

CaseTalk

What is Communication Oriented?



Introduction

The essence of *Fully Communication Oriented Information Modelling* is in the *Communication Oriented* part. FCO-IM stands for modelling the communication instead of using communication to model. This leaves us with the question 'What is communication oriented?'

Anarchy

Object Oriented designers, developers and consultants make it sound easy. Almost every noun is an object so simply look around, write these down on your white board or piece of paper and you're almost done. If it was only this simple. What almost every OO-course shows in a few seconds is complete chaos, which nouns are worth mentioning and which are not. And most important, where to stop analysing. The one thing stands out: Everyone has his or her personal perspective and this leads to anarchy if all individual perspectives are not compromised by your training consultant.

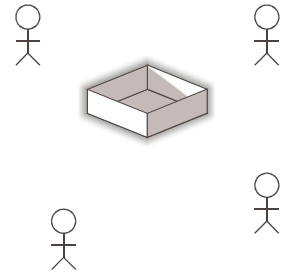


Fig. 1 Real World

Where does this chaos come from, if it really is as simple as pronouncing noun? It is the personal perspective bit. Everyone has a personal interest in saying his or her bit, or even in not mentioning things. Individual perspectives and motives lead to anarchy in simply analysing what should be part of the model and what shouldn't.

Subjective

If every individual has his personal agenda, history, and life experience, this will lead to a personal view of the world around. This view is therefore a subjective perspective of the world. If a single analyst is present and would create a model of the world, viewed by this individual, the world may look very much like the individual recognises it. Still it remains a *subjective* model since it is based on a personal opinion.

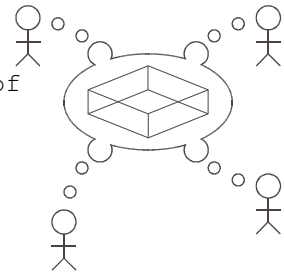


Fig. 2 Individual Perspectives

Objective

The analyst in many cases attempts to ask questions for information. Questions should clarify the intentions of the individual and the meanings of what is answered. With this attempt an analyst tries to model a more *objective* model. This is important since a model is hardly ever being created to serve this single individual. It's almost always being created to help this individual perform tasks which relate to other individuals. Instead of being subjective in modeling practice requires the model to be more *objective*.

Being objective requires much skill for proper interviews. More questions will not always lead to better answers. The answers must be questioned as well. This interview then has everything to do with language. Language used by the analyst and by the users. This interaction makes it difficult to be objective, because both the user and the analyst are again, individuals.



Intersubjective

If real objectivity is hard or even impossible to accomplish, what than? Help is at hand in a very practical way. If more individuals agree on each others perspective, a closer resemblance will be created to an *objective* model. If individuals agree on each others perspective it is called *intersubjective*.

Agreement on a model requires a contract which is crystal clear to all individuals involved. A contract should exist of a language which can be read and nunderstood fully by all parties involved. This includes both the analysts as well as the users. This contract should be clear to any individual, without the need for clarifications by another individual.

Communication Oriented

Instead of now creating the impossible *objective*, or create the unusable *subjective* model dedicated to one individual, we should concentrate on the *intersubjective* model.

This model is based upon information readily available in all present communication between individuals. Instead of now modelling every noun a person comes up with, we only start modelling nouns on which several developers agree on what this means.

How to determine if a group of individuals agree on something? If language is the medium to be used to communicate between people which automatically (sometimes with more effort than usual) leads to an agreeable contract we should use the language used to describe the content of this contract.

Conclusion

Actually modelling with the language as the basis for the model is the closest to the objective model any model will get. There remains no unclear area where individuals are lead to chaos about meaning by unclear specifications, because facts are written down in commonly understood natural language. No subjective diagramming interpretations by individuals, just clear plain simple facts in natural language.

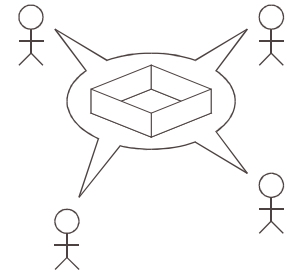


Fig. 3 Intersubjective

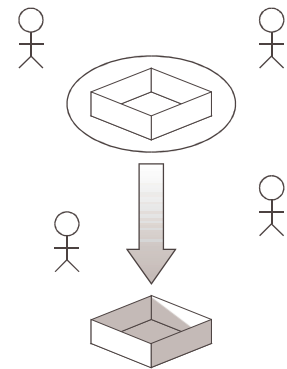


Fig. 4 Communication Oriented Model

