Lecture 7: Requirements Elicitation

Kenneth M. Anderson
Object-Oriented Analysis and Design
CSCI 6448 - Spring Semester, 2002

Credit where Credit is Due

Some material presented in this lecture is taken from section 3 of Maciaszek’s “Requirements Analysis and System Design”. © Addison Wesley, 2000

Goals for this Lecture

- Introduce requirements elicitation
- Cover the standard set of techniques used during this stage of the requirements phase
  - Also known as “Requirements Gathering”

Topics

- Principles of Requirements Determination
- Requirements Elicitation
- Requirements Negotiation and Validation
- Requirements Management
- Problem Statements for Case Studies
- Requirements Business Model
- Requirements Document
Principles of requirements determination

- Requirements define
  - System services
    - Function requirements
      - What must the system do?
    - Data requirements
      - What information must the system manage?
  - System constraints
    - Also known as Non-Functional Requirements
      - performance, security, robustness, etc.

Traditional methods of requirements elicitation

- Interviewing customers/domain experts
- Questionnaires
- Observation
- Study of (existing) documents and software systems

Interviewing customers and domain experts

- Structured interview
  - Open-ended questions
  - Close-ended questions
- Unstructured interview
- Questions to be avoided
  - Opinionated questions
    - “Isn’t that an outdated way of doing things?”
  - Biased questions
    - “Are you going to upgrade to a better toolkit?”
  - Imposing questions
    - “Of course you already do configuration management, right?”
Questionnaires

- In addition to interviews
- Close-ended questions
  - Multiple-choice, rating, and ranking questions
- Very difficult to “get right”
  - You need to know in advance what information you are looking for and how to ask questions that provide the information without biasing the answers
- Need to account for unreturned surveys
  - e.g. if you distribute 100 surveys but only get 20 back, you can’t assume you know the majority opinion

Observation

- This technique is drawn from anthropology
  - The analyst needs to understand the culture of the organization being observed
- Passive
  - analyst observes business activities without interruption or direct involvement (typically through video recordings)
- Active
  - analyst joins the team that is being observed
- Observations must occur for a prolonged period of time
  - to capture different types of activities and workloads
- Be aware that people tend to behave differently

Study of documents and software systems

- Use case requirements
  - Organizational documents
  - System forms and reports
    - these items can show how work is really done as opposed to how its specified
- Domain knowledge requirements
  - Domain journals and reference books
  - Proprietary software packages often contain a wealth of domain knowledge

Modern methods of requirements elicitation

- Prototyping
  - Already discussed previously in lecture
- Joint Application Development (JAD)
- Rapid Application Development (RAD)
Prototyping

- **Throw-away prototype**
  - Typically generated automatically by prototyping tools
  - Does not contain anything close to complete functionality
  - Used only to answer questions
- **Evolutionary prototype**
  - Used to build final product, but only when domain is well-understood and first version of system can be produced fairly quickly (but with incomplete functionality)

JAD

- **The membership**
  - Leader - moderator/domain expert
  - Scribe - records design decisions
  - Customers - they do the talking
    - Users
    - Managers
    - Developers - they do the listening
  - Leverages “Oracle Effect”

RAD

- **Evolutionary prototyping**
- **CASE tools with**
  - code generation
  - round-trip engineering
- **Specialists with Advanced Tools (SWAT)**
  - the developers: best available, co-located with users
- **Interactive JAD**
  - SWAT Team takes place of Scribe
- **Timeboxing**
  - fixed development time; scope is trimmed back if team is running out of time

Requirements Negotiation/Validation

- After elicitation, requirements must be checked for inconsistencies, overlaps, and validity (in-scope);
- A priority must be placed on requirements as negotiated with the customer
- A requirements dependency matrix can aid this process
Requirements dependency matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>R1</th>
<th>R2</th>
<th>R3</th>
<th>R4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Overlap</td>
<td>Overlap</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Requirements management

- Requirements identification and classification
- Requirements hierarchies
- Change management
- Requirements traceability

Requirements identification and classification

- Unique identifier
- Sequential number with document hierarchy
- Sequential number with requirement’s category
- Database generated unique identifier
  - some databases can maintain referential integrity links that aid in requirements change management

Requirements hierarchies

- Requirements can be expressed in parent-child relationships similar to composition relationships
  - Children may be at a different level of abstraction
  1. "The system shall schedule the next phone call to a customer upon telemarketer's request."
    1.1 “The system shall activate Next Call push button upon entry to Telemarketing Control form or when the previous call has terminated.”
    1.2 “The system shall remove the call from the top of the queue of scheduled calls and make it the current call.”
    1.3 etc.
Telemarketing

- Campaigns are started by the society trustees
- Campaigns have to be approved by the local government
- The design and planning of campaigns is supported by a separate Campaign Database application system
- There is also a separate Supporter Database that stores and maintains information about all past and present supporters – used to select supporters to be contacted in a particular campaign
- Orders from supporters for lottery tickets are recorded during telemarketing for perusal by the Order Processing system
- Order Processing System maintains status of orders in the Supporter Database
Business class model

![Business class model diagram]

Project preliminaries chapter
- Targets managers and decision makers
- Begins with purpose and scope of the project
- Makes a business case for the system
- Identifies stakeholders
- Offers initial ideas for the solution
- Includes an overview of the rest of the document

System services chapter
- Dedicated to the definition of system services - what the system must accomplish
- Likely to account for more than half of the entire document
- Contains high-level requirements business models
  - Context diagram (the system scope)
  - Business use case diagram (function requirements)
  - Business class diagram (data requirements)
System constraints chapter

- Dedicated to the definition of system constraints - how the system is constrained when accomplishing services with regard to
  - Interface requirements
  - Performance requirements
  - Security requirements
  - Operational requirements
  - Political and legal requirements
  - Other constraints
    - Usability
    - Maintainability

Project matters chapter

- Open issues
  - Future requirements
  - Current requirements to be implemented in the future – enhancements
  - Potential problems once when the system deployed
- Preliminary schedule
  - Human and other resources
  - Planning charts (PERT, Gantt)
- Preliminary budget
  - Project cost – range rather than figure

Appendices chapter

- Glossary
  - Terms
  - Acronyms
  - Abbreviations
- Documents and forms
  - Examples of completed (filled in) forms
- References
  - To books and other published sources
  - Meetings’ minutes, memoranda, internal documents

Summary

- Requirements determination is about discovering requirements and documenting them
- Two lines of discovery – the discovery from the domain knowledge and from the use cases
- Methods of requirements elicitation include interviewing customers and domain experts, questionnaires, observation, study of documents and software systems, prototyping, JAD and RAD
- Requirements negotiation and validation to resolve overlaps and conflicts
- Requirements have to be managed
- Requirements business model uses diagrams – Context Diagram, Business Use Case Diagram, and Business Class Diagram
- The resulting document is called the Requirements Document