ER12-Tutorial: Enabling Flexibility in Process-aware Information Systems Challenges, Methods, Technologies



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Content

- Part 1 Process-aware Information Systems
- Part 2 Flexibility Issues
- Part 3
 – Flexibility Support for Pre-specified Process Models
 - Pre-specified process models and flexibility-by-design
 - Process configuration
 - Flexible process execution and handling of anticipated exceptions
 - Handling unforeseen exceptions
 - Process Evolution

• Part 4– Loosely-specified Process Models

- Loosely-specified process models
- Constraint-based process models

Business Processes and Workflows Process-aware Information Systems

3

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A Retail Process



Welcome customer



Offer Clothes



Bill Clothes



Hand over clothes

Mendling 2006











Process Instance I1



Execution Trace:

 σ_1 = < "Patient Admission", "Anamnesis & Clinical Examination", "X-ray">

Activity States:

Enabled

🗴 Skipped

✓ Completed

Process Instance I2



Execution Trace:

 $\sigma_2 = <$ "Patient Admission", "Anamnesis & Clinical Examination", "Non Operative Therapy">









Business Processes and Workflows Flexibility Issues

13

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Variability

15

• Variability is typical for many domains and requires that processes are handled differently depending on the particular context

Drivers

- Product and service variability
- Differences in regulations
- Different customer groups
- Temporal differences



Looseness

16

• Knowledge-intensive processes cannot be fully prespecified, but require loose specifications

Drivers

- Unpredictability
- Non-Repeatability
- Emergence



Adaptation

- Ability to adapt the process and its structure to temporary events
- Drivers
 - Special Situations
 - Exceptions
- Anticipation of Adaptation
 - Planned
 - Unanticipated



Evolution

19)

• Extent of Evolution

- o Incremental
 - Continuous Process Improvement
- Revolutionary
 - Business Process Reengineering

• Duration

- Temporary
- o Permanent

Evolution

20

- Swiftness
 - Deferred
 - Ongoing instances are not affected
 - o Immediate
 - Ongoing instances are affected
- Visibility
 - Observable Behavior
 - Internal Structure

nder
Example: Tene Preparation
10: Inconsistent
Example. Naming of Process



Flexibility Needs and Technological Requirements

22

Flexibility Need	Dimension	Technological Requirement
Variability		Configuration
Looseness		Loosely-specified processes
Adaptation	Planned Unplanned	Exception Handling Ad-hoc Changes
Evolution	Deferred Evolution Immediate Evolution Poor Internal Quality Organizational Learning	Versioning Process Instance Migration Refactoring Monitoring, Analysis and Mining

Business Processes and Workflows Pre-specified Process Models and Flexibility-by-Design

23

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Examples of Control Flow Patterns (2)

27







Business Processes and Workflows Configurable Process Models

30

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Motivation – Change Management Process







Motivation – Handling Medical Examinations

Variety of related variants

- Same business objective
- Commonalities
- Differences due to varying application context



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Behavior-based Approaches

36

- Main idea: Merging all possible behavior in on reference model with configurable nodes
 - Extension of an existing process modeling language by adding configurable elements (e.g., activities, control connectors)
 Examples: C-EPC, C-YAWL
- Configurable nodes represent variation points associated with configuration alternatives
- Possible combinations of configuration alternatives can be restriceted through constraints
Configurable Activities

37

- Included (ON)
- Excluded (OFF)
- Conditional (OPT)





Configuration Requirements and Guidelines

39

Requirements

 Define constraints over the configuration alternatives that may be chosen

Guidelines

 Do not prescribe mandatory constraints, but serve as recommendations



Configurable Model: Handling Medical Examinations





Two Main Approaches for Capturing Process Variability

Behaviour-based Approaches

Structural Approaches



Representing a Process Family

• Through a configurable base process model

- Policy 1: Standard Process
- Policy 2: Most frequently used process
- Policy 3: Superset of all process variants
- Policy 4: Intersection of all process variants

and a related set of pre-specified changes

- Adjustment points
- Change options (i.e., a grouping of change operations)

Examples of Change Operations

44

1. INSERT-O	peration			
Symbol				
Purpose	Adding a process fragment (e.g., a single activity or an activity sequence).			
Parameters	 Process fragment to be added Target position of the process fragment to be added in the base process, specified in terms of adjustment points 			
2. DELETE-C	Dperation			
Symbol	\bowtie			
Purpose	Removing a process fragment			
Parameters	 Process fragment to be deleted with entries and exits being marked by adjustment points Alternatively: deleting single activities by referring to their ID 			
3. MOVE-Op	eration			
Symbol	→			
Purpose	Changing the execution order of activities			
Parameters	Process fragment to be moved with entries and exits being marked by adjustment points Target position of the process fragment to be moved specified in			
	terms of adjustment points			





Constraining Allowed Combinations of Change Options

46

- Implications
- Mutual exclusion
- Hierarchy



Context Model

47

- Context-specific selection of change options
 - Context variables

Context Variable	Value Range		
Examination-Type	Standard medical exam., Emergency medical exam}		
Scheduling-Type	Examination with appointment, Examination with simple registration, Emergency registration		
Preparing-Patient	Yes, No		
Informing-Patient	Yes, No		
Transporting-Patient	Yes, No		

Bringing all together ...

- (1) Select relevant changes options R All change options whose context rules evaluate to true are selected
- (2) Ensure compliance of the selected options with option constraints ISF Compliance with option constraints has to be checked
- (3) Determine the order in which options shall be applied
- (4) Configuring the base process by applying the selected options and their change operations to it



Questionnaire-driven Process Configuration

50

(1) Questionnaire Model

(2) Using Questionnaire Models for Configuring a Reference Process Model

(a) Linking Domain Facts and Configurable Activities

(b) Linking Domain Facts and Configurable Connectors



Business Processes and Workflows Exception and Compensation Handling

52

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Business Processes and Workflows Handling Unforeseen Exceptions



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Behavioral Changes Require Structural Process Model Adaptations



Behavioral Changes Require Adaptations of the Process Instance State

Dynamic Change Bug



Behavioral Changes Require Adaptations of the Process Instance State





Behavioral Changes Require Adaptations of the Process Instance State



Behavioral Changes Must not Violate Process Model Soundness and Proper Instance Execution



Ad-hoc Changes of a Process Instance Must Not Affect any Other Process Instances



Structurally Adapting Pre-Specified Process Models

Change Primitives

- Add node
- Remove node
- Add edge
- Remove edge
- Move edge

High-Level Change Operations

- Combines a set of change primitives
- Referred to as Adaptation Patterns in the following

Adaptation Patterns

65

Adding / Deleting	AP1:	Insert Process Fragment
Process Fragments	AP2:	Delete Prrocess Fragment
Moving / Replacing	AP3:	Move Process Fragment
Process Fragments	AP4:	Replace Process Fragment
	AP5:	Swap Process Fragment
	AP14:	Copy Process Fragment
Adding / Removing	AP6:	Extract Sub Process
Process Levels	AP7:	Inline Sub Process
Adapting Control Dependencies	AP8:	Embed Process Fragment in Loop
	AP9:	Parallelize Process Fragments
	AP10:	Embed Process Fragment in Conditional Branch
	AP11:	Add Control Dependency
	AP12:	Remove Control Dependency
Change Transition Conditions	AP13:	Update Condition

[WRR08]

Adaptation Patterns versus Change Primitives



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BW2

Folie 66

BW2 Bild tauschen Barbara Weber; 02.04.2011



May the depicted schema change be propagated to the process instance?

Need for general correctness criterion

⇒State Compliance

[ReDa98, RRW08a, RRD04a, RRD04b]



Correctness of Process Instance Changes



User Assistance & Change Reuse (1)

The ProCycle (= ADEPT + CBRFlow) Approach for Assisting Users in Defining and Reusing Changes:

- Annotate ad-hoc changes with information about the reasons for their introduction
- Support users in retrieving past ad-hoc changes applied in similar context
- Assist users in reusing a past ad-hoc change when coping with an exceptional situation

[RWR+05, WRW+09, WRR+05, WRW06, WWB04]


Business Processes and Workflows Process Evolution

72

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Change Support Features

Schema Evolution, Version Control and Instance Migration

75

Schema Evolution

• Changes at the process type level

 How to deal with running instances when adapting the original process schema?

- Scenario 1: No version control
- Scenario 2: Co-existence of instances of old / new schema
- Scenario 3: Change propagation and instance migration



Scenario 2 - Version Control Co-existence of instances of different schema versions Type change results into a new version of schema S **Process Schema S Process Schema S** Insert X between A and B Insert Y between C and AND-Join1 A → B AND-Join1 Schema Evolution AND-Split Old instances remain with schema S Instances created from S (before schema evolution) Instances created from S' (after schema evolution) **Process Instance I1 Process Instance I4** E → F Process Instance I2 **Process Instance I5** E → F

Image: Scenario 3 – Instance Migration 78 Image: Scenario 3 – Imag

Migration of compliant process instances to S'

Process Instance I1



Process Instance I2



Propagation of compliant process instances to schema S' (incl. state adaptations)



Process Instance I₂ not compliant with S'

[RRD04a]

Process Model Refactoring

79

(1) Identify refactoring opportunities

(2) Determine which refactoring should be applied

(3) Ensure that the applied refactoring preserves model behavior

(4) Apply the refactoring

(5) Assess the effect of the refactoring on the quality characteristics of the process model <u>repository</u>







Process Model Smells: Example

83

PMS4: Large Process Model









Process Model Smells: Example

87

PMS4: Large Process Model



Process Model After Refactoring







Integrated Lifecycle Support for Adaptive and Dynamic Processes (3)



Business Processes and Workflows Loosely Specified Processes

92



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Loosely specified Processes

93

- To deal with unpredictability, non repeatability and emergence loosely specified processes keep (parts) of the process unspecified during build-time
- Loosely specified processes are characterized by *decision deferral* restaxonomy of decision deferral



Decision Deferral Patterns

(94))

Pattern	Degree of Freedom	Planning Approach	
Traditional Worflow	None	Plan-driven	
Late Selection	Selection	Plan-driven	
Late Modeling and Composition	Modeling / Composition	Plan-driven	
Iterative Refinement	Modeling / Composition	Iterative	
Ad-hoc Composition	Modeling / Composition	Ad-hoc	



Late Selection – The Worklets Approach

96



[AHE+06]



Late Modeling – Pockets of Flexibility







Business Processes and Workflows Declarative Processes

101

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Declarative Processes

- Instead of describing exactly how a business process should be executed, declarative processes
 - **o** describe the activities to be executed and
 - constraints prohibiting undesired behavior (e.g., selection constraints, ordering constraints, resource constraints)



[PSSA07]



Modeling Declarative Processes

104

• 5 Major Categories

- o Selection Constraints
- Relation Constraints
- **o** Branching Constraints
- Negation Constraints
- Choice Constraints

	n* a	Activity <i>a</i> must occur at least <i>n</i> times in every trace	
existence(a, n)	Example: existence(A,1) Supported traces, e.g.: <a>, <a,a,a> Unsupported trace, e.g.: <></a,a,a>		
at_most(a, n)	0n a	Activity <i>a</i> must occur at most <i>n</i> times in every trace	
	<pre>Example: at_most(A,3) Supported traces, e.g.: <> , <a> , <a ,="" a=""> , <a ,="" a=""> Unsupported trace, e.g.: <a ,="" a=""></pre>		
exactly(a, n)	n a	Activity <i>a</i> must occur exactly <i>n</i> times in every trace	
	Example: exactly(A,2) Supported trace, e.g.: <a,a> Unsupported traces, e.g.,: <a>, <a,a,a></a,a,a></a,a>		
init(a)	init a	Activity <i>a</i> must be the first executed activity in every trace	
	Example: init(A) Supported trace, e.g.: <a,c,d,b> Unsupported trace, e.g.: <d,c,b,a></d,c,b,a></a,c,d,b>		

EXAMPLE: SELECTION CONSTRAINTS

EXAMPLE: RELATION CONSTRAINTS

response(a, b)	a ●• b	If <i>a</i> is executed, <i>b</i> needs to be executed afterwards (but not necessarily directly after)	
	Example: response(A Supported traces, e.g.: Unsupported trace, e.g.:	,B) <a,b>,<a,a,a,b>, <a></a,a,a,b></a,b>	
precedence(a, b)	(b)	Activity <i>b</i> needs to be preceded by activity <i>a</i>	
	Example: precedence(A,B)		
	Supported traces, e.g.:	<a, b="">, <a, b="" b,="">, <a></a,></a,>	
	Unsupported trace, e.g.: 		
succession(a, b)	a b	If <i>a</i> is executed, <i>b</i> needs to be executed afterwards (but not necessarily directly after); activity <i>b</i> needs to be preceded by activity <i>a</i>	
	Example: succession(A,B)		
	Supported traces, e.g.:	<a, b="">, <a, a,="" b="">, <a, b="" b,=""></a,></a,></a,>	
	Unsupported traces, e.g.: <a> , 		
respondedExistence(a, b)	(If activity <i>a</i> is executed, activity <i>b</i> needs to be executed either before or after <i>a</i>	
	Example: respondedExistence(A,B)		
	Supported traces, e.g.:	<a, b="">, <b, a="">, <a, a="" b,="">, </a,></b,></a,>	
	Unsupported trace, e.g.:	<a>	
















van der Aalst, Pesic and Schonenberg 2009 [APS09]



Manfred Reichert Barbara Weber



Enabling Flexibility in Process-Aware Information Systems

Enabling Flexibility in Process-Aware Information Systems

Challenges, Methods, Technologies







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