The rise of the (modelling) bots:
Towards assisted modelling via Social Networks

Sara Pérez-Soler, Esther Guerra, Juan de Lara, Francisco Jurado

MISO - Modelling & Software Engineering Research Group (miso.es)
Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (Spain)
Motivation

- Modelling applications are heavyweight (desktop, diagramming)
- Social networks, like Twitter and Telegram:
  - increasingly used for work and leisure
  - agile and lightweight means for coordination and information sharing
- **Goal: exploit social networks for collaborative modelling**
  - social networks as front-end for modelling
  - domain requirements as short messages in natural language
  - a bot interprets the messages and derives a domain model
Users interact by sending messages to social network of choice.

- Discussion and coordination via regular messages
- Project management commands (e.g., projects)
- Domain requirements in natural language:
  - descriptions: “houses have windows”
  - flexible commands: “add class house”, “create class house”
Approach
Processing of messages in natural language

- Bot parses the message (Stanford parser)
- Rules\(^a\) to interpret parse tree and trigger model update actions
- A picture of the updated model is sent to users

\(^a\) “Extracting domain models from NL requirements: approach and industrial evaluation”, Arora et al., MODELS 2016.
Model validation
Exporter to Ecore/EMF
Trace model
Example

*a goods transport company handles deliveries*
Example

a goods transport company handles deliveries

⇒

a delivery has a numeric identifier
Example

*a goods transport company handles deliveries*

*a delivery has a numeric identifier*

*a delivery is made of packages. Packets can be bulky, heavy or fragile*
Key points

Benefits

- Social networks are ubiquitous (low learning curve)
- Use in mobility, no need to install new applications
- Lightweight front-end
- Interaction via short messages can be easier/faster
- Requirements in natural language (suitable for non-modelling experts)
- A bot interprets the messages and derives a model
- Seamless integration of modelling and discussion mechanisms
- Message history provides trace information
Key points

Scenarios

- Quick prototyping of models *when* and *where* needed
- Sw projects: foster collaboration of engineers and domain experts
- Education: collaborative resolution of exercises
- Crowdsourcing of modelling decisions
Tool support

- SOCIO is a bot for assisted modelling over social networks
- It works over Telegram and Twitter (@modellingBot)
- It uses the Stanford parser (parsing) and Wordnet (synonyms)
- Video and URL: https://saraperezsoler.github.io/ModellingBot
Evaluation

- Participants: 10 post-graduate or last-year degree students of CS
- Configuration: 4 Telegram groups (2-3 people/group)
- Task: building model for e-commerce, answering questionnaire

- Results:
  - good usability (74%)
  - natural language is suitable to build models (75%)
  - social networks are useful for collaboration (76%)
  - easy-to-use, quicker than other modelling tools
Summary and next steps

- Novel approach to collaborative modelling via social networks
- Tooling and promising initial evaluation
- What’s next?
  - improve natural processing, extend command set of tool
  - define collaboration protocols (e.g., roles, voting)
  - other bots (e.g., quality assurance bots, gamification bots)
  - other social networks (e.g., Slack) and communication mechanisms (e.g., speech recognition using Skype bots)
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Questions?