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An Ontological Evaluation of Jackson's System Development Model

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Abstract

Within the discipline of information systems, numerous methodologies exist to aid the analyst and designer develop a well-designed system that meets the specifications put forward by the user. These methodologies tend to fall into two categories: (a) reality driven, or (b) informationsystems driven. Wand and Weber (1989), have mapped a set of ontologically-based constructs onto two widely-used analysis and design techniques being data flow diagrams (an informationsystems driven methodology) and entity relationship modelling (a reality-driven methodology).

In this paper, Wand and Weber's work is extended to investigate the systems analysis and design methodology created by Michael Jackson, namely Jackson System Development (JSD). JSD was selected as it combines the reality-driven and information-system driven approaches by modelling what is happening in reality through the use of constructs related to the process to be modelled (usually computerised processes). The oncological analysis of JSD undertaken during this paper is used to evaluate the methodology's strengths and weaknesses as a modelling technique and ultimately to investigate its usefulness as a systems analysis and design methodology.

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