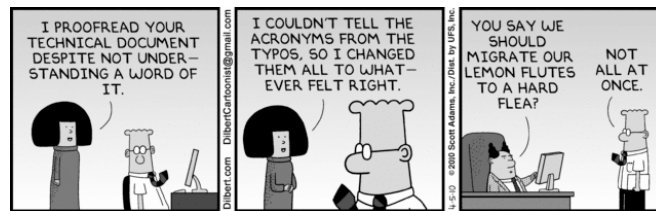

Architectural Design IV

Designing the Module Structure Design Principles



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1

Architecture Design Process

Building architecture to address business goals:

1. Understand the goals for the system
2. Define the quality requirements
3. *Design the architecture*
 1. Views: which architectural structures should we use?
(goals \leftrightarrow architectural structures \leftrightarrow representation)
 2. Documentation: how do we communicate design decisions?
 3. Design: how do we decompose the system?
4. Evaluate the architecture (is it a good design?)

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2

Module Decomposition Strategies

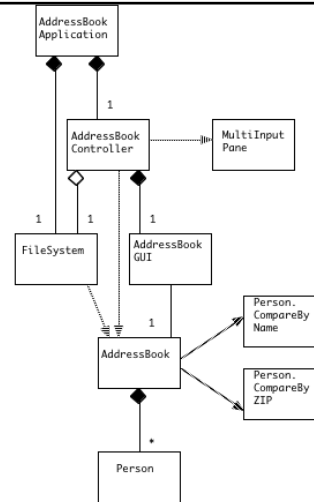
- How do we develop this structure so that the leaf modules make independent work assignments?
 - Dependencies are few
 - Decisions that might change are encapsulated
 - Interfaces are simple and well defined
- I.e. low *coupling*, high *cohesion*
 - Coupling: degree of interdependence **between** software modules
 - Cohesion: degree of relation or interdependence of elements within a module

Modular Decomposition

- Design goals: modifiability, work assignments, maintainability, reusability, understandability, etc.
- Observed strategies only partially successful
 - Use-case driven OOD, heuristics
 - MVC Pattern
- What should be done differently?
 - Why did these approaches fail?

Use Case Driven OO Process

- Address book design: in-class exercise
- Requirements
- Problem Analysis
 - Identify use cases from requirements
 - Identify domain classes operationalizing use cases (apply heuristics)
- OO Design (refinement)
 - Allocate responsibilities among classes
 - Identify object interactions supporting use cases
 - Identify supporting classes (& associations)
- Detailed Design
 - Design class interfaces (class attributes and services)



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5

Decomposition Heuristics

- Heuristics: suppose we create objects by ...
 - Underline the nouns
 - Identify causal agents
 - Identify coherent services
 - Identify real-world items
 - Identify physical devices
 - Identify essential abstractions
 - Etc.
- Do the properties we want follow?
 - Conversely, is it possible to satisfy the heuristic but not get the properties we want (e.g. few dependencies)?

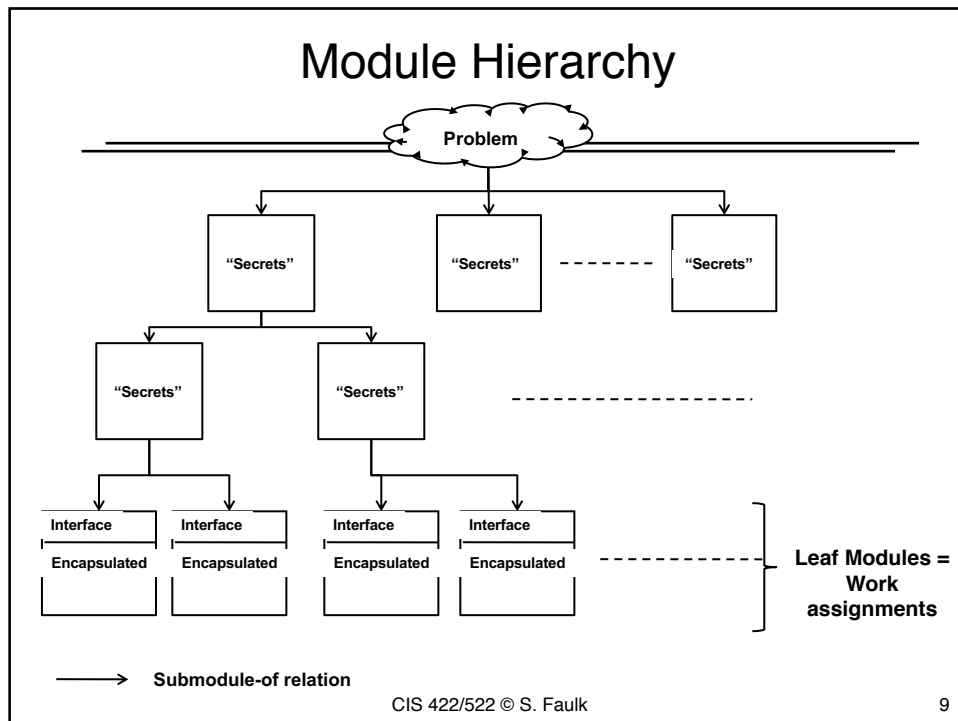
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6

Design Principles

Modular Structure

- Architecture = components, relations, and interfaces
- Components
 - Called modules
 - Leaf modules are work assignments
 - Non-leaf modules are the union of their submodules
- Relations (connectors)
 - submodule-of => implements-secrets-of
 - Module is an aggregate of its submodules
 - Constrained to be acyclic tree (hierarchy)
- Interfaces (externally visible component behavior)
 - Defined in terms of access procedures (services or method)
 - Services provide only access to module internals



Design Principles

- Principle (n): a comprehensive and fundamental rule, doctrine, or assumption
- Design Principles – rules that guide developers in making design decisions consistent with overall design goals and constraints
 - Guide the decision making process of design by helping choose between alternatives
 - Embodied in methods and techniques (e.g., for decompositions)

Three Key Design Principles

- Most solid first
- Information hiding
- Abstraction

Principle: Most Solid First

- View design as a sequence of decisions
 - Later decisions depend on earlier
 - Early decisions harder to change
- Most solid first: in a sequence of decisions, those that are least likely to change should be made first
- Goal: reduce rework by limiting the impact of changes
- Application: used to order a sequence of design decisions
 - Generally applicable to design decisions
 - Module decomposition – ease of change

Information Hiding

- Design principle of limiting dependencies between components by hiding information other components should not depend on
- An information hiding decomposition is one following the design principles that (Parnas):
 - System details that are likely to change independently are put in different modules
 - The interface of a module reveals only those aspects considered unlikely to change
 - Details other modules should not depend on are encapsulated

Decomposition Strategy

- Decompose recursively
 - If a module holds decisions that are likely to change independently, then decompose it into submodules
 - Decisions that are likely to change together are allocated to the same submodule
 - Decisions that change independently should be allocated to different submodules
- Stopping criteria
 - Each module contains only things likely to change together
 - Each module is simple enough to be understood fully, small enough that it makes sense to throw it away rather than re-do
- Define the Interfaces
 - Anything that other modules should not depend on become secrets of the module (e.g., implementation details)
 - If the module has an interface, only things not likely to change can be part of the interface

Abstraction

- General: disassociating from specific instances to represent what the instances have in common
 - Abstraction defines a *one-to-many relationship*
E.g., one type, many possible implementations
- Modular decomposition: Interface design principle of providing only essential information and suppressing unnecessary detail

Abstraction

- Two primary uses
- Reduce Complexity
 - Goal: manage complexity by reducing the amount of information that must be considered at one time
 - Approach: Separate information important to the problem at hand from that which is not
 - Abstraction suppresses or hides “irrelevant detail”
 - Examples: stacks, queues, abstract device
- Model the problem domain
 - Goal: leverage domain knowledge to simplify understanding, creating, checking designs
 - Approach: Provide components that make it easier to model a class of problems
 - May be quite general (e.g., type real, type float)
 - May be very problem specific (e.g., class automobile, book object)

Address Book Reconsidered

- Consider address book design based on principles

Summary

- Heuristics and patterns are guidelines
 - Do not guarantee qualities
 - Must understand how and why they work to apply effectively
- Principles are more direct – achieve qualities *by construction*
- Good design requires careful thinking
 - Which goals are we trying to achieve
 - How design decisions address those goals

Questions?

Lessons on Patterns

- Patterns are often misused
- Using a pattern correctly requires understanding it
 - “Correctly” – such that the pattern’s design goals are realized in your design
 - “Understanding” – you understand what the pattern is supposed to accomplish, how it works, and how to apply it in your context

Lessons on Patterns (2)

- A pattern is a three part rule that expresses a relation between [Schmidt]:
 1. A particular problem context
 2. A set of competing forces (goals and constraints) in that context
 3. A software *configuration* that *resolves* the set of forces
 - *Configuration* == objects, interfaces, relations
 - *Resolves* == concurrently addresses the goals and constraints