Afpatoo: Tool to Automate Function Point Analysis Based on UML Class and Sequence Diagrams

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Abstract: Function Point Analysis (FPA) is a well-established and widely used measure of software functional size. For more than 20 years, there have been several attempts to calculate function points on the basis of the object-oriented specifications, mainly in the form of UML models, but fully automatic tools dedicated to that process are still missing. To fill this gap, we propose Afpatoo, a tool which performs IFPUG version of FPA on the basis of UML class and sequence diagrams with combined fragments. The tool implements two existing approaches from the literature in a plugin to Modelio, a broadly used open source UML modeling environment. Usefulness of the Afpatoo was tested and confirmed on the exemplary model for payback payments.

1 INTRODUCTION

Functional size measurement is an important task in software development. One of the well-established methods for such calculations is Function Point Analysis (FPA), proposed originally by (Albrecht, 1979). It has evolved into various variants, e.g. IFPUG (ISO, 2009), COSMIC (ISO, 2011), NESMA (ISO, 2018). Among them, the version defined by IFPUG (IFPUG, 2024) is the most widely used.

Although the original FPA was not suited for object-oriented specifications, there have been several attempts to adopt the method to such kind of input, usually in the form of the UML (Unified Modeling Language) (OMG, 2017) diagrams. Unfortunately, despite over 20 years of trials, there is a lack of completely automatic tools performing FPA on the basis of the UML diagrams. Such a tool could facilitate software measurement process and be beneficial for the practitioners. Its exemplary use cases include passing the obtained FPA results as an input to another algorithm. On the other hand, the need for the FPA for the already existing or historical project may arise, e.g. during the maintenance of legacy systems.

In such a case, the tool could be used to perform FPA on the basis of the models obtained using reverse engineering methods. Although some researchers argue that the FPA cannot be fully automated (Jorio, 2004; Harput et al., 2005), as it needs a human interpretation of the input, we believe that when it comes to the estimation, the easier to perform calculations, the better, and the FPA specialist may be not always available. However, our aim is not to replace manual analyses performed by experts, which are the most accurate, but to facilitate analyses for those cases, in which it is difficult to obtain the results from the analyst.

To fill in the gap in the market of fully automated software for FPA based on UML model, we have implemented the tool named Afpatoo, described in an unpublished thesis (Zabuski, 2022), which we present here. It implements the approach proposed by Uemura et al. (Uemura et al., 1999; Uemura et al., 2001) and the improvements defined by Bluemke and Malanowska (Bluemke and Malanowska, 2020b; Malanowska, 2019), as well as introduces some additional refinements. Afpatoo is a plugin to Modelio (Modeliosoft, 2022), a popular open source UML modeling environment.

Input data of our tool consist of class and sequence diagrams which completely describe the analyzed system, and the output is the number of Unadjusted Function Points (UFPs), as well as identified Data Functions (DFs) and Transactional Functions (TFs).

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. In Section 2, we recall existing approaches to FPA based on object-oriented specifications. Then, we explain implemented algorithms in Section 3. The details about the architecture of the Afpatoo are described in Section 4 and its evaluation is provided in Section 5. Finally, Section 6 concludes our paper.

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2 RELATED WORK

There have been several attempts to establish a mapping between the object-oriented specifications and the function points (FPs). Usually, UML diagrams are transformed to the terms related to IFPUG version of FPA. Unfortunately, it seems to be impossible to find tools which perform such an analysis in a completely automatic way. Although some tools allowing for automatization of FPA can be found, e.g. (Function point Modeler Inc., 2009; ScopeMaster., 2023), they are not based on the object-oriented specification, but on some other type of input, e.g. textual requirements specification in natural language.

One of the earliest approaches to transformation of object-oriented requirements specification into the IFPUG FPs was performed by (Fetcke et al., 1997). The approach was based on (Jacobson, 1992) methodology, a predecessor of the UML. The mapping rules presented by the authors cannot be fully automated, as at some points they refer to descriptions from textual documentation or decisions of an FPA expert. Clear transformation rules are provided only to identify candidates of FPA objects, but final selection of actual objects is left to the user.

Another early approach was made by (Caldiera et al., 1998). This work introduces Object Oriented Function Points (OOFP), which cannot be mapped directly to traditional FPs. OOFPs are calculated on the basis of the object model, which can be understood as class diagrams. OOFP counting methodology has few parametrizable points, in which one of the possible strategies can be chosen. The authors, however, do not assume decisions of an FPA expert, but offer the possibility of adjusting the calculations to the needs of particular organization. The approach was also implemented in a parametrizable software.

Although those works cannot be used directly to transform UML diagrams into FPA results, they and (Uemura et al., 1999; Uemura et al., 2001) (see Section 3.1) have made a significant impact on the further proposals. (Iorio, 2004) reviewed transformation rules proposed in (Fetcke et al., 1997; Uemura et al., 1999; Caldiera et al., 1998) and created guidelines to identify candidates on IFPUG FPA entities on the basis of use case, class, and sequence diagrams. He claims it is impossible to automatically map UML to FPA, as they have different objectives and the diagrams can be prepared from various perspectives.

Similarly, (Cantone et al., 2004), based on (Fetcke et al., 1997; Caldiera et al., 1998; Uemura et al., 2001), proposed a detailed rules to transform use case, class, and sequence diagrams to UFPs from IFPUG FPA. They discuss and combine the rules defined by different techniques and, in the case of conflict, allow the user to choose the preferred one. Some new rules are also defined. The approach is parametrizable and has been implemented in a semi-automatic tool, which requires presence of an FPA expert.

(van den Berg et al., 2005) discuss the problem of specification of Functional User Requirements expressed in the UML to measure the functional size of the software. The authors compare NESMA and COSMIC approaches. Use case diagrams and scenarios, class, and activity diagrams are considered. However, the paper does not define any mapping between those diagrams and FPs, the measurement process is performed manually, and is not clear.

(Harput et al., 2005) propose a semi-automatic conversion from UML requirements specification into the IFPUG FPA. UFPs are calculated from use cases with pre- and postconditions, class diagrams representing domain or information model, and sequence diagrams. Moreover, non-functional requirements are mapped to General System Characteristics used in FPA, what allows for calculation of Adjusted Function Points. Although the authors convince that fully automatic transformation is impossible due to various possible interpretations of the diagrams, they provide a semi-automatic tool, which requires an FPA expert.

(Batista et al., 2011) focus on the presentation of the semi-automatic tool, ReMoFP, which supports the FPA analyst. The input data are UML requirements specification in the form of class diagrams and use case flows modeled on the activity diagrams. Their approach is based on creation of UML stereotypes and OCL (Object Constraint Language) (OMG, 2014) constraints. The aim of the used stereotypes is to facilitate manual recognition of DFs and TFs.

Finally, (Irawati and Mustofa, 2012) present the semi-automatic approach and tool for calculation of IFPUG UFPs and estimation of project effort, duration, and speed of delivery on the basis of UML design model. The input consists of use case or class diagrams, or the diagram describing the relationships between the classes and use cases. The authors do not define mapping rules, they only indicate which elements of each diagram type can serve as a basis for calculation of the given FPA parameter.

3 ALGORITHMS USED

As can be seen from Section 2, it is impossible to find any tools which would map object-oriented concepts into the results of FPA in a completely automatic way.
Although several proposals exist, they all require the presence of an expert, who may not be available in all circumstances. Moreover, although majority of the aforementioned mappings is suited for UML input, they seem to be quite outdated. Only (van den Berg et al., 2005) and (Batista et al., 2011) refer to UML 2.0, the others use its 1.x version.

Our approach differs from those mentioned in Section 2. We aimed to create fully automatic tool performing FPA on the basis of the UML model, adjusted to the contemporary version of the UML 2.5.1. Our tool, Afpatoo, takes advantage of one of the meaningful outdated mappings, but uses also an approach to update it to the current version of the UML. Hence, it is based on implementation of two existing algorithms from the literature: transformation of class and sequence diagrams into UFPs (Section 3.1) and its improvements resulting from the introduction of newer elements in the UML diagrams (Section 3.2).

3.1 FPA Based on UML Diagrams

Uemura et al. (Uemura et al., 1999; Uemura et al., 2001) proposed a method to conduct first five steps of the IFPUG FPA. This approach, proposed originally for UML 1.0, is based on the software design model consisting of class and sequence diagrams. Unlike all the solutions recalled in Section 2, it is completely automatic and has been implemented in a tool at the time of its introduction over 20 years ago. Therefore, this algorithm has been chosen for usage in our approach. In the rest of the paper, the term 'FPA' refers to the IFPUG FPA, its details can be found in, e.g., (ISO, 2009; Uemura et al., 2001).

(Uemura et al., 1999; Uemura et al., 2001) divide all objects from the sequence diagrams into two types: actor and non-actor objects. The former do not belong to the considered information system, while the latter are placed inside the system. Another important assumption is that the data exchange is performed in the form of message with non-empty list of arguments on the sequence diagrams. DFs are formed from those non-actor objects for which there are attributes defined on the class diagram and which exchange some data with other non-actors. If some attributes of the identified DF are modified by some operation of another object, the given DF is recognized as an Internal Logical File (ILF). The authors define that an object has attributes modified in such a way if it is associated at least one External Input (EI) TF. On the contrary, if there is no such modification, the DF is treated as an External Interface File (EIF). To measure the complexity of the DF, the authors assume that Data Element Type (DET) value is equal to the number of attributes of the given class and Record Element Type (RET) is always assigned the value of 1.

TFs are built from the messages (or their sequences), started by an actor, which ensure that there is some data exchange between the objects. Uemura et al. assumed that all important returns from synchronous calls have to be clearly drawn on the diagram, as this was not obligatory in UML 1.0. They defined five patterns of messages sequence to recognize the type and complexity of the TFs. Those patterns are explained in detail in (Uemura et al., 1999; Uemura et al., 2001). In each pattern, some meaningful message is identified and serves as a basis for determination for the type of the TF (EI, External Output - EO, or External Inquiry - EQ, depending on the pattern). Moreover, the number of the arguments of the meaningful message is treated as a value of DET parameter. File Type Referenced (FTR) is the number of DFs involved in the sequence.

3.2 Usage of Combined Fragments

As the method of Uemura et al. was defined over 20 years ago for UML 1.0, it does not take into account newer UML elements, such as combined fragments (CFs) and interaction uses, which modify the meaning of the sequence diagram. Recently, Bluemke and Malanowska (Bluemke and Malanowska, 2020b; Malanowska, 2019) proposed a technique to consider the meaning of CFs in the automatic FPA. It is defined as a pre-processing step before performing the method of Uemura et al. The general idea is that each sequence diagram containing CFs should be reduced to (possibly many) diagrams without the CFs, so that all interaction scenarios are preserved. Transformation rules are defined for single CFs and applied iteratively and recursively. Later, such simplified diagrams can be normally used as an input to the method of Uemura et al.

(Bluemke and Malanowska, 2020b; Malanowska, 2019) divide all 12 types of UML CFs into three categories on the basis of the meaning of interaction operators. The first category contains CFs which are easy to be reduced, i.e. _alt, opt, break, and neg_. The diagram with such a CF can be easily replaced with one or more diagrams, each of which represents different scenario and contains everything from the original diagram except of the CF and zero or one of the operands of that CF.

The second category consists of CFs which do not require any reduction, because they do not provide any additional information. _Ignore, consider, assert, strict, and critical_ CFs belong to this group. Here, the only necessary step is to ignore the existence of the
frame enclosing the CF and to keep its content. The same approach is used for reduction of the CFs from the third category (par, seq, and loop), which are currently unsupported.

4 AFPATOO TOOL

To fill in the gap in the field of automatic tools performing FPA on the basis of the UML model, we have implemented a tool called Afpatoo (Zabuski, 2022), which allows for fully automated calculation of UFPs from the model containing complete class and sequence diagrams with CFs. To achieve this, Afpatoo implements the algorithms described in Section 3 and proposes several own refinements.

4.1 Architecture

Afpatoo is written in Java, as a plugin to Modelio 5.1.0 (Modeliosoft, 2022) modeling environment, chosen because of being open source and having quite a big community of users, who can be potential recipients of the tool.

Our tool is prepared in accordance with the Model-View-Controller (Eckstein, 2007) design pattern. The Model reads the UML model from Modelio, converts necessary data from class and sequence diagrams to its internal representation and is responsible for performing the algorithms from Section 3. The View generates the dialog windows with results of the automatic FPA in tabular form, warnings, and errors. Both Model and View consists of Java classes. Moreover, the View uses JFace (Eclipse Foundation, 2020) to handle GUI. The task of the Controller is to manage user data and actions. It is based on the context menu commands which are used to start the whole analysis. The Controller is written in XAML (Extensible Application Markup Language) files, which are used for generation of context menu options in Modelio and bind them to proper commands.

As a result, the only input of our plugin is the UML model prepared in Modelio. The output consists of dialog windows with the results of analysis or information about errors. Moreover, the results can be also saved in a CSV file. The overview of the Afpatoo architecture is presented in Figure 1.

4.2 Input and Output

We had to specify several requirements on the content of the analyzed diagrams. The whole analyzed project needs to be stored in one UML package. Afpatoo operates not only on the elements stored in the diagrams, but on the whole package.

Regarding elements of the class diagram, we assume that for every actor on the sequence diagram, there will be corresponding class on the class diagram. Moreover, operations corresponding to the actions performed by the actor have to be contained in some class on the class diagrams.

While counting attributes of the class during the analysis, Afpatoo takes into account not only owned attributes of the given class, but also navigable association ends, attributes of implemented interfaces, and inherited from direct base classes. As the identification of all the ancestors of each class could be time- and resource-consuming due to the limitations of Modelio API, at this moment, the Afpatoo does not take into account information about attributes of other base classes.

Regarding sequence diagrams, the Modelio API does not offer any way to get information about the lifelines covered by the CF, which makes it impossible to detect the case in which messages are sent between the lifelines, some of which are covered by the CF and some of which are not. To overcome this problem, we assume that the CF and all messages contained in it have to be separated from other messages, so that the row ranges of the diagram covered by those two types of messages do not overlap.

Similarly to the assumptions of the algorithm described in Section 3.1, we expect that all vital returns from synchronous calls are shown on the sequence diagrams. Moreover, we assume that only meaningful replies are drawn. Furthermore, to ensure proper identification of reply messages by the Afpatoo, we require that all important returns are described by <<return>> keyword. This approach allows us to simply use the algorithm of Uemura et al. without the need for any other, more complex assumptions.
To calculate FPs correctly, in every case Afpatoo needs information about operation invoked by the given synchronous message and classifier represented by the given lifeline. Lack of the former information would cause that the given message will not be taken into account in the analyzed sequence of messages and, therefore, the results of the analysis may be incomplete. However, this kind of omission does not prevent Afpatoo from performing the analysis, as we believe that the tool should be able to work in as many situations, as possible. In such a case, the UFFs are calculated, but the user is also warned that the results of the analysis may be inaccurate.

When there are some lifelines, to which no classifiers are assigned, the analysis cannot be continued and the only output of the tool is a dialog window with explanation of the error. It is caused by the fact that if we do not know the represented classifier, we have no information on its type. Particularly, we do not know whether it is an actor or not.

Nevertheless, in a typical case, when the input diagrams contain all the necessary data and fulfill the requirements specified in this section, the output consist of one modal dialog window with the results of the analysis. There is also an option to export the results of the analysis into a CSV file.

It is also worth noting that TFs produced by Afpatoo may contain duplicates. It is caused by the fact that the same sequences of messages were present on several simplified sequence diagrams without CFs describing various scenarios (see Section 3.2). Although there may be various points of view on that issue, currently we decided not to remove information about such repeated TFs. In fact, the usefulness of them depends on the purpose for which the FPs are calculated - if they are used, e.g., as a basis for estimation of testing effort, like in (Bluemke and Malanowska, 2020a), it may be worth to consider the given TF several times, as in each case it will have to be tested with different test scenario. Moreover, we believe that in estimation process it is always better to overestimate the result than to underestimate it.

5 EVALUATION ON EXAMPLE

Afpatoo, as a plugin to Modelio (Modeliosoft, 2022), is distributed in the JMDAC files. The only required activity to enable usage of Afpatoo is to add the corresponding JMDAC file as a module used in the given project. Then, the analysis can be started from the context menu of the UML package containing the model.

In addition manual and unit tests, we have evaluated usefulness of the Afpatoo on an exemplary system for payback payments. Unfortunately, we did not have access to any industrial UML models or results of the FPs calculation performed by a human expert, so we could not evaluate our tool on such kind of data.

5.1 Analyzed System

The exemplary system used for Afpatoo evaluation represents a simple web application which allows for buying products and making payments with payback points. There are two main types of users: customers and shop staff. The main functionalities of the system are searching for products to be bought for the collected payback points, adding selected products to the cart, placing an order, and making payments with the payback points. Moreover, there are options for the administrator to change user data and status.

The whole system is described by two class and three sequence diagrams with various combinations of CFs. One of the created class diagrams, representing classes used in ordering products and paying for them, is shown in Figure 2. An exemplary sequence diagram, which presents the process of searching for the product in the shop and adding it to the cart, is depicted in Figure 3.

Figure 2: Exemplary class diagram.

5.2 Results of Manual FPA

We compared manually calculated results of FPA with those obtained using Afpatoo. It is worth noting that both types of analyses were performed on different bases - manual FPA was performed on the description...
of the functional requirements of the system, while the automated FPA was conducted on the basis of UML model of the designed system and the DFs and TFs were identified using the algorithms from the literature, not the intuition of the analyst.

Based on the description of functional requirements of the exemplary system, 5 DFs and 9 TFs were identified. As the system manages all the data on its own and does not exchange data with any external system, all recognized DFs were treated as ILFs. The values of RET (predicted number of records) and DET (estimated number of fields in the records) parameters, and the resulting complexities of DFs, are presented in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Name of DF</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>RET</th>
<th>DET</th>
<th>Complexity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DF1</td>
<td>Users</td>
<td>ILF</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DF2</td>
<td>Products</td>
<td>ILF</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DF3</td>
<td>Shopping carts</td>
<td>ILF</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DF4</td>
<td>Orders</td>
<td>ILF</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DF5</td>
<td>Payments</td>
<td>ILF</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Manual analysis resulted in identification of 6 EIs and 3 EQs. Details of the recognized TFs are shown in Table 2. Similarly as DFs, majority of identified TFs were recognized as low-complex, including all detected EQs. However, TF6 was assigned high, and TF8 - average complexity.

In total, the DFs recognized during manual analysis are assigned 35 UFPs. TFs present in the exemplary system are responsible, in turn, for 31 UFPs. The whole exemplary system is assigned 66 UFPs.

5.3 Results Obtained Using Afpatoo

Afpatoo identified 7 DFs (2 ILFs and 5 EIFs) and 28 TFs (4 EIs, 24 EOs and 0 EQs) in the model from Section 5.1. DFs were assigned 39 UFPs. TFs are responsible for 92 UFPs. Accordingly, calculated functional size of the whole exemplary system is equal to 131 UFPs. Complexity of all identified DFs and TFs was evaluated to low. According to (Calderi et al., 1998; Cantone et al., 2004), the low complexity of identified FPA entities is a common observation in different approaches based on object-oriented specifications.

As mentioned earlier, the results produced by Afpatoo contain duplicates of identified TFs. After elimination of the repeated operations, there are 11 unique TFs left, including 2 EIs and 9 EOs. Sum of the UFPs for them is 42, meaning that in such a case, the total number of UFPs for the system is equal to 81. The detailed results after elimination of replicated TFs are shown in Table 3, which also presents the mapping of the TFs automatically detected by Afpatoo to the TFs identified in manual FPA.

5.4 Discussion

The set of identified DFs is quite similar for both manual analysis and the one performed by Afpatoo. Automatic analysis revealed 2 more DFs than the manual one. Of those two additional DFs, one is related to CartItem class, which has not been identified as a separate entity during the manual analysis. The other corresponds to PaybackPaymentSystem class, representing the user interface. However, it is worth noting that the types of the DFs differ between two methods of calculation. Unlike in the manual analysis, the automatic FPA treated some of the DFs as EIFs. The complexity of all DFs is low in both cases.

Regarding TFs, the observations depend on whether we consider results with or without duplicated operations. In the first case, there is obviously quite a big difference in the number of obtained TFs. As mentioned earlier, for some use cases, this approach may be useful, as it allows to avoid underestimations. There are, however, some applications, which would require precise values of FPs and for which the duplicates of TFs should be removed before further calculations. As can be seen in Table 3, once we consider only unique TFs, the set of identified operations is quite similar to what was discovered during manual analysis. There are only two TFs not recognized before, namely confirmAddressAndPrice and notifyOnUserDataChangeRequest. The reason for that is the fact that manual analysis is based on the initial specification of requirements, while the automatic one is performed on the actual UML model.

Another remarkable differences are the identified types of TFs. First, manual analysis treated some of them as EQs, while Afpatoo perceived them as EOs.
Table 2: TFs identified in manual FPA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Name of TF</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>FTR</th>
<th>DET</th>
<th>Complexity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TF1</td>
<td>Change user data</td>
<td>EI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TF2</td>
<td>Change user status</td>
<td>EI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TF3</td>
<td>Search for products</td>
<td>EQ</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TF4</td>
<td>Display product details</td>
<td>EQ</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TF5</td>
<td>Add product to cart</td>
<td>EI</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TF6</td>
<td>Order products</td>
<td>EI</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TF7</td>
<td>Cancel order</td>
<td>EI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TF8</td>
<td>Realize payment</td>
<td>EI</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TF9</td>
<td>Confirm order realization</td>
<td>EQ</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: TFs identified by Afpatoo after removal of duplicates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of method mapped to TF</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>FTR</th>
<th>DET</th>
<th>Complexity</th>
<th>Corresponds to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>changeUserEmail</td>
<td>EO</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>TF1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>changeUserAccountStatus</td>
<td>EO</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>TF2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>searchInventory</td>
<td>EO</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>TF3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viewItemDescriptions</td>
<td>EI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>TF4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>addItemToCart</td>
<td>EI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>TF5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>startCheckoutProcess</td>
<td>EO</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>TF6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confirmAddressAndPrice</td>
<td>EO</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cancelCheckout</td>
<td>EO</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>TF7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>realisePayment</td>
<td>EO</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>TF8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>getOrderDetails</td>
<td>EO</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>TF9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>notifyOnUserDataChangeRequest</td>
<td>EO</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This may be caused by the fact that although the operation does not perform any complicated calculation (and should not be seen as an EO), the algorithm rules are unable to detect that difference. Second, some of TFs were identified as EI in manual analysis, but Afpatoo treated them as EOs. Again, this difference results from the used algorithm, as its rules determine the TF type. The complexities of identified TFs are quite similar in both cases - however, manual analysis detected two TFs with non-low complexity, on the contrary to automatic analysis.

As can be seen, although the sets of DFs and TFs and their complexities determined by Afpatoo are comparable with those recognized in manual analysis, there are differences in the types of DFs and TFs, as well as in the value of their parameters. It may require further modifications of the original algorithm proposed by (Uemura et al., 1999; Uemura et al., 2001). Depending on the application of the approach, it may be also worth considering removal of duplicated TFs.

Some threats to validity of our study can result from the method and number of conducted experiments. Manual analysis may be biased due to the fact that it was performed by the authors themselves, as no FPA experts were available. Moreover, more tests on bigger and industrial UML models are needed.

6 CONCLUSIONS

Although there have been several attempts to transform UML models into FPs, to the best of our knowledge, there are no tools which support the mapping in a fully automatic way. Although some researchers argue that complete automatization of FPA on the basis of the UML model is impossible due to its various interpretations, we believe that even if the results obtained by a fully automatic tool are not always accurate, they can be used for estimations of the project size. Such estimations may need to be performed for various purposes - either to use them in conjunction with other algorithms or to facilitate maintenance of legacy systems or create dataset of historical data using reverse engineering methods.

To fill this gap, we have presented Afpatoo (Zabuski, 2022), a tool which calculates UFPs on the basis of class and sequence diagrams. It is based on two algorithms described in the literature (Uemura et al., 1999; Uemura et al., 2001; Bluemke and Malanowska, 2020b; Malanowska, 2019) and implemented as a plugin to Modelio (Modeliosoft, 2022). Selection of the main algorithm is based on the fact that it is the only identified method allowing for complete automatization of the FPA. Supplementary al-
Algorithm used to adjust the main one to the current UML standard is also chosen. Several modifications of those original approaches are also presented. Evaluation of the tool on the exemplary system shows that although the results obtained from manual and automatic analysis vary and some amendments may be required, it allows to detect DFs and TFs and estimate their complexity correctly.

Although the tool is already promising, there are several ways to improve it. First, adaptation of the approach to the rest of newer elements of the sequence diagrams needs to be defined. Evaluation on the real-world industrial projects of various sizes, as well as the comparison of the results with those calculated by an FPA specialist, would be also a great benefit. Particularly, verification on the bigger number of commercial projects, including large ones, and decision about potential modifications of the used algorithms should be performed in the future.

REFERENCES


