

JITTA

JOURNAL OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY THEORY AND APPLICATION

NEW CONTENT, NEW FORM

Applying coordination theory to avoid collisions

Peer-2-peer networks

Requirements elicitation

Genre analysis

Practical theory

KEN PEFFERS, University of Nevada Las Vegas

MIS Department, 4505 Maryland Pkwy, Las Vegas, NV 89154-6034

Email: k@peffers.com, Fax: +1 603 696 1289, URL: <http://peffers.com>

This issue breaks new ground for IS research in two ways, consistent with JITTA's explicit objective to publish exciting new research quickly. The first paper (Crowston 2003) introduces a new stream of research for the IS discipline with an investigation of collision avoidance in transportation. The remaining three papers are novel in the way that they present research.

IS researchers have continuously tested the boundaries of our discipline when we have found new problems, new technologies, and new environments to investigate. In the issue's lead article, Crowston (2003) opens up a new stream of research, using coordination theory to investigate collision avoidance among transportation vehicles. He investigates collision avoidance in four modes of transportation, automobile, trains, ships, and aircraft, identifying the coordination mechanisms and procedures in use for each mode. He analyzes each mode to identify possible coordination mechanisms that might be exploited, particularly when supported by advanced information technology. This research has the potential to segue a new stream of research in IS to support the coordination of transportation vehicles, which, in turn, may have the potential to spur innovative use of IT applied to transportation.

The next three papers showcase an innovative publication form, the "state of research review (SORR)". SORR papers are intended to review current efforts in a focused stream of IS research to call attention to important streams long before the results of those streams is presented in traditional IS research journals, often two years or more, on average, later. SORR articles can clearly increase the velocity of the research life cycle in IS, critical for a discipline driven by technological and social change and challenges to its applicability. They may help potential research collaborators to find each other early in the research process. They may raise interest among researchers in new research streams, thus encouraging involvement.

Krishnan, Smith, and Telang (2003) review the nascent research about the economics of peer-to-peer (P2P) networks to identify current and potential research in this area. They start with an overview of the architecture of the P2P network and its adoption, then they proceed with an analysis of its economic characteristics, highlighting research presented at the 2003 Workshop on the Economics of Peer-to-Peer Networks at the University of California at Berkeley. Finally, they use this research to discuss areas of potential research in this stream.

Tuunanen (2003) reviews research about IS requirements elicitation for wide audience end users, e.g., end users who are outside the boundaries of the firm or who are hard to identify because they are not yet users. He develops a framework to analyze concepts for such elicitation that incorporates reach (the extent to which methods based on the concept can include various user types) and communication (the level and types of interaction between users and developers). He uses this framework to analyze current concepts, including group elicitation, contextual, and cognitive techniques. He concludes with a call for researchers to join in investigating an important and under researched area of IS.

Firth and Lawrence (2003) review the IS literature around the use of genre analysis. They categorize genre analysis in IS research in terms of the type of systems analyzed, the communication being analyzed, the purpose of genre analysis in the research, the insights gained, and its impact. They attempt to show why genre analysis is useful for academic and

practitioner research. Finally, they advocate future research. The paper includes some interesting discussion about how genre analysis helps to provide an identity for the IS discipline by helping us to understand the IT artifacts.

Also in this issue is a call for papers (Peffers 2003) for an interesting special JITTA issue on the conjecture that “there is nothing so practical as a good theory,” to be edited by former JITTA senior editor Mike Metcalfe. We are very happy that Prof. Metcalfe can contribute to JITTA with this new special issue.

Antony Bryant, Professor of Informatics, Leeds Metropolitan University, School of Information Management, joins our group of senior editors in this issue as the senior editor for (Firth and Lawrence 2003). Professor Bryant is a past JITTA author (Bryant 2002a, 2002b). We feel very privileged to have him working with us and hope to be able to send him many papers to edit.

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