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Integration of UML in Human Factors Analysis for Safety of a medical robot for tele-echography

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Abstract—For new robot applications, as medical robots, safety has become a major concern. The human sharing the working area with the robot led to integrate the field of human factors in the development. Hence, the human component has to be integrated in the early steps of the development process. Regards to the complexity of today’s robotic application, and to the requirements of a teamwork, we choose UML as the language. This paper focuses on the UML modeling contribution to the human factors analysis of a medical robot. A first section presents the function allocation and task analysis step, and a second section deals with human error. Each section is illustrated by a case study of a system for robotic tele-echography (ultrasound scan examination).

I. MOTIVATIONS

Today, as many new application areas for robotic systems emerge, including medical robots, safety is becoming critical [5]. Robots can have a close interaction with patients and medical specialists. In this context, for medical robots as Robodoc (ISS, Inc., USA), AESOP (Computer Motion, Inc., USA), or daVinci (Intuitive Surgical, Inc., USA), safety is the essential requirement for commercialization [1]. This concept, defined for industrial robots as the prevention of damage to the robot itself and its environment, and particularly the human component [6], can now be defined as the property of a medical robot to be "free from unacceptable risk" [10]. Therefore it’s necessary to reduce the risk to an acceptable level with a complete risk management activity [11]. The integration of human factors in this activity is still in work [8], [9]. But it’s obvious that the interaction between the human and the technology in a medical robotic system, plays a major role in safety. Therefore, the human component have to be integrated at the early stages of the development process.

Those activities are based on a system model. Ideally, the system definition is modeled formally, but the use of formal methods in industrial development of safe systems is still rare. A significant barrier is that many formal languages and formal analysis techniques are unfamiliar and difficult to understand and to apply for engineers. Developers must also integrate medical specialists requirements, and explain them the whole system definition. For these reasons, existing techniques must be considered. UML (Unified Modeling Language) notation fulfill these

claims, and is now a standard in system and software engineering. It’s also well adapted to robotic systems [4].

In scope of the TER project [22], a system for robotic tele-echography, we have studied the relationships between the main activities of a human factors analysis and a system definition in UML. Human factors as an overall discipline covers a wide range of areas related to integration of humans within work systems. We focus on those that are core to human factors, and that have an important relation with system definition and safety. A first step is to analyze tasks and determine function allocation which are two main activities of human factors engineering. A second step concerns the analysis of human error which is the major activity of human reliability assessment.

Each section is illustrated by a case study of a system for Robotic Tele-Echography (TER)[22]. TER is a tele-robotic system designed and developed by a French consortium composed of universities, hospitals and industrial companies. The slave robot is tele-operated by an expert clinician who remotely performs the ultrasound scan examination. A virtual probe is mounted on the master interface device. The real probe is placed on the slave robot end-effector. We will focus on the computer control system of the slave site, where safety is critical.

II. FUNCTION ALLOCATION AND TASK ANALYSIS

The function allocation aims at determining the distribution of work between human actors and machines. It is particularly important to define non ambiguous and consistent tasks for humans who are using the robot. Task analysis is conducted to identify the details of specified tasks, including the required knowledge, skills, attitudes, and personal characteristics required for successful task performance.

These activities are usually performed with different algorithms. The allocation should be iterative and can follow algorithms as in [14, pp.231-236], [2] and [16]. Through this description of function allocation, modeling furnish basis for task analysis. One of the difficulties is to model those allocations and to integrate them to system modeling. The purpose of this paper is not to present algorithms for those activities, but to analyze how

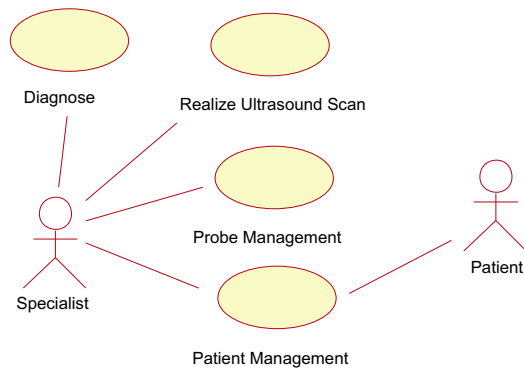


Fig. 1. Use case diagram: global view of ultrasound scan examination

UML help in modeling the specification of the function allocation and the definition of task analysis.

A. General Scenario

The first step is to describe the general scenario of an usual ultrasound scan examination. The UML *use case diagram* in figure 1 presents the main use cases during this task. This diagram belongs to the *business modeling* (as defined in [12]). The business is here the real ultrasound scan examination. Business modeling permits to increase the understanding of the business and facilitate communication about the business [7], particularly between engineers and doctors. Based on this diagram, the TER system is later integrated in the requirement modeling in the next diagrams. In the TER project, experts have studied the ultrasound scan examination and particularly the use case *Realize Ultrasound Scan*, to determine all the interactions between the doctor manipulating the probe, and the patient (particularly pressures and movements on the patient's body which are critical for safety). This leads to the choice of a parallel robot structure (see figure 2) which is different to a serial robot structure (like a robot arm). The main safety criteria was to limit the work envelope and limit the collisions (which are well-known with robot arms). The difficulty of modeling the working area (i.e. the patient's body), leads to the choice of a compliant slave robot, with an actuation by intrinsically compliant artificial muscles [21]. The other use cases have also been studied to determine the architecture of the TER system. For example, the use case *Patient Management*, contains scenarios of communication between the patient and the medical expert which are essential. This led to choose a bi-directionally videoconference subsystem. The other business that will be integrated is the use of a robot. This led to the generic use case diagram on figure 3. A new actor is specified on this diagram: the *Equipment Servicer*, who is in charge of the *Robot Management* and involved in the task achievement.

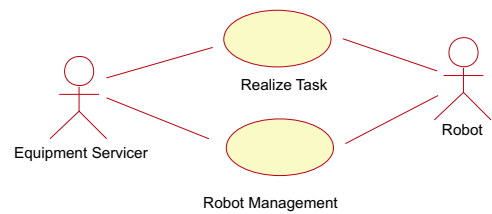


Fig. 3. Use case diagram of a generic robot system

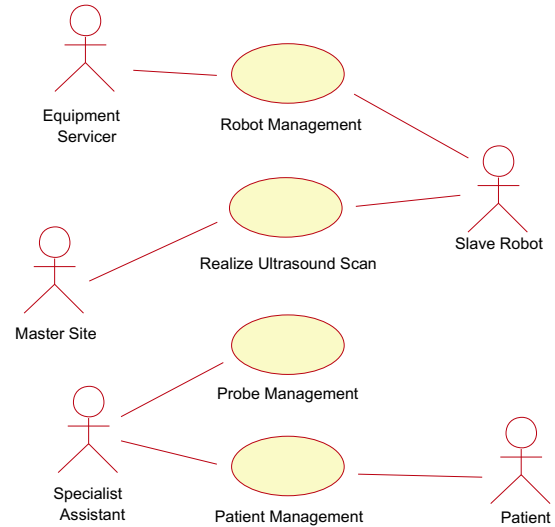


Fig. 4. Use case diagram of the TER slave site

B. From actual echography to robotic echography

An overview of the TER system is presented on figure 2. This led to use and modify specifications of previous use cases. Indeed, based on the use case diagrams of figure 3 and figure 1, we model the slave site on figure 4. On this diagram new actors are identified. First UML diagrams (use case and object diagrams) show all the interactions between *actors* and the system, but also between *actors* themselves. An *actor* characterizes an outside user or related set of users who interact with the system [3]. It is possible for an *actor* to be a human user (like in figure 1) or an external system. This is really useful in socio-technical systems, and particularly in the TER project. Indeed, such a modeling allows the interactions to be handled for safety studies. We choose to represent two external systems as actors: the *Master Site* and the *Robot*. The *Master Site* replaces the actor *Specialist* (see figure 1) who is in the charge of realizing the examination. It is important to observe that the use case *Diagnose* has also disappeared.

This diagram shows a first allocation of tasks between actors according to the medical domain. Tasks can be described with *collaboration or sequence diagrams* for each use case. However, on this diagram, the boundaries of the computer control system are not defined. We defined

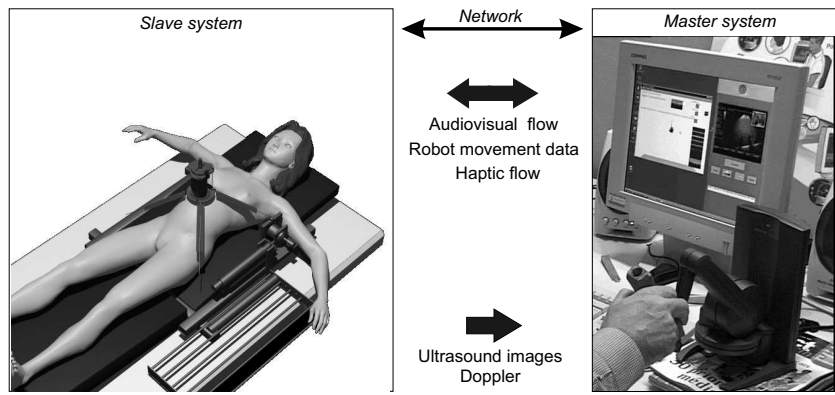


Fig. 2. TER system overview

the *TER Control System* as all the machine parts (computer control system, actuators, sensors, monitors, etc.) but without the physical structure of the robot. In order to specify requirements, it is important to define whether each use case belongs to the system or not. For example, the use case *Robot Management* includes tasks such as maintenance operations. This fault prevention operation (preventive maintenance) can be entirely independent of the TER system or may be assisted by the system (for example by monitoring the use time of critical units). *Patient Management* is a set of scenarios that can be clean patient, position patient, or monitor patient during operation. These use cases imply a collaboration between cognitive ergonomists, medical specialists and requirement engineers to determine, for each task, how the system can help the actors to perform the task, make decisions, diagnose or act. Again the models have to be understood by all the participants of the development process (analysts, designers, etc.).

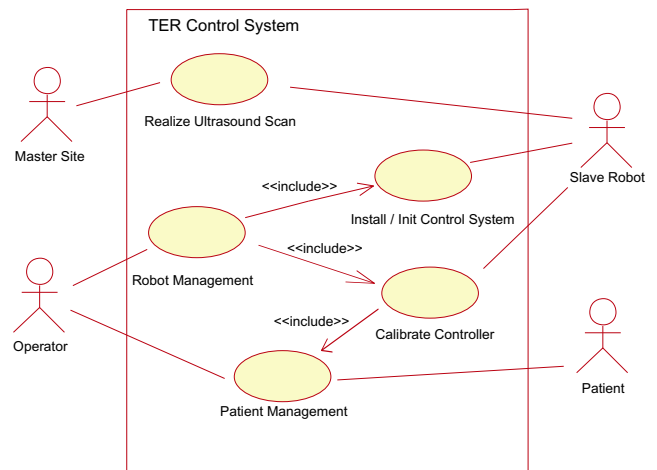


Fig. 5. Use case diagram with *Control System* boundaries

C. TER Control System boundaries

The determination of the system boundaries is a fundamental step of requirements analysis, and is entirely linked with the definition of human tasks. In this step, it should be determined which of the requirements are system requirements, which are requirements for the operational processes associated with the system and which requirements should be outside the scope of the system [20]. Based on figure 4, we have chosen use cases that belong to the computer control system for the TER slave robot. Figure 5 models the computer control system use cases where a new actor is specified in the class diagram presented in figure 6: *Operator* inherits from the *Equipment Servicer* and the *Specialist Assistant*. Some previous use cases as *Visioconference Management* (not shown for readability) and *Probe Management* have been removed from this use case diagram (figure 5) because they don't belong to or have any interaction with the computer control system.

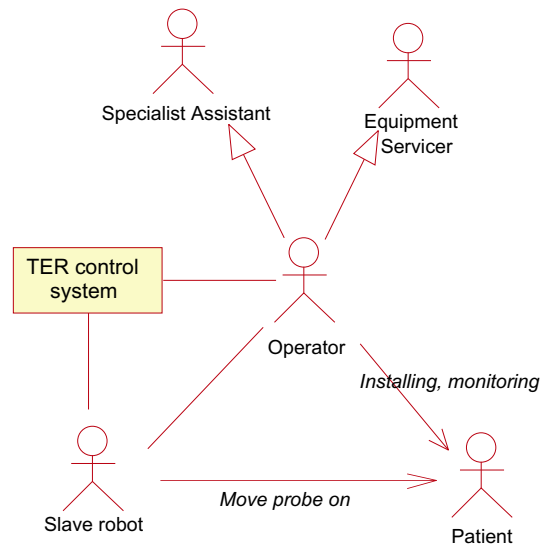


Fig. 6. Class diagram in a business modeling

On sequence diagram presented in figure 7, the main scenario of the installation of the whole system is presented. We present this diagram because most of the interactions between human and technology appear during this scenario (during the use case *Realize ultrasound scan*, human tasks are less numerous). Such diagram help in describe tasks that humans have to do. For instance the *Operator* have to *Prepare Patient*, which can be extend in position the patient, put ultrasound scan gel on patient's body, give information to the patient, monitor the patient, etc. Therefore, this diagram and some refinements help in represents all the tasks.

This notation of tasks is also useful to determine an order of actions, which can be essential for safety. Indeed, the sequence of actions presented on figure 7 have been determined according to functional requirements and safety requirements. For instance, *Connection with master site* have been placed before all the installation procedures in order to minimize the waiting time (connection can be long) of the patient with the robot placed on her/his body (that can create a psychological trouble). Another example is the action *Set air pressure in artificial muscles* coming after all installations and calibrations. Without any air pressure in artificial muscles, the robot system is safe and all the installations and checks can be done safely.

On the same diagram it is also important to study interlocks between tasks. The calibration of the controller depends on the patient corpulence, and this factor influence also the robot settings (for example the length of the cables connected from muscles to the slave robot, see figure 2). Hence, it is important to calibrate the controller, first according to the patient body, and then to the robot settings. The order of those actions presented with sequence diagram is easily readable by non expert modeling.

These models which are essential in a safety critical project, can directly be used for different safety-dependent tasks: writing of a user-guide (using the sequence diagrams), specification and design of the Human-Machine Interface (HMI) and furnish models for the specification of the system. It is important to note that in such robot systems, HMI includes the robot-human interface (control panels, teach pendant, computers, etc.) but also the robot itself (in the TER project the slave robot is always in contact with the patient's body).

III. HUMAN ERROR ANALYSIS

The other main activity of a human factors study, is the analysis of *human error*: a failure of a human to do a specified action, which results in undesirable outcomes. The aim of this step is to reduce the undesirable actions, their propagation and their outcomes. It leads to the specification of new requirements, re-design and documentation production. The complexity of human error

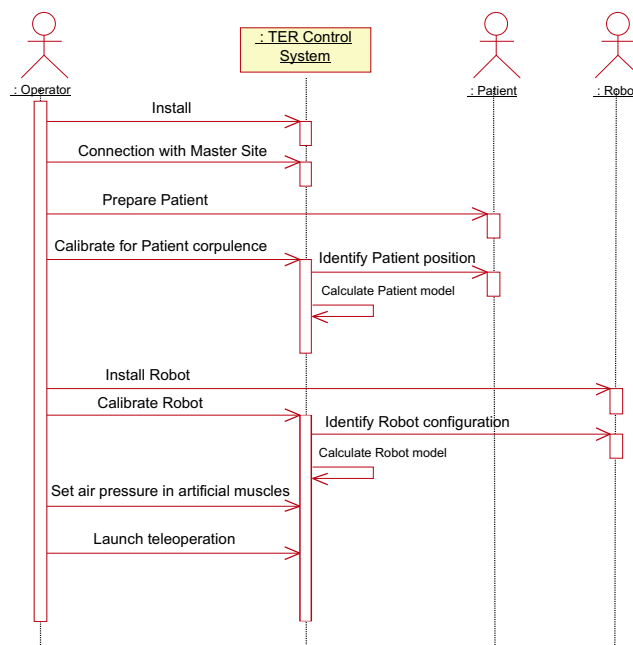


Fig. 7. Sequence diagram of installation of the whole system

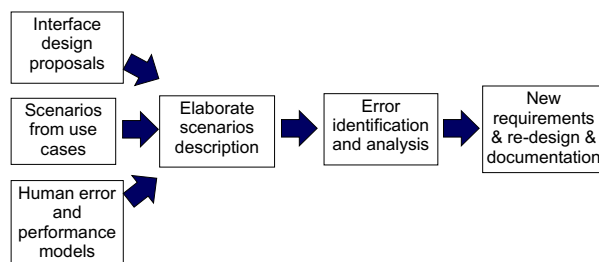


Fig. 8. Structure of human error analysis method

classification and cognitive theory [18] usually lead to the use of design checklists and guidelines [15]. Human error analysis methods are also often based on experimentation, simulation, and on *human reliability analysis* [13]. But for innovating projects, it is really difficult to get information on experience, incident and accident reports. Moreover, guidelines are not sufficient for innovative projects as medical robots [23]. For instance, we found nothing on medical robots. Thus, we had to develop our own accident scenarios. We notice that a human error is linked with a use case because it appears during a scenario of use. So the description of the error can be modeled with a sequence diagram. It is a scenario of a use case with an erroneous *message* generated by a human actor. Then, a number of models, theories and collections of empirical data about human performance and human error can be useful in deciding which scenarios it will be important to analyze [19]. This analysis process is presented in figure 8 adapted from THEA [17], a method for human error analysis.

A first analysis can be based on the business models and

then on the requirement models (as explained previously). The business modeling leads to identify errors linked with social interaction whereas the requirement modeling identifies errors during the use of the system, directly linked with human-machine interfaces. For instance, based on the sequence diagram in figure 7, different errors can be identified:

- Omission, non execution of an expected action: the operator forget to launch *Connection with master site*
- Realization error:
 - Bad execution of an expected action: the operator place the patient in a wrong position
 - Execution of an action at a wrong instant: the operator do the *Set the air pressure in artificial muscles* before *position patient*
 - Execution of several actions in a wrong sequence: the operator can change the order of the installation and calibration.
- Unknown or unplanned actions: the patient try to catch the robot.

For each identified error it is possible to describe the scenario with a sequence diagram but also to describe effects and to present corrective measures (interlocks, checks, use modification, etc.). In this paper we don't present a sequence diagram for an error analysis, because figure 7 need to be refined in order to show how an error can change an actor or an object state. For instance, a bad calibration of the patient will generate a wrong *patient model*, that can be a software component included in the TER Control System. More refined diagrams can then present how a wrong patient model can be a source of risk for patient.

Later, for each HMI proposal, all the potential errors have to be analyzed in the same way. In the TER project, the operator is in charge of calibrating the robot controller in order to calculate robot and patient models (see figure 7). The proposal interface for this scenario is the use of a 3-D position sensor manipulated by the operator. The use of such an interface can produce errors. Based on the sequence diagram, we can determine for each message how it is possible to reduce errors (supervision of the system and validation of the calculated models) and also produce a documentation for the procedure. For the TER system, there are three main HMI on the slave site: a computer, a power control panel and the robot itself. The human error analysis has to consider how the human can fail in interacting with those HMI during a use case scenario. For example, it is important to identify what will happen if the operator pushes the wrong button during a use case. Again, this implies the use of sequence diagrams. In order to identify scenarios and system responses to the errors, it is useful to use a *state diagram* (Harel's statecharts) to model the external black box behavior

to indicate in which state the system is when the error happens. A state diagram can also be useful to identify the effects of a human error on the system. In order to be concise we do not present the state diagram which require place and explanation for the semantic.

As presented here, it is possible to describe human error effects on system with sequence diagrams. But today there isn't any tools to integrate errors in the UML models, the description remains qualitative. Moreover, during requirements analysis, models are not enough refined to identify the error propagation from humans to computer control system. This can be done later, and particularly during risk management activities. Indeed during risk analysis, failures and their effects are analyzed. And it is possible to integrate human errors in techniques as Failure Modes Effects and Critically Analysis and Fault Tree Analysis.

IV. CONCLUSION

Medical robots belong to safety-critical systems, and human factors studies are a major concern during safety analysis of such systems. In order to guarantee consistency of information between the different entities (engineers, doctors, etc.) throughout the development process and particularly during the requirements analysis, we proposed to use the object-oriented language UML.

Throughout the human factors analysis two major activities can be identified. The power of UML in modeling socio-technical systems, and the different diagrams, used in the business modeling and the requirement modeling, help to model function allocation and contribute to the task analysis. We also use those models to identify and analyze human errors. This point needs to be further developed, especially for innovations where it is difficult to apply historical data or experience. This human factors study have mainly been performed during the requirements specification. Moreover in an iterative development process, this study have been updated several times and at different steps of the development process.

A further work concerns the risk management. This analysis, widely used in different safety-critical domains, and one of the essential requirements for certification, is based on models of the system. Analytical methods, like Failure Modes Effects and Critically Analysis and Fault Tree Analysis can be combined and are today widely used in robotic and medical field. Studies have to be held to highlight relationships between UML notation, FMECA tables and FTA trees. We are now combining those techniques in the TER project.

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