


Engineering Artifacts for Multi-Agent Systems

(Version 2)



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Van Paranak

- **Scientific Fellow, ERIM.**
- **Senior technical direction of marketing initiatives and projects**
- **Developed and executed a strategy for coherent identification, development, and marketing of ERIM tools**
- **Responsible for marketing to the research community.**
- **www.erim.org/~van/**



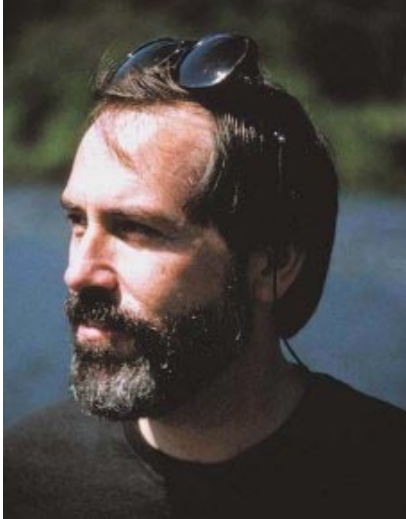
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James Odell

- **Industrial Consultant in OO, Agents, and Complex systems**
- **Based in Ann Arbor, MI**
- **Leadership role in OMG:**
 - **Co-Chair of Object Analysis and Design Task Force (source of UML)**
 - **Co-Chair of Agents Working Group**
- **www.jamesodell.com**



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Overview

- **Why Engineering Artifacts?**
- **OO Artifacts for MAS Development**
- **Toward Agent-Specific Artifacts**

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Industry vs. Research

	Academy	Industry
Scope	One person, 1-3 years (Ph.D. project)	100's of person-years
Skills	Latest techniques Reward for <i>innovation</i>	General SWE Reward for <i>control</i>
Success	Novelty; peer review	Satisfy specifications

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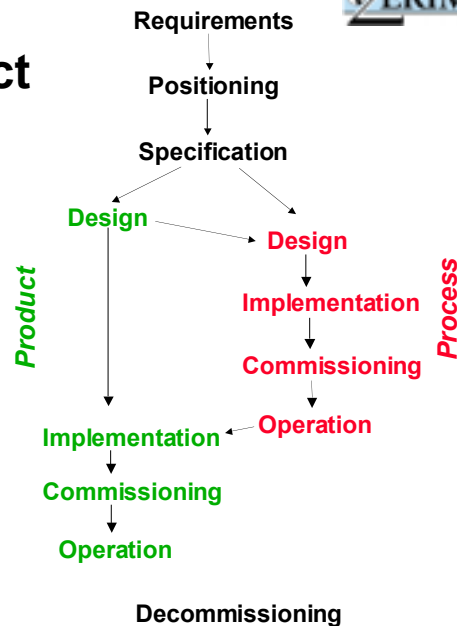
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Scope: Life Cycle Project Management


- Each stage may involve different people with different skills, perspectives, and objectives.
- Artifacts provide clean interfaces between stages.



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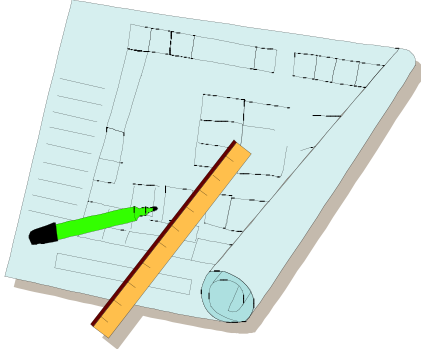
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Skills:

Artifacts capture “best practice”

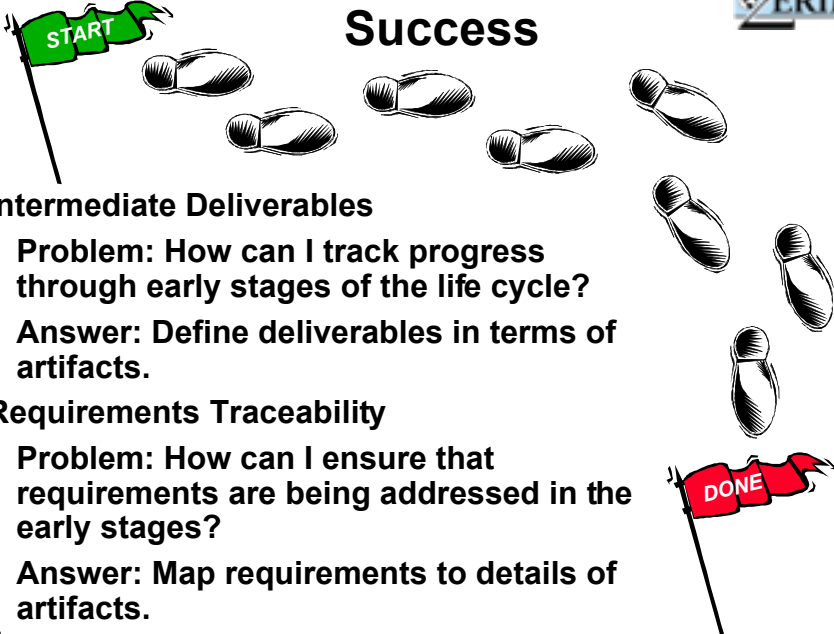


- What inputs from previous stages do I need to consider?
- What decisions do I need to make?
- How do these decisions depend on one another?

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Success



Intermediate Deliverables

- Problem: How can I track progress through early stages of the life cycle?
- Answer: Define deliverables in terms of artifacts.

Requirements Traceability

- Problem: How can I ensure that requirements are being addressed in the early stages?
- Answer: Map requirements to details of artifacts.

3+3
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Overview

- Why Engineering Artifacts?
- **OO Artifacts for MAS Development**
 - **Agent = Object++**
 - **So start with proven OO methods**
- Toward Agent-Specific Artifacts

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Spreading Localization

	Machine Language	Structured Programming	Object-Oriented Programming	Agent-Oriented Programming
How does a unit behave? (Code)	Diffuse	Focused	Focused	Focused
What does a unit do when it runs? (State)	External	External	Internal	Internal
When does a unit run?	External	External (called)	External (message)	Internal (rules; goals)

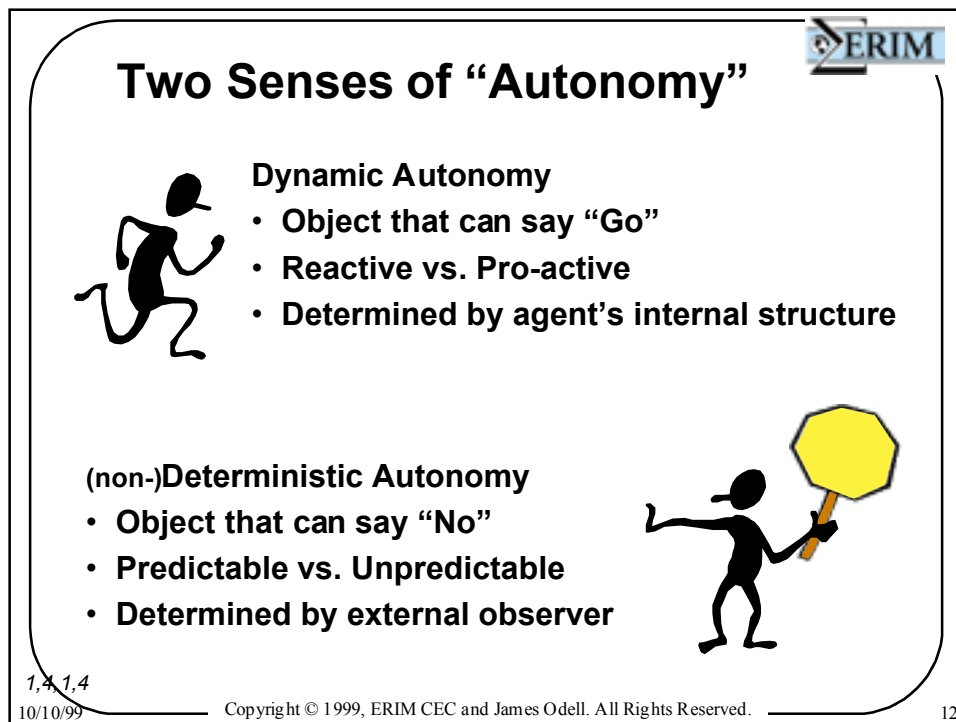
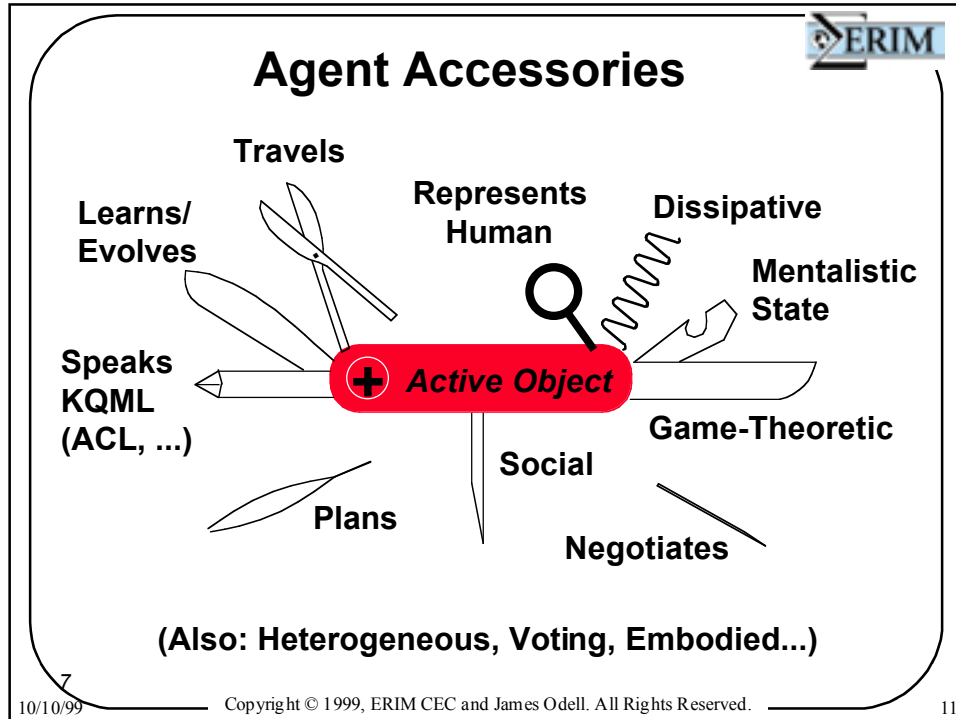
Agents are:

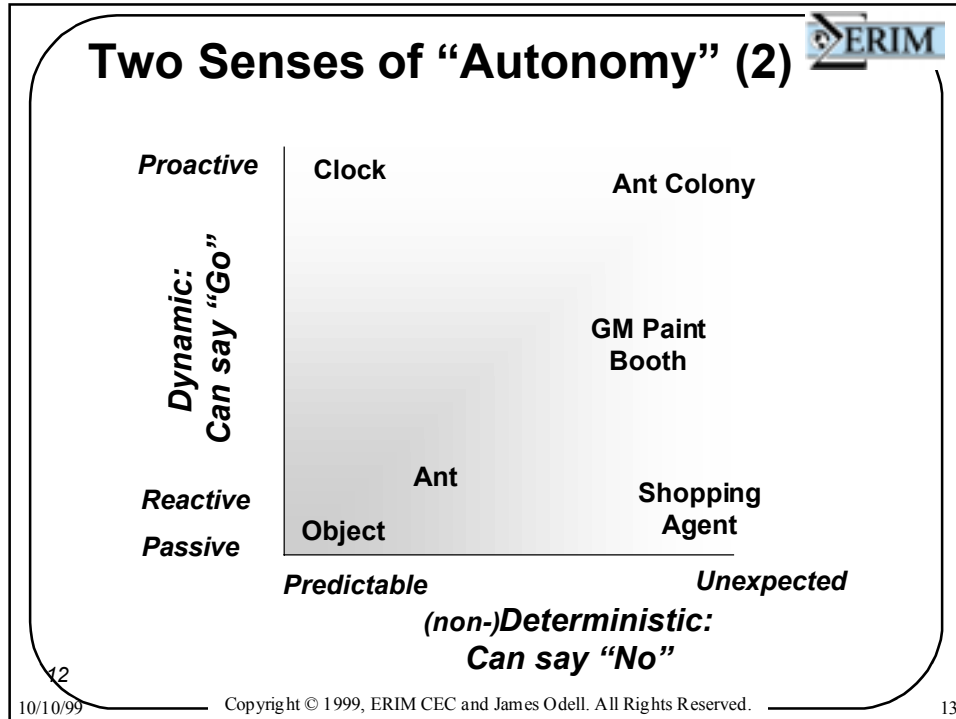
- **Objects with Initiative**
- **Objects with Attitude**
- **Pro-Active Objects**
- **Objects++**
- **Objects on Steroids**
- **Objects that can say “No” (or “Go”)**

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Key OO Concepts in the Context of Agents

Objects	Agents
Class	Species, Roles
Message	Assertion, Query, Command, State change, Event
Attribute	State, Beliefs, Goals, Second-Order Knowledge
Method	Plans, Capabilities, Rules, Services, Responsibilities

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OO Concepts: Class

- **Class defined by static identity**
- **Roles defined by patterns of interaction**
- **Example: a company agent in a supply chain may assume different roles as**
 - Purchaser of supplies
 - Vendor of finished products
 - Employer of workers
 - Football for government regulatory agencies

Class	Role
One per object	Many per agent
Immutable	Mutable
Focus on Implementation	Focus on Function

7+1

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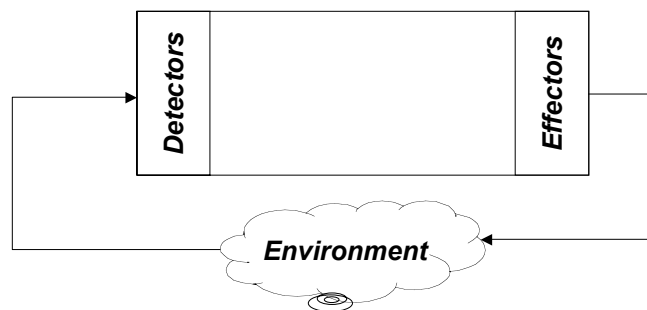
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OO Concepts: Message

- **OO: <Object, method, parameters>**
- **Agent:**
 - Any change in the environment that the agent is equipped to detect.
 - At the heart of *Dynamic Autonomy*




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OO Concepts: Attributes

- **OO:**
 - Internal state variables.
 - “Variable” ↔ The mutable part of an object’s code.
- **Agents: Much more is “mutable”**
 - Beliefs about the agent and the external world
 - » Can include beliefs about agent capabilities (“methods”)
 - Desires about later states
 - Intentions (plans) for getting from here to there
 - At the heart of Deterministic Autonomy

<i>OO:</i> Attributes	<i>Agents:</i> Beliefs, Desires
↑ Rules ↓	
Methods	Intentions

3+5+1
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OO Concepts: Methods (1)

Subroutine < Method < Service < Responsibility

- **Method = Subroutine + Polymorphism**
- **Service = Method + Discretion (Deterministic Autonomy; “Can say No”)**
- **Responsibility includes**
 - Services (initiated by requests other agents)
 - Responses to environmental changes
 - Self-initiated activity (Dynamic Autonomy; “Can say Go”)

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OO Concepts: Methods (2) Agent Capabilities

Internal	What I know how to do	Psychology
External	Laws of Nature	Physics
Both	Resources at my disposal	Economics

Implemented with

- Subroutines
- Rules
- Constraints
- ...

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Unified Modeling Language: A Proven Language for OO Artifacts

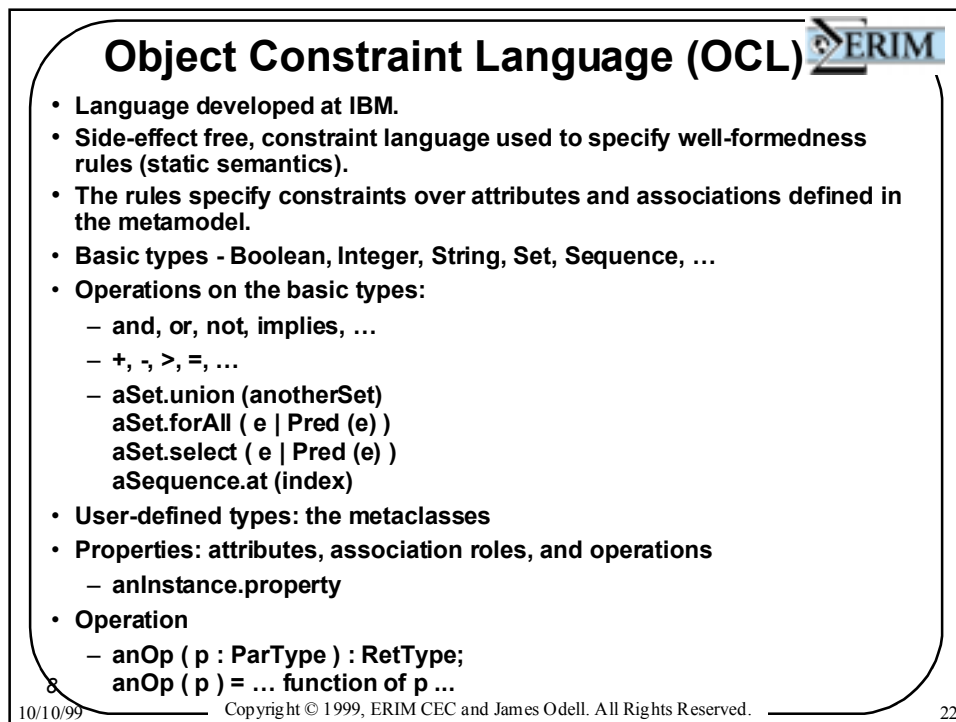
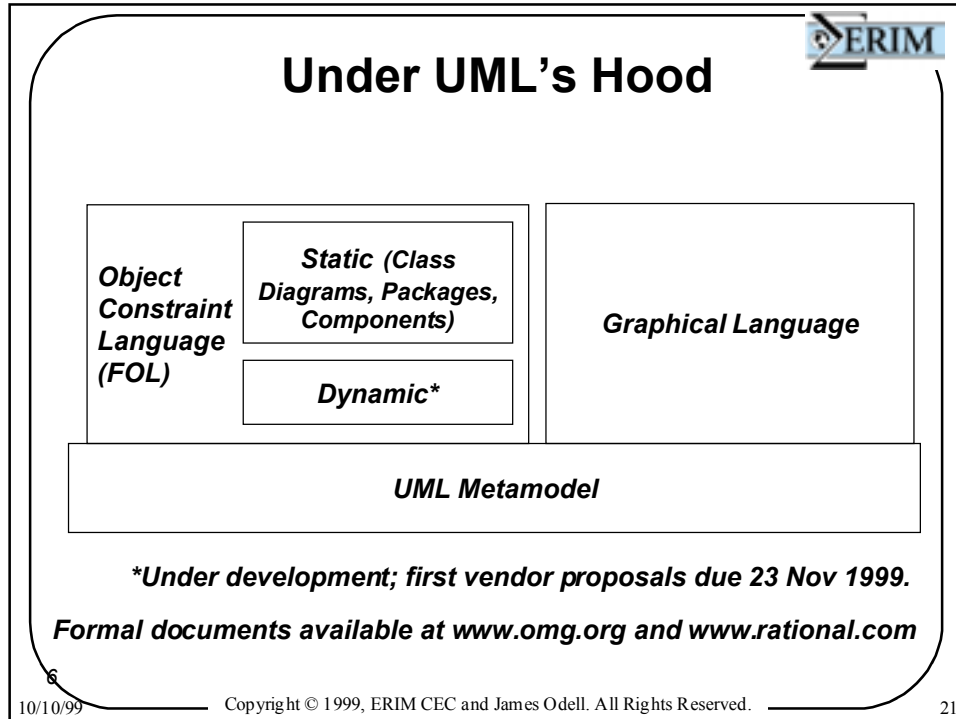
Integration and rationalization of methods promoted
by a number of OO gurus


- Booch
- Rumbaugh
- Jacobson
- Odell
- ...

Developed through OMG process

**NB: a good example of a standard *following*
technology rather than *preceding* it.**

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OCL Examples

Association

[1] The **AssociationRoles** must have a unique name within the **Association**.

self.allRoles.forAll(r1, r2 | r1.name = r2.name **implies** r1 = r2) (e.g., can't be reflexive: "spouse" can't be both association role and opposite association role for same association)

[2] At most one role in a given association may be an aggregation.

self.allRoles.select(aggregation <> none).size <= 1


Additional Operations

[3] The operation *allRoles* results in the set of all roles of the **Association**.

allRoles : Set(AssociationRole);
allRoles = self.role

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Warmer, Jos and Anneke Kleppe, *The Object Constraint Language*, Addison-Wesley, 1999.
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UML Resources

- Metamodel and Object Constraint Language
- Static Diagrams**
 - Class diagrams
 - Packages
 - Component diagrams
- Dynamic Diagrams
 - Statechart
 - Collaboration diagrams
 - Sequence diagrams
 - Activity diagrams
 - Deployment diagrams
 - Use Case diagrams

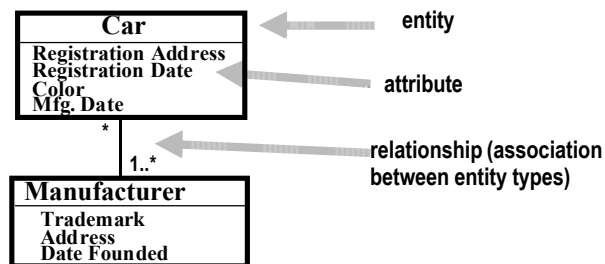
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CLASS DIAGRAMS Entity-attribute-relationship approach (ERA)

- ERA was introduced to the DB community and refined by Bachman, Chen, and others.
- Relationships are usually binary (dyadic); some variants allow n-ary.
- Some variants allow relationships to have attributes.



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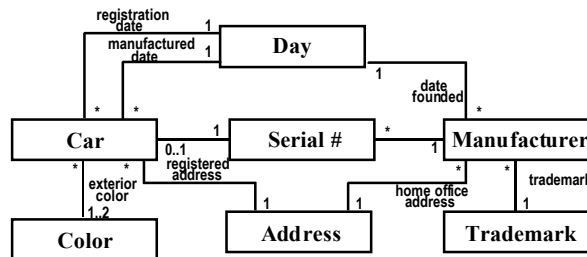
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CLASS DIAGRAMS Binary relationship approach (BRA)

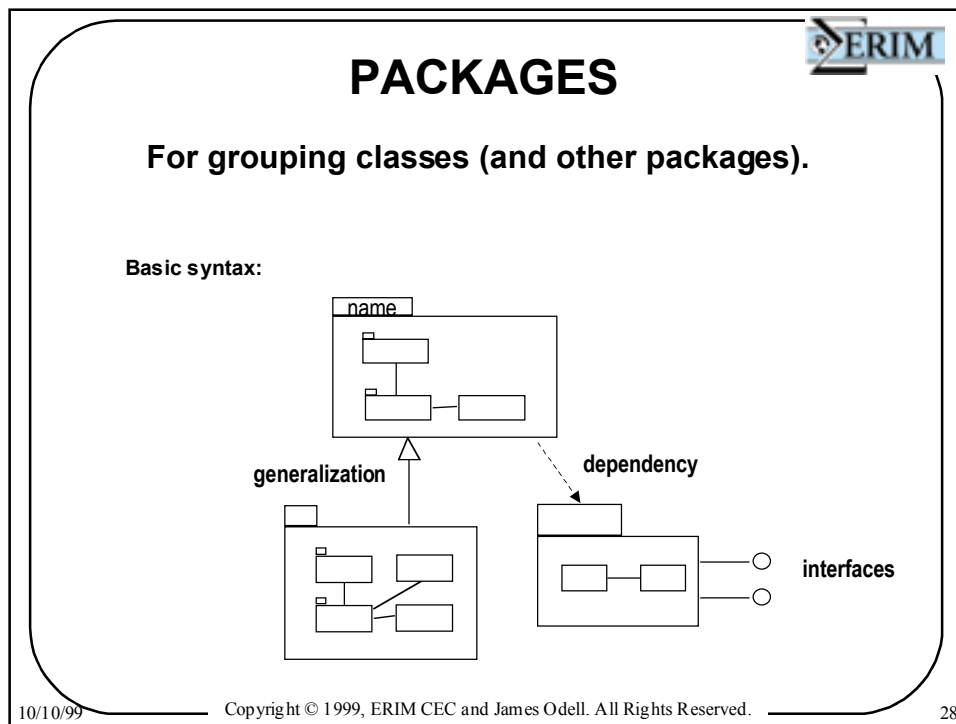
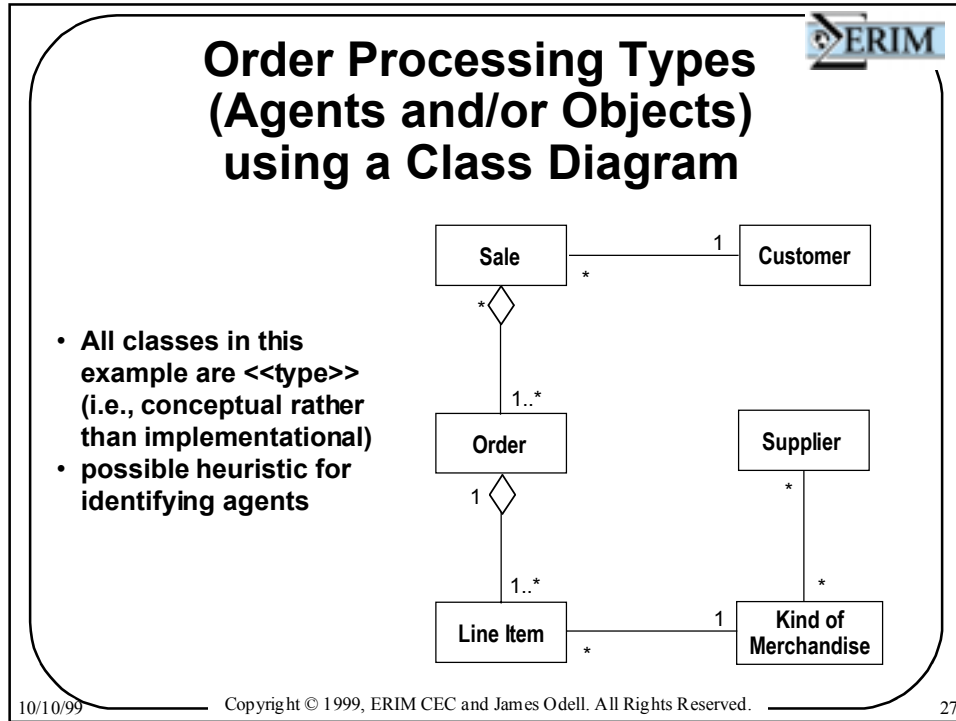
- Roots in AI and linguistics; introduced to DP community by Abrial, Bracchi, Nijssen, and Senko.
- Does not distinguish relationships from attributes.
- Relationships not restricted to binary (dyadic).
- Relationships can be component types.

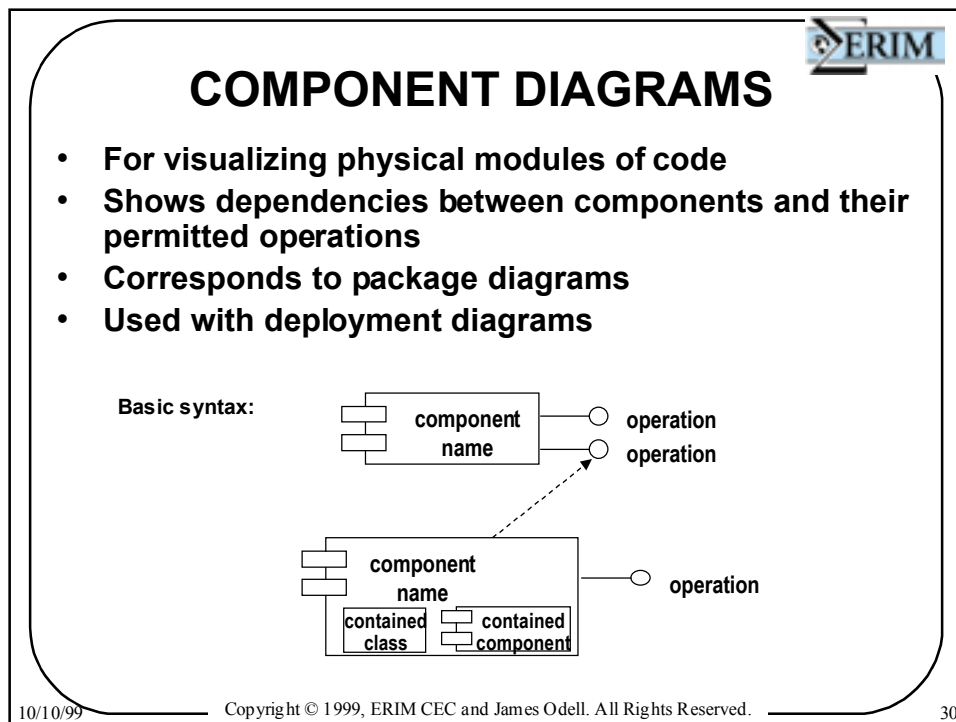
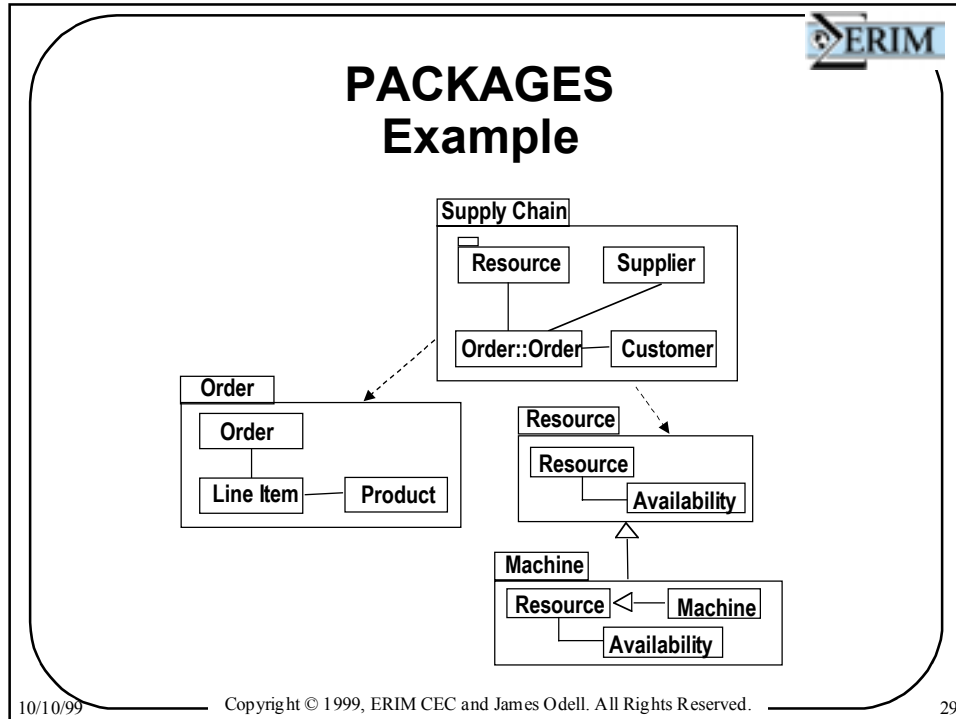


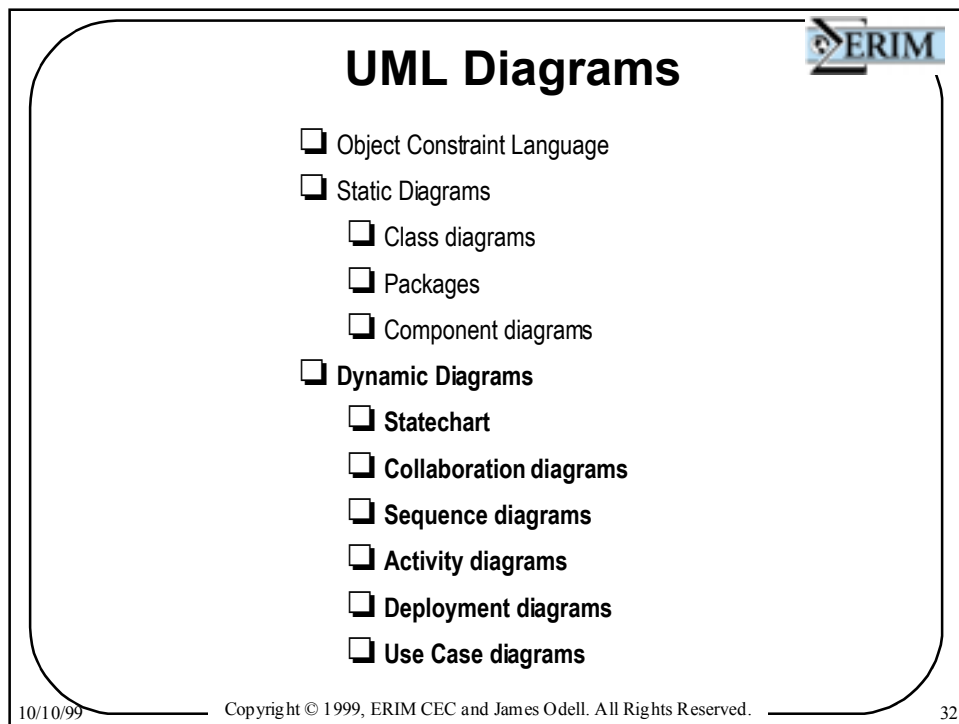
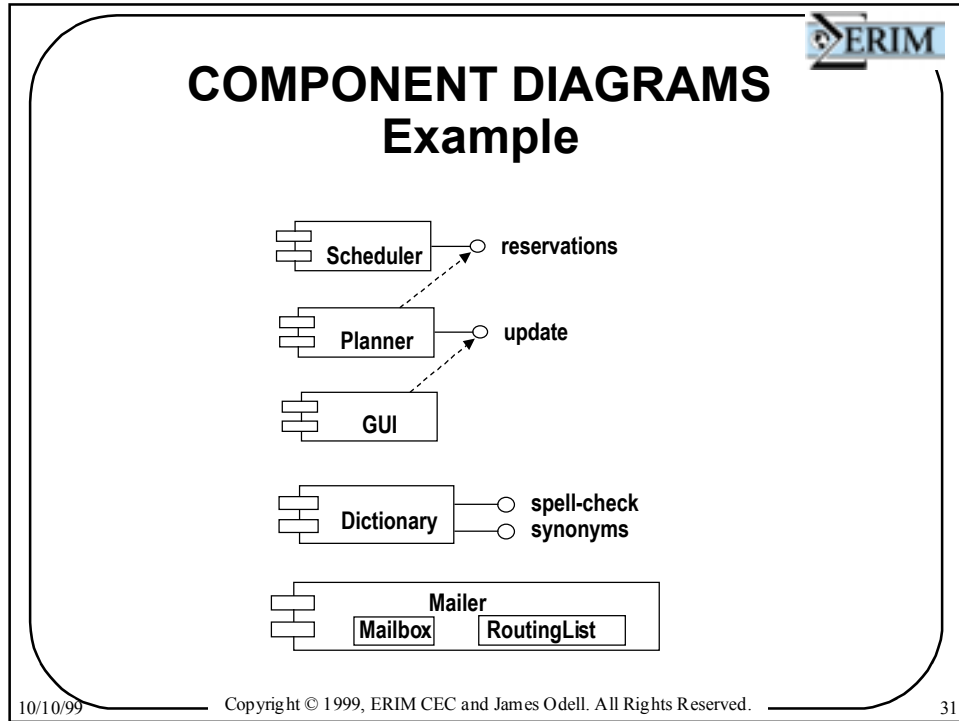
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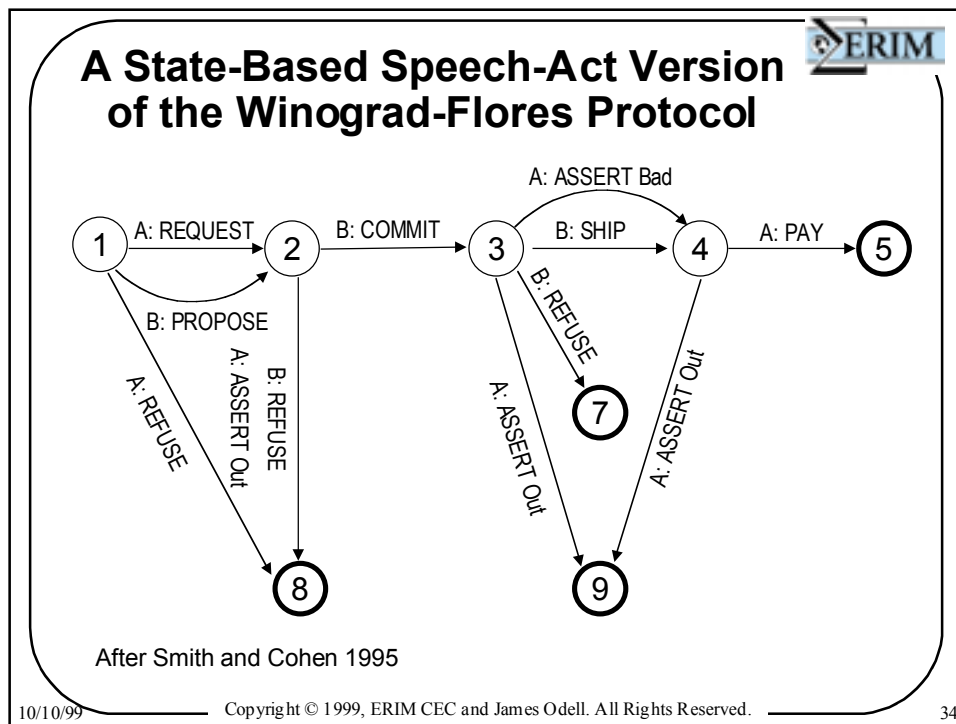
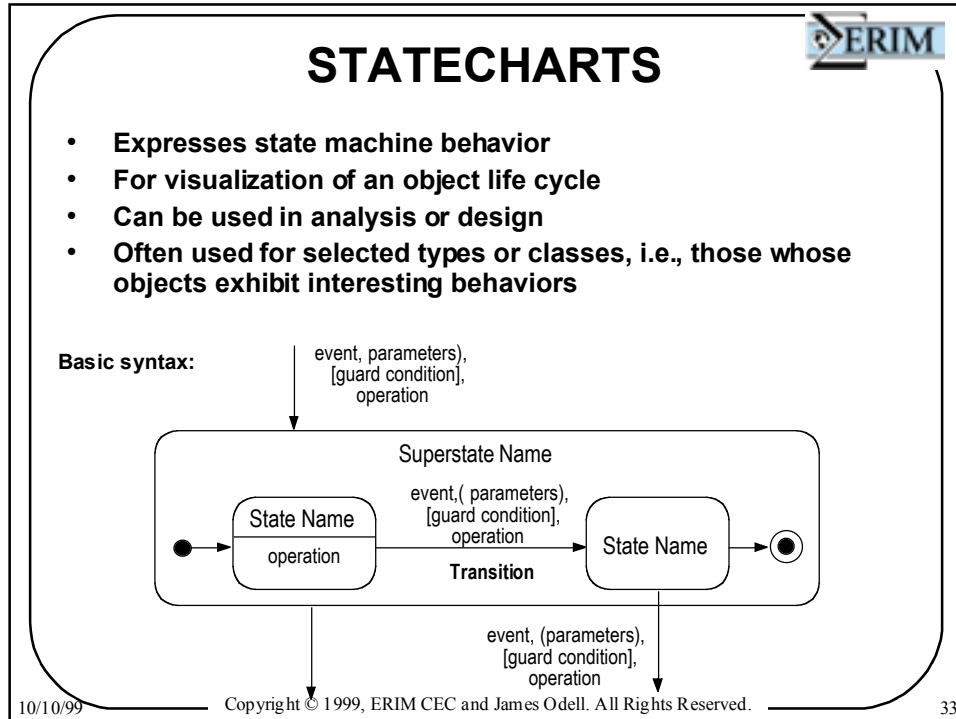
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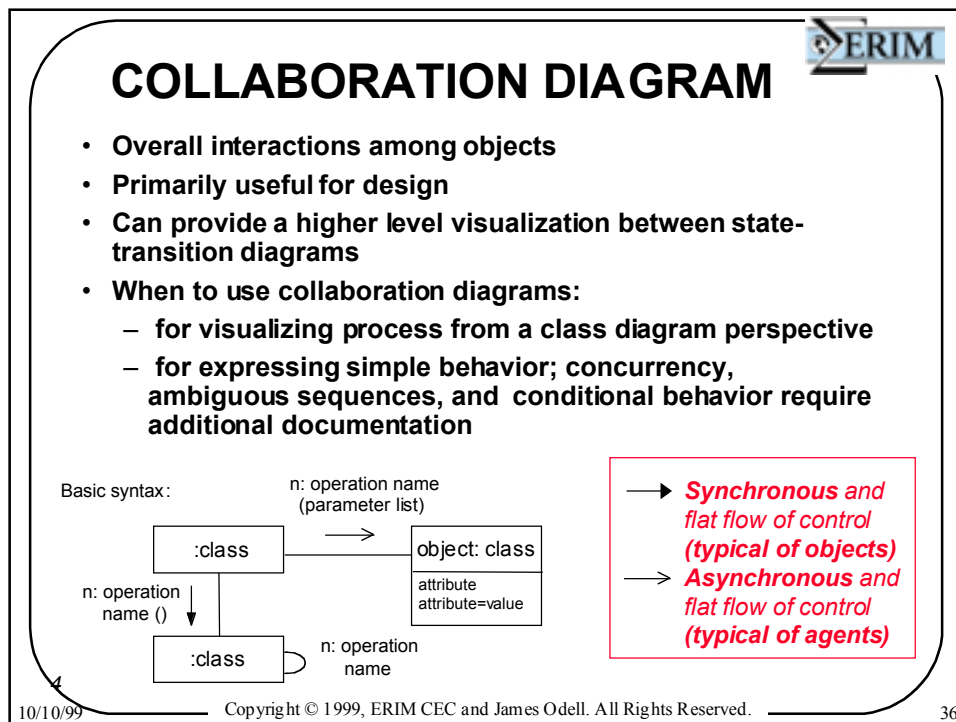
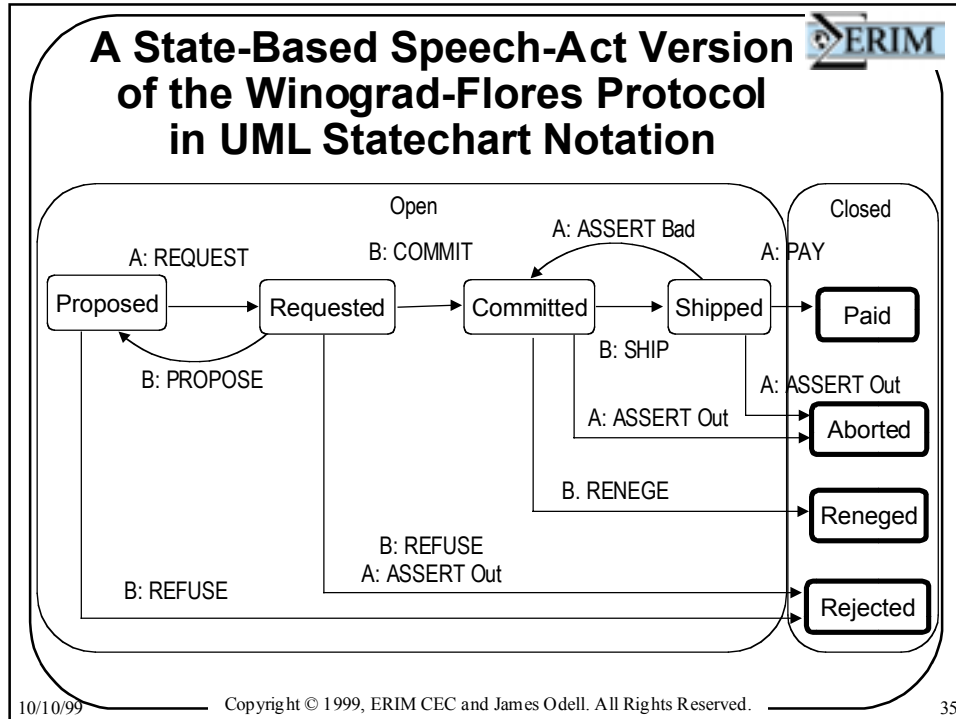
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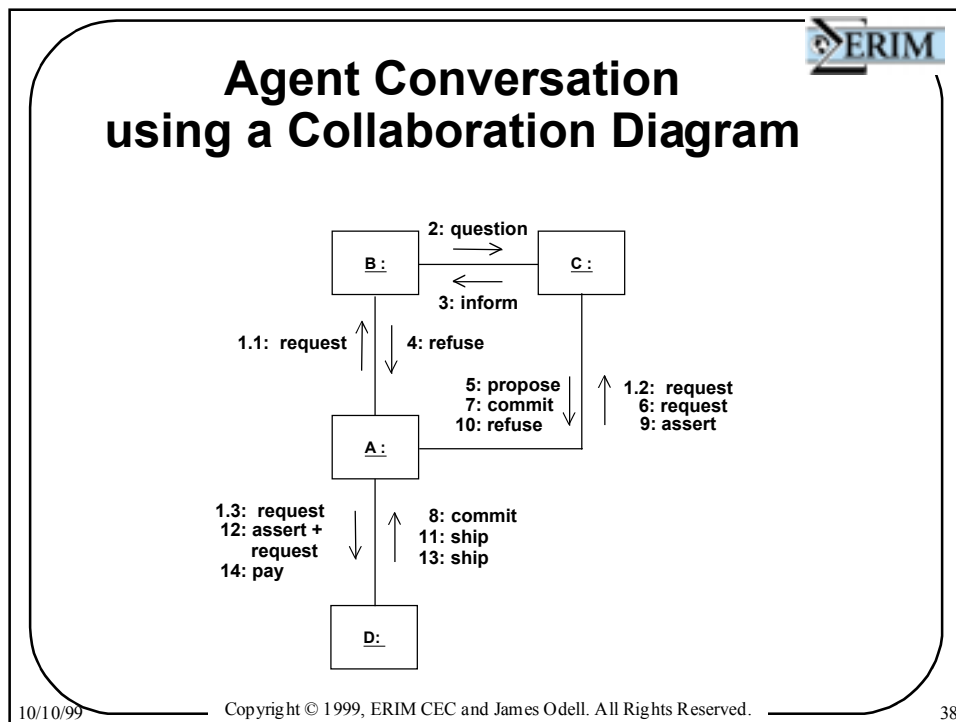


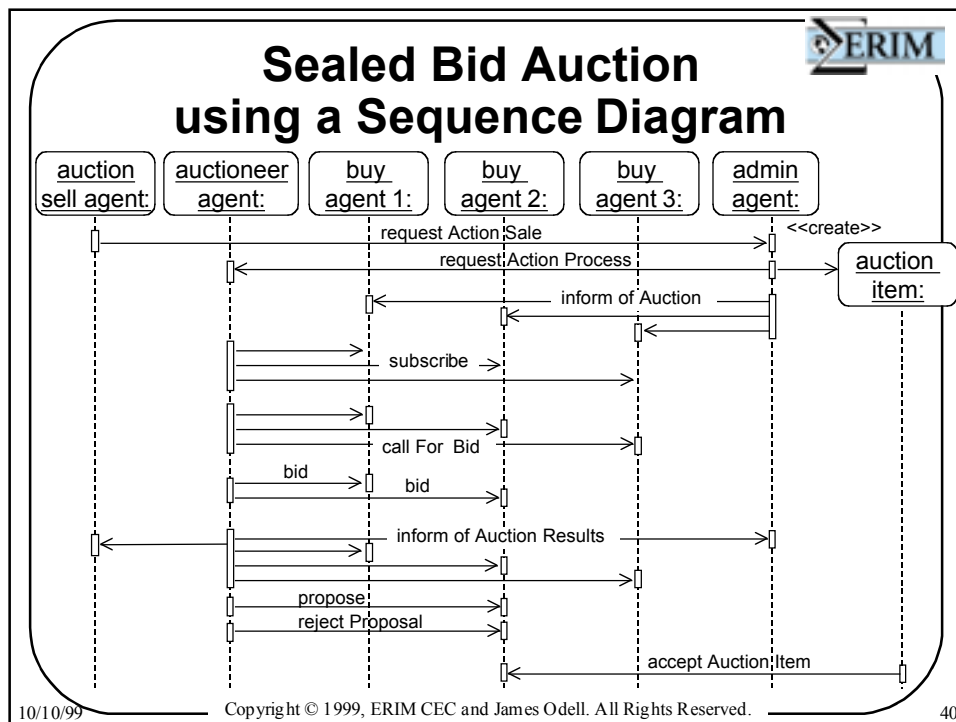
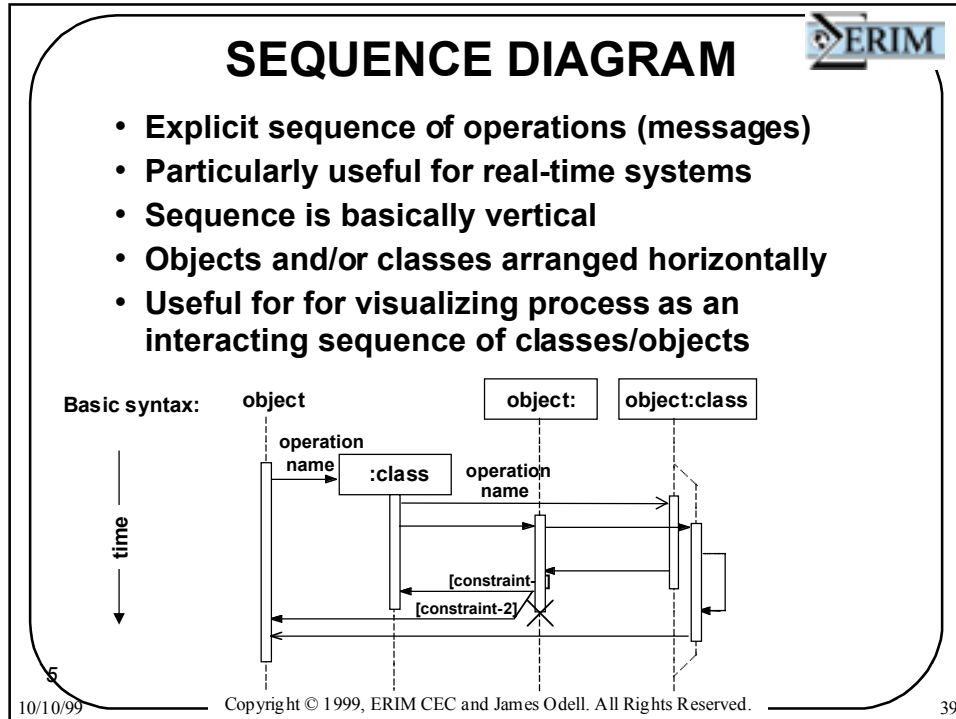
An Agent Conversation

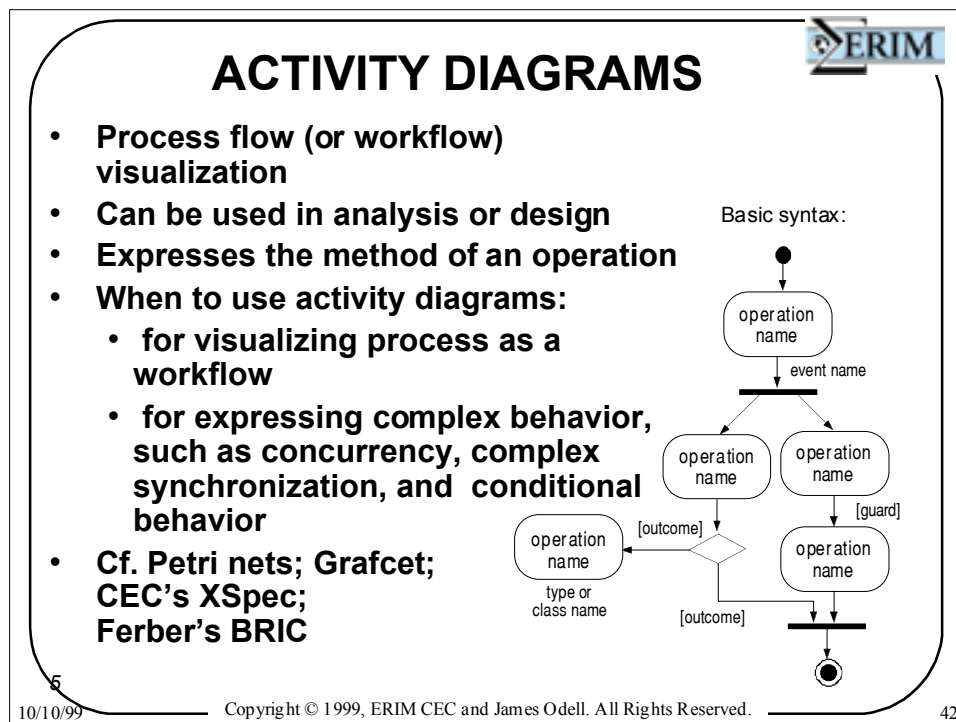
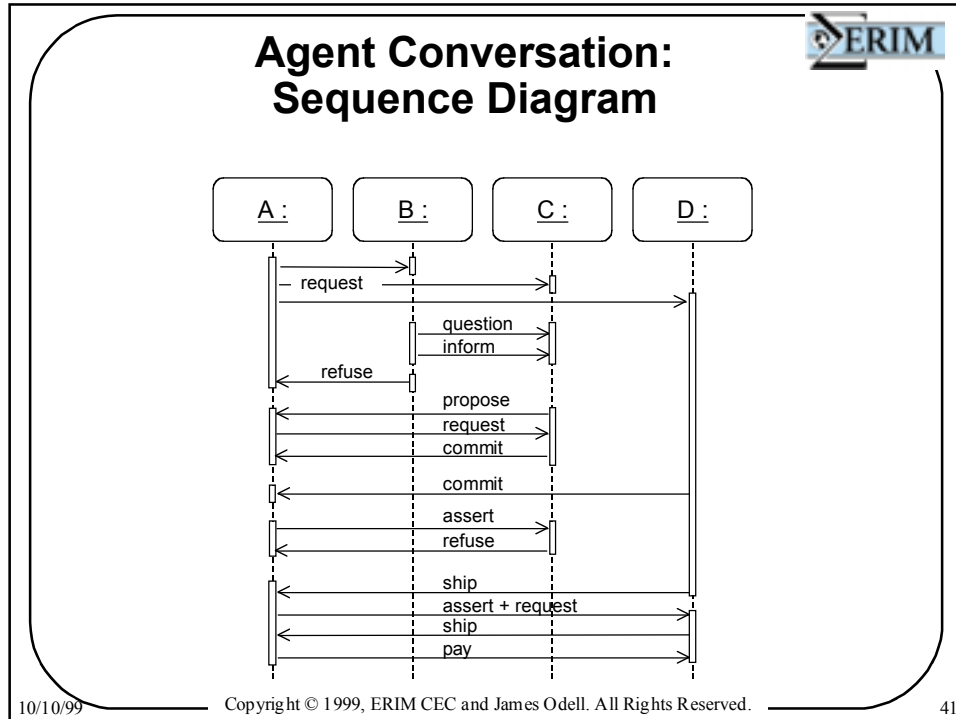


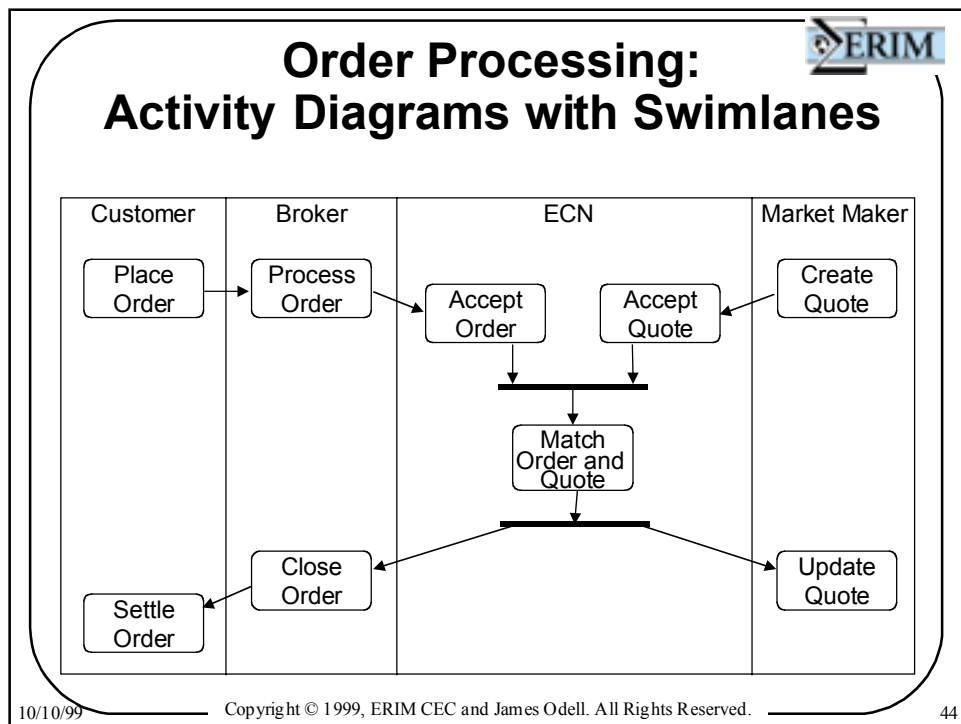
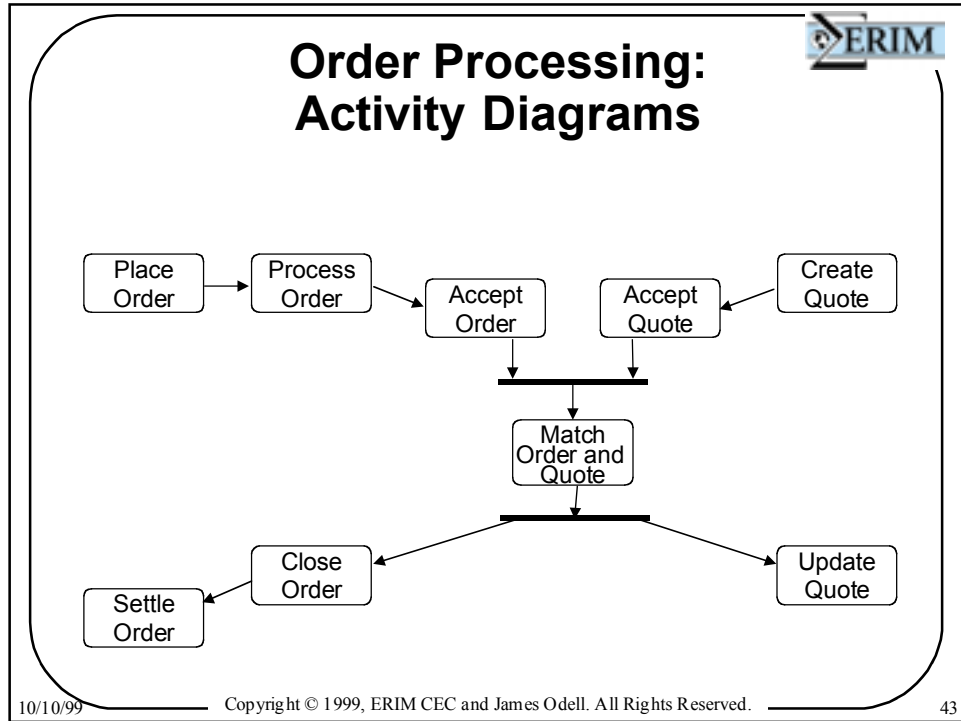
Seq	Sndr	Rcvr	Utterance	Rspnds to	Replies to	Re-solves	Completes
1.	A	B,C,D	REQUEST: Please send me 50 widgets at your catalog price by next Thursday.				
2.	B	C	QUESTION: Are you bidding on A's RFQ?	1			
3.	C	B	INFORM: Yes, I am.	2	2	2	
4.	B	A	REFUSE	3	1	1	
5.	C	A	PROPOSE (INFORM + REQUEST): How about 40 widgets at catalog price by next Friday?	1	1		
6.	A	C	REQUEST: Please send me 40 widgets at catalog price by next Friday.	5	5	5	
7.	C	A	COMMIT: I plan to send you 40 widgets at catalog price by next Friday.	6	6	6	
8.	D	A	COMMIT: I plan to send you 50 widgets at catalog price by next Thursday.	1	1	1	
9.	A	C	ASSERT: I've found a better supplier, and am not relying on your COMMIT.	7,8	7		
10.	C	A	REFUSE: I'm abandoning my COMMIT.	9	9		7
11.	D	A	SHIP: Here are your widgets. Please pay me.	1	1		8
12.	A	D	ASSERT + REQUEST: You're five short. Please send the difference.	11	11		
13.	D	A	SHIP: Here are five more widgets. Please pay me.	12	12	12	
14.	A	D	PAY	13	13	13	

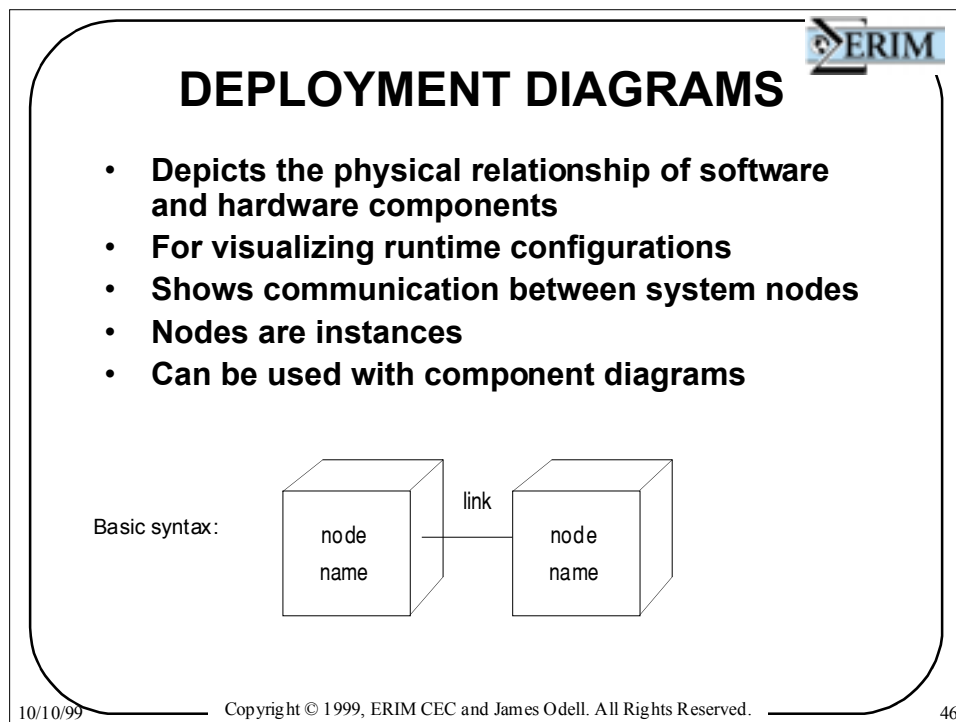
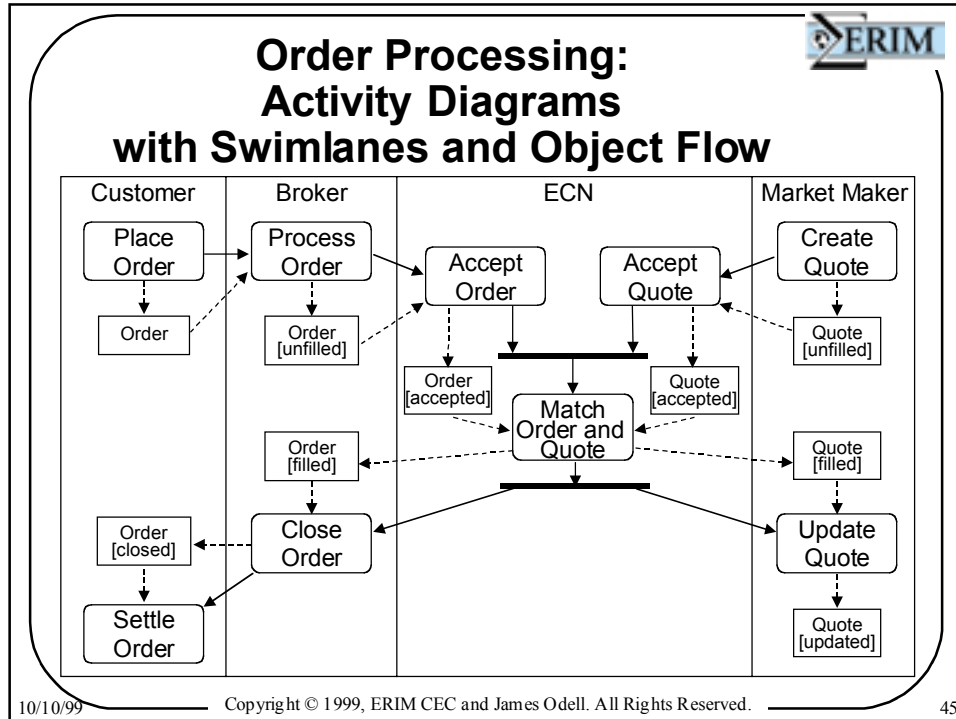
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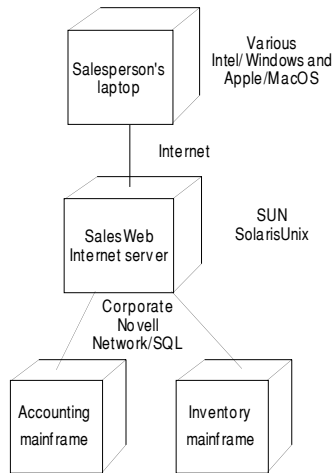








DEPLOYMENT DIAGRAMS Example



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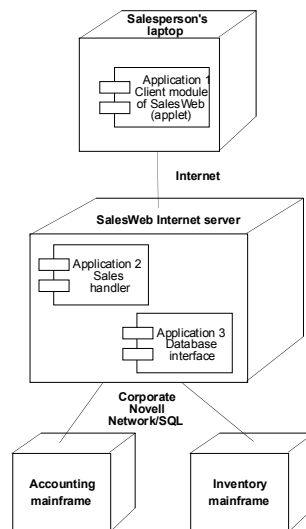
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DEPLOYMENT DIAGRAMS WITH COMPONENTS

Example:



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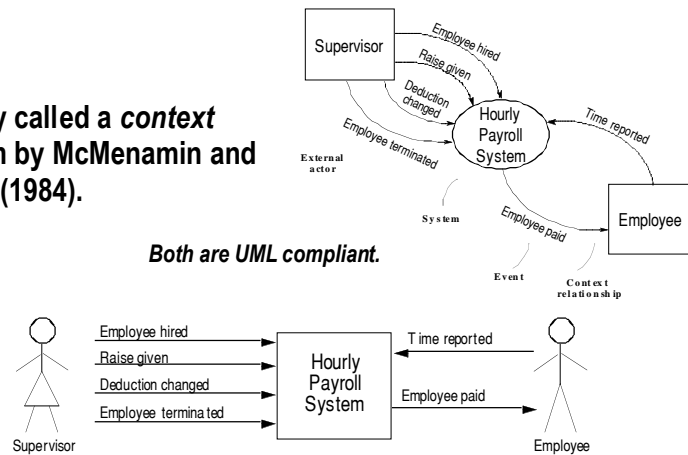


USE CASE DIAGRAMS for context specification

Expresses the relationship between a given system and its environment.

Originally called a *context diagram* by McMenamin and Palmer (1984).

Both are UML compliant.



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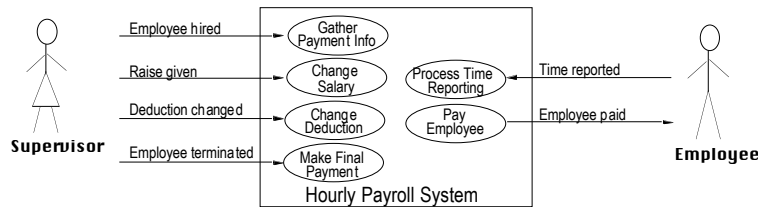
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USE CASE DIAGRAMS

Shows the relationships among actors and use cases within a system.



A context diagram expressing the operations that will provide the interface between the system and its environment. UML refers to these operations as *use cases* (discussed in the next section).


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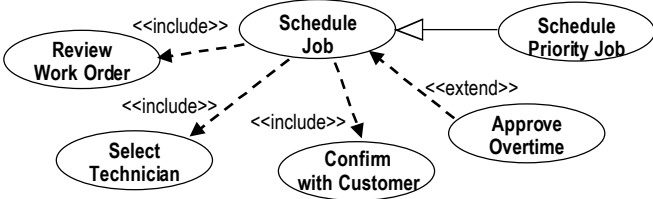
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USE CASE DIAGRAMS

Use Case Relations



- **Includes Relation** – A “base” use case incorporates the behavior of another use case, i.e., mandatory.
- **Extends Relation** – A “base” use case adds to the behavior specified in another use case, i.e., optional.
- **Generalization**– A “base” use case that has more specialized use cases.




“Uses” has been replaced by include and generalization.

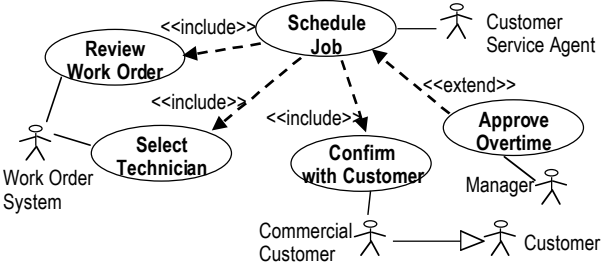
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USE CASE DIAGRAMS

with actors



Actors are roles played when interacting with the use case. They may be human, hardware, or software.



- The symbol can be confusing: **an actor does not have to be a person.**
- It represents the external interfaces to the system.
- Identifying the actor helps the team in understanding the stakeholder of a use case.
- Since actors are types, they may be subtyped.

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Overview

- Why Engineering Artifacts?
- OO Artifacts for MAS Development
- **Toward Agent-Specific Artifacts**

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Some Deficiencies of UML Diagrams for Agents

UML has no “off-the-shelf” constructs for:

- mobility
- role changes
- generative functions, such as cloning, birthing, reproduction
- parasitism and symbiosis
- agents *on* “cell membranes” versus *within* membranes
- emergent phenomena
- ...

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UML Extension Mechanisms

- Labels in <<...>> (“stereotypes”)
- Extensions may become normative in later versions of the language.
- These are only suggestions; help us develop the right notations.
 - What do we need to represent?
 - What are the most helpful ways to represent them?

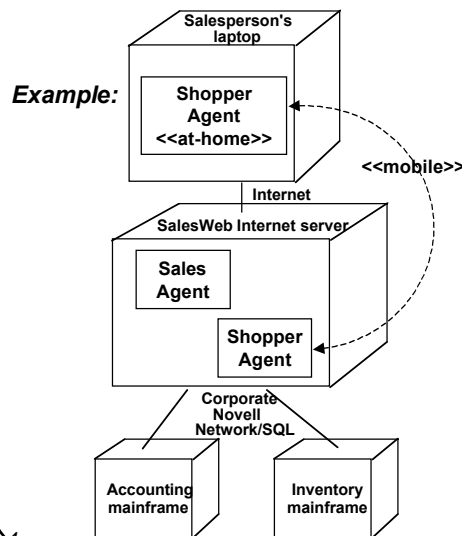
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DEPLOYMENT DIAGRAMS Extending UML for Mobile Agents



Innovations:

- Class (not just component) in deployment box
- <<at-home>> to indicate origin
- <<mobile>> link to show possible movement

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Application-oriented view

- How to define agents?
 - Class diagrams
 - Activity diagrams via swimlanes
 - Sequence diagrams defined first at the agent level, then abstracted to the role level
- How to derive roles?
 - Dooley analysis from collaboration diagram
 - Time analysis from sequence diagram

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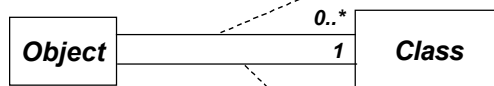
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Multi-Role Agents

1. Defining Roles in the UML Metamodel:



Other roles the object can fill

Primary role of the object

2. Detecting Roles:

- From Dooley analysis
- From sequence diagrams

3. Representing Roles

2+3+1

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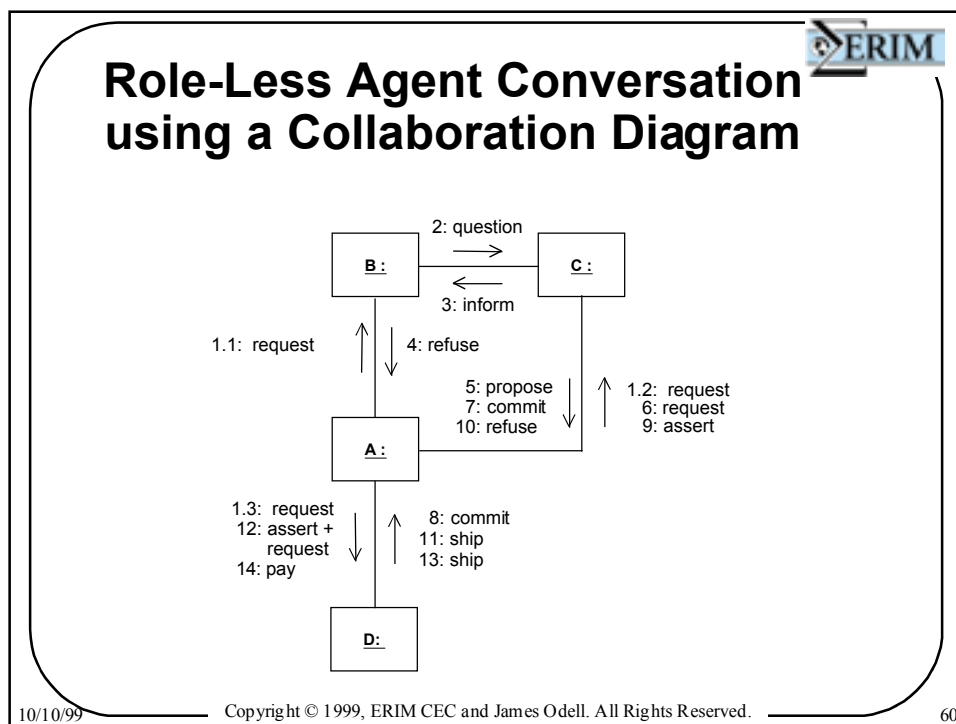
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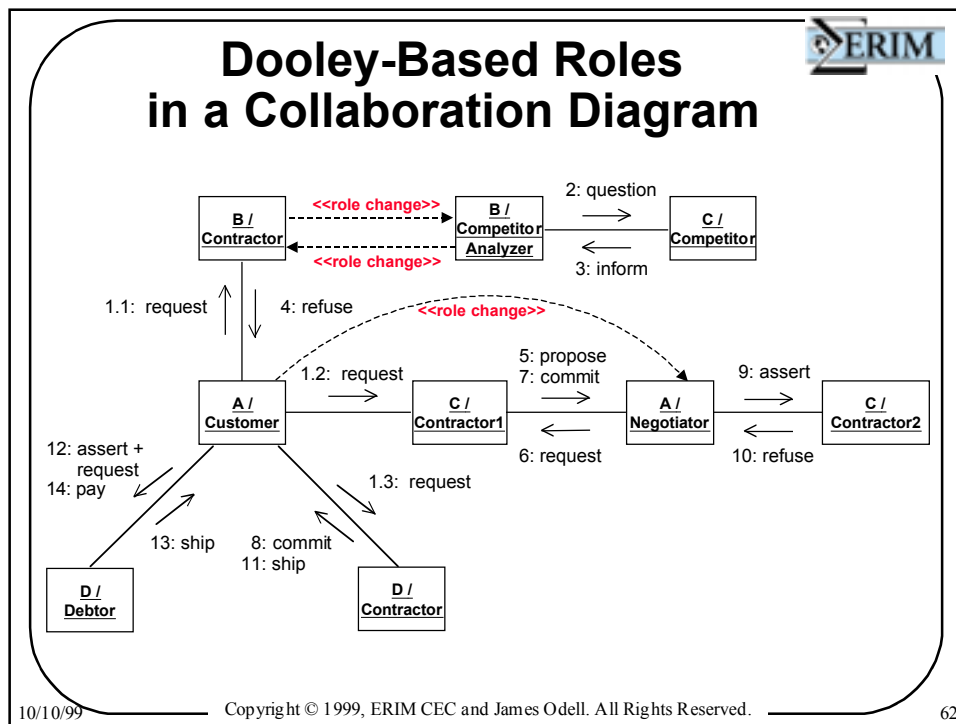
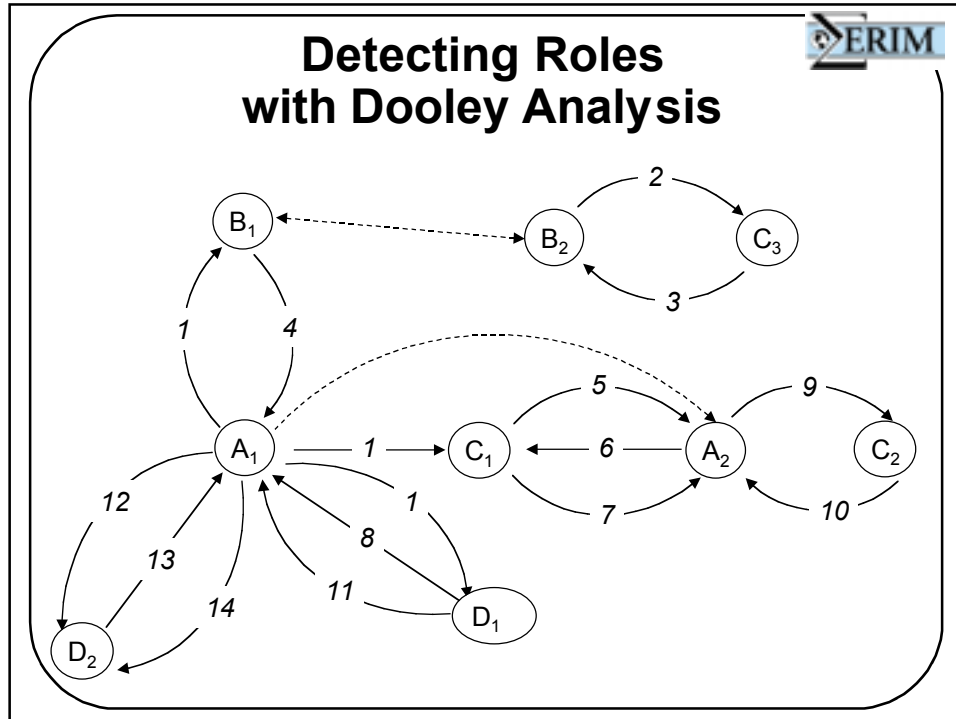
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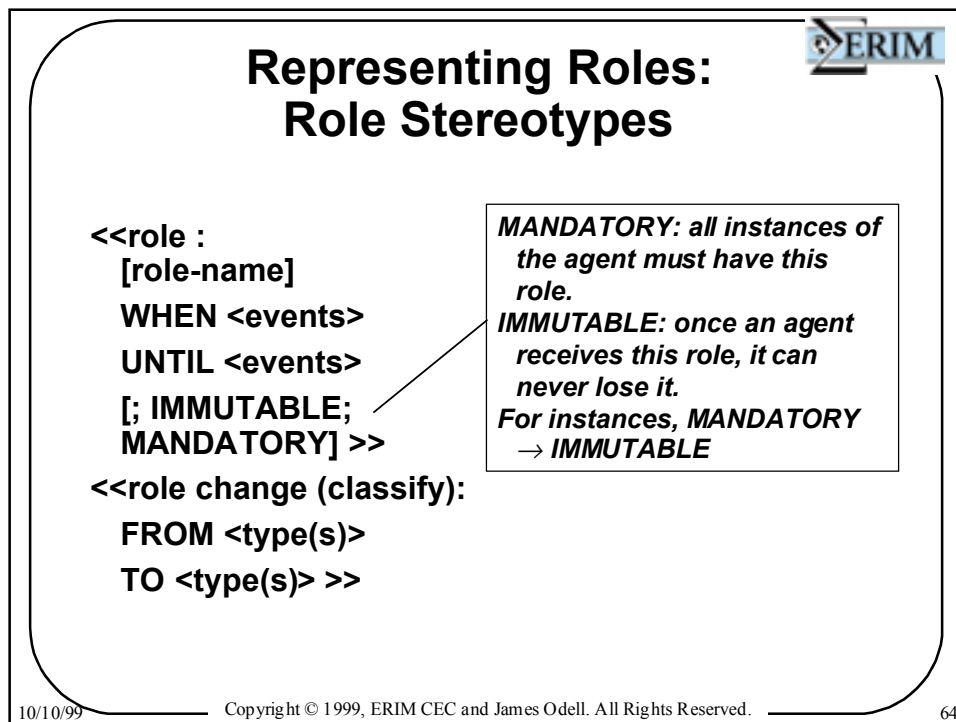
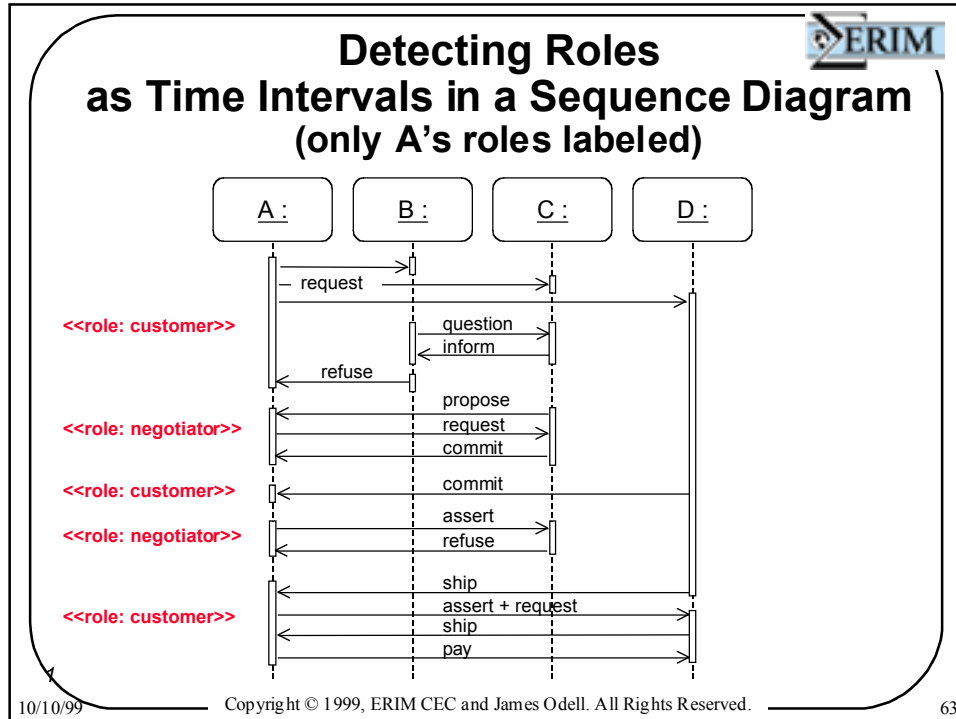
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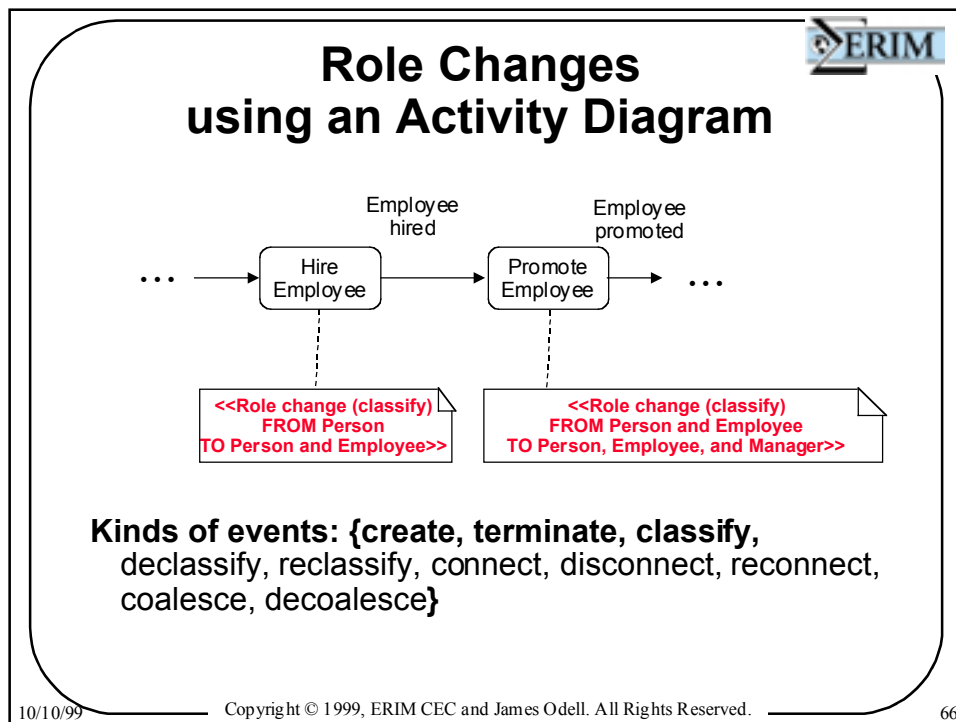
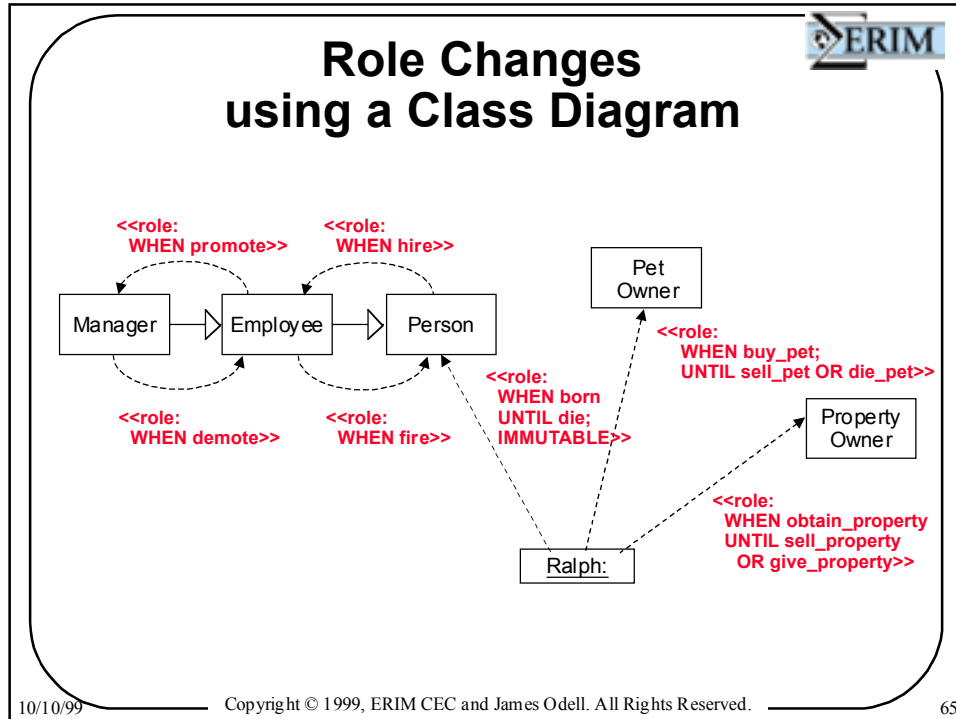
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5.	C	A	PROPOSE (INFORM + REQUEST): How about 40 widgets at catalog price by next Friday?	1	1		
6.	A	C	REQUEST: Please send me 40 widgets at catalog price by next Friday.	5	5	5	
7.	C	A	COMMIT: I plan to send you 40 widgets at catalog price by next Friday.	6	6	6	
8.	D	A	COMMIT: I plan to send you 50 widgets at catalog price by next Thursday.	1	1	1	
9.	A	C	ASSERT: I've found a better supplier, and am not relying on your COMMIT.	7,8	7		
10.	C	A	REFUSE: I'm abandoning my COMMIT.	9	9		7
11.	D	A	SHIP: Here are your widgets. Please pay me.	1	1		8
12.	A	D	ASSERT + REQUEST: You're five short. Please send the difference.	11	11		
13.	D	A	SHIP: Here are five more widgets. Please pay me.	12	12	12	
14.	A	D	PAY	13	13	13	

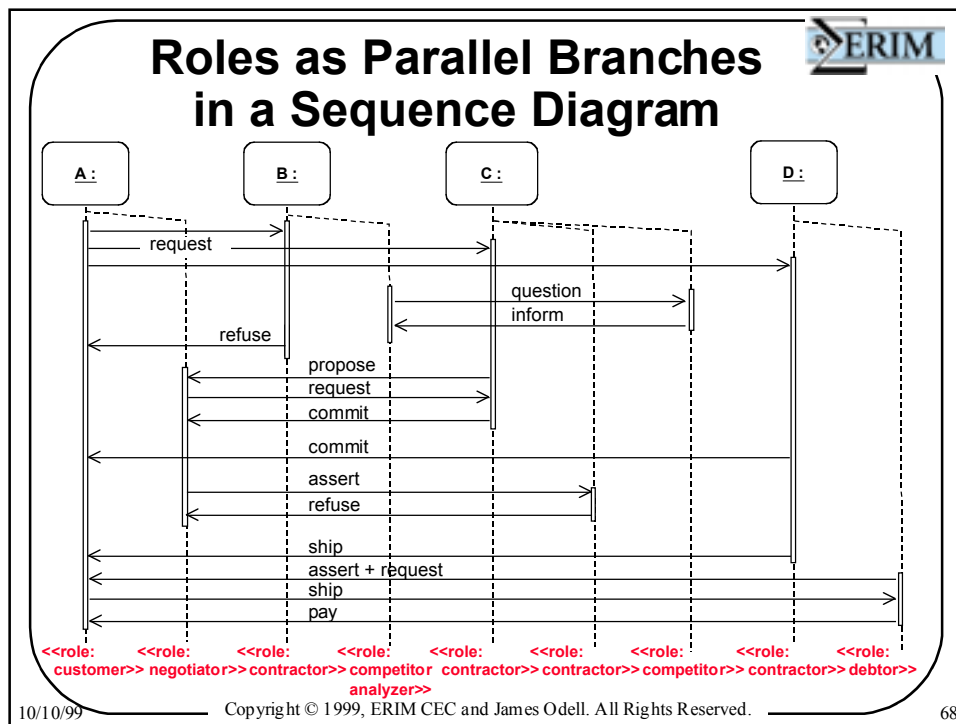
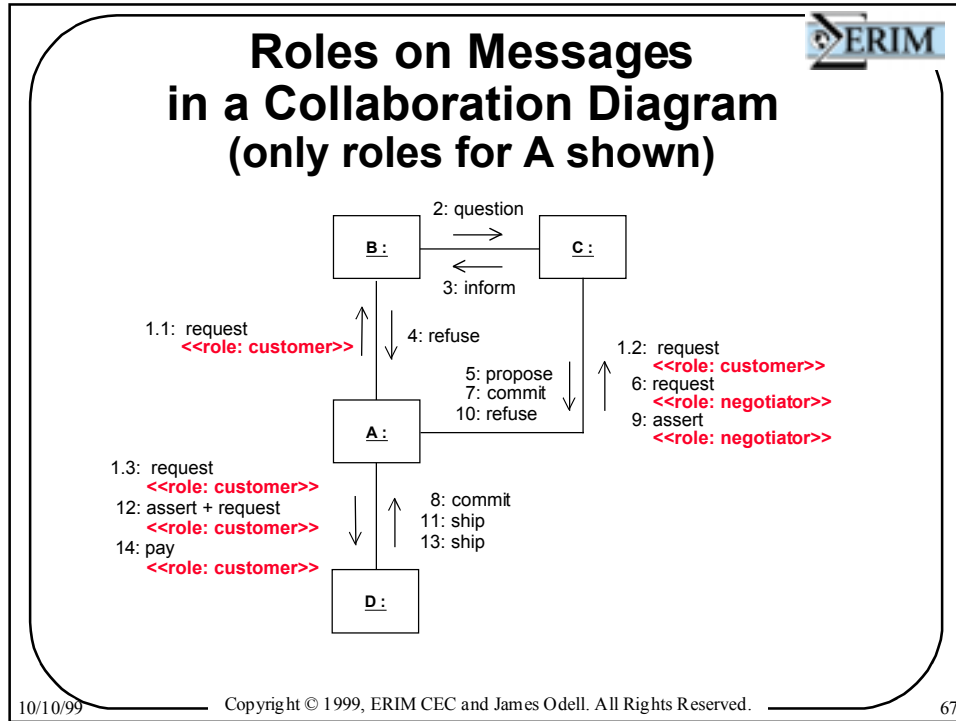
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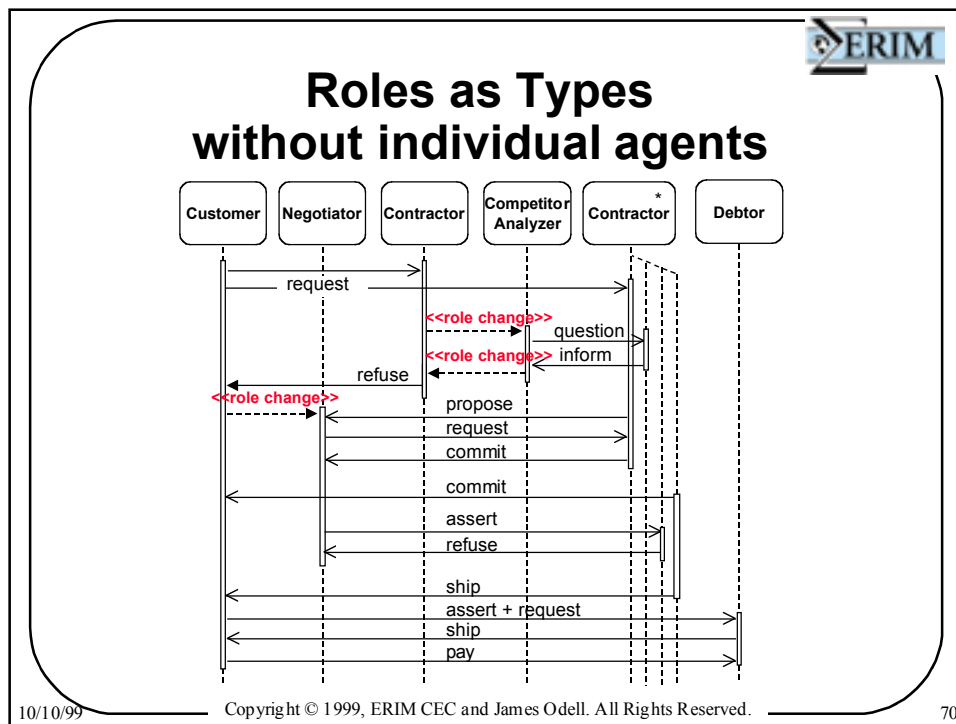
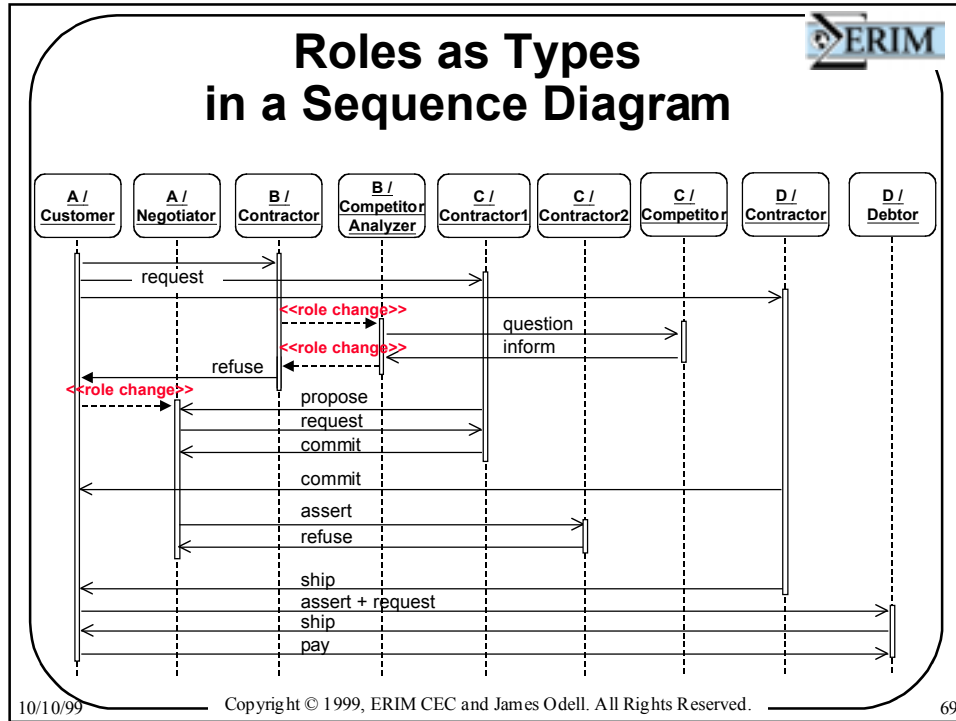


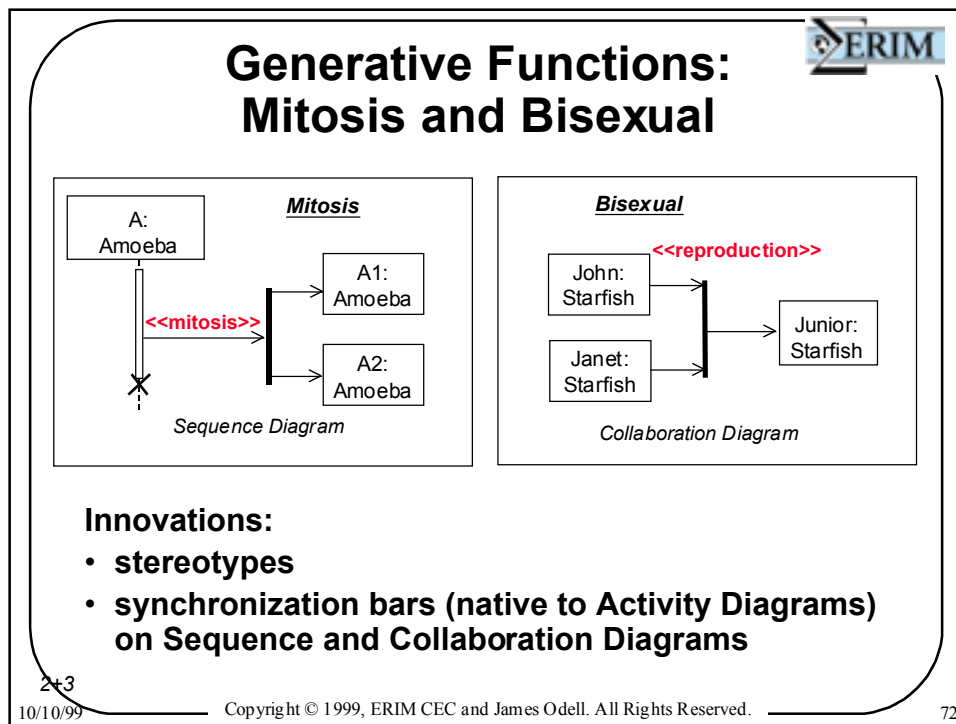
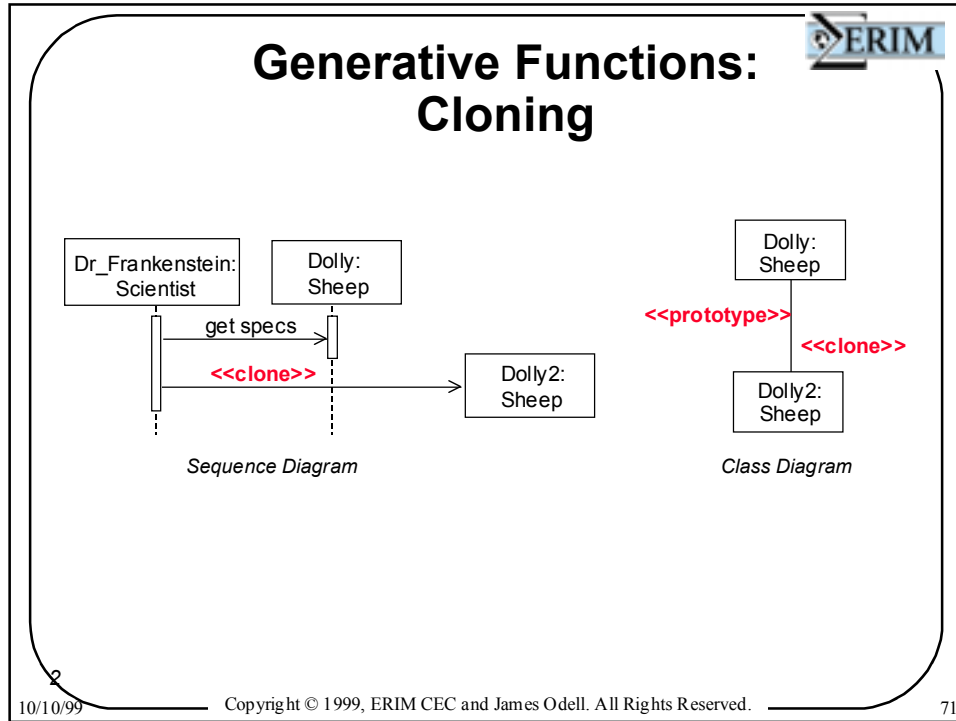


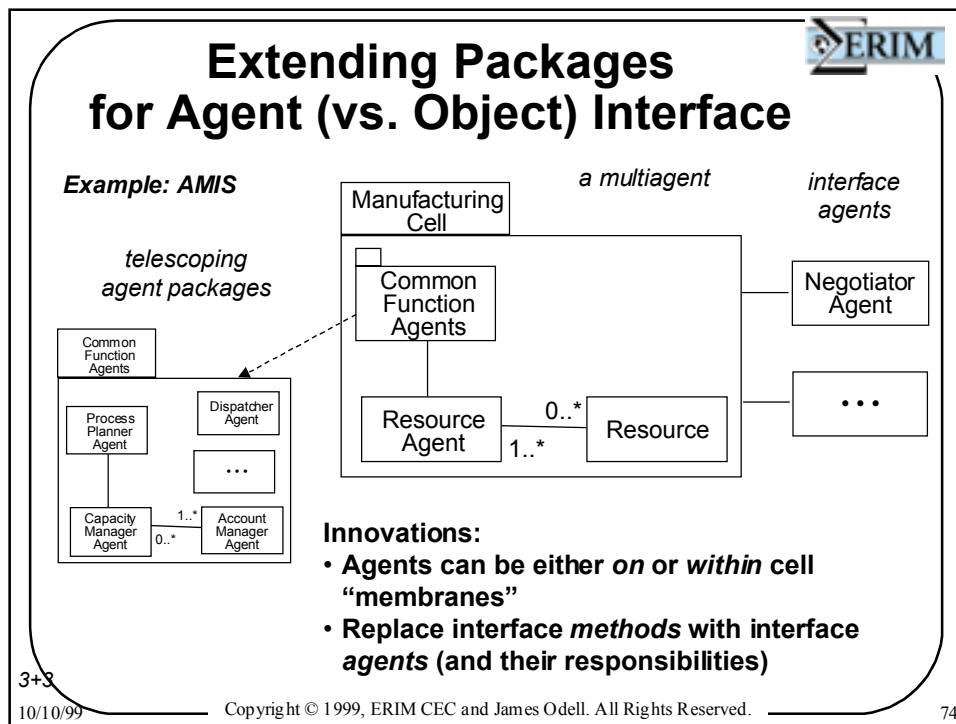
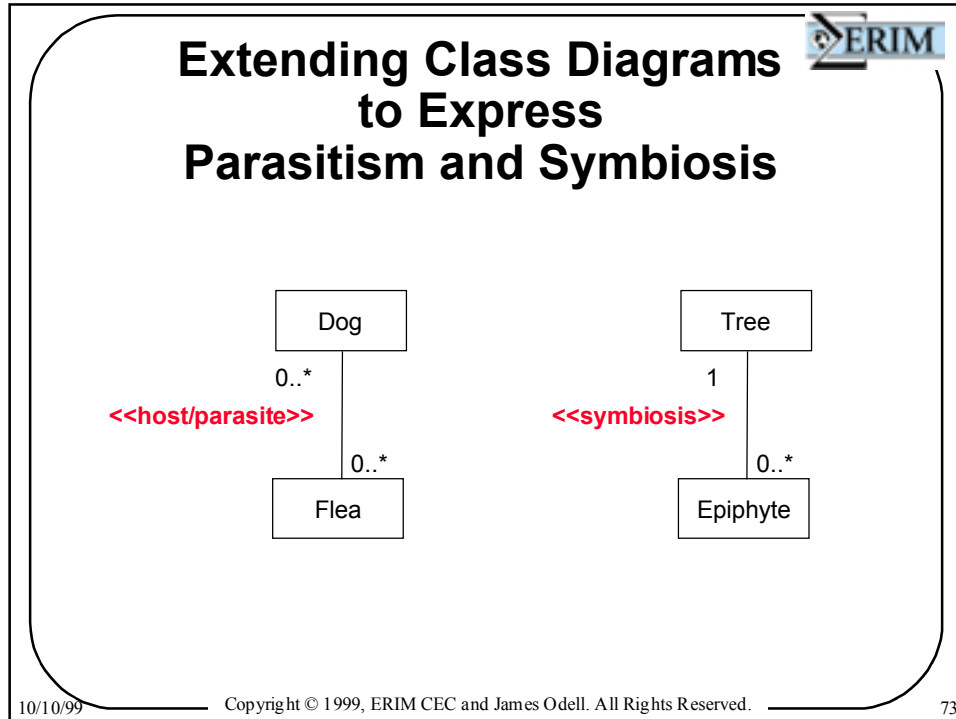












Expressing Emergence by Extending Aggregation in Class Diagrams

```
classDiagram
    Market "0..*" o-- "0..*" Consumer : <<emergence>>
```

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Role Changes

- **Concurrent vs. sequential roles**
 - Concurrent on sequence type
 - Sequential on dashed arrow in collaboration diagram
- **Gets into branching temporal logics; multiple world semantics;**
- **Need either**
 - extension to state or activity diagram
 - new “role diagram”
 - class diagram with dashed line and name of process that causes the change
- **Need examples and list of issues.**

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Generative and Collaborative

- **Currently, use sequence diagram with arrow going to a box. But not joint effort. Could add synch bar from activity diagrams.**

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Overview

- **Why Engineering Artifacts?**
- **OO Artifacts for MAS Development**
- **Toward Agent-Specific Artifacts**
 - **What do we need to represent?**
 - **What are the most helpful ways to represent them?**
 - **vparunak@erim.org**

10/10/99

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