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Analysing Ripose as a mature EA model

I happened to read an article on the LinkedIn site called 'EA Maturity Assumptions' written by James Lapalme about the 'underlying assumptions of current EA maturity models'. After reading the article I set about analysing how the Ripose Technique (I started developing in 1991) would go about matching the criteria set out in the article. This document is the result of my analysis. I will address my assertions under the following headings:

1) Introduction
2) Thematic
3) Application of thematic analysis
4) Theories of action
5) Thematic analysis results
6) Conclusion

Introduction

In the introduction, the authors wrote:

> *An important research problem facing the community is that despite the availability of multiple EA maturity models, very few research efforts have been invested in analysing and comparing these maturity models, notwithstanding the stated importance of EA for organisational performance (Ross 2004; Niemi 2006; Boh and Yellin 2007; Lankhorst 2013).*

In all fairness I carried out an analysis of some 20 frameworks and published my findings. In addition I have also created a web presentation detailing my findings for 7 of the 20 frameworks.

Thematic analysis

In this section under the heading 'Research methodology', the authors wrote:

> *Thematic analysis is a method that enables the identification of themes in qualitative data. Put simply, thematic analysis is achieved by annotating qualitative data units (e.g. text fragments, image fragments) with codes. Each code (or label) represents a concept; hence, annotating a specific data unit with a particular code signifies that the given data unit instantiates the concept represented by the particular code: each annotation may be called a code instantiation. A collection of codes is referred to as a codebook. In a codebook, each code, at a minimum, must be associated with an explicit definition that defines the concept represented by the code (see Appendix for examples). The code–definition pairs are the means for guiding coding decisions: if a data unit is judged to exemplify the concept as defined by a particular definition, then the qualitative data unit is associated with an instantiation of the code related to the definition. A data unit can be associated with multiple codes. The annotation process is called coding.*

After much thought I would like to propose that it is my assertion that Ripose satisfies this requirement as follows:
Level 1 Views of information, the code book contains the following views/domains
• Conceptual
• Logic

Level 2 Views of the conceptual architecture, the code book contains the following views/domains
• Information architecture
• System architecture

Level 3 Views of the logical architecture, the code book contains the following views/domains
• Data architecture
• Application architecture

Application of thematic analysis

In this section under the heading 'Research methodology', the authors wrote:

> *As stated previously, there has been very little attention given to the analysis of maturity models in the academic literature; hence no research results were available to guide this research. Since an a priori model could not guide this study and since its concerns are exploratory in nature, the thematic analysis method was applied inductively.*

It is my assertion that Ripose satisfied this requirement by exploring the work done by the 18th century philosopher Immanuel Kant and by using his 'Critique of Pure Reason' as a Meta model, from which the two layers of reason were extrapolated (namely theory and practice) as well as the three categorical imperatives that cover the two, namely Theory – What one knows and Practice – What one ought to do and What one can hope for. These 3 imperatives led to the assertion of a three layer domain architecture:

Kant's section	**Categorical imperative**	**Domain**
Theory	What one knows	Concept
Practice	What one ought to do	Logic
	What one can hope for	Physical

Theories of action

In this section under the heading 'Research methodology', the authors wrote:

> *Two pioneers in the field of organisational learning are Donald Schön and Chris Argyris, who co-authored an organisational learning framework that describes three types of learning processes: single-loop, double-loop and deutero learning (Argyris and Schön 1974). At the heart of their framework are three interrelated concepts: governing variables, action strategies and consequences.*

It is my assertion that Ripose satisfies these:

- Governing variables – for example in the Conceptual domain the variables used are business objectives, knowledge and strategies
- Action strategies – for example in the business objective variable the actions are to 1) define the goals and 2) define the measures that support the goals
- Consequences – for example the results of defining the measures is a hierarchical layering of key performance indicators together with their performance indicators with monetary rates for income and expenditure (both Opex and Capex)

Thematic analysis results

This exercise was never carried out for the Ripose Technique. Despite my numerous emails and calls to Foresters and Gartner to consider including Ripose in their publications, apart from 1 20 minute Skype session with a representative from Foresters, I never heard anything more from either organisation.

I could however spend some time developing a similar presentation as depicted in some of the examples but I am not sure if that will achieve anything.

Conclusion

In this section the authors wrote:

> *For many in academia and the industry, the field of EA is viewed as a means to manage the increasing complexity within modern organisations as well as enhance their performance. In order to aid organisations to adopt adequate EA practices and processes, maturity models have been proposed. The models promote that they offer organisational roadmaps and assessment frameworks for guiding the implementation of effective and mature practices and processes. However, how can one be certain that such maturity models do promote maturity and effectiveness? Key questions such as 'how do they understand the meaning of maturity?'; 'what mechanisms are used to increase maturity?'; and 'are such models sufficient and adequate given the various perspectives of the meaning of EA in the community?' have been left unanswered.*

It is my assertion that the Ripose Technique's answers to these questions are as follows:

- *how do they understand the meaning of maturity?* – By one definition of Maturity 'State of being mature' (fully considered and perfected); full development') the Ripose technique can answer this as follows: The Ripose Technique was developed to bridge the gap between business requirement and information technology solutions, by considering all the possible building blocks of both sets of requirements and producing not only a clear action plan on how to achieve this but also by providing a comprehensive set of applications, architected and built using the technique
- *what mechanisms are used to increase maturity?* – Ripose has been tried and tested in the field in both large and small enterprises and is scalable enough to be cost effective in both, as well as being efficient, ethical and easy to use
- *are such models sufficient and adequate given the various perspectives of the meaning of EA in the community?* – The Ripose Technique meets all the requirements of EA. The barrier to entry is due to 1) the 60+ other frameworks in the market, all purporting to meet these objectives but in most cases fail to; 2) the C-Types that make the decisions as to whether EA has a role to play are yet to make up their minds. In one survey over 60% of all senior managers interviewed admitted they were not using any form of EA approach and; 3) most enterprise architects are too busy to even look at how the Ripose Technique can improve their productivity

In closing I am not sure where this leaves me or my 3 creations (Ripose Technique, Caspar – the computerised strategic planning and reasoning engine or iCaspar – the freely available web based 'goal setting' module of Caspar) however, I felt it would be remiss of me if I did not take this opportunity to leave this comment to this very interesting and informative article.

I can only hope that the developers of the 900+ frameworks would be forthcoming in providing these sorts of answers.

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