

MULTITIER DIVERSIFICATION IN SOFTWARE COST ESTIMATION

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Abstract- Software cost estimation, is one of the important factors which affect the success of a project development. There are several areas of the software engineering in which we can use the function point analysis like project planning, project construction, software implementation etc. In software development, accuracy and efficiency of cost estimation methodology for a web based application is very important. Accurate project estimation such as cost estimation, quality estimation and risk estimation is a major role in software project management. In this paper, we present a soft computing framework to tackle this challenging problem. We first neuro-fuzzy inference system to handle the dependencies among contributing factors and decouple the effects of the contributing factors into individuals. Then we use software cost estimator to calibrate the parameters of contributing factors. In order to extend our framework into fields that lack of an appropriate algorithmic model of their own, we propose a default algorithmic model that can be replaced when a better model is available. Validation using industry project data shows that the framework produces good results when used to predict software cost.

I. INTRODUCTION

As software development has become an essential investment

for many organizations, software cost estimation is gaining an ever-increasing importance in effective software project management. In practice, software estimation includes cost estimation, quality estimation, risk analysis, etc. Accurate software estimation can provide powerful assistance for software management

The concept of software cost estimation has been growing rapidly due to practicality and demand for it. Today people are expecting high quality of software with a low cost which is goal of software engineering. So many popular cost estimation models like COCOMO81, COCOMOII, SLIM, FP and Delphi. Today most of the software companies follow COCOMOII for estimating the cost of products, this model is also not giving an accurate results.

PROPOSED SYSTEM

A NOVEL NEURO-FUZZY MODEL

The input for this model is the software size and ratings of 22 cost drivers including 5 scale factors (SFR_i) and 17 effort

multipliers (EMR_i). The output is the software development effort estimation. Ratings of cost drivers can be continuous numerical values or linguistic terms such as “low”, “nominal” and “high”. The parameters in this model are calibrated by learning from industry project data.

There are two major components in our neuro fuzzy model:

- Twenty-two sub-models NF_i: for each sub-model, the input is the rating value of a cost driver, and the output is the corresponding multiplier value, which is used as the input of the COCOMO model.
- COCOMO model: the input is the size of software and the output of NF_i. The output is software effort estimation.

Sub-model NF_i:

There are 22 cost drivers in our neuro-fuzzy model. Each cost driver represents one factor that contributes to the development effort, such as application domain experience and product complexity. We use six qualitative rating levels to evaluate the contribution. When expressed in linguistic terms, these six rating levels are very low (VL), low (L), nominal (N), high (H), very high (VH) and extra high (XH). Each rating level of every cost driver relates to a value called a multiplier value, which is a quantitative value used in the COCOMO model. Sub-model NF_i is used to translate the qualitative rating of a cost driver into a quantitative multiplier value and to calibrate these relations using industry project data. It should be noted that not all six rating levels are valid for all cost drivers. A natural way to represent linguistic terms is to use fuzzy sets. We define a fuzzy set for each linguistic term of every cost driver, i.e. “very low”, “low”, “nominal”, “high”, “very high”, “extra high”. The membership functions are either triangular functions or other functions, and the universe of discourse is the interval. We use fuzzy numbers “about 1”, “about 2”... “About 6” to represent linguistic terms “very low”, “low”, “nominal”, “high”, “very high”, “extra high”, respectively.

II. ARCHITECTURE

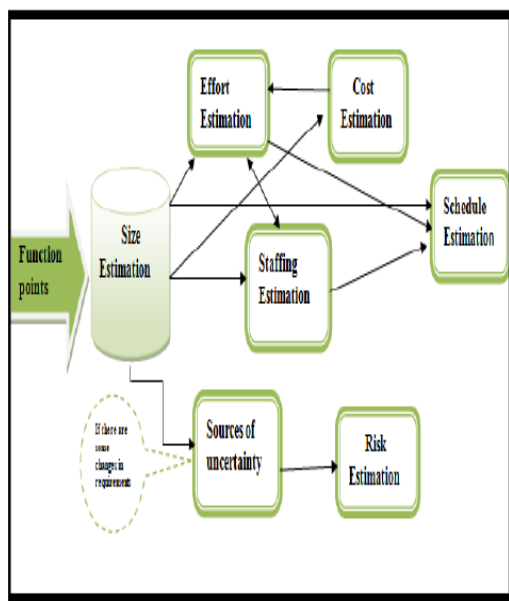


Figure 1: Overall Architecture

Function point is a measure of software size that uses logical functional terms inputs and outputs. A risk is an exposure to loss or injury or a factor, thing, element or course that involves uncertain danger. Risk assessment involves risk identification, risk analysis, risk planning & risk controlling. Software risk can be internal or external; the internal risks come from risk factors within the organization. The external risks come from outside the organization & are difficult to control. Software risks can be grouped into project risks, process risks & product risks.

III. CONCLUSION

This paper has presented a general framework for software estimation. The framework concentrates on the pre-processing neuro-fuzzy inference system, the neurofuzzy bank and the algorithmic model. We consider the rating value of contributing factors as input and produce software metrics as output. This framework has been validated with project data from the industry. The main benefit of this approach is its good interpretability, that is, by using the fuzzy rules, the approach tries to simulate the software engineers' line of thought when they are doing software estimation. Another great advantage of this research is that we could put together expert knowledge (fuzzy rules), project data and the traditional algorithmic model into one general framework that can have a wide range of applicability in software cost estimation, quality estimation and risk analysis. In this proposed Expert estimator, we focus on developing an estimation tool for web-based applications. This tool, namely (i.e. Expert estimator) is developed by using Java as the development language & Java Eclipse as the development tool. The proposed tool easily estimates the risk in software & also estimates the cost of the software. The cost estimation depends on the calculation of function points, cost adjustment factors & reuse. The function point approach is used as an input parameter into the "Expert

estimator". This information is needed in the calculation of effort, schedule & total cost for the project. The risk estimation is based on the risk assessment of software projects. Risk identification, risk analysis & risk prioritization are the main subparts of risk assessment. From the proposed model, it is easy to calculate the risk at different phases as the software project progresses from phase to phase. From further research, it is highly recommended that other cost estimating methods be considered such as Price-to-win as an added method to cost estimation for web-based applications & software requirements after adding the thread to it & then we will prioritize it using the analytic hierarchy process & quality function deployment, & after this we will generate the results of that software using the proposed Expert estimator tool.

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