## E-commerce transaction modeling formalisms

#### Formalismos de modelado de transacciones en comercio electrónico

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#### **Abstract**

This article presents the modeling of the purchase-sale transaction (pst) in electronic commerce (e-commerce) using different formalisms. E-commerce is an area of interest that is gaining rapid momentum in recent times because of the pandemic. In this work, the pst is a basic scheme that particularly excludes the participation of the intermediary that manages the reception and/or transfer of money. With the above, it is intended to minimize the number of actors involved in the pst to make relevant the contrast of the power representation of different formalisms to facilitate the analysis and make improvements. Firstly, conceptual maps are among formalisms that facilitates the exposition of complex processes. A next formalism is the coverage tree which allows to follow the flow of the pst in a clear way. The pst can be abstracted into a mathematical expression, however, it loses the power of visual scheme. The pseudocode is a way of representing computational processes that, in this case, allows modeling the pst also. Flowcharts are a tool associated with the development of programs that allow visually displaying the events of the pst.

#### E-commerce, ICT, Modeling

#### Resumen

Este artículo presenta el modelado de la transacción de compra-venta (tcv) en el comercio electrónico utilizando diferentes formalismos. El comercio electrónico es un área de interés que cobra un acelerado impulso en últimas fechas. La tcv mencionada es un esquema básico que particularmente excluye la participación del intermediario que gestiona la recepción y/o transferencia de dinero. Con lo anterior se pretende minimizar el número de actores involucrados en la tcv con el fin de hacer relevante el contraste del poder de representación de diferentes formalismos para facilitar su análisis y hacer mejoras. Los mapas conceptuales se encuentran entre las formas formales que facilitan la exposición de procesos complejos. Un siguiente formalismo es el árbol de cobertura el cual permite seguir el flujo de la tcv de forma clara. La tcv puede abstraerse en una expresión matemática, sin embargo, pierde el poder de exhibición visual. El pseudo código es una forma de representar procesos computacionales que, en el caso particular, permite modelar la tcv. Los diagramas de flujo son una herramienta asociada al desarrollo de programas que permiten mostrar visualmente los eventos de la tcv.

## Comercio electrónico, TIC, Modelado

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#### Introduction

In recent times, there has been an accelerated impulse in the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) (Raissi & Matoussi, 2019) . ICTs are being used massively in areas that range from daily to professional (Mishna, y otros, 2021). To give some examples, it can mention social relations (Chernova, Skvortsova, Loginova, Sariev, & Polshinskaya, 2019), e-business (Kosaka, Wu, Xing, & Zhang, 2021), learning and teaching (Kiliçkaya, 2018), marketing (Ahmad, 2021), political advertisement (Franklin Fowler, Franz, Martin, Zachary, & Ridout, 2020), administration (Galazka, Beynon, & Edwards, 2018), distance work (Cetrulo, Guarascio, & Virgillito, 2020), games and recreation (Wibawa, Rochimah, & Anggoro, 2019), news (Vosoughi, Roy, & Aral, 2018), among others.

In the context of *e-business*, *e-commerce* is considered a fundamental area of study to explain the economic development of contemporary society (Li, Du, Zhang, & Mao, 2018). There are various studies in relation to *e-commerce* such as: production optimization (Maciulyte-Sniukiene & Butkus, 2020), market research (Busca & Bertrandias, 2020), logistics resources (Li, Shen, & Huang, 2019), social marketing (Jung, Seungjun, & Kim, 2020), digital security (Raju & Vivekanandam, 2019), remote communication (Mero (Järvinen), 2018), and quality of service (Dhingra, Gupta, & Bhatt, 2020).

In *e-commerce*, *electronic transactions* are the most critical condition in the *buying-selling process* (Cardoso & Martínez, 2019). Mechanisms for resolving commercial disputes (Onyema, 2019) are studied in order to be refined and/or generalized at the international (Fentiman, 2018) level. Of course, digital security and relevant legislative development (Grazia, 2018) are heavily involved here.

There are some reviews about *electronic transactions* in *e-commerce* (González Castolo, Ramos Cabral, Zataraín Durán, & Hernández, 2021) (Stephen, Mazey, Baglione, & Storholm, 2019). These reviews take into account *providers* (Luk, Choy, & Lam, 2018), *consumers* (Trivedi & Sama, 2020), laws (Barkatullah & Djumadi, 2018), financial logistics (Ilin, Kalinina, & Barykin, 2018), and/or taxes (Argilés-Bosch, Somoza, Ravenda, & García-Blandón, 2020).

ISSN 2531-3002 RINOE® All rights reserved In this paper, the *electronic transaction* process is shown with formal tools in order to contrast them. In this work, the *pst* is modeled with a *conceptual map*, *pseudocode*, *coverture graph*, and *flowcharts*. Moreover, this procedure could be applied to more complex systems without any problem.

This article is organized as follows. The incoming section presents the glossary of definitions. Next, the *pst* is modeled with many formalisms such as *conceptual map*, *pseudocode*, *coverture graph*, and *flowcharts*. Finally, the conclusions are given.

## **Definition glossary**

Greed state (Gs): the emotional level at which a consumer (Cmer) is willing to buy a product.

Product (P): a service and/or object that is offered in the market.

Purchase-sale transaction (pst): Process to pay with money and receive a P in return.

Consumer (Cmer): the entity that acquires a *P* through a pst.

Entity: the organization or individual.

Provider (Pder): the entity that offers its P looking for a pst for said P.

In the context of e-Commerce, the Cmer and Pder are online consumer and provider, respectively. They are called as econsumer (eCmer) and eprovider (ePder).

Direct pst: ePder receives the payment for a product from eCmer directly.

Indirect pst: the payment is made with an intermediary.

Hybrid pst: the payment could be received directly and/or indirectly.

 $\wedge$ : It is and operator, and is used to represent event parallel execution.

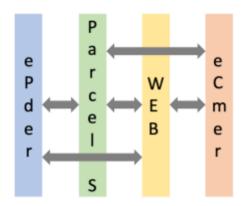
V: It is or operator, and is used to represent optional events.

Δ: It is strong operator, and is used to finish events before the next events.

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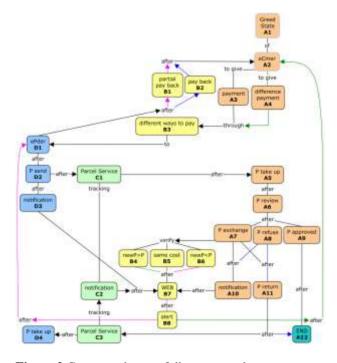
## Direct pst modeling whit conceptual maps

The *direct pst* has four basic blocks that are interrelated as shown in Figure 1. The blocks are related to actions or events were performed and/or occur in them. Each block represents an actor in *pst*. All blocks are considered animated actors because communication is present among them. The protagonist actors, *ePder* and *eCmer*, have indirect communication.



**Figure 1** Actors in direct pst *Own source* 

The *direct pst* is shown in Figure 2. Table 1 has its description. Conceptual maps are practical tools because they are expressive to visualize complex process. The rendering power of conceptual maps is limited because *loops* have imprecise description, and the *pst* flow gets confused without its description.



**Figure 2** Conceptual map of direct pst cycle *Own source* 

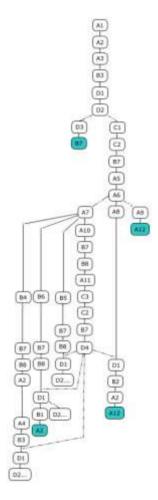
node	Description
A1	The eCmer has a Gs
A2	eCmer is ready to continue or finish the pst
A3	eCmer is going to pay to ePder
B3 D1	The payment could be made in different electronic ways  After ePder received the money and/or P return, ePder
DI	has taken steps to serve eCmer
D2	Logistics to send P to eCmer in a parcel service
D3	The ePder notifies through WEB portal that P was sent
B7	WEB register
C1	Parcel service transit
C2	Tracking P also involves when it is received
	B7, A5
A5	The eCmer receives P
A6	eCmer reviews P and takes a decision: exchange, reject
A9	or approved eCmer is satisfied with P
A	o Indirect elements notify ePder that eCmer is
	satisfied with P but, are not mentioned here
A12	The pst is finished (END)
A8	P refuse
A10	Notifies to ePder that eCmer has refused P or wants to
	change P
D.0	B7, B8
В8	The alert is activated after registering on the WEB the refuse of P or the change of P
A 1 1	Logistics to send P to ePder in a parcel service
A11 C3	Parcel service transit
	C2, B7, D4
D4	The ePder receives P
	D1, B2
B2	ePder returns the payment to eCmer and the pst is
	finished
A7	A2, A12 eCmer wants to change P and one of three cases are
A/	presented (B4, B5, B6)
B4	Price of the new selected P is higher
	o B7, B8: Notifies eCmer that it is necessary to
	cover a price difference
	A2: eCmer is ready to continue the pst
A 4	A4
A4	eCmer is going to pay the difference to ePder  o B3: The payment is through different
	electronic ways
	D4: eCmer returns P to ePder
	<ul> <li>D1: After ePder received the money and P,</li> </ul>
	ePder has taken steps to attend eCmer and the
	pst cycle continue
B5	Price P is the same as the new selected P
J.J.	o B7, B8: Notifies ePder that the money is OK
	o D4: eCmer returns P to ePder
	o D1: After ePder received P, ePder has taken
	steps to attend eCmer and the pst cycle
	continue
B6	Price of the new selected P is lower
ВО	o B7, B8: Notifies ePder that the price of the
	new selected P is lower
	D4: eCmer returns P to ePder
	o D1: After ePder received P, it has taken steps
	to attend eCmer and the pst cycle continue
D.	D2
B1	ePder returns the partial payment to eCmer
	<ul> <li>This is a parallel and asynchrony event, and it is necessary to end pst</li> </ul>
	A2
L	

**Table 1**. Description of *e-Commerce* transaction *Own Source* 

In Table 1, bullet points describe nodes that continue from the node that is described here. *Successive dots* as a prefix to a label node mean that the cycle transaction continues to it. If the successive dots are a suffix a node, then the cycle transaction continues from it.

## Direct pst modeling whit coverture graph

Figure 3 shows the *tree coverture* of *direct pst*, and this was obtained from the *conceptual map* of *direct pst*. Green nodes are the end of the branch. Nodes with *successive dots* mean that the *direct pst* circle continues.



**Figure 3** Coverage graph of direct pst *Own Source* 

Figure 3 describes the *direct pst* flow that cannot be represented with conceptual maps, Figure 2. *Loops* have an indirect representation. However, the *coverture graph* cannot distinguish among sequential or parallel event.

## Direct pst modeling whit a math expression

The following expressions represent the *pst\_loop* equation that is abstracted from the *tree coverture* of *direct pst*.

$$pst\_loop = A1, A2, A3, B3, D1, D2 ...$$
 (1)

Equation (1) is interpreted as: event *A1* occurred before *A2*. Event *A2* occurred before *A3* and so on. Three ellipses indicate that other events continue.

... 
$$D2$$
,  $((D3 ...) \land (C1 ...))$  (2)

Likewise, in equation (2), events D3 and C1 continue from D2. Also, they are executed in parallel (2) as shown in Figure 2, but could be done sequentially (2a).

$$...D2, D3, B7, C1...$$
 (2a)

Equations (2) and (2a) have no real difference in practice because *D3* and *B7* are fast events. After that, the following events shown in equations (3) and (4) going to occur.

$$\dots C1, C2, B7, A5, A6 \dots$$
 (3)

... 
$$A6$$
,  $((A7 ...) \lor (A8 ...) \lor (A9 ...))$  (4)

Equation (4) implies that events A7, A8, or A9 can occur. After the A9 events occur then equation (5) is obtained.

$$...A9, A12$$
 (5)

Event A12 is the final node. On the other hand, after the A8 event occurs, then equation (6) is given.

$$(...A8 \Delta D4), D1, B2, A2, A12$$
 (6)

The event D1 will take place after A8 and D4 have finished. Next,

... 
$$A7$$
,  $((B4 ...) \lor (B5 ...) \lor (B6 ...)) \land (A10 ...)$  (7)

$$\dots A10, B7, B8, A11 \dots$$
 (8)

Equation (8) could be expressed with parallel events as indicated in equation (9); this is similar to equation (2).

...
$$((A10, B7, B8) \land (A11 ...))$$
 (9)

$$\dots A11, C3, C2, B7, D4 \dots$$
 (10)

$$...B5, B7, (B8 \Delta D4), D1, D2 ...$$
 (11)

In equation (11), the *D1* event takes place after *B8* and *D4* have finished.

... 
$$B6, B7, (B8 \Delta D4), D1, ((B1, A2) \land D2 ...)$$
 (12)

Finally, the *pst\_loop* equation ends with equation (13).

... 
$$B4, B7, B8, A2, (B3 \Delta D4), D1, D2 ...$$
 (13)

## Direct pst modeling with pseudocode

A *pseudocode* of process in *direct pst* can be obtained from the conceptual maps, Figure 2.

```
input A1 //Greed State
A2 => eCmer=startTrans
i=1 //loop
do i<>0{
 if eCmer=startTrans then
  A3 //Payment
  A4 //Difference payment
 end if
 B3 //different ways to pay
 i=1 //loop
 do j<>0{
  D1 //ePder
   D2 //P send
    || D3 //notification->B7 //Web
     || C1 //Parcel Service(C2 //tracking)->B7
    //Web
    A5 //take up by eCmer
A6 //review
    input A7 V A8 V A9
    if A9=0
              //P approved
      A10 //notification
      B7 //Web
      B8 //alert
      A11 //P return
      C3 //Parcel Service
      C2 //tracking
      B7 //Web
      B8 //alert
      D4 //P take up by ePder
      if A7=1 //P exchange
       //B5->out if
       if B4 //newP>P
         A2 => eCmer=adjustTrans
         j=0 //out loop
       else //B6 //newP<P
         B1 //partial pay back
       end if
      else // A8 => P refuse
       B2 //pay back
       ALL FALSE //end if end loop j end loop i
      end if
    else //P approved
     ALL FALSE //endif end loop j end loop i
    end if
   //j
A12 END
```

In the previous *pseudocode*, parallel events are represented with the  $\parallel$  symbol. The *FALSE* tag means that all control variables are false. When *B5* occurs, then *j loop* continues. Note that the event *B5* is an event that is lost in the *pseudocode*.

#### Direct pst modeling with flowcharts

Figure 4 shows the *flowcharts* of direct *pst* where *A5*, *A6* means that *A5* occurs after *A6*.

After B2 it is not necessary to mention A2 because a *loop* starts from B2.

The parallel events are easy to identify, but due to the fast-computing process, some could be put as sequential events.

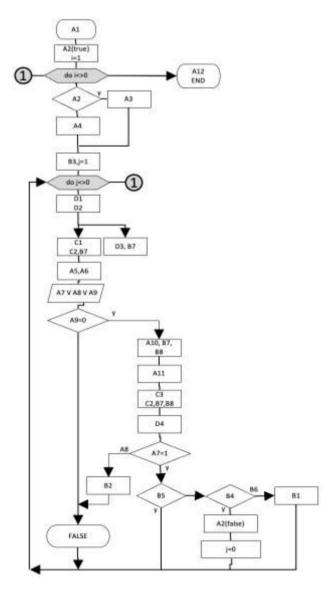
The *loops* are easy to identify. They have i and j as control variables.

After *B5* it is not necessary to mention *B7* and *B8* because the *pst* flow is well described and, they are computational events.

After B4, the j control variable is necessary for following the pst flow.

The *flowcharts* are more complex to interpret without prior context.

Now, reduced *pseudocode* is presented in order to show the exact representation of the original *pseudocode* with *flowcharts*.



**Figure 4** Flowcharts of direct pst *Own source* 

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# Direct modeling of pst with reduced pseudocode

In the following lines, reduced *pseudocode* is shown. This is called *pseudocode2* and it is a reduced representation of direct *pst* obtained from the *flowchart* in Figure 4.

```
start A1
A2=true
i true
do i <> false
 if A2 true
  A3
 else
  Α4
 end if
 вз
 j=1
 do j <> 0
   D1
   D2
   ||D3,B7
   ||C1,C2,B7
   Α5
   input A7 V A8 V A8
   if A9=0
     A10, B7, B8, A11, C3, C2, B7, B8, D4
     if A7=1
        //B5 same cost
      if B4=1
        A2=false
      j=0 //out_loop_j
else //B6
        в1
      endif
     else
       В2
        all_variables=0
     endif
   else
    all variables=0
   endif
 enddo
enddo
A12 //END
```

The *pseudocode2* is a reduced representation of *direct pst* obtained from its *flowchart* in figure 4. In this case, the symbol || represents parallel processes. The *all\_variables* tag refers to the control variables as *i*, *j*.

#### **Conclusions**

This paper presented a description of the *direct* pst. The description was made using different formalisms such conceptual as mathematical expressions, and computational (pseudocode, flowcharts). resources obtained models have different advantages and limitations among them. For example, conceptual maps are easy tools for representing complex processes, but they are limited because they cannot show their flow without an adjunct explication. The *coverage graph* shows the *pst* but can't differentiate sequential and parallel events.

The *math expressions* are more precise to describe the *pst* but lost the visual representation and it's difficult to identify the *loops*. The *pseudocode*, as *math expressions*, is precise with the process flow but lost the visual representation. Finally, the *flowchart* is a recurse that helps to describe the *pst* with minimal elements that omit some important events.

The procedure could be applied to more complex systems without any difference. In the near future, this work will be extended to represent the coverage graph in Petri nets with the aim of optimizing the *pst*.

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