
Guest Lecture

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Why A Model Does Not An Ontology Make

Robert A. Meersman

Department of Computer Science
Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Almost all examples of so-called ontologies in today's research literature on the Semantic Web are in fact just their author's (extended) data model for a particular, a priori known, application that the author has in mind. Ontologies as computer-based repositories of a domain's semantics however should not be bound to the context of a single "application". Indeed they must express a form of agreement, in an "application-independent" language, on the concepts, relationships, events, rules and processes present in that domain. Agreements in turn imply (virtual) communities of users and/or developers collaborating towards such a shared, formal understanding.

In the DOGMA Framework (Developing Ontology-Grounded Methodology and Applications) of the VUB STARLab, the theoretical foundations of ontologies and of collaborative ontology engineering are studied, and an experimental tool suite to illustrate the principles that are claimed to be involved is developed. This lecture reports on some results and applications as well as difficulties.

Dr. Robert A. Meersman is a professor in the Department of Computer Science of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel where he leads the Semantics Technology and Applications Research Laboratory (STAR Lab).