

"Whither TEI": Session planning

TODOs

1. Decide what we'd like to get out of this exercise
2. Find out what venue is like, so we can plan on how to engage the audience
3. Develop short position papers for delivery
4. Disseminate those beforehand; get comments; revise
5. Figure out who's presenting, who's moderating, and who's planted in the audience

Position Papers

Presentation #1: What Council Does (Raff Viglianti, Elisa Beshero-Bondar)

- Anatomy of a bugfix/feature request
- Release?

Presentation #2: Customization or Simple Defaults? (Lou Burnard)

- Why do/don't people build custom schemas?
- For TEI adopters, is it better to an easy schema choice or should most people learn to customize?

Presentation #3: TEI Next

- should we re-evaluate our relationship to XML?
- should we do more "outreach" to the Web?

ODD Survey Questions for #2

Do you know what TEI ODDs are?

- Yes
- no

Do you ever use a TEI Schema you or your project has customized?

- Yes
- No
- don't know

If you don't, what do you use?

- TEI Lite
- TEI All
- EpiDoc
- Other

If you don't customize TEI, Why don't you?

- Didn't know you could
- Too complicated
- The schema I use just works
- Other

MS: If you customize, how do you create your ODD?

- ROMA
- By hand using XML editing tools

MT: If you think customization is too complicated, what could possibly help?

- Pre-defined TEI flavors (eg. correspondence, plays, diaries, early modern books)
- Better interface to create ODD in a graphic manner
- Better explanation of the customization process in the Guidelines
- Divine intervention

Ideas

Notes from 2016-07-29 Council meeting:

- Big picture questions: Weak points in the TEI? / Road to P6?
 - Remember that P5 was designed to evolve at major versions and we've committed to the idea that P6 is only for major new technologies (such as SGML to XML) or major infrastructural change.
- LB suggests we should address a lack of understanding in the community about writing ODDs (EB)
- What it takes to make a small change to the Guidelines? - disagree that showing all the technical details will be compelling (EM) - but maybe explain the infrastructure in general way.
- Goal: provide more insight into what Council does and how it works - less about software and more about schema? (EM) Maybe also more about how audience can get involved? Why Council shouldn't be only people maintaining software? How they can help, etc.

Thoughts?

EB: I think we have to respond in some way to Elena Pierazzo's presentation in Lyon, calling for TEI to be expressed in other ways than XML. She said it would take a year, and we should do it "while we are strong." It's a challenge we shouldn't let go unanswered because if we don't bring it up someone in the audience surely will. And of course it's complicated to respond

to! I'd suggest discussing web interfaces and the new attention to JavaScript technologies (perhaps Raff's ideas/efforts on generating a JavaScript alternative to Roma?) might be a direction to take, as well as some attention to the distinctive strengths and capacities of TEI as XML.

HC; I Agree responding to EP's Lyon talk is a good idea, though I'm not sure where to go with it. Some thoughts:

- Improving Roma potentially responds to Lou's "Why aren't you writing ODDs?" question (if the reason people aren't is because ODDs are scary and Roma doesn't help enough). Other possibilities are that the module/class system is kind of a mess, and too hard to understand; the documentation is too opaque; the downsides of just picking a pre-baked schema are unclear. I think it's very important to ask the question though. In fact, I wonder whether we ought not to put together a survey before the conference and circulate it.
- Another consideration might be Fabio Ciotti's work on building a TEI ontology. While it has a class system (sort of), TEI lacks any concept of inheritance, and that makes for a degree of clumsiness that I think contributes to some of our horrible content models. It also makes it harder to have rules that apply to class members
- A further thought: maybe we're reaching the stage at which XML's tooling really isn't working for us anymore...FC pointed out in his DH talk, that `<p>` in the `<teiHeader>` isn't really the same as `<p>` in the `<text>`, which is an illustration of this. No schema language out there can deal with context-based content models satisfactorily (there is always Schematron, but that won't give you a list of allowed elements). Maybe it's time to think about finishing the job of breaking ODD out of prison.

LB: May I just say that I find EP's objections to XML (like those of D. Schmidt) somewhat unhelpful and incoherent? I will anyway. Pointy-bracket-based-markup-systems don't seem to me to be about to disappear any time soon.

LB : Another random thought: why not put some effort into developing an appropriate TEI schema for authoring websites? SB: Or phone apps? (Or both?)

EB (post Council meeting): Council will keep discussing here over the next week, and prepare some discussion points/questions for reflection for the TEI community to send via listserv a few weeks before conference. Among topics of interest: the uses of ODD, problems people have.

Also, that ODDs aren't necessary for every project.

Our audience at the member's meeting in Vienna is likely to be full of ODD users.