
BBT User stories. Benefits from joining the thesaurus federation

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Abstract

The Backbone Thesaurus (BBT for short) [1] is the research outcome of work undertaken by the Thesaurus Maintenance WG in an effort to design and establish a coherent overarching meta-thesaurus for the Humanities, under which specialist thesauri and structured vocabularies used across scholarly communities can be integrated and form a thesaurus federation. Its core feature is that it promotes alignment of cutting-edge terminology to the well-formed terms of the meta-thesaurus capturing general meanings. The BBT favors a loose integration of multiple thesauri, by offering a small set of top-level concepts (facets and hierarchies) for specialist thesauri terms to map to. This way, it enables cross-disciplinary resource discovery, while ensuring compatibility with thesauri that cover highly specific scientific domains and areas of knowledge in development.

The labels and the definitions for the facets and hierarchies of the BBT are available in four (4) languages –namely, English, French, German, and Greek.

The controlled vocabularies/thesauri the concepts of which have been mapped to the BBT to this date are the DAI Thesaurus [2], the DYAS Humanities Thesaurus [3] and the Parthenos Vocabularies [4]. At the same time, members of the working group are working towards integrating the Language of Bindings Thesaurus [5], PACTOLS [6], the Taxonomy of Digital Research Activities in the Humanities (TADiRAH) [7] and the Arts and Architecture Thesaurus [7] with the BBT, at least partially.

The BBT is systematically curated by a cross disciplinary team of editors coming from organizations participating in the TMWG (AA, DAI, FORTH, FRANTIQ/CNRS), through BBTalk [8], an online service designed to support collaborative, interdisciplinary development and extension of thesauri. The BBT versions are regularly uploaded to the DARIAH-EU vocabularies along with all their connections to local thesauri via the ACDH-ÖAW service [9].

Goal of this presentation is to showcase the benefits of joining the BBT federation and become part a gradually growing community of thesauri maintainers. The Thesaurus Maintenance WG will bring forward in a YouTube video linked on a poster via a QR code, designed for the Marketplace of the 2020 Annual Event, the cases of DAI and FRANTIQ. Their experience will help outline the challenges encountered in the curatorial process and how they were solved. We envisage that this presentation will serve as an overall evaluation of the work performed thus far by the Thesaurus Maintenance WG.

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