
TaDiRAH as Linked Open Data

Luise Borek and Canan Hastik

Abstract

Classifying and categorizing the activities that comprise the Digital Humanities (DH) has been a longstanding area of interest for many practitioners in this field, fueled by ongoing attempts to define Digital Humanities both within the academic and public sphere. The emergence of directories that cross traditional disciplinary boundaries has also spurred interest in categorization, with the practical goal of helping scholars identify, for instance, projects that take a similar technical approach, even if their subject matter and objects are vastly different.

TaDiRAH, the Taxonomy of Digital Research Activities in the Humanities, is the result of a year-long project undertaken by the DiRT (Digital Research Tools) Directory and DARIAH-DE (Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities) to develop a shared taxonomy. TaDiRAH was created to organize the content of sites as diverse as the DARIAH Zotero bibliography ‘Doing Digital Humanities’, the DHCommons online hub and DiRT (now TAPoR, the Text Analysis Portal for Research). It has also been used with the Standardization Survival Kit research use case scenario collection, and AGATE, a European Science Academies Gateway for the Humanities and Social Sciences, to name just a few examples.

TaDiRAH has been shaped both by and for the DH community to classify and define research activities in the humanities and related fields. With DHCommons, DARIAH and Europeana as its original use case environments, it has developed into a widely known taxonomy that has been used and adapted in various international research projects. Through a community-driven approach, TaDiRAH has been improved through user feedback and has been translated into French, German, Spanish and Serbian increasing its application. However, to meet an increasing demand that is intensified by the growing influence of linked data technologies ensuring interoperability in digital research infrastructures, TaDiRAH should now evolve from a sum of terms in the form of narrower and broader relationships to a formalized model with a common ontological basis. Within CLARIAH-DE the taxonomy is now translated into a machine-readable version in order to implement it in the Language Resource Switchboard (LRS). This process includes the conceptualization, semantification and formalization of the existing taxonomy in terms of the FAIR Principles. It will be made available as Simple Knowledge Organization System (SKOS) including a SPARQL endpoint becoming part of DARIAH-EU’s Vocab services hosted at the Austrian Centre for Digital Humanities Austrian Academy of Sciences (ACDH-ÖAW).

TaDiRAH’s aim remains to be a community-driven taxonomy that is easy to use and meets the needs of a wide variety of humanities scholars. The goal, therefore, is to provide a version that is more fully compliant with standards for Linked Open Data (LOD). With several European initiatives currently shaping advanced research infrastructures that could benefit from its implementation, new collaborations have been formed to bring TaDiRAH to this next level. TaDiRAH’s implementation may lead to the taxonomy living on and help categorize, visualize, search, and find the activities and results of Digital Humanities initiatives.

Keywords: Taxonomy, Digital Humanities, Community, LOD