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TextAPI and TIDO - An example for research software product development

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Introduction

Interoperability is key. Libraries, archives, and other repositories providing data to the public utilize a variety of metadata standards and interface specifications. TextAPI is a newly developed API specification (so far mainly used for digital scholarly editions) that provides metadata about textual resources while TIDO (Text vIewer for Digital Objects) is an application to display them. Our contribution will give a short introduction about this couple.

Providing (meta)data for digital editions via API makes applications using this data agnostic to the back end technology. This can significantly contribute to the sustainability of the project and the resulting architecture. TextAPI does not require any database at all, since a static copy of the resources provided by a webserver is sufficient for most features.

TextAPI

Features   By referencing **Web Annotations** TextAPI resources can be extended to any scale. Currently we use Web Annotations to reference entities, highlight editorial desicions and other annotations.
The API is organized in a **modular** and **extensible** way to extend the core specifications with additional data for specific use cases.
The specification conforms to JSON-LD format to become part of the semantic web.

TIDO

TIDO is a web application based on VueJS operating in common with the TextAPI. It provides views to the data organized in panels and tabs. These views contains image, text, metadata, collection objects and annotations. It is designed to be a general-purpose front-end application to display TextAPI resources. Project implementators can rely on highly dynamic configuration options in order to assembly the desired presentation of their data. It is possible to define a strict panel setup (order and amount of panels and their content) or rely on TIDO's default settings to achieve quick results. The viewer enables researchers to interact with the text by displaying various types of annotations, for example editorial comments or references to external registers. That combined, users are able to exchange their current state of the application by sharing a citable URL. The TIDO bundle provides a lightweight solution that can be self-hosted on any web server architecture.

Roadmap

The architecture is not feature-complete, yet. Our requirements mainly derived from projects creating digital editions (e.g. transcriptions) include the display of multiple sources at once for comparing and analyzing multiple texts. Also the interactions between text, annotations and corresponding images has to be improved to complete our construction kit for digital editions.

When applied on many resources, TextAPI will allow for a central search index for all these resources and so –again - helps to scale vertically.

- centralized search index based on many TextAPIs
- in the future: building LLM upon many TextAPIs
- Variants: allow to reference variants of a certain text part in the annotation panel

- Text Comparison: compare and analyze multiple texts side-by-side

Slot length

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