

Comments of OASIS SEE TC to SAWSDL

Members of SEE TC became familiar with both documents [1], [2] produced by SAWSDL WG. Initial comments have been produced through the mailing list, but the final discussion has taken place during F2F meeting of the SEE TC in Athens on 8th of November 2006.

The work is well done, especially the Usage Guide, but there are several aspects, which we believe should be addressed. A general comment to both documents is that while we would expect from [1] to be a formal specification, it still includes the number of examples, which actually should become part of the primer/guide document [2].

If we take a look at these documents from an industrial perspective, it appears the WG is merely trying to move complexity away. The entire specification is about adding three attribute to WSDL (`modelReference`, `liftingSchemaMapping`, `loweringSchemaMapping`) and opening up a world of semantic magic. However as soon as a reader goes through it, it becomes obvious that the magic (as always) is nowhere to be found. The `modelReference` attribute itself is just a pointer useful for discovery, but lowering and lifting operations are very complex and should be described using difficult declarative languages (e.g. XSLT is not so well accepted by the industry, especially if XML2XML mappings are required). There would be a need to develop some grounding machine, that would be quite a complex piece of software that could (not should) be feed with declarative descriptions (XSLT, SPARQL, etc.) of the lowering and lifting operations.

Moreover, the behavioural annotation remains underspecified leaving many options open for describing the Choreography of the Web Service. We believe that WG mean Web Service Choreography when referring to “specify behavioural aspects”, but the ordinary reader might not understand the same by behavioural annotations.

The group may also wish to consider how semantic annotations could be used and acquired externally. There are two items of work to serve as a reference: use of ebBP semantic variables that may be attached to business activities and/or documents. These semantics and their values may also be acquired external to the business process. This may be quite valuable to add flexibility of use across domains. In addition, they may also be mapped to abstract web service operations. In addition, reference the eHealth work of Middle East Technical University (METU) where they also attaches ontologies to business transaction patterns using ebBP. Both serve as opportunities and insight into the levels of abstraction whereby semantics may occur and be effectively utilized [3].

[1] <http://www.w3.org/TR/2006/WD-sawSDL-20060928/>

[2] <http://www.w3.org/TR/2006/WD-sawSDL-guide-20060928/>

[3] http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/tc_home.php?wg_abbrev=ebxml-bp