Responses to First Public Review Comments on Code List Representation (genericode) 1.0

Draft, 3 August 2007

Technical Committee:
> OASIS Code List Representation TC

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1 Introduction

What follows are responses to the comments that were posted to the OASIS Code List Representation TC's comments mailing list in response to the first public review of the Code List Representation (genericode) 1.0 specification.

2 Comments and Responses

2.1 Peter F Brown, peter@pensive.eu

Comment

http://lists.oasis-open.org/archives/codelist-comment/200705/msg00000.html

The model and approach used seems to be an implementation of Parts 1 and 2 of ISO 11179, and yet no mention is made in the draft recommendation of this provenance.

My questions/concerns are therefore:

-       if it is intended to be an implementation of ISO 11179 Parts 1 and 2, why is no mention made? Could you point to how and where the specification coincides with or differs from the ISO standard?

-       if it is not intended to implement or leverage ISO 11179, was this standard at least examined in the course of the TC's work? what were the reasons for not explicitly working with it? Our primary concern is to establish what the advantages and issues would be for an implementer to use the proposed specification rather than ISO 11179 and/or - if they are not orthogonal - what the relationships between them are.

Response

ISO 11179 tends to be a basis for modelling methodologies (in particular the naming conventions), and doesn't apply directly to code lists. We note that both UN/CEFACT and ISO 20022 have some basis in ISO 11179, and both are interested in genericode, which suggests that genericode is complementary to ISO 11179. We don't believe there is anything in the genericode specification which requires a formal reference to ISO 11179, nor do we think it would be helpful to users to add such a reference, since users might be led to believe that they need to understand ISO 11179 in order to use genericode, and that isnt' the case.

2.2 Anthony B. Coates, abcoates@mileywatts.com

Comment

http://lists.oasis-open.org/archives/codelist-comment/200705/msg00001.html

The committee draft of genericode 1.0 does not support xml:base. It should be modified to do so. The difficulty is that genericode documents potentially contain two kinds of URLs:

1. those used as URIs to identify code lists, etc.;

2. those used as suggested locations for retrieving other documents.

The appropriate bases for these two groups may sometimes be the same, but certainly won't always be the same. As such, a choice needs to be made about which group to which to apply xml:base. It is recommended that the second group of URLs, location URLs, are the ones to which xml:base applies. Additionally, the spec should be tightened to say that canonical URIs (for identifying code lists and their versions, etc.) must be absolute URIs and not relative URIs.

Response

Agree to

- *add support for "xml:base" to Schema;*

- *note in specification that this only applies to location URIs, not to canonical URIs*

- *not in specification that canonical URIs must be absolute URIs, not relative URIs.*

2.3   Martin Roberts, martin.me.roberts@bt.com

Comment

http://lists.oasis-open.org/archives/codelist-comment/200705/msg00002.html

As a person who would need to convert the lists to be used by other applications, I have some concerns over the structure of the lists in terms of the XML.

In order to get values from any list the xpath required would need to be complex in terms of looking for an appropriate attribute that given that name of the value and then fetching the value from a related element.

This gives you a flexible structure for defining data but it does not allow schemas to provide validation of content or for applications to easily pickout the required data.

I would have prefered the use of something like

```
  <Value>
   <numericode>1</numericode>
  </Value>
```

Rather than

```
  <Value type="numericode">1</Value>
```

(yes I know this is not an exact example from the document)

The later form would not be able to be validated by a schema and therefore it would be possible to have the word numericode spelt incorrectly and the list would be broken. There are tools which can help in this kind of thing (CAM, Schematron) but it would be better to have a structure that made the best use of native XML rather than this current open schema approach.

One was round the need to allow flexibility of the names for value types would be to have a schema structure that others could use to define elements that could become legitimate children of the value or row structures.

Response

The proposal is to change genericode that would make it possible to apply Schema simple data type validation to values in rows. The reason that genericode doesn't do this already is because genericode allows for data type libraries other than the XML Schema datatype library, just as RELAX NG makes this provision (although we expect most people to use the Schema datatypes most of the time). The expectation is that validation of code list values against their data types will be done by tools other than the genericode Schema. The committee does not want to stifle innovation in this, but options include (a) validation of code list values by code written in some general purpose programming language, and (b) transforming the genericode document into an XML format where the values can be validated by a Schema (which would itself be generated from the genericode document).

Stronger language will be added to the specification to make it clearer than genericode is intended as a format for codifying and transmitting code list information between users and/or systems. It is not designed as a run-time lookup or validation format for codes. However, it is expected that it will be used to load code list information into such systems.

2.4 Anthony B. Coates, abcoates@mileywatts.com

Comment

The genericode "CodeList.xsd" uses "rule:*" attributes to indicate documentation statements that are intended as additional rules that cannot be enforced by the Schema. However, in my testing, I have found that some Schema validators do not ignore these attributes as they should, so they need to be replaced by something which is less likely to run foul of less-than-perfect W3C XML Schema validators.

Response

Will replace "rule:" attributes with an alternate mechanism that embeds the same information into the Schema without causing this validation issue.*