

ABSTRACT

The migration of legislative archives into Internet, the imminent "semantic web" and the expectations generated from such processes make it necessary and possible, thanks to the technologies now available, to proceed to the review of information systems and their data. The access of the citizen to the legislative data will be in fact not only virtual but effective only if the information systems will be adapted to such not specialized user. It will be necessary to modify the systems and the data: appropriate interfaces will make it easier and in some way guide the access of common user. The data also should be transparent and enriched with meta data, able to point out and make it comprehensible the meaningful aspects.

For the Italian legislation the NormInRete plan (Ministry justice and CNIPA) has already operated in such direction, promoting the standardization of the legislative data and its annotation. Metadata for the description of the Italian legislative data, pertinent to the act, to its provisions and to their relevant terms, are available. In this paper a model based language (DAO), to deeply and widely describe legislative texts meaningful fragments through analitical metadata, is presented.

In order to facilitate the information extraction activity it is necessary to identify, highlight and describe the relevant fragments included in the texts. In the model presented here, the significant pieces are regarded as provisions and their significant-necessary components are their arguments, while the conditionals elements and elements regarding time and space, acting on both provisions and arguments, are called operators.

The model based on provisions, arguments/subarguments and operators is in fact a language for the integral annotation of the normative texts. Its ability to cover is sufficient not to leave fragments not described.

Underlining explicit meanings, but not the implicit ones and so much the less adding new meanings to the formulations. Subsequently, during the searching phase, some implicit meanings will be deducted by means of special logical and technical-legislative rules.

On this language of basic description of the texts, other more sophisticated description instruments will be easily grafted. An example is the coupling of arguments to ontologies: while the language DAO indicates the contingent sense of an argument (the role: e.g. norm addressee), the application of the descriptions of ontologies to arguments-terms of the texts, adds information on their general meaning.

Therefore the method, avoiding a true and own legal interpretation, can carry out the neutral role of standard of description of the relevant semantic of the texts and constitute an aid to their consultation and a bridge towards deeper annotations for legal reasoning applications.