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Interoperability Issues Between Learning Object Repositories and Metadata Harvesters

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Abstract

In this paper we describe an open learning object repository on Statistics based on DSpace which contains true learning objects, that is, exercises, equations, data sets, etc. This repository is part of a large project intended to promote the use of learning object repositories as part of the learning process in virtual learning environments. This involves the creation of a new user interface that provides users with additional services such as resource rating, commenting and so. Both aspects make traditional metadata schemes such as Dublin Core to be inadequate, as there are resources with no title or author, for instance, as those fields are not used by learners to browse and search for learning resources in the repository. Therefore, exporting OAI-PMH compliant records using OAI-DC is not possible, thus limiting the visibility of the learning objects in the repository outside the institution. We propose an architecture based on ontologies and the use of extended metadata records for both storing and refactoring such descriptions.