

# Austrian Literature Moving to Cyberspace – A Framework for Building an Open Distance Learning Website using Platform Independent Standards

## Literature

Close contacts between the department of German language and literature of the Paris Lodron University and an increasing number of German Departments in various CEE-states have been established within the past 25 years.

Thus we have experienced a steadily growing interest for the topic „Literatur in der Wiener Moderne“, focussing a most interesting, shifting cultural scenery between about 1870 and 1910, comprising both the desires of incoming students and the demands for outgoing Salzburg professors.

At the same time it became obvious that it would not be possible to cover those demands by means of physical mobility, not only due to limited finances.

This project is one of the first steps in this direction. Further German (Austrian) literature projects are planned.

Not only adding new content will be part of the future development, also update in new technological directions are desired. Particularly the next browser generation and their ability to directly render XML will influence the future development (from the technological side).

Regardless in which direction the internet is developing, the content created and prepared for this project should be stored as flexible as possible for future use in various web and multimedia or **Open Distance Learning (ODL)** projects.

## Technology

The basic concept is: *Entering and collecting information not building layouts first of all.*

Reuse of data for future projects should be easy, so the data produced by the team of german language and literature scientists should be stored in a highly generic form with a minimum loss of information.

Platform independent tools are preferred for maximum flexibility

Metadata initiatives like Dublin-Core and RDF should be implemented for easy interoperability

The two teams were located in two cities so a good concept for information exchange and documentation was needed.

## Design



User Friendly Interface for entering data

Different types of documents: Lexicographical Articles, Lectures Text-analytical elements, „Free Elements“

High flexibility and stability in using multimedia elements like: images, music, URLs, ...

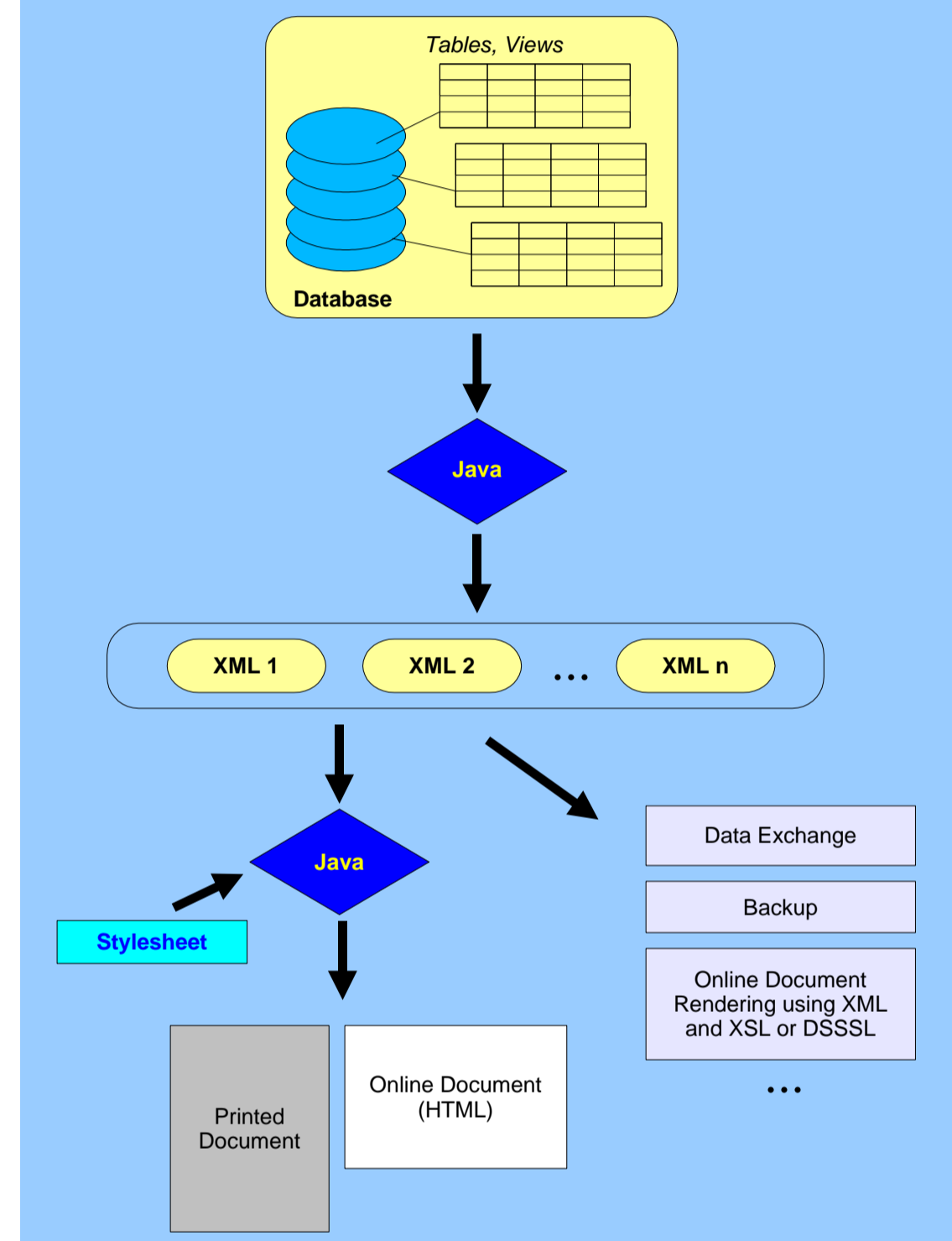
Adding or manipulating data must be easily possible.

Design is a relevant aspect for ODL user to:

Enhance Navigation in the text-oriented learning material

Give easy access to various types and depth of information

For a maximum in flexibility, design, content and the software creating the website are separated! So changes in design are easily possible



RDBMS for data storage

XML for presentation and data exchange

Java for Platform independent processing of data

RDF/Dublin Core for Metadata

Access as Frontend for Data Entry

## ODL/USER

STUDENT

„Machines“

Academic

Disciples

„Other“

Tourist

Teacher

We expect a broad range of possible users: Starting with the „core“ group of students who want to participate in the Open Distance Learning Program up to „Machines“ meaning: web spiders, Library agents, ...

ODL Students will have to pass an exam at the university of Salzburg after learning the lectures provided on our ODL Website.

Some may want to get information in printed form, so the lecture content will be available as

book using „Print on Demand“ technology.

Other users will be interested in Austrian literature and culture others may „simply“ be tourists and want to receive some information about Austria and its tradition.

Furthermore content is enriched with metadata-information, which allows easy integration of our content into future library frameworks.