XSLT

Introduction to Databases
CompSci 316 Fall 2017
Announcements (Thu., Oct. 26)

- Homework #3 due in 1½ week
- Project milestone #2 due in 2 weeks
XSLT

• XML-to-XML rule-based transformation language
  • Used most frequently as a stylesheet language
  • An XSLT program is an XML document itself

Actually, output does not need to be in XML in general
XSLT program

• Basic ideas
  • Templates specify how to transform matching input nodes
  • Structural recursion applies templates to input trees recursively

• Uses XPath as a sub-language

• An XSLT program is an XML document containing
  • Elements in the `<xs1:`> namespace
  • Elements in user namespace

• Roughly, result of evaluating an XSLT program on an input XML document = the XSLT document where each `<xs1:`> element is replaced with the result of its evaluation
XSLT elements

• Element describing transformation rules
  • `<xsl:template>`

• Elements describing rule execution control
  • `<xsl:apply-templates>`
  • `<xsl:call-template>`

• Elements describing instructions
  • `<xsl:if>`, `<xsl:for-each>`, `<xsl:sort>`, etc.

• Elements generating output
XSLT example

• Find titles of books authored by “Abiteboul”

```xml
<?xml version="1.0"?>  Standard header of an XSLT document
<xsl:stylesheet
    xmlns:xsl="http://www.w3.org/1999/XSL/Transform"
    version="2.0">
    <xsl:template match="book[author='Abiteboul']">
        <booktitle>
            <xsl:value-of select="title"/>
        </booktitle>
    </xsl:template>
</xsl:stylesheet>
```

• Not quite; we will see why later
<xsl:template>
  <xsl:template match="book[author='Abiteboul']">
    <booktitle>
      <xsl:value-of select="title"/>
    </booktitle>
  </xsl:template>
</xsl:template>

• <xsl:template match="match_expr"> is the basic XSLT construct describing a transformation rule
  • match_expr is an XPath-like expression specifying which nodes this rule applies to
• <xsl:value-of select="xpath_expr"/> evaluates xpath_expr within the context of the node matching the template, and converts the result sequence to a string
• <booktitle> and </booktitle> simply get copied to the output for each node matched
Template in action

```xml
<xsl:template match="book[author='Abiteboul']">
  <booktitle>
    <xsl:value-of select="title"/>
  </booktitle>
</xsl:template>
```

• Example XML fragment

```xml
<book ISBN="ISBN-10" price="80.00">
  <title>Foundations of Databases</title>
  <author>Abiteboul</author>
  <author>Hull</author>
  <author>Vianu</author>
  <publisher>Addison Wesley</publisher>
  <year>1995</year>
  <section>…</section>…
</book>
  <title>A First Course in Databases</title>
  <author>Ullman</author>
  <author>Widom</author>
  <publisher>Prentice-Hall</publisher>
  <year>2002</year>
  <section>…</section>…
</book>
```

Template applies
- `<booktitle>`
  - Foundations of Databases

Template does not apply;
- default behavior is to process
  - the node recursively and print
    - all text nodes

A First Course in Databases
- Ullman
- Widom
- Prentice-Hall
- 2002
- … …
Removing the extra output

• Add the following template:
  \[
  \textless \text{xsl:template match="text()|@*"} \textgreater \\
  \]
• This template matches all text and attributes
• XPath features
  • \texttt{text()} is a node test that matches any text node
  • \texttt{@*} matches any attribute
  • \texttt{|} means “or” in XPath
• Body of the rule is empty, so all text and attributes become empty string
  • This rule effectively filters out things not matched by the other rule
<xsl:element> and <xsl:attribute>

• Again, find titles of books authored by “Abiteboul,” but make the output look like <BOOK title="booktitle" />

... ...
<xsl:template match="book[author='Abiteboul']">
  <BOOK title="{normalize-space(title)}"/>
</xsl:template>  {expr} evaluates expr and replaces itself with the output string
... ...

• A more general method

... ...
<xsl:template match="book[author='Abiteboul']">
  <xsl:element name="{upper-case(name())}">
    <xsl:attribute name="title">
      <xsl:value-of select="normalize-space(title)"/>
    </xsl:attribute>
  </xsl:element>
</xsl:template>

  <xsl:attribute name="attr">body</xsl:attribute>
  adds an attributed named attr with value body to the parent element in the output

<xsl:element> creates an element of the given name in the output
Another slightly different example: return (entire) books authored by “Abiteboul”

```xml
<?xml version="1.0" ?>
<xsl:stylesheet
   xmlns:xsl="http://www.w3.org/1999/XSL/Transform"
   version="2.0">
   <xsl:template match="text()|@*"/>
   <xsl:template match="book[author='Abiteboul']">
     <xsl:copy-of select="."/>
   </xsl:template>
</xsl:stylesheet>
```

`<xsl:copy-of select="xpath_expr"/>
` copies the entire contents (including tag structures) of the node-set returned by `xpath_expr` to the output
Formatting XML into HTML

• Example templates to
  • Render a book title in italics in HTML
  • Render the authors as a comma-separated list

```xml
<xsl:template match="book/title">
  <i><xsl:value-of select="normalize-space(.)"/></i>
</xsl:template>

<xsl:template match="book/author[1]">
  <xsl:value-of select="normalize-space(.)"/>
</xsl:template>

<xsl:template match="book/author[position() > 1]">
  <xsl:text>, </xsl:text>
  <xsl:value-of select="normalize-space(.)"/>
</xsl:template>

• `<xsl:template>` allows more precise control of white space in output
<xsl:apply-templates>

• Example: generate a table of contents
  • Display books in an HTML unordered list
  • For each book, first display its title, and then display its sections in an HTML ordered list
  • For each section, first display its title, and then display its subsections in an HTML ordered list

  <xsl:template match="title">
    <xsl:value-of select="normalize-space(.)"/>
  </xsl:template>

  <xsl:template match="section">
    <li>
      <xsl:apply-templates select="title"/>
      <ol><xsl:apply-templates select="section"/></ol>
    </li>
  </xsl:template>

(Continue on next slide)

<xsl:apply-templates select="xpath_expr"/>
applies templates recursively to the node-set returned by xpath_expr
Example continued

```xml
<xsl:template match="book">
  <li>
    <xsl:apply-templates select="title"/>
    <ol><xsl:apply-templates select="section"/></ol>
  </li>
</xsl:template>

<xsl:template match="bibliography">
<html>
  <head><title>Bibliography</title></head>
  <body>
    <ul><xsl:apply-templates select="book"/></ul>
  </body>
</html>
</xsl:template>

• One problem remains
  • Even if a book or a section has no sections, we will still generate an empty `<ol></ol>` element
<xsl:if>

• A fix using <xsl:if>:replace
  <ol><xsl:apply-templates select="section"/></ol>
with
  <xsl:if test="section">
   <ol><xsl:apply-templates select="section"/></ol>
  </xsl:if>

• The body of <xsl:if test="xpath_cond"> is processed only if xpath_cond evaluates to true
Output control

<xsl:output method="html" indent="yes"/>

- Specifies that output
  - Will be HTML
  - Will be indented to make reading easier

- Other possible method values include "text", "xml"
  - For XML output, if you want to suppress "<!--...-->" at the beginning of the output, set attribute omit-xml-declaration="yes"
White space control

• White space is everywhere in XML

  ... ...
  <book ISBN="ISBN-10" price="80.00">督察
  <title>督察
  Foundations of Databases督察
  </title>...

  • “督察” goes into a text node (assuming no DTD)
  • “督察Foundations of Databases督察” goes in another
text node

• Specify `<xsl:strip-space elements="*"/>` to remove text nodes (under any element) containing only
white space

• To strip leading and trailing white space and replace any
sequence of white space characters by a single one, specify
`<xsl:template match="text()">
  <xsl:value-of select="normalize-space()"/>
</xsl:template>`
• `<xsl:for-each select="xpath_expr">`

  body

  </xsl:for-each>

  • Process body for each node in the node-set returned by `xpath_expr`
  • Processing context changes to the node being processed

• Another way to render authors as a comma-separated list

  `<xsl:template match="book">`

  ... ...

  `<xsl:for-each select="author">`

  `<xsl:if test="position()">1", </xsl:if>`

  `<xsl:value-of select="normalize-space(.)"/>

  </xsl:for-each>`

  ... ...

  `</xsl:template>`
Named templates with parameters

• Define a generic template for rendering a list of things as a comma-separated list
  • Cannot use match because we do not know in advance the things to render

```xml
<xsl:template name="comma-separated-list">
  <xsl:param name="things-to-be-formatted"/>
  <xsl:for-each select="$things-to-be-formatted">
    <xsl:if test="position() > 1">, </xsl:if>
    <xsl:value-of select="normalize-space(.)"/>
  </xsl:for-each>
</xsl:template>
```
Calling templates with parameters

• Use the named template

```xml
<xsl:template match="book">
  <xsl:value-of select="normalize-space(title)"/>
  <xsl:text>: </xsl:text>
  <xsl:call-template name="comma-separated-list">
    <xsl:with-param name="things-to-be-formatted" select="author"/>
  </xsl:call-template>
  <br/>
</xsl:template>
```

• `<xsl:with-param name="para_name" select="xpath_expr">` evaluates `xpath_expr` and passes its result as the value of the parameter `para_name`

• `<xsl:call-template>` invokes the named template without changing the context
Other useful features

- `<xsl:text>&#10;</xsl:text>` inserts a newline in the output
- `<xsl:message>` for debugging
  - `<xsl:message terminate="yes">` exits the program
- `<xsl:variable>` defines a (constant) variable
- `<xsl:function>` defines a function
- `<xsl:key>` defines a key that can be used for lookups
XSLT summary

• Used often as a stylesheet language, but can be considered a query language too
  • Grouping in XSLT 2.0 (<xsl:for-each-group>)
  • Very expressive, with full recursion
    • Cannot be replaced by XQuery?
      • Well, XQuery supports user-defined functions, which can be recursive
  • Easily non-terminating, difficult to optimize
    • Cannot replace XQuery

• So many features, so little time!
Review

• XML: tree (or graph)-structured data
• DTD: simple schema for XML
  • Well-formed XML: syntactically correct
  • Valid XML: well-formed and conforms to a DTD
• XML Schema: a more sophisticated schema for XML
• XPath: path expression language for XML
  • An XPath expression selects a list of nodes in an XML document
  • Used in other languages
• XQuery: SQL-like query language for XML
  • FLWOR expression, quantified expression, aggregation, etc.
• XSLT: stylesheet language for XML, in XML
  • Transforms input XML by applying template rules recursively on the structure of input XML