

Subject: A note for the Eclipse Language Conference

From: Allan K Pratt <apratt@us.ibm.com>

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To: bjorn.freeman-benson@eclipse.org

CC: Harm Sluiman <sluiman@ca.ibm.com>

Bjorn,

I don't expect to attend the Language Conference in Ottawa, but I'd like to make you aware of some tooling that might be relevant.

Version 4.1 of the Testing and Performance Tools Project (TPTP) at Eclipse.org has a new feature for displaying profiling data that is collected from a non-Java context. We call it the "application context" system: profiling data collectors tag the data with the name of the application context (not always a programming language name) that the data came from. As long as you can shoehorn your data into our EMF model, which is based on a Package/Class/Method structure, you can provide a "context formatter" and make the existing profiling views display your data using terms appropriate to the domain.

For example, C uses "function" instead of "method," while Fortran uses "procedure" and UML uses "operation." C++ wants to format namespace names (the equivalent of "packages") as "com::intel::something" while Java wants "com.intel.something." The context formatter system lets you use the existing model, loaders, and views, while letting you tell the views what terms to use for these things, and how to format the data for display.

We have user documentation for how it feels to use this system, but we don't yet have developer documentation for how to drive it - that is, how to create a formatter plugin that provides the terms and syntax formatting for a new application context. That's next.

This sounds like something the people at your conference would like to hear about. As long as you can write a data collector that produces a XML data stream that can be loaded into the TPTP models, plus a context formatter, you can leverage the TPTP views and have them display the data using the terms and formatting familiar to the programmer.

This is the first release, so the APIs are provisional. I'm sure the team would welcome feedback from consumers. If there is developer documentation available in time for your conference, I'll send along links to it. But even if not, I wanted you to know this exists so can publicize it, make people aware of it so they know it even exists. Thanks.

-- Allan Pratt, apratt@us.ibm.com
Rational software division of IBM