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Reification vs. Annotation

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Reification in Topic Maps

- *"The act of reification is the act of making a topic represent the **subject** of another topic map construct in the same topic map. For example, creating a topic that represents the relationship represented by an association is reification."* [TMDM, 5.3.4]

- **Example:**
  - employed-by(lm : employee , ul : employer) ~ employment-lm
  - {employment-lm , startdate , [[2002-11-01]]}

- **Reification – allows to make more statements about the subject of a statement**

Reification vs. Annotation in Topic Maps

Problem of Reification

- **Reification is**
  - the creation of a (first-class) proxy for a *subject* of a statement
  - i.e. a topic for the *subject* of an association or an occurrence

- **But how to represent METADATA about the statement?**
  - *Who has created the **statement**?*
  - *What is the creation date of the statement?*
  - etc …
  - → you can't use **reification** for this purpose
    - → because the subject of the metadata is the topic maps construct, not the subject of this topic maps construct
  - → it's the good old problem we know from "subject locators" and "subject indicators/identifiers"

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Proposal: Annotation

- *"The act of **annotation** is the act of making a topic represent the information resource which is another topic map construct. For example, creating a topic that represents the association item which is the proxy of a relationship is annotation."*

- **Example:**
    - employed-by(lm : employee , ul : employer) ANNOTATION employment-lm
    - {employment-lm , creator , [[Lutz Maicher]]}

- **Annotation - allows to make more statements about the information resource which is a topic maps construct**

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What is the solution?

- **Is there an "inofficial" agreement possible? Here?**
- **Discussion!**

Proposal: Annotation in practice

- **using the "item identity" of the topic maps construct to use as "subject locator" of the annotating topic**
  - this solution is in accordance with the semantics of subject locator "locator that refers to the information resource that *is* the subject of a topic" (TMDM, 3.17)