

1. Hierarchical TAP Examples

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What to do if you have too many examples in your TAP services?
 ... use the continuation property!

By the way: What to do if you have too few examples in your TAP service? Well... do write some...



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2. What's the Problem?

TAP examples are among the most popular features of our TAP machinery.

They are communicated in XHTML with some extra (RDFa) markup:

```
<div typeof="example" id="Queryagainstbooleancolumns"
  resource="#Queryagainstbooleancolumns">
  <h2 property="name">Query against boolean columns</h2>
  <p>Regrettably, ADQL has no notion of boolean values. Some tables
  this service exposes to TAP -- e.g.,
  <a href="/tableinfo/amanda.nucand" content="&#x2197;">&#x2197;</a>
  <em property="table">amanda.nucand</em>, have boolean columns
  natively... or <tt>'False'</tt> as string literals, as in</p>
  <pre property="query">
  SELECT * FROM amanda.nucand WHERE atmonsubset='True'
  </pre>
</div>
```

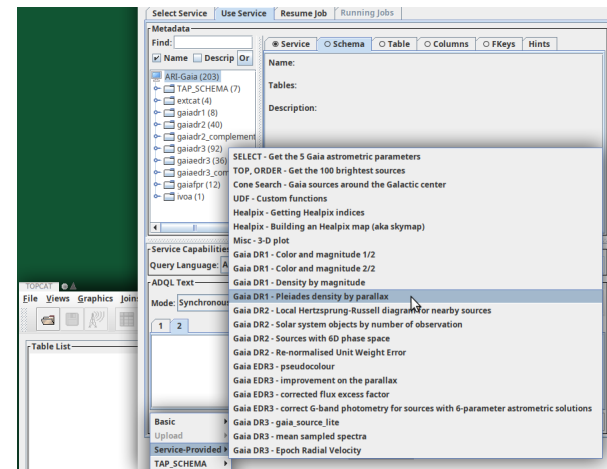


Fig. 1

3. TOPCAT's Rendering

(cf. Fig. 1)

TOPCAT lists the examples by title under the service-provided menu item you get when hitting the Examples button.

4. Too Many Examples

There's Miller's law of 7 ± 2 items in a menu. And at some point the menu spills over, too. So: Introduce hierarchy. From DALI (after DALI-Erratum 1):

If the examples are spread over multiple linked documents, the links to documents with additional examples [...] must contain the following additional attributes: a property attribute with the value continuation, and the href attribute with the URL of another document formatted as above (i.e. another collection of examples that clients should read to collect the full set of examples).

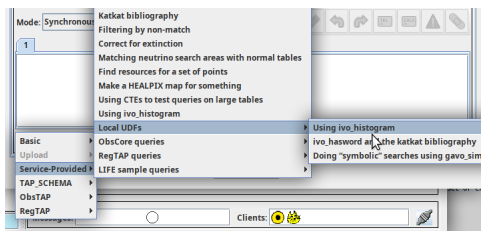


Fig. 2

5. Supporting continuation: TOPCAT

Until recently, few clients have supported the *continuation* property. Now, TOPCAT does: (cf. Fig. 2)

6. Supporting continuation: pyVO

pyVO 1.5 adds basic support for the continuation property. Try:

```
import pyvo
svc = pyvo.dal.TAPService("http://dc.g-vo.org/tap")
print(len(svc.examples))
print(svc.examples[-1])
```

This prints:

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```
SELECT star_ob.main_id as star_name, plx_value, plx_err,
plx_qual, plx_source_idref
FROM life_td.star_basic as s
JOIN life_td.object as star_ob on
(s.object_idref=star_ob.object_id)
WHERE plx_value is Null or plx_qual in ('D','E') or
plx_qual is Null
```

That is: All examples are presented in a single, flat list. That's certainly not ideal; it would also be great if there were a way to fiddle out the documentation URL out of the TAPQuery objects examples is parsed into. And the whole thing should be a bit more prominent in the documentation, too.

7. Treat Your Users

... and give them examples.

So many that you will need hierarchy and hence continuation.