Kepler-TANGO Integration at ELI-ALPS

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Motivation
ELI-ALPS is one of the three pillars of the European Extreme Light Infrastructure project. As a research facility, the infrastructure will contain a large number of experimental devices and equipment which have to be managed and controlled by a robust and flexible system. We found that the TANGO Control system is able to address this complexity. But using TANGO by researchers for experiment design is not obvious, because it requires programming knowledge. Scientific workflow systems provide easy-to-use graphical interface to create applications, therefore we decided to integrate TANGO with the Kepler workflow system to facilitate the flexibility of the control system.

Main concept
- One TANGO actor represents one TANGO Device
- The user is able to select a TANGO actor from the list of available ones (i.e. the TANGO devices in the TANGO database)
- An input/output port of a TANGO actor represents an attribute or a command of the corresponding TANGO Device
- The user is able to filter which TANGO attributes and/or commands appear as ports of the corresponding TANGO actor.

Steps of the development

1) Hard-coded integration
Goal: whether the workflow system capable of adopt TANGO’s unique functionalities.
Result: It is able to
- handle the connection of a device
- manage the execution of a command
- read/write some attributes

2) Database level integration
Goal: facilitate deploying the TANGO actors on the workflow canvas by choosing from the list of available TANGO actors.
Result: The extension appearing on a separate tab is able to query the available devices from the TANGO Database and to integrate it in a way that the user can conveniently deploy TANGO actors.

3) Complete type conversion
Goal: solve the type conversion, which experienced as one of the most challenging task.
Result: for basic datatypes the conversion is obvious. In case of exotic types, the developers have to agree on a general integration.

4) Configuring ports (attributes, command)
Goal: reduce the graphical elements as much as possible. One TANGO Device may have large number of attributes and commands, which means hundreds of input and output ports in a TANGO actor.
Result: The users should choose the attributes and the command in advance.

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