
Terminology work — Principles and methods

Travail terminologique — Principes et méthodes



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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

The main task of technical committees is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

ISO 704 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 37, *Terminology and other language and content resources*, Subcommittee SC 1, *Principles and methods*.

This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition (ISO 704:2000), which has been technically revised.

0 Introduction

0.1 Overview

The terminological principles and methods provided in this International Standard are based on current thinking and practices in terminology work.

Terminology work is multidisciplinary and draws support from a number of disciplines (e.g. logic, epistemology, philosophy of science, linguistics, translation studies, information science and cognitive sciences) in its study of concepts and their representations in special language and general language. It combines elements from many theoretical approaches that deal with the description, ordering and transfer of knowledge.

The terminology work dealt with in this International Standard is concerned with terminology used for unambiguous communication in natural, human language. The goal of terminology work as described in this International Standard is, thus, a clarification and standardization of concepts and terminology for communication between humans. Terminology work may be used as input for information modelling and data modelling, but this International Standard does not cover the relation with these fields.

In line with the current trend in standardization towards providing guiding principles, this International Standard is intended to standardize the essential elements for terminology work. The general purposes of this International Standard are to provide a common framework of thinking and to explain how this thinking should be implemented by an organization or group.

It is further intended to provide assistance to those involved in terminology management. The principles and methods should be observed not only for the manipulation of terminological information but also in the planning and decision-making involved in managing a stock of terminology. The main activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- identifying concepts and concept relations;
- analysing and modelling concept systems on the basis of identified concepts and concept relations;
- establishing representations of concept systems through concept diagrams;
- defining concepts;
- attributing designations (predominantly terms) to each concept in one or more languages;
- recording and presenting terminological data, principally in print and electronic media (terminography).

Objects, concepts, designations and definitions are fundamental to terminology work and therefore form the basis of this International Standard. Objects are perceived or conceived and abstracted into concepts which, in special languages, are represented by designations and/or definitions. The set of designations belonging to one special language constitutes the terminology of a specific subject field.

0.2 Conventions and notation

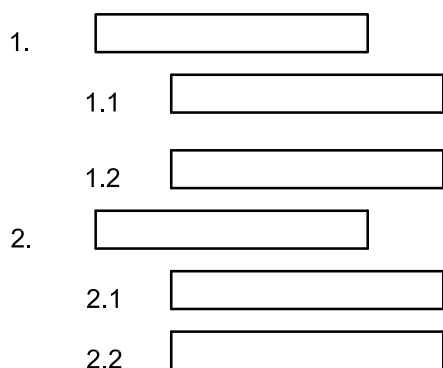
In this International Standard and for the English language, 'terminology work' designates the discipline; 'terminology' used in the plural or preceded by an article refers to the set of designations of a particular subject field, such as legal terminology.

For the sake of consistency in reference to objects, concepts, definitions, and designations, the following wording conventions are used in this International Standard:

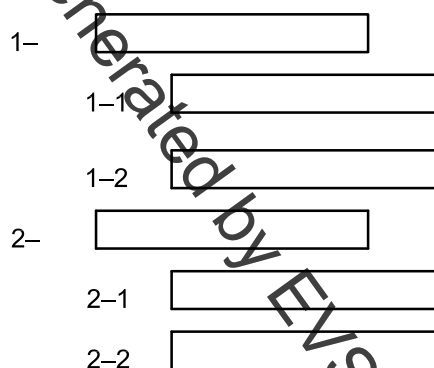
- objects
 - are **perceived** or **conceived**;
 - are **abstracted** or **conceptualized** into concepts;
- concepts
 - depict** or **correspond to** objects or sets of objects;
 - are **represented** or **expressed in language** by designations or by definitions;
 - are **organized** into **concept systems**;
- designations (terms, appellations or symbols)
 - designate** or **represent** a concept;
 - are **attributed** to a concept;
- definitions
 - define**, **represent** or **describe** the concept.

The more complex a concept system is, the more useful it is to clarify relations among concepts by representing them formally or graphically. Concept relations can be represented formally in a list. The formal representations used in this International Standard are indented and numbered with a full stop (period) (.) for generic relations and numbered with a dash (–) for partitive relations, as in the following models:

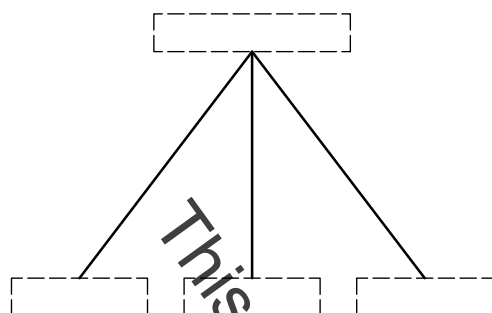
For generic relations:



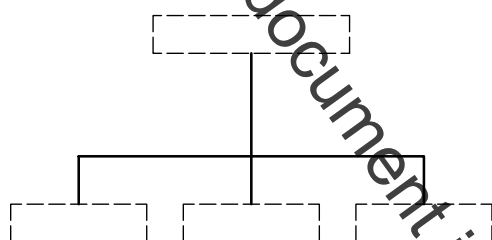
For partitive relations:



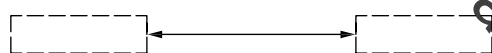
The graphic representations used in this International Standard are the most typical ones. The use of UML (Unified Modeling Language) notation for terminology work is described in ISO/TR 24156.



tree diagram to represent generic concept relations



rake diagram to represent partitive concept relations



line with arrowheads at each end to represent associative concept relations

The notation used throughout this International Standard is as follows:

- terms designating concepts defined in ISO 1087-1:2000 are in italics;
- concepts are indicated by single quotes;
- designations (terms, appellations or symbols) are in boldface;
- characteristics are underlined;
- examples are boxed.

This International Standard follows the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2, 2004 with regard to the use of “shall”, which indicates a requirement and the use of “should”, which indicates a recommendation.

It should be noted that the examples in this International Standard have been chosen and simplified for illustrative purposes. Translation into other languages may necessitate the selection of other examples to illustrate the points.

It should also be noted that the examples of term-formation methods, in Annex B, are specific to the English language in the English version and to the French language in the French version. Annex B should not be translated, but should be adapted to the needs of each language.

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Terminology work — Principles and methods

1 Scope

This International Standard establishes the basic principles and methods for preparing and compiling terminologies both inside and outside the framework of standardization, and describes the links between objects, concepts, and their terminological representations. It also establishes general principles governing the formation of terms and appellations and the formulation of definitions. Full and complete understanding of these principles requires some background knowledge of terminology work. The principles are general in nature and this International Standard is applicable to terminology work in scientific, technological, industrial, administrative and other fields of knowledge.

This International Standard does not stipulate procedures for the layout of international terminology standards, which are treated in ISO 10241.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 1087-1, *Terminology work — Vocabulary — Part 1: Theory and application*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 1087-1 and the following apply.

3.1

stipulative definition

definition which results from adapting a lexical definition to a unique situation for a given purpose and which is not standard usage

3.2

ostensive definition

demonstrative definition

definition which exhibits one or more representative object(s) in the extension of the concept

3.3

specialized concept

concept which reflects specific or technical knowledge within a given subject field