
**Terminology products and services —
Overview and guidance**

Produits et services en terminologie — Aperçu et orientation

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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.

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Terminology products and services — Overview and guidance

1 Scope

This International Standard identifies and describes a wide range of terminology products and services so that suppliers of these products and services and their clients can have a common understanding as well as shared expectations in their delivery. This International Standard outlines some of the generally-accepted terminology practices to be followed in the development and delivery of terminology products and services as well as some of the desired quality features that should characterize the products and services produced. This International Standard is intended as guidance for work contracts in the field of terminology. This International Standard focuses on terminology in specialized language as opposed to general language resources.

For general language resources, i.e. lexicographical products, a standard is under development and will be available in the future.

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 1951:2007, *Presentation/representation of entries in dictionaries — Requirements, recommendations and information*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1

candidate terminology

set of designations that has been extracted from one or more documents but has not been reviewed to determine its validity as actual terminology

3.2

deliverable

(project management) any measurable, verifiable outcome, result or item to be produced within a specific timeframe to complete a project or part of a project

NOTE Often used more narrowly in reference to an external deliverable, which is a deliverable that is subject to approval by the project sponsor, client or other stakeholder.

3.3

designation

representation of a concept by a sign which denotes it

NOTE In terminology work, three types of designation are distinguished: symbols, appellations and terms.

[ISO 1087-1:2000, definition 3.4.1]

3.4 embedded terminology
any set of terminology that is part of another larger printed document and that provides definitions or language equivalents for the designations in the printed document

NOTE In electronic documents, one finds a similar concept to the embedded glossary but it is called an on-line glossary or a hyperlinked glossary.

3.5 generally-accepted terminology practices
GATP
standards, rules, conventions and recommended procedures to be followed when producing terminographical products and terminology services

3.6 macrostructure
arrangement of entries in a collection

[ISO 1087-1:2000, definition 3.7.7]

3.7 microstructure
arrangement of data in each entry of a collection

[ISO 1087-1:2000, definition 3.7.8]

3.8 stipulative definition
definition that assigns a particular meaning that is valid only within a specific context or document

NOTE A stipulative definition can even go so far as to contradict the lexical definition or may change its extension beyond the norms of understanding in its subject field.

3.9 terminographical product
terminology product consisting of a set of designations and terminological and/or linguistic information to support special language use

3.10 terminography
part of terminology work concerned with the recording and presentation of terminological data

[ISO 1087-1:2000, definition 3.6.2]

3.11 terminology
<language for specific purposes (LSP)> set of designations belonging to one special language

NOTE 1 Adapted from ISO 1087-1:2000, definition 3.5.1.

NOTE 2 This concept differs from another concept represented by the homograph **terminology** (3.12).

3.12 terminology
<knowledge theory> science studying the structure, formation, development, usage and management of terminologies in various subject fields

NOTE 1 Adapted from ISO 1087-1:2000, definition 3.5.2.

NOTE 2 This concept differs from another concept represented by the homograph **terminology** (3.11).

3.13**terminology product**

product that supports special language use or the field of terminology

NOTE Products that support special language use refer to dictionaries, databases, and other products for the dissemination of specialized terminology while products that support the field of terminology refer to journals, training manuals, tools, etc.

3.14**terminology service**

service that involves the production and/or dissemination of terminology or terminographical products or supports education in the field of terminology

3.15**terminology tool**

terminology product that is a computer application intended to assist in the production and delivery of terminology products and services or in information retrieval

3.16**textual support**

information recorded in a definition, context, note or other descriptive information

4 Terminology products**4.1 Introduction to terminology products**

The following is a listing of terminology product categories that can be delivered in the field of terminology. The delivered product is a physical and tangible product developed in response to a user's specific needs. Therefore, the terminology product may be more customized than the basic product category listed below. Customization aspects are given for many of the products. Delivered products may also be interim products or services used to develop other deliverables.

4.2 Terminology product categories

This product category includes all delivered products in the form of a tangible product that supports special language use.

Terminology products fall into four categories:

- terminographical products;
- terminology documents;
- educational products;
- terminology tools.

4.3 Terminographical products**4.3.1 Terminographical product categories**

This product category includes all products that provide a terminology or terminologies and terminological and/or linguistic information to support special language use.

The deliverable may range from a single designation to hundreds of thousands of entries. It may include some general language words (lexica).

This category represents the largest set of products and forms the core of the terminology products produced by terminologists. This category includes:

- printed terminologies;
- electronic terminologies;
- terminology databases;
- systematic terminologies for information management;
- terminology lists;
- vetted terminologies;
- terminology equivalents;
- pictorial terminologies;
- multimedia terminology products.

4.3.2 Printed terminologies

4.3.2.1 Basic category

This category includes any terminographical product that is a closed set of designations in one or more specialized fields of knowledge with some textual support for at least some of the entries and disseminated in printed format. It may contain some lexical entries. This category does not include collections consisting of lists of terms or term-equivalent pairs (see 4.3.6.5 or 4.3.9). This type of terminographical product is comparable to and may be converted into an electronic terminology (see 4.3.3).

Printed terminologies are usually bound in a book or take the form of loose-leaf pages. The microstructure of the entries in the printed terminology ranges from a simple entry containing a term with a single textual support, most often a definition, to a complex entry with many term variants and synonyms and many types of linguistic, terminological or even encyclopaedic, information. Lexical entries may be included. A range of terminological or linguistic information such as incorrect usage, level of language, or geographic usage may be specified for some entries. Term variants or synonyms may be included and are usually accessed by cross-references. The subject field is generally specified in the title; in some cases subfields are indicated for some designations in the printed terminology. The layout is often in columns but some information may be shown in rows or in indented paragraphs. The macrostructure, the main body of the printed terminology, is organized in alphabetical, sequential or systematic order. If systematically organized, access is by alphabetical or sequential ordering (as in an index) depending on the language. The document may include a preface, forward, appendices, bibliographic information or citations. Updating requires reprinting. Printed terminologies are similar to and often formatted like lexicographical dictionaries (see ISO 1951).

The products in this category may be called a dictionary, a specialized dictionary, a glossary, a vocabulary, a lexicon or a terminology.

Printed terminologies may be classified as monolingual, bilingual or multilingual terminologies. Monolingual terminologies contain terminology entries for one language. These products may be called a specialized glossary, a vocabulary, a lexicon, a unilingual dictionary, a monolingual dictionary or simply a dictionary. Monolingual terminologies are arranged in alphabetical or sequential order, or accessed by means of an alphabetical, sequential or numerical index. The microstructure contains at least one designation and a definition or similar description.

A bilingual terminology includes entries in two languages and may be called a lexicon, a bilingual glossary, a bilingual dictionary or a bilingual vocabulary. It is arranged in alphabetical or sequential order, most often by the source language; the other language equivalents may be accessed with an alphabetical, sequential or

numerical index or a table of equivalents. The microstructure contains at least one term in each of the two languages, and one textual support element. There may be exceptions when one of the language pairs does not have a term for a given concept. Entries often have terminological and/or linguistic information in only the source language.

Multilingual terminologies contain more than two languages and are arranged in alphabetical or sequential order, most often by the source language; the equivalents in the other languages, if they are accessed, are listed in an alphabetical, sequential or numerical index or a table of equivalents. The microstructure contains terms in at least some of the languages, and has at least one textual support element; entries often have terminological and/or linguistic information in only the source language. Because there are multiple languages, language identifiers are required.

The deliverable ranges from the provision of the designations and textual support that make up the entries in the printed terminology to a complete end product. If the deliverable is limited to the information in the microstructure of the printed glossary, this will include the designation or designations, any linguistic and/or terminological information and the textual support, which can take the form of a definition, context, encyclopaedic information or note. If term variants and/or synonyms are included, cross-references may be required. Subfield specification may be required for some entries. An index may be required, especially in cases when the entries are numbered or appear in classified order.

More specifically, a deliverable for a bilingual terminology includes pairs of designations in two languages. Any terminological, linguistic or encyclopaedic information may be required in one or both languages depending on the nature of the terminology. The deliverable may include an index, indexes or a table of equivalents.

A deliverable for a multilingual terminology includes sets of equivalent designations in more than two languages along with language identifiers. Any terminological, linguistic or encyclopaedic information may be required in one or more languages depending on the nature of the terminology. The deliverable may include an index, indexes or a table of equivalents.

If the deliverable is the final end product, this may involve numerous publication tasks such as the preparation of the preface and forward, the design of the cover, the formatting and proofreading.

The deliverable is often customized in regards to the following aspects:

- macrostructure (appendices, bibliography, list of citations, incorrect usage);
- microstructure (usage labels such as level of language, geographic usage);
- level of completeness.

4.3.2.2 Printed embedded terminologies

An embedded terminology is a glossary or collection of printed terminology entries listed in a larger document such as a report, textbook, standard or statute. It often includes definitions and may include stipulative definitions.

It is most often monolingual but may be bilingual or multilingual and is limited to a single subject area or to the area of the document.

When the terminology is embedded in a legally binding document (e.g. statute, regulation, contract), the definitions are usually stipulative; when the terminology is embedded in a standard, the definitions are normative.

Printed embedded terminologies are comparable to on-line embedded terminologies (see 4.3.3.2).

4.3.3 Electronic terminologies

4.3.3.1 Basic category

This category includes any terminographical product that is a fixed collection of electronic terminology entries accessible from various entry points. The product includes a query function but does not have an updating function. For multimedia terminology products, see 4.3.10.

These products are monolingual, bilingual or multilingual with similar characteristics as those described under the monolingual, bilingual or multilingual terminology database (see 4.3.4). Because of their electronic nature, these products may be accessed on a single computer, networked or via the web.

The deliverable ranges from the provision of the designations and textual support that make up the entries to a complete end product. In the case of a final end product, the deliverable will require one or more terminology services (see Clause 5). In the case of an end product, the deliverable may take the form of a CD-ROM, an electronic file (e.g. pdf file) or a web-enabled file (e.g. html, xml). It may be generated from a terminology database (see 4.3.4) or converted from a printed terminology (see 4.3.2). Customization is limited to the display options, not the configuration of the information as in terminology databases (see 4.3.4).

This category includes:

- on-line embedded terminologies;
- hyperlinked terminologies;
- mobile terminologies.

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4.3.3.2 On-line embedded terminologies

On-line terminologies are smaller sets of electronic terminology entries (i.e. electronic terminology) that appear in a larger electronic document such as a section in a CD-Rom, a web page within a website or a frame within a webpage. It may be generated from a terminology database, taken from an existing electronic dictionary or converted from a printed dictionary. The display is preset, not variable. It most often includes definitions and may include stipulative definitions. It is most often monolingual but may be bilingual or multilingual. It is limited to a single subject area or to the area of the document.

When the terminology is embedded in a legally binding document (e.g. statute, regulation contract), the definitions are usually stipulative; when the terminology is embedded in a standard, it is considered normative.

On-line embedded terminologies are comparable to printed embedded terminologies (see 4.3.2.2).

4.3.3.3 Hyperlinked terminologies

Hyperlinked terminologies are sets of electronic terminology entries that sit behind an electronic document. The entries are not visible unless one mouses over the term or clicks on it. The terminology is hyperlinked to a set of entries so as to provide the definition or definition-like information in a pop-up box, as required. The number of entries and the way the entries are displayed and linked to the electronic document are customized according to the needs of the deliverable.

4.3.3.4 Mobile terminologies

Mobile terminologies are collections of electronic terminology entries formatted for mobile technology such as cell phones and personal information devices.

4.3.4 Terminology databases

Terminology databases are collections of electronic data categories that allow one to manage a stock of terminology by recording and updating terminological data and their terminological, linguistic and

administrative information. This category includes any terminographical product that involves continually adding and/or updating designations and terminological, linguistic and administrative information in a terminology management system. This terminology product category is not to be confused with the category of products that develop tools or applications for terminology management (see 4.6.2). Terminology databases include a query function as well as updating functions (add, edit and delete) to allow for dynamic updating. A basic database includes data categories for at least one designation, and language identifier(s) and administrative categories, such as the creation date for managing the data. The actual data categories selected for inclusion in the database will vary according to user needs (see data category registry). If the content of the database is limited to a single subject field, a subject-field data category is not required. If the database is not specialized in a given subject field, it includes at least one data category to indicate the subject field. If the database contains more than one language, it includes language identifiers. The display format may be fixed or may vary according to user profiles. The database may be stand-alone, networked or web-enabled.

These products may be called a terminology management system, a terminology bank, a term bank, a term database and are not to be confused with electronic terminologies (see 4.3.3).

The deliverable can vary widely and may range from the development of the terminology management system (TMS), (i.e. the development and structure of the data categories and any templates) to the terminology data to populate the TMS. The deliverable takes the form of a computer file or a web-enabled file.

The deliverable is customized in regards to the following aspects:

- language: monolingual, bilingual or multilingual;
- data categories: number and type;
- subject fields: one or more;
- database type: relational, flat, object-oriented;
- normativity: level;
- multimedia: types of integrated multimedia;
- display: format and what content.

Terminology databases can be classified as monolingual, bilingual or multilingual terminology databases.

Monolingual terminology databases are developed in a single language. In addition to the data category to record designations, the deliverable contains at least one other field or data category with a definition or concept description.

Bilingual terminology databases include terminology in two languages. The deliverable contains at least designations and language identifiers in each of the two languages, although there may be some entries with only a term (or a term and its synonymous terms) and corresponding terminological and/or linguistic information in only one language.

Multilingual terminology databases include terminology in more than two languages. The deliverable includes a data category to identify each language and one to record the designations in each language. The deliverable contains at least terms in some, if not all of the languages, although there may be some entries with only a term (or a term and its synonymous terms) and terminological and/or linguistic information in only one language.

4.3.5 Systematic terminologies for information management

4.3.5.1 Basic category

Systematic terminologies are collections of terminological entries arranged systematically according to classes or in concept systems. These products tend to be used for knowledge engineering, information and content management. The output of the products may be used for data and metadata management, management of recorded information and information retrieval. These products are often called a dictionary or specialized dictionary, synonym dictionary or maybe take more specific designations such as nomenclature, taxonomy, ontology or thesaurus.

The deliverables are produced as electronic and/or printed versions and the printed version usually has an alphabetical or sequential index. Most often the deliverable is produced in one language but may be in two or more languages and may include definitions in one or more languages.

This category of products includes:

- nomenclatures;
- taxonomies;
- thesauri;
- ontologies.

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4.3.5.2 Nomenclatures

This category of systematic terminologies includes any collection of specialized terminology compiled according to pre-established naming rules in classified order. The product does not include definitions but may include the rules. The deliverable is produced usually in one language but may be in one or more languages. It often includes acronyms or abbreviations.

4.3.5.3 Taxonomies

This category of systematic terminologies includes any collection of structured designations in classified order, which specify hierarchical relationships (generic and partitive) and/or equivalence relationships or synonymy. Products that deal only with synonymous relationships are often called synonym rings. The deliverable is produced usually in one language but may be in more than one language and it may include definitions in one or more languages.

4.3.5.4 Thesauri

This category of systematic terminologies includes any collection of structured designations used as descriptors for information management. The structured designations are organized into descriptor displays that include a preferred designation (descriptor), its hierarchical relations (broader, narrower terms), associative relations (related terms) and synonymous relations (used for). Other relations may be specified. In the descriptor display, scope notes may include definitions or definition-like information. Usually the deliverable is produced in one language but may be in more than one language.

4.3.5.5 Ontologies

This category of systematic terminologies includes any structured set of concepts whose relationships are indicated and presented in a diagram or model to facilitate machine processing. The complex set of relationships may be of any type and the designations representing the concepts may be displayed in various formats. Given its complexity the deliverable is most often produced in one language.