

Terminological Semantics

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Discussion

Terminological semantics defines meaning through terms, definitions, designations, notes, examples, sources, synonyms, deprecated terms, and usage constraints.

A terminology record expresses semantic content when it identifies a term, defines the concept designated by the term, records the source of the definition, and constrains how the term appears in architecture, models, reports, schemas, rules, policies, interfaces, and implementation artefacts.

Terminological semantics differs from ordinary word usage. Ordinary word usage changes across communities and contexts. Terminological semantics establishes governed meaning for a defined community, domain, architecture, specification, or project.

Terminological semantics also differs from [ontology](#). An ontology captures selected semantic commitments through concepts, relationships, distinctions, and constraints. Terminological semantics governs the terms and definitions used to name and explain those concepts.

Terminological semantic content includes:

- Terms
- Definitions
- Designations
- Acronyms
- Abbreviations
- Synonyms
- Deprecated terms
- Preferred terms
- Notes
- Examples
- Sources
- Related terms
- Broader terms
- Narrower terms
- Usage constraints
- Traceability to authoritative sources

A governed architecture preserves [traceability](#) from terminological semantics to source standards, conceptual models, vocabularies, ontologies, schemas, reports, rules, policies, and implementation artefacts that use the governed terms.

Definition

meaning defined through governed terms, definitions, designations, sources, notes, examples, and usage constraints within a defined terminology context

Source

DIDO Solutions usage, informed by terminology practice, ISO terminology principles, semantic modelling practice, and standards-development practice.

Note

Terminological semantics does not define all [semantics](#) of a domain. Terminology establishes the governing meaning of terms and definitions. Conceptual models, ontologies, schemas, rules, reports, policies, type systems, and implementation artefacts express additional semantic content.

A term without a governed definition creates semantic risk. Different communities can use the same term with different meanings or different terms for the same meaning.

Example

An FX Demo terminology record defines the term `settlement date`.

Terminology element	Example value	Terminological semantic meaning
Term	<code>settlement date</code>	preferred designation for the concept
Definition	date on which settlement occurs	governed meaning of the term
Source	FX Demo terminology source	authority for the definition
Related term	<code>trade date</code>	related but distinct date concept
Related term	<code>effective date</code>	related but distinct date concept
Usage constraint	use only for settlement occurrence date	prevents confusion with other lifecycle dates

The term `settlement date` has terminological semantics because the terminology record establishes the meaning of the term and distinguishes it from `trade date`, `effective date`, and `termination date`.

A schema field named `settlementDate` expresses schema semantics by constraining the field structure. The field preserves terminological semantics when it traces back to the governing definition of 'settlement date'.

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