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First edition
2013-03-15

Information and documentation — Thesauri and interoperability with other vocabularies —

Part 2: Interoperability with other vocabularies

*Information et documentation — Thésaurus et interopérabilité avec
d'autres vocabulaires —*

Partie 2: Interopérabilité avec d'autres vocabulaires



Reference number
ISO 25964-2:2013(E)

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Published in Switzerland

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Contents

Page

Foreword	v
Introduction.....	vi
1 Scope	1
2 Normative references.....	1
3 Terms and definitions	1
4 Symbols, abbreviations and other conventions	15
5 Objectives and identification	16
5.1 Objectives of interoperability and mapping	16
5.2 Identifying the elements to be mapped.....	16
6 Structural models for mapping across vocabularies	16
6.1 General	16
6.2 Model 1: Structural unity	17
6.3 Model 2: Direct-linked	17
6.4 Model 3: Hub structure	17
6.5 Selective mapping	19
6.6 Choosing among the options.....	20
7 Types of mapping.....	20
7.1 General	20
8 Equivalence mappings.....	21
8.1 General	21
8.2 Simple equivalence	21
8.3 Compound equivalence.....	22
9 Hierarchical mappings.....	25
10 Associative mappings.....	25
11 Exact, inexact and partial equivalence.....	26
11.1 General	26
11.2 Exact equivalence	26
11.3 Inexact equivalence.....	27
11.4 Partial equivalence	27
12 Use of mappings in information retrieval	28
12.1 General	28
12.2 Human mediation	28
12.3 Examples of mapping implementation.....	29
12.4 Conclusions and recommendations	30
13 Handling pre-coordination	31
13.1 General	31
13.2 Mapping between a thesaurus and a scheme with context-dependent captions	32
13.3 Mapping more complex classes	37
14 Techniques for identifying candidate mappings	38
14.1 General procedure.....	38
14.2 Computer assisted direct matching	40
14.3 Co-occurrence mapping	40
14.4 Other methods	40
15 Managing the data	41
15.1 Types of data to be recorded	41
15.2 Storing the data	43
15.3 Maintaining the mappings data.....	43

This is a preview of "ISO 25964-2:2013". [Click here to purchase the full version from the ANSI store.](#)

16	Display of mapped vocabularies.....	45
16.1	General.....	45
16.2	Single record display	46
16.3	Complete displays based on one of the vocabularies.....	48
16.4	Crosswalks	49
17	Classification schemes	50
17.1	Key characteristics and background.....	50
17.2	Semantic components and relationships compared with thesaurus components	53
17.3	Recommendations for mapping between a thesaurus and a classification scheme	55
18	Classification schemes used for records management	56
18.1	Key characteristics and background.....	56
18.2	Semantic components and relationships compared with thesaurus components	57
18.3	Recommendations for interoperability with a thesaurus	58
19	Taxonomies	59
19.1	Key characteristics and background.....	59
19.2	Types of taxonomies	60
19.3	Semantic components and relationships	61
19.4	Mapping between a thesaurus and a taxonomy.....	63
20	Subject heading schemes.....	67
20.1	Key characteristics and background.....	67
20.2	Semantic components and relationships	68
20.3	Mapping subject headings to and from thesaurus concepts	69
21	Ontologies	72
21.1	Key characteristics and background.....	72
21.2	Semantic components and relationships	73
21.3	Structural comparison between thesauri and ontologies	76
21.4	Interoperability with thesauri.....	77
22	Terminologies	78
22.1	Key characteristics and background.....	78
22.2	Semantic components and relationships compared with those of a thesaurus	79
22.3	Interoperability with thesauri.....	81
23	Name authority lists	81
23.1	Key characteristics and background.....	81
23.2	Semantic components and relationships	83
23.3	Mapping between a thesaurus and a name authority list.....	85
24	Synonym rings	87
24.1	Key characteristics and background.....	87
24.2	Semantic components and relationships	88
24.3	Interoperability with thesauri.....	89
Annex A (informative) Management of terminological data in support of interoperability		90
Bibliography.....		93
Index.....		96

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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 25964-2 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation*, Subcommittee SC 9, *Identification and description*.

ISO 25964-1:2011, Clauses 1 to 13, correspond broadly to the content of ISO 2788:1986 and ISO 5964:1985. The remaining clauses of ISO 25964-1, and the whole of this part of ISO 25964, cover new ground not previously covered in any International Standard.

ISO 25964 consists of the following parts, under the general title *Information and documentation — Thesauri and interoperability with other vocabularies*:

- *Part 1: Thesauri for information retrieval*
- *Part 2: Interoperability with other vocabularies*

ISO 25964-1 covers the development and maintenance of thesauri, both monolingual and multilingual, including formats and protocols for data exchange.

This part of ISO 25964 covers interoperability between different thesauri and with other types of structured vocabulary.

ISO 25964 covers development and maintenance of thesauri rather than how to use them in indexing, which is covered by ISO 999.

Introduction

The ability to identify and locate relevant information among vast collections and other resources is a major and pressing challenge today, hence the need for semantic interoperability. To support this need, a variety of web services and other tools are under active development, including (but not limited to):

- registries of vocabularies and metadata schemas,
- repositories of vocabularies and metadata schemas, and
- crosswalk services.

While registries and repositories are outside the scope, this International Standard provides guidance fundamental to the establishment of crosswalk services. Typically these rely on mapping between different schemas and vocabularies. Accordingly, inter-vocabulary mapping will be the principal focus of this part of ISO 25964.

The foundation for discussion of interoperability is laid in ISO 25964-1, which describes the key characteristics of thesauri and provides guidance on best practice. Unfortunately, however, a comparable International Standard does not exist for the other types of vocabulary with which a thesaurus needs to interoperate. For this reason, this second part of ISO 25964 provides some elementary description of other vocabularies such as classification schemes, subject heading schemes, etc., before making recommendations on mapping between these and thesauri. It does not provide guidance on the construction of vocabularies other than thesauri.

Clauses 1 to 12 and Clauses 14 to 16 of this part of ISO 25964 deal with the principles and practicalities of interoperability, especially mapping, that apply to most vocabularies and especially thesauri. Clause 13 provides additional guidance for handling the pre-coordinated classes that occur in classification schemes and other vocabularies using the classification approach.

Clauses 17 to 24 are each dedicated to a different type of vocabulary. First priority is given to vocabularies that are commonly used for classifying or indexing resources, namely classification schemes (including those used for records management), taxonomies, subject heading schemes and name authority lists. Notwithstanding their different purposes, terminologies, ontologies and synonym rings are also included. Each clause provides a brief informative description of the vocabulary's key characteristics, contrasting its semantic components with those of a thesaurus, so as to provide context for the interoperability requirements and recommendations that follow.