Terminology
Cross-Domain Group

InterPARES 2
Outline

• goals
• tasks
• challenges
• conclusions
Goals

• to improve the effectiveness of IP-related communication and dissemination
• by helping authors, readers, and intermediaries to select and use terms consistently
• thus increasing the likelihood ...
  – that authors will use terms in the manner expected by their readers: effective authorship
  – that readers will find documents of the kind they want: effective retrieval
  – that readers will interpret documents in the manner intended by their authors: effective understanding
Tasks

• vocabulary control
  – definition of terms
    • submission of candidate terms: listed in Register
    • compilation of candidate definitions: listed in Dictionary
    • selection of IP-approved definitions: listed in Glossary
  – identification of relationships among terms
    • represented in Thesaurus
    • collocating synonyms and disambiguating homonyms
Identification of term relationships

- identification of basic facets (e.g., Agents, Actions, Objects, Events, Properties)
- assignment of terms to facets
- construction of intra-facet structures
  - equivalence relationships (USE/UF)
  - hierarchical relationships (BT/NT)
    - genus/species
    - whole/part [actually RT]
    - [class-instance]
  - associative relationships (RT)
- selection of IP-preferred terms
Modeling :: Terminology

- **Modeling group**
  - modeling of **activities**
    - hierarchical decomposition
    - identification of constraints, motivations, requirements, products (i.e., entities playing different roles)
  - modeling of **entities**
    - identification of entity **types** [facets]: e.g., agents, events, objects ...
    - identification of **attributes**, **relationships**

- **Terminology group**
  - vocabulary control
    - consistent, rigorous definition of all **terms** used to denote activities, entities, attributes, etc.
Current facets

- **objects** [inc. sets and parts of objects]
  - e.g., “fonds”; “active record”
- **events** [i.e., activities, processes]
  - e.g., “authentication”; “emulation”
- **agents**
  - e.g., “juridical person”; “creator”
- **properties** [i.e., attributes, characteristics, of objects, events, agents]
  - e.g., “authenticity”; “date of receipt”
- **actions** [i.e., verbs]
  - e.g., “authenticate”; “certify”
TCS-8 example

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evidential value (529)

Stage: Process
Status: Main Term
Children: By Alphabet
Order: 

SN: The capacity of records of illuminating the nature and work of their creator by providing evidence of the creator’s origins, functions and activities. Evidential value is distinct from informational value.

BT Type: BT
BT: <properties of objects>
URL: http://www.interpares.org/rws/ip2_glossary_display_term.cfm?term=615
General challenges

• potential **conflict** of purpose: is partly **descriptive**, partly **prescriptive**
  – founded on current usage ...
  – ... but specifying preferred future usage
• **specificity** of (often multiple) senses of **technical** terms
• **domain**-specific variation
• **region**-specific variation
  – e.g., requirements for authenticity are not established by legislation, but by cultural tradition
  – thus, contextualization of project findings in national, multinational, international contexts is essential
General challenges, cont’d

• multiplicity of (sometimes contradictory) vocabulary-construction standards

• **facet** analysis
Specific challenges

• assignment of terms to facets
  – is the current facet-set useful and/or appropriate?

• categorization of terms within facets
  – within each facet, what set of categories is useful and/or appropriate?

• reconciliation of conflicting recommendations, in the various standards, as to form of terms

• reconciliation of conflicting recommendations, by IP stakeholders, as to definition of terms
Next steps

• evaluation
  – how are tools to be evaluated w.r.t.
    • complying with international standards?
    • meeting users’ requirements?

• public access, allowing users
  – to check standard definitions of terms used in InterPARES documentation
  – to search for occurrences of terms in internal/external documents
  – to identify terms for authors’ future use
Conclusion

• the process of deciding what is worth remembering and what is not is **political** (cf. Cook, 1997)

• so is the process of prescribing ("standardizing") the meanings of terms – no lexicographer is neutral or impartial

• tests: consistency, simplicity, utility
Terminology team

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