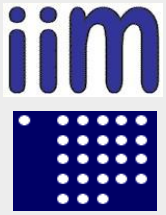
Introduction to Terminology
Part 2

Terminology Summer School - Vienna
09 - 13 July 2012



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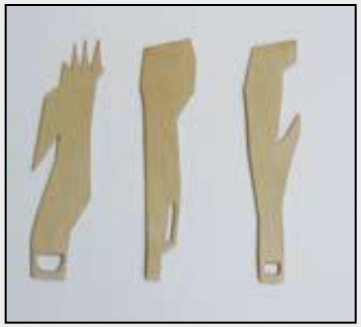
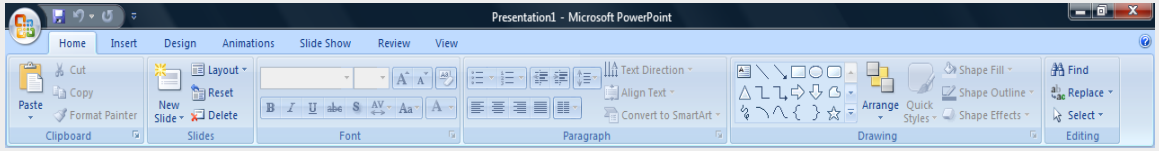
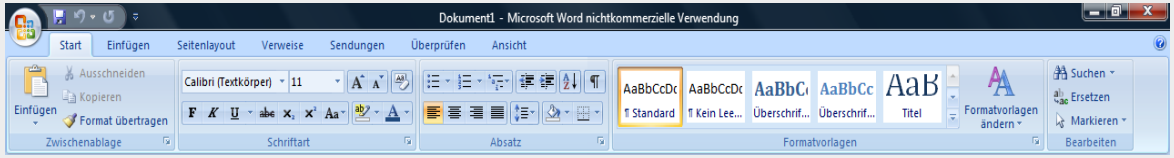
Coining new terms







Coining new terms

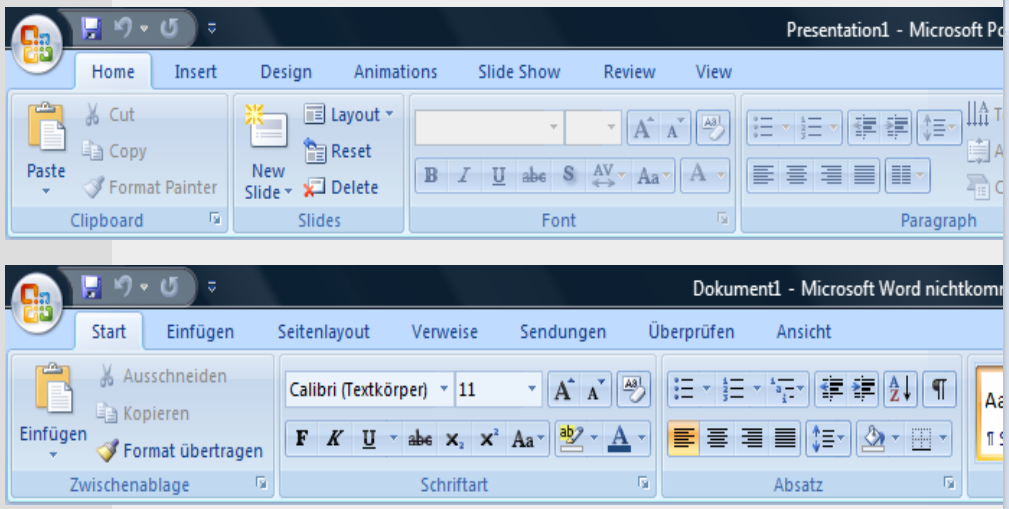
- Freiraum-Utensilien
- Multifunktionsbesteck
- ???

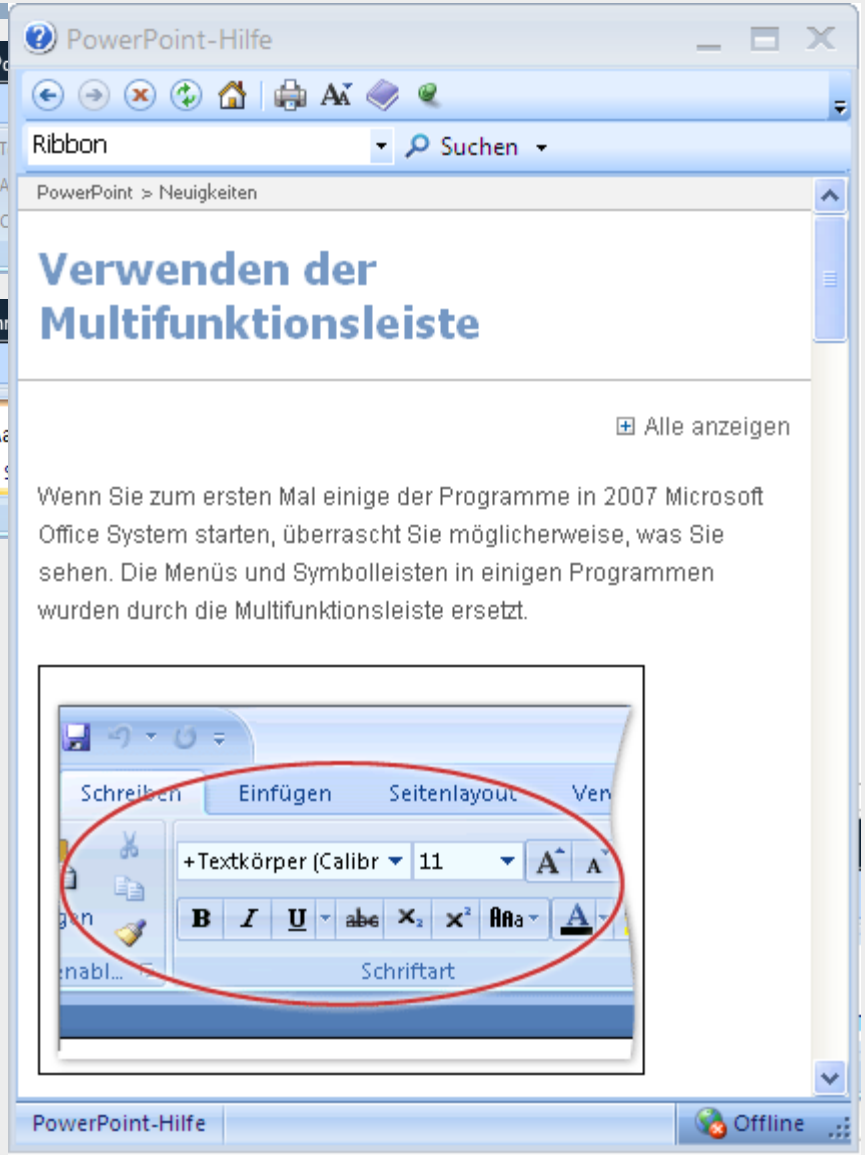
Coining new terms

Segway

- Segway Personal Transporter
- Segway PT
- Selbstbalance-Roller
- Gyropode (fr)

Coining new terms





ribbon

- Ribbon
- Band
- Multifunktionsleiste
- ruban (FR)

Coining new terms

- **Coining of new terms:** word formation + term buildings mechanisms (language dependant)
  - **Composition:** cyberspace, translation memory system
  - **Derivation:** *pre*face, manage*ment*
  - **Conversation:** the chair → to chair, green (adj) → the green
  - **Terminologization:** mouse (IT) ← mouse (bio, general), virus (IT) ← virus (med)
  - **Loan word:** festschrift, zeitgeist from DE, rickshaw from JP
  - **Abbreviation:** CEO, AIDS, scuba, Interpol
  - **New creation:** blurb, quark (very rare)

Selecting “good” terms

- **USB flash drive**
- **flash drive**
- **USB stick**
- **USB memory key**
- **memory stick**
- **keydrive**
- **pendrive**
- **thumbdrive**
- **jumpdrive**
- **etc.**

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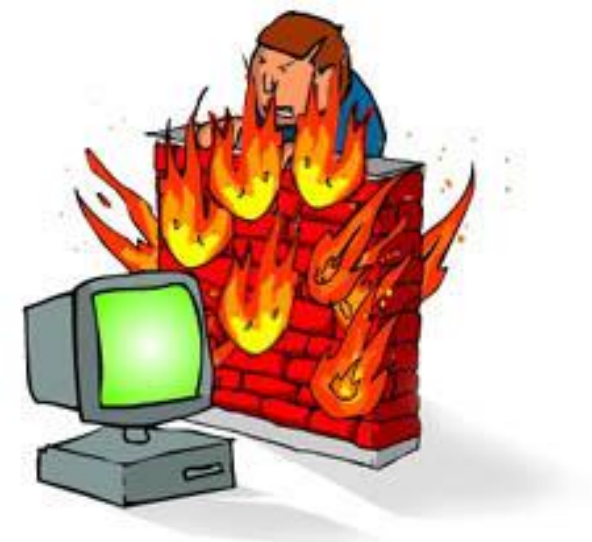
Selecting “good” terms

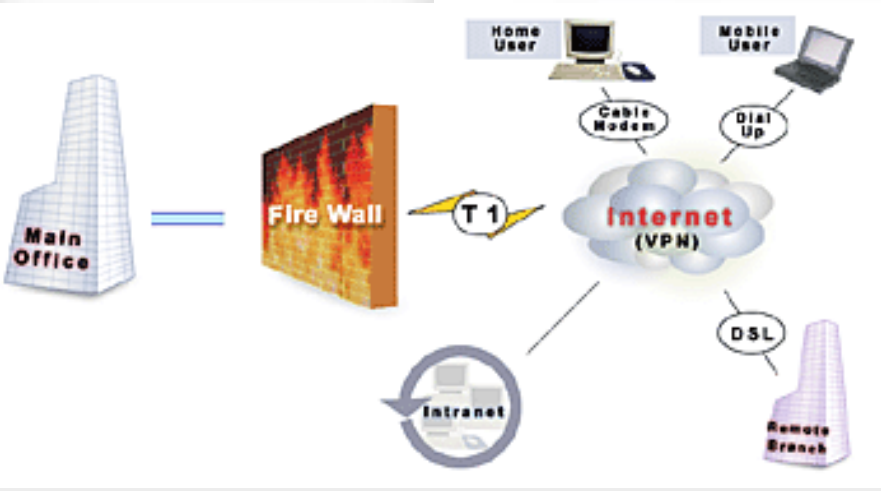
- **Criteria for the selection and creation/coining of terms (ISO 704):**
  - Transparency/motivation
  - Consistency
  - Appropriateness
  - Linguistic economy
  - Derivability
  - Linguistic correctness
  - Preference for native language
  - …

Transparency

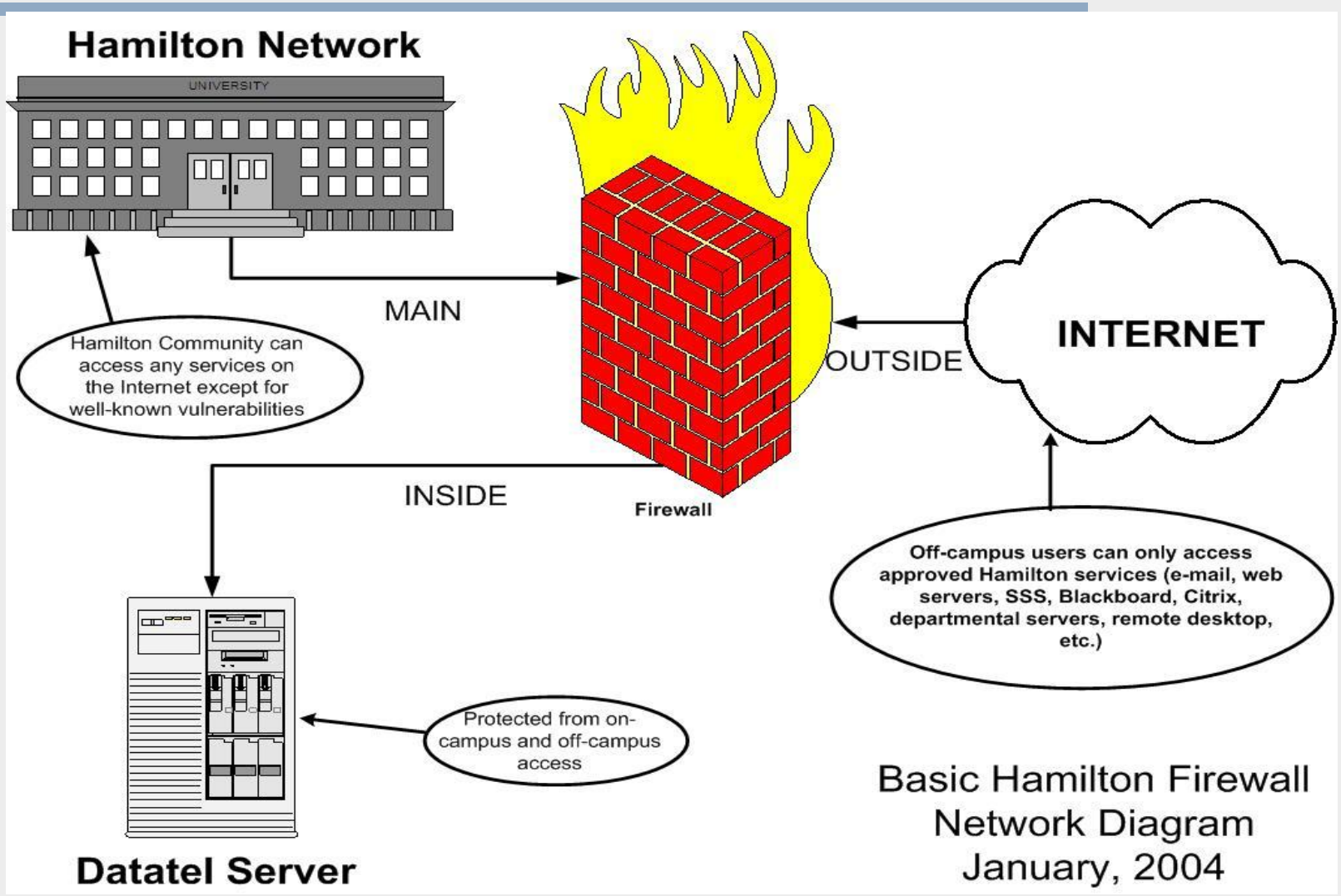
- The concept designated by the term can be inferred without a definition
- The meaning of the term is visible by:
  - **morphological motivation**
    page setup, error message
    *data network identification code**
    *network printing device setup**
  - **semantic motivation**
    mouse, worm, virus, infected file, vulnerability
    *firewall**
  - **torque wrench vs. monkey wrench**

Transparency: fire wall





Transparency: fire wall



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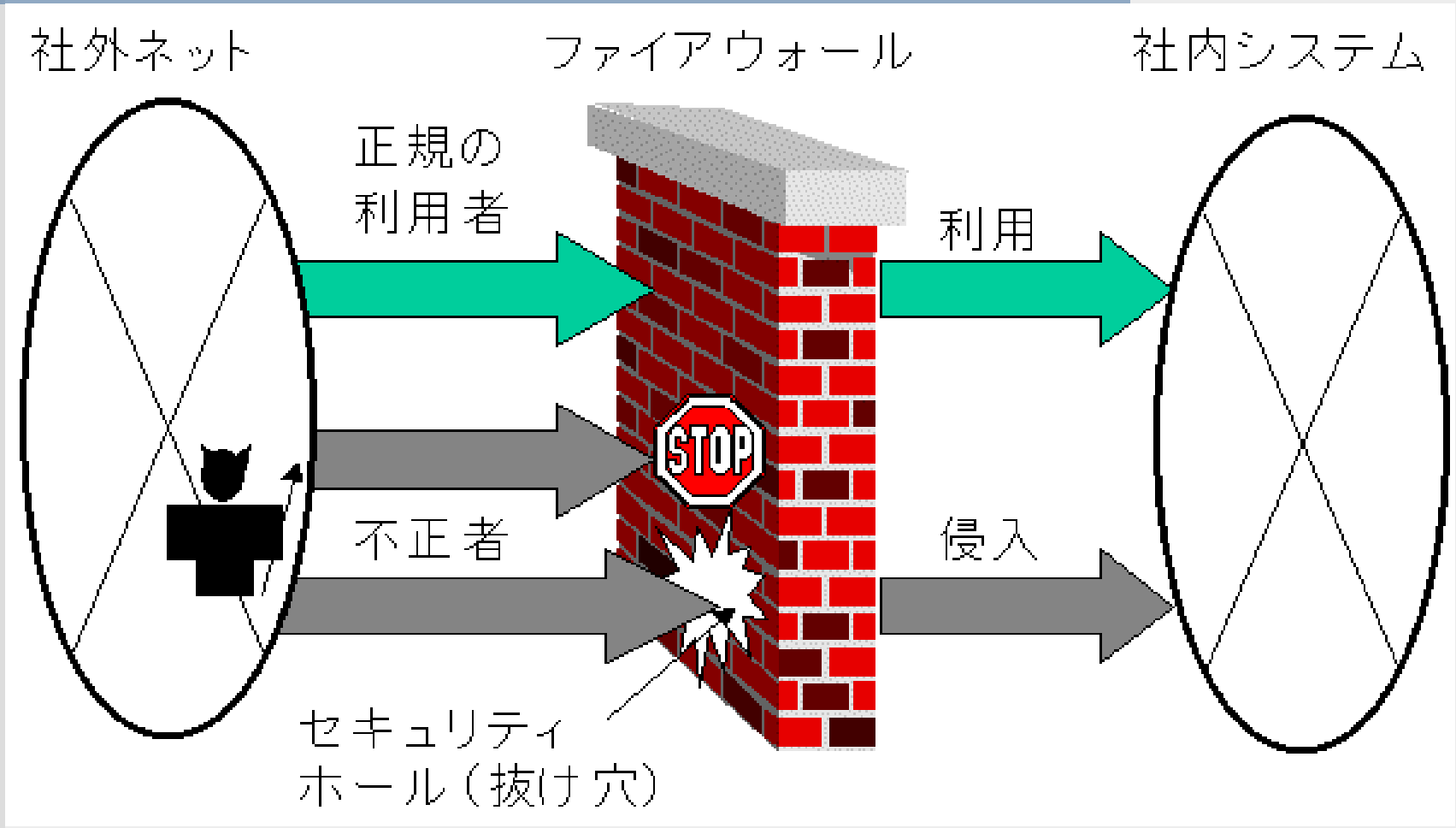
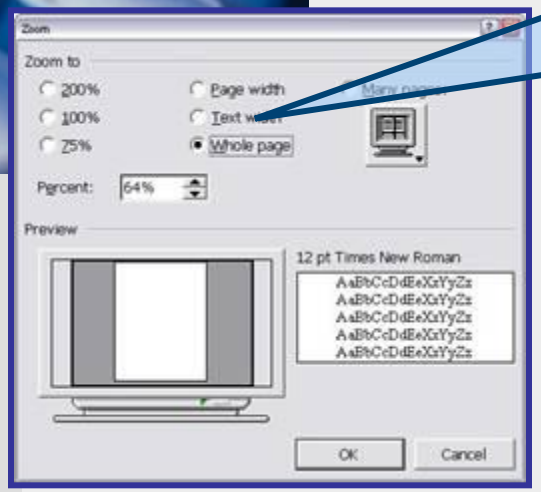
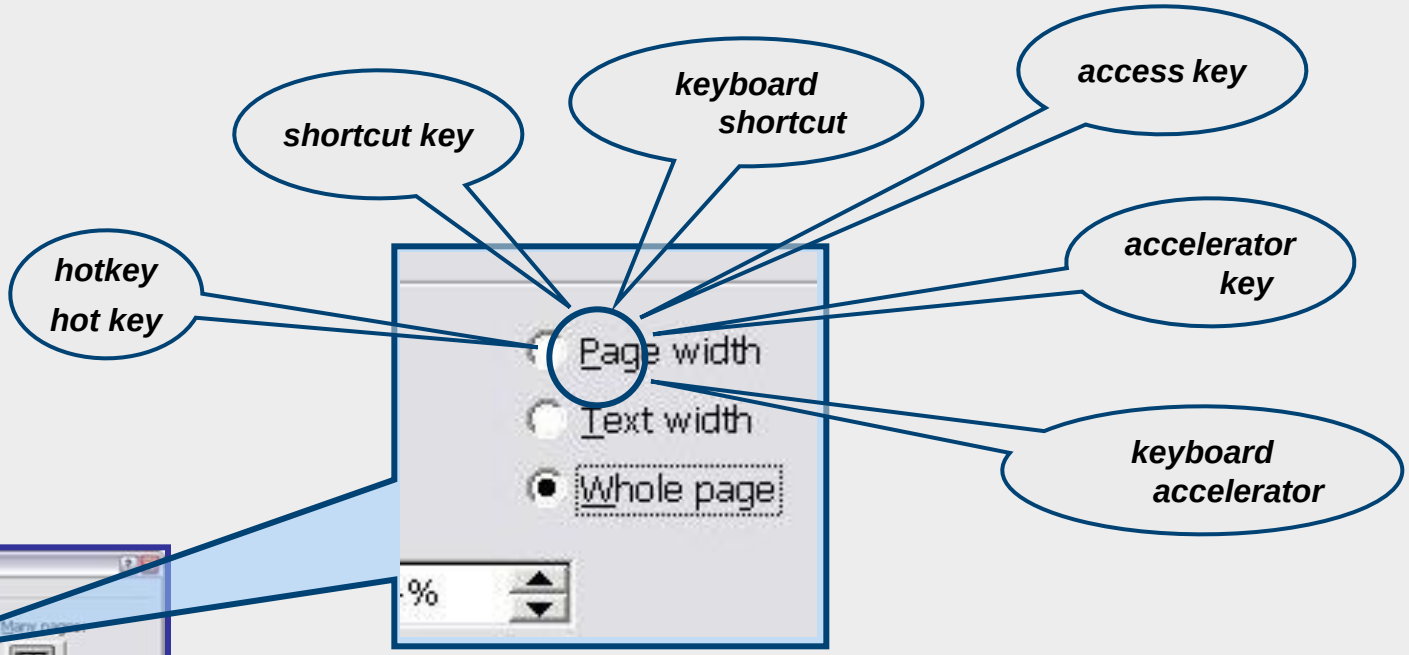


Consistency

- The terms of one domain / concept system are coined consistently using the same motivation (characteristics) and the same word formation mechanisms:
  - *nylon, orlon, dracon, ... -on*
  - *VP of Finance, VP of Marketing, VP of Production, …*
  - **NOT:** *spark plug wrench, open-end wrench, adjustable wrench, monkey wrench, Allen wrench, alligator wrench, …*

Consistency: Standardizing terminology





Matthias Heyn, SDL,
tekom-Jahrestagung 2005

Consistency: Standardizing terminology

Begriffsnummer: 127

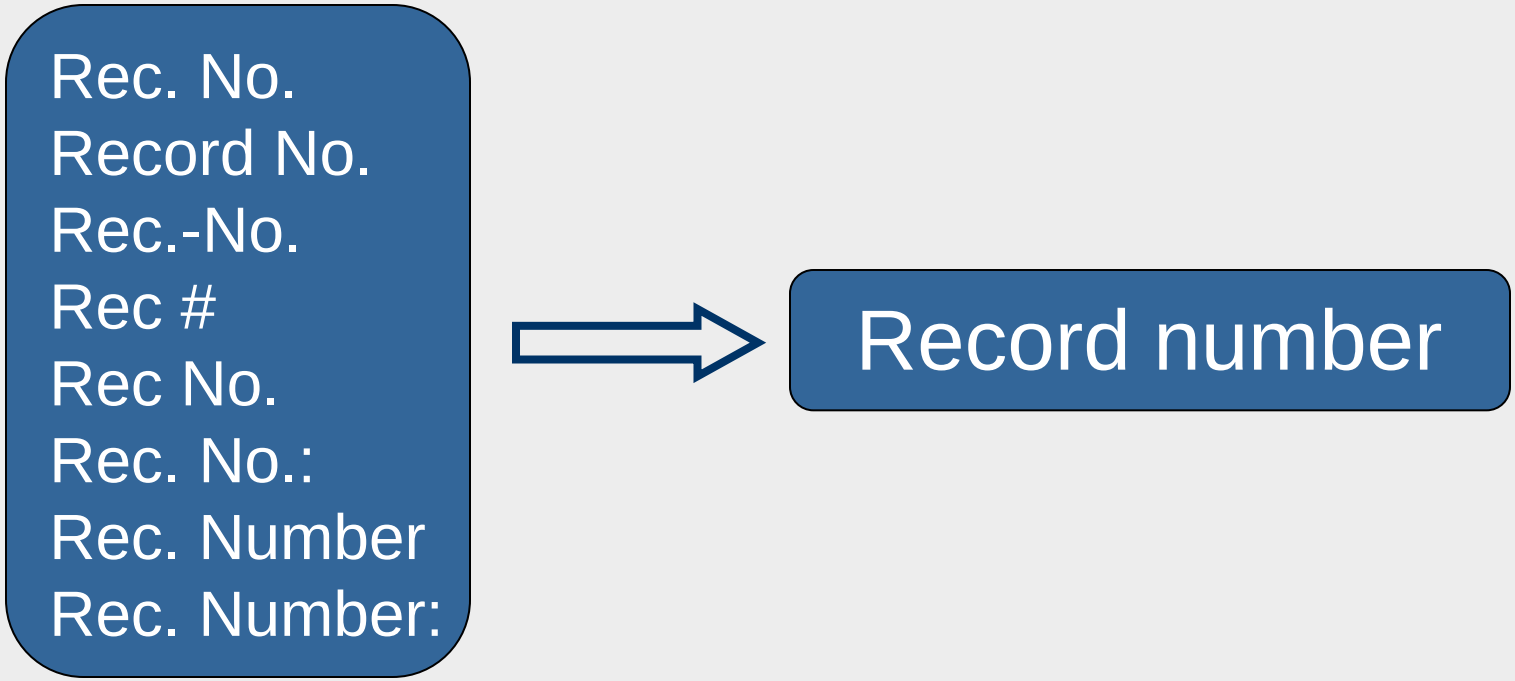
Begriffsklärung:

Benennung: **Leichtmetallscheibenrad**

Synonyme: **Leichtmetallrad**
Alufelge
Aluminiumscheibenrad
Aluminium-Scheibenrad
Leichtmetall-Scheibenrad
Scheibenrad Aluminium

Reference: Susanne Göpferich, DAISY-Projekt, DTT-Symposion 2004

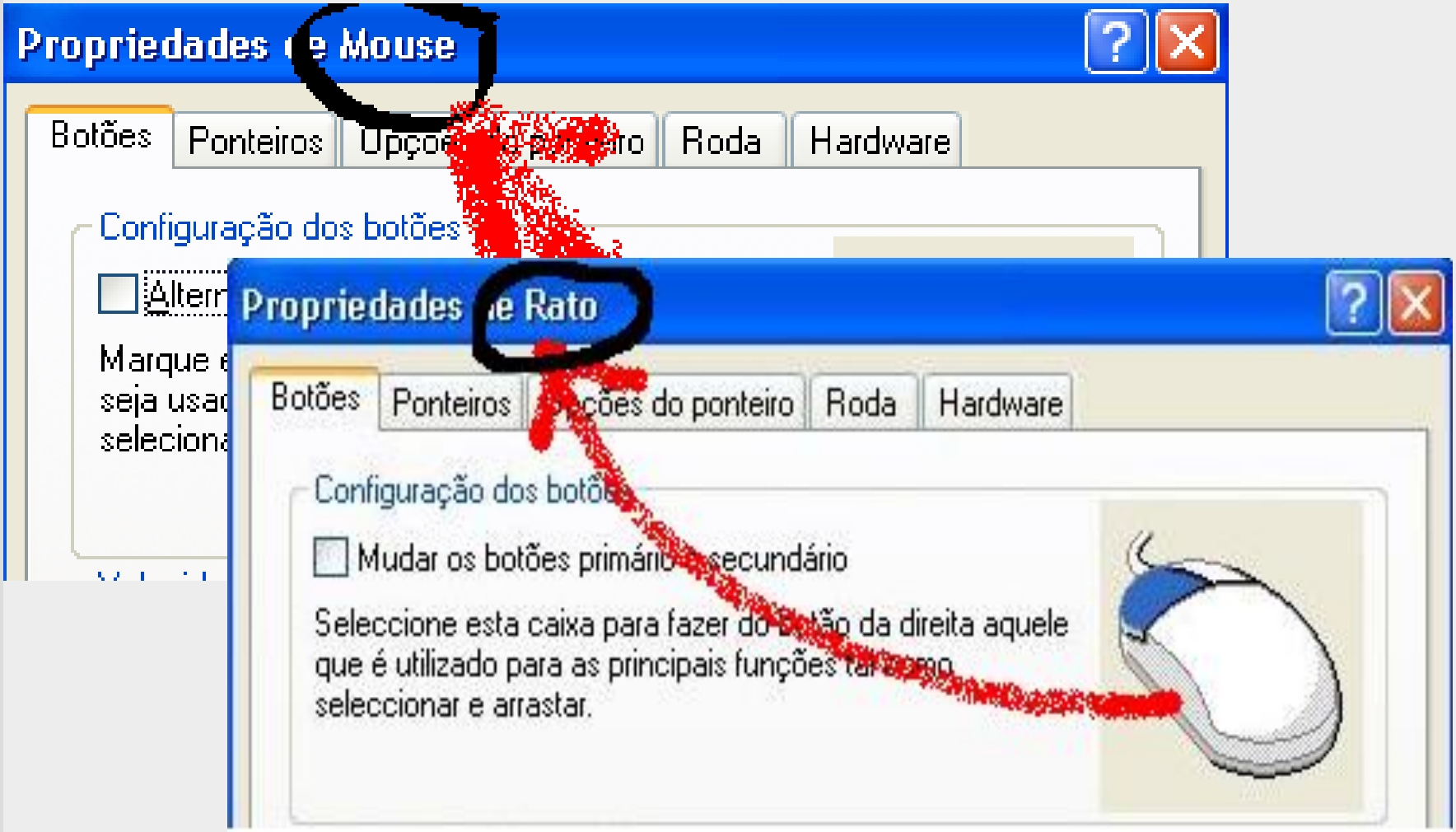
Consistency: Standardizing terminology



Appropriateness

- Appropriateness means that terms:
  - have to be familiar to the user (localization!)
  - don't cause confusion or insecurity
  - have no negative connotations (neutral, politically correct)
  - *express installation (only components needed)*
    network installation (all components)
  - *system error, severe error, fatal error, user error etc.*
  - *master/slave, web designers' bible, knowledge nugget etc.*
  - *nuclear energy vs. atomic energy*
    genetic engineering vs. genetic manipulation

Appropriateness



Oh come on-
how fatal
can it be?
FATAL
ERROR

Other criteria

- Linguistic economy
  - *term bank vs. terminological data bank*
  - *Ultrakurzwellenüberreichweitenfernsehrichtfunkverbindung*
- Derivability
  - *medicinal plant vs. herb --> herbal, herbalist, ...*
- Linguistic correctness
  - *aktualisieren vs. updaten, geupdated, upgedatet, ...*
- Preference for native language
  - *Startseite vs. Homepage*
- Uniqueness (don't create homonyms in one domain !)

Term-related issues for termbases

Terms should be entered in canonical form:

- **normally in lowercase (but: *Drucker, Microsoft*)**
- **nouns normally in singular (pl: *trousers, Leute*)**
- **verbs normally in infinite form**
- **multi-word terms in spoken/written order**
- **nouns not with articles (*der, le*)**
- **verbs not with infinite particles (*to, à, zu*)**
- **spelled correctly**

Characteristics

- **Characteristic:**
  abstraction of a property of an object or
  of a set of objects

  Characteristics are used for describing concepts!

- **Concepts** have **characteristics**
- **Objects** have **properties**

Concept: abstraction based on the set of all mechanical mice

***Designation* (*term*): mechanical mouse**

Properties of *Object 1*	**Properties of *Object 2***	**Properties of *Object 3***	***Characteristics***
hand-manoeuvred along a firm, flat surface	hand-manoeuvred along a firm, flat surface	hand-manoeuvred along a firm, flat surface	being hand-manoeuvred along a firm, flat surface
has a ball on its underside	has a ball on its underside	has a ball on its underside	having a ball on its underside
has three buttons	has two buttons	has three buttons	having at least one button
has a wire for connecting to a computer	has a wire for connecting to a computer	has a wire for connecting to a computer	having a wire for connecting to a computer
rollers detect the movement of the ball	rollers detect the movement of the ball;	rollers detect the movement of the ball	having rollers (mechanical sensors) for detecting ball-movement
ivory-coloured	blue	black	having colour NOTE This *characteristic* is inherited from a *superordinate concept* at a very high level, e.g. 'physical *object*'.

Characteristics

- **Essential characteristic:**
  characteristic which is indispensable to understanding a concept

- **Delimiting characteristic:**
  essential characteristic used for distinguishing a concept from related concepts

- The delimiting characteristic **support for the back** may be used for distinguishing the concepts ***stool*** and ***chair***.

Characteristics

- **Characteristics shall be used for:**
  - **the analysis of concepts**
  - **the modeling of concept systems**
  - **the formulation of definitions**
  - **the selection and formation of terms** (where appropriate)
  - **the comparison of concepts** (find out about synonymy and equivalence)

Intension & Extension

- **Intension**
  set of characteristics which makes up the concept
  Lorry: vehicle, motor-powered, steering mechanism, for transportation of goods

- **Extension**
  totality of objects to which a concept corresponds
  Scandinavian countries: Denmark, Norway, Sweden

DIN: Begriffsinhalt, Begriffsumfang, Begriffsbestand

Definition

- representation of a concept by a descriptive statement which serves to differentiate it from related concepts

  For terminology work, concepts are essential. But concepts are mental representations. Definitions are used to make the concept "visible".

Definition

- **intensional definition**
  definition which describes the intension of a concept by stating the superordinate concept and the delimiting characteristics

  incandescent lamp: electric lamp in which a filament is heated by an electric current in such a way that it emits light

- **extensional definition**
  description of a concept by enumerating all of its subordinate concepts under one criterion of subdivison

  noble gas: helium, neon, argon, crypton, xenon, radon.

Deficient definitions

- **circular definition**

  evergreen tree:
  NO tree with evergreen foliage
  YES tree that has green leaves throughout the entire

  - Can be circular within one definition or between two definition
  - Sometimes called tautological definition
  - BUT: motivated transparent terms !

Deficient definitions

- **inaccurate definition**

optomechanical mouse:

NO, too broad:
computer mouse that uses a ball to control the pointer on the computer screen

NO, too narrow:
computer mouse composed of a mouse button, rubber ball, circuit board, cord, x- and y-axis rollers, LED infrared emitter, and infrared sensor

YES, correct:
computer mouse composed of a mouse button, ball, circuit board, cord, x- and y-axis rollers, infrared emitter, and infrared sensor

Deficient definitions

- **negative definition**

  deciduous tree:
  NO: tree other than an evergreen tree
  YES: tree that loses its foliage seasonally

  But ("negative" concepts):
  nonconformity:
  non-fulfilment of a specified requirement

  baldness:
  having no hair on the head

Definition-related issues

- **Try to provide just one good definition (see 704)**
  (Multiple definitions can be confusing)

- **Try to find and enter existing definitions**
  (with the source)**; shortenings and extensions are sometimes necessary and helpful**

- **Definitions should be as short as possible and as long as necessary**

- **Stating a synonym is not a definition!**
  e.g. diaphragm spring* = *Belleville spring

Definition-related issues

- **Use terms for referenced concepts and characteristics consistently**
- **If the term is mentioned in the definition, try to use it in singular form**
- **Definitions do not exist for ever: concepts are changing; therefore check and update**
- **Test definitions by inversion**
- **Definition should be written in a way that the statement can replace the term in a text**

Definition-related issues

If you have to write you own definition:

- **state what kind of thing your concept represents (usually the broader concept) and mention what differentiates your concept from other closely related concepts**
- **let a domain expert check the definition**
- **do not use finite verbs like *is, refers to, is called***
- **do not mention the term in the definition (DE !)**
- **punctuation, capitalization, article usage: provide styleguides**

Definition-related issues

- **Examples:**

Term: ***terminography***
Term: ***terminology management***
Def: *part of terminology work concerned with the recording and presentation of terminological data*
Ref: *ISO 1087-1:2000*
Note: *Terminological data may be presented in the form of term banks, glossaries, thesauri or other publications.*

Terminology working methods I

- **ad hoc terminology work**
  solving a current terminological problem
  (research for unknown terms, equivalents, synonyms)
- **text-oriented terminology work**
  preparatory terminology research for a given text
  (solve all terminological problems before you translate)
- **domain-oriented terminology work**
  terminology research for all concepts of a given subject field
  (elaborate a complete terminology with concept relations)

Terminology working methods II

- **descriptive terminology work**
  determine and describe the (current) usage of concepts, terms and definitions
  (typical for freelance translators, interpreters, techwriters)

- **prescriptive (normative) terminology work**
  lay down and define concepts, terms and equivalents, classify them as preferred, admitted and deprecated
  (typical for standards bodies, but also for companies etc.)

Thank you for your attention

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