Use of the terms 'classification', 'taxonomy' and 'ontology'

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Auckland/CIB w78 conference 2003

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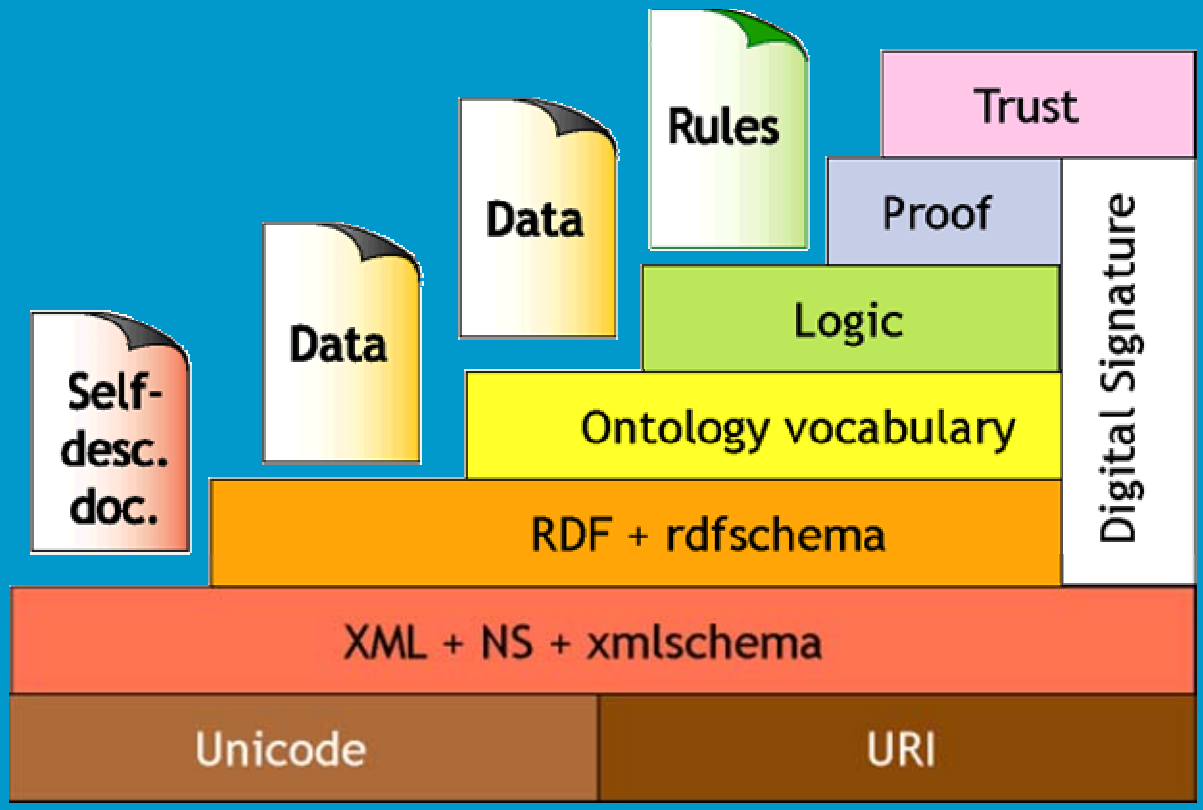
12 August 2003

Civil engineering informatics

TU Delft
Delft University of Technology


Rules
Trust
Data
Proof
Data
Logic
Self-
desc.
doc.
Ontology vocabulary
Digital Signature
RDF + rdfschema
XML + NS + xmlschema
Unicode
URI

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Definitions

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Classification

- Systematic arrangement in groups
- 'Boxes with labels'

- McDonalds/Airline/Home/Waiheke quality

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Taxonomy

- Orderly classification according to natural relationships
- Animal > mammal > canis > gray wolf

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Ontology

- Philosophical: nature of being
- W3C: machine-readable set of definitions

- Example: bcxml/eConstruct

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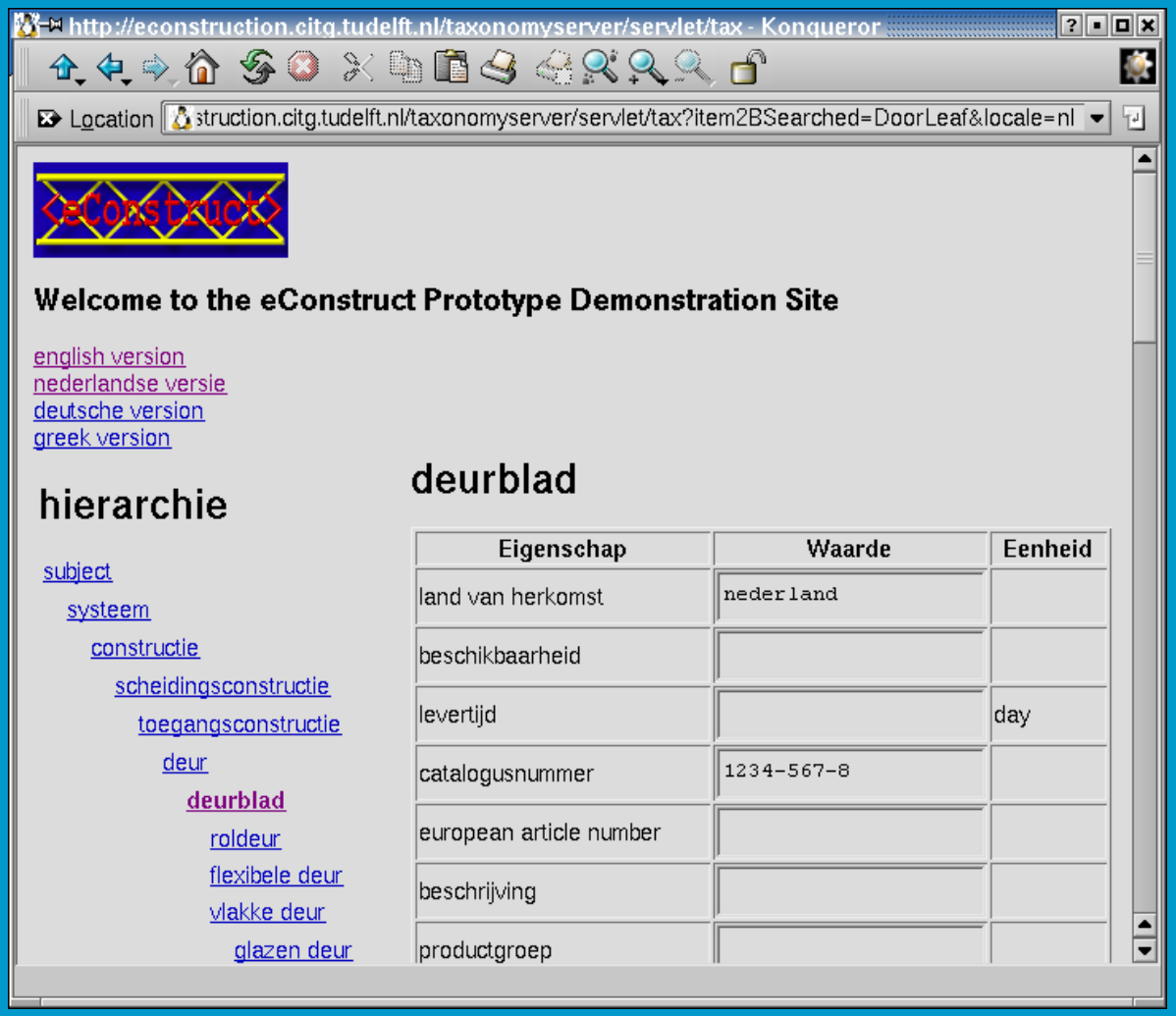
Bcxml/eConstruct



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Differences

- Classification: boxes with labels
- Taxonomy: natural hierarchy
- Ontology: definitions and relations

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This conference: Classification

- 5 boxes with labels
- 6 building classification systems
- 2 'active'
- 1 research field
- (2 included hierarchy)

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This conference: Taxonomy

- 2 bcxml (it wasn't me!)
- 1 structured hierarchy
- 1 part of ontology definition

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This conference: Ontology

- 3 ‘fipa’ ontologies
- 1 philosophical/original
- 1 topic map
- 1 semantic web quote

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Conclusions

- At this conference, nobody (yet) advertised a classification as an ontology or vice versa.
- With the emerging trend to use ontologies, make sure that you specify what you mean by them. There is much room for misunderstanding.

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