

Interoperability: Just a marker for a problem or already a concept? Some sociological driven notes
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One general idea of Interoperability

(Re)production of identity in order to make differences work.

This is an abstract way to think about IOP.



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Definition 1: Interoperability

“With respect to software, the term interoperability is used to describe the capability of different programs to exchange data via a common set of business procedures, and to read and write the same file formats and use the same protocols. (...) The lack of interoperability strongly implies that the described product or products were not designed with standardization in mind.”

(Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interoperability> - 2006.08.25)

Definition is too close or specific- but in this terms powerful technocrats think on IOP.



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Definition 2: Interoperability

“interoperable, adj. able to operate in conjunction (...)”

(The Concise Oxford Dictionary, 9th Edition)

“Interoperability is the ability of products, systems, or business processes to work together to accomplish a common task. The term can be defined in a technical way or in a broad way, taking into account social, political and organizational factors.”

(Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interoperability> - 2006.08.25)

These definitions are too wide or „wrong specific“.



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Definition 3: Interoperability

„The ability of systems, units, or forces to provide services to and accept services from other systems, units or forces and to use the services exchanged to enable them to operate effectively together.“

(Source: from Federal Standard 1038C and from the Department of Defence Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms in support of MIL-STD-188)

Interoperability is the ability of observing and addressable systems (human beings, technology, organisations) to work in relations to accomplish a not ignorable task in each case.

Is this a good compromise between too specific and unspecific?



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Suggestion for a communicational or more operationalized understanding of Interoperability

Interoperability means a communicational (and therefor observation) schema, which marks the difference between stable and unstable.

Marker of a problem
AND
a generic concept to solve the problem



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Interoperability - concept

- **Reentry** the difference of stable/unstable in systems (human beings, organisations and workflows, technologies and infrastructures) and their selfsimilar subsystems with the same difference.
- Each (sub)system operates on its **reproduction of addressability** but this reproduction does not mean determining the way a system operates.
- The influence from one system to the other should not be observed in terms of determination but of intelligent formed **perturbation**. If no system communicates a conflict or a defect everything works in conjunction.
- From a privacy-oriented point of view Interoperability - as an indicator of heterogeneity - helps **separating contexts** by focussing their specific purposes to local circumstances, and decoupling activities of citizens and customers.



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