

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir

Thank you for the interesting issue (35(2008) No. 4) of *Knowledge Organization*. I especially liked the inspiring article on Ontology Design by Oknam Park. I very much appreciate Park's approach of combining the principles of facet analysis with conventional designing principles of ontologies. However, the article would have benefited from 1) a more scrupulous proofreading and 2) a stricter peer review.

- p. 214 the spelling mistake Proprieties instead of Priorities is rather disturbing;
- In my view the “Case Studies on Wine Ontology” (by the way, a somewhat weird heading) needs some more thinking.

In combining the two classes consumable things and meal course in one class ‘dish’ Park ignores the function of the class meal course for instantiating food and drink. I agree, it can be discussed if this is a useful option, however it should be discussed.

Even more critical I view Park's suggestion to group Wine Region below Winery as this change implies a severe violation of logical ontological principles. Ontologies, and especially ontology languages like OWL, are based on the assumption that the in-build hierarchical relation of the class relation is either a *is\_a* or *is\_part\_of* relation. The decision to define Wine Region as a subclass of Winery disregards this principle and would therefore severely limit the reasoning potentialities of the ontology.

I am sure a revision of this aspects would even increase the usability of Park's approach.

Kind regards,  
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Sir,

Thank you for the useful feedback.

Although the class “meal course” functions for instantiating food and drink, the representation of “consumable things” and “meal course” as classes might confuse users as to when they need to look at two similar classes and when they need to look at each one separately. Therefore, combining these according to the principle of differentiation would enhance usefulness of this representation.

This is valuable feedback regarding the change of facets. I define ontologies in a more broad sense, suggesting that ontologies consist of terms and exhibit structured relationships. Along the continuum of complexity of semantic relationships and logical inheritance, ontologies can be represented in different formats. In this wine case, I represented that Wine region is a facet indicator and subgroups are preceded by Wine region (Winery by Wine region) since wine region is the class to represent Winery. The other option to represent facets, which may not violate the reasoning potentialities of the ontology that you suggested, is to mention that wine region and winery can be represented as having an associative relationship.

Oknam Park

*We regret any errors in proofreading.—Ed.*