VES & SES
How to differentiate?

Issue: We need a deeper level of description and differentiation between VES and SES, including definitions. If you have a something already, how do you tell if it is VES or SES?

The Abstract Model gives the following definitions:
VES: An enumerated set of resources.
SES: A set of strings and an associated set of rules that describe a mapping between that set of strings and a set of resources. The mapping rules may define how the string is structured (for example DCMI Box) or they may simply enumerate all the strings and the corresponding resources (for example ISO 3166).
The AM also adds that a SES is a "class (of literals):

Discussion:
Is the problem one of things vs strings? One early statement of the difference is that the values for a VES are strings; those for a SES are URIs. However, this does not solve the problem that both a string and a URI are a representation of a thing and therefore are not necessarily enough to differentiate between VES and SES. There is also the issue of what is a controlled vocabulary? My view is that this is not actually a problem. The ISO definition is "a list of terms that have been enumerated explicitly". At this level a controlled vocabulary is simply a VES. The ISo definition requires more but for DC purposes isn't this sufficient?

In Manzanillo we made the following categorisation of the schemes in DC:

Vocabulary encoding schemes
- http://purl.org/dc/terms/DCMIType
- http://purl.org/dc/terms/DDC
- http://purl.org/dc/terms/IMT
- http://purl.org/dc/terms/LCC
- http://purl.org/dc/terms/LCSH
- http://purl.org/dc/terms/MESH
- http://purl.org/dc/terms/NLM
- http://purl.org/dc/terms/TGN
- http://purl.org/dc/terms/UDC

Syntax encoding schemes
- http://purl.org/dc/terms/Box
- http://purl.org/dc/terms/Period
- http://purl.org/dc/terms/Point
- http://purl.org/dc/terms/ISO3166
- http://purl.org/dc/terms/ISO639-2
- http://purl.org/dc/terms/RFC1766
- http://purl.org/dc/terms/RFC3066
- http://purl.org/dc/terms/URI
- http://purl.org/dc/terms/W3CDTF

On this basis the difference between a VES and a SES is that the SES tells you how to encode/create/structure a value but doesn't enumerate all possible values, the VES gives you the enumerated list of approved/acceptable/conforming values (which isn't to say that the list can't change). Do we still hold to this categorisation?

Joe and Stuart wrote that "If an Encoding Scheme tells you what a value string is it's a SES. If an Encoding Scheme defines a class of values, then it is a VES (e.g., concepts). For example, if you develop a list of educational levels, and if you define a list of strings, then you're defining an SES. If you define a set of concepts and assign URIs to them (as best practice), then you're defining a VES. Best practice in this scenario is to define a set of concepts with URIs rather than a set of strings…SES is a datatype in RDF. VES is like conceptScheme in SKOS, only not limited to concepts. For discussion: VES is a set of concepts that, once in metadata, allows editors to handle assertion by adding things to it. SES is a set of strings."

Is the implicit suggestion here that in a VES the values can be defined with URIs, not strings, ie the values in a VES are non-literals. Conversely, in a SES, values are only strings, ie. literals.