

# Second Committee Meeting

## Updated Progress Report

Samuel Crawford

McMaster University

Fall 2025

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## 2 Project

- Research Questions
- Methodology

## 3 Results

## 4 Next Steps

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# Introduction

Where Were We?

- We wanted to generate test cases in **Drasil**, our software artifact generation framework
  - Started writing test cases manually

# Introduction

## Where Were We?

- We wanted to generate test cases in **Drasil**, our software artifact generation framework
  - Started writing test cases manually
  - We stopped to understand software testing to follow existing standards
- What happened?
  - The domain of software testing is *much* larger than we expected
  - Software testing terminology and standards are *not* standardized

# Introduction

## Existing Taxonomies?

- Existing software testing taxonomies:

- Tebes et al. (2020)
- Souza et al. (2017)
- Firesmith (2015)
- Unterkalmsteiner et al. (2014)

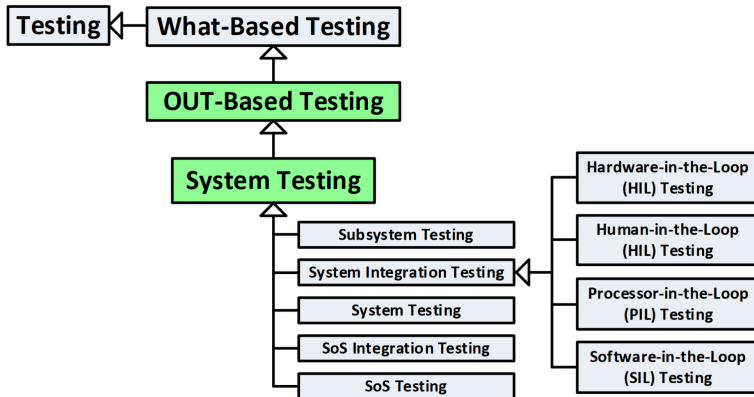
### Focus on:

The Testing Process  
Organizing Terminology  
Relations between Approaches  
Traceability between Stages

# Introduction

## Existing Taxonomies?

### What: by Object Under Test (OUT) – System Testing

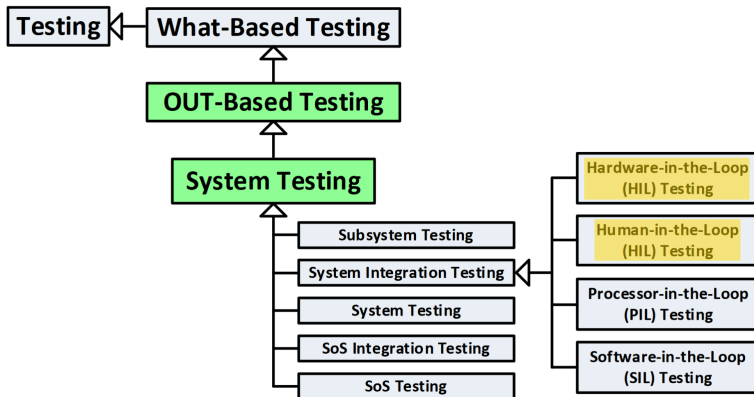


(Firesmith, 2015, p. 23)

# Introduction

## Existing Taxonomies?

### What: by Object Under Test (OUT) – System Testing



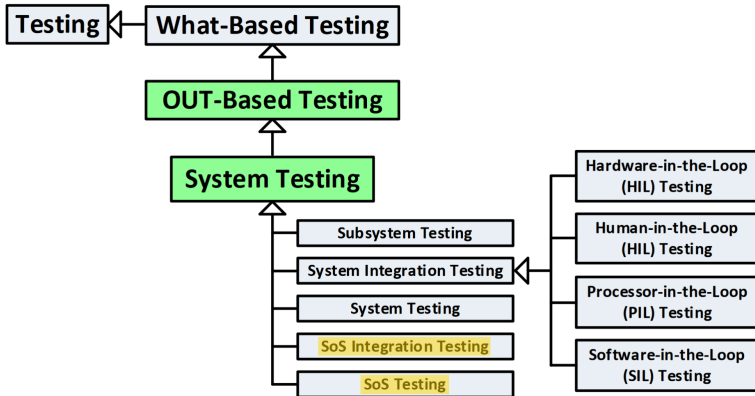
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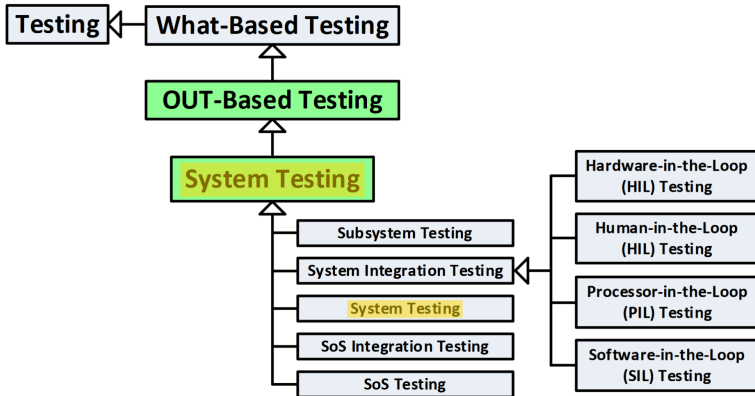


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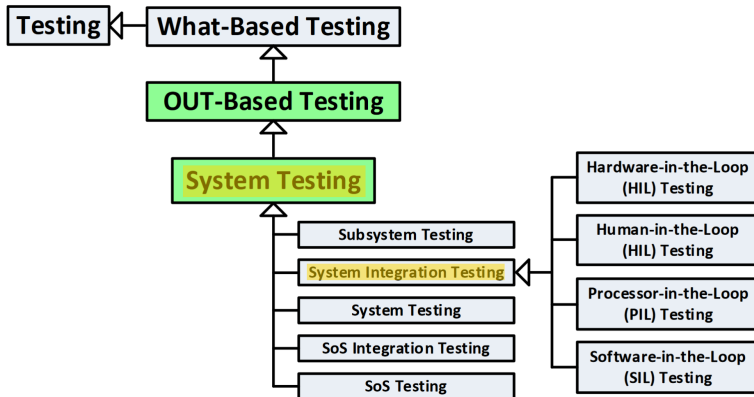


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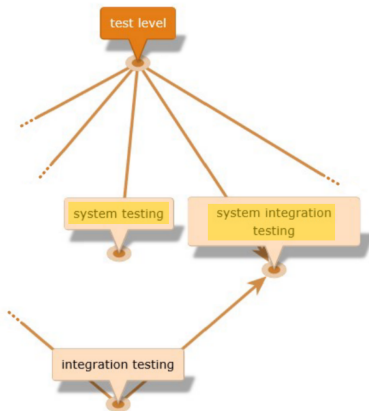
### What: by Object Under Test (OUT) – System Testing



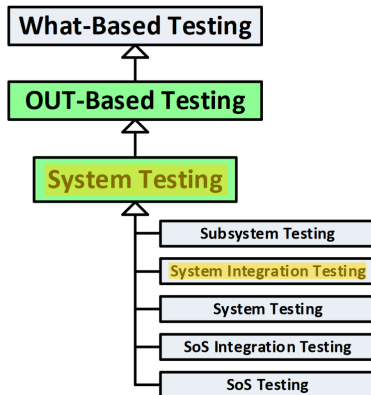
Adapted from (Firesmith, 2015, p. 23)

# Introduction

## Existing Taxonomies?



Adapted from (Hamburg and Mogyorodi, 2024)



Adapted from (Firesmith, 2015, p. 23)

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# Research Questions

## Research Question 1

What test approaches do the literature describe?

## Research Question 2

Are these descriptions consistent?

## Research Question 3

Can we systematically resolve any of these inconsistencies?

### Research Question 1

What test approaches do the literature describe?

- ➊ Identify authoritative sources on software testing and “snowball” from them
- ➋ Identify all test approaches and testing-related terms described in these authoritative sources
- ➌ Record all relevant data, including implicit data, for each term identified in step 2; test approach data are comprised of:

➊ Names	➋ Definitions	➍ Parents
➌ Categories	➎ Synonyms	➏ Flaws
- ➍ Repeat steps 1 to 3 for any missing or unclear terms until the stopping criteria is reached

### Research Question 2

Are these descriptions consistent?

- ⑤ Analyze recorded test approach data for additional flaws
  - ① Generate relation graphs
  - ② Automatically detect certain classes of flaws
  - ③ Automatically analyze manually recorded flaws from step 3.6
- ⑥ Report results of flaw analysis

### Research Question 3

Can we systematically resolve any of these inconsistencies?

- ⑦ Provide examples of how to resolve these flaws



- We build a glossary with a row for each test approach

Name	Category	Definition	Parent(s)	Synonym(s)
A/B Testing	Practice (Fig. 2)	Testing “that allows testers to determine which of two systems or components performs better” (pp. 1, 36)	Statistical Testing (pp. 1, 36), ...	Split-Run Testing (pp. 1, 36)

Information from (ISO/IEC and IEEE, 2022)

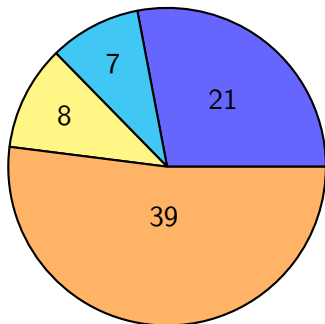
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Information from (ISO/IEC and IEEE, 2022)

- We gather this information from sources by looking for:
  - Glossaries, taxonomies, hierarchies, etc.
  - Testing-related terms
  - Terms described *by* other approaches
  - Terms that *imply* other approaches

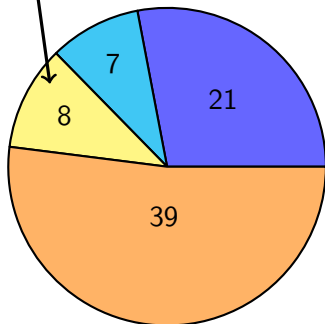
In total, we investigate 75 sources



- Established Standards
- Terminology Collections
- Textbooks
- Papers and Other Documents

Textbooks used at McMaster were our ad hoc starting points

(Patton, 2006; Peters and Pedrycz, 2000; van Vliet, 2000)



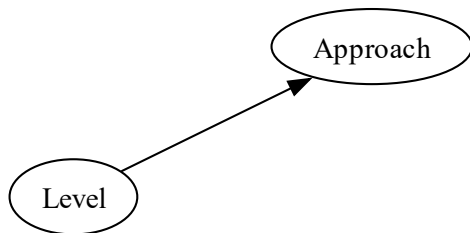
- Established Standards
- Terminology Collections
- Textbooks
- Papers and Other Documents

### Approach

**Approach:** a “high-level test implementation choice” (ISO/IEC and IEEE, 2022, p. 10) used to “pick the particular test case values” (2017, p. 465)

# Methodology

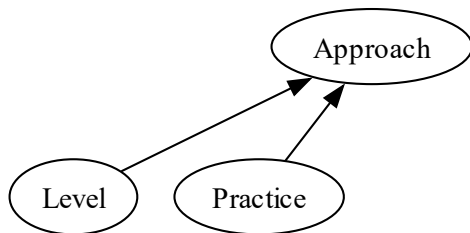
## Categories



**Level:** a stage of testing with “particular objectives and ... risks”, each performed in sequence (ISO/IEC and IEEE, 2022, p. 12; 2021a, p. 6; 2021c, p. 6)

# Methodology

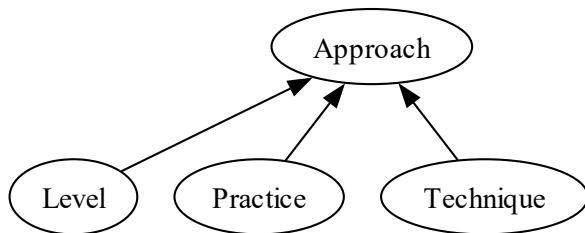
## Categories



**Practice:** a “conceptual framework that can be applied to . . . [a] test process to facilitate testing” (ISO/IEC and IEEE, 2022, p. 14; 2017, p. 471)

# Methodology

## Categories

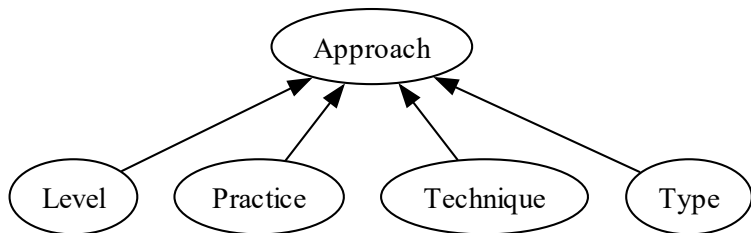


**Technique:** a “procedure used to create or select a test model, identify test coverage items, and derive corresponding test cases” (2022, p. 11; 2021a, p. 5; similar in 2017, p. 467)



# Methodology

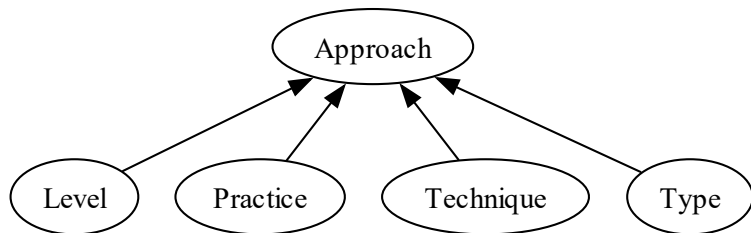
## Categories



**Type:** “testing that is focused on specific quality characteristics”  
(ISO/IEC and IEEE, 2022, p. 15; 2021c, p. 7; 2017, p. 473)

# Methodology

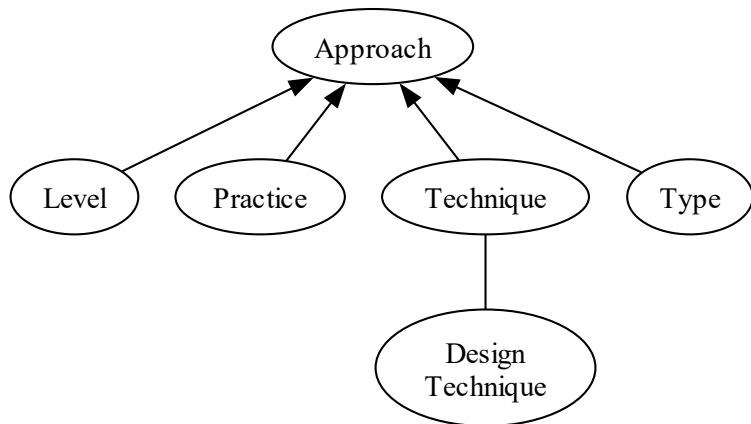
## Visualization Notation



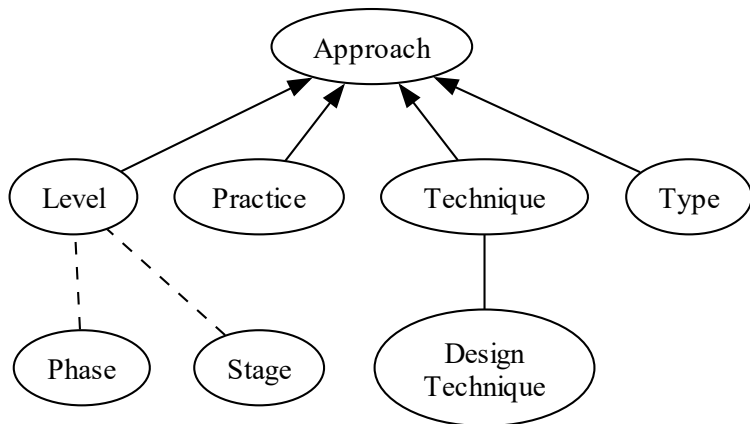
Arrows point from a *child* node to a *parent* node.

# Methodology

## Visualization Notation



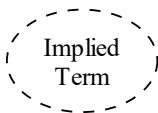
Lines without arrowheads connect *synonyms*.



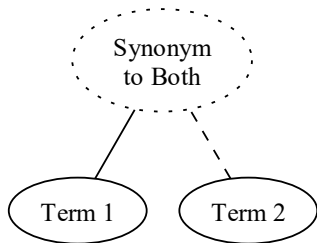
Dashed lines indicate a relationship is *implicit*.

# Methodology

## Visualization Notation



Dashed outlines indicate a term is *implicit*.



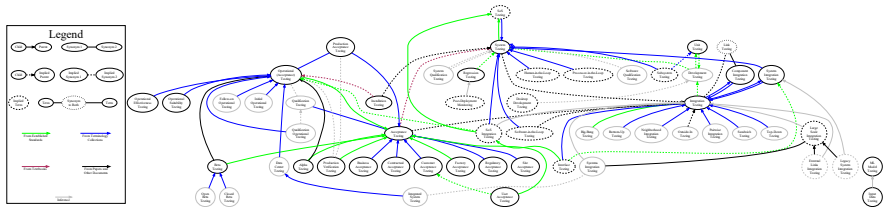
Dotted outlines indicate a term is a *synonym* to more than one term.

# Graph of Test Approaches

# Graph of Test Approaches

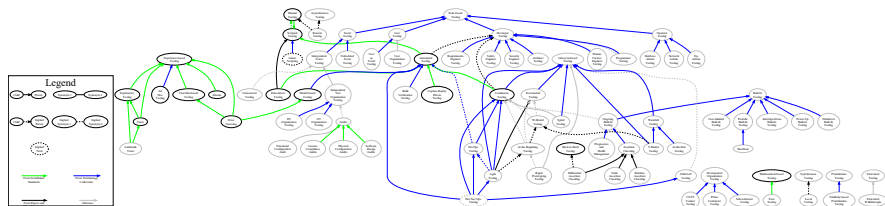
! Dimension too large.

## Graph of Test Levels

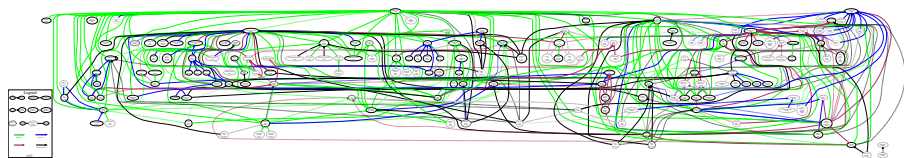




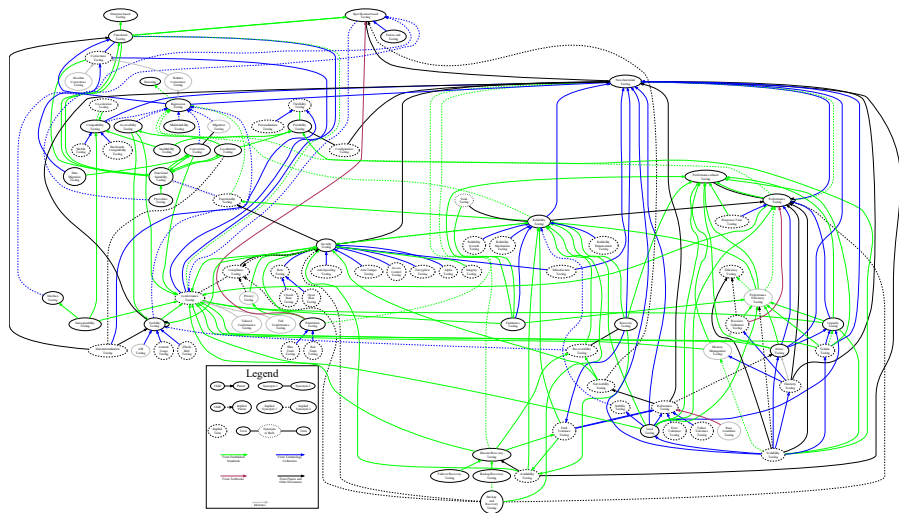
# Graph of Test Practices



# Graph of Test Techniques



# Graph of Test Types



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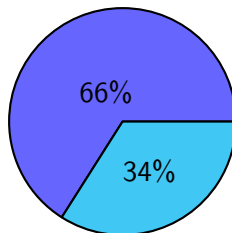
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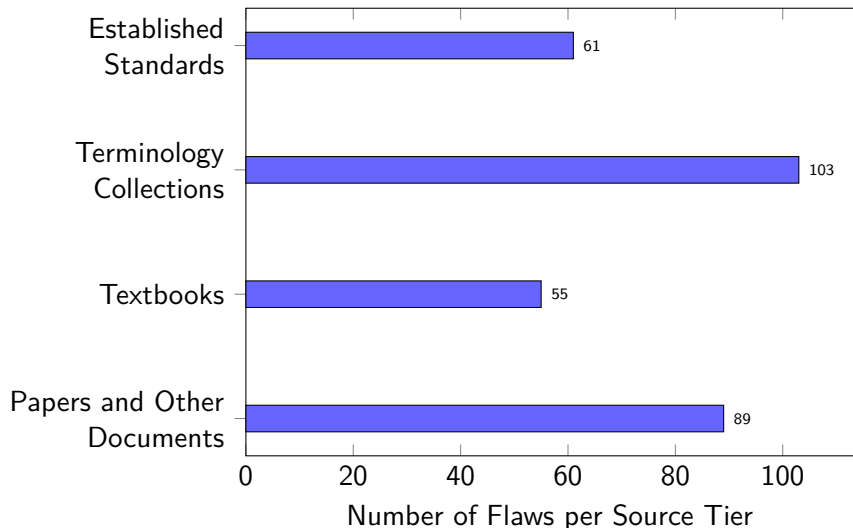
# Overview

- 563 test approaches →
- 77 software qualities (may imply test approaches)
- 308 flaws in the software testing literature

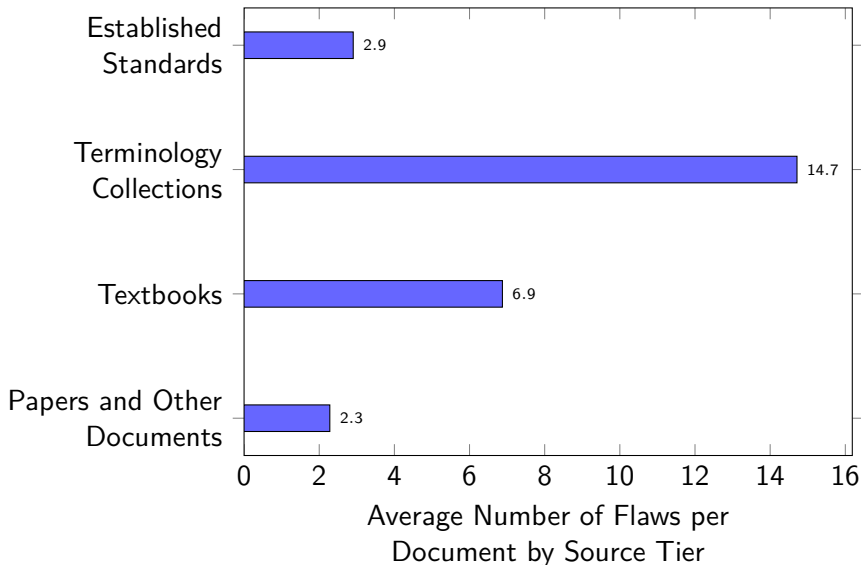


- Defined
- Not defined

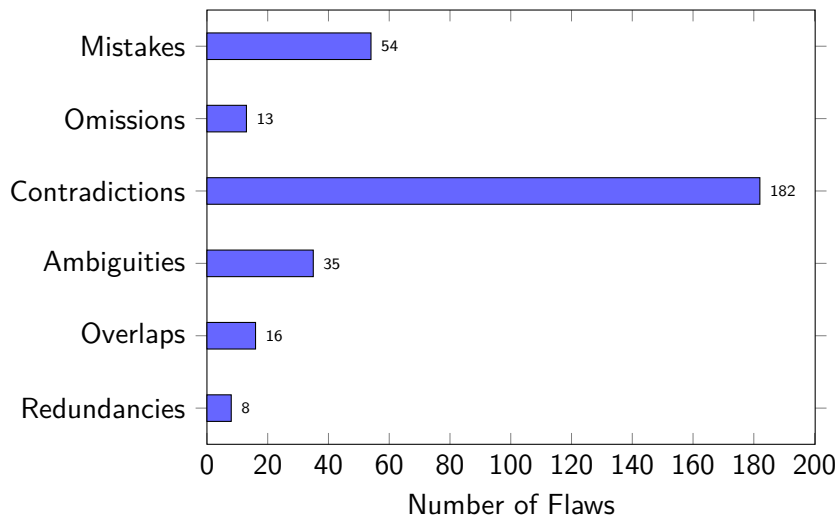
# Flaw Summary by Source Tier



# Normalized Flaw Summary

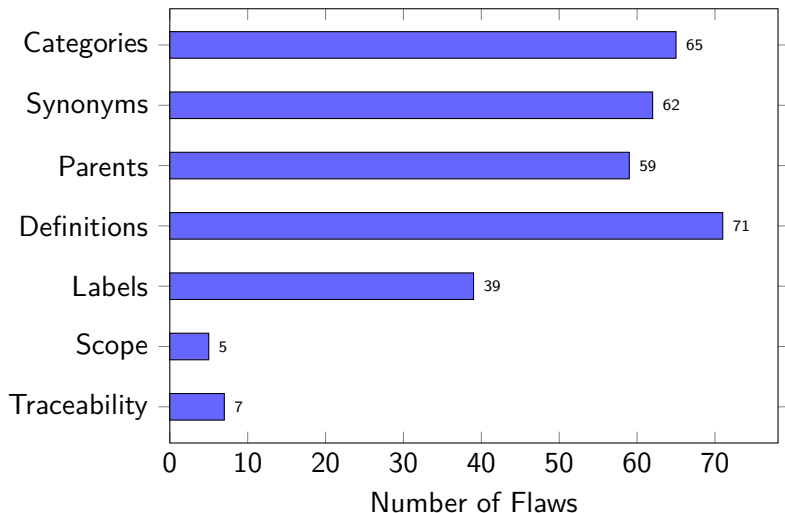


# Flaw Summary by Manifestation





# Flaw Summary by Domain

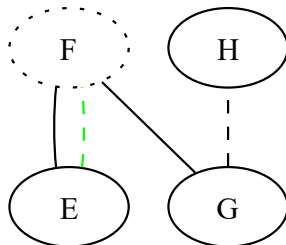


# Automated Flaws

## Intransitive Synonyms

Some terms are given as a synonym to two (or more) disjoint terms, making their relations ambiguous

Name	Synonym(s)
E	F (Author, 2022; implied by StdAuthor, 2021)
G	F (Author, 2017), H (implied by 2022)
H	X (StdAuthor, 2021)



Some prominent examples:

### ① Functional Testing:

- *Conformance Testing*
- *Correctness Testing*
- Specification-based Testing

### Source(s)

(Washizaki, 2025a, p. 5-7)

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(ISO/IEC and IEEE, 2017, p. 196; ...)

Some prominent examples:

### ① Functional Testing:

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### Source(s)

(Washizaki, 2025a, p. 5-7)

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(ISO/IEC and IEEE, 2017, p. 196; ...)

### ② Portability Testing:

- Configuration Testing
- Flexibility Testing

(Kam, 2008, p. 43)

(ISO/IEC, 2023)

### ③ Soak Testing:

- Endurance Testing
- Reliability Testing

(ISO/IEC and IEEE, 2021c, p. 39)

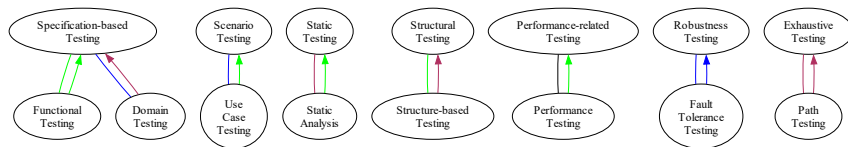
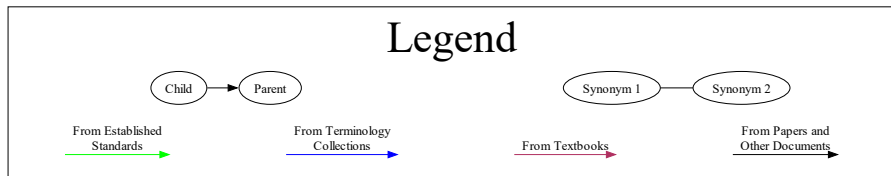
(Gerrard, 2000a, Tab. 2; 2000b, Tab. 1, p. 26)

We also find some test approaches that are given as parents of themselves:

- ① Performance Testing (Gerrard, 2000a, Tab. 2; 2000b, Tab. 1)
- ② System Testing (Firesmith, 2015, p. 23)
- ③ Usability Testing (Gerrard, 2000a, Tab. 2; 2000b, Tab. 1)

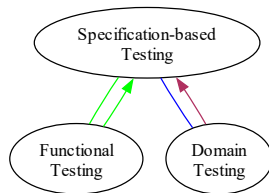
# Automated Flaws

## Synonym and Parent-Child Overlaps



# Automated Flaws

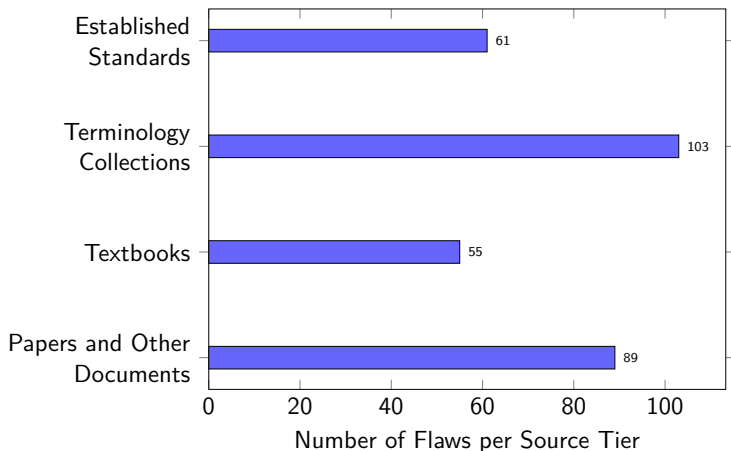
## Synonym and Parent-Child Overlaps



- Functional testing is a:
  - Synonym (ISO/IEC and IEEE, 2017, p. 196;  
van Vliet, 2000, p. 399; Kam, 2008, pp. 44–45, 48; ...)
  - Child (ISO/IEC and IEEE, 2021c, p. 38; Kam, 2008, p. 42)
- Domain testing is a:
  - Synonym (Washizaki, 2024, p. 5-10)
  - Child (Peters and Pedrycz, 2000, Tab. 12.1)

# Conclusion

- The software testing literature is flawed, so don't assume everyone is on the same page

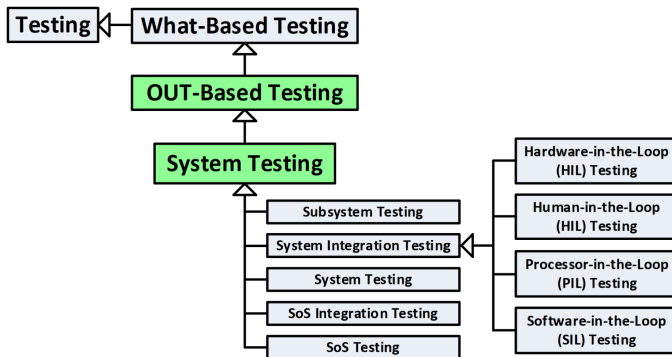




# Conclusion

- The software testing literature is flawed, so don't assume everyone is on the same page
- Even if they are, there can still be issues!

## What: by Object Under Test (OUT) – System Testing



(Firesmith, 2015, p. 23)

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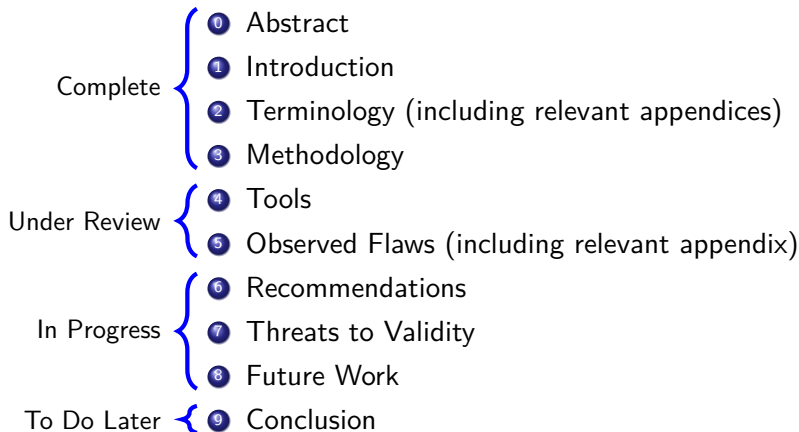
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# Thesis Chapters



# Acknowledgment

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- The past and current Drasil team have created a truly amazing framework!

Thank you!  
Questions?

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