7.3.2 Integrated Vocabularies

Sometimes attempts have been made to merge a number of independently developed vocabularies into a single large resource. The prime example of this is the Unified Medical Language System,[6] which integrates 100 biomedical vocabularies and classifications. The UMLS metathesaurus alone contains 750,000 concepts, with over 10 million links between them. Not surprisingly, the semantics of such a resource that integrates many independently developed vocabularies is rather low, but nevertheless it has turned out to be very useful in many applications, at least as a starting point.

7.3.3 Upper-Level Ontologies

Whereas the preceding ontologies are all highly domain-specific, some attempts have been made to define very generally applicable ontologies (sometimes known as upper-level ontologies). The two prime examples are Cyc,[7] with 60,000 assertions on 6,000 concepts, and the Standard Upperlevel Ontology (SUO).[8]

7.3.4 Topic Hierarchies

Other "ontologies" hardly deserve this name in a strict sense: they are simply sets of terms, loosely organized in a specialization hierarchy. This hierarchy is typically not a strict taxonomy but rather mixes different specialization relations, such as *is-a, part-of,* or *contained-in*. Nevertheless, such resources are often very useful as a starting point. A large example is the Open Directory hierarchy,[9] which contains more than 400,000 hierarchically organized categories and is available in RDF format.

[6] umlsinfo.nlm.nih.gov/.
[7] www.opencyc.org/.
[8] suo.ieee.org/.
[9] dmoz.org/.