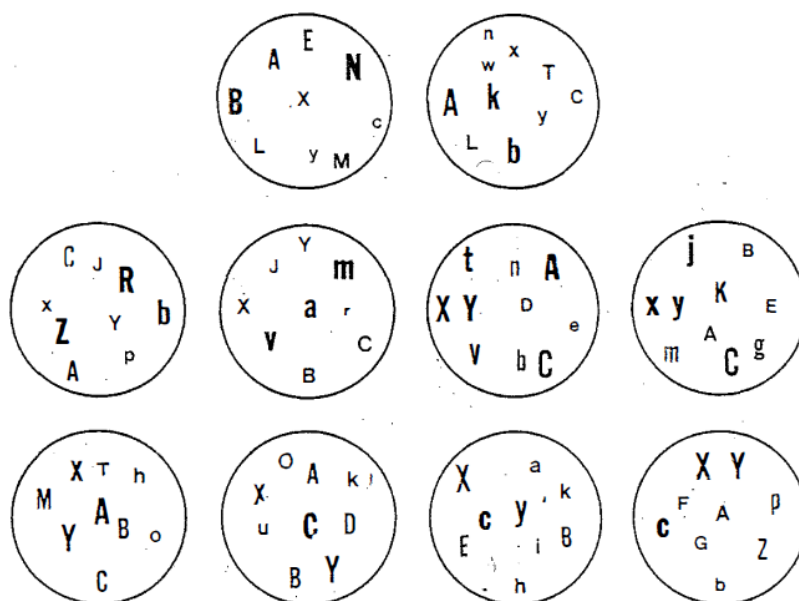


Denotatum and Significatum / Members and Definition

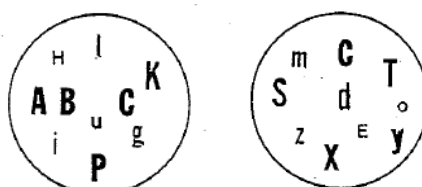
To gain a practical appreciation of the difference between the concepts denotatum and significatum (or members and definition) consider the following example:



The ten objects, the boundaries of which are delimited by circles, constitute the denotata of Class I on this sheet of paper. Class I is defined as ABC; hence the significatum of Class I is ABC. The letters indicate some of the discriminated attributes of these objects; variability in form and location are intended to remind you that they are attributes. Your intuitive identification of these symbols with the alphabet will create attribute classes (e.g., "a's", capital letters, etc.). The meaning of Class I is ABC, its significatum, because this is the reason, the only reason, why these ten objects are Class I objects and any conclusions we might draw about Class I objects is a direct function of ABC.

If we did not know, a priori, that Class I is defined as ABC, we could not extract this information from the set of objects. A, B, C, X, Y, AB, AC, AX, AY, BC, BX, BY, XY, ABC, ABX, ABY, ACX, ACY, BXY, CXY, ABCX, ABCY, ABCXY, BCXY, ACXY, etc., are all equally acceptable extensional definitions of Class I. Note that ABC might be among the extensional definitions we could extract, but note also that possible definitions includes those that contain neither A, nor B, nor C and that the number of possible definitions, not exhausted above, is a very large number in even this simplest of cases.

So what? So plenty! Consider first what you would do and what would happen as a consequence of encountering the object indicated below, left. Whether it is or is not a member of Class I would depend entirely upon the particular definition you had extracted extensionally. It is, of course a member of Class I.



Then, consider what would happen if you were to encounter the object on the right, which is not a member of Class I.

Finally, consider the effects of these issues on simple statements like "three Type II adzes were found in Stratum III."