Signification Pattern – Problem

Problem:

The Signification Pattern (SP) has 3 classes: Sign, Signified, Signifier. This pattern has a lot of power and appears in many parts of the model.

Signifier has one property: Token. Token has a datatype of Value. Value has properties Content and Whitespace. Content is of type String. This is a lot of indirection for a simple idea, that idea being that a Token is a perceivable object - something capable of being written down.

The SP is a general model for expressing the ways a concept and other objects may be referred to linguistically or programmatically. Words in natural language, codes in classifications, and terms in statistical practice are common examples. The SP model links a Token to a Sign (e.g., a concept) to create a Signified (e.g., a designation, such as a code).

The Token illustrating a Signifier is typically an alphanumeric string. There are other possibilities, but these are less common, and socio-economic data require the typical usage. Users of DDI may require other kinds of Signifiers as data change over time, but we do not know what those Tokens will look like now.

So, the DDI needs to handle the case of Tokens as strings. This should be done directly to minimize processing overhead.

Recommendation:

Make the datatype of Token, the property in Signifier, a string. There is no need to include any more detail. The datatype of Value is not needed.