

□ Conceptual Ambiguity

Conceptual ambiguity refers to the use of vague, imprecise, or ill-defined concepts that lack clear boundaries or operational definitions, leading to confusion or misinterpretation in scientific discourse.

⚠ Key Characteristics

- Undefined or shifting terms (e.g., “functional outcome” without specification)
- Lack of clarity about study population or intervention scope
- Implicit assumptions not explicitly addressed
- Overlap between distinct categories without proper justification

□ Why It Matters

- Undermines the internal validity of research
- Hinders reproducibility and evidence synthesis
- Facilitates biased conclusions or oversimplified narratives
- Obstructs proper clinical translation

□ Example in Context

- Comparing “microsurgical” vs. “endovascular” treatment without accounting for aneurysm morphology, size, or location introduces **conceptual ambiguity**—because the two groups are not truly equivalent or comparable in real clinical terms.

□ Best Practice

- Define all key terms explicitly
- Disclose assumptions and group criteria clearly
- Justify comparisons with solid conceptual alignment

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