Item 11 of the provisional agenda

Activities relating to the Working Group on Toponymic Terminology

Proposed Modifications to the Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names [*]

WORKING PAPER ON

Proposed Modifications to the Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names

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This paper presents some notes on the "Glossary of terms for the standardization of geographical names". Some of them where submitted in a previous paper but were not considered by the work group probably because they were not well explained. Here are those notes in addition to a few more.

Of course, these notes apply to the Arabic section of the glossary, which was translated from its original English text. Hence, it is extremely important to make this Arabic translation in harmony with the cultural and lingual heritage of the Arab World.

Here below are suggestions that are believed to be important to be taken into account in the future versions of the glossary:

1. **In Grammar:**

   a. The Arabic spelling of most of the words containing Alif (أ) is incorrect because the Hamzah (ء) was omitted, which makes those words wrongly spelled following the rules of the Arabic language grammar. In fact, some texts consider the Hamzah as a stand-alone letter.

2. **In format:**

   a. The serial number of each term (as they are numbered in an ascending order according to the English alphabet) is better appearing next to the Arabic translation of this term whenever it is mentioned within the definition. This makes it easier for the reader to jump into any term written in Arabic within the text when needed without looking into the index to figure it its location in the Glossary or.

3. **In translation:**

   a. In term "004", **morpheme** was incorrectly translated to "وحدة صوتية فارقة" when it has to be translated to "وحدة صرفية فارقة" as shown in the definition of **morpheme** (201).

   b. In "059", **data portability** means "قابلية البيانات للتحويل" and not "قابلية البيانات للحمل" as it is given in the translation, because the meaning of portability is the capability of the data to be handled by various computer systems, while the currently inferred Arabic meaning means the capability of the data to be written in multiple formats.

   c. In "100", it is better to make it clear that there is a difference between the different scales of font sizes. The first figure used is the size of the character in points and the second figure is the number of characters written in one inch. Thus, "قياس 12" is better replaced by "قياس 12 نقطة" and "قياس 10" is better replaced by "قياس 10ح/ب.". This makes the text more compliant to the original English text and helps in avoiding confusion between the two measurement units given in the same example.

   d. In "263", it is better to write "عنصر صورة" next to "بيكسل" in the Arabic translation of the term "pixel", because "بيكسل" is the Arabic transcription of the English word, while "عنصر صورة" is the Arabic translation of that word.

4. **In content:**

   a. In "134", it is better to give some examples in order to clarify the meaning of ideograms, like an Egyptian Hieroglyph.

   b. In "005", **allonym**, it is better to use "دمشق" (Damascus) and "الشام" (Sham) as an example instead of giving non-Arabic examples.

   c. In "133", "152", "280", 352", and "368" and few others in the glossary, some "Israeli" examples were given. It is, however, necessary to remove such examples from the definition of these terms and replace them by other Arabic examples in order to preserve the original Palestinian geographic names of the occupied Palestinian territories (refer back to the resolutions of the First Arab Conference on Geographical Names that was held in Beirut in 1971). This suggestion shall not be regarded as anti-Semitic for two main reasons. First, the Palestinians themselves are Semites. Second, the original Palestinian names are the native names of that land and shall be preserved.

   d. The definitions should use Arabic examples whenever possible and avoid using examples from other languages but transcripted in Arabic alphabet. For example, "Radar" (رادار) is given as an example of acronyms, but it is not an Arabic acronym at all. The letters that make up the word "رادار" do not represent the first letter (or letters) of Arabic words. It, however, represents the Arabic transcription of an English word. The glossary is better providing an Arabic acronym in this case, although the acronyms are rarely used in Arabic.

It is extremely important to adopt the above suggestions not only to facilitate the use of the glossary and reduce the number of mistakes, but also to maintain the integrity of this glossary by preserving the original Arabic names from being forgotten or replaced as is the case in the occupied Palestine.