

AGENDA ITEM 8

Standardization of the terminology of geographical names

GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMINOLOGY EMPLOYED IN THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES*

PREPARED BY THE WORKING GROUP ON DEFINITIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS GROUP OF EXPERTS ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES**

INTRODUCTION

The following definitions of terminology are intended for employment in discussion and exposition in the field of toponymy. They are set forth not as prescriptive rules of usage but rather as guidelines which may serve to enhance clarity and precision in communication.

It is generally recognized that the semantic range of any given term may vary from person to person and from community to community. It is further recognized that cognate terms tend to vary in meaning to a still larger degree from language to language. Furthermore,

the semantic ranges of terms often change with usage and with the passage of time. Although it is not possible in such circumstances wholly to avoid arbitrary delineations, a sincere effort has been made to reduce these to a minimum.

Equivalent terms are provided for most entries in English, French and Spanish and the definition of each term is given in English. Where synonymy of two or more terms is indicated, no order of preference is intended.

An index has been included in order to aid users in locating particular terms without introducing an excessive number of cross-references in the main body of the definitions.

The terms defined by the First United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names at Geneva in 1967, and subsequently modified by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, are indicated with an asterisk (*).

* The report was before the Conference as document E/CONF. 61/L.1/Rev.1.

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TECHNICAL TERMINOLOGY EMPLOYED IN THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

ENGLISH (unless otherwise designated)	FRENCH	SPANISH
1. <i>allomorph</i> A form of a morpheme which differs in phonological structure from another allomorph or allomorphs of the same morpheme.	<i>allomorphe</i>	<i>alómorfo</i>
2. <i>allonym</i> One of two or more names employed in reference to a single topographic feature.	<i>allonyme</i>	(—————)
3. <i>allophone</i> A phonetic variant of phoneme.	<i>allophone</i>	<i>alófono</i>
4.* <i>alphabet</i> A specific set of graphic symbols which may be employed in representation of the phonological elements of a language.	<i>alphabet</i>	<i>alfabeto</i>
5.* <i>alphabetical sequence</i> 1. The order in which the letters or characters of an alphabet are customarily cited. 2. A body of items listed in such order.	<i>suite alphabétique</i>	<i>orden alfabético</i>
6. <i>article</i> A morpheme which makes explicit the definite or indefinite nature of another morpheme or morphemes.	<i>article</i>	<i>artículo</i>
7. <i>authority, names</i> A person or body assigned power of decision in toponymic matters by legally constituted entity.	<i>autorité toponymique</i>	<i>autoridad de nombres geográficos</i>

8. *character* *caractère* *carácter*
A segmental graphic symbol particularly of a script other than Roman script (see *letter*)
9. *character, abbreviated* *caractère abrégé* *carácter abreviado*
A variant character which is less complex than another, and which resembles it in some particular (see *character, variant*).
10. *character, modified* *caractère modifié* *carácter modificado*
(see *character, variant* and *character, abbreviated*)
11. *character, variant* (————) *carácter optativo*
One of two or more characters employed in a writing system in representation of the same phonological and/or morphological item or items.
- 12.* *community, linguistic* *communauté linguistique* *comunidad lingüística*
The totality of those individuals who communicate with relative ease in a single dialect, language or writing system.
- 13.* *community, speech*
The totality of those individuals who communicate orally with relative ease in a single dialect or language.
14. *context* *contexte* *contexto*
The body of material within which a particular item appears.
15. *conventional* *usuel* *convencional*
That which is sanctioned by current and widespread usage.
16. *conversion* *conversion* *conversion*
The process of recording in terms of a given writing system the phonological and/or morphological elements of a language, or the graphic symbols of another writing system. (see *transcription* and *transliteration*)
17. *creole* (————) (————)
A stable form of speech derived from a pidgin, which has become the sole or principle language of a linguistic community.
- 18.* *designation* *désignation* *designación*
A term employed in such a manner as to encompass a specific range of feature types.
19. *dialect* *dialecte* *dialecto*
A variety of a language which is distinguished by phonological and/or morphological characteristics which give it a distinctive identity.
20. *dictionary, geographical terms* *dictionnaire géographique* *diccionario geográfico*
A list of and/or names pertaining to the field of geography, which presents relatively extensive and definitive information concerning the items listed.
- 21.* *digraph* *digraph* *dígrafo*
Two letters or characters which are together employed in a particular order in representation of a single phonological and/or morphological element of a language.
22. *diglossy*
23. *element, generic* *élément générique* *elemento genérico*
That part of a name which consists of a generic term, and which may include modifiers, articles and/or particles as well (see *term, generic*).
24. *element, specific* *élément spécifique* *término específico*
That portion of a name which does not contain a generic element (see *element, generic*).
25. *entity, geographical* *objet géographique* *entidad geográfica*
(synonym: *feature, geographical, q.v.*)
26. *entity, topographic* *objet topographique* *entidad topográfica*
(synonym: *feature, topographic, q.v.*)
27. *exonym* *exonyme* *exónimo*
A geographical name used in a certain language for a geographical entity situated outside the area where that language has official status and differing in its form from the name used in the official language or languages of the area where the geographical entity is situated.
28. *feature, cultural* (————) *accidente geográfico cultural*
A topographic feature made or significantly modified by human effort.
29. *feature, extraterrestrial* *accident topographique extra-terrestre* *accidente topográfico extraterrestre*
On any planet or satellite other than the earth, a portion of the surface which has a recognizable identity.

30. *feature,* *accident* *accidente*
geographical *géographique* *geográfico*
 A portion of the surface of the earth which has a recognizable identity.
31. *feature,* (————) *accidente*
natural *natural*
 A topographic feature not made or significantly modified by human effort.
32. *feature,* (————) *accidente*
physical *físico*
 (synonym: *feature, natural, q.v.*)
- 33.* *feature,* *accident* *accidente*
topographic *topographique* *topográfico*
 A portion of the surface of any planet or satellite which has a recognizable identity.
34. *feature,* (————) *accidente*
undersea *submarino*
 A portion of that part of the earth which lies directly beneath an ocean or sea, and which has a recognizable identity.
- 35.* *form,* *présentation* *presentación*
printing *typographique* *tipográfica*
 The size, shape and stle of the graphic items in a printed document.
- 36.* *format* *présentation* *formato*
générale
 The size, shape and general arrangement of a written document.
37. *gazetteer* *nomenclature* *lista de*
toponymique *topónimos*
 A list of toponyms which presents relatively brief information regarding the items listed.
- 38.* *gazetteer,* *index* *índice*
index *toponymique* *toponímico*
 A list of toponyms which presents relatively brief information regarding the items listed, and which serves as a guide to the source from which it has been compiled.
39. *glossary* *glossaire* *glosario*
 A relatively brief list of items pertinent to a limited field of interest, which may present information concerning the items listed.
- 40.* *hydronym* *hydronyme* *nombre*
hidrográfico
 A toponym applied to a hydrographic feature.
- 41.* *index,* (————) *índice de*
place name *nombres geográficos*
 (synonym: *gazetteer, index, q.v.*)
- 42.* *index,* (————) *índice*
toponymic *toponímico*
 (synonym: *gazetteer, index, q.v.*)
43. *information,* *renseignement* *información*
map *cartographique* *cartográfica*
 An item written on a map, which does not constitute a toponym, but which serves to describe a topographic characteristic in the area where it appears.
- 44.* *key,* *tableau de* *quadro de*
transcription *transcription* *transliteración*
 A table which sets forth descriptions and/or graphic representations of the phonological and/or morphological elements of a language together with corresponding representations in terms of a particular writing system.
- 45.* *key,* *tableau de* *cuadro de*
transliteration *translitération* *transcripción*
 A table which sets forth the graphic symbols of one writing system together with the corresponding graphic symbols of another writing system or systems.
46. *language* *langue* *idioma*
 A system which provides a means by which the members of a community carry on conscious thought, and in terms of which they communicate orally and/or graphically.
- 47.* *language,* *langue* *lengua*
colloquial *courante* *coloquial*
 A form of the speech and/or writing of a language which is employed in informal communication in a given area, and which, where a standard or literary language exists, significantly differs from it.
- 48.* *language,* *langue* *lengua*
literary *littéraire* *literaria*
 A form of the speech and/or writing of a language which is employed in formal speech and/or writing.
- 49.* *language,* *langue* *lengua*
national *nationale* *nacional*
 A language which has official status throughout a nation, including any constituent state(s), republic(s) and/or other legally defined constituent part(s).

50. *language,* *langue* *lingua*
non-official *non-officielle* *inoficial*
A language which lacks official status in a particular legally constituted entity.
51. *language,* *langue* *lingua*
official *officielle* *oficial*
A language which has official status in a particular legally constituted entity.
52. *language,* *langue* *lingua*
principal *principale* *principal*
In a linguistic community where more than one language is in use, that language which has greatest currency.
- 53.* *language,*
standard
That form of the speech and/or writing of a language which is specified as correct by an officially designated or widely recognized authority, or in the absence of such an authority, which is in general recognized as correct in a linguistic community.
- 54.* *language,*
state
A language which has official status in a constituent state, republic, or other legally defined constituent part of a nation, but which lacks such status throughout that nation.
- 55.* *language,* *langue* *lingua*
vehicular *véhiculaire* *vehicular*
A language which serves for intercommunication between members of different linguistic communities.
56. *letter* *lettre* *letra*
A segmental graphic symbol, particularly of Roman script (see *character*).
- 57.* *lettering,* (————) *rotulación,*
multilingual *multilingüe*
The writing of geographical names in the individual countries which appear on a map in accordance with their official recognized spellings.
58. *lexicon* *dictionnaire* *léxico*
A relatively exhaustive compilation of items, generally in alphabetical order, pertinent to a particular sphere of interest, which may present information concerning the items listed.
- 59.* *lexicon,* *lexique* *léxico*
logographic *logographique* *logográfico*
A body of graphic symbols, each symbol typically (but not necessarily) representing a morpheme, which may be employed in the writing of a language or languages.
60. *mark.* *signe* *signo*
diacritical *diacritique* *diacrítico*
A non-segmental graphic symbol which does not in itself represent a phoneme, and which is employed in conjunction with a letter or character.
61. *marker* (————) *signo*
auxiliar
A graphic symbol or combination of graphic symbols (segmental, non-segmental or combined), which represents one or more phonemes of a language, and which is employed in conjunction with a character or letter.
62. *morpheme* *morphème* *morfema*
A unit in the grammatical structure of a language which has a specific phonological form or range of forms, a particular grammatical function or set of functions, and a limited semantic range.
63. *name* *nom propre* *nombre*
proprio
An oral or written item which is recognized as designating a particular entity.
64. *name,* (————) *nombre*
alternative *proprio*
alternativo
One of two or more standardized names for a single feature.
65. *name,* (————) *nombre*
conventional *proprio*
convencional
A written form of a name which is widely and currently used in a given linguistic community, and which does not coincide with any local official form of the name.
66. *name, feature*
(synonym: *toponym*, q.v.)
67. *name,* *nom* *nombre propio*
geographical *géographique* *geográfico*
A name applied to a geographical feature.
68. *name,* *nom* *nombre propio*
lunar *lunaire* *lunar*
A name applied to a feature on the surface of the moon.

69.*	<i>name,</i> <i>map</i>	<i>nom porté sur</i> <i>une carte</i>	<i>topónimo</i> <i>cartográfico</i>
	A toponym which appears on the face of a map.		
70.	<i>name,</i> <i>place</i>	<i>nom de</i> <i>lieu</i>	<i>nombre propio</i> <i>de lugar</i>
	(synonym: <i>toponym</i> , q.v.)		
71.	<i>name,</i> <i>populated place</i>	<i>nom de</i> <i>lieu habité</i>	<i>nombre propio</i> <i>de lugar habitado</i>
	A name applied to an inhabited feature.		
72.*	<i>name,</i> <i>standardized</i>	<i>nom</i> <i>normalisé</i>	<i>nombre propio</i> <i>normalizado</i>
	A name which has the official sanction of a legally constituted entity.		
73.	<i>name,</i> <i>variant</i>	<i>variante</i>	<i>nombre propio</i> <i>optativo</i>
	A name other than that or those standardized for a feature.		
74.	<i>non-official</i>	<i>non-officiel</i>	<i>inoficial</i>
	Lacking explicit sanction by a legally constituted entity.		
75.	<i>normalization</i>	<i>normalisation</i>	<i>normalización</i>
	1. The establishment of a specific set of orthographic criteria or norms. 2. The writing of an item in accordance with such criteria or norms.		
76.	<i>official</i>	<i>officiel</i>	<i>oficial</i>
	Explicitly sanctioned by a legally constituted entity.		
77.	<i>onomastics</i>	<i>onomastique</i>	<i>onomástica</i>
	A science which has as its object the study of proper names.		
78.*	<i>oronym</i>	<i>oronyme</i>	<i>orónimo</i>
	A name applied to a feature of elevation.		
79.	<i>orthography</i>	<i>orthographie</i>	<i>ortografía</i>
	(synonym: <i>system</i> , <i>writing</i> , q.v.)		
80.*	<i>particle</i>	<i>particule</i>	<i>partícula</i>
	A morpheme which serves to identify and/or to delimit the grammatical function of another morpheme or other linguistic construction.		
81.	<i>phoneme</i>	<i>phonème</i>	<i>fonema</i>
	1. A functionally irreducible unit in the phonological structure of a language. 2. That limited range of quality, tone, stress, pitch and/or duration of sound, which corresponds to the above.		
82.	<i>pidgin</i>	(—————)	(—————)
	A relatively stable form of speech learned as an auxiliary language, whose vocabulary and sphere of employment are narrowly limited, and whose phonological and morphological structures tend to be simpler than those of the languages of derivation.		
83.	<i>point, vowel</i>	<i>point-voyelle</i>	<i>moción</i>
	A term which designates a vowel marker in an alphabet or Arabic or Hebrew script.		
84.	<i>romanization</i>	<i>romanisation</i>	<i>romanización</i>
	1. The process of recording in Roman script either the phonological elements of a language or the graphic symbols of a non-Roman writing system. 2. An item of a language which has undergone this process.		
85.	<i>script</i>	<i>écriture</i>	<i>escritura</i>
	A set of graphic symbols which may be variously employed in representation of the phonological and/or morphological elements of a language or languages.		
86.	<i>sound</i>	<i>son</i>	<i>sonido</i>
	An oral symbol which, in a given linguistic context, conveys a specific item of information.		
87.*	<i>speech</i>	<i>parole</i>	<i>habla</i>
	An oral manifestation of language.		
88.*	<i>spelling</i>	<i>graphie</i>	<i>grafía</i>
	A graphic symbol or ordered sequence of graphic symbols which represent a particular expression in a given language.		
89.	<i>syllabary</i>	<i>syllabaire</i>	<i>silabario</i>
	A specific set of graphic symbols, each symbol typically (but not necessarily) representing a particular syllable, which may be employed in representation of the phonological elements of a language.		
90.	<i>syllable</i>	<i>syllabe</i>	<i>sílabo</i>
	An arbitrary unit composed of one or more phonemes of a language, only one of which may be a vocalic nucleus.		
91.	<i>symbol,</i> <i>graphic</i>	<i>symbole</i> <i>graphique</i>	<i>signo gráfico</i>
	A written mark which, in a given linguistic context, conveys a specific item of information.		
92.	<i>system,</i> <i>writing</i>	<i>système</i> <i>d'écriture</i>	<i>sistema</i> <i>de escribir</i>
	A structure which employs in representation of the phonological and/or morphological elements of a language or languages both:		

	1. An alphabet, syllabary and/or logographic lexicon; and		
	2. A systematic manner of application of the alphabet, syllabary and/or logographic lexicon.		
93.*	<i>term,</i> <i>designatory</i> (synonym: <i>designation</i> , q.v.)	(—————) 	<i>término</i> <i>designativo</i>
94.*	<i>term,</i> <i>generic</i>	<i>terme</i> <i>générique</i>	<i>término</i> <i>genérico</i>
	A term included in a name which indicates the type of the named entity, and which has the same meaning in current local usage (see <i>element</i> , <i>generic</i>).		
95.*	<i>topography</i>	<i>topographie</i>	<i>topografía</i>
	The surface configuration of a planet or satellite, or of a portion thereof.		
96.	<i>toponym</i>	<i>toponyme</i>	<i>topónimo</i>
	A name applied to a topographic feature.		
97.	<i>toponymy</i>	<i>toponymie</i>	<i>toponimia</i>
	1. A science which has as its object the study of toponyms. 2. A coherent body of toponyms.		
98.	<i>transcription</i>	<i>transcription</i>	<i>transliteración</i>
	1. The process of recording the phonological and/or morphological elements of a language in terms of a specific writing system. 2. The result of this process.		
99.*	<i>translation</i>	<i>traduction</i>	<i>traducción</i>
	1. The process of rendering an expression of one language in terms of a corresponding expression of another language. 2. The result of this process.		
100.	<i>transliteration</i>	<i>translittération</i>	<i>transcripción</i>
	1. The process of recording the graphic symbols of one writing system in terms of corresponding graphic symbols of a second writing system. 2. The result of this process.		
101.*	<i>trigraph</i>	<i>trigraph</i>	<i>trigrafo</i>
	Three letters of characters which are together employed in a particular order in representation of a single phonological and/or morphological element of a language.		
102.	<i>tetragraph</i>	<i>tétragraph</i>	<i>tetrógrafo</i>
	Four letters or characters which are together employed in a particular order in representation of a single phonological and/or morphological element of a language.		

INDEX

	<i>See</i>		<i>See</i>
abbreviated character	character, abbreviated	geographical entity	entity, geographical
accidente geográfico	feature, geographical	geographical feature	feature, geographical
agglomération	place, populated	geographical name	name, geographical
alternate name	name, alternate	glossaire	glossary
apóstrofo	apostrophe	glossario	
colloquial language	language, colloquial	graphic symbol	symbol, graphic
contexte	context	hydronyme	hydronym
contexto	context	ideographic lexicon	(synonym: lexicon, logographic, q.v.)
conventional name	name, conventional	index gazetteer	gazetteer, index
cultural feature	feature, cultural	internacional	international
designatory term	term, designatory	langue	language
détail hydrographique	feature, hydrographic	langue nationale	language, national
détail topographique	feature, topographic	langue non-officielle	language, non official
diacritical mark	mark, diacritical	langue officielle	language, official
dialecte	dialect	langue principale	language, principal
dialecto	dialect	langue vernaculaire	language, colloquial
diccionario geográfico	dictionary, geographical	lengua	language
dictionnaire géographique	dictionary, geographical	lengua nacional	language, national
écriture	script	lengua oficial	language, official
escritura	script	lengua principal	language, principal
extraterrestrial topographic feature	feature, extraterrestrial, topographic	lengua vernácula	language, colloquial
feature name	name, feature	letra	letter
fonema	phoneme	lettre	letter
generic element	element, generic	léxico	lexicon
generic term	term, generic	lexique	lexicon
geographical dictionary	dictionary, geographical	lieudit	locality

linguistic community	community, linguistic	official language	language, official
literary language	language, literary	place name	name, place
logographic lexicon	lexicon, logographic	place name index	index, place name
lugar	locality	physical feature	feature, physical
lunar name	name, lunar	principal language	language, principal
map informaton	information, map	printing form	form, printing
map name	name, map	specific element	element, specific
mention cartographique	information, map	speech community	community, speech
modified character	character, modified	standardized name	name, standardized
multilingual lettering	lettering, multilingual	standard language	language, standard
nacional	national	toponymic index	index, toponymic
names authority	authority, names	topographic entity	entity, topographic
natural feature	feature, natural	topographic feature	feature, topographic
nom	name	transcription key	key, transcription
nombre	name	transliteration key	key, transliteration
nombre geográfico	name, geographical	undersea feature	feature, undersea
nombre hidrográfico	name, hydrographic	variant character	character, variant
nomenclature	gazetteer	variant name	name, variant
nom géographique	name, geographical	vehicular language	language, vehicular
nom lunaire	name, lunar	vowel point	point, vowel
non-official language	language, non-official	writing system	system, writing
objet géographique	feature, geographical		

SPANISH TERMINOLOGY FOR GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES*

Report presented by Spain

The meetings of the First United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names showed the need to review and refine the meanings of some technical terms. Many of the comments made in this paper stem from those meetings and from a conviction of the importance of technical terms to the development of a common approach. The experience of the past four years and the work that has been done will be reflected in the various points made in this report, when their subject-matter relates to them.

The list of selected technical terms in Spanish, taken from the English original, is the one which appears in the report of the Group of Experts on Geographical Names.¹ The 41 terms in the list, with the suggested new versions in Spanish, appear in annex I.

The definitions of "geographical name", "toponym" and "conventional name" do not reflect the way in which the corresponding terms are used in Spanish. According to the list, "toponym" means "the name of a natural feature", but in Spanish *topónimo* is used in its broader etymological sense as "a proper place name",² whether the place is natural or artificial; for example, "Río Guadarrama", "San Lorenzo de El Escorial" and "el Embalse de Entrepeñas" are toponyms. On consulting the English writer Arousseau, one reads that "place-names (toponyms) are the names of places in particular countries and geographical names are the

names of places in particular languages".³ This would mean that toponyms are the conventional names and that geographical names are the names in the official language. It would be desirable to achieve a precise definition of these three terms. The Spanish Academy's rules state in this connexion: "We must call attention to the difference between the foreign name of a place and the Spanish name of a foreign place":⁴ as examples of the latter it mentions "París", "Alejandría" and "Moscú", which are the conventional names. The work carried out by the United Nations and by these Conferences has been useful, since now, if one consults modern Spanish publications, one finds on maps "París (París)", "el Iskandariya" (Alejandría)" and "Moskva (Moscú)" — although in the indexes, to facilitate identification, such names are listed alphabetically according to the traditional Spanish spelling, with their equivalents in national systems following the Spanish name.

Spanish place names (*nombres de población*) are given in the gazetteer issued by the National Institute of Statistics; for the 1970 census, some 100,000 *topónimos* were included. Since 1969 it has also been possible to consult *España, Términos Municipales*,⁵ which includes three indexes: an alphabetical index by provinces, a numerical index, and a general index of all Spanish municipalities. The term "nombre de población" is the

* The original text of this report, submitted in Spanish, was contained in document E/CONF.61/L.8.

¹ Geneva Conference, 1967, E/CONF.53/L.2, Extracts from World Cartography, Volume VII, p. 15.

² Spanish Royal Academy, *Diccionario de la Lengua Española*, 19th ed. (Madrid, Espasa Calpe, 1970), p. 1276.

³ M. Arousseau, *The Rendering of Geographical Names* (London Hutchinson, 1957), p. 3.

⁴ Spanish Royal Academy, *Nuevas normas de prosodia y ortografía* (Madrid, 1952), p. 116.

⁵ Institute of Applied Geography, *España Atlas e Índices de sus Términos Municipales* (Madrid, Spanish Federation of Savings Banks, 1969).