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TERMINOLOGY IN THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Glossary of toponymic terminology

Paper submitted by the United Nations Group of Experts  
on Geographical Names (UNGEGN)\*\*

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UNITED NATIONS

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Group of Experts on  
Geographical Names

GLOSSARY OF  
TOFONYMIC TERMINOLOGY

Edited by

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Version 1.2  
February, 1992



## P R E F A C E

This Glossary, produced at the recommendation of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, owes its existence to several factors. Although new in its approach, extent and content, it would not, perhaps, have come into being had it not been for the energy invested in its predecessor<sup>(1)</sup> by members of the Group of Experts. While the latter work was more limited in the number of terms included, it had the temporary advantage of being multilingual.

Recent years have witnessed a rapid increase in the use of computers in practically all fields of human activity. This development has not bypassed the treatment of geographical names, both in alphanumeric, i.e. chiefly textual, applications such as in gazetteers, and in graphic ones, e.g. in cartography. Many technical terms current in computer science have thus 'infiltrated' the professional lexicon of toponymists and others dealing with geographical names. But scientific terms in the field of linguistics, too, as well as new cartographic concepts employed in relation to geographical names, have enriched our professional language.

At its 14th Session, in September 1989, the U.N. Group of Experts on Geographical Names decided to set up a Working Group<sup>(2)</sup> whose task it would be to produce a new Glossary of Toponymic Terminology. One of the aims was to strive, as far as possible, for precision in the definitions, while still keeping a relatively easily readable style; another was the desirability of adding actual examples in order to further clarify the use of the terms. Furthermore, since terms and their definitions in previous texts were based mainly on western languages and scripts, the present Glossary, which resulted from those decisions, supplies examples in no less than 17 eastern and western languages and scripts. However, it was decided to produce the Glossary in the first stage in English only. At a later stage translation into the other official languages of the United Nations Organization is envisaged. This will aim at the greatest possible degree of uniformity in formulation between the different languages, while preserving the linguistic and operational characteristics of each language.

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(1) United Nations, Glossary No. 330. Document ST/CS/SER.F/330 of 24 Sept. 1984.

(2) United Nations, Document ESA/RT/C/GN/12 of 12 July 1989, p. 12.

The Editor wishes to express his sincere thanks to those of the Working Group members who contributed their time and professional expertise, and in particular Ms. Kerfoot and Mssrs. Hornansky, Lapierre, Payne, Raper and Spiess, as well as to the Dutch-German Speaking Division of UNGEGN under the Chairmanship of the last-mentioned. Their contribution is appreciated all the more because it was offered under pressure of a rather strict timetable 'dictated' by the Editor. But only thus was it possible to complete, within three years, not only the pilot project distributed to the Working Group members at the 15th Session in 1991 as Version 1 of the Glossary, but also the present Version 1.2.

In order to facilitate the use of the Glossary, an index of main entries only (including synonyms but not other cross-references), has been added. Where terms occur as cross-references in definitions within the body of the Glossary, they are printed in heavier type. Following convention, phonemic examples are presented in IPA notation between oblique slashes, while phonetic examples are indicated by square brackets.

It is hoped that this publication will be of practical use to all those who prepare or employ Toponymic Guidelines, the world-wide production of which is also recommended and encouraged by the U.N. Group of Experts, and by others engaged in the study or application of geographical names.

Since the Editor assumes responsibility for all errors in the Glossary, he will be grateful for any note of correction or criticism, which may be conveyed to him at the address below.

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G L O S S A R Y   O F   T O P O N Y M I C   T E R M I N O L O G Y

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Note: Phonemic examples between oblique slashes // are in IPA notation.  
Phonetic examples are shown in square brackets [].

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- 001 acronym                      Word formed from the initial letter or letters of each of the successive or major parts of a composite term. Examples: Radar; Pixel; UNGEGN.
- 002 address                      Computer location where a particular item is stored.
- 003 allograph                    Each of the particular graphic representations of a grapheme. Examples: in English, ff, ph and gh are allographs of f, the grapheme for the /f/ phoneme; in German, ss=sz=ß, ä=ae.
- 004 allomorph                    Each of two or more differing phonological manifestations of a given morpheme. Example: foot->feet and the -s in "lakes" are allomorphs of the plural morpheme.
- 005 allonym                      Each of two or more names employed in reference to a single topographic feature. Example: Hull, Kingston-upon-Hull; Vesterhavet, Nordsee; Swansea, Abertawe.
- 006 allonym, standardized      Each of two or more standardized allonyms of a given feature. Example: Biel/Bienne; Casablanca/Dār al-Baydah; Kaapstad/Cape Town.
- 007 allophone                    A phonetic variant of a phoneme, usually written in square brackets. Examples: allophones of the /t/ phoneme in English [Tynemouth] (tip of tongue against the alveolar ridge) as distinct from [Newcastle-upon-Tyne] (tip of tongue against back of upper front teeth); /b/ in Spanish [banca] as against [saber]. See also phone.
- 008 alphabet                    Set of all letters of a language with alphabetic script, ordered in a specific sequence and provided with names for each character.
- 009 alphabet, conversion      An alphabet used in names conversion. Comprehensive term for alphabet, transcription and alphabet, transliteration.

- 010 alphabet, international phonetic See IPA.
- 011 alphabet, transcription An alphabet, sometimes limited in extent, that may be employed in the process of transcription. Examples: using only z, not c, to represent the dental /ts/-phoneme in transcription into German, or only k, not c, for transcribing the velar /k/ phoneme into English.
- 012 alphabet, transliteration An alphabet, sometimes limited in extent, that may include diacritics, employed in transliteration. Example: alphabet used in the romanization of non-Roman script, e.g. for classical Arabic omitting C, E, P, V and X, but including ' and other markers.
- 013 alphabetic script See script, alphabetic.
- 014 alphabetic sequence See sequence, alphabetic.
- 015 alphabetic sequence rules See sequence rules, alphabetic.
- 016 alphabetization Putting into alphabetic order. See also sequence rules, alphabetic.
- 017 alphanumeric Graphic or digital representation, e.g. on a computer screen, employing only letters and/or numerals. In a wider sense, including punctuation marks and mathematical symbols.
- 018 anthroponym Personal (proper) name. Examples: Alfred, 'Ali.
- 019 article A morpheme that makes explicit the definite (or indefinite) nature of a noun. Examples: English the; Spanish el, los; French le, la, les; Arabic al-; Hebrew ha-.
- 020 authority, names (a) a body such as a person, commission or board, assigned power of decision in toponymic matters by a legally constituted entity such as a state;  
  
(b) an authority charged with issuing standardized names.
- 021 batch processing Method whereby items are coded and collected into groups and then processed sequentially in a computer, usually at a later time. Complementary term: interactive processing.
- 022 biscriptual See map script, multiscriptual.
- 023 category, topographic See class, feature.
- 024 character Graphic symbol used as a unit in a writing system; more specifically, a graphic symbol in a non-alphabetic writing system. Example: Chinese  $\phi$ , zhong; Amharic  $\eta$ , ke.



- 025 character, modified      Comprehensive term for character, simplified and character, variant.
- 026 character, simplified      Variant of a character which is graphically less complex than its original form. Example: 'Grotesque' vs 'Roman' typeface; modern straightlined Chinese Han and Japanese Kanji characters.
- 027 character, variant      One of two or more characters in a writing system representing the same phonological and/or morphological item, belonging to the same typeface or font but differing in shape. Examples: Arabic  $\xi = \varkappa = \varepsilon$  , Hebrew פ=פ.
- 028 character, vowel      In an alphabetic or syllabic script, a character, not a marker, representing a vowel. Examples: Thai  $\eta$  (a); Amharic  $\varkappa$  (a, first vowel character).
- 029 choronym      Toponym applied to an areal feature.
- 030 class, feature      Grouping of topographic items with similar characteristics, to facilitate search and retrieval. Example: river, creek, brook, wadi etc. all classed under 'stream'.
- 031 coded representation      The representation of an item or of a feature class by a code; the result of applying a code to any member of a coded set. Example: 0226 - main road.
- 032 colloquial language      See language, colloquial.
- 033 community, linguistic      A group of people who communicate with relative ease in a common language or dialect.
- 034 community, speech      A group of people who communicate orally with relative ease in a common language or dialect.
- 035 composite name      See name, composite.
- 036 compound name      See name, composite.
- 037 computer file      See file, computer.
- 038 computer format      See format, computer.
- 039 computer record      See record, computer.
- 040 consonant letter      See letter, consonant.
- 041 consonant script      See script, defective alphabetic.
- 042 context      The body of material or conditions within which a particular item appears.
- 043 conventional name      See exonym.
- 044 conversion alphabet      See alphabet, conversion.

- 045 conversion table Comprehensive term for key, transcription and key, transliteration. See also key, romanization.
- 046 conversion, names The process of transferring the phonological and/or morphological elements of a particular language to another, or from one script to another. Conversion is effected by either transcription or transliteration.
- 047 conversion, script See conversion, names.
- 048 coordinates, geographical The (spheroidal) graticule of lines of latitude (parallels) and longitude (meridians) used to define location on the Earth's surface - disregarding altitude - with the aid of angular measure (degrees, minutes and seconds of arc).
- 049 coordinates, rectangular See coordinates, topographic.
- 050 coordinates, topographic Grid of plane rectangular coordinates with equal units of length on both axes, superimposed on a (usually topographic) map.
- 051 creole A stable form of speech, derived from a pidgin, which has become the sole or principal language of a speech community. Example: Haitian Creole (derived from French).
- 052 cultural feature See feature, cultural.
- 053 data A representation of facts or concepts in a formalized manner suitable for communication, interpretation or processing by man or machine. Complementary term (in computer usage): program.
- 054 data base (also database), digital Comprehensive, sometimes exhaustive, collection of computer records pertaining to a specific subject. Example: the collection of computer records for all hydrographic features in a country.
- 055 data base, digital toponymic A digital data base containing (all) toponyms in a specific region, with or without accompanying data, in computer-readable form.
- 056 data base management system (DBMS) A collection of software required for using a digital data base so as to enable independent users to access this data base.
- 057 data dictionary Catalog of definitions of the contents of a data base, including data element reference labels, formats, internal reference codes and text entry, as well as their interrelationships.
- 058 data directory See data dictionary.
- 059 data element Description of a basic unit of identifiable and definable information to occupy a specific data field in a computer file. Example: "Date of ratification of name by the names authority".

- 060 data field Space for a specific data element in a computer record. Example: the field for the coordinates in a place name computer record.
- 061 data interchange, translingual Data exchange (esp. by computer) via standardized codes and/or terminology not bound to a particular language.
- 062 data item Content of a particular data element in a specific record. Example: 01.01.92 in the data field for "Date".
- 063 data portability The possibility of running the same program and using the same data on different computer systems.
- 064 default value In computer processing, an option chosen by the computer in the absence of explicit instructions by the operator.
- 065 defective alphabetic script See script, defective alphabetic.
- 066 descriptive term See term, descriptive.
- 067 designation See term, descriptive.
- 068 diacritic A sign, usually small, placed above, below or across a letter or group of letters in order to change the phonemic value of the original letter(s). Example: German ä, ö, ü; ž in romanization of Russian; ẓ in romanization of Hebrew; Polish ʃ.
- 069 diacritical sign or mark See diacritic.
- 070 dialect Regionally or socially distinctive variety of a language, characterised and identified by a particular set of words, grammatical structures and pronunciation. See also diglossia; vernacular.
- 071 dictionary, geographical List of geographical terms and/or names, usually arranged in alphabetic order, providing definitions, explanatory information or descriptive data for each item.
- 072 digital data base See data base, digital.
- 073 digital toponymic data base See data base, digital toponymic.
- 074 diglossia A relatively stable linguistic situation, in which two different varieties of a single language co-occur in a linguistic community, one (the "high" variety) usually being the more formal and prestigious; the other (the "low") variety being used in more informal settings, chiefly in conversation. Examples: Greek Katharevousa and Dhimotiki; German Hochdeutsch and Plattdeutsch.

- 075 diglossic Referring to diglossia.
- 076 digraph Sequence of two characters, eg letters, which represent a single phoneme. Examples: for /ʃ/, sj in Dutch, ch in French, sh in English.
- 077 diphthong Combination of two (or three, in triphthong) vocalic elements in a single syllable. Examples: for /aɪ/, ei in German "bei"; i in English "time".
- 078 donor language See language, source.
- 079 donor script See script, source.
- 080 element, data See data element.
- 081 element, generic That part of a toponym which consists of a generic term. Examples: Port au Prince, Sierra Nevada, Newport. The generic element does not necessarily indicate the feature class of the item named. See also false generic element. Complementary term: element, specific.
- 082 element, specific That part of a toponym which does not constitute a generic term and which distinguishes it from others of the same feature class. It may include articles and/or other linguistic elements. Examples: Port Elizabeth, Rio Negro, Cape of Good Hope.
- 083 endonym Name used in the principal language spoken in the region in which the feature is located, regardless of the script in which it is expressed in writing. Examples: Vārānasi (not Benares), Aachen (not Aix-la-Chapelle), Krung Thep (not Bangkok), Al-Uqsūr (not Luxor), Yerushalayim (not Jerusalem).
- 084 endonym, standardized Endonym sanctioned by a names authority as the preferred name. Example: among the allonyms Kingston-upon-Hull and Hull (England), the former is the standardized form.
- 085 entity, topographic See feature, topographic.
- 086 eponym Anthroponym constituting the origin, or part, of a toponym. Examples: Iago (James) in Santiago, Everest in Mount Everest, Kruger in Krugersdorp.
- 087 epotponym Toponym which constitutes the basis or origin of a common noun. Examples: Xerez (for sherry), Olympia (for Olympiad), Portugal (for Burduqāl or Burduqān, Arabic for orange).
- 088 exonym Name used in a specific language for a topographic feature situated outside the area where that language has official status, and differing from

the endonym not only by diacritic marks or through conversion. Examples: Warsaw is the English exonym for Warszawa, Londres the French for London, Mailand the German for Milano.

- 089 exonymization Substitution of an exonym for an endonym.
- 090 extraterrestrial feature See feature, extraterrestrial.
- 091 extraterrestrial name See name, extraterrestrial.
- 092 false generic element See generic element, false.
- 093 feature class See class, feature.
- 094 feature name See toponym.
- 095 feature, cultural Geographical feature made, or significantly modified, by man. Examples: canal, road, populated place. Complementary term: feature, natural.
- 096 feature, extraterrestrial A feature on any planet other than Earth or on a satellite. Example: a crater on the moon.
- 097 feature, geographical Topographic feature on the surface of the Earth.
- 098 feature, hydrographic Topographic feature consisting of water, or associated mainly with water but not consisting of dry land. Example: lake, underground reservoir, but not island.
- 099 feature, natural Topographic feature not made or significantly modified by man. Complementary term: feature, cultural.
- 100 feature, physical See feature, natural.
- 101 feature, topographic A portion of the surface of the Earth or of any other planet or satellite that has recognizable identity.
- 102 feature, undersea A portion of that part of the Earth which lies beneath the surface of an ocean or sea, and which has a recognizable identity.
- 103 field, data See data field.
- 104 file, computer Organized, ordered and named collection of computer records.
- 105 firmware Computer programs and procedures programmed onto a card or board inserted into or fixed in a computer. It is not changeable by software commands.
- 106 font A typeface of a specified size. Example: 12-point Times Roman.

- 107 form, graphic            Written or printed character(s), including any diacritics, which represent a linguistic item such as a name. Distinct from spoken or digital form.
- 108 format                    Size and general arrangement of a written or printed document. See also format, computer.
- 109 format, computer        The arrangement of data in a computer file (eg into records and fields, numeric and alphanumeric, fixed or floating point, etc.).
- 110 gazetteer, index        Ordered list of toponyms with or without additional data, serving as a guide to the source in which they appear. See also gazetteer, toponymic. Example: index gazetteer appended to an atlas.
- 111 gazetteer, toponymic    Ordered list of toponyms with information about location, type of feature and possibly other relevant data for each item.
- 112 generic element         See element, generic.
- 113 generic element, false   Generic element which does not indicate the feature class of the item named. Examples: Mount Isa, 'Ain es-Sultan, Rio de Janeiro are all populated places.
- 114 generic term             See term, generic.
- 115 geographical dictionary See dictionary, geographical.
- 116 geographical entity     See feature, geographical.
- 117 geographical feature    See feature, geographical.
- 118 geographical name        See name, geographical.
- 119 geographical names standardization    See standardization, geographical names.
- 120 geographic information system (GIS)    Computerised multi-purpose system combining input, processing and output of geographically-referenced data, which usually include toponyms.
- 121 GIS                        See geographic information system.
- 122 glossary                  Specialized list of terms relating to a particular field of study or interest, which may contain explanatory or descriptive information on the items listed. Example: glossary of terms employed in the standardization of geographical names.
- 123 grapheme                  Graphic representation of a phoneme in a particular language. Examples: j is the grapheme for the /dʒ/ phoneme in English and for the /ʒ/ phoneme in French.
- 124 grapheme, vowel         See character, vowel; vowel point.

- 125 graphic form See form, graphic.
- 126 guidelines, toponymic Set of rules governing the standardization of a country's toponyms and their presentation in maps and gazetteers.
- 127 hardware Reference to the computer itself (central processing unit, CPU), as well as to all peripheral input and output devices such as disks, tape consoles, printers, plotters, digitisers, scanners, etc. Complementary term: software.
- 128 historical name See name, historical.
- 129 hodonym See odonym.
- 130 homonym One of two or more identical toponyms denoting different items. Example: Monaco (Principauté de) and Monaco (di Bavaria), the Italian exonym for München.
- 131 hydrographic feature See feature, hydrographic.
- 132 hydronym Toponym applied to a hydrographic feature.
- 133 hyphenization (a) In toponymy, joining two or more elements, usually specific, of a composite name by hyphens, thereby normally preventing change of word order in an alphabetic listing. Examples: Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Höhr-Grenzhausen, Tel-Aviv.  
(b) Placing hyphens between the syllables of a word.
- 134 ideogram See logogram.
- 135 ideographic script See script, logographic.
- 136 index, place names See index, toponymic. Sometimes applied to populated places only. See also name, place.
- 137 index, toponymic Ordered list of toponyms, including data about location but little or no additional information.
- 138 indigenous name See endonym.
- 139 interactive In a computer system, the process of interacting directly with a data base for immediately retrieving and/or displaying information. This is usually done on a computer screen. Complementary term: batch processing.
- 140 interface A common boundary at which two different computer systems or portions thereof join or intersect. It can be mechanical or electrical, and can also refer to the interaction between man and computer.
- 141 international standardization See standardization, international, geographical names.

- 142 IPA, International Phonetic Alphabet An internationally recognized set of symbols for phonetic transcription.
- 143 key, romanization Table listing the characters of a non-Roman script together with corresponding letters of a Roman alphabet, including diacritics as required. Also called conversion table. Examples: Roman šč for Russian Cyrillic ш ; Roman G for Greek Γ.
- 144 key, transliteration Table listing the graphic characters of a particular source script together with the corresponding characters of a specific target script. Examples: Roman yu for Japanese Katakana ユ ; Russian Cyrillic P for Roman R; Hebrew א for Amharic ለ .
- 145 language, colloquial Form of language used in informal speech, differing noticeably from that used in formal speech and writing. See also dialect; diglossia.
- 146 language, donor See language, source.
- 147 language, literary Written form of language, regarded as the desirable standard for works of literature. May also form the basis of formal speech. See also diglossia. Example: Arabic Nahawi as against colloquial dialects.
- 148 language, national Language in widespread and current use throughout a specific country or in part of its territory. It may or may not have the status of an official language. Example: Romansch in Switzerland.
- 149 language, non-official Language which, though relatively widely used, lacks officially-sanctioned status in a particular legally constituted political entity. Example: English in Israel.
- 150 language, official Language which has legal status in a particular legally-constituted political entity such as a state or part of a state, and which serves as a language of administration. Examples: Afrikaans and English in South Africa; Italian and German in South Tirol.
- 151 language, principal In a linguistic community where more than one language is in use, that language which has most adherents. Example: German in South Tirol.
- 152 language, receiver See language, target.
- 153 language, source Language from which a name is converted to, or adopted by, another language, the target language. Example: in conversion from Russian to Chinese, the former is the source language.
- 154 language, standard That form of 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 generally recognized as correct in a linguistic community. Examples: RP ("Received Pronunciation") in English, Hochdeutsch in German.
- 155 language, target Language in terms of which a toponym may be adopted or converted from its source language. Example: in conversion from French to Arabic, the latter is the target language.
- 156 language, vehicular Language which serves communication between members of different linguistic communities. Example: English is the vehicular language of civil aviation throughout most of the world.
- 157 letter A graphic symbol serving as a unit character in an alphabet.
- 158 letter, basic Fundamental form of a letter without diacritics. Example: Polish ł as against l; Icelandic ð as against D.
- 159 letter, consonant Letter of an alphabet representing a consonant. Example: Roman B, D, F, G etc.
- 160 letter, vowel Letter of an alphabet representing a vowel. Examples: Roman A, E, I, O, U; Thai ๏ (ā).
- 161 lettering, map Map script in an alphabetic writing system.
- 162 lettering, multilingual See map script, multilingual.
- 163 lettering, multiscriptual See map script, multiscriptual.
- 164 letters, cardinal Those letters of a script which are contained in most alphabets that use this script. Examples: the Roman alphabet excluding eg the letters K, Q, X; the Arabic letters of the Persian (Farsi) alphabet. Complementary term: letters, special.
- 165 letters, special Those letters of the alphabet of a particular language which are characteristic of the latter, being absent in all or most other alphabets using the same script. Examples: Danish ø, German ß, Polish ł, Persian ۚ. Complementary term: letters, cardinal.
- 166 lexicon (a) A dictionary or glossary relating to a particular language or sphere of interest.  
(b) The vocabulary of an individual person, an occupational group or a professional field.
- 167 lexicon, logographic An ordered listing of the characters of a logographic script; the counterpart of an alphabet in alphabetic script and of a syllabary in syllabic script.

- 168 linguistic area See region, linguistic.
- 169 linguistic community See community, linguistic.
- 170 linguistic region See region, linguistic.
- 171 linguistics The study of human language in all its aspects, including, among others, phonetics, phonology and morphology.
- 172 literary language See language, literary.
- 173 local name See name, local.
- 174 logogram A graphic symbol or combination of symbols which represents an entire free morpheme such as a word, without separately representing its constituent constituent phonemes or syllables.  
Example: Japanese (Kanji) 山 for yama or san (mountain).
- 175 logographic lexicon See lexicon, logographic.
- 176 logographic script See script, logographic.
- 177 lunar name See name, lunar.
- 178 map lettering See lettering, map.
- 179 map script Toponyms and other verbal and numeric items such as descriptive terms and spot and contour heights in a map. See also lettering, map.
- 180 map script, multilingual Map script which, for a particular topographic feature, shows allonyms in different languages, not necessarily standardized.  
Examples: Athens (Athīnai); Moscou (Moskva).
- 181 map script, multiscriptual Map script which presents toponyms in two (biscrptual) or more different types of script or writing system. Example: ΑΘΗΝΑΙ, Athens; נֶזְרֵת, Nazareth.
- 182 mark, diacritical See diacritic.
- 183 marker Graphic symbol representing a phoneme, morpheme or other element of a language and used only in combination with an independent letter, syllabogram or logogram.  
Examples: Amharic syllabic vowel markers, Arabic shaddah (doubling marker), French cédille.
- 184 menu, computer List of options available to an operator, usually displayed in graphic form on the computer screen.
- 185 modified character See character, modified.
- 186 morpheme The minimal distinctive unit of grammar; the smallest functioning unit in the composition of

words. Example: "names" consists of the free morpheme "name" and the bound plural morpheme "s".

- 187 morphological Relating to morphology.
- 188 morphology The branch of grammar which studies the structure and form of words in a language.
- 189 mother tongue The first language acquired within one's family.
- 190 multilingual lettering See map script, multilingual.
- 191 multiscriptual lettering See map script, multiscriptual.
- 192 name (a) Oral or written item recognized as designating a particular entity such as an object, an individual or a topographic feature.  
  
(b) In the specific context of this glossary: a toponym.
- 193 name, alternative See allonym.
- 194 name, approved See name, standardized.
- 195 name, composite Toponym consisting of a generic and a specific component, or of a specific component consisting of more than one word or free morpheme. Examples: Rostov-na-Donu, Stoke-on-Trent. Complementary term: name, simplex.
- 196 name, compound See name, composite.
- 197 name, extraterrestrial Toponym applied to an extraterrestrial feature  
Example: Nix Olympica (on Mars).
- 198 name, geographical Name applied to a feature on the surface of the Earth; a particular case of a topographic name or toponym.
- 199 name, historical Toponym found in historical document(s) but being no more in current use. Example: Eboracum (for York, England); Mediolanum (for Milano, Italy); New Amsterdam (for New York, USA).
- 200 name, indigeonous See endonym.
- 201 name, local Toponym applied by a geographically limited sector of a linguistic community to a feature within its area. It may differ from the standardized endonym.
- 202 name, lunar Toponym applied to a feature on the surface of the Moon. Examples: Gagarin, Mare Tranquillitatis.
- 203 name, official Toponym sanctioned by a legally constituted names authority and applied to a topographic feature within its jurisdiction.

- 204 name, place (a) See toponym.  
(b) Synonym (used by some writers) for name of populated place.
- 205 name, populated place Toponym applied to an inhabited cultural feature.
- 206 name, proper A noun which designates an individual being or object. Examples: Albert; Beijing.
- 207 name, simplex Toponym consisting of a single word. Examples: Viipuri, Nouakchott. Al-Qahirah (Cairo) is also simplex, since, in the original Arabic, the article al- constitutes a bound morpheme, i.e. an integral unhyphenated prefix. Complementary term: name, composite.
- 208 name, standardized Name sanctioned by a names authority as the preferred name. In the context of this Glossary a standardized toponym.
- 209 name, topographic See toponym.
- 210 name, traditional An exonym in relatively widespread use by a particular linguistic community and usually in its tradition and literature. Examples: Alexandrie (French) for Al-Iskandāriyah (Arabic); Jerusalem (Spanish) for Yerushalayim (Hebrew); Peking (English) for Beijing (Chinese).
- 211 name, variant See allonym.
- 212 names authority See authority, names.
- 213 names conversion See conversion, names.
- 214 names transformation See transformation, names.
- 215 national language See language, national.
- 216 national standardization, geographical names See standardization, national, geographical names.
- 217 noise, graphic That which hinders, obstructs or obscures the clear transmission or reception of a graphic message. Examples: "snow" on a television screen; cluttering of a map with too dense graphic information; fuzzy map script.
- 218 non-official language See language, non-official.
- 219 non-vocalized A written word or text which does not include vocalization.
- 220 non-vowelled See non-vocalized.
- 221 normalization See standardization.
- 222 noun, proper See name, proper.

- 223 **odonym** Proper name of a traffic route feature. Examples: Via Appia, Airway Amber, M4, Fleet Street, Picadilly Circus, Darb al-Hajj.
- 224 **official language** See language, official.
- 225 **onomastics** (a) The science that has as its object the study of proper names.  
(b) The activity or process of name giving.
- 226 **oronym** Name applied to a feature of topographic elevation such as a mountain or a hill. Examples: Matterhorn, Gauri Sankar, Fuji San, Sierra Madre.
- 227 **orthography** Correct spelling of words.
- 228 **phone** In phonetics, the smallest perceptible unit of sound in the stream of speech. A specific phoneme can be realized by different phones called allophones.
- 229 **phoneme** A minimal (ie functionally indivisible) unit of sound in the phonological structure of a language, usually symbolized by oblique slashes. Examples: /b/; /p/; /ʃ/ (for English sh). In practice a phoneme is realized by variants named allophones, usually symbolized by square brackets [].
- 230 **phonemic** Relating to phonemes.
- 231 **phonetic, phonetical** Relating to phonetics.
- 232 **phonetics** The study and classification of sounds made in spoken language. The minimal phonetic unit is the phone.
- 233 **phonological** Relating to phonology.
- 234 **phonology** The study of speech sounds in a specific language or in two or more related languages considered together for comparative purposes.
- 235 **physical feature** See feature, natural.
- 236 **pidgin** A relatively stable form of speech developed as an auxiliary language, whose vocabulary and sphere of employment are narrowly limited and whose grammar, phonological structure and style are simpler than those of the language(s) from which it evolved. A pidgin which becomes the mother tongue of a linguistic community is said to be creolized. Examples: Lingua Franca (from Italian); Melanesian Pidgin (from English); Sranantonga (i.a. from Dutch). See also creole.
- 237 **place name index** See index, place names.
- 238 **place name** See toponym; name, place (b).

- 239 portability, data See data portability.
- 240 principal language See language, principal.
- 241 proper name See name, proper.
- 242 radical, radix (a) Basic form of a logographic character. Example: one of the 214 Chinese basic characters which represent categories of sense, such as the character for "tree" from which the logograms for specific kinds of trees are derived by the addition of markers.  
  
(b) See root.
- 243 raster mode In a computer, storage and display of data on a dense grid of pixels (picture elements) arranged in rows and columns. Example: Satellite images are normally stored in raster mode. Complementary term: vector mode.
- 244 receiver language See language, target.
- 245 receiver script See script, target.
- 246 record, computer Computer-readable collection of related data pertaining to a single topical item and treated as a unit. Example: a single toponym and its related data such as coordinates, date of ratification and origin.
- 247 region, linguistic Region or area where a particular language constitutes the official or principal language. Example: the Flemish and Walloon regions in Belgium.
- 248 retranscription Re-conversion of a result of transcription into the source language.
- 249 retransliteration Re-conversion of a result of transliteration into the source script. See also reversibility.
- 250 reversibility A characteristic of transliteration which permits a written item to be converted from one script or writing system into another, and subsequently to be reconverted back into the source script, the resulting item being identical with the original.
- 251 romanization Conversion from non-Roman script into Roman script. For the following, UNGEGN- approved romanization systems exist: Amharic; Bulgarian, Macedonian, Russian and Serbo-Croatian Cyrillic; Chinese (Pinyin); Devanagari; Farsi; Greek; Hebrew; Khmer; Thai. Examples: AΘHNAI -> Athinai; MOCKBA -> Moskva; 1'ΛN-7N -> Tel-Aviv.
- 252 romanization key See key, romanization.

- 253 root Reference to a basic linguistic item. Example: the basis from which a word is derived, such as the cluster of three consonants in Semitic words, e.g. n z l for nazala (Arabic descend) or y r d for yarad (Hebrew, ditto) and all their derivatives.
- 254 script A set of graphic symbols employed in writing, differing from another set not only by typeface. Groups of different scripts form writing systems. Examples: Roman, Greek, Cyrillic, Arabic, Thai and Hebrew scripts belong to the alphabetic writing system, Amharic and Kana to the syllabic, Han and Kanji to the logographic.
- 255 script conversion See conversion, names.
- 256 script, alphabetic Script belonging to the alphabetic writing system. Examples: Roman, Greek, Cyrillic, Arabic, Thai and Hebrew scripts are alphabetic, but the latter three are defective, i.e. mainly consonant scripts.
- 257 script, consonant See script, defective alphabetic.
- 258 script, defective, alphabetic Alphabetic script in which the letters predominantly or exclusively represent consonants, vowels being exclusively or primarily represented by non-letter markers such as dots and bars above, below or within the consonant letters. Examples: Arabic, Hebrew and Thai script. See also vowel letter; vowel point.
- 259 script, donor See script, source.
- 260 script, ideographic See script, logographic.
- 261 script, logographic A script consisting of logograms and belonging to the logographic writing system. Examples: Chinese; Japanese Kanji.
- 262 script, map See map script.
- 263 script, original See script, source.
- 264 script, receiver See script, target.
- 265 script, source A script in terms of which a toponym is produced, and on the basis of which it may be converted for use in another script called target script.
- 266 script, syllabic A script belonging to the syllabic writing system, in which the majority of characters each represent an entire syllable. Examples: Ethiopian Amharic; Japanese Katakana and Hiragana.
- 267 script, target A script into which a toponym may be converted from its source script. See also transliteration. Example: Roman script in the romanization of Greek.

- 268 segment In phonetics and linguistics, any discrete unit which can be identified in the stream of speech. Example: phonemes; consonants and vowels.
- 269 sequence, alphabetic (a) The order in which the letters of an alphabet are customarily cited.  
(b) A body of items listed in this order.
- 270 sequence rules, alphabetic Rules that indicate in which sequence words, e.g. names, should be arranged (alphabetized) with respect to the sequence of their letters. Problems may arise especially with letters omitted in the conventional way of reciting the alphabet or letters with diacritics such as ä, ö, ü, ß in German, or ll and ñ in Spanish, as well as with hyphenated words.
- 271 sign, diacritical See diacritic.
- 272 simplex name See name, simplex.
- 273 simplified character See character, simplified.
- 274 software Programs, procedures and data associated with the operation of a computer system. Complementary term: hardware.
- 275 source language See language, source.
- 276 source script See script, source.
- 277 specific element See element, specific.
- 278 speech An oral manifestation of language.
- 279 speech community See community, speech.
- 280 standard language See language, standard.
- 281 standardization (a) The establishment, by an appropriate authority, of a specific set of standards or norms, e.g. for the uniform rendition of toponyms.  
(b) Writing an item such as a toponym in accordance with such norms.
- 282 standardization, geographical names The prescription by a names authority of one or more particular names, together with their precise written form, for application to a given geographical feature, as well as the conditions for their use. In a wider sense, standardization of toponyms.
- 283 standardization, international, geographical names Activity aimed at reaching maximum practical uniformity in the rendering - oral and written - of all geographical names on Earth (and in a wider sense of toponyms on extraterrestrial bodies), by means of (1) national standardization, and/or (2) international convention, including the



- correspondence between different languages and writing systems.
- 284 standardization, national, geographical names Standardization of geographical names within the area of a national entity such as a state.
- 285 standardized Sanctioned by an appropriate society.
- 286 standardized allonym See allonym, standardized.
- 287 standardized name See name, standardized.
- 288 standardized toponym See toponym, standardized.
- 289 syllabary A specific and ordered set of syllabograms representing all the syllables of a particular language which uses syllabic script. Example: the set of syllabograms of Japanese Kana ka, ki, ku, ke, ko, kya, kyu, kyo, etc.
- 290 syllabic script See script, syllabic.
- 291 syllabification Division of a word into syllables, usually with hyphenization. Examples: Val-pa-ra-i-so, O-ban.
- 292 syllable Unit of speech including (or consisting of) a single vowel, diphthong or triphthong; the first division of a word. Example: Ge, no and va in Genova, Hei, del and berg in Heidelberg.
- 293 syllabogram Single graphic character representing a syllable. Examples: = for Japanese Katakana ni; Ꞥ for Amharic zu.
- 294 syntax That part of grammar which deals with the mutual relations between, and correct arrangement of, words in a sentence.
- 295 target language See language, target.
- 296 target script See script, target.
- 297 term, descriptive In a map, a noun which designates a topographic feature by its feature class, but which does not constitute a toponym. Examples: Airfield; Canal; Water Tower.
- 298 term, generic A common noun which describes a topographic feature in terms of its characteristics and not by its proper name. Examples: mountain, sierra, yama/san, dagh, river, wadi. It may form part of a toponym; see element, generic.
- 299 tetragraph Four characters (esp. letters) employed together in a particular order to represent a single phonological element in a specific language. Example: German tsch for the /tʃ/ phoneme.
- 300 topographic feature See feature, topographic.

- 301 topographic name See toponym.
- 302 topography (a) The surface configuration of the Earth or of a planet or satellite, or of a portion thereof, including its planimetric and altimetric aspects.  
(b) Description and graphic representation of the above.
- 303 toponomastics The activity or process of giving topographic names.
- 304 toponym Proper name applied to a topographic feature  
Comprehensive term for geographical and extraterrestrial names.
- 305 toponymic index See index, place names.
- 306 toponymy (a) The science which has as its object the study of toponyms in general and of geographical names in particular.  
(b) The totality of toponyms in a given region.
- 307 toponym, standardized Toponym sanctioned by a names authority as the preferred name.
- 308 toponym, variant See allonym.
- 309 traditional name See name, traditional.
- 310 transcription (a) A method of names conversion between different languages, in which the phonological elements (i.e. the sounds) of a source language are recorded in terms of a specific target language and its particular script, normally without recourse to additional diacritics.  
(b) A result of this process. Examples: English Chichester -> German Tschitschester; German Stuttgart -> English Shtootgart; Turkish Ankara -> Greek ΑΚΚΑΡΑ; Russian ШЧУКНО -> English Shchukno. Transcription is not normally a reversible process: retranscription e.g. by computer might result in English Tshitshester, German Schtutgart, Turkish Aqkara or Russian ШЧУКНО.
- 311 transcription alphabet See alphabet, transcription.
- 312 transcription key See key, transcription.
- 313 transformation, names General term covering the translation), exonymization, transcription and transliteration of toponyms. The two latter terms constitute conversion.
- 314 translation (a) The process of expressing meaning, presented in a source language, in the words of a target language.

- (b) A result of this process, sometimes applied only to the generic element. Examples: Lake Como (English for Italian Lago di Como); Mer noire (French for Russian Čornoje More); Casablanca (Spanish for Arabic Dār al-Baydah).
- 315 translingual data interchange See data interchange, translingual.
- 316 transliteration (a) A method of names-conversion between different alphabetic and syllabic scripts, in which each character of the source script is represented in principle by one character or di- or trigraph, or diacritic, or a combination of these, in the target script. Transliteration, as distinct from transcription, aims at complete reversibility, and must be accompanied by a transliteration key.
- (b) A result of this process. Examples: (with exonyms in brackets): القاهرة -> Al-Qahirah (Cairo); ШУКНО -> Ščukno; הַפַּיָּה -> Hefa (Haifa); Chichester -> Čičester.
- 317 transliteration alphabet See alphabet, transliteration.
- 318 transliteration key See key, transliteration.
- 319 trigraph Sequence of three characters, eg. letters, which represent a single phoneme. Example: for /ʃ/, sch in German.
- 320 typeface Style or design of a set of all print characters of an alphabet, regardless of size. Examples: Times Roman; Garamond; Univers.
- 321 undersea feature See feature, undersea.
- 322 unvocalized See vocalization.
- 323 unvowelled See vocalization.
- 324 UTM grid Universal Transverse Mercator grid, a plane grid of topographic coordinates overlaid on maps to assist location.
- 325 variant character See character, variant.
- 326 variant name See allonym.
- 327 vector mode In a computer, storage and display of graphic information (points, lines, areas) with the aid of points defined and addressed by their (usually rectangular) coordinates. Complementary term: raster mode.
- 328 vehicular language See language, vehicular.
- 329 vernacular Language or dialect native to a region.

- 330 vocabulary (a) List of words of a language.  
(b) Repertory of words of a particular individual.  
See also lexicon.
- 331 vocalization The inclusion or insertion of vowel markers in an item or a text written in defective alphabetic script such as Arabic, Hebrew or Thai. Except in instructory texts, only sacred texts and foreign words such as toponyms are usually vocalized in print. Examples: 'Ali - علي (vocalized) as against علي (unvocalized); Carmel- כרמל (vocalized) as against כרמל (unvocalized).
- 332 vocalized See vocalization.
- 333 vowel letter See letter, vowel.
- 334 vowel point Term designating a vowel marker in a defective alphabetic or consonant script. Examples: Arabic َ, ِ, ُ, (a,i,u); Hebrew =, ם, ם, ם, ם, (a,e,i,o,u); Thai ๐, ๑, ๒, (a, i, u) etc.
- 335 vowelised See vocalization.
- 336 writing system Method of representing the elements of phonology and morphology of a language by a set of graphic symbols which make up an alphabet, a syllabary or a logographic lexicon, respectively, for an alphabetic, syllabic or logographic writing system. A writing system is composed of scripts.

I N D E X

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UNITED NATIONS GROUP OF EXPERTS ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES  
WORKING GROUP ON TERMINOLOGY  
CONVENOR: NAFTALI KADMON

GLOSSARY OF TOPONYMIC TERMINOLOGY

Version 1.2

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(Including Synonyms)

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