INTRODUCTION
A thesaurus is an annotated list of descriptive nouns or noun phrases. These "descriptors" or "terms" are used to define the subject content of documents in a library or computer data base so that those documents can be searched or retrieved according to the subjects they cover. The assignment of descriptors or terms to documents is known as indexing.

For example, a document about the fertility of migrants from West Africa to France might be indexed by the terms:

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION
FERTILITY
MIGRANTS
FRANCE
WESTERN AFRICA

This document could then be retrieved by any one term only or by a combination of any number of the terms listed above.

A thesaurus is made up of a controlled vocabulary of descriptors with specific meanings. Unlike the terms in a dictionary, which may be accompanied by a number of different definitions reflecting common usage, a thesaurus descriptor is assigned a single meaning appropriate to the specific indexing system it serves.

**THESAURUS STRUCTURE**

The POPIN Thesaurus provides alphabetical, thematic or subject, and permuted arrangements of terms.

(a) **Alphabetical Thesaurus**

The Alphabetical Thesaurus is the main component of the POPIN Thesaurus; it lists descriptors in all three languages (English, French and Spanish) together with their relationships, notes on their use and a number indicating the subject category to which each is allocated.

AGE GROUPS / GROUPE D'AGES / GRUPOS DE EDADES
SN : Population within specified age limits [02.02.04]
BT GROUPS [05.02.00]
NT MIDDLE AGED [02.02.041]
RT AGE [02.02.01]

(i) Hierarchical Relationship (BT and NT)
In general, Broader Terms (BT) and Narrower Terms (NT) are of two types:

Whole/Part: FERTILITY
NT:NATURAL FERTILITY
Divisions/Subdivisions: DISEASE
   NT : CANCER

Some terms can appear in more than one hierarchy, particularly in the geographical section.

(ii) **Facet Numbers**

Facet numbers are used to group descriptors in the same subject area together. Thus, all terms concerning population characteristics are grouped under [02.00.00]; all terms concerning age distribution, a subdivision of population characteristics, are grouped under [02.02.00]; and a more specific selection of related terms on age distribution will be grouped under [02.02.04].

(iii) **Associative Relationships (RT)**

These include relationships which are not hierarchical, but can be useful in guiding users to Related Terms (RT) where the underlying concept may also be of interest.

MARRIAGE
RT : DIVORCE

(iv) **Scope Notes (SN)**

Scope Notes (SN) and definitions are provided for certain terms. They are not intended as dictionary definitions but as indications of the use of the term or descriptor in this thesaurus; they are provided only when required, and not when the meaning of the descriptor is obvious.

NULLIPARAS
SN : Women who have never given birth to a child.

(v) **Synonyms (USE and UF)**

The instruction to USE another term is employed where a true synonym exists (Economically Active Population USE LABOUR FORCE) and where a near synonym exists and a distinction is considered unnecessary (Health Manpower USE MEDICAL PERSONNEL). The instruction UF, meaning Used For, is the reciprocal for USE (LABOUR FORCE USE Economically Active Population; MEDICAL PERSONNEL UF Health Manpower).

(b) **Thematic Presentation of Descriptors**

(i) **Subject Category Fields**

This section provides the main subject headings under which the thesaurus is organised, together with the facet numbers of each theme. The purpose of this section is to display the scope and general structure of the POPIN Thesaurus at the first two hierarchical levels. The classification is not designed to be used for the shelf arrangement of books or for the filing of documents, although these first two levels can be used for generic coding.

(ii) **Descriptor Groups**

In this section of the thesaurus, the terms or descriptors are grouped together by subject category. Only the term itself is included, excluding linguistic equivalents and relationships (BT, NT, RT) or Scope Notes (SN).
(c) Permutated Index of Compound Terms

This list is automatically generated and provides the significant components of each descriptor and nondescriptor in alphabetical order. This enables the user to check, for example, the range of nouns that have been qualified by preceding words and thus scattered in the alphabetical listing:

MATERIAL AND CHILD CARE
ONLY CHILD
WANTED CHILD

Each term in this list is also provided with its thematic classification number (e.g., POPULATION DENSITY [04.01.03]), which provides a cross-reference between the alphabetical listing of descriptors and their presentation by subject.

PURPOSE

The POPIN Thesaurus is designed primarily for individual organisations and networks wishing to index material acquired by libraries and documentation centres and for the corresponding retrieval of such material. While many applications will be manual, an increasing number of such services will be computerised and will have access to various software packages developed for use in bibliographic and documentary databases. The POPIN Thesaurus is suitable for use with such packages.

Second, the thesaurus may be used as a terminological guide for the standardisation of index entries such as subject headings.

Third, wherever a computerized search is conducted of bibliographic databases in other subject areas, the thesaurus can be used as a search aid together with other subject-related vocabularies.

Fourth, the thesaurus can be used to obtain linguistic equivalencies for translation purposes. It is important to understand the difference between use of a classification scheme and of a thesaurus. A classification scheme provides a logical subject arrangement for books on shelves, but provides only a single point of subject access to that book. Indexing involves assigning multiple subject terms from a thesaurus to reflect the subjects covered in that book, so that retrieval of relevant information can be achieved no matter how the book has been classified. "Classification gives the broad subject; subject indexing adds specific subjects..." 2

SUBJECT SCOPE

This thesaurus provides a core terminology in the field of population and demography. Included in these subject areas are population characteristics, family and household, spatial distribution, labour force and employment, population policy, morbidity and mortality, nuptiality, fertility and family planning, migration, and population dynamics. All these topics are treated in some depth; however, they all impinge to some extent on virtually all aspects of human activity, involving many fringe, as opposed to core, areas. The thesaurus includes some terms from such fringe areas, which include socioeconomic development, culture and, society, education and training, agriculture, industry, management and administration, health, and the social sciences. However, all these fringe areas represent the core areas of other disciplines whose thesauri should be consulted if more specific information is needed. For example, seekers of more information on socioeconomic development are directed towards the Macrothesaurus3.

SEARCHING STRATEGIES

As a general rule, the more descriptors used to retrieve documents from the system, the more relevant the documents retrieved. Consequently, a search using one or two descriptors will generally retrieve many documents, only some of which will be relevant; a search using three, four, or more descriptors will yield fewer documents, most of which will be relevant.

Furthermore, the use of compound terms (such as CHILD MORTALITY instead of CHILDREN and MORTALITY) and of Narrower Terms (NT) will tend to increase the precision of a particular search. In contrast, the use of generic, or single word, descriptors, Broader Terms (BT) or Related Terms (RT) will tend to increase the number of documents retrieved.

GEOGRAPHICAL TERMS

The geographical terms used in this thesaurus have been selected in accordance with the geographical concepts used in the literature up to September 1992. As a general rule, the country names and regions selected conform to those in current usage by the United Nations, but the designations employed do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever by the compilers of this thesaurus concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area of its authorities, or the delineation of its frontiers or boundaries.

THESAURUS CHANGES

The work involved in the preparation of the Third Edition of the POPIN Thesaurus can be summarised as follows:

(i) Implementation as far as possible of the suggestions for additions, changes and deletions of terms suggested by users of the thesaurus since the previous edition was published in 1985.

(ii) Review of all POPIN Thesaurus terms in the area of socioeconomic development to see if there was an


demographic terms, changing them as appropriate in all three languages to ensure greater compatibility with the terms in the Multilingual Demographic Dictionary\(^4\).

(iii) Review of all demographic terms, changing them as appropriate in all three languages to ensure greater compatibility with the terms in the Multilingual Demographic Dictionary\(^4\).

(iv) Review of all terms in the areas of contraception and family planning, making changes where possible to correspond more closely with the terminology used in POPLINE\(^5\).

(v) The addition of a new category/facet WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT [07.05.00].

In consequence, the sections on Demography and Research Methodology [01.00.00] and Fertility and Family Planning [14.00.00] have undergone major revisions; the other sections have been less vigorously revised, and only major errors have been corrected and specific suggestions for changes implemented.

As a result of this work, the Third Edition of the POPIN Thesaurus contains approximately 100 new descriptors or terms, all of which are provided in all three languages. A total of some 240 descriptors have been deleted in order to give the thesaurus a more specific subject focus. Some 56 existing descriptors have been clarified by the addition of Scope Notes (SN) in some or all of the languages concerned. Many of the terms in all three languages have also been changed in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the POPIN Thesaurus Management Working Group, primarily to achieve closer comparability between the POPIN Thesaurus and the Macrothesaurus. A few changes in facet titles have also been made, but no major changes to the thematic organisation of the thesaurus were attempted.

**WORD CONTROL**

As far as possible, this edition of the POPIN Thesaurus conforms to ISO guidelines as laid out in ISO 27885\(^6\) and ISO 5964\(^6\). As a consequence:

- In the English and Spanish versions, plurals are preferred to singulars where a noun can be counted (e.g., CLINICS). In the French edition singular is the general rule, except some particular cases according to habitual uses of these terms (e.g., RESOURCES HUMANES).

- Direct entry is preferred to indirect, or inverted, terms (e.g., INFANT MORTALITY not MORTALITY, INFANT).

- Nouns and noun phrases are used; adjectives, adverbs and verbs are not used by themselves.

- Abbreviations and acronyms have been avoided as far as possible, except where they have become the accepted form in preference to the full form (e.g., AIDS and IUD) and for U.N. agencies (e.g., FAO and UNESCO).

- Homographs have been avoided, and where a term occurs which has a homograph outside the POPIN Thesaurus the meaning will be clear from its hierarchical relationship, or it will be provided with a Scope Note (SN) (e.g., COUPLE (SN) Two persons of the opposite sex living in a stable union, whether legal or not).

- British English spelling is generally preferred over American English, in accordance with normal U.N. practice (e.g., AMENORRHOEA not AMENORRHEA).

- Punctuation marks are, as far as possible, avoided except in a few cases where hyphenation has been preserved (e.g., FRENCH-SPEAKING AFRICA).

- The word-by-word arrangement is used for alphabeticisation, e.g.:
  - COST OF LIVING
  - COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS
  - COSTS

**MAINTENANCE**

The POPIN Thesaurus is maintained by the Working Group on the Management of the POPIN Thesaurus which has met regularly since 1982. The ongoing administration of activities concerning thesaurus management is the responsibility of CICRED, the Committee for International Cooperation in National Research in Demography, which is based at the Institut National d'Etudes Démographiques (INED) in Paris. Users are encouraged to submit suggestions for additions or changes to thesaurus terms to POPIN Thesaurus
CICRED
27 Rue du Commandeur
75675 Paris Cedex 14
France

Suggestions will be considered at the next meeting of the Working Group and, if accepted, included in the next edition of the thesaurus.

The substantive work of preparing the third edition was undertaken in the summer of 1990. This edition therefore contain suggestions for changes submitted before 1990, with the exception of some changes to geographical terms to take into account political events affecting the former USSR and Yugoslavia in 1991 and early 1992.

Any suggested modifications to thesaurus terms subsequent to the summer of 1990 will be considered in future editions of this thesaurus.

Richard Hankinson
Editor
September 1992

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