

September 14, 2017



*Transportation Research Thesaurus:
Past, Present, and Future*

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Sandy Tucker, Associate Professor Emerita, Texas A&M University Libraries

<http://ntl.bts.gov/networking/roundtable.html>

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Bob Cullen:

This TLR's speakers are Sandy Tucker, Associate Professor Emerita at Texas A&M University and chair of the TRB LIST Transportation Research Thesaurus Committee, and Janet Daly, TRB's TRIS Indexing Manager. Their presentation is entitled "The Transportation Research Thesaurus: The History and Future of a Transportation Controlled Vocabulary."

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Texas A&M University Libraries
Transportation Librarians Roundtable
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What is the TRT?

The TRT:

- Is a tool to improve the indexing and retrieval of transportation information.
- Provides a common and consistent language between producers and users of transportation information.
- Covers all modes and aspects of transportation.
- Primarily is used to tag records in the Transportation Research Information Services (TRIS) databases.
- Is searchable/browsable at trt.trb.org

Today's TRT

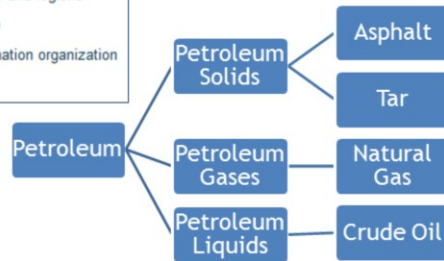
- 12,125 terms (9591 preferred; 2534 lead-in terms)
- Terms may have definitions, scope notes, related terms
- “Mode-agnostic”—terms can be applied to any mode
- Terms are added on a regular basis to reflect new concepts. Vetted by a subcommittee of transportation library professionals.

TRT Term Arrangement

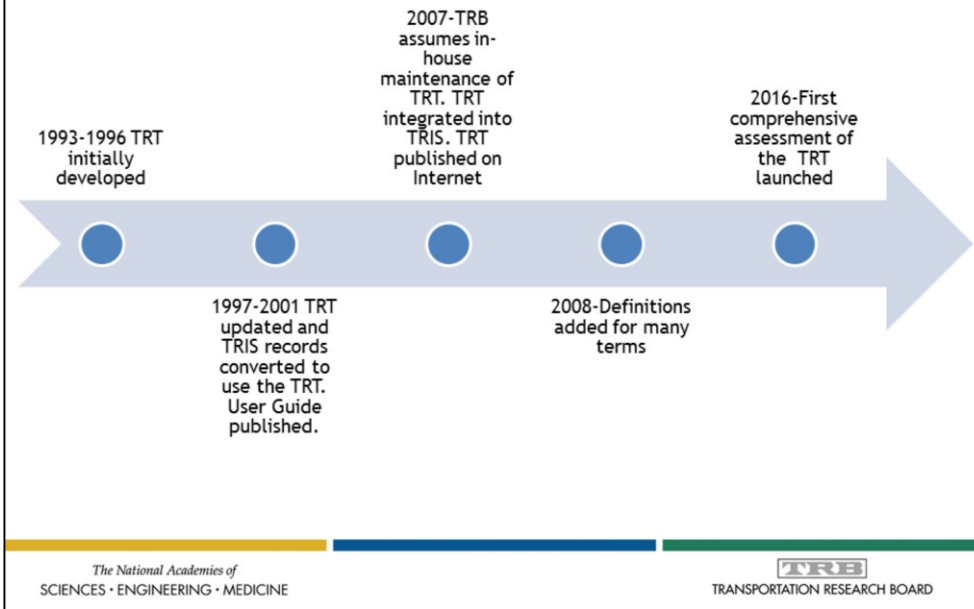
21 Facets:

A: Transportation	N: Organizations
B: Transportation operations	P: Facilities
C: Management and organization	Q: Vehicles and equipment
D: Communication and control	R: Materials
E: Planning and design	S: Physical phenomena
F: Construction and maintenance	T: Disciplines
G: Testing	U: Mathematics
H: Safety and security	V: Areas and regions
J: Environment	W: Time
K: Economic and social factors	X: Information organization
M: Persons and personal characteristics	

Example Term Hierarchy:



History of the TRT



NCHRP Project 20-109 Enhancement of the TRT

Objective

Develop a strategic plan and action plan for enhancing the TRT and ensuring its ongoing value to the transportation community

NCHRP 20-109

Research Methods

- Develop assessment criteria
- Assess the current TRT against the criteria by reviewing the TRT and interviewing stakeholders
- Identify thesaurus use cases to inform TRT's future development.

NCHRP 20-109

Draft Findings

Gaps include:

- the lack of a standards-based thesaurus structure that can be easily accessed and shared with others
- limited ability to improve the scope beyond transportation research to address user needs for mode-specific, operational or project terms from the States
- inability to semantically enrich the TRT within its current architecture
- lack of “balance” across facets makes it difficult to browse the TRT to get a sense of the scope.
- lack of mode-based facets.

****Potential****

Future Directions

- New thesaurus management software that will:
 - Support a standards-based thesaurus
 - Improve administrative functions
 - Facilitate use of the TRT by other organizations
 - Eliminate dependence on strict enumerated hierarchical structure
- More transportation-focused terminology
- Communication to inform TRB and the broader community about the TRT
- Improved engagement of transportation experts

YOU can help shape the future TRT!

- How do you use the TRT?
- How would you like to use the TRT?
- What are the obstacles that keep you from using it?
- What controlled vocabularies do you use?
Do you have other term lists that you use?

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Thank you for attending!
Join us October 12, 2017:



10 Years of the TLR
Amanda Wilson, Head, National Network Coordinating Office
US National Library of Medicine

For Past Episodes, Visit the TLR Archive at:
<https://ntl.bts.gov/networking/tlrarchive/index.html>