

C O N C E P T U A L A N A L Y S I S

INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS OF
TERMINOLOGY IN
POLITICAL SCIENCE

GEORGE J. GRAHAM, JR.
Box 1830, Station B ,
Vanderbilt University
Nashville, Tennessee 37235

At the 1970 International Political Science Association Congress in Munich, the first informal meeting was held of what became Research Committee Number One of the Association, the Committee on Conceptual and Terminological Analysis (COCTA). This committee (which includes political scientists, sociologists, anthropologists, linguists, and philosophers) has been moving toward several objectives of concept clarification in political and social analysis. COCTA has organized panels at many political science and sociology associations, including its formal association with the Comparative Interdisciplinary Studies Section of the International Studies Association as the Internet on Conceptual and Terminological Analysis. Over the half-decade of its existence, COCTA has developed several separate stages of conceptual analysis including special foci on metalinguistics, concept construction and reconstruction, and clarification of the theoretical usages of concepts. Underlying these and other interests is a prerequisite need for an inventory of concepts-in-use. The rationale for attempting to develop the inventory, and discussion of its potential usages, are fully stated in my *Commencement of a Systematic Concept*

Collection This statement sets forth the description of the resulting official COCTA Concept Inventory².

The inventory is a rather ambitious project that will depend upon the contributions of interested scholars. It will begin with special focal points within political science and sociology as a pilot project. The logic of this pilot collection, however, is to provide a framework within which the collection can be expanded into other social sciences and related fields in the humanities. The immediate task is to commence the collection of social science concepts-in-use and to demonstrate the inventory's utility. Since the inventory can be commenced only by volunteers, the aid of scholars from several disciplines is essential to its success. Any concepts can be listed by interested scholars.

The present procedures for entering concepts into the inventory are simple. Scholars in the fields record concepts and related information according to the inventory's format and mail them to me. These materials will be edited and sent to Carl Beck at the University of Pittsburgh where the concepts and information will be recorded and stored (the Pittsburgh

¹Pittsburgh: University Center for International Studies, No. 9, 1974. See also the other COCTA papers listed therein.

²The final design of the collection has seriously benefited from comments from Fred W Riggs, from those who attended a special workshop on the inventory at the 1975 International Studies Association Meeting in Washington (including Carl Beck, James Bjorkman, Judy Bertelsen, Ray Corrado, David Hays, Ray Johnston, R. J. Kirkbride, David Nasatir, Stephenie Neuman, Jonathan Pool, Charles Powell, Fred Riggs, Henry Teune, Theodore Tsukahara, and Alan Zuckerman), and special responses from David Hays and Glenda Patrick.

system also houses, among other important resources, the United States Political Science Information System--UPSIS)³ Except for the labor and postage costs, to be absorbed by scholars one way or another, Beck's technical and storage assistance permits commencing the inventory without funds. Once the inventory is seriously commenced, funds should quickly follow.

INVENTORY FORMAT

For each definition of a concept from the literature, the following information should be recorded by typing the information on 8½ x 11 inch paper. The identification of field and its contents should follow as below, with the information replacing the field descriptions. The information for some fields may either not be available or not be relevant, but NO RECORD WILL BE STORED THAT DOES NOT COMPLETE THE INFORMATION FOR THE FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD FIELDS. Each definition of a concept will be assigned an entry number when placed in the inventory because of multiple definitions for a specific term, but this will not affect the records sent from the field.

FIELD DESCRIPTION OF CONTENTS

- 1 THE TERM USED BY THE AUTHOR TO REFERENCE A CONCEPT, e.g. 'consensus' (If the term is not English, it should be followed by a comma and the closest English translation)
- 2 ORIGINAL LANGUAGE DEFINITION DIRECTLY FROM THE TEXT. If the term and definition are in a language other than English, the definition should be followed by an EXACT

³The UPSIS is a special abstracting and retrieval system of political science articles, books, papers, etc., published in the United States which are indexed and retrieved by using the American Political Science Association's *Political Science Thesaurus*, eds. Carl Beck, Eleanor D. Dym, and J. Thomas McKechnie (Washington, D.C.: American Political Science Association, 1975).

English translation. (Because exact translation may require familiarity with the article, these entries require exceptional care.)

- 3 The source of the definition should be fully cited by AUTHOR, TITLE OF PUBLICATION (article and journal title if appropriate), PUBLICATION INFORMATION (full standard references for book, journal, or other paper or publication), and PAGE(S) from which the DEFINITION is drawn. If guidance for full citations is needed, the most complete reference is *A Manual of Style*, (12th ed.; Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1969)
- 4 RELATED CONCEPTS should be noted by identifying terms associated with the meaning identified by the definition. The use of a term is, of course, arbitrary since meaningful associations must be with other concepts, but the associations of terms will provide guidelines specified by the individual recording the entry. Each related concept (identified by terms) listed should be preceded by BC, NC, RC, or OC as follows:
 - BC BROADER CONCEPT of which the recorded concept is a less extensive definition
 - NC NARROWER CONCEPT of which the recorded concept is a more extensive definition
 - RC RELATED CONCEPT of which the recorded concept is on the same LEVEL of extension, though different in extension
 - OC OVERLAPPING CONCEPT of which the recorded concept shares extension
- 5 Category of concepts as either THEORETICAL or OPERATIONAL INDICATOR should be noted simply by entering either "theoretical" or "operational" in this field. This will facilitate searches for sets of measures for concepts in devising research designs.
- 6 ENGLISH LANGUAGE DESCRIPTIONS OF THE USE OF THE CONCEPT should be recorded. For example, "Revolution is defined only for use when analyzing third world nations from the

perspective of demographic measures." These descriptions should attempt to characterize the type and level of theory employed as completely as is possible. Several sentences can be used. Retrieved definitions then CAN be limited to only those concepts which ALSO have description terms of interest in this file For example: REVOLUTION/THIRD WORLD/DEMOGRAPHIC. (Since the collection will be stored in the same retrieval network as USPSIS, the APS Thesaurus terms provide useful guides for types of descriptors that can be used in both systems.)

- 7 IF A TERM FOR THE CONCEPT IS INCLUDED IN ESTABLISHED RETRIEVAL THESAURI, THESE SHOULD BE LISTED. The term associated with the definition may or may not be listed in the *Political Science Thesaurus* of the American Political Science Association, or some other thesauri IF THE TERM IS LISTED in any available thesaurus, the name(s) of the thesaurus should be listed. If in more than one, a comma should separate each listing. IF THE TERM IS KNOWN NOT TO BE LISTED IN A THESAURUS, the recorder is asked to select the term(s) closest to the assigned term and list it, followed by the thesaurus s name (e.g., "APPEASEMENT, *Political Science Thesaurus*"). The internal structure of the thesaurus will provide, without recording for the storage system, broader, narrower, and related TERMS, in contrast with the recorder-listed set of related CONCEPTS recorded under 4.
- 8 THE NAME AND LOCATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL RECORDING THE CONCEPT'S DEFINITION.

The clarification of concepts will inevitably lead to re-statements of definitions from the literature, to metalinguistic information worth storing, etc. Any restatements not contained in papers, articles, books, etc., can be sent in the same for-

mat as the above with the third category filled in as a COCTA PARTICIPANT RESTATEMENT. If the restatement is in a form subject to citation, it is simply entered as any other concept-in-use.

Because the COCTA Concept Inventory is designed to facilitate research and concept clarification in the social and related sciences, the COCTA Board⁴ and the Director of the COCTA Concept Inventory hope to draw upon and share the mutual rewards and costs with active scholars. The enterprise depends upon scholars taking the time to record the concepts they are using and promises, in return, to facilitate the efforts of scholars by providing an expanding list of concept meanings-in-use.

⁴General information about activities can be received from Giovanni Sartori, COCTA Chairman, Istituto di Scienza Politica, Università degli Studi di Firenze, 48, via Laura, 50121 Firenze, Italy, or Fred Riggs, COCTA Secretary, Department of Political Science, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822.