

Nordic RDA Meeting Helsinki 25.-26. September 2019



Attendees:

Denmark: Hanne Hørh Hansen, Anders Cato

Finland: Marja-Liisa Seppälä, Tatja Puusa

Iceland: Hallfrídur Kristjansdóttir, Kristín Lilja Björnsdóttir

Norway: Frank Haugen

Sweden: Olle Johansson, Katarina Synnermark

Meeting Day 1

Hanne greeted everyone to the meeting and thanked Marja-Liisa for this great initiative. Everyone introduced him-/herself.

Country reports

Finland

The Finnish RDA Team presented the state of the Finnish translation as it stands right now in September 2019. [See appendix 1.](#)

The appendix covers most of what was said. What can be added is that training of staff will take part during most of 2020 and then hopefully Finland will be ready to implement the new toolkit by mid-2021. It is, however, each individual library consortium, that decides if they wish to implement the new RDA or not.

Norway

Frank Haugen reported that in Norway, they are in line with the Finnish plan for translation. The translation of values and elements (RDA Reference) should be finished in September this year, i.e. any day now. A first version of a complete translation will be finished earliest in April 2020. Implementation of the new toolkit some time in 2021.

Norway deals with the implementation in a relaxed way. When it is finished, it is finished. They don't want to force anything. Better use the time that is needed and get a good result.

Hanne stressed, after the Norwegian report, that an important message to EURIG must be that we will need more time with the old toolkit. We will not be ready on time for a complete change by the summer of 2021. Another half year at least is needed, maybe a full year. We should announce this as early as possible. The group unanimously supported this.

Like in Finland, each library in the BIBSYS-consortium (university and academic libraries) now decides which rules to use, RDA or the old rules. The metadata vendors (Bokbasen and Biblioteksentralen) are now delivering RDA-metadata to the public libraries.

Denmark

Hanne reported about the situation in Denmark. We are still in a Mitch match. When the Danish move to RDA finally takes place, all libraries will have to move to RDA because of the close connectivity of our systems. All systems are more or less interlinked to with each other.

We did prepare Danish Policy Statements for the old version of RDA, but nothing has been implemented yet.

On top of everything, there have been ownership and legal problems as far as the national systems and the national bibliography are concerned. The private company DBC that up until now has been co-owned by

the State of Denmark and the municipalities mainly maintains the national systems. DBC also has had the duty to produce the national bibliography for Denmark, since many years back.

Now the State of Denmark has decided, for political reasons, to back out of its ownership of DBC and leave everything to the municipalities. This has of course consequences not only for the company as such, but also for the national library systems and the national library. An "extra" consequence was also the decision on RDA. Denmark has decided on a move to RDA, but there is no timeline for the implementation yet. This decision about the state pulling out from some of its earlier obligations made the implementation of RDA more uncertain, and it has been set on hold since spring 2018. From January 2020, the new national structure should be ready and we hope that the work with RDA can start running again.

Hanne also reported about problems she had experienced when talking to decision makers and library directors about the new toolkit. We had just managed to make them accept the old toolkit and now we are coming with a new one, and it is so hard to try to find acceptance for that. This new toolkit is also even more complicated to explain to decision makers than the old one was.

Hanne expected Denmark to be more pragmatic in the implementation of RDA. Let us start by implementing what we like about RDA and what is usable for our systems and users – and that is the move to a new data model, above all for authorities. Therefore, we will most likely start with authority data and wait with the manifestation level. We hope that manifestation cataloguing time by time will get clearer. Many cataloguers only catalogue a few hours a week; we cannot expect them to grasp this completely new system without heavy education, and can we really expect them to be interested in a big education package like we would need here?

Iceland

RDA was officially implemented in Gegnir, the Icelandic Union Catalogue in May 2016.

See further the Icelandic report in [appendix 2](#).

So far, Iceland has only moved to RDA on the manifestation level. The authority part has not been implemented yet. However as a first step in that direction Iceland recently joined VIAF.

Iceland also does a partial translation. There has been no formal 3R translation yet. Translated terms have not yet been entered into the RDA registry.

As a consequence of the move to RDA printed and electronic records are now split up in the union catalogue. They have also stopped abbreviating terms that earlier were abbreviated.

A library change in Iceland has taken up a lot of the time of the staff and given them not so much time over to work with RDA. The new Sierra system will take over from Aleph. There is a belief that MARC21 will live on for yet some time in Iceland.

A Cataloguer's manual has been developed and is run by the National Library of Iceland for every cataloguer in Iceland to use. It contains MARC based instructions with links to the current RDA toolkit. It has not yet been adapted to the new toolkit.

The Icelandic representatives meant that there is a need for MARC based instructions, since we have so many cataloguers just doing basic cataloguing, maybe only a few hours a week. This is actually the same problem as was pointed out by Hanne earlier.

Sweden

Sweden are working on the translation of the vocabularies. Terms, definitions and scope notes are being translated, but a lot remains to be done.

In June 2018 the National Library released the new Libris, a system based on Bibframe. The metadata experts have together with the developers created templates for certain media types to help the cataloguers along the way to a correct description. They have also spent a lot of time writing help instructions for how to use the properties (=fields), but have not yet managed to write new RDA instructions.

There is a cataloguer's toolkit in MARC21 for the old system. A project aiming at producing a new cataloguer's toolkit has started, but so far there are no visible results. There is no budget for the project, so it depends on available resources. Hopefully, it will be possible to reuse the current RDA instructions and change the examples from MARC to the format of the new Libris.

The Swedish policy statements for the present toolkit are there, and there is a hope to include the new ones too, once finished, but only time can tell how they will end up.

Education & training

After the country presentations, there was a discussion about education and courses on the new toolkit for cataloguers.

The National Library of Iceland does give courses in the old toolkit and has the goal to do the same for the new one. DBC in Denmark also gives cataloguing courses for interested cataloguers.

Sweden: When moving to a new cataloguing code it is also a challenge to assure quality. In Libris, there are many different types of libraries contributing, and the number increases. Public libraries and small special libraries, many of them with limited time and resources for cataloguing, need very much support and training.

There was a question as to whether it is easier to use RDA with BIBFRAME than with MARC? Sweden meant that it is hard to say, since the Libris cataloguing interface is not fully developed. Once ready, it should be easier.

Presentation of the new RDA Toolkit

Hanne made a presentation for the group on the new RDA Toolkit, and made comparisons with the old toolkit while showing it.

A lot of the guidance is still very abstract and hard for a newcomer to grasp.

So far, there are only policy statements for English speakers. There will be no other policy statements until the new toolkit has been published.

The resources section has now been changed.

The entities section is very big and there are now descriptions of every entity that can be used, but we would prefer to have it split up into "elements as attributes" and "elements as relationships". We will get back to EURIG on the issue of this.

Several participants expressed a wish to get a mapping between elements in RDA and MARC21.

Hanne also pointed out that RDA is an online tool, for good and for bad. This fact sometimes makes it difficult to feel sure if you have turned every stone or not. When you have a printed tool to go to it is usually easier to get the full overview. In an online tool, it is hard to know whether you have looked at every possible link, or if you maybe, by mistake, skipped one.

There was a general opinion that it is a pity that we need so many extra tools to understand the main tool. There is also a big risk that countries create many local profiles that will not be completely compatible with each other. Was not the main, original, purpose of RDA to make us more compatible? Is there not a risk that this might be lost again or at least put at risk?

What is the new RDA now, a cataloguing tool, or just a cataloguing framework?

Who do we think it is aimed for? Can a new cataloguer use it? Most likely not. It might even be difficult for experienced cataloguers. Maybe the toolkit is just thought of as a basis for developers developing other tools for cataloguers to use and is then just thought of as a hidden tool in the background?

Olle mentioned that the main purpose of the toolkit must be for us to create and use workflows and link to different rules and paragraphs from them. However, the new Toolkit is now much more theoretical and difficult to use and so difficult to link to, due to the lack of visible paragraphs. It is difficult when you cannot see the context in which a rule is contained.

There was a question on how much we can put outside of the toolkit without breaking copyright laws? Surely, ALA will not allow us to include too big chunks of text without paying for it.

Finally, Hanne mentioned a good tip for newcomers to the new toolkit. Under the menu "Help", you can find a page called "Getting started". You get the most practical information there, quick facts, how to log in and create profiles, personalising the toolkit etc.

Partial translation issues

Olle gave a presentation on the specific issues the Swedes had encountered when doing their partial translation. [See appendix 3.](#)

Many definitions are very complicated and hard to read and understand and could have been constructed much more easily, according to the Swedes. They had asked Daniel Paradis if they were allowed to translate more liberally, but in most cases, that was not the case. A translation must obey the following:

- a translation must be faithful to the original text
- all the elements that form the definition must be present in the translation, even though the word order might be different or a word in the original text might be rendered by more than one word in the translation or by a word of a different nature
- it is not acceptable to simplify, abridge or shorten the original definition.

The Swedish translators had also run into many inconsistencies. There were occurrences where the same phenomenon was expressed in different ways for different media types, e.g. the definitions for audio file, video file and program file, see Olle's presentation.

No matter what, it is a bit problematic that they treat translations so hard. It should be clear to the authors if the original text that languages are very different and cannot follow English language rules as strictly as they seem to take for granted.

Olle proposed a solution to one problem that occurred quite often: The problem of having a term in English that does not exist in your own language. The group made a unanimous decision here: We do not translate elements in English that do not have an equivalent in our own language eg. Table book. Then better keep the English original term.

One suggestion that was also put forward was the possibility of creating scope notes for your own language. That might be further discussed with Daniel Paradis.

Full translation issues

Frank reported on the Norwegian translation of the Toolkit. [See appendix 4.](#) The vocabularies had been translated by the end of 2018 and the files are kept in Google Drive according to the instructions received by Daniel Paradis. The element sets is about to be finished. Even if Google Drive is used for this part of the translation, Norway will try take the vocabularies and elements sets into Trados TM, and even if future amendments of vocabularies and elements still are done in Google Drive, to have the translated text in Trados TM will be a good aid in making new translated text consistent.

So far not so much work had been done on translation of the new toolkit text. This will start after Trados training in October. But Norway believe much of the initial translation done in 2017 could be reused with some amendments. It is probably much more work if you are translating from scratch.

The shift of RDA into a data dictionary has increased the number of relationships in RDA Reference, which results in much more (unnecessary) work for the translators. Some relationships seem to be in there to fulfil the need of the data dictionary as a model and has no relevance to the real world. An example of this is the relationship "has minute taker family".

The report from Frank then evolved into a discussion about RDA and different formats to be used in connection with the toolkit. One could see three different layers of the description: RDA, MACRC21 and BIBFRAME. People were happy that BIBFRAME and RDA are having a dialogue now. Maybe the distance between their ways of looking at the bibliographical world does not need to be so big.

Application profiles

Marja-Liisa gave a very good description on the use of Application Profiles, and why we need to have them when cataloguing. [See appendix 5.](#)

She described minimum elements required and how they should be registered, and also posed some questions to the group, all described in the appendix. If it had not been clear to everyone before it now became evident to everyone, that it is essential to have application profiles for many different parts of cataloguing and if we could create common ones in the Nordic, and even better the EURIG area it would be a great advantage.

Hanne explained that application profiles would have a great role to play when we are writing our own policy statements. We will need a national bibliography application profile to “protect” ourselves, to show what elements are needed in the national bibliography. The application profile could then also be used as an argument for what we are doing. However, application profiles are not needed for everything, but for most general things, it is a very good thing to have them as a support.

It would be great if EURIG could define which application profiles could be shared over Europe. If we all, in each country, look to what we could do then maybe we could bring it together to make a European application profile.

Request list from the Nordic RDA Group to EURIG, or the RDA Toolkit Office

- More time is needed with the old toolkit, maybe between 6-12 months more than foreseen, in order to be able to get everything settled.
- List of elements
We would prefer to have the lists of elements divided into “elements as attributes” and “elements as relationships”
- The elements should also appear structured according to MARC codes and maybe other lists. Different options would be preferable. To have them only in alphabetical order is not sufficient.
- What is considered application profile and what is considered workflow?
How do we link between the two roles?
- How many layers/steps can we accept in a toolkit like RDA?
Too many layers of information create confusion and we have to realise that all cataloguers are not experts within the field. They will need a fast workflow that guides them through the cataloguing process, not detective work going through many different layers and steps.
- What about the thought about navigation tool? What can we expect? Is there still funding for that?
- Will it be possible to personalize the view and the texts shown in the toolkit according to a profile used in logging-in? In that way, a cataloguer doesn't have to see any other contents but the essential ones to her/him. (Hallfridur's suggestion)
- When integrating the RDA Toolkit texts into an open source editor, is licensing of the RDA Toolkit a problem?

Day 2

Aggregates and diachronic works

The day started with a thorough presentation by Hallfríður Kristjansdóttir on how to work on aggregates and diachronic works in RDA. See the full presentation in [Appendix 6](#).

Data model issues

The second presentation of day 2 was by Katarina Synnermark on "How to record timespan, place, nomen and discrepancies between RDA and BIBFRAME, authorized access points etc."

See the full presentation in [appendix 7](#).

Various questions from the two days

Different questions that had been thought of during the day before were addressed:

- Is the new RDA more liberal when it comes to combining the aggregator with the aggregate? Eg. The Brothers Grimm. Or does it consider the brothers to be just authors? You have the new Aggregator agent, how can this be used here?
Hanne: This could be a good thing to discuss further at next meeting.
- The possibility to link to GeoNames was discussed.
- There was a comparison with BIBFRAME where the model is a bit different. Only three levels: Work – instance- item. Some members had discussed skipping the expression level for some legacy data.
- Has anyone discussed moving some parts into another system, like a wiki-based system?
There have been discussions in some countries, but no decisions taken. In that case it should be a system using free open data, like for example the Swedish: id.kb.se
- A shared database for works.
There was a question as to whether this was discussed at the last NNG meeting.
Hanne meant though, that this could actually be obtained through VIAF, where also works are recorded.
- GDPR and VIAF.
Sending personal data to VIAF, is that really according to European Law, GDPR?
Opinions vary here, and some countries interpret GDPR more strictly, than others. Finland has decided not to send any data on living authors to VIAF because of that, but it for example Germany does. Sweden and Denmark does as well.

- There has been a question from Latvia about moveable objects and buildings.
Does BIBFRAME have anything about that?
Answer: We have tried to find a logical solution to this subject, but we could not really find it in the present RDA.
- Fictitious persons were discussed. No one has the correct solution yet, so we need to deal with them in a pragmatic way that meets the needs of our systems and users.
- Suggestion from Hanne: When we meet next time it could be a good thing to do something practical, a real exercise. Why not try to make a Nordic application profile for something. The group was very positive to that and decided to prepare for next year along that track.

Next meeting: It was proposed to have a meeting in connection with the NNG meeting the coming spring. The topic will be application profiles for aggregates.