

IFLA Cataloguing Section's FRBR Review Group

Status report of activities

2004-2005



Overall Activity

The big event of the term 2004-2005 was the FRBR workshop in Dublin, Ohio, on May 2-4. Even though the Review Group's Terms of Reference still cannot be said to have been fulfilled this year, the workshop is to be regarded as a landmark on our difficult path toward that goal:

- **“provide a guideline to apply FRBR to cataloguing activities”**: it was decided in Dublin to develop a “middle implementation model” that will embody such a guideline;
- **“expand the FRBR Website to promote the model and encourage its use”**: the FRBR Web site was maintained (rather than expanded);
- **“develop a revision to the FRBR model”**: a basis for a future revision of the model was prepared, by compiling all suggested changes as collected from various sources (most prominently, those changes that were suggested during the Dublin Workshop) in one single document, which is available to everyone at <http://infoserv.inist.fr/wwsympa.fcgi/d_read/frbr/Suggestions_for_Reviewing.doc>.

Publication

A special theme issue of *Cataloging and Classification Quarterly*, titled *Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR): Hype or Cure-All?* and edited by Patrick Le Bœuf, was released by The Haworth Press in June 2005. Several members of the Review Group and its Working Groups contributed to this publication.

FRBR Bibliography

The bibliography is updated as regularly as possible, although perhaps a bit less so than in the past. It now is 45 pages long. The most recently updated version (August 1st, 2005) is available from <http://infoserv.inist.fr/wwsympa.fcgi/d_read/frbr/FRBR_bibliography.rtf>; the version available from IFLANET (<<http://www.ifla.org/VII/s13/wgfrbr/bibliography.pdf>>) was last updated on October 27th, 2004.

Discussion list

The frbr@infoserv.inist.fr listserv, hosted by INIST in France, currently has over 600 subscribers (230 more than last year). There was a peak of new subscription requests towards the end of May, after the Dublin workshop. The listserv archive is available from <http://infoserv.inist.fr/wwsympa.fcgi/d_read/frbr/FRBR_Listserv_Archive.rtf>. The listserv has undergone no “revival” and still is very quiet, in spite of its huge number of subscribers.

Web site

The Web site was last updated in July 2005. A link to the proceedings of the Dublin workshop will have to be added as soon as possible.

FRBR Workshop, May 2-4, 2005

The FRBR Review Group and OCLC co-organised an invitational workshop devoted to theoretical and practical aspects of FRBR implementation in Dublin, Ohio, on May 2-4, 2005. All presentations are available from OCLC's Web site, at <<http://www.oclc.org/research/events/frbr-workshop/program.htm>>.

The following conclusions were presented at the end of the Workshop:

- The FRBR Review Group will focus on the revision of attributes and relationships that are defined for Group 1 entities, as the FRANAR and FRSAR Study Groups will deal with Group 2 and Group 3 of entities.

- A “middle implementation model”, which will include a practical definition for the Expression entity, will be developed by the FRBR Review Group.
- The FRBR Revision Group will post on its Web site more examples of “agglomerates” for commentators to react, so that consensus can be reached about the best way to deal with such complex entities as anthologies, collected vs. selected works, serials, etc.
- The FRBR Review Group will contact the CONSER Task Force on FRBR & Continuing Resources in order to take benefit of their approach to continuing resources.
- The utmost complex topic of Web resources is postponed for the time being.
- Is the Subject relationship a Work property only? The FRBR Review Group thinks that “aboutness” is actually only at the Work level, but that subject headings such as we currently know them do not deal exclusively with “aboutness”. The FRSAR Study Group will explore that.
- The FRBR Review Group will contact vendors* in order to ask them what they think the issues are for introducing the FRBR concepts into library catalogues. What do they expect from us in order to go ahead? What are their needs?
- The FRBR Review Group will besides strive to promote and stimulate research and study by doctoral students, professors, etc.
- The FRBR Review Group acknowledged that the FRBR model would benefit from an ontology, and that the FRBR/CRM Harmonization Group is going in that direction.

Working Groups

The **Expression entity Working Group**, chaired by Anders Cato, received examples from Cristina Magliano. Patrick Le Bœuf did not have time to finish the two papers he had promised (an account for various theoretical views on the Expression notion, and a more practical study of the amount of “FRBRizability” of Emily Dickinson’s literary output).

The **Working Group on continuing resources**, chaired by Janifer Gatenby, is now disbanded. It was decided last year that a new Study Group should be formed in order to model the peculiarities of continuing resources, independently from the FRBR conceptual framework, and taking time aspects more into account.

The **Working Group on FRBR/CRM dialogue**, chaired by Patrick Le Bœuf, had one of its usual joint meetings with representatives of the CIDOC CRM-Special Interest Group, chaired by Martin Doerr, in London on February 14-16. The attributes of the Manifestation and Item entities were examined. A first draft of an object-oriented definition of FRBR is underway. A further meeting is planned in Heraklion, Crete, on July 4-6, 2005. After that meeting, deliverables and explanatory materials are expected to be made publicly available.

The **Working Group on teaching and training**, chaired by Maja Žumer, is still dormant but may well awake during the next term.

The **Working Group on subject relationships and classification**, which will be chaired by Marcia Lei Zeng, will be formed at the Division level; as such, it is no longer to be regarded as affiliated to the FRBR Review Group. The final FRSAR model, once it has been developed and approved, will be “plugged” to the FRBR model, but there is no “hierarchical” relation between the FRSAR Study Group and the FRBR Review Group, the same way as there was no hierarchical relation between the FRANAR Study Group and the FRBR Review Group.

Patrick Le Bœuf
Chair of the FRBR Review Group
June 8th, 2005; slightly updated on August 1st, 2005

* Note: at the time this report is being written, this has actually already been done by Alan Danskin, who received only 5 responses by August 1st.