

Deutsche Nationalbibliothek response to FRBRoo

The following is a set of comments and questions on the FRBRoo document from March 2015; I hope that you still have time to consider them even if the official due date has passed.

Given that I'm not an expert on CIDOC-CRM, nor on FRBR or FRBRoo, my view is rather that of an outside commentator than of an inside domain expert. Thus much of what I write probably is more of a question than a comment; please feel free to ignore it should you consider it nonsensical. Also note that I was not able to elaborate my comments very much due to time constraints: They are brief and might sound harsher than they are meant!

0) My introduction: This document is an extremely impressive piece of work. Particularly that you ground the design decisions on actual bibliographic data and supply examples for most of the concepts is greatly helpful and shows the thoroughness of the model's design. Please read all of my comments in the light of this statement.

1) General scope of FRBRoo: In the introduction (particularly 1.1.1) you write that the aim of FRBRoo is to create a shared conceptualization of the reality behind library practice. You give no hint, however, if this is a purely _conceptual_ model or something intended to be implemented verbatim and what should be the intended consequences for data exchange. In my opinion this is something you should clarify in the document.

2) Examples from actual bibliographic data: When discussing some issues, you give examples using bibliographic data in MARC 21 (or sometimes INTERMARC). While this might be helpful to (some) librarians, there is a risk of creating a disconnect with the non-librarian community, e. g. museum curators or archivists. For those communities, it would be helpful to have examples from EAD or similar data models. Further it is noticeable that you do not supply any examples in UNIMARC. Given that the FRBRoo WG is affiliated with IFLA I find this pretty alarming since it shows a severe disconnect between two major IFLA standards.

3) Figures (classes vs instances): The figures showing how different parts of the model interact are very helpful to the reader. I noted, however, that they often leave it open if they show relations between the classes themselves or between instances of those classes (important distinction!); you might want to make this explicit in a note somewhere. (Figure 10 makes the distinction!).

4) Self-contained Expression vs Expression Fragment (§1.2.2): (This is perhaps philosophical question): You say that a Self-contained Expression should convey "the whole idea of the work they realise". Is this really possible given that a sequence of signs seldom can convey the _whole_ idea... Wouldn't something similar to the Dewey concept of "approximate-the-whole" be more accurate?

5) Electronic publications in FRBRoo: When reading the document, I do get a feeling that it is still very much rooted in print media or at least media on physical carriers. An example is the use of F32 Carrier Production Event to represent the download of a file to a data carrier (or storage medium). While I understand that from a conceptual point of view the production of an F5 Item or an F53 Material Copy are very similar, I think there will be problems further down the chain. One example

would be if I download five different files (being five carrier production events) to a flash disk and then catalogue that disk. Will the disk itself then be a carrier that contains other carriers (each downloaded file)?

6) Figure 5: (minor nitpick): Why is the class E29 in this figure grey? In all other figures the classes from CIDOC-CRM are yellow. The caption would read better as "Physical and electronic publishing" or "Physical vs electronic publishing".

7) Use of F10 Person vs use of personas (§ 1.3): You discuss the differences between the personas-based view in FRAD and the person-based view in FRBRoo when it comes to pseudonyms. It would be helpful if you could add some illustrating examples.

8) Modelling of subject headings in FRBRoo (§ 1.3): It would be helpful to the reader if you could provide an example of what the supplied MARC data would look like in FRBRoo.

9) Formatting of comments on figures (particularly Figg. 6-10): In some cases you supply lists with the items identified through letters (Fig. 6), sometimes you use dashes (Fig. 7) and sometimes no item identifiers at all (Fig. 9). It would increase the readability if you kept this consistent.

10) § 2.1.3: Here you describe the processes for "how products of the mind are communicated among human beings through physical carriers". Is there a similar section where you discuss those processes for digital media? Given that those media types will continue to rise in the foreseeable future, such a section would be very important.

11) F4 Manifestation Singleton vs F5 Item: My reading of the definitions of F4 and F5 is that instances of F4 are unique objects while instances of F5 are "produced by an industrial process". In the Later Middle Ages, some monasteries (or other institutions) mass-produced manuscripts (often by letting different copyists write different parts of the manuscript). Is that considered an industrial process and could you supply a definition of that term?

12) § 2.1.4: Here a figure showing the dynamic view of the process would help understanding the concepts, as would some examples of the use of the class properties.

13) Rights statements: As I read the model, you only model rights on manifestations (by using F3.CLP104.E30). Are other rights statements out of scope?

14) Figure 10 (minor nitpicks): The red text on red background is hard to read. Is there a reason that there is a red frame around the F1 at the top right? The date "25/12/07" is ambiguous, it would be better to use ISO formats throughout.

15) Controlled access points (CAP): I have some issues with this topic. One is that CAPs are highly community specific, which you allude to by referring to F43 Identifier Rule and also by saying that the selection of a CAP has a certain moment of arbitrariness (p 27) and that they are used for consistent reference "in a given bibliographic database" (p 26). More important, though, in my view CAPs are **not** identifiers. Ontologically, F50 is a subclass of F13 and in the description of F13 is stated that instances of F13 are used to "identify [...] uniquely and permanently". I'm not deep enough into the cataloguing rules to say how the uniqueness can be ensured, but a CAP can not be ensured to be permanent. As an example: the CAP for "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire" by would be (similar to)

"Rowling, J. K. (1965-). Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire". This, however, is only true as long as Rowling is still alive. The moment she dies, the CAP will change to accommodate the year of death. Thus, it's not permanent and violates one of the criteria for F13 Identifier. Can you please elaborate on this?

16) Equivalent classes and properties in CIDOC-CRM and FRBRoo (out of curiosity): Why does FRBRoo declare classes and properties that are equal to those in CIDOC-CRM instead of just re-using them (e. g. F40)?

17) Superclass of F4 Manifestation Singleton: I notice that the superclass of F4 is E24 Physical Man-Made Thing. Does this imply that Manifestation Singletons are not instances of F42 Utilized Information Carrier? The definition of F33 (p 62) says that F4 is subclass of E84 but I cannot find that in the class hierarchy. That definition also says that it is possible to account for private copying without saying what kind of event to use for that activity.

18) Examples of instances of classes (here for F16): In many of the examples for instances of classes you give examples that are really instances of subclasses (e. g. F16). Does that imply that F16 is more similar to the concept of an abstract class in OOP and that we should not expect any instances of that class?

19) F34 KOS: The advent of electronic publishing means that the notion of releases is increasingly becoming obsolete (Pat will remember the discussion at EDUG in Naples). Is it intended that I need to create a new expression of the KOS every time I publish a change to a class or a subject heading (implying that there can be many expressions per day)? (This question also draws from the definition of R34 has validity period).

20) F38 Character: Does this class also apply for fictitious families (e. g. the Wesleys from Harry Potter) or do those go into F39 Family (I guess not)?

21) R3 is realised in: Is this a shortcut for F1.R19i.F28.R17.F2?

22) Relation naming (present vs past tense): Some relations have name in present tense (R6 carries / is carried by) while others are in past tense (R17 created / was created by). Is there a particular naming convention here?

23) MARC dialects in examples: In the definitions of R36-R39 you don't specify which MARC dialect you use for your examples.

Lars

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