Translating RDA into French

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Abstract
This article reports on a joint translation project (France and Canada) of the RDA (*Resource Description and Access*) standard into French. We describe how the translation committee was functioning, explain the methodology, and present the measures taken to ensure that all contributing parties be satisfied with the end result. The paper discusses problems that arose when dealing with translating specific instructions and examples that needed to be adapted (or changed) to the French context. Other sections report on technical and managerial challenges encountered. We conclude with "lessons learned" that will hopefully help others embarking on such a project.

1. Introduction to the French translation project
Translating RDA (*Resource Description and Access*) into French (*Ressources : description et accès*) was an essential prerequisite for Canada's full implementation of the RDA standard. Since 1980, Canadian French-language libraries have applied AACR2 in French translation (*Règles de catalogage anglo-américaines*) and it was deemed essential that they be provided with a French version of RDA to make the transition to the new standard feasible. Thus, in 2009, when the release of the first version of the RDA text was imminent, a quadripartite translation partnership involving Library and Archives Canada (LAC), Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ), the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF) and ASTED[1] (Association pour l'avancement des techniques et des sciences de la documentation) was established. Each of these four institutions designated a number of representatives to constitute the membership of the French editorial committee for RDA (*Comité éditorial francophone*). Since ASTED was also designated as the publisher of the French version of RDA in print format, it assumed leadership in managing the work of the committee which included planning the meetings, producing minutes of the meetings, hiring professionals (translator, graphic designer…), liaising with ALA Publishing on contractual matters and so forth.

Modus operandi
Work started shortly after RDA was published in June 2010. In the spirit of internationalization, the aim was to arrive at a single French-language version of RDA equally suitable for Canadian and European francophone libraries and insofar as we were able, also useful for French-language libraries world-wide. The functional objective was to produce a French-language *adaptation* of the original English text—rather than a *literal* translation—that would be applicable within a variety of French-language work

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1. ASTED is Canada's French-language professional association of librarians and library technicians.

environments. To ensure equal representation of each party within the committee, members commonly agreed on a multi-lateral organizational structure, which meant that no central editor was designated and that each constituency was responsible for forming and then training its own translation teams and dispatching the work accordingly.

Members of the editorial committee convened on a monthly basis during the course of the 2½-year project. Use of teleconferencing technology simplified the process of bringing together members dispersed in three different physical locations on two continents: Paris, Montréal and Gatineau (near Ottawa). IFLA meetings were also used as an opportunity for some of the members to meet in person. Coordination with the Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA (JSC) was also ensured by the active participation of the Canadian representative to the JSC during the meetings. Because of the organizational structure of the editorial committee, meetings were essential to ensure that work was going steadily as planned. At the beginning of each meeting, each constituency would first issue a progress report which allowed further planning of the work ahead and establishing the deadlines to be met. During the meetings, discussion time was also allotted to address specific translation problems, and to resolve thorny terminology issues that arose during the process.

Following the March 2nd 2012 announcement by the Library of Congress[2] regarding the planned full implementation of RDA on March 31st 2013—which was also the target date set by LAC and BAnQ—it was of paramount importance to the committee that the translation project be completed as close as possible to that date. In the end, RDA in French was included in the first release of the RDA Toolkit for 2013 (issued May 14th 2013) and published in print form in June.[3] This included the April 2012 RDA update resulting from amendments adopted by the JSC in 2011, and all corrections and minor changes up to and including the October 2012 RDA Toolkit release.

2. Translation methodology

Prior to beginning the translation of the text *per se*, a translation methodology was established and commonly agreed upon. We decided to first invest time in three simultaneous actions that we believed were to save time in the long run. First, we translated the RDA glossary—approximately 600 terms with their definitions—to establish the specialized French terminology to be used in the translation. The bilingual glossary that resulted from this exercise served as a common tool for the various translation teams that were scattered amongst the four collaborating institutions. Second, from the English text of RDA, we extracted and compiled a list of approximately 85 recurring phrases that we translated into French. This exercise was useful for establishing the French counterparts to stock phrases (e.g., "when describing", "if considered important"…), adverbial phrases (e.g., "as follows", "as required", "as applicable"…) and action verbs (e.g., "record", "transcribe", "apply"…) that are used recurrently throughout the RDA text and that were obviously not present in the glossary. This list proved useful in speeding up the translation substantially and in ensuring stylistic consistency. The utility of this technique was later endorsed by the JSC,[4] and the initial list of recurring phrases was issued as an appendix to

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2. http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/news_rda_implementation_date.html.
3. Pat Riva. "The French translation of RDA is published". *SCATNews*, number 39 (June 2013), p. 15. http://www.ifla.org/files/assets/cataloguing/scatn/scat-news-39.pdf.
4. Cover sheet to 6JSC/RDA/Editor's Guide/Rev/1, January 21, 2011: "This document lists recurring phrases used in RDA. These phrases supplement those identified in section 7.9 of the Editor's Guide. JSC strongly recommends that

the *Editor's Guide* starting with the January 2011 revision. Third, we also decided to translate Chapter 0 and part of Appendix D to test and establish an efficient and practical procedure for translating the various RDA chapters and appendices. This test translation was also used as a starting point for compiling a succinct supplement to the JSC *Editor's Guide*[5] for issues of style that are specific to French-language text (e.g., abbreviations, use of definite versus indefinite articles, spacing and punctuation, capitalization, etc.). Also, this test was useful in establishing a proofreading sequence between teams and in learning to work with the Word and, subsequently, Excel templates provided to us by ALA Publishing into which we had to enter the translated data. Working with the templates proved a bit tedious throughout the project but this was a necessary evil to ensure smooth uploading of the text into the RDA Toolkit application and to enable the production of the PDF files (which were used as source files for the production of the print version). Testing with Chapter 0 also proved useful to ALA Publishing as it revealed a number of glitches and minor problems with the scripts used for the production of the PDF files. Fine-tuning and refining of these scripts was a necessary and ongoing process during the course of the project. We also worked closely with ALA Publishing on the translation of the RDA Toolkit interface into French and on refining and testing the integrated search engine regarding handling of specific characters such as the "œ" ligature (often used in RDA since "work" translates to "*œuvre*") and diacritic characters.

For the translation of the RDA chapters and appendices, several measures were taken to ensure that all contributing parties would be satisfied with the end result. Establishing a common glossary right from the start of the project was a fundamental step that resolved most of the issues regarding differences between Canadian and European French usage for cataloguing-related terminology. Another fundamental principle on which we agreed right at the beginning was to work within a crossed double-proofreading model (*révisions croisées*) between France and Canada, meaning that if a chapter was translated by a French team, it would get revised by a Canadian team and vice versa. This was deemed essential since France and Canada do not entirely share a common cataloguing tradition, meaning that some practices differ between the two countries. Once we agreed on this principle, the chapters were divided up and dispatched to specific translating teams who were then paired with a counterpart from the other country for the revision. These assignments were made taking into account the length of the chapters, any areas of particular expertise of the team members, and the structure of RDA. To enhance consistency, chapters within a single section and any related appendices were assigned to the same team either for translation or for revision. Specific deadlines were established for each step of the process and, as mentioned earlier, progress reports were presented at each meeting and adjustments were made to the timetable as necessary.

On a more practical level, early on we felt the need to set up a common virtual space to exchange the many documents produced during the course of the project and to exchange ideas and opinions throughout the course of this endeavour. A wiki was just the tool we needed and members from BAnQ took charge in preparing and maintaining a common web

agencies preparing translations of RDA render recurrent phrases consistently." http://www.rda-jsc.org/docs/6JSC-RDA-Editor's-guide-Rev-1-Cover-sheet.pdf.

5. http://www.rda-jsc.org/working2.html#rda-edguide.

space on the PBworks[6] collaborative platform which proved to be a very valuable investment of time.

As could be expected, the translation of RDA was not always straightforward and the translation teams and editorial committee had to devise strategies to overcome various challenges. These challenges can be grouped into those involved in adapting the examples in RDA, those related to the text of the instructions, technical issues, as well as logistical and managerial challenges.

3. Challenges relating to examples

As instruction 0.10 explains, in the English version of RDA, "all examples illustrate elements as they would be recorded by an agency whose preferred language is English." Producing a translation that would allow the use of RDA in a French-language catalogue therefore required reviewing all the examples and making sure that they reflected the elements as they would be recorded by an agency that chose French as its preferred language.

The degree of difficulty of this task varied depending on the chapter. For example, chapter 2 contains mostly elements that are transcribed and which need to be recorded "in the language and script in which they appear on the sources from which they are taken" (1.4). The examples included in that chapter would generally not need to be translated into French. By contrast, chapter 3 contains elements that need to be recorded in a language and script preferred by the agency creating the data. All chapter 3 examples had thus to be translated.

Not all examples in chapter 2 could be accepted as they appear in the original version of RDA, however. Examples showing added data or supplied information often had to be adapted into French according to the specifications of 1.4, which says:

> When adding data within an element listed above, record the added data in the language and script of the other data in the element unless the instructions for a specific element indicate otherwise.

> When recording an element listed above as a supplied element, record the supplied element in the most appropriate language and script.

Thus, for supplied places, French was considered to be the most appropriate language (for example, "[Danemark]" instead of "[Denmark]" at 2.7.2.6.3). For terms indicating the function of a producer, publisher, distributor or manufacturer, the specific instructions do not specify the language to be used. A strict application of 1.4 would have meant not translating the term "distributor", which is supplied in square brackets in the examples illustrating the optional addition at 2.9.4.4. However, this would have contradicted the AACR2 and ISBD practice of giving this information in the language of the agency. Considering that it was probably not the intent of the JSC to change a practice that is helpful to users, we decided to translate "distributor."

An example in chapter 7 also caused problems due to the absence of clear instructions in RDA. Instruction 7.26.1.3 tells cataloguers to "transcribe the statement of projection if it appears on the resource, its container or case, or ancillary material." It then goes on to say, under Optional Addition, to "record phrases associated with the projection statement that concern meridians and/or parallels." The term used in the optional addition is "record," not

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6. http://pbworks.com/.

"transcribe," which usually implies that the information should be given in the language of the agency. However, because the examples include both the statement of projection and the phrases associated with it, this interpretation would have caused us to give the examples partly in English and partly in French, which did not look right. We therefore decided on a practical solution which consisted in replacing the examples with new examples taken from actual French resources.

Adapting the examples in chapters 6, 9, 10, 11 and 16 required a deep knowledge of the instructions in order to determine whether an example had to be given in French, in part or in whole. Titles for works and names of persons, families and corporate bodies are generally recorded "in the language and script in which they appear on the sources from which they are taken" (5.4 and 8.4). However, a number of instructions require choosing a name in the language of the agency creating the data. As for identifying attributes of these entities other than names, they are recorded "in the language and script specified in the applicable instructions" in chapters 6, 9, 10, 11 and 16 (5.4 and 8.4).

Table 1 gives a sample of examples which needed to be adapted because the instructions required giving the names, titles or other attributes used in the examples in French.

[INSERT TABLE 1 HERE]

For some instructions, adapting the examples proved to be more problematic than expected at first sight. This was the case with the following two examples given at 9.4.1.4.3, Children and Grandchildren of Royal Persons:

Princess, Countess of Snowdon

Prince, Duke of York

These examples illustrate the instruction that says that, if a child or grandchild of a monarch is known only as *Prince* or *Princess* or a similar title without a territorial designation, one should record that title followed by another title associated with the name. The instruction also specifies to "record the title in the language preferred by the agency creating the data if there is a satisfactory equivalent in that language." It is not clear, though, if the language instruction applies only to the "similar title without a territorial designation" or if it should also apply to the other title associated with the name. Given that titles of nobility are usually recorded in the language in which they were conferred, it would look inconsistent to translate titles of nobility in the case of children and grandchildren of monarchs but not in other cases, including the descendants of these children and grandchildren after one or two generations. Until a JSC constituency tackles this issue by submitting a revision proposal, we decided to continue the practice that was adopted in the French translation of AACR2 and to give these examples respectively as "princesse, Countess of Snowdon" and "prince, Duke of York."

It was not always possible to keep an example and adapt it simply by translating elements or finding a French equivalent for a name or a title. Table 2 lists a number of examples that could not be adapted into French and for which substitutes illustrating the same situations had to be found. The remarks explain why the original example did not work in French and had to be replaced.

[INSERT TABLE 2 HERE]

4. Challenges relating to the text of RDA instructions

As mentioned in a previous section, we had taken the precaution of translating the Glossary terms and their definitions, as well as a number of recurring phrases, at the beginning of the project so as to ensure a minimum of consistency between the various translators participating in the project. This exercise did not succeed in identifying all the phrases or expressions which are encountered multiple times in the text of RDA, far from it! Others were added to the initial list during the course of the project. It also turned out to be necessary to revise a few Glossary definitions to take into account the context of the instruction where they appeared. Each RDA element is defined and this definition appears in the Glossary as well as in the "Scope" statement at the beginning of the sequence of instructions relating to that element. In that instruction, the definition begins with the name of the element in question (for example, "**Layout** is the arrangement of text, images, tactile notation, etc., in a resource."), which at times resulted in undesirable repetition which had to be corrected by adjusting the translation previously adopted for the definition.

Throughout the review process, the translators had to come to agreement on uniform translations of expressions that recur multiple times and which could have been rendered in various ways in French, such as "one or more", "part or parts" or "modern reference sources". It also required much careful attention to realize when text was repeated in one or more other instructions (often in other chapters and sections) and ensure that the translation was identical. This was the case, for instance, at 19.3.3.1 which is composed of two lists of categories of liturgical works, the first of which comes from 6.30.1.5.1 and the second from 6.30.1.5.4. In another example, in chapter 6 there are four instructions which use the same list of sources ("a) modern editions", "b) early editions" and "c) manuscript copies").

Despite the care that was taken in translating the Glossary, it was nevertheless inevitable that minor differences appeared at times in error between the text in the Glossary and that in the instructions. Some constructions which do not cause any particular grammatical issues in English caused difficulties when being translated into French where the applicable rules of grammatical agreement are not clear and could allow stylistic variations to arise. In a phrase such as "title or form of title chosen to identify the work", for example, the word "chosen" could be translated four different ways, depending on the grammatical rule applied or the translator's understanding of the intended meaning: "choisi", "choisie", "choisi(e)" or "choisis" (varying in grammatical gender and number). The Editorial Committee had to review these questions and determine the rules to be followed.

Certain instructions refer to other works, sometimes in bibliographic references. This is the case with such IFLA documents as FRBR, FRAD and the International Cataloguing Principles, which are mentioned in chapter 0. To meet the needs of francophone users, agreement was reached early in the project that when a French translation of a document was available, the bibliographic reference for the French translation would be included along with that of the original. Other instructions cite a work to be used as a reference source. For example, instructions 1.7.1 and 1.10.2 mention the *Chicago Manual of Style* (CMOS) as an example of a style manual that an agency could choose as its preferred manual in questions of capitalization, punctuation, abbreviations, etc. CMOS being intended for an anglophone context, it was not relevant as an example in French. Finding an equivalent French-language manual was not at all obvious, as there is no single French-language manual that covers the whole spectrum of editorial practices included in the *Chicago Manual of Style*, and which is also accepted as authoritative in both Canada and

France. In the end it was decided to substitute two reference works, one published in Quebec and the other in France, so that each user population would find mention of a familiar reference source.

In a few instructions, a reference work is cited as a source for establishing the preferred title of a work or part of a work. It is for this reason that the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* is mentioned in four instructions relating to Jewish religious works (6.23.2.8, 6.23.2.10.1, 6.23.2.11 and 6.23.2.12.1). Fortunately, this reference work has been translated into French, although in an abridged form, under the title *Dictionnaire encyclopédique du judaïsme*. It was thus possible to give an equivalent well-adapted to the francophone context, that is, a work which is not only more likely to be found in the collections of French-language libraries, but also adopts a transliteration scheme based on French orthography. However, no such equivalent could be found for instruction 6.23.2.9.2 on the books of the Bible which says: "For books of the Catholic or Protestant canon, record the brief citation form of the Authorized Version as a subdivision of the preferred title for the Bible." As the instruction when adapted required listing these titles in French, it was obviously out of the question to retain the reference to the "King James Bible" in which these titles are in English. Now, there is no single source in French for the titles of the books of the Bible. Instead of citing a particular French version of the Bible, it was decided to adapt the instruction by requiring the cataloguer to record "une forme brève du titre du livre consacré par l'usage en français comme subdivision du titre privilégié de la Bible" ("record a brief form of a well-established title in French as a subdivision of the preferred title for the Bible.")[7]

Another form of adaptation consisted in giving more than one French term as the equivalent of a single English term. For example, instruction 6.15.1.8 uses three terms to designate large instrumental ensembles: "orchestra", "string orchestra" and "band". While the first two terms are easy to translate, the same is not true of the third, which cannot be translated into French by a single term. The French language actually requires the two words "fanfare" and "harmonie" to denote the real-word entities which can be referred to in English by a single, albeit more general, term. In the above-mentioned instruction, the word "band" had then to be translated throughout by the terms "fanfare" and "harmonie". A similar situation was presented by instruction 9.6.1.4 which states: "For a Christian saint, record *Saint*." In this case, the rules for grammatical gender agreement in French require two terms to be given as equivalent to "Saint", being "saint" (for male Saints) and "sainte" (for female Saints).

In other situations, adaptation resulted instead in the deletion of some terms present in English. For example, instruction 6.15.1.6 "Individual Instruments" lists a series of terms designating musical instruments and includes pairs of synonyms such as "cello *or* violoncello", "cor anglais *or* English horn" or "double bassoon *or* contrabassoon". In French each of these three instruments is known only by a single term. Consequently, the synonyms were omitted. Another example is found in instruction B.11, the names of some countries and American states present in the list do not have abbreviated forms in French. However, it was deemed useful to retain these terms in the Appendix for the benefit of those agencies that catalogue bilingually in both French and English or who work with records derived from English-language sources. Instead of the abbreviation, the note "(ne s'abrège pas en français)" *(not abbreviated in French)* appears in the column for the abbreviations.

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7. The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek also considered this instruction to be problematic and submitted the revision proposal 6JSC/DNB/1 (http://www.rda-jsc.org/docs/6JSC-DNB-1.pdf) to make the instruction less Anglo-centric.

The format of dates is another example of where adaptations were necessary. In French, the convention applied for dates is the "little-endian" sequence ([day]-[month]-[year]). In the translation of AACR2 it had already been agreed, that in access points the year should be given first to provide a meaningful browseable sort order. In AACR2 the date format only appeared in examples, which gave the translators license to adopt the order [year]-[day]-[month] in personal name headings, while retaining, for reasons unknown, the original [year]-[month]-[day] order in headings for treaties. This kind of divergence from the English text was no longer possible with RDA as the [year]-[month]-[day] order in access points is explicitly prescribed in instructions 6.20.3.3, 9.3.1.3 and 11.4.2.3. However, in the case of instruction 7.11.3.3 relating to the date of capture, which is a data element intended to be read by users rather than manipulated by machine, it seemed important to respect the order normally used in French. As the instruction does not prescribe any specific order, we did not interpret the order in which the elements to be recorded were enumerated ("year, month, day, and time, as applicable") as an indication that this order was to be followed in the recording of the data. We were, then, able to translate the instruction literally, without changing the order of the date sub-elements, as this was of no consequence, but in the examples we followed the standard French order instead (such as, "13 septembre 2002" not "2002 septembre 13").

5. Technical challenges

RDA is intended as an online tool, and so although it is also published in print, the primary access path is the RDA Toolkit. The RDA Toolkit is a single multilingual product, providing access to all the language versions of RDA. To facilitate tracking and consistency between language versions, the text is held in an XML database with ID numbers for each block of text. Formatting, such as whether the block of text is an example, a term in a controlled list, or an RDA instruction, alternative or option, is controlled by metadata associated with each ID, and is not under the translator's control. This underlying structure imposes a strict constraint on translations, which must follow the original even more closely than was the case for print-based content standards. Any divergence is a barrier to the dual language display functionality made available in the November 2013 RDA Toolkit release. This prevented the addition of translator's footnotes or addenda to the French translation, techniques that had been used in the translation of AACR2 into French to deal with certain internationalization issues.

The templates were submitted several times to be ingested into the master XML database. This allowed us to check that we were following all technical directives, such as XML coding for font effects and hyperlinks within RDA, and to review the resulting PDF output for issues relating to the internal metadata. As this metadata is not even visible to the translator in the templates, any unexpected results in formatting need to be reported quickly to the vendor for resolution. Proofreading for editorial details (missing or extraneous final stops, excess or missing spaces between words) is often easier with the fully formatted PDF output than in the templates.

Working with the index for RDA presents several technical challenges and is particularly difficult. One is related to the parallelism of the underlying structure. Attempting to translate an index which is presented line by line, rather than in a database structure, runs into the logical difficulty that the amount of synonyms for concepts varies between languages, requiring mechanisms to suppress or add certain lines in the translation. Review of drafts of

the index in PDF (after the application of re-alphabetization) is essential for the identification of logical inconsistencies in entry structure or of the duplicate entries that are the inadvertent result of using the same term in French for two different but synonymous terms in English.

In the last stretch of the project, the near-final drafts of the French RDA text were loaded into the development server, where the initial multilingual functionality of the RDA Toolkit was being tested. This was done to test the functionality with real data, but as a by-product the translation teams were able to take advantage of the full power of the RDA Toolkit as a tool to facilitate the final stages of review. For example, to verify that all instances of a term were revised, it was much easier to use the RDA Toolkit search functionality rather than to open the templates for each chapter in turn; this certainly helped improve consistency. Lastly, a major link-checking operation was done in the development server, where any errors with hyperlink targets would be evident, permitting numerous errors to be corrected.

Alphabetization and other localization issues

The structural parallelism constraint surfaced as an issue in all aspects of RDA that involve alphabetized lists of any sort. Re-sorting the Glossary into alphabetical order was envisaged from the start, but as it turns out, many other parts of RDA are ordered editorially into alphabetical order. Some obvious examples are the index, the lists of relationship designators in appendices I, J and K, tables or lists of controlled values (such as table 3.1 Media Types, table. 6.1 Content Types, the list of Carrier Types in instruction 3.3) and lists of abbreviations in appendix B. Chapters 3, 6, and 7 had most of the lists of controlled values that required alphabetization, with some in chapters 2 and 9; yet in some cases a list of terms is in priority order and should not be resorted. This was easy to determine when the English list was not in alphabetical order, but when by coincidence a priority order list happened to be in alphabetical order in English (such as instruction 3.10.16.3 Recording Generation of Videotapes) the content of the instruction had to provide the cues.

In the Glossary some terms have two definitions. Special formatting is applied to display them as single entries with numbered definitions. An example is the word *Part* which can mean both a component unit of a larger resource, or a musical part. In French the word *Partie* is also used for both meanings. This sort of case should not have caused any difficulties, but the special formatting was sometimes lost. Another example is the term *Section*, meaning a separately issued part of a resource (also called *Section* in French), or in the context of geographic resources, a scale representation of a vertical surface (in French *Coupe de terrain*). Splitting these entries into two worked well once the situation was communicated. The reverse also occurred, the English terms *Surname* and *Name of the Family* are both translated as *Nom de famille* in French. In this case, combining the entries required development and was accomplished in a later release.

An even finer examination of RDA revealed still more cases, such as Glossary terms with multiple cross-references, and instructions with exceptions for several material types, where the alphabet had been used as a default organizing principle. These examples show the need to understand RDA's fine structure in order to produce a code which is as polished in French as it is in English.

Development was required to apply sorting on output in either the RDA Toolkit or in PDF where appropriate, including nested sorting of lists which are up to four levels deep in appendix J. "Sort in alphabetical order" seems simple to say, but language-specific usage must be taken into account to produce a result that permits native speakers to find entries in

lists where they unconsciously expect them to be. In French, letters with accents (such as é as in *échelle* = scale) sort as if there was no accent; the digraph œ sorts as the letter o followed by the letter e. In an early iteration of the Glossary these had sorted as additional "letters". Normally punctuation is ignored in sorting, those characters used in French but not English, such as French quotes (*guillemets* « … »), had to be identified and incorporated into the sort algorithm. Additionally, a temporary solution had to be found to address alphabetical order in the French index, which is sorted letter-by-letter (meaning that spaces between words are ignored) instead of word-by-word (meaning spaces are significant and sort prior to any letter), as it does in English. This was not merely a technical question. Since the index begins with an explanation on how to use the index, any difference in sort order between language versions must be reflected in an adaptation of that text; this required coordination between the translation team and the technical team, pending a more permanent solution to the problem.

The case for each of these adjustments had to be made in terms of the needs of French-language users of RDA. As one of the first translations of RDA, we were often the first to raise certain technical issues and highlight modifications required due to localization. At each stage we needed to be able to justify and demystify our requests for ALA Publishing and technical staff who are not French speakers.

6. Logistical and managerial challenges
All four partners were faced with the issue of assigning staff to the project teams to contribute their fair share of the work. The ideal mix of skills and knowledge would consist of:
- native (or extremely strong near-native) proficiency in French with a high-level of linguistic sophistication and grammatical acuity;
- excellent comprehension of written English, particularly the sort of technical English used in a standard;
- high level of knowledge of cataloguing, both the current standards and terminology as well as an understanding of the development of RDA;
- attention to detail, accuracy, facility with computer applications;
- availability over several years.

As with all translations, mastery of the target language is essential for the production of a fluid text that reads as well in translation as it does in the original. A translator must take care to avoid coining loan words or retaining non-native sounding sentence structure from the original. However, a translation of a content standard must be accurate as well as beautiful, which requires a very deep understanding of the original, both the linguistic structures and the content. In this case the content is cataloguing, and the context is a new standard which has made a paradigm shift as evidenced by deliberate changes of terminology, adding to the challenge of the translation. On that point, we would like to mention that referring to the French version of AACR2 was at times very useful for translating some of the instructions and also finding good examples, even though we knew that the phrasing of the text needed to be changed.

In the real world, few people combined the linguistic skills with the prerequisite knowledge, along with availability during the timeframe of the project. The national library partners selected existing members of staff who had relevant linguistic skills and/or cataloguing experience who contributed a portion of their work time to the project. These

staff were drawn from cataloguing departments or standards offices; while most were librarians, one was a library translator. ASTED contributed primarily through a professional translator with experience in non-library technical translation, and the volunteer work of a member of the editorial committee. Thus some project structures were put in place to allow for compensation for the potential weaknesses. It was judged essential that the initial draft translation of each chapter be done by a native speaker of French. For those drafts done by non-cataloguers, an experienced cataloguer (in some cases a second language speaker of French) reviewed the text and particularly the examples; also many chapters were reviewed by a native speaker of English with strong French comprehension to ensure that the French text actually conveyed the same meaning as the English.

As the project continued over three fiscal years (34 months in total), some personnel changes were inevitable. New staff were hired and integrated into the project, some retired, or went on leaves of different lengths. As no one worked full-time on RDA, their other commitments added constraints to availability from time to time. This required regular re-evaluation of work assignments to avoid bottle-necks and use everyone's skills productively.

The levels of energy and enthusiasm of the participants can easily wax and wane during a long project. This is where having other tasks can be a benefit; switching to alternate tasks can allow participants to take a break and return to the RDA project refreshed. Early on, a new project is exciting for all and has high profile with upper management. As any project continues, newer projects begin to compete with it for time, attention and resources. Everyday tasks that were postponed to allow time for RDA can accumulate to the point where it is difficult to postpone them any longer. This led to needing to re-make the case for the significance and impact of the project regularly.

7. Lessons learned

Despite the complexity of the project itself and of the multi-lateral partnership involved, the basic methodology we adopted served us well for the most part, and certainly did not prevent the completion of the translation of RDA. However, there are aspects that we would have done differently or taken more care over if we had known at the outset certain things we now know.

One of the big issues remains techniques for ensuring consistency in style and terminology in such a long text worked on by so many people over such a long period of time. All the measures we took were helpful, but still not enough. In addition to working through the Glossary, it would probably have been helpful to complete the relationship designator lists (appendices I, J, and K) at the outset, as these terms appear in examples. There are a lot more recurring phrases in RDA, both long and short, than the 85 we identified at the outset! As an outcome of the RDA rewording project, the Copy Editor identified changes to phrases previously identified and added more. This list appears as Appendix A to the revision of the RDA *Editor's Guide* issued December 17, 2013.[8] However, some of the greatest consistency issues arose from small phrases; while many of these were documented on the translation wiki, this could have been more systematic to provide even greater assistance and to be easier to refer to for future updates.

As translators tended to concentrate on their assigned chapters, they came to recognize patterns in the text within their sections, but did not have enough of an overview to

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8. http://www.rda-jsc.org/docs/6JSC-RDA-Editor%27s-guide-rev-2-Appendix-A.pdf.

recognize dependencies with other sections. One strategy could be to encourage translators to quickly read through chapters being worked on by others. Another strategy which we considered but were only partially able to carry out (due to looming deadlines) was to have a final reading for consistency carried out in a short period of time by a much smaller team (ideally only one or two people).

Cataloguing knowledge was definitely an asset for translators and revisers; without it transforming examples was very difficult as was recognizing instructions that had to be adapted instead of being translated literally. Even more support, and more timely support, could have been arranged for those participants without a cataloguing background.

A common experience in translation projects of all sorts is the discovery of small errors, typographical inconsistencies or anomalies in the original text. Following up on these and reporting them quickly turned out to be helpful, as there was time for many of them to be corrected in the original before the first release of the translation. One seemingly small error in a chapter title that we neglected to address quickly enough remained in error as we went to print.

Some aspects of the project took more time than originally envisaged. It was important to review the PDF output of the draft translation several times; scheduling needs to accommodate the time required for the ingestion of the templates, generation of PDFs and new templates each time.

While working in a distributed model in several sites takes time for formal coordination efforts, the advantage is that work on different chapters can be done in parallel. However, it turned out to be difficult to work on the index in parallel with the main text, as the terminology of the text needs to be stable to refer to it in the index.

Finally, as we came to the later stages of the project we realised that producing a translation of RDA is not just about technical translation—it is also an editorial product, requiring the committee to approve the title page, verso, credits, preface to the French translation, as well as the cover design.

8. Conclusion

Translating RDA into French was a challenging and demanding task which entailed the mobilization of a great deal of resources, not to forget the hard work of several highly dedicated individuals. Working in a decentralized multi-lateral structure required all committee members to remain flexible and open-minded to other cultural realities and organizational cultures. It was nonetheless an inspiring and stimulating endeavour that contributed in heightening all contributing members understanding of the complex and detailed standard that is RDA.

The translation of an evolving standard is an ongoing process which requires a long-term and enduring commitment. The next phase is further complicated, in our case, by the rewording project which was completed in English in May 2013.[9] Translating the reworded sections must come before the next translation of annual updates to RDA which were issued in the July 2013 release of the RDA Toolkit. Future updates will hopefully be more manageable. However, certain extensive discussion papers submitted to JSC in 2013 could eventually lead to substantial translation work (placeholder chapters for example). It is thus necessary to closely follow these developments and plan accordingly in order to maintain a

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9. http://www.rdatoolkit.org/blog/rewording_RDA.

French version of RDA that will always be as current as possible and in sync with the most current English version of the standard.

Knowing that a well-crafted and useful product has been produced and made available to the community when needed was extremely gratifying to all committee members, and it is with renewed enthusiasm that we now embark on another round of meetings to ensure that francophone cultural institutions be provided with an accurate, up-to-date, and high-quality version of the standard to allow the precise description of and efficient access to their valuable resources.

TABLE 1. SAMPLE OF EXAMPLES WHICH NEEDED TO BE ADAPTED INTO FRENCH

Instruction	English	French
6.2.2.5	Arabian nights	Mille et une nuits
6.23.2.19	Othello (Television program : 1963 : Canadian Broadcasting Corporation)	Othello (Émission de télévision : 1963 : Société Radio-Canada)
6.28.3.4	Gillis, Don, 1912–1978. Quartets, strings, no. 6. Passacaglia (Sketches)	Gillis, Don, 1912–1978. Quatuors, cordes, no 6. Passacaglia (Esquisses)
9.2.3.7	Edward VIII **Later name recorded as preferred name:** Windsor, Edward, Duke of	Édouard VIII **Nom ultérieur enregistré comme nom privilégié :** Windsor, Edward, Duke of
9.2.3.9	Jeanne, d'Arc **English language form recorded as preferred name:** Joan, of Arc	Joan, of Arc **Forme en langue française enregistrée comme nom privilégié :** Jeanne, d'Arc
9.19.1.1	Carlos, Prince of Asturias	Carlos, prince des Asturies
10.10.1.4	James (Family : Summerton, S.C.)	James (Famille : Summerton, Car. du S.)
11.2.2.5.2	Canadian Committee on Cataloguing *not* Comité canadien de catalogage	Comité canadien de catalogage *et non* Canadian Committee on Cataloguing
11.2.2.5.3	European Economic Community *not* Communauté économique européenne *not* Europese Economische Gemeenschap [*etc.*]	Communauté économique européenne *et non* European Economic Community *et non* Europese Economische Gemeenschap [*etc.*]
11.2.2.5.4	Yalta Conference	Conférence de Yalta
11.13.1.8	Olympic Winter Games (21st : 2010 : Vancouver, B.C.)	Jeux olympiques d'hiver (21es : 2010 : Vancouver, C.-B.)
11.2.2.19, Type 9	Norway. Sovereign	Norvège. Monarque
16.2.2.6	Austria *not* Österreich	Autriche *et non* Österreich

TABLE 2. SAMPLE OF EXAMPLES FOR WHICH SUBSTITUTES HAD TO BE FOUND

Instruction	English	French	Remarks
6.23.2.8	Book of common prayer **Resource described:** The book of common prayer, and administration of the sacraments and other rites and ceremonies of the church, according to the use of the Church of England	Euchologe **Ressource décrite :** Eủchológion tò méga periéchon tàs tõn heptà mystīríōn ảkolouthías. **Nom de la collectivité :** Église orthodoxe	The example illustrates a liturgical work for which the title chosen is a well-established title in the language preferred by the agency creating the data because the name of the corporate body used in constructing the authorized access point representing the liturgical work is also in the language preferred by the agency creating the data. In French, the example had to be replaced with a work for which the title and the responsible corporate body were in French.
6.27.1.9	Nutcracker (Choreographic work) NuTCRACKER (Computer file)	Blade runner (Film) Blade runner (Fichier informatique)	The examples illustrate two works with identical preferred titles. In French, the title for the ballet would be *Casse-Noisette*, which would not conflict with the title of the software package. The examples had to be replaced with titles that would be identical in a French catalogue.
9.2.2.5.2	Thérèse de Lisieux *not* Theresa of Lisieux	María Josefa del Corazón de Jesús *et non* Marie-Josèphe du Cœur de Jésus	The example illustrates a case where the name of a person in the person's native language is chosen as the preferred name because there is doubt as to whether the name in the language of the cataloguing agency is well-established or not. In French, the example had to be replaced with the name of a person whose native language was not French.
11.2.2.5.2	Schweizerische Nationalbibliothek *not* Biblioteca nazionale svizzera *not* Bibliothèque nationale suisse	Kansalliskirjasto *et non* Nationalbiblioteket	The example illustrates a corporate body that has more than one official language, none of which being a language preferred by the agency creating the data. In French, the example had to be replaced with a body which does not have French as one of its official languages.
11.7.1.6	North **Preferred name recorded as:** Korea South **Preferred name recorded as:** Korea	République démocratique **Nom privilégié enregistré comme suit :** Allemagne République fédérale **Nom privilégié enregistré comme suit :** Allemagne	The examples illustrate designations used to distinguish between two or more corporate bodies with the same name. Korea does not work as an example in French because the preferred names for the two countries (*Corée du Nord* and *Corée du Sud*) are different.
16.2.2.6	Livorno *not* Leghorn **English form no longer in general use**	Göteborg *et non* Gothembourg **La forme française n'est plus d'usage général**	The example illustrates a name of a place whose form in the language preferred by the agency creating the data is not chosen as the preferred name of the place because it is no longer in general use. The French equivalent for Livorno is *Livourne* and is still in general use.

Instruction	English	French	Remarks
16.2.2.8.1	Mexico City (Mexico)	Atlantic City (N.J.)	The example illustrates a case where a place name includes a term for a type of jurisdiction that would be kept as part of the name. The French equivalent of Mexico City is *Mexico*, which does not work because it does not include a type of jurisdiction.
16.2.3.7	Rumania **Different spelling recorded as preferred name:** Romania	Lithuanie **Orthographe différente enregistrée comme nom privilégié :** Lituanie	The French equivalent for Rumania/Romania is *Roumanie*, which does not have variant spellings in French.