National bibliographic databases for research output
opportunities and challenges

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EuroCRIS meeting at Espoo, Finland. May 28, 2019
context matters

context  bibliography databases for research output
Outline

Conceptual framing: bibliographic database as infrastructure

Context matters
→ ENRESSH and the overview of bibliographic databases
→ Variety of purposes
→ Alignment between purpose and content

Conclusions
"Fundamentally relational concept"

"[infrastructure] becomes infrastructure in relation to organized practices"

“Within a given cultural context, the cook considers the water system a piece of working infrastructure integral to making dinner; for the city planner, it becomes a variable in a complex equation”

Star & Ruhleder (1996, p. 113)
Context matters #1

ENRESSH and the overview of bibliographic databases
Goal: a roadmap for European bibliographic database for research output in the social sciences and humanities

Approach: European database created by integrating currently existing (national) databases
Study on bibliographic databases for research output in the social sciences and humanities

Survey I (41 countries)
Survey II (13 countries)
Participant observation

Data collected in 2016-2018
Bibliographic database for research output

a structured set of bibliographic metadata for research output

where research output is

any artifact that represents or communicates research findings
Context matters #2

Variety of purposes
Purpose

To monitor research/publishing activities
To evaluate research
To calculate bibliometric indicators for research funding systems
To showcase research
To report to governmental bodies
To search for literature
To make scholarly literature retrievable
To study processes in science (bibliometric research)
To pursue historical research

... different requirements for content and quality
Context matters #3
Alignment between purpose and content
Purpose

To monitor research/publishing activities
To evaluate research
To calculate bibliometric indicators for research funding systems
To showcase research
To report to governmental bodies
To search for literature
To make scholarly literature retrievable
To study processes in science (bibliometric research)
To pursue historical research
…
Bibliographic database for research output to be used for bibliometrics

A structured set of bibliographic metadata for research output (e.g. title, author, publishing year)

Where research output is any artifact that represents or communicates research findings

And (ideally) meets these criteria:

- Valid
- Reliable
- Comprehensive
- (Based on a legal framework)
Procedures ensuring (token-level) comprehensiveness

8 databases (of 13)  Comprehensiveness is confirmed by institutions

4 databases (of 13)  Comprehensiveness is confirmed by authors and institutions

4 databases (of 13)  Comprehensiveness is not confirmed
Understanding of a database (or CRISs) resides in the context of its envisioned purpose
Different purposes have different requirements for the content

For integration:
Not all contextual differences in database setups are obvious
! Risk to lose crucial information upon integration

Own system: Listen to the users
Other systems: Explore contents and practices
Thank you

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