



THE LONG ROAD OF THE INFORMATION LITERACY SECTION 1990 – 1996 - First part

By

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1990 - Stockholm

The Information Literacy Section history starts as a request by a committee from the Information Technology Section. It was decided to ask the new Round Table Executive Committee to investigate the matter.

The Unisist programme, 1971, UNESCO, played an important role, because this programme was involved in the development of library and information education, mainly organizing seminars and publishing documents. In August 1990, the UNESCO Expert Meeting on the Training Information Users in Higher Education was held in **Espoo**, Finland. Among the participants to this Seminar as IFLA representative was Dr. Ian Johnson, member of the IFLA Professional Board. The Expert Meeting made several proposals for action out of which one of the essential ones was that IFLA might consider creating a Round Table on User Education which would provide a forum for international action.

The IFLA procedure required that at least two Sections bring forth a recommendation for the establishment of a new Round Table. Dr. Ian Johnson together with Dr. Sinikka Koskiala were charged to take this matter up in the their respective Sections, i.e. Education and Training and Science and Technology Libraries at the Standing Committee Meetings of the IFLA Annual Conference in **Stockholm** 1990. The two Sections decided to forward the proposal to establish a Round Table on User Education to the Professional Board. The

Professional Board granted the permission to start a Working Group on User Education. The purpose was to find out whether in the IFLA community there would be enough interest to pursue programmes related to user education questions.

1991 - Moscow

In the beginning the Working Group consisted of Ian Johnson as Chair and Sinikka Koskiala as Secretary. In the 1991 IFLA Conference in **Moscow** the Working Group organized an Open Business Meeting. Due to the revolutionary situation in Moscow at those days the meeting attracted only four persons. Those present were Martin Kesselman (USA), Oili Kokkonen (Finland), Sinikka Koskiala (Finland) Secretary, and Seth Manaka (South Africa).

1992 - Delhi

In the 1992 Conference at **Delhi** the Working Group on User Education organized in addition to the Business Meeting an Open Session with four presentations by Michael Freeman (Great Britain), Tore Ahlbäck (Finland), Oili Kokkonen (Finland) and Abdelaziz Abid (UNESCO).

1993 - Barcelona

At the Working Group Business Meeting at the IFLA Conference in 1993 in **Barcelona** the chairman, Dr. Ian Johnson, reported that now that the Working Group had been in existence for three years and arranged program sessions at the IFLA Conferences successfully it could apply for a Round Table status. The chairman took the matter to the next meeting of the Professional Board. The Round Table status would improve the possibilities of advancing the User Education work of the group by providing administrative funding to the Round Table.

The objectives and Work Plan for the Round Table on User Education were discussed and approved by the Open Session and business meetings of the Working Group in Barcelona. They were also submitted for the IFLA Professional Board.

The chairman presented to the meeting the Resolution, the Objectives and the Work Plan prepared for the Round Table. These were all adopted.

Objectives:

- 1) to foster international co-operation in the development of user education
- 2) to promote research into the development of information skill and user education
- 3) to promote the establishment and development of user education programmes in libraries
- 4) to develop guidelines for user education programmes and for their integration into educational curricula at all levels
- 5) to disseminate information on the development of curricula and teaching methodologies
- 6) to encourage the development of dissemination of appropriate teaching materials
- 7) to encourage the development of education and training for librarians in user education

Work Plan:

In order to achieve its goals the Round Table will:

- a) review and revise the statement of its aims and objectives
- b) identify a work plan, including:

- projects on aspects of user education
- conferences, etc.
- c) organise sessions and workshops during the annual IFLA conferences on, for example:
 - the role which international agencies can play in developing user education in libraries
 - current practice in user education
 - recent research and developments in user education and information skills development
 - the education and retraining of teachers of information skills.

Projects:

- a) the Directory of Experts in User Education which was decided upon in Delhi could be undertaken as soon as the Round Table has been established and IFLA funding for the project can be applied for.
- b) the chairman presented a proposal for a project on Psychology and Attitudes of Users of Information Technology. This might be carried out with the Section on Election of officers: The present chairman Ian Johnson and secretary, Sinikka Koskiala were unable to continue. The candidates for new chairman and secretary respectively were Martin Kesselmann and Oili Kokkonen, who were elected to their positions unanimously.

According to the chairman there was no limit on how many can be members of a Round Table Executive Committee. It was decided to notify all those at the time on the Working Group mailing list and ask the persons interested in being on the Round Table Executive Committee to send a notice to the secretary or to IFLA.

Regarding the question whether the User Education Round Table should be in the Division or in the Section it was decided to locate the Round Table in the Division of Education and Research.

At the Open Session there were three presentations: Virginia Cano (Spain), Martin Kesselman (USA) Page, Irma Pasanen-Tuomainen (Finland).

The IFLA Professional Board confirmed the status of the Working Group as a Round Table in November 1993.

The sessions organized by the Working Group had proved that interest in user education was solid and extensive enough to give good reasons to establish an official Round Table on User Education under the Division of Education and Research.

1994 - Havana

The basic membership of the Round Table consisted of the persons who had expressed their interest in the work of a possible Round Table in the Open Sessions of the Working Group in Delhi and Barcelona, and amounted to 36 members from 16 different countries at the beginning of the RT. After distribution of a Newsletter with an invitation of new members and the IFLA Conference in **Havana** in 1994, the membership of the RT amounted to 68 persons representing 19 different countries. A provisional Executive Committee was nominated from the beginning of 1994 to operate until the IFLA Conference 1995 in composition of the persons who by the time of the board meeting in Havana had confirmed their membership. The list of the provisional Executive Committee members is enclosed.

The first issue of a Newsletter was sent to the persons in the original list of members of the RT in April 1994. It also was distributed by the BI-L –list-serv and, mainly due to this, called for several interested connections and new members. The Newsletter as well as the letter for the members of the Havana Conference were e-mailed to the members with an e-mail address (38 members).

The Executive Committee Meeting in Havana gathered four EC members and four observers. The programmes for Istanbul and Beijing conferences were dealt with and a Workshop in Istanbul was planned. A project application to build a Directory of specialist in user education was also on the agenda and the contents and technical implementation of the network were discussed.

The main theme of the Open Session was "User Education and Information Skills Development in Public and School Libraries". Four papers were presented and followed by discussion. Originals of two papers were in English, two in Spanish, all published in the Conference Booklet n:o 7. The papers in Spanish were also translated and available in English. The session was attended by 81 persons who took part in the discussions. At the Open Session there were four presentations: Emilio Setién (Cuba), Lyn Hay (Australia), Pilar Grafton Horta, (Cuba), and Mary C. Cox (USA) whose paper was presented by the RT Secretary due to the absence of the author.

Seminar in Tunis

The Seminar "Psychologie et Comportement des Usagers face aux Nouvelles Technologies de l'Information" was held in Tunis in November 1994. The Seminar was organized by the Institut Supérieur de Documentation (ISD), Université des Lettres, des Arts et des Sciences Humaines de Tunis under auspices of BIEF (Banque International d'Information sur Etats Francophone, Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique, Canada) and IFLA. The secretary of the RT, Oili Kokkonen, extended the greetings of IFLA and the RT to the Seminar, and Marie-Joelle Tarin (France), member of the EC of the RT, presented the activities and objectives of the Round Table. The report from the seminar and the recommendations accepted at the seminar were published in the RT Newsletter, May 1995.

1995 - Istanbul

The 1995 **Istanbul** IFLA Conference Executive Committee Meeting discussed e.g.:
Projects:

IFLA had allocated funds for compiling a Directory/Electronic Network of User Education Specialists. The content of the directory was discussed: contact information, specialities, experience, important publications, professional affiliation, user education specialization. It was also decided that the concrete aim of the project would be to establish the directory for the IFLA-Net.

The RT brochure was published in 1000 copies in English and was available at the Istanbul Conference. Possibilities of translations into e.g. French, German, Spanish and Russian were discussed.

Election of EC officers for 1996-1997:

Oili Kokkonen Chair/treasurer
Martin Kesselman Secretary.

Election of EC members for 1996-1997:

Following new member was elected for the EC:
Nancy Fjällbrandt, Sweden

Jesus Lau, Mexico.

The EC Meeting in Istanbul was attended by six members and two observers.

Programme in Istanbul:

The RT organized an Open Session on the theme "Educating users internationally" and two workshops - one on access and training issues of electronic journals with the Standing Committee on Science and Technology Libraries and one on training issues and the internet with the Standing Committee on University and General Research Libraries. The RT was quite pleased that these two Standing Committees sought its cooperation for the workshops.

Both the Open Session and the workshops proved an increasing interest in user education. The Open Session gathered an audience of 240, the two workshops of about 60 persons respectively.

All papers at the Open Session and the workshops were presented in English. Four of the papers were available through IFLANET before the conference, three papers were sent later on. The availability of simultaneous translation at the Open Session was a great asset and welcome, especially from the point of view of the large audience in the session.

Open Session "Educating Users Internationally". Presentations by Hannelore Rader (USA), Babakisi Fidzani (Bostwana), Nancy Fjällbrandt (Sweden), Barbara Wittkopf (USA).

Workshops:

"Internet Training and Use Internationally" (Joint with Section of University Libraries).

Presentations by: Isabel Stirling (USA), Oili Kokkonen (Finland), Irma Pasanen (Finland)

"Electronic Journals: "Access, Use and Implications for Training, Implications for Users and Librarians" (Joint with Science and Technology Libraries). Presentations by: Tom Nisonger (USA), Jan Olsen (USA), Tuija Sonkkila (Finland), Suzanne Grefshem (USA), Marina Zalvzhskaya (Russia), and, a Publishers' Round Table: Arnoud de Kemp (Springer Verlag), Ted Caris (Cambridge Scientific Abstracts), Robert Kimberley (ISI)

During the year 1995 one issue of a Newsletter was published and sent to the persons in the list of members. The Newsletter was e-mailed for 45 e-mail addresses, faxed for 12 recipients and posted for 20 addresses. The Newsletter was also distributed, when ever possible by e-mail, to chairs and secretaries of all IFLA Sections and RTs.

1996 - Beijing

In 1996 The Round Table held an Open Session and workshop at the Annual Conference in **Beijing**. Attendance at the Open Session was scarce due to the problems with competition from library tours at the same time. The workshop was successful with 35 attendees. During this year, the RT completed the first draft of it's online directory of User Education Specialists.

The theme of the Open Session was "Information Literacy: Global Perspectives". Papers by Pirjo Linnakylä (Finland) presented by Sinikka Koskiala, Leena Siitonen (Finland), Chengren Hu (USA) and Baiyin Feng (China).

The workshop theme was "User Education For Remote Library Users". Presentations by Martin Kesselman (USA), Navjit Brar (USA), Aniko Halverson (USA), Steve Sloan (Canada), A.K. Srivastava (India).

Projects: The first edition of the Electronic Directory of User Education Specialists was completed and approved by the IFLA Coordinating Board. The secretary was charged to work with IFLANET administration to make the directory available on IFLANET. The RT put forward a project proposal, approved by the CB, to sponsor a seminar on user education at the Crimea'97 Conference in June 1997.

A Nordic Conference on Information Literacy and Library Instruction was held in Linköping, Sweden, in November 1996. The RT was represented by the Chair, Oili Kokkonen, who, in addition to her paper "New Trends in Information Literacy" also presented the activities of the RT to the Conference audience.

Executive Officers, and Standing Committee Members:

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This list of members also served as a mailing list of the first RT Newsletter in April 1994:

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