RESEARCH SUPPORT LIBRARIES PROGRAMME

Electronic Gateway for Icelandic Literature – EGIL

Project Report for August-October 2001

Summary
Good progress has been made with cataloguing, digitisation and work on the subject gateway, and this is largely in line with the timings envisaged by the project plan. The area where the target envisaged by the plan has not been met is that of the collection level descriptions, where the small scale of the project meant that it was desirable to wait until the UKOLN Access database to create and manipulate the descriptions became available, rather than devoting major resource to creating an equivalent for ourselves. The availability of the database has clashed with other pressures on relevant staff, but it will now become a priority to take forward the creation and mounting of collection descriptions.

Individual areas of the project

Project web site

The project web site continues to be developed to reflect progress on the project and areas which will become available. Full details of academic advisers and partners are now included, as agreed at the partners' meeting in March 2001.

Cataloguing

Progress was made at individual sites as follows:

Leeds   Cataloguing was completed on schedule by July 2001.

Nottingham   Between August and October 2001, records for 611 titles were created/ converted. This brings the total of cataloguing completed at Nottingham to 1181 records, approximately 43% of the 2700 records estimated as needing to be done.

Oxford   The English Faculty Library have appointed a graduate student to catalogue their records. Work is proceeding extremely well and records for approximately 300 titles (75%) have been added to the online catalogue. Once the EFL's work is complete, the cataloguer will undertake the work to be done at the Bodleian.

UCL   Arrangements have been put in place for the cataloguing of the 150 titles included in the initial bid. A decision as to whether additional funding might be found for the 1100 titles subsequently discovered is still awaited, though UCL are confident that if funded, they will be able to complete the work by July 2002.

Collaborative Collection Management

The statement relating to Collaborative Collection Management which was agreed by the partners has been mounted on the project web site. As previously reported, the methodology for reporting major purchases/donations has been agreed and a form mounted on the project web site. The project plan envisages testing and refinement of the methodology during the remaining months of the project. Since no use has been made of the form as yet, we will need to ascertain whether there are flaws in the methodology which can be corrected, or where the problems – if there are problems – lie.

Digitisation of selected texts
A separate report on digitisation aspects of the project is appended.

Collection descriptions
The UKOLN Access database to facilitate the creation and manipulation of collection level descriptions has now become available. The next stage will be for us to assess whether and if so how this can be used in the context of the EGIL project. Partners have already agreed in principle the elements to be included in the descriptions.

Subject gateway
Content
A first list of sites to be included in the gateway and evaluative descriptions of twelve sites have been circulated to academic advisers and partners for comment. These have all been created in Nottingham, but the methodology is in place for all partners to contribute sites and/or descriptions for inclusion in the gateway, should they wish to do so. As agreed at the partners' meeting, all descriptions will be circulated and any comments taken account of before the descriptions appear in the gateway.

The initial estimate of the possible number of sites for inclusion in the gateway was around two hundred. If this figure is likely to be realised and most of the work of identifying and evaluating the sites needs to be done by the EGIL Assistant Librarian at Nottingham, then the timing for this will need to be monitored carefully so as not to jeopardise the achievement of cataloguing targets.

Technical aspects
Although the major work of creating the database for the gateway descriptions is scheduled to be done in December, further work has continued on planning the indexing. It has also been established that all but one of the special characters and diacritics which might be used in the course of the descriptions can be input in the normal way as for word processing and successfully displayed in a web browser. This will simplify significantly the work involved in creating the gateway descriptions.

JCW
November 2001