

# A critical and constructive analysis of the punctuation rules in *Retskrivningsordbogen* (the Danish Orthographic Dictionary)

MICHAEL NGUYEN

In 2024, the fifth fully revised edition of *Retskrivningsordbogen* (RO) was published—the most central publication of Dansk Sprognævn (the Danish Language Council). From now on, the electronic dictionary will be updated annually with minor revisions (RO 5.1, 5.2, etc.). This means that each year there will be an opportunity to introduce changes to the orthographic rules, including the punctuation rules. The purpose of this article is to review the punctuation rules systematically and to propose amendments to them—proposals which may not only serve as inspiration for the editorial board of RO in the annual updates, but which may also be useful for the equivalent editorial boards in Sweden, Norway and Germany. The proposals primarily concern the form of the rules, especially how they are formulated. Only a few proposals involve what might be termed substantive changes, that is, changes that would mean that something previously considered correct would no longer be so—or vice versa. Even if all the proposed amendments in this article were implemented, the punctuation rules would hardly be final: this is an ongoing process, and in that light, it is positive that changes can be introduced every year in the future.

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