Resource Description and Access (RDA): Cataloguing Standard for the Digital Era

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Abstract

The Resource Description and Access (RDA) standard is a new cataloguing standard created for digital environments. It is based on the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules(AACR) foundations and will eventually replace the existing Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, 2nd Edition (AACR2). The Resource Description and Access (RDA) provides a comprehensive set of principles and instructions on resource description and access for all contents and media. It is based on the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR) to connect the user's retrieval job and access to an online library catalogue and biographic database.RDA bibliographic entries are more useful in an online setting because they allow cataloguers to group similar records to display diverse expressions of the same work. Patrons could discover that the information sources they seek are available in different forms in the library. This paper investigated RDA as a new cataloguing standard, its meaning of RDA, its Characteristics of RDA, the Need for new cataloguing rules as well as its structure.

Keywords: Resource Description and Access (RDA); Cataloguing; cataloguing standards; digital era; characteristics of RDA and Structure of RDA

Introduction

Resource Description and Access (RDA) is a cataloguing system that creates well-formed, interconnected information for the digital world, allowing libraries to remain relevant on the World Wide Web (Tillett, 2011). RDA provides a comprehensive set of guidelines and instructions on resource description and access, covering all types of content and media in libraries, archives and information centres. It is based on the functional needs for bibliographic records to connect the user's retrieval job and access an online library catalogue and biographic database. Cataloguing and indexing should no longer be based on the imaginary subject listing but instead on user needs (Esse, 2013). RDA is based on the AACR's traditions. The Joint Steering Committee (JSC) for the Development of RDA recognized during the 1990s that AACR2 was not a code that would serve 21st-century users. It was structured around card catalogues and linear displays of citations, created before the internet and well-formed metadata that could be used by computer systems (Tillett, 2011).

RDA offers a set of standards and procedures for recording data in order to aid resource discovery. The metadata provided for a resource using RDA is intended to help users with the following tasks: to identify and confirm that the resource described corresponds to the user's stated search criteria, such as a resource by a specific author; to find resources that correspond to the user's stated search criteria, such as a resource by a particular author; to find resources that correspond to the user's stated search criteria, such as a resource by a particular author; identify and confirm that the resource described matches to the resource sought, or to differentiate between two or more resources with comparable characteristics; choose a resource that is appropriate for the user's needs; acquire or access the resource described. The metadata created by RDA to describe an entity associated with a resource is intended to help users perform the following tasks: find information on that entity and related resources, confirm that the entity described corresponds to the entity sought, or distinguish between two or more entities with similar names, etc. To understand why a particular name or title, or form of name or title, has been chosen as the preferred name or title for the entity, or to clarify the relationship between two or more such entities, or to clarify the relationship between the entity described and a name by which that entity is known. RDA provides a comprehensive set of guidelines and instructions covering all types of cataloguing content and media (RDA Toolkit, 2020).

Cataloguing is the art of describing, indexing, classifying, and controlling library materials bibliographically (Bello and Mansor, 2011). Cataloguing is creating bibliographic records of works according to accepted rules or standards. This helps users efficiently survey a library's holdings and determine where items are located. Cataloguing is the act of describing the physical nature and content of an information material as part of the process of organizing library materials for easy retrieval using standard rules. The purpose of cataloguing is to provide all the information necessary to describe an item accurately, both physically and intellectually, in order to distinguish it from every other item (Hawkins, 2008). This is done with the help of cataloguing standards of rules. Cataloguing standards are "authoritative rules, codes, guidelines acceptable and used by the communities of practice, and regarded as essential to attain accuracy and consistency in creating a catalogue record. They are a set of rules and guidelines for preparing bibliographic records to represent library resources, established to maintain consistency within the catalogue and between the catalogues of libraries using the same code. These rules, according to Ekere and Mole (2014), in chronological order of publication are the

British Museum rule for compilation of catalogues of printed books published in 1841; Cutter rules for a dictionary catalogue published in 1876; Anglo American Cataloguing Rules first published in 1908; Library of Congress Rule for descriptive cataloguing, published in 1949; ALA Rules of cataloguing published in 1949; Anglo-American Cataloguing Rule 2 (AACR2) developed in 1978 and Resource Description and Access, a more robust code that is friendlier to the digital information environment published jointly by American Library Association, the Canada Library Association and the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in June 2010 to replace Anglo-American Cataloguing Rule 2 (AACR2).

What is RDA

The cataloguing standard newly developed is referred to as Resource Description and Access (RDA). RDA is a collection of new cataloguing standards developed for the automated description of both print and digital materials in an automated environment (Vere, 2013). It was created to help catalogers define and access diverse forms of content and media more effectively. RDA, according to Vere (2013), is built on the descriptive models created by AACR2, the world's most widely used standard for bibliographic metadata content in the world. Cerbo (2011:4) states that RDA is a new cataloguing standard designed to improve "flexibility in rules for dealing with the changing landscape of resource description and access". The cataloguing leaders felt that there was a need to develop cataloguing rules because AACR2 is seen as inadequate for the myriad types of resources that came into being after AACR2 was adopted.

RDA, according to Olive (2010), contains a collection of practical instructions based on the conceptual models of Functional Requirement for Bibliographic Records (FRBR) and Functional Requirement for Authority Data (FRAD). FRBR is a conceptual model of the bibliographic universe that assists in connecting user tasks of access and retrieval of resources to the elements and relationships of resource description. So, it is a document that illustrates a framework for accessing and retrieving records from bibliographic databases. FRAD, on the other hand, is a conceptual model designed to describe the authority side of the library catalogue. It establishes a clearly defined structured framework for connecting the data documented in authority records to the needs of the records' users. FRAD also assists in determining the possibility of international exchange and the use of authority records inside and outside the library. The properties and relationships associated with the entities' work, expression, manifestation, and item, as specified in FRBR, are commonly reflected in RDA data elements for defining a resource.

Need for a New Cataloguing Rule.

During the digitization and online resources age, it became evident that (AACR2) lacked suitable provisions for the descriptive cataloguing of newly acquired electronic resources by libraries (Madireng, 2020). As a result, AACR2's cataloguing criteria needed to be fundamentally revised (Tillett, 2011).This aimed to ensure that libraries maintained and remained relevant in terms of cataloguing metadata for all types of library information resources so that users could easily access and retrieve them (Ahonsi, 2014). According to Tillett (2011), the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) for establishing AACR2 felt obligated to hold the

International Conference on the "Principles and Future Development of AACR" in Toronto, Canada, in 1997 in response to these concerns. The conference included a wide range of cataloguing topics, with a focus on current and future trends in information resources and management. The essential principles and structure of AACR2 should be analyzed, and it was agreed after the discussions. The recommendations made at the conference led to some amendments to AACR2. However, in 2002, it was discovered that in order to overcome AACR2's limitations, there was a severe need for an extensive reorganization of AACR2 because the information had become increasingly complex as updates were added, particularly to address new electronic and information resources, and AACR2 could not cater for those resources.

AACR2 lacked a rational structure and instead focused on individual rules for each type of material rather than commonalities and basic principles for a more consistent approach; AACR2 was organized by class of materials, which caused issues when cataloguing electronic resources with multiple attributes; AACR2 was organized by class of materials, which caused problems when cataloguing electronic resources with multiple attributes; AACR2 did not adequately address bibliographic relationships, whereas the internet is all about networks of inter-connected information; AACR2 did not adequately address bibliographic relationships, whereas the internet is all about networks of related information; AACR2 had a strong Anglo-American bias, despite the fact that it is used worldwide; AACR2 had a strong Anglo-American bias, despite the fact that it is used worldwide (Tillett, 2011). A new standard with rules aligned with the concepts and vocabulary used in Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records was needed (FRBR), a new model developed by the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) in the 1990s. The JSC decided in 2005 to create a whole new standard that gives catalogers sufficient structure and rules so that the bibliographic records they create can address the problems posed by digital information resources (Ahonsi, 2014).

Characteristics of Resources Description and Access (RDA)
Simplification

In order to accommodate increasingly diverse and sophisticated resource formats, the rules have become more complex over time. Chapters addressing general rules, cartographic materials, manuscripts, music, sound recordings, motion pictures and video recordings, graphic materials, electronic materials, 3D items, microforms, and continuous resources were followed by general rules. (e.g. serials)(Chapman,2010). RDA aims to phrase rules more simply so that they can easily be applied to various resources with the minimum of specific instruction and with suitably chosen examples.

Structure

The existing structure of AACR2, as previously mentioned, is a cause of several issues. Because the descriptive chapters are organized by resource type, the cataloguer must first decide on the format or material type of the resource to be described before determining which chapters to use. However, there is no clear direction on how to make the decision. While this may be obvious for some resources (e.g. a single textual manuscript), it will be less so for others - for example, is a music serial "primarily music" or a "continuing resource"? RDA plans to address

this by making resource type identification the first step in the cataloguing process and thus at the beginning of the general instructions (Joint Steering Committee, 2006).

Consistency

Because of the AACR2 framework of general and specialized criteria, specific resources were catalogued slightly differently than others. Alternative rules and optional rule amendments further complicate things, so two catalogue records for the same item may be prepared using AACR and have significant variances. RDA aims to simplify rules so that they are more easily applied to a range of resources and to limit alternative variations in treatment (Chapman, 2010).

Collocation

Individual information resources are available in a variety of formats and often with a number of derivative works in today's information ecosystem. A novel, for example, could be available in hardcover and paperback formats, regular and large print, Braille and Moon tactile formats, digital files, and spoken word recordings on audio cassette and CD. It may also be the inspiration for prequels, sequels, and related works by the same or different authors, as well as the source work for films, musicals, operas, and ballets. Although FRBR describes various interactions between these things, AACR does not precisely represent this theoretical model or the terminologies it uses. These links are crucial in allowing catalogues to collate records retrieved from searches in a way that reflects these relationships. In addition to using FRBR language throughout the course, RDA will feature a chapter on relationships (Joint Steering Committee, 2005).

Principle-based Rules

Because of the general and particular rule structure, as well as the availability of alternate instructions, rule interpretations were created to assist catalogers. RDA hopes to create a set of guidelines based on clearly stated concepts with few options, allowing catalogers to develop their judgment and experience.

Content and Formats

The words 'generic material designation' (GMD) and specific material designation' (SMD) originated from bringing AACR in line with ISBD. These phrases could be used as filtering parameters in systems (find only DVD versions of a film, not video) or display sequence settings (for a single work with 8 text versions, 3 spoken word recordings, 1 digital file and 1 Braille text) and content information (musical notation and recorded performances of a musical work). To date, the use of GMD and SMD terms has been restricted and spotty, owing in part to issues with the terms' listings. There are two GMD listings, one for the United Kingdom and the other for North America and Australia.GMD terminologies are confusing since they cover both content (e.g. music) and format (e.g. cartographic material) (e.g. Braille, filmstrip).Furthermore, since the number of information carriers grew fast, SMD terms became increasingly out of touch with user practice: authorized terms include 'sound cassette' and 'videodisc' and not the more commonly used audio tape and DVD. Recent editions of AACR2 have given some choices for

using such product-related phrases to solve this. GMDs and SMDs will be replaced by RDA, allowing existing content and carrier terms to be described without precluding the usage of future words (Mederios, 2006).

Internationalization

AACR arose from the English-speaking cultures of Britain and North America, and it has an Anglo-American slant in some aspects. Meanwhile, other countries had devised their own sets of cataloguing criteria, which shared some similarities with AACR but also differed (Mederios, 2005). The library world was quick to recognize the economic advantage of the 'create an electronic catalogue record once and reuse it many times' principle, with the result that there is globally a great deal of bibliographic data exchange. As this exchange increases, it has highlighted the obstacles to exchanging data created by different rules. In some parts of the world, where the information community is becoming increasingly multinational, the AACR2's Anglo-American bias is considered an impediment to wider acceptance. RDA's goal is to be based on internationally agreed-upon cataloguing principles and to eliminate any instances of Anglo-American bias in the new guidelines.

The Structure of RDA

The RDA standards will serve as a guide for describing and gaining access to various resources. RDA is structured in such a way that people can recognize and use fundamental instructions. These standards are divided into three parts, each of which has multiple chapters: The first section is devoted to resource descriptions, the second to relationships, and the third to retrieval indicators control. (According to The Joint Steering Committee, 2005).Each chapter's content will be introduced:

Part I - Resource Description Part I contain a Resource Description with six chapters covering different elements of resource description.

Chapter 1 covers general guidelines for determining the appropriate type of description to use (comprehensive, analytical, or multilevel description), changes that necessitate a new description, mandatory elements of description, description language and script, conventions for transcribing descriptive elements, note formulation, and descriptive elements used as access points. Chapter 2 focuses on the descriptive elements that are most commonly used to identify the resource. The elements covered will include title, statement of responsibility, edition/issue designation, etc. ó information that users rely on to confirm that the resource described corresponds to the one sought or to distinguish between two or more resources bearing similar identifying information. Chapter 3 will focus on the technical description of the resource. The elements presented will include those that users consider when choosing a resource to fit their needs in terms of the carrier's physical properties, the formatting and encoding of data stored on the carrier, the manner of accessing the resource, and so on. Chapter 4 will focus on the content of the resource. The factors presented will include those that users consider when choosing a resource that meets their needs in terms of work kind, audience, language, and so on. Elements that illustrate content-oriented relationships will also be included in Chapter 4. (e.g. sources on which the resource's content is based).Chapter 5 will concentrate on information on the resource's availability. The aspects that will be examined include those users use to obtain or access a resource (terms of availability, contact information, etc.). Chapter 6 will focus on item-

specific information. The elements covered will include provenance, marks/inscriptions, condition, access restrictions, etc. information that pertains specifically to the copy or copies of the resource held by the agency describing the resource. Instructions in chapters 2-6 will be presented in groupings that correspond to the logical attributes of entities defined in FRBR. For example, in chapter 2, the "title" grouping will cover instructions about all data elements subsumed under the attribute that FRBR defines as "title of the manifestation" (i.e., title proper, parallel title, variant title, key title, etc.).

Part II – Relationships: Part II contains an introduction and four chapters providing guidelines and instructions on reflecting on relationships.

Chapter 7 provides general guidelines on bibliographic conventions for reflecting relationships, sources of information, and levels of relationships. Chapter 8 provides a set of general rules and instructions for selecting the principal access point (i.e., the access point used as the first element in citing a work) as well as other access points reflecting relationships between the resource specified and individuals, families, and corporate bodies. It will also provide general instructions on reflecting changes in responsibility and function designations. Chapter 9 provides a general guideline on the use of citations to reflect relationships between the resource described and other related content and resources. In addition, Chapter 9 will cover how to use analytic citations, citations for related works, and series citations. Chapter 10 will provide special instructions on choosing the primary access point and other access points for particular types of works. The instructions provided in chapter 10 will reflect citation practices for the types of works covered that differ from the standard citation practices reflected in the general guidelines and instructions provided in chapters 7-9.

Part III -Access Point Control: Part III contains an introduction with seven chapters that provide guidelines and instructions on formulating access points and recording data used in access point control

Chapter 11 provides general guidelines on sources of information, levels of access point control, transcription, language and script of access points, the structure of access points, and the use of references. Chapters 12-15 provide general instructions on choosing the preferred name of a person, family, corporate body, or place, ordering the elements of the name for use as an access point, adding identifying elements to the name to differentiate entities with the same name, and using variant and related names as references. Chapters 12 and 14 will also provide additional instructions for specific types of names (e.g., personal names in various languages and names of government bodies and officials). Chapter 16 will provide general instructions on constructing citations, choosing the preferred title for a work, adding identifying elements to the title to differentiate works with the same title, etc., and using variant and related titles as references. It also provides additional instructions on formulating titles and citations for specific types of works (e.g., music). Chapter 17 will provide instructions on recording information other than names and titles that can be used either to identify a person, family, corporate body, place or work (e.g., date and place of birth of a person or the location of the headquarters of a corporate body) or to account for the form chosen as the preferred name or title (e.g., the country of residence of a person, or the place of origin of a work). Chapter 17also provides instructions on citing sources consulted in choosing and formulating names and titles for use in access points and citations.

Appendices

RDA contains five appendices: Appendix A. Capitalization, Appendix B. Abbreviations, Appendix C. Initial articles, Appendix D. Presentation of descriptive data, Appendix E. Presentation of access point control data.

Appendix A provides instructions on conventions for capitalization of data transcribed in English and for data transcribed in several other languages. The instructions in the appendix will supplement the general guidelines on capitalization provided in chapters 1 and 11. Appendix B provides lists of abbreviations for use in bibliographic descriptions, including abbreviations for specific countries, states, etc., abbreviations for the names of months, and abbreviations used in citing bibliographic sources. The lists in the appendix will supplement general guidelines on the use of abbreviations provided in chapters 1 and 11. Appendix C provides a list of definite and indefinite articles in several languages that are to be either omitted or treated as non-filing characters when they occur at the beginning of an access point or the beginning of a title used in a citation. Appendix D contains instructions and guidelines for presenting descriptive data items. A table in the appendix will explain how the individual data items described in chapters 2-6 can be mapped to the regions and elements indicated in the ISBDs to provide a display that follows the established ISBD sequence of elements and punctuation. Instructions on the analytics presentation and multilevel descriptions based on ISBD specifications will also be included. In addition, Appendix D will provide guidelines on presenting descriptive data elements in other forms, such as those typically used in OPAC displays. Appendix E contains guidelines and instructions for presenting data for access point control. A table in the appendix will explain how the individual data items described in chapters 12-17 can be mapped to the regions and elements defined in GARR to provide a presentation that follows the GARR sequence of elements and punctuation. In addition, Appendix E will also include instructions for presenting access point control data in various formats, such as those used in OPAC displays.

Conclusion

This paper's main contribution is to present the new cataloguing standard created for the cataloguing of digital resources, as well as its characteristics, structure, and the necessity for its implementation. The new cataloguing standard, "Resource description and access", addresses the inadequacies identified in the AACR second edition. It is a global content description standard that applies to all media and is unaffected by technical communication formats. Although the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rule second edition was the inspiration for Resource description and access, RDA is easier to use and has more flexible rules. Finally, the most significant benefit is that libraries and information centres can use databases with minimal system adjustments thanks to new RDA standards.

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