This second article in the three-part series on the new cataloging code Resource Description and Access (RDA) will present summaries of two studies developed by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA): Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR) and Functional Requirements for Authority Data (FRAD). These describe in a new way the constitution of library catalogs and how this design assists with catalog users’ needs.

FRBR
Often when encountering RDA for the first time in training or information sessions, FRBR and to a lesser extent FRAD play a considerable role in the proceedings. Why is this? Simply put, their concepts inform the structure of RDA and their language populates its text. This is not to say that it is necessary to become intimately aware of these studies to use RDA; as following the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (AACR2) without direct knowledge of the International Standard Bibliographic Description (ISBD) proves no hindrance, the rules of RDA are enough for day-to-day work. Still, I do find it useful to peer into the deeper waters of FRBR and FRAD to gain a fuller understanding of the content and context of the new cataloging code.

Let us begin with synopses of the two reports. FRBR presents a broad, structural overview (or conceptual model) of the universe of bibliographic records. According to FRBR’s authors, this construct as represented in library catalogs aids the user in finding, identifying, selecting, and obtaining various works, expressions, manifestations, and items. Or put more plainly, it helps people get to resources.

FRBR divides the bibliographic universe into three groups of entities: the resources themselves, the creators of and affiliates to these resources, and the subject matter covered by the resources. If these groups sound familiar, compare them to the first object of the catalog as devised by Charles Cutter: “To enable a person to find a book of which either

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(A) the author, (B) the title, (C) the subject is known.”

The first group, those concerning resources, is broken down into four integrated entities: works, expressions, manifestations, and items; collectively these are known by the acronym WEMI. A work is a “distinct intellectual or artistic creation” (FRBR 3.2.1): Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony, or A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens. An expression is a realization of a work, but its form described broadly. Expressions may be characterized, for example, through their medium (Beethoven’s Seventh in notational format or the same work expressed in performances) or through language (Dickens’ original English text or a strict translation of the same into Spanish). Authority records provide the platform for designating works and expressions in library catalogs:

**Authorized headings in authority records for works:**
Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827. Symphonies, no. 7, op. 92, A major
Dickens, Charles, 1812-1870. Tale of two cities
Leonardo, da Vinci, 1452-1519. Last Supper

**Authorized headings in authority records for expressions of works:**
Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827. Symphonies, no. 7, op. 92, A major (Sketches)
Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827. Symphonies, no. 7, op. 92, A major; arranged
Dickens, Charles, 1812-1870. Tale of two cities. Spanish
Dickens, Charles, 1812-1870. Tale of two cities. Spoken word

Title and name-title authority records do not exist for every publication available in library catalogs, of course. Instead, authorized headings are implied within the bibliographic record structure, often through title main entry (245 MARC field) and author main entry plus the title (1XX + 245 fields). These stand as proxies in bibliographic records for what would otherwise be authorized title or name-title headings such as those I give above.

I should emphasize here that works and expressions are conceptual entities only and do not point to any particular format or object. Physicality and specific format come into play with manifestations. A manifestation is the “physical embodiment of an expression of a work” (FRBR 3.2.3), such as the book, the compact disc, or the game. For published works, a manifestation refers to the aggregate of a particular issued title. The Cambridge Scholars Publishing edition of A Tale of Two Cities released in 2008 in book form is a different manifestation from Dickens’ Tale put out by the Oxford University Press in 1987, also in book form. Both of these manifestations are embodiments of a textual, English-language expression of Dickens’ artistic work. The Penguin audiobook on CD issued in 2003 is a manifestation of a different expression, the work’s English-language audio expression. And the manifestation of an abridged, audio, Spanish-language expression of Dickens work was put out by Yoyo Libros in 2001 on audiocassette and titled Historia de dos ciudades. A graphic of these manifestations in the context of the greater WEMI model follows:

W1 – Charles Dickens’ A Tale of Two Cities
   E1 – Textual, English language
       M2 – A Tale of Two Cities, Oxford University Press (1987), book format
   E2 – Audio, English language
       M1 – A Tale of Two Cities, Penguin (2003), audiobook, CD format
   E3 – Audio, Spanish translation, abridged
       M1 – Historia de dos ciudades, Yoyo Libros (2001), audiobook, audiocassette format

Note that much manifestation data appears in the descriptive portions of bibliographic records, such as the title as transcribed from the piece in hand, the publication information, and physical characteristics.

An item is a single copy of a manifestation: an individual volume of Dickens’ A Tale of Two Cities and a distinct CD of Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony performed by Herbert von Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic, both sitting on the shelves in your library. Any unique information pertaining to an item—missing pages, author signatures—often ends

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6 Form of outline based on similar illustrations in IFLA’s FRBR document. W = work; E = expression; M = manifestation.
up in holdings or item records; for those library systems that cannot accommodate this method, a local note in the bibliographic record is employed.

The second group of FRBR entities constitutes those parties responsible for the creation and promulgation of WEMI: persons and corporate bodies. (Families appears in FRAD, but not in FRBR.) And the third group concerns those entities that represent topics set forth in resources; WEMI, persons, and corporate bodies can stand as subject headings, as may concepts, objects, events, and places.

All FRBR entities have unique characteristics. These characteristics are referred to as attributes. For instance, work has the attributes “title of work” and “form of work” along with some others, and person includes the “name of person,” “dates of person,” and “title of person” attributes. As a general rule of thumb, the facets of works and expressions, persons and corporate bodies, and places are recorded in authority records, whereas those for manifestations and items are bound to bibliographic records.

FRBR also stresses the various relationships that exist among its entities. One fundamental chain of relationships appears from work to expression to manifestation to item, as the sample Tale titles I give above demonstrate. Another primary relationship includes those between WEMI and their creators (persons and corporate bodies). And a third links a work to the subject matter of that work, which may be any or all of the entities described thus far, e.g., a work may be about another work or item, or a person, or a concept or event.

FRBR on the User’s Side
The descriptions and relationships as iterated in bibliographic records promote four basic library catalog user tasks: find, identify, select, and obtain (a good acronym for these is FISO):

- To find is to give the user the ability to locate resources based on the data in bibliographic records; any catalog worth its salt will contain records of high enough quality to achieve this goal
- To identify is to give the user the ability to distinguish one resource from another, or to confirm the resource has been sought, based on information in bibliographic records
- To select is to give the user the ability to choose the resource based on a comparison of bibliographic data with the user’s search needs; for instance, consideration may be made regarding medium (print versus electronic) or language (English versus German)
- To obtain is to give the user the ability to acquire the resource, whether that takes the form of a link in a bibliographic record to an online article, reference to a vendor from which the user may purchase the resource, or a call number addressing the location on a shelf

FRAD
FRAD extends the FRBR model to authority record data. Like FRBR, FRAD offers an umbrella view of the authority record ecosystem by delineating FRBR entities and additional entities in the context of the authority side of the catalog. Each of these entities has at least one name, for instance, “Dickens, Charles, 1812-1870” for a person. That structured name, or all such names for any entity that has several, is christened in FRAD terms a controlled access point. Library cataloging rules offer guidance on selecting one of these access points to be an authorized access point (equivalent to AACR2’s heading or uniform title). Entities in the authority record universe also exhibit attributes like their FRBR siblings.

Relationships between and among these entities play a significant role in FRAD: one such connection lies between earlier and later forms of corporate names, another between an author’s real name and his/her pseudonyms. For those accustomed to authority record intricacies, these and other such relationships should be very familiar territory.

FRBR and FRAD Meet RDA
Methods to learning RDA vary from individual to individual. Some reverse engineer understanding of the new code by revisiting AACR2. Others jump right into the deep end of the pool. And yet another contingent wants to slowly acclimate themselves to the new environment. I have been taking the first and last routes in my own studies of RDA and have found the course fruitful, though measured. For the purposes of this and the succeeding article, I will follow
a similar path and begin a survey of the new cataloging code from a broad perspective—describing the forest of RDA before minding the individual trees.

RDA is divided into 10 sections (ignoring for now the introduction, appendices, and glossary); each section is composed of one or more chapters:

- Section 1: Recording Attributes of Manifestation and Item
- Section 2: Recording Attributes of Work and Expression
- Section 3: Recording Attributes of Person, Family, and Corporate Body
- Section 4: Recording Attributes of Concept, Object, Event, and Place
- Section 5: Recording Primary Relationships Between Work, Expression, Manifestation, and Item
- Section 6: Recording Relationships to Persons, Families, and Corporate Bodies Associated with a Resource
- Section 7: Recording Subject Relationships
- Section 8: Recording Relationships Between Works, Expressions, Manifestations, and Items
- Section 9: Recording Relationships Between Persons, Families, and Corporate Bodies
- Section 10: Recording Relationships Between Concepts, Objects, Events, and Places

The text is divided into two broad parts. The first four sections are dedicated to the establishment of FRBR/FRAD entities for the library catalog (i.e., bibliographic and authority record data), with the remaining sections describing the composition of FRBR and FRAD relationships between entities (i.e., added entries and references). Section titles employ FRBR/FRAD language as does the text itself; in fact, many of the entity attribute terms in FRBR and FRAD find their way into the specific rules of RDA. For now, however, I will confine this survey to a section-level review to highlight one of the major disparities between AACR2 and the new cataloging manual. (Caveat: bibliographic and authority data are not neatly aligned to distinct RDA sections; what follows is only a general account of the relationships.)

The chapters that make up Section 1 dedicate their instructions to the descriptive segments of bibliographic records. In fact, the contents of this section parallel the substance if not the layout of Part I of AACR2, tweaked in places with new or revised rules. Sections 2 and 3 and the chapter from Section 4 on places direct the cataloger in the production of headings and authority record data; compare these sections to chapters 22-25 in Part II of AACR2. The remainder of Section 4 and all of Sections 7 and 10 are presently placeholders; further work on these is delayed until after the initial release and testing of RDA.

Sections 5, 6, 8, and 9 answer concerns on when and how to employ added entries (cf. AACR2’s chapter 21) and other relational information in bibliographic records. Additional content is devoted to rules on creating references within authority records (cf. AACR2’s chapter 26).

Conclusion
The greatest challenge boots-on-the-ground catalogers will face with the new rules is the language of the text. The fact that RDA is not built on the familiar ISBD model but on the novel FRBR/FRAD structures compounds the usability issue. However, as I have implied above, catalogers have been organizing the sea of information into FRBR and FRAD models for a long time now; the differences lie in the terminology and—with RDA—the instructions for assembling the data. Adjusting the familiar to accommodate the new perspective is one step to understanding the substance of RDA.

The next article in this series will briefly revisit FRBR and FRAD as prelude to further insights into the language and structure of RDA. It will also focus on some specific differences between present AACR2 cataloging and RDA’s approach, and how these changes are represented in MARC records.

Further Information on FRBR and FRAD
Below you will find a short annotated bibliography of resources on FRBR and FRAD. The list includes those works to which I made reference in this article.

Original sources

**General guides and commentaries**


A fine, short introduction to FRBR, with helpful diagrams illustrating the concepts described. Also available online in PDF format: http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/whatfrbr.html.


A very good overview of FRBR. RDA information is slightly outdated. Also available online in PDF format: http://www.minitex.umn.edu/Communications/Oclc/2006/03March.pdf.


A succinct and proficient explanation of FRBR. Some links are outdated.


Another set of essays on FRBR, these evaluating the model and how it relates to various formats of material (e.g., music, serials, archival collections). Includes some information on FRAD.


An excellent follow-up to any of the shorter introductory works listed here.

**About the Author**

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