

4JSC/Chair/71/Rev/Chair follow-up/3
9 August 2002

To: Joint Steering Committee for Revision of AACR
From: Ann Huthwaite, Chair, JSC
Subject: JSC Format Variation Working Group: Third Interim Report

Attached is the third interim report of the Format Variation Working Group, prepared by its Chair, Jennifer Bowen.

JSC Format Variation Working Group

Third Interim Report

August 9, 2002

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1. Executive Summary

The three U.S. members of the Working Group (Bowen, Beacom, and Weiss) attended ALA in June 2002 and engaged in several activities related to the Working Group.

Test Database/OCLC:

The Working Group members were invited by OCLC to meet with representatives from OCLC, VTLS, Inc., and the Library of Congress (Barbara Tillett and Sally McCallum) to discuss FRBR. This was a very productive meeting that has set the stage for the Working Group to continue working with OCLC in their test FRBR environment. The group in attendance agreed to meet regularly at upcoming ALA meetings.

It now appears likely that our work with OCLC will be sufficient to fulfill those portions of our original Charge that call for us to develop a test database. The formation of this FRBR group has also provided an opportunity for us to work more closely with VTLS as well.

MARBI Discussion Paper:

Members of the Working Group participated in discussion with MARBI of the Discussion Paper that the Working Group submitted to MARBI (<http://lcweb.loc.gov/marc/marbi/2002/2002-dp08.html>) at ALA. The discussion provided a lead-in to other FRBR activities at ALA, and served as a way for the Working Group to publicize our work to the vendor community. Depending upon the speed with which our work progresses, we may want to consider submitting a follow-up paper to MARBI either at ALA Midwinter or Annual 2003.

Revision of Chapter 25:

The Working Group has formed a new subgroup, chaired by Peter Haddad. This group, primarily composed of members who will not be attending the London meeting on September 6th, will begin to draft rule revisions to Chapter 25 to incorporate expression-level citations and to separate out the rules for collective uniform titles. Draft revisions will be presented to JSC for discussion prior to the April 2003 JSC meeting.

Plans for London Meeting:

Working Group members from the U.S. and the U.K will meet in London at the British Library on September 6th. The agenda for this meeting will focus upon various methods of implementing expression-level collocation: pre-coordinated

(using expression-level citations) and system-based or post-coordinated, as OCLC and VTLS are now implementing. We will also begin to put together criteria for evaluating FRBR-based systems or system interfaces. The report proper includes a list of likely agenda topics.

Discussion Questions for London Meeting and JSC:

As a result of the London meeting, those in attendance may have additional recommendations for JSC concerning the Working Group's role in facilitating system-based collocation, in particular related to the questions below. Our concerns going into the London meeting include the following (numbering follows question numbering in Section 2 of the report proper):

- 2.1.1.1 Should the Working Group consider the needs of system developers as well as of catalogers as we propose rules for determining when something is a new expression?
- 2.1.1.2 If the level of guidance appropriate for inclusion in the Rules is not sufficient for system developers (i.e. they want more specific guidance), should the Working Group provide additional guidance for developers based upon our experience with this issue, without actually writing this level of detail into AACR? Should this guidance take the form of a separate document of some kind?
- 2.1.2.1 Should the Working Group pursue possible rule changes related to clarifying the usefulness of uniform titles, relator information, etc. in facilitating system-based collocation at the expression level?
- 2.1.2.2 Should AACR discuss the need to code such expression-level attributes as format (form of expression) and language in a catalog record in order to facilitate system-based collocation?
- 2.1.2.3 Should systems-based approaches to "partial expression-level collocation" be discussed somewhere in AACR?
- 2.1.2.4 Could a library or system vendor tailor levels of collocation using expression-level data to its own needs, such as is commonly done now with indexing specifications? Should this be discussed within AACR?

Matthew Beacom will provide JSC with a verbal update of the London meeting in York, and will convey the more specific sentiments of that group regarding the questions above. In general, however, we would appreciate JSC's guidance on these issues and our level of participation in them.

2. Format Variation Working Group Activities at ALA

The three U.S. members of the Working Group (Bowen, Beacom, and Weiss) attended ALA in June 2002 and engaged in several activities related to the Working Group.

2.1 OCLC FRBR Meeting

The Working Group members were invited by OCLC to meet with representatives from OCLC, VTLS, Inc., and the Library of Congress (Barbara Tillett and Sally McCallum) to discuss FRBR. The stated purposes of this meeting, as defined by OCLC, were to:

- Understand where we are and where we expect to go
- Identification of issues of shared interest
- Identification of next steps
- Discussion of mechanism to continue discussion.

The OCLC parts of the meeting consisted of an update of OCLC activities in the areas of development (Bob Pearson) and research (Ed O'Neill), a review of the algorithms for work-level collocation (Rich Greene) and a demonstration of OCLC's test system. Vinod Chachra, President of VTLS, then discussed VTLS's ability to "FRBR-ize" records within their system. Both companies are working on approaches to FRBR that utilize algorithms to identify data at the work and expression levels within existing bibliographic records and use these to collocate records at the work and expression levels. VTLS's system also allows catalogers to input new FRBR-based records.

At the conclusion of this meeting, the group in attendance agreed that we would begin to meet regularly at ALA meetings during the same time slot (Friday AM, 10-noon). OCLC will organize the meetings. The group also discussed the desirability of forming a FRBR discussion list (and we now know that Patrick LeBoeuf is setting up one that will be available within the next month or so). The opportunity to share ideas with others who are working in the same area was very exciting and we look forward to continuing this communication forum at ALA Midwinter in January.

After waiting for over a year, it was gratifying for members of the Working Group to finally have an opportunity to see and hear about OCLC's work and to speculate about how we might contribute to it. OCLC's timetable is not ideally matched to that of the Working Group because they have not yet begun dealing with expression-level collocation. The first (and current) phase of OCLC's project involves identifying and collocating works; the second will look at related works, and the third phase will then deal with expressions.

While we are not working on the same thing at the same time as OCLC, there still are many connections between what OCLC is now working on now and our own work on expressions. We have a common interest in the success of work-level collocation: this must be successful in order for expression-level collocation to be a viable option. Some of the algorithms that OCLC has developed so far to deal with work-level data already consider elements that will be useful in expression-level algorithms (e.g. relation elements for agents, language of work) so it may be helpful for us to comment on them now. Our work will be even more connected with OCLC's when they begin their second phase on related works and how to distinguish between examples of related works vs. expressions of the same work.

OCLC has recently shown considerable interest in sharing their work with us and getting our input. We now have copies of their most-recent work algorithms to review, and will soon have access to the OCLC test environment, which we hope to be able work with at our London meeting on September 6th. It now appears likely that our work with OCLC will be sufficient to fulfill those portions of our original Charge that call for us to develop a test database. Rather than attempting to develop our own test database, we recommend that we continue to work with OCLC, adapting to their timeline as necessary. As a result of the formation of the OCLC/FRBR group, this seems like a natural opportunity for us to work more closely with VTLS as well. Since VTLS is currently dealing with expression-level collocation, we can study and evaluate what they are doing while we work with OCLC on other issues.

There are several possible ways that all of us can benefit from these discussions with vendors at the early stage of their FRBR implementations, as follows:

2.1.1 Working Group Activities Informing System Development

Our colleagues at OCLC and VTLS very much want our input to assist them in developing algorithms that can automatically extract work- and expression-level data from catalog records. Specifically, they want guidance in when determining when something is a new work and a new expression. Some examples of the types of questions that they have asked follow:

- Is a screenplay a different work than the movie?
- Does ANY variation constitute a new expression, as seemingly defined in FRBR, or is this open to interpretation?
- How should collective uniform titles be handled?

The existing rules in AACR Chapter 21 that currently determine main entry (and that implicitly define when something is a new work) already provide guidance in this area and the rule changes that our Working Group propose will include further guidance for determining when something is a new expression. However, it remains to be seen whether or not the cataloging rules will provide sufficient guidance for system developers in performing expression-level collocation.

This suggests some related questions:

- 2.1.1.1 Should the Working Group consider the needs of system developers as well as of catalogers as we propose rules for determining when something is a new expression?
- 2.1.1.2 If the level of guidance appropriate for inclusion in the Rules is not sufficient for system developers (i.e. they want more specific guidance), should the Working Group provide additional guidance for developers based upon our experience with this issue, without actually writing this level of detail into AACR? Should this guidance take the form of a separate document of some kind?

2.1.2 System Development Activities Informing Working Group Rule Revisions Proposals

As well as providing us the opportunity to aid system developers in developing their algorithms, the OCLC FRBR meeting at ALA also suggested ways that efforts to implement FRBR for system-based collocation can inform the future revision of AACR. The developers that we met with spoke repeatedly about specific problems with records cataloged according to AACR that lacked certain elements necessary for their algorithms to correctly identify work and expression level elements. Two that were mentioned repeatedly were the lack of uniform titles and lack of relator-type information that allowed an agent to be identified as a translator, editor, etc.

This suggests another relevant task for the Working Group. In addition to proposing revisions to Chapter 25 to accommodate the construction of expression-level citations, we could also look at other areas in the rules outside of Chapter 25 that the developers identify as problematic, and then suggest rule changes in these areas. These changes would not necessarily need to be drastic changes in policy (such as eliminating the optionality of uniform titles, as some might like) but we could instead propose wording that would, for example, further explain the usefulness of uniform titles and at least suggest the potential consequences of not using them in a catalog.

- 2.1.2.1 Should the Working Group pursue possible rule changes such as these that would facilitate the work of developers to implement systems-based collocation at the expression level?

We could also take this beyond the areas of description and access now covered in AACR. Expression-level attributes such as format¹ and language must be coded accurately in a catalog record in order for system-based collocation to work.

- 2.1.2.2 Should this need be discussed somewhere within AACR? If a system cannot perform adequate post-coordinated collocation, this could (and perhaps should!) influence a cataloger's decision regarding the necessity of using uniform titles and expression-level citations.

The current work of system developers also illustrates their efforts to collocate under categories based upon expression-level data while not going so far as to fully differentiate one expression from another within these categories. One example of this might be to group all translations together.

- 2.1.2.3 Should this approach to “partial expression-level collocation” be discussed in the Rules?
- 2.1.2.4 Could a library or system vendor tailor levels of collocation using expression-level data to its own needs, such as is commonly done now with indexing specifications? For example, some libraries might want all translations of a work grouped together; another might want these translations grouped by language or even by the name of the translator. Should this be discussed within AACR?

The Working Group plans to discuss these issues and the questions above at our London meeting. We would appreciate JSC's guidance on whether or not these are areas that you would like us to continue to pursue and how far we might go in these directions. Since system-based collocation is the area where most FRBR implementation work is already being done, it would seem to be valuable for the Working Group to make as large a contribution in this area as possible.

2.2 Meeting with CONSER FRBR Working Group

At ALA, Bowen and Weiss met informally with the Chair (Everett Allgood) and other members of the newly-appointed Program for Cooperative Cataloging

¹While “format” as coded in MARC21 isn't exactly analogous to “form of expression”, it is still being used by systems as a way to begin to collocate at the expression level.

/CONSER Working Group on FRBR. Again, the opportunity to communicate directly with others who are working in a similar area provided for stimulating discussion of the topic. In particular our discussion focused upon the need for this group to look at defining a serial WORK, which is central to the charge of that group. At the time of that meeting, members of the CONSER group were discussing the advantages of defining a serial work to include all of a serial's earlier and later titles, excluding mergers and splits. However, that group has just begun its work and the exact nature of its recommendations has yet to be determined.

2.3 MARBI Discussion Paper

MARBI discussed the Discussion Paper (DP08) from the Format Variation Working Group (<http://lcweb.loc.gov/marc/marbi/2002/2002-dp08.html>) at their Saturday meeting at ALA. Prior to the meeting some comments on the D.P. were posted on the MARC list, with some comments on the Autocat list as well. It was unfortunate that the actual discussion of the paper during MARBI preceded other FRBR-related events at ALA, such as Ed O'Neill's (OCLC) presentation of his Humphry Clinker study, Barbara Tillett's Introduction to FRBR at CC:DA, and the joint CC:DA/MARBI panel presentation of FRBR by Tom Delsey, Sally McCallum, and Glenn Patton. The Working Group Chair received a couple of informal comments outside of the meeting that suggested that members of MARBI were not yet "ready" for the paper: that their understanding and appreciation of FRBR were not sufficiently developed to address the discussion questions that we submitted in DP08. It is hoped that some progress was made in this area thanks to the other presentations that followed at ALA. Nevertheless, the paper did generate some interesting discussion, some of which it is useful to repeat here.

Comments on the discussion lists ranged from thanking us for putting together the discussion in a clear, understandable manner, to speculation that perhaps FRBR and MARC are incompatible. However, this last suggestion was countered by both Rich Greene from OCLC and John Espley from VTLS, who both talked about how their companies are already striving to implement FRBR in a MARC environment. Others suggested that implementing FRBR in a MARC environment might be more trouble than it is worth. The RLG response included the following comment:

"It would be useful to see an assessment of whether FRBR displays of bibliographic records will be conceptually meaningful to end users of catalogs. The work/expression/manifestation/item model is an abstraction which may be difficult to relate to end users. The extra effort and costs of making FRBR displays will only be justifiable if those displays provide significant value to end users."

This concern fits in well with part of our current charge: to develop criteria for evaluation of a test system using expression-level collocation. While we are not currently planning to conduct usability testing of a system that uses FRBR displays, the Working Group will want to monitor research being conducted by others in this area (such as the study recently conducted by Allyson Carlyle) as we develop criteria for assessing such displays during the coming months.

While the timing of our Discussion Paper may not have been entirely appropriate for MARBI, we nevertheless feel that it was a valuable undertaking to submit this paper. It will continue to be available on the MARBI website and we hope that other papers will refer to it as discussion of implementing FRBR in the MARC environment continues. It was also a very effective way to publicize our work. The Discussion Paper was written with an audience outside of JSC in mind, and may be more appropriate for public consumption than our periodic interim reports that are targeted directly to JSC. With JSC's approval, we would like to submit a follow-up Discussion Paper to MARBI either prior to ALA Midwinter or (more likely) prior to next summer's ALA meeting in Toronto, depending upon how quickly our work progresses in the next few months.

3. Current Working Group Activities

3.1 Chapter 25 Revision

A subgroup of the Working Group has been established to develop rule revision proposals for Chapter 25 allowing for expression-level collocation. The subgroup will also work on distinguishing between uniform titles that show expression level differences and those uniform titles used for collective titles.

The group has identified the following tasks:

- Draft rules for determining new expressions

[Examples to be provided]

- Draft guidelines for adding expression-level elements to uniform titles to create an expression-level citation

Rule 25.5 Additions has been selected as the appropriate place.

Existing wording in rules 25.5A1-25.5B1 to be redrafted.

New rules to be added.

Appropriate examples provided.

- Suggest how the rules might be reordered or re-organised to separate uniform titles presenting expression level citations from uniform titles used for collective titles

Produce a new outline of Chapter 25
Suggest section heading changes

- Propose a general rule for the selection of elements in an expression level heading

25.5E6 Selection of citation elements
Provide examples

At present the subgroup envisages the revised structure of Rule 25.5 to be something like the following:

25.5	ADDITIONS	
25.5A	Scope	
25.5B	Work-level heading	
25.5B1	Conflict resolution	
25.5C	Expression-level heading	
25.5C1	Selection of citation elements	
25.5C2	Conflict resolution	
25.5C2.2	Differences in form of expression	
25.5C2.3	Differences in title proper	
25.5C2.4	Differences in persons or bodies responsible	

However, further work on drafting revisions may result in variations to the above.

[submitted by Peter Haddad]

3.2 Plans for London Meeting

As of this writing in early August, plans for the upcoming London meeting at the British Library on September 6th are still being developed. In attendance will be all of the U.S. members of the Group and most of the members from the U.K: Jennifer Bowen, Matthew Beacom, Paul Weiss, Antony Gordon, and Sue Lambert. Paul Weiss will be receiving funding to attend from his own institution (thanks to Brian Schottlaender!). Stuart Hunt, the Working Group member from OCLC Europe, is unable to attend because of a scheduling conflict, and Janet Lees (also of OCLC Europe, and originally a member of the Working Group) has been invited to attend in his place or to send another member of her staff to the meeting. We are still awaiting her reply. The institutions represented at the OCLC FRBR meeting (OCLC, VTLS, LC) have also been invited to send representatives if they happen to be in the London area. We may also invite other colleagues in the London area to join us for portions of the meeting as

appropriate. Matthew Beacom will provide JSC with a verbal summary of this meeting at the York JSC meeting, as a supplement to this report.

The agenda for the London meeting will focus upon those areas of our charge other than the actual revision of Chapter 25, as we leave most of that activity to the group that will not be attending the meeting.

In London we will discuss topics including the following:

- An update on various recent FRBR-related activities of other groups, etc. institutions: IFLA FRBR papers, writings by LeBoeuf, Carlyle; Italian responses to FRBR, etc.
- Discussion/demonstration of the BL's FRBR-based CADENSA system (Ag Gordon)
- VTLS's implementation of FRBR: we expect to have access to VTLS's current prototype at the meeting.
- OCLC's "FISH" (FRBR Interface System) - We hope to have access to the OCLC test environment by the meeting date so that we can look at the system itself and not just the written documentation.
- Criteria for evaluating FRBR-based systems or interfaces such as the three above
- Collocation by expression-level elements (post-coordinated) vs. pre-coordinated citations to identify expressions: what are the benefits and drawbacks of both? How could the two approaches work together?
- The Working Group's potential role in the development of post-coordinated or system-based approaches to expression-level collocation (as discussed previously in this report).
- Should the Rules take into account coded expression-level attributes that currently aren't discussed as such? If so, how?
- Implications for Chapter 25 of these discussion points
- Communication with other groups: who do we need to communicate with, and how? Should we submit another MARBI paper this Midwinter? etc.

We are looking forward to what we hope will be a stimulating discussion on September 6th that will help to energize the next phase of our work.