

## MARC DISCUSSION PAPER NO. 2023-\_\_\_\_\_

**HARMFUL LANGUAGE STATEMENT:** This discussion paper contains historical language and content that is offensive or harmful, for example, language used to refer to racial, ethnic and cultural groups.

**DATE:** MM/DD/YY

**REVISED:**

**NAME:** Adding Subfield \$i to Field 245 in the MARC 21 Bibliographic Format

**SOURCE:** Rare Book and Manuscripts Section of ACRL (Bibliographic Standards Committee)

**SUMMARY:** This paper examines the possibility of adding subfield \$i to field 245 (Title Statement) to provide a display text that identifies the source of the title, especially when that title contains harmful language. The subfield \$i (Display Text) is already available in field 246 (Varying Form of Title). The use of this subfield would be optional and does not need to be applied retrospectively.

**KEYWORDS:** Field 245 (BD); Display text in Title Statement (BD); Source of Title (BD); Type of Title (BD); Subfield \$i, in Field 245 (BD); Subfield \$i, in Field 246 (BD)

**RELATED:** [2014-01](#)

**STATUS/COMMENTS:**

MM/DD/YY – Made available to the MARC community for discussion.

---

## Discussion Paper No. 2022-DP\_\_ : Adding Subfield \$i to Field 245

### 1. BACKGROUND

#### Current Definition of Field 245

Field 245 is currently defined, in part, in the MARC 21 Bibliographic Format as follows:

245 - Title Statement (NR)

First Indicator	Second Indicator
<i>Title added entry</i>	<i>Nonfiling characters</i>
0 - No added entry	0 - No nonfiling characters
1 - Added entry	1-9 - Number of nonfiling characters

#### Subfield Codes

- \$a - Title (NR)
- \$b - Remainder of title (NR)
- \$c - Statement of responsibility, etc. (NR)
- \$f - Inclusive dates (NR)
- \$g - Bulk dates (NR)
- \$h - Medium (NR)
- \$k - Form (R)
- \$n - Number of part/section of a work (R)
- \$p - Name of part/section of a work (R)
- \$s - Version (NR)
- \$6 - Linkage (NR)
- \$7 - Data provenance (R)
- \$8 - Field link and sequence number (R)

#### FIELD DEFINITION AND SCOPE

Title and statement of responsibility area of the bibliographic description of a work.

Title Statement field consists of the title proper and may also contain the general material designation (medium), remainder of title, other title information, the remainder of the title page transcription, and statement(s) of responsibility. The title proper includes the short title and alternative title, the numerical designation of a part/section and the name of a part/section. ...

---

### 2. DISCUSSION

Researchers are questioning libraries about the source of title information. This is especially true in cases where the title source is not readily apparent to researchers. Furthermore, librarians and archivists increasingly recognize that language in titles can harm or offend the

users of library catalogs. The addition of a \$i (Display text) to field 245 (Title Statement) can help reduce this unintentional harm by identifying the source for published titles that contain culturally insensitive language. A display text can contextualize the racist, homophobic, ableist, and similar words that appear in the titles of many types of materials, including books, cartoons, maps, moving images, photographs, posters, and sheet music.

In the past, users were expected to know that an unbracketed title was transcribed from printed words provided by the creator or publisher of the resource being described. This no longer holds true. Many of our legacy collections contain words we would consider to be harmful or offensive. Additionally, many of these collections include photographs, sculptures, and other unique formats where the title is not inherently manifest to the user.

Today, guidelines for inclusive description recommend making the source of racist language explicit. Notably, the Society of American Archivists recently adopted as a formal standard *Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia: Anti-Racist Description Sources* (2019). This guideline advises, “Consider your audience and the potential for harm when making decisions about whether to preserve problematic creator-supplied language. In most cases, preserve but contextualize creator-sourced original description when racism is an important context for understanding records.” (page 8, [https://archivesforblacklives.files.wordpress.com/2019/10/ardr\\_final.pdf](https://archivesforblacklives.files.wordpress.com/2019/10/ardr_final.pdf))

The current provisions for identifying the source of a title are in fields 500 (General Note) and 588 (Source of Description, etc., Note). These note fields are not directly connected to field 245 (Title Statement) and are hard for catalog users to notice among other notes. Furthermore, depending on the display layer a researcher would need to click on the full catalog record to learn where the source of the title was taken. The proposed subfield (\$i) would allow title metadata to be encoded, enabling visual proximity in a display layer.

Retaining the original title is an important part of the context of the work, because it represents the original presentation, purpose, and impact. Moving away from the original title can give the appearance of trying to sanitize history. Using the published title is also important for helping users locate information about a work in other sources.

The scope of this subfield can also be broader than the needs of inclusive description. For untitled works, the titles devised by catalogers could use \$i to clarify that the bracketed title was created by library or archives staff. Libraries could also optionally use this subfield to identify the source of all titles, including non-offensive titles.

### **Uses for Subfield \$i in MARC Bibliographic Field 245**

1. The \$i in field 245 would have a role similar to the use of the \$i “Display text” in [field 246 Varying Form of Title](#) and would precede subfield \$a at the beginning of the field. In field 246 Varying Form of Title, the role of \$i is available only for alternate titles and has a limited

choice of display texts. In field 245, the \$i applies to what might be the only title for the work.

2. Display texts, such as “Title provided by original publisher:” and “Title transcribed from item:” could help catalog users recognize the source and context of a title.
3. The visual resources and museum communities have long provided for metadata about the source of a title. [Cataloging Cultural Objects](#) (2006) has a specific element called “Title Type” in Section 1.2.2.3 (page 69). The recommended controlled vocabulary for this element suggests the following terms, among others: owner’s title, repository title, inscribed title, creator’s title, descriptive title, constructed title, published title, and collective title.
4. [Descriptive Cataloging for Rare Materials: Graphic \(DCRMG\)](#) requires a source of title note because the titles of visual materials are so difficult for users to recognize as transcribed vs. devised by staff or supplied from another source. Section 7B3.1 (page 127), “Always make a note on the source of the title proper.”

Title from item  
Title from Pennington  
Title from artist's pencil note on back  
Title engraved below image  
Title devised by library staff

5. [Descriptive Cataloging for Rare Materials: Manuscripts](#) also requires a note for the source of formal titles and transcribed titles. 1C1.2. Transcription. Transcription is required only for formal titles that appear on the title page, colophon, or caption (for instances when transcription is not appropriate, see 1C1.2.1). Use judgment as to whether to transcribe or paraphrase titles from other sources. When transcribing the title, do so exactly as to wording, order, and spelling, but not necessarily as to punctuation or capitalization. Make a note when the title is transcribed.

### 3. PROPOSED CHANGES

*[Note: proposed changes to current definitions are in bracketed italics.]*

In field 245 (Title Statement) of the MARC 21 Bibliographic Format, add and define the following new subfield:

#### ***\$i - Display text***

*Optional text to be displayed to identify the source of the title. Subfield \$i precedes subfield \$a at the beginning of the field.*

### 4. EXAMPLES

#### **4.1 Photographs**

245 00 \$i Title transcribed from item: \$a See <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2021630944/>

245 10 \$i Title provided by publisher in 1918: \$a See <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2016826637/>

245 00 \$i Title provided by newspaper in 1942: \$a See <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2018648096/>

#### **4.2 Monographs**

245 10 \$i Transcribed title: \$a See <https://worldcat.org/en/title/26688132>

245 10 \$i Title transcribed from item: \$a See <https://archive.org/details/b21297563>

#### **4.3 Sheet Music**

245 12 \$i Title from cover: \$a See <https://www.loc.gov/item/2016761411/>

#### **4.4 Cartographic materials**

245 10 \$i Title from item: \$a See <https://worldcat.org/en/title/1014028387>

#### **4.5. Ephemeral materials**

245 10 \$i Title from item: \$a See <https://worldcat.org/en/title/1014028387>

### **5. BIBFRAME DISCUSSION**

No special provisions anticipated.

### **6. QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION**

6.1. Have we demonstrated that there is sufficient need for defining subfield \$i for the 245 field, even though RDA 2.2.4 advises that a source of title indication is not necessary?

RDA 2.2.4: "Do not indicate that the information was taken from a source outside the manifestation itself if the manifestation is of a type that does not normally carry identifying information (e.g., a photograph, a naturally occurring object, a collection)." [Previous RDA text: "Exception: when cataloging a resource that doesn't typically have bibliographic information on the resource (e.g., photograph, sculpture), you do not need the square brackets."]

6.2. Are there other potential issues that need to be taken into account?

6.3. How will the guidance already available in descriptive cataloging manuals be applicable? For example, the rare book cataloging guideline DCRM(B) does not recommend a source of title not for transcribed titles.

6.4. How will \$i be displayed? Ideally, adjacent to the title statement.

6.5. How broad a concern is harmful language among libraries?

See [List of statements on bias in library and archives description](#).

6.6. Other questions?