

ALCTS

Association for Library Collections & Technical Services

Committee on Cataloging: Description & Access

Task Force on Rule 0.24

Report to CC:DA, 1999 Annual (continued)

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VI. Options to Deal with Multiple Characteristics

Option 1 to deal with multiple characteristics. Simply modify the language of 0.24, leaving the current chapters in AACR2R intact.

The specific recommendation is: Retain rule 0.24 and modify its language along the lines suggested below. Leave the current chapters 1-11 of AACR2 in the order they now are and with their texts essentially intact. Expand existing chapters (or write additional chapters) as necessary to provide for electronic resources, digitized and microform reproductions and originals. For electronic resources indicate that when a bibliographic item is remotely accessed on a computer, the description can be based on the observed or otherwise known characteristics of the item. Add, however it is deemed best, a discussion of integrating resources.

Proposed text for rule 0.24 to support option 1 to deal with multiple characteristics:

It is a central principle of the use of part I that description should be based first on one of three forms of issuance: monograph, serial, or integrating entity, and subsequently on the other chapters in part I (chapters 2-11) which collectively represent classes of materials which share certain common characteristics. After form of issuance has been determined, choose the chapter (class of materials) most applicable in describing the item and in determining the chief source of information as necessary to make it clear to the user of the bibliographic record what the item looks like physically and what it contains. For items made up of several types of material, see 1.10. For items with multiple characteristics, cataloging agencies or user groups may determine what characteristics should receive preferential consideration in the descriptive sequence.

In addition, it is recommended that the following definitions be added to the glossary:

Class of materials. A class of materials constitutes any of several bibliographic groups having similar characteristics which differentiate one group of materials from another. These characteristics require members of these groups to be catalogued with attention to their unique shared characteristics. The major classes are: textual materials (books, pamphlets and printed sheets and the texts of serials); cartographic materials; manuscripts; music; sound recordings; motion pictures and videorecordings; graphic materials; electronic resources; three dimensional artefacts and realia; and microforms.

Bibliographic item. A bibliographic item forms the basis for a bibliographic description. A bibliographic item may be perceived directly through either sight, sound, or touch, or a combination thereof.

Integrating entity. An integrating entity is a bibliographic item issued with the potential for seamless integration of new data into the content (e.g., looseleaf services, online databases and some Web sites).

Pro's: Option 1 would require less change to the rules than Option 2.

Option 1 may correspond more closely than Option 2 to the way cataloguing departments are organized.

Option 1 may correspond more closely than Option 2 to the training needs of departments that train specialized cataloguers, such as music cataloguers or serials cataloguers.

Con's: Does not meet Goal 1, clarity for cataloguers in deciding how to formulate a description for an item with multiple characteristics, as well as Option 2 does.

Does not meet Goal 5, a code that is expandable to cover new materials, as well as Option 2 does.

Does not meet Goal 6, clear decision-making for cataloguers cataloguing an item with multiple characteristics when a particular rule for one aspect of the item conflicts with the same rule for another aspect of the item, as well as Option 2 does.

Option 2 to deal with multiple characteristics. Reorganize the current chapters 1-13 such that they are in order by the areas of the description, with a chapter on Area 1, a chapter on Area 2, etc., as recommended in the Delsey report, Part I. Within each chapter, include special rules to deal with conditions arising out of:

- a. form of issuance (seriality vs. one-time publication vs. integrating/dynamic updating)
- b. published vs. unpublished
- c. fundamental content (textual/alpha-numeric content, textual/alpha-numeric sound, musical notation, musical sound, other sound, moving image content, graphic content, spatial/cartographic/geographic content, 3-dimensional content/artefact/object, computer program, mixed)

- d. 'type of carrier' or physical format, i.e. the physical medium onto which the fundamental content has been put in order to distribute it
- e. method of management (library vs. archival/collection level records based on provenance)
- f. reproduction (same physical format/different physical format; simultaneously released/successively released such that there is an "original")

Note that a change in the organization of chapters in AACR2R would also require revision of rule 0.23, as well as slight revision to rules 0.25 and 0.26 to remove references to chapters.

Proposed text for rule 0.24 to support option 2 to deal with multiple characteristics:

It is important to bring out *all* aspects of the item being described, including its content, its carrier, its form of issuance, its relationship to other manifestations of the same edition/expression of the same work, and whether it is published or unpublished. In any given area of the description, all relevant aspects should be described, with no one relevant aspect taking precedence over any other. When descriptive rules governing a particular ISBD area address more than one aspect of an item and differ or seem to be in conflict as a result, the rules themselves will provide guidance on how to combine information about these aspects. General rules are followed by specific rules for the aspects of an item, so as a rule of thumb, the cataloguer should follow the more specific rules applying to the item being catalogued, whenever they differ from the general rules.

Experiments in reorganization

In [Appendix B](#) of this document, you will find Martha Yee's attempt to demonstrate what a reorganization of AACR2R by ISBD area might look like; basically, she brought together all of the current rules concerning Area 1 and put them in one place. At the following web site, you will find John Attig's experiment with reorganizing Area 2.

<http://www.libraries.psu.edu/tas/jca/ccda/area2.html>

And finally, we would like to point out that Michael Gorman's *Concise AACR2* (The concise AACR2, 1988 revision / prepared by Michael Gorman. Chicago: ALA, 1989) is organized by ISBD area, rather than by "class of material".

We discussed the fact that neither option 1 nor option 2 can rid us of the problem of potential conflicts in rules for items with multiple characteristics. Such conflicts will occur and will have to be resolved in either case. Supporters of Option 2 just feel that the reorganization option gives us greater flexibility to resolve such conflicts where they occur, and in such a way as to allow the inclusion of information about all relevant aspects of the item in the description, without the rigidity of a table of precedence imposed from above.

We did identify some specific conflicts in rules that will occur with multiple-characteristic items, and that will demand resolution under either option. These include:

1. *Source of title.* Resolution of such conflict is likely to require negotiation among form of issuance aspects (seriality), carrier aspects (where is the title usually found on this type of carrier?) and content aspects (e.g. special rules for music). Jean Hirons' report already points the way to the types of solutions that could be tried in her recommendation 2-4, in which different chief sources are proposed for electronic journals (A□entire source), databases and web sites (B□title screen, home page, main menu or other prominent page), direct access electronic resources (C□eye-readable information on the disc label), and loose-leaf publications (D□title page or title page substitute).
2. *GMD's* (covered in a special section below).
3. *Area 2.* Edition statements would have to be transcribed differently depending on whether or not an item is determined to be a serial or not (i.e. based on form of issuance).
4. *Area 3.* This has been addressed already by AACR2R in rule 0.25, which allows you to add as many as apply.
5. *Area 5.* This area is likely to be carrier-dominated, but content is described here as well (e.g. playing time (which, by the way, is connected with edition/expression), and nature of color and sound for a motion picture). If description of content aspects could be divorced from particular carriers, it might be possible to create much more flexible rules, such that anything, regardless of carrier, that had a playing time could have the playing time added, anything that had color and/or stereo. sound could have the color and/or stereo. sound described, etc.

It is likely, however, that conflicts will have to be adjudicated over time as the reorganized rules are applied to more and more different types of material and conflicts arise.

Pro's: One could argue that Option 2 is based on a facet analysis of AACR2R's chapters, in an attempt to correct the cross-classification that is evident when one tries to catalogue a digitized manuscript map.

This approach could allow the cataloguer the freedom to describe all aspects of an item effectively, including its content, its carrier, and its publication type. This should aid in achieving Goal 1, clarity for cataloguers in deciding how to formulate a description for an item with multiple characteristics, and Goal 6, clear decision-making for cataloguers cataloguing an item with multiple characteristics when a particular rule for one aspect of an item conflicts with the same rule for another aspect of the item. [Note 1]

It could also allow greater flexibility in fashioning descriptions for new types of content and/or carrier that might appear on the bibliographic horizon in the future. This should aid in achieving Goal 5, a code that is expandable to cover new materials. (The scope notes of the current content and carrier-based chapters of AACR2R can form a barrier that prevents the cataloguer of new media from using all relevant descriptive rules.) [Note 2]

Option 2 releases cataloguers from the obligation to designate one aspect primary over the others. [Note 3] Option 2 does not apply one inflexible rule, e.g., form of issuance always takes precedence over content or carrier, or content always takes precedence over carrier or vice versa; instead, it would be possible to resolve conflicts differently in different areas of the description, allowing the inclusion of all relevant descriptive elements, instead of forcing the use of one relevant data element over another. This should aid in achieving Goal 1, clarity for cataloguers in deciding how to formulate a description for an item with multiple characteristics, and Goal 6, clear decision-making for cataloguers cataloguing an item with multiple characteristics when a particular rule for one aspect of an item conflicts with the same rule for another aspect of the item. Presumably, this could also result in a more useful description for the public.

Option 2 could result in greater consistency among cataloguers with many different types of expertise cataloguing materials with many types of carrier, content and publication type.

Option 2 is similar to format integration, and thus continues a trend toward a more logical approach to content and carrier, as well as to new formats. The principle could simply be: if the rule is relevant to the item you are cataloguing, it is permissible to use the rule. In other words, the structure and scoping of the chapters would no longer prevent the use of relevant rules.

[Appendix D](#), a quick study of where the rules in any given ISBD area differ based on class of material in current AACR2R, reveals that, depending on the area of description you examine, each different aspect of a given item (its content, or its carrier, or its publication type) is sometimes given precedence in the rules for its description. This would seem to indicate a fairly complex relationship among these three aspects of any given item, which argues against the possibility of any simple rules of precedence being possible in rule 0.24. Instead, reorganization would allow these complex relationships to be stated in the rules themselves, with content sometimes given precedence, carrier sometimes, and form of issuance sometimes.

It is possible that reorganization of the rules could result in the identification of general descriptive rules that have not yet been identified as general, and have been masquerading as special rules; this could improve the overall logic of the code, as well as making it more extensible to new media.

Con's: Option 2 may not correspond to the way all cataloguing departments are organized.

Option 2 may not correspond to the training needs of departments that train specialized cataloguers, such as music cataloguers, media cataloguers or serials cataloguers. It might be difficult to train a music, media or serials cataloguer using rules organized by ISBD area.

The descriptive rules might become complicated, as each area chapter examines and treats each medium for variation based on its physical nature, form of issuance, content, and other characteristics.

Note 1: We note, however, that there is no escaping the need to deal with such conflicts; this organization simply provides a more efficient way to discover them and deal with them in the rules.

Note 2: Note that when a special rule is written for a particular type of carrier, a particular type of content, or a particular publication type, care should be taken to write scope notes for the rule that are as principled and flexible as possible, to prevent inadvertent exclusion of new types of content, carrier or publication type in the future.

Note 3: Note that MARC 21 still requires the cataloger to designate one aspect as primary, in that a principal material type must be chosen for coding purposes, leader 6 and 7 being linked to the kind of 008 field that is used (see [Appendix G](#)); due to format integration, however, the descriptive part of the record can now describe all aspects of an item.

Option 3 to deal with multiple characteristics. Reverse the order of AACR2R chapters 1-13, with precedence being given to chapters that occur first in order, placing content chapters ahead of carrier or form of issuance chapters.

Proposed order of chapters:

1. Textual Materials (currently chapters 2, Books, Pamphlets and Printed Sheets, and 4, Manuscripts (Including Manuscript Collections))
2. Cartographic Materials (currently chapter 3)

3. Motion Pictures and Videorecordings (currently chapter 7)
4. Graphic Materials (currently chapter 8)
5. Three-Dimensional Artefacts and Realia (currently chapter 10)
6. Music (currently chapter 5)
7. Sound Recordings (currently chapter 6)
8. Microforms (currently chapter 11)
9. Computer Files (currently chapter 9)
10. Serials (currently chapter 12)

Note that a change in the organization of chapters in AACR2R would also require revision of rule 0.23, as well as slight revision to rules 0.25 and 0.26 to correct references to chapters.

Proposed text for rule 0.24 to support option 3 to deal with multiple characteristics:

It is a cardinal principle of the use of part I that the description of [an item] should be based in the first instance on the chapter dealing with the class of materials to which that item belongs. [. . .]

There will be need in many instances to consult [several chapters in order to deal with all aspects of the item, including its content, its carrier and its publication type When rules in several chapters conflict, give precedence to the chapter that occurs first in order.]

(Non-bracketed text is already present in AACR2R.)

Pro's: Option 3 would require less change in the rules than Option 2.

Option 3 may correspond more closely than Option 2 to the way some cataloguing departments are organized.

Option 3 may correspond more closely than Option 2 to the training needs of departments that train specialized cataloguers, such as music cataloguers or serials cataloguers.

Con's: Does not meet Goal 1, clarity for cataloguers in deciding how to formulate a description for an item with multiple characteristics, as well as Option 2 does.

Does not meet Goal 5, a code that is expandable to cover new materials, as well as Option 2 does.

Does not meet Goal 6, clear decision-making for cataloguers cataloguing an item with multiple characteristics when a particular rule for one aspect of the item conflicts with the same rule for another aspect of the item, as well as Option 2 does.

Option 4 to deal with multiple characteristics. Use a phased approach, consisting of Option 1 in the short term, to allow fairly immediate guidance for the cataloguing of electronic serials and other electronic resources, and Option 2 in the long term, moving eventually to a code that is organized by ISBD area.

Pro's: This could allow us to have the best of both worlds — immediate relief for cataloguers who need to know NOW how to catalogue electronic resources, especially electronic serials, and eventual movement toward a more logically organized code that is easier for cataloguers to use for the cataloguing of items with multiple characteristics. (Also see all of the pro's and con's listed under Options 1 and 2 above.)

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