

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA
From: Christine Frodl, DNB Representative
Subject: Discussion paper: First issue v. latest (current) issue

1. Background

By request of the German-speaking library community, represented by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek (DNB), the Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA (JSC) discussed the topic „First issue v. latest issue“ during their meeting in Chicago, 5 – 11 November 2012. The result was a JSC Announcement, posted on 14 November 2012 on the RDA-L mailing list and also published on the JSC website, in which DNB was invited to write a discussion paper on that topic. The scope of this task was also described in this announcement:

“Recent discussions on RDA-L have high-lighted that in RDA the description of resources issued in more than one part is based on the earliest issued or lowest numbered part (2.1.2.3). JSC acknowledges that this is not a FRBR requirement and creates a barrier to the adoption of RDA. JSC notes that different approaches have different strengths and weaknesses: the earliest entry approach is considered to be more economical; but the latest entry approach emphasizes the convenience of the user.

JSC takes the view that data created under RDA should be sufficiently flexible to support any approach, without compromising the capability to control and link descriptions of serial resources.

JSC invites Deutsche Nationalbibliothek (DNB) to prepare a discussion paper for development of RDA to support a more flexible approach, while sustaining the process of harmonization with ISSN Network and ISBD.

The discussion paper should consider changes to RDA guidelines and instructions; evaluate probable impacts, including the effect on bibliographic control and linking of serial descriptions. Stakeholders should be consulted and their views clearly represented.

JSC recognises that this is a substantial task, which will take some time to realise. In the interim, agencies following the latest entry technique should continue to do so and may encode their records as RDA.”¹

2. Members of the task force and working method

Members of the discussion paper task force are mainly members of the Office for Library Standards, the “Working group on continuing resources” of the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek (DNB) and the Zeitschriftendatenbank (ZDB). Furthermore the group was supported by Christine Frodl (JSC, DNB Representative), Prof. Heidrun Wiesenmüller (Stuttgart Media University, Faculty of Information and Communication), representatives of the library service centers in the German-speaking countries, members of the German expert group on descriptive cataloguing and the National ISSN Centre of Germany. The group met several times via teleconferences and worked collaboratively on this paper in a wiki environment, which was a cooperative and challenging task. Stakeholders have been consulted on their view on the topic of this discussion paper. We would like to thank CONSER, PCC and the Library of Congress, the ISBD Review Group, the ISSN Review Group, OCLC and the Electronic Journals Library (EZB) for sharing their views. Their expert opinions can be found in chapter 7 of this discussion paper. They also gave some valuable recommendations for improving the wording of the suggested changes. These have been included under 5.2. We would also like to thank Les Hawkins for his contribution under 4.1 of this paper. The discussion paper has been updated to reflect the current RDA text as of July 2013.

¹ Posted on behalf of JSC to the RDA-L mailing list by Alan Danskin, 14 November 2012, see also: <http://www.rda-jsc.org/firstissue.html>.

The discussion paper focuses on serials only but the task force is aware of the fact that multipart monographs should also belong to the scope of the paper. This topic could be subject of a follow-up paper.

3. Introduction

Serials are subject to changes during their lifetime, e.g. in title proper, parallel title proper, other title information, place of publication, or publisher's name. The German-language cataloguer's community applies basically the same rules (based on the ISBD) to determine upon „major and minor changes“ as the Anglo-American cataloguing community. In case of a „major change“ in the title proper, a new description is made. But there also are „minor changes“ in the title proper, which do not require a new description, such as a spelling variant in the title proper (e.g. „Deutsche Nationalbibliografie“ and „Deutsche Nationalbibliographie“) or a change of the publisher's name. For handling cases like these, there are two different strategies:

1. According to AACR2/RDA, the ISBD as well as the ISSN regulations², the bibliographic description is based on the „first issue“. Therefore, the main categories of a record represent the earliest state of the title proper, other title information, the statement(s) of responsibility, place(s) of publication, or publisher's name(s). References to later changes, e.g. a more recent title proper, are made in the form of notes.
2. According to the RAK/ZETA³ instructions, which are used to record data for the Serials Union Catalog for Germany and Austria (ZDB), the bibliographic description is based on the most recent state of affairs („latest issue“). If there is a change of information in the main categories, these are being updated in order to reflect the current state of affairs. Information on earlier states, which is deemed important, is recorded in indexed and searchable note fields.

² ISSN Manual, June 2012, 2.4.1 Minor changes in title proper of continuing resources

³ RAK = Regeln für die alphabetische Katalogisierung in wissenschaftlichen Bibliotheken

ZETA = Format und Konventionen für die Zeitschriften-Titelaufnahme in der Zeitschriftendatenbank (ZDB)

Note that according to RDA, serials and integrating resources are treated differently: The former follow the principle of „first issue“ (RDA 2.3.2.12.2), whereas the latter follow the principle of „current iteration“ (RDA 2.3.2.12.3), which corresponds to “latest issue”. In contrast, both are treated identically in the Serials Union Catalog (ZDB), according to the principle of “latest issue” or “current iteration”, respectively.

4. Context

4.1 Anglo-American library networks and systems

For our German-speaking working group it was important to understand the wider context. Therefore we asked for descriptions of Anglo-American library networks and systems with regard to the topic of this discussion paper. We are grateful to have received the following description from Les Hawkins (CONSER):

“The CONSER Program began with a focus on retrospective conversion in the 1970s. Since then CONSER has evolved into the serials cataloging component of the Program for Cooperative Cataloging. It is a cooperative effort of serial cataloging experts from many different institutions to maintain high quality bibliographic records for serials. Members include the national libraries of the US and Canada (and their respective ISSN centers), the National Library of Wales, university, government, research, special, public libraries, and commercial affiliate members. CONSER members cooperatively contribute and maintain records for serials and integrating resources using OCLC WorldCat as a shared interface. The CONSER file of records distributed by the Library of Congress Cataloging Distribution Service contains over a million records and is used by library and commercial subscribers to maintain databases for serials directories, e-resources access and management systems, and MARC 21 record subscription services.

Successive record cataloging instructions have been used since the early years of CONSER and have been embodied in the cataloging instructions shared by CONSER program members. Although some records in the CONSER database are based on earlier codes most CONSER records are based on AACR2 and increasingly RDA. Successive record cataloging instructions in AACR2 and RDA define benchmarks for major changes in the elements that identify a serial

work: title proper and bodies or persons considered to be creators of the resource. When an issue of a serial reflects changes considered to be major, a new description is created. The two descriptions representing former and later titles are linked with MARC 21 linking entry fields that specifically name the relationships.

The initial description of a serial resource is based on the chronologically earliest or lowest numbered issue of a serial according to AACR2 and RDA instructions. Minor changes in title are added to the description using access points if appropriate and an indication of the issues to which a change pertains.

For example the MARC 21 246 field for variant title provides an access point for minor title changes and other variant titles in \$a and an indication of the coverage in subfields \$i and/or \$f in that field:

245 00 Bulletin of atomic scientists.

246 1# \$i At head of title: \$a Science and public affairs \$f Jan. 1970-Apr. 1974

Minor changes in the name of a creator body or person are reflected in the LC/NACO name authority record for the body or person.

Major and minor title change rules, successive record practices and the linkages between earlier and later titles have been harmonized with the practices in ISBD (CR), the ISSN guidelines of the ISSN Network, and instructions in AACR2/RDA. The harmonization of practice facilitates sharing of records created according to these standards.”

4.2 German and Austrian library networks and systems

4.2.1 Technical and organizational framework

Since its foundation in the year 1983, the objectives of the Consortium of Library Networks⁴ have been to cooperate in the introduction and maintenance of innovative services as well as hardware and software concepts across the networks. The members reach agreements on common standards for data communication and coordinate the uniform application of rules and standards for cooperative cataloguing, interlibrary loan and data exchange. The members of the consortium include centres of the various library networks in Germany, Austria and the German-speaking Switzerland, the German National Library and the Serials Union Catalogue for Germany and Austria (ZDB).

The Serials Union Catalog for Germany and Austria (ZDB) is the cooperatively maintained national library network for serials and integrating resources. The ZDB comprises materials from all countries and in all languages, in printed, electronic or any other form. It contains 1.6 million bibliographic records and 12 million holdings information records of 4.300 German and Austrian libraries. As the cooperatively maintained national library network for serials, the ZDB together with its partner Deutsche Nationalbibliothek (DNB) supplies centrally managed data and services for regional library networks and individual libraries.

The bibliographic and holdings information records held in the ZDB are regularly synchronized with the local catalogs of the participating libraries via the regional networks. Identical versions of the bibliographic record are reproduced for local library systems by automatic updating processes. If information is changed on the bibliographic level, the changed record will be distributed to all other participant libraries holding or licensing the title.

4.2.2 Reasons for following the principle of “latest issue” in German and Austrian catalogs

In the cataloging tradition of Germany and Austria, the principle of “latest issue” has been favored for two main reasons:

⁴ <http://www.ag-verbund.de/eng>

1. The first reason is the convenience of the user. It is assumed that for the vast majority of the users, the most current information is also the most important one, and therefore should be shown prominently in the description (i.e. in the main categories and not in note fields). Users looking for current issues of a journal might get confused if the description presents the title in an old fashioned spelling or shows a former publisher. They might also find it odd if the catalog wasn't in agreement with their real life experience of the periodical in question. Regular readers of a journal will be most familiar with its current presentation, even if they also consult older issues occasionally. In the case of an e-journal, the website will usually only present the current state of affairs, even if a user looks for an older issue (see also 4.3). So, we feel that presentation systems (e.g. the display in a catalog) should follow the principle of "latest issue". Giving the current state of affairs prominently does not only match users' expectations. It also helps them to perform FRBR's generic user task of "using the data retrieved to identify an entity".⁵
2. The second reason is that current title information is also needed for acquisition purposes. The bibliographic records from the ZDB are also distributed to the acquisition systems of the participating libraries. Up-to-date information is needed for e.g. pre-order searching, ordering, negotiations, etc., and should therefore be displayed prominently. Also, not all acquisition systems can handle the fullness of the bibliographic records including notes. Therefore, giving the current state of affairs only in notes would lead to serious difficulties in many libraries.

4.3 E-Journals

The "first issue" vs. "latest issue" approach should also be considered in the light of recent developments in the area of e-journals. As is well known, some journals judged to be serials in the print world have a digital counterpart which has to be cataloged as an integrating resource. In this case, according to the Anglo-American cataloging tradition, the print version must be treated according to "first issue" and the online version according to "current iteration". This leads to a

⁵ see Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records. Final Report. München, 1998, p. 8

heterogeneous situation for these cases. A possible solution would be to broaden the scope of the “current iteration/latest issue” approach to include print serials. Then both kinds of manifestations would be treated alike.

However, there may even be a more serious problem with respect to electronic journals with separate issues. These are still to adhere to the principle of “first issue” according to AACR2 and RDA. This approach works well when complete issues are presented as e.g. PDF documents, each including a title page. But the majority of e-journals are no longer presented like this. Very often, there is only a navigation help showing the tables of contents of the various issues, leading directly to the individual articles. In these cases, there are no more title pages of the separate issues to be viewed, and only rarely a substitute (such as a running title on a PDF article) can be found. Typically, the journal’s website will only present the most current title information. In those cases, it is simply not possible to catalog the “first issue” in retrospect, and it is also not satisfying to have a description which is based on something which no longer exists. According to LCRI 12.0B1, in such cases the description is to be based on the current presentation, i.e. it follows the principle of “latest issue”.⁶ It must be assumed that more and more e-journals will fall under this category in the near future. This poses the question whether the principle of “first issue” is still practicable with e-journals.

4.4 Theoretical foundation and internal consistency of RDA

With respect to the question of “first” vs. “latest” issue as the basis for the bibliographic description, there is also a number of concerns about the internal consistency of RDA and its adherence to its own principles as stated in chapter 0.

0.4.1 RDA states: “The IFLA Statement of International Cataloguing Principles informs the cataloguing principles used throughout RDA.”

⁶ Cf. LCRI 12.0.B: „If an electronic serial is reformatted so that all evidence of the earlier title (or earlier corporate body under which the serial is entered) is removed, base the description on the current presentation. Give a note that explains the change in the serial. Give notes and added entries for the earlier title proper and/or corporate body; give notes about earlier publishers, etc., if considered to be important. Update the existing record if there is one; otherwise, make a new record that covers the earlier and current presentations.”

Convenience of the user resp. Responsiveness to user needs

The first general principle of the IFLA statement (2.1) is the “convenience of the user”:

“Decisions taken in the making of descriptions and controlled forms of names for access should be made with the user in mind.”⁷ This guiding principle appears under the objectives governing RDA as “Responsiveness to user needs” (RDA 0.4.2.1). As has already been explained in 4.2.2., the prominent display of the current title information seems to be the best way of responding to user needs. This is also true for the FRBR user tasks, which appear as functional objectives and principles in RDA 1.2. Although users may still be able to **find** a serial described according to “first issue”, if the information on the current state of affairs has been indexed for retrieval, this kind of presentation makes it unnecessarily difficult for them to **identify** the resource described. So, the aims of RDA 0.4.2.1 and RDA 1.2 can only be partly met by the “first issue” approach and would be better served by the “latest issue” approach.

Discrepancy in the treatment of serials and integrating resources

As has already been noted (see 4.1.2 and 4.3), there is a discrepancy in the treatment of serials and integrating resources, since the cataloguing of the latter follows the principle of “current iteration” (i.e. the equivalent to the “latest issue”). As there is no theoretical foundation in the rules which would explain this difference in treatment, this seems rather arbitrary. It becomes especially unsatisfactory if there is both a print version and an integrating resource version of the same periodical. The descriptions of the two manifestations of the same work will then drift apart – one of them showing primarily the “first issue” information, the other primarily the “latest issue” information.

Discrepancy in the treatment of print journals and e-journals

As has already been pointed out (see 4.3), recent developments suggest that it will be very difficult in practice to keep the “first issue” approach even for e-journals which are still published in single issues. We predict (assume?), that more and more of these will have to be

⁷ Cf. Statement of international cataloguing principles, URL:
http://www.ifla.org/files/assets/cataloguing/icp/icp_2009-en.pdf.

treated according to the “latest issue” principle, simply for practical reasons. If this assessment is correct, it will mean a more general discrepancy between the treatment of print journals and that of e-journals (no matter whether these are catalogued as integrating resources or as serials). Whereas print journals will be treated according to “first issue”, e-journals will come to be treated more and more often according to “latest issue/current iteration”. We believe that such a development would be counterproductive, as one of RDA’s expressed aims was to clearly distinguish between content and carrier. In AACR2, descriptive cataloguing was “based, in the first instance, on the physical format of the material – the carrier – rather than on the intellectual or artistic content of the work.”⁸

Principle of representation of data

The “first issue” approach also does not fit well with the principle of representation as stated in RDA 0.4.3.4: “The data describing a resource should reflect the resource’s representation of itself.” (See also RDA 1.2 “Representation”). We believe that the principle of representation would be much better served by the “latest issue” than by the “first issue” approach. It seems only logical that a description aiming at this principle should reflect the *current* way in which the resource represents itself, and not a form of representation which has perhaps been long since abandoned by those responsible for the resource. Again, this is especially obvious with many e-journals, where only the current way of representation can be observed on the website. So, the treatment of serials according to “first issue” arguably violates the principle of representation.

5. Proposal

5.1 General considerations

After having studied the problem in detail we think that we need to accept that, at least for the foreseeable future, the two different approaches will have to coexist. Because even if there were

⁸ Howarth, Lynne C.: Content versus carrier. Paper given at the International Conference on the Principles and Future Development of AACR, Toronto, Canada, October 23-25, 1997. URL: http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/300/jsc_aacr/content/rcarrier.pdf, p. 2.

complete agreement in the international cataloging community as to which of the two strategies is the ‘best’, the different practices could not be harmonized easily, as there are huge amounts of legacy data to be taken into account. The re-working of large numbers of records would not be economically justifiable, and therefore also be in conflict with the principle of cost efficiency (RDA 0.4.2.2). The rules could handle this situation by introducing an alternative in RDA 2.1.2.3 which allows for a “latest issue” approach. Yet we also have to consider questions of interaction and data exchange.

For this, it should, firstly, be kept in mind that the “first/latest” difference does not apply to *all* serials, but only to a part of them – those that exhibit minor changes in the title proper or changes in other title information, statement of responsibility, publisher’s name etc. Therefore, the possible problems shouldn’t be overrated. Secondly, we believe that the vital thing is to have identical entities, e.g. for a mapping between records or an interaction in a semantic web framework. This has already been achieved when the German splitting rules were aligned to international standards some years ago. The fact that some entities show certain differences on the ‘surface’ cannot be avoided in an international and multilingual environment. This is e.g. also true for the preferred names of some persons and geographic entities; nonetheless a mapping can be achieved, as has been demonstrated by VIAF. The difference between the “first issue” and “latest issue” approach should also be seen as such a difference on the surface.

Thirdly, we believe that international data exchange of serials records could be improved considerably if

- i) records were clearly marked to show whether they follow the “first issue” or the “latest issue” approach
- ii) information concerning earlier or later states of a resource were given in a clearly labeled and structured way.

This may require certain changes to the design of RDA, and (as long as the data will be encoded in MARC 21) also subsequent changes to the MARC format; it should also be taken into account within the BIBFRAME⁹ Initiative.

⁹ <http://bibframe.org>

5.2 Outline of changes to RDA

As a basis for discussion, the following draft aims at giving a general outline of possible changes to RDA, which could solve the “first” vs. “latest” problems. We can think of two different ways of how the rules could be adjusted in order to support both the “first” and the “latest issue” approach. After a consensus has been reached on the general strategy to be followed, the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek is willing to provide a complete and detailed account in the form of a proposal.

Alternative in RDA 2.1.2.3

The main change to RDA would be the introduction of an alternative in RDA 2.1.2.3 b) and c) to allow for the “latest issue” approach. Of course, it would also be possible to use the “latest issue” approach as the new standard rule in 2.1.2.3 and keep the “first issue” approach as an alternative. If the first option is chosen, the result could e.g. look like this:

2.1.2.3 Resource Issued in More Than One Part

When preparing a comprehensive description for a resource issued in more than one part (e.g., a series of scientific treatises, a periodical, a compact disc set) that is not an integrating resource (see 2.1.2.4 RDA), choose one of the following, as appropriate, as the basis for identifying the resource as a whole:

- a) If the resource is issued as a set that is unnumbered, or if the numbering does not help to establish an order (e.g., a compact disc set containing an opera, a kit), choose a source of information identifying the resource as a whole, preferring a source that has a collective title. See categories d) or e) if there is no source of information identifying the resource as a whole.
- b) If the resource has sequentially numbered issues or parts, choose a source of information identifying the lowest numbered issue or part available.

Alternative:

If the issues or parts are sequentially numbered, choose a source of information identifying the highest numbered issue or part available.

Indicate whether the lowest or highest numbered issue or part available has been used as the basis for identifying the resource as a whole by a note (see 2.20.13.3 RDA) or some other suitable means.

- c) If the resource has unnumbered issues or parts, or if it has numbering that does not help to establish an order, choose a source of information identifying the issue or part with the earliest date of issue.

Alternative:

If the resource has unnumbered issues or parts, or if it has numbering that does not help to establish an order, choose a source of information identifying the issue or part with the latest date of issue. Indicate this by a note (see 2.20.13.3 RDA) or some other suitable means.

Indicate whether the issue or part with the earliest or latest date of issue has been used as the basis for identifying the resource as a whole by a note (see 2.20.13.3 RDA) or some other suitable means.

d) If there is no source of information identifying the resource as a whole, but one source has a title identifying a main or predominant work or content, consider that source to identify the resource as a whole.

e) If there is no source of information identifying the resource as a whole and no source has a title identifying a main or predominant work or content (e.g., a videodisc set containing multiple feature films but with no source of information identifying the resource as a whole), treat the sources identifying the individual parts as a collective source of information for the resource as a whole.

If the identification of a resource with ordered parts is not based on the first issue or part or (if the alternatives in b) or c) are used) on the latest issue or part, make a note identifying the issue or part used as the basis for identification of the resource (see 2.20.13.3 RDA).

(...)

In our opinion, it should always be explicitly stated whether the data conforms to the “first issue” or the “latest issue” approach. We also think that this could be done in different ways; therefore, the words “or some other suitable means” have been added. In the MARC format, this could e.g. be achieved by a special code in 008 for Continuing Resources, position 34 “Entry convention”, instead of or in addition to a note. We are not certain whether an indication like this would need to be reflected in RDA by the introduction of a new element or not. This question needs further discussion.

Recording of “earlier” information: minimum impact solution

RDA would also have to provide for ways to record information on earlier states of affairs for serials which are treated according to the new alternative. There are two different ways of doing this. The solution with the least impact on RDA would be to leave the rules basically unchanged but provide instructions for the “latest issue” serials at each relevant rule.

This would mean changes to the element “Earlier title proper” (2.3.7), e.g. like this:

2.3.7 Earlier Title Proper

2.3.7.1 Scope

An earlier title proper is a title proper appearing on an earlier iteration of an integrating resource or an earlier issue or part of a serial which is treated according to the alternative in RDA 2.1.2.3 b) or c) that differs from that on the current iteration, issue or part.

In other cases, there are no special elements to record earlier states of affairs. For integrating resources, information like earlier parallel title (2.3.3.5.3) and earlier other title information (2.3.4.7.3) can be recorded as variant titles, whereas e.g. an earlier statement of responsibility can be given in a note (2.4.1.10.3). All relevant rules would need to include a new alternative for “latest issue” serials, e.g. like this:

2.4.1.10 Recording Changes in Statements of Responsibility

2.4.1.10.2 Serials

Make a note (see 2.20.3.6.2 RDA) if:

A statement of responsibility is added, deleted, or changed on a subsequent issue or part of a serial and the addition, deletion, or change does not require a new description (see 1.6.2 RDA) and the change is considered important for identification or access.

Alternative:

For serials treated according to the alternative in RDA 2.1.2.3 b) or c):

If a statement of responsibility is added, deleted, or changed on a subsequent issue or part of a serial and the addition, deletion, or change does not require a new description (see 1.6.2 RDA), then: revise the statement of responsibility to reflect the latest issue or part.

Make a note giving the earlier statement of responsibility (see 2.20.3.6.3 RDA) if the earlier statement is considered important for identification or access.

If a statement of responsibility is deleted on a subsequent issue or part, delete the statement of responsibility to reflect the latest issue or part. Make a note on the deletion if considered important for identification or access (see 2.20.3.6.3 RDA).

A new design for the recording of information on earlier and later stages

Whereas the minimal impact approach as described above would make it possible to use RDA both in a “first issue” and a “latest issue” scenario, it would still have some drawbacks. Firstly, it might lead to a rather cumbersome amassing of alternatives. Secondly, it would not support data

sharing and interaction in the best possible way. If this is to be achieved, we believe that a more fundamental change to the design of RDA is needed: It should be possible to record information on earlier or later states of a resource in a clearly and unambiguously labeled way, which can also be easily interpreted by machines. The present instructions, which make use of note elements and variant titles, are not well suited to this task.

A better solution would be to introduce a set of new elements named e.g. “Later parallel title” and “Earlier parallel title”, “Later statement of responsibility” and “Earlier statement of responsibility”, “Name of later publisher”, “Name of earlier publisher”, etc. They could be complemented by a chronological element specifying the time span of its validity.

The encoding in MARC could be modeled on field 264 “Production, Publication, Distribution, Manufacture, and Copyright Notice” (which is based on field 260 “Publication, Distribution, etc. (Imprint)”). This is a repeatable field with the first indicator showing whether the information recorded gives the earliest stage, the current/latest stage, or an intervening stage. Similarly, elements like “Title proper”, “Parallel title”, “Statement of responsibility” etc. could be complemented by a second element which denotes whether the information recorded gives the earliest stage, the current/latest stage, or an intervening stage. An optional addition would make it possible to specify the period of validity exactly. Most of the necessary elements are already repeatable. In the case of the title proper it would also be possible to retain the existing elements “Earlier title proper” and “Later title proper” as an alternative to making the title proper repeatable. MARC field 247 “Former Title” should be taken into account as well.

Here is an example to illustrate the idea:

Publisher’s name: Blackwell	Stage: current	Period: 1992-
Publisher’s name: Butterworth-Heinemann	Stage: intervening	Period: 1990,3-1991
Publisher’s name: Butterworth	Stage: intervening	Period: 1983-1990,2
Publisher’s name: Sage	Stage: earliest	Period: -1982

The core requirement would then be to always have either the “current” information or the “earliest” information. Although information on the other stages should be optional, in practice there often will be information about other stages in the data as well. This would not only support the matching of records from the “first” and “latest” world (e.g. in a linked data scenario),

as all states of affairs can be easily taken into account. It will also make it possible to reuse such data to a considerable extent, even if it is shared between agencies which follow different approaches.

6. Scope – List of RDA Instructions for Serials Approached by the Principle of “First”

The list comprises instructions for serials approached by the principle of “first”. The options for the integration of “latest” into RDA are shown in 5.2 which is a start for discussion. According to the results of this discussion changes/alternatives to these instructions have to be accomplished in detail in a possible proposal to come. Also references, examples, and appendices have to be checked in the later process.

- 2.1.2.3 [Comprehensive Description] Resource Issued in More Than One Part
- 2.3.2.12.2 [Recording Changes in the Title Proper] Serials
- 2.3.3.5.2 [Recording Changes in Parallel Titles Proper] Serials
- 2.3.4.7.2 [Recording Changes in Other Title Information] Serials
- 2.3.5.4.2 [Recording Changing in Parallel Other Title Information] Serials
- 2.3.6.1 [Variant Title] Scope
- 2.3.8.1 [Later Title Proper] Scope
- 2.3.8.2 [Later Title Proper] Sources of Information
- 2.4.1.10.2 [Recording Changes in Statements of Responsibility] Serials
- 2.7.1.5.2 [Recording Changes in Production Statements] Serials
- 2.8.1.5.2 [Recording Changes in Publication Statements] Serials
- 2.9.1.5.2 [Recording Changes in Distribution Statements] Serials
- 2.10.1.5.2 [Recording Changes in Manufacture Statements] Serials
- 2.12.1.6.1 [Recording Changes in Series Statements] Multipart Monographs and Serials
- 2.20.3.6.2 [Change in Statement of Responsibility] Serials
- 2.20.4.5.2 [Change in Edition Statement] Serials
- 2.20.6.4.2 [Change in Production Statement] Serials
- 2.20.7.5.2 [Change in Publication Statement] Serials
- 2.20.8.4.2 [Change in Distribution Statement] Serials
- 2.20.9.4.2 [Change in Manufacture Statement] Serials
- 2.20.11.5.1 [Change in Series Statement] Multipart Monographs and Serials
- 2.20.13.3 [Issue or Part Used as the Basis for the Identification of a Multipart Monograph or Serial]

3.5.1.8.1 [Change in Dimensions] Multipart Monographs and Serials

3.22.4.4.1 [Change in Dimensions of Manifestation] Multipart Monographs and Serials

3.22.6.3.1 [Change in Carrier Characteristics] Multipart Monographs and Serials

(6.1.3.2 [Works Issued as Serials] does not explicitly address the principles of “First”/“Latest”. The assumption is “First”, indicated by 6.1.3.2.1 RDA “Change in Responsibility for the Work” which refers to 2.1 RDA, the principle of “First” for the “basis for identifying the resource” for manifestations. To stress the principle of “Latest” for works issued as serials 6.1.3.2.2 RDA [Works Issued as Integrating Resources - Change in the Title Proper] could be taken as a pattern for an alternative.)

7. Stakeholders‘ views

By the end of May 2013, DNB asked the following stakeholders for their view on the topic of this discussion paper. It should be noted that the version of this discussion paper presented to the stakeholders was based on the RDA text prior to the update of July 2013. We have received the following answers by the end of June 2013:

Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek (EZB) – Electronic Journals Library:

“The Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek (EZB¹⁰ – Electronic Journals Library) strongly argues in favour of the “latest issue” principle. EZB is one of the world’s largest collections of academic e-journals comprising approx. 70.000 titles at present. EZB is a collaborative project of 600 academic libraries and institutions mainly from Central and Eastern Europe using EZB as an interface for administration and presentation of e-journals. The Library of Congress also uses the services of the EZB.¹¹

We strongly recommend the “latest issue” principle, as only this approach meets EZB’s standards and requirements for search and discovery of e-journals, which usually manifest themselves on the web with the most recent title.”

¹⁰ EZB <http://rzblx1.uni-regensburg.de/ezeit/us.phtml?bibid=UBR&lang=en>

¹¹ <http://rzblx1.uni-regensburg.de/ezeit/index.phtml?bibid=LOC>

IFLA, Cataloguing Section, ISBD Review Group:

“The official view of the ISBD RG and based on the individual members’ viewpoints on the question is that the statement as given in the ISBD, consolidated edition, 2011 is strongly supported, specifically:

A.4 Sources of information

A.4.1 Basis of the description

For all types of material the whole resource constitutes the basis of the description. In deciding the basis of the description, the bibliographic unit that is going to be described, it is necessary to take into account the following:

Single-part monographic resources: the whole resource

Multipart monographic resources: a source identifying the entire resource and source of information applying to the whole resource is preferred, but if there is no such source, the first issue or part, or lacking this the earliest available issue or part is selected. For analytic description of the part see single-part monographic resources.

Serials: the first issue or part or, lacking this, the earliest available issue or part. For numbered serials, the first issue or part is the one with the lowest numeric designation or the earliest chronological designation. For unnumbered serials, the first issue or part is the issue or part with the earliest date of publication, production and/or distribution. Generally the first (or earliest) issue or part is preferred over a source associated with the whole resource or with a range of more than one issue or part.

Integrating resources: the current iteration, except for the beginning date of publication.

It should be noted, though, that the ISBD RG has no objection to the DNB’s proposal of creating **an alternative** for using the latest issue as the basis of description.”

ISSN Review Group:

“Preliminary remarks

We agree that each approach has pro and cons and our discussions reflected this situation. As a matter of fact, the paper was an opportunity to exchange again about this long-standing question (earliest/latest issue as the basis of the description) and no full consensus has been reached in our Review Group for determining what could be the best approach, even from the users standpoint. In the end, the best one might be a “neutral approach” where all data available when describing a publication is coded as to its appropriate time period.

Our opinions

1) We agree that there is a need for being able to provide, as much as possible, comprehensive and up-to-date information about the history of a resource in an unambiguous way. And, indeed, the solution used for recording the successive publishers in MARC formats can be considered as an example. For instance, according to the first issue approach, we do not update the MARC 21 field 245 (title proper) when a title undergoes a minor change but we add this new title as “variant title/ other title” (field 246, second indicator = 3) in the bibliographic record. This is not satisfactory since we have no coded way to state in ISSN records that a given “variant title” is actually a “later title” (which could be displayed as such in OPAC for instance). So, whatever the outcome of the discussion launched by our German colleagues this paper reminds us usefully that we have to improve our current practices.

2) To have a fully common approach, as it is currently the case in RDA, ISBD and ISSN, remains the best solution, at least until systems are developed that can easily and transparently accommodate multiple approaches.

3) Nevertheless, and since we are afraid that no consensus is possible in the short term for keeping a “fully common approach” within the bibliographic community and because of the legacy of data, a more flexible framework that would allow the coexistence of the two approaches at the international level or that would make possible, within the same institution, to switch from an approach to another, may be doable and could present some advantages.

But:

- it would be indeed necessary that the records are clearly marked as created according to “the earliest issue” or the “latest issue” approach;
- the impact on International databases such as the ISSN Register, which would receive records created following the two approaches (which is not the case for the moment since the ISSN

German Centre creates ISSN records in a dedicated system and following ISSN rules), should be carefully analyzed;

- and of course, detailed examples of current and of suggested practices are needed for a better assessment. No final decision can be made without such examples.”

OCLC:

“As an interim step, we think that the RDA changes that you outline would provide an acceptable solution for the situation you describe. We look forward to seeing a fully-developed set of changes to RDA instructions that would allow the implementation of RDA to move forward in the German-speaking cataloging community. We would also be interested in exploring further how MARC coding might allow explicit coding that the alternative instructions had been applied, since we do use the 008/34 coding in some aspects of our system processing.

As a longer-term solution, we agree that it is important to start a discussion in the continuing resources community about potential additional RDA elements that might allow more explicit treatment of information that applies during various stages of a serial’s life. Serials cataloging is being challenged by the transition of print serials to digital form, the evolution of many digital serials into databases of articles that may not have the traditional hallmarks of seriality (like enumeration and chronology), and the demands imposed by the need to link bibliographic descriptions to article-level data and to determine availability through knowledge bases and link resolvers.”

PCC/CONSER:

“General comments:

Appreciation was expressed for the clear presentation and reasoning evident in the proposals outlined in the paper. CONSER representatives understood the importance of the user tasks supported by describing and displaying attributes such as title proper, publisher, etc. from the latest issue of a serial. There was general agreement that the two approaches, describing from the latest issue and describing from the earliest issue in the context of RDA should co-exist.

The CONSER community looks forward to seeing a more completely developed proposal from the DNB on these topics. Many were especially interested in seeing the approach outlined in the section called "A new design for recording the information on earlier and later stages" [...] ¹² more fully developed. The "new design" presents an opportunity to define elements that give a more complete snapshot of the serial from earliest to the latest issue. This will facilitate exchanges in a future linked data or otherwise non-MARC environment.

Minimal impact approach:

Some respondents recognized that the "minimal impact approach" [...] was an acceptable way to formally define latest issue practices in RDA as an alternative to earliest issue conventions. Defining the practice formally facilitates the co-existence of the two practices in the RDA MARC 21 environment. There was also agreement with the statement [...] that the minimal impact approach results in a "cumbersome amassing of alternatives." If the minimal impact approach is pursued, CONSER representatives support changes to MARC 21 to identify records following earliest or latest issue conventions as well as changes to better accommodate elements from later issues. Specific suggestions were made for MARC21 changes including the definition of new unambiguous codes for 008/34 and possibly redefining indicators in the 245 field to provide functionality similar to the repeatable 264 field.

There was some concern that the establishment of citations used for related works and manifestations in linking entry fields requires stable unambiguous authorized access points, at least in the current MARC 21 environment. Similarly, the use of series authorized access points in descriptions for parts of a series requires stable authorized access points. Record exchange and interoperability may be a challenge to resolve if earliest issue and latest issue records have differing authorized access points for the same resource.

It was also pointed out that at the present time, PCC parameters for record selection is based on English as the language of cataloging. Records with German as language of cataloging are not candidates for copy or for linking related resources so the impact on exchange or linking of records is minimal as long as this PCC parameter remains in place.

¹² [...] = left out references to page numbers of the draft version of the discussion paper

There was also agreement with the statement concerning legacy data [...] that the re-working of large numbers of records would not be feasible or cost efficient.

Several comments suggested foregoing the minimal approach entirely and instead focus on the development of "A new design for recording the information on earlier and later stages."

DNB, ZDB and the Consortium of Library Networks in the German-speaking cataloguing community:

"DNB, ZDB and the Consortium of Library Networks in the German-speaking cataloguing community thank the JSC for putting the topic "first v. latest issue" on their agenda.

Generally we would like to state that both, first and latest title information is relevant for users during their research processes. As stated in 4.2 of this paper, the Serials Union Catalog for Germany and Austria (ZDB) has been using the "latest issue" approach from the beginning, for two main reasons: the convenience of the user and matters of acquisition. The practicability of the principle of "first issue" with regard to E-Journals has been questioned in 4.3 and the principles underlying RDA are topic in 4.4.

DNB, ZDB and the Consortium of Library Networks in the German-speaking cataloguing community assume that for the vast majority of the users, the most current information is also the most important one. We think that it should therefore be shown prominently in the description (i.e. in the main categories and not in note fields). Current title information also is needed for matters of acquisition. The bibliographic records from the ZDB are also distributed to the acquisition systems of all participating libraries. Up-to-date information is needed for e.g. pre-order searching, ordering, negotiations, etc., and should therefore be displayed prominently. Also, not all acquisition systems can handle the fullness of the bibliographic records including notes.

We strongly hope that the discussion will lead to a fruitful solution for the whole library community and that the proposed changes to RDA outlined in 5.2 of this paper meet the goals the JSC has to balance: the principle of representation and the objective of international compatibility with the requirements for cost efficiency and continuity."

8. Sources

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RDA – Resource Description & Access

URL: <http://www.rdatoolkit.org/>

Statement of international cataloguing principles

URL: http://www.ifla.org/files/assets/cataloguing/icp/icp_2009-en.pdf.

ZETA = Format und Konventionen für die Zeitschriften-Titelaufnahme in der Zeitschriftendatenbank (ZDB)

URL: <http://www.zeitschriftendatenbank.de/index.php?id=2844>