RDA: An Overview of Descriptive Elements – Introduction

RDA Preconference
Music Library Association Annual Meeting
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February 9, 2011
Based on three different standards
- Content: RDA
- Encoding: MARC21
- Display: ISBD
  - Not required, but generally used during RDA test for MARC record creation
Issues related to using 3 standards

- Less guidance about order and display in RDA than in AACR2
- ISBD helps, but does not address anything outside of bibliographic description
- Lack of correspondence between standards
  - ISBD Area 0 vs. 33X MARC21
  - “1 score” instead of “p. of music” used in RDA, but MARC21 still retains 008/20 “z” for music not in score format
Approaching RDA

- Understand FRBR & FRAD concepts, which underpin RDA
- Review ISBD, which is more than just “areas” and punctuation standards
- Remember that American use of AACR2 incorporated LCRIs – and not all of this content migrated to RDA
- Do not read or use linearly!
Description Basics

- Basis for identifying the resource
  - Type of description *(RDA 1.5)*
    - Comprehensive *(describes the resource as a whole)*
    - Analytical *(describes a part of a larger resource)*
    - Hierarchical *(combination of the two above)*
  - Mode of issuance *(RDA 1.1.3)*
    - Single unit
    - Multipart monograph
    - Serial
    - Integrating resource
  - Number of parts *(RDA 2.1.2)*
    - More than one part – if so, simultaneous, or not?
Description Basics

- Preferred source: 3 categories
  - Pages, leaves, etc., or images of pages, leaves, etc. (scores)
    RDA 2.2.2.2
  - Moving images
    RDA 2.2.2.3
  - Everything else (sound recordings)
    RDA 2.2.2.4
Description Basics

- Transcribed data
  - Capitalization from RDA Appendix A *(alternatives possible)*
  - Abbreviations from RDA Appendix B *(very limited) (alternatives possible)*
  - Take what you see
  - Accept what you get
  - Transcribe language/script from resource *(option for transliteration)*
No list of preferred sources based on material type

For all resources with pages, the preferred source is selected in this order:
- Title page/title sheet/title card
- Cover
- Caption
- Masthead
- Colophon
Description Basics: Differences from AACR2

- For sound recordings, the preferred source is:
  - The label
  - or -
  - Embedded metadata in textual form
  - If neither of these apply
    - Use another source that is part of the resource itself
Description Basics: Differences from AACR2: General

- Transcription
  - Punctuation as on source
    - Add punctuation as needed for clarity
    - No ISBD substitutions
  - No interpolation of [sic] or [i.e.]
    - Important differences explained elsewhere in the record
    - Errors will continue to be corrected in titles proper of serials and integrating resources
  - Only bracket information not taken from the resource itself
Description Basics: Differences from AACR2: General

- MARC identification for RDA records
  - Leader/18 value “i” for ISBD
    - not “a” for AACR2
  - 040 $e rda
Designations of “core” elements instead of levels of description

- Included as applicable and when readily ascertainable (RDA 0.6.2)
- Some always core

**Title**

CORE ELEMENT

- Some core in certain situations

*Date of distribution is a core element for a resource in a published form if the date of publication is not identified.*
Description Basics: Differences from AACR2: General

- Cataloger’s judgment about adding elements beyond core
  - Informed by
    - LC Policy Statements (LCPS)
    - Understanding of FRBR User Tasks
      - Find, Identify, Select, Obtain
    - Local policies
    - Best practices guides
    - Etc.
Description Basics: Differences due to ISBD changes

- Each adjacent data element that requires square brackets has its own set

- When an element or area ends with a full stop, the full stop for prescribed punctuation is also added
  - Was: 2nd ed.
  - Now: 2nd ed..

- Field 300 will end with a full stop – only if –
  - It ends in an abbreviation, or
  - A series statement follows