

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA

From: Kathy Glennan, ALA representative

Subject: Subject Relationship Element in RDA Chapter 23

The following revisions are based on the JSC discussion at the November 2014 meeting; the JSC will discuss these revisions via email. Potential changes to 0.3.3 will also be discussed by the JSC via email.

0.5 Structure

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Appendix M lists terms used as designators to indicate the nature of a relationship between a work and an indication of what the work is about. The relationship designators define the relationship more specifically than the relationship element by itself. The appendix provides definitions for terms used as relationship designators and instructions on their use.

0.6.7 Section 7: Recording Subject Relationships

When recording relationships between a work and an indication of what the work is about, include as a minimum at least one subject relationship element that is applicable and readily ascertainable.

0.7 Access Points

RDA provides instructions on the construction of authorized and variant access points representing works, expressions, persons, families, and corporate bodies.

RDA also provides instructions on the use of authorized access points to record the following types of relationships:

- primary relationship between a manifestation and a work or expression embodied in the manifestation

- relationships between a resource and persons, families, and corporate bodies associated with that resource

- relationships between a work and an indication of what the work is about

- relationships between works, expressions, manifestations, and items

- relationships between persons, families, and corporate bodies

In addition, RDA provides guidance on the use of titles (title proper, parallel title, variant title, etc.) as access points.

RDA does not provide guidance on the use of other data elements as access points. Agencies using RDA data may determine which additional elements are to be indexed based on the needs of their users and the capabilities of their data management systems.

SECTION 7

RECORDING SUBJECT RELATIONSHIPS

23

GENERAL GUIDELINES ON RECORDING THE SUBJECT OF A WORK

23.0 Scope

This chapter provides general guidelines and instructions on recording subject relationships between a work and an indication of what the work is about. It includes:

- a) an explanation of key terms (see [23.1](#))
- b) the functional objectives and principles underlying the general guidelines and instructions in chapter [23](#) (see [23.2](#))
- c) the core elements for recording subject relationships to entities (see [23.3](#))
- d) the use of identifiers, authorized access points, and/or descriptions to record subject relationships (see [23.4](#))
- e) the use of relationship designators to indicate the specific relationship between works and entities that are the subjects of works (see [23.5](#))

23.1 Terminology

23.1.1 Explanation of Key Terms

There are a number of terms used in this chapter that have meanings specific to their use in RDA. Some of these terms are explained at [23.1.2–23.1.5](#).

All terms with a specific technical meaning are defined in the glossary.

23.1.2 Work

The term **work**▼ refers to a distinct intellectual or artistic creation (i.e., the intellectual or artistic content).

The term *work* can refer to an individual work, an aggregate work, or a component of a work.

23.1.3 Access Point

The terms *access point* and *authorized access point* are used as follows:

The term **access point**▼ refers to a name, term, code, etc., representing a specific entity (work, expression, person, family, corporate body, or other entity that serves as the subject of a work).

The term **authorized access point**▼ refers to the standardized access point representing an entity.

The authorized access point representing a work or expression is constructed by combining (in this order):

- a) the authorized access point representing a person, family, or corporate body responsible for the work, if appropriate
- b) the preferred title for the work
- c) other elements as instructed at 6.27-6.31.

The authorized access point representing a person, family, or corporate body is constructed using the preferred name for person, family, or corporate body.

The authorized access point representing what a work is about may be a controlled subject term or combination of terms for the entity, or a classification number representing the entity, as specified in an identifiable subject system.

23.1.4 Identifiable Subject System

The term **identifiable subject system**▼ refers to a standard for subject access points and/or classification numbers used by the agency creating the data. It may be used in determining the names or terms, other identifying attributes, and relationships representing what a work is about. It may also include rules for application of terms, systematic combination of terminology (e.g., pre- or post-coordination), and guidelines on cardinality and depth of assignment.

23.1.5 Relationship Designator

The term **relationship designator**▼ refers to a designator that indicates the nature of the subject relationship. *[Alternatively, "...indicates the nature of the relationship between a work and an indication of what the work is about."]*

A relationship designator is recorded with the authorized access point or identifier representing the subject of the work.

23.2 Functional Objectives and Principles

The data recorded to reflect the subject relationship should enable the user to find all works about a particular subject.

To ensure that the data created using RDA meet that functional objective, the data should reflect all significant subject relationships.

23.3 Core Elements

When recording relationships between a work and an indication of what the work is about, include as a minimum at least one subject relationship element that is applicable and readily ascertainable.

23.4 Subject

CORE ELEMENT

23.4.1 Basic Instructions on Recording the Subject

23.4.1.1 Scope

Subject ▼ refers to the relationship between a work and an indication of what the work is about.

23.4.1.2 Sources of Information

Take information on the subject of a work from any source.

23.4.1.3 Recording the Subject

Record the subject of the work by using one or more of these techniques:

- a) identifier (see **23.4.1.3.1**)
 - b) authorized access point (see **23.4.1.3.2**)
- and/or**
- c) description of the related subject (see **23.4.1.3.3**)

23.4.1.3.1 Identifier for the Subject Term

Provide an identifier for the subject term.

EXAMPLE

Library and Archives Canada control number: 0200B4753
Identifier for the Canadian Subject Heading Icelandic Canadians, **a term that indicates a subject of the work**: Selected resource material on Canadians of Icelandic descent

Library of Congress control number: sh 85040737

Identifier for the Library of Congress Subject Heading Economic policy, **a term that indicates a subject of the work**: The changing role of central banks

Medical Subject Headings control number: D005817

Identifier for the Medical Subject Heading Genetic Counseling, **a term that indicates a subject of the work**: Atlas of genetic diagnosis and counseling

Library of Congress/NACO Authority File control number: n 79032932

Identifier for the Library of Congress/NACO authority record recording the term Wright, Frank Lloyd, 1867–1959, **an authorized access point for a term that indicates a subject of the work**: Frank Lloyd Wright, his life and architecture

Library of Congress Classification control number: CF 00434699

Identifier for the Library of Congress Classification number QL737.M35, **a term that indicates a subject of the work**: Kangaroos & their relatives

23.4.1.3.2

Authorized Access Point Representing the Subject Term

Provide an authorized access point representing the subject term.

The access point may be a controlled subject term or a combination of terms for the entity, or a classification number representing the entity, as specified in an identifiable subject system.

EXAMPLE

Icelandic Canadians

Authorized access point in Canadian Subject Headings for an entity that is a subject of the work: Selected resource material on Canadians of Icelandic descent

Economic policy

Authorized access point in the Library of Congress Subject Headings for an entity that is a subject of the work: The changing role of central banks

332.1

Authorized access point in the Dewey Decimal Classification for an the entity that is a subject of the work: The changing role of central banks

Genetic Counseling

Authorized access point in Medical Subject Headings for an entity that is a subject of the work: Atlas of genetic diagnosis and counseling

Wright, Frank Lloyd, 1867–1959

Authorized access point in the Library of Congress/NACO Authority File for an entity that is a subject of the work: Frank Lloyd Wright, his life and architecture

QL737.M35

Authorized access point in the Library of Congress Classification for an entity that is a subject of the work: Kangaroos & their relatives

23.4.1.3.3 Description of the Subject of the Work

Provide a description of the related subject by using either a structured description or an unstructured description (e.g., keywords), as appropriate.

23.5 Relationship Designator

23.5.1 Basic Instructions on Recording Relationship Designators

23.5.1.1 Scope

A **relationship designator** ▼ is a designator that indicates the nature of the relationship between a work and an indication of what the work is about. A relationship designator is recorded with the authorized access point or identifier representing the subject of the work.

[Question: How closely does this language need to parallel what's in 23.1.5?]

The defined scope of a relationship element provides a general indication of the subject relationship. Relationship designators provide more specific information about the nature of the relationship. (~~e.g., entity depicted in the work, setting of the work~~)

23.5.1.2 Sources of Information

Take information on the nature of the subject relationship from any source.

23.5.1.3 Recording Relationship Designators

Record one or more appropriate terms from the list in appendix **M** to indicate the specific nature of the subject relationship.

If none of the terms listed in appendix **M** is appropriate or sufficiently specific, use another concise term to indicate the nature of the relationship.

M

RELATIONSHIP DESIGNATORS: SUBJECT RELATIONSHIPS

M.0 Scope

This appendix provides general guidelines on using relationship designators to specify relationships between works and indications of what the works are about, and lists relationship designators used for that purpose.

M.1 General Guidelines on Using Relationship Designators

The defined scope of a relationship element provides a general indication of the relationship between a work and an indication of what the work is about. If the relationship element is considered sufficient for the purposes of the agency creating the data, do not use a relationship designator to indicate the specific nature of the relationship.

Relationship designators provide more specific information about the nature of the relationship (~~e.g., entity depicted in the work, setting of the work~~).

If none of the terms listed in this appendix is appropriate or sufficiently specific, use another concise term to indicate the nature of the relationship.

M.2 Relationship Designators Between Works and Indications of What the Works are About

Record an appropriate term from the following list with the authorized access point or identifier indicating the relationship between a work and what the work is about (see 23.4). Apply the general guidelines on using relationship designators at M.1.

[Insert list of designators here]

GLOSSARY

Identifiable Subject System

A standard for subject access points and/or classification numbers used by the agency creating the data. It may be used in determining the names or terms, other identifying attributes, and relationships representing what a work is about. It may also include rules for application of terms, systematic combination of terminology (e.g., pre- or post-coordination), and guidelines on cardinality and depth of assignment.

Subject

The relationship between a work and an indication of what the work is about.

Unstructured Description

A full or partial description of a resource written as a sentence, paragraph, etc.