The Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules and Their Future

Ralph W. Manning

The past, present, and future development of AACR2 is outlined with particular emphasis on the directions provided by the International Conference on the Principles and Future Development of AACR held in Toronto in October 1997. International cooperation as a significant element in the development and future of the code was highlighted. The Toronto conference, an invitational meeting attended by 65 cataloging experts, was undertaken by the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) as part of its ongoing mandate to respond to changing needs. Among the actions and recommendations resulting from the conference, the following were approved by JSC for immediate action: develop a mission statement for JSC; create a list of the principles of AACR2; pursue the recommendation that a logical analysis of the principles and structure on which AACR2 is based be undertaken; establish an AACR Web site; determine whether there are surveys on the use of AACR2 outside the Anglo-American community, and if no such survey exists, conduct such a survey; formulate the recommendations on serials endorsed during the conference and introduce them into the revision process; publicize and reaffirm JSC policies, procedures, activities, and the current process for submitting rule revision proposals; and solicit a proposal to revise rule 0.24. The international conference has helped JSC to develop an plan of action, which will test the applicability of AACR in current and future environments and balance the need for a sound and workable cataloging code with the cost of cataloging and change.

Ralph W. Manning (ralph.manning@ nlc.bnc.ca) is Past Chair of the Joint Steering Committee for Revision of AACR.

The Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (AACR2) are situated in the midst of a continuum of constant revision. This revision has sometimes been sudden and jarring, and sometimes gradual. Smiraglia (1992) outlined the continuous revision process that is now in place for the coordination and development of the cataloging rules.

The continuous process of revision can be taken as far back as the 1839 rules developed by Panizzi for the catalogs of the British Museum. In looking at the sequence of major cataloging codes that eventually led to AACR2, we can see an early series of codes that were very much influenced by individuals (Panizzi 1839; Jewett 1853; Cutter 1876). Cutter (1876) included the statement of the objectives of the catalog that has been very important to the development of cataloging codes since then.

At the beginning of this century, international cooperation was introduced into the process of catalog code revision. In 1904 the American Library Association (ALA) and the Library Association agreed to cooperate on the development of a new code. ALA was in the process of a seven-year committee study that eventually began close communication with a counterpart committee in the United Kingdom that was also working on a revised cataloging code. Each of the two committees had a mandate to cooperate closely with a view to publishing a joint code. The British and American committees developed their codes separately, but

endeavored to resolve all differences. Because of the distances and publishing requirements, the resulting joint code was published in distinct U.S. and British editions in 1908. In a 1910 review, Bolton said: "The day of standardization, of centralization, and of co-operation is rapidly dawning, and with these, conformity to prescribed rules and professional methods . . . will become all but compulsory" (Bolton 1910, 389). Downing presented a very interesting perspective on the 1908 rules at the International Conference on AACR2 in 1989; he expressed amazement that seventy years later librarians were still pursuing the objective of standardization contained in Bolton's prediction (Downing 1980). I think it is still fair to say that now, ninety years later, we have not achieved the objective and are still striving toward it.

From 1901 when the Library of Congress (LC) began to distribute printed catalog cards, libraries recognized the great cost savings that could accrue by using LC's cataloging. We have learned over the years that common cataloging systems also allow us to share each other's cataloging. This spirit of cooperation has been easier in the concept than in the implementation, however, and we are still working toward a seamless sharing of cataloging information across international borders. Even in North America, where we have shared a common cataloging tradition for more than a century, differences have developed in our applications of cataloging codes and cataloging systems. The two most evident examples were the trend for many Canadian libraries not to follow LC's lead in abandoning AACR2 chapter 11 for microform reproductions and the requirement in Canada for a bilingual approach to bibliographic control. In a closely related effort to enhance international compatibility, efforts have been underway for several years now to harmonize MARC formats; McCallum's article in this issue describes these efforts.

The Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules were under development for many years following the strong criticism to the 1949 ALA cataloging rules (ALA 1949). During this period, the International Conference on Cataloguing Principles was held in Paris in 1961 with a true international representation from more than fifty countries. The resulting Paris Principles provided a strong base for international cooperation in the development of cataloging rules. Cooperation between the United Kingdom and the United States was initiated in the early 1960s, shortly after the Paris Conference, but in the end, complete agreement on a cataloging code could not be reached and, lamentably, once again a British text and a separate North American text were published.

These rules were considered in many ways to be a major improvement over previous codes. Compromises were made, however, to reduce cataloging costs, and these compromises eventually led to the need for the separate editions. Other major changes from previous practice were, however, embedded in the code, which led to significant conflicts with existing catalogs. This in turn created considerable difficul-

ties for libraries who could not afford to recatalog the entries in their existing catalogs. As a result most libraries adopted the provisions of the new code only for names and entries being established for the first time. This of course created a chaotic situation, particularly for library users who had a difficult time understanding the conflicting practices.

After the publication of AACR in 1967, the IFLA Committee on Cataloguing organized the International Meeting of Cataloguing Experts in Copenhagen in 1969. The following resolution was passed:

> Efforts should be directed towards creating a system for the international exchange of information by which the standard bibliographic description of each publication would be established and distributed by a national agency in the country of origin . . . The effectiveness of the system would depend upon the maximum standardization of the form and content of the bibliographic description (Report of the International Meeting 1970, 115–16).

This was the origin of the International Standard Bibliographic Description (ISBD), a vital element in the effort to reach the ideal of Universal Bibliographic Control. The first ISBD was published in 1971 and the First Standard Edition of the ISBD for Monographs was published in 1974.

I began this article with the observation that the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules are in a process of constant revision. This is not only an observation, but has become formalized in international agreements. In 1966 a "memorandum of agreement" was signed between ALA and the Library Association to provide a means of continuing review after publication of AACR. From 1969 to 1974 this continuous review was accomplished through regular meetings of the Descriptive Cataloging Committee of ALA (Resources and Technical Services Division), which included formal representation of the Library Association's Cataloguing Rules Committee, the Canadian Library Association, and LC.

By 1974 events had reached a point where it was clear that a new direction needed to be established for the future. International standardization and LC's decision to abandon its practice of "superimposition" (whereby obsolete forms of name were perpetuated in catalogs) were two of the driving forces behind the organization in 1974 of a tripartite meeting "consisting of one delegate each from the three 'Anglo-American' countries, representing in each case both the library association and the national library—to draw up a new memorandum of agreement and to complete the planning of the project for a second edition of AACR" (AACR 1978, vi). From the point of view of international cooperation, two of the objectives established by this meeting are particularly important:

- to reconcile in a single text the North American and British texts of 1967; and
- to provide for international interest in AACR by facilitating its use in countries other than the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

As a matter of fact, a condition of funding by the Council on Library Resources was that an objective of rule revision include a contribution to the development of an international cataloging code.

At this point, a Joint Steering Committee for Revision of AACR was established consisting of the five participating organizations (ALA, the British Library, the Canadian Committee on Cataloguing, the Library Association, LC) and two editors. After a great deal of consultation and collaboration, particularly with the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), the second edition of AACR was published in 1978. Although there was controversy and there were implementation difficulties, AACR2 became firmly established as a cataloging standard. By the time the 1988 revision was published, AACR2 had found general acceptance in most English-speaking countries. Interestingly, this begins to fulfill the objective expressed by Melvil Dewey at the turn of the century when he suggested that the United Kingdom and the United States should "unite in the production of an Anglo-American Code with a view to establishing uniformity of practice throughout the English speaking race" (Committees of the Library Association and of the American Library Association 1908, iii).

International cooperation continued to mark the development of the rules through its ongoing process of revision. In 1986 the Australian Committee on Cataloguing was made a full participant in the Joint Steering Committee for Revision of AACR in recognition of its regular contributions since 1981.

In 1989 an agreement was established between ALA, the British Library, the Canadian Library Association, the Library Association, and LC in order to clarify the responsibilities and relationship of the various bodies charged with the production and publication of the AACR. In 1991 the National Library of Canada also became a party to the agreement. These six organizations became known as the Principals of AACR and form the Committee of Principals. The key functions of this committee are oversight of the Joint Steering Committee and of the publication of the code itself.

As noted above, JSC is the committee that ultimately approves rule revision. It is made up of representatives from ALA, the Australian Committee on Cataloguing, the British Library, the Canadian Committee on Cataloguing, the Library Association, and LC. It meets approximately once per year and deals with proposals for rule revisions that come to it formally from any of the constituent bodies or from the chair. In considering proposals for rule revision, JSC has been very conscious of the cost of change while at the same keeping in mind the need for flexibility and responsiveness to continuing developments.

When I say that rule revision proposals can come from the chair of JSC, I should point out an important element of the procedures followed by JSC. Whenever a proposal is received by the chair from within one of the participating countries, the submitter is asked to take the proposal to the appropriate national committee for review and eventual formal submission to JSC if deemed appropriate. But over the years we have grappled with the question of proposals coming from outside the author community. Although it does not happen frequently, it has become procedure that such proposals are vetted and submitted by the chair. In the past this has not been widely known and JSC with the support of the Committee of Principals will be looking at mechanisms to encourage suggestions from anywhere in the world. This might bring to a head the challenges that international cooperation might introduce into the rule revision process.

In the continuum of constant revision that I mentioned at the beginning of this article, 1998 marked a turning point. A new revision to the second edition of the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules was published, and it incorporated all rule revisions and corrections that were identified since the 1988 revision. The 1998 revision coincided with a major new development in the history of AACR2: it was published concurrently in print and electronic form. The content of the two formats were identical except for those changes in formatting that were dictated by the requirements of the electronic medium.

Over the past century, cooperation has been well established between the United Kingdom and the United States, and the inclusion of Australia and Canada has recognized a wider sphere. But AACR2 has had considerable influence in many other parts of the world. As noted above, the majority of the English-speaking world has adopted the code. However, it has also been translated or is being translated into eighteen other languages. This would appear to mark a distinct tendency toward an international cataloging code, meeting the requirement established in the mid-1970s to make a contribution to such an international code. The sharing of cataloging among libraries has become an essential component of management planning, particularly in national libraries, and this has continued to encourage international cooperation and harmonization of cataloging practices beyond national boundaries.

With these thoughts in mind, and as we prepared for the International Conference on the Principles and Future Development of AACR that I shall describe in more detail below, I wrote to the international cataloging community in 1996 to solicit input on AACR2. I did this through the expediency of the mailing list of the Conference of

Directors of National Libraries and I received twenty replies, representing every region of the world. In addition to some very specific suggestions from some countries, most of the replies pointed out problems with the various rules that stipulate that English should be used as the preferred language in certain rules; problems of cataloging in a bilingual or multilingual environment were noted and in one case, a formal rule revision proposal was submitted by the Malaysian Committee on Cataloguing and Classification for the rules on Malay names.

One of the most interesting comments came from the Bulgarian national library. The author emphasized that AACR2 should continue to be developed for the English-speaking world. The author felt that this would ensure a high professional standard of cataloging while still providing a sound theoretical base for librarians around the world who use a different language. I quote from the letter: "No quality cataloging can be done without . . . the preparation of a national standard, based on ISBD and national rules, reflecting national practice and specific linguistic features" (Lyudskanova 1996). Clearly, internationalization of AACR will engage a challenging debate.

Now let us begin to look at the future. A number of continuing issues affecting implementation of AACR have been compounded in recent years by the fast-moving pace of technological development with its concomitant impact on publishing patterns. Some of the issues date from the beginning days of implementation of AACR, such as the early decision by LC not to implement chapter 11 for microform reproductions. In the years since then we have witnessed the creation of a considerable opus of specialized manuals that were developed to enhance or improve AACR for certain types of material. More recently we have seen the publication of cataloging interpretations outside the structure of AACR2, such as ALA's *Guidelines for Bibliographic Description of Interactive Multimedia* and *Guidelines for Bibliographic Description of Reproductions* (ALCTS 1994 and 1995). Such trends led to the need for an in-depth consultation and review of AACR2.

As part of its ongoing mandate to respond to changing needs, JSC undertook, with the support of the Committee of Principals, the International Conference on the Principles and Future Development of AACR. This invitational conference was held in October 1997 in Toronto and generated a number of action items that will be dealt with by JSC and the Committee of Principals over the next months and years, always balancing the need for change with its impact on libraries and their catalogs.

The idea of holding an invitational meeting of cataloging experts to deal with issues facing the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules was first discussed by JSC at its March 1994 meeting. Interest in such a meeting continued to increase, particularly as momentum grew. In the United

States, many of the issues surrounding AACR were the subject of the 1995 ALA preconference "The Future of the Descriptive Cataloging Rules" (Schottlaender 1998), held in Chicago. In Canada, the development of the Rules for Archival Description (1990–), which were closely based on AACR2, gave rise to an expressed need for clear direction for the cataloging rules. The Canadian Committee on Cataloguing, a member of JSC, prepared a formal proposal that was discussed at the May 1995 meeting of JSC. This resulted in the development of an initial framework for a conference that was enhanced by the Committee of Principals; the final proposal was approved and detailed planning began in the summer of 1996.

A Web site was established to publicize the conference and to make the conference papers available online. This was felt to be particularly important because of the decision to tightly limit the number of participants at the conference. From January to November 1997 the site received more than seven thousand visits. In addition, a preconference discussion list was established with the objective of stimulating discussion on the issues presented in the conference papers in order to bring out different points of view. The list was established in early July 1997 and had approximately 650 subscribers at its peak, with about 500 posted messages from all over the world.

The conference was held in October 1997 in Toronto, Canada. The objective was to provide the Joint Steering Committee for Revision of AACR with guidance on the direction and nature of future cataloging rule revision. Sixty-five cataloging experts, primarily from the "author countries," were invited to contribute their views on many issues, including, for example, the principles of AACR2, how to handle serials, the question of "content versus carrier," internationalization of the rules and amendments to the rule revision process. The conference proceedings have been edited by Jean Weihs, former chair of JSC, and were published jointly by ALA, the Canadian Library Association, and the Library Association.

A number of actions and recommendations resulted from the conference and the JSC has established a plan to be implemented in conjunction with the Committee of Principals. The following items for immediate action were approved during the JSC meeting held immediately following the conference:

- Develop a mission statement for JSC. In order to clarify the role of JSC, particularly in an international context, it was recommended that, in conjunction with some of the other recommendations below, JSC formalize and publicize its ongoing role by means of a mission statement. The Library Association representative to JSC agreed to arrange for a facilitator to help develop this statement at the meeting of JSC

scheduled for November 1998. [Editor's note: JSC developed the following mission statement in November 1998: "In support of effective cataloging practice, the Joint Steering Committee develops and maintains the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules according to established principles for bibliographic description and access. To this end, the Committee works in a timely and proactive manner to formulate a cataloging code that is responsive to changes in the information environment and that results in cost-effective cataloging."]

- Create a list of the principles of AACR2. One of the goals of the 1997 conference was to identify and record the principles upon which AACR2 is based. This was not accomplished during the conference, and at its October 1997 meeting, each member of JSC was asked to record a list of these principles for discussion at the November 1998 meeting.
- Pursue the recommendation that a logical analysis of the principles and structures on which AACR is based be undertaken. In his presentation at the conference, Delsey (1998) recommended that such an analysis be done, noting that it would provide a framework for evaluating the end product of the cataloging code against the criteria of accuracy, flexibility, user-friendliness, compatibility, and efficiency.

Delsey noted that the environment within which AACR2 exists has changed and continues to change. There are also new opportunities presented by the same technologies that generate much of this change. Delsey introduced the concept of modeling in the following way:

Several of those who have advocated a reexamination of conventional data structures have endeavored to illustrate and test the value of reconceptualizing the bibliographic record by sketching out (and in a few cases, developing in considerable detail) conceptual models for the restructuring of bibliographic records and databases. Not long after the publication of the second edition of AACR, Michael Gorman posited a new schema for the logical restructuring of bibliographic data into a number of "linked packages" of information in use in what he envisioned as the "developed" catalog. More recently, that same notion has been further developed by Michael Heaney, who has "deconstructed" the MARC record using the techniques applied in object-oriented analysis, and by Rebecca Green, who has used an entity-relationship analysis technique for the same purpose. Building on work done by Barbara Tillett on the representation of relationships in bibliographic databases, Gregory

Leazer and Richard Smiraglia have developed a conceptual schema for modeling derivative relationships within "bibliographic families" of works. And in what is in some respects the most comprehensive undertaking of this kind to date, the IFLA Study Group on Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records has used the entity-relationship analysis technique to develop a model designed to serve as a framework for relating bibliographic data to user needs.

With the approval of the Committee of Principals, JSC asked Delsey to proceed with the development of a formalized schema to reflect the logical structure underlying AACR2. The objective is to use the schema as a tool to assist in the reexamination of the fundamental principles underlying the code and in setting directions for its future development. In the meantime, as noted above, JSC is developing a list of the principles that it believes underlie the code. Eventually, that list will help to inform the discussion when the Delsey study reveals the true logical structure underlying the data in the record. A comprehensive analysis of the logic of the code will be essential in order to satisfy ourselves that its theoretical underpinnings are sound, that it is capable of accommodating change, that it can continue to be responsive to user needs, that it can interface effectively with other systems for bibliographic control, and that it is cost effective.

Delsey completed the logical analysis of part one of AACR2 and presented it to JSC at a special meeting in July 1998. JSC agreed that wide consultation on the issues and recommendations contained in Delsey's conclusions was necessary and made the Delsey study and recommendations available for comment during the summer of 1998. Delsey undertook the logical analysis of part two and presented it to JSC at its meeting in November 1998 (www.nlc-bnc.ca/jsc). He made the following recommendations:

Establish an AACR Web site that will build on the success of the site created for the conference. In June 1998 arrangements were made for assistance in designing and improving the existing Web site originally established for the 1997 conference. A much improved and more informative site was available by the fall of 1998. The National Library of Canada has hosted the site.

Determine whether there are surveys on the use of AACR2 outside the Anglo-American community and, if no such surveys exist, conduct such a survey. The Australian representative to JSC has agreed to pursue this recommendation and preliminary research has begun.

Formalize the recommendations on serials endorsed during the conference and introduce them into the rule revision process. In their proposal to the International Conference, Hirons and Graham recommended that the concept of "serial" be redefined by removing the requirement for numbering

and successive parts. The definition of "serial" used in AACR2 is "A publication in any medium issued in successive parts bearing numeric or chronological designations and intended to be continued indefinitely."

While this definition is consistent with other internationally accepted definitions, including the one in the *ALA Glossary of Library and Information Science*, the ISBD(S), ISDS, and ISO 5127, Hirons and Graham felt that it needed to be modified to accommodate ongoing publications that did not strictly meet the current definition. In their subsequent consultations, however, they have discovered that a more encompassing approach would be superior and they are now investigating an alternative approach that would embrace the concept of "ongoing entity" as the overarching concept under which other categories of entities such as "serial," "loose-leaf," and "database" will fall. Hirons presented a new model to sessions of ALA's Annual Conference in June 1998 and to JSC at its special meeting in July the same year. It was noted that many of the directions being pursued were compatible with the conclusions of the Delsey study and JSC asked Hirons to proceed with the intensive consultation that she planned to undertake during 1998. JSC received a report on her findings in the spring of 1999 and will determine the best course of action in view of the consultation that took place on the Delsey analysis. The chair of JSC initiated contacts with the international community to ensure that pending changes to the ISDS Guidelines and ISBD(S) are fully informed by developments within AACR2.

Publicize and reaffirm, on the AACR Web site, JSC policies, procedures, activities, and current processes for submitting rule revision proposals emanating from within or outside AACR author countries. This work is underway and was posted on the revitalized Web site in the fall of 1998.

Solicit a proposal to revise rule 0.24 to advance the discussion on the primacy of intellectual content over physical format. Rule 0.24 in AACR2 is known as the "cardinal principle" that requires primacy of the physical carrier over the intellectual content when cataloging an item. It has been identified as a major obstacle to a number of new formats, particularly electronic documents that do not reside permanently on a fixed carrier. The ALA representative to JSC was asked to pursue this recommendation and subsequently a task group was struck. The task force is examining a wide range of options from simply deleting references to "physicality" in rule 0.24 to completely reorganizing the code.

Conclusion

The International Conference on the Principles and Future Development of AACR has helped JSC to develop a plan of action that will test the applicability of AACR in the current and future environments and balance the need for a sound

and workable cataloging code with the cost of cataloging and the cost of change. Before deciding on any change to the cataloging code, JSC will give careful consideration to the implications of such change, particularly on the costs of cataloging. As is its ongoing policy, JSC will undertake wide consultation and further use will be made of the JSC Web site.

The JSC action plan and other relevant information are available from the AACR Web site: www.nlc-bnc.ca/jsc.

Works Cited

American Library Association (ALA). 1949. *ALA cataloging rules for author and title entries.* 2d ed. Chicago: American Library Assn.

Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, 2d ed., 1978. Chicago: American Library Assn.; Ottawa: Canadian Library Assn.

Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS), Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access. 1995. *Guidelines for bibliographic description of reproductions.* Chicago: American Library Assn.

Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS), Interactive Multimedia Guidelines Review Task Force. 1994. *Guidelines for bibliographic description of interactive multimedia.* Chicago: American Library Assn.

Bolton, George R. 1910. Anglo-American joint code of cataloguing rules, 1908. *Library World* 12, no. 46: 389.

Committees of the Library Association and of the American Library Association. 1908. *Cataloguing rules, author, and title entries.* English ed. London: The Library Association.

Delsey, Tom. 1998a. The logical structure of the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules: Part I. www.nlc-bnc.ca/jsc/aacredel.html.

———. 1998b. The logical structure of the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules: Part II. www.nlc-bnc.ca/jsc/aacredel2.html.

Downing, J. C. 1980. International implications of AACR2. In *The making of a code: The issues underlying AACR2. Papers given at the International Conference on AACR2, held March 11–14, 1979 in Tallahassee, Florida.* Ed. by Doris Hargrett Clack. Chicago: American Library Assn.

Hirons, Jean, and Crystal Graham. 1998. Issues related to seriality. In *The principles and future of AACR: Proceedings of the International Conference on the Principles and Future Development of AACR, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, October 23–25, 1997.* Ottawa: Canadian Library Assn.

Lyudskanova, V. 1996. Letter to the author. Nov. 11.

Report of the International Meeting of Cataloguing Experts, Copenhagen, 1969. 1970. *Libri* 20, no. 1/2: 115–16.

Rules for archival description. 1990–. Ottawa: Bureau of Canadian Archivists.

Schottlaender, Brian E. C., ed. 1998. *The future of the Descriptive Cataloging Rules: Papers from the ALCTS preconference, AACR2000, American Library Association annual conference, Chicago, June 22, 1995.* ALCTS papers on library technical services and collections, no. 6. Chicago: American Library Assn.

Smiraglia, Richard P. 1992. The continuous revision process. In *Origins, content, and future of AACR2 revised.* Ed. by Richard P. Smiraglia. Chicago: American Library Assn.