



FRBR Chapter 3: Entities

**Proposed changes to the FRBR text
by the IFLA Working Group on the Expression Entity**

Clean copy of changed text

21 August 2006

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3.2.2 Expression

The second entity defined in the model is *expression*: the intellectual or artistic realization of a *work* in the form of alpha-numeric, musical, or choreographic notation, sound, image, object, movement, etc., or any combination of such forms.

An *expression* is the specific intellectual or artistic form that a *work* takes each time it is “realized.” *Expression* encompasses, for example, the specific words, sentences, paragraphs, etc. that result from the realization of a *work* in the form of a text, or the particular sounds, phrasing, etc. resulting from the realization of a musical *work*. The boundaries of the entity *expression* are defined, however, so as to exclude aspects of physical form, such as typeface and page layout, that are not integral to the intellectual or artistic realization of the *work* as such. When an *expression* is accompanied by augmentations, such as illustrations, notes, glosses, etc. that are not integral to the intellectual or artistic realization of the *work*, such augmentations are considered to be separate *expressions* of their own separate *work(s)*.

Inasmuch as the form of *expression* is an inherent characteristic of the *expression*, any change in form (e.g., from alpha-numeric notation to spoken word) results in a new *expression*. Similarly, changes in the intellectual conventions or instruments that are employed to express a *work* (e.g., translation from one language to another) result in the production of a new *expression*. Thus, if a text is revised or modified, the resulting *expression* is considered to be a new *expression*. Minor changes, such as corrections of spelling and punctuation, etc., are normally considered as variations within the same *expression*.

However for some applications of the model, each variation may be viewed as a different *expression*, such as variations between early texts of rare manuscripts.

Examples

- **w₁** Ellwanger’s *Tennis--bis zum Turnierspieler*
 - **e₁** the original German text
 - **e₂** the English translation by Wendy Gill
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- **w₁** Franz Schubert’s *Trout quintet*
 - **e₁** the composer’s score
 - **e₂** the music as performed by the Amadeus Quartet and Hephzibah Menuhin on piano
 - **e₃** the music as performed by the Cleveland Quartet and Yo-Yo Ma on the cello
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On a practical level, the degree to which bibliographic distinctions are made between variant *expressions* of a *work* will depend to some extent on the nature of the *work* itself, on the anticipated needs of users and on what the cataloguer can reasonably be expected to recognize

from the *manifestation* being described. Differences in form of *expression* (e.g., the differences between the *expression* of a *work* in the form of musical notation and the *expression* of the same *work* in the form of recorded sound) will normally be reflected in the bibliographic record, no matter what the nature of the *work* itself may be. Variant *expressions* in the same form (e.g., revised versions of a text) will often be indirectly identified as different *expressions* because the variation is apparent from the data associated with an attribute used to identify the *manifestation* in which the *expression* is embodied (e.g., an edition statement). Variations that would be evident only from a more detailed analysis and comparison of *expressions* (e.g., variations between several of the early texts of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* conveyed by distinct editions such as the so-called “Folio” and “Quarto”) would normally be reflected in the data only if the nature or stature of the *work* warranted such analysis, and only if it was anticipated that the distinction would be important to users.

Variations within substantially the same *expression* (e.g., slight variations that can be noticed between two states of the same edition in the case of hand press production) would normally be ignored or, in specialized catalogues, be reflected as a note within the bibliographic record for the publication as a whole, but would not justify a new bibliographic record that would tend to be interpreted as a misleading indication that there are two distinct publications rather than one publication available in two states.

Defining *expression* as an entity in the model gives us a means of reflecting the distinctions in intellectual or artistic content that may exist between one realization and another of the same *work*. With *expression* defined as an entity, we can describe the intellectual or artistic attributes of a particular realization of a *work*, and use the differences in those attributes to signal differences in intellectual or artistic content.

Defining *expression* as an entity also enables us to draw relationships between specific *expressions* of a *work*. We can use the entity called *expression* to identify, for example, the specific text on which a translation is based, or the specific score used for the performance of a musical composition.

We can also use the entity defined as *expression* to indicate that the intellectual or artistic content embodied in one *manifestation* is in fact the same, or substantially the same, as that embodied in another *manifestation*. If two *manifestations* embody the same or almost the same intellectual or artistic content, even though the physical embodiment may differ and differing attributes of the *manifestations* may obscure the fact that the content is similar in both, we can make the common link through the entity defined as *expression*.

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Examples

- w_1 Harry Lindgren's *Geometric dissections*
 - e_1 original text entitled *Geometric dissections*
 - m_1 the book published in 1964 by Van Nostrand
 - e_2 revised text entitled *Recreational problems in geometric dissections*
 - m_1 the book published in 1972 by Dover

- w_1 J. S. Bach's *Six suites for unaccompanied cello*
 - e_1 the music as performed by Janos Starker and recorded in 1963 and 1965
 - m_1 recordings released on 33 1/3 rpm sound discs in 1965 by Mercury
 - m_2 recordings re-released on compact disc in 1991 by Mercury
 - e_2 the music as performed by Yo-Yo Ma and recorded in 1983
 - m_1 recordings released on 33 1/3 rpm sound discs in 1983 by CBS Records
 - m_2 recordings re-released on compact disc in 1992 by CBS Records

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Example

- w_1 J. S. Bach's *Goldberg variations*
 - e_1 the music as performed by Glen Gould and recorded in 1981
 - m_1 recording released on 33 1/3 rpm sound disc in 1982 by CBS Records
 - m_2 recording re-released on compact disc in 1993 by Sony