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Multilevel Structures and Russian Cataloguing Rules

Russian Cataloguing Rules (RCR) prescribes multilevel cataloguing or description for:

- multipart/multi-volume monographs,
- continuing resources,
- component part of a work

For cataloguing a component part of a work it is being discussed what to use: multilevel or one-level description. Multilevel description is more preferable from our point of view and that is against ISBD where one-level description is recommended in this case.

RCR admits 2 ways of multilevel cataloguing: by creating (1) one record or (2) two and more linked records.

1. Multilevel cataloguing (or description) in one record means the presence of the same (or almost the same) set of data (1) about a whole and (2) about components in this record. That is in this case several physical units are all described in one record with a description of a whole. A separate added record on each physical unit may be created. This kind of cataloguing is used if:
 - multipart work was issued in one physical unit,
 - all physically separate parts of a multipart work were received by the library the same time .
2. Multilevel cataloguing in two or more hierarchically linked separate records. In this case one record is created on a whole work containing the first level descriptive information and then separate records are created for the second and subsequent levels containing information about volumes or other physical units. So, each physical unit has a separate record linked to the record on the whole or main publication by linking field.
- 3 Monographic series issued in independent titled publications may be an object both for multilevel and one-level cataloguing:
 - multilevel cataloguing under a series title may be realized:
 - in one record,
 - in a set of records;the first level contains information under series title, the second level – information about every physically separate series issue, and when it is a set of records they are linked;
 - one-level description means that one bibliographic record is created for every titled volume where the individual title of a volume is used as a title proper and series title, volume number, etc. are given in series area.
4. New descriptions are created for every new expression/manifestation of multipart or continuing work. A new description is required when major changes in title proper

or in another data are made. In this case it is considered as a new work required a new description connected with previous expressions and manifestations.

5. For analytic description of a component part of a work we would like to suggest to use a multi-level description in one record where the first level is description of a component part as a main object of cataloguing and the second level is description of a whole work (monograph or continuing publication).

6. For several works formed one physical unit (collection without common title) one one-level description is created under the title of the first work with other works titles in content note.

Analysis of cataloguing rules of other countries (AACR, RAK, Katalogisieringsregler for danske biblioteker) shows that Russian rules are close to Danish rules, partially coincide with AACR and RAK and have more important differences with Lithuanian rules mainly in practice of using one record for multilevel description.

SUMMARY

1. There is a big variety of different conditions for applying one-level or multilevel description in cataloguing rules of different countries. And there are different interpretations of the concept “multilevel description” itself.

2. For international cataloguing rules it is necessary to reduce to a minimum the number of conditions having influence on choosing one-level or multilevel description.

3. It is necessary to exclude the orientation on:

- local catalogues including card catalogues,
- chronology of arrival of multipart publication issues to the library

4. The most preferable condition for multilevel description using a set of linked records should be existence of physically separate units of publication. In this connection we think that it would be more far-seeing to do a separate bibliographic record for each physical unit. As concern multipart or continuing bibliographic resources we think it should be applied a multilevel description where each physically separate part of a whole work has a separate record linked to the first-level record on a whole (common data for the multipart or continuing publication).

5. It is necessary to find a common point of view on the description of component parts (analytical description). A component part physically contained in a unit should be described in one record as an object for multilevel description. This record contains data about a component part and data about a whole. It is necessary to discuss and to define how to consider this description: multilevel or one-level.

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