



**IFLA Cataloguing Section
FRBR Review Group**

Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records

Chapter 3: Entities

Changes approved to the FRBR text

Clean Version

Prepared by the IFLA Working Group on the Expression Entity

Approved by the Standing Committee of the Cataloguing Section

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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)*. Such augmentations may, or may not, be considered significant enough to warrant distinct bibliographic identification.

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*. 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., may be considered as variations within the same *expression*.

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 notated music
 - **e₂** the musical work as performed by Rosina Lhevinne, piano, Stuart Sankey, double bass, and members of the Juilliard String Quartet
 - **e₃** the musical work as performed by Jörg Demus, piano, and the members of the Collegium Aureum
 - **e₄** the musical work as performed by Emanuel Ax, piano, members of the Guarneri String Quartet, and Julius Levine, double bass
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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*.

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*) 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 *manifestation*. However, for some applications of the model (e.g., early texts of rare manuscripts), each variation may be viewed as a different *expression*.