

Catalogers Group Minutes

February 15, 2007

Present: Nora Avetyan, Sharon Benamou, Valerie Bross, Hong Cheng, Ja Eun Ku, Toshie Marra, Caroline Miller, Louise Ratliff (recorder), John Riemer, Sharon Shafer, Hermine Vermeij

1. CONSER Standard Record. Valerie Bross reported on behalf of Melissa Beck. Implementation of the CONSER standard record has been deferred until a response has been received from all parties involved in the PCC extended community, including the Joint Steering Committee. See the announcement at: <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsoc/conserdelay.html> See also a powerpoint presentation at: <http://www.loc.gov/acq/conser/CONSERStandardRecord.ppt> There is a plan to develop a distance learning module, one of the first in the SCCTP series of training programs.

At this time an implementation date has not been decided; the hope is that the JSC will confirm the recommendations. Any outstanding problems or concerns will be discussed at the upcoming CONSER meeting, May 3-4, 2007.

Riemer asked if there is uncertainty about how people will use the new standard. Bross responded that the fullness and maintenance of records will be discussed at the CONSER meeting; users will compare experiences with their first uses of the standard. Miller asked whether any RLG libraries were interested in joining CONSER. The University of Pennsylvania has joined.

In an email status report, Beck provided information in addition to the above: Prospective SCCTP trainers have identified “gray areas” in the documentation, particularly in regard to catalog maintenance: how much should be done to existing cataloging, what kinds of maintenance activities will result in “hybrid” catalog records, etc. Local training should not be planned until we get closer to implementation because we still don’t even know what the CONSER Standard Record is.

2. OCLC Master Record vs. Institutional Records

http://www.rlg.org/en/page.php?Page_ID=21014

As part of the merger of RLG and OCLC, OCLC will preserve the capability for preserving institutional versions of bibliographic records in WorldCat. The RLIN database uses a cluster model whereby a master record is selected for display, but links are maintained to institutional versions of that record. Five sixths of RLG libraries stated they want to maintain their institutional records. This approach generally conflicts with recommendations of the Bibliographic Services Task Force report to share and work with a single copy of a bibliographic record for each title. Institutional records are desirable for rare materials where important descriptive differences among copies do not warrant input of a separate record in OCLC.

In the first phase of the merger, unique RLIN records will be loaded into WorldCat. About 16% of RLIN records are not in WorldCat, and about 2 million records per day are

being loaded. The last phase will install the institutional copies of the records and their clusters. Cross stated that this is similar to the old Melvyl design, which indexed all records but then selected one for display. The clustering supported by OCLC technology could also be helpful in dealing with parallel records (records for the same item but with cataloging done in different languages); the output of multiple mass digitization projects covering the same title; and the pre- and post-prints of a paper submitted to institutional repositories.

Institutional records will likely become an option available to all OCLC member institutions later on, at an additional cost. It is not known whether institutional records can be an option for selected categories of records or must be applied to all of an institution's cataloging.

3. WorldCat Identities project <http://orlabs.oclc.org/Identities/>

This is a data-mining project in WorldCat that pulls together information about personal and fictitious names. The opening web page shows a tag cloud of the top 100 identities. According to Thom Hickey's blog:

“The cloud at the top of this post is based on the surnames of the most widely held identities in WorldCat. One of the most striking aspects of the cloud is the number of composers that are widely held (about a third of the top 100). This project has been a lot of fun and I think it shows quite well some of the possibilities for the use of library bibliographic data.

“Of course, we couldn't stop with just people. Following FictionFinder's example (and some of their regular expressions), fictional/legendary characters (Robin Hood) and famous animals (Secretariat) have their own pages.”
http://outgoing.typepad.com/outgoing/2007/02/worldcat_identi.html

Riemer demonstrated a search for Victor Hugo. The results show groups of works, genres, subjects, roles, classifications, and a publication timeline. Also, the top works by and about Victor Hugo, general audience level of the entity's works, and related names. OCLC is soliciting feedback for several months (Feb.-Apr. 2007), especially from undergraduate users. UCLA has signed up as a beta tester; initial testers include: John Riemer, Sharon Shafer and Andy Kohler. He is hoping to get cataloger thoughts and involvement in identifying additional data mining that would be useful. **If you are interested in being a beta tester, please notify John.**

After the ALA Midwinter Meeting the scope of desired feedback broadened to:
Librarians: What uses do you imagine WorldCat Identities could serve in your information landscape, and What other links would make this possible?
Readers: How would you likely use it to pursue your research? Give examples where it was particularly helpful, or not.

Beta testers: Feedback needed on what additional information would be useful, anything that does not seem to work well.

Bross recommended that this should be linked to the OCLC digital archives, OCA and Google, especially to full text. A discussion followed, covering various ways and means of linking to other databases. Bross wondered if the authority record could become like an "ISSN" for identities to link them further; as more things link, more clustering could happen.

Catalogers Group next meeting: March 1, 2007

Agenda item: demonstration of new Cataloging & Metadata Center website (Ratliff)