BIBFRAME's Present and Future

Lesson 3 Transcript

Hello, and welcome to the BIBFRAME video tutorial series, presented by the Cataloging Policy Specialists in the Policy, Training, and Cooperative Programs Division at the Library of Congress. The scope and purpose of this series is to provide training on using BIBFRAME.

This video tutorial is Lesson 3, BIBFRAME's Present and Future.

In this video tutorial, participants will learn about what BIBFRAME's future looks like. They will be able to identify and describe the three core classes of BIBFRAME, and they will be introduced to linked data editors.

Today, we will begin with the objectives of the BIBFRAME model as they were initially outlined in November 2012. First, to differentiate clearly between conceptual content (or a work) and its physical manifestations (or instances). Second, to focus on unambiguously identifying information entities. And finally, to leverage and expose relationships between and among entities, which is also a basic premise of linked data.

The BIBFRAME model consists of three core classes that can be viewed as a simplified version of the FRBR Work-Expression-Manifestation-Item (or WEMI) model.

The BIBFRAME Work represents the conceptual essence of the resource being described. It is analogous to both the Work and Expression in RDA modeling. Its properties include contextual relationships to entities such as authors who are responsible for the creation of the resource and subjects that describe what the resource is about.

A Work may have one or more individual, material embodiments, or Instances, that can be physical or digital in nature. A BIBFRAME Instance is equivalent to a Manifestation in RDA modeling. Its properties include contextual relationships to entities related to the publication, production, and distribution of a resource.

A BIBFRAME Item is an actual physical or electronic copy of an Instance. It is similar to the RDA Item.

For BFProd, catalogers are primarily working with BIBFRAME Works and Instances in the Marva Quartz linked data editor.

Linked data editors are tools or platforms that allow users to edit and publish linked data. The Library's first linked data editor was the BIBFRAME Editor (or BFE) version 1.0 that was used during the first cataloging pilot in 2015-2016. The editor was redesigned and relaunched in June 2021. Around this time, the BIBFRAME Editor was renamed Marva in honor of Henriette Avram, who led the development of MARC at the Library of Congress in the 1960s and 1970s. The version of Marva that is currently being used for BFProd is Marva Quartz.

Other linked data editors exist and more are in development.

The Sinopia linked data editor is a cloud-based cooperative cataloging environment developed by the Linked Data for Production (LD4P) project, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and released in

2019. Sinopia uses Cornell's Questioning Authority look up service to provide access to controlled vocabularies.

JCricket is an entity editor and shared cataloging tool developed by the Share-VDE community. It operates on the Share-VDE Cluster Knowledge Base (CKB) and on the CKB of other Share Family tenants.

EBSCO is developing a linked data editor for FOLIO. OCLC, Alma, and other bibliographic utilities and library service platforms are also working on incorporating the BIBFRAME model and ontology, becoming linked data-friendly, and/or creating their own linked data editors.

Both BIBFRAME and the Marva linked data editor are intended to be agnostic to cataloging rules. This is a significant departure from the past, when the Anglo-American Cataloging Rules (AACR2) and the MARC encoding standard were so intertwined that people often conflated the two, referring to them as MARC cataloging.

Now we have BIBFRAME as our encoding standard, RDA for our cataloging rules, and Marva Quartz as our cataloging environment. At the same time, a relationship with MARC must be maintained because the Library of Congress is committed to providing MARC cataloging records to its distribution partners. Additionally, the Library needs to ensure compatibility between the new Marva metadata descriptions and existing MARC records (including authority data) and legacy data. These are the reasons why the Network Development and MARC Standards Office maintains BIBFRAME-to-MARC conversion specifications.

Catalogers at the Library of Congress will be working in a hybrid environment with both MARC bibliographic records and BIBFRAME metadata descriptions. Projects and working groups at other libraries and institutions point to wider implementation and adoption of the BIBFRAME model. In the meantime, "linky MARC," or MARC bibliographic records enriched with URIs are becoming more prevalent.

As BIBFRAME is adopted and implemented internationally, it will become more and more important to maintain standard BIBFRAME practice. To this end, some in the library linked data community would like to see a BIBFRAME steering group or advisory committee to manage changes to the encoding standard.

Thank you for watching this video tutorial. You can find more training, information, and support online at the Library of Congress.