To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA

From: Kathy Glennan, ALA Representative

Subject: Transcription of punctuation and symbols (1.7.3, 1.7.5)

ALA thanks CCC for this proposal to clarify alternatives to transcribing punctuation and symbols. We have a mixed reaction to adding these alternatives, since there already is a blanket provision for alternatives in 1.7.1 as the CCC proposal notes. While we have no strong objection to adding this guidance, we have some questions in relation to the changes proposed for 1.7.3. We also offer rewording suggestions for the proposed additions to both 1.7.3 and 1.7.5.

Adding alternative to 1.7.3

ALA believes that the suggested wording for the alternative can be greatly simplified. We see no added value in specifying that modification or omission of punctuation should occur if the transcription "significantly hinders clarity". Instead, we believe that the new text only needs to reference the need for clarity, following the model of the existing paragraph in 1.7.3 which addresses adding punctuation. We are unsure of the value of adding wording relating to spacing in this new text, since that really relates to display standards such as ISBD. Therefore we have not included spacing in our proposed revision.

Beyond the wording of the proposed alternative, the proposal caused ALA to take a closer look at the current text of 1.7.3. We think that the status of the paragraph "Add punctuation, as necessary, for clarity." should be reconsidered, since the primary instruction is to transcribe the punctuation as it appears on the resource. There are several different ways to present this paragraph within 1.7.3. The interpretation of the status of the "Add punctuation…" paragraph will help inform the decision about how to proceed with CCC's proposed alternative. ALA prefers the "alternative" approach (#2) described below.

The "add punctuation …" instruction could be treated as any of the following:

1. An additional instruction (***no change***): it is applicable in all situations.

    In this situation ALA recommends:

    a) Reconsidering the placement of the "Add punctuation…" paragraph within 1.7.3. If this is part of the primary instructions, we believe it should precede the exceptions.

    b) Combining the "Add punctuation…" paragraph with the instructions to modify or omit punctuation, keeping this as a primary instruction:

    If necessary for clarity, add, modify, or omit punctuation.

    c) Making the following the final paragraph in 1.7.3:

> Make a note to indicate that punctuation has been added, omitted or modified (see 2.17), if considered important for identification.

2. An *alternative*: this would leave guidance for adding punctuation to application profiles.

    In this situation ALA recommends:

    a) Incorporating the "Add punctuation…" guidance into the 1st paragraph of the proposed alternative to omit or modify punctuation.

    b) Simplifying the wording of the proposed CCC alternative to:

    > If necessary for clarity, add, modify, or omit punctuation.

    > Make a note to indicate that punctuation has been added, omitted or modified (see 2.17), if considered important for identification.

3. An *optional addition*: after all, the decision about clarity is based largely on cataloger's judgment. This would parallel the optional addition in 1.7.4 to add missing diacritical marks.

    In this situation ALA recommends:

    a) Creating an alternative for omitting or modifying punctuation that would follow the optional addition.

    b) Simplifying the wording of the proposed CCC alternative to:

    > If necessary for clarity, modify or omit punctuation.

    c) Making the following the final paragraph in 1.7.3, since the reasons to make a note should not exclude addition of punctuation:

    > Make a note to indicate that punctuation has been added, omitted or modified (see 2.17), if considered important for identification.

Finally, ALA observes that the examples CCC provided for the note encompass more than one element. This treatment is not currently supported by 2.17, which would require separate notes for punctuation substitution occurring in both the title and statement of responsibility.

Adding alternative to 1.7.5

If the JSC agrees to add an alternative here, we recommend simplifying the phrasing to:

> *Alternative*
>
> If necessary for clarity, omit or replace a symbol that can be reproduced by the facilities available.
>
> Make a note to indicate that the symbol has been omitted or modified (see 2.17), if considered important for identification.

[examples]