Pseudo-Elements

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Introduction

This paper proposes that community-based pseudo-elements be moved from the base RDA Toolkit instructions to the Community resources area of the RDA Toolkit as Community refinements of base RDA elements.

Background

At the start of the 3R Project, the RSC agreed that unless there was a conflict with the IFLA-LRM conceptual model, most instructions would be brought from the classic Toolkit into the new Toolkit.

The classic Toolkit contained many instructions for recording titles and access points for legal, musical, and religious works and expressions, and for official communications and their expressions. It also contained special instructions for agents related to legal and religious works.

During the development of the new Toolkit, all of the instructions relating to variant titles and variant access points were able to be placed into the element pages for variant access point for work, variant access point for expression, and variant title of work without adversely affecting length or readability of these element instructions.

The length of the element pages for authorized access point for work, authorized access point for expression, preferred title of work, and related agent of work was a problem encountered early on in the 3R project. After testing several approaches for resolving the problem, the decision was made by the Core team to link to separate "pseudo-element" pages for the legal, music, official communications, and religious content. While helping to solve the immediate problem of long page lengths, this solution was always recognized by the Core team as temporary.

Discussion

Pseudo-element problems

As implied by the name, the pseudo-elements are not true RDA elements and are not a part of RDA Reference. Because of this, the following content related to the pseudo-elements cannot be generated using the operational script:

- Element reference
- Glossary entries
- Broader and narrower elements

Additionally, pseudo-elements cannot be found using the element search box located at the bottom of each entity page. The only access to the pseudo-element pages is from the general search box in the Toolkit header or from a link on the element pages for preferred title of work, authorized access point for work, and authorized access point for expression.

In short, while having the appearance of element pages, the pseudo-element pages do not behave as other element pages and could potentially frustrate Toolkit users who are familiar with how the other element pages function.

Community resources

RSC decided at its October 2020 meeting that content related to specific communities should be removed from the base RDA instructions and placed in the Community resources area of the Toolkit.

This decision provides a way forward for treating the pseudo-elements as community-based refinements of base RDA instructions.

Recommendation 1: Move the existing pages for pseudo-elements from base RDA to Community resources as Community refinements of existing RDA elements.

Late in the 3R Project, the Core team adopted and implemented the policy that references to community resources within base RDA should be removed. The same would apply to references in base RDA to the pseudo-elements.

Recommendation 2: Remove all text from base RDA that references pseudo-elements.

Policy writers should be able to use the existing functionality in the Toolkit to provide a policy statement that links to a community refinement page in Community resources. Policy writers could also decide to present community refinements as policies that could be viewed in-line with the base RDA text.

A community refinement may also be annotated with policy statements using the existing functionality of the Toolkit, as can be done for any of the RDA elements or RDA guidance.

Building out community resources

If recommendation 1 is accepted, this would mean that a new type of resource would be added to Community resources: a community-based refinement of an existing RDA element.

Recommendation 3: Create a new area in Community resources for Community refinements. Organize content by entity and element, and then by community.

Example:

- Community resources
  - Community vocabularies
  - Community refinements
    - Expression
      - authorized access point for expression
        - Legal
        - Music
        - Official Communication
        - Religious
      - [other elements]
    - Work
      - authorized access point for work
        - Legal
        - Music
        - Official Communication
        - Religious
      - [other elements]

Adopting this structure mirrors the Toolkit organization of base RDA.

Impact

None of the recommendations require changes to RDA Reference.

If all of the recommendations are accepted, most of the impact would be on the structure of the Toolkit and the file structure of the CMS. 14 pseudo-elements would be moved from base RDA to Community resources:

- authorized access point for expression of legal work
- authorized access point for expression of musical work
- authorized access point for expression for official communication
- authorized access point for expression of religious work
- authorized access point for legal work
- authorized access point for musical work
- authorized access point for official communication
- authorized access point for religious work
- preferred title of legal work
- preferred title of musical work
- preferred title of official communication
- preferred title of religious work
- related agent of legal work
- related agent of religious work

The following text would be removed from the Prerecording section of Expression: authorized access point for expression:

> For instructions on constructing an authorized access point for an expression of a special kind of work, see:
>
> - Expression: authorized access point for expression of legal work
> - Expression: authorized access point for expression of musical work
> - Expression: authorized access point for expression for official communication
> - Expression: authorized access point for expression of religious work

The following text would be removed from the Prerecording section of Work: authorized access point for work:

> For instructions on constructing an authorized access point for a special kind of work, see:
>
> - Expression: authorized access point for legal work
> - Expression: authorized access point for musical work
> - Expression: authorized access point for official communication
> - Expression: authorized access point for religious work

The following text would be removed from the Prerecording section of Work: preferred title of work:

> For instructions on constructing a preferred title for a special kind of work, see:
>
> - Expression: preferred title of legal work

- Expression: preferred title of musical work
- Expression: preferred title of official communication
- Expression: preferred title of religious work

The following text would be removed from the Prerecording section of Work: related agent of work:

For instructions on agents associated with special kinds of works, see:

- Work: related agent of legal work
- Work: related agent of religious work

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Move existing pages for pseudo-elements from base RDA to Community resources as Community refinements of existing RDA elements.

Recommendation 2: Remove all text from base RDA that references pseudo-elements.

Recommendation 3: Create a new area in Community resources for Community refinements. Organize content by entity and element, and then by community.