

Understanding FRBR



Madely du Preez
Lecturer
preezm@unisa.ac.za
Tel: 012 429 6792





INTRODUCTION

- Modern cataloguing environment is complex
- Reasons for changing the way cataloguers think about organising information:
 - Advent of automated systems
 - Development of bibliographic databases
 - Copy cataloguing
 - Introduction of new formats
- Users experience a problem in finding the required information



Author search in OCLC for Ferber, Edna

- Author search for Ferber, Edna (January 2007)
- Retrieves 117 entries
- Default display is alphabetical by the title
- Only the following numbers are relevant:
 - #40: “five complete novels”, the 2nd is *Show Boat*
 - #73: “Reminiscence of Show Boat”
 - #84: title alone (1929 publication)
 - #85: microfilm version of the 1928 book, no date for filming
 - #86-87: Title with subtitle “A novel”
 - #88-91: Title alone (1943, 1926, 1935, and 2007) publications
 - #92: a microfilm version of the 1928 book
 - #93: version containing 3 novels
 - #115-116: two recordings published in 1988 and 1946 (Taylor 2007:2)



Title search in OCLC for *Show Boat*

Title search for *Show Boat* has 91 entries

#1: sound recording of selections from three shows, 1 is *Show boat*

#2: excerpts from *Show Boat and No, no Nanette* (1950)

#3: excerpts from *Show Boat and Roberta* (1950)

#4: version of the movie (1989)

#5: selections from *Show Boat and An American in Paris* (1960)

#6-7: versions of the movie (1951 and 1989)

#8: Show stoppers in dance time [sound rec] (1942)

#9: sound recording including *An incident from Show Boat* (n.d.)

#10-15: 6 of the 9 text versions shown under author Ferber

#16: a “highlights” sound recording (1949)

#17: themes sound recording (1942)

#18: vocal score

#19-20: movie versions (1920 and n.d.) (Taylor 2007:2)



Solution to the problem?

Taylor (2007:3) suggests a combination of:

- Accepting the principles and the entity-attribute-relationship model espoused by FRBR.
- Constructing rules for creating cataloguing and other metadata based on this model.
- Designing systems that will display cataloguing metadata using the model conceptualised in FRBR.



What is FRBR?

Conceptual model aimed at improving cataloguing records (product); cataloguing (process); and catalogues

- A hierarchical system
- Defines families of relationships between records
- A tool for modeling the bibliographic universe
- Highly theoretical and system-neutral
- Evokes sets of records
- RDA is based on FRBR



What are FRBR entities

Entities are “key objects of interest to users” of a database (FRBR 3.1)



User requirements

Users require four things from a database

- Find entities
- Identify entities
- Select an entity from the resulting group
- Obtain the selected entity



What does FRBR do?

- Describes the entities in the bibliographic universe, their relationships, and attributes.
- It describes user tasks that serve as criteria to determine which attributes and relationships are important in a bibliographic description.
- FRBR includes former mandatory data elements (attributes) to include in a national bibliographic record



Why use FRBR?

- FRBR enables database designers to consider the functions a catalogue should fulfill (including 4 user tasks).
- FRBR takes advantage of the capabilities of digital technology
- FRBR allows for a better arrangement and collocation of bibliographic records in a database



Why use FRBR?

Better collocation = Better navigation
e.g. Different filmed versions of Romeo and Juliet:

language of production sets
subsets for DVDs and
videocassettes

Promises better navigational displays



FRBR vocabulary

- FRBR vocabulary is divided into three groups:
 - Cataloguing terms
 - Bibliographic relationships
 - User tasks
- The clustering of cataloguing terms into groups promotes interaction among terms and the forming of relationships



FRBR GROUPS

- GROUP 1: The “products of intellectual or artistic endeavour” : *work, expression, manifestation, and item*
- GROUP 2: Entities responsible for the production of Group 1 entities: *person, corporate body* and an entity defined for FRAD, *family*
- GROUP 3: Entities that “serve as subjects of *works*”



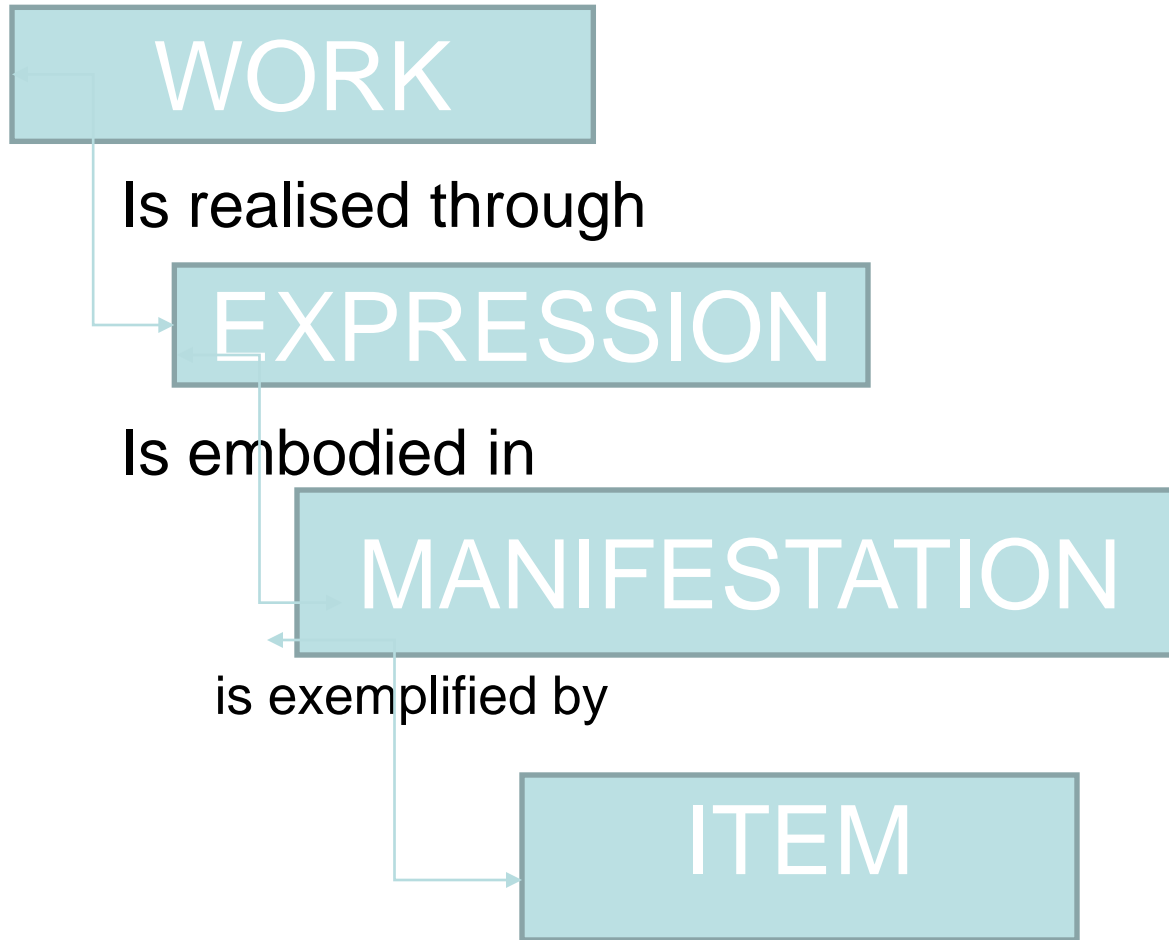
Relationships among entities

The primary relationships among Group 1 entities hierarchically links the entities:

- A *work* is realised through an *expression*
- An *expression* is 'embodied in' a *manifestation*,
- A *manifestation* 'is exemplified' by an item.

FRBR Model

GROUP 1 Entities





WORK

The work is a unique creation of the intellect, which may inspire other works in different media (e.g. the film of the book), or which may be expressed in other languages (i.e. the translation of the work) or forms (e.g. arrangement of a musical work, or narration of a novel). Works and expressions can be manifested when issued or published as physical items, for example a manuscript. A single work can have many manifestations. A manifestation can consist of many items or just one (FRBR 1998)





Attributes that define WORK

12 attributes define work and distinguishes it from other entities in the FRBR model, these include:

- Title of work, form of work, date of work, other distinguishing characteristics, intended termination, intended audience, context of the work.
- For musical works: medium of performance, numeric designation, and key
- For cartographic materials: coordinates and equinox



EXPRESSION

DEFINITION: *Expression* is the ‘intellectual or artistic realisation of a *work* in the form of alpha-numeric, musical, or choreographic notation, sound, image, object, movement, etc., or any combination of such forms’ (FRBR 1998:3.2.2).

- Implication of the word ‘realisation’ is that a work cannot be real until it finds an expression.
- The definition defines the boundaries of *expression* and excludes aspects of physical form such as layout and script.



Attributes for expression

25 attributes for expression. The six principle attributes are:

title of expression,

form of expression,

date of expression,

language of expression,

other distinguishing characteristics,

extensibility of expression



MANIFESTATION

The *manifestation* is the physical embodiment of an expression of a work. A manifestation can exist in any physical form



Attributes for Manifestation

38 attributes for manifestation. The most important attributes are:

Title of manifestation; statement of responsibility; edition statement; place of publication/distribution; publisher/distributor; date of publication/distribution; series statement; form of carrier; extent of carrier; physical medium; capture mode; dimensions of carrier; manifestation identifier (e.g. ISBN or ISSN)



ITEM

Item. This is a single example of a manifestation – a book, a video, a musical recording



Attributes for Item

Nine attributes for item. The 4 most important ones are:

- Item identifier (e.g. accession number)
- Fingerprint (e.g. a group of rare books from a specific print type)
- Provenance of the item (records of previous ownership)
- Marks or inscriptions made by previous owners



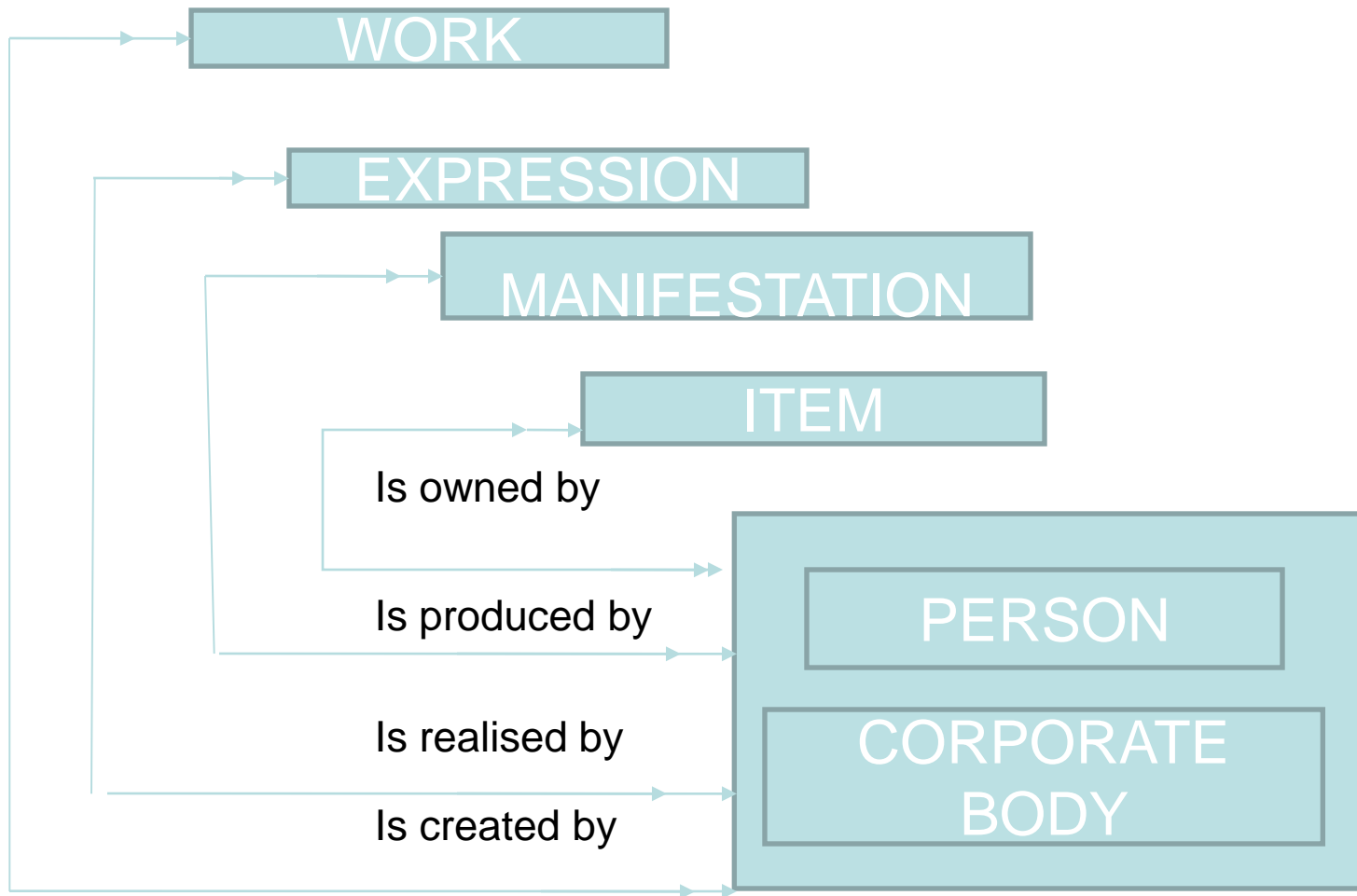
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN Group 1 and Group 2 entities

Certain relationships present the “role” of the Group 2 entities to the Group 1 entities:

- A “created by” relationship links a *person* or a *corporate body* to a *work*
- A “realized by” relationship links to the *expression*
- “produced by” links to the *manifestation*
- “owned by” links to the *item*

FRBR Model

GROUP 2 Entities





GROUP 2 ENTITIES

Entities responsible for

- intellectual or artistic content
- Physical production and dissemination

Entities that own Group 1 entities

- Person
- Corporate body

Entities defined for Functional Requirements for Authority Data (FRAD):

- Family



GROUP 2 ENTITIES

Continued

Explanations for Group 2 entities:

- Production: a poet can ‘produce’ a poem (a *work*);
- a translator can ‘produce’ a translation (*expression*);
- a publisher can ‘produce’ a publication (*manifestation*);
- a binder can ‘produce’ an item.



Person

- *Person* represents those persons responsible for the intellectual or artistic content, the physical production and dissemination, or custodianship of the entities of the first group” (FRBR 3.1.2, 13)
- Persons can also have relationships with other Group 2 entities. A person can for example write under different pseudonyms
- Persons can also have relationships with Group 3 entities (topics), e.g. Nataniel is an author, composer and an actor



Attributes for Person

Four attributes for person:

- Name of person
- Dates of person
- Title of person
- Any other designation associated with the person



Corporate body

“an organisation or group of individuals and/or organisations acting as a unit” (FRBR 1998:3.2.6)

- Can have relationships with any Group 1 entity and with other Group 2 entities:
predecessor and successor bodies
- Can have relationships with Group 3 entities: e.g. Ladysmith Black Mambaza has a relationship to the concept choral music and African culture.

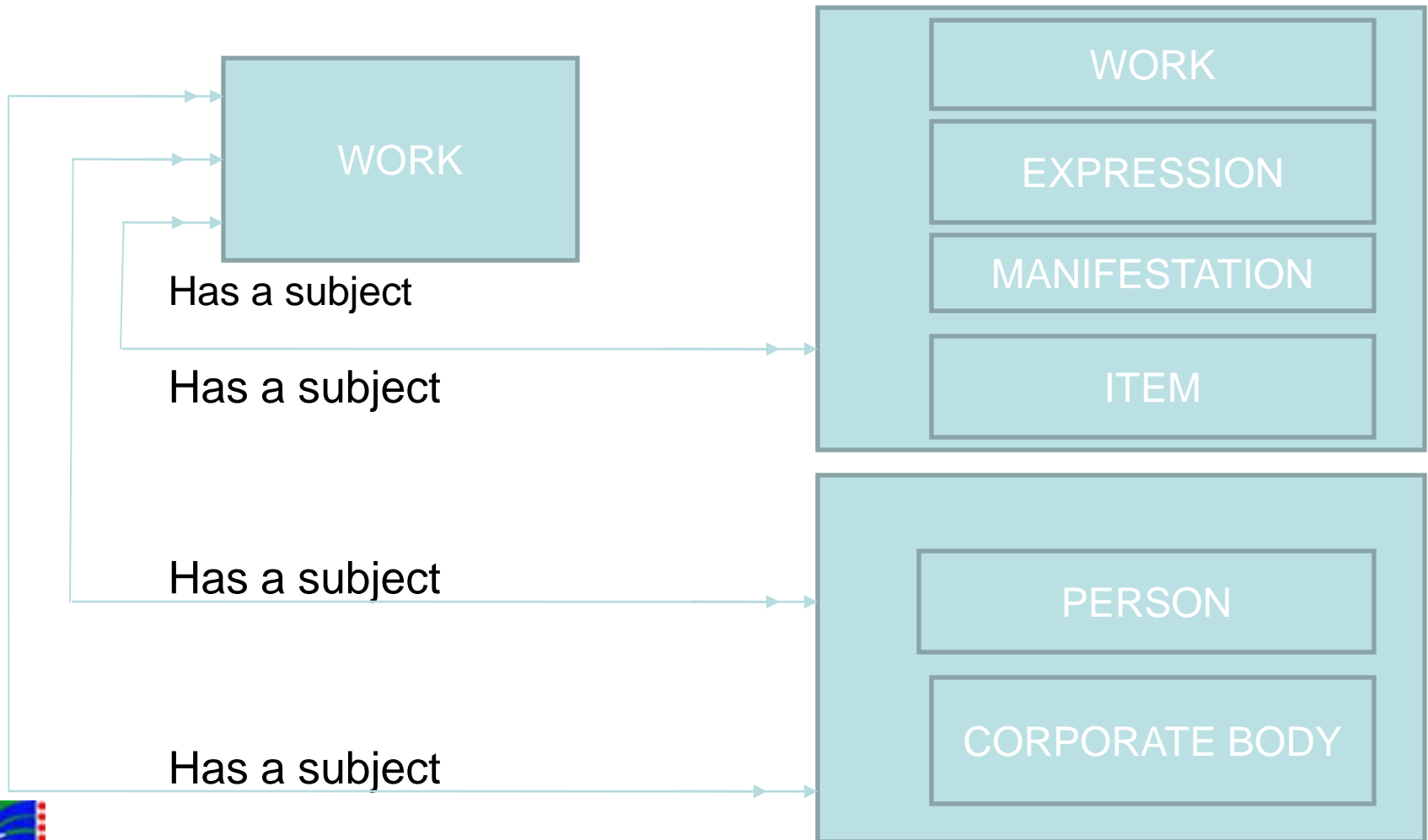


Family

- Family is a third Group 2 entity identified by FRAD, but not by FRBR.
- Definition: *family* is “two or more persons related by birth, marriage, adoption, or similar legal status, or otherwise present themselves as a family”.
- The four attributes FRAD defines for *family* are: “type of family,” “dates of family”, “places associated with family”, and “name of family.”

FRBR

GROUP 3 Entities





Attributes for Subject

- Concept - an abstract notion or idea
- Object – a material thing
- Event – an action or occurrences
- Place – location



FRBR's influences and applications

- A conceptual model for the structuring of bibliographic databases
- Indicates the attributes of important data elements required for the identification of resources
- FRBRised catalogues will:
 - enhance existing library catalogues to add bibliographic relationships to surface in the retrieval phase
 - design or adapt new interfaces and displays to reflect the relationships among records.





FRBR's influences and applications

FRBR most suitable to a variety of other information settings and collections that are format-based and domain specific, e.g. traditional libraries, consortia, digital libraries, institutional repositories, internet archives, museums and portals



FRBR Challenges

- Claims to be system neutral
- Producing cataloguing software based on FRBR principles
- Expression entity challenges - bibliographic records often don't document illustrators and other contributors
- The rule of three: Too often one can only ascertain that two expressions or manifestations are the same by recataloguing them.
- Change and variation of work identifiers, both authors and titles
- Acceptance of FRBR as a being necessary and useful.



CONCLUSION

- FRBR is only a conceptual model
- Few online catalogues based on FRBR principles have been developed to date
- Future research will be required to determine whether FRBRised online catalogues really live up to the expectations cataloguers and system designers have of FRBR



BIBLIOGRAPHY

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). Study Group on the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records. 1998. *Functional requirements for bibliographic records: final report*. München: Saur. Available: www.ifla.org/VII/s13/frbr/frbr.htm (Accessed: 06 January 2009).

Maxwell, RL. 2008. *FRBR: a guide for the perplexed*. Chicago: American Library Association.

Taylor, A. 2007. An introduction to functional requirements for bibliographic records (FRBR), in *Understanding FRBR: what it is and how it will affect our retrieval tools*, edited by AG Taylor. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited.

Yee, MM. 2005. FRBRization: a method for turning online public finding lists into online public catalogs. *Information Technology and Libraries* 24(2):77-96

