# RDA in Turkey:
# Perceptions and Expectations on Implementation

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## Introduction

The enormous developments in information technology lead to changes in cataloging rules, principles, standards, and library catalogs. These changes bring a complex, challenging, deeply inter-related, and dynamic structure to deal with in cataloging implementations. The new platform in which the needs of library users are taken into consideration is formulated by libraries and technologists.

RDA especially gives some opportunities to identify information resources, create inter-related metadata in digital environment, help libraries keep in touch with semantic web, and encourage international collaborations. Many countries have undergone a change in their national cataloging codes, policies and implementations to update them for creating new structures for future applications. These changes affect catalogers as the creators of bibliographic records. This study explores the implications of RDA on the bibliographic universe and applications based on information organisation, how the catalogers are affected by these developments,

and the perceptions and expectations of catalogers in accordance with RDA development and implementations in Turkey.

# New cataloging code: RDA

The Anglo-American Cataloging Rules (AACR) published in 1967 are regarded as the most important cataloging rules to organize information resources such as books and serials. These rules have changed in time and the second edition of AACR was published in 1978. AACR2 was revised and updated in 1988, 1998 and 2002 in parallel with the developments in information technology and changes in information resources. In 2004, AACR3 was intended to be a revised version of the cataloging rules. However, instead of a revision, a new standard was agreed on by the Joint Steering Committee (JSC). In this framework, RDA was created as a new standard based on the drafts of AARC3.

RDA, Resource Description and Access, which has replaced the AACR2 can be described as a new cataloging standard in the digital environment to provide guidelines regarding listing bibliographic resources more functionally, defining information resources in all formats, sharing metadata in digital environment, and the integration of libraries with Semantic Web.

RDA, developed by the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) for Development of RDA, with representatives from the ALA, Canadian Library Association, the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), Library of Congress, Library and Archives Canada, the British Library and National Library of Australia was published in RDA Toolkit in 2010. It is supposed to reshape the bibliographic universe, library catalogs and cataloging implementations.

RDA has the foundations of the principles, conceptual models, and standards of AACR2, FRBR, FRAD and ISBD. It allows the recording of what is seen by using the International Cataloging Principles (ICP)

rule of representation, eliminates incomprehensible abbreviations, uses related FRBR entities (finding, identifying, selecting and obtaining information resources users need), and supplies better display opportunities in library catalogs for clustering information about titles and authority data. Additionally, it helps users locate the items that they require more conveniently and functionally.

These functional requirements will provide a new perspective about structure and relationships between bibliographic and authority records. FRBR and FRAD will bring a level of bibliographic control for all types of material while integrating users' tasks and their searching criteria to help with "finding, identifying, selecting, and obtaining" resources.

Among the facilities of RDA will be flexibility and extensibility in sharing and exchanging the data, clear interpretation of the cataloging rules and standards and easy understanding by users of the online catalog, open cataloging workflow with ready tools supporting export/import of data on the web, global accessibility and delivery of information in the digital environment and increasing users' satisfaction. JSC also confirms and explains that RDA, as a new information resource description principle, will provide a flexibility between analog and digital resources in terms of description procedures, adaptable data structures, and compatibility with existing records stored in library catalogs.

On the other hand, Tillett briefly summarizes the differences between AACR2 and RDA under the following titles:

- *Reference Points*: In contrast to AACR2, the reference points used for RDA developments are specified as IFLA's International Cataloguing Principles in RDA. Plus, their relationships with RDA elements were linked in order to provide instructions for catalogers.

- *Abbreviations*: RDA eliminates Latin abbreviations used in AACR2 which are not comprehensible for users.

- *Description of Access Points*: RDA provides a cataloger centered decision making system for description of access points such as explanation of authors and other contributors.

- *Interlinks with authority files, access points open data sources*: RDA with its relational structures, changes the concept of main entry as a result of the explanation of authority data instructions. It is clear that RDA also can provide detailed characteristics of resources, authors or other metadata fields by interlinking with open data sources such as book covers, author biographies and so on.

Beyond B. Tillett's expressions on differences between RDA and AACR2, it is also possible to infer that RDA varies from AACR2 with three main points. These points are terminology, structure and rules. In this context, catalogers are required to know new concepts and their attributes different from AACR2 (e.g.: "work", "expression", "manifestation", "item", "relationship", "element", "access point", "access point for creator or title of a work", "creator", "preferred title for a work", "identifier", "preferred access point", "variant access point"). Furthermore, RDA consists of 10 chapters listed under two section in contrast to AACR2 in terms of structure and depending on the different structure, RDA provide different and updated rules list for catalogers. It also effects MARC fields. All these developments reflect that RDA brings significant improvements and it will be essential for the description and organisation of various kinds of information resources in the future Web environments. Changing to RDA brings some immediate improvements, but it also lays the groundwork for future improvements. There are advantages that will be seen on day one, advantages that will require a sufficiently large body of RDA data before they become apparent, advantages that necessitate software improvements to fully exploit the changes, and, finally, advantages that will be realized in future Web environments. Today many libraries have started to test RDA to organize all kinds of information resources they have. The increasing

importance of RDA implementation requires the adaptation of a new bibliographic environment by removing the existing problems. Therefore, it is crucial to determine the awareness, perceptions and expectations of catalogers as regards RDA and their institutional efforts about the transition to RDA.

# Research Design

The aim of the study is to evaluate awareness, perceptions and expectations of catalogers in academic libraries where new developments about information services are widely and quickly used and implemented. This study therefore reflects research that was conducted on catalogers in academic libraries in Turkey. It can be said that this study provides an insight on Turkish catalogers' views s on transition to RDA and complements similar studies.

Following the research objectives, this study identifies proficiency levels of catalogers regarding implementations and processes of RDA. The research presented in the study particularly demonstrates the current awareness and perception levels towards RDA implementation in Turkish academic libraries, utilizing the description method widely used in social sciences. In order to obtain meaningful results the study research questions were stated as follows:

- What are the perspectives of catalogers regarding terminology of RDA?
- What are the current viewpoints of catalogers about RDA structure?
- What are the current awareness and perceptions of catalogers on requirements for RDA implementation and changing rules?

# Data collection & analysis

In accordance with the research design data were gathered from librarians who work in cataloging sections of academic libraries via an online survey. In this context intentional sampling was used to determine target group. The statements given in the research instrument were mostly based on the Sanchez's study titled, "RDA, AACR2, and You: What Catalogers Are Thinking". The developed statements were translated into Turkish in order to increase response rate. 76 responses were received from the online survey disseminated to catalogers via email and local LIS discussion lists.

Qualitative findings obtained via the questionnaires were analyzed using the program PASW (Predictive Analytics SoftWare). Descriptive statistics were used for analyses. Obtained results handled under the four titles consisting of the implementation phases and three main points (terminology, structure and rules) of RDA. Data were gathered from more than 20 different organizations mainly consisting of research and university libraries and their cataloging units. These organizations are listed in Table 1.

| Libraries |
| --- |
| Abant İzzat Baysal University Library |
| Anadolu University Library |
| Başkent University Library |
| Beykent University Library |
| Boğaziçi University Library |
| Hacettepe University |
| İnönü University Library |
| İpek University Library |
| İstanbul Technical University |
| İstanbul University |
| İstanbul Gelişim University Library |
| Karadeniz Technical University |
| Kocaeli University Library |

| Middle East Technical University |
| National Library of Turkey |
| Ondokuz Mayıs University Library |
| Selçuk University Library |
| Sinop University Library |
| Uludağ University Library |
| Yaşar University Library |

**Table1: Participant Libraries**

# Findings

The findings we report here are those that show particularly the perspectives of catalogers about terminology of RDA, their current view points about RDA structure and their current awareness and perceptions on requirements for RDA implementation and changing rules.

### RDA Terminology

At the beginning of the survey, statements about RDA terminology were directed to catalogers by three Likert Scale questions (1 to 3). Results obtained from catalogers are presented in Table 2.

|  | I understand and I agree | | I have no idea or I don't understand | | I understand and I disagree | | No Answer | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| RDA's defined element set allows our bibliographic data to be more easily shared in many different formats. | 60 | 79 | 7 | 9.2 | 2 | 2.6 | 7 | 9.2 |
| RDA's vocabularies and Element set have consistent and complete terminology to describe the relationships | 15 | 19.7 | 40 | 52.6 | 4 | 5.3 | 17 | 22.4 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| between FRBR and RDA Elements etc. | | | | | | | | |
| Latin abbreviations no longer transcend linguistic boundaries. | 51 | 67.1 | 10 | 13.2 | 3 | 3.9 | 12 | 15.8 |

**Table 2: RDA Terminology**

According to the results, more than three quarters of the participants (79%) confirmed that RDA elements enable sharing of bibliographic data between different description formats. On the other hand, only 2.6% of the participants stated that they do not agree with the idea of bibliographic data sharing between different description formats through RDA elements. Results also show that more than half of the participants (52.6%) have no idea or they do not understand the statement about RDA vocabularies and RDA element set and its terminology. More than one-fifth (22.4%) of the participants. did not responded to the statement. Furthermore, more than two-thirds of the participants (67.1%) considered the grammatical efficiency levels of Latin abbreviations are low. Only a few catalogers (3.9%) stated that grammatical efficiency level of Latin abbreviations is sufficient. This statement was not marked by the 15.8% of the participants. In this context, it is clear that catalogers are aware of the significance of RDA Terminology, but they have some problems in relationship between FRBR and RDA in terms of terminology. In addition, the rates of the statements which have no response show the lack of knowledge about related subjects.

*RDA Structure*

Catalogers were asked to indicate their understanding of the given statements regarding RDA structure. The ratings related to perceptions of catalogers are displayed in Table 3.

| | I understand and I agree | I have no idea or I don't understan | I understand and I disagree | No Answer |
|---|---|---|---|---|

| | N | % | d N | % | N | % | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AACR2 is too bound to the limitations of the card environment. | 36 | 47.4 | 9 | 11.8 | 18 | 23.7 | 13 | 17.1 |
| FRBRized catalogs, using RDA rules linking all types of works, expressions, manifestations and items, are a necessary requirement for future online catalogs. | 57 | 75.00 | 8 | 10.5 | 3 | 4.0 | 8 | 10.5 |
| The underlying FRBR model supports linking between entities such as works and persons, allowing the description of relationships between them. | 33 | 43.4 | 28 | 36.8 | 1 | 1.3 | 14 | 18.5 |
| Machine-generated automatically applied publisher and vendor data is sufficient for a basic record, providing the necessary quality data for subsequent building on that record. | 60 | 78.9 | 6 | 7.9 | 4 | 5.3 | 6 | 7.9 |

**Table 3: RDA Structure**

In Table 3, it is seen that 47.4% of the participants explained that AACR2 rules mostly depended on the card catalog structure, while 11.8% have no idea or don't understand the presented statement. Also, 23.7% do not think that AACR2 is too bound to the limitations of the card environment. Perspectives of catalogers towards the requirements of the conceptual models such as FRBR for the RDA implementation were investigated via another question. According to the results, three quarter of the respondents (75%) think that library catalogs empowered with conceptual models and RDA are important for the creation of next generation library catalogs. Only 4% stated that this structure is not important for the next generation library catalogs and the question was not responded to by 10.5% of

the participants. 43.4% of the participants agreed that the FRBR conceptual model allows the description of relationships between works and corporate bodies, authors and creators. Furthermore, 36.8% of the participants pointed out that they don't understand the statement or they don't have an idea about the given statement. Moreover, 78.9% expressed that re-use of publisher information created by computers in a standardized format is important and valuable. These findings indicate that catalogers mostly understand and agree with all the statements about RDA structure, but it is interesting that some catalogers have no idea and do not undertand the statements.

### RDA Implementation

In this section, catalogers were probed about their current awareness and perceptions on RDA Implementation. The findings are shown in Table 4.

| | I understand and I agree | | I have no idea or I don't understand | | I understand and I disagree | | No Answer | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| RDA Implementation creates stress for catalogers and libraries. | 37 | 48.7 | 6 | 7.9 | 26 | 34.2 | 7 | 9.2 |
| It is important to encourage publisher or distributor RDA use, and to eliminate the re-description of information objects. | 57 | 75 | 9 | 11.8 | 3 | 3.9 | 7 | 9.3 |

**Table 4: RDA Implementation**

Table 4 reveals that almost half of the catalogers (48.7%) understand and agree that RDA implementation processes create stress for their libraries and for their workspaces. On the other hand, more than

one-third (34.2%) of the respondents explain that RDA implementation processes do not create stress in their worklifes. Besides, three quarters of the participants considered that encouragement of publishers for the use of RDA for their records will eliminate the re-description of information objects.

According to these findings, it is obvious that RDA implementation has put pressure on most of the catalogers and libraries. Also publishers and distributors are mostly considered to have the responsibility regarding RDA use and this will help in facilitating the description of information resources.

### *RDA Rules*

At the end of the survey, statements about RDA rules were presented to participants in order to get catalogers' understandings. The results obtained are displayed in Table 5.

| | I understand and I agree | | I have no idea or I don't understand | | I understand and I disagree | | No Answer | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| AACR2's transcription rules and exceptions for corrections and abbreviations impede automated data re-use and cause difficulties for non-library entities. | 46 | 60.5 | 10 | 13.2 | 4 | 5.3 | 16 | 21.0 |
| RDA's take-what-you-see in transcription approach facilitates re-use of metadata from non-library entities and enables automated machine matching. | 49 | 64.5 | 12 | 15.8 | 3 | 3.9 | 12 | 15.8 |
| RDA's elimination of tracing only 3 added | 57 | 75.0 | 5 | 6.6 | 6 | 7.9 | 8 | 10.5 |

| authors increases user access, improve machine-processing, provides better representation of the resource. | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | |

**Table 5: RDA Rules**

According to the findings, most of the catalogers (60.5%) stated that AACR2 rules and abbreviations block the automatic usage of cataloging data. 13.2% of the participants considered that they have no idea or they do not understand the statement. Only 5.3% stated that there are no barriers in cataloging in terms of AACR2 rules and abbreviation usage. Moreover, this statement was not rated by the 21% of the participants. Secondly, catalogers were queried regarding the statement that RDA's "take what you see" approach's impacts on providing easiness for reuse and mapping of description fields by computer. Almost two-third of the catalogers (64.9%) marked that they understood the statement and agreed with the presented idea while 15.8% of the participants indicated that they had no idea about the statement or they did not understand it. Only 3.9% explained that they disagreed with the statement. In addition, three quarter of the participants (75%) believed that RDA Rules increase access to works, which are created by more than three authors, provide mapping of description fields, and improve machine-processability of bibliographic records.

Table 4 points that most of the catalogers know how RDA rules affect description and access of information resources. However, the rate of catalogers who are not aware of this effect is high.

# Conclusion and recommendations

Today's library catalogs are changing faces of libraries with their new structures empowered by RDA, conceptual models, authority lists and linked data. Especially with the development of RDA, many studies and assessments were conducted for RDA implementation

phase. As these studies reflected that transition to RDA and its implementation phases varies between countries as a result of different cultures, languages and community characteristics. As a developing country Turkey also has similar problems with other countries, as well as different issues in the context of RDA implementation. All kinds of libraries in Turkey use Anglo American Cataloging Rules Second Revised Version and MAchine Readable Cataloging in order to describe information resources. However, some libraries have been observed to utilize different rules which create some problems. Moreover, there is no national cataloging policy, subject and author headings lists, the catalogers have lack of knowledge and experience about new rules, standards and models. It is also possible to state that catalogers encounter problems in cooperation and their needs of in-service training are not met. Plus, copy catalogers use the headings of records they download directly or by translating them into Turkish. There are differences between the records related to the period and persons in Turkey. On the other hand, there are some efforts that have been expended in order to increase awareness level of catalogers about RDA. In 2013, many scientific events were organized in collaboration with professional associations such as University and Research Librarians' Association in Turkey and Turkish Library Associations, LIS Departments, RDA Working Group (namely known as RDA Turkey) and National Library of Turkey.

As a conclusion of the study, the findings show that there is an educational need for catalogers especially on RDA element set and RDA vocabularies as well as their relationships with conceptual models. It is also seen in the results that publishers and vendors should use RDA for creating standardized bibliographic records of their published works. Although catalogers evaluated RDA implementation processes as a stressfull period for their libraries and for their workspaces, they describe RDA as an important tool that increases resource discovery, improves machine-process, and provides interoperability in order to create next generation library

catalogs. At this point, it is recommended that different training formats be used for catalogers to increase their proficieny levels of RDA. One of them is in-service training by academicians such as face to face education, group education and web-based distance education. Also, to simplify the proces of inservice training, some catalogers can be trained as trainers of trainees in order that they can train others within the library. Moreover, educational documents, brochures and guidelines about RDA can be prepared by the experts and professionals. Library associations can also undertake the organization of some conferences, workshops and seminars on RDA. Finally, it is essential for libraries to send employees to the national and international conferences and educational programmes where they could take advantage of best practices of RDA. All of these suggestions will provide catalogers with a sufficient level about RDA terminology, structure, implementation and rules. They will also make the transition into RDA easier and faster.

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ABSTRACT: Integration of user-generated content with library catalogs become more important with the developments in web technologies and semantic networks. As a result of these developments, library catalogs are linked with open data resources like the Virtual International Authority File (VIAF), DBpedia, and amazon.com with the aim of bibliographic description via Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) based structures.

On the other hand "Resource Description and Access" (RDA), as a new cataloging standard, supports libraries for their bibliographic description studies by increasing access points. Furthermore, many initiatives have been launched by countries who would like to keep themselves up-to-date by using and implementing RDA in their library catalogs. In this context, improving catalogers' opinions and perceptions regarding RDA implementations is of great importance.

This study aims to reveal the requirements, awareness and perceptions of catalogers in academic libraries in Turkey regarding RDA developments and implementations.

KEYWORDS: Academic libraries, Cataloguing, Resource Description and Access, RDA, Turkey.