

To: ALA/ALCTS/CCS Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access

From: Shi Deng, Chair, ALA/ALCTS/CCS Committee on Cataloging; Asian and African Materials (CC:AAM)

Subject: Revised proposal to delete the Turkish word "bir" from Appendix E (Initial Articles)

Background and rationale

Since its 2001 revision, the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules* (Appendix E) has included a list of initial articles to be omitted in headings constructed per rules 22.11D, 24.5A, 25.2C, and 26.1A. The list includes the Turkish word "bir," which it identifies as a definite or indefinite article.

CC:AAM believes that the Turkish word "bir" should be deleted from Appendix E of AACR2 for the following reasons:

1. Modern grammarians do not class "bir" as an indefinite article.
2. Current practice in North America and Turkey, as determined by searching OPAC records, is to regard the "bir" as a significant word rather than an indefinite article to be disregarded.

"Bir" can be used as both an ordinal numeral and an indefinite article, but when "bir" does serve as an indefinite article, it normally comes between adjective and noun; when it means "one", it precedes the adjective as do all other numerals.¹ This eliminates the possibility that "bir" could be an indefinite article at the beginning of a heading or at the beginning of a title.

In the interest of correctness and uniformity in the practice of heading construction using AACR rules 22.11D, 24.5A, 25.2C, and 26.1A, CC:AAM recommends that "bir" be removed from the Appendix E list.

This proposal was endorsed by a unanimous vote at the Middle East Librarians Association (MELA) annual meeting on November 23, 2002 (see the Appendix below).

CC:AAM is aware that the AACR2 Appendix E list is derived from the *MARC Format for Authority and Bibliographic Data* list "Initial Definite and Indefinite Articles"² maintained by the Network Development and MARC Standards Office, Library of Congress. In May 2003, Michael Chohey received confirmation from Robert Ewald at the Library of Congress that it is appropriate for a rule revision proposal of this sort to originate with a constituent body of the Joint Steering Committee for the Revision of AACR2.

¹ Lewis, Geoffrey. *Turkish grammar*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 51.

² Available at <http://www.loc.gov/marc/bibliographic/bdapp-e.html>

CC:DA suggested at its 2003 Annual Meeting in Toronto that CC:AAM obtain an endorsement for this proposal from the National Library of Turkey. Requests to that organization for such a statement have gone unanswered, so CC:AAM is re-submitting this proposal.

Proposed revision

| ARTICLE(S) | LANGUAGE |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| ... | |
| *bat | Basque |
| *bir | Turkish |
| d' | English |
| ... | |

Clean copy of revised rule

| ARTICLE(S) | LANGUAGE |
|------------|----------|
| ... | |
| *bat | Basque |
| d' | English |
| ... | |

**Appendix:
Endorsement of the proposal by the
Middle Eastern Librarians Association**

17 December 2002

John Eilts, Chair
CC:AAM Bir Task Force
Stanford University Libraries
123I Green Library
Stanford, CA 94305-6004

Dear John:

The Middle East Librarians Association (MELA) at its annual meeting on 23rd November 2002 voted unanimously to endorse the following statement:

The Turkish word “Bir” should be deleted from Appendix E of the AACR2, for the following reasons.

1. Modern grammarians do not class “bir” as an indefinite article.
2. Current practice in North American and Turkey as determined by searching OPAC records is to regard the "bir" as a significant word rather than an indefinite article to be disregarded.

On behalf of the Middle East Librarians Association, I would like to thank you for your hard work on this committee and for your efforts to resolve this thorny issue.

Sincerely,

David Hirsch
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