



TECHNISCHE
UNIVERSITÄT
DRESDEN

FOUNDATIONS OF SEMANTIC WEB TECHNOLOGIES

Semantics of SPARQL

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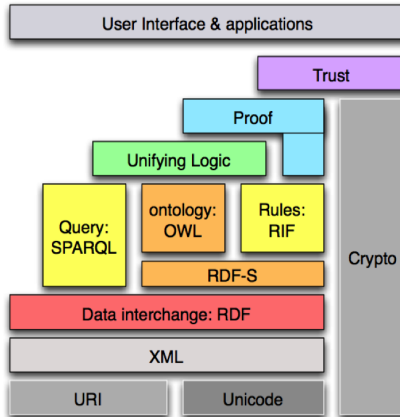


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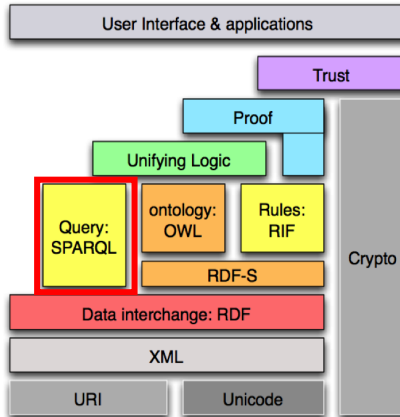
Content

Overview & XML	9 APR DS2	Hypertableau II	7 JUN DS5
Introduction into RDF	9 APR DS3	Tutorial 5	11 JUN DS2
RDFS – Syntax & Intuition	12 APR DS5	SPARQL Syntax & Intuition	11 JUN DS3
RDFS – Semantics	16 APR DS2	SPARQL – Semantics	14 JUN DS2
RDFS Rule-based Reasoning	16 APR DS3	SPARQL Algebra	14 JUN DS3
Tutorial 1	19 APR DS5	SPARQL 1.1	14 JUN DS5
OWL – Syntax & Intuition	26 APR DS5	Tutorial 6	18 JUN DS2
Tutorial 2	3 MAY DS5	SPARQL Entailment	18 JUN DS3
OWL – Syntax & Intuition ctd.	7 MAY DS2	Ontology Editing	2 JUL DS2
OWL & Description Logics	7 MAY DS3	Ontology Engineering	2 JUL DS3
OWL 2	10 MAY DS5	Tutorial 7	9 JUL DS2
Tutorial 3	14 MAY DS2	Linked Data	9 JUL DS3
Tableau I	14 MAY DS3	Applications	12 JUL DS5
Tableau II	17 MAY DS5	Test Exam	16 JUL DS2
Tutorial 4	7 JUN DS2	Test Exam Evaluation	16 JUL DS3
Hypertableau I	7 JUN DS3	Q&A Session	19 JUL DS5

The SPARQL Query Language



The SPARQL Query Language



Agenda

- 1 Recap
- 2 Output Formats
- 3 SPARQL Semantics
- 4 Transformation of Queries into Algebra Objects
- 5 Evaluation of the SPARQL Algebra
- 6 Summary

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Recap: Introduced SPARQL Features

Basic Structure

PREFIX

WHERE

Graph Patterns

Basic Graph Patterns

{...}

OPTIONAL

UNION

Filter

BOUND

isURI

isBLANK

isLITERAL

STR

LANG

DATATYPE

sameTERM

langMATCHES

REGEX

Modifiers

ORDER BY

LIMIT

OFFSET

DISTINCT

Output Formats

SELECT

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Output Format `SELECT`

So far all results have been tables (solution sequences): Output format `SELECT`

Syntax: `SELECT <VariableList> or SELECT *`

Advantage

Simple sequential processing of the results

Disadvantage

Structure/relationships between the objects in the results is lost

Output Format CONSTRUCT

CONSTRUCT creates an RDF graph for the results

Example Query

```
PREFIX ex: <http://example.org/>
CONSTRUCT { ?person ex:mailbox ?email .
             ?person ex:telephone ?tel . }
WHERE { ?person ex:email ?email .
        ?person ex:tel ?tel . }
```

Output Format CONSTRUCT

CONSTRUCT creates an RDF graph for the results

Example Query

```
PREFIX ex: <http://example.org/>
CONSTRUCT { ?person ex:mailbox ?email .
             ?person ex:telephone ?tel . }
WHERE { ?person ex:email ?email .
        ?person ex:tel ?tel . }
```

Advantage

Structured result data with relationships between the elements

Disadvantages

- Sequential processing of the results is harder
- No treatment of unbound variables (triples are omitted)

CONSTRUCT Templates with Blank Nodes

Data

```
@prefix foaf: <http://xmlns.com/foaf/0.1/> .  
_:a foaf:firstname "Alice" ;  
    foaf:surname "Hacker" .  
_:b foaf:firstname "Bob" ;  
    foaf:surname "Hacker" .
```

CONSTRUCT Templates with Blank Nodes

Data

```
@prefix foaf: <http://xmlns.com/foaf/0.1/> .  
_:a foaf:firstname "Alice" ;  
    foaf:surname "Hacker" .  
_:b foaf:firstname "Bob" ;  
    foaf:surname "Hacker" .
```

Query

```
PREFIX foaf: <http://xmlns.com/foaf/0.1/>  
PREFIX vcard: <http://www.w3.org/2001/vcard-rdf/3.0#>  
CONSTRUCT {  
  ?x vcard:N          _:v .  
  _:v vcard:givenName ?gname ;  
      vcard:familyName ?fname  
} WHERE {  
  ?x foaf:firstname ?gname .  
  ?x foaf:surname ?fname }
```

CONSTRUCT Templates with Blank Nodes

Resulting RDF graph

```
@prefix vcard: <http://www.w3.org/2001/vcard-rdf/3.0#> .  
_:v1 vcard:N _:x .  
_:x vcard:givenName "Alice" ;  
    vcard:familyName "Hacker" .  
_:v2 vcard:N _:z .  
_:z vcard:givenName "Bob" ;  
    vcard:familyName "Hacker" .
```

Further Output Formats: ASK & DESCRIBE

SPARQL supports two additional output formats:

- ASK only checks whether the query has at least one answer (true/false result)
- DESCRIBE (informative) returns an RDF description for each resulting URI (application dependent)

Example Query

```
DESCRIBE ?x WHERE { ?x <http://ex.org/emplID> "123" }
```

Possible Result (prefix declarations omitted):

```
_:a      exOrg:emplID      "123" ;  
         foaf:mbox_sha1sum "ABCD1234" ;  
         vcard:N  
         [ vcard:Family    "Smith" ;  
           vcard:Given     "John" ] .  
foaf:mbox_sha1sum a owl:InverseFunctionalProperty .
```

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Semantics of Query Languages

So far only informal presentation of SPARQL features

- User: “Which answers can I expect for my query?”
- Developer: “Which behaviour is expected from my SPARQL implementation?”
- Marketing: “Is our product already conformant with the SPARQL standard?”

↪ Formal semantics should clarify these questions . . .

Logic-based Semantics

Semantics of formal logics:

- Model-theoretic semantics: Which interpretations do satisfy my knowledge base?
- Proof-theoretic semantics: Which derivations can be build from my knowledge base?
- ...

Logic-based Semantics

Semantics of formal logics:

- Model-theoretic semantics: Which interpretations do satisfy my knowledge base?
- Proof-theoretic semantics: Which derivations can be build from my knowledge base?
- ...

Semantics of Programming Languages

- Axiomatic semantics: Which logical statements hold for my program?
- Operational semantics: What happens during the processing of my program?
- Denotational semantics: How can we describe the input/output function of the program in an abstract way?

Semantics of Programming Languages

- Axiomatic semantics: Which logical statements hold for my program?
- Operational semantics: What happens during the processing of my program?
- Denotational semantics: How can we describe the input/output function of the program in an abstract way?

What to do with query languages?

Semantics of Query Languages (1)

Query Entailment

- Query as description of allowed results
- Data as set of logical assumptions (axiom set/theory)
- Results as logical entailment

↪ OWL DL and RDF(S) as query languages

↪ conjunctive queries

Semantics of Query Languages (2)

Query Algebra

- Query as instruction for computing the results
- Queried data as input
- Results as output

↪ Relational algebra for SQL

↪ SPARQL Algebra

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Translation into SPARQL Algebra

```
{ ?book ex:price ?price .  
  FILTER (?price < 15)  
  OPTIONAL { ?book ex:title ?title }  
  { ?book ex:author ex:Shakespeare } UNION  
  { ?book ex:author ex:Marlowe }  
}
```

Semantics of a SPARQL query:

- 1 Transformation of the query into an algebra expression
- 2 Evaluation of the algebra expression

Translation into SPARQL Algebra

```
{ ?book ex:price ?price
  FILTER (?price < 15)
  OPTIONAL { ?book ex:title ?title }
  { ?book ex:author ex:Shakespeare } UNION
  { ?book ex:author ex:Marlowe }
}
```

Attention: Filters apply to the whole group in which they occur

Translation into SPARQL Algebra

```
{ ?book ex:price ?price
  OPTIONAL { ?book ex:title ?title }
  { ?book ex:author ex:Shakespeare } UNION
  { ?book ex:author ex:Marlowe }
  FILTER (?price < 15)
}
```

- 1 Expand abbreviated IRIs

Translation into SPARQL Algebra

```
{ ?book <http://ex.org/price> ?price
  OPTIONAL { ?book <http://ex.org/title> ?title }
  { ?book <http://ex.org/author>
      <http://ex.org/Shakespeare> } UNION
  { ?book <http://ex.org/author>
      <http://ex.org/Marlowe> }
  FILTER (?price < 15)
}
```

Translation into SPARQL Algebra

```
{ ?book <http://ex.org/price> ?price
  OPTIONAL { ?book <http://ex.org/title> ?title }
  { ?book <http://ex.org/author>
      <http://ex.org/Shakespeare> } UNION
  { ?book <http://ex.org/author>
      <http://ex.org/Marlowe> }
  FILTER (?price < 15)
}
```

2. Replace triple patterns with operator $Bgp(\cdot)$

Translation into SPARQL Algebra

```
{ Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/price> ?price)
  OPTIONAL {Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/title> ?title)}
  {Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>
    <http://ex.org/Shakespeare>)} UNION
  {Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>
    <http://ex.org/Marlowe>)}
  FILTER (?price < 15)
}
```

Translation into SPARQL Algebra

```
{ Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/price> ?price)
  OPTIONAL {Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/title> ?title)}
  {Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>
    <http://ex.org/Shakespeare>)} UNION
  {Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>
    <http://ex.org/Marlowe>)}
  FILTER (?price < 15)
}
```

3. Introduce the LeftJoin(·) operator for optional parts

Translation into SPARQL Algebra

```
{ LeftJoin(Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/price> ?price),
           Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/title> ?title),
           true)
  {Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>
       <http://ex.org/Shakespeare>)} UNION
  {Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>
       <http://ex.org/Marlowe>)}
  FILTER (?price < 15)
}
```


Translation into SPARQL Algebra

```
{ LeftJoin(Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/price> ?price),
           Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/title> ?title),
           true)
  {Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>
       <http://ex.org/Shakespeare>)} UNION
  {Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>
       <http://ex.org/Marlowe>)}
  FILTER (?price < 15)
}
```

4. Combine alternative graph patterns with Union(.) operator
- ↪ Refers to neighbouring patterns and has higher precedence than conjunction (left associative)

Translation into SPARQL Algebra

```
{ LeftJoin(Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/price> ?price),  
          Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/title> ?title),  
          true)  
  Union(Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>  
        <http://ex.org/Shakespeare>),  
        Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>  
            <http://ex.org/Marlowe>))  
  FILTER (?price < 15)  
}
```

Translation into SPARQL Algebra

```
{ LeftJoin(Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/price> ?price),  
          Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/title> ?title),  
          true)  
  Union(Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>  
        <http://ex.org/Shakespeare>),  
        Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>  
            <http://ex.org/Marlowe>))  
  FILTER (?price < 15)  
}
```

5. Apply Join(.) operator to join non-filter elements

Translation into SPARQL Algebra

```
{ Join(  
  LeftJoin(Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/price> ?price),  
    Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/title> ?title),  
    true),  
  Union(Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>  
    <http://ex.org/Shakespeare>),  
    Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>  
    <http://ex.org/Marlowe>)))  
FILTER (?price < 15)  
}
```

Translation into SPARQL Algebra

```
{ Join(  
  LeftJoin(Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/price> ?price),  
    Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/title> ?title),  
    true),  
  Union(Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>  
    <http://ex.org/Shakespeare>),  
    Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>  
    <http://ex.org/Marlowe>)))  
FILTER (?price < 15)  
}
```

6. Translate a group with filters with the Filter(·) operator

Translation into SPARQL Algebra

```
Filter(?price < 15,  
  Join(  
    LeftJoin(Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/price> ?price),  
             Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/title> ?title),  
            true),  
    Union(Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>  
           <http://ex.org/Shakespeare>),  
          Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>  
              <http://ex.org/Marlowe>))))
```

Translation into SPARQL Algebra

```
Filter(?price < 15,  
  Join(  
    LeftJoin(Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/price> ?price),  
      Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/title> ?title),  
      true),  
    Union(Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>  
      <http://ex.org/Shakespeare>),  
      Bgp(?book <http://ex.org/author>  
        <http://ex.org/Marlowe>))))
```

- Online translation tool:
<http://sparql.org/query-validator.html>

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Semantics of the SPARQL Algebra Operations

Now we have an algebra object, but what do the algebra operations mean?

$\text{Bgp}(P)$	match/evaluate pattern P
$\text{Join}(M_1, M_2)$	conjunctive join of solutions M_1 and M_2
$\text{Union}(M_1, M_2)$	union of solutions M_1 with M_2
$\text{LeftJoin}(M_1, M_2, F)$	optional join of M_1 with M_2 with filter constraint F (<code>true</code> if no filter given)
$\text{Filter}(F, M)$	filter solutions M with constraint F
Z	empty pattern (identity for join)

Semantics of the SPARQL Algebra Operations

Now we have an algebra object, but what do the algebra operations mean?

$\text{Bgp}(P)$	match/evaluate pattern P
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$\text{Union}(M_1, M_2)$	union of solutions M_1 with M_2
$\text{LeftJoin}(M_1, M_2, F)$	optional join of M_1 with M_2 with filter constraint F (true if no filter given)
$\text{Filter}(F, M)$	filter solutions M with constraint F
Z	empty pattern (identity for join)

- Only $\text{Bgp}(\cdot)$ matches or evaluates graph patterns
- ↪ We can use entailment checking rather than graph matching

Definition of the SPARQL Operators

How can we define that more formally?

Output:

- “solution set” (formatting irrelevant)

Input:

- Queried (active) graph
- Partial results from previous evaluation steps
- Different parameters according to the operation

↪ How can we formally describe the “results”?

SPARQL Results

Intuition: Results coded as tables of variable assignments

Result:

List of solutions (solution sequence)

↪ each solution corresponds to one table row

SPARQL Results

Intuition: Results coded as tables of variable assignments

Result:

List of solutions (solution sequence)

↪ each solution corresponds to one table row

Solution:

Partial function

- Domain: relevant variables
- Range: IRIs \cup blank nodes \cup RDF literals

↪ Unbound variables are those that have no assigned value (partial function)

Evaluation of Basic Graph Patterns

Definition (Solution)

Let P be a basic graph pattern. A partial function μ is a solution for $\text{Bgp}(P)$ over the queried (active) graph G if:

- 1 the domain of μ is exactly the set of variables in P ,
- 2 there exists an assignment σ from blank nodes in P to IRIs, blank nodes, or RDF literals such that:
- 3 the RDF graph $\mu(\sigma(P))$ is a subgraph of G .

Evaluation of Basic Graph Patterns

- The result of evaluating $\text{Bgp}(P)$ over G is written $\llbracket \text{Bgp}(P) \rrbracket_G$
- The result is a multi set of solutions μ
- The multiplicity of each solution μ corresponds to the number of different assignments σ

Multi Sets

Definition (Multi Set)

A multi set over a set S is a total function $M: S \rightarrow \mathbf{N}^+ \cup \{\omega\}$

- \mathbf{N}^+ denotes the positive natural numbers
 - $\omega > n$ for all $n \in \mathbf{N}^+$
 - $M(s)$ is the multiplicity of $s \in S$
 - ω : countably infinite number of occurrences
-
- We represent a multi set over the set S also with the set $\{(s, M(s)) \mid s \in S\}$
 - We write $(s, n) \in M$ if $M(s) = n$
 - We assume that $M(s) = 0$ if $s \notin S$
 - Alternative notation: $\dot{\{a, b, b\}}$ corresponds to the multi set M over the set $\{a, b\}$ with $M(a) = 1$ and $M(b) = 2$

Solution Mapping Example

```
ex:Birte ex:gives [  
  a ex:Lecture ;  
  ex:hasTopic "SPARQL" ] .  
ex:Sebastian ex:gives [  
  a ex:Lecture ;  
  ex:hasTopic "DLs and OWL" ] .
```

```
Bgp(?who ex:gives _:x . _:x ex:hasTopic ?what)
```

Solution Mapping Example

```
ex:Birte ex:gives _:a .
_:a rdf:type ex:Lecture .
_:a ex:hasTopic "SPARQL" .
ex:Sebastian ex:gives _:b .
_:b rdf:type ex:Lecture .
_:b ex:hasTopic "DLs and OWL" .
```

```
Bgp(?who ex:gives _:x . _:x ex:hasTopic ?what)
```

Solution Mapping Example

```
ex:Birte ex:gives _:a .  
_:a rdf:type ex:Lecture .  
_:a ex:hasTopic "SPARQL" .  
ex:Sebastian ex:gives _:b .  
_:b rdf:type ex:Lecture .  
_:b ex:hasTopic "DLs and OWL" .
```

Bgp(?who ex:gives _:x . _:x ex:hasTopic ?what)

μ_1 : ?who \mapsto ex: Birte, ?what \mapsto "SPARQL"
 σ_1 : _:x \mapsto _:a

Solution Mapping Example

```
ex:Birte ex:gives _:a .  
_:a rdf:type ex:Lecture .  
_:a ex:hasTopic "SPARQL" .  
ex:Sebastian ex:gives _:b .  
_:b rdf:type ex:Lecture .  
_:b ex:hasTopic "DLs and OWL" .
```

Bgp(?who ex:gives _:x . _:x ex:hasTopic ?what)

μ_1 : ?who \mapsto ex: Birte, ?what \mapsto "SPARQL"
 σ_1 : _:x \mapsto _:a
 μ_2 : ?who \mapsto ex: Sebastian, ?what \mapsto "DLs and OWL"
 σ_2 : _:x \mapsto _:b

Solution Mapping Example

```
ex:Birte ex:gives _:a .  
_:a rdf:type ex:Lecture .  
_:a ex:hasTopic "SPARQL" .  
ex:Sebastian ex:gives _:b .  
_:b rdf:type ex:Lecture .  
_:b ex:hasTopic "DLs and OWL" .
```

Bgp(?who ex:gives _:x . _:x ex:hasTopic ?what)

μ_1 :	?who \mapsto ex: Birte,	?what \mapsto "SPARQL"
σ_1 :	_:x \mapsto _:a	
μ_2 :	?who \mapsto ex: Sebastian,	?what \mapsto "DLs and OWL"
σ_2 :	_:x \mapsto _:b	

Two solutions each with multiplicity 1

Exercise Solution Sets

```
ex:Birte ex:gives [  
  a ex:Lecture ;  
  ex:hasTopic "SPARQL" ] .
```

```
ex:Birte ex:gives [  
  a ex:Lecture ;  
  ex:hasTopic "SPARQL Algebra" ] .
```

```
Bgp(?who ex:gives _:x .  _:x ex:hasTopic _:y)
```

Solution

Solution

```
ex:Birte ex:gives _:a .  
_:a rdf:type ex:Lecture .  
_:a ex:hasTopic "SPARQL" .  
ex:Birte ex:gives _:b .  
_:b rdf:type ex:Lecture .  
_:b ex:hasTopic "SPARQL Algebra" .
```

```
Bgp(?who ex:gives _:x . _:x ex:hasTopic _:y)
```


Solution

```
ex:Birte ex:gives _:a .
_:a rdf:type ex:Lecture .
_:a ex:hasTopic "SPARQL" .
ex:Birte ex:gives _:b .
_:b rdf:type ex:Lecture .
_:b ex:hasTopic "SPARQL Algebra" .
```

Bgp(?who ex:gives _:x . _:x ex:hasTopic _:y)

μ_1 : ?who \mapsto ex: Birte,

σ_1 : _:x \mapsto _:a _:y \mapsto "SPARQL"

Solution

```
ex:Birte ex:gives _:a .
_:a rdf:type ex:Lecture .
_:a ex:hasTopic "SPARQL" .
ex:Birte ex:gives _:b .
_:b rdf:type ex:Lecture .
_:b ex:hasTopic "SPARQL Algebra" .
```

Bgp(?who ex:gives _:x . _:x ex:hasTopic _:y)

μ_1 : ?who \mapsto ex:Birte,

σ_1 : _:x \mapsto _:a _:y \mapsto "SPARQL"

μ_2 : ?who \mapsto ex:Birte,

σ_2 : _:x \mapsto _:b _:y \mapsto "SPARQL Algebra"

Solution

```
ex:Birte ex:gives _:a .
_:a rdf:type ex:Lecture .
_:a ex:hasTopic "SPARQL" .
ex:Birte ex:gives _:b .
_:b rdf:type ex:Lecture .
_:b ex:hasTopic "SPARQL Algebra" .
```

Bgp(?who ex:gives _:x . _:x ex:hasTopic _:y)

μ_1 :	?who \mapsto ex: Birte,	
σ_1 :	_:x \mapsto _:a	_:y \mapsto "SPARQL"
μ_2 :	?who \mapsto ex: Birte,	
σ_2 :	_:x \mapsto _:b	_:y \mapsto "SPARQL Algebra"

One solution with multiplicity 2

Union of Solutions (1)

Definition (Compatibility)

Two solutions μ_1 and μ_2 are compatible if
 $\mu_1(x) = \mu_2(x)$ for all x , for which μ_1 and μ_2 are defined

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Two solutions μ_1 and μ_2 are compatible if
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$\mu_1: ?x \mapsto ex : a, ?y \mapsto ex : b$

$\mu_2: ?y \mapsto ex : b, ?z \mapsto ex : c$

Union of Solutions (1)

Definition (Compatibility)

Two solutions μ_1 and μ_2 are compatible if
 $\mu_1(x) = \mu_2(x)$ for all x , for which μ_1 and μ_2 are defined

$\mu_1: ?x \mapsto ex : a, ?y \mapsto ex : b$
 $\mu_2: ?y \mapsto ex : b, ?z \mapsto ex : c \quad \checkmark$

Union of Solutions (1)

Definition (Compatibility)

Two solutions μ_1 and μ_2 are compatible if
 $\mu_1(x) = \mu_2(x)$ for all x , for which μ_1 and μ_2 are defined

$\mu_1: ?x \mapsto ex : a, ?y \mapsto ex : b$

$\mu_2: ?y \mapsto ex : b, ?z \mapsto ex : c$ ✓

$\mu_1: ?x \mapsto ex : a, ?y \mapsto ex : b$

$\mu_2: ?x \mapsto ex : b, ?z \mapsto ex : c$

Union of Solutions (1)

Definition (Compatibility)

Two solutions μ_1 and μ_2 are compatible if
 $\mu_1(x) = \mu_2(x)$ for all x , for which μ_1 and μ_2 are defined

$\mu_1: ?x \mapsto ex : a, ?y \mapsto ex : b$

$\mu_2: ?y \mapsto ex : b, ?z \mapsto ex : c$ ✓

$\mu_1: ?x \mapsto ex : a, ?y \mapsto ex : b$

$\mu_2: ?x \mapsto ex : b, ?z \mapsto ex : c$ ✗

Union of Solutions (1)

Definition (Compatibility)

Two solutions μ_1 and μ_2 are compatible if
 $\mu_1(x) = \mu_2(x)$ for all x , for which μ_1 and μ_2 are defined

$\mu_1: ?x \mapsto ex : a, ?y \mapsto ex : b$

$\mu_2: ?y \mapsto ex : b, ?z \mapsto ex : c$ ✓

$\mu_1: ?x \mapsto ex : a, ?y \mapsto ex : b$

$\mu_2: ?x \mapsto ex : b, ?z \mapsto ex : c$ ✗

$\mu_1: ?x \mapsto ex : a$

$\mu_2: ?y \mapsto ex : b$

Union of Solutions (1)

Definition (Compatibility)

Two solutions μ_1 and μ_2 are compatible if
 $\mu_1(x) = \mu_2(x)$ for all x , for which μ_1 and μ_2 are defined

$\mu_1: ?x \mapsto ex : a, ?y \mapsto ex : b$

$\mu_2: ?y \mapsto ex : b, ?z \mapsto ex : c$ ✓

$\mu_1: ?x \mapsto ex : a, ?y \mapsto ex : b$

$\mu_2: ?x \mapsto ex : b, ?z \mapsto ex : c$ ✗

$\mu_1: ?x \mapsto ex : a$

$\mu_2: ?y \mapsto ex : b$ ✓

Union of Solutions (2)

Union of two compatible solutions μ_1 and μ_2 :

$$(\mu_1 \cup \mu_2)(x) = \begin{cases} \mu_1(x) & \text{if } x \in \text{dom}(\mu_1) \\ \mu_2(x) & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

↪ simple intuition: union of matching table rows

- Next lecture: Evaluation of the main algebra operators

Agenda

- 1 Recap
- 2 Output Formats
- 3 SPARQL Semantics
- 4 Transformation of Queries into Algebra Objects
- 5 Evaluation of the SPARQL Algebra
- 6 Summary**

Summary

- SPARQL queries are translated into algebra objects
- The BGPs generate solutions
- Other algebra operators combine solutions
- Details in the next lecture