

# Planning with Ontology-Enhanced States Using Problem-Dependent Rewritings

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## Abstract

We present a framework to integrate OWL ontologies into planning specifications. The resulting planning problems consider states that correspond to OWL knowledge bases, so that implicit information deduced using OWL reasoning may influence the decisions taken by the planner. While other approaches integrate ontology languages directly into the planning specification, our approach keeps planning specification and ontology separated, and only loosely couples them through an interface. This allows the ontology to be developed and maintained by ontology experts, and the planning specification by planning experts. We developed a practical method for planning in those ontology-mediated planning specifications, which, different to other ontology-based approaches to planning, supports full OWL-DL. Specifically, we implemented a problem-dependent rewriting approach that translates the ontology-mediated planning specification—including the planning domain and the planning problem—into a PDDL planning specification that can be processed by a standard PDDL planner.

## Keywords

Planning, OWL Ontologies, Description Logics

## 1. Introduction

OWL ontologies are used in many application areas to model domain knowledge. Typically, such an ontology focuses on terminological knowledge, and contains axioms that specify the meaning of terminology via definitions and subsumption axioms, thus providing meaning to OWL classes and properties (unary and binary predicates). Having a foundation on description logics (DLs) allows OWL ontologies to be processed by an OWL reasoner, so that implicit information can be inferred from the ontology, or from a fact base that is used in conjunction with the ontology [1]. Both planning and ontologies are commonly used in approaches to develop autonomous robots [2, 3], which is also the motivation of the present paper.

In particular, the motivation for this work comes from planning problems for autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs). Such robots are often used for inspection tasks, e.g. of underwater infrastructure such as pipelines or oil platforms, as well as for mapping of the sea floor [4], but eventually they should also be able to complete more complex missions that include manipulation tasks [5]. The robots need to be able to work autonomously, because their operation area is very remote and without a connection to a human operator. Even recovering the vehicle in case of a

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problem is a difficult and time consuming task. Therefore, the mission plans for such vehicles should be as robust as possible, which includes that the robots have some understanding of the domain they operate in. This domain knowledge is not specific to planning, and would thus be ideally formalized in an ontology that can also be used in other contexts of AUVs, such as configuring them, or recognizing unexpected situations [6]. For example, such an ontology might define a concept of ProtectedAnimal, based on the concept of Animal and having a position that is located in a NatureProtectionArea. Using such an ontology, the robot would then be able to understand when it needs to keep a larger distance to an animal in order not to disturb it. Ontologies are an ideal framework to represent such domain knowledge, and there are existing ontologies for the underwater domain, such as the SWARMS ontology [7, 8]. However, if we want to use such an ontology in connection with planning, we need a planning framework that can make use of the ontology.

In this paper, we propose a general framework to connect planning problems with OWL ontologies, and a technique to compute plans for such problems. Using this framework, we can create a planning domain that interacts with the ontology to generate plans that take its domain knowledge into account. Similar to [5], we use the ontology to model the environment. But additionally, we model actions of the robot that manipulate the objects and the relations between objects in the environment, e.g. that the robot opens or closes a valve.

### 1.1. Related Work

Using ontologies to support planning is not a new idea, and has been investigated for decades. [9] gives an overview about early works in which ontologies are used to infer implicit information about planning states. Different approaches have since then been used to model planning domains, actions, and even planning problems using ontologies, but also to use ontologies to generate planning problems, in domains as diverse as kitting and assembly [10, 11], semantic web service decomposition [12, 13], robotics [14], train depot management [15] and manufacturing [16]. These approaches usually depend on a static ontology that is used to generate specifications for the planner, while the actions of the planning specifications cannot modify the ontology.

In [17, 18], actions can use DL concepts in the preconditions and postconditions of an action, which then operate on the models of an OWL ontology. A downside of letting actions directly operate on the models is that it is not trivial to determine the implicit consequences of an actions, that is, to ensure that after executing an action on a model, we obtain an interpretation that is still a model of the ontology.

This problem is avoided in approaches where actions do not operate on models, but on the knowledge base itself. This is the case with the *Knowledge Action Bases* (KABs) and *extended Knowledge Action Bases* (eKABs) introduced in [19, 20], which combine DL knowledge bases with actions that can add facts to and remove them from the knowledge base. Here, every state in the planning domain corresponds to a DL knowledge base, and pre-conditions of actions can query implicit information entailed in the current state via DL reasoning. The idea is that what is known about the world in each system state is represented using facts of a knowledge base, interpreted as potentially incomplete under the open-world assumption, and any implicit consequences of an action are accessed only through reasoning with the ontology.

Existing approaches to plan with eKABs practically rely on rewriting the eKABs into planning problems in pure PDDL [21] or its extension with derived predicates, i.e. axioms, [22], so that a standard planning system such as Fast-Downward planner [23] can be used. The limits of such an approach are investigated in [24], where the underlying ontology can be expressed in the description logic Horn- $\mathcal{ALCHOIQ}$ , which roughly corresponds to the Horn-fragment of OWL-DL without complex object property axioms. Many naturally occurring constructs such as disjunction (e.g. to express that a valve must be either open or closed), or at-most constraints (e.g. to express how many objects an AUV can carry), go beyond the Horn fragment, and can thus not be handled by this approach. Also SWRL-rules, which are used in the SWARM ontology, are not supported. To our knowledge, there is no research yet in this direction that would support this expressivity.

## 1.2. Our Approach

Our approach is close to that of eKABs, but goes beyond existing approaches in the following way: 1) Rather than integrating actions and knowledge, we strive for a separation of the representation formalisms. 2) Using a domain-dependent rewriting approach, we are able to support the full OWL DL 2 syntax as defined in [25], including SWRL rules [26].

The aim of 1) is to have a presentation format that is tailored towards the specific needs and skills of knowledge engineers and planning experts. In particular, in our framework, we favor a strong separation of concerns, with the planning specification encoded in standard PDDL, and the domain knowledge encoded in a separate OWL ontology. The connection between the two is established via an interface that links statements in the planning language to OWL axioms. This way, existing OWL ontologies can be easily integrated, and PDDL experts do not need to learn another knowledge representation formalism.

Our solution to 2) is inspired by a technique for ontology-mediated probabilistic model checking presented in [27, 28], which uses a similar separation of concerns as our approach, but with a simpler representation of states using propositional logic. This allows us to support ontologies that go beyond Horn. Similar to [29], we use justifications [30] to determine which elements of a planning state are relevant to an action to be executed. However, while [29] are interested in explaining pre-conditions in an action for a singular state, we use justifications to determine conditions on all possible states. Initial experiments of our implementation indicate that this approach can deal even with larger planning problems, with the comparatively high cost of generating justifications being mitigated by very short planning times.

## 2. Preliminaries

We recall the relevant notions regarding planning with PDDL. We assume the reader is familiar with the basics of OWL and description logics (DLs). For an introduction into OWL and description logics, we refer to [1]. We further assume standard knowledge of first-order logic, and use  $\models$  to express entailment between theories and satisfaction in models. We call a formula  $P(\vec{t})$  *atom*, which is *ground* if  $\vec{t}$  contains only constants.

## 2.1. PDDL Planning Specifications

We consider the common syntax and semantic as introduced in [21, 31] and described in detail in [32]. A *PDDL planning specification*  $\mathbf{P}$  is a tuple  $\langle D, P \rangle$  that contains a *domain*  $D = \langle \mathcal{P}, \mathcal{A}, \mathcal{D} \rangle$  and a *problem*  $P = \langle O, I, G \rangle$ . Here,  $\mathcal{P}$  is a finite set of predicate names,  $\mathcal{A}$  a finite set of actions,  $\mathcal{D}$  a finite set of derivation rules,  $O$  a finite set of objects,  $I$  is an initial state and the goal  $G$  is a first-order formula with predicates from  $\mathcal{P}$ . A *state* is a finite set of ground atoms over  $\mathcal{P}$  and  $O$ , interpreted as first-order interpretation; an *action* is a tuple  $a = \langle V, \text{pre}, \text{eff} \rangle$  where  $V$  is a vector of variables,  $\text{pre}$  is the *precondition* (a first-order formula with predicates from  $\mathcal{P}$  and free variables from  $V$ ) and  $\text{eff} = \langle \text{add}, \text{del} \rangle$  is the *effect*. Both  $\text{add}$  and  $\text{del}$  are finite sets of atoms over predicates from  $\mathcal{P}$  using variables from  $V$  and constants from  $O$ . If neither  $\text{pre}$  nor  $\text{eff}$  contain variables from  $V$  or  $V = \emptyset$ , we call  $a$  a *ground action*.

*Derivation rules* are of the form  $p(V) \leftarrow \phi(V)$ , where  $V$  is a vector of variables,  $p \in \mathcal{P}$ , and  $\phi$  is a first-order formula over the predicates in  $\mathcal{P}$  with free variables  $V$  and constants from  $O$ . We often call derivation rules just *rules*. If a predicate  $p$  occurs on the left hand side of a rule, it is called a *derived predicate*. Derived predicates are neither allowed to occur negatively in a derivation rule, nor are they allowed to occur in an effect of an action. For a finite set of atoms  $s$ , we define  $\mathcal{D}(s)$  as the least fix point over the possible applications of some rules from  $\mathcal{D}$  to the atoms in  $s$ , i.e., we apply the rules from  $\mathcal{D}$  exhaustively and add the derived ground atoms until no more rules can be applied.

Let  $a = \langle V, \text{pre}, \text{eff} \rangle$  with  $\text{eff} = \langle \text{add}, \text{del} \rangle$  be an action and  $\theta : V \mapsto O$  a variable assignment. We denote by  $\theta(a)$  the ground action obtained by replacing each  $x \in V$  in  $a$  with  $\theta(x)$ . A ground action is *applicable* in a state  $s$  iff  $\mathcal{D}(s) \models \text{pre}$ , that is, the precondition is evaluated over the atoms in the state and the entailed derived atoms. The result of applying the action  $a$  on  $s$  is then denoted  $s(a)$ , defined as  $s(a) := (s \setminus \text{del}) \cup \text{add}$ , i.e., all atoms are deleted and added according to the effect. A *plan*  $\pi$  is now a sequence  $a_1 \dots a_n$  of ground actions that generates a sequence of states  $s_0 \dots s_n$  such that 1)  $s_0 = I$  is the initial state of the planning problem, 2) for each  $i \in \{1, \dots, n\}$ ,  $a_i$  is applicable in  $s_{i-1}$  and  $s_i = s_{i-1}(a_i)$ , and 3) the goal is reached:  $\mathcal{D}(s_n) \models G$ .

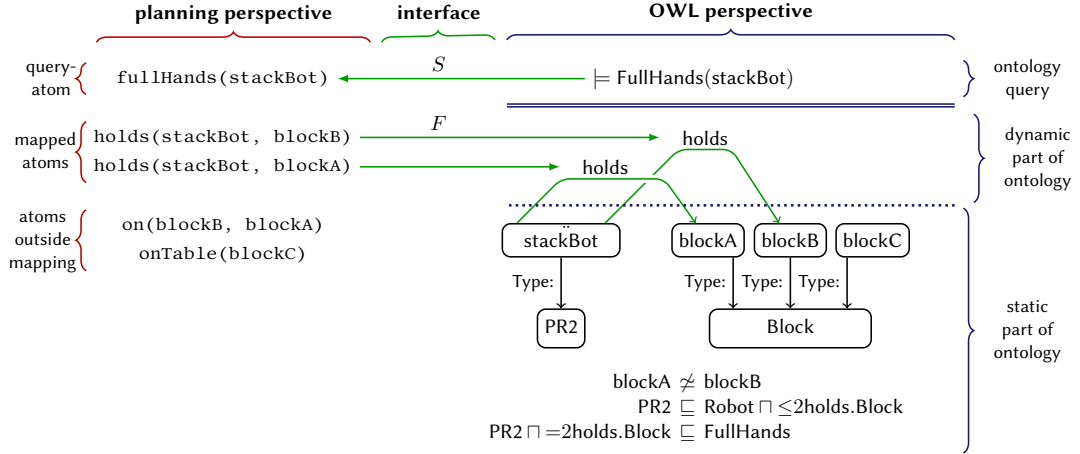
There are many extensions to PDDL, for example conditional effects. The described components are the ones necessary for our framework but it can also be used with such extensions.

## 3. Ontology-Mediated Planning

We capture our framework formally via *ontology-mediated planning specifications*. At the heart of those is the notion of *ontology-enhanced states*, which combine a PDDL state with an OWL ontology.

**Definition 1** (Ontology-Enhanced State). *An ontology-enhanced state is a tuple  $q = \langle P_q, \mathcal{O}_q \rangle$ , where  $P_q$  is a set of atoms called the planner perspective of  $q$ , and  $\mathcal{O}_q$  is a set of OWL axioms called the OWL perspective of  $\mathcal{O}$ .*

The idea is that each state has a *planner perspective*, on which the planner directly operates, and on which preconditions and effects of actions are evaluated and executed, respectively. The planner perspective of an ontology-enhanced state is, as for classical planning problems, a set



**Figure 1:** Example of ontology based planning. The interface maps ontology queries to planning predicates and atoms in the planning perspective to ABox atoms. The static part of the ontology contains information about instances (ABox) as well as general axioms (TBox). The connections between the two perspectives via the fluent (F) and query (S) interface are shown in green.

of ground atoms, where predicates of arbitrary arity may occur. On the other side, there is the *OWL perspective* of the ontology-enhanced state, which corresponds to an OWL ontology, i.e. a set of OWL axioms, and from which implicit entailments can be derived using reasoning. The two perspectives are linked via an interface: which axioms are in the OWL perspective depends on the atoms in the planner perspective. There is however also a static part, which we call the static ontology, that describes time-independent information (such as class definitions and general domain knowledge), which is obtained from an external OWL file and has no direct correspondence in the planner perspective. The planner perspective can access implicit information from the OWL perspective using *query predicates*. Specifically, whether a query-atom is active in the planner perspective depends on what can be derived from the OWL perspective of the state. Before we give the formal definition of how this works, we illustrate this idea with an example.

**Example 1.** An example of an ontology-enhanced state is depicted in Figure 1. The scenario is inspired from the classic blocksworld planning example. In contrast to the classic problem where the robot has only one hand, we use an OWL ontology to specify the type of the robot and infer its number of hands. In the example, the stacking robot is a PR2 robot [33] that can hold two blocks at a time, and if it holds two blocks, it becomes an instance of `FullHands`. While relatively simple, those cardinality constraints are already more expressive than the most expressive DL currently supported by existing implementations for eKABs (see Section 1.1). The planner perspective of the state is shown on the left, and the OWL perspective is shown on the right. The interface is in the middle. If the atom `holds(stackBot, blockA)` becomes true in the planner perspective, this is reflected in the ontology perspective as an OWL axiom expressing a corresponding relation between the two individuals `stackBot` and `blockA`. Using the static ontology, we can infer that `stackBot` is an instance of the OWL class `FullHands`, because the `holds` relation is true for two different

OBJECT	stackBot	->	stackBot
OBJECT	blockA	->	blockA
OBJECT	blockB	->	blockB
OBJECT	blockC	->	blockC
PREDICATE	holds(, )	->	holds

(a) Example of a fluent interface.

PREDICATE:	fullHands
VARIABLES:	?r
TYPE_SPECIFICATION:	Robot(?r)
QUERY:	FullHands(?r)

(b) Example of a query specification.

**Figure 2:** Interface specification using the syntax of our implementation.

blocks. This is reflected by the entailed OWL axiom  $\text{FullHands}(\text{stackBot})$ . We also have a query predicate  $\text{fullHands}$ , which corresponds to a query over instances of the OWL class  $\text{FullHands}$ . Since we can infer from the OWL perspective that  $\text{stackBot}$  is an instance of  $\text{FullHands}$ , the atom  $\text{fullHands}(\text{stackBot})$  becomes true in the planner perspective of the state.

The central notion of this paper is that of an *ontology-mediated planning specification*, which consists of three components

1. the *PDDL component*  $\mathbf{P}$ , which is a PDDL planning specification consisting of a domain and a problem,
2. the *static ontology*  $\mathcal{O}$ , which is an OWL ontology specifying the static knowledge, that is, it contains axioms whose truth cannot be affected by actions, and
3. the *interface* that specifies how the two perspectives of an ontology-enhanced state should be linked. The interface itself consists of two parts:
  - a) the fluent interface, and
  - b) the query interface.

The *fluent interface* maps objects, unary and binary predicates used in the planner perspective to the named individuals, OWL classes and OWL properties that are used in the OWL perspective. An example of how this looks like for our implementation is shown in Figure 2a. In the context of this paper, it is convenient to see the fluent specification simply as a partial function  $F$  that assigns to some of the predicates and objects  $X$  in the planning specification an IRI  $F(X)$ . We require  $F$  to be inverse functional, that is,  $F^{-1}$  is also a function. We lift  $F$  in a straight-forward way to atoms by setting  $F(P(t_1, \dots, t_n)) = F(P)(F(t_1), \dots, F(t_n))$  if it is defined.

The *query interface* is a set of *query specifications*  $S = \langle p_S, V_S, T_S, Q_S \rangle$ , which each consist of four components:

1.  $p_S$  is the *query predicate*,
2.  $V_S$  is a vector of *query variables*, whose number corresponds to the arity of  $p_S$ ,
3. the *type specification*  $T_S$  assigns to each variable  $x \in V_S$  an OWL class expression specifying its *static type*, and



4. the *query*  $Q_S$  is a set of OWL axioms using variables from  $V_S$  as place holders for individual names.

An example of how this looks like for our implementation is shown in Figure 2b. Note that in the type specification, we can only assign one class expression to each variable, while variables may occur in arbitrary ways in the query. The static types are used to restrict the set of named individuals that can be assigned to a variable: candidates for a variable  $x \in V_S$  are individual names  $a$  for which the static ontology entails  $a : T_S(x)$ , that is, which are an instance of the class expression assigned to  $x$  via  $T_S$ . For the specification in Figure 2b,  $V_s = \{?r\}$  and  $?r$  can be associated with instances of the class Robot. For a given static ontology  $\mathcal{O}$  and query specification  $S$ , we thus have a set  $\Theta(S, \mathcal{O})$  of *legal assignments*  $\theta : V_S \rightarrow \text{Ind}(\mathcal{O})$  of variables to individual names in  $\mathcal{O}$ . Finally,  $Q_S$  specifies the OWL query that the query predicate  $p_S$  stands for. For a given assignment  $\theta \in \Theta(S, \mathcal{O})$ ,  $\theta(Q_S)$  denotes the set of OWL axioms obtained by replacing each variable  $x \in V_S$  in  $Q_S$  by  $\theta(x)$ . In the present example, for the assignment  $\theta(?r) = \text{stackBot}$ , we would have  $\theta(Q_S) = \{ \text{fullHands}(\text{stackBot}) \}$ .

We have now all ingredients to define ontology-mediated planning specifications.

**Definition 2.** An ontology-mediated planning specification is a tuple  $\langle \mathbf{P}, \mathcal{O}, F, \mathbf{S} \rangle$ , where  $\mathbf{P}$  is a PDDL planning specification consisting of a planning domain and a planning problem,  $\mathcal{O}$  is an OWL ontology called the static ontology,  $F$  is a fluent interface, and  $\mathbf{S}$  is a set of query specifications called the query interface.

An ontology-mediated planning specification determines when an ontology-enhanced state is compatible for that specification. In particular, a state  $q = \langle P_q, \mathcal{O}_q \rangle$  is *compatible* to an ontology-mediated planning specification  $\mathbf{OP} = \langle \mathbf{P}, \mathcal{O}, F, \mathbf{S} \rangle$ , where  $\mathcal{D}$  are the derivation rules in  $\mathbf{P}$ , iff:

- C1**  $P_q$  is a set of atoms over predicates and constants occurring in  $\mathbf{P}$ ,
- C2**  $\mathcal{O} \subseteq \mathcal{O}_q$  (the static ontology is always part of the OWL perspective),
- C3** for every atom  $\alpha \in \mathcal{D}(P_q)$  for which  $F(\alpha)$  is defined,  $F(\alpha) \in \mathcal{O}_q$
- C4**  $\mathcal{O}_q$  contains no axioms that are not required due to Conditions **C2** and **C3**
- C5** for every query specification  $S = \langle p_S, \langle x_1, \dots, x_n \rangle, T_S, Q_S \rangle \in \mathbf{S}$  and  $\theta \in \Theta(S, \mathcal{O})$ , if  $F^-(\theta(x_i))$  is defined for each variable  $x_i$  and  $\mathcal{O}_q \models \theta(Q_S)$ , then

$$p_S(F^-(\theta(x_1)), \dots, F^-(\theta(x_n))) \in P_q.$$

Given an ontology-mediated planning specification  $\mathbf{OP} = \langle \mathbf{P}, \mathcal{O}, F, \mathbf{S} \rangle$  and a state  $P$  in the corresponding planning domain, we define the *extension*  $\text{ext}(P, \mathbf{OP})$  of  $P$  according to  $\mathbf{OP}$  as follows. Let 1)  $P'$  be the set of atoms in  $P$  that are not over query predicates, 2)  $\mathcal{O}_q$  the set of axioms required to satisfy Conditions **C2** and **C3** based on the atoms in  $P'$ , and 3)  $P_q$  the extension of  $P'$  by all atoms over query predicates that are required to satisfy Condition **C5** for the ontology  $\mathcal{O}_q$ . Then,  $\text{ext}(P, \mathbf{OP}) = \langle \mathcal{O}_q, P_q \rangle$ .

**Example 2.** Consider the example in Figure 1 where  $\alpha = \text{holds}(\text{stackBot}, \text{blockA})$  and  $\beta = \text{holds}(\text{stackBot}, \text{blockB})$  with  $\alpha, \beta \in P_q$  and  $F$  is defined as in Figure 2a and  $S$  as in Figure 2b. Then, according to C3, the axioms from the mappings  $F(\alpha) = \text{holds}(\text{stackBot}, \text{blockA})$  and  $F(\beta) = \text{holds}(\text{stackBot}, \text{blockB})$  are part of  $\mathcal{O}_q$ . Using the static part of  $\mathcal{O}_q$ , which states that  $\text{stackBot}$  is a PR2 robot and  $\text{blockA}$  is different from  $\text{blockB}$ , we can infer that  $\mathcal{O}_q \models \{\text{FullHands}(\text{stackBot})\}$ . Using  $\theta = \{(?r \mapsto \text{stackBot})\}$ ,  $F$  and  $S$  from Figure 2b, we can apply C5 to determine that  $\text{fullHands}(\text{stackBot}) \in P_q$ .

It remains to define the semantics of actions and plans on ontology-mediated planning specifications. Fix an ontology-mediated planning specification  $\mathbf{OP} = \langle \mathbf{P}, \mathcal{O}, F, S \rangle$ . Let  $a$  be a ground action with precondition  $\text{pre}$  and effect  $\text{eff} = \langle \text{add}, \text{del} \rangle$ . Let  $q$  be an ontology-enhanced state. We say that  $a$  is *applicable* on  $q$  iff  $\mathcal{D}(P_q) \models \text{pre}$ . The result of *applying*  $a$  on  $q$  is then denoted by  $q(a)$  and defined as  $q(a) = \text{ext}(P_q(a), \mathbf{OP})$ . We can now define *plans* for  $\mathbf{OP}$  similarly as we did for planning specifications: Namely, a plan is a sequence  $a_1 \dots a_n$  of actions that generates a sequence  $q_0 q_1 \dots q_n$  of ontology-enhanced states s.t.

1.  $q_0 = \text{ext}(I, \mathbf{OP})$ , where  $I$  is the initial state of the PDDL planning problem in  $\mathbf{OP}$ ,
2. for each  $i \in \{1, \dots, n\}$ ,  $q_i = q_{i-1}(a_i)$ ,
3. for each  $i \in \{1, \dots, n\}$ ,  $a_i$  is applicable on  $q_{i-1}$ , and
4.  $\mathcal{D}(P_{q_n}) \models G$ , where  $\mathcal{D}$  are the derivation rules of the planning domain, and  $G$  is the formula describing the goal of the planning problem.<sup>1</sup>

## 4. A Rewriting-Based Approach to Compute Plans in Practice

Semantically, our approach is very related to that of eKABs introduced in [20]. eKABs do not offer a differentiation between OWL perspective and planner perspective. Instead, actions operate directly on OWL axioms, which can be directly referenced to both pre-conditions and post-conditions of the actions. We conjecture that it is always possible using simple transformations to translate an eKAB with a finite domain into an ontology-mediated planning problem. In the other direction, we can translate ontology-mediated planning problems into eKABs by replacing atom predicates by the corresponding OWL class and OWL properties, and replacing query atoms by the corresponding queries. It is thus in theory possible to use an eKAB planner to compute plans for ontology-mediated planning problems. However, existing implementations for eKAB planning have limitations regarding the supported OWL fragment. The general idea of these approaches is to take the eKAB planning specification, and translate it into a PDDL specification that can then be used by a standard PDDL planner. Those techniques focus on the *planning domain*, that is, the obtained rewritings are independent of the planning problem. The approach presented in [20, 34] only supports *rewritable DLs*, which would correspond to

<sup>1</sup>Note that we allow the plan to go through states whose OWL perspective is inconsistent. If this is not wanted, an easy way to avoid this would for example be to use a query predicate to detect such states, and to adapt the preconditions of all actions so that they are not applicable in inconsistent states, so that a goal state can never be reached from such a state.



<pre> (:derived (inconsistent)   (and     (holds stackBot blockA)     (holds stackBot blockB)     (holds stackBot blockC)   ) ) </pre>	<pre> (:derived (fullHands ?r)   (or     (inconsistent)     (and (= ?r stackBot) (or       (and (holds stackBot blockA)         (holds stackBot blockB))       (and (holds stackBot blockA)         (holds stackBot blockC))       (and (holds stackBot blockB)         (holds stackBot blockC))     ))   ) ) </pre>
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**Figure 3:** Derivation rules in PDDL syntax as generated by our technique.

the OWL fragment OWL-QL. The approach presented in [24] goes further by using derivation rules, which allows to encode Horn- $\mathcal{ALCHOIQ}$  via a known translations of such ontologies into datalog programs. Horn- $\mathcal{ALCHOIQ}$  roughly corresponds to the Horn fragment of OWL DL. For DLs that are not Horn, a translation into datalog is generally not possible, since datalog is itself a Horn logic. The same applies to rewriting into derivation rules, if those are supposed to be defined independently of the objects of the planning problem. Therefore, in order to support full OWL DL, we need to take into account also the planning problem. Specifically, our approach directly iterates over the possible assignments for each query predicate. This allows us to develop a more generic approach that does not restrict the ontology language, as long as a reasoner for it is available.

The basic idea is to construct a derivation rule for each query predicate, which determines for each valid variable assignment a set of conditions that can be evaluated directly on the planner perspective of a state.

**Example 3.** Figure 3 depicts the generated derived predicates for our running example. The special atom `(inconsistent)` becomes true if the ontology perspective of the state is inconsistent. In our example, the static ontology states that every individual from the class `PR2` is only allowed to hold at most two blocks. Using the fluent interface, we can determine the combination of atoms in the planning perspective that would lead to an ontology that would violate this constraint. The derivation rule for the query-predicate `fullHands` lists all possible variable mappings and gives for each of them the conditions under which the query atom becomes true. In our case, the query predicate is satisfied if the ontology is inconsistent and for `?r = stackBot` if `stackBot` is holding two blocks.

To construct these derivation rules automatically, we make use of *justifications*, which were originally developed as a means to explain entailments in ontologies to end-users [30].

**Definition 3.** Let  $\mathcal{O}, \mathcal{O}'$  be ontologies s.t.  $\mathcal{O}' \subseteq \mathcal{O}$  and  $\alpha$  be an axiom s.t.  $\mathcal{O} \models \alpha$ . Then, a justification for  $\mathcal{O} \models \alpha$  relative to  $\mathcal{O}'$  is a set  $\mathcal{J} \subseteq \mathcal{O}$  s.t.  $\mathcal{J} \cup \mathcal{O}' \models \alpha$  and for no  $\mathcal{J}' \subset \mathcal{J}$ ,  $\mathcal{J}' \cup \mathcal{O}' \models \alpha$ . If  $\mathcal{O}' = \emptyset$ ,  $\mathcal{J}$  is called a classical justification.

We use  $\text{Just}(\mathcal{O}, \mathcal{O}', \alpha)$  to denote the set of all justifications of  $\mathcal{O} \models \alpha$  relative to  $\mathcal{O}'$ . A special case of justifications are those of  $\text{Just}(\mathcal{O}, \mathcal{O}', \perp)$ , where  $\perp$  is an axiom stating inconsistency of the ontology.  $\text{Just}(\mathcal{O}, \mathcal{O}' \perp)$  contains all sets of axioms from  $\mathcal{O}$  that are inconsistent with  $\mathcal{O}'$ .

Classical justifications can be computed using standard tools such as the OWL API [35]. To compute relative justifications, we use an adaption of the existing implementation from the OWL API that we already used in [27]. This can now be used to compute the described derivation rules. Fix an ontology-mediated planning specification  $\langle \mathbf{P}, \mathcal{O}, F, \mathbf{S} \rangle$ . Let  $\mathbf{F}$  be the set of all OWL axioms in the range of  $F$ , which we call *fluents* from now on. Furthermore, set  $\text{Just}_\perp = \text{Just}(\mathbf{F} \cup \mathcal{O}, \mathcal{O}, \perp)$ , and for an axiom  $\alpha$ , we set  $\text{Just}_\alpha = \text{Just}(\mathbf{F} \cup \mathcal{O}, \mathcal{O}, \alpha) \setminus \text{Just}_\perp$ .  $\text{Just}_\perp$  contains all sets of fluents that are inconsistent with the static ontology.  $\text{Just}_\alpha$  contains all sets of fluents that are consistent with the static ontology, and lead to an entailment of  $\alpha$  when added to it. Since an inconsistent ontology entails every axiom,  $\text{Just}_\perp$  describes the special case in which all query predicates should become active for all assignments.

First, we construct a derivation rule for an atom inconsistent:

$$\text{inconsistent} \leftarrow \bigvee_{\mathcal{J} \in \text{Just}_\perp} \bigwedge_{\alpha \in \mathcal{J}} F^-(\alpha).$$

Next, for a given query specification  $S = \langle p_S, \langle x_1, \dots, x_n \rangle, T_S, Q_S \rangle$ , and an assignment  $\theta \in \Theta(S, \mathcal{O})$ , we define the formula  $\phi_{S, \theta}$  that describes when  $p_S$  should become active under that assignment. Specifically, 1) we check that all variables are assigned according to  $\theta$  and the fluent interface  $F$ , 2) we iterate over all the axioms  $\alpha \in \theta(Q_S)$ , 3) we iterate over all the justifications  $\mathcal{J} \in \text{Just}_\alpha$ , and 4) we translate all the axioms in  $\mathcal{J}$  based on the fluent interface  $F$ . This leads to the following formula:

$$\phi_{S, \theta} = \bigwedge_{i=1}^n (x_i = F^-(\theta(x_i))) \wedge \bigwedge_{\alpha \in \theta(Q_S)} \bigvee_{\mathcal{J} \in \text{Just}_\alpha} \bigwedge_{\beta \in \mathcal{J}} F^-(\beta).$$

The derivation rule for  $p_S(x_1, \dots, x_n)$  is then constructed as follows:

$$p_S(x_1, \dots, x_n) \leftarrow \text{inconsistent} \vee \bigvee_{\theta \in \Theta(S, \mathcal{O})} \phi_{S, \theta}$$

We use a special atom for inconsistent states to simplify the derive-directives. But having such an atom has the further advantage that we can easily adapt the planning specification to avoid inconsistent states all together: we can for instance add a precondition to every action that the current state is not inconsistent. This behavior is in line with the existing semantics of eKABs [20].

The ontology-mediated planning specification is now translated to a standard PDDL specification by just adding to  $\mathbf{P}$  all these derivation rules. We can now use an off-the-shelf planner to determine a plan for it.

In an initial evaluation, we tested our approach with an ontology-mediated planning specification in the AUV domain, where the AUV is supposed to inspect an underwater pipeline with different sections of the pipe in different conditions at different waypoints (around 50 waypoints in total). We used a static ontology with around 200 axioms. The set of fluents of this

problem is around 50, while the set of valid groundings of query predicates is around 100. The specification was translated into a PDDL specification in 22 seconds, for which Fast-Downward planner was able to compute a plan of length 27 in less than a second.

## 5. Conclusion

We proposed ontology-mediated planning specifications as a way to integrate OWL reasoning into planning. One objective was to find a formalism that allows for a separation of concerns, allowing to separate the specification of ontologies from the specification of planning problems and domains. This has the advantage that the ontology can be maintained by ontology experts, while the planning specification can be developed by planning experts, with the interface serving as the only connecting component. We developed a first practical method for computing plans for such planning problems, which relies on justifications. This technique allows us to be flexible with respect to the ontology language, with the result that our method supports the entirety of OWL DL, going beyond what is currently supported by implementations for the related frameworks of KABs and eKABs. We are currently setting up a larger evaluation, comparing our approach to existing implementations for eKABs and on existing benchmarks, and also want to evaluate those implementations on benchmarks created by us from the AUV domain. Based on the results of these evaluations, we want to investigate optimizations of our approach that lead to shorter plan evaluation times.

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