

The Web Ontology Language OWL2

M. Koubarakis, G. Santipantakis

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1 The Web Ontology Language (OWL)

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- OWL Basics
- OWL Syntax Variants
- OWL Classes
- OWL Properties
- OWL Individuals
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- Assertions

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- As a DL-based language:
 - different language profiles based on expressiveness are possible
 - ontologies comprise a TBox, an RBox and ABox
 - sound and complete algorithms for the reasoning tasks are available

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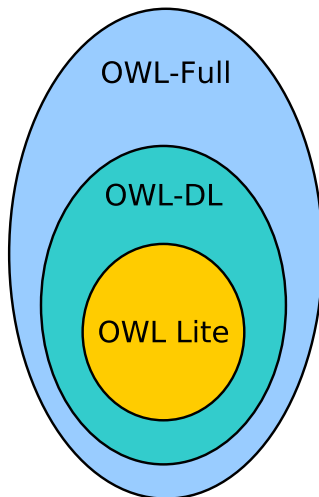
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- No Unique Name Assumption:
 - e.g., `:Mary :hasChild :John ; :hasChild :kid1`
:John and :kid1 may refer to the same entity
- Open World Assumption:
 - absence of information must not be considered as negative information,
e.g. `:Mary :hasChild :John`
does not entail that Mary has only one child

OWL Overview (cont'd)

OWL profiles (sublanguages) are syntactic restrictions:

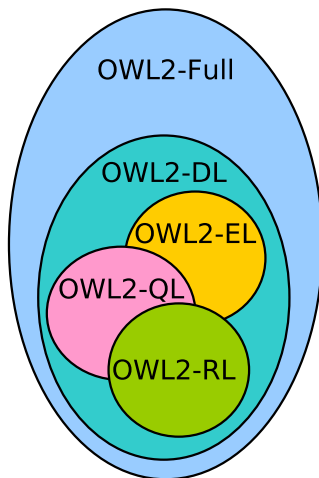
- **OWL Lite:** designed for easy implementation with a functional subset of OWL.
- **OWL DL:** designed to support the existing Description Logic and provide a language subset that has desirable computational properties for reasoning systems.
- **OWL Full:** relaxes some of the constraints on OWL DL for maximum expressiveness, but which violate the constraints of Description Logic reasoners.



OWL Overview (cont'd)

OWL2 profiles (sublanguages), each profile is more restrictive than OWL DL:

- **OWL 2 EL** enables polynomial time algorithms for all the standard reasoning tasks
- **OWL 2 QL** enables conjunctive queries to be answered in LogSpace using standard relational database technology
- **OWL 2 RL** enables the implementation of polynomial time reasoning algorithms using rule-extended database technologies operating directly on RDF triples



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- Datatypes (\mathcal{D})
- **ABox**: class and property assertions e.g.,
 $Student(ST001), hasParent(MARIA, NIKOS)$, instance equality e.g.,
 $ST001 = NIKOS$, and difference e.g., $MARIA \neq NIKOS$

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- **RBox:** symmetry, reflexivity, irreflexivity, disjunctiveness
- **ABox:** negated property assertions e.g., $\neg hasPet(NIKOS, PLUTO)$

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- The ontology itself also has an IRI, it can be annotated (`owl:version`, `rdfs:label`, `rdfs:seeAlso`, etc) and reused (`owl:import`)

OWL in a nutshell (cont'd)

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- Expressions: describing complex classes of elements in the domain (i.e. complex concepts or roles in DL terms).
- Axioms are statements that are asserted to be true (e.g., a subclass axiom)
- DL reasoners can be employed to draw inferences from asserted knowledge

Serializers and Parsers are available for the following syntax variants:

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- Turtle

Example (RDF/XML Syntax)

Parent $\equiv \exists hasChild.Person$

```
...  
<owl:Class rdf:about="http://example.gr#Parent">  
  <owl:equivalentClass>  
    <owl:Restriction>  
      <owl:onProperty rdf:resource="http://example.gr#hasChild"/>  
      <owl:someValuesFrom rdf:resource="http://example.gr#Person"/>  
    </owl:Restriction>  
  </owl:equivalentClass>  
</owl:Class>  
...
```

Example (OWL/XML Syntax)

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```
...
<Declaration>
  <Class IRI="#Parent"/>
</Declaration>
<Declaration>
  <Class IRI="#Person"/>
</Declaration>
<Declaration>
  <ObjectProperty IRI="#hasChild"/>
</Declaration>
<EquivalentClasses>
  <Class IRI="#Parent"/>
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...
```

Example (Functional/Manchester Syntax)

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Functional Syntax:

```
Declaration(Class(<http://example.gr#Parent>))
Declaration(Class(<http://example.gr#Person>))
Declaration(ObjectProperty(<http://example.gr#hasChild>))
EquivalentClasses(<http://example.gr#Parent>
  ObjectSomeValuesFrom(<http://example.gr#hasChild>
    <http://example.gr#Person>))
```

Manchester Syntax:

```
ObjectProperty: <http://example.gr#hasChild>
Class: <http://example.gr#Person>
Class: <http://example.gr#Parent>
  EquivalentTo:
    <http://example.gr#hasChild> some
      <http://example.gr#Person>
```

Example (Turtle Syntax)

Parent $\equiv \exists hasChild.Person$

Turtle Syntax:

```
:Person rdf:type owl:Class .
:hasChild rdf:type owl:ObjectProperty .
:Parent rdf:type owl:Class ;
  owl:equivalentClass [ rdf:type owl:Restriction ;
    owl:onProperty :hasChild ;
    owl:someValuesFrom :Person
  ] .
```

OWL classes represent sets of individuals.

Predefined classes in OWL are:

- `owl:Thing`, which represents the set of all individuals
- `owl:Nothing`, which represents the empty set

OWL ObjectProperties connect pairs of individuals, e.g.,

```
:parentOf (:Homer :Bart)
```

Built-in object properties:

- `owl:topObjectProperty`, which connects all possible pairs of individuals.
- `owl:bottomObjectProperty`, which does not connect any pair of individuals.

Object properties can be used to form object property expressions.

OWL ObjectProperty Expression (Inverse)

An inverse object property expression `ObjectInverseOf(P)` connects an individual `I1` with `I2` if and only if the object property `P` connects `I2` with `I1`.

Example: if an ontology contains:

```
ObjectPropertyAssertion(:parentOf :Homer :Bart)
```

then it also entails:

```
ObjectPropertyAssertion(ObjectInverseOf(:fatherOf)  
    :Bart :Homer)
```

OWL ObjectProperty Expression (Symmetric/Asymmetric)

In some cases, a property and its inverse coincide, or in other words, the direction of a property doesn't matter.

Example: if an ontology contains:

```
SymmetricObjectProperty( :hasSpouse )
```

```
ObjectPropertyAssertion(:hasSpouse :Bart :Lisa)
```

then it also entails:

```
ObjectPropertyAssertion(:hasSpouse :Lisa :Bart)
```

A property can also be asymmetric, if it connects A with B, but it never connects B with A.

Example:

```
AsymmetricObjectProperty( :hasChild )
```

OWL ObjectProperty Expression (Reflexivity/Irreflexivity)

Reflexive properties relate everything to itself.

Example: Everyone is a relative to him/herself:

```
ReflexiveObjectProperty( :hasRelative )
```

Note: this does not necessarily mean that every two individuals which are related by a reflexive property are identical.

Irreflexive properties model the case where no individual can be related to itself by such a property.

Example:

```
IrreflexiveObjectProperty( :parentOf )
```

Nobody can be his own parent.

OWL ObjectProperty Expression (Functional)

Some properties relate a subject to at most one object. These properties are called functional.

Example: If an ontology contains

```
FunctionalObjectProperty( :hasHusband )
```

```
ObjectPropertyAssertion(:hasHusband :Marge :Homer)
```

```
ObjectPropertyAssertion(:hasHusband :Marge :HomerSimpson)
```

it also entails:

```
SameIndividual(:Homer :HomerSimpson)
```

Note: this expression does not require every individual to have a husband, it only states that there can be no more than one.

It is also possible to indicate that the inverse of a given property is functional.

Example: If an ontology contains

```
InverseFunctionalObjectProperty( :hasHusband )
```

```
ObjectPropertyAssertion(:hasHusband :Marge :Homer)
```

```
ObjectPropertyAssertion(:hasHusband :MargeBouvier :Homer)
```

it also entails:

```
ObjectPropertyAssertion(owl:sameAs :Marge :MargeBouvier)
```

This indicates that if two or more individuals are related with the same individual via an inverse functional property, then these individuals refer to the same entity in the domain.

OWL ObjectProperty Expression (Transitive)

A transitive property R interlinks an individual i with j , whenever R relates i with k , and k with j .

Example: If an ontology contains

```
TransitiveObjectProperty( :hasAncestor )
```

```
ObjectPropertyAssertion(:hasAncestor :Marge :ClancyBouvier)
```

```
ObjectPropertyAssertion(:hasAncestor :Lisa :Marge)
```

it also entails:

```
ObjectPropertyAssertion(:hasAncestor :Lisa :ClancyBouvier)
```

Data properties (e.g., `:hasAge`) connect individuals with literals.

Built-in properties:

- `owl:topDataProperty`, which connects all possible individuals with all literals.
- `owl:bottomDataProperty`, which does not connect any individual with a literal.

Annotation properties can be used to provide an annotation for an ontology, axiom, or a resource. Users can define their own annotation properties or use the available built-in annotation properties:

- `rdfs:label`, `rdfs:comment`, `rdfs:seeAlso`, `rdfs:isDefinedBy`
- `owl:deprecated`, `owl:versionInfo`, `owl:priorVersion`,
`owl:backwardCompatibleWith`, `owl:incompatibleWith`

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- Named individuals are given an explicit name (an IRI e.g., `:Peter`) that can be used in any ontology to refer to the same object.
- Anonymous individuals do not have a global name. They can be defined using a name (e.g., `_:somebody`) local to the ontology they are contained in. They are like blank nodes in RDF.

Datatypes are entities that represent sets of data values.

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- `rdfs:Literal` contains all the elements of other data types.
- There are also the OWL datatypes `owl:real` and `owl:rational`.

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 - The lexical space is a set of strings that can be used to refer to data values. Each member of the lexical space is called a lexical form, and it is mapped to a particular data value.
 - The facet space is a set of pairs of the form (F,v) where F is an IRI called a constraining facet, and v is an arbitrary data value called the constraining value. Each such pair is mapped to a subset of the value space of the datatype.

OWL Datatypes (Example)

We can define a new datatype for a person's age by constraining the datatype integer to values between (inclusively) 0 and 120.

```
DatatypeDefinition( :personAge
  DatatypeRestriction(
    xsd:integer
      xsd:minInclusive "0"^^xsd:integer
      xsd:maxInclusive "120"^^xsd:integer
  )
)
```

Literals represent data values such as particular strings or integers. They are analogous to RDF literals.

Examples:

"1"^^xsd:integer (typed literal)

"Family Guy" (plain literal, an abbreviation for

"Family Guy"^^rdf:PlainLiteral)

"Padre de familia"@es (plain literal with language tag)

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- Class expressions represent sets of individuals by formally specifying conditions on the individuals' properties; individuals satisfying these conditions are said to be instances of the respective class expressions.

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An intersection class expression

`ObjectIntersectionOf(CE_1 ... CE_n)` contains all individuals that are instances of all class expressions CE_i for $1 \leq i \leq n$.

Example:

`ObjectIntersectionOf(:Dog :CanTalk)`

OWL Class Expressions (cont'd)

A union class expression `ObjectUnionOf(CE_1 ... CE_n)` contains all individuals that are instances of at least one class expression `CE_i` for $1 \leq i \leq n$.

Example:

`ObjectUnionOf(:Man :Woman)`

OWL Class Expressions (cont'd)

A complement class expression `ObjectComplementOf(CE)` contains all individuals that are not instances of the class expression `CE`.

Example:

`ObjectComplementOf(:Man)`

OWL Class Expressions (cont'd)

We can define disjoint classes, i.e. those sets that cannot have a common element.

Example: If an ontology contains:

```
DisjointClasses(:Man :Woman)  
ClassAssertion(:Woman :Marge)
```

it also entails:

```
ClassAssertion(ObjectComplementOf(:Man) :Marge)
```


An enumeration of individuals `ObjectOneOf(a_1 ... a_n)` contains exactly the individuals `a_i` with $1 \leq i \leq n$.

Example:

`ObjectOneOf(:Saturday :Sunday)`

Example Inference

From

```
EquivalentClasses(:GriffinFamilyMember
  ObjectOneOf(:Peter :Lois :Stewie :Meg :Chris :Brian))
DifferentIndividuals(:Quagmire :Peter :Lois :Stewie :Meg
  :Chris :Brian)
```

we can infer ClassAssertion(
 ObjectComplementOf(:GriffinFamilyMember) :Quagmire)

Example Inference (cont'd)

From

```
ClassAssertion(:GriffinFamilyMember :Peter)
ClassAssertion(:GriffinFamilyMember :Lois)
ClassAssertion(:GriffinFamilyMember :Stewie)
ClassAssertion(:GriffinFamilyMember :Meg)
ClassAssertion(:GriffinFamilyMember :Chris)
ClassAssertion(:GriffinFamilyMember :Brian)
```

```
DifferentIndividuals(:Quagmire :Peter :Lois :Stewie
:Meg :Chris :Brian)
```

Can we infer this:

```
ClassAssertion(
ObjectComplementOf(:GriffinFamilyMember) :Quagmire) ?
```

OWL Class Expressions (cont'd)

An existential class expression `ObjectSomeValuesFrom(OPE CE)` consists of an object property expression `OPE` and a class expression `CE`, and it contains all those individuals that are connected by `OPE` to an individual that is an instance of `CE`.

Example:

`ObjectSomeValuesFrom(:hasChild :Person)`

If `OPE` is simple, the above class expression is equivalent with the class expression `ObjectMinCardinality(1 OPE CE)`

Example

From

```
ObjectPropertyAssertion(:hasChild :Peter :Stewie)  
ClassAssertion(:Person :Stewie)
```

we can infer

```
ClassAssertion(  
ObjectSomeValuesFrom(:hasChild :Person) :Peter)
```

A universal class expression `ObjectAllValuesFrom(OPE CE)` consists of an object property expression `OPE` and a class expression `CE`, and it contains all those individuals that are connected by `OPE` only to individuals that are instances of `CE`.

Example:

`ObjectAllValuesFrom(:fatherOf :Man)`

If `OPE` is simple, the above class expression is equivalent with the class expression `ObjectMaxCardinality(0 OPE ObjectComplementOf(CE))`

OWL Class Expressions (cont'd)

An individual value class expression `ObjectHasValue(OPE a)` consists of an object property expression `OPE` and an individual `a`, and it contains all those individuals that are connected by `OPE` to `a`.

Example: If an ontology contains:

```
EquivalentClasses(:SolarPlanet ObjectHasValue(:orbits :Sun))  
ObjectPropertyAssertion(:orbits :Earth :Sun))
```

it can also entail:

```
ClassAssertion(:SolarPlanet :Earth)
```

The above class expression is equivalent to the class expression `ObjectSomeValuesFrom(OPE ObjectOneOf(a))`.

OWL Class Expressions (cont'd)

A self-restriction `ObjectHasSelf(OPE)` consists of an object property expression `OPE`, and it contains all those individuals that are connected by `OPE` to themselves.

Example: if an ontology contains:

```
EquivalentClasses(:Narcisist ObjectHasSelf(:likes))
```

```
ObjectPropertyAssertion(:likes :Peter :Peter)
```

it also infers:

```
ClassAssertion(:Narcisist :Peter)
```


Object property cardinality restrictions are distinguished into:

- Qualified: apply only to individuals that are connected by the object property expression and are instances of the qualifying class expression. (e.g. `>3hasChild.Male`)
- Unqualified: apply to all individuals that are connected by the object property expression (this is equivalent to the qualified case with the qualifying class expression equal to `owl:Thing`) (e.g. `>3hasChild`).

A minimum cardinality expression `ObjectMinCardinality(n OPE CE)` consists of a nonnegative integer `n`, an object property expression `OPE`, and a class expression `CE`, and it contains all those individuals that are connected by `OPE` to at least `n` different individuals that are instances of `CE`. If `CE` is missing, it is taken to be `owl:Thing`.

Example:

```
ObjectMinCardinality(2 :fatherOf :Man)
```

Example

From

```
ObjectPropertyAssertion(:fatherOf :Peter :Stewie)
```

```
ObjectPropertyAssertion(:fatherOf :Peter :Chris)
```

```
ClassAssertion(:Man :Stewie)
```

```
ClassAssertion(:Man :Chris)
```

```
DifferentIndividuals(:Chris :Stewie)
```

we can infer:

```
ClassAssertion(ObjectMinCardinality(2 :fatherOf :Man) :Peter)
```

A maximum cardinality expression $\text{ObjectMaxCardinality}(n \text{ OPE } CE)$ consists of a nonnegative integer n , an object property expression OPE, and a class expression CE, and it contains all those individuals that are connected by OPE to at most n different individuals that are instances of CE. If CE is missing, it is taken to be `owl:Thing`.

Example:

`ObjectMaxCardinality(2 :hasPet)`

OWL Class Expressions (cont'd)

An exact cardinality expression `ObjectExactCardinality(n OPE CE)` consists of a nonnegative integer `n`, an object property expression `OPE`, and a class expression `CE`, and it contains all those individuals that are connected by `OPE` to exactly `n` different individuals that are instances of `CE`.

Example:

```
ObjectExactCardinality(1 :hasPet :Dog)
```

The above expression is equivalent to

```
ObjectIntersectionOf(  
  ObjectMinCardinality(n OPE CE)  
  ObjectMaxCardinality(n OPE CE))
```

Data Property restrictions

- Data property restrictions are similar to the restrictions on object property expressions.
- The main difference is that the expressions for existential and universal quantification allow for n-ary data ranges.
- Given the syntax for data ranges given earlier, only unary data ranges are supported.
- However, the specification provide the syntactic constructs needed to have n-ary data ranges e.g., sets of rectangles defined by appropriate geometric constraints.

The “Data Range Extension: Linear Equations” W3C note proposes an extension to OWL 2 for defining n-ary data ranges in terms of linear (in)equations with rational coefficients. See <http://www.w3.org/TR/owl2-dr-linear/> .

A subclass axiom `SubClassOf(CE1 CE2)` states that the class expression `CE1` is a subclass of the class expression `CE2`.

Example:

```
SubClassOf(:Child :Person)
```

The properties known from RDFS for `SubClassOf` hold here as well (Reflexivity, Transitivity)

An equivalent classes axiom `EquivalentClasses(CE_1 ... CE_n)` states that all of the class expressions $CE_i, 1 \leq i \leq n$, are semantically equivalent to each other.

Example:

`EquivalentClasses(:Boy ObjectIntersectionOf(:Child :Male))`

An axiom `EquivalentClasses(CE1 CE2)` is equivalent to the conjunction of the following two axioms: `SubClassOf(CE1 CE2)`
`SubClassOf(CE2 CE1)`

A disjoint classes axiom `DisjointClasses(CE_1 ... CE_n)` states that all of the class expressions CE_i , $1 \leq i \leq n$, are pairwise disjoint.

Example:

`DisjointClasses(:Boy :Girl)`

An axiom `DisjointClasses(CE1 CE2)` is equivalent to the following axiom:

`SubClassOf(CE1 ObjectComplementOf(CE2))`

A disjoint union axiom `DisjointUnion(C CE_1 ... CE_n)` states that a class `C` is a disjoint union of the class expressions `CE_i`, $1 \leq i \leq n$, all of which are pairwise disjoint.

Such axioms are sometimes referred to as covering axioms, as they state that the extensions of all `CE_i` exactly cover the extension of `C`.

Example:

```
DisjointUnion(:Child :Boy :Girl)
```

Each such axiom is equivalent to the conjunction of the following two

```
axioms: EquivalentClasses(C ObjectUnionOf(CE1 ... CEn))
```

```
DisjointClasses(CE1 ... CEn)
```

From

```
DisjointUnion(:Child :Boy :Girl)
```

```
ClassAssertion(:Child :Stewie)
```

```
ClassAssertion(ObjectComplementOf(:Girl) :Stewie)
```

we can infer

```
ClassAssertion(:Boy :Stewie)
```

- Object subproperty axioms are analogous to subclass axioms.
- The basic form of an object subproperty axiom is $\text{SubObjectPropertyOf}(OPE1\ OPE2)$.
- This axiom states that the object property expression $OPE1$ is a subproperty of the object property expression $OPE2$ i.e. if an individual x is connected by $OPE1$ to an individual y , then x is also connected by $OPE2$ to y .
- $\text{SubObjectPropertyOf}$ is a reflexive and transitive relation.

OWL Axioms (Property Chain)

If OPE_1, \dots, OPE_n are object properties then $OPE_1 \dots OPE_n$ is called an object property chain.

The more complex form of object subproperty axioms is

$\text{SubObjectPropertyOf}(\text{ObjectPropertyChain}(OPE_1 \dots OPE_n) \text{ OPE})$.

This axiom states that, if an individual x_1 is connected by a sequence of object property expressions OPE_1, \dots, OPE_n with an individual x_n , then x_1 is also connected with x_n by the object property expression OPE .

These axioms are known as complex role inclusions in the DL literature.

Example

From

```
SubObjectPropertyOf(  
ObjectPropertyChain(:hasMother :hasSister) :hasAunt)
```

```
ObjectPropertyAssertion(:hasMother :Stewie :Lois)  
ObjectPropertyAssertion(:hasSister :Lois :Carol)
```

we can infer

```
ObjectPropertyAssertion(:hasAunt :Stewie :Carol)
```

An equivalent object properties axiom

`EquivalentObjectProperties(OPE_1 ... OPE_n)` states that all of the object property expressions `OPE_i`, $1 \leq i \leq n$, are semantically equivalent to each other.

The axiom `EquivalentObjectProperties(OPE1 OPE2)` is equivalent to the following two axioms:

`SubObjectPropertyOf(OPE1 OPE2)`

`SubObjectPropertyOf(OPE2 OPE1)`

A disjoint object properties axiom

`DisjointObjectProperties(OPE1 ... OPEn)` states that all of the object property expressions `OPEi`, $1 \leq i \leq n$, are pairwise disjoint.

Example:

`DisjointObjectProperties(:hasFather :hasMother)`

- An object property domain axiom $\text{ObjectPropertyDomain}(OPE\ CE)$ states that the domain of the object property expression OPE is the class expression CE i.e. if an individual x is connected by OPE with some other individual, then x is an instance of CE .
- An object property range axiom $\text{ObjectPropertyRange}(OPE\ CE)$ states that the range of the object property expression OPE is the class expression CE i.e. if some individual is connected by OPE with an individual x , then x is an instance of CE .

OWL 2 supports a rich set of axioms for stating assertions about individuals:

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- Negative data property assertion

Assertions are often also called facts. They are part of the ABox in DLs.

An individual equality axiom `SameIndividual(a_1 ... a_n)` states that all of the individuals `a_i`, $1 \leq i \leq n$, are equal to each other.

Example:

From `SameIndividual(:Meg :Megan)`

`ObjectPropertyAssertion(:hasBrother :Meg :Stewie)`

we can infer:

`ObjectPropertyAssertion(:hasBrother :Megan :Stewie)`

An individual inequality axiom `DifferentIndividuals(a_1 ... a_n)` states that all of the individuals a_i , $1 \leq i \leq n$, are different from each other.

Example:

```
DifferentIndividuals(:Peter :Meg :Chris :Stewie)
```

A class assertion `ClassAssertion(CE a)` states that the individual `a` is an instance of the class expression `CE`.

Example:

```
ClassAssertion(:Dog :Brian)
```

Object Property Assertion

A positive object property assertion

`ObjectPropertyAssertion(OPE a_1 a_2)` states that the individual `a_1` is connected by the object property expression `OPE` to the individual `a_2`.

A negative object property assertion

`NegativeObjectPropertyAssertion(OPE a_1 a_2)` states that the individual `a_1` is not connected by the object property expression `OPE` to the individual `a_2`.

Examples:

`ObjectPropertyAssertion(:hasDog :Peter :Brian)`

`NegativeObjectPropertyAssertion(:hasSon :Peter :Meg)`

- OWL 2 Web Ontology Language Primer (Second Edition)
<https://www.w3.org/TR/owl2-primer/>
- OWL 2 Web Ontology Language Manchester Syntax (Second Edition)
<https://www.w3.org/TR/owl2-manchester-syntax/>
- Krötzsch, M. (2012). OWL 2 Profiles: An Introduction to Lightweight Ontology Languages. In: Eiter, T., Krennwallner, T. (eds) Reasoning Web. Semantic Technologies for Advanced Query Answering. Reasoning Web 2012. Lecture Notes in Computer Science, vol 7487. Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-33158-9_4
- An introduction to OWL 2 and DL *SROIQ*, which also discusses various OWL tools/applications: Ian Horrocks and Peter F. Patel-Schneider. KR and Reasoning on the Semantic Web: OWL. In Handbook of Semantic Web Technologies, chapter 9. Springer, 2010.
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