

# A Formal Model of the Shape Expression Language

Harold Solbrig<sup>1</sup>, Eric Prud'hommeaux<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mayo Clinic, Rochester MN 55095, USA,  
solbrig.harold@mayo.edu

<sup>2</sup> World Wide Web Consortium, Cambridge MA 02139, USA,  
eric@w3.org

**Abstract.** Shape Expressions express formal constraints on the content of RDF graphs and are intended to be used to validate RDF documents, communicate expected graph patterns for interfaces and to generate forms and validation code. This document describes the formal semantics of the Shape Expressions language through the use of the *Z* Specification Language.

**Keywords:** RDF, RDF Graph, RDF Dataset, validation, formal schema, ShEx, RDF Validation, Z Specification Language

## 1 Introduction

The Shape Expressions Language (*ShEx*) is used to specify formal constraints on the content of RDF graphs and are intended to be used to validate RDF documents, communicate expected graph patterns for interfaces and to generate forms and validation code. *ShEx* can be used to:

- Describe the contents of an RDF graph
- Express invariants about an RDF triple store
- Define a predicate that can be tested against an RDF graph instance
- Define a set of rules that can be used to generate forms, validation code and other constructs in specific target languages

Information about the use, grammar and syntax of *ShEx* can be found at <http://www.w3.org/2013/ShEx>. The purpose of this document is to describe the formal *semantics* of the *ShEx* language using the *Z* specification language. We begin with a formal specification of the characteristics of an *RDF Graph* that are referenced by *ShEx*.

## 2 The RDF Data Model

Using the formal definitions in *RDF 1.1 Concepts and Abstract Syntax*[1], we begin with:

“An **RDF graph** is a set of **RDF Triples**”

Formally:

$$Graph == \mathbb{P} Triple$$

The specification then defines the notion of **Triple**:

- “An **RDF triple** consists of three components:
- the *subject*, which is an **IRI** or a **blank node**
  - the *predicate*, which is an **IRI**
  - the *object*, which is an **IRI**, a **literal** or a **blank node**”

“... **IRIs**, **literals** and **blank nodes** are distinct and distinguishable.”

The *ShEx* language treats **IRIs** and **blank nodes** as primitive types, so we can formally define them as *Z* free types:

$$[IRI, BlankNode]$$

The *ShEx* language can express constraints on both the type and content of **literals**, so we need to model these separately. Starting with:

- “A **literal** in an RDF graph consists of two or three elements:
- a **lexical form**, being a Unicode string...
  - a **datatype IRI**, being an IRI
  - if and only if the datatype IRI is `http://www.w3.org/1999/02/22-rdf-syntax-ns#langString`, a non-empty language tag as defined in [BCP47][3]. The language tag MUST be well-formed according to section 2.2.9 of [BCP47][3].”

We model this by defining *String* and *LanguageTag* as free types:

$$[String, LanguageTag]$$

And then use them in the definition the two flavors of *RDFLiteral*, plain literal and typed literal::

$$\begin{aligned} TypedLiteral &\hat{=} [lexicalForm : String; dataType : IRI \mid dataType \neq XSD\_String] \\ PlainLiteral &\hat{=} [lexicalForm : String; dataType : IRI; langTag : LanguageTag \mid \\ &\quad dataType = XSD\_String] \\ RDFLiteral &::= pl\langle\langle PlainLiteral \rangle\rangle \mid tl\langle\langle TypedLiteral \rangle\rangle \end{aligned}$$

The RDF 1.1 specification the defines *RDFTerm* as:

“**IRIs**, **literals** and **blank nodes** are collectively known as **RDF terms**”

$$RDFTerm ::= iri\langle\langle IRI \rangle\rangle \mid literal\langle\langle RDFLiteral \rangle\rangle \mid bnode\langle\langle BlankNode \rangle\rangle$$

We are now in the position to complete the definition of *Triple* as a tuple consisting of three constrained *RDFTerms*:

<i>Triple</i>
$s, p, o : RDFTerm$
$iri \cdot s \in IRI \vee bnode \cdot s \in BlankNode$
$iri \cdot p \in IRI$
$iri \cdot o \in IRI \vee bnode \cdot o \in BlankNode \vee literal \cdot o \in RDFLiteral$

## 2.1 RDF Access Functions

The *ShEx* language uses the following functions:

***triplesForSubject*** – return set of triples in a graph triples whose subject is a given *RDFTerm*

$triplesForSubject : RDFTerm \rightarrow Graph \rightarrow Graph$
$\forall subj : RDFTerm; g : Graph \bullet triplesForSubject\ subj\ g = \{t : g \mid t.s = subj\}$

***triplesForObject*** – return set of triples in a graph triples whose object is a given *RDFTerm*

$triplesForObject : RDFTerm \rightarrow Graph \rightarrow Graph$
$\forall obj : RDFTerm; g : Graph \bullet triplesForObject\ obj\ g = \{t : g \mid t.o = obj\}$

## 2.2 Well Known URIs

The following URI's are referenced explicitly in the *ShEx* implementation:

| *XSD\_String*, *RDF\_Resource* : *IRI*

This completes the formal definition of *Graph*, *Triple*, *RDFTerm* and their components, which we can now use to describe the relationship between an *ShEx Schema* and an RDF graph.

## 3 Shape Expression Evaluation

A Shape Expression *Schema* is a collection of labeled rules where exactly one rule in the collection is identified as the outermost or “starting” rule. In addition, any

rule that is referenced within the *Schema* is also itself a member of the *Schema*.  
Formally:

$ \begin{array}{l} \textit{Schema} \\ \hline \textit{rules} : \textit{Label} \rightarrow \textit{Rule} \\ \textit{start} : \textit{Label} \\ \hline \textit{start} \in \text{dom } \textit{rules} \\ \forall r : \text{ran } \textit{rules} \bullet \\ \quad (r \in \text{ran } \textit{group} \Rightarrow (\textit{group} \cdot r).\textit{rule} \in \text{dom } \textit{rules}) \wedge \\ \quad (r \in \text{ran } \textit{and} \Rightarrow \text{ran}(\textit{and} \cdot r) \subseteq \text{dom } \textit{rules}) \wedge \\ \quad (r \in \text{ran } \textit{xor} \Rightarrow \text{ran}(\textit{xor} \cdot r) \subseteq \text{dom } \textit{rules}) \wedge \\ \quad (r \in \text{ran } \textit{arc} \wedge (\textit{arc} \cdot r).\textit{valueSpec} \in \text{ran } \textit{valueRef} \Rightarrow \\ \quad \quad (\textit{valueRef} \cdot (\textit{arc} \cdot r).\textit{valueSpec}) \in \text{dom } \textit{rules}) \end{array} $
---

While existing *ShEx* implementations define a rule *Label* as being either an *IRI* or a *BlankNode*, the type of *Label* does not impact the evaluation semantics. For our purposes, we can simply define it as a separate free type:

[*Label*]

The validity of a given RDF *Graph* is determined by taking the *start Rule* of a *ShEx Schema* and a reference *IRI* and evaluating the validity of the *Rule* against the supplied graph.

Formally, the *evaluate* function takes a *Schema*, a *Graph* and a reference *IRI* and, if the *start Rule* in the *Schema*, in the context of the starting *Schema* and *graph*, returns either *nomatch* (**z**) or *pass* (**p**) then the function returns *pass*. In all other cases, the function returns *fail* (**f**).

$ \begin{array}{l} \textit{evaluate} : \textit{Schema} \rightarrow \textit{Graph} \rightarrow \textit{IRI} \rightarrow \textit{OptValidity} \\ \hline \forall s : \textit{Schema}; g : \textit{Graph}; i : \textit{IRI}; v : \textit{OptValidity}; ec : \textit{EvalContext} \mid \\ \quad ec.\textit{graph} = g \wedge ec.\textit{schema} = s \bullet \\ \quad \textit{evaluate } s \ g \ i = \\ \quad \quad \textbf{if } \textit{evalRule } ec \ (\textit{iri } i) \ (s.\textit{rules } s.\textit{start}) \in \{\mathbf{z}, \mathbf{p}\} \\ \quad \quad \textbf{then } \mathbf{p} \textbf{ else } \mathbf{f} \end{array} $
--

## 4 Rule Evaluation

A *ShEx Rule* is a set of constraints that can be evaluated against a reference *RDFTerm* in the context of a given *Schema* and RDF *Graph*:

$\textit{EvalContext} \hat{=} [\textit{schema} : \textit{Schema}; \textit{graph} : \textit{Graph}]$

Formally, the *evalRule* function takes an *EvalContext*, a reference *RDFTerm* and a *Rule* and returns one of the following:

- **Pass** ( $p$ ) - the supplied *Graph* satisfied the evaluation *Rule*
- **Fail** ( $f$ ) - the supplied *Graph* did not satisfy the evaluation *Rule*
- **Nomatch** ( $z$ ) - an *optional GroupRule* was encountered and there were no matching triples
- **Dunno** ( $\emptyset$ ) - an *ArcRule* was encountered with a minimum cardinality of 0 and there were no matching triples
- **Error** ( $\varepsilon$ ) - an *XorRule* was evaluated and two or more components passed the evaluation.

$$OptValidity ::= p \mid f \mid z \mid \emptyset \mid \varepsilon$$

A *Rule* can take one of five forms. Each will be formally described later in this document, but informally they are:

- **ArcRule** – selects the subset of the graph having the reference *RDFTerm* as the subject and matching predicates and and validates the resulting objects
- **RevArcRule** – selects the subset of the graph having the reference *RDFTerm* as the object and matching predicates and and validates the resulting subjects
- **GroupRule** – identifies a *Rule* and declares it as optional and/or describes a set of external *Actions* to be evaluated if the inner *Rule* passes.
- **AndRule** – identifies a set of *Rules*, all of which must pass when evaluated against the supplied *Graph* and *EvalContext*
- **XorRule** – identifies a set of *Rules*, exactly one of which must pass when evaluated against the supplied *Graph* and *EvalContext*

$$\begin{aligned} Rule ::= & \text{arc}\langle\langle ArcRule \rangle\rangle \mid \\ & \text{rarc}\langle\langle RevArcRule \rangle\rangle \mid \\ & \text{group}\langle\langle GroupRule \rangle\rangle \mid \\ & \text{and}\langle\langle AndRule \rangle\rangle \mid \\ & \text{xor}\langle\langle XorRule \rangle\rangle \end{aligned}$$

---


$$evalRule : EvalContext \rightarrow RDFTerm \rightarrow Rule \rightarrow OptValidity$$


---

$$\begin{aligned} \forall ec : EvalContext; i : RDFTerm; r : Rule \bullet & evalRule \ ec \ i \ r = \\ & \text{if } r \in \text{ran } arc \\ & \quad \text{then } evalArcRule \ ec \ i \ (arc \cdot r) \\ & \text{else if } r \in \text{ran } rarc \\ & \quad \text{then } evalRevArcRule \ ec \ i \ (rarc \cdot r) \\ & \text{else if } r \in \text{ran } group \\ & \quad \text{then } evalGroupRule \ ec \ i \ (group \cdot r) \\ & \text{else if } r \in \text{ran } and \\ & \quad \text{then } evalAndRule \ ec \ i \ (and \cdot r) \\ & \text{else} \\ & \quad evalXorRule \ ec \ i \ (xor \cdot r) \end{aligned}$$


---

The function below de-references the supplied *Label* and invoke *evalRule* with the result. This is not explicitly represented because the *Z* specification language does not allow cyclic dependencies. Note that this function is undefined if *Label* is not in *EvalContext*

$evalRule' : EvalContext \rightarrow RDFTerm \rightarrow Label \rightarrow OptValidity$
$\forall ec : EvalContext; l : Label \bullet l \in \text{dom } ec.schema.rules$

#### 4.1 ArcRule evaluation

The *ArcRule* is used to select the subset of the graph having a given predicate or predicates and to determine whether the cardinality and/or “type” of this subset matches a supplied criteria. The rule itself consists of a *PredicateFilter* to select the triples, an *ObjectSpecification* to evaluate the result, a optional *min* and *max* cardinality and a (possibly empty) set of *Actions*:

<i>ArcRule</i>
<i>filter</i> : <i>PredicateFilter</i>
<i>valueSpec</i> : <i>ObjectSpecification</i>
<i>min, max</i> : $\mathbb{N}[0..1]$
<i>actions</i> : $\mathbb{P} Action$
$(\#min = 1 \wedge \#max = 1) \Rightarrow value\ min \leq value\ max$

*ArcRule* evaluation consists of:

1. Select the subset of the *EvalContext Graph* with the supplied subject and predicates matching *PredicateFilter*
2. Evaluate the cardinality and return the result if it doesn't pass
3. Evaluate the object of each of the triples in the set against *ObjectSpecification*. If any of the evaluations fail, return *fail* (**f**).
4. Return the result of evaluating *actions* against the matching triples.

$evalArcRule : EvalContext \rightarrow RDFTerm \rightarrow ArcRule \rightarrow OptValidity$
$\forall ec : EvalContext; s : RDFTerm; ar : ArcRule; sg : Graph \mid$ $sg = evalPredicateFilter\ ar.filter\ (triplesForSubject\ s\ ec.graph) \bullet$ $evalArcRule\ ec\ s\ ar =$ <b>if</b> <i>evalCardinality</i> <i>sg</i> <i>ar.min</i> <i>ar.max</i> $\neq \mathbf{p}$ <b>then</b> <i>evalCardinality</i> <i>sg</i> <i>ar.min</i> <i>ar.max</i> <b>else if</b> <i>evalObjectSpecification</i> <i>ec</i> <i>ar.valueSpec</i> <i>sg</i> $\neq \mathbf{p}$ <b>then</b> <i>evalObjectSpecification</i> <i>ec</i> <i>ar.valueSpec</i> <i>sg</i> <b>else</b> <i>dispatch</i> <i>ar.actions</i> <i>sg</i> <i>ec</i>

**PredicateFilter Validation** A *PredicateFilter* can be one of:

- an *pfIRI* - the IRI of a specific predicate or the *IRIstem* that defines a set of predicates
- *pfWild* - an expression that matches any predicate *except* those matching the (possibly empty) set of *IRIorStems*

$$\begin{aligned} \text{IRIorStem} &::= \text{iosi}\langle\text{IRI}\rangle \mid \text{ioss}\langle\text{IRIstem}\rangle \\ \text{PredicateFilter} &::= \text{pfIRI}\langle\text{IRIorStem}\rangle \mid \text{pfWild}\langle\mathbb{P} \text{IRIorStem}\rangle \end{aligned}$$

An *IRIstem* matches any *IRI* whose stringified representation begins with the stringified representation of *IRIstem* according to standard IRI matching rules [2]. This is represented by the function:

[*IRIstem*]

$\text{IRIstemRange} : \text{IRIstem} \rightarrow \mathbb{P} \text{IRI}$
--

*evalPredicateFilter* returns all of the triples in a *Graph* whose predicate matches the supplied *PredicateFilter*:

$\text{evalPredicateFilter} : \text{PredicateFilter} \rightarrow \text{Graph} \rightarrow \text{Graph}$
$\begin{aligned} \forall f : \text{PredicateFilter}; g : \text{Graph} \bullet \text{evalPredicateFilter } f \ g = \\ \text{if } f \in \text{ran pfIRI} \text{ then } \text{evalIRIorStem } (\text{pfIRI} \cdot f) \ g \\ \text{else } \text{evalWild } (\text{pfWild} \cdot f) \ g \end{aligned}$

*evalIRIorStem* returns all of the triples in a *Graph* matching the supplied *IRIorStem*

$\text{evalIRIorStem} : \text{IRIorStem} \rightarrow \text{Graph} \rightarrow \text{Graph}$
$\begin{aligned} \forall e : \text{IRIorStem}; g : \text{Graph} \bullet \text{evalIRIorStem } e \ g = \\ \text{if } e \in \text{ran iosi} \text{ then } \{t : g \mid \text{iri} \cdot t.p = \text{iosi} \cdot e\} \\ \text{else } \{t : g \mid \text{iri} \cdot t.p \in \text{IRIstemRange } (\text{ioss} \cdot e)\} \end{aligned}$

*evalWild* returns all of the triples in a *Graph* that do *not* match an entry in the set of *IRIorStems*.

$\text{evalWild} : \mathbb{P} \text{IRIorStem} \rightarrow \text{Graph} \rightarrow \text{Graph}$
$\begin{aligned} \forall es : \mathbb{P} \text{IRIorStem}; g : \text{Graph} \bullet \text{evalWild } es \ g = \\ \{t : g \mid t \notin \bigcup \{e : es \bullet \text{evalIRIorStem } e \ g\}\} \end{aligned}$

**ObjectSpecification evaluation** *ObjectSpecification* specifies a set of possible values for an *RDFTerm* and takes one of the following forms:

- *ValueType* - matches *Literals* having a specified data type
- *ValueSet* - matches *IRIs* or *Literals* that match one or more of the expressions in the specified set
- *ValueWild* - matches any target *except* those matching the (possibly empty) set of *IRIstems*
- *ValueReference* - matches any target that is considered valid according the *Rule* identified by *Label*.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{MatchValue} &::= \text{mviri}\langle\langle\text{IRI}\rangle\rangle \mid \text{mviris}\langle\langle\text{IRIstem}\rangle\rangle \mid \\ &\quad \text{mvlit}\langle\langle\text{RDFLiteral}\rangle\rangle \\ \text{ObjectSpecification} &::= \text{valueType}\langle\langle\text{IRI}\rangle\rangle \mid \\ &\quad \text{valueSet}\langle\langle\mathbb{P} \text{ MatchValue}\rangle\rangle \mid \\ &\quad \text{osWild}\langle\langle\mathbb{P} \text{ MatchValue}\rangle\rangle \mid \\ &\quad \text{valueRef}\langle\langle\text{Label}\rangle\rangle \end{aligned}$$

**evalCardinality** – evaluates the cardinality the supplied graph.

- If the graph has no elements and:
  - *min* value is 0 – *nomatch* (*z*)
  - *min* value isn't specified or is  $> 0$  – *dunno* ( $\emptyset$ )
- Otherwise:
  - If number of elements in graph  $< \text{min}$  or  $> \text{max}$  – *fail* (*f*)
  - Otherwise – *pass* (*p*)

$\text{evalCardinality} : \text{Graph} \rightarrow \mathbb{N}[0 \dots 1] \rightarrow \mathbb{N}[0 \dots 1] \rightarrow \text{OptValidity}$
$\forall g : \text{Graph}; \text{min}, \text{max} : \mathbb{N}[0 \dots 1] \bullet \text{evalCardinality } g \text{ min max} =$ $\begin{aligned} &\text{if } \# \text{min} = 1 \wedge \#g = 0 \wedge \text{value min} = 0 \\ &\quad \text{then } z \\ &\text{else if } \#g = 0 \\ &\quad \text{then } \emptyset \\ &\text{else if } (\# \text{min} = 1 \wedge \#g < \text{value min}) \vee \\ &\quad (\# \text{max} = 1 \wedge \#g > \text{value max}) \\ &\quad \text{then } f \\ &\text{else } p \end{aligned}$

*evalObjectSpecification* – returns *pass* (*p*) if all of the triples in a *Graph* match the supplied *ObjectSpecification*, otherwise *fail* (*f*)



$evalObjectSpecification : EvalContext \rightarrow ObjectSpecification \rightarrow Graph \rightarrow OptValidity$
$\forall ec : EvalContext; os : ObjectSpecification; g : Graph \bullet$ $evalObjectSpecification\ ec\ os\ g =$ <b>if</b> $\forall t : g \bullet evalObjectSpecificationTriple\ ec\ os\ t.o = p$ <b>then</b> $p$ <b>else</b> $f$

$evalObjectSpecificationTriple : EvalContext \rightarrow ObjectSpecification \rightarrow RDFTerm \rightarrow OptValidity$
$\forall ec : EvalContext; os : ObjectSpecification; n : RDFTerm \bullet$ $evalObjectSpecificationTriple\ ec\ os\ n =$ <b>if</b> $os \in \text{ran } valueType$ <b>then</b> $evalValueType\ (valueType \cdot os)\ n$ <b>else if</b> $os \in \text{ran } valueSet$ <b>then</b> $evalTermSet\ (valueSet \cdot os)\ n$ <b>else if</b> $os \in \text{ran } osWild$ <b>then</b> $evalTermWild\ (osWild \cdot os)\ n$ <b>else</b> $evalTermReference\ ec\ (valueRef \cdot os)\ n$

$evalValueType$  – returns pass if the supplied  $RDFTerm$  is:

- type *literal* and whose *dataType* matches *ValueType*
- type *IRI* and *ValueType* is type *RDF\_Literal*

$evalValueType : IRI \rightarrow RDFTerm \rightarrow OptValidity$
$\forall vt : IRI; n : RDFTerm; l : RDFLiteral \bullet evalValueType\ vt\ n =$ <b>if</b> $vt = RDF\_Resource \wedge n \in \text{ran } iri$ <b>then</b> $p$ <b>else if</b> $n \in \text{ran } literal \wedge l = (literal \cdot n) \wedge$ $((l \in \text{ran } pl \wedge (pl \cdot l).dataType = vt) \vee$ $(l \in \text{ran } tl \wedge (tl \cdot l).dataType = vt))$ <b>then</b> $p$ <b>else</b> $f$

$evalTermSet$  – return  $p$  if the supplied  $RDFTerm$  is a member of *MatchValue*

$evalTermSet : \mathbb{P} MatchValue \rightarrow RDFTerm \rightarrow OptValidity$
$\forall mvs : \mathbb{P} MatchValue; n : RDFTerm \bullet evalTermSet mvs n =$ <b>if</b> $\exists mv : mvs \bullet$ $((mv \in \text{ran } mviri \wedge n \in \text{ran } iri \wedge (iri \cdot n) = mviri \cdot mv) \vee$ $(mv \in \text{ran } mviris \wedge n \in \text{ran } iri \wedge$ $(iri \cdot n) \in IRIstemRange(mviris \cdot mv)) \vee$ $(n \in \text{ran } literal \wedge mvlit \cdot mv = literal \cdot n))$ <b>then</b> $p$ <b>else</b> $f$

*evalTermWild* – return pass ( $p$ ) if the supplied *RDFTerm* is *not* a member of *MatchValue*.

$evalTermWild : \mathbb{P} MatchValue \rightarrow RDFTerm \rightarrow OptValidity$
$\forall mvs : \mathbb{P} MatchValue; n : RDFTerm \bullet evalTermWild mvs n =$ <b>if</b> $evalTermSet mvs n = p$ <b>then</b> $f$ <b>else</b> $p$

*evalTermReference* – return  $p$  if the subgraph of the *EvalContext* graph whose subjects match the supplied *RDFTerm* satisfies the *ValueReference* rule.

$evalTermReference : EvalContext \rightarrow Label \rightarrow RDFTerm \rightarrow OptValidity$
$\forall ec : EvalContext; vr : Label; n : RDFTerm \bullet$ $evalTermReference ec vr n =$ <b>if</b> $n \notin \text{ran } literal$ <b>then</b> $evalRule' ec n vr$ <b>else</b> $f$

## 4.2 RevArcRule evaluation

The *RevArcRule* is used to select the subset of the graph having a given predicate or predicates and to determine whether the cardinality and/or “type” of this subset matches a supplied criteria. The rule itself consists of a *PredicateFilter* to select the triples, an *SubjectSpecification* to evaluate the result, a optional *min* and *max* cardinality and a (possibly empty) set of *Actions*:

<i>RevArcRule</i>
$filter : PredicateFilter$ $valueSpec : SubjectSpecification$ $min, max : \mathbb{N}[0..1]$ $actions : \mathbb{P} Action$
$(\#min = 1 \wedge \#max = 1) \Rightarrow value min \leq value max$

*RevArcRule* evaluation consists of:

1. Select the subset of the *EvalContext Graph* with the supplied object and predicates matching *PredicateFilter*
2. Evaluate the cardinality and return the result if it doesn't pass
3. Evaluate the object of each of the triples in the set against *SubjectSpecification*. If any of the evaluations fail, return *fail (f)*.
4. Return the result of evaluating *actions* against the matching triples.

$evalRevArcRule : EvalContext \rightarrow RDFTerm \rightarrow RevArcRule \rightarrow OptValidity$ $\forall ec : EvalContext; o : RDFTerm; rar : RevArcRule; og : Graph \mid$ $og = evalPredicateFilter rar.filter (triplesForObject o ec.graph) \bullet$ $evalRevArcRule ec o rar =$ $\text{if } evalCardinality og rar.min rar.max \neq p$ $\quad \text{then } evalCardinality og rar.min rar.max$ $\text{else if } evalSubjectSpecification ec rar.valueSpec og \neq p$ $\quad \text{then } evalSubjectSpecification ec rar.valueSpec og$ $\text{else}$ $\quad dispatch rar.actions og ec$
---

**SubjectSpecification evaluation** *SubjectSpecification* specifies a set of possible values for an *RDFTerm* and takes one of the following forms:

- *SubjectSet* - matches *IRIs* or *IRIstems* that match one or more of the expressions in the specified set
- *SubjectWild* - matches any target *except* those matching the (possibly empty) set of *IRIstems*
- *subjectRef* - matches any target that is considered valid according the *Rule* identified by *Label*.

$SubjectSpecification ::= subjectSet \langle \langle \mathbb{P} MatchValue \rangle \rangle \mid$   
 $ssWild \langle \langle \mathbb{P} MatchValue \rangle \rangle \mid$   
 $subjectRef \langle \langle Label \rangle \rangle$

paragraphevalSubjectSpecification – returns *pass (p)* if all of the triples in a *Graph* match the supplied *SubjectSpecification*, otherwise *fail (f)*

$evalSubjectSpecification : EvalContext \rightarrow SubjectSpecification \rightarrow Graph \rightarrow OptValidity$ $\forall ec : EvalContext; ss : SubjectSpecification; g : Graph \bullet$ $evalSubjectSpecification ec ss g =$ $\text{if } \forall t : g \bullet evalSubjectSpecificationTriple ec ss t.o = p \text{ then } p$ $\text{else } f$
--

$evalSubjectSpecificationTriple : EvalContext \rightarrow SubjectSpecification \rightarrow RDFTerm \rightarrow OptValidity$
$\forall ec : EvalContext; ss : SubjectSpecification; n : RDFTerm \bullet$ $evalSubjectSpecificationTriple\ ec\ ss\ n =$ $\text{if } ss \in \text{ran } subjectSet \text{ then}$ $evalTermSet (subjectSet \cdot ss) n$ $\text{else if } ss \in \text{ran } ssWild \text{ then}$ $evalTermWild (ssWild \cdot ss) n$ $\text{else}$ $evalTermReference\ ec\ (subjectRef \cdot ss) n$

### 4.3 GroupRule evaluation

A *GroupRule* serves two purposes. The first is to declare that a referenced rule is to be treated as “optional”, which, in this case means that if (a) the referenced rule returned *dunno* ( $\emptyset$ ), (meaning an *ArcRule* was encountered that had no matching predicates and a non-zero minimum cardinality) the group rule returns *nomatch* ( $\mathbf{z}$ ). An optional *GroupRule* also treats an error situation as a *fail* ( $\mathbf{f}$ ).

The second purpose of a group rule is to allow a set of external *actions* to be evaluated whenever the referenced *rule* returns *pass* ( $\mathbf{p}$ ).

$OPT ::= OPTIONAL \mid REQUIRED$   
 $GroupRule \hat{=} [rule : Label; opt : OPT; actions : \mathbb{P} Action]$

*evalGroupRule* evaluates *Rule*, applies *opt* and, if the result is *pass* ( $\mathbf{p}$ ) evaluates the actions with respect the passing *Graph*

$evalGroupRule : EvalContext \rightarrow RDFTerm \rightarrow GroupRule \rightarrow OptValidity$
$\forall ec : EvalContext; i : RDFTerm; gr : GroupRule \bullet evalGroupRule\ ec\ i\ gr =$ $\text{if } evalRule'\ ec\ i\ gr.rule = \emptyset \wedge gr.opt = OPTIONAL$ $\text{then } \mathbf{z}$ $\text{else if } evalRule'\ ec\ i\ gr.rule = \varepsilon \wedge gr.opt = OPTIONAL$ $\text{then } \mathbf{f}$ $\text{else if } evalRule'\ ec\ i\ gr.rule = \mathbf{p}$ $\text{then } dispatch\ gr.actions\ \emptyset\ ec$ $\text{else } evalRule'\ ec\ i\ gr.rule$

### 4.4 AndRule evaluation

An *AndRule* consists of a set of one or more *Rules*, whose evaluation is determined by the following table:

And	$\emptyset$	$\mathbf{z}$	$\mathbf{f}$	$\mathbf{p}$	$\varepsilon$
$\emptyset$	$\emptyset$	$\emptyset$	$\mathbf{f}$	$\mathbf{f}$	$\varepsilon$
$\mathbf{z}$	$\emptyset$	$\mathbf{z}$	$\mathbf{f}$	$\mathbf{p}$	$\varepsilon$
$\mathbf{f}$	$\mathbf{f}$	$\mathbf{f}$	$\mathbf{f}$	$\mathbf{f}$	$\varepsilon$
$\mathbf{p}$	$\mathbf{f}$	$\mathbf{p}$	$\mathbf{f}$	$\mathbf{p}$	$\varepsilon$
$\varepsilon$	$\varepsilon$	$\varepsilon$	$\varepsilon$	$\varepsilon$	$\varepsilon$

The formal implementation of which will be realized in the corresponding function:

$$\text{And} : \text{OptValidity} \rightarrow \text{OptValidity} \rightarrow \text{OptValidity}$$

Observing that the above table is a monoid with *nomatch* ( $\mathbf{z}$ ) as an identity element, *evalAndRule* can be applied using the standard functional pattern:

$$\text{AndRule} == \text{seq}_1 \text{ Label}$$

$$\text{evalAndRule} : \text{EvalContext} \rightarrow \text{RDFTerm} \rightarrow \text{AndRule} \rightarrow \text{OptValidity}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \forall ec : \text{EvalContext}; i : \text{RDFTerm}; r : \text{AndRule} \bullet \\ \text{evalAndRule } ec \ i \ r = \\ \text{foldr And } \mathbf{z} \ (\text{map } (\text{evalRule}' \ ec \ i) \ r) \end{aligned}$$

#### 4.5 XorRule evaluation

An *XorRule* consists of a set of one or more *Rules*, whose evaluation is determined by the following table:

Xor	$\emptyset$	$\mathbf{z}$	$\mathbf{f}$	$\mathbf{p}$	$\varepsilon$
$\emptyset$	$\emptyset$	$\mathbf{z}$	$\emptyset$	$\mathbf{p}$	$\varepsilon$
$\mathbf{z}$	$\mathbf{z}$	$\mathbf{z}$	$\mathbf{z}$	$\mathbf{p}$	$\varepsilon$
$\mathbf{f}$	$\emptyset$	$\mathbf{z}$	$\mathbf{f}$	$\mathbf{p}$	$\varepsilon$
$\mathbf{p}$	$\mathbf{p}$	$\mathbf{p}$	$\mathbf{p}$	$\mathbf{p}$	$\varepsilon$
$\varepsilon$	$\varepsilon$	$\varepsilon$	$\varepsilon$	$\varepsilon$	$\varepsilon$

The formal implementation of which will be realized in the corresponding function:

$$\text{Xor} : \text{OptValidity} \rightarrow \text{OptValidity} \rightarrow \text{OptValidity}$$

As with the *And* function above, *Xor* is a monoid whose identity is *fail* ( $\mathbf{f}$ ) resulting in the following definition for *evalXorRule*

$$\text{XorRule} == \text{seq}_1 \text{ Label}$$

$evalXorRule : EvalContext \rightarrow RDFTerm \rightarrow XorRule \rightarrow OptValidity$
$\forall ec : EvalContext; i : RDFTerm; r : XorRule \bullet$ $evalXorRule\ ec\ i\ r =$ $foldr\ Xor\ \mathbf{f}\ (map\ (evalRule'\ ec\ i)\ r)$

## 5 Action evaluation

The *dispatch* function allows the evaluation / execution of arbitrary external “Actions”. While the evaluation of an *Action* can (obviously) have side effects outside the context of the *ShEx* environment, it must be side effect free within the execution context. In particular, an *Action* may not change anything in the *EvalContext*. The action dispatcher exists to allow external events to happen. Parameters:

- *as* - the set of *Actions* associated with the *GroupRule*, *ArcRule* or *RevArcRule*
- *g* - the *Graph* that passed the *ArcRule* or *RevArcRule*. Empty in the case of *GroupRule*
- *ec* - the *EvalContext* containing the *Schema* and *Graph*

The dispatch function usually returns pass (**p**) or fail (**f**), although there may also be cases for other *OptValidity* values in certain circumstances. The dispatch function always returns *pass* (**p**) if the set of actions is empty.

[*Action*]

$dispatch : \mathbb{P}\ Action \rightarrow Graph \rightarrow EvalContext \rightarrow OptValidity$
$\forall as : \mathbb{P}\ Action; g : Graph; ec : EvalContext \bullet$ $as = \emptyset \Rightarrow dispatch\ as\ g\ ec = \mathbf{p}$

## 6 Appendix

### 6.1 Foldr

The *foldr* function is the standard functional pattern, which takes a binary function of type *T*, an identity function for type *T*, a sequence of type *T* and returns the result of applying the function to the right to left pairs of the sequence.

$[T]$
$foldr : (T \rightarrow T \rightarrow T) \rightarrow T \rightarrow seq\ T \rightarrow T$
$\forall f : T \rightarrow T \rightarrow T; id : T; xs : seq\ T \bullet foldr\ f\ id\ xs =$ $\mathbf{if}\ xs = \langle \rangle\ \mathbf{then}\ id$ $\mathbf{else}\ f\ (head\ xs)\ (foldr\ f\ id\ (tail\ xs))$

## 6.2 Map

The *map* function takes a function from type  $A$  to type  $B$  and applies it to all members in the supplied sequence

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{[} [A, B] \text{]} \\ \hline \text{map} : (A \rightarrow B) \rightarrow \text{seq } A \rightarrow \text{seq } B \\ \hline \forall f : A \rightarrow B; \text{ xs} : \text{seq } A \bullet \text{map } f \text{ xs} = \\ \quad \text{if } \text{xs} = \langle \rangle \text{ then } \langle \rangle \\ \quad \text{else } \langle f(\text{head } \text{xs}) \rangle \frown \text{map } f(\text{tail } \text{xs}) \end{array}$$

## 6.3 Helper Functions

$Z$  uses the notion of *free type definitions* in the form:

$$\text{FreeType} ::= \text{constructor} \langle \langle \text{source} \rangle \rangle$$

which introduces a collection of constants of type *FreeType*, one for each element of the set *source*. *constructor* is an injective function from *source* to *FreeType*:

$$\text{constructor} ::= \text{source} \rightarrow \text{FreeType}$$

In the models that follow, there is a need to reverse this – to find the *source* for a given *FreeType* instance. The  $\cdot$  function exists for this purpose. As an example, if one were to define:

$$\text{TravelDirections} ::= \text{bus} \langle \langle \text{BusDirections} \rangle \rangle \mid \text{walking} \langle \langle \text{WalkingDirections} \rangle \rangle$$

If one is supplied with an instance of *Travel*, one can convert it to the appropriate type by:

$$\begin{array}{c} x : \text{TravelDirections} \\ \hline \text{if } x \in \text{ran bus then bus} \cdot x \text{ else walking} \cdot x \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{[} [X, Y] \text{]} \\ \hline - \cdot - : (X \rightarrow Y) \times Y \rightarrow X \\ \hline \forall y : Y; f : X \rightarrow Y \bullet f \cdot y = (\mu x : \text{dom } f \mid f x = y) \end{array}$$

One way to represent optional values is a set with one member. We take that route here and introduce a bit of syntactic sugar to show our intent:

$$T[0 \dots 1] == \{s : \mathbb{P} T \mid \#s \leq 1\}$$

And a shorthand for addressing the content:

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{[} [T] \text{]} \\ \hline \text{value} : \mathbb{P} T \rightarrow T \\ \hline \forall s : \mathbb{P} T \bullet \text{value } s = (\mu e : T \mid e \in s) \end{array}$$

## References

1. Richard Cyganiak and David Wood. RDF 1.1 concepts and abstract syntax - generalized rdf triples, graphs, and datasets. World Wide Web Consortium, Working Draft WD-rdf11-concepts-20130723, August 2013.
2. M. Dürst and M. Suignard. Internationalized resource identifiers (iris). RFC, January 2005.
3. RA Phillips and M. Davis. Tags for identifying language. IETF Best Current Practices, September 2009.