The Business Process Modelling Ontology

Liliana Cabral
KMi, The Open University
Milton Keynes, UK
+44 1908 653800
l.s.cabral@open.ac.uk

Barry Norton
KMi, The Open University
Milton Keynes, UK
+44 1908 653800
b.j.norton@open.ac.uk

John Domingue
KMi, The Open University
Milton Keynes, UK
+44 1908 653800
j.b.domingue@open.ac.uk

ABSTRACT

In this paper we describe the Business Process Modelling Ontology (BPMO), which is part of an approach to modelling business processes at the semantic level, integrating knowledge about the organisational context, workflow activities and Semantic Web Services. We harness knowledge representation and reasoning techniques so that business process workflows can: be exposed and shared through semantic descriptions; refer to semantically annotated data and services; incorporate heterogeneous data though semantic mappings; and be queried using a reasoner or inference engine. In this paper we describe our approach and evaluate BPMO through a use case.

Categories and Subject Descriptors

I.2.4 [**Knowledge Representation Formalisms and Methods**]: Representations. F.3.2 [**Semantics of Programming Languages**]: Process models.

General Terms

Design, Standardization, Management, Languages.

Keywords

Semantic Business Process Modelling, Semantic Interoperability, Ontology, Workflow Management.

1. INTRODUCTION

Business organisations today need agility and flexibility to deal with highly dynamic environments, providing ever-changing services and products as well as in interacting with diverse customers and partners. A significant problem in the area of Business Process Management (BPM) lies in bridging between the organisational context, the diverse process workflow notations, and the executable services that fulfill process activities, by which business analysts would like to understand, maintain and adapt their business processes.

Currently, business analysts use process modelling notations such as BPMN [11] and EPC [14] to define business process models as part of tool suites for BPM. These notations are useful at the business level, but alone they provide no inference reasoning over business processes. For example, BPMN tools are rich in control-flow constructs, but the graphical elements contain only limited textual information with no formal semantics. Some EPC-based tools such as ARIS [14] on the other hand, provide integration of different views (e.g. organisation, data and control) and levels (e.g. requirements and implementation); however mediating between these views and levels is a very complex task due to the variety of underlying representations. In addition, it is very difficult to use these notations to automatically query the business context or draw relations between existing processes or services.

In this paper we present the Business Process Modelling Ontology[1] (BPMO), which plays a key role in solving the problem above, by enabling the semantic annotation of high-level business process models, which we assume can be fulfilled by Web services. This work is part of the SUPER project[2], which in particular provides a set of integrated ontologies for facilitating Semantic Business Process Management [6].

The rest of this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 describes the BPMO approach. Section 3 describes the main concepts of BPMO. Section 4 illustrates the use of BPMO and shows results through a use case. Section 5 presents our conclusions and related work.

2. APPROACH OVERVIEW

The Business Process Modelling Ontology (BPMO) is part of an approach to modelling business processes at the semantic level, integrating knowledge about the organisational context, workflow activities and Semantic Web Services. This approach provides support for various BPM activities, from modelling and querying to execution and analysis; regardless of specific notations in a manner which crosses domains and organisational boundaries. We harness a number of knowledge representation and reasoning techniques so that business process workflows can: be exposed and shared through semantic descriptions; refer to semantically annotated business data and services; incorporate heterogeneous data though semantic mappings; and be queried using a reasoner or inference engine. We argue therefore, that BPMO enables

[1] http://www.ip-super.org/ontologies/process/bpmo/v2.0.1#bpmo

[2] Semantics Utilised for Process Management within and between Enterprises (http://www.ip-super.org)

seamless interoperation, querying, sharing, mediation and translation of business processes.

Within our approach, a business analyst can draw a business process diagram with a tool that automatically generates BPMO instances (see example in Section 3), or he can use translators that will transform specific notations from and to BPMO. BPMO can thus be viewed as a bridging ontology enabling the annotation of business processes workflows extended with organisational context and automated translation between an open-ended set of existing notations and languages.

As we will show in the rest of the paper, the BPMO model captures domain independent organisational aspects, control-flow features of notations such as BPMN, via a number of workflow patterns as in [1], process interaction features from BPEL[3], and finally service description and invocation features from Semantic Web Services (SWS) [4]. BPMO builds on the formalization of Business Process Diagrams as presented in [12], and as such is oriented towards the production of well-formed workflow models, where graphs decompose unambiguously into sub-graphs that start and end with compatible constructs.

More specifically, in the SUPER project we provide ontologies for standards such as BPMN, EPC and BPEL (see [2], [5], [10]) as well as corresponding translators to BPMO. In addition, it is possible for business analysts to create alternative organisational ontologies to define BPMO process organisational attributes. This is done via UPO[4] (Upper-level Process Ontology), an ontology defining high-level business process concepts, which are shared by all ontologies in SUPER.

A BPMO diagram can be defined using the WSMO Studio BPMO Modeller tool[5], which automatically generates instances of BPMO in WSML [16]. More precisely, we use WSML-Flight, which adds F-Logic like features to the WSML core, directly supporting WSMO Web Service descriptions [4]. WSML- Flight also allows us to apply data mappings (via rule-type axioms) directly in the ontology language without having to rely on a hybrid approach of a separate rule language. BPMO and the related ontologies mentioned above are publicly available at the SUPER website (http://www.ip-super.org/ontologies).

3. BPMO DESCRIPTION

BPMO is a representation for high-level business process workflow models, abstracting from existing business process notations. Nevertheless, the workflow elements of a BPMO process diagram comply with a corresponding subset of BPMN control-flow elements and are informed by, and named according to Workflow Patterns [1]. Moreover, BPMO concepts related to interaction activities (e.g. Send, Receive) have a number of attributes that correspond to BPEL constructs.

Basically, a BPMO process description captures the business context of the modelled process and contains the process workflow, which represents the behaviour of the process (through control-flow and data-flow constructs) and process activities (through *Tasks*). The main BPMO process elements are structured as follows (see Table 1):

[3] http://docs.oasis-open.org/wsbpel/2.0/wsbpel-v2.0.pdf

[4] http://www.ip-super.org/ontologies/process/upo/v2.0.1#upo

[5] http://www.wsmostudio.org/

- ***Workflow*** – The business process container for Workflow Elements. The initial Workflow Element may be a *StartEvent* or a block pattern, commonly a *Sequence* or *ParallelSplit Synchronise*. If the *StartEvent* is present, subsequent elements will be linked in graph style by *Controlflow Connectors*. If the Workflow Element is a *Sequence*, a sequence flow is implicit between the contained elements. If the Workflow Element is *ParallelSplitSynchronise*, a parallel flow is implicit.
- ***Workflow Elements*** – These are general elements that belong to a business process workflow, including *Processes*, *Tasks*, *Events*, block patterns and graph patterns;
- ***Block Patterns*** – These are structured or pattern-based control-flow elements representing workflow decision points (gateways), including *Sequence*, *ParallelSplitSynchronise*, *ExclusiveChoiceMerge*, *DeferredChoiceMerge*, *While*, *Repeat*, and so on.
- ***Graph patterns*** – These are link based control-flow elements representing workflow decision points (gateways), including *ParallelSplit*, *ExclusiveChoice*, *DeferredChoice*, *SimpleMerge*, *Synchronise*, and so on.

As can be seen, BPMO combines features of block-oriented and graph-oriented workflow models. The main purpose of block patterns is to explicitly represent structured elements and workflow patterns that can be used to facilitate process verification and the translation to notations in the execution level. The BPMO design enforces well formed diagrams, via graph patterns and structures, but further restrictions can be easily provided via axioms.

Table 1 Description of main BPMO Process Elements

BPMO Element	Description
StartEvent	An event signalling the start of a process
TimerEvent	An event signalling that a specific time has been reached
ErrorEvent	An event signalling that an error has occurred
EndEvent	An event signalling the end of a process
Task	An atomic activity within a Process.
Goal Task	A Task with an attached Semantic Capability, used for invoking SWS goals
Send	A Task for sending messages. Provides a semantic description of the requested capability.
Receive	A Task for receiving messages. Provides a semantic description of the provided capability.
ReceiveMessageEvent	A Receive task associated with an event (which may resolve choices, see DeferredChoice).
Mediation Task	A Task for dataflow and data mediation
Sequence	An ordered set of activities (also a linked list) with an implicit sequence flow (Block pattern)
ParallelSplit	A gateway (or decision point) for creating concurrent branches
Synchronisation	A gateway for synchronizing concurrent branches
ParallelSplitSynchronise	ParallelSplit with an implicit Synchronisation (Block pattern)
ExclusiveChoice	A decision gateway for selecting one out of a set of mutually exclusive alternative branches based on

BPMO Element	Description
	data. One of the branches may be default.
ExclusiveChoiceMerge	Exclusive Choice with an implicit Simple Merge (Block pattern)
DeferredChoice	A decision gateway for selecting one out of a set of mutually exclusive alternative branches based on external event
DeferredChoiceMerge	Deferred Choice with an implicit Simple Merge (Block pattern)
SimpleMerge	Gateway for joining a set of mutually exclusive alternative branches into one branch
MultipleChoice	A decision gateway for selecting many out of a set of alternative branches into several parallel branches based on data. One of the branches may be default.
MultipleMerge	Unsynchronised convergence of two or more distinct branches
MultipleChoiceMerge	Multiple Choice with an implicit Multiple Merge (Block pattern)
MultipleMergeSynchronise	Synchronised convergence of two or more distinct branches
Repeat	A structured loop where the condition is evaluated after the body of the loop is executed
While	A structured loop where the condition is evaluated before the body of the loop is executed

We will discuss next the use of a number of key BPMO concepts, which are defined in WSML, including *Process, Business Activity*, *Task* (*Send, Receive, GoalTask), SemanticCapability, MediationTask* and *DataMediator.*

The *Process* concept (shown in Listing 1) defines several organisational attributes, by inheriting from *BusinessActivity*, according to the types *BusinessDomain*, *BusinessFunction*, *BusinessStrategy*, *BusinessPolicy*, *BusinessProcessMetrics*, *BusinessProcessGoal* and *BusinessResource*. These business-level concepts (attribute types) are primarily defined in external ontologies, which model a specific business domain and organisation. These ontologies are linked to the BPMO process by subclassing the UPO concept (note that *upo#* is the prefix for the UPO namespace). As a result, we enable the querying of processes against organisational aspects by business analysts (see example in the next section). The *Process* itself can also have a corresponding Web Service description (*hasWSDescription* attribute). In addition, the *Process* concept defines the process workflow (attribute *hasWorkflow)*. The concept *Workflow* defines the first element of the workflow (*hasFirstWorkflowElement*). The workflow is modelled with *Workflow Elements* contained in or following (via connectors) the first element.

Listing 1. Process and Business Activity Concepts

```
Concept BusinessActivity subConceptOf
upo#BusinessActivity
   hasName ofType  (0 1) _string
   hasDescription ofType  (0 1) _string
   hasNonFunctionalProperties ofType  (0 1)
BusinessActivityNonFunctionalProperties
   hasBusinessDomain ofType upo#BusinessDomain
   hasBusinessFunction ofType upo#BusinessFunction
   hasBusinessStrategy ofType upo#BusinessStrategy
   hasBusinessPolicy ofType upo#BusinessPolicy
   hasBusinessProcessMetrics ofType
upo#BusinessProcessMetrics
   hasBusinessProcessGoal ofType upo#BusinessProcessGoal
   hasBusinessResource ofType upo#Resource
```

```
concept Process subConceptOf {BusinessActivity,
                              upo#BusinessProcessModel}
   hasWSDescription ofType(0 1) SemanticCapability
   hasWorkflow ofType  (0 1) Workflow

concept Workflow subConceptOf
upo#ProcessOrchestrationSpecification
   hasHomeProcess ofType  (0 1) Process
   hasFirstWorkflowElement ofType(1 1) WorkflowElement
```

The concepts related to interaction tasks in BPMO are *GoalTask*, *Receive*, *Send* and *ReceiveMessageEvent* (see Listing 2), which are subconcepts of *Task*. A *Task* is also a *Business Activity* (as in Listing 1) and thus can also refer to business attributes such as a business policy or a business process goal. *Tasks* have attributes to represent information about the interaction with a partner process, such as partner role (*hasPartnerRole*), inputs (*hasInputDescription*) and outputs (*hasOutputDescription*). Most attribute types in *Tasks* are defined as *SemanticCapability* which is a wrapper for ontology elements or service descriptions. For example, a *SemanticCapability* instance can refer to the URI of an concept within an ontology or to the URI of a Web Service or Goal description.

Listing 2. Concepts related to interaction tasks

```
concept GoalTask subConceptOf Task
     hasPartnerGoal ofType  (0 1) SemanticCapability
     hasPartnerRole ofType (0 1) BusinessRole
     messageTo ofType  (0 1) Receive
     messageFrom ofType  (0 1) Send
     hasInputDescription ofType SemanticCapability
     hasOutputDescription ofType SemanticCapability
     requestsCapability ofType  (0 1) SemanticCapability
     providesCapability ofType  (0 1) SemanticCapability

concept Send subConceptOf Task
     hasPartnerWebService ofType (0 1)SemanticCapability
     hasPartnerRole ofType (0 1) BusinessRole
     hasReceiveCounterpart ofType (0 1) Receive
     messageTo ofType  (0 1) Receive
     hasOutputDescription ofType SemanticCapability
     requestsCapability ofType  (0 1) SemanticCapability

concept Receive subConceptOf Task
     hasPartnerWebService ofType (0 1 SemanticCapability
     hasPartnerRole ofType (0 1) BusinessRole
     hasSendCounterpart ofType Send
     messageFrom ofType  (0 1) Send
     hasInputDescription ofType SemanticCapability
     providesCapability ofType  (0 1) SemanticCapability

concept ReceiveMessageEvent subConceptOf {
                         IntermediateEvent, Receive}
```

A *GoalTask* represents an atomic activity, which can be automatically achieved through a SWS invocation (synchronous communication). The attribute *hasPartnerGoal* is used in this case to refer to the Goal description. The *hasInputDescription* and *hasOutputDescription* attributes refer to the semantic descriptions of request and response data respectively. Hence, dataflow is enabled by sharing the same data description across tasks in the workflow. The *requestsCapability* and *providesCapability* attributes refer to the semantic descriptions of operations related to request and response respectively. The *Send* and *Receive* tasks are similar to Goal tasks, but they are used for asynchronous communication. A *Receive* task can be associated with a *Send* in the same workflow via the *hasSendCounterpart* attribute (and conversely for *Send*). *ReceiveMessageEvent* works as a *Receive* task, but is also associated to an event, which is triggered when a message is received.

Listing 3. Concepts related to Mediation

```
concept MediationTask subConceptOf Task
     hasSourceTask ofType  (0 1) Task
     hasTargetTask ofType  (0 1) Task
     hasDataMediator ofType DataMediator

concept Mediator subConceptOf upo#BusinessProcessMediator
     hasName ofType  (0 1) _string
     hasDescription ofType  (0 1) _string

concept ProcessMediator subConceptOf Mediator
     hasSourceProcess ofType  (1 1) Process
     hasTargetProcess ofType  (1 *) Process
     hasMediationProcess ofType  (0 1) MediationProcess
     hasSWSMediator ofType  (0 1) SemanticCapability

concept DataMediator subConceptOf Mediator
     hasMediator ofType  SemanticCapability
     hasMediationService ofType  SemanticCapability
     hasInputDescription ofType (0 1) SemanticCapability
     hasOutputDescription ofType(0 1) SemanticCapability

concept MediationProcess subConceptOf Process
```

BPMO also supports data and process mediation through a number of concepts as shown in Listing 3. See also the examples in the next section. A *MediationTask* is a task that provides data mapping specifications to be used between tasks during runtime. A *MediationTask* can have one or more *DataMediators*. The *DataMediator* concept refers to a data mediator or mediation service and the input and output for them. In a typical use case, the *hasMediator* attribute will refer to a mapping definition (URI), the *hasInputDescription* will refer to a source ontology (URI) and the *hasOutputDescription* will refer to a target ontology (URI). In addition, the *ProcessMediator* concept is used as a descriptor to identify a process with a mediation role (*hasMediation Process*) and mediated processes (*hasSourceProcess, hasTargetProcess*) in order to facilitate the job of tools for verification and creation of mediation processes. The *ProcessMediator* can also refer to a mediator component (*hasSWSMediator*).

4. USE CASE

In this section we will illustrate and evaluate the BPMO model through an example taken from the mediation scenario provided in the SWS Challenge (http://sws-challenge.org). This scenario is about a Purchase Order process and involves three partners: the service requester (customer), company Blue, which order products; the service provider, company Moon, which sells products; and the mediator, which must be implemented to mediate between Blue and Moon. The goal of the mediator is to map the incoming and outgoing messages between Blue and Moon and also invoke required services from Moon so that the interactions necessary to buy a product is complete. Company Blue sends a purchase order and receives an acknowledgment via the mediator. In this paper we focus on the part of the solution comprising the use of ontology based-technology, required to solve the scenario above. We use BPMO for modelling the main process using SWS references for Task descriptions, and domain ontologies for modelling data and mappings.

We created a BPMO diagram to represent the mediator process (*Moon Mediator Process*) as shown in Figure 1, using WSMO studio's BPMO modeller. The modeller generates an initial set of BPMO instances corresponding to the process control-flow, to which the user can add data instances for attributes using the modeller's property editor. A number of BPMO instances corresponding to the diagram presented in Figure 1 are shown in Listing 4.

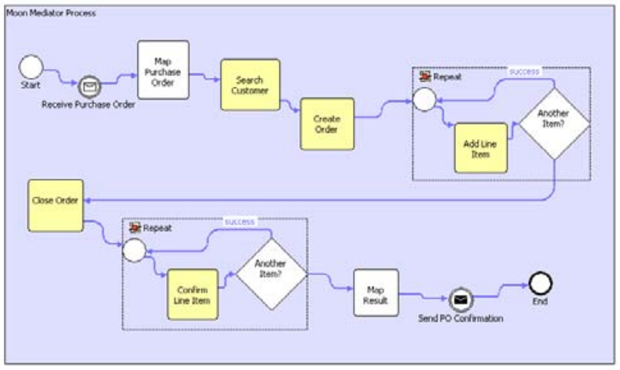


Figure 1. BPMO diagram of the Mediator process

The Moon Mediator Process workflow is quite self-explanatory. Basically, we used activities *Receive Purchase Order* and *Send PO Confirmation* to interact with the Blue Company, modelled as Receive and Send BPMO tasks accordingly. *Map Purchase Order* and *Map Result* are modelled as Mediation Tasks and used to map the values needed by the Moon and Blue Web Services, respectively. *Search Customer*, *Create Order* and *Close Order* are modelled as Goal Tasks for invoking Web Services provided by Moon. *Add Line Item* and *Confirm Line Item* are modelled as corresponding asynchronous Send and Receive tasks, which are called in a *Repeat* (loop) for every item in the received Purchase Order. *Start* and *End* are events used to initiate and finalise the process.

Listing 4. BPMO instances for the Moon Mediator Process

```
instance Process_MoonMediator memberOf bpmo#Process
     bpmo#hasName hasValue "Moon Mediator Process"
     bpmo#hasWorkflow hasValue Workflow_1217
     bpmo#hasBusinessStrategy hasValue moon#strategy45
     bpmo#hasBusinessPolicy hasValue moon#policy33
     upo#hasInvolvedRole hasValue moonMediator

instance moonMediator memberOf bpmo#BusinessRole
     bpmo#hasName hasValue "Moon Mediator"
     bpmo#hasOrganisation hasValue kmi

instance kmi memberOf upo#Organisation
     upo#hasName hasValue "KMi, The Open University, UK"

instance blue memberOf upo#Organisation
     upo#hasName hasValue "Blue, SWS Challenge"

instance customer memberOf bpmo#BusinessRole
     bpmo#hasName hasValue "Blue Customer"
     bpmo#hasOrganisation hasValue blue

instance moon memberOf upo#Organisation
     upo#hasName hasValue "Moon, SWS Challenge"

instance moonCRM memberOf bpmo#BusinessRole
     bpmo#hasName hasValue "Moon Customer Relationship
Management"
     bpmo#hasOrganisation hasValue moon

instance Workflow_1217 memberOf bpmo#Workflow
     bpmo#hasHomeProcess hasValue Process_MoonMediator
     bpmo#hasFirstWorkflowElement hasValue StartEvent_1

instance StartEvent_1 memberOf bpmo#StartEvent
     bpmo#hasHomeProcess hasValue Process_MoonMediator
     bpmo#hasName hasValue "Start"

instance ControlflowConnector_100 memberOf
bpmo#ControlflowConnector
     bpmo#hasHomeProcess hasValue Process_MoonMediator
     bpmo#hasSource hasValue StartEvent_1
     bpmo#hasTarget hasValue Receive_ReceivePO

instance Receive_ReceivePO memberOf bpmo#Receive
     bpmo#hasHomeProcess hasValue Process_MoonMediator
     bpmo#hasName hasValue "Receive Purchase Order"
     bpmo#hasPartnerWebService hasValue
SemanticCapability_ReceivePO_WSMO
     bpmo#hasPartnerRole hasValue customer
     bpmo#hasSendCounterpart hasValue Send_SendPOConf
     bpmo#hasInputDescription hasValue
SemanticCapability_PurchaseOrderDesc

instance SemanticCapability_PurchaseOrderDesc memberOf
bpmo#SemanticCapability
     bpmo#hasSemanticDescription hasValue
"http://kmi.open.ac.uk/swsc/datamediator#PurchaseOrderReq
uest"

instance SemanticCapability_ReceivePO_WSMO memberOf
bpmo#SemanticCapability
     bpmo#hasSemanticDescription hasValue
"http://kmi.open.ac.uk/swsc/wsmo/RequestPOWS#RequestPOWS"

instance GoalTask_CreateOrder memberOf bpmo#GoalTask
     bpmo#hasName hasValue "Create Order"
     bpmo#hasHomeProcess hasValue Process_MoonMediator
     bpmo#hasPartnerGoal hasValue
SemanticCapability_CreateOrder_WSMO
     bpmo#hasPartnerRole hasValue moonCRM
     bpmo#hasInputDescription hasValue
SemanticCapability_OrderDesc
     bpmo#hasOutputDescription hasValue
SemanticCapability_OrderResponseDesc

instance SemanticCapability_OrderDesc memberOf
bpmo#SemanticCapability
     bpmo#hasSemanticDescription hasValue "http://
kmi.open.ac.uk/swsc/datamediator#Order"

instance Repeat_AddLineItem memberOf bpmo#Repeat
     bpmo#hasHomeProcess hasValue Process_MoonMediator
     bpmo#hasCondition hasValue
Condition_1218020116299_1731096821
     bpmo#executes hasValue Send_AddLineItem

instance Condition_1218020116299_1731096821 memberOf
bpmo#Condition
     bpmo#hasExpression hasValue "Another Item?"
```

In this example starting with a *Start* event, all workflow elements are linked sequentially in an explicit way using *ControlflowConnector*. Each *ControlflowConnector* points to a source *WorkflowElement* and a target *Workflow Element*. For example, StartEvent_1 is linked to Receive task *Receive_ReceivePO* via *Controlflow Connector_100*. Note that in this example we use structured loops (Repeat), which are treated as one block element (with a condition and an execution body). Note also in Listing 4 how we have added information about the partner roles and involved organisations. The attributes *hasBusinessStrategy* and *hasBusinessPolicy* have values that refer to strategies and policies defined by Moon Company in an external ontology. The value of attribute *upo#hasInvolvedRole* in *Process_MoonMediator* defines the role (*BusinessRole*) of this process. In this case *kmi* (*Organisation)* is playing the mediator role (*moon Mediator*). In a similar way we define the roles of *blue* (customer) and *moon (moonCRM)* partners. In *Receive_ ReceivePO* we provide values for attributes *hasPartnerRole*, *hasPartner WebService*, *hasSendCounterpart* and *hasInput Description*. These attributes values are necessary in order to establish an interaction with a partner. In particular, *Receive_ ReceivePO* obtains data from partner *blue.* The data received is defined in *hasInputDescription* (via *Semantic Capability*), which in this case is kmi.open.ac.uk/swsc/datamediator#PurchaseOrder Request. The definition of *Purchase OrderRequest* (omitting namespace) and other concepts used in the scenario are shown in Listing 5 together with some instances. These concepts and instances have been derived from the XML Schema given in the original scenario, but simplified here for illustration purposes.

Listing 5 Domain data ontology concepts and instances

```
concept PurchaseOrderRequest
     fromRole ofType PartnerRoleDescription
     hasPurchaseOrder ofType PurchaseOrder

concept PartnerRoleDescription
     hasContact ofType ContactInformation
     hasRole ofType _string
     partnerDescription ofType PartnerDescription

concept Order
          authToken ofType _string
    contact ofType Contact
    shipTo ofType OrderInformation
    billTo ofType OrderInformation

concept OrderInformation
    name ofType _string
    street ofType _string
    city ofType _string
    postalCode ofType _string
    country ofType _string

concept Contact
    name ofType _string
    telephone ofType _string
    email ofType _string

instance bluePORequest memberOf PurchaseOrderRequest
     fromRole hasValue bluePartnerRole
     hasPurchaseOrder hasValue bluePurchaseOrder

instance bluePartnerRole memberOf PartnerRoleDescription
     hasContact hasValue blueContact
     hasRole hasValue "Buyer"
     partnerDescription hasValue bluePartnerDescription

instance bluePartnerDescription memberOf
PartnerDescription
     contactInfo hasValue blueContact
     businessInfo hasValue blueBusiness
     physicalLocation hasValue blueAddress

instance blueAddress memberOf PhysicalAddress
     addressLine1 hasValue "North Business Center, Bl 9"
     cityName hasValue "Innsbruck"
     countryCode hasValue "AT"
     postalCode hasValue "A-6020"

instance blueBusiness memberOf BusinessDescription
     hasName hasValue "Company Blue"

instance blueContact memberOf ContactInformation
     contactName hasValue "Stefan Blue"
     emailAddress hasValue "stefan.blue@blue.com"
     telephoneNumber hasValue "+43(650)89930011"
```

We use the instances in Listing 5 to illustrate dataflow as well as the use of a *MediationTask* to map instances of *PurchaseOrderRequest* used by the requester (*Receive_ ReceivePO*) to *Order*, used by the provider (*GoalTask_ CreateOrder*), as shown in Listing 6 and Listing 7. *MediationTask_MapPurchaseOrder* provides two *DataMediators: DataMediator_MapOrderRequestToSearch Customer and DataMediator_MapOrderRequestToOrder.*

Listing 6 BPMO instances related to data mediation

```
instance MediationTask_MapPurchaseOrder
                           memberOf bpmo#MediationTask
  bpmo#hasName hasValue "Map Purchase Order"
  bpmo#hasHomeProcess hasValue Process_MoonMediator
  bpmo#hasDataMediator hasValue
          {DataMediator_MapOrderRequestToSearchCustomer,
           DataMediator_MapOrderRequestToOrder}

instance DataMediator_MapOrderRequestToOrder
                            memberOf bpmo#DataMediator
  bpmo#hasMediator hasValue
    SemanticCapability_MapOrderRequestToOrder
  bpmo#hasInputDescription hasValue
    SemanticCapability_PurchaseOrderDesc
  bpmo#hasOutputDescription hasValue
    SemanticCapability_OrderDesc

instance SemanticCapability_MapOrderRequestToOrder
                      memberOf bpmo#SemanticCapability
  bpmo#hasSemanticDescription hasValue
"http://kmi.open.ac.uk/swsc/datamediator#OrderFromPurchas
eOrderResquest"
```

Note in particular that the data mapping (*hasMediator* attribute) *SemanticCapability_MapOrderRequestToOrder* defined in DataMediator *DataMediator_MapOrderRequestToOrder* with value *OrderFromPurchaseOrderResquest* (omitting namespace) is shown in Listing 7. This WSML axiom defines a mapping rule, which infers (implies) instances of *Order* (used by company Moon) from instances of *PurchaseOrderRequest* (used by company Blue)[6].

Listing 7. Example of a mapping specification

```
relation MapOrderRequestToOrder( impliesType
           PurchaseOrderResquest,  impliesType Order)

axiom OrderFromPurchaseOrderResquest
 definedBy
   ?request[fromRole hasValue ?pr]
                      memberOf PurchaseOrderRequest
     and ?pr[partnerDescription hasValue ?pd]
                    memberOf PartnerRoleDescription
     and ?pd[contactInfo hasValue ?ci,
             businessInfo hasValue ?bd,
             physicalLocation hasValue ?pl]
                      memberOf PartnerDescription
     and ?ci[contactName hasValue ?contactName]
                      memberOf ContactInformation
     and ?bd[hasName hasValue ?bussName]
                      memberOf BusinessDescription
     and ?pl[addressLine1 hasValue ?adr,
             cityName hasValue ?c,
             countryCode hasValue ?co,
             postalCode hasValue ?pc ]
                      memberOf PhysicalAddress

   implies moonOrder(?request)
        [authToken hasValue "LilianaCabral",
         contact hasValue contact(?ci),
         shipTo hasValue shipTo(?bd)]
                      memberOf Order
     and contact(?ci)
         [name hasValue ?contactName] memberOf Contact

     and shipTo(?bd)
         [name hasValue ?bussName,
          street hasValue ?adr,
          city hasValue ?c,
          postalCode hasValue ?pc,
                                country hasValue ?co]
                      memberOf OrderInformation
     and
  MapOrderRequestToOrder(?request, moonOrder(?request)).
```

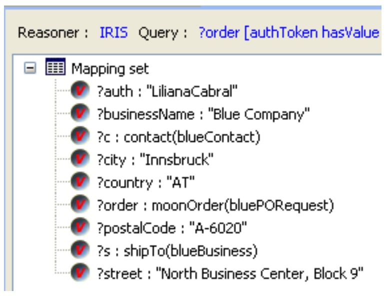
For illustration purposes, we performed the query below over the sample instances to test the *OrderFromPurchaseOrderResquest* axiom, using the IRIS reasoner[7]:

"?order [authToken hasValue ?auth, contact hasValue ?c, shipTo hasValue ?s] memberOf Order and ?s [name hasValue ?businessName, street hasValue ?street, city hasValue ?city, postalCode hasValue ?postalCode, country hasValue ?country] memberOf OrderInformation"

[6] Such a rule is beyond the capabilities of a DL-based ontology language

[7] IRIS is an open source reasoner for WSML Flight, available as an integrated component of WSMO Studio

This query asks about any instance of *Order* with corresponding attribute values. The result of the query is presented in Figure 2, which basically shows a newly inferred instance of *Order* (named using the function symbol *moonOrder*, in accordance with the consequent of the axiom[8]) to which the attribute values of instance *bluePORequest* is mapped.



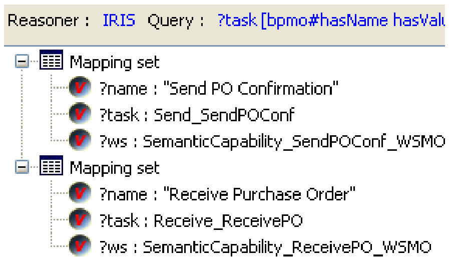
Reasoner : IRIS Query : ?order [authToken hasValue

Mapping set
- ?auth : "LilianaCabral"
- ?businessName : "Blue Company"
- ?c : contact(blueContact)
- ?city : "Innsbruck"
- ?country : "AT"
- ?order : moonOrder(bluePORequest)
- ?postalCode : "A-6020"
- ?s : shipTo(blueBusiness)
- ?street : "North Business Center, Block 9"

Figure 2 Query result using mappings

We next illustrate a query that can be performed over BPMO instances related to its component workflow activities. A business analyst might be interested in knowing about tasks and partners of a specific process. For example, in the query below we ask which tasks are related to partner role *customer* (company Blue), with the corresponding attributes values of *hasName* (?name) and hasPartnerWebService (?ws):

"?task [bpmo#hasName hasValue ?name, bpmo#hasPartnerRole hasValue customer, bpmo#hasPartnerWebService hasValue ?ws] memberOf bpmo#Task"



Reasoner : IRIS Query : ?task [bpmo#hasName hasValu

Mapping set
- ?name : "Send PO Confirmation"
- ?task : Send_SendPOConf
- ?ws : SemanticCapability_SendPOConf_WSMO

Mapping set
- ?name : "Receive Purchase Order"
- ?task : Receive_ReceivePO
- ?ws : SemanticCapability_ReceivePO_WSMO

Figure 3 Query result for finding workflow activities

The result of this query (Figure 3) contains the instances of *Receive* (Receive Purchase Order) and *Send* (Send PO Confirmation) corresponding to the interaction with company Blue as expected.

Another interesting query, of which we omit the details only for brevity, would be a query over processes according to the associated organisational attributes, such as business policies and strategies. We note that, like semantic search, many implicit inferences may be involved in such queries. Queries are not, therefore, limited in scope by the data that are explicitly represented, as they would be in a database. Furthermore, by representing all of these modelling concerns of BPM in a uniform and connected model we can issue cross-cutting queries that are

[8] This use of function symbols is safe, does not affect the decidability of WSML-Flight reasoning, is supported by the IRIS reasoner and can be reduced to a normal URI name on lowering.

impossible in a tool dedicated to, say, process modelling where other aspects are separately modelled and maintained.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RELATED WORK

BPMO describes a rich business process model, as demanded by the BPM community, using ontological descriptions to capture workflow and organisational concerns in a uniform and extensible manner, and reuses the results of Semantic Web Services research for the description of interaction activities.

There are various advantages for using BPMO. First, BPMO provides comprehensive semantic annotations for business processes that can be used for automated inference at the business level while facilitating the translation to the execution level. Second, BPMO provides links from the process to organisational aspects, which can be modelled independently for different domains. Third, BPMO can be used to verify at the semantic level restrictions applied to the workflow or certain process activities. Finally, BPMO facilitates the modelling of new (or mediation) processes based on existing ones as well as the discovery of services for goal-based activities.

BPMO facilitates semantic interoperability by modelling interaction activities using SWS descriptions of inputs, outputs and operations. These activities use ontologically defined data for dataflow and also take advantage of the semantic mappings provided by the BPMO Data Mediators.

BPMO diagrams can be created using practical and freely available tooling with WSMO Studio. The advantage is that the BPMO modeller of WSMO Studio automatically generates BPMO instances from the workflow diagram and allows easy reference to ontology instances and service descriptions. BPMO uses WSML-Flight as the representation language, which can be used with the IRIS reasoner for performing instance validation and queries.

From the business viewpoint, business analysts can perform semantically enabled queries directly and uniformly on the business context and activities of a business process. The queries can be extended to BPMO’s translation destinations and sources throughout the process life cycle from creation to deployment, monitoring and execution. In this way, reuse across the business/IT divide is facilitated and great scalability is achieved through increased automation supported by ontology-based reasoning.

There is substantial work discussing the translation and mismatches between BPMN and BPEL (e.g [12], [13]), and more generically between block and graph oriented workflow notations [8], that has informed the implementation of BPMO concepts and attributes, especially in what concerns enabling the translation of BPMO constructs from notations such as BPMN, and to languages such as BPEL. For instance, we have developed a number of translators (e.g. [9]) within the SUPER project that use appropriate workflow pattern representations in BPMO to avoid workflows with acyclic loops and unsynchronised branches. One main difference from existing standards to BPMO, though, is that we use ontologies and extensions to support Semantic Web Services.

OWL-S[9], the SWS ontology submitted to W3C, contains a semantic-based process workflow description (i.e. the process model), which serves the same purpose as BPMO; however this model is not very rich. As pointed out in [3], there are a number of constructs from BPEL, such as conditions, synchronization and external (event-based) choices and handlers that cannot be expressed in OWL-S.

The Semantic Web approach presented in [3] has similar goals to our approach using BPMO in that the authors there argue that the syntactic approach provided by BPEL has shortcomings that limit its ability to provide seamless interoperability. They propose the use of semantic-based technologies (OWL-S) to support automated service discovery, customization and semantic translation for BPEL based processes; however, their annotations for services and data are decoupled from the control-flow language. BPMO, instead, provides semantically annotated control-flow constructs coupled with semantic descriptions of data and services. In addition, BPMO workflow includes semantic data mediation via *Mediation Tasks* and *Data Mediators*, which can refer to mapping rules and mediation services.

In [15] an approach called Semantic Process Templates (SPT) is presented, which provides semantic extensions to a (XML-based) BPEL-compatible process workflow specification. A semantic template is used for every activity in the process definition in order to attach concepts from a given ontology to inputs, outputs and operations. SPT differs from BPMO because it is a bottom-up approach, tied to a particular execution standard (BPEL), and the control-flow constructs have no ontological representation.

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