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Master of Construction Management & Engineering

Automated Rule Checking for in-house BIM Norms of Building Models

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Summary

Rules are written in a natural language by the experts of the field. In the construction industry the rules and regulations are called “Building Standards”. These rules are often published by the public legal bodies in both national and international level. Professional clients have their own in-house rules and regulations in order to maintain a smooth work flow with the supply chain partners throughout the building process. Rule checking for building design is conducted universally to check the stability of building design to improve the quality and safety of that building. Traditionally, building designs in 2D are checked against the building standards manually. This traditional rule checking process is more complex and time consuming. The advancement in Building Information Modeling (BIM) in the construction industry over the years allows rule checking process to be automated. BIM has brought an integration of building information and its 3D visualization of objects into building models.

In the past decade, many new automated rule checking systems and tools have been developed. Some state of the art technologies in the field of automated rule checking process are CORENET, Solibri Model Checker, EDM model checker and SMART-Code. These technologies have their own limitations in terms of interoperability, extendibility and logical compliance checking. Rules and regulations are changing from time to time based on new inventions in the construction industry to enhance the quality and safety of the building. Investing on the commercial tools like Solibri Model Checker would increase the investment cost in a project and reduce the overall profit.

This research focuses on avoiding above limitations of an automated rule checking tools for building designs. Semantic web technology and Linked data approach provides a possible solutions to overcome some of these limitations. Using the Semantic web technology: schemas, instances, and the rules can be defined in a common frame with the same language or format, known as Resource Description Framework (RDF). Linking of diverse information gives an opportunity to show potential interrelationship among diverse sources of information in a building project.

This graduation project is collaborated with Hendriks Bouw en Ontwikkeling located in Oss, The Netherlands. Hendriks have their own in-house BIM norm known as the HBO BIM norm. The models are checked and validated using Solibri Model Checker (SMC). The above mentioned limitations of SMC are reflected in the process of rule checking in the company. Still few in-house rules are checked manually and it is time consuming and needs extra effort for the BIM manager to check the design. This project focuses on developing an automated rule checker for in-house BIM norms based on Linked data approach.

Initially, the rules are selected from the HBO BIM norm based on company’s preference(s) and academic perspective. Rules are categorized into two: property rules and geometrical rules. The building design and construction data are converted into a common data format know as RDF.

Rules written in a natural language are formalized using the SPARQL query language. The use case models are tested against the rules and end results are reported in three dimensional view. Finally, the research questions stated for this graduation project are answered and recommendations are given for future development and research.

This prototype of an automated rule checker based on Linked data approach proves that this technique is able to solve the limitations and barriers in the current rule checking process of the company. This automated rule checker has the following capabilities.

- The ability to query and check the building model without expensive and heavy technical or programming requirements.
- The ability to perform checks on both the properties and geometry of the building model.
- The ability to visualize the results in a three dimensional view.
- This rule checker can be shared among the stakeholders to check the design by themselves before sending it to other stakeholders. It reduces the iterative process of rule checking.

Abstract

In recent years the Architectural, Engineering & construction (AEC) industry relies on different automated tools to check and validate the building design. However most of the tools are lack in interoperability, extendibility and logical compilation checks. Moreover these tools are programmed with high level programming languages. By avoiding these limitations an automated tool is beneficial for the rule checking process. Semantic web technology and Linked data approaches help to fulfill the above aim. This graduation project focuses on developing, an automated rule checker based on a Linked Data approach for in-house BIM norms. The architectural design and construction data are converted into common data format know as Resource Description Framework (RDF). The rules form the in-house BIM norm is formalized using the SPARQL query language. The results of this automated rule checking process are visualized in three dimensional view using Python libraries and modules know IfcOpenShell and python OpenCasCade. Once this in-house rule checker is developed, the end user can check multiple of design and 3D visualization of results helps for effective communication among the stakeholders involved in the construction project. It addition this it reduces the cost on investing in a commercial rule checking tools.

Keywords: Rule checking, in-house BIM norm, Linked data, RDF, SPARQL and IfcOpenShell

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Chapter-1

1 Introduction

In recent years the construction industry became more complex due to an increased number of stakeholders or actors involved in the same project. For example, to construct a normal multi-story building a minimum of five stakeholders are involved. They are: client, structural engineer, architect, MEP engineer and site manager. These stakeholders often have diverse interests in the construction project. Based on the management hierarchy, each stakeholder has different levels of power to influence certain decisions and even controlling the actions in the project. Decisions are often made based on requirements and actions that are normally controlled by rules and regulations (Nash et al., 2010). These rules and regulations are written by humans in a natural language. The collection of rules and regulations for a building design is commonly known as building standards. In general, building standards are formulated for each domain in the architectural, engineering and construction (AEC) industry such as architectural and structural building standards. Since there are large numbers of building standards, checking and validating the building design based on those standards manually is a complex task. Violations that arise (if any) in the process of rule checking must be clearly explained and communicated to other stakeholders involved in the project.

In the AEC industry the client is the person or company, with the controlling interest in the project. Generally the client will retain a significant level of control over the assessment and appointment of Designers and Contractors for a project (Berggren, Soderlund, & Anderson, 2001). Due the globalization, the client's taste regarding the requirements and service became more demanding and sophisticated. Under this circumstance, the construction industries are under pressure to fulfill the client's expectation with more difficulties (Albino et al., 2002). Especially, the professional clients have their own in-house rules and regulations, to maintain uniqueness and quality in the construction project. Checking these in-house rules against the actual design before executions helps to maintain the unique competitive advantage of that client or company. If any violation exists during the process of rule checking, it must be addressed to the concern person in standard way because communication plays a major role in stakeholder management (Malkat & GYOO, 2012). Building Information Model (BIM) is defined by international standards as shared digital representation of physical and operational characteristics of any built object which is reliable and helps on decision making (Volk et al., 2014) BIM is used for communication and data exchange in the AEC industry. When there are large number of stakeholders involved in a construction project, BIM is used to exchange data. There are platform like BIMserver support data exchange using semantic web technology (Beetz et al., 2010)& (bimserver.org, 2011)¹. The Semantic Web aims to build a common

¹ <http://bimserver.org/>

framework that allows sharing and reused of data across applications, companies or industries, and community boundaries (W3C, 2012)².

Industry Foundation Classes (IFC) is an open vendor-independent neutral file format that captures both geometry and properties of building objects and their relationships within building information models (BIM). This facilitates the coordination of information across incompatible applications, which is a prerequisite for improving building workflows using building information modeling (BIM) methods. Building Information Modeling (BIM) technology in the AEC industry is used e.g for clash detection, visualization, construction planning and monitoring cost estimation of the construction project.

The AEC industry deals with large numbers of data and documents. These data and documents are often isolated from each other. For example, the clients have some requirements (information) towards the architectural design. If this information is isolated, maintaining a well-functioning information flow throughout the complete building life-cycle is complex (Pauwels, 2014). To avoid complexity diverse information data can be linked and formed into structure data. This approach is called “Linked Data approach” (Berners-Lee et al., 2009).

This graduation project aims to check the mismatches against the rules and regulations in BIM model by developing an automated rule checker based on the Linked Data approach. This research topic focuses on finding the mismatches and gives a solution approach in the conceptual design phase of a building life cycle. If the design is checked and validated in the conceptual design phase the other life cycles can be executed smoothly.

By using this automated rule checker the stakeholders can check their models against the rules and regulations. The mismatch and violations are visually represented in a three dimensional view as end result. Visualization of violations helps to communicate to the respective stakeholders involved in the construction project. As a result, it will reduce the analyzes cost and avoid delays in the construction project. This increases the profits for both the client and construction company.

1.1 Research Overview

In this section, the current rule checking process conducted in the Hendriks Bouw en Ontwikkeling is explained. The draw backs of the current rule checking process was explained based on the expert interview from the company. Finally, the objective of this graduation project is briefed.

1.1.1 Current process

This graduation project is in collaborated with Hendriks Bouw en Ontwikkeling located in Oss, The Netherlands. Data such as IFC models, rules sets and requirements were issued by Hendriks Bouw en Ontwikkeling to conduct this project.

² http://semanticweb.org/wiki/Main_Page.html

In general, Hendriks buys their BIM models from different Engineering Consultancies in the market in an IFC file format. Each domain such as Architecture, Structural and MEP is designed by different Engineering Consultancies. These companies are listed in Table 1

Architectural	Structural	MEP
By Root	Goudstikker de Vries	Hendriks Installatietechniek
van der Pauwert Architecten		Schrijvers Elektrotechniek
H&R bouwkundig ingenieurs		

Table 1 List of Engineering Consultancies

This research thesis focuses on Architectural design of a building model. These architectural BIM models were designed based on Rijksgebouwendienst (Rgd) BIM standards (Rgd BIM Standard, 2013) by the Engineering consultancies. Since Hendriks is the client, the Engineering Consultant must adopt the in-house BIM Norms known as Hendriks Bouw en Ontwikkeling (HBO) Building Information Model standard Norms (HBO BIM Norm, 2016). These in-house rules and requirements are specified by the experts without violating the Rgd BIM Standards (Rgd BIM Standard).

The HBO BIM norms, specifies some additional rules. It is essential for Hendriks and its supply chain partners to achieve their goals to conduct the BIM processes more efficiently. Moreover, this HBO BIM norm helps to maintain uniqueness and competitive advantage in the construction project.

Currently, Hendriks is using the Solibri Model Checker (SMC) to check and validate the BIM models. The process of rule checking is conducted on a weekly basis and is documented. The rule check document contains the details about the project, team members, software user to draft the model and most importantly the clashes and violations arise during the process of rule checking. These clashes and violations were illustrated using the screen shot presentation from the Solibri Model Checker and it is attached to that document. The main objective of this documentation is to highlight the type of violations or errors in the design and send to the respective person for decision making. This process of rule checking is conducted in iterative manner until it satisfies the specifications. The below figure 1 shows the overall contain of the document.

To be clearer, a BPNM models is illustrated in figure 2 to show the current the rule checking process in the company. Initially, the building design is designed by the Engineering consultant (designer). The design is send to the client (Hendriks) in an IFC file format. Using the Solibri Model Checker (SMC), the design will be checked and validated. If there are any violations or clashes arise during the process of rule checking, a detailed report is send to the designer to solve those issues. If the design is satisfied, it will be send to the supplier. The design is double checked by the supplier. During this process if the design is perfect, the specifications (of the products) were send for production. Suppose, if there is any violation or issue in the design a detail report is send to Hendriks by the supplier. Based on those issues, the rule checking

process is conducted again until the design satisfies the requirements of both Hendriks and suppliers. This process conducted in iterative manner.

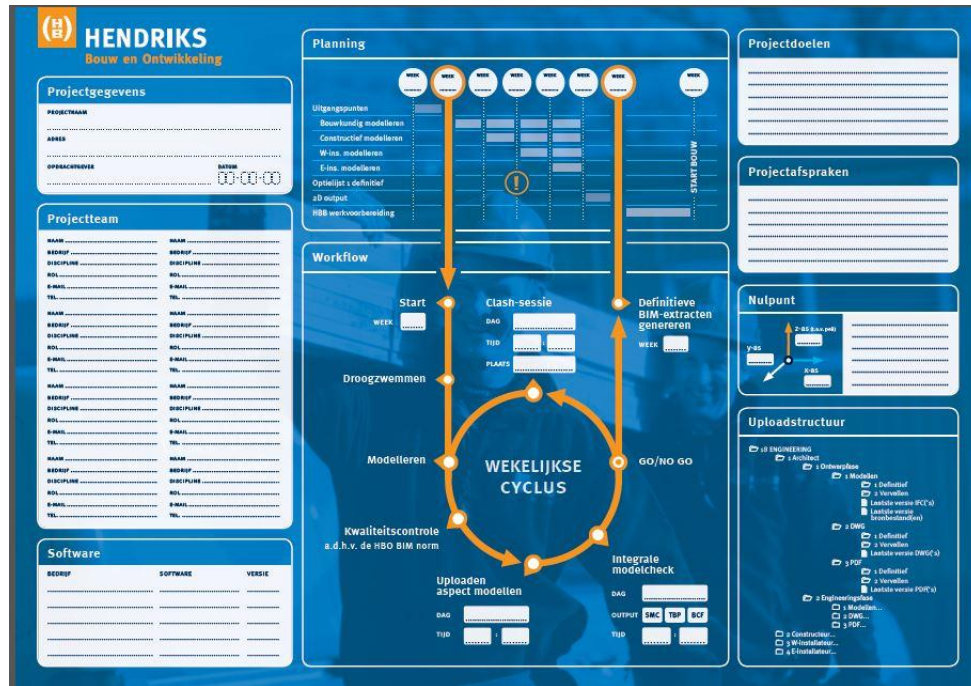


Figure 1 Overall Rule Checking process report format

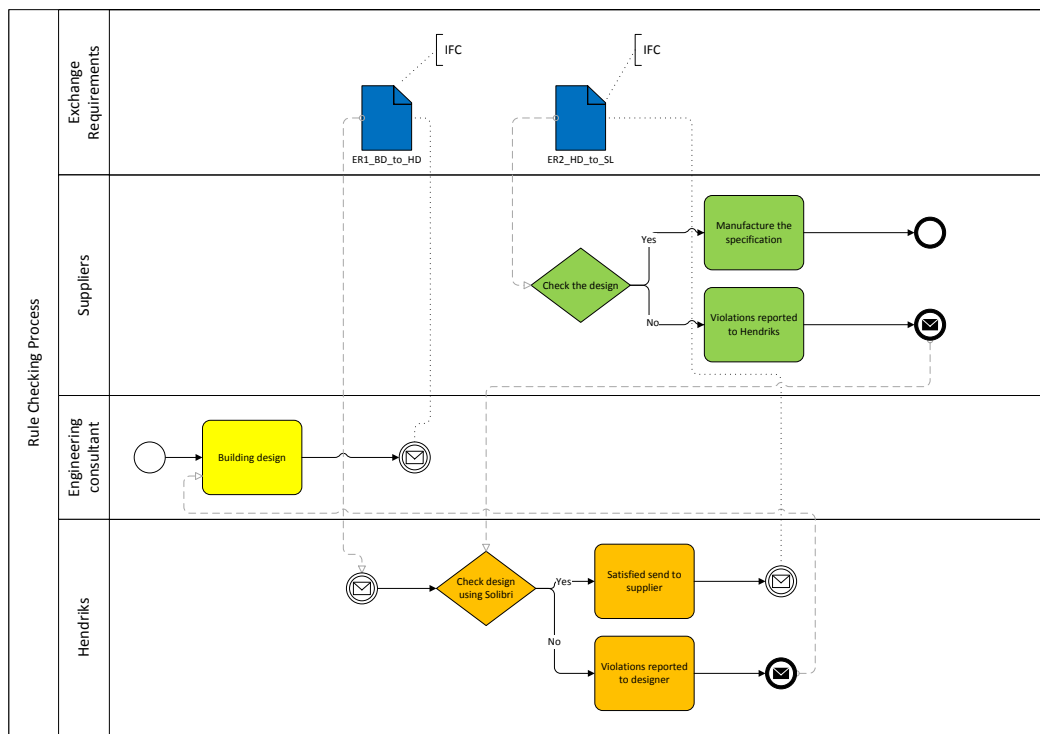


Figure 2 Current rule checking process (BPNM)

1.1.2 Problem analysis

In HBO BIM norms, the rules and specifications are stated for IfcWallStandardCase, IfcSlab, IfcColumn, IfcBeam, IfcFooting, IfcStairs, IfcRoof, IfcMember, IfcRailings and IfcDoor. Each IFC object has its own boundary conditions and property sets. The BIM manager has to check and validate the boundary conditions and property sets for all IFC objects in the BIM models. The process of rule checking is conducted in design, engineering and realization phase of the building life cycle.

As mentioned before, currently the Solibri Model Checker (SMC) is used to check and validate the BIM model in the company. SMC has a set of built-in rules that can be managed by a rule-set manager. New rules can be added in SMC application programming interface (API) using Java programming. Since SMC is a commercial tool, the API interface is not publicly available and it was restricted by the original SMC software developers (Eastman et al., 2009). As result, a rule-set can be replicated, but the extent of user customization is limited to changing parameters values. Rules are not static, they are dynamic. Whenever the rules are changed based on any situation the company (Hendriks) has to go and approach the original software developer to upgrade or update the new rules in the model checker. This causes additional investments in the construction project.

Due to this limitation and investment cost, checking all the rules (boundary conditions) and specifications (property sets) stated in HBO BIM norms are not fully automated. As result, still few in-house rules and specifications were checked manually. It takes additional time and effort for the BIM manager to check the design. This time consuming factor reflects in the execution stage. Any delay in a project life cycle reduces the profit for both the stakeholders and affects the overall efficiency of the project.

The above issue motivates to develop an automated rule checker for the manually checking rules stated in the HBO BIM norms. To make the process of rule checking into automated.

In the BIM Norms of Hendriks (HBO BIM Norm, 2016), many rules and regulations were proposed. Due to time limitations few rules were taken into account, based on the company's interest and academic perspective. The chosen rules are explained in-detail in chapter 4, section 4.1.1

1. 2 Research question

In order to develop this automated rule checker and to answer the problem definitions, a number of research questions were specified.

Main Question:

- ***How to develop an Automated Rule checker for in-house BIM norms to check and validate building models?***

Sub-Question

- ***What are the rules chosen for this rule checking process and why it is stated in the in-house BIM norms?***
- ***What data is needed to conduct this automated rule checking process?***
- ***How is this automated rule checker beneficial for the BIM manager for decision making?***

To get the answers for the above research questions a methodology is formulated. This methodology and conceptual frame work is illustrated and brief in the below chapter 4.

1.3 Research approach

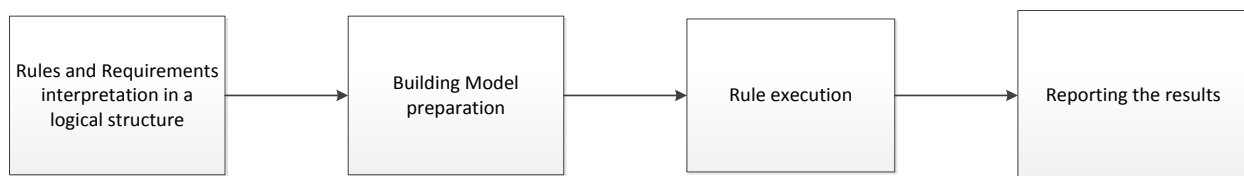


Figure 3 Research approach

1.3.1 Rule and Requirement Interpretation

Rules and building design codes are stated to control and the monitor the construction project. These building codes consist of tables, equations and written text in a semi-formal structure. For example, in the building standards the equations are mainly stated to design and analyze the structural elements. Transferring these design codes into a computer readable language is complex because design codes often deal with legal issues and converting these codes without losing the nature of the context is a complex task. According to (Eastman et al., 2009) in a language, the rules written would be portable, in the same way that programs language are portable to different platform environments. This allows running the same rules on a code checking server and also embeds them in a design tool. The other benefits of a well-designed language are that, it is able to capture large number of rules, including nested conditions and branching of alternative contexts within a specified domain.

1.3.2 Building Model Preparation

Building Model Preparation is drafting the building design using any design tool that can support the Industry Foundation Classes (IFC). A building model consists of datasets such as properties and dimensions. The design should match to the exact client who suggests some requirements regarding the design.

1.3.3 Rule Execution

Rule checking is straightforward when rules and requirements were converted into a machine readable format. The functions must deal with the prepared building model. The rules are executed by applying the set of rules to the instance building model.

1.3.4 Reporting the Result

The main objective of reporting is to communicate the end result of the rule checking process to the respective stakeholders involved in the project. This reporting process, use for decision making and solving problems raised during the project life cycle.

1.4 Expected results

The main objective of this graduation project is to develop an automated rule checker for the in-house BIM norm. This rule checker helps to find the mismatches and violations in the design against the in-house rules. Once this rule checker is fully developed the end user (BIM manager) can check multiple model instances. In addition to that, this project concerns about representing the mismatch and violation in a 3D view. This helps the BIM manager to communicate the end result with the designers and supplier chain partners involved in the project. Overall, this automated rule checking process reduces the time used in the rule checking process. Visualizing the violations and mismatches (if any) in a 3D view, helps for effective communication among the stakeholders in the project. To achieve this objective, a methodology is formulated. By implementing that formulated method an automated rule checker for in-house BIM norm can be developed.

Chapter-2

2 Glossary

Notations	Abbreviations	Definitions
AEC	Architecture Engineering & Construction	A phrase that may be used as an alternative to describe the building construction industry.
API	Application Programming Interface	A platform to express operations, inputs, outputs, and underlying types, defining functionalities that are independent of their respective implementations, which allows definitions and implementations to vary without compromising the interface.
BIM	Building Information Modeling	An object-oriented, AEC-specific model – a digital representation of a building to facilitate exchange and interoperability of information in digital format. The model can be without geometry or with 2D or 3D representations. It is mainly used to communicate among stakeholders of that construction project.
CORENET	Construction and Real Estate Network	An Automated Rule checking system development in 1995 by Singapore's Ministry of National Development. This facility offers three phase e-Submission, e-PlanCheck and e-Info.
CS	Compressive Strength	The compressive strength of concrete is the most common performance measure used by engineers in designing buildings.

Notations	Abbreviations	Definitions
GUID	Global Unique Identifier	It is a unique reference used as an identifier.
HBO BIM norms	Hendriks Bouw en Ontwikkeling	The HBO BIM Norm is derived from the Dutch Rgd BIM Norms (Rgd BIM Standard, 2013) with additional rules and requirements specified by the experts without violating the original BIM Standards
IFC	Industry Foundation Classes	An international specification for product data exchange and sharing for AEC/FM. IFC enables interoperability between the computer applications for AEC/FM.
LBIW	Load- Bearing Internal Wall	A load-bearing wall is a wall that bears the weight of the structure and conducts its weight to foundations of a structure.
NLBIW	Non-Load Bearing Internal Walls	A wall that only capable of supporting its own weight and it can't support an impose load.
NL/SFB	Netherlands/ Samarbestkommitte Byggnadsfragor (collaborative commite for construction issues)	SfB coding was developed in the fifties in Sweden for classification of building parts for the benefit of cost estimates and performance specifications. NL is a Dutch SfB committee, which has developed a classification table for the Dutch construction industry under the name NL-SfB.
Python OCC	OpenCasCade	A 3D CAD development framework for the Python programming language. It provides features such as advanced topological and geometrical operations, data

Notations	Abbreviations	Definitions
		exchange (STEP).
OWL	Web Ontology Language	A Semantic Web language designed to represent complex knowledge about things and relation between group of things
RDF	Resource Description Framework	A data model for representing information (especially metadata) about resources in the Web. RDF consists of triple patterns Subject, Predicate and Object.
RDFLIB	Resource Description Framework Library	A library used to work with RDF in a Python package.
RGD/RVD Dutch BIM norms	Rijksgebouwendienst Building Information Model Standard	BIM norms provided by the Dutch government as a guideline to designers to design the building models according to the given set rules and regulation.
SMC	Solibri Model Checker	A software tool to check and validate IFC models
SPARQL	Simple Protocol and RDF Query Language	SPARQL is a semantic query language for datasets in RDF and use to retrieve and manipulate data store in RDF format
TTL	Terse Triple Language	An extension of turtle files has a “.ttl” on all platforms. A Turtle document allows writing down an RDF graph in a compact textual form
URI	Uniform Resource Identifier	A string of characters used to identify a resource. Such identification enables interaction with representations of the resource over a network, typically the World Wide Web, using specific protocols.
W3C	The World Wide Web	An international community

Notations	Abbreviations	Definitions
	Consortium	and a standard organization for World Wide Web. The organization's purpose is to develop an open standard so that the Web evolves in a single direction rather than being splintered among competing factions.

Chapter-3

3 Literature Review

In recent years the AEC industry became more complex due to larger number of stakeholders involved in the same construction project. This increase in the number of stakeholders effects the effective collaboration. According to (Charalambous, Thorpe, Yeomans, & Doughty, 2013) “Effective collaboration requires coordinated communication and communicated coordination”. Building Information Modeling (BIM) can be expressed as the language to coordinate the communication in the construction industry. Collaboration not only means exchange of data among the stakeholders but also checking and validating of those exchanged data. To check and validate the data there are few automated rule checkers such as the Solibri Model Checker (SMC) and Revit tools are available in the market. These tools are sometimes isolated or differ from the current requirement. A strong coordination between these requirement and tools is beneficial for a better collaboration. Semantic web technologies and Linked Data approach can be helpful to achieve this aim (Costa & Pauwels, 2015).

In this chapter, current studies between BIM and Linked Data approach are discussed, in order to show the development of BIM and Linked Data approach in the construction industry. Based on these development, an automated rule checker is beneficial in rule checking is conducted in the end.

3.1 Building Information Modeling (BIM) and Industry Foundation Classes (IFC)

Building Information Modeling (BIM) is an emerging technology in the AEC industry. BIM technology helps to present the building design in three dimensional views and it is also known as virtual building. This virtual building plays a major role in the process of simulations, testing, refining and validation of building design (Christiansson et al., 2010). BIM technology not only beneficial in virtual buildings and rule checking, it also gives an opportunities for the stakeholders to control the important variables of the project such as cost and time management (Azhar et al., 2008).

The Industry Foundation Classes (IFC) is a standard data model that supports the data exchange of building information models. Its schema is developed in the EXPRESS modelling language (Beetz et al., 2014). There are many modelling language available to describe the product and their data, but EXPRESS is the most successful modelling language define in ISO 10303-11:1994. The EXPRESS language consist of the elements that allows an unambiguous data definition and is part of the Standard for the Exchange of Product data (STEP) standard to define how the product data should be described and exchanged (Pauwels, et al., 2010).

There are lot of research and development effort ongoing in the field of Building Information, Modelling (BIM), and every research has its own limitations. Since BIM is more technically

advanced it is difficult for the non-professional client to understand and particularly elderly people are resisting to accept this technology even though it has benefits (Vries et al., 2012). According to a survey conducted by (Yan & Damian, 2008) over 40% of the USA and 20% UK construction companies are not interested to adopt BIM because they have to invest time and human resources to train their employees in the Building Information Modelling field. The percentage of adopting this technology is increasing day by day.

Although, the Industry Foundation Classes (IFC) is a central and standardized data model shared among the different stakeholders in a project it has some limitations. The IFC file format is not based on a mathematically rigid theory like OWL and lacks formal rigidity. The EXPRESS modelling language has limitations in resources reuse and interoperability. Few developers have knowledge on this modeling language so it reduces the development of affordable and free tools (Beetz et al., 2009). The details of domain information are not explicitly available in the modelled data (Beetz et al., 2015). Information picking i.e. the stakeholder can't pick specific information from the IFC model they must receive the full size model (Fischer & Kam, 2002).

3.2 Linked Data and Semantic web

The name Linked Data itself defines its definition, linking of data from different sources. Technically, Linked Data define as the data published on the World Wide Web in a machine-readable format and its meaning is explicitly defined. Then it is linked to other external data sets, and can be linked from external data sets (Christian et al., 2008). The principle of Linked Data is first outlined by Tim Berners-Lee in 2006 (Berners-Lee et al., 2008). The Semantic Web shares the data and reuse among companies and community boundaries (Campbell & MacNeill, 2010). The Semantic not only requires machine-readable language, but also in the machine understandable format. The machine-readable format recommended by World Wide Consortium (W3C) is Resource Description Framework (RDF) in February 1999 (W3C, 2014)³.

The concept of Resource Description Framework (RDF) is a data model for representing information (especially metadata) about resources on the Web. Metadata gives the information about other data. RDF data model makes a statement about the resource in the form of subject,_predicate,_object expressions. These expressions are known as "triples" in RDF terminology. To identify the resources, RDF uses Uniform Resource Identifiers (URIs) and URI references (URIRefs) (Decker et al., 2000). The triple patterns are identified by the following format:

- Subjects can be either URIs or Blank nodes
- Predicates are mostly URI
- Objects can be URIs, Blank nodes or literals.

³ <https://www.w3.org/TR/rdf-schema/>

These triple patterns from different data can be linked together and form as RDF graphs (Hitzler, 2011)

The exact meaning of an RDF graph in a general context depends on many factors, which include conventions within a user community to interpret user-defined RDF classes and properties in specific ways, comments in natural language, or links to other content bearing documents. But the meaning is much more convey that these forms will not directly accessed by the machine processing. This meaning may be used by human interpreters of the RDF information, or by programmers writing software to perform various kinds of processing on that RDF information. However, RDF statements also have a formal meaning which determines, with mathematical precision, the conclusions (or entailments) that machines can draw from a given RDF graph (W3C, 2004)⁴. To retrieve and manipulate data store in RDF format or graph using Simple Protocol and RDF Query Language and it's shortly known as SPARQL (Prudhomme & Seabome, 2008). SPARQL is a semantic query language for database in RDF and it recommend by World Wide Consortium (W3C) in 1998 (W3C, 2013)⁵.

SPARQL is a graph matching query language and a query consist of three parts. They are as follows:

- Pattern match
- Solution modifiers
- Output

Pattern match consist of several operation to find the matching pattern in RDF graph such as optional parts, union of patterns, nesting, filtering (or restricting) values of possible matchings, and the possibility of choosing the data source to be matched by a pattern. *Solution modifiers* use to modify the computed output values using projection, distinct, order, limit, and offset. *Output*, based on the query the end result (output) differs, such as matching of patterns, construction of new triples from these values, and descriptions of resources (Perez et al., 2006).

Since the Semantic Web technology getting popular, the need for this technology in many applications to support the rule based inference engine for processing Semantic Web data in an intelligent manner. Many rule languages are proposed to allow rule reuse and interoperations (Ameen et al., 2015). Some the rule languages for Semantic Web are RuleML, Semantic Web Rule Language (SWRL), Notation3 (N3), Jane rules and Rule Interchange Format (RIF) (Paschke & Boley, 2009).

3.3 BIM, Linked Data and Semantic web

In the context of Semantic Web technology, ontologies are playing a vital role for publishing and connecting structured data on the web as Linked Data. In the AEC industry, Building Information Modelling (BIM) is being used as central place of building data to facilitate

⁴ <https://www.w3.org/TR/rdf-primer/>

⁵ <https://www.w3.org/TR/sparql11-query/>

exchange of data in digital format by all stakeholders across the project life cycle. In order to make a bridge between the BIM, Semantic Web and Linked data, (Lee et al., 2016) suggest a framework to achieve the above mentioned goal. They are as follows:

- Develop an ontology for publishing data using linked data principles
- Extract the information from the BIM model and generate or convert it into a machine-readable format
- Convert the extracted BIM data into a RDF graph
- Use SPARQL query to retrieve or modified the output data.

Creating a link between different building data set, can be achieved by creating vocabularies using Linked data approach. A Vocabulary is a set of classes and properties used to describe specific types of things, or things in a given domain or industry, but for a specific usage. Vocabularies are used RDF, RDF Schema (W3C, 2004)⁶ and Web Ontology Language (OWL, 2012)⁷ that defines the main schema modeling constructs such as “owl:Class” or “rdf:Property”.

In Building data, such as a BIM, in a Linked data format, can be combined with other relevant data sets. By doing so, the AEC industry can generate and extract additional valuable information across different domains in the industry. As result, cross domain information gives a clear view of buildings operations and also provides added value for the domain stakeholders in the organization. This valuable information is used take decision support throughout the project life cycle (Curry et al., 2012).

3.4 Rules and Regulation

Rules and Regulation are written by experts (humans) in that field in a natural language. These rules and regulations are composed into a set of standards known as building standards. These building standards differ from country to country based on local conditions and these rules are often published by the public legal bodies in both national and international level (Hjelseth & Nisbet, 2011). These building standards are mostly in the form of documents, forms, orders and information data base.

The European Union suggests a series of 10 European Standards and providing a common approach for the design of buildings and other civil engineering works and construction products (EN Eurocodes, 2013)⁸. In particular, Netherlands follows the European standards, with additional rules and regulations were published as local building standards in Building Decree 2012 (Bouwbesluit 2012). This decree contains the technical regulations for all type structures in the Netherlands. These Dutch regulations are more concerned about the safety, health, usability, energy efficiency and green environment. Note that the Building rules can

⁶ <https://www.w3.org/TR/rdf-primer/>

⁷ <https://www.w3.org/2001/sw/wiki/OWL>

⁸ <http://eurocodes.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>

differ from one municipality to another (Building regulations, 2012)⁹. In particular, the Netherlands proposed a BIM standard referred to as the Rijksvastgoeddienst Building Information Model Standard, shortly referred to as RGD Dutch BIM norms (Rillaer et al., 2012). This Rgd BIM norms provides guidelines to designers to design the building models according to the given set rules and regulations.

Even though these building standards are published to regulate the building design, due to the large number of the rules standards, checking and validating these rules manually is a complex task. This complexity reduces the efficiency of the project life cycle.

3.5 Automated Rule Checking and Linked Data

Rules and Regulation plays a vital role in the AEC industry by controlling and monitoring a construction project. These Rules and Regulations are written in natural language, converting these rules and regulations without changing the gist into machine-readable codes to check the design is part of the Automated Rule checking process. This automated process helps to increase the efficiency of the project and allows rapid decision-making in that particular issue (Park & Kim, 2015). To achieve this rule checking process (C. Eastman et al., 2009) suggest four different phases. They are:

- Rule and Requirement interpretation in a logical structure;
- Building model preparation;
- Rule execution;
- Reporting the results.

An Automated rule checker is a software tool which does not make any change or alternation in the original design but it can access the design to check and validate the object and attributes in that design (C. Eastman et al., 2009). Eastman state that “Rule-based systems apply rules, constraints or conditions to a proposed design, with results such as “pass”, “fail” or “warning”, or ‘unknown’ for cases where the needed data is incomplete or missing”.

Automated Rule checking is not new concept. In 1995 Singapore’s Ministry of National Development initiated the effort of automated code checking. The objective of “CORENET is to re-engineer the business processes of the construction industry to achieve a quantum leap in turnaround time, productivity and quality” .CORENET is standards for Construction and Real Estate Network. This facility offers three phases of services namely: e-Submission, e-Plan-Check and e-Info (Government of Singapore, 2016)¹⁰. CORENET is developed by novaCITYNETS Pte. Ltd in the own platform called FORNAX. By using FORNAX objects, a rule written in natural language could be directly interpreted to programming language. FORNAX has a C++ object library to obtain new data and generate extended views of IFC data. The results of this e-checking is

⁹ <http://www.answersforbusiness.nl/regulation/building-regulations>

¹⁰ <https://www.corenet.gov.sg>

delivered in the form of word or pdf and also in the graphical format (Eastman et al., 2009). Since the FORNAX library which has been developed and maintained by a private company, expanding and hard-coded checking routines are not transparent for the public. The rule checking codes are highly confidential. Therefore it is called a black box method (Preidel et al., 2015).

Solibri Model Checker (SMC) is a Java based model checker developed in the year 2000 by the Finnish software development company known as Solibri Inc. SMC can read the IFC files and check the models with its preset rule libraries. By using the rule libraries available in the SMC, the user can check and validate the model based on the chosen rules from the rule library. Since Solibri is a commercial tool, external development of new or custom rule sets is only possible with a cooperation of the original SMC software developer (Preidel & Borrmann, 2015).

Jotne EDMModelChecker is another model checker, based on the EXPRESS language. This platform providing an object database and supports the open development of new rules in EXPRESS language. The IFC schema is also written in EXPRESS language. Working knowledge of the rule written EXPRESS is limited within a small group of people (Eastman, et al., 2009).

SMART-Code is developed by International Code Council (ICC). It formalized process of rule by converting the rules written in natural language into computer readable format (codes) (Nawari, 2012). Unfortunately due lack of funding the development of SMART-Code is stopped in 2010. The underlying mark-up concept used by SMART-Codes has been developed further by AEC3 Ltd (Hjelseth, 2012).

The above mentioned (FORNAX, SMC, EDM & SMART-Code) state of the art technologies still have limitations in terms of interoperability (Tan et al., 2010). Moreover these technologies are not transparent and such that any editing, modifications of existing rules, or addition of new rules have to be done by editing the original code by a person with a sound knowledge in the field of computer science. The state art of tools lacks the capability of performing logical compliance checking. Such as contractual requirement, quality control and safety procedures are not semantically represented in the BIM model (Kasim, Li, Rezgui, & Beach, 2013).

When it comes to Linked data, several authors like (Beetz et al 2009,Pauwels, et al., 2010) have done lot of research and development over a decade to create a bridge between BIM and Linked data, based on Semantic Web techonolgy. Especially, in the process of rule checking linked data has the potential to play a vital role. Data from different domains described in RDF format can be linked through semantic rules and the information from the BIM models descibes in this format .This cross domain information gives an opportunity to link alternative representations of building information to show potential interrelationship among diverse sources of information in a building project. The main advantage of Linked Data and semantic web technology is that the schema, instances, and the rules can be defined in a common frame with the same language (Pauwels et al., 2015).

3.6 Conclusion

Even though an automated rule checker has a lot of benefits, converting every rule and regulation from natural language without changing its natural context into machine-readable format is a complex task. From the above analysis, the IFC data model contains the whole information about the project and converting these STEP-based instance models into a RDF file can be achieved. Using the Linked Data approach allows models information from different data sources to be linked together. By using the SPARQL query language we can retrieve or modify the data. Based on the above literature study a prototype of an automated rule checker can be developed.

Chapter-4

4 Methodology

In this chapter the methodology to develop an automated rule checker is explained and illustrated with work flow diagrams. Initially, the conceptual frame is illustrated, the rules and requirements chosen to develop an automated rule checker are explained and the computer programming and query language is briefed. Finally, the conceptual work flow is explained.

4.1 Research model



Figure 4 Conceptual Frame Work

4.1.1 In-House Rules

To conduct the process of rule checking, rules were chosen from the Hendriks Bouw en Ontwikeling (HBO) BIM Norms (HBO BIM Norm, 2016). In this HBO BIM Norm the additional rules and requirements are mainly derived with the suppliers in order to obtain an efficient workflow throughout the entire building process. These additional rules and requirements specified by the experts without violating the Rgd BIM Standards (Rgd BIM Standard, 2013). These rules were formulated as in-house standards to enhance the quality, workflow and to maintain uniqueness in a project.

There are many rules and regulations in HBO BIM Norms. For this research topic `IfcWallStandardCase` is chosen. HBO BIM norms suggest specifications for three types of walls. They are as follows.

- ❖ External walls
- ❖ Load Bearing Internal Walls (LBIW) (Lime Stone)
- ❖ Non-Load Bearing Internal Walls (NLBIW)

The above mentioned walls have many sub-rules, since it is practically not possible to consider all rules due to the time limitation in the context of this thesis. This graduation project focuses only on the Lime Stone walls specifications. The rules are divided into two categories namely: [1] Property rules and [2] Geometrical rules

4.1.1 (A) Property Rules

Property rule specify the attributes of the walls. The properties and the specification are summarized in the table 2.

Clause	Wall type	Attributes	Specification
NLSfb 22	Kalkzandsteen (LBIW)	Type: Elements	E, IN, EV, I
NLSfb 22	Kalkzandsteen (LBIW)	Compressive strength	CS12, CS20, CS28, CS36, CS44 (Element)
		Thickness	100, 120, 150, 175, 214, 250, 300

Table 2 Property Rules

Table 2, shows the attributes of the limestone walls. These attributes have different combinations of specifications. In the actual design this specification mentioned as combination of strings in the IfcLabel under IfcWallStandardCase schema as explicit information. For example, these wall labels are sequenced in the actual design as shown below.

❖ **Kalkzandsteen Element E214 CS20**

These sets of rules are suggested by the supplier Xella. Xella is one of the leading building materials manufacturers in The Netherlands. This company supplies building materials to Hendriks Bouw en Ontwikeling, especially the prefabricated limestone walls. Xella offers five different type of prefabricated wall materials namely: [1]Silka Element, [2] Silka Lijbolken, [3] Massief Blokken, [4] Ytong Cellenbeton and [5] Ytong Multipor Platen. These products have their own set of properties like: wall type, element, thickness and compressive strength. These sets of properties are suggested as a combination of strings. To be specific, the property combinations of Silka Element product were chosen for this rule checking process. For example, in the Silka Element load bearing wall has a combination in the following order: “Kalkzandsteen Element (wall type), E (Element), 100 (Thickness) and CS20 (Compressive strength)” is the efficient combination. There are some combinations which are not efficient or allowed in the actual design they are: “Kalkzandsteen Element E100 CS28”. This list of property combinations has both “true” and “false” combinations. Initially, it was documented as an IFC file as shown in figure 5. Later, it was converted into an Excel file as shown in Appendix-A

4.1.1(B) Geometrical Rules

A geometrical rule specifies the geometrical terms and conditions associated with that rule. The geometrical rule specified for the limestone wall is taken into consideration. The rule is shown in table 3

Clause	Wall type	Rules
NLSfb 22	LBIW (Lime stone only)	<i>Prevent walls longer than 12 meters</i>

Table 3 Geometrical Rule

“Prevent walls longer than 12 meters”

The above rule is stated because the fabricated limestone walls are lifted and placed using a crane in the construction site. The crane has a range of 12 meters maximum .If a wall is longer than 12 meters, the workers have to dismantle the crane which is time consuming and not efficient. So the company wants to check the length of the limestone in the design phase. If the violations were found in the design phase, the company can find an alternative solution in an efficient way.

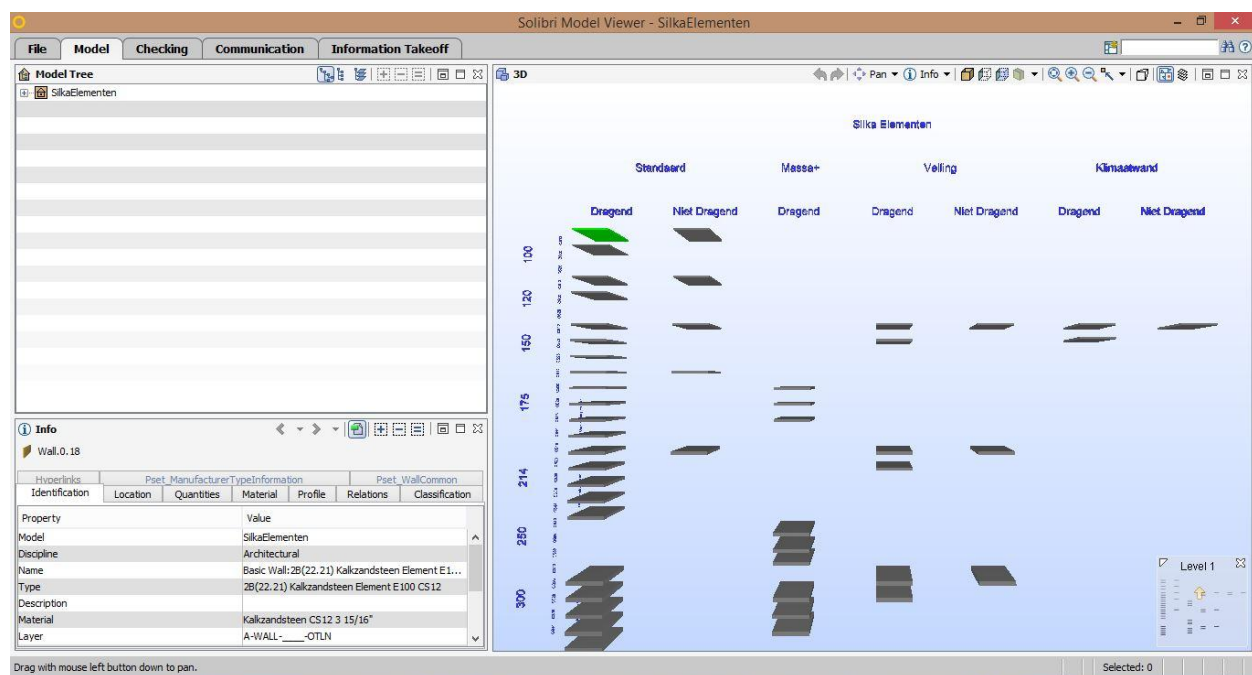


Figure 5 Xella Combinations in IFC file (screen shot)

4.1.2 Formalized the rules

The rules are initially written in a natural language. These rules are converted into computer readable format using the Simple Protocol and RDF Query Language and it's shortly known as SPARQL. The formalized rules in SPARQL query are explained in chapter 5, sections 5.3.2 and 5.6.4.

4.1.3 Convert data to RDF

In the data sets, such IFC model and the supplier combination in Excel file is converted to an RDF file format. The main purpose of converting data to RDF is to maintain the uniform data format throughout the rule checking process. Initially, the IFC model which is STEP file format will be converted into an IfcOWL format. IfcOWL (Beetz et al., 2009) is an ontology that can be published to synchronized with IFC specification IfcOWL is used to allow extension towards structured data sets and link the data to made it present online using semantic web technology (buildingSMART, 2016). The supplier combination Excel file is converted into an RDF file. The process of converting the data into RDF file is explained in chapter 5.

4.1.4 Execution and Visualization

The rules are formalized using the SPARQL query language. Executing the rules (query) against the IFC model gives an opportunity to check and validate the design. The result of this process of rule checking can be visualized in the form of text, graphs, tables and 3D graphical view. To achieve this, the Python programming language along with special libraries and modules are adopted.

Python can be extended by importing additional libraries, such rdflib, IfcOpenShell and PythonOCC. IfcOpenShell is an open source software library that helps users to work with the IFC file format. In other words IfcOpenShell is basically used to edit or add new content to an .ifc file (Krijnen, 2015)¹¹.

4.2 Conceptual Frame work

The conceptual work flow diagram in (figure 3) shows the process to develop this automated rule checker. Initially, the rules and requirements mentioned in section 4.1.1 are written in natural language were collected from Hendriks Bouw en Ontwikeling. These rules were formalized into computer readable format using SPARQL. The role of python program language is more in the geometrical rule checking process. The geometrical representations in an IFC schema are not explicit, so python scripts are used to calculate the dimensions of the walls. The IFC model and supplier's specifications in Excel files are converted into an RDF files. The SPARQL query is executed to check the design. Finally, the violating walls were visualized in a three dimensional view using Python libraries. The implementation of this process in explained in chapter 5.

¹¹ <http://ifcopenshell.org/index.html>

Chapter-5

5 Implementation

In this Chapter, the implementation procedure to develop a prototype Automated Rule checker is explained. Initially, a brief introduction is given about the programming and querying language and also Integrated Development Environment (IDE) used in this process. As mentioned before, the process of rule checking is divided into two categories namely: [1] Property Rule Checking and, [2] Geometric Rule checking. Each rule checking process has followed different implementation procedure to achieve the end results to find the mismatch and violations based on the in-house rules in a BIM model. Both implementations are illustrated using work flow diagrams. A step by step procedure of the programming part is explained using separate work flow diagrams. The output of this automated rule checker illustrated using screen shots .Finally, a discussion is made based the assumptions, limitations in this process and few recommendations were given for future development.

5.1 Introduction

The main object of this graduation thesis is to develop an Automated Rule Checker for in-house BIM norms. To achieve this objective, programming and querying languages used in the process of rule checking are shown in table 4.

Programming/Querying language	IDE	Application
SPARQL	TopBraid Composer	Retrieve the data from RDF file
Python	JetBrainsPyCharm Community Edition	Program to achieve the geometrical rule checking and visualization of results

Table 4 Programming and Querying languages

SPARQL is shorthand for Simple Protocol and RDF Query Language. SPARQL is a Semantic query language for database in RDF and it recommended by World Wide Consortium (W3C) in 1998 (W3C, 2013). SPARQL is used to retrieve and manipulate data from an RDF file. In research presented here, the SPARQL query was composed in TopBraid Composer because if there are any bugs in the SPARQL query it will highlighted as warring in TopBraid Composer. This helps to debug the query based on the given warnings.

Python is an object oriented high level computer programming language with dynamic semantics, in this process Python version 27 is used for programming. In this project, Python is used to process geometrical rule checking and also to visualize the results in three dimensional views.

The Resource Description Framework (RDF) plays a vital role in this project. The IFC model in which the company is interested to check the properties of the walls was converted using the IFC to RDF converter. This, IFC-to-RDF converter is a configurable Java program with open API (Pauwels et al., 2012). The IFC model which is in STEP file format is import to the converter (Java, API) and exported as an RDF file format. The process of converting IFC to RDF creates an opportunity to link alternative representations of building information to show potential interrelationship among diverse sources of information in a building project.

The combinations of wall properties are suggested by the supplier in section 4.1.1 are listed in an Excel file. Using Google Open Refine this Excel file is converted into an RDF file (Open Refine , 2012). During this process of converting Excel to RDF, the Excel file is imported into Google Open Refine. The base or instance URI and reference URI are created. The reference URI (predicate) is associated with wall attributes (objects) as strings. Finally, the file was exported in an RDF file format. By using these above mentioned programming and querying languages, implementations process to develop a prototype automated rule checker is explained in this chapter.

5.2 Implementation for Property Rule Checking

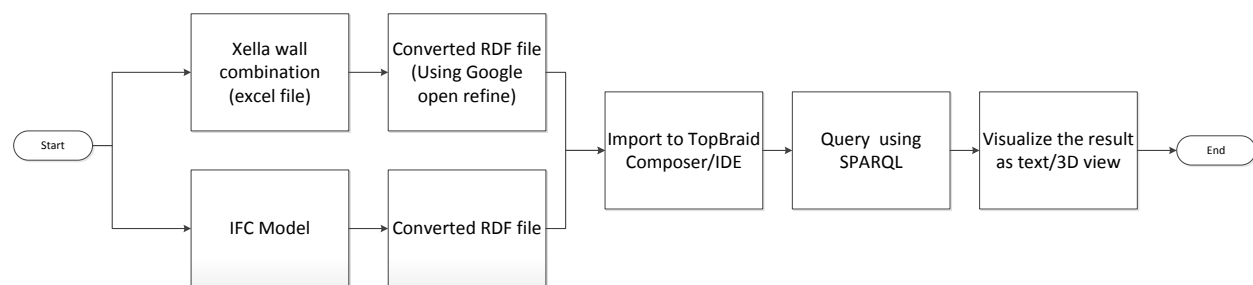


Figure 6 Work flow diagram of Property Rule Check

The wall property combinations suggested by the supplier was documented in spread sheet as shown in table 5 format.

Silka Elmenten	Wall	Elementen	Thickness	Compressive Strength	Allowable
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	100	CS12	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	100	CS20	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	100	CS28	False

Table 5 Example of wall property combinations

Note: The above table 5 is an example from the original excel file, the full combination of the wall property is available in Appendix-A.

This excel file combinations were converted into an RDF file using Google Open Refine. Figure 7 represent the wall combinations in table 5 in turtle format.

```
1. @prefix rdf: <http://www.w3.org/1999/02/22-rdf-syntax-ns#>.
2. @prefix owl: <http://www.w3.org/2002/07/owl#>.
3. @prefix inst: <http://www.hendriks.bouwoss.nl/instance#>.
4. @prefix xsd: <http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema#>.
5. @prefix rdfs: <http://www.w3.org/2000/01/rdf-schema#>.
6. @prefix foaf: <http://xmlns.com/foaf/0.1/>.
7. @prefix hdse: <http://www.hendriks.bouwoss.nl/vocabulary#>.
8.
9. inst:0 hdse:silkaElement "Standaard Dragend" ;
10.      hdse:wall "Kalkzandsteen Element" ;
11.      hdse:elementen "E" ;
12.      hdse:thickness "100" ;
13.      hdse:compressiveStrength "CS12" ;
14.      hdse:allowable "True" .
15.
16. inst:1 hdse:silkaElement "Standaard Dragend" ;
17.      hdse:wall "Kalkzandsteen Element" ;
18.      hdse:elementen "E" ;
19.      hdse:thickness "100" ;
20.      hdse:compressiveStrength "CS20" ;
21.      hdse:allowable "True" .
22.
23. inst:2 hdse:silkaElement "Standaard Dragend" ;
24.      hdse:wall "Kalkzandsteen Element" ;
25.      hdse:elementen "E" ;
26.      hdse:thickness "100" ;
27.      hdse:compressiveStrength "CS28" ;
28.      hdse:allowable "False" .
```

Figure 7 Wall property combinations in RDF triple format

The turtle format is a textual syntax in a compact and natural text form expressing data in Resource Discretion Framework (RDF). In figure 7, a base URI or instance URI is created as "<http://www.hendriks.bouwoss.nl/vocabulary#>" and a reference URI is created as "<http://www.hendriks.bouwoss.nl/instance#>". Prefixes are given to represent these URI's, namely "inst" (base URI) and "hdse" (URIref). Note these URI's are created by myself.

The IFC model in which the company is interested to check the properties of the walls was converted using the IFC to RDF converter. The two RDF files such as: [1] Excel to RDF and [2] IFC to RDF files are imported and linked using TopBraid Composer.

The list of walls was retrieved from the IFC to RDF model and compared against the Excel to RDF file using a SPARQL query. The detail of this SPARQL query is explained in section 5.3.2. Initially, this query was executed using the TopBraid Composer. The output of this SPARQL query is illustrated in-detail with a screen shot in section 5.4

Using the Python programming language the visualization is conducted. Technically, it could be achieved by opening the IFC model using IfcOpenshell in the program. A Visualization in a three dimensional views can be achieved by using python OpenCasCade (OCC). The output of this property rule checking is illustrated in-detail with screen shots in section 5.4

5.3 Programming steps for Property Rule Check

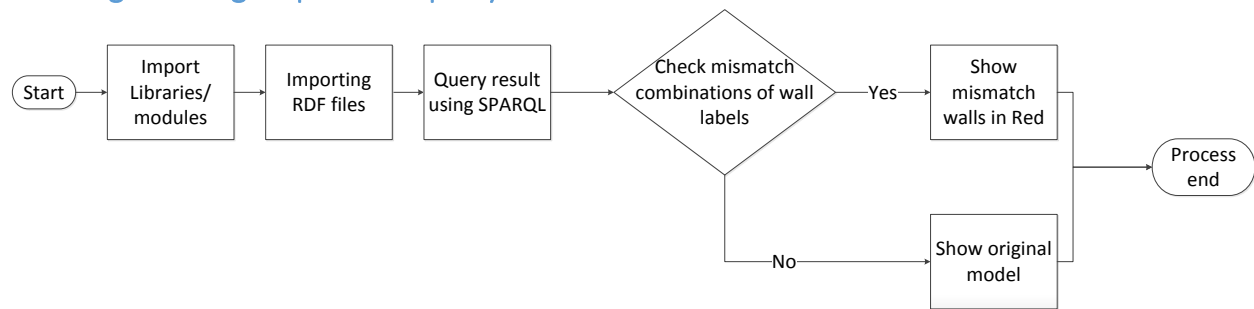


Figure 8 Programming sequence for Property Rule Checking

5.3.1 Import Libraries and Modules

Libraries and Modules	Application
Rdflib	It is a Python library for working with RDF and it helps to represent information as graphs.
IfcOpenShell	Help to open the IFC file
OCC	OCC is known as OpenCasCADE. It provides features such as advanced topological and geometrical operation, data exchange in various file formats.
IfcOpenShell.geom	Opens a new graphical display window and shows the output this program in 3D view

Table 6 Libraries and Modules using in Property Rule Checking

5.3.2 SPARQL Query: Property Rule Check

The list of walls along with its GUID(s) is retrieved from `IfcWallStandardCase` in the `IfcOWL` file. An `IfcWallStandardCase` defines a wall with constraints for the provision of parameters and with constraints for the geometric representation (buildingSMART, 2010). In particular, this property rule checking is specified to check the attribute of the walls. Attributes of the walls are explicitly present in `IfcLabel` entity from the `IfcWallStandardCase`. An `IfcLabel` defines as a label of a wall in a string which represents the human-interpretable name and shall have a natural-language meaning.

```
1    SELECT ?wall ?value ?id
2    WHERE {
3        ?wall a ifcowl:IfcWallStandardCase .
4        ?wall ifcowl:objectType_IfcObject ?type .
5        ?type rdf:type ifcowl:IfcLabel .
6        ?type express:hasString ?value .
7        ?wall ifcowl:globalId_IfcRoot ?globale .
8        ?globale rdf:type ifcowl:IfcGloballyUniqueId.
9        ?globale express:hasString ?id .
10
11    MINUS
12        {?wall ifcowl:objectType_IfcObject ?type .
13         ?type rdf:type ifcowl:IfcLabel .
14         ?type express:hasString ?value .
15
16         ?xella hdse:wall ?w;
17             hdse:allowable "True";
18             hdse:silkaElement ?se;
19             hdse:thickness ?t;
20             hdse:compressiveStrength ?cs;
21             hdse:elementen ?e.
22
23     FILTER (contains(str(?value),?t))
24     FILTER (contains(str(?value), ?w))
25     FILTER (contains(str(?value),?e))
26     FILTER (contains(str(?value), ?cs))
27     }}
```

Figure 9 SPARQL Query for Property rule check

To find the mismatch wall property combinations, “MINUS” operation is used. This operation first checks whether a string exists in both the files and remove the matching sets by comparing

the two files. In this case, an attribute of wall is expressed as string in the ifcOWL file. The ifcOWL is compared against the Xella RDF file by applying “FILTER” condition. Filters are used to restrict the solution. Finally, the mismatch wall attributes are shown as an output. The result of this SPARQL query is illustrated in the section 5.4

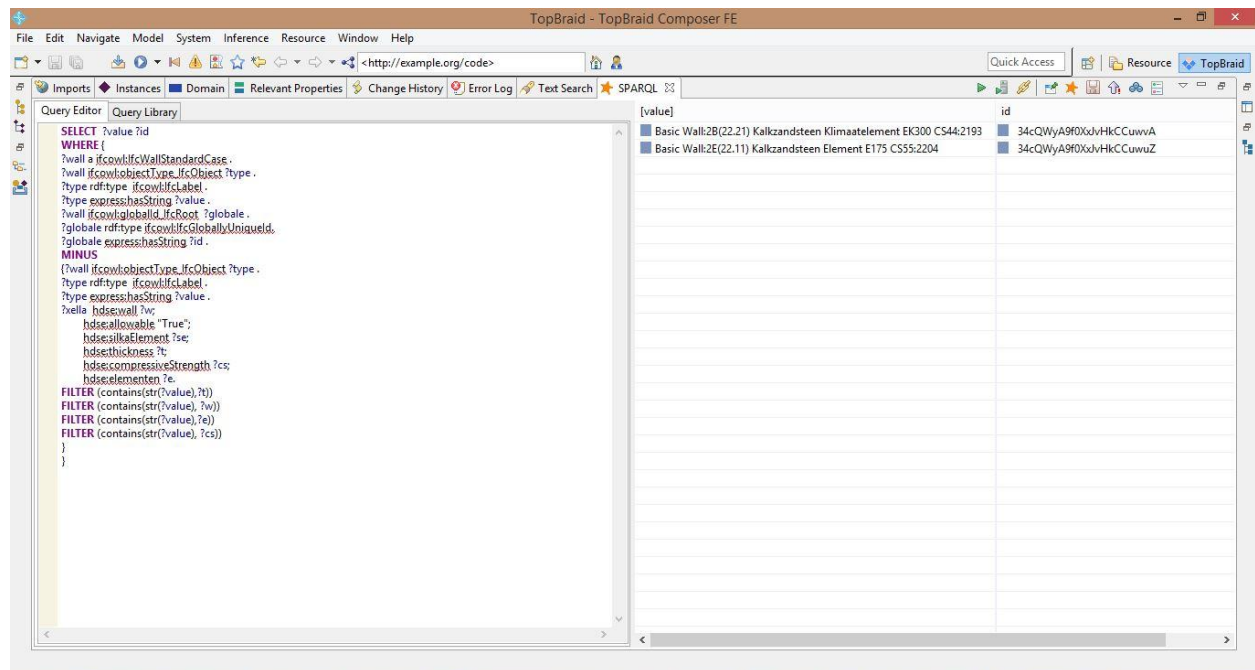
5.3.3 Visualization: Property Rule Check

The SPARQL query shows in figure 9 the mismatching attributes of the walls along with its GUID. A GUID is a unique reference identity of wall, by using IfcOpenshell the violated walls were highlighted in red by assigning the RGB color triplets in Python OpenCasCade (OCC). This visualization is present in a three dimension views in new graphical window.

The code of the above property rule checking can be seen in Appendix-B

5.4 Results of Property Rule Checking

The main objective of this property Rule Checking is to check the mismatch properties or attributes of the walls in an IFC model against the supplier specifications. This property rule is explained in Chapter 4, section 4.1.1 and these combinations were listed in Appendix-A. As mentioned in section 5.2, the SPARQL query was initially executed in TopBraid Composer. The result of this is shown in figure 10



Value	id
Basic Wall:2B(22.21) Kalkzandsteen Klimatelement EK300 CS44:2193	34cQWyA9f0XdvHkCCuwwA
Basic Wall:2E(22.11) Kalkzandsteen Element E175 CS55:2204	34cQWyA9f0XdvHkCCuwwZ

Figure 10 Output of the SPARQL query for property rule check in TopBraid Composer

The above output shows two mismatching wall properties when a SPARQL query is executed in TopBraid composer. These mismatching wall combinations are mentioned under the “Value” column and the GUID is listed in the “Id” column. In that, the first combination: “Kalkzandsteen Klimatelement EK300 C44” is false or inefficient combination as per the suppliers wall specification (Appendix-A). The second combination, “Kalkzandsteen Element E175 CS55” is

violated because there is no “CS55” in the wall specification list. It proves that, the above SPARQL query can find both the inefficient or false combination and also find the combinations which are not present in the supplier’s combination list.

To visualize the violating walls in three dimensional views this process of rule checking is conducted using Python. This process is conducted by the steps described in section 5.3 and Python code for this property rule checking is available in Appendix-B. The violated walls are visualized in three dimensional views as shown in the figure 11

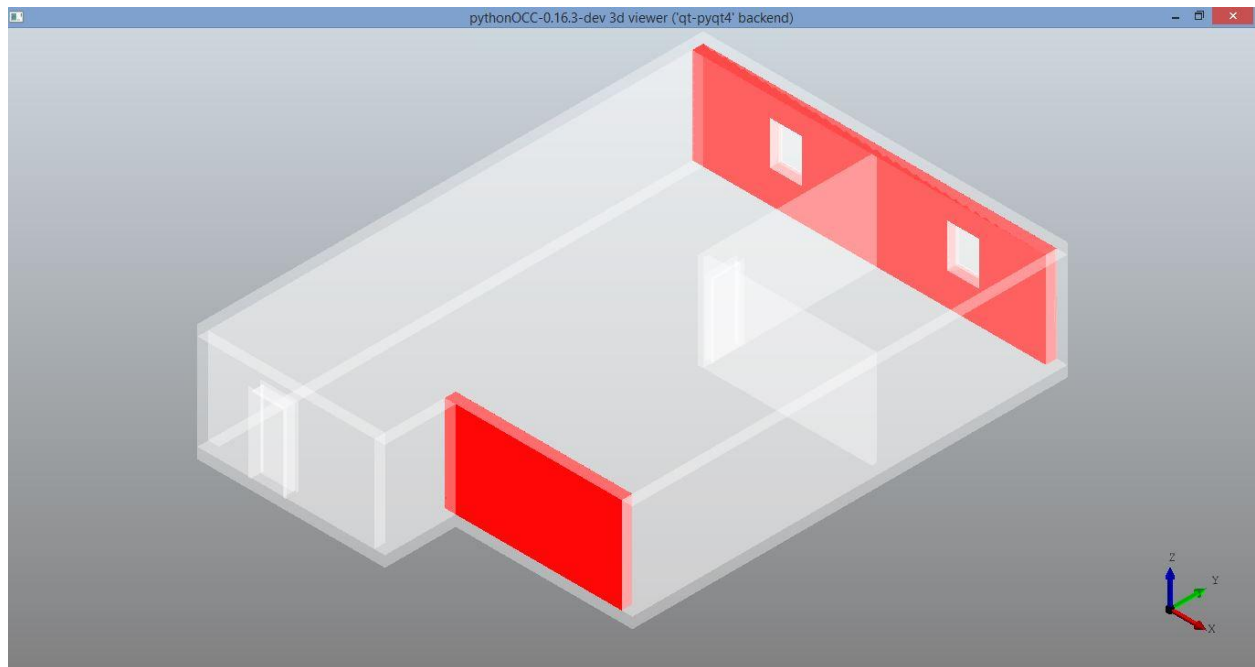


Figure 11 Violated wall Properties in 3D view

The above figure 11 shows the output of the Property Rule checking. In that, we can see that the mismatching wall properties are highlighted in Red. In particular, the front wall has a wall combination of “Kalkzandsteen Element E175 CS55” and the rear wall has a combination of “Kalkzandsteen Kimaatelement EK300 C44”. The python code identifies both violations and shows them in a 3D view.

In some case, the design contains different types of walls like brick walls, concrete walls and special type walls, etc. The specifications provided by suppliers have combinations of limestone walls (ideal input). Walls other than this combination could occur in the actual design, but they would be tracked by the program and shown as a violation in the output. So it may cause unnecessary confusion to the end user, to avoid this confusion the walls which are not Limestone walls will be highlighted in Green as shown in the below figure 12

In figure 12 the outer walls of the house are Limestone (Kalkzandsteen) walls and the inner partition walls are designed using the preset wall library available in Revit such as “Interior - 3 1/8" Partition (1-hr)”walls. Since there is no partition wall combination in the suppliers

specification, SPARQL would consider this as a violated wall .To avoid this, the walls which are not Limestone (Kalkzandsteen) walls are shown in the output as green. Technically it could be achieved, by giving an “If condition” in python during visualization as show in the below figure 13

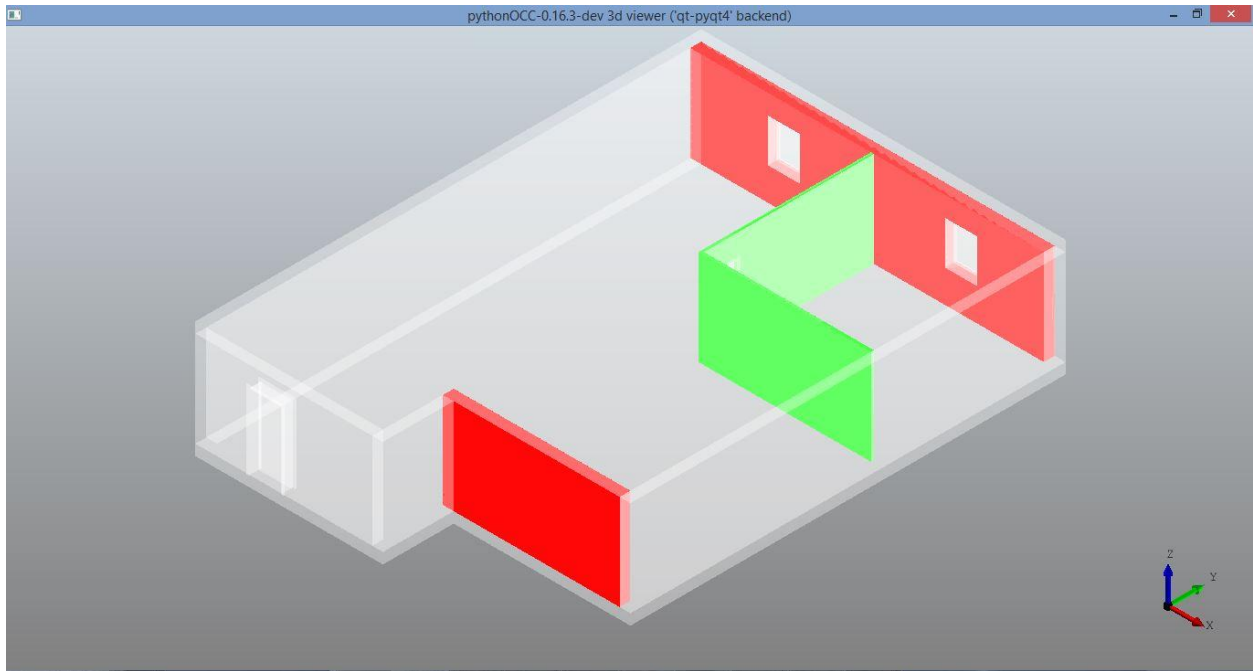


Figure 12 Walls other than limestone walls as in green

```
1 if value.find("Kalkzandsteen")== -1:  
2     clr = (0,1,0)  
3 else:  
4     clr = (1,0,0)
```

Figure 13 Highlighting non-limestone walls in green using "If "condition

The listing in figure 13 says that, if the result or output of the SPARQL query has the string “Kalkzandsteen” show in Red else show the result in Green. This help to avoid confusion and the end user can able to spot the error more accurately. Note “clr” is color and numbers (0,1,0) and (1,0,0) are represent red and green in RGB triplets. The Python script for property rule checking is available in Appendix-B

5.5 Implementation of Geometrical Rule Checking

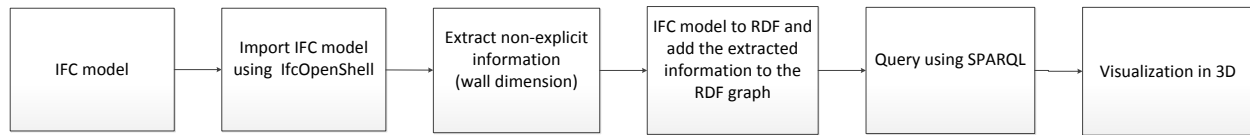


Figure 14 Work flow of Geometrical Rule Checking

Figure 14, illustrates the general work flow diagram to achieve the process of the Geometrical Rule Checking. The rule adopted to conduct this process is explained in chapter 4, section 4.1

This geometrical rule checking process is concerned about the dimensions such as length, thickness and height of the walls. The geometrical representations are not explicitly present in an IFC schema. Python program (IfcOpenShell) is used to calculate (extract) the wall dimensions from the IFC model. The procedure to extract this information is explained in section 5.6 with the work flow diagram.

The extracted wall dimensions are added into an RDF graph to make the values as explicit information. This RDF graph contains a base URI or instance, reference URIs and literals. SPARQL query is use to retrieve the length, GUID and attribute of the walls form the RDF graph. Since the company is interest to check the Limestone walls (Kalkzandsteen wall) which are longer than 12 meters, the SPARQL query is resisted using Filter condition. This SPARQL query is explained in the section 5.6.4

Finally, the violated walls along with the GUID(s) are collected and visualization was done by using IfcOpenShell. By assigning the RGB color triplets in OCC, the violated walls were highlighted in red. This visualization is present in a three dimension views in new graphical window.

Note: The code of the above property rule checking can be seen in Appendix-C

5.6 Programming steps for Geometric Rule checking

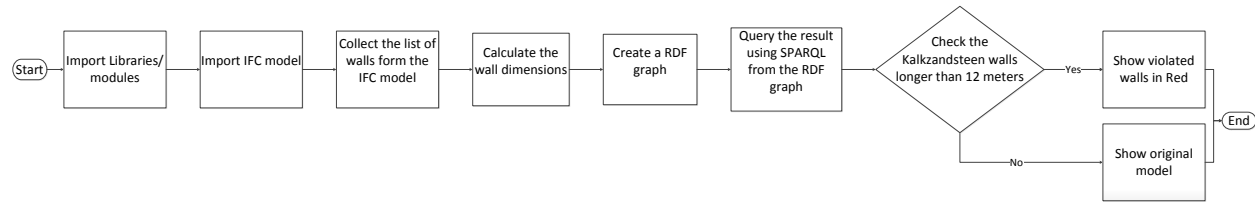


Figure 15 Programming sequence for Geometrical rule checking

5.6.1 Import libraries and IFC model

As did in the property rule checking, libraries and modules must be imported into the IDE. They are explained in the below table 7.

Libraries and modules	Application
Rdflib	It is a Python library for working with RDF and it helps to represent information as graphs.
IfcOpenShell	Help to open the IFC file
OCC	OCC is known as OpenCasCADE. It provides features such as advanced topological and geometrical operation, data exchange in various file formats.
IfcOpenShell.geom	Opens a new graphical display window and show the output in 3D view.

Table 7 Libraries and modules used in Geometrical rule checking process

5.6.2 Calculating wall dimensions

This process of rule checking is concerned about the dimensions of walls, so the list of walls is collected from the IFC model to calculate the wall dimensions. The dimensions of the walls are calculated by using the Swept area and bounding box dimensions.

Swept area or swept surface geometry is defines a rectangle as the profile definition in `IfcRectangleProfileDef`. An `IfcRectangleProfileDef` is defined within the local coordinate system, where “*XDim*” defines the length measure for the length of the rectangle, “*YDim*” defines the length measure for the width of the rectangle (buildingSMART, 2010)¹². So the length of the walls is assigned by using `Swept Area.Xdim` and width of the walls is assigned using `Swept Area.Ydim` and the height of the walls is calculate using bounding box (see Appendix-C).

A bounding box is defined as an expression of the maximum extents of a three-dimensional object or set of objects within its 3-D (x, y, z) coordinate system, in other words `min(x)`, `max(x)`, `min(y)`, `max(y)` and `min(z)`, `max(z)`. In particular, for an `IfcWall` the bounding box is placed

¹² <http://www.buildingsmart-tech.org/ifc/IFC2x3/TC1/html/ifcsharedbldgelements/lexical/ifcwallstandardcase.htm>

relative to the walls local placement and the dimensions have to be positive. The bounding box is calculated using the $\max(x,y,z) - \min(x,y,z)$ and the maximum value between X and Y is assigned as length and minimum of X and Y is interpreted as thickness of the walls, the Z coordinate will always be height of the walls.

5.6.3 Creating a RDF graph

Once the dimensions of the walls are extracted the values are added in an RDF graph. The RDF contains a base URI or instance, reference URIs and literals. The URI's are created by myself as show in the below figure 16.

```
1. wall = URIRef("http://www.exlla.nl/wall_")
2.
3. length = URIRef("http://www.hendriks.bou/length")
4. height = URIRef("http://www.hendriks.bou/height")
5. thick = URIRef("http://www.hendriks.bou/thickness")
6. Gid = URIRef("http://www.hendriks.bou/Guid")
7. name = URIRef("http://www.hendriks.bou/name")
8.
9. length = (Literal(l, datatype=XSD.float))
10. thicknes = (Literal(t, datatype=XSD.float))
11. height = (Literal(h, datatype=XSD.float))
12. GuId = Literal(product.GlobalId)
13. walltype = Literal(product.Name)
14.
15. g.add((wall, Gid, GuId))
16. g.add((wall, leng, length))
17. g.add((wall, thick, thicknes))
18. g.add((wall, heigh, height))
19. g.add((wall, name, walltype))
20.
21. g.serialize(format='turtle')
```

Figure 16 RDF graph with wall dimensions

The literal are the values of wall dimensions such as length, thickness, height along with the GUID and wall label. A RDF graph has subject, predicate and object; here the subject is a base URI of wall instance, predicate is an URI reference to length, thickness, height and GUID, wall label and each predicate has its own literals. Finally, the RDF graph is serialized in turtle format as shown in the above figure 16.

5.6.4 SPARQL query: Geometrical Rule checking

SPARQL query is used to retrieve the wall length from the list of walls with filtering condition to restrict the result to find the walls longer than 12 meters. The RDF graph not only consists of the length, thickness and height but also with the GUID and label of the wall. By using the “FILTER” condition the result is restricted to check the Limestone walls (Kalkzandsteen wall) which are longer than 12 meters. The query is composed as shown in the below figure 17.

```
1. SELECT DISTINCT ?length ?GuidId
2. WHERE {
3.     ?wall ns1:length ?length.
4.     ?wall ns1:GuidId ?GuidId.
5.     ?wall ns1:name ?type.
6.
7. FILTER(?length>12&&(contains(str(?type),"KALKZANDSTEEN")))
8. }
```

Figure 17 Query to find the walls longer than 12 meters

5.6.5 Visualization: Geometrical Rule checking

Visualization is achieved by using the query result, which shows the walls longer than 12 meters along with its GUID. The GUID is a unique reference identity of wall, by using IfcOpenshell the violating walls were traced and highlighted in red by assigning the RGB color triplets in Python OpenCasCade (OCC). This visualization is present in a three dimension view in a new graphical window. The output of this geometrical rules checking is explained using the screen shot in the below section 5.7

Note: The code of the above geometrical rule checking can be seen in Appendix-C

5.7 Result of Geometrical Rule Checking

Initially a simple model was used to test the code; purposely the two outer walls are drafted longer than 12 meters. The code checks every wall and shows the violated walls in Red as shown in figure 18

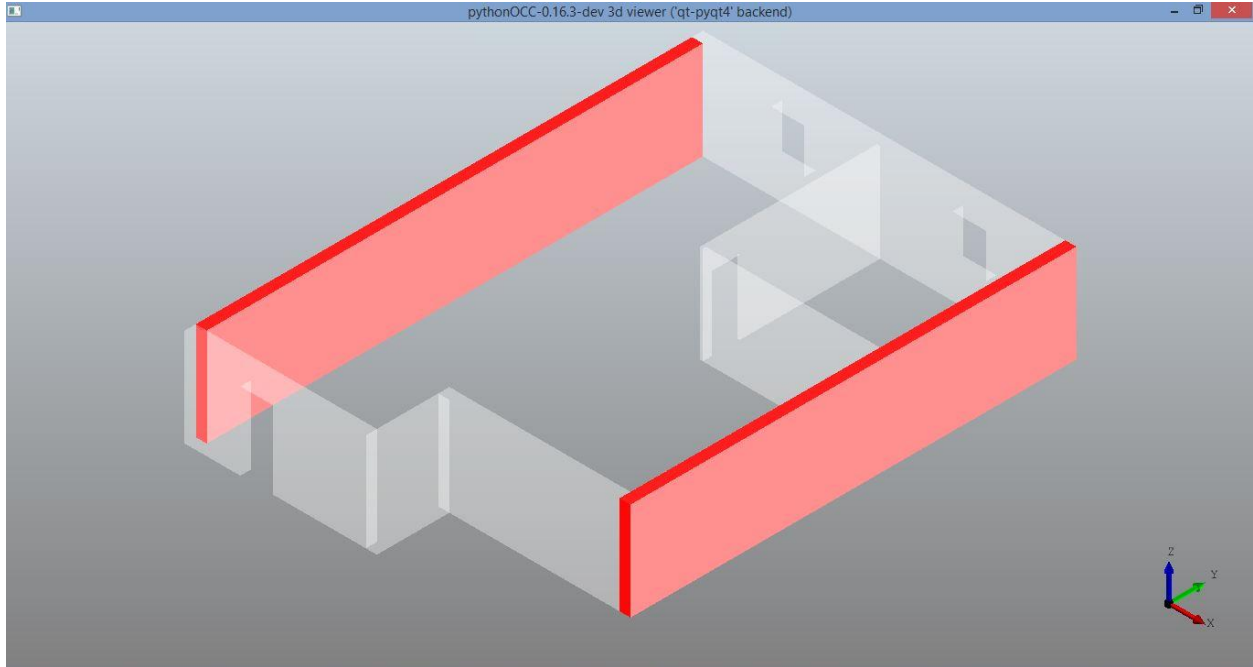


Figure 18 Walls longer than 12 meters highlighted in red

Finally, a complex model is chosen to test this geometrical rule and this model was issued by the Hendriks. Since the company is interested to test only for the Limestone walls (Kalkzandsteen) the result were narrowed down using SPARQL query as mentioned in figure 16.

There is no limestone walls longer than 12 meters, in the IFC model. This shows that all Limestone walls are below 12 meters, the output shows no violations see figure 20.

To double check the result the SPARQL is modified to check the limestone walls smaller than 12 meters as shown figure 19

```
1. SELECT DISTINCT ?length ?GuidId
2. WHERE {
3.     ?wall ns1:length ?length.
4.     ?wall ns1:Guid ?GuidId.
5.     ?wall ns1:name ?type.
6.
7. FILTER(?length<12&&(contains(str(?type),"KALKZANDSTEEN")))
8. }
```

Figure 19 Query modified to check limestone walls smaller than 12

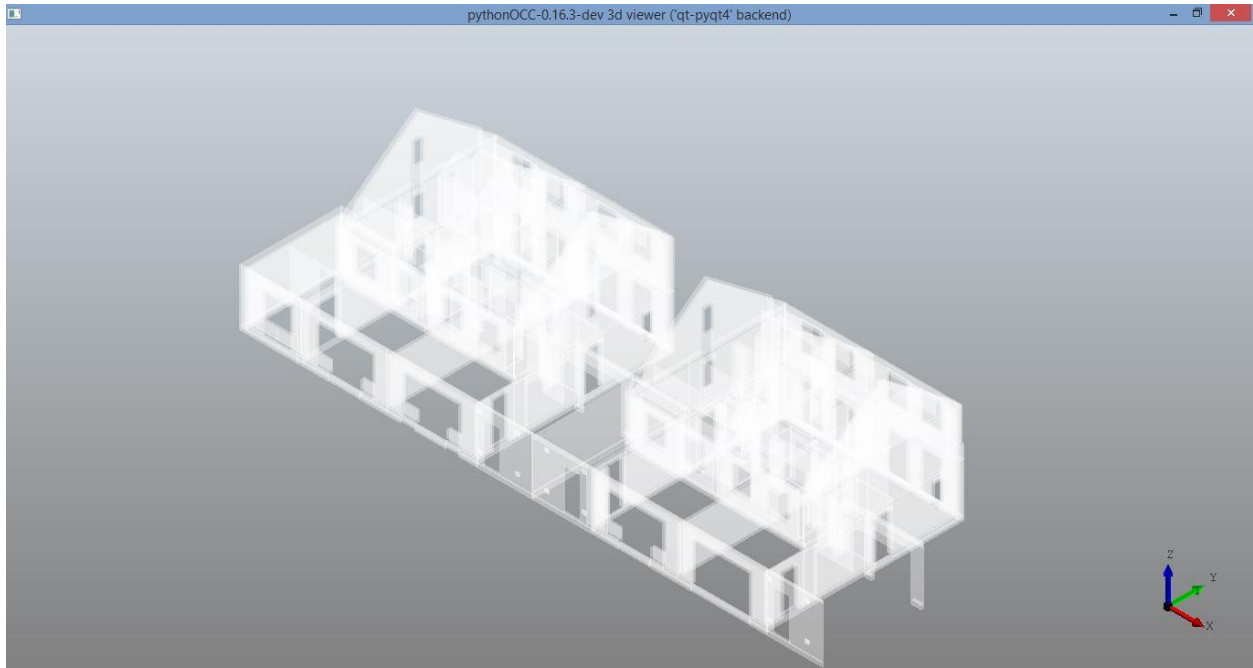


Figure 20 Geometrical rule checking conducted using complex model

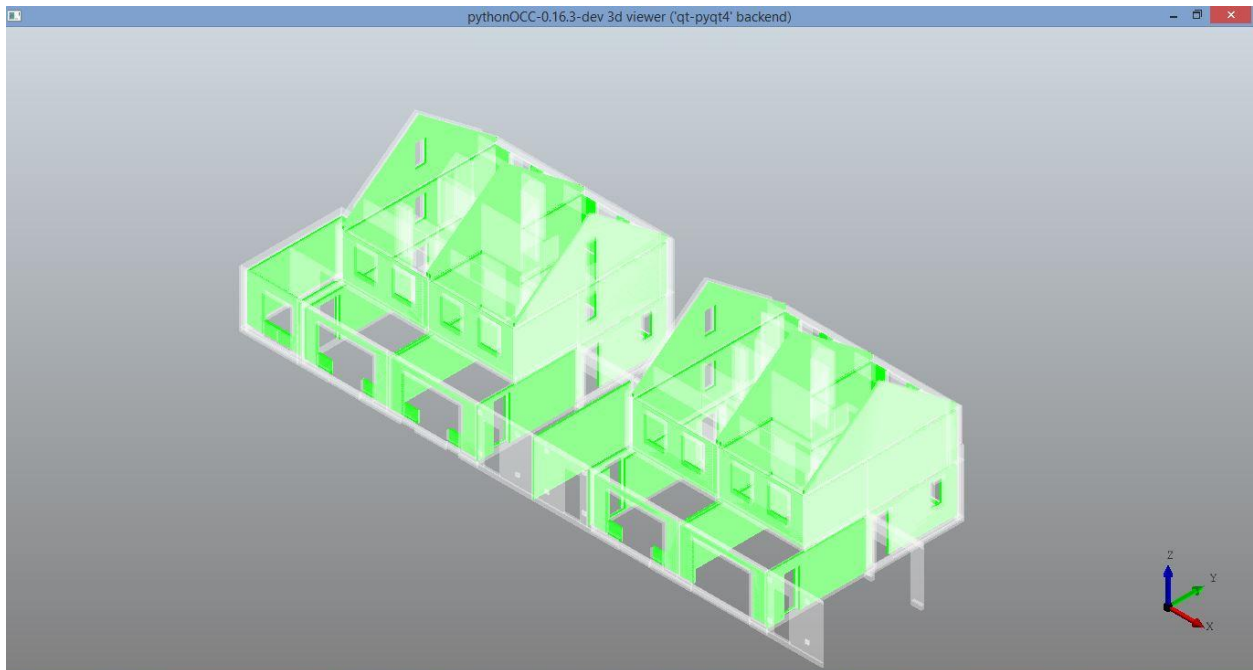


Figure 21 Limestone walls smaller than 12 meters are shown in green

The figure 21 shows the limestone walls which are smaller than 12 meters in green.

5.8.1 Assumptions

In this geometrical rule check process, it was assumed that all walls are straight and rectangular walls. The company is interested to check the length of the limestone walls. These limestone walls are always straight and rectangular because these walls are prefabricated by the suppliers.

5.8.2 Limitations

The use of axis-aligned bounding boxes to determine the dimensions of walls implies limitations, since the rotation of a bounding box is no longer axis aligned. When the walls are curved or aligned crossly the length and width of the walls are not accurate.

5.8.3 Recommendation

- Bounding box and swept area dimension are applicable only when the walls are straight and rectangle. These geometrical repetitions are not fully accurate for all types of walls in an IFC model. There different ways to calculate the dimensions of the walls, the wall thickness can be obtained directly from the `IfcMaterialLayer` entity and the length of the wall can be obtained by navigating into the wall axis shape representation entity in both `IfcWallStandardCase` and `IfcWall`. The height of the walls can be determined by using bounding box because bounding box take the maximum height of the walls. In future if the company wants to check the wall dimensions for different types of walls these IFC schema entities can be taken into account to determine the dimensions of the wall.
- In property rule checking, the automated tool checks only the walls labels. For example, if the thickness of a wall is stated as 300mm in the label but the actual geometry in the design may be 250mm. Based on the wall label we cannot conclude that the specifications is in line with the actual wall geometry . So this property rule can be combined with the geometrical rule to check whether the actual geometry matches its specifications.
- In the 3D visualization, the new graphical window shows only the violated walls in different colors. For example, in geometrical rule checking the output figure 17 shows the walls longer than 12 meters in red. But it doesn't show how much the wall exceeds beyond 12 meters in annotations in the graphical window. In future, `IfcOpenShell` can focuses on adding annotations in the visualization helps end user to have clear about the results.

- In the HBO BIM norms, there are many rules and requirements are stated for IFC objects such as doors, windows, beams, columns, roofs, floors etc. Each IFC objects has its own boundary conditions and property sets. Keep this research as a reference the properties (supplier catalog) can be converted into a RDF file format. As mentioned before, property (attribute) information of an IFC object is explicitly present in an IFC model. Converting the IFC model into an IfcOWL gives an opportunity to compare the design against the supplier specifications using the SPARQL query language. As result, the BIM manager can find that the designer uses the correct or allowable specifications in the actual design.

Geometry of an IFC object is not explicitly present in the IFC model. Using Python programming language along with the IfcOpenShell (software library) the geometrical information can be calculated. The calculated geometrical values can be added into an RDF graph to make the information explicit. The rules can be formalized using SPARQL query.

The results of this rule checking process can be visualized in three dimensional views using python libraries and modules.

This gives an opportunity to convert maximum number of rules in the HBO BIM norm into an automated rule checking process in the near future.

Chapter-6

6 Conclusion

In this chapter the overall conclusion is explained based on this rule checking process. Initially, the answers to the research questions are briefed. Finally, the contribution of this prototype automated rule checker to the society and industry is briefed.

6.1 Answer(s) to research questions

In this section, the sub-questions answers to the specific process of this development project are being summarized. The main research question answers the overall process as summarized at the end of this section.

Sub-Questions:

❖ ***What are the rules chosen for this automated rule checking process and why it is stated in the in-house BIM norms?***

In HBO BIM norms many rules and requirements were proposed for model captured the in the IFC standard. This graduations project is focused on IfcWallStandardCase rules and requirements. The rules are further categorized into [1] Property Rules and [2] Geometrical Rules.

A property of a wall defines the attribute of a wall such type, thickness and compressive strength. Such property rules are used to capture, the lists of wall properties that are suggested by the supplier. Since the supplier fabricates different types of walls, this property rule set acts as a catalog. From this catalog the client (Hendriks) can choose a particular type of wall based on their requirement. The designers must design the exact specification chosen by the client. Based on the design specification the supplier fabricates the walls and delivered to site.

A Geometrical rule defines constraints on the geometry or dimensions of the wall. In this case, the rule states that the wall should not be longer than 12 meters because the prefabricated walls are lifted using a crane in the site. This crane has the range of 12 meters, if the walls are designed and fabricated beyond 12 meters the workers have dismantle the crane. This process is time consuming and inefficient in site.

❖ ***What data do we need to conduct this automated rule checking process?***

To conduct this automated rule checking process, the rules written in natural language and IFC models are collected from the company. Since this automated rule checker is based on Linked Data approach, the data sets are converted into the Resource Description Framework (RDF) format. The IFC model in which the rule checking process was executed is converted into the IfcOWL format using a converter. The wall properties are listed in an Excel file was converted into an RDF file using Google Open Refine.

❖ ***How is this automated rule checker beneficial for the BIM manager for decision making?***

Once this automated rule checker is developed the BIM manager can import models into this rule checker. This rule checker is developed to check the wall properties and dimensions. By executing the SPARQL query, along with Python program the mismatch wall properties and violated wall length are visualized in a three dimensional view. Visualizing the result helps the BIM manager and other stakeholders to take rapid-decisions on those issues. This rule checker is more beneficial when the rule checking process is conducted in the design phase of a building. This rule checking process helps to avoid unnecessary problems during the execution phase of the building life cycle. Overall, this automated rule checker reduces time consumption during the process of rule checking.

Main Question:

❖ ***How to develop an Automated Rule checker for in-house BIM norms to check and validate building models?***

This question is the baseline of this whole thesis. To develop this automated rule checker the project is divided into three major phases. They are: [1] Problem analysis, [2] Methodology and [3] Implementation.

In the *problem analysis phase*, problems in the current rule checking process were analyzed based on the expert interviews from the company.

During the *Methodology phase*, the solution for the problems that exist in the current rule checking process is formulated based on literature studies. The methodology is divided into five different processes. They are: [1] Select the rules from the in-house BIM norms and collect the models, [2] Convert the rules written in natural languages into computer readable format, [3] Convert data such as IFC model and supplier requirement (Excel file) into RDF file format, [4] execute the SPARQL along with python program and [5] visualize the result in three dimensional views.

Finally the *implementation phase* of rule checking is divided into two categories namely: [1] Property rule checking and [2] Geometrical rule checking.

In property rule checking, the supplier's wall properties listed in an Excel file and the IFC model are converted into RDF files. Using SPARQL query the mismatch wall properties are identified. The result of this property rule checking is visualized in a three dimensional view using Python libraries and modules.

In geometrical rule checking process, the geometrical information is not explicit in the IFC schema. In this case, python program is used to calculate (extract) the wall dimensions. The dimensions of the walls are added in an RDF graph to make the

information explicit. Using SPARQL query, the walls longer than 12 meters are identified. The output of this geometrical checking is visualized in a three dimensional view using Python libraries and modules.

6.2 Social Relevance

Due to globalization, clients around the world became more demanding and sophisticated towards the requirements and services offered by the construction industry. This demanding nature makes a huge pressure on the AEC industry to fulfill the clients expected services. The constructions industry is in a position to adopt new smart solutions and services for better coordination and communication among the stakeholders. An effective collaboration requires coordinated communication and communicated coordination. In recent years, many smart solutions and services were developed in the construction industry. One of the emerging technologies is Building Information Modeling (BIM). BIM has many usages, such as clash detection, visualization, construction planning and monitoring cost estimation of the construction project.

This graduation project adds a small contribution to the constructions industry by developing a prototype of an automated rule checker. This tool helps to check the properties and geometrical conditions of a wall in the BIM model. If any violations are found during the rule checking process, it will be highlighted in a 3D view. A visualization of the result helps the effective communications and collaborations among the stakeholders. Based on the visualization report, rapid decision making can be achieved. As a result, it will reduce the analyzing cost and save time. This helps to avoid unnecessary delay in the project. Avoiding delays increase profit for both the client and construction industry.

Investing into a commercial rule checking tools need high investment and high level of programming knowledge is required to customize new rules. This automated rule checker is developed based on a Linked Data approach, the process of querying and checking the building models can be conducted without expensive and heavy technical or programming requirements. The Semantic web technology and Linked Data approach give an opportunity to link or compare cross domain information of the construction industry using a common data format, know as RDF. However, to make profit out this automated rule checker based on Linked data format the programs must also have the integrate capabilities that enable the interaction with these types of information represented using the RDF data model.

This in-house automated rule checker can be shared among the stakeholders (open environment) to check the models on their own. If any violations arise during the process of rule checking, it can be rectified by designer himself. This leads to self repairing and reduce the iteration process of rule checking among the stakeholders. On the business side, having our own in-house rule checker gives a unique identity to the company in the construction market.

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Appendix- A

Silka Elementen	Wall	Elementen	Thickness	Compressive Strength	Allowable
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	100	CS12	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	100	CS20	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	100	CS28	False
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	120	CS12	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	120	CS20	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	120	CS28	False
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	150	CS12	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	150	CS20	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	150	CS28	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	175	CS12	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	175	CS20	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	175	CS28	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	175	CS36	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	175	CS44	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	214	CS12	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	214	CS20	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	214	CS28	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	214	CS36	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	214	CS44	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	250	CS20	False
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	250	CS28	False
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	250	CS36	False
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	300	CS12	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	300	CS20	True

Silka Elementen	Wall	Elementen	Thickness	Compressive Strength	Allowable
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	300	CS28	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	300	CS36	True
Standaard Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	300	CS44	True
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	100	CS12	True
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	100	CS20	False
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	100	CS28	False
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	120	CS12	True
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	120	CS20	False
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	120	CS28	False
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	150	CS12	True
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	150	CS20	False
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	150	CS28	False
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	175	CS12	True
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	175	CS20	False
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	175	CS28	False
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	175	CS36	False
Standaard Niet	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	175	CS44	False

Silka Elementen	Wall	Elementen	Thickness	Compressive Strength	Allowable
Dragend					
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	214	CS12	True
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	214	CS20	False
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	214	CS28	False
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	214	CS36	False
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	214	CS44	False
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	250	CS20	False
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	250	CS28	False
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	250	CS36	False
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	300	CS12	False
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	300	CS20	False
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	300	CS28	False
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	300	CS36	False
Standaard Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	E	300	CS44	False
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	100	CS12	False
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	100	CS20	False
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	100	CS28	False

Silka Elementen	Wall	Elementen	Thickness	Compressive Strength	Allowable
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	120	CS12	False
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	120	CS20	False
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	120	CS28	False
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	150	CS12	False
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	150	CS20	False
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	150	CS28	False
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	175	CS12	False
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	175	CS20	True
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	175	CS28	True
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	175	CS36	True
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	175	CS44	False
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	214	CS12	False
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	214	CS20	False
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	214	CS28	False
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	214	CS36	False
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	214	CS44	False
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	250	CS20	True
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	250	CS28	True
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	250	CS36	True
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	300	CS12	False
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	300	CS20	True
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	300	CS28	True
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	300	CS36	True
Massa+ Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Element	EM	300	CS44	False
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	100	CS12	False

Silka Elementen	Wall	Elementen	Thickness	Compressive Strength	Allowable
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	100	CS20	False
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	100	CS28	False
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	120	CS12	False
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	120	CS20	False
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	120	CS28	False
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	150	CS12	True
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	150	CS20	True
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	150	CS28	False
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	175	CS12	False
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	175	CS20	False
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	175	CS28	False
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	175	CS36	False
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	175	CS44	False
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	214	CS12	True
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	214	CS20	True
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen	EV	214	CS28	False

Silka Elementen	Wall	Elementen	Thickness	Compressive Strength	Allowable
	Vellingelement				
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	214	CS36	False
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	214	CS44	False
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	250	CS20	False
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	250	CS28	False
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	250	CS36	False
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	300	CS12	True
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	300	CS20	True
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	300	CS28	False
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	300	CS36	False
Velling Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	300	CS44	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	100	CS12	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	100	CS20	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	100	CS28	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	120	CS12	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	120	CS20	False

Silka Elementen	Wall	Elementen	Thickness	Compressive Strength	Allowable
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	120	CS28	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	150	CS12	True
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	150	CS20	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	150	CS28	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	175	CS12	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	175	CS20	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	175	CS28	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	175	CS36	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	175	CS44	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	214	CS12	True
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	214	CS20	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	214	CS28	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	214	CS36	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	214	CS44	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	250	CS20	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen	EV	250	CS28	False

Silka Elementen	Wall	Elementen	Thickness	Compressive Strength	Allowable
	Vellingelement				
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	250	CS36	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	300	CS12	True
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	300	CS20	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	300	CS28	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	300	CS36	False
Velling Niet Dragend	Kalkzandsteen Vellingelement	EV	300	CS44	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaattelement	EK	100	CS12	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaattelement	EK	100	CS20	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaattelement	EK	100	CS28	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaattelement	EK	120	CS12	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaattelement	EK	120	CS20	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaattelement	EK	120	CS28	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaattelement	EK	150	CS12	True
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaattelement	EK	150	CS20	True
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaattelement	EK	150	CS28	False

Silka Elementen	Wall	Elementen	Thickness	Compressive Strength	Allowable
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	175	CS12	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	175	CS20	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	175	CS28	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	175	CS36	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	175	CS44	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	214	CS12	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	214	CS20	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	214	CS28	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	214	CS36	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	214	CS44	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	250	CS20	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	250	CS28	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	250	CS36	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	300	CS12	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	300	CS20	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen	EK	300	CS28	False

Silka Elementen	Wall	Elementen	Thickness	Compressive Strength	Allowable
	Klimaatelement				
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	300	CS36	False
Klimaatwand Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	300	CS44	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	100	CS12	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	100	CS20	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	100	CS28	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	120	CS12	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	120	CS20	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	120	CS28	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	150	CS12	True
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	150	CS20	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	150	CS28	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	175	CS12	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	175	CS20	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	175	CS28	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	175	CS36	False

Silka Elementen	Wall	Elementen	Thickness	Compressive Strength	Allowable
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	175	CS44	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	214	CS12	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	214	CS20	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	214	CS28	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	214	CS36	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	214	CS44	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	250	CS20	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	250	CS28	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	250	CS36	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	300	CS12	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	300	CS20	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	300	CS28	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	300	CS36	False
Klimaatwand Niet Dragen	Kalkzandsteen Klimaatelement	EK	300	CS44	False

Appendix-B

```
import rdflib

import OCC.gp
import OCC.Geom

import OCC.Bnd
import OCC.BRepBndLib

import OCC.BRep
import OCC.BRepPrimAPI
import OCC.BRepAlgoAPI
import OCC.BRepBuilderAPI

import OCC.GProp
import OCC.BRepGProp

import OCC.TopoDS
import OCC.TopExp
import OCC.TopAbs

import ifcopenshell
import ifcopenshell.geom

from rdflib import URIRef, BNode, Literal, Graph, XSD
from rdflib import Namespace
from rdflib.namespace import RDF, FOAF

g = rdflib.Graph()

g.parse("silkaele.ttl", format="n3")
g.parse("SilkaElement.ttl", format="n3")

qres = g.query(
    """SELECT ?wall ?value ?id
WHERE {
?wall a ifcowl:IfcWallStandardCase .
?wall ifcowl:objectType_IfcObject ?type .
?type rdf:type ifcowl:IfcLabel .
?type express:hasString ?value .
?wall ifcowl:globalId_IfcRoot ?globale .
?globale rdf:type ifcowl:IfcGloballyUniqueId.
?globale express:hasString ?id .
MINUS
{?wall ifcowl:objectType_IfcObject ?type .
?type rdf:type ifcowl:IfcLabel .
?type express:hasString ?value .
?xella hdse:wall ?w.
?xella hdse:allowable "True".
?xella hdse:silkaElement ?se.
?xella hdse:thickness ?t.
?xella hdse:compressiveStrength ?cs.
?xella hdse:elementen ?e.
FILTER (contains(str(?value),?t))
FILTER (contains(str(?value), ?w))
FILTER (contains(str(?value),?e))
FILTER (contains(str(?value), ?cs))

} }""")
```

```

for i in qres:
    print i

tem = qres
tem1 = list()
tem2 = list()
results = list()

for i in tem:
    tem1.append(str(i))

for i in tem1:
    tem2.extend(i.split(" "))

k = 3
while k < len(tem2):
    print (tem2[k], tem2[k + 2])
    results.append(tem2[k])
    results.append(tem2[k + 2])
    k = k + 7

# Specify to return pythonOCC shapes from ifcopenshell.geom.create_shape()
settings = ifcopenshell.geom.settings()
settings.set(settings.USE_PYTHON_OPENCASCADE, True)

# Initialize a graphical display window
occ_display = ifcopenshell.geom.utils.initialize_display()

Hendriks = ifcopenshell.open(r"SilkaElementen.ifc")
products = Hendriks.by_type("IfcProduct")

guid_to_color = {}

index = 1
while index < len(results):
    guid = results[index]
    value = str(results[index - 1])

    clr = (1,1,1)

    if value.find("Kalkzandsteen") == -1:
        clr = (1,0,0)
    else:
        clr = (1,0,0)

    clr = OCC.Quantity.Quantity_Color(clr[0], clr[1], clr[2],
OCC.Quantity.Quantity_TOC_RGB)
    guid_to_color[guid] = clr

    index = index + 2

for product in products:
    if product.Representation:
        shape = ifcopenshell.geom.create_shape(settings, product).geometry
        clr = guid_to_color.get(product.GlobalId)

```



```
display_shape = ifcopenshell.geom.utils.display_shape(shape, clr)
if not clr:
    ifcopenshell.geom.utils.set_shape_transparency(display_shape, 0.8)

occ_display.FitAll()

ifcopenshell.geom.utils.main_loop()
```


Appendix-C

```
import OCC.gp
import OCC.Geom

import OCC.Bnd
import OCC.BRepBndLib

import OCC.BRep
import OCC.BRepPrimAPI
import OCC.BRepAlgoAPI
import OCC.BRepBuilderAPI

import OCC.GProp
import OCC.BRepGProp

import OCC.V3d
import OCC.Quantity
import OCC.BRepTools
import OCC.Display.SimpleGui

import OCC.TopoDS
import OCC.TopExp
import OCC.TopAbs

import ifcopenshell
import ifcopenshell.geom

from rdflib import URIRef, BNode, Literal, Graph, XSD
from rdflib import Namespace
from rdflib.namespace import RDF, FOAF

import math

# Specify to return pythonOCC shapes from ifcopenshell.geom.create_shape()
settings = ifcopenshell.geom.settings()
settings.set(settings.USE_PYTHON_OPENCASCADE, True)

# Initialize a graphical display window
occ_display = ifcopenshell.geom.utils.initialize_display()

# Open the IFC file using IfcOpenShell
ifc_file = ifcopenshell.open(r"house.ifc")

# Display the geometrical contents of the file using Python OpenCascade
products = ifc_file.by_type("IfcWall")
j=0
g = Graph()
for product in products:
    v=1
    try:

        l= product.Representation.Representations[v-1].Items[0].SweptArea.XDim
        t= product.Representation.Representations[v-1].Items[0].SweptArea.YDim

        shape = ifcopenshell.geom.create_shape(settings, product).geometry
        bbox = OCC.Bnd.Bnd_Box()
        OCC.BRepBndLib.brepbndlib_Add(shape, bbox)
        x1, y1, z1, x2, y2, z2 = bbox.Get()
        h = '{0:.5f}'.format(z2 - z1)
```

```

except AttributeError:

    shape = ifcopenshell.geom.create_shape(settings, product).geometry
    display_shape = ifcopenshell.geom.utils.display_shape(shape)
    bbox = OCC.Bnd.Bnd_Box()
    OCC.BRepBndLib.brepbndlib_Add(shape, bbox)
    x1, y1, z1, x2, y2, z2 = bbox.Get()
    x = x2 - x1
    y = y2 - y1
    h = z2 - z1

    l = '{0:.5f}'.format(max(x, y))
    t = '{0:.5f}'.format(min(x, y))
    h = '{0:.5f}'.format(z2 - z1)

    wall = URIRef("http://www.exlla.nl/wall_" + str(j))

    leng = URIRef("http://www.hendriks.bou/length")
    heigh = URIRef("http://www.hendriks.bou/height")
    thick = URIRef("http://www.hendriks.bou/thickness")
    Gid = URIRef("http://www.hendriks.bou/Guid")
    name = URIRef("http://www.hendriks.bou/name")

    length = (Literal(l, datatype=XSD.float))
    thicknes = (Literal(t, datatype=XSD.float))
    height = (Literal(h, datatype=XSD.float))
    GuId = Literal(product.GlobalId)
    walltype = Literal(product.Name)

    # creating rdf graph

    ifcwall = g.bind('wall', 'http://www.exlla.nl/')

    g.add((wall, Gid, GuId))
    g.add((wall, leng, length))
    g.add((wall, thick, thicknes))
    g.add((wall, heigh, height))
    g.add((wall, name, walltype))
    j = j + 1

g.serialize(format='turtle')

#query the rdf graph using SPARQL
gres = g.query(
    """SELECT DISTINCT ?length ?GuId
    WHERE {
        ?wall ns1:length ?length.
        ?wall ns1:Guid ?GuId.
        ?wall ns1:name ?type.

        FILTER(?length > 12 && (contains(str(?type),"KALKZANDSTEEN")))

    }"""
)
tem =gres
tem1 = list()
tem2 = list()
results = list()

```

```

for i in tem:
    tem1.append(str(i))

for i in tem1:
    tem2.extend(i.split(" "))

k = 1
while k < len(tem2):
    print (tem2[k], tem2[k + 4])
    results.append(tem2[k])
    results.append(tem2[k + 4])
    k = k + 7

guid_to_color = {}

index = 1
while index < len(results):
    guid = results[index]
    value = float(results[index - 1])

    clr = (1,1,1)

    if value:
        clr = (1,0,0)

    clr = OCC.Quantity.Quantity_Color(clr[0], clr[1], clr[2],
OCC.Quantity.Quantity_TOC_RGB)
    guid_to_color[guid] = clr

    index = index + 2

for product in products:
    if product.Representation:
        shape = ifcopenshell.geom.create_shape(settings, product).geometry
        clr = guid_to_color.get(product.GlobalId)
        display_shape = ifcopenshell.geom.utils.display_shape(shape, clr)
        if not clr:
            ifcopenshell.geom.utils.set_shape_transparency(display_shape, 0.8)

occ_display.FitAll()

ifcopenshell.geom.utils.main_loop()

```