

SQL: Triggers, Views, Indexes

CompSci 316
Introduction to Database Systems

Announcements (Thu. Sep. 27)

- ❖ Homework #2 due in one week
- ❖ Midterm in two weeks, in class
 - Open-book, open-notes
 - No use of any communication devices
 - A sample midterm (from last year) will be emailed to you
 - Roughly the same format, but slightly different scope
- ❖ Project milestone #1 due in 3 weeks
 - Right after fall break

“Active” data

- ❖ Constraint enforcement: When an operation violates a constraint, abort the operation or try to “fix” data
 - Example: enforcing referential integrity constraints
 - Generalize to arbitrary constraints?
- ❖ Data monitoring: When something happens to the data, automatically execute some action
 - Example: When price rises above \$20 per share, sell
 - Example: When enrollment is at the limit and more students try to register, email the instructor

Triggers

- ❖ A trigger is an event-condition-action (ECA) rule
 - When event occurs, test condition; if condition is satisfied, execute action
- ❖ Example:
 - Event: whenever there comes a new student...
 - Condition: with GPA higher than 3.0...
 - Action: then make him/her take CPS316!

Trigger example

```
CREATE TRIGGER CPS316AutoRecruit
AFTER INSERT ON Student → Event
REFERENCING NEW ROW AS newStudent
FOR EACH ROW
WHEN (newStudent.GPA > 3.0) → Condition
INSERT INTO Enroll
  VALUES(newStudent.SID, 'CPS316');
  ↓
  Action
```

Trigger options

- ❖ Possible events include:
 - INSERT ON *table*
 - DELETE ON *table*
 - UPDATE [OF *column*] ON *table*
- ❖ Granularity—trigger can be activated:
 - FOR EACH ROW *modified*
 - FOR EACH STATEMENT that performs modification
- ❖ Timing—action can be executed:
 - AFTER or BEFORE the triggering event
 - INSTEAD OF the triggering event on views (more later)

Transition variables

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- ❖ OLD ROW: the modified row before the triggering event
- ❖ NEW ROW: the modified row after the triggering event
- ❖ OLD TABLE: a hypothetical read-only table containing all modified rows before the triggering event
- ❖ NEW TABLE: a hypothetical table containing all modified rows after the triggering event
- ☞ Not all of them make sense all the time, e.g.
 - AFTER INSERT statement-level triggers
 - Can use only NEW TABLE
 - BEFORE DELETE row-level triggers
 - Can use only OLD ROW
 - etc.

Statement-level trigger example

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```
CREATE TRIGGER CPS316AutoRecruit
AFTER INSERT ON Student
REFERENCING NEW TABLE AS newStudents
FOR EACH STATEMENT
INSERT INTO Enroll
(SELECT SID, 'CPS316'
FROM newStudents
WHERE GPA > 3.0);
```

BEFORE trigger example

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- ❖ Never give faculty more than 50% raise in one update
- ```
CREATE TRIGGER NotTooGreedy
BEFORE UPDATE OF salary ON Faculty
REFERENCING OLD ROW AS o, NEW ROW AS n
FOR EACH ROW
WHEN (n.salary > 1.5 * o.salary)
SET n.salary = 1.5 * o.salary;
```
- ☞ BEFORE triggers are often used to “condition” data
  - ☞ Another option is to raise an error in the trigger body to abort the transaction that caused the trigger to fire

## Statement- vs. row-level triggers

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Why are both needed?

- ❖ Certain triggers are only possible at statement level
  - If the average GPA of students inserted by this statement exceeds 3.0, do ...
- ❖ Simple row-level triggers are easier to implement
  - Statement-level triggers require significant amount of state to be maintained in OLD TABLE and NEW TABLE
  - However, a row-level trigger does get fired for each row, so complex row-level triggers may be inefficient for statements that generate lots of modifications

## Another statement-level trigger

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- ❖ Give faculty a raise if GPA's in one update statement are all increasing
- ```
CREATE TRIGGER AutoRaise
AFTER UPDATE OF GPA ON Student
REFERENCING OLD TABLE AS o, NEW TABLE AS n
FOR EACH STATEMENT
WHEN (NOT EXISTS(SELECT * FROM o, n
WHERE o.SID = n.SID
AND o.GPA >= n.GPA))
UPDATE Faculty SET salary = salary + 1000;
```
- ☞ A row-level trigger would be difficult to write in this case

System issues

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- ❖ Recursive firing of triggers
 - Action of one trigger causes another trigger to fire
 - Can get into an infinite loop
 - Some leave it to programmers/database administrators (e.g., PostgreSQL)
 - Some DBMS restrict trigger actions (e.g., Oracle)
 - Many DBMS set a maximum level of recursion (e.g., 16 in DB2)
 - ❖ Interaction with constraints (very tricky to get right!)
 - When do we check if a triggering event violates constraints?
 - After a BEFORE trigger (so the trigger can fix a potential violation)
 - Before an AFTER trigger
 - AFTER triggers also see the effects of, say, cascaded deletes caused by referential integrity constraint violations
- (Based on DB2; other DBMS may implement a different policy)

Views

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- ❖ A view is like a “virtual” table
 - Defined by a query, which describes how to compute the view contents on the fly
 - DBMS stores the view definition query instead of view contents
 - Can be used in queries just like a regular table

Creating and dropping views

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- ❖ Example: CPS316 roster
 - ```
CREATE VIEW CPS316Roster AS
SELECT SID, name, age, GPA
FROM Student
WHERE SID IN (SELECT SID FROM Enroll
 WHERE CID = 'CPS316');
```

Called “base tables”
- ❖ To drop a view
  - ```
DROP VIEW view_name;
```

Using views in queries

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- ❖ Example: find the average GPA of CPS316 students
 - ```
SELECT AVG(GPA) FROM CPS316Roster;
```
  - To process the query, replace the reference to the view by its definition
  - ```
SELECT AVG(GPA)
FROM (SELECT SID, name, age, GPA
      FROM Student
      WHERE SID IN (SELECT SID
                  FROM Enroll
                  WHERE CID = 'CPS316'));
```

Why use views?

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- ❖ To hide data from users
- ❖ To hide complexity from users
- ❖ Logical data independence
 - If applications deal with views, we can change the underlying schema without affecting applications
 - Recall physical data independence: change the physical organization of data without affecting applications
- ❖ To provide a uniform interface for different implementations or sources
- ☞ Real database applications use tons of views

Modifying views

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- ❖ Does not seem to make sense since views are virtual
- ❖ But does make sense if that is how users see the database
- ❖ Goal: modify the base tables such that the modification would appear to have been accomplished on the view

A simple case

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```
CREATE VIEW StudentGPA AS
  SELECT SID, GPA FROM Student;

DELETE FROM StudentGPA WHERE SID = 123;
```

translates to:

```
DELETE FROM Student WHERE SID = 123;
```

An impossible case

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```
CREATE VIEW HighGPASStudent AS
  SELECT SID, GPA FROM Student
  WHERE GPA > 3.7;
INSERT INTO HighGPASStudent
  VALUES(987, 2.5);
```

- ❖ No matter what you do on *Student*, the inserted row will not be in *HighGPASStudent*

A case with too many possibilities

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```
CREATE VIEW AverageGPA(GPA) AS
  SELECT AVG(GPA) FROM Student;
```

- Note that you can rename columns in view definition
- UPDATE AverageGPA SET GPA = 2.5;
- ❖ Set everybody's GPA to 2.5?
- ❖ Adjust everybody's GPA by the same amount?
- ❖ Just lower Lisa's GPA?

SQL92 updateable views

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- ❖ More or less just single-table selection queries
 - No join
 - No aggregation
 - No subqueries
- ❖ Arguably somewhat restrictive
- ❖ Still might get it wrong in some cases
 - See the slide titled "An impossible case"
 - Adding WITH CHECK OPTION to the end of the view definition will make DBMS reject such modifications

INSTEAD OF triggers for views

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- ❖ CREATE TRIGGER AdjustAverageGPA
INSTEAD OF UPDATE ON AverageGPA
REFERENCING OLD ROW AS o, NEW ROW AS n
FOR EACH ROW
UPDATE Student
SET GPA = GPA + (n.GPA-o.GPA);
 - What does this trigger do?

Indexes

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- ❖ An index is an auxiliary persistent data structure
 - Search tree (e.g., B⁺-tree), lookup table (e.g., hash table), etc.
- ☞ More on indexes later in this course!
- ❖ An index on *R.A* can speed up accesses of the form
 - *R.A* = *value*
 - *R.A* > *value* (sometimes; depending on the index type)
- ❖ An index on (*R.A*₁, ..., *R.A*_{*n*}) can speed up
 - *R.A*₁ = *value*₁ ∧ ... ∧ *R.A*_{*n*} = *value*_{*n*}
 - (*R.A*₁, ..., *R.A*_{*n*}) > (*value*₁, ..., *value*_{*n*}) (again depends)
- ☞ Is an index on (*R.A*, *R.B*) equivalent to one on (*R.B*, *R.A*)?
- ☞ How about an index on *R.A* plus another index on *R.B*?

Examples of using indexes

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- ❖ SELECT * FROM Student WHERE name = 'Bart'
 - Without an index on Student.name: must scan the entire table if we store Student as a flat file of unordered rows
 - With index: go "directly" to rows with name = 'Bart'
- ❖ SELECT * FROM Student, Enroll
WHERE Student.SID = Enroll.SID;
 - Without any index: for each Student row, scan the entire Enroll table for matching SID
 - Sorting could help
 - With an index on Enroll.SID: for each Student row, directly look up Enroll rows with matching SID

Creating and dropping indexes in SQL ²⁵

- ❖ `CREATE {UNIQUE} INDEX index_name ON table_name(column_name1, ..., column_namen);`
 - With UNIQUE, the DBMS will also enforce that {*column_name*₁, ..., *column_name*_{*n*}} is a key of *table_name*
- ❖ `DROP INDEX index_name;`

- ❖ Typically, the DBMS will automatically create indexes for PRIMARY KEY and UNIQUE constraint declarations

Choosing indexes to create ²⁶

More indexes = better performance?

- ❖ Indexes take space
- ❖ Indexes need to be maintained when data is updated
- ❖ Indexes have one more level of indirection

- ☞ Optimal index selection depends on both query and update workload and the size of tables
 - Automatic index selection is still an area of active research

Summary of SQL features covered ²⁷

- ❖ Query
- ❖ Modification
- ❖ Constraints
- ❖ Triggers
- ❖ Views
- ❖ Indexes