

Chapter 13 Normalization

Review Questions

- 13.1 *Describe the purpose of normalizing data.*

When we design a database for a relational system, the main objective in developing a logical data model is to create an accurate representation of the data, its relationships and constraints. To achieve this objective, we must identify a suitable set of relations. A technique that we can use to help identify such relations is called normalization. Normalization is a technique for producing a set of relations with desirable properties, given the data requirements of an enterprise. Normalization supports database designers by presenting a series of tests, which can be applied to individual relations so that a relational schema can be normalized to a specific form to prevent the possible occurrence of update anomalies.

See also Sections 13.1 and 13.4.

- 13.2 *Describe the types of update anomalies that may occur on a relation that has redundant data.*

A major aim of relational database design is to group attributes into relations so as to minimize information redundancy and thereby reduce the file storage space required by the base relations. Another serious difficulty using relations that have redundant information is the problem of update anomalies. These can be classified as insertion, deletion, or modification anomalies.

See Section 13.2

- 13.3 *Describe the concept of functional dependency.*

Functional dependency describes the relationship between attributes in a relation. For example, if A and B are attributes of relation R, B is functionally dependent on A (denoted $A \rightarrow B$), if each value of A in R is associated with exactly one value of B in R.

Functional dependency is a property of the meaning or semantics of the attributes in a relation. The semantics indicate how the attributes relate to one another and specify the functional dependencies between attributes. When a functional dependency is present, the dependency is specified as a constraint between the attributes.

See also Section 13.3.

- 13.4 *How is the concept of functional dependency associated with the process of normalization?*

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