Informationsteknologi – Databasesprog – GQL

Information technology – Database languages – GQL

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Foreword

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Introduction

This document defines GQL, a database language for modeling structured data as a graph, and for storing, querying, and modifying that data in a graph database or other graph store. There are two major graph data models in current use: the Resource Description Framework (RDF) model and the Property Graph model. The RDF model has been standardized by W3C in a number of specifications. GQL addresses the Property Graph model.

Property graphs organize data as entities called nodes (or, alternatively, vertices) and edges (or, alternatively, relationships). Each graph element (a node or an edge) can have associated labels and properties. The flexibility and intuitiveness of the data model and its emphasis on interconnections between graph elements make property graphs suitable for storing complex knowledge and for analytical tasks such as entity resolution, fraud detection, cyber security, and forecasting.

GQL is declarative and transactional, taking inspiration from SQL and from leading independently-developed property graph languages. Property graphs select data primarily through path pattern matching. Defining path pattern searches in a graph is often simpler or more flexible than defining the equivalent joins in SQL. The flexible data model, the availability of path pattern matching, and the efficiency of traversing edges compared to joining tables have led to increasing interest in property graph databases.

Various graph data models have been around for many decades, but it is only since the early 21st century that the demand has driven the rise of commercial graph database and graph analytical systems for property graphs.

GQL provides a standard yet flexible common language for this growing market. GQL supports the same graph pattern matching syntax as SQL Property Graph Queries, ISO/IEC 9075-16, Information technology — Database languages SQL— Part 16: Property Graph Queries (SQL/PGQ). While SQL/PGQ provides the property graph data model and graph pattern matching on top of a relational SQL database, GQL is intended for pure property graphs that provide graph data management independent from SQL.

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1 Scope

This document defines data structures and basic operations on property graphs. It provides capabilities for creating, accessing, querying, maintaining, and controlling property graphs and the data they comprise.

This document specifies the syntax and semantics of a data management language for specifying and modifying the structure of property graphs and collections thereof. This document provides a vehicle for portability of data definitions and manipulation among GQL-implementations.

Implementations of this document can exist in environments that also support application programming languages, end-user query facilities, and various tools for database design, data administration, and performance optimization.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 8601-1:2019, *Date and time — Representations for information interchange — Part 1: Basic rules*

ISO 8601-2:2019, *Date and time — Representations for information interchange — Part 2: Extensions*

ISO/IEC 9075-2:2023, *Information technology — Database languages — SQL — Part 2: Foundation (SQL/Foundation)*

ISO/IEC 14651:2020, *Information technology — International string ordering and comparison — Method for comparing character strings and description of the common template tailorable ordering*

IEEE Std 754:2019, *IEEE Standard for Floating-Point Arithmetic*

Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) RFC 3986, *Uniform Resource Identifier (URI): Generic Syntax*. Edited by: Berners-Lee, T., Fielding, R., Masinter, L. January 2005
Available at: `https://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc3986.txt`

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