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Experimental Comparisons of Entity-Relationship and Object Oriented Data Models

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Abstract

The extended entity-relationship (EER) model is being "threatened" by the object-oriented (OO) approach, which penetrates into the areas of system analysis and data modeling. The issue of which of the two data models is better for data modeling is still an open question. We address the question by conducting experimental comparisons between the models. The results of our experiments reveal that: a) schema comprehension: ternary relationships are significantly easier to comprehend in the EER model than in the OO model; b) the EER model supasses the OO model for designing unary and ternary relationships; c) time: it takes less time to design EER schemas; d) preferences: the EER model is preferred by designers. We conclude that even if the objective is to implement an OO database schema, the following procedure is still recommended: 1) create an EER conceptual schema, 2) map it to an OO schema, and c) augment the OO schema with behavioral constructs that are unique to the OO approach.



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