QGIS Application - Bug report #21192
substr function in Select by Expression behaving strange

2019-02-06 10:55 PM - Richard Duivenvoorde

Status:	Closed			
Priority:	Normal			
Assignee:				
Category:	Expressions			
Affected QGIS version:	3.5(master)	**Regression?:**	No	
Operating System:		**Easy fix?:**	No	
Pull Request or Patch supplied:	No	**Resolution:**		
Crashes QGIS or corrupts data:	No	**Copied to github as #:**	29010	

Description

Having a set of points with a 'code' attribute consisting of a 2-char code+5digits I wanted to select all dutch points (starting with NL).

Reading substr(string,start[,length]) I tried:
eg: code = "NL1234"

substring("code", 0, 2) => 'NL'
then I thought to start on position 1 so did
substring("code", 1, 2) => 'NL'
I actually started questioning because I started of with
substring("code", 0, 3) => 'NL' thinking it was from-till

then tried
substring("code", 0, 2) and also came to 'NL'

So there are three ways to find the first 2 chars :-)

Isn't this confusing? Should an expression not either be zero-based or one-based?

We could argue that expressions are not for devs/coders so we deliberately choose for 1-based. But I think then we should put that in the Help text (so peeps like me should not try zero) and using zero then should work.

But personally I would just prefer zero-based...Mmm, testing LibreOffice here, I see that using a zero as start actually returns an error)...

So this is actually a feature?

Associated revisions

Revision 2bed7ab0 - 2019-02-07 11:17 AM - Jürgen Fischer

fix substr help (fixes #21192)

Revision eb8e36c2 - 2019-02-08 12:30 AM - Jürgen Fischer

fix substr help (fixes #21192)

(cherry picked from commit 2bed7ab0018696dba76d2c8053d22633a271486e)

History

#1 - 2019-02-07 01:05 AM - Jürgen Fischer

Not reproducable here:

    substr('NL1234',0,2) => 'NL'
    substr('NL1234',1,2) => 'NL'
    substr('NL1234',0,3) => 'NL1'

#2 - 2019-02-07 01:05 AM - Jürgen Fischer

- Status changed from Open to Feedback

#3 - 2019-02-07 10:08 AM - Richard Duivenvoorde

Mmm, strange. So the last example I cannot reproduce here either.

But my point that it is not clear if it is zero based or one based is still valid:

substr('NL1234',0,2) => 'NL'
substr('NL1234',1,2) => 'NL'

But we could consider this a 'feature'...
Problem would have been bigger if the second parameter would have been the end-stop instead of the length....

Close?

#4 - 2019-02-07 11:17 AM - Jürgen Fischer

Richard Duivenvoorde wrote:

> *Mmm, strange. So the last example I cannot reproduce here either.*
>
> *But my point that it is not clear if it is zero based or one based is still valid:*
>
> *substr('NL1234',0,2) => 'NL'*
> *substr('NL1234',1,2) => 'NL'*
>
> *But we could consider this a 'feature'...*
> *Problem would have been bigger if the second parameter would have been the end-stop instead of the length....*
>
> *Close?*

The help doesn't say where the indexes start - but the examples show the current behavior (ie. index start at 1 - like in postgresql for instance; postgresql however produces an empty string on substring('NL1234',0,1) and 'N' on substring('NL1234',0,2)). Except

    substr('HELLO WORLD',6) → 'WORLD'

#5 - 2019-02-07 11:17 AM - Jürgen Fischer

- % Done changed from 0 to 100

- Status changed from Feedback to Closed

Applied in changeset commit:qgis|2bed7ab0018696dba76d2c8053d22633a271486e.

#5 - 2019-02-07 11:17 AM - Jürgen Fischer

- % Done changed from 0 to 100

- Status changed from Feedback to Closed