Introduction, practical information, and recap of database background

January 27, 2009

Partly based on [RG 1.5-1.8; 4.2] (not curriculum)
Today’s lecture (2 hours)

- Course introduction
- Practical information
- Overview of lectures

Slides for self study: Recap of relevant database background.
Your main goals in the course should be to:

- Understand how relational database systems work and what influences their performance. Main focus is on large data sets.
- Get an understanding of indexing methods, both ones that are presently common, and ones that are likely to play a role in the future.
- Be able to use the above knowledge for tuning, and for critically evaluating upcoming database technologies.
Why this course is important

- Tuning databases is a non-trivial and important activity for many database developers and administrators. ("But what about self-tuning databases?")

- Most common tasks of databases can be done fast when the amount of data is small, while it may be very time consuming for larger data sets. Scalability is challenging, especially if performance guarantees are needed.

- There is a need for people that are able to handle massive data sets! In many areas the amount of data grows faster than the size of internal memory, e.g. biological data, internet pages. Also, it is becoming common to store large amounts of historical data. This means that the data to process cannot be expected to fit into internal memory.
Why this course is interesting

- Quote from “Database Tuning”: “Tuning is difficult because the principles and knowledge underlying that common sense requires a broad and deep understanding of the application, the database software, the operating system, and the physics of the hardware.”

- You will see many smart and elegant algorithmic ideas that go into DBMS software.

- Tuning is like athletics — always a way of doing better.
The focus will be on scalability aspects of database implementation:

- Efficient data structures for indexes
- Efficient implementation of relational operations

We will spend a lot of time on analytical tools that can be used to reliably predict performance. When rules-of-thumb (guidelines that mostly work) are presented, we try to identify their limitations.
A little about hardware

See other slide set...  

Conclusions:

• The time to retrieve data from RAM or disk is likely to be the bottleneck for data intensive applications.

• Sequential memory access is much faster than random access.
Block transfers:
Because of the large access time, every memory access is used to transfer a whole block of adjacent data. (E.g., disk blocks are typically 4-16 kilobytes.)

Question: Why do block transfers help?

A particularly simple model of external memory is the I/O model, which will be used for most of the material in the course:

- The complexity of an algorithm is the number of block reads and writes (I/Os) it makes.
- Complexity depends on block size $B$, and size $M$ of “internal memory”.
Pretend you are a DBMS!

Now suppose that all the relations mentioned in the queries on the hand-out are very large (residing on external memory).

How would you process each one of the queries?
Next: Practical information
Lectures and problem sessions:
Mainly Thursdays 10.00-12.00 and 13.00-15.00.
Mix of lectures and problem sessions/exercises without preparation.

Project:
3-4 project deliverables to be handed in during the course, and one project report at the end of the course.
The project will be initiated on February 10, and most project activities (common sessions, supervision, feedback) will run on Tuesdays. Office hours each Tuesday 13-15 in room 3A18.

Manning of course and course homepage

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Homepage: www.itu.dk/people/pagh/DBT09/

- News (see also course blog).
- Reading directions for each lecture.
- Lecture slides, and other material.
- Material for the project.
- Intranet with material (password protected).
What we expect from you

- Basic course in databases, e.g.,
  - Relational data model / relational databases
  - SQL (and perhaps relational algebra)
- Basic course in algorithms and data structures, e.g.,
  - Search trees
  - Sorting algorithms
  - Hashing
  - Big-O notation
  - Basic algorithm analysis
Next: Course overview

(different slide set)
Recap (self-study)

Goal: Refresh your memory, and agree on common terminology.

• Basic concepts in relational data model, like attribute, schemas, keys etc.
• Relational algebra
• Basic operations, like set operations, joins, selection etc.
• Bags (multisets)
• More operations, e.g., duplicate removal, grouping
• Indexes
• Transactions
What is a relational database?

All major general purpose DBMSs are based on the so-called **relational data model**. This means that all data is stored in a number of tables (with named columns), such as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>accountNo</th>
<th>balance</th>
<th>type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12345</td>
<td>1000.00</td>
<td>savings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67890</td>
<td>2846.92</td>
<td>checking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32178</td>
<td>-3210.00</td>
<td>loan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For historical, mathematical reasons such tables are referred to as **relations**. SQL is a query language for relational databases and is based on **relational algebra**.
Relation instance

A relation instance is a two-dimensional table of data.

The order of rows and columns can be exchanged, and it is still the same relation instance.

An attribute is the name of a column in a relation instance.

Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>title</th>
<th>year</th>
<th>length</th>
<th>film Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mighty Ducks</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne’s World</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>color</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A **tuple** is a row in a table. The values in the row are called components. A relation (instance) can be seen as a set of tuples.

**Example:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>title</th>
<th>year</th>
<th>length</th>
<th>filmType</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mighty Ducks</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne’s World</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>color</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A **schema** is a description of a class of relation instances with the same attributes. It consists of a name for the relation and a set of attributes. (It may also contain data types for attributes.)

**Example:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>title</th>
<th>year</th>
<th>length</th>
<th>filmType</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mighty Ducks</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne’s World</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>color</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Schema: Movies(title, year, length, filmType).

A set of schemas is called a **database schema**.
The word relation can refer both to a particular relation instance and to a schema (an “abstract relation instance”).

Saying “the relation $R$” is similar to saying “the integer $x$”. Depending on the context we may or may not be thinking of a concrete value/instance.
Keys of a relation

A **key** (≠ primary key) for a relation is a set of its attributes that satisfy:

- **Uniqueness.** The values of the attributes uniquely identify a tuple. (This should hold for all possible instances of the relation.)

- **Minimality.** No proper subset of the attributes has the uniqueness property.

If uniqueness is satisfied (but not necessarily minimality) the attributes are said to form a **superkey**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>title</th>
<th>year</th>
<th>length</th>
<th>filmType</th>
<th>studioName</th>
<th>starName</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>color</td>
<td>Fox</td>
<td>Carrie Fisher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>color</td>
<td>Fox</td>
<td>Mark Hamill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>color</td>
<td>Fox</td>
<td>Harrison Ford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mighty Ducks</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>color</td>
<td>Disney</td>
<td>Emilio Estevez</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key:** \{title, year, starName\}  **Superkey:** \{title, year, length, starName\}
Relational algebra is notation for expressing queries on relations.

The rest of the recap is about:

- Basic operations in relational algebra:
  - set operations (e.g. union)
  - selection and projection
  - join
- Bags (multisets). Why they are used and what the consequence is.
- More operations, e.g., duplicate removal, grouping
- Indexes
- Transactions
Set operations

Operations on two sets $R$ and $S$, where $R$ and $S$ must have the same set of attributes. We have the three set operations:

- Union, $R \cup S$,
- Intersection, $R \cap S$, and
- Difference, $R \setminus S$.

Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$R$</th>
<th></th>
<th>$S$</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>title</td>
<td>year</td>
<td>filmType</td>
<td>title</td>
<td>year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>color</td>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mighty Ducks</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>color</td>
<td>Mighty Ducks</td>
<td>1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne’s World</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>color</td>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Projection

A **projection** of relation $R$ on attributes $A_1, \ldots, A_n$ is denoted by

$$\pi_{A_1, \ldots, A_n}(R)$$

and is the relation $R$ restricted to columns for attributes $A_1, \ldots, A_n$.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>title</th>
<th>year</th>
<th>length</th>
<th>filmType</th>
<th>studioName</th>
<th>starName</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>color</td>
<td>Fox</td>
<td>Carrie Fisher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>color</td>
<td>Fox</td>
<td>Mark Hamill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>color</td>
<td>Fox</td>
<td>Harrison Ford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mighty Ducks</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>color</td>
<td>Disney</td>
<td>Emilio Estevez</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$$\pi_{\text{title}, \text{length}, \text{studioName}}(\text{Movies}) = \begin{array}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
\text{title} & \text{length} & \text{studioName} \\
\hline
\text{Star Wars} & 124 & \text{Fox} \\
\text{Mighty Ducks} & 104 & \text{Disney} \\
\hline
\end{array}$$
A selection of tuples satisfying condition $C$ from relation $R$ is denoted by

$$\sigma_C(R)$$

and is the relation $R$ restricted to tuples for which condition $C$ is satisfied. $C$ can be any boolean expression, i.e. it may involve multiple attributes, constants, AND, OR, and NOT.

**Example:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Movies</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>title</td>
<td>year</td>
<td>filmType</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mighty Ducks</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne’s World</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>color</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$$\sigma_{\text{year}>1981}(\text{Movies}) =$$

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>title</td>
<td>year</td>
<td>filmType</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mighty Ducks</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne’s World</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>color</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Natural-Join or Inner-Join:

Let $R$ and $S$ be two relations with attributes $R_1, \ldots, R_n$ and $S_1, \ldots, S_m$ respectively. The join of relations $R$ and $S$, denoted

$$ R \bowtie S $$

has attributes $\{R_1, \ldots, R_n\} \cup \{S_1, \ldots, S_m\}$.

If $r \in R$ and $s \in S$ agree on attributes $\{R_1, \ldots, R_n\} \cap \{S_1, \ldots, S_m\}$ then the joint tuple for $r$ and $s$ is in $R \bowtie S$.

There are other types of join, e.g., Theta-Join and Outer-Join.
### Join example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movies</th>
<th>StarsIn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>title</td>
<td>year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mighty D.</td>
<td>1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne’s W.</td>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne’s W.</td>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Movies $\bowtie$ StarsIn =

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>title</th>
<th>year</th>
<th>length</th>
<th>studioN.</th>
<th>starN.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>Fox</td>
<td>Carrie F.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>Fox</td>
<td>Mark H.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>Fox</td>
<td>Harrison F.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mighty D.</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>Disney</td>
<td>Emilio E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne’s W.</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>Param.</td>
<td>Dana C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne’s W.</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>Param.</td>
<td>Mike M.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Relational algebra is an algebra on sets, but most database systems do not (only) use sets, they (also) use bags.

A **bag** or a multiset, is a set where elements may appear more than once. (E.g., in a relation there may be two or more identical rows.)

The motivation for using bags instead of sets is that some operations can be implemented faster. E.g.,

- union
- projection
Operations on bags vs. sets

Some examples of the difference between operations on bags and sets.

- $R \cup S$: All rows in $R$ and $S$, even if they appear in both or if they appear more than once in $R$ or in $S$.

- $R \cap S$: if tuple $t$ appears $n$ times in $R$ and $m$ times in $S$, then it appears $\min(n, m)$ times in $R \cap S$.

- $\pi_{A_1,\ldots,A_n}(R)$ (projection): All tuples in $R$ also appear in $\pi_{A_1,\ldots,A_n}(R)$, even if the rows become identical when some columns are removed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movies1</th>
<th>Movies2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>title</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>year</strong></td>
<td><strong>filmType</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mighty Ducks</td>
<td>1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne's World</td>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mighty Ducks</td>
<td>1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars</td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other useful relational operations often used in languages like SQL:

- Duplicate elimination: When bags are used it is useful to be able to get rid of duplicates. $\delta(R)$

- Aggregation operators: E.g., sum, average, maximum in a column. $\gamma_{\text{OP}(A)}(R)$, where OP is e.g., max.

- Grouping (not described in RG): Divide a relation up into groups of tuples depending on the values in one or more attributes. Used together with aggregation. $\gamma_{A_1,\ldots,A_n,\text{OP}(A)}(R)$.

- Extended projection: Creation of new columns from existing columns by performing some kind of computation.
SQL is a language that can be used for expressing queries on relations. It is based on a “mixture” of relational algebra for sets and bags.

Some SQL examples:

- SELECT $A_1, \ldots, A_n$ FROM $R$ means $\pi_{A_1, \ldots, A_n}(R)$.
- SELECT * FROM $R$ WHERE $C$ means $\sigma_C(R)$.
- $R \cup S$ means $R \cup S$ (set union, for bag union use UNION ALL).
- $R \setminus S$ means $R \setminus S$.
- $R \bowtie S$ means $R \bowtie S$.
- SELECT DISTINCT * FROM $R$ means $\delta(R)$.
- SELECT $A$, $OP(B)$ FROM $R$ GROUP BY $A$ means $\gamma_{A,0P(B)}(R)$.
SQL also supports the creation and modification of relations.

Some SQL examples:

- CREATE TABLE $R$ (<schema description>)
- INSERT INTO $R$ VALUES ($v_1, \ldots, v_n$).
- DELETE FROM $R$ WHERE $C$.
- UPDATE $R$ SET $A = v$ WHERE $C$. 
Selective queries

Consider the selection query:

```sql
SELECT *
FROM R
WHERE <condition>
```

- If we have to report 80% of the tuples in R, it makes sense to do a full table scan.
- On the other hand, if the query is very selective, and returns just a small percentage of the tuples we might hope to do better, by using an index.
To be able to quickly find the first tuple with a specific value for an attribute, the DBMS may build an **index** on that attribute.

A database index is similar to an index in the back of a book:

1. For every piece of data you might be interested in (e.g., the attribute `year=1977`), the index says where to find it.
2. The index itself is organized such that one can quickly do the lookup.
Some indexes are efficient for both point queries (year=1977) and range queries (1985<year<1999), while others only support efficient point queries.

Indexes are also used by the DBMS to speed up other operations, e.g., join operations are sometimes considerably faster when a join attribute is indexed.

In most DBMSs we can specify what indexes should be created, e.g.:

- `CREATE INDEX I ON R(A)`
One or more updates in a database can be grouped into something called a **transaction**. This is a way to ensure correct updates of the database.

Ideal transactions are said to meet the **ACID** test:

- **Atomicity** – the all-or-nothing execution of transactions.
- **Consistency** – transactions preserve database constraints.
- **Isolation** – the appearance that transactions are executed one by one.
- **Durability** – the effect of a transaction is never lost once it has completed.

A good DBMS should fully implement **A**, **C** and **D**, and will allow the user to specify the extent to which **I** should hold (for efficiency reasons).

However, **I** always applies to any *single* SQL statement in a transaction.
Summary of recap

This part of the lecture was about:

- the relational data model
- relational algebra
- relational algebra on bags
- some examples in SQL
- Properties of DBMSs

These concepts will underlie much of the course.