Chapter 18: Parallel Databases
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Introduction

- Parallel machines are becoming quite common and affordable
  - Prices of microprocessors, memory and disks have dropped sharply
  - Recent desktop computers feature multiple processors and this trend is projected to accelerate
- Databases are growing increasingly large
  - large volumes of transaction data are collected and stored for later analysis.
  - multimedia objects like images are increasingly stored in databases
- Large-scale parallel database systems increasingly used for:
  - storing large volumes of data
  - processing time-consuming decision-support queries
  - providing high throughput for transaction processing
Parallelism in Databases

- Data can be partitioned across multiple disks for parallel I/O.
- Individual relational operations (e.g., sort, join, aggregation) can be executed in parallel
  - data can be partitioned and each processor can work independently on its own partition.
- Queries are expressed in high level language (SQL, translated to relational algebra)
  - makes parallelization easier.
- Different queries can be run in parallel with each other. Concurrency control takes care of conflicts.
- Thus, databases naturally lend themselves to parallelism.
I/O Parallelism

- Reduce the time required to retrieve relations from disk by partitioning
- The relations on multiple disks.
- Horizontal partitioning – tuples of a relation are divided among many disks such that each tuple resides on one disk.
- Partitioning techniques (number of disks = $n$):
  
  **Round-robin:**
  
  Send the $i^{th}$ tuple inserted in the relation to disk $i \mod n$.

  **Hash partitioning:**
  
  - Choose one or more attributes as the partitioning attributes.
  - Choose hash function $h$ with range $0…n - 1$
  - Let $i$ denote result of hash function $h$ applied to the partitioning attribute value of a tuple. Send tuple to disk $i$. 

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Partitioning techniques (cont.):

- **Range partitioning:***
  - Choose an attribute as the partitioning attribute.
  - A partitioning vector \([v_0, v_1, ..., v_{n-2}]\) is chosen.
  - Let \(v\) be the partitioning attribute value of a tuple. Tuples such that \(v_i \leq v_{i+1}\) go to disk \(i + 1\). Tuples with \(v < v_0\) go to disk 0 and tuples with \(v \geq v_{n-2}\) go to disk \(n-1\).

  E.g., with a partitioning vector \([5,11]\), a tuple with partitioning attribute value of 2 will go to disk 0, a tuple with value 8 will go to disk 1, while a tuple with value 20 will go to disk 2.
Comparison of Partitioning Techniques

- Evaluate how well partitioning techniques support the following types of data access:
  1. Scanning the entire relation.
  2. Locating a tuple associatively – **point queries**.
     - E.g., \( r.A = 25 \).
  3. Locating all tuples such that the value of a given attribute lies within a specified range – **range queries**.
     - E.g., \( 10 \leq r.A < 25 \).
Round robin:

- **Advantages**
  - Best suited for sequential scan of entire relation on each query.
  - All disks have almost an equal number of tuples; retrieval work is thus well balanced between disks.

- **Range queries are difficult to process**
  - No clustering -- tuples are scattered across all disks
Hash partitioning:
- Good for sequential access
  - Assuming hash function is good, and partitioning attributes form a key, tuples will be equally distributed between disks
  - Retrieval work is then well balanced between disks.
- Good for point queries on partitioning attribute
  - Can lookup single disk, leaving others available for answering other queries.
  - Index on partitioning attribute can be local to disk, making lookup and update more efficient
- No clustering, so difficult to answer range queries
Range partitioning:
- Provides data clustering by partitioning attribute value.
- Good for sequential access
- Good for point queries on partitioning attribute: only one disk needs to be accessed.
- For range queries on partitioning attribute, one to a few disks may need to be accessed
  - Remaining disks are available for other queries.
  - Good if result tuples are from one to a few blocks.
  - If many blocks are to be fetched, they are still fetched from one to a few disks, and potential parallelism in disk access is wasted
    - Example of execution skew.
Partitioning a Relation across Disks

- If a relation contains only a few tuples which will fit into a single disk block, then assign the relation to a single disk.
- Large relations are preferably partitioned across all the available disks.
- If a relation consists of $m$ disk blocks and there are $n$ disks available in the system, then the relation should be allocated $\min(m,n)$ disks.
Handling of Skew

- The distribution of tuples to disks may be **skewed** — that is, some disks have many tuples, while others may have fewer tuples.

- **Types of skew:**
  - **Attribute-value skew.**
    - Some values appear in the partitioning attributes of many tuples; all the tuples with the same value for the partitioning attribute end up in the same partition.
    - Can occur with range-partitioning and hash-partitioning.
  - **Partition skew.**
    - With range-partitioning, badly chosen partition vector may assign too many tuples to some partitions and too few to others.
    - Less likely with hash-partitioning if a good hash-function is chosen.
Handling Skew in Range-Partitioning

- To create a balanced partitioning vector (assuming partitioning attribute forms a key of the relation):
  - Sort the relation on the partitioning attribute.
  - Construct the partition vector by scanning the relation in sorted order as follows.
    - After every $1/n$th of the relation has been read, the value of the partitioning attribute of the next tuple is added to the partition vector.
  - $n$ denotes the number of partitions to be constructed.
  - Duplicate entries or imbalances can result if duplicates are present in partitioning attributes.

- Alternative technique based on histograms used in practice
Handling Skew using Histograms

- Balanced partitioning vector can be constructed from histogram in a relatively straightforward fashion
  - Assume uniform distribution within each range of the histogram
- Histogram can be constructed by scanning relation, or sampling (blocks containing) tuples of the relation
Handling Skew Using Virtual Processor Partitioning

- Skew in range partitioning can be handled elegantly using virtual processor partitioning:
  - create a large number of partitions (say 10 to 20 times the number of processors)
  - Assign virtual processors to partitions either in round-robin fashion or based on estimated cost of processing each virtual partition

- Basic idea:
  - If any normal partition would have been skewed, it is very likely the skew is spread over a number of virtual partitions
  - Skewed virtual partitions get spread across a number of processors, so work gets distributed evenly!
Interquery Parallelism

- Queries/transactions execute in parallel with one another.
- Increases transaction throughput; used primarily to scale up a transaction processing system to support a larger number of transactions per second.
- Easiest form of parallelism to support, particularly in a shared-memory parallel database, because even sequential database systems support concurrent processing.
- More complicated to implement on shared-disk or shared-nothing architectures
  - Locking and logging must be coordinated by passing messages between processors.
  - Data in a local buffer may have been updated at another processor.
  - **Cache-coherency** has to be maintained — reads and writes of data in buffer must find latest version of data.
Cache Coherency Protocol

- Example of a cache coherency protocol for shared disk systems:
  - Before reading/writing to a page, the page must be locked in shared/exclusive mode.
  - On locking a page, the page must be read from disk
  - Before unlocking a page, the page must be written to disk if it was modified.
- More complex protocols with fewer disk reads/writes exist.
- Cache coherency protocols for shared-nothing systems are similar. Each database page is assigned a home processor. Requests to fetch the page or write it to disk are sent to the home processor.
Intraquery Parallelism

- Execution of a single query in parallel on multiple processors/disks; important for speeding up long-running queries.
- Two complementary forms of intraquery parallelism:
  - **Intraoperation Parallelism** – parallelize the execution of each individual operation in the query.
  - **Interoperation Parallelism** – execute the different operations in a query expression in parallel.

  The first form scales better with increasing parallelism because the number of tuples processed by each operation is typically more than the number of operations in a query.
Our discussion of parallel algorithms assumes:

- *read-only* queries
- shared-nothing architecture
- \( n \) processors, \( P_0, \ldots, P_{n-1} \), and \( n \) disks \( D_0, \ldots, D_{n-1} \), where disk \( D_i \) is associated with processor \( P_i \).

If a processor has multiple disks they can simply simulate a single disk \( D_i \).

Shared-nothing architectures can be efficiently simulated on shared-memory and shared-disk systems.

- Algorithms for shared-nothing systems can thus be run on shared-memory and shared-disk systems.
- However, some optimizations may be possible.
Parallel Sort

Range-Partitioning Sort

- Choose processors $P_0, \ldots, P_m$, where $m \leq n - 1$ to do sorting.
- Create range-partition vector with $m$ entries, on the sorting attributes.
- Redistribute the relation using range partitioning:
  - all tuples that lie in the $i^{th}$ range are sent to processor $P_i$
  - $P_i$ stores the tuples it received temporarily on disk $D_i$.
  - This step requires I/O and communication overhead.
- Each processor $P_i$ sorts its partition of the relation locally.
- Each processors executes same operation (sort) in parallel with other processors, without any interaction with the others (data parallelism).
- Final merge operation is trivial: range-partitioning ensures that, for $1 \leq j \leq m$, the key values in processor $P_i$ are all less than the key values in $P_j$. 
Parallel Sort (Cont.)

Parallel External Sort-Merge

- Assume the relation has already been partitioned among disks $D_0$, $D_1$, ..., $D_{n-1}$ (in whatever manner).
- Each processor $P_i$ locally sorts the data on disk $D_i$.
- The sorted runs on each processor are then merged to get the final sorted output.
- Parallelize the merging of sorted runs as follows:
  - The sorted partitions at each processor $P_i$ are range-partitioned across the processors $P_0$, $P_1$, ..., $P_{m-1}$.
  - Each processor $P_i$ performs a merge on the streams as they are received, to get a single sorted run.
  - The sorted runs on processors $P_0$, ..., $P_{m-1}$ are concatenated to get the final result.
Parallel Join

- The join operation requires pairs of tuples to be tested to see if they satisfy the join condition, and if they do, the pair is added to the join output.
- Parallel join algorithms attempt to split the pairs to be tested over several processors. Each processor then computes part of the join locally.
- In a final step, the results from each processor can be collected together to produce the final result.
Partitioned Join

- For equi-joins and natural joins, it is possible to partition the two input relations across the processors, and compute the join locally at each processor.
- Let \( r \) and \( s \) be the input relations, and we want to compute \( r \bowtie_{A=s.B} s \).
- \( r \) and \( s \) each are partitioned into \( n \) partitions, denoted \( r_0, r_1, \ldots, r_{n-1} \) and \( s_0, s_1, \ldots, s_{n-1} \).
- Can use either range partitioning or hash partitioning.
- \( r \) and \( s \) must be partitioned on their join attributes \( r.A \) and \( s.B \), using the same range-partitioning vector or hash function.
- Partitions \( r_i \) and \( s_i \) are sent to processor \( P_i \).
- Each processor \( P_i \) locally computes \( r_i \bowtie_{A=s_i.B} s_i \). Any of the standard join methods can be used.
Partitioned Join (Cont.)
Fragment-and-Replicate Join

- Partitioning not possible for some join conditions
  - E.g., non-equijoin conditions, such as r.A > s.B.
- For joins where partitioning is not applicable, parallelization can be accomplished by fragment and replicate technique
  - Depicted on next slide
- Special case – asymmetric fragment-and-replicate:
  - One of the relations, say r, is partitioned; any partitioning technique can be used.
  - The other relation, s, is replicated across all the processors.
  - Processor $P_i$ then locally computes the join of $r_i$ with all of s using any join technique.
**Depiction of Fragment-and-Replicate Joins**

(a) Asymmetric fragment and replicate

(b) Fragment and replicate
Fragment-and-Replicate Join (Cont.)

- General case: reduces the sizes of the relations at each processor.
  - $r$ is partitioned into $n$ partitions, $r_0, r_1, \ldots, r_{n-1}$; $s$ is partitioned into $m$ partitions, $s_0, s_1, \ldots, s_{m-1}$.
  - Any partitioning technique may be used.
  - There must be at least $m \times n$ processors.
  - Label the processors as $P_{0,0}, P_{0,1}, \ldots, P_{0,m-1}, P_{1,0}, \ldots, P_{n-1,m-1}$.
  - $P_{i,j}$ computes the join of $r_i$ with $s_j$. In order to do so, $r_i$ is replicated to $P_{i,0}, P_{i,1}, \ldots, P_{i,m-1}$, while $s_j$ is replicated to $P_{0,j}, P_{1,j}, \ldots, P_{n-1,j}$.
  - Any join technique can be used at each processor $P_{i,j}$. 
Both versions of fragment-and-replicate work with any join condition, since every tuple in \( r \) can be tested with every tuple in \( s \).

Usually has a higher cost than partitioning, since one of the relations (for asymmetric fragment-and-replicate) or both relations (for general fragment-and-replicate) have to be replicated.

Sometimes asymmetric fragment-and-replicate is preferable even though partitioning could be used.

- E.g., say \( s \) is small and \( r \) is large, and already partitioned. It may be cheaper to replicate \( s \) across all processors, rather than repartition \( r \) and \( s \) on the join attributes.
Partitioned Parallel Hash-Join

Parallelizing partitioned hash join:

- Assume $s$ is smaller than $r$ and therefore $s$ is chosen as the build relation.
- A hash function $h_1$ takes the join attribute value of each tuple in $s$ and maps this tuple to one of the $n$ processors.
- Each processor $P_i$ reads the tuples of $s$ that are on its disk $D_i$, and sends each tuple to the appropriate processor based on hash function $h_1$. Let $s_i$ denote the tuples of relation $s$ that are sent to processor $P_i$.
- As tuples of relation $s$ are received at the destination processors, they are partitioned further using another hash function, $h_2$, which is used to compute the hash-join locally. (Cont.)
Partitioned Parallel Hash-Join (Cont.)

- Once the tuples of $s$ have been distributed, the larger relation $r$ is redistributed across the $m$ processors using the hash function $h_1$
  - Let $r_i$ denote the tuples of relation $r$ that are sent to processor $P_i$.
- As the $r$ tuples are received at the destination processors, they are repartitioned using the function $h_2$
  - (just as the probe relation is partitioned in the sequential hash-join algorithm).
- Each processor $P_i$ executes the build and probe phases of the hash-join algorithm on the local partitions $r_i$ and $s$ of $r$ and $s$ to produce a partition of the final result of the hash-join.
- Note: Hash-join optimizations can be applied to the parallel case
  - e.g., the hybrid hash-join algorithm can be used to cache some of the incoming tuples in memory and avoid the cost of writing them and reading them back in.
Parallel Nested-Loop Join

- Assume that
  - relation \( s \) is much smaller than relation \( r \) and that \( r \) is stored by partitioning.
  - there is an index on a join attribute of relation \( r \) at each of the partitions of relation \( r \).
- Use asymmetric fragment-and-replicate, with relation \( s \) being replicated, and using the existing partitioning of relation \( r \).
- Each processor \( P_j \) where a partition of relation \( s \) is stored reads the tuples of relation \( s \) stored in \( D_j \), and replicates the tuples to every other processor \( P_i \).
  - At the end of this phase, relation \( s \) is replicated at all sites that store tuples of relation \( r \).
- Each processor \( P_i \) performs an indexed nested-loop join of relation \( s \) with the \( i^{th} \) partition of relation \( r \).
Other Relational Operations

Selection $\sigma_\theta(r)$

- If $\theta$ is of the form $a_i = v$, where $a_i$ is an attribute and $v$ a value.
  - If $r$ is partitioned on $a_i$ the selection is performed at a single processor.

- If $\theta$ is of the form $l \leq a_i \leq u$ (i.e., $\theta$ is a range selection) and the relation has been range-partitioned on $a_i$
  - Selection is performed at each processor whose partition overlaps with the specified range of values.

- In all other cases: the selection is performed in parallel at all the processors.
Other Relational Operations (Cont.)

- **Duplicate elimination**
  - Perform by using either of the parallel sort techniques
    - eliminate duplicates as soon as they are found during sorting.
  - Can also partition the tuples (using either range- or hash-partitioning) and perform duplicate elimination locally at each processor.

- **Projection**
  - Projection without duplicate elimination can be performed as tuples are read in from disk in parallel.
  - If duplicate elimination is required, any of the above duplicate elimination techniques can be used.
Grouping/Aggregation

- Partition the relation on the grouping attributes and then compute the aggregate values locally at each processor.
- Can reduce cost of transferring tuples during partitioning by partly computing aggregate values before partitioning.
- Consider the **sum** aggregation operation:
  - Perform aggregation operation at each processor $P_i$ on those tuples stored on disk $D_i$
    - results in tuples with partial sums at each processor.
  - Result of the local aggregation is partitioned on the grouping attributes, and the aggregation performed again at each processor $P_i$ to get the final result.
- Fewer tuples need to be sent to other processors during partitioning.
Cost of Parallel Evaluation of Operations

- If there is no skew in the partitioning, and there is no overhead due to the parallel evaluation, expected speed-up will be $1/n$

- If skew and overheads are also to be taken into account, the time taken by a parallel operation can be estimated as

  $T_{\text{part}} + T_{\text{asm}} + \max (T_0, T_1, ..., T_{n-1})$

  - $T_{\text{part}}$ is the time for partitioning the relations
  - $T_{\text{asm}}$ is the time for assembling the results
  - $T_i$ is the time taken for the operation at processor $P_i$

    - this needs to be estimated taking into account the skew, and the time wasted in contentions.
Interoperator Parallelism

- **Pipelined parallelism**
  - Consider a join of four relations
    - \( r_1 \bowtie r_2 \bowtie r_3 \bowtie r_4 \)
  - Set up a pipeline that computes the three joins in parallel
    - Let P1 be assigned the computation of \( \text{temp1} = r_1 \bowtie r_2 \)
    - And P2 be assigned the computation of \( \text{temp2} = \text{temp1} \bowtie r_3 \)
    - And P3 be assigned the computation of \( \text{temp2} \bowtie r_4 \)
  - Each of these operations can execute in parallel, sending result tuples it computes to the next operation even as it is computing further results
    - Provided a pipelineable join evaluation algorithm (e.g., indexed nested loops join) is used
Factors Limiting Utility of Pipeline Parallelism

- Pipeline parallelism is useful since it avoids writing intermediate results to disk.
- Useful with a small number of processors, but does not scale up well with more processors. One reason is that pipeline chains do not attain sufficient length.
- Cannot pipeline operators which do not produce output until all inputs have been accessed (e.g., aggregate and sort).
- Little speedup is obtained for the frequent cases of skew in which one operator's execution cost is much higher than the others.
Independent Parallelism

Independent parallelism

- Consider a join of four relations
  \[ r_1 \bowtie r_2 \bowtie r_3 \bowtie r_4 \]
  - Let \( P_1 \) be assigned the computation of \( \text{temp1} = r_1 \bowtie r_2 \)
  - And \( P_2 \) be assigned the computation of \( \text{temp2} = r_3 \bowtie r_4 \)
  - And \( P_3 \) be assigned the computation of \( \text{temp1} \bowtie \text{temp2} \)
  - \( P_1 \) and \( P_2 \) can work independently in parallel
  - \( P_3 \) has to wait for input from \( P_1 \) and \( P_2 \)
    - Can pipeline output of \( P_1 \) and \( P_2 \) to \( P_3 \), combining independent parallelism and pipelined parallelism

- Does not provide a high degree of parallelism
  - useful with a lower degree of parallelism.
  - less useful in a highly parallel system.
Query Optimization

- Query optimization in parallel databases is significantly more complex than query optimization in sequential databases.
- Cost models are more complicated, since we must take into account partitioning costs and issues such as skew and resource contention.
- When scheduling execution tree in parallel system, must decide:
  - How to parallelize each operation and how many processors to use for it.
  - What operations to pipeline, what operations to execute independently in parallel, and what operations to execute sequentially, one after the other.
- Determining the amount of resources to allocate for each operation is a problem.
  - E.g., allocating more processors than optimal can result in high communication overhead.
- Long pipelines should be avoided as the final operation may wait a lot for inputs, while holding precious resources.
Query Optimization (Cont.)

- The number of parallel evaluation plans from which to choose from is much larger than the number of sequential evaluation plans.
  - Therefore heuristics are needed while optimization
- Two alternative heuristics for choosing parallel plans:
  - No pipelining and inter-operation pipelining; just parallelize every operation across all processors.
  - First choose most efficient sequential plan and then choose how best to parallelize the operations in that plan.
- Choosing a good physical organization (partitioning technique) is important to speed up queries.
Design of Parallel Systems

Some issues in the design of parallel systems:

- Parallel loading of data from external sources is needed in order to handle large volumes of incoming data.
- Resilience to failure of some processors or disks.
  - Probability of some disk or processor failing is higher in a parallel system.
  - Operation (perhaps with degraded performance) should be possible in spite of failure.
  - Redundancy achieved by storing extra copy of every data item at another processor.
On-line reorganization of data and schema changes must be supported.

- For example, index construction on terabyte databases can take hours or days even on a parallel system.
  - Need to allow other processing (insertions/deletions/updates) to be performed on relation even as index is being constructed.
- Basic idea: index construction tracks changes and “catches up” on changes at the end.

Also need support for on-line repartitioning and schema changes (executed concurrently with other processing).