



Caching with machine learned advice: the case of Spark

Supervisor

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Location

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Description

Spark [1] is an in-memory distributed processing framework, that is experiencing rapid growth and adoption due to its use in big data analytics. A crucial reason for its success is its ability to persist intermediate data in memory between computation tasks, which eliminates significant amount of disk I/Os and reduces data processing time.

Crucial to Spark performance is then the capability to maintain in cache the "right data," i.e. the information that is likely to be requested again in the near future.

To this purpose, it has been recently proposed to take advantage of the application execution flow to determine which content to cache [2,3,4]. In particular, Spark represents the execution flow as a Directed Acyclic Graph (DAG), that captures data dependencies across multiple stages.

This application presents important challenges from an algorithmic point of view. When the pattern of future requests is known, the optimal caching policy is Bélády's algorithm: if retrieval of a new content requires to free some space in the cache, then discard the information that will not be needed for the longest time in the future. For the rest, past research has mainly focused on the following scenarios: i) when the content request pattern exhibits some statistical regularity, and ii) when the request process is unpredictable. For example, the Independent Reference Model (IRM) is a classic stochastic model, which assumes content popularities are constant over time and contents requests are drawn independently according to a given probability distribution. The second scenario is usually studied through competitive analysis [5]. The request process in Spark does not fit any of the models indicated above: there is a *partial* knowledge of future requests. Indeed, while the DAG establishes some temporal priorities among different tasks, there is high level of parallelism so that it is not possible to predict the exact execution order.

In the framework of this internship we plan to evaluate how Spark caching policies can be augmented with machine learning algorithms that take into account the DAG information. Ideally, we would like to maintain worst-case guarantees of known online algorithms, while achieving optimal decisions as the prediction error of the machine learning algorithms converges to zero. Some preliminary steps in this direction are in [6]. The internship will also take advantage of some ongoing research from the supervisor on caching under partial future knowledge [7] and caching augmented by neural networks [8].



During the internship the student should

- study the relevant papers indicated below
- propose other caching policies exploiting the DAG information
- evaluate their performance analytically or by experiments with Spark

We think this research topic has the potential to bring to a publication by the end of the internship.

Candidate's profile

We are interested in two possible profiles:

- 1) a candidate with strong theoretical background on algorithms and probability;
- 2) a candidate with hands-on experience with distributed systems and in particular Spark. Knowledge of Scala language would definitely be an important plus.

Master students in mathematics, computer science and computer/electrical engineering with the required background are welcome to apply.

About Inria and NEO

Public science and technology institution established in 1967, Inria is the only French public research body fully dedicated to computational sciences. The Inria Sophia Antipolis-Méditerranée research centre (<http://www.inria.fr/en/centre/sophia>) is one of the 8 Inria centers, localized in a pine tree forest inside the technopole of Sophia Antipolis (<http://www.sophia-antipolis.org/>), the first technopole in Europe. It has more than 500 scientists including 200 PhD belonging to 37 different teams. It has strong collaborations with Greece including an agreement with The University of Athens.

NEO team is positioned at the intersection of Operations Research and Network Science. By using the tools of Stochastic Operations Research, we model situations arising in several application domains, involving networking in one way or the other. The aim is to understand the rules and the effects in order to influence and control them so as to engineer the creation and the evolution of complex networks.

Starting date and duration

The 6-month internship can start between October 2018 and February 2019 (the earliest the better).

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- [3] Y. Yu, W. Wang, J. Zhang, and K. B. Letaief, LRC: DAG-Aware Cache Management in Distributed Data Analytics Systems, IEEE Infocom, 2017
- [4] Mingxing Duan, Kenli Li, Zhuo Tang, Guoqing Xiao, and Keqin Li, "Selection and replacement algorithms for memory performance improvement in Spark," Concurrency and Computation: Practice and Experience (Special Issue on WPBA 2014), vol. 28, no. 8, pp. 2473-2486, June 2016.
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- [6] T. Lykouris, and S. Vassilvitskii, "Competitive caching with machine learned advice," arXiv:1802.05399v1, 15 Feb 2018
- [7] K. Dermentzis, G. Neglia, D. Carra, P. Michiardi "Caching under partial future knowledge," ongoing work
- [8] V. Fedchenko, G. Neglia, B. Ribeiro "Online learning of caching policies," ongoing work