ERCIM "Alain Bensoussan" Fellowship Scientific Report

Fellow: Akrivi Vlachou
Visited Location : NTNU
Duration of Visit: March 01, 2009 – February 28, 2010

I - Scientific activity

In the following, I summarize my research results during the fellowship.

Distributed query processing. Similarity search in highly distributed environments has several important applications such as image retrieval. In my research work, I have studied similarity queries (i.e., range queries) [2, 3, 4] in peer-to-peer (P2P) systems. Additionally, novel multidimensional routing indices for P2P systems have been proposed in [6] in order to speed-up query processing. Finally, skyline queries have attracted recently much attention, because they help users make intelligent decisions over complex data, where different and often conflicting criteria are considered. In my work, I have studied skyline queries [1, 7, 8] in different distributed environments, including P2P systems and mobile networks.

Centralized query processing and novel query types. Top-k queries have been mainly studied from the perspective of the user, focusing primarily on efficient query processing. In [5], for the first time, we studied top-k queries from the perspective of the product manufacturer. We identified a novel query type, namely *reverse top-k query*, which is essential for manufacturers to assess the potential market and impact of their products based on the competition. An extended version of this paper is invited for publication in the special issue of *IEEE Transactions on Knowledge and Data Engineering* of the best papers of ICDE'10. Furthermore, I have studied bandwidth-constrained skyline queries [8], which retrieve a subset of the skyline points based on a given constraint. Furthermore, in [10] I have studied skyline join queries. Such queries have been studied only recently in the related literature and in [10] we exploit their properties and propose efficient novel algorithms.

II- Publication(s) during your fellowship

During the tenure of the fellowship, I have published 3 journal papers and 5 conference papers. In addition, 5 papers are currently under review. In the following, the titles and the abstract of the papers are presented.

Refereed Journal publications

1. Akrivi Vlachou, Christos Doulkeridis, Yannis Kotidis, Michalis Vazirgiannis. Efficient Routing of Subspace Skyline Queries over Highly Distributed Data. In *IEEE Transactions on Knowledge and Data Engineering (TKDE).*

Data generation increases at highly dynamic rates, making its storage, processing and update costs at one central location excessive. The P2P paradigm emerges as a powerful model for organizing and searching large data repositories distributed over independent sources. Advanced query operators, such as skyline queries, are necessary in order to help users handle the huge amount of available data. A skyline query retrieves the set of non-dominated data points in a multi-dimensional dataset. Skyline query processing in P2P networks poses inherent challenges and demands non-traditional techniques, due to the distribution of content and the lack of global knowledge. Relying on a super-peer architecture, we propose a threshold-based algorithm, called SKYPEER and its variants, for efficient computation of skyline points in arbitrary subspaces, while reducing both computational time and volume of transmitted data. Furthermore, we address the problem of routing skyline queries over the super-peer network and we propose an efficient routing mechanism, namely SKYPEER+, which further improves the performance by reducing the number of contacted super-peers. Finally, we provide an extensive experimental evaluation showing that our approach performs efficiently and provides a viable solution when a large degree of distribution is required.

2. Christos Doulkeridis, Akrivi Vlachou, Kjetil Nørvåg, Yannis Kotidis, Michalis Vazirgiannis. Efficient Search based on Content Similarity over Self-Organizing P2P Networks. In *Peer-to-Peer Networking and Applications, Springer*, Vol. 3, Issue 1, pages 67-79, March 2010.

The advent of the World Wide Web has made an enormous amount of information available to everyone and the widespread use of digital equipment enables end-users (*peers*) to produce their own digital content. This vast amount of information requires scalable data management systems. Peer-to-peer (P2P) systems have so far been well established in several application areas, with file-sharing being the most prominent. The next challenge that needs to be addressed is (more complex) data sharing, management and query processing, thus facilitating the delivery of a wide spectrum of novel data-centric applications to the end-user, while providing high Quality-of-Service. In this paper, we propose a self-organizing P2P system that is capable to identify peers with similar content and intentionally assign them to the same super-peer. During content retrieval, fewer super-peers need to be contacted and therefore efficient similarity search is supported, in terms of reduced network traffic and contacted peers. Our approach increases the responsiveness and reliability of a P2P system and we demonstrate the advantages of our approach using large-scale simulations.

3. Christos Doulkeridis, Akrivi Vlachou, Yannis Kotidis, Michalis Vazirgiannis. Efficient Range Query Processing in Metric Spaces over Highly Distributed Data. In *Special Issue: Data Management in Peer-to-Peer Systems, Distributed and Parallel Databases*, Vol. 26, Issue 2-3, pages 155-180, December 2009.

Similarity search in P2P systems has attracted a lot of attention recently and several important applications, like distributed image search, can profit from the proposed distributed algorithms. In this paper, we address the challenging problem of efficient processing of range queries in metric spaces, where data is horizontally distributed across a super-peer network. Our approach relies on SIMPEER, a framework that dynamically clusters peer data, in order to build distributed routing information at super-peer level. SIMPEER allows the evaluation of exact range and nearest neighbor queries in a distributed manner that reduces communication cost, network latency, bandwidth consumption and computational overhead at each individual peer. In this paper, we extend SIMPEER by focusing on efficient range query processing and providing recall-based guarantees for the quality of the result retrieved so far. This is especially useful for range queries that lead to result sets of high cardinality and incur a high processing cost, while the complete result set becomes overwhelming for the user. Our framework employs statistics for estimating an upper limit of the number of possible results for a range

query and each super-peer may decide not to propagate further the query and reduce the scope of the search. We provide an extensive experimental evaluation of our framework and show that our approach performs efficiently, even in the case of high degree of distribution.

Refereed Conference publications

4. Akrivi Vlachou, Christos Doulkeridis and Yannis Kotidis. Peer-to-Peer Similarity Search based on M-Tree Indexing. In Proceedings of *15th International Conference on Database Systems for Advanced Applications (DASFAA'10)*, pp.269-275, Tsukuba, Japan, April 1-4, 2010.

Similarity search in metric spaces has several important applications both in centralized and distributed environments. In centralized applications, such as similarity-based image retrieval, usually a server indexes its data with a state-of-the-art centralized metric indexing technique, such as the M-Tree. In this paper, we propose a framework for distributed similarity search, where each participating peer stores its own data autonomously, under the assumption that data is indexed locally by peers using M-Trees. In order to support scalability and efficiency of search, we adopt a super-peer architecture, where super-peers are responsible for query routing. We propose the construction of metric routing indices suitable for distributed similarity search in metric spaces. We study the performance of the proposed framework using both synthetic and real data.

5. Akrivi Vlachou, Christos Doulkeridis, Yannis Kotidis and Kjetil Nørvåg.
Reverse Top-k Queries. In Proceedings of *26th IEEE International Conference on Data Engineering (ICDE'10)*, Long Beach, CA, March 1-6, 2010.

Rank-aware query processing has become essential for many applications that return to the user only the top-k objects based on the individual user's preferences. Top-k queries have been mainly studied from the perspective of the user, focusing primarily on efficient query processing. In this work, for the first time, we study top-k queries from the perspective of the product manufacturer. Given a potential product, which are the user preferences for which this product is in the top-k query result set? We identify a novel query type, namely *reverse top-k query*, that is essential for manufacturers to assess the potential market and impact of their products based on the competition. We formally define reverse top-k queries and introduce two versions of the query, namely monochromatic and bichromatic. We first provide a geometric interpretation of the monochromatic reverse top-k query in the solution space that helps to understand the reverse top-k query conceptually. Then, we study in more details the case of bichromatic reverse top-k query, which is more interesting for practical applications. Such a query, if computed in a straightforward manner, requires evaluating a top-k query for each user preference in the database, which is prohibitively expensive even for moderate datasets. In this paper, we present an efficient threshold-based algorithm that eliminates candidate user preferences, without processing the respective top-k queries. Furthermore, we introduce an indexing structure based on materialized reverse top-k views in order to speed up the computation of reverse top-k queries. Materialized reverse top-k views trade preprocessing cost for query speed up in a controllable manner. Our experimental evaluation demonstrates the efficiency of our techniques, which reduce the required number of top-k computations by 1 to 3 orders of magnitude.

6. Christos Doulkeridis, Akrivi Vlachou, Kjetil Nørvåg, Yannis Kotidis and Michalis Vazirgiannis. Multidimensional Routing Indices for Efficient Distributed Query Processing. In Proceedings of *18th ACM Conference on Information and Knowledge Management (CIKM'09)*, Hong-Kong, November 2-6, 2009.

Traditional routing indices in peer-to-peer (P2P) networks are mainly designed for document retrieval applications and maintain aggregated one-dimensional values representing the number of documents that can be obtained in a certain direction in the network. In this paper, we introduce the concept of *multidimensional routing indices* (MRIs), which are suitable for handling multidimensional data represented by minimum bounding regions (MBRs). Depending on data distribution on peers, the aggregation of the MBRs may lead to MRIs that exhibit extremely poor performance, which renders them ineffective. Thus, focusing on a hybrid unstructured P2P network, we analyze the parameters for building MRIs of high selectivity. We present techniques that boost the query routing performance by detecting similar peers and grouping and reassigning these peers to other parts of the hybrid network in a distributed and scalable way. We demonstrate the advantages of our approach using large-scale simulations.

7. Joao Batista da Rocha Junior, Akrivi Vlachou, Christos Doulkeridis and Kjetil Nørvåg.
AGiDS: A Grid-based Strategy for Distributed Skyline Query Processing.
In Proceedings of *2nd International Conference on Data Management in Grid and P2P Systems (Globe 2009)*, Linz, Austria, August 31 - September 4, 2009.

Skyline queries help users make intelligent decisions over complex data, where different and often conflicting criteria are considered. A challenging problem is to support skyline queries in distributed environments, where data is scattered over independent sources. The query response time of skyline processing over distributed data depends on the amount of transferred data and the query processing cost at each server. In this paper, we propose AGiDS, a framework for efficient skyline processing over distributed data. Our approach reduces significantly the amount of transferred data, by using a grid-based data summary that captures the data distribution on each server. AGiDS consists of two phases to compute the result: in the first phase the querying server gathers the grid-based summary, whereas in the second phase a skyline request is sent only to the servers that may contribute to the skyline result set asking only for the points of non-dominated regions. We provide an experimental evaluation showing that our approach performs efficiently and outperforms existing techniques.

8. Akrivi Vlachou and Kjetil Nørvåg, Bandwidth-constrained Distributed Skyline Computation. In Proceedings of the 8th International ACM Workshop on Data Engineering for Wireless and Mobile Access (MobiDE'09), in conjunction with SIGMOD, Providence, USA June 2009.

Skyline queries have been studied in centralized systems, but also in distributed environments, such as web information systems and peer-to-peer networks. Most of the existing work focuses on efficient processing of skyline queries that return the exact and complete result set. In this paper, we study skyline computation in a distributed environment under the assumption of a given upper bound on the bandwidth consumption. Supporting such a constraint is very important in a mobile environment, where data transmissions may lead to deterioration of query processing performance, while imposing high cost for the mobile device in terms of energy consumption. Therefore, the cost of transferring all data points that may contribute to the skyline result set to the querying server is often prohibitive. Our target is, given an upper bound of bandwidth consumption, to maximize the quality of the retrieved skyline approximation. For this purpose, we propose a framework for bandwidth-constrained skyline query processing, based on the intentional selection of a limited amount of data points from each participating mobile device. We propose a novel method to carefully select the most promising data points based on subspace dominations and analyze its properties. In our extensive experimental

evaluation, we demonstrate that result sets of high quality are achieved, while reducing the communication cost considerably.

Papers under review

9. Akrivi Vlachou, Christos Doulkeridis, Kjetil Nørvåg, Yannis Kotidis. Identifying the Most Influential Objects with Reverse Top-k Queries.

10. Akrivi Vlachou, Christos Doulkeridis, Neoklis Polyzotis. Skyline Query Processing over Joins.

11. Christos Doulkeridis, Akrivi Vlachou, Kjetil Nørvåg, Yannis Kotidis, Neoklis Polyzotis. Efficient Rank Join Processing in Highly Distributed Systems.

12. Joao Batista da Rocha Junior, Akrivi Vlachou, Christos Doulkeridis and Kjetil Nørvåg. SkyPlan: Planning the Execution of Skyline Queries in Distributed Environments.

III -Attended Seminars, Workshops, and Conferences

1. Participation in the 26th IEEE International Conference on Data Engineering (ICDE'10), Long Beach, CA, March 1-6, 2010.
2. Participation in the 18th ACM Conference on Information and Knowledge Management (CIKM'09), Hong-Kong, November 2-6, 2009.
3. Participation in the 8th Hellenic Data Management Symposium (HDMS'09), Athens, Greece, August 31 – September 1, 2009.
4. Participation in the 35th International Conference on Very Large Data Bases (VLDB'09), Lyon, France, August 24-28, 2009.
5. Participation in the ACM International Conference on Management of Data (SIGMOD'09) and ACM Workshop on Data Engineering for Wireless and Mobile Access (MobiDE'09), Providence, Rhode Island, USA, June 29 – July 2, 2009.

IV – Research Exchange Programme (12 month scheme)

Due to the research exchange programme, I had the opportunity to visit two different research groups:

- the Data-Intensive Applications and Systems (DIAS) laboratory at Ecole Polytechnique Federale Lausanne (EPFL), which is headed by Professor Anastasia Ailamaki. This visit took place in the period of 13–20 May, 2009.
- the Center for Data-Intensive Systems (DAISY) at Aalborg University, which is headed by Professor Christian S.Jensen. This visit took place in the period of 16-25 November, 2009.

The research exchange programme gave me the opportunity to present my ongoing research and get valuable feedback about my work. Furthermore, the visited research groups shortly described to me the current research interests of the group. Moreover, during my visit interesting discussions took place, which may lead to collaborations in terms of common research in the future. In more details, at EPFL I presented my ongoing research about skyline query processing in distributed environments, while at DAISY I presented my research results about ranking of skyline points and reverse top-k queries. Notice that some of the members of DAISY are interested in skyline computation and we currently discuss related research topics, which hopefully will lead to a publication.