

LabReport on Extendible Hashing

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Abstract

This is the LabReport about EHDB, a simple database system featured with the extendible hashing algorithm and the clock page replacement algorithm. In this report we provide some details about the ideas and implementation. Moreover, we will also discuss on the problems that trapped us and how we overcame them, and about the optimization of the EHDB. Thanks for Mr. Feng's and TAs's instructions.

1 Environment

1. Operating system: Linux(Debian & Arch & Ubuntu, with 3.0+ kernels)
2. Language: C
3. Compiler: GCC
4. Documentation: \LaTeX , asciidoc, Markdown
5. Collaboration Platform/Project Hosting: GitHub
6. Debug utils: GDB, python, perf, gprof, xdot, gprof2dot, VIM(to do regex matching often)
7. Editor: VIM

Here's the repo on GitHub, where you can see several branches, and some history about the project.

<https://github.com/ddmbr/Extendible-Hashing/>

2 Overview

What this program mainly do can be roughly divided into two aspects, namely *build* and *query*.

2.1 Build the database

We have to parse the raw data before actually building the database. We then design our own data structure to store the data, which save a lot of space(will be discussed in the following sections).

When building the database, first of all the program extract records from the raw data, and translate them to the data structure we previously mentioned, formally called `recotd_t`.

Next, the key is extract from the `record_t`, which decide its hash value and therefore the bucket it should be contained. The `record_t` then go to the bucket it belongs to. Index and bucket are corresponding to the files *index* and *bucket*, and each 8K of the files represent a page of them.

When a bucket is full, it split and when necessary, the index is also doubled.

It is worth mentioning that, when the records in a bucket is impossible to distinguished only by their hash values, it make no sense to split the bucket. In this situation, a new bucket should be created to hold comming data, with a link pointing to the previous bucket.

Here's a draft¹ about the process.

```
While the end of the raw file(i.e, lineitem.tbl) is not reached,
  Load a page from the raw file to the memory.
  Loop through the page, to:
    Read the next record in the page.
    Get its key.
    Get the hash value `hv' of the key.
    Fetch the corresponding index page,
    According to the index, fetch the corresponding
    bucket page.
    Before inserting the record, check that
    whether the bucket will be overflowed.
    If yes,
```

¹You can also see that on our GitHub Repo.

```
        If global depth == local depth,
            Double the index
        Then split the bucket and redistribute.
    Write the record into the page.
```

2.2 Query

This process is much simply compared with the building process, with the following steps:

```
While not reach the end of the query,
    Read next specific key.
    Get the hash value `hv' of the key.
    Fetch the corresponding bucket
    Loop through the bucket and print the matched records.
```

3 Architecture

3.1 Main modules

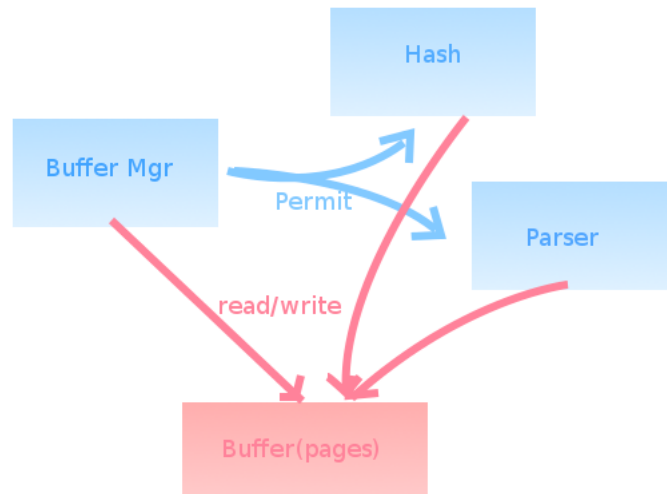
The program(we call it EHDB) consists of mainly 4 important modules, the File Manager, Buffer Manager, Parser and Hash.

- File Manager is responsible for the manipulation directly on the filesystem, for example request for a new page on disk.
- Buffer Manager deals with operations concerned with the main memory, like page swapping. It contains the core of the Clock Page Replacement Algorithm.
- Parser, as its name suggests, will parse raw data.
- Hash module contains the core of the Extendible Hashing algorithm.

3.2 Organize the modules

We experience some errors while trying to get the above modules well organized. Here we'd like to share our findings.

On the relationship among the Buffer manager, the Hash, and the Parser, we first designed it like this:

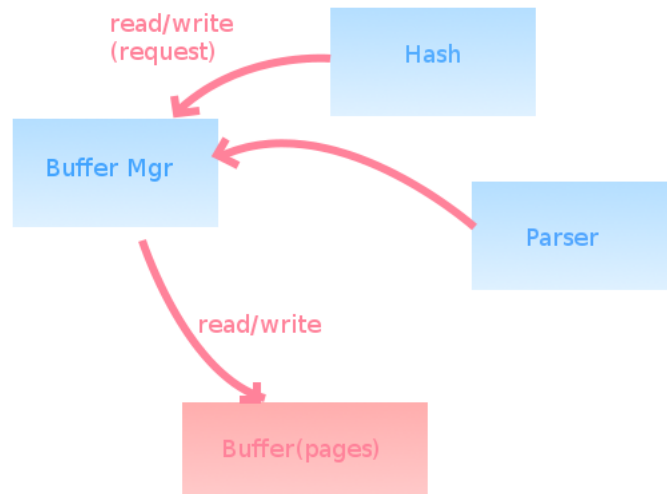


Notice that in this diagram we omit the File Mgr and some smaller module, as they are not concerned with the problem that we will then talk about.

According to this idea, the Buffer Manager is responsible for giving permission to the Parser and the Hash module. After acquiring its permission, the two modules then manipulate the data in the buffer directly. However, it's hard to guarantee that while the 3 modules can deal with the data directly (by acquiring its memory address), they can also do it in an orderly manner. Therefore, data inconsistency *will* occur, which turns out to be a disaster.

This problem, however, can be fixed by assigning the *hold* flag to each page of data, preventing it from being modified by 2 or more modules. But all the modules and their methods should then be able to set and reset the flag correctly, hence adding to the complexity of programming.

We finally came up with a more convenient solution.



A layer was constructed upon the Buffer Manager, forcing all requests to go through it. Although this slows down the program a bit, it effectively prevents potential access violations. This strategy works well and turns out to be a reliable one.

3.3 Algorithms

1. Clock Page Replacement Algorithm

Clock Page Replacement Algorithm is a more efficient version of FIFO. The clock algorithm keeps a circular list of pages in memory, with the "hand" (iterator) pointing to the last examined page frame in the list. When a page fault occurs and no empty frames exist, then the R (referenced) bit is inspected at the hand's location. If R is 0, the new page is put in place of the page the "hand" points to, otherwise the R bit is cleared. Then, the clock hand is incremented and the process is repeated until a page is replaced.

In another word, the replacement(or swaping) works just as follows

- (a) If the R bit of the page pointed by the head equals to 0, swap that page.
- (b) Otherwise, set the R bit to 0, and the hand then point to the next page in the clock.
- (c) Repeat until the a page with R=0 is found.

R is set 1 for the new page swapped in.

2. Extendible Hashing

Extendible Hashing is a type of hashing system which treats a hash as a bit string. Because of the hierarchical nature of the system, re-hashing is an incremental operation (done one bucket at a time, as needed). This means that time-sensitive applications are less affected by table growth than by standard full-table rehashes.

There're 2 version of this algorithm, the LSB version and the MSB one. There exits some differences and will do analysis on this in the later section.

3.4 Data structures

3.4.1 Record

Here's the record_t structure in our codes.

```
struct record_t{
    identifier_t orderkey,
                partkey,
                suppkey;
    int linenummer;
    decimal_t quantity,
            extendedprice,
            discount,
            tax;
    flag_t returnflag,
            linestatus;
    date_t shipdate,
            commitdate,
            receiptdate;

    char shipinstruct[25+1];
    char shipmode[10+1];
    char comment[44+1];
};
```

in ehdb_record.h, we provide some methods about the records. The two most important functions may be these two

```

/* read and convert a record from `page` start with `offset`
 * return: the new offset when conversion finished
 *
 * Example usage:
 *
 * int offset = 0
 * page_t * page = ...;
 * record_t record;
 * while(offset != -1){
 *     offset = ehdb_page_record2record(page, offset, &record);
 *     // do something or print out the record
 *     //...
 * }
 */
int
ehdb_page_record2record(page_t * page, int offset, record_t * record);

/* convert record_t and write it back
 * to a page on disk
 */
void
ehdb_record2page_record(record_t * record, int bucket_id);

```

3.4.2 Page

Here's the `page_t` structure in our codes.

```

struct page_t{
    page_type_t page_type;
    int page_id;
    void * head;
    short modified;
};

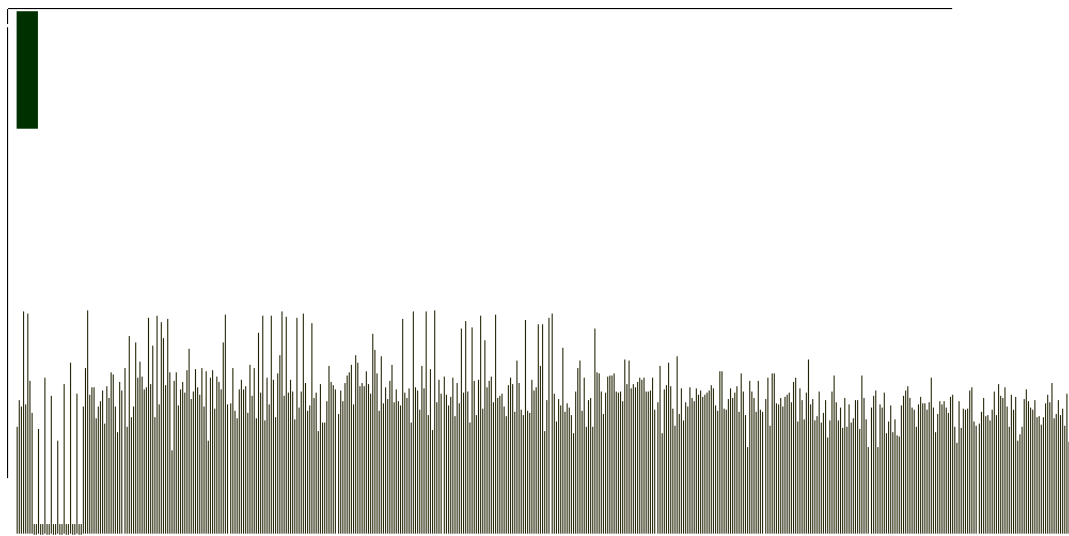
```

We use a flag called *modified*, to record that whether the page has been modified since fetched from the disk. Then Buffer Mgr will then be able determine whether a “save” operation is necessary, which is an improvement on I/O efficiency.

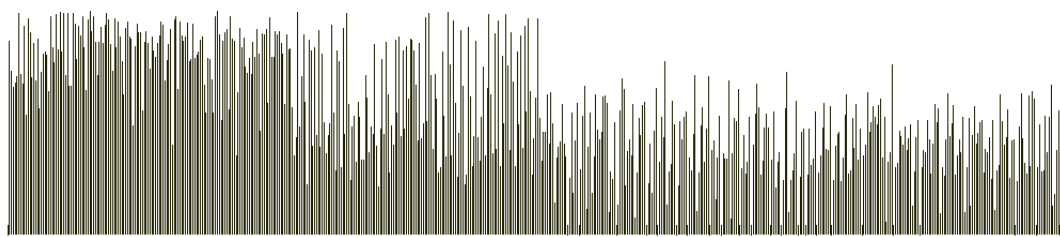
4 Analysis and Optimization

4.1 Compare the LSB and MSB strategy

To help us comprehend the idea of extendible hashing better, and ease the debugging, we rewrite the program in Python, which is both shorter and more comprehensive. Then we generated an animation and got a feel about how the bucket split and how the index double.



The graph above describes the pages of index(4 pages) and buckets(Many!), with the LSB hashing strategy and 20000 raw records. With some observation we confirmed that the usage rate of a bucket is about 70



Then the MSB strategy. We see that the MSB strategy consume more storage and with lower usage rate of bucket. However it's much faster. Here's a list about the different version and the corresponding IO frequency.

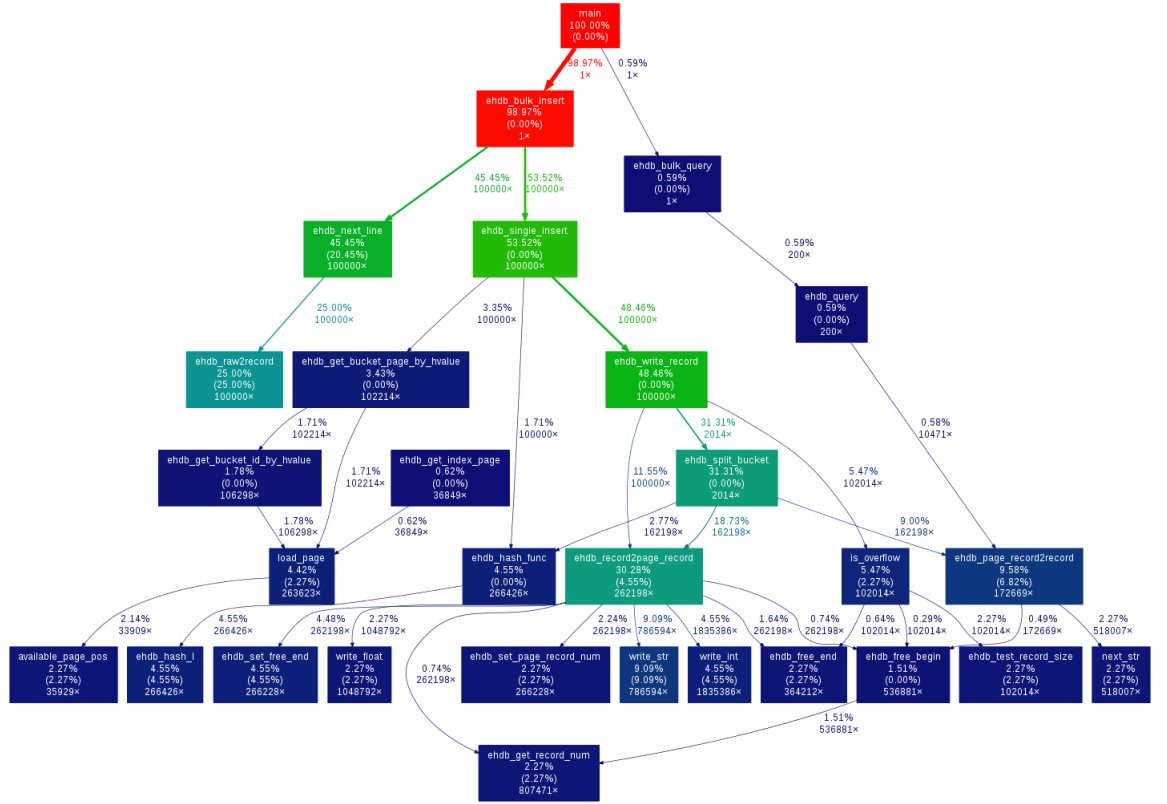
- 8 pages buffer, LSB, 107857 IOs
- 8 pages buffer, MSB, 67844 IOs
- 128 pages buffer, MSB, 12227 IOs
- 128 pages buffer, LSB, 99591 IOs

Larger buffer definitely helps improve IO performance. However there's a flaw about it, which we will discuss later.

4.2 The record structure

To help optimize the program, we generate a profile diagram² about it.

²More diagrams can be found in doc/img/



It says that the translate(raw data<->record<->page record or say disk files) of records cost a lot of CPU time.³ However it is not surprising because we use sscanf to convert. To do some comparisons, we then rewrite a new version of EHDB, which doesn't do the translation. Records are stored simply as a char string in this version.

It turned out that, the new version is slower, by about 2min. Based on these facts, we can conclude that the trade-off between IO time and CPU time we previously took is worthwhile.

4.3 Cache

As buffer grows bigger, it takes more time for Buffer Mgr to search for a specific page in the buffer. Then we came up with an idea. We design a cache with 2 pages space, to store the 2 most frequent used pages recently.

³In the previous discussion we stated that a special data structure is designed to hold a single record, it can save disk space

We compare the 128 pages buffer with cache and the one without cache, and discover that the cache is indeed a great help. It decreases the total time cost by about 10

4.4 More optimization

We have more thoughts on this project, however time is limited. Here are two other ideas that we are interested in.

- How about adjusting the page size? Once in MSDN, I see that the Microsoft staff have tested various page sizes, from 4K, 8K, to even 64K (should be 4*n K as most filesystems transfer 4K data at a time). And they discovered that 8K is the best choice. We are interested in doing it by ourselves and exploring the reason.
- We think the clock algorithm is not so effective. A buffer manager based on Red-Black tree⁴ or Splay tree might have more advantage.

5 Summary

We learn a lot, and have a lot of fun from this project. The most important thing is that, we are strongly impressed by the characteristics of the C programming language. It is not so human-friendly like Python, but it can be used to control the data and process in a very effective way (I mean the program's efficiency, not the development). However it also troubles us a lot and we admit that we aren't familiar with its features much.

And this project also gives us a more detailed view, about how a DBMS actually works.

⁴The famous CFS strategy in Linux Kernel code is based on Red-Black tree data structure.