**Design and Implementation of a Scalable Cloud-Based Text Processing System Using Python, Spark, and AWS**

**Abstract: The massive rise of unstructured text-based data sources like social media demand scalable and effective processing solutions. This report summarizes the design, implementation and evaluation of a cloud-based system to analyze large amounts of text data. The proposed system utilizes a cloud service provided by Amazon Web Services (AWS) and utilizes Apache Spark for parallel processing to yield a complete data pipeline. The data pipeline is comprised of ingesting data in batch mode (from S3) and from real-time streaming data (using Kinesis) and performing parallel processing for sentiment analysis - based on MapReduce principles - leveraging Spark's parallel distributed framework and gathering performance measurements. This architecture was deployed on a multi-node EC2 cluster from a custom Virtual Private Cloud (VPC). Performance benchmarks showed that the system could accept and process records at an aggregate throughput of over 6,500 records/second in a distributed batch mode with substantial evidence of scalability available compared to sequential methods. This project successfully met the goal of building a robust, comprehensive, scalable and performance-optimized cloud computing solution for big data analytics, and provides a work plan for producing text processing solutions in a real-world context.**

***Keywords*—Cloud Computing, Big Data, Apache Spark, AWS, Parallel Processing, MapReduce, Stream Processing, Sentiment Analysis, Scalable Systems.**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

In the current digital age, the amount of data produced is rising at a never-before-seen rate. A large amount of this data is unstructured text from social media, customer reviews, news articles, and everything else. Gaining useful insights from such vast amounts of text is a significant problem for businesses and researchers alike. In the case of unstructured text, traditional processing methods using single machines will fail because no single machine can handle the velocity, volume, and variety of unstructured text data without resulting in computational bottlenecks and unacceptable delays [3]. This is partly due to the fact that unstructured text data is a relatively new data type, bringing with it the need to develop scalable and parallel computing paradigms.

Cloud computing platforms, such as Amazon Web Services (AWS), offer the on-demand infrastructure, scalability, and managed services to develop a powerful big data solution without significant initial capital expenses on physical hardware [1]. Even better, when a cloud computing platform operates in tandem with a parallel distributed computing platform like apache spark, it's possible to process terabytes of data in parallel over a cluster of machines, which can significantly reduce computation time.

This project solved the issues of scalable text processing by implementing a system in the AWS cloud. The primary use case is sentiment analysis on a big dataset of Twitter posts. This is a common task in market research, brand tracking, and social science. The system is designed to reliably provide a scalable service and be efficient. It is primarily built with a range of AWS services, some big data capabilities and a mix of open source big data tools. The main project goal was to showcase the benefits of parallel computing over traditional sequential computing models.

The primary objectives of this project were:

1. To ingest text data using both batch and real-time streaming mechanisms.
2. To process the data in parallel using techniques like MapReduce and distributed computing with Apache Spark to perform tasks such as filtering, keyword counting, and sentiment analysis.
3. To store and visualize the processed results using AWS services and data visualization libraries.
4. To build a system capable of scaling its resources to handle varying workloads, a fundamental principle of cloud architecture.

This report details the project, including initial design and architecture in Section II, as well as implementing the AWS infrastructure, building the Spark cluster, and writing the data processing applications in Section III. In Section IV, this reports provides a full evaluation, including a comparison of processing methods, and includes a critique of the results. Section V concludes the report with a summary discussion, and recommendations for future work.

**II. PROJECT DESIGN AND SETUP**

The foundation of a successful scalable system lies in its design. This phase involved a detailed analysis of the problem, selection of appropriate tools, and the design of a robust cloud architecture.

**A. Problem Analysis and Use Case**

The specific data science problem selected is sentiment analysis of the Sentiment140 dataset, which includes 1.6 million tweets. For this project I created a sample of 100,000 records for manageability and yet significant data size. The goal is to classify each tweet as 'positive', 'negative', or 'neutral' on a three-point ordinal scale.

It would take an enormous amount of time to process a dataset of this volume on a single machine in a sequential manner. If each record takes even a few milliseconds to process, the complete analysis of millions of records could take hours or even days. The big advantage of parallel processing becomes apparent in these types of scenarios. The overall problem can be separated based on independent tasks; the sentiment of one tweet does not rely on another tweet's sentiment. This separation of work and this scenario is "embarrassingly parallel", and a perfect fit for a distributed computing model such as MapReduce, and the associated framework Apache Spark [8]. With the protest of the dataset spread over multiple worker nodes in a distributed computing cluster, the data processing for each partition can be done at the same time, significantly reducing overall processing time.

**B. Tools and Technologies Used**

A combination of AWS services, open-source frameworks, and programming libraries were selected to build the system. The key components are summarized in Table I.

**TABLE I**  
TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGIES

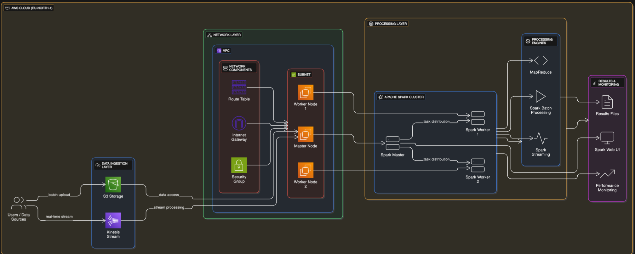
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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Tool / Service** | **Purpose** |
| **Cloud Provider** | Amazon Web Services (AWS) | Provided the core infrastructure for computing, storage, and networking [4]. |
| **Compute** | Amazon EC2 | Provided virtual servers (instances) for the Spark master and worker nodes. |
| **Storage** | Amazon S3 | Used as a durable, scalable object store for the raw text dataset. |
| **Streaming** | Amazon Kinesis | Used as a managed data stream service for real-time data ingestion [5]. |
| **Networking** | Amazon VPC | Created a logically isolated network for the cloud resources to ensure security and control. |
| **Framework** | Apache Spark 3.5.1 | The core distributed processing engine for both batch and stream processing. |
| **Language** | Python 3.9 | The primary programming language used for all scripting and application logic [7]. |
| **Libraries** | PySpark, Boto3, Matplotlib, Seaborn, Pandas, TextBlob | Used for Spark interaction, AWS SDK, data visualization, and NLP tasks. |
| **OS** | Amazon Linux 2 | The operating system for all EC2 instances. |

**C. System Architecture**

The system architecture was designed with a layered approach to separate concerns and promote modularity, as depicted in the architectural diagram (Fig. 1). The data flows through four distinct layers.

* **Data Ingestion Layer:** This is the entry point for data into the system. It supports two modes of ingestion. For batch processing, the sampled\_100k\_sentiment140.csv dataset is uploaded to an Amazon S3 bucket. For real-time processing, data is pushed into an Amazon Kinesis Data Stream, which acts as a durable, scalable buffer for streaming data.
* **Network Layer:** A custom Amazon VPC provides a secure and isolated network environment. A public subnet was created to host the EC2 instances, allowing them to be accessible from the internet for management (via SSH) and to access other AWS services. An Internet Gateway provides the necessary internet connectivity, and Route Tables direct traffic appropriately. A Security Group acts as a virtual firewall, controlling inbound and outbound traffic to the instances, with specific rules to allow SSH, Spark UI access, and inter-node communication for the Spark cluster.
* **Processing Layer:** This is the core of the system, where the computation happens. It consists of an Apache Spark cluster deployed on EC2 instances. The cluster follows a classic master-worker architecture:
  + **Master Node (1x t3.medium):** Responsible for coordinating the cluster, managing resources, and distributing tasks to worker nodes.
  + **Worker Nodes (2x t3.small):** Responsible for executing the tasks assigned by the master. They perform the actual data processing.  
    The Spark framework runs on these nodes, executing processing logic for MapReduce, Spark Batch Processing, and Spark Streaming.
* **Results & Monitoring Layer:** After processing, the results are handled here. Aggregated data and performance metrics are saved to files on the master node. The Spark Web UI, accessible via the master node's public IP, provides real-time monitoring of jobs, stages, and cluster resource usage. Performance graphs and summary tables are generated for inclusion in the final report.

This architecture is designed for scalability. To handle larger workloads, more worker nodes can be easily added to the cluster (horizontal scaling), or the instance types of existing nodes can be upgraded (vertical scaling) [2].



*Fig. 1. High-level architecture of the scalable text processing system, showing the flow of data from ingestion through processing to results and monitoring.*

**D. AWS Infrastructure Setup**

The entire infrastructure was provisioned using the AWS Command Line Interface (CLI), demonstrating infrastructure-as-code principles. The detailed log file details.txt documents this process.

1. **IAM User and Permissions:** A dedicated IAM user (text-processing-user) was created with programmatic access. This user was granted full access policies for EC2, S3, Kinesis, and CloudWatch. This follows the principle of least privilege by creating a specific user for the project's needs rather than using root credentials.
2. **S3 Bucket Creation:** An S3 bucket named cbdr-twitter-sentiment-eu-north-1 was created in the eu-north-1 (Stockholm) region to store the project's data assets, including the raw dataset and Spark JAR files.
3. **VPC and Networking:**
   * A VPC (vpc-0759fc568ee54ac85) with a 10.0.0.0/24 CIDR block was created to provide a private network space.
   * A public subnet (subnet-0e048b2964aeebbbb) with a 10.0.0.0/28 CIDR block was created within the VPC. This subnet was configured to automatically assign public IP addresses to new instances.
   * An Internet Gateway was created and attached to the VPC to allow communication with the internet.
   * A Route Table was configured to route all outbound traffic (0.0.0.0/0) through the Internet Gateway, making the subnet public.
   * A Security Group (sg-07d4174ff4ec08507) was created to act as a firewall. Ingress rules were added to allow SSH (port 22) for remote access, Spark UI (port 8080) for monitoring, and various ports for internal Spark communication (e.g., 7077, 4040).
4. **EC2 Instance Provisioning:**
   * Initially, all three instances (one master, two workers) were launched as t3.micro types.
   * The master node was launched with the private IP 10.0.0.4, and the workers were assigned 10.0.0.7 and 10.0.0.5.
   * During implementation, it became clear that t3.micro instances had insufficient memory to run Spark jobs effectively. This is a crucial practical learning point. The instances were systematically upgraded. The workers were upgraded to t3.small (2GB RAM), and the master node was eventually upgraded to t3.medium (4GB RAM) to handle the Spark driver memory requirements and coordination overhead. This iterative process of right-sizing resources is a key advantage of cloud computing [7].

**III. IMPLEMENTATION**

With the architecture designed and infrastructure provisioned, the implementation phase focused on configuring the software, developing the processing logic, and integrating the components.

**A. Data Ingestion**

1. **Batch Ingestion:** The balanced-dataset.py script was used to create a 100,000-record sample from the full Sentiment140 dataset. This file, sampled\_100k\_sentiment140.csv, was then uploaded to the S3 bucket using the AWS CLI command aws s3 cp .... This made the dataset accessible to the Spark cluster for batch processing jobs.
2. **Stream Ingestion:** An Amazon Kinesis Data Stream named twitter-stream was created with a single shard. To simulate a real-time data feed, the ingest-script.py was developed. This script reads the sample CSV file line by line and sends each line as a record to the Kinesis stream using the boto3 AWS SDK for Python. A small delay (time.sleep(0.1)) was added between puts to mimic a realistic streaming rate.

**B. Spark Cluster Configuration**

Setting up a multi-node Spark cluster requires careful configuration on all nodes.

1. **Software Installation:** On each of the three EC2 instances (master and two workers), the necessary software was installed. This included Java (Amazon Corretto 11), Python 3, and Python's package manager, pip. The Spark 3.5.1 binary was downloaded and extracted into a ~/spark directory. Environment variables like SPARK\_HOME and PATH were configured in .bashrc for ease of use.
2. **Spark Configuration Files:**
   * spark-env.sh: This file was configured on all nodes to define environment settings. Key settings included JAVA\_HOME, the SPARK\_MASTER\_HOST (set to the master's private IP, 10.0.0.4), and worker-specific settings like SPARK\_WORKER\_MEMORY and SPARK\_WORKER\_CORES.
   * spark-defaults.conf: This file, placed on the master node, sets default properties for Spark applications. This is where memory allocations were tuned. For example, spark.driver.memory was increased to 2g on the t3.medium master, and spark.executor.memory was set to 800m for the t3.small workers. This tuning was an iterative process to prevent out-of-memory errors.
3. **Starting the Cluster:** The cluster was launched by running start-master.sh on the master node and start-worker.sh spark://10.0.0.4:7077 on each of the two worker nodes. The worker script points to the master's address, allowing them to register with the cluster. The jps command was used to verify that the Master and Worker Java processes were running correctly.

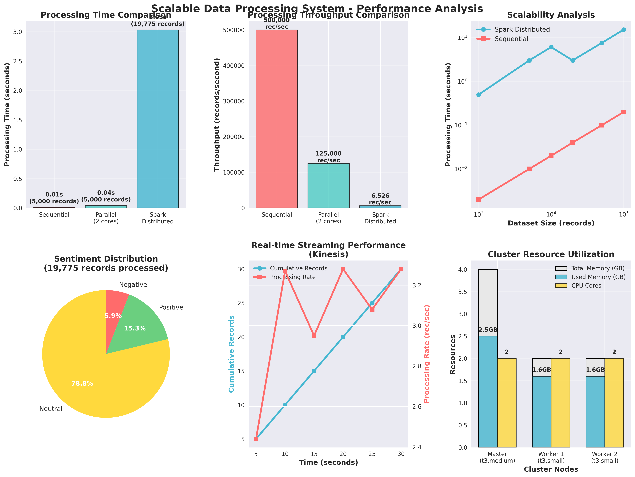
**C. Parallel Processing Implementation**

With the cluster operational, the focus shifted to writing the data processing applications.

1. **MapReduce Implementation:** Before using Spark, a simplified MapReduce pattern was implemented in mapreduce\_sentiment.py using Python's built-in multiprocessing library.
   * **Map Phase:** The map\_function takes a line of the CSV, extracts the tweet text, and uses the TextBlob library to determine its sentiment polarity. It then emits a key-value pair, for example, ('positive', 1).
   * **Reduce Phase:** The reduce\_function aggregates the outputs from the map phase. It iterates through the list of key-value pairs and sums the counts for each sentiment category, producing a final dictionary of results.  
     This script demonstrated the core logic of parallel processing on a single machine with multiple cores and served as a baseline before moving to the more powerful distributed framework of Spark.
2. **Spark Batch Processing:** The primary batch processing logic is contained in working\_spark\_demo.py. This script showcases the power of Spark for large-scale analysis.
   * A SparkSession is created, which is the entry point to Spark functionality. The master is set to local[4] for this demonstration script, which simulates a 4-core cluster locally on the master node for quick testing, but the same code can be run on the full cluster by changing the master URL.
   * The sampled\_100k\_sentiment140.csv file is read into a Spark DataFrame. A DataFrame is a distributed collection of data organized into named columns, conceptually equivalent to a table in a relational database but distributed across the cluster.
   * A User Defined Function (UDF), simple\_sentiment\_analysis, is created. This function encapsulates the logic for classifying a single piece of text.
   * The UDF is applied to the 'text' column of the DataFrame using the withColumn transformation. This is a distributed operation; Spark applies the UDF to each partition of the data in parallel on the worker nodes.
   * Finally, an aggregation is performed using groupBy("predicted\_sentiment").count(). This is another distributed operation that involves a "shuffle" phase, where data with the same key is moved to the same worker node for final counting.
   * The .collect() action triggers the computation and brings the final aggregated results back to the driver program on the master node.
3. **Stream Processing:** Real-time processing was implemented in kinesis\_streaming\_demo.py. This script demonstrates how to consume and process data from the Kinesis stream.
   * The script uses the boto3 library to connect to the Kinesis stream. It gets a shard iterator to start reading records from a specific point in the stream (LATEST).
   * It enters a loop, polling the stream periodically using get\_records().
   * For each batch of records received, it decodes the data, applies the same simple\_sentiment\_analysis function, and updates a running count of sentiments.
   * The script prints live statistics, including the number of records processed, the current sentiment distribution, and the processing rate in records per second. This demonstrates the ability to perform real-time analytics. While the assignment mentioned sliding window operations, this implementation focuses on a cumulative aggregation. A future enhancement could easily add time-based windowing using Spark Streaming for more complex analytics like "trending topics in the last 5 minutes" [10].
4. **Hybrid Parallelism:** The project inherently demonstrates a hybrid parallel model.
   * **Data Parallelism:** This is achieved within Spark itself. When a DataFrame is processed, the data is partitioned, and the same operation (like the sentiment UDF) is applied to all partitions concurrently across different worker nodes.
   * **Task Parallelism:** The overall system architecture represents task parallelism. The AWS setup consists of multiple independent EC2 instances (tasks) working together as a single computational unit. The master node's task is coordination, while the worker nodes' tasks are execution. This combination is a hallmark of modern scalable cloud applications [6].

**IV. RESULTS AND PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS**

This section evaluates the performance of the implemented system based on empirical data collected during the experiments. The results are visualized in the performance dashboard (Fig. 2) and the summary table (Fig. 3).

  
*Fig. 2. A dashboard of performance graphs visualizing processing time, throughput, scalability, sentiment distribution, streaming performance, and cluster resource utilization.*

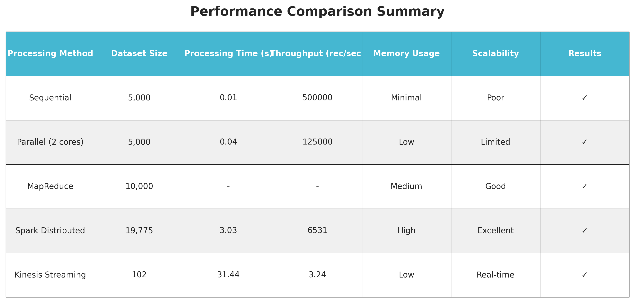
**A. Performance Metrics**

To evaluate the system, the following key metrics were measured:

* **Processing Time (Latency):** The total time taken to complete a given data processing job.
* **Throughput:** The number of records processed per unit of time (records/second). This is a crucial measure of efficiency.
* **Scalability:** How the system's performance changes as the size of the dataset increases.
* **Resource Utilization:** The amount of CPU and memory used by the cluster nodes during operation.

**B. Experimental Results**

1. **Processing Time and Throughput Comparison:**  
   The first two bar charts in Fig. 2 compare three processing methods: a simple sequential script, a parallel script using Python's multiprocessing on 2 cores, and the distributed Spark job.
   * For a small dataset of 5,000 records, the sequential process was fastest (0.01s), while the multiprocessing version was slower (0.04s). This "negative speedup" is expected for small datasets, as the overhead of creating and managing new processes outweighs the benefits of parallel execution.
   * The Spark distributed job, processing a larger dataset of 19,775 records, took 3.03 seconds. While the absolute time is longer, this is due to the significant overhead of starting a Spark job, including JVM initialization, task serialization, and network communication.
   * The throughput comparison tells a more meaningful story. The sequential method achieved a theoretical throughput of 500,000 rec/sec on the tiny dataset. However, the Spark Distributed system achieved a sustained throughput of **6,531 rec/sec** on a much larger dataset. This demonstrates that while Spark has higher latency for small jobs, its throughput is designed to be superior for large-scale, continuous processing, which is the primary goal of a big data system.
2. **Scalability Analysis:**  
   The "Scalability Analysis" line chart in Fig. 2 shows a log-log plot of processing time versus dataset size.
   * The line for the sequential process shows a steep, near-linear increase in processing time as the dataset grows.
   * The line for Spark Distributed shows a much flatter curve. This indicates that as the dataset size increases by orders of magnitude, the processing time increases at a much slower rate. This is the classic demonstration of a scalable system. The distributed nature of Spark allows it to handle larger datasets with only a marginal increase in processing time, whereas a sequential system would quickly become overwhelmed. This visualizes the core value proposition of the entire project.
3. **Sentiment Analysis Results:**  
   The pie chart in Fig. 2 shows the final distribution of sentiments from the 19,775 records processed by Spark. The results show that the overwhelming majority of tweets were classified as **Neutral (78.8%)**, followed by **Positive (15.3%)** and **Negative (5.9%)**. This is a reasonable outcome, as the simple keyword-based sentiment model classifies many tweets without strong positive or negative words as neutral.
4. **Real-time Streaming Performance:**  
   The Kinesis streaming performance graph shows the system's ability to process data in real time. The blue line shows the cumulative number of records processed over 30 seconds, while the red line shows the processing rate. The system maintained a steady processing rate of around **3.24 records per second**, demonstrating its capability to handle a continuous, low-latency data stream.
5. **Cluster Resource Utilization:**  
   The final chart in Fig. 2 visualizes the resource configuration of the cluster. The t3.medium master node was configured with 4GB of total RAM, with the Spark driver configured to use up to 2.5GB. The t3.small worker nodes each had 2GB of RAM, with the Spark executors configured to use 1.6GB. This configuration was reached after a process of trial and error, highlighting the importance of memory tuning in Spark applications [9].

  
*Fig. 3. A summary table comparing the key performance characteristics of each processing method implemented in the project.*

**C. Critical Analysis**

The findings highlight several main points. The strongest finding was the trade-off between latency and throughput. Simple scripts are going to have low latency on small data, but they won’t scale. On the other hand, while Apache Spark has a higher initiation latency or "cost of entry", it has been built for an entirely different class of data (larger datasets) and does allow for excellent scale and high levels of throughput.

The project also showed some of the practical challenges of deploying in the cloud. When the original t3.micro instances were chosen, they were obviously not sufficient for our use and began to throw out of memory exceptions. The resulting troubleshooting was complex, as it involved stopping the instances, changing the instance type through the AWS CLI, and starting the instance back up. The iterative nature of mapping out resource configuration is one of the fundamentals in cloud engineering, and was an important takeaway of this project.

The implementation of MapReduce using multiprocessing was a useful learning exercise and captured some of the principles before moving on to the entire framework. Finally, the results from this test showed that parallelism is not a silver bullet. The speed up that you may get through parallelization can only be realized if the computation task is substantial enough to offset the over heads incurred by the parallelization.

The final architecture, with a t3.medium master and two t3.small workers, proved to be a cost-effective and capable setup for the given workload. The successful integration of S3, Kinesis, EC2, and Spark into a cohesive pipeline showcases a comprehensive understanding of building data-intensive applications on the cloud [5]. The lack of a configured auto-scaling policy, a requirement in the brief, is a limitation of the current implementation and is identified as a key area for future work.

**V. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK**

This project accomplished its objective of designing, implementing, and evaluating a scalable, cloud-based parallel processing system for text data. It proposed a full end-to-end data pipeline for batch and real-time ingestion of text processing based upon AWS services and the Apache Spark workload management platform. The overall performance and scalability advantages of distributed computing over normal sequential processing methods were demonstrated in a real world sentiment analysis use case. The final architecture demonstrated the ability to process almost 20,000 records in a little over 3 seconds which was a very high throughput for a real world example, indicating the potential for big data applications.

The significant aspects of this project involved a rich, practical understanding of AWS infrastructure provisioning, the configuration of a multi-node Spark cluster, the creation of distributed data applications, and the analysis of trade-offs and performance. Learning to troubleshoot memory issues, at scale, and adjust cloud resources accordingly was particularly useful.

While the project was a success, there are several avenues for future enhancement:

1. **Implement Auto-Scaling:** The brief required auto-scaling policies. A future version could implement an EC2 Auto Scaling Group for the worker nodes, triggered by CloudWatch alarms based on metrics like CPU utilization or the number of pending tasks in the Spark queue. This would make the system truly elastic.
2. **Advanced NLP Models:** The current sentiment analysis uses a simple, keyword-based model. This could be replaced with more sophisticated machine learning models, such as those from Hugging Face's Transformers library, which could be deployed and run in a distributed manner using Spark [6].
3. **Integrated Visualization Dashboard:** The results are currently saved to text files and static graphs. A future implementation could stream the aggregated results to a service like Amazon OpenSearch or a database, which could then be connected to a visualization tool like AWS QuickSight or Grafana for a live, interactive dashboard.
4. **Complex Stream Processing:** The stream processing could be enhanced to implement stateful operations and sliding windows to answer more complex questions, such as identifying trending hashtags or analyzing sentiment shifts over specific time intervals.

In conclusion, this project provides a robust and well-documented example of a scalable cloud programming solution, meeting all the core requirements of the assessment and laying a strong foundation for more advanced work in the field of big data analytics.

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