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Software development and optimisation of bioinformatics pipelines to analyse high-throughput sequencing data in oncology

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1 Institut Curie

2 Software engineering for bioinformatics pipelines

3 Parallelisation of algorithms using MPI



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3 hospitals

- 9.800 new patients / year
- 15.300 patients with treatment (76% women, among them 7.100 breast cancer)
- 500 patients with pediatric cancer

1 multidisciplinary research center

- 12 research units (with INSERM, CNRS and universities)
- 1 department of translational research
- 16 technical core facilities (Curie CORE TECH)

Bioinformatics core facility Unité 900 (~20 pers.) - created in 2002

 Transversal and institutional missions (management and biostatistical analysis of omics data, HPC, training)

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Asset to be part of a research unit

Support for precision medicine

Tailor the treatment based on genomic alterations in the tumor



- develop new methods
- implement pipelines for routine production
 - research
 - diagnostic
 - precision medicine for 10.000 patients / year
 - results must be delivered within 48h once the data are available



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Bioinformatics pipeline for high-throughput sequencing data

Bioinformatics pipeline to detect and annotate mutations and DNA copy number alterations that are used for the therapeutic decision



- many different steps that can be parallelized
- various languages (bash, python, R, java, C/C++, ...)



A process consists of three blocks

process align_sample {

input: file 'reference.fa' from genome_ch file 'sample.fq' from reads ch

output: file 'sample.bam' into bam_ch

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¹adapted from Di Tommaso et al., 2017's slides

Input / output are connected by a channel

```
process align sample {
input:
                                        process index sample {
file 'reference.fa' from genome ch
file 'sample.fg' from reads ch
                                           input:
                                           file 'sample.bam' from bam ch
 output:
 file 'sample.bam' into bam ch
                                           output:
                                           file 'sample.bai' into bai ch
script:
 bwa mem reference.fa sample.fg \
                                           script:
       | samtools sort -o sample.bam
                                           samtools index sample.bam
                                            .....
```

- Processes wait for their input data
- When an input set is ready the process is executed
- They communicate by using dataflow variables (the channels)
- Parallelisation and tasks dependencies are implicitly defined by process in/out declarations

Easy to launch the pipeline on a computing cluster



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¹adapted from Di Tommaso et al., 2017's slides

One software = one container that can be used by several processes



 Best practises to write the different process and nextflow code and organize the source code repository

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- In-house toolbox to automatize container generation and deployement of the pipeline
- The toolbox is as set of ACMake scripts

Ever-growing size and complexity of the data

Need to identify the bottlenecks (CPU, IO, memory, job duration) for each task of bioinformatics pipelines.

Code profiling of the pipeline with **nextflow**¹ (Workflow Management System)

Bioinformatics pipeline to detect gene fusions from RNA-seq for diagnostic (walltime \sim 24H)



CPU Usage

¹Di Tommaso et al., 2017

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Task execution real-time

Ever-growing size and complexity of the data

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Physical Memory Usage

¹Di Tommaso et al., 2017

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High-Throughput Sequencing... some figures...





Sequencing with Illumina NovaSeq 6000

- 2 days of experiment
- 6000 billions of bases sequenced
- 10 billions of reads
- 2 millions times Les Misérables
- \sim 4,500 GB of data



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Alignment on the human reference genome



code: https://github.com/bioinfo-pf-curie/mpiBWA

Sort the SAM file by position along the genome



For deep sequencing, the size of the SAM file can be $\sim 1TB$ with $\sim 3\times 10^9$ lines.

code: https://github.com/bioinfo-pf-curie/mpiSORT

¹https://gatkforums.broadinstitute.org/gatk/

Bitonic sort of $n = 2^k$ elements¹

Bitonic sequence



Bitonic sorting network (does not depend on the input data)

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sort the bitonic sequence

¹Batcher, 1968 ² http://pages.cs.wisc.edu

Bitonic sort of $n = 2^k$ elements¹

Bitonic sequence



Bitonic sorting network (does not depend on the input data)



The data are split into blocks attached to the different processors



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Start with a merge sort for each block performed by each processor

Use compare-split operator over the bitonic sorting network

Bruck algorithm¹ exchanges data between $p = 2^m$ processors from different nodes

- Bruck phase is like a joint between two tables (the elements of the table located on different processors)
- Each processor writes the data from a block of contiguous offsets O_d in the sorted destination file
- Avoid random access during writing for better IO performance



- C is the coordinate on the genome
- O_i the offset of the line from the input SAM file, O_d for the sorted destination SAM file
- R_i is the rank of the proc. that reads the block of the input SAM file
- R_d is the rank of the processor that will write the block of the sorted data in the destination SAM file

Bruck algorithm¹ principle



Performance on the sorting of SAM file with mpiSORT¹

Walltime on Skylake architecture: 128 cpus on 4 nodes on sample HG001²



- Efficient implementation (standard implementation process the data within ~ day)
- Ensure the scalability of the sorting as the size of the data increases
- Tweaking the code using MPI is not straigthforward and takes time

¹ https://github.com/bioinfo-pf-curie/mpiSORT, ²GIAB HG001 300X sample



mpiSORT is memory bounded

- The data have to fit into the memory
- More cores (and nodes) are required as the input data gets bigger and bigger
- Memory can be a bottleneck

Assess different data placement strategies using different technologies

 Intel Optane DC persistent memory up to 3 TB per CPU socket (in addition to the DRAM in the system)



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Thank you!





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Marie Curie

Dans une bonne équipe chacun fait plus que son métier.