

# Better Full Text Search in PostgreSQL

Oleg Bartunov  
Postgres Professional, Moscow University  
Artur Zakirov  
Postgres Professional

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# FTS in PostgreSQL

- FTS is a powerful built-in text search engine
- No new features since 2006 !
- Popular complaints:
  - Slow ranking
  - No phrase search
  - No efficient alternate ranking
  - Working with dictionaries is tricky
  - Dictionaries are stored in the backend memory
  - FTS is flexible, but not enough

# FTS in PostgreSQL

- **tsvector** – data type for document optimized for search
- **tsquery** – textual data type for rich query language
- **Full text search operator:** tsvector @@ tsquery
- **SQL interface** to FTS objects (CREATE, ALTER)
  - Configuration: {tokens, {dictionaries}}
  - Parser: {tokens}
  - Dictionary: tokens → lexeme{s}
- **Additional functions and operators**
- **Indexes:** GiST, GIN, RUM

```
to_tsvector('english','a fat cat sat on a mat and ate a fat rat')  
      @@  
to_tsquery('english','(cats | rat) & ate & !mice');
```

# Some FTS problems: #1

156676 Wikipedia articles:

- Search is fast, ranking is slow.

```
SELECT docid, ts_rank(text_vector, to_tsquery('english', 'title')) AS rank
FROM ti2
WHERE text_vector @@ to_tsquery('english', 'title')
ORDER BY rank DESC
LIMIT 3;
```

```
Limit (actual time=476.106..476.107 rows=3 loops=1)
  Buffers: shared hit=149804 read=87416
  -> Sort (actual time=476.104..476.104 rows=3 loops=1)
    Sort Key: (ts_rank(text_vector, ''titl''::tsquery)) DESC
    Sort Method: top-N heapsort  Memory: 25kB
    Buffers: shared hit=149804 read=87416
    -> Bitmap Heap Scan on ti2 (actual time=6.894..469.215 rows=47855 loops=1)
      Recheck Cond: (text_vector @@ ''titl''::tsquery)
      Heap Blocks: exact=4913
      Buffers: shared hit=149804 read=87416
      -> Bitmap Index Scan on ti2_index (actual time=6.117..6.117 rows=47855 loops=1)
        Index Cond: (text_vector @@ ''titl''::tsquery)
        Buffers: shared hit=1 read=12
```

```
Planning time: 0.255 ms
Execution time: 476.171 ms
(15 rows)
```

**HEAP IS SLOW  
470 ms !**

## Some FTS problems: #2

- No phrase search
  - “A & B” is equivalent to “B & A»  
There are only 92 posts in -hackers with person 'Tom Good', but FTS finds 34039 posts
- FTS + regex is slow and can be used only for simple queries.

## Some FTS problems: #3

- Slow FTS with ordering by timestamp («fresh» results)

```
SELECT sent, subject from pgl1st
WHERE fts @@ to_tsquery('english', 'server & crashed')
and sent < '2000-01-01'::timestamp
ORDER BY sent desc
LIMIT 5;
```

- Bitmap index scan by GIN (fts)
- Bitmap index scan by Btree (date)
- BitmapAND
- Bitmap Heap scan
- Sort
- Limit
- 10 ms



# Inverted Index in PostgreSQL

## Report Index

ENTRY TREE

**A**

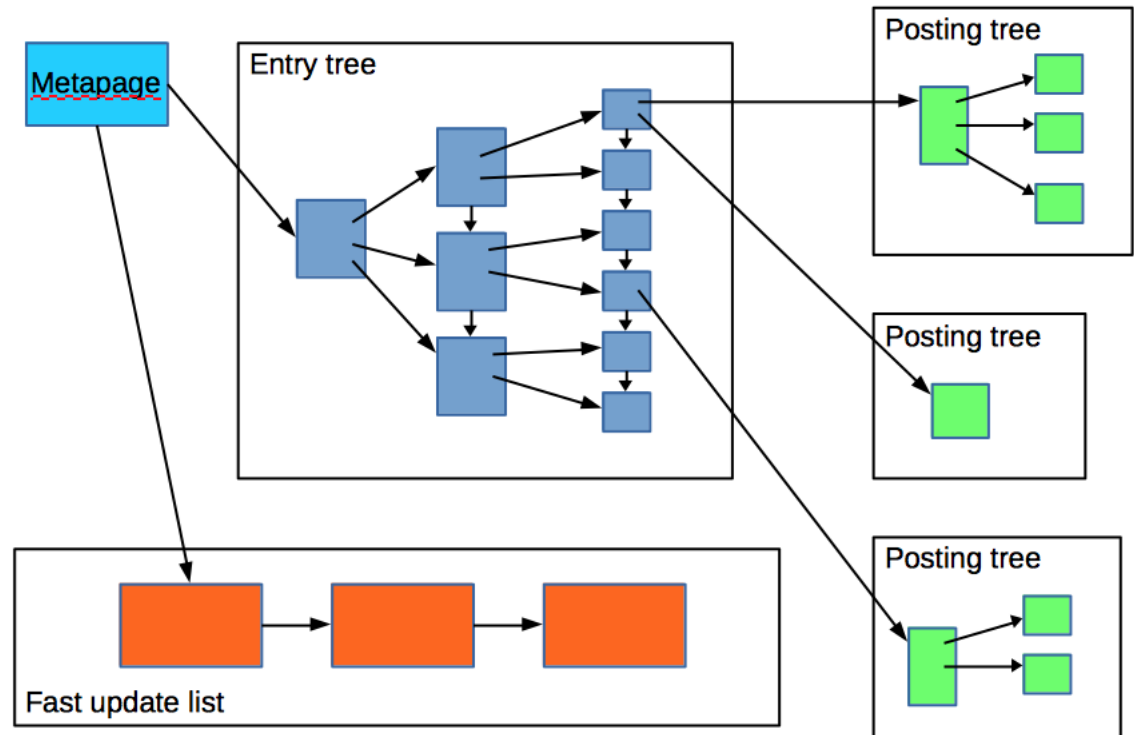
abrasives, 27  
 acceleration measurement, 58  
 accelerometers, 5, 10, 25, 28, 30, 36, 58, 59, 61, 73, 74  
 actuators, 4, 37, 46, 49  
 adaptive Kalman filters, 60, 61  
 adhesion, 63, 64  
 adhesive bonding, 15  
 adsorption, 44  
 aerodynamics, 29  
 aerospace instrumentation, 61  
 aerospace propulsion, 52  
 aerospace robotics, 68  
 aluminium, 17  
 amorphous state, 67  
 angular velocity measurement, 58  
 antenna phased arrays, 41, 46, 66  
 argon, 21  
 assembling, 22  
 atomic force microscopy, 13, 27, 35  
 atomic layer deposition, 15  
 attitude control, 60, 61  
 attitude measurement, 59, 61  
 automatic test equipment, 71  
 automatic testing, 24

Posting list  
Posting tree

compensation, 30, 68  
 compressive strength, 54  
 compressors, 29  
 computational fluid dynamics, 23, 29  
 computer games, 56  
 concurrent engineering, 14  
 contact resistance, 47, 66  
 convertors, 22  
 coplanar waveguide components, 40  
 Couette flow, 21  
 creep, 17  
 crystallisation, 64

**B**

backward wave oscillators, 45

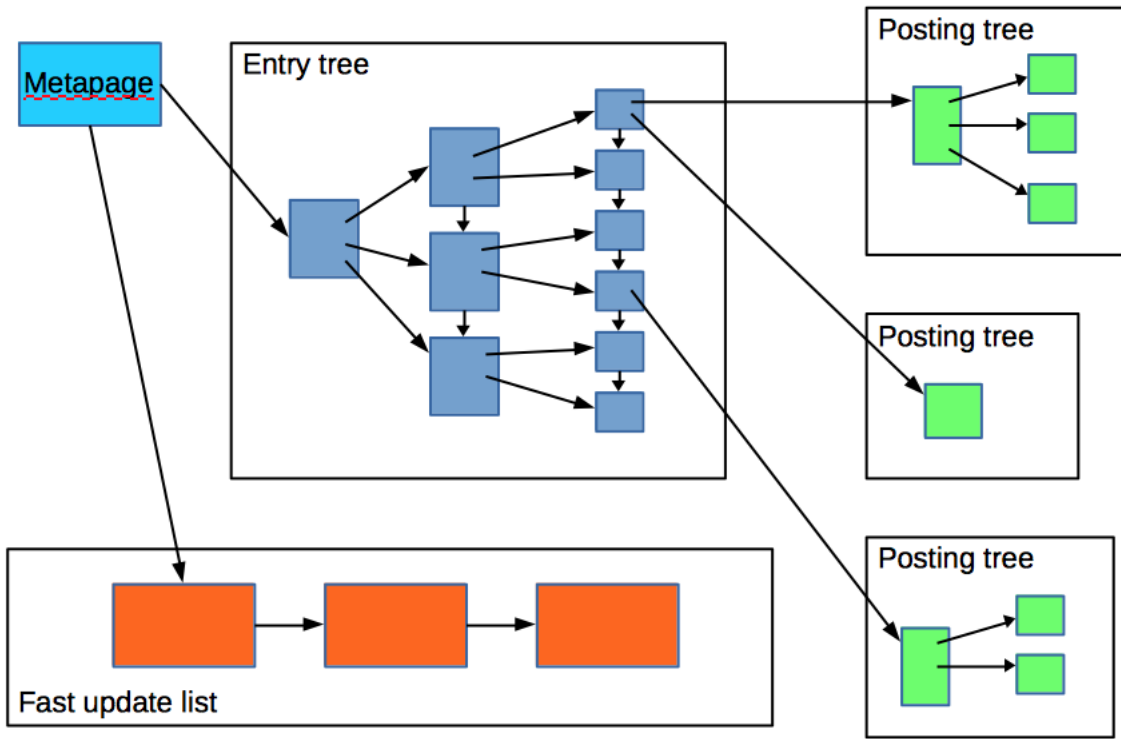


# Improving GIN

- Improve GIN index
  - Store additional information in posting tree, for example, lexemes positions or timestamps
  - Use this information to order results

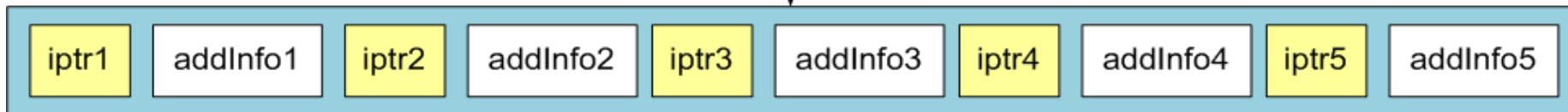
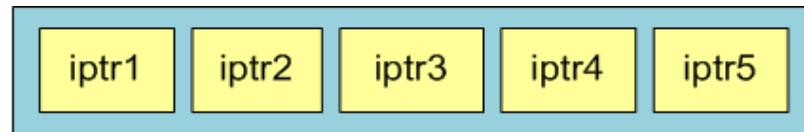


# Improving GIN



9.6: CREATE AM  
GENERIC WAL

Create access methods  
RUM as extension !



# CREATE INDEX ... USING RUM

- Use positions to calculate rank and order results
- Introduce distance operator `tsvector <=> tsquery`

```
CREATE INDEX ti2_rum_fts_idx ON ti2 USING rum(text_vector rum_tsvector_ops);
```

```
SELECT docid, ts_rank(text_vector, to_tsquery('english', 'title')) AS rank
FROM ti2
WHERE text_vector @@ to_tsquery('english', 'title')
ORDER BY
text_vector <=> plainto_tsquery('english','title') LIMIT 3;
                                QUERY PLAN
```

```
-----
L Limit (actual time=54.676..54.735 rows=3 loops=1)
  Buffers: shared hit=355
   -> Index Scan using ti2_rum_fts_idx on ti2 (actual time=54.675..54.733 rows=3 loops=1)
        Index Cond: (text_vector @@ ''titl''::tsquery)
        Order By: (text_vector <=> ''titl''::tsquery)
        Buffers: shared hit=355
```

```
Planning time: 0.225 ms
```

```
Execution time: 54.775 ms vs 476 ms !
```

```
(8 rows)
```

# CREATE INDEX ... USING RUM

- Top-10 (out of 222813) postings with «Tom Lane»
  - GIN index — 1374.772 ms

```
SELECT subject, ts_rank(fts,plainto_tsquery('english', 'tom lane')) AS rank
FROM pglisT WHERE fts @@ plainto_tsquery('english', 'tom lane')
ORDER BY rank DESC LIMIT 10;
```

## QUERY PLAN

```
-----
Limit (actual time=1374.277..1374.278 rows=10 loops=1)
-> Sort (actual time=1374.276..1374.276 rows=10 loops=1)
    Sort Key: (ts_rank(fts, '''tom' & 'lane''::tsquery)) DESC
    Sort Method: top-N heapsort  Memory: 25kB
    -> Bitmap Heap Scan on pglisT (actual time=98.413..1330.994 rows=222813 loops=1)
        Recheck Cond: (fts @@ '''tom' & 'lane''::tsquery)
        Heap Blocks: exact=105992
        -> Bitmap Index Scan on pglisT_gin_idx (actual time=65.712..65.712
rows=222813 loops=1)
            Index Cond: (fts @@ '''tom' & 'lane''::tsquery)
Planning time: 0.287 ms
Execution time: 1374.772 ms
(11 rows)
```

# CREATE INDEX ... USING RUM

- Top-10 (out of 222813) postings with «Tom Lane»
  - RUM index — 216 ms vs 1374 ms !!!

```
create index pglisr_rum_fts_idx on pglisr using rum(fts rum_tsvector_ops);
```

```
SELECT subject FROM pglisr WHERE fts @@ plainto_tsquery('tom lane')  
ORDER BY fts <=> plainto_tsquery('tom lane') LIMIT 10;
```

```
QUERY PLAN
```

```
-----  
Limit (actual time=215.115..215.185 rows=10 loops=1)
```

```
-> Index Scan using pglisr_rum_fts_idx on pglisr (actual time=215.113..215.183 rows=10 loops=1)
```

```
Index Cond: (fts @@ plainto_tsquery('tom lane'::text))
```

```
Order By: (fts <=> plainto_tsquery('tom lane'::text))
```

```
Planning time: 0.264 ms
```

```
Execution time: 215.833 ms
```

```
(6 rows)
```

# CREATE INDEX ... USING RUM

- RUM uses new ranking function (ts\_score) — combination of ts\_rank and ts\_rank\_cd
  - ts\_rank doesn't supports logical operators
  - ts\_rank\_cd works poorly with OR queries

```
SELECT ts_rank(fts,plainto_tsquery('english', 'tom lane')) AS rank,
       ts_rank_cd (fts,plainto_tsquery('english', 'tom lane')) AS rank_cd ,
       fts <=> plainto_tsquery('english', 'tom lane') as score, subject
FROM pglist WHERE fts @@ plainto_tsquery('english', 'tom lane')
ORDER BY fts <=> plainto_tsquery('english', 'tom lane') LIMIT 10;
```

rank	rank_cd	score	subject
0.999637	2.02857	0.487904	Re: ATTN: Tom Lane
0.999224	1.97143	0.492074	Re: Bug #866 related problem (ATTN Tom Lane)
0.99798	1.97143	0.492074	Tom Lane
0.996653	1.57143	0.523388	happy birthday Tom Lane ...
0.999697	2.18825	0.570404	For Tom Lane
0.999638	2.12208	0.571455	Re: Favorite Tom Lane quotes
0.999188	1.68571	0.593533	Re: disallow LOCK on a view - the Tom Lane remix
0.999188	1.68571	0.593533	Re: disallow LOCK on a view - the Tom Lane remix
0.999188	1.68571	0.593533	Re: disallow LOCK on a view - the Tom Lane remix
0.999188	1.68571	0.593533	Re: [HACKERS] disallow LOCK on a view - the Tom Lane remix

(10 rows)

# Phrase Search ( 8 years old!)

- Queries 'A & B'::tsquery and 'B & A'::tsquery produce the same result
- Phrase search - preserve order of words in a query

Results for queries 'A & B' and 'B & A' should be different !

- Introduce new FOLLOWED BY (<->) operator:
  - Guarantee an order of operands
  - Distance between operands

$$a <n> b == a \& b \& (\exists i,j : \text{pos}(b)_i - \text{pos}(a)_j = n)$$



# Phrase search - definition

- FOLLOWED BY operator returns:
  - false
  - true and array of positions of the **right** operand, which satisfy distance condition
- FOLLOWED BY operator requires positions

```
select 'a b c'::tsvector @@ 'a <-> b'::tsquery; – false, there no positions
?column?
```

```
-----
```

```
f
(1 row)
```

```
select 'a:1 b:2 c'::tsvector @@ 'a <-> b'::tsquery;
?column?
```

```
-----
```

```
t
(1 row)
```

# Phrase search - properties

- 'A <-> B' = 'A<1>B'
- 'A <0> B' matches the word with two different forms ( infinitives )

```
=# SELECT ts_lexize('ispell','bookings');
   ts_lexize
-----
 {booking,book}
to_tsvector('bookings') @@ 'booking <0> book'::tsquery
```

# Phrase search - properties

- Precedence of tsquery operators - '! <-> & |'
- Use parenthesis to control nesting in tsquery

```
select 'a & b <-> c'::tsquery;
      tsquery
```

```
-----
'a' & 'b' <-> 'c'
```

```
select 'b <-> c & a'::tsquery;
      tsquery
```

```
-----
'b' <-> 'c' & 'a'
```

```
select 'b <-> (c & a)'::tsquery;
      tsquery
```

```
-----
'b' <-> 'c' & 'b' <-> 'a'
```

# Phrase search - example

- `TSQUERY phraseto_tsquery([CFG,] TEXT)`  
Stop words are taken into account.

```
select phraseto_tsquery('PostgreSQL can be extended by the user in many ways');
        phraseto_tsquery
```

```
-----
'postgresql' <3> 'extend' <3> 'user' <2> 'mani' <-> 'way'
(1 row)
```

- It's possible to combine `tsquery`'s

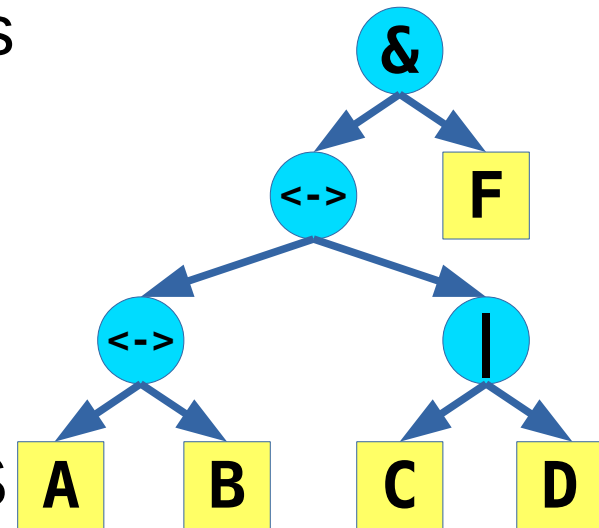
```
select phraseto_tsquery('PostgreSQL can be extended by the user in many ways') ||
        to_tsquery('oho<->ho & ik');
        ?column?
```

```
-----
'postgresql' <3> 'extend' <3> 'user' <2> 'mani' <-> 'way' | 'oho' <-> 'ho' & 'ik'
(1 row)
```

# Phrase search - internals

- Phrase search has overhead, since it requires access and operations on posting lists

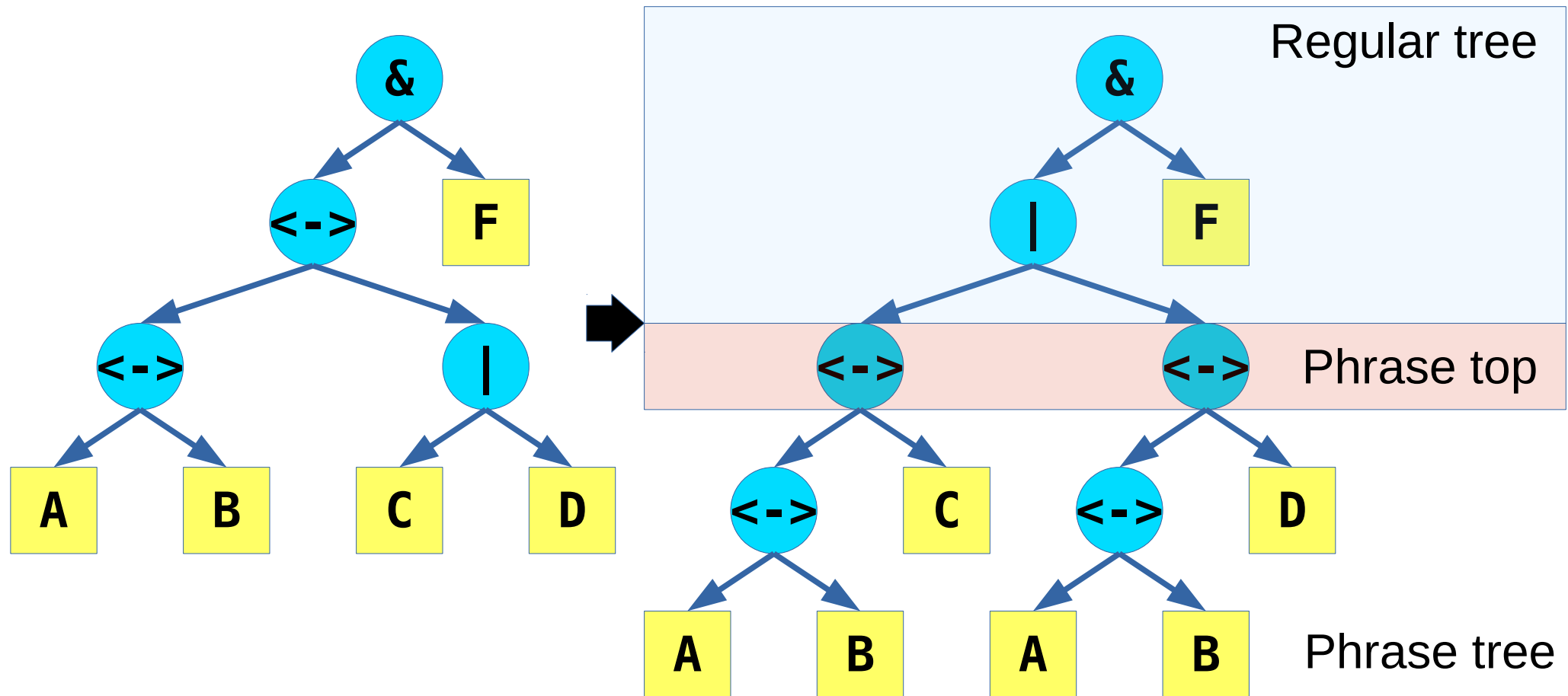
$( (A \leftrightarrow B) \leftrightarrow (C \mid D) ) \& F$



- We want to avoid slowdown FTS operators (& |), which do not need positions.
- Rewrite query, so any <-> operators pushed down in query tree and call phrase executor for the top <-> operator.

# Phrase search - transformation

$( (A \leftrightarrow B) \leftrightarrow (C \mid D) ) \& F$



$( 'A' \leftrightarrow 'B' \leftrightarrow 'C' \mid 'A' \leftrightarrow 'B' \leftrightarrow 'D' ) \& 'F'$



# Phrase search - push down

$a \leftrightarrow (b \& c) \Rightarrow a \leftrightarrow b \ \& \ a \leftrightarrow c$

$(a \& b) \leftrightarrow c \Rightarrow a \leftrightarrow c \ \& \ b \leftrightarrow c$

$a \leftrightarrow (b \mid c) \Rightarrow a \leftrightarrow b \ \mid \ a \leftrightarrow c$

$(a \mid b) \leftrightarrow c \Rightarrow a \leftrightarrow c \ \mid \ b \leftrightarrow c$

$a \leftrightarrow !b \Rightarrow a \ \& \ !(a \leftrightarrow b)$

there is no position of A followed by B

$!a \leftrightarrow b \Rightarrow !(a \leftrightarrow b) \ \& \ b$

there is no position of B preceded by A

# Phrase search - transformation

```
# select '( A | B ) <-> ( D | C )'::tsquery;  
          tsquery
```

-----

```
'A' <-> 'D' | 'B' <-> 'D' | 'A' <-> 'C' | 'B' <-> 'C'
```

```
# select 'A <-> ( B & ( C | ! D ) )'::tsquery;  
          tsquery
```

-----

```
'A' <-> 'B' & ( 'A' <-> 'C' | 'A' & !( 'A' <-> 'D' ) )
```

# Phrase search

1.1 mln postings (postgres mailing lists)

- Phrase search has overhead

```
select count(*) from pglist where fts @@ to_tsquery('english', 'tom <-> lane');
count
```

```
-----
222777
(1 row)
```

	<->(s)		&(s)	
<b>Sequential Scan:</b>	2.6		2.2	
<b>GIN index:</b>	1.1		0.48	- significant overhead
<b>RUM index:</b>	0.5		0.48	- solves the problem !

## Some FTS problems: #3

- Slow FTS with ordering by timestamp («fresh» results)
  - Store timestamps in additional information in timestamp order !

```
create index pglis_fts_ts_order_rum_idx on pglis using
rum(fts rum_tsvector_timestamp_ops, sent) WITH (attach =
'sent', to = 'fts', order_by_attach = 't');
```

```
select sent, subject from pglis
where fts @@ to_tsquery('server & crashed')
order by sent <=| '2000-01-01'::timestamp limit 5;
```

- Index Scan by RUM (fts, sent)
- Limit
- 0.08 ms vs 10 ms !

# RUM vs GIN

- 6 mln classifies, real fts queries, concurrency 24, duration 1 hour
  - GIN — 258087 qph
  - RUM — 1885698 qph ( **7x speedup** )
- RUM has no pending list (not implemented) and stores more data.

Insert 1 mln messages shows no significant overhead:

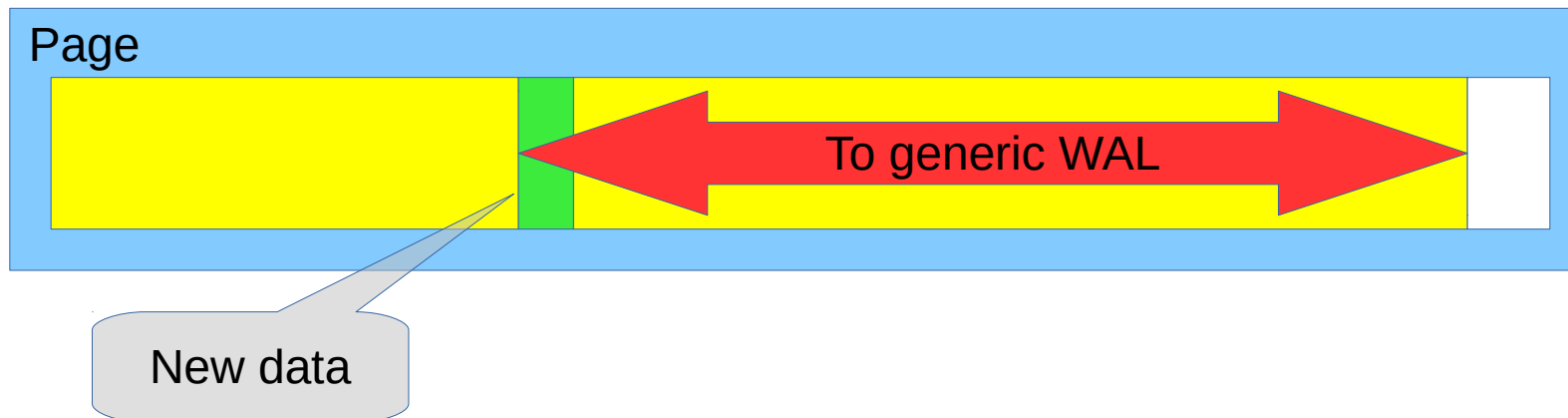
Time(min): GiST(10), GIN(10), GIN\_no\_fast(21), RUM(34)

WAL(GB): GiST(3.5), GIN(7.5), GIN\_no\_fast(24), RUM(29)

# RUM vs GIN

- CREATE INDEX

- GENERIC WAL (9.6) generates too big WAL traffic





# Inverse FTS (FQS)

- Find queries, which match given document
- Automatic text classification

```
SELECT * FROM queries;
```

q	tag
'supernova' & 'star'	sn
'black'	color
'big' & 'bang' & 'black' & 'hole'	bang
'spiral' & 'galaxi'	shape
'black' & 'hole'	color

(5 rows)

```
SELECT * FROM queries WHERE
to_tsvector('black holes never exists before we think about them')
@@ q;
```

q	tag
'black'	color
'black' & 'hole'	color

(2 rows)

# Inverse FTS (FQS)

- RUM index supported – store branches of query tree in addinfo

Find queries for the first message in postgres mailing lists

```
\d pg_query
  Table "public.pg_query"
  Column | Type      | Modifiers
  -----+-----+-----
  q      | tsquery   |
  count  | integer   |
Indexes:
    "pg_query_rum_idx" rum (q)          33818 queries

select q from pg_query pgq, pglist where q @@ pglist.fts and pglist.id=1;
      q
-----
 'one' & 'one'
 'postgresql' & 'freebsd'
(2 rows)
```

# Inverse FTS (FQS)

- RUM index supported – store branches of query tree in addinfo

Find queries for the first message in postgres mailing lists

```

create index pg_query_rum_idx on pg_query using rum(q);
select q from pg_query pgq, pglist where q @@ pglist.fts and pglist.id=1;
                                QUERY PLAN
-----
Nested Loop (actual time=0.719..0.721 rows=2 loops=1)
  -> Index Scan using pglist_id_idx on pglist
(actual time=0.013..0.013 rows=1 loops=1)
    Index Cond: (id = 1)
  -> Bitmap Heap Scan on pg_query pgq
(actual time=0.702..0.704 rows=2 loops=1)
    Recheck Cond: (q @@ pglist.fts)
    Heap Blocks: exact=2
    -> Bitmap Index Scan on pg_query_rum_idx
(actual time=0.699..0.699 rows=2 loops=1)
        Index Cond: (q @@ pglist.fts)
Planning time: 0.212 ms
Execution time: 0.759 ms
(10 rows)

```

# Inverse FTS (FQS)

- RUM index supported – store branches of query tree in addinfo

## Monstrous postings

```
select id, t.subject, count(*) as cnt into pglis_t_q from pg_query,
(select id, fts, subject from pglis) t where t.fts @@ q
group by id, subject order by cnt desc limit 1000;
```

```
select * from pglis_t_q order by cnt desc limit 5;
```

id	subject	cnt
248443	Packages patch	4472
282668	Re: release.sgml, minor pg_autovacuum changes	4184
282512	Re: release.sgml, minor pg_autovacuum changes	4151
282481	release.sgml, minor pg_autovacuum changes	4104
243465	Re: [HACKERS] Re: Release notes	3989

(5 rows)

# RUM vs GIN

- CREATE INDEX

- GENERIC WAL(9.6) generates too big WAL traffic.

It currently doesn't supports shift.

rum(fts, ts+order) generates 186 Gb of WAL !

- RUM writes WAL AFTER creating index

	table	gin	rum (fts	rum(fts,ts)	rum(fts,ts+order)
Create time		147 s	201	209	215
Size( mb)	2167/1302	534	980	1531	1921
WAL (Gb)		0.9	0.68	1.1	1.5

# RUM Todo

- Allow multiple additional info (lexemes positions + timestamp)
- Add support for arrays
- improve ranking function to support TF/IDF
- Improve insert time (pending list ?)
- Improve GENERIC WAL to support shift

Availability:

- 9.6+ only: <https://github.com/postgrespro/rum>



# Better FTS configurability

- The problem

- Search multilingual collection requires processing by several language-specific dictionaries. Currently, logic of processing is hidden from user and example would“nt works.

```
ALTER TEXT SEARCH CONFIGURATION multi_conf
ALTER MAPPING FOR asciiword, asciihword, hword_asciipart,
word, hword, hword_part
WITH unaccent, german_ispell, english_ispell, simple;
```

- Logic of tokens processing in FTS configuration

- Example: German-English collection

```
ALTER TEXT SEARCH CONFIGURATION multi_conf
ALTER MAPPING FOR asciiword, asciihword, hword_asciipart,
word, hword, hword_part
WITH unaccent THEN (german_ispell AND english_ispell) OR simple;
```

## Some FTS problems #4

- Working with dictionaries can be difficult and slow
  - Installing dictionaries can be complicated
  - Dictionaries are loaded into memory for every session (slow first query symptom) and eat memory.

```
time for i in {1..10}; do echo $i; psql postgres -c "select  
ts_lexize('english_hunspell', 'evening')" > /dev/null; done
```

```
1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10
```

```
real    0m0.656s  
user    0m0.015s  
sys 0m0.031s
```

For russian hunspell dictionary:

```
real 0m3.809s  
user0m0.015s  
sys 0m0.029s
```

Each session «eats» 20MB of RAM !

# Dictionaries in shared memory

- Now it's easy (Artur Zakirov, Postgres Professional + Thomas Vondra)

[https://github.com/postgrespro/shared\\_ispell](https://github.com/postgrespro/shared_ispell)

```
CREATE EXTENSION shared_ispell;
CREATE TEXT SEARCH DICTIONARY english_shared (
  TEMPLATE = shared_ispell,
  DictFile = en_us,
  AffFile = en_us,
  StopWords = english
);
CREATE TEXT SEARCH DICTIONARY russian_shared (
  TEMPLATE = shared_ispell,
  DictFile = ru_ru,
  AffFile = ru_ru,
  StopWords = russian
);
time for i in {1..10}; do echo $i; psql postgres -c "select ts_lexize('russian_shared', 'туши')" > /dev/null; done
1
2
.....
10

real 0m0.170s      VS      real 0m3.809s
user 0m0.015s      user 0m0.015s
sys  0m0.027s      sys  0m0.029s
```

# Dictionaries as extensions

- Now it's easy (Artur Zakirov, Postgres Professional)  
[https://github.com/postgrespro/hunspell\\_dicts](https://github.com/postgrespro/hunspell_dicts)

```
CREATE EXTENSION hunspell_ru_ru; -- creates russian_hunspell dictionary
CREATE EXTENSION hunspell_en_us; -- creates english_hunspell dictionary
CREATE EXTENSION hunspell_nn_no; -- creates norwegian_hunspell dictionary
SELECT ts_lexize('english_hunspell', 'evening');
    ts_lexize
```

```
-----
{evening,even}
(1 row)
```

```
Time: 57.612 ms
SELECT ts_lexize('russian_hunspell', 'туши');
    ts_lexize
```

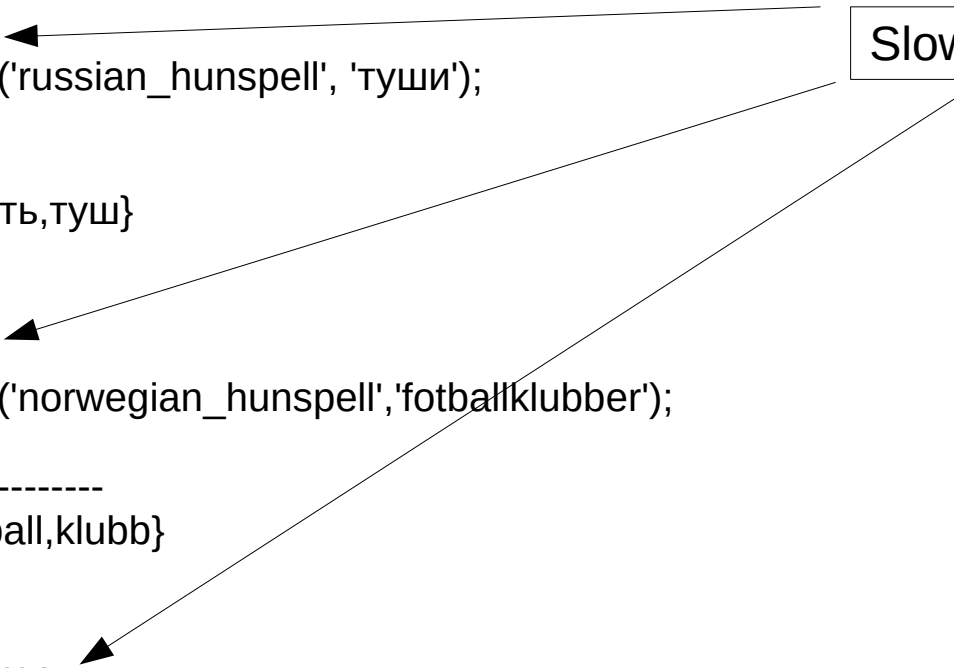
```
-----
{туша,тушь,тушить,туш}
(1 row)
```

```
Time: 382.221 ms
SELECT ts_lexize('norwegian_hunspell', 'fotballklubber');
    ts_lexize
```

```
-----
{fotball,klubb,fot,ball,klubb}
(1 row)
```

```
Time: 323.046 ms
```

Slow first query syndrom



# Tsvector editing functions

- Stas Kelvich (Postgres Professional)
- `setweight(tsvector, 'char', text[])` - add label to lexemes from `text[]` array

```
select setweight( to_tsvector('english', '20-th anniversary of PostgreSQL'),
'A',    '{postgresql,20}');
           setweight
-----
'20':1A 'anniversari':3 'postgresql':5A 'th':2
(1 row)
```

- `ts_delete(tsvector, text[])` - delete lexemes from tsvector

```
select ts_delete( to_tsvector('english', '20-th anniversary of PostgreSQL'),
'{20,postgresql}'::text[]);
           ts_delete
-----
'anniversari':3 'th':2
(1 row)
```

# Tsvector editing functions

- `unnest(tsvector)`

```
select * from unnest( setweight( to_tsvector('english',
'20-th anniversary of PostgreSQL'), 'A',  '{postgresql,20}'));
lexeme      | positions | weights
-----+-----+-----
20          | {1}       | {A}
anniversari | {3}       | {D}
postgresql  | {5}       | {A}
th          | {2}       | {D}
(4 rows)
```

- `tsvector_to_array(tsvector)` — tsvector to text[] array  
`array_to_tsvector(text[])`

```
select tsvector_to_array( to_tsvector('english',
'20-th anniversary of PostgreSQL'));
tsvector_to_array
-----
{20,anniversari,postgresql,th}
(1 row)
```

# Tsvector editing functions

- `ts_filter(tsvector, text[])` - fetch lexemes with specific label{s}

```

select ts_filter($$'20':2A 'anniversari':4C 'postgresql':1A,6A 'th':3$$::tsvector,
 '{C}');
      ts_filter
-----
 'anniversari':4C
(1 row)

select ts_filter($$'20':2A 'anniversari':4C 'postgresql':1A,6A 'th':3$$::tsvector,
 '{C,A}');
              ts_filter
-----
 '20':2A 'anniversari':4C 'postgresql':1A,6A
(1 row)

```

# FTS demo

- How to configure and use FTS with PostgreSQL?

[https://github.com/select-artur/apod\\_fts](https://github.com/select-artur/apod_fts)

ToDo:

- Exampe of fixing misspelled user queries
- Query suggestion for user





**Thanks !**