Parallel Computing/Programming Assignment #1: Amdahl’s Law for Multicore

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1 Assignment Description

For this assignment, you are to write a serial C program which uses the revised formulations of Amdahl’s Law from Hill et al [1] to determine the speedup for a supercomputer consisting of multicore nodes connected by a zero overhead network. Recall from the paper that:

\[ Speedup_{base} = \frac{1}{((1-f) + f/n)} \]  

where \( Speedup_{base} \) is the number of times faster the parallel execution is compared to the execution time on a single processor (i.e., sequential) execution, \( f \) is the fraction of the total execution time in the serial case that can be made parallel and \( n \) is the number of processors.

In [1], we found that a heterogeneous multicore chip where one or more cores are more powerful than others yields the following speedup formula:

\[ Speedup_{asymmetric}(f, c, r) = \frac{1}{((1-f)/perf(r) + f/(perf(r) + c - r))} \]

Here, \( r \) cores are combined into a super-fast core yielding a serial performance of \( perf(r) = \sqrt{r} \) but we see that we have to penalize the parallel fraction of the program by not allowing the full \( c \) cores to be used within that node but instead only \( c + perf(r) - r \) processors can be applied.

Now, the ultimate “cake and eat it too” design allows the dynamic combining of upto \( r \) cores when necessary for fast serial execution of the non-parallel part of the program, but can reconfigure those \( r \) cores at zero overhead to be fully applied to the parallel part of the program. This yields the following dynamic formulation of speedup:

\[ Speedup_{dynamic}(f, c, r) = \frac{1}{((1-f)/perf(r) + f/c)} \]
We are adding a new wrinkle into this, by assuming that the above describes the speedup for a single node within a larger supercomputer system. Thus, there could be $N$ nodes and so the new speedup equations become:

$$\text{Speedup}_{\text{asymmetric}}(N, f, c, r) = N \times \frac{1}{((1 - f) / \text{perf}(r) + f / (\text{perf}(r) + c - r))}$$

(4)

and,

$$\text{Speedup}_{\text{dynamic}}(N, f, c, r) = N \times \frac{1}{((1 - f) / \text{perf}(r) + f / c)}$$

(5)

Now, suppose you are given a supercomputer with up to 1024 nodes and each node has up to 1024 cores. Write a serial C program that generates speedup data that can be plotted in 3-D according to the following:

1. Each 3-D plot will be based on a fixed $f$ that will have the following 5 possible values $f = \{0.99999999, 0.9999, 0.99, 0.9, 0.5\}$ for both $\text{Speedup}_{\text{asymmetric}}(N, f, c, r)$ and $\text{Speedup}_{\text{dynamic}}(N, f, c, r)$. Thus, there will be 10 plots in total generated.

2. Within each plot, $N$ will vary from 1 to 1024 in jumps of 4x (i.e., 1, 4, 16, 64, 256 and 1024).

3. Within each plot, $r$ will vary from 1 to 1024 in jumps of 4x.

4. Within each plot, $c$ will vary from $r$ to 1024 in jumps of 4x.

5. The axes for each plot are $N \times c$ total cores in the supercomputer (x), $r$ cores used to make the super-fast serial processors (y) and the overall computed speedup (z).

6. There is a template on kratos.cs.rpi.edu, /tmp/assignment1-template.tar.gz to help you get started. Please use this template.

In total you will have 1260 data points – 630 data points for asymmetric and 630 data points for dynamic. Each 3-D plot for a given $f$ and speedup formula combination will have 126 data points. So, again, you will have 10 data plots overall.

You can use GNU Plot or Excel to perform the plots. For each graph, indicate the overall trend you observe and compare both speedup formulas for each $f$ value. Does dynamic always win? Are there places where dynamic and asymmetric yield nearly the same speedup?

2 HAND-IN INSTRUCTIONS

Put your assignment C code and write-up with graphs in PDF format on the class server, kratos.cs.rpi.edu under the assignment1 subdirectory on your Linux account.

We will use an automated script to collect the assignments.

PLEASE PUT YOUR ASSIGNMENT UNDER THE assignment1 SUBDIRECTORY OR ELSE IT WILL NOT BE COLLECTED CORRECTLY AND COULD RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL POINT LOSS OR NOT GRADED AT ALL.

ADDITIONALLY, KEEP A BACKUP COPY OF YOUR CODE, DATA and REPORT/GRAPHS ON YOUR OWN SYSTEM IN CASE KRATOS.CS.RPI.EDU FAILS DURING THE ASSIGNMENT PERIOD.
References