

Parallel Programming with Processes, Threads and Message Passing

TDDE35

Christoph Kessler

PELAB / IDA Linköping University Sweden



Outline

Lecture 2a: Parallel programming with threads

- Shared Memory programming model
- Revisiting processes, threads, synchronization
- Pthreads
- OpenMP (very shortly)

Lecture 2b: Parallel programming with message passing

- Distributed Memory programming model
- MPI introduction



Concurrency vs. Parallelism

Concurrent computing

1 or few CPUs

Quasi-simultaneous execution



Parallel computing

Many CPUs

Simultaneous execution of many / all threads of the *same application*

Common issues:

- threads/processes for overlapping execution
- synchronization, communication
- resource contention, races, deadlocks

Goals of concurrent execution:

- Increase CPU utilization
- Increase responsitivity of a system
- Support multiple users

Central issues: Scheduling, priorities, ...

Goals of parallel execution:

- Speedup of 1 application (large problem)

Central issues: Parallel algorithms and data structures, Mapping, Load balancing...



Parallel Programming Models



Parallel Programming Model

- System-software-enabled programmer's view of the underlying hardware
- Abstracts from details of the underlying architecture, e.g. network topology
- Focuses on a few characteristic properties, e.g. memory model
- → **Portability** of algorithms/programs across a family of parallel architectures





Processes

(Refresher from TDDB68)



Example: Process Creation in UNIX

- fork system call
 - creates new child process
- exec system call
 - used after a **fork** to replace the process' memory space with a new program
- wait system call
 - by parent, suspends parent execution until child process has terminated



```
int main()
                      C program forking
                     a separate process
   Pid_t ret;
   /* fork another process: */
   ret = fork();
   if (ret < 0) { /* error occurred */
         fprintf ( stderr, "Fork Failed" );
         exit(-1);
   else if (ret == 0) { /* child process */
         execlp ( "/bin/ls", "ls", NULL );
   }
   else { /*parent process: ret=childPID *
         /* will wait for child to complete: *
         wait (NULL);
```

printf ("Child Complete"); exit(0);



Parallel programming with processes

- Processes can create new processes that execute concurrently with the parent process
- OS scheduler also for single-core CPUs
- Different processes share nothing by default
 - Inter-process communication via OS only, via shared memory (write/read) or message passing (send/recv)
- Threads are a more light-weight alternative for programming shared-memory applications
 - Sharing memory (except local stack) by default
 - Lower overhead for creation and scheduling/dispatch
 - E.g. Solaris: creation 30x, switching 5x faster



IPC Models – Realization by OS





Example: POSIX Shared Memory API

- #include <sys/shm.h> #include <sys/stat.h>
- Let OS create a shared memory segment (system call):
 - int segment_id = shmget (IPC_PRIVATE, size, S_IRUSR | S_IWUSR);
- Attach the segment to the executing process (system call):
 - void *shmemptr = shmat (segment_id, NULL, 0);
- Now access it:
 - strcpy ((char *)shmemptr, "Hello world"); // Example: copy a string into it

- Detach it from executing process when no longer accessed:
 - shmdt (shmemptr);
- Let OS delete it when no longer used:
 - shmctl (segment_id, IPC_RMID, NULL);

process A	
process B	~ ²
kernel	



Threads



Single- and Multithreaded Processes



A **thread** is a basic unit of CPU utilization:

• Thread ID, program counter, register set, stack.

A process may have one or several threads.



Benefits of Multithreading

- Responsiveness
 - Interactive application can continue even when part of it is blocked
- Resource Sharing
 - Threads of a process share its memory by default.
- Economy
 - Light-weight
 - Creation, management, context switching for threads is much faster than for processes
- Utilization of Multiprocessor Architectures
 - Convenient (but low-level) shared memory programming



POSIX Threads (Pthreads)

- A POSIX standard (IEEE 1003.1c) API for thread programming in C
 - start and terminate threads
 - coordinate threads
 - regulate access to shared data structures
- API specifies behavior, not implementation, of the thread library
- C interface, e.g.
 - int pthread_create (pthread_t *thread, const pthread_attr_t *attr, void *(*start_routine)(void*), void *arg);
- Note: as a library, rely on underlying OS and hardware!
- Common in UNIX operating systems (Solaris, Linux, Mac OS X)



Starting a Thread (1)

Thread is started with function

- Called func must have parameter and ret values void*
 - Exception: first thread is started with main()
- Thread terminates when called function terminates, or by pthread_exit (void *retval)
- Threads started one by one
- Threads represented by data structure of type pthread_t



Starting a Thread (2)

Example:

```
#include <pthread.h>
```

```
int main ( int argc, char *argv[] )
{
    int *ptr;
    pthread_t thr;
```

```
pthread_create( &thr,
NULL,
foo,
(void*)ptr );
```

```
pthread_join( &thr, NULL );
return 0;
```

```
void *foo ( void *vp )
ł
  int i = (int) vp;;
// alternative
// - pass a parameter block:
void *foo ( void *vp )
  Userdefinedstructtype *ptr;
  ptr=(Userdefinedstructtype*)vp;
```

. . .



Access to Shared Data (0)

- Globally defined variables are globally shared and visible to all threads.
- Locally defined variables are visible to the thread executing the function.
- But all data in shared memory publish an address of data: all threads could access...
- Take care: typically no protection between thread data – thread1 (foo1) could even write to thread2's (foo2) stack frame

```
C. Kessler, IDA, Linköping University
```

Example 0: Parallel incrementing

int a[N]; // shared, assume P | N
pthread_t thr[P];

```
int main(void)
  int t;
  for (t=0; t<P; t++)
    pthread_create(&(thr[t]), NULL,
                    incr, a + t^*N/P );
  for (t=0; t<P; t++)
    pthread join( thr[t], NULL );
   ...
}
void *incr ( void *myptr_a )
{ int i;
  for (i=0; i<N/P; i++)
    ((int*)myptr a[i])++; }
```



Access to Shared Data (1)

- Globally defined variables are globally shared and visible to all threads.
- Locally defined variables are visible to the thread executing the function.
- But all data in shared memory publish an address of data: all threads could access...
- Take care: typically no protection between thread data – thread1 (foo1) could even write to thread2's (foo2) stack frame

```
C. Kessler, IDA, Linköping University
```

```
• Example 1
```

```
int *globalptr = NULL; // shared ptr
void *foo1 (void *ptr1)
{
    int i = 15;
    globalptr = &i; // ??? dangerous!
    // if foo1 terminates, foo2 writes
    // somewhere, unless globalptr
    // value is reset to NULL manually
```

```
void *foo2 ( void *ptr2 )
{
    if (globalptr) *globalptr = 17;
...
}
```



Access to Shared Data (2)

- Globally defined variables are globally shared and visible to all threads
- Locally defined variables are visible to the thread executing the function
- But all data in shared memory publish an address of data: all threads could access...
- Take care: typically no protection between thread data – thread1 could even write to thread2's stack frame

Example 2

```
int *globalptr = NULL; // shared ptr
```

```
void *foo1 ( void *ptr1 )
```

```
int i = 15;
globalptr =(int*)malloc(sizeof(int));
// safe, but possibly memory leak;
// OK if garbage collection ok
```

```
void *foo2 ( void *ptr2 )
{
    if (globalptr) *globalptr = 17;
...
```



Coordinating Shared Access (3)

What if several threads need to write a shared variable?

- If they simply write: ok if write order does not matter
- If they read and write: encapsulate (critical section, monitor) and protect e.g. by mutual exclusion using mutex locks)
- Example: Access to a taskpool
 - Maintain shared list of tasks to be performed
 - If a thread is idle, it gets a task and performs it

```
// each thread:
while (! workdone)
{
  task = gettask( Pooldescr );
  performtask ( task );
}
```

// may be called concurrently:
Tasktype gettask (Pool p)
{
 // begin critical section
 task = p.queue [p.index];
 p.index++;
 // end critical section

return task;

C. Kessler, IDA, Linköping University

Race Conditions lead to Nondeterminism

- Example: p.index++
- could be implemented in machine code as
 - 39: register1 = p.index40: register1 = register1 + 141: p.index = register1
- Consider this execution interleaving, with "index = 5" initially:

// load

// add

// store

- 39: thread1 executes register1 = p.index
 39: thread2 executes register1 = p.index
 40: thread1 executes register1 = register1 + 1
 40: thread2 executes register1 = register1 + 1
 41: thread1 executes p.index = register1
 41: thread2 executes p.index = register1
- Compare to a different interleaving, e.g., 39,40,41, 39,40,41...
 - → Result depends on relative speed of the accessing threads (race condition)

C. Kessler, IDA, Linköping University

Not atomic!

{ T1.register1 = 5 }
{ T2.register1 = 5 }
{ T1.register1 = 6 }
{ T2.register1 = 6 }
{ p.index = 6 }
{ p.index = 6 }



Critical Section

- Critical Section: A set of instructions, operating on shared data or resources, that should be executed by a <u>single</u> thread at a time <u>without interruption</u>
 - Atomicity of execution
 - Mutual exclusion: At most one process should be allowed to operate inside at any time
 - Consistency: inconsistent intermediate states of shared data not visible to other processes outside
- May consist of different program parts for different threads
 - that access the same shared data
- General structure, with structured control flow:

Entry of critical section C

... critical section C: operation on shared data

Exit of critical section C





Coordinating Shared Access (4)

pthread_mutex_t mutex; // global variable - shared

```
...
// in main:
  pthread_mutex_init( &mutex, NULL );
  ...
                                              Often implemented using
// in gettask:
                                              test and set or other atomic
  ...
                                              instruction where available
  pthread_mutex_lock( &mutex );
  task = p.queue [p.index];
  p.index++;
  pthread_mutex_unlock( &mutex );
   ...
```



Hardware Support for Synchronization

- Most systems provide hardware support for protecting critical sections
- Uniprocessors could *disable interrupts*
 - Currently running code would execute without preemption
 - Generally too inefficient on multiprocessor systems
 - Operating systems using this are not broadly scalable
- Modern machines provide special *atomic instructions*
 - **TestAndSet**: test memory word <u>and</u> set value atomically
 - Atomic = non-interruptable
 - If multiple TestAndSet instructions are executed simultaneously (each on a different CPU in a multiprocessor), then they take effect sequentially in some arbitrary order.
 - **AtomicSwap**: swap contents of two memory words atomically
 - CompareAndSwap
 - Load-linked / Store-conditional



TestAndSet Instruction

Definition in pseudocode:

```
boolean TestAndSet (boolean *target)
{
    boolean rv = *target;
    *target = TRUE;
    return rv; // return the OLD value
}
```



Mutual Exclusion using TestAndSet

Shared boolean variable lock, initialized to FALSE (= unlocked)

```
do {
   while (TestAndSet (&lock ))
       ; // do nothing but spinning on the lock (busy waiting)
   // ... critical section
   lock = FALSE;
   // ... remainder section
```

```
} while ( TRUE);
```



Pitfalls with Semaphores

- Correct use of mutex operations:
 - Protect all possible entries/exits of control flow into/from critical section:

pthread_mutex_lock (&mutex)

pthread_mutex_unlock (&mutex)

- ors: (or both) ??
- Possible sources of synchronization errors:
 - Omitting lock(&mutex) or unlock(&mutex) (or both) ??
 - Iock(&mutex) Iock(&mutex) ??
 - Iock(&mutex1) unlock(&mutex2) ??
 - if-statement in critical section, unlock in then-branch only

C. Kessler, IDA, Linköping University



Problems: Deadlock and Starvation

- Deadlock two or more threads are waiting indefinitely for an event that can be caused only by one of the waiting threads
 - Typical example: Nested critical sections
 - Guarded by locks S and Q, initialized to unlocked

```
P_0
mutex_lock(S);
mutex_lock(Q);
...
mutex_unlock(S);
time mutex_unlock(Q);
```

P₁ mutex_lock(Q); mutex_lock(S);

mutex_unlock(Q); mutex_unlock(S);

 Starvation – indefinite blocking. A thread may never get the chance to acquire a lock if the mutex mechanism is not *fair*.

Deadlock Characterization [Coffman et al. 1971]

Deadlock can arise only if **four conditions** hold simultaneously:

- Mutual exclusion: only one thread at a time can use a resource.
- Hold and wait: a thread holding at least one resource is waiting to acquire additional resources held by other threads.
- No preemption of resources: a resource can be released only voluntarily by the thread holding it, after that thread has completed its task.
- **Circular wait:** there exists a set $\{P_0, P_1, \dots, P_n\}$ of waiting threads such that
 - P_0 is waiting for a resource that is held by P_1 ,
 - P_1 is waiting for a resource that is held by $P_2, \ldots,$
 - P_{n-1} is waiting for a resource that is held by P_n , and
- P_n is waiting for a resource that is held by P_0 . C. Kessler, IDA, Linköping University 29



Coordinating Shared Access (5)

- Must also rely on implementation for efficiency
- Time to lock / unlock mutex or synchronize threads varies widely between different platforms
- A mutex that all threads access serializes the threads!
 - Convoying
 - Goal: Make critical section as short as possible

```
// in gettask():
int tmpindex; // local (thread-private) variable
pthread_mutex_lock( &mutex );
tmpindex = p.index++;
pthread_mutex_unlock( &mutex );
task = p.queue [ tmpindex ];
```



Coordinating Shared Access (6)

- When programming on this level of abstraction: can minimize serialization, but not avoid
 - Example: Fine-grained locking
- Better: avoid mutex and similar constructs, and use higher-level data structures that are lock-free
 - Example: NOBLE library
- Also: Transactional memory

More about this in TDDD56



Performance Issues with Threads on Multicores

Performance Issue: Thread Pools

 For a multithreaded process: Create a number of threads in a pool where they await work



- Advantages:
 - Faster to service a request with an existing thread than to create a new thread
 - Allows the number of threads in the application(s) to be bound to the size of the pool
- Win32 API
- OpenMP

C. Kessler, IDA, Linköping University

Performance Issue: Spinlocks on Multiprocessors

Recall busy waiting at spinlocks:

// ... lock initially 0 (unlocked)
while (test_and_set(&lock))

// ... the critical section ... lock = 0;

- Test_and_set in a tight loop
 → high bus traffic on multiprocessor
 - Cache coherence mechanism must broadcast all writing accesses (incl. t&s) to lock immediately to all writing processors, to maintain a consistent view of lock's value
 - → contention
 - degrades performance

C. Kessler, IDA, Linköping University

Solution 1: TTAS

Combine with ordinary read:

while (test_and_set(&lock))
 while (lock)

// ... the critical section ...

- Most accesses to lock are now reads
 - → less contention, as long as lock is not released.

Solution 2: Back-Off

- while (test_and_set(&lock)) do_nothing_for (short_time);
 // ... the critical section ...
- Exponential / random back-off



Performance Issue: Manual Avoidance of Idle Waiting

- Thread that unsuccessfully tried to acquire mutex is blocked but not suspended
 - busy waiting, idle ☺
- Can find out that mutex is locked and do something else:
 pthread_mutex_trylock (&mutex_lock);
 - If mutex is unlocked, returns 0
 If mutex is locked, returns EBUSY
- Useful for locks that are not accessed too frequently and for threads having the chance to do something else



Better Programmability for Thread Programming

Short overview of OpenMP™

(see TDDE65 for in-depth treatment of OpenMP)



sequential

#pragma omp parallel

OpenMP[™]

- Standard for shared-memory thread programming
- Developed for incremental parallelization of HPC code
- Directives (e.g. #pragma omp parallel)
- Support in recent C compilers, e.g. gcc from v.4.3 and later
- High-level constructs for data and work sharing
 - Low-level thread programming still possible





Performance Issue: Load Balancing

- Parallel execution time ("makespan" in scheduling terminology) is determined by the longest-running process / thread
- Minimized by load balancing
 - Static mapping of tasks to cores before runtime, no OH
 - Dynamic mapping done at runtime
 - Shared (critical section) or distributed work pool
 - On-line problem don't know the future, only the past
 - Heuristics such as best-fit, random work stealing

Example: Parallel loop, iterations of unknown+varying workload #pragma omp parallel for schedule(dynamic) for (i=0; i<N; i++) work (i, unknownworkload(i));</p>



Example: Sequential sum in C

```
#define N 2048
```

```
int sum, arr[N];
```

```
void main()
```

```
{
// ... initialize arr
```

```
for (i=0; i<N; i++) {
    sum = sum + arr[i];
}
// ... output sum</pre>
```

}



Example: Parallel sum in OpenMP

```
#include <omp.h>
#define N 2048
int sum, arr[N];
void main()
 // ... initialize arr
#pragma omp parallel private(i)
#pragma omp for reduction(+:sum)
  for (i=0; i<N; i++) {
    sum = sum + arr[i];
  }
 // ... output sum
```



Message Passing



MPI – Program Startup

- MPI (implementation) is a **library** of message passing operations, linked with the application's executable code.
- **SPMD** execution style
 - all started processes (at least, 1 per node) execute main() of the same program
- Startup script (platform-dependent), e.g.:

mpirun – np 8 a.out



launches 8 MPI processes, each executing main() of a.out

 Distinguished only by their MPI rank (unique ID in 0 ... #processes – 1)

C. Kessler, IDA, Linköping University



Background: SPMD vs. Fork-Join



constant number of parallel activities (processors / processes / threads)

static mapping to processors

mostly flat parallelism (nested parallelism by group splitting)

Example: MPI, HPF, UPC, NestStep

needs dynamic scheduling (overhead)

dynamic creation and deletion

of parallel activities

naturally nested parallelism (nested parallelism by nested spawning)

Example: pthreads, Java threads, Unix–fork, OpenMP, PVM, MPI–2, Cilk



Hello World (1)







MPI Core Routines (C API)

MPI_Init(int *argc, char ***argv);

MPI_Finalize(void);

Status object:

status->MPI_SOURCE indicates the sender of the message received; status->MPI_TAG indicates the tag of the message received;

status->MPI_ERROR contains an error code.

C. Kessler, IDA, Linkoping University



MPI – Determinism

Message passing is generally nondeterministic: Arrival order of two sent messages is unspecified.

MPI guarantees that two messages sent from processor *A* to *B* will arrive in the order sent.

Messages can be distinguished by sender and a tag (integer).

User-defined nondeterminism in receive operations:

wildcard MPI_ANY_SOURCE

wildcard MPI_ANY_TAG

MPI blocking vs. nonblocking communication operations → TDDC78 MPI communication modes (synchronous, buffered, ...) → TDDC78 C. Kessler, IDA, Linköping University 47



Collective Communication Operations



C. Kessler, IDA, Linköping University

48

Some Collective Communication Operations in MPI

Single-Broadcast:

Reduction:

with predefined $op \in \{ MPI_SUM, MPI_MAX, ... \}$ or user-defined by MPI_Op_Create.

MPI_Allreduce

Barrier synchronization:

c.int MPI_Barrier(MPI_Comm comm);

Collective Communication in MPI Example: Scatter and Gather





#include <mpi.h>
#define N 2048

. . .

```
void main( int argc, int argv )
```



int rank, p, i, sum, arr[N], *myarr, myN, mysum;



#include <mpi.h>
#define N 2048

```
void main( int argc, int argv )
```



int rank, p, i, sum, arr[N], *myarr, myN, mysum; MPI_Init(&argc, &argv); MPI_Comm_rank(MPI_COMM_WORLD, &rank); MPI_Comm_size(MPI_COMM_WORLD, &p);



```
#include <mpi.h>
#define N 2048
                                       arr
                                           0
                                                                            N-1
void main( int argc, int argv )
 int rank, p, i, sum, arr[N], *myarr, myN, mysum;
 MPI_Init( & argc, & argv );
 MPI_Comm_rank(MPI_COMM_WORLD, &rank);
 MPI_Comm_size( MPI_COMM_WORLD, &p );
 if (rank==0) // initialize on P0 only:
   for (i=0; i<N; i++)
     arr[i] = ...;
 myN = N / p; // assume p divides N
 myarr = (int *) malloc( myN * sizeof(int));
```



```
#include <mpi.h>
#define N 2048
                                       arr
                                          0
                                                                          N-1
void main( int argc, int argv )
 int rank, p, i, sum, arr[N], *myarr, myN, mysum;
 MPI_Init( & argc, & argv );
 MPI_Comm_rank( MPI_COMM_WORLD, &rank );
 MPI_Comm_size( MPI_COMM_WORLD, &p );
 if (rank==0) // initialize on P0 only:
   for (i=0; i<N; i++)
     arr[i] = ...;
 myN = N / p; // assume p divides N
 myarr = (int *) malloc( myN * sizeof(int));
 MPI_Scatter( arr, myN, MPI_INT, myarr, myN, MPI_INT, 0, MPI_COMM_WORLD);
```



```
#include <mpi.h>
#define N 2048
                                       arr
                                          0
                                                                          N-1
void main( int argc, int argv )
 int rank, p, i, sum, arr[N], *myarr, myN, mysum;
 MPI_Init( & argc, & argv );
 MPI_Comm_rank( MPI_COMM_WORLD, &rank );
 MPI_Comm_size( MPI_COMM_WORLD, &p );
 if (rank==0) // initialize on P0 only:
   for (i=0; i<N; i++)
     arr[i] = ...;
 myN = N / p; // assume p divides N
 myarr = (int *) malloc( myN * sizeof(int));
 MPI_Scatter( arr, myN, MPI_INT, myarr, myN, MPI_INT, 0, MPI_COMM_WORLD);
 mysum = 0;
 for (i=0; i<myN; i++)
    mySum += myarr[i]; // each process calculates partial sum of N/p elements
```



```
#include <mpi.h>
   #define N 2048
                                         arr
                                             0
                                                                            N-1
   void main( int argc, int argv )
    int rank, p, i, sum, arr[N], *myarr, myN, mysum;
    MPI_Init( & argc, & argv );
    MPI_Comm_rank(MPI_COMM_WORLD, &rank);
    MPI_Comm_size( MPI_COMM_WORLD, &p );
    if (rank==0) // initialize on P0 only:
      for (i=0; i<N; i++)
        arr[i] = ...;
    myN = N / p; // assume p divides N
    myarr = (int *) malloc( myN * sizeof(int));
    MPI_Scatter(arr, myN, MPI_INT, myarr, myN, MPI_INT, 0, MPI_COMM_WORLD);
    mysum = 0;
    for (i=0; i<myN; i++)
       mySum += myarr[i]; // each process calculates partial sum of N/p elements
    MPI_Reduce( &mysum, &sum, 1, MPI_INT, MPI_SUM, 0, MPI_COMM_WORLD);
    // ... now output sum
    MPI_Finalize();
C. K }
```



More about MPI \rightarrow TDDE65

- MPI Communication modes for point-to-point communication
- MPI Communicators and Groups
- MPI Datatypes
- MPI One-Sided Communication (Remote Memory Access)
- MPI Virtual Topologies
- Labs: Image filter, Particle simulation



Questions?



Further Reading (Selection)

- C. Lin, L. Snyder: *Principles of Parallel Programming*. Addison Wesley, 2008. (general introduction; Pthreads)
- B. Wilkinson, M. Allen: *Parallel Programming, 2e.* Prentice Hall, 2005. (general introduction; pthreads, OpenMP, MPI)
- M. Herlihy, N. Shavit: *The Art of Multiprocessor Programming*. Morgan Kaufmann, 2008. (threads; nonblocking synchronization)
- Chandra, Dagum, Kohr, Maydan, McDonald, Menon: Parallel Programming in OpenMP. Morgan Kaufmann, 2001.
- B. Chapman *et al.*: Using OpenMP Portable Shared Memory Parallel Programming. MIT press, 2007.
- OpenMP: www.openmp.org
- MPI: www.mpi-forum.org

C. Kessler, IDA, Linköping University