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# Hardware modeling with QEMU

by novecube 2020, 8, 15,

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# 1. The need for QEMU

QEMU is open source software that provides virtualization and emulator capabilities. It features high performance using dynamic translators and can run the entire software stack on top of a virtual machine. It was creat ed to emulate the x86 system, but now provides an emulation environme nt for various processors such as ARM, MIPS, and ALPHA.

Using an emulator has the advantage of being able to develop a system without actual physical hardware. QEMU provides emulation not only for the processor but also for the device unit, so you can get the same effect as running it on the actual target board.

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Software for embedded systems requires a lot of resources in the develo pment process. In particular, debugging is difficult, and debugging equip ment is also expensive. However, easy debugging is possible by using the monitor function provided by QEMU.

A typical example of QEMU being used is the Android emulator. The Android emulator is developed based on QEMU and provides a virtual target board named "Goldfish". As a result, developers who had difficulty developing embedded systems due to complex development environments a nd expensive equipment can develop Android without any difficulties.

# 2. Hardware modeling

This article shows how to implement the UART function by configuring t he memory layout of the target board based on the PowerPC architectur e and implementing the interrupt processing routine using the API provided by QEMU. QEMU supports various architectures, CPUs, and reference boards, but if a separate external module is mounted on the target board to be actually used, it must be implemented directly through the hardware modeling process.

The target board is an MPC8560 based on the PowerPC architecture, and we aim to implement the UART function of this board. The basic target b oard based on the PowerPC architecture provided by QEMU is the MPC85 44. The difference between the MPC8544 and the MPC8560 is the presence or absence of a communication processor module (CPM).

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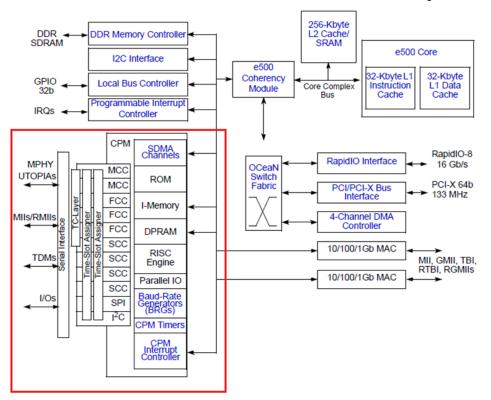
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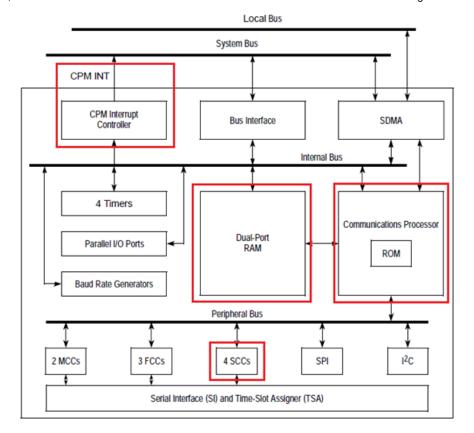
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# (MPC8560 block diagram)

The communication processor module (CPM) of the MPC8560 is a communication module for improving the performance of high bit-rate protoco ls such as UART and Fast Ethernet.

The communication processor (CP) can execute one instruction per clock and executes code in the internal ROM or I-Memory. It has an internal tim er and generates an interrupt with this timer to monitor the buffer status. The shared memory area is used for data exchange between the CP and the e500 core processor. In PowerPC, the memory area is called Dual-port RAM, and in MPC8560, it has a size of 32-Kbytes. This area provides a flexible, high-speed communication medium.



#### (MPC8560 CPM block diagram)

In order to activate the UART function of the communication processor module (CPM), it is necessary to identify the modules required for functional operation in the MPC8560 CPM block diagram. In actual hardware, the communication processor (CP) executes the instructions loaded in the ROM or I-RAM inside the CPM independently of the e500 core and operates, but there is no CPM module code in QEMU. Therefore, it is necessary to create a CPM module and program it to operate the same as the actual hardware.

When the printf function is called in the e500 core processor where the k ernel is running, the UART 1-byte output function is finally called, and th e function writes the data to be output in the designated area of the dual -port RAM of the communication processor module (CPM). Also, the statu s register of the area where the data is recorded is monitored at a very fa st cycle by the interrupt controller operated by the internal timer of the C PM, and when the status value is determined to be data input, it is output to the outside.

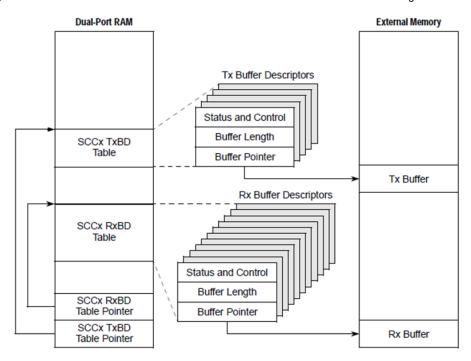
0x8_0000	er RAM ytes #10 er RAM ytes
0x8_0800	ytes #10 er RAM ytes
0x8_0800	#10 er RAM ytes
Bank #2  BD/Data  2 Kbytes  (Partially F	er RAM ytes
BD/Data 2 Kby 2 Kbytes (Partially F	ytes
2 Kbytes (Partially R	,
0x8_1000	,
Bank #3 Bank	
BD/Data BD/I	
2 Kbytes 2 Kb	ytes
0x8_1800	#12
BD/Data BD/D	ata
2 Kbytes 2 Kb	ytes
0x8_2000	#13
BD/Data BD/D	ata
2 Kbytes 2 Kb	ytes
0x8_2800	#14
BD/Data BD/C	
2 Kbytes 2 Kb	
0x8 3000	
Bank#/	
BD/Data FCC	
2 Kbytes 2 Kb	ytes
0x8_3800	#16
BD/Data FCC	Data
2 Kbytes 2 Kb	

#### (Dual-Port RAM Memory Map)

In terms of software emulation, if the hardware polling method is imple mented identically, CPU cycles are wasted. Instead, by using the memory -mapped I/O function supported by QEMU, I/O properties are given to the corresponding area of the dual-port RAM to be processed in an interrup t manner. In this way, the internal timer of the CPM does not have to be taken into account.

For the UART area of Dual-port RAM, you need to figure out the Dual-port RAM memory map and data storage format in the data sheet. The UART f unction is handled by the serial communication controller (SCC) inside t he CPM, and it needs to be configured to operate in UART mode.

Data related to the SCC channel is stored in the Buffer Descriptor (BD) are a of the Dual-port RAM. These values are shared by all serial controllers.



## (SCC BD and Buffer Memory Structure)

In order to activate the UART function with QEMU, you need to understan d the hardware specifications in detail. In particular, it is necessary to acc urately grasp the operating scenario, but since the scenario is not specifically described in the data sheet, the operating principle must be identified through the kernel source code or, if there is only a binary file, through analysis of the disassembly result.

Address	Name	Function	
Base + \$00	RBASE	The DPRAM location of the first RBD	
Base + \$02	TBASE	The DPRAM location of the first TBD	
Base + \$04	RFCR	Function Code for Receive DMA	
Base + \$05	TFCR	Function Code for Transmit DMA	
Base + \$06	MRBLR	Max Receive Buffer Length	
Base + \$08	RSTATE	RCV State information about channel	
Base + \$0C	R_PTR	Pointer to next memory write location	
Base + \$10	RBPTR	Pointer to current/next BD location	
Base + \$12	R_CNT	Down count to end of frame or Buffer	
Base + \$14	RTEMP		
Base + \$18	TSTATE	TX State information about channel	
Base + \$1C	T_PTR	Pointer to next memory read location	
Base + \$20	TBPTR	Porinter to current/next BD location	
Base + \$22	T_CNT	Down count to end of Buffer	
Base + \$24	TTEMP		
Base + \$28	R_CRC	Current Receive CRC	
Base + \$2C	T_CRC	Current Transmit CRC	

(SCC Parameter RAM)

According to the figure above, you can see that there is a TBASE address value at an offset +2 from the memory bank base of the dual-port RAM to which SCC channel 1 is allocated. TBASE has a TX buffer descriptor table. The information in this table is as follows.

	0 15		
Offset + 0	Status and Control		
Offset + 2	Data Length		
Offset + 4	High-Order Buffer Pointer		
Offset + 6	Low-Order Buffer Pointer		

#### (SCC Buffer Descriptors (BD))

The Status and Control field is used for exchanging status information be tween the e500 core processor and the CPM. Simultaneous access is not allowed. For this purpose, check the Status value and record the Control value. For example, when the e500 core processor outputs a character to UART, it checks the Status bit to see if the UART buffer is available before writing the data.

Mutual data exchange between the core processor and the communicati on processor module can be largely classified into four types.

- Command transmission of the core processor
   Changes the state of the SCC channel or initializes the SCC channel.
- Buffer descriptor manipulation
   Delivers the data to be transmitted and tells which memory address to store the received data. It also reports errors that occur during transmission and reception.
- Event Register
   An event occurs when the core processor writes data to a specific register. Conversely, it is used for the purpose of generating an interrupt to the core processor.
- Register property value setting
   Set the operation mode of SCC and set the clock. And it determines the type of physical interface.

When each instruction is delivered from the core processor, the CPM performs the defined operation, and the types are as follows.

INIT TX PARAMETERS
 Copy the TBASE value of SCC parameter RAM to TBPTR and initialize the TSTATE value to 0.

#### INIT RX PARAMETERS

Copy RBASE value of SCC parameter RAM to RBPTR and initialize RSTATE value to 0.

#### ENTER HUNT MODE

Sends a command to the channel to ignore all input data and wait until it returns to the IDLF state.

#### STOP TX

Stops waiting data transmission.

#### GRACEFUL STOP

Transmits the buffer of the TX channel to the end and then ends the transmission process.

#### RESTART TX

Resume transmission in a stopped state.

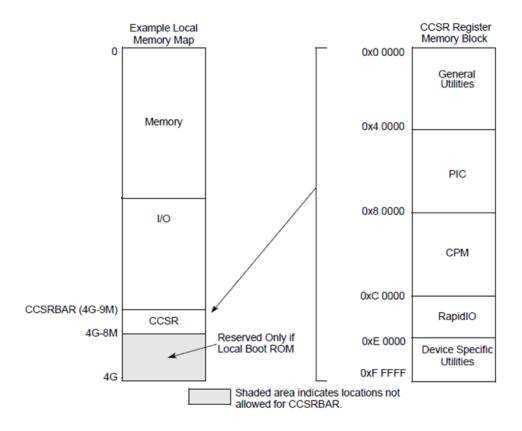
When the communication processor module (CPM) receives a data transmission command from the core processor, it operates in the following scenario. Access the first buffer descriptor by referring to the TxBD table pointer. At this time, if the "INIT TX PARAMETERS" command has not been executed in advance, TBPTR has an unknown value, so be careful. Detects whether the Ready bit value is set in the Status field of the buffer descriptor. As mentioned above, this Ready bit is polled by the internal clock of the CPM, and polled at 128 clock cycles in case of Ethernet and 64 clock cycles in case of UART. Since this is an internal operation of the CPM, the core processor is unaware of it. If the Ready bit is set, it signals that there is data to be transmitted, so the buffer length value is stored in the temporary counter area, T CNT, and the starting address of the buffer is stored in the temporary pointer area, T PTR. If this operation is not performed in the hardware, you need to look at the TX clock setting part again. When transmission starts, T\_CNT decreases and T\_PTR increases. At this time, if the value of TSTATE is set to 0, care must be taken as the core processor may intervene in the middle of transmission. Several buffers can be used depending on the length of the transmission data. Therefore, when the buffer is emptied, it is always necessary to check whether data exists in the next buffer.

When a low-level I/O function is called from the kernel, data is directly written to the CPM register and an event is generated. However, when a high-level I/O function such as printf is called, interrupts are exchanged between the core processor and the CPM as well as memory I/O operations. If a character string exceeding bytes is input to printf, the loop runs internally so that it is stored in the TX buffer in

units of bytes. At this time, in order for the loop to be called, the interrupt generated by the CPM must be processed by the core processor and the ACK must be delivered to the CPM. The way to solve this is in the interrupt section below.

## Memory

To add the dual-port RAM of the communication processor module (CPM) to the existing memory map, the structure of the upper memory map must be identified and the address assigned to the dual-port RAM area must be checked.



### (Top-Level Register Map)

Looking at the figure above, you can see that the CPM memory area is lo cated in the lower tree of the Configuration, Control, and Status Register Map (CCSR) area, so you must allocate the CPM memory area under the C CSR area. Prior to this, device registration is required so that QEMU can r ecognize the CPM as a peripheral device.

```
/* Communications Processor Module(MPC8560) */
/* Initializing CPM areas under CCSR */
dev = qdev_create(NULL, "mpc8560-cpm");
object_property_add_child(OBJECT(ccsr), "mpc8560-cpm", OBJECT(dev), NULL);
qdev_init_nofail(dev);
cpm = MPC8560_CPM(dev);

/* Assign serial port to SCC UART */
mpc8560_cpm_init_serial(cpm, serial_hds[0]);

/* Connecting IRQ line */
s = SYS_BUS_DEVICE(dev);
sysbus_init_irq(s, &(cpm->irq));
sysbus_connect_irq(s, 0, mpic[46]);
memory_region_add_subregion(ccsr_addr_space, 0x80000, &(cpm->cpm_space));
```

(CPM device initialization, hw/ppc/e500.c)

Since the CPM to be implemented is a peripheral device of the e500 processor-based board of the PowerPC architecture, insert the above initializ ation code into the "ppce500\_init" function of the "hw/ppc/e500.c" file where the e500 processor is implemented. The role of each function is as follows.

- DeviceState qdev\_create(BusState \*bus, const char \*name) This function creates a new device. Only objects are created, but the actual operation is performed after qdev\_init-type functions are called.
- void object\_property\_add\_child(Object \*obj, const char \*name,
   Object \*child, Error \*\*errp)
   Since the CPM object was created with the qdev\_create function, the
   object tree must be configured. Since we know that CPM is a sub module of CCSR, we register it as a child object of CCSR. At this time,
   you need to get a CCSR object, and you can use the OBJECT macro.
- qdev\_init\_nofail(DeviceState \*dev)
   Previously, the CPM object was created with the create function, and the object was registered as a sub-module of CCSR. Now, call the init function so that the actual operation can be performed. This function is similar to the qdev\_init function, but if an error occurs, the program terminates instead of returning the error value.
- void mpc8560\_cpm\_init\_serial(CPMState \*s, CharDriverState \*chr)
   This
   function registers the handler of the serial device, sets the size under fifo creation, sets the polling cycle, timeout, and baud rate. The inside of the function is covered in detail in the part describing the UART function setting.
- sysbus\_connect\_irq(SysBusDevice \*dev, int n, qemu\_irq irq)
   To transfer the IRQ generated by CPM to the core processor, this function must be used to set. To do this, the CPM must check the assigned internal interrupt number. If you look at the picture below,

you can see that number 30 is allocated as an internal interrupt number. However, you can see that the previous QEMU code passes "mpic[46]" as an argument value. This is because QEMU manages external and internal interrupts in one array, so "mpic" array parameters from 0 to 15 are external interrupts. because it is assigned to

Internal Interrupt Number	Interrupt Source	Internal Interrupt Number	Interrupt Source
0	L2 cache	14	TSEC 1 receive interrupt
1	ECM	15–17	Reserved
2	DDR DRAM	18	TSEC 1 receive/transmit error interrupt
3	LBC	19	TSEC 2 transmit interrupt
4	DMA channel 0	20	TSEC 2 receive interrupt
5	DMA channel 1	21–23	Reserved
6	DMA channel 2	24	TSEC 2 receive/transmit error interrupt
7	DMA channel 3	25	unused
8	PCI/PCI-X	26	unused
9	RapidIO inbound port write/ error interrupt	27	I <sup>2</sup> C controller
10	RapidIO doorbell inbound interrupt	28	Performance monitor interrupt
11	RapidIO outbound message interrupt	29	Unused
12	RapidIO inbound message interrupt	30	CPM (note that interrupts from port C are not signaled to the PIC when the device is asleep)
13	TSEC 1 transmit interrupt	31	Unused

(internal interrupt assignment)

void memory\_region\_add\_subregion()

This function adds a subregion to the existing memory region in the form of a tree. Since the CPM memory area is located at offset 0x80000 from the start of the CCSR memory area, 0x80000 is passed as an offset factor. The result can be seen in the figure below. You can enter QEMU monitor mode by entering "ctrl+a+c" in QEMU, and in this state, you can check all information of the internal system. Memory tree information can be checked with the "info mtree" command. It can be seen that the memory of the entire system is located at the top and the memory area of "mpc8560-cpm" is located at the bottom of "e500-ccsr". The lower memory area of "mpc8560-cpm" was additionally registered in the CPM device.

#### (memory tree information)

Through the above process, CPM was created and activated as a peripher al device of the e500 core, and the memory area is also secured. Now, we need to implement the detailed operation through internal programmin g of the actual CPM. To do so, you need to know the device programming conventions of QEMU. This convention is very similar to the way Linux de vice drivers work. First, create a structure to contain the information of the peripheral device to be created, and call the initialization function at the device initialization stage.

```
- - X
    static void mpc8560_cpm_class_init(ObjectClass* oc, void* data)
        DeviceClass* dc = DEVICE_CLASS(oc);
        DPRINTF("HIT");
        dc->realize = mpc8560 cpm realize;
        dc->reset = mpc8560_cpm_reset;
    static const TypeInfo mpc8560_cpm_info =
                         = TYPE_MPC8560_CPM,
= TYPE_SYS_BUS_DEVICE,
        .name
        .parent
        .instance_size
                            sizeof(CPMState),
        .instance_init
                            mpc8560_cpm_class_init,
         .class_init
    static void mpc8560_cpm_register_types(void)
        type_register_static(&mpc8560_cpm_info);
DPRINTF("HIT");
    type_init(mpc8560_cpm_register_types)
                                                           1556,32
w/ppc/mpc8560 cpm.c
                                                                           Bo
```

### (initialization part of CPM device file)

The type\_init() function is used to call the initialization function of the ne wly added device. Before that, save the device name and the function po inter to be called during initialization in the TypeInfo type structure. The function that actually performs device initialization is a function with \_re alize appended to the suffix, and in CPM, the lower memory area of CPM is initialized.

For memory area initialization, simple I/O properties and Memory-mapp ed I/O properties can be selected.

Since there are two dual-port RAM areas in CPM, they were named "cpm. dpram1" and "cpm.dpram2" respectively and configured as lower memo ry areas of CPM. Among them, the memory-mapped I/O property is given to the address area where the status value is changed when performing the UART function. The API that can give this property is the memory\_region\_init\_io() function.

```
1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 1479 | 14
```

(CPM lower memory area initialization)

(Filled with Chinese characters and Chinese characters after reading CP M's register map and data sheet)

When the memory-mapped I/O property is set from 0x100 to 0x110, the p re-set handler is called when a memory access is detected at 0x104. At th is time, the memory address value passed to the handler is 0x4, not 0x10 4. However, since each register address in the register map has an absolu te address, a separate calculation is required. To improve readability, it is desirable to use register names with absolute address values as they are, so the following macro is defined separately.

(absolute address-relative address macro)

In the above figure, when the CPM\_REG\_SCCE1 register is accessed, the handler registered at SCC1 base address 0x91a00 is called and the offset of CPM\_REG\_SCCE1 is passed as a factor.

Much of the emulation process is dedicated to register manipulation. Reg isters use bit operators, and if macros are not used, code readability is re duced. Normally, when operating registers, read from bit X to bit size Y, m anipulate the value, and then write it back to the same place. So, I define d and used the PARTIAL\_XXX macro with a prefix meaning partial manipulation. (See the figure below)

(macro for register bit masking)

# interrupt

When an interrupt is normally transmitted from the peripheral device to the core processor, an ACK is transmitted to the core processor. When thi s ACK is received, the corresponding interrupt bit in the Pending register can be initialized. QEMU provides the "qemu\_irq" function to generate a n interrupt.

In the case of a kernel that operates on real hardware, most of the hardware initialization is performed in the bootloader. In the case of a custom operating system other than Linux, the hardware initialized in the bootloader is often not initialized separately. As a result, code that works normally on real hardware may not work on QEMU.

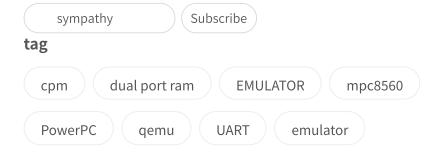
As a result, it is advantageous to include the hardware initialization code in the kernel to support the emulator when developing the kern el because separate debugging is required. Otherwise, you have to mani pulate the hardware in QEMU, but you must be careful because the hard ware itself will initialize itself and patch dependent on a specific kernel i mage.

(Example of undesirable hardware interrupt initialization code)

# **UART** function

QEMU provides character device emulation. UART function can be used by using this character device. Attributes to be set by the user include sen d/receive processing handlers, fifo size settings, poll mode, and transmis sion speed related settings. An example is shown in the figure below.

(Character device initialization code)



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