Amdahl's Law

The necessity to parallelize

Balázs Pál

Eötvös Loránd University

Data Models and Databases in Science, December 3, 2020



- Algorithms can easily exceed any reasonable amount of runtime.
 - Example from the slides: "Algorithms more complex than $\mathcal{O}(n \log (n))$ are hopeless to trace."



- Algorithms can easily exceed any reasonable amount of runtime.
 - Example from the slides: "Algorithms more complex than $\mathcal{O}(n \log(n))$ are hopeless to trace."
 - Solution: parallelization of subtasks!



- Algorithms can easily exceed any reasonable amount of runtime.
 - Example from the slides: "Algorithms more complex than $\mathcal{O}(n \log(n))$ are hopeless to trace."
 - Solution: parallelization of subtasks!
- Problems
 - There are task that can be solved only sequentially (eg. reading from disk).
 - There are task which requires a lot of effort and work to parallelize.



- Algorithms can easily exceed any reasonable amount of runtime.
 - Example from the slides: "Algorithms more complex than $\mathcal{O}(n \log(n))$ are hopeless to trace."
 - Solution: parallelization of subtasks!
- Problems
 - There are task that can be solved only sequentially (eg. reading from disk).
 - There are task which requires a lot of effort and work to parallelize.
- We expect or at least hope that parallelization shortens runtime significantly.



Balázs Pál (ELTE) Amdahl's Law ELTE 2020 2 / 4

Amdahl's law

• Quantifies the theoretical magnitude of speedup due to parallelization.



3/4

Amdahl's law

- Quantifies the theoretical magnitude of speedup due to parallelization.
- We can split a whole arbitrary algorithm (denoting with 1) into to parts:

$$1 = S + P, \tag{1}$$

where S denotes the runtime of the sequentially and P the parallel solved part.





Amdahl's law

- Quantifies the theoretical magnitude of speedup due to parallelization.
- We can split a whole arbitrary algorithm (denoting with 1) into to parts:

$$1 = S + P, \tag{1}$$

where S denotes the runtime of the sequentially and P the parallel solved part.

• Amdahl's law now can be formulated as the following:

$$Q_{\text{speed up}}(N) = \frac{1}{S + \frac{P}{N}} = \frac{1}{(1 - P) + \frac{P}{N}},$$
 (2)

Where N is the number of parallel threads, and the runtime S was expressed in the denominator using equation (1).

Balázs Pál (ELTE) Amdahl's Law ELTE 2020 3/4

Sample outputs of method I.

