Politechnika Wrocławska

Computer Architecture and Organization

Lecture 4

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Source and licensing

The most current version of this lecture is here:
https://github.com/rmhere/lecture-comp-arch-org

Overview of this lecture

CPU, FPGA, ASIC

MIPS assembly language

CPU, FPGA, ASIC

How FPGA is different from a CPU?

- **f**ield-programmable **g**ate **a**rray - **FPGA**
- an idea that started in 1980's
- goal: to build a reprogrammable chip
- no fixed gates' configurations
- more flexible architecture
- hardware description language (HDL) for specifying the configuration

CPU, FPGA, ASIC

FPGA applications

- previously: for low-volume applications
- now: almost everywhere
  - consumer electronics
  - medical applications
  - video and image processing
  - automotive
  - many, many more

CPU, FPGA, ASIC

ASIC

- **a**pplication-**s**pecific **i**ntegrated **c**ircuit - **ASIC**
- specific task to be performed
- the purpose has to be known before manufacturing
- fixed configuration (security)
- applications
  - aerospace (more tolerant to radiation)
  - DSP
  - cryptography

CPU, FPGA, ASIC

Comparison

- **CPU**: most expensive, high power demand, fixed HW configuration, general purpose
- **FPGA**: cheaper, high number of gates, reprogrammable logic, more flexible, also for prototyping ASICs
- **ASIC**: cheapest, specific purpose, fixed HW configuration, power saving

CPU, FPGA, ASIC

Comparison - mining Bitcoins

Satoshi, *public domain*

bitcoinwiki - Non-specialized hardware comparison
bitcoinwiki - Mining hardware comparison

CPU, FPGA, ASIC

Comparing chip types

Video

Amplex Electrosystem - CPU vs FPGA vs ASIC

MIPS assembly language

Program structure overview

- plain text file
- data declaration first
- program code section later

MIPS assembly language

Program structure

Data declarations:

- followed by the assembler directive `.data`
- declare variable names to be used in program
- these are stored in main memory (RAM)

Code:

- followed by the assembler directive `.text`
- first instruction run after `main:`

Comments:

- `# starts a comment`

MIPS assembly language

Program structure - example

```
# Comment giving name of program and description of function
# Template.s
# Bare-bones outline of MIPS assembly language program

    .data           # variable declarations follow this line
                    #
    .text           # instructions follow this line
    main:           # indicates start of code

# End of program, leave a blank line afterwards.
```

MIPS assembly language

Assembly instructions

- each line contains one instruction (operation)
- fixed order and number of operands
- more operands needed in high level language?
  - more instructions needed in assembly

MIPS assembly language

Assembly operands

- no variables, just registers (load and store)
- data declarations refer to memory

MIPS assembly language

Bytes and words

- byte - 8 bits
- word - 4 bytes - 32 bits

MIPS assembly language

Data declaration

Format:

```
name:    storage type    value(s)
```

Example:

```
var1:    .word    3         # integer
array1:  .byte    'a','b'   # a 2-element char array
array2:  .space   40        # 40 consecutive bytes
```

MIPS assembly language

Registers

Number	Name	Description
$0	$zero	Always zero
$1	$at	Reserved for assembler
$2-$3	$v0, $v1	First and second return values, respectively
$4-$7	$a0...$a3	First four arguments to functions
$8-$15	$t0...$t7	Temporary registers
$16-$23	$s0...$s7	Saved registers
$24-$25	$t8, $t9	More temporary registers
$26-$27	$k0, $k1	Reserved for kernel (operating system)
$28	$gp	Global pointer
$29	$sp	Stack pointer
$30	$fp	Frame pointer
$31	$ra	Return address

MIPS assembly language

System calls

- used to read or print values or strings from input/output window, and indicate program end
- use syscall operating system routine call
- first supply appropriate values in registers $v0, $a0-$a1, $f
- result value (if any) returned in register $v0

MIPS assembly language

System calls - list

Service	Code in $v0	Arguments	Results
print_int	1	$a0 = integer to be printed	
print_float	2	$f12 = float to be printed	
print_double	3	$f12 = double to be printed	
print_string	4	$a0 = address of string in memory	
read_int	5		integer returned in $v0
read_float	6		float returned in $v0
read_double	7		double returned in $v0
read_string	8	$a0 = memory address of string input buffer, $a1 = length of string buffer (n)	
sbrk	9	$a0 = amount	address in $v0
exit	10		

MIPS assembly language

An example of assembly code - goal

Write a program that computes the following expression:

```
(a + b) - (c - d)
```

MIPS assembly language

An example of assembly code - source

```
.data
    a:   .word 5
    b:   .word 6
    c:   .word 4
    d:   .word 3

.text
main:
    lw $t0, a
    lw $t1, b
    lw $t2, c
    lw $t3, d

    add $t4, $t0, $t1
    sub $t5, $t2, $t3
    sub $t6, $t4, $t5

    li $v0, 1
    add $a0, $zero, $t6
    syscall
```

MIPS assembly language

MARS - demo

Demonstration of how the code works in MARS MIPS Simulator.

MIPS assembly language

Sources & additional materials

- D. Reed, MIPS Architecture and Assembly Language Overview, University of Illinois at Chicago, IL, United States (course materials)
- Y. Kreinin, How FPGAs work, and why you'll buy one (article)
- R. Baruch, Bulding a CPU on an FPGA (videos)