C335
Computer Structures

Introduction to MIPS Assembly Languages

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Adapted from Morgan Kaufmann and others

Review: Instruction Set Architecture

- Basic job of a CPU: execute lots of *instructions*.
- Instructions are the primitive operations that the CPU may execute.
- Different CPUs implement different sets of instructions. The set of instructions a particular CPU implements is an *Instruction Set Architecture* (*ISA*).
  - Examples: Intel x86, Apple/IBM/Motorola PowerPC (Macintosh), ARM, MIPS, Intel IA64, ...

MIPS Architecture

- MIPS (Microprocessor without Interlocked Pipeline Stages) – semiconductor company that built one of the first commercial RISC architectures

- We will study the MIPS architecture in some detail in this class

- Why MIPS instead of Intel 80x86?
  - MIPS is simple, elegant. Don't want to get bogged down in gritty details.
  - MIPS widely used in embedded apps, x86 little used in embedded, and more embedded computers than PCs

Most HP LaserJet workgroup printers are driven by MIPS-based™ 64-bit processors.

Assembly Variables: Registers (1/4)

- Unlike HLL like C or Java, assembly cannot use variables
  - Why not?
    - Keep Hardware Simple
- Assembly Operands are registers
  - limited number of special locations built directly into the CPU hardware
  - Arithmetic/logical operations can only be performed on these!
- Benefit: Since registers are directly in CPU hardware, they are very fast
  (faster than 1 billionth of a second)

Assembly Variables: Registers (2/4)

- Drawback: Since registers are in CPU, there are a predetermined number of them
  - Solution: MIPS code must be very carefully put together to efficiently use registers
- 32 registers in MIPS, Why only 32?
  - Smaller is faster
- Each MIPS register is 32 bits wide
  - Groups of 32 bits called a word in MIPS

Assembly Variables: Registers (3/4)

- Registers are numbered from 0 to 31
- Each register can be referred to by number or name
- Number references:

```
$0, $1, $2, … $30, $31
```

Assembly Variables: Registers (4/4)

- By convention, each register also has a name to make it easier to code
- For now:

  `$16 - $23` ➔ `$s0 - $s7`

  (correspond to C variables)

  `$8 - $15` ➔ `$t0 - $t7`

  (correspond to temporary variables)

  Later will explain other 16 register names
- In general, use names to make your code more readable

C variables vs. registers

- In C (and most High Level Languages) variables declared first and given a type
  - Example:

```
int fahr, celsius;
char a, b, c, d, e;
```

- Each variable can ONLY represent a value of the type it was declared as.
- In Assembly Language, the registers have no type; operation determines how register contents are treated

Comments in Assembly

- Another way to make your code more readable: comments!
- Hash (#) is used for MIPS comments
  - anything from hash mark to end of line is a comment and will be ignored
- Note: Different from C.
  - C comments have format
    `/* comment */`
    so they can span many lines

Assembly Instructions

- In assembly language, each statement (called an Instruction), executes exactly one of a short list of simple commands
- Unlike in C (and most other High Level Languages), each line of assembly code contains at most 1 instruction
- Instructions are related to operations (=, +, -, *, /) in C or Java
- Ok, enough already…gimme my MIPS!

MIPS Addition and Subtraction (1/4)

- Syntax of Instructions:

  1 2,3,4

  where:

  1) operation by name

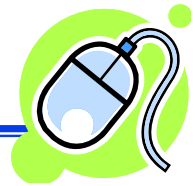
  2) operand getting result (“destination”)

  3) 1st operand for operation (“source1”)

  4) 2nd operand for operation (“source2”)

- Syntax is rigid (Why?)
  - 1 operator, 3 operands,
  - Keep Hardware simple via regularity

Addition and Subtraction of Integers (2/4)



- Addition in Assembly
  - Example: `add $s0,$s1,$s2` (in MIPS)

    Equivalent to: `a = b + c` (in C)

  where MIPS registers `$s0,$s1,$s2` are associated with C variables `a, b, c`
- Subtraction in Assembly
  - Example: `sub $s3,$s4,$s5` (in MIPS)

    Equivalent to: `d = e - f` (in C)

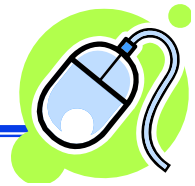
  where MIPS registers `$s3,$s4,$s5` are associated with C variables `d, e, f`

Addition and Subtraction of Integers (3/4)

- How do we do for the following C statement?

```
a = b + c + d - e;
```

Addition and Subtraction of Integers (3/4)



- How do we do for the following C statement?

```
a = b + c + d - e;
```

- Break into multiple instructions

```
add $t0, $s1, $s2 # temp = b + c
add $t0, $t0, $s3 # temp = temp + d
sub $s0, $t0, $s4 # a = temp - e
```

- Notice: A single line of C may break up into several lines of MIPS.
- Notice: Everything after the hash mark on each line is ignored (comments)

Addition and Subtraction of Integers (4/4)

- How do we do this?

```
f = (g + h) - (i + j);
```

Addition and Subtraction of Integers (4/4)

- How do we do this?

```
f = (g + h) - (i + j);
```

- Use intermediate temporary register

```
add $t0,$s1,$s2      # temp = g + h
add $t1,$s3,$s4      # temp = i + j
sub $s0,$t0,$t1      # f=(g+h)-(i+j)
```

Register Zero

- One particular immediate, the number zero (0), appears very often in code.
- So we define register zero (`$0` or `$zero`) to always have the value 0; eg

  `add $s0,$s1,$zero` (in MIPS)

  `f = g` (in C)

  where MIPS registers `$s0,$s1` are associated with C variables `f, g`
- defined in hardware, so an instruction

  `add $zero,$zero,$s0`

  will not do anything!

Immediates

- Immediates are numerical constants.
- They appear often in code, so there are special instructions for them.
- Add Immediate:

  `addi $s0,$s1,10` (in MIPS)

  `f = g + 10` (in C)

  where MIPS registers `$s0,$s1` are associated with C variables `f, g`
- Syntax similar to `add` instruction, except that last argument is a number instead of a register.

Immediates

- There is no Subtract Immediate in MIPS: Why?
- Limit types of operations that can be done to absolute minimum
  - if an operation can be decomposed into a simpler operation, don't include it
  - `addi` …, `-X` = `subi` …, `X` => so no `subi`
- `addi $s0,$s1,-10` (in MIPS)

  `f = g - 10` (in C)

  where MIPS registers `$s0,$s1` are associated with C variables `f, g`

Question

A. Types are associated with declaration in C (normally), but are associated with instruction (operator) in MIPS.

B. Since there are only 8 local (`$s`) and 10 temp (`$t`) variables, we can't write MIPS for C exprs that contain > 18 vars.

C. If p (stored in `$s0`) were a pointer to an array of `int`s, then `p++;` would be `addi $s0, $s0, 1`

	ABC
1:	FFF
2:	FFT
3:	FTF
4:	FTT
5:	TFF
6:	TFT
7:	TTF
8:	TTT

“And in Conclusion…”

- In MIPS Assembly Language:
  - Registers replace C variables
  - One Instruction (simple operation) per line
  - Simpler is Better
  - Smaller is Faster
- New Instructions:

  `add, addi, sub`
- New Registers:

  C Variables: `$s0` - `$s7`

  Temporary Variables: `$t0` - `$t9`

  Zero: `$zero`