



Mahidol University
International College

ICCS315 Applied Algorithms

False Sharing

Written by
Archer N. Phillips, Krittin Nisunarat 6280782

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Abstract

We can not deny that cache protocols are essential for improving the performance of computer systems in several ways. One essential way is by reducing the time it takes to access data from memory. However, the restriction is the size of it with a trade off. Obviously, any kinds of volatile memories have a small size, but fast storage area that stores frequently used data and instructions so that they can be accessed quickly by the processor. Nevertheless, the performance is uncertain as some data can be stored on the same address on share stage cache line. This situation is well-known in computer science that is called **false sharing**.

In general, false sharing is a performance-degrading usage pattern that can arise in systems with distributed, coherent caches at the size of the smallest resource block managed by the caching mechanism. When a system participant attempts to periodically access data that is not being altered by another party, but that data shares a cache block with data that is being altered, the caching protocol may force the first participant to reload the whole cache block despite a lack of logical necessity. The caching system is unaware of activity within this block and forces the first participant to bear the caching system overhead required by true shared access of a resource. This can happen several ways which will be discussed in this paper after the experiment.

In this paper, MESIF cache coherence protocol will be discussed in detail and stage management of the cache protocol in multiprocessor. In addition, existing solution will be illustrated as many of architectures and programming languages are integrated. Finally, our false sharing solution will be determined at the end of the paper.

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Chapter 1

Cache Coherence and its performance

1.1 Understanding of cache coherence in single core

Before we determine and analyze MESIF protocol, there are a few important concept about read-write memory transaction in both single core or multiple cores. To understand coherence, suppose that we are executing a single core algorithm S on x86 machine and the task that is sent to processor is to either read or write value to cache at address A where A is an arbitrary hexadecimal number. For reading memory by S algorithm, the task is scheduled by CPU with read instruction on address A at local cache. Then, the cache on the core is being searched according to the read instruction and return the value of address A that is currently stored in the cache line as shown in the figure 1.1.

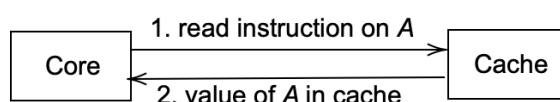


Figure 1.1: Read access on cache line

Same thing goes the same way with write access on cache. In order to write data into a cache line in a particular core, the task of S is being scheduled on core and CPU performs write instruction to address A specify by algorithm S and finish with callback. But, the value on algorithm S will be not be automatically update which the algorithm require another read instruction to the same address to retrieve a value as shown in figure 1.2. This is also the reason why writing value to cache takes more CPU cycle than read in general on both single core and multiple cores. Overall, the timeline of accessing will be write and read repeatedly. In single score, everything seems perfectly fine with the design. Once we run same algorithm in more than 1 processor, there are a drop on performance on accessing cache and memory which will be determined in the next section.

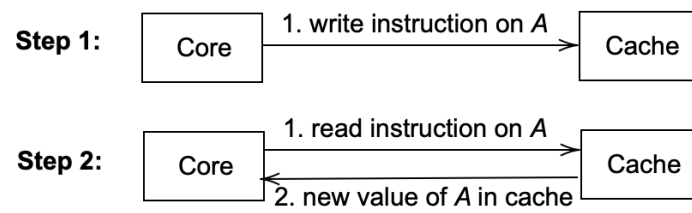


Figure 1.2: Write access on cache line

1.2 Understanding of cache coherence in multiple cores

Chapter 2

MESIF Cache Coherence Protocol

Chapter 3

Existing Solution

Chapter 4

Theoretical Solution

Reference