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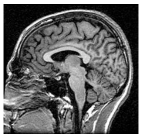
CS61C : Machine Structures

Lecture 6 – Introduction to MIPS Data Transfer & Decisions I



2014-09-12

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MIPS Strikes Back: Imagination Technologies (acquired MIPS Technologies in 2012) with the aim to take on ARM announced Warrior I6400 core, based on MIPS64. Applications: Mobile, home entertainment, automotive, networking...

http://www.anandtech.com/show/8457/mips-strikes-back-64bit-warrior-i6400-architecture-arrives

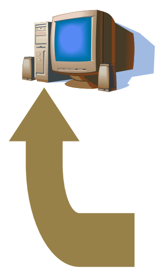
Review

- In MIPS Assembly Language:
  - Registers replace 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 - $t7`
  Zero: `$zero`

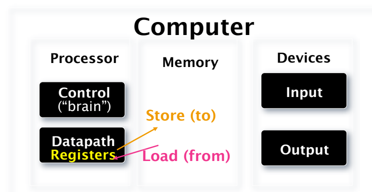
Assembly Operands: Memory

- C variables map onto registers; what about large data structures like arrays?
- 1 of 5 components of a computer: memory contains such data structures
- But MIPS arithmetic instructions only operate on registers, never directly on memory.
- Data transfer instructions transfer data between registers and memory:
  - Memory to register
  - Register to memory

Anatomy: 5 components of any Computer



Registers are in the datapath of the processor; if operands are in memory, we must transfer them to the processor to operate on them, and then transfer back to memory when done.



These are "data transfer" instructions…

Data Transfer: Memory to Reg (1/4)

- To transfer a word of data, we need to specify two things:
  - Register: specify this by number (`$0 - $31`) or symbolic name (`$s0,…, $t0,…`)
  - Memory address: more difficult
    - Think of memory as a single one-dimensional array, so we can address it simply by supplying a pointer to a memory address.
    - Other times, we want to be able to offset from this pointer.
- Remember: "Load FROM memory"

Data Transfer: Memory to Reg (2/4)

- To specify a memory address to copy from, specify two things:
  - A register containing a pointer to memory
  - A numerical offset (in bytes)
- The desired memory address is the sum of these two values.
- Example: `8($t0)`
  - specifies the memory address pointed to by the value in `$t0`, plus 8 bytes

Data Transfer: Memory to Reg (3/4)

- **Load Instruction Syntax:**
  - 1 2,3(4)
  - where
    - 1) operation name
    - 2) register that will receive value
    - 3) numerical offset in bytes
    - 4) register containing pointer to memory
- **MIPS Instruction Name:**
  - `lw` (meaning Load Word, so 32 bits or one word are loaded at a time)

Data Transfer: Memory to Reg (4/4)

Data flow

Example: `lw $t0,12($s0)`

This instruction will take the pointer in $s0, add 12 bytes to it, and then load the value from the memory pointed to by this calculated sum into register $t0

- **Notes:**
  - `$s0` is called the base register
  - `12` is called the offset
  - offset is generally used in accessing elements of array or structure: base reg points to beginning of array or structure (note offset must be a constant known at assembly time)

Data Transfer: Reg to Memory

- Also want to store from register into memory
  - Store instruction syntax is identical to Load's
- MIPS Instruction Name:

  `sw` (meaning Store Word, so 32 bits or one word is stored at a time)

  Data flow
- Example: `sw $t0,12($s0)`

  This instruction will take the pointer in $s0, add 12 bytes to it, and then store the value from register $t0 into that memory address
- Remember: "Store INTO memory"

Pointers v. Values

- **Key Concept: A register can hold any 32-bit value. That value can be a (signed) int, an unsigned int, a pointer (memory addr), and so on**
  - E.g., If you write: `add $t2,$t1,$t0` then `$t0` and `$t1` better contain values that can be added
  - E.g., If you write: `lw $t2,0($t0)` then `$t0` better contain a pointer
- **Don't mix these up!**

Addressing: Byte vs. Word

- Every word in memory has an address, similar to an index in an array
- Early computers numbered words like C numbers elements of an array:
  - `Memory[0]`, `Memory[1]`, `Memory[2]`, …

    Called the "address" of a word
- Computers needed to access 8-bit bytes as well as words (4 bytes/word)
- Today machines address memory as bytes, (i.e., "Byte Addressed") hence 32-bit (4 byte) word addresses differ by 4
  - `Memory[0]`, `Memory[4]`, `Memory[8]`

Compilation with Memory

- What offset in `lw` to select `A[5]` in C?
- 4x5=20 to select `A[5]`: byte v. word
- Compile by hand using registers:

  `g = h + A[5];`
  - `g: $s1, h: $s2, $s3`: base address of `A`
- 1st transfer from memory to register:

  `lw $t0,20($s3) # $t0 gets A[5]`
  - Add 20 to `$s3` to select `A[5]`, put into `$t0`
- Next add it to `h` and place in `g`

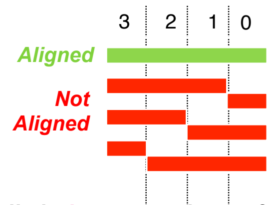
  `add $s1,$s2,$t0 # $s1 = h+A[5]`

Notes about Memory

- Pitfall: Forgetting that sequential word addresses in machines with byte addressing do not differ by 1.
  - Many an assembly language programmer has toiled over errors made by assuming that the address of the next word can be found by incrementing the address in a register by 1 instead of by the word size in bytes.
  - Also, remember that for both `lw` and `sw`, the sum of the base address and the offset must be a multiple of 4 (to be word aligned)

More Notes about Memory: Alignment

- MIPS requires that all words start at byte addresses that are multiples of 4 bytes



Last hex digit of address is:
0, 4, 8, or C_{hex}
1, 5, 9, or D_{hex}
2, 6, A, or E_{hex}
3, 7, B, or F_{hex}

- Called Alignment: objects fall on address that is multiple of their size

Role of Registers vs. Memory

- What if more variables than registers?
  - Compiler tries to keep most frequently used variable in registers
  - Less common variables in memory: spilling
- Why not keep all variables in memory?
  - Smaller is faster: registers are faster than memory
  - Registers more versatile:
    - MIPS arithmetic instructions can read 2, operate on them, and write 1 per instruction
    - MIPS data transfer only read or write 1 operand per instruction, and no operation

So Far...

- All instructions so far only manipulate data… we've built a calculator of sorts.
- In order to build a computer, we need ability to make decisions…
- C (and MIPS) provide labels to support "`goto`" jumps to places in code.
  - C: Horrible style; MIPS: Necessary!
- Heads up: pull out some papers and pens, you'll do an in-class exercise!

C Decisions: if Statements

- 2 kinds of if statements in C
  - `if` (condition) clause
  - `if` (condition) clause1 `else` clause2
- Rearrange 2nd if into following:

```
if  (condition) goto L1;
    clause2;
         goto L2;
L1: clause1;
L2:
```

- Not as elegant as if-else, but same meaning

MIPS Decision Instructions

- Decision instruction in MIPS:
  - `beq   register1, register2, L1`
  - `beq` is "Branch if (registers are) equal"
    Same meaning as (using C):
    `if (register1==register2) goto L1`
- Complementary MIPS decision instruction
  - `bne   register1, register2, L1`
  - `bne` is "Branch if (registers are) not equal"
    Same meaning as (using C):
    `if  (register1!=register2)  goto L1`
- Called conditional branches

MIPS Goto Instruction

- In addition to conditional branches, MIPS has an unconditional branch:

```
j label
```

- Called a Jump Instruction: jump (or branch) directly to the given label without needing to satisfy any condition
- Same meaning as (using C): `goto label`
- Technically, it's the same effect as:

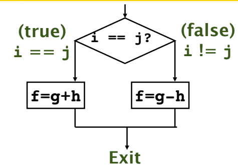
```
beq $0,$0,label
```

since it always satisfies the condition

Compiling C if into MIPS (1/2)

- Compile by hand

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



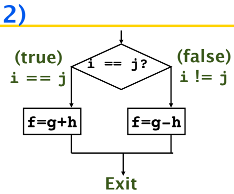
- Use this mapping:

```
f: $s0
g: $s1
h: $s2
i: $s3
j: $s4
```


Compiling C if into MIPS (2/2)

- Compile by hand

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



- Final compiled MIPS code:

```
      beq $s3,$s4,True   # branch i==j
      sub $s0,$s1,$s2    # f=g-h(false)
      j   Fin            # goto Fin
True: add $s0,$s1,$s2    # f=g+h (true)
Fin:
```

Note: Compiler automatically creates labels to handle decisions (branches). Generally not found in HLL code.

Peer Instruction

We want to translate `*x = *y` into MIPS (x, y ptrs stored in: `$s0 $s1`)

```
1: add $s0,  $s1, zero
2: add $s1,  $s0, zero
3: lw  $s0, 0($s1)
4: lw  $s1, 0($s0)
5: lw  $t0, 0($s1)
6: sw  $t0, 0($s0)
7: lw  $s0, 0($t0)
8: sw  $s1, 0($t0)
```

```
a) 1 or 2
b) 3 or 4
c) 5→6
d) 6→5
e) 7→8
```


"And in Conclusion…"

- Memory is byte-addressable, but lw and sw access one word at a time.
- A pointer (used by lw and sw) is just a memory address, we can add to it or subtract from it (using offset).
- A Decision allows us to decide what to execute at run-time rather than compile-time.
- C Decisions are made using conditional statements within `if`, `while`, `do while`, `for`.
- MIPS Decision making instructions are the conditional branches: `beq` and `bne`.
- New Instructions:

```
lw, sw, beq, bne, j
```