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CS61C : Machine Structures

Lecture 9 – Introduction to MIPS Data Transfer & Decisions I

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There is one handout today at the front and back of the room!

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Human-assisted searching ⇒

A new search engine company is betting that a FREE human-assistant will be worth the ad-revenue they get from the Google ads on the right. I tried it, was sent to 3 "guides" (each didn't have access to the previous chat transcript…grr!) but all ended well!

www.chacha.com

technologyreview.com/Infotech/18132/

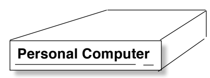
Review

- 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`

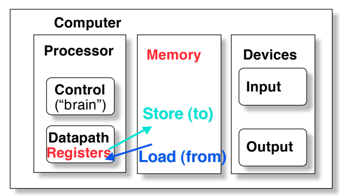
Assembly Operands: Memory

- 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 # ($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 address), and so on
- If you write `add $t2,$t1,$t0` then `$t0` and `$t1` better contain values
- 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`

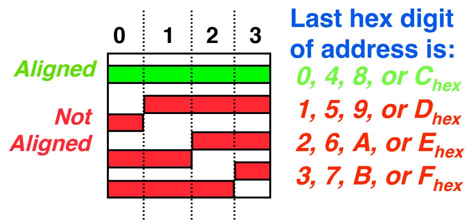
```
add $s1,$s2,$t0   # $s1 = h+A[5]
```

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**



- **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

Administrivia

- **Project 1 due this Sun @ 11:59pm**
- **Other administrivia?**

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:

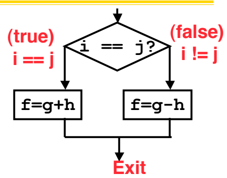
  `beq     $0,$0,label`

  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;
```



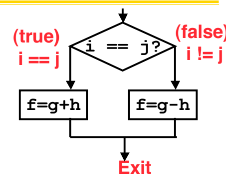
- Use this mapping:

  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`)

```
A: add $s0,   $s1, zero
B: add $s1,   $s0, zero
C: lw  $s0, 0($s1)
D: lw  $s1, 0($s0)
E: lw  $t0, 0($s1)
F: sw  $t0, 0($s0)
G: lw  $s0, 0($t0)
H: sw  $s1, 0($t0)
```

```
0: A
1: B
2: C
3: D
4: E→F
5: E→G
6: F→E
7: F→H
8: H→G
9: G→H
```


"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`