

# Dynamic Scheduling Techniques

M. Sonza Reorda

Politecnico di Torino  
Dipartimento di Automatica e Informatica

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## INTRODUCTION

*Dynamic scheduling* is a technique aimed at rearranging in hardware the instruction execution order to reduce the pipeline stalls while maintaining data flow and exception behavior.

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# Advantages

## Dynamic scheduling

- Identifies some dependencies that are unknown at compile time (e.g., concerning memory cells)
- Simplifies the compiler job
- Allows to run the same code on different pipelined processors.

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# Example

```
DIV.D  F0, F2, F4  
ADD.D  F10, F0, F8  
SUB.D  F12, F8, F14
```

The pipeline stalls after the `DIV.D` instruction, due to the data dependency between `DIV.D` and `ADD.D`.

The `SUB.D` instruction is also stalled, no matter the fact that it is not involved in any dependency with the previous instructions.

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## Example

```
DIV.D  F0, F2, F4  
ADD.D  F10, F0, F8  
SUB.D  F12, F8,
```

The pipeline stalls after  
data dependency between

The SUB.D instruction  
that it is not involved  
previous instructions.

We could improve  
performance by  
removing the  
constraint of *in-  
order instruction  
execution*.

to the  
the fact  
the

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## Out-of-order execution

It may introduce

- WAR hazards
- WAW hazards
- Imprecise exceptions.

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## WAR hazards

If out-of-order execution is allowed, WAR hazards may arise.

### Example

DIV.D F0, F2, F4

ADD.D F6, F0, F8

SUB.D F8, F8, F14

If SUB.D is executed before ADD.D, the antidependency relation is violated, and the result is incorrect.

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## WAW hazards

If out-of-order execution is allowed, WAW hazards may also arise.

### Example

DIV.D F0, F2, F4

ADD.D F6, F0, F8

SUB.D F8, F8, F14

MUL.D F6, F10, F8

If MUL.D is executed before ADD.D, the output dependency relation is violated, and the result is incorrect.

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# Exceptions

If out-of-order execution (and completion) is allowed, precise exception handling is impossible.

This may mean that at the time when the exception is raised

- An instruction before that raising the exception still has to be completed, *or*
- An instruction after that raising the exception has been already completed.

In both cases resuming program execution after exception handling is difficult.

Some techniques will be introduced later to solve this problem.

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# Splitting the ID stage

To support out-of-order execution, the ID stage is split in two parts:

- *issue*: decode instructions, check for structural hazards
- *read operands*: wait until no data hazards, then read operands.

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## **Splitting the ID stage (II)**

The issue stage reads instructions from a register or a queue (written by the IF stage).

Instruction issue is performed in-order.

After instructions are issued, they may wait for operands, and then (when operands are available) sent to the EX stage.

Instructions can be stalled or bypass each other while in the read operand stage.

Therefore, they can enter execution out-of-order.

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## **EX stage**

If the processor includes multiple functional units, multiple instructions may be in execution at the same time.

Instructions can also bypass each other while in the execution stage.

Therefore, they can leave execution out-of-order.

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## Hardware schemes for dynamic scheduling

- *Scoreboarding* (adopted by CDC 6600)
- *Tomasulo's algorithm* (adopted by IBM 360/91 and then adopted in many other processors).

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## THE TOMASULO APPROACH

Robert Tomasulo was the architect of the IBM 360/91 floating point unit: his ideas were published in a paper of 1967.

The same ideas were then re-used when the first superscalar processors were built.

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## Reservation stations

They are the key novelty in Tomasulo's approach.

They have several functions:

- they buffer the operands of instructions waiting to issue; operands are stored in the station as soon as they are available
- they implement the issue logic
- pending instructions designate the reservation station that will provide them with an input operand
- when successive writes to a register appear, only the last one is used to update the register.

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## Register renaming

Each time an instruction is issued, the register specifiers for the pending operands are renamed to the names of the reservation stations in charge of computing them.

This implements a register renaming strategy.

WAW and WAR hazards are eliminated in this way.

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## Distributed hazard detection and execution control

The reservation stations at each functional unit control when an instruction can begin execution at that unit.

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## Common Data Bus (CDB)

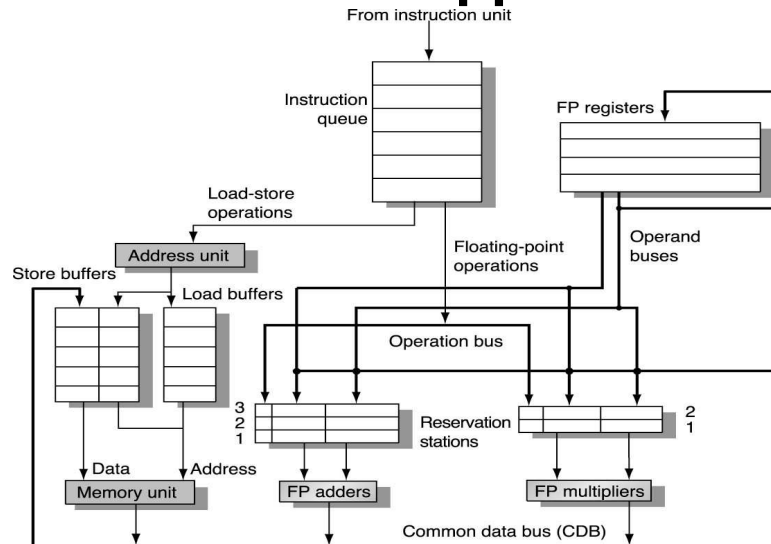
Results are passed directly to other functional units, rather than going through the registers.

All results from the functional units and from memory are sent to the *Common Data Bus*, which

- goes everywhere (except to the load buffer)
- allows all units waiting for an operand to load it simultaneously when it is available.

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# MIPS FP unit structure using Tomasulo approach



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## Instruction execution steps

They are

- Issue
- Execute
- Write result.

They can have different length.

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# Issue

Get an instruction from the instruction queue (implementing a FIFO strategy)

- if no reservation station is available, a structural hazard occurs, and the instruction stalls until a reservation station becomes available
- if there is an empty reservation station, send the instruction to it
  - if the operands are available, they are sent to the reservation station
  - if not, the instructions responsible for their generation are recorded.

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# Execution (normal instructions)

- When an operand appears on the CDB, it is read by the reservation unit
- As soon as all the operands for an instruction are available in the reservation unit, the instruction is executed.
- In this way, RAW hazards are avoided.

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## Execution (load and store instructions)

First step:

- As soon as the base register is available, the effective address is computed and written in the *load/store buffer*

Second step:

- Load instructions: execution takes place as soon as memory is available
- Store instructions:
  - wait for the operand to be written in memory
  - execution takes place as soon as memory is available.

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## Execution (branches)

To preserve exception behavior, no instruction is allowed to initiate execution until all branches that precede the instruction in program order have completed.

Speculation may allow to improve this mechanism.

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## **Write result**

**When the result of an instruction is available, it is immediately written on the CDB, and from there in the registers and functional units waiting for it.**

**Store instructions also write to memory in this step.**

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## **Instruction identifiers**

**Every reservation station (i.e., instruction to be or being executed) is associated with an identifier.**

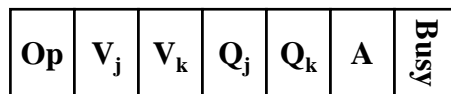
**This identifier also identifies the operand the instruction will produce.**

**Instructions requiring that operand identify it using the identifier.**

**Identifiers play the role of names of virtual registers that can be used to implement register renaming.**

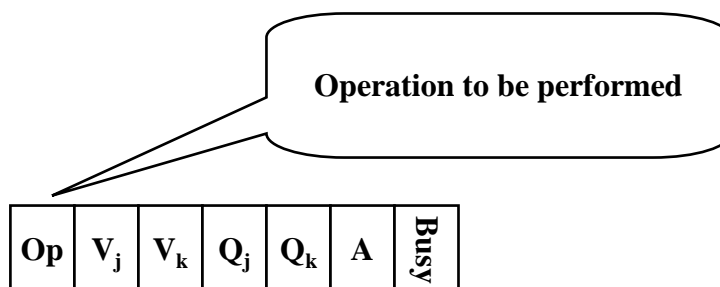
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## Reservation station fields



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## Reservation station fields



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# Reservation s

Values of the source operands

Op	V <sub>j</sub>	V <sub>k</sub>	Q <sub>j</sub>	Q <sub>k</sub>	A	Busy
----	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	---	------

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# Reservation s

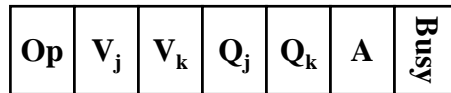
Reservation stations that will produce a source operand (if not available)

Op	V <sub>j</sub>	V <sub>k</sub>	Q <sub>j</sub>	Q <sub>k</sub>	A	Busy
----	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	---	------

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## Reservation s

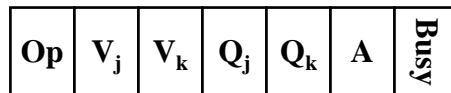
Used in the load/store buffer, only. Stores the immediate field first, and the effective address, then.



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## Reservation s

Status of the reservation station (and corresponding functional unit)



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# Register file

Each element in the register file contains one field  $Q_i$ .

$Q_i$  contains the number of the reservation station that contains the instruction whose result should be stored in the register.

If  $Q_i$  is null, no currently active instruction is computing a result destined for this register.

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## Example

Let us consider the following fragment:

```
1  L.D      F6, 34(R2)
2  L.D      F2, 45(R3)
3  MUL.D    F0, F2, F4
4  SUB.D    F8, F2, F6
5  DIV.D    F10, F0, F6
6  ADD.D    F6, F8, F2
```

We will analyze the content of the different data structures when the first L.D has completed and written its result.

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# Instruction status

Instruction	Instruction status		
	Issue	Execute	Write Result
L.D F6,34(R2)	✓	✓	✓
L.D F2,45(R3)	✓	✓	
MUL.D F0,F2,F4	✓		
SUB.D F8,F2,F6	✓		
DIV.D F10,F0,F6	✓		
ADD.D F6,F8,F2	✓		

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# Instruction status

Instruction	Instruction status		
	Issue	Execute	Write Result
L.D F6,34(R2)	✓	✓	✓
L.D F2,45(R3)	✓	✓	
MUL.D F0,F2,F4	✓		
SUB.D F8,F2,F6	✓		
DIV.D F10,F0,F6	✓		
ADD.D F6,F8,F2	✓		

**This is not  
a hardware data structure!**

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## Reservation stations

Name	Busy	Op	Vj	Vk	Qj	Qk	A
Load1	no						
Load2	yes	Load					45 + Regs[R3]
Add1	yes	SUB		Mem[34 + Regs[R2]]	Load2		
Add2	yes	ADD			Add1	Load2	
Add3	no						
Mult1	yes	MUL		Regs[F4]	Load2		
Mult2	yes	DIV		Mem[34 + Regs[R2]]	Mult1		

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## Register status

Field	F0	F2	F4	F6	F8	F10	F12	...	F30
Qi	Mult1	Load2		Add2	Add1	Mult2			

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## **Advantages**

- The hazard detection logic is distributed
- Stalls for WAW and WAR hazards are eliminated.

## **Disadvantages**

- High complexity hardware (including an associative buffer for each reservation station)
- The CDB can be a bottleneck.

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## **Loop handling**

**Loop unrolling is not required by the Tomasulo architecture.**

**Loop instructions are naturally performed in parallel.**

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# Example

Let consider the following piece of code:

```
Loop:  L.D      F0, 0(R1)
        MUL.D   F4, F0, F2
        S.D     0(R1), F4
        DADDUI  R1, R1, -8
        BNE     R1, R2, Loop;branches if R1≠R2
```

We will consider the instant when all the instructions of the first two iterations of the code have been issued, but none of the floating point operations still completed.

We will assume that the hardware always predicts branches as taken.

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## Instruction status

Instruction	Instruction status			Write Result
	From iteration	Issue	Execute	
L.D F0,0(R1)	1	√	√	
MUL.D F4,F0,F2	1	√		
S.D F4,0(R1)	1	√		
L.D F0,0(R1)	2	√	√	
MUL.D F4,F0,F2	2	√		
S.D F4,0(R1)	2	√		

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## Reservation stations

Reservation stations							
Name	Busy	Op	Vj	Vk	Qj	Qk	A
Load1	yes	Load					Regs[R1] + 0
Load2	yes	Load					Regs[R1] - 8
Add1	no						
Add2	no						
Add3	no						
Mult1	yes	MUL		Regs[F2]	Load1		
Mult2	yes	MUL		Regs[F2]	Load2		
Store1	yes	Store	Regs[R1]			Mult1	
Store2	yes	Store	Regs[R1] - 8			Mult2	

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## Register status

Register status									
Field	F0	F2	F4	F6	F8	F10	F12	...	F30
Qi	Load2		Mult2						

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## **Load and store order**

**Load and store instructions can be executed in any order, provided that they do not refer to the same address.**

**In this case, by exchanging their order**

- **if the load is before the store, a WAR hazard may happen**
- **if the store is before the load, a RAW hazard may happen.**

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## **Dynamic disambiguation**

**To avoid hazards coming from reordering load and store instructions, the processor must**

- **compute memory addresses in order**
- **perform some check for every load or store instruction.**

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## **Checks for a load instruction**

**Each time a load is ready to be issued:**

- **The store buffer is checked for store instructions acting on the same address**
- **In this case, the load is not sent to the load buffer until the store completes.**

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## **Checks for a store instruction**

**Each time a store is ready to be issued:**

- **The store and load buffers are checked for store instructions acting on the same address**
- **In this case, the store is not sent to the store buffer until all the previous load and store instructions complete.**

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