Transaction Management: Concurrency Control, part 1

CS634 Class 15, Mar 28 and reviewed Apr. 6, 2016

Slides based on “Database Management Systems” 3rd ed, Ramakrishnan and Gehrke
Transaction Execution

• Example: Reading Uncommitted Data (Dirty Reads)

| T1:       | R(A), W(A),          | R(B), W(B) |
| T2:       | R(A), W(A), R(B), W(B) |

• We are assuming each transaction is single-threaded
  • Usually the case in practice, though not universal

• And, for simplicity, that operations for the whole DB happen in some order, possibly interleaving the transactions
  • This is not true in reality: in fact, parallel execution of transactions happens on multi-processors,
  • But it’s close enough to show the important behaviors
Transaction Schedule Notation

• Example: Reading Uncommitted Data (Dirty Reads)

| T1:       | R(A), W(A),       | R(B), W(B) |
| T2:       | R(A), W(A), R(B), W(B) |

Another notation: Using subscripts for transaction ids

• Arrows mark conflicts, yield arcs in PG: T1->T2, T2->T1

R₁(A) W₁(A) R₂(A) W₂(A) R₂(B) W₂(B) R₁(B) W₁(B)

Note: commits are not involved in locating conflicts
Example: RW Conflicts

• Unrepeatable Reads

| T1: | R(A), R(A), R(A), W(A), Commit |
| T2: | R(A), W(A), Commit |

• Alternatively:

R₁(A) R₂(A) W₂(A) C₂ R₁(A) W₁(A) C₁

• Again T1->T2, T2->T1, cycle in PG, not conflict serializable
• See conflicts reaching across a commit here
Conflict Serializable Schedules

- Two schedules are **conflict equivalent** if:
  - Involve the same actions of the same transactions
  - Every pair of conflicting actions is ordered the same way
- Schedule S is **conflict serializable** if S is conflict equivalent to some serial schedule
- Example: T1->T2 only, and conflict serializable, as shown below

```
R₁(A) R₁(B) W₁(C) R₂(B) W₂(A) R₂(C) R₁(B) C₁C₂
R₁(A) R₁(B) W₁(C) R₁(B) C₁ R₂(B) W₂(A) R₂(C) C₂
```

Dependency Graph

- **Dependency graph:**
  - one node per transaction
  - edge from $Ti$ to $Tj$ if action of $Ti$ precedes and conflicts with action of $Tj$

- **Theorem:** Schedule is conflict serializable if and only if its dependency graph is acyclic
  - Equivalent serial schedule given by topological sort of dependency graph
From cs310: Definitions

- **Path**
  - A sequence of vertices \( w_1 \ldots w_n \) connected by edges s.t. \( \{w_i, w_{i+1}\} \in E \) for each \( i=1..n \).

- **Path length**
  - Number of edges on the path

- **Cycle**
  - A path that begins and ends at the same vertex and contains at least one edge

- **Directed Acyclic Graph (DAG)**
  - A type of directed graphs that has no cycles
A cycle in a digraph is a path that returns to its starting vertex.

An acyclic digraph is also called a DAG, short for directed acyclic graph. These graphs show up in lots of applications. For example, the graph of course prerequisites.

CS110 → CS210 → CS310
   ↓   ↓
    CS240

is a DAG. A cycle in prerequisites would be ridiculous.
A DAG induces a partial order on the nodes. Not all element pairs have an order, but some do, and the ones that do must be consistent. So CS110 < CS210 < CS310, and so CS110 < CS310, but CS210 and CS240 have no order between them.

Suppose a student took only one course per term in CS. Then they would be finding a sequence that satisfies the partial order requirements, for example CS110, CS210, CS240, CS310. Another possible sequence is CS110, CS240, CS210, CS310.

One of these fully ordered sequences that satisfy a partial order or DAG is called a topological sort of the DAG.

A topological sort orders the nodes such that if there is a path between two nodes u and v, u will appear before v.
Finding a topological sort

- Weiss (author of cs310 book) presents a non-recursive algorithm for finding a topological sort of a DAG, checking that it really has no cycles.
- The first step of this algorithm is to determine the in-degree of all vertices in the graph.
- The in-degree of a vertex is the number of edges in the graph with this vertex as the to-vertex.
- Once we have all the in-degree numbers for the vertices, we look for a vertex with in-degree 0.
- It has no incoming edges, and so can be the vertex at the start of a topological sort, like CS110.
Finding a topological sort (cont.)

- Notice that there must be a node with in-degree 0.
- If there weren’t, then we could start a path anywhere, extend backwards along some in-edge from another vertex and from there to another, etc.
- Eventually we would have to start repeating vertices.
- For example, if we have managed to avoid repeating vertices and have visited all the vertices, then the last vertex still has an in-edge not yet used, and it goes to another vertex, completing a cycle.
- Thus the lack of an in-degree-0 vertex is a sure sign of a cycle and a DAG doesn’t have any cycles.
- OK, we have the very first vertex, but what about the rest? Think recursively!
A Topological Sort Example

The topological order is:

\[ V_2, V_0, V_1, V_3, V_4, V_6, V_5 \]
Dependency Graph

- **Dependency graph:**
  - one node per transaction
  - edge from $T_i$ to $T_j$ if action of $T_i$ precedes and conflicts with action of $T_j$

- **Theorem:** Schedule is conflict serializable if and only if its dependency graph is **acyclic**
  - Equivalent serial schedule given by topological sort of dependency graph
Example

• A schedule that is not conflict serializable:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T1:</th>
<th>R(A), W(A), R(B), W(B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T2:</td>
<td>R(A), W(A), R(B), W(B)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependency graph

• The cycle in the graph reveals the problem. The output of T1 depends on T2, and vice-versa.
Strict Two-Phase Locking (Strict 2PL)

- Protocol steps
  - Each transaction must obtain a \( S \) (shared) lock on object before reading, and an \( X \) (exclusive) lock on object before writing.
  - All locks held are released when the transaction completes
    - (Non-strict) 2PL: Release locks anytime, but cannot acquire locks after releasing any lock.

- Strict 2PL allows only serializable schedules of R/W ops.
  - It simplifies transaction aborts
  - (Non-strict) 2PL also allows only serializable schedules, but involves more complex abort processing
Strict 2PL Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T1:</th>
<th>S(A) R(A)</th>
<th>S(B) R(B) C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T2:</td>
<td>S(A) R(A) X(B) R(B) W(B) C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

where $S_1(B)$ blocked

Using subscripted notation: blow-by-blow actions

$S_1(A) R_1(A) S_2(A) R_2(A) X_2(B) <S_1(B)\text{-blocked}> R_2(B) W_2(B) C_2 <S_1(B)\text{-unblocked}> R_1(B) C_1$
Aborting Transactions

• When $Ti$ is aborted, all its actions have to be undone
  • if $Tj$ reads an object last written by $Ti$, $Tj$ must be aborted as well!
  • *cascading aborts* can be avoided by releasing locks only at commit
  • If $Ti$ writes an object, $Tj$ can read this only after $Ti$ commits

• In Strict 2PL, cascading aborts are prevented
  • At the cost of decreased concurrency
  • No free lunch!
  • Increased parallelism leads to locking protocol complexity
Deadlocks

• Cycle of transactions waiting for locks to be released by each other: case of “deadly embrace”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T1: X(A) W(A) S(B) [R(B) …]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T2: X(B) W(B) S(A) [R(A) …]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using subscripted notation:
X₁(A) W₁(A) X₂(B) W₂(B) <S₂(A) blocked> <S₁(B) blocked>…
Deadlock Detection

- Create a *waits-for graph*:
  - Nodes are transactions
  - Edge from $T_i$ to $T_j$ if $T_i$ is waiting for $T_j$ to release a lock

$$
\begin{align*}
T_1: & \quad S(A), R(A), S(B) \\
T_2: & \quad X(B), W(B), X(C) \\
T_3: & \quad S(C), R(C) \\
T_4: & \quad X(A), X(B)
\end{align*}
$$
Deadlock Prevention

• Assign priorities based on timestamps
• Assume $Ti$ wants a lock that $Tj$ holds
  • Wait-Die: If $Ti > Tj$, $Ti$ waits for $Tj$; otherwise $Ti$ aborts
  • Wound-wait: If $Ti > Tj$, $Tj$ aborts; otherwise $Ti$ waits
• Fairness is an issue
  • If transaction re-starts, make sure it has its original timestamp
  • Otherwise starvation may occur
• In practice, not used for 2PL locks (but may be in use for mutex-related mechanisms ("latches") to be covered later)
More Dynamic Databases

• If the set of DB objects changes, Strict 2PL using row or page locks will not ensure serializability (locking whole tables will work but is horribly slow)

• Example:
  • T1 finds oldest sailor for each of rating=1 and rating=2
  • T2 does an insertion and a deletion
    1. T1 locks all pages with rating = 1, finds oldest sailor (age = 71)
    2. Next, T2 inserts a new sailor; rating = 1, age = 96
    3. T2 deletes oldest sailor with rating = 2 (age = 80), commits
    4. T1 locks all pages with rating = 2, and finds oldest (age = 63)

• No serial schedule gives same outcome!
The “Phantom” Problem

• T1 implicitly assumes that it has locked the set of all sailor records with $rating = 1$
  • Assumption only holds if no sailor records are added while T1 is executing!

• Two mechanisms to address the problem
  • Index locking
  • Predicate locking
Another phantom example

- Table tasks has one row for each worker task, with worker name, task name, number of hours
- Rule that no worker has more than 8 hours total
- Application A to add a task sums hours for worker, adds task if it fits under 8 hours max
  - T1 running A sees ‘Joe’ has 6 hours, adds task of 2 hours
  - Concurrently, T2 running A sees ‘Joe’ has 6 hours, adds task of 1 hour.
    - Joe ends up with 9 hours of work.
- Again, the problem is there is no lock on the set of rows being examined to make a decision
Index Locking

- Assume index on the *rating* field
- T1 should lock the index page(s) containing the data entries with *rating* = 1, and their immediate neighbors
  - If there are no records with *rating* = 1, T1 must lock the index page where such a data entry *would* be, if it existed!
  - e.g., lock the page with rating = 0 and beginning of rating=2
  - Or lock pages for just one extra data item on one side, if a lock is understood to cover the key value plus gap to one side.
- If there is no suitable index, T1 must lock all data pages, and lock the file to prevent new pages from being added
Index Locking

• Assume index on the *rating* field

• Row locking is the industry standard now

• T1 should lock all the data entries with *rating* = 1 and at least one neighbor (depending on details of protocol)
  • If there are no records with *rating* = 1, T1 must lock the entries adjacent to where data entry *would* be, if it existed!
  • e.g., lock the last entry with rating = 0 and beginning of rating=2

• If there is no suitable index, T1 must lock all the rows and lock the file to prevent new rows from being added, or use a “table lock”.
Predicate Locking

• Grant lock on all records that satisfy some logical predicate
  • But note that a general predicate can depend on data in the row: salary > 50000 + 1000*years
  • Or a whole table: salary > (select avg(salary) in emps)

• Index locking is a special case of predicate locking
  • Index supports efficient implementation of the predicate lock
  • Predicate is specified in WHERE clause

• In general, predicate locking is expensive to implement!
  • Can avoid the runtime cost by using Repeatable Read isolation level, but that opens up anomaly possibilities.
Index Locking, Blow by blow

• Index locking happens in the storage engine, based on FILE calls coming from query processor as directed by the query plan.

• Example: Transaction T1 accesses a heap table with certain index, gets row for certain index key value, say 100. Suppose the next data entry is for another key, 102.
  • Storage engine share-locks the accessed data entry for key 100, guarding it and the gap between that key and the next key.
  • Then if another transaction T2 tries to change the row with key 100, can’t get necessary X lock, waits. Same with key 101.
  • Original transaction T1 can ask for next key, get 102.
  • But if another transaction updates row with key 102 (not guarded by T1’s share lock), then then T1 has to wait for the next key.
Index Locking Scenario, cont.

• There is an underlying assumption in that story: that all the accesses in fact use the index on this column.

• Well, the important thing is that all accesses that change the column value go through the index. It’s OK for another reader to access the value.

• An insert or delete need to change the index, so they are naturally involved.

• An update to this column also needs to change the index, in two places, so it also collides with the old lock.

• You can see this has to be checked out carefully!