Concurrency Control

Chapter 17

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

- A schedule that is not conflict serializable:

  
  \begin{tabular}{l}
  T1: R(A), W(A), R(B), W(B) \\
  T2: R(A), W(A), R(B), W(B)
  \end{tabular}

  
  The cycle in the graph reveals the problem. The output of T1 depends on T2, and vice-versa.

Dependency Graph

- **Dependency graph**: One node per Xact; edge from Ti to Tj if Tj reads/writes an object last written by Ti.

- **Theorem**: Schedule is conflict serializable if and only if its dependency graph is acyclic

Review: Strict 2PL

- **Strict Two-phase Locking (Strict 2PL) Protocol**:
  - Each Xact must obtain a S (shared) lock on object before reading, and an X (exclusive) lock on object before writing.
  - All locks held by a transaction are released when the transaction completes.
  - If an Xact holds an X lock on an object, no other Xact can get a lock (S or X) on that object.

- Strict 2PL allows only schedules whose precedence graph is acyclic

Two-Phase Locking (2PL)

- Two-Phase Locking Protocol
  - Each Xact must obtain a S (shared) lock on object before reading, and an X (exclusive) lock on object before writing.
  - A transaction can not request additional locks once it releases any locks.
  - If an Xact holds an X lock on an object, no other Xact can get a lock (S or X) on that object.
**View Serializability**

- Schedules S1 and S2 are view equivalent if:
  - If Ti reads initial value of A in S1, then Ti also reads initial value of A in S2
  - If Ti reads value of A written by Tj in S1, then Ti also reads value of A written by Tj in S2
  - If Ti writes final value of A in S1, then Ti also writes final value of A in S2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T1: R(A)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T2:</td>
<td>W(A)</td>
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<tr>
<td>T3:</td>
<td>W(A)</td>
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**Lock Management**

- Lock and unlock requests are handled by the lock manager
- Lock table entry:
  - Number of transactions currently holding a lock
  - Type of lock held (shared or exclusive)
  - Pointer to queue of lock requests
- Locking and unlocking have to be atomic operations
- Lock upgrade: transaction that holds a shared lock can be upgraded to hold an exclusive lock

**Deadlocks**

- Deadlock: Cycle of transactions waiting for locks to be released by each other.
- Two ways of dealing with deadlocks:
  - Deadlock prevention
  - Deadlock detection

**Deadlock Prevention**

- Assign priorities based on timestamps.
  Assume Ti wants a lock that Tj holds. Two policies are possible:
  - Wait-Die: If Ti has higher priority, Ti waits for Tj; otherwise Ti aborts
  - Wound-wait: If Ti has higher priority, Tj aborts; otherwise Ti waits
- If a transaction re-starts, make sure it has its original timestamp

**Deadlock Detection**

- Create a waits-for graph:
  - Nodes are transactions
  - There is an edge from Ti to Tj if Ti is waiting for Tj to release a lock
- Periodically check for cycles in the waits-for graph

**Deadlock Detection (Continued)**

Example:

- T1: S(A), R(A), S(B)
- T2: X(B), W(B)
- T3: S(C), R(C), X(C)
- T4: X(A), X(B)

Diagram:

- T1
- T2
- T3
- T4
- T1 - T2 - T1
- T3 - T3 - T3
- T4 - T3
Multiple-Granularity Locks

- Hard to decide what granularity to lock (tuples vs. pages vs. tables).
- Shouldn’t have to decide!
- Data “containers” are nested:
  - Database
    - Tables
      - Pages
        - Tuples

Solution: New Lock Modes, Protocol

- Allow Xacts to lock at each level, but with a special protocol using new “intention” locks:
  - Before locking an item, Xact must set “intention locks” on all its ancestors.
  - For unlock, go from specific to general (i.e., bottom-up).
  - SIX mode: Like S & IX at the same time.

Multiple Granularity Lock Protocol

- Each Xact starts from the root of the hierarchy.
- To get S or IS lock on a node, must hold IS or IX on parent node.
  - What if Xact holds SIX on parent? S on parent?
- To get X or IX or SIX on a node, must hold IX or SIX on parent node.
- Must release locks in bottom-up order.

Protocol is correct in that it is equivalent to directly setting locks at the leaf levels of the hierarchy.

Examples

- T1 scans R, and updates a few tuples:
  - T1 gets an SIX lock on R, then repeatedly gets an S lock on tuples of R, and occasionally upgrades to X on the tuples.
- T2 uses an index to read only part of R:
  - T2 gets an IS lock on R, and repeatedly gets an S lock on tuples of R.
- T3 reads all of R:
  - T3 gets an S lock on R.
  - OR, T3 could behave like T2; can use lock escalation to decide which.

Dynamic Databases

- If we relax the assumption that the DB is a fixed collection of objects, even Strict 2PL will not assure serializability:
  - T1 locks all pages containing sailor records with rating = 1, and finds oldest sailor (say, age = 71).
  - Next, T2 inserts a new sailor; rating = 1, age = 96.
  - T2 also deletes oldest sailor with rating = 2 (and, say, age = 80), and commits.
  - T1 now locks all pages containing sailor records with rating = 2, and finds oldest (say, age = 63).
- No consistent DB state where T1 is “correct”!

The 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!
  - Need some mechanism to enforce this assumption. (Index locking and predicate locking.)
- Example shows that conflict serializability guarantees serializability only if the set of objects is fixed!
**Index Locking**

- If there is a dense index on the `rating` field using Alternative (2), T1 should lock the index page containing the data entries with `rating` = 1.
  - If there are no records with `rating` = 1, T1 must lock the index page where such a data entry would be, if it existed!
- If there is no suitable index, T1 must lock all pages, and lock the file/table to prevent new pages from being added, to ensure that no new records with `rating` = 1 are added.

**Predicate Locking**

- Grant lock on all records that satisfy some logical predicate, e.g. `age > 2*salary`.
- Index locking is a special case of predicate locking for which an index supports efficient implementation of the predicate lock.
  - What is the predicate in the sailor example?
- In general, predicate locking has a lot of locking overhead.

**Locking in B+ Trees**

- How can we efficiently lock a particular leaf node?
  - Btw, don’t confuse this with multiple granularity locking!
- One solution: Ignore the tree structure, just lock pages while traversing the tree, following 2PL.
- This has terrible performance!
  - Root node (and many higher level nodes) become bottlenecks because every tree access begins at the root.

**Two Useful Observations**

- Higher levels of the tree only direct searches for leaf pages.
- For inserts, a node on a path from root to modified leaf must be locked (in X mode, of course), only if a split can propagate up to it from the modified leaf. (Similar point holds w.r.t. deletes.)
- We can exploit these observations to design efficient locking protocols that guarantee serializability even though they violate 2PL.

**A Simple Tree Locking Algorithm**

- Search: Start at root and go down; repeatedly, S lock child then unlock parent.
- Insert/Delete: Start at root and go down, obtaining X locks as needed. Once child is locked, check if it is safe:
  - If child is safe, release all locks on ancestors.
- Safe node: Node such that changes will not propagate up beyond this node.
  - Inserts: Node is not full.
  - Deletes: Node is not half-empty.
A Better Tree Locking Algorithm
(See Bayer-Schkolnick paper)

- Search: As before.
- Insert/Delete:
  - Set locks as if for search, get to leaf, and set X lock on leaf.
  - If leaf is not safe, release all locks, and restart Xact using previous Insert/Delete protocol.
- Gambles that only leaf node will be modified; if not, S locks set on the first pass to leaf are wasteful. In practice, better than previous alg.

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Even Better Algorithm

- Search: As before.
- Insert/Delete:
  - Use original Insert/Delete protocol, but set IX locks instead of X locks at all nodes.
  - Once leaf is locked, convert all IX locks to X locks top-down: i.e., starting from node nearest to root. (Top-down reduces chances of deadlock.)

(Contrast use of IX locks here with their use in multiple-granularity locking.)

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Optimistic CC (Kung-Robinson)

- Locking is a conservative approach in which conflicts are prevented. Disadvantages:
  - Lock management overhead.
  - Deadlock detection/resolution.
  - Lock contention for heavily used objects.
- If conflicts are rare, we might be able to gain concurrency by not locking, and instead checking for conflicts before Xacts commit.
Validation

- Test conditions that are sufficient to ensure that no conflict occurred.
- Each Xact is assigned a numeric id.
  - Just use a timestamp.
- Xact ids assigned at end of READ phase, just before validation begins. (Why then?)
- ReadSet(Ti): Set of objects read by Xact Ti.
- WriteSet(Ti): Set of objects modified by Ti.

Test 1

- For all i and j such that Ti < Tj, check that Ti completes before Tj begins.

Test 2

- For all i and j such that Ti < Tj, check that:
  - Ti completes before Tj begins its Write phase +
  - WriteSet(Ti) \ \bigcap \ \text{ReadSet(Tj)} \text{ is empty.}

Does Tj read dirty data? Does Ti overwrite Tj’s writes?

Test 3

- For all i and j such that Ti < Tj, check that:
  - Ti completes Read phase before Tj does +
  - WriteSet(Ti) \ \bigcap \ \text{ReadSet(Tj)} \text{ is empty} +
  - WriteSet(Ti) \ \bigcap \ \text{WriteSet(Tj)} \text{ is empty.}

Does Tj read dirty data? Does Ti overwrite Tj’s writes?

Applying Tests 1 & 2: Serial Validation

- To validate Xact T:
  
  valid = true;
  // S = set of Xacts that committed after Begin(T)
  foreach Ts in S do {
    if ReadSet(Ts) does not intersect WriteSet(Ts)
      then valid = false;
    } 
  if valid then { install updates; // Write phase Commit T } >
  else Restart T

Comments on Serial Validation

- Applies Test 2, with T playing the role of Tj and each Xact in Ts (in turn) being Ti.
- Assignment of Xact id, validation, and the Write phase are inside a critical section!
  - i.e., Nothing else goes on concurrently.
  - If Write phase is long, major drawback.
- Optimization for Read-only Xacts:
  - Don’t need critical section (because there is no Write phase).
Serial Validation (Contd.)

- Multistage serial validation: Validate in stages, at each stage validating $T$ against a subset of the Xacts that committed after Begin($T$).
  - Only last stage has to be inside critical section.
- Starvation: Run starving Xact in a critical section (!!!)
- Space for WriteSets: To validate $T_j$, must have WriteSets for all $T_i$ where $T_i < T_j$ and $T_i$ was active when $T_j$ began. There may be many such Xacts, and we may run out of space.
  - $T_j$'s validation fails if it requires a missing WriteSet.
  - No problem if Xact ids assigned at start of Read phase.

Overheads in Optimistic CC

- Must record read/write activity in ReadSet and WriteSet per Xact.
  - Must create and destroy these sets as needed.
- Must check for conflicts during validation, and must make validated writes "global".
  - Critical section can reduce concurrency.
  - Scheme for making writes global can reduce clustering of objects.
- Optimistic CC restarts Xacts that fail validation.
  - Work done so far is wasted; requires clean-up.

"Optimistic" 2PL

- If desired, we can do the following:
  - Set S locks as usual.
  - Make changes to private copies of objects.
  - Obtain all X locks at end of Xact, make writes global, then release all locks.
- In contrast to Optimistic CC as in Kung-Robinson, this scheme results in Xacts being blocked, waiting for locks.
  - However, no validation phase, no restarts (modulo deadlocks).

Timestamp CC

- Idea: Give each object a read-timestamp (RTS) and a write-timestamp (WTS), give each Xact a timestamp (TS) when it begins:
  - If action $a_i$ of Xact $T_i$ conflicts with action $a_j$ of Xact $T_j$, and $TS(T_i) < TS(T_j)$, then $a_i$ must occur before $a_j$. Otherwise, restart violating Xact.

When Xact $T$ wants to read Object $O$

- If $TS(T) < WTS(O)$, this violates timestamp order of $T$ w.r.t. writer of $O$.
  - So, abort $T$ and restart it with a new, larger TS. (If restarted with same TS, $T$ will fail again! Contrast use of timestamps in 2PL for ddlk prevention.)
  - If $TS(T) > WTS(O)$:
    - Allow $T$ to read $O$.
    - Reset RTS($O$) to max($RTS(O), TS(T)$)
  - Change to RTS($O$) on reads must be written to disk! This and restarts represent overheads.

When Xact $T$ wants to Write Object $O$

- If $TS(T) < RTS(O)$, this violates timestamp order of $T$ w.r.t. writer of $O$; abort and restart $T$.
- If $TS(T) < WTS(O)$, violates timestamp order of $T$ w.r.t. writer of $O$.
  - Thomas Write Rule: We can safely ignore such outdated writes; need not restart $T$! ($T$'s write is effectively followed by another write, with no intervening reads.)
  - Allows some serializable but non conflict serializable schedules:
  - Else, allow $T$ to write $O$. 

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**Timestamp CC and Recoverability**

- Unfortunately, unrecoverable schedules are allowed.
- Timestamp CC can be modified to allow only recoverable schedules:
  - Buffer all writes until writer commits (but update WTS(O) when the write is allowed.)
  - Block readers T (where TS(T) > WTS(O)) until writer of O commits.
- Similar to writers holding X locks until commit, but still not quite 2PL.

**Multiversion Timestamp CC**

- Idea: Let writers make a “new” copy while readers use an appropriate “old” copy:

  - Readers are always allowed to proceed.
  - But may be blocked until writer commits.

**Multiversion CC (Contd.)**

- Each version of an object has its writer’s TS as its WTS, and the TS of the Xact that most recently read this version as its RTS.
- Versions are chained backward; we can discard versions that are “too old to be of interest”.
- Each Xact is classified as Reader or Writer.
  - Writer may write some object; Reader never will.
  - Xact declares whether it is a Reader when it begins.

**Reader Xact**

- For each object to be read:
  - Finds newest version with WTS < TS(T).
  - Starts with current version in the main segment and chains backward through earlier versions.
- Assuming that some version of every object exists from the beginning of time, Reader Xacts are never restarted.
  - However, might block until writer of the appropriate version commits.

**Writer Xact**

- To read an object, follows reader protocol.
- To write an object:
  - Finds newest version V s.t. WTS < TS(T).
  - If RTS(V) < TS(T), T makes a copy CV of V, with a pointer to V, with WTS(CV) = TS(T), RTS(CV) = TS(T). (Write is buffered until T commits; other Xacts can see TS values but can’t read version CV.)
  - Else, reject write.

**Transaction Support in SQL-92**

- Each transaction has an access mode, a diagnostics size, and an isolation level.
Summary

- There are several lock-based concurrency control schemes (Strict 2PL, 2PL). Conflicts between transactions can be detected in the dependency graph.
- The lock manager keeps track of the locks issued. Deadlocks can either be prevented or detected.
- Naïve locking strategies may have the phantom problem.

Summary (Contd.)

- Index locking is common, and affects performance significantly:
  - Needed when accessing records via index.
  - Needed for locking logical sets of records (index locking/predicate locking).
- Tree-structured indexes:
  - Straightforward use of 2PL very inefficient.
  - Bayer-Schkolnick illustrates potential for improvement.
- In practice, better techniques now known; do record-level, rather than page-level locking.

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Summary (Contd.)

- Multiple granularity locking reduces the overhead involved in setting locks for nested collections of objects (e.g., a file of pages); should not be confused with tree index locking.
- Optimistic CC aims to minimize CC overheads in an “optimistic” environment where reads are common and writes are rare.
- Optimistic CC has its own overheads however; most real systems use locking.
- SQL-92 provides different isolation levels that control the degree of concurrency.

Summary (Contd.)

- Timestamp CC is another alternative to 2PL; allows some serializable schedules that 2PL does not (although converse is also true).
- Ensuring recoverability with Timestamp CC requires ability to block Xacts, which is similar to locking.
- Multiversion Timestamp CC is a variant which ensures that read-only Xacts are never restarted; they can always read a suitable older version. Additional overhead of version maintenance.