MIRROR: A State-Conscious Concurrency Control Protocol for Replicated Real-Time Databases

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Abstract

Data replication *is one of the main techniques by which database systems can hope to meet the stringent temporal constraints of current time-critical applications, especially Web-based directory and electronic commerce services. A pre-requisite for realizing the benefits of replication, however, is the development of high-performance* concurrency control *mechanisms. We present in this paper* **MIRROR** *(Managing Isolation in Replicated Real-time Object Repositories), a concurrency control protocol specifically designed for firm-deadline applications operating on replicated real-time databases. MIRROR augments the optimistic two-phase locking (O2PL) algorithm developed for non real-time databases with a novel and simple to implement state-based conflict resolution mechanism to fine-tune real-time performance.*

Using a detailed simulation model, we have compared MIRROR's performance against the real-time versions of a representative set of classical protocols for a range of transaction workloads and system configurations. Our performance studies show that (a) the relative performance characteristics of replica concurrency control algorithms in the real-time environment could be significantly different from their performance in a traditional (non-real-time) database system, (b) MIRROR provides the best performance in both fully and partially replicated environments for real-time applications with low to moderate update frequencies, and (c) MIRROR's conflict resolution mechanism works almost as well as more sophisticated (and difficult to implement) strategies.

1 Introduction

Many *time-critical* database applications are inherently *distributed* in nature. These include the intelligent network services database described in [17], the mobile telecommunication system discussed in [29], the 1-800 telephone service in the United States. More recent applications include the multitude of directory, data-feed and electronic commerce services that have become available on the World Wide Web – for example, organizations the world over are starting to deploy Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP)-accessible directories as part of their information infrastructure [12, 13].

The performance, reliability, and availability of such applications can be significantly enhanced through the *replication* of data on multiple sites of the distributed network. This has been the main motivation, for example, for the now commonplace establishment of "mirror sites" on the Web for heavily accessed services. In fact, a large percentage of the data that directories are expected to provide reside in replicated relational databases.

A pre-requisite for realizing the benefits of replication, however, is the development of efficient replica management mechanisms. In particular, for many of these applications, especially those related to on-line information provision and electronic commerce, stringent consistency requirements need to be supported while achieving high performance. Therefore, a major issue is the development of efficient *replica concurrency control* protocols. While a few isolated efforts in this direction have been made earlier, they have resulted in schemes wherein ei-

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ther the standard notions of database correctness are not fully supported [22, 23], or the maintenance of multiple historical *versions* of the data is required [21], or the real-time transaction semantics and performance metrics pose practical problems [25]. Further, none of these studies have considered the optimistic two-phase locking (O2PL) protocol [3] although it is the best-performing algorithm in conventional (non-real-time) replicated database systems [3].

In contrast to the above studies, we focus in this paper on the design of *one-copy serializable* concurrency control protocols for replicated real-time databases. Our study is targeted towards real-time applications with "firm deadlines".[1] For such applications, completing a transaction after its deadline has expired is of no utility and may even be harmful. Therefore, transactions that miss their deadlines are "killed", that is, immediately aborted and discarded from the system without being executed to completion. Accordingly, the performance metric is the *percentage of transactions that miss their deadlines*.

Our choice of firm-deadline applications is based on the observation that many of the current distributed real-time applications belong to this category. For example, in the 1-800 service, a customer may hang up the phone if the answer to his query is not provided in a timely manner. Similarly, most Web-based services employ "stateless" communication protocols with timeout features.

The MIRROR Protocol

For the above application and system framework, we present in this paper a replica concurrency control protocol called **MIRROR** (Managing Isolation in Replicated Real-time Object Repositories). MIRROR augments the optimistic two-phase locking (O2PL) algorithm with a novel, simple to implement, state-based conflict resolution mechanism called *state-conscious priority blocking*. In this scheme, the choice of conflict resolution method is a dynamic function of the states of the distributed transactions involved in the conflict. A feature of the design is that acquiring the state knowledge does not require inter-site communication or synchronization, nor does it require modifications to the two-phase commit protocol [7] (the standard mechanism for ensuring distributed transaction atomicity).

Using a detailed simulation model of a *replicated* RTDBS, we compare MIRROR's performance against the real-time versions of a representative set of classical replica concurrency control protocols for a range of transaction workloads and system configurations. These protocols include two phase locking (2PL), optimistic concurrency control (OCC) and optimistic two phase locking (O2PL). Our performance studies show the following:

1. The relative performance characteristics of replica concurrency control algorithms in the real-time environment could be significantly different from their performance in a traditional (non-real-time) database system. For example, the O2PL algorithm, which is reputed to provide the best overall performance in traditional databases, performs poorly in real-time databases.

2. The MIRROR protocol provides the best performance in both fully and partially replicated environments for real-time applications with low or moderate update frequencies. For high update frequencies, however, OCC is better. But, given that most of the distributed real-time applications that we are aware of fall into the former category, MIRROR appears to be an attractive choice for designers of replicated RTDBS.

3. As mentioned above, MIRROR implements a state-conscious priority blocking-based conflict resolution mechanism. We also evaluated alternative implementations of MIRROR with more sophisticated, and difficult to implement, conflict resolution mechanisms such as *state-conscious priority inheritance*. Our experiments demonstrate, however, that little value is added with these enhancements – that is, the basic simple implementation of MIRROR itself is sufficient to deliver good performance.

Organization

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows: In Section 2, we present the locking-based distributed concurrency control algorithms evaluated in our study. In particular, we describe MIRROR, the state-conscious conflict resolution mechanism. Experimental results are presented and summarized in Section 3. Section 4 discusses the related work. Finally, we summarize

[1] In the rest of this paper, when we refer to real-time databases, we mean *firm* real-time databases unless specified otherwise.

our conclusions and suggest future research directions in Section 5.

2 Locking-based Distributed Concurrency Control Protocols

In this section, we review the classical families of locking-based distributed CC protocols, 2PL [5] and O2PL [3], and present the MIRROR protocol. All the protocol classes belong to the ROWA ("read one copy, write all copies") category with respect to their treatment of replicated data. While the 2PL and O2PL implementations are taken from the literature, our MIRROR protocol is new. In the following description, we assume that the reader is familiar with the standard concepts of distributed transaction execution [3, 7, 8].

2.1 Distributed Two-Phase Locking (2PL)

In the distributed two-phase locking algorithm described in [5], a transaction that intends to read a data item has to only set a read lock on *any* copy of the item; to update an item, however, write locks are required on *all* copies. Write locks are obtained as the transaction executes, with the transaction blocking on a write request until all of the copies of the item to be updated have been successfully locked by a local cohort and its remote updaters. Only the data locked by a cohort is updated in the data processing phase of a transaction. Remote copies locked by updaters are updated after those updaters have received copies of the relevant updates with the PREPARE message during the first phase of the commit protocol. Read locks are held until the transaction has entered the prepared state while write locks are held until they are committed or aborted.

2.2 Distributed Optimistic Two-Phase Locking (O2PL)

The O2PL algorithm [3] can be thought of as a hybrid occupying the middle ground between 2PL and OCC. Specifically, O2PL handles read requests in the same way that 2PL does; in fact, 2PL and O2PL are *identical* in the absence of replication. However, O2PL handles replicated data optimistically. When a cohort updates a replicated data item, it requests a write lock immediately on the local copy of the item. But it defers requesting write locks on any of the remote copies until the beginning of the commit phase is reached.

As in the OCC algorithm, replica updaters are initiated by cohorts in the commit phase. Thus, communication with the remote copy site is accomplished by simply passing update information in the PREPARE message of the commit protocol. In particular, the PREPARE message sent by a cohort to its remote updaters includes a list of items to be updated, and each remote updater must obtain write locks on these copies before it can act on the PREPARE request.[2]

Since O2PL waits until the end of a transaction to obtain write locks on copies, both blocking and abort are possible rather late in the execution of a transaction. In particular, if two transactions at different sites have updated different copies of a common data item, one of the transactions has to be aborted eventually after the conflict is detected. In this case, the lower priority transaction is usually chosen for abort in RTDBS.[3]

2.3 The MIRROR Protocol

We now present our new replica concurrency control protocol called **MIRROR** (Managing Isolation in Replicated Real-Time Object Repositories). MIRROR augments the O2PL protocol with a novel, simple to implement, state-based conflict resolution mechanism called *state-conscious priority blocking*. In this scheme, the choice of conflict resolution method is a dynamic function of the states of the distributed transactions involved in the conflict. A feature of the design is that acquiring the state knowledge does not require inter-site communication or synchronization, nor does it require modifications of the two-phase commit protocol.

Two real-time conflict resolution mechanisms are used in MIRROR. They are *Priority Blocking* (PB) and *Priority Abort* (PA). PB is similar to the conventional locking protocol in that a transaction is always blocked when it encounters a lock conflict and can only get the lock after the lock is released. PA attempts to resolve all data conflicts in favor of high-priority transactions. Specifically, at the time of a data lock conflict, if the lock holding cohort (updater) has higher priority than the priority of the cohort (updater) that is requesting the lock, the requester

[2] To speed up conflict detection, special "copy locks" rather than normal write locks are used for updaters. Copy locks are identical to write locks in terms of their compatibility matrix, but they enable the lock manager to know when a lock is being requested by a replica updater.

[3] The exception occurs when the lower priority transaction is *prepared* in which case the other transaction has to be aborted.

is blocked. Otherwise, the lock holding cohort (updater) is aborted and the lock is granted to the requester. Readers are referred to [28] for details of such real-time conflict resolution mechanisms.

The key idea of the *MIRROR* protocol is to resolve data conflicts based on distributed transaction *states*. As observed in earlier work in centralized RTDBS, it is very expensive to abort a transaction when it is near completion because all the resources consumed by the transactions are wasted[11]. Therefore, in the MIRROR protocol, the state of a cohort/updater is used to determine which data conflict resolution mechanism should be employed. The basic idea is that Priority Abort (PA) should be used in the early stages of transaction execution, whereas Priority Blocking (PB) should be used in the later stages since in such cases a blocked higher priority transaction may not wait too long before the blocking transaction completes. More specifically, it follows the mechanism given below:

State-Conscious Priority Blocking (PA_PB):

A cohort/updater employs PA until it reaches a point called the *demarcation point* after which it employs the PB protocol.

We assign the demarcation points of a cohort/updater T_i as follows:

- T_i **is a cohort:**
  when T_i receives a PREPARE message from its master
- T_i **is a replica updater:**
  when T_i has acquired all the local write locks

Essentially, we want to set the demarcation point in such a way that, beyond that point, the cohort or the updater does not incur any locally induced waits. So, in the case of O2PL, a cohort reaches its demarcation point when it receives a PREPARE message from its master. This happens before the cohort sends PREPARE messages to its remote updaters. It is worth noting that, to a cohort, the difference between PA and PA_PB is with regard to when the cohort reaches the point after which it cannot be aborted by lock conflict. In case of the classical priority abort (PA) mechanism, a cohort enters the PREPARED state after it votes for COMMIT, and a PREPARED cohort cannot be aborted unilaterally. This happens *after* all the remote updaters of the cohort vote to COMMIT. On the other hand, in the PA_PB mechanism, a cohort reaches its demarcation point *before* it sends PREPARE messages to its remote updaters. PA and PA_PB become identical if databases are not replicated. Thus, in state-conscious protocols, cohorts or updaters reach demarcation points only after the two phase commit protocol starts. This means that a cohort/updater cannot reach its demarcation point unless it has acquired all the locks. Note also that a cohort/updater that reaches its demarcation point may still be aborted due to write lock conflict, as discussed earlier in Section 2.2.

2.3.1 Implementation Complexity

We now comment on the overheads involved in implementing MIRROR in a practical system. Firstly, note that MIRROR does not require any inter-site communication or synchronization to determine when its demarcation points have been reached. This information is known at each local cohort or updater by virtue of its own local state. Second, it does not require any modifications to the messages, logs, or handshaking sequences that are associated with the two-phase commit protocol. Third, the changes to be made to the local lock manager at each site to implement the protocol are quite simple.

2.3.2 Incorporating PA_PB into the 2PL Protocol

Note that the PA_PB conflict resolution mechanism, which we discussed above in the context of the O2PL-based MIRROR protocol, can be also added to the distributed 2PL protocol.

For 2PL, we assign the demarcation points of a cohort/updater T_i as follows:

- T_i **is a cohort:**
  when T_i receives a PREPARE message from its master
- T_i **is a replica updater:**
  when T_i receives a PREPARE message from its cohort

One special effect in combining with 2PL is that, unlike the combination with O2PL, here a low priority transaction which has reached its demarcation point and has blocked a high priority transaction will not suffer any lock based waits.

2.3.3 Choice of Post-Demarcation Conflict Resolution Mechanism

In the above description, we have used Priority Blocking (PB) for the post-demarcation conflict resolution mechanism. Alternatively, we could have used *Priority Inheritance* (PI) instead, as given below:

State-Conscious Priority Inheritance (PA_PI): A cohort/updater employs PA until it reaches the demarcation point after which it employs the PI protocol.

At first glance, the above approach may appear to be significantly *better* than PA_PB since not only are we preventing close-to-completion transactions from being aborted but in addition are helping them complete quicker, thereby reducing the waiting time of the high-priority transactions blocked by such transactions. However, as we will show later in Section 3, this does not turn out to be the case, and it is therefore the simpler and easier to implement PA_PB that we finally recommend for the MIRROR implementation.

3 Experiments and Results

To evaluate the performance of the concurrency control protocols described in Section 2, we developed a detailed simulation model of a DRTDBS. Our model is based on the distributed database model presented in [3], which has also been used in several other studies (for example, [8, 14]) of distributed database system behavior, and the real-time processing model of [27]. A summary of the parameters used in the simulation model are presented in Table 1.

The database is modeled as a collection of $DBSize$ pages that are distributed over $NumSites$ sites. The number of replicas of each page, that is, the "replication degree", is determined by the $ReplDegree$ parameter. The physical resources at each site consist of $NumCPUs$ CPUs, $NumDataDisks$ data disks and $NumLogDisks$ log disks. At each site, there is a single common queue for the CPUs and the scheduling policy is preemptive Highest-Priority-First. Each of the disks has its own queue and is scheduled according to a Head-Of-Line policy, with the request queue being ordered by transaction priority. The $PageCPU$ and $PageDisk$ parameters capture the CPU and disk processing times per data page, respectively. The parameter $InitWriteCPU$ models the CPU overhead associated with initiating a disk write for an updated page. When a transaction makes a request for accessing a data page, the data page may be found in the buffer pool, or it may have to be accessed from the disk. The *BufHitRatio* parameter gives the probability of finding a requested page already resident in the buffer pool.

Parameter	Meaning	Setting
$NumSites$	Number of sites	4
$DBSize$	Number of Pages in the databases	1000 pages
$ReplDegree$	Degree of Replication	4
$NumCPUs$	Number of CPUs per site	2
$NumDataDisks$	Number of data disks per site	4
$NumLogDisks$	Number of log disks per site	1
$BufHitRatio$	Buffer hit ratio on a site	0.1
$ArrivalRate$	Transaction arrival rate (transactions/second)	Varied
$SlackFactor$	Slack factor in deadline assignment	6.0
$TransSize$	Average No. of pages accessed per trans.	16 pages
$UpdateFreq$	Update frequency per page access	0.25
$PageCPU$	CPU processing time per page	10 ms
$InitWriteCPU$	Time to initiate a disk write	2 ms
$PageDisk$	Disk access time per page	20 ms
$LogDisk$	Log force time	5 ms
$MsgCPU$	CPU message send/receive time	1 ms

Table 1. Simulation Model Parameters and Default Settings.

The communication network is simply modeled as a switch that routes messages and the CPU overhead of message transfer is taken into account at both the sending and receiving sites and its value is determined by the $MsgCPU$ parameter – the network delays are subsumed in this parameter. This means that there are two classes of CPU requests – local data processing requests and message processing requests. We do not make any distinction, however, between these different types of requests and only ensure that all requests are served in priority order.

With regard to logging costs, we explicitly model only *forced* log writes since they are done synchronously, i.e., operations of the transaction are suspended during the associated disk writing period. This logging cost is captured by the $LogDisk$ parameter.

Transactions arrive in a Poisson stream with rate $ArrivalRate$, and each transaction has an associated firm deadline, assigned as described below. Each transaction randomly chooses a site in the system to be the site where the transaction originates and then forks off cohorts at all the sites where it has to access data. Transactions in a distributed system can execute in either *sequential* or *parallel* fashion. The distinction is that cohorts in a sequential

transaction execute one after another, whereas cohorts in a parallel transaction are started together and execute independently until commit processing is initiated. We consider only sequential transactions in this study. Note, however, that the execution of replica updaters belonging to the same cohort is *always in parallel*.

The total number of pages accessed by a transaction, ignoring replicas, varies uniformly between 0.5 and 1.5 times $TransSize$. These pages are chosen uniformly (without replacement) from the entire database. The proportion of accessed pages that are also updated is determined by $UpdateFreq$.

Upon arrival, each transaction T is assigned a firm completion deadline using the formula

$$Deadline_T = ArrivalTime_T + SlackFactor * R_T$$

where $Deadline_T$, $ArrivalTime_T$, and R_T are the deadline, arrival time, and resource time, respectively, of transaction T, while $SlackFactor$ is a slack factor that provides control of the tightness/slackness of transaction deadlines. The resource time is the total service time at the resources at all sites that the transaction requires for its execution *in the absence of data replication*. This is done because the replica-related cost differs from one CC protocol to another. It is important to note that while transaction resource requirements are used in assigning transaction deadlines, *the system itself lacks any knowledge of these requirements* in our model since for many applications it is unrealistic to expect such knowledge [20]. This also implies that a transaction is detected as being late only when it *actually* misses its deadline.

As discussed earlier, transactions in an RTDBS are typically assigned priorities so as to minimize the number of killed transactions. In our model, all cohorts inherit their parent transaction's priority. Messages also retain their sending transaction's priority. The transaction priority assignment used in all of the experiments described here is the widely-used *Earliest Deadline* policy [16], wherein transactions with earlier deadlines have higher priority than transactions with later deadlines.

Deadlock is possible with some of the CC protocols that we evaluate – in our experiments, deadlocks are detected using a time out mechanism. Both our own simulations as well as the results reported in previous studies [2, 6] show that the frequency of deadlocks is extremely small – therefore a low-overhead solution like timeout is preferable compared to more expensive graph-based techniques.

The performance metric employed is *MissPercent*, the *percentage of transactions that miss their deadlines*. Several additional statistics are used to aid in the analysis of the experimental results, including the *abort ratio*, which is the average number of aborts per transaction[4], the *message ratio*, which is the average number of messages sent per transaction, and the *wait ratio*, which is the average number of waits per transaction. Further, we also measure the *useful resource utilization* as the resource utilization made by those transactions that are successfully completed before their deadlines.

All the missed deadline percentage graphs in this paper show mean values that have relative half widths about the mean of less than 10% at the 90% confidence interval, with each experiment having been run until at least 10000 transactions are processed by the system. Only statistically significant differences are discussed here.

3.1 Expt. : Concurrency Control Algorithms

The goal of this experiment was to investigate the performance of CC protocols based on the three different techniques: 2PL, O2PL and optimistic concurrency control (OCC). For OCC, we use the *OPT-WAIT* conflict resolution mechanism [9] [5]. The missed deadline percentage of transactions is presented in Figures 1(a) and 1(b) for the normal load and heavy load regions, respectively.

Focusing our attention on the locking-based schemes, we observe that MIRROR outperforms 2PL-PA_PB in both normal and heavy workload ranges. For example, MIRROR outperforms 2PL-PA_PB by about 12% (absolute) at an arrival rate of 14 transactions/second. This can be explained as follows: First, 2PL results in much higher message overhead for each transaction, as is clearly brought out in Figure 1(c), which profiles the message ratio statistic. The higher message overhead results in higher CPU utilization, thus aggravating CPU contention. Second, 2PL-PA_PB detects data conflicts earlier than MIRROR. However, data conflicts cause transaction blocks or aborts. In Figures 1(d) and 1(e), it is clear that 2PL-PA_PB results in more number of waits per transaction and longer

[4] In RTDBS, transaction aborts can arise out of deadline expiry or data conflicts. Only aborts due to data conflicts are included in this statistic.

[5] Readers are referred to [28] for details of our OCC implementation.

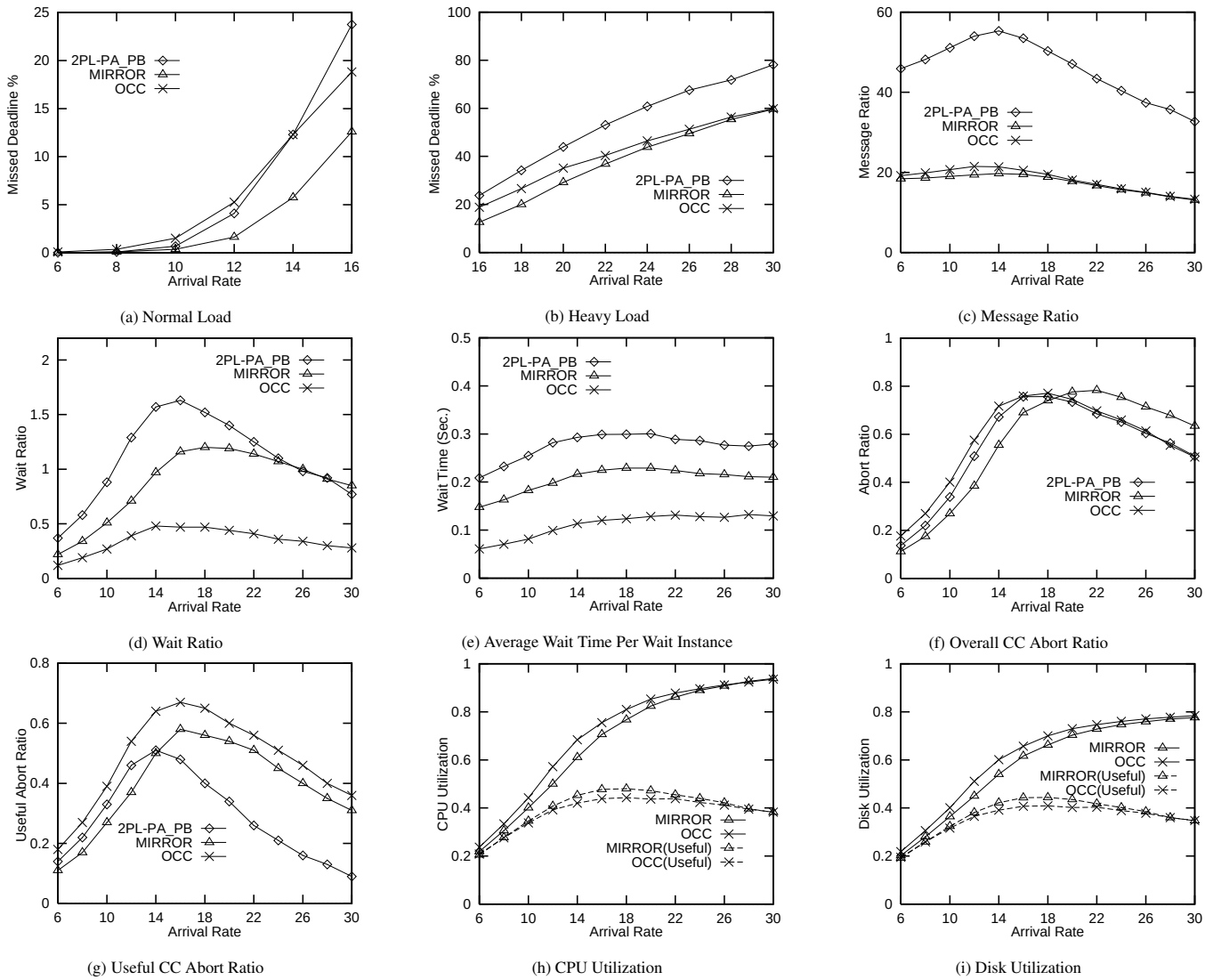

Figure 1. 2PL, O2PL and OCC Algorithms

wait time per wait instance. Thus 2PL-PA_PB results in more transaction blocks and longer blocking times than MIRROR. On the other hand, MIRROR has less transaction blocks. In other words, unlike in 2PL-PA_PB, a cohort with O2PL cannot be blocked by data conflicts with cohorts or updaters on other sites before it reaches the commit phase. Thus, with MIRROR, transactions can proceed faster.

Figures 1(f) and 1(g) present the *overall* and *useful* concurrency control (CC) abort ratios for the various protocols. The *useful* CC abort ratio only includes aborts caused by eventually committed transactions. Focusing our attention on 2PL-PA_PB and MIRROR, under normal workload range, MIRROR has significantly lower CC abort ratio than 2PL-PA_PB. Thus MIRROR utilizes resources better under normal workloads. Under heavy workload range, MIRROR has higher CC abort ratios than 2PL-PA_PB. This can be explained as follows : In case of O2PL, it is possible for each copy site to have an update transaction obtain locks locally, but discover the existence of competing update transaction(s) at other sites only after successfully executing locally. Discovering the conflict at this late stage leaves no option for resolving the conflicts except to abort the lower priority transaction. However, we also observe that MIRROR has much higher *useful* CC abort ratio than 2PL-PA_PB even though its *total* abort ratio is slightly higher than 2PL-PA_PB. For example, at an arrival rate of 22 transactions/second, the total and use-

ful abort ratio of MIRROR are 0.78 and 0.51, respectively, while the total and useful abort ratio of 2PL-PA_PB at the same arrival rate are 0.69 and 0.26, respectively. Thus the wasteful CC abort ratio of MIRROR and 2PL-PA_PB are 0.27 and 0.43, respectively. It demonstrates that MIRROR improves performance by detecting global CC conflicts late in the transaction execution thereby reducing wasted transaction aborts.

Finally turning our attention to the OCC protocol, we observe that OCC is slightly worse than 2PL-PA_PB and MIRROR under arrival rates less than 14 transactions/second. This is due to the fact that OCC has a higher CC abort ratio than 2PL-PA_PB and MIRROR under those loads, as shown in Figure 1(f). With higher loads, OCC outperforms 2PL-PA_PB. This is because OCC has a lower CC abort ratio and higher useful CC abort ratio than MIRROR. This is clearly brought out in Figure 1(f) and 1(g), respectively. In Figures 1(d) and 1(e), it is also clearly shown that OCC has less number of waits per transaction and shorter wait time per wait instance. Thus OCC can reduce the total blocking time of a transaction.

It may be considered surprising that MIRROR has the best performance over a wide workload range, improving slightly even over OCC. With arrival rate less than 18 transactions/second, MIRROR has much less *overall* CC abort ratio than OCC. This is clearly brought out in Figure 1(f). With higher loads, MIRROR has more *overall* CC abort ratio and less *useful* CC abort ratio than OCC, as shown in Figures 1(f) and 1(g), respectively. To compare the performance of OCC and MIRROR more carefully, we examine the resource utilization and useful resource utilization in Figures 1(h) and 1(i). We observe that MIRROR has higher *useful* CPU and disk utilization, even though its *overall* CPU and disk utilization is lower than OCC. This clearly indicates that OCC wastes more resources than MIRROR does. It implies that the average progress made by transactions before they were aborted due to CC conflicts is larger in OCC than that in MIRROR.[6] As observed in the previous studies of centralized RTDB settings[9], the wait control in OCC can actually cause all the conflicting transactions of a validating transaction to be aborted at a later point in time, thereby wasting more resources even if OCC has slightly less CC abort ratio than MIRROR. In contrast, MIRROR reduces wasted resources by avoiding transaction aborts after cohorts/updaters reach demarcation points.

In summary, although OCC outperforms 2PL-PA_PB, MIRROR, the protocol of O2PL augmented with PA_PB, outperforms OCC in the tested workloads.

3.2 Summary of Experimental Results

We have conducted a variety of experiments that cover a range of workloads and system configurations, including full and partial data replication, finite and "infinite" resources[7] to isolate the impact of data contention, variations in *update probability*, *data access ratio*[8], *message cost*, *message propagation delay*, *slack factor*, etc. Due to space limitation, we only summarize these experimental results in Table 2.

Table 2 presents these results under both tight and loose slack factor: In the table, system parameters, i.e., load, message cost, data access ratio (DAR) and update frequency have been coarsely categorized into low and high, and '*' refers to both low and high categories. The terms "poor", "fair", "good", and "best" are used to describe the relative performance in a given system state and for a given algorithm. Whereas in a particular row, "fair" is better than "poor", "good" is better than "fair", and "best" represents the best algorithm in a row, the terms in two different rows are not comparable. The following general observations pertain to our experimental results.

1. 2PL based algorithms perform poorly in most cases, especially when the message cost is high. Thus 2PL based algorithms are not the proper choices for high message cost environments.
2. O2PL-PA and MIRROR achieve good performance for low to moderate update frequencies but the O2PL approach does not work well at high update frequencies.
3. OCC achieves better performance than all the O2PL-based and 2PL-based algorithms, except for MIRROR, over most of the update frequency range.
4. Protocols integrated with only PB or PI (e.g., O2PL-PB, O2PL-PI) always perform poorly. Thus they are not suited to distributed real-time databases. A similar poor performance of these mechanisms has

[6] A transaction's progress is measured in terms of the resources it has consumed.

[7] No queuing for the CPU and disk resources.

[8] Data access ratio is defined to be the maximum number of objects that could be simultaneously accessed by all the transactions in the system relative to the size of the database [9].

Parameter				Algorithms' Performance								
				2PL				O2PL				OCC
Load	MsgCost	DAR	UpdateFreq	PB	PI	PA	PA_PB	PB	PI	PA	MIRROR	Wait
Low	Low	High	Low	Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Poor	Poor	Good	Best	Good
Low	High	High	Low	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Good	Best	Good
High	Low	High	Low	Poor	Poor	Poor	Fair	Poor	Poor	Fair	Best	Good
High	High	High	Low	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Fair	Fair	Good	Best	Good
*	*	High	High	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Good	Best
*	*	Low	Low	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Good	Good	Good	Best	Good
*	*	Low	High	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good

Table 2. Performance of Algorithms.

also been observed earlier for centralized real-time databases [9].

5. In our experiments, we found that the performance of O2PL-PA_PI was *virtually identical* to that of MIRROR in all cases. The reason for this perhaps counter-intuitive result is that priority-inheritance in the distributed environment involves excessive message costs and dissemination delay, thereby neutralizing its positive points. Similar relative performance is also observed for 2PL-PA_PI and 2PL-PA_PB. To save space, we omit the PA_PI variations in Table 2.
6. No single algorithm can *always* outperform all the others: MIRROR (O2PL-PA_PB) performs best for low to moderate update frequencies whereas OCC performs best at high update frequencies. However, since we expect that most replicated RTDBS applications will belong to the former category, MIRROR appears to be the best overall choice for implementation in these systems.

4 Related Work

Concurrency control algorithms and real-time conflict resolution mechanisms for RTDBS have been studied extensively (e.g. [9, 10, 11, 25]). However, concurrency control for replicated DRTDBS has only been studied in [21, 22, 23, 25]. An algorithm for maintaining consistency and improving the performance of replicated DRTDBS is proposed in [21]. In this algorithm, a *multiversion* technique is used to increase the degree of concurrency. Replication control algorithms that integrate real-time scheduling and replication control are proposed in [22, 23]. These algorithms employ Epsilon-serializability (ESR) [26] which is less stringent than conventional one-copy-serializability.

In contrast to the above studies, our work retains the standard one-copy-serializability as the correctness criterion and focuses on the locking and OCC based concurrency control protocols.

The performance of the classical distributed 2PL locking protocol (augmented with the priority abort (PA) and priority inheritance(PI) conflict resolution mechanisms) and of OCC algorithms in replicated DRTDBS was studied in [25] for real-time applications with "soft" deadlines. [9] The results indicate that 2PL-PA outperforms 2PL-PI only when the update transaction ratio and the level of data replication are both low. Similarly, the performance of OCC is good only under light transaction loads.

Making clear-cut recommendations on the performance of protocols in the soft deadline environment is rendered difficult, however, by the following: (1) There are *two* metrics – Missed Deadlines and Mean Tardiness, and protocols which improve one metric usually degrade the other. (2) The choice of the post-deadline value function has considerable impact on relative protocol performance; (3) There is no inherent load control, so the system could enter an unstable state. Due to such problems with the soft-deadline framework and, more importantly, because many of the replicated applications fall into the firm-deadline category, we have modeled firm real-time transactions in this paper. Finally, we also include an investigation of the O2PL algorithm which has not been studied before in the real-time context.

In [11], a *conditional priority inheritance* mechanism is proposed to handle priority inversion. This mechanism capitalizes on the advantages of both priority abort and priority inheritance in real-time data conflict resolution. It outperforms both priority abort and priority inheritance when integrated with two phase locking in centralized real-time databases. However, the protocol assumes that the *length* (in terms of the number of data accesses) of

[9] With soft deadlines, a reduced value is obtained by the application from transactions that are completed after their deadlines have expired.

transactions is known in advance which may not be practical in general, especially for distributed applications. In contrast, our *state-conscious priority blocking* and *state-conscious priority inheritance* protocols resolve real-time data conflicts based on the *states* of transactions rather than their lengths.

5 Conclusions

In this paper, we have addressed the problem of accessing replicated data in distributed real-time databases where transactions have firm deadlines, a framework under which many current time-critical applications, especially Web-based ones, operate. In particular, for this environment we proposed a novel state-conscious protocol called MIRROR which can be easily integrated and implemented in current systems, and investigated its performance relative to the performance of the 2PL, O2PL and OCC based concurrency control algorithms. Our performance study indicates that OCC outperforms 2PL and O2PL based algorithms when these locking based algorithms are integrated with priority abort and priority inheritance protocols. However, MIRROR, the O2PL protocol augmented with PA_PB, can outperform OCC under a wide loading range when the data update rate is low to moderate, which is usually the case for replicated database environments. The study has demonstrated the superior performance of MIRROR as well as its PI-based counterpart, O2PL-PA_PI, over earlier protocols in both fully and partially replicated environments. Since MIRROR is much simpler to implement than O2PL-PA_PI, we recommend it as the protocol of choice to designers of distributed replicated real-time database systems.

Our plans for future research include combining the MIRROR protocol with the optimistic distributed real-time commit protocol of [8] to investigate the performance improvements that may arise out of this combination. We will also investigate mechanisms for decoupling the consistency maintenance of the different replicas. This decoupling might help transactions to complete earlier, thereby giving them a better chance to make their deadlines.

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