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# From dataflow specification to multiprocessor partitioned time-triggered real-time implementation

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## From dataflow specification to multiprocessor partitioned time-triggered real-time implementation

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**Abstract:** We consider deterministic functional specifications provided by means of synchronous data-flow models with multiple modes and multiple relative periods. These specifications are extended to include a real-time characterization defining task periods, release dates, and deadlines. Task deadlines can be longer than the period to allow a faithful representation of complex end-to-end flow requirements. We also extend our specifications with partitioning and allocation constraints. Then, we provide algorithms for the off-line scheduling of these specifications onto partitioned time-triggered architectures *à la* ARINC 653. Allocation of time slots/windows to partitions can be fully or partially provided, or synthesized by our tool. Our algorithms allow the automatic allocation and scheduling onto multi-processor (distributed) systems with a global time base, taking into account communication costs. We demonstrate our technique on a model of space flight software system with strong real-time determinism requirements.

**Key-words:** scheduling, distributed, partitioned, multi-rate

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## Implantation temps-réel time-triggered partitionnée distribuée de spécifications flots de données

**Résumé :** Nous considérons des spécifications fonctionnelles de type flots de données synchrone multi-périodes avec plusieurs modes d'exécution. Ces spécifications sont étendues afin d'inclure une caractérisation temps-réel définissant des dates d'arrivée et des échéances. Les échéances des tâches peuvent être plus longues que leur période pour permettre une représentation plus réaliste des contraintes de bout À bout complexes existant sur les flots. Nous étendons également nos spécifications pour inclure des contraintes de partitionnement et d'allocation. Nous définissons ensuite des algorithmes pour l'ordonnancement hors ligne de ces spécifications sur des architectures time-triggered à la ARINC 653. L'allocation des fenêtres temporelles aux partitions peut être totalement ou partiellement fournie, ou être synthétisée par notre outil. Nos algorithmes permettent l'allocation et l'ordonnancement automatique sur des architectures multi-processeurs (distribués) disposant d'une base de temps globale, en prenant en compte les coûts de communication. Nous illustrons notre approche sur un modèle de logiciel de contrôle embarqué spatial comportant des contraintes de déterminisme temps-réel strictes.

**Mots-clés :** ordonnancement, distribué, partitionné, multi-période

## 1 Introduction

This paper addresses the implementation of embedded control systems with strong functional and temporal determinism requirements. The development of these systems is usually based on *model-driven* approaches using high-level formalisms for the specification of functionality (Simulink, SCADE[CCM<sup>+</sup>03]) and/or real-time system architecture and non-functional requirements (AADL [AAD], UML/Marte [uml]).

The temporal determinism requirement also means that the implementation is likely to use *time-triggered* architectures and execution mechanisms defined in well-established standards such as TTA, FlexRay [Rus01], ARINC 653 [ARI05], or AUTOSAR [AUT09].

The time-triggered paradigm describes sampling-based systems (as opposed to event-driven ones) [Kop91] where sampling and execution are performed at predefined points in time.<sup>1</sup> The offline computation of these points under non-functional constraints of various types (real-time, temporal isolation of different criticality sub-systems, resource allocation) often complicates system development, when compared to classical event-driven systems. In return for the increased design cost, system validation and qualification are largely simplified, which explains the early adoption of time-triggered techniques in the development of safety- and mission-critical real-time systems.

**Contribution.** The objective and contribution of this paper is to facilitate the development of time-triggered systems by automating the allocation and scheduling steps for significant classes of functional specifications, target time-triggered architectures, and non-functional requirements. On the application side, we consider general dataflow synchronous specifications with *conditional execution*, *multiple execution modes*, and *multiple relative periods*. Explicitly taking into account conditional execution and execution modes during scheduling is a key point of our approach, because the offline computation of triggering dates limits flexibility at runtime. For instance, taking into account conditional execution and modes allows for better use of system resources (efficiency) and a simple modeling of reconfigurations.

On the architecture side, we consider multiprocessor *distributed architectures*, taking into account *communication costs* during automatic allocation and scheduling.

In the non-functional domain, we consider *real-time*, *partitioning*, *preemptability*, and *allocation constraints*. By *partitioning* we mean here the *temporal partitioning* specific to TTA, FlexRay (the static segment), and ARINC 653, which allows the static allocation of CPU or bus time slots, on a periodic basis, to various parts (known as partitions) of the application. Also known as static time division multiplexing (TDM) scheduling, these approaches further enhance the temporal determinism of a system.

We make an original use of classical real-time characteristics such as periods, release dates, and deadlines, which we adapt to our time-triggered target. In particular, the use of deadlines that are longer than the periods naturally arises. It allows a more natural real-time specification, improved schedulability, and less context changes between partitions (which are notoriously expensive).

**The application.** We apply our technique on a model of spacecraft embedded control system. Spacecrafts are subject to very strict real-time requirements. The unavailability of the avionics system (and thus of the software) of a space launcher during a few milliseconds during the

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<sup>1</sup>Partially supported by the FUI8 PARSEC project.

<sup>1</sup>As such, it generalizes classical periodic real-time scheduling concepts, by relaxing fixed release intervals into more complex repetitive patterns.

atmospheric phase may indeed lead to the destruction of the launcher. From a spacecraft system point of view, the latencies are defined between acquisitions of measurement by a sensor to sending of commands by an actuator. Meanwhile, the commands are established by a set of automatism algorithms (Guidance, Navigation and Control or GNC).

Traditionally, the GNC algorithms are implemented on a dedicated processor using a classical multi-tasking approach. But today, the increase of computational power provided by space processors allows suppressing this dedicated processor and distributing the GNC algorithms on the processors controlling either the sensors or the actuators. For future spacecraft (space launchers or space transportation vehicles), the navigation algorithm could for instance run on the processor controlling the gyroscope, while the control algorithm could run on the processor controlling the thruster. The suppression of the dedicated processor allows power and mass saving.

The sharing of a processor by two pieces of software (one controlling for instance a gyroscope and the other one implementing the navigation algorithm) requires the use of a hypervisor ensuring the Time and Space Partitioning (or TSP), such as ARINC 653 [ARI05]. The scheduling problem is therefore as follows: End-to-end latencies are defined at spacecraft system level, along with the offsets of sensing and actuation operations. Also provided are *WCET* (worst case execution time) values associated to tasks. What must be computed is the time-triggered schedule of the system, including the activation times of each partition and the bus frame.

**Outline.** The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 reviews related work. Section 3 defines our architecture model, spending significant space on the careful definition of time-triggered and partitioned systems. Section 4 defines our task model, including functional and non-functional aspects. Sections 5, 6, and 7 cover the scheduling algorithms and experimental results. Section 8 concludes.

## 2 Related work

Previous work by Forget *et al.* [PFB<sup>+</sup>11] and Marouf *et al.* [MGS12] on the implementation of multi-periodic synchronous programs, as well as previous work by Blazewicz and Chetto *et al.* [CSB90] on the scheduling of dependent task systems have been a major source of inspiration. By comparison, our paper provides a general treatment of ARINC 653-like partitioning and of conditional execution, and a novel use of deadlines longer than periods to allow faithful real-time specification. Our work is also close to that of Pop *et al.* [PEP99], the main differences being the handling of end-to-end delays and the use of fast heuristics.

Compared to previous work by Isovich and Fohler [IF09] on real-time scheduling for predictable, yet flexible real-time systems, our approach does not directly cover the issue of sporadic tasks. Instead, we focus on the representation of real-time characteristics and on a very general handling of execution conditions, allowing for important flexibility *inside* the fully predictable domain.

Compared to classical work on the on-line real-time scheduling of tasks with execution modes (cf. Baruah *et al.* [BCGM99]), our off-line scheduling approach comes with precise control of timing and causalities. It is therefore more interesting for us to use a task model that directly represents execution conditions. We can then use *table-based scheduling* algorithms that precisely determine when the same resource can be allocated at the same time to two tasks because they are never both executed.

References on time-triggered and partitioned systems, as well as scheduling of synchronous specifications will be provided in the following sections.

### 3 Architecture model

In this paper, we consider both single-processor architectures and bus-based multi-processor architectures with a globally time-triggered execution model and with strong temporal partitioning mechanisms. This class of architectures covers the needs of the considered case study, but also covers platforms based on the ARINC 653, TTA, and FlexRay (the static segment) standards.

Formally, for the scope of this paper, a piece of architecture is a pair  $Arch = (B(Arch), Procs(Arch))$  formed of a broadcast message-passing bus  $B(Arch)$  connecting a set of processors  $Procs(Arch) = \{P_1, \dots, P_n\}$  for some  $n \geq 1$ . We assume that the bus does not lose, create, corrupt, duplicate or change the order of messages it transmits. Previous work by Girault *et al.* [GKSS03] (among others) can be used to extend this simple model (and the algorithms of this paper) to deal with fault-tolerant architectures with multiple communication lines and more complex interconnect topologies. However, for space and clarity reasons, the remainder of the paper only focuses on extending our simple model with timing, allocation, and partitioning information specific to our time-triggered approach.

#### 3.1 Time-triggered systems

In this section we define the notion of time-triggered system used in this paper. It roughly corresponds to the definition of Kopetz [Kop91], and is a sub-case of the definition of Henzinger and Kirsch [HK07]. We shall introduce its elements progressively, explaining what the consequences are in practice.

##### 3.1.1 General definition

By *time-triggered systems* we understand systems satisfying the following 3 properties:

- TT1** A system-wide time reference exists, with good-enough precision and accuracy. We shall refer to this time reference as the *global clock*. For single-processor systems the global clock can be the CPU clock itself.<sup>2</sup>
- TT2** The execution duration of code driven by interrupts other than the timers is negligible. In other words, for timing analysis purposes, code execution is only triggered by timers synchronized on the global clock.
- TT3** System inputs are only read/sampled at timer triggering points.

At the same time, we place no constraint on the sequential code triggered by timers. In particular:

- Classical sequential control flow structures such as *sequence* or *conditional execution* are permitted, allowing the representation of modes and mode changes.
- Timers are allowed to preempt the execution of previously-started code.

This definition of time-triggered systems is fairly general. It covers single-processor systems that can be represented with *time-triggered e-code programs*, as they are defined by Henzinger and Kirsch [HK07]. It also covers multiprocessor extensions of this model, as defined by Fischmeister *et al.* [FSL06] and used by Potop *et al.* [PBAF10]. In particular, our model covers time-triggered communication infrastructures such as TTA and FlexRay (static and dynamic segments) [KB03, Rus01], the periodic schedule tables of AUTOSAR OS [AUT09], as well as systems following a

<sup>2</sup>For distributed multiprocessor systems, we assume it is provided by a platform such as TTA [KB03] or by a clock synchronization technique such as the one of Potop *et al.* [PBAF10].



preemptive multi-processor periodic scheduling model without jitter and drift.<sup>3</sup> It also covers the execution mechanisms of the avionics ARINC 653 standard [ARI05] provided that interrupt-driven data acquisitions, which are confined to the ARINC 653 kernel, are presented to the application software in a time-triggered fashion satisfying property **TT3**. To our knowledge, this constraint is satisfied in all industrial settings.

### 3.1.2 Model restriction

The major advantage of time-triggered systems, as defined above, is that they have the property of *repeatable timing* [EKL<sup>+</sup>09]: For any two input sequences that are identical in the large-grain timing scale determined by the timers of a program, the behaviors of the program, including timing aspects, are identical.<sup>4</sup> This property is extremely valuable in practice because it largely simplifies debugging and testing of real-time programs. A time-triggered platform also insulates the developer from most problems stemming from interrupt asynchrony and low-level timing aspects.

However, the applications we consider have even stronger timing requirements, and must satisfy a property known as *timing predictability* [EKL<sup>+</sup>09]. Ideally, formal timing guarantees should be provided by means of off-line (static) analysis. The general time-triggered model defined above remains too complex to allow the analysis of real-life systems. To facilitate analysis, this model is usually restricted and used in conjunction with worst-case execution time guarantees on the sequential code fragments.

In this paper we consider a restriction of the general definition provided above where timer triggers occur following a fixed pattern which is repeated periodically in time. Following the convention of ARINC 653, we call this period the *major time frame (MTF)*. The timer triggering pattern is provided under the form of a set of fixed offsets  $0 \leq t_1 < t_2 < \dots < t_n < MTF$  defined with respect to the start of each *MTF* period. Note that the code triggered at each offset may still involve complex control, such as conditional execution or preemption.

This restriction corresponds to the classical definition of time-triggered systems by Kopetz [Kop91, KB03]. It covers our target platform, TTA, FlexRay (the static segment), and AUTOSAR OS (the periodic schedule tables). At the same time, it does not fully cover ARINC 653. As defined by this standard, partition scheduling is time-triggered. The strict temporal partitioning also implies that all input/output is sampled, and that code execution is triggered by timers [MLL06]. However, given that periodic processes can be started (in normal mode) with a release date equal to the current time (not a predefined date), intra-partition process scheduling does not fit our restricted model. To do so, an ARINC 653 system should not start periodic processes *after* system initialization, *i.e.* in normal mode.

## 3.2 Temporal partitioning

Our target architectures follow a strong temporal partitioning paradigm similar to that of ARINC 653.<sup>5</sup> In this paradigm, both system software and platform resources are *statically* divided among a finite set of *partitions*  $Part = \{part_1, \dots, part_k\}$ . Intuitively, a partition comprises both a software application of the system and the execution and communication resources allocated to it.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup>But these two notions must be accounted for in the construction of the global clock [PBAF10].

<sup>4</sup>We assumed that programs are functionally deterministic.

<sup>5</sup>Spatial partitioning aspects are not covered in this paper.

<sup>6</sup>The aim of this static allocation is to limit the functional and temporal influence of one partition on another to a set of explicitly-specified inter-partition communication and synchronization mechanisms.

We are mainly concerned in this paper with the execution resource represented by the processors. To eliminate timing interference between partitions, the static partitioning of processor time between the partitions running on it is done by means of a static time division multiplexing (TDM) scheme. In our case, the TDM scheme is built on top of the time-triggered model of the previous section. It is implemented by partitioning, separately for each processor  $P_i$ , the *MTF* defined above into a finite set of non-overlapping *windows*  $W_i = \{w_1^i, \dots, w_{k_i}^i\}$  having each a fixed start offset  $tw_j^i$  and duration  $dw_j^i$ . Each window is then allocated to a single partition  $partw_j^i$ , or left unused. Unused windows are called spares and identified by  $partw_j^i = spare$ .

Software belonging to partition  $part_i$  can only be executed during windows belonging to  $part_i$ . Unfinished partition code will be preempted at window end, to be resumed at the next window of the partition. There is an implicit assumption that the scheduling of operations inside the *MTF* will ensure that non-preemptive operations will not cross window end points.

For the scheduling algorithms of Section 6, the partitioning of the *MTF* into windows can be either an input or an output. More precisely, all, none, or part of the windows can be provided as input to the scheduling algorithms.

## 4 Task model

Following classical industrial design practices, the specification of our scheduling problem is formed of a *functional specification* and a set of *non-functional properties*. Represented in an abstract fashion, these two components form what is classically known as a *task model* used in the definition of our scheduling algorithms. In our case, the functional specification is provided under the form of a set of dependent tasks with a cyclic execution model. Non-functional properties include the real-time task characteristics, the allocation constraints, the preemptability of the tasks, and the partitioning constraints.

### 4.1 Functional specification

#### 4.1.1 Simplifying assumptions

Our scheduling technique works on functional specifications of dataflow synchronous type. This allows the faithful representation of *dependent task systems* featuring *multiple execution modes*, *conditional execution*, and *multiple relative periods*.

However, the presentation of the scheduling results of this paper does not require a full description of all the details of this formalism. The task model we formally define abstracts away two difficult aspects of synchronous modeling and analysis. We present them here, pointing the reader to detailed papers covering the topics and explaining why the simplification does not reduce the generality of our results.

The first simplifying assumption concerns the *relative periods* of tasks. Assume that our scheduling problem requires tasks  $\tau$  and  $\tau'$  to have periods of 5 ms (milliseconds) and 20 ms, respectively. In this requirement, the real-time information is a non-functional property, defined later. But the *ratio* between the periods of  $\tau$  and  $\tau'$  belongs to the functional specification, facilitating for instance the definition of the way  $\tau$  and  $\tau'$  exchange data by means of a finite pattern which is repeated periodically.

Our simplifying assumption is that we work on single-period task systems where the period ratio is always 1. This simplification does not affect *generality*, because multi-period specifications can always be transformed into single-period ones by means of a hyper-period expansion. For instance, the hyperperiod of tasks  $\tau$  and  $\tau'$  is 20 ms. The hyperperiod expansion consists in replacing each tasks with as many instances of it as to cover the hyperperiod. Thus,  $\tau$  is replaced

by 4 tasks  $\tau_1$ ,  $\tau_2$ ,  $\tau_3$ , and  $\tau_4$ , all of period 20ms. Task  $\tau'$  does not require replication because its period is 20 ms. Section 4.1.3 will provide a larger modeling example.

The *compact* representation of the functional part of multi-period specifications, as well as its *efficient* manipulation for scheduling purposes is elegantly covered by Forget *et al.* [PFB<sup>+</sup>11], drawing influences from Chetto *et al.* [CSB90] and Pouzet *et al.* [CDE<sup>+</sup>06], among others.

The second simplification concerns execution modes and conditional execution. Our model represents this information in an abstract way, by means of an exclusion relation between task instances. A full-fledged definition and analysis of the data expressions used as execution conditions has been presented elsewhere [PBAF10] and would take precious space in this paper.

#### 4.1.2 Dependent task systems

The previous simplifications allow us to use the following model of dependent task system, which we define in 2 steps. The first covers systems with a single execution mode:

**Definition 1 (Non-conditioned dependent task set)** *A non-conditioned dependent task system is a directed graph defined as a triple  $D = \{T(D), A(D), \Delta(D)\}$ . Here,  $T(D)$  is the finite set of tasks. The finite set  $A(D)$  contains typed dependencies of the form  $a = (src(a), dst(a), type(a))$ , where  $src(a), dst(a) \in T(D)$  are the source, respectively the destination task of  $a$ , and  $type(a)$  is its type (identified by a name). The directed graph determined by  $A(D)$  must be acyclic. The finite set  $\Delta(D)$  contains delayed dependencies of the form  $\delta = (src(\delta), dst(\delta), type(\delta), depth(\delta))$ , where  $src(\delta), dst(\delta), type(\delta)$  have the same meaning as for regular dependencies and  $depth(\delta)$  is a strictly positive integer.*

Non-conditioned dependent task sets have a cyclic execution model. At each execution cycle of the task set, each of the tasks is executed exactly once. We denote with  $t^n$  the instance of task  $t \in T(D)$  for cycle  $n$ . The execution of the tasks inside a cycle is partially ordered by the dependencies of  $A(D)$ . If  $a \in A(D)$  then the execution of  $src(a)^n$  must be finished before the start of  $dst(a)^n$ , for all  $n$ . Note that dependency types are explicitly defined, allowing us to manipulate communication mapping.

The dependencies of  $\Delta(D)$  impose an order between tasks of successive execution cycles. If  $\delta \in \Delta(D)$  then the execution of  $src(\delta)^n$  must complete before the start of  $dst(\delta)^{n+depth(\delta)}$ , for all  $n$ .

We are now ready to provide the full definition covering specifications with multiple execution modes.

**Definition 2 (Dependent task set)** *A dependent task set is a tuple  $D = \{T(D), A(D), \Delta(D), EX(D)\}$  where  $\{T(D), A(D), \Delta(D)\}$  is an unconditioned dependent task set and  $EX(D)$  is an exclusion relation  $EX(D) \subseteq T(D) \times T(D) \times \mathbb{N}$ .*

The introduction of the exclusion relation modifies the execution model defined above as follows: if  $(\tau_1, \tau_2, k) \in EX(D)$  then  $\tau_1^n$  and  $\tau_2^{n+k}$  are never both executed, for any execution of the modeled system and any cycle index  $n$ . For instance, if the activations of  $\tau_1$  and  $\tau_2$  are on the two branches of a test we will have  $(\tau_1, \tau_2, 0) \in EX(D)$ . The relation  $EX(D)$  needs not be computed exactly (it can even be void) but the more precise it is, the better results the scheduling algorithms will give because tasks in an exclusion relation can be allocated the same resources at the same dates.

#### 4.1.3 Modeling of the case study

The specification of the space flight application mentioned in the introduction was provided under the form of a set of AADL [AAD] diagrams, plus textual information defining specific

inter-task communication patterns, determinism requirements, and a description of the target hardware architecture. We present here its simpler version (with fewer tasks), the results on the full example being provided in Section 7.

Our first step was to derive a task model in our formalism. In doing this we discovered that the initial system was over-specified, in the sense that real-time constraints were imposed in order to ensure causal ordering of tasks instances using AADL constructs. Removing these constraints gave us more freedom for scheduling, allowing for a reduction in the number of partition changes. The resulting specification is presented in Fig. 1.

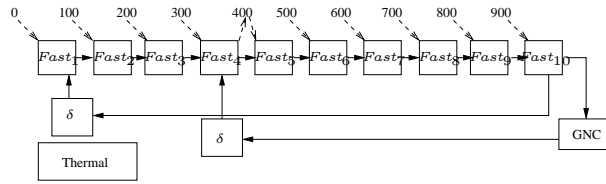


Figure 1: The *Simple* example ( $MTF=1000$  time units)

Our model, named *Simple* represents a system with 3 tasks *Fast*, *GNC*, and *Thermal*. The periods of the 3 tasks are 100, 1000, and 1000 time units, respectively, meaning that *Fast* is executed 10 times for each execution of *GNC* and *Thermal*. The hyper-period unfolding described in Section 4.1.1 replicates task *Fast* 10 times, the resulting tasks being  $Fast_i$ ,  $1 \leq i \leq 10$ . Tasks *GNC* and *Thermal* are left unchanged. The direct arcs connecting the tasks  $Fast_i$  and *GNC* represent regular (intra-cycle) data dependencies of  $A(Simple)$ . The arcs labeled with  $\delta$  are *delayed data dependencies* of depth 1 where information is transmitted from one execution cycle of the synchronous specification to the next. In this simple model, task *Thermal* has no dependencies. Dashed arcs and numerical values are the real-time characterization of the model, explained in the next section.

**Representing execution modes.** Our first model has no execution modes. However, the input specification allows the specification of modes under the form of mode-dependent durations for the various tasks. There is also a requirement that task start dates (after scheduling) do not change with the mode. This is consistent with the practice of grouping into each task several functions that can be turned on or off individually according to the execution mode. We explain below how our task model allows the representation of such specifications. Note, however, that our algorithms could take better advantage of a specification where each function is associated an individual task, providing more degrees of freedom to the scheduler.

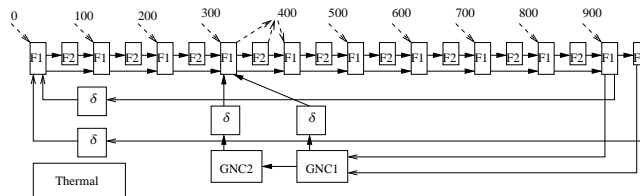


Figure 2: Representing mode-dependent *WCET* variations

If we assume that our system has 2 modes (1 and 2, which could correspond to the ground and

flight modes), each of the tasks *Fast* and *GNC* having a different duration in each of the modes. We denote these durations respectively with  $WCET(Fast, P)_{mode}$  and  $WCET(GNC, P)_{mode}$  for  $mode = 1, 2$  and  $P$  ranging over the processors where the two tasks can be executed. We assume that  $WCET(Fast, P)_1 < WCET(Fast, P)_2$  and that  $WCET(GNC, P)_1 > WCET(GNC, P)_2$  for all  $P$  (a form of monotony). Then, our modeling is based on the use of 2 tasks for the representation of each of *Fast* and *GNC*. The first task represents the part of computation of shorter duration, whereas the second task represents the remainder, which is only needed in modes where the duration is longer. Note that more than 2 tasks are needed when a task can have 3 or more different durations. The resulting model is pictured in Fig. 2. Here, *Fast* has been split into *F1* and *F2*, the second one being executed only in mode 2. *GNC* has been split into *GNC1* and *GNC2*, the second one being executed only in mode 1. We assume the mode change is triggered such that  $(GNC2, F2_i, 1) \in EX(Simple)$  for  $1 \leq i \leq 10$ , which will allow *GNC2* and the tasks  $F2_i$  to partially overlap if they are placed in the same partition.

## 4.2 Non-functional properties

Our task model considers non-functional properties of real-time, allocation, and partitioning types.

### 4.2.1 Period, release dates, and deadlines

The functional specification of the previous section is usually provided by the control engineers, which must also provide a *real-time characterization* in terms of *periods*, *release dates*, and *deadlines*.<sup>7</sup> More constraints of the same types may be imposed by the system architecture, as explained below. Our model allows the specification of these characteristics in a specific form adapted to our functional specification model and time-triggered implementation paradigm.

**Period.** Recall from the previous section that after hyper-period expansion all the tasks of a dependent task system  $D$  have same period. In the functional model, each task is executed once per execution cycle, modulo conditional execution modeled by relation  $EX(D)$ . Defining the period of these tasks is easily done by defining the period with which execution cycles are started. We shall call this period the *major time frame* of  $D$  and denote it  $MTF(D)$ . We will require it to be equal to the  $MTF$  of its time-triggered implementation, as defined in Section 3.1.2.

Throughout this paper, we will assume that  $MTF(D)$  is an input to our scheduling problem. Other scheduling heuristics, more directly derived from those of [PBAF10] can be used in the case where it must be computed.

**Release dates and deadlines.** For each task  $\tau \in T(D)$ , we allow the definition of a release date  $r(\tau)$  and a deadline  $d(\tau)$ . Both are positive offsets defined with respect to the start date of the current cycle. Their default values, meaning that no constraint is imposed, are respectively 0 and  $\infty$ .

This definition is consistent with our time-triggered implementation target where all inputs are sampled. The main assumption we make is that the *sampling offsets are an input to our scheduling problem*, specified using the release dates defined above.

End-to-end latency requirements are specified using a combination of both release dates and deadlines. Indeed, such end-to-end latencies should be defined on flows (chains of dependent task instances) starting with an input acquisition and ending with an output. Since acquisitions

<sup>7</sup>This characterization is directly derived from the analysis of the control system, and does not depend on architecture details such as number of processors, speed, etc.

have fixed positions, the latency constraints can also be specified using fixed offsets, namely the deadlines.

Even though the release dates and deadlines defined above have the same meaning as in classical real-time, there is a fundamental difference: In our implementations the scheduler never uses these values directly (they are specification objects), relying instead on the start dates computed offline.

**Modeling of the case study.** The specification in Fig. 1 has  $MTF(Simple) = 1000$  time units. Release dates and deadlines are respectively represented using descending and mounting dashed arcs. The release dates specify that task *Fast* uses an input that is sampled with a period of 100 time units, starting at date 0, which imposes a release date of  $n * 100$  for the  $n^{th}$  instance of task *Fast*. Although, by transitivity, the release dates on *Fast* constrain the start of *GNC*, we do not consider these constraints to be a part of the specification itself. Thus, we set the release dates of tasks *GNC* and *Thermal* to the default value 0 and do not represent them graphically.

Only task *Fast*<sub>4</sub> has a deadline that is different from the default  $\infty$  (and is thus represented). In conjunction with the 0 release date on *Fast*<sub>1</sub>, this deadline represents an end-to-end constraint of 1400 time units on the flow defined by the chain of task instances  $Fast_1^n \rightarrow Fast_2^n \rightarrow \dots \rightarrow Fast_{10}^n \rightarrow GNC^n \rightarrow Fast_4^{n+1}$  for  $n \geq 0$ . The deadline on *Fast*<sub>4</sub> is of 400 time units, and not 1400, because the flow covers two successive execution cycles of our functional specification. The end of the flow belonging to the second execution cycle, we must subtract one *MTF* (1000 in our case) from the end-to-end constraint value (1400 time units).

The release dates and deadlines of Fig. 1 represent architecture-independent real-time requirements that must be provided by the control engineer. But architecture details may impose constraints of their own. For instance, assume that the samples used by task *Fast* are stored in a 3-place circular buffer. At each given time, *Fast* uses one place for input, while the hardware uses another to store the next sample. Then, to avoid buffer overrun, the computation of *Fast*<sub>*n*</sub> must be completed before date  $(n + 1) * 100$ , as required by the new deadlines of Fig. 3. Note that these deadlines can be both larger than the period of task *Fast*, and larger than the *MTF* (for *Fast*<sub>10</sub>) to allow the faithful representation of our real-time constraints. By comparison, the specification of Fig. 1 corresponds to the assumption that input buffers are infinite.

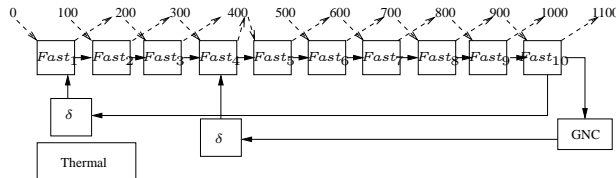


Figure 3: Adding 3-place circular buffer constraints to our example

#### 4.2.2 Worst-case durations, allocations, preemptability

We also need to describe the processing capabilities of the various processors and the bus. More precisely:

- For each task  $\tau \in T(D)$  and each processor  $P \in Procs(Arch)$  we provide the *capacity*, or *duration* of  $\tau$  on  $P$ . We assume this value is obtained through a worst-case execution time (WCET) analysis, and denote it  $WCET(\tau, P)$ . This value is set to  $\infty$  when execution of  $\tau$  on  $P$  is not possible.



- Similarly, for each data type  $type(a)$  used in the specification, we provide  $WCCT(type(a))$  as an upper bound on the transmission time of a value of type  $type(a)$  over the bus. We assume this value is always finite.

Note that the *WCET* information may implicitly define *absolute allocation constraints*, as  $WCET(t, P) = \infty$  prevents  $t$  from being allocated on  $P$ . Such allocation constraints are meant to represent hardware platform constraints, such as the positioning of sensors and actuators, or designer-imposed placement constraints. *Relative allocation constraints* can also be defined, under the form of *task groups* which are subsets of  $T(D)$ . The tasks of a task group must be allocated on the same processor. The use of task groups is necessary in the representation of mode-dependent task durations, as presented in Section 4.1.3 (to avoid task migrations). It is also needed in the transformations of Section 5.

Our task model allows the representation of both preemptive and non-preemptive tasks. The preemptability information is represented for each task  $\tau$  by the flag  $is\_preemptive(\tau)$ . We assume that bus communications are non-interruptible. Throughout this paper we make the simplifying assumption that preemption and partition context switch costs are negligible.<sup>8</sup>

### 4.2.3 Partitioning

Recall from Section 3.2 that there are two aspects to partitioning: the partitioning of the application and that of the resources (in our case, CPU time). On the application part, we assume that every task  $\tau$  is associated to a partition  $part_\tau$  of a fixed partition set  $Part = \{part_1, \dots, part_k\}$ .

Also recall from Section 3.2 that CPU time partitioning, *i.e.* the time windows on processors and their allocation to partitions can be either provided as part of the specification or computed by our algorithms. Thus, our specification may include window definitions which cover none, part, or all of CPU time of the processors. We do not specify a partitioning of the shared bus, but the algorithms can be easily extended to support a per-processor time partitioning like that of TTA [Rus01].

## 5 Removal of delayed dependencies

The first step in our scheduling approach is the transformation of the initial task model specification into one having no delayed dependency. This is done by a modification of the release dates and deadlines for the tasks related by delayed dependencies, possibly accompanied by the creation of new helper tasks that require no resources but impose scheduling constraints. Doing this will allow in the next section the use of simpler scheduling algorithms that work on acyclic task graphs.

The first part of our transformation ensures that delayed dependencies only exist between tasks that will be scheduled on the same processor. Assume that  $\delta \in \Delta(D)$  and  $src(\delta)$  and  $dst(\delta)$  are not forced by absolute or relative allocation constraints to execute on the same processor. Then, we add a new task  $\tau^\delta$  to  $D$ . The source of  $\delta$  is reassigned to be  $\tau^\delta$ , and a new (non-delayed) dependency is created between  $src(\delta)$  and  $\tau^\delta$ . Relation  $EX(D)$  is augmented to place  $\tau^\delta$  in exclusion with all tasks that are exclusive with  $src(\delta)$ . Task  $\tau^\delta$  is assigned durations of 0 on all processors where  $dst(\delta)$  can be executed, and  $\infty$  elsewhere. Finally, a task group is created containing  $\tau^\delta$  and  $dst(\delta)$ .

The second part of our transformation removes the delayed dependencies. It does so by imposing for each delayed dependency  $\delta$  that  $src(\delta)$  terminates its execution before the release

<sup>8</sup>Taking them into account is work in progress

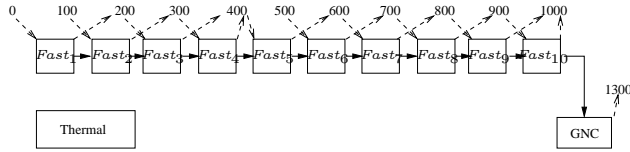


Figure 4: Delay removal result

date of  $dst(\delta)$ . This is done by changing the deadline of  $src(\delta)$  to  $r(dst(\delta)) + depth(\delta) * MTF(D)$  whenever this value is smaller than the old deadline.

Finally, task deadlines are changed following the approach of Blazewicz, as cited by Chetto *et al.* [CSB90]. More precisely, the deadline of each task is set to be the minimum of all deadlines of tasks depending transitively on it (including itself).<sup>9</sup>

The result of all these transformations for the example in Fig. 3, assuming that tasks  $Fast_4$  and  $GNC$  are always allocated on the same processor and thus no helper task is needed, is pictured in Fig. 4. Note that this transformation is another source of deadlines larger than the periods. Also note that all the transformations described above are linear in the size of the number of arcs (delayed or not), and thus very fast.

## 6 Offline real-time scheduling

On the transformed task models we apply an *offline scheduling* algorithm whose output is a system-wide *scheduling table* defining the allocation of processor and bus time to the various computations and communications. The length of this table is equal to the *MTF* of the task model.

Our offline scheduling algorithm is a significant extension of those described by Potop *et al.* [PBSST09]. New features are the handling of *preemptive* tasks, *release dates* and *deadlines*, the *MTF*, and the *partitioning* constraints. Other major features remain largely unchanged. This is the case for the handling of conditional execution and bus communications. We do not present these features in detail, instead pointing the interested reader to reference [PBSST09]. Instead, we insist on the novelty points, like the deadline-driven scheduler inspired by existing work by Blazewicz (cited by Chetto *et al.* [CSB90]).

### 6.1 Basic principles

As earlier explained, our algorithm computes a scheduling table. This is done by associating to each task a *target processor* on which it will execute, a set of *time intervals* that will be reserved for its execution, and a date of *first start*. The conditional execution paradigm of our task model implies the use of *conditional reservations*: The same time interval can be reserved to two or more tasks if they are mutually exclusive, as defined by relation  $EX(D)$ . A similar reservation model is used for the bus [PBSST09].

Given a scheduling table  $S$  of task system  $D$ , and  $\tau \in T(D)$ , we shall denote with  $S.proc(\tau)$  the target processor of  $\tau$ , with  $S.start(\tau)$  the date of first start, and with  $S.intervals(\tau)$  the set of time intervals reserved for  $\tau$ . A time interval  $i$  is defined by its start date  $start(i)$  and end date  $end(i)$ . It is required that the intervals of  $S.intervals(\tau)$  are disjoint, and that the start date of

<sup>9</sup>More generally, the recomputation of release dates and deadlines by means of a fixed-point computation can be useful *before* the removal of delayed arcs to provide for longer deadlines.



one of them is

$S.start(\tau) \bmod MTF(D)$ .

The execution model is as follows: The  $n^{th}$  instance of task  $\tau$  will start (modulo conditional execution) at date  $S.start(\tau) + n * MTF(D)$ . If its execution terminates before consuming all reserved intervals, unused space can be used by any of the suspended tasks belonging to the same partition as  $\tau$  (arbitrating between multiple such tasks can be done using a priority-driven scheme not covered here). A task is suspended between intervals reserved for itself, unless using free space from another task.

The choice of processor, start date, and intervals by the scheduling algorithm must ensure that:

- The intervals reserved for a task allow the complete execution of a task instance before the next instance is started.
- Intervals of two tasks can only overlap if the two tasks are exclusive.
- The task and communication execution order imposed by the direct and delayed dependencies is respected.
- The release date of a task precedes its start date, and deadline constraints are respected.
- Intervals reserved for two tasks of different partitions cannot overlap. Moreover, an interval allocated to task  $\tau$  of a partition *part* cannot overlap with windows allocated to other partitions.

## 6.2 Scheduling algorithms

The scheduling algorithm, whose top-level routine is Procedure 1, follows a classical list scheduling approach. It works by iteratively choosing a new task to schedule and then scheduling it and the necessary communications.

Among the not-yet-scheduled tasks of whom all predecessors have been executed, function *choose\_task\_to\_schedule*, not provided here, returns the one of minimal deadline. If several tasks satisfy this criterion, it returns one of greatest release date.

The body of the **while** loop allocates and schedules a single task  $\tau$ , along with the communications needed to gather the input data of  $\tau$ . It works by attempting to schedule  $\tau$  on each of the processors that can execute it. Function *group\_ok* determines if the relative allocation constraints and the current scheduling state allow  $\tau$  to be allocated on  $P$ .

Among all the possible allocations of  $\tau$ , Procedure 1 chooses the one resulting in a schedule of minimal cost. In our case, *cost\_function* chooses the schedule ensuring the earliest termination of  $\tau$ . If scheduling is not possible on any of the processors Procedure 1 returns *invalid\_schedule* to identify the failure.

Procedure 2 does the actual scheduling of a task  $\tau$  on a processor  $P$ , following a classical ASAP (as soon as possible) scheduling strategy. The scheduling is done as follows. First, the transmission of data needed by  $\tau$  and not yet present on  $P$  is scheduled for communication on the bus using function *schedule\_bus\_communications*. This function schedules the transmission of both input data of  $\tau$  and state variables needed to compute the execution condition of  $\tau$ . We do not provide the function here, interested readers being directed to [PBSST09].

Once communications are scheduled, we attempt to schedule the task at the earliest date after the date where all needed data is available. If this is not possible without missing the deadline, *invalid\_scheduling* is returned to identify the failure. To allow an efficient search for free time intervals, the data structure storing the partial schedules also stores the set of free intervals of

---

**Procedure 1 scheduler\_driver**

---

**Input:**  $D$  : dependent task system  
*Arch*: architecture description  
*initial\_schedule* : schedule

**Output:** *result* : system schedule  
*result* := *initial\_schedule*

**while**  $T(D) \neq \emptyset$  **and** *result*  $\neq$  *invalid\_schedule* **do**  
 $\tau$  := *choose\_task\_to\_schedule*( $D$ )  
*new\_schedule* := *invalid\_schedule*  
*new\_cost* :=  $\infty$   
**for all**  $P$  in *Archi* **do**  
  **if**  $WCET(\tau, P) \neq \infty$  **and** *group\_ok*( $\tau, P, result$ ) **then**  
    *temp\_sched* :=  
      *schedule\_task\_on\_proc*( $\tau, P, result, MTF$ )  
    *temp\_cost* := *cost\_function*(*temp\_sched*)  
    **if** *temp\_cost* < *new\_cost* **then**  
      *new\_schedule* := *temp\_sched*  
      *new\_cost* := *temp\_cost*  
  *result* := *new\_schedule*  
   $T(D)$  := *remove\_task*( $\tau, T(D)$ )

---

the processors and buses. Window allocations taken as input by our scheduler are passed to Procedure 1 through parameter *initial\_schedule*, which contains no task allocation, but already constrains the free interval set.

Looking for individual intervals is done by function *get\_first\_interval*, not provided here. This function takes as input the preemptability flag of the task. For non-preemptive tasks, it looks for the first free interval long enough to allow the execution of the task and satisfying the execution condition and partitioning constraints. For preemptive tasks, this function may be called several times to find the first free intervals satisfying the execution condition and partitioning constraints and of sufficient cumulated length to cover the needed duration. When unable to find a valid interval, function *get\_first\_interval* returns an invalid interval identifying the failure. Depending on the task deadline, the search for free intervals may loop over the *MTF*.

## 7 Post-scheduling slot minimization

The algorithm of the previous section follows a classical ASAP deadline-driven scheduling policy. Such policies are good at ensuring schedulability. It is easy to prove that our algorithm is even optimal in certain cases (all-preemptive, single processor, no execution condition, no delayed dependency).

However, resulting schedules may have a lot of unneeded preemptions and, most importantly, partition changes which are notoriously expensive. Consider our example of Fig. 1 and an architecture with a single processor  $P$  such that  $WCET(Fast, P) = 40$ ,  $WCET(GNC, P) = 140$ , and  $WCET(Thermal, P) = 100$ . We assume a partitioning approach *à la* IMA, where the 3 tasks have each one partition. Then, Fig. 5(a) provides the output of the scheduling phase. This figure shows the allocation of the time intervals to the various tasks over the *MTF*. Time flows from left to right, and the target processor is shown on the right. This schedule features no less than 11 partition changes (note that no partition change occurs between the start of  $Fast_5$  and the

---

**Procedure 2** `schedule_task_on_proc`


---

**Input:**  $\tau$  : task to schedule  
 $P$  : processor on which to schedule  
 $schedule$  : scheduling state before adding  $\tau$   
 $MTF$  : major time frame of the task system

**Output:**  $result$  : schedule after adding  $\tau$

```

 $result := schedule$ 
 $(result, d_{earliest}) :=$ 
   $schedule\_bus\_communications(\tau, P, result)$ 
if  $d_{earliest} > d(\tau)$  then
   $result := invalid\_schedule$ 
else
   $needed\_duration := WCET(\tau, P)$ 
   $interval\_set := \emptyset$ 
   $failure := false$ 
  while  $needed\_duration > 0$  and not  $failure$  do
     $(interval, result.free\_interval\_set) :=$ 
       $get\_first\_interval(result.free\_interval\_set,$ 
         $needed\_duration, d(\tau), d_{earliest},$ 
         $part_{\tau}, is\_preemptive(\tau))$ 
    if  $is\_valid(interval)$  then
       $interval\_set := interval\_set \cup \{interval\}$ 
       $d_{earliest} := end(interval)$ 
       $needed\_length := needed\_length - len(interval)$ 
    else
      if  $deadline \leq MTF$  then
         $failure := true$ 
      else
         $deadline := deadline - MTF(D)$ 
         $d_{earliest} := 0$ 
  if  $failure$  then
     $result := invalid\_schedule$ 
  else
     $result := set\_task\_intervals(result, \tau, interval\_set)$ 

```

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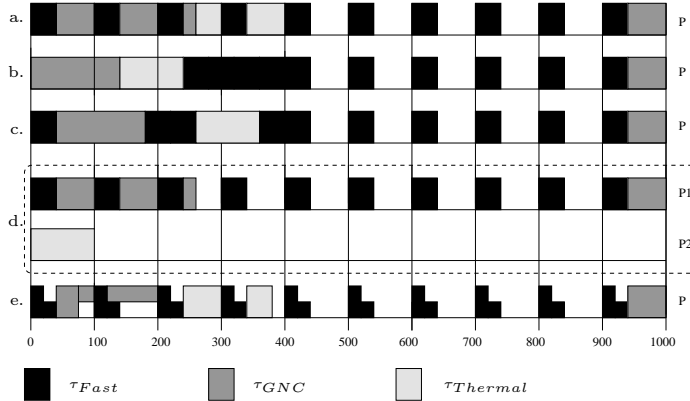


Figure 5: Resulting schedules: For the example in Fig. 1, single-processor without slot minimization (a) and with it (b), and bi-processor (d). For the example in Fig. 3 (c), and for the two-mode example of Fig. 2 (e).

end of  $Fast_{10}$ ).

To mitigate this issue, we perform a heuristic post-scheduling schedule transformation aimed at reducing partition changes. The transformation we apply is the following: The scheduling table is traversed from end to the beginning. Whenever two intervals  $i_1$  and  $i_2$  allocated to tasks of the same partition are separated by intervals of another partition, we attempt to group  $i_1$  and  $i_2$  together. Assuming  $i_1$  starts before  $i_2$ , our technique attempts to move  $i_1$  just before  $i_2$  while moving all operations between  $i_1$  and  $i_2$  to earlier dates. The transformation step is only performed when the resulting schedule respects the correctes properties of Section 6.1.

The result of the transformation on our example is provided in Fig. 5(b) (only 3 partition changes). Fig. 5(c) provides the schedule obtained for the more constrained example in Fig. 3.

We also provide in Fig. 5(d) an example of bi-processor scheduling (there are no bus communications to represent), and the scheduling of the two-mode specification of Fig. 2, in Fig. 5(e)). In this last case, we assume that tasks  $F2$  and  $GNC$  belong to the same partition. Notice that the second instance of  $F2$  and  $GNC$  share a reservation.

**A larger example** We have implemented our scheduling algorithms into a tool, which allowed us to schedule the proof-of-concept versions of the target application, as presented above. More important, we have been able to build and schedule a large-scale model of the application, involving 4 processors, 13 tasks, and 8 end-to-end flow constraints. We do not present it here for space reasons.

## 8 Conclusion and future work

We have proposed a technique for the distributed partitioned time-triggered implementation of synchronous dataflow specifications featuring multiple periods and conditional execution (and modes). Implementation can be done under end-to-end latency and partitioning constraints. We have successfully applied our technique on a realistic spacecraft case study.

Future work will focus on 2 main directions. On the scheduling side, we will focus on the fine tuning of the scheduling and the promising slot minimization heuristics. On the modeling

side, we will take inspiration from Forget *et al.* to allow the compact representation and efficient manipulation of multi-period task models. It is important here to preserve a faithful representation of timing requirements, without over-constraining, and to allow a smooth integration of conditional execution.

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