

Energy Consumption Optimization in Hard Real-Time System CMOS Processors

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Introduction

Portable system energy consumption reduction is of primary importance in mobile embedded systems and SoC design [1]. Dynamic voltage scaling (DVS) for CMOS chips at this time is the most effective energy reduction technology [2–11]. Usually there are no or few problems for DVS using it for *soft real-time* system design or task scheduling, where deadlines can be missed if the Quality of Service is kept [9, 10]. In *hard real-time* systems it is necessary to provide that the task never miss the deadline and the energy saving is maximized. The problems arise in *on-line* systems when at the ordinary task starting moment the task execution time is impossible to know and the best energy reduction regime can not be selected. In majority investigations and publications periodic task executions are analysed there with *off-line* determined execution times and determined priorities. Then the popular hard real-time task scheduling methods are earliest–deadlines first (EDF) or rate-monotonic scheduling (RMS) for DVS based energy consumption reduction is used [5, 6, 7, 8]. Few investigations are made in the field of event driven single stochastic hard real-time task energy consumption reduction. In [12] there is a method of dividing the task into multiple smaller sub-tasks with checkpoints for dynamic power management or voltage scaling. By using this method the energy consumption is reduced, but there are not guarantee that for the last sub-tasks execution step the deadline will not be reached. Method for the hard task energy consumption *on-line* minimisation which is named “*mini-max*” is proposed from author in article [11]. By using it the deadline is guaranteed for the task execution at the minimal power till the critical time t_{cr} , after which the execution is finished at maximal clock frequency.

Dynamic voltage scaling DVS

Power consumption of CMOS has two main components: P_{sw} – dynamic power consumption by charging and discharging the capacitive load and P_{st} – static power consumed, which is determined by leakage current I_{leak} and for CMOS technology below 0.1 μm can

not be taken into account. Dynamic or switching power can be estimated by: $P_{sw} \sim C_{ef} V^2 f_{sw} = C_{ef} V^2 / \tau_c$, where: V – supply voltage, C_{ef} – capacitive load, f_{sw} – switching frequency and τ_c – cycle time.

The time and energy consumption optimisation by using dynamic voltage-time scaling DVS is based on power ΔP_i consumption minimization for task step i , duration the *slack time* s_i . In cases when the real task execution time t_i is smaller then the worst case execution time WCET $_i$:

$$s_i = \text{WCET}_i - t_i. \quad (1)$$

For hard real-time system: $\text{WCET}_i \leq D$ (D deadline)

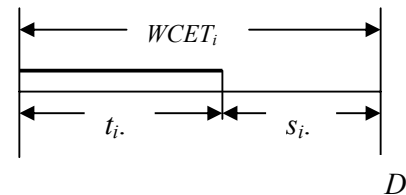


Fig. 1. Time connections for the task step i

For voltage or (and) frequency scaling different program controlled CMOS chips are designed and can be used: *Intel XScale Technology* (XA250, 80200) [14], *Transmeta Co. Crusoe* (TM5400÷TM5800) [15], *XILINX Co. Virtex-Pro* [16], *Altera Co. NoisII* [17].

Mini-max method for hard real-time task energy consumption on-line minimization

The hard real-time single event driven stochastic task energy consumption on-line minimization method is developed by consideration that CMOS processor has a wide supply voltage and clock frequency borders for voltage and frequency scaling. For the stochastic task it is necessary to assess the clock cycle τ_c number N_{max} at the WCET and at the best case execution time (BCET) τ_c number N_{min} . It can be made by simulation or executing

the task at some nominal frequency f_0 , clock cycle τ_{co} and nominal voltage V_0 . By using the power cycle time characteristic $P_c(\tau_c)$ the cycle time can be adjusted in region $\tau_{cmin} \div \tau_{cmax}$ and the cycle power consumption in region $P_{cmax} \div P_{cmin}$ (Fig. 2.), where P_{co} – cycle time power consumption at nominal frequency f_0 and nominal voltage V_0 .

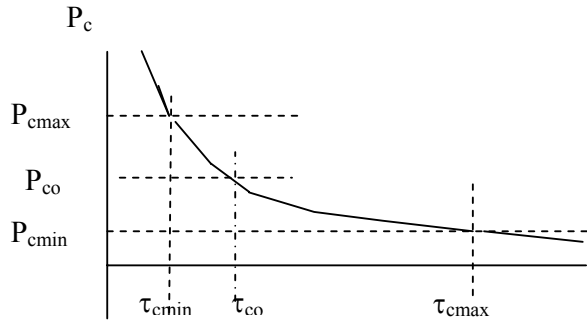


Fig. 2. Cycle time power consumption

Execution time characteristics at nominal voltage V_c and frequency f_{co} :

$$t_{max} = \tau_{co} N_{max} = WCET, \quad (2)$$

$$t_{min} = \tau_{co} N_{min} = BCET, \quad (3)$$

$$s_{max} = D - \tau_{co} N_{min}. \quad (4)$$

By using mini-max method in the worst case, when $t_i = WCET_i = D$ and $s_i = 0$, the task execution is started at minimal power P_{cmin} and continued till instant t_{cr} , after which in time interval $T_D = D - t_{cr}$ the execution is finished at maximal frequency and min clock time τ_{cmin} (Fig. 3).

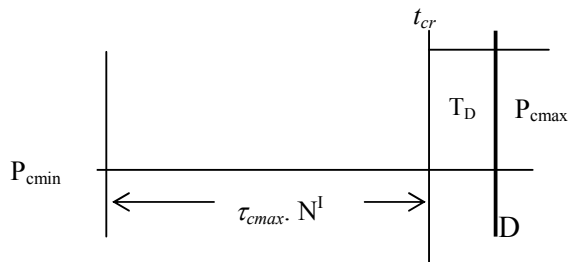


Fig. 3. The presentation of task execution critical time t_{cr}

In Fig. 3 by N^l the number of instructions executed at maximal long clock cycles is denoted. This number and time intervals t_{cr} and T_D can be calculated from equation (5):

$$\tau_{cmax} \cdot N^l + \tau_{cmin} (N_{max} - N^l) = D, \quad (5)$$

$$N^l = (D - \tau_{cmin} N_{max}) / (\tau_{cmax} - \tau_{cmin}), \quad (6)$$

$$t_{cr} = \tau_{cmax} N^l, \quad (7)$$

$$T_D = D - \tau_{cmax} \cdot N^l. \quad (8)$$

From here the energy consumption at WCET:

$$E_{max} = \tau_{cmax} P_{cmin} N^l + P_{cmax} T_D. \quad (9)$$

The task energy consumption E_{ci} at the dynamic (on-line) scheduling when $\tau_{cmax} N_i < D - T_D$:

$$E_{ci} = \tau_{cmax} P_{cmin} N_i, \quad (10)$$

$$E_{ci} = \tau_{cmax} P_{cmin} N^l + \tau_{cmin} P_{cmax} (N_i - N^l), \quad (11)$$

or

$$E_{ci} = \tau_{cmin} P_{cmax} N^l + (\tau_{cmax} P_{cmin} - \tau_{cmin} P_{cmax}) N_{max} (\tau_{cmax} - \tau_{cmin}) / (\tau_{co} - \tau_{cmin}). \quad (12)$$

To estimate the benefits of the mini-max method it is necessary to compare this energy consumption with the energy consumption at task static (off-line) scheduling, i.e. that at every instant of task start its execution time t_i is known (for example calculate at task compilation). For different hard deadline situations the execution at different t_i can be estimated by using simple expressions represented in Fig. 4.

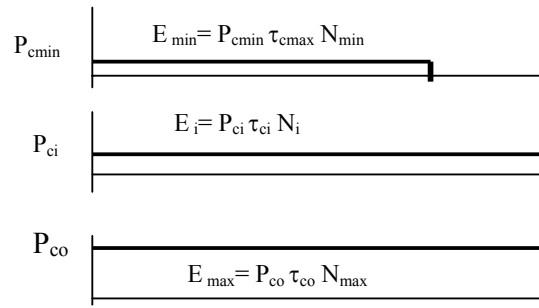


Fig. 4. Energy consumption at the task static scheduling

Uniform random distributed task execution time flow is proposed for the mini-max method investigation. For simplicity uniform distributed by constant step Δ_N clock cycle discrete number N_i and corresponding constant step Δ_s slot time s_{ico} values are used.

The single task energy consumption E_{m-m} includes two components E_1 and E_2 for the task execution times $t_i = t_{cr} \leq \tau_{cmax} N^l$:

$$E_1 = \sum_{i=1}^k P_{cmin} \tau_{cmax}, \quad (13)$$

else

$$E_2 = (n-k) P_{cmin} \tau_{cmax} + P_{cmax} \tau_{cmin} \sum_{k+1}^n (N_{max} - N^l - (n-k-1) \Delta_N) \quad (14)$$

Mini-max method was proposed in [13] and quantitative estimation of an *Example* was made. Experimental obtained $P(\tau_c)$ characteristic was used and work point $\tau_{co} = 1 \mu s$ ($f_{co} = 1 \text{ MHz}$), $P_{co} = 6 \text{ nJ}$; $\tau_{cmax} = 3 \mu s$, $P_{cmin} = 0.5 \text{ nJ}$; $\tau_{cmin} = 0.4 \mu s$, $P_{cmax} = 14 \text{ nJ}$, $N_{max} = 1000$, $N_{min} = 100$ and deadline $D = 1000 \mu s$ are selected. When $WCET = D$ and $BCET t_{min} = 100 \mu s$, then by using (6), (7) and (8): $N^l = 230$, $t_{cr} = 690 \mu s$ and $T_D = 310 \mu s$. The energy consumption is calculated for $\Delta_N = 100$ and for all corresponding slot times $s_{ico} = \{0, 100, 200, \dots, 800,$

900 μs) and the results of estimation as $E_{i \text{ din}}$ mini-max are represented in Fig. 5. For comparison there are represented curved lines calculated using the same workload: for task execution at nominal clock frequency f_{co} ($E_{i \text{ co}}$ at τ_{co}) and for task execution at off-line voltage scaling ($E_{i \text{ st}}$ off-line DVS).

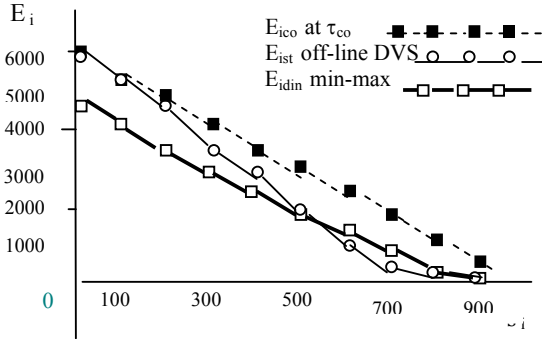


Fig. 5. The graphical presentation of the task energy consumption at different scheduling

The joint energy consumptions for task cycle including 10 tasks with different slot times $s_{i \text{ co}} = \{0, 100, 200, \dots, 800, 900 \mu\text{s}\}$ was calculated using (13) and (14): $E_{m-m} = E_1 + E_2 = 22000 \text{ nJ}$. For identical tasks and workloads the energy consumptions for the task execution at nominal clock frequency $E_{\text{co}} = 26000 \text{ nJ}$ and task execution at off-line voltage scaling, $E_{\text{st}} = 33000 \text{ nJ}$. The gain from the mini-max method using for energy consumptions in % can be estimated by using two characteristics

$$\delta_{\text{st}} = (E_{\text{st}} - E_{m-m}) 100 / E_{\text{st}}$$

and $\delta_{\text{co}} = (E_{\text{co}} - E_{m-m}) 100 / E_{\text{co}}$.

For the above example: $\delta_{\text{st}} = 15\%$ and $\delta_{\text{co}} = 33\%$.

The mini-max method benefit boundaries estimation

At first the influence of τ_{cmax} on E_{m-m} was investigated. The value of τ_{cmax} was adjusted from 1.5 μs to 5 μs and the energy economy results in % were compared with energy consumptions E_{st} and E_{co} . The results of estimation are presented in Table 1 and Fig. 6.

Table 1. Results of estimation

No.	τ_{cmax} , μs	δ_{st} , %	δ_{co} , %
1	1.5	3.5	13
2	2.0	8.8	22.5
3	2.5	12.5	29
4	2.8	16.5	34
5	3.0	15.5	33
6	3.5	12.5	31
7	4.0	6.0	25
8	4.5	-1.5	20
9	5.0	-19.0	6.0

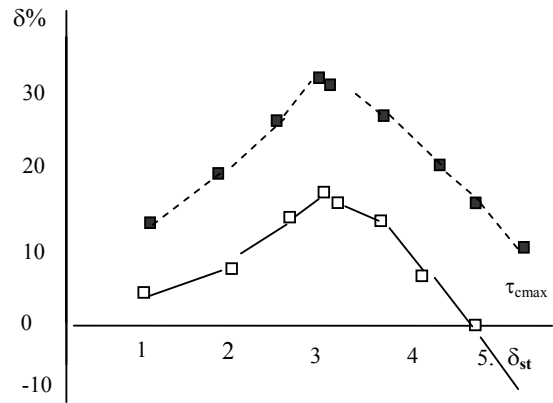


Fig. 6. Energy consumptions: $\delta_{\text{st}}(\tau_{\text{cmax}}) \%$ and $\delta_{\text{co}}(\tau_{\text{cmax}}) \%$

The value of $\tau_{\text{cmax}} = 3 \mu\text{s}$ which was used in Example is close to the optimal value $\tau_{\text{cmax}} = 2.8 \mu\text{s}$

At second the influence of τ_{cmin} on E_{m-m} was investigated. The value of τ_{cmin} was adjusted from 0.2 to 0.65 μs and the energy economy results in % compared with energy consumptions E_{st} and E_{co} . The results of estimation are presented in Table 2. and Fig. 7.

Table 2. Results of estimation

No.	τ_{cmin} , μs	δ_{st} , %	δ_{co} , %
1	0.2	31	75
2	0.3	24.5	40
3	0.4	15.5	33
4	0.45	13	31
5	0.5	10	28
6	0.6	-0.1	21
7	0.7	-4.0	20

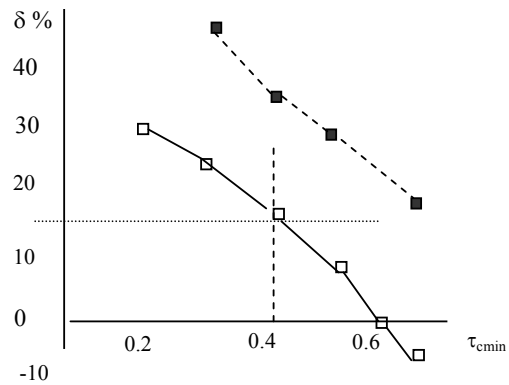


Fig. 7. Results of estimation: $\delta_{\text{st}}(\tau_{\text{cmin}}) \%$ and $\delta_{\text{co}}(\tau_{\text{cmin}}) \%$

It follows from Fig. 7, that by using mini-max method the energy economy can be a raised at task execution at small τ_{cmin} or by increasing the maximal clock frequency f_{cmax} .

Conclusion

To solve the *on-line* energy saving problem in the hard deadline task real-time systems *mini-max* method was proposed. By using this method at uniform random distributed task execution time workload, the energy saving exceed more then 15% compared to off-line DVS scheduling. The gain from *mini-max* using it for energy saving is estimated by using functions of τ_{cmax} and τ_{cmin} . The maximum energy saving can be obtained by selecting the optimal value of minimal frequency.

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Energy consumption reduction is of primary importance in mobile embedded systems and SoC design. Dynamic voltage scaling (DVS) for CMOS chips is the most effective energy reduction technology. For hard real-time system optimisation DVS based task on-line scheduling method “mini-max” was developed. By it using the deadline is guaranteed at the task execution at minimal power till critical time, after which task is finished at maximal clock frequency and speed. In paper the benefits of the mini-max method using for energy saving is estimated and the optimal frequency selection for hard deadline task execution is analysed. Ill. 7, bibl. 16 (in English; summaries in English, Russian and Lithuanian).

A. Баумс. Оптимизация энергопотребления CMOS процессоров в системах реального времени с жесткими временными ограничениями // Электроника и электротехника. – Каунас: Технология, 2006. – № 4(68). – С. 19–22.

Минимизация энергопотребления является первоочередной задачей при создании мобильных и однокристалльных CMOS систем. Наиболее эффективной технологией для этого является DVS (динамическое масштабирование напряжением). На ее основе создан метод оптимизации энергопотребления для CMOS процессоров „mini-max”. Согласно с этим методом при выполнении задач можно оперативно гарантировать жесткие временные ограничения и оптимальное потребление энергии. Это достигается реализацией задачи с минимальной частотой и энергопотреблением до определенного критического момента, после которого выполнение завершается на максимальной частоте. В работе представляются результаты анализа возможностей метода mini-max и принципы определения ее оптимального частотного режима. Ил. 7, библи. 16 (на английском языке; рефераты на английском, русском и литовском яз.).

A. Baums. Energijos suvartojimo optimizavimas realaus laiko sistemų KMOP procesoriuose su griežtais laiko apribojimais // Elektronika ir elektrotechnika. – Kaunas: Technologija, 2006. – Nr. 4(68). – P. 19–22.

Energijos sąnaudų minimizavimas yra ypač svarbus veiksnys projektuojant mobilios paskirties įterptines sistemas ir vienkristales KMOP sistemas. Pati efektyviausia šiam tikslui technologija yra DVS (dinaminis įtampos keitimas). Jos pagrindu sukurtas CMOS procesorių energijos sąnaudų optimizavimo minimumų ir maksimumų metodas. Atliekant šiuo metodu užduotis galima operatyviai garantuoti griežtus laiko apribojimus ir optimalų energijos vartojimą. Tai pasiekama atliekant užduotį esant minimaliam dažniui ir energijos suvartojimui iki nustatyto kritinio laiko, po kurio vykdomas užbaigiamas maksimaliu dažniu. Darbe pateikti metodo „mini-max“ galimybių analizės rezultatai ir jo optimalaus dažnio režimo nustatymo principai. Il. 7, bibl. 16 (anglų kalba; santraukos anglų, rusų ir lietuvių k.).