Chapter 15: Transactions

- Transaction Concept
- Transaction State
- Implementation of Atomicity and Durability
- Concurrent Executions
- Serializability
- Recoverability
- Implementation of Isolation
- Transaction Definition in SQL
- Testing for Serializability.

ACID Properties

To preserve integrity of data, the database system must ensure:

- **Atomicity.** Either all operations of the transaction are properly reflected in the database or none are.
- **Consistency.** Execution of a transaction in isolation preserves the consistency of the database.
- **Isolation.** Although multiple transactions may execute concurrently, each transaction must be unaware of other concurrently executing transactions. Intermediate transaction results must be hidden from other concurrently executed transactions.
- **Durability.** After a transaction completes successfully, the changes it has made to the database persist, even if there are system failures.

Example of Fund Transfer

- Durability requirement — once the user has been notified that the transaction has completed (i.e., the transfer of the $50 has taken place), the updates to the database by the transaction must persist despite failures.
- Isolation requirement — if between steps 3 and 6, another transaction is allowed to access the partially updated database, it will see an inconsistent database (the sum $A + B$ will be less than it should be).

Example of Fund Transfer (Cont.)

- Committed, after successful completion.

Transaction State

- Active, the initial state; the transaction stays in this state while it is executing.
- Partially committed, after the final statement has been executed.
- Failed, after the discovery that normal execution can no longer proceed.
- Aborted, after the transaction has been rolled back and the database restored to its state prior to the start of the transaction. Two options after it has been aborted:
  - Restart the transaction — only if no internal logical error
  - Kill the transaction
- Committed, after successful completion.

Transaction Concept

- A transaction is a unit of program execution that accesses and possibly updates various data items.
- A transaction must see a consistent database.
- During transaction execution the database may be inconsistent.
- When the transaction is committed, the database must be consistent.
- Two main issues to deal with:
  - Failures of various kinds, such as hardware failures and system crashes
  - Concurrent execution of multiple transactions

Transaction State (Cont.)

Implementation of Atomicity and Durability

- The recovery-management component of a database system implements the support for atomicity and durability.

  The **shadow-database** scheme:
  - Assume that only one transaction is active at a time.
  - A pointer called db_pointer always points to the current consistent copy of the database.
  - All updates are made on a shadow copy of the database, and db_pointer is made to point to the updated shadow copy only after the transaction reaches partial commit and all updated pages have been flushed to disk.
  - In case transaction fails, old consistent copy pointed to by db_pointer can be used, and the shadow copy can be deleted.
Implementation of Atomicity and Durability (Cont.)

The shadow-database scheme:

![Diagram of shadow-database scheme]

- Assumes disks to not fail
- Useful for text editors, but extremely inefficient for large databases: executing a single transaction requires copying the entire database. Will see better schemes in Chapter 17.

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Concurrent Executions

- Multiple transactions are allowed to run concurrently in the system. Advantages are:
  - increased processor and disk utilization, leading to better transaction throughput: one transaction can be using the CPU while another is reading from or writing to the disk.
  - reduced average response time for transactions: short transactions need not wait behind long ones.
- Concurrency control schemes – mechanisms to achieve isolation, i.e., to control the interaction among the concurrent transactions in order to prevent them from destroying the consistency of the database.
- Will study in Chapter 14, after studying notion of correctness of concurrent executions.

Example Schedules

- Let $T_1$ transfer $50$ from $A$ to $B$, and $T_2$ transfer $10\%$ of the balance from $A$ to $B$. The following is a serial schedule (Schedule 1 in the text), in which $T_1$ is followed by $T_2$:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transaction</th>
<th>Operation 1</th>
<th>Operation 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$T_1$</td>
<td>read($A$)</td>
<td>$A := A - 50$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>write($A$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>read($B$)</td>
<td>$B := B + 50$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>write($B$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$T_2$</td>
<td></td>
<td>read($A$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$A := A - \text{temp}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>write($A$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>read($B$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$B := B + \text{temp}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>write($B$)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example Schedules (Cont.)

In both Schedule 1 and 3, the sum $A + B$ is preserved.

Serializability

- Basic Assumption – Each transaction preserves database consistency.
- Thus serial execution of a set of transactions preserves database consistency.
- A (possibly concurrent) schedule is serializable if it is equivalent to a serial schedule. Different forms of schedule equivalence give rise to the notions of:
  1. conflict serializability
  2. view serializability
- We ignore operations other than read and write instructions, and we assume that transactions may perform arbitrary computations on data in local buffers in between reads and writes. Our simplified schedules consist of only read and write instructions.

Example Schedules (Cont.)

- The following concurrent schedule (Schedule 4 in the text) does not preserve the value of the the sum $A + B$.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transaction</th>
<th>Operation 1</th>
<th>Operation 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>$A := A - 50$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>write($A$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>read($B$)</td>
<td>$B := B + 50$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>write($B$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$T_2$</td>
<td></td>
<td>read($A$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$A := A - \text{temp}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>write($A$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>read($B$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$B := B + \text{temp}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>write($B$)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conflict Serializability

- Instructions $i$ and $j$ of transactions $T_i$ and $T_j$, respectively, conflict if and only if there exists some item $Q$ accessed by both $i$ and $j$, and at least one of these instructions wrote $Q$.
  1. $i = \text{read}(Q), j = \text{read}(Q)$, $i$ and $j$ don't conflict.
  2. $i = \text{read}(Q), j = \text{write}(Q)$, They conflict.
  3. $i = \text{write}(Q), j = \text{read}(Q)$, They conflict.
  4. $i = \text{write}(Q), j = \text{write}(Q)$, They conflict.

Intuitively, a conflict between $i$ and $j$ forces a (logical) temporal order between them. If $i$ and $j$ are consecutive in a schedule and they do not conflict, their results would remain the same even if they had been interchanged in the schedule.
Conflict Serializability (Cont.)

- If a schedule \( S \) can be transformed into a schedule \( S' \) by a series of swaps of non-conflicting instructions, we say that \( S \) and \( S' \) are **conflict equivalent**.
- We say that a schedule \( S \) is **conflict serializable** if it is conflict equivalent to a serial schedule.
- Example of a schedule that is not conflict serializable:

\[
\begin{array}{c|c|c}
T_1 & T_2 \\
\hline
\text{read}(A) & \text{write}(Q) \\
\text{write}(Q) & \\
\end{array}
\]

We are unable to swap instructions in the above schedule to obtain either the serial schedule \( <T_2, T_1> \), or the serial schedule \( <T_1, T_2> \).

View Serializability

- Let \( S \) and \( S' \) be two schedules with the same set of transactions. \( S \) and \( S' \) are **view equivalent** if the following three conditions are met:
  1. For each data item \( Q \), if transaction \( T \) reads the initial value of \( Q \) in schedule \( S \), then transaction \( T \) must, in schedule \( S' \), also read the initial value of \( Q \).
  2. For each data item \( Q \) if transaction \( T \) executes \( \text{read}(Q) \) in schedule \( S \), and that value was produced by transaction \( T' \) (if any), then transaction \( T \) must in schedule \( S' \) also read the value of \( Q \) that was produced by transaction \( T' \).
  3. For each data item \( Q \), the transaction (if any) that performs the final \( \text{write}(Q) \) operation in schedule \( S \) must perform the final \( \text{write}(Q) \) operation in schedule \( S' \).

As can be seen, view equivalence is also based purely on **reads** and **writes** alone.

Other Notions of Serializability

- Schedule 8 (from text) given below produces same outcome as the serial schedule \( <T_3, T_9> \), yet is not conflict equivalent or view equivalent to it.

\[
\begin{array}{c|c|c}
T_3 & T_9 \\
\hline
\text{read}(A) & \text{write}(\bar{A}) \\
\text{write}(\bar{A}) & \text{write}(\bar{A}) \\
\text{read}(\bar{A}) & \text{write}(\bar{A}) \\
\text{write}(\bar{A}) & \\
\end{array}
\]

- Determining such equivalence requires analysis of operations other than read and write.

Recoverability

- **Cascading rollback** – a single transaction failure leads to a series of transaction rollbacks. Consider the following schedule where none of the transactions has yet committed (so the schedule is recoverable)

\[
\begin{array}{c|c|c}
T_{12} & T_{11} & T_{12} \\
\hline
\text{read}(A) & \text{write}(A) & \text{read}(A) \\
\text{read}(B) & \text{write}(B) & \text{read}(A) \\
\end{array}
\]

If \( T_{12} \) fails, \( T_{11} \) and \( T_{12} \) must also be rolled back.
- Can lead to the undoing of a significant amount of work.

- **Cascadless schedules** — cascading rollbacks cannot occur; for each pair of transactions \( T_i \) and \( T_j \) such that \( T_j \) reads a data item previously written by \( T_i \), the commit operation of \( T_i \) appears before the read operation of \( T_j \).
- Every cascadeless schedule is also recoverable
- It is desirable to restrict the schedules to those that are cascadeless

- **Recoverability** — if a transaction \( T \) reads a data item \( A \) which was previously written by a transaction \( T' \), the commit operation of \( T \) must appear before the read operation of \( T' \).

\[
\begin{array}{c|c|c}
T_1 & T_2 \\
\hline
\text{read}(A) & \text{read}(A) \\
\text{write}(A) & \text{write}(A) \\
\text{write}(B) & \text{write}(B) \\
\end{array}
\]

- Every recoverable schedule that is not conflict serializable has **blind writes**.
Implementation of Isolation

Schedules must be conflict or view serializable, and recoverable, for the sake of database consistency, and preferably cascadeless.

A policy in which only one transaction can execute at a time generates serial schedules, but provides a poor degree of concurrency.

Concurrency-control schemes tradeoff between the amount of concurrency they allow and the amount of overhead that they incur.

Some schemes allow only conflict-serializable schedules to be generated, while others allow view-serializable schedules that are not conflict-serializable.

Levels of Consistency in SQL-92

- **Serializable** — default
- **Repeatable read** — only committed records to be read, repeated reads of same record must return same value. However, a transaction may not be serializable – it may find some records inserted by a transaction but not find others.
- **Read committed** — only committed records can be read, but successive reads of record may return different (but committed) values.
- **Read uncommitted** — even uncommitted records may be read.

Lower degrees of consistency useful for gathering approximate information about the database, e.g., statistics for query optimizer.

Transaction Definition in SQL

Data manipulation language must include a construct for specifying the set of actions that comprise a transaction.

In SQL, a transaction begins implicitly.

A transaction in SQL ends by:

- **Commit work** commits current transaction and begins a new one.
- **Rollback work** causes current transaction to abort.

Levels of consistency specified by SQL-92:

- Serializable — default
- Repeatable read
- Read committed
- Read uncommitted

Testing for Serializability

Consider some schedule of a set of transactions $T_1, T_2, \ldots, T_n$

- **Precedence graph** — a direct graph where the vertices are the transactions (names).
- We draw an arc from $T_i$ to $T_j$ if the two transaction conflict, and $T_i$ accessed the data item on which the conflict arose earlier.
- We may label the arc by the item that was accessed.

Example 1

- $T_1$
- $T_2$

Example Schedule (Schedule A)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$T_1$</th>
<th>$T_2$</th>
<th>$T_3$</th>
<th>$T_4$</th>
<th>$T_5$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>read(Y)</td>
<td>read(X)</td>
<td>read(V)</td>
<td>read(W)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>read(Z)</td>
<td>write(Y)</td>
<td>read(Y)</td>
<td>write(Z)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>read(U)</td>
<td>write(U)</td>
<td>read(U)</td>
<td>write(U)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Precedence Graph for Schedule A

- $T_1$
- $T_2$
- $T_3$
- $T_4$

Test for Conflict Serializability

A schedule is conflict serializable if and only if its precedence graph is acyclic.

Cycle-detection algorithms exist which take order $n^2$ time, where $n$ is the number of vertices in the graph. (Better algorithms take order $n + e$ where $e$ is the number of edges.)

If precedence graph is acyclic, the serializability order can be obtained by a topological sorting of the graph. This is a linear order consistent with the partial order of the graph.

For example, a serializability order for Schedule A would be $T_2 \rightarrow T_1 \rightarrow T_3 \rightarrow T_2 \rightarrow T_4$.

Test for View Serializability

The precedence graph test for conflict serializability must be modified to apply to a test for view serializability.

The problem of checking if a schedule is view serializable falls in the class of NP-complete problems. Thus existence of an efficient algorithm is unlikely.

However practical algorithms that just check some sufficient conditions for view serializability can still be used.
Concurrency Control vs. Serializability Tests

- Testing a schedule for serializability after it has executed is a little too late!
- Goal – to develop concurrency control protocols that will assure serializability. They will generally not examine the precedence graph as it is being created; instead a protocol will impose a discipline that avoids nonserializable schedules. Will study such protocols in Chapter 16.
- Tests for serializability help understand why a concurrency control protocol is correct.

Schedule 2 – A Serial Schedule in Which $T_2$ is Followed by $T_1$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$T_1$</th>
<th>$T_2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>read($A$)</td>
<td>read($A$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$A := A - 50$</td>
<td>$A := A - \text{temp}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>write($A$)</td>
<td>write($A$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>read($B$)</td>
<td>read($B$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>write($B$)</td>
<td>write($B$)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Schedule 5 -- Schedule 3 After Swapping A Pair of Instructions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$T_1$</th>
<th>$T_2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>read($A$)</td>
<td>read($A$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>write($A$)</td>
<td>write($A$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>read($B$)</td>
<td>read($B$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>write($B$)</td>
<td>write($B$)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Schedule 6 – A Serial Schedule That is Equivalent to Schedule 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$T_1$</th>
<th>$T_2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>read($A$)</td>
<td>read($A$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>write($A$)</td>
<td>write($A$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>read($B$)</td>
<td>read($B$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>write($B$)</td>
<td>write($B$)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Schedule 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$T_3$</th>
<th>$T_4$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>read($Q$)</td>
<td>read($Q$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>write($Q$)</td>
<td>write($Q$)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Precedence Graph for (a) Schedule 1 and (b) Schedule 2

Illustration of Topological Sorting
The Precedence Graph shows the dependencies between transactions:

- $T_1$ precedes $T_2$.
- $T_1$ and $T_4$ both precede $T_3$.
- $T_4$ and $T_5$ both precede $T_3$.

The table illustrates the operations performed by each transaction:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transaction</th>
<th>$T_3$</th>
<th>$T_4$</th>
<th>$T_7$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$T_3$</td>
<td>read(Q)</td>
<td>write(Q)</td>
<td>read(Q)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$T_4$</td>
<td>write(Q)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$T_5$</td>
<td>write(Q)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>