On The Implications of Language Constructs for Concurrent Execution in the Energy Efficiency of Multicore Applications

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The Problem
The performance of the existing constructs for concurrent execution is reasonably well-understood. But, little is known about the energy-efficiency of these techniques.

“Race to idle”: Is a common belief that faster applications will also consume less energy.

But... it is not necessarily true!

Factors analyzed:
- Internal factors
  - Concurrent constructs
  - Number of threads
  - Resource usage
- External factors
  - Clock frequency
  - JVM providers

Some Results
Varying Concurrent Construct

Different concurrent constructs could produce unexpected results.

Varying number of Threads: N-Queens

Improvements in performance do not necessarily mean less energy consumed.

Varying JVM providers: LargestImage

Different JVM could increase in more than 10% of the energy consumed!

The Benchmarks
- N-Queens: CPU-bound
- LargestImage: IO-bound
- Mandelbrot: CPU-bound
- Knucleotide: 23% doing IO

The Study

- 4 Benchmark Apps
  - 4 Variants (3 conc. + 1 seq.)
  - 3 JVMs
  - Number of Threads
  - 2 Clock Frequencies

Intel(R) Xeon(R), 2.13 GHz, 4 cores/8 threads 16Gb of memory
Linux 64-bit, kernel 3.0.0.-31-server.

The Conclusions
- Some factors create variations, but some others do not.
  - Do
    - Nature of the problem
    - Concurrent programming construct
  - Do not
    - JVM implementation
    - CPU clock frequency
- We also found out that, for concurrent software, faster does not always mean greener

Future work
- To conduct a broader-scoped study.
- The results of this new study will provide input for us to derive a catalog energy code smell for concurrent software.
- Then we plan to proceed with the design of refactoring catalog that will enable application programmer to safely restructure their applications to use less energy

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