# An Adaptive Scheduling Algorithm Using Period Adjustment

Shri Prakash Dwivedi

Abstract—Real-time system technology traditionally developed for safety critical system, has now been extended to support multimedia system and virtual reality. A large number of real-time applications, related to multimedia and adaptive control system, require more flexibility than classical real-time theory usually permits. This paper proposes an efficient adaptive scheduling framework in real-time system based on period adjustment. Under this model periodic tasks can change their execution rates based on their importance values to keep the system underloaded.

Index Terms—Adaptive real-time system, scheduling algorithm, overload management.

# I. INTRODUCTION

The real-time scheduling paradigms, both static such as rate monotonic scheduling [1], and dynamic such as earliest deadline first scheduling, do not fit well the requirements of advanced real-time applications in dynamic environments. Real-time systems are being increasingly designed for complex systems. For these applications, it is sometime impractical or impossible to provide static guarantees to real-time computation. These motivations have led to the emergence of the adaptation and overload management as a major research issue in real-time systems.

An overview of prior art in overload management and adaptive scheduling techniques for real-time systems is given in Lu et al. [2]. An interesting technique for overload management in hard real-time control applications is described in Ramanathan et al. [3]. The author presents a scheduling policy deterministically guaranteeing m out of any k periodic task activations, along with a methodology able to minimize the effects of missed control-law updates. This work provides a solid foundation to graceful degradation policies of periodic real-time tasks. However, unless the overload duration is very short, the application could be significantly impaired by the loss of periodic execution for a number of real-time tasks. Dynamic Window Constrained Scheduling algorithm is similar except that the window k is fixed. Mok et al. [4] modified Dynamic Window Constraint Scheduling, which is primarily deadline based by using the concept of Pfairness to improve the success rate for tasks with unit size execution time. Other frameworks such as the imprecise computation model and reward based model can be applied in the situation where quality of service is proportional to the amount of workload

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completed.

The need for adaptive management of the Quality of Service has been widely recognized in the domain of the distributed multimedia systems. A graceful degradation of the communication subsystem is obtained in Abdelzaher and Shin [5] by means of QoS contracts specifying degraded acceptable QoS levels. Significant research has also been devoted to schedulers providing some degree of adaptation to cope with the dynamic overload environment. The need for scheduling systems providing real-time guarantee to a subset of tasks within a general operating system has been emphasized in the Stankovic et al. [6]. In Lu et al. [7] the authors assume a flexibility in timing requirements. To address the dynamics of the environment, they proposed a modified EDF adaptive scheduling framework based on feedback control methods and use feedback control loops to maintain a satisfactory deadline miss ratio when task execution times change.

Many real-time task models have been proposed to extend timing requirements beyond the hard and soft deadlines based on the observation that jobs can be dropped without severely affecting performance [8]. Despite the success of some models in alleviating overload situation, it is sometime more suitable to execute jobs less often instead of dropping them or allocating fewer cycles. The work in Kuo et al. [9] is among the first to address this type of requirement. Load-adjustable algorithms and value-based policies are the main techniques proposed for graceful recovery from overload. A load adjustment mechanism is proposed in [9] in order to handle periodic processes with varying temporal parameters. The aim of this work is to determine feasible time parameter configurations (execution time C and period T) and thus modify the real-time computation for collections of tasks. The configuration selection problem is solved by a harmonic approach achieving the maximum exploitation of the computational resources under any time parameter configuration. While appealing, this approach does not lend itself to many real-time systems, where execution times, in spite of their variability, cannot be set or chosen by the designer.

In [10] Seto *et al.* considered the problem of finding a feasible set of task period as a non-linear programming problem, which seeks to optimize specific form of control performance measure. Cervin et al. used optimization theory to solve the period selection problem online by adaptively adjusting task periods with focus on optimizing specific control performance [11].

Buttazo et al. [12] proposed a flexible framework known

as elastic task model, where deadline misses are avoided by increasing task periods until some desirable utilization is achieved. The work in [7] extends the basic elastic task model to handle cases where the computation time is unknown. In elastic task model [13], [14], periodic computations are modeled as springs with given elastic coefficients and minimum lengths. Requested variations in task execution rates or overload conditions are managed by changing the rates based on the spring's elastic coefficients. Generalized elastic scheduling proposed by Chantem et al. [15], [16], by generalizing elastic scheduling approach. Although the Elastic model is nice but it does not consider the cases where the task periods of soft real-time systems may be unbounded or loosely bounded. We develop in this paper an efficient adaptive scheduling scheme in real-time systems through period adjustment, which consider the tasks having bounded as well as unbounded periods.

This paper is organized as follows. Section II describes problem definition and motivation. Section III presents our proposed task model and the Period Adjust algorithm and its features. In Section IV, we present the experimental results. Finally, Section V contains conclusion.

# II. PROBLEM DEFINITION AND MOTIVATION

Many models have been proposed in real-time scheduling theory to deal with adaptive scheduling and overload management. Some of the proposed models are based on observation that less important jobs can be dropped without severely affecting performance. But dropping of jobs may not always be the best option, because it is sometime more suitable to execute the jobs less often instead of dropping them even if they are less important. Elastic task model [13] uses flexible framework but it do not consider the case where some of the soft real-time task may be loosely bounded or unbounded. We propose a novel scheduling framework based on period adjustment. Our algorithm considers the tasks whose periods are tightly bounded as well as the tasks whose periods are loosely bounded. We feel that this is more general model and this model performs nicely even when all tasks are bounded.

Many soft real-time applications require the execution of periodic activities, whose rate can usually be defined within a certain range. Higher the frequency, better the performance. Depending on the application domain, some tasks are rigidly imposed by the environment whereas other activities can be more flexible, producing significant results when their rates are within a certain range. For example, in multimedia systems the activities such as voice sampling, image acquisition, data compression, and video playing are performed periodically, but their execution rates are not so rigid. Depending on the requested quality of service, tasks may increase or decrease their execution rate to accommodate the requirements of other concurrent activities. However this period range may be flexible also. Suppose a soft real-time task has period range (a, b), then in some

application it may be possible to increase few time units above b and decrease few time units below a, if by doing so system become schedulable. It is sometime counter intuitive that a soft real-time application which is schedulable in range (a, b) cannot be schedulable for the range (a, (b + 1)) or alike. There are many flexible applications in multimedia and control applications in which we may be able to vary few time units across bound (upper or lower) without severely affecting the performance. We feel that there should be a general scheduling framework which can consider the flexible applications whose periods are unbounded along with the bounded one.

### III. PROPOSED WORK

# A. Task Model

We consider the system where each task  $\tau_i$  is periodic and characterized the is by following  $(C_i, T_{i_0}, T_{i_{min}}, T_{i_{max}}, w_i)$  for i = 1, ... N. Where N is the number of tasks in the system,  $C_i$  is the worst case execution time and  $T_{i_0}$  is the initial period of  $\tau_i$ .  $T_{i_{min}}$  denotes the minimum possible period of  $\tau_i$  as specified by the application and  $T_{i_{max}}$  represent the maximum period beyond which the system performance is no longer acceptable. The weighting factor  $w_i$  represents the importance of task  $\tau_i$ , to changing its period in case of changes. The longer the weighting factor of a task, the more will be its contribution towards overall utilization. Given a task set  $\Gamma$ , tasks are arranged in non decreasing order of deadline.

Each task  $\tau_i$  in task set  $\Gamma$  is divided in to two parts.  $\Gamma_h$  for hard real-time tasks and  $\Gamma_s$  for soft real-time tasks such that  $\Gamma = \{\Gamma_h \cup \Gamma_s\}$ . N is the total number of tasks in the system.  $n_h$  is the number of hard real-time task such that  $(n_h = |\Gamma_h|)$ .  $n_s$  is the number of soft real-time task such that  $(n_s = |\Gamma_s|)$ .  $w_i$  is the weighting factor or importance value of each soft real-time task in  $\Gamma_s$ .  $w_i$ 's for soft real-time tasks are arranged in such a way that  $\sum_{i=1}^{n_s} w_i = 1$ , in other words  $w_i$  represents fractional importance value or percentage of importance value of each soft real-time task towards the whole system performance. Furthermore a task in  $\Gamma_s$  may belongs to  $\Gamma_{s\_bound}$  or  $\Gamma_{sp}$  or  $\Gamma_{s\_unbound}$ , i.e.  $\Gamma_{s} = \{\Gamma_{s\_bound} \cup \Gamma_{sp} \cup$  $\Gamma s_{\underline{}}$  unbound where  $\Gamma s_{\underline{}}$  bound consists of those soft real-time tasks for which an upper bound or lower bound or both are imposed on tasks periods prior to execution or during execution, and  $\Gamma_{sp}$  consists of those soft real-time tasks which have fixed periods or which request for fixed periods during run time, whereas task set  $\Gamma_{s\_unbound}$  consists of those tasks which are unbounded. As a matter of fact the period  $T_i$  cannot be less than worst case computation time  $C_i$ of a task. Our scheduling algorithm emphasize such soft real-time applications which have more number of tasks in  $\Gamma_s$  In this task model, all the tasks  $\tau_i$ , which does not belongs to  $\Gamma_{s\_bound}$  can have  $T_{i_{min}}$  or  $T_{i_{max}}$  equal to  $\Phi$ , which means they are unbounded. For each  $(\tau_i \in \Gamma_h)$ ,  $w_i = h_{rt} = 1$  which means that all hard real-time tasks must execute provided they are schedulable.  $T_i$  denotes the actual period of task  $\tau_i$ , which is constrained to be in the range  $[T_{i_{min}}, T_{i_{max}}]$  for the case  $(\tau_i \in \Gamma_{s \ bound})$ , whereas  $C_i$  denotes the actual execution time considered to be known a priori. In the case of tasks with variable computation time,  $C_i$  will denote the actual worst case execution time. Any period variation is subject to an utilization guarantee and is accepted only if there exists feasible schedule such that tasks are schedulable by earliest deadline first algorithm. Hence if  $\sum (C_i/T_{i_0}) \le 1$ , all tasks can be created at the minimum period  $T_{i_0}$ , otherwise the algorithm is used to adapt the task's period to  $T_i$  such that  $\sum (C_i/T_i) = U_d \le 1$ , where  $C_i$  is the actual online execution estimate and  $U_d$  is the some desired utilization factor. System designer can set  $w_i$  statically or dynamically depending upon requirements. In static method, all soft real time tasks are assigned  $w_i$ 's prior to start of the task execution and these  $w_i$ 's remains fixed up to the end of task completions. In dynamic method, assignment of  $w_i$  is event based i.e., weighting factor  $w_i$  may be reassigned during the occurrence of any event such as, a new task arrival or completion of a task.

# B. Period\_Adjust Algorithm

We propose a new scheduling framework namely Period\_Adjust algorithm which accepts set of tasks  $\Gamma$  and desired utilization  $U_d$  and return set of periods for soft real-time tasks. We may set  $U_d$  equal to the maximum schedulable utilization of individual scheduling algorithm. We can set  $U_d = 1$  for dynamic scheduling algorithm like EDF, or we can set  $U_d(n) = n(2^{1/n} - 1)$  for the static scheduling algorithm, where n is the number of independent, preemptable periodic tasks with relative deadline equal to their respective periods. In this algorithm we assume that deadline is equal to the period. We also assume that execution time  $C_i$  of all the task is given prior along with the periods of hard real-time tasks. The total task set  $\Gamma$  is divided in to two groups, namely the set of hard real-time tasks  $\Gamma_h$ , and the set of soft real-time tasks  $\Gamma_s$ . Further the set of soft real-time task may consists of  $\Gamma_{sp}$ , in which soft real-time task request for fixed period,  $\Gamma_{s\_bound}$  in which tasks are bounded by maximum or minimum periods and  $\Gamma_{s\_unbound}$ .

Our Period\_Adjust algorithm is given in Algorithm 1. It work as follows: The first for loop computes the utilization of hard real-time tasks, then algorithm computes the summation of all utilization of task set  $\Gamma_h$  to check for its feasibility. In the second for loop it computes the utilization of those tasks which request for period change, if there is no such task  $U_{sp}$  is set to 0, after that it again checks for the feasibility of schedulable utilization. The third for loop computes the task periods of all soft real-time tasks in accordance with their weighting factor or importance value. Next, the algorithm checks whether the periods of unbounded tasks are less than their computation time. If period is less than computation time, it replaces period by computation time. Finally it checks whether these periods exceeds their bound for the bounded tasks, if this is the case it replaces periods with their bounds.

If computed  $T_i$  for a bounded task is less than the minimum period  $T_{i_{min}}$ , we can simply replace  $T_i$  by  $T_{i_{min}}$ , because increasing the period leads to less overall utilization. However if the computed period  $T_i$  is greater than the maximum period  $T_{i_{max}}$ , we cannot simply replace  $T_i$  by

 $T_{i_{max}}$ , because decreasing the period leads to increased utilization, which may exceeds the schedulable utilization. Therefore corresponding task is replaced from bounded task set  $\Gamma_{s\_bound}$  to fixed period task set  $\Gamma_{sp}$  and Period\_Adjust algorithm is re-invoked. In this algorithm we assume that in soft real-time application there are many cases where either no bounds are available or no bounds are required for soft real-time tasks.

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Algorithm 1: Period_Adjust (\Gamma, U_d)
for each (\tau_i \in \Gamma_h) do
      U_i = \frac{c_i}{T_i}
U_h = \sum_i U_i

U_s = U_d - U_h

if (U_s \le 0) then
     return infeasible
for each (\tau_i \in \Gamma_{sp}) do U_i = \frac{c_i}{T_{i_{sp}}}
end for
U_{sp} = \sum U_i
U_s = U_d - U_h - U_{sp}
if (U_s \le 0) then
     return infeasible
for each \left(\tau_i \in (\Gamma_s - \Gamma_{sp})\right) do
T_i = \frac{\sum_{i} w_{sp_i}}{\left(w_{i+\frac{\sum w_{sp_i}}{N-n_h-n_{sp}}\right)}(u_d-u_h-u_{sp})}
for each (\tau_i \in (\Gamma_s - \Gamma_{sp} - \Gamma_{s\_bound})) do
      if (T_i < C_i) then
      end if
end for
mod = 0
for each (\tau_i \in \Gamma_{s\_bound}) do
     if (T_i < T_{i_{min}}) then
           T_i = T_{i_{min}}
         if (T_i > T_{i_{max}}) then
T_i = T_{i_{max}}
\Gamma_{s\_bound} = \Gamma_{s\_bound} - \tau_i
\Gamma_{sp} = \Gamma_{sp} + \tau_i
mod = 1
           end if
       end if
end for
if (mod = = 1) then
     return Period_Adjust (\Gamma, U_d)
end if
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# IV. EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

In this section we present the experimental results performed on our task model. We consider period selection with deadline equal to periods. In all the following tables here onwards periods  $(T_{i_0}, T_{i_{min}}, T_{i_{max}})$  and computation times  $(C_i)$  are expressed in milliseconds (ms).

TABLE I: TASK SET PARAMETERS 18 100 0.30 0.30 18 100 50 150 50 18 100 150 0.30 100 50 0.30 18 150 18 50

To execute the Period\_Adjust algorithm, we first use the task set parameters given in Table I. In this experiment, all tasks start at time 0 with an initial period of 100 time units and the task set is schedulable under EDF. Here the required maximum utilization of the overall system is  $\frac{18}{50} + \frac{18}{50} + \frac{18}{5$  $\frac{18}{50} + \frac{18}{50} = 1.8$ , whereas the required minimum utilization of the overall system is  $\frac{18}{150} + \frac{18}{150} + \frac{18}{150} + \frac{18}{150} + \frac{18}{150} = 0.6$ . Since the current utilization is  $\frac{18}{100} + \frac{18}{100} + \frac{18}{100} + \frac{18}{100} + \frac{18}{100} = 0.90$ , the task set is schedulable under EDF. Assume that, at 10sec,  $\tau_1$  needs to reduce its period to 50 time units, due to some changes in system dynamics not experienced by other tasks. Since the new required utilization of the system is  $\frac{18}{50} + \frac{18}{100} + \frac{18}{100} + \frac{18}{100} + \frac{18}{100} = 1.08$ , which is greater than 1, and therefore as such it is not schedulable under EDF. We can observe that the required minimum utilization of the system is  $\frac{18}{50} + \frac{18}{150} + \frac{1}{150}$  $\frac{18}{150} + \frac{18}{150} + \frac{18}{150} = 0.84$ , which is less than 1. Therefore to allow for  $\tau_1$  to change its period, the periods of tasks  $\tau_2$ ,  $\tau_3$ ,  $\tau_4$ ,  $\tau_5$  must increase for the system to remain schedulable. At time 20sec,  $\tau_1$  goes to back to its initial period state. Fig. 1 shows the cumulative number of executed instances for each task as its period changes over time. When we execute the Period\_Adjust algorithm on the above task set, it will return the feasible set of task periods ( $T_1 = 50$ ,  $T_2 = 80$ ,  $T_3 =$ 110, T4=138, T5=150.

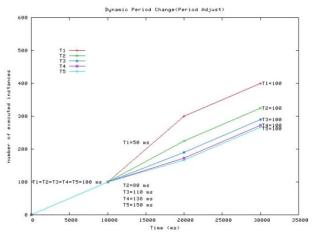


Fig. 1. Dynamic period change using Period\_Adjust.

Now we consider the same task set parameters with some change. Here we assume that soft real-time tasks  $\tau_4$  and  $\tau_5$  are not bounded, i.e. although the preferable maximum period is 150, some flexibility is provided by the application to increase or decrease the bound. In this case assume that at  $10 \sec \tau_1$  needs to reduce its period to 60 time units, as shown

in Table II.

Task	$C_i$	$T_{i_0}$	$T_{i_{min}}$	$T_{i_{max}}$	$w_i$
$ au_1$	18	50	50	150	0.30
$ au_2$	18	60	50	150	0.30
$ au_3$	18	100	50	150	0.18
$ au_4$	18	100	Φ	Φ	0.12
$ au_5$	18	100	Φ	Φ	0.10

For these task set parameters Task\_compress algorithm [12] is infeasible, whereas Period\_Adjust algorithm is feasible. In fact when we execute the Period\_Adjust algorithm on the above task sets, the corresponding periods obtained for the tasks are shown in Fig. 2. ( $T_1$ = 50,  $T_2$ = 60,  $T_3$ = 147,  $T_4$ =155,  $T_5$ = 175).

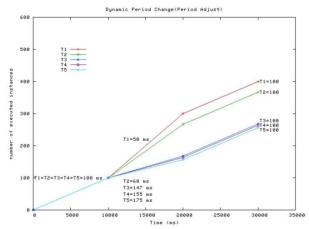


Fig. 2. Dynamic period change which is feasible by Period\_Adjust only.

Now we consider the task set parameters given in Table III for the case of admission control policy during dynamic task activation.

TABLE III: TASK SET PARAMETERS Task 30 100 0.20 50 50 50 350 200 0.20 70 300 50 350 0.20  $\tau_3$ 10

50

350

70

10

In this experiment  $\tau_1$ ,  $\tau_2$  and  $\tau_3$  starts at time 0. They have the current utilization  $\frac{30}{100} + \frac{50}{200} + \frac{70}{300} = 0.78$  and therefore schedulable by EDF. At time 10sec two tasks  $\tau_4$  and  $\tau_5$  arrives, which makes the total utilization  $\frac{30}{100} + \frac{50}{200} + \frac{70}{300} + \frac{10}{300} + \frac{10}{70} = 1.03$ . In order to allow the tasks  $\tau_4$  and  $\tau_5$  for execution, tasks  $\tau_1$ ,  $\tau_2$  and  $\tau_3$  can increase their period. Since both tasks  $\tau_4$  and  $\tau_5$  are of 10sec duration, after 20sec tasks  $\tau_1$ ,  $\tau_2$  and  $\tau_3$  return to their previous periods, as shown in Fig. 3 (Dynamic task activation). Now we consider the above task set parameters with some modification. In this case  $\tau_4$  and  $\tau_5$  arrives 10sec having the computation time 30ms and 20ms respectively as shown in Table IV.

Here task  $\tau_3$  is loosely bounded (period of task  $\tau_3$  should be preferably between 50 and 350 but not necessarily). In this case total utilization is  $U = \frac{30}{100} + \frac{50}{200} + \frac{70}{300} + \frac{30}{100} + \frac{20}{70} = 1.37$ . Obviously the task set is not schedulable. In this case

also Task\_compress algorithm is infeasible, while Period\_Adjust is feasible. On execution periods returned by the Period\_Adjust algorithm are ( $T_1$ = 150,  $T_2$ = 250,  $T_3$ = 355,  $T_4$ =150,  $T_5$ = 200).

TABLETY, TASK SELLAKAMETERS							
Task	$C_i$	$T_{i_0}$	$T_{i_{min}}$	$T_{i_{max}}$	$w_i$		
$ au_1$	30	100	50	350	0.20		
$ au_2$	50	200	50	350	0.20		
$ au_3$	70	300	Φ	Φ	0.20		
$ au_4$	30	100	50	350	0.20		
$ au_5$	20	70	50	350	0.20		

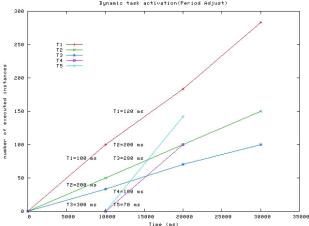


Fig. 3. Dynamic task activation using Period\_Adjust.

For the comparison purpose, here we use the task set parameters in [14], and we show that Period\_Adjust work nicely in this case also.

Task set parameters are shown in Table V. In this experiment four periodic tasks are created at time t=0, All the tasks start executing at their initial period, at  $t=10\sec ,\, \tau_1$  decreases its period from 100ms to 33ms. At  $t=20\sec ,\, \tau_1$  return to its initial period. The result of the application of Period\_Adjust algorithm and Task\_compress algorithm on the above task set are shown in the Fig. 4. It shows the actual number of instances executed by each task as a function of time.

TABLE V: TASK SET PARAMETERS

TABLE V. TASK SETT AKAMETERS							
Task	$C_i$	$T_{i_0}$	$T_{i_{min}}$	$T_{i_{max}}$	$E_i$	$w_i$	
$ au_1$	24	100	30	500	1	0.30	
$ au_2$	24	100	30	500	1	0.30	
$ au_3$	24	100	30	500	1.5	0.25	
$\tau_4$	24	100	30	500	2	0.15	

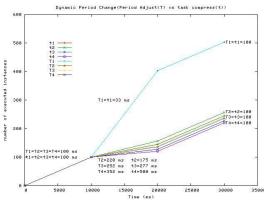


Fig. 4. Period\_Adjust vs Task compress.

# V. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

In this paper we have suggested Period Adjust algorithm for scheduling of tasks in which periods of soft real-time tasks are flexible. In this framework, periodic tasks can change their importance value to provide different quality of service. Importance value or weighting factor of soft real-time tasks is arranged in such a manner to keep the system underloaded. What makes Period Adjust more interesting is that it considers those soft real-time tasks whose periods are unbounded. The Period Adjust model is useful for supporting both multimedia systems and control applications in which the execution rates of some computational activities cannot be properly predicted and they have to be dynamically tuned as a function of the current system state.

We feel that Period Adjust model is a general model which can be applied in many applications. This framework can be extended to support the cases where deadline is less than period and computation time is variable.

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