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An SoC Test Scheduling Algorithm using Reconfigurable Union Wrappers

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Abstract

This paper presents a reconfigurable union wrapper that can wrap multiple cores into a single wrapper design. Moreover, we present a test scheduling algorithm to minimize a test application time using the proposed reconfigurable union wrapper. The proposed heuristic algorithm can achieve short test application time with low computational cost compared to the conventional approaches where every core has its own wrapper. Experimental results for the ITC'02 SOC Benchmarks show the effectiveness of our approach.

keywords: *system-on-a-chip, test scheduling, reconfigurable union wrapper, test access mechanism*

1 Introduction

In the SoC test environment, each embedded core is isolated from other logics during test of the core. Therefore, the following three components are necessary for SoC testing: 1) test pattern source and test response sink, 2) test access mechanism (TAM), and 3) wrapper [1]. The TAM propagates test patterns for a core from test pattern source to the core, and furthermore propagates the responses from the core to test pattern sink. The wrapper provides functions for cores to switch the mode of the cores: 1) normal, 2) INTEST, 3) EXTEST, and 4) BYPASS defined in IEEE 1500 standard [2]. The goal for SoC test engineers is to develop techniques for wrapper design, TAM design and test schedule that minimizes test application time under given constraints. A number of approaches have addressed wrapper design [3, 4, 5]. Several TAM architectures have been proposed such as *TestBus* [6, 7], *TESTRAIL* [8], *transparency based TAMs* [9, 10, 11]. However, wrapper and TAM co-optimization problem was shown to be NP-hard in [3]. Therefore, many heuristic approaches for this problem have been proposed [4, 5, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17].

Recently, the reconfigurable wrapper was proposed by Koranne [18] that allows a core to have several wrapper configurations in contrast to the previous approaches. The advantage is the increased flexibility for the test scheduling. Erik et al. proposed the reconfigurable power-conscious core test wrapper to increase the flexibility for power-constrained test scheduling [19].

One crucial aspect of these approaches including reconfigurable and non-reconfigurable wrapper designs is that each core has an own wrapper and a core is tested independently of other cores. Quasem et al. showed that further reductions in test application time can be achieved if multiple cores are wrapped into single wrapper design and the overlapped test application scheme is used [20]. They also proposed the reconfigurable wrapper design that includes all embedded cores in a single wrapper. In the proposed reconfigurable wrapper design, the length of each wrapper scan chain can be reconfigured (reduced) during test by bypassing scan chains which are not necessary for further test application.

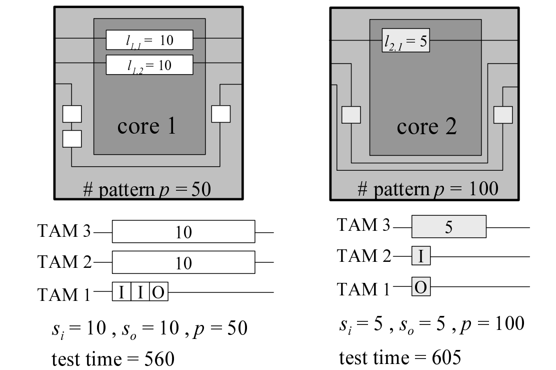
However, wrapping all the cores into a single wrapper design can not alway achieve the minimum test application time due to the lack of flexibility for test scheduling. Moreover, the proposed reconfigurable wrapper can only bypass scan chains in each wrapper scan chain, and can not reassign scan chains to different wrapper scan chains.

This paper presents a reconfigurable union wrapper that can wrap multiple cores into a single wrapper design. Moreover, we present a test scheduling algorithm to minimize a test application time using the proposed reconfigurable union wrapper. The proposed algorithm finds the optimal core groups for designing reconfigurable union wrappers, and it can achieve short test application time with low computational cost. Experimental results for the ITC'02 SOC Benchmarks show the effectiveness of our approach.

The rest of this paper is organized as follows. We discuss our motivation in Section 2. Section 3 shows a reconfigurable union wrapper design. After formulating a test scheduling problem using reconfigurable union wrappers in Section 4, we present a test scheduling algorithm in Section 5. Experimental results are discussed in Section 6. Finally, Section 7 concludes this paper.

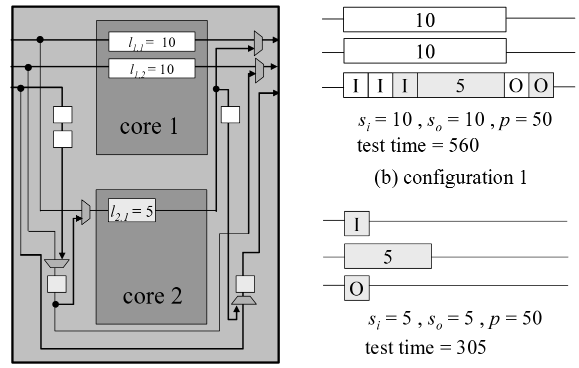
2 Motivation

In this section, we examine the effectiveness of the *reconfigurable union wrapper* for minimizing test application time by using example cores shown in Fig.1. A significant amount of research has been devoted to reducing test application time. Consequently, several test scheduling algorithms have been proposed. In these approaches, every core has its own wrapper and cores are tested independently of



(a) wrapper design for core 1 (b) wrapper design for core 2

Figure 1. Wrapper designs using three wrapper scan chains by [3].



(a) wrapper design

Figure 2. A reconfigurable union wrapper and its configurations.

others by using the wrappers. Wrapper designs for core 1 and 2 using tree wrapper scan chains are shown in Fig.1(a) and Fig.1(b), respectively. The time required to apply the entire test set to a core is given as follows.

$$T = 1 + \max(s_i, s_o) \cdot p + \min(s_i, s_o) \quad (1)$$

Here, p is the number of test patterns, and $s_i(s_o)$ is the length of the longest wrapper scan-in(scan-out) chain for the core. In this example, test time for core 1 and core 2 are 550 and 605, respectively. The total test time for these two cores is 1165 if core 1 and core 2 are tested serially by using a shared TAM with three bits.

Fig.2 shows the proposed reconfigurable union wrapper design for core 1 and core 2. The wrapper design has two test configurations. The first configuration shown in Fig.2(b) includes all scan chains, and core 1 and core 2 are tested at the same time for first 50 patterns. After applying the first 50 patterns, the wrapper is reconfigured to configuration 2 shown in Fig.2(c) where only scan chains in core 2 are connected to the wrapper scan chains. Then, core 2 is tested using configuration 2 for the remaining 50 patterns. Test time for configuration 1 and 2 are 560 and 305, respectively. The total test time for these two cores is 860 since the first scan-in in configuration 2 can be overlapped with the last scan-out in configuration 1. Consequently, we can achieve 26% test time reduction by using the proposed reconfigurable union wrapper. Therefore, we can reduce the total SoC test time if we can find the optimal groups for the proposed reconfigurable union wrappers during test scheduling.

3 Reconfigurable Union Wrapper Design

In this section, we present a method to design the reconfigurable union wrapper. Let S be the set of cores and w be the number of wrapper scan chains. The proposed procedure is shown in Fig.3. First, configuration ID i is set to 1 (line 1). Then, configuration i is designed by *WrapperDesign* procedures proposed in [3] by regarding cores in S as a single core (line 3). After that, the cores with the smallest number of test patterns are removed from S (line 4), and configuration ID i is increased by 1 (line 5). The above process is repeated until S becomes empty. An example of the reconfigurable union wrapper for core 1 and core 2 shown in Fig.1 and its configurations are shown in Fig.2.

```
procedure RUW(S, w)
1  i := 1;
2  while(S≠ ϕ){
3     design configuration i by WrapperDesign in [3] for S;
4     S := S - {c} s.t.
      c has the smallest number of test patterns in S;
5     i := i + 1;
6  }
```

Figure 3. Reconfigurable union wrapper design procedure.

4 Problem Formulation

We formulate the test scheduling problem using reconfigurable union wrappers as follows.

Definition 1 P_{ruw}: Given the maximum TAM width W_{max}, a set of cores M and for each core $m \in M$ the test set parameters including the number of test patterns p_m, the number of input terminals i_m, the number of output terminals o_m, the number of bidirectional terminals b_m, the number of scan chains s_m and for each scan chain k the length of it $l_{m,k}$, determine the test groups, the TAM width and the reconfigurable union wrapper design for each group, and a test schedule such that: (1) the total number of TAM wires utilized at any moment does not exceed W_{max} and (2) the overall test time is minimized.

5 Scheduling Algorithm using Reconfigurable Union Wrapper

In this section, we present an algorithm for determining a solution to the test scheduling problem using reconfigurable union wrappers. In our algorithm, a TAM b is represented as a set of cores which are connected to b. Our algorithm determines a solution which consists of

- the set of TAMs B such that every core is assigned to exactly one TAM,
- the width $w(b)$ of every TAM $b \in B$ such that the summed widths of the TAMs does not exceed W_{max},
- the reconfigurable union wrapper design for each TAM $b \in B$

such that total test time T is minimized. To determine the test time $t(b, w)$ for a TAM b with width w, we assume the existence of a procedure *TestTime(b,w)* which use a procedure *RUW(b,w)* for designing a reconfigurable union wrapper for cores in b presented in Section 3.

An outline of this algorithm is presented in Fig.4. The algorithm has three main steps which are *ASSIGN*, *TRANSFER* and *MERGE*.

```
procedure TestSchedule
1  sort M in the descending order based on the amount of test data;
2  for all m ∈ M in the decided order at line1{
3     ASSIGN(m);
4     TRANSFER();
5  }
6  repeat until no more improvement on T is possible{
7     MERGE();
8     TRANSFER();
9  }
```

Figure 4. Scheduling algorithm

First, it sorts cores in the descending order based on the amount of test data (line 1). The amount of test data of a core is equivalent to the test time provided by the wrapper design using one wrapper scan chain. Then, a core is assigned to a TAM such that current total test time T is minimized by *ASSIGN* procedure (line 3). Whenever a core is assigned, *TRANSFER* procedure is executed (line 4). The *TRANSFER* procedure tries to minimize T by finding a bottleneck TAM b_{max} which is a TAM with the longest test time and re-assigning a core in b_{max} to other TAM. *TRANSFER* repeats the above process until no more improvement on T is possible. After assigning all cores to TAMs, the algorithm performs the *MERGE* procedure (line 7). The *MERGE* procedure tries to minimize T by finding a bottleneck TAM b_{max} and merging b_{max} with other TAM. *MERGE* repeats the above process until no more improvement on T is possible. Then, the *TRANSFER* procedure is executed again (line 8). These *MERGE* and *TRANSFER* procedures are repeated until no more improvement on T is possible. Each of these steps is explained in more detail in the sequel of this section.

5.1 Assignment

The procedure *ASSIGN* as outlined in Fig.5 determines a TAM to which the current targeted core m is assigned. It consists of three main steps.

In Step 1 (line 1-2), for each TAM $b \in B$ which already exists in the current test schedule, it computes the test time

```
procedure ASSIGN(m)
/*Step1: Compute T_ex when m is assigned to the existing TAM */
1  find b_ex ∈ B s.t. t(b_ex ∪ {m}, w(b_ex)) is minimized;
2  T_ex := t(b_ex ∪ {m}, w(b_ex));
/*Step2: Compute T_new when m is assigned to new TAM */
3  Generate new TAM b_new := {m};
4  B_new := B ∪ {b_new};
5  Compute T_tar by [14];
6  for all b ∈ B_new{
7     Compute w(b) s.t. t(b, w(b)) is closest to T_tar;
8  }
9  find a bottleneck TAM b_max;
10 T_new := t(b_max, w(b_max));
11 W := Σ_{b∈B_new} w(b);
12 while(W > W_max){
13    find b_min ∈ B_new s.t. t(b_min, w(b_min) − 1) is minimized;
14    w(b_min) := w(b_min) − 1;
15    W := W − 1;
16    if(T_new < t(b_min, w(b_min) − 1))
17       T_new := t(b_min, w(b_min) − 1));
18 }
/*Step3: Update TAMs */
19 if(T_ex < T_new)
20    T := T_ex;  b_ex := b_ex ∪ {m}for b_ex ∈ B;
21 else
22    T := T_new; B := B_new;
```

Figure 5. ***ASSIGN*** **procedure**

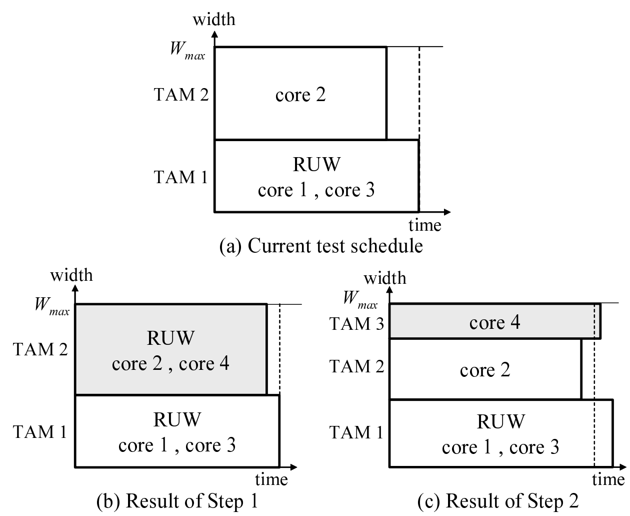


Figure 6. An example of ***ASSIGN*** **procedure.**

when the core m is assigned to b and a reconfigurable union wrapper for b is designed. Then, it finds b_{ex} which is a TAM with the shortest test time T_{ex} after assigning m. In Step 2 (line 3-18), it computes the test time T_{new} when a new TAM b_{new} is created and the core m is assigned to b_{new}. When b_{new} is created, for each TAM $b \in B \cup b_{new}$, the width of b is updated such that test time of b is the closest to the lower bound T_{tar} on test time proposed in [14] for the cores currently scheduled (line 6-8). Consequently, if the total TAM width W exceeds W_{max}, the algorithm finds a TAM b_{min} such that $t(b_{min}, w(b_{min})-1)$ is minimized and the TAM width $w(b_{min})$ is updated. This process is repeated until W does not exceed W_{max} (line 12-18). In Step 3 (line 19-22), two solutions created in Step 1 and 2 are compared and the solution with smaller test time is selected.

Fig.6 shows an example of the *ASSIGN* procedure. In this example, it tries to assign core 4 for the current test schedule shown in Fig.6(a). Fig.6(b) and (c) show the results of Step 1 and 2, respectively. Consequently, core 4 is assigned to TAM 2 since the solution shown in Fig.6(b) has smaller test time.

5.2 Transfer

The procedure *TRANSFER* as outlined in Fig.7 tries to minimize the total test time T by finding a bottleneck TAM b_{max} and re-assigning a core in b_{max} to other TAM.

```
procedure TRANSFER()
1  repeat until no more improvement on T is possible{
2     Find a bottleneck TAM b_max;
3     T_max := t(b_max, w(b_max));
4     for all core s ∈ b_max{
5        for all TAM b ∈ B − {b_max} {
6           T_temp := ∞;
7           b_1 := b ∪ {s};  b_2 := b_max − {s};
8           w_b1 := w(b_1);  w_b2 := w(b_2);
9           repeat until no more improvement on T_temp is possible{
10             if(T_temp > max(t(b_1, w_b1 + 1), t(b_2, w_b2 − 1))){
11                T_temp := max(t(b_1, w_b1 + 1), t(b_2, w_b1 − 1));
12                w_b1 := w_b1 + 1;  w_b2 := w_b2 − 1;
13             }
14          }
15          if(T_temp < T_max){
16             T_max := T_temp;  b_min := b;  s_min := s;
17             w_b1,new := w_b1;  w_b2,new := w_b2;
18          }
19       }
20    }
21    if(T_max < T){
22       b_min := b_min ∪ {s_min};  b_max := b_max − {s_min};
23       w(b_min) := w_b1,new;  w(b_max) := w_b2,new;
24       T := T_max;
25    }
26 }
```

Figure 7. *TRANSFER* **procedure**

First, it finds a bottleneck TAM b_{max} and computes its test time T_{max} (line 2-3). Then, for each core $s \in b_{max}$, it computes the test time T_{temp} when s is removed from b_{max} and re-assigned to other TAM $b \in B - \{b_{max}\}$ (line 4-20). During this step, TAM width of b_{max} is also reduced from b_{max} and re-assigned to b until no more improvement on T_{temp} is possible (line 9-14). After that, it finds a core $s_{min} \in b_{max}$ and $b_{min} \in B - \{b_{max}\}$ such that test time T_{temp} is minimized when s_{min} is re-assigned to b_{min} (line 15-20). If the re-assignment gives smaller test time than T which is the current total test time, then it updates the solution. *TRANSFER* repeats the above reassignment until no more improvement on T is possible.

Fig.8 shows an example of the *TRANSFER* procedure. In this example, core 3 in the bottleneck TAM 1 is re-assigned to TAM 3 and a part of width of TAM 1 is also re-assigned to TAM 3.

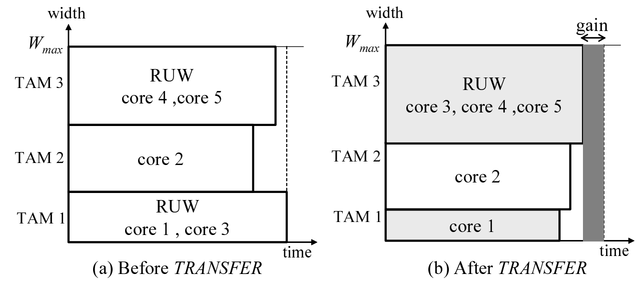


Figure 8. An example of *TRANSFER* **procedure.**

5.3 Merge

The procedure *MERGE* as outlined in Fig.9 tries to minimize the total test time T by finding the bottleneck TAM b_{max} and merging b_{max} with other TAM.

```
procedure MERGE()
1  repeat until no more improvement on T is possible{
2     Find a bottleneck TAM b_max;
3     T_max := t(b_max, w(b_max));
4     for all b ∈ B − {b_max} {
5        b_temp := b ∪ b_max;
6        w_temp := w(b) + w(b_max);
7        if(t(b_temp, w_temp) < T_max){
8           T_max := t(b_temp, w_temp);  b_min := b;
9        }
10    }
11    if(T > T_max){
12       w(b_min) := w(b_min) + w(b_max);
13       b_min := b_min ∪ b_max;
14       B := B − {b_max}
15       T := T_max;
16    }
17 }
```

Figure 9. *MERGE* **procedure**

First, it finds a bottleneck TAM b_{max} and computes its test time T_{max} (line 2-3). Then, for each core $b \in B - \{b_{max}\}$, it computes the test time when b_{max} is merged with b (line 4-10). After that, it finds a TAM $b_{min} \in B - \{b_{max}\}$ such that test time T_{max} is minimized when b_{max} is merged with b_{min} (line 15-20). If the merged TAM gives smaller test time than the current total test time T , then it updates the solution. *MERGE* repeats the above process until no more improvement on T is possible.

Fig.10 shows an example of the *MERGE* procedure. In this example, the bottleneck TAM 3 is merged with TAM 1.

6 Experimental Results

Table 1 compares the test time results obtained using the proposed method with those using the test scheduling methods proposed by Im et al. [5], Xia et al. [16] and Zou et al. [4]. We have chosen the methods presented in [5, 16, 4] for comparison since they have been applied to the ITC'02 benchmarks [21] and give the best results to the best of our knowledge. In 23 out of the 28 cases (7 TAM widths for

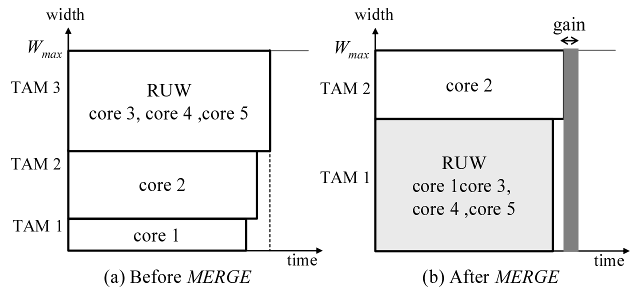


Figure 10. An example of *MERGE* procedure.

4 benchmarks) our method can find the solution with the smallest test time.

In Table 1, we also show the lower bound on test time proposed in [14] in order to discuss the potential advantage of the proposed reconfigurable union wrapper. We can observe that our method finds the solution with smaller test time than the lower bound in some cases. It should be noted that the lower bound of the test time proposed in [14] is computed assuming that every core has its own wrapper and tested independently of other cores. From these results, we can say that test time can be reduced further than the lower bound by using the proposed reconfigurable union wrapper where multiple cores have a single wrapper and are tested at the same time.

In terms of area overhead, the proposed reconfigurable union wrapper needs additional multiplexers for changing its configurations. Table 2 shows the area overhead computed by the following equation.

$$\text{overhead} = \frac{\sum \text{gates of additional multiplexers}}{\sum \text{gates of 1500 wrapper cells}} \times 100 \qquad (2)$$

Please note that the area overhead is only to the logic introduced by IEEE 1500 wrapper cells, not to the overall SoC. In other words, the area overhead shows the increase ratio for each wrapper cell. The number of wrapper cells depend only on the number of I/O cells of the cores and do not depend on the number of gates of the cores. Therefore, for complex cores with hundreds of thousands of gates, we believe that this overhead becomes insignificant.

7 Conclusion

In this paper we have proposed a reconfigurable union wrapper and a test scheduling algorithm using it. We have shown that by allowing multiple cores to have a single wrapper, test time can be reduced compared to the approaches where every core has its own wrapper. Moreover, our method finds the solution with smaller test time than lower bound proposed in [14] in some cases. This indicates the potential advantage of the proposed reconfigurable union wrapper for test time minimization.

Acknowledgments

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Table 1. Test time results (#cycles).

soc	approach	W_{max} 16	24	32	40	48	56	64
d695	our method	**40933**	**27456**	**20789**	16935	**14144**	**11978**	**10571**
	RA[5]	41442	27725	20948	**16852**	14182	12084	10628
	EA[16]	41553	27982	21014	16908	14240	11988	**10571**
	SA[4]	41604	28064	21161	16993	14182	12085	10723
	Lower Bound[14]	40951	27305	20482	16388	13695	11709	10247
p22810	our method	**420299**	**283391**	214434	169891	**143756**	**123721**	114579
	RA[5]	422345	284632	**214354**	173637	145781	126548	112620
	EA[16]	438783	292824	226545	**167792**	153260	133094	117638
	SA[4]	438619	289287	218855	175946	147944	126947	**109591**
	Lower Bound[14]	419466	279644	209734	167787	139823	119848	104868
p34392	our method	**924846**	625963	**544579**	**544579**	**544579**	**544579**	**544579**
	RA[5]	939855	**625543**	**544579**	**544579**	**544579**	**544579**	**544579**
	EA[16]	939855	641514	**544579**	**544579**	**544579**	**544579**	**544579**
	SA[4]	944768	628602	**544579**	**544579**	**544579**	**544579**	**544579**
	Lower Bound[14]	932790	621903	544579	544579	544579	544579	544579
p93791	our method	**1739032**	**1157239**	**868825**	**696522**	**580936**	**500200**	**438141**
	RA[5]	1742995	1157974	870059	701204	587907	500976	441786
	EA[16]	1754980	1171190	886038	706820	600986	501057	445748
	SA[4]	1754452	1169945	878493	718005	594575	509041	447974
	Lower Bound[14]	1746657	1164442	873334	698670	582227	499053	436673

Table 2. Area overhead (%) to IEEE wrapper cells.

soc	W_{max} 16	24	32	40	48	56	64
d695	33.84	28.82	32.98	27.65	21.26	22.55	29.62
p22810	23.16	35.41	25.47	31.47	32.68	37.53	38.82
p34392	5.84	3.75	2.43	2.43	2.43	2.43	2.43
p93791	109.42	114.38	96.90	128.88	159.88	136.33	86.46

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