Dual-Channel Multiplier for Piecewise-Polynomial Function Evaluation for Low-Power 3-D Graphics

Dina M. Ellaithy, Magdy A. El-Moursy, Amal Zaki, and Abdelhalim Zekry

Abstract—A dual-channel multiplier (DCM) for energy efficient second-order piecewise-polynomial function evaluation for 3-D graphics applications is presented in this paper. The performance of the evaluation process is highly dependent on the design of the multiplication and squaring structure. A novel hardware implementation for polynomial evaluation is presented. The proposed approach compensates the complex multipliers by using DCM which reduces the hardware complexity. The DCM scheme performs complex functions with power-efficient and area-efficient approach. The multiplier reduces the hardware computational effort in the piecewise polynomial approximation with uniform or nonuniform segmentation. For large operand input size, a multiplier adder converter and a dedicated radix-4 squaring unit are also proposed. These units achieve the least power consumption compared to previous approaches with large input word size. Comparison with general purpose multiplication has shown reduction in power, and delay by up to 36%, and 50%, respectively. The proposed technique exhibits up to 93% saving in power consumption compared to the current traditional schemes.

Index Terms—Dual channel multiplier (DCM), graphical processing unit (GPU), low power, multiplier adder converter (MAC), piecewise-polynomial evaluation, radix-4 squaring unit.

I. INTRODUCTION

G RAPHICAL processing units (GPUs) have a wide variety of applications in different fields such as compute art, engineering, science, medicine, entertainment, advertising, visualization, military, and graphical user interface. The growth in the GPUs applications has led to evolution in the hardware design to handle the needed increase in performance [1]. The general purpose GPUs are used to perform intensive computations on the same hardware covering large sector of applications. GPUs are mainly composed of several unified shaders. Each unified shader contains general purpose arithmetic unit and special function unit (SFU) that is used for computing special transcendental and algebraic functions not provided by the general function unit [1]. Functions such as sine, cosine, reciprocal, logarithm, exponential, and compound functions are computed by SFUs.

The main design constraint in the handheld devices is power dissipation. To extend the battery lifetime, low-power schemes are essential at all stages of design. SFUs handle the complex operations which are required for graphics applications [2]. Most of the power is consumed by those heavy arithmetic functions [3]. Three main algorithms have been adopted to evaluate various functions in hardware including direct lookup table algorithm, polynomial and rational algorithm, and table-based piecewise-polynomial (PWP) algorithm [2], [4]–[17]. Large lookup tables are used to store the approximated value of the function in the direct lookup algorithm. The direct lookup table method is appropriate for low accuracy function evaluation due to the exponential increase in area with the increase in the input size [2], [4]. There is tradeoff between the lookup table size and the hardware cost. Fast execution can be obtained with smaller hardware. Low lookup table size is exploited in the polynomial and rational algorithm but with excessive hardware complexity [5]. High-degree polynomial is used in this algorithm to approximate the function. As a result, large number of multiplications and additions leads to high power consumption and long execution times. As a compromise between the direct lookup table algorithm and the polynomial algorithm, the table-based PWP is employed [6]–[18]. PWP has low overhead and small table size for hardware computation which makes that algorithm the most attractive for function evaluation. The approximation coefficients of the polynomial are stored in small lookup table. PWP algorithm gives attractive tradeoff between the computation error and hardware cost. Several PWP evaluation techniques are proposed in literature.

The most hardware expensive part of the PWP evaluation architecture is the multiplier. Focusing on low power, dual-channel multiplier (DCM) with low-cost hardware for efficient GPU is proposed in this paper as shown in Fig. 1. Compared to the traditional PWP evaluation techniques, the proposed DCM technique has improved power-delay-product (PDP) with compact area. Furthermore, for large input operand size, the main advantage of logarithmic number system (LNS) is exploited. Multiplication is reduced to addition using logarithmic conversion in this paper. The multiplier-free architecture achieves low-power dissipation with small area and low conversion error. After a brief background of previous work in Section II, the DCM scheme is explained in Section III combined with the quadratic PWP evaluation. In Section IV,
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Fig. 1. Core structure of the DCM-GPU.

a novel architecture of the quadratic PWP evaluation with radix-4 squaring unit is presented. Hardware implementation and performance evaluation of the proposed techniques beside comparison with earlier work are presented in Section V. Finally, some conclusions are obtained in Section VI.

II. BACKGROUND

A good tradeoff between the table size and the hardware complexity is given by the PWP function evaluation approach. This approach has been widely used [6]–[18]. In PWP, the interval for the computed function is divided into subsegments. An appropriate low degree polynomial is employed to approximate the computed function in each subsegment. A small size lookup table is used to store the approximation coefficients for each subsegment. The divided subsegments of the PWP function evaluation can be uniformly or nonuniformly distributed. The address count for the approximation coefficients becomes simpler when the evaluation range is equally divided [6]–[10]. Also, uniform segmentation requires low-cost hardware implementation compared to nonuniform segmentation which requires more hardware for address remapping [11], [12]. However, nonuniform segmentation can be more efficient with functions that have high nonlinearity [13].

The hardware architecture of the quadratic PWP function evaluation is shown in Fig. 2. The input operand with n bits is split into two portions. The most significant bits m are used to select the approximation coefficients of each segment. The total number of segments equals 2^m. The function evaluation is approximated by the least significant bits (n − m) which are the second portion of the input operand bits. The approximation coefficients C_0, C_1, and C_2 are determined for each segment using mathematical algorithms. Minimax and Chebyshev are the two primary algorithms that are exploited to determine the approximation coefficients of the quadratic PWP evaluation. Approximations nearby the optimal least maximum approximation are determined by the Chebyshev algorithm [10], [18]. Unlike Chebyshev algorithm, the Minimax algorithm provides better approximation [6]–[9]. Therefore, the Minimax algorithm is the most popular approximation algorithm. Large number of researches adopted the Minimax algorithm for better approximation [6]–[9], [11], [12], [16], [17]. However, Chebyshev is used to speed up the coefficients generation process [10].

The approximation coefficients of the piecewise quadratic polynomial are chosen in order to optimize the overall performance at the expense of precision. Researches have been carried out to simplify the hardware realization of the PWP evaluation [6]–[10], [14], [16]. However, these techniques are only concentrated on the optimization of the coefficients, overlooking the cost of the hardware.

The function evaluation data path as shown in Fig. 2 contains two multipliers. Low-power and low-cost GPUs with enough processing speed are needed in handheld devices. This brings the need of embedding low power multiplier into the PWP. Most of the previous work focuses on speeding up the multiplication process in order to have high performance [6], [12], [16]. However, the requirements in GPU architecture for portable applications have dictated the need for low-power designs. This paper presents different design methods for low power and area efficient PWP function evaluation for low-power 3-D graphics applications. The serial bit schemes which handle one input bit in one clock cycle are well-known with their simplicity and low hardware cost. They are ideal for low-power applications. These characteristics of serial schemes have been exploited in the proposed DCM in this paper. In the Section III, the proposed DCM scheme for cutting down power consumption and area is described.

As the input size grows, the approximated coefficients as well as the hardware complexity and the power consumption are increased incredibly in the conventional schemes. Large input operand size parallel multiplier has quite complex structure. Therefore, for large operand size, the precision requirements have to be shrunk [10], [17], [18]. In this paper,
III. PROPOSED DUAL-CHANNEL MULTIPLIER SCHEME

It is the age of the handheld devices which directs all attempts to cut down the amount of power and to shrink the area as much as possible. Both of these requirements fit with the features of serial algorithm [28]–[34]. The straightforwardness of the key cell of serial multipliers makes its implementation perfect for VLSI. The hardware of such multipliers can simply be extended by repeating one cell. The complete structure of the quadratic PWP contains two main multipliers which are typically implemented by booth multipliers with a different radix [12], [16]. In Section III-A, low-power and low-area DCM architecture is proposed based on a serial algorithm.

A. DCM Architecture

The proposed DCM architecture is shown in Fig. 3. The DCM scheme has simple and uniform construction, x and y are the serial input and the parallel input, respectively, and p is the final product. Two serial input bits are processed each clock cycle. Even index numbers (x₂, x₄, x₆, x₈) are the serial input and the parallel input, respectively, and p is the final product. Two serial input bits are processed each clock cycle. Even index numbers (x₂, x₄, x₆, x₈) of the serial input are directed to the upper channel while, odd index numbers (x₁, x₃, x₅, x₇) are processed in the lower channel. Concurrently, the pairs are transferred and handled on the same clock phase. Starting with the first clock cycle, the partial products (PP₀) are generated

\[ PP₀ = \begin{cases} \ y₀x₀, & 1x₀ \\ y₀x₁ & \end{cases} \]

The partial product (y₀x₁) is added to the partial product (y₁x₀) and propagated to the output. Also, the partial product (y₀x₀) is directly propagated to the output. The least significant two bits of the product (P₀ and P₁) are generated simultaneously in the following equations:

\[ P₀ = y₀x₀ \]
\[ P₁ = y₀x₁ + y₁x₀. \]

In the next clock cycle, the serial input data have been moved one phase to the right after each delay element.

Note that the generated carry from addition remains to be added for the exact final result. The current partial products which are generated for the upper channel are (y₀x₂), (y₁x₂), (y₂x₀), and (y₃x₀) as the following equation. For the lower channel, the partial products (y₀x₃), (y₁x₃), and (y₂x₁) are produced as in the following equation:

\[ PP₁ = \begin{cases} \ y₀x₂, & y₁x₂, y₂x₀, y₃x₀ \\ y₀x₃, y₁x₁, y₂x₁ & \end{cases} \]

Starting from the partial product (y₀x₂) in the upper channel, two complete additions are carried out. The partial product (y₀x₂) is added to (y₁x₁) then is added to (y₂x₀) and the final result becomes (P₂). Three complete additions are performed starting from the partial product (y₀x₃) in the lower channel. The partial product (y₀x₃) is added to (y₁x₂) then is added to (y₂x₁) and at last is added to (y₃x₀).
The final result of the previous sum is \((P_3)\). The carry bits which are produced by the full adders are propagated forward and added to the next partial products. The multiplication process is repetitive

\[
P_2 = y_0x_2 + y_1x_1 + y_2x_0
\]
\[
P_3 = y_0x_3 + y_1x_2 + y_2x_1 + y_3x_0.
\]

The next partial products are generated by the same procedure. After eight clock cycles, the product of 8-bit by 8-bit multiplication is achieved. The partial product architecture for 8-bit by 8-bit multiplication is shown in Fig. 4. A 1-bit multiplication is performed by an AND gate and a 1-bit addition is performed by a full adder. Unlike the traditional twin serial/parallel multipliers [30]–[34], double throughput is achieved in DCM with minimum data latches. Hence, the multiplier requires \(n\) (number of input bits) clock cycles to complete the multiplication process. The DCM includes parallel-to-serial and serial-to-parallel converters to handle the input and to compute the parallel result, respectively. For large word size, additional cells can be added in the hardware implementation to perform the multiplication. Each cell includes two AND gates, two full adders, and 2-D flip flops. Compared to different previous architectures [30]–[34], DCM uses less hardware. Also, the proposed DCM includes only full adders and delay units. This makes the proposed architecture consumes significant lower power than traditional architecture with booth multiplier. The 8-bit and 16-bit DCM are implemented in 90-nm CMOS process in Section V to demonstrate the efficiency of the architecture.

B. DCM With Quadratic Piecewise Polynomial Function Evaluation

In this paper, traditional parallel multipliers are replaced with DCM scheme in the PWP function evaluation architecture as shown in Fig. 5. The control unit is responsible for determining the start and the end of the multiplication process and also for managing the function evaluation. The hardware architecture of the quadratic PWP evaluation is simplified using DCM. In the performance evaluation Section V, great savings in power and area are achieved using DCM.

As the input operand size increases, the size of the hardware of the quadratic PWP function evaluation grows. A multiplier adder converter (MAC) is proposed in Section IV to overcome the increase in hardware cost for large operand input size.

IV. PROPOSED MULTIPLIER–ADDER–CONVERTER QUADRATIC PWP FUNCTION EVALUATION

In order to reduce the hardware cost, truncated multipliers have been utilized to decrease the number of formed partial products. The least significant lines of the partial products are not generated. Hence, the number of the utilized adders and logic cells are reduced. Consequently, savings in the overall area and power consumption using the truncated multipliers are achieved. However, truncated multipliers complicate the error analysis and decrease the accuracy. It is useful to reduce the hardware implementation by replacing the multiplication with addition. Consequently, faster and more power efficient systems are acquired. However, additions and subtractions become more complex operations in LNS. The main limitation of LNS is that not all basic operations can be performed within the logarithmic field. Thus, PWP approximations are utilized for the nonlinear operations in the logarithmic domain [35]–[38]. On the other hand, tasks are switched and logarithmic domain can be involved in the PWP function evaluation architecture. LNS is adopted in MAC and is used in the evaluation of quadratic PWP structure design.

The proposed scheme is designed and simulated. Power saving of MAC is achieved by completely suppressing multiplication process. The structure of MAC is shown in Fig. 6. The key blocks of MAC are the logarithmic and antilogarithmic converters. The inputs go directly to the logarithmic converters then the addition is carried out. The obtained result is converted from the logarithmic domain using antilogarithmic converter. Large reductions in power consumption and area are obtained as a result of decreasing the process degree from multiplication to addition.

A. Proposed MAC

The MAC is composed of two logarithmic converters, an adder, and an antilogarithmic converter as shown in Fig. 6. The implementation of the logarithmic and antilogarithmic converters controls the MAC performance. Several works have been proposed to optimize the performance of the transformation [19]–[23]. To take full advantage of LNS, logarithmic and antilogarithmic converters are implemented using the double
logarithmic technique [19]. Lower error ranges with saving in power and area are provided by the proposed transformation. The converters are employed in the MAC implementation. The addition is implemented using the basic carry propagate adder (CPA) for efficient power saving. For speeding up the addition, carry look ahead adder can be used. The architecture of the proposed quadratic PWP function evaluation is presented in Section IV-B.

B. Quadratic PWP Function Evaluation With MAC

A novel design of second-degree PWP function evaluation is provided in this section. The traditional multiplier technique is replaced with the multiplier-free MAC scheme in the PWP approximation architecture as shown in Fig. 7. For large operand input size, MAC directly handles the limitations of hardware cost unlike the conventional second-degree PWP function evaluation which requires high implementation cost.

In addition, a radix-4 squarer is proposed. As shown in the PWP function evaluation structure, the squarer is located in the critical path. Therefore, to speed up the overall performance, the proposed radix-4 squarer can be realized by operating on each two bits simultaneously. The number of partial products is reduced to half. Instead of multiplying by 0 or 1, multiplying by 0, +1, +2, or +3 is performed in radix-4. The proposed squarer exhibits higher speed than the traditional squarer that is utilized in PWP [39]. Hardware implementation and performance results for the proposed schemes are presented and compared with the existing techniques in Section V.

V. HARDWARE IMPLEMENTATION AND PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

The proposed and all prior schemes are implemented in VHDL. Then the implementation is compiled using Synopsys Design Compiler 90-nm CMOS technology, 1-V supply voltage standard cell library, operating at 200 MHz.

A. Different Multipliers Implementation

The implementation of the most popular five types of multipliers is compared with the proposed DCM approach. Different numbers of bits are used in the comparison. The results of 8-bits and 16-bits are reported in Tables I and II, respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheme</th>
<th>Power (mW)</th>
<th>Area (μm²)</th>
<th>Delay (ns)</th>
<th>Power-Delay Product (pJ)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Array Multiplier</td>
<td>0.27089</td>
<td>1456.67</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>0.64743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Booth radix-4 Multiplier</td>
<td>0.28537</td>
<td>1336.72</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>0.64208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Booth radix-8 Multiplier</td>
<td>0.30867</td>
<td>1564.08</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>0.55561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallace Multiplier</td>
<td>0.28560</td>
<td>1527.23</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>0.55692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serial Multiplier</td>
<td>0.01590</td>
<td>646.80</td>
<td>9.92(0.62*16)</td>
<td>0.15773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposed DCM</td>
<td>0.01979</td>
<td>838.88</td>
<td>4.96(0.62*8)</td>
<td>0.09816</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 38% reduction in PDP is achieved compared to serial multipliers. From Tables I and II, the implementation cost (power, area, delay) for parallel multipliers is considerably increased as the input size $N$ is doubled from 8 bit to 16 bit. Less power and area characterize DCM. Compared to the fully parallel multipliers, DCM provides cutting down in area and power by up to
37% and 93%, respectively. On the other hand, one clock cycle is required for parallel multipliers to complete multiplication while eight clock cycles are required for the DCM. However, the PDP is improved by at least 80% in the proposed DCM. DCM is optimum for low-energy applications such as hand-held devices applications that require low power consumption. Thus, DCM is efficient in designing PWP function evaluation since it provides simple and energy efficient design structure.

It can be observed that for radix-8 booth multiplier, instead of multiplying by 0 or 1, multiplying by 0, ±1, ±2, ±3, or ±4 are performed. Hence, extra hardware is needed to handle the generation of ±3∗Multiplicand which leads to large power consumption and area, although the reduction in partial products provides high-speed output. All additions for the radix-4 and radix-8 booth multipliers use Wallace adder tree to compress the partial products to compute the final results. In contrast, serial multiplier has a different performance due to its different structures. Huge reduction in power and area are achieved by the serial multiplier while completely sacrificing speed. The proposed DCM approach exhibits better tradeoff between area, power, and delay. Hence, compared to conventional different types of multipliers, the proposed DCM exhibits a cutting in energy requirements by at least 70%. The proposed DCM is used in the quadratic PWP architecture for high reduction in energy. The hardware implementation results of the second-degree PWP with DCM are presented in Section V-B with comparison with the conventional techniques.

### B. Quadratic PWP With DCM Implementation

Quadratic PWP evaluation for the reciprocal and the \(1/(1 + x)\) functions are created. Different algorithms for obtaining and optimizing the approximation coefficients have been proposed [6]–[16]. For the \(1/(1+x)\) function, the approximation coefficients of Qoubt et al. [12] and Pineiro et al. [16] are utilized to compare different interpolator structures. Uniform segmentation algorithm Pineiro et al. [16] uses radix-4 booth multiplier in the structure of the interpolator. For high speed, Qoubt et al. [12] have proposed a high radix booth multiplier which considerably increases the consumed power. By switching the standard arithmetic units of PWP function evaluation to the proposed DCM scheme, significant saving in hardware size is achieved and performance is improved.

Synopsys Design Compiler using 90-nm CMOS technology, 1-V supply voltage standard cell library is used to synthesis the proposed quadratic PWP approximation design and all previous schemes. The implementation results for the various designs that evaluate the \(1/(1 + x)\) function are shown in Table III. Also, a comparison between the DCM structure and the optimized quadratic interpolator Sadeghian et al. [10] is performed using the same approximation coefficients for the \(1/x\) function. The results are reported in Table IV.

When the DCM scheme is used in the second-degree interpolator for function evaluation, great reductions in hardware, power consumption, and area are achieved. For the \(1/(1 + x)\) function, the DCM achieves up to 85%, 46%, and 63% savings in power, area, and energy, respectively, compared to Pineiro et al. [16]. Comparison with Qoubt et al. [12]...
exhibits a reduction by at least 86%, 50%, and 62% in power consumption, area, and PDP, respectively. Furthermore, 91% less power, 70% less area, and 37% less energy are achieved by DCM compared to Masoud et al. [10] for the function \(1/x\).

C. Proposed MAC Associated With Quadratic PWP Implementation

The 32-bit MAC is also implemented and synthesized using Synopsys Design Compiler based on 90-nm CMOS technology, 1-V supply voltage standard cell library, at 100 MHz. From Fig. 6, multiplication is replaced with addition in logarithmic field. The addition is implemented using CPA to obtain the summing result that directly goes into the antilogarithmic converter. The output from the antilogarithmic converter is the multiplication result. The 9-region logarithmic converter with 8-region antilogarithmic converter is employed to give a simple hardware implementation [19]. Correspondingly, 32-bit radix-4 and radix-8 booth multipliers are implemented using the same technology for comparison. The hardware performance results are summarized in Table V. Area, power, delay, and PDP are listed in columns 2–5, respectively. From the results in Table V, a significant drop in power and delay is achieved by the proposed MAC which would be valuable for implementing PWP function evaluation with large input operand size. Moreover, a radix-4 squarer is implemented and compared to the conventional squarer that is usually utilized in PWP evaluation [39]. The comparison is presented in Table VI. Speeding up the squarer is the result of reducing the number of partial products using radix-4 algorithm. Hardware resources are decreased while the implementation is improved according to the power and delay values in Table VII. Savings by up to 36% in power, 44% in delay, and 64% in energy are achieved with MAC compared to booth radix-8 multiplier in Table V. Quadratic PWP function evaluation with MAC achieves reduction in power, delay, and energy by at least 36%, 40%, and 61% compared to the traditional architecture with radix-4 booth multiplier, respectively, with an increase in the approximation error by less than 0.04%.

VI. Conclusion

The implementation of PWP evaluation in the SFU of the GPUs can be highly improved by boosting the performance of multiplication and squaring unit which are the basic components in the evaluation process. Exploiting the serial/parallel algorithm, an energy efficient DCM is proposed in this paper. Comparisons with the well-known multiplication schemes have demonstrated savings in area, power, and energy by at least 46%, 85%, and 63%, respectively. Moreover, for large operand input size, MAC is utilized to replace the traditional parallel multiplier scheme. MAC is proposed to perform the computation of the overall approximated polynomial without the need for multiplication in SFUs. The proposed scheme can implement different functions using simple hardware design. Also, high-speed dedicated squaring unit is proposed. It can be readily applied to any number of bits. PWP function evaluation by MAC is implemented using 90-nm CMOS technology. Eliminating the need of multiplication in the evaluation process leads to reduction in power by 36%, and delay by 40%. These features make the proposed designs more suitable for GPU applications. Complex designs generally incur long delay in PWP function evaluation, so a simple structure is a good choice. The overall energy of the proposed PWP function evaluation is reduced by at least 61% compared to previous work.
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Prof. Zekry got several prizes for his outstanding research and teaching performance.