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Minimizing the total machine workload for the wafer probing scheduling problem

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Minimizing **the total machine workload for the wafer probing scheduling problem**

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The Wafer Probing Scheduling Problem (WPSP) is a practical generalization of the parallel-machine scheduling problem, which has many real-world applications, particularly, in the Integrated Circuit (IC) manufacturing industry. In the wafer probing factories, the jobs are clustered by their product types, which must be processed on groups of identical parallel machines and be completed before the due dates. The job processing time depends on the product type, and the machine setup time is sequentially dependent on the orders of jobs processed. Since the wafer probing scheduling problem involves constraints on job clusters, jobcluster dependent processing time, due dates, machine capacity, and sequentially dependent setup time, it is more difficult to solve than the classical parallel-machine scheduling problem. In this paper, we consider the WPSP and formulate the WPSP as an integer programming problem to minimize the total machine workload. We demonstrate the applicability of the integer programming model by solving a real-world example taken from a wafer probing shop floor in an IC manufacturing factory.

1. Introduction

Classical parallel-machine scheduling problems have been categorized (Cheng and Sin, 1990) into three types according to the job processing time characteristics, including the identical parallel-machine scheduling problem (Gabrel, 1995; Suer *et al.,* 1997), the uniform parallelmachine scheduling problem (Guinet, 1991; Randhawa and Kuo, 1997), and the unrelated parallel-machine scheduling problem (Piersma and Dijk, 1996; Herrmann *et al.,* 1997). For the identical parallel-machine scheduling problem, each job requires only a single operation, which may be processed on any of the parallel machines with an identical processing time. For the uniform parallel-machine scheduling problem, the job processing times are determined by the efficiencies of the machines and the job processing times are all the same on each single machine. For the unrelated parallel-machine scheduling problem, which is a generalization of the uniform parallel-machine scheduling problem, the efficiency of the machine depends on the type of jobs processed and the processing times of different jobs on the same machine may not be equal.

The Wafer Probing Scheduling Problem (WPSP) is a variation of the parallel-machine scheduling problem considered by Ovacik and Uzsoy (1995, 1996) and Centeno and Armacost (1997), which has many realworld applications, particularly, in the Integrated Circuit (lC) manufacturing industry. In a wafer probing factory, the jobs are clustered by their product types, which must be processed on identical parallel machines and be completed before the due dates. Further, the job processing time may vary, depending on the product type (jobcluster) of the job processed on. Setup times for two consecutive jobs of different product types (job clusters) on the same machine are sequentially dependent. Since the wafer probing scheduling problem involves constraints on job clusters, job-cluster dependent processing time, due dates, machine capacity, and sequentially dependent setup time, it is more difficult to solve than the classical parallel-machine scheduling problem.

Parker *et al.* (1977) considered a simple version of the WPSP with each job-cluster containing only one job, and provided a mathematical model. Parker *et al.* (1977) also presented a heuristic algorithm to solve the problem approximately. Unfortunately, their model does not consider the due date restriction that is essential and critical in practical situations. **In** fact, their formulation only includes the processing time without considering the setup time (changeover cost) in the machine capacity constraints, which may not reflect the real situations accura tely.

Ovacik and Uzsoy (1996) presented another version of the WPSP with a different objective function. Ovacik and Uzsoy (1996) provided a class of heuristic procedures to

^{&#}x27;Corresponding author

subject to

$$
\sum_{k=1}^{K} x_{ijk} = 1, \quad \text{for all } i, j,
$$
 (1)

$$
x_{0kk} = 1, \quad \text{for all } k,\tag{2}
$$

(3)

(II)

$$
\sum_{i=0}^{l} \sum_{j=1}^{J_i} x_{ijk} n_{ij} p_i + \sum_{i=0}^{l} \sum_{j=1}^{J_i} \left(\sum_{i'=0}^{l} \sum_{j'=1}^{J_{i'}} z_{iji'j'k} s_{ii'} \right) \leq W,
$$

for all k ,

$$
(y_{ij}r_{jk} + y_{i'j'ijk}) - Q(x_{ijk} + x_{i'j'k} - 2) \ge 1,
$$

for all $i, j, k,$ (4)

$$
(y_{ij}r_{jk} + y_{i'j'ijk}) + Q(x_{ijk} + x_{i'jk} - 2) \le 1,
$$

for all $i, j, k,$ (5)

$$
(y_{ijl'j'k} + y_{i'j'ijk}) - Q(x_{ijk} + x_{i'j'k}) \le 0,
$$

for all $i, j, k,$ (6)

$$
(y_{ijl'j'k} + y_{l'j'ijk}) - Q(x_{l'j'k} - x_{ijk} + 1) \le 0,
$$

for all $i, j, k,$ (7)

$$
(y_{ij\ell'jk} + y_{i'j'ijk}) - Q(x_{ijk} + x_{i'jk} + 1) \le 0,
$$

for all $i, j, k,$ (8)

 $y_{iji'j'k} \ge z_{iji'j'k}$ for all i, j, k , (9)

$$
\sum_{i=0}^{I} \sum_{j=1}^{J_i} x_{ijk} - \sum_{r_{ij} \neq r_{j'j}} z_{ij^{i'}j'k} = 1, \text{ for all } k, \qquad (10)
$$

$$
t_{ijk} + n_{ij}p_i + s_{ii'} - t_{i'jk} + Q(y_{iji'jk} - 1) \le 0,
$$

for all i, j, k ,

$$
t_{ijk} + n_{ij}p_i + s_{ii'} - t_{i'j'k} - Q(y_{iji'j'k} + z_{iji'j'k} - 2) \ge 0,
$$

for all i, j, k , (12)

 $y_{ij}y_{jk} + z_{ij}y_{jk} - Q(y_{ij}y_{jk} + z_{ij}y_{jk} - 2)$

$$
-Q(y_{ijj'jk} - z_{ijj'jk} - 1) \ge 2, \quad \text{for all } i, j, k, \qquad (13)
$$

$$
t_{ijk} \ge b_{ij}x_{ijk}, \quad \text{for all } i, j, k,
$$
 (14)

$$
t_{ijk} \le e_{ij} x_{ijk}, \quad \text{for all } i, j, k,
$$
 (15)

$$
x_{ijk} \in \{0, 1\}, \quad \text{for all } i, j, k,
$$
 (16)

$$
y_{ij\ell j'k} \in \{0, 1\}, \quad \text{for all } i, j, k,
$$
 (17)

$$
z_{ijj'j'k} \in \{0, 1\}, \quad \text{for all } i, j, k. \tag{18}
$$

The objective function seeks to minimize the sum of the total processing time $\sum_{i=0}^{I} \sum_{j=1}^{J_i} x_{ijk} n_{ij} p_i$ and the total setup time $\sum_{i=0}^{I} \sum_{j=1}^{J_i} (\sum_{i'=0}^{I} \sum_{j'=1}^{J_{i'}} z_{ij'j'k} s_{ii'})$ over the K machines. The constraints in $\overline{(1)}$ guarantee that job r_{ij} is processed by one machine exactly once. The constraints in (2) guarantee that only one pseudo-job r_{0j} is scheduled

on a machine. The constraints in (3) state that each machine workload does not exceed the machine capacity. The constraints in (4) and (5) ensure that one job should precede another $(y_{ij}y_{ik} + y_{ij}y_{ijk} = 1)$ if two jobs are scheduled on the same machine $(x_{ijk} + x_{i'jk} - 2 = 0)$. The number Q is a constant, which is chosen to be sufficiently large so that the constraints in (4) and (5) are satisfied for $x_{ijk} + x_{i'j'k} - 2 < 0$. The constraints in (6) ensure that the precedence variables $y_{ij}y_{ik}$ and $y_{ij}y_{ijk}$ should be set to zero $(y_{ij}y_{jk} + y_{i'j'ijk} \leq 0)$ if any two jobs r_{ij} and $r_{i'j'}$ are not scheduled on the machine m_k $(x_{ijk} + x_{i'j'k} = 0)$. The constraints in (7) and (8) ensure that the precedence variables $y_{ij}y_{ik}$ and $y_{i'j'ijk}$ should be set to zero $(y_{ij'jk} + y_{i'j'ijk} \le 0)$ if any two jobs r_{ij} and $r_{i'j'}$ are not scheduled on the machine m_k . The constraints in (7) indicates the case that job r_{ij} is scheduled on machine m_k and the job $r_{i'j'}$ is scheduled on another machine $(x_{i'j'k} - x_{ijk} + 1 = 0)$ and the constraints in (8) indicates the case that job $r_{i'j'}$ is scheduled on machine m_k and the job r_{ij} is scheduled on another machine $(x_{ijk} - x_{i'j'k} + 1 = 0).$

The constraints in (9) ensure that job *rij* could precede job $r_{i'j'}$ directly $(z_{i'j'k'} = 1)$ only when $y_{i'j'j'k} = 1$ and job r_{ij} could not precede job $r_{i'j'}$ directly $(z_{iji'j'k} = 0)$ if job r_{ij} is scheduled after job $r_{i'j'}$ ($y_{iji'j'k} = 0$). The constraints in (10) state that there should exist $n-1$ direct-precedence variables, which are set to one, on the schedule with n jobs. The constraints in (II) ensure the satisfaction of the inequality $t_{ijk} + n_{ij}p_i + s_{ji'} \leq t_{i'j'k}$, if the jobs r_{ij} preceding job $r_{i'j'}$ ($y_{i'j'k} - 1 = 0$). The number Q is a constant, which is chosen to be sufficiently large so that the constraints in (II) are satisfied when *Yiji'j'k* is equal to zero or one. For example, we can choose $Q = \sum_{i=1}^{l} \sum_{j=1}^{J_i} (n_{ij}p_i +$ $\max_{i'} {s_{ii'}}$). The constraints in (12) ensure the satisfaction of the inequality $t_{ijk} + n_{ij}p_i + s_{ii'} \ge t_{i'j'k}$ if the jobs r_{ij} preceding job $r_{i'j'}$ directly $(y_{iji'j'k} + z_{ij'j'k} - 2 = 0)$. Therefore, the constraints in (II) and (12) ensure that $t_{ijk} + n_{ij}p_i + s_{ji'} = t_{i'j'k}$ if job r_{ij} precedes job $r_{i'j'}$ directly $(y_{iji'jk} = 1$ and $z_{iji'jk} = 1$). The constraints in (13) state: when the job r_{ii} proceeds job $r_{ii'}$ but not consecutively $(y_{ij}y_{jk} = 1$ and $z_{ij}y_{jk} = 0$, then there must exist another job $r_{i''j''}$ scheduled after job r_{ij} directly $(y_{iji''j''k} = 1$ and $z_{ij} = 1$) and ensuring the satisfaction of the inequality $y_{ij}y_{ij} + z_{ij}y_{jk} \ge 2$. The constraints in (14) and (15) state that the starting processing time t_{ij} for each job r_{ij} scheduled on machine m_k ($x_{ijk} = 1$) should not be less than the earliest starting processing time *bij* and not be greater than the latest starting processing time *eij'*

For a parallel-machine problem with I job clusters and K machines, containing a total of $N_I = J_0 + J_1 +$ $J_2 + \cdots + J_l$ jobs, the integer programming model contains $N_I K$ variables of x_{ijk} , $N_I K$ variables of t_{ijk} , $N_I K$ $(N_l - 1)$ variables of $y_{ijl'jk}$, and $N_lK(N_l - 1)$ variables of z_{ij} _{*iji'*/k} (including z_{ij} ^{*u*}/ⁿ_k). Further, the constraint set in (1) contains N_l equations, the constraint set in (2) contains K equations, the constraint sets in (3) and (10) each contains K equations, constraint sets in $(4) \sim (8)$ each contains $N_I K(N_I - 1)/2$ equations, the constraint sets in (9), (11), and (12) each contains $N_I K (N_I - 1)$ equations, the constraints in (13) contains $N_I K (N_I - 1)(N_I - 2)$ equations, and the constraint sets in (14) and (15) each contains $N_I K$ equations. Thus, the total number of variables is $2N_i²K$, and the total number of equations is $N_i^3K + (5/2)N_i^2K - (3/2)N_iK + N_i + 3K$.

4. Solutions for the WPSP

To solve the integer programming problem for the WPSP example described in Section 2, we write a C_{++} programming code to generate the constraints and variables of the model. For the WPSP example with two machines, three job clusters, and seven jobs, the model contains 324 variables and 1851 equations. We run the integer programming model using the IP software CPLEX 4.0 on a Pentium II 266 MHz PC. Table 3 displays the output solution of the integer programming model.

The variables $X011 = 1$, $X111 = 1$, $X311 = 1$, and $X321 = 1$ indicate that the jobs r_{01} , r_{11} , r_{31} , and r_{32} are scheduled on machine m_1 . The variables Z01321 = 1, $Z32311 = 1$, and $Z31111 = 1$ imply that job r_{01} precedes job *r32* directly, job *r32* precedes job *r31* directly, and job r_{31} precedes job r_{11} directly. Thus, there are two product type changes, one from R_0 (r_{01}) to R_3 (r_{32}) and the other one from R_3 (r_{31}) to R_1 (r_{11}) . The starting processing times (t_{ijk}) for the jobs on machine m_1 are shown in Table 4.

The variables $X022 = 1$, $X122 = 1$, $X212 = 1$, $X222 = 1$, and $X232 = 1$ indicate that jobs r_{02} , r_{12} , r_{21} , r_{22} , and r_{23} are scheduled on machine m_2 . The variables $Z02122 = 1$, $Z12232 = 1$, $Z23222 = 1$, and $Z22212 = 1$ 1 imply that job r_{02} precedes job r_{12} directly, job r_{12} precedes job r_{23} directly, job r_{23} precedes job r_{22} directly, and job r_{22} precedes job r_{21} directly. Thus, there are two product type changes, one from R_0 (r_{02}) to R_1 (r_{12}) and the other one from R_1 (r_{12}) to R_2 (r_{23}) . The starting processing times *(tijk)* for the jobs on machine *mz* are shown in Table 5. We note that the integer programming solution of the problem is indeed identical to that depicted in Section 2.

5. A real-world application

To demonstrate the applicability of the integer programming model in real situations, we consider the following example taken from a wafer probing shop-floor in an IC manufacturing factory located in the Science-based

Table 3. The integer programming solution (optimal) for the WPSP example in Section 2 solved by CPLEX 4.0

The objective value and the solution time Integer optimal solution: Objective = $1.4300000000 + 002$ Solution time = 152.36 seconds Iterations = 292.758 Nodes = 29.417						
The statistics of the model						
Constraints: Variables: Constraint nonzeros: Objective nonzeros: RHS nonzeros:	1851 324 7108 106 1599		[Less: 452, Greater: 1386, Equal: 13] [Nneg: 18, Binary: 306]			
The values for all variables Name	Value	Name	Value	Name	Value	
X011	1.000 000	Z12232	1.000 000	Y12222	1.000 000	
X111	1.000 000	Z22212	1.000 000	Y12232	1.000 000	
X311	1.000 000	Z23222	1.000 000	Y22212	1.000 000	
X321	1.000 000	Y01111	1.000 000	Y23212	1.000 000	
Z01321	1.000 000	Y01311	1.000 000	Y23222	1.000 000	
Z31111	1.000 000	Y01321	1.000 000	Y32311	1.000 000	
Z32311	1.000 000	Y02122	1.000 000	T111	33.000 000	
X022	1.000 000	Y02212	1.000 000	T ₃₁₁	20.000 000	
X122	1.000 000	Y02222	1.000 000	T321	10.000 000	
X212	1.000 000	Y02232	1.000 000	T ₁₂₂	10.000 000	
X222	1.000 000	Y31111	1.000 000	T212	69.000 000	
X232	1.000 000	Y32111	1.000 000	T ₂₂₂	54.000 000	
Z02122	1.000 000	Y12212	1.000 000	T ₂₃₂	39.000 000	

Table 4. The starting times for the jobs on machine m_1

	Starting time			
I_{011}	0			
1321	$10 (t_{321} = t_{011} + s_{03})$			
-4311	20 $(t_{311} = t_{321} + n_{32}p_3)$			
I_{111}	33 $(t_{111} = t_{311} + n_{31}p_3 + s_{31})$			

Table 5. The starting times for the jobs on machine *m;*

Industrial Park at Hsinchu, Taiwan. For the case we investigated, there arc six test codes (product type) being processed on three identical testers arranged in parallel with each tester connected to the same type of prober, at which the wafer lot is positioned and tested, as shown in Fig. 4. We note that the test codes are the program executed in the tester when the wafer is probed with a specific probe card fixed on the prober.

This real example contains 10 wafer lots with due dates and processing times, which should be tested under certain levels of temperature with six test codes and five probe cards, as shown in Table 6. The product type of a wafer lot is determined by the code used during the testing operations. Thus, there are six product types and 10 jobs in this example. These jobs are to be completed on the three parallel testers within 3 days. Therefore, the machine capacity is set to 4320 minutes. We have set the "minute" as the unit of the processing time, setup time, due date, machine workload, and machine capacity in our investigation.

Before the testing of a job, setup operations including probe card change and temperature setting are needed.

The time required to change a probe card can be regarded as a fixed constant. In the case where the previous job is tested under a high temperature, we would have to wait for the temperature to fall. On the other hand, if the next job is to be tested at high temperature whilst the current one is a room temperature test then we would have to wait for the temperature to increase. Thus, the setup time required for switching one product type to another depends on the probe card and the testing temperature as is shown in Table 7. The time to change a probe card is 40 minutes in this case. The time to increase the temperature to the required level is 30 minutes and the time to decrease the temperature is 40 minutes.

Obtaining the optimal solution, as shown in Fig. 5, with a total load of 9486 for the real example requires roughly 5.42 hours, (see Table A I in the Appendix). However, in solving the integer programming problem, we implement a depth-first search strategy by choosing the most recently created node, incorporating a strong branching rule causing variable selection based on partially solving a number of sub-problems with tentative branches to find the most promising branch. The depth-first search strategy looks for a quick good solution by following and searching good lower bounds right to the bottom of the tree. The implementation thus allows us to set various limits on the number of memory nodes so that feasible solutions may be obtained efficiently within reasonable amount of computer time. Table 8 shows various memory node limits, the corresponding feasible solutions, run times, and solution quality in terms of the deviation from the optimality. Tables A2-A4 (see Appendix) show the output solutions for the real example with different memory node limits. The feasible solutions obtained are remarkably good.

6. **Conclusion**

In this paper, we considered the Wafer Probing Scheduling Problem (WPSP), a variation of the parallel-machine scheduling problem, which has many real-world applica-

Fig. 4. The relationships between the six test codes, five probe cards, three probers and testers.

Fig. S. The optimal schedule for the application example.

Table 6. The product types, probe card, testing temperatures, processing times, and due dates for the 10 jobs in the real example

Job $I.D.$	Product type	Probe card	Testing temperature	Processing time	Due date
			High	1200	4320
			High	1200	4320
			Room	262	1440
Λ			Room	277	1440
			Room	277	1440
o			Room	2215	4320
			Room	2215	4320
			High	300	4320
			High	585	1440
10			High	585	4320

Table 7. Setup times required for switching one product type to another in the real example

Tο								
From								
		70	40	40	40	70	70	
	80		80	80	80	110	110	
	40				40	70	70	
	40				40	70	70	
	40	70	40	40		70	70	
	80	110	80	80	80		110	
	80	110	80	80	80	110		

Table 8. The run times (in minutes), solutions, and solution quality for the real example with various node limits

tions. The WPSP involves constraints on job clusters, jobcluster dependent processing time, due dates, machine capacity, and a sequentially dependent setup time, which is more difficult to solve then the classical parallel-machine scheduling problem. We formulated the WPSP as an integer programming model to minimize the total machine workload. We demonstrated the applicability of the integer programming model by solving a real-world example taken from a wafer probing shop-floor in an IC manufacturing factory using the powerful software CPLEX 4.0. We also implemented the depth-first search strategy with strong branching rules to effectively solve the WPSP example investigated, to obtain the desired solution within a reasonable amount of computation time.

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Appendix

Table AI. The integer programming solution (optimal) for the application example solved by CPLEX 4.0

The objective value and the solution time

The objective value and the solution time

All other variables in the range 1-1014 are zero

The objective value and the solution time

All other variables in the range 1–1014 are zero

Table A4. A feasible solution for the application example solved by CPLEX 4.0 with the node limit set to I E04

The objective value and the solution lime

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