A full-compliance MP3 decoder using DSP

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Abstract

This paper describes the techniques used in the non-linear dequantization process of MP3 (MPEG audio, Layer III) decoding, with Motorola Star*Core DSP (MSC8101). The method introduced here is more than five times faster than calling traditional mathematics library, yet achieves a high level of accuracy that conforms to the ISO/IEC 13818-4 standard [2]. Memory consumption of this method is considerably low and is very suitable for DSP implementation of the MP3 decoder in real-time.

1.0 Introduction

MPEG-1 (Moving Pictures Experts Group) is a standard for compressing digital video and audio, at a combined bit-rate of 1.5Mbit/sec. The standard is divided into several parts and the third part (11172-3) specifies the standard for audio compression [1]. The audio compression standard consists of three layers with different complexity and performance, named as Layer I, II and III. The Layer III standard (usually referred to as "MP3"), is the most complex among the three layers. Like Layer I & II, layer III makes use of "Sub-band Synthesis" for transforming audio signal. On top of it, it introduces Huffman coding to reduce the bit-rate of audio frames and also use nonlinear quantization to improve the sound quality. DSP implementation of MP3 player has been wildly adopted in applications such as exchanging music in internet, hand-held music players, PDAs, Hi-Fi and transportation audio systems nowadays. In order to implement the MP3 in real-time running simultanously with other applications, a powerful DSP has to be used.

The StarCore 140 in Slide 4 is a low cost, low power, high performance, high flexibility programmable general purpose fixed-point DSP core with the 3rd generation DSP Archnitecture that efficiently deploys a novel Variable Length Execution Set (VLES) execution model utilizing maximum parallelism by allowing multiple Data and Address ALUs to execute multiple operations in a single clock cycle. A Data Arithmetic Logic Unit (DALU) performs arithmetic and logical operations on data operands in the Star*Core 140 core. The Star*Core 140 has 4 Arithmetic & Logic units in the DALU. Four instances of a single-cycle Multiplier-Accumulator (MAC) Unit

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with automatic saturation capability and four instances of a Bit Field Unit (BFU), each with a 40-bit barrel shifter capable of executing a variety of single-bit and multi-bit logic and shift operations.

2.0 MP3 Decoding Algorithm

Slide 2 shows the outline of MP3 decoding process. After seeking the "Sync Word" (which identifies the start of frame) and reading the audio frame header, The decoder should first fetches in the "Side Information", which contain information about audio block type, Huffman tables, gain and scale factors. After reading the scale factors of different scale-factor-bands, the decoder decodes the frequency samples using the Huffman decoding scheme. Then, the frequency samples are dequantized. Unlike Layer I & II, the dequanzition process uses non-linear scale. After that, the samples of both channels undergoes stereo processing (both Middle-Side-Stereo & Intensity-Stereo), Antialiasing. And after the IMDCT process, Sub-band Synthesis process is applied to the sub-band samples to yield the PCM audio signal.

The most computational intensive parts are the "Sub-band Synthesis", "IMDCT", "Dequantization" and the "Huffman Decoding". Fast algorithms for "Sub-band Synthesis" and "IMDCT" has been discussed in many papers [3]. In this paper, fast method for sample dequantization will be presented.

3.0 Sample Dequantization

The dequantization process of MP3 decoding can be written as:

$$xr_i = sign(is_i) * |is_i|^{25} * gain * scale _ factor$$

where is_i is the input sample and xr_i is the dequantized sample. The problem is "How to calculate $x^{4/3}$? (where x is an integer)". Although mathematics libraries are available to different kinds of DSP, there are simply too time-consuming. Even using optimized assembly code, the *power()* mathematics routine takes about 115 cycles per calculation. For a stereo music stream at 48kHz, only this part consumes more than 11 MIPS. Hence this method is not suitable for real-time DSP implementation.

An alternative is to use pure table lookup. As the range of is_i is bounded to range 0..8207, by storing 8207 entries (of $x^{4/3}$)

into memory, one can get the output sample easily. However, the memory consumption is huge. Assume each entry is stored in 32 bits. The whole table takes about 33kbytes of memory. Even 24-bit word is used, the table is still very large (25 kbytes).

Here, we use a new method to solve the problem. What's difficult about the formula is that the "power" term (4/3) is not integer. If the power is integer, we can calculate it easily by successive multiplication. The main idea of our method is to use polynomial of x to estimate the curve of $y=x^{4/3}$

$$y' = a_0 + a_1 x + a_2 x^2 + a_3 x^3 + a_4 x^4 + \dots$$

So, the program only need to store the coefficients a_0, a_1, \dots, a_n , instead of storing the whole 8207 entries of the curve. The order of polynomial (number of terms) depends on the required accuracy. The greater the number of terms, the more accurate is the estimation.

To use a single curve for estimation is difficult, so, the curve is broken down into regions and each part is estimated individually (shown in Slide 11). Dividing the curve into regions is advantageous. First of all, one can keep the estimation error low by setting some threshold value: Observe the estimation error along the x-axis, (from 0 towards 8207), if the estimation error gradually increases. We can stop the current estimation curve and use a new estimation curve for the remaining part of the curve (Slide 12). This method allows trade-off between table size and the estimation error.

Also, dividing the curve into regions enables uneven range size. Observed that when x is small, the curve is more "curved" and the curve is more "linear" when x is large. So, when x is small, one can divide the curve more precisely (e.g. use range size of 32); and when x is large, one can use larger range size (e.g. use size of 512).

Another advantage of dividing the curve is that one can use polynomials of different orders to estimate different parts of the curve. For example, when x is large, the error percentage is relatively small, so, one can use a polynomial of order 2 $(a_0+a_1x+a_2x^2)$ to estimate that part. When x is small and the curve is more "curved", one can use polynomial of 3rd or 4th order. This makes our method very flexible, one can add in new polynomial terms or new regions if more precision is needed. And one can delete terms or regions if the memory constraint is tight (with the cost of some precision).

4.0 Range Identification

So, the method for getting $\mathbf{x}^{4/3}$ is straight forward. After fetch in input \mathbf{x} , the program find whether \mathbf{x} is in region 0, 1, 2, or ...etc. After identifying the region of the input \mathbf{x} , use the polynomial of that range to estimate $\mathbf{x}^{4/3}$. The question is how to break down the curve and how to identify the region of \mathbf{x} . A simple approach is to set arbitrary upper bound and lower bound and use a series of if-then-else to check the range. For example, we break the curve to range: (0-1000), (1001-2000), (2001-3000),etc. Then the pseudo code would be like:

If (0<x<1000) {use polynomial1} ElseIf (1001<x<2000) {use polynomial2} ElseIf (2001<x<3000) {use polynomial3} Else if etc. The major problem is that the code contains a large number of *if-then-else*. In assembly language, this is equivalent to a lot of *compare* and *jump*. Each *jump* instruction takes about 3 to 4 cycles, which is more expensive than normal arithmetic operations. (which usually uses 1 cycle only). Even worse, the greater the number of regions, the greater the number of *if-then-else* and the worse the performance.

Here we propose a better method: which is, to use the range boundary that is aligned to power of 2 (2^n , where n=5..10). (Slide 15 shows the range used in our prototype of MP3 decoder)

Note that in each region, all number has the same number of leading zeroes. (when presented as binary number). So, in the implementation on Motorola Star*Core DSP, one can use the CLB (Count Leading Bits) instruction to identify the range of input x. Many other DSP, such as the DSP563xx family should have similar instruction for counting bits. The advantage of this method is fast and direct. Only 2 cycles, we can find the range where the input x is located. Another advantage is that this method uses "Unven Division". When \mathbf{x} is small (0-32), the range size is small (32); when x is large (4096-8191), the range size is large (4096). This allows a good banlance between the table size and the percentage error. Figure 7 shows the table used in one of our implementation. Note that when **x** is small, the range size is smaller and the "order" of polynomial is higher. The reason is mentioned before. Using the table in Figure 7, the mean percentage error is about 0.0295%.

5.0 Accuracy and Performance

ISO/IEC 13818-4 standard states the accuracy requirement for limited-accuracy and fully-accurate MPEG Audio decoders. To be an full-accurate decoder, the RMS (Root Mean Square) between the reference and the decoded signal should be less than 2-15/sqrt(12) relative to full-scale, when decoding a given "sinesweep". Also, the maximum absolute different should be at most 2-14 relative to full-scale. For a full-scale of 64k (16-bit output), the Mean RMS should be less than 0.577, and the maximum absolute difference should be no more than 4. Using our method, the RMS is 0.880 and the maximum difference is 4.949. Which is much better than limited-accuracy decoders and come very close to the fully-accurate standard. (Figure 8). Also, the method is very efficient. It takes a maximum of 22 cycles to calculate $x^{4/3}$, which is 5 times faster than calling mathematics library (115 cycles). There is only 31 (3*9+4) entries in the lookup table (of coefficients), which is much smaller than traditional table lookup (8207 entries).

6.0 Higher Accuracy

In the method described above, the index for table-lookup is obtained by counting leading zeroes of \mathbf{x} (yields 10 regions). Actually, the index can be derived by other methods, say, by counting leading zeros of functions or polynomial consisting x. For example, in actual implementation, our decoder counts the leading zeros of \mathbf{x}^2 . (yields 20 regions).

The reason for using \mathbf{x}^2 is that: In a 32-bit word, \mathbf{x} , the number of leading zero = \mathbf{x} have range 0..8207, hence $\log_2(\mathbf{x})$ has range 0..13. There are <u>at most 14 ranges</u>

 \mathbf{x}^2 have range 0..67354849, $\log_2(\mathbf{x}^2)$ has range 0..26. There are at most 27 ranges

Hence, by squaring \mathbf{x} , the number of region is nearly doubled. This results in a more accurate curve (and larger table size). Figure 9 compares the two partitioning methods. Note that when using \mathbf{x}^2 , the curve is more precisely divided and

hence more accurate. Figure 10 shows the actual table used.

Using the new method, the mean percentage error is reduced to 0.0047%. The new function still uses 22 cycles only (because when evaluating polynomial, \mathbf{x}^2 is calculated anyway). The new table uses 61 entries of coefficients, which is still smaller than pure table lookup (8207 entries).

Using this implementation, the Mean RMS is 0.356 and the Maximum difference is 1.680, which is better than the fully-accurate conformance standard proposed by ISO. As a reference, we also implement another version, using a full lookup table of 8207 entries. The achieved RMS is 0.326 and the Maximum difference is 1.086. It shows that the estimation method is highly accurate and close to optimum.

7.0 Hybrid Scheme

As mentioned above, this method is a flexible, many other partition methods are possible. Look at the initial partition method (by counting leading 0 of \mathbf{x}), when \mathbf{x} is large, the range size is large. So, for a few applications, it may find the accuracy of those regions not high enough.

On the contrary, for the partitioning method that counts leading 0 of \mathbf{x}^2 . When \mathbf{x} is small, the range size is very small. The high accuracy of those regions may be unnecessary for some applications. So, one can combine both schemes to yield a hybrid scheme (Slide 22).

When **x** is small (e.g. $\mathbf{x} < 1024$), the range is partitioned according to leading 0 bits of x;

When **x** is large (**x**>1024), the range is partitioned according to leading 0 bits of \mathbf{x}^2 .

With this arrangement, the range size will not be too small (unnecessarily accurate) for small \mathbf{x} and the range will not be too large (not accurate enough) for large \mathbf{x} .. This gives a good trade-off between table size and accuracy.

References

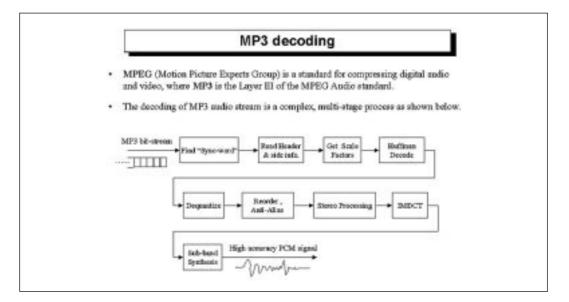
- 1. ISO/IEC 11172-3, Information technology Coding of moving pictures and associated audio for digital storage media at up to 1.5Mbit/s. Part 3 - Audio
- ISO/IEC 13818-4, Information technology Generic coding of moving pictures and associated audio. Part 4 - Conformance.
- Tadashi Sakamoto, Maiko Taruli, and Tomohiro Hase, "A Fast MPEG-Audio Layer III algorithm for 1 32-bit MCU", IEEE transactions on consumer electronics, Vol. 45, No.3, Aug 1999

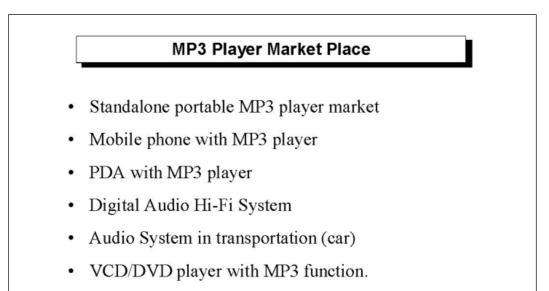
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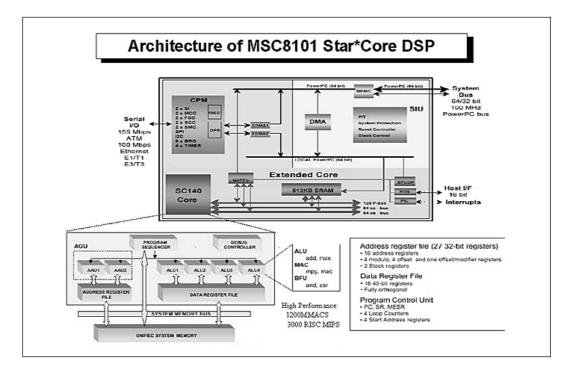
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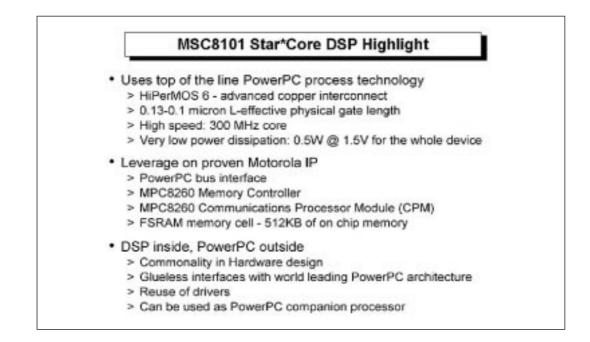
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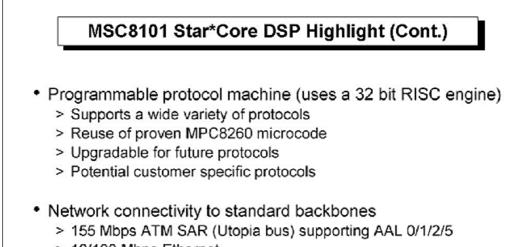
Presentation Materials



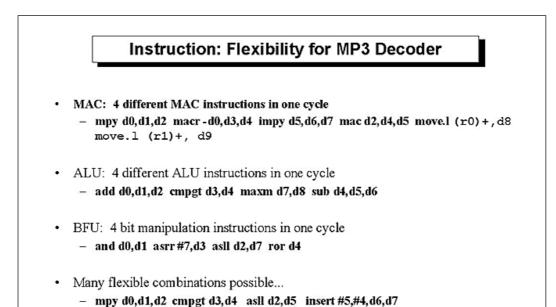


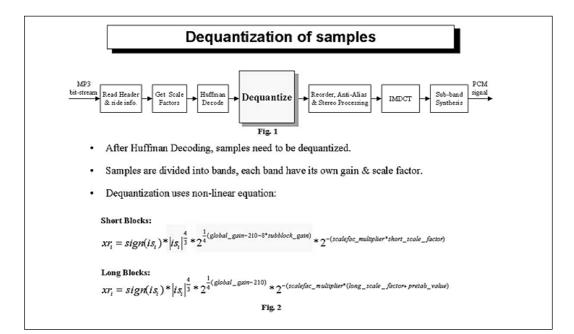


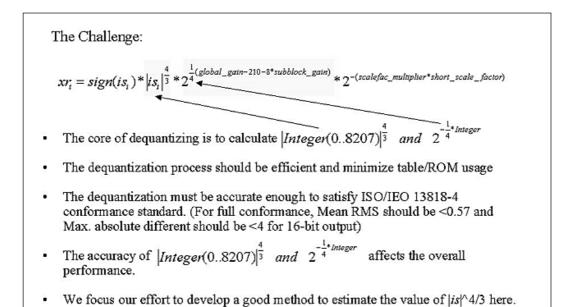




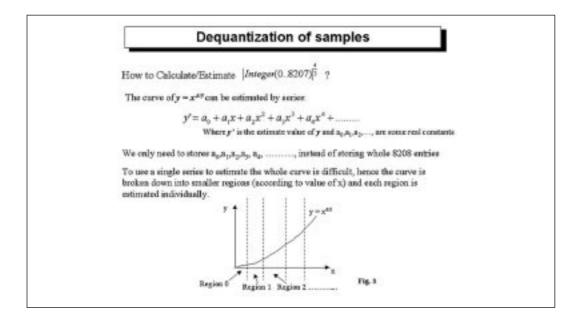
- > 10/100 Mbps Ethernet
- > Up to four E1/T1 interfaces or one E3/T3 and one E1/T1
- > HDLC support up to T3 rates or 256 channels

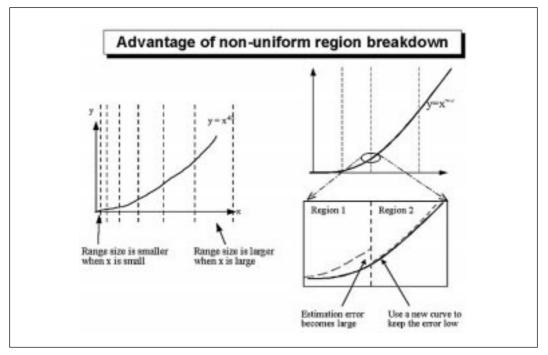


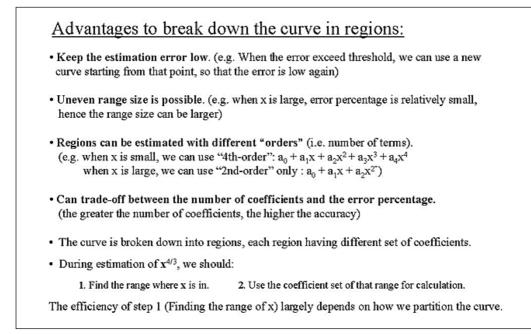




Dequantization of samples - E	xisting methods
How to Calculate/Estimate $ Integen(08207) ^{\frac{4}{3}}$?
. Calculate during dequantization, with C/Assemb (Sample decoder : Decoder by ISO MPEG Audio Subgroup So	
=> Unreasonable MIPS consumption (acceptable f (e.g. The "power" calculation routine by Lucent u	
=> Considerable code size. The "power" calculation (e.g. The "power" calculation routine by Lucent is	5 0
. Stores the values in memory table, either as "con decoder initialization phase. (Sample decoder : "MA play 1.2", "LAME 3.51", "MPG-123 ·	



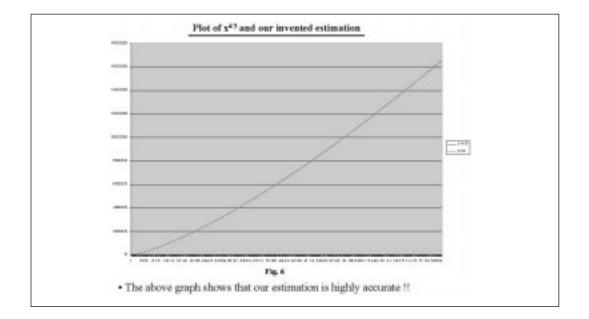


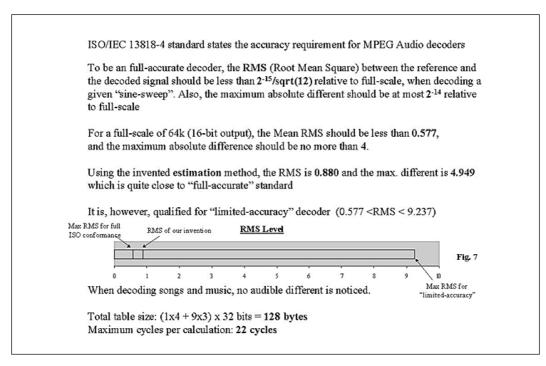


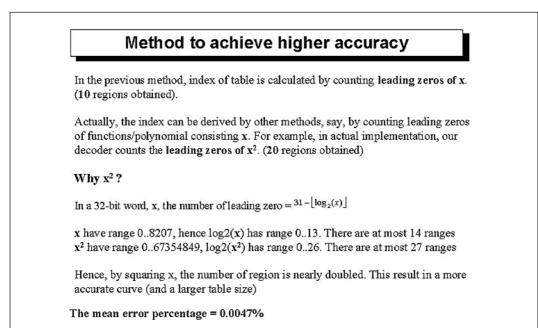
Method t	ethod to Break Down the Curve					
. Set arbitrary upper-bound a "if-then-else" to select the cor	and lower-bound of range and use a sequence of rect set of coefficients.					
=> Not used because of relativ	vely large code-size and MIPS consumption					
E.g. Range = (01000),(10012000	0),(2001-4000),(4001-8207)					
If (x<=1000) Then	If-then-clse is actually a set of compare and jump.					
If (x<=1000) Then use Coefficient-Get-0	If-then-else is actually a set of compare and jump. Such <i>"Jump-if-true"</i> and <i>"Jump-if-false"</i> instructions requires 3-4 cycles, so, for the worse case, 10-20 cycles are					
If (x<=1000) Then use Coefficient- Cet 0 Else if (x<=2000) Then use Coefficient-Set 1 Else if (x<=4000) Then	If-then-else is actually a set of compare and jump. Such "Jump-if-true" and "Jump-if-false" instructions requires 3-4 cycles, so, for the worse case, 10-20 cycles are wasted just to struggle for the correct range					
Else if (x<=2000) Then	If-then-else is actually a set of compare and jump. Such <i>"Jump-if-true"</i> and <i>"Jump-if-false"</i> instructions requires 3-4 cycles, so, for the worse case, 10-20 cycles are					

Renge	Range Size	Number of leading 0	26 -# of leading 0	Notice that the numbers between 2 boundaries has the same number of leading zero. Hence we can use the "CLB" (Count leading bits)
0-31	32	32-27	1.	instruction of the DSP to determine which region
32-83	32	28 🔺	0	is the number in.
64-127	84	25	1	
128-255	128	24	2 🔹	After adjusting the return value of CLB, the number
256-511	25.6	23	3	can be used directly for table-lookup
512-1023	512	22	4	
1024-2047	1024	21	5	
2048-4095	2048	20	6	
4096-8191	4098	19	7	
8192-8207	18	18	8	
	/ *	ig. 4	Very fa	st in determining the range !!

			igher the "order",			
	1.000 0.000 0.000		se "2nd-order", a			
(Because w	then x is	small, perce	entage error is rel	atively large,	so we need	better estimation
- 1	width	Range	a.0	a1	82	a3
part0	32	0-31	-0.43670023	1.32857277	0.09763591	-0.00129573
part1	32	32-63	-17.42554112	3.15853318	0.01745638	
part2	84	64-127	-44 46108777	3.99174848	0.01093090	
part3	128	128-255	-111 99462997	5.02876297	0.00588745	
part4	256	256-511	-282 60871996	6.33802143	0.00433591	
part5	512	512-1023	71261067563	7.98671266	0.00273058	
part6	1024	1024-2047	-1805.67994957	10.07657685	0:00171548	
part7	2048	2048-4095	-4527.92296185	12 68028146	0.00108327	
part8	4096	4096-8101	-11426.54030096	15.08200384	0.00068193	
part9	16	8192-8207	-11427.36842840	15.96871367	0.00068173	
			Fig. 5			







partitioning according to x (Limited accuracy) Fig. 8		110 0	200 0		5414		7414	
Partitioning according to x ² (Full conformance) Fig. 9					2010		748.8	
	: (1x4 + 19x3) x r calculation: 22							
Achieved Mear Which is <u>quali</u> t	n RMS: 0.356 fied for a fully ac	curate de		solute dif	ferent: 1.	680		
As a reference Achieved Mear	(to find the best and RMS: 0.326	achievabl	/-		use a loo ferent: 1.	-	e of size :	8208 (32-bit)
It shows that	our estimation	method	is highly	accura	te			

	Range	wiah	49	al	a2	a3	х'х	Number of leading 1 of x's
partil	IP-18	16	-8.3294	1.2048	0.12749	-0.80287	0-225	32-24
part 1	16-22	Ŧ	-5.2730	2.3351	0.03214		256-484	23
part 2	23-31		8.6459	2.6426	0.02688		629-961	22
part 3	12.45	1.4	13.6126	2 8697	0.02081	-	10.24-20.25	21
part 6	45-03	10	-22.4848	3.1667	0.01556		3116-3969	21
part5	64.93	27	-36.6771	2.7633	0.01238	1. S	40.96-8100	18
parts	91-127	37	-66.3247	4.2213	0.01984	-	8291-10129	18
part 7	128-181	54	-89.9113	4.7.449	0.01779		16384-32761	17
partit	182-255	7.4	-139.8969	6 2 9 9 4	0.03624		33124-66025	16
part 9	256-362	107	-227.8070	5.5011	0.01410		85536-131044	11
part 18	363-611	149	-3.69, 63.69	6.7.096	0.01359		131768-261121	14
part 11	512-723	212	-519.1873	7.5264	0.01319		262144-522729	11.
	724-1028	300	-896.7189	8.4322	0.01247	1.1	\$24178-1046529	12
	1024-1489	426		9.3929	0.08199		1048676-2096704	11
	1449-2847	589	-2211.9583		0.01157		2099501-4190209	11
	2048-2895	049		11.0591			#194304-8396816	
	2897-4895	1199			0.00100		0392685-16769025	8
	4098-6792	18.97	-8874.3137				16777218-33547284	#X.
	6792-6191	2199	-14195 4670				30550048-67092481	
part 19	8192-8207	18	119268.6213	18.1847	0.08053		67109964-67354949	4

