

# **TCLL1: An LL(1) Parser Generator and Parser**

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To obtain a up-to-date copy of this document and the TCLL1 parser generator

<http://www.iit.edu/~tc/toolsfor.htm>

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# Chapter 1 Introduction

---

*Parsing, finding the phrases of a program, is the first job of a compiler. The LL(1) parsing algorithm is probably the easiest parsing algorithm to understand and the easiest program for error recovery, but it does require skill to use.*

*This document describes the use of TCLL1, an LL(1) parser generator and parser, written in the Icon programming language. Topics include (a) how to build the parser generator, (b) how to write the grammar, and (c) how to interface to the parser.*

The goal of this document is to give compiler writers the training they need to use the TCLL1 parser generator to build parsers for their compilers. In an attempt to be self contained, it includes a brief introduction to context free grammars, so many readers will wish to skim or skip parts of this document.

TCLL1 is an LL(1) parser generator. It reads a context free grammar and, if possible, generates tables for a parser. The parser will call a *scanner* to read tokens (terminal symbols) and will call *action routines* to find the meanings of the phrases of the sentence.

## Chapter 2      Building the parser generator

---

Before reading the rest of this description of TCLL1, you should compile it on your own system. That will allow you to try out the test grammars as they are discussed.

If you do not have a copy of Icon, you can get it over the Internet: ftp it from *ftp.cs.arizona.edu*. Versions of Icon for several machines are in subdirectories of directory *icon*. Or get it through the World Wide Web, <http://cs.arizona.edu/icon/www/>. You may also want to pick up the Icon Programming Library.

If you have the Icon Programming Library (IPL) installed on a DOS/WINDOWS machine, you can execute the batch file *mktcll1.bat* to build the parser generator. The five files from the IPL that the parser generator uses are included with this distribution and can be compiled separately. To build the parser generator by hand, you may execute

```
rem These are from the Icon Program Library:

icont -c xcode escape ebcdic

rem These form the parser generator proper

icont -c grananal lll semstk readlll parselll
icont -c scangram semgram
icont -fs tcll1
```

The first *icont* line compiles the files from the IPL. You may omit the line if you have the IPL installed. The second *icont* line compiles modules used by the parser generator. The third line compiles the parser generator's main program. The flag *-fs* tells the translator that the parser generator calls some procedures by giving their names as strings. In Icon version 8, this flag is not needed; in version 9 it is.

To use TCLL1 to build a parsing table, execute

Under Icon version 8:

```
iconx tcll1 grammar.grm
```

Under Icon version 9:

```
tcll1 grammar.grm
```



where *grammar.grm* is the grammar file. The output of the parser generator will be encoded parse tables in file *grammar.lll* . If you would also like a listing of the grammar and diagnostic information, execute

Under Icon version 8:

```
iconx tc111 -p grammar.grm
```

Under Icon version 9:

```
tc111 -p grammar.grm
```

Tc111 reads its own parsing table from file *tc111.lll* which must be in the current directory tc111.

## Chapter 3 Context-Free Grammars

---

### 3.1 Context-free grammars

To use LL(1) parsers, you need to be skilled at manipulating context-free grammars.

In the jargon of formal language theory, a context-free grammar (CFG) is a "4-tuple"  $(N, T, s, P)$ . That is to say, it has four parts:

- $T$ —a set of terminal symbols, the words in the language;
- $N$ —a set of nonterminal symbols which do not themselves appear in sentences, but are used to generate sentences.
- $s$ —one of the nonterminals, the start symbol.
- $P$ —a set of productions, the rules for generating sentences.

(In a later section, we will add another part: a set of action symbols.)

A production of a CFG is typically written

$$LHS \rightarrow RHS$$

Where LHS, the "left hand side" of the production, is a single nonterminal symbol and RHS, the "right hand side" of the production is a string of zero or more symbols, terminal and nonterminal.

The arrow is a metalinguistic symbol: it is used to write the productions; it is not part of the language they describe.

Since we are using a particular parser generator, TCLL1, we will follow its input syntax and write the productions as

$$LHS = RHS .$$

with the equal sign and period as metalinguistic symbols.

We will speak of a left hand side as "possessing" the productions or the right hand sides of the productions it appears in. We will also speak of the right hand side being a right hand side "for" the left hand side symbol.

The productions are rewriting rules. A sentence is generated by starting with a string composed solely of the start symbol and repeatedly replacing a nontermi-

nal in the string with one of its right hand sides. When there are only terminal symbols left in the string, the string is called a *sentence* in the language.

Each single rewriting is called a *derivation step*. A sequence of derivation steps, especially the sequence leading from the start symbol to a sentence is a *derivation*. A derivation step is written

$$uAw \Rightarrow uvw$$

where  $A \Rightarrow v$  is a production and  $u$  and  $v$  are any strings of zero or more symbols. A derivation composed of zero or more derivation steps is written:

$$u \Rightarrow^* w$$

In TCLL1, a nonterminal symbol is written as an identifier. A terminal symbol is written as an identifier or as any string of printable symbols surrounded by quotes.

We will use the expression grammar Figure 1 in many of our examples.

Figure 1 Expression grammar

```

start = e .
e = e "+" t .
e = e "-" t .
e = t .
t = f "*" t .
t = f "/" t .
t = f .
f = i .
f = "(" e ")" .

```

TCLL1 assumes the start symbol is named start. Since we really wanted  $e$  to be the start symbol, we put in a production

$$\text{start} = e .$$

The terminal symbols are  $"(", ")", "*", "+", "-", "/",$  and  $i$ .

The nonterminal symbols are  $\text{start}$ ,  $e$ ,  $t$ , and  $f$ .

### 3.2 Derivations

All strings derived from the start symbol are called *sentential forms*. A *sentence* is a sentential form composed entirely of terminals.

Figure 2 an example of the derivation of a sentence.

Not only was this a derivation, it was a *leftmost derivation*; we always replaced the leftmost nonterminal in the string with a right hand side. We could have

Figure 2 The derivation of a sentence

```

start
e
t
f*t
(e)*t
(e-t)*t
(t-t)*t
(f-t)*t
(i-t)*t
(i-f*t)*t
(i-i*t)*t
(i-i*f)*t
(i-i*i)*t
(i-i*i)*f
(i-i*i)*i

```

done a *rightmost derivation*, always replacing the rightmost nonterminal. Or we could have replaced arbitrary nonterminals. Since the nonterminals are replaced without regard to the symbols that surround them, the sentences we can derive don't depend on the order of replacement. That is the meaning of "context-free". However, the set of sentential forms we can derive do depend on the order of replacement.

A leftmost derivation step is written

$$uAw \Rightarrow_L uvw$$

where  $u$  must be composed entirely of terminals and  $A \Rightarrow v$  is a production. Similarly,  $\Rightarrow_L^*$  represents a leftmost derivation;  $\Rightarrow_R$ , a rightmost derivation step; and  $\Rightarrow_R^*$ , a rightmost derivation.

An LL(1) parser finds a leftmost derivation of the input sentence.

### 3.3 Phrases

A *phrase* is a substring of a sentential form that was derived from a single nonterminal during the derivation of the sentential form. When we compile a program, we will deduce the meanings of phrases from the meanings of the words and phrases within them. In the sentence  $(i-i*i)*i$  derived above, the substring  $i-i*i$  is a phrase; it was derived from an  $e$ . Within the  $i-i*i$ ,  $i*i$  is a phrase, but  $i-i$  is not. Although the string  $i-i$  could be derived from an  $e$ , in this derivation it was not.

Notice that phrases can contain other phrases. Indeed, for two phrases in a sentential form, one of the following is true:

- one is a substring of the other, or
- they have no symbols in common, or
- they are the same string.

### 3.4 Bugs in grammars

Context-free grammars can have bugs in them. The grammar in Figure 3 exhibits three common bugs.

Figure 3 Grammar *bugs.grm*

```

start = e.
e = e "+" t .
e = e "-" t .
t = t "*" t .
t = t "/" t .
t = f .
p = i .
p = "(" e ")" .

```

If we pass this grammar through TCLL1, we get the error messages shown in Figure 4 (and a few others).

We got the first two errors by removing the production " $e = t$ ". Once we have the symbol  $e$  in a string, we can't get rid of it:  $e$  can only be replaced with strings containing an  $e$ . Since  $start$  only goes to  $e$ ,  $start$  too cannot derive a string composed entirely of terminals.

The reason TCLL1 says the symbols do not *appear* to derive a terminal string has to do with its algorithm. It tries to calculate the minimum length of a string of terminals the nonterminal can derive. If it can't satisfy itself that the nonterminal can generate a string of less than a certain large length, it reports the error. You can fool it by writing a grammar that will only generate sentences of greater than that length.

The errors stating that  $p$ ,  $)$ ,  $($ , and  $i$  cannot appear in a sentential form simply means that there is no sequence of derivation steps starting from the start symbol that can derive a string containing those symbols. The bug may be that we should have used  $f$  rather than  $p$  in the last two productions, or we should have had some more productions for  $f$  including " $f = p$ ."

Figure 4 Error messages from bugs.grm (Figure 3).

```
Error: start does not appear to derive a terminal string
Error: e does not appear to derive a terminal string
Error: p cannot appear in a sentential form
Error: ) cannot appear in a sentential form
Error: ( cannot appear in a sentential form
Error: i cannot appear in a sentential form
Error: t is both left and right recursive, the grammar is ambiguous
Error: t is left recursive, the grammar is not LL(1)
Error: e is left recursive, the grammar is not LL(1)
Error: overlapping selection sets for
1.   t = t "*" t.
2.   t = t "/" t.
    overlap: {f}
Error: overlapping selection sets for
1.   t = t "*" t.
2.   t = f.
    overlap: {f}
Error: overlapping selection sets for
1.   t = t "/" t.
2.   t = f.
    overlap: {f}
12 errors and 0 warnings
```

### 3.5 Ambiguous grammars

The final error

Error: t is both left and right recursive, the grammar is ambiguous

reports on one of the most common bugs in grammars used for programming languages. To understand it, we need a few concepts first.

A sentence derived using a particular grammar is *ambiguous* if there is more than one way to divide it up into phrases. It can be proven that the sentence is ambiguous if and only if it has more than one leftmost derivation. A grammar is ambiguous if it can generate any ambiguous sentences.

Since the phrases of a sentence are used to determine its meaning, an ambiguous sentence can have more than one meaning. An ambiguous programming language grammar would militate against reliable software.

An additional problem for compiler writers is that there are no fast parsing algorithms that work for ambiguous grammars. (Some parser generators will accept ambiguous grammars, but they resolve the ambiguity internally before generating the parsers.)

It would be nice if we could find out if a given grammar is ambiguous. Unfortunately, it is impossible to do that in general. It is *incomputable* whether an arbitrary context free grammar is ambiguous. There is no algorithm that can take an arbitrary context free grammar and report whether it is ambiguous or not. It is not, mind you, that we don't know the algorithm yet. We can prove that there is no such algorithm possible.

For particular grammars we may be able to prove they are ambiguous or unambiguous, but there will always be some that we cannot be sure about. Here are two classes of grammars we *can* know about:

- If the grammar is accepted by TCLL1 without any warnings or errors, it is unambiguous.
- If the grammar is left and right recursive in the same nonterminal, it is ambiguous.

A nonterminal is left recursive if it can derive a string in which it appears as the leftmost symbol. It is right recursive if it can derive a string in which it appears as the rightmost symbol. Don't consider only leftmost derivations for this definition of right recursive: the symbol might be followed by some nonterminals that derive the empty string that we have to get rid of. Consider the grammar

$$\begin{aligned} A &= i \ A \ B \mid i. \\ B &= . \end{aligned}$$

A is right recursive which can be seen from the derivation

$$\begin{aligned} &A \\ &i \ A \ B \\ &i \ A \end{aligned}$$

but not from the rightmost derivation

$$\begin{aligned} &A \\ &i \ A \ B \\ &i \ i \ B \end{aligned}$$

If a grammar is both left and right recursive in the same nonterminal then the grammar is ambiguous. As a proof, suppose A is both left and right recursive in a reduced grammar (i.e., a grammar without bugs in it), then

$$A \Rightarrow_L^* A \ v$$

$$A \Rightarrow_L^* x \ A \ w$$

$$A \Rightarrow_L^* y$$

$$w \Rightarrow_L^*$$

$$v \Rightarrow_L^* z$$

where

$$v \in (N \cup T)^*$$

$$x \in T^*$$

$$w \in N^*$$

$$y \in T^*$$

$$z \in T^*$$

(that is to say,  $x$ ,  $y$ , and  $z$  are strings of terminals,  $w$  is a string of nonterminals, and  $v$  is a string of any symbols).

This allows two different leftmost derivations of  $xyz$  from  $A$  shown by these sentential forms along the derivation:

$A$	$A$
$\Rightarrow_L^* A v$	$\Rightarrow_L^* x A w$
$\Rightarrow_L^* x A w v$	$\Rightarrow_L^* x A v w$
$\Rightarrow_L^* x y w v$	$\Rightarrow_L^* x y v w$
$\Rightarrow_L^* x y v$	$\Rightarrow_L^* x y z w$
$\Rightarrow_L^* x y z$	$\Rightarrow_L^* x y z$

Since a nonterminal being both left- and right-recursive is a common bug in programming language grammars, TCLL1 checks for it. But remember, there are many other ways for grammars to be ambiguous as well.

### 3.6 Leftmost derivation algorithm

Sentences can be generated with a leftmost derivation using a *prediction stack*. The algorithm is as follows:

#### THE LEFTMOST-DERIVATION ALGORITHM

Initially, place the start symbol on the prediction stack.

Repeat

pop the top symbol off the prediction stack

if it is a terminal, write it out

if it is a nonterminal, then choose one of its right hand sides and push it on the prediction stack, leftmost symbol on top



until the prediction stack is empty.

We call the stack the prediction stack since it predicts what symbols and phrases will be generated later.

### 3.7 Extended syntax

To make it more convenient to write grammars, TOLL1 provides an extended syntax for expressing alternatives, groupings, optional parts, and repetitions. We show how they may be used with the expression grammar given above:

- | the vertical bar is used to separate alternatives. It is customarily used to combine all the productions for a single nonterminal into a single rule. It can also separate alternatives within groupings. We can, for example, shorten our expression grammar from nine lines to four:

```
start = e .
e = e "+" t | e "-" t | t .
t = f "*" t | f "/" t | f .
f = i | "(" e ")" .
```

- () parentheses are used to group symbols and alternatives. We can group the operators in our expression grammar as follows:

```
start = e .
e = e ("+" | "-") t | t .
t = f ("*" | "/") t | f .
f = i | "(" e ")" .
```

- [ ] brackets group optional items. Basically, [x] is equivalent to (x | ); that is, a bracketed item is equivalent to the enclosed item or the empty string. In our expression grammar, the alternatives for *t* provide an optional part:

```
start = e .
e = e ("+" | "-") t | t .
t = f [ ("*" | "/") t ].
f = i | "(" e ")" .
```

- { } braces group items that may occur any number of times. The alternatives for *e* provide an example of this repetition:

```
start = e .
e = t { ("+" | "-") t } .
t = f [ ("*" | "/") t ].
f = i | "(" e ")" .
```

When given a grammar using the syntax extensions, TCLL1 translates it into a pure, unextended CFG. It does this by introducing new nonterminals for all the groupings. It constructs the names of the new nonterminals from the left hand side symbol, line number, and position on the line where the grouping begins:

LHS\_lineNumber\_column

You should be able to figure out how grammars are transformed from the extended notation to the basic notation by comparing our final expression grammar

```
start = e .
e = t { ( "+" | "-" ) t } .
t = f [ ( "*" | "/" ) t ] .
f = i | "( " e " )" .
```

to its transformed version:

```
e = t e_2_7 .
e_2_7 = e_2_9 t e_2_7 .
e_2_7 = .
e_2_9 = "+" .
e_2_9 = "-" .
f = i .
f = "( " e " )" .
start = e .
t = f t_3_8 .
t_3_10 = "*" .
t_3_10 = "/" .
t_3_8 = t_3_10 t .
t_3_8 = .
```

TCLL1 provides one further enhancement to CFGs: *action symbols*. Action symbols provide the interface between the parser and the "semantics" in the compiler. An action symbol is written as an identifier followed by an exclamation point:

ID !

As far as the language generated from the grammar is concerned, action symbols don't appear. They behave as if they were nonterminals that only have one production and that production has an empty right hand side. During the parse, however, whenever the parser finds an action symbol on the top of the prediction stack, it performs some action as it pops the symbol off. In a later section, we will discuss the use of action symbols.

## Chapter 4      LL(1) Parsing

---

### 4.1 Principles of LL(1) Parsing

"LL(1)" means the parser works **L**eft-to-right, finding a **L**eftmost derivation of the sentence, and looking at most one (**1**) symbol ahead in the input to decide what action to take next.

The trick is this: the LL(1) parser generates a sentence on top of the input sentence, matching the two. When it has successfully matched all of the input sentence, it has also parsed it, since the phrases of the input are the same as those of the generated sentence.

If we are only interested in whether the input is a sentence—and not interested in the phrases—we call the parser a *recognizer*. We present an LL(1) recognizer now, and wait to present the parser until we have discussed action symbols. The sentence generation algorithm of the last section now becomes the recognition algorithm shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5      LL(1) Recognition algorithm.

#### THE LL(1) RECOGNITION ALGORITHM

Initially, place the start symbol and the EOI (end of input) symbol on the prediction stack with the start symbol on top. Append EOI to the right end of the input. Read the leftmost symbol from the input into the *current symbol*.

Repeat

    pop the top symbol off the prediction stack

    if it is a terminal, compare it to the current symbol. If they match, read the next input symbol into the current symbol. If they don't, an error has been discovered in the input.

    if it is a nonterminal, then choose one of its right hand sides and push it on the prediction stack, leftmost symbol on top. Choose the right hand side by looking at the current symbol and deciding which RHS will allow parsing to continue.

until the EOI symbol is matched.

The EOI ("end of input") symbol is inserted into the set of terminals by the TCLL1 parser generator. It is used to permit the parser to recognize when the last terminal has been read in. In a real compiler, the parser calls the scanner to return one symbol of the sentence at a time, left to right. The scanner will return EOI when there are no more symbols in the input.

The big problem in LL(1) parsing is rewriting the grammar into *LL(1) form*, a form in which the next input symbol can always tell the parser which right hand side to choose. In a later section we will discuss ways to rewrite grammars to put them in LL(1) form.

## 4.2 Putting grammars into LL(1) form

It is hard to put grammars into LL(1) form. Here we consider the requirements LL(1) places on grammars, how grammars fail to meet those requirements, and techniques for rewriting grammars to make them suitable.

First a caution. To save yourself much grief, obey this simple rule when transforming grammars: You may introduce new nonterminals. You may revise the definitions of existing nonterminals. You may delete nonterminals if they are no longer needed. But *never* change the meaning of a nonterminal. Never change the set of strings a nonterminal generates.

## 4.3 How a grammar fails to be LL(1)

The only place in the LL(1) recognition algorithm where problems can arise is when a nonterminal comes to the top of the prediction stack. The parser must pick one of the nonterminal's right hand sides to replace it with, a right hand side that will allow parsing to continue. To do this, it can look only at the next symbol in the input. As an example of where this fails, consider our expression grammar productions for  $t$  and  $f$ :

```
t = f "*" t .
t = f "/" t .
t = f .
f = i .
f = "(" e ")" .
```

Suppose  $t$  is on top of the prediction stack. Each of its right hand sides begins with  $f$ . An  $f$  itself can begin with either an "(" or an  $i$ . So if we see either an "(" or an  $i$  next in the input, we can't possibly tell which production for  $t$  we should use.

We need two concepts:

- The *first set* of a string of symbols,  $u$ , is the set of terminal symbols,  $First(u)$ , that can occur leftmost in a string derived from  $u$ . In formal notation
  - $First(u) = \{ a \mid u \Rightarrow^* av, a \text{ is a terminal symbol, } u \text{ and } v \text{ are strings} \}$
- The *follow set* of a nonterminal,  $A$ , is the set of symbols,  $Follow(A)$ , that can follow  $A$  in a sentential form. Formally

- $\text{Follow}(A) = \{ b \mid s \Rightarrow^* v A b w, s \text{ is the start symbol, } b \text{ is a terminal symbol, } v \text{ and } w \text{ are strings} \}$

Now let's consider which right hand side to choose for a nonterminal. Given a production

$$A = u.$$

what terminal symbol,  $t$ , would tell us to replace  $A$  with  $u$ ?

- If symbol  $t$  is in  $\text{First}(u)$ , we should choose  $u$ . After all, we want to choose the right hand side that will allow us to continue parsing, and right hand side  $u$  will at least be able to get past the next input symbol.
- If  $u$  is the empty string, or if it derives the empty string, and if  $t$  is in  $\text{Follow}(A)$  we should choose  $u$ . After all, if the right hand side vanishes, the next input symbol we are looking at could be one that follows the phrase, not one that begins it.

If any terminal symbol tells us to choose more than one right hand side for a nonterminal, the grammar is *not* LL(1). If no terminal symbol ever tells us to choose more than one right hand side for any nonterminal, the grammar *is* LL(1).

When we give a grammar that is not LL(1) to TCLL1, it will give error messages specifying the terminals and productions that are in conflict. Figure 6 shows the grammar "e-notll1.grm".

Figure 6 Grammar e-notll1.grm

```
# errors--not LL(1)
start = e .
e = e "+" t .
e = e "-" t .
e = t .
t = f "*" t .
t = f "/" t .
t = f .
f = i .f = "(" e ")" .
```

Here's what we get when we pass it through TCLL1:

```
Error: e is left recursive, the grammar is not LL(1)
Error: overlapping selection sets for
1.   t = f "*" t.
2.   t = f "/" t.
    overlap: {"(", i}
Error: overlapping selection sets for
1.   t = f "*" t.
2.   t = f.
```

```

    overlap: {"(", i}
Error: overlapping selection sets for
1.   t = f "/" t.
2.   t = f.
    overlap: {"(", i}
Error: overlapping selection sets for
1.   e = e "+" t.
2.   e = e "-" t.
    overlap: {"(", i}
Error: overlapping selection sets for
1.   e = e "+" t.
2.   e = t.
    overlap: {"(", i}
Error: overlapping selection sets for
1.   e = e "-" t.
2.   e = t.
    overlap: {"(", i}
7 errors and 0 warnings

```

We will consider the causes and cures of these and other problems in the subsections to follow.

#### 4.4 Left-recursion removal

The error messages state that the grammar is left recursive and hence not LL(1). Why? Consider the productions:

```

e = e "+" t .
e = e "-" t .
e = t .

```

Consider the leftmost-derivation algorithm given above. When a  $e$  appears on top of the prediction stack, we can keep on replacing it with  $e+t$  or  $e-t$ , pushing  $+t$ 's and  $-t$ 's onto the stack and still leaving  $e$  on top. Eventually we will replace  $e$  with  $t$  and stop the process, but no symbol in  $First(t)$  will tell how many  $+t$ 's or  $-t$ 's were pushed on the stack. Similarly, while parsing, the next input symbol cannot tell us how many  $+$ 's or  $-$ 's we are going to need.

The parser generator checks for left recursion explicitly. The problems also appear in the reports of overlapping selection sets.

A nonterminal is directly left recursive if it occurs as the first symbol on the right hand side of one or more of its productions. If it takes more than one derivation step to derive itself first, for example,  $A \Rightarrow^* Bu \Rightarrow^* Cvu \Rightarrow^* Awvu$ , then it is indirectly left recursive, or as we more colorfully say, there is *daisy-chain* recursion.

Direct left recursion can be removed as follows:

- Divide up the productions for the nonterminal into the left-recursive and non-left-recursive.

$$A = A u_1 \mid A u_2 \mid \dots \mid A u_m \mid v_1 \mid v_2 \mid \dots \mid v_n .$$

- Call the  $u_1 u_2 \dots u_m$  the *tail ends* of the left recursive rules.
- Group the non-recursive right hand sides and follow them by an arbitrary repetition of the tail ends of the recursive rules, thus:

$$A = (v_1 \mid v_2 \mid \dots \mid v_n) \{ u_1 \mid u_2 \mid \dots \mid u_m \} .$$

When we apply this to our expression grammar, we get

$$e = t \{ "+" t \mid "-" t \} .$$

For daisy-chained left recursion, you have to first convert into direct left recursion by replacing nonterminals by their right hand sides, a technique shown below.

## 4.5 Factoring

An obvious problem for an LL(1) parser is a nonterminal having several right hand sides beginning with the same symbol. In our expression grammar,  $t$  has that problem:

$$\begin{aligned} t &= f "*" t . \\ t &= f "/" t . \\ t &= f . \end{aligned}$$

The solution is to factor the common initial part out:

$$t = f ( "*" t \mid "/" t \mid ) .$$

Which is to say, a  $t$  is an  $f$  followed by one of several tails.

Since one of the alternatives is empty, we can use brackets:

$$t = f [ "*" t \mid "/" t ] .$$

## 4.6 Replacing nonterminals by right hand sides

When faced with daisy-chained left recursion or right hand sides with conflicts but no common initial symbols to factor, we can resort to replacing nonterminals by their right hand sides to try to make the left recursion direct or the initial parts of right hands sides equal. Consider the following grammar, "c-nll1.grm":

```
# c-nll1
# not LL(1)
start = s .
s = e .
s = i "=" e .
e = e "+" t .
e = e "-" t .
e = t .
t = f "*" t .
t = f "/" t .
```

```

t = f .
f = i .
f = n .
f = "(" e ")" .

```

In addition to the conflicts we have seen already in the definitions of  $e$  and  $t$ , there is a conflict between the two definitions of  $s$ : a string derived from  $e$  can also begin with an  $i$ .

First, let's fix  $e$  and  $t$ :

```

e = t etail.
etail = { "+" t | "-" t } .
t = f ttail .
ttail = [ "*" t | f "/" t ].

```

Now let's start working on the production

```
s = e .
```

The  $e$  can derive a string beginning with an  $i$ . We need to rewrite until we have a production for  $s$  whose right hand side begins with  $i$  so we can factor. We replace the  $e$  with its one definition, giving

```
s = t etail.
```

Now we replace the  $t$  by its one definition

```
s = f ttail etail.
```

Now we need to replace the  $f$ , but it has three definitions. We must replace it with each, copying the production for each of them

```

s = i ttail etail.
s = n ttail etail.
s = "(" e ")" ttail etail.

```

Now we can factor, yielding

```

s = i ("=" e | ttail etail) .
s = n ttail etail .
s = "(" e ")" ttail etail .

```

So the resulting grammar is:

```

# c-ll1
# LL(1)
start = s .
s = i ("=" e | ttail etail) .
s = n ttail etail .
s = "(" e ")" ttail etail .
e = t etail.
etail = { "+" t | "-" t } .

```



```

t = f ttail .
ttail = [ "*" t | f "/" t ].
f = i .
f = n .
f = "(" e ")" .

```

Now you see why we created new nonterminals *etail* and *ttail*. We knew from experience that we were going to copy them in several productions, and if we left the braced or bracketed constructs in line, the parser generator would introduce multiple nonterminals with identical definitions.

#### 4.7 Replacing right hand side by left hand side

If we can replace a nonterminal by all of its right hand sides, what about going the other way? Well yes, that can work, as long as we don't try to replace the definitions of the nonterminal itself. (We wouldn't want to replace  $A = u / v$  with  $A = A$ .)

In fact, we have been replacing multiple right hand sides using newly created nonterminals. For example, we replaced

```

t = f "*" t .
t = f "/" t .
t = f .

```

with

```

t = f [ "*" t | "/" t ].

```

knowing that the brackets create a new nonterminal. The translation done by the parser generator makes this explicit:

```

t = f t_3_8 .
t_3_8 = "*" t .
t_3_8 = "/" t .
t_3_8 = .

```

Notice that just as replacing a nonterminal in a production required substituting each of its right hand sides, duplicating the production as necessary, the substitution the other way requires each right hand side be found at the same place in otherwise identical productions and that all those productions be replaced with a single production.

Here's a more tricky use of this technique. Suppose we have a language where statements can have any number of statement labels preceding them. The statement labels are identifiers, and assignment statements begin with an identifier:

```

# ls-nl11
# not LL(1)
start = labeled_statement .
labeled_statement = label statement .
label = { i ":" } .

```

```
statement = i "=" e.
```

The parser generator will find a conflict in  $label = \{id \text{ ":"}\}$ , which it reports as shown in Figure 7.

The problem is that the empty right hand side can be followed by the identifier at the beginning of the assignment statement. (The reason it's a warning rather than an error will be discussed later when talking about the "dangling else problem".

Figure 7 The warning generated for the labeled statement

```
Warning: overlapping selection sets for
      label_5_9 = i ":" label_5_9.
and empty-deriving production
      label_5_9 = .
      overlap: {i}
0 errors and 1 warning
```

Let's try rewriting  $label$  in  $labeled\_statement$  to allow us to factor. First, we rewrite the definition of  $label$  to make the right recursion explicit:

```
label = i ":" label | .
```

And then replace it in  $labeled\_statement$ :

```
labeled_statement = i ":" label statement .
labeled_statement = statement .
```

Now rewriting  $statement$  in  $labeled\_statement = statement .$  gives

```
labeled_statement = i "=" e.
```

allowing us to factor

```
labeled_statement = i labeled_statement_tail .
labeled_statement_tail = "=" e .
labeled_statement_tail = ":" label statement .
```

If we run this through the parser generator, alas, we find the same warning. We still have  $label$  followed by  $statement$  which is the same problem as before.

But now we can apply the trick of rewriting a right hand side as its left hand side. We know we have not changed the set of strings that  $labeled\_statement$  generates so that the strings are still described by the single right hand side  $label\ statement$ . We replace  $label\ statement$  with  $labeled\_statement$  in the last production giving

```
labeled_statement = i labeled_statement_tail .
labeled_statement_tail = "=" e .
labeled_statement_tail = ":" labeled_statement .
```

This definition works.

## 4.8 Tables of operators

You may be given tables of operators with their precedences and associativities. You may have to translate these into context free syntax.

Binary operators associate to the left if the left hand side nonterminal is left recursive, and associate to the right if the nonterminal is right recursive. The higher precedence operator must occur in a subphrase of the lower precedence one. Here is a method for generating productions from a precedence table of binary operators. Suppose the grammar specifies

$$E = E P E .$$

$$E = F$$

with tables giving the precedence and associativity of the operators,  $P$ .

Number the precedence levels consecutively,  $1, 2, \dots, n$  from lowest to highest.

Create a nonterminal,  $E_i$ , for  $1 \leq i \leq n+1$ .

Create a renaming production

$$E_i = E_{i+1} .$$

for all  $i \leq n$ .

For each binary operator  $P_j$  at precedence level  $i$ , if  $P_j$  is left associative, put in a production

$$E_i = E_i P_j E_{i+1} .$$

If  $P_j$  is right associative, put in a production

$$E_i = E_{i+1} P_j E_i .$$

Or if  $P_j$  is non-associative (for example, the relational operators in Pascal), put in a production

$$E_i = E_{i+1} P_j E_{i+1} .$$

If you end up with two productions

$$E_i = E_i \dots .$$

and

$$E_i = \dots E_i .$$

you have generated an ambiguous grammar; left and right associative operators must not be at the same precedence.

For each unary operator  $P$  at precedence level  $i$ , if several occurrences of  $P$  may occur in a row, put in a production

$$E_i = P E_i .$$

Or, if at most one occurrence of  $P$  can occur in front of an operand, put in the production

$$E_i = P E_{i+1} .$$

Add productions

$$E = E_1 .$$

$$E_{n+1} = F .$$

For example, given the following table of operators:

Operators	Unary or binary	Associativity	Precedence
%	unary	many	highest
\$ !	binary	left	
&	binary	right	
#	binary	non-associative	
^	unary	one-at-most	lowest

the algorithm gives the following grammar:

```

E1 = ^ E2 .
E1 = E2 .
E2 = E3 # E3 .
E2 = E3 .
E3 = E4 & E3 .
E3 = E4 .
E4 = E4 $ E5 .
E4 = E4 ! E5 .
E4 = E5 .
E5 = % E5 .
E5 = E6 .
E6 = F .

```

## 4.9 The dangling-else problem

The dangling-else problem occurs in languages that have optional *else* clauses in *if* statements and no *if* statement terminator (such as *end if* or *fi*). In nested *ifs*,

it is not clear which preceding *if* an *else* goes with. This ambiguity shows up when we try to construct an LL(1) parser. Consider the syntax:

```
statement = if_statement
           | i "=" e.
if_statement = if e then statement
             | if e then statement else statement .
```

this obviously will have a conflict. So we try factoring

```
if_statement = if e then statement else_option.
else_option = [ else statement ].
```

When we pass this through the parser generator, we get the warnings shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8 Warnings for a dangling-else.

```
Warning: overlapping selection sets for
        else_option_6_15 = else statement.
and empty-deriving production
        else_option_6_15 = .
overlap: {else}
0 errors and 1 warning
```

Why? First consider this example:

```
if e then if e then if e then i=e else i=e else
i=e
```

We have three **if**'s and two **else**'s. Which **else** goes with which **if**? When the LL(1) recognizer has just finished processing the first *i=e*, there will be three *else\_option*'s on the prediction stack. Two of them must be replaced with *else statement*; one, with the empty string. Which?

Observe that a *statement* can be followed by an *else\_option* and an *if\_statement* can end in an *else\_option*. The *else\_option* at the end of an *if\_statement* can therefore be followed by an *else*, which means that it is unclear how to choose between a right hand side beginning with an *else* and the empty right hand side.

Unfortunately, there's no way to get rid of this problem. (Well, if you are the language designer, you could redesign the language, but if you are only the compiler writer, you have to take the language as given.) So here's what we do: we cheat. We want the parser to associate the *else* with the innermost *if*. This will be the *if* statement that placed the *else\_option* on top of the prediction stack. So we let the *else\_option* on top of the prediction stack handle the *else*. That means we will choose the right hand side that has the *else* in its first set rather than the right hand side that is empty and only has the *else* in its follow set.

We've written the parser generator to use this rule: only use a symbol from the follow set to choose an empty-deriving right hand side if it does not appear in the first set of any right hand side.

The parser generator fills a table, *sel*, that maps nonterminals and terminals into right hand sides. For nonterminal *A* and terminal *t*, *sel*[*A*,*t*] is the right hand side to replace *A* with if *t* is next in the input.

The parser generator works in two passes over a nonterminal's productions:

- 1 For each production  $A = u$ . and every terminal *t* in *First*(*u*), *sel*[*A*,*t*] is assigned right hand side *u*. If TCLL1 finds that *sel*[*A*,*t*] already has been assigned a different right hand side, it reports an error.
- 2 Then TCLL1 checks to see if there is a production for *A* with an empty-deriving right hand side, *i.e.*,  $A = w$ . where *w* is either empty or is composed of nonterminals each of which derives the empty string. If there is no such right hand side, TCLL1 is done with this nonterminal. If there are two or more such productions, the grammar is ambiguous—there is more than one way to derive the empty string from *A*. If there is precisely one such production,  $A = w$ ., then for all symbols *t* in *Follow*(*A*),
  - if *sel*[*A*,*t*] already has a right hand side assigned, issue a warning,
  - otherwise assign *sel*[*A*,*t*] the right hand side *w*.

We have the parser generator give a warning when first sets and follow sets give conflicting choices for a nonterminal since it may not be a dangling else problem. Indeed, in the labeled statement example, it wasn't. If we'd used the parser that was generated with this warning, it would never have been able to parse an assignment statement: it would assume an identifier at the beginning of a statement had to be a label and it would report an error when it saw an "=" rather than a ":".

## Chapter 5      Parsing with action symbols

---

We have talked about grammars being used to *derive* sentences from the start symbol by replacing nonterminal symbols by their right hand sides, but this is just the reverse of what we need for parsing; we need to *reduce* the sentence to the start symbol by repeatedly replacing right hand sides by their left hand sides. As each reduction is made, a semantic value is computed for the left hand side symbol from the semantic values of the right hand sides. The procedures that compute these values are called semantics routines or action routines. In addition to computing semantic values, the semantics routines can also access shared data structures and write to files. In theory, "the meaning of the program" is the semantic value assigned to the start symbol. In practice it can be the contents of a data structure or the contents of a file.

### 5.1 Reductions

If we start with a sentence and just look through the right hand side for substrings we can reduce, we may go down blind alleys and never reduce it to the start symbol. Using our expression grammar, we could try the following reduction sequence on  $i*i$ :

```
i * i
f * i
t * i
e * i
e * f
e * t
e * e
```

whereupon we cannot make any further reductions.

There are some parsing algorithms, called *bottom-up parsing algorithms*, that find the correct substring to reduce each step. These parsing algorithms can be used directly. Unfortunately, LL(1) parsing is *top-down*, so we must do something to make it give us the reduction sequence.

Here's what we do: We invent an extension of the language in which each production ends with a distinct terminal symbol, a *marker*, translate the sentence into the equivalent *marked* sentence in this extended language, and use the marked sentence to compute the semantic associations for the nonterminals. We will show that

- we can use the markers to perform reductions in the correct order.

- we can translate a sentence without markers into a sentence with markers using a version of the LL(1) recognition algorithm.
- we can combine these two operations so that no intermediate sentence is ever generated.

First, let's consider how we would use markers for reductions. We add markers to our expression grammar to give an marker-augmented grammar as shown in the following table:

Original grammar	Marked grammar
start = e.	start = e P1.
e = e "+" t.	e = e "+" t P2.
e = e "-" t.	e = e "-" t P3.
e = t .	e = t P4 .
t = f "*" t.	t = f "*" t P5.
t = f "/" t.	t = f "/" t P6.
t = f .	t = f P7 .
f = i.	f = i P8.
f = "(" e ")".	f = "(" e ")" P9.

Notice that each production in the original grammar has a corresponding production in the marked grammar. The only difference between these productions is that the marked production has a marker at the end of its right hand side. All the markers are distinct.

Assuming *i* represents *integer*, here's a sentence in the expression language and its translation:

30 / 5 \* 2 + 6  
 30 P8 / 5 P8 \* 2 P8 P7 P5 P6 P4 + 6 P8 P7 P2 P1

The corresponding sentences can be derived by leftmost derivations using the corresponding productions in each derivation step, as follows:

start	start
e	e P1
e + t	e + t P2 P1
t + t	t P4 + t P2 P1
f / t + t	f / t P6 P4 + t P2 P1
30 / t + t	30 P8 / t P6 P4 + t P2 P1
30 / f * t + t	30 P8 / f * t P5 P6 P4 + t P2 P1



30 / 5 * t + t	30 P8 / 5 P8 * t P5 P6 P4 + t P2 P1
30 / 5 * f + t	30 P8 / 5 P8 * f P7 P5 P6 P4 + t P2 P1
30 / 5 * 2 + t	30 P8 / 5 P8 * 2 P8 P7 P5 P6 P4 + t P2 P1
30 / 5 * 2 + f	30 P8 / 5 P8 * 2 P8 P7 P5 P6 P4 + f P7 P2 P1
30 / 5 * 2 + 6	30 P8 / 5 P8 * 2 P8 P7 P5 P6 P4 + 6 P8 P7 P2 P1

When reducing the translated sentence, we use the markers as suffix Polish operators. Each marker has a number of symbols preceding it in its right hand side. The numbers for the markers are shown below:

marker	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
number of operands	1	3	3	1	3	3	1	1	3

Now we will show how to reduce a marked sentence to the start symbol. The input consists of a string of tokens and markers. The algorithm uses a stack.

Figure 9 Algorithm for Reduction using markers.

#### ALGORITHM FOR REDUCTION USING MARKERS

Initially set the stack empty.

Read through the marked sentence one symbol at a time

if the symbol is a token, push it on the stack

otherwise the symbol is an marker,

look up the production it occurs in

remove the marker's "arity" number of symbols from the stack  
(these correspond to the symbols ahead of the marker on the right hand side)

push the left hand side symbol on the stack

At the end, the start symbol will be on the stack.

The markers coming at the ends of right hand sides tell us when to make a reduction and which production to use. Here is a reduction sequence using the algorithm:

stack	input
	30 P8 / 5 P8 * 2 P8 P7 P5 P6 P4 + 6 P8 P7 P2 P1
30	P8 / 5 P8 * 2 P8 P7 P5 P6 P4 + 6 P8 P7 P2 P1
f	/ 5 P8 * 2 P8 P7 P5 P6 P4 + 6 P8 P7 P2 P1
f /	5 P8 * 2 P8 P7 P5 P6 P4 + 6 P8 P7 P2 P1
f / 5	P8 * 2 P8 P7 P5 P6 P4 + 6 P8 P7 P2 P1
f / f	* 2 P8 P7 P5 P6 P4 + 6 P8 P7 P2 P1
f / f *	2 P8 P7 P5 P6 P4 + 6 P8 P7 P2 P1
f / f * 2	P8 P7 P5 P6 P4 + 6 P8 P7 P2 P1
f / f * f	P7 P5 P6 P4 + 6 P8 P7 P2 P1
f / f * t	P5 P6 P4 + 6 P8 P7 P2 P1
f / t	P6 P4 + 6 P8 P7 P2 P1
t	P4 + 6 P8 P7 P2 P1
e	+ 6 P8 P7 P2 P1
e +	6 P8 P7 P2 P1
e + 6	P8 P7 P2 P1
e + f	P7 P2 P1
e + t	P2 P1
e	P1
start	

## 5.2 Semantic values

Every symbol in the sentential form has a meaning associated with it, a *semantic value*. The semantic values of symbols are also called collections of *attributes*. Terminal symbols will have semantic values assigned to them by the scanner. Terminal symbols with their associated values are called *tokens*. In the TCLL1 system, a token is a record containing

- the syntactic type (the terminal symbol)—used by the parser to recognize the input.
- the body (the string of characters that comprise the token)—used by the semantics routines.
- the line number on which the token occurred.
- the column number (actually the character position) of the leftmost charac-

ter of the token; the line and column are used to report the position of an error.

It is fairly clear how to use the reduction algorithm to compute semantic values of symbols. Each production, and hence each marker, has a procedure, a *semantics routine*, associated with it. What is kept on the stack are semantic values. When a marker is encountered, the semantic values of the right hand side symbols are removed from the stack and passed to the semantics routine. The routine computes the semantic value of the left hand side symbol and that value is pushed back on the stack.

A semantic value of a nonterminal expresses the meaning of the phrase it derived. A semantic value may be:

- The numeric value of the subexpression the nonterminal represents.
- An operator tree or an abstract syntax tree representing the phrase.
- A translation of the phrase and a description of its result's data type.

### 5.3 Inserting markers into sentences

So how do we insert markers into a sentence? We use a version of our LL(1) recognition algorithm. The differences from the original recognition algorithm are as follows:

- The algorithm uses a grammar containing markers.
- As it matches tokens, it writes them out.
- When it finds a marker on the top of the prediction stack, it writes it out.

The LL(1) translation algorithm with action symbols is shown in Figure 10.

Of course a grammar has to be put in LL(1) form before the parser can use it. Do markers cause any problems? Not really. All they require is:

- Markers are moved around like any other symbol.
- When calculating First and Follow sets, markers are invisible; they are treated like nonterminals that derive only the empty string.

If we transform the marked expression grammar, we can get the following LL(1) form:

```

start = e P1.
e = t P4 etail.
etail = "+" t P2
etail.
etail = "-" t P3
etail.
etail = .
    
```

```

t = f ttail .
ttail = "*" t P5.
ttail = "/" t P6.
ttail = P7 .
f = i P8.
f = "(" e ")" P9.

```

Figure 10 LL(1) Algorithm to insert markers

### LL(1) ALGORITHM TO TRANSLATE INTO A MARKED SENTENCE

Initially, place the start symbol and the EOI (end of input) symbol on the prediction stack with the start symbol on top. Put the EOI symbol at the end of the input. Read the first input symbol into the *current token*.

Repeat

pop the top symbol off the prediction stack.

if the top symbol is a marker, write it out.

otherwise if the top symbol is a terminal, compare it to the current token.

If they match, write the current token out and read the next token from the input into the current token.

If they don't match, an error has been discovered in the input. Execute error recovery code.

otherwise if the top symbol is a nonterminal, choose one of its right hand sides and push it on the prediction stack, leftmost symbol on top. Choose the right hand side by looking at the next input symbol and deciding which RHS will allow parsing to continue.

until the EOI symbol is matched.

## 5.4 Parsing

In practical parsers, we do not first insert markers into a sentence and then pass it through a reduction algorithm. We combine both parts in one algorithm.

In the following LL(1) parsing algorithm, we use the name *action symbols* for *markers*. When the parser sees an action symbol, it calls an *action routine*, sometimes called a *semantics routine*. Is there a difference between a marker and an action symbol? Well, yes. All markers are action symbols, but we can put in action symbols for other purposes than marking the end of a right hand side, *e.g.* putting the scanner into a different mode.

### 5.4.1 Action symbols

In TCLL1, action symbols are required to be identifiers; they are used as names of the Icon procedures used for action routines. Action symbols may be declared by following them with an exclamation point, *e.g.*

$f = "(" e ")" P9! .$

If the action symbol has been declared in one place with an exclamation point, it need not be followed by an exclamation point anywhere else.

If you don't care to use the exclamation point, you can declare action symbols with the following declaration:

**actions :**  $a_1 a_2 \dots a_n .$

where each  $a_i$  is an action symbol.

### 5.4.2 The LL(1) parsing algorithm

The LL(1) parsing algorithm with action symbols is shown in Figure 11.

Figure 11 LL(1) parsing algorithm.

#### LL(1) PARSING ALGORITHM

Initially, place the start symbol and the EOI (end of input) symbol on the *prediction stack* with the start symbol on top. Put EOI at the end of the input. Make the *current token* empty. Make the *semantics stack* empty.

Repeat

pop the top symbol off the prediction stack.

while it is an action symbol, call its action routine and pop the next top symbol off the prediction stack. The action routine may pop zero or more values off the semantics stack and may push one or zero values back on it.

if the current token is empty, call the scanner to read the next input token into the current token.

if the top symbol from the prediction stack is a terminal, compare it to the current token.

If they match, push the current token onto the semantics stack. Make the current token empty.

If they don't match, an error has been discovered in the input. Execute some error recovery code.

otherwise if the top symbol from the prediction stack is a nonterminal, then choose one of its right hand sides and push it on the prediction stack, rightmost symbol on bottom. Choose the right hand side by looking at the next input symbol and deciding which right hand side will allow parsing to continue.

until the EOI symbol is matched.

A bit of explanation is necessary about marking the current token present or absent. In earlier algorithms we read the first token at the beginning and then read in a new token as soon as we had recognized the previous. This is quite all right for some compilers, but it is particularly a problem for interactive programs. The system won't respond to one command until it has seen the first token of the next. Here we don't try reading another token until we are going to look at it. We can perform any number of actions after recognizing a token before requesting the next, allowing the program to respond immediately after the last token of the command has been read.

### 5.4.3 *Building parsers*

Here is an approach for building parsers:

First, design a grammar for the language which has meaningful phrases. It must be clear to you what action you wish to take at the end of each phrase and what the semantic value of each symbol in the grammar is. Each token *is* a semantic value (the value of the terminal symbol). Each nonterminal has an associated data type to contain its semantic value or attributes.

Put an action symbol at the end of the right hand side of each production. Each production has some rule for constructing its left hand side's semantic value from the semantic values of the right hand side symbols (in addition to writing out translated code and changing some global variables). The action symbol is the name of the procedure to call when that right hand side has been recognized. It will pull off the semantics stack one value for each symbol on the right hand side and will push back the value of the left hand side.

Several productions may have the same action symbol if the number of elements on the right hand side are the same and the actions are similar. For example, each binary operator could have its own action routine, or all binary operators could share the same routine that looks at the operator token to decide what to do.

You may omit an action symbol for a renaming production, a production that has exactly one symbol on the right hand side and no action except to push back the value it pops. You may introduce action symbols at other places than the ends of right hand sides if you feel the need; not all action symbols represent markers.

Transform the grammar to LL(1) form. Move around action symbols the same as any other symbol. When checking whether the grammar is LL(1), treat action symbols as if they are nonterminals that derive only the empty string.

Write the action routines. An action routine for a *marker* action symbol will pull values off the semantics stack for the right hand side symbols of a production, compute the semantic value of the left hand side, and push it back. However, an action routine that does not correspond to a marker is not required to pop any value off the semantics stack or push a value back. You may also decide that some nonterminals have no semantic value and hence do not need to have a value on the semantics stack. Feel free not to push a value for such a symbol, but

be aware that it will complicate keeping track of the semantics stack's depth, as will be discussed later.

#### 5.4.4 Example of evaluating arithmetic expressions

Let's design action routines to evaluate arithmetic expressions using our expression grammar. Here's a sentence in the language:

$30/5*2+6$

Suppose we parse it using the LL(1) grammar with markers we constructed before:

```

start = e P1.                ttail = "*" t P5.
e = t P4 etail.              ttail = "/" t P6.
etail = "+" t P2 etail.      ttail = P7 .
etail = "-" t P3 etail.      f = i P8.
etail = .                    f = "(" e ")" P9.
t = f ttail .
    
```

In this case the terminal symbol *i* represents an integer token. Here's what the action routines are expected to do:

- P1** pop the numeric value on top of the semantics stack, write it out, and terminate execution.
- P2** pop three values from the semantics stack, add the first and third, and push the sum.
- P3** pop three values from the semantics stack in order *z*, *y*, *x*; push the value *x-z* back on the stack.
- P4** no operation.
- P5** pop three values from the semantics stack in order *z*, *y*, *x*; push the value *x\*z* back on the stack.
- P6** pop three values from the semantics stack in order *z*, *y*, *x*; push the value *x/z* back on the stack.
- P7** no operation.
- P8** pop the token off the semantics stack, convert its body from a string to an integer, and push the value back.
- P9** pop three values off the semantics stack and push the middle value back.

Here's a trace of the input and the semantics stack while parsing the sentence  $30/5*2+6$ . Tokens are indicated as *type:value*.

Action from previous	Semantics stack	Prediction stack	Input
		start EOI	30/5*2+6 EOI
		e P1 EOI	30/5*2+6 EOI
		t P4 etail P1 EOI	30/5*2+6 EOI
		f ttail P4 etail P1 EOI	30/5*2+6 EOI
		i P8 ttail P4 etail P1 EOI	30/5*2+6 EOI
match	i:30	P8 ttail P4 etail P1 EOI	/5*2+6 EOI
P8	30	ttail P4 etail P1 EOI	/5*2+6 EOI
	30	"/" t P6.P4 etail P1 EOI	/5*2+6 EOI
match	30 /:/	t P6 P4 etail P1 EOI	5*2+6 EOI
	30 /:/	f ttail P6 P4 etail P1 EOI	5*2+6 EOI
	30 /:/	i P8 ttail P6 P4 etail P1 EOI	5*2+6 EOI
match	30 /:/ i:5	P8 ttail P6 P4 etail P1 EOI	*2+6 EOI
P8	30 /:/ 5	ttail P6 P4 etail P1 EOI	*2+6 EOI
	30 /:/ 5	"*" t P5 P6 P4 etail P1 EOI	*2+6 EOI
match	30 /:/ 5 *.*	t P5 P6 P4 etail P1 EOI	2+6 EOI
	30 /:/ 5 *.*	f ttail P5 P6 P4 etail P1 EOI	2+6 EOI
	30 /:/ 5 *.*	i P8 ttail P5 P6 P4 etail P1 EOI	2+6 EOI
match	30 /:/ 5 *.* i:2	P8 ttail P5 P6 P4 etail P1 EOI	+6 EOI
P8	30 /:/ 5 *.* 2	ttail P5 P6 P4 etail P1 EOI	+6 EOI
	30 /:/ 5 *.* 2	P7 P5 P6 P4 etail P1 EOI	+6 EOI
P7	30 /:/ 5 *.* 2	P5 P6 P4 etail P1 EOI	+6 EOI
P5	30 /:/ 10	P6 P4 etail P1 EOI	+6 EOI
P6	3	P4 etail P1 EOI	+6 EOI
P4	3	etail P1 EOI	+6 EOI
	3	"+" t P2 etail P1 EOI	+6 EOI
match	3 +:+	t P2 etail P1 EOI	6 EOI



	3 +:+	f ttail P2 etail P1 EOI	6 EOI
	3 +:+	i P8 ttail P2 etail P1 EOI	6 EOI
match	3 +: i:6	P8 ttail P2 etail P1 EOI	EOI
P8	3 +: 6	ttail P2 etail P1 EOI	EOI
	3 +: 6	P7 P2 etail P1 EOI	EOI
P7	3 +: 6	P2 etail P1 EOI	EOI
P2	9	etail P1 EOI	EOI
	9	P1 EOI	EOI
P1		EOI	EOI
match			

## 5.5 Accounting for semantics stack depth

As mentioned, an action routine can push either one or zero values on the semantics stack. As a rule, they would leave one value to represent the left hand side symbol. Some nonterminals, however, have no semantic information associated with them, so there is no reason to keep a value on the stack for them. It is a strong temptation not to needlessly push and pop null values, and we are sure to give in to this temptation, but it makes it harder to get our parser right. We will probably find one of our biggest problems with this parsing method is that we mangle the semantics stack by popping or pushing the wrong number of items.

Recall that the paradigmatic way to use action symbols involves four things:

1. Write an original grammar in a clear, meaningful form without using any grouping, optional, or repetitive constructs and with action symbols only at the ends of right hand sides.
2. Design the action routines to remove one thing from the semantics stack for each symbol ahead of them on the right hand side and will push one value back.
3. Then, create a transformed grammar in LL(1) form, moving the action symbols around like any other symbol.
4. Represent every terminal and nonterminal symbol in the original grammar by exactly one value on the semantics stack.

If we decide not to push values for some nonterminals, you will have to keep track of which nonterminals have values and which do not. It will no longer be

immediately obvious by looking at a right hand side just how many values an action symbol's procedure is to pop or push.

The problem is made all the worse once the grammar is transformed into LL(1) form. When we need to make a change in the grammar (and we will) we will make the change directly to the LL(1) form and it will not be at all clear what effect it will have on the semantics stack. In the LL(1) form, newly introduced nonterminals will not necessarily leave either zero or one values on the stack. And the braces, brackets, parentheses, and vertical bars cause their own confusion.

What we will need is a way to account for stack depth. Associate a number with each symbol, right hand side, alternative, and parenthesized, optional, or repetitive phrase. These numbers represent the effect of the construct on the semantics stack depth. Here are the rules:

- 1 Every symbol will change the depth of the semantics stack by a fixed amount.
  - All terminals count as +1. The parser will push each token matched on the stack.
  - Each nonterminal will have a fixed number of symbols it will leave on or remove from the stack. Nonterminals in the original grammar will change the stack depth by +1 or +0. Nonterminals introduced during the translation to LL(1) form may even have a negative net depth, as we will see below.
  - An action symbol has an effect equal to the number of symbols pushed minus the number popped. Since the number pushed is zero or one and the number popped is greater than or equal to zero, an action symbol can have any number less than or equal to one.
- 2 A string of symbols has a number computed by adding up all its components.
- 3 The number associated with a nonterminal must be the same as the number computed for each of its right hand sides.
- 4 Each alternative (separated by vertical bars, |) must add up to the same value.
- 5 The contents of brackets, [...], must add up to zero.
- 6 The contents of braces, {...}, must add up to zero.

To use a version of our expression grammar:

```
start = e P1!.
e = t { "+" t P2! | "-" t P3! } .
t = f [ "*" t P5! | "/" t P6! ].
f = i P8! | "(" e ")" P9!.
```

We can determine the numbers associated with the symbols as follows:

"+", "-", "*", "/", i, "(", ")"	1	they all are terminals
start	0	
e, t, f	1	they are nonterminals from the original grammar
P2, P3, P5, P6	-2	they handle binary expressions, popping three and pushing one
P1	-1	it pops an expression's value and pushes nothing
P8	0	it pops the integer token and pushes its numeric value
P9	-2	it pops three values and pushes back the middle one

We can now compute the lengths of the right hand sides to make sure the rules aren't violated and the lengths of the left hand sides match. Here is a rough trace of the calculations we may need to go through:

syntax	calculation	number of the rule being used or checked
start = e P1!.	$0 = 1 + -1$	3
"+" t P2!	$1 + 1 + -2 = 0$	2
"-" t P3!	$1 + 1 + -2 = 0$	2
"+" t P2!   "-" t P3!	$0 = 0$	4
{ "+" t P2!   "-" t P3! }	0	6
e = t { "+" t P2!   "-" t P3! }	$1 = 1 + 0$	3
"*" t P5!	$1 + 1 + -2 = 0$	2
"/" t P6!	$1 + 1 + -2 = 0$	2
"*" t P5!   "/" t P6!	$0 = 0$	4
[ "*" t P5!   "/" t P6! ]	0	5
t = f [ "*" t P5!   "/" t P6! ].	$1 = 1 + 0$	3
i P8!	$1 + 0 = 1$	2
"(" e ")" P9!.	$1 + 1 + 1 + -2 = 1$	2

## TCLL1 Parser Generator

i P8!   "( " e " )" P9!	1 = 1	4
f = i P8!   "( " e " )" P9!	1 = 1	3

## Chapter 6      Panic mode error recovery

---

The parser discovers an error in its input when the next input symbol either does not match the terminal symbol on top of the prediction stack or it does not select a right hand side for the nonterminal on top of the stack. There are no rules to tell the parser what to do next. What should it do?

First, of course, the parser should give an error message. The easiest error message is simply:

unexpected token XXXX at line YYYY, column ZZZZ

Then what? Just stopping isn't nice. Users appreciate the compiler trying to find several errors with each attempted compile. The compiler should attempt to recover from the error and continue processing the program.

There are two problems in attempting to continue:

- The parser must get past the token that caused the syntactic error.
- The semantics routines must not become so confused that they either crash or flood the user with error messages. This requires that the semantics stack be set to an appropriate depth and that the contents of the stack not cause errors to the action routines.

Fortunately, both are easy to accomplish with LL(1) parsing.

A simple error recovery technique for LL(1) parsers is called *panic mode*. When the parser has detected and reported an error, it goes into panic mode and throws away part of the input and part of the prediction stack until it has found a token in the input and a symbol in the prediction stack that allow parsing to continue, then it returns to normal mode and continues parsing.

How does it choose an input symbol to restart at, and how does it decide how much of the stack to throw away? The answers to the two questions are related.

The parser will read ahead to one of a set of symbols that delimit major sections of the program. These symbols are called *fiducial symbols*, symbols the parser can trust. For many programming languages, the fiducial symbols include ";", "then", "else", and "end", symbols that end or separate statements. If an error is detected within a statement, the parser will throw away the rest of the statement and try to resume parsing with the next.

The parser will not, however, accept just any fiducial. The fiducial must be predicted. The parser will throw away input symbols up to a fiducial and then look down the prediction stack. If it finds the fiducial symbol on the stack, or if it finds a nonterminal symbol that derives that fiducial symbol first in a string, then the parser will remove the symbols on the prediction stack down to the fiducial or nonterminal and will then resume parsing.

If the fiducial is not predicted, of course, the parser throws it away and continues looking. EOI is a fiducial, and it is at the bottom of the stack, so the parser can at least resynchronize by throwing away all the rest of the program.

EOI is the only fiducial chosen by the parser generator. You must specify the others yourself with the fiducials declaration:

**fiducial:**  $f_1 f_2 \dots f_n$  .

Notice that the declaration uses a colon rather than an equal sign, the fiducials are listed without commas and the declaration concludes with a period.

"But," you may ask, "if the parser just throws away part of the prediction stack, won't the semantics stack will be mangled when the parsing resumes. What does the parser do about that?"

The TCLL1 parser tries to repair errors. After throwing away part of the input, it does *not* just throw away the top part of the stack, but instead generates a replacement string of tokens for the input thrown away. Recall that the parser works by generating a program atop the input program, matching them. It is trivial to generate the replacement tokens. Instead of throwing away symbols from the prediction stack, it does the following with each top symbol of the prediction stack down to the symbol that predicted the fiducial:

- If the top symbol is a terminal, the parser generates an error token and pushes it onto the semantics stack. An error token can be recognized by the action routines. It warns the action routines that the token did not come from the user. The routines should not try to use the token nor give any further error messages.
- If the top symbol is an action symbol, the parser calls its action routine. The action routine will adjust the semantics stack properly. Most action routines will start by removing the correct number of values from the semantics stack and checking if there were any error tokens among them. If the action routine finds an error token, it will push the correct number of error tokens back on the stack (zero or one) and return immediately.
- If the top symbol is a nonterminal, the parser replaces it with one of its right hand sides. The parser chooses the right hand side that will generate a shortest possible string of terminals. If there are several such right hand sides, the parser generator chooses arbitrarily which one will be used.

## Chapter 7      Incorporating the parsers into compilers

---

Here is what we need to do to build a compiler using this system:

- create a grammar for the language you wish to compile, put in action symbols, put it into LL(1) form, and run it through TCLL1 to get tables for our parser. If our grammar is called *ourlang.grm*, the tables will be given the name *ourlang.ll1*.
- Write a main program to initialize the compiler and call the parser. Actually, we will just edit an old main program to adapt it. We'll see one later that we can start with.
- Write a scanner for the language. Again, we will just adapt an already written scanner. We usually start with one written for Oberon-2. We'll see it later and see how it works.
- Write action routines. Most of these need to be written specially for each compiler, but there is some standard boilerplate that they share.
- Compile our files together and link with *readll1*, *parsell1*, *semstk*, and *rpt-perr* from the TCLL1 run time library and with files *xcode*, *escape*, and *ebcdic* from the Icon programming library.

The call-structure of the compiler is as follows:

Our **main** program calls

- **readLL1** in file *readll1.icn* to read in the parse tables from a file and produce an internal form of the tables for the parser to use.
- **initSemanticsStack** in file *semstk.icn* to initialize the semantics stack for the action routines.
- **initScanner**, which we provide to initialize the scanner. It is used mainly to open the user's input file. We can leave this routine out if we don't need it.
- **parseLL1** in file *parsell1.icn* to read and parse the input program. Procedure *parseLL1* calls
  - **scan**, which we provide, to return it the next token of the input each time it is called. When the input is finished, scan will return an EOI token for each call.
  - **outToken** in file *semstk.icn* to put a token it has matched onto the

semantics stack.

- **outError** in file *semstk.icn* to push an error token on the semantics stack during panic mode error recovery.
- **reportParseError** in file *rptperr.icn* to report the parser has encountered an unexpected token in the input.
- **outAction** in file *semstk.icn* to call an **action routine**, which you supply.
- Our **action routine** may call
  - **popSem** in file *semstk.icn* to pop a number of values off the semantics stack and return them in a list. The leftmost value in the list corresponds to the leftmost symbol in the right hand side that contains the action symbol, and is the value that was furthest down the semantics stack.
  - **pushSem** in file *semstk.icn* to push the semantics value of the left hand side symbol onto the semantics stack.
  - **anyError** in file *semstk.icn* to look through a list of values and succeed returning any of those values that is an error token, or fail if there are no error tokens present.
  - **isError** in file *semstk.icn* to check whether a particular semantic value is an error token.

## 7.1 Interface to readll1.icn

The TCLL1 parser generator creates a file of parse tables from a grammar. This parse table must be read in before the parser can use it. Module *readll1.icn* provides the routine, *readLL1*, to read in a parse table. Routine *readLL1* returns the parse table contained in a record of type *LL1*.

**record LL1(...)**

We don't need to know the fields of this record to use the parser. Procedure *readLL1* returns a record of this type; procedure *parseLL1* takes it as a parameter.

**procedure readLL1(fileName)**

parameter: *fileName*—a string, the name of the file containing the output of the TCLL1 parser generator.

returns a record of type *LL1* containing parse tables

fails if it can't open file *fileName*

Procedure *readLL1* takes the name of the parse table file as a string. (TCLL1 creates the file with the extension ".ll1" so unless you've renamed it, you will



pass a file name with that extension.) If it successfully reads the tables, *readLL1* will return a record of type *LL1* containing an internal form of the tables. If it can't open the file, *readLL1* will fail. Unfortunately, if the file is malformed, the Icon library routine *decode* will crash.

## 7.2 Interface to *parsell1.icn*

Module *parsell1.icn* contains the parser and the record declaration for tokens, the record *Token*. The scanner returns a token to the parser for each input symbol. Tokens are pushed on the semantics stack as they are recognized.

**record *Token*(type,body,line,column)**

fields:

- 1 type—a character string, the identifier or string used in the grammar to represent the terminal symbol.
- 2 body—the character string that the scanner found in the input. For keywords and most punctuation, the bodies will usually be the same as the type. For identifiers, the body will be the name of the identifier. For constants, the type will indicate the type of the constant and the body will have the character string the user wrote.
- 3 line—an integer, the line number where the token was found.
- 4 column—an integer, the character position of the token in the line (tabs are treated as single characters).

If we are allowing "includes" you may want to add another field to tell which file the token was found in.

**procedure *parseLL1*(ll1)**

parameter: ll1—a record of type *LL1*

returns nothing

Procedure *parseLL1* performs an entire parse up to the end of input. It must be given an *LL1* record containing the parse tables. (See module *readll1.icn* for a further discussion of record *LL1* and procedure *readLL1* to read in the tables.)

## 7.3 Interface to *semstk.icn*

Module *semstk.icn* provides procedures to maintain the semantics stack. The parser uses three of the routines; we use the rest. This module provides the definition of record *ErrorToken*, which has exactly the same fields as *Token*, but is used to represent erroneous phrases.

**record *ErrorToken*(type,body,line,column)**

The parser inserts error tokens during panic mode error recovery. Our action routines should check for error tokens before taking any action. Once either the parser or an action routine has reported an error, error tokens should be pushed

on the semantics stack to warn other action routines not to give another error message and not to try to make sense of the input.

### **procedure initSemanticsStack()**

called by our main program

parameters: none

returns nothing

This procedure should be called by the main program before starting parsing. As its name says, it initializes the semantics stack.

### **procedure outToken(tok)**

called by the parser

parameter: tok—a token

returns nothing

The parser calls procedure *outToken* to push a token on the semantics stack.

### **procedure outAction(a)**

called by the parser

parameter: a—a string, an action symbol, the name of an action routine.

returns nothing

The parser calls procedure *outAction* to call an action routine. The parser passes *outAction* the string name of the routine to call.

### **procedure outError(t,l,c)**

called by the parser

parameters:

t—a string, the name of a terminal symbol

l—an integer, a line number

c—an integer, a position on the line

returns nothing

The parser calls procedure *outError* to push an error token on the stack. The error token will have the type and body *t*, line *l* and column *c*.

### **procedure popSem(n)**

called by an action routine

parameter:  $n$ —an integer, the number of values to pop from the semantics stack

returns a list containing the values popped, topmost at the right

We call procedure *popSem* to remove the top  $n$  values from the semantics stack and return them to us in a list. The top element will be the rightmost value in the list. Say we call this from an action routine  $A$  and the grammar has a production:

$$L = R_1 R_2 \dots R_k A!$$

where each symbol  $R_i$  has a value  $V_i$  on the semantics stack, then

`popSem(k)`

will yield a list

$[V_1, V_2, \dots, V_k]$

#### **procedure pushSem(s)**

called by an action routine

parameter:  $s$ —a value to push on the semantics stack

returns nothing

We call procedure *pushSem* to push a value on the semantics stack.

#### **procedure isError(v)**

called by an action routine

parameter:  $v$ —a value, presumably from the semantics stack

returns: an undefined value if  $v$  is an ErrorToken record

fails if  $v$  is not an error token

Procedure *isError* will succeed if  $v$  is an ErrorToken record and will fail otherwise.

#### **procedure anyError(V)**

called by an action routine

parameter:  $V$ —a list of values, presumably from the semantics stack

returns: an ErrorToken record,  $v$ , found in the list  $V$  if there is any

fails if  $V$  does not contain any error tokens

Procedure *anyError* looks through list *V* to see if it contains any error tokens. If *V* does, then *anyError* will succeed returning one of the error tokens in *V*. If there are no error tokens, then *anyError* fails.

## 7.4 Interface to action routines

We will need to provide an action routine for each action symbol. The routine has the same name as the action symbol and takes no parameters.

The boilerplate for an action routine for action symbol *A* is:

```
procedure A( )
  local V,e,...
  V:=popSem(...)
  if e:=anyError(V) then {pushSem(e); return}
  ...
  pushSem(...)
  return
end
```

The action routine is a parameterless procedure with the same name as the action symbol. It pops the appropriate number of values off the semantics stack. If there is an error token among them, then there was an error in a subphrase, so the action routine pushes an error token back on the stack and returns. Otherwise it performs whatever action it should and pushes a value back on the stack.

Of course, the pushSem's should be omitted if the action routine isn't supposed to leave any value on the stack.

## 7.5 Interface to rpterr.icn

**procedure reportParseError(t)**

called by the parser

parameter: *t*—a token encountered by the parser that it wasn't expecting

returns nothing

Actually, this is such a small procedure, we usually just include a copy of it with our main program rather than compiling it separately.

## 7.6 Main procedure

We will need to provide a main program to initialize our compiler and call the parser. Do what we do: adapt one that already exists. Here is the main program from the TCLL1 parser generator:

Figure 12 Example main program for a compiler.

```
1 # TCLL1 -- an LL(1) parser generator
2 # Main program.
3 # (written by Dr. Thomas W. Christopher)
4 #
5
```

```

6 link readll1,parsell1,scangram,semgram,semstk,gramanal,ll1
7
8 procedure main(L)
9   local filename,baseFilename,flags,filenameParts
10
11   flags := ""
12   if L[1][1]=="-" then {
13     flags := L[1]
14     filename := L[2]
15   } else {
16     filename:=L[1]
17   }
18   if /filename then
19     stop("usage: iconx tc111 [flags] filename.grm")
20
21   filenameParts:=fileSuffix(filename)
22   baseFilename:=filenameParts[1]
23   if filename==(baseFilename||".ll1") then
24     stop("would write output over input")
25   initScanner( filename |
26     (/filenameParts[2] & baseFilename||".grm")) |
27     stop("unable to open input: ",filename)
28
29   initGrammar()
30   initSemanticsStack()
31
32   parseLL1(readLL1("tc111.ll1"))
33
34   finishDeclarations()
35   ll1(baseFilename||".ll1")
36   if find("p",flags) then printGrammar()
37   write(errorCount," error",(errorCount~1&"s")||",
38     " and ",warningCount," warning",(warningCount~1&"s")||")
39
40 end
41
42 # From:      filename.icn in Icon Program Library
43 # Author:    Robert J. Alexander, 5 Dec. 89
44 # Modified:  Thomas Christopher, 12 Oct. 94
45
46 procedure fileSuffix(s,separator)
47   local i
48   /separator := "."
49   i := *s + 1
50   every i := find(separator,s)
51   return [s[1:i],s[*s >= i) + 1:0] | &null]
52 end

```

**Note:**

- 7 Lines 11-19 read and check the input file name and optional flags.
- 8 Lines 21-24 decompose and check the input file name.
- 9 Lines 25-27 try to open the input file. Procedure `initScanner` will fail if the file can't be opened.
- 10 Line 29 initializes the semantics module, which contains the action routines.
- 11 Line 30 initializes the semantics stack in module `semstk.icn`.

- 12 Line 32 reads the TCLL1 parse tables and calls the parser.
- 13 Lines 34-38 finish processing the user grammar.
- 14 Lines 42-52 are adapted from the Icon programming library to separate an extension from a base file name.

## 7.7 Structure of scanner

We must provide a parameterless procedure, *scan*, which will return the next token from the input each time it is called. We will probably wish to provide with it a procedure *initScanner* which will open the input file and initialize the scanner. We ourselves call that routine from the main program, so we can choose whatever interface we want for it.

As with main programs, we probably will not write an entirely new scanner when we need one; we will adapt one that already exists. Here is the scanner we usually start with, written for the language Oberon-2:

Figure 13 Example scanner.

```

1 #
2 # Scanner for Oberon 2
3 #
4
5 global inputFile
6 global inputLine,inputLineNumber,inputColumn,eoiToken
7 global keywordSet
8
9 procedure initScanner(filename)
10 inputFile := open(filename,"r") |
11   stop("unable to open input: ",filename)
12 return
13 end
14
15 procedure fractionPart()
16 return "." || (tab(many(&digits)) | "")
17 end
18
19 procedure scaleFactor()
20 return tab(any('ED')) || (tab(any('+-')) | "") || tab(many(&digits))
21 end
22
23 procedure scan()
24 local t,c,b
25 static whiteSpace,initIdChars,idChars,hexdigits,commentDepth,commentLineNo
26 initial {
27   /inputFile := &input
28   inputLineNumber := 1
29   inputColumn := 1
30   inputLine := read(inputFile)
31   eoiToken := &null
32   whiteSpace := &ascii[1:34]#control ++ blank
33   initIdChars := &letters
34   hexdigits := &digits ++ 'ABCDEF'
35   idChars := &letters ++ &digits ++ '$_'
36   keywordSet := set([
37     "ARRAY","BEGIN","BY","CASE","CONST","DIV","DO",
38     "ELSE","ELSIF","END","EXIT","FOR","IF","IMPORT",
39     "IN","IS","LOOP","MOD","MODULE","NIL","OF","OR",
40     "POINTER","PROCEDURE","RECORD","REPEAT","RETURN",
41     "THEN","TO","TYPE","UNTIL","VAR","WHILE","WITH"
```

```

42 ] )
43 }
44 if \eoiToken then return eoiToken
45 repeat inputLine ? {
46   tab(inputColumn)
47   tab(many(whiteSpace))
48   c := &pos
49   if b := tab(many(&digits)) then {
50     if b ||:= tab(many(hexdigits)) || ="X" then {
51       t := Token("character",b,
52         inputLineNumber,c)
53     } else if b ||:= tab(many(hexdigits)) || ="H" then {
54       t := Token("hexinteger",b,
55         inputLineNumber,c)
56     } else if b := b || fractionPart() ||
57       scaleFactor() then {
58       t := Token("real",b,
59         inputLineNumber,c)
60     } else if b ||:= fractionPart() then {
61       t := Token("real",b,
62         inputLineNumber,c)
63     } else if b ||:= "." || scaleFactor() then {
64       t := Token("real",b,
65         inputLineNumber,c)
66     } else {
67       t := Token("integer",b,
68         inputLineNumber,c)
69     }
70     inputColumn := &pos
71     return t
72   } else
73     if any(initIdChars) then {
74       t := Token("ident",tab(many(idChars)),
75         inputLineNumber,c)
76       inputColumn := &pos
77       if member(keywordSet,t.body) then
78         t.type := t.body
79       return t
80     } else
81       if b := (":=" | ">=" | "<=" | "..") then {
82         inputColumn := &pos
83         return Token(b,b,inputLineNumber,c)
84       } else
85         if ="(" then {
86           inputColumn := &pos
87           commentDepth := 1
88           commentLineNo := inputLineNumber
89           while commentDepth > 0 do {
90             tab(upto('*(')|0)
91             if pos(0) then {
92               &pos := 1
93               inputLineNumber += 1
94               if not (&subject :=
95                 inputLine := read(inputFile))
96                 then {
97                 eoiToken := Token("EOI","EOI",
98                   inputLineNumber,1)
99                 write("end of input in comment beginning at ",
100                   commentLineNo)
101                 return eoiToken
102               }
103             } else if ="*)" then {
104               commentDepth -= 1
105             } else if ="(" then {

```

## TCLL1 Parser Generator

```
106             commentDepth += 1
107         } else {
108             move(1)
109         }
110     }
111     inputColumn := &pos
112 } else
113 if b := tab(any(',' , '#' ( [] { } ~+-*/|&^; :><.' ) ) ) then {
114     inputColumn := &pos
115     return Token(b,b,inputLineNumber,c)
116 } else
117 if pos(0) then {
118     inputColumn := 1
119     inputLineNumber += 1
120     if not (inputLine := read(inputFile)) then {
121         eoiToken := Token("EOI","EOI",
122             inputLineNumber,1)
123     }
124     return eoiToken
125 }
126 } else
127 if "=" then {
128     b := tab(find("="))
129     if not( = "=" ) then {
130         write("unterminated string at ",
131             inputLineNumber," ",c)
132     }
133     t := Token("string",b,inputLineNumber,c)
134     inputColumn := &pos
135     return t
136 } else
137 if "\"" then {
138     b := tab(find("\""))
139     if not( = "\"" ) then {
140         write("unterminated string at ",
141             inputLineNumber," ",c)
142     }
143     t := Token("string",b,inputLineNumber,c)
144     inputColumn := &pos
145     return t
146 } else
147 {
148     write("unexpected character: ",move(1),
149         " at line ",inputLineNumber," column ",c)
150     inputColumn := &pos
151 }
152 }
153 end
```

### Notes:

- 15 Lines 9-13 are the initialization routine, *initScanner*, that tries to open the input file.
- 16 Lines 15-21 help in recognizing real numbers.
- 17 Lines 23-153 are the scanner proper.
- 18 Lines 26-43 initialize the scanner the first time it is called. They could have been included in *initScanner* if the static's on line 25 had been made global.
- 19 Line 44 checks to see if an end-of-input token has been returned yet. If



so, it returns it again. We don't keep trying to read past the end of file.

- 20 Line 45 is a repeat because when we fall off the end of an input line, we will have to read in a new line and restart our scan at its beginning. We make `inputLine` the subject string and enter the compound expression to look for tokens.
- 21 Line 46 moves the cursor `&pos` over to the next column to look in.
- 22 Line 47 moves the cursor past any white space.
- 23 Line 48 remembers where the first legible character was so that we can report it as the *column* in a Token record.
- 24 Lines 49 -151 are a nested if statement to find tokens. The token types are grouped by the class of character they begin with.
- 25 Lines 49-72 handle all tokens that begin with a digit.
- 26 Lines 50-53 handle characters written in hexadecimal format.
- 27 Lines 53-56 handle integers written in hexadecimal format.
- 28 Lines 56-60 handle real numbers with both a fraction part and an exponent.
- 29 Lines 60-63 handle real numbers with a fraction part but no exponent.
- 30 Lines 63-66 handle real numbers with an exponent but no fraction.
- 31 Lines 66-69 handle integers.
- 32 Line 70 remembers where to restart the scan on the next call.
- 33 Lines 73 through 80 handle identifiers and keywords. A keyword is simply an identifier that is found in the set `keywordSet`.
- 34 Lines 81-84 handle two character operators.
- 35 Lines 85-112 handle comments, which in Oberon-2 are delimited by (\*) and \*) and can extend over multiple lines and be nested. Following the comment, this code falls out of the if expression to repeat the search for a token from the beginning.
- 36 Lines 113-116 handle single character operators and punctuation.
- 37 Lines 117-126 handle the scanner falling off the end of the line. (See also lines 91-103 which handle the same thing within a comment.)
- 38 Lines 127-146 handle quoted strings.
- 39 Lines 146-151 handle the default case of an unexpected character in the input.

## Appendix A The TCLL1 input grammar

---

Here is a grammar for TCLL1's input:

```
start = grammar.
grammar = { declaration }.
declaration = ID ( ":" rhs "." | "=" alts "." ).
rhs = {elem}.
alts = rhs { "|" rhs }.
elem = ID [ "!" ] | "(" alts ")" | "{" alts "}"
      | "[" alts "]" .
```

In the grammar, *ID* represents an identifier or a quoted string of special characters (recognition of *IDs* is handled by the scanner). The only syntax that hasn't been described yet is

```
declaration = ID ":" rhs "." .
```

This is a form of declaration that gives the symbols on the right hand side of the ":" special meanings. There are four such declarations:

- start : ID .

This declares the identifier *ID* to be the start symbol. It is equivalent to "*start* = *ID* ."

- EOI : ID .

This declares symbol *ID* to represent end-of-input. If this is not provided, the parser generator declares *EOI* itself to be the end-of-input symbol.

- actions : ID1 ID2 ... IDn .

This declares the identifiers to be action symbols so they can be used without following them with exclamation points.

- fiducials: ID1 ID2 ... IDn .

This declares the identifiers to be *fiducial symbols* for use in panic mode error recovery. Error recovery was discussed in Chapter 6 on page 43 .

Identifiers can have two forms:

- A letter or underscore (" \_"), followed by zero or more letters, digits, or underscores.

- A string of any characters except a quote enclosed in (double) quotes, e.g. `"=`".

An identifier must be entirely on one line.

A comment is the same as in Icon: a `#` and all the characters following it up to the end of the line.

## Appendix B    Contents of the LL1 record

---

The best way to use TCLL1 to generate a parser in some language other than Icon is to simply run the parser generator and write a program in Icon to read in the tables and translate them into the other language. To do that, you need to know the contents of the *LL1* record returned by procedure *readLL1*.

The record definition is:

```
record  LL1(sel,deflt,
           terminals,actions,
           fiducials,firstFiducials,
           minLengRHS,
           start,eoi)
```

All symbols are represented by character strings, their names. The fields are as follows

- *start* is the start symbol.
- *eoi* is the end-of-input symbol.
- *terminals* is a set containing all the terminal symbols.
- *actions* is a set containing all the action symbols.
- *sel* is a table used to select which right hand side to use for a nonterminal on the stack and a terminal in the input. Let L be the LL1 record, N be the non-terminal, and T be the terminal, then if L.sel[N] is not &null and if L.sel[N][T] is not &null, then L.sel[N][T] is a list of symbols to replace N with—the right hand side. However, if either L.sel[N] is &null or L.sel[N][T] is &null, there may still be a replacement right hand side given by field *deflt*.
- *deflt* is a table to specify default right hand sides for nonterminals. Let L be the LL1 record, N be the nonterminal, and T be the terminal. The parser will first try to look up a right hand side in L.sel[N][T]. If there is no right hand side there, the parser tries to find one in L.deflt[N]. If L.deflt[N] is not &null, the parser will replace N with the list of symbols in L.deflt[N]. The whole purpose of this table is to save space in the *sel* table. It is used under two circumstances: (1) for nonterminals that have only one production and (2) for the right hand side chosen by the largest number of terminal symbols.
- *fiducials* is a set containing all the fiducial symbols, i.e., the subset of termi-

nal symbols at which the parser will try to resume parsing following an error.

- *firstFiducials* is a table mapping nonterminals into the sets of fiducial symbols they derive first. The error recovery uses this when it scans ahead to a fiducial and then sees if the fiducial is predicted. A fiducial is predicted if it is on the prediction stack or if a nonterminal is on the stack which can derive the fiducial first.
- *minLengRHS* is a table mapping each nonterminal to one of its right hand sides which will derive a minimum length terminal string. It is used by the error recovery to replacement tokens for the tokens thrown away during panic mode error recovery.

Care has been taken to minimize the storage required by the parsing tables. All occurrences of the same right hand side are represented by the same list (not merely lists with the same contents). All symbols are represented by the same bytes in Icon's string area, not merely by equal strings.