

Activation Records

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Chapter 6.3

Outline of this lecture

- Operations on routines
- Stack Frames
- The Frame Pointer and Frame Size
- The Lexical Pointers and Nesting Levels
- Machine Architectures
- Parameter Passing and Return Address
- Frame Resident Variables
- Limitations
- Summary

Operations on Routines

- Declarations
- Definitions
- Call
- Return
- Jumping out of routines
- Passing routines as parameters
- Returning routines as parameters

Nested routines in C syntax

```
int i;
void level_0(void) {
    int j;
    void level_1(void) {
        int k;
        void level_2(void) {
            int l;
            ...          /* code has access to i, j, k, l */
            k = 1;
            j = 1;
        }
        ...          /* code has access to i, j, k */
        j = k;
    }
    ...          /* code has access to i, j */
}
```

Non-Local goto in C syntax

```
void level_0(void) {  
    void level_1(void) {  
        void level_2(void) {  
            ...  
            goto L_1;  
            ...  
        }  
        ...  
L_1: ...  
        ...  
    }  
    ...  
}
```

Non-local gotos in C

- `setjmp` remembers the current location and the stack frame
- `longjmp` jumps to the current location (popping many activation records)

Non-Local Transfer of Control in C

```
#include <setjmp.h>

void find_div_7(int n, jmp_buf *jmpbuf_ptr) {
    if (n % 7 == 0) longjmp(*jmpbuf_ptr, n);
    find_div_7(n + 1, jmpbuf_ptr);
}

int main(void) {
    jmp_buf jmpbuf;          /* type defined in setjmp.h */
    int return_value;

    if ((return_value = setjmp(jmpbuf)) == 0) {
        /* setting up the label for longjmp() lands here */
        find_div_7(1, &jmpbuf);
    }
    else {
        /* returning from a call of longjmp() lands here */
        printf("Answer = %d\n", return_value);
    }
    return 0;
}
```

Passing a function as parameter

```
void foo (void (*interrupt_handler)(void))  
{  
    ...  
    if (...) interrupt_handler();  
    ...  
}
```


Currying in C syntax

```
int (*)(int x) f(int x)
{
    int g(int y)
    {
        return x + y;
    }
    return g ;
}
```

```
int (*h)() = f(3);
int (*j)() = f(4);
```

```
int z = h(5);
int w = j(7);
```

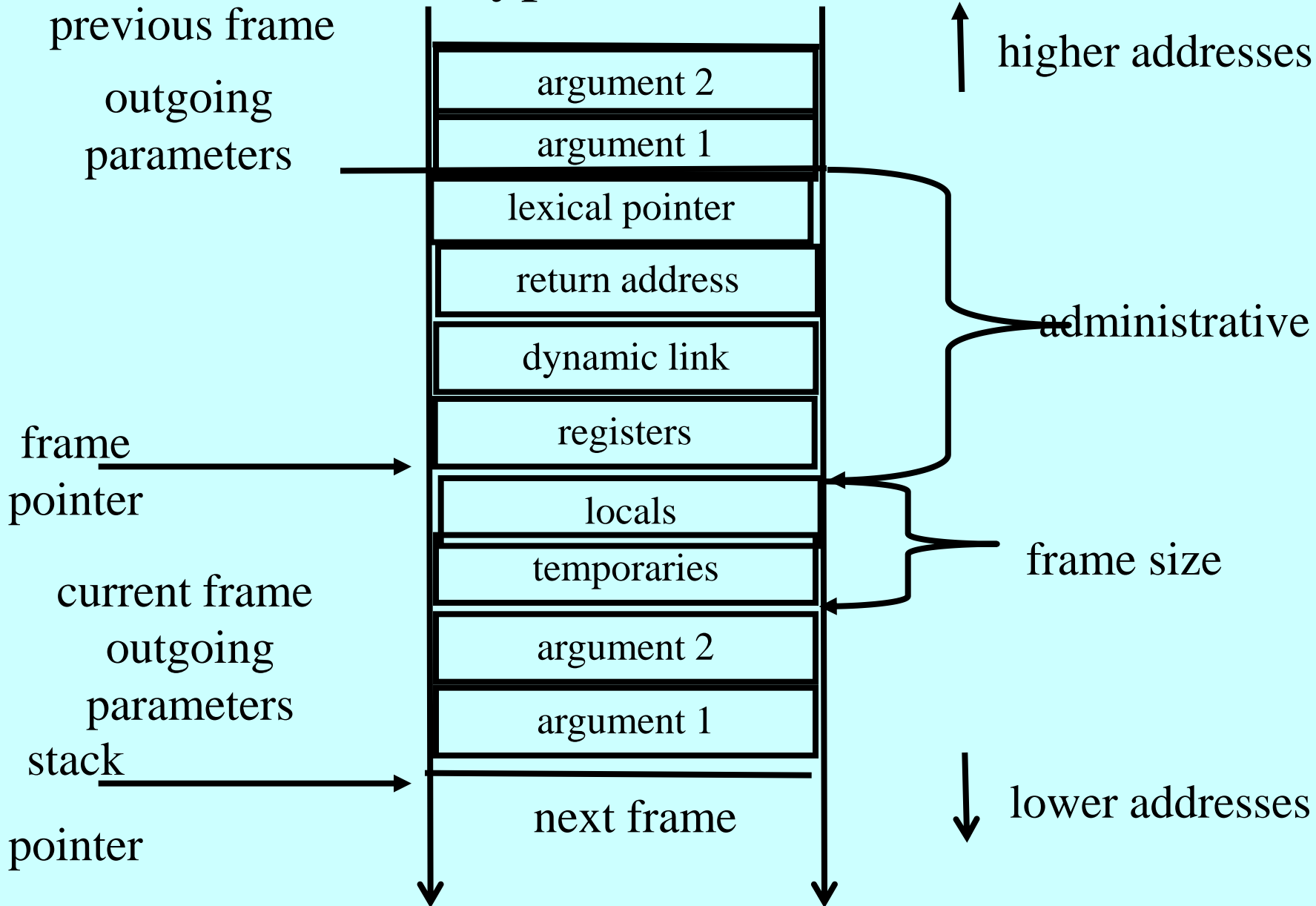
Compile-Time Information on Variables

- Name
- Type
- Scope
 - when is it recognized
- Duration
 - Until when does its value exist
- Size
 - How many bytes are required at runtime
- Address
 - Fixed
 - Relative
 - Dynamic

Stack Frames

- Allocate a separate space for every procedure incarnation
- Relative addresses
- Provide a simple mean to achieve modularity
- Supports separate code generation of procedures
- Naturally supports recursion
- Efficient memory allocation policy
 - Low overhead
 - Hardware support may be available
- LIFO policy
- Not a pure stack
 - Non local references
 - Updated using arithmetic

A Typical Stack Frame



L-Values of Local Variables

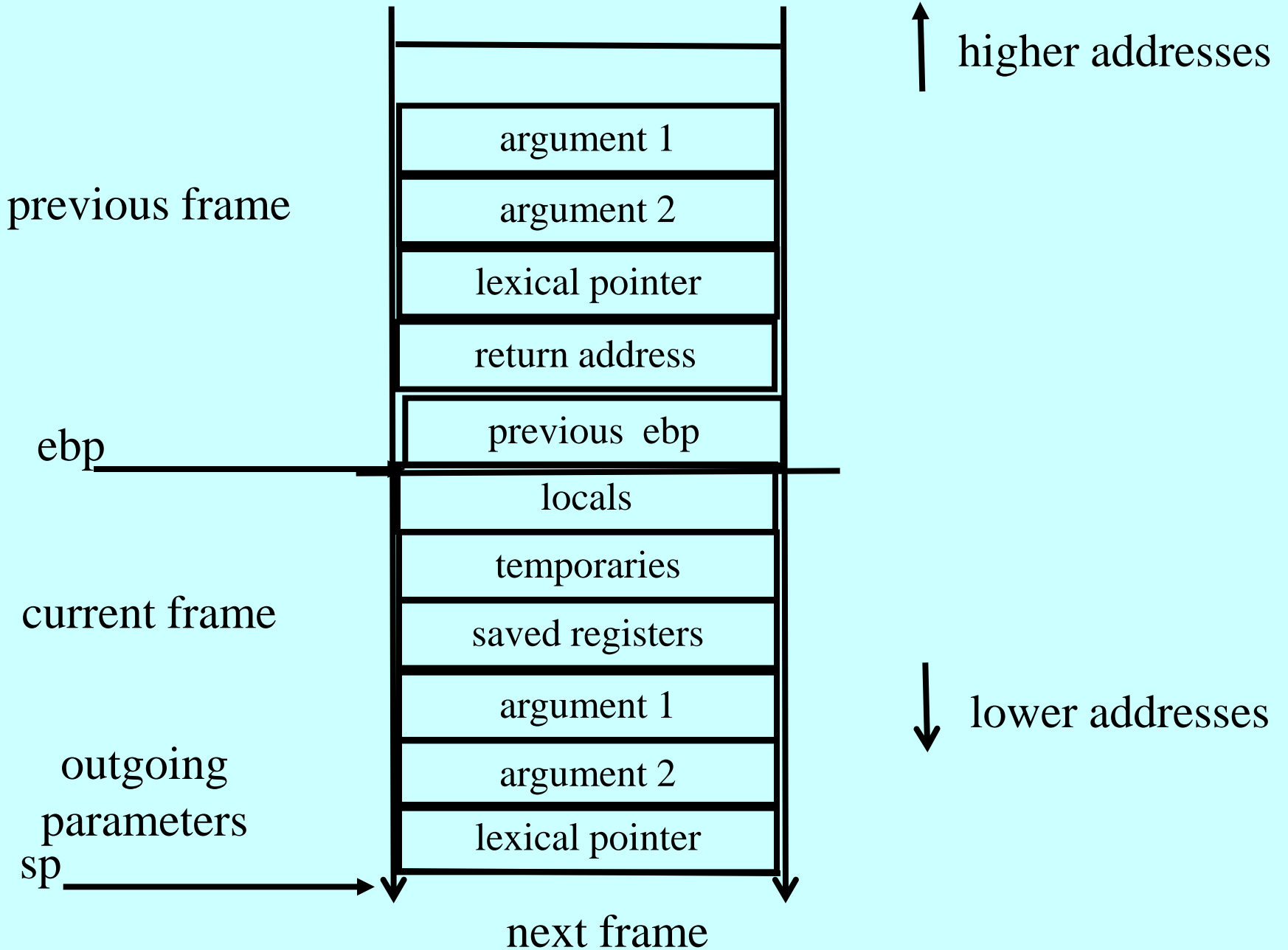
- The offset in the stack is known at compile time
- $L\text{-val}(x) = FP + \text{offset}(x)$
- $x = 5 \Rightarrow$ Load_Constant 5, R3
Store R3, $\text{offset}(x)(FP)$

Code Blocks

- Programming language provide code blocks

```
void foo()
{
    int x = 8 ; y=9;
    { int x = y * y ; }
    { int x = y * 7 ;}
    x = y + 1;
}
```

Pascal 80386 Frame



Summary thus far

- The structure of the stack frame may depend on
 - Machine
 - Architecture
 - Programming language
 - Compiler Conventions
- The stack is updated by:
 - Emitted compiler instructions
 - Designated hardware instructions

The Frame Pointer

- The **caller**
 - the calling routine
- The **callee**
 - the called routine
- caller responsibilities:
 - Calculate arguments and save in the stack
 - Store lexical pointer
- call instruction:
 - $M[--SP] := RA$
 - $PC := \text{callee}$
- callee responsibilities:
 - $FP := SP$
 - $SP := SP - \text{frame-size}$
- Why use both SP and FP?

Variable Length Frame Size

- C allows allocating objects of unbounded size in the stack

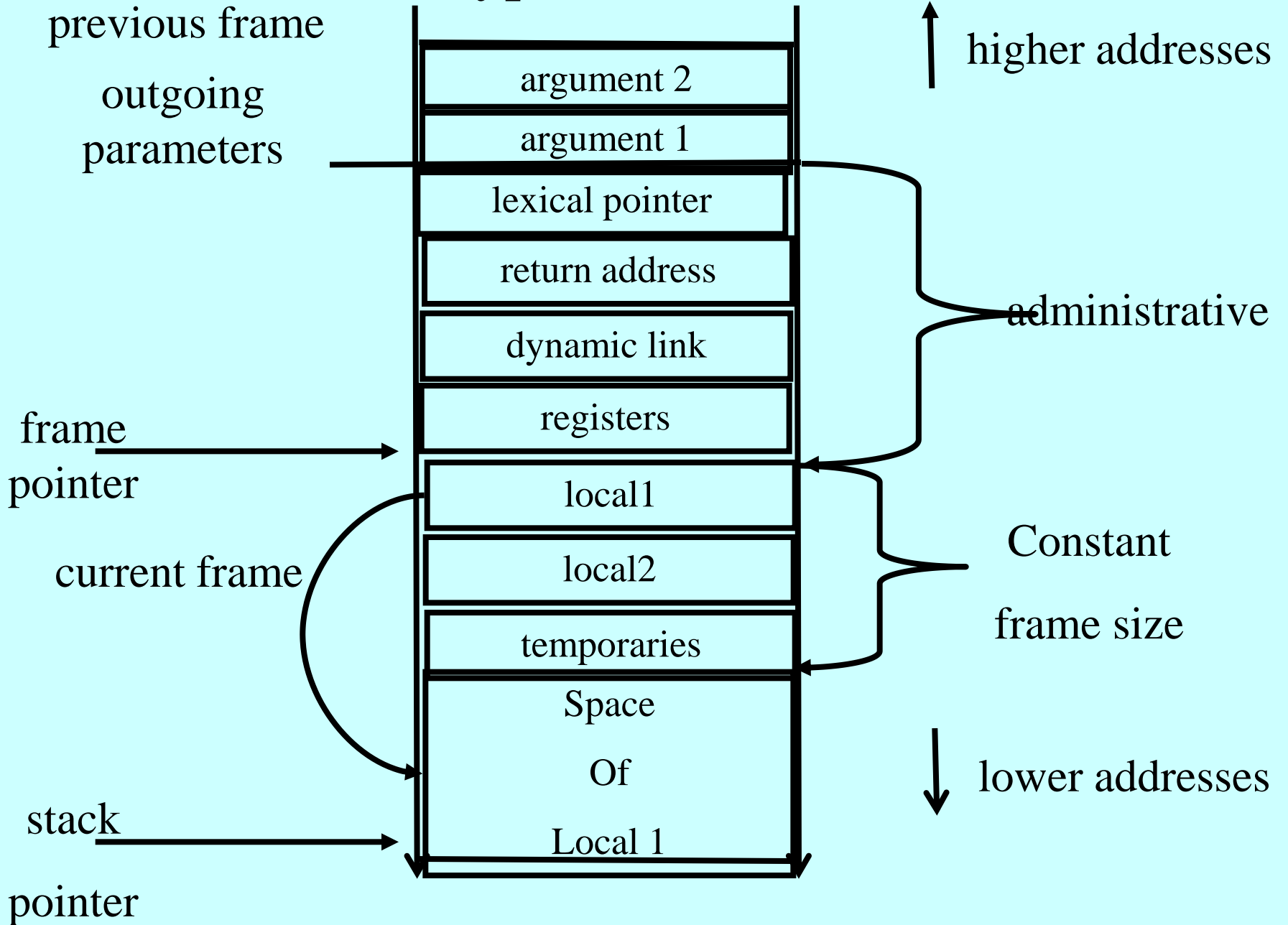
```
void p() {  
    int i;  
    char *p;  
    scanf("%d", &i);  
    p = (char *) alloca(i*sizeof(int));  
}
```

- Some versions of Pascal allows conformant array value parameters

Pascal Conformant Arrays

```
program foo ;
const max = 4 ;
var m1, m2, m3: array [1..max, 1..max] of integer
var i, j: integer
procedure mult(a, b: array [1..1, 1..1] of integer;
               var c:array [1..1, 1..1] of integer));
  var i, j, k: integer;
  begin { mult }
    for i := 1 to 1 do
      for j := 1 to 1 do begin
        c[i, j] := 0 ;
        for k := 1 to 1 do
          c[i, j] := c[i, j] + a[i, k] * b[k, j];
        end
      end; { mult }
  begin { foo }
    ...
    mult(m1, m2, m3)
  end. { foo }
```

A Typical Stack Frame



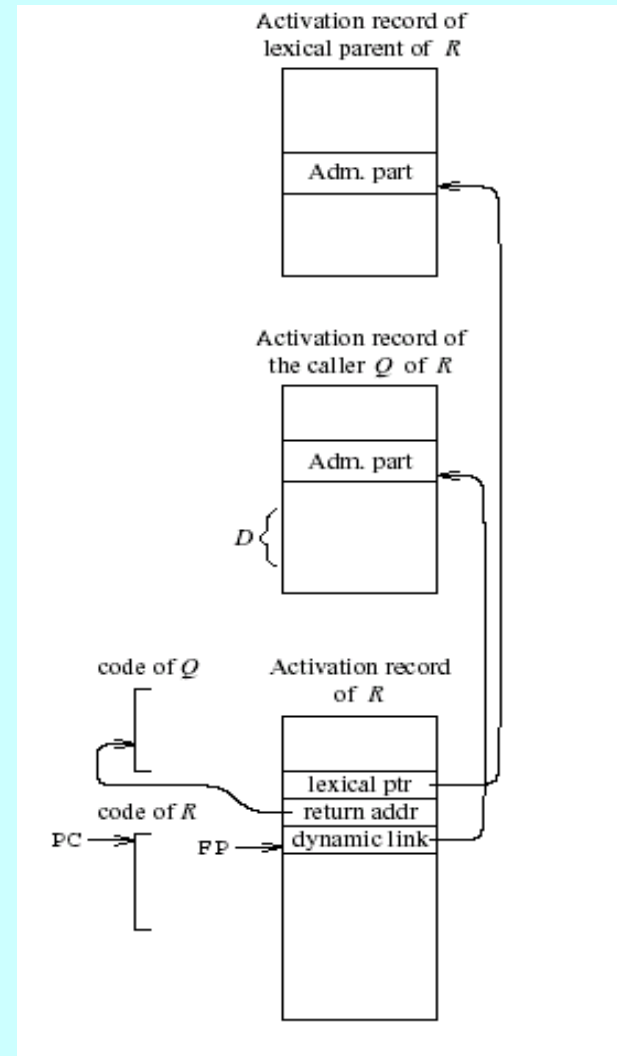
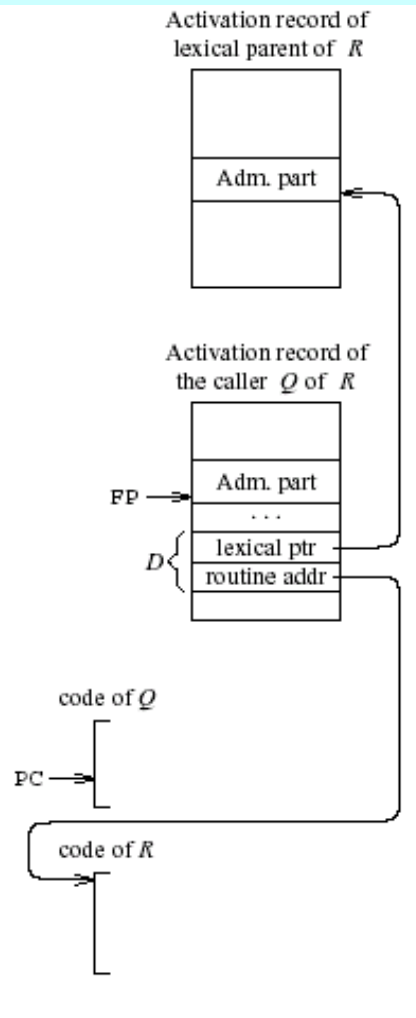
Supporting Static Scoping

- References to non-local variables
- Language rules
 - No nesting of functions
 - C, C++, Java
 - Non-local references are bounded to the most recently enclosed declared procedure and “die” when the procedure end
 - Algol, Pascal, Scheme
- Simplest implementation
 - Pass the lexical pointer as an extra argument to functions
 - Scope rules guarantee that this can be done
 - Generate code to traverse the frames

Routine Descriptor for Languages with nested scopes

Lexical pointer
routine address

Calling Routine R from Q

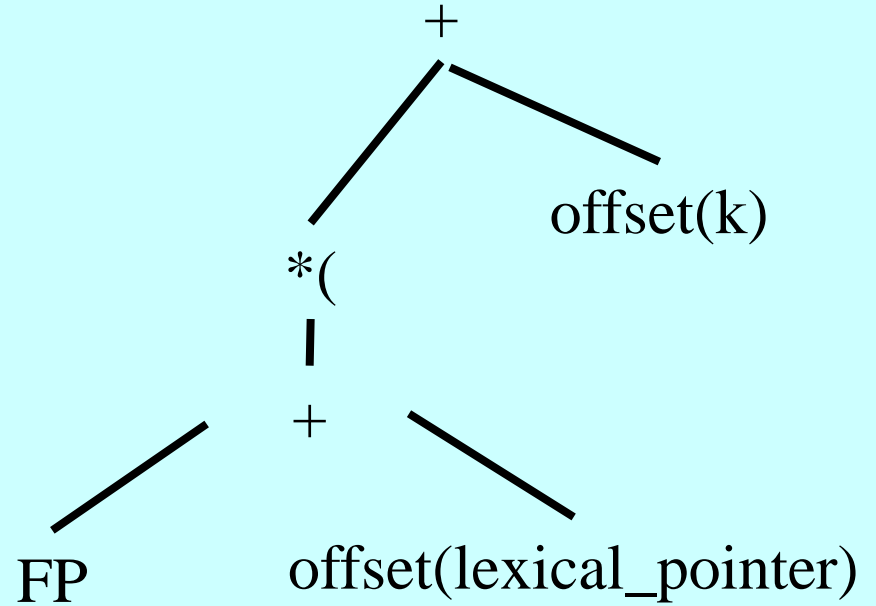


Nesting Depth

- The semantic analysis identifies the static nesting hierarchy
- A possible implementation
 - Assign integers to functions and variables
 - Defined inductively
 - The main is at level 0
 - Updated when new function begins/ends

Calculating L-Values

```
0
int i;
void level_0(void) { 1
    int j;
    void level_1(void) { 2
        int k;
        void level_2(void) { 3
            int l;
            → k=l;
            j=l;
        }
    }
}
```



Code for the k=1

```
int i;  
void level_0(void){  
    int j;  
    void level_1(void) {  
        int k;  
        void level_2(void) {  
            int l;  
            k=1;  
            j =1;  
        }  
    }  
}
```

```
    *{  
        *{  
            FP  
            +  
            offset(lexical_pointer)  
        }  
        +  
        offset(k)  
    } =  
    *(FP + offset(1))
```

Code for the j=1

```
int i;  
void level_0(void){  
    int j;  
    void level_1(void) {  
        int k;  
        void level_2(void) {  
            int l;  
            k=l;  
            j =l;  
        }  
    }  
}
```

```
*(  
    *(  
        *( FP  
          +  
            offset(lexical_pointer)  
          )  
        +  
          offset(lexical_pointer)  
      )  
      +  
        offset(j)  
    ) =  
    *(FP + offset(1))
```

Other Implementations of Static Scoping

- **Display**
 - An array of lexical pointers
 - $d[i]$ is lexical pointer nesting level i
 - Can be stored in the stack
- **lambda-lifting**
 - Pass non-local variables as extra parameters

Machine Registers

- Every year
 - CPUs are improving by 50%-60%
 - Main memory speed is improving by 10%
- Machine registers allow efficient accesses
 - Utilized by the compiler
- Other memory units exist
 - Cache

RISC vs. CISC Machines

Feature	RISC	CISC
Registers	≥ 32	6, 8, 16
Register Classes	One	Some
Arithmetic Operands	Registers	Memory+Registers
Instructions	3-addr	2-addr
Addressing Modes	r $M[r+c]$ (l,s)	several
Instruction Length	32 bits	Variable
Side-effects	None	Some
Instruction-Cost	“Uniform”	Varied

Caller-Save and Callee-Save Registers

- Callee-Save Registers
 - Saved by the callee before modification
 - Values are automatically preserved across calls
- Caller-Save Registers
 - Saved (if needed) by the caller before calls
 - Values are not automatically preserved across calls
- Usually the architecture defines caller-save and callee-save registers
- Separate compilation
- Interoperability between code produced by different compilers/languages
- But compiler writers decide when to use caller/callee registers

Callee-Save Registers

- Saved by the callee before modification
- Usually at procedure prolog
- Restored at procedure epilog
- Hardware support may be available
- Values are automatically preserved across calls

```
.global _foo
```

```
int foo(int a)  {
    int b=a+1;
    f1();
    g1(b);
    return(b+2);
}
    Add_Constant -K, SP //allocate space for foo
    Store_Local  R5, -14(FP) // save R5
    Load_Reg  R5, R0; Add_Constant R5, 1
    JSR f1 ; JSR g1;
    Add_Constant R5, 2; Load_Reg R5, R0
    Load_Local -14(FP), R5 // restore R5
    Add_Constant K, SP; RTS // deallocate
```


Caller-Save Registers

- Saved by the caller before calls when needed
- Values are not automatically preserved across calls

```
void bar (int y) {  
    int x=y+1;  
    f2(x);  
    g2(2);  
    g2(8);  
}  
  
    .global _bar  
    Add_Constant -K, SP //allocate space for bar  
    Add_Constant R0, 1  
    JSR f2  
    Load_Constant 2, R0 ;    JSR g2;  
    Load_Constant 8, R0 ;    JSR g2  
    Add_Constant K, SP // deallocate space for bar  
    RTS
```

Parameter Passing

- 1960s
 - In memory
 - No recursion is allowed
 - 1970s
 - In stack
 - 1980s
 - In registers
 - First k parameters are passed in registers ($k=4$ or $k=6$)
 - Where is time saved?
-
- Most procedures are leaf procedures
 - Interprocedural register allocation
 - Many of the registers may be dead before another invocation
 - Register windows are allocated in some architectures per call (e.g., sun Sparc)

Modern Architectures

- **return-address**
 - also normally saved in a register on a call
 - a non leaf procedure saves this value on the stack
 - No stack support in the hardware
- **function-result**
 - Normally saved in a register on a call
 - A non leaf procedure saves this value on the stack

Limitations

- The compiler may be forced to store a value on a stack instead of registers
- The stack may not suffice to handle some language features

Frame-Resident Variables

- A variable x cannot be stored in register when:
 - x is passed by reference
 - Address of x is taken ($\&x$)
 - is addressed via pointer arithmetic on the stack-frame (C varargs)
 - x is accessed from a nested procedure
 - The value is too big to fit into a single register
 - The variable is an array
 - The register of x is needed for other purposes
 - Too many local variables
- An escape variable:
 - Passed by reference
 - Address is taken
 - Addressed via pointer arithmetic on the stack-frame
 - Accessed from a nested procedure

The Frames in Different Architectures

$g(x, y, z)$ where x escapes

	Pentium	MIPS	Sparc
x	InFrame(8)	InFrame(0)	InFrame(68)
y	InFrame(12)	InReg(X_{157})	InReg(X_{157})
z	InFrame(16)	InReg(X_{158})	InReg(X_{158})
View Change	$M[sp+0] \leftarrow fp$ $fp \leftarrow sp$ $sp \leftarrow sp-K$	$sp \leftarrow sp-K$ $M[sp+K+0] \leftarrow r_2$ $X_{157} \leftarrow r_4$ $X_{158} \leftarrow r_5$	$save \%sp, -K, \%sp$ $M[fp+68] \leftarrow i_0$ $X_{157} \leftarrow i_1$ $X_{158} \leftarrow i_2$

The Need for Register Copies

```
void m(int x, int y) {  
    h(y, y);  
    h(x, x);  
}
```

Limitations of Stack Frames

- A local variable of P cannot be stored in the activation record of P if its duration exceeds the duration of P

- Example 1: Static variables in C
(own variables in Algol)

```
void p(int x)
{
    static int y = 6 ;
    y += x;
}
```

- Example 2: Features of the C language

```
int * f()
{ int x ;
  return &x ;
}
```

- Example 3: Dynamic allocation

```
int * f() { return (int *) malloc(sizeof(int)); }
```


Currying Functions

```
int (*)() f(int x)
{
    int g(int y)
    {
        return x + y;
    }
    return g ;
}
```

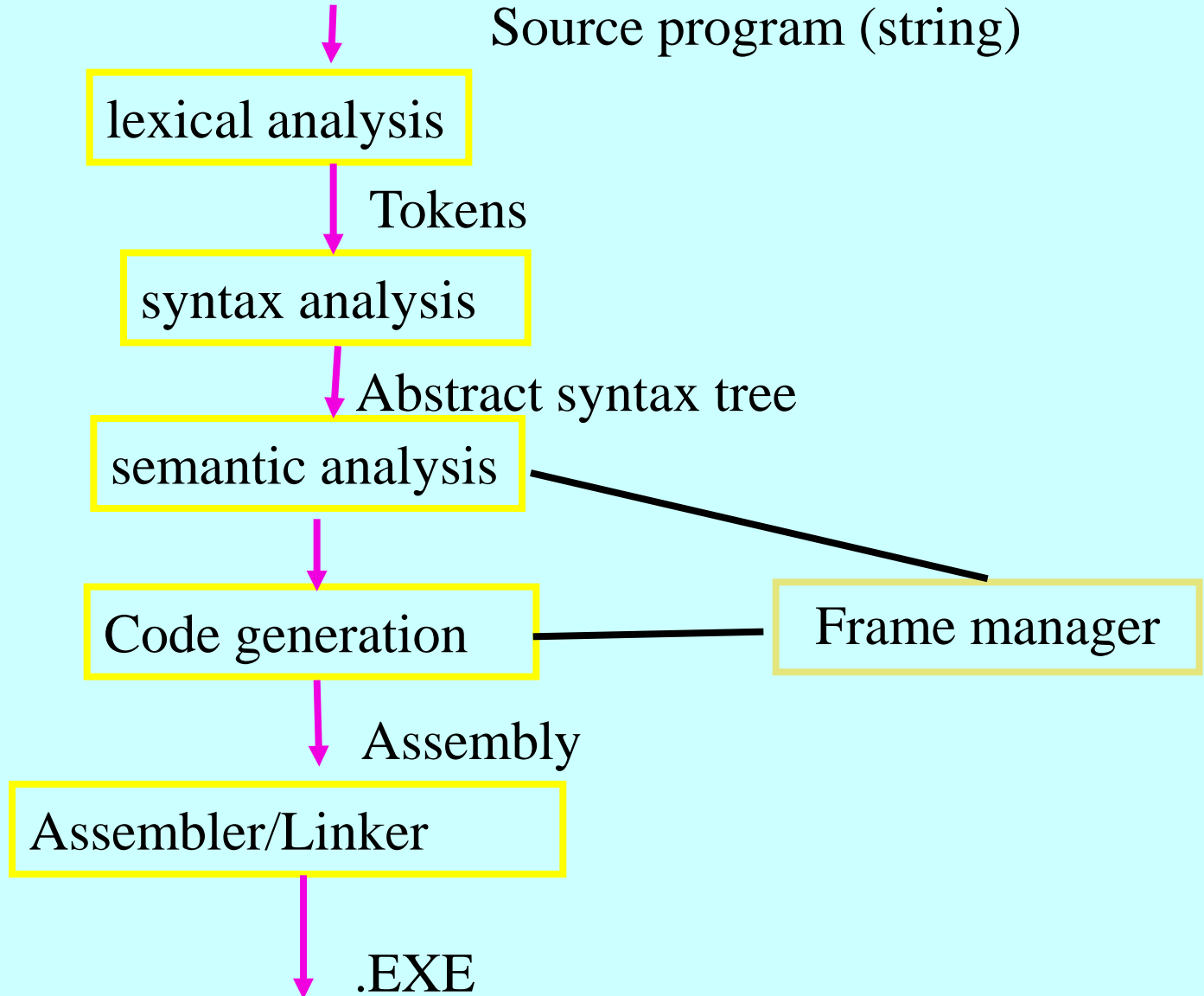
```
int (*h)() = f(3);
int (*j)() = f(4);
```

```
int z = h(5);
int w = j(7);
```

Compiler Implementation

- Hide machine dependent parts
- Hide language dependent part
- Use special modules

Basic Compiler Phases



Hidden in the frame ADT

- Word size
- The location of the formals
- Frame resident variables
- Machine instructions to implement “shift-of-view” (prologue/epilogue)
- The number of locals “allocated” so far
- The label in which the machine code starts

Invocations to Frame

- “Allocate” a new frame
- “Allocate” new local variable
- Return the L-value of local variable
- Generate code for procedure invocation
- Generate prologue/epilogue
- Generate code for procedure return

Summary

- Stack frames provide a simple compile-time memory management scheme
 - Locality of references is supported
- Can be complex to implement
- Limits the duration of allocated objects
- Memory allocation is one of most interesting areas