

A Tour Through the C Implementation of Icon; Version 5.9*

Ralph E. Griswold
Robert K. McConeghy
William H. Mitchell

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ABSTRACT

This report documents the C implementation of Version 5.9 of the Icon programming language. This report concentrates on the major parts of the system — the translator, the linker, and the interpreter. An additional section discusses how the implementation can be modified for new language features.

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Department of Computer Science

The University of Arizona

Tucson, Arizona 85721

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4

5

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Introduction

This report describes the C implementation of Version 5.9 of the Icon programming language [1]. Most of the system is coded in C [2] and is designed to be run under UNIX*. In addition to the C portion of the system, there is some assembly language code. To date, the C implementation has been adapted to the PDP-11[†], VAX-11, and Onyx C8002. This implementation is intended to be portable to other computers running under UNIX, but portability was not a primary design goal. Reference 3 describes the process of transporting this implementation and contains detailed descriptions of the assembly language routines for the VAX implementation.

The implementation of the Icon system consists of three parts: a translator, a linker, and an interpreter. The interpreter contains a run-time system that includes routines for the operations that are needed to execute an Icon program. The translator converts an Icon source program into an intermediate code, called *ucode*. The linker combines separately translated *ucode* files, binds inter-procedure references, and produces interpretable binary output, called *icode*.

The reference language for this report is Version 5.9 of Icon [4]. This report is intended to be used in conjunction with the source listings for Version 5.9, although a general overview of the system can be obtained from this document alone.

1. The Translator

The Icon translator is written entirely in C and consists of 12 files of source code and 10 header files. The translator builds a parse tree for each Icon procedure, then traverses the tree to generate code. Three of the 12 source files contain only data initialization and are automatically generated from specification files. In addition, the LALR(1) parser is automatically generated by the *Yacc* parser generator [5].

The *ucode* output from the translator consists of two files. One file, with the suffix *.u1*, contains intermediate code corresponding to the procedures in the program. The second file, with the suffix *.u2*, contains global symbol table information. Both files are printable.

The following sections discuss the four parts of the translator: the lexical analyzer, the parser, the code generator, and the symbol table manager.

1.1 The Lexical Analyzer

The lexical analyzer reads the Icon source program, breaks it into tokens, and delivers the tokens to the parser as requested. A token is the basic syntactic unit of the Icon language; it may be an identifier, a literal, a reserved word, or an operator (operators include punctuation).

The lexical analyzer consists of four source files: *lex.c*, *char.c*, *optab.c*, and *toktab.c*. The latter two of these files contain operator and token tables, respectively, and are automatically generated from operator and token specification files, described below. The file *char.c* contains character mapping tables and the file *lex.c* contains the lexical analyzer itself.

The parser requests a token by calling *yyl_{ex}*, which finds the next token in the source program and determines its token type and value. The parser bases its moves on the token type: if the token is an operator or reserved word, the token type specifically identifies the operator or reserved word; otherwise, the token type indicates one of the six "primitive" types: identifier, integer literal, real literal, string literal, cset literal, or end-of-file. The token value is a leaf node of the parse tree, which, for the primitive types, contains the source

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program representation of the token. The token value node also contains the source-program line and column numbers where the token starts. A pointer to this node is placed in the global variable `ychar`, and `yylex` returns the token type.

The lexical analyzer finds the next token by skipping white space, including comments. The first character of the new token indicates which of the classes it belongs to. A letter or underscore begins an identifier or reserved word, a digit begins an integer or real literal, a double quote begins a string literal, a single quote begins a cset literal, and any other character is assumed to begin an operator. An identifier or reserved word is completed by gathering all subsequent letters, digits, and underscores. The reserved word table is consulted to determine if the token is an identifier or a reserved word. Numeric literals are recognized by a finite-state automaton, which distinguishes real from integer literals by the presence of a decimal point or the letter "e". A quoted literal is completed by reading until the opening delimiter is repeated, converting escapes in the process and continuing to new lines as necessary. A table-driven finite-state automaton, described below, recognizes operators.

An important task of the lexical analyzer is semicolon insertion. The grammar requires that semicolons separate expressions in a compound expression or procedure body, so they must be inserted into the token stream where they are omitted in the source program. This process is table driven. Associated with each token type are two flags, *BEGINNER* and *ENDER*. The *BEGINNER* flag is true if a token may legally begin an expression (i.e., if it may follow a semicolon). Similarly, the *ENDER* flag is true if a token may legally end an expression (i.e., if it may precede a semicolon). When a newline appears between two tokens, the *ENDER* flag of the first is true, and the *BEGINNER* flag of the second is true, then a semicolon is inserted between the two tokens.

The token table is initialized in the file `toktab.c`. The table is divided into three sections: primitive types, reserved words, and operators. The primitive types are fixed in the first six slots in the table, and must not be changed, since they are referenced directly from the code. The reserved words follow and must be in alphabetical order. The operators follow in no special order. The last entry merely marks the end of the table.

Also in `toktab.c` is an index to reserved words. To speed up the search for reserved words, this table hashes the search using the first letter as the hash value. The reserved words that begin with that letter then are examined linearly.

The operator table, in `optab.c`, describes a finite-state automaton that recognizes each operator in the language. Each state is represented by an array of structures. Each structure in the array corresponds to a transition on the input symbol. The structure contains three fields: an input symbol, an action, and a value used by the action. The recognizer starts in state 0; the current input symbol is the first character of the operator. In a given state with a given input symbol, the recognizer searches the array associated with the current state for an entry that matches the current input symbol. Failing a match, the last entry of the array, with the input symbol field of 0, is used. The recognizer then performs one of the following actions, depending on the value of the action field:

- goes to the new state indicated by the value field and gets the next input character
- issues an error
- returns the value field as a pointer to the token table entry for the operator
- returns the value field, but pushes the current input character back onto the input.

The difference between the last two actions is that some operators are recognized immediately (e.g., ";"), while others are not recognized until the character following the operator is read (e.g., "=").

The token table and operator table are automatically constructed by the Icon program `mktoktab.icn`. This program reads the specification file `tokens` and builds the file `toktab.c`. The file `tokens` contains a list of all the tokens, their token types (given as defined constants), and any associated flags. This list is divided into the three sections detailed above. The program then reads the specification file `optab` and builds the file `optab.c`. The former is a skeleton for the operator table; it contains the state tables, but the program fills in the pointers to the token table entries.

1.2 The Parser

The parser, in the file `parse.c`, is automatically generated by *Yacc*. The grammar and semantic actions are contained in the file `icon.g`. From these specifications, *Yacc* generates parser tables for an LALR(1) parser.

In addition to the grammar, `icon.g` contains a list of all the token types in the language and declarations necessary to the actions. *Yacc* assigns an integer value to each token type, and generates define statements, which are written to the file `token.h`. These defined constants are the token types returned by the lexical analyzer.

The grammar is context-free, with actions associated with most of the rules. An action is invoked when the corresponding rule is reduced. The actions perform two duties: maintaining the symbol tables and constructing the parse tree. The parse tree is built from the bottom up — the leaves are supplied by the lexical analyzer and the actions build trees from the leaves and from smaller trees with each reduction.

The parser requests tokens from the lexical analyzer, building a parse tree until it reduces a procedure. At this point, it passes the root of the parse tree to the code generator. Once the intermediate code has been generated, the parse tree is discarded, and a new tree is begun for the next procedure.

Record and global declarations affect only the symbol table and do not generate parse trees. Files named in link directives produce link instructions in the ucode output.

A complete parse tree is rooted at a `proc` node, which identifies the procedure and points to the subtrees for the `initial` clause (if any) and the body of the procedure. Each node in the parse tree represents a source program construction or some implicit semantic action. A node can contain up to six fields, the first of which is the node type. The second and third fields are always line and column numbers that are used for error messages and tracing. Any additional fields contain information about the construction, and possibly pointers to subtrees. Appendix A contains a description of all the node types.

The grammar, shown in Appendix B, has several ambiguities. The well-known “dangling else” problem exists not only in the `if-then-else` expression, but also in the `while-do`, `until-do`, `every-do`, and `to-by` expressions. In each of these expressions, the last clause is optional, so that when the parser sees an `else`, for example, it does not know whether to shift the token (associating it with the most recent `if`), or to reduce the preceding `if-then` expression (leaving the `else` “dangling”). The latter choice is obviously incorrect, since the `else` would never be shifted, and *Yacc* correctly resolves such conflicts in favor of the shift. Thus, each `else` is paired with the most recent unpaired `if`. All the control structures (except `case`) have an additional ambiguity: they do not have a closed syntax, yet they may appear in an expression at the highest precedence level. For example, the expression

```
x := y + if a = b then z else -z * 3
```

could parse in either of two ways:

```
x := y + (if a = b then z else (-z * 3))
x := y + (if a = b then z else -z) * 3
```

This problem, too, is resolved in favor of the shift, such that the first parse is always used. Thus, in the absence of parentheses, the entire expression to the right of a control structure is part of the control structure.

Little attention has been paid to error recovery. A few error productions have been placed in the grammar to enable *Yacc* to recover from syntax errors; the technique for doing so is described by Aho and Johnson [6]. The parser is slightly modified by the editor script `pscript` so that the parser state is passed to the routine `yyerror`. This routine prints an error message from the file `synerr.h` that is associated with the current parser state. This error table currently is constructed by hand from the `y.output` file obtained by running *Yacc* with the `-v` option.

1.3 The Code Generator

The parser calls the code generator upon recognition of each Icon procedure, giving it the root of the parse tree. The code generator traverses the parse tree recursively, emitting ucode. Appendix C contains a description of ucode.

The file `code.c` contains both the tree node allocation and the code generation routines. The included header file `code.h` contains macros and definitions needed by the code generator, while `tree.h` defines the tree

nodes and the macros that allocate them. The macros in `tree.h` provide the interface between the parser and the code generator.

The tree traversal routine, `traverse`, is a recursive procedure with one argument, a pointer to the root of a tree or subtree for which code is to be generated. The routine examines the `type` field of the root and, through a switch statement, generates a sequence of `ucode` instructions as determined by the `type`. If the node has subtrees, `traverse` calls itself recursively at the appropriate point to generate code for the subtree. For example, the code generated for a binary operator first generates code for its two subexpressions, then emits the code that calls the appropriate run-time library routine.

The returned value of the traversal routine is used for counting elements of expression lists. If the root of the tree being traversed is an `elist` (expression list) node, `traverse` returns the sum of the returned values of its two subtrees. Otherwise, it returns 1. This count is used when generating code for procedure calls and lists with explicit elements, which need to know the number of arguments to be pushed onto the stack.

When generating code for loops, the code generator needs to save three pieces of information for each nested loop: the *break label*, the *next label*, and the expression nesting level. This information is kept on the *loop stack*. The break label is a label placed just past the end of the loop; it is the place where control is passed when the loop is finished. The next label is placed near the end of the loop, at a point where the next iteration of the loop can be started. The code for `break` and `next` expressions branches to these labels, but in either case, any incomplete expression frames (see Section 3.2) within the loop must first be popped from the stack. The expression nesting level counts the number of currently active expression frames within the current loop; an `unmark` instruction is generated for that many expression frames (less one for a `next` expression).

The possibility of nested `case` expressions requires that certain information be kept on a *case stack*. For each case expression, the code generator allocates a label for the end of the expression and pushes it onto the case stack. When a `default` clause is encountered, its subtree is placed on the top of the case stack to delay code generation for it until the end of the `case` expression.

1.4 The Symbol Table Manager

The symbol table manager consists of the symbol table data structures and routines that operate upon these data structures. The source code for the symbol table manager is contained in two files. The file `keyword.c` contains only the keyword name table and is automatically constructed from a keyword specification file discussed below. The remainder of the symbol table manager is located in the file `sym.c`.

The symbol table manager operates with two logical data structures, the symbol table proper and the string space. When the lexical analyzer identifies a token as either an identifier or a literal, the lexical analyzer requests the symbol table manager to enter the token into the string space. The symbol table manager returns a pointer into the string space for that string. The lexical analyzer then places this pointer in the token value node. To help keep the size of the string space small, all entries are hashed, and only one copy of any string is kept. This has the added benefit that two strings can be compared by checking only the pointers into the string space.

The parser determines the context of the token and requests the symbol table manager to enter the token into the symbol table proper. It is the responsibility of the symbol table manager to verify that the use of the token is consistent with prior use. Appropriate diagnostics are issued if the use is inconsistent.

The symbol table proper is physically divided into three separate structures: the *global*, *local*, and *literal* tables. Each of these tables is hashed, using the pointer into the string space as the key. Since this pointer is an offset into the string space, hashing is simply and effectively performed by taking the rightmost n bits of the offset (where 2^n is the size of the hash vector for the table).

The global table contains identifiers that have been declared as globals, procedures, or records. The local table holds all identifiers declared as locals, formal parameters for procedure declarations, field names for record declarations, and all other identifiers referenced in the procedure (including those declared as global elsewhere). The literal table contains entries for literal strings and csets, integers, and floating-point constants.

Both the local and literal tables are associated with the current procedure being parsed and are written to the `.u1` file when the procedure has been successfully parsed. If a record declaration has been parsed, then the local table, containing only the field name identifiers, is written to the `.u2` file. After all procedure, record, and global declarations in a Icon source file have been parsed, the global table is written into the global

declarations file.

An entry into any of the three symbol table sections is a structure with three fields: a link, a name, and a flag. The link field holds the pointer to the next entry in the same hash bucket. The name is the pointer to the identifier or literal name in the string space. The flag field contains the type (*formal parameter, static local, procedure name, etc.*) of the entry. Global table entries have a fourth field, an integer providing the number of formal parameters for a procedure declaration, or the number of fields in a record declaration.

Lookup in the local and global tables is merely the process of following a hash chain until an entry of the same name is found or until the hash chain is exhausted. If a previous entry is found, the flags of the existing and new entries are compared, and diagnostics are printed if the use of the new entry conflicts with the previous usage. The new entry is ignored whenever such an inconsistency is found.

The literal table uses the same lookup procedure, except the search down the hash chain stops when an entry is found with the same textual form and flag fields. Thus the string literal "123" and the integer literal 123 have separate entries in the literal table, even though they have the same string representations. A consequence of this technique is that the integer literals 123 and 0123 have separate entries in the literal table, even though they have the same numeric value. Since most programmers use a reasonably consistent style when expressing literals, this technique usually does not produce many duplicate constants.

A final task of the symbol table manager is the identification of keyword names. (Note that keywords are of the form *&name*.) The symbol table manager maintains a list of the legal keyword names and, upon request, returns a numeric identification for a keyword name to the parser. An automatic procedure exists for creating the keyword name table: the Icon program `mkkeytab.icon` reads the specification file `keywords` and produces the keyword name table in `keyword.c`. The file `keywords` is simply a list of the keyword names and a numeric identification for each. Since the number of keyword names is small, and only a few references to keywords are typical in an Icon program, lookup in the keyword name table is done using a linear search.

The sizes of the respective portions of the symbol table may be altered with command line arguments to the Icon translator.

2. Linker

The Icon linker is written entirely in C. It consists of eight files of source code and three header files. The linker performs three tasks: combining the global symbol tables from one or more runs of the translator, resolving undeclared identifiers, and translating ucode to icode. The resulting combined global symbol table is used for determining the scope of undeclared identifiers during the second task. The second and third tasks are done during a single pass over each intermediate code file. A single file of assembly code is produced.

The symbol table module, in the file `lsym.c`, is similar to the symbol table module of the translator, except that there is an additional table for storing field names of records. The input module, in the file `llex.c`, recognizes the instructions in both the global symbol table files and the intermediate code files. The global symbol tables are merged by the routine `globals` in `glob.c`, and the intermediate code files are produced by the routines in `lcode.c`. Of the remaining source files, `llink.c` and `lmem.c` contain the main program, miscellaneous support routines, and memory initialization. The files `builtin.c` and `opcode.c` contain table initializations for the list of built-in procedures (functions) and the ucode operations, respectively.

The first phase of the linker reads the global symbol table file from each translator run, and entering all the global symbols into one combined table. The format of a global symbol table file is described in Appendix C. This phase also builds the record/field table that cross-references records and field names, and sets the trace flag for execution-time tracing if any of the files being linked were translated with the `-t` option.

As records are entered into the global symbol table and the record/field table, they are numbered, starting from 1. These record numbers are used to index the record/field table at run-time when referencing a field.

When the linker encounters a link instruction, the named file is added to the end of a linked list of files to be linked. The list initially consists of the files named as arguments. Names are not added to the list if they are already on it.

The second phase reads each intermediate code file in sequence, emitting icode as each procedure is encountered. Appendix C describes the intermediate code. The intermediate code contains a prologue for

each procedure, beginning with a **proc** opcode, followed by a series of **loc** opcodes describing the local symbol table, a series of **con** opcodes describing the constant table, and a **declend** opcode terminating the prologue. The local symbol table contains not only local symbols, but all identifiers referenced in the procedure — global, local, or undeclared. When an undeclared identifier is entered into the local symbol table, its scope is resolved by the following steps:

- if the identifier has been entered in the global symbol table, it is entered into the local symbol table as a global identifier
- if the identifier matches the name of a function, it is entered into the local symbol table as a function
- otherwise it is entered as a local identifier and a warning is issued if the linker was run with the **-u** option

The constant table contains an entry for each literal used in the procedure.

The linker outputs icode in several regions. The first region contains constants, procedure blocks, and code for the Icon procedures. The next region contains the record/field table and procedure blocks for record constructors. The next four regions contain the global identifiers, the names of the global identifiers, the static identifiers, and the identifier table. The icode is a sequence of instructions, each with an opcode and, in some cases, operands. The sizes of opcodes and operands depend on the machine architecture and the implementor's judgement. On the VAX-11, opcodes are one byte long and operands are four bytes long. Most instructions correspond exactly to instructions in the ucode that is output by the translator. The opcode values are those used internally by the linker (defined in the file `link/opcode.h`).

Fields are provided in the global symbol and literal tables for associating a location with each entry. As the prologue is being read, each cset, real, or long-integer literal entered into the literal table is output immediately and its location is stored in the literal table. Thus, the locations of all constants are known before their reference.

The same is true of references to procedures, since these references only occur in the initialization for global identifiers, which is not output until all procedures have been output. When the prologue for a procedure has been completely processed, the procedure data block is output, and its location is noted in the global symbol table.

References to program labels require backpatching, since there often are forward references. Because program label references are always local to the current procedure, the linker buffers the output code for a procedure. A table of values for all program labels is initialized to zero at the beginning of each procedure. When a label is referenced and its table entry is zero, the location of the reference is negated and stored in the table entry and a zero is output for the operand. If a label's table entry is negative, the location of the reference is negated and stored in the table entry as before, but the previous value of the table entry is output for the operand. This forms a linked list of references to the as-yet-undefined label. When a label is defined, each reference on the linked list is replaced with the correct value of the label.

References to global and static identifiers are determined at run-time. The **glob** and **static** instructions have an integer operand referring to the identifier by position in the global or static identifier region. When one of these instructions is interpreted, the actual address is calculated from the position and the known address of the global or static identifier region. References to functions are also resolved at run-time. Each function is assigned an integer index (its position in the table of functions in `builtin.c`). When the global identifier initialization for a function is output, the negated index is output instead of an address. The interpreter fills in the correct address during program initialization.

Once the prologue has been processed, a procedure data block (see Section 3.1) is emitted. Opcodes following the prologue represent execution-time operations, and cause code to be emitted.

The record/field table is a two-dimensional matrix, first indexed by a field number assigned to each identifier that is used as a field name, next by a record number assigned to each record type. The value at the selected position in the table is the index of the field in a record of the given type, or -1 if the given record type does not contain the given field.

The initial value for global and static identifiers is the null value unless the global identifier is a procedure, function, or record constructor, in which case the initial value is a descriptor of type *procedure* pointing to the

appropriate procedure data block. The values output use the data representations described in Section 3.1.

The names of global and static identifiers are output as *string qualifier* descriptors (see Section 3.1) and are used by the function `display`. All string qualifiers contained in the generated procedure data blocks and global and static names point into the identifier table, which is just a static string space for that purpose.

3. The Interpreter

The interpreter consists of an interpretive loop and a collection of run-time routines that collectively provide support for the execution of an Icon program.

Three directories contain routines relating directly to source-language operations: `functions`, `operators`, and `lib`. The first two directories contain one routine per function or operator, respectively. The `lib` directory contains routines relating to Icon control structures. A fourth directory, `rt`, contains routines for performing common operations needed by many routines in the other three directories. In particular, `rt` contains routines that handle storage allocation and reclamation, type conversion, data comparison, integer arithmetic with overflow checking, generator suspension, and tracing. The directory `iconx` contains initialization and the interpreter proper.

In each of the four run-time directories, all of the object files are archived in a `Lib` file which is randomized to speed loading. The `Lib` files are loaded together with a startup routine and the interpretive loop to produce the interpreter.

Most of the run-time system is coded in C, but some of the routines are coded in assembly language. The interpretive loop and startup routines are written in assembly language, as is integer arithmetic with overflow checking (C does not provide this), as well as other routines concerned with stack management.

The interpreter is loaded with the run-time libraries and the C library to form the program `iconx`, which interprets `icode`.

Before the interpreter begins executing the Icon program, it reads in the `icode` file generated by the linker. The first eight words of this file contain header information indicating the total size of the rest of the file, the initial value of `&trace`, and the relative offsets from the beginning of the file to the various regions. These offsets are converted to actual addresses by adding the base address of the `icode` buffer. Several pointers in the `icode` must also be relocated. The interpreter sweeps through the global identifiers, looking for procedures, functions, and record constructors. For each function, it supplies the address of the appropriate procedure block. For each procedure, it relocates pointers from its procedure block to the procedure entry point, as well as to strings representing the procedure and local identifier names in the identifier table. For each record, it supplies the address of `mkrec`, the routine that constructs new records, as the entry point field in the procedure block.

The interpreter then begins execution by invoking the value of the first global identifier, which corresponds to the procedure `main`. If there is no main procedure, the first global identifier has the null value and a run-time error is reported. The routine `invoke` sets the *interpreter program counter* (`ipc`) to the entry point, and branches to `interp`, which is contained in `iconx/interp.s`.

The routine `interp` is the main interpreter loop. It fetches the next opcode, and branches to the appropriate processing routine through a jump table.

3.1 Data Representations

Icon has two elementary forms of data objects — values and variables. Values often can be converted from one data type to another. When this is done automatically, it is called *coercion*. There are three kinds of variables, each discussed below: *natural variables*, *created variables*, and *trapped variables*. The process of obtaining the value referred to by a variable is called *dereferencing*.

Every data object is represented by a two-word *descriptor*, which may, depending on the type of the object, contain a value or refer to some other area of memory for the actual value. The first word of the descriptor always indicates the data type, and the second word either contains the value or a pointer to it. There are six descriptor formats, shown in Appendix D: *null*, *string qualifier*, *integer*, *value*, *variable*, and *trapped variable*. These formats are distinguished from one another by the three high-order bits of the first word, except that a

null descriptor is distinguished from a *string qualifier* only by the contents of the second word. Among *integer*, *value*, and *trapped variable* descriptors, the low-order six bits of the first word identify the type of object represented, while the remaining high-order bits in the first word are flags that classify the object (for example, whether the second word contains a pointer — historically, a “floating address” [7]).

The *null* descriptor represents the null value. A *string qualifier* represents a string, and contains the length of the string and a pointer to the first character of the string. An *integer* descriptor represents an integer small enough to fit in the second word of the descriptor. This includes all integers on computers whose *C ints* are the same size as *C longs* (such as the VAX-11). All data types other than **integer**, **string**, and **null** are represented by *value* descriptors. A value descriptor contains a pointer to a *data block* of appropriate format for a value of the given type. On computers whose *C longs* are longer than *C ints* (such as the PDP-11), an integer that requires more bits than there are in an *int* is contained in a *long integer* data block. The data block formats for each data type are shown in Appendix D.

A *variable* descriptor represents either a natural variable or a created variable. A natural variable contains a pointer to a descriptor at a fixed location (for a global identifier) or a location on the stack (for a local identifier) where the value of the variable is stored. A created variable, formed by a table, list, or field reference, contains a pointer to a descriptor in the aggregate where the referenced element is located. Since such elements are in the heap, created variables also contain an offset that indicates the distance (in words) from the beginning of the data block to the referenced descriptor. This offset is used during the marking phase of garbage collection, discussed in Section 3.3.

A *trapped variable* [8] descriptor represents a variable for which special action is necessary upon dereferencing or assignment. Such variables include substrings, non-existent elements of tables, and certain keywords. Each type of trapped variable is distinguished by the first word of the descriptor.

Substring trapped variables, created by a section or subscripting operation, contain a pointer to a data block that contains a *variable* descriptor identifying the value from which the substring was taken, an integer indicating the beginning position of the substring, and an integer showing the length of the substring. With this information, assignment to a substring of a variable can modify the contents of the variable properly. Substrings of non-variables do not produce substring trapped variables, since assignment to such substrings is meaningless and illegal; instead, forming the substring of a non-variable produces a string qualifier.

Table element trapped variables, formed by referencing a non-existent element of a table, similarly contain a pointer to a data block that contains enough information for assignment to add the element to the referenced table or to supply the default table value.

The keywords **&pos**, **&random**, and **&trace** are handled via trapped variables (**&subject** is handled differently). These trapped variables need no additional information. It is sufficient to know the type of trapped variable on dereferencing — the value of the keyword can be accessed and returned. On assignment, the new value is coerced to the appropriate type, checked for validity, and assigned to the keyword.

Strings formed during program execution are placed in the *string space*; string qualifiers for these strings point into this region. Substrings of existing strings are not allocated again; instead, a string qualifier is formed that points into the existing string. When storage is exhausted in the string space, the garbage collector (see Section 3.3) is invoked to reclaim unused space and compact the region; if enough space cannot be reclaimed, the region is expanded if possible.

Data blocks formed during program execution are placed in the *heap*. Data blocks have a rigid format dictated by the garbage collection algorithm. The first word of the block always contains a type code which identifies the structure of the rest of the block. Descriptors follow all non-descriptor information in the block. If the size of the block is not determined by its type, the size (in bytes) is contained in the second word of the block. When storage is exhausted in the heap, the garbage collector is invoked to reclaim unused space and compact the heap; if enough space cannot be reclaimed, the heap is expanded if possible.

Co-expression stack blocks are allocated in a separate region and are treated specially by the garbage collector.

3.2 Stack Organization

The stack is the focus of activity during the execution of an Icon program. All operators, functions, and procedures expect to find their arguments at the top of the stack, and replace the arguments with the result of their computation. Local variables for Icon procedures are also kept on the stack. The arguments, local variables, and temporaries on the stack for an active Icon procedure are collectively called a *procedure frame*. This is one of several kinds of *stack frames* discussed in this section. Appendix E summarizes the layouts of the stack frames for the PDP-11 and VAX-11. See [3] for a detailed discussion of stack frames. Each co-expression also has a stack. For uniformity, the main stack is treated as the stack for the co-expression `&main`.

On the PDP-11 and VAX-11 stacks start in high memory and grow downward. On these computers, a push causes the stack pointer to decrease and a pop causes the stack pointer to increase. Thus “above” and “below” refer, respectively, to “older” and “newer” information on the stack. An exception to this is the phrase “top of the stack”, which is used to refer to the *lowest* memory location. The description of relative stack locations that follows is based on this kind of architecture and nomenclature.

Before an Icon procedure calls another Icon procedure, the caller pushes the procedure to be called (a descriptor — procedures are data objects in Icon) onto the stack. The caller then pushes each argument (also a descriptor) onto the stack, leftmost argument first. The caller then pushes one word onto the stack indicating the number of arguments supplied, which may be different from the number of arguments expected. The run-time library routine `invoke` is then called, which checks that the first descriptor pushed above actually does represent an integer, procedure, or a variable whose value is an integer or a procedure. An integer indicates the selection of one of the arguments resulting from mutual evaluation. A procedure, on the other hand, points to a procedure data block, which contains various information about the called procedure, including the number of arguments expected, the number of local variables used, and the procedure’s entry point address. The routine `invoke` next adjusts the number of arguments supplied to match the number expected, deleting excess arguments or supplying the null value for missing ones. This adjustment is performed by moving the portion of the stack below the arguments up or down, as appropriate. It then dereferences the arguments. A *procedure marker* is then pushed onto the stack, and the *procedure frame pointer* is set to point to the new procedure marker. The procedure marker contains, among other things, the return address in the calling procedure and the previous value of the procedure frame pointer. Next, the null value is pushed onto the stack as the initial value for each local variable. The routine `invoke` then transfers control to the procedure’s entry point, and execution of the Icon program resumes in the new procedure.

When a procedure is ready to return to its caller, it pushes its return value (a descriptor) on the stack. It then transfers control to `pret`, which moves the return value to the location occupied by the descriptor that represented the called procedure. That is, the return value is stored in place of the first descriptor that was pushed at the beginning of the calling sequence described above. The return sequence then restores the state of the previous procedure from the current procedure marker (the procedure marker that the procedure frame pointer currently points to). This includes restoring the previous value of the procedure frame pointer, retrieving the return address, and popping the returning procedure’s local variables, procedure marker, and arguments. Thus, when the calling procedure regains control, the arguments have been popped and the return value is now at the top of the stack.

Functions and operators are written in C, and therefore obey the C calling sequence. By design, the Icon calling sequence described above is similar to the C calling sequence. When an Icon procedure calls a function, a *boundary* on the stack is introduced, where the stack above the boundary is regimented by Icon standards, and the stack below the boundary contains C information. This boundary is important during garbage collection: The garbage collector must ignore the area of the stack below the boundary, since the structure of this area is unknown, whereas the structure of the area above the boundary is well-defined. In particular, all data above the boundary is contained in descriptors or is defined by the structure of a frame, so that all pointers into the heap or string space may be located during a garbage collection.

Functions and operators are written to “straddle” the boundary. From above, they are designed to resemble Icon procedures; from below, they are C procedures. An Icon procedure calls a function in the same way as it calls another Icon procedure; in fact, functions are procedure-typed data objects just as Icon procedures are. When `invoke` recognizes that a function is being called, it bypasses the argument adjustment if the field in the procedure data block that indicates the number of arguments expected contains `-1`, which indicates that

the function can take an arbitrary number of arguments. It also does not allocate stack space for local variables, since any such variables are C variables and are allocated by the C function itself. C procedures have an entry sequence that creates a new procedure frame; since `invoke` has already done this, the entry point for functions must be set past any instructions that are involved in procedure frame creation.

The first formal parameter of all functions is `nargs`, which corresponds to the word that contains the number of arguments supplied. For functions that expect a fixed number of arguments, they are also listed as arguments, in reverse order. For functions that can take an arbitrary number of arguments, there is a macro `ARG(n)` that uses the address and contents of `nargs` to calculate the location of the *n*th argument. Thus, `ARG(1)` accesses the first argument (as a descriptor), and `ARG(nargs)` accesses the last argument. Each function is responsible for supplying defaults for missing arguments and for dereferencing arguments that are variables. Because of the calling protocol, `ARG(0)` accesses the location where the return value should be stored. Every function must place its result there and then return through normal C conventions. Each function must also supply a procedure data block that contains the number of arguments expected (or `-1`), its entry point, and a string qualifier representing its name.

Operators are very similar to functions. The only difference is that operators are called directly (rather than being called through `invoke`) and must set the boundary themselves.

When an operator or function fails to produce a result, it calls `fail`. This routine initiates backtracking as described below.

Expressions are evaluated within an *expression frame*. When the evaluation of an expression is complete, whether it has produced a result or failed, the expression frame must be popped from the stack and the result of the expression must be pushed back onto the stack. The expression frame marks the stack height at the point that the expression began to be evaluated, so that the stack may be restored to its original state when the evaluation of the expression is complete. The stack normally would be restored to the original height (that is, the pops would match the pushes) except when an expression fails at some midpoint in its evaluation. The expression frame is also used to limit backtracking: backtracking is restricted in the language to the current expression instance only.

When evaluation of an expression begins, an *expression marker* is pushed on the stack, the *expression frame pointer* is set to point to it, and the *generator frame pointer*, discussed below, is cleared. The marker contains the previous values of the expression and generator frame pointers and a failure label. When an expression produces a result, that result, on the top of the stack, is popped and saved. Then the stack is popped to the expression marker, and the previous values of the two frame pointers are restored. The marker is popped and the result of the expression is pushed back onto the stack, now a part of the previous expression frame. If an expression fails to produce a result, `fail` pops the stack to the expression marker, restores the previous values of the two frame pointers, and branches to the failure label. In the special case that the failure label is zero, `fail` is effectively called again to indicate failure in the new expression frame. Thus the failure is propagated from one expression to an enclosing one.

If an expression has any generators, then there is a *generator frame* within the current expression frame for each generator that is inactive (that is, that has produced a value but is not yet exhausted). A generator frame preserves the state of the stack at the point just before the generator (whether it be operator, function, or procedure) suspended (became inactive). If `fail` is called and there are inactive generators, then instead of exiting the current expression frame, the most recently inactivated generator is reactivated by restoring the stack to the state saved in the most recent generator frame.

A function or operator suspends itself by calling `suspend`. This routine preserves the state of the stack by duplicating the current expression frame, bounded on one end by the most recent generator frame (or, if there are no inactive generators, the current expression frame) and bounded on the other end by the beginning of the argument list of the suspending function or operator. A generator marker is pushed onto the stack, followed by the duplicate expression frame. The routine `suspend` then causes the suspending function or operator to return to its caller, instead of itself returning.

When reactivated by `fail`, the stack is restored to the generator marker, which is used to restore the various frame pointers. Then the marker is popped. The stack is then in the same state that it was in when `suspend` was called. The routine `fail` then returns to the generator as if the original call to `suspend` had returned. Thus the following schema is typical of operators and functions that generate a sequence of values.

```

initialize;
while (not exhausted) {
    compute next value;
    store return value;
    suspend()
}
fail();

```

The effect of resuming an expression containing generators is that **suspend** actually causes the generator to return. If alternatives are needed, backtracking occurs, and the apparent effect is that **suspend** has finally returned. The generator computes the next result, and suspends with it. When the generator is exhausted, it merely fails without suspending, which just passes the failure back to the next most recently inactivated generator, if any.

Just as functions and operators can return normally, suspend, or fail, so can Icon procedures. The mechanics are essentially the same, but the differences in stack layout require different primitives. When Icon procedures return normally, the return value is presumed to be at the top of the stack and **pret** is called. Similarly, Icon procedures call **psusp** to suspend. Both of these routines also dereference the return result if it is a local variable. The routine **pfail** causes an Icon procedure to return with no result.

The same three primitives are also needed at the expression level: **eret**, **esusp**, and **efail**. Unlike **unmark**, **eret** is not a library routine, but is generated as in-line code. Both cause an exit from the current expression frame; but **eret** supplies a result to the enclosing expression, while **unmark** does not. The routine **esusp** creates a inactive generator before supplying a result to the enclosing expression; it is used by the alternation control structure. The routine **efail** simply causes backtracking within the current expression frame. In fact, **fail** and **pfail** merely exit their procedure frame before branching to **efail**.

3.3 Storage Allocation and Reclamation

During program execution, storage allocation is necessary when a data object is created. The three primitive routines **allocate**, **alcstr**, and **alcestk** allocate storage in the heap, string space, and co-expression stack space, respectively. All three routines return pointers to the beginning of newly allocated space. None of the routines is responsible for ensuring that enough space remains in the data regions. Ensuring that enough space remains in the data regions is the responsibility of a *predictive need* strategy described below.

In the heap, **allocate(n)** returns a pointer to *n* contiguous bytes of storage. Because a wide variety of objects may reside in the heap, a number of support routines are provided to simplify the storing of various objects. There is a specific routine to allocate a block for each datatype in the heap. Where appropriate, these routines have the actual values to be stored as their arguments. All of the routines call **allocate** to obtain storage for the object.

In the string space, **alcstr(s, l)** allocates room for a string of length *l* and copies the string pointed to by **s** into this space. Since some routines such as **left**, **right**, and **center** need room in the string space in which to construct a string, a call to **alcstr** with the defined constant **NULL** as the first argument results in the allocation of storage without attempting to copy a string.

In the co-expression stack region, **alcestk()** allocates a new co-expression stack.

Source code for all of the allocation routines is contained in the file **rt/alc.c**. Almost all interaction with the storage management is made through these routines. Two exceptions occur in string concatenation (**operators/cat.c**) and reading a fixed number of bytes from a file (**functions/reads.c**). In these cases, it is simpler and more efficient to have these operations deal directly with storage management.

As mentioned earlier, a *predictive need* strategy is employed to ensure that enough room remains for data storage. Simply put, *predictive need* states that it is the responsibility of any routine that calls an allocation routine both to ensure that enough room remains in the proper data region and to maintain the validity of any temporary pointers into the data regions, should a *garbage collection* be necessary to free storage space.

Since the check for storage space only needs to occur before the allocation takes place, each routine may perform this check at its convenience. This approach permits the minimization of the number of temporary pointers that must be protected during garbage collection. As an aid, space for several descriptors is

automatically protected by the procedure invocation mechanism, and usually is used to hold information pertaining to the arguments of the procedure (see Section 3.4).

Routines to ensure space are provided for each of the three storage regions. The routine `sneed(n)` ensures that at least `n` bytes of storage remain in the string space, and `hneed(n)` performs the same function in the heap. `esneed()` ensures that there is a co-expression stack available. If either routine finds that there is insufficient storage remaining, it invokes the *garbage collector* in an attempt to obtain that storage. If that fails, then program execution is aborted with an appropriate diagnostic.

Garbage collection, or *storage reclamation*, is a process that identifies all valid allocated data. In the string and heap regions, valid data is compacted in order to provide a contiguous area of unused storage. The algorithm used for identifying valid data is based upon the algorithm described by Hanson [7]. Only the more novel features are discussed here.

Whenever a predictive need request discovers that insufficient storage remains in either the heap or string space, the garbage collector is invoked to reclaim unused space in all regions. This approach is more efficient in situations where all regions are heavily allocated and only slightly less efficient otherwise.

The approach is to sweep through the permanent data regions and the stack, looking for descriptors that are either pointers into the heap or string qualifiers. When a string qualifier is found, a pointer to that qualifier is saved in a temporary data region at the end of the heap. If the descriptor is a pointer into the heap, then that heap data block contains valid information. The block is marked as valid, the descriptor is placed on a back chain headed in the block, and the marking process is called recursively on any descriptors within that block. Blocks that are already marked as valid are not processed a second time. To simplify the marking of heap blocks, all data blocks have been designed so that all descriptors within them exist as a contiguous section at the end of the block. Thus to sweep through the descriptors within a block, the marking algorithm need only know the size of the block and the location of the first descriptor. Information concerning a data block's size, as well as the offset for the first descriptor is in the file `rt/dblocks.c`.

Valid co-expression stacks also may contain string qualifiers and pointers to other valid data; such stacks are included in the marking phase.

After the marking phase is completed, the string region is compacted. The algorithm used is described by Hanson [9]. The pointers to the string qualifiers are sorted so that the order of all valid strings within the string space is identified. The string qualifiers are then processed in order, and modified as the valid strings are compacted. If this compaction does not free enough space within the string space to satisfy the request, the heap must be moved in order to provide more room in the string space. An attempt is also made to provide some additional "breathing room" in the string space to permit future expansion.

The heap cannot be moved until after the valid pointers into it are adjusted and the storage is compacted. The pointer adjustment and heap compaction phases are two linear passes through the heap which must be performed during standard heap garbage collection. The only difference when the heap is to be moved is that the adjusted pointers point to where that data will be after the heap has been moved. If not enough breathing room is freed in the heap, then more space is requested from the operating system. As a last step, if the string space needs more room, the heap is relocated.

This method has proved to be quite satisfactory for most applications. A shortcoming of the implementation is the absence of a process for decreasing the size of a data region, should it become too large. It is also possible that insufficient room would be available for storing the pointers to the string qualifiers, even though enough storage would become available if the heap were collected separately. In practice, this has not been a problem. The source code for the garbage collector is contained in the files `rt/gcollect.s`, `rt/gc.c`, and `rt/sweep.c`.

3.4 Coding Conventions

The calling conventions for functions and operators have been mentioned earlier. Several other aspects of the run-time system are explained here.

All header files for the run-time system are in the directory `h`. The file `h/rt.h` (or, for assembly-language routines, `h/defs.s`) is included by almost every source file in the run-time system, and contains machine-dependent defined constants, run-time data structure declarations, and defined constants and macros for flags, type codes, argument accessing, and bit manipulations.

During the execution of an Icon program, many type conversions are done on temporary values, where data storage is not required beyond the bounds of the current operation. For this reason, the type conversion routines all operate with pointers passed to them that reference buffers in the calling procedure. Any routine calling for type conversion must determine if heap or string space storage is needed, and perform the allocation. Most of the conversion routines return the type of the result or `NULL` if the conversion cannot be performed. One exception is `cvstr` which, in addition to `NULL`, returns `2` if the object was already a string, and `1` if the object had to be converted to a string. This distinction makes it possible to avoid a large number of predictive-need checks. The second exception is `cvnum`, which returns either real numbers or integers and makes no attempt to distinguish between short and long integers.

As mentioned in Section 3.3, there is space set aside to hold temporary descriptors and to protect the validity of these descriptors during garbage collection. The garbage collector knows about this region, and *tends* it during storage reclamation. The region is defined in the file `h/gc.h`, and is bounded by the labels `tended` and `etended`. This area can be referenced from C by considering `tended` to be an array of descriptors. Since a garbage collection can occur only during a call to `sneed` or `hneed`, or between suspension and reactivation, the only places where C routines need to ensure that all pointers into the heap or string space are tended are just before calls to `sneed`, `hneed`, or `suspend`.

All function names are preceded by the letter `X`, and their procedure blocks are preceded by the letter `B`. This prevents name collisions between Icon procedures and other routines, such as those for operators, type conversions, and storage management. Reference from the generated code to functions is made entirely through the procedure block; the entry point field of the procedure block references the function itself.

4. Modifying the Implementation

This section is intended to serve as a brief guide for those who wish to modify the Icon system. It is not comprehensive; it only points to various parts of the implementation that need to be considered when making various kinds of changes.

Perhaps the most common kind of change that one might expect to make is to add new functions (built-in procedures). To add a function, first write it according to the conventions described in Section 3.4. (Use an existing function similar to the new one as a prototype. Appendix F contains several example functions.) Be especially careful to observe the rules concerning storage allocation and tended descriptors.

Prepare to add the new function to the run-time library by moving the source code into the `functions` directory and adding its name to `functions/Makefile` (the name must be added in three places — there are many examples already in the `Makefile`). Then add the name to `h/pdef.h` in proper alphabetical order. Use other functions as a guide to the format of the entry.

When all changes have been made to the source code, go to the Icon root directory and run

```
make icon
```

This runs `make` in each of the system directories — `tran`, `link`, `functions`, `operators`, `lib`, `rt`, and `iconx` — and then copies the new versions into the `bin` directory [10].

Adding a new operator is more complicated. Again, the first step is to write the routine, place it in the `operators` directory, and add the appropriate entry to the `Makefile` there. Next, the operator must be added to the translator, as follows:

- (1) Add the operator to the operator table in `tran/optab`; the structure of the table is described in Section 1.1.
- (2) Create a unique name for the new token and make a new token table entry in `tran/tokens` in the operators section of the table. Although the operators section of the table is in alphabetical order by token name as distributed, there is no need to preserve this order.
- (3) If a running Version 5 of Icon is not available, edit the files `tran/optab.c` and `tran/toktab.c` to correspond to the changes made in steps 1 and 2. This sometimes involves a renumbering of token table entries in both files (but nowhere else). If a running Version 5 of Icon is available, a `make` in `tran` executes `mktoktab` to produce the new token tables.

- (4) Add the operator to the grammar in `tran/icon.g`. The token name must be added to the list of terminal symbols at the beginning of the grammar file, and the operator must be inserted into the syntax at the appropriate precedence level. If the precedence is the same as that of an existing operator, simply add the operator as an alternative to the existing production; otherwise, insert a new production, and change the production at the next lower precedence level to refer to the new one. The semantic action should create either a *BINOP* or a *UNOP* node in the parse tree; use existing actions as a prototype.
- (5) The new operator must now be added to the code generator in `tran/code.c`. Insert a case in either of the routines `binop` or `unop` for the new token name that assigns a new intermediate code opcode to `name`, as for other operators — this causes the new opcode to be emitted into the ucode. The opcode should have the same name as the library routine that performs the operation.
- (6) The new intermediate code opcode must also be added to the linker. Add a defined constant to `link/opcode.h`; order here is not important. Then add the opcode name and the defined constant to `link/opcode.c`; alphabetical order must be preserved here, since a binary search is used. Then edit the code generator in `link/lcode.c`, adding a case in the routine `gencode` with either the binary or the unary operators. The standard processing here emits code that evaluates the operand(s), then calls a library routine with the same name as the intermediate code opcode.
- (7) Add entries for the operator to `h/pnames.h`, using other operators as a guide.

The system is then be ready to be made as described above.

Adding a new control structure is similar in nature to adding a new operator. Most often, a new reserved word must be added to `tran/tokens`; this part of the token table must be kept in alphabetical order. The new token must be added to the grammar, and productions must be added, usually at the highest precedence level (the same as `if`, for example). The semantic action for the new production probably will involve creating a parse tree node of a new type. The new node type should be added to `tran/tree.h` and a new case in the routine `traverse` (in `tran/code.c`) should be added to generate intermediate code. The intermediate code generated can use any of the existing opcodes or can use new ones created specifically for the new control structure. If new opcodes are created, they must be added to the linker as described above, and a new case in the routine `gencode` must generate code for it. The generated code can be either entirely in-line or can call a new library routine. If new code generation templates are needed, modify the code emission routines in `link/lcode.c`. If the code calls a new library routine, add it to the `lib` directory and the `Makefile` there. Then the system is ready to be made.

Modifying the semantics of existing control structures, operators, or functions, often involves changing only the generated in-line code or a library routine. Modifying the syntax without disturbing any semantics usually requires only a change to the grammar.

Adding a new datatype means making many of the above changes. A new datatype code must be added to `h/rt.h` and `h/defs.s`, and a new data block format must be defined in `h/rt.h`. The size and location of the first descriptor of the new data block must be entered in `rt/dblocks.c` so that the garbage collector knows how to treat the block. The routines in `functions/image.c` and `rt/outimage.c` must be extended so that images of the new datatype can be produced. The routines in `functions/type.c` and `rt/equiv.c` must also be modified to account for the new type. In addition, `rt/anycmp.c` must be extended so that objects of the new type can be sorted relative to other types. New functions and operators on the new type may be needed, and possibly new coercion routines must be added to `rt`.

Adding a new keyword entails a change to `tran/keywords` (and, if a running Version 5 of Icon is not available, to `tran/keyword.h`) and a new case in `lib/keyword.c`. A `make` in `traan` runs the program `mkkeytab` to produce both `tran/keyword.h` and `tran/keyword.c`. Many keywords require trapped variables, which requires changes to `h/rt.h`, `operators/asgn.c`, and `rt/deref.c`; the trapped variable for `&random` is a good model.

As mentioned above, the examples in this section are intended to identify what parts of the system are affected by certain kinds of changes or extensions. A thorough understanding of the system is suggested, however, for other than minor changes.

Acknowledgements

This report is a revision of earlier descriptions of the C implementation of Icon [11, 12], which were co-authored by Cary Coutant and Steve Wampler. Much of the material in this report is taken from the earlier ones.

Many features of the current implementation of Icon are based upon the original Ratfor implementation by Dave Hanson, Tim Korb, and Walt Hansen [13, 14].

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Appendix A — The Parse Tree

The parse tree is a collection of nodes, described below, rooted at a **proc** node. Nodes have a common format: the first field contains the node type, the second and third fields contain a line and column number relating the node to the source program, and the next zero to four fields contain node-dependent information. The line and column numbers are usually those of the first token or the primary token of the construct; for example, in **binop** nodes, they are the location of the operator; in **if** nodes, they are the location of the **if** token.

The following list of node types gives a brief description of the node and a list of the node-dependent fields and their uses. The fields are named *val* if they contain an integer value, *str* if they contain a pointer to a string, or *tree* if they contain a pointer to another node (a leaf or subtree). A digit between 0 and 3 is appended indicating its position in the node.

Seven of the nodes — **cset**, **id**, **int**, **op**, **real**, **res**, and **str** — are leaf nodes. These nodes, allocated and returned by the lexical analyzer, represent source program tokens. The remaining nodes contain one or more pointers to other nodes, either leaves or subtrees.

- activat** A transmission expression (*e1 @ e2*).
 - tree0* The operator (an **op** node).
 - tree1* *e1*.
 - tree2* *e2*.
- alt** An alternation expression (*e1 | e2*).
 - tree0* *e1*.
 - tree1* *e2*.
- augop** An augmented assignment expression (*e1 O:= e2*).
 - tree0* The operator.
 - tree1* *e1*.
 - tree2* *e1*.
- bar** A repeated alternation expression (*|e*).
 - tree0* *e*.
- binop** A binary operation (*e1 O e2*).
 - tree0* The operator.
 - tree1* *e1*.
 - tree2* *e2*.
- break** A **break** expression (**break** [*e*]).
 - tree0* *e*.
- case** A **case** expression (**case** *e* **of** { ... }).
 - tree0* *e*.
 - tree1* The list of case clauses. If there is only one case clause, this field points to the **ccls** node; if there are more, it points to a **clist** node.
- ccls** A case clause (*e1 : e2*).
 - tree0* *e1*. For a **default** clause, this field points to a **res** node that contains the reserved word **default**.
 - tree1* *e2*.
- clist** A list of case clauses. The list is represented as a binary tree, with left branches pointing to case clauses and right branches pointing to a list of the remaining case clauses. The right branch of the last **clist** node points directly to a **ccls** node.
 - tree0* A case clause (pointer to a **ccls** node).
 - tree1* Pointer to another **clist** node, or to the last **ccls** node in the list.
- conj** A conjunction expression (*e1 & e2*).
 - tree0* *e1*.
 - tree1* *e2*.

create A **create** expression (**create** *e*).
tree0 *e*.

cset A leaf node representing a cset literal.
str0 The string equivalent of the literal.
val1 The length of the string.

elist An expression list, as in a list construction or the argument list in a procedure call. An expression list, like a list of case clauses, is represented as a binary tree.
tree0 An expression.
tree1 Pointer to another **elist** node, or to the last expression in the list.

empty This node is used as a placeholder for missing expressions in control structures and expression lists.

field A field reference to a record (*e* . *ident*).
tree0 *e*.
tree1 Pointer to an **id** node, containing the field name *ident*.

id A leaf node representing an identifier.
str0 The name of the identifier.

if An if expression (if *e1* then *e2* [**else** *e3*]).
tree0 *e1*.
tree1 *e2*.
tree2 *e3*.

int A leaf node representing an integer literal.
str0 The string representation of the literal.

invok A procedure call or mutual evaluation expression (*e* (*args*)).
tree0 *e*.
tree1 The argument list *args*. If there is one argument, this field points to the expression; if there are more, it points to an **elist** node.

key A keyword reference (&*ident*).
val0 The index of the keyword *ident*, defined in the file `tran/keyword.h`.

limit A limitation expression (*e1* \ *e2*).
tree0 *e1*.
tree1 *e2*.

list A list ([*e1*, *e2*, ...]).
tree0 The list of elements. If there is one element, this field points to the expression; if there are more, it points to an **elist** node.

loop A loop expression (*loop e1* [**do** *e2*]).
tree0 The style of loop. This field points to a **res** node, which identifies the reserved word that introduced the loop.
tree1 *e1*.
tree2 *e2*.

next A **next** expression.

not A **not** expression (not *e*).
tree0 *e*.

op A leaf node representing an operator.
val0 The token type of the operator.

proc	A procedure. This node is always at the root of the parse tree. <i>tree0</i> The procedure name. This field points to an id node containing the name. <i>tree1</i> The initial clause. <i>tree2</i> The procedure body. If there is one expression in the procedure body, this field points to it; if there are more, it points to an elist node. <i>tree3</i> A node containing the end token. This field is used to supply a line number for the implicit return at the end of a procedure.
real	A leaf node representing a real number literal. <i>str0</i> The string representation of the literal.
res	A leaf node representing a reserved word. <i>val0</i> The token type of the reserved word.
ret	A return or fail expression. <i>tree0</i> The type of return. This field points to a res node, which contains the reserved word return or fail . <i>tree1</i> The expression following return , or a pointer to an empty node.
scan	A scanning expression (<i>e1</i> ? <i>e2</i>). <i>tree0</i> The operator. <i>tree1</i> <i>e1</i> . <i>tree2</i> <i>e2</i> .
sect	A section expression (<i>e1</i> [<i>e2</i> : <i>e3</i>]). <i>tree0</i> <i>e1</i> . <i>tree1</i> <i>e2</i> . <i>tree2</i> <i>e3</i> .
slist	A list of expressions separated by semicolons, as in a procedure body (a statement list). This list, like expression lists and case lists, is represented as a binary tree. <i>tree0</i> An expression in the list. <i>tree1</i> A pointer to another slist node, or to the last expression in the list.
str	A leaf node representing a string literal. <i>str0</i> The string value of the literal. <i>val1</i> The length of the string, necessary because the string may contain the ASCII <i>null</i> character, which would otherwise terminate the string.
susp	A suspend expression (suspend [<i>e</i>]). <i>tree0</i> <i>e</i> .
toby	A to-by expression (<i>e1</i> to <i>e2</i> by <i>e3</i>). <i>tree0</i> <i>e1</i> . <i>tree1</i> <i>e2</i> . <i>tree2</i> <i>e3</i> .
to	A to expression (<i>e1</i> to <i>e2</i>). <i>tree0</i> <i>e1</i> . <i>tree1</i> <i>e2</i> .
unop	A unary operation (\odot <i>e</i>). <i>tree0</i> The operator. <i>tree1</i> <i>e</i> .

Appendix B — Icon Grammar

The following grammar describes the Icon language. Reserved words and operators are shown in a sans-serif type face; nonterminals are in italics. The nonterminals *ident*, *literal*, *strliteral*, and *empty* are left undefined in the syntax.

```
program → decls
decls → empty
       → decls decl
decl → record
       → proc
       → global
       → link
link → link lnklist
lnklist → lnkfile
        → lnklist , lnkfile
lnkfile → ident
         → strliteral
global → global idlist
record → record ident ( arglist )
proc → prothead ; locals initial procbody end
prothead → procedure ident ( arglist )
arglist → empty
         → idlist
idlist → ident
        → idlist , ident
locals → empty
        → locals retention idlist ;
retention → local
           → static
           → dynamic
initial → empty
         → initial expr ;
procbody → empty
          → nexpr ; procbody
nexpr → empty
        → expr
expr → exprla
       → expr & exprla
exprla → exprl
        → exprla ? exprl
```

expr1 → *expr2*
→ *expr2 op1 expr1*
→ *expr2 op1a expr1*
→ *expr2 ?:= expr1*
→ *expr2 &:= expr1*
→ *expr2 @:= expr1*

op1 → := | :=: | <- | <->

op1a → += | -= | *= | /= | %:= | ^= | ++:= | --:= | **:= | ||= | ||:=
→ <:= | <:=: | :=: | >:=: | >:= | ~:=:=
→ <<:= | <<:=: | ==:= | >>:=: | >>:= | ~==:=
→ ==:=: | ~==:=:

expr2 → *expr3*
→ *expr2 to expr3*
→ *expr2 to expr3 by expr3*

expr3 → *expr4*
→ *expr4 | expr3*

expr4 → *expr5*
→ *expr4 op4 expr5*

op4 → < | <= | = | >= | > | ~=
→ << | <<= | == | >>= | >> | ~==
→ == | ~==

expr5 → *expr6*
→ *expr5 op5 expr6*

op5 → || | |||

expr6 → *expr7*
→ *expr6 op6 expr7*

op6 → + | - | ++ | --

expr7 → *expr8*
→ *expr7 op7 expr8*

op7 → * | / | % | **

expr8 → *expr9*
→ *expr9 ^ expr8*

expr9 → *expr10*
→ *expr9 \ expr10*
→ *expr9 @ expr10*

expr10 → *expr11*
→ not *expr10*
→ @ *expr10*
→ | *expr10*
→ *op10 expr10*

op10 → . | ! | + | - | ~ | = | * | / | \ | ? | ^

expr11 → *ident*
 → *literal*
 → **&** *ident*
 → *expr11* . *ident*
 → *expr11* [*nexpr*]
 → *expr11* (*exprlist*)
 → *expr11* { *exprlist* }
 → [*exprlist*]
 → (*exprlist*)
 → { *compound* }
 → *while*
 → *until*
 → *every*
 → *repeat*
 → **next**
 → **break** *nexpr*
 → **create** *expr*
 → *if*
 → *case*
 → *return*
 → *section*

while → **while** *expr*
 → **while** *expr* **do** *expr*

until → **until** *expr*
 → **until** *expr* **do** *expr*

every → **every** *expr*
 → **every** *expr* **do** *expr*

repeat → **repeat** *expr*

if → **if** *expr* **then** *expr*
 → **if** *expr* **then** *expr* **else** *expr*

case → **case** *expr* **of** { *caselist* }

caselist → *cclause*
 → *caselist* ; *cclause*

cclause → **default** : *expr*
 → *expr* : *expr*

return → **fail**
 → **return** *nexpr*
 → **suspend** *nexpr*

section → *expr11* [*expr* *sectop* *expr*]

sectop → : | +: | -:

exprlist → *nexpr*
 → *exprlist* , *nexpr*

compound → *nexpr*
 → *nexpr* ; *compound*

Appendix C — Ucode

The intermediate ucode generated by the Icon translator resembles a stack-oriented assembly language. A ucode program is a sequence of labels and instructions. A label marks a location in the program to which other instructions may transfer control. Labels are of the form “**lab Ln**”, where *n* is a decimal number. A ucode instruction either describes an imperative operation or communicates information to the Icon linker. Instructions consist of an opcode followed by zero or more arguments. Arguments can be decimal or octal integers, names, or label references.

The intermediate language operates exclusively on the stack. There are several kinds of objects that can appear on the stack: descriptors, which represent Icon values and variables; procedure frame markers, which mark the beginning of a new procedure frame; expression frame markers, which delimit expression instances; and generator frame markers, which mark inactive generators. For more details about the stack, refer to Section 3.2.

The opcodes and their arguments are described in three groups below. The global symbol table file has a similar format. The opcodes used there are described in the fourth group.

Imperative Instructions

The instructions below, together with the operators described in the next section, represent run-time actions for which code is executed.

bscan

Save the values of **&subject** and **&pos** on the stack and establish values for them. This operation is reversible.

ccase

Duplicate the value on the stack just below the current expression frame. Used in **case** expressions.

chfail lab

Change the failure label for the current expression frame to *lab*. Used for repeated evaluation.

coact

Switch co-expression evaluation. Create a procedure frame on the current co-expression stack. Transfer the result from old stack to new stack, dereferencing if necessary. Set the activator field in new stack block to point to old co-expression stack block. Return from procedure frame on new co-expression stack.

cofail

Fail from current co-expression to activating co-expression. Create a procedure frame on current co-expression stack. Fail from procedure frame on activator's co-expression stack.

coret

Switch evaluation to activating co-expression. Create a procedure frame on current co-expression stack. Transfer the result from old stack to activator's stack, dereferencing it if the result is on the old stack. Return from the procedure frame on new co-expression stack.

create

Create a co-expression. Allocate co-expression stack and heap blocks. Copy the arguments and locals variables from the current procedure frame into the heap block. Create a procedure frame in the new co-expression stack using the arguments and other locals from current procedure frame. Create a procedure frame for dummy call to **coact** on the new co-expression stack. Push a descriptor representing the new co-expression onto current co-expression stack.

cset n

Push a descriptor representing the **cset** literal at constant table location *n* onto the stack.

dup

Push a descriptor representing the null value onto the stack, and then duplicate the value that was the previous top of the stack. Used in most augmented assignments.

efail

Signal failure in the current expression. If there are any inactive generators, reactivate the most recent one. If there are none, branch to the failure label for the current expression frame. If the failure label is null, exit the current expression frame, and signal failure in the enclosing one.

eret

Return a value from an expression. Save the value on top of the stack, exit the current expression frame, and push the value onto the stack as part of the enclosing expression frame.

escan

Restore **&subject** and **&pos** from the stack. This operation is reversible.

esusp

Suspend a value from an expression. The value on the top of the stack is saved, and a generator frame hiding the current expression frame is created. The surrounding expression frame is duplicated, and the value is pushed onto the stack as part of that expression frame. When reactivated, **esusp** in turn reactivates any inactive generators in the suspended expression.

field *name*

Access the field *name* of the record on the top of the stack.

file *name*

Set the file name to *name* for use in error messages and tracing. Used at the beginning of each procedure.

goto *lab*

Transfer control to the instruction following label *lab*.

incres

Increment result count field in current co-expression stack block.

init? *lab*

If the initialization statement for the current procedure has already been executed once, go to *lab*.

int *n*

Push a descriptor representing the integer literal at constant table location *n* onto the stack.

invoke *n*

Invoke a procedure or create a record. The number of arguments or fields on the stack is given by *n*. The procedure (which may be a record constructor) is on the stack, just beyond the arguments. After invocation, the arguments are popped from the stack, and the returned value is pushed (see **pret**).

keywd *n*

Push a descriptor representing a value or trapped variable representing keyword *n* onto the stack. (See `tran/keyword.h` for keyword numbers.)

limit

Check the value on the top of the stack for a legal limitation value. If the value is zero, failure is signalled in the current expression (see **efail**).

line *n*

Set the line number to *n* for use in error messages and tracing.

llist *n*

Create a list of *n* values. The values are popped from the stack and the created list is pushed back onto the stack.

lsusp

Decrement the limitation counter for the current expression frame. If the counter becomes zero, then return a value from the current expression frame (see **eret**); otherwise, suspend a value from the current expression frame (see **esusp**).

mark lab

Save the current expression and generator frame pointers on the stack, then create a new expression frame, with failure label *lab*. Control is transferred to *lab* if failure occurs in the expression frame and there are no suspended generators to reactivate (see **efail**). The failure label **LO** indicates that control is to be transferred to the failure label in the enclosing expression.

pfail

Return from the current procedure, and signal failure (see **efail**).

pnull

Push a descriptor representing the null value onto the stack.

pop

Pop the top element off of the stack.

pret

Return from the current procedure with the result that is on top of the stack.

psusp

Suspend from the current procedure with the result that is on top of the stack.

pushl

Push a descriptor representing the integer *l* onto the stack.

pushnl

Push a descriptor representing the integer $-l$ onto the stack. This is used as default in mutual goal-directed evaluation.

real n

Push a descriptor representing the real literal at constant table location *n* onto the stack.

refresh

Allocate space for a new co-expression stack. Create a procedure frame in new co-expression stack using arguments and other locals from entry block for co-expression operand. Create a procedure frame for dummy call to **coact** on new co-expression stack. Push a descriptor representing the new co-expression onto current co-expression stack.

sdup

Duplicate the descriptor on the top of the stack. Used in assignment augmented with string scanning.

str n

Push a descriptor representing the string literal at constant table location *n* onto the stack.

unmark n

Exit from *n* expression frames. No value is pushed onto the stack in their place.

var n

Push the descriptor for the variable at location *n* in the local symbol table onto the stack.

Operators

The instructions below perform the functions corresponding to the indicated Icon operator. The operands are evaluated and pushed onto the stack from left to right, so that the topmost element of the stack is the rightmost operand. The operands are popped before the result of the operation is pushed onto the stack. All operations dereference their operands as necessary, but only after all operands have been evaluated and pushed onto the stack. All operations attempt to convert their operands to an appropriate type. If this implicit conversion fails, an error is issued. Relational tests fail if the specified condition is not met; the result of a successful comparison is the value of the right-hand operand. Arithmetic operations cause an error to be

issued if the result overflows or underflows. If an operation cannot be performed for some other reason, it fails.

asgn	x := y	null	/x
bang	!x	number	+x
cat	x y	numeq	x = y
compl	~x	numge	x >= y
diff	x -- y	numgt	x > y
div	x / y	numle	x <= y
eqv	x === y	numlt	x < y
inter	x ** y	numne	x ~= y
lconcat	x y	plus	x + y
lexeq	x == y	power	x ^ y
lexge	x >>= y	random	?x
lexgt	x >> y	rasgn	x <- y
lexle	x <<= y	rswap	x <-> y
lexlt	x << y	sect	x[y:z]
lexne	x ~= y	size	*x
minus	x - y	subsc	x[y]
mod	x % y	swap	x := y
mult	x * y	tabmat	=x
neg	-x	toby	x to y by z
neqv	x !== y	unioncs	x ++ y
nonnull	\x	value	.x

Non-Imperative Instructions

The following instructions generate no executable code. Instead, they communicate various information to the linker each procedure and its symbol table. An Icon procedure is translated into a sequence of ucode instructions beginning with a **proc** instruction, followed by a sequence of **local** instructions, a sequence of **con** instructions, a **declend** instruction, then the imperative instructions describing the procedure body. An **end** instruction terminates the procedure.

proc *name*

Begin a new procedure with the indicated name. The local and constant tables are initialized. The procedure block is not generated at this time, since the local identifiers have not yet been declared.

local *n,flags,name*

Enter *name* into the current procedure's local symbol table at location *n*. The symbol's *flags* indicate information about the symbol, its scope, and its retention. All identifiers referred to in a procedure appear in the local symbol table. If an identifier is undeclared, its scope is determined by consulting the global symbol table and a list of functions.

con *n,flags,value*

Enter *value* into the current procedure's constant table at location *n* in the table. The type of the constant (integer, real, or string) is indicated by *flags*. For integer and real literals, *value* is an 11-digit octal number; for string and cset literals, it is a comma-separated list of 3-digit octal numbers, each representing one byte in the string.

declend

Signal the end of the procedure prologue. The procedure block is generated at this point.

end

Signal the end of a procedure.

Global Symbol Table Instructions

A single global symbol table file is output during each translation. Record declarations appear first in the file; they are output as they are encountered in the Icon source program. The first instruction following the record declarations is **impl**, which may be followed by a **trace** instruction, then by the global declarations. The global declarations are output at the end of translation.

record *name,n*

Declare a record with the indicated name and *n* fields. One line for each field follows this line, each containing the field number and name.

impl *scope*

Declare the implicit scope as indicated. *Scope* can be either **local** or **error**. If the implicit scope is **error**, undeclared identifiers are flagged as warnings during linking; otherwise, they are made local variables. The implicit scope is **error** if the **-u** option was given on the translator command line, otherwise it is **local**.

trace

Enable run-time tracing. This instruction is present if the **-t** option was given on the translator command line, and causes the keyword **&trace** to be initialized to **-1**.

global *n*

Begin the global symbol table. There are *n* global declarations following, one per line. Each global declaration contains a sequence number, the flags, the identifier name, and the number of formal parameters (for procedures) or fields (for records).

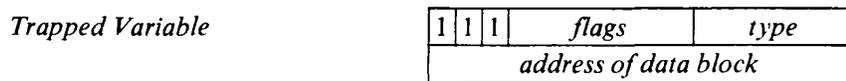
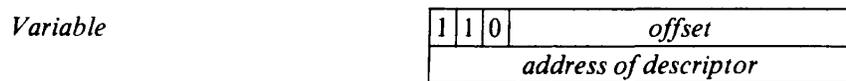
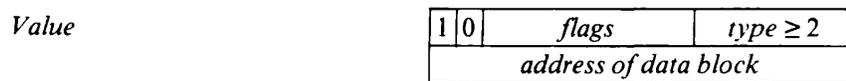
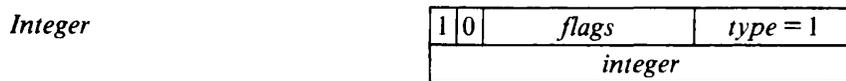
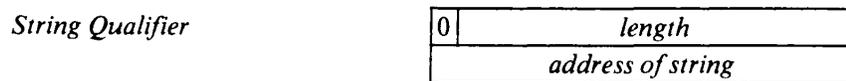
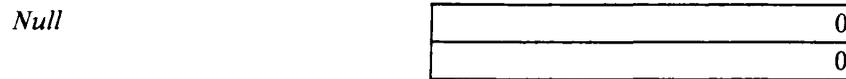
link *name*

Search each directory named in the *IPATH* environment variable for a file named *name.u1*. If the file is located, it is added to the list of files to link.

Appendix D — Data Representations

Descriptor Formats

The figures below depict each of the six descriptor types mentioned in Section 3.1. Each descriptor is two words long; the first word is shown on top of the second.

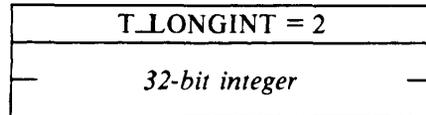


Notes: The offset in a variable descriptor is the number of words from the top of the block in which the descriptor that is pointed to occurs. The second word in the descriptors for the trapped variables for **&pos**, **&random**, and **&trace** contain addresses of locations in statically allocated data.

Data Block Formats

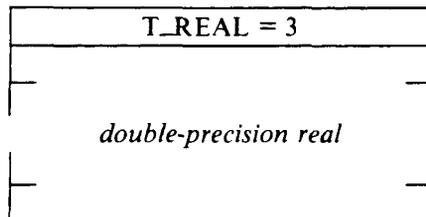
The data blocks used by the Icon system are pictured below. The data type code, shown as both a mnemonic and an integer, is always the first word of the block and has the same value as the type code in the *value* or *trapped variable* descriptor that refers to it. All *name* fields in the data blocks are *string qualifier* descriptors, and all *pointers* in the data blocks are *variable* descriptors.

Long Integer Block

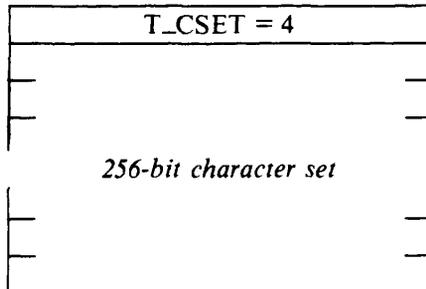


Note: Long integers apply only when `sizeof(int) != sizeof(long)`

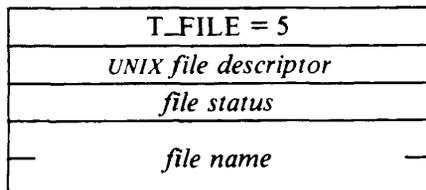
Real Block



Cset Block



File Block



Procedure Block

T_PROCEDURE = 6
<i>size of this data block</i>
<i>entry point address</i>
<i>number of arguments</i>
<i>number of dynamic locals</i>
<i>number of static locals</i>
<i>index of first static local</i>
— <i>procedure name</i> —
— <i>name of first identifier</i> —
• • •
— <i>name of last identifier</i> —

Notes: Identifiers include arguments and locals. Similar blocks are used for built-in functions; in this case the word for the number of dynamic locals contains -1. For functions, there are no argument names. Functions like **write**, which have an arbitrary number of argument, are indicated by the value -1 in place of the number of arguments. Record constructors are distinguished from other functions by the value -2 in place of the number of dynamic locals. Each record declaration is distinguished by a unique record identification number, which appears in place of the number of static locals.

List Header Block

T_LIST = 7
<i>current size of list</i>
— <i>pointer to first list block</i> —
— <i>pointer to last list block</i> —

List Element Block

<i>T_LELEM = 11</i>
<i>size of this data block</i>
<i>number of slots in this block</i>
<i>index of first slot used</i>
<i>number of slots used</i>
<i>pointer to previous list block</i>
<i>pointer to next list block</i>
<i>first slot</i>
<i>.</i>
<i>.</i>
<i>last slot</i>

Table Header Block

<i>T_TABLE = 8</i>
<i>current table size</i>
<i>default value</i>
<i>first hash bucket</i>
<i>.</i>
<i>.</i>
<i>last hash bucket</i>

Table Element Block

<i>T_TELEM = 10</i>
<i>hash number</i>
<i>pointer to next element</i>
<i>entry value</i>
<i>assigned value</i>

Set Header Block

<i>T_SET = 20</i>
<i>current set size</i>
<i>first hash bucket</i>
<i>.</i>
<i>.</i>
<i>last hash bucket</i>

Set Element Block

<i>T_SELEM = 21</i>
<i>hash number</i>
<i>member value</i>
<i>pointer to next member</i>

Record Block

<i>T_RECORD = 9</i>
<i>size of this data block</i>
<i>pointer to record constructor</i>
<i>first field of record</i>
<i>.</i>
<i>.</i>
<i>last field of record</i>

Co-Expression Stack Block

<i>T_ESTACK = 18</i>
<i>most recent activator</i>
<i>stack base</i>
<i>stack pointer</i>
<i>address pointer</i>
<i>Icon/C boundary</i>
<i>number of results produced</i>
<i>pointer to refresh block</i>
<i>.</i>
<i>.</i>

Co-Expression Heap Block

T_EBLOCK = 19
<i>size of this data block</i>
<i>entry point address</i>
<i>number of arguments</i>
<i>number of locals</i>
<i>procedure</i>
<i>value of first identifier</i>
<i>·</i>
<i>·</i>
<i>·</i>
<i>value of last identifier</i>

Note Identifiers include arguments and locals

Substring Trapped Variable

T_TVSUBS = 12
<i>length of substring</i>
<i>relative position of substring</i>
<i>variable containing substring</i>

Table Element Trapped Variable

T_TVTBL = 14
<i>hash number</i>
<i>pointer to table</i>
<i>entry value</i>

Note The last descriptor in a table element trapped variable is not used until the element is inserted in the table, at which time the table element trapped variables is converted into a table element block

Appendix E — Stack Frame Formats

Stack frame formats depend on computer architecture and the C compiler that is used. Consequently, stack frame formats are specific to a particular implementation. This appendix gives the UNIX PDP-11 and VAX-11 stack frame formats. See [3] for a detailed description of the design of stack frame formats.

On the PDP-11 and VAX-11 stacks start in high memory and grow downward. On these computers a push causes the stack pointer to decrease and a pop causes the stack pointer to increase, while “top of the stack” refers to the *lowest* memory location that is logically contained in the stack. The diagrams that follow are arranged accordingly.

There are three kinds of stack frames: *procedure frames*, *expression frames*, and *generator frames*. For each kind of frame, a *frame pointer* points to the most recent *frame marker*, which marks one end of the frame. These frame pointers are referred to as *pf_p*, *ef_p*, and *gf_p*, respectively. Each frame marker contains a pointer to the next most recent marker of the same kind.

PDP-11 Stack Frame Formats

On the PDP-11, *pf_p*, *ef_p*, and *gf_p* are in registers *r5*, *r4*, and *r3*, respectively, whenever an Icon procedure is active. In the interpreter implementation, *r2* contains the interpreter’s program counter (*ipc*), which points to the next icode operation to be done. When a C procedure is active, only the procedure frame pointer is kept in a register; registers *r2–r4* are used for local variables by C procedures.

Procedure Frames on the PDP-11

Icon procedure frames are augmented C procedure frames. A procedure frame contains a procedure’s arguments, local variables, and temporary storage for incomplete computations. When an active procedure invokes another procedure, a new procedure frame is created for the new procedure, which then becomes active. AAA such, the new procedure represents an incomplete computation in the calling procedure, so the new procedure frame is within the old one. The *procedure marker* is placed on the stack between the arguments and local variables. The format of the procedure frame is shown below. The locations are relative to *pf_p*.

		arguments
	4	number of arguments
	2	return address
<i>pf_p</i> →	0	previous <i>pf_p</i>
	-2	previous <i>ef_p</i>
	-4	previous <i>gf_p</i>
	-6	previous <i>ipc</i>
	-8	previous source program line number
	-10	previous source program file name

Expression and generator frames are always contained wholly within a procedure frame, and their respective frame pointers are cleared to zero after being saved in the procedure marker.

The first argument to a procedure is located at 6(*pf_p*), the second at 10(*pf_p*), and so on. The first local variable is located at -14(*pf_p*), the second at -18(*pf_p*), and so on.

Procedure markers created for functions and operators do not contain the source program line number or file name, since functions and operators do not change it. Because they are C procedures, their local variables are not descriptors and are subject to C language conventions, but everything above the marker (higher addresses) is subject to Icon language conventions. The location of the procedure marker for functions and operators is considered the *boundary*, mentioned in Section 3.2.

Expression Frames on the PDP-11

An expression frame limits the scope of backtracking. No inactive generator outside the current expression frame may be reactivated until evaluation of the current expression is complete. The format of an expression marker is shown below, locations are relative to *efp*

<i>efp</i> →	0	previous <i>efp</i>
	-2	previous <i>gfp</i>
	-4	failure label for expression frame

When an expression frame is created, the generator frame pointer is cleared after being saved in the expression marker, to indicate that there are no inactive generators that may be reactivated while the new expression frame is current. An expression frame extends from its expression marker to the top of the stack. Expression frames are not disjoint, new frames are always nested within older ones.

When failure occurs within an expression and there are no inactive generators to reactivate, the expression frame is exited, and control is transferred to the failure label. If the failure label is null, however, another failure occurs within the new expression frame, and the logic is the same.

For limited expressions, the limitation counter is contained in an Icon integer just above the expression marker at $2(efp)$. This counter is decremented each time the expression suspends a result.

Generator Frames on the PDP-11

Generator frames are augmented procedure frames. A generator frame preserves the state of execution of an inactive generator. When a suspending procedure calls **psusp**, a generator marker is placed on the stack to mark the point of suspension, and the most recent expression frame *outside* the suspending procedure frame (the expression frame that was current just prior to invocation of the suspending procedure) is then duplicated and pushed onto the stack. The suspending procedure then returns, so that the expression frame that was duplicated is current. Thus, the generator frame is contained within the expression frame, and the inactive generator. The format of the generator marker is shown in the following table, locations are shown relative to *gfp*

	10	reactivation address
	8	previous <i>pfp</i>
	6	previous <i>efp</i>
	4	previous <i>gfp</i>
	2	previous <i>ipc</i>
<i>gfp</i> →	0	previous boundary address
	-2	previous value of &level
	-4	previous source program line number
	-6	previous source program file name

The last five words of the generator marker are actually part of a procedure marker, created by the call to **psusp**. Thus, the reactivation address is just the return address for **psusp**.

When a function or operator suspends, there is a boundary that becomes hidden. This boundary address needs to be restored upon reactivation. It is also important to the garbage collector, since the portion of a generator frame between the hidden boundary and the generator marker does not have the well-defined structure that is required.

VAX-11 Stack Frame Formats

The C frames on the VAX are variable in size and *ap* is used to facilitate access to the arguments.

Procedure Frames on the VAX-11

On the VAX-11, there is a program counter (*pc*), a stack pointer (*sp*), a frame pointer (*fp*), and an argument pointer (*ap*). These pointers are registers *r15*, *r14*, *r13*, and *r12*, respectively. Icon uses *fp* for *pfp*, *r11* for *efp*, and *r10* for *gfp*.

The procedure frame for the VAX-11 is

		arguments
	4	number of arguments
<i>ap</i> →	0	number of words in the argument list
	-4	previous <i>efp</i>
	-8	previous <i>gfp</i>
	16	previous <i>pc</i>
	12	previous <i>fp</i>
	8	previous <i>ap</i>
	4	program status word and register mask
<i>fp</i> →	0	0 (condition handler status)
	-4	previous source program line number
	-8	previous source program file name
		local variables

The first argument is at 8(*ap*), the second argument is at 16(*ap*), and so on. The first local variable is at -16(*fp*), the second local variable is at -24(*fp*), and so on.

Expression Frames on the VAX-11

The expression frame marker for the VAX-11 is

<i>efp</i> →	0	previous <i>efp</i>
	-4	previous <i>gfp</i>
	-8	failure label for expression frame

Generator Frames on the VAX-11

The generator frame marker for the VAX-11 is

		previous <i>efp</i>
		previous <i>gfp</i>
		last saved register
	20	reactivation address
	16	previous <i>fp</i>
	12	previous <i>ap</i>
	8	program status word and register mask
	4	0 (condition handler address)
<i>gfp</i> →	0	previous boundary address
	-4	previous value of <i>&level</i>
	-8	previous source program line number
	-12	previous source program file name

Appendix F — Sample Functions

The following routines are examples of the source code for Icon functions. As indicated in the report, each routine consists of a C procedure that performs the indicated function and a procedure block linking the C procedure with the Icon procedure invocation mechanism.

The first example is the code for the routine `write`, as supplied with the Icon distribution, and is included to show how a routine is written to handle a variable number of arguments.

```
#include "../h/rt.h"

/*
 * write(a, b, ...) — write arguments.
 */

Xwrite(nargs)
int nargs;
{
    register int n;
    char sbuf[MAXSTRING];
    struct descrip arg;
    FILE *f;

    f = stdout;
    arg = nullstr;

    for (n = 1; n <= nargs; n++) {
        arg = ARG(n);
        DeRef(arg);                /* dereference arguments */

        if (!EQUAL(arg) && TYPE(arg) == T_FILE) {
            if (n > 1) {
                putc('\n', f);
                fflush(f);
            }
            if ((BLKLOC(arg)->file.status & FS_WRITE) == 0)
                runerr(213, &arg);
            f = BLKLOC(arg)->file.fd;
            arg = nullstr;
        }
        else {
            if (n == 1 && (k_output.status & FS_WRITE) == 0)
                runerr(213, NULL);
            defany(&arg, &nullstr);
            if (cvstr(&arg, sbuf) == NULL)
                runerr(109, &arg);
            putstr(f, STRLOC(arg), STRLEN(arg));
        }
    }
}
```

```

putc('\n', f);
fflush(f);
if (STRLOC(arg) >= sbuf && STRLOC(arg) < sbuf + MAXSTRING) {
    sneed(STRLEN(arg));
    STRLOC(arg) = alcstr(STRLOC(arg), STRLEN(arg));
}
ARG(0) = arg;
}

```

Procblock(write, -1)

The -1 in the Procblock macro indicates that **write** takes an arbitrary number of arguments.

The following two routines are examples of typical functions that could be added to the run-time system using the technique described in Section 4.

The first of these routines, **seek**, interfaces to the C library routine **fseek**.

```

#include "../h/rt.h"

/*
 * seek(file, offset, start) - seek to offset byte from start in file.
 */

Xseek(nargs, arg3, arg2, arg1, arg0)
int nargs;
struct descrip arg3, arg2, arg1, arg0;
{
    long l1, l2;
    int status;
    FILE *fd;
    long ftell();

    DeRef(arg1);
    if (arg1.type != D_FILE)
        runerr(106);

    defint(&arg2, &l1, 0);
    defshort(&arg3, 0);

    fd = BLKLOC(arg1)->file.fd;

    if ((BLKLOC(arg1)->file.status == 0) ||
        (fseek(fd, l1, arg3.value.integer) == -1))
        fail();
    mkint(ftell(fd), &arg0);
}

Procblock(seek, 3)

```

The argument 3 in the Procblock macro indicates that **seek** takes three arguments.

The routine **getenv** provides access to shell environment variables through the C library procedure **getenv**.

```

#include "../h/rt.h"

/*
 * getenv(s) – return contents of environment variable s
 */

Xgetenv(nargs, arg1, arg0)
int nargs;
struct descrip arg1, arg0;
{
    register char *p;
    register int len;
    char sbuf[MAXSTRING];

    DeRef(&arg1);

    if (!QUAL(arg1)) /* check legality of argument */
        runerr(103, &arg1);
    if (STRLEN(arg1) <= 0 || STRLEN(arg1) >= MAXSTRING)
        runerr(401, &arg1);
    qtos(&arg1, sbuf); /* convert argument to C-style string */

    if ((p = getenv(sbuf)) != NULL) { /* get environment variable */
        len = strlen(p);
        sneed(len);
        STRLEN(arg0) = len;
        STRLOC(arg0) = alcstr(p, len);
    }
    else /* fail if variable not in environment */
        fail();
}

Procblock(getenv, -1)

```