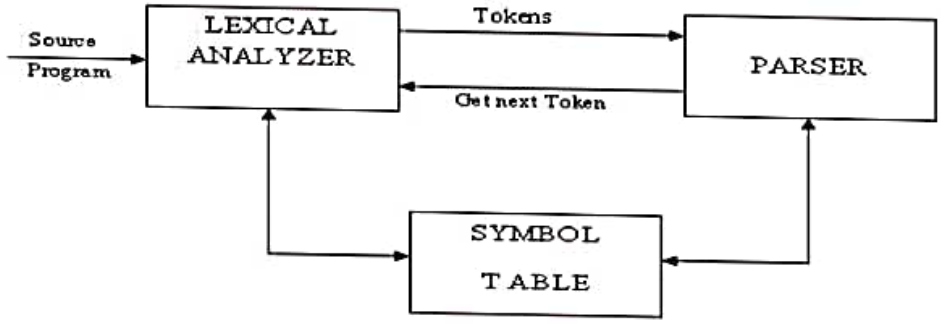
LEXICAL ANALYSIS

OVER VIEW OF LEXICAL ANALYSIS

- To identify the tokens we need some method of describing the possible tokens that can appear in the input stream. For this purpose we introduce regular expression, a notation that can be used to describe essentially all the tokens of programming language.
- Secondly , having decided what the tokens are, we need some mechanism to recognize these in the input stream. This is done by the token recognizers, which are designed using transition diagrams and finite automata.

ROLE OF LEXICAL ANALYZER

the LA is the first phase of a compiler. It main task is to read the input character and produce as output a sequence of tokens that the parser uses for syntax analysis.



Upon receiving a 'get next token' command form the parser, the lexical analyzer reads the input character until it can identify the next token. The LA return to the parser representation for the token it has found. The representation will be an integer code, if the token is a simple construct such as parenthesis, comma or colon.

LA may also perform certain secondary tasks as the user interface. One such task is striping out from the source program the commands and white spaces in the form of blank, tab and new line characters. Another is correlating error message from the compiler with the source program.

TOKEN, LEXEME, PATTERN:

Token: Token is a sequence of characters that can be treated as a single logical entity. Typical tokens are,

1) Identifiers 2) keywords 3) operators 4) special symbols 5)constants

Pattern: A set of strings in the input for which the same token is produced as output. This set of strings is described by a rule called a pattern associated with the token.

Lexeme: A lexeme is a sequence of characters in the source program that is matched by the pattern for a token.

Example:

Description of token

Token	**lexeme**	**pattern**
const	const	const
if	if	If
relation	<,<=,= ,< >,>=,>	< or <= or = or < > or >= or letter followed by letters & digit
i	pi	any numeric constant
nun	3.14	any character b/w "and "except"
literal	"core"	pattern

A patter is a rule describing the set of lexemes that can represent a particular token in source program.

Lex specifications:

declarations

%%

translation rules

%%

auxiliary procedures

1. The *declarations* section includes declarations of variables,manifest constants(A manifest constant is an identifier that is declared to represent a constant e.g. *# define PIE 3.14*), and regular definitions.
2. The *translation rules* of a Lex program are statements of the form :

p1	*{action 1}*
p2	*{action 2}*
p3	*{action 3}*
...	...
...	...

   where each p is a regular expression and each *action* is a program fragment describing what action the lexical analyzer should take when a pattern p matches a lexeme. In Lex the actions are written in C.

3. The third section holds whatever *auxiliary procedures* are needed by the *actions*.Alternatively these procedures can be compiled separately and loaded with the lexical analyzer.

INPUT BUFFERING

The LA scans the characters of the source pgm one at a time to discover tokens. Because of large amount of time can be consumed scanning characters, specialized buffering techniques have been developed to reduce the amount of overhead required to process an input character.For example please refer class notes.