RISC Architecture: Pipeline Hazard

Virendra Singh
Associate Professor
Computer Architecture and Dependable Systems Lab
Department of Electrical Engineering
Indian Institute of Technology Bombay
http://www.ee.iitb.ac.in/~viren/
E-mail: viren@ee.iitb.ac.in

Computer Organization & Architecture

Lecture 19 (06 May 2013)

CADSL

Pipeline Hazards

- Definition: *Hazard in a pipeline is a situation in which the next instruction cannot complete execution one clock cycle after completion of the present instruction.*
- Three types of hazards:
  - Structural hazard (resource conflict)
  - Data hazard
  - Control hazard

Ways to Handle Branch

- Stall or bubble
- Delayed branch
- Branch prediction:
  - Heuristics
    - Next instruction
    - Prediction based on statistics (dynamic)
    - Hardware decision (dynamic)
  - Prediction error: pipeline flush

Delayed Branch Example

- Stall on branch

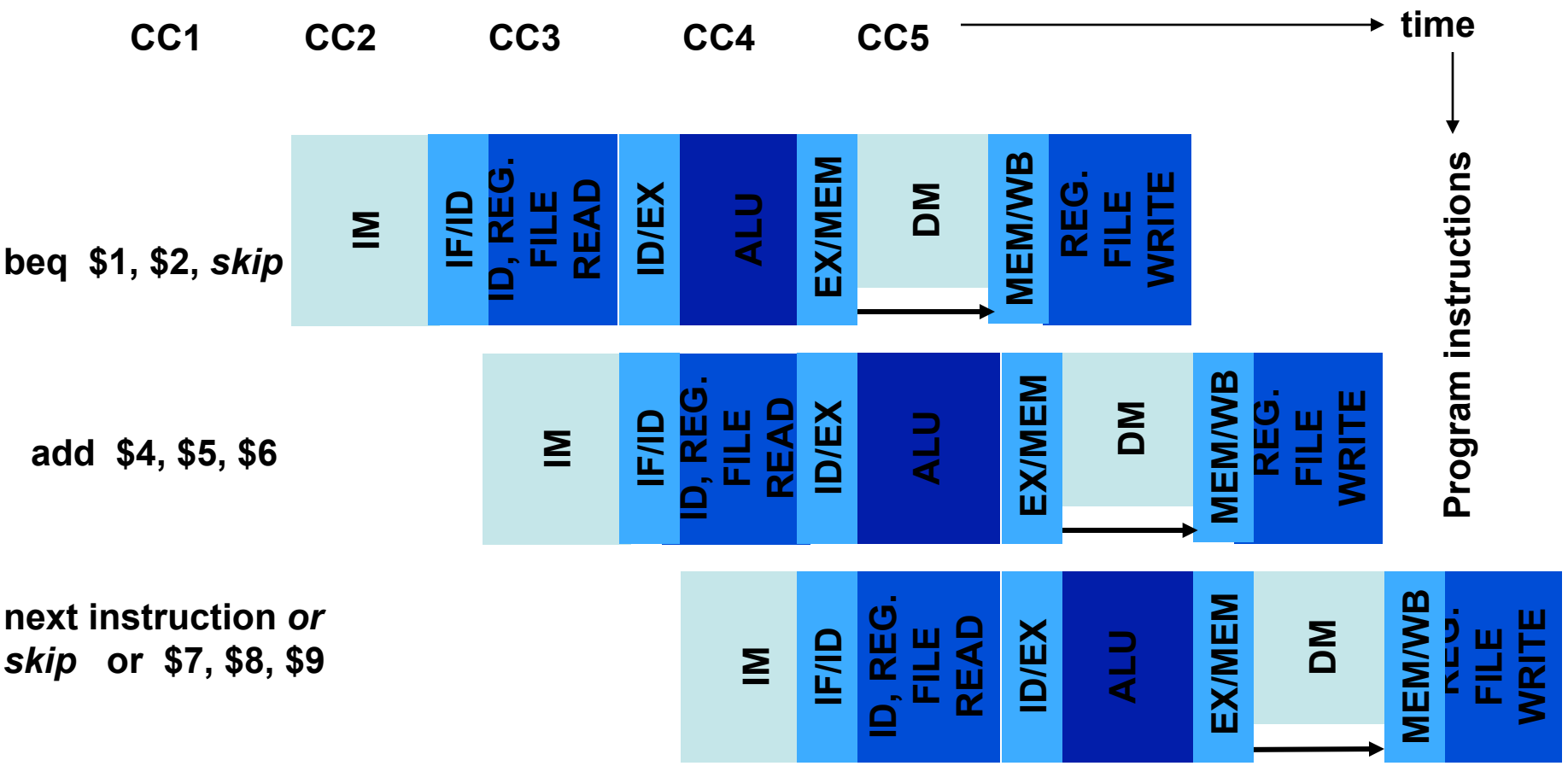
```
        add $4, $5, $6
        beq $1, $2, skip
        next instruction
        . . .
skip    or $7, $8, $9
```

- Delayed branch

```
        beq $1, $2, skip
        add $4, $5, $6
        next instruction
        . . .
skip    or $7, $8, $9
```

Instruction executed irrespective of branch decision

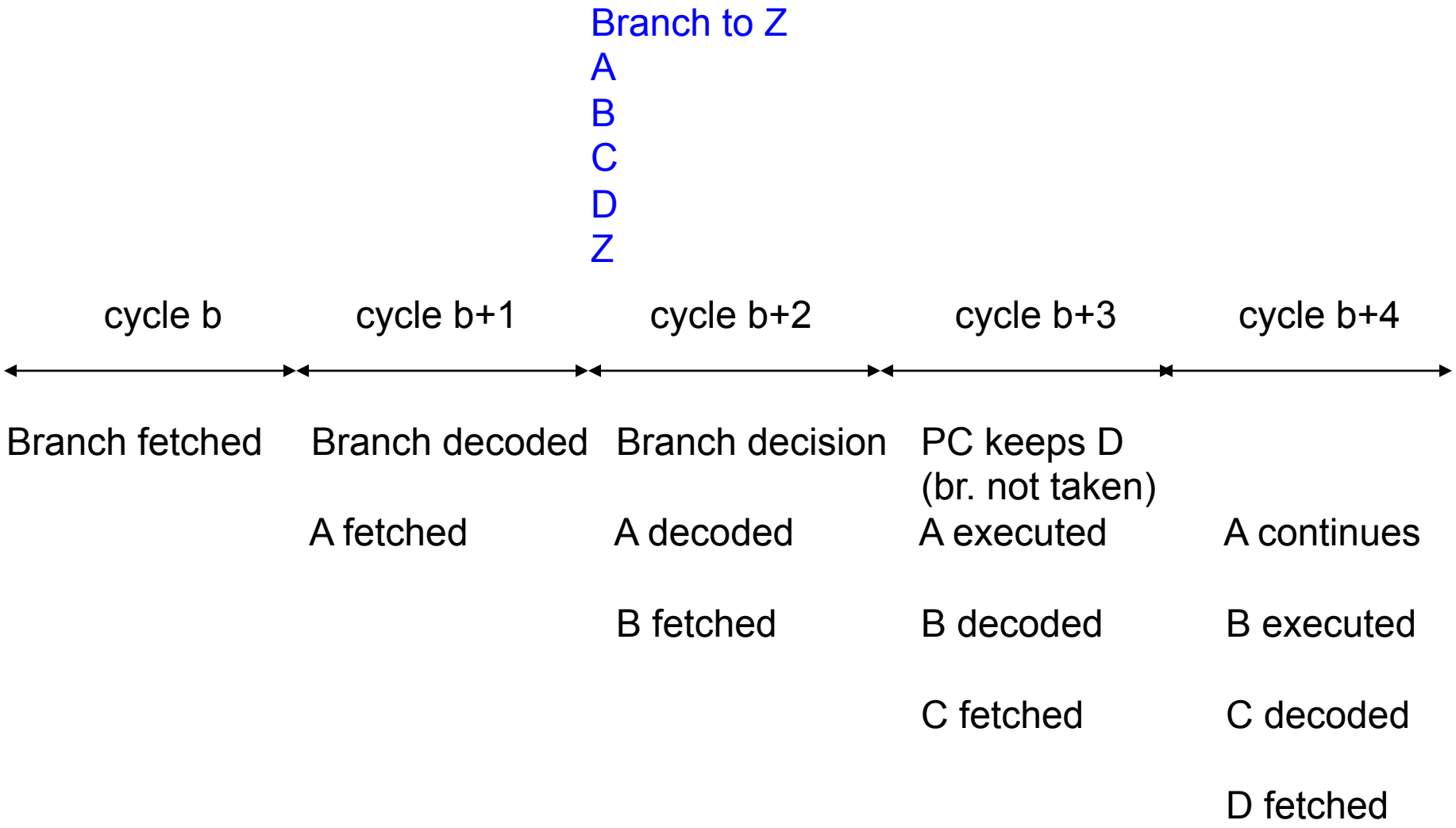
Delayed Branch



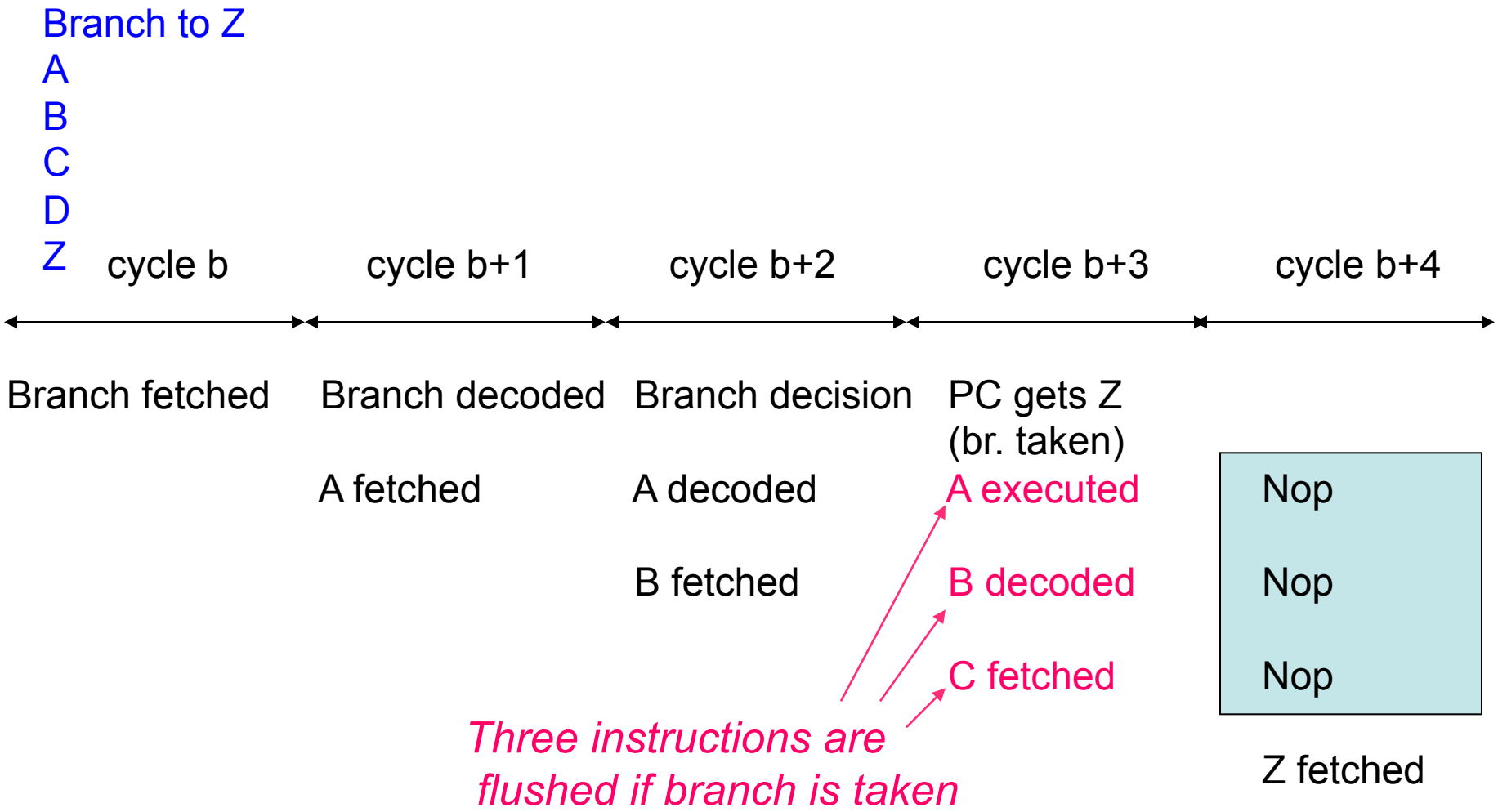
Branch Hazard

- Consider heuristic – branch not taken.
- Continue fetching instructions in sequence following the branch instructions.
- If branch is taken (indicated by *zero* output of ALU):
  - Control generates *branch* signal in ID cycle.
  - *branch* activates *PCSource* signal in the MEM cycle to load PC with new branch address.
  - *Three instructions in the pipeline must be flushed if branch is taken – can this penalty be reduced?*

Branch Not Taken



Branch Taken



Thank You