

1. Introduction

Brief Summary of Course Objectives

- Improve the background for choosing appropriate programming languages
- Be able in principle to program in a *procedural*, an *object-oriented*, a *functional*, and a *logical* programming language
- Understand the significance of an implementation of a programming language in a *compiler* or *interpreter*
- Increase the ability to learn new programming languages
- Increase the capacity to express general programming concepts and to choose among alternative ways to express things in a particular programming language
- Simulate useful features in languages that lack them
- Be able write programs that parse and translate (programming) languages
- Be able in principle to design a new programming language

Note: These slides cover Chapter 1 Sections 1.1 to 1.3 of the textbook

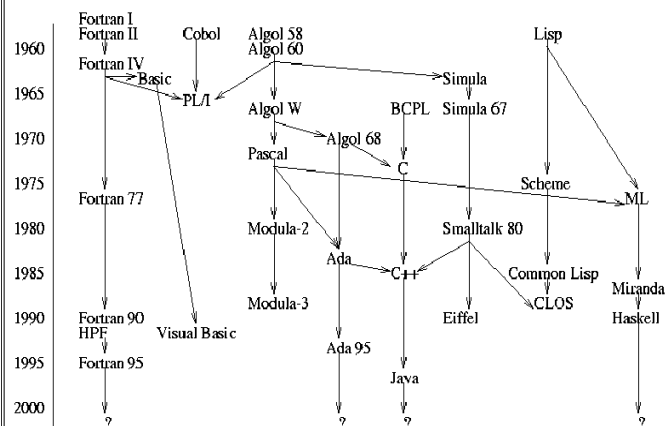
Important Events in Programming Language History

- 1940s: The first electronic computers were monstrous contraptions
 - Programmed in binary *machine code* by hand
 - Code is not reusable or relocatable
 - Computation and machine maintenance were difficult: cathode tubes regularly burned out
 - The term *bug* originated from a bug that reportedly roamed around in a machine causing short circuits
- *Assembly languages* were invented to allow machine operations to be expressed in mnemonic abbreviations
 - Enables larger, reusable, and relocatable programs
 - Actual machine code is produced by *assembler*
 - Early assemblers had a one-to-one correspondance between assembly and machine instructions
 - Later: macro expansion into multiple machine instructions to achieve a form of higher-level programming

Important Events in Programming Language History (cont'd)

- Mid 1950s: development of Fortran, the first arguably higher-level language
 - Finally, programs could be developed that were machine independent!
 - Main computing activity in the 50s: solve numerical problems in science and engineering
 - Other high-level languages soon followed:
 - Algol 58 is an improvement compared to Fortran
 - Cobol for business computing
 - Lisp for symbolic computing and artificial intelligence
 - BASIC for "beginners"
 - C for systems programming
- 1980s: Object-oriented programming
 - Important innovation for software development
 - The concept of a *class* is based on the notion of data type abstraction from Simula 67, a language for discrete event simulation that has classes but no inheritance

Programming Language Genealogy



Note: go to the on-line textbook Appendix for a list of programming languages and other links

Selected Overview of Programming Languages

- Fortran (I, II, IV, 77)
 - Had a dramatic impact on computing in early days
 - Is mainly used for numerical computation
 - No recursion
 - Limited data types (no records and no pointers)
 - Limited type checking
 - Very good compilers are available today
- Fortran (90, 95, HPF)
 - Major revisions, e.g. recursion, pointers, and records added
 - New control constructs (eg. `while` loop)
 - Extensive set of array operations
 - HPF (High-Performance Fortran) includes constructs for parallel computation
- Lisp
 - The original functional language developed by McCarthy as a realization of Church's lambda calculus
 - Many dialects exist, including Common Lisp and Scheme
 - Very powerful for symbolic computation with lists (e.g. for artificial intelligence)
 - Implicit memory management (allocate/deallocate) using *garbage collection*
 - Influenced functional programming languages (ML, Miranda, Haskell)

Selected Overview of Programming Languages

- Algol 60
 - The original block-structured language (local variables in a statement block)
 - First use of Backus-Naur Form (BNF) to formally define language grammar
 - All subsequent imperative programming languages are based on it
 - No I/O and no character set, not widely used in US
- Algol 68
 - Large and relatively complex
 - Strong influence on Pascal, C, Ada
- Cobol
 - Originally developed by Department of Defense
 - Intended for business data processing
 - Extensive numerical formatting features and decimal number storage
 - Introduced the concept of records and nested selection statements
- Basic
 - Intended for interactive use (intepreted) and easy for "beginners"
 - Goals: easy to learn and use for non-science students
 - Visual Basic is a popular dialect

Selected Overview of Programming Languages

- PL/I
 - First exception handling
 - First pointer data type
 - Poorly designed, too large, too complex
- Pascal
 - Designed for teaching "structured programming"
 - Small and simple
- Simula 67
 - Primarily designed for discrete-event simulation
 - Based on Algol 60
 - Introduced concept of coroutines
 - Introduced the `class` concept for data abstraction
- Ada
 - Originally intended to be the standard language for all software commissioned by the Department of Defense
 - Very large
 - Elaborate support for packages, exception handling, generic program units, concurrency
- Ada 95
 - Support for object-oriented programming
 - New concurrency features

Selected Overview of Programming Languages

- Smalltalk-80
 - Developed by XEROX PARC
 - First full implementation of an object-oriented language
 - First design and use of window-based graphical user interfaces (GUIs)
- APL
 - Intended for interactive use ("throw-away" programming)
 - Highly expressive functional language makes programs short, but hard to read
 - Many array operations
- Prolog
 - The most widely used logic programming language
 - Non-procedural (declarative: states what you want, not how to get it)
 - Based on formal logic
- Haskell
 - The leading purely functional language, based on Miranda

Selected Overview of Programming Languages

- **C**
 - One of the most successful programming languages
 - Primarily designed for systems programming but used more widely
 - Powerful set of operators, but weak type checking and no dynamic semantic checks
- **C++**
 - The most successful of several object-oriented successors of C
 - Evolved from C and Simula 67
 - Large and complex, partly because it supports both procedural and object-oriented programming
- **Java**
 - Developed by Sun Microsystems
 - Based on C++, but significantly simplified
 - Supports only object-oriented programming
 - Safe language (e.g. no pointers but references, strongly typed, and implicit garbage collection)
 - Portable and machine-independent

Note: Follow this link to find more about Java.

So Why are There so Many Programming Languages?

- **Evolution**
 - This course gives you some insight in what constitutes a good or a bad programming construct. (Appendix B of the textbook has a long list of historical design mistakes)
 - Early 70s: *structured programming* in which `goto`-based control flow was replaced by high-level constructs such as `while` loops and `case` statements
 - Late 80s: nested block structure gave way to object-oriented structures
- **Special Purposes**
 - Many languages were designed for a specific problem domain. For example
 - Scientific applications
 - Business applications
 - Artificial intelligence
 - Systems programming
- **Personal Preference**
 - The strength and variety of personal preference makes it unlikely that anyone will ever develop a universally acceptable programming language

What Makes a Programming Language Successful?

- **Expressive Power**
 - All languages are equally powerful in technical sense (i.e. Turing complete)
 - Language features have a huge impact on the programmer's ability to read, write, maintain, and analyze programs
 - Abstraction facilities enhance expressive power
- **Ease of Use for Novice**
 - Low learning curve and often interpreted, eg. Basic and Logo
- **Ease of Implementation**
 - Runs on virtually everything, e.g. Basic, Pascal, and Java
 - Freely available, e.g. Java
- **Excellent Compilers**
 - Fortran has extremely good compilers (because it lacks recursion and pointers) and is therefore popular for numerical applications
 - Supporting tools to help the programmer manage very large projects, e.g. Visual C++
- **Economics, Patronage, and Inertia**
 - Powerful sponsor: Cobol, PL/I, Ada
 - Some languages remain widely used long after "better" alternatives because of a huge base of installed software and programmer experience

Classification of Programming Languages

Declarative : Implicit solution "What the computer should do"	Functional (Lisp, Scheme, ML, Haskell) Logic (Prolog) Dataflow
Imperative : Explicit solution "How the computer should do it"	Procedural "von Neumann" (Fortran, C) Object-oriented (Smalltalk, C++, Java)

- Declarative functional example (Haskell)

```
gcd a b
| a == b = a
| a > b = gcd (a-b) b
| a < b = gcd a (b-a)
```

- Declarative logic example (Prolog)

```
gcd(A, A, A).
gcd(A, B, G) :- A > B, N is A-B, gcd(N, B, G).
gcd(A, B, G) :- A < B, N is B-A, gcd(A, N, G).
```

- Imperative procedural example (C)

```
int gcd(int a, int b)
{ while (a != b)
  if (a > b) a = a-b; else b = b-a;
  return a;
}
```

Classification of Programming Languages (cont.)

