



Programming Languages

- When computers were first invented they had to be programmed in their own natural language, i.e. *binary* machine code.
- Later, programmers developed more sophisticated systems to make programming easier and more efficient.
- Assembly languages were developed as the 2nd generation of languages.
- High-level languages (3rd & 4th generation) later made programming even more productive.

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The Generations

High-Level Language

Assembly Language

Machine Language



Machine Code

- These are the only kind of instructions the CPU can directly understand and execute.
- Stream of binary bit patterns that represent the instructions that are to be carried out.
- The binary bit patterns are decoded by the processor's logic circuits.
- They are then acted upon or executed, one after another.
- Machine code is a type of low-level code.



Machine Code

- Writing programs in machine code is difficult and time-consuming.
- It's difficult to remember all the bit patterns and what they do.
- Each operation of the processor has to be defined.
- Each machine instruction causes the processor to carry out just one operation.
- Nearly all machine code instructions consist of two parts:
 - An opcode, which tells the processor what to do
 - An operand, which tells the processor what to do it to.



Instruction Set

 This is the full set of machine code instructions, which the CPU "understands" and can execute directly without translation.

Assembly Languages

- The commands are still the basic CPU instruction set, but in an easier-to-read form.
- One assembly language instruction corresponds to one machine code instruction.
- Assembly language instructions have to be translated into machine code by an
 Assembler before the CPU can execute them.

Assembly Languages

- Low-Level Language
- As with machine language, each instruction causes just one processor operation
- These use mnemonic instructions

 (op-codes) instead of binary codes and hex
 or decimal in operands.
- These make programming less error prone and more productive than programming in pure binary code.

High-Level Languages

- High-Level languages do not have the same one-to-one correspondence between commands and machine code instructions as an assembler.
- A high-level command may represent several machine code instructions:
 - In a high-level language we can multiply two numbers together in one command.
 - At machine level this is not possible and it has to be done by repeated addition.

High Level Languages

- High level commands have to be turned into binary instructions the machine can understand; this is translation.
- There are two basic ways of translating high-level code
 - Complier: converts the whole code into machine code before running it
 - Interpreter: converts the code one instruction at a time, running each instruction before translating the next.

High-Level Languages

- Source code is the code written by the programmer.
- A compiler translates this source code into an object code in machine language. Object code runs independently of the source code and translator.
- An interpreter does not create object code so the source code has to be translated each time it is run.
- This means interpreted languages need the source code and translator present every time the code is run.



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