

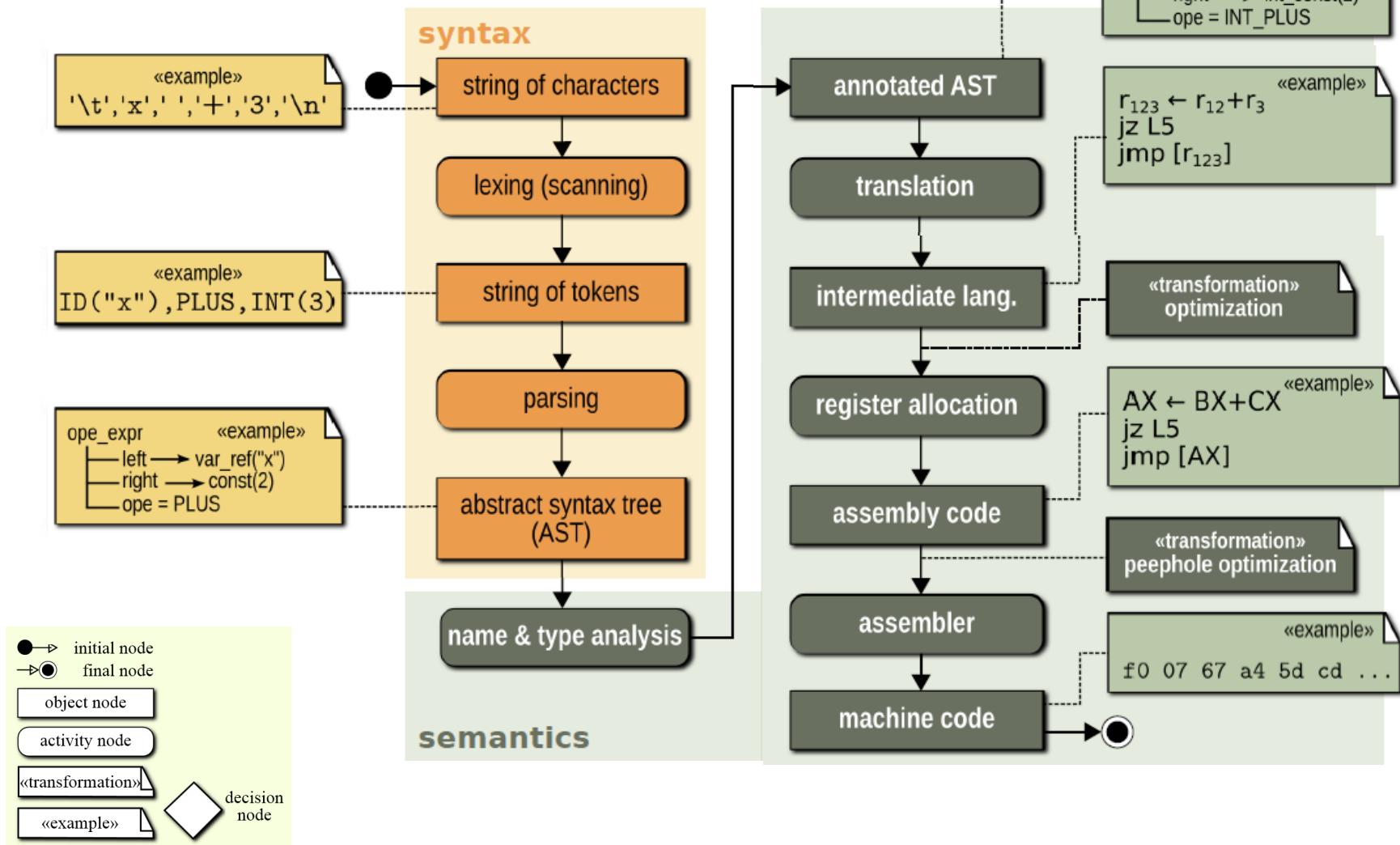
Domain-Specific Languages (DSLs) motivation, concepts, examples

Thorsten Berger

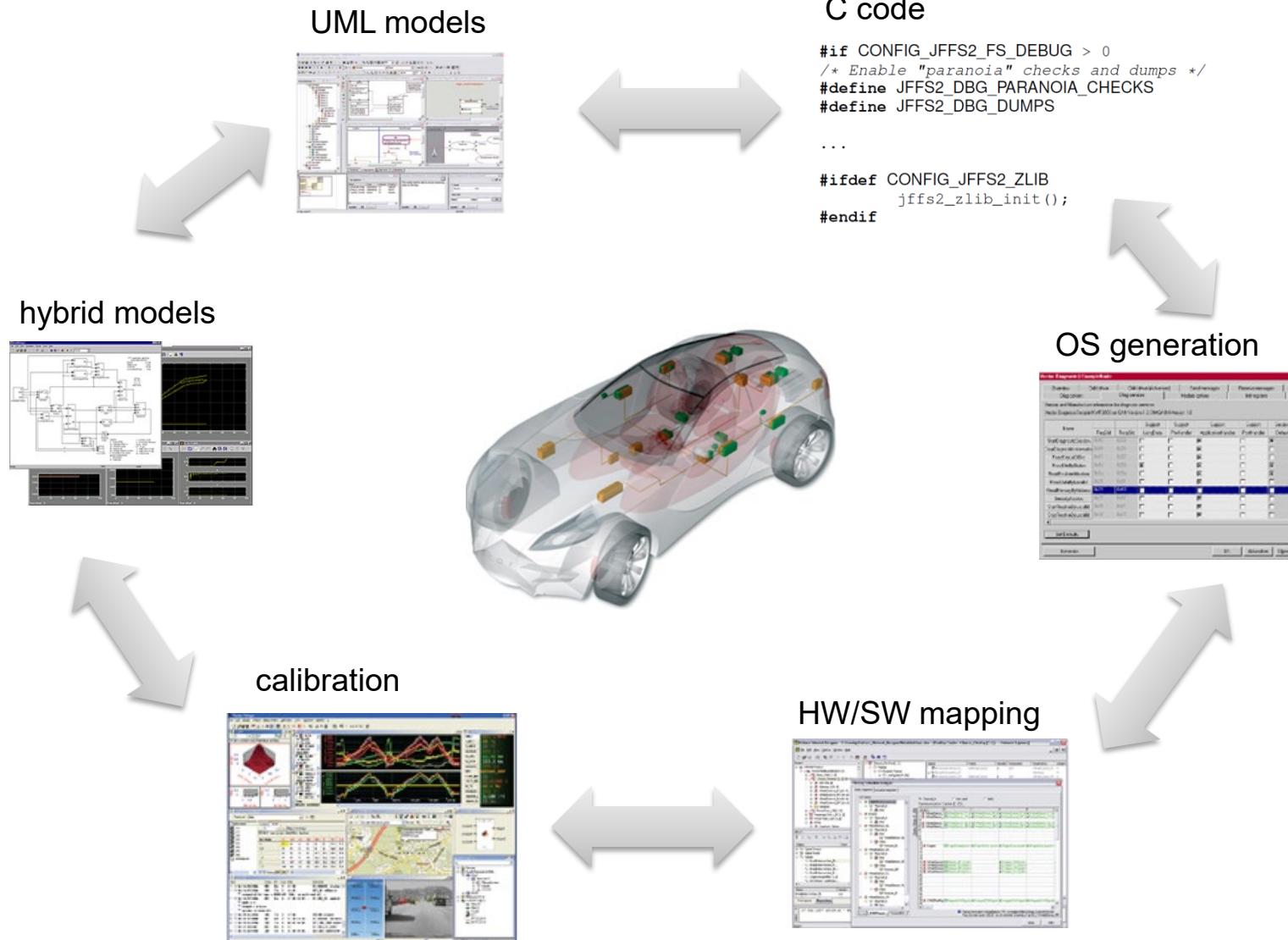
Associate Professor

thorsten.berger@chalmers.se

architecture of a compiler



a perspective from systems engineering



www.vsd-project.org



Requirements

Operational Modes

Operational Proc

Configuration

Integration Procedure

Electrical Interfaces

Functional Architecture

Budgets

Manual process to ensure coherence between views

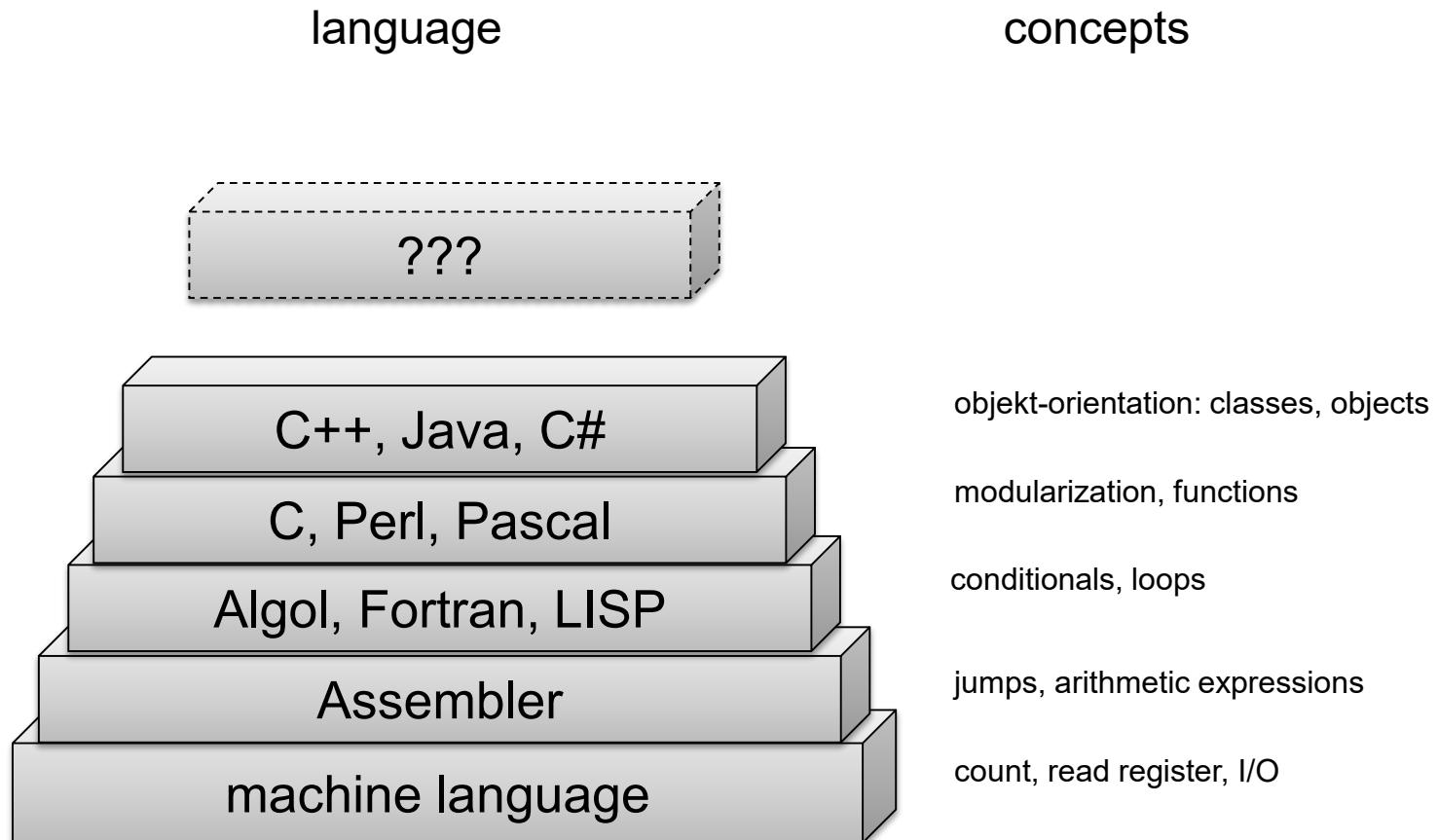
All the space you need

like life

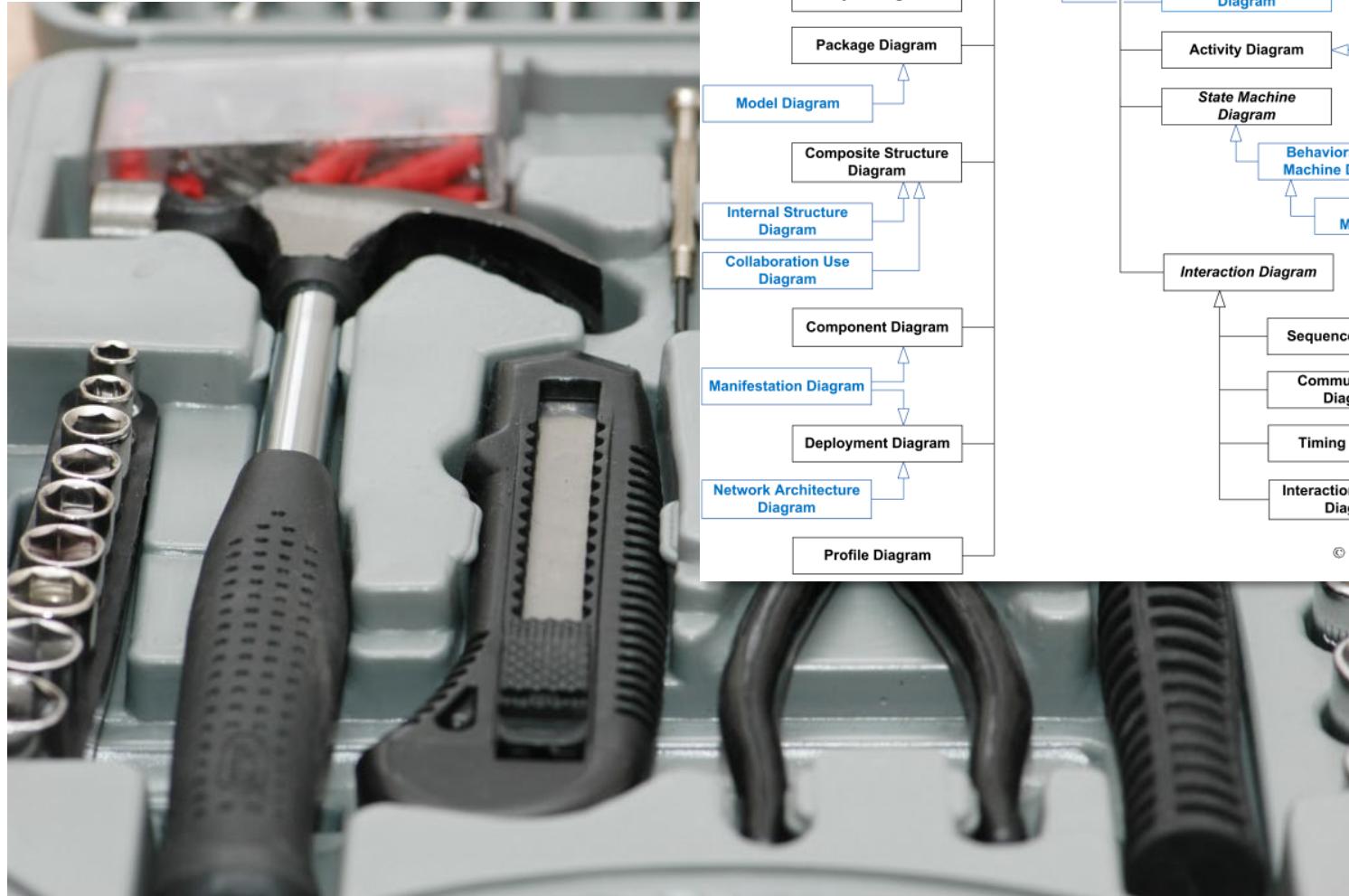
The Tools Experts

HISTORY OF LANGUAGES

continuous abstractions



general-purpose tools



domain-specific tools

focus on the domain!



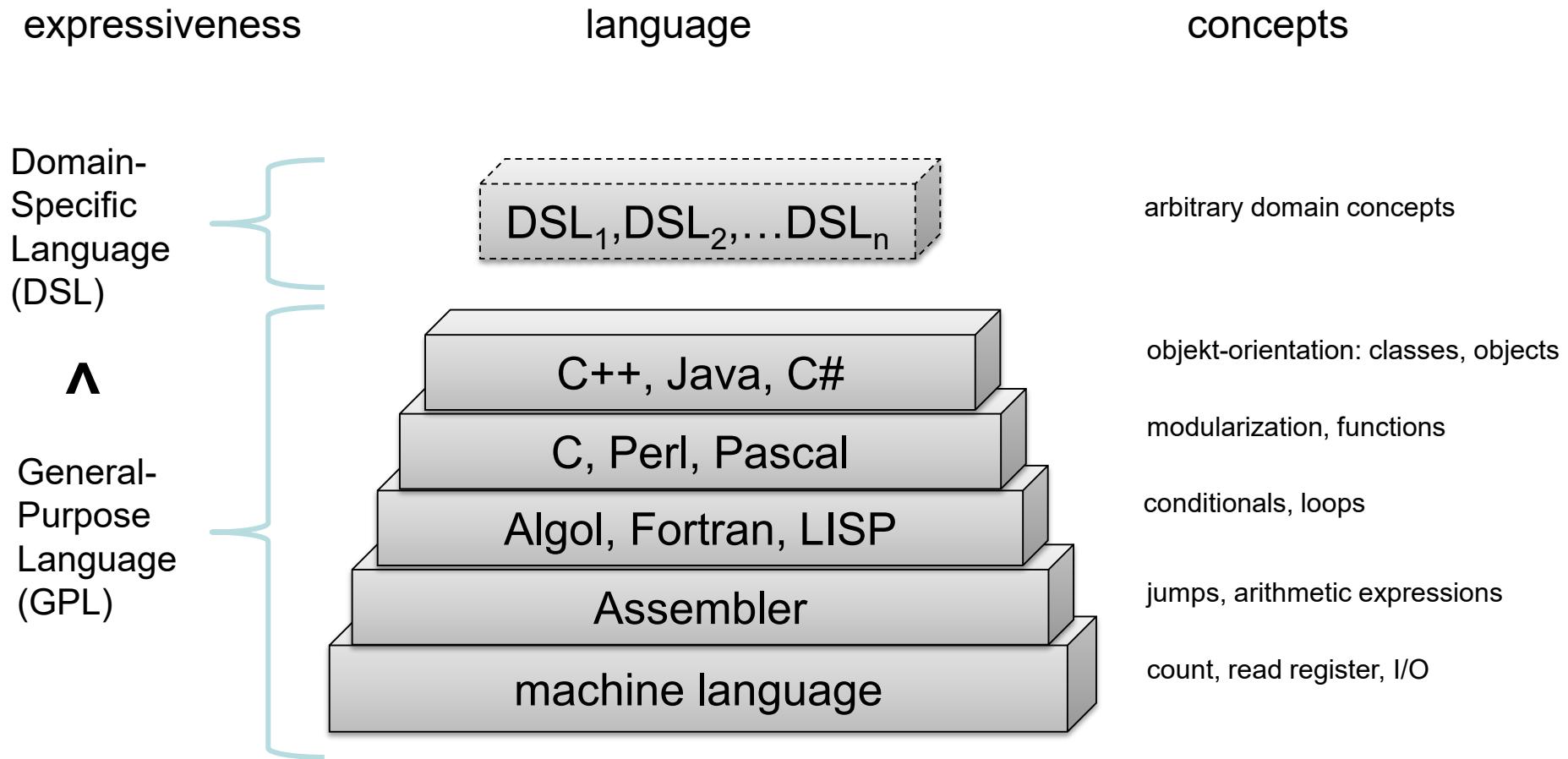
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© Europäische Union, [2010] – EP

tailored towards domain requirements
effective within the domain
both specialized and limited
used by domain experts

use domain-specific languages!



domain-specific language

advantages

- less expressive

- separates domain-related and infrastructure code

- improves communication with domain experts and customers

DSLs exist for a long time, such as:

- regular expressions: `[-+]?[0-9]*\\.?[0-9]+`

- SQL: `SELECT ... FROM ... WHERE ...`

- CSS/HTML: `b{ color: #926C41 }`

recent improvements in language technology help

- to quickly create your own DSL

- language workbenches instead of CASE tools

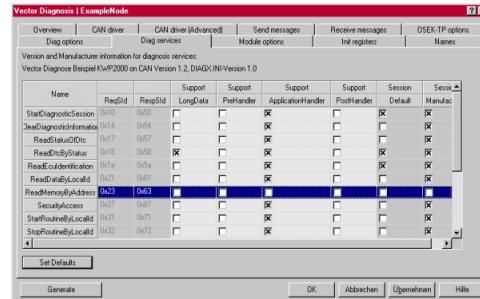
- model-transformation languages

disadvantage: tools are still somewhat complex

kinds of DSLs



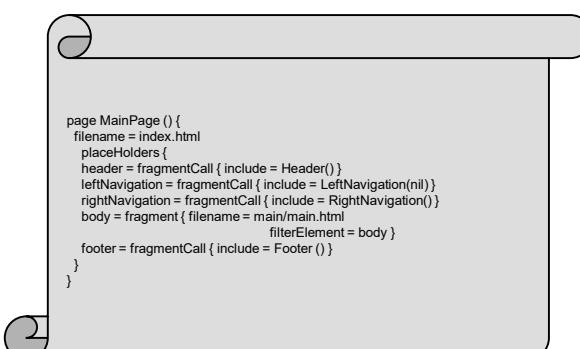
wizard



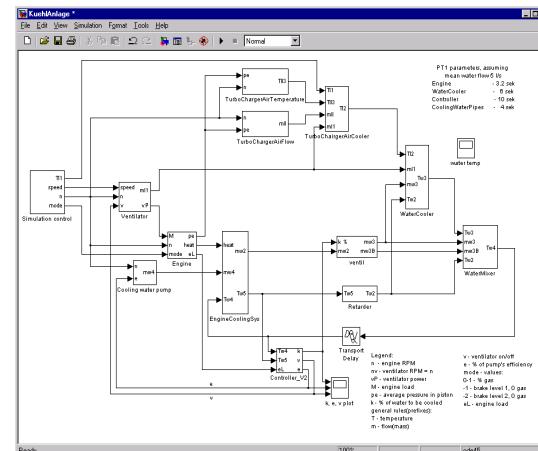
configuration tool



library in a
programming language



textual DSL



visual DSL

EXAMPLES

INTERNAL (EMBEDDED) DSLS

UI programming in Java



Java

```
Display display = Display.getDefault();
Shell shell = new Shell(display);
shell.setText("SWT");
shell.setLayout(new FillLayout());
Label label = new Label(composite, SWT.NONE);
label.setText("Hello World!");
shell.pack();
shell.open();
while(!display.isDisposed()){
    if(!display.readAndDispatch()){
        display.sleep();
    }
}
display.dispose();
```

JRuby with Glimmer DSL

```
shell {
  text "SWT"
  label {
    text "Hello World!"
  }
}
```

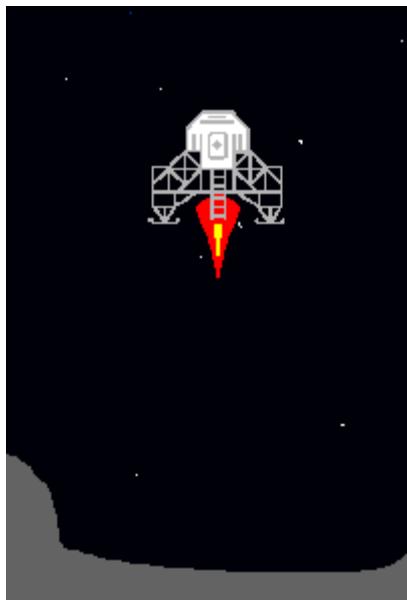
Lunar lander

```
object Lunar extends Baysick {
  def main(args:Array[String]) = {
    10 PRINT "Welcome to Baysick Lunar Lander v0.9"
    20 LET ('dist := 100)
    30 LET ('v := 1)
    40 LET ('fuel := 1000)
    50 LET ('mass := 1000)

    60 PRINT "You are drifting towards the moon."
    70 PRINT "You must decide how much fuel to burn."
    80 PRINT "To accelerate enter a positive number"
    90 PRINT "To decelerate a negative"

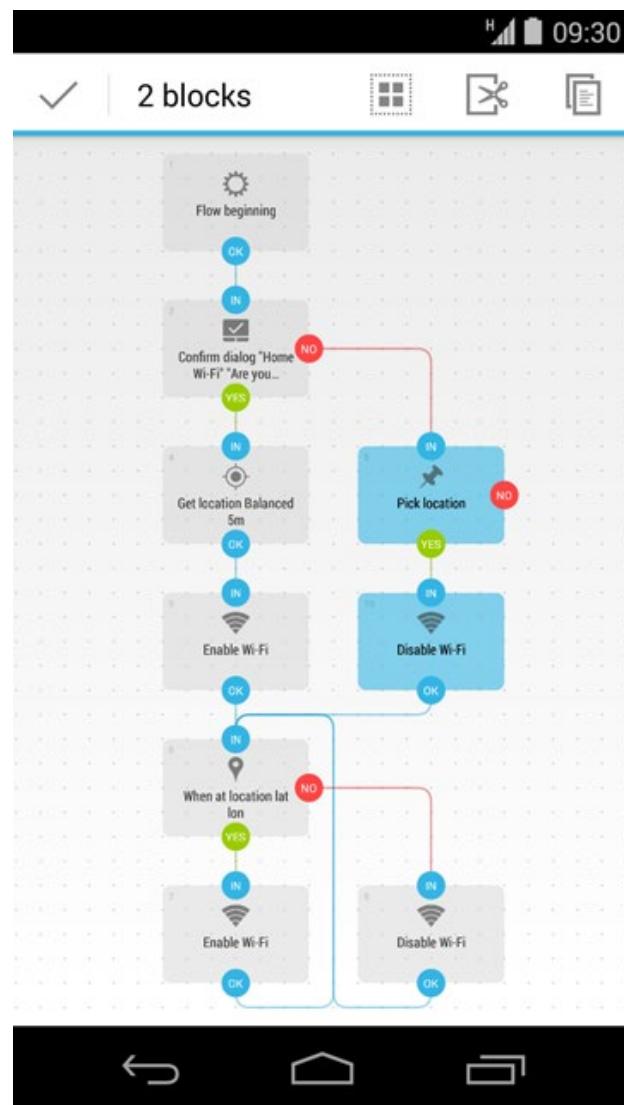
    100 PRINT "Distance " % 'dist % "km, " % "Velocity"
    110 INPUT 'burn
    120 IF ABS('burn) <= 'fuel THEN 150
    130 PRINT "You don't have that much fuel"
    140 GOTO 100
    150 LET ('v := 'v + 'burn * 10 / ('fuel + 'mass))
    160 LET ('fuel := 'fuel - ABS('burn))
    170 LET ('dist := 'dist - 'v)
    180 IF 'dist > 0 THEN 100
    190 PRINT "You have hit the surface"
    200 IF 'v < 3 THEN 240
    210 PRINT "Hit surface too fast (" % 'v % ")km/s"
    220 PRINT "You Crashed!"
    230 GOTO 250
    240 PRINT "Well done"

    250 END
  }
  RUN
}
```

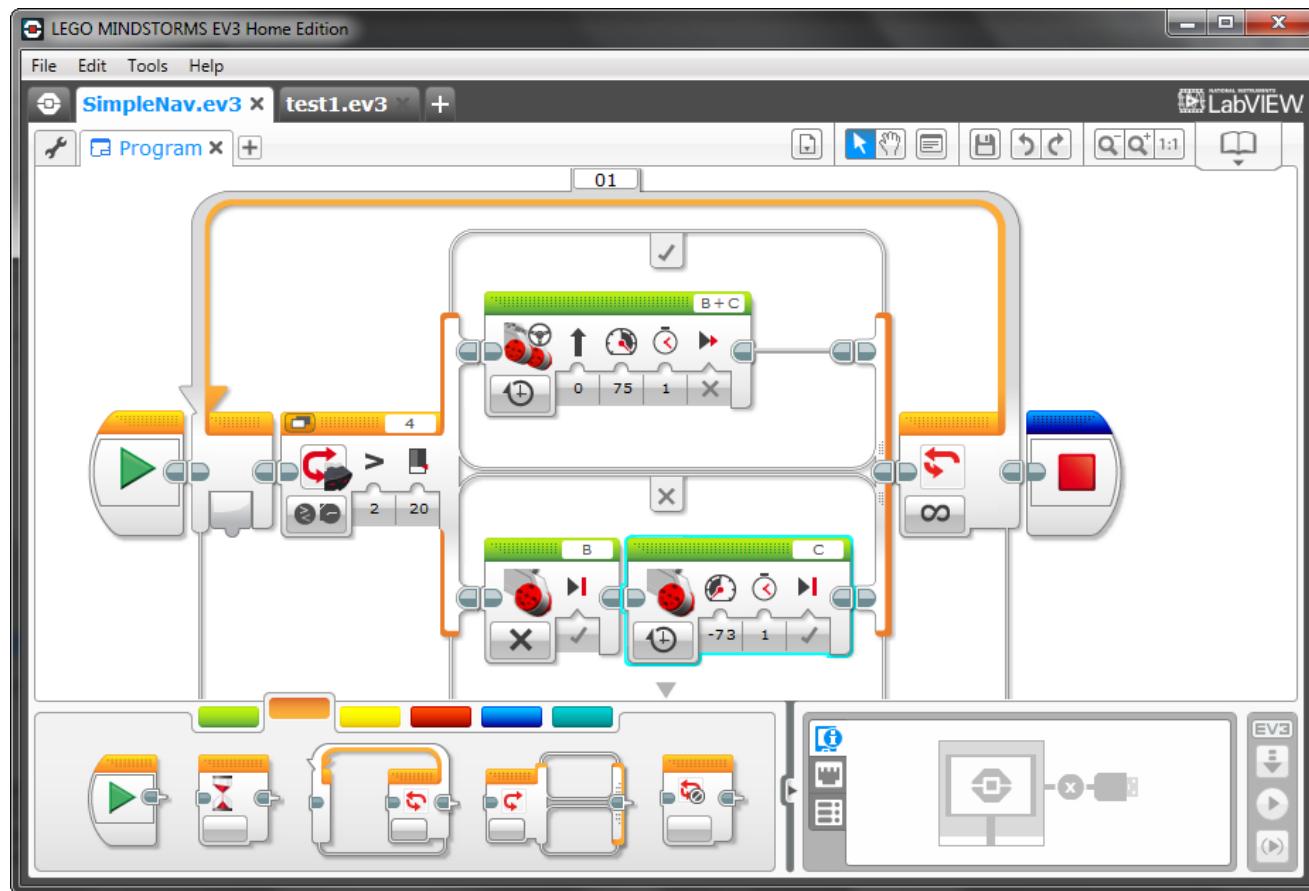


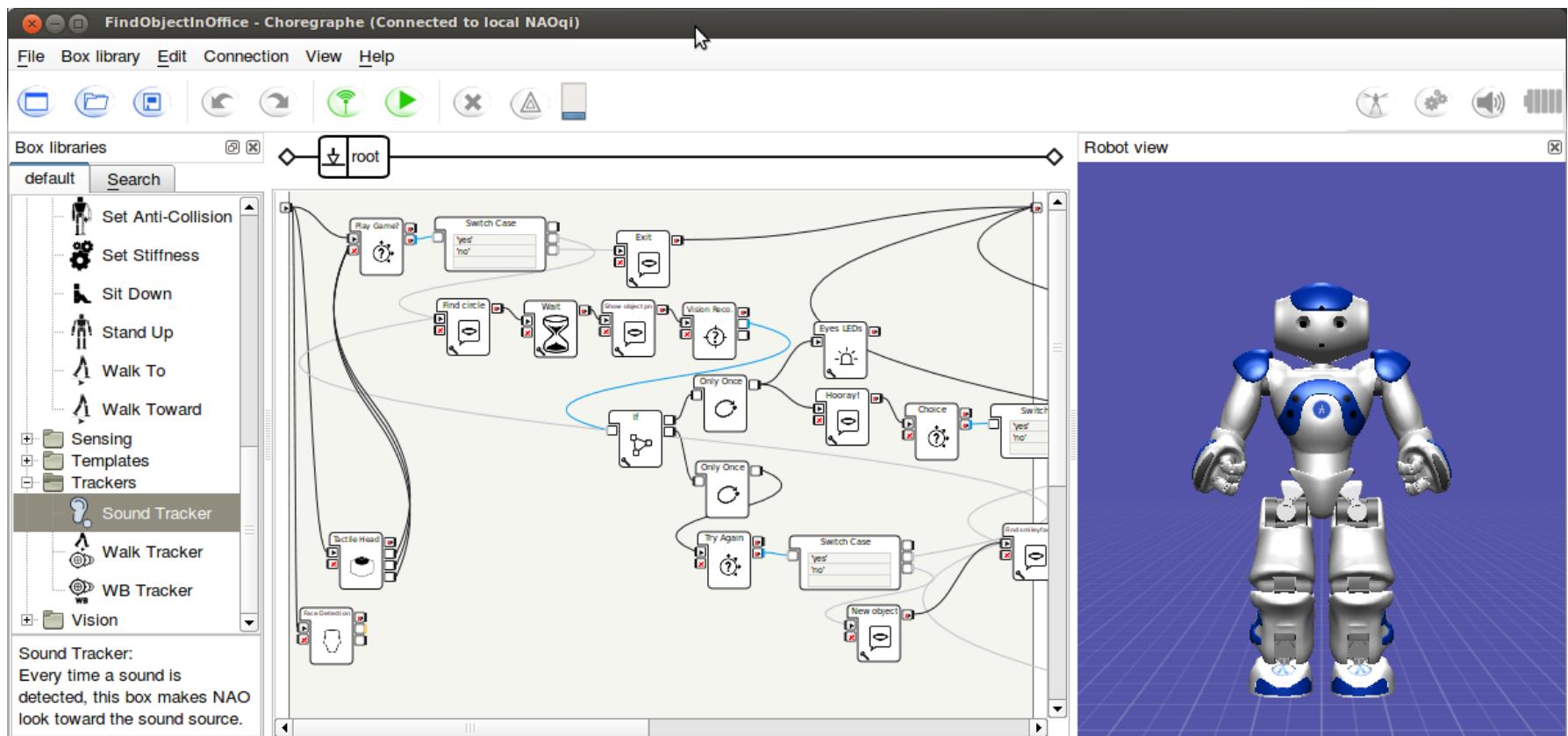
EXTERNAL GRAPHICAL DSLS

Automate (Android App)



Lego Mindstorms Robots



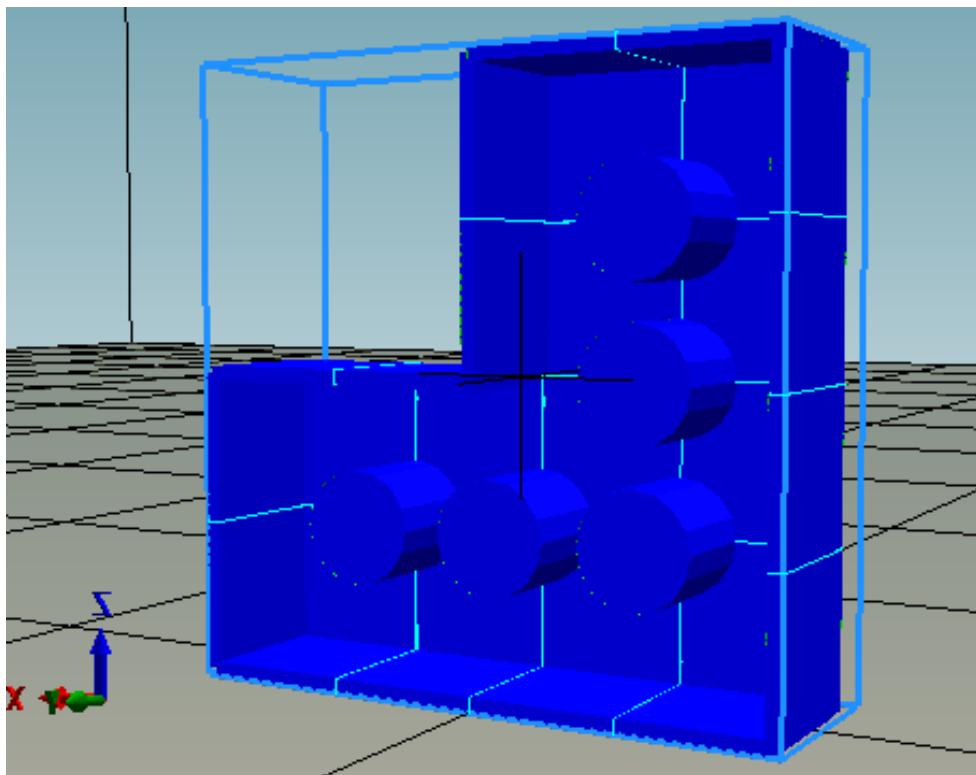


EXTERNAL TEXTUAL DSLS

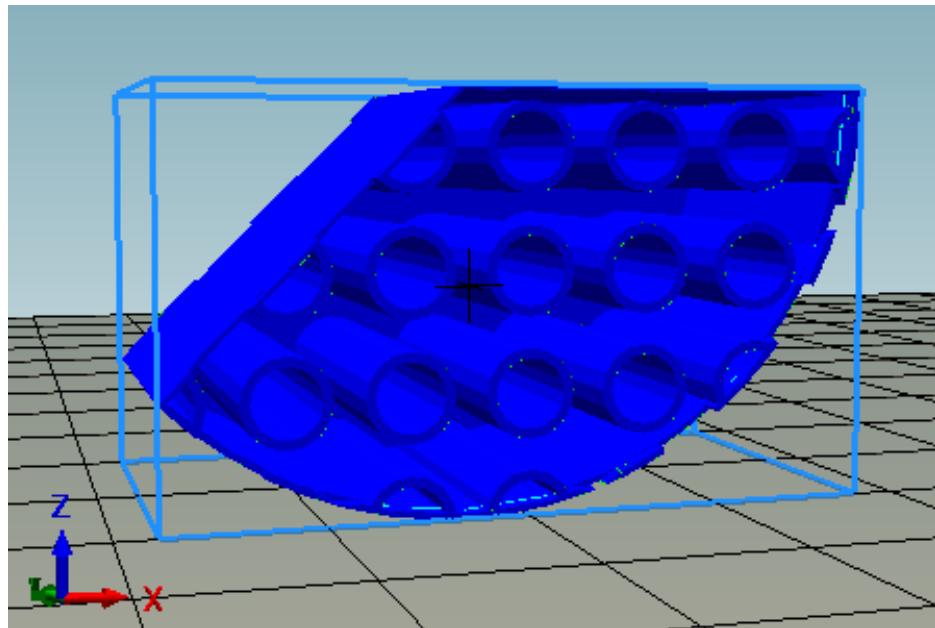
Google Protocol Buffers

```
1 message Person {  
2  
3     enum PhType { MOBILE = 0; WORK = 1; }  
4  
5     message PhoneNo {  
6         required string no = 1;  
7         optional PhType type = 2 [default = MOBILE];  
8     }  
9  
10    required string name = 1;  
11    repeated PhoneNo phone = 2;  
12 }
```

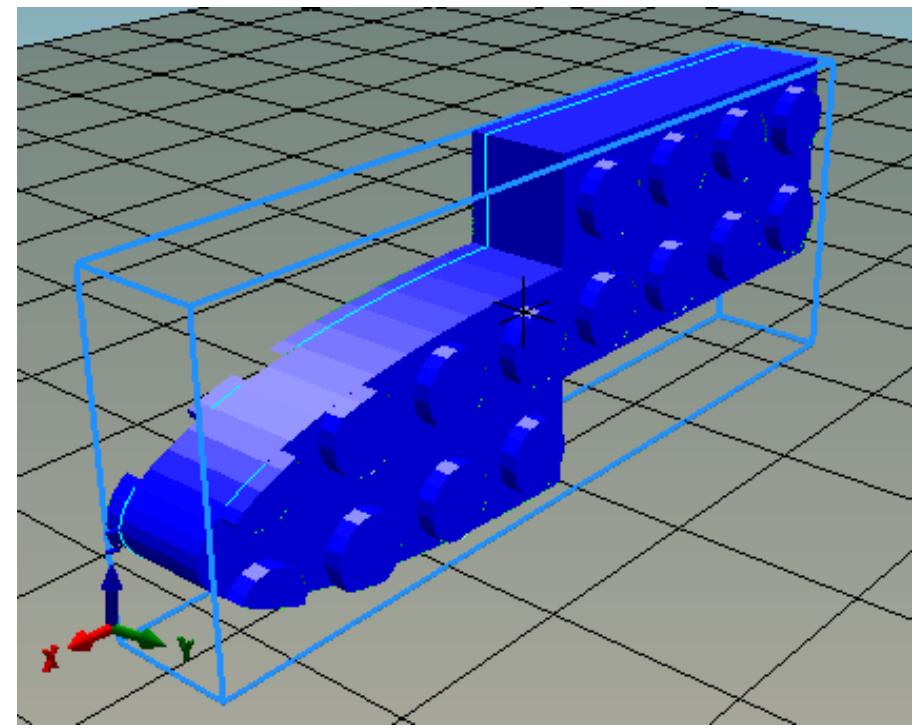
developed in the MDE course



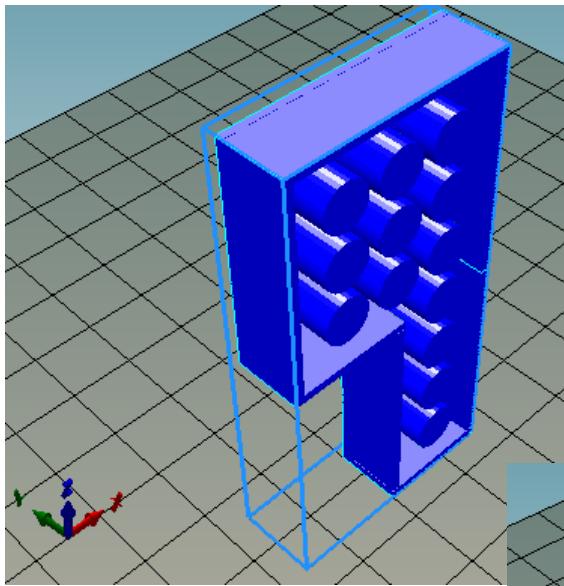
```
{  
  "Lego": "Star",  
  "Length": 20,  
  "Width": 20,  
  "Bricks" : [  
    {"Brick": "Wars",  
     "Width": [4],  
     "Length": [2]  
   }, {  
    "Brick": "Trek",  
    "Width": [2],  
    "Length": [2]  
  ]  
}
```



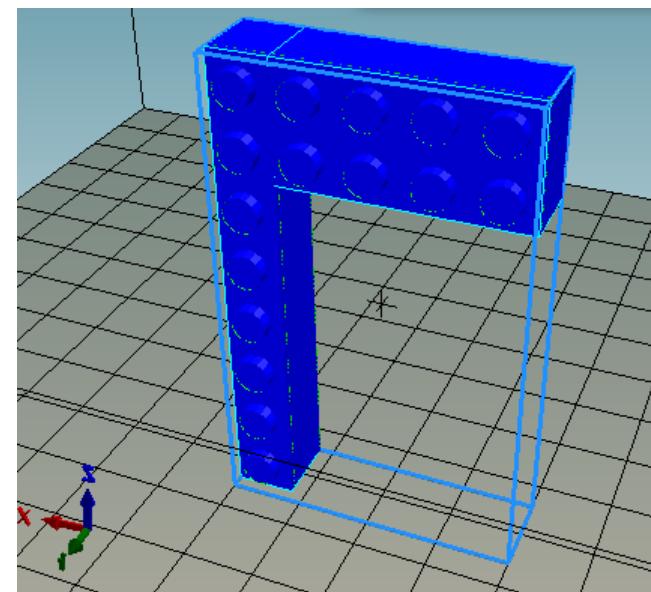
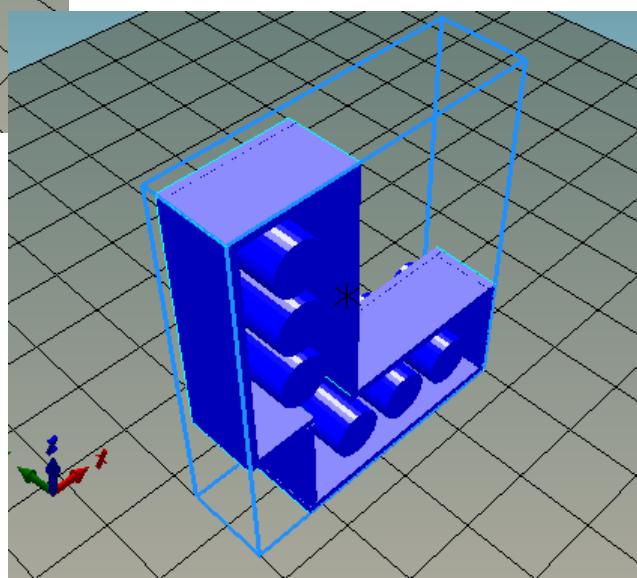
```
AdjLegoSystem {  
    thickness 20  
    finalBrick Pizza  
    abstractlegobrick {  
        RoundedBrick Pizza{  
            roundedSide ALL  
            sizeproperties {  
                int length = 7,  
                int width = 7  
            }  
        },  
        SlicedBrick Slice {  
            portions 3  
            brick Pizza  
        }  
    }  
}
```



```
AdjLegoSystem {  
    thickness 7  
    finalBrick Boomerang  
    abstractlegobrick {  
        RoundedBrick Frisbee{  
            roundedSide RIGHT  
            sizeproperties {  
                int length = 4,  
                int width = 2  
            }  
        },  
        SquareBrick Stick {  
            sizeproperties {  
                int length = 4,  
                int width = 2  
            }  
        },  
        Combination Boomerang {  
            mainSide LEFT  
            position 3  
            main Frisbee  
            secondary Stick  
        }  
    }  
}
```

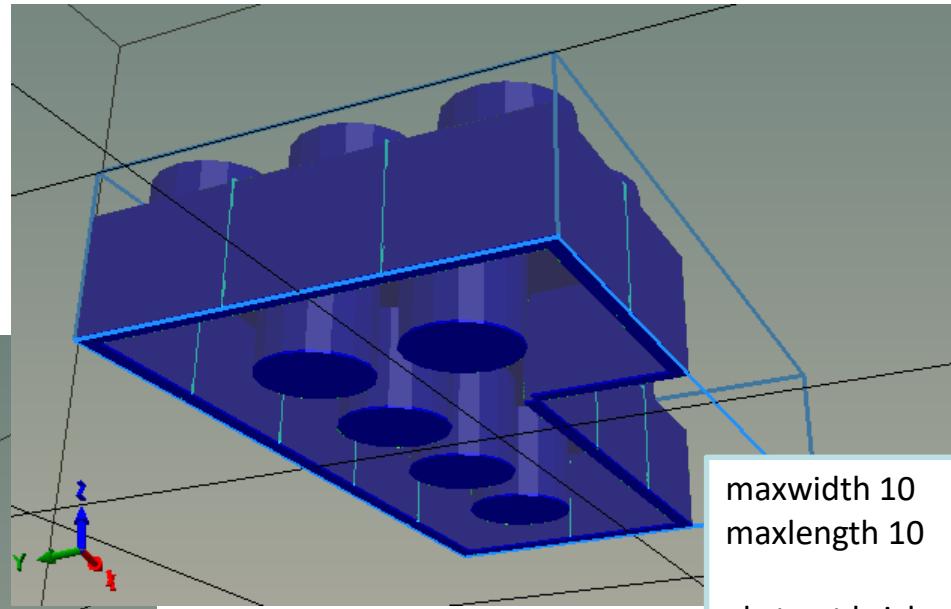
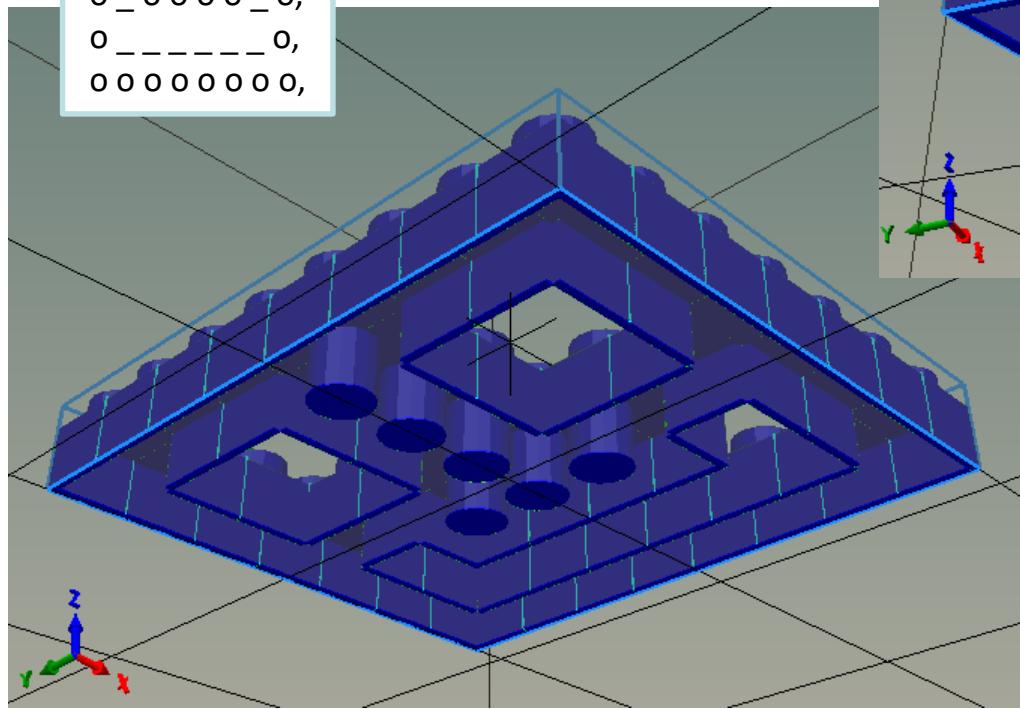


```
dimensions 10 x 10;  
"2x4": 2 x 4;  
"4x2": 4 x 2;  
"1x8": 1 x (2 * "4x4".width);  
"4x4": "2x4".height x (2 * "2x4".width);  
"Composite Brick 1": "2x4" <- "4x4" TOP: LEFT 1 <- LEFT 1;  
"Composite Brick 2": "2x4" <- "4x2" BOTTOM: LEFT 1 <- LEFT 4;  
"Composite Brick 3": "1x8" <- "4x2" RIGHT: TOP 1 <- BOTTOM  
2;
```



brick smiley

```
o o o o o o o o,  
o _ _ o o _ _ o,  
o _ _ o o _ _ o,  
o o o o o o o o,  
o _ o o o o _ o,  
o _ _ _ _ _ o,  
o o o o o o o o,
```



maxwidth 10
maxlength 10

abstract brick a

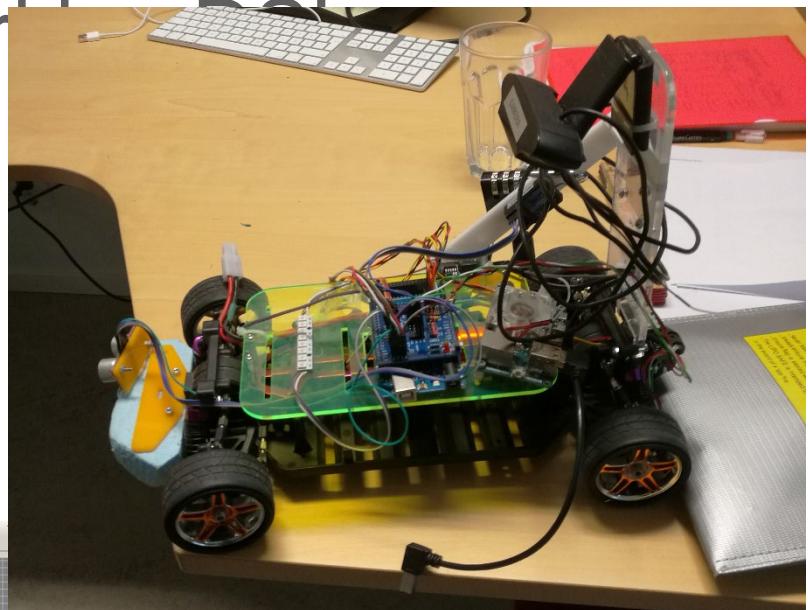
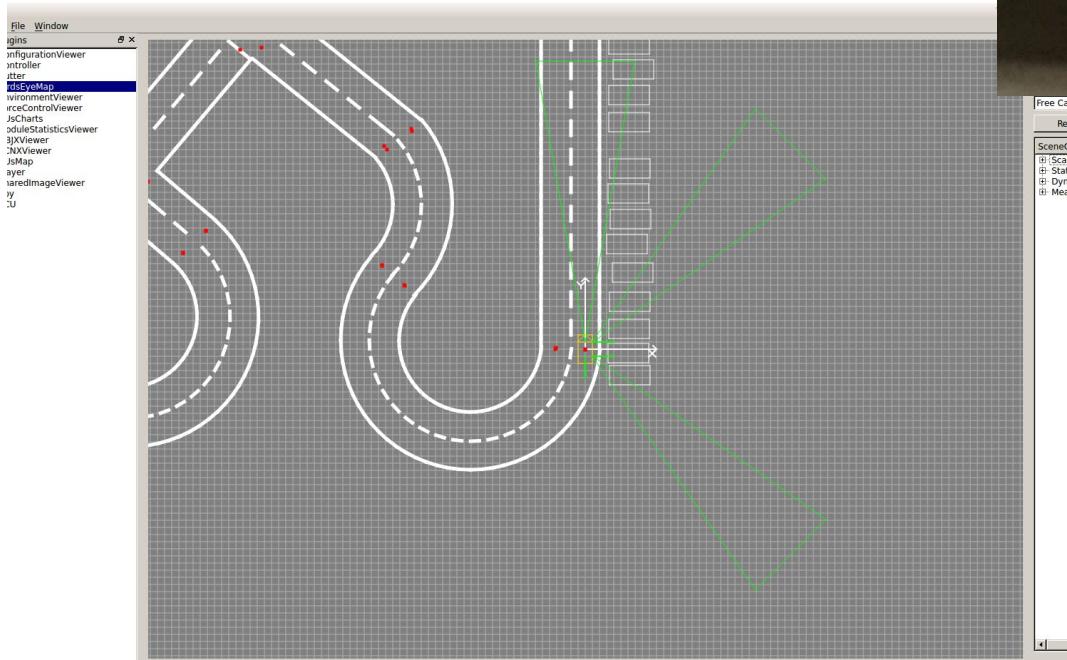
```
o o o,  
o o o,
```

abstract brick b

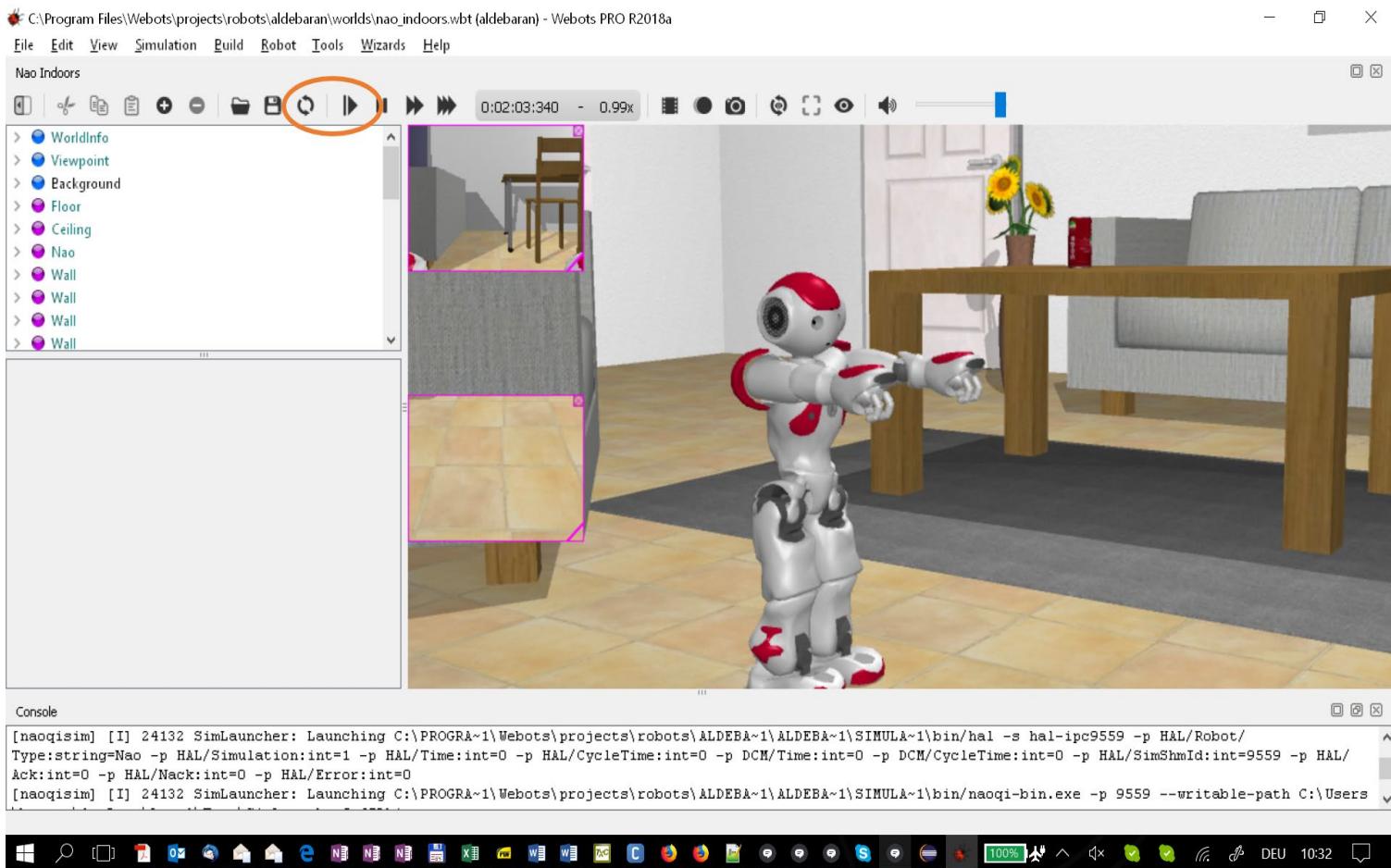
```
_ o o,  
_ o o,  
_ o o,
```

combo T a over b

Autonomous Driving, Part I

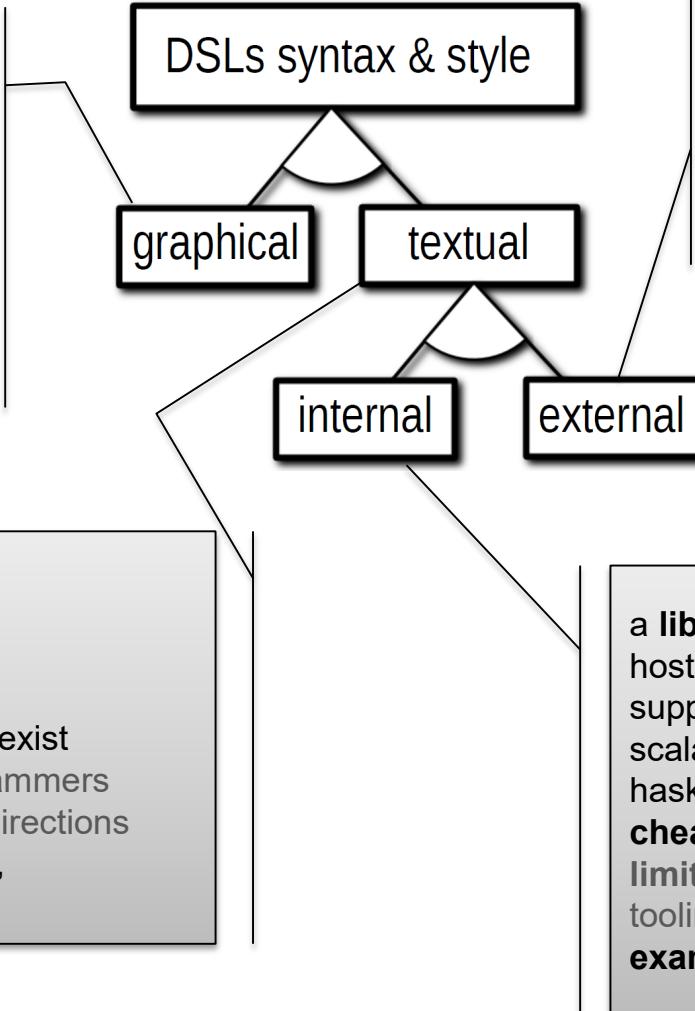


Controlling a NAO Robot



kinds of DSLs

comprehensible
good for **nonprogrammers**
layout conveys information
layout tedious to use
layout **tedious to implement**
syntax **scalability** issues
examples: BPMN, class
diagrams, feature models,
Yahoo pipes, MIT scratch



clear **order of reading**
efficient **editing**
easy to incorporate **expressions**
popular among programmers
cheaper to implement, good **tools** exist
harder to read, esp. for non-programmers
complex **dependencies hide** in indirections
examples: Google protocol buffers,
Rails active record

implemented as a **separate language**; parsed, translated/
interpreted
good control over syntax,
semantics, tooling
costlier to implement
example: Google protocol buffers

a **library** within a **host** language
host must be **flexible** syntactically and
support meta-programming features:
scala, ruby, python, smalltalk, C++,
haskell
cheap to implement, **reuse** from host
limited control of syntax, semantics,
tooling
example: Rails active record

BUILDING DSLS

language workbenches

language workbench:

tool for creating and using (domain-specific) languages

early workbenches (textual)

SEM, MetaPlex, Metaview, QuickSpec, MetaEdit

workbenches for graphical languages

MetaEdit+, DOME, GME

workbenches for textual languages

Centaur, Synthesizer, ASF+SDF Meta-Environment, Gem-Mex/Montages, LRC, Lisa, JastAdd, Rascal, Spoofax, Xtext

workbenches for projectional languages

Jetbrains MPS, Intentional Domain Workbench, ...

Erdweg, Sebastian, et al. "The state of the art in language workbenches." *International Conference on Software Language Engineering*. 2013.

in-class demo

We will implement a language (incl. abstract syntax and a textual and graphical concrete syntax) for expressing simple graphs.

Using the following technological space:

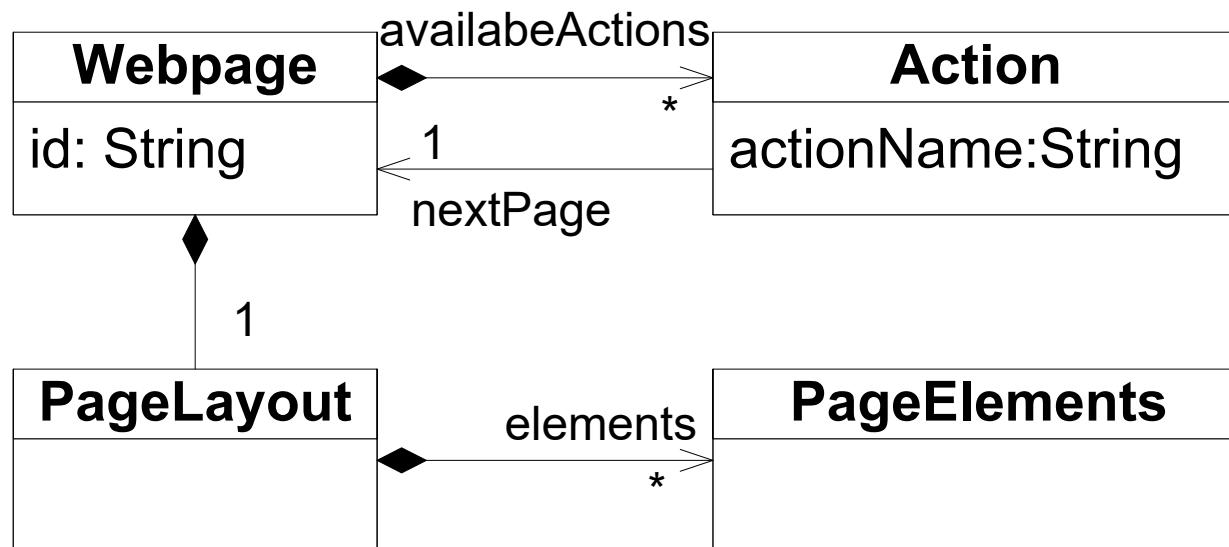


meta-model (abstract syntax)

how to build a modelling languages?

we *model* the modelling language

result is a meta-model:



meta-model: definition

A meta-model is a model that precisely defines the parts and rules needed to create valid models.

Parts: domain concepts (model elements)

Rules: Well-formedness rules, determine validity of a model.

Defines a languages' abstract syntax: elements and their relations independent of the representation

Mapped to:

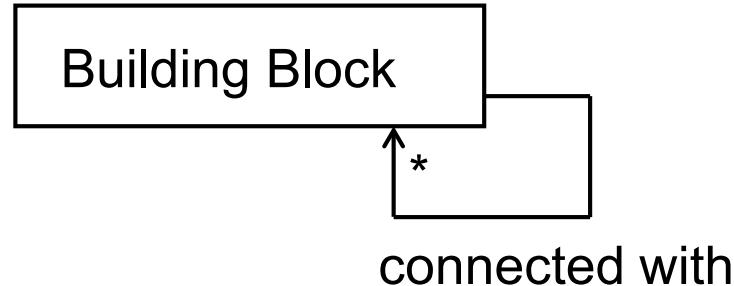
Concrete syntax: representation of models (instances), e.g., within an editor

Static semantics: semantics evaluable without executing/interpreting the model (using constraints)

Dynamic semantics: what the model means or expresses

meta-model: lego

**Meta-
Model**
Building
Rules



Model
Lego



Real world
House



meta-model: languages

Meta-Model
Building Rules



Model
A natural description

“A nice brown and white coloured house
in the middle of the black forest”

Real world
House



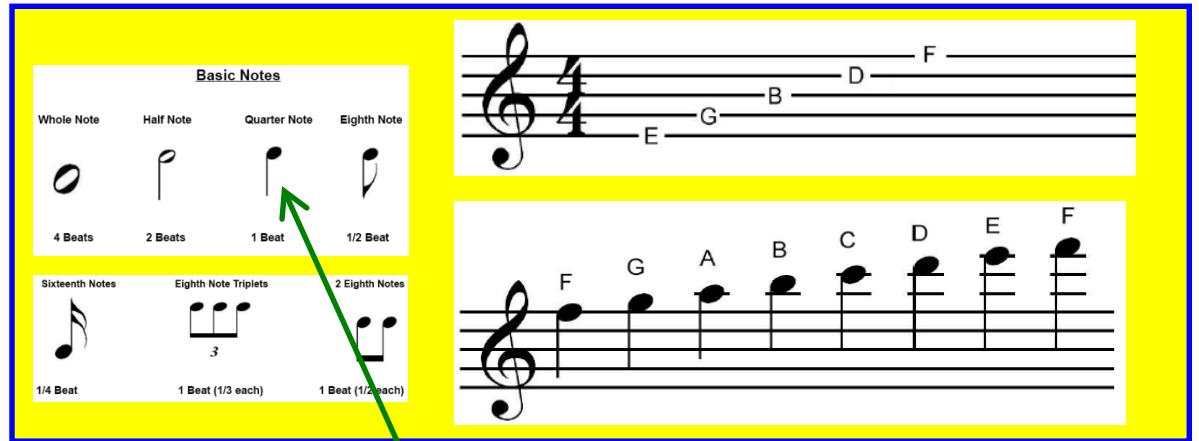
a well-known DSL

Music notation

Metamodel

Model

Music sheet

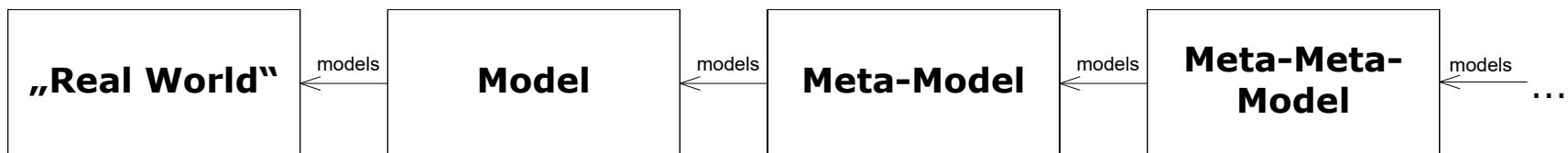


meta-model levels

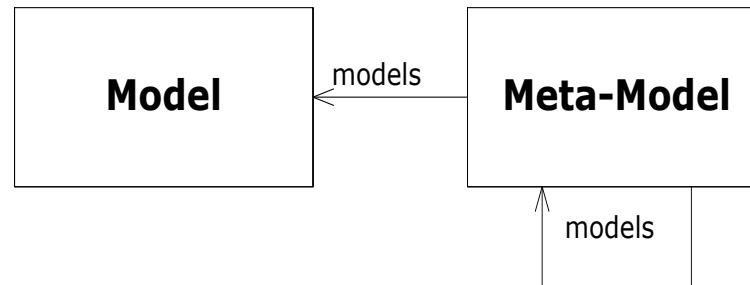
a meta-model is *also a model*

how is the meta-model then being modelled?

using a meta-meta-model! ☺



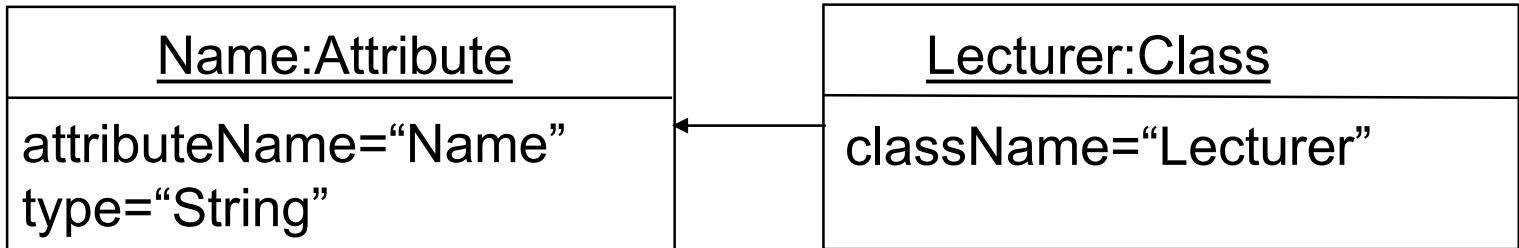
this goes (theoretically) infinite or ends if the model is *self-describing*



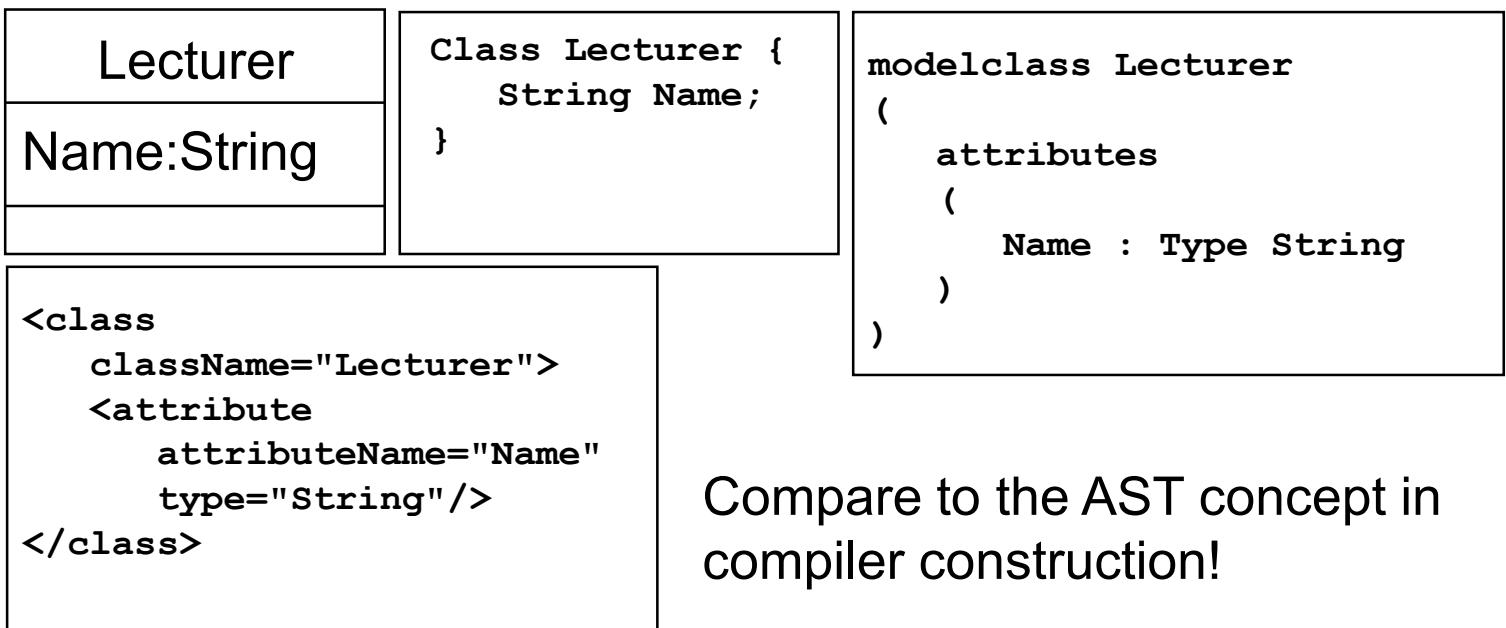
typically called *bootstrapping* (your favorite Java compiler is likely implemented in Java itself)

abstract vs. concrete syntax

abstract

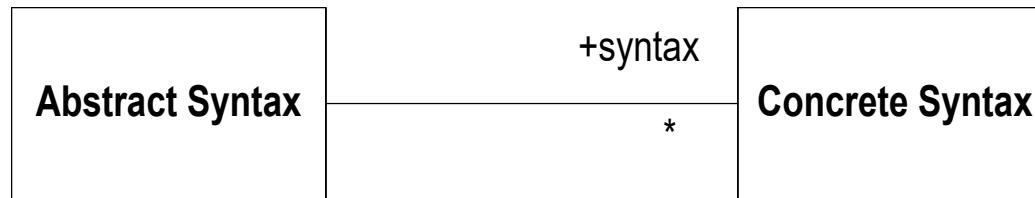


Concrete



Compare to the AST concept in compiler construction!

abstract vs. concrete syntax

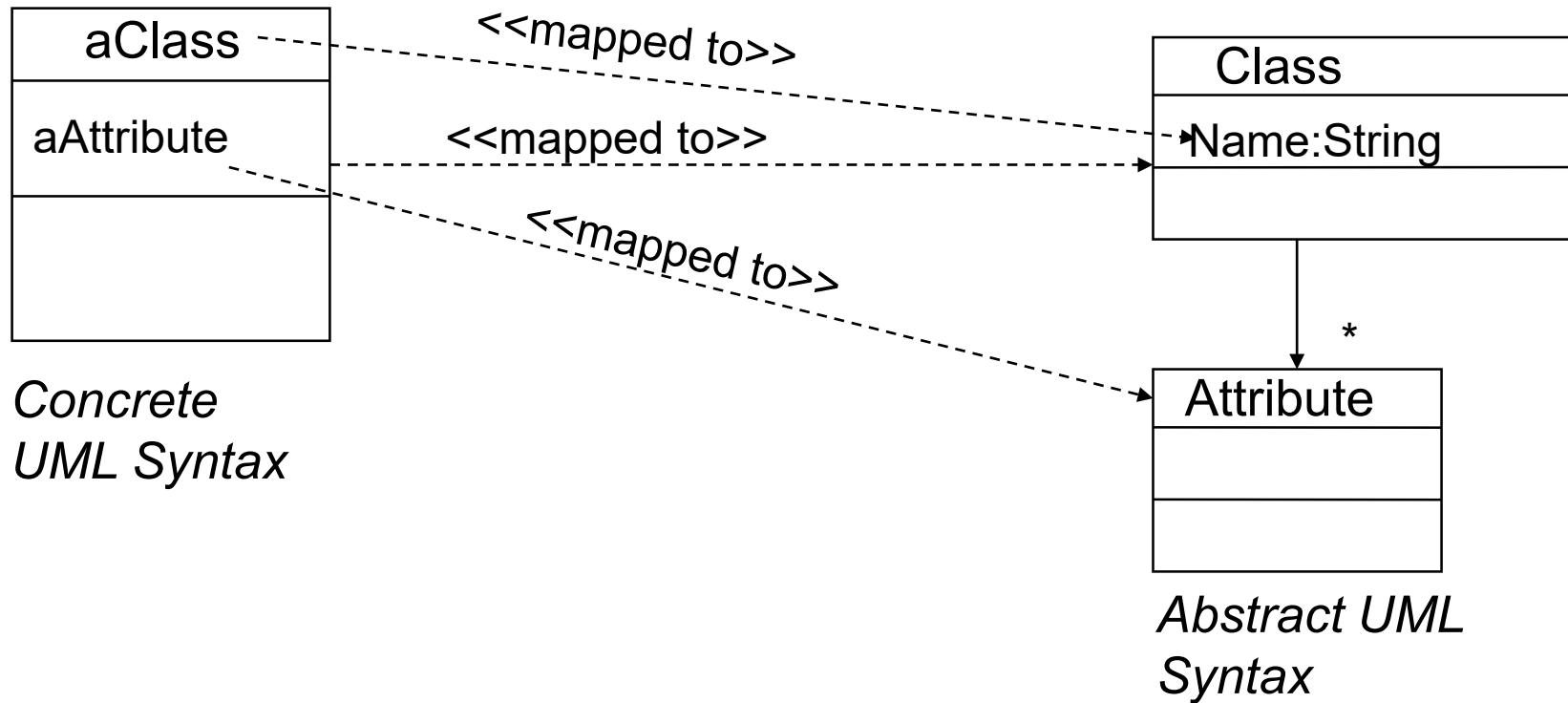


abstract syntax uses the meta-model concepts to represent the models

concrete syntaxes can choose any kind of representation plus a mapping

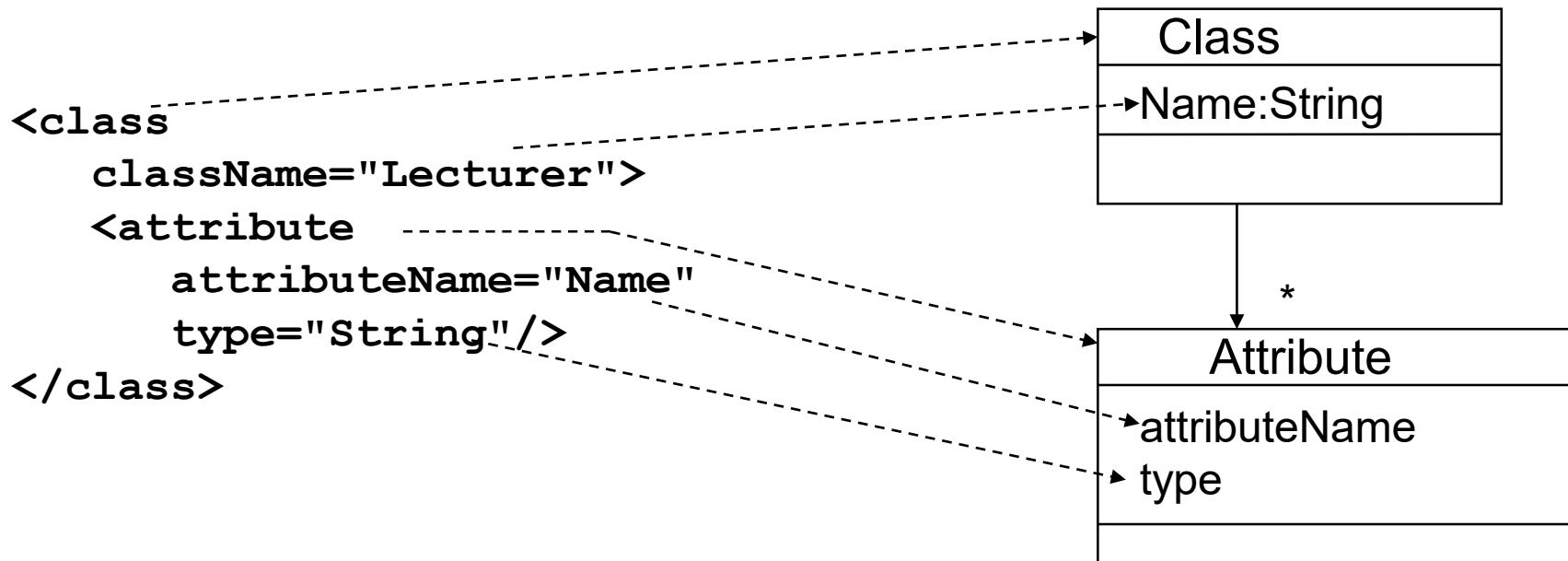
abstract vs. concrete syntax

a mapping maps elements of the concrete syntax to the meta-model elements



abstract vs. concrete syntax

A mapping maps elements of the concrete syntax to the meta-model elements

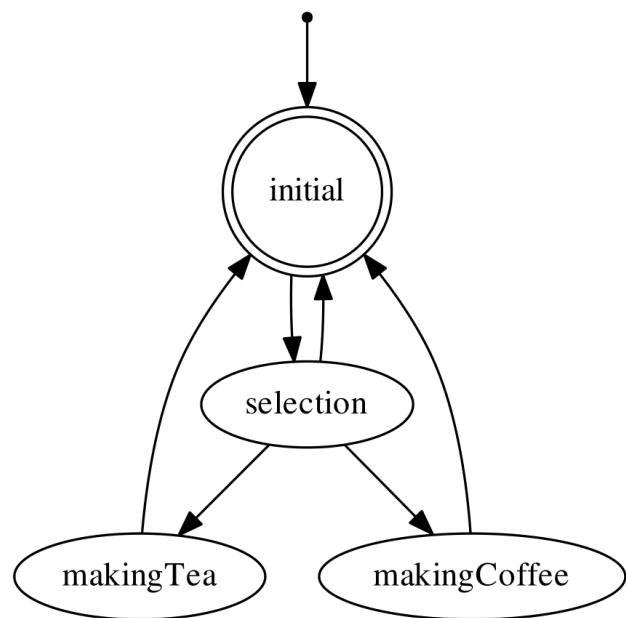


there is a standard defining the mapping from (MOF) models to XML: XMI (XML Metadata Interchange)

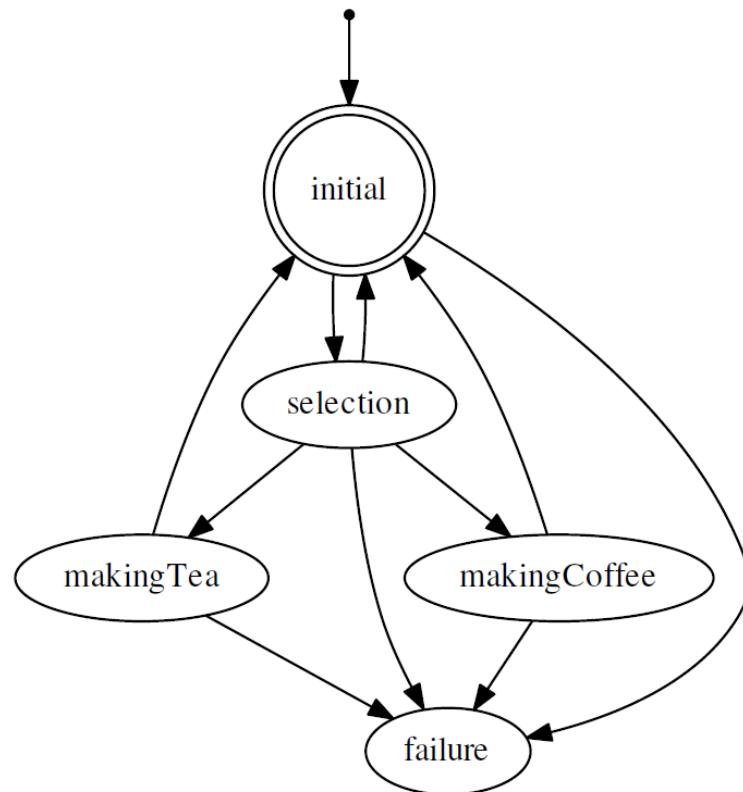
example walkthrough again

EXTERNAL DSL (TEXTUAL)

coffee machine



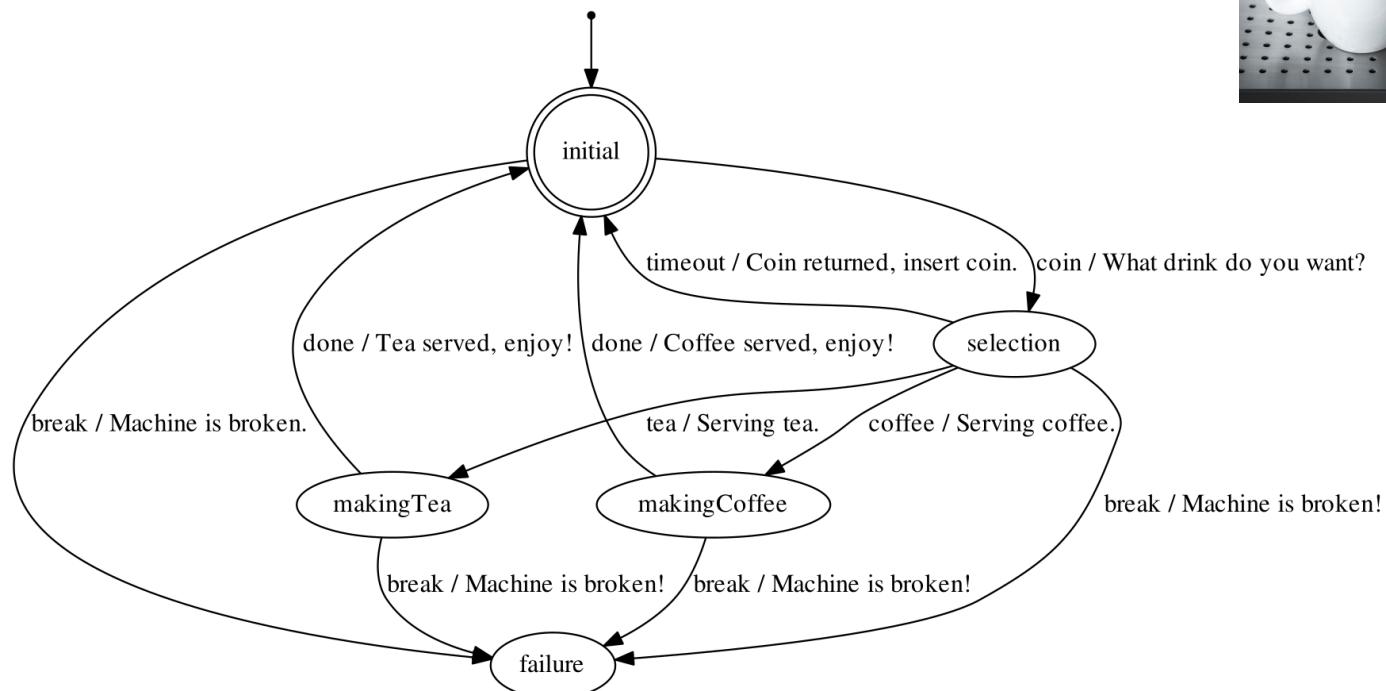
coffee machine



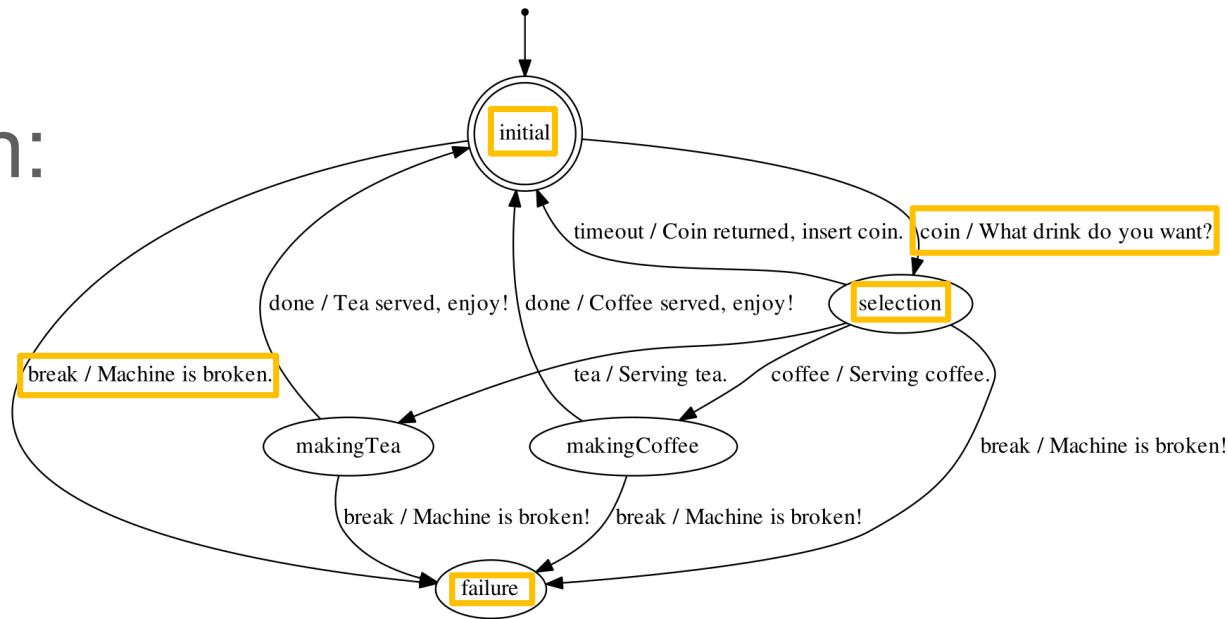
input / output

$\Sigma = \{\text{coin}, \text{timeout}, \text{tea}, \text{coffee}, \text{break}\}$

$\Gamma = \{\text{Tea served, enjoy!}, \text{Machine is broken.}, \dots\}$



implementation: switch pattern



```
int current = INITIAL;  
while (true) {  
    String input = scanner.nextLine();  
    switch (current) {  
        case INITIAL:  
            switch (input) {  
                case "coin":  
                    System.out.println ("What drink do you want?");  
                    current = SELECTION; break;  
                case "break":  
                    System.out.println ("Machine is broken");  
                    current = FAILURE; break;  
            } break;  
        case SELECTION:  
            switch (input) {  
                ...
```

other implementation options

switch pattern

simple, fast

cluttered

state pattern [Gamma et al. 95, Johnson and Zweig 91]

comprehensible (esp. for hierarchical models)

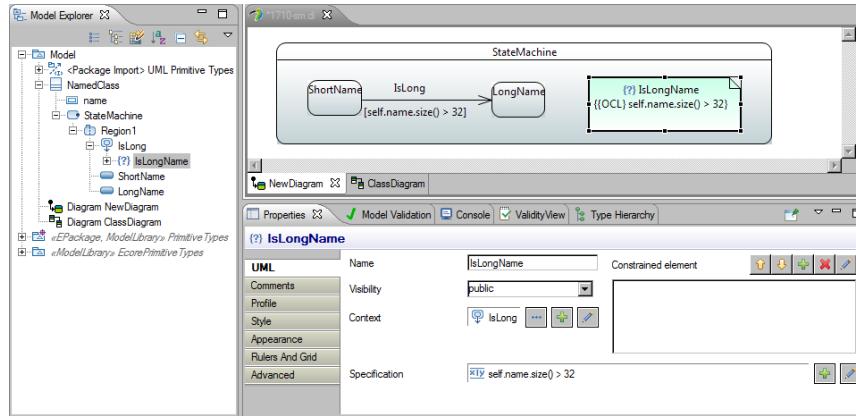
OO overhead (polymorphism)

interpret a data structure at runtime [Pinter and Majzik 03, Zündorf 02]

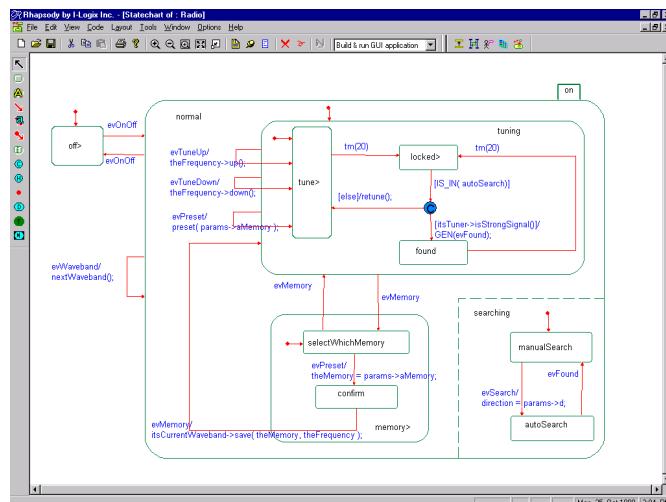
few code, very memory-efficient

interpreter overhead

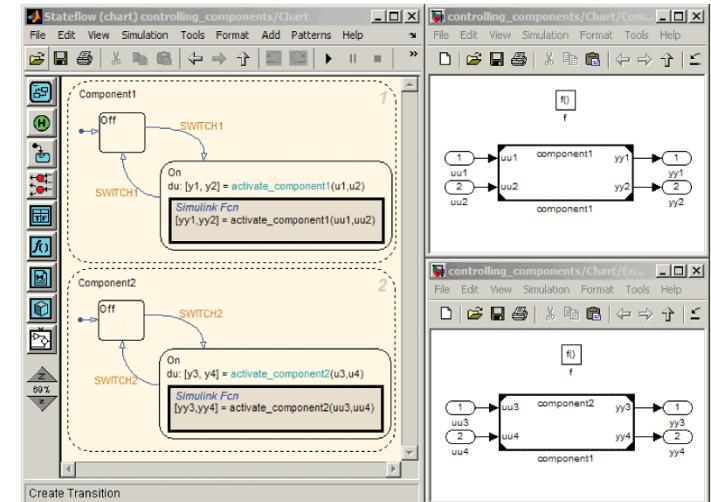
use existing tools?



Papyrus



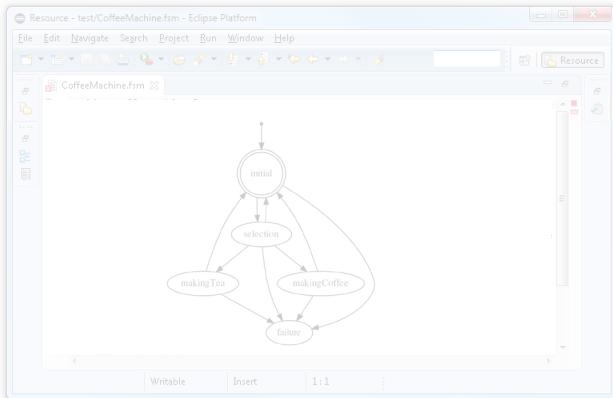
IBM Rational Rhapsody



Mathworks Simulink

let's build our own DSL

domain-specific language (DSL)

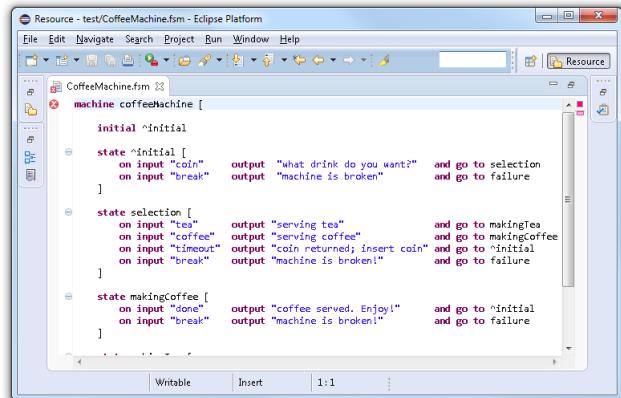


programming language (GPL)

```
int current = INITIAL;
while (true) {
    String input = scanner.nextLine();
    switch (current) {
        case INITIAL:
            switch (input) {
                case "coin":
                    System.out.println ("What drink do you want?");
                    current = SELECTION; break;
                case "break":
                    System.out.println ("Machine is broken");
                    current = FAILURE; break;
            } break;
        case SELECTION:
            switch (input) {
                ...
            }
    }
}
```

code generation

code generation



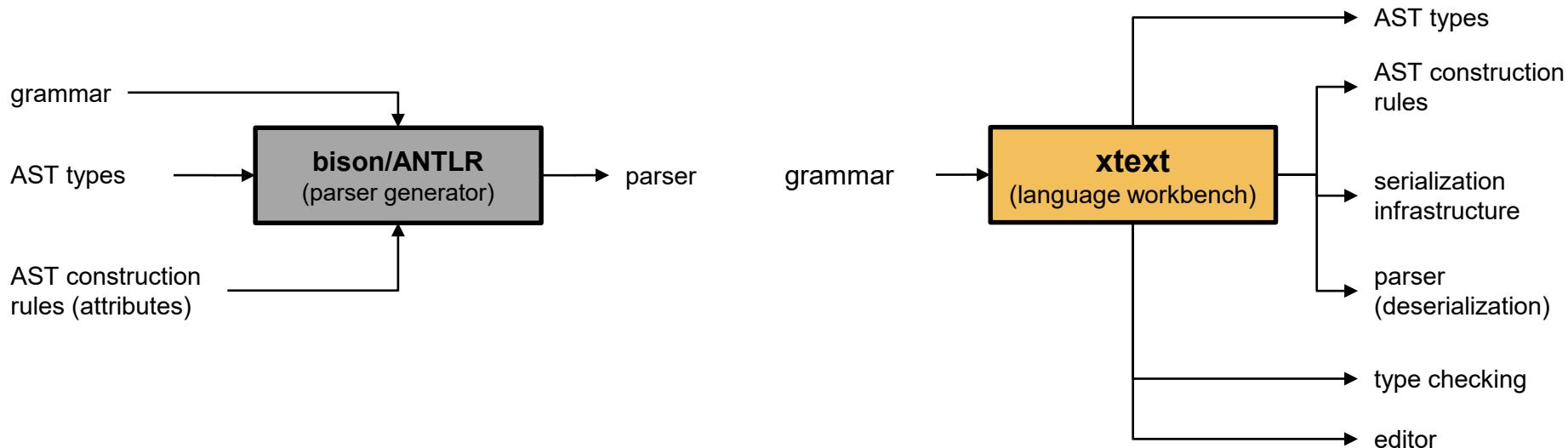
DSL ... Domain-Specific Language
GPL ... General-Purpose Language

automata model in concrete textual syntax



```
machine coffeeMachine [  
  
    initial ^initial  
  
    state ^initial [  
        on input "coin"  
        on input "break"  
    ]  
  
    state selection [  
        on input "tea"  
        on input "coffee"  
        on input "timeout"  
        on input "break"  
    ]  
  
    state makingCoffee [  
        on input "done"  
        on input "break"  
    ]  
  
    state makingTea [  
        on input "done"  
        on input "break"  
    ]  
  
    state failure  
]  
  
        output "what drink do you want?" and go to selection  
        output "machine is broken" and go to failure  
  
        output "serving tea" and go to makingTea  
        output "serving coffee" and go to makingCoffee  
        output "coin returned; insert coin" and go to ^initial  
        output "machine is broken!" and go to failure  
  
        output "coffee served. Enjoy!" and go to ^initial  
        output "machine is broken!" and go to failure  
  
        output "tea served. Enjoy!" and go to ^initial  
        output "machine is broken!" and go to failure
```

two external DSL tactics



ANTLR supports many target platforms. There exists a tool like that for any serious language technical space

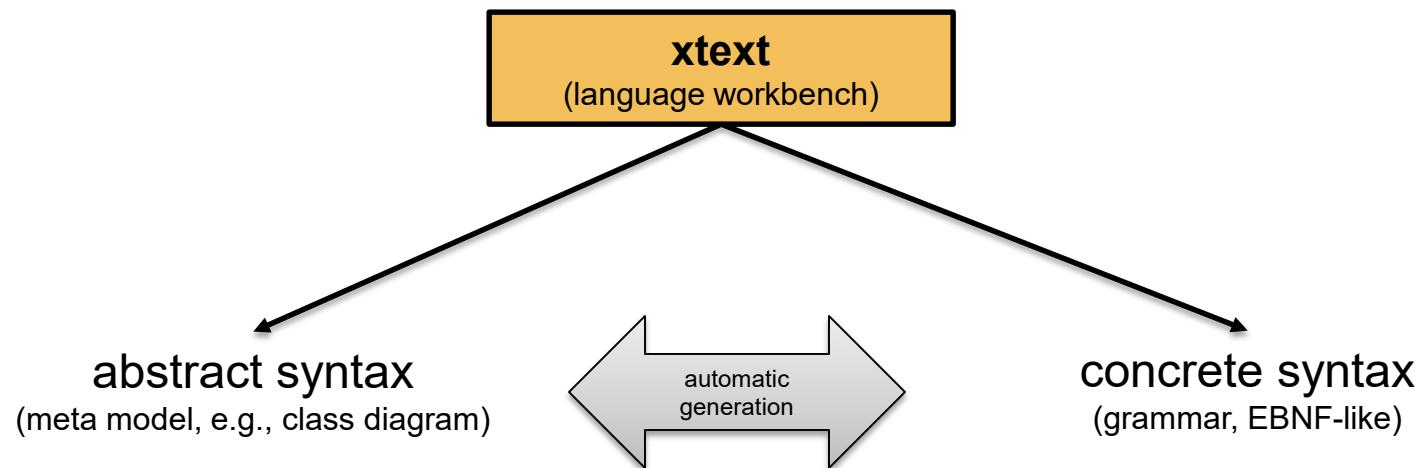
ANTLR can do a bit more than the figure would suggest (AST classes and construction)

there exist workbenches for visual languages (GMF, Graphiti, Microsoft DSL Tools, ...)

implementation of graphical DSLs only differs from textual in the syntax/editor aspect

the third tactic: do everything manually is left only to the insane ...

syntax



syntax

machine coffeeMachine [

initial ^initial

state ^initial [

on input "coin"

on input "break"

output "what drink do you want?" **and go to** selection

output "machine is broken" **and go to** failure

]

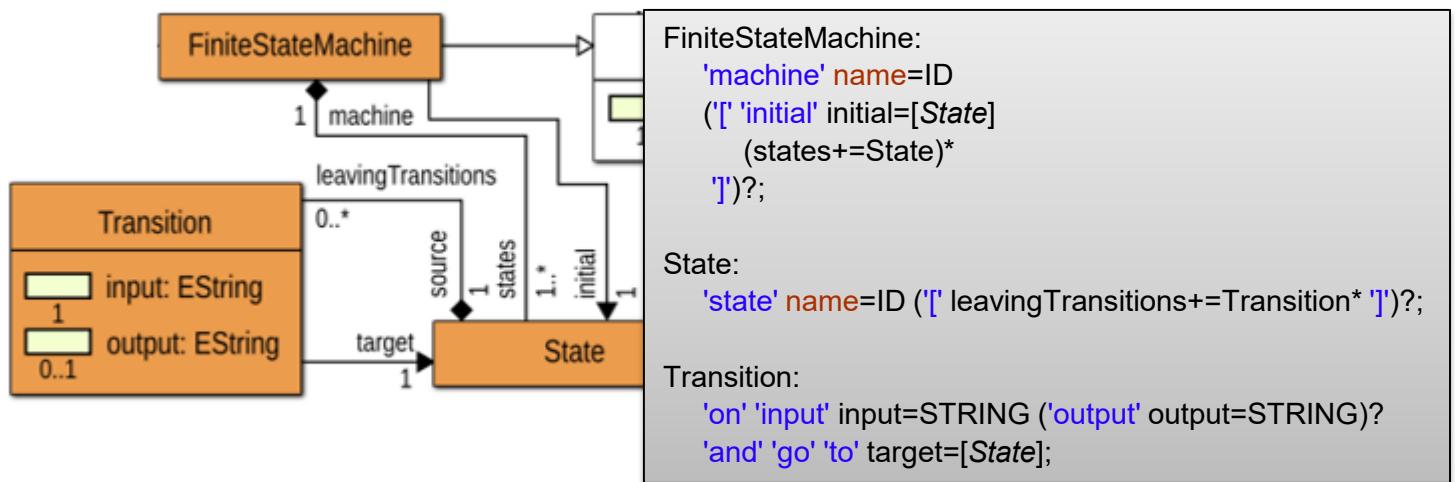
...

state failure

]

abstract syntax

concrete syntax



model-driven development

textual DSL

domain-specific language (DSL)
in concrete and abstract syntax



code generation (M2T)

programming language (GPL)

```
int current = INITIAL;
while (true) {
    String input = scanner.nextLine();
    switch (current) {
        case INITIAL:
            switch (input) {
                case "coin":
                    System.out.println ("What drink do you want?");
                    current = SELECTION; break;
                case "break":
                    System.out.println ("Machine is broken");
                    current = FAILURE; break;
            } break;
        case SELECTION:
            switch (input) {
```

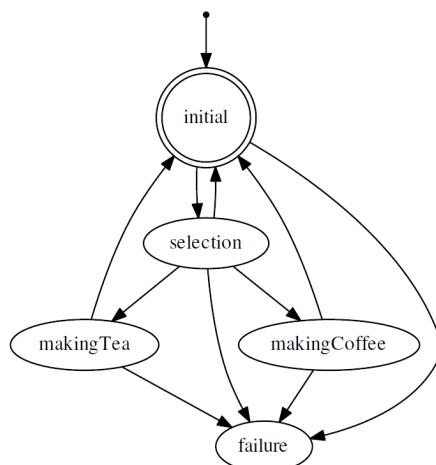
DSL ... Domain-Specific Language
GPL ... General-Purpose Language

generator

»Xtend

alternatives

XPAND, JSP, Velocity, etc.



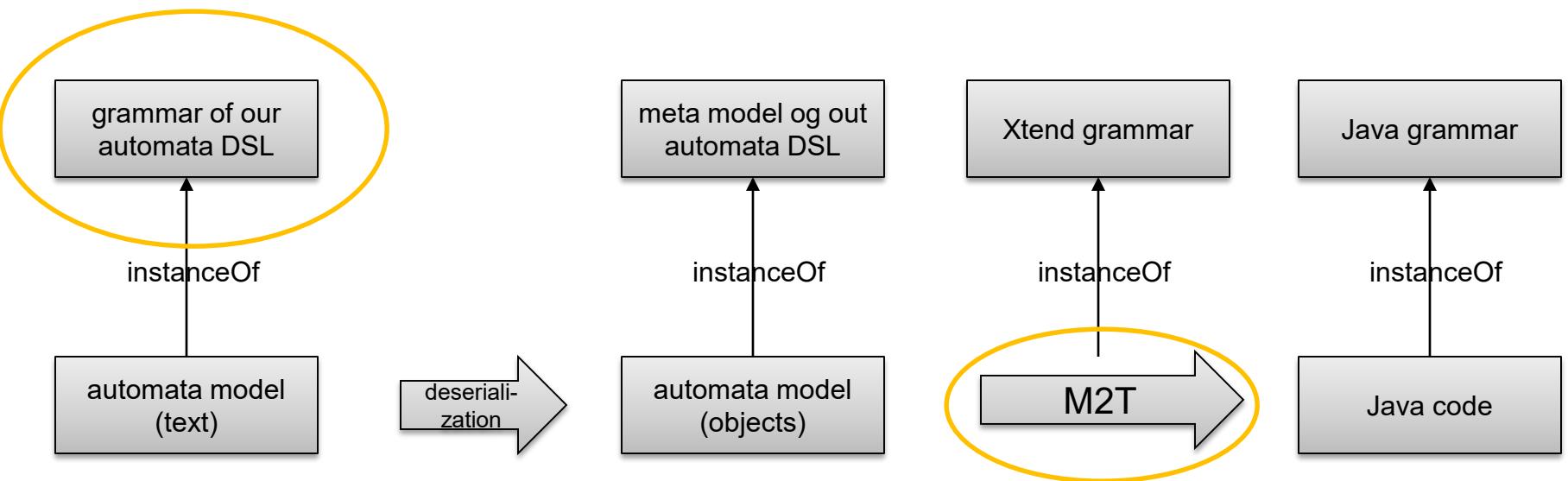
```
def static compileToJava(FiniteStateMachine it) {  
    var int i = -1  
    ...  
    Scanner scanner = new Scanner(System.in);  
    current = «initial.name.toUpperCase»;  
  
    while (true) {  
        print ("[" + stateNames[current] + "] ");  
        print ("What is the next event? available: " + availableInputs[current]);  
        String input = scanner.nextLine();  
  
        switch (current) {  
  
            «FOR state : states»  
            case «state.name.toUpperCase»:  
                switch (input) {  
                    «FOR t : state.leavingTransitions»  
                    case "«t.input»":  
                        println ("machine says: «t.output»");  
                        current = «t.target.name.toUpperCase»;  
                        break;  
                    «ENDFOR»  
                }  
                break;  
            «ENDFOR»  
        }  
    }  
}
```

```
def static compileToDot(FiniteStateMachine it) {  
    ...  
    digraph "«it.name»" {  
        _init -> «it.initial.name»;  
        «FOR state : states»  
        «FOR t : state.leavingTransitions»  
            "«state.name»" -> "«t.target.name»" [label="«t.input» / «t.output» "];  
        «ENDFOR»  
        «ENDFOR»  
        «it.initial.name» [shape=doublecircle];  
        _init [shape=point];  
    }  
}
```

target:
Java

target:
Graphviz

overview



Resource - test/CoffeeMachine.fsm - Eclipse Platform

File Edit Navigate Search Project Run Window Help

CoffeeMachine.fsm

```
machine coffeeMachine [  
    initial ^initial  
  
    state ^initial [  
        on input "coin"      output "what drink do you want?" and go to selection  
        on input "break"     output "machine is broken"  
    ]  
  
    state selection [  
        on input "tea"       output "serving tea"           and go to makingTea  
        on input "coffee"     output "serving coffee"        and go to makingCoffee  
        on input "timeout"   output "coin returned; insert coin" and go to ^initial  
        on input "break"     output "machine is broken!"     and go to failure  
    ]  
  
    state makingCoffee [  
        on input "done"      output "coffee served. Enjoy!" and go to ^initial  
        on input "break"     output "machine is broken!"     and go to failure  
    ]  
]
```

Writable

Insert

1:1

GRAPHICAL SYNTAX

creation of a graphical syntax

Steps

Define graphical elements

Develop editing tool

Implement mapping to meta-model

Typical questions

Where do we store layout information?

Do we support partial views?

Auto layouts?

Graphical Editing Framework (GEF)

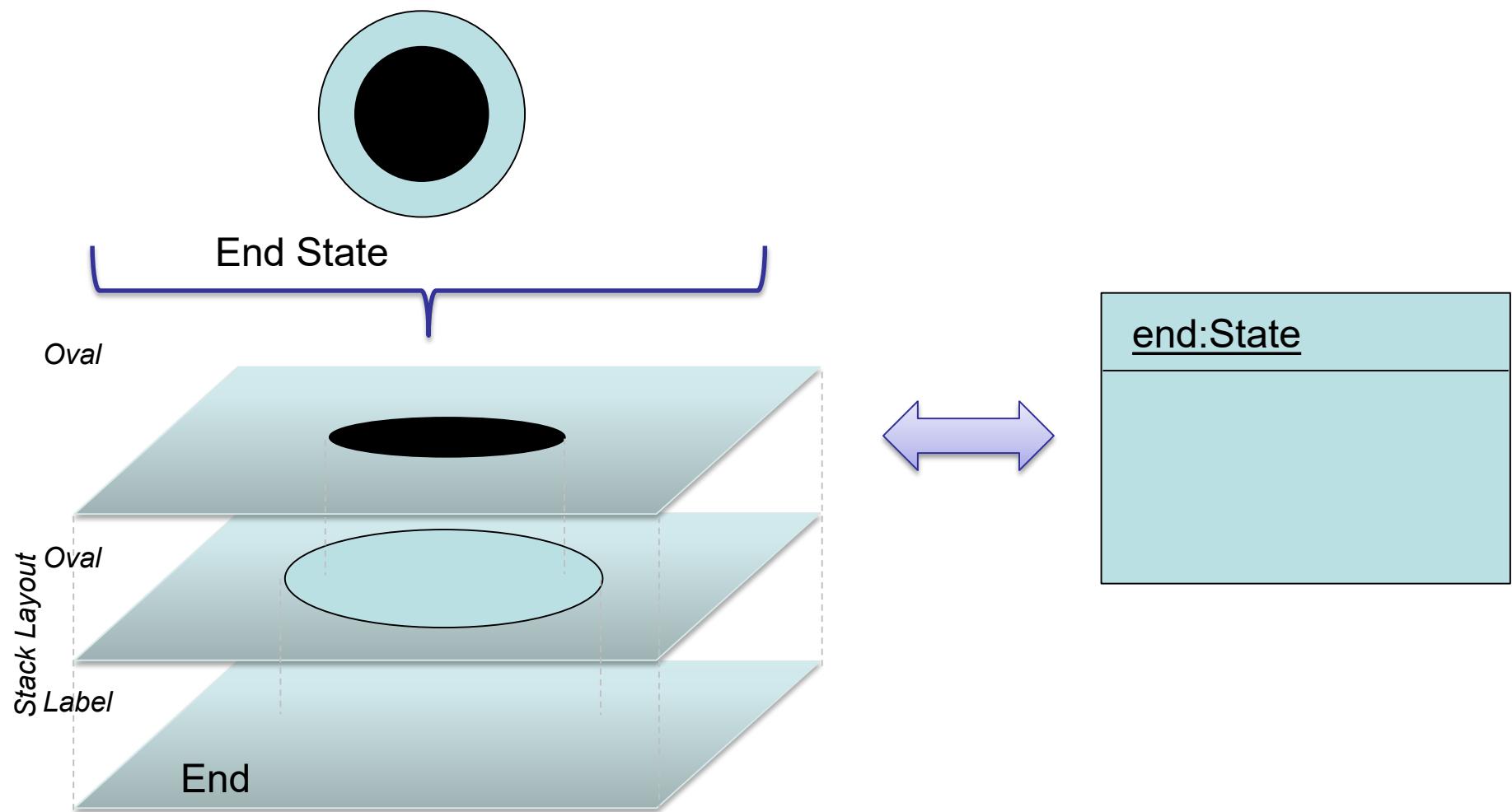
Eclipse Plugin

Framework for Diagram Editors

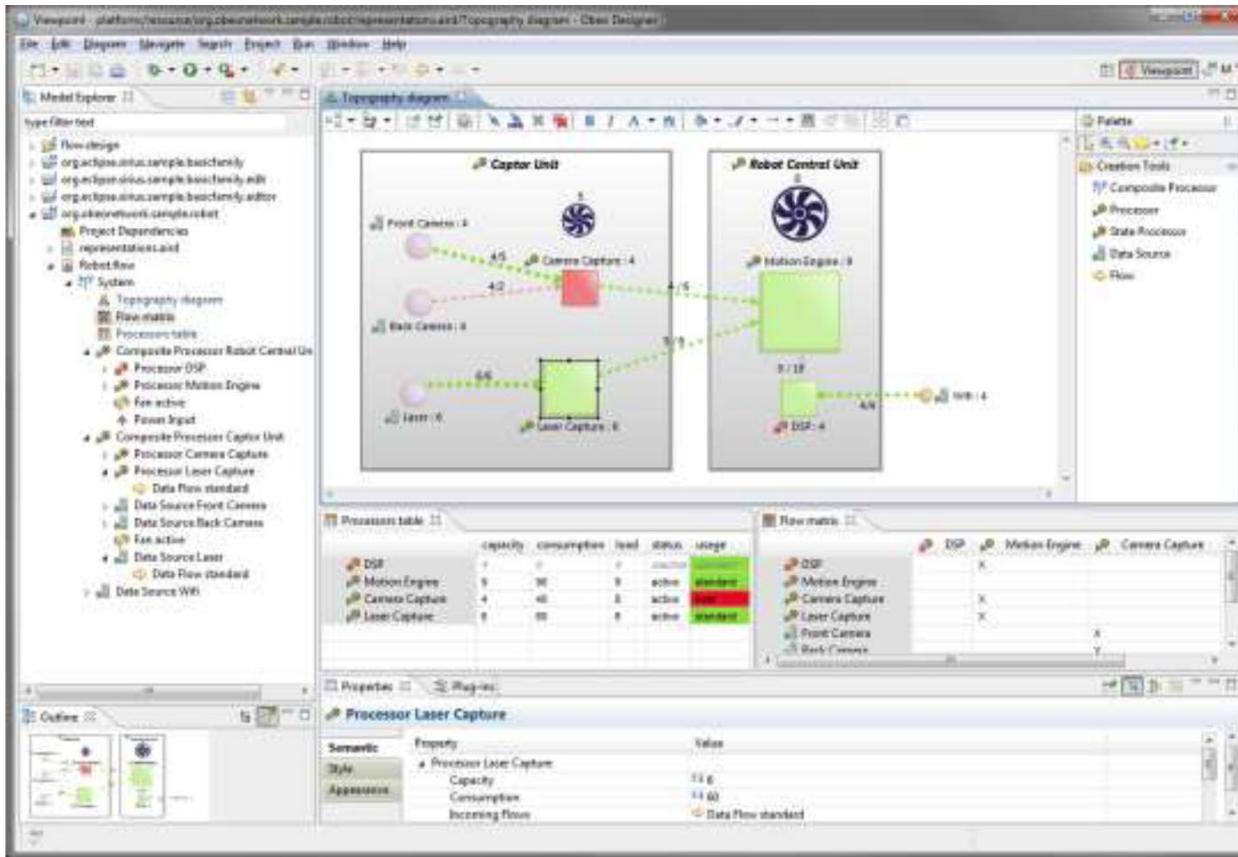
used in IBM Rational Software Architect and Borland Together



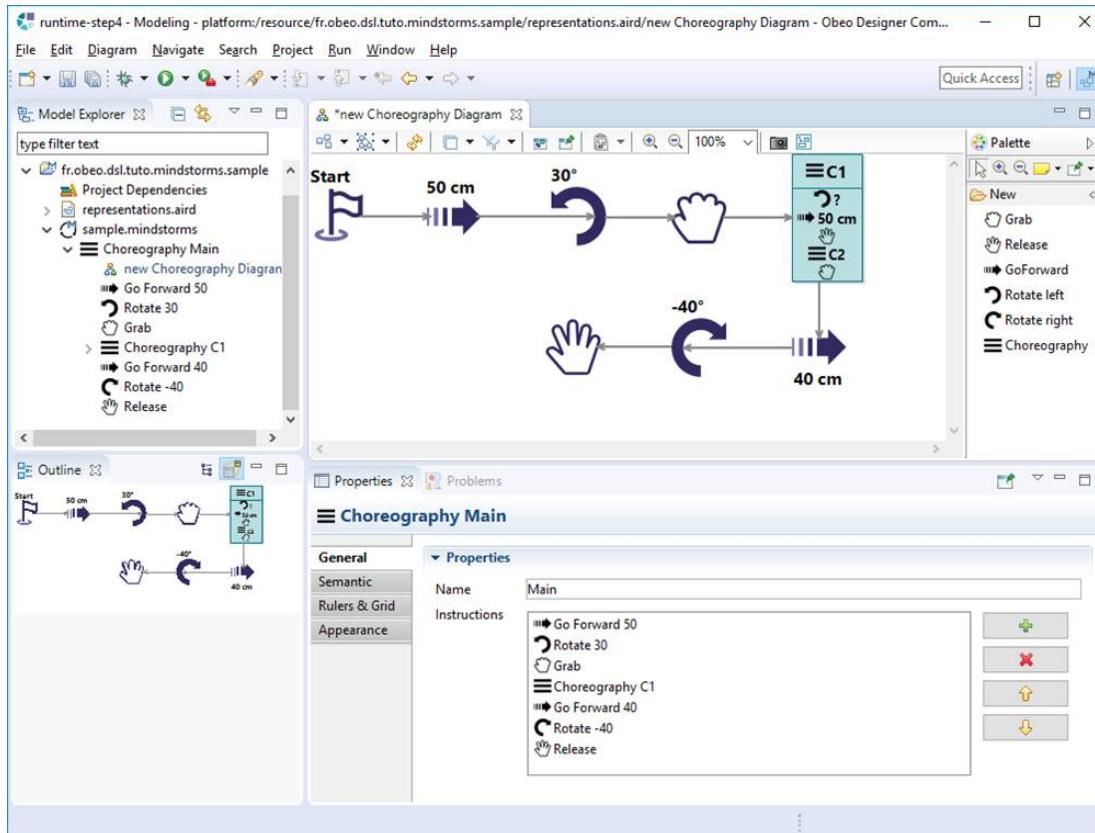
Example: Mapping an end state...

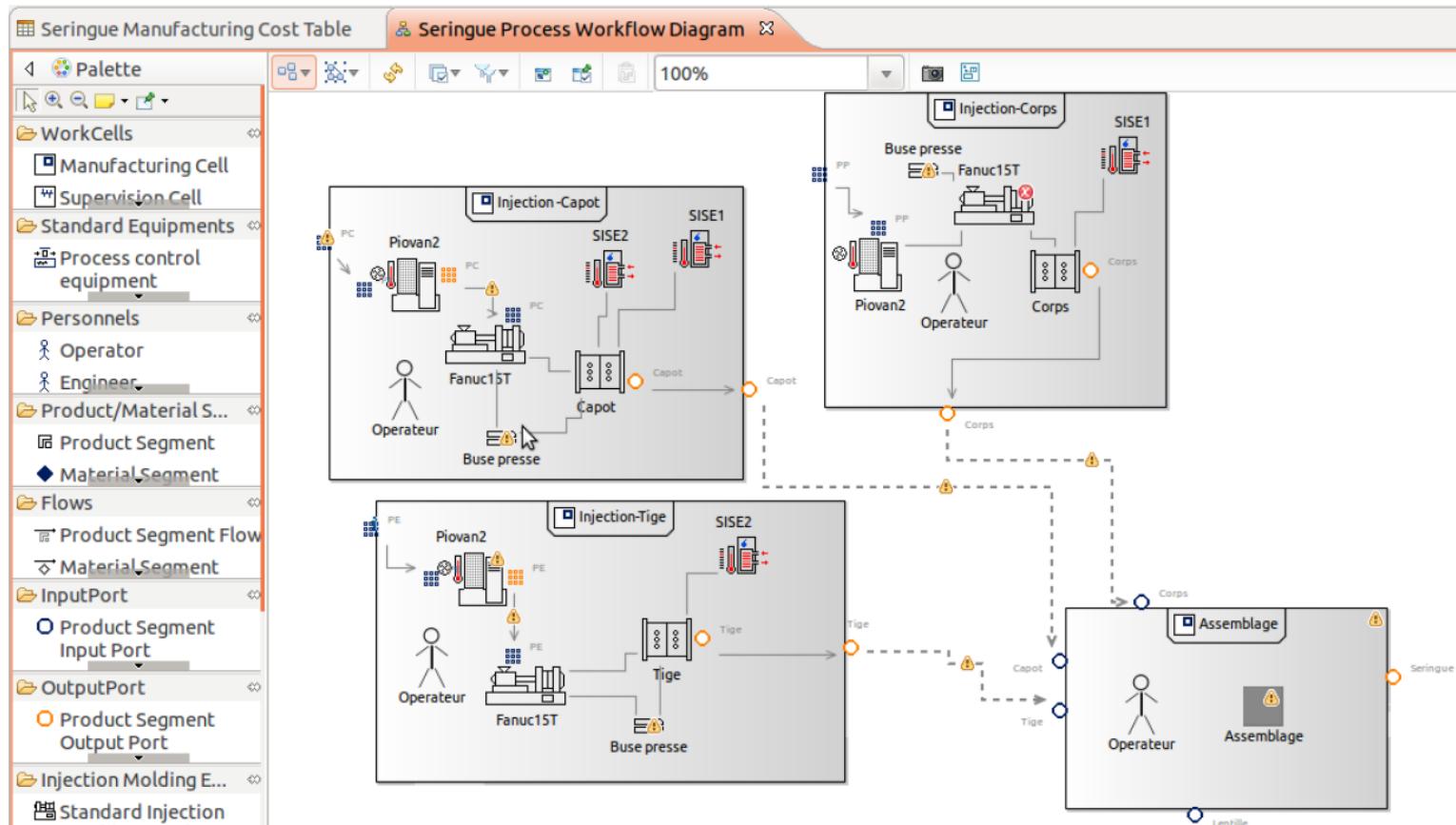


graphical syntax



<http://www.eclipse.org/sirius/gallery.html>





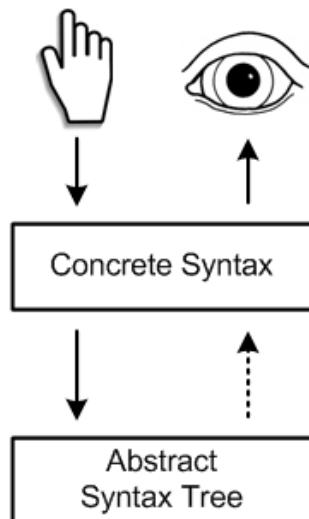
projectional language workbenches for

LANGUAGE-ORIENTED PROGRAMMING

projectional editing

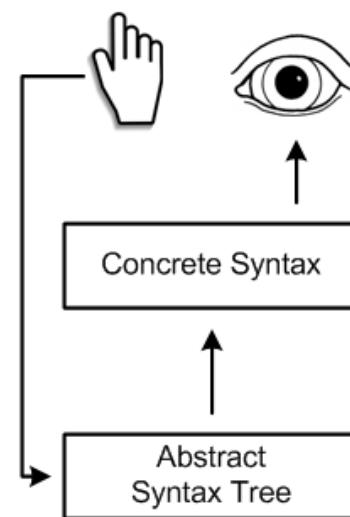
no grammars
or parsers
involved

parser-based editing

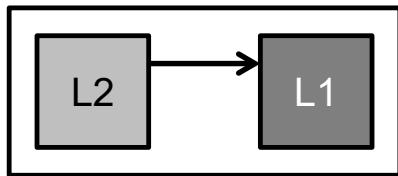


projectional editing

(a.k.a., syntax-directed editing,
structured editing)

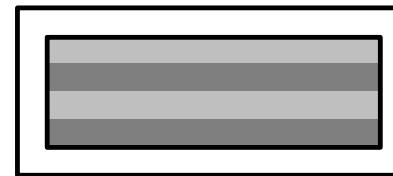


advantage: language composition



separate files

type system
transformation
constraints



in one file

type system
transformation
constraints
syntax
IDE

advantage: flexible notations

regular code/text



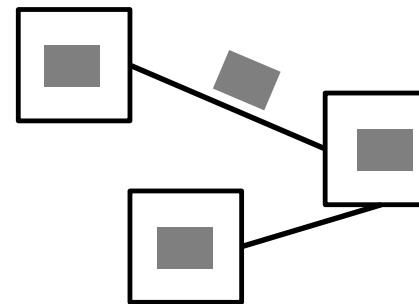
mathematical

$$\sum \begin{array}{c} \text{---} \\ \text{---} \end{array}$$

A mathematical summation symbol (\sum) followed by a horizontal line with two segments above it, and a single horizontal bar below it.

tables

graphical



advantage: flexible notations

regular code/text

```
// [ A documentation comment with references  
  to @arg(data) and @arg(dataLen)  
]  
void aSummingFunction(int8[ ] data, int8 dataLen) {  
    int16 sum;  
    for (int8 i = 0; i < dataLen; i++) {  
        sum += data[i];  
    } for  
} aSummingFunction (function)
```

tables

```
int16 decide(int8 spd, int8 alt) {  
    return  

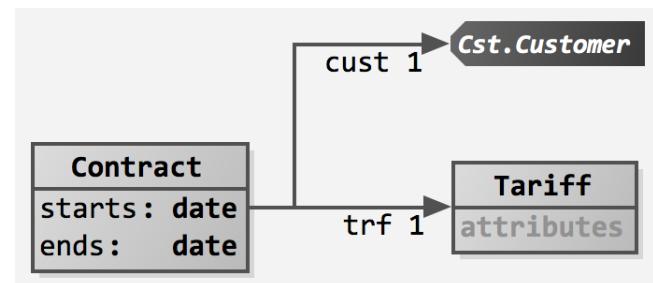

|           |         |           |
|-----------|---------|-----------|
|           | spd > 0 | spd > 100 |
| alt < 0   | 1       | 1         |
| alt == 0  | 10      | 20        |
| alt > 0   | 30      | 40        |
| alt > 100 | 50      | 60        |

  
    otherwise 0;  
}  
decide (function)
```

mathematical

```
double midnight2(int32 a, int32 b, int32 c) {  
    return (-b + sqrt(b * b - 4 * a * c)) / (2 * a);  
}  
midnight2 (function)
```

graphical



Jetbrains Meta Programming System (MPS)



MPS is a language workbench
(a tool for defining, composing, and using languages)

MPS language workbench

```
#constant TAKEOFF = 100; -> implements PointsForTakeoff
#constant HIGH_SPEED = 10; -> implements FasterThan100
#constant VERY_HIGH_SPEED = 20; -> implements FasterThan200
#constant LANDING = 100; -> implements FullStop

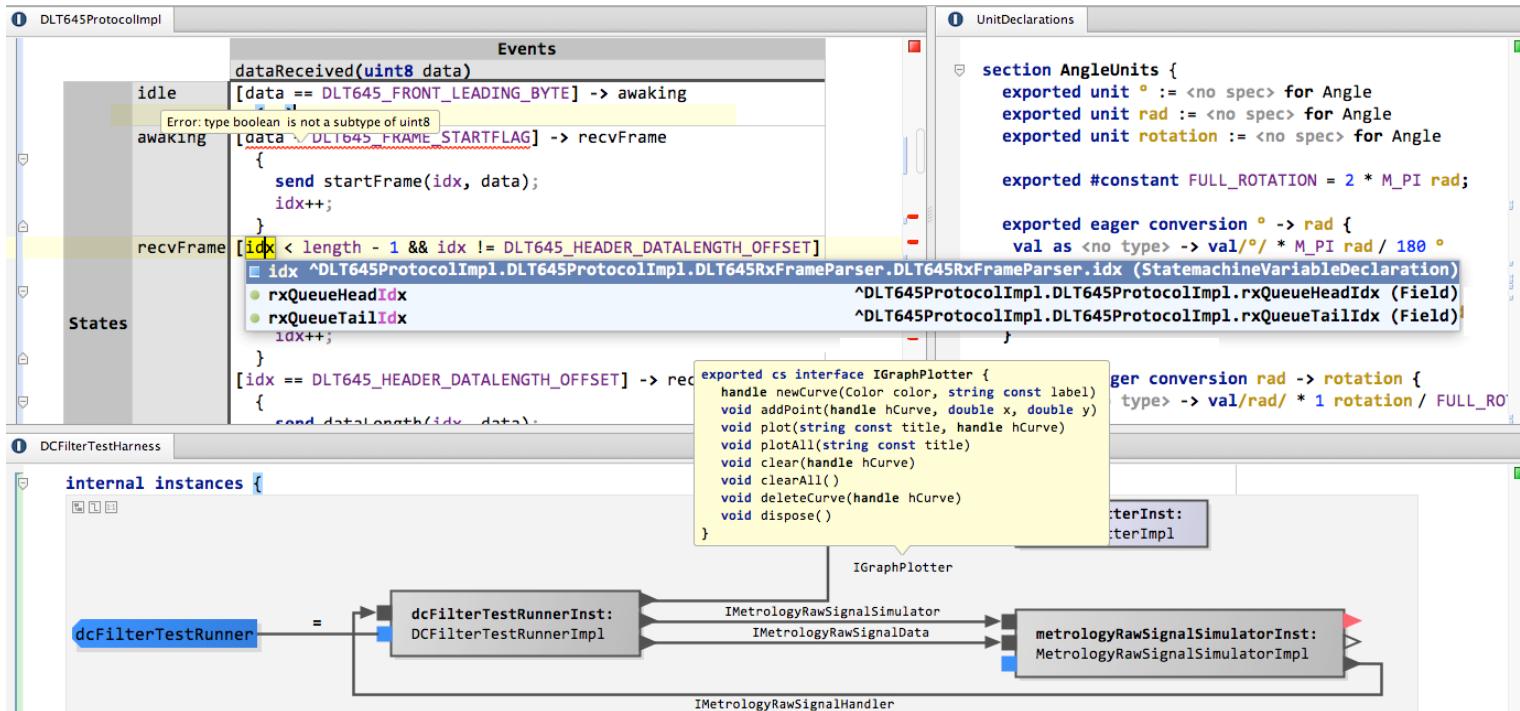
[verifiable]
exported statemachine FlightAnalyzer initial = beforeFlight {
    in event next(Trackpoint* tp) <no binding>
    in event reset() <no binding>
    out event crashNotification() => raiseAlarm
    readable var int16 points = 0
    state beforeFlight {
        // [ Here is a comment on a transition. ]
        on next [tp->alt == 0 m] -> airborne
        [exit { points += TAKEOFF; } -> implements PointsForTakeoff]
    } state beforeFlight [Error: type int16[m / s] is not comparable with (uint8 || int8)]
    state airborne {
        on next [tp->alt == 0 m && tp->speed == 0] -> crashed
        on next [tp->alt == 0 m && tp->speed > 0] -> flying
        [on next [tp->speed > 200 mps && tp->alt == 0 m] -> crashNotification ^StateMachines.FlightAnalyzer.crashNotification (OutEvent)
        [on next [tp->speed > 100 mps && tp->alt == 0 m] -> flying
        on reset [ ] -> beforeFlight
    } state airborne
    state landing {
        on next [tp->speed == 0 mps] -> landed
        [on next [tp->speed > 0 mps] -> landing { points--; } -> implements FullStop]
    }
}
```

```
#constant TAKEOFF = 100; -> implements PointsForTakeoff
#constant HIGH_SPEED = 10; -> implements FasterThan100
#constant VERY_HIGH_SPEED = 20; -> implements FasterThan200
#constant LANDING = 100; -> implements FullStop

[verifiable]
exported statemachine FlightAnalyzer initial = beforeFlight
    in event next(Trackpoint* tp) // [ Here is a comment on a transition. ]
    in event reset() <no binding>
    out event crashNotification() => raiseAlarm
    readable var int16 points = 0
    state beforeFlight
    state airborne
        [tp->alt == 0 m] -> flying
        [tp->alt == 0 m && tp->speed == 0] -> crashed
        [tp->alt == 0 m && tp->speed > 0 mps] -> flying
        [tp->speed > 200 mps && tp->alt == 0 m] -> crashed
        [tp->speed > 100 mps && tp->speed <= 200 mps] -> flying
        [tp->alt == 0 m] -> flying
        [tp->speed == 0 mps] -> landed
        [tp->speed > 0 mps] -> landing
    state landing
    state landed
```

A tooltip for the `Trackpoint.alt` field is shown, listing its members: `crashNotification`, `id`, `speed`, `time`, `x`, and `y`.

MPS language ecosystems



5+ base languages
50+ extensions to C
10+ extensions to requirements lang.

in-depth?

Kursplan för
DAT240 - Model-driven engineering
Model-driven engineering
Kursplanen fastställd 2016-02-03 av programansvarig (eller motsvarande)

Ägare: MPSOF
Högskolepoäng: 7,5
Betygsskala: TH - Fem, Fyra, Tre, Underkänd
Betydningsnivå: Avancerad nivå
Utbildningsområde: Datateknik, Informationsteknik
Huvudområde: 37 - DATA- OCH INFORMATIONSTEKNIK
Institution: Institutionen för Informationsteknologi
Undervisningsspråk: Engelska
Sökerbar för utbytesstudenter: Ja
Max antal deltagare: 50

Kursmoment
0110 Tentamen 3,0hp Betygsskala: TH
0210 Projekt 4,5hp Betygsskala: UG

I program
MPIDE INTERAKTIONSDESIGN, MASTERPROGRAM, Årskurs 2 (valbar)
MPSOF SOFTWARE ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY - UTVECKLING OCH IMPLEMENTERING AV MÅLUKVARA, MASTERPROGRAM, Årskurs 1 (obligatoriskt valbar)

Examinator:
Thorsten Berger

Kurshemsida saknas

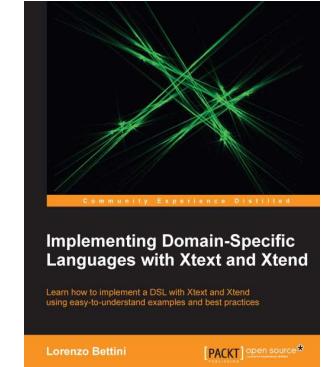
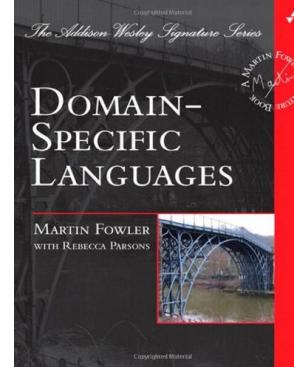
Behörighet:
För kurser på avancerad nivå gäller samma grundläggande och särskilda behörighetskrav som till det kursägande programmet. (När kursen är på avancerad nivå med undantag från tillträdeskraven: Sökande med en programregistrering på ett program där kursen ingår i programplanen undantas från ovan krav.)
Till kursen krävs minst 1) en kandidatexamen i Software Engineering, Programvaruteknik, datavetenskap eller motsvarande, 2) en godkänd kurs i mjukvarumodellering t ex TDAS93 eller motsvarande.

Känna förkunskaper
TDA454, TDA550 eller motsvarande, och 3) en godkänd kurs i mjukvarumodellering t ex TDAS93 eller motsvarande.

Poängfördelning
Lp1 Lp2 Lp3 Lp4 Sommarkurs Ej Lp
3,0hp
4,5hp

Tentamensdatum 1
20 Mar 2019 fm L, 11 Jun 2019 em L, 19 Aug 2019 fm L

questions?



Domain-Specific Languages

Thorsten Berger, Assoc. Prof.
<thorsten.berger@chalmers.se>