1.7 Language history

In 1978, Brian Kernighan and Dennis Ritchie at AT&T Bell Labs (which used computers extensively for automatic phone call routing) published a book describing a new high-level language with the simple name **C**, being named after another language called B (whose name came from a language called BCPL). C became the dominant programming language in the 1980s and 1990s.

In 1985, Bjarne Stroustrup published a book describing a C-based language called **C++**, adding constructs to support a style of programming known as *object-oriented programming*, along with other improvements. The unusual ++ part of the name comes from ++ being an operator in C that increases a number, so the name C++ suggests an increase or improvement over C.

Both C and C++ are popular first languages for programming computers, widely used for desktop and embedded systems. Furthermore, C# for Microsoft Windows programming and Objective-C for iPhone/iPad/Mac programming are C++ variants. Many newer languages like Java have a strong C/C++ flavor.

A June 2019 survey ranking language by their popularity yielded the following:

Table 1.7.1: Top languages ranked by popularity.

Language	Usage by percentage
Java	15%
C	13%
Python	9%
C++	7%
Visual Basic .NET	5%
C#	4%
JavaScript	3%
PHP	3%
SQL	2%
Assembly language	1%

Swift	1%

(Source: https://www.tiobe.com/tiobe-index/, 2019)

Feedback?

The C/C++/C# group accounts for 24% of all code being written.

PARTICIPATION ACTIVITY | 1.7.1: C/C++ history. ✓

1) In what year was the first C book published?

1978

Check **Show answer**

Correct

1978

C became the dominant language of the 1980s and 1990s.

2) In what year was the first C++ book published?

1985

Check **Show answer**

Correct

1985

C++ added object-oriented constructs to C, among other things.

3) According to the above table, C, C++, and C# account for what percentage of code being written?

24

Check **Show answer**

Correct

24%

C++ is a C-based language and C# is a C++ variant.

Feedback?