Reducing Programs to Objects

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Abstract

C++, Java, C#, Python, Ruby, JavaScript are the most powerful object-oriented programming languages, if language power would be defined as the number of *features* available for a programmer. EO, on the other hand, is an object-oriented programming language with a reduced set of features: it has nothing by objects and mechanisms of their composition and decoration. We are trying to answer the following research question: "Which known features are possible to implement using only objects?"

1 Features

To answer our research question we selected most complex features and demonstrated how each of them may be represented in EO (Bugayenko, 2021) objects¹:

- Non-conditional jumps (Sec. 1.1),
- Data and code pointers (Sec. 1.2),
- Procedures (Sec. 1.3),
- Classes (Sec. 1.4),
- Exceptions (Sec. 1.6),
- Anonymous functions (Sec. 1.7),
- Generators (Sec. 1.8),
- Types and casting (Sec. 1.9),
- Reflection (Sec. 1.10),
- Static methods (Sec. 1.11),
- Inheritance (Sec. 1.12),
- Method overloading (Sec. 1.13),
- Java generics (Sec. 1.14),
- C++ templates (Sec. 1.15),
- Mixins (Sec. 1.16),
- Java annotations (Sec. 1.17).

Other features are more trivial, that's why they are not presented in this paper, such as operators, loops, variables, code blocks, constants, branching, and so on.

1.1 Goto

Goto is a one-way imperative transfer of control to another line of code. There are only two possible cases of goto jumps: forward and backward.

1.1.1 Backward Jump. This is a "backward" jump example in C language:

```
#include "stdio.h"

void f() {
   int i = 1;
   again:
   i++;
   if (i < 10) goto again;
   printf("Finished!");
}</pre>
```

It can be mapped to the following EO code:

```
[] > f
    memory 0 > i
    seq > @
      i.write 1
      goto
        [g]
          seq > @
            i.write (i.plus 1)
            if.
              i.lt 10
              g.backward
11
              TRUE
12
      QQ.io.stdout "Finished!"
13
```

Here, the one-argument abstract atom goto is being copied with a one-argument abstract anonymous object, which is the sequence of objects doing the increment of i and then the comparison of it with the number ten. If the condition is true, g.backward is called, which leads to a backward jump and re-iteration of goto.

1.1.2 Forward Jump. This is an example of a "forward" jump in C language:

¹LAT_EX sources of this paper are maintained in REPOSITORY GitHub repository, the rendered version is [0.0.0].

```
int f(int x) {
  int r = 0;
  if (x == 0) goto exit;
  r = 42 / x;
  exit:
  return r;
}
```

It can be mapped to the following EO code:

```
[x] > f
    memory 0 > r
2
    seq > @
3
      r.write 0
4
      goto
5
         [g]
6
           seq > @
7
             if.
8
9
               x.eq 0
               g.forward TRUE
10
               TRUE
11
             r.write (42.div x)
12
13
      r
```

Here, the same abstract atom **goto** is copied with an abstract one-argument object, which is a sequence of objects. When the condition is true, a forward jump is performed by **g.forward** atom.

Similar way, the atom **goto** may be used to simulate other conditional jump statements, like **break**, **continue**, or **return** in the middle of a function body (see Sec. 1.3).

1.1.3 Complex Case. This is a more complex case of using goto in C:

```
#include "stdio.h"
void f(int a, int b) {
  goto start;
back:
  printf("A");
start:
  if (a > b) goto back;
  printf("B");
}
```

In order to translate this code to EO it has to be refactored as Fig. 1 demonstrates. The function **f()** is copied twice and each copy has its own execution flow implemented.

```
#include "stdio.h"
void f(int a, int b) { f1(a, b); }
void f1(int a, int b) {
```

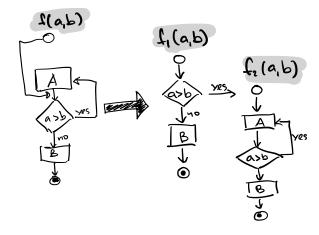


Figure 1. The function f with a few goto statements inside is translated to two functions, reducing the complexity of the code at the cost of introducing duplication.

```
4   if (a > b) f2(a, b);
5   printf("B");
6 }
7 void f2(int a, int b) {
8 back:
9   printf("A");
10   if (a > b) goto back;
11   printf("B");
12 }
```

Then, the translation to EO is trivial, with the use of the **goto** object.

In more complex cases a program may first be restructured to replace **goto** statements with loops and branching, as suggested by Williams et al. (1985), Pan et al. (1996), Erosa et al. (1994), and Ceccato et al. (2008).

1.1.4 Multiple Returns. Some structured programming languages allow a function to exit at an arbitrary place, not only at the end, using return statements, for example:

```
void abs(int x) {
  if (x > 0) {
    return x;
  }
  return -1 * x;
}
```

This can be mapped to the following EO code using goto object:

```
1 [x] > abs
```

```
goto > @
2
3
       [g]
         seq > @
4
           if.
5
             x.gt 0
6
             g.forward x
7
             TRUE
8
           g.forward
9
             -1.times x
10
```

The dataization of g.forward will exit the goto object wrapping the entire code in the "function" abs.

1.2 Pointers

A pointer is an object in many programming languages that stores a memory address. Pointers may point to data memory and to program memory.

1.2.1 Pointers to Data. This is an example of C code, where the pointer p is first incremented by seven times <code>sizeof(book)</code> (which is equal to 108) and then de-referenced to become a struct book mapped to memory. Then, the <code>title</code> part of the struct is filled with a string and the price part is returned as a result of the function f:

```
1 #include "string.h"
  struct book {
2
    char title[100];
3
    long long price;
4
  };
5
  int f(struct book* p) {
6
    struct book b = *(p + 7);
    strcpy(b.title, "Object Thinking");
    return b.price;
9
10 }
```

This code can be mapped to the following EO code:

```
[ptr] > book
    ptr > @
2
    ptr.block > title
3
4
      [b] (b.as-string > 0)
5
6
    ptr.block > price
7
      [b] (b.as-int > 0)
8
  pointer. > p1
    heap 1024
    0
11
```

Here, p1 is an object that can be used as an argument of f. It is a copy of an abstract object heap.pointer, which expects two: 1) an absolute address in memory, and 2) the size of the memory block it points to, in bytes. Its attribute block expects two attributes: 1) the number of bytes in the heap, and 2) an abstract object that can encapsulate bytes which were just read from memory.

The object heap is an abstraction of a random access memory.

1.2.2 Pointers to Code. A pointer may not only refer to data in the heap, but also to executable code in memory (there is no difference between "program" and "data" memories both in x86 and ARM architectures). This is an example of C program, which calls a function referenced by a function pointer, providing two integer arguments to it:

```
int foo(int x, int y) {
   return x + y;
}
int f() {
   int (*p)(int, int);
   p = &foo;
   return (*p) (7, 42);
}
```

This code can be mapped to the following EO code:

```
1  [x y] > foo
2    x.plus y > @
3  [] > f
4    cage 0 > p
5    seq > @
6    p.write
7    [x y]
8     foo x y > @
9    p.@ 7 42
```

Important to notice that the following code is not possible to represent in EO:

```
int f() {
  int (*p)(int);
```

```
g p = (int(*)(int)) 0x761AFE65;
teturn (*p) (42);
f }
```

Here, the pointer refers to an arbitrary address in program memory, where some executable code is supposed to be located.

1.2.3 Variables in Stack. This C function, which returns seven (tested with GCC), assumes that variables are placed in stack sequentially and uses pointer de-referencing to access them:

```
int f() {
long long a = 42;
long long b = 7;
return *(&a - 1);
}
```

This code can be mapped to the following EO code:

```
[p] > long64
    p.block > @
2
3
      [b] (b.as-int > 0)
4
  [] > f
5
    seq > @
6
      malloc. > stack
7
        heap 32 > h
8
        16
9
      long64 stack > b
10
      b.write (7.as-bytes)
11
      long64 stack > a
12
      a.write (42.as-bytes)
13
      long64 (a.p.sub 1) > ret!
14
      h.free stack
15
16
```

Here, the atom malloc allocates a segment of bytes in the heap. Later, the atom free releases it. The attribute ret is made constant in order to avoid its recalculation after it's "returned" (this mechanism is explained in Sec. 1.5 where destructors are discussed).

1.3 Procedures

A subroutine is a sequence of program instructions that performs a specific task, packaged as a unit. In different programming languages, a subroutine may be called a routine, subprogram, function, method, or procedure. In this PHP example, a function max is defined:

```
function max($a, $b) {
  if ($a > $b) return $a;
  return $b;
}
```

It can be mapped to the following EO code:

```
1  [a b] > max
2  goto > @
3  [g]
4  seq > @
5  if.
6  a.gt b
7  g.forward a
8  TRUE
9  b
```

This example also demonstrates how goto object can be used to simulate the behavior of the return statement from within the body of a method.

1.3.1 Impure Functions. A function is pure when, among other qualities, it doesn't have side effects: no mutation of local static variables, non-local variables, mutable reference arguments or input/output streams. This PHP function is impure:

It may be mapped to a constant EO object:

```
memory 42 > a
[x] > inc!
seq > @
x.write
x.plus 1
inc
inc a
```

1.4 Classes

A class is an extensible program-code-template for creating objects, providing initial values for state (member variables) and implementations of behavior (member functions or methods). The following program contains a Ruby class with a single constructor, two methods, and one mutable member variable:

```
class Book
1
    def initialize(i)
2
      @id = id
3
      puts "New book!"
4
    end
5
    def path
6
      "/tmp/${@id}.txt"
7
8
    def move(i)
9
      @id = i
10
    end
11
12 end
```

It can be mapped to the following EO code, where a class becomes a factory of objects:

```
[i] > book
    cage i > id
2
    [] > ruby-init
3
      QQ.txt.sprintf > 0
        "New book!"
5
    [] > path
6
      QQ.txt.sprintf > @
7
        "/tmp/%s.txt"
8
        id
9
    [i] > move
10
      id.write i > @
11
```

Here, the constructor is represented by the object [ruby-init], which initializes finishes the initization of the object. The making an "instance" of a book would look like this:

```
book 42 > b
b.ruby-init
b.move 7
b.path
```

1.5 Destructors

In C++ and some other languages, a destructor is a method that is called for a class object when that object passes out of scope or is explicitly deleted. The following code will print both Alive and Dead texts:

```
Foo f = Foo();

It may be translated to EO as such:

It may be translated to EO as such:

It may be translated to EO as such:

QQ.io.structor
QQ.io.stdout "Alive" > @

QQ.io.stdout "Dead" > @

QQ.io.stdout "Dead" > @

If property is property is property is property is property in the property is property in the property is property in the property in the property is property in the property
```

There is no garbage collection in EO, that's why a destructor must be explicitly "called" when an object passes out of scope or is deleted.

1.6 Exceptions

Exception handling is the process of responding to the occurrence of exceptions—anomalous or exceptional conditions requiring special processing—during the execution of a program provided. This C++ program utilizes exception handling to avoid segmentation fault due to null pointer de-referencing:

```
#include <iostream>
  class Book { public: int price(); };
  int price(Book* b) {
    if (b == NULL) throw "NPE!";
    return (*b).price() * 1.1;
5
6
  }
  void print(Book* b) {
8
      std::cout << "The price: " << price(b)
    } catch (char const* e) {
      std::cout << "Error: " << e;
    }
12
13 | }
```

This mechanism may be implemented in EO:

```
try > @
9
       10
         QQ.io.stdout > @
11
          QQ.txt.sprintf
12
           "The price: %d"
13
          price b
14
       ГеЪ
15
        QQ.io.stdout > 0
16
          QQ.txt.sprintf
17
           "Error: %s"
18
19
       20
        nop > @
21
```

Here, the object try expects three arguments:
1) an abstract object to be dataized, and 2) an abstract object to be copied with one argument, in case dataization returns encapsulated object, and 3) an object to be dataized anyway (similar to Java finaly block).

In the object price we get the object error, which if dataized, causes the termination of dataization and a non-conditional jump to the "catch" object of the try. The mechanism is similar to "checked" exceptions in Java, where a method's signature must declare all types of exceptions the method may throw.

1.6.1 Many Exception Types. A Java method may throw a number of either checked or unchecked exceptions, for example:

```
void f(int x) throws IOException {
   if (x == 0) {
     throw new IOException();
   }
   throw new RuntimeException();
}
```

This would be represented in EO as such:

```
1 [x] > f
2   if. > @
3    x.eq 0
4   error "IOException"
5   error "RuntimeException"
```

To catch both exceptions the object f would be used like this:

```
1 try
2 []
3 try > @
4 []
```

```
f 5 > 0
5
         [e1]
           QQ.io.stdout e1 > @
         П
8
           nop > @
9
     [e2]
10
       QQ.io.stdout e2 > @
11
     Γ٦
12
       nop > @
13
```

1.7 Anonymous Functions

Anonymous functions that can be passed into methods as arguments. For example, in this Ruby code a "block" (a name Ruby uses for anonymous functions) is passed:

```
def scan(lines)
lines.each do |t|
if t.starts_with? '#' yield t
end
end
scan(array) { |x| puts x }
```

This mechanism may be implemented in EO:

```
1 [lines b] > scan
2  lines.each > @
3  [t]
4   if. > @
5   t.starts-with "#"
6   b t
7   TRUE
8  scan
9  array
10  [x]
11  QQ.io.stdout x > @
```

Here, the anonymous function passed to the object scan as an argument b. The "call" of this function is the dataization of its copy, performed by the if atom.

1.8 Generators

A generator is a routine that can be used to control the iteration behaviour of a loop. For example, this PHP program will print first ten Fibonacci numbers:

```
function fibonacci(int $limit):generator {

yield $a = $b = $i = 1;

while (++$i < $limit) {

$b = $a + $b;
</pre>
```

```
5    yield $b - $a;
6    $a = $b;
7    }
8 }
9 foreach (fibonacci(10) as $n) {
10    echo "$n\n";
11 }
```

This mechanism may be implemented in EO:

```
[limit f] > fibonacci
    memory 0 > a
2
    memory 0 > b
3
    memory 0 > i
4
    seq > @
5
      a.write 1
6
      b.write 1
7
      f 0
8
9
      while.
        seq (i.write (i.plus 1)) (i.lt limit
10
            )
        [idx]
11
          seq > @
12
            b.write (a.plus b)
13
            a.write (b.minus a)
14
            f (b.minus a)
15
      TRUE
16
17
  fibonacci > @
    10
18
    [n]
19
      QQ.io.stdout > @
20
        QQ.txt.sprintf "%d\n" n
21
```

Here, the generator is turned into an abstract object fibonacci with an extra parameter f, which is specified with an abstract object argument, which prints what's given as n.

1.9 Types and Type Casting

A type system is a logical system comprising a set of rules that assigns a property called a type to the various constructs of a computer program, such as variables, expressions, functions or modules. The main purpose of a type system is to reduce possibilities for bugs in computer programs by defining interfaces between different parts of a computer program, and then checking that the parts have been connected in a consistent way. In this example, a Java method add expects an argument of type Book and compilation would fail if another type is provided:

```
class Cart {
  private int total;
  void add(Book b) {
    this.total += b.price();
  }
}
```

The restrictions enforced by Java type system in compile time through types [Cart] and [Book] may be represented in EO by means of decorators, for example:

```
1 [] > original-cart
    memory 0 > total
    [b] > add
      total.write (total.plus (b.price))
  [] > cart
    original-cart > @
    [b] > add
      if.
        b.subtype-of (QQ.txt.text "Book")
        @.add b
10
        11
          error "Type mismatch, Book
12
             expected" > @
```

Here, it is expected that the parameter **b** is defined in a "class," which has **subtype-of** attribute, which may also be provided by a decorator (a simplified example):

```
1 [] > original-book
2  memory 0 > price
3 [] > book
4  original-book > @
5  [t] > subtype-of
6  t.eq "Book" > @
7  [] > price
8  @.price > @
```

This decoration may be simplified through a "fluent" supplementary object:

```
type "Cart" > cart-type
super-types "Object" "Printable"
method "add" "Book"
cart-type original-cart > cart
```

Here, the **type** object implements all necessary restrictions Java type system may provide for the type **Cart** and its methods.

Type casting, which is a mechanism of changing an expression from one data type to another, may also be implemented through same decorators.

1.10 Reflection

Reflection is the ability of a process to examine, introspect, and modify its own structure and behavior. In the following Python example the method hello of an instance of class Foo is not called directly on the object, but is first retrieved through reflection functions globals and getattr, and then executed:

```
def Foo():
    def hello(self, name):
        print("Hello, %s!" % name)

obj = globals()["Foo"]()
getattr(obj, "hello")("Jeff")
```

It may be implemented in EO just by encapsulating additional meta information in classes explained in Sec. 1.4.

1.10.1 Monkey Patching. Monkey patching is making changes to a module or a class while the program is running. This JavaScript program adds a new method print to the object b after the object has already been instantiated:

```
function Book(t) { this.title = t; }
var b = new Book("Object Thinking");
b.print = function() {
   console.log(this.title);
}
b.print();
```

This program may be translated to EO, assuming that **b** is being held by an attribute of a larger object, for example **app**:

```
[] > app
1
2
    cage 0 > b
    b' > copy
3
    seq > @
4
      b.write
5
         [] > book
6
           [t] > new
7
             memory "" > title
8
             title.write t > 0
9
      copy. <
10
      b.write
11
         [] > book
12
           [t] > new
13
             seq > @
14
               15
                 copy > @
16
                 [] > print
17
```

```
QQ.io.stdout (^.title) b.print
```

Here, the modification to the object **book** is happening through making a copy of it, creating a decorator, and then storing it to where the original object was located.

1.11 Static Methods

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A static method (or static function) is a method defined as a member of an object but is accessible directly from an API object's constructor, rather than from an object instance created via the constructor. For example, this C# class consists of a single static method:

```
class Utils {
  public static int max(int a, int b) {
   if (a > b) return a;
   return b;
}
```

It may be converted to the following EO code, since a static method is nothing else but a "global" function:

```
1 [a b] > utils-max
2   if. > @
3    a.gt b
4    a
5   b
```

1.12 Inheritance

Inheritance is the mechanism of basing a class upon another class retaining similar implementation. In this Java code class Book inherits all methods and non-private attributes from class Item:

```
class Item {
  private int p;
  int price() { return p; }
}
class Book extends Item {
  int tax() { return price() * 0.1; }
}
```

It may be represented in EO like this:

```
1 [] > item
2   memory 0 > p
3   [] > price
4   p > @
5 [] > book
```

```
item > i

(QQ.math.number (i.price)).as-float.
times 0.1 > @
```

Here, composition is used instead of inheritance.

1.12.1 Prototype-Based Inheritance. So called prototype-based programming uses generalized objects, which can then be cloned and extended. For example, this JavaScript program defines two objects, where Item is the parent object and Book is the child that inherits the parent through its prototype:

```
function Item(p) { this.price = p; }
function Book(p) {
   Item.call(this, p);
   this.tax = function () {
     return this.price * 0.1;
   }
}
var t = new Book(42).tax();
console.log(t); // prints "4.2"
```

This mechanism of prototype-based inheritance may be translated to the following EO code, using the mechanism of decoration:

```
[p] > item
1
2
    memory 0 > price
    [] > new
3
      price.write p > @
  [] > book
5
    [p] > new
6
      item p > 0
7
      [] > tax
8
        times. > @
9
          as-float.
10
            QQ.math.number (^.price)
11
          0.1
12
13
  QQ.io.stdout
    QQ.txt.sprintf
14
      "%f"
      tax.
16
        book.new 42
17
```

1.12.2 Multiple Inheritance. Multiple inheritance is a feature of some object-oriented computer programming languages in which an object or class can inherit features from more than one parent object or parent class. In this C++ example, the

class Jack has both bark and listen methods, inherited from Dog and Friend respectively:

```
1 #include <iostream>
  class Dog {
    virtual void bark() {
      std::cout << "Bark!";
    }
  };
  class Friend {
    virtual void listen();
9
  };
  class Jack: Dog, Friend {
    void listen() override {
11
      Dog::bark();
12
      std::cout << "Listen!";
13
    }
14
15 };
```

It may be represented in EO like this:

Here, inherited methods are explicitly listen as attributes in the object <code>jack</code>. This is very close to what would happen in the virtual table of a class <code>Jack</code> in C++. The EO object <code>jack</code> just makes it explicit.

1.13 Method Overloading

Method overloading is the ability to create multiple functions of the same name with different implementations. Calls to an overloaded function will run a specific implementation of that function appropriate to the context of the call, allowing one function call to perform different tasks depending on context. In this Kotlin program two functions are defined with the same name, while only one of them is called with an integer argument:

```
fun foo(a: Int) {}
fun foo(a: Double) {}
```

3 foo(42)

It may be represented in EO like this:

```
[args...] > foo
(args.at 0) > a0
if.
a0.subtype-of "Int"
first-foo a0
second-foo a0
foo 42
```

This code expects arguments of **foo** to be equipped with the type system suggested in Sec. 1.9. The attribute **subtype-of** will help dispatching the call to the right objects.

1.14 Java Generics

Generics extend Java's type system to allow a type or method to operate on objects of various types while providing compile-time type safety. For example, this Java class expects another class to be specified as T before usage:

```
class Cart<T extends Item> {
  private int total;
  void add(T i) {
   total += i.price();
  }
}
```

It may be represented in EO like this:

```
1 [] > cart
2  memory 0 > total
3  [i] > add
4  total.write > @
5  total.plus (i.price)
```

As the example demonstrates, the presence of generics in class declaration may be ignored, since EO is a language without types and type checking.

1.15 C++ Templates

Templates are a feature of the C++ programming language that allows functions and classes to operate with generic types, allowing a function or class to work on many different data types without being rewritten for each one.

```
template<typename T> T max(T a, T b) {
   return a > b ? a : b;
}
int x = max(7, 42);
```

It may be represented in EO like this:

```
1 [a b] > max
2 if. > @
3 a.gt b
4 a
5 b
6 max 7 42 > x
```

As the example demonstrates, the presence of templates may be ignored, since EO is a language without types and type checking.

1.16 Mixins

A mixin is a class that contains methods for use by other classes without having to be the parent class of those other classes. The following code demonstrates how Ruby module is included into a class:

```
module Timing
def recent?
    @time - Time.now < 24 * 60 * 60
end
end
def News
include Timing
def initialize(t)
    @time = t
end
end
n = News.new(Time.now)
n.recent?</pre>
```

This code may be represented in EO by just copying the method [recent?] to the object [News] as if it was defined there.

1.17 Annotations

In Java, an annotation is a form of syntactic metadata that can be added to source code; classes, methods, variables, parameters and Java packages may be annotated. Later, annotations may be retrieved through Reflection API. For example, this program analyzes the annotation attached to the class of the provided object and changes the behavior depending on one of its attributes:

```
interface Item {}

CShip(true) class Book { /*..*/ }

CShip(false) class Song { /*..*/ }

class Cart {

void add(Item i) {
    /* add the item to the cart */
```

The code may be represented in EO using classes suggested in Sec. 1.4:

```
[] > book
    ship TRUE > a1
2
     [] > new
3
       [] > @
4
   [] > song
5
    ship FALSE > a1
6
     [] > new
7
      [] > @
8
   [] > cart
9
    [i] > add
10
      # Add the item to the cart
11
      if. > 0
12
         i.a1.value
13
           # Mark the cart shippable
14
           TRUE
15
          FALSE
16
```

Annotations become attributes of objects, which represent classes in EO, as explained in Sec. 1.4: book.al and song.al.

2 Traceability

Certain amount of semantic information may be lost during the translation from a more powerful programming language to EO objects, such as, for example, namings, line numbers, comments, etc. Moreover, it may be useful to have an ability to trace EO objects back to original language constructs, which they were motivated by. For example, a simple C function:

```
int f(int x) {
  return 42 / x;
}
```

It may be mapped to the following EO object:

```
1  [x] > f
2  [] > @
3     "src/main.c:1-1" > source
4     42.div x > @
5     "src/main.c:0-2" > source
```

Here, synthetic **source** attribute represents the location in the source code file with the original C code. It's important to make sure during translation that the name **source** doesn't conflict with a possibly similar name in the object.

3 Conclusion

We demonstrated how some language features often present in high-level object-oriented languages, such as Java or C++, may be expressed using objects. We used EO as a destination programming language because of its minimalistic semantics: it doesn't have any language features aside from objects and their composition and decoration mechanisms.

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