Languages form an approximate spectrum from "low-level" to "high-level"; "low-level" languages are typically more machine-oriented and faster to execute, whereas "high-level" languages are more abstract and easier to use but execute less quickly..  
 Machine code was the language of early programs, written in the instruction set of the particular machine, often in binary notation.  
 Whatever the approach to development may be, the final program must satisfy some fundamental properties.  
For example, when a bug in a compiler can make it crash when parsing some large source file, a simplification of the test case that results in only few lines from the original source file can be sufficient to reproduce the same crash.  
However, with the concept of the stored-program computer introduced in 1949, both programs and data were stored and manipulated in the same way in computer memory.  
In 1801, the Jacquard loom could produce entirely different weaves by changing the "program" – a series of pasteboard cards with holes punched in them.  
Methods of measuring programming language popularity include: counting the number of job advertisements that mention the language, the number of books sold and courses teaching the language (this overestimates the importance of newer languages), and estimates of the number of existing lines of code written in the language (this underestimates the number of users of business languages such as COBOL).  
 Code-breaking algorithms have also existed for centuries.  
For example, COBOL is still strong in corporate data centers often on large mainframe computers, Fortran in engineering applications, scripting languages in Web development, and C in embedded software.  
Many programmers use forms of Agile software development where the various stages of formal software development are more integrated together into short cycles that take a few weeks rather than years.  
A study found that a few simple readability transformations made code shorter and drastically reduced the time to understand it.  
This can be a non-trivial task, for example as with parallel processes or some unusual software bugs.  
However, Charles Babbage had already written his first program for the Analytical Engine in 1837.  
 High-level languages made the process of developing a program simpler and more understandable, and less bound to the underlying hardware.  
The following properties are among the most important:  
  
 In computer programming, readability refers to the ease with which a human reader can comprehend the purpose, control flow, and operation of source code.