**Iterator Pattern**

**Overview**

Iterator pattern provides a way to access elements of an aggregate object sequentially without exposing its underlying representation. Freeman Eric., Freeman Elisa. (2004). It allows traversing of elements of collections without exposing underlying representation ( list, stack, tree etc). Usually with one type of data structure such as array or array-list, it would be easier to iterate in data structure but iterator pattern comes handy when you would want to hide logic of data objects structure such as list, stack and tree but want to safely iterate in all those data structures through a pattern.

Iterator interface declares operations required for traversing a collection while collection interface lists a list of collection methods which

* It provides uniform way to access different collections of object
* An iterator can cycle uniformly through all different collections

**Benefits**

* In a codebase where multiple types of data objects are stored and are to be iterated through without further modifying data structures themselves iterator pattern would be very useful.
* With iterator pattern the normal behaviour of iterating through collection of object is extracted and put into a single object called iterator so that collection remains untouched time and again.
* An iterator object provides primary method for fetching elements of collection.
* A polymorphic code can be referred to each collection as they will implement same interface
* When new object is added , new iterator could be added without having to change the collection or the client.

**Problem/Scenario**

A pizza shop sells two types of pizzas; one is vegetarian pizza and the other is non-vegetarian pizzas. Pizza menu wants to separate two types of pizzas in separate menus; one as vegetarian and other as non-vegetarian pizzas so that customers done accidently order wrong pizza and complain about it later.

* Every menu item includes name, a description of ingredients and price.

**Before Refactor**

Before pattern is implemented pizza menu would have vegetarian and non-vegetarian objects to store array, and array list of pizzas which show different implementation of data structures as this design pattern is to show variation in data structure. This structure would just normally iterate through those array, array list from main class by accessing methods which exist in vegetarian and non-vegetarian pizzas and pizzas from menu.

**After Refactor**

After refactor, we would create Iterator interface which is implemented by independent iterators defined by VegetarianPizzaIterator and NonVegetarianPizzaIterator and independent objects which store array list and array of vegetarian pizza and non-vegetarian pizza. Iterators are accessed by independent menu iterator and print list of pizza available in menu from vegetarian and non-vegetarian pizzas.

Before/after link

**UML Diagram**

Please find it inside relevant project UML in pattern folder

/IteratorPattern.png

Direct Access

<https://app.lucidchart.com/documents/edit/85d4043f-1c46-49fe-b7e8-77f0a9244e72/0_0>

**Reference**

Freeman Eric., Freeman Elisa. 2004. 1st ed. O’Reily Media Inc. 1995, Sebasttopo, CA