Python for linguists

Syntax of Python

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- How to think like a computer scientist https://openbookproject.net/thinkcs/
 - Precision in formulating descriptions
 - Problem solving

Our tasks in learning

Introduction into basic concepts





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Syntactic errors when the syntax of the code is incorrect

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e.g. "1+"two"" is not legal
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                                          Traceback (most recent call last)
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Semantic errors the program does not do what you want it to do





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Class a template of a variable:

 defines how variables, functions, and methods work together and what we can do with them





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- Google Colab for the notebook interface





```
s = "Hello world"
print(s)
print(s.upper())
print(s.split())
print(s.split("l"))
   Variable s
      Type string
  Operator = (assignment)
  Function print()
  Methods upper(), split(), find(), startswith()...
```

 Now open an empty notebook in Google Colab, type the commands at the top as cells and execute them



word-counting.png



```
import re
text = requests.get("http://corpus.leeds.ac.uk/teaching/mod
text = text.lower()
corpus_count = 0
dictionary = {}
for sentence in text.split(". "):
  for word in sentence.split(" "):
    corpus_count += 1
    word = re.sub("[^a-z-]+","",word)
    if word in dictionary: dictionary[word] += 1
    else: dictionary[word] = 1
for word in dictionary:
  ipm = dictionary[word] / ( corpus_count / 1000000 )
  if ipm > 1000:
    print(word, ipm)
```

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- Zero indexing: $s[0] \rightarrow "M"$; $s[1] \rightarrow "y"$ Like house floor counting: first floor





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- Membership operator: a in [5, 6, 7]







• Legal naming conventions: standard characters, numbers (not at the start) and underscores

Syntax of Python

- Names need to be informative to reflect the logic of your script
- Variable names are case-sensitive:

```
CamelCase
Title Case
snake case
```

Q What is the difference between:

```
favorite_color = "blue"
favorite_color == "blue"
favorite_color = blue
favorite color == blue
```





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 - user-defined def compute_keywords(your_corpus, reference..): do something return result
 - imported from libraries: import LibraryName





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    then a
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Introduction

Control structures and functions

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• Find the minimum of three numbers: 12 or 7 or 25?





Minimum of three numbers

• Expanding the case of two numbers:

```
def min3(a, b, c):
if a < b:
    if a < c:
return a
    else:
return c
else:
    if b < c:
return b
    else:
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```

Minimum of three numbers

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Import statement

 Importing a module for the current script For example for regular expressions:

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import re
re.findall(regex, string)
re.findall(".[aeiou]", "Monty Python") \to "Mo", "ho"
re.sub("[^a-z-]+","","Monty Python") \to "MontyPython"
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Syntax of Python

Trafilatura for web scraping:

```
import trafilatura
from trafilatura.spider import focused_crawler
url_list=focused_crawler(start_url, max_seen_urls=10,
     max_known_urls=50)
```

Lists

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- last element: a[-1] "My hovercraft is full of eels" split()[-1] \rightarrow "eels"
- Same slicing as with strings: a[:2]





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- for key in d: d[key]
- for key in d: ipm[key] = d[key] / (CorpusSize / 1000000)



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- Use print more often. print(len(url_list)) for url in url_list: print(f"We are processing: {url}")
- Note the possibility to include variables into strings: print("We are processing: {url}")
- assert stops execution if something is not right assert len(url_list)>0, "Empty url list"



Al frameworks

 Various AI models can help you with writing code: Ask ChatGPT, Claude, Copilot, Google Colab etc to: Write a function which gets an HTML file as its parameter and used the Trafilatura library to extract its text content.

- Use the right prompts: be as specific as possible
- Understanding their output and your ability to modify it
- Be inquisitive and ask AI models why a specific line behaves in this way
- Be liberal with your own commentaries: literate programming



