

Administrivia

Project 1 is due 4/15 by 11:59PM

Minor project errata: **lookup_env** should be **fetch_env**. Please use the latter, that is the one we will be testing

We will hold office hours during sections this week (excluding A6 and A4 will be held in CDS 907).

Variables: Binding and Scoping

Principles of Programming Languages
Lecture 20

Objectives

Discuss the semantics of **variable binding**.

Try to understand **scope**, particularly **lexical** vs. **dynamic** scoping.

Keywords

environment

scope

mutability

assignment

dynamic scope

lexical scope

let-bindings

binding-defined scope

block-defined scope

Two Main Concerns about Variables

Are variables **mutable**? Can we change their value? Are there restrictions when we can change a value?

How are variables **scoped**? Dynamically or lexically? Does a binding define its own scope?

Mutability

Mutability (High Level)

```
let x =  
  let y = 2 in  
  let y = 3 in  
  y
```

OCaml (*y* is *shadowed*)

```
y = 2  
y = 3  
x = y
```

Python (*y* is *reassigned*)

Mutability (High Level)

```
let x =  
  let y = 2 in  
  let y = 3 in  
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OCaml (*y is shadowed*)

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y = 2  
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Python (*y is reassigned*)

A variable is **mutable** if we are allowed to change its value after it has been declared.

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We think of variables as

» **names** when they are immutable

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Python (*y is reassigned*)

A variable is **mutable** if we are allowed to change its value after it has been declared.

We think of variables as

- » **names** when they are immutable
- » **(abstract) memory locations** when they are mutable

Examples of Immutable Variables

```
func g() -> Int {  
    let x = 100  
    // let x = 200  
    return x  
}
```

```
var y = g()
```

Constants in Swift

```
let y =  
    (* let x = 100 in *)  
    let x = 200 in  
    x
```

Let-Bindings in OCaml

Examples of Immutable Variables

```
func g() -> Int {  
    let x = 100  
    // let x = 200  
    return x  
}  
  
var y = g()
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let y =  
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Let-Bindings in OCaml

We can think of constants in Swift or OCaml as variables that we **cannot reassign**.

Examples of Immutable Variables

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func g() -> Int {  
    let x = 100  
    // let x = 200  
    return x  
}  
  
var y = g()
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let y =  
    (* let x = 100 in *)  
    let x = 200 in  
    x
```

Let-Bindings in OCaml

We can think of constants in Swift or OCaml as variables that we **cannot reassign**.

Note. In each case we *technically* can create the new binding, but it would shadow the original, and the static analyzer would complain.

Examples of Mutable Variables

```
def f():  
    y = 0  
    y += 1  
    return y  
  
x = f()
```

Variables in Python

```
let x =  
    let y = ref 0 in  
    y := !y + 1; !y
```

References in OCaml

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def f():  
    y = 0  
    y += 1  
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References in OCaml

We think of variables in Python as references to an abstract memory space. We can make these references in OCaml too.

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In Python **fetching** and **updating** are **implicit** in the syntax.

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References in OCaml

We think of variables in Python as references to an abstract memory space. We can make these references in OCaml too.

In Python **fetching** and **updating** are **implicit** in the syntax.

In OCaml, fetching (!) and updating (:=) are **explicit**.

Toy Stack-Oriented Language

<prog>	::=	{	<com>	;	}
<val>	::=	<num>			
<com>	::=	<ident>	=	<val>	<ident>
<ident>	::=	w		x	y z
<num>	::=	0		1	2 3 4 5 6

Example Program:

```
x = 1;  
y = 2;  
x = 3;  
x;  
y;
```

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Example Program:

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This is a simple language with assignment statements and a push operation for identifiers.

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This is a simple language with assignment statements and a push operation for identifiers.

We will take a *configuration* to be:

environment
(S, E, P) or ERROR
stack program

Operational Semantics

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$$\frac{}{(S, E, x = n ; P) \longrightarrow (S, \text{update}(E, x, n), P)} \text{ (assign)}$$

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Question. What should the stack be after evaluating the program

$x = 1; y = 2; x = 3; x; y;$

Questions

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What is an environment?

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How should updating work if our variables are immutable?

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How should it work if they are mutable?

Questions

What is an environment?

How should updating work if our variables are immutable?

How should it work if they are mutable?

Does it matter for this toy-language?

Environments

($x \mapsto v$, $y \mapsto w$, $z \mapsto n$)

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An environment is a collection of **bindings**.

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binding

variable value

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In the project we use an **association list**:

Environments

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binding

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An environment is a collection of **bindings**.

The exact way you implement an environment depends on the situation.

In the project we use an **association list**:

(**ident** * **value**) **list**

Immutable Fetches and Updates

```
update (x ↦ 1 , z ↦ 2) z 3  
= (z ↦ 3, x ↦ 1 , z ↦ 2)
```

```
fetch (z ↦ 3, x ↦ 1 , z ↦ 2) z  
= Some 3
```

```
fetch (z ↦ 3, x ↦ 1 , z ↦ 2) w  
= None
```

Immutable Fetches and Updates

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Immutable updates should **shadow** existing bindings

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Immutable updates should **shadow** existing bindings

One way to do this is to prepend new bindings

Again, this is not the only way!

Mutable Fetches and Updates

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Mutable Fetches and Updates

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Mutable updates should **change existing bindings** in the environment

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Mutable updates should **change existing bindings** in the environment

In this case, we might think of the environment as a **map** (i.e., dictionary)

Understanding Check

Evaluate the program

x = 1; y = 2; x = 3; x; y;

with mutable and immutable updates. How does the environment differ.

Does the value of the stack differ in each case?

Scope

The Takeaway

Without restricting **when and how** bindings are accessed, it doesn't matter whether variables are mutable or immutable.

For it to matter, we have to restrict the *scope* of the binding.

Scope

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- » the scope of a binding
- » the scope of a function
- » scopes in general (i.e., global scope)
- » "this variable is not in scope..."
- » this function is not in the scope of this variable..."

Scoping Rules

The **scope** of a binding is **where** or **when** a binding can be accessed.

Scoping rules describe how the scope of bindings works in a program.

There are two standard paradigms:

- » dynamic scoping
- » lexical scoping (static scoping)

Dynamic Scoping

Dynamic Scoping

```
f() { x=0; g; }  
g() { y=$x; }  
x=1; f; echo $y;
```

(Bash)

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Dynamic scoping refers to the idea that variables bindings are determined at run time based on the **computational context**.

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In its simplest form, dynamic scoping uses a **global environment** and *any* binding may be referred to *anywhere* in the program.

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This is a **temporal view**, i.e., was there a computation done beforehand which affected the value of a variable?

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In its simplest form, dynamic scoping uses a **global environment** and *any* binding may be referred to *anywhere* in the program.

This is a **temporal view**, i.e., was there a computation done beforehand which affected the value of a variable?

(It is uncommon in modern programming languages, but it is typically easier to implement)

Example: Bash

```
f() { x=0; g; }  
g() { y=$x; }  
x=1; f; echo $y;
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What does this program print?

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What does this program print?

(echo is like print)

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What does this program print?

(echo is like print)

Answer: 0

Example: Project 1

```
def F 0 |> X #G ;  
def G X |> Y ;  
1 |> X #F Y .
```

```
f() { x=0; g; }  
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Example: Project 1

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What do these programs print?

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f() { x=0; g; }  
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```

What do these programs print?

Answer: Both 0

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<val>	::=	<num>		{ <prog> }	
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Example Program:

```
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  x;
};
f;
x;
```

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Example Program:

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```

This is a simple language with assignment statements and a push operation for identifiers **and subroutines**.

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This is a simple language with assignment statements and a push operation for identifiers **and subroutines**.

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This is a simple language with assignment statements and a push operation for identifiers **and subroutines**.

We will take a *configuration* to be:

environment
(S, E, P) or ERROR
stack program

Operational Semantics

$$\frac{}{(S, E, x = n ; P) \longrightarrow (S, \text{update}(E, x, n), P)} \text{ (assign)}$$
$$\frac{\text{fetch}(E, x) = n \quad n \text{ is a number}}{(S, E, x ; P) \longrightarrow (n :: S, E, P)} \text{ (fetchPush)}$$
$$\frac{\text{fetch}(E, f) = Q \quad Q \text{ is a program}}{(S, E, f ; P) \longrightarrow (S, E, Q P)} \text{ (fetchCall)}$$
$$\frac{\text{fetch}(E, x) \text{ is None}}{(S, E, x ; P) \longrightarrow \text{ERROR}} \text{ (fetchErr)}$$

Example: Toy Language

```
f = { x = 0; g; };  
g = { x; };  
x = 1; f;
```

Example: Toy Language

```
f = { x = 0; g; };  
g = { x; };  
x = 1; f;
```

([], [], f = { x = 0; g; }; g = { x; }; x = 1; f;) \longrightarrow

Example: Toy Language

<pre>f = { x = 0; g; }; g = { x; }; x = 1; f;</pre>

$([], \quad [], \quad f = \{ x = 0; g; \}; g = \{ x; \}; x = 1; f;) \longrightarrow$

$([], \quad [("f" \mapsto x = 0; g;)], \quad g = \{ x; \}; x = 1; f;) \longrightarrow$

Example: Toy Language

$\begin{aligned} f &= \{ x = 0; g; \}; \\ g &= \{ x; \}; \\ x &= 1; f; \end{aligned}$

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Example: Toy Language

$f = \{ x = 0; g; \};$ $g = \{ x; \};$ $x = 1; f;$
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$([], [("g" \mapsto x;) ("f" \mapsto x = 0; g;)], x = 1; f;) \longrightarrow$

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Lexical Scoping

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x = 0
def f():
    x = 1
    return(x)
assert(f() == 1)
assert(x == 0)
```

(Python)

```
let x = 0
let y = let x = 1 in x

let _ = assert(y = 1)
let _ = assert(x = 0)
```

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(This is far more common in modern programming languages)

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Lexical scoping allows us to **restrict** the scope of a binding. This tends to happen in two ways:

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- » The binding defines its own scope (e.g. let-bindings)

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(OCaml)

Lexical scoping allows us to **restrict** the scope of a binding. This tends to happen in two ways:

- » The binding defines its own scope (e.g. let-bindings)
- » A subroutine or code block defines a scope (e.g. python function)

Toy Stack-Oriented Language

<prog>	::=	{	<com>	;	}
<val>	::=	<num>		{ <prog> }	
<com>	::=	<ident>	=	<val>	<ident>
<ident>	::=	w		x	y z
<num>	::=	0		1	2 3 4 5 6

Example Program:

```
x = 1;  
f = {  
    x = 2;  
    x;  
};  
f;  
x;
```

This is a simple language with assignment statements and a push operation for identifiers **and subroutines**.

We will take a *configuration* to be:

(S, E, P) or **ERROR**

Toy Stack-Oriented Language

<prog>	::=	{	<com>	;	}
<val>	::=	<num>		{ <prog> }	
<com>	::=	<ident>	=	<val>	<ident>
<ident>	::=	w		x	y z
<num>	::=	0		1	2 3 4 5 6

Example Program:

```
x = 1;
f = {
  x = 2;
  x;
};
f;
x;
```

This is a simple language with assignment statements and a push operation for identifiers **and subroutines**.

We will take a *configuration* to be:

environment
(S, E, P) or ERROR
stack program

Example

```
x = 1;  
f = { x; }  
x = 2;  
f ;
```

What should be at the top of the stack after evaluation?

Dynamic scoping: 2

Lexical Scoping: 1? 2? Depends. Is x mutable? What is the scope of x after assignment?

(we'll come back to this next week)

An Overview

Dynamically scoped:

Bash variables

Lexically scoped, immutable, binding defined:

OCaml let-bindings

Lexically scoped, mutable, block defined:

Local variables in Python functions

Lexically scoped, mutable, binding defined:

OCaml references

demo

(epilogue: OCaml References)