

## **Class 03: The Evolution of Some Key Language Features**

**Held:** Friday, January 26, 2007

**Summary:** Today we consider a variety of issues pertaining to Ryder et al.'s paper. Some issues are more general (e.g., how do you read a paper), while others bear on the specific relationships the group identifies between software engineering and programming languages.

### **Related Pages:**

- EBoard.
- Reading: Barbara Ryder et al. - The Impact of Software Engineering Research on Modern Programming Languages and Ed Nather - The Story of Mel, a Real Programmer.

### **Assignments**

- Homework 2: Permutations.

### **Notes:**

- There was some confusion about the readings. Note that I do my best to distribute readings two classes in advance. Hence, the readings you get today you should read for next Wednesday.

### **Overview:**

- The Story of Mel, a Real Programmer.
- Reading Ryder et al.
- Major Characteristics.
- Relating to Past Papers.

## **The Story of Mel, a Real Programmer**

- What were the key points?
- Why might this suggest that programming is an art?

## **Reading Ryder et al.**

- What is the thesis?
- What evidence is used to support that thesis?
- Is the evidence sufficient?
- How was that evidence gathered?
- What biases are there in the way the thesis is stated or argued?
- Are there any parts of the paper that undermine the thesis?

## **Major Characteristics**

- What are some major characteristics of programming languages that Ryder describes?
- How long did the evolution of those characteristics from theory into regular practice take?
- Were there particular characteristics you were surprised to see?

## **Relating to Past Papers**

- Are there developments that Ryder describes that Sammet predicted?
- What other similarities and differences do you see when comparing the two papers?