Programming language = english

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ExplainedELI5: Why are programming languages in english?

enviado hace 2 años por josueespinosa

I recently noticed that the languages i'm familiar with, HTML, jQuery, Objective-C, SQL, are all english based. For statements, while loops, etc, all use english terms although people from all over the world use these languages. Why does it seem a majority of programming languages are in english?

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[–][deleted] 53 puntos hace 2 años

Historical reasons mainly. The computer industry grew out of technology developed on the Allied side of World War II; mainly in the US and a bit in the UK. Obviously, the engineers working on programming languages based them on the language they already spoke; English.

Later on, even as the field diversified, there was a momentum. Most programmers had learned some level of English to

deal with existing programming languages so they used it when developing new ones. Using a different spoken language risked cutting their programming language off from other programmers.

There has actually been some movement to develop non-English based languages, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-English-based_programming_languages. there is also the possibility of adapting existing languages; for instance, I imagine you could adapt C for non-English speakers by using #defines to translate the keywords.

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[–]dsampson92 48 puntos hace 2 años

The lion's share of tech research, development, and business has been conducted in the United States, at least until relatively recently. Furthermore English has become the defacto official language of science and technology. Thus even people who don't speak English natively often write in English in tech circles because it will be universally understood.

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[–]LittleOmid 138 puntos hace 2 años

Same reason that words in world of music are often in Italian. It has to do with where it first originated.

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[–]_swifty_ 5 puntos hace 2 años

I have seen people write Java in both Dutch and Portuguese ...

It was very annoying as an SME (Subject Matter Expert) to come in and try to fix their problems ...

When method names and variable names are in a foreign language it's annoying, almost as annoying if very poorly chosen names like String a, b, c; type of stuff

There is a Portuguese dialect of Java where even the keywords are in Portuguese.

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[–]majinspy 9 puntos hace 2 años

For the same reason England is the only country without a national abbreviation on their stamps: they invented the mail system.

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[–]graendallstud 1 punto hace 2 años

There are several reasons.... and it is totally false.
The first, reason: the most important one is that since the end of WWI, english have been the most used international language in North America, West Europe and Japan; as most (cf reason #2) language building have been done since the 40s, english was favored, and that most of the practical development have been done in the US.

The second reason is that "informatics language" is just a way to means "algorithmic language that my advanced adding machine can understand", which means the first informatics languages predates the first computer from more than a century: the work of Babbage and Lovelace for example, were in English; the industrial sewing machines, which appeared in England in the 18th century were a sort of computers, which accepted instructions in the form of perfored cards and had a carpet-screen (i.e. the result of the algorithm/data on the perfored cards was posted, not on a screen, but on/in/as a carpet).

The third reason is that english provides "easy" words : I learned a french-based Basic version as my first programming language and the "Jusqu'a" clause, I think, would be an horror for non-french speaker or even for them...

Now why the assertion is false: not all languages are in english. Those used the most, in their most used version, are, that's perfectly true. Although there are many, many languages not based upon english, most of them are not used at all, and never were. But some were and still are: some languages were created based over russian in the Soviet Union (and still are used because rebuilding a whole system is just hard) for example; the only recent non-english based language I know is Wlangage (which exists in and can even mix french, english and chineese... as if the mixing part was really necessary but still...), and it can be quite weird (singular and plural are important for example. or verbs).

And there are even languages which are not based upon any language. The most important is machine code, which is used thanks to an english based assembly language but is basically the core of any and all languages (remember: a language is just the way one give orders to a very dumb and very efficient adding machine, which understand only 0s and 1s (and in the case of Bender, at least a 2).

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[–]thh11 4 puntos hace 2 años

This is mainly due to the fact that most popular programming languages were developed in English speaking countries, or to appeal to greater masses. English is very common as both a primary and secondary language.

There is a list of non-English programming languages here - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-English-based_programming_languages#Based_on_non-English_languages

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[–]plasticironic 4 puntos hace 2 años

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-English-based_programming_languages

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[–]2059FF 1 punto hace 2 años

In the 1970s, the French ministry of education oversaw the design and distribution (to french lycées -- high schools) of a language called LSE (Langage symbolique d'enseignement -- Symbolic Language for Teaching) which was basically a dialect of Basic with French keywords. It quickly died in the 1980s, and became jokingly referred to as Langage Sans Espoir -- Language Without Hope.

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[–]sky111 1 punto hace 2 años*

Other languages have weird symbols like ö, ü, ?, ?, not to mention chinese symbols. It would be very hard to type if you are not from that country. And english language is default, people from most countries don't have trouble typing it. Programming languages in other languages exist though, for example this language:

http://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/??????????_????_???????????????_1?:???????????

It's very widely used in that country. You can find example program in that language at the bottom of the mentioned wikipedia page. Longer code example is available on this page:

http://www.tgslabs.com/ru/downloads/db/code1C/

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[–]kobescoresagain 1 punto hace 2 años

English is the lingua Franca of the world. Almost everything is in English or available in English. Give it another 1000 years and we will probably be done to even fewer languages as we globalize.

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[–]KingHenryXVI 1 punto hace 2 años

I'm not sure that all are; I'm no techie but ai saw a guy on the train writing code it what looked like Russian or some Cyrillic language. I have no idea qhat he was doing, though.

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[–]Thugg_Nasty 1 punto hace 2 años

It isn't necessary to know English in order to program. For the most part, the only things that are identifiably english are control structures (While,If,For) which is only about 5 words? I've read about non English programmers and apparently the English vocabulary needed is so minimal that it isn't an obstacle for non speakers.

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[–]sirlanceb 0 puntos hace 2 años

The imperialism of the US and the Uk before them. The language became widespread due to this.

And during the 20-40s, many scientists came to the US due to the problems that existed in Europe. And thus, most Computer Science/Programming advancements were borne from the US. Doesn't mean there weren't other great men outside of US. But the efforts and imperialism nature led to the US having a pretty big control on the direction of computer technology.

And as time went on, other countries adapted to learn English because it benefited them. Gave them a chance to be recognized more.

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[–]coolplate 1 punto hace 2 años

It is the language of global business.

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[–]satismo -2 puntos hace 2 años

because high level languages were invented in the states. i would not even want to begin to imagine what writing code would be like if it was in japanese. like the matrix.

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[–]ToxinFoxen 0 puntos hace 2 años

Because English is the world's natural universal language. Also the scientific and IT industry dominance of England and its' settler countries.

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[–][eliminado] hace 2 años

[–]Mason11987[M] 1 punto hace 2 años

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[–]beer_music 0 puntos hace 2 años

Because of WWII...Also my Grandpa's balls...

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[–]SackLunch94 -15 puntos hace 2 años

Just think about it for say.. a few seconds, and you'll answer your own question.

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[–]kauneus -5 puntos hace 2 años

They may have english loan words but they're not reeeeallly in english.

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[–][deleted] -11 puntos hace 2 años

racism and imperialism. without the latter, we'd be writing code in bantu

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[–][eliminado] hace 2 años

[–]Mason11987[M] 2 puntos hace 2 años

Top-level comments are for explanations or related questions only. No low effort "explanations", single sentence replies, anecdotes, or jokes in top-level comments.

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