CS61B Lecture #9: Interfaces and Abstract Classes

Announcements

• Programming Contest: Sat., 29 September at 10:00 AM.
Abstract Methods and Classes

- **Instance method can be abstract:** No body given; must be supplied in subtypes.

- **One good use is in specifying a pure interface to a family of types:**

  ```java
  /** A drawable object. */
  public abstract class Drawable { // "abstract" = "can’t say new Drawable"
      /** Expand THIS by a factor of SIZE */
      public abstract void scale (double size);
      /** Draw THIS on the standard output. */
      public abstract void draw ();
  }
  ``

  Now a Drawable is something that has at least the operations scale and draw on it. Can’t create a Drawable because it’s abstract—in particular, it has two methods without any implementation.

- **BUT, we can write methods that operate on Drawables:**

  ```java
  void drawAll (Drawable[] thingsToDraw) {
      for (Drawable thing : thingsToDraw)
          thing.draw ();
  }
  ``

- **But draw has no implementation! How can this work?**
Concrete Subclasses

- Can define kinds of Drawables that are non-abstract. To do so, must supply implementations for all methods:

  public class Rectangle extends Drawable {
    public Rectangle (double w, double h) { this.w = w; this.h = h; }
    public void scale (double size) { w *= size; h *= size; }
    public void draw () { draw a \( w \times h \) rectangle }
    private double w,h;
  }

  Any Circle or Rectangle is a Drawable.

  public class Circle extends Drawable {
    public Circle (double rad) { this.rad = rad; }
    public void scale (double size) { rad *= size; }
    public void draw () { draw a circle with radius rad }
    double rad;
  }

- So, writing

  Drawable[] things = { new Rectangle (3, 4), new Circle (2) };
  drawAll (things);

  draws a \( 3 \times 4 \) rectangle and a circle with radius 2.
Interfaces

• In generic use, an interface is a “point where interaction occurs between two systems, processes, subjects, etc.” (Concise Oxford Dictionary).

• In programming, often use the term to mean a description of this generic interaction, specifically, a description of the functions or variables by which two things interact.

• Java uses the term to refer to a slight variant of an abstract class that contains only abstract methods (and static constants).

• Idea is to treat Java interfaces as the public specifications of data types, and classes as their implementations:

```java
public interface Drawable {
    void scale (double size); // Automatically public abstract.
    void draw ();
}

public class Rectangle implements Drawable { ... }
```

• Interfaces are automatically abstract: can’t say new Drawable(); can say new Rectangle(...).
Multiple Inheritance

- *Can extend one class, but implement any number of interfaces.*

- **Contrived Example:**

  ```java
  interface Readable {
    Object get();
  }
  interface Writable {
    void put(Object x);
  }
  
  class Source implements Readable {
    public Object get() { ... }
  }
  class Sink implements Writable {
    public void put(Object x) { ... }
  }
  
  class Variable implements Readable, Writable {
    public Object get() { ... }
    public void put(Object x) { ... }
  }
  
  // The first argument of copy can be a Source or a Variable. The second can be a Sink or a Variable.
  ```

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Review: Higher-Order Functions

- In Scheme, you had higher-order functions like this (adapted from SICP)

```scheme
(define (map proc items)
  (if (null? items)
      nil
      (cons (proc (car items)) (map proc (cdr items)))))
```

and could write

```
(map abs (list -10 2 -11 17))
```

```latex
(10 2 11 17)
```

```
(map (lambda (x) (* x x)) (list 1 2 3 4))
```

```latex
(1 4 9 16)
```

- Java does not have these directly, but can use abstract classes or interfaces and subtyping to get the same effect (with more writing)
Map in Java

/** Function with one integer argument */

public interface IntUnaryFunction {
    int apply (int x);
}

intList map (IntUnaryFunction proc, intList items) {
    if (items == null) {
        return null;
    } else {
        IntList result = new IntList();
        result.add(proc.apply(items.head),
                   map(proc, items.tail));
        return result;
    }
}

• It's the use of this function that's clumsy. First, define class for
  absolute value function; then create an instance:

    class Abs implements IntUnaryFunction {
        public int apply (int x) { return Math.abs (x); }
    }

    map (new Abs (), some list);

• Or, we can write a lambda expression (sort of):

    map (new IntUnaryFunction () {
        public int apply (int x) { return x*x; }
    }, some list);
Review: A Puzzle

class A {
    void f () { System.out.println ("A.f"); }
    void g () { f (); /* or this.f() */ }
    //static void g (A y) { y.f(); }
}

class B extends A {
    void f () { System.out.println ("B.f"); }
    //static void g (A y) { y.f(); }
}

class C {
    static void main (String[] args) {
        B aB = new B ();
        h (aB);
    }

    static void h (A x) { x.g(); }
    //static void h (A x) { A.g(x); } // x.g(x) also legal here
}

1. What is printed?
2. What if we made g static?
3. What if we made f static?
4. What if f were not defined in A?

Choices:

a. A.f
b. B.f
c. Some kind of error
class A {
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2. What if we made $g$ static?  a. A.f
3. What if we made $f$ static?  b. B.f
4. What if $f$ were not defined in $A$?  c. Some kind of error
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Choices:

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Answer to Puzzle

1. Executing java C prints ___, because
   1. C.main calls h and passes it aB, whose dynamic type is B.
   2. h calls x.g(). Since g is inherited by B, we execute the code for g in class A.
   3. g calls this.f(). Now this contains the value of h’s argument, whose dynamic type is B. Therefore, we execute the definition of f that is in B.
   4. In calls to f, in other words, static type is ignored in figuring out what method to call.

2. If g were static, we see ___; selection of f still depends on dynamic type of this.

3. If f were static, would print ___ because then selection of f would depend on static type of this, which is A.

4. If f were not defined in A, we’d get ______________.
Answer to Puzzle

1. Executing `java C` prints `B.f`, because
   1. `C.main` calls `h` and passes it a `B`, whose dynamic type is `B`.
   2. `h` calls `x.g()`. Since `g` is inherited by `B`, we execute the code for `g` in class `A`.
   3. `g` calls `this.f()`. Now `this` contains the value of `h`’s argument, whose dynamic type is `B`. Therefore, we execute the definition of `f` that is in `B`.
   4. In calls to `f`, in other words, static type is ignored in figuring out what method to call.

2. If `g` were static, we see `B.f`; selection of `f` still depends on dynamic type of `this`.

3. If `f` were static, would print `A.f` because then selection of `f` would depend on static type of `this`, which is `A`.

4. If `f` were not defined in `A`, we’d get a compile-time error.
Example: Designing a Class

Problem: Want a class that represents histograms, like this one:

Analysis: What do we need from it? At least:

- Specify buckets and limits.
- Accumulate counts of values.
- Retrieve counts of values.
- Retrieve numbers of buckets and other initial parameters.
Specification Seen by Clients

- The clients of a module (class, program, etc.) are the programs or methods that use that module’s exported definitions.
- In Java, intention is that exported definitions are designated public.
- Clients are intended to rely on specifications, not code.
- Syntactic specification: method and constructor headers—syntax needed to use.
- Semantic specification: what they do. No formal notation, so use comments.
  - Semantic specification is a contract.
  - Conditions client must satisfy (preconditions, marked “Pre:” in examples below).
  - Promised results (postconditions).
  - Design these to be all the client needs!
  - Exceptions communicate errors, specifically failure to meet pre-conditions.
Histogram Specification and Use

/** A histogram of floating-point values */
public interface Histogram {
    /** The number of buckets in THIS. */
    int size ();

    /** Lower bound of bucket #K. Pre: 0<=K<size(). */
    double low (int k);

    /** # of values in bucket #K. Pre: 0<=K<size(). */
    int count (int k);

    /** Add VAL to the histogram. */
    void add (double val);
}

Sample output:

>= 0.00 | 10
>= 10.25 | 80
>= 20.50 | 120
>= 30.75 | 50

void fillHistogram (Histogram H,
    Scanner in)
{
    while (in.hasNextDouble ())
        H.add (in.nextDouble ());
}

void printHistogram (Histogram H) {
    for (int i = 0; i < H.size (); i += 1)
        System.out.printf
            (">=%5.2f | %4d%n",
             H.low (i), H.count (i));
}
public class FixedHistogram implements Histogram {
    private double low, high; /* From constructor*/
    private int[] count; /* Value counts */

    /** A new histogram with SIZE buckets recording values >= LOW and < HIGH. */
    public FixedHistogram (int size, double low, double high)
    {
        if (low >= high || size <= 0) throw new IllegalArgumentException ();
        this.low = low; this.high = high;
        this.count = new int[size];
    }

    public int size () { return count.length; }
    public double low (int k) { return low + k * (high-low)/count.length; }
    public int count (int k) { return count[k]; }

    public void add (double val) {
        int k = (int) ((val-low)/(high-low) * count.length);
        if (k >= 0 && k < count.length) count[k] += 1;
    }
}
Let's Make a Tiny Change

Don't require \textit{a priori} bounds:

class FlexHistogram implements Histogram {
    /** A new histogram with SIZE buckets. */
    public FlexHistogram (int size) {
        ?
    }
    // What needs to change?
}

• How would you do this? Profoundly changes implementation.
• But \textit{clients} (like \texttt{printHistogram} and \texttt{fillHistogram}) still work with no changes.
• Illustrates the power of \textit{separation of concerns}.
Implementing the Tiny Change

- Pointless to pre-allocate the count array.
- Don’t know bounds, so must save arguments to add.
- Then recompute count array “lazily” when count(⋯) called.
- Invalidate count array whenever histogram changes.

```java
class FlexHistogram implements Histogram {
    private List<Double> values = ...; // Java library type (later)
    int size;
    private int[] count;

    public FlexHistogram (int size) { this.size = size; this.count = null; }

    public void add (double x) { count = null; values.add (x); }

    public int count (int k) {
        if (count == null) { compute count from values here. }
        return count[k];
    }
}
```
Advantages of Procedural Interface over Visible Fields

By using public method for count instead of making the array count visible, the “tiny change” is transparent to clients:

- If client had to write myHist.count[k], would mean

  “The number of items currently in the $k^{th}$ bucket of histogram myHist (and by the way, there is an array called count in myHist that always holds the up-to-date count).”

- Parenthetical comment useless to the client.

- But if count array had been visible, after “tiny change,” every use of count in client program would have to change.

- So using a method for the public count decreases what client has to know, and (therefore) has to change.