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software engineering dependability

Software Quality Assurance
Software Measurement

- Motivation
- Measure types
- Requirements
- Evaluation and calibration of measures
- Measure scales
- Data Acquisition for Measuring
- Important measures
- Case study

- When you can measure what you are speaking about, and express it in numbers, you know something about it; but when you cannot measure it, when you cannot express it in numbers, your knowledge is of a meager and unsatisfactory kind (Lord Kelvin, Popular Lectures and Addresses, 1889)
- Remark
Generally, the terms measure and metrics are used as synonyms. This is not quite correct. For this reason the correct term "measure" is used here

- Software is an abstract, immaterial product
- Control of the quality, the complexity, the productivity, the development process, the costs and further important properties is difficult
- Idea: Definition of a quantified "sensor" which allows to draw conclusions w.r.t. interesting properties
- Measures quantify certain aspects of software. Measures can only indirectly point to potential sources of problems. A significant deviation of a measure from its usual value might be an indicator for a problem, but this is not guaranteed

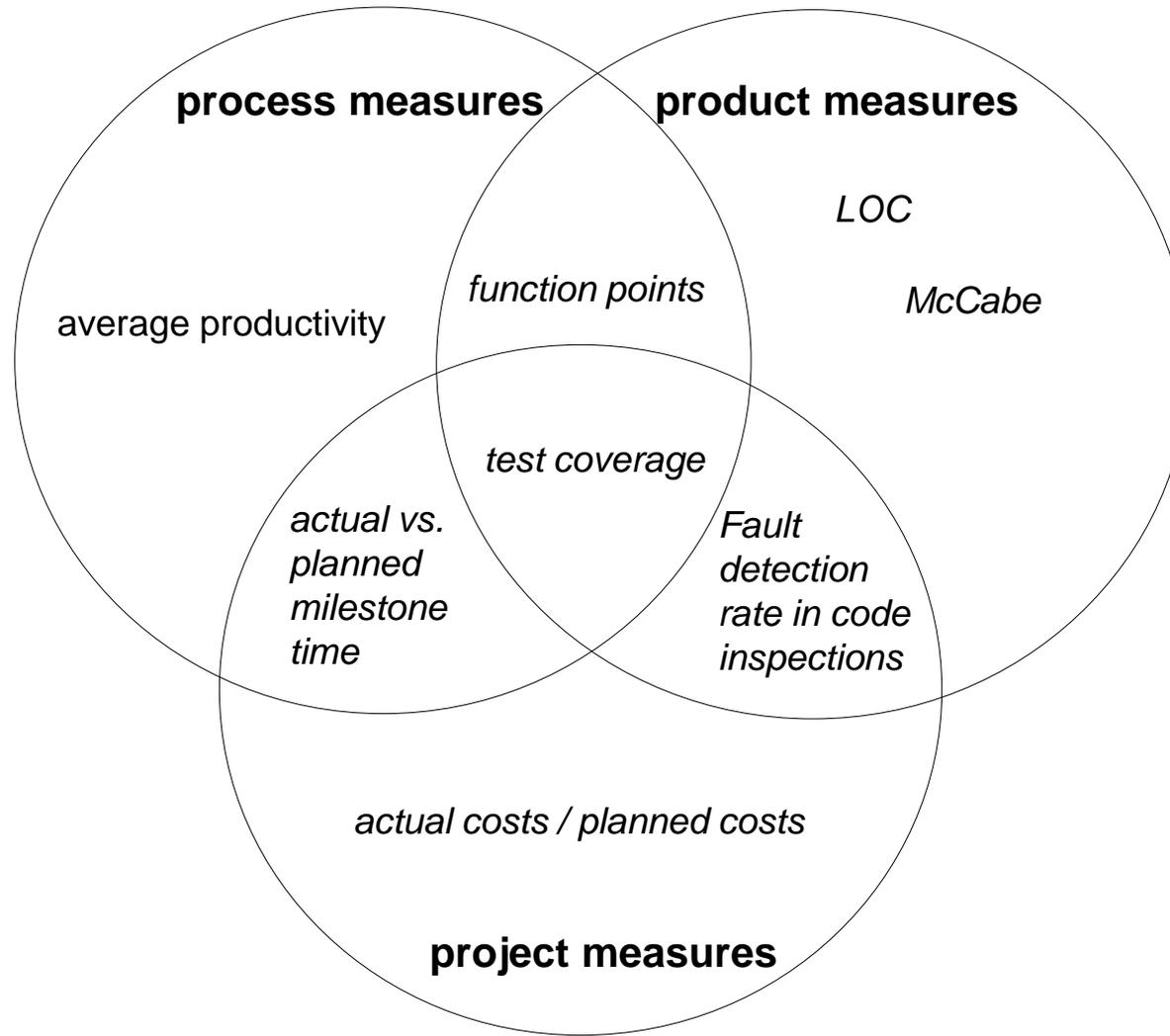
Motivation

Application of Measures

- Control of software quality
- Control of software complexity
- Control of the software development process
- Costs and time prediction
- Costs and time tracing
- Definition of standards
- Early problem identification
- Comparison and evaluation of products
- Feedback concerning the introduction of new methods, techniques, and tools

Motivation

Application of Measures



- **Product Measures**
 - Information about properties of a product (complexity, size, ...).
 - Identification of critical product parts
 - Classification and comparison of products
- **Process Measures**
 - Information about properties of the software development process (productivity, failure costs, ...)
 - Control of the proper execution of process steps.
- **Project Measures**
 - Planning and tracking of a project

- Measures can involve several areas
 - Example: Function Point
 - Goal: Estimation of the development costs of a product on the basis of its functionality at an early stage, e.g. based on the product requirements
 - Measures the product size (function points)
 - Uses a curve or table that reflects the maturity of the development process in order to convert function points (product size) into man-months (development effort)
 - Function point method involves product and process measures

- **Simplicity**
 - Is the result so simple that it can be interpreted easily?
- **Suitability**
 - Does the measure show an appropriate correlation to the desired property?
- **Robustness**
 - Is the value of the measure stable with regard to minor changes of the measured software?
- **Timeliness**
 - Is the measure available early enough?
- **Processability**
 - Is it possible to process the measures (e.g. statistically → scale type)?
- **Reproducibility**
 - The value of a measure should have an identical value for a particular product independently of the mode of generation

- Examples

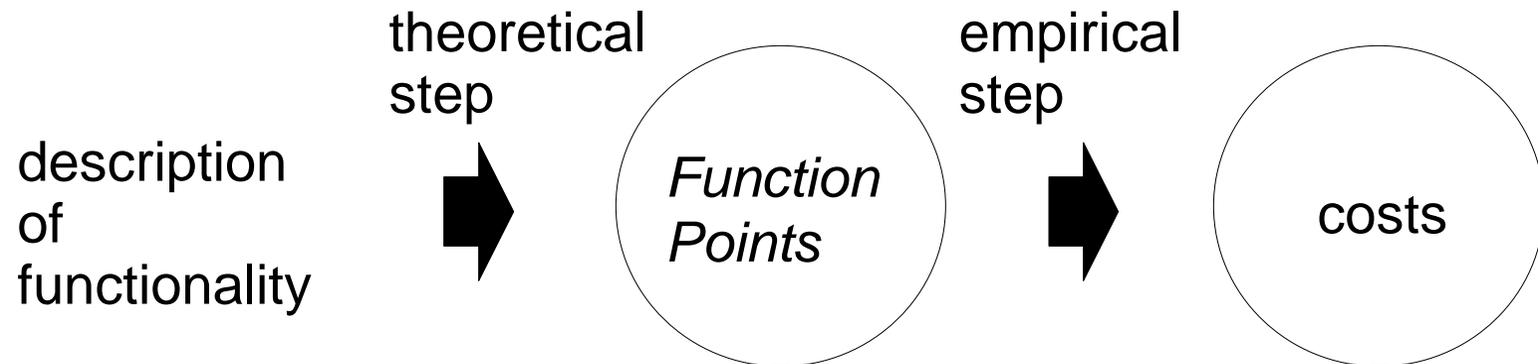
- McCabe's cyclomatic number: $e-n+2$

e = number of edges of a CFG; n = number of nodes of a CFG; CFG = control flow graph

- Completely reproducible
- Lines of Code (LOC)
Count blank lines? Count comment lines?
 - Completely reproducible, if specified appropriately
- Function Points: manual evaluation of complexities required
 - Not completely reproducible
- Understandability
 - Not reproducible

- Suggesting lower or upper limits of measures is difficult
- Which values are to be regarded as "normal" might be determined based on expertise
- A deviation from the usual value might or might not be an indication of a problem

- The assignment between measures and the relevant properties requires a calibration which has to be adapted to changed situations if necessary
- Empirical and theoretical models can be distinguished
- Examples
 - Theoretical model for costs (e.g., Halstead measures):
 $E = \dots \text{size}^2 \dots$
The quadratic relation between costs and size was identified on the basis of theoretical considerations
 - Empirical model for costs: $E = \dots \text{size}^{1,347} \dots$
The exponent 1,347 was determined on the basis of statistical data evaluation



- Not every operation applied to a specific measure makes sense:
- Examples
 - Measuring of length
 - Board a is one meter in length. Board b is two meter in length. Therefore, board b is twice as long as board a
 - This statement makes sense
 - Measuring of temperature
 - Today it is 20°C. Yesterday it was 10°C. Thus, today it is twice as warm as yesterday
 - This is wrong, the right answer is: Today the temperature is about 3,5 % higher than yesterday
 - Obviously there is a difference between the scale of the temperature in °C and the length in meters which leads to the fact that certain operations are not applicable to the temperature scale

- Nominal scale
 - Free description of certain properties with labels
 - Inventory numbers of books of a library (DV 302, PH 002, CH 056, ...)
 - Names of different requirements engineering methods (SA; SADT, OOA; IM, ...)
- Ordinal scale
 - Mapping of an ordered aspect of a property to an ordered number of measurements in such a way that the order is maintained
 - Mapping of the arrival of patients to the waiting numbers in a doctor's surgery
- Interval scale
 - A scale which is still valid if transformations $g(x) = ax + b$, with $a > 0$ are applied to it
 - Temperature scales in degree Celsius or Fahrenheit. If F is a temperature in the Fahrenheit-scale the temperature C in the Celsius-scale can be calculated as follows: $C = \frac{5}{9} (F - 32)$. The relations between temperatures are maintained

- Rational scale

- A scale where measurements can be correlated (statements like double, half, three times as much, ... make sense)
- Length in meters (it is twice as far from a to b as from c to d)
- Temperature in Kelvin

- Absolute scale

- A scale which is the only possibility to measure the issue
 - Counting
 - Probabilities

- Ordinal scales are characterized by the property that the relation of the properties of two objects retaining the relation is mapped to the measurements
- The empirical relation concerning the properties is mapped to a corresponding formal relation of the measurements
- Empirical relation: for the software modules a and b the binary relations $\bullet \geq$ (more complex or equally complex), $\bullet >$ (more complex) and $\bullet \approx$ (equally complex), which can be applied to the modules, are referred to as empirical relations
- The intuitive idea of complexity, as people would decide it, determines the empirical relation
- A is to be the set of all modules with $a, b \in A$. It is written
 - $a \bullet > b$; (a is more complex than b)
 - $a \bullet \approx b$; (a is as complex as b)
 - $a \bullet \geq b \Leftrightarrow a \bullet > b$ or $a \bullet \approx b$;

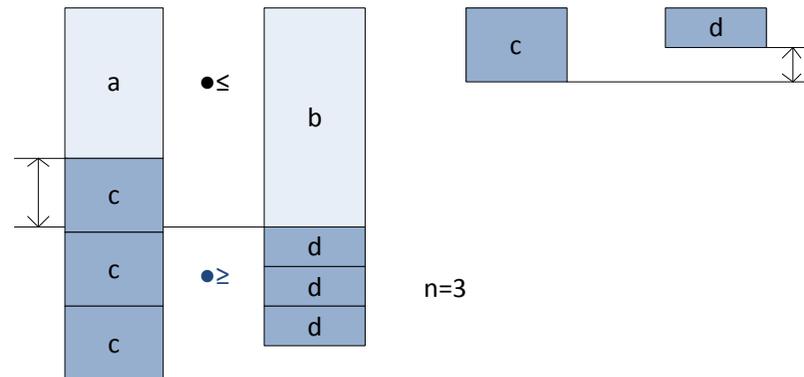
- A relation $\bullet \geq$ on a set A is called *order* if
 - a) $\forall x, y, z \in A: x \bullet \geq y \wedge y \bullet \geq z \Rightarrow x \bullet \geq z$ (transitivity)
 - b) $\forall x \in A, \exists y \in A: x \bullet \geq y$ or $y \bullet \geq x$ (comparability)
 - Example: the relation "is ancestor of" on the set of persons
- An order is called *quasi order* if
 - c) $\forall x \in A: x \bullet \geq x$ (reflexivity)
 - c implies b: every x is at least comparable to itself
 - Quasi orders can contain elements which cannot be ordered
 - Example: the identity "=" on every not empty set
- A *quasi order* is called *half order* if
 - d) $x \bullet \geq y \wedge y \bullet \geq x \Rightarrow x = y$ (anti-symmetry)
 - Half orders also can contain elements which cannot be ordered
 - Example: the relation „ \geq “ on the set of integers

- A half order is called *linear* if
 - e) $\forall x, y \in A: x \bullet \geq y$ or $y \bullet \geq x$ (connectivity, completeness)
 - Example: the relation " \geq " on the set of integers
- Orders which fulfill the axioms a, c (and thus also b) and e, but not necessarily d, are called *weak order*
- In the following the empirical relation $\bullet \geq$ is considered. It is demanded that it generates a weak order on the set of the modules A, fulfilling the following axioms
 - axiom 1: reflexivity: $a \bullet \geq a, \forall a \in A$
 - axiom 2: transitivity: $a \bullet \geq b, b \bullet \geq c \Rightarrow a \bullet \geq c, \forall a, b, c \in A$
(If the complexity of module a is greater equal the complexity of module b and the complexity of b is greater equal the complexity of c also the complexity of a is greater equal the complexity of c.)
 - axiom 3: connectivity (completeness): $a \bullet \geq b$ or $b \bullet \geq a, \forall a, b \in A$

- If the axioms 1 to 3 for the empirical relation $\bullet \geq$ concerning A are valid an ordinal scale exists
 - $((A, \bullet \geq), (\mathbb{R}, \geq), f)$, with $a \bullet \geq b \Leftrightarrow f(a) \geq f(b), \forall a, b \in A$
 - $(A, \bullet \geq)$ is the empirical relational system (modules and their empirical relation)
 - (\mathbb{R}, \geq) is the formal relational system (the numerical values of the measures and the corresponding formal relation \geq)
 - f is a measure

- A rational scale has to meet all criteria of an ordinal scale. The empirical and formal relational system has to be enhanced as follows
 - $((A, \bullet \geq, \circ), (\mathbb{R}, \geq, +), f)$,
 - with $a \bullet \geq b \Leftrightarrow f(a) \geq f(b)$, (ordinal scale)
 - and $f(a \circ b) = f(a) + f(b)$, (rational scale)
 - $\forall a, b \in A$
- \circ is a binary operation for the empirical relational system. $+$ is the corresponding binary operation for the formal relational system

- A measure $f: A \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ which meets the requirements of the rational scale mentioned above exists when
 - $(A, \bullet \geq)$ fulfills the axioms 1, 2, 3 (reflexivity, transitivity, connectivity)
 - axiom 4: $a \circ (b \circ c) \bullet \approx (a \circ b) \circ c, \forall a, b, c \in A$
(associativity)
 - axiom 5: $a \bullet \geq b \Leftrightarrow a \circ c \bullet \geq b \circ c \Leftrightarrow c \circ a \bullet \geq c \circ b, \forall a, b, c \in A$
(Monotony)
 - axiom 6: if $c \bullet > d$, it is valid: $\forall a, b \in A, \exists n \in \mathbb{N}, a \circ nc \bullet \geq b \circ nd$
(archimedic axiom)



- As the empirical relation $\bullet \geq$ is used in the definition of the scales it is required to determine it precisely
- Problem: a general definition is not possible, as the empirical relation reflects an intuitive idea of complexity
- But: It is possible to define the empirical relations with the aid of small modifications applied to an object to be measured, by considering whether these modifications lead to an increased, reduced or identical complexity
- Example: Lines of Code (LOC)
 - modification 1: add code line
 - modification 2: interchange code lines
 - modification 3: move code line

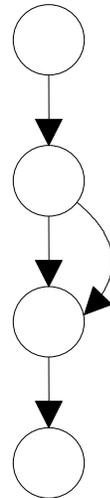
- Idea concerning the measure LOC: The size is to be measured. The modification 1 increases the complexity of the modified module b compared to a, while the modifications 2 and 3 generate an identical complexity
 - M1: $b \bullet > a \Rightarrow \text{LOC}(b) > \text{LOC}(a)$
 - M2: $b \bullet \approx a \Rightarrow \text{LOC}(b) = \text{LOC}(a)$
 - M3: $b \bullet \approx a \Rightarrow \text{LOC}(b) = \text{LOC}(a)$
- In this way the empirical relation $\bullet \geq$ was defined for the measure LOC
- If these properties of the modifications 1 to 3 are accepted, LOC fulfills the criteria of the ordinal scale, i.e., then the measurements can be used as ordinal scale

- The measure LOC further fulfills the axioms 1 to 6 if as binary operation \circ the textual chaining is used
- Further it is valid, that
 - $LOC(a \circ b) = LOC(a) + LOC(b)$ (additive)
- The values of the measure LOC can be used as a rational scale w.r.t. the agreed operation

Measure Scales - Example for the Measure Discussion: the Cyclomatic Number

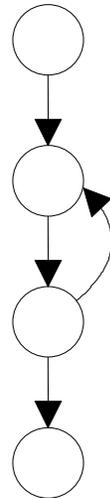
- The cyclomatic number Z of a control flow graph g is defined as
 - $Z = e - n + 2p$
 - e = number of edges, n = number of nodes, p = number of the considered control flow graphs
- For a single module ($p = 1$) we get
 - $Z = e - n + 2$

Measure Scales - Example for the Measure Discussion: the Cyclomatic Number



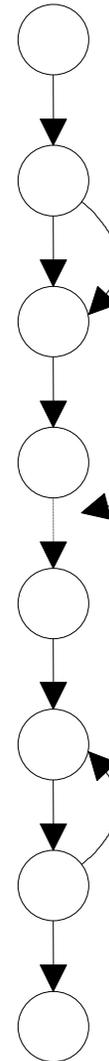
$$Z = 4 - 4 + 2 = 2$$

$$Z' = 4 - 4 + 1 = 1$$



$$Z = 4 - 4 + 2 = 2$$

$$Z' = 4 - 4 + 1 = 1$$



operation \circ
is the sequence

$$Z = 9 - 8 + 2 = 3$$

$$Z' = 9 - 8 + 1 = 2$$

- M1: add a node and an edge
M2: move/displace an edge
M3: add an edge
- M1: $b \bullet \approx a \Rightarrow Z(b) = Z(a)$
M2: $b \bullet \approx a \Rightarrow Z(b) = Z(a)$
M3: $b \bullet > a \Rightarrow Z(b) > Z(a)$
- With regard to the specified modifications we see

$$b \bullet \geq a \Leftrightarrow Z(b) \geq Z(a);$$

i.e. the values can be used as ordinal scale

- Obviously Z does not fulfill the condition of the additivity concerning the operation \circ (sequence), i.e., $Z(a) + Z(b) \neq Z(a \circ b)$
- The values of the measures Z concerning the operation \circ (sequence) cannot be used as rational scale. On the other hand Z fulfills the axioms 1 to 6. Thus, a measure Z' must exist which is additive

$$Z' = Z - 1 = e - n + 1$$

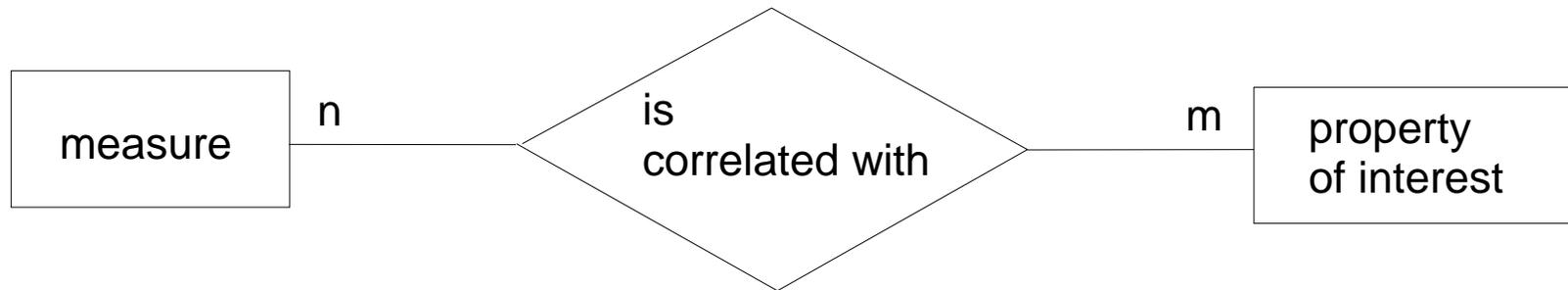
(Can be used as rational scale concerning the operation *sequence*.)

- Measures are directly enumerable, calculated or evaluated parameters, if necessary also a corresponding combination
 - ➔ input parameters (primary data) for the generation of measures have to be collected
- Example
 - enumerable measure: Lines of Code
 - calculated measure: MTTF
 - evaluated measure: function points
- Questions
 - Which primary data can be determined automatically (e.g. from the source code)?
 - Which primary data have to be collected manually?
 - Which primary data can only be gathered based on expertise?

- Principle
 - Collect automatically and tool supported as much of the required information as possible!
 - good cost-value ratio
 - Pure product measures often can be collected fully automatic from the product
 - Collection of the primary data directly from the product
 - Application of measuring tools
 - Example
 - Lines of Code
 - McCabe's cyclomatic number
 - Halstead's measures
- ➔ basically complexity measures

- But: some measures relating to products cannot be derived from them
 - Example
 - MTTF (mean time to failure) or
 - Faults / LOC
 - Relate to a product
 - Require error statistics for this product
- ➔ basically quality measures

- Parts of the required data can be gained with corresponding tool application directly from the process
 - Example: test coverage



- Parts have to be taken manually
 - Example: costs, time, error statistics

- Quality-related
 - Number, type and cause of faults
 - Number of problem messages
 - Number of changes
- Cost-related
 - Costs of fault corrections
 - Costs and time exposure (development and testing costs per process step)
- Product-related
 - Size of the product using an appropriate measure (LOC, pages, processes, number of entries in the data dictionary, function points, number of modules, ...)

- Many measures do not only measure a single property, but are influenced by several factors
- Collection of the primary influencing variable
- Collection of side effects
- Example
If the increase of the MTTF is used as a measure for reliability of a system this relation may be distorted if only failure statistics are used
- Causes
 - During the observation period the number of the software systems in operation is usually not constant, so that the failure probability declines or rises
 - Larger modifications (new version, functional enhancement, etc.) increase the failure probability

- Consequence

- Major influencing parameters regarded as side-effects have to be measured in order to correct the primary measure from their influence
- Example MTTF
 - Recording the number of installed systems over time
 - Recording important events: new version, etc.

Important Measures

The Halstead Measures

- Set of measures concerning different aspects, e.g., complexity, size, costs, etc.
- Are all based on theoretical considerations
- Are based on the program text (number of the different operands and operators and total number of the operands and operators)
- Halstead's costs measure E does not necessarily fulfill the criterion of timeliness
- No direct relation to natural parameters; unnatural measures
- Common as measures in analysis and test tools
- Remark: Halstead's costs measure determines a quadratic dependence between the size of a module and the costs for its implementation → modularization

- The four basic parameters of the Halstead measures are
 - η_1 – number of different operators
 - η_2 – number of different operands
 - N_1 – total number of operators
 - N_2 – total number of operands
- From these four measures two further simple measures can be derived
 - $\eta = \eta_1 + \eta_2$ – size of the vocabulary
 - $N = N_1 + N_2$ – length of the implementation
- By considering some combinatorial rules the formula for the calculated program length N is derived
 - $N = \eta_1 \log_2 \eta_1 + \eta_2 \log_2 \eta_2$

Important Measures

The Halstead Measures

- Program volume V
 $V = N \log_2 \eta$
- V is the volume of the program in bits provided that a binary coding with a fixed word length of the vocabulary is used
- The potential program volume V^* depends only on the algorithm, not on the programming language used for the implementation

$$\begin{aligned} V^* &= (N_1^* + N_2^*) \log_2 (\eta_1^* + \eta_2^*) \\ &= (2 + \eta_2^*) \log_2 (2 + \eta_2^*) \end{aligned}$$

- The quotient of the potential volume V^* and V is called level

Important Measures

The Halstead Measures

- Every implementation has a level L which is smaller or at best equal one. The more L approximates the value one, the more appropriate is a programming language for the implementation of a given algorithm
- A measure for the difficulty to implement an algorithm in a programming language is the reciprocal D of the level (Difficulty)

$$D = \frac{1}{L}$$

- A programming language inappropriate for the implementation of an algorithm causes a rise of the volume V and thus also of the difficulty D

Important Measures

The Halstead Measures

- The volumes L and D are a measure for the problem adequacy of the used programming language and for the difficulty to implement a given algorithm in a particular language
- The Effort E necessary to code an algorithm is proportional to the program volume and to the difficulty of the coding. Difficulty D is the reciprocal of the program level L
- Effort E then can be defined to

$$E = \frac{V}{L} = \frac{V^2}{V^*}$$

Important Measures

The Halstead Measures: Example

```
PROCEDURE CountChars(VAR VowelNumber : CARDINAL;  
                     VAR TotalNumber : CARDINAL);  
  
  VAR Char : CHAR;  
  BEGIN  
    READ (Char);  
    WHILE ((Char ≥ „A“) AND (Char ≤ „Z“) AND TotalNumber < MAX (CARDINAL)) DO  
      TotalNumber := TotalNumber + 1;  
      IF ((Char = „A“) OR (Char = „E“) OR (Char = „I“) OR (Char = „O“) OR  
          (Char = „U“)) THEN  
        VowelNumber := VowelNumber + 1;  
      END; (* IF *)  
      READ (Char);  
    END; (* WHILE *)  
  END CountChars;
```

Important Measures

The Halstead Measures: Example

- Number of operators: $\eta_1 = 20$
Number of operands: $\eta_2 = 10$
Total number of operators: $N_1 = 58$
Total number of operands: $N_2 = 26$
- From this follows
 $N = N_1 + N_2 = 84$
and
$$\begin{aligned} N &= \eta_1 \log_2 \eta_1 + \eta_2 \log_2 \eta_2 \\ &= 20 \log_2 20 + 10 \log_2 10 \\ &= 86,4 + 33,2 \\ &= 119,6 \end{aligned}$$

- The primary purpose of programs is the processing of data
- Live Variables
 - Is based on the assumption that the generation of a statement is the more difficult the more variables have to be considered at the execution of this statement
 - Definition: a variable "lives" within a procedure from its first to its last reference

- Example

```
1   PROCEDURE MinMax (VAR Min: CARDINAL; VAR Max: CARDINAL);
2   VAR Help : CARDINAL;
3   BEGIN
4       IF Min > Max THEN
5           Help := Min;
6           Min := Max;
7           Max := Help
8       END;
9   END MinMax;
```

line	live variables	number
4	Min, Max	2
5	Min, Max, Help	3
6	Min, Max, Help	3
7	Help, Max	2

- LV: medium number of live variables = $\frac{\text{total number of live variables}}{\text{number of executable statements}}$
- In the example: $\overline{LV} = \frac{10}{4} = 2,5$

Important Measures

Data Measures: Variable Span

- Additionally, the span of the variable references is important
- Example
 - Min is referenced at lines 4, 5 and 6
Max is referenced at lines 4, 6 and 7
Help is referenced at lines 5 and 7
 - The spans of Min are: 1 line, 1 line;
averaging: 1
 - The spans of Max are: 2 lines, 1 line;
averaging: 1,5
 - The spans of Help are: 2 lines;
averaging 2
 - The average span of all variables is 1,4

Important Measures

The Cyclomatic Complexity

- A common complexity measure
- Often has the aura of an "important" key value
- Derives from graph theory (strongly connected graphs) and thus can be related to control flow graphs and consequently to programs represented by these graphs
- Formula: $e - n + 2$
(e = number of edges, n = number of nodes)
- Very easy to determine as for programs highly dependent on the number of decisions (it is simply the number of decisions + 1)
- Appropriate as a complexity measure if the number of decisions says much about the complexity of the program
- Probably the most widespread measure in analysis and test tools

- Nesting

- Every statement is assigned a nesting level according to the following rules
 - To the first executable statement the value 1 is assigned
 - All statements that belong to a statement sequence are on the same nesting level
 - If a statement a is on the nesting level I and statement b is within a selection or loop controlled by a, statement b has the nesting level $I + 1$
- The value of this measure is the arithmetic mean of the nesting levels of all statements

- Software measurement is, e.g., important for the following areas
 - Flat management structures
 - Compliancy to certain software engineering standards
 - High capability maturity levels

- Flat management structures are a trend
 - A manager supervises more developers
 - The supply and aggregation of information is not done anymore via the middle management, but via automated measuring systems
 - Interventions of the management are required only if measurements indicate problems

- Standards increasingly gain importance in software engineering (e.g. ISO 9001)
 - Proof of qualification for potential clients
 - Marketing criterion; differentiation from non-accredited competitors
 - Important in the context of product liability
 - In some areas definitely required
 - All standards underline the importance of a systematic procedure, transparency, and control of the development process
- ➔ This can be proven with the aid of corresponding measures

- The Capability Maturity Model classifies the maturity of a software development process using maturity levels. The model used by the SEI uses the following levels: 1-initial, 2-repeatable, 3-defined, 4-measured, 5-optimizing
- The attainment of the maturity levels 4 and 5 is possible only with the existence and use of a measuring system which enables the following operations
 - Measuring of productivity and quality
 - Evaluation of projects on the basis of these measurements
 - Identification of deviations
 - Corrective actions in the case of deviations
 - Identification and control of project risks

- Failure lists are to be evaluated to make a decision for systematic techniques, methods, and tools due to the number of failures, their causes, and the costs for their correction
- The goal is
 - A clear reduction of the number of faults to reduce the problems of clients with the software and to demonstrate high quality
 - The prevention or early detection of costly failures in order to save money

- Failure list

No.	problem description	date of message	corrected at	correction time (workdays)	correction costs (MDays)	fault cause
1	07.03.92	20.04.92	25	50	faulty/defective requirement
2		11.04.92	13.04.92	0,5	0,5	coding fault (loop)
3		13.04.92	05.05.92	5	5	module specification
4		04.05.92	06.05.92	0,3	0,3	wrong path requirement
5		23.05.92	05.06.92	7	7	interface between modules
6		01.06.92	28.06.92	15	15	missing functionality
7		02.06.93	15.06.93	0,2	0,2	missing initialization
8		15.06.92	18.06.92	0,4	0,4	consecutive fault by fault correction
9		01.07.92	10.07.92	2,5	5	wrong modularization
10		03.07.92	30.08.92	28	35	performance too low
11		02.08.92	05.08.92	0,6	0,6	previous fault correction
12		29.08.92	01.09.92	0,8	0,4	wrong data type used
13		04.09.92	06.09.92	1	1	algorithmic fault
14		28.09.92	18.11.92	22	22	requirement misunderstood
15		11.11.92	10.12.92	13	13	requirement wrong
16		20.12.92	23.12.92	0,2	0,2	required data not provided
17		02.01.93	31.01.93	9	2	coding bug
18		13.02.93	15.02.93	1	0,4	missing initialization
					

observed period: 343 days

- The average MTTF is selected to measure reliability
- One receives
 - $MTTF = 343 \text{ days} / 17 = 20,2 \text{ days}$
- The average correction costs are used additionally
 - The average fault correction costs 8,8 Man days

- The faults have different causes which can be attributed to different phases
 - Definition phase (5 faults): 1, 6, 10, 14, 15
Average costs: 27 MD
Total costs: 135 MD
 - Design phase (3 faults): 3, 5, 9
Average costs: 5,7 MD
Total costs: 17 MD
 - Implementation phase (10 faults): 2, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18
Average costs: 0,6 MD
Total costs: 6 MD
- Costs reduction is achieved best by improvements in the definition phase, as here the major part of the correction costs is caused, although more faults are created in the implementation phase

- A reduction of the number of faults is achieved best by improvements in the implementation or unit test phase
 - ⇒ Application of corresponding techniques and tools
 - ⇒ SA, OOA, IM, RT, reviews, ...
 - ⇒ Structured programming, code generation, systematic testing, ...
- Further observation of the measures in order to control effects

- Halstead M.H., Elements of Software Science, New York: North-Holland 1977
- Zuse H., Software Complexity - Measures and Methods, Berlin, New York: De Gruyter 1991