

1.4 A BRIEF HISTORY OF PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES

The first programming languages were the machine languages of the earliest computers, designed in the 1940s. Several hundred programming languages and dialects have been developed since that time. Most have had a limited life span and utility, while a few have enjoyed widespread success in one or more application domains. Many have played an important role in influencing the design of future languages. A general overview of the history of a few of the most influential programming languages is summarized in Figure 1.3.

