

# Java: interfaces

Madhavan Mukund, S P Suresh

Programming Language Concepts

Lecture 9, 7 February 2023

- An interface is a purely abstract class
  - All methods are abstract
- A class **implements** an interface
  - Provide concrete code for each abstract function
- Classes can implement multiple interfaces
  - Abstract functions, so no contradictory inheritance
- Interfaces describe relevant aspects of a class
  - Abstract functions describe a specific “slice” of capabilities
  - Another class only needs to know about these capabilities

# Interfaces express relevant capabilities

- Generic `quicksort` for any datatype that supports comparisons
- Express this capability by making the argument type `Comparable[]`
  - **Only** information that `quicksort` needs about the underlying type
  - All other aspects are irrelevant
- Describe the relevant functions supported by `Comparable` objects through an interface
- However, we **cannot** express the intended behaviour of `cmp` explicitly

```
public class SortFunctions{
    public static void quicksort(Comparable[] a){
        ...
        // Usual code for quicksort, except that
        // to compare a[i] and a[j] we use
        // a[i].cmp(a[j])
    }
}
```

```
public interface Comparable{
    public abstract int cmp(Comparable s);
    // return -1 if this < s,
    //           0 if this == s,
    //           +1 if this > s
}
```

# Interactions with state

- Connect database query to logged in status of the user
- Use objects!
  - On log in, user receives an object that can make a query
  - Object is created from private class that can look up `railwaydb`
- How does user know the capabilities of private class `QueryObject`?
- Use an interface!
  - Interface describes the capability of the object returned on login

```
public interface QIF{
    public abstract int
        getStatus(int trainno, Date d);
}

public class RailwayBooking {
    private BookingDB railwaydb;
    public QIF login(String u, String p){
        QueryObject qobj;
        if (valid_login(u,p)) {
            qobj = new QueryObject();
            return(qobj);
        }
    }
}

private class QueryObject implements QIF {
    public int getStatus(int trainno, Date d){
        ...
    }
}
}
```

# Interactions with state ...

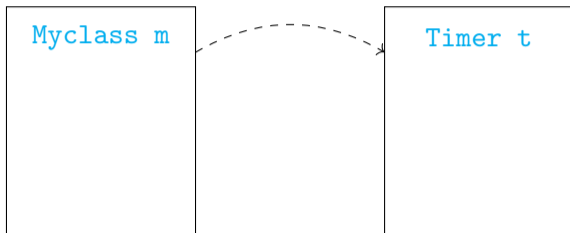
- Query object allows unlimited number of queries
- Limit the number of queries per login?
- Maintain a counter
  - Add instance variables to object returned on login
  - Query object can remember the **state** of the interaction

```
public class RailwayBooking {
    private BookingDB railwaydb;
    public QIF login(String u, String p){
        QueryObject qobj;
        if (valid_login(u,p)) {
            qobj = new QueryObject();
            return(qobj);
        }
    }
    private class QueryObject implements QIF {
        private int numqueries;
        private static int QLIM;

        public int getStatus(int trainno, Date d){
            if (numqueries < QLIM){
                // respond, increment numqueries
            }
        }
    }
}
```

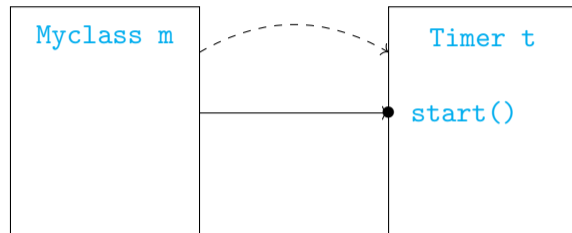
# Implementing a call-back facility

- `Myclass m` creates a `Timer t`



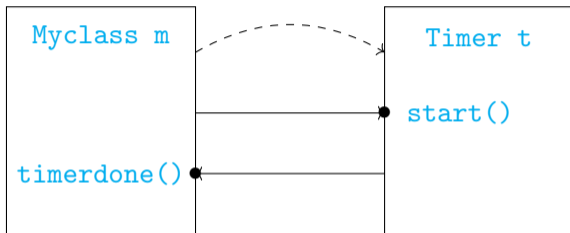
# Implementing a call-back facility

- `Myclass m` creates a `Timer t`
- Start `t` to run in parallel
  - `Myclass m` continues to run
  - Will see later how to invoke parallel execution in Java!



# Implementing a call-back facility

- `Myclass m` creates a `Timer t`
- Start `t` to run in parallel
  - `Myclass m` continues to run
  - Will see later how to invoke parallel execution in Java!
- `Timer t` notifies `Myclass m` when the time limit expires
  - Assume `Myclass m` has a function `timerdone()`





# Implementing callbacks

## ■ Code for `Myclass`

```
public class Myclass{

    public void f(){
        ..
        Timer t =
            new Timer(this);
            // this object
            // created t
        ...
        t.start(); // Start t
        ...
    }

    public void timerdone(){...}
}
```

# Implementing callbacks

- Code for `Myclass`
- `Timer t` should know whom to notify
  - `Myclass m` passes its identity when it creates `Timer t`

```
public class Myclass{  
  
    public void f(){  
        ..  
        Timer t =  
            new Timer(this);  
            // this object  
            // created t  
        ...  
        t.start(); // Start t  
        ...  
    }  
  
    public void timerdone(){...}  
}
```

# Implementing callbacks

- Code for `Myclass`
- `Timer t` should know whom to notify
  - `Myclass m` passes its identity when it creates `Timer t`
- Code for `Timer`
  - Interface `Runnable` indicates that `Timer` can run in parallel

```
public class Myclass{  
  
    public void f(){  
        ..  
        Timer t =  
            new Timer(this);  
        // this object  
        // created t  
        ...  
        t.start(); // Start t  
        ...  
    }  
  
    public void timerdone(){...}  
}
```

```
public class Timer  
    implements Runnable{  
    // Timer can be  
    // invoked in parallel  
  
    private Myclass owner;  
  
    public Timer(Myclass o){  
        owner = o; // My creator  
    }  
  
    public void start(){  
        ...  
        owner.timerdone();  
        // I'm done  
    }  
}
```

# Implementing callbacks

- Code for `Myclass`
- `Timer t` should know whom to notify
  - `Myclass m` passes its identity when it creates `Timer t`
- Code for `Timer`
  - Interface `Runnable` indicates that `Timer` can run in parallel
- `Timer` specific to `Myclass`

```
public class Myclass{  
    public void f(){  
        ..  
        Timer t =  
            new Timer(this);  
        // this object  
        // created t  
        ...  
        t.start(); // Start t  
        ...  
    }  
  
    public void timerdone(){...}  
}
```

```
public class Timer  
    implements Runnable{  
    // Timer can be  
    // invoked in parallel  
  
    private Myclass owner;  
  
    public Timer(Myclass o){  
        owner = o; // My creator  
    }  
  
    public void start(){  
        ...  
        owner.timerdone();  
        // I'm done  
    }  
}
```

# Implementing callbacks

- Code for `Myclass`
- `Timer t` should know whom to notify
  - `Myclass m` passes its identity when it creates `Timer t`
- Code for `Timer`
  - Interface `Runnable` indicates that `Timer` can run in parallel
- `Timer` specific to `Myclass`
- Create a generic `Timer`?

```
public class Myclass{  
  
    public void f(){  
        ..  
        Timer t =  
            new Timer(this);  
            // this object  
            // created t  
        ...  
        t.start(); // Start t  
        ...  
    }  
  
    public void timerdone(){...}  
}
```

```
public class Timer  
    implements Runnable{  
    // Timer can be  
    // invoked in parallel  
  
    private Myclass owner;  
  
    public Timer(Myclass o){  
        owner = o; // My creator  
    }  
  
    public void start(){  
        ...  
        owner.timerdone();  
        // I'm done  
    }  
}
```

# A generic timer

- Use Java class hierarchy

# A generic timer

- Use Java class hierarchy
- Parameter of `Timer` constructor of type `Object`
  - Compatible with all caller types

```
public class Myclass{
```

```
    public void f(){
```

```
        ..
```

```
        Timer t =
```

```
            new Timer(this);
```

```
            // this object
```

```
            // created t
```

```
        ...
```

```
        t.start(); // start t
```

```
        ...
```

```
    }
```

```
    public void timerdone(){...}
```

```
}
```

```
public class Timer
```

```
    implements Runnable{
```

```
    // Timer can be
```

```
    // invoked in parallel
```

```
    private Object owner;
```

```
    public Timer(Object o){
```

```
        owner = o; // My creator
```

```
    }
```

```
    public void start(){
```

```
        ((Myclass) owner).timerdone();
```

```
        // I'm done
```

```
    }
```

```
}
```

# A generic timer

- Use Java class hierarchy
- Parameter of `Timer` constructor of type `Object`
  - Compatible with all caller types
- Need to cast `owner` back to `Myclass`

```
public class Myclass{  
  
    public void f(){  
        ..  
        Timer t =  
            new Timer(this);  
            // this object  
            // created t  
        ...  
        t.start(); // Start t  
        ...  
    }  
  
    public void timerdone(){...}  
}
```

```
public class Timer  
    implements Runnable{  
    // Timer can be  
    // invoked in parallel  
  
    private Object owner;  
  
    public Timer(Object o){  
        owner = o; // My creator  
    }  
  
    public void start(){  
        ...  
        ((Myclass) owner).timerdone();  
        // I'm done  
    }  
}
```



# Use interfaces

- Define an interface for callback

```
public interface
    Timerowner{

    public abstract
        void timerdone();
}
```

# Use interfaces

- Define an interface for callback

```
public interface
    Timerowner{

    public abstract
        void timerdone();
}
```

- Modify `Myclass` to implement `Timerowner`

```
public class Myclass
    implements Timerowner{

    public void f(){
        ..
        Timer t =
            new Timer(this);
        // this object
        // created t
        ...
        t.start(); // Start t
        ...
    }

    public void timerdone(){...}
}
```

# Use interfaces

- Define an interface for callback

```
public interface
    Timerowner{

    public abstract
        void timerdone();
    }
```

- Modify `Myclass` to implement `Timerowner`

- Modify `Timer` so that `owner` is compatible with `Timerowner`

```
public class Myclass
    implements Timerowner{
    public void f(){
        ..
        Timer t =
            new Timer(this);
        // this object
        // created t
        ...
        t.start(); // Start t
        ...
    }

    public void timerdone(){...}
}
```

```
public class Timer
    implements Runnable{
    // Timer can be
    // invoked in parallel
    private Timerowner owner;

    public Timer(Timerowner o){
        owner = o; // My creator
    }

    public void start(){
        ..
        owner.timerdone();
        // I'm done
    }
}
```

- A generic linear list of objects

# Linear list

- A generic linear list of objects
- Internal implementation may vary

# Linear list

- A generic linear list of objects
- Internal implementation may vary
- An array implementation

```
public class Linearlist {  
    // Array implementation  
    private int limit = 100;  
    private Object[] data = new Object[limit];  
    private int size; // Current size  
  
    public Linearlist(){ size = 0; }  
  
    public void append(Object o){  
        data[size] = o;  
        size++;  
        ...  
    }  
    ...  
}
```

# Linear list

- A generic linear list of objects
- Internal implementation may vary
- An array implementation
- A linked list implementation

```
public class Linearlist {
    private Node head;
    private int size;

    public Linearlist(){ size = 0; }

    public void append(Object o){
        Node m;

        for (m = head; m.next != null; m = m.next){}
        Node n = new Node(o);
        m.next = n;

        size++;
    }
    ...
    private class Node (...}
}
```

# Iteration

- Want a loop to run through all values in a linear list



# Iteration

- Want a loop to run through all values in a linear list
- If the list is an array with public access, we write this

```
int i;  
for (i = 0; i < data.length; i++){  
    ... // do something with data[i]  
}
```

# Iteration

- Want a loop to run through all values in a linear list
- If the list is an array with public access, we write this
- For a linked list with public access, we could write this

```
int i;  
for (i = 0; i < data.length; i++){  
    ... // do something with data[i]  
}
```

```
Node m;  
for (m = head; m != null; m = m.next){  
    ... // do something with m.data  
}
```

# Iteration

- Want a loop to run through all values in a linear list
- If the list is an array with public access, we write this
- For a linked list with public access, we could write this
- We don't have public access ...

```
int i;  
for (i = 0; i < data.length; i++){  
    ... // do something with data[i]  
}
```

```
Node m;  
for (m = head; m != null; m = m.next){  
    ... // do something with m.data  
}
```

# Iteration

- Want a loop to run through all values in a linear list
- If the list is an array with public access, we write this
- For a linked list with public access, we could write this
- We don't have public access ...
- ... and we don't know which implementation is in use!

```
int i;  
for (i = 0; i < data.length; i++){  
    ... // do something with data[i]  
}
```

```
Node m;  
for (m = head; m != null; m = m.next){  
    ... // do something with m.data  
}
```

- Need the following abstraction

```
Start at the beginning of the list;
while (there is a next element){
    get the next element;
    do something with it
}
```

- Need the following abstraction

```
Start at the beginning of the list;
while (there is a next element){
    get the next element;
    do something with it
}
```

- Encapsulate this functionality in an interface called `Iterator`

```
public interface Iterator{
    public abstract boolean has_next();
    public abstract Object get_next();
}
```

- How do we implement `Iterator` in `Linearlist`?

# Iterators

- How do we implement `Iterator` in `Linearlist`?
- Need a “pointer” to remember position of the iterator



- How do we implement `Iterator` in `Linearlist`?
- Need a “pointer” to remember position of the iterator
- How do we handle nested loops?

```
for (i = 0; i < data.length; i++){  
    for (j = 0; j < data.length; j++){  
        ... // do something with data[i] and data[j]  
    }  
}
```

# Iterators


- Solution: Create an `Iterator` object and export it!

- Solution: Create an `Iterator` object and export it!

```
public class Linearlist{  
  
    private class Iter implements Iterator{  
        private Node position;  
        public Iter(){...} // Constructor  
        public boolean has_next(){...}  
        public Object get_next(){...}  
    }  
  
    // Export a fresh iterator  
    public Iterator get_iterator(){  
        Iter it = new Iter();  
        return(it);  
    }  
}
```

- Solution: Create an `Iterator` object and export it!

```
public class Linearlist{  
  
    private class Iter implements Iterator{  
        private Node position;  
        public Iter(){...} // Constructor  
        public boolean has_next(){...}  
        public Object get_next(){...}  
    }  
  
    // Export a fresh iterator  
    public Iterator get_iterator(){  
        Iter it = new Iter();  
        return(it);  
    }  
}
```



- Definition of `Iter` depends on linear list

- Now, we can traverse the list externally as follows:

```
Linearlist l = new Linearlist();
...
Object o;
Iterator i = l.get_iterator();

while (i.has_next()){
    o = i.get_next();
    ...    // do something with o
}
```

# Iterators

- Now, we can traverse the list externally as follows:

```
Linearlist l = new Linearlist();
...
Object o;
Iterator i = l.get_iterator();

while (i.has_next()){
    o = i.get_next();
    ... // do something with o
}
```

for (t x) in l:

- For nested loops, acquire multiple iterators!

```
Linearlist l = new Linearlist();
...
Object oi,oj;
Iterator i,j;

i = l.get_iterator();
while (i.has_next()){
    oi = i.get_next();
    j = l.get_iterator();
    while (j.has_next()){
        oj = j.get_next();
        ... // do something with oi, oj
    }
}
...
```

# Iterators

- Now, we can traverse the list externally as follows:

```
Linearlist l = new Linearlist();
...
Object o;
Iterator i = l.get_iterator();

while (i.has_next()){
    o = i.get_next();
    ... // do something with o
}
```

- The new Java `for` over lists implicitly constructs and uses an iterator

```
for (type x : a)
    do something with x;
}
```

- For nested loops, acquire multiple iterators!

```
Linearlist l = new Linearlist();
...
Object oi,oj;
Iterator i,j;

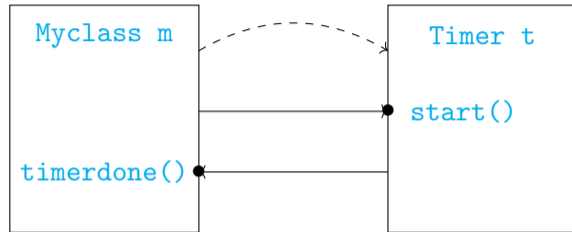
i = l.get_iterator();
while (i.has_next()){
    oi = i.get_next();
    j = l.get_iterator();
    while (j.has_next()){
        oj = j.get_next();
        ... // do something with oi, oj
    }
}
...
```

# Passing functions

- Recall callbacks
  - `Myclass m` creates a `Timer t`
  - `t` starts running in parallel
  - `t` notifies `m` when the time limit expires
- `m` needs to pass `timerdone()` to `t`
- Achieved this through an interface

```
public interface Timerowner{  
    public abstract void timerdone();  
}
```

```
public class Myclass  
    extends Timerowner{  
    ...  
}
```



```
public class Timer implements Runnable{  
    private Timerowner owner;  
    ...  
    public void start(){  
        ...  
        owner.timerdone();  
    }  
}
```



- Customize `Arrays.sort`

# Passing functions

- Customize `Arrays.sort`
- `Comparator` interface provides signature for comparison function
  - `T` is type variable — structural polymorphism, Java `generics`, to be discussed later

```
public interface Comparator<T>{  
    public abstract int compare(T o1, T o2);  
}
```

# Passing functions

- Customize `Arrays.sort`
- `Comparator` interface provides signature for comparison function
  - `T` is type variable — structural polymorphism, Java `generics`, to be discussed later
- Implement `Comparator`

```
public interface Comparator<T>{
    public abstract int compare(T o1, T o2);
}

public class StringCompare
    implements Comparator<String>{

    public int compare(String s1, String s2){
        return s1.length() - s2.length();
    }
}
```

# Passing functions

- Customize `Arrays.sort`
- `Comparator` interface provides signature for comparison function
  - `T` is type variable — structural polymorphism, Java `generics`, to be discussed later
- Implement `Comparator`
- Pass to `Arrays.sort`

```
public interface Comparator<T>{  
    public abstract int compare(T o1, T o2);  
}
```

```
public class StringCompare  
    implements Comparator<String>{  
  
    public int compare(String s1, String s2){  
        return s1.length() - s2.length();  
    }  
}
```

```
String[] strarr = new ...;  
Arrays.sort(strarr,StringCompare);
```

StringCompare  
pass object

# Functional interfaces

- Interfaces that define a single function are called **functional interfaces**
  - `Comparator`, `Timerowner`

```
public interface Comparator<T>{  
    public abstract int compare(T o1, T o2);  
}
```

```
public interface Timerowner{  
    public abstract void timerdone();  
}
```

# Functional interfaces

- Interfaces that define a single function are called **functional interfaces**
  - `Comparator`, `Timerowner`
- How can we directly pass the required function?

```
public interface Comparator<T>{  
    public abstract int compare(T o1, T o2);  
}
```

```
public interface Timerowner{  
    public abstract void timerdone();  
}
```

# Functional interfaces

- Interfaces that define a single function are called **functional interfaces**
  - `Comparator`, `Timerowner`
- How can we directly pass the required function?
- In Python, function names are similar to variable names
  - Define a function
  - Pass it as an argument to another function
  - `map` is a **higher order function**

```
public interface Comparator<T>{  
    public abstract int compare(T o1, T o2);  
}
```

```
public interface Timerowner{  
    public abstract void timerdone();  
}
```

```
def square(x):  
    return(x*x)
```

```
l = list(map(square,range(100)))
```

# Lambda expressions

- **Lambda expressions** denote anonymous functions
  - (Parameters) -> Body
  - Return value and type are implicit

arglist  
(String s1, String s2) ->  
s1.length() - s2.length()

body  
ret frame(arglist) {  
body  
}



# Lambda expressions

- **Lambda expressions** denote anonymous functions

- `(Parameters) -> Body`
- Return value and type are implicit

- From  $\lambda$ -calculus (Alonzo Church)

- Foundational model for computing, parallel to Alan Turing's machines
- Basis for **functional programming**, will discuss in detail later

```
(String s1, String s2) ->  
    s1.length() - s2.length()
```

# Lambda expressions

- **Lambda expressions** denote anonymous functions
  - (Parameters) -> Body
  - Return value and type are implicit
- From  $\lambda$ -calculus (Alonzo Church)
  - Foundational model for computing, parallel to Alan Turing's machines
  - Basis for **functional programming**, will discuss in detail later
- Substitute wherever a functional interface is specified

```
(String s1, String s2) ->  
    s1.length() - s2.length()
```

```
String[] strarr = new ...;  
Arrays.sort(strarr,  
            (String s1, String s2) ->  
                s1.length() - s2.length());
```

# Lambda expressions

- More complicated function body can be defined as a block

```
(String s1, String s2) -> {  
    if s1.length() < s2.length()  
        return -1;  
    else if s1.length() > s2.length()  
        return 1;  
    else  
        return 0;  
}
```

# Lambda expressions

- More complicated function body can be defined as a block
- Note that the function is anonymous only for the caller

```
(String s1, String s2) -> {  
    if s1.length() < s2.length()  
        return -1;  
    else if s1.length() > s2.length()  
        return 1;  
    else  
        return 0;  
}
```

What happens inside  
Arrays.sort(--)?

↑  
Array

↘  
Comparator  
object

# Lambda expressions

- More complicated function body can be defined as a block
- Note that the function is anonymous only for the caller
- The function that receives the lambda expression still needs to use a functional interface for the parameter type

```
public static <T> void  
    Arrays.sort(T[] a, Comparator<T> c){
```

- Inside `Arrays.sort()`, refer to the function as `c.compare()`, name defined in the `Comparator` interface

```
(String s1, String s2) -> {  
    if s1.length() < s2.length()  
        return -1;  
    else if s1.length() > s2.length()  
        return 1;  
    else  
        return 0;  
}
```

Also possible to pass  
a named function