LANGUAGE HISTORY CHART

First letter of each name has been aligned with the approximate date on which work began.

THIS TYPE STYLE indicates languages of major importance, because of their wide usage or technical significance.

THIS TYPE STYLE indicates languages of moderate importance.

THIS TYPE STYLE is used for all other languages.

Parentheses were used to indicate alternate names, or the later addition of the sequence number "1."

═══ indicates that the second language is a direct extension of the first

——— indicates that the second language is an approximate extension of the first, i.e., very similar to the first, but not completely upward compatible

— — — — indicates strong influence; sometimes the second language is "like, or in the style of" the first

- - - - - - - - - - indicates an approximate subset

Each of the following marks is associated with the language above or to its left:

● indicates preliminary or informal specifications or manual

■ indicates a public manual, or formal publication via technical paper, or public presentation

▲ release for usage outside development group

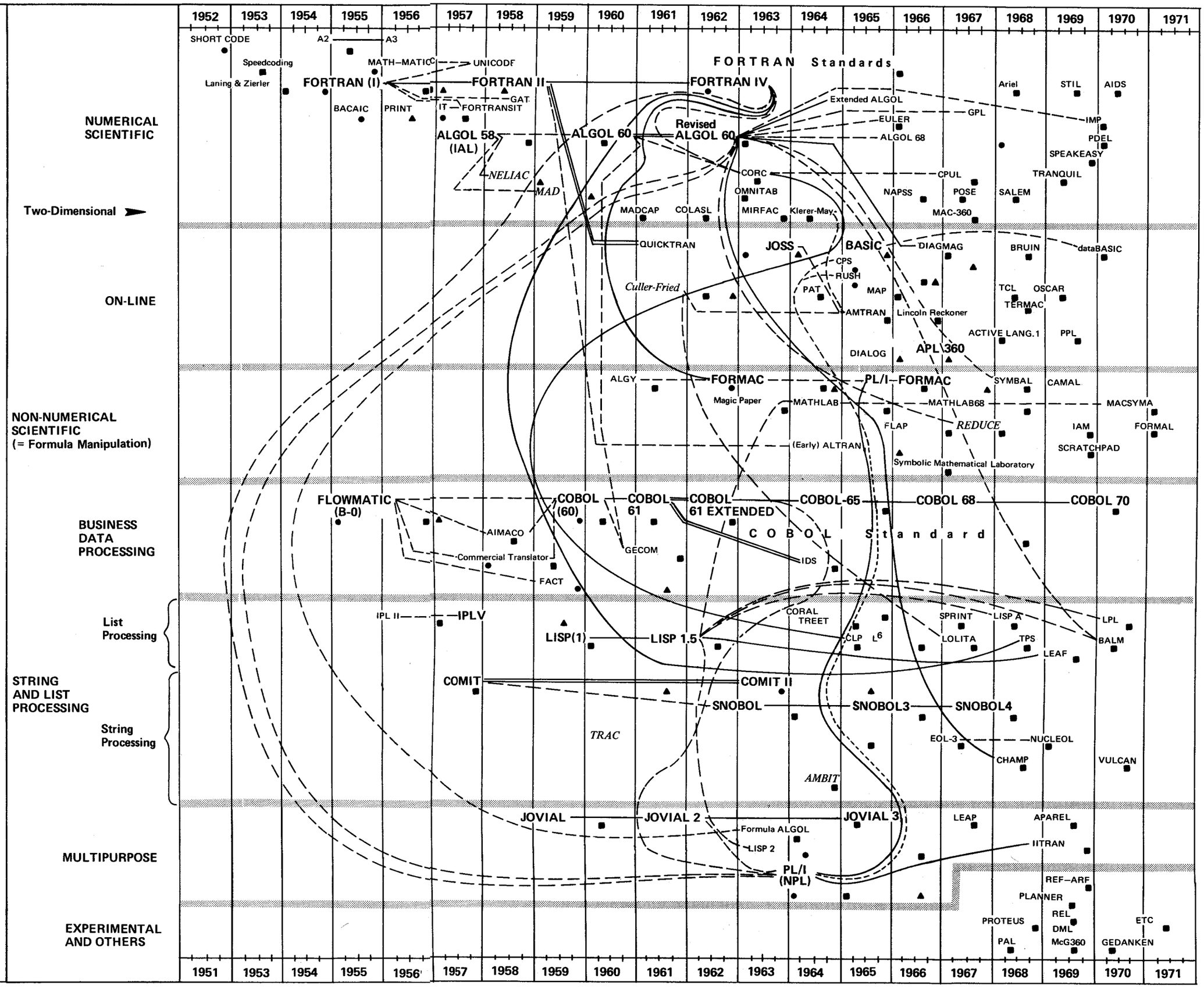
General Comments

This chart represents only the personal opinions of the author as far as value judgments are involved, and the author's best estimate in many cases as far as dates are involved. The indications of the start of the work are the most questionable.

The information for languages in 1971 is based solely on those listed in "Roster of Programming Languages-1971," Computers and Automation, Vol. 20, No. 6B (June 1971), pp. 6-13.

In most cases, dialects with differing names have been omitted. This has the unfortunate effect of appearing to minimize the importance of some languages which spawned numerous versions under differing names (e.g., JOSS).

Languages for specialized application areas (e.g., simulation, machine tool control, civil engineering, systems programming) have not been included because of space considerations. This explains the absence of such obvious languages as APT, GPSS, SIMSCRIPT, COGO, BLISS.

Acknowledgment: The idea for such a chart in such a format came from the one by Christopher J. Shaw entitled "Milestones in Computer Programming" and included with the [ACM Los Angeles Chapter] SIGPLAN notices, February 1965.

"Programming Languages: History and Future"
by Jean E. Sammet
Communications of the ACM, Vol. 15, July 1972
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