

The New C Standard (Excerpted material)

An Economic and Cultural Commentary

Derek M. Jones

derek@knosof.co.uk

3.3

argument

argument

actual argument

actual parameter (deprecated)

expression in the comma-separated list bounded by the parentheses in a function call expression, or a sequence of preprocessing tokens in the comma-separated list bounded by the parentheses in a function-like macro invocation

Commentary

The terms *argument* and *parameter* are sometimes incorrectly interchanged. One denotes an expression at the point of call, the other the identifier defined as part of a function or macro definition.

C++

The C++ definition, 1.3.1p1, does not include the terms *actual argument* and *actual parameter*.

Coding Guidelines

The term *actual parameter* is rarely used. While the standard may specify its usage as being deprecated, it cannot control the terms used by developers. This term is not used within the standard.

Example

```
1  #define M(a) ((a) - (1))
2
3  int f(int b) /* The object b is the parameter. */
4  {
5  return b + 2;
6  }
7
8  void g(int x, int y)
9  {
10 x=f(1); /* The literal 1 is the argument. */
11 y=M(x); /* The value of x is the argument. */
12 }
```

40

References