



# PyHDL-Eval: An LLM Evaluation Framework for Hardware Design Using Python-Embedded DSLs

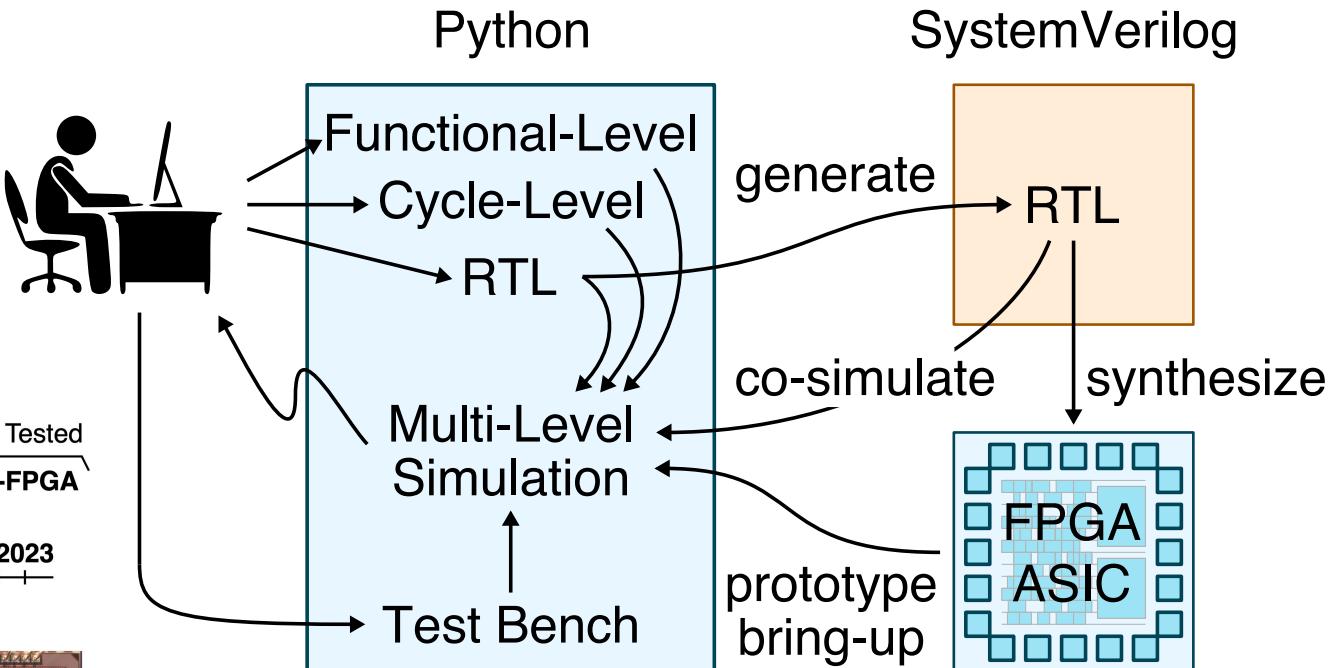
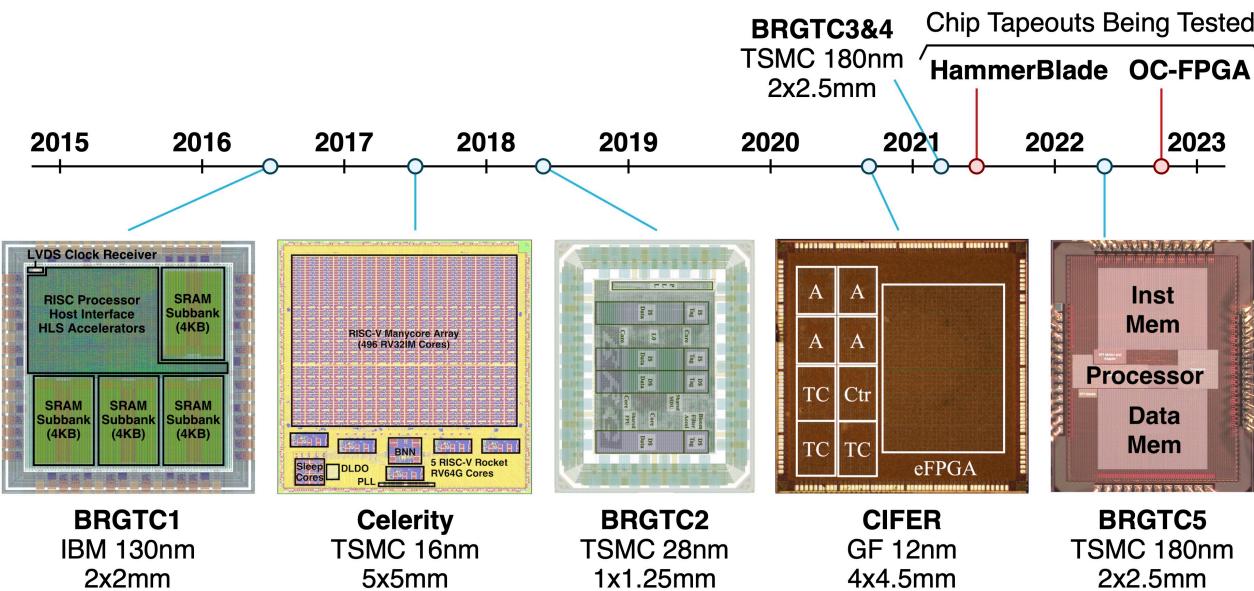
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# PyMTL: A Python Framework for Hardware Modeling, Generation, Simulation, & Verification

- PyMTL3 enables:
  - implementing multi-level hardware models
  - analyzing, instrumenting, transforming models
  - simulating models w/ fast JIT-compiled simulator
  - applying state-of-the-art SW testing to HW

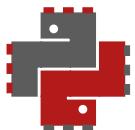


```
1  from pymtl3 import *
2
3  class RegIncrRTL( Component ):
4
5    def construct( s, nbits ):
6      s.in_ = InPort( nbits )
7      s.out = OutPort( nbits )
8      s.tmp = Wire( nbits )
9
10   @update_ff
11   def seq_logic():
12     s.tmp <= s.in_
13
14   @update
15   def comb_logic():
16     s.out @= s.tmp + 1
```

# Python-Embedded DSLs

Modules as function vs classes  
Different bit datatypes

Cycle-level vs event-based  
Implicit vs explicit clk/reset



**PyMTL**



**PYRTL**



**MyHDL**



**Migen**



**Amaranth**

```

1 from pymtl3 import *
2
3 class Top(Component):
4   def construct(s):
5     s.in_ = InPort(Bits8)
6     s.en = InPort()
7     s.out = OutPort(Bits8)
8
9   # Sequential Logic
10  s.in_r = Wire(Bits8)
11  @update_ff
12  def seq():
13    if s.reset:
14      s.in_r <= 0
15    elif s.en:
16      s.in_r <= s.in_
17    else:
18      s.in_r <= s.in_r + 1
19  # Combinational Logic
20  @update
21  def comb():
22    s.out @= s.in_r + 1

```

```

1 from pyrtl import *
2
3 def Top( in_, en ):
4   out = WireVector(8)
5
6   # Sequential Logic
7   in_r = Register( 8,
8                   reset_value=0 )
9
10  with conditional:
11    with en:
12      in_r.next |= in_
13
14  def seq():
15    # Combinational Logic
16    if reset:
17      in_r.next = 0
18    elif en:
19      in_r.next = in_
20
21  def comb():
22    out.next = in_r + 1
23
24  return seq, comb

```

```

1 from myhdl import *
2
3 @block
4 def Top( clk, reset,
5          in_, en, out ):
6
7   # Sequential Logic
8   in_r = Signal(modbv(0)[8:])
9
10  @always( clk.posedge )
11  def seq():
12    if reset:
13      in_r.next = 0
14    elif en:
15      in_r.next = in_
16
17  # Combinational Logic
18  @always_comb
19  def comb():
20    out.next = in_r + 1
21
22  return seq, comb

```

```

1 from migen import *
2
3 @ResetInserter()
4 class Top(Module):
5   def __init__(s):
6     s.in_ = Signal(8)
7     s.en = Signal()
8     s.out = Signal(8)
9
10  # Sequential Logic
11  in_r = Signal(8,reset=0)
12
13  s.sync += \
14    If( s.en,
15        in_r.eq(s.in_) )
16
17  with m.If( s.en ):
18    m.d.sync += in_r.eq(s.in_)
19
20  s.comb += \
21    s.out.eq( in_r + 1 )
22
23  return m

```

```

1 from amaranth import *
2
3 class Top(Elaboratable):
4   def __init__(s):
5     s.in_ = Signal(8)
6     s.en = Signal()
7     s.out = Signal(8)
8
9   def elaborate(s,platform):
10    m = Module()
11
12    # Sequential Logic
13    in_r = Signal(8,reset=0)
14
15    s.sync += \
16      If( s.en,
17          in_r.eq(s.in_) )
18
19    with m.If( s.en ):
20      m.d.sync += in_r.eq(s.in_)
21
22    # Combinational Logic
23    s.comb += \
24      s.out.eq( in_r + 1 )
25
26    return m

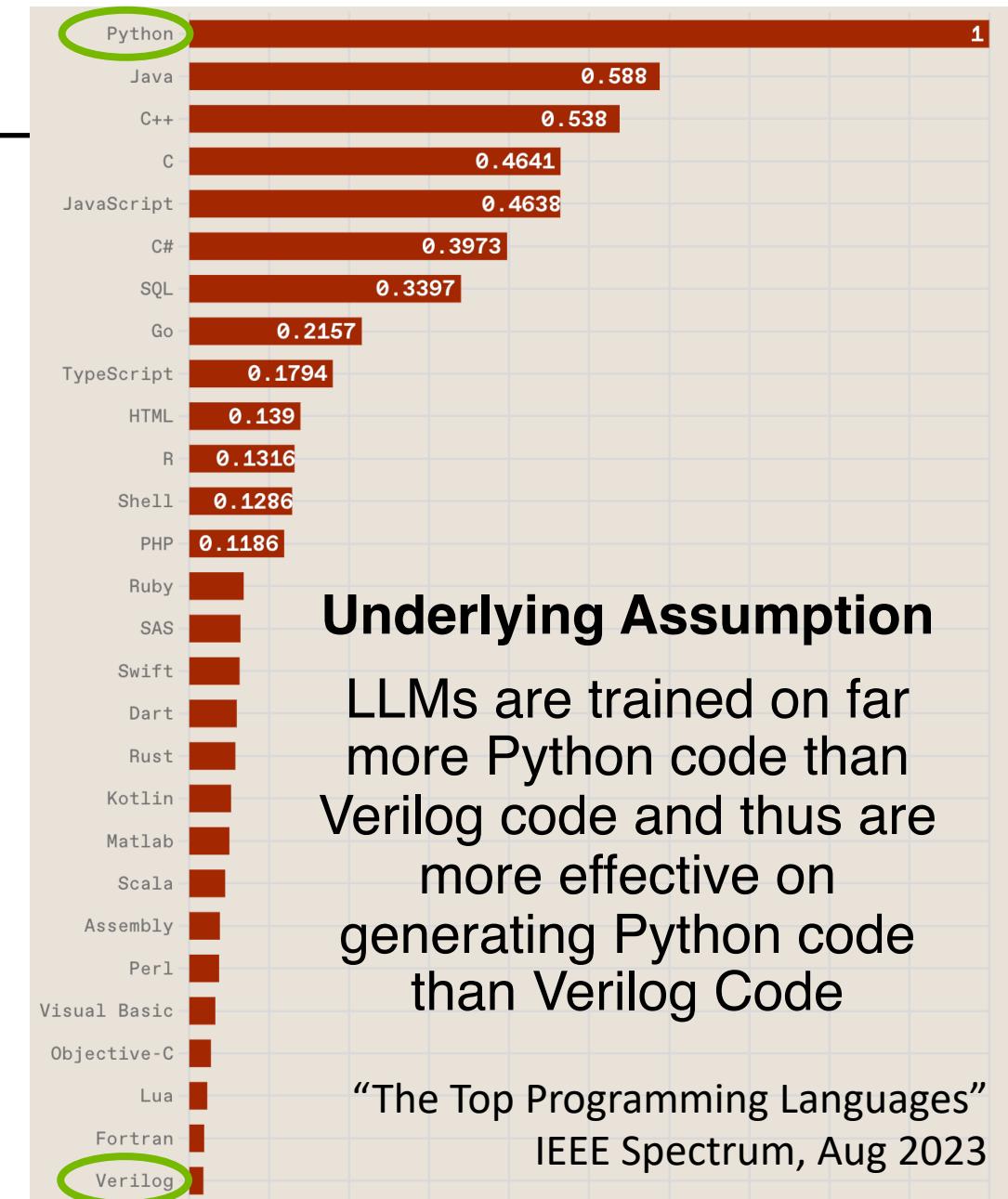
```

# Embedded DSLs & LLMs

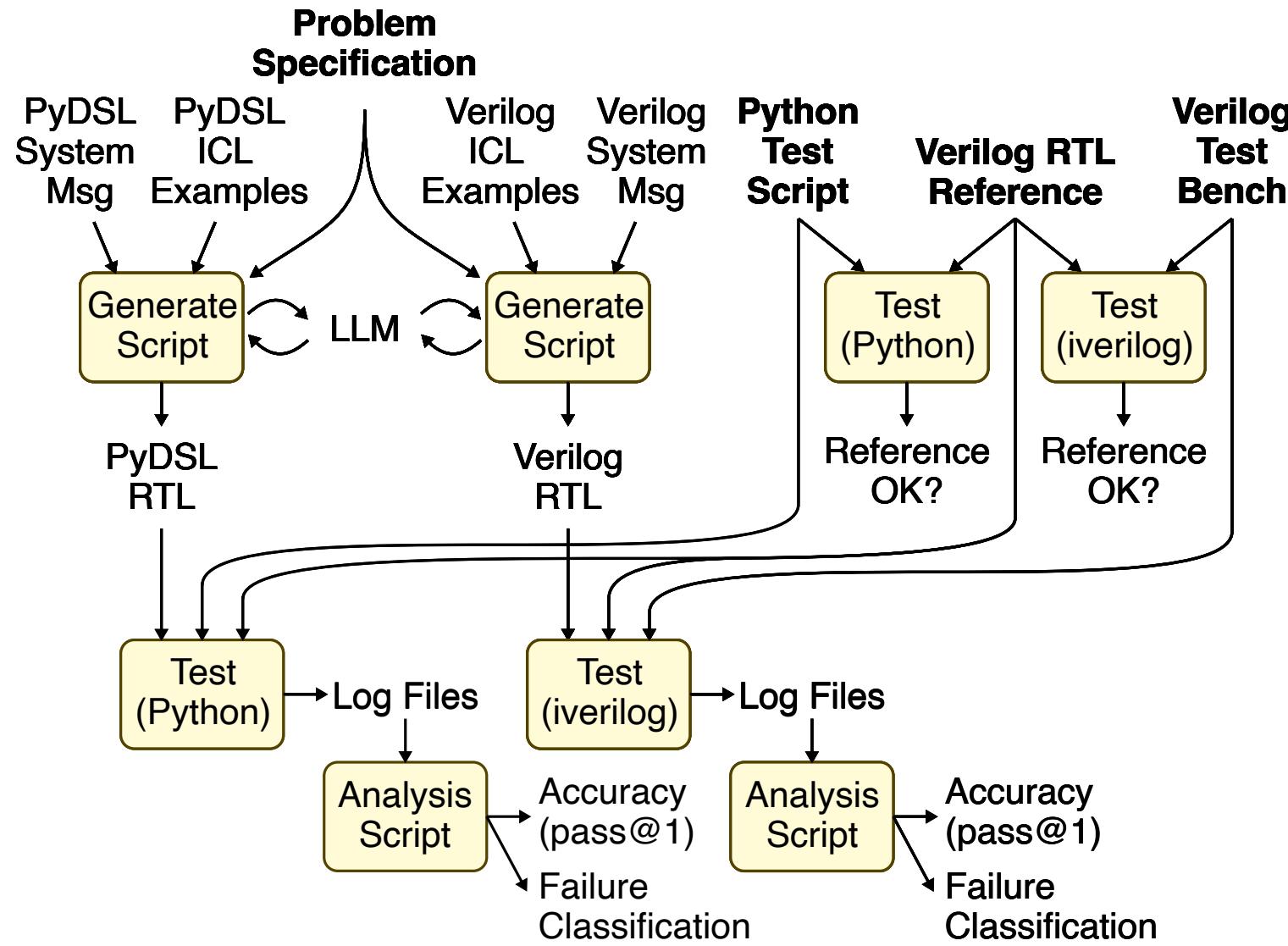
A hardware design framework embedded in the most popular general-purpose programming language can potentially make **design engineers** more effective

## Hypothesis

A hardware design framework embedded in the most popular general-purpose programming language can potentially make **LLMs** more effective



# PyHDL-Eval Framework



- Each problem includes prompt, Verilog reference, Verilog test bench, and Python test script
- **Generate** script supports different ICL examples, models, model hosting services, and languages
- **Verilog reference** can be tested against itself using both Icarus Verilog and Python via PyMTL3/Verilator
- **LLM-generated Verilog RTL** is tested against Verilog reference using Icarus Verilog
- **Analysis scripts** enable automatic failure classification
- **LLM-generated Python-embedded DSL RTL** is tested against Verilog reference using Python test scripts
- Includes **workflow management scripts**

# PyHDL-Eval Problems

Problem Category	Examples of Problems in Category			Num Probs
1 comb const	constant zero, one, lohi, 32-bit value			4
2 comb wires	pass through, split, bit/byte reverse, sign extend			8
3 comb gates	single logic gate, multiple logic gates, natural language			13
4 comb bool	logic equations, truth table, K-map, waveform, natural language			15
5 comb mux	various bitwidths and number of inputs, mux/demux			9
6 comb codes	encoder, decoder, priority encoder, graycode, BCD, ASCII, parity			14
7 comb arith	add/sub, popcount, multiplication, shift/rotate, comparison, ALU, sorter			17
8 comb fsm	FSM tables and diagrams for next state and output logic			9
9 comb param	parameterized: gates, mux, encoder, decoder, priority encoder, rotator			8
10 seq gates	single gate, multiple gates, natural language			9
11 seq bool	truth table, waveform			5
12 seq sreg	shift registers: SISO, PISO, SIPO, universal, bidir, LFSR			7
13 seq count	counters: binary, up/down, saturating, variable, decade, timer, clock			9
14 seq edge	edge detect, edge capture, edge counters, max switching			5
15 seq arb	arbiters: priority, rotational oblivious, round robin, grant-hold, weighted			5
16 seq fsm	FSM tables and diagrams, natural language			13
17 seq mem	1r1w, 2r1w register file (forwarding, reg zero, byte enables), 1s1w CAM			6
18 seq arith	bit serial incrementer, bit serial adder, byte-serial adder, accumulator			4
19 seq pipe	1/2/3-stage delay, 1/2-stage 2/3/4-input adder, 2-stage minmax			8

- New evaluation benchmark with **168 specification-to-RTL problems developed from scratch**
- Careful **ontological approach** with problems categorized into classes and subclasses
  - 97 combinational problems
  - 71 sequential problems
  - 19 subclasses
- Covers ~75% of the concepts from the VerilogEval benchmark (~117/156 problems)
  - *Excludes* problems not supported by all Python-embedded DSLs (latch-based design, neg edge, asynchronous reset)
  - *Excludes* complex lemmings and cellular automata game problems
  - *Excludes* bug fixing and hierarchical design
  - *Excludes* under-specified, ambiguous problems
  - *Includes* parameterized design problems
  - *Includes* new kind of problems

# PyHDL-Eval Problem 9.8

Problem Category	Examples of Problems in Category	Num Probs
1 comb const	constant zero, one, lohi, 32-bit value	4
2 comb wires	pass through, split, bit/byte reverse, sign extend	8
3 comb gates	single logic gate, multiple logic gates, natural language	13
4 comb bool	logic equations, truth table, K-map, waveform, natural language	15
5 comb mux	various bitwidths and number of inputs, mux/demux	9
6 comb codes	encoder, decoder, priority encoder, graycode, BCD, ASCII, parity	14
7 comb arith	add/sub, popcount, multiplication, shift/rotate, comparison, ALU, sorter	17
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14 seq edge	edge detect, edge capture, edge counters, max switching	5
15 seq arb	arbiters: priority, rotational oblivious, round robin, grant-hold, weighted	5
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17 seq mem	1r1w, 2r1w register file (forwarding, reg zero, byte enables), 1s1w CAM	6
18 seq arith	bit serial incrementer, bit serial adder, byte-serial adder, accumulator	4
19 seq pipe	1/2/3-stage delay, 1/2-stage 2/3/4-input adder, 2-stage minmax	8

Implement a hardware module named TopModule with the following interface. All input and output ports are one bit unless otherwise specified.

- parameter nbits
- input in\_ (nbits)
- input amt (log2(nbites))
- input op
- output out (nbites)

The module should implement a variable rotator which takes as input a value to rotate (in\_) and the rotation amount (amt) and writes the rotated result to the output (out). The module should be parameterized by the bitwidth (nbites) of the input and output ports; nbites can be assumed to be a power of two. The input op specifies what kind of rotate to perform using the following encoding:

- 0 : rotate left
- 1 : rotate right

```
module RefModule
#(
    parameter nbites
)
(
    input  logic [nbites-1:0] in_,
    input  logic [$clog2(nbites)-1:0] amt,
    input  logic [nbites-1:0] op,
    output logic [nbites-1:0] out
);

    logic [(2*nbites)-1:0] temp;

    always @(*) begin
        if ( op == 1'd0 ) begin
            temp = { in_, in_ } << amt;
            out = temp[(2*nbites)-1:nbites];
        end
        else begin
            temp = { in_, in_ } >> amt;
            out = temp[nbites-1:0];
        end
    end
endmodule
```

# PyHDL-Eval Problem 19.6

Problem	Category	Examples of Problems in Category	Num Probs
1	comb	const constant zero, one, lohi, 32-bit value	4
2	comb	wires pass through, split, bit/byte reverse, sign extend	8
3	comb	gates single logic gate, multiple logic gates, natural language	13
4	comb	bool logic equations, truth table, K-map, waveform, natural language	15
5	comb	mux various bitwidths and number of inputs, mux/demux	9
6	comb	codes encoder, decoder, priority encoder, graycode, BCD, ASCII, parity	14
7	comb	arith add/sub, popcount, multiplication, shift/rotate, comparison, ALU, sorter	17
8	comb	fsm FSM tables and diagrams for next state and output logic	9
9	comb	param parameterized: gates, mux, encoder, decoder, priority encoder, rotator	8
10	seq	gates single gate, multiple gates, natural language	9
11	seq	bool truth table, waveform	5
12	seq	sreg shift registers: SISO, PISO, SIPO, universal, bidir, LFSR	7
13	seq	count counters: binary, up/down, saturating, variable, decade, timer, clock	9
14	seq	edge edge detect, edge capture, edge counters, max switching	5
15	seq	arb arbiters: priority, rotational oblivious, round robin, grant-hold, weighted	5
16	seq	fsm FSM tables and diagrams, natural language	13
17	seq	mem 1r1w, 2r1w register file (forwarding, reg zero, byte enables), 1s1w CAM	6
18	seq	arith bit serial incrementer, bit serial adder, byte-serial adder, accumulator	4
19	seq	pipe 1/2/3-stage delay, 1/2-stage 2/3/4-input adder, 2-stage minmax	8

Implement a hardware module named TopModule with the following interface. All input and output ports are one bit unless otherwise specified.

```
- input clk
- input in0  (8 bits)
- input in1  (8 bits)
- input in2  (8 bits)
- output out01 (8 bits)
- output out   (8 bits)
```

The module should implement a two-stage pipelined three-input adder. Just the first addition of in0 and in1 should occur during the first stage, and then the second addition of this first sum and input in2 should occur during the second stage. The final result should be written to the output out at the end of the second stage. The module should write output out01 with the result of the first addition at the end of the first stage.

All transactions should have a two cycle latency (i.e., inputs on cycle i will produce the corresponding sum on cycle i+2). The module should be able to achieve full throughput, i.e., it should be able to accept new inputs every cycle and produce a valid output every cycle. Here is an example execution trace. An X indicates that the output is undefined because there is no reset signal for the pipeline registers.

cycle	in0	in1	in2	out01	out
0	00	00	00	XX	XX
1	01	02	04	00	XX
2	02	03	04	03	00
3	03	04	05	05	07
4	00	00	00	07	09
5	00	00	00	00	0c
6	00	00	00	00	00

Assume all sequential logic is triggered on the positive edge of the clock.

# Verilog TBs

- Includes simple Verilog testing framework
  - Instantiate reference and DUT modules
  - Define comparison task
  - Define test case tasks
  - Define main initial block
- Features to make it easier to debug tests
  - Easily run test cases in isolation
  - Common trace output showing DUT inputs/outputs every cycle
  - Common error reporting

```
//=====
// Prob02p01_comb_wires_8b_passthru_test
//=====

`include "test_utils.v"

module Top();
    //-----
    // Setup
    //-----

    logic clk;
    logic rst;

    TestUtils t(.*);

    //-----
    // Instantiate reference and top modules
    //-----

    logic [7:0] ref_module_in_;
    logic [7:0] ref_module_out;

    RefModule ref_module
    (
        .in_(ref_module_in_),
        .out_(ref_module_out)
    );

    logic [7:0] top_module_in_;
    logic [7:0] top_module_out;

    TopModule top_module
    (
        .in_(top_module_in_),
        .out_(top_module_out)
    );

    //-----
    // compare
    //-----
    // All tasks start at #1 after the rising edge of the clock. So we
    // write the inputs #1 after the rising edge, and check the outputs #1
    // before the next rising edge.

    task compare
    (
        input logic [7:0] in_
    );
        ref_module_in_ = in_;
        top_module_in_ = in_;

        #8;

        if (t.n != 0)
            $display( "%3d: %x %x", t.cycles, top_module_in_, top_module_out );
        `TEST_UTILS_CHECK_EQ( top_module_out, ref_module_out );
    endtask
endmodule

//-
// test_case_1_directed
//-

task test_case_1_directed();
    $display( "\ntest_case_1_directed" );

    t.reset();
    compare( 8'b0000_0000 );
    compare( 8'b0000_0001 );
    compare( 8'b0000_0010 );
    compare( 8'b0000_0100 );
    compare( 8'b0000_0100 );
    compare( 8'b0001_0001 );
    compare( 8'b0010_0010 );
    compare( 8'b0100_0100 );
    compare( 8'b1000_1000 );

endtask

//-
// test_case_2_random
//-
// svt.seed is set to a known value in the reset() task, so when use
// $urandom(t.seed) we will get reproducible random numbers no matter
// the order that test cases are executed.

logic [7:0] test_case_2_random_data;
task test_case_2_random();
    $display( "\ntest_case_2_random" );

    t.reset();
    for (int i = 0; i < 20; i = i+1)
        compare( $urandom(t.seed) );

endtask

//-
// main
//-
// We start with a #1 delay so that all tasks will essentially start at
// #1 after the rising edge of the clock.

initial begin
    #1;

    if ((t.n <= 0) || (t.n == 1)) test_case_1_directed();
    if ((t.n <= 0) || (t.n == 2)) test_case_2_random();

    $write("\n");
    $finish;
end
```

# Python Test Scripts

- Includes API to enable a single Python test script to be applied across Verilog and five Python-embedded DSLs
  - constructor (create module from source file)
  - reset module
  - write port
  - read port
  - tick\_phase0, tick\_phase1
  - cleanup
- Each Python-embedded DSL requires ~100 lines of Python code

Pytest library for testing &  
Hypothesis library used for  
advanced random testing

```
=====
# Prob02p01_comb_wires_8b_passthru_test
=====

from pyhdl_eval.cfg import Config, InputPort, OutputPort
from pyhdl_eval.core import run_sim
from pyhdl_eval import strategies as pst

from hypothesis import settings, given
from hypothesis import strategies as st

-----
# Configuration
-----

config = Config(
    ports = [
        { "in": InputPort(8) },
        { "out": OutputPort(8) },
    ],
)

-----
# test_case_directed
-----

def test_case_directed( pytestconfig ):
    run_sim( pytestconfig, __file__, config,
        [
            0b0000_0000,
            0b0000_0001,
            0b0000_0010,
            0b0000_0100,
            0b0000_0100,
            0b0001_0001,
            0b0010_0010,
            0b0100_0100,
            0b1000_1000,
        ]
    )

-----
# test_case_random
-----

@settings(deadline=1000,max_examples=20)
@given( st.lists(pst.bits(8)) )
def test_case_random( pytestconfig, test_vectors ):
    run_sim( pytestconfig, __file__, config, test_vectors )
```

Support for specifying parameters and startup cycles

run\_sim compares Python-embedded DSL to Verilog reference via PyMTL3/Verilator

```
=====
# pyhdl_eval.myhdl
=====
# PyHDL-Eval support for MyHDL.

import importlib
import types
import myhdl

from pyhdl_eval.bits import Bits

class TopModuleMyHDL():

    def __init__( s, file_name, config ):

        loader = importlib.machinery.SourceFileLoader("TopModule",file_name)
        mod = types.ModuleType(loader.name)
        loader.exec_module(mod)

        # ... ~30 lines of code to dynamically add ports ...

        # Create a top level wrapper for hardware module

        @myhdl.block
        def test_top():
            top = mod.TopModule( *signal_list, **config.parameters )

            @myhdl.always(myhdl.delay(5))
            def clkgen():
                s.signals.clk.next = not s.signals.clk

            return top, clkgen

        s.sim = test_top()

    def reset( s ):
        if s.has_reset:
            s.signals.reset.next = 1
            s.sim.run_sim( 30, quiet=True )
            s.signals.reset.next = 0

    def write( s, port_name, value ):
        if isinstance( value, Bits ):
            value = value.uint()
        port = getattr( s.signals, port_name )
        port.next = value

    def read( s, port_name ):
        myhdl_modbv = getattr( s.signals, port_name )
        nbits = len(myhdl_modbv)
        return Bits(nbits,int(myhdl_modbv))

    def tick_phase0( s ):
        s.sim.run_sim( 8, quiet=True )

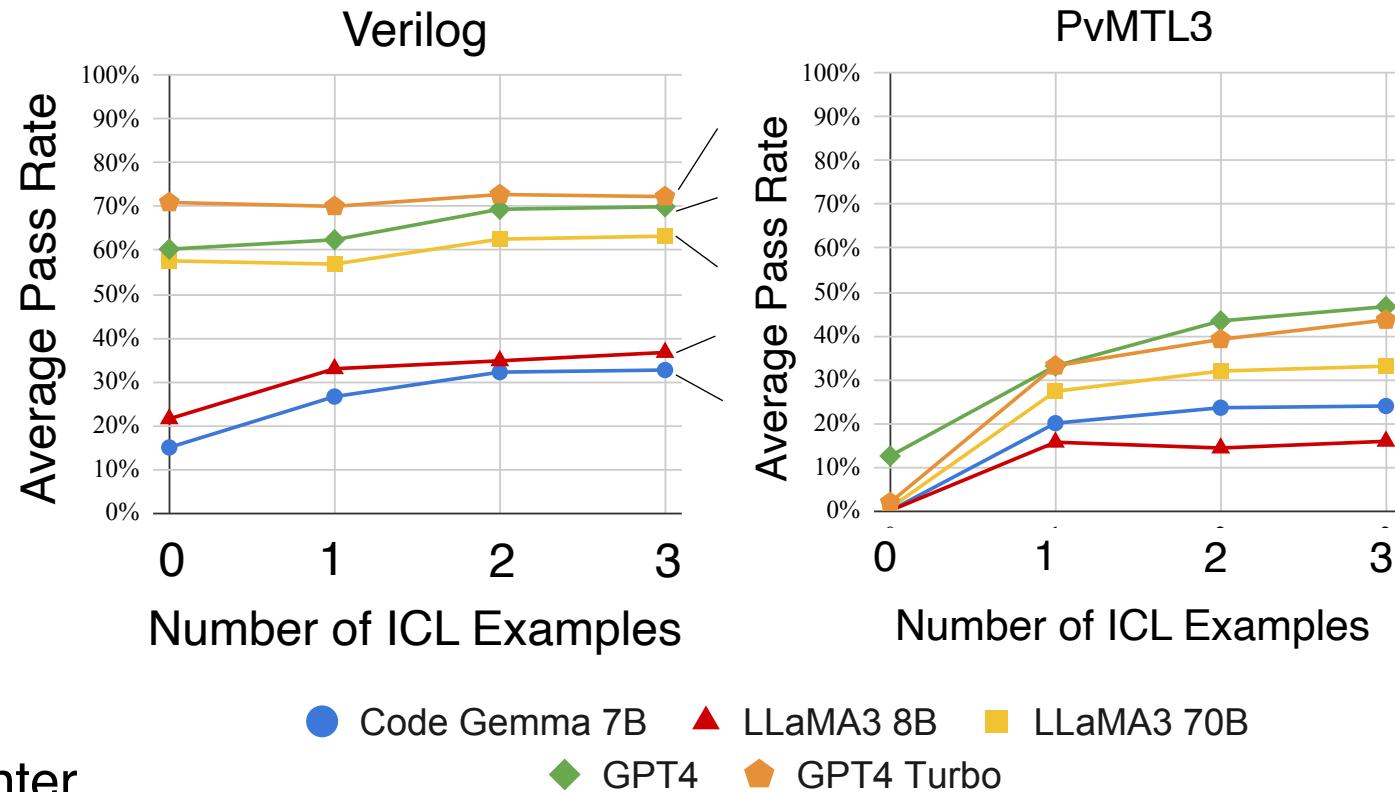
    def tick_phase1( s ):
        s.sim.run_sim( 2, quiet=True )

    def cleanup( s ):
        s.sim.quit_sim()
```

# PyHDL-Eval Results: ICL for Verilog & PyMTL3

DSL	Num ICL Ex	Code Gemma	LLaMA3 7B	LLaMA3 8B	LLaMA3 70B	GPT4	GPT4 Turbo
Verilog	0	14.9%	21.5%	57.5%	60.2%	71.0%	
Verilog	1	26.6%	33.0%	56.7%	62.4%	70.1%	
Verilog	2	32.2%	34.7%	62.4%	69.3%	72.7%	
Verilog	3	32.7%	36.6%	63.2%	69.9%	72.2%	
PyMTL3	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	13.2%	2.0%	
PyMTL3	1	20.0%	15.7%	27.3%	33.1%	33.2%	
PyMTL3	2	23.5%	14.3%	31.9%	43.5%	39.2%	
PyMTL3	3	23.9%	15.9%	33.0%	47.0%	43.6%	

- Up to three ICL examples
  - 8-bit combinational incrementer
  - 8-bit registered incrementer
  - 8-bit parameterized registered incrementer
- ICL for Verilog
  - ICL examples help smaller models more than larger models
  - ICL examples also help LLaMA3 70B and GPT4
  - ICL examples do not significantly help GPT4 Turbo

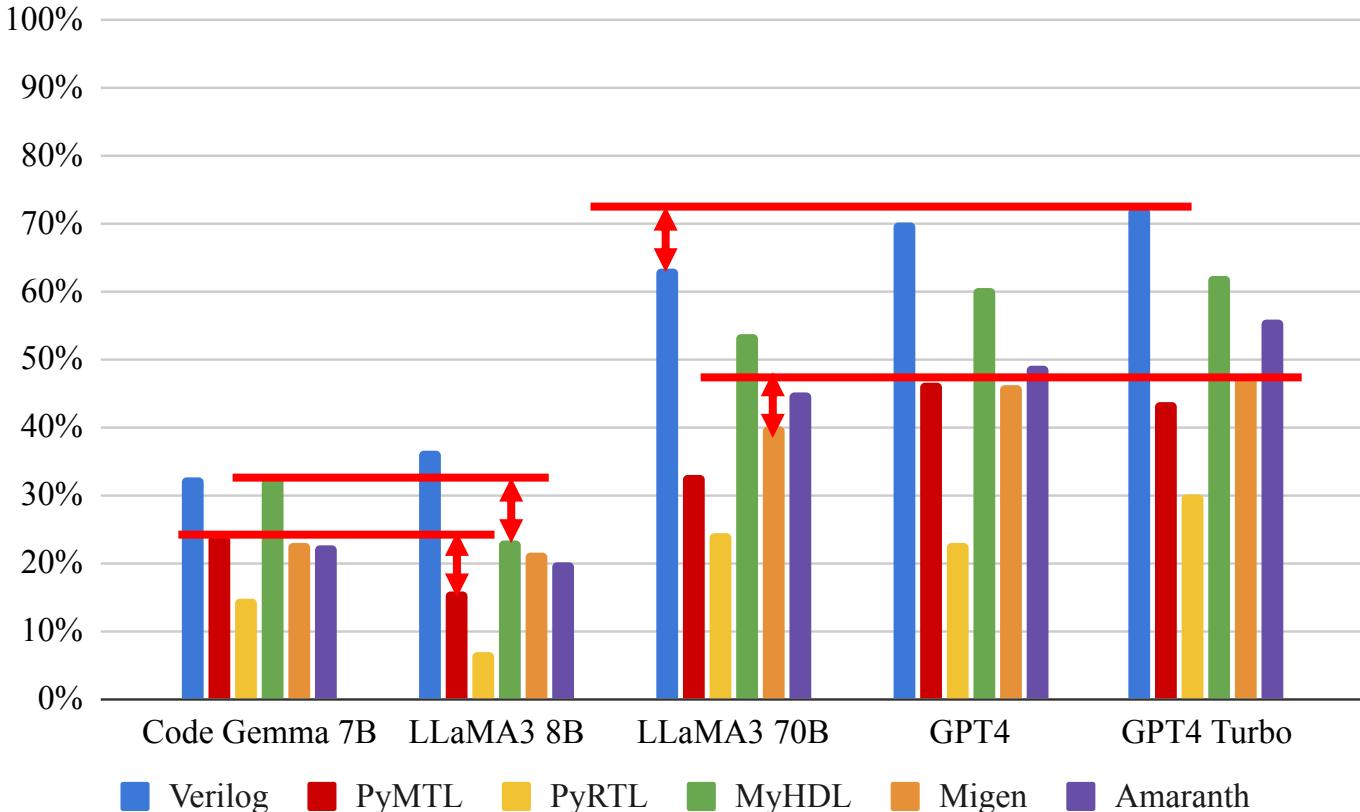


ICL is critical for  
Python-embedded DSLs  
(even for GPT4 Turbo)!

# PyHDL-Eval Results: Comparing Embedded DSLs

DSL	Num Ex	Code				
		ICL	Gemma	Llama3 7B	Llama3 8B	Llama3 70B
						GPT4
Verilog	3	32.7%	36.6%	63.2%	69.9%	72.2%
PyMTL3	3	23.9%	15.9%	33.0%	47.0%	43.6%
PyRTL	3	14.7%	6.9%	24.4%	22.9%	29.8%
MyHDL	3	32.8%	23.1%	53.8%	61.0%	62.0%
Migen	3	22.9%	21.4%	40.2%	46.0%	47.3%
Amaranth	3	22.4%	20.7%	45.2%	49.4%	56.0%

- State-of-the-art GPT4 Turbo does reasonably well on Verilog specification-to-RTL tasks
- Larger open models (LLaMA3 70B) nearing larger closed models (GPT4, GPT4 Turbo)
- Smaller code foundation model (Code Gemma 7B) outperforms smaller general foundation model (LLaMA3 8B) on Python-embedded DSL
- LLMs have more success on specification-to-RTL tasks targeting MyHDL vs other Python-embedded DSLs



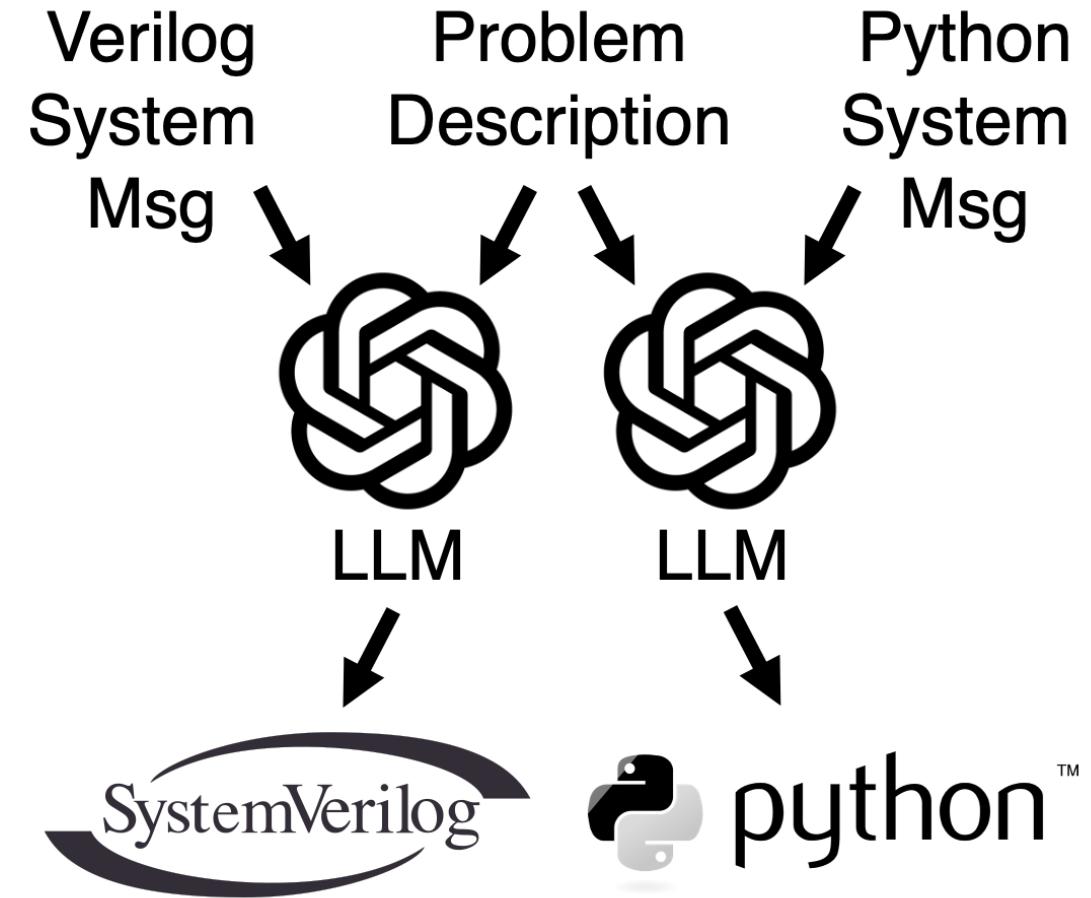
Ultimately, our findings do not support the original hypothesis that LLMs would be naturally more effective targeting Python-embedded DSLs

# PyHDL-Eval Results: Pass Rate vs. Subclasses

Problem	Num	Code Gemma 7B						LLaMA3 8B						LLaMA3 70B						GPT4					GPT4 Turbo							
		Ver	PyM	PyR	MyH	Mig	Ama	Ver	PyM	PyR	MyH	Mig	Ama	Ver	PyM	PyR	MyH	Mig	Ama	Ver	PyM	PyR	MyH	Mig	Ama	Ver	PyM	PyR	MyH	Mig	Ama	
Category	Probs	86	100	69	0	100	98	85	95	25	0	100	100	100	100	76	0	100	100	100	100	98	81	0	100	100	100	100	99	0	100	100
1	comb const	4	86	100	69	0	100	98	85	95	25	0	100	100	100	100	76	0	100	100	100	100	98	81	0	100	100	100	100			
2	comb wires	8	49	36	26	24	49	52	58	28	24	27	43	29	67	44	49	39	73	61	92	41	48	46	64	56	89	76	46	58	86	76
3	comb gates	13	62	49	5	53	53	53	65	45	5	45	54	48	96	80	42	84	84	90	99	92	63	83	93	91	99	88	57	76	96	90
4	comb bool	15	31	40	8	36	28	32	35	38	0	44	32	31	49	55	33	54	47	51	57	52	46	60	56	55	56	58	46	61	57	60
5	comb mux	9	58	82	7	84	23	8	53	19	0	45	13	8	96	83	63	100	51	73	98	95	12	99	47	66	85	92	52	98	62	89
6	comb codes	14	6	17	0	26	10	9	16	4	0	9	3	4	38	23	2	32	26	13	64	34	3	63	29	46	68	48	46	65	21	54
7	comb arith	17	47	24	25	48	32	31	46	14	16	41	24	28	68	37	36	67	56	59	76	30	38	65	49	48	84	27	46	76	62	66
8	comb fsm	9	0	1	0	7	0	0	3	9	0	9	1	0	41	66	0	75	27	20	81	78	0	81	44	53	83	43	61	78	26	66
9	comb param	8	23	31	11	20	24	23	40	21	13	10	20	4	62	49	24	42	44	57	83	45	16	55	37	44	88	43	33	64	49	67
10	seq gates	9	73	13	29	67	48	51	81	2	0	41	50	56	95	0	23	87	67	74	89	59	19	87	77	66	99	42	0	89	57	76
11	seq bool	5	0	1	0	8	0	0	8	0	0	11	1	1	33	2	3	22	10	6	43	53	11	72	24	12	11	1	51	31	32	
12	seq sreg	7	41	0	0	47	0	0	20	0	0	6	0	0	64	0	0	3	2	49	59	2	0	18	24	36	71	0	0	41	22	37
13	seq count	9	39	18	25	49	17	22	46	3	14	11	14	23	82	2	8	82	27	29	83	46	6	82	29	38	89	39	0	90	61	46
14	seq edge	5	11	6	9	2	5	4	22	8	11	3	17	28	41	1	32	41	40	39	46	50	25	67	43	41	62	51	4	66	56	54
15	seq arb	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	17	0	0	1	0	0	10	0	0	2	0	0
16	seq fsm	13	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	51	3	2	52	6	17	30	22	0	42	6	5	29	12	0	36	3	12
17	seq mem	6	36	4	0	46	2	0	36	0	0	28	0	0	91	0	0	68	16	26	92	15	0	81	58	69	90	2	0	75	13	13
18	seq arith	4	25	0	0	0	0	0	24	0	0	0	0	0	25	0	5	4	1	0	35	3	3	3	5	14	21	16	0	6	5	3
19	seq pipe	8	24	16	36	27	26	25	47	12	31	36	33	33	63	23	58	45	42	51	58	55	39	68	47	54	63	46	7	41	53	61
<b>Average Pass Rate</b>		33	24	15	33	23	22	37	16	7	23	21	21	63	33	24	54	40	45	70	47	23	61	46	49	72	44	30	62	47	56	

# Key Contributions

- This is the first LLM evaluation framework for hardware design targeting multiple Python-embedded DSLs
- In-context learning is critical for improving the LLM pass rate for Python-embedded DSLs
- Rigorous analysis of LLMs targeting both Verilog and five Python-embedded DSLs suggest LLMs achieve higher pass rates when targeting Verilog



<https://github.com/cornell-brg/pyhdl-eval>