
Subject: Re: writing a structure with pointers
Posted by [davidf](#) on Wed, 15 Jul 1998 07:00:00 GMT
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Lisa Bryan (lbryan@arete-az.com) writes:

> Could someone tell me the easiest way to do the following.
>
> state = {.....big long huge structure with many substructures and lots
>
> of pointers all over the place....}
> writeu,unit,state
>
> I'm trying to write my state structure into an unformatted file and
> get the error:
>
> WRITEU: Expression containing pointers not allowed in this context:
> STATE.

Oh, oh. Looks like someone will have to write a recursive procedure to example the fields of structures and dereference the pointer fields. It is a shame there isn't a DEREFERENCE keyword that could be used with the WRITEU command.

The alternative, of course, is to SAVE the structure. SAVE will store the pointers along with the data they point to, so that all can be RESTORED later. This is not always my preferred solution, since it is not guaranteed to work with IDL upgrades and variables that are not named carefully can be a problem. I can imagine that pointer variables might be even more difficult to handle than normal variables.

Absent RSI adding some capability to WRITEU, how about you let us know when you have this program written, Lisa. :-)

Cheers,

David

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