Craig has hit the nail on the head with many of his suggestions.
There are many changes that could be made to IDL that would be convenient to
some but inconvenient to others. The best changes, however, would be those
that improve IDLs useability to everyone (no matter how small the
improvement).

In particular:

Craig Markwardt wrote:

> * The concept of an empty array (null data type).
> I've mentiond this before. It would avoid special cases for WHERE()
> commands. Also, it would make it much easier to do list processing,

> * Short-hand notation to index arrays from the end.
> It pains me to have to use N_ELEMENTS() to find out the size of an array
before indexing it.
> I've wondered whether we could just be allowed to use "*" in an expression,
> like MATRIX(0:*-1) in place of MATRIX(0:N_ELEMENTS(MATRIX)-2)

> * A way to index strings like arrays.
> I know we can use STRMID and STRPUT, but it seems that an array-like
> notation would fit so much better with the philosophy of IDL.

I think changing these 3 small details would add alot of elegance to IDL, and
would benefit everyone.

Brad Gom