
Subject: Re: translating an array name to a string
Posted by [John-David T. Smith](#) on Thu, 19 Oct 2000 07:00:00 GMT
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Craig Markwardt wrote:

>
> Craig Markwardt <craigmnet@cow.physics.wisc.edu> writes:
>> Second, your check to see if a variable is undefined is rather
>> convoluted. It involves two passes to get it right. I prefer instead
>> to use the N_ELEMENTS command to immediately determine whether a
>> variable is undefined. Unlike *assigning* an undefined variable,
>> which does produce an error, simply taking the N_ELEMENTS of an
>> undefined variable will not cause an error.
>
> Ooops, this is actually a mistake on my part, at least on versions of
> IDL earlier than v5.3.
>
> ROUTINE_NAMES(NAME, FETCH=1) will
>
> * succeed if a variable exists and is defined
> * return an undefined value if the variable exists but is undefined
> * utterly fail if the variable doesn't exist, stopping execution

That's not the behavior I see in 5.3. I get the 2nd behavior for both
of the latter two cases, and your first code version works as
advertised. (I like it better too.)

JD

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