

---

Subject: Re: IDL interpreter questions - can someone (D.Fanning) explain - TIA  
Posted by [Craig Markwardt](#) on Sat, 19 May 2001 17:20:12 GMT

[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

---

<mankoff@I.HATE.SPAM.lasp.colorado.edu> writes:

> On 18 May 2001, Craig Markwardt wrote:  
>> As for continuations, closures, etc., these are computer science  
>> jargon for specific language behaviors. IDL has none of them. I  
>> understand continuations to be a way for execution contexts to be  
>> suspended, saved, and later restored. Perhaps the CATCH error  
>> handling technique is a nascent continuation. Alas, this has nothing  
>> to do with the CONTINUE reserved word recently added to FOR and WHILE  
>> loops.  
>  
> ok, i get it.  
>  
> But if you want to "suspend, save, restore" the execution state, wouldn't  
> "save, /vars" and "save, /all" simulate this to some extent?

Yes, sort of, but a formal continuation also saves the execution context, not just the variables. Take a look at CATCH for exception handling and you will see that CATCH can essentially return \*twice\*. Once in the normal program flow, and a second time if an error occurs.

So, internally CATCH saves the execution context so that when an error happens the execution can resume again within CATCH. To be honest I don't totally understand formal continuations, but I think CATCH is a rudimentary example of one.

Craig

--

-----  
Craig B. Markwardt, Ph.D.      EMAIL: [craigmnet@cow.physics.wisc.edu](mailto:craigmnet@cow.physics.wisc.edu)  
Astrophysics, IDL, Finance, Derivatives | Remove "net" for better response  
-----