
Subject: passing structure elements... by value?

Posted by [Randall Skelton](#) on Fri, 13 Jul 2001 16:03:39 GMT

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Hi all,

I am seem to be somewhat confused on passing structure... this *almost* seems like one of those dreaded 'pass by reference/pass by value' problems...

I have a simple routine that increments the value of a structure:

```
pro test, mod_struct
  for i=0, n_tags(mod_struct)-1 do begin
    mod_struct.(i) = mod_struct.(i) + 1
  endfor
end
```

As expected, this will increment all of the values in a passed structure.

```
IDL> struct = {A:0, B:0} & big = replicate(struct,3)
IDL> print, big
{  0  0}{  0  0}{  0  0}
IDL> test, big
IDL> print, big
{  1  1}{  1  1}{  1  1}
```

But, when I try and increment a single element in the structure it fails?

```
IDL> struct = {A:0, B:0} & big = replicate(struct,3)
IDL> test, big[0]
IDL> print, big
{  0  0}{  0  0}{  0  0}
^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^
```

I expected the ^^ element above to be ones? Is there any way to force IDL to pass this by reference instead of passing by value? It would be nice if you could put brackets around the thing you want to pass by reference... something like '(big[0])'

Have a good weekend all!
Randall

PS: I'm sure Liam's new book answers this...
