
Subject: Re: Naive pointer question ?

Posted by [Paul van Delst](#) on Tue, 22 Jan 2002 22:14:05 GMT

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trouble wrote:

>
> From my understanding, pointers are useful in C where you have the
> option of passing by value or by reference, but in IDL it seems one
> *always* passes by reference (insofar as any variable passed to a
> function and then changed within that function is also changed in the
> calling function).
>
> So I was wondering, what is the benefit of explicitly using pointers
> in IDL ?

Let's you easily create complex data structures at the very least (which may or may not be a Good Thing). E.g. imagine a data array where each "element" was another array, and each one was a different size. One probably could gin together a regular ol' structure containing (non-pointer) arrays I'm sure, but the code would probably look like chook scratchings through your dog's dinner.

paulv

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