
Subject: Re: When Ptr_New doesn't work
Posted by [Richard Younger](#) on Wed, 23 Jan 2002 17:27:17 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

JD Smith wrote:

[...]

> The problem is with IDL's somewhat strict definition of what can
> constitute a "left-hand", or assignable, value. It handles the simple
> case of:
>
> IDL> (((a)))=1
>
> without choking, but throw anything more complicated at the LHS, and it
> often falls down. It's a known weakness of IDL, revealed in a
> complicated way. ;) One good rule of thumb is that, if the LHS contains
> subscripts, the last character before the "=" (modulo whitespace),
> should be "]" (ok Craig, or ")").

[...]

This seems very strange to me. I think of parenthesis as not modifying their arguments at all, since they should (in my own little idl, er, ideal world) change only precedence and not value. Go figure. As you say, it must be fallout from dynamic typing and/or that incomplete operator precedence.

I am in the habit of adding parens everywhere I can when constructing one of those long complicated lines of code from the inside out. I then make sure the thing works, start from the outside in and remove those that seem unnecessary. I'm completely suprised I haven't been frustrated by this quirk before. I guess I must have never put an outside pair on a LHS, or never noticed the error for something else.

Thanks for clearing things up, JD. It's nice to know why things are screwy, even if it is "because that's the way they are."

Best,
Rich

--
Richard Younger MIT Lincoln Laboratory
Phone: (781)981-4464 244 Wood St.
Fax: (781)981-0122 Lexington, MA 02421
