
Subject: Re: CALL_EXTERNAL and memory allocation
Posted by [Michael Zingale](#) on Sun, 10 Mar 2002 21:42:19 GMT
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I typically do something like the following:

in IDL:

```
string = ''
```

```
ierr = call_external('lib.so', 'read_string', string)
```

and in C:

```
IDL_STRING* string = (IDL_STRING *) argv[0];
```

then fill string.s with the string.

To do an array of strings, it is a little more complicated. If you do

```
unklabels = strarr(num),
```

you must initialize each string with a UNIQUE value, otherwise, IDL gives them the same memory address. I do something like this:

```
unklabels = strarr(nvar)

; this is important -- each string must be initialized to a unique
; 'word', otherwise all the unklabels will share the same address in
; memory
for i = 0, nvar-1 do begin
    unklabels[i] = string(i, format = '(i4)')
endfor
```

Then I can fill this in IDL w/o problems.

Mike

lyubo wrote:

> I have to get back a string from C, and if I have a null string
> defined in IDL and passed to C it won't work, because there
> isn't any memory allocated to the string.

>

> In general, how can I allocate memory for a string in IDL?

>

> lyubo

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