

Reimar Bauer (R.Bauer@fz-juelich.de) writes:

- > What is your estimation in teaching people never have programmed before.
- > At the moment my feeling is if we don't start with objects by beginners it
- > is more difficult to get them later to work on objects too.
- > But on the other hand if someone has only small time to solve his problems
- > by idl without a "catalyst object library" it would better for him to show
- > him the "object free idl".

I'm not exactly sure why people are afraid of objects.  
Certainly the basics of object programming can be taught  
in half a day. I make sure I include at least this much time  
in any IDL programming class I teach.

And while it is true that a library of objects makes application  
development MUCH easier, I know for a fact that half a day is  
enough to get a number of people hooked for good! Objects can  
be that powerful. Even simple objects. (Rob Dimeo got turned on  
over dinner one night, for goodness sake! I didn't even have to  
draw any diagrams.)

- > I think teaching objects will be always nearly the same as teaching of
- > writing library routines. In objects there is quite no difference between
- > this. But normally we try to teach people to use idl dependent on the idl
- > commands because they work in very different places with several of
- > different problems.

IDL courses are probably the wrong place to try to solve  
everyone's problems. I'm happy if I can get people excited  
enough about IDL that they want to go out and learn more  
about it on their own. It is not unusual, though, for people  
to complain to me after a class about the work they have ahead  
of them. Sometimes they want to go back home and re-write \*all\*  
their IDL programs!

I don't usually recommend that. Programming evolves like everything  
else. I'm satisfied if the programs I write tomorrow are better than  
the ones I wrote yesterday. If you know about objects and are not  
completely frightened of the words "object programming", then objects  
will naturally find a way into your programs. You can't keep them  
out. :-)

- > But I believe it is very hard to teach a beginner the clever usage of
- > objects in idl with the momentanly existing objects.

Oh, I guess "clever" is in the eye of the beholder. Objects seduce you (at least if you have a bit of imagination) into being \*too\* clever. I think you write better objects if you are a bit of a dullard. Probably why my library works so well. :-)

> I hope this discussion helps to form an opinion how we should proceed  
> teaching the next classes.

Not learning about objects in an IDL programming course is like taking a woodworking course and skipping the bit about the dovetail saw. Yes, you can make boxes. They just won't be as beautiful.

Cheers,

David

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