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Subject: Re: Python and IDL

Posted by [marc schellens\[1\]](#) on Fri, 28 May 2004 16:12:14 GMT

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Probably one could write a python wrapper for CALL\_EXTERNAL or a DLM.

Note that GDL (<http://gnudatalanguage.sourceforge.net>) has an interface to python.

marc

Michael Wallace wrote:

- > I'm probably the only person here who'd be interested in this, but I
  - > guess I'll throw it out anyway.
  - >
  - > I have recently started using Python and love the language. Python is
  - > interpreted, interactive, object oriented, and has dynamic data types
  - > and dynamic typing. From this perspective, IDL and Python are very
  - > similar. There are even projects such as SciPy (<http://www.scipy.org>)
  - > which add some scientific analysis to the language.
  - >
  - > Python does have a couple nice benefits, namely the huge number of
  - > modules available where there's everything from operating system
  - > commands to networking to XML to email etc. One thing I've found myself
  - > doing recently is writing my core analysis processing code in IDL and
  - > then writing a Python wrapper around the particular code. For example,
  - > in one of my programs, I use Python to automatically download files from
  - > an FTP site and then call IDL to do the specific processing on the
  - > files. In another program, I use Python to process command line
  - > arguments and then call the appropriate IDL code based on the arguments.
  - >
  - > Currently, in my Python programs I open a pipe to an IDL process and
  - > write the IDL commands to the pipe. What I'm wondering is if there is
  - > an efficient way to send data from IDL back to Python. The only thing
  - > I've found so far is to have IDL write data to stdout and set up the
  - > Python side to read this stream. However, this can get pretty
  - > inefficient at times. Without any direct conversion between the two
  - > languages available, are there any other (i.e. better, efficient) ways
  - > to set up bi-directional interprocess communication between Python and IDL?
  - >
  - > What'd be really nice is if RSI provided some mechanism for IDL and
  - > Python to communicate at a much closer level than interprocess
  - > communication. Karl, that's a hint. ;-)
  - >
  - > -Mike
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