Subject: Re: Q: Efficient Memory handling and deallocation
Posted by Paul Probert on Thu, 04 May 1995 07:00:00 GMT
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rutledge@hoshi.mit.edu (Bob Rutledge) wrote:
>
>
> I handle quite a bit of data, and I have been using the "save" and
> "restore" routines to manage them. It seems that IDL takes quite
> a bit of time to deallocate a variable when a new one is read in over it
> (I create a huge data structure, and "save" it, to be "restored" later).
> Further, it seems that after I have dealt with the data in the variable,
> and I would like to deallocate it (by setting the variable=0), the
memory
> does not get freed up.
>
> Suggestions?
>
> Bob

We've had that problem, and if your program iterates through the "create, do something, delete" cycle a few times you run out of memory, because the "do something" step inevitably allocates a few more bytes, and these come from the hole left by the previous delete. So on the next create you don't have a large enough contiguous block of memory. We brought this up with the support people at IDL, and they said it was the operating system's fault. But we figured out, as you did, that IDL doesn't deallocate the memory. One workaround is, at the beginning of your program, create and then immediately delete an array 2 or 3 times the size of your needs, and this will leave a hole big enough for many future reallocations.

Another technique is to give up modular programming and do everything in one big main program and never deallocate. But I would really like the people at RSI to read these complaints and fix IDL.

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