
Subject: Re: Structures

Posted by [mperrin+news](#) on Wed, 02 Mar 2005 00:21:02 GMT

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Michael Wallace <mwallace.no.spam@no.spam.swri.edu.invalid> wrote:

- > I learned all this the hard way by trying to figure out why I kept
- > getting errors when I'd attempt to use a different array size for some
- > of my structure variables. I finally ran across this in the IDL
- > documentation, but there wasn't any actual reason given for such
- > draconian policy, especially when compared to the rest of the language.

I *think* it's something along these lines: We want to be able to create arrays of structs, which (from a language designer's viewpoint!) is much, much easier when all the structs are the same size. If you let array sizes inside of structs vary, then you might have foo1.somearray with 10 elements, and foo2.somearray with 100. Then when the user does bar = [foo1,foo2], suddenly you're dealing with an array of heterogenous data types and memory access becomes a whole lot uglier and more inefficient. At that point, it's probably easiest just to switch to Perl. ;-)

- > It's really not a big deal since I can create anonymous structs
- > everywhere instead of using named structures. Do named structures

You can also create named structures containing pointers to arrays, too. This very problem is what finally pushed me over the potential barrier into learning how to do pointers in IDL!

- Marshall
