Subject: Re: IDL alternatives?
Posted by patterso on Wed, 31 May 1995 07:00:00 GMT
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Charles Cavanaugh (cavanaug@uars1.acd.ucar.edu) wrote:
: In article <3qh748$kc2@nntp.Stanford.EDU>, zowie@banneker.stanford.edu (Craig DeForest) writes:

: >Well, I got tired of buggy behavior from my old copy of IDL (3.5.0 for
: >Ultrix) (it's dumping core again), and called RSI to get a price on
: >the update to 4.0. I've been using IDL for about six months, enough
: >time to be excited by the functionality, and horrified at the 1970s
: >programmer interface.

: I am probably opening myself up for a resounding flaming, but I just
: could not help myself . . .

: I read in various places (Mr. Deforest's above posting being one) about
: how IDL's API is so-o-o-o horrible. I do not understand this. To me,
: IDL seems like a Fortran 90 - Pascal morph, with dynamic typing,
: automatic variables, automatic garbage collection and a useful event-
: driven paradigm all thrown in the mix.

I wonder if he was referring not to the actual language itself, but to the lack of development tools for IDL? There is no debugger for example. No integrated environemnt. No way to compile stand alone code. Perhaps this is what he meant by the programmer interface? (It's how I interpreted it anyway).

As somebody who has often had to adapt and update other people's IDL/PV-WAVE code, I know how difficult it is to write easily maintainable code in these languages. And there are no tools for this purpose. Even the emacs IDL mode is not officially supported. This can be a real probelm when trying to develop and debug large systems written in IDL/PV-WAVE.

Tim