Subject: IDL objects (not object graphics) tutorial?
Posted by Richard French on Thu, 24 Nov 2005 02:33:31 GMT
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I'd like to learn how to make use of IDL objects. I'm not ready for object graphics yet, because I'd like to understand INITS and SELF and classes and methods before worrying about viewports and plots disappearing because I am not using the correct projection scheme. I've scoured the web in vain looking for a simple tutorial on how and when to use objects in IDL. I've found a few generic tutorials praising the virtues of object-oriented programming, but almost none of the examples give me any sense of why one would go to the trouble. For example, one tutorial describes an object that can return constants such as the speed of light or Planck's constant, but it isn't obvious to me why this is superior to a simple function that returns clight() or PlancksConst().

What I am looking for is something with a simple application or two in which it is both clear why using objects is superior AND which explains what is meant by self and methods and classes. Without some specific examples to look at, I am having a hard time making sense of the nomenclature or of the value of the approach.

This is prompted in part by David's nifty little pixmap object that I've already made use of in a new program - thanks, David.

Someone must be out there just waiting to get rich writing a book on this topic. The second volume can be about object graphics - I'd settle for the first volume for now - a gentle introduction to objects in IDL. Any suggestions? Thanks!

Dick French