Subject: Re: Pass by value and performance
Posted by David Fanning on Wed, 14 Dec 2005 15:53:08 GMT
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Kenneth P. Bowman writes:

> True, and I considered that possibility. It would work fine for passing
> the arrays amongst my own routines, but I have to dereference the
> pointer to pass the array itself into system routines. Dereferencing a
> pointer is an expression, is it not?, and expressions are passed by
> value.

Ah, you would be interested to read the new pointer
section of my book that I just completely yesterday!
(Well, actually, you could read the damn pointer tutorial
where I learned about this, too.) Here is the news that
even I didn't fully appreciate until I put it down in my
own words. Pointers are just regular IDL variables!!

Consider this function:

```
  PRO JUNK, var
   var = var * 5
  END
```

And do this:

```
  IDL> a = Ptr_New(5)
  IDL> junk, *a
```

Here is the question. What is the result of this command?

```
   IDL> Print, *a
```

The answer might surprise you! :-)

Cheers,

David

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Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: http://www.dfanning.com/