
Subject: file_lines and expand path
Posted by [FL](#) on Fri, 04 Aug 2006 15:23:37 GMT
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Hi,

I am implementing file_lines in FL and was wondering what to return when the input path expands to multiple files. The IDL reference guide says nothing. I have run IDL and got curious result:

```
IDL> help, file_lines('*.pro')  
<Expression>  LONG64  =          15
```

I have 448 .pro files in the current directory, with a total of 10k lines. IDL seems to be randomly picking a single file and reporting its length (probably the first match in readdir()).

What do you expect to get?

Possibilities:

1. never expand (but why do we have NOEXPAND then?)
2. give an error message if the expansion results in more than one file
3. return the total length of files
4. return the total length of files if a new keyword TOTAL was set
5. do as IDL, pick a single file silently

thanks,
lajos
