
Subject: Re: Naming batch files and main-level programs

Posted by [Robi](#) on Thu, 02 Nov 2006 12:27:46 GMT

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Hey there Greg,

greg michael wrote:

> I don't see the problem, though - surely the batch files should be
> doing something more specific than the prog files, so use a name that
> reflects that...

You're right, the batch file should be descriptive, so, ya know, I have batch files like `accumulate_map.pro`, but that doesn't tell me it's a batch file when I do a directory listing. And there might be a function named `accumulate_spectra.pro`... both very descriptive names, but not in the sense of telling me whether a routine or batch file or main-level program lives inside, so your suggestion isn't quite the whole story. The key is, yes, there should be something descriptive in the name to differentiate batch files and main-level programs from routines. But that descriptive name has to include some specifier to denote its batch-ness or main-level-ness. Something like `accumulate_map.bat.pro`, well, that might do the trick. Or `accumulate_map.ml.pro` or `accumulate_map.main.pro` for a main-level program.

> The other scheme looks ugly to me - won't it mean that IDL can't find any of your routines?

Sorry, I don't understand this question. All routines should be stored in files ending in `.pro`, so IDL will always be able to find them if you specify the `!PATH` correctly. The ugly scheme you're referring to was a stab at differentiating the batch files and main-level programs from real routines (functions and procedures) while still maintaining the `.pro` suffix so that IDL will be able to find them. I guess I'm thinking that there's no way to avoid the gist of the scheme, but I agree, the `.idl` and `.idlprc` part are pretty ugly to me, and seemingly pulled out of the blue. I guess `.bat.pro` and `.main.pro` might be a bit more descriptive.

Also, I think I'm being exhaustive when I state that the only types of code that can be stored in text files and then used in some fashion by IDL are routines, batch files and main-level programs. I've been using these for years and always wondered if other people had worried about differentiating them. I hadn't really started to trip over my own feet until this last week when I started a huge project in a very ad-hoc fashion and ended up with a ton of batch files and main-level programs. They're nice for playing with complex data sets because they allow you to have the functionality of a function or procedure but also allow you to have command

line access to the variables that are defined at the MAIN level.

Best -Tim.
