
Subject: Re: Is it an IDL bug or feature?

Posted by [chase](#) on Thu, 26 Oct 1995 07:00:00 GMT

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>>>> > "Liyun" == Liyun Wang <Liyun.Wang.1@gsfc.nasa.gov> writes:

Liyun> In a process of debugging our IDL codes, we found an
Liyun> interesting case which you may want to be aware of. Consider
Liyun> this:

```
IDL> b = 1  
IDL> a = b(1,2,1)
```

Liyun> IDL will complain about subscript being out of range. But watch this:

```
IDL> b = 1  
IDL> a = b([2],[1],[2])  
Liyun> or  
IDL> a = b([[2],[1],[10],[30]])  
Liyun> or even  
IDL> a = b([[2],[1],[10],[30]], [[20],[12],[70],[20]])
```

Liyun> What do you think IDL will respond? Will it issue a syntax
Liyun> error message? Wrong! As long as the subscript indices of a
Liyun> *scalar* variable, like b here, are arrays with the same
Liyun> dimension, IDL does not care nor complain, no matter how many
Liyun> array elements you give. Do you consider this to be a potential
Liyun> bug or a feature of IDL?

It is not a bug. The specific behaviors are clearly documented
features in Chapter 5 of the "IDL User's Guide" (version 3.5 and
version 4, perhaps earlier too) under the subsections "Subscript
Examples" and "Array Subscripts".

It does seem unfortunate the behavior seems inconsistent. I find that
both behaviors are useful.

Chris

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Bldg 24-E188
The Applied Physics Laboratory
The Johns Hopkins University
Laurel, MD 20723-6099
(301)953-6000 x8529
chris.chase@jhuapl.edu
