
Subject: Re: Yet again, The Sky is Falling!
Posted by [Sven Geier](#) on Mon, 12 Mar 2007 22:04:10 GMT
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mgalloy@gmail.com wrote:

> I'm talking about two parameters that are both passed a single named
> variable (like Paul's mypro example). While legal, I don't think this
> is a good technique for clear code.
>

...and as usual there's exceptions where this is a perfectly good thing to do. I have a routine in front of me that dynamically improves a "guess" of some number. It takes an input and an output parameter and in almost all cases you want to give it the same variable there. Schematically like this

```
x = someOldGuess  
improve,x,x
```

where "improve" takes the first "x" as its input, copies the values to a local variable, performs a bunch of magic and returns the result in the "second x". From the outside, the variable "x" simply has a new, improved value (which is the purpose of "improve"). However, there can be extreme cases where one might want to have a little more introspection and where one might want to check the returned value before using it and in that case one can make it

```
improve,x,y  
if (some test here) then x=y
```

or such.

I second David's statement that one of the nice things about IDL is that one can do all these weird things. As someone once said (about C++, I think) "all the power and all the elegance of a hand grenade": It ain't always pretty but it gets things done.

- S

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<http://www.sgeier.net>

My real email address does not contain any "Z"s.
