
Subject: Re: efficient use of call_external
Posted by [rivers](#) on Wed, 22 May 1996 07:00:00 GMT
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In article <4ntrfg\$697@acs1.star.net>, nelson@star.net (Nelson Tarr) writes:
> I am interested in any information on the speed improvement that can
> be expected in translating parts of an IDL procedure to C. I plan on
> using "call_external" to invoke the functions within my C module.

The answer depends entirely upon what your IDL code does. If you were to try to rewrite the IDL FFT routine in C, and use CALL_EXTERNAL to call it, you would probably have to work hard to make it any faster than using IDL. On the other hand, if you have to do some special processing on large arrays which cannot be coded in IDL to use array primitives and/or built-in IDL functions which handle arrays, then you can get 10-100 times speed improvement using CALL_EXTERNAL.

> I am also interested in suggestions about when it is most beneficial
> to use C instead of IDL.

See above, and also Chapter 12 (Efficient Programming) in the IDL User's Guide.

Mark Rivers	(312) 702-2279 (office)
CARS	(312) 702-9951 (secretary)
Univ. of Chicago	(312) 702-5454 (FAX)
5640 S. Ellis Ave.	(708) 922-0499 (home)
Chicago, IL 60637	rivers@cars3.uchicago.edu (Internet)
