
Subject: what to make of read_interfile.pro ?

Posted by [Mike\[2\]](#) on Wed, 29 Oct 2008 14:17:49 GMT

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New IDL "idiom"?

Interfile is an aged but quite straight forward image file format used in nuclear medicine. Turns out that there are some vestiges of it deep in the bowels of a certain manufacturer's reconstruction codes, so I decided it was time to come up with an interfile reader for IDL. I was pleased to see that there is a read_interfile routine that has been a part of IDL for many versions (since 1993). It doesn't work on the data I'm trying to read - in their wisdom, the people who wrote the code that wrote the data I've got called floats "float", rather than using the interfile specs which call for "short float" and "long float". I thought it would be no problem to modify read_interfile to handle this, but then I became astonished by a new IDL idiom - new to me at least.

In the code, there is a structure that handles image headers. Each header has widget_base associated with it and the uvalue for that that base is used to store the header data value. There is another widget_base uvalue that is used to handle valid choices. This is in an entirely non-gui procedure by the way. At the end of the procedure, there is a loop that "widget_control, /destroy"s the widget_bases.

Anyone have an idea of why the author might have made that choice? Were there no pointers in 1993? Maybe the original author (Goldstein) just wanted to toy with us here in the future?

Anyway, out of respect/fear/queasiness, I think I may let this procedure rest in peace and write a header cleaner/fixer to stick in between reading the header and interpreting it.

Mike
