Subject: STRING(structure) curiosity

Posted by wlandsman on Fri, 10 Apr 2009 20:30:24 GMT

I am using some old code that applies the STRING function to a
structure.   This surprised me because I didn't think it was possible.

```
IDL>  a = { v1:bindgen(5), v2:!dpi, v3:['idl','structure'] }
IDL> print,string(a)
% STRING: Struct expression not allowed in this context: A.
```

The reason it works in the old code is that it used a format statement

```
IDL> print,string(a,f='( 5i3, f10.6, 2a10) ')
  0  1  2  3  4  3.141593      idl structure
```

So it appears you can apply the STRING function to a structure but you
must then supply a format statement.   I actually like this
behavior, but I can't find it documented anywhere.   Applying STRING
to a structure allows one to efficiently write the structure to an
ASCII file, but I would think that one would always want to specify
the format in such a case.   --Wayne