On Aug 27, 12:22 am, David Fanning <n...@dfanning.com> wrote:

> Having spent more time this week than I wanted to learning
> that "too many array elements" really means "you are
> *totally* confusing me with that binsize that isn't
> really a number", I thought I might work on an article
> this weekend on "Unhelpful Help Messages".

IDL> a = findgen(10)
IDL> b = a[10]
% Attempt to subscript A with <LONG   (10)> is out of
range.

IDL> b = a[0:10]
% Subscript range values of the form low:high must be >= 0, < size,
with low <= high: A.

The first message is OK, I get the array, and the value that is wrong.
The second message is slightly less helpful, as you don't get
information which boundary is out of range. Here it isn't too bad, but
if you use the following in a function call (i.e. more than one on a
line), then things do get confusing:

IDL> a = {a:findgen(10), b:findgen(10)}
IDL> c = a.a[0:10]
% Subscript range values of the form low:high must be >= 0, < size,
with low <= high: <No name>.

Maarten