
Subject: Re: dereference with wildcard

Posted by [Carsten Lechte](#) on Tue, 09 Feb 2010 17:05:08 GMT

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PimK wrote:

```
> print, mean( (*( *pState).navtrack)[*]).lat )
```

```
> % Expression must be a scalar in this context: <POINTER  Array[2]>.
```

This is because you can only dereference scalar pointers. This is a fundamental limitation of IDL's arrays: all array elements have to be of the same scalar type. You can have arrays of pointers to anything, since the array is made up of things of the same type (i.e. pointers). If you dereferenced the whole array, you would have an array of "anything", which is not allowed. IDL refuses to evaluate the expression, even if all the pointers pointed to a scalar integer, and the resulting array would be legal in IDL.

chl
