On Jul 26, 3:44 pm, wlandsman <wlands...@gmail.com> wrote:
> which tells me right away that I am calling a function named OBJ_NEW()
> rather than subscripting an array.   But I don't believe that a =
> list(foo) will ever give an error, and it is only when trying to use
> the variable that one will encounter the (less obvious) error.

Indeed. Particularly so given the introduction of !null and that lists
can (and frequently need to) have !null elements, so even giving
list() an undefined variable is not an error:

IDL> a=list(some_undefined_name)
IDL> help,a
A   LIST <ID=1 NELEMENTS=1>
IDL> print,a
!NULL