Subject: Re: Warning: IDL 8.0 alters the behaviour of existing valid programs without any notice!

Posted by Chris[7] on Thu, 19 Aug 2010 19:35:48 GMT

View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

In reality, how many people actually use CATCH to handle the case of a
failed call to where? Maybe I'm off base here, but I'm guessing that
people either do something like

```
hit = where(data eq min(data)-1, count)
if count eq 0 then ....
```

or they don't check for a failure at all. In the former case, the code
still works fine in IDL 8. In the latter case, the data gets messed up
in an admittedly subtle way. But in that case, the "existing valid code"
isn't valid -- not checking the result of where is a bug. It wouldn't be
fair to blame IDL for that.

chris

On 8/19/10 1:57 AM, svhhaugan wrote:
> On Aug 18, 8:45 pm, "Jeff N."<jeffnettles4...@gmail.com> wrote:
>>> For IDL 8, the rules have suddenly been changed, with no warning
>>> and no way to turn it off (other than staying with version 7).
>>
>> I don't know how you can say there was no warning - ITTVIS has been
>> advertising the negative indexing feature for months now. And it was
>> completely obvious to me from the get-go that the new indexing would
>> have the effect on where() calls that you're talking about. It was
>> one of the first things I thought of.
>
> I guess we haven't been spending much time reading the advertising ;-)
> Anyhow, that's not the kind of warning I referred to.
>
> I think most researchers naively expect new features in a
> "programming
> language" to preserve the stated semantics of existing code, or at
> least
> provide (optional) warning mechanisms (compile-time or run-time)
> that'll flag those cases where the semantics have been changed.
>
> The help file for IDL 7 said "code similar to the following *can*
> be used to avoid errors", not "code similar to the following
> *should* be used, because we do not guarantee that an error will
> occur in the next version of IDL".
>

> Stein