Subject: Using wait in IDL from C

Posted by Karl Young on Fri, 11 Oct 1996 07:00:00 GMT

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I'm using the following code to call IDL from C and
it works fine except that I can't seem to make IDL
wait for keyboard input (e.g. to terminate). For
example if I stick a getchar in, it gets executed before
all the idl commands, regardless of where I put it in
the program and so is useless. It seems the compiler
is seperating all the code I send throught the pipe
and I apparently need to include some kind of
synchronization.

More specifically what I want to do is call IDL and put
up a plot, then wait for some keyboard input to terminate,
so you can view the plot as long as you want. My current
workaround is really ugly; run the process in the background,
send IDL a really long wait after putting up the plot and then
closing the plot window when done viewing (what a trainwreck
if a lot of people tried to use this at once !)

Here's a simple example:

```
#include <stdio.h>
FILE *idl;

start_idl()
{
        idl = popen("idl >/dev/null 2>&1", "w");

        if (idl == NULL) {
                printf ("error invoking idl\n");
                exit(1);
        }
}

stop_idl()
{
        pclose(idl);
}

main()
{
        char *cmd;
        start_idl();
        /*
         * send commands to idl...
         */
        cmd = "num = FindGen(40)*10\n";
        fputs(cmd, idl);
        cmd = "line = Sin(num * !DtoR)\n";
        fputs(cmd, idl);
        cmd = "Plot, num , line\n";
        fputs(cmd, idl);
        /*
         * here's where I'd like to pause but currently
         * just send a long wait, e.g. wait, 180. If I
         * put something like:
         *              getint = getchar();
         * it gets executed before the above idl calls,
         * so the program initially just waits and then
         * zooms through all the idl calls after any
         * keyboard input.
         */
        cmd = "exit\n";
        fputs(cmd, idl);

        stop_idl();
}

 ------------------------------------------------------------ -
```

Any suggestions greatly appreciated !

-- Karl Young