Subject: Re: Functions and arrays
Posted by greenwoodde on Thu, 05 Dec 1996 08:00:00 GMT
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In a previous article, William Clodius <wclodius@lanl.gov> wrote:

> Allowing '[]' to replace '()' may be a good idea, but it can provide a
> maintenance problem for old code.

Please don't underestimate the problem of maintaining old code. We have
some recent experience with this. Back in the dark ages - before IDL
even had version numbers - we wrote an external library. Then IDL 2
came along and we didn't have the time to update our library. With the
help of RSI we've now done that, but the result is that we effectively
went from IDL "v1" to v4 in one jump. Because several non-compatible
changes were introduced in the meantime we've had a number of unpleasant
surprises when people tried to dust off old code. In fact, I have to
maintain a copy of "v1" just so we can run that old code :-(

Now, personally I like the idea of replacing "()" with "[]" for arrays.
My suggestion would be to introduce "[]" as an *alternate* way of
specifying arrays. In fact, it could be documented as the *preferred*
way - to avoid the issues that started this thread.

Dave

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