
Subject: Re: Postscript settings

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Fri, 19 Aug 2011 18:43:10 GMT

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David Fanning writes:

> IDLgraphics writes:

>

>> I am enhancing a set of postscript plots, replacing the default vector

>> fonts, etc. Some of the features of the plot, such as `psym =3`, `psym`

>> `=4`, and the box around the legend, retain the thin vector font style.

>> I am aware of the `symcat` and `sym` packages, but they do not offer

>> thicker 'x' symbols or thicker but not filled diamonds or squares

>

> My version of `SymCat` certainly allows thicker symbols:

>

> `cgplot, cgdemodata(1), PSYM=symcat(4, THICK=3), SYMSIZE=3.0`

I have been having a hard time understanding why this command works to produce thicker symbols:

```
cgplot, cgdemodata(1), PSYM=symcat(4, THICK=3), SYMSIZE=3.0
```

But, this command doesn't:

```
cgplot, cgdemodata(1), PSYM=symcat(4), SYMSIZE=3.0, THICK=3
```

In theory, they both should work. `THICK` is being collected by keyword inheritance and is actually passed to the `SYMCAT` function inside of `cgPLOT`. So, why isn't it working!?

It turns out that the `SYMCAT` program is called twice in this command. Once from the command line, and a second time inside the `cgPLOT` program. When I examined the symbol just before the `SYMCAT` program is called in `cgPLOT`, the symbol is 8, not the 4 I was expecting!!

On reflection is working as I expect (I guess!), since `SYMCAT` has to return an 8 for a user symbol. I am actually creating a diamond with `USERSYM` when the initial `SYMCAT` call is made from the command line:

```
IDL> Print, SymCat(4)
      8
```

This call is made with (essential `THICK=1`), so no thickness is used. The second call is actually `SYMCAT(8, THICK=3)`, but when the symbol is 8, I just return an 8 and don't do anything

else:

```
IDL> Print, SymCat(8, THICK=3)  
8
```

I can't remember now why I decided to use USERSYM for the symbols 1,4,5,and 6, but it was probably because I wanted consistent behavior from *all* the symbols. I wonder if I should be re-thinking this. :-(

Cheers,

David

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David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.

Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.idlcoyote.com/>

Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")
