
Subject: Re: Explain Contour Plot to Me

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Sun, 11 Sep 2011 13:59:30 GMT

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alx writes:

- > Your example illustrates two flaws in NG that ITTVIS should correct as
- > soon as possible (or, possibly, for which I was not yet able to find
- > any right answers in ITTVIS documentation ...).
- > The first one is the fact that the OVERPLOT keyword overrides the font
- > and axis styles of the overplotted plot, which is a real nonsense. In
- > your case, the font size attributed to the "ctrOver" plot does
- > actually change the one of the "ctr" plot. My work around would be:
- > drawing "ctrOver" first without any axis, then "ctr" (I get the
- > correct font size, while keeping a smaller font for the isocontour
- > labels), finally pushing ctrOver in front by using the "Order" method.

I hadn't thought of overplotting **before** I had drawn the plot, but, as I say, I am having trouble adapting to the "new graphics" way of doing things and I am trying to be more flexible. I'll give this a try.

- > The second flaw, even more annoying, is the way in which the NG
- > "Colorbar" function defines its color range: by using the true min and
- > max of the (Y or Z) values of the underlying object (here your DATA
- > array, through TARGET=ctr keyword). You get 0.0134482 and 0.984703,
- > instead of 0 and 1. Setting ZRANGE=[0,1] does not work better. My
- > workaround would be: creating a new contour object (here "ctrFake")
- > with modified data having the desired range, using it as the target of
- > the colorbar, then pushing it back or deleting it.

Even though your (fake) color bar seems to be labeled correctly now, the colors don't line up with the annotations. I think we can safely conclude that it is impossible to create a color bar that actually represents the data in this very simple way.

If it were, say, Matlab graphics routines that behaved like this I am sure we would all agree that the software "doesn't friggin' work!" Since it's IDL, though, I guess I'll get out my checkbook and write a \$500 maintenance check for another load of this manure.

Cheers,

David

P.S. Please understand, my criticism of the software does

not imply criticism of the many fine and bright people working at ITTVIS. I do not know what is wrong there, though, that causes this kind of software to be produced. But ITTVIS needs to fix this, and quickly, or IDL as a product will be dead and gone.

--

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

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