
Subject: Re: Your experience with other scientific languages?

Posted by [Fabzi](#) on Tue, 12 Nov 2013 10:58:32 GMT

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Andy, Mike,

thanks for your answers! Like you I learned to really like IDL and I am efficient enough with it, but the relatively poor map projection handling and the lack of user friendly standard statistical tools (matlab for example proposes graphical ANOVA, significance tests or histogram fitting tools) are really annoying.

I will give a look at python or R and try to be able to develop in both languages in the first place. I'll let you know!

Fabien

On 11/11/2013 06:11 PM, Fabien wrote:

> IDLers,

>

> It is not my intention to start a troll-like discussion here. I am
> reading this newsgroup since a couple of years now and I really
> appreciate the friendly tone of this group (I followed some other groups
> where arrogant people argued with other arrogant people... awful).
> Having said this, I am wondering why we are never talking about other
> languages. Is it to avoid trolls like me, or because EXELIS people also
> read this group? (did I emphasize already how much I appreciate the
> reactivity of Mark and Chris on this group? ;-))

>

> To my point: I am starting a career in academia and my future employer
> and colleagues don't use IDL. I could argue with my future boss and make
> him pay for an IDL license. But I am seriously wondering if I want to do
> this during my whole career (taking the risk to always be the only one
> using IDL), and I am thinking about leaning Python. I've been searching
> a bit for pro and cons, and since I am in the atmospheric sciences I
> came to this website for example:
> <http://pyaos.johnny-lin.com/?p=544>

>

> Such a topical argument can last for ever, starting with the pros and
> cons of open-source VS commercial softwares. So I will try to limit the
> discussion to a couple of points:

>

> - Map Projections: pyproj relies on the state-of-the art proj.4, and can
> do Datum shifts (it seems). IDL's system is quite old and can't do datum
> shifts.

> - Graphics: I read in a VISualize presentation that IDL's objective was
> to be "better than Python" in plotting (can't find the PDF anymore).

> Does that mean that Python is really good at plotting?

> - Statistics: my feelings says that Python probably has many more tools
> "out-of-the-box" due to the larger community.
> - Easiness of use: I am a Linux user so I am not afraid of installing
> some packages, but I'm told that python is quite complicated in this
> respect.
>
> My question: did some of you have experience with python or similar
> languages and if yes, what was your impressions *from the IDL user
> perspective*? Any thoughts are appreciated!
>
> Thanks,
>
> Fabien
>
>
