
Subject: Re: MESSAGE facility
Posted by [thompson](#) on Thu, 24 Apr 1997 07:00:00 GMT
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Wayne Landsman <landsman@mpb.gsfc.nasa.gov> writes:

> I'm not sure if it is appropriate yet to discuss IDL V5.0, which is
> still in beta release, but this can be considered a general (and minor)
> question about the philosophy of error reporting.

> One change in IDL V5.0 is that the default response of the MESSAGE
> facility is now to include a traceback. At least, as of V5.0B5 there
> is no way to suppress this response, e.g. there is no /NOTRACEBACK
> keyword. This can lead to the following disconcerting behavior. A
> function call that in V4.0.1 yields the following response:

> IDL> a = dbfind('dec>0')
> % DB_INFO: No data base file(s) opened

> becomes in V5.0B5

> STIS>a = dbfind('dec>0')
> % DB_INFO: No data base file(s) opened
> % Error occurred at: DB_INFO 112/share/idl/astro_util/db_info.pro
> % DBFIND 137/share/idl/astro_util/dbfind.pro
> % \$MAIN\$
> % Execution halted at:\$MAIN\$

There are three ways I'm aware of that the MESSAGE function can be called:

1. Without any keywords.
2. With the keyword /CONTINUE.
3. With the keyword /INFORMATIONAL. (Like /CONTINUE, but messages are not printed if !QUIET=1.)

Checking the source of db_info.pro, I see that it uses no keywords in the call to MESSAGE. Printing a traceback as a default seems to be quite a reasonable thing to do in this case. However, I'd be very disappointed if a traceback was printed in the other two cases--that could cause me to stop using MESSAGE. What does IDL v5 do in those cases?

I notice that the online documentation for MESSAGE in IDL v3.6 includes the keyword TRACEBACK. (The online doc in version 4 is much less informative.) Have you tried

MESSAGE, 'No data base file(s) opened', TRACEBACK=0

I agree that there should be some mechanism for turning off the traceback.

Bill Thompson
