
Subject: White space conversion (READS)
Posted by [reuss](#) on Tue, 10 Jun 1997 07:00:00 GMT
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I do not understand how IDL treats input fields consisting of white space only when reading formatted data.

First I thought that IDL converts white space fields to zeroes:

```
IDL> a = 0.0
IDL> b = 99.0
IDL> teststr = '6.0      '
IDL> reads,teststr,a,b,f='(f4.0,f6.0)'
IDL> print,a,b
      6.00000  0.000000
```

Then I tried to read data from a table with white space for missing values.

I read the lines as strings.

One line of data looks as follows:

```
;      1      2      3      4      5
;12345678901234567890123456789012345678901234567890123456789
;2 11234567890123 1 1123412123121234561234512345612345123456

1 F 92.178045955 S d              45.7 6.0
```

The scalar data variables are initialized to their respective data types, then I try to read:

```
IDL> print,strlen(line)
      60
IDL> reads,line,int1,str1,dbl1,str2,str3,int2,int3,int4,int5,flt1,$
IDL> flt2,flt3,flt4,flt5,$
IDL> f='(i2,1x,a1,f13.9,1x,a1,1x,a1,i4,i2,i3,i2,f6.2,f5.0,f6.0,f5 .0,f6.0)'
% Type conversion error: Unable to convert given STRING
to Float.
% Detected at: $MAIN$
% READS: End of input data encountered: LINE
% Execution halted at $MAIN$ (READS).
IDL> print,flt4
      6.00000
```

Further inspection shows that the only variable not read correctly is the last one, whereas the other white space fields have been converted to zeroes.

Is this a bug, or have I made something wrong?

I use IDL 3.6.1 on a PC.

Yours,

Matthias Reuss
