Subject: Re: Beginner, Question
Posted by chris_torrence@NOSPAM on Wed, 26 Aug 2015 15:00:27 GMT
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On Tuesday, August 25, 2015 at 8:06:59 AM UTC-6, Jeremy Bailin wrote:
> On Monday, August 24, 2015 at 11:49:44 PM UTC-5, justdo...@gmail.com wrote:
>> I'm not programmer.
>>
>> I have a question.
>>
>> What is a advantage of idl. comparison with python?
>>
>> It is not sarcastic. just question.
>
> The major reason that it is used a lot in astronomy is because there is a large well-tested codebase out there of routines that make oftentimes very complicated and necessary astronomical tasks fairly easy. There is currently a large effort underway to replicate all of that functionality in Python, and they are making great strides, but for many many tasks, the best and easiest way of doing them is using existing IDL routines.
>
> I suspect the situation is similar in the other fields where IDL is prominent -- it's not so much that the task can't be done in Python, as that the effort required to rewrite routines with the existing sophistication and robustness hasn't been finished yet.
>
> -Jeremy.

Hi Jeremy,

Good answer. Also, not to start a flame (or religious) war, but I would also say that both languages have their strengths and weaknesses. IDL's interpreter is faster than Python's, so if you are writing lots of general purpose code, or trying to build a large application, then IDL may serve you better. IDL's image processing routines are in general faster, although this may vary depending upon the routine and the platform. Finally, IDL's built-in array routines are much faster than Python's built-in arrays (not numpy!). On the other hand, Python's numerical routines (especially in linear algebra) may be faster on certain platforms (such as Intel), where they have been fine tuned. Finally, Python has a broader selection of modules available, although these can be of varying quality since it is open source.

Finally, one more point - since IDL 8.5 now includes the Python->IDL and IDL->Python bridge, you really can't go wrong either way.

Cheers,
Chris