
Subject: Re: Counting header lines in a file

Posted by [Markus Schmassmann](#) on Mon, 24 Jul 2017 15:30:04 GMT

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On 07/24/2017 03:56 PM, thtran296@gmail.com wrote:

>> Once you read a line, you can parse it using the string functions. For example, strmid(line, 0, 1) returns the first character of the string. Then you can test if it is a letter or a number so that you can decide if it belongs to the header or to the data.

>

> The function strmid() returns a string to me, even if the input is a number.

> For example,

> a = 123456

> result = strmid(strtrim(a,2),1,4) & print, result & help, result

> IDL print:

> 2345

> STRING = '2345'

>

> For this reason, when I use the ISA() function to test if it is a string or number, it would return string to everything. So how can I test if it is a letter or a number? Is there another function besides ISA() ?

I would recommend using the STRMATCH function to test whether your line contains numbers. Example:

```
tab=string(9b)
regex1='^[\ '+tab+']*[0-9]*[\ '+tab+']*[0-9]*[\ '+tab+']*'$'
```

```
openr, lun, file, /get_lun
header=!null
repeat begin
    point_lun, -lun, currentlocation
    readf, lun, line
    header=[header,line]
endrep until strmatch(line,regex1)
```

```
header=header[0:-2]
point_lun, lun, currentlocation
```

```
data = fltarr(cols,rows - n_elements(header))
.....
```

Often used, but very bad programming style is to abuse the error handling system.

```
function isa_number, string, number=number
err_no=0
catch, err_no
if err_no ne 0 then begin
```

```
    catch,/cancel
    message, /reset
    return, 0b
endif
number=0
reads, string, number
return, 1b
end
```

Both approaches need to be refined before use, (e.g. float instead of integers), but the idea should be clear.

Good luck, Markus
