Subject: savefile incompatibilities...
Posted by Richard G. French on Wed, 02 Jul 1997 07:00:00 GMT

I have recently upgraded to IDL5.0 on a DEC Alpha running OSF. I have created
some save files that contain variables ONLY (NOT any routines, NO system

variables, and only some explicitly listed variables) using a command
such as

save,file=savefilename,variable1, variable2, etc....

I then ported this file by binary ftp to a Sun workstation running
IDL4.0 and
tried to restore the savefile. I get 'Unexpected item code' and then IDL
crashes.
My reading of the manual implies that as long as you read variables, and
not
system variables or compiled routines, savefiles are supposed to be
readable
across platforms and across versions of IDL.

I tried restoring the file on a DECstation running an ancient version of
IDL (since
RSI does not support DECstations anymore) and got a similar message:
unexpected
item code (but IDL did not crash, and it did seem to do the proper
restoration in spite
of the error message.)

My question is:
    Am I mistaken in thinking that I should be able to read savefiles
with variables
across platforms and across IDL versions? In this case, the variables
are primarily
structures, but I don't think they use any of the new properties of
structures of
IDL5.0.
    We are working on software development and data analysis at two
different
sites, and a key assumption we have been making is that we can share
data and
intermediate results by porting savefiles. If this is wrong, I need to
figure out
another way to do it.
    Is the documentation wrong, or is there a bug in 5.0?

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