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Subject: Re: is it possible to pass named variables through \_extra

Posted by [Martin Schultz](#) on Wed, 27 Aug 1997 07:00:00 GMT

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Mirko Vukovic wrote:

```
>
> so, this is the story,
>
> I have a call to contour burried deep in some subroutine. And sometimes
> I would like to do a
> contour,foo,path_xy=path_xy
> i.e., get the coordinates of the contours. Using _extra does not seem
> to work. If in the top routine I specify
> path_xy=var
> where var is undefined, I get an error message,
> If I define var to be an array, or something like that IDL complains
> that the expression must be a named variable.
>
> Any ideas?
>
> tia,
>
```

The problem must be buried somewhere in your subroutine as you say. Here is how IDL's contour behaves depending on the parameters you give it and whether you pass a "named variable" :

```
a=fltarr(10,10)
x=findgen(10)*!PI/18.
for i=0,9 do a(*,i) = 2*sin(!PI/(i+1))-x

; #1 : (see manual) works !
print,' #1 : ----- '
contour,a,color=1,/follow,path_info=info1,path_xy=path1
help,info1,path1,/stru

; #2 : (no path) works !
print,' #2 : ----- '
contour,a,color=1,/follow,path_info=info2
help,info2,/stru

; #3 : (no info) works !
print,' #3 : ----- '
contour,a,color=1,/follow,path_xy=path3
help,path3,/stru

; #4 : (no variable parameter) ERROR !
```

```
print,' #4 : ----- '  
contour,a,color=1,/follow,path_xy=1  
  
; #5 : (no variable parameter) ERROR !  
print,' #5 : ----- '  
contour,a,color=1,/follow,path_info=1  
end
```

This program will actually stop at step 4 with the error message you quoted.

You don't need to define infoN or pathN beforehand, but you cannot pass a value (as in steps 4 and 5). This is also what \_EXTRA does, since there is no way that \_EXTRA can know what you want to extract from it later it only passes by value and can therefore not work.

Good luck,  
Martin

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check out <http://www-as.harvard.edu/people/staff/mgs/idl> !  
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