
Subject: Re: Problem restoring IDL SAVE files in version 5.3 when created in version 5.4

Posted by [Craig Markwardt](#) on Tue, 08 May 2001 18:04:08 GMT

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"Christopher K. Pankratz" <chris.pankratz@lasp.colorado.edu> writes:

> I am attempting to save a variable created in an IDL 5.4 session for
> someone to restore in IDL 5.3, and I am running into some problems. Here
> is a sample session for creating the save file in IDL 5.4 and restoring it
> in IDL 5.3 which illustrates the problem.

>
> In IDL 5.4:
> IDL> rec = {a:0.0, b:0L, c:bytarr(200)}
> IDL> save, rec, file='test.sav'

>
> In IDL 5.3:
> IDL> restore, 'test.sav'
> % RESTORE: Unexpected item code found in save file.

...

> % Execution halted at: \$MAIN\$

>
> The IDL 5.4 reference manual indicates that saving/restoring data should be
> backward compatible. It says "Note also that save files containing routines
> may not be compatible between different versions of IDL, but that files
> containing data are always backwards-compatible." It is my intent not to
> store any information other than the variable of interest, which does happen
> to be a structure.

IDL 5.4 on some platforms creates save files that are not compatible with older versions of IDL. This is a "feature" of IDL 5.4 which originally was intended to allow save files larger than 2 gigabytes. Unfortunately it also broke backwards compatibility.

I have it on good authority that this will be "fixed" in a forthcoming version of IDL: fixed in a way that still allows large files, and also allows older versions of IDL to read. There will also be a conversion script to take non-compatible IDL 5.4 files to compatible ones.

In the meantime, you might consider using my CMSAVE library, which allows reading and writing save files in any recent version of IDL with very few restrictions. It's "drop n' load!"

Craig

<http://cow.physics.wisc.edu/~craigm/idl/idl.html> (under Save files)

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