Subject: Speed and array operations
Posted by Conor on Thu, 21 Jun 2007 16:33:01 GMT
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I've often wondered about the speed of IDL compared to other languages. Now, it is my understanding that IDL isn't really a compiled language (please, correct me if I'm wrong). Although the IDL interpreter "compiles" and IDL program before you run it, apparently it isn't compiled all the way down to machine code. As such, I'm under the impression that natively, IDL is always going to be slower than a fully compiled language such as C or fortran. However, it seems to me that there might be case where IDL might still be quicker. Namely, array operations. My question is, is it possible for IDL to be faster than a fully compiled language? Are the array operations in IDL so well optimized that adding together gigantic arrays in IDL would actually be faster than the equivelent for-loop style methods you would have to use in fortran or C? Or are C and fortran always faster? Or do I completely misunderstand how these languages work?