
Subject: newbie wants to call IDL from shell

Posted by [Tom Roche](#) on Sat, 12 Jul 2008 01:36:43 GMT

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How to exec IDL procedures from a shell or other programming environment? (Correctly: see failed attempt below.) Note that I'm not talking about creating a runtime distribution; I just want to be able to call a procedure from the OS commandline, not from the IDL commandline, on a box with IDL installed. Why I ask:

My group mostly uses IDL to interact with netCDF files. I'm noticing that, in scripts I've been given, we do a lotta code where we type in literals to specify files on which to operate, e.g.

```
indir = '/path/to'
files = ['foo' , 'bar' , 'baz']
FOR i = 0, n_elements(files)-1 DO BEGIN
  filename = files[i]
  infile = indir+'/'+filename
  doSomethingWith, infile
ENDFOR
```

I'd prefer to use IDL for things it does well, and use something more general-purpose (e.g. bash, perl, python) (i.e. something I already know how to use :-) to drive it, e.g.

```
# bash
for INFILE in $(bash fu) ; do
  idl < doSomethingWith $INFILE
done
```

So I thought I'd start simple: I have a script (my first script that does something useful!)

```
public1:/home/tlr/idl> ls -al regrid_mozt42_tlr.pro
> -rw-r--r--  1 tlr m 755 Jul 10 16:11 regrid_mozt42_tlr.pro
public1:/home/tlr/idl> cat regrid_mozt42_tlr.pro
> COMPILE_OPT IDL2
> PRO regrid_mozt42_tlr
...
> END
```

done in the deprecated style above, which works from the IDL shell with no args (because everything is literal within the *.pro):

```
public1:/home/tlr/idl> idl
> IDL Version 7.0 (linux x86 m32). (c) 2007, ITT Visual Information Solutions
> ...
```

```
> IDL> regrid_mozt42_tlr
> % Compiled module: REGRID_MOZT42_TLR.
> ...
> Done.
```

Now I just want to run it from the commandline, in the same directory as above (which is in my IDL_DIR):

```
public1:/home/tlr/idl> idl < regrid_mozt42_tlr.pro
> IDL Version 7.0 (linux x86 m32). (c) 2007, ITT Visual Information Solutions
> ...
> PRO regrid_mozt42_tlr
>      ^
> % Programs can't be compiled from single statement mode.
```

What do I need to do to make that work? Or how else should I do this?
Apologies if this is a FAQ but I haven't found any answers either googling or in the online help. If I should RTFM, please pass pointer.

TIA, Tom Roche <Tom_Roche@pobox.com>
