
Subject: inconsistent results running an absurdly simple function using 'spawn'

Posted by [desertdryad](#) on Wed, 14 Dec 2011 18:12:50 GMT

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I have a problem that is making me batty, on IDL 7.0.

I'm trying to use a simple function I wrote, that spawns a clal to a Perl script. IT works as I expect, 'some of' the time in a predictable fashion. Here is the script:

```
-----  
compile_opt idl2
```

```
spawn, 'C:\\Cyndys\\WEATHER\\mesomech3.pl '+station, result  
print, result  
data=result[4]
```

```
return, data  
end  
-----
```

So, I wish the function to return the 4th line of output from the Perl script (which reads stuff from a web page for me).

The first time in a session that I try to run this, it will NOT work; I get this error at run time:

```
% Attempt to subscript RESULT with <LONG    (      4)> is out of  
range
```

NOW, here's the bizarro part - if I take out 'return, data[4]' and replace it with 'return, data' the function works. But THEN, if I put that line of code back to 'return, data[4]' .. that then also works! What the Hey.

I need to run this function without altering the code back and forth each session. Any idea what's going on, here??

thanks!
