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Subject: savefile incompatibilities...

Posted by [Richard G. French](#) on Wed, 02 Jul 1997 07:00:00 GMT

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I have recently upgraded to IDL5.0 on a DEC Alpha running OSF. I have created some save files that contain variables ONLY (NOT any routines, NO system

variables, and only some explicitly listed variables) using a command such as

save,file=savefilename,variable1, variable2, etc....

I then ported this file by binary ftp to a Sun workstation running IDL4.0 and

tried to restore the savefile. I get 'Unexpected item code' and then IDL crashes.

My reading of the manual implies that as long as you read variables, and not

system variables or compiled routines, savefiles are supposed to be readable

across platforms and across versions of IDL.

I tried restoring the file on a DECstation running an ancient version of IDL (since

RSI does not support DECstations anymore) and got a similar message: unexpected

item code (but IDL did not crash, and it did seem to do the proper restoration in spite of the error message.)

My question is:

Am I mistaken in thinking that I should be able to read savefiles with variables

across platforms and across IDL versions? In this case, the variables are primarily

structures, but I don't think they use any of the new properties of structures of IDL5.0.

We are working on software development and data analysis at two different

sites, and a key assumption we have been making is that we can share data and

intermediate results by porting savefiles. If this is wrong, I need to figure out

another way to do it.

Is the documentation wrong, or is there a bug in 5.0?

Dick French  
rfrench@ahab.wellesley.edu

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Subject: Re: savefile incompatibilities...

Posted by [Richard G. French](#) on Tue, 08 Jul 1997 07:00:00 GMT

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My apologies - I made a mistake in the spelling of the hostname where these

savefiles are located. I have corrected the message below and would greatly

appreciate it if some of you with SUN's could let me know if you can read

and restore test4.sav without problems. Please send your results to rfrench@ahab.wellesley.edu, along the the version of your operating system

(find this on the first line or so of /etc/motd). I'll summarize as appropriate.

RSI has been notified of my problem but on their SUN's the savefile is restored properly - I just have the bad luck to have it not work on ours, and

I would like to understand why, and possibly how to get around the problem.

Many thanks.

> I have done some more testing with savefile problems. The long and  
> short  
> of it is that I am having problems porting savefiles between DEC  
> Alpha,  
> DECstation and a SUN sparc.  
> The Sun is running IDL4.0.1, the Alpha is running OSF/1 and IDL 5.0,  
> and  
> the  
> DECstation is running IDL3.6. To see if the problem is an IDL5.0  
> problem, I created 4 test savefiles, which I have put on my anonymous  
> ftp site. I would appreciate hearing from  
> people to see if you are able to restore the file without problems.  
> Please login to  
> anonymous ftp on  
> ahab.wellelsey.edu  
> ftp> cd pub/rsi  
> ftp> bin  
> ftp> mget test\*.sav  
> ftp> quit  
>  
> Here is a description of the individual savefiles.  
>

> 1) test1.sav  
> Created the savefile under DEC ALPHA (Unix) IDL5.0. Should contain  
>  
> variables only, no procedures or system variables. Results so far:  
> crashes IDL on sun sparc IDL4.0.1  
> Readable on DECstation running IDL3.6  
>  
> 2) test2.sav  
> Smaller version of test1.sav (same variables saved, but array of  
> structures is smaller).  
> This was to see if the problem was associated with a memory  
> problem. Results so far: crashes IDL on sun sparc IDL4.0.1  
> Readable on DECstation running IDL3.6  
>  
> 3) test3.sav  
> To see if problem was an IDL5.0 problem, I restored test2.sav on a  
> DECstation running  
> IDL3.6, and then immediately did  
> save,/variables,file='test3.sav'  
> Results so far:  
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>  
> 4) test4.sav  
> In desperation, I set the /xdr flag when saving the file. Created  
> as  
> test3.sav except:  
> save,/variables,/xdr,file='test4.sav'  
> Results so far:  
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> Readable on DEC Alpha Unix IDL5.0  
>  
> I have reported this problem to RSI but I think it might be very  
> helpful  
> to get more test  
> results on other platforms.  
>  
> This problem is preventing us from being able to use the  
> cross-platform  
> strengths of IDL  
> and is really cramping our research at the moment. I would appreciate  
> hearing from  
> anyone who might have ideas about how to get around this problem. The  
> SUN sparc  
> owners let their maintenance lapse due to the high cost, and so  
> upgrading to IDL5.0  
> is not an option.  
>

> Thanks very much.  
>  
>> Dick French  
>> rfrench@ahab.wellesley.edu

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Subject: Re: savefile incompatibilities...  
Posted by [Inigo Garcia](#) on Mon, 14 Jul 1997 07:00:00 GMT  
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Hi:

I work in a UltraSparc with IDL 5.0, operating system SunOS 5.5.1

I brougth teh test1.sav file, and I was able to restore it. What I get if I type "HELP" is the next:

```
-----  
CATALOG      STRUCT  = -> HST Array[54]  
CATALOG_NAME STRING  = 'C5Vaug'  
ID           STRING  = '5836C5Vaug'  
LABEL        STRING  = 'Saturn C5Vaug'  
N_IMAGES_CATALOG  
              INT     =    54  
PID           STRING  = '5836'
```

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I suppose that that is all that was in that file !!!

Cheers,  
I~nigo.

Richard G. French wrote:

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>>> Dick French  
>>> rfrench@ahab.wellesley.edu

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+-----oOOo-(~)-oOOo-----++
| I~nigo Garcia Ruiz          |
| Kapteyn Instituut          | Phone: +31-(0)50-3634083 |
| Landleven 12                | Fax:  +31-(0)50-363   |
| 9747 AD GRONINGEN (Netherlands) e-mail: iruiz@astro.rug.nl |
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