The \texttt{drac} package\footnote{This document corresponds to the file \texttt{drac v1}, dated 2008/08/14.}

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Abstract
This package provides \texttt{\DeclareRobustActChar} and \texttt{\ReDeclareRobActChar} macros.

One uses \texttt{\DeclareRobustActChar} as \texttt{\DeclareRobustCommand} but the macro \texttt{\protect} the active character when it appears in a moving argument, see \texttt{ltdefns.dtx} in \texttt{/latex/base/}.

\texttt{\ReDeclareRobActChar} redefines the active character, previously defined with \texttt{\DeclareRobustActChar}, the way \texttt{\renewcommand} does for usual commands.

Résumé
Ce module définit \texttt{\DeclareRobustActChar} et \texttt{\ReDeclareRobActChar}.
Vous devriez avoir obtenu, avec ce document, les fichiers \texttt{drac-fr.dtx} et \texttt{drac-fr.pdf} qui donnent la version française de cette documentation.

Contents

1 Introduction 1

2 Usage 2

1 Introduction

When the macro appeared on \texttt{fr.comp.text.tex} in the thread “la question à 100 euros\footnote{The 100 euro question.}”, dated 8th april 2004, its name was \texttt{\DeclareRobustActiveCharacter} which had the advantage to be totally descriptive but one drawback viz. it was really long. To alleviate the pains of the typist but \texttt{mainly} to avoid a complete mess in the index of this document, I have taken it upon myself to rename it \texttt{\DeclareRobustActChar}.

When reading the above mentioned thread, one can easily see that I —i. e. Yvon Henel, \TeXnicien de surface— just asked for code which was provided, very friendly and efficiently, by Josselin Noirel.

I played a bit with Josselin’s code but some months later life hit me hard which would not have been a surprise if I had really understood the classical wisdom I have been educated in during my younger days. But “the light, which experience gives, is a lantern on the stern, which shines only on the waves behind us” as wrote Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Thence when Josselin, who was rather busy as a student, sent me with an email in February 2005 a second version where \texttt{\ReDeclareRobActChar} appeared I was in no state to benefit from it.
Then time, the great healer, did fly...I’m back to the world and Josselin has left for other shores.

The code exists and works. So instead of leaving it to rot somewhere on my hard disk and for I have spent some hours to update my own packages I have decided to launch drac on the vast ocean of life. I just provide the wrapping and push the tiny thing on the nearest CTAN server.

I do suppose that one understood that I can’t promise to maintain the following code I hardly understand and that only because of the comments given by Josselin. So now is the time to let Josselin be at the helm...and the keyboard.

Le TêXnicien de surface

2 Usage

This command has the usual syntax of the \newcommand and friends: it accepts a starred form depending on whether the active character accepts \long arguments (i.e. an argument could contain a paragraph ending) or not; next comes the active character; an optional number of arguments, an optional argument which is the optional value of the first argument, and then the actual definition. Here are the valid syntaxes:

\DeclareRobustActChar\{\textit{active character}\}\{\textit{definition}\}
\DeclareRobustActChar*\{\textit{active character}\}\{\textit{definition}\}
\DeclareRobustActChar*\{\textit{active character}\}\{\textit{definition}\}

Then one will be able to use the active character in moving arguments (in the arguments of \caption for instance) and in other cases which demand robust commands (\protected@edef, \protected@write, and so on).

Similarly \reDeclareRobActChar has the same syntax than \renewcommand so here are the possible syntaxes:

\reDeclareRobActChar\{\textit{active character}\}\{\textit{definition}\}
\reDeclareRobActChar*\{\textit{active character}\}\{\textit{definition}\}
## Change History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>v0</td>
<td>General: Missed to be the 1st public version</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v0.1</td>
<td>General: Almost have been the 1st</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v1</td>
<td>General: First public version</td>
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