Calling `#raise` with a message parameter passes the argument on the `Exception` class' `initialize` method. But it does not support any additional arguments if the `initialize` method has been defined otherwise. Nor is the last optional argument, caller, passed to the `initialize`. All of which makes for a rather confusing mishmash of an interface between `#raise` and `Exception#initialize`.

Ideally I would think whatever arguments are passed to `#raise` would likewise be passed on to `Exception#initialize`, e.g.

```ruby
class MyError < Exception
  def initialize(a,b)
    super("#{a} and #{b}")
  end
end

raise MyError, 'foo', 'bar'
```

Alas, because caller can be passed to `#raise` this causes an error, as it thinks bar ought to be the caller array. So unless others see a way around it that I do not, this idealized scenario simply is not possible.

So I propose a second best approach. Notice that if caller is passed to `#raise` it is not being passed on to the `#initialize` method unlike the message argument. Instead `#set_backtrace` is being used to set the caller. I propose that the message argument be handled in the same way, and a new method `#set_message(msg)` be added to the `Exception` class to handle it.

This would then allow the initializer of subclasses to be freed up to be defined in other ways, should a specialized exception be able to make good use of a variant interface. Which, btw, is the exact circumstance I presently find myself in for one of my projects. Consequently I had no choice by to define the `#initialize` method to take an initial blank argument that will almost always be set to `+nil+`.

**History**

#1 - 01/16/2012 11:23 AM - nobu (Nobuyoshi Nakada)

Hi,

(12/01/16 10:03), Thomas Sawyer wrote:

```ruby
class MyError < Exception
  def initialize(a,b)
    super("#{a} and #{b}")
  end
end

raise MyError, 'foo', 'bar'
```

Try:

```ruby
class MyError < RuntimeError
  def initialize(args)
    a, b = *args
    super("#{a} and #{b}")
  end
end

raise MyError, ['foo', 'bar']
```

So I propose a second best approach. Notice that if caller is passed to `#raise` it is not being passed on to the `#initialize` method unlike the message argument. Instead `#set_backtrace` is
being used to set the caller. I propose that the message argument be handled in the same way, and a new method #set_message(msg) be added to the Exception class to handle it.

How do you tell if the second argument is a part of messages, or a caller?

--
Nobu Nakada

#2 - 01/16/2012 11:23 AM - nobu (Nobuyoshi Nakada)

Hi,

(12/01/16 11:03), Nobuyoshi Nakada wrote:

How do you tell if the second argument is a part of messages, or a caller?

One of simplest ways I can think of would be:

raise MyError.new('foo', 'bar')

Wow, this works with your definition, doesn't it? ;)

--
Nobu Nakada

#3 - 01/16/2012 11:45 AM - trans (Thomas Sawyer)

One of simplest ways I can think of would be:

raise MyError.new('foo', 'bar')

Wow, this works with your definition, doesn't it? ;)

Of course, I could do that, and that might be fine if it were only me and my program that would ever raise that error. But that's not the case. It may well be used by others. So to break the #raise "contract" would be very bad form. In other words, I am not going to try to explain to my end-developers that certain exceptions are "special" and can't be raised in standard fashion, but always must be done so with #new. And that's really the jist of my point. We shouldn't need to sacrifice one interface for the other.

#4 - 01/16/2012 11:56 AM - trans (Thomas Sawyer)

Actually, I just did something rather interesting that better illustrates the discrepancy:

trans@logisys:assertions$ irb

class MyError < RuntimeError
def initialize(*args)
p args
end
end
=> nil
raise MyError.new, "custom message"
[]
MyError: custom message
from (irb):6
from /home/trans/.rbenv/versions/1.9.3-rc1/bin/irb:12:in `'

raise MyError, "custom message"
["custom message"]
MyError: MyError
from (irb):7
from /home/trans/.rbenv/versions/1.9.3-rc1/bin/irb:12:in `'

The first case sets the message without needing to pass the message to the MyError#initialize, but the second does not.

#5 - 01/16/2012 12:23 PM - nobu (Nobuyoshi Nakada)
Hi,

(12/01/16 11:56), Thomas Sawyer wrote:

class MyError < RuntimeError
  def initialize(*args)
    p args
    super
  end
end

--
Nobu Nakada

#6 - 01/17/2012 01:17 AM - trans (Thomas Sawyer)
How does adding #super help?

Maybe I've over explained (as I am wont to do) and I should just put it this way: It would be good if one could customize the #initialize method of an Exception subclass without causing #raise to break when used in the typical raise ErrorClass, "message" fashion.

#7 - 03/31/2012 10:38 AM - nobu (Nobuyoshi Nakada)
- Status changed from Open to Rejected

#8 - 03/31/2012 11:05 AM - trans (Thomas Sawyer)
You can reject it, but this will eventually come up again b/c current behaviour is confusing, inconsistent and either overly limiting or not limiting enough depending on which side you come down on.

#9 - 03/31/2012 06:23 PM - nobu (Nobuyoshi Nakada)
If you can show the answer to the questions in comment #1([ruby-core:42143]) and it is reasonable, this may advance.