

A quick overview of  
*epsilon*  
- a functional language implementation -

*LCR*

*LIPN - Université Paris 13*

```

a
atalkd: can't get interfaces, exiting.
Usage: nbprgstr [ -A address ] [-m Mac charset] [-p port] obj:type@zone
Usage: nbprgstr [ -A address ] [-m Mac charset] [-p port] obj:type@zone
  atalkd papd afpd cnid_metad.
Exporting directories for NFS kernel daemon....
Starting NFS kernel daemon: nfsdsvc: unknown version (3)
  mountd.
Starting internet superserver: inetd.
Starting OpenBSD Secure Shell server: sshd.
Starting file alteration monitor: FAM.
Starting NFS common utilities: statd idmapd.

* modprobe tun
FATAL: Module tun not found.
* ifconfig tap0 172.23.0.254 netmask 255.255.255.255 up
* bash -c echo 1 > /proc/sys/net/ipv4/ip_forward
* route add -host 172.23.0.3 dev tap0
* bash -c echo 1 > /proc/sys/net/ipv4/conf/tap0/proxy_arp
Now asking the kernel to ghostify eth42...
success.

Debian GNU/Linux lenny/sid a ttyS0
a login: 

```

H1

Control panel

0 1 2 3

Hub ● ● ● ● TX/RX

S1

Control panel

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Switch ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● TX/RX

```

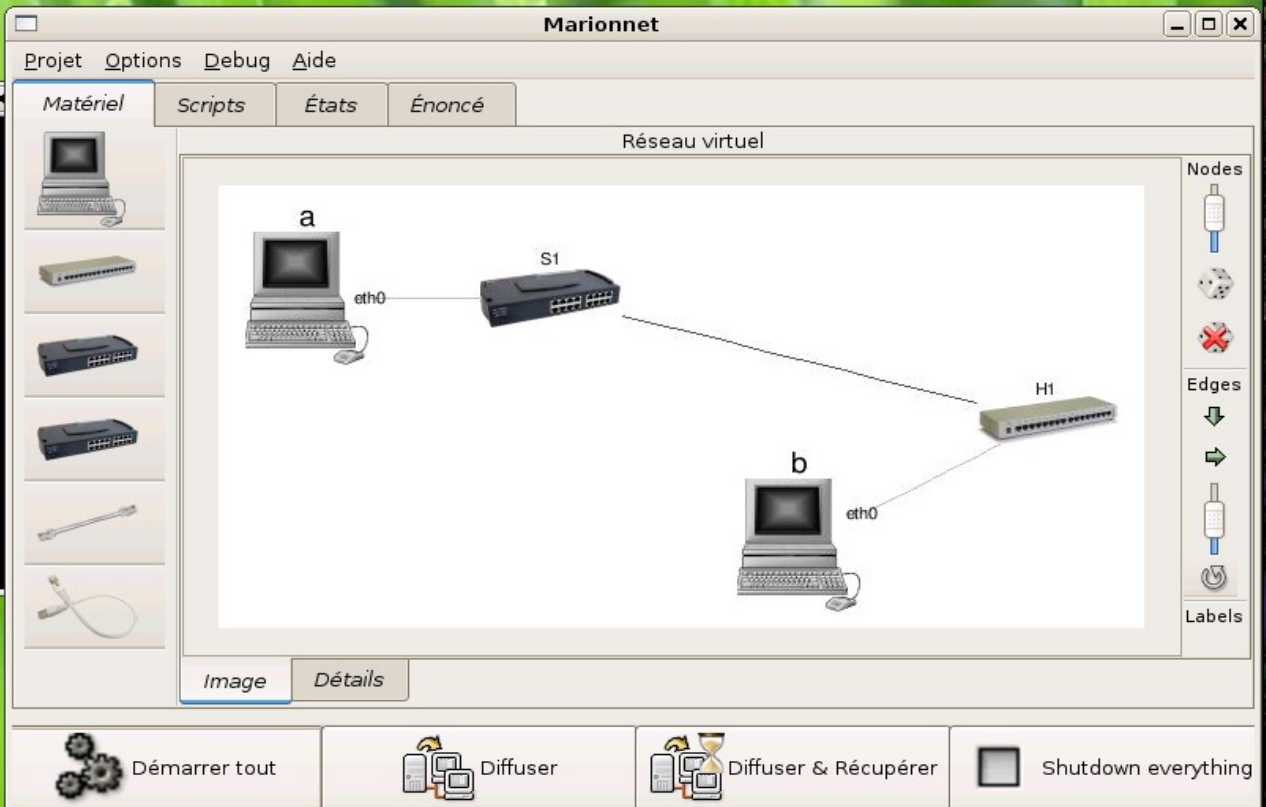
b
b login: root
Password:
Last login: Mon May 28 20:26:38 2007 on ttyS0
Linux (none) 2.6.18-ghostification #4 Mon May 28 17:49:50 CEST 2007 i686

The programs included with the Debian GNU/Linux system are free software;
the exact distribution terms for each program are described in the
individual files in /usr/share/doc/*/copyright.

Debian GNU/Linux comes with ABSOLUTELY NO WARRANTY, to the extent
permitted by applicable law.
b:~# ifconfig eth0 10.10.10.2 up
b:~# ifconfig eth0
eth0      Link encap:Ethernet  HWaddr 00:01:02:00:07:00
          inet addr:10.10.10.2  Bcast:10.255.255.255  Mask:255.0.0.0
          inet6 addr: fe80::201:2ff:fe00:700/64 Scope:Link
          UP BROADCAST RUNNING MULTICAST  MTU:1500  Metric:1
          RX packets:9 errors:0 dropped:0 overruns:0 frame:0
          TX packets:6 errors:0 dropped:0 overruns:0 carrier:0
          collisions:0 txqueuelen:1000
          RX bytes:422 (422.0 b)  TX bytes:468 (468.0 b)
          Interrupt:5

b:~# 

```



# GNU epsilon

A **functional** programming language

- Usable **in practice**...
- ...and also clean and minimal
- Efficient implementation
- **Free software** and part of the **GNU Project**
- Quite a long history
  - Started in 2001, implemented **three times**

# Why functional

An extremely interesting alternative paradigm:

- Very **high-level**
- Safe, when statically-typed
- **Clean semantics**: easy to reason about
- **Challenging**: efficient compilation is nontrivial

# Why another language

*Every powerful language has three mechanisms [...]:*

- **primitive expressions**,  
*which represent the simplest entities the language is concerned with,*
- **means of combination**,  
*by which compound elements are built from simpler ones, and*
- **means of abstraction**,  
*by which compound elements can be named and manipulated as units.*

— Abelson and Sussman, SICP

- **All** the existing programming languages I know of leave to desire in their *means of abstraction*
- (but Lisp macros are a step in the right direction)

# Better means of abstraction

User-definable:

- Macros pattern-matching
- Global transforms SPS, CPS
- Semantic *constraints* and *attributes* type checking  
type inference
- ...and language “primitives” **definable in C**



- epsilon is free software and part of the **GNU Project**

(officially approved by Richard Stallman)

- As of now:
  - Currently implemented in C    **~60,000 lines**
  - Compilation **into C code** and **bytecode interpretation**
  - Programming tools: **epsilonlex, epsilonyacc**
  - **“Usual” features**: omega-order, first-class functions, modules...
  - Usable (**ICFPc**)

## “Stratified” implementation

- Compilation via **source-to-source transforms**...
- ...into a minimal *purely-functional* language...
- ...then into *very low-level* abstract machine code

macro expansion, constraints,  
attributes

*epsilon*

*middle language*

first-class continuations,  
side effects

✓ transforms (CPS, SPS), optimizations

*core language*

purely functional

(Ocaml interpreter) ✓

*eAML*

assembly-like with  
primitives in C

✓ code generation

*C*

*Scheme*

- **Bootstrapped** via OCaml



For more information

For more information...

<http://www-lipn.lipn.univ-paris13.fr/~saiu>

<http://www.gnu.org/software/epsilon>

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Thanks.