

GNU Data Language (GDL)

a free and open-source implementation of IDL

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JAMSTEC, Yokohama, Japan

GDL development is led by Marc Schellens, the project founder

August 20th 2010, JAMSTEC, Yokohama, Japan

Plan of the talk

- About GDL
 - what's GDL (and IDL)
 - why to use GDL, who uses it and what for
 - how to get GDL
 - how to help and contribute
- Hands-on demo
 - running the GDL interpreter
 - syntax basics
 - opening an example dataset
 - simple array manipulation
 - basic plotting functionalities

before we begin with GDL: what's IDL

<http://www.ittvis.com/>

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The IDL Programming Language

When you need to transform complex scientific data from numbers into visualizations to convey meaningful information – such as 2 and 3-dimensional lines, surface and contour plots, or high-quality images – you need a programming language that is intuitive and powerful at the same time, and one that doesn't require excessive time and effort to produce expert-level results.

IDL is the programming language choice of scientists and engineers because it's easy to learn, easy to use, and requires fewer lines of code than other programming languages, so getting from data to discovery is easier and faster.

What Makes IDL so Easy and Effective?

Dynamic Type System

Intuitive Rules and Conventions

Access Visuals any Type of Data

The IDL programming language requires fewer lines of code than many other languages (bottom). Five lines of IDL code were used to create a contour plot of coastline topography (top).

[back]

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- IDL is a product and registered trade mark of ITT Visual Information Solutions
- IDL is a tool for data analysis and visualisation
- IDL is a programming language
- IDL package contains:
interpreter/compiler, library routines, documentation and a development environment
- IDL is related with GDL as Matlab with Octave/Scilab, M\$ Office with OO.org etc

IDL in Astronomy

- The situation
 - IDL is widely used in astronomy, since 1977, including a lot of Space Missions (official pipelines)
 - Several well known libraries (Astron, MPFIT, Solar Soft, ...) used as commodity by Scientists
 - Code is rather well independant of OS's (VMS, many Unix, OSX, Linux and also MS-win) and can live during very long time
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- The problems ?
 - **Dependence.** IDL is not open source free software. We had serious warning in the past, some platforms (Unix, VMS) had desapear. Despite support by NASA, editor may desapear. Some choices by editor (widgets, limited graphical outputs, ...) upset users. Because of the large codebase, we cannot afford disparition!
 - **No general purpose alternative.** Now Python in Astronomy become a real alternative, but it was not he case 3 or 5 years ago.

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 - **No general purpose alternative.** Now Python in Astronomy become a real alternative, but it was not he case 3 or 5 years ago.
- Solution? **Having a free clone.**

About GDL: the project and its authors

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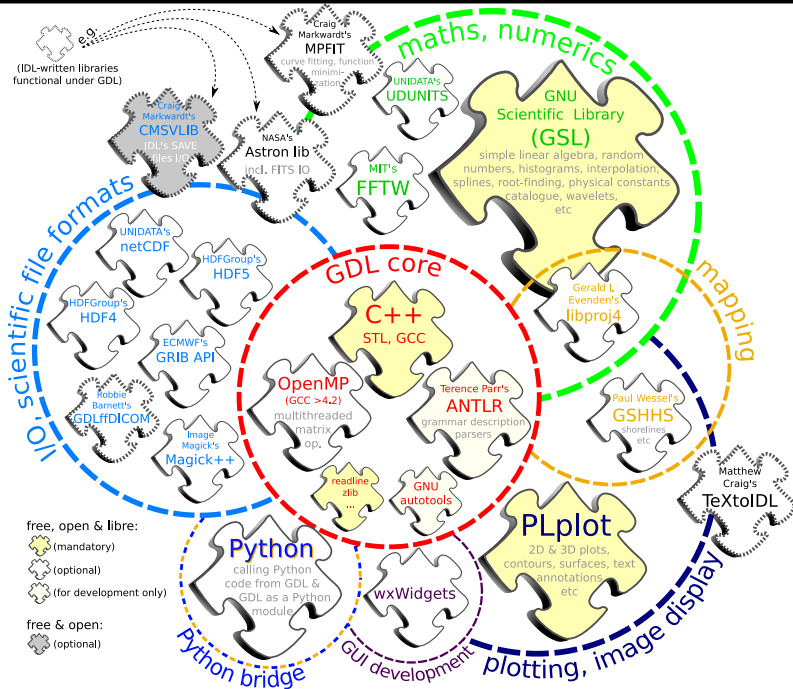
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Joel Gales, Pierre Chanial, Peter Messmer, ...
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N. Galmiche, M. Lenoir, G. Marshall, L. Noreksal, T. Mermet
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- more info: <http://gnudatalanguage.sourceforge.net/>



About GDL: some pros and cons

- inherited from IDL:
 - one can process data and get customized plots of them with a few (dozens) lines of code
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About GDL: known users

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- students at the Dept of Physics, Montana State Univ.
- and many more... (assuming from the number of downloads, packages, forum posts)

About GDL: how we use it

- @ the Observatoire de Paris:
 - analysing time series (several satellites)
 - modelization and inversion of time responses of various detectors: IR detectors, bolometers
 - 2D deconvolution methods for Radio Interferometry (Clean, MEM, and alternative)
 - teaching various topics, at different levels: FFT, image processing ...

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- @ the University of Warsaw:
 - aircraft & LIDAR measurements data analysis and visualisation
 - teaching meteorological data processing:
 - geosci. model output data: interpolation, subsetting, statistics
 - signals processing: FFT, wavelets, principal components, filtering
 - satellite image and weather-forecast display/processing
 - plotting, data formats: CVS, netCDF, HDF4, HDF5, GRIB
 - "operational" weather forecast visualisation (GRIB+SVG)

About GDL: how others use it

- **At Strasbourg and Lyon:**
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- **at Montana State University:**
web-based remote access to data analysis environment for students of an IDL course



GDL - GNU Data Language Beta by [m_schellens](#)

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GDL - GNU Data Language, a free IDL (Interactive Data Language, see <http://itvis.com/idl/>) compatible incremental compiler.

Download Now!

[gdl-0.9rc4.tar.gz \(1.5 MB\)](#)



OR

[View all files](#)

Project Reviews



That's a very good work.

posted by [astroste](#) 313 days ago

Was this review helpful for you? [Yes](#) or [No](#)



An incomplete but functional and very useful Interactive Data Language interpreter.

posted by anonymous 359 days ago

Was this review helpful for you? [Yes](#) or [No](#)



Extremely useful!

posted by anonymous 288 days ago

Was this review helpful for you? [Yes](#) or [No](#)



High functionality!

posted by anonymous 134 days ago

Was this review helpful for you? [Yes](#) or [No](#)



GDL is a great chance to introduce IDL to students. Thanks to all developers!

posted by anonymous 197 days ago

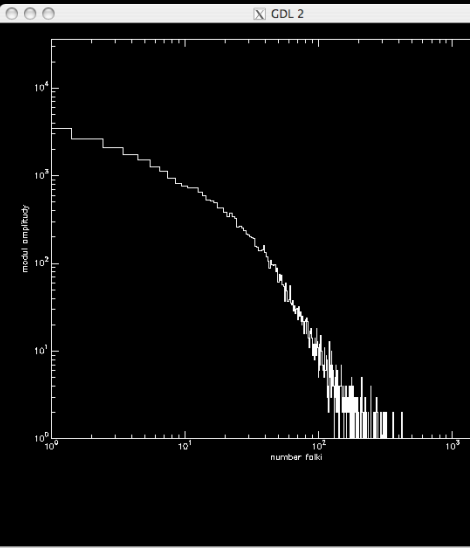
Was this review helpful for you? [Yes](#) or [No](#)



Bit of a pain to compile, but generally works well and makes it quick and easy to do sophisticated data analysis.

posted by anonymous 244 days ago

Was this review helpful for you? [Yes](#) or [No](#)



Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

http://localhost/babyeulag/panes.php?Grabowski_2008_IGF

Google

click here to run the set-up script and run the model solver

```

103 ;
104 ; Rd es
105 ; qv 7= RH qvs = RH -----
106 ; Rv p - es
107 ;
108 ; [Lv / 1 1 \]
109 ; es(T) = e0 * exp [ - | --- - - | ]
110 ; [Rv \ T0 T /]
111 ;
112 es = ee0 * exp(hlatv / rv * (1 / tt0 - 1 /
113 th(0, *, 0) * (p0 / prs(0, *, 0)) ^ (-rg
114 )))
115 qvs = rg / rv / (prs(0, *, 0) - es)
116 qvs *= temporary(es)
117 ; RH increases linearly from 70% at the su
118 qv = fltarr(X_len, Z_len, 1, /nozero)
119 for z = 0, half do qv[* , z, 0]
120 for z = half + 1, Z_len - 1 do qv[* , z, 0]
121 ncdf_varput, nc, 'qv_e', qv(0, *, 0)
122
123 ; circular bubble (r=.6km + 100m linear tr
124 ; - increased temperature (+.5K)
125 ; - increased water-vapour content (RH=95%)
126 for b = 0, 1 do begin
127 ;x0 = X_len * dx / 3.
128 x0 = X_len * dx / 3. * (b + 1)
129 z0 = Z_len * dz / 4.
130 radius = 800
131 for z = 0, Z_len - 1 do for x = 0, X_len
132 dstnc = sqrt((x * dx - x0)^2 + (z * dx
133 if dstnc ge radius + 100 then del = 0.
134 else if dstnc ge radius then del = 1

```

Position: Ln 1, Ch 1 Total: Ln 149, Ch 6045

```

*** time, time: 496 24.75
*** time, time: 497 24.8
*** time, time: 498 24.85
*** time, time: 499 24.9
*** time, time: 500 24.95
surf max qr (g/kg): 5.56057e-05
surf max prec rate (mm/hr): 0.000267464
GDL> exit

```

click here to run the analysis script and produce plots

```

14
15 c = [Z_len, X_len, 1]
16 o = [0, 0, 0]
17
18 ; animation loop
19 for i = 0, T_len - 1 do begin
20
21 file = string(i, f='(I5.5)')
22 device, filename = file + '.svg'
23 o[2] = i
24
25 ; getting a slice of data
26 ncdf_varget, nc, ncdf_varid(nc, "T"), T
27 ncdf_varget, nc, ncdf_varid(nc, "qc"), q
28 ncdf_varget, nc, ncdf_varid(nc, "qr"), q
29 ncdf_varget, nc, ncdf_varid(nc, "th"), t
30
31 ; plotting cloud water
32 contour, qc, X, Z, /fill, lev=lev qc/1000
33 xtitle = "X [m]", ytitle = "Z [m]", $
34 title = "T = " + string(T, f='(F4.1)')
35 contour, 1000 * qc, X, Z, /foll, /overpl
36
37 ; plotting rain water
38 wh = where(qr gt 10e-5, cnt)
39 if cnt gt 0 then oplot, psym=3, $
40 (rebin(X, X_len, Z_len, /s))[wh], $
41 (rotate(rebin(Z, Z_len, X_len, /s), 1)
42
43 ; plotting potential temperature
44 contour, th, X, Z, /foll, /overplot, lev
45
46 device, /close
47
48 endfor

```

Position: Ln 1, Ch 1 Total: Ln 51, Ch 1379

```

Low zylaszat na http://sun.cba.gwdg.net/projects/gnuada-
*****
% Compiled module: ANALYSIS.
% Compiled module: LOADCT.
% LOADCT: Loading table BLUE/WHITE
GDL> exit

```

choose a plot from the list below

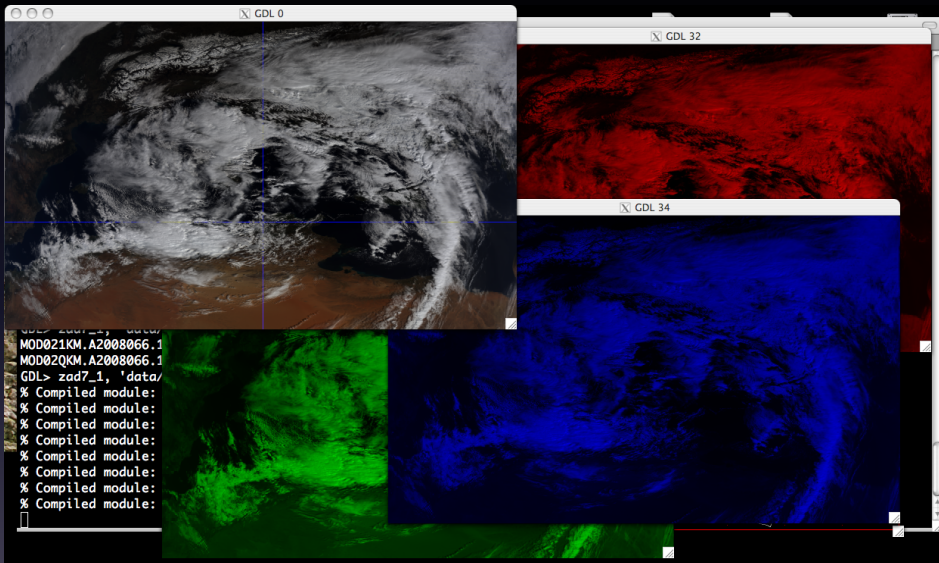
00016.svg play rate: 1/0.8 sec

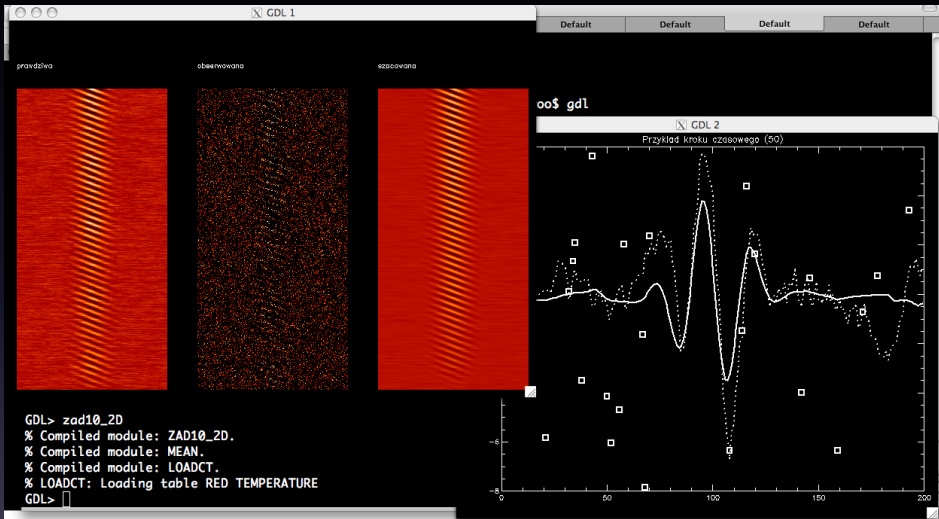
T = 8.0 [min]

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GNU Data Language

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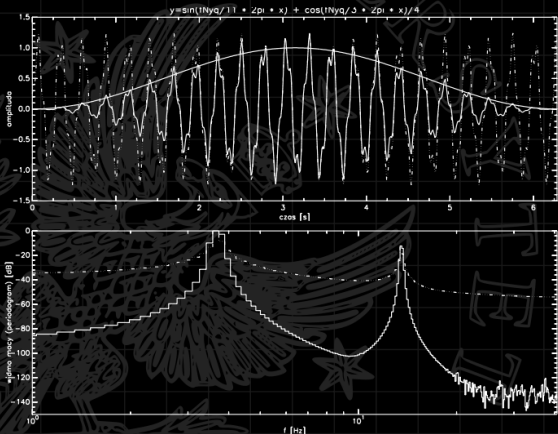


hann_demo.pro

```

1 pro periodogram, czas, sgnl, _extra = ex
2 n = n_elements(czas)
3 dt = czas[1]-czas[0]
4 f = findgen(n/2+1) / n / dt
5 amp2 = abs((fft(sgnl))[0:n/2])^2
6 amp2[1:n/2-1] *= 2 ; uwzgl. częstości ujemnych
7 moc_db = 10*log10(amp2/max(amp2))
8 ; norm. do max więc bez norm. do sumy wag w oknie
9 oplot, f, moc_db, psym=10, _extra = ex
10 end
11
12 pro hann demo
13 n = 512 dt = 1./(n-1) * 2 * !PI
14 nyquist = .5 / dt
15
16 czas = findgen(n) * dt
17 sgnl = sin(nyquist/11 * 2*!PI * czas) +
18       cos(nyquist/3 * 2*!PI * czas) / 4
19 hann = hanning(n)
20
21 !P.MULTI = [0,1,2] & !X.STYLE = 1
22
23 plot, linestyle=4, czas, sgnl,
24 xtitle="czas [s]", ytitle="amplituda",
25 title="y=sin(fNyq/11 * 2pi * x) +
26       cos(fNyq/3 * 2pi * x)/4"
27 oplot, linestyle=0, czas, sgnl*hann
28 oplot, czas, hann
29
30 plot, [0, nyquist], [0, -150], /nodata,
31 xtitle="f [Hz]", /xlog,
32 ytitle="widmo mocy (periodogram) [dB]"
33 periodogram, linestyle=4, czas, sgnl
34 periodogram, linestyle=0, czas, sgnl * hann
35 end

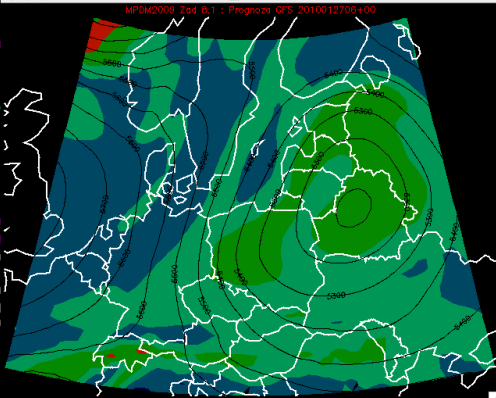
```

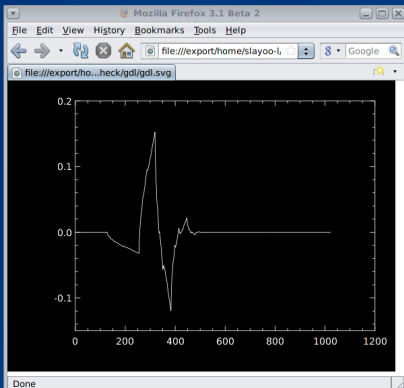


```

22 cmd = "wget --continue --output-document=" + plik $
23 + "http://nomads.ncep.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/filter_gfs_hd.pl?file=gfs.t06z.mastergrb2f" + hh_str $
24 + "&lev_500_mb=on&var_HGT=on&var_UGRD=on&var_VGRD=on&var_ABSV=on&subregion=&dir=%2Fgfs." + data + "%2Fmaster"
25 + "&bottomlat=" + strtrim(string(maplimit[0]), 2) + "&leftlon=" + strtrim(string(maplimit[1]), 2) + "&" $
26 + "&toplat=" + strtrim(string(maplimit[2]), 2) + "&rightlon=" + strtrim(string(maplimit[3]), 2) + "&" $
27 spawn, cmd, output, exit_status=status
28 if status ne 0 then begin
29     message, /continue, 'pobranie pliku nie powi
30     continue
31 endif
32
33 ; pobranie danych z plików GRIB (w pierwszym kr
34 grib_f = gribapi_open_file(plik)
35 n_msgs = gribapi_count_in_file(grib_f)
36 for m = 0, n_msgs - 1 do begin
37     grib_m = gribapi_new_from_file(grib_f)
38     if h eq h_prwsz and m eq 0 then begin
39         gribapi_get_data, grib_m, lats, lons, tmp
40         gribapi_get, grib_m, 'numberOfPointsAlongA
41         gribapi_get, grib_m, 'numberOfPointsAlongA
42         n_stps = 1 + (h_osttn - h_prwsz) / h_perstp
43         lons = (temporary(lons))[indgen(n_lons)]
44         lats = (temporary(lats))[indgen(n_lats)] * r
45         vals = fltarr(n_lons, n_lats, n_stps, n_msg
46     endif else gribapi_get, grib_m, 'values', tmp
47     vals[* , *, h/h_perstp, m] = temporary(tmp)
48     gribapi_release, grib_m
49 endfor ; m
50 gribapi_close_file, grib_f

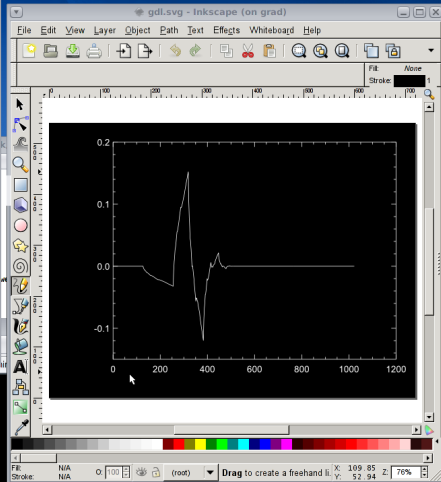
```





- No startup file read (GDL_STARTUP/IDL_STARTUP env. var. not set).
 - Please report bugs, feature or help requests and patches at:
<http://sourceforge.net/projects/gnudatalanguage/>

```
GDL> set_plot, 'svg'
GDL> v = f1tarr(1024) & v[9] = 1
GDL> plot, wtn(v, 4, /inverse)
GDL> device, /close
GDL> help, /version, /stru
** Structure IVERSION, 8 tags, data length=28:
ARCH          STRING      'i86pc'
OS            STRING      'SunOS'
OS_FAMILY     STRING      'unix'
OS_NAME       STRING      'SunOS'
RELEASE       STRING      '6.0'
BUILD_DATE    STRING      'Jan 27 2010'
MEMORY_BITS   INT         32
FILE_OFFSET_BITS INT      32
GDL>
```

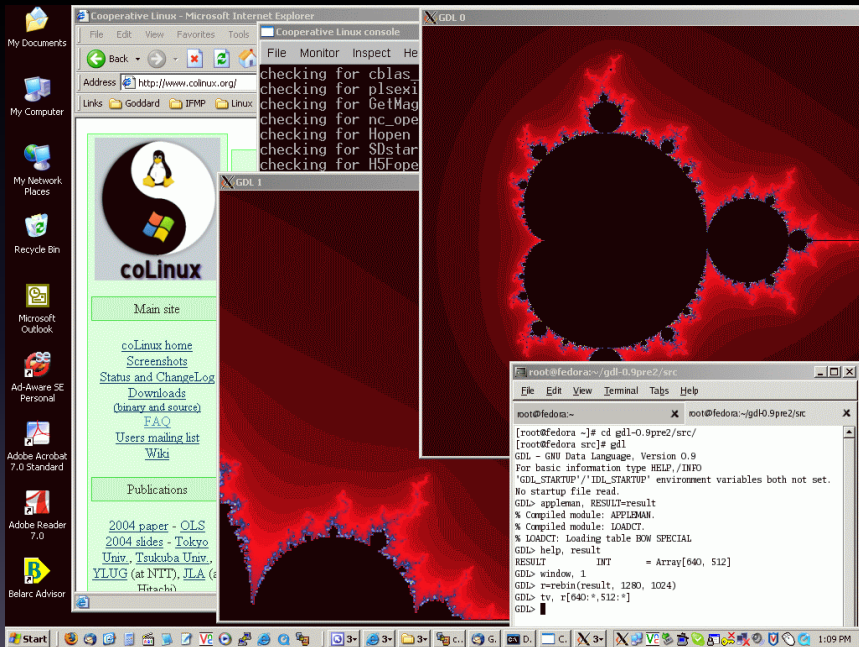


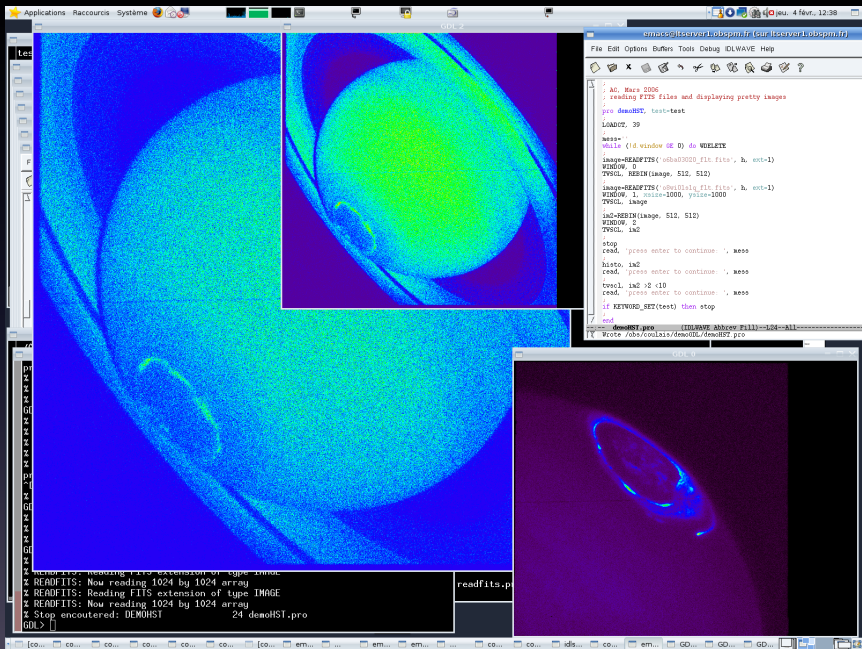
| Name | Size | Type | Date Modified |
|---------------------|----------|--------|------------------|
| gdl-basic_op.o | 2 KB | O File | 2010-01-28 20:49 |
| gdl-basic_pro.o | 2 285 KB | O File | 2010-01-28 21:16 |
| gdl-basic_pro_img.o | 1 166 KB | O File | 2010-01-28 21:16 |
| gdlc.g | 45 KB | G File | 2009-12-29 16:13 |
| gdlc.i.g | 125 KB | G File | 2009-11-20 23:15 |
| gdlc.tree.o | 43 KB | G File | 2009-12-29 16:13 |

```

$ ./gdl.exe
GDL - GNU Data Language, Version 0.9rc3 CVS
- For basic information type HELP./INFO
- Default library routine search path used <GDL_PATH/IDL_PATH env. var. not set>:
  /usr/local/share/gnudatalanguage/lib:/usr/local/share/gnudatalanguage/lib/dicom
- No startup file read <GDL_STARTUP/IDL_STARTUP env. var. not set>.
- Please report bugs, feature or help requests and patches at:
  http://sourceforge.net/projects/gnudatalanguage/

GDL> set_plot, 'x'
GDL> surface, dist(25), title='GDL works under Cygwin! :)'
% Compiled module: DIST.
GDL> write_png, 'test.png', tord()
% Compiled module: WRITE_PNG.
GDL> _
  
```



```

Plik Edycja Widok Terminal Karty Pomoc
IDLWAVE Help
File Edit Options Buffers Tools Debug IDLWAVE Help
ncdf_varget, nc, 'range', r
ncdf_varget, nc, 'average_time', avt
ncdf_varget, nc, 'beta_raw', snl
ncdf_varget, nc, 'temp_int', temp_int
ncdf_varget, nc, 'temp_ext', temp_ext
ncdf_varget, nc, 'temp_det', temp_det
ncdf_varget, nc2, 'time', t2
ncdf_varget, nc2, 'range', r2
ncdf_varget, nc2, 'average_time', avt2
ncdf_varget, nc2, 'beta_raw', snl2
ncdf_varget, nc2, 'temp_int', temp_int2
ncdf_varget, nc2, 'temp_ext', temp_ext2
ncdf_varget, nc2, 'temp_det', temp_det2

; Przygotowanie danych
; lacze dane z dwioma sasiednich
; plikow zadajac warunek, zeby
; pierwszy bin byl o godzinie 00 UTC a
; ostatni 00 UTC 24 godziny pozniej
t_0 = day1904(mm,dd,yyyy,0,0,0) ; godzina zapisana w formacie sekund
t_1 = day1904(mm,dd,yyyy,2,0,0)
indx_t_0 = where(t gt t_0 and t lt t_0+20)
indx_t_1 = where(t2 lt t_1 and t2 gt t_1-20)
; print, indx_t_0, indx_t_1
; help, snl, t, temp_int, snl2, t2, temp_int2
snl = [snl(*,indx_t_0(0):n_elements(t)-1)], [snl2(*,0:indx_t_1(n_eleme

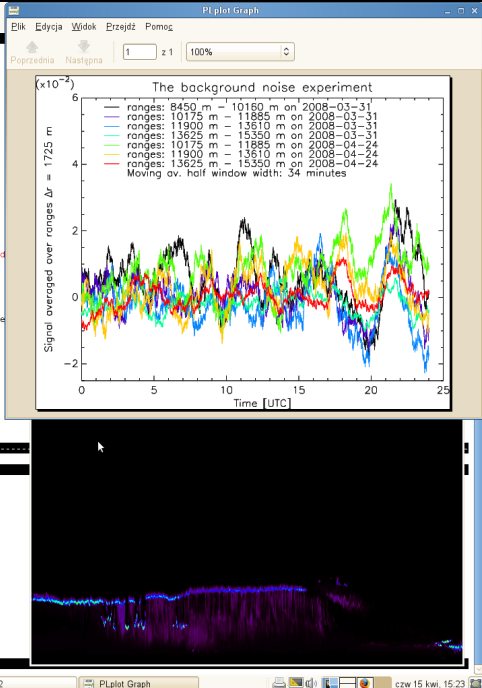
; Tworze tablice odpowiadajace regionowi powyzej wyznaczonej granicy
r_brdr = 5000
snl_up = snl(r_brdr/15:n_elements(r)-1,*)
r_up = r(r_brdr/15:n_elements(r)-1)

; snl(*,0:500) = 1000
for i=0,n_elements(r_up)-1 do begin
    snl(1,*) = (15*i)^2*snl(1,*)
end

--2:----F1 normalis.pro (IDLWAVE Abbrev F11)--L137--C0--31%-----

@ bash
% Compiled module: CHSV_WREC.
% Compiled module: CHSV_RREC.
% Compiled module: CHSV_WRAM.
% Compiled module: CHSV_WVTYPE.
% Compiled module: CHSV_WDATA.
SNL FLOAT = Array[1024, 8520]
GDL> normalis, 20080424
153.313
% LOADCT: Loading table Rainbow + white
1.57355e-06
SNL FLOAT = Array[1024, 8516]
GDL> normalis, 20100304
25270.4
% LOADCT: Loading table Rainbow + white
5.29369e-06
SNL FLOAT = Array[1024, 2871]
GDL> normalis, 20080424
2 bash
Komputer sirocco GDL 13 GDL 2 PLplot Graph czw 15 kwi, 15:23

```



About GDL: how to get GDL

- pre-compiled packages (**no trouble**, **fast**, **no options**, **releases only**):
 - Fedora: 32/64 bit, up-to-date, even experimental features available
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- CVS (**all options up to you**, **newest features/fixes**, **expect troubles**)

About GDL: the Macports GDL package

```
eyrie:~ slayoo$ port info gnudatalanguage
gnudatalanguage @0.9rc4, Revision 4 (math, science)
Variants:                mpich, openmp, python, universal, wxWidgets

Description:              A free IDL (Interactive Data Language) compatible
                           incremental compiler (ie. runs IDL programs).
Homepage:                  http://gnudatalanguage.sourceforge.net/

Build Dependencies:        autoconf, automake, libtool
Library Dependencies:      zlib, gsl, ncurses, readline, plplot, netcdf, hdf4,
                           hdf5-18, grib_api, libproj4, ImageMagick, xorg-libX11,
                           udunits2, fftw-3, fftw-3-single, cmsvlib

Platforms:                 darwin
License:                   GPLv2
Maintainers:                takeshi@macports.org, slayoo@igf.fuw.edu.pl
```

<http://www.macports.org/>

About GDL: how to help and contribute

- Try it! Let us know what you use GDL for. Or if you don't, why not.
- Report feature/improvement requests and bugs (with example codes).
- Send patches (GPL code) with new features, bugfixes or test routines.
- Port or package GDL for new platforms.
- Report problems to packagers.
- Let others know about GDL!

We need help!

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We need help!

- What is really important now is that GDL is User-wish driven project.
- We cannot check all the cases: please report!
- We don't know all keywords: please report if missing or misbehaving.
- We don't know or haven't checked all (sometime crazy) interactions between keywords: please report problems (IDL Documentation is itself not always without ambiguities).

Hands-on: let's start

```
$ gdl
GDL> print, 'Hello world!'
Hello world!
GDL> $ echo "Hello world!"
Hello world!
GDL> hello
% Compiled module: HELLO.
Hello world!
GDL> hello
Hello world!
GDL> exit
$ gdl -quiet -e hello
% Compiled module: HELLO.
Hello world!
```

hello.pro:

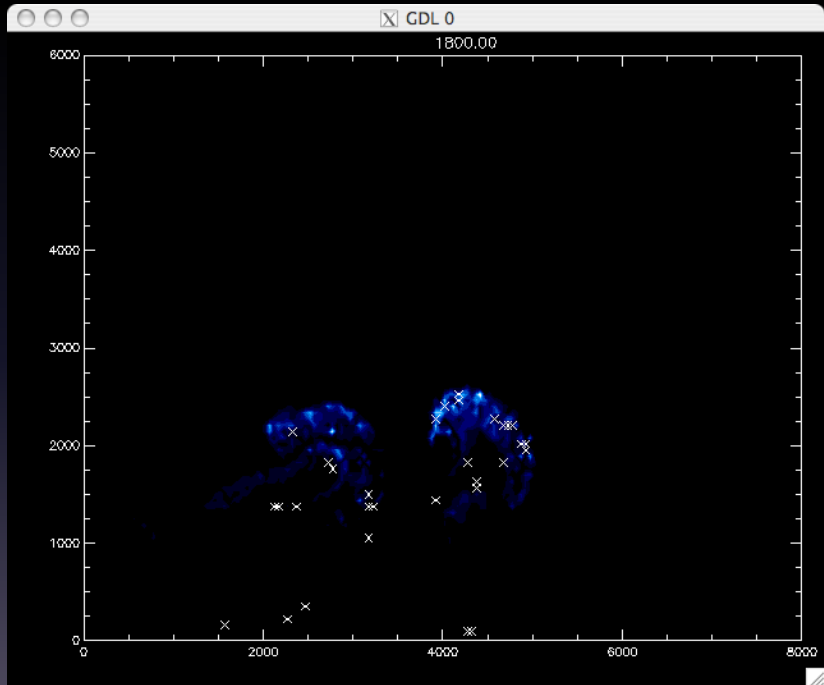
```
1 pro hello
2   print, 'Hello world!'
3 end
```

Hands-on: syntax basics

- assignment & function call with one positional argument:
GDL> `a = findgen(11)`
- procedure call & variable size inquiry
GDL> `help, a`
- keyword argument & some Fortran heritage...
GDL> `print, a, format='(4G)'`
- ... and some relief for C users
GDL> `print, a, format='(%" %4.3g")'`
- simplest plot (x-axis: array indices) & math ops. applied to arrays
GDL> `plot, sin(a*!PI/10)^2`
- array addressing
GDL> `print, a[0]`
GDL> `print, a[4:5]`
GDL> `print, a[[9,10]]`
GDL> `print, a[a]`
GDL> `print, a[indgen(3)]`

Hands-on: CReSS-SDM example

```
1 pro cressanim, ncfile
2   nc = ncdf_open(ncfile)                                ; opening the netCDF file
3   ncdf_varget, nc, 'X', x, nx = n_elements(x)           ; \
4   ncdf_varget, nc, 'Z', z, nz = n_elements(z)           ; | grid-box->x/z ; time-step->time
5   ncdf_varget, nc, 'T', t, nt = n_elements(t)           ; /
6
7   loadct, 1                                              ; BLUE/WHITE colour palette
8   qclev = findgen(11) / 1000.                          ; [0, .001, ... .01] kg/kg
9
10  for i = 0, nt - 1 do begin
11    ncdf_varget, nc, 'qc', qc, offset=[0,0,0,i], count=[nx,1,nz,1]
12    contour, reform(qc), x, z, /fill, levels=qclev, title=t[i] ; filled-contour plots of cloud water
13
14    ncdf_varget, nc, 'qr', qr, o=[0,0,0,i], c=[nx,1,nz,1] ; any unambiguous keyword name is OK
15    wh = where(qr gt 0, cnt)                               ; returns "1d indices"
16    if cnt gt 0 then begin
17      ai = array_indices(qr, wh)                           ; converting indices from 1d to 2d
18      plots, x[ai[0,*]], z[ai[2,*]], psym=7                ; rain water plotted with "X" symbols
19    endif
20
21    wait, 1                                                ; wating one seconds before next frame
22  endfor
23 end
```



NCDF_OPEN & NCDF_VARGET

`NCDF_OPEN()` opens a netCDF file

returns: a "handle" to the file (long integer)

arguments: filename

keywords: /nowrite, /write

`NCDF_VARGET` retrieves data from an open netCDF file

arguments: handle, variable id or name, output variable

keywords: count=array, offset=array, stride=array

LOADCT, CONTOUR & PLOTS

LOADCT loads a color palette

argument: palette id (0...40)

CONTOUR plots data with contours

arguments: values array, [x array, y array]

keywords: /fill, levels=array, title=string, ...

PLOTS plots data with symbols or lines

arguments: x array, y array

keywords: psym=integer, ...

WHERE, ARRAY_INDICES & REFORM

`WHERE()` returns the (1d) indices of array elems that evaluate to true

arguments: array, output var with count of "true" elems

keywords: ...

`ARRAY_INDICES()` converts 1-d indices to n-d indices

returns: array with n-d indices for given 1-d indices

arguments: n-d array, 1-d indices

keywords: ...

`REFORM()` changes the dimensions of an array

returns: the modified array (copy or not)

arguments: array, [new dimenions]

keywords: /overwrite

.COMPILE, STOP & .CONTINUE

`.COMPILE` triggers recompilation of a file/routine
(interpreter directive)

`STOP` stops execution allowing interactive debugging
(to be inserted in the code)

`.CONTINUE` continues execution after a `STOP`
(interpreter directive)

ご清聴ありがとうございました。