

Critical Review of Seminar

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This is a critical review of the presentation Audio Signal Processing for Dynamical Noise Mapping in Smart Cities, presented by Professor Francesc Alas the 22. of November at UPC Campus Nord. The presentation describes how to compute a dynamic traffic noise maps in real-life environments with the use of audio signal processing. In this critical review we will look on how the presenter interacted with the crowd and how the use of slides with sound effects gave the listeners an understanding of the possibilities and challenges when trying to analyze sounds in real-life environments.

The presenter first talked about the key steps of the audio signal processing and how the creation of noise maps changed with the emergence of Wireless Acoustic Sensor Networks. Having presented the background of how the technology worked the presenter moved on to describing the challenges with computing dynamic traffic noise maps in real-life environment. This made sure that a listener without any knowledge of the problem from before could follow the presentation easily and get an understanding of the problems and how the technology is developing in a way that makes it possible to make dynamic noise maps.

During the presentation the presenter used slides. It was not too many slides, but the amount of information of some of the slides where too much, and some slides where chaotic. A presenter could not expect the listeners to understand and follow every single part of the presentation and having slides with too much information makes it difficult for both the listener and the presenter. In this presentation is was difficult for listeners to follow which parts that were important and the presenter seemed to be unsure about how to present the key aspects of each part. The presenter choose to show a slide with contents pointing out where we where in the presentation between each section of the presentation that made it easier for the listeners to follow.

The biggest contribution for giving the listeners a feeling of what the topics was about, was the use of example sounds in the presentation. The presenter chose to play some sounds that the sensors had picked up and described how these sounds where used to analyze and compute the dynamic noise maps. This gave the listeners and impression of the challenges and possibilities and at the same time gave the listeners the chance to make up their one mind on how they would have tried to use the collected data with the sounds.

Two times during the presentation the presenter got a question from one of the listeners. Being open to take questions during the presentation gives the listeners the possibility to clear up in uncertainties that often gets forgotten when it is a question part after the presentation. However, it is important that the questions are clear for all listeners, and often it helps that the presenter repeat the question from the listeners. In this case it was difficult to follow the asked question and the presenter used time to answer the question going back and forward in the slides when the question was unclear.

Professor Francesc Alas gave an interesting and well formulated presentation. He followed his plan and slides and always made sure that the listeners knew who which point was next in the presentation. It was easy for the listeners to understand the main topics and challenges with the presentation and was well described with the use of example sounds. As expected it is not possible for the listeners to follow every part of the presentation but this would have been easier if the slides had contained less information with which could have underlined the most important aspects of the presentation.