

Review: CIMNE Seminar November 22nd, 2017. “Audio Signal Processing for Dynamic Noise Mapping in Smart Cities” by Francesc Alías.

The description of CIMNE regarding the content of the seminar says that the talk wants to “describe the key steps of the audio signal processing together with the main challenges of their application for computing dynamic traffic noise maps in real-life environments”.

In my eyes, the seminar held its promise. By the end of the talk I understood the basic steps in audio signal processing as well as the challenges the procedure still faces. Therefore, I think that – generally speaking – the seminar was very good.

In comparison to the first seminar our course attended, I thought that the introduction in this seminar was better, due to two important elements: it was shorter and only contained the information necessary to get an overall knowledge of the science behind the presentation as well as its goal and structure. This is why, it was easier and more interesting to listen to this presentation. In the first seminar, the presenter used a lot of time to present the faculty he is working in – even describing the building – which made it hard to focus and sort out which information was actually important.

Furthermore, Francesc Alías talked very freely and confident. I especially liked two things about his style of presentation:

1. He did not just make eye-contact with one person, but made sure to always look at different people in the room while talking. This gave the impression, that he values everyone’s attention.
2. He asked us questions. Sometimes, it is hard to focus after a longer period of time only listening. By asking questions we were animated to think throughout the presentation which made it easier to stay concentrated.

Regarding the content of the presentation itself, I especially liked the audio examples. They were a nice and interesting alternative to only using key words or notes on the slides. Furthermore, since the audio signals are the key of the project, I thought it was important to hear actual examples in order to understand what the programmes are analysing exactly.

So, all in all, I thought the presentation was very good. There is just one little thing that I would criticise: Sometimes there were too many pictures on one slide. It was hard to see what the figures showed, let alone read any numbers or see the scales used in the diagrams. So, the only thing I would suggest for future presentations is to not use more than two figures on one slide. Because otherwise a lot of information is lost for the audience, because it is not readable.