Seminar und Praktikum, SoSe 2014

„Wissenschaftliches Arbeiten und Lehren”

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Presentation of Scientific Work

Presenting Yourself

- A conference talk is a chance to get your name and research In front of lots of people who would not otherwise read your paper
- Among conference delegates or visitors you may find people who can help you with your research, PhD examiners, etc.; you want them to see you as professional, interesting and interested in the research of others
- Be prepared to talk to people you don’t know, often without anyone introducing you
- People who speak well are considered smart and vice versa
- Don't need natural talent to be a good speaker

Preparing the Presentation

- You will not be able to cover everything that is in your paper
- Focus on
  - the aspect you are particularly proud of
  - an argument you want to make
  - what the audience is likely to be most interested in
  - the area where you are seeking advice from the audience
- Spend enough time preparing
- Rehearse in front of a friendly audience
- Cut down to tell a tight story
- Memorize the key points you are trying to leave with the audience

Why do you present

- The purpose of a presentation is NOT
  - to convince the audience that you are the coolest guy ever
  - to tell everything you know about a topic
  - to present all technical details
- Rather you want to
  - present the audience your idea
  - make the audience keen about reading your work
  - engage, tease, provoke the audience

The audience you want…

- knows your work
- understands all details of your important theory of complex varieties of high dimensionality
- is keen on learning about the newest developments in your area
- pays attention, is constructive, and favourable

The audience you get…

- does not know you
- probably heard about your theory but damns it to hell
- just came back from lunch (“Schnitzelkoma”)
- thinks their emails are much more important

Wake up the audience!

You have about 2 minutes to catch the audience before they nap away!

If you can convey only one message to the audience - which one should it be?

What to put on the Slides

- Don’t use too much text
- Put a picture on every slide
- Demos in your talk are awesome
- Honest charts
- Videos
- Subtle animation

Software Demonstrations

- Make sure that your software runs exactly as you expect on the machine designated for the demonstrations
  - software my require particular plugins or a particular version of a database
  - computer technicians may have upgraded the machine
- Have everything open and running before the audience arrives
- If your software malfunctions, do not swear - nor spend the next 10 minutes inspecting the source code for a bug

Doing the Presentation

- Speak energetically but clearly and slowly enough to articulate
- Do not read out the slides
- Neither look at your notes nor at the screen all the time
- Tell’em what you are going to tell’em, tell ’em, and tell ’em what you told ’em
- Ask for understanding at key points
- Project and emphasise
- Use your eyes, body and hands
- Show your passion
- Good posture and balance
- If you are one of the speakers in a session, stay for the whole session

What to Say

- Motivate problem with a practical scenario
- Before explaining the technology
  - Why is this an important problem? (Audience will be distracted by guessing otherwise.)
  - Why is your solution better?
- The technology
  - Goal is to convince you've got something great ...
  - ... not to teach them how to implement it
  - Success if you get them to read the paper for details
- Shorter is better
- Don't irritate your audience
- Stories get attention

How to Say it Well

- Practice your talk
  - More than once
  - Time yourself
- Compensate for distractions/inattention
  - Restate overall goals from time to time, e.g. "Remember that we're trying to compute these probabilities on the map."
  - Repetition is OK
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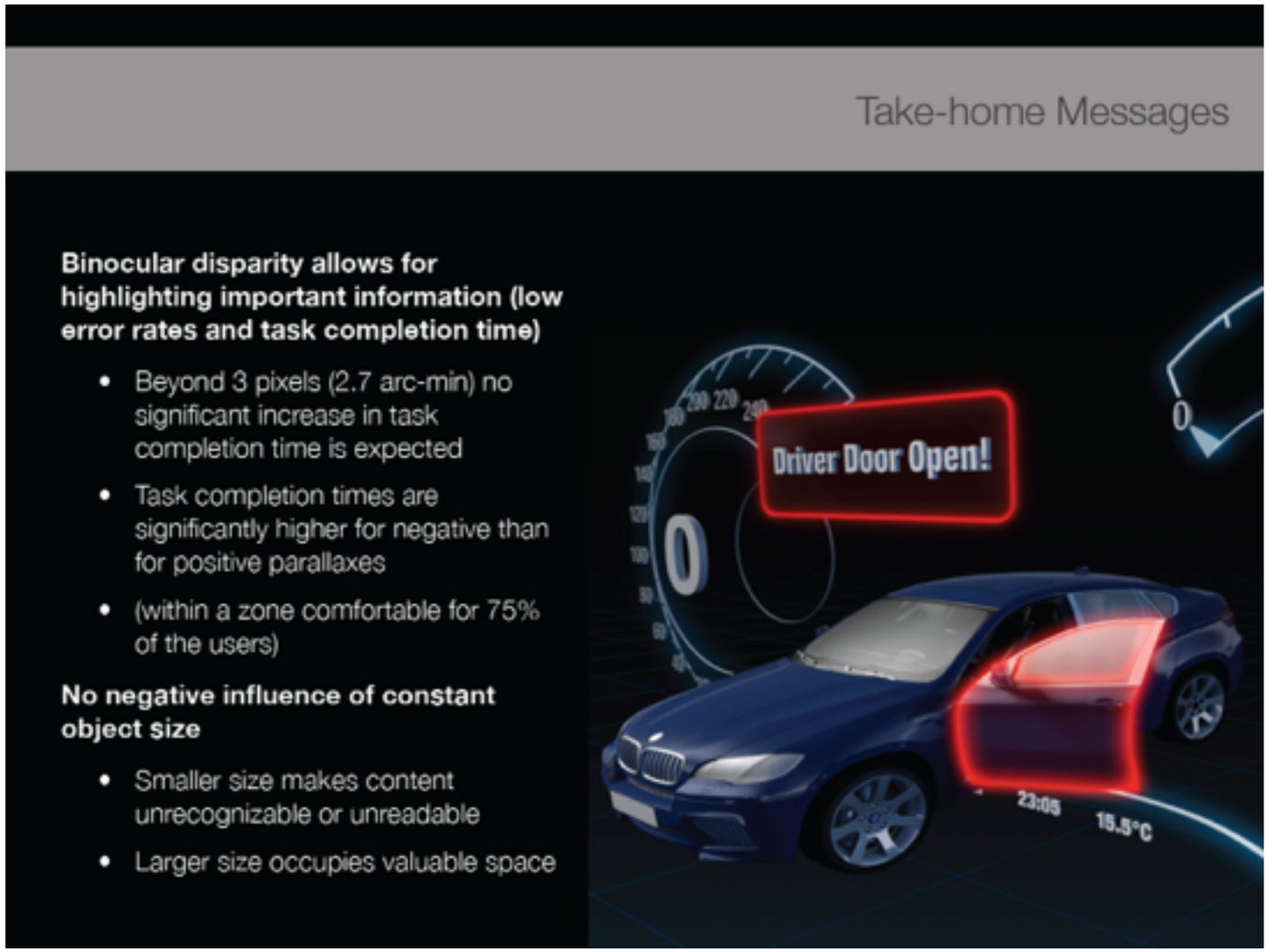
- Eye Contact: always face the audience
  - don't look or point at screen
  - glance at laptop, use the mouse
- Always be prepared to skip ahead (bridging slides!)

What you can skip

- **Agenda / Outline**
  - conveys almost no information at the outset of the talk
  - potentially *after* the motivation
  - maybe to sync during the presentation
- **Related Work**
  - are part of the paper
  - you should be aware of related work
  - talk about related work in a constructive way
- **Technical details / Formulas**
  - don't try to tell your story with equations
  - a few equations are ok, but not gratuitous
  - flash up some math just to show you have it

End of your presentation

- End on a memorable slide
  - people should remember the end of your talk
  - it should be worthwhile to remember
  - be short and concise
- Indicate when you're done, e. g., "That's the end. Thanks for listening."
- Let session chair ask for questions



Rude Q & A

- Repeat the question to buy time
- If multiple questions, answer the last one and ask what the first one was again
- Ask for clarification of the question
- Ask a question instead of answering
- If too long an answer… “that’s interesting - let’s talk offline”
- Be calm, humble - but prepared for anything