

Master's Thesis



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F8

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Katedra teoretické informatiky

Tablet infotainment system

Bc. Michael Bláha

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Supervisor: Ing Jan Šedivý, CSc.

/ Declaration

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Abstrakt / Abstract

Tento dokument je pouze pro potřeby testování.

This document is for testing purpose only.

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Chapter 1

Introduction TODO

sources:

- <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pGtlS5uY4PdKfHjf83dFGrajyVcea0tvzAnwXf61Cs8/edit>
- generally progress: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CEWym7MphsC00v3CXe_bTH0gFBgquBbPVb/edit

1.1 Project TODO

See above

1.1.1 Motivation TODO

See above

1.2 Assignment analysis

1.2.1 Assignment tasks

1.2.1.1 Review existing Android applications for in-car use

One of the key approaches in research project is reviewing the existing progress in the given field. Reviewing existing applications helps understanding the topic, seeing the bigger picture, learning from mistakes of others and last but not least, getting general idea about competition.

1.2.1.2 Review and analyse User Interface development methods for in-car infotainment applications

Cosidering the car environment, the user interface must deal with a lot of different problems than usual. This task should review existing User Interface development rules and apply them to the car environment, then analyse them and choose proper method for car-UI design process.

1.2.1.3 Analyze the in-car OBD API and exported data

On-Board Diagnostics API is a standard API provided by modern cars for gathering various information from speed to engine temperature. This task focuses on understanding and gathering data from the OBD API.

1.2.1.4 Design an application system architecture for accessing the OBD data and resources

Having the data from OBD and preparing an application for displaying them, designing proper architecture is required for everything to work well. The application has to gather data, while displaying them properly without unnecessary (TODO FIX!) delay.

■ 1.2.1.5 Design a tablet User Interface for in-car use

After reviewing existing applications and UI development methods, the next goal is to create new User Interface for in-car use, while considering the constraints this environment puts on it.

■ 1.2.1.6 Design and implement in-car application offering the OBD data for Android tablet platform

With everything prepared and thought through, the application will be developed based on result from all the tasks accomplished so far. In this case, the Android platform will be used as explained later in the text.

■ 1.2.1.7 Perform UI and application testing and evaluate results

For best results the application must and will be tested. Both code and UI must be tested properly, using various testing approaches, such as unit tests or UI testing with real users in a car simulator.

Chapter 2

Analysis TODO

sources:

- application analysis https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Qy0iMzV0ikcDhPY3P5MsRL_80cCGzjoGfUL0/edit
- priority list <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1juKYgUUDSI5CmfzjR4BsYSPHVYCGqrWuejgbhqzw/edit>

2.1 Existing applications

2.1.1 Applications TODO

sources:

- https://docs.google.com/document/d/1p_pSGTUHEoj0yP7ICCDNVV7RW1vn8iN_KECipC4Y9tY/edit
- <http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/5-best-dashboard-car-mode-apps-android-compared/>

2.1.2 Torque

Starting with an empty screen, lot of settings are required before using this application, since there is no default mode. Adding new views is easy and intuitive, but still very confusing. The add menu lacks hierarchy and everything is just sorted array of various options. There is no cancel button when popping the menu dialog.

This application can actually show almost anything OBD provides. It supports different types of display, but it is hard to tell by their names. Responsiveness it not smooth at all and launching the application in horizontal mode confuses it, everything behaves like if it was in vertical mode.



Figure 2.1. Screenshot from Torque

■ 2.1.2.1 Advantages

- Lot of data from OBD available,
- various layout settings and themes,
- HUD mode.

■ 2.1.2.2 Disadvantages

- One-level confusing menu without hierarchy,
- limited size options for displays (3 types),
- lacks default mode with predefined displays,
- hard to place displays, the grid does not work well,
- slow and laggy.

■ 2.1.3 CarHome Ultra

This application starts with a pop-up tutorial for its elementary functionality, telling the user about the speedmeter, compass, weather forecast and customizable dashboard for launching external applications. In default it offers Google Maps, Google Navigation and voice search. Adding another external application shortcut is done by tapping the tab. Also there are basic settings, which offer brightness mode (day, night, auto), theme and safety options.

It appears to be just a simple application offering speed, compass, weather and external application launcher. The new version also displays location (address) and a phone version is able to respond to text messages. It also supports text to speech (on touch).



Figure 2.2. Screenshot from CarHome Ultra

■ 2.1.3.1 Advantages

- Simple UI, easy to understand,
- responsive, fluent,
- possible to change units (mile/km, etc.),
- lot of themes available,
- adjustable update rates,
- a lot of different settings.

■ 2.1.3.2 Disadvantages

- Small buttons on small screens (fixed 6 buttons),
- even smaller setting buttons
- limited functionality
- tapping weather makes the app speak for every single tap, no matter if it already speaks (it can speak for hours after few taps).

■ 2.1.4 Car Dashdroid

After a long loading the main window appears. It has three screens, which change by swiping right or left. The left screen contains dial keyboard, the right screen contains customizable cards (for external application shortcuts or built-in tools) and the main screen consists of weather, speed and shortcuts to contacts, music, navigation and voice command.

It also provides settings for bluetooth, brightness, screen rotation, fullscreen, day/night mode and application settings, where other options can be set, such as home adress, theme, units.

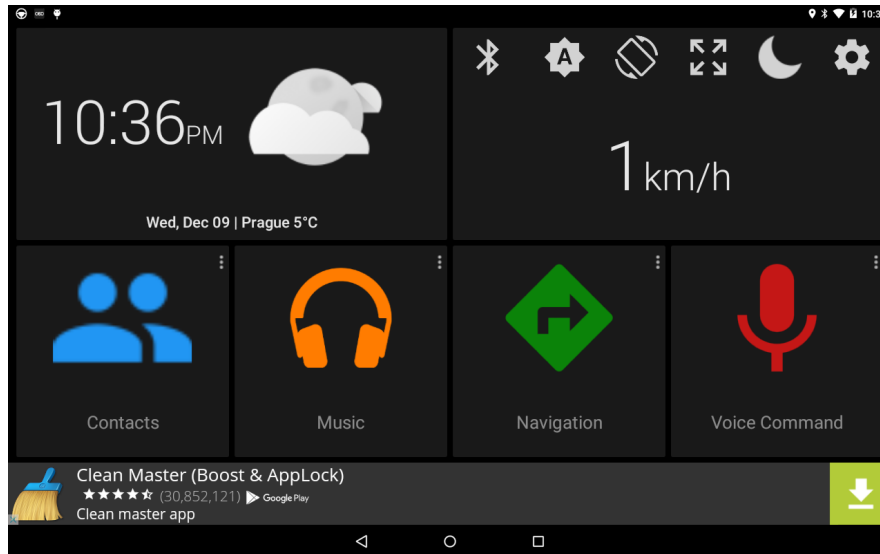


Figure 2.3. Screenshot from Car Dashdroid

■ 2.1.4.1 Advantages

- Simple UI, easy to understand,
- responsive, fluent,
- possible to change units (mile/km, etc.),
- able to read incoming SMS using TTS.

■ 2.1.4.2 Disadvantages

- Very limited functionality
- not optimized for tablet,
- distractive commercial ads in free version.

■ 2.1.5 Ultimate Car Dock

While the design is very similar to CarHome Ultra, this application offers fewer displays on a single screen. There are five screens, each one consists of six cards. Every card can change into shortcut or a build-in application. The Ultimate Car Dock has only few built-in applications: music player, voice command, speed, weather, messages and calls. It also supports shortcuts to other external applications.



Figure 2.4. Screenshot from Ultimate Car Dock

■ 2.1.5.1 Advantages

- Simple UI, easy to understand,
- responsive, fluent,
- possible to change units (mile/km, etc.),
- able to read various incoming notifications using TTS (Gmail, WhatsApp, etc.),
- predefined SMS responses (selectable when a message comes),
- direct calls and messages (shortcut to call/message a certain person).

■ 2.1.5.2 Disadvantages

- Limited functionality
- not optimized for tablet,
- small font.

■ 2.1.6 Conclusion

Except by Torque, which focuses mainly (and only) on OBD, all the applications are very similar to each other. They have similar design and functionality – mostly weather, speed provided by GPS, voice command and shortcuts for external applications.

■ 2.1.6.1 Suggestions

- OBD data,
- shortcuts to other applications,
- adjustable cards,
- built-in cards (weather, speed, voice command, etc.),
- simple grid UI,
- possibility to change displayed units,
- responsive and fluent,
- day and night theme,
- predefined message and call responses,
- TTS for incoming notifications.

2.1.6.2 Possible issues to avoid

- Responsiveness,
- limited functionality,
- small and hardly visible font,
- distractive ads.

2.1.7 Android Auto

sources:

- <http://developer.android.com/design/auto/index.html>
- <https://www.google.com/design/spec-auto/designing-for-android-auto/designing-for-cars.html>

Recently, Google presented new application model for information delivery while driving. It is called Android Auto, it provides a standardized user interface and user interaction model for Android devices. Focusing on minimizing the driver distraction, it presents a few options to interact with user. It supports three application types:

- System overview
- Audio applications
- Messaging applications

2.1.7.1 System overview

System overview is supposed to be a home screen for Android Auto application. It presents both current and past notifications. The amount of notifications is limited based on screen size. Every notification consists of an intent icon, text and image, while following certain sizing rules. Every such notification can be expanded on the spot or another subapplication can be launched.



Figure 2.5. Android Auto Home screen

2.1.7.2 Audio applications

Audio applications in Android Auto have a simple template structure. It consists of a main consumption view, a drawer and a queue screen. The main consumption view displays a few control elements and a cover background. The drawer is a simple list

and provides access to favorite and popular content. Finally the queue screen displays a list of pending content, for example songs in a queue.



Figure 2.6. Android Auto audio application

■ 2.1.7.3 Messaging applications

Focusing on minimizing the cognitive load, messaging concept in Android Auto focuses on voice control over looking and typing. It allows reading the message aloud and responding with a set of predefined voice commands as well as dictating a whole message using built-in speech recognition.



Figure 2.7. Android Auto conversational flow

■ 2.1.7.4 Conclusion

It seems to be a good sign that even Google is interested in this area and performs such a research. Every Android application can be designed for Android Auto and use its simplified user interface, allowing the developer to focus on other issues than in-car user interaction. However, the functionality is currently very limited. Hopefully there will be further progress as soon as possible.

■ 2.2 Use-cases

Based on above. Also other typical analysis stuff.

2.3 Platforms

The chosen platform heavily influences the piece of market an application can reach. Therefore, only platforms with solid market share are considered. Another criteria is the simplicity of development, which influences the time and effort put into an application before it can be released. This is especially important for quickly finding out the sale potential of an application. Following the first rule mentioned above and based on tablet sales in past years (sources: <http://techcrunch.com/2014/03/03/gartner-195m-tablets-sold-in-2013-android-grabs-top-spot-from-ipad-with-62-share/>), the only viable options for an application are platforms Android, iOS and Windows.

2.3.1 Android

In 2013, the Android platform had 61.9 % market share, making it the most used platform in the world. Targeting the Android platform would create large base of potential customers.

The development language for Android is Java, commonly known object-oriented programming language with solid developer base. Therefore it is easy to find developers as well as answers to variety of programming related issues, making the development much easier.

2.3.2 iOS

With 36 % market share in 2013, iOS is the second most popular tablet platform. Considering a typical iOS user, who is willing to pay for quality, iOS could be a good choice for an application in context of potential customers.

However, the development language called Swift is somewhat new in the world, which brings a lot of possible difficulties. Searching for answers while developing in this technology might prove too troublesome.

2.3.3 Windows

With only 2.1 % market share in 2014, the Windows platform does not seem to be a valid choice for given criteria. Having thirty times lower customer base than Android, it goes into the nice-to-have section when it comes to multi-platform applications.

2.3.4 Conclusion

Fulfilling the requirements for customer base as well as simplicity of development, the Android platform seems to be the best choice available at the time of writing this. As such, it will be analyzed more thoroughly later in this chapter.

2.4 Android platform TODO

There are some platform aspects to be considered when developing for Android-based tablet device. First is the problem with most of the tablet devices – the device performance. While the hardware is continuously evolving, one must consider older devices as well as growing requirements for graphics presentation. The second possible issue is the Android architecture, which influences the application inner communication.

■ 2.4.1 Performance

Nearly with every new version of Android, new presentation effects are prepared for developers to use. While it is not mandatory, it is still advised to hold the platform standards as the market demands it. The application must have a good look and feel in order to attract attention. This must be considered when building the application, because the environment demands fluent responses.

■ 2.4.2 Architecture

The main building block in Android application is an activity. The activity is an independent component of application, a hybrid between controller and view in MVC architecture. It contains a single screen (which contains a single layout), it has its own independent data. An application usually consists of multiple loosely coupled activities. Those activities are held in an activity stack, where they are preserved to be used later without need to create them all over again. However, if the system needs memory, it clears the stack from the bottom (least recently used activities). For communication between activities there are so called Intents. An intent is the main concept of communication between two components. A component can be for example an activity or a service. Intent can contain simple data, such as primitive or serialized data.

■ 2.5 GUI TODO

■ 2.5.1 Basic principles

As the main tool of communication between an application and its user, user interface must follow one basic rule – the user goes first. UI is about the user, he must have a good feeling when using the application. He must understand what to do and how to do it. Therefore there are four rules a proper UI must obey:

- **Clear** – it must be obvious what and where the user can control,
- **Effective** – minimizing the required user interactions for certain (requested) thing to happen,
- **Foolproof** - avoiding the errors before they happen,
- **Pleasant** - no stress when working with the UI, pleasant colors, contrast, good readability.

Those rules might seem too shallow. That is why there are certain subgoals which are more specific, helping to achieve the main four goals. Those subgoals are the following seven:

- **Minimality** – removing everything that can be removed without losing the requested information value,
- **Responsiveness** – giving the user a proper feedback, so that he knows something is happening,
- **Forgiveness** – letting the user make mistakes, allowing him to fix them, for example undo button or prompt message,
- **Familiarity** – using familiar, commonly used metaphors, icons, procedures,
- **Consistency** – using consistent visual and interaction language,
- **Integration** – using platform specific elements and rules
- **Simplicity** - allowing user to quickly learn how to use the UI

sources:

- MI-NUR <https://edux.fit.cvut.cz/courses/MI-NUR/lectures/start>
- Designing for indash automotive <http://revinity.com/?p=128>
- UX design stackexchange <http://ux.stackexchange.com/questions/51968/what-ux-guidelines-should-one-keep-in-mind-when-designing-the-gui-for-a-automobi> 0

■ 2.5.2 UI in a car environment

When developing user interface for car, it adds a certain responsibility. The need for safety while using the UI becomes the main priority. Because of that, some aspects are more important than other. The most important are described later in this section.

■ 2.5.2.1 Minimality

For minimizing the cognitive load, the must be as little information as possible at a certain time. The user must see what he wants to see on first sight without seeking the answer for too long. When minimizing the information displayed there is no confusion, minimizing the glance time.

■ 2.5.2.2 Consistence

Supporting usability and shortness of learning curve, consistency allows user to remember one procedure and apply it successfully in different sections of UI. It allows user to learn things just once.

■ 2.5.2.3 Readability

Good readability is one of the condition for application to be pleasant to use. In case of car environment, however, the readability of information is not just pleasant, but critical. Allowing the user to see the information he needs to see in the shortest time possible is fatal when it comes to driving. Therefore the font has to be large enough for every driver to see.

■ 2.5.2.4 Controls

When it comes to controlling an application in an environment such as car, it is required to consider certain aspects not present in other environments. The moving car prevents user from being precise when it comes to touch. Therefore, the controls must be large enough to be reliably selectable.

■ 2.5.2.5 Colors

While in other environment the user can usually control the device brightness, it is not as easy task while driving. Furthermore, blinding the user with too much light might be fatal. Therefore proper colors must be used. For example, dominance of white color might be visible well in the daylight, but might blind the user at the night time. Also, proper color contrast must be considered for good visibility and readability.

■ 2.5.2.6 Responsiveness

Responsiveness is an important factor when it comes to pleasure of using an application, but when it comes to using it in a car, it becomes extremely important for safety as well. When the application is responsive, the user does not have to check the screen for progress so often or worse, wait for the progress looking at it continuously.

2.6 Development and support tools TODO

2.6.1 Development environment

While using text editor and command line is an option, for speed of development only Integrated Development Environments are considered. In the time of writing this text, there were two possibilities for Android development – Eclipse and AndroidStudio.

2.6.1.1 Eclipse

Based on research by (<http://zeroturnaround.com/rebellabs/java-tools-and-technologies-landscape-for-2014/6/>), the Eclipse IDE is the most often used Java IDE. That is probably the reason why Google inc. suggested this IDE for Android development in early phase. However, Eclipse has lost Android development support in late 2014 (<http://www.zdnet.com/article/google-releases-android-studio-kills-off-eclipse-adt-plugin/>).

2.6.1.2 Android Studio

Released in 2014, Android Studio became the main platform for Android development. It is based on IntelliJ IDE and supported by Google. For that reason, it is an obvious choice for new applications to be developed in Android Studio.

2.6.2 Version control system

In a software development process, version is very important. Being able to go back to working version, or to develop new features while the main version is still working is priceless. Currently there are three main VCS worth considering (<http://www.sitepoint.com/version-control-software-2014-what-options/>).

2.6.2.1 Subversion

Based on CVS, Subversion has a single repository where all the data are stored. This simplifies the backup of a whole project, because all the data are located in one place. This, however, creates possible threat of data loss when the central repository gets destroyed without backup.

Because of the central repository, Subversion allows read and write access controls for a every single location and have them enforced across the entire project, which can come in handy when developing in a large community, but it is usually not required when developing in a small team.

2.6.2.2 Mercurial TODO

2.6.2.3 Git TODO

2.6.3 Test driven development

Being one of the main development approaches in the last decade, test driven development helps to develop the application quickly and fluently. The main idea of TDD is to create automatic tests before the actual application code. While this enforces the developer to think twice when creating tests, which makes him think about what he actually wants to achieve, it also helps against random errors in code. Having the application tested with every build also supports continuous integration, which is described later in this text.

■ 2.6.4 Continuous integration

Continuous Integration is a software development practice where members of a team integrate their code frequently (Martin Fowler, <http://www.martinfowler.com/articles/continuousIntegration.html>).

Continuous integration supports rapid application development while giving the much needed feedback, so that the developer can see and adjust the direction, which the application development takes.

For simple CI practice integration, there are several online services. For this particular application development, Travis system was chosen (TODO link <https://travis-ci.org/>). While offering usual CI functionality, it also integrates easily with GitHub and Gradle build system.

■ 2.7 On-Board Diagnostics TODO

■ 2.7.1 Overview

On-Board Diagnostics states for a self-diagnostic equipment requirements for automotive vehicles. The modern implementations offer standardized communication port to provide real-time data as well as diagnostic trouble codes. The full specifications are explained in ISO 15031 (TODO fix). Some of them will be discussed later in the text.

Currently there are two versions of OBD. The first one (OBD I) provides only diagnostic trouble codes. The second one (OBD II) adds real-time vehicle data. The third version (OBD III) is currently being developed. It should support so called **remote OBD**, which would broadcast the data to other vehicles, which could prevent collisions by warning the drivers when something bad happens suddenly.

■ 2.7.2 API TODO

■ 2.7.3 Data TODO

Chapter 3

Design TODO

3.1 Application architecture TODO

Designing proper application architecture is one of the main and most challenging tasks in development process. Changing the architecture in to future proves to be one of the most expensive changes as for manhours (TODO link Code Complete?). Application architecture influences data flow, communication amongst components and overall application performance, as well as extensibility and possibility to change or add features in the future. While Android application architecture enforces certain components and platform features to be used, there is still space for diversity.

3.1.1 Platform limitations

As mentioned in platform analysis (TODO link), the typical Android application consists of multiple Activities, which communicate with each other using Intents. While this approach supports the loosely coupled concept, it makes certain inter-cooperation rather difficult. Sharing an object between activities usually means serializing the object or saving it to the database, which means deserializing or loading from database later. When striving for excellent performance, this can emerge into a real problem. As the Android platform does not allow database IO operations on the main presentation thread, it requires background thread with callbacks to the main one and screen revalidation when such callback occurs. It is critical to avoid such delays as much as possible, when comes to car environment where rapid reactions are required.

3.1.2 Extensibility

With the current rapid application development there is a need to be able to adjust based on market requirements. While creating a new application with every feature is a possibility, it is certainly better to be able to add new features to the old application so that is actually never becomes old. Extensibility is one of the main requirements for many reasons. When it comes to CarDashboard application (TODO name?), new features are planned to be added based on user feedback. Therefore the architecture must be prepared to be easily extendable.

The main approach to achieve proper extensibility should be to write a clean code, which can prove to be a good idea when considering nearly every part of implementation process. Also the modularity concept is very useful when it comes to extensibility and it will be discussed in the next section.

3.1.3 Modularity TODO

Modularity concept allows application to contain certain modules, each offering certain functionality based on some predefined requirements.

■ 3.1.4 Adaptability

Because the space on the screen is limited and also unknown (multiple devices have varying screen sizes) and every user might want to see different kind of information, he must be able to modify the layout, to choose the information he wants to see. The application must be adaptable to user's needs and requirements, so that he can control the application fluently and spend as little time as possible seeking the requested information.

For that reason there will be module containers which can contain multiple modules. User then selects the module for each container and selects a single container to be displayed at a time. This allows to build custom module sets for greater adaptability.

■ 3.1.5 AutoUI preparation TODO

■ 3.2 GUI TODO

Given the car environment, designing proper graphics user interface is crucial for an in-car application. Not only it has to look good, it also has to consider safety issues, such as minimizing the cognitive load and required glance time to control the application or to read displayed information. To achieve that the GUI should follow the principles mentioned in chapter (TODO link).

■ 3.2.1 Basic elements TODO

Basic idea

■ 3.2.2 Drafts TODO

■ 3.2.3 The early phase

In the early phase of the design process, the main idea was to display single piece of information as a time. Given that, a certain concept was created with a single application panel per screen, which would be a scrollable list. Swiping left or right would change the focus to another application panel. Part of the previous and following application panel would be seen, as shown on image (TODO link and image #1).

This concept was recreated into a similar concept with difference in size of previous and following application panels. Those panels would be moved into the background which would make them smaller, as shown on image (TODO link and image #2), however, more of those panels could be visible letting the user know more about the actual structure. Also, it presents combination of a name and an icon for easier recognizability.

For both drafts the following would apply. The swipe action would invoke text-to-speech action telling user the name of selected panel. This could lower the need to look at the application screen while driving. Also, all the panels would have different colors making them recognizable on first sight. The touch on an application panel would invoke the related application. This could be a music player, a map, etc. Examples of a music player subapplication are shown on images (TODO #3 #4) in the additional (TODO PRILOHA?).

■ 3.2.3.1 Advantages

- **Readability** – given a single panel per screen with only a name and icon in it, the font can be large enough to be properly readable.

- **Colors** – colors can distinguish separate applications panels making them easily recognizable, once the user learns the colors for each application.

■ 3.2.3.2 Disadvantages

- **Consistency** – however is the main screen consistent, the invoked subapplications are not. The concept does not force them to be, neither it gives a clue about how they should look.
- **Limited** – the main screen has a limited functionality (near to none) while the layout of subapplications would have to be created independently everytime a new feature is implemented. This also limits easy extensibility, as creating a proper GUI is not a simple task with the given constraints.

Describe the process, phases, analyse and compare advantages, disadvantages, thoughts

Chapter 4

Realization TODO

4.1 Preparation TODO

4.1.1 Environment TODO

4.1.2 Versioning TODO

4.1.3 Testing TODO

4.1.4 Scripting TODO

4.2 Core TODO

4.2.1 Core TODO

4.2.2 Data storage TODO

4.2.3 Communication TODO

4.2.4 Optimization TODO

4.3 Modularity TODO

4.3.1 Requirements TODO

4.3.2 Integration TODO

4.4 GUI TODO

GUI implementation based on the design! Implementing modules, color, responsive effects

4.4.1 Common elements TODO

Hierarchical model, effects, submenus

4.4.2 Multiple designs TODO

Limited set of module types

Chapter 5

Testing TODO

Brag about TDD, CI and Simulator!

5.1 Code TODO

Describe testing code, common testing (look&see, etc.)

5.1.1 Unit testing TODO

Unit testing on android, mention Test driven development, continuous integration, automatic tests, consider giving an example

5.1.2 Integration testing TODO

Instrumentation? Describe TDD, CI, automation

5.1.3 System testing TODO

Server testing, consider removing

5.1.4 Qualification testing TODO

Testing with users - consider section on its own - testing application as a whole thing

5.2 GUI TODO

5.2.1 Heuristic testing TODO

Introduction, description

5.2.1.1 Evaluation TODO

sources:

- <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1LAPqmYqe5LBE6vqWpi-rRYjHY1-zVPCzkFP2Gvh5i-Q/edit>

5.2.1.2 Conclusion TODO

Did not have time to fix

■ 5.2.2 Testing with users TODO

■ 5.2.2.1 Usability testing TODO

Testing the application as a regular application. Is it understandable? Is it easy to control, to see data, to understand, to comprehend, to learn?

■ 5.2.2.2 Simulator TODO

Describe the car simulator in Albertov. DO NOT FORGET TO THANK THE DEPARTMENT OF DRIVING SMTHING, CVUT FD

■ 5.2.2.3 Preparations TODO

Selecting the world models and preparing them for testing, installing EyeTracker cameras, installing WebCamera, preparing data gathering, designing scenarios

■ 5.2.2.4 Course TODO

The testing itself, describing participants

■ 5.2.2.5 Evaluation TODO

Evaluating results

■ 5.3 Summary TODO

Chapter 6

Conclusion TODO

6.1 Assignment completion TODO

6.2 Project life cycle TODO

6.2.1 Present TODO

6.2.2 Future TODO

6.3 Summary TODO