Critique of Dr. Dawn Song's Presentation

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Our last distinguished lecture of this semester is called *Malware Defense: New Trends and Approaches*, and it was a disaster. The lecturer on this Thursday was Dr. Dawn Song, a professor from University of California, Berkeley. She may have done her research quite well, but she was not successful in introducing her work to the audience, or at least, to me.

First of all, the slides she used were not neat or clear, which provided a bad first impression to me: Most of the slides had left-aligned text, while some of them used right-aligned red-colored text; Some slides have pictures that looked like a mess, not to mention that some pictures were too 'cartoon' and some others were either meaningless or useless; etc. What was worse was that some charts she used had some obvious errors that were quite unacceptable such as the number of years of which the data was included in a chart.

I also remember that one of the slides had a lot of webpages with a BUY NOW button in each. This kind of slides is almost always of little help, if not of zero help, to any lecture, especially when the lecturer herself spends only ten to fifteen seconds in that slide. As simply an example that concludes previous section of talk or initialize the next section, it should have been an item in a list or a sub-sub-title of a slide.

The other issue about slides was that there were too many of them. And this leads to my second point of view: this presentation tried to include too much information. Dr. Song had too many projects to talk about, bitBlaze, webBlaze, etc., and she spent too much time introducing background information, not giving up any detail in any of them. If she focused on fewer aspects of her research, or skipped some less important details, the lecture could have been much clearer delivered.

Finally, above issues result in another problem: the very high speed of speaking. Even though Dr. Song tried her best to convey as much information as she could by talking very fast, I actually did not understand much. Sometimes it was difficult for me to understand the content of her sentences; sometimes I couldn't even understand her sentences. These were because of the unclearness of her speaking. As the saying goes, haste makes waste. If the audience cannot understand you, no matter how fast you talk, it is a waste.

For example, I am not sure if I missed some part or she never mentioned it, but I had no idea what *EEG* was when I first saw it in her slides, not until I looked it up afterwards, the same thing happened to the term *MegaD*. But no matter which was the case, it demonstrates that Dr. Song has a lot of space to improve in the term of conveying ideas to the audience.

In one word, this lecture was much worse than previous distinguished lectures in this semester. It included too much information of less importance but needed to talk more in other aspects. Besides, the speaking was too fast to follow and the slides were not clearly supporting the lecture. These defects contributed together to the unpleasant result that the actual amount of information the lecture conveyed

was very limited.