

AFxResearch: a repository and website of audio effects research

Marco Comunità and Joshua D. Reiss

Centre for Digital Music, Queen Mary University of London, UK, m.comunita@qmul.ac.uk

Abstract— We present *AFxResearch*¹, a repository and associated website² gathering scientific literature about audio effects. Our database includes topics like: modeling, classification, estimation, removal, style transfer, processing and review papers. Our website contains a detailed table of publications, with search, filter and sort features, while the repository enables users to submit requests for new entries or revise existing ones.

I. REPOSITORY AND WEBSITE

Research on audio effects has significantly expanded over the last few decades [1], driven by advances in digital signal processing [2], machine learning [3], and auditory perception. As the body of literature on audio effects grows, the need for a centralized repository with tools for easy access and exploration becomes essential. *AFxResearch* addresses this by providing a comprehensive and flexible database of publications, serving as a go-to resource for researchers, educators, and practitioners. *AFxResearch* is hosted on a user-friendly website that facilitates exploration through search, filter, and sort functionalities. It also supports community-driven updates, allowing users to submit new publications or suggest modifications, ensuring the database remains current and reflects the evolving field of audio effects research.

II. DATABASE

Metadata — The database offers detailed metadata for each publication, allowing users to assess its relevance before accessing the full text. At the moment of publication, the metadata includes: title, author(s), paper URL, publication date, main task, paradigm(s), device(s) type(s), device(s) model, method(s), webpage URL, code URL, dataset URL, abstract.

Tasks — Publications are categorized based on the primary task they address, included and not limited to:

- Classification/Identification - studies that classify different types of audio effects (e.g., distortion, phaser, reverb) or identify specific devices (e.g., ProCo Rat distortion, Teletronix LA2A compressor) from audio signals [4].
- Estimation/Regression - works concerned with estimating the controls settings (e.g., gain, cutoff frequency, modulation speed) used to process audio examples or the internal coefficients of processing blocks (e.g., all-pass filter, biquad filter, low-frequency oscillator) [5].

- Modeling - research on developing mathematical or computational models of audio effects [6].
- Removal - research aimed at removing audio effects from processed signals.
- Style Transfer - studies about replicating the sonic characteristics of a reference audio example onto an input example, independent of content, effects, or processing methods used [7].
- Processing - broad category about processing audio signals that includes: automatic audio effects control, automatic mixing, audio processing graph estimation, creative uses of audio effects or derivation of new ones.
- Review - overviews of a specific subtopic or task.

Paradigms — The database includes publications that employ any modeling or emulation paradigms: white-box, gray-box [8], black-box.

Methods — The methods section categorizes publications based on the technical approaches and tools used in the research. Common methods include: differentiable DSP, dynamic convolution, equations solving or approximation, neural networks [3], state-space, wave digital filters, port-hamiltonian, Volterra series, waveshaping, Wiener-Hammerstein.

III. REFERENCES

- [1] T. Wilmering, D. Moffat, A. Milo, and M. Sandler, "A history of audio effects," *Applied Sciences*, vol. 10, no. 3, p. 791, 2020.
- [2] U. Zölzer, X. Serra, M. Sandler, *et al.*, "Digital audio effects," pp. 1–2, 2011.
- [3] T. Vanhatalo, P. Legrand, M. Desainte-Catherine, P. Hanna, A. Brusco, G. Pille, and Y. Bayle, "A review of neural network-based emulation of guitar amplifiers," *Applied Sciences*, vol. 12, no. 12, p. 5894, 2022.
- [4] M. Comunità, D. Stowell, and J. Reiss, "Guitar effects recognition and parameter estimation with convolutional neural networks," *Journal of the Audio Engineering Society*, vol. 69, no. 7/8, pp. 594–604, 2021.
- [5] C. Mitcheltree, C. Steinmetz, M. Comunità, and J. Reiss, "Modulation extraction for lfo-driven audio effects," *arXiv preprint arXiv:2305.13262*, 2023.
- [6] M. Comunità, C. Steinmetz, H. Phan, and J. Reiss, "Modelling black-box audio effects with time-varying feature modulation," in *ICASSP 2023-2023 IEEE International Conference on Acoustics, Speech and Signal Processing*. IEEE, 2023, pp. 1–5.
- [7] C. Steinmetz, S. Singh, M. Comunità, I. Ibnyahya, S. Yuan, E. Benetos, and J. Reiss, "St-ito: Controlling audio effects for style transfer with inference-time optimization," in *International Society for Music Information Retrieval (ISMIR) Conference, 2024, 2024*.
- [8] J. Colonel, M. Comunità, and J. Reiss, "Reverse engineering memory-less distortion effects with differentiable waveshapers," in *Audio Engineering Society Convention 153*. Audio Engineering Society, 2022.

¹<https://github.com/mcomunita/afx-research>

²<https://mcomunita.github.io/afx-research>