
VISUAL SERVOING

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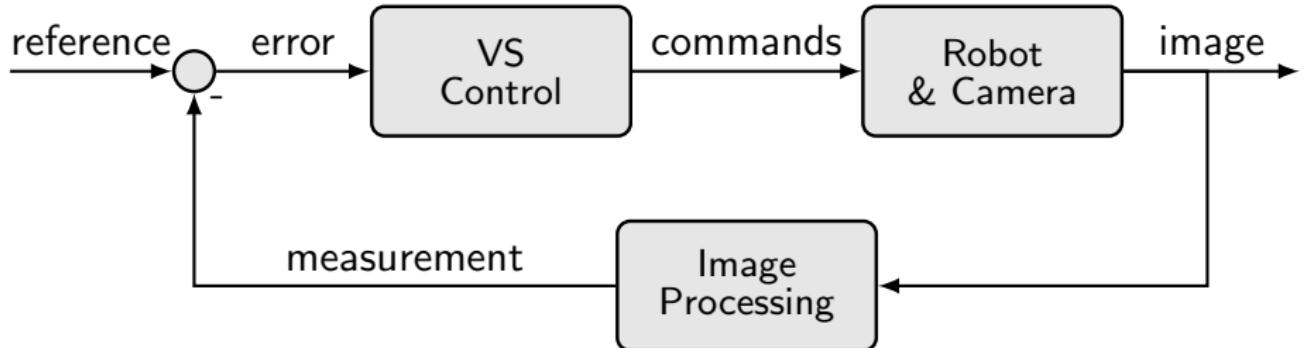
Outline

- ▶ What is visual servoing?
- ▶ Why do we need visual servoing?
- ▶ How do we build visual servoing?
- ▶ What can we do with visual servoing?

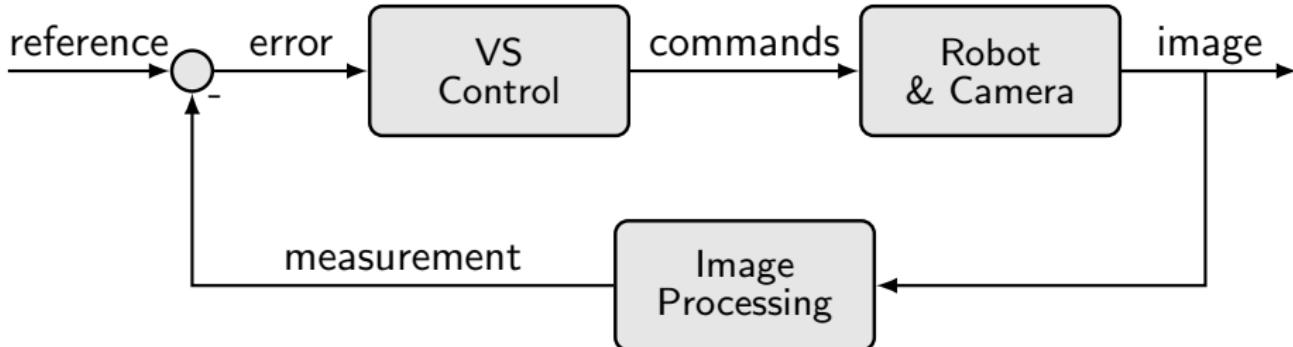
Definition of Visual Servoing (VS)

- “ VS is the use of computer *vision* data in the servo loop that *controls* the motion of a robot ”
- “ VS is the action taken by a *vision-based control* ”
- “ VS is the way to provide a control algorithm with *visual feedback* to reach a desired target ”

Block diagram & scheme classification



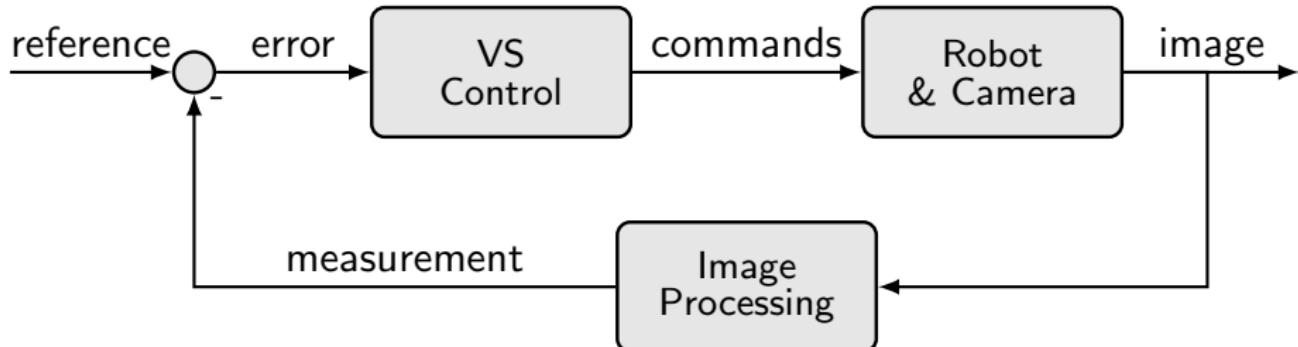
Block diagram & scheme classification



Two main VS schemes:

1. Position-based visual servoing (*PBVS*)
 - More complicated image processing (need to reconstruct a pose)
 - + Relatively easier control law
 2. Image-based visual servoing (*IBVS*)
 - + Easier image processing (it is a features extraction)
 - More complicated control law
- Other options are also possible, such as *2.5D VS*

Block diagram & scheme classification



In this lecture we focus on **IBVS**

reference	desired visual features	s^*
measurement	current visual features	s
error	visual error	$e = s - s^*$
commands	velocities command	v

Definition of visual feature

- ▶ In computer vision, it is the set of pixels for which the *link* between photometric measurement and geometric primitives can be established
- ▶ It is the attempt to *summarize* the richness of data coming from the camera video stream
 - ▶ Be aware of the *information loss* that this “summary” involves
- ▶ It is the *gist* of the scene needed to control the robot
- ▶ It is the summary information got from the captured image, needed to close the VS loop and achieve a desired robotic behavior

Why visual features?

Consider the task of looking at the red object



captured image
 240×320 pixels

Why visual features?

Consider the task of looking at the red object



captured image
 240×320 pixels

$$\left[\begin{array}{c} \begin{bmatrix} 157 \\ 182 \\ 202 \end{bmatrix} \quad \begin{bmatrix} 157 \\ 182 \\ 202 \end{bmatrix} \quad \begin{bmatrix} 157 \\ 182 \\ 202 \end{bmatrix} \quad \dots \quad \begin{bmatrix} 82 \\ 106 \\ 130 \end{bmatrix} \\ \begin{bmatrix} 157 \\ 182 \\ 202 \end{bmatrix} \quad \begin{bmatrix} 157 \\ 182 \\ 202 \end{bmatrix} \quad \begin{bmatrix} 157 \\ 182 \\ 202 \end{bmatrix} \quad \dots \quad \begin{bmatrix} 82 \\ 106 \\ 130 \end{bmatrix} \\ \vdots \qquad \qquad \qquad \vdots \qquad \qquad \vdots \\ \begin{bmatrix} 51 \\ 61 \\ 71 \end{bmatrix} \quad \begin{bmatrix} 51 \\ 61 \\ 71 \end{bmatrix} \quad \begin{bmatrix} 50 \\ 60 \\ 70 \end{bmatrix} \quad \dots \quad \begin{bmatrix} 29 \\ 41 \\ 53 \end{bmatrix} \end{array} \right]$$

how it looks like in the PC
 $240 \times 320 \times 3$ matrix of numbers

Why visual features?

Consider the task of looking at the red object



captured image
 240×320 pixels



coordinates of the object centroid
2 scalar numbers

An example of image processing algorithm

- Computer vision community provides many *ready-to-use* tools



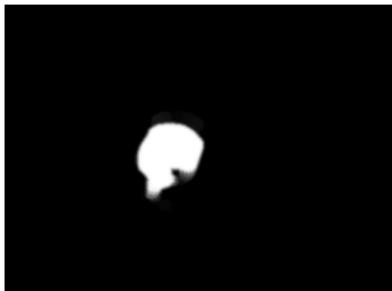
original image



color filtering



smoothing



erode & dilate



inversion



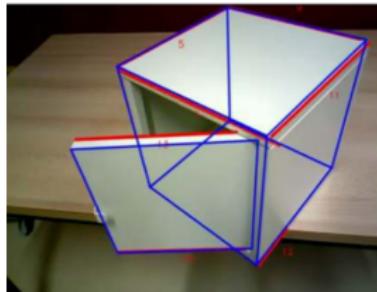
blob detection

- All these operations are available in the *opencv library*, for example

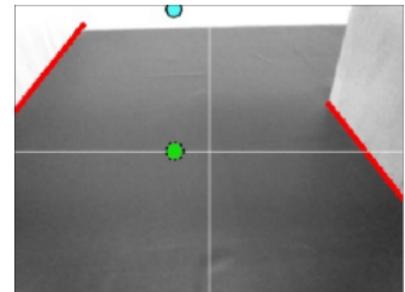
Examples of visual features



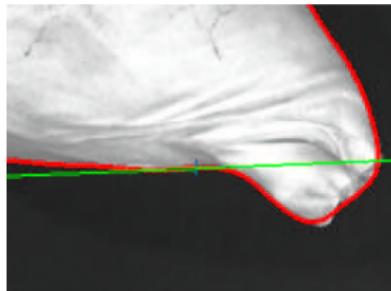
points



lines



reconstructed points



contours

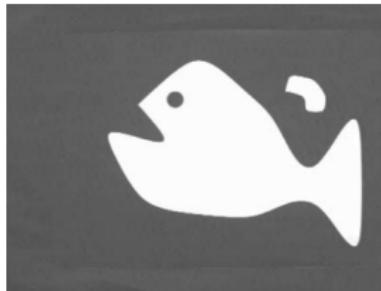


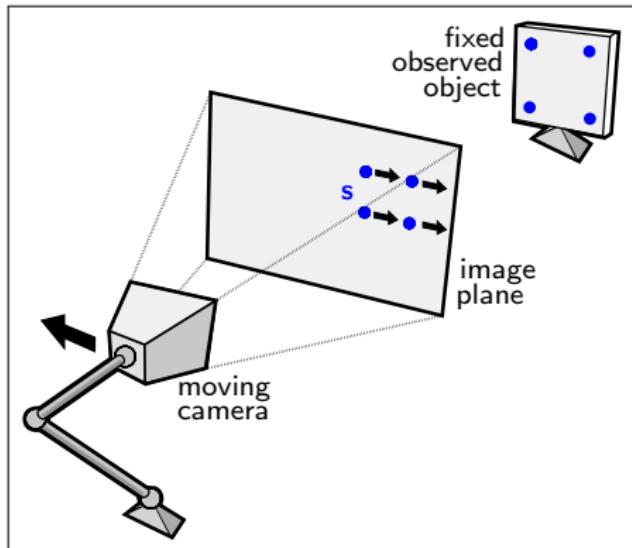
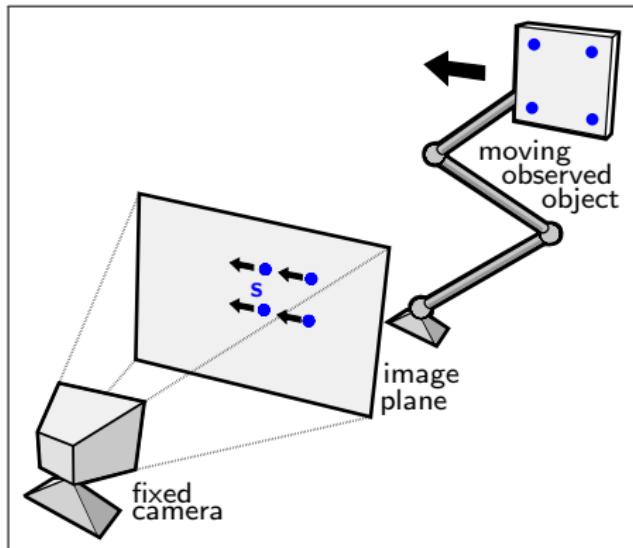
image moments



pixel luminance

In this lecture we focus on *point visual features*

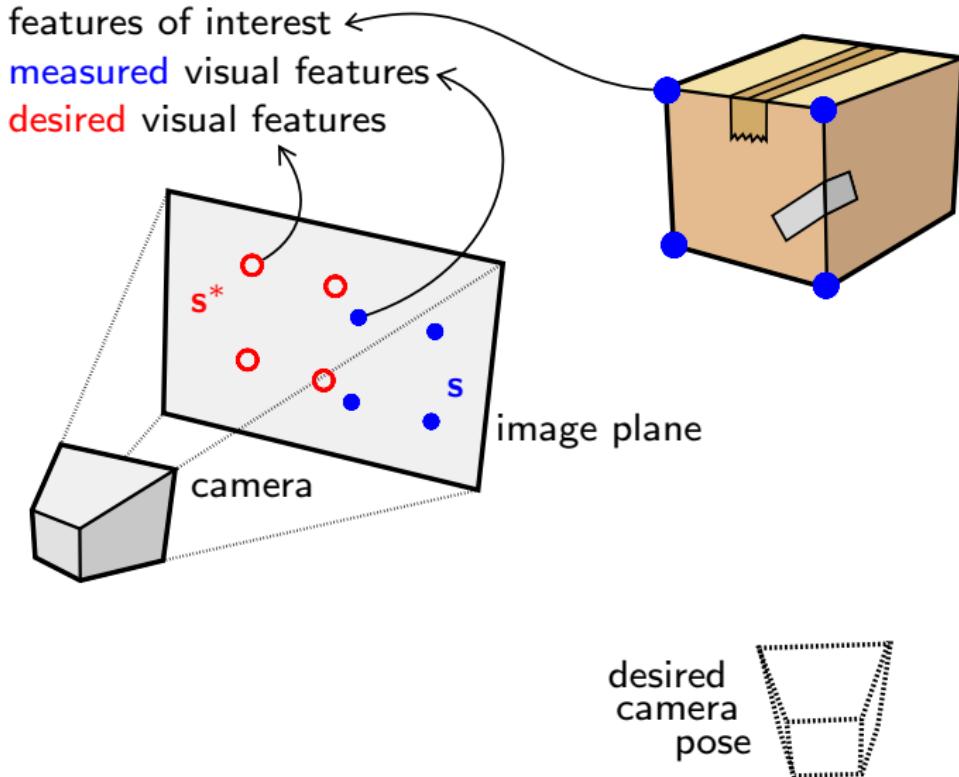
Eye-to-hand & eye-in-hand configuration



- ▶ *Eye-to-hand*: actuated target observed by a camera (left)
- ▶ *Eye-in-hand*: actuated camera observing a target (right)

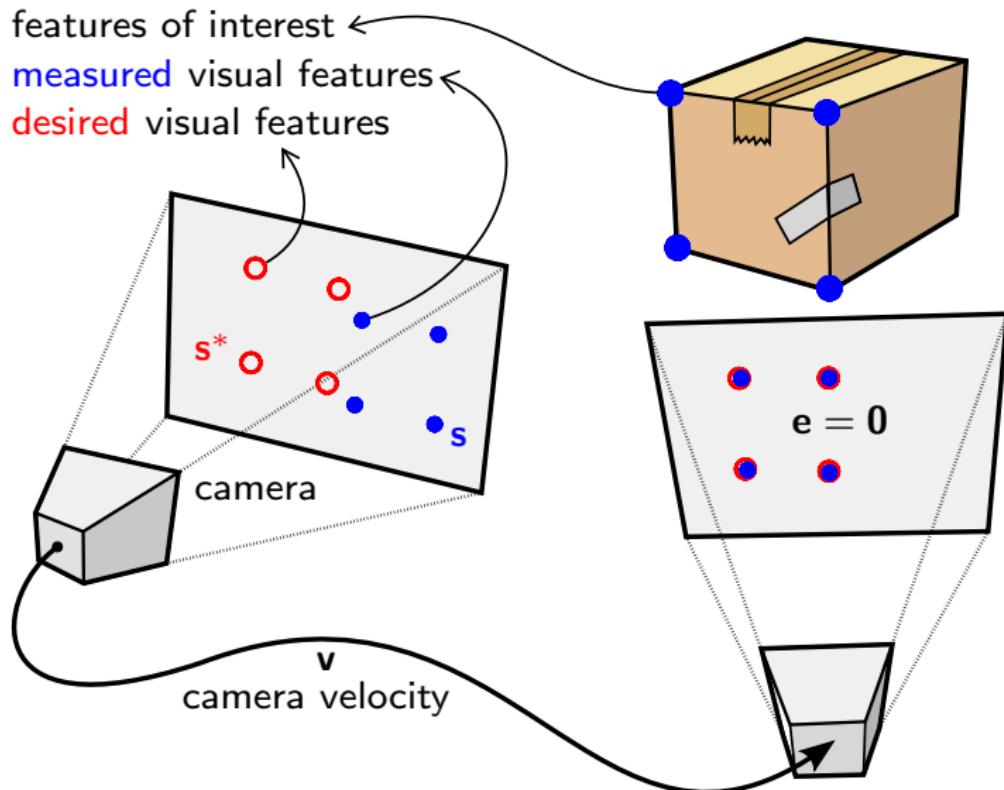
In this lecture we focus on *eye-in-hand* configurations

Working principle (with an hand-held camera)



The high-level task consists in moving the camera to a desired pose

Working principle (with an hand-held camera)



The cartesian task is actually translated in a *visual task*

Computing the VS control law

The VS control law is obtained in three steps

1. *Model design*: the features motion is related to the camera motion as

$$\dot{\mathbf{s}} = \mathbf{L}\mathbf{v} \quad (1)$$

where \mathbf{L} is the *interaction matrix*

2. *Stable error dynamics*: we want $\mathbf{s} \rightarrow \mathbf{s}^*$, that is $\mathbf{e} = (\mathbf{s} - \mathbf{s}^*) \rightarrow \mathbf{0}$

$$\dot{\mathbf{e}} = \dot{\mathbf{s}} - \dot{\mathbf{s}}^* = -\lambda\mathbf{e}, \quad \lambda > 0 \quad (2)$$

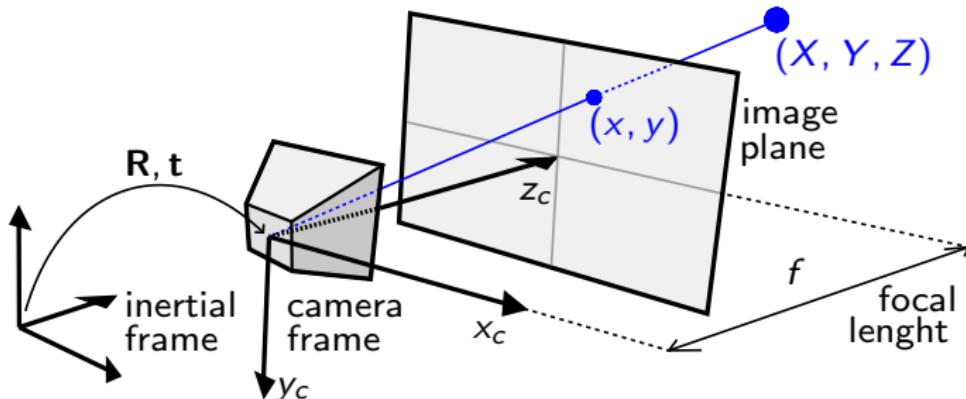
where λ is the *control gain*

3. *Controller computation*: (1) in (2) with a constant target ($\dot{\mathbf{s}}^* = \mathbf{0}$)

$$\dot{\mathbf{e}} = -\lambda\mathbf{e} = \dot{\mathbf{s}} = \mathbf{L}\mathbf{v} \implies \boxed{\mathbf{v} = -\lambda\mathbf{L}^+\mathbf{e}}$$

Camera projection model (1/5)

- *Frontal pin-hole* camera model



- *Perspective projection*

$$x = f \frac{X}{Z}, \quad y = f \frac{Y}{Z}$$

- Sometimes *normalized coordinates* are used, considering $f = 1$
- Also used to compute the interaction matrix (go to slide 17)

Camera projection model (2/5)

- In a more compact way, using *homogeneous coordinates*:

$$Z \begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} f & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & f & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} X \\ Y \\ Z \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

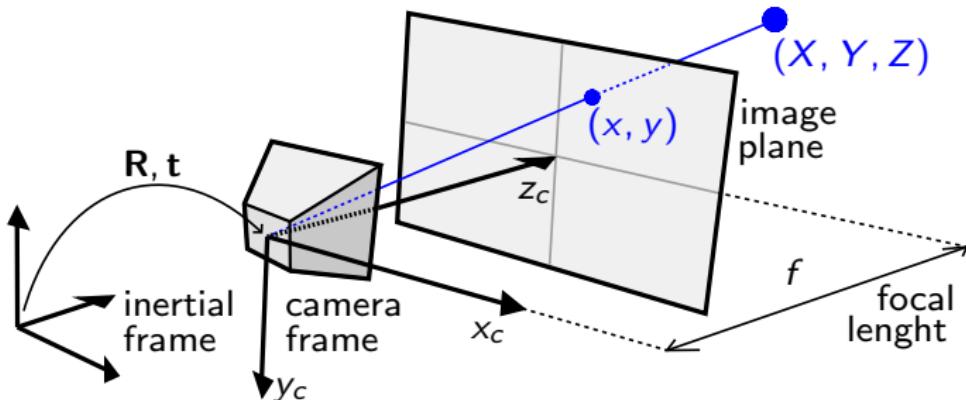
- The *depth* Z is *unknown* (remember the loss of information): we call it as *parameter* ζ in the left-hand side of the equation
- For convenience, we write the matrix as

$$\begin{pmatrix} f & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & f & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} f & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & f & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

- In general, the Cartesian point can be expressed in the *inertial frame*

$$\begin{pmatrix} X \\ Y \\ Z \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{R} & \mathbf{t} \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}^{-1} \begin{pmatrix} X_0 \\ Y_0 \\ Z_0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

Camera projection model (3/5)



- The *camera ideal model* results to be

$$\zeta \begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} f & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & f & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{R} & \mathbf{t} \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}^{-1} \begin{pmatrix} X_0 \\ Y_0 \\ Z_0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

Camera projection model (4/5)

- ▶ However, the features are *measured in pixels*, with coordinates (u, v) , which are related to (x, y) through the following relationship

$$u = u_0 + \frac{x}{\rho_w}, \quad v = v_0 + \frac{y}{\rho_h}$$

where (ρ_w, ρ_h) is the *size of the pixel* and (u_0, v_0) is the *central point*

- ▶ Using homogenous coordinates and writing in compact form:

$$\begin{pmatrix} u \\ v \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1/\rho_w & 0 & u_0 \\ 0 & 1/\rho_h & v_0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

- ▶ Used to compute the interaction matrix (go to slide 19)

Camera projection model (5/5)

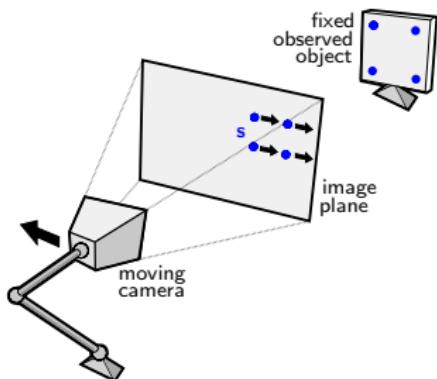
- ▶ Putting all together

$$\zeta \begin{pmatrix} u \\ v \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} = \underbrace{\begin{pmatrix} f/\rho_w & 0 & u_0 \\ 0 & f/\rho_h & v_0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}}_{\mathbf{K}} \underbrace{\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}}_{\mathbf{P}} \underbrace{\begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{R} & \mathbf{t} \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}}_{{}^0\mathbf{T}_c^{-1}} \begin{pmatrix} X_0 \\ Y_0 \\ Z_0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\tilde{\mathbf{p}} = \underbrace{\mathbf{K} \mathbf{P} \left({}^0\mathbf{T}_c\right)^{-1}}_{\mathbf{C}} \tilde{\mathbf{P}}$$

- ▶ \mathbf{K} is called *intrinsic parameter matrix* or *calibration matrix*
- ▶ \mathbf{P} is called *standard projection matrix*
- ▶ ${}^0\mathbf{T}_c$ is obtained with a *extrinsic calibration*
- ▶ \mathbf{C} is called *camera matrix*
- ▶ f/ρ_w and f/ρ_h are the *focal lenght expressed in units of pixels*
- ▶ From $\tilde{\mathbf{p}}$ we obtain the model in pixels of our visual feature: $\mathbf{s} = (u, v)^\top$

Computation of the interaction matrix (1/3)



- The interaction matrix relates the *velocity of the feature* to the *velocity of the camera*

$$\dot{\mathbf{s}} = \begin{pmatrix} \dot{u} \\ \dot{v} \end{pmatrix} = \mathbf{L}\mathbf{v} = \mathbf{L} \begin{pmatrix} \nu \\ \omega \end{pmatrix}$$

- Remember: eye-in-hand configuration

- From the perspective equation (see slide 12) we have

$$\dot{x} = f \frac{\dot{X}Z - X\dot{Z}}{Z^2} = \frac{f}{Z} \dot{X} - \frac{x}{Z} \dot{Z}, \quad \dot{y} = f \frac{\dot{Y}Z - Y\dot{Z}}{Z^2} = \frac{f}{Z} \dot{Y} - \frac{y}{Z} \dot{Z}$$

- In compact form:

$$\begin{pmatrix} \dot{x} \\ \dot{y} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \frac{f}{Z} & 0 & -\frac{x}{Z} \\ 0 & \frac{f}{Z} & -\frac{y}{Z} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \dot{X} \\ \dot{Y} \\ \dot{Z} \end{pmatrix}$$

Computation of the interaction matrix (2/3)

- The time derivative of the point expressed in Camera frame is related to the velocity of the camera:

$$\begin{pmatrix} \dot{X} \\ \dot{Y} \\ \dot{Z} \end{pmatrix} = -\nu - \omega \times \begin{pmatrix} X \\ Y \\ Z \end{pmatrix}$$

that is

$$\begin{pmatrix} \dot{X} \\ \dot{Y} \\ \dot{Z} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} -1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & -Z & Y \\ 0 & -1 & 0 & Z & 0 & -X \\ 0 & 0 & -1 & -Y & X & 0 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \nu \\ \omega \end{pmatrix}$$

- Substituting:

$$\begin{pmatrix} \dot{x} \\ \dot{y} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} -\frac{f}{Z} & 0 & \frac{x}{Z} & \frac{xY}{Z} & -f - \frac{xX}{Z} & \frac{fY}{Z} \\ 0 & -\frac{f}{Z} & \frac{y}{Z} & f + \frac{yY}{Z} & -\frac{yX}{Z} & -\frac{fX}{Z} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \nu \\ \omega \end{pmatrix}$$

Computation of the interaction matrix (3/3)

- Considering that $X = xZ/f$ and $Y = yZ/f$:

$$\begin{pmatrix} \dot{x} \\ \dot{y} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} -\frac{f}{Z} & 0 & \frac{x}{Z} & \frac{xy}{f} & -f - \frac{x^2}{f} & y \\ 0 & -\frac{f}{Z} & \frac{y}{Z} & f + \frac{y^2}{f} & -\frac{xy}{f} & -x \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \nu \\ \omega \end{pmatrix}$$

- From the metric-pixel conversion (see slide 15) we have that

$$\dot{u} = \dot{x}/\rho_w, \quad \dot{v} = \dot{y}/\rho_h$$

$$x = (u - u_0)\rho_w = \bar{u}\rho_w, \quad y = (v - v_0)\rho_h = \bar{v}\rho_h$$

- Substituting:

$$\begin{pmatrix} \dot{u} \\ \dot{v} \end{pmatrix} = \underbrace{\begin{pmatrix} -\frac{f}{\rho_w Z} & 0 & \frac{\bar{u}}{Z} & \frac{\bar{u}\bar{v}\rho_h}{f} & -f - \frac{\bar{u}^2\rho_w}{f} & \bar{v} \\ 0 & -\frac{f}{\rho_h Z} & \frac{\bar{v}}{Z} & f + \frac{\bar{v}^2\rho_h}{f} & -\frac{\bar{u}\bar{v}\rho_h}{f} & -\bar{u} \end{pmatrix}}_{L} \begin{pmatrix} \nu \\ \omega \end{pmatrix}$$

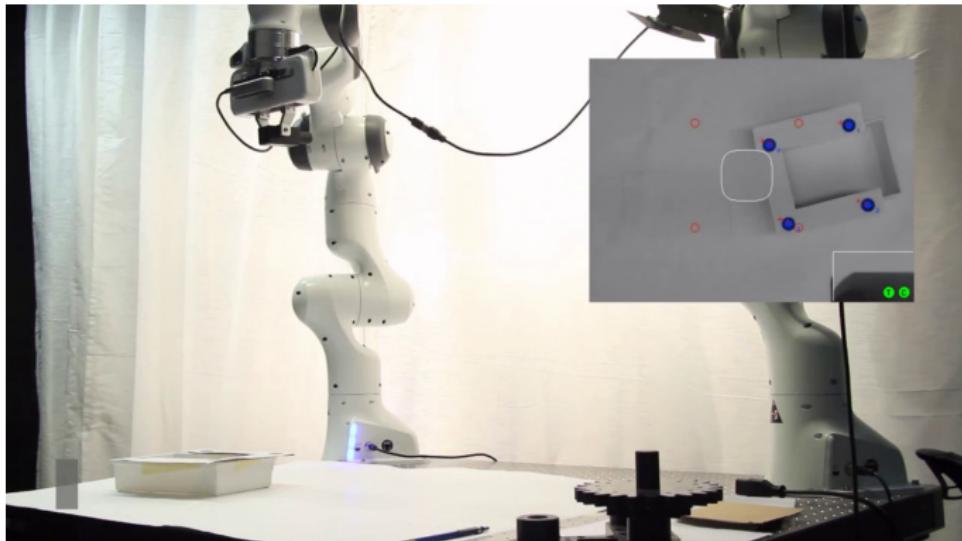
(Some) practical aspects of VS

- ▶ One point is not enough to uniquely determine the pose of the camera at convergence
- ▶ For example, if we want to control the motion of the camera in the 3D space, at least three points have to be used
- ▶ This means that the information used in the control law is the stack of three sets:

$$\mathbf{s} = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{s}_1 \\ \mathbf{s}_2 \\ \mathbf{s}_3 \end{bmatrix}, \quad \mathbf{s}^* = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{s}_1^* \\ \mathbf{s}_2^* \\ \mathbf{s}_3^* \end{bmatrix}, \quad \mathbf{L} = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{L}_1 \\ \mathbf{L}_2 \\ \mathbf{L}_3 \end{bmatrix}$$

- ▶ The choice of the visual features, their number, and their desired value is part of the algorithm design

Application example (1/6): pick-and-place



[video]

Task: place an object in a box

Application example (2/6): humanoid manipulation



[video]

Task: open/close a drawer

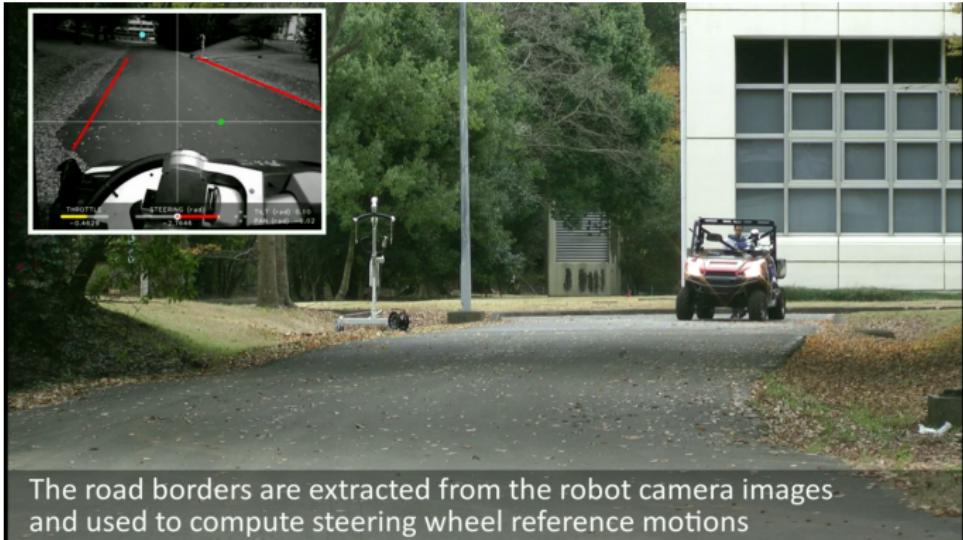
Application example (3/6): corridor navigation



[video]

Task: navigate at the center of a corridor

Application example (4/6): car driving



[video]

Task: drive the car at the center of the road

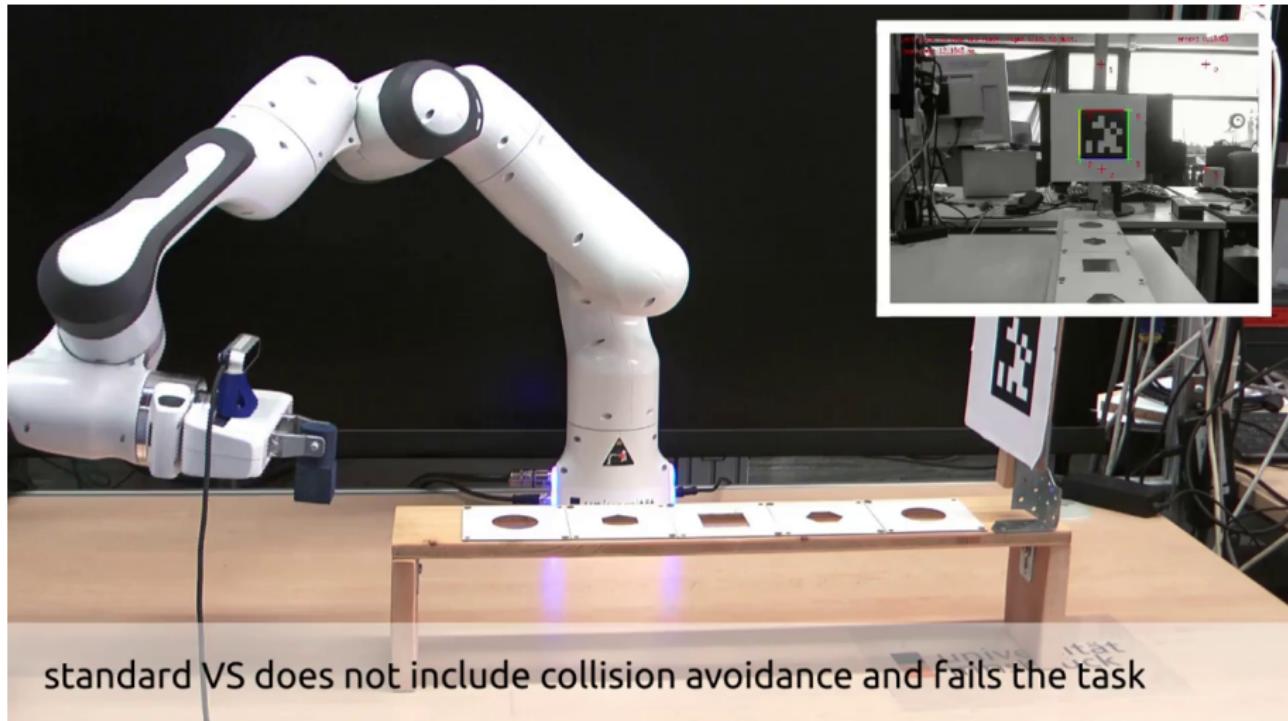
Application example (5/6): space operation



[video]

Task: re-orient the body with respect to a tool, in space

Application example (6/6): Peg-in-Hole



standard VS does not include collision avoidance and fails the task

[video]

Task: insert a peg in an hole avoiding collision

Final remark

- ▶ What is visual servoing?
 - ▶ Vision-based control of robot
- ▶ Why do we need visual servoing?
 - ▶ Translate cartesian tasks into visual tasks
- ▶ How do we build visual servoing?
 - ▶ Simple law, visual features definition
- ▶ What can we do with visual servoing?
 - ▶ Navigation, manipulation, operation...

More advanced topics

- ▶ Standards VS is purely *reactive*: its performance can be improved by using *predictive* techniques, such as model predictive control
- ▶ The measurement of the visual features can be robustified by extending both control and perception algorithm; for example
 - ▶ on the control side, adaptive or weighing mechanisms can be used
 - ▶ on the perception side, machine learning tools can be employed
- ▶ VS can be applied to many different robotic platforms; for humanoids has to be computed accordingly to the whole-body motion
- ▶ Further developments deal with the integration of VS with optimization, planning and machine learning methodologies

Thesis proposals

If you are interested in visual servoing, check out the list of *thesis proposals* available at IDSIA's Robotics Lab, or contact me and Prof. A. Giusti.

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(Some) References

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