

Media Engineering and Technology Faculty
German University in Cairo



Bachelor Thesis Title

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Supervisors: Assoc. Prof. Georg Jung
Sup 2
Sup 3
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This is to certify that:

- (i) the thesis comprises only my original work toward the Bachelor Degree
- (ii) due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used

ElHassan Makled
05 May, 2013

Acknowledgments

Text

Abstract

Motion and gesture input systems are spreading in software development during the past few years. Some examples are Microsoft's Kinect, Nintendo's Wii, or Sony's Move. This spread ranged to affect video games and fitness programs. However, none of the fitness programs focus on actual contact sports techniques. In this project, we will use Microsoft Kinect to create an application that will help Ju-Jutsu (a martial arts form) practitioners to keep track of their performance.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

With the current rise of ubiquitous computing touchless input sensor devices have emerged to replace controllers in some video games, house hold appliances or lately, mobile phones. With these devices present, programmers take advantage of developing applications either for entertainment, such as dancing games, sword fighting games or shooting games, or fitness related applications, like yoga.

When it comes to fitness related applications, users are able to use them as support for keeping track of their performance. Some applications target to replace a coach, such as Nike+ Kinect training. This program guides the user through a series of exercises including sit ups, push ups and more. The user in the practice is able to recieve real time feedback and coaching.

All the emerging fitness applications mostly target activities that could be done at a limited space such as a living room. Only few applications target contact sports such as Ju-Jutsu, Muay Thai, or Boxing. However, there applications available using touchless input sensors that target these types of sports, but only focuses on the gaming experience and do not act as fitness applications.

Ju-Jutsu, Muay Thai, Karate, Boxing, and other contact sports have a certain practice that requires a practitioner and a coach, where the coach is holding two Thai-Pads, a thick pad that covers the arms of the coach so that the trainee would punch or kick for practice. Usually this practice is fast paced with the coach always signalling for a certain move to be executed by the practitioner. With the practice being fast paced the practitioners sometimes find it hard to recognize their mistakes or evaluate their performance.

Project Recon focuses on creating a tool for practitioners to evaluate and support in keeping track of their performance. Project Recon is part of a larger project titled Impact. Project Impact is a fitness monitor project that targets Ju-Jutsu practitioners. It has multiple plugins for applications. Those applications take input from sensors and process them. This information is later sent to Project Impact which will visualize the

information to the user. There are various types of information about the practitioner. All of which later reflect the performance and work out results of the user. The applications used as plug-ins to Project Impact include Project Recon. Which uses a Microsoft Kinect sensor to locate the practitioner and recognizes his techniques. Other possible sensors are the sensor equipped Thai-Pads and a heart rate monitor.

Chapter 2

Background

2.1 Architecture

The architectures shown below describes how communication between Project Recon and the general interface would look like. Figure 3.1 shows more details regarding the internal architecture and design of Project Recon itself.

As shown in figure 2.1, Project Recon main inputs are the Kinect sensor and Thai Pad Sensor. The Kinect sensor sends the Image stream and skeleton stream to Project Recon's Technique recognizer which in turn would take the skeleton of the user and keep track of its joints' position in time. When the practitioner moves the technique recognizer would compare the current movement with the database of reference moves. From this, it would associate the detected move with its respectful reference. The sensor equipped Thai Pads would measure the impact and send the value to Project Recon. The impact is then linked to its respectful technique and compared with reference impact. All this data is sent to the client which is responsible for the connection between the interface and Project Recon.

In figure 2.2, an overview of the project is shown. Where it shows the linking between the Main Interface and Project Recon. As previously said, the client is responsible for the connection between both by communicating and connecting to a socket specified for it by the Main Interface.

2.2 Development Tools and Technologies

When it came to developing with Kinect, two choices were on the table. Whether to use the official Microsoft Kinect SDK or use other unofficial SDK's. The official Kinect SDK may have slightly less capabilities, and we will be talking about them later and exploring them more. However, it is easier to use the official Microsoft SDK. The environment that

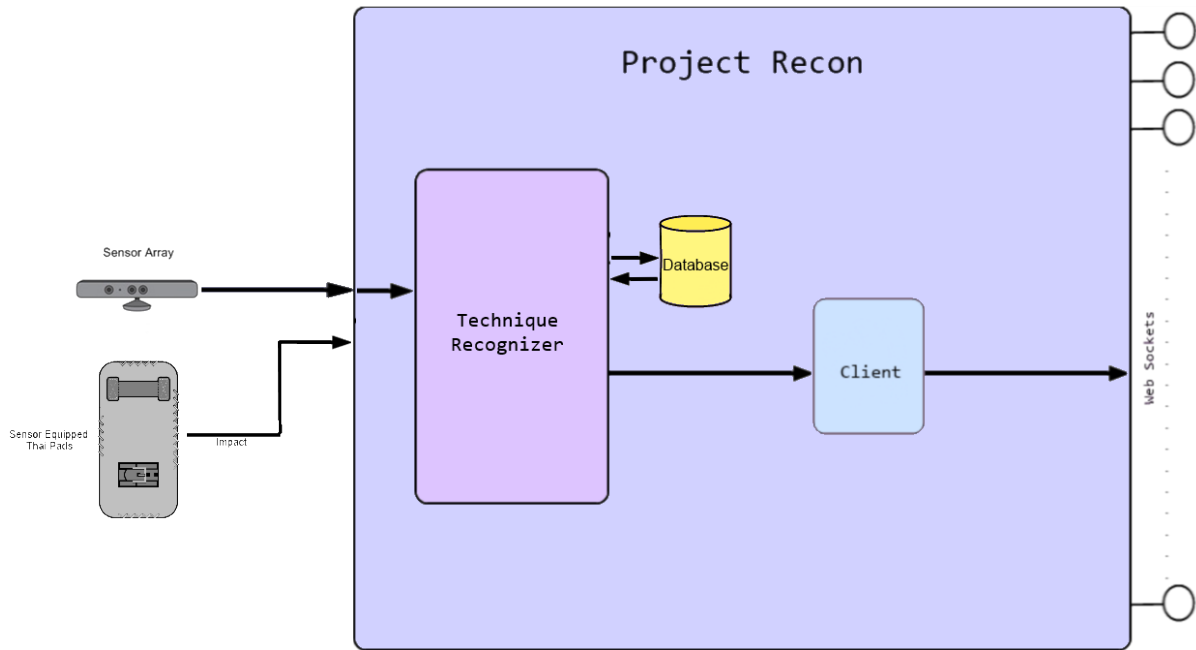


Figure 2.1: Internal architecture and design of Project Recon

was chosen for development (XNA) would also support our choice of using the official SDK. The programming language possible to use are Visual Basic and C#. The chosen language was C# as it was easier for me to develop for.

2.2.1 Microsoft XNA

XNA is an IDE (Integrated Development Environment) created by Microsoft to help game development for their systems to be easier. XNA is based on .NET Framework and it creates applications for platforms like XBox 360, Zune, Windows Phone and Microsoft Windows. Since its release there are 4 versions with the final version being XNA Game Studio 4.0. The framework was released on March of 2004 and the latest update released on September 16th 2010.

XNA is mostly used for XBox 360 video game development, which of course in turn is compatible with Kinect development, since Kinect is a Microsoft XBox 360 device. Making it easier to integrate the device within the code and collect data sent from the device and being able to read this data.

XNA makes it easier for developers to organize their code in many ways as it takes care of low level technologies related in game development. Helping developers to focus more on the gameplay and game detail itself. To make it more clear, when creating a class using XNA. Certain methods are created under a class titled *Game1* this class inherits from *Microsoft.XNA.Framework.Game*. This class includes several methods that help in

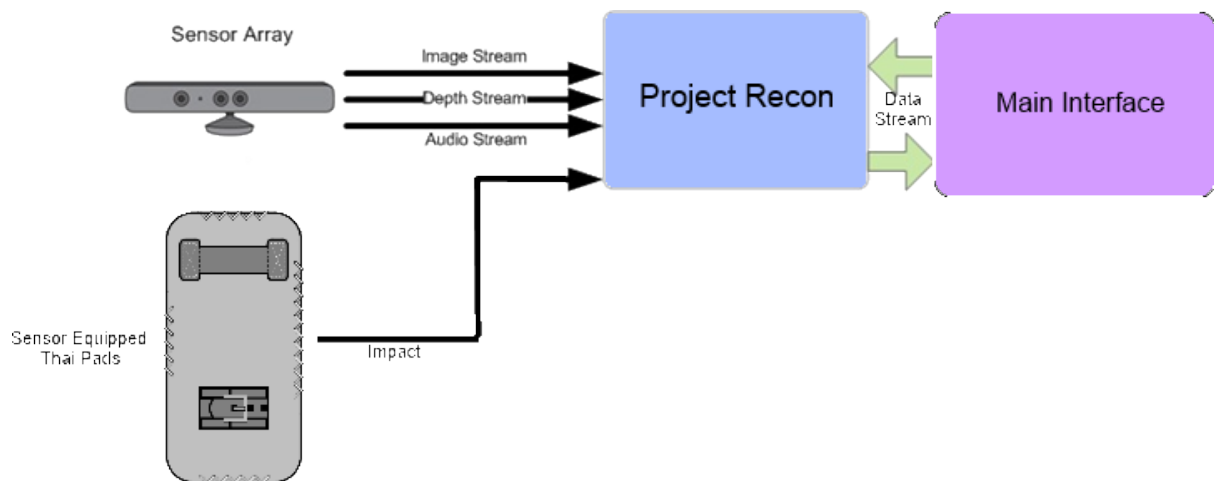


Figure 2.2: Overall architecture of Project Recon and its connection to the interface

organizing the code.

Initialize(), in this method every single variable is initialized. In our case since we use the Kinect, several initialization took place. For example, initializing the variable *kinect* to a connected Kinect Sensor. As well as initializing the elevation angle of the Kinect itself. Every other variable is initialized in this method.

Code:

```

protected override void Initialize()
{
    // TODO: Add your initialization logic here
    kinect = KinectSensor.KinectSensors[0];
    kinect.ColorStream.Enable(ColorImageFormat.RgbResolution640x480Fps30);
    kinect.DepthStream.Enable(DepthImageFormat.Resolution320x240Fps30);
    kinect.SkeletonStream.Enable();
    kinect.Start();
    kinect.ElevationAngle = 0;
    colorData = new byte[640 * 480 * 4];
    colorTex = new Texture2D(GraphicsDevice, 640, 480);
    rawSkeletons = new Skeleton[kinect.SkeletonStream.FrameSkeletonArrayLength];
    keepcover = true;
    base.Initialize();
}

```

The *LoadContent()* method as its name specifies is responsible for loading the content required for the game. These contents range from images to audio or even video content that will be used in game as textures or in game music.

Code:

```
// Create a new SpriteBatch, which can be used to draw textures.
spriteBatch = new SpriteBatch(GraphicsDevice);
circleTex = Content.Load<Texture2D>("circle");
lineTex = Content.Load<Texture2D>("4KWjQ");
lineTexRed = Content.Load<Texture2D>("4KWjQR");
font = Content.Load<SpriteFont>("MainFont");
// TODO: use this.Content to load your game content here
```

There is also an *UnloadContent()* method that is used to unload the content once the game is done using them. This method is helpful with multi level games as loading all the game content unto the gpu will be impossible so items will be loaded when needed and unloaded when they are no longer needed during the gameplay to give space for more items to be loaded. In our project we will not need the Unload method as there aren't any high processing going on the graphics level.

The *Update()* method takes the gameTime as an argument, which is a snapshot of the game timing state. This method is called every interval. Updating all variables and values that have changed from previous frames. In our case, the positions of the joints of the skeleton. Later, the draw method would take care in rendering the images and displaying them. The two figures below show two different frames in time with the skeleton in a position and in the other time in another position.

In the following images, two frames are shown where the skeleton first is standing regularly and then, later in time standing on one foot and leaning slightly to its left. As said before the update method updated the data from the previous method in terms of each joint's location in space and then the draw method rendered the skeleton with the new joints' locations.

2.2.2 Kinect

What makes Kinect sensor a good choice for this project is its ability to recognize and keep track of a person's movement through creating a virtual skeleton that matches the user and makes the skeleton move with the user. There are few constraints unfortunately when it comes to incorporating it with the Jiu Jitsu training. One of which would be the fact that Kinect does not differentiate between a user who is facing the Kinect from a user who is giving his back to the Kinect sensor.

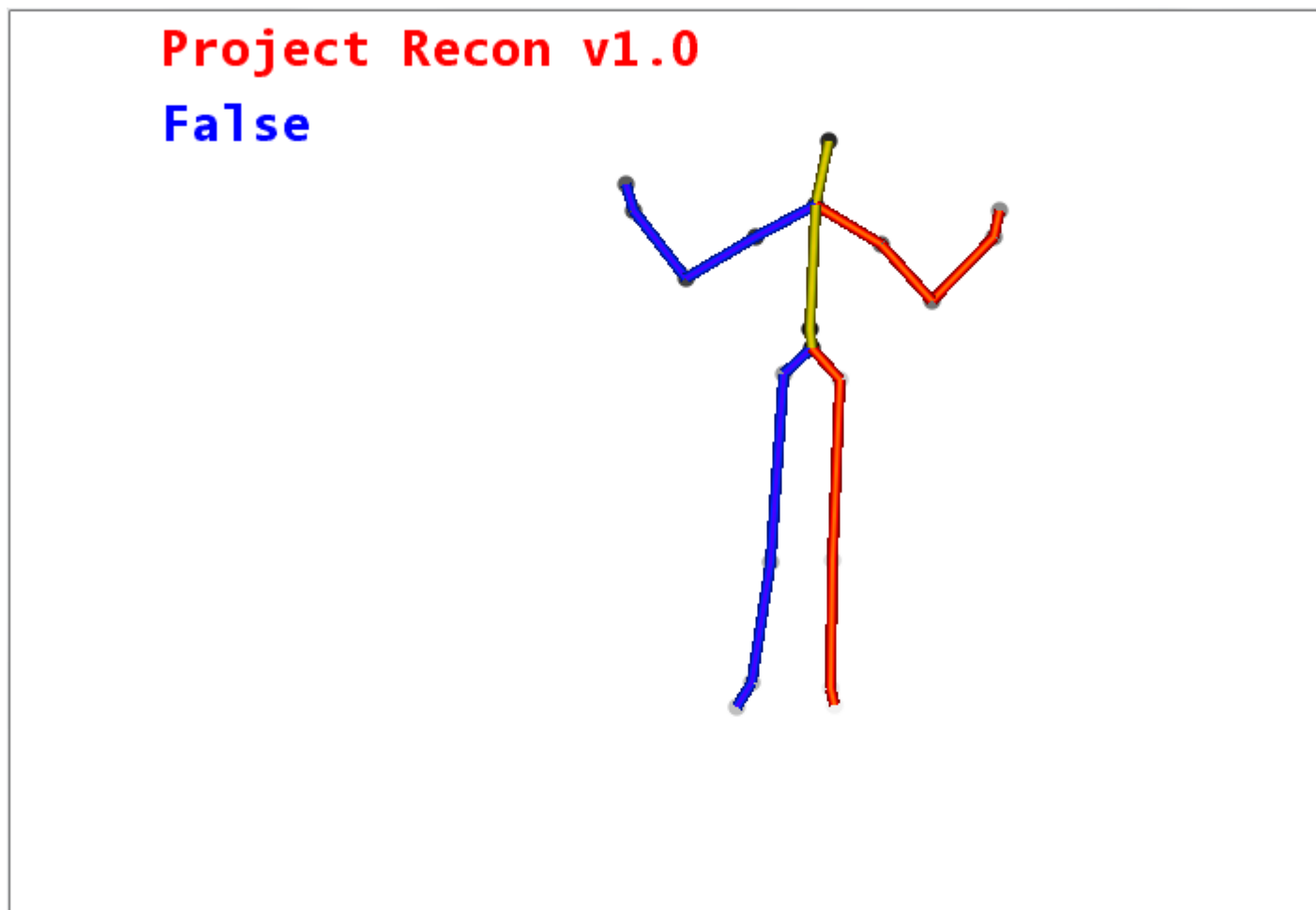


Figure 2.3: initial frame

The Kinect sensor consists of three major parts. A regular camera used mostly for video chat on the XBox and the Kinect and sometimes visualization (e.g adding the user inside the scene of the game). The other two major parts are the ones that detect the user and their motion. The first is an infrared emitter and the other is an infrared sensor. The way the Kinect works is that the infrared emitter emits a mesh of infrared rays that would reflect back to the Kinect off from the user and then are detected by the sensor.

The Kinect sensor has sends as an output three streams, an audio stream, a depth image stream and a color image stream. In the image below the color image stream is used to render the regular image captured by the Kinect camera.

Other streams that the Kinect provides as output are the skeleton stream, Kinect provides an array of skeletons (having skeletons of all available users). So far the array has a maximum of four users at a time. The skeleton stream can be used to acquire information regarding the skeleton of a certain user. In the next image, a circle was used to identify

Project Recon v1.0

False

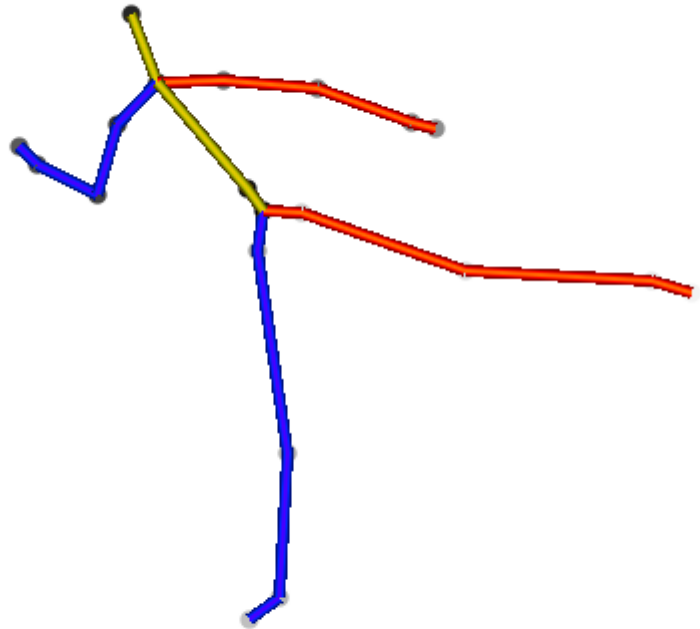


Figure 2.4: few seconds later from initial frame

the places of the joints and was drawn on its respective joint. Different shades of grey were used in this image to show the system's differentiation of the joints.

There is a total of 20 joints recognized by the Kinect sensor. The head, the center shoulder, right shoulder, left shoulder, right and left elbows, right and left wrists, right and left hands, right and left hips, right and left knees, right and left ankles, right and left feet, a center hip and a spine.

After visualizing the joints, the next step was to link the joints with a line to show the skeleton itself. By simple line equations and using the two points as the joints, the skeleton was drawn in the following manner:

Kinect uses three different coordinate systems. Each one is different to the other,



Figure 2.5: Color stream data visualization

however have relations to one another. Those spaces are Skeleton Space, Color Space and Depth Space. Kinect streams information on those three spaces during each frame.

The Color Space is a 2D space having only X and Y as its coordinates. During each frame, the color sensor (camera) captures an image of everything in the visibility box of the camera itself. The frame of the Color Space is made up of pixels, where the size is determined by the specified `NUIIMAGE_RESOLUTION`. Resolution could be either 80 x 60, 320 x 240, 640 x 480, or 1280 x 960. Every pixel contains the three values of red, green and blue at the particular coordinate.

Similar to the Color Space, the Depth Space is a 2D space with X and Y as its coordinates. Each frame is represented as a gray scale image of the visible objects to the camera. The frame size is also determined by the specified `NUIIMAGE_RESOLUTION`, where each pixel contains the Cartesian distance between the camera plane and the nearest body. The distance is measured in millimeters.



Figure 2.6: Color stream data visualization with a visualization of the joints that is provided from the skeleton stream

2.2.3 Connections and Communications

The communication between Project Recon and the interface is seen as a client-server communication. When browsing the possible technologies to use, socket programming came at the top of the list.

Socket Programming uses the client server model of network communication, in which a server (in this case the interface) would listen on different ports for data arriving from any of the devices that are supposed to connect to it. When Project Recon starts and is ready it will take the part of the client, as it will send its data stream to the specified socket. When ready, a handshake will occur to initialize connection between starting to send the data stream. In which the interface will receive the data of gestures and delivers the proper output.

There are three different data streams, a data stream responsible for system-related ges-

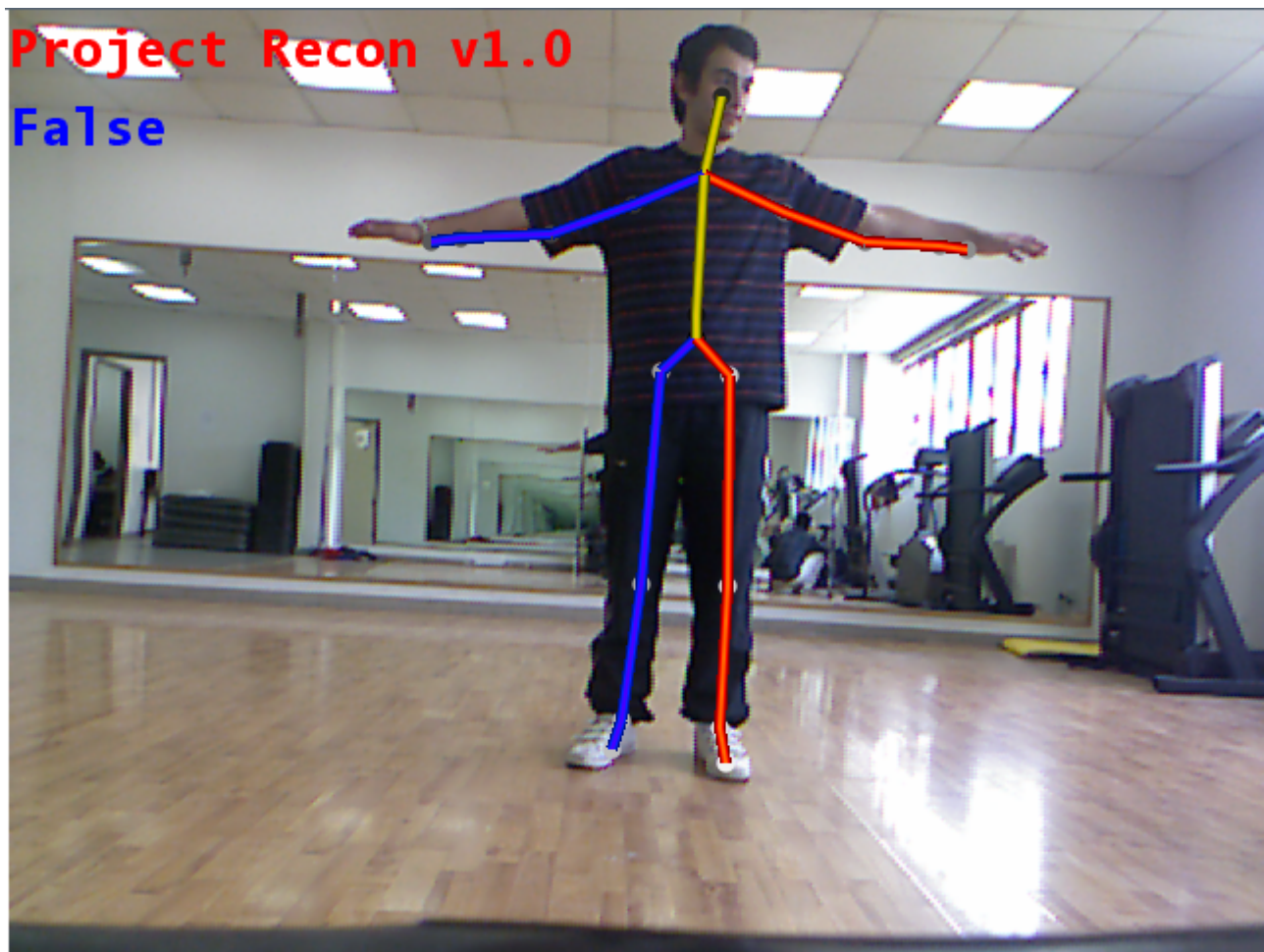


Figure 2.7: Color stream data visualization and skeleton visualization

tures, like a gesture to start the session or end it. The other stream consists of technique details. Finally, the third stream is contains the impact of the technique. All of the three streams have a timestamp in order to associate each impact with the proper technique used.

2.3 Project Requirements

The practice that is targeted by the project is fast paced, which means the system needs to be performant enough to handle fast motion and recognize the technique in real time. Also, for it being a dynamic practice, which means rapid movement takes place during practice and the user will not necessarily be always facing the Kinect as he will be moving freely around the practice room and most of the times will be giving his back to the Kinect. We need to make the system robust enough to be able to recognize different motions.

Another basic requirement is to allow the differentiation between two different users in front of the Kinect, one being the coach and the second being the practitioner. This is easily resolved as Kinect's stream sends multiple skeletons of the multiple users. However it is required that the first user be defined as a the practitioner and the second to join in later would be the coach.

Finally, the project should be able to plugin to a different system, the fitness monitor. The fitness monitor is an interface that shows the user's current stats, technique executed, and more. A connection should be established between Project Recon and the fitness monitor, where Project Recon should be able to send information regarding the technique executed by the user for the fitness monitor display.

Chapter 3

Application

In order to create a robust system, two solutions are proposed. The first utilizes the fact that a person faces the same direction their waist faces. So we create a plane between three fixed points, the center hip \vec{c} , the left \vec{l} and the right hips \vec{r} . A normal vector \vec{N} was created from this plane in order to allow the program to recognize where the person is facing.

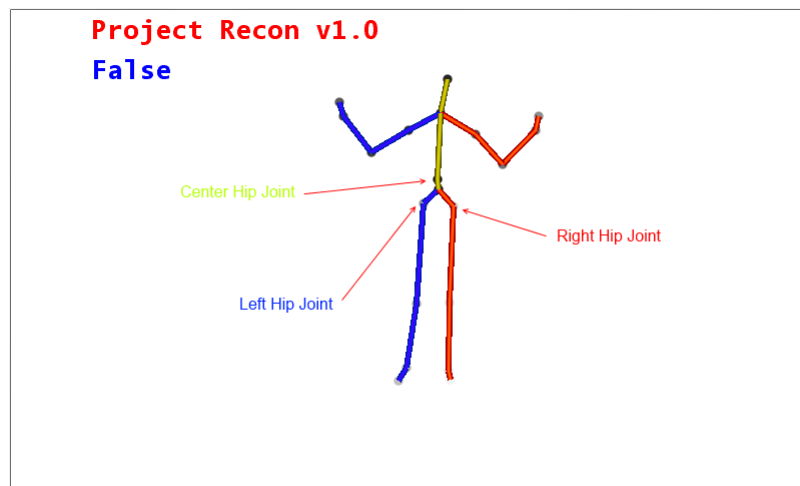


fig.4.6 (In the figure the three joints are pointed out and named)

To calculate the normal vector, we subtract the right and left hip joints from the center hip joint and then we calculate the cross product of the two subtractions.

$$\vec{N} = (\vec{r} - \vec{c}) \times (\vec{l} - \vec{c})$$

We then calculate the normal by using the Normalize method.

```
var dir = Vector3.Cross(rhip - chip, lhip - chip);  
var norm = Vector3.Normalize(dir);
```

As the person turns, the normal vector will be used as a reference to calculate the angle between it and the Z axis. This will allow us to rotate the skeleton so that it will be always facing the Kinect. Recognition will then take place.

Kinect has another problem, which is that it cannot differentiate between a user giving it his face or his back. In other words, a user's left and right are swapped if the user is giving the Kinect his back.

The normal vector calculation approach will reswap the left joints with the right joints when the \vec{N} is on the negative Z axis. However, here another problem emerges. When the swap takes place, an error occurs. Mainly, the programmer can not edit the value of the position of the joints. The value is read from the skeleton stream of the Kinect. In order to resolve this, an avatar skeleton needs to be created, littleGuy. littleGuy is an array of SkeletonPoints, where every SkeletonPoint represents a joint, and gets the value from these joints. This helps in allowing us to edit and the SkeletonPoints as we wish and in the end draw this avatar skeleton instead.

In the figure below the user is facing their right, having the normal vector (red line) erected and defining the direction the user is facing.

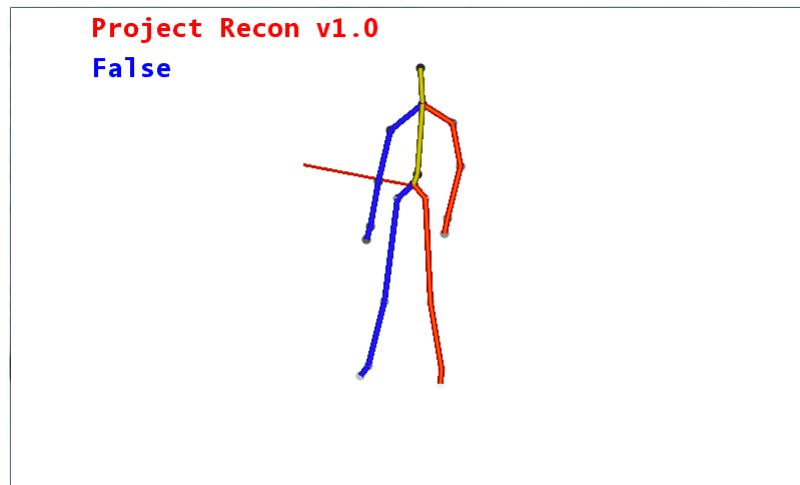


fig.4.6 (Skeleton with a normal vector defining where it is facing)

The translation and rotation of the skeleton occurs in the Skeleton Space. The algorithm translates littleGuy to the origin point where it calculates the \vec{N} . Rotation occurs in the origin and then the new manipulated littleGuy translates back to a fixed point in the Z axis, the Y axis and X axis however remain in the origin. After this Project Recon stores the translated littleGuy in a new avatar skeleton called transGuy. The program then renders transGuy to the 2D Color Space.

The second step is using Kinect's face detection capabilities, which may be hard and require high processing. Errors may occur when Kinect re-swaps the joints to their right place. For this we will use the face detection capabilities of Kinect to create a sanity check. That is if the swap did occur and the user's face was visible, then the swap is a

mistake and it will re-swap again to the correct state.

When it came to testing the normalization of the skeleton using the Kinect, a problem emerges. When the user has a joint not facing the Kinect, then the Kinect does not have the position value of this joint. The reason for this is that no infrared rays are reflected from this joint. In turn, when the rotation occurs the some joints have false space(X, Y, and Z) values. This error will question the validity of the rendered and final translated values of the joints. This error made us discard this method and resort a different one that will also aims to maintain the robustness of the system.

3.1 Recognition

Recognition is the essence of this project. Recognition needs to be in real time, but most importantly how will the recognition occur. We discussed in the previous section the resolve of the normal vector. However, why is it needed? In recognition we want to be able to translate the skeleton of the person in order to always recognize from the same direction, facing the Kinect. In the coming sections we will discuss the different ways for recognition.

3.1.1 Glyphs Method

3.1.2 Frames

Chapter 4

Conclusion

Conclusion

Chapter 5

Future Work

Text

Appendix

Appendix A

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