

Problem statement:

Computer information technology is increasingly penetrating into the hospital domain. A major challenge involved in this process is to provide doctors with efficient, intuitive, accurate and safe means of interaction without affecting the quality of their work. Keyboards and pointing devices, such as a mouse, are today's principal method of human— computer interaction. However, the use of computer keyboards and mice by doctors and nurses in intensive care units (ICUs) is a common method for spreading infections.¹ In this paper, we suggest the use of hand gestures as an alternative to existing interface techniques, offering the major advantage of sterility. Even though voice control also provides sterility, the noise level in the operating room (OR) deems it problematic.² In this work we refer to gestures as a basic form of non-verbal communication made with the hands. Psychological studies showed that young children use gestures to communicate before they learn to talk. Manipulation, as a form of gesticulation, is often used when people speak to each other about some object. Naturalness of expression, non-encumbered interaction, intuitiveness and high sterility are all good reasons to replace the current interface technology (e.g., keyboard, mouse, and joystick) with more natural interfaces