

Research project:

Finite Element Method In Python

Group 3: Loads

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1. Project Description:

FEM(Finite Element Method) is a numerical approach to predicting the behavior of structural systems. Our task is part of the project with the purpose of programming FEM using Python. The user defines the loads, moments, and values; then, the program visualizes them in Rhinoceros. The received data will store in a JSON file and transfer to the following groups for the next steps.

In order to gain these operations, three classes are defined for point loads, linear loads & moments, and users can choose different methods of inputting data through the Rhino Dialogue Box. The overall process of the project is shown in (figure 1).

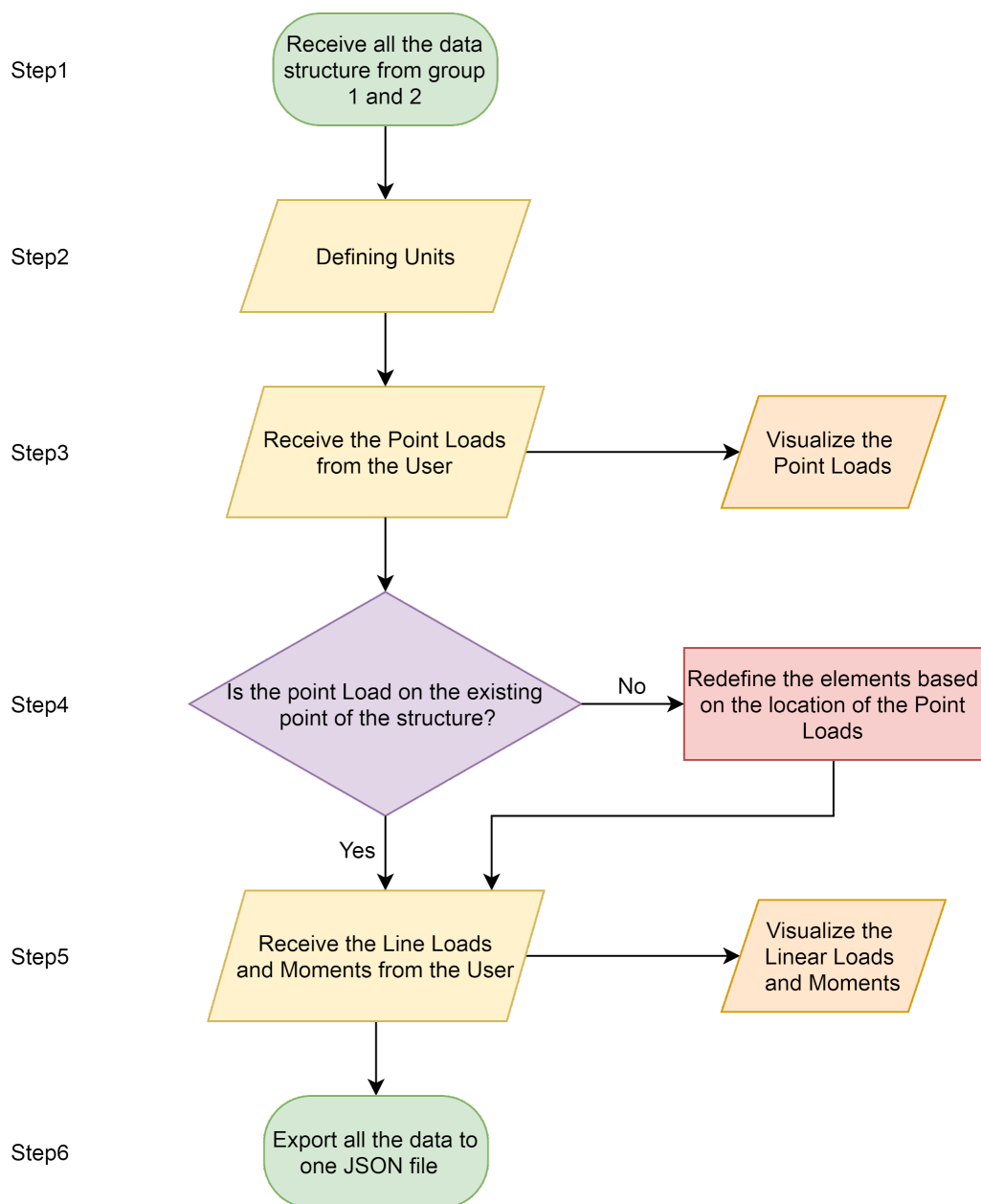


Figure 1: Diagram of the overall process

2. Scientific Theory:

Three types of load can act on the beam. these are:

1. Point load is also called a concentrated load¹
2. Distributed load
3. Coupled load

2.1. Point Load

Point load acts over a small distance. This load can be considered as acting on a point. Point load is indicated by **P** and symbol of point load is an arrowhead.

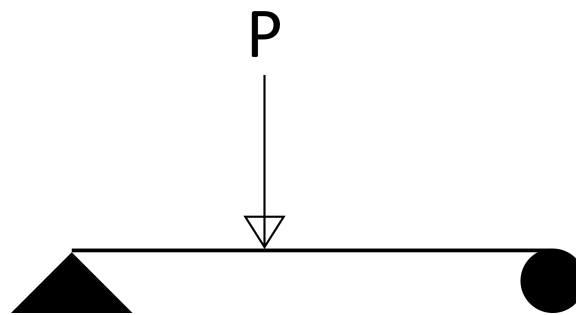


Figure 2: Point Load

2.2. Distributed Load

Distributed load acts over a considerable length, or you can say over a measurable distance. Distributed load is measured as per unit length.

Two types of distributed load

1. Uniformly Distributed load (UDL)
2. Uniformly Varying load (Non-uniformly distributed load).

Uniformly Distributed Load (UDL)

In this type of distributed load the magnitude remains uniform throughout the length.

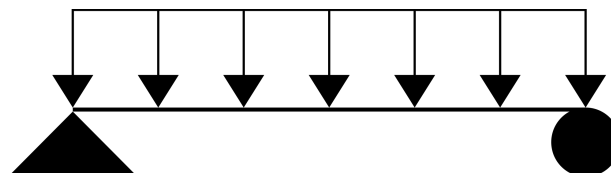


Figure 3: Uniformly Distributed Load (UDL)

¹ Podut, Alex. (2018). Strength of Materials Supplement for Power Engineering

Non-Uniformly Distributed Load or Uniformly Varying Load

in this type of load, the magnitude varies along the loading length with a constant rate.

there are two types of Uniformly Varying Load:

1. Triangular Load
2. Trapezoidal Load

In the **Triangular Load**, the magnitude starts from zero at one end of the span and increases constantly till the second end of the span.

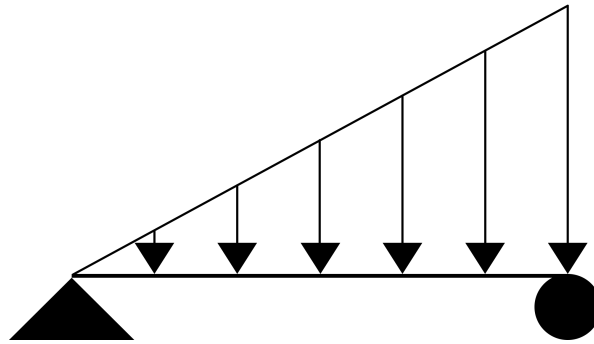


Figure 4: Triangular Load

In the **Trapezoidal load**, the load acts as a form of a trapezoid. Trapezoidal loads are the combination of uniformly distributed loads (UDL) and triangular loads.

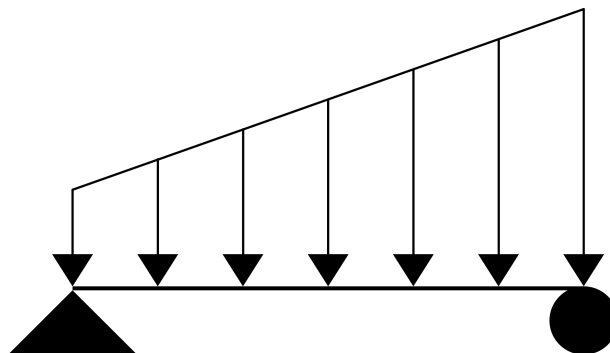


Figure 5: Trapezoidal Load

3. Outsource Data Inputs:

As shown in Step1 of the diagram, we receive the structure's geometry as a rhino file and a dictionary of data from group 2 as a JSON file consisting of elements, points, profiles, and conditions. Therefore, different dictionaries have been created with the same name to organize the received data.

Code 1

```

8 #Import the dictionaries from the data_file
9 structure_data = {}
10 points = {}
11 elements = {}
12 conditions = {}
13 profile = {}
14 with open('data_file.json') as json_file:
15     structure_data = json.load(json_file)
16     points = structure_data["Points"]
17     elements = structure_data["Elements"]
18     conditions = structure_data["Conditions"]
19     profile = structure_data["Profile"]

```

4. Units:

In the second step, the user is asked to choose the Units of Load (figure 6). And the Units of the Dimension are taken automatically from the rhino system.

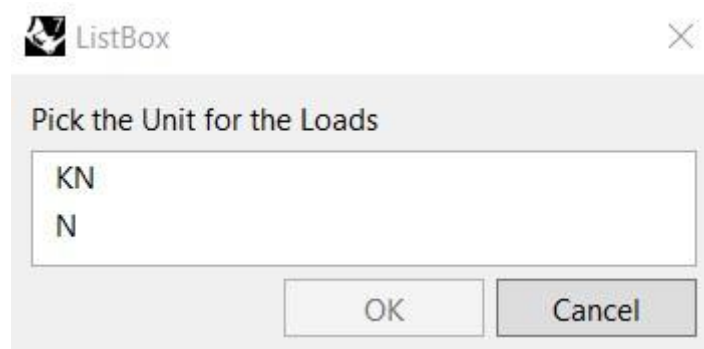


Figure 6: Unit of the Loads

Two different variables, **unit_l**, and **unit_f** are defined in the code. The **unit_l** takes the dimension unit from the unit system of the RhinoScript. The user establishes the **unit_f** for the Loads. The Units of the dimensions could be meter, centimeter, or millimeter, so they are abbreviated as "**m**," "**cm**," and "**mm**". The units of the loads are also abbreviated as "**KN**" for *kilonewtons*, and "**N**" for *Newtons*.

Code 2

```

25 #UNITS
26 unit_f = rs.ListBox(["KN", "N"], "Pick the Unit for the Loads")
27 if rs.UnitSystem() == 2:
28     unit_l = "mm"
29 if rs.UnitSystem() == 3:
30     unit_l = "cm"
31 if rs.UnitSystem() == 4:
32     unit_l = "m"

```

5. Point Loads:

In the third step, the user can choose whether they will pick a Point Load or skip this step to define Linear Loads or Moments (figure 7).

A class is defined for the Point Loads. Every time the user wants to pick a point load, an object is determined to collect the point load variables in the class and return those parameters to store in a list. The object is defined as “obj” in the code, and the returning variables from the class are “point” and “dir,” which are the location and the direction of the point load respectively. They are all stored in a list named “P” in this step (Code3).

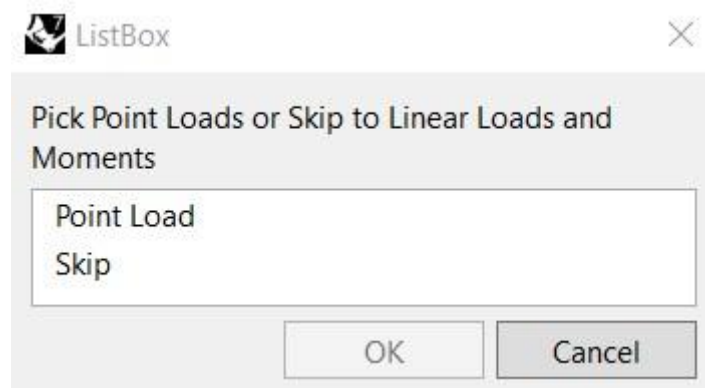


Figure 7: Picking the point loads

5.1. Point load methods:

There are two methods for defining point loads (figure 8)(code 3):

Method 1: Load direction based on x,y,z value

The program asks the user to choose the load location and the values of x ,y, and z.

Method 2: drawing the load in Rhino

The program asks the user to choose the load location and draw a line in the desired direction.

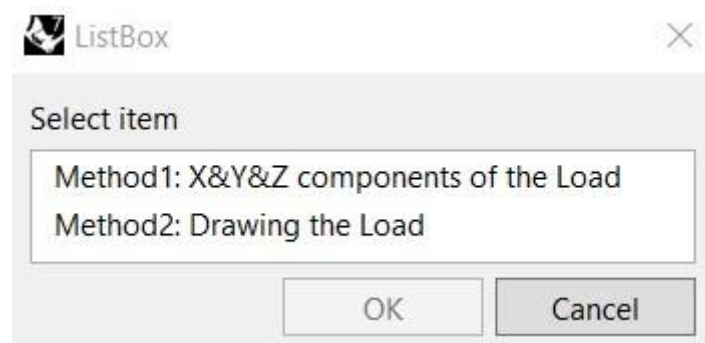


Figure 8: choosing a method for picking point loads

After the user picks a method, the class's related functions are called to take the user's point load. These two functions also have an argument "i" which shows the index of the point loads.

```
219 obj.Point_Load_Method1(i)
221 obj.Point_Load_Method2(i)
```

5.2. Point load Inputs:

- Selecting point location by the user
- Determining load direction by the user

Code 3

```
213 while True:
214     Pick_Load = rs.ListBox(["Point Load", "Skip"], "Pick Point Loads or Skip to
Linear Loads and Moments")
215     if Pick_Load == "Point Load" :
216         obj = Point_Load (0,0)
217         Point_Method = rs.ListBox(["Method1: X&Y&Z components of the Load",
"Method2: Drawing the Load"])
218         if Point_Method == "Method1: X&Y&Z components of the Load" :
219             obj.Point_Load_Method1(i)
220         if Point_Method == "Method2: Drawing the Load" :
221             obj.Point_Load_Method2(i)
224 to 251 (Group 2 code): #Checks the points with the element dictionary and update
the element dictionary
252         P.append(obj)
253         i= i+1
254     if Pick_Load == "Skip" :
255         break
```

5.3. Point load Class:

In the class point loads, there are two main functions:

1. `def Point_Load_Method1(self, i):`
2. `def Point_Load_Method2(self, i):`

In the first function, the user is asked to select the Point Load's location and then Enter the Load components in the X, Y, and Z Direction, respectively. Based on the point load's coordinates and the fx, fy, and fz parameters, the direction of the point load is then defined, and an arrowhead and the name of the point load by its index are added as the visualization of the point load (figure 9). As mentioned, the returning variables from this function are the point(point) and direction(dir) of the point load.

The second function acts the same as the first function. It takes "i" as an input and returns point load coordinates and the direction of the point load. The only difference in this function is the method of taking the load's direction from the user. Here the user picks the direction of the point load by drawing a line. The visualization is also the same as the first function.

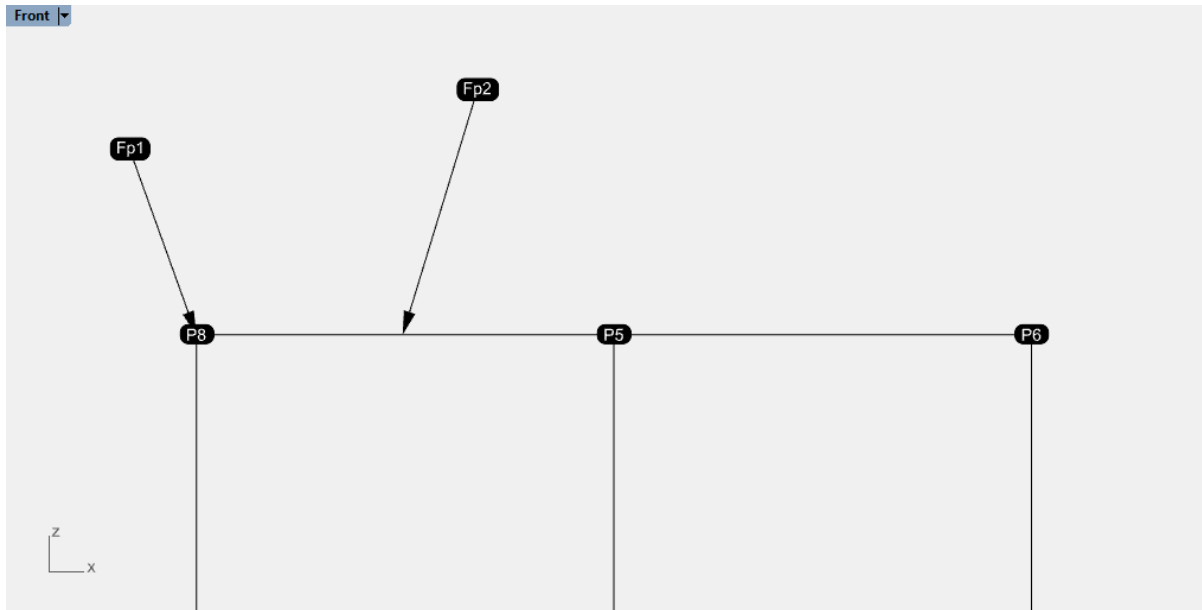


Figure 9: Visualization of the point loads

Code 4

```

class Point_Load:
76     def __init__(self, _point, _dir):
77         self.point = _point
78         self.dir = _dir
79     def Point_Load_Method1(self, i):
80         self.point = rs.GetPoint("Select Point Load Location")
81         fx = rs.GetReal("Enter the Load component in the X Direction")
82         fy = rs.GetReal("Enter the Load component in the Y Direction")
83         fz = rs.GetReal("Enter the Load component in the Z Direction")
84         AB = rs.CreatePoint(fx*-1, fy*-1, fz*-1)
85         B = self.point + AB
86         line = rg.Line(B, self.point)
87         self.dir = line.Direction
88         l = rs.AddLine(self.point, B)
89         rs.CurveArrows(l, 1)
90         rs.AddTextDot("Fp" + str(i+1), B)
91
92         return self.point, self.dir
93
94     def Point_Load_Method2(self, i):
95         self.point = rs.GetPoint("Select Point Load Location")
96         B = rs.GetPoint("Start of the load")
97         line = rg.Line(B, self.point)
98         self.dir = line.Direction
99         l = rs.AddLine(self.point, B)
100        rs.CurveArrows(l, 1)
101        rs.AddTextDot("Fp" + str(i+1), B)
102        return self.point, self.dir

```

6. Group 2 Function:

In Step 4, group 2 has defined a function, after receiving the point loads from the user, to see if the point loads are on the structure's existing points or are between the nodes. Therefore if they are between the nodes, the elements would be split into two parts, and a new list of points and elements would be defined. For example, in figure 9, the fp2 is a point load between the nodes p8 and p5. Therefore it split the element between the point p8 and p5 into two elements. And also add a point named P9 to the end of the points dictionary.

Code 5

```

224 #create coordinations variables
225 PX = str(obj.point[0])
226 PY = str(obj.point[1])
227 PZ = str(obj.point[2])
228 #assign a name to the chosen element
229 #element_name = get_Element([PX,PY,PZ],points)
230 #create a condition to replace the element with two new one and update the points
dict
231 if getKeyByValue(points,[PX,PY,PZ]) == -1:
232     element_name = get_Element([PX,PY,PZ],points)
233     #calculate how many points
234     lenPointDict = len(points)
235     #name the new point
236     name_Point = "P" + str(lenPointDict)
237     #update it in the dict
238     points.update({name_Point : [PX,PY,PZ]})
239     #create the first element from the new point to the old one
240     elem1 = (elements[element_name][0] ,name_Point)
241     #create the first element from the old point to new point (the other way
around)
242     elem2 = (name_Point,elements[element_name][1])
243     #Insert the new elements in the dict
244     elements.update({element_name : [elem1[0],elem1[1]]})
245     #calculate how many elements
246     lenElementDict = len(elements)
247     #assign a new name to the new elements and add them to the dict
248     name_Element = "E" + str(lenElementDict)
249     elements.update({name_Element : [elem2[0],elem2[1]]})

37 #Definition to get the Element where the point load is
38 def get_Element(point,Point_dict):
39     #create a dictionary to calculate the nodes distances from the point load
40     d = {}
41     #transform the points from the points dict to floats
42     point_f = (float(point[0]),float(point[1]),float(point[2]))
43     #loop in the points dict to search for the points
44     for p in Point_dict:
45         point_dict_f =
(float(Point_dict[p][0]),float(Point_dict[p][1]),float(Point_dict[p][2]))
46         #If the rest of the division of the point angel is 10 then choose
the point to eliminate the NOT perpendicular angels
47         state = rs.Angle(point_f, point_dict_f, True)[1]%10
48         if rs.Angle2((point_f,point_dict_f),((0,0,0),(0,0,10)))[0] == 90:
49             state = rs.Angle(point_f, point_dict_f, True)[0]%10
50         if state == 0:
51             d.update({p: rs.Distance(point_f,point_dict_f)})
52             #get the closest point from the dict and delete it

```

```

53         P1 = getKeyByValue(d,min(d.values()))
54         d.pop(P1)
55         #get the second closest point
56         P2 = getKeyByValue(d,min(d.values()))
57         #detect the element that connects
the two closest points to the new point and get the
name
58         if getKeyByValue(elements,[P1,P2]) != -1:
59             elem_Name = getKeyByValue(elements,[P1,P2])
60         if getKeyByValue(elements,[P2,P1]) != -1:
61             elem_Name = getKeyByValue(elements,[P2,P1])
62         return elem_Name

```

7. Linear loads:

After updating the dictionary, the user is asked to pick a Linear Load, Moment or Exit the dialog box. In this project, the term linear load refers to distributed load.

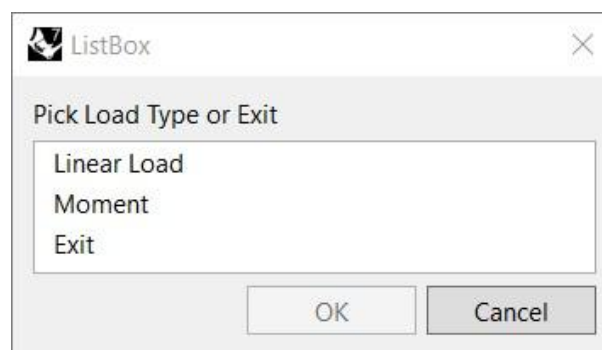


Figure 10: picking load type

7.1. Linear load Inputs:

There are three steps for the user to define a linear load.

1. Selecting start and end point of the load
2. Selecting load direction
3. Choosing load magnitudes

First:

Choosing the start point and end point of the linear load.

Second:

Choosing one of the predefined directions for the load or drawing the direction as a line. Three different methods are defined in the code. Based on the selected methods, one of the functions from the class `Linear_Load()` would be called. The returning of these functions would be a direction as "dir" which will be stored in a list named "L".

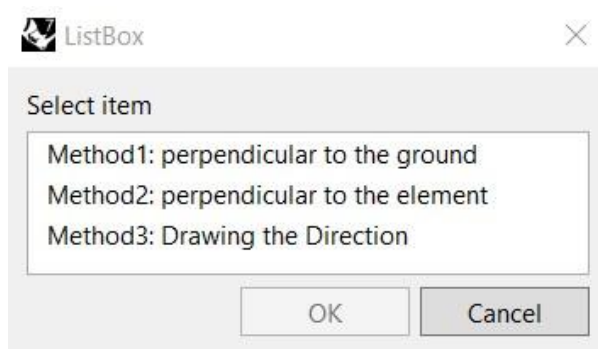


Figure 11: choosing linear load method

Method 1: perpendicular to the ground

Code 6

```
128 def Linear_Load_Method1(self):
129     vec = rs.CreateVector(0, 0, -1)
130     line = rg.Line(self.point1, self.point1 + vec)
131     self.dir = line.Direction/line.Length
132     return self.dir
```

Method 2: perpendicular to the element

Code 7

```
133 def Linear_Load_Method2(self):
134     line = rg.Line(self.point1, self.point2)
135     vec = line.Direction/line.Length
136     self.dir = rs.CreateVector(vec.Z, 0, -1*vec.X)
137     return self.dir
```

Method 3: drawing the load direction

Code 8

```
138 def Linear_Load_Method3(self):
139     line = rg.Line(rs.GetPoint("draw the Direction of Load"), rs.GetPoint())
140     self.dir = line.Direction/line.Length
141     return self.dir
```

Third:

After selecting the direction of the load, the user is asked to choose a method for defining the load's magnitude. Two methods have been defined. These functions return one magnitude for the start point of the linear load as "f1" and one for its end as "f2" which will be stored in the list named "L". So if the

linear load has the same magnitude as the start point and the endpoint is a Uniformly Distributed Load. If it has different values for the two magnitudes is a Non Uniformly Distributed Load.

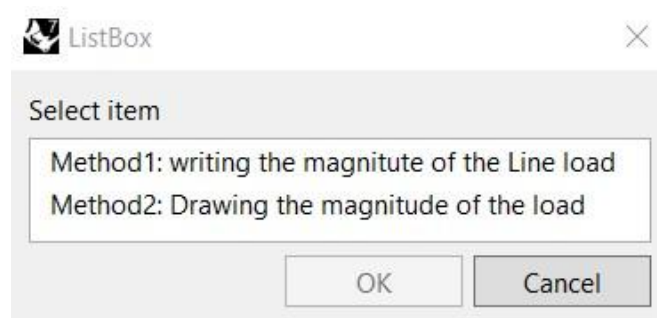


Figure 12: choosing linear load magnitude method

Method 1: Writing the magnitude of the line load

Code 9

```
118 def Line_Load_Magn1(self):
119     self.f1 = rs.GetReal("Enter the Load Magnitude at the Start point"+" (" +
        unit_f + "/" + unit_l + ")")
120     self.f2 = rs.GetReal("Enter the Load Magnitude at the End point"+" (" +
        unit_f + "/" + unit_l + ")")
121     return self.f1, self.f2
```

Method 2: Drawing the magnitude of the line load

Code 10

```
122 def Line_Load_Magn2(self):
123     draw1 = rg.Line(rs.GetPoint("Draw the Load Magnitude for start point "+" (" +
        unit_f + "/" + unit_l + ")"), rs.GetPoint())
124     draw2 = rg.Line(rs.GetPoint("Draw the Load Magnitude for End point"+" (" +
        unit_f + "/" + unit_l + ")"), rs.GetPoint())
125     self.f1 = draw1.Length
126     self.f2 = draw2.Length
127     return self.f1, self.f2
```

7.2. Linear load visualization:

After taking all the Linear Load parameters from the user in step 5, the linear load class's last function, Visualize_Line_Load(j), is called with an argument, j, the index of the linear loads. In this function, different parameters related to the linear load, such as the integral of the load function, are being calculated. This resulting force is also called the **Equivalent Concentrated Load**. The centroid of the linear load is being calculated, which defines the Equivalent Concentrated Load's acting point. These are the parameters that seem to be necessary for calculating a Non Uniformly Distributed Load. But here, it is considered that only two types of distributed loads are being calculated; Rectangular and triangular loads. So the returning parameters of this function are not added to the final dictionary.

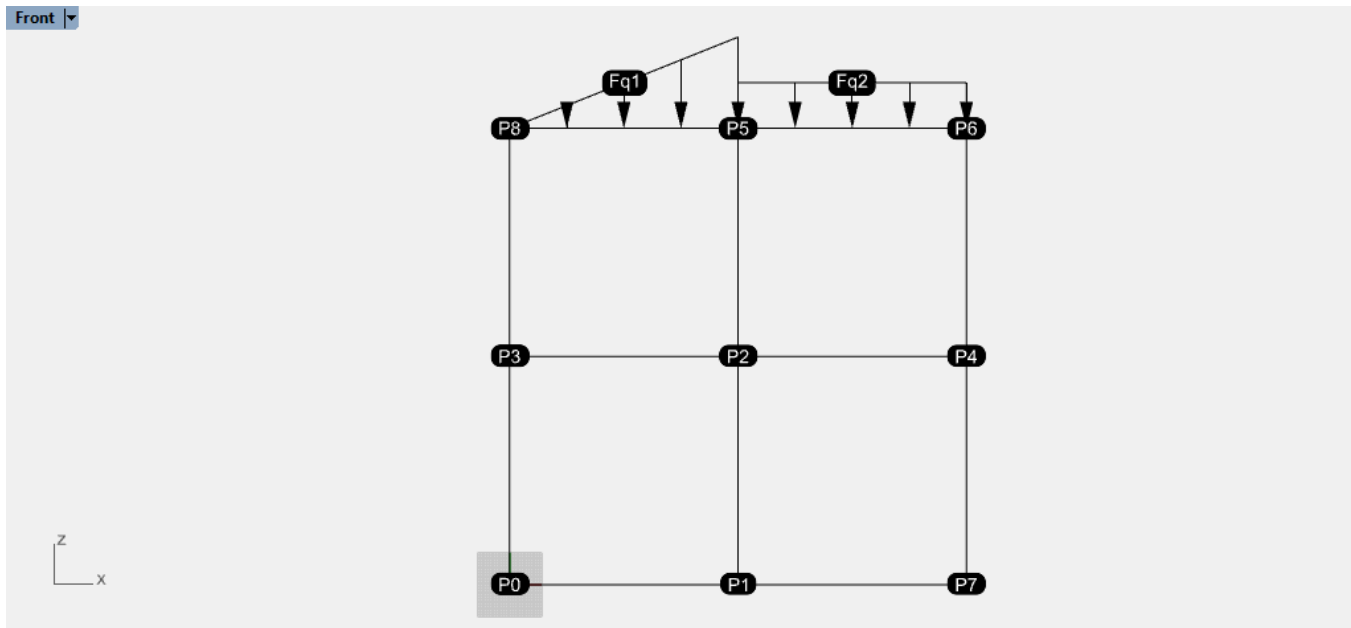


Figure 13: Visualization of the Linear Loads

Code 11

```

143 def Visualize_Line_Load(self,j):
144     #polyLine from 4 point
145     #AREA
146     #Centroid
147     #centroid closest point on line
148     plp2 = rg.Line(self.point1,self.point2)
149     vecplp2= plp2.Direction/4
150     p1 = self.point1
151     p2 =self.point2
152     p3 = p1+(self.dir*-1*self.f1)
153     p4 = p2+(self.dir*-1*self.f2)
154     poly = rs.AddPolyline([p1,p2,p4,p3,p1])
155     self.area = rs.Area(poly)
156     c = rs.CurveAreaCentroid(poly)
159     l = rg.Line(c[0] , c[0]+ self.dir * -1)
160     intersect = rs.LineLineIntersection(plp2, l)
161     self.cent = intersect[0]
162
162
163     dif= (self.f2-self.f1)/4
164     if (p1 != p3):
165         line1 = rs.AddLine(p1,p3)
166         rs.CurveArrows(line1, 1)
167
168     line2 = rs.AddLine(p1+vecplp2,p1+vecplp2+(self.dir*-1*(self.f1+dif)) )
169     rs.CurveArrows(line2, 1)
170     line3 = rs.AddLine(p1+2*vecplp2,p1+2*vecplp2+(self.dir*-1*(self.f1+2 *dif)))
171     rs.AddTextDot("Fq" + str(j+1) ,p1+2*vecplp2+(self.dir*-1*(self.f1+2* dif)))
172     rs.CurveArrows(line3, 1)
173     line4 = rs.AddLine(p1+3*vecplp2,p1+3*vecplp2+(self.dir*-1*(self.f1+3 *dif)))
174     rs.CurveArrows(line4, 1)
175     line5 = rs.AddLine(p2,p4)

```

```

176     rs.CurveArrows(line5, 1)
177
178     return self.cent , self.area

```

7.3. Adding Linear Load to the JSON Dictionary:

For adding the linear loads to the JSON dictionary, two if conditions have been defined that compare the coordinates of the start and endpoint of the linear load with the structure's Points dictionary, and if they are the same, it returns the name of the points as strings. Then it compares the name of these two points with the existing Elements dictionary, then assigns the name of the element to the related load when updating the dictionary. There are two conditions for checking the points with the elements, because the user might select the points of the linear load in the reverse order of the points of the element.(figure 14)(Code 12)

In the if conditions there is a function called `getKeyByValue(List,item)` that checks if an item exists in the list or not. If it exist, the returning parameter is the Key of the related item in the list but if not it returns -1.(Code 13)

Code 12

```

279 PX1 = str(obj.point1[0])
280 PY1 = str(obj.point1[1])
281 PZ1 = str(obj.point1[2])
282 PX2 = str(obj.point2[0])
283 PY2 = str(obj.point2[1])
284 PZ2 = str(obj.point2[2])
285
286 if getKeyByValue(points, [PX1,PY1,PZ1]) != -1:
287     P1_name = getKeyByValue(points, [PX1,PY1,PZ1])
288 if getKeyByValue(points, [PX2,PY2,PZ2]) != -1:
289     P2_name = getKeyByValue(points, [PX2,PY2,PZ2])
291
292 if getKeyByValue(elements, [P1_name,P2_name]) != -1:
293     E_Name = getKeyByValue(elements, [P1_name,P2_name])
294     Line_Loads.update({E_Name : (str(obj.f1) ,str(obj.f2))})
295
296 if getKeyByValue(elements, [P2_name,P1_name]) != -1:
297     E_Name = getKeyByValue(elements, [P2_name,P1_name])
298     Line_Loads.update({E_Name : ( str(obj.f2), str(obj.f1))})

```

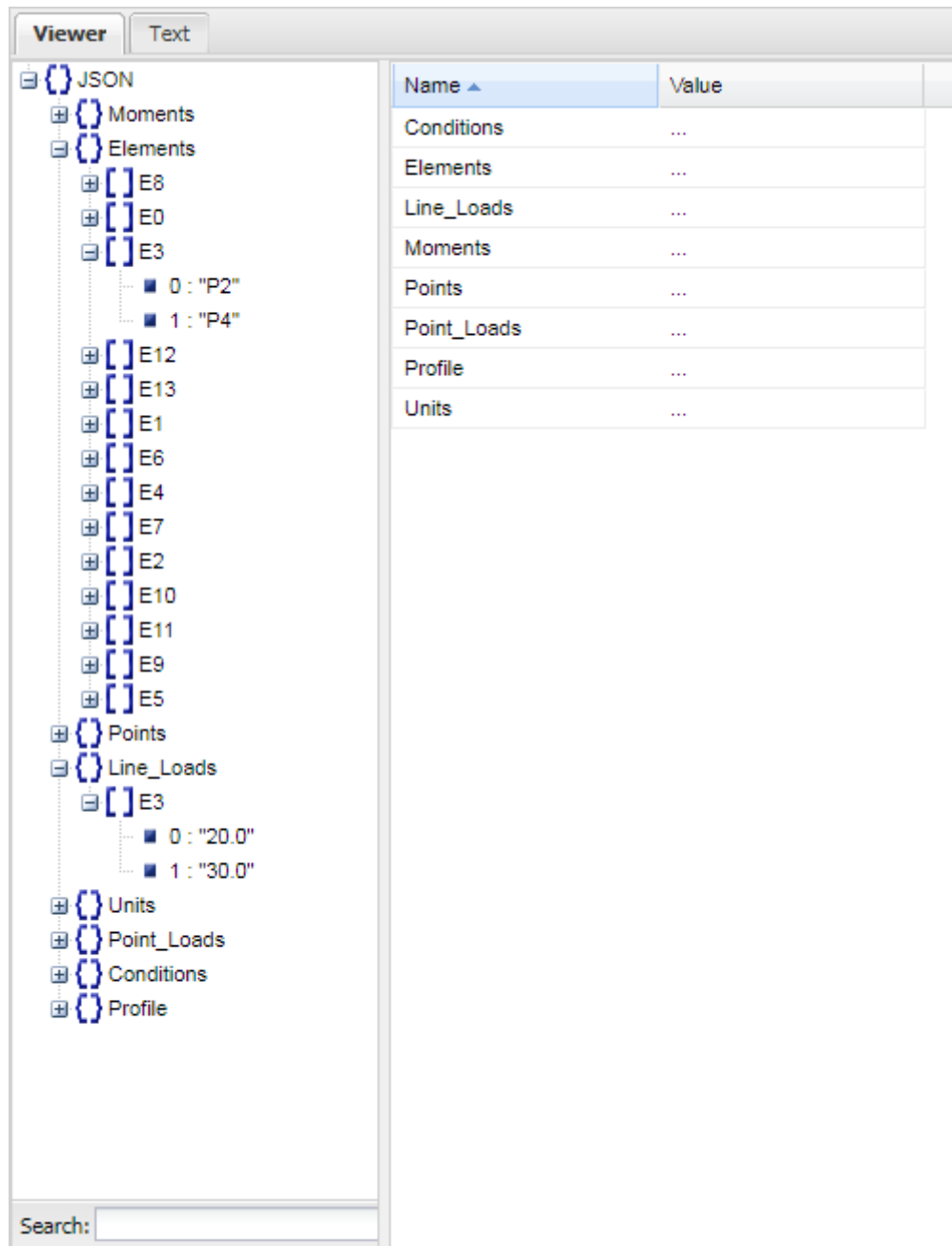



Figure 14: Linear Loads exported to JSON Dictionary

Code 13

```

65 #Search key by the values and the indexes
66 def getKeyByValue(list,search_pointName):
67     try:
68         return list.keys()[list.values().index(search_pointName)]
69     except ValueError:
70         return -1

```

8. Defining Moments:

For the moments, it is necessary to specify the moment direction which is asked from the user (Figure 15). A class is defined to receive the value of the moment from the user. It has two main functions for the direction of the moments, which also visualize the user's defining moment (figure 16). This class returns the value and the acting point of the moment as "m" and "mpt" respectively. All the moments and the points are then added to the list name M.

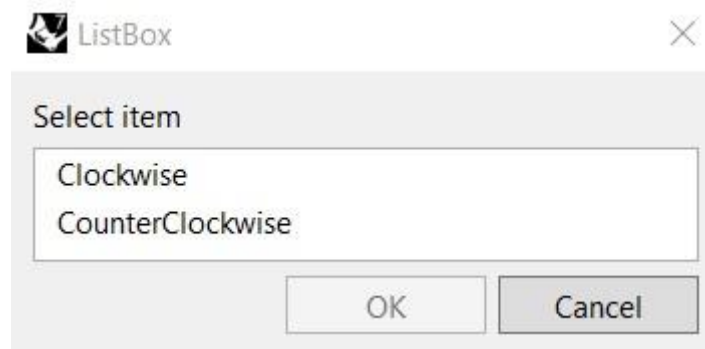


Figure 15: selecting moment direction

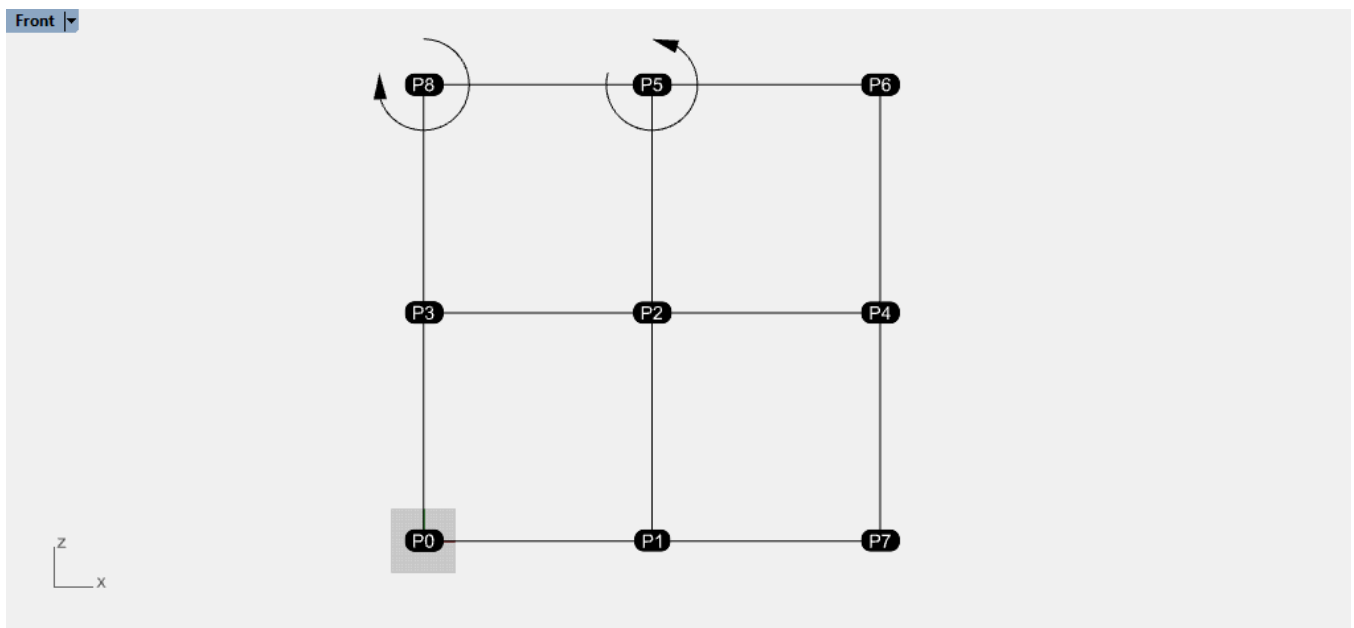


Figure 16: The visualization of the Moments

8.1. Moment Inputs:

- Selecting Moment point by user
- Selecting Moment direction by user
- Defining the moment value by user

Code 14

```

180 class Moments:
181     def __init__(self, _m, _mpt):
182         self.m = _m
183         self.mpt = _mpt

```

8.2. Choosing moment direction and visualization:

Clockwise:

Code 15

```

184 def Clockwise(self, k, d):
185     self.mpt = rs.GetPoint("Select Moment Location")
186     self.m = rs.GetReal("Amount Of Moment?")
187     vec= rg.Vector3d(0,1,0)
188     pl = rg.Plane(self.mpt, vec)
189     arc = rs.AddArc(pl , d , 285)
190     rs.CurveArrows(arc, 2)
191     return self.m, self.mpt

```

Counterclockwise:

Code 16

```

193 def Counterwise(self, k, d):
194     self.mpt = rs.GetPoint("Select Moment Location")
195     self.m = rs.GetReal("Amount Of Moment?")*-1
196     vec= rg.Vector3d(0,1,0)
197     pl = rg.Plane(self.mpt, vec)
198     arc = rs.AddArc(pl , d , 285)
199     rs.CurveArrows(arc, 1)
200     return self.m, self.mpt

```

9. Exporting data to Json File:

In step 6, Point Loads and Moments are added to dictionaries with the same assigned name as the points dictionary. For this purpose, the coordinates of the point loads and moments are compared with the existing points dictionary then the returning point name is assigned as the Key of point loads and moments. After exporting Moments and Point Loads, the units are also added to the dictionary. (Figure 17)(Code 17)

Code 17

```

320 Point_Loads = {}
321 for i,d in enumerate(P):
322     #add the point loads and assign them to the existed points dict
323     name = getKeyByValue(points, [str(d.point.X),str(d.point.Y),str(d.point.Z)])
324     Point_Loads.update({name : (str(d.dir.X),str(d.dir.Y),str(d.dir.Z))})
325
326 Moments = {}

```

```

328 for i,d in enumerate(M) :
329     #add the point loads and assign them to the existed points dict
330     name = getKeyByValue(points, [str(d.mpt.X),str(d.mpt.Y),str(d.mpt.Z)])
331     Moments.update({name : (str(d.m))})

333 Units = {}
334 Units.update({"Loads" : (unit_f)})
335 Units.update({"Dimension" : (unit_l)})
336 json_dict = {"Points": points, "Elements": elements, "Conditions": conditions ,
               "Profile": profile, "Point_Loads": Point_Loads, "Line_Loads": Line_Loads ,
               "Moments": Moments, "Units": Units}

```

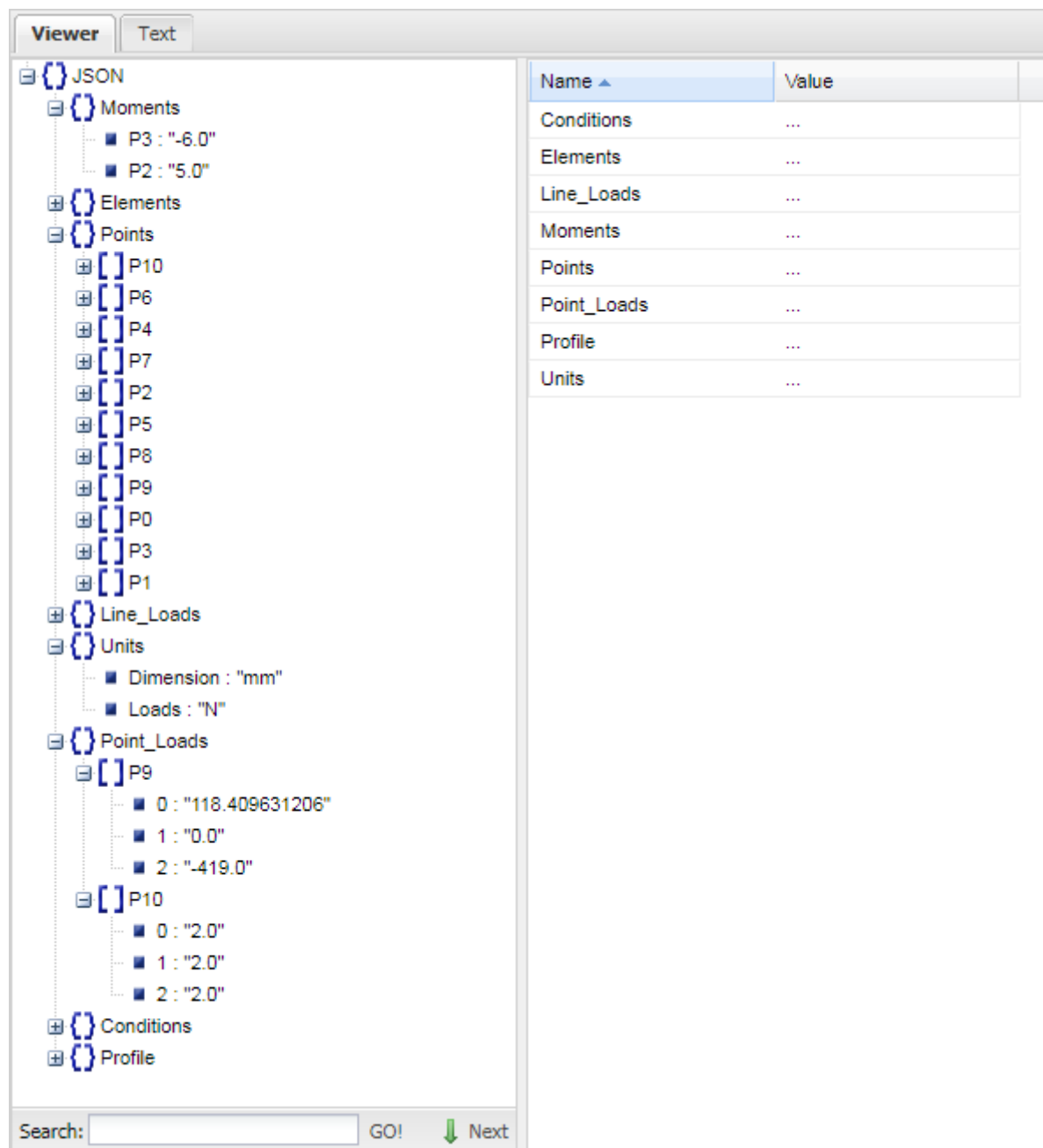


Figure 17: The exported JSON file Containing Point Loads and Moments data

In the end, the user is asked to choose a folder and a name to save the JSON file. (Code 18)(figure 18)

Code 18

```

338 #Get the file name for the new file to write
339 filter = "JSON File (*.json)|*.json|All Files (*.*)|*.*||"
340 filename = rs.SaveFileName("Point_Loads", filter)
341
342 # If the file name exists, write a JSON string into the file.
343 if filename:
344     # Writing JSON data
345     with open(filename, 'w') as f:
346         json.dump(json_dict, f)

```

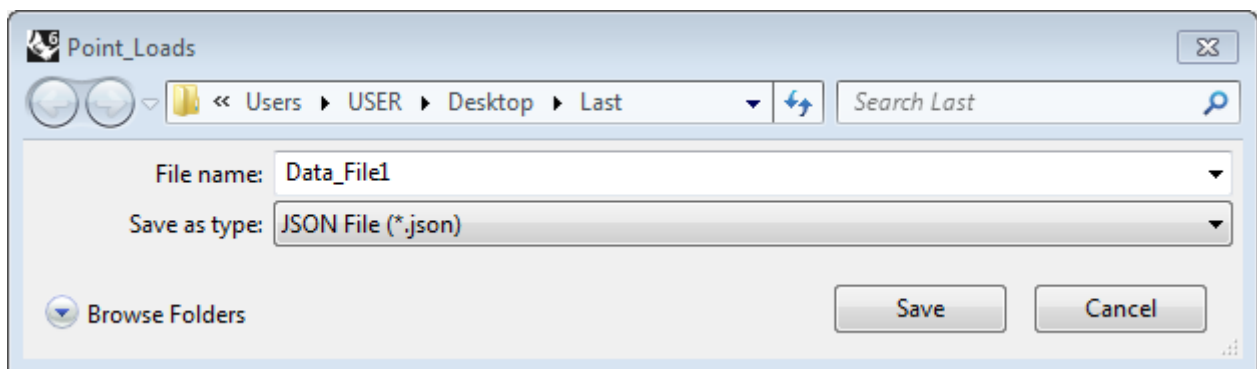


Figure 18: The user can save the JSON file

10. Conclusion:

In conclusion, as shown in Figure 19, after receiving the geometry as a rhino file from Group 2, different types of load, including Point Load, Distributed Load, and Moment, were picked by the user in the rhino interface and then have been visualized. The Point Loads are named "fp", and the Linear Loads are named "fq".

As can be seen from figure 20, alongside the visualization, first, all the structure data, including Profile, Conditions, Points, and Elements, has been imported from Group2's JSON file. After defining the Point Loads, the Elements and Points dictionaries have been updated, and new elements have been added to these dictionaries.

The code's output is a JSON file which can be seen on the right side of figure 20. this JSON file consists of old, updated, and new dictionaries including Point_Loads, Line_Loads, Moments, and Units.

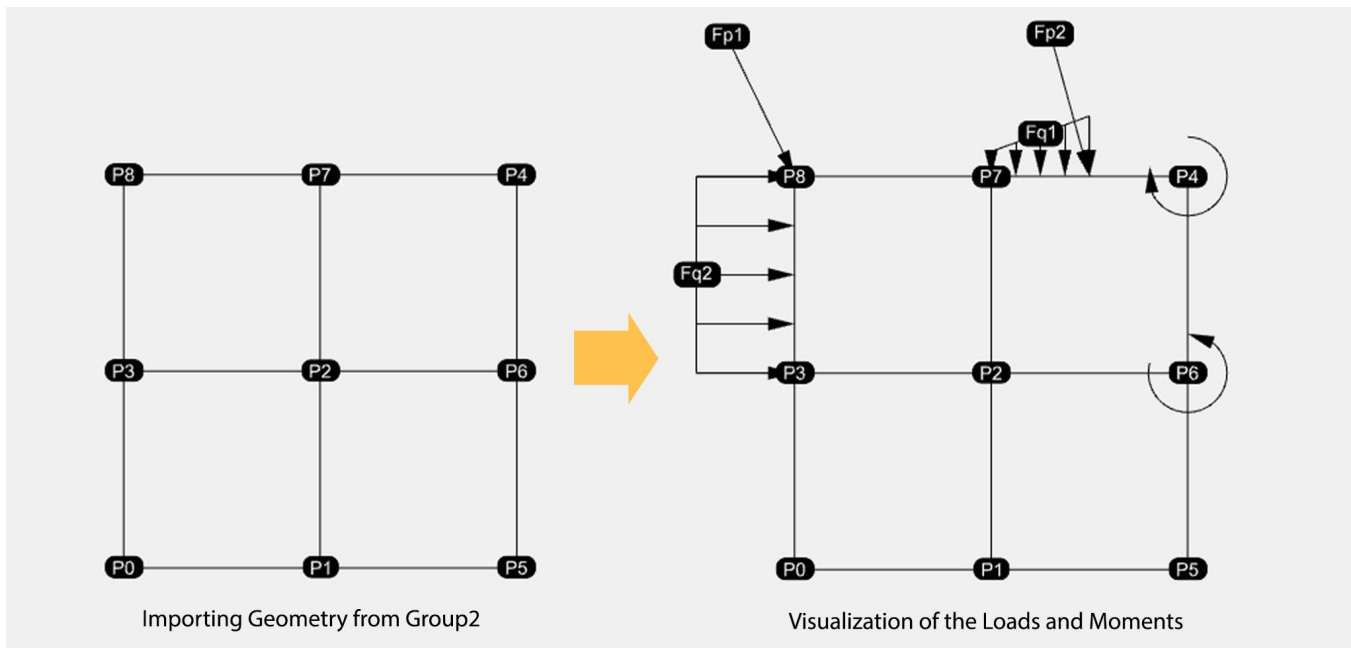


Figure 19: Imported geometry from group two and the user-defined loads, and visualization

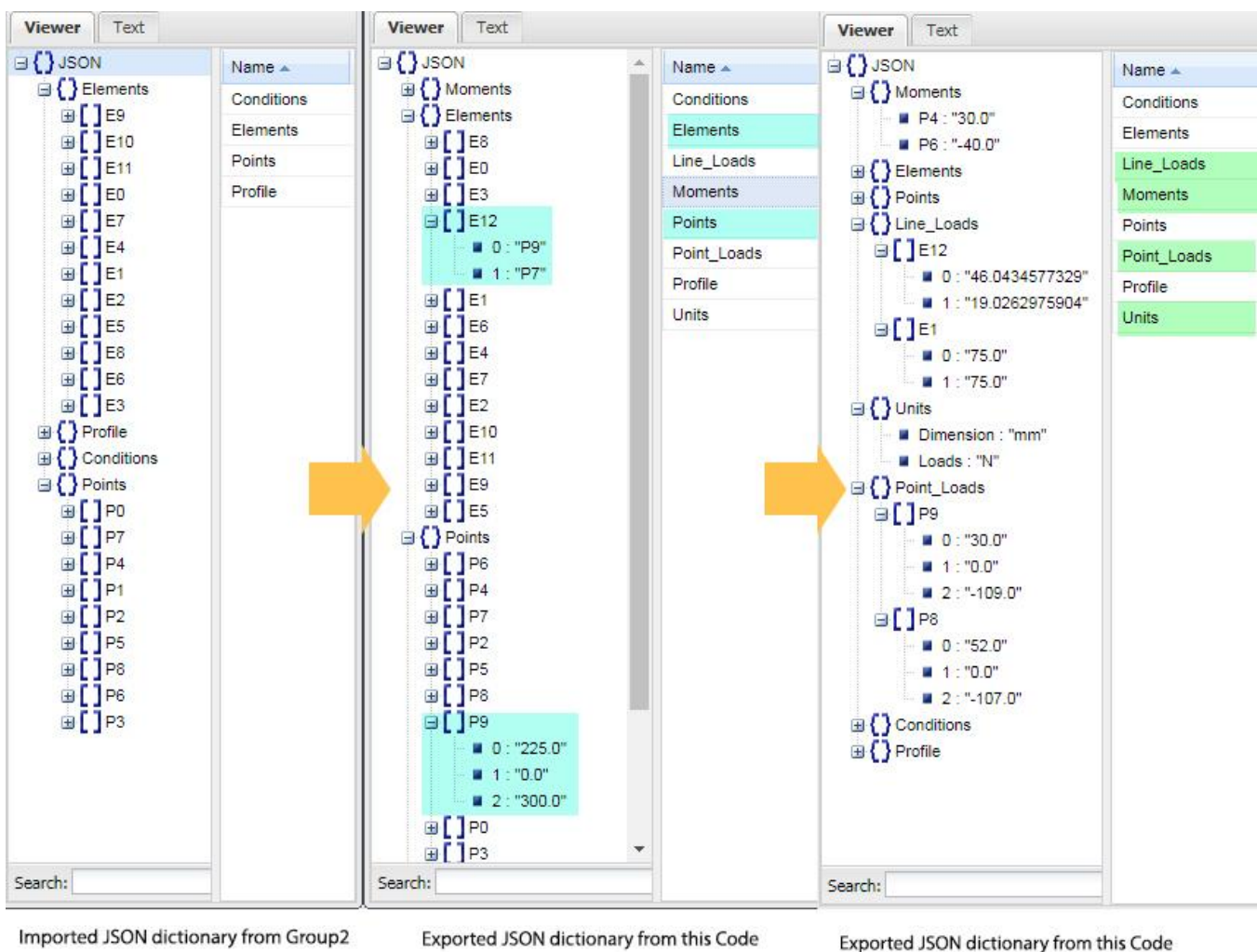


Figure 20: Adding new Elements and Dictionaries to the Imported JSON file from Group 2