A Literature Survey for Virtual Environments: Military Flight Simulator Visual Systems and Simulator Sickness

Abstract

Researchers in the field of virtual environments (VE), or virtual reality, surround a participant with synthetic stimuli. The flight simulator community, primarily in the U.S. military, has a great deal of experience with aircraft simulations, and VE researchers should be aware of the major results in this field. In this survey of the literature, we have especially focused on military literature that may be hard for traditional academics to locate via the standard journals. One of the authors of this paper is a military helicopter pilot himself, which was quite useful in obtaining access to many of our references. We concentrate on research that produces specific, measured results that apply to VE research. We assume no background other than basic knowledge of computer graphics, and explain simulator terms and concepts as necessary. This paper ends with an annotated bibliography of some harder to find research results in the field of flight simulators:

- The effects of display parameters, including field-of-view and scene complexity;
- The effect of lag in system response;
- The effect of refresh rate in graphics update;
- The existing theories on causes of simulator sickness; and
- The after-effects of simulator use

Many of the results we cite are contradictory. Our global observation is that with flight simulator research, like most human—computer interaction research, there are very few "correct" answers. Almost always, the answer to a specific question depends on the task the user was attempting to perform with the simulator.

I Introduction

Researchers in the field of virtual environments surround a participant with synthetic stimuli. Therefore, VE researchers must be aware of the phenomena that can occur when various aspects of the stimuli cause undesired artifacts. The flight simulator community, primarily in the U.S. military, has a great deal of experience with aircraft simulations, and VE researchers should be aware of the major results in this field.

In flight simulation, the basic goal is to develop aviation skills that the pilot can then transfer to a real-world mission. In this paper, we present major results from the flight simulation literature about both the measured success of skill transfer, and the effects of simulator sickness and simulator after-effects. Many of the results we found were contradictory; the specific task being performed must be taken into account when asking even the most basic questions regarding the efficacy of simulator technology.

2 Transference of Skill

That a pilot can train in a simulator to gain experience about a real aircraft is taken as given today, but this was not always so. Initially, many aviators were skeptical about the training value of simulators and preferred training in the actual aircraft. As the government trimmed operational budgets, the military needed to

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Presence, Volume 1, Number 3, Summer 1992 © 1992 The Massachusetts Institute of Technology reduce flight training costs and directed research efforts toward cost-effectiveness studies. Orlansky and String (1977) investigated the studies made since 1939 and concluded that simulators had significant positive effects on training. In one study using the 2-B-24 Flight Trainer for instrument training of undergraduate helicopter pilots in the Army, Caro (1973) stated there was a "90% reduction in the amount of aircraft time to attain course objectives." Specifically, Caro (1972) showed that previous students needed 60 hr of actual aircraft time and 26 hr in the older 1-CA-1 trainer. After using the 2-B-24, students achieved the same training goals in only 6.5 aircraft hours and just under 43 simulator hours on average. Orlansky and String's results were instrumental in promoting simulator use. They concluded that "hourly operating costs of flight simulators were approximately 5% to 20% of the hourly operating costs of the aircraft they emulate." They also predicted that military flying hours would be reduced to almost 17% by 1981, and that the procurement cost of these simulators could be amortized in 2.2 years. Consequently, the military strongly encouraged flight simulator use in all areas of training. Today, simulators serve as a major training resource for the United States military services and many

For additional transfer of training information, the reader should look at Waag's (1981) review of the literature concerning the training effectiveness of visual motion, or a collection of nearly 150 extracts compiled by Ayres, Hays, Singer, and Heinicke (1984).

3 **Simulator Sickness**

commercial aviation companies.

For all their advantages, simulators are not without their problems; many pilots experience so-called simulator sickness. There is a subtle difference between simulator sickness and motion sickness. Kennedy and Frank (1985) describe motion sickness as a general term for a collection of symptoms one experiences when subjected to abrupt, periodic, or unnatural accelerations, and common symptoms include loss of skin color, inability to coordinate voluntary muscular movements, and nausea.

The term simulator sickness is typically used to refer to sickness caused by the incorrect aspects of the simulation, not sickness caused by a correct simulation of a nauseating experience, such as a turbulent airplane flight.

An examination of motion sickness is helpful here to underscore the distinction between simulator sickness and motion sickness. Motion sickness can be caused by any number of things; Casali (1985) for example, concluded from earlier research conducted by Money, that it is "generally accepted that stimulation of the vestibular apparatus of the inner ear is necessary for the inducement of motion sickness in humans." Daunton, Fox, and Crampton (1984), however, disagreed and showed that the symptoms of motion sickness, along with the illusions of self-motion, could be elicited in human subjects by visual stimulation alone. This so-called visually induced motion sickness (VIMS) happens when the user becomes sick without any vestibular (inner ear) stimulation, and, although the symptoms are similar to those of motion sickness, VIMS is really an example of simulator sickness, because it does not involve physical motion to stimulate the vestibular system.

Kennedy, Frank, and McCauley (1985) depict this subtlety in a diagram (Fig. 1) showing a schematic relationship among simulator sickness, motion sickness, and perceptual adaptation. Perceptual adaptation is the ability of the human central nervous system to adjust and respond to a stimulus more effectively the next time the stimulus is encountered. Figure 1 illustrates that although there exists overlap among each of the three, each also has its own unique characteristics. Later, Cheung, Howard, and Money (1991) identified another issue asserting, "Labyrinthine-defective subjects [those with inner-ear damage] experience no sickness symptoms, which strongly suggests that the vestibular system is necessary for sickness induced by moving visual fields."

The origins of simulator sickness are unclear and no single factor appears to cause illness in all simulators. Sickness may arise as a result of unique, individual factors or because of improper simulation from the hardware device. Some, but not all, symptoms of simulator sickness are identical to those of motion sickness.

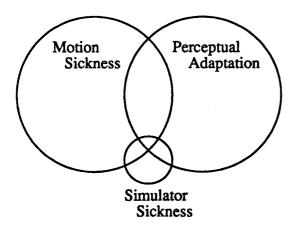


Figure 1. The relationship between simulator sickness and motion sickness. Reproduced from Kennedy, Frank and McCauley (1985).

Kennedy and Frank (1985) describe simulator sickness as both polysymptomatic (inducing many symptoms) and polygenic (originating from many distinct sources).

The polygenic nature of simulator sickness is readily seen: it can be caused by both moving and motionless platforms, by oscillatory motion of about 0.2 Hz (cycles/second) (Kennedy et al., 1985) and by visual imagery alone. The visual systems of simulators are vital in our understanding of the origins of simulator sickness.

Visual Systems

Many of the characteristics of a simulator's visual display system can be described on two levels: a quantitative, physical level and a qualitative, psychophysical (or perceptual) level. A 1981 Advisory Group for Aerospace Research and Development (AGARD) paper, "Characteristics of Flight Simulator Visual Systems," described the display system in detail and discussed visual systems in terms of energy, spatial, and temporal properties.

5 **Energy Properties of Simulator Visual Systems**

Several energy properties pertaining to flight simulator visual systems include:

- Luminance—the intensity, or brightness of the light coming from the display measured in candela per square meter.
- Contrast—the ratio of the highest luminescence provided by the display to the lowest.
- Resolution—a measurement of the level of detail provided by a display, measured in pixels per inch. This should not be confused with visual acuity, which is the ability of the human eye to recognize fine detail. For instance, the more dots/inch an individual can distinguish, the better his or her visual acuity.

Luminance, contrast, and resolution are interrelated; any adjustment of one of these variables may require and adjustment of the other two to achieve a proper visual display. Consequently, these properties must be carefully balanced with the task to be performed and the capabilities of the human visual system in order to achieve optimum performance (AGARD, 1981).

Color is another energy property whose value concerning user performance is uncertain. "Whether color should be used in visual systems is a debatable question. There is little experimental evidence of its effect, and presently no substantial objective evidence either for or against the use of color in visual flight simulators" (AGARD, 1981). In a study of bombing performance in the 2B35 TA-4J flight simulator, Kellogg, Kennedy, and Woodruff (1984) determined there were no statistically significant differences between performance with color and black-and-white visual displays. They concluded that color visual scene presentation did not enhance performance and that the only advantage was that pilots preferred the color display for aesthetic reasons. Despite the fact that "the highest resolution color television display has significantly lower resolution than many monochrome displays," there is a subjective preference of color over monochrome (AGARD, 1981). On the other hand, if tasks depend on rapid discrimination of objects, color may provide benefit: "An object is more easily recognized in color than monochrome . . . in a projected image of the sky and ground, if the sky is blue and the ground is brown/green, the pilot will rarely mistake his

orientation, even in violent combat maneuvers" (AGARD, 1981).

Spatial Properties of Simulator Visual Systems

Several spatial properties pertain to flight-simulator visual systems, including field-of-view, the viewing region, depth perception, and scene content. We will consider each of these separately.

5.1 Field-of-View

Field-of-view is a spatial property that defines the horizontal and vertical angular dimensions of the display. Research tends to show that wider field-of-view displays enhance performance while also increasing the likelihood of simulator sickness. The exact results tend to depend on the task being performed.

Research conducted at the Naval Training Systems Center's (NTSC) Visual Technology Research Simulator (VTRS) studied field-of-view and considered its effect on performance, its cost-effectiveness, and its role in causing simulator sickness. In two carrier landing studies, Westra, Lintern, Sheppard, Thomley, Mauk, Wightman, and Chambers (1986) showed there was no transfer advantage for those trained with a wide field-of-view compared to those trained with the lower cost narrow field-of-view. In contrast, earlier studies by Westra (1983) showed that there were some advantages for the wide field-of-view conditions, although these effects were small and/or short lived and generally disappeared after the user completed a few trials within the simulator. In two other studies pertaining to helicopter shipboard landings, the advantages of a wide field-of-view were confirmed when Westra, Sheppard, Jones, and Hettinger (1987) determined pilot performance was significantly better in all phases of the approach, hover, landing, and precision hover task with the wider field-ofview display; Westra and Lintern (1985) also determined field-of-view had a marginal positive effect on a few performance measures.

The advantages gained from wider displays varied with each study and depend on the task performed. Determining the correct field-of-view for any particular simulator is not straightforward. The studies of Westra and his colleagues considered transfer of training advantages and the cost-effectiveness of a wide field-of-view, and they based their recommendations on these considerations.

In terms of increased simulator sickness, Van Cott (1990) showed that a wide field-of-view provides more stimulation and results in a more compelling display of motion. Furthermore, Kennedy, Fowlkes, and Hettinger (1989) stated that restricting the field-of-view may reduce the properties that cause nausea. These results imply that simulator sickness generally occurs more frequently and more intensely with a wider field-of-view display. While a display's field-of-view is a factor in determining whether people will experience illness, it should be understood that it is not the only factor, and therefore, must be considered in conjunction with other characteristics of the display and the task at hand.

For example, in the mid-1980s, Anderson and Braunstein (1985) studied the phenomenon of linear vection, the perception of self-motion induced by visual stimulation. A common example of this effect occurs when movie producers show aircraft moving at very fast rates of speed, using dots or stars to simulate spaceflight. Anderson and Braunstein were able to induce linear vection in subjects with a visual angle as small as 7.5° in the central visual field. They achieved these results by placing observers in an environment in which they were exposed to a moving display of randomly positioned dots. The researchers concluded that motion and texture in the display may be more critical than the display's fieldof-view measurements.

5.2 Viewing Region

The viewing region is the volume in front of the display where an observer can be situated and still see an undistorted, high-quality view of the simulated scene. The point in the center of this volume is called the design eyepoint and represents the optimal position for the observer. As the observer moves away from the design eyepoint, the image becomes increasingly distorted; when the viewer is completely outside the volume of the viewing region, the displayed graphics disappear or their quality becomes unacceptable (AGARD, 1981).

The viewing region of most computer-generated imagery (often abbreviated "CGI" in the literature) is rather different from most other projective media. In a cinema, for example, the viewing region is substantially larger than that of a computer-generated simulator image. Images from film projectors degrade gradually and the imagery can be useful at locations considerably distant from the design eyepoint (AGARD, 1981). On the other hand, the fidelity of computer-generated imagery degrades quickly with distance from the design eyepoint. The smaller viewing region of CGI implies that it is possible for some simulator participants to be away from the design eyepoint, but still inside the viewing region. It is possible from this vantage point to succumb to simulator sickness induced by motion in the display and distorted visuals. Lilienthal (unpublished) stated that "In the 2F87(F) (P-3C) simulator, the flight engineer, who was behind the pilot's [location] and thus out of the design eye point of the visual system, saw distorted visual cues." He explains that flight engineers reported a significant amount of simulator sickness until they used a baffle to prevent them from having a direct view of the visual scene, and this modification reduced reports of sickness significantly. He also mentions that viewing the visual scene outside the design eyepoint causes users to see distorted visual cues that induce symptoms of simulator sickness and a lack of balance while standing.

Several of these distorted visual cues are dynamic. "Graphic displays, such as those used in flight simulator visual systems, provide accurate representations of threedimensional space only when viewed from the geometric center of projection. If the head is moved outside the center of projection, geometric distortions occur in the projected imagery that provide inappropriate visual information for self-motion" (Rosanski, cited in Kennedy, Fowlkes, and Hettinger, 1987). Kennedy, Fowlkes, and Hettinger also state that these optical distortions may be magnified by highly detailed imagery and wide field-ofview systems, and the irregularities introduced by distortions may provide inappropriate self-motion information.

5.3 Depth Perception

Depth perception is the property of vision that allows us to see the world as three-dimensional rather than flat. Unfortunately, depth cues are difficult to simulate and it is difficult to build hardware that permits the use of binocular vision. Visual systems that are biocular (both eyes) may only provide monocular cues if the same image is sent to both eyes. Although humans can adapt and use monocular cues to accomplish a variety of tasks, Hale (1987) claims binocular vision is clearly superior. Hale concludes this via a literature review that included an article by Upton and Strothers that stated stereo viewing was superior to monocular viewing. In Hale's review, another paper by Martin and Warner compared four different field-of-view angles: 40° monocular, 40° binocular, 90° binocular, and 120° binocular. The subjective response from the questionnaire indicated a progressive increase in pilot ratings from the 40° monocular field-ofview to the 90° binocular field-of-view for various aspects of the mission. There was very little difference in ratings between the 90° binocular and 120° binocular field-of-view. Martin and Warner indicated this may suggest that increasing the field-of-view beyond 90° will not significantly improve pilot performance.

5.4 Scene Content

Scene content simply refers to the level of detail available for the given scene. There are varying reports on the performance advantages of greater scene detail depending on the task performed and the study. The conclusions Westra and colleagues reached with the carrier landing studies indicate scene detail had very small effects, and the helicopter shipboard landing studies indicate a range of small to large effects. Specifically, Westra et al. (1987) stated that the "largest" scene detail effects occurred during the approach, hover, and landing phases. A possible explanation for this is that the takeoff and landing tasks performed by any pilot typically require greater concentration than normal in-flight tasks.

Temporal Properties of Simulator Visual Systems

Temporal properties are potentially the most important aspects of a simulation (or virtual environment) system, but they are also among the most difficult to measure. Temporal properties include phosphor lag, time lag, refresh rates, and update rates, all of which we discuss below.

6.1 Phosphor Lag

When the phosphor on the CRT screen continues to glow from one frame to the next, we say that the screen exhibits phosphor lag. If this lag is excessive, it will cause smearing of a moving image and after-images of previous frames may be visible (AGARD, 1981). We discuss this topic further in the section on refresh rates.

6.2 Time Lag

Although time lag (often simply referred to as "lag") may refer to either the cockpit instruments, the motion system, or the simulator visual system, most research concerning time lag pertains to the motion and visual systems. Because the majority of information we receive is from visual stimuli, our discussion here will focus largely on the visual system. Frank, Casali, and Wierwille (1988) confirm this point as they cite Newell and Smith, who show that our reliance on visual stimuli transfers to simulators. Frank et al. (1988) later concluded that visual delay is far more disruptive to a simulator operator's control performance and physical comfort than motion delay.

At the Navy's Visual Technology Research Simulator, Westra and Lintern (1985) compared two simulator systems in their studies of helicopter landings on small ships. The two simulator systems exhibited visual lags of 217 and 117 msec, respectively. Researchers found that pilot performance was better with the shorter lag system. Curiously, although lag had only small effects on objective performance measures, pilots noticed the increased lag and believed it had a serious detrimental effect on their performance.

Uliano, Lambert, Kennedy, and Sheppard (1986) conducted another study as part of the Navy's VTRS program on three visual throughput delay systems with varying amounts of lag at 215 \pm 70, 177 \pm 23, and 126 ± 17 msec, respectively. Here, they concluded that lag had no effect on illness in any of the conditions. They also noted that pilots were almost unanimously aware of the two longest lags, and that simulator performance was the worst under the longest lag condition.

Westra et al. (1987) conducted a second study of helicopter landings on small ships using system visual lags of 183 and 117 msec. Once again, they concluded that the smaller system lag had only small effects on improved performance. They also concluded that the 183 msec lag system is marginally acceptable for performance and mentioned that there is a substantial accumulation of empirical evidence indicating increased lag contributes to deteriorated operator performance. After this study, they recommended a constant condition of 117 msec for future VTRS transfer-of-training research. In their paper, they cite Ricard et al., who "contrasted delays of 68 and 128 milliseconds and reported significantly lower error rates on all their measures of helicopter shipboard landing performance with the shorter delay." The Ricard study generated one display frame every 33 msec and they learned that a difference of 66 msec (two frames) produces a "just noticeable difference" in performance while the one frame delay of 33 msec is "just noticeable."

The time lag issues discussed above deal strictly with transport delay, that is, "the time period from stick input to the completion of the first field of video output" (Westra et al., 1987). Lilienthal (1992) recommended a limit on transport delays of 100–125 msec to ensure that pilot technique is not affected by the delay, asserting that large transport delays (over 150 msec) made it difficult, if not impossible, for a pilot to adapt to the system. For large transport delays, pilots could not predict with any accuracy the length of the delay and attempts to "guess and lead" the system failed. As a result, pilots would overcompensate and produce oscillations, which would cause abnormal accelerations sometimes leading to sickness.

Time lag can lead to problems beyond decreased performance and confidence. It also can lead to the "cue

asynchrony problem," a problem that can contribute to simulator sickness (Lilienthal, unpublished). Lilienthal describes cue asynchrony as the difference between any two interacting systems (i.e., motion, visual, or instruments) and recommends that the delay between any two cues be less than 35 msec because "the motion cues may give the impression of motion in one direction while the delayed visual cues give the impression of motion in another direction." Kennedy, Fowlkes, and Hettinger (1989) state that there were only two experiments addressing lags and asynchronies. In the first study Uliano et al. (1986) claim no differences in sickness ratings and in the second study, Frank, Wierwille, and Casali (1988) show that transport delays affected performance (i.e., manual control) behaviors, but the size of the delay did not affect reports of simulator sickness (Kennedy et al., 1989).

6.3 Refresh Rate

Refresh rate refers to the rate at which the CRT updates the scene. Television sets in the United States, for example, operate at 30 Hz in a 2:1 interlaced mode. That is, each raster line on the screen is painted 30 times a second, such that the electron beam paints every other line during one sweep of the frame buffer, and the alternate set of lines during the next pass. The electron beam continually alternates between these sets of lines, sweeping the entire screen 60 times a second. The human visual system is generally not susceptible to flicker at 30 Hz in the fovea or central vision, however, the observer may still perceive flicker with peripheral vision. The point at which flicker becomes visually perceptible is called the flicker fusion frequency threshold.

Refresh rate and luminance are related factors that contribute to determining the flicker fusion frequency threshold. As the level of brightness increases, the speed of refresh must also increase in order to suppress flicker. Unfortunately, as the speed of refresh increases, the cost of the display will also increase. As a result, many users of flight simulators with slower refresh rates will reduce the visibility to dusk conditions (lower luminance) in order to prevent flicker.

Field-of-view also affects the flicker fusion frequency threshold. Since the peripheral visual system is more sensitive to motion than the central visual system, larger field-of-view displays increase the likelihood that the observer will perceive *flicker* (Lilienthal, unpublished). Once again, refresh rates must increase with larger fieldof-view displays in order to suppress flicker.

Slower refresh rates require more persistent phosphors that are not suitable for displaying moving images because they will cause the images to smear (AGARD, 1981). Also, slower refresh rates promote flicker, which Van Cott (1990) cites as a contributor to simulator sickness. Lilienthal (1992) also states that flicker is distracting, induces eye fatigue, and appears to be associated with simulator sickness, and that if the cost of refresh rates are too high, then the trade-off should be made with luminance specifications.

The literature mentions two general categories of display flicker. Small-field flicker refers to elements in single lines or small groups of lines corresponding to the central visual system, while large-field flicker refers to all portions of the display and the peripheral visual system. Large-field flicker appears as random movements across the display and is more objectionable than small-field flicker (AGARD, 1981). Kennedy (1990) supports this argument and found that large-field flicker may be interpreted as motion in the background, and the discomfort reported from flicker may cause sickness.

6.4 Update Rate

While the refresh rate indicates how often the frame buffer is examined and displayed to the screen, the update rate refers to the speed of the simulation: the rate at which subsequent frames of the moving scene can be generated and rendered into the frame buffer for display. Unlike refresh rate, which is hardware-determined, update rate can vary dramatically based on scene complexity and available computing power for the simulation.

7 **Determining Susceptibility to Simulator** Sickness

Havron and Butler in 1957 and Miller and Goodson in 1958 were the first pairs of researchers to mention the phenomenon of simulator sickness by name (Frank,

Kennedy, Kellogg, & McCauley, 1983). Research on simulator sickness steadily increased through 1980, while by 1985, reported incidents of simulator sickness nearly doubled (Kennedy and Frank, 1985). A majority of these reports investigate the rate of incidence of simulator sickness and attempt to characterize the population that might be most susceptible to it. The reported rate of incidence varies, as Casali and Frank (1987) point out in their review of the literature, which documents incidence rates ranging from 0% to nearly 90% in flight devices and even higher in some ground vehicle devices. Kennedy et al. (1987) provide more concise results taken from U.S. Navy studies conducted over a 2-year period at 10 flight simulator sites. These studies showed less variation, with incidence rates ranging from 12 to 60% in these simulators.

Several studies have attempted to determine whether certain individuals or groups were more susceptible to simulator sickness than others. For example, Kennedy et al. (1987) claim that "perhaps as much as 80% of the simulator sickness problem resides in perhaps 20% of the population." They later went on to say that "only about 30% of the individuals become ill under even the worst simulator conditions." In an attempt to isolate various individual sources, Kennedy and Frank (1985) address several, including gender, age, and physiological condition.

7.1 Gender

Regarding *gender*, Kennedy and Frank (1985) claim that women are more susceptible to motion sickness than men. They mention a postulate concerning motion sickness which stated "that perhaps hormonal influences are at play, since women are most susceptible during their menstrual cycle." Perhaps more importantly, they noted that women exhibit larger fields of view than men, and it is a well documented fact that simulator sickness appears more prevalent in simulators with wide fields of view.

7.2 Age

Kennedy and Frank (1985) address age as a factor and state that susceptibility is highest for individuals

from about 2 years of age through puberty. Susceptibility to simulator sickness decreases rapidly up through age 21, then decreases gradually thereafter, and finally disappearing almost entirely at age 50.

7.3 Illness

Illness is another factor that increases a person's susceptibility to simulator sickness. Previously, Frank et al. (1984) addressed the physiological state of the individual and advised against using the simulator if the subject were ill or suffered from fatigue, sleep loss, hangover, upset stomach, periods of emotional stress, head colds, ear infection, ear blocks, upper respiratory illness, or if the subject were taking some kinds of medication. They further recommend not using simulators more than necessary when suffering from the effects of flu or possibly after receiving a flu shot, primarily because the literature on motion sickness and vomiting shows that the symptoms of flu and simulator sickness are cumulative (Frank et al., 1984).

7.4 Position in the Simulator

Casali and Wierwille (1986) looked at crewmember susceptibility and found that susceptibility to simulator-induced sickness can be a function of the aircrew member's degree of control in the simulator cockpit. This could explain why the incidence of simulator sickness among pilots is lower than that of co-pilots or other crewmembers; pilots generally control more of the motion and visuals than the other members of the flight crew. Lackner (1990) found that when subjects generated input themselves they were less susceptible to motion sickness. He makes the point that the person controlling or anticipating the motion becomes sick less often than the passengers, a phenomenon similar to the experiences of many automobile passengers whose car sickness diminishes or disappears when they are the driver.

7.5 Pilot Experience

The level of previous experience is another factor relevant to determining whether any given individual

will be prone to simulator sickness. Kennedy et al. (1987) believe that experienced pilots have greater difficulty than novice pilots and they cite research done in the field from 1957 to the present to support their argument. Specifically, they state that Miller and Goodson (1960) found 60% of the instructor pilots reported symptoms as compared to only 12% of the student pilots, and McGuiness et al. (1981) concluded that the more experienced aircrews (over 1500 flight hours) had a higher incidence of symptoms than the less experienced flight crew. On the other hand, Magee, Kantor, and Sweeney (1987) stated there was no evidence to indicate that experience influenced susceptibility to simulator sickness.

These seemingly contradictory conclusions come from the inconsistent definitions for "novice pilot." This issue came up at the 1988 Advisory Group for Aerospace Research and Development (AGARD) conference during the concluding roundtable discussion. In the Magee et al. (1987) study, "novice pilots" were defined as those who were new to the C-130 aircraft, but averaged 1500 flight hours, while previous studies defined novice pilots as those who had little or no total flight time. The outcome of the discussion was that the AGARD committee generally accepted "novice" to mean little or no flight experience. As a result, the committee recognized that more experienced pilots tend to experience greater difficulty than novices, and that the different criterion used explained the varying results.

The fact that experienced pilots have greater difficulty might be explained from several points already mentioned. Since more experienced pilots have clearer expectations than novices of what should happen in the real aircraft, an incorrect simulator signal to the experienced individual may result in a greater mismatch discrepancy than for the novice. Further, since student pilots tend to handle the flight controls more than the instructor pilots, they may be less susceptible because they control the input to the system. Finally, if the optimal position is placed at the student pilot's location, this would be one explanation for the higher incidence rates for instructor pilots.

8 **Theories**

After examining several generic sources for individual differences in susceptibility, Kennedy and Frank (1985) reviewed a number of theories that attempted to explain the origin of motion sickness. The most popular of these theories, the "perceptual conflict" theory proposed by Steele in the '60s, is also known as the "sensory conflict" theory or the "cue-conflict" theory. This theory addresses the mismatch between signals that the visual or vestibular system is getting from the simulator and the signals the pilot is expecting to get based on his or her previous experience. Van Cott (1990) described this theory as sickness that arises when "motion information from vision, the vestibular system, and proprioceptors (sensory receptors) may be in conflict with the expected values of these inputs derived from past experience." Although this theory does not answer every possible source of simulator sickness, it is presently the most widely accepted working model explaining the illness. Cheung, Howard, and Money (1991) support the Kennedy and Frank conclusions concerning the vestibular system and simulator sickness, and their conclusions are consistent with the theory of sensory conflict.

9 The Disadvantages of Simulator Use

9.1 After-Effects

The debilitating effects of a simulator can last far beyond the simulator session itself. If an individual experiences side-effects (pallor, sweating, nausea) as the result of a simulator session, the consequences of operating another vehicle such as a car or the actual aircraft after simulator exposure could be hazardous. Many of the reports on simulator after-effects include examples where the user receives a conflict from the orientation cues used in the simulator. Kennedy et al. (1987) tell of an incident where one individual had to stop his car on the side of the road because the pronounced after-effects of a particularly intense simulator experience. Kellogg, Castore, and Coward (1980) cited F-4 pilots reporting delayed perceptual after-effects occurring 8 to 10 hr following simulator flight. These observations led to additional studies that attempted to better understand the issues of after-effects.

In one of four studies conducted with helicopter simulators, Gower et al. (1987b) revealed that nearly 40% of the AH-64 (Apache) helicopter pilots reported symptoms lasting over an hour, and 14% reported symptoms lasting longer than 6 hr. In another study of UH-60 (Black Hawk) pilots, Gower and Fowlkes (1989) reported cases where individuals experienced delayed effects for over 24 hr after exposure. They concluded that approximately 8% of the aviation population experiences delayed problems beyond the simulator session for periods that exceed 6 to 8 hr, and an even smaller population will experience symptoms for as long as 1 to 2 days. As a result of this study, many U.S. Army aviation units adopted a policy that prohibits aircraft flying within 6 hr after simulator flight.

9.2 Fatigue

Frank et al. (1984) mention something they call fatigue-decreased proficiency, which is caused by simulator sickness symptoms causing distractions that interfere with learning or by being fatigued upon entry to the simulator. Ebenholtz (1990) claims that once the user experiences fatigue, the potential for positive learning effects from the simulator is decreased. Hamilton, Kantor, Heslegrave, Magee, and Hendy (1989) showed that over 50% of tested aircrews experienced increases in simulator sickness symptom frequency following training, with the most commonly reported symptoms being mild mental fatigue, physical fatigue, eye strain, and after-sensations of motion. The CH-47 (Chinook) Flight Simulator study conducted by Gower and Fowlkes (1989) also showed eyestrain and headache as the leading symptoms of asthenopia, a term optometrists use to refer to many eyestrain problems.

9.3 Adaptation

The capability of humans to adapt to simulation deficiencies, sometimes called perceptual adaptation, can be a problem. It is possible that an individual might use techniques to avoid simulator sickness that may be detrimental if they transfer these techniques to the actual aircraft. For example, many pilots restrict their head movement while in the simulator to avoid what is known as the pseudo-coriolis effect. This effect is analogous to the Coriolis force that deflects moving objects (such as projectiles or air currents) to the right in the northern hemisphere and to the left in the southern hemisphere. If a pilot moves his head rapidly during a maneuver in which the simulator is undergoing some kind of angular motion, these same coriolis-type forces begin to act on the vestibular apparatus of the inner ear, causing disorientation and discomfort. Even if the simulator remains still, "head movements during visually represented angular motion can cause pseudo-coriolis effects" (Van Cott, 1990).

Lackner (1990) also discussed how provocative the effects of head movement can be, but if pilots begin to restrict head movements, they may develop negative habits that may be detrimental if transferred to in-flight conditions. Any pilot who learns to restrict his head movement in the simulator will develop bad habits that will impact his basic flying skills and his ability to establish visual contact with other aircraft. Needless to say, this could have disastrous consequences in a battlefield scenario involving enemy aircraft.

All these negative side effects may cause some pilots to avoid simulators altogether (Frank et al., 1983). If simulators produce unpleasant side effects, they may not be used because people will lack confidence in the training they receive. The effort to produce the most realistic simulator continues to be an active area of research.

Conclusion

Our goals with this paper was to collect references to significant results obtained by the simulator research community. We were surprised at the current isolation between the academic computer science community and the (primarily military) simulator community, and we have collected these results, and provided our bibliography in the hopes that as virtual environments research progresses, the computer science community will be able to learn from these results, rather than reestablish them unnecessarily.

Acknowledgments

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- (2) the salience of specific sources of visual information might not be the same in novice pilots. This study may not reveal the use of visual information important for performance of the task that pilots do not consciously attend. The authors also discuss "augmented feedback," which is supplementary visual information not available in the real world. Five different visual cues were used for hover: motion parallax, interposition, shape consistency, peripheral vision in support of shape constancy, and spatial orientation and depth perception.
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