Title

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Abstract

Lecturers of the Agribusiness Centre at MCAST strive to teach students using 3D life-like models. Since they are expensive only the lecturers can use them while they are delivering the lecture. This paper presents a prototype that will assist the lecturers and students of Agribusiness Centre at MCAST, to help them interact with the 3D life-like models using an Augmented Reality (AR) application. It will help the students by identifying the organs of the 3D life-like model by labelling them and in addition the student can watch a video related to the 3D model to understand more.

Keywords: Augmented reality, 3D objects, Labels, Teaching

Introduction

The Institute of Applied Sciences Centre of Agriculture, Aquatics and Animal Science offers Diploma and Degree courses in Animal Care, Animal Management and Veterinary Nursing ("Institute of Applied Sciences – Centre of Agriculture, Aquatics and Animal Sciences – MCAST", 2020). Knowledge about animals is an important part of vocational education. Lecturers frequently encounter the difficulty in the teaching and learning which involves real scenarios e.g. large live animals.  This is due to inaccessible environments and precautions that need to be taken with live animals.  To address this challenge, the Agriculture Centre has invested in a number of 3D life like models to aid in the acquisition of knowledge about various animals and their anatomy. However, the models lack in themselves the content to be learnt. Although these models are highly useful, information related to them is still presented as paper posters or documents. The aim of this study is to explore the use of Augmented Reality (AR) technology to present better knowledge related to the 3D life-like models. This would enable lecturers to present and students to understand better the anatomy of the animal object.

Hypothesis

Given the challenge with the Agribusiness centre explained above it is being assumed that AR can address this problem and improve accessibility through the use of mobile applications which accurately display augmented content like model labelling, placing objects, information, audio or video to facilitate learning through these expensive models.

Research questions

1. How will AR facilitate the teaching and learning that involves real scenarios?

2. How will the result be presented in this application?

3. How can such a prototype be evaluated in term of accuracy and performance?

Aim

The aim of this project is to assist the agribusiness lecturers at MCAST by making it easier the proposed application will help them teaching the students by showing the 3D model label represented on the model organs using the mobile application. Therefore, students will be able to interact more with the 3D model by creating labels, delete and even play videos.

Objectives

The goal of this research is to develop an AR application which displays accurately augmented content like placing labels on a 3D object. Also identifying multiple 3D objects so it would not be restricted to only one object. Finally, the achievement of accuracy and performance of the prototype is an asset.

Motivation

The motivation of this research is the significant of this application that accuracy of the 3D labels on the 3D models will assist the lecturer and students at the institute of Applied Sciences at MCAST.

Relevance of research

The purpose of this project is to assist lecturers by giving them the ability to teach students using animals which are 3D objects. No matter the technological advancements, it is still hard for lecturers to have interactable resources for them to use. Rather than using simple images of an animal’s internals to explain their functions and locations, they could use a 3D object which entices users to interact more. Students could interact with the application and understand more using AR technologies. The application will provide labels on the internal organs of the ‘augmented animals’ and playing a video about the detected 3D object.

In a nutshell the proposed application will introduce innovative technologies like AR to the Agribusiness centre so students can interact more with the life-like models given real life animals cannot be used. Lecturers can create new materials using this mobile application and the lecture will be more understandable.

Literature review

What is Augmented Reality

Augmented Reality (AR) is a popular technology that manages to combine the real world and the virtual world together in order to create new experiences and environments. AR technology is also possible to experience on smartphones making it available to more users (Kyu Yoo and Weon Lee, 2014). As of recent years, mobile devices have been upgraded with the inclusion of new features which can support Mobile Augmented Reality (MAR). MAR is a new experience for users and is being welcomed by many and being spread throughout mobile app markets. MAR is one of the many developments being adapted from classic AR technologies. (Zhang et al., 2014).

Augmented Reality in Education

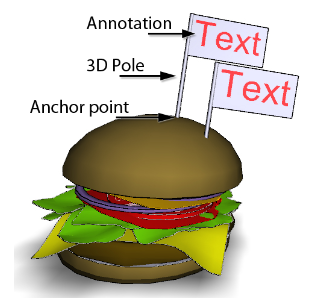
Kesim and Ozarslan (2012) outline how AR Technology can also be experienced thanks to advancements with smartphones, making it more widely available to users, it has been used in used in various fields such as military; engineering design; manufacturing, maintenance and repair applications; consumer design; psychological treatments, etc. Displaying information by using virtual objects that a user cannot directly interact with or sense in real life, can enable a person to interact with the real world in different ways. We can edit the position, shape, and/or other visual features of virtual objects when desired thanks to specific techniques supported by augmented reality. Using our hands or a supported device's movement such as a shake or a tilt gives the ability to manipulate virtual objects. AR can be utilized for learning, entertainment, or a combination of both by enhancing a person’s level of interaction with the real world, by using AR. Users can move around virtual images and view them from any specific points/angles, similar to a real object. Information conveyed by virtual objects can also help users do real-world tasks (Kesim and Ozarslan, 2012).

Superimposing 3D Animal Models to User Defined Targets for Augmented Reality Game.

Lee and Choi (2014) are presenting an application which superimposes 3D Animal Models living in tideland in a sequence when the users make image targets in real time. They are attempting to improve the overall effectiveness of the proposed technique by implementing a Mobile Augmented Reality Application for smartphones using 3D animals, by selecting 10 animals living in tideland and creating 3D Animated Models of them. When implemented the application, Vuforia SDK is being used so that the 3D tidal animals can be seen on a 2D plane through the use of a mobile device and its camera. This application and its uses' main targets are: children, those of which are studying about tideland and its inhabiting animals. After reading the book about tideland, the children can use smartphones to take pictures of a poster or an individual image upon which the 3D Animal can be displayed in the image that is taken using the smartphone. (Lee and Choi, 2014)

*External Labels In 3D Space*.

Authors of another research paper are proposing a multitude of techniques on how to place external labels on a 2D image (Tatzgern, Kalkofen, Grasset and Schmalstieg,2014). As AR Cameras are always in motion, the labels float around the object they refer to. Desktop applications often only display external labels when the camera is not in motion. The specific technique is applied onto the label, as the 3D label is made up of a 3D annotation, a 3D pole and a singular anchor point - so that the label is essentially attached to the object and not "floating" around it. As this approach is aimed towards higher standards in terms of stability of the layout and general aesthetic, this paper introduces strategies for said layouts in 3D object spaces.



This shows the result of a balanced label distribution (Tatzgern, Kalkofen, Grasset and Schmalstieg, 2014).

Augmented Reality Application For Plant Learning.

Zhao et al.(2018) proposes plant learning and a way for students to understand nature. With the help of mobile applications, the author finds a way to provide assistance in learning about plants. In previous research there was an application that was developed and designed based on mobile visual search. The system using mobile intelligence could take pictures, audio, video and other information associated with plants. Though the system still required some modification. The researchers modified their system by implementing AR in it, using similar technologies like this paper is going to propose they were able to build a mobile application with Unity. By selecting the AR button from the mobile application it automatically requests usage from the phone’s camera, and scans the plant. After the scan has finished - the information about the plant will be displayed on the screen so the student can interact with the 3D model of the plant by rotating it, zoom in and out, swiping left and right for information and rotating the model. This could increase the students interest and understanding about plants. (Zhao et al., 2018)

Mobile- Based Application For The Blind Using Augmented Reality Detection.

In this final research paper Mambu et al. (2019) talks about blind people. In their daily lives they depend on other people, in a research which was based on 5,329 blind people, it showed that they had a hard time identifying objects on their own as well as describing the object. Therefore, the authors developed a mobile application for blind people so with a smartphone they can scan an object and the application will output a sound and give information about the object that the person is scanning. This application uses 'Vuforia' that contains the datasets so that when the camera is pointed at an object, the camera can identify it via markers, of which are identified by that of a single image. In this research the total of identified objects are 40 objects that consist of jelly powder, noodles and wafers. The time required to identify the objects are seconds, with the help of google assistant they can open the application and then it will detect automatically objects that the user wants. If an object cannot be identified, then the application will keep on rendering until an object has been identified. The limitation of this application is that the user can’t identify all objects but in the future the user themselves can add objects upon which the application could be converted and made available on different platforms (Mambu et al., 2019).

The application that is going to be built will use similar technologies that was mentioned above using Unity and Vuforia to upload the chicken 3D scan. The application can provide features such as creating a label, watching videos, instructions etc. Also, the proposed application will have a unique feature that other research papers didn’t use, that is identifying multiple 3D objects while running the application and labels can be displayed on the 3D object. Methodology

In the methodology I will discuss step by step how the prototype was built, what technologies I used, what platform the application will run on, what are the main functions of the application, and what 3D objects will identify.

Scanning the 3D object and technologies.

By using the Vuforia scanner to scan the 3D chicken object and going around the object on a flat surface, 225 points were covered from the scan, this means that it will be identified from every corner of the 3D object. After taking the scan, the data set was uploaded to Vuforia so it can be used within Unity. In this case Unity 2019.3.5f1 will be used by first importing the dataset from Vuforia, creating an AR camera and starting to experiment with labels and positioning them according to possible organ locations. By doing so, I was able to test the accuracy of the labels on the organs by moving the smartphone slowly around the 3D object.

Labels

The labels were visible on the organs when the smartphone detected the 3D object in the augmented environment. After experimenting with labels, I started using scripts, implementing some code and actions.

Functions of the Button

By using buttons, I was able to implement the “Create Label” button. When the user clicks on the “Create Label” on the scene a label will be created, and using an initialized array, each label is added to the array. After creating the labels, and the 3D object was detected, the user can move the label that represents the organ on the 3D object in the augmented environment. By implementing the touch manager script using C#, it can identify the touch on a smartphone screen and transform the position of the label. Following this, I implemented the double click which deletes the label and removes the element from the array list. The labels position is being saved in an array list so when the user loads the game again the labels will be positioned as the user left them, not creating new ones. The user can rotate the arrow of the label depending which side the organ is so it will be much more understandable which label is referring to.

Menu

A menu will be visible when the user starts the application. An information window will be available to guide the user what the application consists of. The user has an option to quite the game or play the game. When the application loads as mentioned before all the labels will be available when the user detected the 3D the objects, they will be visible.

Video Player

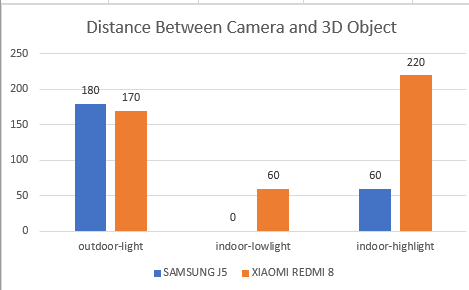
A video will be available to the students to understand more about the 3D object (chicken). The video player has the features to skip through and even the sound to increase the volume and decrease it. Also, the student can pause, play, and stop the video.

Platform

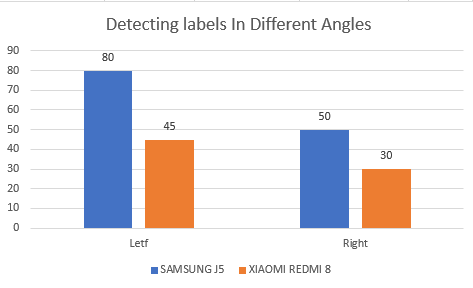
This application will be available only for android devices since most of the students owns an android smartphone.

This application will be used by the students of Agribusiness at MCAST so they can use the functionalities of this mobile application to understand more the 3D objects that will be detected by their smartphone using this application.

Evaluation



This results that outdoor-light is much better than indoor-light when detecting the 3D object using the mobile camera of Xiaomi. Xiaomi’s camera is much better when trying to detect the 3D object because it keeps detecting the object from a far distance of 170 cm in outdoor-light, 60 cm indoor-lowlight and 220cm indoor-highlight. Compared with Samsung smartphone its camera is not good at detecting the 3D object in indoor-lowlight, but it is much better in outdoor-light.



This result is about detecting the 3D object, creating labels and position them and move the camera around the 3D object to see if the labels are still being detected from a different angle. This was tested in indoor-light, Samsung shows that it keeps on detecting the labels from the left side of the 3D object with 80 degrees and 50 degrees on the right.

It is recommended to use this application in outdoor light to have a good detection on the 3D models. To have a good angle of the labels it is recommended to use a Samsung smartphone to detect the 3D object with indoor light.

Conclusion

This prototype is able to help teachers to teach their students using this application by labelling the organs of the 3D object. The student is interacting more with the application and understating more by practising on his own.

For future work, it is recommended to allow the user to input the 3D model using this mobile application at run time and scanning models which are bigger in size. Since scanning large models is a big challenge, using a different technology will be considered to scan the model.References

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