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Real-Time Sign-Language Detection and Translation Using Machine Learning

Sayali Omkar Relekar[1] and Sonal Sandeep Pawar[2], Ms. Shobhana Gaikwad[3]
Department of Computer Technology[1-3]
Bharati Vidyapeeth Institute of Technology, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra, India
relekarsayali91@gmail.com

Abstract: *Communication is an essential part of daily life, but individuals with hearing and speech impairments often face challenges while interacting with others. Sign language helps them communicate effectively, but its limited understanding among the general public creates a communication gap. To address this issue, this paper presents a real-time sign language detection and text translation system using machine learning and computer vision techniques.*

The proposed system captures hand gestures using a camera and processes them using image processing methods. A trained model is used to recognize gestures and convert them into text output. Tools such as Python and OpenCV are used to build a simple and efficient system [4]. Previous research has shown that machine learning and deep learning techniques can effectively recognize hand gestures and sign language patterns [1][2].

The results demonstrate that the system performs well in real-time and provides satisfactory accuracy. This project offers a practical and cost-effective solution to improve communication and promote inclusivity. Future work can focus on expanding the dataset, recognizing continuous sentences, and adding multilingual support..

Keywords: Sign Language Detection, Machine Learning, Computer Vision, Gesture Recognition, Real-Time Translation, OpenCV

I. INTRODUCTION

Communication plays a vital role in human interaction, helping people share ideas and express emotions. However, individuals with hearing and speech impairments often find it difficult to communicate with those who do not understand sign language. Although sign language is an effective communication method, its limited usage among the general population creates a significant barrier.

With advancements in technology, especially in machine learning and computer vision, it has become possible to develop systems that can recognize and interpret human gestures. Several studies have explored the use of deep learning and image processing techniques for sign language recognition, achieving promising results in gesture detection and classification [1][2]. These technologies provide an opportunity to develop assistive systems that can bridge the communication gap.

This paper presents a real-time sign language detection and translation system that converts hand gestures into text. The system uses a camera to capture gestures and applies image processing techniques using OpenCV [4]. A machine learning model is used to classify gestures and generate corresponding text output. The goal of this project is to develop a simple, user-friendly, and affordable system that can assist people in everyday communication.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: Section II discusses related work, Section III explains the methodology, Section IV presents results, and Section V concludes the paper.

The main objective of this work is to develop a simple, cost-effective, and accessible solution that can support better communication for people with disabilities. By providing real-time translation, the system can improve interaction in daily situations such as education, healthcare, and public services.

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II. METHODOLOGY

The proposed system is designed to detect sign language gestures and convert them into text in real time using machine learning and computer vision techniques. The methodology consists of several stages, including data collection, preprocessing, feature extraction, model training, and prediction.

A. Data Collection

The first step involves collecting a dataset of hand gesture images representing different sign language alphabets or words. The dataset can be created using a webcam or obtained from publicly available sources. Each gesture is captured under different lighting conditions and backgrounds to improve model performance and accuracy.

B. Image Preprocessing

The captured images are preprocessed to improve quality and remove noise. This step includes resizing the images, converting them into grayscale, and applying filtering techniques. Background removal and hand region extraction are also performed to focus only on the gesture, making the system more efficient.

C. Feature Extraction

In this stage, important features of the hand gestures are extracted from the processed images. These features help the model differentiate between different gestures. Techniques such as edge detection, contour detection, or key point extraction can be used to identify unique patterns in hand shapes.

D. Model Training (KNN Classifier)

The extracted features are used to train a K-Nearest Neighbors (KNN) classifier. The KNN algorithm classifies a new input based on similarity with the nearest data points in the training dataset. It is simple, effective, and suitable for small to medium- sized datasets. The model is trained using labeled gesture data to ensure accurate prediction.

E. Gesture Recognition and Prediction

During real-time execution, the system captures live video input through a camera. Each frame is processed and passed through the trained KNN model, which predicts the corresponding gesture. The predicted gesture is then converted into text and displayed on the screen.

F. Output Display

The final output of the system is displayed in text form. The recognized sign language gesture is converted into readable text, enabling easy communication between users and others who do not understand sign language.

Summary of Workflow

Camera Input → Preprocessing → Feature Extraction → KNN Model → Gesture Recognition → Text Output

III. MODELING AND ANALYSIS

The proposed system uses the K-Nearest Neighbors (KNN) algorithm for gesture classification. KNN is a simple and effective machine learning algorithm that classifies input data based on similarity with the nearest training samples. In this model, each hand gesture image is converted into feature vectors during preprocessing and feature extraction stages.

The value of K is an important parameter in the KNN algorithm. After experimentation, an optimal value of K is selected to achieve better accuracy and avoid overfitting or underfitting. The model stores all training data and compares new input gestures with existing samples to determine the closest match.

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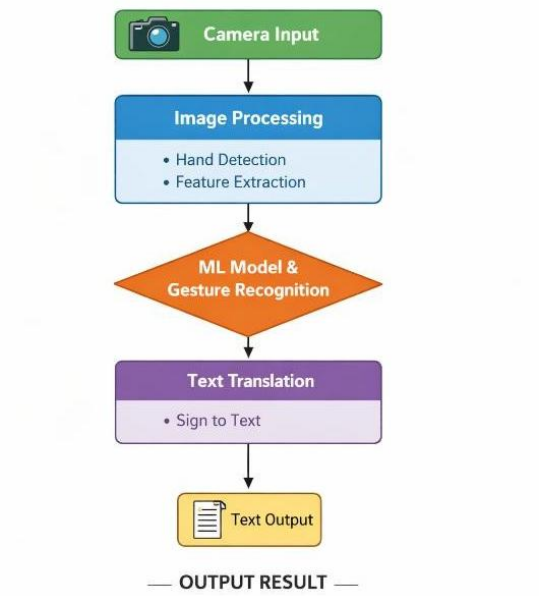

Fig. 1: Flowchart of Sign Language Detection and Text Translation System"

The system captures hand gestures using a camera, processes the image to extract features, and uses a machine learning model to recognize the gesture. The recognized gesture is then converted into text as the final output.

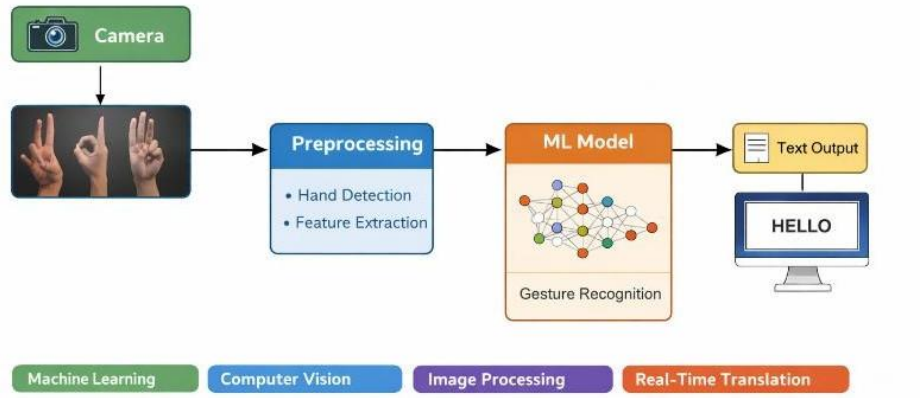

Fig. 2: System Architecture of Sign Language Detection and Text Translation System

IV. CONCLUSION

In this paper, a real-time sign language detection and text translation system has been developed to help improve communication for individuals with hearing and speech impairments. The system uses computer vision and machine learning techniques to recognize hand gestures and convert them into meaningful text output. By using tools such as Python and OpenCV, the project demonstrates how technology can be used to create practical and accessible solutions for real-world problems.

The results show that the system performs well in recognizing gestures accurately under suitable conditions and provides quick responses in real time. This makes it useful for everyday communication, especially in environments where understanding sign language is limited.

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Overall, this work highlights the importance of assistive technologies in promoting inclusivity and reducing communication barriers. In the future, the system can be further improved by increasing the dataset size, supporting continuous sentence recognition, and adding multilingual features to make it more effective and widely usable.

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