Automated Detection of Human Emotion

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Abstract

An automated method to identify human emotions using electronic visual data has been pursued in hopes of advancing human-computer interaction and various other commercial needs. While previous ventures into this area have proven successful, the majority of them require high-end equipment which keeps this technology out of reach for most casual uses. By utilizing an easily accessible web camera and python, an inexpensive alternative can be created with hopefully the same level of accuracy as more expensive attempts.

Introduction

This project will explore the limitations of using low-end equipment to accurately track facial movement to identify emotions. By researching previous expensive attempts, a variety of tracking techniques can be found and utilized. The results of this project can then be used to expand human-computer interaction, or expand the commercial use of this technology, possibly in the standard household.

Background

The ability to read human emotions automatically and efficiently has been a goal for both computer scientists and commercial entities. Human-Computer interaction is a quickly expanding field where this information is vital. Commercial uses include advancing automated product testing, and various uses in the entertainment industry. However, various different approaches have been previously used in previous experiments. Some rely on both visual and auditory data while others rely on one or the other. Visually based experiments also utilize different techniques such as tracking placed markers and analyzing shadow placement. However, most of these experiments utilized high end equipment while I am attempting to recreate the same results at a much cheaper price.

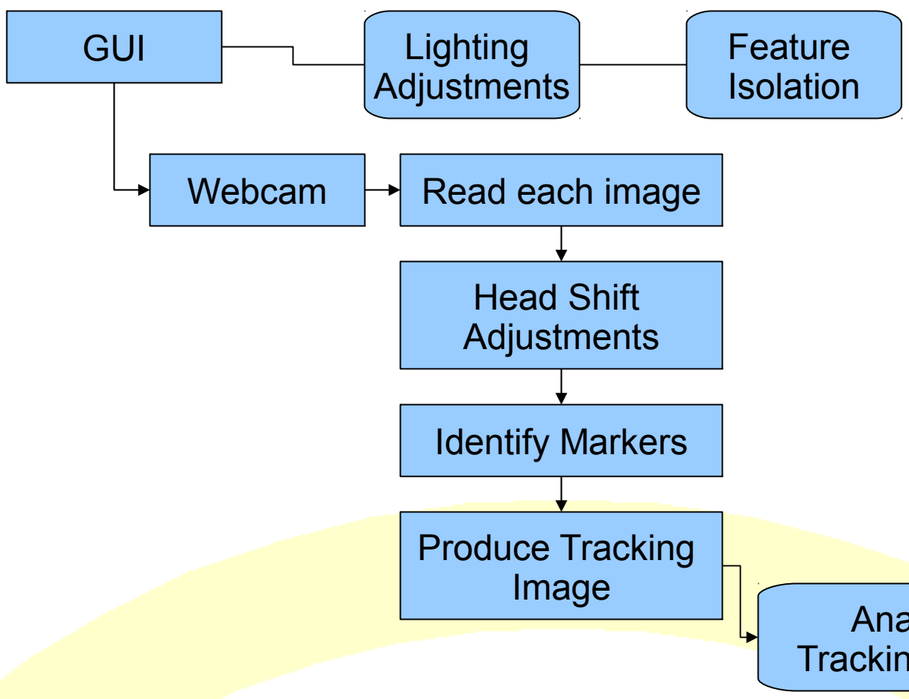
Facial Action Coding System

The Facial Action Coding System (FACS) was developed by Paul Ekman and Wallace Friesen in 1976 and is used as the standard for determining emotions by psychologists and animators. FACS works by identifying action units that associated with certain muscle movements. When a certain combination of action units are seen together, emotions can be narrowed down and identified.

Marker recognition and detailed tracking results. Detailed tracking reduces each marker to a single pixel, making distance and angle calculations very precise.

Development

Development consisted of three stages: tracking, emotion recognition, and GUI development. Each of these stages begin very simply and then expand into more complicated code after extensive testing. The entire project was coded using Python with the OpenCV package to receive webcam information and the PIL package to analyze the visual data.



Discussion

The results of the program are currently varied. While the tracking is very accurate, the emotion classification has a low rate of success. This is most likely caused by the loose classifications of emotions currently being used and I predict that after further testing, the results will greatly improve.