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Implementation of an Assistive Software for Visually Impaired Individuals

G. Divya [*1], K.S. Hari Priya[*2], V. Hemalatha[*3], L. Sharmila[*4]
[1]*Assistant Professor, Department of Information Technology, PSV College of Engineering and Technology, Krishnagiri, Tamil Nadu, India.*
[2,3,4]*UG Scholars, Department of Information Technology, PSV College of Engineering and Technology, Krishnagiri, Tamil Nadu, India.*

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Abstract: *Visually impaired individuals face significant challenges in recognizing objects, avoiding obstacles, and navigating safely in both indoor and outdoor environments. Traditional assistive tools such as walking sticks and human guidance offer only limited support and lack the ability to provide real-time contextual information about surroundings. To address these limitations, this project proposes an AI-based assistive software system that enhances mobility and independence through intelligent object detection and voice guidance. The system captures live video input using a camera and processes the frames using advanced deep learning models such as YOLOv5 or YOLOv8 to accurately identify objects in real time. Along with detection, the system estimates the approximate distance of objects to determine their proximity and potential risk. Based on this analysis, it generates audio feedback using text-to-speech technology, informing the user about nearby objects and issuing timely warnings to prevent collisions. Additionally, speech-to-text functionality enables users to interact with the system through voice commands, making it fully hands-free and user-friendly.*

The system can be further enhanced with scene understanding to recognize environments such as roads, staircases, or crowded areas, thereby providing more meaningful navigation assistance. Integration with GPS can support outdoor navigation, while emergency features like SOS alerts can improve user safety. Designed to be cost-effective and portable, the solution can be deployed on laptops, mobile devices, or embedded platforms such as Raspberry Pi 4. With support for multi-language voice output and customizable alerts, the system ensures accessibility for diverse users. Overall, this intelligent assistive solution leverages advancements in computer vision and artificial intelligence to provide real-time environmental awareness, significantly improving the quality of life, safety, and independence of visually impaired individuals.

The system is designed with scalability in mind, allowing future integration of additional sensors and modules without major architectural changes. It can be connected to cloud platforms for data storage and performance improvement through continuous learning. The use of edge computing ensures low latency and faster response, which is critical for real-time navigation. Energy efficiency is also considered, making the solution suitable for battery-powered portable devices. The system can adapt to different lighting conditions, ensuring reliable performance during both day and night. Advanced filtering techniques help reduce false detections and improve accuracy.

I. INTRODUCTION

PROLOGUE Visually impaired individuals, the absence or limitation of vision creates serious challenges in performing daily activities. Even simple tasks such as walking inside a room, finding an object, identifying obstacles, or crossing a road become difficult and unsafe. In many cases, visually impaired individuals depend on external support such as family members, caretakers, walking sticks, or guide dogs for movement and safety. Although these traditional methods provide basic assistance, they do not offer complete awareness about the surroundings and may fail in complex environments such as crowded places, unknown locations, or dynamic traffic situations. In modern society, accessibility and independence are important factors for improving the quality of life of visually impaired individuals.

However, many visually impaired people still face limitations due to the lack of affordable and intelligent assistive systems. The need for a smart system that can guide visually impaired individuals in real time has become a major research and development area in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Assistive Technology. Computer Vision is a branch of artificial intelligence that enables machines to interpret and understand visual information from images and videos. Object detection is one of the most important applications of computer vision, where the system identifies objects present in a scene and locates them using bounding boxes. Deep learning models such as YOLO (You Only Look Once) have proven to be highly efficient and accurate in real-time object detection tasks.

Assistive technology plays a very important role in improving the quality of life of visually impaired individuals by providing them with tools and systems that support independence, mobility, and safety. Vision is essential for performing everyday tasks such as walking, recognizing objects, identifying people, reading signs, and navigating through unknown environments. When a person is visually impaired, these tasks become difficult and may lead to frequent dependence on others. The primary importance of assistive technology lies in providing real-time support and enhancing accessibility. Traditional methods such as walking 1 sticks and guide dogs can help detect nearby obstacles, but they cannot provide detailed information about the surrounding environment. For example, a walking stick can detect an object in front of the user but cannot identify whether the object is a chair, a staircase, a person, or a moving vehicle

This lack of information can still create confusion and unsafe conditions, especially in crowded places such as markets, railway stations, bus stops, and road crossings. Modern assistive technology systems use Artificial Intelligence and Computer Vision to provide better support compared to conventional tools. AI-based object detection models can recognize multiple objects simultaneously and provide accurate results in real time. Such systems can detect obstacles like walls, doors, poles, vehicles, and furniture, and then alert the user through voice output. Voicebased assistance is especially important for visually impaired individuals because it provides information in an easily understandable form without requiring visual interaction. Text-to-speech technology can announce detected object names, warn the user about nearby obstacles, and guide them safely. Deep learning models such as YOLO (You Only Look Once) have proven to be highly efficient and accurate in real-time object detection tasks.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The diagram effectively illustrates the progression from traditional assistive methods to advanced AI-based solutions for visually impaired individuals. It clearly organizes key components such as sensor-based navigation, image processing, deep learning-based object detection, and distance estimation, making the overall concept easy to understand. The inclusion of voice assistance and AI chatbot integration highlights the importance of user interaction and accessibility in modern systems.

III. METHODOLOGY

The proposed system is designed as a wearable glove-based assistive solution that enables physically challenged or speech-impaired individuals to communicate and interact with their environment using hand gestures. The system integrates flex sensors, a microcontroller-based processing unit, and output modules to convert gestures into meaningful text, voice, and control signals. The overall workflow involves sensing finger movements, processing the signals, recognizing gestures, and generating appropriate outputs in real time.

The first stage of the system is the flex sensor input module, where flex sensors are attached to each finger of the glove to detect bending motions. These sensors work on the principle of variable resistance, where the resistance changes according to the degree of bending. As the user performs different hand gestures, the sensors generate corresponding analog voltage signals. These signals represent unique patterns for each gesture and are forwarded to the processing unit for interpretation.

To improve accuracy and reliability, a calibration and gesture mapping module is implemented. During calibration, the system records minimum and maximum sensor values for different finger positions to account for variations in user hand movement and sensor behavior. Based on these readings, threshold ranges are defined for each gesture. These gestures are then mapped to specific text messages and voice outputs stored in the system. This step minimizes recognition errors and enhances system performance under different usage conditions.

Finally, the output and appliance control module converts the recognized gesture into useful outputs. The identified message is displayed on an LCD screen, and a corresponding voice output is generated using a speaker through prerecorded audio or text-to-speech technology. In addition, certain gestures are assigned to control home appliances such as lights and fans using relay modules. This feature extends the system's functionality beyond communication, enabling users to independently operate devices in their surroundings. Overall, the methodology ensures an efficient, accurate, and user-friendly assistive system that enhances communication and independence.

IV. MODELING AND ANALYSIS

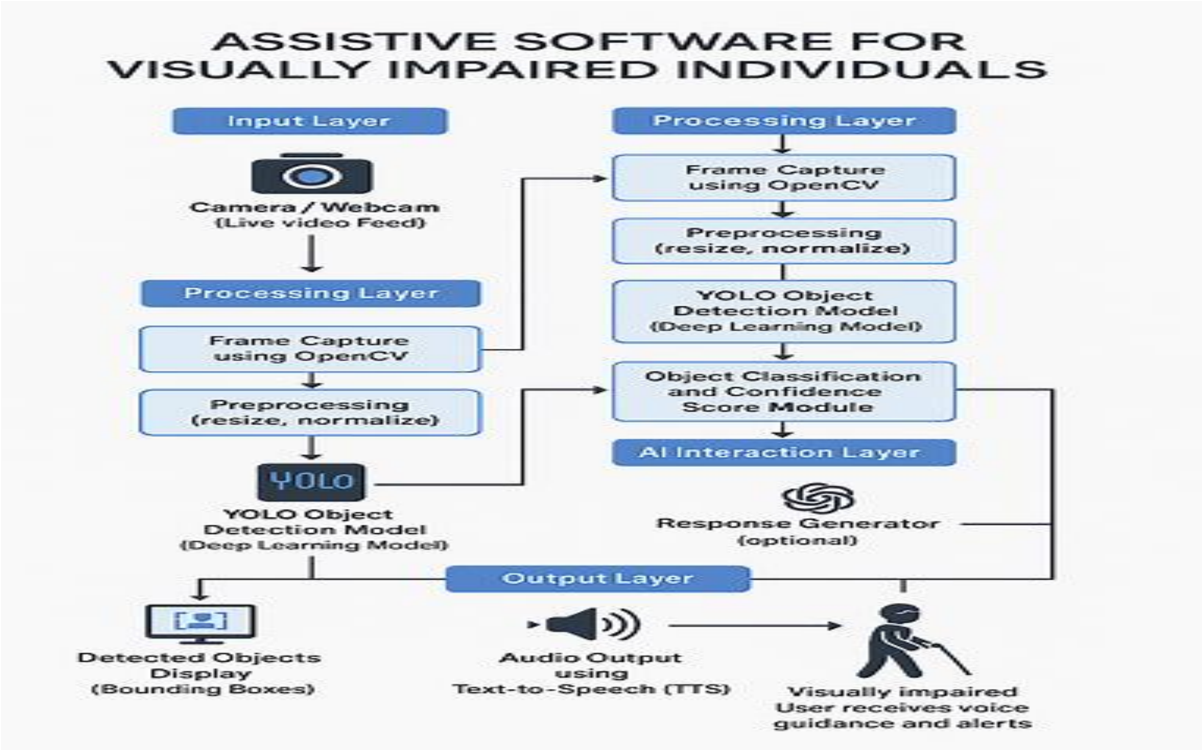

Figure 1: Architectural Diagram

A Data Flow Diagram represents how data moves through the system and how it is processed. In the proposed system, the primary data input is live video captured through the camera. The video is converted into frames and passed to the preprocessing stage where resizing and enhancement operations are performed. These frames are then forwarded to the YOLO object detection model which generates detected objects with bounding box coordinates and confidence levels.

The detected data is sent to the distance estimation module which calculates approximate distance values. The final processed data is then transferred to the output section where results are displayed and voice announcements are generated. In the case of voice interaction, the microphone input is converted into text using speech-to-text and passed to the AI chatbot module. The chatbot generates responses which are converted to speech and delivered to the user.

V.RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The proposed project, "Assistive Software for Visually Impaired Individuals," is developed as an AI-based real-time assistance system that helps visually impaired users understand their surroundings. The system uses a webcam to capture real-time video frames and processes them using a YOLO deep learning object detection model. The detected objects are identified and displayed with bounding boxes and confidence scores. The system also estimates the approximate distance of detected objects to provide warning alerts when obstacles are nearby. Finally, the detected information is converted into speech using text-to-speech technology and announced to the user. This process provides real-time guidance and helps visually impaired individuals move safely.

The project successfully achieved the objectives defined in the earlier chapters. The system was able to detect objects in real time using YOLO model with good accuracy. It identified common objects such as persons, chairs, tables, and vehicles, which are important for navigation. The voice announcement module successfully provided spoken output for detected objects and warning alerts. The distance estimation module provided approximate distance information, improving obstacle awareness.

V. CONCLUSION

The proposed assistive software system proved to be effective in both indoor and outdoor testing environments. In indoor environments, it successfully detected furniture and obstacles such as chairs, tables, doors, and other objects. In outdoor environments, it detected people and vehicles, helping users understand potential obstacles. The real-time voice alerts provided immediate guidance, which is essential for visually impaired individuals. The system also showed good response time, allowing users to receive alerts quickly without delay.

The system is cost-effective because it uses open-source tools and does not require expensive hardware devices. It is portable and can run on laptops, desktops, or mobile-based platforms. The system provides accurate object detection using deep learning models, and voice announcements make the system user-friendly. Distance estimation provides additional safety by warning the user about nearby obstacles. These advantages highlight the usefulness of the proposed assistive software system. The system provides accurate object detection using deep learning models, and voice announcements make the system user-friendly.

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