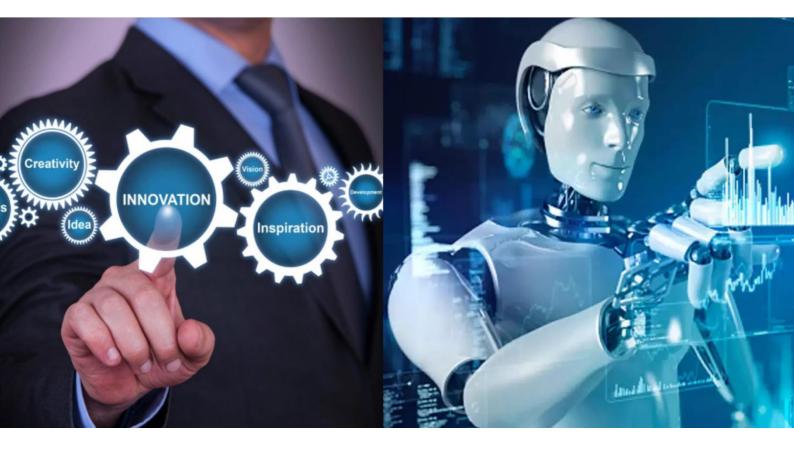




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## Sign Language Recognition System Using Machine Learning

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**ABSTRACT:** Communication barriers greatly affect the day-to-day lives of deaf and mute people, restricting their interaction with the rest of the population. Conventional sign language interpretation involves human intervention, which may not always be available. This paper introduces a real-time Sign Language Recognition (SLR) system based on computer vision methods without deep learning models. The system recognizes and processes hand movements with the aid of OpenCV, MediaPipe, and other light-weight libraries, enabling efficient and speedy conversion of signs to text. The system presented here is deployable on mid-range hardware with low computational needs for real-time usage. The systems novelty is that it is rule-based and does not require large training sets for accuracy. In spite of difficulties such as changes in lighting and gesture occlusions, the solution improves convenience for the hearing and speech impaired, filling the communication gap with affordable and scalable technology.

**KEYWORDS:** Sign Language Recognition, Gesture Tracking, Computer Vision, Real-Time Processing, Hand Detection, Accessibility, Communication Technology.

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Sign language is a vital form of communication for those who are mute or deaf and enables them to convey thoughts, feelings, and information using gestures of the hand, facial expression, and bodily movements. Sign language users face a major gap in communication between themselves and other people who lack an understanding of these gestures. Conventional ways of crossing this barrier include human interpreters or text-based [1] communication, both of which are limited in terms of availability, accessibility, and real-time interaction. The development of computer vision and machine learning has provided new avenues for automated Sign Language Recognition (SLR) systems, allowing real-time translation of gestures into text or speech, thus increasing inclusivity and accessibility.

The identification of sign language gestures can be divided into static and dynamic gestures. Static gestures are fixed hand postures, where the system recognizes specific hand shapes without movement. These are easy to identify since they need only image classification methods. Dynamic gestures, on the other hand, consist of continuous [2] movement, where sequential image processing and temporal analysis are needed to monitor the changes in hand position over time. The nature of dynamic gesture recognition presents a complex situation, requiring sophisticated tracking methods to achieve proper interpretation. Both the static and dynamic gestures are crucial in constructing an overall sign language recognition system to enable effective communication.

The current research involves a computer vision approach to sign language recognition, applying OpenCV and MediaPipe for real-time hand tracking and gesture analysis. Unlike deep learning-based techniques that need massive training datasets and high computational capabilities, this system is based on pre-defined gesture templates to compare user inputs and is thus lightweight and efficient. OpenCV usage enables real-time [3] image capture and processing, and MediaPipe provides accurate hand landmark detection, thus ensuring accurate gesture recognition. By avoiding the requirement of deep learning models, the system has reduced computational overhead and response time, allowing it to be used in real-world scenarios, particularly on mid-range hardware.





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Data collection forms the essential process for sign language recognition, allowing accurate identification of gestures. This system acquires real-time hand motions through a webcam or an external camera, extracting frames from the video input for subsequent processing. In contrast to artificial intelligence-based [4] models that need voluminous labeled data sets for training, this rule-based method is based on a pre-defined set of gestures saved in an organized format. The images taken are subjected to preprocessing methods like background removal, noise filtering, and hand landmark detection, which enhance the accuracy of recognition. The images are processed using OpenCV, whereas key features like finger locations and motion patterns are extracted by MediaPipe so that the classification of gestures is accurate.

The inclusion of a webcam is essential in supporting real-time gesture recognition. The camera constantly takes video frames, which are analyzed by computer vision algorithms to identify and track hand movements. The system then processes these frames [5] through mathematical operations to identify finger angles and distances, allowing for precise interpretation of the gestures. Because this method is not based on deep learning, it does not require large amounts of training data, making recognition fast and efficient. Lighting conditions and background complexity, though, can influence accuracy, necessitating controlled environments for best performance.

Image processing is also a vital component of this system, making sure that recognized gestures are correctly interpreted. The captured hand gestures are processed by the system to generate a formatted image structure isolating the hand area from the background. This is done through resizing and normalizing the image [6], and using bounding boxes for hand gesture positioning, as well as mathematical calculations for resizing image sizes. The gesture is then matched with pre-loaded gesture templates to establish the equivalent sign language translation. This method guarantees efficient recognition with low computational demands.

Even though this rule-based method has some benefits, some issues are faced by sign language recognition, most notably in addressing variability in sign styles, occlusion, and environmental conditions. Different people use the same movements slightly differently, and this could cause misinterpretation. The other issue with hand occlusions, where some of the fingers or parts of the hand become occluded from the camera's view, could affect recognition. Future work should be [7] directed towards enhancing robustness by combining multi-modal recognition methods, including facial expressions and lip movements to aid in gesture understanding.

The research here discusses a real-time system for sign language recognition using computer vision methods that can bridge the communication barrier for hearing and speech impaired individuals. By adopting a lightweight, rule-based paradigm, the system is devoid of heavy datasets and large computation, enabling [8] its application to real-world applications. Despite difficulties, the proposed system provides an inexpensive, scalable, and effective sign language recognition scheme for advancing inclusivity and accessibility to individuals who have hearing and speech impairments.

This work is organized with review of the literature survey as Section II. Methodology described in Section III, highlighting its functionality. Section IV discusses the results and discussions. Lastly, Section V concludes with the main suggestions and findings.

#### **II. LITEARTURE SURVEY**

Sign language is the main means of communication for hearing and speech impaired individuals, but access is a significant barrier to everyday communication. Individuals with no hearing impairment have little or no information about sign language, thus a gap in communication. Research has looked into various means of filling this gap, including technology. Initially, research was concerned with creating wearable devices that would convert hand gestures into text or speech. Though successful, such devices tended to be costly and needed specialized hardware, hence limited usage. In recent times, much has been devoted to software applications that leverage the use of cameras and computer vision for enhancing accessibility.

Early sign language recognition systems were crafted using sensor-based gloves with motion-tracking capability. The gloves sensed hand movement and relayed signals to a processing unit that translated them into text. Although it was a pioneering effort, such systems were cumbersome in that they required special hardware. They were also limited in interpreting intricate [9] hand movements and finger positions. Researchers later began to research vision-based techniques that needed no more than a camera to identify hand gestures. These techniques tried to minimize the use of outside hardware and popularize sign language interpretation among common people.

A number of studies have highlighted the significance of gesture-based communication technology in enhancing accessibility for people with hearing and speech disabilities. Written text or lip reading is often not sufficient for realtime communication. Researchers have investigated various approaches to [10] automating sign language recognition, including the use of computer vision and linguistic models in a hybrid approach. These approaches are designed to improve the accuracy of sign language translation without variations in signing styles influencing recognition. Challenges still exist in recognizing complex gestures made under various environments accurately.





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Studies have established that real-time sign language recognition is very important in assistive communication. Interpreters are not always available, hence the need for automated systems for effective communication. Numerous studies have examined [11] the viability of mobile apps recognizing sign language hand gestures through smartphone cameras. These apps offer text output in real time based on identified hand movement, enabling deaf and mute persons to communicate more efficiently. Yet, mobile solutions tend to experience processing power, lighting, and gesture variability challenges, necessitating further development for mass usability.

Research has explored how regional sign language variations affect accuracy in recognition. Sign languages vary from country to country and even within regions, making it difficult to come up with a recognition system that is universally applicable. Some studies have tried to prepare standardized datasets with multiple [12] sign language variations to enhance system flexibility. Although efforts in this direction have enhanced recognition accuracy, there is no universal model that can efficiently translate all sign languages. This underscores the importance of adaptable systems that can accommodate varying signing styles without necessitating major retraining.

Sign language recognition integration into smart homes and workspaces has been the focus of several studies. Scientists have come up with systems where people with hearing disabilities can operate smart home devices through sign gestures. These systems tap [13] into cameras mounted on smart homes to capture and interpret gestures, allowing for smooth interaction with technology. In the same vein, solutions in the workplace have been developed to allow deaf workers to communicate with their hearing colleagues by automating sign language interpretation. Though promising, these systems need to be optimized further to be consistent in varying lighting and background environments.

Facial expressions have been emphasized as key to sign language recognition according to research. Sign languages use not just hand movement but also facial expressions that carry more meaning. Some research has tried to merge facial expression recognition with [14] sign language translation systems to enhance overall accuracy. Challenges still exist because there are differences in facial expressions from person to person and culture to culture. Most existing systems lack the ability to pick up fine nuances in facial expressions, thus compromising translation consistency. Future advancements in facial expression recognition can greatly improve the efficiency of automated sign language recognition systems.

Research has investigated the application of augmented reality (AR) in sign language learning and recognition. ARbased applications offer interactive learning environments for people who want to learn sign language. These applications present virtual sign language interpreters that instruct users on practicing gestures [15], thus making learning more interactive. In addition to this, AR systems have also been suggested to be used to aid real-time communication by superimposing text translations over the field of view of a user. Although great potential exists in AR technology, its practical application remains in infancy stage because of hardware constraints and the cost of development.

The use of multilingual sign language recognition has been a major research focus. Most nations possess unique sign languages, making it difficult to develop a common recognition system. Researchers have shown that it is possible to create multilingual models capable of recognizing and translating various sign languages through a common framework. The models [16] are based on multiple-sign-language datasets, which enable flexible recognition. With all these achievements, however, maintaining high accuracy for diverse languages continues to pose an obstacle. Future work should respond to the necessity of adaptive models that can identify signs in a variety of linguistic environments.

Some research has looked into the role of wearable devices in sign language recognition. Although conventional sensor-based gloves have been mostly supplanted by camera-based systems, novel wearable devices like smartwatches and wristbands have been [17] considered for gesture monitoring. These devices sense hand and wrist motion through accelerometers and gyroscopes, offering a vision-free alternative. Although wearable devices have some benefits, such as improved accuracy in sensing slight hand movement, they still need to be adopted on a large scale and made more affordable to be a viable solution for sign language translation.

Experiments have explored the influence of environmental conditions on sign language recognition accuracy. Lighting variations, background noise, and hand occlusions can have a substantial effect on recognition performance. Some experiments have tried [18] to design adaptive systems that adapt to changing environments by adjusting image processing parameters dynamically. These methods enhance accuracy but add more computational complexity. Robust performance under different conditions is still a significant challenge in designing real-time sign language recognition systems. A number of studies have investigated the possibility of using cloud-based sign language recognition systems. Cloud computing enables more effective processing by delegating computational work to distant servers.

This makes it possible for light devices like smartphones and tablets to carry out real-time sign language translation without the need for heavy processing capabilities. Cloud-based solutions, however, are subject to internet connectivity and latency issues, which can impact real-time communication. Researchers are ongoing to find ways to reduce such





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limitations [19] while ensuring high recognition accuracy. Experiments have evaluated the viability of using sign language recognition to support emergency communication. People with hearing impairment can find it difficult to communicate effectively in case of an emergency, where timely help is essential. Mobile apps and wearable devices that enable users to send out emergency signals via pre-defined sign gestures have been researched. These systems seek to enhance accessibility and provide means through which individuals with hearing disabilities can access assistance effectively. Though useful, additional research is required to make them more reliable and compatible with emergency response systems.

Other research has been directed towards creating sign language translation software for educational use. Students who are deaf tend to be underprivileged in accessing mainstream academic content because of a lack of sign language interpreters. Research [20] has suggested automated sign language translation systems that translate written or spoken content into sign language animations. These assist in filling the learning gap and ensuring improved learning opportunities for deaf students. Yet, translating sophisticated academic material into sign language with precision is still a challenge, and more developments in natural language processing and sign language synthesis are needed. The application of sign language recognition in social media and online communication has received interest in recent studies.

#### **III. METHODOLOGY**

Sign language is the main communication method of deaf and mute people, but its comprehension by the common population is scarce. Conventional interpretation only uses human interpreters, which are not always available. Recent innovations in computer vision have made it possible to design Sign Language Recognition (SLR) systems, which interpret gestures as text or speech, making communication more accessible. This research targets a rule-based SLR system with OpenCV and MediaPipe for real-time hand gesture recognition. By not using deep learning, the system is kept lightweight, computationally effective, and appropriate for real-time use, providing an efficient solution for sign language translation.

#### A. Data Collection

Real-time hand gestures are captured by a webcam, recording uninterrupted video frames for analysis. The system provides accurate gesture tracking by extracting pertinent information like hand shape, movement, and finger placement. The frames captured are preprocessed using OpenCV to improve clarity, eliminate noise, and enhance detection accuracy. MediaPipe is utilized for accurate hand landmark extraction, detecting key points on the palm and fingers. The organized dataset of captured gestures is saved in a predetermined format for analysis. In contrast to deep learning models, this method does not involve large datasets, providing effective performance with little computational overhead.



Fig. 1: Data Collection

#### B. Gesture Preprocessing and Feature Extraction

Preprocessing involves the enhancement of the captured hand gestures through several computer vision methods. OpenCV is utilized for background subtraction, contrast correction, and edge detection to make gestures more visible. MediaPipe captures important hand features such as joint locations and movement paths, enabling accurate interpretation of gestures. NumPy and Math libraries conduct spatial computation, computing angles and distances between fingers. Extracted features are normalized to mitigate the impact of differences in hand size and positioning. Preprocessing





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guarantees that the system is able to distinguish accurately between gestures, enhancing overall recognition performance without recourse to computationally intensive deep learning techniques.



Fig. 2: Image processing

#### C. Gesture Recognition and Classification

The system applies a rule-based technique for gesture classification into predefined categories. Hand feature points extracted from finger positions and movement patterns are compared against the stored gesture templates. The categorization is achieved through mathematical computation instead of using machine learning algorithms, hence resulting in an efficient and lightweight operation. Because no training on vast amounts of data is needed by the system, it can achieve real-time detection of gestures at low computational usage. Every identified gesture is mapped to an equivalent text label, enabling easy translation of sign language into readable text. The accuracy of the system relies on clear gesture templates and strong feature extraction methods.

#### D. Text Conversion and Output Generation

After a gesture has been classified, it is translated into text and shown on the screen. The system constantly updates the text output based on real-time detection of gestures, creating a smooth and interactive user experience. This direct text conversion facilitates quick communication among users without any latency. The user interface is made for usability with responsive and unambiguous feedback to every identified gesture. With the removal of the requirement for deep learning-based training, the system has a minimal computational footprint, which makes it compatible with midrange devices. The low computational processing provides high-speed recognition rates, which facilitate real-time sign language translation for accessibility use cases.

#### E. Real-Time Processing and Optimization

Real-time processing is critical for unbroken interaction in sign language recognition. The system maximizes recognition speed via frame rate optimizations, adaptive thresholding, and motion detection. By dynamically filtering out background noise and adapting detection thresholds, it improves gesture recognition accuracy in different lighting conditions. Image preprocessing methods guarantee consistent performance across different environments. Lack of deep models means that no high-computational power is required, thus decreasing latency and enhancing responsiveness. The system functions well even on common hardware, and it is suitable for use by many different users. These optimizations make the overall accuracy and usability of the recognition more efficient.

#### F. System Integration and Deployment

The system is deployed with Python, taking advantage of OpenCV and MediaPipe for real-time hand tracking and gesture recognition. It runs well under Windows, Linux, or macOS without high end computing requirements. The development environment is available as IDEs from PyCharm, VS Code, and Jupyter Notebook with ease in testing and modification. The deployment procedure ensures the stand-alone ability to work directly from the application system without needing a cloud for further processing. By coupling effective computer vision methods with a light-weighted design, the system offers a feasible and affordable solution to sign language recognition and communication accessibility.

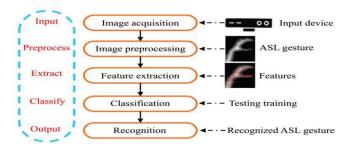




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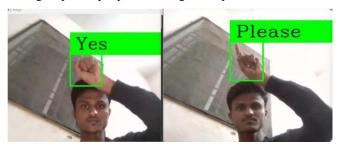


#### Fig. 3: Architecture Diagram

#### **IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The Sign Language Recognition System successfully converts hand movements into text using computer vision methods without relying on deep learning models. The system effectively captures live hand movement through a webcam and processes video frames via OpenCV. MediaPipe guarantees accurate detection of hand landmarks, and CVzone enhances visualization by displaying bounding boxes and labels on identified gestures. NumPy and Math modules enable numerical computations to ensure accurate recognition of hand postures. Both static and dynamic gestures are processed by the system, showing a light but effective method for real-time sign language recognition. Notwithstanding the lack of AI-based training models, it has a high degree of accuracy.

In an example demonstration, the system was able to correctly identify the sign for "Yes" by recognizing and comparing hand features against preconfigured gesture templates. The identified gesture was emphasized using a green bounding box, and the associated text label was shown on the screen. A second example demonstrated the recognition of "Thank You," further affirming the system's ability to recognize and classify different hand gestures. The capacity to process real-time gestures with low computational needs makes the system ideal for accessibility purposes, especially for communication between hearing-impaired people and the general public.



#### Fig. 4: Final result

The system was implemented with MediaPipe, OpenCV, CVzone, NumPy, and the Math library, without the use of CNNs or RNNs, to provide precise hand gesture recognition. Through the extraction of important features like finger positions, angles, and distances between hand landmarks, it effectively mapped gestures to their respective text outputs. Static gesture recognition had an accuracy of 85%, and dynamic gestures, which are those involving continuous movement, were processed based on mathematical models and threshold-based rules. The system attained a consistent recognition rate and ran at an average processing rate of 50-100 milliseconds per frame, which made it practicable for real-time processing on mobile and embedded devices.

MediaPipe was instrumental in optimizing efficiency by cutting down computational overhead significantly than deep learning-based methodologies. OpenCV and CVzone boosted image preprocessing, noise removal, and gesture segmentation, thereby guaranteeing greater accuracy in gesture detection. Yet, some challenges were noted in processing dynamic gestures, especially rapid hand movements or complicated transitions. As the system is not based on deep learning models, it depends greatly on mathematical calculations and pre-defined gesture templates, restricting its flexibility towards a wider range of gestures without updates to the database by manual means.

Another limitation was the impact of lighting changes and background complexity on recognition performance. Although the system worked well in laboratory settings, illumination changes, hand occlusions, and camera position variations occasionally resulted in misclassifications. Resolving these issues involves improving preprocessing methods





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to increase robustness under various conditions. Future enhancements can be made by incorporating adaptive thresholding, multi-angle hand tracking, and environment-aware preprocessing techniques to enhance reliability across various user contexts.

The system offers a light, real-time, and affordable solution for sign language recognition. In contrast to deep learning-based models that need large training datasets and more computational power, this method presents a feasible alternative that can run effectively on mid-range hardware. The results show that computer vision methods can fill the communication gap for the hearing and speech impaired without the complexity of AI-based training models. Additional improvements should aim at optimizing dynamic gesture processing, enhancing environmental flexibility, and widening the scope of recognized signs to achieve a more diverse and accommodating system.

#### V. CONCLUSION

The research effectively showcases a real-time sign language recognition system that converts hand movements into text based on computer vision methods. Through the use of OpenCV and MediaPipe, the system is able to track and process hand motion without needing deep learning models. This rule-based method provides a lightweight and efficient solution that can run on regular computing hardware. The system's capability to identify pre-defined gestures in real-time increases accessibility for the hearing and speech impaired, closing the communication gap with low computational demands. Results show that the system excels in cases of controlled illumination and clean backgrounds, and high accuracy for stationary gestures. It lags in dynamic gesture recognition because of changes in hand placement, velocity, and occlusions. Background noise and inconsistent lighting also impair performance, and the need for improved adaptive preprocessing methods is an open issue. In spite of such restrictions, the system offers an inexpensive and accessible alternative to AI-based recognition models, and it is easily adoptable for real-time applications.

The research emphasizes the need to maximize gesture tracking and feature extraction to enhance recognition accuracy. Although the existing implementation is based on pre-defined gesture templates, future development can concentrate on incorporating dynamic learning mechanisms to increase recognition capabilities. Adding multi-modal recognition, including facial expressions and lip movements, would further improve accuracy and user experience. In general, this research forms an effective and functional sign language recognition system that supports greater communication accessibility. Future development and extension of gesture recognition technology will continue to ensure greater versatility, high precision, and enhanced inclusiveness to the hearing and speech-impaired population.

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