3D User Interface Travel Techniques

Lecture #10: Travel
Spring 2020
Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

Introduction

- Travel: moving from current location to new target location or in the desired direction
- Wayfinding: cognitive process of determining and following a route between an origin and destination
- Techniques classified by metaphor:
  - Walking
  - Steering
  - Selection-based travel
  - Manipulation-based travel
3D Travel Tasks

- Exploration: browsing the environment with no explicit goal for movement
- Search: traveling to a specific goal or target location
  - Naïve search: the user does not know the position of the target or path in advance
  - Primed search: the user has visited the target before or has some knowledge of its position
- Maneuvering: small precise movements

Additional Travel Task Characteristics

- Distance to be traveled
- Amount of curvature or number of turns in the path
- Visibility of the target from the starting location
- Number of DOF required for the movement
- Required accuracy of the movement
- Other primary tasks that take place during travel
Classifications for 3D Travel

**Technique Classifications**
- Active versus passive
- Physical versus virtual
- Using task decomposition
- By metaphor

A Technique Classification – Component Decomposition

- **Direction/Target Selection**
  - gaze-directed
  - pointing
  - choose target from list

- **Velocity/Acceleration Selection**
  - gesture
  - slow in, slow out
  - physical props

- **Conditions of Input**
  - start/stop buttons
  - automatic start/stop
  - constant movement
Alternate Technique Classification
- User Control Level

Travel
- Start to move
- Indicate position
- Indicate orientation
- Stop moving

Walking Metaphors
- Walking is the most natural travel technique
- But it’s not always practical or feasible
  - Technological limitations
  - Space limitations
- Categories based on human gait
  - Full gait: involve biomechanics of full gait cycle
  - Partial gait: mimic only some biomechanics
  - Gait negation: negate the user’s forward locomotion
Walking Metaphors

Full Gait Techniques
- Real walking
- Redirected walking
- Scaled walking

Walking Metaphors

Partial Gait Techniques
- Walking in place
- Human joystick
Walking Metaphors

Gait Negation Techniques

- Treadmills
- Passive omnidirectional treadmills
- Active omnidirectional treadmills
- Low-friction surfaces
- Step-based devices

Physical Locomotion Devices

- Omni-Directional Treadmill
- GaitMaster II
- Large Scale Tracking
Physical Locomotion Devices

String Walker

Steering Metaphors

- Most common virtual technique metaphor
- Steering refers to continuous control of the direction of motion by the user
- Travel direction is specified either
  - Through spatial interactions, or
  - With physical steering props
Steering Metaphors

Spatial Steering Techniques
- Gaze-directed
- Hand-directed (Pointing)
- Torso-directed
- Lean-directed

Physical Steering Props
- Cockpits
- Cycles
Selection-Based Travel Metaphors

- Depend on the user selecting either a target to travel to or a path to travel along
- Simplify travel by not requiring details
- Techniques take care of the actual movement
- Extremely easy to understand and use

Target-Based Travel Techniques

- Representation-based
- Dual-target
Map-based Travel Implementation

- Must know
  - map scale relative to world: $s$
  - location of world origin in map CS: $o=(x_0, y_0, z_0)$
- On button press:
  - if stylus intersects user icon, then each frame:
    - get stylus position in map CS: $(x, y, z)$
    - move icon to $(x, 0, z)$ in map CS

Map-Based Travel Implementation (cont.)

- On button release:
  - Get stylus position in map CS: $(x, y, z)$
  - Move icon to $(x, 0, z)$ in map CS
  - Desired viewpoint: $p_v = (x_v, y_v, z_v)$ where
    - $x_v = (x - x_0)/s$
    - $z_v = (z - z_0)/s$
    - $y_v = desired\ height\ at\ (x_v, y_v)$
  - Move vector: $m = (x_v - x_{curr}, y_v - y_{curr}, z_v - z_{curr}) \times (velocity/distance)$
  - Each frame for $(distance/velocity)$ frames: translate viewpoint by $m$
Selection-Based Travel Metaphors

Route-Planning Travel Techniques

- Drawing a path
- Marking points along a path

Manipulation-Based Travel Metaphors

- Manipulate either the viewpoint or world
- Should be used when both travel and object manipulation tasks are frequent
- Ideally the same metaphor can be used for both travel and object manipulation
Manipulation-Based Travel Metaphors

**Viewpoint Manipulation Techniques**
- Camera manipulation
- Avatar manipulation
- Fixed-object manipulation

**World Manipulation Techniques**
- Single-point world manipulation
- Dual-point world manipulation
Grabbing The Air Implementation (one-handed)

- On pinch:
  - Obtain initial hand position in world CS: \( (x_h, y_h, z_h) \)
- Each frame until release:
  - Obtain current hand position in world CS: \( (x'_h, y'_h, z'_h) \)
  - Hand motion vector: \( m = ((x'_h, y'_h, z'_h) - (x_h, y_h, z_h)) \)
  - Translate world by \( m \) (or viewpoint by \(-m\))
  - \( (x_h, y_h, z_h) = (x'_h, y'_h, z'_h) \)
- Cannot simply attach objects to hand – do not want to match hand rotations

Other Aspects of Travel Techniques

**Viewpoint Orientation**

- Head tracking
- Orbital viewing
- Nonisomorphic rotation
- Virtual sphere techniques
Other Aspects of Travel Techniques

**Velocity Specification**
- Discrete changes
- Continuous control
- Direct input
- Automated velocity

**Vertical Travel**
- Many techniques restrict travel to horizon
- Some techniques afford vertical travel
  - 3D steering
  - Virtual ladders
  - Virtual stairs
Other Aspects of Travel Techniques

Semiautomated Travel
- The system provides general constraints
- The user moves within those constraints

Scaling the World
- Active scaling
- Automated scaling
Other Aspects of Travel Techniques

Travel Modes

- Most techniques use a single mode for travel
- Some techniques require additional modes to transition among different travel methods
- Modes should be:
  - Well integrated to allow easy transitions
  - Clearly distinguished to avoid unintentional travel

Multiple Cameras

- Most techniques use a single camera for travel
- Some techniques incorporate different perspectives of multiple cameras
- Examples:
  - Through-the-lens
  - Transitioning to remote camera feeds
  - Snapshots of augmented scenes
Other Aspects of Travel Techniques

**Nonphysical Input**
- Not all travel techniques require physical input
- Brain-computer interfaces (BCIs) allow for travel by thinking about moving
- These interfaces require a great deal of time to train
- Else generically trained algorithms can be unresponsive and induce false positives

Wayfinding in 3D Environments
- Cognitive aspect of navigation
- Effectiveness depends on the number and quality of the wayfinding cues or aids provided
- Two types of wayfinding aids:
  - User-centered: make use of human perception
  - Environment-centered: depend on virtual world
Wayfinding in 3D Environments

User-Centered Wayfinding Cues
- Field of view
- Motion cues
- Multisensory output
- Presence
- Search strategies

Environment-Centered Wayfinding Cues
- Environment legibility
- Landmarks
- Maps
- Compasses
- Signs
- Trails
- Reference objects
Design Guidelines

- Match the travel technique to the application.
- Consider both natural and magic techniques.
- Use an appropriate combination of travel technique, display devices, and input devices.
- Choose travel techniques that can be easily integrated with other interaction techniques in the application.

Design Guidelines

- Provide multiple travel techniques to support different travel tasks in the same application.
- Make simple travel tasks easier by using target-based techniques for goal-oriented travel and steering techniques for exploration and search.
- Use a physical locomotion technique if user exertion or naturalism is required.
Design Guidelines

- The most common travel tasks should require a minimum amount of effort from the user.
- Use high-speed transitional motions, not instant teleportation, if overall environment context is important.
- Train users in sophisticated strategies to help them acquire survey knowledge.
- If a map is used, provide a you-are-here marker.

Case Studies

**VR Gaming Case Study**

- Rotating bookshelf allows the user to walk between rooms
- Virtual elevators allow for vertical travel
- Key concepts:
  - Natural physical movements for navigation can enhance the sense of presence.
  - Even with a limited tracking area, consider ways to allow and encourage the use of a physical walking metaphor.
  - If the application allows, use story elements to help users make sense of travel techniques.
Case Studies

Mobile AR Case Study
- Uses a multi-camera navigation system
- Interface shows camera viewpoints with regularly updated thumbnails of their video footage
- Variable perspective visualization blends first-person and remote viewpoints together
- Key concepts:
  - Creating a good mental map of the observed environment is crucial to adequately making use of the augmented information within.
  - The use of multi-camera systems can help by providing an overview and resolving occlusions.

Conclusion
- 3D travel is another foundational task
- Physical and virtual travel approach have various tradeoffs
- Wayfinding affects navigation in 3D UIs
- Design your virtual world to provide sufficient environment-based wayfinding cues
Next Class

- System Control
- Readings
  - 3DUI Book - Chapter 8