

REFLECTION REMOVAL AND FEATURE EXTRACTION TECHNIQUES IN
NON-COOPERATIVE VISIBLE EYE IMAGES FOR IRIS RECOGNITION

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REFLECTION REMOVAL AND FEATURE EXTRACTION TECHNIQUES IN
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To my beloved parents,
MAT RAFFEI B AB RAHMAN
AINUN BINTI SALLEH

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ABSTRACT

Research on iris recognition system nowadays focuses on identifying a person in a non-cooperative environment by capturing an eye image in motion and at different distances. A visible wavelength illumination is used to capture the eye image which is believed to be safer to the eyes as excessive level of near infrared wavelength illumination can endanger the eye. However, the quality of data captured is very low and there are large reflections with different intensities in the eye image. These have caused incorrect segmentation of iris boundaries as well as the inability to extract texture features of an iris in a non-cooperative environment leading to a reduction in the iris recognition performance. The research proposed the development of two combined methods to improve the iris recognition system. The first combined method consists of line intensity profile and support vector machine and the second is a combination of multiscale sparse representation of local Radon transform. The former identifies and classifies between reflections and non-reflections whereas the latter performs three processes: reduces noise during down sample of normalized iris, extracts an iris texture in the different angles of orientation information and uses score combination of multiscale at the end of the process to increase the matching score. These two methods were tested against UBIRIS.v2 iris database and the results of iris recognition compared to the existing methods achieved an accuracy of more than 90%.

ABSTRAK

Penyelidikan ke atas sistem pengecaman iris pada masa kini memberi tumpuan kepada mengenal pasti seseorang dalam keadaan tidak kooperatif dengan mengambil imej mata dalam pergerakan dan pada jarak yang berbeza. Satu gelombang pencahayaan tampak digunakan untuk mengambil imej mata yang dipercayai lebih selamat digunakan kepada mata kerana gelombang pencahayaan jarak dekat berasaskan inframerah yang berlebihan boleh membahayakan mata. Walau bagaimanapun, kualiti data yang diambil adalah sangat rendah dan terdapat pantulan yang besar dengan intensiti yang berbeza pada imej mata. Ini telah menghasilkan segmentasi sempadan-sempadan iris yang tidak tepat serta kegagalan untuk mengekstrak ciri-ciri tekstur iris dalam keadaan tidak kooperatif yang membawa kepada pengurangan dalam pelaksanaan pengecaman iris. Penyelidikan ini mencadangkan pembangunan dua kaedah gabungan untuk meningkatkan sistem pengecaman iris. Kaedah gabungan yang pertama terdiri daripada gabungan garis intensiti profil dan mesin sokongan vektor dan yang kedua ialah gabungan daripada perwakilan pelbagai skala jarang transformasi *Radon* tempatan. Yang pertama mengenal pasti dan mengklasifikasi antara pantulan dengan bukan pantulan manakala yang kedua menjalankan tiga proses: mengurangkan ralat semasa pengurangan sampel normal iris, mengekstrak tekstur iris dalam pelbagai sudut maklumat orientasi dan menggunakan penggabungan skor dari pelbagai skala pada proses terakhir untuk meningkatkan skor padanan. Kedua-dua kaedah ini telah diuji terhadap pangkalan data iris UBIRIS.v2 dan hasil daripada pengecaman iris berbanding dengan kaedah-kaedah yang sedia ada telah mencapai ketepatan lebih daripada 90%.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	TITLE	PAGE
	DECLARATION	ii
	DEDICATION	iii
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
	ABSTRACT	v
	ABSTRAK	vi
	TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
	LIST OF TABLES	xi
	LIST OF FIGURES	xv
	LIST OF SYMBOLS	xviii
	LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xix
1	INTRODUCTION	
	1.1 Background	1
	1.2 Challenges of Iris Recognition	3
	1.3 Current Methods in Iris Recognition	4
	1.4 Problem Statement	5
	1.5 Objective of the Study	7
	1.6 Scope of the Study	7
	1.7 Significance of the Study	8
	1.8 Organization of the Thesis	9
2	LITERATURE REVIEW	
	2.1 Introduction	11
	2.2 Iris Recognition	13

2.3	Non-cooperative Eye Images	19
2.4	Iris Segmentation Techniques	23
2.5	Iris Reflection Removal Techniques	28
2.6	Iris Feature Extraction Techniques	32
2.7	Trends and Directions	36
2.8	Summary	37
3	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	
3.1	Introduction	39
3.2	Research Operational Framework	40
3.3	Data Source and Preparation	43
3.4	Instrumentation and Results Analysis	46
3.4.1	Hardware and Software Requirements	46
3.4.2	Testing and Analysis	46
3.4.3	Evaluation Metrics	47
3.5	Summary	48
4	IRIS SEGMENTATION METHODS	
4.1	Introduction	50
4.2	Related Works	51
4.3	Material and Methods	52
4.3.1	Frontal Visible Eye Images	52
4.3.2	Segmentation of Iris	53
4.3.2.1	Canny Edge Detection	54
4.3.2.2	Circular Hough Transform	55
4.3.2.3	Eyelids and Eyelashes Removal	56
4.3.3	Normalization of Iris	57
4.3.4	Feature Extraction of Iris	58
4.3.5	Template Matching of Iris	59
4.4	Results and Discussion	60
4.4.1	Analysis of Iris Segmentation	60
4.4.2	Accuracy of Iris Recognition	62

4.4.3	Equal error rate of Iris Recognition	63
4.4.4	Decidability of Iris Recognition	64
4.5	Summary	65
5	LIPSVM: LINE INTENSITY PROFILE AND SUPPORT VECTOR MACHINE FOR IRIS REFLECTION REMOVAL	
5.1	Introduction	67
5.2	Related Works	68
5.3	Material and Method	69
5.3.1	Reflection Visible Eye Images	69
5.3.2	Preprocessing of Iris	69
5.3.2.1	Reflection Identification by Line Intensity Profile	71
5.3.2.2	Reflection Classification by Support Vector Machine	72
5.3.2.3	Filling In Reflections by Near Intensity Interpolation	75
5.3.3	Segmentation of Iris	76
5.3.4	Normalization of Iris	76
5.3.5	Feature Extraction of Iris	79
5.3.6	Template Matching of Iris	80
5.4	Results and Discussion	80
5.4.1	Intensity Reflections Analysis	80
5.4.2	Decidability of Iris Recognition	89
5.4.3	Accuracy of Iris Recognition	90
5.4.4	Equal error rate of Iris Recognition	91
5.5	Summary	92
6	MSLRT: MULTISCALE SPARSE REPRESENTATION OF LOCAL RADON TRANSFORM FOR IRIS FEATURE EXTRACTION	
6.1	Introduction	93
6.2	Related Works	94
6.3	Materials and Method	95

6.3.1	Distance Reflection Visible Eye Images	95
6.3.2	Preprocessing of Iris	97
6.3.3	Segmentation of Iris	99
6.3.4	Normalization of Iris	101
6.3.5	Feature Extraction of Iris using Down Sampled of Normalized Iris	102
6.3.6	Template Matching of Iris	103
6.4	Results and Discussion	105
6.4.1	Decidability of Iris Recognition	105
6.4.2	Accuracy of Iris Recognition	106
6.4.3	Cumulative Match Score of Iris Recognition	107
6.4.4	Area Under Curve of Iris Recognition	110
6.5	Summary	113
7	CONCLUSION	
7.1	Concluding Remarks	114
7.2	Contributions of the Research	116
7.3	Future Works	117
7.4	Closing Remarks	118
	REFERENCES	119
	LIST OF RELATED PUBLICATIONS	137
	APPENDIX	138

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
2.1	The comparison of biometric characteristics	12
2.2	Iris recognition cameras	14
2.3	Iris Databases	18
2.4	Comparison of the two image acquisition environments	20
2.5	Example eye images of the two image acquisition environments	20
2.6	Parameters for both sessions of UBIRIS.v1	21
2.7	Example UBIRIS.v1 eye images for both sessions	21
2.8	Comparison of three basic techniques of iris segmentation approaches	25
2.9	Example results of reflection removal for the existing methods	29
2.10	Example results of reflection classification method	30
2.11	Decidability results from the NICE II competition	36
3.1	Selected categories of eye images that are to be chosen from UBIRIS.v2	45
3.2	Testing analysis	47
3.3	Evaluation metrics for this study	49
4.1	Frontal RGB eye images of UBIRIS.v2 database at distance of four to eight meters	53
4.2	Canny edge detection processes	54
4.3	Circular Hough transform of iris for distance of four to eight meters	55
4.4	Segmented iris of the eye images in distance of four to eight meters	57
4.5	Normalized iris of eye images for distance of four to eight meters	58

4.6	Feature templates of normalized iris for the distance of four to eight meters	59
4.7	Accuracy of limbic and pupillary localization for different methods	61
4.8	Localization of iris at distance of four to eight meters using different methods	62
4.9	Categories of incorrect iris boundaries localization using different methods	63
4.10	Accuracy of iris recognition for different methods in distance of four to eight meters	63
4.11	Equal error rate of iris recognition for different methods in distance of four to eight meters	65
4.12	Decidability index of iris recognition for different methods in distance of four to eight meters	66
5.1	Different categories of eye images and reflections that have selected from UBIRISv2 database	70
5.2	Example of reverse intensity of green and blue pixels based on the eye images in Table 5.1	74
5.3	Example of iris segmentation for with and without reflection removal in the eye images based on the eye images in Table 5.1	77
5.4	Examples of normalized eye images with and without reflection removal in the form of rubber sheet model based on the eye images in Table 5.1	78
5.5	Examples of normalized eye images with reflection removal in the form of rubber sheet model based on the eye images in Table 5.1	79
5.6	Results of reflection classification and removal based on the eye images in Table 5.1	82
5.7	A graph of accuracy comparison for reflection classification	82
5.8	Result of comparison of reflection classification using different methods and reflection removal in the frontal eye with small reflections	83
5.9	Result of comparison of reflection classification using different methods and reflection removal in the frontal eye with large reflections	84
5.10	Result of comparison of reflection classification using different methods and reflection removal in the frontal eye with spectacle and small reflections	85
5.11	Result of comparison of reflection classification using	

	different methods and reflection removal in the frontal eye with spectacle and large reflections	86
5.12	Result of comparison of reflection classification using different methods and reflection removal in the frontal eye with off focus and small reflections	87
5.13	Result of comparison of reflection classification using different methods and reflection removal in the frontal eye with off focus and large reflections	88
5.14	Graph comparison of decidability index for iris recognition	90
5.15	Graph comparison of accuracy for iris recognition	91
5.16	Graph comparison of equal error rate for iris recognition	92
6.1	UBIRIS.v2 database setup of imaging framework	96
6.2	Different categories of distances for the visible reflection eye images that have been selected from UBIRIS.v2 database	96
6.3	Example of reflection removal of visible eye images of different distances	100
6.4	Example of iris segmentation with and without reflection removal in the visible eye images of different distances	101
6.5	Example of iris normalization of visible eye images of different distances	102
6.6	Decidability index for different levels of distances and methods	106
6.7	Accuracy of iris recognition for different levels of distances and methods	107
6.8	Area under curve for different levels of distances and methods	113

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
1.1	Scope of the study	8
2.1	The content structure of Chapter 2	12
2.2	Iris textures. (1=Arching ligaments; 2= Furrows; 3= Crypts; 4= Rings; 5= Freckles; 6= Ridges; 7= Corona; 8= Zigzag collarete)	13
2.3	(a) Passive, single, close-range and near infrared wavelength camera. (b) Active, multi-camera, long-range lens and near infrared wavelength camera. (Source: http://biometrics.idealtest.org/)	14
2.4	Framework of UBIRIS.v1 for session one. (Source: Proenca and Alexandre (2005))	20
2.5	Framework of UBIRIS.v2. Image acquisition (A,B); light sources (C,D); and subjects location (E). (Source: Proenca <i>et al.</i> (2010))	22
2.6	Global category of noise factors in UBIRIS.v2 database	22
2.7	Local category of noise factors in UBIRIS.v2 database	23
2.8	Example sequence of UBIRIS.v2 eye images acquired at the distance of four to eight meters, on a moving subjects and under dynamic lighting conditions	23
2.9	Summarization of iris segmentation	27
2.10	Reflection removal processes for Yahya <i>et al.</i> (2010)	31
2.11	Reflection removal processes for He <i>et al.</i> (2009)	31
2.12	Reflection removal processes for Aydi <i>et al.</i> (2011)	32
2.13	A quadrature pair of two dimensional of Gabor filters	33
2.14	The real and imaginary part of two dimensional of log Gabor filters	33
2.15	An illustration of feature extraction process using one dimensional of Log Gabor filter. (Source: Masek (2003))	34

3.1	Overview of the research framework	41
3.2	UBIRIS.v2 license agreement	44
3.3	Categories of eye images that are not to be selected from UBIRIS.v2	45
4.1	Circular Hough transform of limbic and pupillary boundaries	55
4.2	Overall process of iris segmentation	56
4.3	Normalized iris of the eye images in distance of four to eight meters	58
4.4	Feature template of one dimensional log Gabor filter from normalized iris	59
5.1	Block diagram of proposed iris recognition	71
5.2	Frontal left eye image with strong and weak reflections. Red color denotes as strong reflections while yellow color refers to weak reflections	72
5.3	Line intensity profile pseudo code for reflection identification	73
5.4	Framework of training classification reflection and non-reflection areas using support vector machine	75
6.1	The proposed framework	98
6.2	Steps of line intensity profile method	98
6.3	Steps of support vector machine method	99
6.4	Steps of neighboring intensity interpolation method	101
6.5	Overall processes of multiscale sparse representation of local radon transform	103
6.6	Steps of multiscale sparse representation of local radon transform	104
6.7	Example results of the down sampling of the normalized iris into three different lengths of scales	104
6.8	Masking the normalized iris (full length size) in 10×10 pixel region with wide of two in the different angles; 0° , 30° , 60° , 90° , 120° and 150°	105
6.9	Cumulative match score for all matches at the distance of 4 meter	108
6.10	Cumulative match score for all matches at the distance of 5 meter	108
6.11	Cumulative match score for all matches at the distance of 6 meter	109

6.12	Cumulative match score for all matches at distance of 7 meter	109
6.13	Cumulative match score for all matches at distance of 8 meter	109
6.14	Cumulative match score for all matches at all distances	110
6.15	ROC curve for all matches at the distance of 4 meter	111
6.16	ROC curve for all matches at the distance of 5 meter	111
6.17	ROC curve for all matches at the distance of 6 meter	111
6.18	ROC curve for all matches at the distance of 7 meter	112
6.19	ROC curve for all matches at the distance of 8 meter	112
6.20	ROC curve for all matches at all distances	112

LIST OF SYMBOLS

d	-	decidability
π	-	means
σ	-	standard deviations
n	-	total number of access
k	-	total number of candidate person
γ	-	red, blue and green intensities

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	-	Accuracy
ATM	-	Automated Teller Machine
BATH	-	University of Bath
BVC	-	First Biometrics Verification Competition
CASIA	-	Institute of Automation, Chinese Academy of Science
CPU	-	Central Processing Unit
DPI	-	Dots Per Inch
FAR	-	False Acceptance Rate
FRR	-	False Rejection Rate
GHz	-	Gigahertz
HD	-	Hamming Distance
HT	-	Hough Transform
ICE	-	Iris Challenge Evaluation
ID	-	Identification Card
ISO	-	International Organization for Standardization
LBP	-	Local Binary Pattern
LG	-	One Dimensional of Log Gabor Filter
LIP	-	Line Intensity Profile
LIPPNN	-	Line Intensity Profile and Perceptron Neural Network
LIPSVM	-	Line Intensity Profile and Support Vector Machine
LOI	-	Line of Interest
LRT	-	Local Radon Transform
MB	-	Mbyte
MMU	-	Multimedia University
MSLRT	-	Multiscale Sparse Representation of Local Radon Transform
NICE I	-	Noisy Iris Challenge Evaluation Part I

NICE II	-	Noisy Iris Challenge Evaluation Part II
NIST	-	National Institute of Standards and Technology
RAM	-	Random Access Memory
RANSAC	-	Random Sample Consensus
RGB	-	Red, Green and Blue
ROC	-	Receiver Operating Characteristic
SIFT	-	Scale Invariant Feature Transform
SLRT	-	Sparse Representation of Local Radon Transform
SRGB	-	Standard RGB
TIFF	-	Tagged Image File Format
TSR	-	Total Success Rate
UBIRIS.v1	-	University of Beira Interior version One
UBIRIS.v2	-	University of Beira Interior version Two
UPOL	-	University of Olomuc
WVU	-	West Virginia University

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Currently, almost every individual requires a security number or password to access an automated teller machine (ATM) or databases and identification card (ID) to pass through restricted areas such as the airport (Radman *et al.*, 2011) or security screening areas. However, many problems had occurred by using these conventional methods in identifying or authenticating a person as it can be easily forgotten, stolen or fraud by other individual (Radman *et al.*, 2011). In order to overcome these drawbacks, a reliable and strong recognition system is needed and therefore, a biometric recognition system has been introduced recently due to its higher security and speed, reliability, ease of use and difficulty of duplicating (Sonkamble *et al.*, 2010; Tan *et al.*, 2010; Sankowski *et al.*, 2010; Min and Park, 2009).

Biometric systems recognized persons using either their physiological, behavioral or both features (Mir *et al.*, 2011; Sonkamble *et al.*, 2010). The physiological features of biometrics are based on information derived from the direct measurement of a body part such as iris (Rankin *et al.*, 2012), fingerprints (Akbari and Sadr, 2012), retina (Choras, 2010) and face (Wright *et al.*, 2009), while the behavioral features of biometrics are based on the measurements and information extracted from human actions such as gait (Amin and Hatzinakos, 2012) and signature (Murab and Deshmukh, 2012).

Among those biometrics recognition systems, iris recognition system is believed as the most promising method in providing a higher accuracy in identifying a person where each individual has their very own unique iris pattern with higher degree of freedom (Jeong *et al.*, 2010). According to Park *et al.* (2007) and Daugman (2004), the chance of finding two persons that have the same identical irises is close to zero and most iris patterns remain stable over the life time. In addition, the left and right irises of an individual can be treated as separate unique identifier (Sonkamble *et al.*, 2010).

There are four stages in iris recognition system: (i) image acquisition; (ii) iris preprocessing; (iii) iris feature extraction; and (iv) template matching. Firstly, in image acquisition stage, two types of illumination spectrum which is visible or near infrared may be used and to date, most of the commercial systems use the near infrared solution (Sankowski *et al.*, 2010). Next, the iris preprocessing stage consist of two steps namely segmentation and normalization. This preprocessing stage gives desirability and precise measurement of iris area in the image used for the iris feature extraction and matching stages. Then, in the feature extraction stage, the unique iris features (Radman *et al.*, 2011) are extracted followed by matching it with the other unique features of iris. Finally, the available databases of registered users which have been stored previously are evaluated (Sankowski *et al.*, 2010).

All the aforementioned stages of iris recognition system are possible source of errors resulting in inaccurate recognition of a person (Sankowski *et al.*, 2010). The current accurateness to identify a person is due to the implementation of methods for the eye images captured in cooperative environment setting and under near infrared wavelength illumination (Jeong *et al.*, 2010; Proenca *et al.*, 2010). However, the performance of current methods is decreased when they are applied in the eye images captured in non-cooperative environment and under visible wavelength illumination. In the non-cooperative environment, the eye images are captured in the movement and at different distances while in the cooperative environment, the eye images are captured in the static position and at specific distances.

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) had promoted an Iris Challenge Evaluation (ICE) where focused on the eye images that captured under near infrared wavelength illumination and in the non-cooperative environment (Boddeti and Kumar, 2008; Miyazawa *et al.*, 2008; Vasta *et al.*, 2008). However, the excessive level of near infrared wavelength illumination for the non-cooperative environment could endanger the eye of a person as larger distances might require more near infrared wavelength illumination (Proenca *et al.*, 2010). This is because, the normal usages of near infrared wavelength illumination is in the range of 700-900 nm (McConnon *et al.*, 2010; Proenca *et al.*, 2010).

Then, a Noisy Iris Challenge Evaluation Part I (NICE I) contest was formed exclusively to measure the effectiveness of iris segmentation of the eye images that were captured in non-cooperative environment and under visible wavelength illumination (Chen *et al.*, 2010; Li *et al.*, 2010; Sankowski *et al.*, 2010; Tan *et al.*, 2010). Still, the levels of realistic noises for the eye images have received criticisms. Due to those criticisms, a Noisy Iris Challenge Evaluation Part II (NICE II) contest was formed exclusively to evaluate the degraded visible wavelength iris images in the signatures encoding and matching stages (Tan *et al.*, 2012; Santos and Hoyle, 2012). The performance of iris recognition for the database that captured in the non-cooperative environment and under visible wavelength illumination has showed significant results in this contest. The following two sections will discuss the challenges as well as current respective solutions, toward achieving accurate iris recognition. Research goal, objectives, scopes and significance ensue thereafter. The chapter ends with thesis organization.

1.2 Challenges of Iris Recognition

Although the current iris recognition technology could accurately identified a person, this system is recognized a person in cooperative acquisition environment and under near infrared wavelength illumination. In contrast, the performance of this system is decreased to identify a person in non-cooperative acquisition environment and under visible wavelength illumination. One of the reasons is due to the degraded

data quality that caused incorrect localization of iris boundaries. Therefore, this issue befits as first challenge to iris recognition.

In order to localize the iris boundaries correctly in this acquisition environment, existing of reflections should be removed or reduced. Majorities of eye images captured in this acquisition environment contained reflections. The existing of reflections has caused disruption of iris boundaries detection although the method of iris segmentation is tolerant to ‘noise’ (Sankowski *et al.*, 2010; Li *et al.*, 2010; Labati and Scotti, 2010). Many existing reflection removal methods are able to remove or reduce the reflections. Unfortunately, those methods could not detect reflections that below the threshold values and falsely detected sclera area as reflections. These are due to the existing of reflections that is large and have different intensities. Hence, this issue has become second challenge to iris recognition.

The third challenge to iris recognition is extraction features of iris at different distances and contained reflections. The existing feature extraction methods are still unable to extract the iris textures in this condition due to their methods that could not reduce the level of noise and complexity of computation of iris feature extraction. As a result, this has caused decreasing of iris recognition performance in term of accuracy and decidability index.

1.3 Current Methods in Iris Recognition

In general, current methods for iris recognition can be categorized into three: image enhancement, feature detection and pattern recognition.

- (i) Image enhancement method usually adjusts the digital eye image to make it more suitable for further analysis where noises such as reflections (Sankowski *et al.*, 2010; Tan *et al.*, 2010; He *et al.*, 2009), off focus (Sazonova *et al.*, 2011; Kang and Park, 2007), occlusion of

eyelids and eyelashes (Mirza *et al.*, 2009) are removed or reduced. Several approaches of image enhancement are used for example noise reduction approach (Park and Kang, 2004), filtering approach (Hosseini *et al.*, 2010), interpolation approach (Aydi *et al.*, 2011; Santos and Proenca, 2009), histogram equalization approach (Kumar *et al.*, 2011) and thresholding approach (Dong *et al.*, 2009; Du *et al.*, 2009).

- (ii) Feature detection method in iris recognition aims at evaluating extractions of eye image information and generating local selections at every eye image point whereby frequently in the form of isolated points, continuous curve or connected region. It can be divided into blobs approach (Jarujareet and Covavisaruch, 2010) and edges approach (Anitha *et al.*, 2011). For blobs approach, it consists of laplacian of Gaussian (Chouhan and Shukla, 2010) and difference of Gaussian (Kang *et al.*, 2010) while for edges approach, it consists of Canny (Patil and Patilkulkarani, 2009) and Sobel (Gupta *et al.*, 2010) operators.
- (iii) Pattern recognition method generally categorized the eye image according to the type of learning procedure used to generate the output value where it can be divided into classification approach (Shams *et al.*, 2011; Patil and Subbaraman, 2011) and clustering approach (Azhar, 2011; Tsai *et al.*, 2010). According to NICE II results competition, both approaches are able to enhance the performance of iris recognition (Bowyer, 2012).

1.4 Problem Statement

The solution for iris recognition in non-cooperative environment drawbacks is briefly explained as follows:

“Given a database of visible eye images that was captured at different distances and contained reflections, the challenge is to localize the iris boundaries

accurately for this data condition. Moreover, existing of reflections that is large and have different intensities must also be removed or reduced to localize the iris boundaries correctly. Lastly, the method must be able to extract the iris features in this data condition to reduce the level of noise and complexity of computation in order to increase the accuracy, decidability index, cumulative match characteristic and area under curve.”

Based on the above challenges, several causes will require to be answered by the possible solution. The first cause is incorrect localization of iris boundaries due to the degradation of data quality that was captured at different distances and contained reflections. It is discovered that many existing methods are able to localize the iris boundaries in good data quality which was captured at specific distance and contained less noise. However, due to those methods that are not tolerant to noise, those methods have led to improper localization of limbic and pupillary boundaries of iris. Thus, this study aims to provide a segmentation method that is tolerant to noise and able to localize the iris boundaries for this data.

The second cause is referring to the existing of reflections that is large and has different intensities in the eye images. Many existing reflection removal methods focused only on the small reflections that have intensities above the threshold values. However, intensities of reflections that are below than threshold value could not be detected and removed. In addition, sclera area tends to falsely identified as reflections due to the intensity pixel of sclera that has the same value with the threshold value. Therefore, this study aims to generate a method to detect the large reflections with different intensities. In addition, the proposed method is believed able to classify between reflections and non-reflections.

The third cause is related to the complexity of computation of iris feature extraction method due to the incapability of existing methods to extract the iris textures of eye images captured at different distances and contained reflections. Moreover, the existing methods are unable to reduce the level of noise during extraction of iris features which has caused decreasing of iris recognition accuracy. Thus, in this study, a method that could extract the iris features in this condition will

be used where it could reduce the level of noise and complexity of computation of iris features.

1.5 Objective of the Study

In order to realize the goal of this study to solve the existing of reflections in order to get correct iris boundaries localization and to extract the iris features at different distance and contained reflections, several objectives need to be achieved:

- (i) To identify iris segmentation methods to correctly localize the limbic and pupillary boundaries of iris for the eye images that captured at different distances and contained reflections.
- (ii) To develop a fusion method of line intensity profile and support vector machine to identify and classify the reflections and non-reflections for the non-cooperative frontal visible eye images.
- (iii) To expand a combined method of multiscale sparse representation of local radon transform in order to extract the iris texture for different distances of visible reflection eye images.

1.6 Scope of the Study

In this study, the eye images database of UBIRIS.v2 is used which was captured in the non-cooperative environment and under visible wavelength illumination. The eye images of this database were taken at distance of four to eight meters. There are several of ‘noises’ existed in the eye images for this database such as blurring, reflections and off-angles. But, the most common ‘noise’ in this database is reflections (McConnon *et al.*, 2010). Thus, the eye images that contained large reflections with different intensities are randomly selected. About 1,000 eye images are used for the research purpose. A circular Hough transform is used to localize the limbic and pupil boundaries of iris during iris segmentation process. A

fusing method of line intensity profile and support vector machine is applied to identify and classify reflections and non-reflections in the eye images. To evaluate the fusing method to remove reflections in the eye images, the 1,000 eye images are divided into left and right eyes where each sides has 500 eye images. A combined method of multiscale sparse representation of local radon transform is used to extract the iris features in this database. To evaluate the combined method to extract the iris features in the eye images, the 1,000 eye images are divided into different distances; from four to eight meters where each distance has 200 eye images. The iris recognition performance for the proposed methods are analyzed using equal error rate, decidability index, cumulative match characteristic, area under curve and accuracy. The scope of this study is simplified in Figure 1.1.

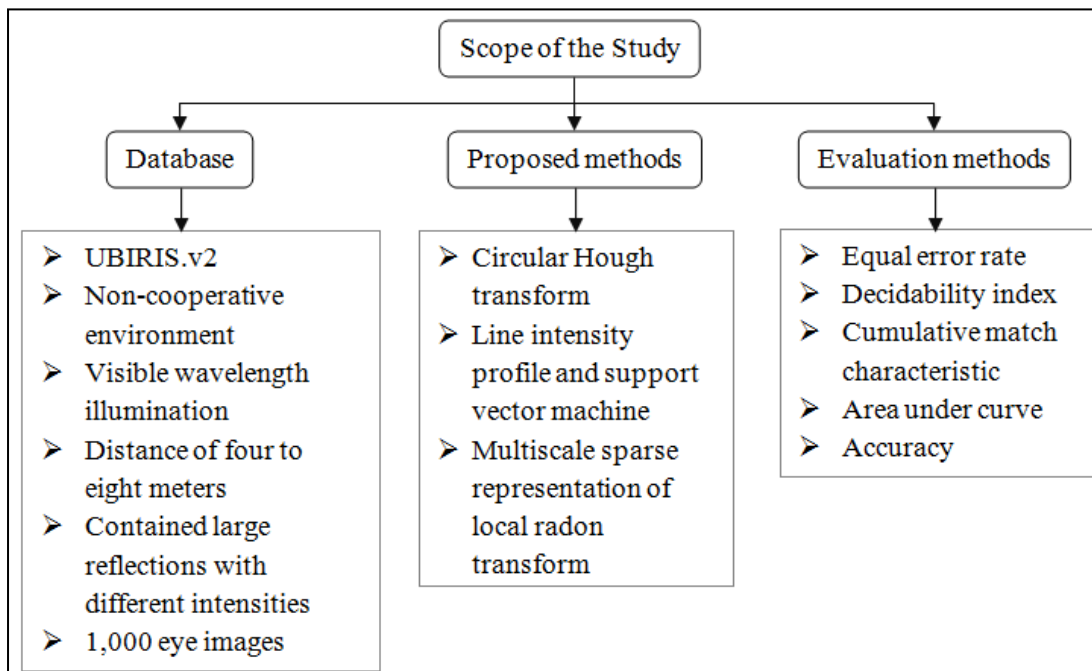


Figure 1.1 Scope of the study

1.7 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study can be divided into two main categories: (i) computational aspect; and (ii) security aspect. From computational aspect, the

proposed method is intended to increase the performance of iris recognition for the database of eye images that was captured in non-cooperative environment and under visible wavelength illumination. It serves as an alternative for laboratory method to identify a person. From the security aspect, the former application of security system such as identification card, pin number and password is easily to be duplicate, forgot and stolen. Hence, the implementation of iris recognition is more reliable and secure. In border-crossing system, the iris recognition system is used to prevent illegal immigrants and former expellees from entering a country using fraudulent travel documents (Daugman and Malhas, 2004).

In addition, iris recognition provides crime reduction for school area where it identifies people who had been preauthorized to enter the schools (Cohn, 2006; Uchida *et al.*, 2004). In the area of police, one of the usages of iris recognition is detecting a person who is under alcohol influence where due to alcohol consumption, pupil dilates or constricts which causes deformation in iris pattern (Arora *et al.*, 2012). Smart cards are increasingly being used as a form of identification and authentication. Integration of iris recognition with the smart card has developed a high security access environment (Abdullah *et al.*, 2011). The implementation of iris recognition for surveillance system has provided better acquiring of eye images with large capture volume (Bashir *et al.*, 2008).

1.8 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is organized into seven chapters. A general description on the content of each chapter in is given as follows:

- (i) Chapter 1 defines the challenges, problems, current methods, objectives, scopes and significance of the study.
- (ii) Chapter 2 reviews the main issues of interest, which iris recognition, non-cooperative iris images, iris segmentation techniques, iris reflection removal techniques and iris feature extraction techniques.

- (iii) Chapter 3 presents the design of the computational method that supports the objectives of the study. This includes data sources, instrumentations and analyses.
- (iv) Chapter 4 discusses the implementation of circular Hough transform in localizing the limbic and pupillary boundaries of iris for the eye images captured in the non-cooperative environment and under visible wavelength illumination.
- (v) Chapter 5 describes the method of LIPSVM which fusing of line intensity profile and support vector machine to identify and classify the reflections and non-reflections in the non-cooperative visible eye images.
- (vi) Chapter 6 explains the combined method of multiscale sparse representation of local radon transform to extract the iris features from the eye images captured at distance of four to eight meters and contained reflections.
- (vii) Chapter 7 draws overall conclusions of the achieved results and presents the contributions of the study as well as recommends the potential enhancements for future study.

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