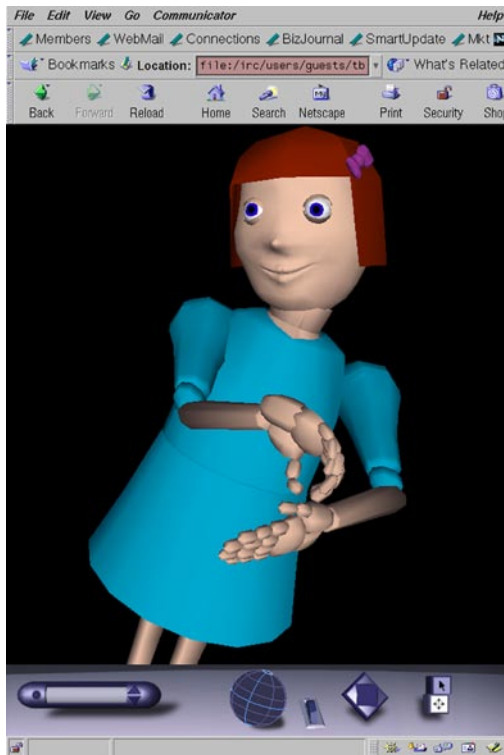




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American Sign Language Project



An animated girl in VRML illustrating the ASL sign for "Computer" as she appears in a Web Browser.



IRC internship student, Jodi Kravetzker (left), working with Sarah Geitz (right) to create the hand positions for the VRML model.

Signs for Computer Terminology

Sarah Geitz, former Professor at Gallaudet University and Indiana University, was awarded a Special Projects Grant from ACM SIGGRAPH to create a web site of VRML models and animations of 150-200 American Sign Language (ASL) signs for communication of computer-related terminology.

The intent of the website is for a user to login, select an avatar, pick the computer terms they would like to learn, and then launch a VRML file that will allow them to see their avatar making the sign. VRML will allow the user to move around the avatar and see movement from any angle.

Animation and Visualization

Effective ASL signing depends on subtle movements of head, shoulders, arms and hands. Ordinary "keyframe" animation to recreate these subtle movements is time intensive and not always successful. Recording the actual movements of the sign is much more accurate.

The IRC is collaborating with Sarah Geitz to record the motion capture data for all the signs, create the needed hand positions, and develop a pool of avatars that users can select from. IRC Interns are involved in all steps of creating the over 800 VRML files that will be needed.

Production Notes

Project Title : Signs For Computer Terminology

Project Director : Sarah Geitz

Funding : ACM SIGGRAPH Special Projects Program

Motion Capture and Technical Directors : Alan Price, Tim Best

UMBC Students : Jodi Kravetzker