(12 pts – 20-30 minutes) Watch the Sixth Sense [instructions removed to save space]

FYI: I made the following assumptions (sorry?) about how this works because the video wasn’t clear

- The gear seems tiny enough that it could be worn at all times in a necklace, on glasses, or something similar.
- It seems only conditional upon wearing those 4 finger caps – which could easily be installed on your set of winter gloves for year round use as well.
- This system, for the purpose of this question, is linked to your mobile phone, somehow.

If I’m not missing the boat on this one, I think one application for which this technology would be suited for is picture taking. I think the whole process of picture taking on-the-go (specifically on-the-go because hardly anyone is aiming to be a pro photographer with their cell phone) would be improved with this technology (given a decent camera that autofocuses, is of decent resolution, etc) for a variety of reasons. First, I would value it for eliminating the constraints on speed and convenience – no waiting upwards of 20 seconds to unlock my iPhone 3G and launch the camera app and another 4 just for the picture to snap. With the Sixth Sense, I wouldn’t even have to pull my phone from my pocket or worry about the weather conditions. I could take pictures instantly in the worst of weather, all while staying warm! Secondly, I would value the mapping this device gives with respect to the Buxton article, because the design simplifies the camera system – by having the ‘input’ device be your hands (more specifically, the framing of your hands) rather than one of 16 buttons on a camera. My mental model of focusing on something in front of me (and capturing it) fits very nicely with what I have to do for the device to capture it – simply frame it (capture it) with my hands. Therefore, I don’t have to worry about whether what I wanted was in frame because my hands would be the frame. I could take panoramas or vertical shots with a simple chance of my hand orientation. This is great, according to Buxton, because I can express what I want (to the Sixth Sense computer) in one gesture – framing my hands. Unfortunately, it looks like you’d lose the feedback associated with your mobile camera – it’d be difficult to see whether your picture was in focus, whether everyone was smiling, etc. because you couldn’t instantly review the picture as is the case with mobile phones. The tradeoff here being that you can get a picture instantly and capture those moments you’d miss otherwise.

I don’t think this would be well suited for anything involving textual input like texting or e-mailing – at least in the context of how it was shown. While I agree that it would be nice to project a full size keyboard on the table in front of me to compose an email, I certainly wouldn’t like my private messages and replies being projected in a similar fashion. Even if the content wasn’t sensitive, I wouldn’t feel comfortable letting everyone nearby watch me compose an e-mail or something – especially if I was supposed to be paying attention in class/meeting. A phone is more discrete. Projecting it onto my hand is no better – I’m now only typing with one hand (much slower) and I have a very interrupted viewing area. Also, feedback is severely lacking (at least with a handheld, you get tactile feedback) which may increase the presence of errors. Also, I suppose you’d be notified of a new message with some sort of similar projection as well, which I’d find far too intrusive. Also, unlike the picture taking application, this application doesn’t mesh well with having to wear gloves or inclement weather (though I guess regular texting doesn’t either) – I certainly wouldn’t want both of my hands exposed all waving around while it’s -15 and windy outside. I’d want them in my pockets.

1. Buxton, Bill. “There’s more to interaction than meets the eye...”