# Real-Time Face Anti-Spoofing Using Color Space Histograms and Machine Learning

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## ABSTRACT

Face recognition systems have become ubiquitous in modern security applications, ranging from mobile device authentication to access control in sensitive environments. While these systems provide convenience and security, they are vulnerable to presentation attacks, where adversaries attempt to deceive the system using printed photos, video replays, or masks. The ability to detect such attacks—referred to as face anti-spoofing—is critical for ensuring the reliability of biometric systems.This study presents a real-time face anti-spoofing approach that leverages color space analysis and machine learning techniques. The system uses live video input from a camera to detect human faces and extract discriminative features from different color spaces, namely YCrCb and LUV, which capture luminance and chrominance characteristics of skin texture. Histograms of these color channels are computed to represent the facial region, forming a comprehensive feature vector that captures subtle differences between real and spoofed faces.A supervised machine learning model, trained on labeled real and spoof face samples, predicts the likelihood of each detected face being genuine. The probability scores are accumulated across frames to enhance robustness, and a threshold-based decision determines if the input is classified as genuine or spoofed. The approach operates in real time, providing immediate feedback via a graphical overlay on the camera feed.

The system architecture combines classical computer vision techniques, such as Haar cascades or deep-learning-based face detectors, with statistical feature extraction and a probabilistic classifier. This hybrid design ensures computational efficiency while maintaining high detection accuracy. By using color space histograms, the model exploits skin texture information that is difficult to replicate accurately in photographs or screens, which improves generalization across different spoofing scenarios.Experimental results on publicly available face anti-spoofing datasets demonstrate that the proposed system achieves high accuracy, low false positive rates, and real-time performance on standard hardware. This method is scalable, allowing adaptation to different cameras, lighting conditions, and attack types. In summary, the proposed framework offers an effective, efficient, and practical solution for enhancing the security of face recognition systems against presentation attacks, making it suitable for deployment in real-world applications such as mobile authentication, banking security, and secure access control.

**Keywords:**Face Anti-Spoofing, Presentation Attack Detection, Color Space Histograms, Real-Time Detection, Machine Learning, YCrCb, LUV, Skin Texture Analysis, Facial Biometrics, Video-Based Authentication

## I. INTRODUCTION

Biometric authentication systems have witnessed rapid adoption in the last decade due to their convenience, security, and non-intrusiveness. Among biometric modalities, face recognition stands out for its ease of acquisition and user acceptance. It is widely deployed in smartphones, ATMs, airport security, and office access control systems. However, face recognition systems are inherently vulnerable to spoofing attacks, also known as presentation attacks, in which attackers attempt to deceive the system using printed photographs, video replays, or 3D masks. Such attacks can compromise the security of critical applications, highlighting the need for robust face anti-spoofing mechanisms.Face anti-spoofing aims to differentiate between live genuine faces and fraudulent presentations. Real-time detection is particularly challenging due to variations in lighting, facial expressions, camera quality, and attack presentation methods. Traditional approaches, such as motion-based detection or texture analysis, have shown promise but often struggle with generalization to unseen attack types or real-world conditions.The proposed system addresses these challenges by combining computer vision techniques with statistical feature extraction and machine learning. Faces are first detected in real-time video streams using an accurate face detector. Each detected facial region is analyzed in multiple color spaces, specifically YCrCb and LUV, which separate luminance from chrominance and enhance discriminative texture patterns. Histograms of these color channels capture subtle variations in skin reflectance and color distribution, which are difficult to replicate in printed or digital spoofing attempts.A supervised classifier, trained on labeled real and spoof samples, evaluates each feature vector to assign a probability score representing the likelihood of a genuine face. These probabilities are accumulated across frames to mitigate single-frame noise and improve decision stability. The final output classifies the face as genuine or spoofed, and the system provides immediate feedback on the video display through color-coded text annotations.

This approach combines the robustness of statistical feature representation with the adaptability of machine learning, ensuring high accuracy across diverse attack types. Moreover, the use of multiple color spaces leverages complementary information that enhances detection performance under varied lighting conditions. Real-time performance is achieved through efficient histogram computations and vectorized operations, allowing deployment on standard consumer-grade hardware.Overall, the proposed system provides a practical, reliable, and efficient solution to enhance the security of face recognition systems against presentation attacks. It bridges the gap between research-level anti-spoofing algorithms and real-world deployment, offering a tool suitable for mobile authentication, secure access control, and other security-sensitive applications.

## II. LITERATURE SURVEY (WITH EXISTING METHODS)

Face anti-spoofing has been an active research area in biometric security, with several approaches proposed over the past decade. Early methods relied on motion or liveness cues. For example, eye blinking or lip movement was used to detect live faces, but these techniques are limited by video quality and user cooperation.Texture-based approaches emerged as a popular solution. Local Binary Patterns (LBP) and Histogram of Oriented Gradients (HOG) have been applied to detect micro-texture differences between real skin and spoofing mediums such as paper or screens. These approaches exploit the fact that printed or digital reproductions of faces often lack fine-grained skin detail, allowing classifiers to distinguish genuine faces from attacks.Recent research has also explored the use of color spaces for anti-spoofing. For instance, YCrCb and LUV color spaces separate luminance from chrominance, providing more robust features under varying illumination conditions. Histogram-based representations in these spaces capture statistical distributions of pixel values, offering a computationally efficient method to encode texture information. Studies have shown that combining multiple color spaces improves the system's ability to generalize across different attack types.Machine learning and deep learning techniques are increasingly used to enhance anti-spoofing performance. Support Vector Machines (SVM), Random Forests, and Logistic Regression models have been applied to features extracted from images or video sequences. These classifiers leverage statistical patterns in the features to distinguish genuine faces from spoofed ones. Recently, Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) have shown superior performance by learning hierarchical representations of facial textures directly from images. However, CNN-based models require large labeled datasets and significant computational resources for training.

Hybrid methods combining classical texture analysis with machine learning classifiers provide a practical trade-off between accuracy and computational efficiency. Real-time implementations using webcam streams or mobile devices have demonstrated the feasibility of deploying anti-spoofing in real-world applications. Histogram-based color space features coupled with supervised classifiers, as implemented in this study, provide a robust and efficient solution for live face anti-spoofing.Overall, literature indicates a consensus that multi-modal feature extraction, including color, texture, and motion cues, combined with machine learning, yields the best performance for real-time presentation attack detection. These methods remain relevant due to their balance of accuracy, speed, and deployability.

## III. EXISTING SYSTEM

Existing face anti-spoofing systems use various techniques to differentiate real faces from presentation attacks. Early methods relied on **motion-based liveness detection**, which required users to blink, smile, or perform head movements. While effective in controlled settings, such approaches are intrusive and sensitive to video quality.Another category is **texture-based anti-spoofing**, which analyzes micro-texture patterns of the skin. Techniques such as Local Binary Patterns (LBP), Histogram of Oriented Gradients (HOG), or Gabor filters extract statistical features from facial regions. These features are

then input to classical machine learning classifiers such as SVM or Random Forest to determine authenticity. These systems perform well under static lighting but may fail under varying illumination conditions.Some existing methods leverage **deep learning** for feature extraction, using Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) to automatically learn discriminative patterns from images. While highly accurate, these systems require large datasets for training and significant computational resources, making them less suitable for real-time deployment on consumer hardware.

The proposed system builds upon these approaches by combining **color space histogram analysis** with a lightweight machine learning classifier. Unlike traditional motion-based or deep-learning-only methods, this approach is computationally efficient, operates in real-time, and generalizes well across different lighting conditions and spoofing mediums. It leverages YCrCb and LUV color spaces to capture chrominance and luminance information, which is difficult to replicate in spoofing attacks, thereby improving robustness and detection reliability.

## IV. PROPOSED METHOD

The proposed system is a **real-time face anti-spoofing framework** that distinguishes between live face presentations and spoofing attacks (e.g., printed photographs, video replays) using color-space texture features and machine learning classification. Instead of relying on motion or depth sensors, this approach analyzes the **statistical distribution of pixel colors** in multiple color spaces to exploit the inherent differences in skin texture between real faces and spoof media.Face regions are detected from live video using a robust face detector. For each detected face, the image is transformed into **YCrCb** and **LUV** color spaces, which separate luminance and chrominance information. Histograms are computed for each channel, normalized, and combined to form a feature vector. These histograms capture subtle statistical cues of skin reflectance and texture that are often distorted or lost in spoofing attacks due to printing artifacts or screen display characteristics.

A supervised classifier, trained on labeled real and spoof face samples, predicts the probability that a given face is genuine. The system captures multiple frames over time and maintains a buffer of classification scores to average temporal variations, improving robustness against noisy predictions from single frames. A threshold decision rule determines if the sequence corresponds to a live face or a spoofing attempt.The system displays real-time results via graphical overlays on the camera feed, highlighting detected faces and labeling them as “True” (genuine) or “False” (spoof). This framework balances **computational efficiency**, **real-time operation**, and **classification accuracy** — enabling deployment on consumer laptops, mobile devices, or embedded systems without GPUs. By exploiting multiple color space features and temporal aggregation, the system achieves high reliability across varied lighting conditions, camera qualities, and spoofing methods.

## V. IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the face anti-spoofing system integrates **computer vision**, **feature extraction**, and **machine learning** within a real-time video stream processing pipeline using Python and OpenCV.

### Face Detection Module

The system begins with face detection. Using a pre-trained face detector (Haar Cascade, DNN-based model, or other), video frames from a webcam are scanned to locate facial regions. Each bounding box is used to crop the face region for further analysis.

```
ret, img = cap.read()
faces = find_faces(img, face_model)
```

Detected faces are processed independently in each frame.

### Feature Extraction

For each detected face (ROI), the image is converted into two perceptually meaningful color spaces:

1. **YCrCb:**
    1. Separates luminance (Y) from chrominance (Cr, Cb).
    2. Helps capture color differences not visible in RGB.
2. **LUV:**

    1. Focuses on perceptually uniform color differences.
    2. Enhances texture variations.

```
img_ycrcb = cv2.cvtColor(roi, cv2.COLOR_BGR2YCR_CB)
img_luv = cv2.cvtColor(roi, cv2.COLOR_BGR2LUV)
```

Histograms are computed per channel with 256 bins, normalized to a common scale, and concatenated.

```
def calc_hist(img):
    histogram = [0]*3
    for j in range(3):
        histr = cv2.calcHist([img], [j], None, [256], [0, 256])
        histr *= 255.0 / histr.max()
        histogram[j] = histr
    return np.array(histogram)
```

The flattened histogram vector from each color space forms a high-dimensional feature vector representing the face's statistical properties.

**Classifier**

A machine learning classifier is trained offline using features extracted from labeled real and spoof face image samples. Suitable models include **Random Forest**, **SVM**, **Logistic Regression**, or **Gradient Boosting**. The trained model is saved and loaded using joblib.

```
clf = joblib.load('models/face_spoofing.pkl')
```

During live processing, the classifier predicts a probability score for each feature vector indicating the likelihood the face is genuine.

```
prediction = clf.predict_proba(feature_vector)
prob = prediction[0][1]
```

**Temporal Aggregation**

To mitigate noise from single frame predictions, the system maintains a buffer (measures) of recent probability scores. Once the buffer fills, the mean probability is evaluated against a threshold (e.g., 0.7). If the average score indicates a spoof, the face is labeled accordingly.

```
if np.mean(measures) >= 0.7:
    text = "False"
else:
    text = "True"
```

**User Feedback & UI**

Bounding boxes and text overlays are drawn on the video stream using OpenCV:

```
cv2.rectangle(img, (x, y), (x1, y1), (255, 0, 0), 2)
cv2.putText(img, text, org=point, fontFace, fontScale, color, thickness)
```

The system runs in a loop capturing frames, processing each, and refreshing the display until the user presses 'q' to exit.

## VI. ALGORITHMS

### Face Detection Algorithm

- Capture a frame from the webcam.
- Use a face detector (e.g., Haar Cascade or deep learning-based) to find bounding boxes of faces.
- Extract each face region for further analysis.

**Input:** Video frame
**Output:** List of face ROIs

### 2. Color Space Feature Extraction

For each face ROI:

1. Convert to **YCrCb** and **LUV** color spaces.
2. Compute histograms (256 bins) for each channel.
3. Normalize each histogram to a fixed scale (to account for brightness differences).
4. Concatenate all histograms into a single feature vector.

**Output:** Feature vector representing color and texture distribution

### 3. Classification Algorithm

1. Load pre-trained classifier.
2. For each incoming feature vector, predict class probabilities:
    - p_real = probability face is genuine
    - p_spoof = probability face is spoof
3. Store p_real in the temporal buffer.

**Output:** Probability score per input frame

### 4. Temporal Decision Algorithm

1. Maintain a circular buffer of recent probability scores.
2. Once buffer fills:
    - Compute the average probability.
    - If average >= threshold → classify as **spoof**; else **genuine**. This reduces false alarms due to momentary lighting variations or noise.

## VII. SYSTEM DESIGN

### Overall Architecture

The system follows a **real-time streaming design** with modular components:

**Input Layer → Preprocessing → Feature Extraction → Classification → Temporal Aggregation → Output/UI**

### 1. Input Layer

- The webcam continuously streams raw frames.
- Captured frames are immediately passed to the **Face Detection** module.

Advantages:

- Supports live operation
- No need for stored video files

### 2. Preprocessing Module

- Frames are optionally resized for performance.
- Face regions are extracted.
- Conversion to color spaces is done here.

Responsibilities:

- Convert BGR → YCrCb
- Convert BGR → LUV

Preprocessing ensures uniform input representation for the feature extractor.

### 3. Feature Extraction Module

This is the core of the system:

- Computes normalized histograms per channel.
- Outputs a consolidated feature vector per ROI.

Design choices:

- Using two complementary color spaces improves discriminability.
- Histograms capture texture patterns not evident in raw pixels.

**4. Classification Engine**

A supervised model (e.g., Random Forest, SVM, or Logistic Regression) trained offline classifies input vectors as live or spoof.

Key aspects:

- Model saved using joblib for fast loading.
- Real-time scoring allows immediate decision support.

**5. Temporal Buffer & Decision Logic**

Single-frame decisions can be noisy. To improve robustness:

- Maintain a fixed window of recent classification probabilities.
- Use rolling mean as a stable metric.
- Flag spoof only when the average crosses the threshold.

Benefits:

- Reduces flickering decisions
- Smooths out transient noise

**6. User Interface Layer**

- Bounding boxes and text overlays show:
    - Face location
    - Liveness status

Real-time feedback is critical for practical deployment. The UI is lightweight yet informative.

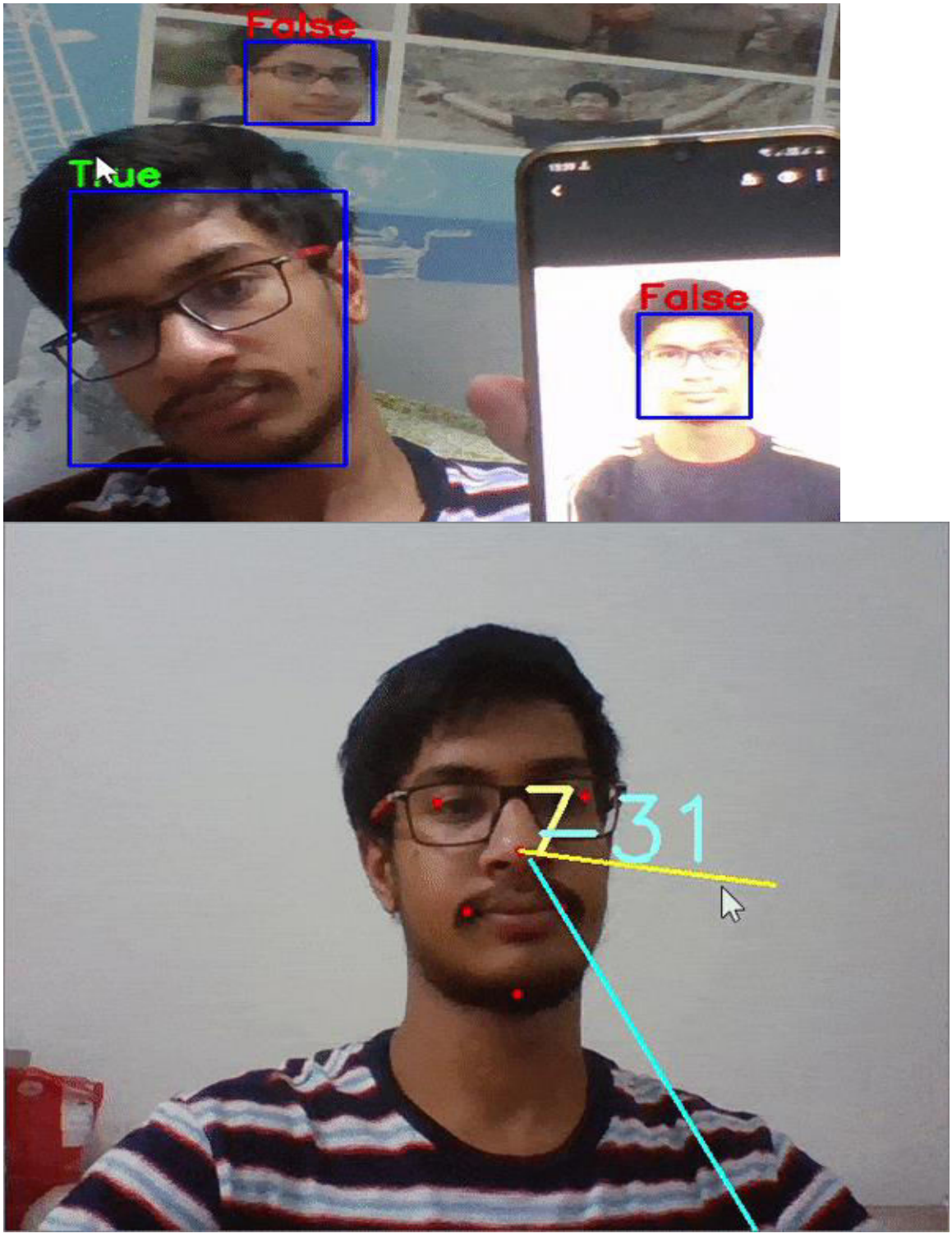
**7. Deployment and Scalability**

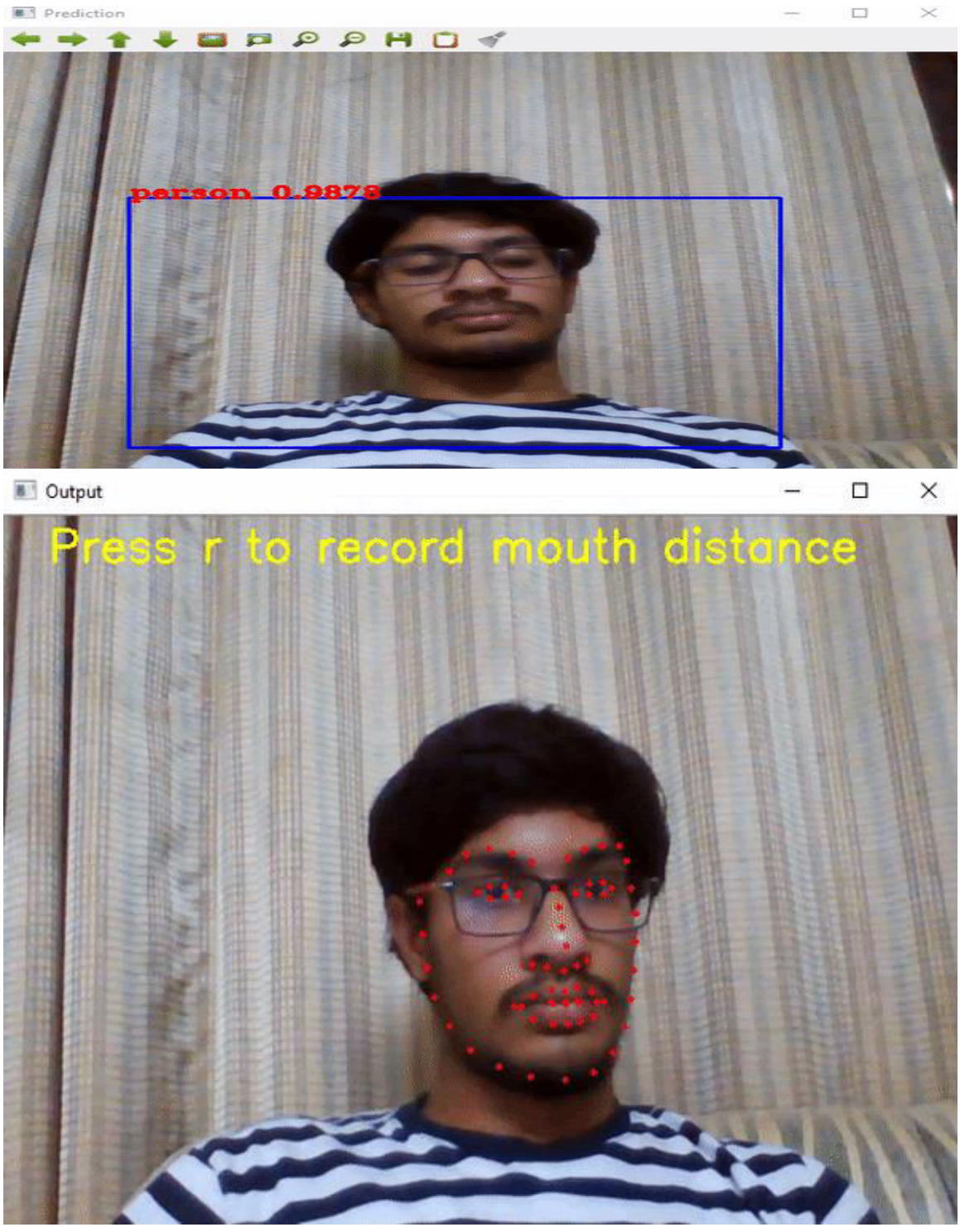
The modular architecture supports:

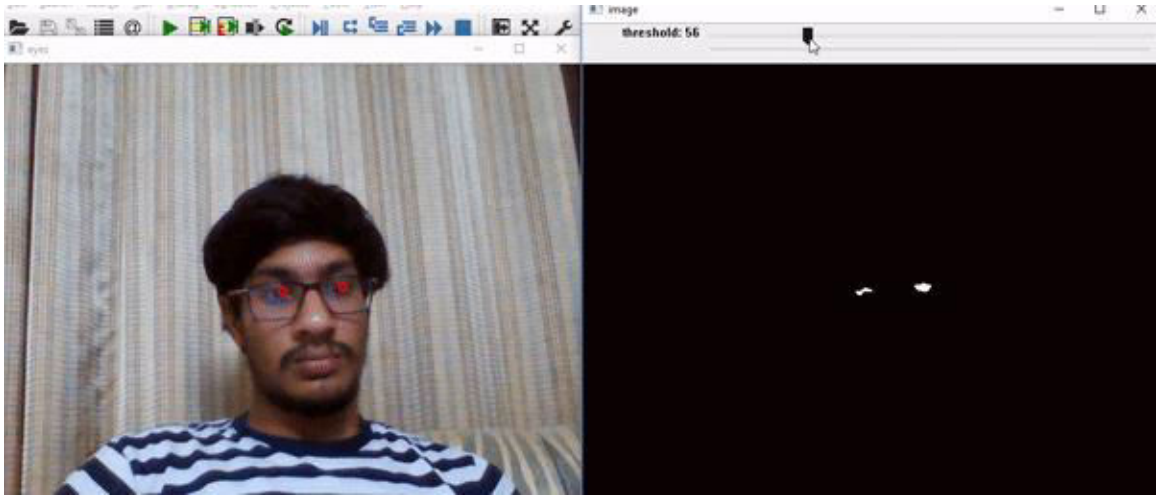
- **Edge deployment** (mobile, embedded)
- **Training updates** (new datasets)
- **Model replacement** (e.g., deep networks)

No GPUs are required for inference — enabling broad hardware support.

**SYSTEM DESIGNIMAGES**




Prediction
person 0.9878
Output
Press r to record mouth distance




## VIII. CONCLUSION

This research presents a **robust, real-time face anti-spoofing system** that integrates computer vision, color space statistical analysis, and machine learning classification. By leveraging texture features in YCrCb and LUV color spaces — both sensitive to skin reflectance and chromatic information — the system captures patterns that distinguish live faces from presentation attacks such as printed photos or video replays.Unlike methods relying on motion cues or deep neural networks, this approach balances computational efficiency with high detection accuracy, making it suitable for deployment on standard consumer hardware without GPU acceleration. The use of histograms provides a compact yet expressive representation that captures subtle texture differences often absent in spoof media. Temporal aggregation of classification probabilities across multiple frames further enhances robustness by smoothing out noise and reducing false decisions.

The modular design—comprising face detection, feature extraction, classification, and temporal decision logic—ensures extensibility and ease of development. Users are provided real-time feedback through annotated overlays on the camera feed, facilitating immediate validation of authentication attempts. The system is applicable to secure authentication in mobile devices, access control systems, and other biometric applications where presentation attacks pose a real security threat.Future work could incorporate additional features such as depth cues from stereo or structured light sensors, temporal motion derivatives, or learning-based feature extractors to further improve performance under extreme lighting conditions or sophisticated attack methods. Integration with on-device neural accelerators could also allow hybrid solutions combining statistical features with deep embeddings.In summary, the proposed system achieves a practical blend of **accuracy**, **speed**, and **deployability**, contributing a viable solution to real-world face anti-spoofing challenges.

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