

Feasibility of an alternative method to estimate glenohumeral joint center from videogrammetry measurements and CT/MRI of patients

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Abstract

Videogrammetry is commonly used to record upper limb motions. However, it cannot track the glenohumeral joint center (GH). GH is required to reconstruct upper limb motions. Therefore, it is often estimated by separately measuring scapula motions using scapular kinematics measurements-devices (SKMD). Applications of SKMD are neither straightforward nor always noninvasive. Therefore, this work investigates the feasibility of an alternative method to estimate GH from videogrammetry using a CT/MRI image of subject's glenohumeral joint and without requiring SKMD. In order to evaluate the method's accuracy, its GH estimations were compared to reference GH trajectories. The method was also applied to estimate scapula configurations and reconstruct an abduction motion measured by videogrammetry. The accuracy of GH estimations were within 5 mm, and the reconstructed motion was in excellent agreement with reported *in vivo* measurements.

Keywords: upper limb kinematics, glenohumeral joint center,
videogrammetry, multi-segment optimization, scapular kinematics

1. Introduction

Videogrammetry tracks trajectories of skin-fixed markers placed on palpable bony landmarks [49]. It is not possible to palpate and measure GH using

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videogrammetry. However, GH is required to reconstruct upper limb motions [27, 37].

Several methods have been developed to estimate GH, namely: formal [5, 12, 15, 17, 40, 50] and predictive methods [6, 26, 33, 39]. Formal methods estimate GH by finding either the closest point to all humerus instantaneous helical axes [5, 12, 40, 50] or the center of a sphere passing through humerus markers [15, 17]. Predictive methods estimate GH either through regressive equations between scapula markers and GH [6, 26, 33] or generic offsets from scapula markers [6, 39]. Formal methods estimate GH more accurately and are preferred over predictive methods whose accuracy drops significantly during arm motions [6, 12]. However, the main limitation of formal methods is their dependency on SKMD.

Due to soft tissue artifacts only two landmarks, angulus acromialis (AA) and acromioclavicular (AC), of the scapula can be practically tracked by videogrammetry [24, 31]. SKMD is therefore used to measure scapula motions. Several SKMD have been proposed, including intracortical bone-fixed pins [22], regressive equations [8–10, 16, 18, 19], scapula locator fixtures [32, 36], and acromion markers-tree [45]. However, applications of SKMD are neither straightforward nor always non-invasive.

Therefore, this study aims at investigating the feasibility of an alternative method to estimate GH from videogrammetry using a CT/MRI of subject’s glenohumeral joint and without requiring SKMD. Provided GH estimations, trigonum scapulae (TS) and angulus inferior (AI) of scapula are consequently estimated defining the scapula configurations. The method’s accuracy is evaluated by comparing its GH estimations to reference GH trajectories. The method is then applied to reconstruct an abduction motion measured by videogrammetry and compare the reconstructed motion to reported *in vivo* measurements.

2. Methods

2.1. Kinematic model

A kinematic model of the upper limb is developed from MRI scans (T1-weighted sequences, 3-T, 0.9 mm isotropic spatial resolution) of the hemi-thorax of a healthy male subject (29 year, 186 cm, 85.5 Kg) (Fig. 1a). It consists of six rigid bodies: thorax, clavicle, scapula, humerus, ulna, and radius (rigidly tied with hand). It has five joints, including three ball-and-socket joints for sternoclavicular (SC), acromioclavicular (AC), and glenohumeral (GH) joints and two hinge joints for humeroulnar (HU) and radioulnar (RU) joints (Fig. 1b,c). Two holonomic constraints restrict TS and AI to glide over ribcage. This results in nine degrees of freedom. Fourteen bony landmarks are identified from the MRI scans to define bone-fixed frames and joints coordinates following ISB recommendations [51]. The landmarks are: incisura jugularis (IJ), processus xiphoideus (PX), 7th cervical vertebra (C7), 8th thoracic vertebra (T8), SC, AC, AA, TS, AI, GH, humerus medial epicondyle (EM), humerus lateral epicondyle (EL), radial styloid (RS), and ulnar styloid (US). Given that the GH is not a

47 bony landmark, its position is defined as the center of a sphere fitting the glenoid
 48 fossa [47]. To this end, a MATLAB (The MathWorks, Natick, MA, USA) routine
 49 [44] is used to fit a sphere on the fossa surface obtained by segmentation of MRI
 50 in Amira (FEI Visualization Sciences Group, Bordeaux, France). Thorax is the
 51 inertial frame. Eleven generalized coordinates ($\mathbf{q} = [q_1 \dots q_{11}]^T$) are considered
 52 to uniquely define each joint configuration. Forward kinematic map (ξ) of the
 53 kinematic model defines inertial coordinates of the j^{th} landmark (\mathbf{x}_j) for given
 54 joint configurations (Eq. 1).

$$\begin{aligned}
 \xi : C_s \subset R^{11} &\mapsto W_s \subset R^3 \\
 \xi(\mathbf{q}(t)) &= \mathbf{x}_j(t), \quad j = \{C7, \dots, RS\}_{1 \times 14} \\
 \Phi_{\text{TS}}(\mathbf{q}(t)) &= 0 \\
 \Phi_{\text{AI}}(\mathbf{q}(t)) &= 0
 \end{aligned} \tag{1}$$

55 Where, C_s and W_s are coordinate and work spaces [42]. The holonomic con-
 56 straints ($\Phi_{\text{TS}} = 0$ and $\Phi_{\text{AI}} = 0$) represent kinematic relationships between
 57 scapula and thorax (Eq. 2). The constraints restrict TS and AI to always lie on
 58 two different ellipsoids approximating ribcage and the underlying soft tissues of
 59 each one of TS and AI.

$$\begin{aligned}
 \Phi_{\text{TS}}(\mathbf{q}(t)) &= ({}_t\mathbf{TS}(t) - {}_t\mathbf{e}_0)^T E_{\text{TS}}({}_t\mathbf{TS}(t) - {}_t\mathbf{e}_0) - 1 = 0 \\
 \Phi_{\text{AI}}(\mathbf{q}(t)) &= ({}_t\mathbf{AI}(t) - {}_t\mathbf{e}_0)^T E_{\text{AI}}({}_t\mathbf{AI}(t) - {}_t\mathbf{e}_0) - 1 = 0
 \end{aligned} \tag{2}$$

60 Where, the left-hand side subscript t denotes that the landmarks are in thorax
 61 frame. The centers of the two ellipsoids coincide and are at ${}_t\mathbf{e}_0$. A single ellipsoid
 62 centered at ${}_t\mathbf{e}_0$ is first fitted to the ribcage. Then, starting from this ellipsoid,
 63 adjustments are made to fit one ellipsoid to AI and another ellipsoid to TS. The
 64 ellipsoids including TS and AI have matrices E_{TS} and E_{AI} , respectively [25].

65 2.2. Estimation of GH

66 Ball-and-socket approximation of the glenohumeral joint implies that GH is
 67 a point shared between scapula and humerus (Fig. 2). Therefore, its positions
 68 as a point either on scapula or humerus should result in the same point in thorax
 69 frame (${}_t\mathbf{GH}$). This can be concisely written as

$$\underbrace{{}_h^t R(\alpha) {}_h\mathbf{GH} + {}_t\mathbf{EM}}_{{}_t\mathbf{GH} \text{ as a point on humerus}} = \underbrace{{}_s^t R(\beta) {}_s\mathbf{GH} + {}_t\mathbf{AC}}_{{}_t\mathbf{GH} \text{ as a point on scapula}} \tag{3}$$

70 Where, ${}_h^t R(\alpha)$ and ${}_s^t R(\beta)$ are rotation matrices from humerus and scapula frames
 71 to thorax frame defined in Eq. 4 using Rodrigues' rotation formula [1]. The
 72 left-hand side subscripts h and s specify that the landmarks are in humerus and
 73 scapula frames, respectively. Constants ${}_h\mathbf{GH}$ and ${}_s\mathbf{GH}$ are obtained from sub-
 74 ject's CT/MRI. From a CT of the subject to be studied ${}_{\text{CT}}\mathbf{GH}$, ${}_{\text{CT}}\mathbf{EM}$, ${}_{\text{CT}}\mathbf{EL}$
 75 that are the landmarks in the CT or MRI coordinate system can be obtained for
 76 a single arm configuration. Then, ${}_h\mathbf{GH}$ is defined as ${}_h\mathbf{GH} = {}_h^{\text{CT}}R {}_{\text{CT}}\mathbf{GH}$. The
 77 rotation matrix ${}_h^{\text{CT}}R$ from the CT or MRI coordinate system to the humeral

coordinate system is obtained following the ISB recommendations [51]. Similarly, ${}^s\mathbf{GH}$ is obtained as ${}^s\mathbf{GH} = {}^s_{CT}R ({}_{CT}\mathbf{GH} - {}_{CT}\mathbf{AC})$. The rotation matrix ${}^s_{CT}R$ from the CT or MRI coordinate system to the scapula coordinate system is obtained following the ISB recommendations.

$$\begin{aligned} {}^t_h R(\alpha) &= \mathbf{d}_h \mathbf{d}_h^T + \cos \alpha (I - \mathbf{d}_h \mathbf{d}_h^T) + \sin \alpha [\mathbf{d}_h] \\ {}^t_s R(\beta) &= \mathbf{d}_s \mathbf{d}_s^T + \cos \beta (I - \mathbf{d}_s \mathbf{d}_s^T) + \sin \beta [\mathbf{d}_s] \end{aligned} \quad (4)$$

Where, $\mathbf{d}_h = {}^t\mathbf{EM} - {}^t\mathbf{EL}$ and $\mathbf{d}_s = {}^t\mathbf{AC} - {}^t\mathbf{AA}$, and α and β are unknown rotation angles of humerus and scapula around \mathbf{d}_h and \mathbf{d}_s . The cross product matrices of \mathbf{d}_h and \mathbf{d}_s are denoted by $[\mathbf{d}_h]$ and $[\mathbf{d}_s]$, respectively.

Equation 3 can be solved for α and β for each frame of measurements using nonlinear root-search methods (e.g. Matlab `fminsearch`). The resulting α and β provide two estimations for GH in thorax frame (${}^t\mathbf{GH}$). Given that the measured positions of AC, AA, EM, and EL are subject to soft-tissue artifacts, the resulting two estimations of ${}^t\mathbf{GH}$ might come apart. Therefore, the following optimization is casted to minimize the distance between the resulting two estimations by compensating effects of soft-tissue artifacts on EM and EL.

$$\begin{aligned} \min_{\boldsymbol{\mu}} \quad & ({}^t\mathbf{GH}_{e_h}(\alpha, \boldsymbol{\mu}) - {}^t\mathbf{GH}_{e_s}(\beta))^2 \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & |\boldsymbol{\mu}| \leq C \end{aligned} \quad (5)$$

Where, ${}^t\mathbf{GH}_{e_h}$ and ${}^t\mathbf{GH}_{e_s}$ are the resulting estimations obtained through humerus and scapula frames, respectively. The decision variable $\boldsymbol{\mu}$ is a 3×1 vector added to \mathbf{d}_h to compensate soft-tissue artifacts. It is bounded by C to vary according to reported values for EM and EL soft-tissue artifacts ($C = 3$ cm [23]).

Estimated GH together with measured AC and AA provide three points on scapula. Therefore, TS and AI are readily estimated, given that they also belong to the same bone segment. The resulting GH, TS, and AI estimations are used in Section 2.3 to reconstruct the shoulder kinematics including scapula configuration.

It is worth noting that Eq. 3 has an intuitive geometrical interpretation. In fact, it estimates GH by intersecting four spheres centered at AC, AA, EM, and EL. Their radii can be defined from a single CT/MRI scan of the glenohumeral joint of the subject to be studied. This intersection can be defined using the intersection theory of quadric surfaces [25].

2.3. Multi-segment optimization

Multi-segment optimization finds joint angles (\mathbf{q}_i) for each frame of measurements (i) such that the overall distance between the measured markers (\mathbf{x}_{e_j}) and their associating landmarks (\mathbf{x}_{m_j}) is minimized, while satisfying the forward kinematics map (Eq. 6). Estimations of GH, TS, and AI are considered

111 on behalf of their missing measured trajectories.

$$\begin{aligned}
& \min_{\mathbf{q}_i} \quad \sum_j (\mathbf{x}_{m_{j,i}}(\mathbf{q}_i) - \mathbf{x}_{e_{j,i}})^T W (\mathbf{x}_{m_{j,i}}(\mathbf{q}_i) - \mathbf{x}_{e_{j,i}}) \\
& \text{s.t.} \quad \Phi_{\text{TS}}(\mathbf{q}_i) = 0 \\
& \quad \quad \Phi_{\text{AI}}(\mathbf{q}_i) = 0
\end{aligned} \tag{6}$$

112 Where, $j = \{\text{C7}, \dots, \text{RS}\}_{1 \times 14}$, and W is a positive definite weighting-matrix
113 that can be used to account for different amount of soft-tissue artifacts occur
114 at each marker [2]. For simplicity, W is set to the identity matrix here. This
115 optimization is a nonlinear programming problem [4] that can be solved using
116 iterative methods e.g. Matlab `fmincon`.

117 2.4. Accuracy

118 A numerical method [21], called minimal coordinates approach, is used to
119 virtually generate trajectories for all fourteen model's landmarks during forward
120 flexion. The minimal coordinates approach is indeed the only available method
121 that can plan the upper limb motions **from a limited** measurement data [21].
122 In the minimal coordinates approach, the shoulder girdle contact constraint is
123 replaced by a novel parallel mechanism that results in a minimal set of gen-
124 eralized coordinates. The resulting minimal coordinates are independent and
125 considerably simplify motion planning. The accuracy of the minimal coordinates
126 approach has been already investigated **in** [20] against *in vivo* measurements **of**
127 [13]. An arm motion from the arm neutral position to 150° flexion is simulated
128 using the minimal coordinates approach. **To this end, the scapular minimal**
129 **coordinates corresponding to beginning and end of the motion are chosen as per**
130 **[20] such that the model bony landmarks match the bony landmarks reported**
131 **in [13] for only beginning and end of the motion. Until 30° arm elevation, the**
132 **scapular minimal coordinates are kept constant at the values for the beginning**
133 **and then are varied with a linear function of time until end of the motion. The**
134 **definition of the arm minimal coordinates are trivial using a linear function of**
135 **time until 150° flexion.** Eventually, GH of the virtually generated trajectories
136 is considered as the reference GH (${}_t\mathbf{GH}_r$). Soft-tissue artifacts are numerically
137 produced and added to the trajectories. Soft-tissue artifacts are defined accord-
138 ing to [7, 43] as $a \sin \omega t + \phi$, where a lies between 1 cm to 3 cm, and ω and
139 ϕ are smaller than 4 Hz and 2π , respectively. The resulting trajectories are
140 considered as pseudo-measurements. The method is used to estimate GH from
141 the pseudo-measurements.

142 The accuracy results are presented in terms of the distance d between esti-
143 mated GH (${}_t\mathbf{GH}_e$) and ${}_t\mathbf{GH}_r$ for each frame of data.

144 2.5. Motion reconstruction from videogrammetry

145 Eleven bony landmarks are palpated using skin-fixed markers on the same
146 subject, including IJ, PX, C7, T8, SC, AC, AA, EM, EL, RS, and US (Fig. 1d).
147 The markers trajectories are recorded for 10 trials using an 8-camera VICON
148 videogrammetry at 100 Hz, while the subject is performing an abduction motion

in scapula plane with a fully extended forearm. The recorded data of each trial is low-passed filtered [49]. Then, means and standard deviations (σ) of the filtered trajectories for the 10 trials are obtained.

The method is used to estimate GH and consequently TS and AI. Then, multi-segment optimization is used to reconstruct the motion in terms of the joints angles. Sensitivity of the joints angles ($\mathbf{q}(\Delta\mathbf{x})$) to markers variations around their means ($\Delta\mathbf{x}$) are also approximated by a first order approximation (Eq. 7) [14].

$$\mathbf{q}(\Delta\mathbf{x}) = \mathbf{q}^* + M^{-1}N\Delta\mathbf{x} + O(|\Delta\mathbf{x}|) \quad (7)$$

Where, \mathbf{q}^* is solution of the multi-segment optimization associated with measurements means. The matrices M and N are defined as follows.

$$M = \begin{bmatrix} \nabla^2 L & \nabla\Phi_{TS} & \nabla\Phi_{AI} \\ \nabla\Phi_{TS} & 0 & 0 \\ \nabla\Phi_{AI} & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}, \quad N = \left[-\frac{\partial}{\partial\Delta\mathbf{x}}(\nabla L) \quad -\frac{\partial\Phi_{TS}}{\partial\Delta\mathbf{x}} \quad -\frac{\partial\Phi_{AI}}{\partial\Delta\mathbf{x}} \right]^T \quad (8)$$

Where, L is Lagrangian of the multi-segment optimization (Eq. 6).

The results consist of eleven joints angles, including axial rotation, depression/elevation, protraction/retraction of SC, posterior/anterior tilt, downward/upward rotation, protraction/retraction of AC, axial rotation, adduction/abduction, flexion/extension of GH, extension/flexion of HU, and pronation/supination of RU joints. Joints angles are presented in thorax frame along arm abduction angle, except for HU and RU joints, which are given with respect to their proximal joints. Angles sensitivities to $\pm 1\sigma$ markers variations are also illustrated.

3. Results

3.1. Accuracy

The distance d was less than 1 mm until 20% of arm flexion and reached 5 mm at 60% of the movement (Fig. 3).

3.2. Motion reconstruction from videogrammetry

Clavicular elevation and retraction increased by 16° and 26° during arm elevation, despite its axial rotation, and were equally (about 13°) affected by landmarks variations (Fig. 4).

Scapular posterior tilt increased by 5° from an anteriorly tilted configuration. Scapular upward rotation increased from a neutral position to 30° . Scapular protraction decreased by 7° . The landmarks variations affected posterior/anterior tilt by 5° , downward/upward rotation by 13° , and protraction/retraction by 6° .

Humerus rotated externally by 49° from an internally orientated position. Abduction increased by 68° , and flexion increased by 30° . Axial rotation and adduction/abduction were almost 250% more sensitive to landmarks variations than flexion/extension angle.

Forearm flexed 6° from full extension, and RU supination increased by 9° (palm of the hand faced anteriorly). Compared to other joint angles, forearm illustrated the highest sensitivities to landmarks variations: (17° and 22° for HU and RU joints, respectively).

4. Discussion

The aim of this study was to develop a method to estimate GH from videogrammetry using a CT/MRI of subject's glenohumeral joint and without requiring SKMD. The method accuracy was verified, and the method was applied to reconstruct a videogrammetry-based measured motion.

The accuracy decreased towards the end of motion that could be associated with increase in the simulated soft-tissue artifacts. The increasing trend considered for soft-tissue artifacts was consistent with previous *in vivo* observations [7, 43]. Compared to the application of a reported predictive method [6] on the same pseudo-measurements, GH estimation was improved around 85% with our method. The choice of the predictive method [6] among the available predictive methods in the literature could be justified by the following main reasons. First, contrary to most of the predictive methods [33, 51], it did not require trajectories of TS or AI. Trajectories of TS and AI could be only either measured using SKMD or estimated based on GH trajectories. Second, it was indeed among the few predictive methods whose accuracy and inter-individual reliability have been assessed against other established predictive methods [26, 33, 39, 51] as well as *in vivo* GH measurements.

Application of the method to videogrammetry measurements followed by multi-segment optimization provided joint angles that were consistent with reported *in vivo* [28, 48] and numerical studies [34, 41].

Clavicular axial rotation was overlooked in our motion reconstruction, whereas several *in vivo* studies reported 0° to 30° variations [28, 38]. Clavicular axial rotation could be enforced using an extra constraint on q_1 in Eq. 6 [46]. However, given few weak muscles attached to the clavicle, underestimating its axial rotation could only have negligible effects on musculoskeletal models outcomes [35].

AC joint angles were in good agreement with *in vivo* measurements [28, 48]. Normalized root mean square error (NRMSE) [30] between the estimated scapular posterior/anterior tilt and the measurements of [48] and [28] were 0.99 and 0.91, respectively. The NRMSE between the estimated scapular downward/upward rotation and the measurements was consistent with the results of [48] (NRMSE above 0.77). The zero downward rotation estimated by our model placed scapula in a rest position for the beginning of motion and was commonly reported [29, 34], although the angle reported in [28] was -16° . Estimated scapular protraction/retraction was consistent with both *in vivo* measurements of [28, 48] (NRMSE above 0.81).

The forearm joint angles had the highest sensitivities to variations in markers trajectories. This could be explained by propagation of the errors introduced through proximal bone segments. The sensitivity analysis investigated

the sensitivity of the resulting joint angles to the recorded variations in markers trajectories. Although this provided valuable information about the reliability of the resulting joint angles, a more detailed sensitivity study was required to investigate influences of positioning each individual marker. Provided this, special attention could be paid to more robustly capture the trajectories of the influential markers.

The effects of soft-tissue artifacts on GH estimations were compensated by an optimization. The optimization accounted for merely EM and EL soft-tissue artifacts, since AC and AA were subject to relatively negligible amount of soft-tissue artifacts [3, 11, 34]. In addition, from a mathematical point of view, it was possible to introduce a second decision variable into the optimization for AC and AA soft-tissue artifacts. However, this could result in an indeterminate optimization with infinite solutions. In order to uniquely solve this indeterminate optimization, complementary information on the ratio of EM-EL to AC-AA soft-tissue artifacts was required. Application of a cluster attached to the humerus could potentially reduce the amount of soft-tissue artifacts, requiring less correction from the optimization.

A major limitation of this study was that only one subject was recorded. More subjects could allow a better evaluation of the method, specially its performance in dealing with inter-individual differences. Given that the method required a CT/MRI scan of the subject’s glenohumeral joint, it could be expected that the method inherently considered inter-individual differences. Another limitation was the dependency of the method on subject’s CT/MRI. The CT/MRI is often performed during subjects’ routine clinical examinations. Therefore, it would not widely affect practical applications of the method for subject-specific modeling. Another potential limitation of the method could be due to the high error sensitivity of the direction connecting EL and EM and/or AC and AA, given the short distances between them. Therefore, special care was taken in this study in placing the markers on these bony landmarks. In addition, an additional marker on the Capitulum would help in compensating the error in direction connecting EL and EM.

The resulting GH estimations and scapula kinematics were compared to those of a commonly used predictive method and *in vivo* measurements, respectively. These partially confirmed the feasibility of the present method as an alternative approach to estimate the GH and scapula kinematics without SKMD. Indeed, direct comparisons of the method estimations with measurements from SKMD such as scapula locator and acromion cluster could enrich the confidence into the method estimations.

In conclusion, the method provided estimations for GH, TS, and AI with sufficient accuracy using a CT/MRI scan of subject’s glenohumeral joint and without requiring SKMD. Provided GH, TS, and AI estimations, a videogrammetry-based measured motion was reconstructed using multi-segment optimization which resulted in scapula configurations that were in good agreement with reported *in vivo* measurements. The developed method would be used to retrospectively study kinematics of a cohort of patients using a scaled-generic shoulder musculoskeletal model. A generic motion data would be scaled to each one

274 of the patients whose CT/MRI were available as a part of their routine clinical
 275 examination. In such retrospective studies that access to the patients and
 276 performing patient specific kinematic measurements with SKMD could face dif-
 277 ficulties, the developed method would be considered as an alternative solution,
 278 despite its limitations.

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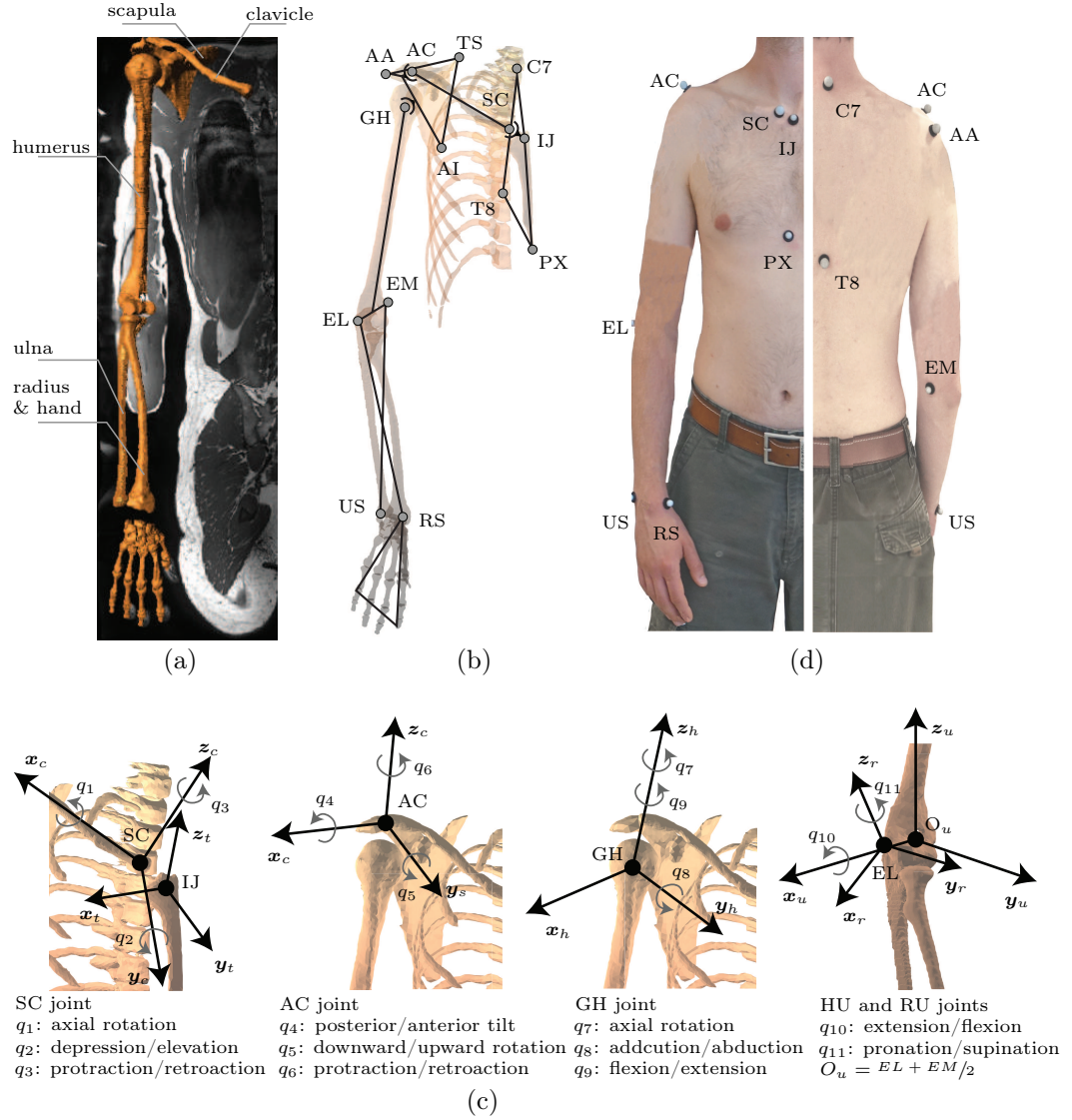


Figure 1: (a) Subject's MRI was used to develop the kinematic model. (b) Fourteen landmarks are considered. (c) Eleven generalized coordinates are considered ($\mathbf{q} = [q_1 \dots q_{11}]^T$). (d) VICON videogrammetry is used to track eleven skin-fixed markers.

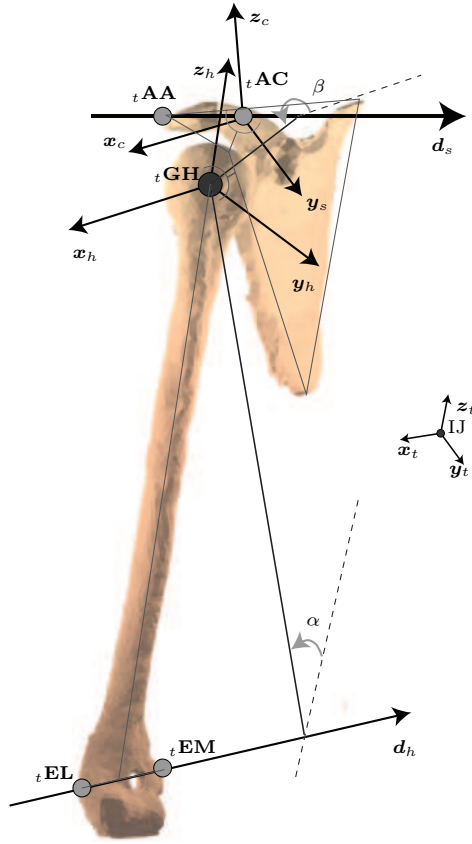


Figure 2: GH belongs to both humerus and scapula. The estimated $t\mathbf{GH}$ lies on the intersection of two line segments in planes perpendicular to d_h and d_s . These two line segments form two angles (α and β) with respect to reference axes that can be found by solving Eq. 3.

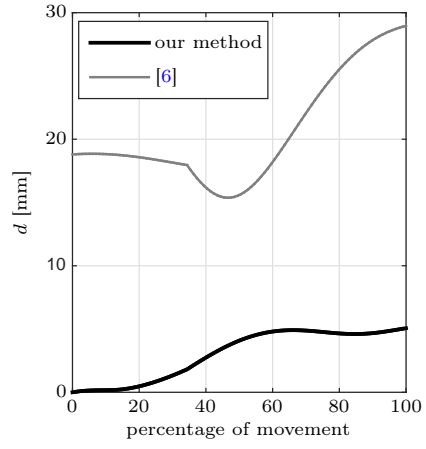


Figure 3: Method accuracy, distance d of the estimated GH to its reference position during arm flexion. The model developed in [6] was directly applied in this study to the same pseudo-measurements, and the corresponding results were presented.

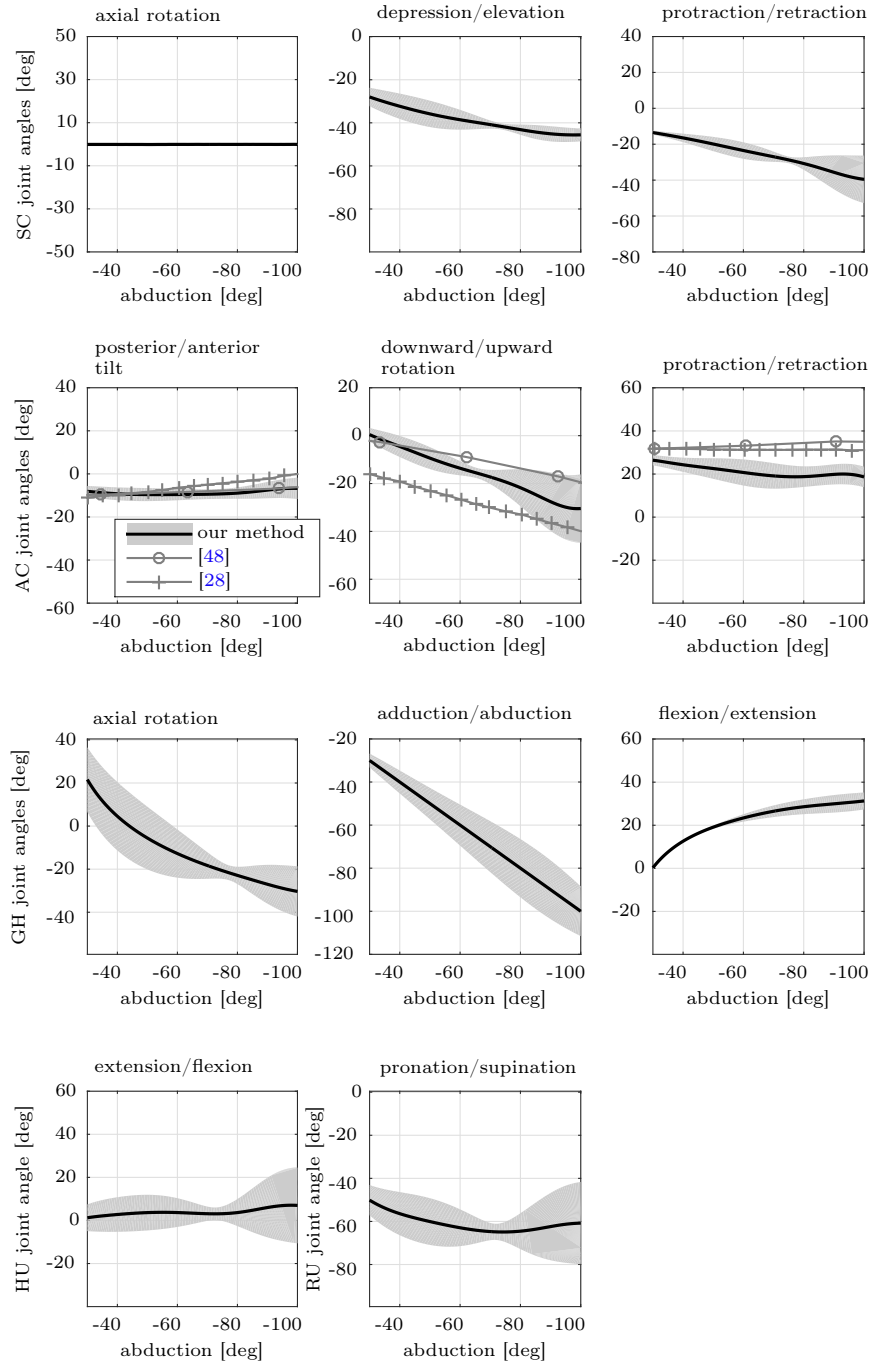


Figure 4: Motion reconstruction, the measured abduction motion was reconstructed in terms of 11 joint angles. The angles sensitivities to $\pm 1\sigma$ landmarks variations were presented as the shaded area. The AC joint angles measured *in vivo* by [28, 48] were also presented, given the importance of the scapula kinematics.