

# Smart Lifelogging: Recognizing Human Activities using PHASOR

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**Keywords:** Lifelog, Human Activity Recognition, Smartphones, Embedded Sensors, Smart-City, Heterogeneous Sensory Data Analytics.

**Abstract:** This paper introduces a new idea for sensor data analytics, named PHASOR, that can recognize and stream individual human activities online. The proposed sensor concept can be utilized to solve some emerging problems in smartcity domain such as health care, urban mobility, or security by creating a lifelog of human activities. PHASOR is created from three 'components': *ID*, *model*, and *Sensor*. The first component is to identify which sensor is used to monitor which object (e.g., group of users, individual users, type of smartphone). The second component decides suitable classifiers for human activities recognition. The last one includes two types: (1) physical sensors that utilize embedded sensors in smartphones to recognize human activities, (2) human factors that uses human interaction to personally increase the accuracy of the detection. The advantage of PHASOR is the error signal is inversely proportional to its lifetime, which is well-suited for lifelogging applications. The proposed concept is evaluated and compared to de-facto datasets as well as state-of-the-art of Human Activity Recognition (HAR) using smartphones, confirming that applying PHASOR can improve the accuracy of HAR.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, everything and everybody with network connectivity can be turned into sensors that continuously generate data reflecting how human interact with the physical world (Sowe and Zettsu, 2015). Thus, linking people, devices, and data to monitor human activities continuously and precisely can be seen as one of the important factors that contributes to the development of health care, security, transportation, and safety (Semanjski and Sidharta, 2016) (Lara and Labrador, 2013). In this context, on-line human activities recognition (HAR) utilizing wearable sensors has attracted researchers for years (Lara and Labrador, 2013). These approaches aim to analyze data gathered from wearable devices to semantically describe human activities. Among types of wearable sensors, smartphones are preferred as the most convenient equipment that can monitor human activities because of its mobility, user-friendly interface, long-time attachment, and available resources such as various embedded sensors, strong CPU, memory, and battery (Shoaib et al., 2015). According to (Lara and Labrador, 2013) (Shoaib et al., 2015), existing challenges include in-sufficient (standard) training data

(Vavoulas et al., 2016) (Ojetola et al., 2015), varying positions and orientations of smartphones on the human body (Miao et al., 2015), resource consumption and privacy (Siirtola and Roning, 2012), dynamic and adaptive sensor selection (Capela et al., 2016) and online versus offline training for classification methods (Shoaib et al., 2015) (Google Activity Recognition API, 2016), etc. Nevertheless, none of the related work discusses the human factor in Internet of Everything (IoE) systems. In other words, users of these systems play a passive role but not an active role (Sowe et al., 2016). Some of these challenges have been solved partially but not completely, especially in the field of smart-city where results from HAR systems should be on-line and frequently streamed to a smart-city center system in order to make suitable decisions. In addition, a large and heterogeneous number of users in the smart-city system raise a difficult challenge of having an adaptive model training component that can update and re-train efficiently to cope with the volume and variety of users.

In order to tackle these problems, we propose a new idea for sensor data analytics, named PHASOR (Physical - Human Sensor) that can on-line monitor (i.e., recognize and stream) individual human ac-

tivities to related components of smart-city scheme. PHASOR is created from three components: *ID*, *Model*, and *Sensor*. The first component identifies which sensor is used to monitor a specific object like a group of users, individual user, or a type of a smartphone. The second component contains the *general model* and the *individual model* that aim to generate suitable classifiers for HAR. The last component includes two types of “sensors”: (1) *physical sensors* that utilizes embedded sensors in smart-phones to recognize human activities, (2) and *human factors* that use human interaction to personally increase the accuracy of activities detection. The advantage of PHASOR is the accuracy will be increased during the runtime. Therefore it suits for lifelogging applications, which analyze and give insights from captured data from wearable devices, in the domain of smart-city.

The major contributions of this work are: **1. Enhance Human Factors:** as discussed in (Sowe and Zettsu, 2015)(Sowe et al., 2016), human factor can contribute to the success of IoE. Unfortunately, it is difficult to know how a human entity interacts with IoE. This work can model human’s involvement (i.e., passive and active roles) in IoE to enhance the accuracy of HAR. The users can flexibly change their role from passive (i.e., users’ activities are recorded by smart-phones), to active (i.e., users correct the recognized results). **2. Adapting:** using users’ feedback to increase individual human activity recognition, bringing the ability to be adapted to specific users. **3. Global Working Scope:** less lead time to detect human activities of a new user at the beginning of lifelog monitoring process with an acceptable accuracy of HAR detection by taking into account the common information sharing among a group of people.

## 2 RELATED WORK

In general, most smart-phone based HAR systems are built with three major components: sensory data acquisition, model training, and activity recognition (Capela et al., 2016). The first component utilizes accelerometer, gyroscope, and barometer sensors to gather data from human activities. These sensors can be used alone (Siirtola and Roning, 2012)(Bayat et al., 2014), or combined together (Shoaib, 2013)(Chetty et al., 2015)(Capela et al., 2016). The second component is built by using different classification methods such as Support Vector Machine (SVM), k-Nearest Neighbour (k-NN/IBk), or others (Lara and Labrador, 2013)(Shoaib et al., 2015). The last component uses these trained models to classify data gathered from

the first component to recognize human activities.

In earlier proposed methods, e.g., (Siirtola and Roning, 2012) and (Bayat et al., 2014), only accelerometer information was exploited. In (Siirtola and Roning, 2012), the authors used two classifiers, namely quadratic discriminant analysis and k-NN, to recognize human activities. The main contribution of this work is how to deploy the components on the smartphone and server, so that the system can work optimally. However, their method requires the phone to be in a fixed position, e.g., in trousers front pockets which limits their application range. In (Bayat et al., 2014) the authors used several classifiers and in order to overcome the difficulty of the phone position, they introduced a strategy to select a suitable classifier for recognizing some activities depending on the kind of activity and the position of the smartphone. In (Miao et al., 2015), the authors also discussed the impact of varying positions and orientations of smartphones on the qualification of HAR. They overcame this problem by developing an orientation-independent features so that the system can work with acceptable accuracy at any pockets. In (Chetty et al., 2015), the authors exploited information not only from accelerometer but also from gyroscope sensors to build classifiers. Data mining approaches were utilized to build classifiers with an information theory based ranking of features as the pre-processing step. Recently, Capela et al. in (Capela et al., 2016) proposed a new method that can take into account different types of users who have differences in walking biomechanics. This system is considered as more affordable-price and convenient solution than using wearable sensors. The proposed system extracted 5 features from accelerometer and gyroscope data and built classifiers using decision tree. These activities are tested on both able-bodied and stroke participants whom have different treatment policies from medical perspective. According to the experimental results, the hypothesis of differences in walking biomechanics influences on the identification of human activities is confirmed.

In (Vavoulas et al., 2016; Ojetola et al., 2015), the authors discussed the insufficient and non-standard of training data for human activities recognition and introduced their shared database collected from volunteers with a set of basic features and baseline methods for further comparison with other methods. The variety of users and positions of smartphones were also considered in these studies.

In our study, we proposed a method that not only improve the accuracy, but also taking into account the human factors impact. We also exploit the data collected in (Vavoulas et al., 2016) and compare their approach with the proposed method.

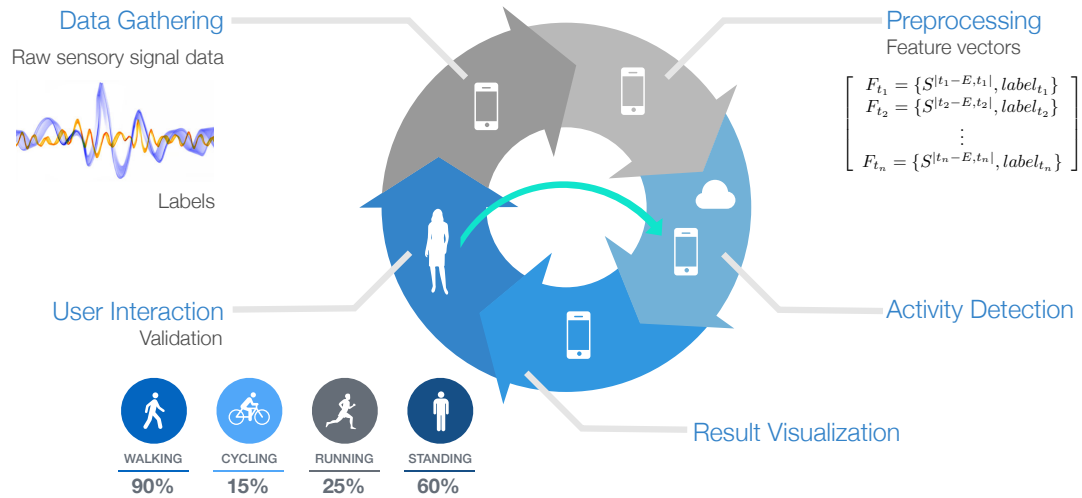


Figure 1: A general view of PHASOR.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

As introduced in Section 1, PHASOR is created from three components: *ID*, *Model*, and *Sensor*, in this section we describe how to apply PHASOR to recognize different types of activities by exploiting the data gathered from embedded sensors of smartphones: accelerometer, gyroscope, and orientation (AGO).

Shown in Figure 1 is a general view of PHASOR. Generally, it acts as a small application that first captures signals from the AGO sensors. These raw data are then pre-processed and converted into meaningful features. These features are then analyzed in order to recognize the activity of the user. Finally, the application visualizes the results to the user. At this stage, the users can validate for the most appropriate activity, and send back the validated activity label to the application, together with the AGO signals.

#### 3.1 Definitions

We define a PHASOR and its components as follows:

1. PHASOR = {ID, Device, Sensor}
2. ID = {Individual-ID = {Smartphone-ID, User-ID}, General-ID}
3. Sensor = {Physical Sensor, Human Factor}
4. Model = {General Model, Individual Model}
5. Storage = {{feature → label} Storage, activity models Storage}
6. Function = {Signal Symbolizing, Feature Extraction, Activity Labeling, Activity Modeling, Activity Recognition}

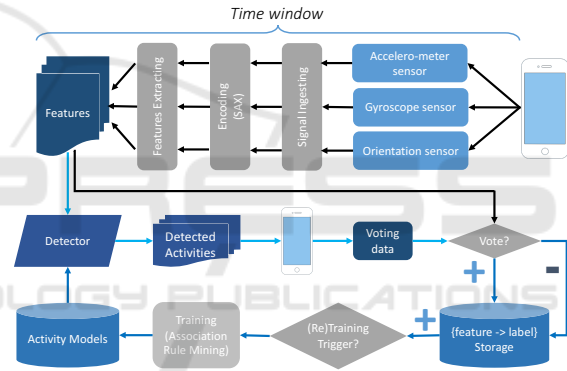


Figure 2: Activity recognition from signals.

The inputs of a PHASOR are a user and his/her smartphone, whereas the outputs are user's activities.

#### 3.2 Functions Definitions

Shown in Figure 2 is the schema of the proposed framework, containing five functions as follows:

- **Signal Symbolizing:** This function acts as the first step of the process, which automatically symbolizes signals collected from AGO sensors using Symbolic Aggregate Approximation (SAX) (Lin et al, 2003). Signals are first converted into time-series format, then symbolized using SAX. The SAX algorithm is known as a good method to symbolize a time-series data to a symbolic sequence while retaining the principal characteristics of the original data and a high correlation between SAX-encoded data and the original data.
- **Feature Extraction:** By defining a time win-

dow (i.e., spatio-temporal constraint), this function grouped all SAX subsequences inside a time window to create a feature vector. We define an activity pattern as a pair of feature vector and its activity label (i.e., {feature → label}). At this state, all labels are assigned a negative value; and all patterns are considered as negative patterns.

- **Activity Labeling:** The target of this function is to assign activity labels to related patterns generated by the previous step (feature extraction). The labels are selected from training datasets (offline mode), classifiers (online mode), or users (feedback mode). Patterns after updated labels are stored in the {feature → label} Storage.
- **Activity Modeling:** An appropriate supervised learning scheme such as association rule mining, or support vector machine, is used to create an activity model from the patterns stored in the {feature → label} Storage. A trigger is designed to determine if the activity models should be updated, e.g., when a new activity instance is detected. The results of this function are stored in the *Activity Models Storage*.
- **Activity Recognition:** Negative patterns are also treat as inputs of the activity model stored in the *Activity Model Storage*. If the patterns trigger pass a detection, a new activity's instance is detected, and alerted to actuators. In parallel, the negative label of this pattern is replaced by the label of detected activity.

In the following subsections, we describe important definitions and components of PHASOR.

### 3.3 Parameters Definitions

1. A time-series of the data recorded from the signal  $j^{th}$  of the sensor  $i^{th}$  is denoted as  $s_{ij}$ . Its SAX code is denoted as  $S_{ij}$ .
2. A time slider window is denoted as  $TSW = \{W, E, J\}$ , where  $W$  is a window size by which historical data are aggregated,  $E$  is an exposure (i.e., interval time looked back at the current time), and  $J$  is a jump step (i.e., an interval time  $TSW$  has to move for the next processing). Depending on the value of  $J$ , a time slider window can be shifted in overlap or non-overlap modes.
3.  $F_t$ : a feature vector created by collecting  $S_{ij}$  extracted from the interval time  $[t - E, t]$  (i.e., the extracting window), and assigned a label (e.g., jogging, walking, negative, or null).  $F_t = \{S_{ij}^{[t-E,t]}, label_t\}$ , where  $S_{ij}^{[t-E,t]}$  is a sub-sequence of  $S_{ij}$  extracted within an interval time  $[t - E, t]$ .

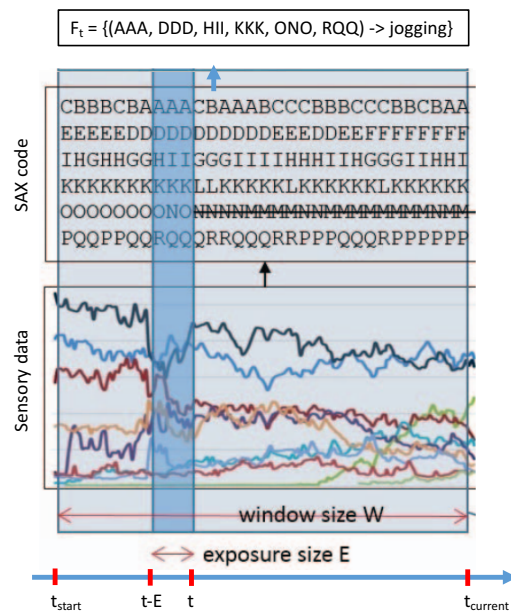


Figure 3: An example of how to extract features. In this case, we have 2 sensors, each sensor has 3 signals, as shown in ‘sensory data’ block.  $E = 2$ .  $S_{11}^{[t-2,t]} = AAA$ ,  $S_{12}^{[t-2,t]} = DDD$ ,  $S_{13}^{[t-2,t]} = HII$ ,  $S_{21}^{[t-2,t]} = KKK$ ,  $S_{22}^{[t-2,t]} = ONO$ , and  $S_{23}^{[t-2,t]} = RQQ$ , and thus  $F_t = \{(AAA, DDD, HII, KKK, ONO, RQQ) \rightarrow jogging\}$ .

Figure 3 illustrates  $TSW$ ,  $S_{ij}$ , and  $F_t$  of “jogging” activity.

### 3.4 Sensors Definitions

**Physical Sensor:** The purpose of the Physical Sensor is to convert raw signals being gathered from smartphones to features and recognize user’s activities, as described below:

1. Use *Signal Symbolizing* component to convert  $s_{ij}$  to  $S_{ij}$ .
2. Use *Feature Extraction* component to create  $F_t$ , where  $W$  is assigned as the time interval when the activity  $A$  happened (the values of  $E$  and  $J$  are empirically selected beforehand). The *label* of  $F_t$  is assigned as the name of activity currently processed, in this case  $A$ .
3. Use *Activity Recognition* function to recognize user’s activities. Inform to users.
4. Repeat from step 1 until the stop condition is met.

**Human Factor:** The purpose of Human Factor is to re-assign the right label to the activity with the wrong label, as described below:

1. Use *Activity Labeling* with  $\{F_t\}$  as the input to re-assign the right label to  $\{F_t\}$  that gave a wrong an-



swer, according to the validated activity label input by users. These  $\{F_i\}$  will be stored in  $\{feature \rightarrow label\}$  Storage with index of identified user and related activity for the next re-training, when it is required.

2. Send  $\{F_i\}$  with updated label to Storage according to Trigger's commands.

### 3.5 Models Definitions

- **General Model:** Given a pre-defined training dataset  $DA = F_i$  of activity  $A$ , use *Activity Modeling* function to generate  $GM_A$  with a suitable machine learning method such as SVM, J48, ANN, or rule-based decision on  $F_i$  to create a general model  $GM_A$ .
- **Individual Model:** The purpose of this component is to generate an activity model using interactive manner with users. In fact, this model works similar to the group model except the training dataset is filtered by IDs (i.e., using data collected from the same IDs).

Both models are re-trained periodically or forcefully according to triggers' commands.

### 3.6 Installations and Trigger

PHASOR can be installed in both clouds and smartphones, as follows:

- **Clouds:** The Storage and Model components are deployed. Models are generated on the clouds, and ready for being downloaded and updated according to users' requirements. Individual Models are either copied from General Models for the first installation or replaced by new Individual Models for the re-training process.
- **Smartphones:** The Model and Device components are installed. At the first time of use, a user will download a General Model from *Activity Models* Storage deployed in the clouds. Then, these models will be treated as Individual Model with user's ID. In on-line mode (i.e., activity recognizing), the physical device detects activities. The results will be displayed on the user's monitor. If the user does not agree the results, he/she can re-label the results. Right after, the human factor will send  $F_i$  with new labels to  $\{feature \rightarrow label\}$  Storage stored in the clouds with proper information of identified user immediately and/or periodically.

The *Trigger* is designed to activate the re-training stage for updating Models. When the number of re-labeled features of one model is large enough, the trigger will activate the *Activity Modeling* function to

re-train a proper model. There are two options: (1) automatically updating, and (2) periodically updating only after evaluating by system administrators. The former does not guarantee if the new model works better than the old one. Fortunately, users can undo and re-activate the old model when they want. The latter needs time due to the cross-validation will be carried on by system administrators to evaluate which model is better. The better model will be asked for updating to a smartphone.

## 4 EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

In order to evaluate the proposed method, we define three criteria: (1) arbitrary parameters (e.g., time-series data, datasets, re-training times, methods), (2) personalized accuracy, and (3) heterogeneous sensors.

### 4.1 Dataset, Parameters, and Cloud Environment

We use the "the MobiAct dataset" (Vavoulas et al., 2016) for training general models. This dataset contains signals gathered from accelerometer, gyroscope, and orientation sensors of a Samsung Galaxy S3 smartphone. We also created another dataset, named PHASOR-dataset, by requesting 10 volunteers to create and re-train 10 different individual models using Samsung Galaxy S3 smartphone. They attached with their smartphones during their daily activities for 3 days. We focus on recognizing following activities: *standing, walking, jogging, up-stairs, down-stairs, sitting*.

SAX-generating functions parameters are set as: the number of alphabet = three (i.e., low, medium, and high), breakpoints = Gaussian, and the PPA number is set so that each symbol representing for one time-unit (e.g., one-symbol/one-second, one-symbol/fifty-milliseconds). Signals of each parameter of each sensor are encoded by different range of the alphabet characters, as an example illustrated in Figure 3.

We use the cloud system, namely UIT-Cloud, that is based on IBM cloud computing solution to simulate the cloud environment<sup>1</sup>. The clouds hardware infrastructure consists of twelve computing nodes, and 3TB RAM is available for computation. The capacity of its storage devices reaches 10TB. UIT-Cloud now has five Tflops of computing power.

<sup>1</sup>mmlab.uit.edu.vn

## 4.2 Results and Comparisons

In order to evaluate the accuracy performance, we compared the proposed method with the ones in (Vavoulas et al., 2016) using both the MobiAct dataset, and the PHASOR-dataset.

First, we use the MobiAct dataset and conduct experiments using 10-fold cross-validation. We use the general model trained by using the MobiAct dataset for the proposed method. We reproduce methods discussed in (Vavoulas et al., 2016) with *Feature Set B* (43 features). Table 1 denotes the results of this experience. The accuracy of the proposed method almost equals to the method in (Vavoulas et al., 2016). Second, we ask volunteers to manually re-assign a right label for activity which has a wrong label. Then, we re-train individual models with the update  $\{feature \rightarrow label\}$  set. We run these steps for five time, and select the best one to report. We reproduce methods described in (Vavoulas et al., 2016) with *Optimal Feature Set* (64 features). Table 2 denotes the new comparison between the method of Vavoulas et al. and the proposed method with updated individual models. The results confirm that changing only physical factor (e.g., feature sets) cannot gain significantly better result comparing to taking into account the human factor (e.g., users' feedback).

We carry on the second experiment to evaluate the adaptation of proposed method when being deployed into a new environment. Here, we use the whole MobiAct dataset as a pre-training data to generate general models. Then, we deploy these models to ten Samsung G3 smartphones. Ten volunteers use these smartphones, and give feedback to the system. We run five times re-training tasks, then select the best one to report. Table 3 describes the comparison of classification results made by method introduced in (Vavoulas et al., 2016), and the proposed method. We can see that, both methods explained in (Vavoulas et al., 2016), and the proposed method do not gain the good results comparing to cross-validation tests mentioned above. The reason of having low accuracy here can be because the training and testing datasets come from different groups of users and devices. Table 4 shows the better results of the proposed method after updating individual models. We can see the big gaps between the accuracy of two approaches. Meanwhile methods introduced in (Vavoulas et al., 2016) can not improve much their accuracy even though using optimal feature set, the proposed method can gain the better results. This results emphasize the quick adaption of PHASOR. Thanks to the human factor and individual model component, PHASOR can re-train with user's support and the lifelog-style of data (i.e., data

Table 1: Results (F-score) on MobiAct dataset. Cross-Validation (10s window size, no overlap).

Activity	Reproduced Methods described in (Vavoulas et al., 2016)			Proposed Method
	Feature Set B (43 features)			SAX-based feature
	J48	Logistic Regression	Multi-layer Perceptron	General Model
Walking	90.6	93.9	95.5	95.2
Jogging	98.2	98.5	99.0	98.7
Upstairs	65.8	54.9	79.3	80.0
Downstairs	55.7	49.3	69.6	70.1
Sitting	97.2	93.9	94.8	93.5
Standing	96.9	94.7	90.7	91.1

Table 2: Results (F-score) on MobiAct dataset. Cross-Validation (10s window size, no overlap).

Activity	Reproduced Methods described in (Vavoulas et al., 2016)			Proposed Method
	Optimal Feature Set (64 features)			SAX-based feature
	J48	Logistic Regression	Multi-layer Perceptron	Individual Model
Walking	99.5	98.3	99.8	99.2
Jogging	99.0	99.2	99.5	99.1
Upstairs	85.6	79.6	92.6	91.9
Downstairs	87.3	77.3	91.5	92.0
Sitting	97.1	97.6	98.1	98.2
Standing	99.3	89.8	99.3	99.1

from an individual user will be large enough to train an individual model). In the third experiment, we change the time-slider-window parameter, the most important factor in time-series processing. In this experience, we set 5s window size, with 80% overlap as used in (Vavoulas et al., 2016). We again use the MobiAct to train the general model; and use 10-fold cross-validation. Table 5 denotes the results of the method introduced in (Vavoulas et al., 2016), and the proposed method. Clearly, there is no significant difference between them.

The last experiment is carried on by applying in real-time with 10 volunteers (as mentioned above), with the same time-slider-window parameter, and the general model as described in the third experience. After the volunteers interact with their smartphones and correct labels, the system is re-trained and updated in individual models, and reported the best one. Results are reported in Table 6, confirming that PHASOR can improve the results during the run-time.

Table 3: Results (F-score) on PHASOR-dataset. General Model (10s window size, no overlap).

Activity	Reproduced Methods described in (Vavoulas et al., 2016) Feature Set B (43 features)			Proposed Method
				SAX-based feature
	J48	Logistic Regression	Multi-layer Perceptron	General Model
Walking	80.2	82.9	85.6	89.6
Jogging	88.3	88.7	89.2	90.1
Upstairs	56.2	44.1	69.5	82.3
Down-stairs	44.8	38.8	58.9	83.5
Sitting	87.1	84.7	84.5	87.0
Standing	87.0	84.8	81.1	91.2

Table 4: Results (F-score) on PHASOR-dataset. Individual Model (10s window size, no overlap).

Activity	Reproduced Methods described in (Vavoulas et al., 2016) Optimal Feature Set (64 features)			Proposed Method
				SAX-based feature
	J48	Logistic Regression	Multi-layer Perceptron	Individual Model
Walking	89.8	88.4	89.9	98.2
Jogging	89.2	89.2	89.7	98.5
Upstairs	75.4	69.1	82.8	95.6
Down-stairs	77.3	67.8	80.9	95.8
Sitting	87.1	87.6	87.8	98.3
Standing	89.8	86.8	89.3	99.1

## 5 DISCUSSION

Since data, included features, labels, models, user profiles, and detected human activities are stored in the cloud, the system suits for connecting to smart-city schema where several departments can access real-time information of human activities to serve their own purposes. For example, a health-care departments can monitor their patients' statuses via activities to give in-time ambulance service or security departments can understand a crowd behavior at certain location by analyzing human activities to avoid a harmful event. Moreover, other researchers can exchange data improve their classifiers due to volume and variety of data offered by this system.

Although the proposed method gains some good results comparing to existing methods, improvements can be made in the future. First, we need to understand whether we can get the convergence for individual model, or find the way to calculate the optimal re-training times to get the optimal personal model. Second, we have not yet clustered users into vari-

Table 5: Results (TP-rate) on MobiAct dataset. General Model (5s window size, 80% overlap).

Activity	Reproduced Method described in (Vavoulas et al., 2016)	Proposed Method
	Optimal Feature Set (64 features)/IBk	SAX-based feature /General Model
Walking	1.000	1.000
Jogging	0.998	0.999
Upstairs	0.992	0.990
Down-stairs	0.983	0.991
Sitting	0.998	1.000
Standing	1.000	1.000

Table 6: Results (TP-rate) on PHASOR-dataset. Individual Model (5s window size, 80% overlap).

Activity	Reproduced Method described in (Vavoulas et al., 2016)	Proposed Method
	Optimal Feature Set (64 features)/IBk	SAX-based feature /Individual Model
Walking	0.989	1.000
Jogging	0.997	1.000
Upstairs	0.987	0.993
Down-stairs	0.983	0.994
Sitting	0.995	1.000
Standing	0.998	1.000

ous groups, although we asked for personal information when creating user profiles. This personal information could help to increase the accuracy of general/group/individual models designed to match users activities individually. Third, the invariance of positions and orientations of smartphones should be examined carefully. At the moment we fix the smartphone's positions as described in (Vavoulas et al., 2016). Fourth, we will apply different supervised and un-supervised methods on SAX-based features to see which combination can give a better results. Fifth, we will connect our system to smart-city scheme to investigate how well the system can be immersed and bring benefits, especially on health-care, urban mobility, and security areas. Finally, the sample rates, time slider windows, overlap and other parameters should be evaluated carefully to find the optimal set of parameters.

## 6 CONCLUSION

The paper introduces a new method to monitor daily human activities using the physical-human sensor that emphasize the active role of human factor in IoE where people, devices, and data are semantically linked together. In order to do that, PHASOR is de-

signed with two major components Sensor and Models to capture users' feedback and re-train the individual models to personalize classifiers. The experiment results confirm the major advantage of PHASOR that is the error signal is inversely proportional to the sensor's lifetime. Therefore, PHASOR suits for life-logging applications, especially applying to smart-city schema, by using it to stream human activities regardless the problem of volume and variety of users.

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