OPTIMIZING AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE PATH PLANNING USING REINFORCEMENT LEARNING AND DYNAMIC MAPPING

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Submitted: Sep, 29, 2024 Revised: Nov, 19, 2024 Accepted: Nov, 30, 2024

Abstract: Path planning is essential for autonomous driving, enabling secure and effective navigation in intricate and dynamic settings. This research examines the combination of Reinforcement Learning (RL) with dynamic mapping to enhance route planning in autonomous vehicles (AVs). RL enables AVs to ascertain ideal routes by persistently adjusting to evolving situations via trial and error, improving real-time decision-making skills. Dynamic mapping offers real-time updates on road conditions, traffic, and impediments, allowing AVs to modify their routes depending on the latest information. Integrating RL with dynamic mapping improves the vehicle's capacity to react to unforeseen conditions, such as traffic congestion or abrupt barriers, facilitating smoother and more effective navigation. This research examines the principal advantages of this integrated technique, including enhanced flexibility, augmented safety, and superior route optimization. It also tackles implementation issues and prospective developments in AV route planning using these technologies.

Keywords: Autonomous vehicles, route optimization, real-time navigation, adaptive decision-making, intelligent navigation, autonomous driving.

I. INTRODUCTION

The navigation and flying capabilities in complicated surroundings are explored using Deep Learning (DL) in [1]. To determine where to fly safely and what obstacles to avoid, DL models sift through data collected by sensors. By integrating with more conventional path planning algorithms, the model improves the route's efficiency, effectiveness, and success rate. To overcome obstacles such as computing complexity and high Q-table sizes, the research presents a novel DRLB-assisted route planning method for autonomous driving cars [2]. To learn the best routes in changing surroundings, the algorithm employs DRL, models the environment using grid maps, and integrates an artificial potential field technique for guiding. Through simulation experiments, its efficacy and stability are shown. The APG-RRT method enhances the traditional RRT route planning algorithm, which incorporates a guiding path, dynamically modifies the selection weight, and eliminates unnecessary path points [3]. Simulation research and real-world vehicle testing corroborate that this method enhances planning efficiency and final route quality. The triangular inequality approach eliminates unnecessary path points and makes the pathways more efficient for the vehicle's operations.

To improve UAV route planning, the Goal-bias RRT algorithm is suggested [4]. A probability factor, local route planning, and node selection approach are incorporated to improve running speed and success rate while decreasing global planning time. The technique effectively manages dynamic route planning while cutting down on planning time. A reliability-based mission planning approach must be used to ensure off-road AGVs are safe and efficient [5]. The approach employs a physics-based vehicle dynamics simulation model to forecast mobility, evaluate reliability in mobility using surrogate modeling techniques, and include reliability restrictions with the Rapidly exploring Random Tree Star algorithm. The approach finds the ideal path by considering the two possible failure scenarios and finding the shortest route. The suggested strategies are shown to be efficient by the case study outcomes.

A robust AV Motion Planning system that prioritizes global route planning in urban environments. After extracting information from OpenStreetMap (OSM) to develop a representative node network, Dijkstra's method generates the shortest route [6]. The route is analyzed for motion planning using B-Spline interpolation. Curvature and steering angle are estimated using Ackermann's relation. Discussions include road validation studies and geometric path analysis restrictions.

Modern technology has made AUVs indispensable for discovering maritime resources [7]. To accomplish their objective, they use path-planning technologies. The study explores the pros and cons of many algorithms, ranging from the more conventional to the more advanced, and explores them in detail. Intelligent algorithms and potential areas for further study are also covered. Solve AV obstacle avoidance versus static barriers in bicycles and confined spaces [8]. After re-planning, a static obstacle state reconstruction-based route planning approach produces new path, speed, and proxy values from vehicle, obstacle, road, and original path information. Heuristic search frameworks and planning result rectification modules improve static obstacle avoidance, global route smoothness, and driving safety.

II. RELATED WORKS

It specifies signal temporal logic for AV intersection turning driving tasks. The specs follow Chinese traffic laws [9]. Path planning optimization issues may be created by encoding signal temporal logic requirements as mixed-integer constraints. Gurobi optimizer solves issues by finding safe pathways. It shows that signal temporal logic is powerful for formalizing driving tasks and addressing autonomous route planning difficulties. A numerical experiment proves the method's viability. An integrated route planning system for autonomous cars emphasizing multi-obstacle difficulties [10]. System components include a multidimensional constraint set, a B-spline route optimizer, and a key reference target risk assessor. The KRE is responsible for risk classification, the BPO for route generation optimization, and the MCS for considering the impact field, planning corridors, and car dynamics. Simulated and HIL test platforms have validated the efficacy and real-time capacity of the framework.

Path planning optimization for intelligent cars or robots in complicated situations is addressed in this research using Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs), Long Short-Term Memory Networks (LSTMs), and the A* search method.

While LSTM handles time-series data, CNN extracts spatial characteristics from data that are aware of its surroundings [11]. The result is an environment model that the A* search algorithm may use. route length, safety, and real-time efficiency are some performance indicators that the algorithm optimizes, offering flexible alternatives for route design. It addresses challenging operating circumstances and unpredictability in off-road terrain to enhance AGVs [12]. It combines high-resolution terrain reconstruction utilizing satellite imagery and soil maps, Bayesian machine learning vehicle-terrain interaction modeling, and mobility uncertainty-aware motion planning. This work may support off-road AGV motion planning in unpredictable terrain.

It introduces an ESP method for detecting blind alleys, optimizing breach sites, and generating smooth emergency avoidance pathways using a dynamic ability field and clothoid curve [13]. The solution demonstrated enhanced performance when tested using MATLAB/Simulink and CarSim Simulator in a highway setting. An innovative approach to collaborative motion planning based on the ant colony algorithm is presented [14]. It modifies the evaporation coefficient, optimizes spatial cooperation and trajectory costs, and creates autonomous subpopulations. The approach uses the trajectories of each subgroup to design plausible routes for each AV. Compared to algorithms that use artificial potential fields for motion planning, the simulation results demonstrate its effectiveness and adaptability. Using the Modified Hummingbird algorithm, this study introduces a new optimum route planning approach for AUVs [15]. By computing the way to gather data from sensor nodes dynamically, the technique enhances energy efficiency in underwater sensor communication networks. The optimum route lessens the load on the batteries of AUVs operating in WSNs.

For AMRs operating in uncharted territories, this study suggests a better path-planning method based on deep RL [16]. The technique uses an adaptive ε greedy action selection policy, a reward function, a Markov decision process framework, and a double deep Q network (DDQN). According to Bezier curve theory, the intended route is made more straightforward. In contrast to the IDDQN algorithm's remarkable resilience to random disturbances in unfamiliar surroundings, the enhanced DDQN algorithm generates shorter and safer global pathways, according to comparative simulations. Mainstream models lack kinematic feasibility for the Trajectory Planning Module, which autonomous cars need [17]. A novel convex optimization approach solves this problem by creating collision-free and changeable boundary restrictions. An external parameter, "time," enhances velocity management in the "Bi-state Challenges Avoidance" approach. The new planner can design safe and efficient paths in real-time utilizing simulated and practical driving data, a necessity for AV adoption.

This study introduces a model predictive control approach to facilitate autonomous tracking control during overtaking maneuvers [18]. After analyzing vehicle kinematics and building a minimum safe distance model, a mixed-function model for route planning is chosen. To increase the accuracy of route tracking, the new approach has a modest steady-state error, a quick reaction time, and resilience. The use of mobile robots in disaster response, and more specifically in rescue operations conducted after a catastrophe [19]. Integrating restrictions on distance and energy usage suggests a heuristic function that may enhance the A * algorithm. The revised algorithm proves successful under tough post-disaster situations by reducing route planning time while balancing energy-efficient planning and appropriate path selection. With an emphasis on global and local planning, this study examines the ant colony algorithm, a tool for effective route planning in autonomous cars [20]. Thee seems compatible with various algorithms such as particle swarm, genetic, and artificial potential field (APF), making it a good fit for global planning. However, more studies are required to guarantee the best results for simulated global and local route planning.

III. PROPOSED SYSTEM

The suggested method optimizes AV route planning utilizing dynamic mapping and RL, helping AVs navigate more effectively in complicated and dynamic surroundings. Using real-time data from dynamic maps and environmental input, this integrated system continually learns and adapts to the vehicle's surroundings. It then processes this data using RL algorithms to make real-time intelligent decisions.

A. System Overview

Path planning, which entails finding the optimal route for an AV to travel, considering various parameters such as road conditions, traffic, barriers, and other environmental components, is fundamental to the proposed system. The complexity and unpredictability of real-world driving situations may be too much for traditional route planning algorithms, as they depend on static maps and established road architecture.

Adaptive route planning is necessary due to the ever-changing nature of traffic, weather, and other factors. To tackle this, the method has two essential components: dynamic mapping and RL. The RL component handles the decision-making process, which allows the vehicle to learn the best navigation techniques via experience. Meanwhile, the dynamic mapping component keeps the vehicle updated in real time on any changes to its surroundings that impact its course.

B. RL and Dynamic Mapping for Path Planning

One subfield of machine learning known as Reinforcement Learning teaches agents how to behave in a given setting so that they may maximize a predefined concept of cumulative reward. Regarding autonomous cars, the agent (the vehicle) determines the optimal route to travel by observing the benefits (or drawbacks) of different driving maneuvers, such as accelerating, stopping, and turning. To make decisions in real-time, the system considers environmental input, such as barriers, road conditions, and traffic lights.

The first step of the RL algorithm is to define a state space that represents the vehicle's surroundings. Each state might include factors including the vehicle's location, speed, barriers in the path, traffic conditions, and route type (highway, urban street, etc.). Depending on these states, the agent conducts action and moves between them. The driver may need to reduce the speed, change lanes, or reroute the car to avoid traffic or impediments.

Depending on the activity's outcome, the vehicle is either rewarded or penalized at each stage. A good outcome would be avoiding an accident, while a negative outcome would be adopting an inefficient route or creating a traffic hazard. The RL agent gradually determines the best course of action or optimum policy to maximize the total reward. The policy enables the vehicle to adjust its route planning in response to environmental changes occurring in real time.

While RL makes decisions, dynamic mapping is vital for keeping the vehicle's environmental knowledge current. Road closures, construction zones, traffic patterns, accidents, and weather conditions are just some of the environmental changes that dynamic maps constantly update in real-time to represent, in contrast to static maps that just provide set road networks and infrastructure.

Crowdsourced data and data collected from sensors (LiDAR, radar, and webcams) create dynamic maps. By integrating with the vehicle's internal systems, these maps enable the retrieval of up-to-the-minute data while navigating. For example, if an accident blocks a road ahead, the RL agent may modify its route based on the most up-to-date information on the dynamic map. Combining RL with dynamic maps allows the system to use the most up-to-date information to improve the route constantly.

C. RL and Dynamic Mapping for Path Planning

Cameras, light detection and ranging (LiDAR), and radar are the sensors that provide the vehicle's navigation system with its first data for detecting its surroundings. A dynamic map is generated from this data in real-time and updated continuously. The location and environmental data are sent to the RL agent, which then determines the optimal course of action according to the present situation. For instance, the agent may choose to switch lanes or reroute the car to avoid congestion if the vehicle encounters severe traffic.

Environmental cues, including changes in road conditions, the emergence of barriers, and updates to the dynamic map (such as road closures), are received by the car as it goes. In response to this input, the RL agent modifies its policy based on what it has learned. The system revises its decision-making model based on lessons learned if the vehicle's path causes an increase in journey time or unanticipated obstacles. Over time, the vehicle's course planning becomes more efficient and precise because of this continual learning loop.

Another important function of dynamic mapping is improving the vehicle's awareness of its surroundings. Any time something unexpected happens, like roadwork or an accident, an update to the dynamic map triggers a new decisionmaking cycle. Following this, the RL algorithm examines the revised map and potential alternate paths, modifying the vehicle's trajectory to maximize efficiency, speed, and safety. Figure 1 presents a block diagram that illustrates the comprehensive data flow within the system.



Fig. 1 System Flow of Proposed Autonomous Path Planning System

Figure 2 illustrates the decision-making process involved in AV route planning. The process begins with gathering sensor data, assessing environmental clarity and path safety, modifying the dynamic map and route as necessary, and perpetually upgrading the system using reinforcement learning-based feedback loops.



Fig. 2 Autonomous Vehicle Path Planning Flowchart

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Using RL and dynamic mapping, the AV path planning system reveals substantial progress in enhancing route navigation, real-time decision-making, and overall system efficacy. This technology provides significant enhancements compared to conventional navigation methods by adjusting to fluctuating road conditions and traffic variations in real-time, hence providing safer and more efficient driving. A significant conclusion of this work is the effective incorporation of RL into the route planning procedure. The RL agent, which perpetually acquires knowledge from the environment, enables the system to make choices depending on fluctuating situations. The car can choose the most efficient path while circumventing obstructions, road congestion, and other dangers.

The feedback loop in the RL model allows the system to refine its decisionmaking process after each encounter with the environment, resulting in ongoing improvement over time. This flexibility facilitates more seamless and secure navigation, especially in intricate and unexpected traffic situations. Dynamic mapping is essential for providing the vehicle with the most current environmental information. The real-time updates from the dynamic mapping system enable the vehicle to alter its route quickly, responding to new data on impediments, road closures, or fluctuations in traffic patterns. This capacity enables the car to react to real-world events, such as unexpected construction zones or traffic incidents, without depending only on pre-programmed maps. This signifies a significant benefit over static mapping systems, which often encounter difficulties in accommodating dynamic changes. Using a mix of RL and dynamic mapping, the vehicle's decision-making method enhances route safety. The algorithm systematically assesses the safest routes, including variables such as road conditions, the presence of people or other cars, and meteorological elements. The RL agent's capacity to learn and revise its knowledge enables the vehicle to adjust to novel problems, like abrupt weather changes or unfamiliar obstructions. This technology enhances vehicle safety and passenger comfort by decreasing the probability of accidents and refining the travel experience.

The system's computational efficiency performance was analyzed. The RL model needs ongoing updates and training. However, it efficiently processes realtime input from many sensors without considerable delays. The system's capacity to reconcile real-time decision-making with resource constraints guarantees its successful operation in practical settings. The dynamic mapping updates are executed rapidly, facilitating flawless navigation without requiring substantial computer resources or time delays, making the system appropriate for use. A notable benefit of this method is the decreased need for physical intervention. Conventional automobile navigation systems depend significantly on pre-defined routes and human input, leading to inefficiencies or inadequate reactions to unforeseen circumstances.

The system uses RL to make judgments, autonomously adjusting to changing circumstances. This reduces the need for human supervision, facilitating more efficient and autonomous driving. Some issues persist regarding system robustness and scalability. The RL model exhibited encouraging outcomes in controlled settings, but its efficacy may be constrained in intricate, unpredictable real-world situations. Extreme weather conditions, such as dense fog or snowfall, may incapacitate the system's sensors or decision-making skills, resulting in mistakes in route planning or safety evaluations. Moreover, the system's scalability across many vehicle kinds and road conditions needs additional testing and improvement.

The system's capacity to generalize across various geographic locations, driving cultures, and infrastructural configurations is a crucial focus for future study. Table 1 comprises data from the vehicle's sensors, used as input for the RL model to inform decisions depending on the prevailing environment.

Timestamp	Sensor Type	Sensor Reading	Unit	Location
2024-11-26 10:00	LiDAR	75	meters	Front-left
2024-11-26 10:00	Camera	Clear Road	Clear Road -	
2024-11-26 10:01	Radar	50 meters		Front-right
2024-11-26 10:01	GPS	37.7749° N, 122.4194° W	-	San Francisco
2024-11-26 10:02	Ultrasonic	3	meters	Rear-left

TABLE. 1 Received data from various sensors

Table 2 illustrates the actions selected by the RL agent in response to sensor inputs, together with the associated rewards obtained for each action executed during navigation. Table 3 illustrates dynamic modifications in the map,

including identified obstructions, route alterations, and associated environmental changes.

Timestamp	Action Taken	Reward Value	Action Description	Path Status
2024-11-26 10:00	Move Forward	+1	The vehicle moves along a clear path	Safe
2024-11-26 10:01	Turn Left	+2	Avoiding obstacles detected by LiDAR	Safe
2024-11-26 10:02	Slow Down	+0.5	Adjusting speed for a sharp turn	Caution
2024-11-26 10:03	Stop	+3	Stopping to avoid collision	Safe
2024-11-26 10:04	Speed Up	+1.5	Resuming speed after clearing the obstacle	Safe

TABLE. 2 RL actions

TABLE.	3	Dynamic	mapping	updates
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Timestamp	Map Update Type	Obstacle Detected	Obstacle Location	New Path Adjustments
2024-11-26 10:00	New Obstacle	Car Stopped	75 meters ahead	Adjust the path to avoid collision
2024-11-26 10:01	Path Adjustment	None	-	Slight left turn to avoid obstruction
2024-11-26 10:02	Road Closed	Construction Zone	200 meters ahead	Recalculate the path to an alternate route
2024-11-26 10:03	New Obstacle	Pedestrian	50 meters ahead	Slow down and adjust speed
2024-11-26 10:04	Path Clear	None	-	Resume normal path

Figure 3 illustrates the progressive rise in cumulative reward over time, demonstrating the enhancement of the RL agent's decision-making via experiential learning from environmental interactions. The slope of the curve intensifies as the agent acquires knowledge, a characteristic feature of RL systems.



Fig. 3 Cumulative Reward Progression Over Time

Figure 4 shows that the RL agent acquires optimum trajectories, traversing reduced time or distance. This enhancement in efficiency signifies that the agent is honing its capacity to maneuver with little resource expenditure.



Fig. 4 Efficiency of route selection by RL agent

Figure 5 indicates that the rise in the frequency of "Move Forward" actions implies that the agent is gaining confidence in picking this action as its preferred option for continuous navigation, particularly once it has knowledge about safe and efficient routes. The reduced frequency of "Turn Left" and "Turn Right" signifies that the vehicle faces fewer barriers or needs fewer modifications as it acclimatizes to the area.



Fig. 5 Action distribution across training episodes

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The proposed approach for enhancing autonomous vehicle route planning using RL and dynamic mapping has shown benefits in augmenting navigation performance in realistic circumstances. Utilizing reinforcement learning, the system can adjust to intricate and dynamic settings, allowing cars to make informed choices that emphasize safety, efficiency, and obstacle evasion. Dynamic mapping has significantly improved the system's capacity to adjust real-time routes according to fresh environmental information. Significant results include enhanced route efficiency, decreased journey duration, and a notable augmentation in reward values during training. The system's capacity to dynamically modify routes demonstrates its applicability in urban and off-road settings, reducing reliance on static maps. It emphasizes the promise of integrating RL with IoT-based dynamic mapping to enhance the safety and reliability of autonomous navigation. Future research may investigate multi-agent cooperation and enhanced sensor integration to tackle more extensive issues in autonomous transportation systems.

Funding Statement: The authors received no specific funding for this study.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest to report regarding the present study.

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