International Journal of Scientific Research in Engineering and Management (IJSREM)
Volume: 08 Issue: 03 | March - 2024 SJIF Rating: 8.176 ISSN: 2582-3930

DriveSmart: Revolutionizing Road Safety through AI&ML Advanced Assistance Systems

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Abstract

In simpler terms, this paper explores an advanced system that helps drivers on rural and intercity roads, especially those with one lane in each direction. The system uses fancy tech like cameras, lasers, and communication between cars and infrastructure to make driving safer and smoother.

It uses sensors to spot things on the road and tell the driver if there's a problem. If the driver doesn't react, the system can step in and adjust things like speed or steering to keep everyone safe. It also talks to other cars and road stuff to share info.

The system does cool stuff like helping with fuel efficiency, assisting with passing slow vehicles, controlling speed at intersections, and avoiding crashes by making quick moves. It uses smart math and AI to figure out the best way to drive.

If there's a danger, the system warns the driver and can even take control of the car if necessary. Tests with a regular car in specific situations showed good results.

Introduction

In Spain, about half of accidents on rural roads occur on single-lane roads, making them particularly risky. These roads present challenges due to their diverse conditions and less structured environments, putting road users at higher risk, especially in terms of safety measures.

Concerns about fuel consumption and emissions in road transportation, which accounts for a large portion of petrol consumption in the EU-27, have spurred efforts to develop new technologies for efficiency. The next wave of Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) aims not only for safety but also for optimizing traffic flow and reducing environmental impact and fuel consumption.

However, the adoption of this new generation of ADAS is still limited, mainly because of the traditional approach of focusing on individual vehicles. Transitioning to cooperative systems, which involve communication between vehicles and their surroundings, opens up new avenues for enhancing safety and efficiency. These cooperative systems are moving towards autonomous driving, where vehicles can automatically adjust their actions to improve safety and efficiency.

In the field of environment perception, sensing systems play a vital role in providing information for decision-making. Technologies such as laser and radar detection have advanced, and computer vision systems are becoming more sophisticated. Challenges persist in improving efficiency and reliability, particularly in rural environments.

Communication systems, such as Vehicular Ad-Hoc Networks (VANETs), enable vehicles to exchange information. Challenges include optimizing communication efficiency, especially in large-scale scenarios. Tailored solutions are necessary to enhance efficiency and ensure the successful implementation of these networks.

Pre-collision systems aim to detect potential risks early and take appropriate safety measures. Real-time analysis of factors like Time-To-Collision (TTC) and Time-To-Avoidance (TTA) is crucial. These systems focus on taking reversible or irreversible actions based on the likelihood of avoiding collisions.

Autonomous maneuvering presents a significant challenge in intelligent transport systems, involving the application of Artificial Intelligence techniques. While partially automated systems like Adaptive Cruise Control (ACC) exist, more advanced systems require detailed and accurate perception of the environment for safe maneuvering. Fully automated driving is a current research focus, with various developments aiming for swift and effective actions in complex scenarios.

In conclusion, integrating cooperative systems, advanced sensing technologies, efficient communication networks, and autonomous maneuvering capabilities is essential for enhancing road safety and efficiency in the evolving transportation landscape.

Literature Review

To reduce the toll of road traffic fatalities and injuries, it's crucial to prioritize safety in the planning,design, and operation of roads. Without specific infrastructure features ensuring a safe journey for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists, they remain vulnerable. Failures in infrastructure can affect the likelihood and severity of crashes, which can be identified through road safety inspections and road star ratings.

Analysis of a network of around 50,000 km of federal highways in the statistical yearbook of accidents in 2019 revealed 12,056 accidents. The causes were diverse, with 11,360 incidents attributed to human error, 1,898 to road conditions, 1,073 to vehicle factors, and 808 to natural causes.

Concerning road-related causes, the statistical data highlights circumstances such as wet or slippery roads, presence of obstacles, lack of signage, animal crossings, damage, and other unspecified factors. While the importance of improving road infrastructure for safety is acknowledged, widespread implementation of audits or star ratings for new road projects is lacking. The absence of inspections on existing roads and investments in upgrading high-risk areas worsens the situation.

Deteriorating road conditions, especially poorly maintained pavements, contribute to unpredictable driver responses, leading to sudden lane changes and emergency braking, resulting in rear-end collisions.

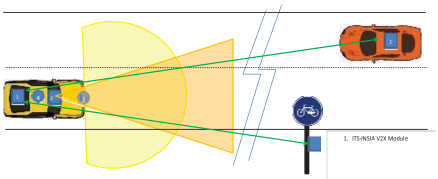
The current vehicle fleet presents additional challenges. While certain safety features like electronic stability control and advanced braking can help mitigate road traffic incidents, not all vehicles, whether new or used, are required to have these technologies. The aging average fleet age increases the risk, as many vehicles have outdated braking systems, along with deteriorated suspension and steering systems. Additionally, essential safety features like anti-lock braking systems (ABS), brake assistance systems (BAS), traction control, and airbags are not mandatory, even in new vehicles.

The statistical data shows that a significant portion of vehicle-related collision causes is linked to poor mechanical or electrical conditions, tires, brakes, overweight vehicles, lights, steering, suspension, axles, poorly secured loads, transmission, and engine issues.

Addressing these challenges through comprehensive measures that include enhancing road infrastructure, improving vehicle safety standards, and adopting advanced safety technologies is essential. Integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into transportation systems offers promising opportunities for enhancing safety, with AI capable of supporting various aspects, including risk assessment and decision-making processes. This interdisciplinary approach requires collaboration across disciplines such as mathematics, computer science, engineering, and sociology, emphasizing responsible and transparent design to ensure the ethical integration of AI technologies.

Proposed System:

Intelligent systems present viable answers to road mobility challenges by concurrently boosting safety and efficiency. This initiative seeks to create a cohesive driving assistance system customized for inter-city settings, particularly emphasizing single-lane roads due to their distinct obstacles. The objective is to enhance both safety and efficiency by crafting targeted applications within this integrated framework.



These applications operate as collaborative systems, utilizing multi-sensory perception and communication among vehicles and infrastructure. By amalgamating data from onboard perception systems and communication networks, the system gains a comprehensive understanding of the surroundings. Onboard sensors provide immediate, independent information about the environment, covering obstacles that may not be detectable through communication technologies alone. Meanwhile, communication systems contribute supplementary data, particularly in areas where perception systems may encounter limitations. The amalgamation of these sources enhances the overall potential for enhancing safety and efficiency.

Additionally, the system integrates vehicle automation, capable of autonomously responding to identified hazardous situations when the driver fails to respond appropriately.

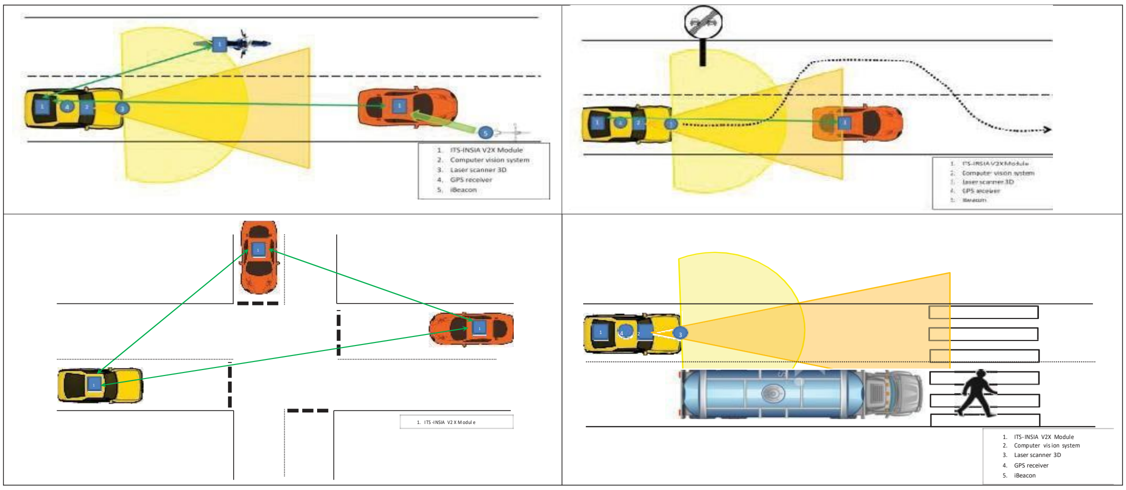
The architecture of this comprehensive ADAS is structured around four applications that seamlessly blend safety and energy efficiency, supported by advanced Information Technology:

1. Collaborative adaptive cruise control, optimizing fuel efficiency by considering other vehicles and the road's incline.

2. Assistance system for overtaking on single-carriage roads, taking into account appropriate speed adjustments and identifying optimal road segments for the maneuver.

3. Assistance system at intersections with speed control during approaching maneuvers.

4. Collision avoidance system with the capability of evasive maneuvers, encompassing pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists.



In particular, the system excels at analyzing complex maneuvers such as passing and identifying potential hazards from other road users. It notifies the driver of these situations, and if it detects an impending accident, it automatically assumes control of the vehicle to reduce speed and adjust its course after thoroughly assessing the surroundings. Additionally, it activates safety systems to mitigate the impact of the collision.

Obstacles detection

The development of the obstacle detection system involved integrating computer vision and laser scanner technologies. Using a Sick LDMRS 4-layer Laser and a stereo camera, the laser scanner created a Point Cloud (PC) from which the system identified obstacles in the form of point clusters. These clusters served a dual purpose, serving as Regions of Interest (ROI) for computer vision and providing data for obstacle classification using machine learning.

Cluster Formation from Point Clouds:

The initial phase focused on identifying obstacles using laser-generated PCs. Obstacles were recognized as concentrated points within the PC, categorized as clusters through mathematical analysis.

Existing clustering methods in the literature are often optimized for densely populated PCs from high-definition multilayer laser scanners and stereo cameras. However, these methods may not perform well with sparse outdoor PCs. To address this, a novel clustering approach was devised, incorporating parameters like sensor-to-obstacle distance, geometrical constraints, and allowed points per cluster.

After extracting clusters, they were checked against specific constraints, such as Cluster Tolerance for maximum cluster width and minClusterSize and maxClusterSize for the minimum and maximum points within a cluster. These parameters were adjusted based on the obstacle's distance.

The goal was to identify the most populated clusters, considering the use of a low-resolution multilayer laser. The threshold distance was adjusted based on the distance (x) from the laser sensor to the obstacle, acknowledging that the distance between consecutive laser points increased with x. Due to laser construction limitations, the minimum distance detected in consecutive points exceeded the initial threshold.

Following cluster generation, coordinate alignment was necessary to align the camera and laser scanner. This alignment was achieved by detecting the plane corresponding to the road surface. Once calibration parameters were computed, the system translated from laser coordinates to camera coordinates, enabling identification based on both sensors.

Obstacle Classification:

Obstacle classification utilized a Support Vector Machine (SVM) approach, leveraging features from both sensors. Clusters were transformed into a mesh structure through Delaunay triangulation to reconstruct obstacle shapes. For the computer vision approach, Histogram of Oriented Gradients (HOG) served as features for each obstacle. SVM training was then conducted based on these features from both sensors.

Vehicle-to-Vehicle and Vehicle-to-Infrastructure Communications:

Vehicular communications form the basis of cooperative systems in transportation, enhancing safety and energy efficiency through data sharing among vehicles and road infrastructure. Wireless communication enables efficient, robust, and real-time data transmission among various road users and infrastructure elements. These communication systems include vehicle-to-vehicle (V2V), vehicle-to-infrastructure (V2I), and vehicle-to-person (V2P) communications, collectively known as vehicle-to-everything (V2X). The aim is for every vehicle, infrastructure element, and road user to be equipped with a vehicular communications module, operating on the Dedicated Short Range Communications (DSRC) service. Interoperability and manufacturer independence are ensured through the use of ISO standardized protocols.

Transportation needs are addressed using standard protocols from classical wired communications at the link and MAC layers. All data packets are associated with GPS coordinates, and every DSRC unit must incorporate a GPS receiver. The GPS coordinates of the packet source's location are added to the data packet at the networking layer, supporting geobroadcast behavior and enabling the multihop behavior of data packets. This allows all communication modules to function as routers, receiving and forwarding data packets, extending their range beyond the coverage of an individual DSRC unit.

The transport and TCP layers are combined to enable TCP communications with a basic transport protocol for packet routing, facilitating the GeoNetworking function of the next layer.

INSIA-ITS communication modules are used in this paper, implementing the specified protocol stack for interoperability with modules from other manufacturers. These modules feature multiple interfaces for interconnection with other devices via WiFi, Bluetooth, or CAN Bus.

At the application level, four different applications are defined, each running within the module and generating standard data packets with distinct user data fields, as detailed in Table 2: .

Table 1. Assistance applications and data transmission.

Application	Data packet	Required Frequency
ACC	Applic ation	1 Hz
Overtaki ng	vehicle	
Intersecti ons	GPS	
Collision	Speed	
	Timest amp	
	Headi ng	

Table 1. Assistance applications and data transmission.

Tests

Several system components underwent preliminary testing, with particular emphasis on the perception system and the communication module.

Regarding the perception system, tests were carried out across four different scenarios, with the objective of enabling real-time vehicle detection techniques:

- Experiment 1: Initial testing involved a raw learning process without the utilization of bootstrap techniques, utilizing images of varying sizes and dimensions.

- Experiment 2: Bootstrap techniques were implemented in this scenario, incorporating diverse image sizes and dimensions.

- Experiment 3: Similar to Experiment 1, bootstrap techniques were not utilized, but images were resized to a standardized dimension.

- Experiment 4: Images were resized as in Experiment 3, with the addition of bootstrap techniques to enhance success rates.

Details of the training and test image sets can be found in Table 3, and the results, including various metrics, are provided in Table 4.

Table 3. Test performed with sets used for training and validation.

Test	Training images	Positive training images	Negative training images	Test set
Test 1	5999	35352	2247	864
Test 2	5999	35352	2247	864
Test 3	3554	2317	1237	844
Test 4	3554	2317	1237	844

Table 4. Results for the 4 test performed.

Test	Accuracy	Precision	Recall	Specificity	True positive rate	False positive rate
Test 1	0.852	0.865	0.914	0.737	0.914	0.990
Test 2	0.918	0.912	0.967	0.829	0.967	0.171
Test 3	0.926	0.920	0.965	0.864	0.965	0.136
Test 4	0.970	0.961	0.990	0.935	0.990	0.065

Figure 3

This showcases the effectiveness of the overtaking warning system, demonstrating its performance in a real-world test scenario where a motorcycle overtakes a car. The evaluation of the communication system is conducted within this context. During the 35-second test, the motorcycle attains a maximum speed of 50 km/h, while the car maintains an average speed of 25 km/h, with continuous connectivity between the vehicles ensured. The warning system is designed to activate only when the distance between the motorcycle and the car drops below 20 meters while both are traveling in the same direction. The safety application then issues warnings to the car driver regarding the nearby motorcycle and its relative position. These warnings cease when the distance between the vehicles exceeds 20 meters.

Methodology:

To begin, conduct an in-depth analysis of road safety challenges, identifying key areas for improvement. Simultaneously, explore state-of-the-art object detection algorithms such as YOLO or Faster R-CNN to select the one best suited for the project's objectives.

Next, acquire or generate a diverse dataset comprising images and videos depicting various road scenarios, ensuring inclusivity of potential challenges. Proceed with data preprocessing, including image augmentation and annotation, to enhance model generalization.

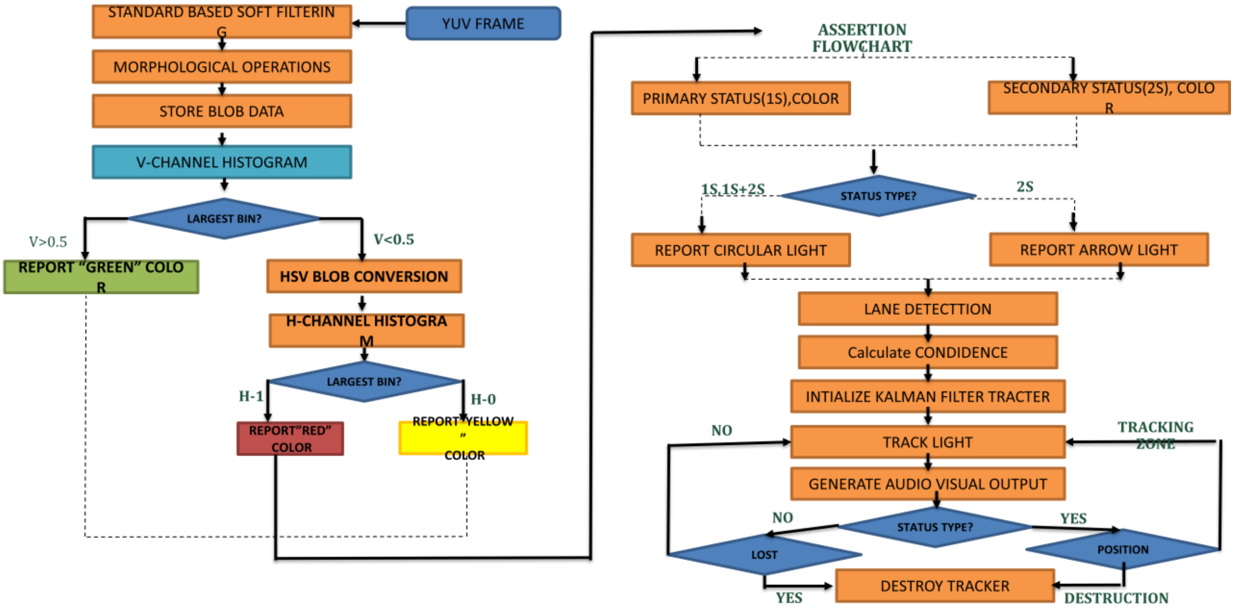
Train the selected object detection model using the annotated dataset, fine-tuning parameters for optimal performance. Develop a real-time integration system that incorporates the trained model, considering hardware compatibility and efficiency.

Initiate a comprehensive testing phase, including controlled environment simulations and real-world scenario evaluations. Assess the model's accuracy, speed, and robustness, making adjustments as needed.

Implement additional features such as real-time alerts or adaptive responses to augment the system's capabilities. Upon achieving satisfactory results, deploy the advanced assistance system in a controlled environment or conduct a pilot study to validate its effectiveness in real-world conditions.

Collect user feedback and performance metrics during this deployment phase to refine the system further. Conclude the project by documenting the entire methodology, including dataset details, model architecture, training parameters, and system integration specifics.

Summarize the project's impact on road safety, emphasizing its potential for scalability and future enhancements.



Result:

The "Revolutionizing Road Safety through Advanced Assistance Systems" project is expected to yield a highly efficient and precise object detection model customized for road safety applications. The trained model is anticipated to accurately recognize and categorize various objects like vehicles, pedestrians, and obstacles in real-world situations. Performance metrics, such as precision, recall, and accuracy, will be utilized to validate the system's effectiveness.

The integrated assistance system aims to deliver timely and dependable alerts or interventions, thereby aiding in the prevention of potential road accidents. Evaluating the system's practicality, responsiveness, and adaptability to diverse road conditions through real-world testing and pilot deployment will be critical. Gathering user feedback will assess the system's user-friendliness and its perceived impact on improving road safety.

Furthermore, the project's success will be gauged by its potential to scale up and address broader road safety challenges beyond its initial objectives. A comprehensive report will document the methodology, training outcomes, system integration, and performance evaluations, offering valuable insights for future advancements in intelligent road safety solutions.

Conclusion

This paper introduces an integrated collision avoidance system that combines obstacle detection systems using artificial vision and 3D-laser scanner technology with wireless communications modules. This approach allows for the retrieval of more information compared to using a single system, thus expanding the digital horizon and proactively identifying potential risks on the road. The system focuses on four primary operating scenarios tailored for single carriageways roads, recognizing their heightened risk levels and the prohibitive costs associated with implementing infrastructure-based safety measures.

Additionally, the system promotes more efficient driving behaviors under normal conditions and issues warnings to the driver upon detecting any dangers. Moreover, it has the capability to assume control of the vehicle, including steering and speed adjustments, to execute evasive maneuvers or automatic stops.

Various tests have been conducted on the individual system modules to ensure proper functionality. Furthermore, comprehensive testing of the complete assistance system is underway in controlled scenarios, with preliminary results indicating satisfactory performance.

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