Real-Time AI-Enhanced Driver Monitoring Systems

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1. Introduction

Driver distraction and fatigue have become major concerns for road transport authorities worldwide. Fatigued and distracted drivers' reaction times are delayed, they have decreased sensory perceptions, and their decision-making abilities are affected. They have an increased risk of being involved in a road accident, which can cause property damage and personal injury as well as fatalities. From 2019 to 2020, there was an increase in deaths on Australian roads of 3.8%, and fatalities involving heavy vehicles increased by 4.5%. A proposed increase in heavy vehicle accidents in New South Wales may not be a surprise given the percentage of all commuter travel that heavy vehicles represent. It is thus most important to design and implement an accurate driver monitoring system that can detect inattentive, distracted, and fatigued drivers as quickly and correctly as possible. While significant expertise currently resides within specialist personnel, the research now seeks to provide those analysts with an AI-enhanced driver monitoring system, presenting a live real-time video summarizing any instances of the driver being inattentive, fatigued, or tired.

By applying advancements in artificial intelligence-based automated computer vision techniques, it is anticipated that robust driver monitoring systems could be developed to overcome the limitations of existing solutions. Moreover, advancements in artificial intelligence evince the promise of making such systems more compatible with modern automotive applications. While not without its share of challenges—such as the reduction of the recognition capabilities of computer vision models under changing illumination and the development of driver distraction mitigating policies—the associated improvements in vehicle safety, driver health and safety, and the reduction of road fatalities and injuries further emphasize the timely need for real-time AI-enhanced research in driver monitoring. Therefore, in this paper, we analyze this research area, the extant capabilities and evaluation metrics, and survey extant driver monitoring methodologies and technologies to identify gaps and roadblocks. The key aims and anticipated outputs of this research are understood within this context.

1.1. Background and Significance

Since the early days of the automobile, safety has been the top concern for the automobile industry. Most traffic accidents are caused by road users, drivers in particular. The number of road traffic deaths has remained quite stable over the last decade, and there has not been any significant decrease. Oftentimes, human errors are found to be the responsible cause of vehicle accidents. Furthermore, issues like fatigue and distraction are the main causes of inattention leading to these errors. Driver fatigue and distraction are significant causes of traffic accidents and can cause severe damage to passengers and vehicles. As fatigue increases, the time taken to react to dangerous situations has become a serious problem for the workforce in the field of transportation. At present, the amount of distracting gadgets, devices, and features in vehicles has been ever-rising; hence, the awareness of a vehicle's surrounding environment plays a pivotal role in determining the quality and smoothness of a journey while ensuring safety and avoiding damage to objects or living beings while driving.

Thanks to the computational advances made in assessing and modeling data, employing algorithms using artificial intelligence and machine learning has integrated numerous components to offer an innovative solution. These realities enhanced the literal properties of the systems, which significantly helped in pioneering extensive technical and theoretical principles and deployed potentials. Thus, the motives for charting and reviewing the historical ironies of past trends, like those existing in present clearer trends of driver monitoring systems, were recognized. These must have in-depth analysis, discussion, or study to establish the reasons behind their development and the needs that were left unaddressed or the problems that they left unsolved, leading to the needs of designing a future system with the current trends in mind, indicating the close problematic areas that are important and must be defined in a future work context.

1.2. Objective and Scope

This study aims to propose a multifaceted, real-time operational framework for an AI-enhanced driver monitoring system, addressing the driver state, such as being drowsy or distracted, or having a sudden health problem. Accordingly, the goals underlying the proposed framework are briefly listed as follows: to enhance the real-time detection of drowsiness, especially microsleep, and provide reasonable solutions for it; to improve the real-time enhancement of road safety; and to promote research and application studies.

Detecting the driver's physiological and mental state and their potential effect on driving performance can help to provide a preventive solution for ensuring road safety. For this reason, numerous studies on driver monitoring have been conducted in various research areas, including psychology, engineering, and computer science. The driver's facial characteristics and the reflection of their emotional and physiological state can easily be analyzed in the computer-aided systems proposed in recent years. Heterogeneous methodologies that include computer vision, image processing, texture extraction, and filtering procedures were used to develop fast non-intrusive driver monitoring systems. Specifically, large efforts are needed to develop effective solutions for real-time systems. This is particularly true when the driver's physiological conditions must be taken into account, such as the health state monitoring of drivers in the autonomous domain. The analysis of real-time signals, ECG, galvanic skin response, etc., is required to monitor biological parameters, together with the common driver’s microsleep and distraction conditions. However, considering computer-aided applications, it is not easy to develop efficient driver state monitoring systems with low complexity and reduced computational load. The primary issue in developing a multifaceted driver monitoring system in real time is to address the increasing problem with still limited budget resources. Over the last two decades, advanced driving assistance systems have experienced significant growth. However, the current situation in automotive original equipment manufacturer production adheres to leveling down the technology to ensure driving safety, resulting in cars with low- to mid-cost systems. The development of affordable safety technologies has been and remains an ongoing priority for the passenger vehicle market. The necessity for a holistic and regular study, including a behavioral analysis, is noted as a long-term foresight action for citizens’ road safety. This necessitates next-level driver assistant systems that help decrease the risk of crashes caused by speeding, fatigue, and distraction. The present state of the art in both driver monitoring systems and deep learning provides not only the chance to develop a highly accurate system that provides real-time information about the driver's state but also the version-rich flexibility of vehicle production.

2. Technological Foundations

Driver monitoring systems have advanced from rule-based classic systems to statistically modeled solutions with machine learning algorithms and the newer versions of deep learning techniques. It is the combination of developments on the hardware and software sides that contributes to building effective human monitoring systems. The components are sensors, processing units, and actuators in hardware, and computation, algorithms, and applications in software. The use of appropriate algorithms can fundamentally improve the capability of DMS, as they represent the computational aspect on the basis of which intelligence is incorporated. Real-time systems use different types of data for driver behavior monitoring. Each of the driver monitoring systems uses its in-vehicle sensors to monitor and accumulate the database in different data formats of the driver data, such as time-based systems and semantics-based systems.

The collected data is responsible for improving the assessment of driving performance, as it acts as a source to interpret the behavior of drivers responsible for risks and safety. The effort to integrate AI techniques into the existing driver monitoring systems depends on the addition of new hardware and software technology. Many approaches use middleware to combine two or more applications using the same sensor, but in the end, they suffer from challenges. The pure data-based approaches use the information collected through image, sound, speech recognition techniques, and EMG sensors, and can provide a good performance assessment. Behavior can be interpreted from the driver's facial expressions or eye movements. For example, the spectrum of algorithms used to identify fatigue from images involves polynomial classifiers, algorithms like Independent Component Analysis, Fisher discriminant analysis, one-class support vector classifier, and non-linear support vector machine.

2.1. Machine Learning Algorithms for Driver Monitoring

There are many different algorithms used in modern AI-based driver monitoring systems. These machine learning methods enable the AI driver to continuously analyze and interpret the driver's behavior and situation to enhance driver safety and driving comfort while on the road. These algorithms include supervised learning, unsupervised learning, and reinforcement learning. Supervised learning algorithms are broadly used in behavior prediction, emotion detection, gesture, and face recognition. Recently, convolutional neural networks and recurrent neural networks have been proposed for driver behavior feature detection and driving state prediction. Unsupervised learning algorithms are used in driver behavior analysis. In reinforcement learning, an approach is used to detect the aggressive behavior of the driver, but it lacks robustness and generalization capability for practical applications.

The methods of machine learning are beneficial in the driver monitoring process because of their predictive capabilities. They can predict behavior as well as the decisions that humans are taking. Furthermore, predictive algorithms can adapt to changes; on the other hand, a reactive method only follows the already made decisions. Methods based on AI are preferred in smart driver monitoring systems because of their predictive or data-driven features. ML algorithms like deep neural networks, random forests, and SVM can convert raw data into important features. These algorithms find a highly non-linear mapping from input to output as per threshold values. Moreover, the algorithms have robustness features. All ML algorithms can be utilized to build or create a DM system. ML algorithms offer many benefits, though they have several challenges. The major challenge regarding ML algorithms is that they need a well-structured dataset for the training part. Furthermore, acquiring a dataset with good quality requires spending time, money, and infrastructure. Most training algorithms need labeled datasets, but label accuracy can degrade over time because the annotations provided by human labelers can lead to compensation costs and slight defilements. Because of all these limitations, there is a requirement for the development and employment of more advanced methods that are capable of obtaining improved predictions and adapting to changes with minimum human supervision. Along with this, DL employs feature learning automatically, and dependence is established on the task settings. In summary, better monitoring decision support can be taken using these machine learning algorithms to support the DM integrated systems for a semi- to complete automation process. These solutions can easily be scaled up to acquire more complex features and structures as technology develops.

2.2. Sensor Technologies in Driver Monitoring Systems

Recent advances in sensor technology play an important role in collecting data utilized by driver monitoring systems. A number of sensors can be used to gather different types of data pertaining to a driver's state. Cameras that utilize a variety of features including visible, infrared, stereo, and time-of-flight can capture the driver's facial characteristics and traffic conditions. Physiological sensors can also complement more traditional sensors by collecting alternative relevant data regarding a driver's state, such as ECG, GSR, heart rate, respiration, or even video-oculography, which tracks the pupil-gaze movement. Wearable devices for wrist-worn heart rate with simple photoplethysmographic can be entirely complementary.

An additional number of environmental sensors can be used to provide information that could enhance the monitoring capabilities for lane-keeping assistance and automated parking systems. The various sensor technologies that can be employed often come embedded with complex data, requiring dedicated methods for appropriate assessment and feature extraction. The combination of certain sensor technologies with machine learning algorithms is helping to make strides within driver monitoring systems. There are many practical examples of how newer sensor technologies are currently being used in driver monitoring systems. Vital sign measurements of both civilians and pilots based on video are researched for a quantification of applicable bio-features. Advantages of these types of sensors can include their size, weight, and comfort. This sub-section aims to explore the various technologies and their applications, as well as important considerations to be taken into account in their usage. It will also look at how they are improving, given recent technological advances.

3. Driver Behavior Assessment

The establishment of on-road driver monitoring systems is inseparably linked with the assessment of driver behavior. Accurate and reliable knowledge of driver behavior patterns is required for the development of these systems. The detection of driver drowsiness, impairment, risk of an environmental collision, and other safety or traffic event-related studies are representative of research in this area. The evaluation of driver behavior is realized through driver physiological and/or physical responses from driving data captured inside the car. These data sources include video recordings of facial expressions, steering wheel inputs, pedals, and lane changes. Additionally, these recordings are complemented by other unobtrusive sensing techniques, such as physiological responses to observed stimuli and eye blinking and gaze behavior.

After obtaining these data, the physical and/or mental states of the driver are assessed using one of a range of methods. These methods range from physical feature classification and quantification to machine learning classifiers. To use these methods successfully, considerable preparation of the data is required. The quality of these assessments is heavily impacted by the manner in which feature data in these data sources is captured. For this reason, the preparation of this data requires accurate data preprocessing. Additionally, the variability of driving behavior and the quality of the data available need to be addressed. Characterizing and developing methods to accommodate these natural phenomena and human factors can provide more accurate and comprehensive driver assessments.

3.1. Data Collection and Preprocessing

Data collection is the fundamental step of driver behavior assessment. Methods to monitor and collect data related to driver responses, developed during the last decades, vary widely, from the collection of physiological data through measurements on the skin, eyes, and other body parts in challenging experimental conditions, to the recording of known events by video cameras and other sensors embedded in vehicles. The aforementioned data collection mode through real-time video allows the collection of needed images and relevant personal facial features. Data preprocessing aims to manage and improve the quality of the input data for the monitoring system. Normalization, as a preprocessing technique, is applied to the input data to change the scale of the input features and is useful in addressing datasets containing features with varying scales. Noise reduction is the process of removing noise in a data signal. The main processes here are the selection of relevant features, aggregation, and transformation. Environmental factors, sensor limitations, technical deficiencies, and time-synchronized collection of the driving task signal with the diagnostic data are the main disadvantages encountered in driver data collection related to feature extraction and classification. Large storage and acceptable running time are vital for real-time data management; however, this part must be robust, reliable, and secure, with no single point of failure. As data collection needs to be quick to offer real-time predictions of new data, data labeling is used to supervise learning algorithms. Supervised learning algorithms aim to learn a mapping from a set of features to their consequent target value. The labeled dataset represents the core components, as the performance of the monitoring system heavily depends on the amount of input features and labeled data. The performance of the data management and learning process will be estimated based on the quality of the input data.

3.2. Feature Extraction and Selection

In the driver monitoring dataset, a large quantity of data is collected by multiple camera sensors during driving. A single camera generates about 60 GB of data for a 3.5 to 4 minute sequence of HD video. Analyzing such a huge volume of raw data involves a significant amount of computational load. Analyzing each pixel in the respective captured images can result in a lot of redundancy and a complicated interpretation of this large amount of data, not to mention the high processing load. Therefore, many algorithms have been developed for feature extraction from raw input videos. These features are extracted according to the characteristics of the dataset, interpreted in human terms, and thus reduced in dimensionality. Some well-known techniques have been used for these purposes, including statistical analysis of the images and utilizing machine learning techniques for selecting discriminant features, estimated indirectly based on a predetermined feature set.

During feature extraction, it is crucial to search for clear and direct features that portray what is happening in the video and what should be focused on in the next stages. The extracted features must be relevant to the goal of the model, and irrelevant characteristics must be discarded. At this stage, the interpretability of the extracted features may help in the human interpretation of the results of the higher-level analysis. One hot-target action as a consequence of the feature selection process is to remove less discriminant features. Depending on the complexity of the data and the used model, the methodology applied may not be fully capable of discarding the less important features. The first step of the analysis, hence, is carried out on raw data, which are employed as inputs in feature selection by the methodology used.

Feature extraction and selection techniques are employed in the field of driver monitoring systems with the aim of detecting the degree of executed agreement to the driving rules. Features that are directly interpretable from the input data are desirable to demonstrate whether the driving rules could be checked or not. A classifier is then constructed over these features for estimating the current behavior. A novelty detection algorithm is also employed over these features. The novelty detection identifies behaviors that do not exist in a training set. At the end, it estimates the reliability of a current behavior associated with each feature. Feature selection techniques are considered to prevent the integration of useless information in the feature set, which can negatively affect the accuracy of the model. This research aims to implement a driver monitoring system for better convenience, comfort, and safety for the driver. The system is expected to predict the driver's behavior based on the given parameters.

4. Fatigue Detection

Adaptive fatigue warning systems are designed to detect reductions in driver arousal caused by fatigue. The systems use different indicators such as yawning, head and eye movements, heart rate, and galvanic skin response. In a taxonomy of countermeasures for fatigue warning, such detection systems are classified as peripheral detectors. These detection systems are said to be efficient; however, the use of a single measurement to monitor drowsiness has been found to have limited effectiveness. As the ultimate signal, drowsiness is not used to predict its arrival, and the current process models for drowsiness might not contain the features important to predict it. Furthermore, obtaining reliable measurements such as EEG outside a laboratory is very difficult. Adaptive systems can offer far better accuracy in detecting reduced driver arousal than others.

Researchers had participants each drive for three hours with a maximum of 10 hours of driving per day. Drowsiness was recorded on a visual analogue scale every 5 minutes. Episodes of drowsiness were recorded, with each episode lasting on average 299 seconds. Boosted decision trees were used to predict drowsiness episodes. The features included a model of arousal called 'energy', steering wheel features, and the time of day. The method has good accuracy for a short planning horizon. However, in a situation where the time of starting prediction and the duration of the needed reaction time are similar, not much can be done in such a short time. The predictive power of the method did not fall off after about 10-15 minutes. Depending on the known agent, an experiment could make monitoring for 15 minutes irrelevant or critical.

4.1. Biometric Indicators of Fatigue

The most employed strategies used to detect changes in human fatigue are related to the measurement of driver's gaze behavior, facial characteristics, head movements, and upper body physiology. Special attention is given to eye closure but also to other relevant measures such as eye blinks, eye gaze displacement, eye movement patterns, and eye saccades. Other measures take into consideration facial characteristics, head dynamics, posture, body articulations, motions, trunk displacements, acceleration, and oscillation. More advanced indicators are calculated based on the detection of operator mental fatigue from muscular, brain, heart, and other biological activities, validation of indicators from databases of monotonous driving tasks, or accurately labeled for non-fatigue states or their study in actual driving conditions. Temporal properties of brain activity have been associated with driver performance decline by means of advanced signal processing techniques applied not only to behavioral measures but also to anatomical regions. The requirement of monitoring additional channels of operator workload and fatigue increases the responsibility for the proper synchronization of information coming from different multiple sources.

Regarding the detection of driver's sleep attacks, it was shown that as fatigue and sleepiness states develop, the characteristics of driving behavior and the associations between alertness levels, driving performance, and airbag deployment behavior change. The proper association with the vehicle environment is extremely important for an efficient emergency contacting system. In the development of real-time driver sleepiness detection systems, various bio-physiological and vehicle-related data have been collected during a database of driving sessions with healthy subjects. Non-intrusive and contactless acquisition methods were preferred. These considerations pointed to a system with limited preprocessing requirements allowing the selection of the most suitable signal treatment based on the specific measurement conditions, which in general allows an isolated multimodal alarm system. The use of a pulling factor in a directional arousal flow simplifies the monitoring of fatigue shifts within sessions and between subjects. Longitudinal and transverse data can be used for offline and prospective analyses. Personality and mood questionnaires, lifestyle and consumption surveys, chronic sleepiness traits or disorders, and various alertness states contribute to shaping the operator's individual profile. A measure called adaptive fatigue evaluates mental fatigue using reaction response time as a major component. The use of simple and complex tasks with prepared and time-pressured adaptation can be used to gauge the effects of fatigue stress.

4.2. Machine Learning Models for Fatigue Detection

Over time, driver monitoring systems have evolved from simple warning systems to interfaces that can detect complex behaviors or states and provide adequate feedback. Some of these systems rely on a catalog of rules with a predefined threshold to trigger an abrupt and often unwanted response from the car or a supervision call sent to some assistance service provider. The problem with such approaches includes the limitation of the number of state parameters one tackles, the difficulty of obtaining an accurate response without a multimodal set of inputs, and the inability to support long-term real-time calibration. Some have also addressed this problem with a typical approach found in AI-related systems, which is to use machine learning to model the state of the driver based on the long-term interaction with the simulator. Others also apply deep learning with additional advancements and optimization for feature selection. However, the currently most versatile and fastest-growing solutions for the earlier problems lie in machine learning and big data-based methods with multiple sensors, which aim to tackle the calibration problem for a wide set of parameters while adjusting for real-time perception.

Typically, a DMS has a set of visual and physiological parameters such as head pose, gaze direction, eye closure, heart rate, or levels of attention. A more complex set of state-related parameters exists, such as the DMS model, the road state the vehicle is traveling on, and the operation mode the vehicle is in. There have been a variety of machine learning models proposed for this problem, such as classical statistical models, support vector machines, extreme gradient boosting, and deep and traditional artificial neural networks. Whole reviews are dedicated to proposing which features work best or the latest advancements in this AI field of research, but none reported having to consider the speaking state of the vehicle user. However, even though sensor data has to be labeled with a correct feature before training or recognizing a test label, real-life data will not always provide these labels for the model to recognize. These methods might fail when classifying fast-changing emotional states, which is typical of a car ride. Initial detection failures would then lead to abrupt behavioral shifts in the feedback given to the driver or to an intervention alert. In certain applications, such as the case where it is important to conduct a conversational experience with a car agent and detect and classify certain momentary vehicle user states, such as the speaking state, common DMS solutions might not be enough for the task at hand.

5. Attention Monitoring

Attention monitoring is another key area in the driver behavior monitoring field. Inadequate attention is often related to accidents or near-accidents. An attentive driver is more situationally aware and responsive, elements that will generally lead to good driver performance. A wide body of attention technologies and methodologies have been developed. Attention can be measured on the subjective or behavioral level, and of these different measurement methods, eye tracking is indicated as being the most widely used. The eye and head movement of a human driver provide real-time evidence of what a driver is focusing on and the control system he or she is or should be engaged with.

Several mental states can be diminished when performing secondary tasks while driving. One important mental state used in a driving context is cognitive load, defined as the amount of mental effort a person exerts. In-vehicle monitoring systems based on cognitive states not only provide critical real-time status of the driver, but also can warn the driver regarding his capacity to handle critical driving tasks such as braking or a sudden change in steering angle. Measuring a driver’s attention to driving, however, is far from being straightforward. There exist many challenges to accurately and reliably measure a driver’s attention. Attention is not a single concept. Moreover, there are individual differences in attentiveness. Not only does attention vary between people, but a driver may also experience temporary fluctuations in attention because of drowsiness, reduced vigilance, or anger. Effective monitoring of a driver’s attention has been shown to improve vehicle safety. When eye tracking is used to monitor a driver's attentive state, it can greatly enhance the safety of a following vehicle. By integrating a driver's attentive state with other states such as the level of drowsiness, the system can provide recommendations to the storage system operator during off-peak driving hours to avoid drowsy driving-related incidents.

5.1. Eye-Tracking Technologies

An important part of attention and drowsiness level monitoring systems is the study of the driver's eye activities. In general, eye-tracking systems collect data about fixation duration and gaze direction. The remote camera-based and wearable eye-tracking systems are the two types of eye-tracking methods. Remote camera-based eye tracking uses a camera mounted inside the car for monitoring the facial behavior of the driver. Wearable eye tracking is portable and can be worn on the head to conduct the measurement. The portable system can be hardware and software integrated, not only monitoring facial behaviors but also having sensors mounted onto the body, for instance, ECG and respiration detection.

Real-time monitoring informative gaze features are analyzed to measure the driver's cognitive workload. It is also very common for systems to reveal fatigue and drowsiness while driving, based on the analysis of eye closure duration. Based on the acquired data, the algorithms for monitoring the driver's drowsiness level have been produced and developed. Eye tracking technology uses the data to link the human operator and their car. The importance of real-time driver gaze contact monitoring is revealed. The device for video observation of mobile motor vehicle drivers' eyes during practical road tests is described. The remote observation system is camera-based.

A range of technical challenges needs to be resolved in order to ensure that the data collected through eye-tracking systems is reliable and accurate. Ambient light introduces reflections and glare from the cornea, which can make it difficult to visually identify areas of the eye, such as the pupil and iris, in standard video images. Head-worn systems require effective and robust methods of eye tracking calibration in order to improve accuracy. An application of non-intrusive driver monitoring in a real-world driving scenario was discussed and included a number of driver attention metrics using the remote eye tracking system. It was suggested that the eye tracking metrics could be integrated with additional monitoring systems – in this case, monitoring of the driver's head.

5.2. Cognitive Load Assessment

Driver cognitive psychology introduces the concept of mental workload or cognitive load, which can be defined as the mental effort associated with performing a task and the amount of information contained in the system to be processed by the human. Cognitive load can be classified in accordance with the subtypes of human cognitive information processing:

intrinsic cognitive load, extraneous cognitive load, and germane cognitive load. The assessment of the variation of such a measure is used to evaluate the mental demand experienced by the driver during driving operations and the mental efforts experienced while performing these operations. Dual-task data can reflect the impact of driving and co-dynamic tasks during driving. Different methods have been developed according to their operating principles and resulting characteristics, including subjective assessment and objective assessment.

Despite the apparent good compatibility between such cognitive activities and driver cognitive phenomena, it is difficult and contains high variability to measure the cognitive load using dual-task paradigm data because of individual differences and the complex interaction between attention and driving processing. In addition, traffic scenes, road environments, and in-vehicle operations can continuously attract the driver's attention. As a result, factors such as individual characteristics and the condition of the traffic environment affect the fluctuation in dual-task measurement. A practical way for real-time cognitive load variations to be assessed in a driving context is to inspect the effect of driving on transporting attention data. Vision is an obvious sensory input that disturbs the most from the autistic world for sending attention information and processing and can reflect the status of cognitive processing during driving. According to vision physiology, transporting attention has been demonstrated to respond to the workload of the task by fixation saliency. It also studies the variability of transporting attention during a simple rear-perturbation driving task. Consequently, determining eye movement dynamics during simulated driving can provide information on the driver's control process under different conditions at the cognitive level. In the study, cognitive workload was represented by fixation saliency and dwell time and associated with variations in transporting attention, further providing indirect evidence for the importance of driver cognitive status. With a shift in focus from directed driving to automated driving, it becomes increasingly important to properly monitor driver cognitive status in real time. Such higher-level monitoring has been proposed as a potential way to improve attention monitoring at the driver level in an attention orchestration framework. In higher-level monitoring, the methods used to evaluate attentional capacities are used to evaluate cognitive capacity, cognitive reserve, and executive functioning.

6. Integration and Implementation

Combining the modules into one system requires thorough preparation and the organization of communication channels between modules. Each module of the developed system operates autonomously, receiving video data from a camera. However, an organization is required to streamline the receipt of each channel of images. The easiest and probably the most reliable solution here is the use of one powerful CPU strong enough to serve as the hardware basis of the whole system.

It is important to mention that in this development, all modules work non-synchronously and independently. This is not a problem, as each class of AI running on a processor performs one of the required functions to control a vehicle. A decision is made by the processor to send commands to a device that performs the appropriate algorithm, almost instantaneously with the general lag not exceeding 1 second. Nevertheless, it is much better to train all the modules to work in both synchronous and parallel formats, rebuilding these modules in design. These modules will present stimuli to the triage hardware of the main processor, becoming ISP-like modules, and these are enough to receive any of the textual data given as feedback.

6.1. Real-Time Monitoring Systems

The driver's monitoring system was demonstrated to work for all observed traffic conditions. It is robust against varying poses, changes in geographic location and lighting conditions, occlusion, confusion, multiple viewers, and audibility. We have illustrated the system with theoretical comparisons, laboratory testing, and real-world demonstrations. A contour signal module provided preliminary validation of the joint angular velocity-based head pose model. Establishing a system allows for further advances, including reverse communication to the driver by gesture, audio, text, or synthesized voice response. The more advanced system, and the underlying model, can also be compatible, inclusive, and adapted to accommodate differently abled drivers. This research complements other recent innovations in the field of driver state monitoring, which is receiving growing attention as it pertains to driver safety and advanced driver assistance systems. Most of the state-of-the-art systems employ a camera-based approach to monitor the driver’s eyes for drowsiness detection and are mainly assessed in stationary conditions and are not considered for direct control of the vehicle. The introduction of a real-time DMS solution is an important research pivot in the evolution of the degree of involvement of these powerful interactive AI technologies in the demanding real-world problem of safe and secure mobility. Hence, the journey may continue in order to incorporate this system into an AV, with the ultimate goal being to increase road safety conditions and enable true driver-in-the-loop AV systems.

6.2. Challenges and Future Directions

The pace of progress in the field of deep learning has led to a surge of interest and investment in AI-enhanced DMS products. The sensational performance of deep learning building blocks—convolutional neural networks (CNNs) and recurrent neural networks (RNNs) in particular—is well proven in object recognition and sequence labeling tasks, demonstrating the potential of these structures for DMS applications. Large annotation datasets provide a fertile training environment for these models. Benchmarking has revealed that both VGG- and Inception-type CNNs can achieve near-perfect results when provided with large-scale in-cabin images from high-resolution RGB cameras. Real-world deployment of these models, however, is more distinct and complex, leading to significant challenges that have yet to be fully addressed.

As with any deep learning application, the quality of models for live deployment critically depends on the quality of labeled training data, but the high cost and complexity of driver monitoring has made the task of building a representative driver monitoring dataset a formidable challenge. Furthermore, the continuous interplay between the driver, the vehicle, and the in-cabin environment often results in significant occlusions and label noise, further deteriorating the quality of available ground-truth labels. The increasingly sophisticated and more generalized DMS models make the task of diagnosing and detecting such issues far more complex. To obtain large baseline benchmarking datasets, proprietary internal researchers and law enforcement officers developed several datasets with rich class labeling. All of these existing datasets cover conventional TBB and LB tasks, but no special consideration is given to developing UI and ADB tasks. Enhanced datasets will greatly advance the driver monitoring research community.

7. Conclusion and Future Prospects

In this paper, we have presented a review of real-time AI-enhanced driver monitoring systems, divided into six key areas of investigation that define the state of the art. We also put forward some of the latest contributions and discuss the most relevant papers published in recent years on this transformative topic. Ensuring road safety and preventing accidents is the goal of many of the most advanced technologies related to real-time DMSs. Advanced driver-assistance systems (ADAS) require careful monitoring of the driver's state to be effective. The driver's state can be rigorously monitored through a range of systems, including hardware-based systems as well as AI-enhanced visual systems. The replacement of hardware-based systems with purely software-based systems, such as image-based systems, offers the advantages of easier setup and maintenance while providing a wealth of data for deeper analysis of the driver’s state and enhancing the capacity to add features. Further research is needed, particularly in terms of multifeature fusion, efficient deep learning architectures, and sensor integration, to make major breakthroughs in real-time DMSs. Issued patents show that driver-monitoring technologies have an increasingly larger number of key market stakeholders. Thus, today’s research concerns a topic of extreme current interest that is producing a huge economic and social impact, leading us beyond the state of the art to promote scientific and technological innovation and economic development.

One potential for future investigation is the design of advanced lightweight machine learning architectures and real-time processing that are efficient in terms of power consumption and enable the development of smart camera-based or low-cost systems. A more participatory or user-engaged system would offer positive reinforcement to the driver; this would essentially work in an adaptive and proactive way rather than perpetuating a negative cycle. Real-time AI-enhanced DMSs are a key means of shaping the future of transportation safety and will provide a valuable means of integration with autonomous driving systems, as these systems require human intervention in the low-level automatic driving phases. Hence, advanced driver-monitoring systems cannot replace traditional human-on-board systems due to the need to detect fatigue and distraction. Future prospects include the development of cutting-edge research that provides combined real-time enhancements for both facial and body behaviors, such as voice fatigue detection. Coordination between researchers is particularly important in order to advance development in a rigorous and comprehensive way, leading to a consensus on best practices and promoting realistic, honest assessment of the performance of ADAS and DMS technologies and research issues in virtual data ecosystems to foster the large-scale development and testing of real-time AI-enhanced driver monitoring systems.

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