Warning of Potential Collision for Vehicles

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Abstract: A moving vehicle may very likely run into accidents. The occurrence rate of accidents would be largely reduced if the driver were warned in advance, even only 0.5 s earlier. For a running vehicle, the driving route within short time before collision has the character of Markov. In this case, we only have to consider the coordinates of position within a short range, rather than the running status during the past long period. Within short period before collision, the driving route can be basically divided into two states: a straight line and a binomial curve. In this paper, we propose a mechanism for sending collision warning messages to running vehicles.

Keywords: Curve fitting, collision, dissemination, emergency warning, VANET.

1. INTRODUCTION

Vehicular Ad-hoc NETwork (VANET) is an open mobile Ad-hoc network composed of intercommunications between vehicles and between vehicles and fixed access point on roads. VANET is a self-organized between-vehicle communication network with open structure [1].

VANET is widely used in road traffic safety, information service, traffic query, and assistant driving. In particular, research about road traffic safety focuses on anti-collision warning. The research on various traffic accidents conducted by German Benz Automobile Corporation shows that at least 60% of rear-end accidents would be prevented if the drivers could promptly recognize the risks and take measures only 0.5 s earlier. About 90% of traffic accidents would be avoided if measures were taken 1 s earlier. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration sponsors developed an Integrated Vehicle-Based Safety System to monitor traffic environment with an aim to reducing crashes. A similar project sponsored by the European Union develops a precrash sensorial system [2-5].

Sengupta et al. [6] first proposed a cooperative driver assistance system, which considers varying emergency warning grades. This system has been applied in many aspects, such as intersection collision emergency warning or forward collision warning, with parameters such as collision time as the condition for sending Emergency warning messages (EWMs). The positioning error can be reduced below 50 cm by integrating GPS, yaw rate gyro, and steering angle sensor.

Tang et al. [7] investigated timings for collision avoidance systems assuming DSRC transmission delays of 25 ms and 300 ms in normal and poorer channel conditions, respectively. They concentrated on the events such as DSRC communication latency, detection range, road condition, driver reaction and deceleration rate. With these events, they defined two collision avoidance timings: critical time to avoid collision and preferred time to avoid collision.

The work reported in Mitropoulos et al. [8] also presents a driver assistant system (WILLWARN—wireless local danger warning) designed to timely warn the driver about a dangerous situation ahead by decentralized distribution of warnings and incident messages via ad hoc inter-vehicle communications.

The study reported in Ibanez-Guzman et al. [9] presents the implementation and basic test in an intersection scenario of an instance of the architecture developed for cooperative vehicle applications. The study highlighted the relevant impact of obstructions on the communications performance, the importance of positioning technologies, the difficulty in creating hazardous situations in testing scenarios, and the need to adequately quantify and log results.

A approach to the study of the positioning impact is that reported in Santa et al. [10]. The authors show that the most appropriate navigation sub-system is based on a combination of motion and GNS sensors. The studies evaluated the positioning error and proposed advanced positioning solutions to support cooperative V2X active safety applications, without addressing the design and implementation of complete functional driver assistant system prototypes.

Lefèvre et al. [11] point out that risk assessment at intersections is possible by comparing intention and expectation. Liebner et al. [12] also used drivers’ intent inference at intersections.

In addition, in the aspect of data distribution, T. Nadeem et al. [13] discuss dissemination techniques for the exchange of messages containing either traffic conditions or vehicles current status information (e.g. speed and direction).

Dornbush et al. [14] focus on the application of informing vehicles about traffic conditions in their surroundings. They propose a mechanism for vehicles to estimate traffic
conditions and, through a clustering approach, disseminate the obtained information to vehicles in the network.

In this paper, we built an EWM transmission mechanism. The driving route has the character of Markov: when risks occur, it is independent of the history of driving. Thus, to send emergency warning, it only depends on the driving state within short time. VANET can be used to obtain the position information of vehicles, thereby predict the driving route, estimate the point of two-vehicle collision, and obtain the time difference [15-16]. In this way, we can sort the vehicles in neighbouring queues by emergency condition, and involve those reaching the alarm threshold in the queue to receive EWMs. Only vehicles entering this queue are regarded as the network nodes of EWM in VANET, which largely reduces load compared with the flooding type network.

2 MODELING MECHANISM

2.1. Fitting of Driving Route

The driving route of a vehicle can be divided into subsections depending on the condition of roads. Within a short time, the driving route may be classified into two types: straight line or polynomial curve.

1) The straight route can be expressed as \( y = ax + b \). During the travelling, a vehicle periodically sends messages to other vehicles and promptly updates the position information in the neighbour list. The system continually corrects and fits the route accordingly. Because of the errors contained in the data, the least square method was used to fit the straight line. According to the measured historical data, \((x_i, y_i)(i=0,2...,n)\), a running vehicle follows the Markov rule that the possibility of braking-caused collision is independent of the previous driving route, and thus the value of \( n \) should be within the effective time limit, expressed as \( n' \). Least square method is used to build the following equation:

\[
\sum_{i=0}^{n'} e_i^2 = \sum_{i=0}^{n'} (ax_i + b - y_i)^2
\]

This is a function of \( a \) and \( b \), namely:

\[
f(a, b) = \sum_{i=0}^{n'} (ax_i + b - y_i)^2
\]

This problem is now equal to finding the minimum of \( f(a, b) \) under the following condition:

\[
\begin{align*}
\frac{\partial f(a, b)}{\partial b} &= 0 \\
\frac{\partial f(a, b)}{\partial a} &= 0
\end{align*}
\]

Then

\[
\begin{align*}
2 \sum_{i=0}^{n'} (ax_i + b - y_i) &= 0 \\
2 \sum_{i=0}^{n'} (ax_i + b - y_i) \cdot x_i &= 0
\end{align*}
\]

After unfolding and reorganization, then

\[
\begin{align*}
a \sum_{i=0}^{n'} x_i + b \cdot n' &= \sum_{i=0}^{n'} y_i \\
a \sum_{i=0}^{n'} x_i^2 + b \sum_{i=0}^{n'} x_i &= \sum_{i=0}^{n'} x_i y_i
\end{align*}
\]

The matrix form is:

\[
\begin{bmatrix}
\sum_{i=0}^{n'} x_i \\
\sum_{i=0}^{n'} x_i^2 \\
\sum_{i=0}^{n'} x_i^3 \\
\vdots \\
\sum_{i=0}^{n'} x_i^{n'}
\end{bmatrix}
\begin{bmatrix}
a \\
b
\end{bmatrix}
=
\begin{bmatrix}
\sum_{i=0}^{n'} y_i \\
\sum_{i=0}^{n'} x_i y_i \\
\sum_{i=0}^{n'} x_i^2 y_i \\
\vdots \\
\sum_{i=0}^{n'} x_i^{n'} y_i
\end{bmatrix}
\]

Then we find the values of \( a \) and \( b \) of this equation set. When a new point \( (x_{new}, y_{new}) \) is obtained, we substitute \( x_{new} \); if \( y = y_{new} \) or \( y = y_{new} + \varepsilon \) (\( \varepsilon \) is the permissible error), the driving route can be judged as a straight line. Otherwise, the route is a curve.

2) The polynomial curve can be expressed as

\[
y = \sum_{k=0}^{m} a_k x^k \] : This is function of driving route.

From the historical data, we can obtain the vehicle’s coordinates set \( A = \{ (x_0, y_0), (x_1, y_1), \ldots, (x_m, y_m) \} \). The value of \( m \) should be within the effective time limit, expressed as \( m' \). Then solving the fitting curve of \( y \) is equal to minimizing the sum of squared deviations of \( y \) and \( y_m' \), namely:

\[
\Phi(X) = \sum_{i=0}^{m'} \left( \sum_{k=0}^{n} a_k x_i^k - y_i' \right)^2 = \text{Min}
\]

Then solving \( \Phi(X) \) is transformed to finding the extremums, then:

\[
\frac{\partial \Phi(X)}{\partial a_j} = 2 \sum_{i=0}^{m'} \left( \sum_{k=0}^{n} a_k x_i^k - y_i' \right) x_i^j = 0 \quad j=0,1,2,\ldots,n
\]

Unfolding Eq. (8), then

\[
\sum_{i=0}^{m'} \sum_{k=0}^{n} a_k x_i^k = \sum_{i=0}^{n} \sum_{k=0}^{n} a_k x_i^k y_i = \sum_{i=0}^{m'} y_i x_i^j
\]

The above equation is equivalent to a linear equation set related to \( a_0-a_n \):

\[
\begin{bmatrix}
m' \\
m' x_0 \\
m' x_1 \\
\vdots \\
m' x_{n-1}
\end{bmatrix}
\begin{bmatrix}
a_0 \\
a_1 \\
a_2 \\
\vdots \\
a_n
\end{bmatrix}
=
\begin{bmatrix}
m' y_0 \\
m' x_0 y_0 \\
m' x_1 y_0 \\
\vdots \\
m' x_{n-1} y_0
\end{bmatrix}
\]

According to the properties of symmetric positive definite matrix, there is one and only one solution to \( a_0-a_n \), which can determine the fitted nonlinear polynomial equation of driving vehicles.
2.2. EWM Sending Mechanism

Based on the above route analysis, we can locate the collision point. The route of collision may be a combination of straight line and curve. According to the traveling characteristics, beforehand when collision occurs, if the curve route is adopted within short time, the route can be fitted using a quadratic polynomial curve, showed in the Fig. (1) below.

![Fig. (1). Driving conditions.](image)

Then the two-vehicle intersection is equal to combinatorial solving $y=ax+b$ and $y=a_0x^2+a_1x+a_2x^2$, while their parameters are known before fitting.

If the equation set has no solution, the two vehicles will not collide; if it has two solutions, let $(x_1,y_1), (x_2,y_2)$; if it has one solution, then $x_1=x_2, y_1=y_2$. The nearest point of intersection ahead of the driving direction is a potential collision point, expressed as $(x_{\text{cross}}, y_{\text{cross}})$. If there is no point of intersection, the two vehicles will not collide.

With the intersection between a straight line and a curve as example, we suppose vehicle A located at $(x_A, y_A)$ is running at a speed of $v_A$ along a straight line. Vehicle B located at $(x_B, y_B)$ is running at a speed of $v_B$ along a curve. A and B are at distance of $s_A$ and $s_B$, respectively away from the cross point. Then

$$s_A = |x_{\text{cross}} - x_A|/\cos(\arctan(\alpha))$$

$$s_B = \int_{x_0}^{x_{\text{cross}}} \sqrt{1+(a_1+2a_2x)^2} \, dx$$

The time difference when A and B arrive at the cross point is $t_s = |s_A/v_A - s_B/v_B| \leq \zeta$, where $\zeta$ is the warning threshold, and then send EWM.

3. MESSAGE SENDING MECHANISM

When two vehicles intercommunicate, the originating node $S_0$ periodically sends a message package “Hello” to the neighbor nodes within its transmission range. The message “Hello” contains the information about the position of this sender node and relevant information collected from the newest neighbor nodes. By exchanging the message “Hello”, each node can build a newest information list for its neighbor nodes, and understand the distribution of neighbor nodes within its transmission range. Then $S_0$ can maintain the network topology with these neighbor nodes. We suppose $A$- $H$ are the neighbor vehicles within a two-hop range of $S_0$. If a message is sent out in the flooding way, there will be redundant information in the network. Therefore, to reduce the redundant EWM, the following method is proposed to send EWM. When $S_0$ to send a warning of braking, at the first hop, $S_0$ selects the nodes with which the collision possibility is within a certain threshold; however, these nodes may become the nodes at the second hop. Transmission is not necessary if no node is within the threshold. After the above computation, we suppose A, B, C, D, E and F are neighbor nodes of $S_0$, and G, H are neighbor nodes of B. In the flooding mode, these nodes will retransmit the message extensively (as shown in Fig. 2). Then the above threshold computation is introduced to avoid such circumstance. If among all neighbor nodes of $S_0$, only B is within the threshold, then B becomes a retransmitting node. B will compute its transmission queue with the same method. If G is within the threshold, G becomes the second-hop node. Transmission will be stopped if no node in G’s transmission queue is within the threshold (as shown in Fig. 3).

![Fig. (2). Flooding mode.](image)

![Fig. (3). EWM mode.](image)

Obviously, the amount of transmitted data will be reduced largely. The nodes within the emergency warning range can be calculated as Algorithm 1.

The steps are as follows: based on the function fitting method in Section 1.2, transfer the records of travelling to generate a neighbor queue travelling route including the originating node and fit a function. Select the transmitting queue, with the between-vehicle distance as threshold, and involve the vehicles within the warning vehicle-distance into the computation. First, compute the fitting function for the neighbor vehicles with the smallest space between, and estimate the collision time; if it is within the threshold, then send EWM, and move to the next neighbor node and repeat the above computation. The originating node searches its transmission queue L, send the EWM to the neighbor node S’ within the time threshold; when S’ receives the EWM, it searches its own sending queue L; if there is no node in L, no node is within the warning range, then stop sending EWM to the next node.

4. SIMULATION

The Vanet simulation system is composed of two modules: network communication module and vehicle motion module.
**Algorithm 1.** Algorithm for the choice of the warning range nodes.

```
Warning_options_algorithm()
1 Traverse Neighbor \( s_0 \) // Search the whole neighbor queue of node \( s \)
2 If d < r
3 L \( \leftarrow \) s // select the neighbor nodes with between-vehicle distance within the threshold, and form a queue L; Sort in the ascending order
4 While \( S' \leftarrow \) L do // Find the first node of queue L, obtain \( n \)-step historical positional information \( (x_1, y_1), (x_2, y_2), \ldots \)
5 d1 \( \leftarrow \) \((x_1, y_1)\);
6 d2 \( \leftarrow \) \((x_2, y_2)\);
7 Function_fitting\( (d_1, d_2, \ldots) \); // Transfer the fitting algorithm to produce a function set
8 Time_calculation\( (s') \); // Compute the time difference
9 If t\( \Delta (s', s_0) \) \( \leq \) // The time difference between the originating node \( s_0 \) and other vehicles is within the threshold.
10 send(message);
11 delete\( (s') \);
12 next;
13 end while;
```

### 4.1. Simulation Environment of Network and Road Traffic

The network simulation module simulates the communication between vehicle nodes. In this paper, this module is realized via OMNET++. At present, VANET vehicle-targeted electronic wireless communication accords to 802.11p communication agreement. Veins possess complete and detailed IEEE 802.11p and IEEE 1609.4 DSRC / WAVE network layer models and creditable vehicle fluidity model. Therefore, the whole simulation model is based on OMNet++, and with the introduction of Veins frame, the road traffic is simulation displayed on SUMO.

### 4.2. Performance Assessment

We introduce the Jilin University campus map, double-channel road, which will induce probability of random collision. Vehicle speed changes randomly at 20-40 km/h. Two types of messages including periodical message and EWM are sent. The periodical messages are generated at 10 pkts/s; EWM is generated when the traveling speed reaches the above threshold. The traveling simulation scene is as follows:

The simulation experiments accord to EWM sent by DCF competition mechanism in IEEE 802.11MAC agreement. The simulation time is 600 s and the size of EWM is 1024 Byte (Fig. 4).

The average delay of EWM transmission is increasing along with the elevated vehicle density, and the amplitude is more obvious (as shown in Fig. 5). When the number of vehicles is smaller than 20, the average delay of EWM transmission is intensified very smoothly, but when the number is larger than 20, the average delay is intensified at higher amplitude.
Targeted at the distributing speed and credibility of warning data, we proposed a warning data distributing mechanism suitable for VANET. This mechanism mainly considers single-hop transmission of warning data and its role in emergency warning to avoid traffic accidents.

We achieved many meaningful findings, but further improvement and perfection are needed.

1) The newly built system is limited and restricted to simplify the simulation scene. We will conduct actual measurements to validate the effects of this mechanism.

2) It is very important to apply VANET in other aspects, such as assisting vehicles to understand position information of relevant service network points, improving the comfort of drivers, and providing services of mobile office and on-line entertainment. These aspects will be studied in the future.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors confirm that this article content has no conflict of interest.

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