

A GENERALIZED LASER SIMULATOR
ALGORITHM FOR OPTIMAL PATH
PLANNING IN CONSTRAINTS
ENVIRONMENT

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I hereby declare that I have checked this thesis and in my opinion, this thesis is adequate in terms of scope and quality for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



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I hereby declare that the work in this thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at Universiti Malaysia Pahang or any other institutions.

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ABSTRAK

Pelan laluan memainkan peranan penting dalam navigasi robot mudah alih berautonomi, dan dengan itu ia telah menjadi salah satu bidang yang paling banyak dikaji dalam bidang robotik. Pelan laluan merujuk kepada proses pencarian laluan yang bebas perlanggaran dan optimum dari posisi mula ke posisi akhir pratakrif dalam persekitaran yang diberikan. Penyelidikan ini memberi tumpuan dalam membangunkan algoritma pelan laluan baru, yang dipanggil Generalized Laser Simulator (GLS), untuk menyelesaikan masalah pelan laluan robot mudah alih dalam persekitaran yang mempunyai kekangan. Pendekatan ini bertujuan membolehkan proses pencarian laluan untuk robot mudah alih dan dalam masa yang sama mengelakkan halangan, mencari satu posisi akhir, mengambil kira beberapa kekangan dan mencari laluan yang optimum semasa pergerakan robot dalam kedua-dua persekitaran yang dikenali dan tidak dikenali. Laluan boleh laksana ditentukan di antara posisi mula dan akhir dengan menjana titik gelombang dalam semua arah ke arah posisi akhir tanpa berganjak dari kekangan. Kajian simulasi menggunakan pendekatan yang dicadangkan pada tetapan peta grid untuk menentukan laluan bebas perlanggaran dari posisi mula ke akhir. Pertama, pemetaan grid bagi persekitaran ruang kerja robot dibina, dan kemudian sempadan persekitaran ruang kerja dikesan berdasarkan fungsi baru yang dicadangkan. Fungsi ini memandu robot untuk bergerak ke arah posisi yang diinginkan. Dua pendekatan telah diperkenalkan untuk menentukan posisi terbaik bagi perjalanan: jarak minimum ke posisi akhir dan jarak indeks maksimum ke sempadan, diintegrasikan oleh kebarangkalian negatif untuk menyusun posisi yang paling diutamakan bagi penentuan trajektori robot. Untuk membina laluan bebas perlanggaran yang optimum, satu langkah pengoptimuman telah dimasukkan untuk mengetahui jarak minimum dalam posisi yang telah ditentukan oleh GLS dalam masa yang sama mematuhi garis kekangan tertentu serta mengelakkan halangan. Algoritma yang dicadangkan akan menukar corak kerjanya berdasarkan matlamat minimum dan jarak indeks maksimum sempadan. Untuk mengelakkan halangan statik, sempadan halangan dianggap sebagai sempadan persekitarannya. Walaubagaimanapun, algoritma mengesan halangan sebagai sempadan baru dalam halangan dinamik apabila ianya berlaku di hadapan gelombang GLS. Kaedah yang dicadangkan telah diuji dalam beberapa persekitaran ujian dengan tahap kerumitan yang berbeza. Dua puluh persekitaran rawak yang berbeza dikategorikan kepada empat: Mudah, kompleks, sempit, dan berselirat, dengan lima persekitaran ujian dalam setiap satu. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa kaedah yang dicadangkan boleh menjana laluan bebas perlanggaran yang optimum. Selain itu, hasil algoritma yang dicadangkan dibandingkan dengan beberapa algoritma biasa seperti algoritma A*, Probabilistic Road Map, RRT, RRT Bi-directional, dan algoritma Simulator Laser untuk menunjukkan keberkesanannya. Algoritma yang dicadangkan menunjukkan prestasi yang jauh lebih baik dari segi peningkatan kos laluan, kelancaran, dan masa carian. Ujian statistik telah digunakan untuk menunjukkan kecekapan algoritma yang dicadangkan ke atas kaedah yang dibandingkan. Nilai GLS adalah 7.8 dan 5.5 kali lebih cepat daripada A* dan LS, masing-masing menjana laluan 1.2 dan 1.5 kali lebih pendek daripada A* dan LS. Nilai min pendekatan yang dicadangkan bagi kos laluan adalah 4% dan 15% lebih rendah daripada PRM dan RRT. Nilai min kos laluan yang dijana oleh algoritma LS, sebaliknya, adalah 14% lebih tinggi daripada yang dihasilkan oleh PRM. Akhirnya, untuk mengesahkan prestasi kaedah yang dibangunkan untuk menjana laluan bebas perlanggaran, kajian eksperimen dijalankan menggunakan platform WMR sedia ada di makmal dan jalan. Kerja-kerja eksperimen mengkaji pelan laluan WMR berautonomi yang lengkap di makmal dan persekitaran jalan menggunakan strim video secara langsung. Peta setempat dibina menggunakan data daripada penstriman video secara langsung oleh pemprosesan imej masa nyata untuk mengesan segmen makmal dan persekitaran jalan. Pemprosesan imej melibatkan beberapa operasi dalam melaksanakan GLS pada peta setempat tersedia. Algoritma yang dicadangkan menjana laluan dalam peta setempat tersedia untuk mencari laluan antara posisi mula ke akhir bagi mengelakkan halangan dan tidak berganjak dari kekangan. Ujian percubaan menunjukkan bahawa kaedah yang dicadangkan boleh menjana laluan yang paling pendek dan trajektori yang lancar dari posisi mula ke posisi akhir berbanding dengan kaedah simulator laser.

ABSTRACT

Path planning plays a vital role in autonomous mobile robot navigation, and it has thus become one of the most studied areas in robotics. Path planning refers to a robot's search for a collision-free and optimal path from a start point to a predefined goal position in a given environment. This research focuses on developing a novel path planning algorithm, called Generalized Laser Simulator (GLS), to solve the path planning problem of mobile robots in a constrained environment. This approach allows finding the path for a mobile robot while avoiding obstacles, searching for a goal, considering some constraints and finding an optimal path during the robot movement in both known and unknown environments. The feasible path is determined between the start and goal positions by generating a wave of points in all directions towards the goal point with adhering to constraints. A simulation study employing the proposed approach is applied to the grid map settings to determine a collision-free path from the start to goal positions. First, the grid mapping of the robot's workspace environment is constructed, and then the borders of the workspace environment are detected based on the new proposed function. This function guides the robot to move toward the desired goal. Two concepts have been implemented to find the best candidate point to move next: minimum distance to goal and maximum index distance to the boundary, integrated by negative probability to sort out the most preferred point for the robot trajectory determination. In order to construct an optimal collision-free path, an optimization step was included to find out the minimum distance within the candidate points that have been determined by GLS while adhering to particular constraint's rules and avoiding obstacles. The proposed algorithm will switch its working pattern based on the goal minimum and boundary maximum index distances. For static obstacle avoidance, the boundaries of the obstacle(s) are considered borders of the environment. However, the algorithm detects obstacles as a new border in dynamic obstacles once it occurs in front of the GLS waves. The proposed method has been tested in several test environments with different degrees of complexity. Twenty different arbitrary environments are categorized into four: Simple, complex, narrow, and maze, with five test environments in each. The results demonstrated that the proposed method could generate an optimal collision-free path. Moreover, the proposed algorithm result are compared to some common algorithms such as the A* algorithm, Probabilistic Road Map, RRT, Bi-directional RRT, and Laser Simulator algorithm to demonstrate its effectiveness. The suggested algorithm outperforms the competition in terms of improving path cost, smoothness, and search time. A statistical test was used to demonstrate the efficiency of the proposed algorithm over the compared methods. The GLS is 7.8 and 5.5 times faster than A* and LS, respectively, generating a path 1.2 and 1.5 times shorter than A* and LS. The mean value of the path cost achieved by the proposed approach is 4% and 15% lower than PRM and RRT, respectively. The mean path cost generated by the LS algorithm, on the other hand, is 14% higher than that generated by the PRM. Finally, to verify the performance of the developed method for generating a collision-free path, experimental studies were carried out using an existing WMR platform in labs and roads. The experimental work investigates complete autonomous WMR path planning in the lab and road environments using-live video streaming. The local maps were built using data from live video streaming s by real-time image processing to detect the segments of the lab and road environments. The image processing includes several operations to apply GLS on the prepared local map. The proposed algorithm generates the path within the prepared local map to find the path between start-to-goal positions to avoid obstacles and adhere to constraints. The experimental test shows that the proposed method can generate the shortest path and best smooth trajectory from start to goal points in comparison with the laser simulator.

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