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Autonomous SAE Car – Visual Base Road Detection

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Abstract

This dissertation describes the development of a real-time vision base road detection technique for an autonomous Formula SAE. Formula SAE is a long-running annual competition organized by the Society of Automotive Engineers, recently SAE-Electric has been introduced. The car in this dissertation is driven by electric motors and control via independent controllers. Although the autonomous driving is not including in Formula-SAE competition, it has been an important research subject over the last years.

This project consists of design and implementation of a real-time vision base road detection technique which uses a computation processor board Nvidia Jetson TX1 to interface with a range of sensors. The camera is one of the sensors which providing the processed information for the autonomous driving control system. The camera provides vision base information then passes to image processing and image semantic segmentation methods to detect lane markings or road edges. The image processing method is applying OpenCV (Open Source Computer Vision Library) to obtain the images characteristic from camera input frames then extract lane markings and calculate the distance between the car and lanes. This road distance information assists Formula-SAE car can drive in right position. However, the image processing technique would limit from the lane marking quality, i.e. fading or no marking. Therefore, the image semantic segmentation scheme SegNet is implemented in the system. It handles low accuracy of the image processing scheme. The semantic segmentation scheme recognized the edge of the road and providing this information for the autonomous driving control system.

This project implements one more image processing method for the traffic cones recognition. It is because that the traffic cones are surrounding track in competition scenario. This image processing method is using HOG (Histogram of Oriented Gradients) to label training image set then create a feature vector. The labeled image set would use linear SVM (Support vector network) classifier for training. The trained data can detect and track traffic cones. This technique assists autonomous driving control system to control Formula-SAE car driving in between the road edges.

Results are demonstrated through autonomous test driving and simulations showing the success of real-time road edge detection, thus achieving the goal of the project.

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Nomenclature

GPS	Global Positioning System
GPU	Graphics Processing Unit
HOG	Histogram Oriented Gradient
HSL	Hue, Saturation, Lightness
HSV	Hue, Saturation, Value
IMU	Inertial Measurement Unit
LiDAR	Light Density and Ranging
LUV	CIE 1976 (L^* , u^* , v^*) colour space
REV	Renewable Energy Vehicle Project
SAE	Society of Automotive Engineers
SVC	Support Vector Machine Classifiers
SVM	Support Vector Machines
UWA	University of Western Australia
YUV	YUV colour space
YCrCb	YCrCb colour space

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	2
Acknowledgements.....	3
Nomenclature.....	4
1. Introduction.....	7
1.1 Background.....	7
1.2 Motivation.....	7
1.3 Project Delimitations.....	8
1.4 Report Layout	9
2. Literature review.....	11
3. System Design	12
3.1 Overview.....	12
3.2 Software Framework.....	13
4. Image processing	14
4.1 Lane Marking Detection	14
4.1.1. Real road distance measurement.....	14
4.1.2. Distortion correction	15
4.1.3. Image thresholding.....	16
4.1.4. Perspective transformation.....	17
4.1.5. Locate road marking	19
5. Machine learning	20
5.1 Traffic cone detection	20
5.1.1. Feature Extraction.....	20
5.1.2. Training.....	23
5.1.3. Searching objects	24
5.1.4. Thresholding	25
5.1.5. Position calculation.....	26
5.2 SegNet.....	27
5.2.1. Data collection	27
5.2.2. Training SegNet	27
5.2.3. Implement SegNet algorithm on NVIDIA Jetson TX1.....	28
6. Integration.....	29
6.1 Software communication	29
6.2 Software Environment Control.....	29
7. Results.....	31
7.1 Lane Marking Detection	31

7.2 Traffic Cones Detection	31
7.3 SegNet.....	32
8. Conclusion and Future work.....	33
8.1 Conclusion	33
8.2 Future Work	33
9. References.....	35

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The Autonomous SAE car project is based on the REV project's 2010 SAE Electric car which was developed from an earlier UWA Motorsport car.

The purpose of this project is that providing vision and sensors assist the autonomous SAE car driving autonomously. This dissertation mainly focusses on vision base detection on road objects that is going through the computer vision to do image processing. The results would provide autonomous SAE car to make more accuracy of driving decisions. This project will cooperate with two other projects. Samuel Evans-Thomson will provide the LiDAR sensor base road detection to help autonomous drive decision and Mitchell Poole will provide the IMU and GPS base road detection to help drive the decision of autonomous. The Autonomous SAE car is a project to provide a platform for autonomous car research. This project build by previous UWA research that has been done the autonomous mode drive base on recorded GPS waypoint. However, this result still restrains from GPS accuracy and limited recorded waypoint.

This project intends to improve autonomous mode driving by visual assistance. Therefore, this project will help the University to researching into fully autonomous vehicles. This autonomous car also helps to promote the REV project.

1.2 Motivation

This project is proposed to develop the visual base road detection algorism to assist the autonomous SAE car to do more advance drive decision. The previous developed autonomous driving algorithm was relying on GPS signal to planning the driving path. However, the GPS signal strength and accuracy would be restricted to the autonomous diving functionality. Therefore, to improve the autonomous driving capability is utilizing different sensors and vision ability, it needs to fusion different incoming data from sensors and vision then do a better driver decision. The visual image is one of the useful data also very easy to acquire. This project was developed real-time image detection and recognition functions to improve autonomous SAE car's capability.

1.3 Project Delimitations



Figure 1: Autonomous SAE car.

This project will outline the complete implementation of road marking detection by image processing scheme, traffic cone detection by machine learning technique and road scene objects detection by image segmentation method. The road marking detection is processing real-time image from camera recording. This is utilizing an open source library, Open Source Computer Vision Library OpenCV, to design the road marking detection mechanism. It will recognize the road boundaries, pavements, and road marking lines. In addition, the algorithm will calculate the distance from autonomous SAE car to two sides of road edge. The traffic cone detection is using machine learning method to implement. The algorithm is training computer to recognize the shape of a traffic cone and use image classifier to extract the traffic cones location on the image. The algorithm using scikit-image image processing library to develop. Moreover, this project adapts the machine learning convolution neural network image segmentation, SegNet to process the camera input real-time video image, then generating a classified pixel-wise segmentation image. These three methods are providing the distance information that is relative the autonomous SAE car to the road scene objects. This distance values will transmit to autonomous SAE car main control program to make more advanced drive decision. The proposed algorithm increases a level of intelligence of autonomous REV car. The image processing and machine learning would need more calculation performance of the embedded system and GPU performance. The current system, Raspberry Pi, is not enough performance for this project's algorithm. Therefore, this project will implement on an NVIDIA

Jetson TX1 platform. It can provide more powerful calculation and GPU performance. The scope of this project will include installation of new Jetson TX1 platform on the autonomous SAE car, development of proposed algorithm software, a development the communication tunnel between different software language, and improvement of autonomous SAE electronic system.



Figure 2: NVIDIA Jetson TX1 development board.



Figure 3: The camera for this project (Microsoft HD-3000).

1.4 Report Layout

Section 2 will cover the various literature review that is related to this project. The reviewed articles are including the autonomous diving, the image processing detection algorithm, and machine learning algorithm. Section 3 will cover the system design of this project, it includes the software architecture and software design framework. Section 4 of the report will describe the image processing method of road detection. This section has detail procedure description of lane marking detection. Section 5 outline the design of machine method road detection. it will be including detail information of the traffic cone detection. Also, including utilize existing image segmentation algorithm SegNet in this project. In section 6, it will describe the integration process of this project with previous autonomous SAE car projects. Section 7 of the report will demonstrate the result of the development system. Finally, in section 8 conclusions

are drawn about the effectiveness of the design for the autonomous SAE car. There are have recommendations for the future work.

2. Literature review

Autonomous vehicles research was started in the 1980s, such as ALV projects in 1984 and Eureka Prometheus project in 1987 [1]. Since then, there are many major cars manufacturers, including technology company Google and Tesla Motors, testing autonomous car system in the 2010s [2][3]. The DARPA Grand Challenge is competition for autonomous vehicles that can be seen the cutting-edge technology and research implement in the autonomous vehicles [4]. The automated vehicles have had classification into six different levels that were published in 2014 by SAE International. From level 0 to level 5 is from none to fully of automated drive control [5]. This project is interesting that using a visual base mechanism to perform road detection. In addition, image detection schemes, Hough transform, is a feature extraction algorithm often using in image analysis [10].

This project intends to adopt some image processing algorithm to achieve road detection objective. The research results by B. Yu et al. [11] is using Hough transform to detect lane boundaries in a different type of road pavement and lane structures. The road mode defines for road detection; this project will use the mathematic model to represent such as the research results that presented by J. Sparbert et al. [8] and C. Jung et al. [9].

In machine learning, convolution neural networks, CNNs, are used for image recognition. And, image segmentation is a process of separating an image source into different segments, this process is simply the image to help further image analyze. [10] [11]. There is research in the image segmentation and convolution neural networks have been done at Cambridge [12]. V. Badrinarayanan et al. have published the research result termed SegNet. It is a deep fully convolutional neural network architecture for semantic pixel-wise segmentation that I will use it for first stage image recognize and classify.

3. System Design

3.1 Overview

Figure 4 shows that the software architecture of proposed visual assistance method for autonomous SAE car. This system will implement on the NVIDIA Jetson TX1 platform. First, the architecture uses a camera to provide real-time video input which installed at front of autonomous SAE car. The software is including three parts in this project development. First, the road marking detection algorithm would receive the camera image source to do image processing. The road marking detection is utilizing conventional image processing to recognize the road marking then implement the edge detection and distance estimation scheme to extracting the distance information for driving assistance. Second, the traffic cone detection is adapting machine learning method to detect traffic cone on the video frames. This algorithm would be detected the traffic in front of the car then estimate the relative distance for the driving decision program. The existing image segmentation algorithm SegNet which is fully convolutional neural network architecture for semantic pixel-wise segmentation. The results of SegNet are classified images which use a different colour to represent a different type of objects. The classified images would be helped the road boundary detection during the road marking and traffic cone detection failed. Finally, these three algorithms providing the road detection result to the distance estimation procedure then feedback the road detection information for the current autonomous SAE car to make drive decision.

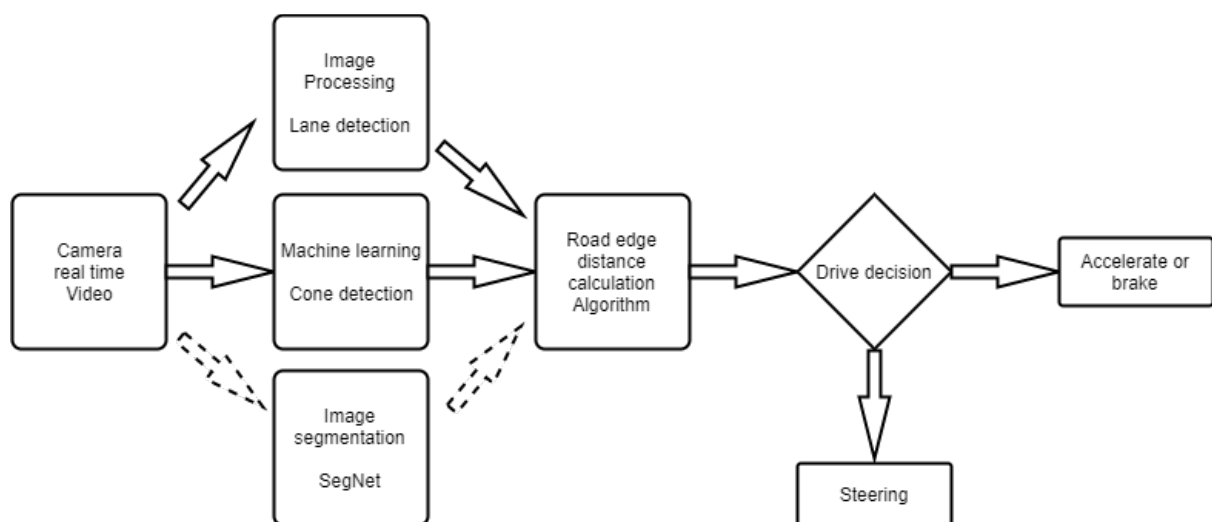


Figure 4: The software architecture of proposed method.

3.2 Software Framework

The autonomous vehicles need visual scene understanding algorithms to recognize and identify the objects at front of vehicle. The image processing algorithm is important for this project. Recently, more and more machine learning image segmentation research has been done. These research results are helpful to develop this project.

The main objective of this project is using the real-time image for road detection. Therefore, image detection algorithm development is the core of this project. The literature review is an important stage for design algorithm.

This algorithm can operate in real-time and run on low-power devices. Therefore, this project is trying to implement the proposed algorithm and image segmentation algorithm, SegNet, on the multicore GPU solution, NVIDIA Jetson TX1.

Autonomous formula SAE vehicle would use visual information to be one of reference for the driving decision. Image data obtained from the camera is processed was the most important thing for this project. This part mainly uses a camera to collect images then to apply OpenCV (Open Source Computer Vision Library) and SegNet (a deep learning framework pixel-wise image semantic segmentation) for road edges detection. OpenCV provides many modules, such as image processing, video, and video I/O, that is useful for road edges detection. However, using OpenCV for image recognition is limited by image quality, brightness, and contrast. SegNet is an image semantic segmentation approach. It can classify road scene objects, such as the pedestrian, lane marking, traffic light, vehicles etc., that complement the insufficient of single image processing methods.

4. Image processing

The programming language is Python for the image processing. Since it can compatible with many open source image processing libraries such as OpenCV, scikit-image libraries.

4.1 Lane Marking Detection

4.1.1. Real road distance measurement

The main road detection algorithm is a post-processing scheme after the image received from the camera. Firstly, the real distance measurement from the image is needed for the road detection algorithm. Figure 5 shows that a road model of distance measurement. The bollards are the anchor point that will help positioning and calculation the point and distance. This image is from the camera which installs on autonomous SAE car, the resolution of the image is 800x600.



Figure 5: The model of road distance measurement.

Figure 6 shows that the values of the real road model. The values of road model can be mapping to the camera captured image. The image resolution of the processed image is smaller than the original image resolution. Therefore, the real distance from the image processing output must be proportional to the original one.

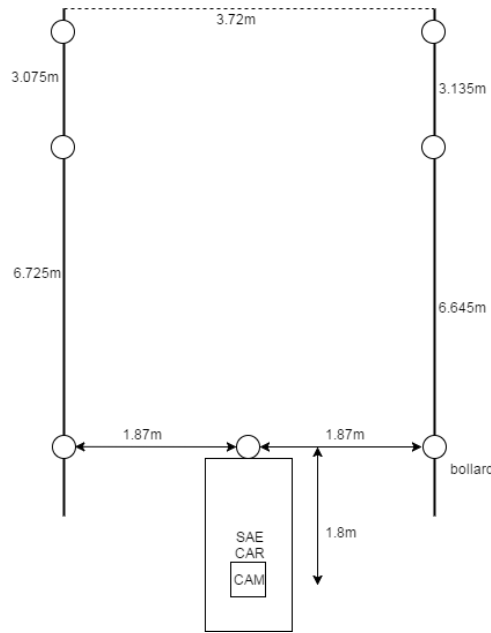


Figure 6: The values of the distance of road model.

4.1.2. Distortion correction

This project is using a conventional webcam as video input camera which is the cheap pinhole camera. Unfortunately, this camera has distortion that caused by the optical design of lenses, that result in some kind of deformation of images. Therefore, the images need to do calibration before image processing. OpenCV provides camera calibration function to correct this distortion. Furthermore, with calibration, the distance of the road can be determined more accurately. It is because the results of this OpenCV function improving the accuracy of the relation between the camera's natural units (pixels) and the real-world units (meters). The first step for the image processing is camera calibration to get a undistorted image. This is using chessboard image and finding chessboard corners to get two accumulated lists, 3D point in real-world space and 2D points in an image plane. Then use the camera calibrate function in OpenCV library to obtain the camera calibration and distortion coefficients [13]. This scheme would remove the camera distortions. The results are shown in figure 7 that the distortion image can be correct effectively.

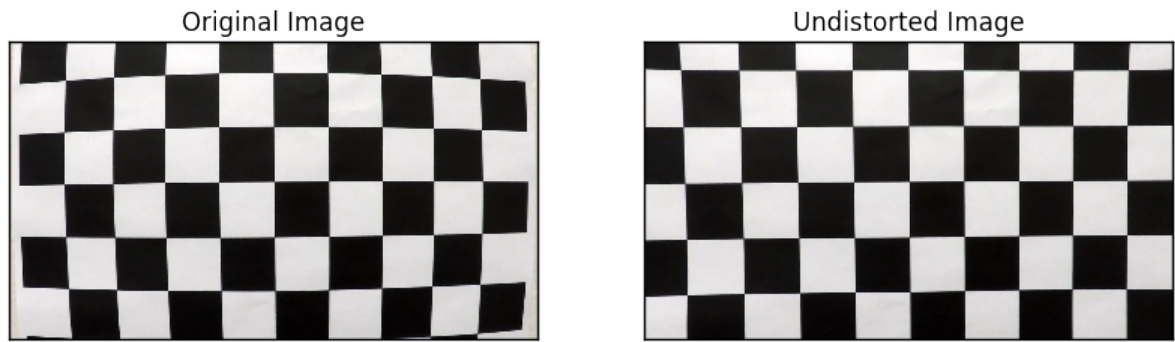


Figure 7: Chessboard distortion correction.

4.1.3. Image thresholding

A camera input image is a number of combinations of colour that image was very unstable since changing conditions in lighting and contrast. Therefore, the image has to convert into the grayscale image to decrease the instability. After that use filter smoothing the image to reduce the image noise. This processed image pass to the other OpenCV function to get the edge information. Using canny edge detection extract structure information from the grayscale image. Canny edge detection has high noise tolerance and low error rate. After that, the algorithm can easier to get the road boundary information [14]. Road edges detection scheme detects lane-marking at two sides of autonomous SAE vehicle. The road marking detection utilize OpenCV library. Finding the edges of the whole image is reducing the image complexity because numbers of colour and gradient of the image would make the image processing more difficult. A canny edge detection is a convenient approach in OpenCV library [15]. The results are shown in figure 8 that the image converted into edge only binary image.

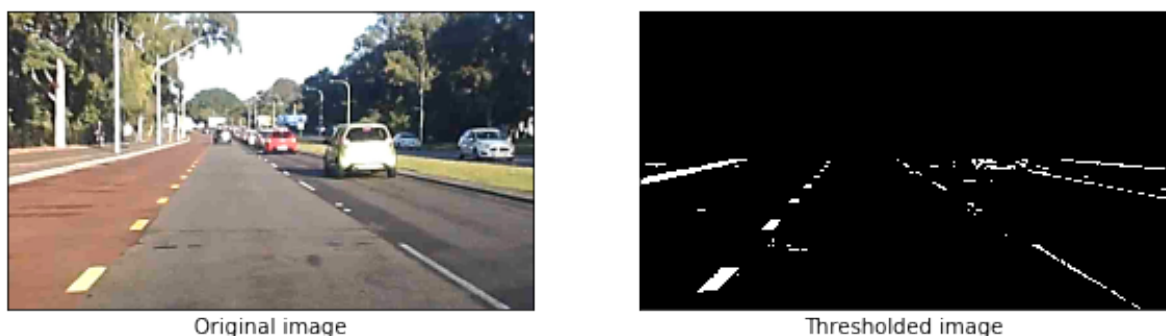


Figure 8: Threshold image processing.

4.1.4. Perspective transformation

The edge image has produced from the previous step, then investigate the edge image and finding the vanishing point, it will help to find the anchor point on the processed image. Figure 9 demonstrates that an example processed image. At the middle of the image is a vanishing point. This point is the end of the road in this image view. Therefore, it can be found the around upper 40 percent of the image is redundant. Hence, it can mask out this region to decrease the process loading.

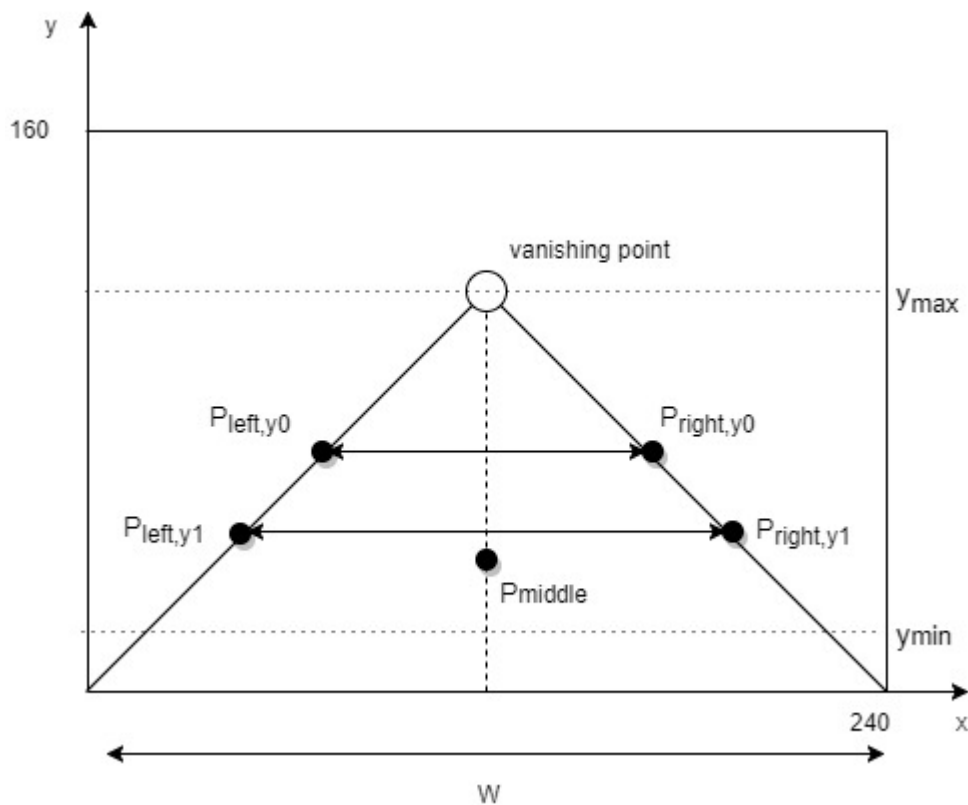


Figure 9: Example processed image and road model.

Now, the road marking has shown on the edge image clearly, since the road markings are approximated as lines, it can be used to extract four points that are actually on the road. then use Hough transforms to detect the left and right road markers that are at two sides of autonomous SAE vehicle. Hough transform is using for recognizing the road boundaries. The road boundaries or edges are a pair of a straight line. Hence, it can use a parametric or normal equation to represent.

$$x\cos\theta + y\sin\theta = r$$

Where r is the length from original to this line and θ is the orientation of r with respect to x -axis.

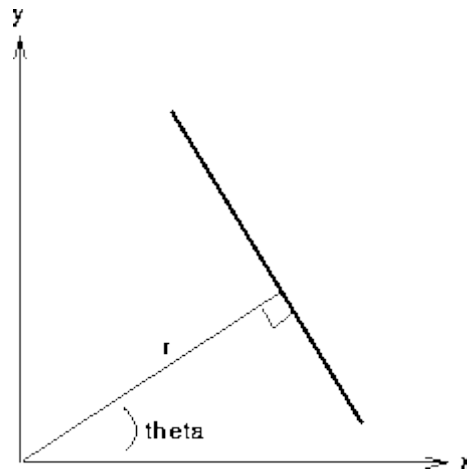


Figure 10: Parametric description of a straight line [16].

The road modeling will be done after the Hough transform. The parameters are shown in figure 9. Where y_{\max} is located at the vanishing point, it means the end of the road. y_{\min} is the closest distance to the car. The algorithm will pick a y value between y_{\max} and y_{\min} for the best position to feedback road distance. Where the P_{middle} is the middle position where the car is. Then P_{left} and P_{right} is the point corresponding to Hough transform line detection. The making of lanes is detected then using perspective transforms to get a bird's view of the image. It can easily find 4 points to represent two-lane markings. Finally, using second order polynomial method fits the points. The perspective transform image shown in figure 11, it converts the image into a bird's view image.

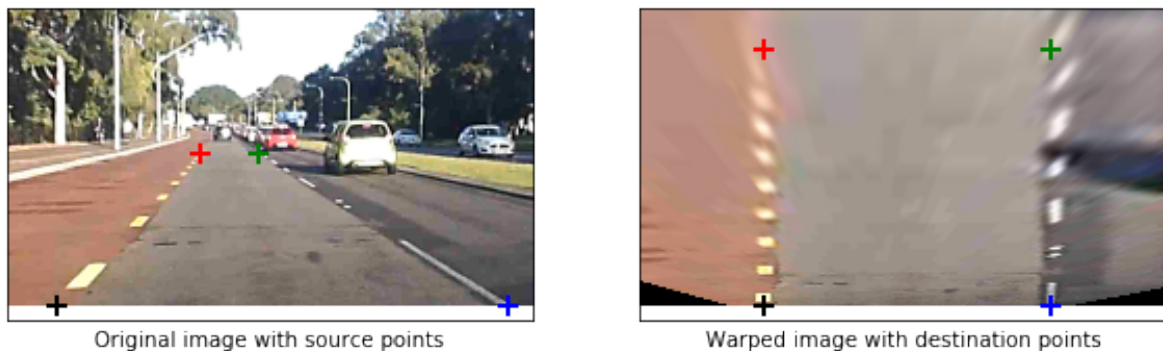


Figure 11: The perspective transform image.

4.1.5. Locate road marking

The edge image and Hough transform can detect the road marking successfully. However, it may have false detection because the road marking quality and dot line type road marking. Therefore, the previous step would very important. It is because the histogram method would be applied for locating lane marking. The histogram identifies the peaks in the histogram to identify the actual road marking the location. The histogram result is shown in figure 12 that demonstrate the x-axis location of road marking.

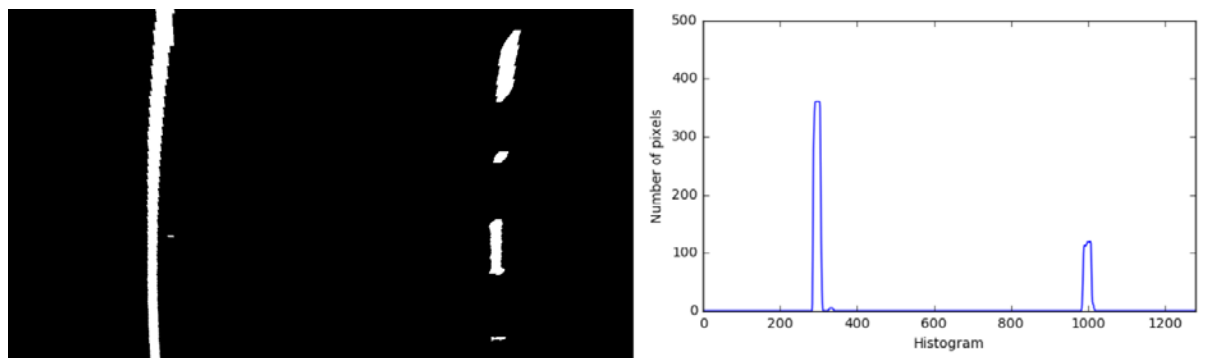


Figure 12: Histogram of the location of road marking.

These two lines are the final road edges detection of image processing method. The lane distance is using pixel values convert into meters. The scaling factors are according to Australia road width standard 3.3 to 3.7 meters. Then do the road distance calculation. Calculating the road distance from the road model got from previous steps. The Road width can calculate as following equation corresponding selected y value.

$$W = P_{left,y} + P_{right,y}$$

The distance to the left-hand side and right-hand side.

$$d_{left} = P_{middle} - P_{left}$$

$$d_{right} = P_{right} - P_{middle}$$

5. Machine learning

Machine learning method is popular for the image objects detection recently. Machine learning is the computer program that is an algorithm that can recognize something would like to detect in the image. There is two type of machine learning, supervised learning and unsupervised learning. This project is using supervised learning type of machine learning. Therefore, the algorithm needs a trained data set for recognizing the object in the image. This project develops an algorithm to detect traffic cone and adapts existing advanced deep learning algorithms for road scene objects detection.

5.1 Traffic cone detection

5.1.1. Feature Extraction

Using machine learning to detect traffic cone detection needs to be prepared at least 300 cone images for the algorithm learning the feature of traffic cones. This project was collected traffic cone images dataset and non-traffic cone images for algorithm comparison. The image is shown in figure 13 that including traffic cone images and non- traffic cone images.

The next step is extracting the image feature. It is a necessary step for the supervised machine learning. Therefore, the image feature is extracting by the Histogram Oriented Gradient (HOG) feature descriptor. HOG feature descriptor is popular for object detection [17]. This algorithm provides from the open source image library scikit-image. This algorithm would do the following computation for the feeding images dataset, computing the gradient image in x and y, computing gradient histograms, normalizing across blocks, and flattening into a feature vector.

The first step of this algorithm is applying a global image normalization which is used for illumination effects reduction. Usually, it applies gamma compression that commuting the square root of each colour channel. The result is image texture strength that is proportional to the surface illumination. Therefore, this compression is able to reduce the image shadowing and illumination. Next step is computing first order image gradients. This step would get the image contour or edge information. Then put it into previous illumination variations results. On the other hand, the local colour channel provides colour invariance. Combined these results that would be an original detector. The third step is to do encoding sensitive local image. Then the image divides into a number of small spatial regions (cells). In each cell do the one dimension histogram of edge orientation for each pixel in local cell.



Figure 13: Traffic cone images and non-traffic cone images.

This one dimension histogram basically is orientation histogram. Every cell has this orientation histogram, then divide gradient angle into previous image calculation results. The gradient magnitude is used to vote the orientation histogram. The fourth step is computing normalization which grouping the local cells and calculating normalize. The normalized procedure would improve the invariance to different factors such as illumination and shadowing. The local group of cells that called blocks. The normalized result is applying in every cell of the block. Therefore, the normalize would do much time for final output vector. It used many calculating sources but improved the performance. This normalized block descriptor is basically being Histogram of Oriented Gradient (HOG)

feature descriptor [17]. The final step is collecting all of the results in the previous step. All blocks normalized results convert into a combined feature vector. The cone HOG feature descriptor result shown in figure 14.

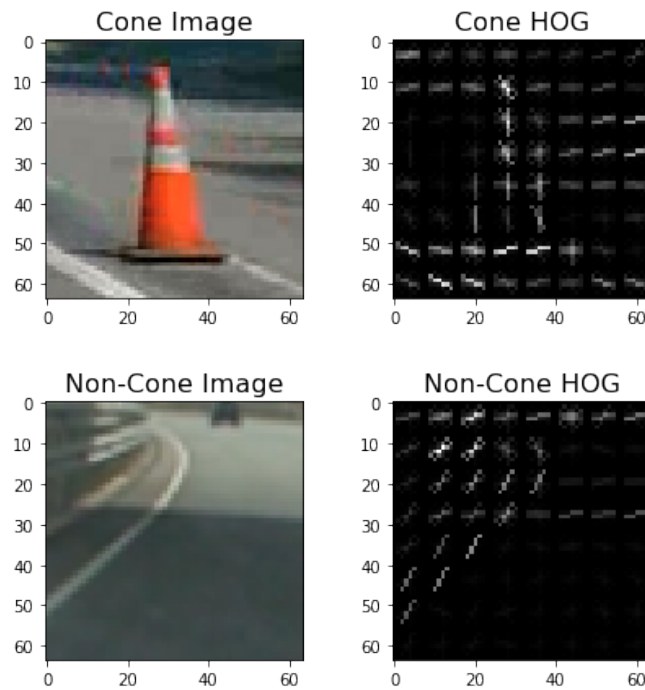


Figure 14: HOG feature descriptor results.

The colour channel and different parameter setup are influenced the performance of extracting time of the HOG feature descriptor. This project has experimented different combination of parameters. The results show that the YUV colour space, 16 pixels per cell, 2 cells per block, and ALL HOG channel have better performance.

Test setting	Colour space	Orientations	Pixels per cell	Cells per block	HOG channel	Time
1	HSL	9	8	2	1	26.40s
2	HSL	9	8	2	ALL	73.97 s
3	HSV	9	8	2	1	35.47 s
4	HSV	9	8	2	ALL	54.74 s
5	LUV	9	8	2	1	35.35 s
6	LUV	9	8	2	ALL	60.09 s
7	YCrCb	9	8	2	1	38.25 s
8	YCrCb	9	8	2	ALL	58.65 s
9	YUV	9	8	2	ALL	48.90 s
10	YUV	11	16	2	ALL	42.83 s

Table 1: HOG feature descriptor extracting time experiment results.

5.1.2. Training

While the image feature descriptor algorithm is ready, then the algorithm can do the training. The dataset training needs to extract input datasets and combine. The previous section has defined 10 different combinations of HOG feature description parameters. Then test the extracting speed for all datasets. The results are extracted from the HOG feature descriptor would shuffle and split into training and test. This step feeds all feature vector of datasets into a linear support vector machine (SVM) classifier. The propagation after linear SVC would be the training time, and the shuffled datasets would test the accuracy. Table 2 shown that 10th parameter setup got the best accuracy and reasonable training time. Therefore, this project would use this setup as the default setting.

Test setting	Classifier	Accuracy	Train time
1	Linear SVC	99.56	1.81 s
2	Linear SVC	99.56	3.03 s
3	Linear SVC	99.62	1.64 s
4	Linear SVC	99.84	27.96 s
5	Linear SVC	99.73	0.61 s
6	Linear SVC	99.84	11.42 s
7	Linear SVC	99.78	4.85 s
8	Linear SVC	99.83	10.62 s
9	Linear SVC	99.84	8.31 s
10	Linear SVC	99.95	3.72 s

Table 2: HOG feature descriptor with linear SVC training time and accuracy.

The classifier is applying linear SVC classifier which is including scikit-learn machine learning library for the Python programming language. This classifier is based on support vector machines (SVMs) to development. The SVMs is a supervised machine learning methods. It is widely applying at classification, regression, and outliers' detection. there are the SVMs advantages such as effective in high dimensional spaces, allow the number of dimensions greater than the number of samples, it uses a subset for training (support vectors) in the decision function, Memory efficient, and it support specifies custom kernel for decision function. However, SVMs also have disadvantages such as do not directly provide probability estimates and the kernel function and regularization term is hard to define while the number of features more than the number of samples.

5.1.3. Searching objects

This section describes the method for detecting traffic cones in an image. It needs the trained data which was prepared by the previous steps. This method using HOG feature extraction again, then applying sliding windows to searching the specific objects in an image. However, extracting features and searching the object in the entire image is time-consuming. Therefore, this algorithm has selected a portion of the image to perform the HOG features extraction first. Then use this extracted feature image doing subsample by different size of windows across a selected range of the image. This selected range of image feeding into the linear SCV classifier. The algorithm performs the classifier prediction based on HOG features for each selected window region. Then the classifier returns the result is matching traffic cone's features or not. The figure 15 shows that the window searching across the image.

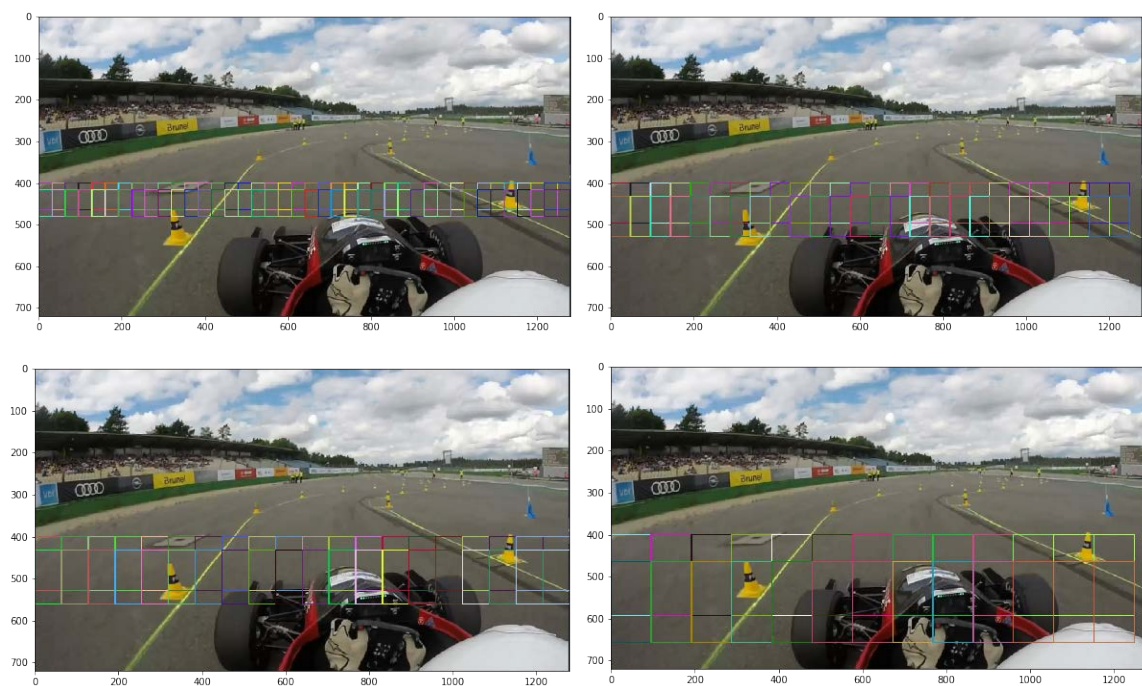


Figure 15: Different size of searching windows.

The algorithm has tried different configuration of window size and window overlap. The previous experiment has tried the smallest size of the window was 0.5 scale of size and 50 and 75 percent of window overlap in both x and y-axis, but the results had too many false detections. Therefore, the algorithm was increasing the window size to 1x, 1.5x, 2x, and 3x times of scales and the overlap percentage set as 50 percent. After the four sizes of window searching finished. Each size of the window would mark the detected traffic cones' position.

It is shown in figure 16 that still has false detection in the image. Therefore, it needs a further algorithm to filter the false detection.

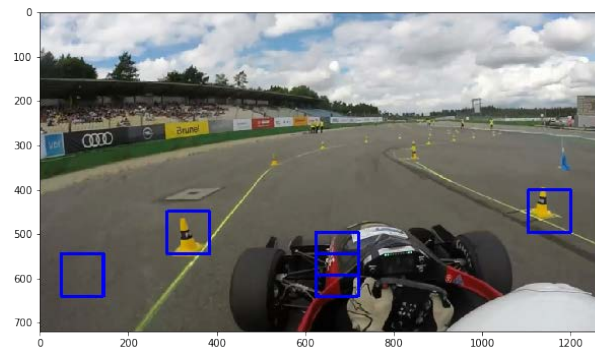


Figure 16: Object searching results with false detection.

5.1.4. Thresholding

The false detection would happen that influence the object detection results. Therefore, the algorithm has to deal with this problem. Analysing the results from the previous section, the correct detection would be detected by different size of window searching. Figure 17 shows that the repetition of traffic cone detected by the different window size.

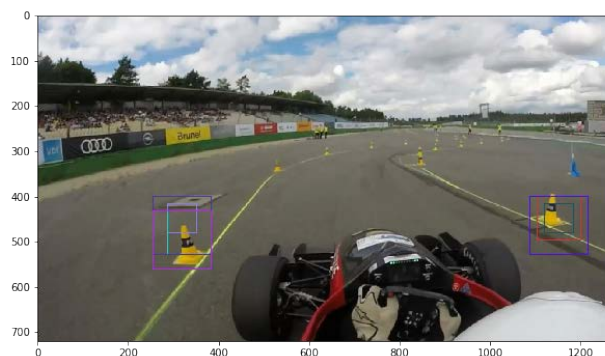


Figure 17: Repetition of traffic cone detected.

The false detections normally show one time only. The algorithm designs a simple filter to cancel out the false detection. The method is creating a blank image then adding the pixel value which is a relative position the different window detected the traffic cones. While the cone position was detected by different size of window searching. The relative position pixel values would greater. Figure 18 shows the repetition of traffic cone detected in pixels view. The final step is given a threshold for the pixels view to filter out the false detection. Figure 19 shows that the false detection pixels have been removed.

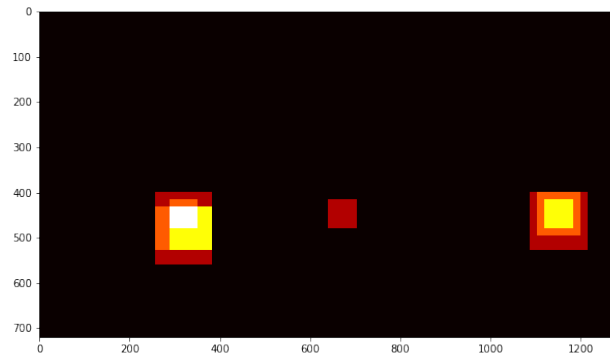


Figure 18: Pixels view of traffic cone detected.

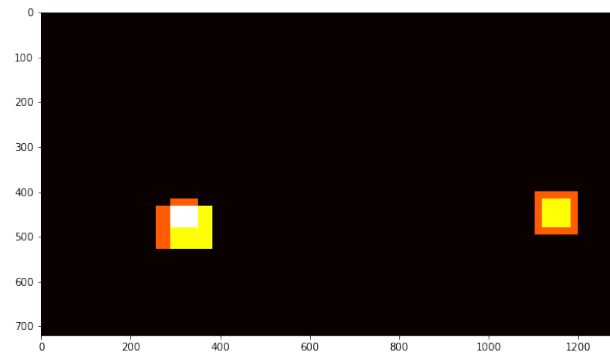


Figure 19: Thresholding pixels view of detected results.

5.1.5. Position calculation

The algorithm detects the traffic cone in the image, the function return results are the position of image pixel location. Therefore, converting the pixel location to the real-world position is needed. According to Section 4 the real-world distance measure, the algorithm uses the value of meters per pixel to calculate the real-world position of detected traffic cones. The figure 20 shows that the algorithm feedback the calculated real-word position to the driver decision program.

```

ID: 42
TimeStamp: 2017-10-28 07:14:56
To left distance: 1.58901 m
To right distance: 1.86223 m
Confidence Value: 0
left cone x: -1.58571
left cone y: 2.55829
right cone x: 2.85429
right cone y: 2.33629

```

Figure 20: The result of detected traffic cone of position.

5.2 SegNet

SegNet is a pixel-wise semantic segmentation in deep learning framework. Semantic segmentation is to apply for understanding the visual scene and object. This has been widely adopted in autonomous driving. The architecture of SegNet is a convolution encoder and decoder which is a pixel-wise classifier. The objects classify from SegNet is including following classes, sky, Building, column-pole, road-marking, road, pavement, tree, sign-symbol, fence, vehicle, pedestrian, and bicyclist. The accuracy of classify result is 65.9% for classes average [12].

The image processing approach road marking detection has a chance to be failed because the lane markings are not clear or no lane markings. Therefore, adapting existing algorithm SegNet into this project's software architecture to supplement image processing method's insufficient.

The original software has hardware requirement, hence NVIDIA Jetson TX1 cannot run the program directly. It needs modification of code to reduce hardware requirement. One of the solutions is decreasing the image resolution. The origin SegNet image resolution is 640 by 480 that caused the memory shortage of Jetson TX1. Adjusting resolution to 320 by 240 can run on the platform, but the FPS is low to run road detection. Therefore, the resolution 240 by 160 is the acceptable speed of processing and quality image output.

The input images use the SegNet to do visual scene classification. It would produce the results, road, road-marking, and pavement, are useful for road edges detection. This algorithm is similar to machine learning method process to get the classification result. There are the process steps of SegNet.

5.2.1. Data collection

The SegNet image segmentation mechanism needs a bunch of videos to train the program. Current SegNet is using CamVid dataset as a training source. It is compatible with the Australia traffic system. However, to improve the image recognize accuracy use local traffic video source to train the segmentation program is needed.

5.2.2. Training SegNet

The current SegNet is using CamVid dataset. Therefore, the program can train by local traffic system, after the video data collected. The training process needs a high GPU performance computer. It is difficult to do that with low power devices. Hence, the training

process was using dual NVIDIA TITAN X GPU computer that provides by robotics and automation lab.

5.2.3. Implement SegNet algorithm on NVIDIA Jetson TX1

The image segmentation algorithm SegNet is a research result from V. Badrinarayanan *et al.* [12]. The authors provide open source code on GitHub. The results of SegNet shown in figure 21. The top image is input video source and the bottom one is the output of segmentation, the right-hand side shows the colour map of the objects.

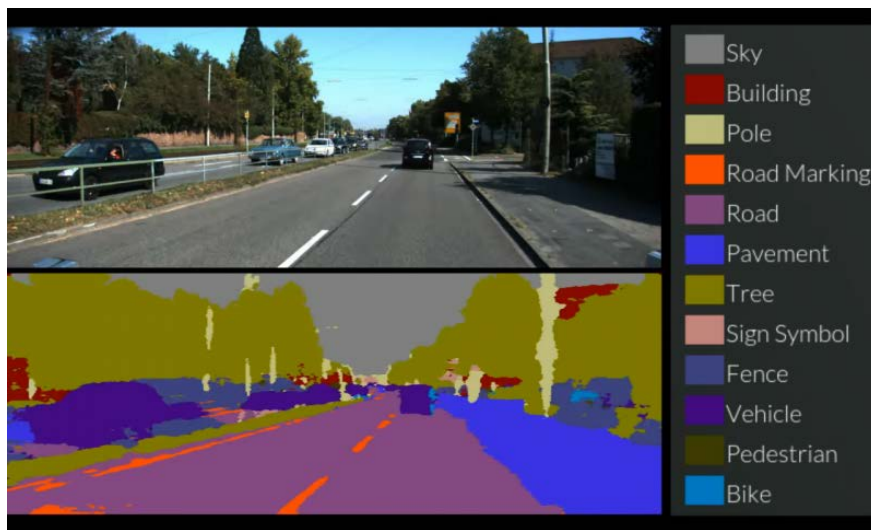


Figure 21: The SegNet result on high-performance computer (640x480) [12].

6. Integration

6.1 Software communication

The software development of this project is using Python as the main programming language because of its compatibility with many image processing libraries and machine learning libraries. However, the original autonomous SAE car was using C++ as the main programming language. The communication between this project's program and the previous main drive decision program needs an intermediate protocol. Therefore, this project applies the Google Protocol Buffers, Protobuf, which is a language-neutral, platform-neutral extensible mechanism for serializing structured data. Protobuf provides a protocol between Python and C++. The data format was defined, including data ID, timestamp, left lane distance, right lane distance, confidence value, and detected cone position. The data format is shown in the following code block. Protobuf can generate Python and C++ code automatically. Then the algorithm establishes a UDP connection between them, and the data structure can directly provide for the main driving decision program.

```
package roadDistance;

message Lane {
  required int32 id = 1;
  required string time = 2;
  required float left = 3;
  required float right = 4;
  required float left_x = 5;
  required float left_y = 6;
  required float right_x = 7;
  required float right_y = 8;
  required int32 cv = 9;
}

message roadDistance {
  repeated Lane lane = 1;
}
```

6.2 Software Environment Control

This project was developed under Ubuntu 16.04 LTS operating system. Therefore, the operating system environment has to be configured for software running. Table 3 shows the libraries used for this project.

Python 2.7.12	Numpy
Caffe	Matplotlib
CUDA Toolkit	Scipy
cuDNN v5	OpenCV
Glob	Protobuf
Pickle	Scikit-image
Scikit-learn	Pillow

Table 3: Software and library usage.

7. Results

7.1 Lane Marking Detection

The result of lane marking detection shown in figure 22 that demonstrate three different windows which include original video input, bird's view, and output of road marking detection. At the output screen, it shows the annotated different colour on the detected road marking. Moreover, the output screen also shows left and right lane distance simultaneously.



Figure 22: The result of lane marking detection.

7.2 Traffic Cones Detection

The result of traffic cone detection shown in figure 23 that use a blue rectangle to indicate the traffic cone position. The results also demonstrate the algorithm can recognize the different colour of traffic cones.



Figure 23: The result of traffic cone detection.

7.3 SegNet

The SegNet output is restrained to Jetson TX1 performance. The output image is noisy, it is shown in figure 24. The results still can recognize the road, and car objects, hence SegNet is useful to be a backup algorithm during the road marking detection failed.

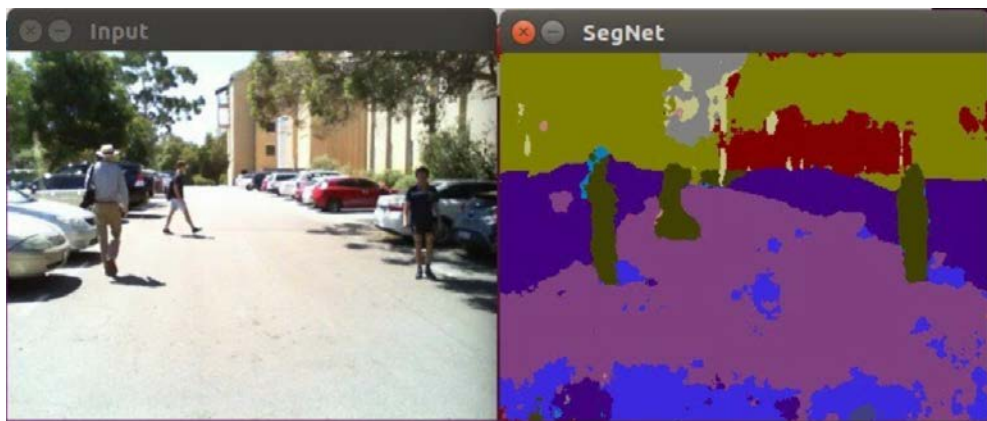


Figure 24: The SegNet result on NVIDIA Jetson TX1 (240x160)

8. Conclusion and Future work

8.1 Conclusion

At the beginning of the project, the drive decision control of the autonomous SAE car was identified to be a failure factor with regards to the accuracy of GPS location accuracy. This generated a goal to investigate that require the software improve and sensors assistance the control functionality. Whilst there exists research in the field of vision assistance for autonomous vehicles, but no result was found the implementation of real-time image processing method in the autonomous SAE vehicles. This is due to image processing would require high-performance calculation.

The GPU performance was improved and the size of the embedded system was significantly reduced. Thus, this project has developed the image processing method and machine learning method to perform road detection. The algorithm can run on the high-performance GPU platform NVIDIA Jetson TX1 with autonomous drive speed requirement.

The road marking detection and traffic cone detection was therefore integrated into the vehicle as a result. The algorithm provides the lane marking distance information and traffic cone position information to the dive decision program to improve the path planning accuracy of autonomous SAE car. The test result was overcoming the GPS signal inaccuracy.

Overall, the autonomous SAE car is now able to navigate while driving on paths with better accuracy, this allows for further research in new areas such as autonomous driving in competitive environments.

8.2 Future Work

In terms of potential research to the road detection ability of the vehicle, the extension of the algorithm capable use multiple cameras for the image processing. There is some research using two cameras to measure the real-world distance. It can improve the method used in this project.

The GPU programming is one of a method to improve the program running speed. The algorithm in this project has been applied it to improve the speed. However, some of the third-party libraries did not support the GPU programming. For the future implementation, using entire GPU programming for the algorithm would need for more complex algorithm development.

The machine learning can be having more improvement. The deep learning research results have more and more been published. This is will help autonomous SAE car processing the image input with reliable, accurate, and fast for the diving control.

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