

# **In-Vehicle Sensing for Smart Cars**

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*(Invited Paper)*

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**ABSTRACT** Driving safety has been attracting more and more interest due to the unprecedented proliferation of vehicles and the subsequent increase of traffic accidents. As such the research community has been actively seeking solutions that can make vehicles more intelligent and thus improve driving safety in everyday life. Among all the existing approaches, in-vehicle sensing has become a great preference by monitoring the driver's health, emotion, attention, etc., which can offer rich information to the advanced driving assistant systems (ADAS) to respond accordingly and thus reduce injuries as much/early as possible. There have been many significant developments in the past few years on in-vehicle sensing. The goal of this paper is to provide a comprehensive review of the motivation, applications, state-of-the-art developments, and possible future interests in this research area. According to the application scenarios, we group the existing works into five categories, including occupancy detection, fatigue/drowsiness detection, distraction detection, driver authentication, and vital sign monitoring, review the fundamental techniques adopted, and present their limitations for further improvement. Finally, we discuss several future trends for enhancing current capabilities and enabling new opportunities for in-vehicle sensing.

**INDEX TERMS** Artificial intelligence, advanced driving assistant systems (ADAS), distraction/inattention, driver authentication, fatigue/drowsiness, in-vehicle sensing survey, occupancy detection, smart car, vital sign monitoring, wireless sensing.

#### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The last several decades have witnessed the unprecedented proliferation of automobiles, which has contributed greatly in our daily commute, economy, business and entertainment [1]. According to the American Automobile Association (AAA) [2], there are roughly about 1.2 billion vehicles operating on the planet every day with an average trip of 15 minutes. The in-vehicle time grows up to 46 minutes per day in the United States [3]. While we have benefited a lot from the tremendous number of motor vehicles, it has been shown [4] that the road accidents cause approximately 1.3 million deaths every year and about 20–50 million more non-fatal injuries, many of which incur a lifelong disability [5]. Among those accidents, about 94% –96% of them are related to some human error [6].

To improve driving safety, many efforts have been devoted by both the government and car manufacturers such as

legislatively prohibiting the use of wireless devices and disabling some of the amusement features (i.e., Bluetooth setting) during driving. However, driving is a complex task and requires a combination of cognitive engagement and physical operations, which makes it very hard for a driver to concentrate, especially during long trips such as those for truck drivers.

As a promising safety enhancement, in-vehicle sensing has been gaining an increasing attraction since it can continuously monitor the driver's status, from which the advanced driving assistant system (ADAS) can predict human error and thus react timely to prevent accidents from happening. In addition, it can also provide other useful real-time information about the interior of a vehicle, e.g. passenger status, or when a vehicle is parked.

Significant efforts have been devoted to in-vehicle sensing, which, according to the application scenarios, can be This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 License. For more information, see https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/

classified into five categories, i.e., occupancy detection, fatigue/drowsiness detection, distraction detection, driver authentication and vital sign monitoring.

Occupancy detection [7]–[13] mainly aims to detect, localize, classify the seat occupancy states and then remind the driver before he/she leaves the vehicle. A particular case is the child presence detection (CPD) to prevent a child from being left alone in a closed vehicle, which may cause fatal damage or even death due to heatstroke [14], [15]. Existing studies about occupancy detection can be categorized into four groups according to the adopted techniques, including sensor-based [7]–[13], WiFi-based [16]–[18], imagebased [19]–[21], and radar-based [22]–[28] methods.

Fatigue/drowsiness can lead to slow reactions of a driver to the surrounding changes and has caused more than 20% of the reported accidents [29]–[31]. By enabling fatigue/drowsiness detection in the ADAS system, fewer traffic accidents can be expected, and safety and transportation efficiency can be improved. Based on the features extracted, research about fatigue detection can be roughly grouped into three types, i.e., 1) using biological signals such as electrocardiography (ECG) [32]–[48], electroencephalography (EEG) [49]–[66], electromyography (EMG) [67]–[76], 2) using facial contexts such as movement of the face [77]–[96], eye [97]– [110], etc., and 3) joint sensing of facial expressions and body/arm/leg/head motions [111]–[128].

Compared to fatigue/drowsiness, distraction can only be roughly defined since *any activity that takes a driver's attention from the driving task can cause distraction* [129] such as talking to passengers, using mobile phones, etc. As there are so many factors that may cause driver's distraction, the existing research on distraction detection mainly focuses on analyzing the driver's behaviors/activities when operating the vehicle such as acceleration/braking, and mainly contains three different groups including joint sensing of human and vehicle status [129]–[135], human sensing only [136]–[145], and cognitive sensing [146]–[148] which monitors the emotion of the driver to decipher whether he/she is focusing on driving or not.

Driver authentication [149]–[152] can help to improve vehicle security and user experience by automatically adjusting settings of the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC), seats, and entertainment. Most of the current research in this area focuses on determining a driver's identity by jointly considering the driving behaviors and biological signals.

Driver vital sign monitoring can assist in preventing accidents caused by unpredictable sudden health deterioration of the driver as well as other in-vehicle sensing applications such as emotion sensing. Most of the conventional vital sign monitoring systems [153]–[158] require a user to wear a lot of sensor pads such as ECG/EEG, which may distract driving and thus are not applicable for driver's vital sign monitoring. Recent advances in wireless sensing techniques [159]–[163] have made contactless vital sensing possible and thus shed light on the future of driver's vital sign monitoring.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. The abbreviations used in this paper are summarized in Table I for easy reference. Section II reviews the research about occupancy detection and Section III reviews the existing works about fatigue detection. Then, Section IV summarizes the existing methods for distraction detection followed by an overview of driver authentication and vital sign monitoring in Section V. Finally, Section VI discusses the limitations and future works while Section VII concludes this paper.

#### **II. OCCUPANCY DETECTION**

In-vehicle occupancy detection, which detects how many seats of a car are occupied and what object (e.g., an adults/kid/pet/inanimate item) is located at a particular seat has been a key component to enhance driving safety by the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) [164]. For example, knowing which seat is occupied by a passenger can be utilized to: 1) remind the passengers who are not wearing seat belts since buckling up can help to reduce the risk of fatal injuries by 45% and moderate to critical injuries by 50% [165]; 2) trigger the emergency system such as airbags in case of accidents to save lives. More importantly, leaving children, especially those who are less than 6 years old and have little ability to exit the vehicle on his/her own, alone in an unattended vehicle can cause very serious damages to organs/brain or even deaths due to heatstroke [14], [15]. As a result, enabling child presence detection has been proposed as a standard feature on the road map of the European New Car Assessment Programme (NCAP) [159], [166] to alert caregivers or emergency services if a child is left alone. Towards this end, many efforts have been devoted to developing accurate and practical occupancy detection systems. Fig. 1 summarizes the existing research about occupancy detection, which, according to the technologies adopted, are categorized into four classes as will be detailed next.

# *A. SENSOR-BASED OCCUPANCY DETECTION*

As shown in Table II, sensor-based occupancy detection methods [7]–[13], usually leverage different kinds of physical sensors such as weight, heat, force, capacitance, Radio frequency identification (RFID) to capture the weight, pressure, temperature, electrical continuity, capacitance, etc. elicited by the presence of passengers and then perform further occupancy analysis. This kind of methods is usually very easy to design, manufacture and deploy with affordable cost to most of Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) and customers. However, there are three main drawbacks of this kind of methods. First, as the equipment/sensor positions are usually pre-designed and thus fixed, they tend to suffer from very limited coverage within/next to the seats in the car. Second, it is very challenging to find a universal threshold suitable for different cars and human beings. For example, it takes different thresholds to detect the presence of people with different weights. Otherwise, it causes high false positive rate (FPR) if the threshold is too small while high false negative rate (FNR) if the threshold is too large. Third, most of them



#### **TABLE I Mapping of Abbreviations**





(d) Overview of the existing work.

**FIGURE 1. Related works of in-vehicle occupancy detection. (The data is obtained by searching on Google Scholar with the combinations of key words: occupancy car, occupancy vehicle, occupancy automotive, child presence car, child occupancy, and seat occupancy. We review the top 600 related papers and patents, from which we find a total of 99 ones that directly study the topic of in-vehicle occupancy detection. Accessed Mar. 06, 2022.).**

Reference	Devices & Input	Methodology	Results & Advantages	Limitations
[7], [8]	Pressure sensor on the seat	Compare the object weight with a threshold	-Easy to deploy -Fast response	-Limited coverage on the seat -Unable to distinguish human from inanimate items
$[13]$	Pressure sensor on the buckle	Compare the forced pressure with a threshold	-Easy to implement -Fast response	-Limited coverage -Unable to work if a passenger forgets to fasten the belt
[167]	Temperature sensor inside the car	Compare the measured temperature with a threshold	-Easy to deploy -Low cost	-Performance varies in different weather conditions -Ad-hoc temperature thresholds
[10]–[12]	Capacitance sensor embedded in the seat	Measure and analyze the variation trend/pattern of capacitance	-Easy to design -Fast response -Low cost	-Performance varies from person to person due to body differences
[9]	Radio frequency identification (RFID) tag	Detect the electrical continuity within the passenger seat	-Easy to manufacture -Fast response	-Limited coverage within the passenger seat -Lack of universal criteria
[168]–[170]	Passive infrared (PIR) sensor inside the car	Measure the interior motion information such as intensity and direction	-Easy to deploy -Low cost	-Covering line of sight (LOS) with respect to the PIR sensor -Vulnerable to surrounding temperature

**TABLE II Sensor-Based Occupancy Detection**

lack the ability to distinguish human from inanimate objects. For example, weight-based approaches cannot tell apart a box from a human as long as they are of the same weight.

# *B. WIFI-BASED OCCUPANCY DETECTION*

As more vehicles are being equipped with WiFi transceivers [171]–[173], WiFi-based occupancy detection approaches [16]–[18] are becoming popular due to their superiority in cost and coverage as shown in Table III. The principle behind WiFi-based occupancy detection is that the presence or activity of a human being inside a car can

affect the WiFi signal propagation between a transmitter and a receiver, which is embedded in the channel state information (CSI) measurements and can be extracted by a dedicated algorithm. For example, Zeng *et al.* [17] proposed an approach based on statistical electromagnetic (EM) modeling, which can achieve over 96.4% detection rate with less than 3.96% false alarm and a responsive time  $\leq$  20s based on the tests over 5 real babies. [18] presented a portable CPD solution that can work on both 2.4 and 5 GHz commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) WiFi equipment by detecting biological movements at  $1 - 6$ mm level. While WiFi-based solutions

#### **TABLE III WiFi-Based Occupancy Detection**



#### **TABLE IV Image-Based Occupancy Detection**



1Forward-looking infrared (FLIR)

<sup>2</sup>Public dataset in [178]

3Including ResNet152V2 [179], DenseNet121 [180] and EfficientNetB0-B5-B7 [181] architectures for feature extraction

enjoy low-cost and good coverage, they may suffer from distortions due to the activities outside a car such as cars passing by, since WiFi signals can penetrate the car exterior under certain conditions. Besides, other factors [174] such as channel frequency offset (CFO), sampling frequency offset (SFO), symbol timing offset (STO), and jitters of the phase-locked loops (PLLs) [175] may reduce the CSI quality and thus degrade the robustness of WiFi-based solutions.

# *C. IMAGE-BASED OCCUPANCY DETECTION*

To accurately estimate how many seats are occupied and further localize and recognize the objects, $\frac{1}{1}$  image-based approaches are extensively studied [19]–[21], [164], [176], [177] because an image can provide more visible information such as the contour/edge of an object than WiFi signals. By leveraging techniques such as edge detection [19]–[21], and learning including convolutional neural network (CNN), multi-task learning [164], which can automatically identify object-related features for recognition, great performance can be achieved. However, as shown in Table IV, capturing highquality images requires dedicated cameras and it takes efforts to construct a *good* dataset to train the network, especially for manual data labeling and annotation. For better privacy protection, thermal images [177] are captured and then fed into a CCN network based on multi-task learning technique. The work in [164] designed a CNN network which is pre-trained from the existing CNN models including ResNet152V2 [179],

<sup>1</sup>Few of the WiFi-based approaches can localize and identify an object occupying a seat as the time and space resolution of COTS WiFi is limited by the bandwidth (20MHz-80 MHz) and the number of antennas  $(< 3 \text{ usually})$ .

DenseNet121 [180], and the most recent EfficientNetB0-B5- B7 [181]. The system yields about 79.87% accuracy on the public synthetic dataset for vehicle interior rear seat occupancy (SVIRO) [178] to classify people and inanimate objects over 10 different vehicle interiors and 25,000 scenarios. As seen, the accuracy is limited because different vehicles have different background information which challenges the classifier greatly.

# *D. RADAR-BASED OCCUPANCY DETECTION*

Recently, the unprecedented development of radar techniques [182]–[187], especially millimeter-wave (mmWave) radar has offered new opportunities for occupancy detection, classification and localization since mmWave can provide better directionality, angular, angular, and range resolution due to its high frequency and large bandwidth. As shown in Table V, recent years have witnessed the blossom of mmWave-based occupancy detection systems [22]–[28]. For example, Vayyar [22] presents occupancy detection and classification by estimating the 4D image of the object. Texas Instrument [27] demonstrates the feasibility of occupancy detection using 77 GHz frequency modulated continuous wave (FMCW) radar to construct the range-angle heatmap of the object.

Another major superiority of the mmWave system is that it is easy to be integrated on a single chip [23], [24] or a small unit [26], offering flexibility in device locations and better portability. At present, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has been trying to enable State-of-the-Art Radar Sensors in 60 GHz Band *to increase the practicality of using mobile radar devices in the 60 GHz band to perform*



#### **TABLE V Radar-Based Occupancy Detection**

<sup>1</sup>Multiple-input and multiple-output (MIMO)

2Evaluation board (EVB)

3Field of view (FOV)

4Ultra-wideband (UWB)

<sup>5</sup>Only testing results in the garage and outdoor parking lots are provided. More tests such as street parking are needed since passing-by cars may cause interference on the received signal and thus degrade the performance.

*innovative and life-saving functions, including gesture control, detection of unattended children in vehicles* [188], which provides legislative support and incentives for mmWavebased occupancy detection approaches. Companies such as Innosent [23], Infineon [24] and NOVELIC [25] have announced their system-on-chip (SOC) solution of presence detection. In February 2021, IEE VitaSens [26] launched VitaSense [189], *an interior radar sensing solution for CPD in vehicles*, with grant from North America and Science and Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED) of Canada [190], [191]. While mmWave is very encouraging, it is yet to be integrated with the current in-car system (most on 2.4 GHz and 5 GHz) without additional hardware cost.

#### **III. DRIVER FATIGUE DETECTION**

Fatigue, which degrades perception, delays reaction, and impacts judgment of a driver on his/her surroundings, has been shown as a prime culprit for over 20% of car accidents [4]. What is worse is that drivers are more prone to feeling fatigue or drowsy nowadays since the roads are becoming more crowded due to the rapid increase of motor vehicles [29] and thus the drivers have to be more focused. It is imperative to seek effective solutions for fatigue detection and prediction so that *smart cars* can sense the status of the driver and respond accordingly, such as sounding a warning/alarm message with an audio assistant system. To meet the demand, various research and commercial solutions have been proposed as summarized in Fig. 2.

#### *A. FATIGUE DETECTION USING BIOLOGICAL SIGNALS*

By directly measuring the variation of biological response related to the human neural system, biological signal-based (e.g., EEG [49]–[66], ECG [32]–[48], and EMG [67]–[76])

fatigue detection has been viewed as the golden standard, and the related works are summarized in Table VI and Table VII. In most of these approaches, users are asked to wear a number of electrode pads for data collection. Then, pre-processing techniques such as Finite Impulse Response (FIR) filter, Infinite Impulse Response (IIR) filter [34], Principal component analysis (PCA) [59], empirical mode decomposition (EMD) [192] and fast independent component analysis (FastICA) [34] are adopted, which aim at removing the noise and artifacts while retaining the signal components within a certain range of frequency. Afterwards, the cleaned signal is fed into some feature extraction module to get the fatigue-related features such as  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  information, inter-beat-interval (IBI), spatial spectrum, temporal dependency, variation, kurtosis of the power spectrum etc. To get the fatigue information, most of the existing works tend to formulate the problem as a discrete classification problem, such as support vector machine (SVM), deep neural network (DNN), K-nearest neighbor (KNN). It is worth to note that the discrete classification model is very straightforward by feeding the data into the well-studied classification models, which can usually achieve reasonably good performance. However, the manual labeling process of fatigue can be error-prone, since the evaluation is subjective and even the most experienced biological experts may get confused in distinguishing fatigue and normal status. For this reason, decision making-based on Fuzzy Inference System (FIS) [195]–[197] have been studied in assisting driver's fatigue detection since it is hard to quantify human's neuron response even for the same activity. Another main drawback of fatigue detection using biological signals is the requirement of many wearable sensors, which may distract the driver. Less intrusive sensors are being considered before such methods can be widely accepted by the market.



#### **TABLE VI Biological Signal-Based Fatigue Detection-Part I**



 $^{\rm 1}$  Wavelet packet transform (WPT)

<sup>2</sup> Deep neural network (DNN)

 $3$  Do it yourself (DIY)

<sup>4</sup> Heart rate variability (HRV)

<sup>5</sup> Finite Impulse Response (FIR), Infnite Impulse Response (IIR)

<sup>6</sup> Fast independent component analysis (FastICA)

<sup>7</sup> K-nearest neighborhood (KNN)

<sup>8</sup> Normal, drowsy, fatigue, visual and cognitive inattention

<sup>9</sup> Photoplethysmograph (PPG)

<sup>10</sup> Data acquisition (DAQ)

<sup>11</sup> Galvanic skin response (GSR)

<sup>12</sup> Karolinska sleepiness scale (KSS)



(d) Overview of the existing work.

**FIGURE 2. Related works of in-vehicle fatigue detection. (The data is obtained by searching on Google Scholar with the combinations of key words: driver fatigue, driver drowsiness, vehicle fatigue, vehicle drowsiness, automotive fatigue, and automotive drowsiness. We review the top 600 related papers and patents, from which we find a total of 189 ones that directly study the topic of in-vehicle fatigue detection. Accessed Mar. 11, 2022.).**

#### **TABLE VII Biological Signal-Based Fatigue Detection-Part II**



<sup>1</sup>Root mean square (RMS)

2Empirical mode decomposition (EMD)

3Polysomnography (PSG)



#### **TABLE VIII Fatigue Detection Using Independent Facial Features**



<sup>1</sup>DLIB:an open-source software library

2Long-short-term-memory (LSTM)

# *B. FATIGUE DETECTION USING INDEPENDENT FACIAL FEATURES*

Without requiring wearable sensors, image/video-based fatigue detection using facial features has become popular, such as those based on face recognition [77]–[96], eye detection [97]–[110], and the combination of the features extracted from face, eye, mouth, etc. In most of these approaches, a face/eye/mouth region detection module is firstly designed to refine the input image to remove redundant information outside the region of interest. As shown in Table VIII, region recognition methods include you only look once (YOLOv-CNN) [198], multi-task cascaded CNN, DLIB keypoint detection [199], etc. The next step following the region detection is to extract the fatigue-related visible features such as eye open/close/gaze, mouth open/close, face being twisted or not.

Afterwards, the joint analysis of the extracted features is performed. For example, the percentage of eyelid closure over the pupil over time (PERCLOS) of a driver larger than 80% [200] is a strong indication that he/she is drowsy, even though the specific threshold/percentage may vary from person to person and at different time over a day. In this case, by continuous monitoring, if the system further detects that the driver yawns more frequently than usual, there is a high probability that he/she is sleepy and thus an alert can be triggered. In the last, different strategies can be adopted such as Two-stream neural network, Adaboost classifier, Fuzzy inference fusion, and long-short-term-memory (LSTM) network to output the final decision.

While many related works have been proposed with their own advantages and drawbacks, as shown in Table VIII,

they share several common limitations: 1) Putting a camera in front of the driver during driving may not only induce **privacy concern** but also distract the driver and thus increase the risk of accidents; 2) Many of the related works are studied on **public datasets** such as WIDER FACE [77], National Tsing Hua University Driver Drowsiness Detection (NTHUDDD) dataset [78], [112], [201], YawDD dataset [88], CEW Database [97], ZJU Database [97], BUAA Eye Database [97], most of which are collected in a laboratory environment when the driver is driving on a simulator. As a result, it is really hard to conclude about the practical performance since human beings tend to have very different biological reactions in practical driving. To expedite the real-world application, efforts are still needed on developing highly efficient data collection tools on practical driving for further validation; 3) Most of the existing studies are based on the dataset when users **face right towards the camera**, while few of them have discussed the case if a user faces towards the camera with an oblique angle, since driving can involve frequent activities requiring head turns, such as checking the rear-mirror, looking at the side mirrors before lane changes, etc.

# *C. FATIGUE DETECTION USING HYBRID ANALYSIS*

As aforementioned, to capture high-quality images/videos so that minute facial/eye/mouth changes can be extracted, dedicated cameras are needed. In addition, under some circumstances, a strict installation angle/position is required to make sure that the camera and user's face are facing towards each other. However, a driver has to keep checking the surrounding environment during practical driving, the relative position/angle between the camera and the driver's face is time variant, and it is impractical to assume that frontal images are always available. To tackle this issue, some of the existing works have explored solutions by studying how the big motion of a driver, such as head movement due to nod, arm/hand motion when moving their hands away from the steering wheel unintentionally, can assist the fatigue detection, because sensing big motions is always feasible during driving. Although relying on sensing the big motion itself may not be accurate enough for reliable fatigue detection as such big motions can also happen when the driver is sober, they can provide good auxiliary information.

Towards this end, many research works [111]–[128] have been proposed by jointly analyzing the big motions and the imperceptible changes corresponding to the subtle motion of face/eye/mouth as shown in Table IX. For example, Part *et al.* [111] presented a joint analysis on local facial expression and head gesture using VGG-FaceNet and FlowImageNet architecture, respectively. The results show that joint features including both face and head can contribute about the 5% improvement in drowsiness detection accuracy over the public NTHUDDD video dataset [112], which are collected over 36 subjects including different genders and ethnicities. While [111] is evaluated on a public dataset collected under simulated driving conditions, Mittal *et al.* [113] develops a

fatigue detection system that combines the information from head pose (with a particle-filter based 3D model to track head motion), lip and eyes, which is then comprehensively evaluated with 14 subjects driving a car on different round-trip routes through the University of California campus at different times, including morning, afternoon, dusk, and night. Further studies also involve the head pose dynamics [114], [115], [202], head orientation and arm position [116], [117], which improve the fatigue detection accuracy by 2% - 10%, compared to the benchmark methods using only facial features. To further handle the time-variant relative position between the camera and a driver's face, multiple cameras can be distributed around the car for data acquisition [114], [115], [202]. Although the fatigue detection accuracy is improved, many new practical problems arise as well, such as the cost of hardware, deployment, computational complexity, and more importantly how to fuse the information from multiple cameras while satisfying the real-time detection requirement.

#### **IV. DRIVER DISTRACTION DETECTION**

Driver distraction, which can increase the risk of accidents, may be caused by many factors. As introduced in Section I, there exists no universal definition for distraction during driving [205]–[207], and a widely accepted concept is that, *any activity that takes a driver's attention from driving belongs to the cause of distraction* [129] such as talking to passengers, using mobile phones, under different kinds of negative emotions including anger [208], anxiety [209], sadness [210], etc. As shown in Fig. 3, the community has been exploring how to detect/prohibit distraction in many different directions to improve driving safety. One example is that playing with mobile devices when driving is legislatively prohibited in most countries. Besides, car manufacturers are adding more convenient designs such as integrating switches of phone-call, music-playing, cruise-setting on the steering wheel area so that a driver does not need to move his/her hand off the steering wheel when they have to utilize related functions. Also, some of the amusement features are disabled during driving such as that Tesla [211] stops allowing drivers to play video games during driving. However, there exists a conflict between simplifying the design/functions and satisfying the users. In other words, to make the car more intelligent and improve the driving experience, manufacturers have to develop and integrate more functions (e.g., entertaining, relaxing), which again will increase the chance of distraction. Therefore, an automatic distraction detection system is needed, which can alert a driver, or more intelligently, provide real-time corrections whenever distraction is detected.

# *A. DISTRACTION DETECTION BASED ON JOINT SENSING OF HUMAN AND VEHICLE*

Among the many distraction detection studies [129]–[135], joint sensing of the vehicle and human status is firstly proposed, as shown in Fig. 3 and Table X. Tang *et al.* first [130] presented a driver's distraction system by leveraging the vehicle data (usually including speed, steering angle, position of



#### **TABLE IX Fatigue Detection Using Hybrid Analysis**



1Frequency of mouth (FOM)

2Long-term recurrent convolutional network (LRCN)

3Localized gradient orientation (LGO)

4Laboratory for intelligent and safe automobile (LISA)

the accelerator pedal, the brake pedal, etc.) gathered from the vehicle controller area network (CAN) [204] system, which is then fed into an SVM classifier for distraction detection. Later, motion information which mainly corresponds to the big motion of the human body such as body/leg/arm movements were further involved in [131] and yielded about 90% detection accuracy. To further improve the accuracy, the relationship between the head motion and distraction was studied in [132] and then fused with the vehicle data [134], which also explores the time-domain information by utilizing LSTMrecurrent neural network. The correlation between eye glance and steering movements was analyzed in [212], which verified the feasibility of distinguishing different types of distraction. To test the performance, a real-time system was implemented in [129] and 30 participants were recruited to drive on a straight country road while performing eight pre-defined secondary task (e.g., playing radio, setting the navigation to a destination) on the multimedia interface to evoke distractions. In total, the authors got about 150 minutes distraction data and 50 minutes attentive data, which demonstrates about 96.6% accuracy.

While these works have shown promising results, most of them are evaluated on the data collected from a driving simulator or practical driving but following a simple route. Although many efforts have been made to make the driving simulator more realistic such as involving challenging routes, playing sound around as distractions, experiences from a driving simulator are still different from practical driving [147], and the validations/findings from the aforementioned works may not hold in practice. as shown by the degraded performance during practical driving [129], [134], and it is worthwhile to conduct more real-world data based studies.

#### *B. DISTRACTION DETECTION ON HUMAN SENSING*

Instead of joint vehicle and human sensing, distraction can also be detected based on human sensing only. The main reasons are as follows. First, vehicle data is not always available. Second, it is difficult to build a universal vehicle data-based driving profile since driving behavior can be affected by many external factors and a driver may respond differently to the same stimulus. For example, braking frequency on a highway



(d) Distribition of different categories in different years.

**FIGURE 3. Related works of in-vehicle distraction detection. (The data is obtained by searching on Google Scholar with the combinations of key words: driver distraction, driver inattention, driver behavior, vehicle distraction, vehicle inattention, automotive distraction, and automotive inattention. We review the top 700 related papers and patents, from which we find a total of 168 ones that directly study the topic of in-vehicle distraction detection. Accessed Mar. 15, 2022.).**

#### **TABLE X Distraction Detection by Joint Sensing of Vehicle and Human**



<sup>1</sup>Controller area network (CAN) [204]





#### **TABLE XI Distraction Detection by Sensing of Human Only**

<sup>1</sup> American University in Cairo (AUC) Distracted Driver Dataset

2Minimum Required Attention (MiRA)

and urban roads is different, while driving in snowy weather is different from driving on a sunny day as well. In addition, the measurement error of the CAN system is vehicle-dependent, which again induces new noise in the vehicle-specific dataset.

Distraction detection based on human sensing only can be mainly divided into two categories. Existing works in the first category mainly leverage the visualized big motion (e.g., head pose/orientation [136]–[139]) of the human body or the minor motion involved in the eye movement/glance [140]–[142], facial expression [143]–[145], and etc. For example, Zhao *et al.* [136]–[138] introduced a distraction detection method by utilizing the head pose estimator (HPE \_ Resnet50) network structure to extract the head pose/orientation (described in Euler angle) of a driver [136], based on the 300W-LP [221] and Annotated facial landmarks in the wild (AFLW) datasets [222]. A similar idea was proposed in [137], [138], which extracted the head pose using a coordinate-pair-anglemethod (CPAM) and then DNN for further classification. Praveen *et al.* [223] demonstrated the feasibility of distraction detection by tracking the face pose using a clustered approach based on Gabor features. The full-scale information of a human body was leveraged by an ensemble of ResNets in [224] to distinguish distraction from images of normal driving, yielding an accuracy of 94.28% on the American University in Cairo (AUC) dataset. On the other hand, Rezaei *et al.* [142] created a cascaded network using Haar-like Masks to detect the subtle eye movement such as opening/closing for distraction recognition, which could detect distraction from both the frontal direction and an oblique angle of a tilted head pose, making a big step towards practical applications. [141], [216], [225] explored metrics such as eye gaze direction [225], blink pattern [141], and on-road/off-road gaze duration [216]. [226]–[228] demonstrated the feasibility of using activities of eyes and mouth, and a review of driver distraction detection using facial expressions was presented in [144], [145]. Note that the different features extracted from subtle eye/face/mouth movements are usually fused [143] and then fed into various classifiers such as AdaBoost, Random Forest, SVM, CNN, DNN for distraction analysis.

Instead of using either the big motion [136]–[139] or minor motion [140]–[145], [226]–[228], the second category [140], [146], [203], [213]–[220], [229]–[231] fuses features from the big motion and minor motion together as shown in Fig. 3 and Table XI. Although different features are extracted, the main steps of this kind of methods can be summarized as follows:

- *Step 1:* Image capturing using dedicated RGB/thermal cameras, which are usually mounted on the windshield/dashboard and pointed towards a driver's face as much as possible while not blocking his/her view.
- *Step 2:* Image pre-processing, such as resizing, noise removal, enhancement, and region detection corresponding to the driver's arms, legs, hands, head, torso, face, mouth, eyes, etc. Note that different region detection methods may be designed for a specific purpose. For example, eye detection takes a smaller window to capture more details while body contour extraction requires full-scale images.
- $\bullet$ *Step 3:* Feature extraction, construction, and classification, which are closely related to the cascaded network and the loss/objective function adopted. The two most common feature extraction methods are shapebased (e.g., calculating the *distance* such as Euclid distance using several key points in the image) and appearance-based by leveraging the color, context, or correlations between different images.

# *C. COGNITIVE DISTRACTION DETECTION*

Another type of distraction is cognitive distraction, which is mainly caused by negative emotions of a driver such as anger [208], sadness [210], and anxiety [209]. Since emotion is mainly related to the activity of one's brain and neural system, cognitive distraction is hard to be detected using the aforementioned detection approaches. It is possible that one may have different behaviors under different moods. However, different people have different ways of expressing their emotions, and thus it may not be accurate to judge one's emotion purely based on his/her behavior. In this sense, cognitive distraction is probably the most difficult type of distraction to be detected [146].

Recent work [147] presented a review of the existing research on in-vehicle emotion sensing, which, according to the information adopted to sense emotion, can be divided into biological signal based (e.g., ECG, Heart rate and blood pressure, etc.) [232]–[239], speech signal based [240], [241], facial expression based [242]–[248], behavior based [249], and those using the combination of different features [148]. Biological signals-based methods can achieve good accuracy because those signals are directly related to the physiological response of a human being under different emotions. However, capturing biological signals is usually intrusive and requires physical contact between electrodes and human body, and is not convenient for a practical driving scenario. In addition, biological signals are often very weak and thus highly vulnerable to external distortions such as noise and unavoidable human body motions. Note that Du *et al.* [148] have shown that the joint use of biological features (e.g., heart rate extracted from RGB images) and facial expressions from images can improve the emotion detection accuracy by about 5%, which may shed light on a new direction of cognitive distraction detection.

#### **V. MORE APPLICATIONS OF IN-VEHICLE SENSING**

In this section, we introduce two more other in-vehicle sensing applications, especially those wireless sensing-based techniques due to its superiority in cost and coverage.

# *A. DRIVER AUTHENTICATION*

As remote keyless system [250] has become standard equipment for modern vehicles, most of them are still relying on a token matching and rolling scheme, which has been reported for several security concerns [150], [251]–[253]. Therefore, enabling a smart driver authentication system can help to protect a car from improper use without the permission of the driver/owner [150]. Moreover, automatic driver authentication can enable intelligent driver-specific adjustments, such as the seat and mirror positions [149].

Towards this end, the works [150], [151] built a driver identification system by sensing the driving behavior using the data from the in-vehicle CAN system, with SVM and CNN + SVDD (Support Vector Domain Description) classifiers, respectively. Face recognition techniques are leveraged in [152] while [254] utilizes the On-Board Diagnostic (OBD) port for collecting data about speed, pedal movement, fuel flow, etc., which are then fed into a machine learning module for classification. Biometric-based driver authentication methods have also been proposed using different biometric information including palm prints and veins [255], brain waves [256], and combinations of hand swipes, voice, and

faces [257]. The authors in [149] presented a driver identification system by recognizing the unique radio biometric information [258] embedded in the CSI of commercial WiFi. A long-term driver radio biometric database was built to train a generalized DNN that is robust to the environment changes, and experiments demonstrate up to 99.13% accuracy.

# *B. DRIVER VITAL SIGN MONITORING*

In-vehicle health/vital sign monitoring has also become attractive recently, because vital sign signals such as heart rates can help to improve other in-vehicle sensing functions such as emotion sensing [148]. Also, continuous health monitoring can reduce the risk of accidents in unpredictable and imperceivable health deterioration (such as a sudden pathological attack or heart stroke, which is difficult to be detected based on emotion or behavior sensing) of a driver when he/she is driving.

Existing works on driver vital sign monitoring include the sensor-based methods [153]–[158], vision-based methods [259]–[262] and radio frequency (RF)-based methods [263]–[275]. The sensor-based methods require wearable sensors such as photoplethysmography (PPG) [156], ECG [154], [155], EEG [153], [276], voltage-controlled oscillators [157], and electromagnetic coupled sensor [158] to capture physiological signals for vital sign analysis. They are accurate due to the direct contact with a human body but tend to be cumbersome, uncomfortable, and distracting for a driver when driving, thus hindering practical applications. Vision-based methods [259]–[262] which usually leverage a camera mounted inside a car to capture images/videos for vital sign analysis, are less intrusive by reducing physical contact than sensor-based methods, but raise privacy concerns and are susceptible to illumination conditions, which again inhabits the wide deployment. More recently, RF based vital sign sensing systems have been gaining more interests since they do not require any wearable sensor while preserving user privacy and robustness over different illumination conditions. Intuitively, RF signals reflected off human subjects will be modulated [277]–[282] by body movements including chest and heart movement due to respiration and heartbeat. As a result, one can decipher the vital sign information embedded in the received RF signals without any intrusion to a driver.

Currently, WiFi- [159], [160] and mmWave-based [283], [284] systems are the two mostly adopted RF-based approaches for in-vehicle vital sign monitoring. For example, Wang *et al.* [160] presented a WiFi-based multi-person (up to 4, a typical number of total passengers in a car) respiration rate estimation system with subcarrier selection and trace concatenation, which yields up to 98.9% detection accuracy with the respiration rate estimation error less than 1 respiration-per-minute (RPM). Moreover, it [160] also explored the feasibility of people recognition using the distribution of the respiration estimations for a certain period. Although WiFi-based vital sign sensing methods [160], [280], [281] have shown great advantages in coverage, low-cost, and excellent portability by reusing the existing on-car WiFi, they



lack good spatial resolution for reliable heart rate sensing. As an alternative, mmWave [163], [264]–[268], [270]–[275] has shown superior spatial resolution because it operates in a much higher frequency, with larger bandwidth and higher integration capability to equip more antennas on a single chip, and many mmWave-based vital sign monitoring systems have been proposed. For example, the works [163], [264]–[266] (although not for in-vehicle sensing) have demonstrated the feasibility of using mmWave to extract breathing and heart rates simultaneously [163], [265] and further estimation of heartbeat variability is presented in [267], [268], [283].

Note that the aforementioned mmWave-based vital sign sensing may not be directly applied to a driver's vital sign monitoring when he/she is driving because the vital signs are very weak and thus easy to be overwhelmed by motions involved in driving. Recently, by exploring the 2D-correlation of the range-angle heat map of the received RF signal, Wang *et. al.* [271] proposed a motion compensation method to mitigate the impact of interfering motions on driver vital sign monitoring when driving by aligning and then concatenating the vital signals in different time intervals dynamically. Extensive experiments show an estimation accuracy of 99.17%, 98.94% and 94.11% for respiration rate, heart rate, and inter-beat-interval estimations, respectively.

# **VI. DISCUSSION**

Despite the significant achievements for in-vehicle sensing applications, a number of issues still remain open for future studies. In this section, we share several possible research opportunities for interested readers.

#### *A. EVALUATION OF THE SYSTEM*

According to the surveyed approaches, there are two common limitations in evaluation. First, most of the published works are evaluated on the data collected either under simulated driving environments or practical experiments along with simple routines. Although many efforts have been made to make the simulated experiments as natural as possible, knowing a mistake does not really hurt, human beings under simulated driving experiments will have much different physiological responses from that of real-world driving [147], [285]. As a result, it is questionable whether the existing research can be generalized to practical driving. Second, different methods are usually evaluated on different datasets, and it is difficult to judge which one is better by just comparing the related approaches side-by-side because even a small difference in data may affect the performance especially for data-driven approaches. Therefore, it is worthwhile to develop highly-efficient in-vehicle sensing data collection platform and build more standard public datasets for comparison across different methods.

# *B. FUSION OF DIFFERENT FEATURES*

Many of the existing studies [129], [131], [134], [135] have shown that joint sensing over different features together can improve performance. However, few of them have studied how much extra cost it takes during the fusion process. For VOLUME 3, 2022 235

example, to train a network that can leverage sensing features from both big motions (e.g., head/leg/arm) and small motions (e.g., eye open/close) may take twice or even higher computation and memory than that of utilizing just one of the features. This is because that the network may suffer from the *Curse of Dimensionality* [286] with the increment of the number of features. Hence, the efforts needed to construct the dataset and then train the network may grow exponentially. Therefore, optimization of feature fusion is important for in-vehicle sensing.

#### *C. PERSONALIZED IN-VEHICLE SENSING*

Most of the current in-vehicle sensing studies aim at improving the safety. However, with the development of automotive techniques, drivers may expect to be able to adjust the sensing functionality freely. For example, an elderly driver may want the sensing system to pay more attention to his/her own health status during driving, while another driver who has a young baby on board cares more about his/her baby on the back seat. Thus, personalized in-vehicle sensing which can meet the various requirements on different functions may be of interests.

#### **VII. CONCLUSION**

This paper presents a survey on the state-of-the-art in-vehicle sensing technology. We classify the existing research works into five topics, i.e., occupancy detection, fatigue/drowsiness detection, distraction detection, driver authentication, and vital sign monitoring. We discuss the motivation and main techniques adopted in each topic, explain how these techniques are leveraged, and analyze the limitations and possible future solutions. A high-level discussion about the evaluation and feature fusion is provided to narrow the gap between theoretical research and practical applications. Personalizing in-vehicle sensing is also covered which may inspire more research to improve driving safety while making driving experience more customized.

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