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The application of reinforcement learning algorithms in intelligent games

Herui Bi

The Gutenberg Talent Academy, Qingdao City University, Qingdao, Shandong, 266106, China

15165367065@163.com

Abstract. The ongoing advancement of computer hardware has spurred the need for high-quality gaming experiences. The pressing need for intelligent games, the proven efficacy of reinforcement learning in various fields, the advancement of deep reinforcement learning technology, and the desire for customized gaming experiences collectively propel the ongoing exploration and implementation of reinforcement learning in intelligent games.This study use algorithms sourced from the literature review to examine multiple facets of reinforcement learning, including the modeling of game settings, reward design, the utilization of deep learning approaches, and adversarial learning. The utilization of reinforcement learning in intelligent games holds immense importance. Initially, it enhances the gaming encounter and renders intelligent games more demanding and tailored. Furthermore, the game gains complexity and intrigue by the implementation of intelligent adversaries capable of assimilating and adjusting to the player's tactics. This not only fosters the advancement of AI technology through research and development, but also broadens the utilization of reinforcement learning in other domains, like autonomous driving and smart manufacturing. Furthermore, tailored encounters, cutting-edge game design, and utilization in schooling are likewise significant contributions, rendering reinforcement learning a pivotal element in propelling technological advancement and augmenting user experience.

Keywords: Reinforcement Learning, Intelligent Games, Deep Learning, Game Environment Modeling

1. Introduction

Reinforcement learning is a kind of machine learning that emulates the learning process observed in humans. It involves initially acting randomly, learning from errors through continuous trial and experimentation, and ultimately discovering patterns and strategies to achieve desired outcomes [1]. With the ongoing evolution of the gaming business, conventional game intelligences are facing difficulties in satisfying players' demands for a more demanding and customized gaming experience. The implementation of reinforcement learning algorithms has expanded the potential for game design, allowing intelligent entities to enhance their performance through ongoing learning and adaptation. This has also stimulated research and technological advancements in the realm of artificial intelligence. The main objective of this research is to enhance the cognitive capabilities of intelligent games through the integration of reinforcement learning methods. This will result in a more engaging and

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demanding gaming experience for the player, while also significantly influencing the advancement of artificial intelligence.

Significant progress has been made in the utilization of reinforcement learning algorithms for intelligent games. For instance, The paper "Playing Atari with Deep Reinforcement Learning" presents the Deep Q Network (DQN) [2], a method that effectively merges deep learning with reinforcement learning to learn how to operate Atari 2600 games straight from unprocessed pixel input. The paper introduces the Proximal Policy Optimization (PPO) algorithm, which is a popular policy optimization approach in deep reinforcement learning. It is applicable to both continuous and discrete action spaces. The algorithm is discussed in detail in the Proximal Policy Optimization Algorithms [2]. It is employed in games to enhance their usability and offer gamers an enhanced gaming experience. These two articles demonstrate the utilization of various algorithms in intelligent games. They primarily depend on fixed training data and predetermined objectives. However, this research highlights the significant influence that reinforcement learning algorithms can have on games. They enable the acquisition of adaptive decision-making strategies through interaction with the environment.

The study utilizes the research approach of literature review, with a specific focus on the historical development of the area, comparative analysis of various algorithms' performance, strategies for designing rewards, adversarial learning, and the practical applications and industrial implementation of these findings. This study aims to provide a thorough understanding of the current research on reinforcement learning in intelligent games. It achieves this by extensively examining how algorithms are applied in various types of games, exploring methods for evaluating performance, and discussing the challenges of adversarial learning. This study carries significant ramifications for the domain of intelligent gaming. Firstly, it facilitates the advancement of game artificial intelligence by thoroughly exploring the utilization of reinforcement learning in intelligent games. Furthermore, this work enhances the comprehension of reinforcement learning's capacity to adapt and make decisions in dynamic contexts. Additionally, it can also facilitate studies on human-computer interaction. The study holds great importance for the field of intelligent games as it promotes technological innovation, facilitates the development of decision-making systems, enhances the human-computer interaction experience, and has potential applications in the field of education. These contributions will strongly support the advancement and development of related fields.

2. Overview of reinforcement learning algorithms

2.1. Basic concepts and principles of reinforcement learning

Reinforcement learning is a component of the machine learning discipline that involves the acquisition of knowledge by an agent through interactions with the environment, with the ultimate objective of achieving a certain goal. The primary objective is to acquire the most effective approach by engaging with the surroundings, enabling the agent to optimize its rewards in ongoing tries and exploration. Various algorithms, such as Q-learning and strategy gradient, can be employed to achieve this learning process. These algorithms optimize the decision-making process of the intelligent entity by maximizing the value function or the strategy function. They also enhance the learning process through constant iterations and updates.Nevertheless, to effectively employ reinforcement learning in scenarios that resemble real-world complexity, agents encounter a challenging objective (illustrated in figure 1): they must acquire accurate representations of the environment from sensory inputs that have a large number of dimensions, and utilize these representations to extrapolate from previous experiences to novel situations [3]. Throughout the process of reinforcement learning, the intelligent agent consistently engages with the environment. An intelligent entity assimilates information from its surroundings, utilizing this information to generate a response or make a choice. Subsequently, the decision is implemented inside the environment, which in turn generates the subsequent state and the reward associated with the current decision, contingent upon the decision made by the intelligent entity.

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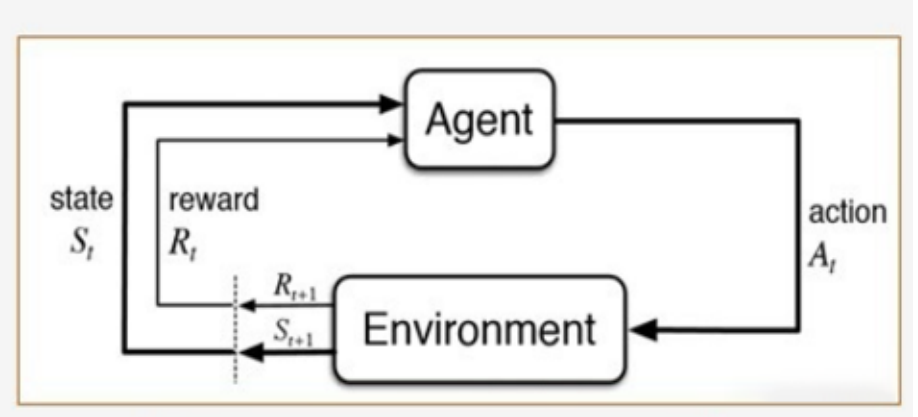

Figure 1. Introduction to reinforcement learning: basic ideas and classical algorithms [4]

2.2. Classification of major algorithms for reinforcement learning

The main algorithms can be categorized based on the agent and method employed.

Reinforcement learning approaches can be classified into two categories: Model-Free RL and Model-Based RL. This classification is based on whether the Agent has knowledge of the probabilities of state transitions and the associated rewards in the Markov decision process it depends on (table 1).

Model-Free Reinforcement Learning enables the Agent to take actions in the environment and determine the optimal strategy for a given environment through iterative trial and error. Model-Based Reinforcement Learning involves constructing a representation of the environment by analyzing its characteristics. This allows the agent to forecast the subsequent state and feedback, identify the optimal strategy, and subsequently execute actions in the actual environment.

Table 1. Model-Free and Model-Based RL[5]

Monte-Carlo Update RL	Model-Based RL
Q learning	Q learning
Sarsa	Sarsa
Policy Gradients	Policy Gradients

Reinforcement learning systems can be classified into two categories based on the methodologies used to pick actions: probability-based reinforcement learning (Policy-Based RL) and value-based reinforcement learning (Value-Based RL), as demonstrated in table 2. In Policy-Based Reinforcement Learning, the Agent's actions at a given state are selected with varying probabilities, depending on the specific action. Probability-based reinforcement learning can be applied to the selection of two distinct types of actions: discrete and continuous. This is because the distribution of probabilities can take either a discrete or continuous form. In Value-Based Reinforcement Learning, the Agent's potential actions at a given state are ranked based on the relevant feedback value received, and the action with the highest feedback value is chosen. Value-Based Reinforcement Learning is exclusively suitable for choosing discrete actions.

Table 2. Policy-Based And Value-Based RL [5]

Policy-Based RL	Value-Based RL
PG	Q Learning
	Sarsa

Reinforcement learning methods can be classified into two categories based on the frequency of updating the policy or value function: Round Update Reinforcement Learning (Monte-Carlo Update

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RL, MC) and Single-Step Update Reinforcement Learning (Temporal-Difference Update RL, TD), as shown in table 3. The Monte-Carlo Update Reinforcement Learning algorithm necessitates the sampling of an entire trajectory before updating the policy or value function. The Temporal-Difference change Reinforcement Learning (RL) algorithm has the capability to change either the policy or the value function following the completion of each phase.

Table 3. Monte-Carlo Update And Temporal-Difference Update RL [5]

Monte-Carlo Update RL	Temporal-Difference Update RL
PG	Q Learning
MC Learning	Sarsa
	DDPG
	PPO, DPPO

The categorization of reinforcement learning methods is based on the Agent's direct interaction with the environment for learning purposes. This categorization includes On-Policy RL and Off-Policy RL, as shown in table 4. On-Policy Reinforcement Learning necessitates direct interaction between the Agent and the environment, meaning that all data and samples utilized in the learning process are observed by the Agent from the environment. Off-Policy Reinforcement Learning (RL) does not necessitate the Agent's direct engagement with the environment. In other words, the data and samples can be acquired by alternative means for the purpose of learning, eliminating the need for the Agent to directly get them by watching the environment.

Table 4. On-Policy And Off-Policy RL [5]

On-policy RL	Of-Policy RL
Sarsa	Q Learning
Sarsa(λ)	DQN
AC, A2C, A3C	SAC
PPO	
TRPO	

2.3. Benefits of Reinforcement Learning in Intelligent Games

The extensive utilization of reinforcement learning techniques in intelligent games yields numerous benefits. The autonomous learning capabilities of intelligent entities allows them to enhance their decision-making methods by interacting with the gaming environment, without relying on artificial rules or extensive manually labeled data. Furthermore, reinforcement learning exhibits remarkable adaptability and generalization prowess, allowing the intelligent agent to swiftly adjust to variations in game levels or regulations and sustain a high level of efficient decision-making. Reinforcement learning possesses the capability to make decisions in real-time, allowing the intelligences to promptly reply in the game. This enhances the interaction and difficulty level of the game. Regarding the trade-off between exploration and exploitation, the algorithms adeptly navigate between experimenting with new strategies and leveraging existing knowledge. This enables the intelligences to engage in both innovative exploration and effective utilization of previously acquired experiences in the game. The game level is dynamically adjusted in real time based on the player's performance, resulting in a personalized experience and increased challenge. This ensures that each player has a distinct and engaging game experience. The application of reinforcement learning in the gaming area offers prospects for technological innovation and scientific improvement, contributing to the progress of intelligent gaming. Collectively, these benefits enhance the favorable impact of reinforcement learning in game design and user experience.

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3. Introduction to Intelligent Game Environments and Datasets

Intelligent games, being at the forefront of the sector that combines artificial intelligence technology and game design, possess a set of distinct and captivating fundamental qualities and criteria. Firstly, intelligent games prioritize the disruption of the fixed characteristics of conventional games and promote dynamic engagement with players in real-time. Furthermore, intelligent games possess a remarkable ability to adapt and personalize themselves. They may dynamically modify the complexity and content of the game based on the player's behavior, skill level, and interests. This ensures that each player enjoys a distinctive and highly tailored gaming experience. Furthermore, intelligent games frequently employ sophisticated technologies like reinforcement learning to endow virtual characters with the capacity to learn and make decisions, hence enhancing the intelligence and complexity of the game's virtual world. Simultaneously, intelligent games necessitate the capacity to handle and examine extensive data sets in order to accomplish real-time surveillance and comprehension of player conduct, inclinations, and input. Intelligent games require advanced graphics processing and computational performance to enable seamless graphics and real-time execution of sophisticated algorithms. In summary, smart games possess key attributes such as instantaneous interactivity, adaptability, personalized engagement, and intelligent virtual settings. These games necessitate sophisticated technical assistance, data analysis, and high-performance computing to propel the gaming experience towards a more intelligent, immersive, and personalized future.

The regularly utilized environments and datasets in intelligent gaming encompass OpenAI Gym, Unity ML-Agents, ViZDoom, DeepMind Lab, CARLA, and the Atari 2600 Games Dataset. These platforms offer a variety of control tasks and simulation environments that are useful for conducting research and testing reinforcement learning and other artificial intelligence systems. OpenAI Gym offers diverse and immersive surroundings, Unity ML-Agents facilitates the creation of 3D virtual environments, ViZDoom provides visual and action spaces that are built upon the Doom engine, and DeepMind Lab encompasses a variety of tasks and scenarios. The CARLA platform is used for simulating autonomous driving, whereas the Atari 2600 Games Dataset is a well-known dataset in the field of reinforcement learning, serving as a standard for evaluating algorithm performance. As an example, Vladimir and his colleagues implemented the technique on seven Atari 2600 games within an arcade learning environment, without making any modifications to the structure or learning algorithms. It was discovered that it surpassed all prior techniques in six games and surpassed human specialists in three of them [6]. The extensive utilization of these technologies and datasets is a valuable asset for study in the domain of intelligent games.

Prior to selecting game environments and datasets, it is essential to carefully analyze the research objectives and ensure that the chosen environment is compatible with the study challenge. The environment should include sufficient intricacy and variety to assess the resilience of the algorithm in various circumstances. The dataset should encompass a diverse sample in order for the model to acquire knowledge of a broad spectrum of settings and activities. Furthermore, it is crucial to take into account the fidelity of the simulation environment, the computational resources needed, and the compatibility with pre-existing methods. Researchers can consider these criteria while choosing the game environment and dataset that aligns with their research objectives and resource limitations. This selection will enhance the efficacy of empirical research and algorithmic advancements.

4. Reinforcement Learning Algorithms in Intelligent Games

The fundamental concept of reinforcement learning in intelligent games relies on the interactive learning process between the intelligent agent and the environment, with the goal of maximizing the cumulative rewards through strategic actions taken in various game stages. The adaptive organism adapts its approach based on the reward signals received from the surroundings, and incrementally enhances its performance in the game by utilizing learning algorithms, such as Q-learning or deep reinforcement learning. Ultimately, it discovers the most effective decision-making strategy to achieve efficient learning and optimization of behaviors in intricate and fluctuating game environments.

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Upon analyzing the current state of computer game software development, it becomes evident that the utilization of human intelligence technology is quite prevalent. For instance, gamers have shown a strong preference for popular games such as King of Glory, Eat Chicken, and League of Legends [7]. AlphaGo defeating the Go champion through self-play, teaching AI versus human players in OpenAI's Dota 2 project, and the Unity ML-Agents toolbox to allow developers train intelligences to do specific jobs in games. These examples showcase the effective implementation of reinforcement learning in many game domains, spanning from board games to real-time strategy games. They offer groundbreaking methods for the autonomous acquisition of intelligence in gaming.

5. Conclusion

The research conducted in this paper reveals that reinforcement learning demonstrates significant promise and accomplishments in the domain of intelligent games. The triumph of AlphaGo, the real-time confrontation of OpenAI's Dota 2, and the development tools of Unity ML-Agents all exemplify the effective implementation of reinforcement learning algorithms in various gaming genres. This offers groundbreaking solutions for self-directed learning of artificial intelligences within gaming environments, hence creating new opportunities and potential for the advancement of intelligent games and artificial intelligence.

While this paper explores the fundamental ideas, methodologies, and instances of using reinforcement learning in intelligent games, it does acknowledge the existence of certain potential limitations. Future research will conduct a multi-disciplinary comparative study to further investigate the application of reinforcement learning in various game environments. The study will encompass different types of games, such as strategy games, role-playing games, and sports games, in order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of their dynamics. Furthermore, a comprehensive assessment and comparison of the efficacy of several reinforcement learning algorithms will be undertaken to ascertain the most successful algorithm for a certain game situation.

The future prospects of reinforcement learning in the domain of intelligent gaming involve attaining enhanced, versatile, and adaptable performance of game characters through training artificial intelligences to acquire knowledge from their surroundings and maximize their decision-making techniques. In the future, reinforcement learning is anticipated to be extensively utilized in game design. This will not only improve the customization and difficulty of the game experience, but also stimulate the advancement and growth of game technology, resulting in more engaging and immersive game experiences for players. This requires the utilization of advanced techniques such as deep reinforcement learning, transfer learning, and the seamless integration of other artificial intelligence technologies. The ultimate goal is to propel the game industry into a future characterized by enhanced intelligence and groundbreaking innovation.

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