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Introduction to Chapter 12 - Overview of Advanced Topics

As we venture into Chapter 12, our focus shifts towards some of the most exciting and advanced topics in machine learning, particularly emphasizing Reinforcement Learning (RL). This chapter aims to provide a scientific understanding as well as context and relevance through inspiring questions and relatable examples.

Introduction to Chapter 12 - What is Reinforcement Learning?

Reinforcement Learning is a type of machine learning inspired by behavioral psychology. It involves training an agent to make decisions based on feedback from its environment. Here are key concepts:

- **Agent**: The learner or decision-maker (e.g., a robot, a software program).
- Environment: Everything the agent interacts with (e.g., a game, a real-world scenario).
- Actions: Choices made by the agent that affect the environment (e.g., moving left, jumping, picking an item).
- Rewards: Signals indicating the success of an action (e.g., points earned, reaching a goal).
- State: The current situation of the agent in the environment (e.g., agent's position in a game).

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Introduction to Chapter 12 - Importance of Reinforcement Learning

- Real-World Applications:
 - Game Playing: RL has led to breakthroughs in game Al, such as AlphaGo, which defeated world champions in the game of Go.
 - Robotics: Training robots to navigate and interact within unpredictable environments.
 - Recommendation Systems: Personalizing content (like videos or ads) based on users' actions
- **Learning Paradigm:** Reinforcement Learning differs from supervised learning, focusing on learning from exploration and trial-and-error, making it powerful in dynamic environments where rules may not be explicitly defined.

Introduction to Chapter 12 - Engaging Example

Imagine teaching a dog to fetch a ball. Every time it successfully retrieves the ball, you give it a treat (reward). If it doesn't fetch (wrong action), it gets no treat. Over time, the dog learns to associate fetching the ball with getting a reward. This is the essence of RL—learning through interaction and feedback.

Introduction to Chapter 12 - Key Points to Emphasize

- **Exploration vs. Exploitation**: The agent must balance trying new actions (exploration) and leveraging known actions that yield high rewards (exploitation).
- Long vs. Short-Term Reward: Agents learn to maximize the cumulative reward over time, often requiring strategies that involve considering future impacts of their actions.

Introduction to Chapter 12 - Conclusion

As we dive deeper into reinforcement learning in the next slides, think about the implications of RL across various industries and its potential to solve complex problems. This chapter will inspire you to ponder questions like:

- How can RL transform everyday tasks?
- What ethical considerations arise when deploying RL in critical systems?

Together, we will explore these intriguing facets of reinforcement learning and its role in shaping the future of artificial intelligence!

What is Reinforcement Learning? - Part 1

Definition

Reinforcement Learning (RL) is a subset of Machine Learning (ML) where an agent learns to make decisions by interacting with its environment.

Key Differences

Unlike supervised learning, where the model learns from labeled data, in RL, the agent learns from the consequences of its actions, similar to how humans learn through trial and error.

Key Principles of Reinforcement Learning

- Agent: The decision-maker (e.g., a robot or game player).
- Environment: Everything the agent interacts with (e.g., a chess board).
- Actions: Moves available to the agent (e.g., move left or right).
- **Rewards**: Feedback received from environment actions (positive or negative).
- Policy: Strategy used by the agent to decide on actions.

Example and Key Points

Example

Teaching a pet to fetch:

- The pet (agent) retrieves the ball (action).
- Receives praise or treats (reward).
- Develops a fetching strategy (policy).
- Trial and Error Learning: The agent learns by experimenting and improving.
- Reward Structure: Critical for guiding learning; immediate vs delayed rewards influence strategies.
- **Exploration vs. Exploitation**: Balancing new actions with known successful actions is key.

What is Reinforcement Learning? - Part 4

Summary

Reinforcement Learning offers a powerful approach to decision-making, enabling agents to learn optimal behaviors through environmental interactions. Its principles underpin many Al innovations, from game-playing bots to robotics and autonomous vehicles, all leveraging rewards and adaptive strategies.

Key Terminology - Introduction to Key Concepts

In the realm of Reinforcement Learning (RL), understanding key terminology is crucial to grasp how agents interact with their environments. This foundational knowledge enables effective engagement with advanced topics later on.

Key Terminology - Agents and Environments

Agents

- Definition: An agent is an entity that makes decisions by interacting with an environment.
- **Example**: A robotic vacuum cleaner navigates around a room (environment) to clean effectively.

Environments

- **Definition**: The environment encompasses everything that the agent interacts with while performing tasks.
- **Example**: In a video game, the digital world including obstacles, rewards, and characters.

Key Terminology - Actions, Rewards, and Policies

3 Actions

- Definition: Actions are choices made by an agent to perform tasks within the environment.
- **Example**: For a chess-playing AI, possible actions include moving a pawn or capturing an opponent's piece.

4 Rewards

- **Definition**: Rewards are signals received from the environment that inform the agent about the success or failure of its actions.
- **Example**: Collecting coins in a video game as a reward for successfully navigating to a certain location.

5 Policies

- Definition: A policy is a strategy that dictates what actions an agent should take in different states.
- **Example**: A navigation app may have a deterministic policy to always choose the shortest route or a stochastic one based on traffic data.

The Learning Process - Overview

The learning process for agents in Reinforcement Learning (RL) involves:

- **Trial and Error**: A fundamental method of learning by interacting with the environment.
- Key components include:
 - Agents
 - Environment
 - Actions
 - Rewards

Key Concepts of Learning

- **Agents**: Entities that perceive their environment and act to maximize performance (e.g., a robot in a maze).
- **Environment**: Everything an agent interacts with, providing feedback (e.g., maze walls and exit points).
- **Actions**: Choices impacting the agent's state (e.g., moving, turning).
- **Rewards**: Signals from the environment based on actions, guiding behavior (e.g., positive reward for reaching the exit).

Example Scenario and Summary

Example Scenario: Imagine a dog learning to fetch a ball:

- The dog (agent) receives the ball (action) and navigates the yard (environment).
- Successful retrieval brings praise (positive reward); incorrect direction leads to no reward (negative outcome).

Key Points to Emphasize:

- **Exploration vs. Exploitation**: Balance between trying new actions and using known rewarding actions.
- **Feedback Loop**: Continuous improvement based on environmental feedback.
- **Self-Improvement**: Learning without pre-labeled data in an uncertain world.

Difference from Supervised and Unsupervised Learning - Overview

Clear Explanations of Concepts

- **Supervised Learning:**
 - **Definition**: Trained using labeled data where input and correct output are paired.
 - **Example:** Teaching a child to recognize fruits through labeled pictures.
- Unsupervised Learning:
 - **Definition:** Involves data without explicit labels, focusing on finding patterns.
 - **Example:** A child grouping fruits by similarity without knowing their names.
- 3 Reinforcement Learning:
 - **Definition:** Learning through interactions with an environment, receiving rewards or penalties.
 - **Example:** Training a pet with rewards and penalties based on behavior.

Difference from Supervised and Unsupervised Learning - Key Points

Key Points to Emphasize

■ Data Requirement:

- Supervised Learning: Needs labeled data.
- Unsupervised Learning: Works with unlabeled data.
- Reinforcement Learning: Operates through trial and error.

Feedback Mechanism:

- Supervised Learning: Direct feedback on predictions.
- Unsupervised Learning: No feedback; discovers patterns independently.
- Reinforcement Learning: Feedback via rewards and penalties.

Applications:

- Supervised Learning: Classification tasks such as spam detection.
- Unsupervised Learning: Clustering tasks like market segmentation.
- Reinforcement Learning: Applications in gaming and robotics.

Summary Comparison Table

Learning Type	Feedback	Data Type	Goal
Supervised Learning	Direct feedback	Labeled data	Predict outcomes
Unsupervised Learning	No feedback	Unlabeled data	Discover patterns
Reinforcement Learning	Reward/Punishment	Interaction-based	Maximize reward over time

Engagement Questions

Discussion Points

- Can you think of a real-world situation where reinforcement learning might be more beneficial than supervised or unsupervised learning?
- How might a child learn differently from a supervised versus an unsupervised setup? What are the implications for designing learning systems in technology?

Types of Reinforcement Learning

Overview

Reinforcement Learning (RL) allows an agent to learn decision-making through interaction with an environment, aiming to maximize cumulative rewards.

Types of Reinforcement Learning - Model-Free vs Model-Based

Model-Free RL:

- Learns directly from experiences, no explicit model of the environment.
- Key Characteristics:
 - Trial and Error Learning.
 - No Environment Prediction.
- Common Algorithms:
 - Q-Learning
 - Deep Q-Networks (DQN)

Model-Based RL:

- Constructs a model of the environment to predict outcomes and refine policies.
- Key Characteristics:
 - Environment Simulation.
 - Planning Capability.
- Common Algorithms:
 - Dyna-Q
 - Monte Carlo Tree Search (MCTS)

Examples and Key Points

Examples

Model-Free Example: A robot learns to navigate a maze through trial and error.

Model-Based Example: An Al agent playing chess simulating future moves before deciding.

Key Points

- Exploration vs Exploitation in model-free approaches.
- Efficiency of model-based methods in learning environments.
- Applications in fields such as robotics and game Al.

Engaging Question: What challenges do you think an agent faces in unpredictable environments using these RL approaches?

Applications of Reinforcement Learning - Introduction

What is Reinforcement Learning?

Reinforcement Learning (RL) is a powerful framework for solving complex problems by leveraging the interaction of agents with environments. It allows agents to learn by taking actions, receiving feedback in the form of rewards or penalties, and adjusting strategies to maximize cumulative rewards.

Key Takeaway

RL has made significant strides and found versatile applications across various fields, including robotics, gaming, and finance.

Applications of Reinforcement Learning - Real-World Examples

Robotics

- Example: Robot Navigation
 - RL enables robots to autonomously navigate complex environments.
 - A robotic vacuum learns efficient cleaning paths through exploration and rewards associated with cleaning time.
- Key Points
 - Enhances adaptability and learning from experience.

2 Gaming

- Example: Atari Games
 - Algorithms like Deep Q-Networks (DQN) achieve success in classic Atari games by maximizing scores from raw pixel inputs.
 - In Breakout, the RL agent learns to control the paddle through past experiences.
- Key Points
 - Achieves superhuman performance without prior knowledge.

3 Finance

- Example: Algorithmic Trading
 - RL is applied in trading strategies, allowing agents to maximize returns while minimizing losses.

Benefits and Summary of Reinforcement Learning

Potential Benefits of Reinforcement Learning

- Autonomous Learning: Reduces need for human guidance.
- Flexibility: Effective in unpredictable environments with undefined rules.
- Performance Optimization: Capable of discovering superior strategies compared to traditional methods.

Conclusion

Reinforcement Learning is transforming industries through smarter systems, with applications in robotics, gaming, and finance that illustrate its potential for innovation and addressing complex challenges.

Questions for Discussion

- What other domains could benefit from RL applications? - How can we ensure the ethical use

Challenges in Reinforcement Learning

This slide discusses key challenges such as exploration vs. exploitation, reward shaping, and scalability.

1. Exploration vs. Exploitation

Concept Explanation

In Reinforcement Learning (RL), an agent must balance between:

- **Exploration**: Trying new actions to discover their effects.
- **Exploitation**: Leveraging known actions that yield the highest rewards.

Example

- **Exploration**: An agent in a game might try unexpected strategies. - **Exploitation**: Repeating a known effective shortcut once discovered.

Key Points

- Balancing exploration and exploitation is crucial for optimizing learning.
- \blacksquare Techniques such as ϵ -greedy are widely used to manage this balance.

2. Reward Shaping

Concept Explanation

Reward shaping modifies the reward signal to make it more informative for the agent, facilitating faster learning.

Example

- Incremental rewards can be given for each step taken towards a goal, rather than just at completion.

Key Points

- Properly designed reward functions can enhance learning efficiency.
- Care must be taken to avoid unintended behaviors stemming from poorly considered rewards.

3. Scalability

Concept Explanation

As environmental complexity increases, challenges in RL can scale dramatically.

Example

- An agent trained in a simple grid-world might struggle in a complex urban environment.

Key Points

- Techniques like function approximation and hierarchical reinforcement learning can help.
- Algorithms must be designed to manage complexity without losing learning benefits.

Summary and Discussion

Summary

Reinforcement Learning faces challenges such as:

- Exploration vs. Exploitation
- Reward Shaping
- Scalability

Navigating these challenges requires innovative strategies and a deep understanding.

Discussion Questions

- I How might changing the reward structure impact the learning process in real-world applications?
- What strategies could you propose to handle the exploration-exploitation trade-off in a dynamic environment?

Deep Reinforcement Learning

Definition

Deep Reinforcement Learning (DRL) integrates deep learning techniques with reinforcement learning (RL) to manage high-dimensional state and action spaces effectively.

Understanding Deep Reinforcement Learning

- Reinforcement Learning (RL): A paradigm where an agent learns decisions through interactions with the environment, receiving feedback as rewards or penalties.
- Deep Learning: A subset of machine learning that utilizes neural networks with multiple layers to learn complex data representations.

Why Combine Deep Learning with RL?

- Complex Environments: DRL effectively tackles high-dimensional state/action spaces seen in scenarios like video games and robotics.
- Feature Extraction: Deep learning automates the feature extraction process, aiding RL agents in understanding their environments better.

Examples of DRL in Action

- Atari Games: Algorithms such as DQN train agents using pixel data to maximize game scores via CNNs.
- Robotics: Used in tasks like navigation and manipulation, where robots learn by trial and error to complete complex actions.

Key Components of DRL

- Agent: Learner or decision-maker.
- **Environment:** The context in which the agent operates.
- Reward Signal: Feedback for actions taken, aiming to maximize cumulative reward.
- **Policy**: Strategy to determine actions based on the current state.
- Value Function: Estimates expected return from a state or state-action pair.

Example Architecture: DQN

Deep Q-Network (DQN)

A DRL architecture combining Q-learning with deep neural networks.

- Q-Learning Simplified: The agent estimates action values at different states.
- Key Update Equation:

$$Q(s,a) \leftarrow Q(s,a) + \alpha \left[r + \gamma \max Q(s',a') - Q(s,a) \right]$$
 (1)

■ Neural Network Role: Estimates Q(s, a) from the visual input of the state, approximating action quality without complete state-action space knowledge.

Engaging Questions for Exploration

- How might DRL impact industries beyond gaming, such as healthcare or finance?
- What ethical considerations emerge with the application of DRL to real-world problems?
- How can we enhance DRL algorithms to be more efficient and less data-dependent?

Key Takeaways

- DRL combines deep learning's feature extraction abilities with the goal of maximizing rewards in RL.
- It is effective in complex decision-making tasks where traditional methods may fail.
- Exploring DRL can lead to advancements in fields such as robotics, gaming, and autonomous systems.

Case Study: AlphaGo

Introduction to AlphaGo

AlphaGo is an Al program developed by DeepMind. It gained fame in 2016 after defeating top Go player Lee Sedol. The complexity of Go, with about 10^{170} possible moves, makes it a significant challenge for Al.

Key Concepts in AlphaGo

- Reinforcement Learning:
 - Definition: Al learns to achieve goals by taking actions and receiving rewards.
 - AlphaGo's usage: It optimizes decision-making through trial and error to learn winning moves.
- Deep Learning:
 - Definition: Utilizes deep neural networks to interpret data.
 - Integration: Combines with reinforcement learning for move evaluation and prediction.

How AlphaGo Works

Training Process:

- Self-Play: Played thousands of games against itself, enhancing strategies over time.
- Supervised Learning: Initially trained on historical games from skilled players.

Move Selection:

- Policy Network: Predicts winning probabilities for each possible move.
- Value Network: Assesses winning likelihood from different board positions.

Key Points and Insights

Key Points

- The Game of Go demands strategic foresight and tactical thinking.
- AlphaGo symbolizes a groundbreaking achievement in Al, showcasing the synergy of learning techniques.
- Its methods offer potential applications in fields like healthcare, finance, and robotics.

Additional Insights

- Ethical Considerations: The rise of Al raises discussions on its ethical usage.
- Future Applications: AlphaGo's architecture can tackle complex real-world issues beyond gaming.

Evaluating Reinforcement Learning Models - Introduction

- Evaluating RL model performance is crucial for real-world applications.
- Differences from traditional supervised learning:
 - RL requires a nuanced approach.
 - Performance assessment involves sequential decision-making and delayed rewards.

Evaluating Reinforcement Learning Models - Key Evaluation Methods

- Reward Metrics
 - Total Reward: Sum of all rewards in an episode.
 - Average Reward: Total reward divided by the number of episodes.
- Discounted Reward
 - Future rewards are discounted using a factor γ .

$$R_t = r_t + \gamma r_{t+1} + \gamma^2 r_{t+2} + \dots$$
 (2)

- Success Rate
 - Percentage of episodes achieving a predefined goal.
- Learning Efficiency
 - Measured by cumulative reward and improvement over time.

Evaluating Reinforcement Learning Models - Example Application

AlphaGo Example

- Evaluation focused on win rates against human champions.
- Key metrics used:
 - Win rate in matches.
 - Average score per game.
 - Learning curve visualization.

Evaluating Reinforcement Learning Models - Conclusion

- Importance of diverse metrics for capturing effectiveness.
- Emphasis on dynamic evaluation over time.
- Consideration of contextual relevance and benchmarking against baselines.

Future Directions in Reinforcement Learning

Overview

Reinforcement learning (RL) is evolving rapidly, presenting exciting avenues for research and innovation.

Key Trends and Areas for Future Research - Part 1

- Integration with Neural Architectures
 - New architectures like Transformers and U-Nets adapted for RL.
 - Example: Enhancing sequence prediction in robotics and finance.
- Multi-Agent Reinforcement Learning (MARL)
 - Focus on environments with multiple interacting agents.
 - Example: Autonomous vehicles coordinating for traffic efficiency.
- 3 Imitation Learning and Transfer Learning
 - Leveraging human or agent knowledge for efficiency.
 - Example: Robots learning navigation from human demonstrations.

Key Trends and Areas for Future Research - Part 2

- Safe and Ethical Al
 - Developing RL systems with safety and ethics in decision-making.
 - Example: Adhering to ethical guidelines in medical decisions.
- **5** Explainable Reinforcement Learning (XRL)
 - Understanding decision-making in complex RL systems.
 - Example: Mechanisms to interpret RL agent's actions.
- 6 Plug-and-Play RL
 - Modular components for easy integration in diverse industries.
 - Example: Adaptable RL algorithms for energy management.

Future Directions: Engaging Thoughts

Key Points to Emphasize

- Interdisciplinary Collaboration: Between fields like neuroscience, economics, and robotics.
- Customization and Personalization: Tailored RL applications for user needs.
- Sustainability Focus: Addressing global challenges with RL strategies.

Thought Questions

- How can RL transform industries outside of traditional tech sectors?
- In what ways can we ensure the future of RL is both beneficial and ethical?

Summary of Key Points - Part 1

1. What is Reinforcement Learning?

- **Definition**: A type of machine learning where an agent learns to make decisions by taking actions in an environment to maximize cumulative rewards.
- Key Concepts:
 - Agent: The learner or decision-maker.
 - **Environment**: The context or system within which the agent operates.
 - **Actions**: Choices made by the agent that affect the state of the environment.
 - **Rewards**: Feedback from the environment representing the success of actions taken.

2. Core Components of RL

- State: The current situation of the agent in the environment.
- Policy: A strategy for determining the action to take in a given state.
- Value Function: A prediction of future rewards to evaluate favorable states.

Summary of Key Points - Part 2

3. Learning Paradigms

- Model-Free vs. Model-Based:
 - Model-Free Learning: Learns from rewards without a model. E.g., Q-Learning, SARSA.
 - Model-Based Learning: Builds a model of the environment for decision-making. E.g., dynamic programming.

4. Exploration vs. Exploitation

- Trade-Off: Balancing exploration of new actions and exploiting known rewarding actions.
- **Example**: Choosing between trying a new strategy or repeating a successful one.

Summary of Key Points - Part 3

5. Applications of Reinforcement Learning

- Gaming: Al models like AlphaGo.
- Robotics: Teaching robots through trial and error.
- Healthcare: Personalizing treatment plans based on patient responses.

6. Future Directions

- Integrating with Neural Networks: Using deep learning to handle complex data.
- Transfer Learning: Adapting knowledge across domains.
- Multi-Agent Systems: Cooperation among multiple agents for complex tasks.

Key Takeaways

■ RL is about learning from interaction to maximize rewards.

Discussion Questions - Overview

Exploring the Potential and Ethical Considerations of Reinforcement Learning (RL)

Reinforcement Learning (RL) is a powerful tool within artificial intelligence, but its applications and implications raise important discussions. Here are engaging questions designed to prompt thoughtful conversations:

Potential Applications of RL

Impactful Industries:

- In what industries do you think reinforcement learning could have the most significant impact, and why?
- **Example:** Think about healthcare: RL can optimize treatment plans for patients by recommending personalized medication schedules based on trial and error outcomes.

2 Enhancing User Experiences:

- How can reinforcement learning enhance user experiences in everyday technologies, such as mobile applications or smart home devices?
- **Example:** Consider how an RL-powered virtual assistant could learn a user's preferences over time, providing increasingly relevant suggestions.

Ethical Considerations and Societal Implications

Ethical Dilemmas:

- What ethical dilemmas might arise from using reinforcement learning in decision-making processes, such as autonomous vehicles?
- **Example:** Discuss scenarios where an autonomous vehicle must make choices that could harm individuals, raising questions about how to program moral values into machines.

Bias in Training Data:

- How could biases in training data affect the outcomes produced by RL systems?
- **Example:** If an RL algorithm learns from data that reflects societal biases (like hiring data favoring a particular demographic), it might perpetuate discrimination.

3 Long-term Societal Impacts:

- What are the potential long-term societal impacts if RL becomes widely implemented in fields like surveillance or law enforcement?
- Example: Discuss the balance between security and privacy and consider how RL algorithms could be used to monitor citizens.

4 Ensuring Accountability:

■ How do we ensure accountability for decisions made by RL systems, especially in critical

Additional Resources - Introduction

Overview

Reinforcement Learning (RL) is a dynamic area of machine learning focused on how agents ought to take actions in an environment to maximize cumulative reward. To deepen your understanding of RL, we recommend various resources, including:

- Books
- Online Courses
- Research Papers
- Online Communities

Additional Resources - Recommended Books

- "Reinforcement Learning: An Introduction" by Richard S. Sutton and Andrew G. Barto
 - Overview: Foundational text explaining RL principles and methods.
 - Key Points: Markov Decision Processes (MDPs), policy gradients, and value functions.
- "Deep Reinforcement Learning Hands-On" by Maxim Lapan
 - **Overview**: Practical guide incorporating deep learning into RL with hands-on projects.
 - **Key Points**: Implementing deep Q-networks and policy-based methods.

Additional Resources - Online Courses and Research Papers

Online Courses

- Coursera: "Reinforcement Learning Specialization" by the University of Alberta
- 2 edX: "Practical Deep Learning for Coders" by Fast.ai

Research Papers

- 1 "Playing Atari with Deep Reinforcement Learning" by Mnih et al. (2013)
- "Mastering Chess and Shogi by Self-Play with a General Reinforcement Learning Algorithm" by Silver et al. (2018)

Additional Resources - Online Communities and Key Points

Online Communities and Platforms

- OpenAl Gym: Toolkit for developing and comparing RL algorithms. Website: https://gym.openai.com/
- Kaggle: Platform for data science competitions, providing datasets and collaborative tools. *Website*: https://www.kaggle.com/

Key Points to Emphasize

- Diverse Learning Pathways
- Practical Application
- Community Engagement

Q&A Session - Introduction

Description

Open floor for any questions about the concepts discussed in this chapter. This session is designed to clarify any uncertainties and deepen understanding of the advanced topics discussed.

Q&A Session - Key Topics

- Advanced Reinforcement Learning Strategies
 - Techniques to improve learning efficiency and performance
 - Examples: transfer learning, meta-learning, multi-agent systems
- Neural Network Architectures
 - Recent developments: Transformers, U-Nets, Diffusion Models
 - Differences from traditional neural networks
- 3 Applications of Advanced Topics
 - **Healthcare**: Predictive analytics in patient diagnosis
 - Autonomous Vehicles: RL for navigation and decision-making
 - Natural Language Processing: Improved language translation and understanding with Transformers

Q&A Session - Engagement Questions

- What aspects of reinforcement learning do you find most intriguing, and why?
- Can anyone share examples of where you've seen advanced neural network models in action?
- What challenges do you anticipate in applying these advanced techniques in real-world scenarios?

Q&A Session - Encouraging Reflection

Considerations for Questions

- How can we apply the theoretical aspects learned in this chapter to practical problems? - In what ways do you think advancements in neural network architectures can impact future technological development?

Final Thoughts

Don't hesitate to raise any topic for discussion! This session will help build a clear understanding of advanced topics.