Yicheng Duan

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Education

Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH

Aug. 2024 – Present

Master of Science in Computer Science. Current GPA: 4.0/4.0; Thesis direction: Embodied AI, VLA, VLN.

Coursework including: Machine Learning, Data Mining, Computer Vision, Machine Learning on Graph, Deep Generative Model.

University of Washington, Seattle, WA

Sep. 2015 – Mar. 2020

Bachelor of Science in Applied Physics

Working Experience

VULab CWRU, Cleveland

May 2025 - Present

Research Assistant

As the most junior member on the team, presented research findings on Vision-Language-Action (VLA) models at 10+ internal research meetings, leading to new insights and identified 4+ potential areas for future research.

ZHIPU.AI, Beijing

May 2021 – Aug. 2024

Algorithm engineer, Part-time

- Developed models that enable metric-based document discovery and semantics-enhanced retrieval methods. These models were validated on millions of data entries and developed using Python, NumPy, the Neo4j Graph database, and MongoDB.
- Implemented plugins and Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG) pipelines with the company's Large Language Model (GLM) for 3+ B2B solutions, including LLM-enhanced retrieval, text-to-video, and image-to-video generation.
- Nominated for 5+ patents focused on big data classification and identification, NLP, and GNN-related methods.
- Built and refactored a web application backend with optimized methods for executing asynchronous calculation tasks.
- Managed the terabyte-scale databases, including MongoDB to Elasticsearch migration and database migration to Alibaba Cloud. Deployed and maintained local cluster CPU/GPU/containers monitoring using Grafana.
- Implemented in-memory relational storage using Redis bitmaps and data stream processing using RabbitMO. Designed and proposed a microservices architecture, boosting online system performance by 7x.
- Led and mentored a team of 4 interns, driving consistent performance and fostering strong cross-functional collaboration with the data department.

Founder Securities Co., Ltd., Beijing

Sep. 2020 – Dec. 2020

Quantitative analyst intern

Developed quantitative trading strategies in Python, including a multi-factor model based on research reports and a statistical model targeting on northbound Hong Kong capital flows affecting the mainland A-share market.

Personal Project Experience

An Agentic Navigation Framework Utilizing Vision-Language Models, Cleveland

Jan. 2025 – May 2025

Designed and implemented a Vision-Language-based navigation agent leveraging Qwen 2.5-VL (7B) as a cognitive "main brain" with structured memory and reflective reasoning. Engineered custom system + user prompting strategies to enable contextual planning and semantic understanding for embodied tasks. Integrated and evaluated the framework within Habitat-Lab and Room-to-Room (R2R) environments, demonstrating improved instruction following and environment grounding. https://arxiv.org/abs/2506.10172

Enhancing Video Retravel Using VLM, Cleveland

Oct. 2024 - Dec. 2024

Designed and developed a scalable backend and database layer for an application focused on retrieving relevant videos based on video or image input. Responsibilities include engineering on VLM model Qwen 2-VL (7b), retrieval method, and Vector DB integration. Used Transformer, Neo4j, and Pinecone, etc. for implementation. https://arxiv.org/abs/2503.17415

Low-Rank Adaptation Defense with Robustness, Cleveland

Oct. 2024 - Dec. 2024

Developed and evaluated a LoRA-based defense pipeline for a ResNet-18 model to counter Feature Importance Attacks (FIA). Achieved a best validation adversarial accuracy of 98.60% within only 2 epochs, demonstrating rapid model robustness improvement. Used Pytorch for implementation.

Skills

Programming Languages: Python, Linux Bash. ML Frameworks: Transformer, Pytorch, Numpy, Scikit-learn. Database Management Systems: MongoDB, Elasticsearch, Kibana, Neo4j, Pinecone, PostgreSQL, Redis.

Message Queues: RabbitMQ, Kafka. Container: Docker, Grafana.

Accomplishments

Patents May 2021 - Present

Document fining methods in large corpus: CN 114510584 B CN 114969251 A CN 115471483 A; Topic crusting: CN 116644338 B

CN 116561605 B; Information Retrieval: CN 117216417 B; Generating training patterns: CN 118277794 A;