Article

Dynamic Coordination and Decentralization: Advancing Multi-Agent Systems with Publish-Subscribe Architectures

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**Abstract:** This article delves into the deployment of Multi-Agent Systems (MAS) within the realm of distributed computing. It capitalizes on the flexibility afforded by the publish-subscribe architecture and employs the holonic agent structure to adeptly model complex systems. The study introduces a framework utilizing this architecture to address the critical challenges of message overhead and load balancing—key to the reliability of expansive systems. Drawing inspiration from the decentralized systems that underpin cryptocurrency technologies, it seeks to promote independent and scalable interactions among agents. The MAS framework is enriched by principles of Microservices and Distributed Ledger Technology, emphasizing durable and efficient operations for intricate tasks. The article lays out the foundational design phase and sets the stage for subsequent experiments aimed at enhancing communication and operational efficacy within the system.

**Keywords:** Multi-Agent Systems, Distributed Artificial Intelligence, Publish-Subscribe Architecture, Decentralized Computing

1. Introduction

Advancements in artificial intelligence and computing hardware have spurred the widespread adoption of deep learning networks across both cloud and edge computing landscapes. This evolution paves the way for the integration of distributed intelligent nodes into unified services. At the heart of this integration lies Multi-Agent Systems (MAS), a pivotal element of Distributed Artificial Intelligence (DAI), which leverages autonomous agents that are loosely coupled to achieve common goals. This paper presents a practical framework designed for distributed computing environments, capitalizing on the widely used publish-subscribe communication architecture in MAS. Moreover, we demonstrate a successful implementation of this framework within MAS, highlighting its effectiveness in fostering collaborative endeavors among distributed intelligent agents.

Thanks to its parallel computation capabilities, robustness, scalability, cost-effectiveness, and reusability, MAS technology is particularly well-suited for large-scale systems. Within the realm of agent organization architecture, a holonic agent organization, characterized by its recursive structure, facilitates the modeling of complex systems with ease. While the publish-subscribe architecture enhances MAS's flexibility, it also introduces significant challenges, especially regarding message overhead and load balancing. To ensure system reliability, these challenges necessitate a sophisticated design strategy, possibly incorporating message compression, Quality of Service (QoS) adjustments, and consensus algorithms.

Message overhead is a common issue in scenarios involving one-to-many communications, where a single agent communicates with multiple client agents. This often results in server agents broadcasting responses using a common topic, forcing client agents to sift through messages irrelevant to their needs, thereby generating unnecessary message traffic. Furthermore, load balancing poses a challenge in many-to-one scenarios, such as when determining the executing agent within a cluster to optimize response efficiency and fault tolerance. We aim to tackle these challenges through a dynamic decentralized approach at the framework level.

Microservices can significantly refine MAS technology by offering a more adaptable and scalable architecture that is in harmony with both holonic and publish-subscribe models. By breaking down complex systems into smaller, independently deployable services, microservices mitigate message overhead and facilitate load balancing via distributed processing. This modular approach not only enhances system robustness but also allows for the dynamic scaling of individual components, streamlining resource management. Additionally, microservices support various communication patterns and service discovery mechanisms, promoting more effective and reliable system interactions. This architecture inherently addresses MAS's design challenges, presenting solutions to its fundamental issues.

Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT), the backbone of cryptocurrencies, markedly enhances decentralized mechanisms within Multi-Agent Systems by promoting autonomy, scalability, and secure, transparent transactions without the need for centralized control. By adopting decentralized consensus principles integral to DLT, MAS can realize autonomous decision-making and seamless adaptation, boosting the system's resilience to failures and enhancing efficiency and privacy. DLT's capabilities for immutable record-keeping and distributed consensus algorithms not only reduce communication overhead but also facilitate local data processing, further strengthening system resilience and streamlining operations. Thus, the integration of DLT into MAS marks a strategic advancement toward achieving dynamic coordination, secure interactions, and efficient decentralized operations.

Our initial approach involves developing a Multi-Agent Systems model based on the Holonic Agent concept, incorporating Microservices and Distributed Ledger Technology to tackle specific communication dynamics. For one-to-many communication challenges, we will employ a Microservices architecture to improve scalability and manageability, facilitating efficient message distribution and processing to multiple clients. Conversely, DLT will address the challenges associated with many-to-one communications, ensuring secure, transparent, and consensus-driven interactions among a multitude of agents converging at a single juncture.

During the design phase, we will delve into class diagrams, sequence diagrams, and algorithms, integrating these technologies. Our experiments aim to explore the reduction of message overhead and the enhancement of load balancing capabilities, with a particular emphasis on exploiting Microservices for flexibility and DLT for secure aggregation. Ultimately, the integration of these solutions is crucial for validating the framework's ability to proficiently manage many-to-many communications, striving for precise and efficient responses within a decentralized, clustered agent service group in the MAS model.

The thesis is structured to methodically explore the integration of Multi-Agent Systems in distributed computing, beginning with an Introduction that sets the stage by outlining the research problem, objectives, and theoretical foundation. The Design section details the development of a MAS model, emphasizing the publish-subscribe architecture and holonic agent organization. In the Experiment section, we conduct rigorous testing to assess system performance, specifically focusing on message overhead and load balancing. The Discussion delves into the analysis of experimental outcomes, implications, and the challenges encountered. Finally, the Conclusion summarizes the study's findings, contributions, and potential directions for future research.

2. Design

The design chapter of our study delves into the sophisticated integration of Multi-Agent Systems (MAS) within distributed computing, revealing our architectural blueprint. Centered on the pivotal challenges of message overhead and load balancing, we present a multifaceted strategy that harnesses the adaptability and efficiency of Microservices architecture alongside the secure, consensus-based capabilities of Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT). Our approach is practical, designed to connect the theoretical groundwork laid in the introduction with actionable design and implementation strategies.

We explore the structure and dynamics of our proposed framework in detail, using class diagrams, sequence diagrams, and algorithms. These elements form the core of our system, depicting the complex interrelations and interactions among components and operationalizing our strategies for effective message distribution and load management. Through focused experimentation, we seek to concretely assess the design's effectiveness, particularly its ability to reduce message overhead and enhance load balancing.

2.1. Holonic Structures in Multi-Agents System

MASs can be used to solve specific problems involving computational entities [21]-[23]. In a MAS, each computational entity is referred to as an agent. A MAS is defined as a network of agents in which the agents communicate with each other and share resources to solve higher-order problems that are beyond the capacity of a single agent. MASs have numerous organizational structures [2], with holonic MAS being suitable for designing complex AI systems [24].

A holon is a stable and coherent structure that can be sub-structured by multiple holons as part of a larger framework. The concept of a holon was initially used to explain the social behavior of biological species [25]. However, the hierarchical structure of the holon and its interactions have been used to model the behavior of large-scale organizations in the manufacturing and commercial sectors [26-28]. In a MAS, an agent that appears to be a single entity may also be composed of numerous subagents.

Each holon has a head agent that can communicate with the environment or other agents, and this head agent has numerous resources and communication capabilities. In inhomogeneous MASs, the selection of head agents may be random, as illustrated by the rotation strategy used in distributed wireless sensor networks (WSNs) [29]. However, in a heterogeneous architecture, the agent capabilities determine such selection. Some holons can be further combined to form superholons depending on the requirements. Fig. 1 depicts a superholon composed of three holons. Agents H-21 and H-31 are head agents responsible for contacting agent H-1, and H-4 is an atomic agent with no subagents.



**Fig. 1 Example of a Holonic MAS**

2.2. Foundational design

The holonic MAS architecture, with its recursively continuous structure reminiscent of physiological systems, serves as an effective model for simulating biological tissues accurately. This study utilizes the holonic MAS approach to construct the structural blueprint for complex, intelligent agents, resulting in a design that adeptly incorporates a range of perceptions and actions. The emergent HolonicAgent is presented as a class diagram in Fig 2, illustrating the sophisticated integration achieved by this method.

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**Fig. 2 HolonicAgent Diagram**

Within the ambit of this research, the Publish-Subscribe paradigm—a communication concept with extensive application—is encapsulated within the abstract MessageBroker class to afford maximal flexibility. This class delineates fundamental operations such as start, stop, publish, and subscribe. It is instantiated through specific implementations such as MQTT\_Broker, DDS\_Broker, and ROS\_Broker, each tailored to meet the distinct demands of various scenarios, ranging from bandwidth-constrained environments to real-time data delivery and robotic software. This modular approach endorses a high-level abstraction and the interchangeability of messaging systems in software architecture, as encapsulated in the class diagram of Fig. 3.

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**Fig. 3 Message Broker Implementation Diagram**

To obviate the complexity within the HolonicAgent whilst enabling Publish-Subscribe communication, the BrokerNotifier interface is employed as an intermediary conduit for interactions with a specified MessageBroker. As depicted in Fig. 4, this configuration empowers agents to manage messages and connections via BrokerNotifier, which advances loose coupling and augments the modularity of the system. Consequently, the agent maintains its agility and manageability, devoid of the intricacies inherent in the foundational message brokering mechanisms.

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**Fig. 4 Message Broker Interfaces and Agent Relationship Diagram**

Building upon these foundational designs, the subsequent phase will address the challenges associated with advanced communication patterns.

2.2. Tackling One-to-Many Communication Challenges

In the context of One-to-Many Communication, a significant challenge lies in ensuring that the Service Agent can relay outcomes to the requesting Client Agent without escalating network load, crucially delivering information to a singular recipient. Moreover, an ambition exists to abstract this logic, enabling all agents to adopt the One-to-Many Communication framework without necessitating redesign. To this end, we have developed a Logistic object, conceptualized as a "logistics provider" for message transportation. This object proficiently aids agents in fulfilling the requisites of One-to-Many Communication, ensuring precise delivery with minimal network burden.

Fig. 5 illustrates the basic application of the Logistic mechanism, which translates the outgoing information from Agent A, encompassing both topic and data, according to its logic requirements. Subsequently, as depicted in Fig. 6, a Request Logistic component packages the outgoing information with identification details of the client agent—Agent A—including an agent ID. Moreover, Fig. 7 showcases the use of a Response Logistic to encapsulate the service agent’s—Agent B—response. This is done by incorporating the requesting side’s identifier within the topic part, achieving the goal of direct responses to the client agent.

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**Fig. 5 Basic Logistic Translation Mechanism**

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**Fig. 6 Request Logistic Process**

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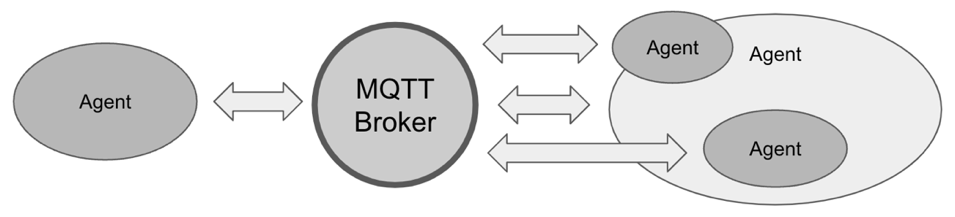
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**Fig. 7 Response Logistic Process**

In detail, the Request Logistic and Response Logistic demonstrate a degree of interdependence, functioning in tandem to encapsulate topics and data into mutually intelligible formats. The client agent employs the Request Logistic while the service agent utilizes the Response Logistic. The implementation of data encapsulation is managed by the Payload Wrapper, which accommodates both binary and textual data types. Figure 8 represents the operational flow of this One-to-Many Communication via a sequence diagram.

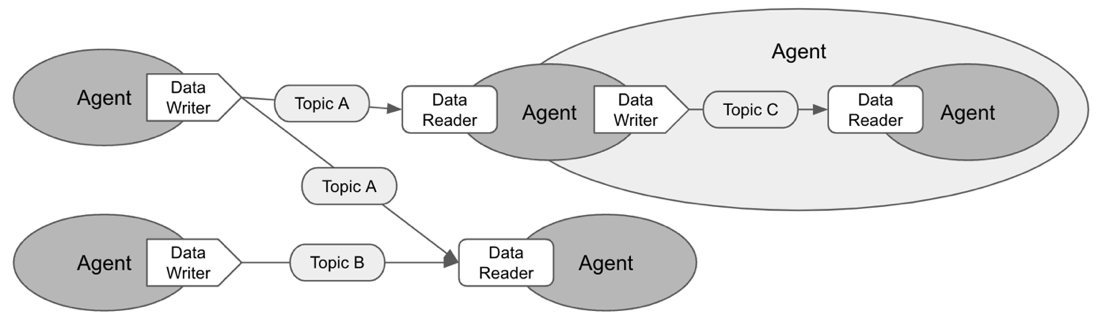
2.3. Strategies for Many-to-One Communication Efficiency

Because of the lightweight nature of MQTT, all agents are designed as MQTT clients without burdening the whole system. Thus, all the agents in the system can gracefully obtain the system status, which is advantageous for overall control. Fig. 4 depicts the scenario of agent and MQTT integration.



**Fig. 4 Agent and MQTT Integration Scenario**

Agents publish or subscribe to related topics as required. Head agents often serve as message receivers and communicate with other agents within the same super-agent by using the same mechanism. Fig. 5 depicts the scenario of agent and DDS integration.

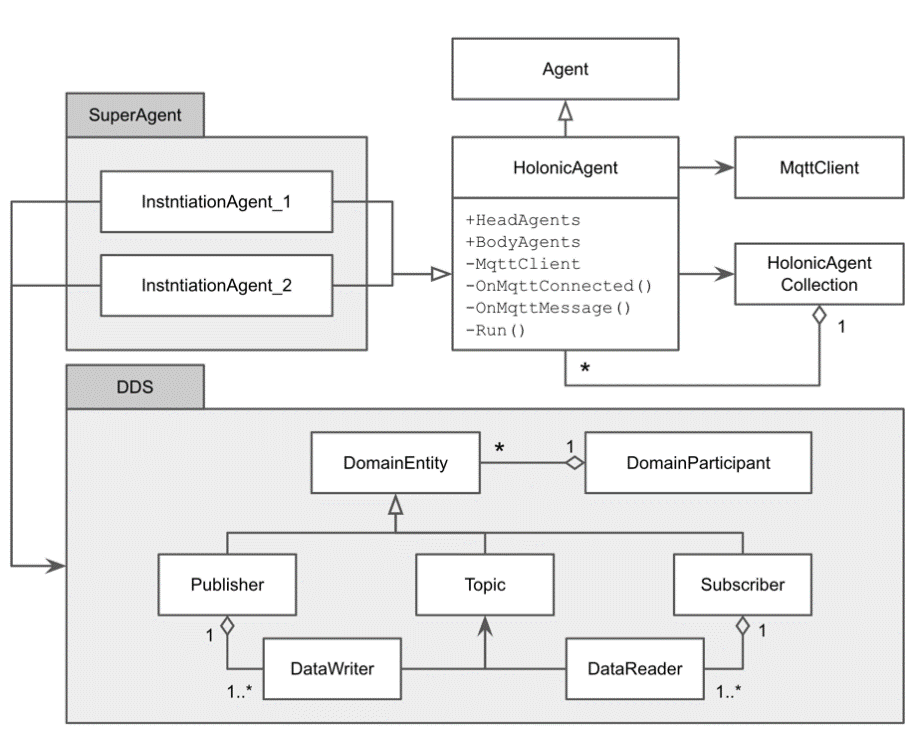


**Fig. 5 Agent and DDS Integration Scenario**

2.4. Integration Strategies for Many-to-Many Communications

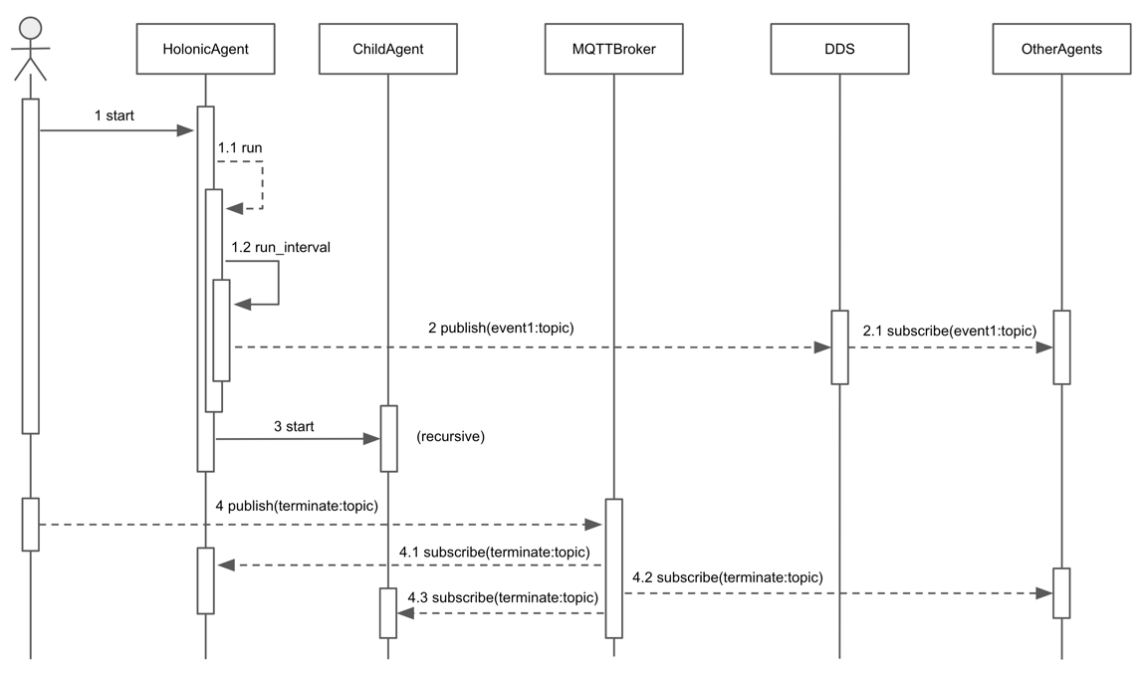
Fig. 6 depicts the class diagram of the integration of agents and coordination. HolonicAgent represents the core, and HeadAgents and BodyAgents represent the collection of head agents and subagents, respectively. MQTT is the fundamental communication protocol for agents in the global circulation system, and MqttClient is a private member of HolonicAgent, which allows the agent to have built-in MQTT connection and reception capabilities.

All agents inherit from HolonicAgent to form a hierarchical structure, and they use the DDS to achieve neural message transmission depending on their specific behavior. Each super-agent is a DDS domain that publishes or subscribes to related topics with the required QoS, such as the DEADLINE policy to confirm the date of the data or the TRANSPORT\_PRIORITY policy to define the transmission priority order [20], in order to achieve the purpose of a specific agent.



**Fig. 6 Class diagram of integration**

According to the sequence diagram depicted in Fig. 7, the DDS and MQTT serve to transmit messages for the agents. Action 1 entails generating an independent process immediately after the root agent is initialized. Action 2 entails subscribing to or publishing relevant topics within the QoS constraints. Action 3 entails recursively calling all the subagents to initiate the action. The agent main action is performed in a separate process of Action 2 until it is notified of its termination. Finally, Action 4 entails generating a global broadcast with MQTT, with a system termination notification serving as an example in this study.



**Fig. 7 Sequence Diagram of Integration**

The implementation of this architecture: <https://github.com/mfshiu/abdi.git>

3. Results

On the basis of the proposed complex artificial agent integration method, an experiment with a navigation system for the visually impaired was planned to verify the feasibility of the design and evaluate the results.

3.1. Experiment Design

Generally, developing a navigation system for visually impaired individuals can demonstrate the feasibility of a proposed architecture. This is a sufficiently complex agent system that must integrate numerous AI systems, including machine learning modules [32]. The completion of this system was expected to confirm the feasibility of the proposed architecture.

Because of their limited vision, visually impaired individuals experience numerous transportation inconveniences. Their primary limitations stem from the selection of routes, the avoidance of obstacles while walking, and the avoidance of obstacles on the road [33]. Therefore, in this study, a system was designed to assist visually impaired individuals in determining the optimal route to their destination and to inform them of the road conditions. This system must communicate in a multiturn dialogue and execute appropriate actions and responses [34].

The navigation system for the visually impaired consists of a visual system, a sound system, an auditory system, a navigation system, and a dialogue system. The navigation system includes a road subsystem, which can detect the surrounding environment, and a path planning subsystem. The visual system obtains images with depth values from a 3D camera and sends these images to the visual receiving area of the navigation system through image preprocessing. The images are then used as the source of environmental detection. The dialogue system receives speech from the auditory system, understands the language used, and generates instructions, such as providing a destination or interrupting navigation. After speech synthesis, the dialogue system creates a natural language response, which is then sent to the user by the vocal system. Finally, human–machine interaction is achieved.

Table 1 lists the general definitions of the agents, Table 2 lists the definitions of the global MQTT topics, and Table 3 lists the definitions and descriptions of the internal DDS topics. Fig. 8 depicts the overall system structure design, which conforms to the continuity structure of holonic MASs.

**Table 1. Agents IDs**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ID** | **Agent** | **ID** | **Agent** | **ID** | **Agent** |
| 000 | Visually Impaired Navigation System |  |  |  |  |
| A00 | Navigation System | B00 | Dialogue System | D00 | Hearing System |
| A01 | Visual Reception | B01 | Voice Output | D01 | Microphone |
| A02 | Command Reception | B02 | Auditory Reception | D02 | Background Denoising |
| A03 | Path Planning | B03 | NLU | E00 | Sound System |
| A10 | Environment Detection | B04 | NLG | E01 | Speaker |
| A11 | Road Detection | C00 | Vision System | E02 | Voice Reception |
| A12 | Obstacle Detection | C01 | 3D Camera | E03 | Tone Processing |
| A13 | Signboard Detection | C02 | Image Preprocessing | F00 | Speech Synthesis |

**Table 2. MQTT Topics**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ID** | **Topic** | **Format** | **Content** |
| M1 | Startup | Text | System startup notification |
| M2 | Terminating | Text | System shutdown notification |
| M3 | Heartbeat | Text | System heartbeat |
| M4 | Status | Text | System Status |
| M5 | Information | Text | Global message |

**Table 3. DDS Topics**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ID** | **Topic** | **Format** | **Concerned**  **Super-agents** | **Content** |
| 1 | Vision | Image | C | Video frame from 3D Camera |
| 2 | VisionProcessed | Image | AC | processed image |
| 3 | TextVoice | Text | AB | Text before speech synthesis |
| 4 | SynthesizedSpeech | Audio | E | voice after speech synthesis |
| 5 | InputVoice | Audio | BD | Audio phrase of hearing |
| 6 | InputSentence | Text | B | Text phrase of hearing |
| 7 | OutputSentence | Text | B | Sentences to be output |
| 8 | UserIntention | Text | B | User intent after understanding |
| 9 | UserCommand | Text | AB | The command of action |
| 10 | OutputContent | Text | B | Output of dialogue system |
| 11 | SoundProcessed | Audio | D | processed sound |
| 12 | Sound | Audio | D | sound phrase from Microphone |
| 13 | WalkCommand | Text | A | Commands required by the navigation |
| 14 | WalkTarget | Text | A | navigation destination |
| 15 | WalkRoute | Text | A | path to destination |
| 16 | StreetTarget | Text | A | The closest target currently in the path |
| 17 | StreetVision | Image | A | street view |
| 18 | SignInfo | Text | A | sign on the road |
| 19 | RoadInfo | Text | A | Road information while walking |
| 20 | OutputVoice | Audio | E | the sound that will be made |
| 21 | OutputVoiceProcessed | Audio | E | upcoming sound after pitch processing |



**Fig. 8 Structural Design of Navigation System for Visually Impaired**

Agents at all levels perform independent processes and communicate with other agents through MQTT and the DDS. This means that the physical environment of the system is unlimited. The agents can be separated from one another. For example, the environment detection agent may be located in another deep learning server, and natural language understanding [36] may utilize certain cloud services. Neither affects the overall system architecture.

3.2. Experiment Results

For the system to function, many messages with different topics are sent between the agents. The DDS stimulates the nervous system to transmit a variety of data while meeting the required QoS. MQTT is similar to the circulatory system in terms of systemic message notification. These actions occur in parallel. Table 4 illustrates working snippets representing speakers, words, and how sentences are formed inside the system.

**Table 4. System execution record**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Speaker** | **Words** | **Agents with topics flow** |
| 1 |  | (System startup) | 000(M1) |
| 2 | User | Please take me to the MRT station. | D01(12) 🡪 D02(11) 🡪 D00(5) 🡪 B02(6) 🡪 B03 |
| 3 | Navigator | Okay, let me check, please wait. | B00(10) 🡪 B04(7) 🡪 B01(3) 🡪 F00(4) 🡪 E02(20) 🡪 E03(21) 🡪 E01 |
| 4 | Navigator | There is Zhongyi Station 300 meters nearby. May I take you there? | B00(9) 🡪 A02(13) 🡪 A03(15) 🡪 B00(10) 🡪 B04(7) 🡪 B01(3) 🡪 F00(4) 🡪 E02(20) 🡪 E03(21) 🡪 E01 |
| 5 | User | Yes, that’s right. | D01(12) 🡪 D02(11) 🡪 D00(5) 🡪 B02(6) 🡪 B03 |
| 6 | Navigator | Please walk straight along the sidewalk. | 1. B00(9) 🡪 A02(13) 🡪 A00(15) 2. C01(1) 🡪 C02(2) 🡪 A01(2) 🡪 A11 3. A11(19) 🡪 A10(3) 🡪 F00(4) 🡪 E02(20) 🡪 E03(21) 🡪 E01 |
| 7 | User | Hi, partner, I would like to take a break. | D01(12) 🡪 D02(11) 🡪 D00(5) 🡪 B02(6) 🡪 B03 |
| 8 | Navigator | Okay, I will suspend until you call me. | 1. B00(10) 🡪 B04(7) 🡪 B01(3) 🡪 F00(4) 🡪 E02(20) 🡪 E03(21) 🡪 E01 2. B00(M4: Suspend) |
| 9 |  | (System suspended) |  |
| 10 | User | Please take me to the MRT station. | D01(12) 🡪 D02(11) 🡪 D00(5) 🡪 B02(6) 🡪 B03 |
| 11 | Navigator | Okay, let’s go. | 1. B00(M4: Resume) 2. B00(10) 🡪 B04(7) 🡪 B01(3) 🡪 F00(4) 🡪 E02(20) 🡪 E03(21) 🡪 E01 |
| 12 | Navigator | We are passing 7-11 convenience store on the left. | 1. C01(1) 🡪 C02(2) 🡪 A01(2) 🡪 A13 2. A13(18) 🡪 A10(3) 🡪 F00(4) 🡪 E02(20) 🡪 E03(21) 🡪 E01 |
| 13 | Navigator | You have already arrived the MRT station. | A00(3) 🡪 F00(4) 🡪 E02(20) 🡪 E03(21) 🡪 E01 |
| 14 |  | (System terminate) | 000(M2) |

Note 1: The format of the content in the fourth column is as follows: source agent ID (publish topic ID) 🡪 target agent ID (publish topic ID).

Note 2: The sequential items in the fourth column represent parallelized processes, but the former affect the behavior of the latter.

During the experiment, the existence of the head agent was ambiguous. According to the design, the head agent served as a communication bridge for the super-agent. However, during the planning of the experiment, the super-agent sometimes directly addressed external communication, such as environmental detection (A10) or the auditory system (E00). Therefore, because the head agent served only as a message forwarder, it was omitted. To avoid the duplication of unnecessary information, the super-agent or internal body agents directly published the message. The head agent existed only when messages were converted or filtered.

Here, the holonic MAS aided in the design of structures. Publishing and subscribing to topics between agents also increased the flexibility of the system. The agents in the system were easily modified so as to gracefully update the system. Importantly, the system had a large number of repeated paths, for example, hearing and understanding (D01(12) 🡪 D02(11) 🡪 D00(5) 🡪 B02(6) 🡪 B03), vision and recognition (C01(1) 🡪 C02(2) 🡪 A01(2) 🡪 A11, A12, A13), and voice output (A00, B00(10) 🡪 B04(7) 🡪 B01(3) 🡪 F00(4) 🡪 E02(20) 🡪 E03(21) 🡪 E01). These paths were dynamic subsystems of the cross-agent service whose discovery aided in understanding and optimizing the system (e.g., in terms of pipelining).

The execution time of the dynamic subsystem was calculated as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (1) |
|  | (2) |

where is the ordered set of agents, is the specific agent, and is the function used to compute the execution time.

4. Discussion

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According to physiology, distributed, hierarchical, regional, and global communication are essential mechanisms of complex intelligent agents. In this study, these insights were applied to the coordination of organizational structure and communication. A complex AI integration framework was also designed and experimentally validated.

The interior of complex intelligent agents is primarily heterogeneous, and entire systems can form a homogeneous connection through the interface between agents and topics. All modules and components at any level are agents, which is advantageous for constructing a fully autonomous system.

The participant discovery of the DDS [35] allows agents to dynamically participate in the system, thereby rendering the system scalable. For instance, adding Lidar’s distance sensing to a visual agent can improve the accuracy of road detection. The system can also be upgraded or repaired online.

As a more advanced protocol, OMG’s DDS is functionally a superset of MQTT and can cover the majority of its features. Because of its wide compatibility and simple implementation, MQTT is still used as a solution for global communication. Given its low frequency and power consumption, its lightweight centralized protocol meets the global communication requirements. Therefore, MQTT is regarded as an essential communication capability for agents.

Some studies have highlighted the benefits of continuous multiagent organization and autonomy [36]. The abstraction of the inner operations of holonic agents has allowed for great flexibility in behavioral decisions. However, predicting the final behavior of a holonic agent is difficult because of the lack of knowledge regarding the internal structure of holons [37].

5. Conclusions

The proposed complex framework for AI integration is a middle layer between the operating system and its applications. It helps organize the system and facilitates the sharing of information and parallelization of processes. This may allow developers to increase their productivity by working in parallel teams and focusing more on the developmental aspect. This study, however, did not investigate the synchronization of parallel processing between agents, which will be provided as a supplementary study in the future.

In addition to functional development, the decision-making of complex AI systems can be crucial at times. Decisions can be made through negotiation or competition among agents or through the application of game theory [38]. MAS-based structures can employ the theory of multiagent decision-making [39] to provide more intelligent decision-making.

System prototypes are great for rapid development, whether for early validation or for iterative development. This is the advantage of the iterative methodology and the essence of agile software development [40]. This complex AI integration framework allows developers to rapidly build verifiable systems.

The framework implements the belief–desire–intention (BDI) software model [41]. This architecture incorporates the concepts of belief and intention but omits desire. Therefore, integrating the desire concept may allow the system to provide more active services and bring it closer to an optimal autonomous system. Future research should focus on implementing the complete BDI methodology.

Among the future implementations of the proposed architecture in more complex AI systems are autonomous mobile robots, intelligent navigation robots, and manufacturing assistance systems for Industry 4.0.

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* **Code availability**

The source code generated during the current study is available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

* **Authors' contributions**

Ching Han Chen and Ming Fang Shiu conceived the presented idea. M.F.S. developed the theory and performed the computations. C.H.C. verified the analytical methods and supervised the findings of this work. All authors discussed the results and contributed to the final manuscript.

**Additional declarations for articles in life science journals that report the results of studies involving humans and/or animals**

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