gMapping

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For more details, see paper: "Improved Techniques for Grid Mapping with Rao-Blackwellized Particle Filters" by Giorgio Grisetti, Cyrill Stachniss, Wolfram Burgard, IEEE Transactions in Robotics, 2006

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gMapping Overview

- gMapping is probably most used SLAM algorithm
- Implementation available on openslam.org (which has many more resources)
- Currently the standard algorithm on the PR2
Problem Formulation

Given
- observations \( z_{1:t} = z_1, \ldots, z_t \)
- odometry measurements \( u_{2:t} = u_1, \ldots, u_t \)

Find
- Posterior \( p(x_{1:t}, m \mid z_{1:t}, u_{2:t}) \)
- With \( m \) a grid map

Key Ideas

Rao-Blackwellized Particle Filter
- Each particle = sample of history of robot poses + posterior over maps given the sample pose history; approximate posterior over maps by distribution with all probability mass on the most likely map whenever posterior is needed

Proposal distribution \( \pi \)
- Approximate the optimal sequential proposal distribution
  \[
  p^*(x_t) = p(x_t \mid x_{1:t-1}, z_{1:t}, u_{1:t}) \
  \]
  \[
  \propto p(z_t \mid m_{t-1}, x_{t-1}) p(x_t \mid x_{t-1}, u_t) \]  
  [note integral over all maps \( \rightarrow \) most likely map only]
- 1. find the local optimum \( \text{argmax}_x p^*(x) \)
- 2. sample \( x^h \) around the local optimum, with weights \( w^h = p^*(x^h) \)
- 3. fit a Gaussian over the weighted samples
- 4. this Gaussian is an approximation of the optimal sequential proposal \( p^* \)

Sample from (approximately) optimal sequential proposal

Weight update for optimal sequential proposal is
\[
 p(z_t \mid x_{1:t-1}, z_{1:t-1}, u_{1:t}) = p(z_t \mid m_{t-1}, x_{t-1}, u_{t-1}, x_{1:t-1}, u_{1:t-1}) \]
which is efficiently approximated from the same samples as above by

Resampling based on the effective sample size \( S_{\text{eff}} \)
Gaussian (EKF) approximation of odometry model from Probabilistic Robotics, pp. 121-123 [fix slide: for my edition of the book those pages describe the velocity motion model, not the odometry motion model]

Discrete time steps (=when updates happen) correspond to whenever the robot has traveled about 0.5m

From paper: “In general, there are more sophisticated techniques estimating the motion of the robot. However, we use that model to estimate a movement between two filter updates which is performed after the robot traveled around 0.5 m. In this case, this approximation works well and we did not observed a significant difference between the EKF-like model and the in general more accurate sample-based velocity motion model [41]”
Scan-Matching

- Find $\arg\max_{x_t} p(z_t | m_{t-1}, x_t) p(x_t | x_{t-1}, u_t)$
- $p(x_t | x_{t-1}, u_t)$: Gaussian approximation of motion model, see previous slide
- $p(z_t | m_{t-1}, x_t)$: “any scan-matching technique […] can be used”
  - Used by gMapping: “beam endpoint model”

More on scan-matching in separate set of slides

Experiments

- “Most maps generated can be magnified up to a resolution of 1 cm without observing considerable inconsistencies”
- “Even in big real world datasets covering […] 250m by 250m, […] never required more than 80 particles to build accurate maps.”

![Graph](image-url)

Fig. 7. Success rate of our algorithm in different environments depending on the number of particles. Each success rate was determined using 20 runs. For the experiment MIT-2 we disabled the adaptive resampling.

Correctness evaluated through visual inspection by non-authors
Effect of Proposal Distribution

Fig. 11. Different mapping results for the same data set obtained using the proposal distribution which ignores the odometry (left image) and which considers the odometry when drawing the next generation of particles (right image).