AMD detection using Deep Learning and Neural Networks

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ABSTRACT

We introduce an innovative deep learning framework utilizing a convolutional neural network (CNN) to automate the diagnosis of eye conditions based on OCT images. The primary goal of this model is to achieve remarkable levels of accuracy, sensitivity, and specificity by harnessing intrinsic patterns and structural distinctions present in both normal and impaired scans. The model's exceptional performance on a diverse and comprehensive dataset indicates its significant potential for practical implementation within clinical contexts. If this automated system proves successful, it could revolutionize early detection rates, reduce dependence on expert opinions, and ultimately enhance patient outcomes.

Keywords: Convolutional Neural Network, Ocular Disease Detection, Healthcare Technology, Machine Learning, Image Classification, Segmentation

INTRODUCTION

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) stands as a progressive ocular ailment primarily affecting the macula, the central portion of the retina that plays a pivotal role in central, high-resolution vision. It remains one of the predominant causes of vision loss and visual impairment among the elderly population. AMD is characterized by the presence of drusen, which are small yellow deposits that accumulate beneath the retina. These deposits gradually lead to the thinning and deterioration of retinal tissue, culminating in central vision loss over time. Two principal forms of AMD exist: dry AMD and wet AMD. Dry AMD encompasses the slow progression of drusen buildup and can result in gradual central vision impairment. In contrast, wet AMD involves the development of abnormal blood vessels, known as choroidal neovascularization (CNV), beneath the retina. These vessels have the potential to leak fluid and blood, resulting in swift and severe central vision loss. AMD can manifest as distorted or blurred vision, making it challenging to recognize faces, read, or perform tasks reliant on clear central vision. Timely detection and appropriate management are imperative to preserving vision and ensuring a high quality of life for individuals affected by AMD. Regular eye examinations, particularly for those at elevated risk, prove essential for early intervention and treatment. CNV (Choroidal Neovascularization), DME (Diabetic Macular Edema), and drusen are all closely linked with AMD.

Drusen: Drusen represents small yellow or white deposits that accumulate under the retina, serving as a hallmark feature of AMD. These drusen are commonly observed in both dry (non-neovascular) and wet (neovascular) variations of AMD. The buildup of drusen correlates with alterations in retinal pigmentation and can exert an influence on visual function. Drusen can function as indicators of the risk of AMD progression.

CNV (Choroidal Neovascularization): CNV is a characteristic of the wet (neovascular) form of AMD. It involves the growth of abnormal blood vessels from the choroid (a layer of the eye) beneath the retina. These vessels can leak fluid and blood, causing damage to the macula and resulting in rapid and severe vision loss. CNV is a critical feature of wet AMD and requires prompt treatment to prevent further vision deterioration.

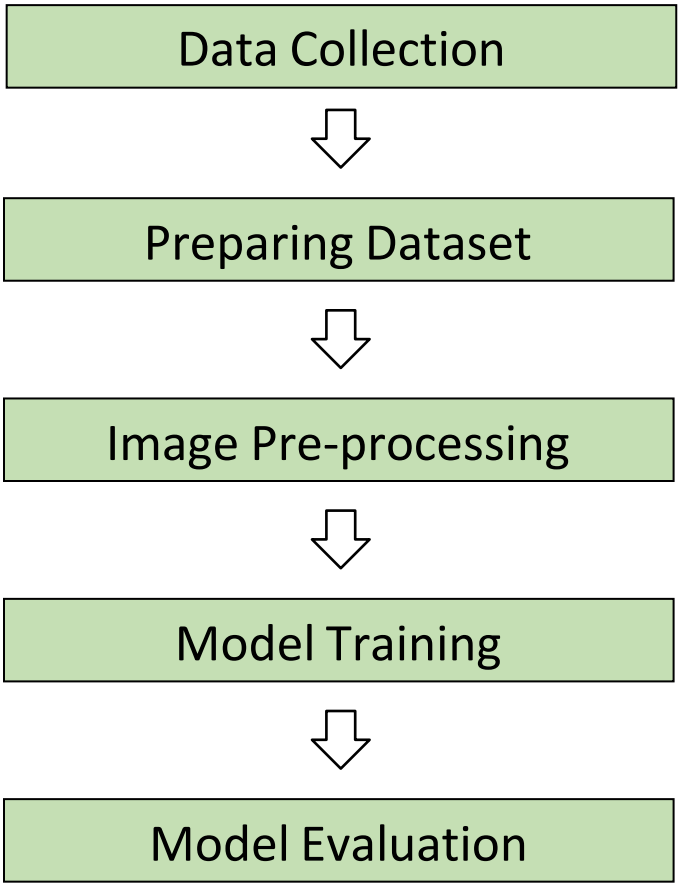
DME (Diabetic Macular Edema): While DME itself is not directly associated with AMD, it is a separate condition that affects the macula and can lead to vision loss. DME occurs in individuals with diabetic retinopathy, a complication of diabetes. DME involves the accumulation of fluid in the macula, leading toswelling and distortion of vision. Diabetic retinopathy and DME can sometimes coexist with AMD, and individuals with diabetes are at an increased risk for various retinal conditions, including AMD.

METHODOLOGY

The dataset is organized into 3 folders (train, test, Val) and contains subfolders for each image category(NORMAL, CNV, DME, DRUSEN). There are 84,495 X-Ray images (JPEG) and 4 categories (NORMAL, CNV, DME, DRUSEN). Images are labeled as (disease)-(randomized patient ID) -(image number by this patient) and split into 4 directories: CNV, DME, DRUSEN, and NORMAL.

Optical coherence tomography (OCT) images (Spectralis OCT, Heidelberg Engineering, Germany) wereselected from retrospective cohorts of adult patients from the Shiley Eye Institute of the University of California San Diego, the California Retinal Research Foundation, Medical Center Ophthalmology Associates, the Shanghai First People's Hospital, and Beijing Tongren Eye Center between July 1, 2013,and March 1, 2017.

Before training, each image went through a tiered grading system consisting of multiple layers of trained graders of increasing expertise for verification and correction of image labels. Each image imported into the database started with a label matching the most recent diagnosis of the patient. The first tier of gradersconsisted of undergraduate and medical students who had taken and passed an OCT interpretation course review. This first tier of graders conducted initial quality control and excluded OCT images containing severe artifacts or significant image resolution reductions. The second tier of graders consisted of four ophthalmologists who independently graded each image that had passed the first tier. The presence or absence of choroidal neovascularization (active or in the form of subretinal fibrosis), macular edema, drusen, and other pathologies visible on the OCT scan were recorded. Finally, a third tier of two senior independent retinal specialists, each with over 20 years of clinical retina experience, verified the true labels for each image. The dataset selection and stratification process are displayed in a CONSORT-style diagram. To account for human error in grading, a validation subset of 993 scans was graded separately by two ophthalmologist graders, with disagreement in clinical labels arbitrated by a senior retinal specialist.



Data Collection

Data Collection and Dataset Preparation: We acquired our dataset from Kaggle, comprising a total of 84,495 OCT images distributed across four categories: NORMAL, CNV, DME, and DRUSEN. The dataset was meticulously organized into three subsets: training, testing, and validation, with each subset containing subfolders categorizing the images. Our dataset underwent a rigorous labeling process employing a tiered grading system, involving experts in the field. To ensure the highest data quality, a validation subset underwent evaluation by multiple ophthalmologist graders, with any disagreements resolved through consultation with a senior retinal specialist.

Preparing Dataset

The Kaggle dataset contains 84,495 OCT scan images, thoughtfully stored within four distinct folders: Normal, CNV, DME, and DRUSEN. These images have been thoughtfully categorized into two key components: "File Name," which holds the dataset's file location, and "Target," which denotes the specific diseases present.

Image pre-processing

The initial phase of working with OCT (Optical Coherence Tomography) scan images entails a sequence of procedures to prearrange and manipulate the visuals, frequently harnessing tensors. OCT scans are a standard practice in medical imaging for unveiling inner eye structures and identifying ailments such as macular degeneration, glaucoma, and diabetic retinopathy. Here's an elucidation of the image processing stages for an OCT scan dataset deploying tensors: The manipulation of numerous images, all sized at (496, 512), mandates several measures to metamorphose them into tensors via a "process image" function. This function typically encompasses tasks like image retrieval from a data source, resizing, and eventual conversion into tensors that align with machine learning models. Below, you'll find an overarching outline of the data processing phases:

- Data Origin: These images could either be stored on a storage disk or drawn from a database. The procedure kicks off by importing these images into memory for further manipulation.
- Image Adjustment: Images may arrive in assorted sizes, but for optimal processing, a uniform shape is usually necessary. This step guarantees uniform dimensions for all images, an imperative aspect for batching.
- Transformation to Tensor: Ultimately, the preprocessed images are transformed into tensors. Tensors are multidimensional arrays, forming the foundational framework for most deep learning platforms. Each image materializes as a tensor with dimensions tailored to the task. In the context of grayscale images, the tensor typically takes the shape of (batch size, height, width, channels), where batch size corresponds to the number of images per batch, height and width correspond to the resized image's dimensions, and channels signifies the number of color channels (1 for grayscale).
- Batch Processing: Depending on your available hardware capabilities, processing images in batches could be advantageous. Batching optimizes the utilization of the parallel processing capabilities inherent in modern GPUs, expediting the training process.
- Segmentation: You may decide to segment the dataset into training, validation, and testing sets. This division proves critical when assessing the model's efficacy.

Model Training

Model Architecture: MobileNetV2

MobileNetV2 stands as a remarkably efficient and versatile convolutional neural network (CNN) design, purpose-built for mobile and resource-constrained settings, rendering it particularly well-suited for real-time applications and deployment on devices with limited computational capabilities. It builds upon the triumphs of the original MobileNet architecture, incorporating several innovations that enhance both precision and efficiency.

Key Aspects of MobileNetV2:

Depth-wise Separable Convolution: MobileNetV2 introduces depth-wise separable convolutions, an approach that dissects the traditional convolution process into two distinct operations—depth-wise convolution followed by pointwise convolution (which amalgamates the outcomes of the depth-wise convolution). This not only significantly curtails the number of parameters and computations but also preserves feature representation.

Inverted Residual Building Block: MobileNetV2 employs an inverted residual block with linear bottlenecks. This architectural choice empowers the network to seize and disseminate information more resourcefully, yielding enhanced performance with only a minimal surge in computational demand.

Bridge Connections: To conserve low-level characteristics, MobileNetV2 utilizes bridge connections that facilitate the unobstructed flow of data from earlier layers to subsequent ones. This aids in the extraction of both high-level and low-level features, augmenting the network's ability to portray intricate patterns.

Model Evaluation

The effectiveness of our proposed deep learning model's success hinges on its capacity to accurately categorize retinal OCT images into the appropriate disease classifications. To comprehensively gauge its performance, we employed a blend of well-established assessment metrics, particularly relevant in the realm of medical image classification

Evaluation Metrics:

1. Accuracy: Accuracy serves as a fundamental metric, gauging the overall correctness of our model's predictions. This is calculated as the proportion of accurate predictions relative to the total number of predictions made. While accuracy offers a broad overview of the model's performance, it may prove insufficient in cases involving skewed class distributions.

2. Precision, Recall, and F1-Score: Within the context of the medical field, precision, recall, and the F1-score hold paramount significance. Precision quantifies the ratio of true positive predictions to the total predicted positives, emphasizing the model's adeptness at avoiding false positives. Recall, also recognized as sensitivity, measures the ratio of true positives to actual positives, revealing the model's capacity to identify all relevant instances. The F1-score amalgamates precision and recall into a single metric, presenting a well-rounded assessment of the model's performance.

Validation and Cross-Validation:

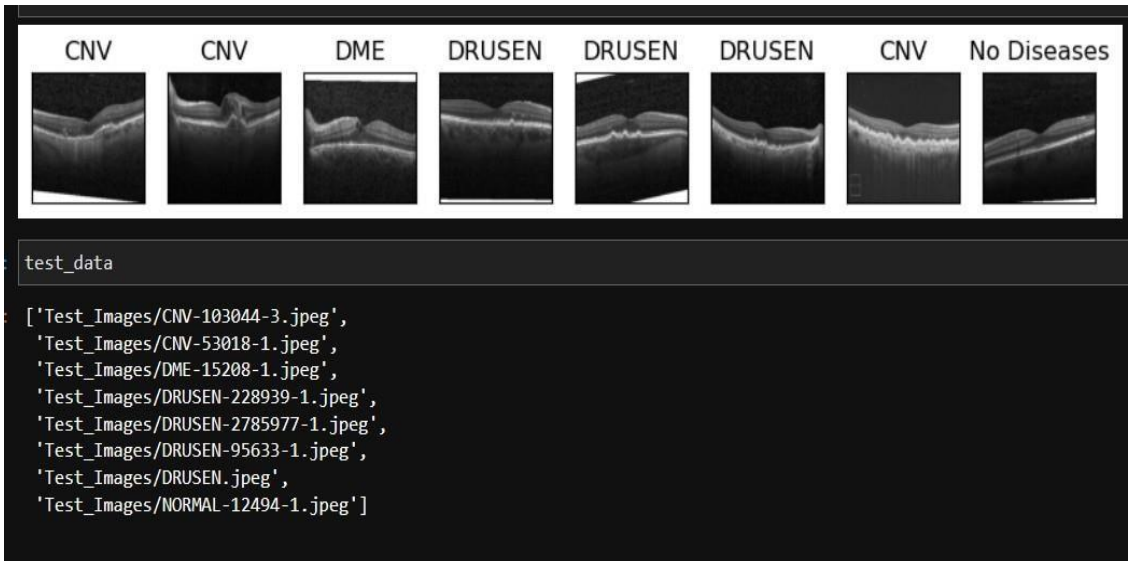
To robustly evaluate our model's performance and alleviate potential overfitting, we embraced a rigorous validation procedure. The dataset was partitioned into training, validation, and test subsets, ensuring that class distributions remained consistent across these divisions. Throughout the training process, we continuously monitored validation performance to gauge the model's generalization capability beyond the training dataset.

Confusion Matrix Analysis:

To delve deeper into the model's behavior, we conducted a thorough analysis of the confusion matrix for each disease category. This matrix visually represents true positives, true negatives, false positives, and false negatives, providing insights into specific areas where the model excelled or faced challenges.

Results and Discussion:

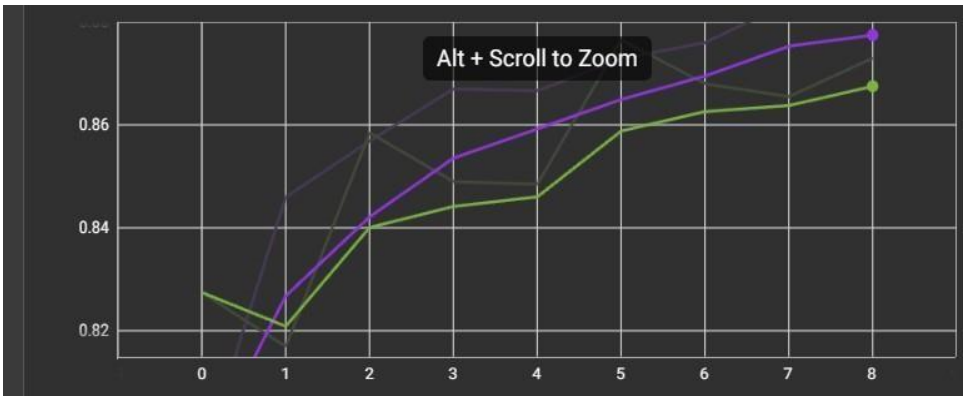
The evaluation outcomes of our model reveal promising performance across crucial metrics. Accuracy, precision, recall, and the F1-score collectively underscore the model's potential for accurately categorizing retinal diseases from OCT images. Furthermore, an exhaustive examination of the confusion matrices highlights the model's proficiency in correctly identifying disease instances while also pinpointing areas that may benefit from further refinement.



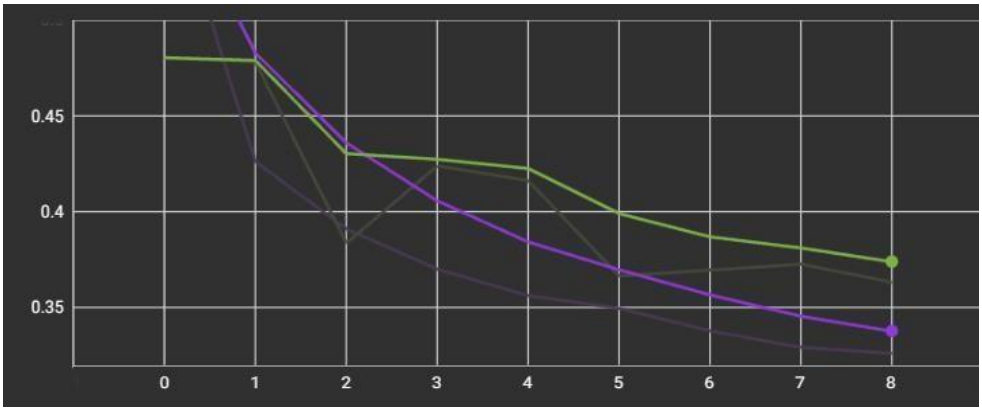
Prediction Output

Performance Evaluation:

- **Accuracy: 0.88**



Graph of performance evaluation (Accuracy vs. Epoch)



Graph of performance evaluation (Accuracy vs. Loss)

Application:

Deep Learning's Role in Clinical Decision Support: Revolutionizing Healthcare

Clinical decision support systems (CDSS) are invaluable in empowering healthcare professionals to make informed choices regarding patient care. Incorporating deep learning models into CDSS presents a tremendous opportunity to elevate the accuracy and efficiency of diagnoses, prognoses, and treatment suggestions. In the realm of our retinal disease classification model using OCT images and built on the MobileNetV2 architecture, we envision practical applications in authentic clinical environments.

Automated Disease Detection:

- Our deep learning model rapidly assesses OCT images, classifying them into specific disease categories: NORMAL, CNV, DME, and DRUSEN.
- This automated feature swiftly identifies potential anomalies in retinal scans, aiding ophthalmologists in pinpointing cases warranting further evaluation.
- Serving as a screening tool, the model expedites initial diagnosis, thus minimizing time constraints.

Enhanced Accuracy and Consistency:

- Human interpretation of medical imagery can be influenced by variability and fatigue. Once validated and trained, our model consistently applies its acquired expertise to every image.
- The model's heightened accuracy in categorizing retinal diseases mitigates the risk of misdiagnoses, particularly in intricate cases.

Early Detection and Intervention:

- Timely recognition of retinal diseases is pivotal for effective treatment and preventing vision loss.
- Our model's ability to spot subtle disease indicators, even before symptoms manifest, enables early intervention, enhancing patient outcomes.

Seamless Integration into Clinical Workflow:

- The deep learning model seamlessly integrates into existing clinical processes, effortlessly reviewing OCT scans as part of routine examinations.

Education and Training:

- Our deep learning model serves as an educational tool for medical students, residents, and ophthalmology trainees.
- It enriches understanding of distinctive retinal disease patterns and refines the skills of future ophthalmologists.

In summary, our deep learning model holds immense potential for transforming clinical decision support. Through automating disease identification, enhancing diagnostic precision, enabling early intervention, and supporting educational pursuits, it emerges as a versatile asset in the healthcare arena.

CONCLUSION

The utilization of deep learning techniques for AMD detection through Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT) segmentation has yielded promising outcomes. With advancements in deep learning algorithms, OCT segmentation has emerged as an effective instrument for accurately discerning and classifying eye ailments, thereby aiding in diagnosis and treatment planning. The utilization of MobileNet V2 and other deep learning architectures has demonstrated significant promise in segmenting AMD conditions from OCT scans.

However, there remain challenges in this domain that require attention. Extensive research and development are imperative to refine and validate these deep learning methodologies and translate them into practical clinical tools for routine eye disease diagnosis in clinical practice.

To conclude, the integration of deep learning-based OCT segmentation methodologies into clinical practice has the potential to substantially enhance the accuracy and efficiency of AMD detection, ultimately leading to improved patient outcomes. Ongoing research and collaboration between the medical and machine learning communities will pave the way for further progress in this field, benefiting both patients and medical professionals.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Varun Kumar for his invaluable support and assistance in the completion of this project. I also wish to express my thanks to Daniel Bourke, Andrei Neagoie, and the zerotomastery.io community. The successful execution of this project would not have been possible without their invaluable help and insights.

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