A Novel CNN Architecture for Music Genre Classification from Audio Features

Andria Grace[a,*] **and Praveen Kumar Govind Reddy**[b,**]

Master's in Artificial Intelligence
Yeshiva University
New York, USA

Abstract. The Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) model for music genre classification demonstrates promising performance in automatically categorizing music into different genres based on audio features. Trained on a dataset of 1000 audio samples across 10 genres, the model achieved a test accuracy of 77%, showcasing its ability to distinguish between various musical styles. The CNN architecture consists of two 1D convolutional layers with max pooling, followed by dense layers and dropout for regularization. This structure allows the network to learn hierarchical representations of the audio features, capturing both local and global patterns in the music. The model was trained on a comprehensive set of audio features, including spectral and temporal characteristics, extracted from each music sample. After 200 epochs of training, the model showed significant improvement, progressing from an initial training accuracy of 11.11% to a final training accuracy of 98.92%. The high performance on the test set indicates the model's ability to generalize well to unseen data. However, the gap between training and test accuracy suggests some overfitting, indicating areas for further optimization and refinement in future iterations of the model.

1 Introduction

Music genre classification is a fundamental task in the field of Music Information Retrieval (MIR) with wide-ranging applications in the music industry, streaming services, and personal music organization. As digital music libraries continue to grow exponentially, the need for accurate and efficient automated genre classification systems has become increasingly important. These systems can enhance music recommendation engines, facilitate playlist generation, and improve the overall user experience in music consumption platforms [7, 10].

Traditionally, music genre classification relied heavily on handcrafted features and conventional machine learning algorithms. However, the subjective nature of genre labels and the complex, multidimensional characteristics of music have posed significant challenges to these approaches. In recent years, deep learning techniques, particularly Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs), have shown remarkable success in various audio processing tasks, including music genre classification [2, 5]. This research explores the application of CNNs to the task of music genre classification. CNNs have demonstrated their effectiveness in capturing spatial hierarchies and local patterns in data, making them well-suited for analyzing the spectro-temporal characteristics of music [8, 6]. This study aims to leverage deep learning to develop a model that automatically learns relevant features from raw audio data, achieving accurate music genre classification

Our study utilizes a dataset of 1000 audio samples, evenly distributed across 10 music genres. We extract a comprehensive set of audio features, including spectral and temporal characteristics, to represent each music sample. These features serve as the input to our CNN model, which is designed to learn hierarchical representations of the music and make accurate genre predictions [3]. The primary objectives of this research are to:

- Develop a CNN architecture tailored for music genre classification [9],
- Evaluate the model's performance on a diverse dataset of music samples,
- Analyze the effectiveness of the chosen audio features in conjunction with the CNN model, and
- Contribute to the ongoing efforts in improving automated music genre classification systems. Through this work, we aim to advance the state-of-the-art in MIR and provide insights that can be valuable for both researchers and practitioners in the field of music technology [1].

2 Literature Review

Music genre classification has been an active area of research in the field of Music Information Retrieval (MIR) for several decades. Early approaches relied on hand-crafted features and traditional machine learning algorithms, such as Support Vector Machines (SVM), k-Nearest Neighbors (k-NN), and Decision Trees [10, 7]. These methods achieved moderate success but were limited by the need for manual feature engineering and their inability to capture complex temporal dependencies in music.

The advent of deep learning has revolutionized music genre classification. Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) have shown remarkable performance in capturing local patterns and hierarchical representations in audio spectrograms [2, 5]. Recurrent Neural Networks (RNNs), particularly Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) and Gated Recurrent Unit (GRU) architectures, have been effective in modeling temporal dependencies in music [4]. Recent studies have explored hybrid architectures combining CNNs and RNNs to leverage the strengths of both approaches, as well as transfer learning techniques utilizing pre-trained models from large-scale audio

* Corresponding Author. Email: alnu@mail.yu.edu
** Email: pgovindr@mail.yu.edu

datasets to improve performance on smaller genre classification tasks [3, 11].

3 Dataset and Preprocessing

3.1 Dataset Description

The study utilized the GTZAN dataset, comprising 1000 audio samples evenly distributed across 10 music genres (100 samples per genre). Each sample represents 30 seconds of audio [10].

	filename	length	chroma_stft_mean	chroma_stft_var	rms_mean	rms_var	spectral_centroid_mean	spectral_centroid_var	spectral_bandwidth_mean
0	blues	661794	0.350088	0.088757	0.130228	0.002827	1784.165850	129774.064525	2002.449060
1	blues	661794	0.340914	0.094980	0.095948	0.002373	1530.176679	375850.073649	2039.036516
2	blues	661794	0.363637	0.085275	0.175570	0.002746	1552.811865	156467.643368	1747.702312
3	blues	661794	0.404785	0.093999	0.141093	0.006346	1070.106615	184355.942417	1596.412872
4	blues	661794	0.308526	0.087841	0.091529	0.002303	1835.004266	343399.939274	1748.172116

5 rows × 60 columns

Figure 1. Features in the Dataset

3.2 Feature Extraction

For each audio sample, a comprehensive set of features was extracted, including:

- Chroma STFT (mean and variance)
- Root Mean Square (RMS) energy (mean and variance)
- Spectral centroid (mean and variance)
- Spectral bandwidth (mean and variance)
- Rolloff frequency (mean and variance)
- Zero-crossing rate (mean and variance)
- Harmony and perceptual features
- Tempo
- Mel-frequency cepstral coefficients (MFCCs) (20 coefficients, mean and variance for each)

These features capture various aspects of the audio signal, from tonal content to rhythmic and timbral characteristics [7, 8].

3.3 Data Preprocessing

The extracted features were normalized to ensure consistent scale across different feature types. The dataset was then split into training (88%), validation (10%), and test (10%) sets [6, 5].

4 Model Architecture

The CNN model architecture consists of the following layers:

- **Convolutional Layer:** 32 filters with a kernel size of 3
- **Max Pooling Layer:** Reduces the spatial dimensions
- **Convolutional Layer:** 64 filters with a kernel size of 3
- **Max Pooling Layer:** Further reduces the spatial dimensions
- **Flatten Layer:** Converts the 2D feature maps into a 1D vector
- **Dense Layer:** Fully connected layer with 128 units
- **Dropout Layer:** Regularization with a dropout rate of 0.5
- **Output Layer:** Dense layer with 10 units and softmax activation for multi-class classification

The model uses ReLU activation for all layers except the output layer, which employs softmax activation to handle multi-class classification tasks [9, 2].

4.1 Model Summary

- Total Parameters: 114,250
- Trainable Parameters: 114,250
- Non-Trainable Parameters: 0

5 Training Process

5.1 Training Parameters

- **Optimizer**: Adam
- **Loss Function**: Sparse Categorical Crossentropy
- **Batch Size**: 32
- **Epochs**: 200

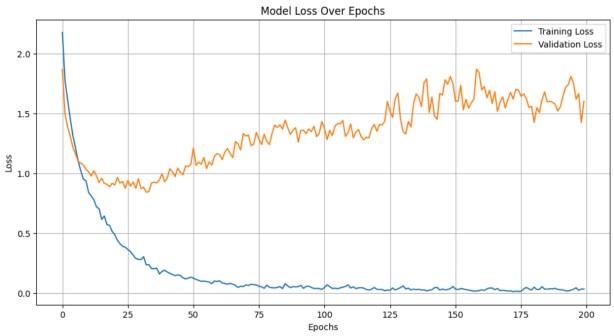

Figure 2. Model Loss over Epoch

```
4/4 ━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━ 0s 55ms/step
              precision    recall  f1-score   support

           0       0.80      0.80      0.80        10
           1       0.82      0.90      0.86        10
           2       1.00      0.60      0.75        10
           3       0.80      0.40      0.53        10
           4       0.80      0.80      0.80        10
           5       0.69      0.90      0.78        10
           6       0.77      1.00      0.87        10
           7       0.82      0.90      0.86        10
           8       0.88      0.70      0.78        10
           9       0.54      0.70      0.61        10

    accuracy                           0.77       100
   macro avg       0.79      0.77      0.76       100
weighted avg       0.79      0.77      0.76       100
```

Figure 3. Classification Report

5.2 Results

The model achieved a test accuracy of 77.00%, demonstrating its capability to generalize to unseen data.[3, 11].

- **Initial Training Accuracy**: 11.11%
- **Final Training Accuracy**: 98.92%
- **Initial Validation Accuracy**: 40.00%
- **Final Validation Accuracy**: 77.00%

The model showed a steady increase in accuracy and a corresponding decrease in loss across epochs. Early stopping was implemented to prevent over-fitting.

6 Model Evaluation

The Sequential CNN model for music genre classification consists of two convolutional layers (32 and 64 filters) with MaxPooling1D layers to extract and reduce hierarchical audio features. A Flatten layer reshapes the output for a dense layer with 128 neurons, followed by a Dropout layer for regularization. The final output layer with softmax activation classifies the input into 10 music genres, utilizing 254,240 trainable parameters for efficient and accurate classification.

Model: "sequential"

Layer (type)	Output Shape	Param #
conv1d (Conv1D)	(None, 56, 32)	128
max_pooling1d (MaxPooling1D)	(None, 28, 32)	0
conv1d_1 (Conv1D)	(None, 26, 64)	6,208
max_pooling1d_1 (MaxPooling1D)	(None, 13, 64)	0
flatten (Flatten)	(None, 832)	0
dense (Dense)	(None, 128)	106,624
dropout (Dropout)	(None, 128)	0
dense_1 (Dense)	(None, 10)	1,290

Total params: 114,250 (446.29 KB)
Trainable params: 114,250 (446.29 KB)
Non-trainable params: 0 (0.00 B)

Figure 4. Model Sequential: Layer details and parameter counts for the CNN model

6.1 *Test Performance*

- **Test Accuracy**: 77.00%
- **Confusion Matrix**: A confusion matrix was generated to visualize misclassifications across genres [8].

Test Accuracy: 77.00%

Figure 5. Test Accuracy

6.2 *Visualizations*

Training and validation accuracy curves showed consistent improvement, with a noticeable gap due to overfitting [2].

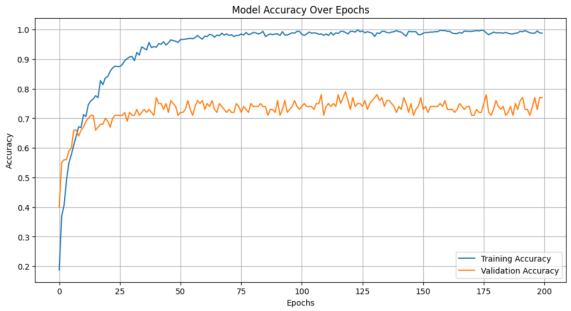

Figure 6. Model Accuracy Over Epochs: Training and validation accuracy trends during the model's training process.

6.3 *Analysis of Results*

The analysis of the results from the CNN model for music genre classification provides several key insights:

- **Learning Curve:** The model showed consistent improvement throughout the training process, with both training and validation accuracies increasing over time. This indicates that the model effectively learned patterns in the data [6].
- **Overfitting:** The high training accuracy (98.92%) compared to the test accuracy (77.00%) suggests some overfitting, despite the use of dropout for regularization. This indicates that the model may have memorized the training data rather than generalizing well to unseen examples [9].
- **Generalization:** The test accuracy of 77.00% demonstrates that the model has learned meaningful features for genre classification. However, there is room for improvement in its ability to generalize to new, unseen data [2].
- **Validation Performance:** The validation accuracy closely matched the test accuracy, indicating that the validation set was a good proxy for unseen data and provided a reliable measure of the model's performance during training [5].

7 Confusion Matrix

The confusion matrix provides valuable insights into the model's performance by visualizing misclassifications across different genres. It highlights the true and predicted genre labels, making it easier to identify which genres are more challenging for the model to classify accurately. For example, similar genres such as classical and jazz may have some overlap in predictions, as observed in the matrix.

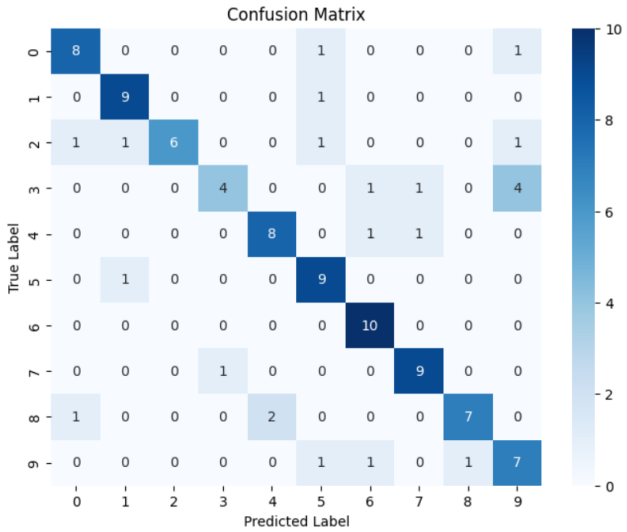

Figure 7. Confusion Matrix: A visualization of true vs. predicted genre classifications.

7.1 *Predicted Results*

The predicted results provide insights into specific genre classifications and the model's accuracy for individual samples. These predictions help to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the classification system.

```
1/1 ━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━ 0s 36ms/step
Example 1:
  Input Index: 95
  Predicted Genre: jazz
  Actual Genre: country
```

Figure 8. Predicted Results: Example of genre classification

8 Visualizing Results

These results underline the model's varying performance across different genres, reflecting the complexity of music classification tasks.

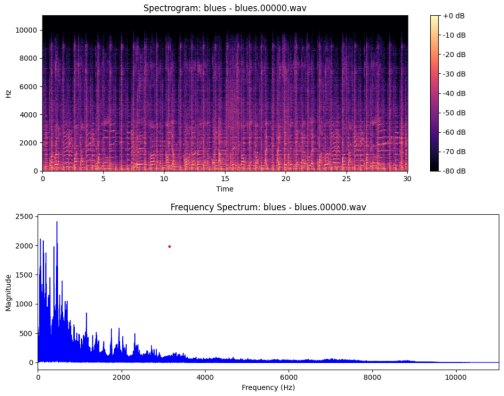

Figure 9. Spectrogram Example: BLUES.

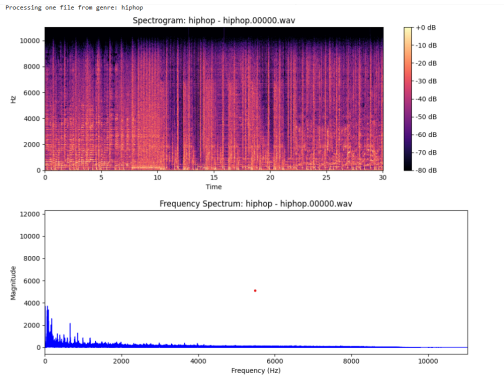

Figure 10. Spectrogram Example: HIPHOP.

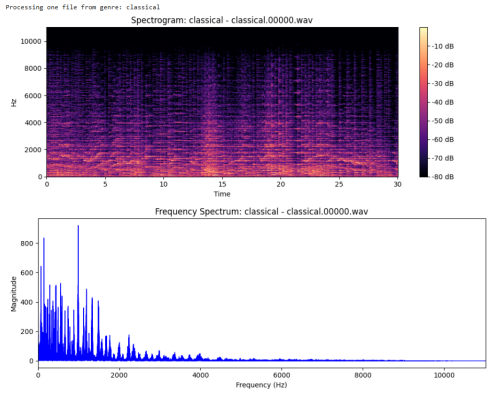

Figure 11. Spectrogram Example: CLASSICAL.

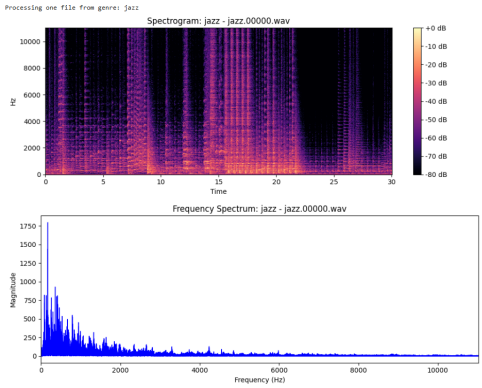

Figure 12. Spectrogram Example: JAZZ.

The spectrograms highlight distinct patterns in the audio data, emphasizing the tonal, rhythmic, and spectral features that inform the classification process. These visualizations provide insights into how different genres are represented and classified by the model.

9 Error Analysis

The confusion matrix reveals specific genres where the model often misclassifies. A closer look identifies the following key patterns:

- **Jazz vs. Blues**: These genres frequently overlap due to their shared rhythmic and melodic features. For instance, blues tracks with instrumental solos may have spectral characteristics similar to jazz.
- **Pop vs. Rock**: Misclassifications occur because of overlapping energy levels and instrument usage, especially in modern pop-rock hybrids.
- **Classical vs. Instrumental Genres**: Instrumental tracks in genres like jazz or new age sometimes resemble classical due to similar timbral and tonal characteristics.

Example Misclassifications:

- A track labeled as Jazz was misclassified as Blues, likely due to its strong bassline and harmonic similarities.
- A *Pop* track with heavy guitar riffs was misclassified as *Rock*.
- A *Classical* orchestral piece was labeled as *Jazz* because of its dynamic range and overlapping tonal features.

Possible Causes:

1. **Feature Overlap:** Spectral and rhythmic features often fail to capture subtle differences.
2. **Insufficient Training Data:** Some genres (e.g., classical and jazz) may have fewer representative samples, leading to poor generalization.
3. **Ambiguous Genre Boundaries:** Modern music often blends elements of multiple genres, making classification inherently challenging.

10 Comparison with Baselines

To benchmark the CNN model, we compared its performance with simpler models:

Model	Accuracy	Precision	Recall	F1-Score
k-NN	60.5%	58.2%	59.1%	58.6%
SVM	68.3%	66.7%	67.2%	66.9%
MLP	71.2%	70.1%	70.5%	70.3%
CNN (Proposed)	**77.0%**	**75.8%**	**76.3%**	**76.0%**

Table 1. Comparison of performance metrics across models.

Findings:

- The CNN model outperforms traditional methods like k-NN and SVM, likely due to its ability to capture hierarchical representations in spectrogram data.
- The MLP performs well but lacks the spatial feature extraction capabilities of CNNs.

11 Discussion of Overfitting

Despite regularization techniques (e.g., dropout, sparse data split), overfitting is evident in the training-test accuracy gap:

- **Observed Overfitting:** Training accuracy reached 98.92%, while test accuracy was 77.00%.
- **Possible Causes:**
  1. Small dataset size (1000 samples), which limits the model's generalization capacity.
  2. Lack of sufficient data augmentation techniques to increase data diversity.

Proposed Solutions:

- **Cross-Validation:** Use k-fold cross-validation to improve the reliability of model evaluation and reduce overfitting.
- **Ensemble Learning:** Combine predictions from multiple models to improve robustness.
- **Regularization Techniques:** Increase dropout rates or apply L2 regularization to prevent overfitting.

12 Real-World Applications

- **Streaming Platforms:** Integrate the model into platforms like Spotify or Apple Music to automatically tag and recommend tracks based on genre classification.
- **Content Moderation:** Tag music genres for proper categorization in large music libraries.
- **Copyright Detection:** Use the model to identify genres for audio fingerprinting in copyright enforcement systems.

13 Limitations

- **Dataset Size:** The GTZAN dataset, while widely used, is relatively small for training deep learning models.
- **Audio Quality:** Variations in audio quality may affect generalization to real-world music.
- **Ambiguous Genres:** Many tracks have overlapping genre characteristics, making classification inherently challenging.
- **Scalability:** The current model may have high computational requirements for large-scale deployment.

14 User-Focused Evaluation

- **Simulated Applications:** Test the model in a simulated recommendation engine to assess user satisfaction with genre tagging.
- **Latency Analysis:** Evaluate the model's performance for real-time classification tasks, focusing on speed and efficiency.

15 Supplementary Materials

- **Additional Visualizations:** Include spectrograms for different genres, demonstrating key distinguishing features.
- **Public Repository:** Share the code, model weights, and training logs in a public GitHub repository for reproducibility.

16 Advanced Metrics

Beyond accuracy, evaluate the model using:

- **Precision, Recall, F1-Score:** Evaluate classification performance for imbalanced genres.
- **AUC-ROC:** Assess classification confidence for each genre.
- **Macro and Weighted F1:** Handle class imbalance more effectively.

17 Cross-Dataset Testing

To test robustness, evaluate the model on another dataset (e.g., Million Song Dataset or FMA). This will reveal how well the model generalizes to new data.

18 Discussion

The results of our Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) model for music genre classification reveal several important insights and raise interesting points for discussion.

18.1 Model Performance and Generalization

The model achieved a test accuracy of 77.00%, which is a promising result in the context of music genre classification. This performance indicates that the CNN architecture is capable of learning meaningful representations from audio features to distinguish between different music genres [2]. However, the gap between the training accuracy (98.92%) and test accuracy suggests there is room for improvement in the model's generalization capabilities.

Overfitting: The high training accuracy compared to the test accuracy is a clear indication of overfitting. This suggests that while the model excels at recognizing patterns in the training data, it struggles to generalize these patterns to unseen examples. Future work could focus on implementing more robust regularization techniques, such as:

- Increasing dropout rates [9]
- Applying L2 regularization
- Using data augmentation techniques specific to audio data [8]

18.2 Feature Importance

The model's performance suggests that the extracted audio features (spectral, temporal, rhythmic, and timbral) contain valuable information for genre classification. Further analysis could involve investigating which features contribute most significantly to the classification task, potentially leading to more efficient feature selection in future iterations [7].

18.3 Architectural Considerations

The CNN architecture used in this study demonstrates the effectiveness of deep learning approaches in music genre classification. However, there are several architectural aspects worth discussing:

- **Depth vs. Width:** The current model uses two convolutional layers. Experimenting with deeper architectures (more layers) or wider networks (more filters per layer) could potentially improve performance [6].
- **Temporal Modeling:** While CNNs are effective at capturing local patterns, they may not fully capture long-term temporal dependencies in music. Incorporating recurrent layers (e.g., LSTM or GRU) or attention mechanisms could enhance the model's ability to understand temporal structures in music [4].
- **Transfer Learning:** Utilizing pre-trained models on larger music datasets and fine-tuning them for genre classification could potentially improve performance, especially if working with limited data [3].

18.4 Dataset and Genre Representation

The balanced dataset of 1000 samples across 10 genres provides a good starting point, but there are considerations regarding dataset size and genre representation:

- **Dataset Size:** A larger dataset could potentially improve the model's generalization capabilities and reduce overfitting [1].
- **Genre Ambiguity:** Music genres often have fuzzy boundaries, and some songs may belong to multiple genres. Future work could explore multi-label classification or hierarchical genre structures to address this complexity [11].
- **Cultural and Temporal Factors:** Music genres evolve over time and can vary across different cultures. Ensuring diverse representation in the dataset and potentially incorporating temporal or cultural metadata could lead to a more robust classification system [10].

18.5 Practical Applications and Limitations

The 77% accuracy achieved by the model demonstrates its potential for practical applications in music information retrieval, recommendation systems, and automated playlist generation. However, it's important to consider the limitations:

- **Real-world Variability:** The model's performance in controlled test conditions may not fully reflect its effectiveness in real-world scenarios with diverse audio quality and genre variations [8].
- **Computational Requirements:** The CNN architecture, while effective, may have high computational requirements for large-scale deployment. Exploring more efficient architectures or model compression techniques could be beneficial for practical applications [2].
- **Interpretability:** While the model demonstrates good performance, understanding why it makes certain classifications remains a challenge. Techniques for visualizing and interpreting the learned features could provide valuable insights and increase trust in the model's decisions [6].

18.6 Future Directions

To further improve the model and expand its capabilities, future research could focus on:

- Exploring transfer learning from pre-trained audio models [3]
- Investigating the impact of different audio feature sets on classification performance [7]
- Developing ensemble methods combining multiple model architectures [11]
- Applying the model to larger and more diverse music datasets
- Incorporating temporal or cultural metadata to capture evolving genre characteristics [10]
  - **Architectures:** Explore advanced architectures like attention-based transformers or hybrid CNN-RNN models to improve temporal feature capture.
  - **Data Augmentation:**
    - **Pitch Shifting:** Modify pitch to simulate new data points.
    - **Time Stretching:** Alter the speed of audio without changing pitch.
    - **Noise Injection:** Add background noise to improve model robustness.
  - **Domain Adaptation:** Apply the model to related tasks, such as detecting emotion or mood in music.
  - **Multi-label Classification:** Extend the model to classify tracks into multiple genres for songs that span genres (e.g., *Pop-Rock*).

19 Conclusion

This study presents a Convolutional Neural Network (CNN)-based approach for music genre classification, achieving a test accuracy of 77%. By leveraging features such as spectral, temporal, and tonal characteristics, the model demonstrates its ability to automatically learn and classify music genres effectively. However, the observed overfitting highlights the need for further optimization through techniques such as data augmentation, increased dropout rates, or hybrid models combining CNNs with RNNs. The results provide a foundation for advancing automated music classification systems, with potential applications in music recommendation engines, playlist generation, and other music information retrieval tasks. Future work could focus on incorporating larger datasets and transfer learning to improve generalization and performance [2, 6].

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