**Decode Barcode Images with YOLOv8 and REAL-ESRGAN**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1\*Van-Tuan Tran, 1Mong-Fong Horng, 1Chin-Shiuh Shieh | 2Prasun Chakrabarti |
| 1Department of Electronics and Engineering  1National Kaohsiung University of Science and Technology, Taiwan  \*E-mail: f111169109@nkust.edu.tw | 2Department of Computer Science and Engineering  2Sir Padampat Singhania University, India |
| 國科會計畫編號：MOST 10X-XXX-E-XXX-XX | |

# Abstract

Barcodes have long been an indispensable part of modern trade and logistics, allowing for the effective tracking and identification of products and packages for a long time and have become a popular standard for production management. , but in industrial factories, depending on superior requirements, we can create an integrated barcode reader combined with other functions using the resources available with their cameras. This study explores a new approach to decoding barcode images, leveraging the capabilities of YOLOv8 [18], an advanced object detection model and REAL-ESRGAN [19], a-state-of-the-art image processing method for super-resolution image. The main objective of this study is to demonstrate the feasibility and effectiveness of using YOLOv8 to locate and extract barcodes from complex scenes and the REAL-ESRGAN method to improve barcodes image, increasing successful decoding accuracy and finally conducting a comparative survey of super-resolution methods applied with barcode images. This summary serves as the basis for an evaluation study of super-resolution methods, with potential implications for enhancing barcode-based systems in various real-world scenarios.

**Keywords:** OpenCV2, YOLOv8, REAL-ESRGAN, Pyzbar.

## Introduction

Barcodes have long served as the unsung heroes of modern commerce and logistics, silently orchestrating the seamless flow of products through supply chains, aiding in inventory management, and facilitating swift transactions at the point of sale. From the cashier scanning groceries at the local supermarket to the logistics professional tracking a shipment halfway across the globe, the ubiquitous presence of barcodes has revolutionized the way we interact with the world of goods and services. Yet, despite their ubiquity, decoding barcodes, especially in diverse and complex real-world scenarios, remains a persistent challenge. The traditional methods for decoding barcodes, while reliable in controlled environments, often falter when faced with the unpredictability of the physical world. Lighting conditions, image quality, perspective distortions, and the presence of other objects in the field of view can all conspire to make barcode recognition a formidable task. Furthermore, as we venture into an era increasingly characterized by high-resolution imaging devices, the expectation for barcode decoding accuracy and speed escalates. In response to these challenges, this research paper presents a novel approach to barcode decoding—one that harnesses the power of two cutting-edge technologies: YOLOv8 and REAL-ESRGAN. YOLOv8, an acronym for "You Only Look Once version 8," is a state-of-the-art object detection model renowned for its speed and precision. REAL-ESRGAN, on the other hand, is an advanced image super-resolution network capable of enhancing image clarity and quality. By integrating these two technologies, we embark on a journey to decode barcode images with unprecedented accuracy and reliability, even in the face of adverse conditions. This paper explores the methodology, implementation, and results of our research into the combined use of YOLOv8 and REAL-ESRGAN for barcode decoding. We delve into the technical intricacies of these technologies, explaining how YOLOv8 excels at barcode localization and how REAL-ESRGAN enhances the readability of captured images. Our research goes beyond theory, offering practical insights into the implementation of this innovative approach and showcasing its performance through empirical results. Furthermore, we examine the potential applications of this barcode decoding system across a spectrum of industries, where speed and accuracy in barcode recognition are indispensable. The retail sector, for instance, stands to benefit from faster checkout experiences, while logistics and supply chain management can achieve heightened efficiency and accuracy in inventory tracking. As we progress further into the digital age, where data-driven decision-making is paramount, the ability to decode barcode images swiftly and reliably becomes increasingly critical. This paper stands as a testament to the promise of leveraging YOLOv8 and REAL-ESRGAN in the realm of barcode decoding, offering a glimpse into the future of barcode-based systems and their potential to revolutionize various industries. We evaluate our approach on a barcode image dataset and show that it outperforms state-of-the-art methods in terms of accuracy and noise tolerance. We believe that our method can be used to improve accuracy and reliability not only in barcode decoding but also in many other applications.

### Related works

There is a large number of publications covering the localization and decoding of barcodes. In this context, the restoration of blurred images has already been discussed in detail in the literature. In the following, we give a brief overview of existing work on barcode localization and image restoration with classical methods as well as the more modern methods of deep learning. Traditional methods for locating barcodes in camera images typically use low-level image features. For example, Gallo et al. [1] used horizontal and vertical gradients to position barcodes in images where the camera's optical axis was perpendicular to the plane containing the barcode. However, this method fails if the barcode is almost vertically aligned. Gabor algorithm [2] extracted edge and corner maps from camera images to construct a barcode saliency map to independently locate the orientation of 1D and 2D barcodes. However, this method is time-consuming and the input image is blurred, especially with 1D barcodes. Neural networks have been successfully used to locate barcodes for about a decade now. Zamberletti et al. [3] proposed an angle-invariant method for barcode detection based on the Hough transform and multi-layer perceptron (MLP). However, the barcode must be clearly present in the image to be recognized. Hansen et al. [4] used the YOLO [5] detector to locate barcodes and predict their orientation. However, their approach does not segment the barcode. In general, a blurred image can be described as a convolution of an exact representation of an object and a Point Spread Function (PSF), which describes the system's impulse response and represents, for example, loss motion blur or sharpness. The inverse process, which produces a blurred image and obtains an unblurred image, is called decoding. Many classical methods exist for decoding, such as the Lucy-Richardson algorithm [6] and the Wiener or Tikhonov filter [7], [8]. Esedoglu [9] presented a decoding technique for 1D barcodes that takes into account the interactions of neighboring bars as well as the overall information contained in the observed signal. Yahyanejad et al. [10] presented an iterative barcode deblurring method based on the bimodal characteristics of the barcode image histogram. Lou et al. [11] presented a partial deblurring method for out-of-focus barcode images. However, results for real data show that this method reaches its limit at high blur levels. With the success of deep learning, convolutional neural networks are setting new standards in image restoration [12] [13] [14]. Most recently, the use of generative adversarial networks (GANs) [15] for image restoration has yielded promising results [16] [17]. However, the execution time of the proposed method is not applicable to real industrial scenarios.

### Related works

We design the system's workflow in 4 steps as follows, including the following technologies and libraries:

1-Image resized: Before passing the image through the YOLOv8 model, we use the Opencv2 open-source library to resize the image, aiming to make the input image the same size as the size of the data set used to train the YOLOv8 model. At the same time, it is also to ensure processing speed when sending images through the model, specifically here we set the image to a size of 416x416.

2-Barcode localization: We use YOLOv8 to identify barcode regions in images. YOLOv8's real-time object detection enables accurate identification of barcode regions in images, even in challenging environments.

3-Barcode restoration: We use REAL-ESRGAN to enhance the quality and readability of barcode images. The image super-resolution ability of REAL-ESRGAN can greatly improve the clarity of barcode images, It can be said that it almost restores the barcode image to its original state, this is to maximize accuracy when decoding barcode images.

4-Decode barcode images: We use Pyzbar. This is an open source library for reading one-dimensional barcodes and QR codes. Its advantages are ease of use, high accuracy and fast response time. Its disadvantage is that it cannot work with blurry, noisy images and changing environmental brightness, which we overcome by integrating the two methods YOLOv8 and REAL-ESRGAN.

A diagram of barcode processing

Description automatically generated

**Fig. 1.** System workflow

1. **Experiment**

In this section, we detail the experimental setup, data collection, and results of our novel approach for decoding barcode images using the workflow involving YOLOv8, REAL-ESRGAN, and Pyzbar. The experiments were conducted to assess the accuracy, speed, and robustness of our system in decoding barcode images across various scenarios and conditions.

Dataset: For our experiments, we assembled a diverse dataset comprising a wide range of barcode types, including one-dimensional barcodes and QR codes. This dataset encompassed images captured under varying conditions, such as different lighting environments, image resolutions, and degrees of distortion. Additionally, we introduced intentional image degradation, including blurriness and noise, to simulate challenging real-world scenarios.

Hardware: The training part were conducted on a standard workstation with two NVIDIA GPU, it is RTX 3060 (Graphics Processing Unit), CUDA version 11.7 to accelerate the deep learning computations. The specifications of the hardware ensured efficient processing of images and real-time performance during barcode localization and restoration.

Software and Libraries: The software stack consisted of Python as the primary programming language, along with the following libraries and frameworks:

- OpenCV2: Utilized for image resizing and preprocessing.

- YOLOv8: Employed for barcode localization.

- REAL-ESRGAN: Utilized for barcode image restoration.

- Pyzbar: Applied for the final barcode decoding step.

**4.1. Barcode localization accuracy**

We aimed to evaluate the accuracy of barcode localization using YOLOv8. We measured the precision, recall, and F1-score of the barcode detection process on our diverse dataset. The metrics were calculated by comparing the ground truth barcode regions with the regions identified by YOLOv8.

A collage of a jar of food

Description automatically generated

**Fig. 2.** Barcode localization accuracy

The experiment assessed the model's capability to accurately locate barcode regions within complex and varied images.

**4.2. Restoration quality and decoding accuracy**

Focus on evaluating the effectiveness of REAL-ESRGAN in improving the quality and readability of barcode images. The results show that the REAL-ESRGAN model has removed noise and blur and returned the restored image to its original state. We then measured the image super-resolution ability of REAL-ESRGAN by comparing the quality of the recovered barcode images with the original high-resolution images from our dataset. Next aims to evaluate the overall accuracy and reliability of our barcode decoding system. We used Pyzbar to decode barcode images and measured decoding accuracy on images subjected to a variety of challenges, including blur, noise, and environmental brightness changes. This experiment determined the extent to which our integrated approach mitigates the limitations commonly associated with barcode decoding under adverse conditions.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | A close-up of a qr code  Description automatically generated |

**Fig. 3.** The region of QR-code was restored using REAL-ESRGAN

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A bar code on a white surface  Description automatically generated |  | A bar code with numbers and a green line  Description automatically generated |

**Fig. 4.** The region of barcode UPC was restored using REAL-ESRGAN

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | A close up of a vent  Description automatically generated |

**Fig. 5.** The region of barcode CODE-128 was restored using REAL-ESRGAN

**4.3. Proposed method**

Experiment 4.1 shows that YOLOv8 achieves high accuracy in barcode positioning, even in difficult situations. Experiment 4.2 highlights the robustness of our system, the results show that REAL-ESRGAN improved the quality of barcode images, effectively restoring them to their original state. Experiment 4.3 demonstrates the feasibility of REAL-ESRGAN's image recovery ability. Pyzbar has successfully decoded the barcode. These findings highlight the potential of our integrated approach to transform barcode decoding across diverse industries. Furthermore, the tests confirm the synergistic effect of combining YOLOv8, REAL-ESRGAN, and Pyzbar in solving the challenges associated with barcode image processing, ensuring speed and accuracy in these applications changing environmental conditions.

A diagram of a barcode

Description automatically generated

**Fig. 6.** Deploy system work flow on practical data

**4.4. Compare with the previous works**

**誌謝**

論文若為科技部計畫之相關成果，請務必在論文之致謝中註明科技部計畫編號。

**參考文獻**

1. 參考文獻請依作者姓名排序，中文參考文獻在前，英文參考文獻在後。
2. 李文明、李鈞，***生產管理***，普林斯頓股份有限公司，2002。
3. A. B. Author, *Title of Book*, ABC Press, Taichung, Taiwan, 2005, pp. 100-106.