

A Survey of the Recent Architectures of Deep Convolutional Neural Networks

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Abstract

Deep Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) are a special type of Neural Networks, which have shown state-of-the-art performance on various competitive benchmarks. The powerful learning ability of deep CNN is largely due to the use of multiple feature extraction stages (hidden layers) that can automatically learn representations from the data. Availability of a large amount of data and improvements in the hardware processing units have accelerated the research in CNNs, and recently very interesting deep CNN architectures are reported. The recent race in developing deep CNNs shows that the innovative architectural ideas, as well as parameter optimization, can improve CNN performance. In this regard, different ideas in the CNN design have been explored such as the use of different activation and loss functions, parameter optimization, regularization, and restructuring of the processing units. However, the major improvement in representational capacity of the deep CNN is achieved by the restructuring of the processing units. Especially, the idea of using a block as a structural unit instead of a layer is receiving substantial attention. This survey thus focuses on the intrinsic taxonomy present in the recently reported deep CNN architectures and consequently, classifies the recent innovations in CNN architectures into seven different categories. These seven categories are based on spatial exploitation, depth, multi-path, width, feature map exploitation, channel boosting, and attention. Additionally, this survey also covers the elementary understanding of CNN components and sheds light on its current challenges and applications.

Keywords: Deep Learning, Convolutional Neural Networks, Architecture, Representational Capacity, Residual Learning, and Channel Boosted CNN.

1 Introduction

Machine Learning (ML) algorithms belong to a specialized area in Artificial Intelligence (AI), which endows intelligence to computers by learning the underlying relationships among the data and making decisions without being explicitly programmed. Different ML algorithms have been developed since the late 1990s, for the emulation of human sensory responses such as speech and vision, but they have generally failed to achieve human-level satisfaction [1]–[6]. The challenging nature of Machine Vision (MV) tasks gives rise to a specialized class of Neural Networks (NN), known as Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) [7].

CNNs are considered as one of the best techniques for learning image content and have shown state-of-the-art results on image recognition, segmentation, detection, and retrieval related tasks [8], [9]. The success of CNN has captured attention beyond academia. In industry, companies such as Google, Microsoft, AT&T, NEC, and Facebook have developed active research groups for exploring new architectures of CNN [10]. At present, most of the frontrunners of image processing competitions are employing deep CNN based models.

The topology of CNN is divided into multiple learning stages composed of a combination of the convolutional layer, non-linear processing units, and subsampling layers [11]. Each layer performs multiple transformations using a bank of convolutional kernels (filters) [12]. Convolution operation extracts locally correlated features by dividing the image into small slices (similar to the retina of the human eye), making it capable of learning suitable features. Output of the convolutional kernels is assigned to non-linear processing units, which not only helps in learning abstraction but also embeds non-linearity in the feature space. This non-linearity generates different patterns of activations for different responses and thus facilitates in learning of semantic differences in images. Output of the non-linear function is usually followed by subsampling, which helps in summarizing the results and also makes the input invariant to geometrical distortions [12], [13].

The architectural design of CNN was inspired by Hubel and Wiesel’s work and thus largely follows the basic structure of primate’s visual cortex [14], [15]. CNN first came to limelight through the work of LeCuN in 1989 for the processing of grid-like topological data (images and

time series data) [7], [16]. The popularity of CNN is largely due to its hierarchical feature extraction ability. Hierarchical organization of CNN emulates the deep and layered learning process of the Neocortex in the human brain, which automatically extract features from the underlying data [17]. The staging of learning process in CNN shows quite resemblance with primate's ventral pathway of visual cortex (V1-V2-V4-IT/VTC) [18]. The visual cortex of primates first receives input from the retinotopic area, where multi-scale highpass filtering and contrast normalization is performed by the lateral geniculate nucleus. After this, detection is performed by different regions of the visual cortex categorized as V1, V2, V3, and V4. In fact, V1 and V2 portion of visual cortex are similar to convolutional, and subsampling layers, whereas inferior temporal region resembles the higher layers of CNN, which makes inference about the image [19]. During training, CNN learns through backpropagation algorithm, by regulating the change in weights with respect to the input. Minimization of a cost function by CNN using backpropagation algorithm is similar to the response based learning of human brain. CNN has the ability to extract low, mid, and high-level features. High level features (more abstract features) are a combination of lower and mid-level features. With the automatic feature extraction ability, CNN reduces the need for synthesizing a separate feature extractor [20]. Thus, CNN can learn good internal representation from raw pixels with diminutive processing.

The main boom in the use of CNN for image classification and segmentation occurred after it was observed that the representational capacity of a CNN can be enhanced by increasing its depth [21]. Deep architectures have an advantage over shallow architectures, when dealing with complex learning problems. Stacking of multiple linear and non-linear processing units in a layer wise fashion provides deep networks the ability to learn complex representations at different levels of abstraction. In addition, advancements in hardware and thus the availability of high computing resources is also one of the main reasons of the recent success of deep CNNs. Deep CNN architectures have shown significant performance of improvements over shallow and conventional vision based models. Apart from its use in supervised learning, deep CNNs have potential to learn useful representation from large scale of unlabeled data. Use of the multiple mapping functions by CNN enables it to improve the extraction of invariant representations and consequently, makes it capable to handle recognition tasks of hundreds of categories. Recently, it is shown that different level of features including both low and high-level can be transferred to a

generic recognition task by exploiting the concept of Transfer Learning (TL) [22]–[24]. Important attributes of CNN are hierarchical learning, automatic feature extraction, multi-tasking, and weight sharing [25]–[27].

Various improvements in CNN learning strategy and architecture were performed to make CNN scalable to large and complex problems. These innovations can be categorized as parameter optimization, regularization, structural reformulation, etc. However, it is observed that CNN based applications became prevalent after the exemplary performance of AlexNet on ImageNet dataset [21]. Thus major innovations in CNN have been proposed since 2012 and were mainly due to restructuring of processing units and designing of new blocks. Similarly, Zeiler and Fergus [28] introduced the concept of layer-wise visualization of features, which shifted the trend towards extraction of features at low spatial resolution in deep architecture such as VGG [29]. Nowadays, most of the new architectures are built upon the principle of simple and homogenous topology introduced by VGG. On the other hand, Google group introduced an interesting idea of split, transform, and merge, and the corresponding block is known as inception block. The inception block for the very first time gave the concept of branching within a layer, which allows abstraction of features at different spatial scales [30]. In 2015, the concept of skip connections introduced by ResNet [31] for the training of deep CNNs got famous, and afterwards, this concept was used by most of the succeeding Nets, such as Inception-ResNet, WideResNet, ResNext, etc [32]–[34].

In order to improve the learning capacity of a CNN, different architectural designs such as WideResNet, Pyramidal Net, Xception etc. explored the effect of multilevel transformations in terms of an additional cardinality and increase in width [32], [34], [35]. Therefore, the focus of research shifted from parameter optimization and connections readjustment towards improved architectural design (layer structure) of the network. This shift resulted in many new architectural ideas such as channel boosting, spatial and channel wise exploitation and attention based information processing etc. [36]–[38].

In the past few years, different interesting surveys are conducted on deep CNNs that elaborate the basic components of CNN and their alternatives. The survey reported by [39] has reviewed the famous architectures from 2012-2015 along with their components. Similarly, in the

literature, there are prominent surveys that discuss different algorithms of CNN and focus on applications of CNN [20], [26], [27], [40], [41]. Likewise, the survey presented in [42] discussed taxonomy of CNNs based on acceleration techniques. On the other hand, in this survey, we discuss the intrinsic taxonomy present in the recent and prominent CNN architectures. The various CNN architectures discussed in this survey can be broadly classified into seven main categories namely; spatial exploitation, depth, multi-path, width, feature map exploitation, channel boosting, and attention based CNNs. The rest of the paper is organized in the following order (shown in Fig. 1): Section 1 summarizes the underlying basics of CNN, its resemblance with primate's visual cortex, as well as its contribution in MV. In this regard, Section 2 provides the overview on basic CNN components and Section 3 discusses the architectural evolution of deep CNNs. Whereas, Section 4, discusses the recent innovations in CNN architectures and categorizes CNNs into seven broad classes. Section 5 and 6 shed light on applications of CNNs and current challenges, whereas section 7 discusses future work and last section draws conclusion.

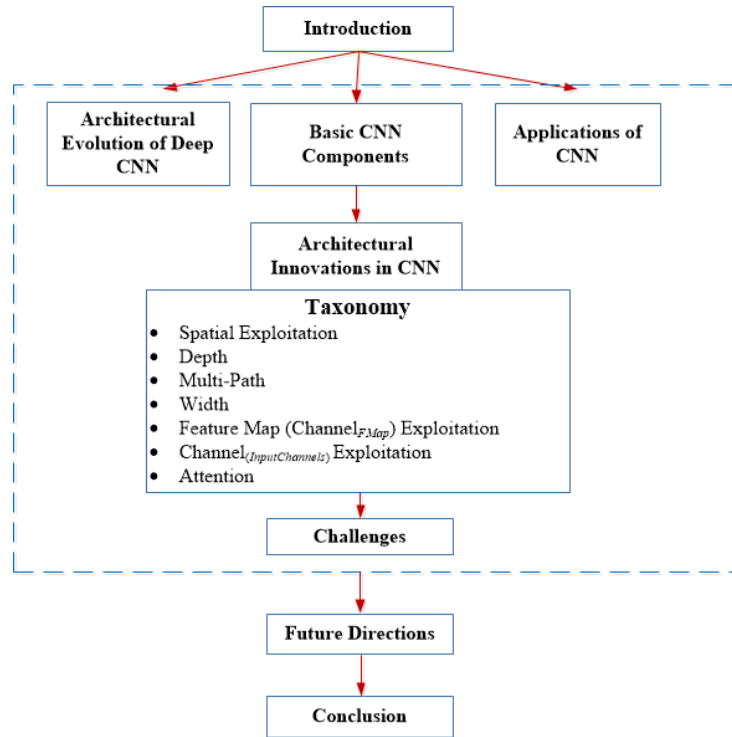


Fig. 1: Organization of the survey paper.

2 Basic CNN Components

Nowadays, CNN is considered as the most widely used ML technique, especially in vision related applications. CNNs have recently shown state-of-the-art results in various ML applications. A typical block diagram of an ML system is shown in Fig. 2. Since, CNN possesses both good feature extraction and strong discrimination ability, therefore in a ML system; it is mostly used for feature extraction and classification.

A typical CNN architecture generally comprises of alternate layers of convolution and pooling followed by one or more fully connected layers at the end. In some cases, fully connected layer is replaced with global average pooling layer. In addition to the various learning stages, different regulatory units such as batch normalization and dropout are also incorporated to optimize CNN performance [43]. The arrangement of CNN components play a fundamental role in designing new architectures and thus achieving enhanced performance. This section briefly discusses the role of these components in CNN architecture.

2.1 Convolutional Layer

Convolutional layer is composed of a set of convolutional kernels (each neuron act as a kernel). These kernels are associated with a small area of the image known as a receptive field. It works by dividing the image into small blocks (receptive fields) and convolving them with a specific set of weights (multiplying elements of the filter with the corresponding receptive field elements) [43]. Convolution operation can expressed as follows:

$$F_l^k = (I_{x,y} * K_l^k) \quad (1)$$

Where, the input image is represented by $I_{x,y}$, x, y shows spatial locality and K_l^k represents the l^{th} convolutional kernel of the k^{th} layer. Division of image into small blocks helps in extracting locally correlated pixel values. This locally aggregated information is also known as feature motif. Different set of features within image are extracted by sliding convolutional kernel on the whole image with the same set of weights. This weight sharing feature of convolution operation

makes CNN parameter efficient as compared to fully connected Nets. Convolution operation may further be categorized into different types based on the type and size of filters, type of padding, and the direction of convolution [44]. Additionally, if the kernel is symmetric, the convolution operation becomes a correlation operation [16].

2.2 Pooling Layer

Feature motifs, which result as an output of convolution operation can occur at different locations in the image. Once features are extracted, its exact location becomes less important as long as its approximate position relative to others is preserved. Pooling or downsampling like convolution, is an interesting local operation. It sums up similar information in the neighborhood of the receptive field and outputs the dominant response within this local region [45].

$$Z_l = f_p(F_{x,y}^l) \quad (2)$$

Equation (2) shows the pooling operation in which Z_l represents the l^{th} output feature map, $F_{x,y}^l$ shows the l^{th} input feature map, whereas $f_p(.)$ defines the type of pooling operation. The use of pooling operation helps to extract a combination of features, which are invariant to translational shifts and small distortions [13], [46]. Reduction in the size of feature map to invariant feature set not only regulates complexity of the network but also helps in increasing the generalization by reducing overfitting. Different types of pooling formulations such as max, average, L2, overlapping, spatial pyramid pooling, etc. are used in CNN [47]–[49].

2.3 Activation Function

Activation function serves as a decision function and helps in learning a complex pattern. Selection of an appropriate activation function can accelerate the learning process. Activation function for a convolved feature map is defined in equation (3).

$$T_l^k = f_A(F_l^k) \quad (3)$$

In above equation, F_l^k is an output of a convolution operation, which is assigned to activation function; $f_A(.)$ that adds non-linearity and returns a transformed output T_l^k for k^{th} layer. In literature, different activation functions such as sigmoid, tanh, maxout, ReLU, and variants of ReLU such as leaky ReLU, ELU, and PReLU [39], [48], [50], [51] are used to inculcate non-linear combination of features. However, ReLU and its variants are preferred over others activations as it helps in overcoming the vanishing gradient problem [52], [53].

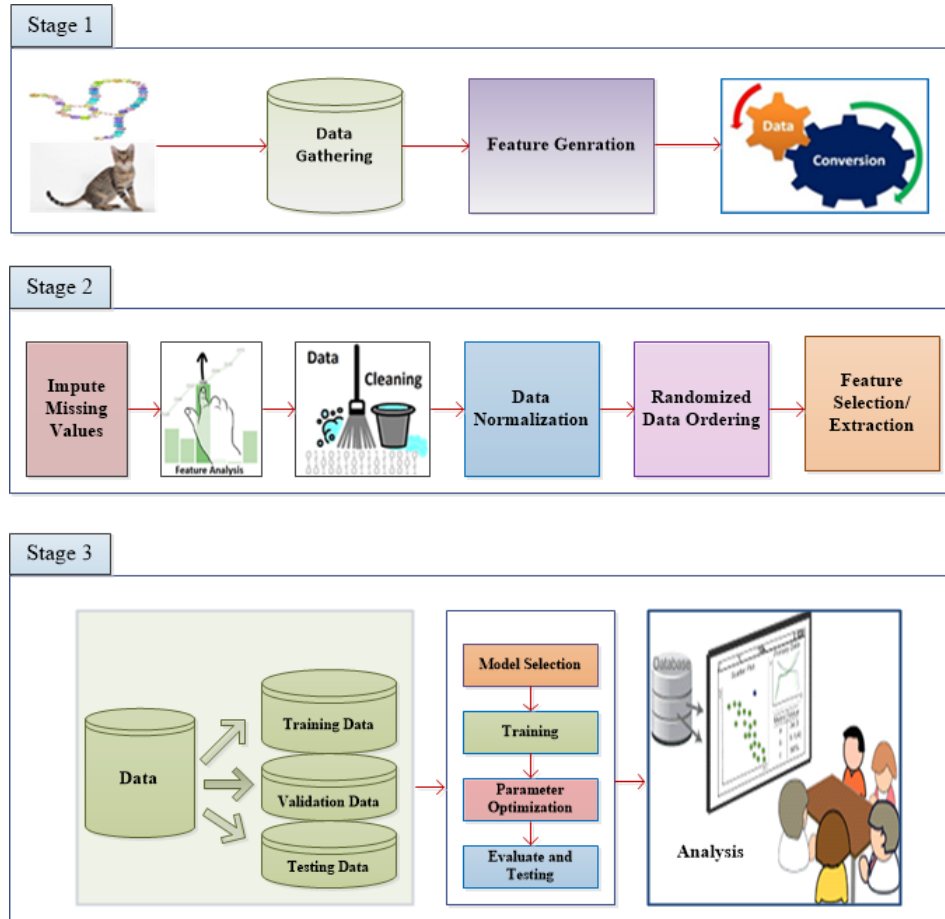


Fig. 2: Basic layout of a typical ML system. In ML related tasks, initially data is preprocessed and then assigned to a classification system. A typical ML problem follows three steps: stage 1 is related to data gathering and generation, stage 2 performs preprocessing and feature selection, whereas stage 3 is based on model selection, parameter tuning, and analysis. CNN has a good feature extraction and strong discrimination ability, therefore in a ML system; it can be used for feature extraction and classification.

2.4 Batch Normalization

Batch normalization is used to address the issues related to internal covariance shift within feature maps. The internal covariance shift is a change in the distribution of hidden units' values, which slow down the convergence (by forcing learning rate to small value) and requires careful initialization of parameters. Batch normalization for a transformed feature map T_l^k is shown in equation (4).

$$N_l^k = \frac{F_l^k - \mu_B}{\sqrt{\sigma_B^2 + \epsilon}} \quad (4)$$

In equation (4), N_l^k represents normalized feature map, F_l^k is the input feature map, μ_B and σ_B^2 depict mean and variance of a feature map for a mini batch respectively. Batch normalization unifies the distribution of feature map values by bringing them to zero mean and unit variance [54]. Furthermore, it smoothens the flow of gradient and acts as a regulating factor, which thus helps in improving generalization of the network.

2.5 Dropout

Dropout introduces regularization within the network, which ultimately improves generalization by randomly skipping some units or connections with a certain probability. In NNs, multiple connections that learn a non-linear relation are sometimes co-adapted, which causes overfitting [55]. This random dropping of some connections or units produces several thinned network architectures, and finally one representative network is selected with small weights. This selected architecture is then considered as an approximation of all of the proposed networks [56].

2.6 Fully Connected Layer

Fully connected layer is mostly used at the end of the network for classification purpose. Unlike pooling and convolution, it is a global operation. It takes input from the previous layer and globally analyses output of all the preceding layers [57]. This makes a non-linear combination of selected features, which are used for the classification of data. [58].

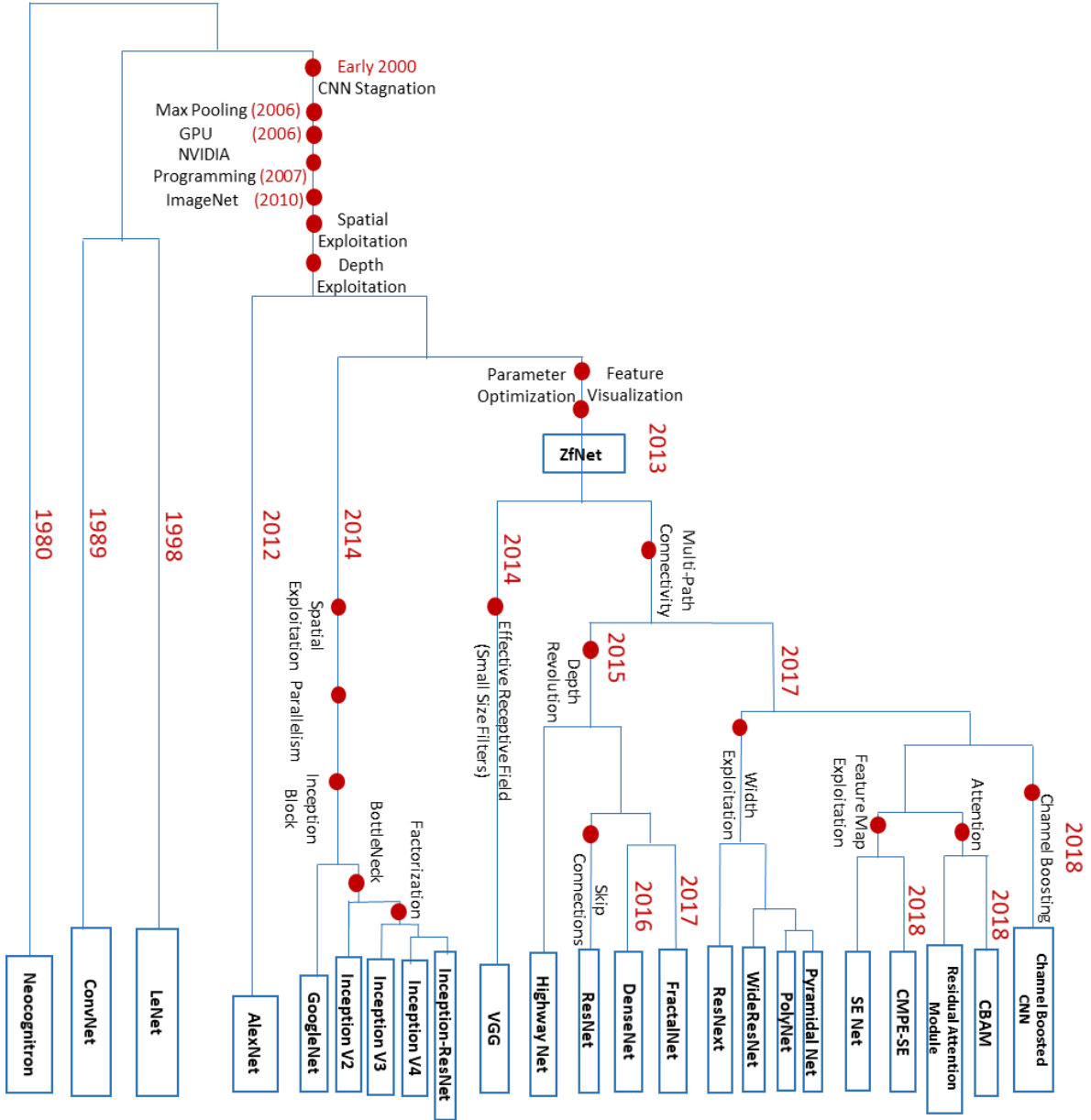


Fig. 3: Evolutionary history of deep CNNs.

3 Architectural Evolution of Deep CNN

Nowadays, CNNs are considered as the most widely used algorithms among biologically inspired AI techniques. CNN history begins from the neurobiological experiments conducted by Hubel and Wiesel (1959, 1962) [14], [59]. Their work provided a platform for many cognitive models, almost all of which were latterly replaced by CNN. Over the decades, different efforts have been carried out to improve the performance of CNNs. This history is pictorially represented in Fig. 3. These improvements can be categorized into five different eras and are discussed below.

3.1 Late 1980s-1999: Origin of CNN

CNNs have been applied to visual tasks since the late 1980s. In 1989, LeCuN et al. proposed the first multilayered CNN named as ConvNet, whose origin rooted in Fukushima's Neocognitron [60], [61]. LeCuN proposed supervised training of ConvNet, using Backpropagation algorithm [7], [62] in comparison to the unsupervised reinforcement learning scheme used by its predecessor Neocognitron. LeCuN's work thus made a foundation for the modern 2D CNNs. Supervised training in CNN provides the automatic feature learning ability from raw input, rather than designing of handcrafted features, used by traditional ML methods. This ConvNet showed successful results for handwritten digit and zip code recognition related problems [63]. In 1998, ConvNet was improved by LeCuN and used for classifying characters in a document recognition application [64]. This modified architecture was named as LeNet-5, which was an improvement over the initial CNN as it can extract feature representation in a hierarchical way from raw pixels [65]. Reliance of LeNet-5 on fewer parameters along with consideration of spatial topology of images enabled CNN to recognize rotational variants of the image [65]. Due to the good performance of CNN in optical character recognition, its commercial use in ATM and Banks started in 1993 and 1996, respectively. Though, many successful milestones were achieved by LeNet-5, yet the main concern associated with it was that its discrimination power was not scaled to classification tasks other than hand recognition.

3.2 Early 2000: Stagnation of CNN

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, interest in NNs reduced and less attention was given to explore the role of CNNs in different applications such as object detection, video surveillance, etc. Use of CNN in ML related tasks became dormant due to the insignificant improvement in performance at the cost of high computational time. At that time, other statistical methods and, in particular, SVM became more popular than CNN due to its relatively high performance [66]–[68]. It was widely presumed in early 2000 that the backpropagation algorithm used for training of CNN was not effective in converging to optimal points and therefore unable to learn useful features in supervised fashion as compared to handcrafted features [69]. Meanwhile, different researchers kept working on CNN and tried to optimize its performance. In 2003, Simard et al. improved CNN architecture and showed good results as compared to SVM on a hand digit benchmark dataset; MNIST [64], [68], [70]–[72]. This performance improvement expedited the research in CNN by extending its application in optical character recognition (OCR) to other script’s character recognition [72]–[74], deployment in image sensors for face detection in video conferencing, and regulation of street crimes, etc. Likewise, CNN based systems were industrialized in markets for tracking customers [75]–[77]. Moreover, CNN’s potential in other applications such as medical image segmentation, anomaly detection, and robot vision was also explored [78]–[80].

3.3 2006-2011: Revival of CNN

Deep NNs have generally complex architecture and time intensive training phase that sometimes spanned over weeks and even months. In early 2000, there were only a few techniques for the training of deep Networks. Additionally, it was considered that CNN is not able to scale for complex problems. These challenges halted the use of CNN in ML related tasks.

To address these problems, in 2006 many interesting methods were reported to overcome the difficulties encountered in the training of deep CNNs and learning of invariant features. Hinton proposed greedy layer-wise pre-training approach in 2006, for deep architectures, which revived and reinstated the importance of deep learning [81], [82]. The revival of a deep learning [83], [84] was one of the factors, which brought deep CNNs into the limelight. Huang et al. (2006)

used max pooling instead of subsampling, which showed good results by learning of invariant features [46], [85].

In late 2006, researchers started using graphics processing units (GPUs) [86], [87] to accelerate training of deep NN and CNN architectures [88], [89]. In 2007, NVIDIA launched the CUDA programming platform [90], [91], which allows exploitation of parallel processing capabilities of GPU with a much greater degree [92]. In essence, the use of GPUs for NN training [88], [93] and other hardware improvements were the main factor, which revived the research in CNN. In 2010, Fei-Fei Li's group at Stanford, established a large database of images known as ImageNet, containing millions of labeled images [94]. This database was coupled with the annual ImageNet Large Scale Visual Recognition Challenge (ILSVRC) competitions, where the performances of various models have been evaluated and scored [95]. Consequently, ILSVRC and NIPS have been very active in strengthening research and increasing the use of CNN and thus making it popular. This was a turning point in improving the performance and increasing the use of CNN.

3.4 2012-2014: Rise of CNN

Availability of big training data, hardware advancements, and computational resources contributed to advancement in CNN algorithms. Renaissance of CNN in object detection, image classification, and segmentation related tasks had been observed in this period [9], [96]. However, the success of CNN in image classification tasks was not only due to the result of aforementioned factors but largely contributed by the architectural modifications, parameter optimization, incorporation of regulatory units, and reformulation and readjustment of connections within the network [39], [42], [97].

The main breakthrough in CNN performance was brought by AlexNet [21]. AlexNet won the 2012-ILSVRC competition, which has been one of the most difficult challenges in image detection and classification. AlexNet improved performance by exploiting depth (incorporating multiple levels of transformation) and introduced regularization term in CNN. The exemplary performance of AlexNet [21] compared to conventional ML techniques in 2012-ILSVRC (AlexNet reduced error rate from 25.8 to 16.4) suggested that the main reason of the saturation in CNN performance before 2006 was largely due to the unavailability of enough training data and

computational resources. In summary, before 2006, these resource deficiencies made it hard to train a high-capacity CNN without deterioration of performance [98].

With CNN becoming more of a commodity in the computer vision (CV) field, a number of attempts have been made to improve the performance of CNN with reduced computational cost. Therefore, each new architecture try to overcome the shortcomings of previously proposed architecture in combination with new structural reformulations. In year 2013 and 2014, researchers mainly focused on parameter optimization to accelerate CNN performance in a range of applications with a small increase in computational complexity. In 2013, Zeiler and Fergus [28] defined a mechanism to visualize learned filters of each CNN layer. Visualization approach was used to improve the feature extraction stage by reducing the size of the filters. Similarly, VGG architecture [29] proposed by the Oxford group, which was runner-up at the 2014-ILSVRC competition, made the receptive field much smaller in comparison to that of AlexNet but, with increased volume. In VGG, depth was increased from 9 layers to 16, by making the volume of features maps double at each layer. In the same year, GoogleNet [99] that won 2014-ILSVRC competition, not only exerted its efforts to reduce computational cost by changing layer design, but also widened the width in compliance with depth to improve CNN performance. GoogleNet introduced the concept of split, transform, and merge based blocks, within which multiscale and multilevel transformation is incorporated to capture both local and global information [33], [99], [100]. The use of multilevel transformations helps CNN in tackling details of images at various levels. In the year 2012-14, the main improvement in the learning capacity of CNN was achieved by increasing its depth and parameter optimization strategies. This suggested that the depth of a CNN helps in improving the performance of a classifier.

3.5 2015-Present: Rapid increase in Architectural Innovations and Applications of CNN

It is generally observed the major improvements in CNN performance occurred from 2015-2019. The research in CNN is still on going and has a significant potential of improvement. Representational capacity of CNN depends on its depth and in a sense can help in learning complex problems by defining diverse level of features ranging from simple to complex. Multiple levels of transformation make learning easy by chopping complex problems into

smaller modules. However, the main challenge faced by deep architectures is the problem of negative learning, which occurs due to diminishing gradient at lower layers of the network. To handle this problem, different research groups worked on readjustment of layers connections and design of new modules. In earlier 2015, Srivastava et al. used the concept of cross-channel connectivity and information gating mechanism to solve the vanishing gradient problem and to improve the network representational capacity [101]–[103]. This idea got famous in late 2015 and a similar concept of residual blocks or skip connections was coined [31]. Residual blocks are a variant of cross-channel connectivity, which smoothen learning by regularizing the flow of information across blocks [104]–[106]. This idea was used in ResNet architecture for the training of 150 layers deep network [31]. The idea of cross-channel connectivity is further extended to multilayer connectivity by Deluge, DenseNet, etc. to improve representation [107], [108].

In the year 2016, the width of the network was also explored in connection with depth to improve feature learning [34], [35]. Apart from this, no new architectural modification became prominent but instead, different researchers used hybrid of the already proposed architectures to improve deep CNN performance [33], [104]–[106], [109], [110]. This fact gave the intuition that there might be other factors more important as compared to the appropriate assembly of the network units that can effectively regulate CNN performance. In this regard, Hu et al. (2017) identified that the network representation has a role in learning of deep CNNs [111]. Hu et al. introduced the idea of feature map exploitation and pinpointed that less informative and domain extraneous features may affect the performance of the network to a larger extent. He exploited the aforementioned idea and proposed new architecture named as Squeeze and Excitation Network (SE-Network) [111]. It exploits feature map (commonly known as channel in literature) information by designing a specialized SE-block. This block assigns weight to each feature map depending upon its contribution in class discrimination. This idea was further investigated by different researchers, which assign attention to important regions by exploiting both spatial and feature map (channel) information [37], [38], [112]. In 2018, a new idea of channel boosting was introduced by Khan et al [36]. The motivation behind the training of network with boosted channel representation was to use an enriched representation. This idea effectively boost the performance of a CNN by learning diverse features as well as exploiting the already learnt features through the concept of TL.

From 2012 up till now, a lot of improvements have been reported in CNN architecture. As regards the architectural advancement of CNNs, recently the focus of research has been on designing of new blocks that can boost network representation by exploiting both feature maps and spatial information or by adding artificial channels.

4 Architectural Innovations in CNN

Different improvements in CNN architecture have been made from 1989 to date. These improvements can be categorized as parameter optimization, regularization, structural reformulation, etc. However, it is observed that the main thrust in CNN performance improvement came from restructuring of processing units and designing of new blocks. Most of the innovations in CNN architectures have been made in relation with depth and spatial exploitation. Depending upon the type of architectural modification, CNN can be broadly categorized into seven different classes namely; spatial exploitation, depth, multi-path, width, feature map exploitation, channel boosting, and attention based CNNs. The taxonomy of deep presented in Fig. 4 showing seven different classes, while their summary is represented in Table 1.

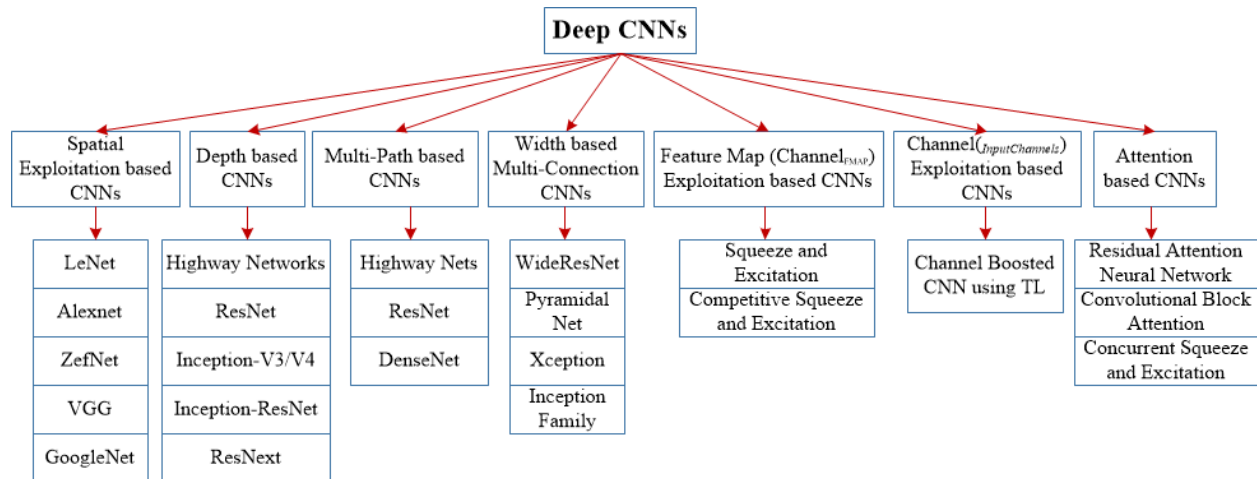


Fig. 4: Taxonomy of deep CNN architectures.

Table 1 Performance comparison of the recent architectures of different categories. Top 5 error rate is reported for all architectures.

Architecture Name	Year	Main contribution	Parameters	Error Rate	Depth	Category	Reference
LeNet	1998	- First Popular CNN architecture	0.060 M	[dist]MNIST: 0.8 MNIST: 0.95	7	Spatial Exploitation	[65]
AlexNet	2012	- Deeper and wider than the LeNet - Uses Relu, Dropout and overlap Pooling - GPU's NVIDIA GTX 580	60 M	ImageNet: 16.4	8	Spatial Exploitation	[21]
ZefNet	2014	- Intermediate layers feature visualization	60 M	ImageNet: 11.7	8	Spatial Exploitation	[28]
VGG	2014	- Homogenous topology - Small kernel size	138 M	ImageNet: 7.3	19	Spatial Exploitation	[29]
GoogLeNet	2015	- Split Transform Merge - Introduces block concept	4 M	ImageNet: 6.7	22	Spatial Exploitation	[99]
Inception-V3	2015	- Handles the problem of a representational bottleneck - Replace large size filters with small filters - Replaces the bigger filter with smaller filters	23.6 M	ImageNet: 3.5 Multi-Crop: 3.58 Single-Crop: 5.6	-	Depth	[100]
Highway Networks	2015	- Multi-Path Idea	2.3 M	CIFAR-10: 7.76	19	Depth + Multi-Path	[101]
Inception-V4	2016	- Split, Transform, Merge Uses asymmetric filter	-	ImageNet: 4.01	-	Depth	[100]
Inception-ResNet	2016	- Split, Transform, Merge and Residual Links	-	ImageNet: 3.52		Depth + Multi-Path	[100]
ResNet	2016	- Residual Learning and Identity mapping based skip connection	6.8 M 1.7 M	ImageNet: 3.6 CIFAR-10: 6.43	152 110	Spatial Exploitation + Depth + Multi-Path	[31]
DelugeNet	2016	- Allow cross layer information inflow in Deep Networks	20.2 M	CIFAR-10: 3.76 CIFAR-100: 19.02	146	Multi-path	[108]
FractalNet	2016	- Different path lengths are interacting with each other without any residual connection	38.6 M	CIFAR-10: 7.27 CIFAR-10+: 4.60 CIFAR-10++: 4.59 CIFAR-100: 28.20 CIFAR-100+: 22.49 CIFAR100++: 21.49	20 40	Multi-Path	[113]
WideResNet	2016	- Width is increased and depth is decreased	36.5 M	CIFAR-10: 3.89 CIFAR-100: 18.85	28 -	Width	[34]
Xception	2017	- Depth wise Convolution followed by point wise convolution	22.8 M	ImageNet: 0.055	36	Width	[114]
Residual Attention Neural Network	2017	- Introduces Attention Mechanism	8.6 M	CIFAR-10: 3.90 CIFAR-100: 20.4 ImageNet: 4.8	452	Attention	[38]
ResNexT	2017	- Cardinality - Homogeneous topology - Grouped convolution	68.1 M	CIFAR-10: 3.58 CIFAR-100: 17.31 ImageNet: 4.4	29 101	Spatial Exploitation	[115]
Squeeze & Excitation Networks	2017	- Models Interdependencies between feature maps	27.5 M	ImageNet: 2.3	152	Feature Map Exploitation	[116]
DenseNet	2017	- Cross-layer information flow	25.6 M 25.6 M 15.3 M 15.3 M	CIFAR-10+: 3.46 CIFAR100+: 17.18 CIFAR-10: 5.19 CIFAR-100: 19.64	190 190 250 250	Multi-Path	[107]
PolyNet	2017	- Experimented structural diversity - Introduces Poly Inception Module - Generalizes residual unit using Polynomial compositions	92 M	ImageNet: Single:4.25 Multi:3.45	- -	Width	[117]
PyramidalNet	2017	- Increases width gradually per unit	116.4 M 27.0 M 27.0 M	ImageNet: 4.7 CIFAR-10: 3.48 CIFAR-100: 17.01	200 164 164	Width	[35]
Convolutional Block Attention Module (ResNexT101 (32x4d) + CBAM)	2018	- Exploit both spatial and feature map information	48.96 M	ImageNet: 5.59	101	Attention	[37]
Concurrent Squeeze & Channel Excitation Mechanism	2018	- Squeezing spatially followed by exciting channel-wise - Squeezing channel-wise followed by exciting spatially - Performing spatial and channel squeeze & excitation in parallel	-	MALC: 0.12 Visceral: 0.09	-	Attention	[112]
Channel Boosted CNN	2018	- Boost the original channels with extra generated information rich channels	-	-	-	Channel Boosted	[36]
Competitive Squeeze & Excitation Network CMPE-SE-WRN-28	2018	- Residual and identity mappings both are responsible for rescaling the channel	36.92 M 36.90 M	CIFAR-10: 3.58 CIFAR-100: 18.47	28 28	Feature Map Exploitation	[118]

4.1 Spatial Exploitation based CNNs

CNN has a large number of parameters and hyperparameters such as the weights, biases, number of processing units (neurons), number of layers, filter size, stride, learning rate, activation function, etc. [119], [120]. As convolutional operation considers the neighborhood (locality) of input pixels, therefore different levels of correlation can be explored by using a different filter size. Consequently, in early 2000, researchers exploited spatial filters to improve performance in this regard; various size of filters were explored to evaluate their impact on learning of the network. Different size of filters encapsulate different levels of granularity; usually, small size filters extract fine-grained and large size extract coarse-grained information. In this way, by the adjustment of filter size, CNN can perform well both on coarse and fine-grained details.

4.1.1 LeNet

LeNet was proposed by LeCuN in 1998 [65]. It is famous due to its historical importance as it was the first CNN, which showed state-of-the-art performance on hand digit recognition tasks. It has the ability to classify digits without being affected by small distortions, rotation, and variation of position and scale. LeNet is a feed-forward NN that constitutes of five alternating layers of convolutional and pooling, followed by two fully connected layers. In early 2000, GPU was not commonly used to speed up training, and even CPUs were slow [121]. The main limitation of traditional multilayer fully connected NN was that it considers each pixel as a separate input and applies a transformation on it, which was a huge computational burden, specifically at that time [122]. LeNet exploited the underlying basis of image that the neighboring pixels are correlated to each other and are distributed across the entire image. Therefore, convolution with learnable parameters is an effective way to extract similar features at multiple locations with few parameters. This changed the conventional view of training where each pixel was considered as a separate input feature from its neighborhood and ignored the correlation among them. LeNet was the first CNN architecture, which not only reduced the number of parameters and computation but was able to automatically learn features.

4.1.2 AlexNet

LeNet [65] though begin the history of deep CNNs but at that time, CNN was limited to hand digit recognition tasks, and didn't scale well to all classes of images. AlexNet [21] is considered as the first deep CNN architecture, which showed groundbreaking results for image classification and recognition tasks. AlexNet was proposed by Krizhevsky et al., who enhanced the learning capacity of the CNN by making it deeper and by applying a number of parameter optimizations strategies [21]. Basic architectural design of AlexNet is shown in Fig. 5. In early 2000, hardware limitations curtailed the learning capacity of deep CNN architecture by restricting them to small size. In order to get benefit of the representational capacity of CNN, Alexnet was trained in parallel on two NVIDIA GTX 580 GPUs to overcome shortcomings of the hardware. In AlexNet, feature extraction stages were extended from 5 (LeNet) to 7 to make CNN applicable for diverse categories of images. Despite the fact that generally, depth improves generalization for different resolutions of images but, the main drawback associated with increase in depth is overfitting. To address this challenge, Krizhevsky et al. (2012) exploited the idea of Hinton [56], [123], whereby their algorithm randomly skips some transformational units during training to enforce the model to learn features that are more robust. In addition to this, ReLU was employed as a non-saturating activation function to improve the convergence rate by alleviating the problem of vanishing gradient to some extent [53], [124]. Overlapping subsampling and local response normalization were also applied to improve the generalization by reducing overfitting. Other adjustments made were the use of large size filters (11×11 and 5×5) at the initial layers, compared to previously proposed networks. Due to efficient learning approach of AlexNet, it has a significant importance in the new generation of CNNs and has started a new era of research in the architectural advancements of CNNs.

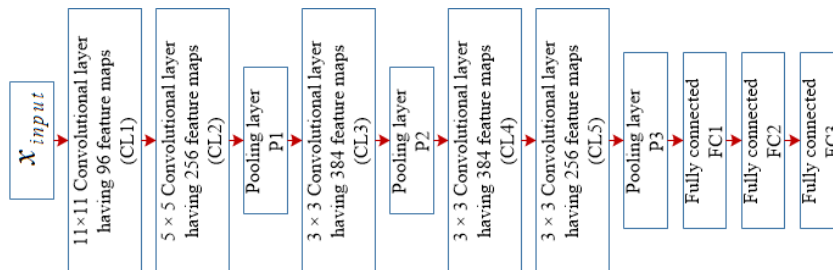


Fig. 5: Basic layout of AlexNet architecture.

4.1.3 ZefNet

Learning mechanism of CNN, before 2013, was largely based on hit-and-trial, without knowing the exact reason behind the improvement. This lack of understanding limited the performance of deep CNNs on complex images. In 2013, Zeiler and Fergus proposed an interesting multilayer Deconvolutional NN (DeconvNet), which got famous as ZefNet [28]. ZefNet was developed to quantitatively visualize network performance. The idea of the visualization of network activity was to monitor CNN performance by interpreting neuron's activation. In one of the previous studies, Erhan et al. (2009) exploited the same idea and optimized performance of Deep Belief Networks (DBNs) by visualizing hidden layers' feature [125]. In the same manner, Le et al. (2011) evaluated the performance of deep unsupervised autoencoder (AE) by visualizing the image classes generated by the output neurons [126]. DeconvNet works in the same manner as the forward pass CNN but, reverses the order of convolutional and pooling operation. This reverse mapping projects the output of convolutional layer back to visually perceptible image patterns consequently gives the neuron-level interpretation of the internal feature representation learned at each layer [127], [128]. The objective of ZefNet was to monitor the learning scheme during training and thus use the findings in diagnosing a potential problem associated with the model. This idea was experimentally validated on AlexNet using DeconvNet, which showed that only a few neurons were active, while other neurons were dead (inactive) in the first and second layer of the network. Moreover, it showed that the features extracted by the second layer exhibited aliasing artifacts. Based on these findings, Zeiler and Fergus adjusted CNN topology and performed parameter optimization. Zeiler and Fergus maximized the learning of CNN by reducing both the filter size and stride to retain maximum number of features in the first two convolutional layers. This readjustment in CNN topology resulted in performance improvement, which suggested that features visualization can be used for identification of design shortcomings and for timely adjustment of parameters.

4.1.4 VGG

With the successful use of CNNs for image recognition, Simonyan et al. proposed a simple and effective design principle for CNN architectures. Their architecture named as VGG was modular in layers pattern [29]. VGG was made 19 layers deep compared to AlexNet and ZefNet to

simulate the relationship of depth with the representational capacity of the network [21], [28]. ZefNet, which was a frontline network of 2013-ILSVRC competition, suggested that small size filters can improve the performance of the CNNs. Based on these findings, VGG replaced the 11x11 and 5x5 filters with a stack of 3x3 filters layer and experimentally demonstrated that concurrent placement of 3x3 filters can induce the effect of the large size filter (receptive field as effective as that of large size filters (5x5 and 7x7)). Use of the small size filters provide an additional benefit of low computational complexity by reducing the number of parameters. These findings set a new trend in research to work with smaller size filters in CNN. VGG regulates complexity of network by placing 1x1 convolution in between the convolutional layers, which in addition, learn a linear combination of the resultant feature maps. For the tuning of the network, max pooling is placed after the convolutional layer, while padding was performed to maintain the spatial resolution [46]. VGG showed good results both for image classification and localization problems. Although, VGG was not at the top place of 2014-ILSVRC competition but, got fame due to its simplicity, homogenous topology, and increased depth. The main limitation associated with VGG was that of high computational cost. Even with the use of small size filters, VGG suffered from high computational burden due to the use of about 140 million parameters.

4.1.5 GoogleNet

GoogleNet was the winner of the 2014-ILSVRC competition and is also known as Inception-V1. The main objective of the GoogleNet architecture was to achieve high accuracy with a reduced computational cost [99]. It introduced the new concept of inception block in CNN, whereby it incorporates multi-scale convolutional transformations using split, transform, and merge idea. The architecture of inception block is shown in Fig. 6. This block encapsulates filters of different sizes (1x1, 3x3, and 5x5) to capture spatial information at different scales (both at fine and coarse grain level). In GoogleNet, conventional convolutional layers are replaced in small blocks similar to the idea of substituting each layer with micro NN as proposed in Network in Network (NIN) architecture [57]. The exploitation of the idea of split, transform, and merge by GoogleNet, helped in addressing a problem related to the learning of diverse types of variations present in the same category of different images. In addition to the improvement in learning capacity, GoogleNet focus was to make CNN parameter efficient. GoogleNet regulates the

computation by adding a bottleneck layer with a 1×1 convolutional filter, before employing large size kernels. It used sparse connections (not all the output feature maps are connected to all the input feature maps), to overcome the problem of redundant information and reduced cost by omitting feature maps (channels) that were not relevant. Furthermore, connection's density was reduced by using global average pooling at the last layer, instead of using a fully connected layer. These parameter tunings caused a significant decrease in the number of parameters from 40 million to 5 million parameters. Other regulatory factors applied were batch normalization and use of RmsProp as an optimizer [129]. GoogleNet also introduced the concept of auxiliary learners to speed up the convergence rate. However, the main drawback of the GoogleNet was its heterogeneous topology that needs to be customized from module to module. Another, limitation of GoogleNet was a representation bottleneck that drastically reduces the feature space in the next layer and thus sometimes may lead to loss of useful information.

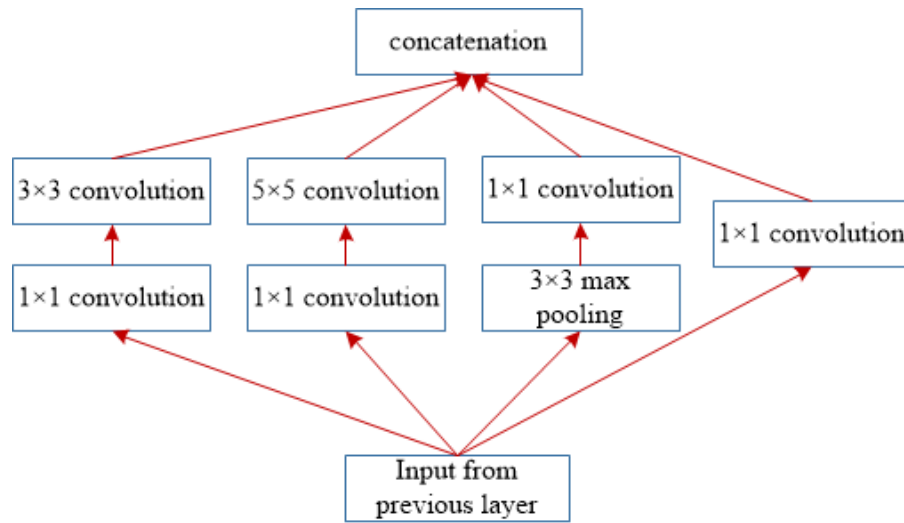


Fig. 6: Basic architecture of inception block.

4.2 Depth based CNNs

Deep CNN architectures are based on the assumption that with the increase in depth, the network can better approximate the target function with a number of nonlinear mappings and improved

feature representations [130]. Network depth has played an important role in the success of supervised training. Theoretical studies have shown that deep networks can represent certain classes of function more efficiently than shallow architectures [131]. Csáji represented universal approximation theorem in 2001, which states that a single hidden layer is sufficient to approximate any function, but this comes at the cost of exponentially many neurons thus, often making it computationally unfeasible [132]. In this regard, Bengio and Delalleau [133] suggested that deeper networks have the potential to maintain the expressive power of the network at a reduced cost [134]. In 2013, Bengio et al. empirically showed that deep networks are computationally more efficient for complex tasks [84], [135]. Inception and VGG, which showed the best performance in 2014-ILSVRC competition, further strengthen the idea that the depth is an essential dimension in regulating learning capacity of the networks [29], [33], [99], [100].

4.2.1 Highway Networks

Based on the intuition that the learning capacity can be improved by increasing the network depth, Srivastava et al. in 2015, proposed a deep CNN, named as Highway Network [101]. The main problem concerned with deep Nets is slow training and convergence speed [136]. Highway Network exploited depth for learning enriched feature representation by introducing new cross-layer connectivity (discussed in Section 4.3.1.). Therefore, highway networks are also categorized into multi-path based CNN architectures. Highway Network with 50-layers showed better convergence rate than thin but deep architectures on ImageNet dataset [94], [95]. Srivastava et al. experimentally showed that performance of a plain Net decreases after adding hidden units beyond 10 layers [137]. Highway networks, on the other hand, were shown to converge significantly faster than the plain ones, even with depth of 900 layers.

4.2.2 ResNet

ResNet was proposed by He et al., which is considered as a continuation of deep Nets [31]. ResNet revolutionized the CNN architectural race by introducing the concept of residual learning in CNN and devised an efficient methodology for training of deep Nets. Similar to Highway Networks, it is also placed under the Multi-Path based CNNs, thus its learning methodology is discussed in Section 4.3.2. ResNet proposed 152-layers deep CNN, which won the 2015-

ILSVRC competition. Architecture of the residual block of ResNet is shown in Fig. 7. ResNet, which was 20 and 8 times deeper than AlexNet and VGG respectively, showed less computational complexity than previously proposed Nets [21], [29]. He et al. empirically showed that ResNet with 50/101/152 layers has less error on image classification task than 34 layers plain Net. Moreover, ResNet gained 28% improvement on the famous image recognition benchmark dataset named as COCO [138]. Good performance of ResNet on image recognition and localization tasks showed that depth is of central importance for many visual recognition tasks.

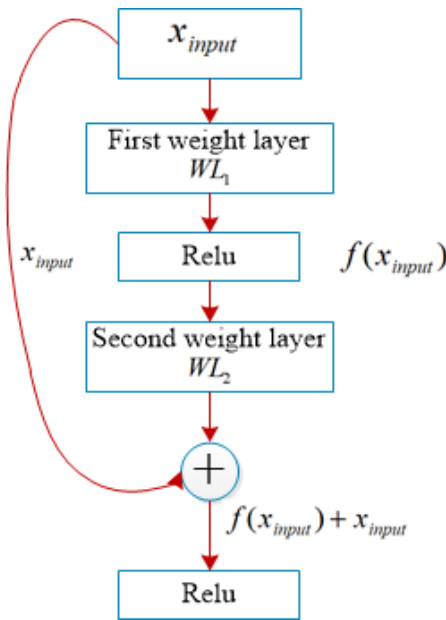


Fig. 7: Residual block.

4.2.3 Inception-V3, V4 and Inception-ResNet

Inception-V3, V4 and Inception-ResNet, are improved versions of Inception-V1 and V2 [33], [99], [100]. The idea of Inception-V3 was to reduce the computational cost of deeper Nets without affecting the generalization. For this purpose, Szegedy et al. replaced large size filters (5x5 and 7x7) with small and asymmetric filters (1x7 and 1x5) and used 1x1 convolution as a bottleneck prior to the large filters [100]. This makes the traditional convolution operation more like cross-channel correlation. In one of the previous works, Lin et al. exploited the potential of

1x1 filters in NIN architecture [57]. Szegedy et al. [100] used the same concept in an intelligent way. In Inception-V3, 1x1 convolutional operation was used, which maps the input data into 3 or 4 separate spaces that are smaller than the original input space, and then maps all correlations in these smaller 3D spaces, via regular 3x3 or 5x5 convolutions. In Inception-ResNet, Szegedy et al. combined the power of residual learning and inception block [31], [33]. In doing so, filter concatenation was replaced by the residual connection. Moreover, Szegedy et al. experimentally showed that Inception-V4 with residual connections (Inception-ResNet) has the same generalization power as plain Inception-V4 but with increased depth and width. However, they observed that Inception-ResNet converges more quickly than Inception-V4, which clearly depicts that training with residual connections accelerates the training of Inception networks significantly.

4.2.4 ResNext

ResNext, also known as Aggregated Residual Transform Network, is an improvement over the Inception Network [115]. Xie et al. exploited the concept of the split, transform and merge in a powerful but simple way by introducing a new term; cardinality [99]. Cardinality is an additional dimension, which refers to the size of the set of transformations [139], [140]. Inception network has not only improved learning capability of conventional CNNs but also makes a network resource effective. However, due to the use of diverse spatial embedding's (such as use of 3x3, 5x5 and 1x1 filter) in the transformation branch, each layer needs to be customized separately. In fact, ResNext derives characteristic features from Inception, VGG, and ResNet [29], [31], [99]. ResNext utilized the deep homogenous topology of VGG and simplified GoogleNet architecture by fixing spatial resolution to 3x3 filters within the split, transform, and merge block. It also uses residual learning. Building block for ResNext is shown in Fig. 8. ResNext used multiple transformations within a split, transform and merge block and defined these transformations in terms of cardinality. Xie et al. (2017) showed that increase in cardinality significantly improves the performance. The complexity of ResNext was regulated by applying low embedding's (1x1 filters) before 3x3 convolution. Whereas training was optimized by using skip connections [141].

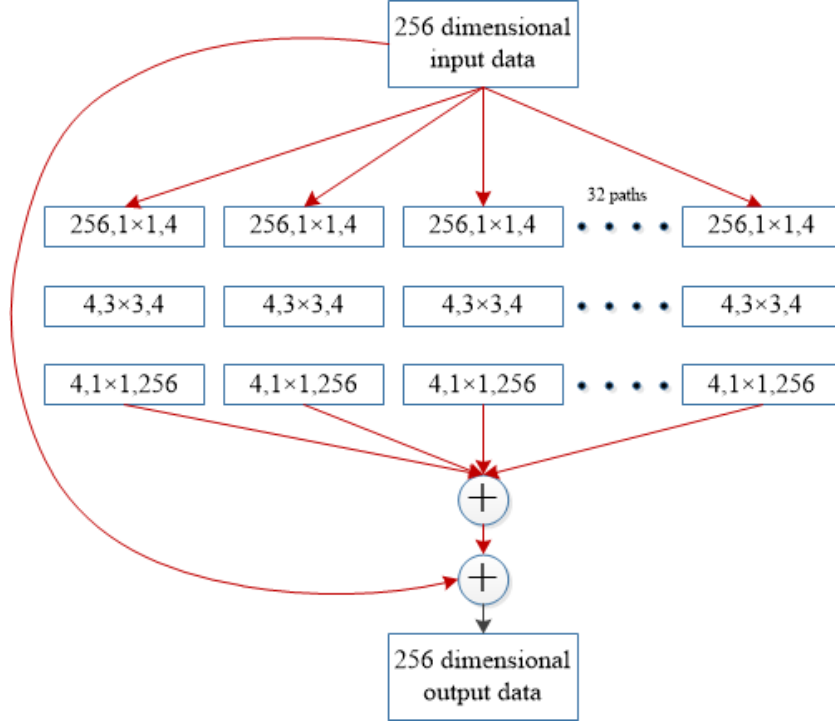


Fig. 8: ResNext building block.

4.3 Multi-Path based CNNs

Training of deep networks is a challenging task and this has been the subject of much the recent research on deep Nets. Deep CNN generally, perform well on complex tasks. However, deeper networks may suffer from performance degradation, gradient vanishing or explosion problems, which are not caused by overfitting but instead by an increase in the depth [53], [142]. Vanishing gradient problem not only results in higher test error but also in higher training error [142]–[144]. For training deeper Nets, the concept of multi-path or cross-layer connectivity was proposed [101], [107], [108], [113]. Multiple paths or shortcut connections can systematically connect one layer to another by skipping some intermediate layers to allow the specialized flow of information across the layers [145], [146]. Cross-layer connectivity partition the network into several blocks. These paths also try to solve the vanishing gradient problem by making gradient

accessible to lower layers. For this purpose, different types of shortcut connections are used, such as zero-padded, projection-based, dropout, skip connections, and 1x1 connections, etc.

4.3.1 Highway Networks

The increase in depth of a network improves performance mostly for complex problems, but it also makes training of the network difficult. In deep Nets, due to a large number of layers, the backpropagation of error may result in small gradient values at lower layers. To solve this problem, Srivastava et al. [101] in 2015, proposed a new CNN architecture named as Highway Network based on the idea of cross-layer connectivity. In Highway Network, the unimpeded flow of information across layers is enabled by imparting two gating units within a layer (equation (5)). The idea of a gating mechanism was inspired from Long Short Term Memory (LSTM) based Recurrent Neural Networks (RNN) [147], [148]. The aggregation of information by combining the l^{th} layer, and previous $l-k$ layers information creates a regularizing effect, making gradient-based training of very deep networks easy. This enables training of a network with more than 100 layers, even as deep as 900 layers with Stochastic Gradient Descent (SGD) algorithm. Cross-layer connectivity for Highway Network is defined in equation (5 & 6).

$$y = H_l(x_i, W_{H_l}) \cdot T_g(x_i, W_{T_g}) + x_i \cdot C_g(x_i, W_{C_g}) \quad (5)$$

$$C_g(x_i, W_{C_g}) = 1 - T_g(x_i, W_{C_g}) \quad (6)$$

In equation (5), T_g refers to transformation gate, which expresses the amount of the produced output whereas C_g is a carry gate. In a network, $H_l(x_i, W_{H_l})$ represents working of hidden layers, and the residual implementation. Whereas, $1 - T_g(x_i, W_{C_g})$ behaves as a switch in a layer, which decides the path for the flow of information.

4.3.2 ResNet

To address the problem faced during training of deeper Nets, in 2015, He et al. proposed ResNet [31] in which they exploited the idea of bypass pathways used in Highway Networks. Mathematical formulation of ResNet is expressed in equation (7 & 8).

$$g(x_i) = f(x_i) + x_i \quad (7)$$

$$f(x_i) = g(x_i) - x_i \quad (8)$$

Where, $f(x_i)$ is a transformed signal, whereas x_i is an original input. Original input x_i is added to $f(x_i)$ through bypass pathways. In essence, $g(x_i) - x_i$, performs residual learning. ResNet introduced shortcut connections within layers to enable cross-layer connectivity, but these gates are data independent and parameter free in comparison to Highway Networks. In Highway Networks, when a gated shortcut is closed, the layers represent non-residual functions. However, in ResNet, residual information is always passed and identity shortcuts are never closed. Residual links (shortcut connections) speed up the convergence of deep networks, thus giving ResNet the ability to avoid gradient diminishing problems. ResNet with the depth of 152 layers, (having 20 and 8 times more depth than AlexNet and VGG, respectively) won the 2015-ILSVRC championship [21]. Even with increased depth, ResNet exhibited lower computational complexity than VGG [29].

4.3.3 DenseNets

In continuation of Highway Networks and ResNet, DenseNet was proposed to solve the vanishing gradient problem [31], [101], [107]. The problem with ResNet was that it explicitly preserves information through additive identity transformations due to which many layers may contribute very little or no information. To address this problem, DenseNet used cross-layer connectivity but, in a modified fashion. DenseNet connected each layer to every other layer in a feed-forward fashion, thus feature maps of all preceding layers were used as inputs into all subsequent layers. This establishes $\frac{l(l+1)}{2}$ direct connections in DenseNet, as compared to l connections between a layer and its preceding layer in the traditional CNNs. It imprints the effect of cross-layer depth wise convolutions. As DenseNet concatenates the previous layers features instead of adding them, thus, the network may gain the ability to explicitly differentiate between information that is added to the network and information that is preserved. DenseNet has narrow layer structure; however, it becomes parametrically expensive with an increase in a number of feature maps. The direct admittance of each layer to the gradients through the loss function

improves the flow of information throughout the network. This incorporates a regularizing effect, which reduces overfitting on tasks with smaller training sets.

4.4 Width based Multi-Connection CNNs

During 2012-2015, the focus was largely on exploiting the power of depth along with the effectiveness of multi-pass regulatory connections in network regularization [31], [101]. However, Kawaguchi et al. reported that the width of network is also important [149]. Multilayer perceptron gained an advantage of mapping complex functions over perceptron by making parallel use of multiple processing units within a layer. This suggests that width is an important parameter in defining principles of learning along with depth. Lu et al. (2017), and Hanin and Sellke (2017) have recently shown that NNs with ReLU activation function have to be wide enough in order to hold universal approximation property with the increase in depth [150]. Moreover, a class of continuous functions on a compact set cannot be arbitrarily well approximated by an arbitrarily deep network, if the maximum width of the network is not larger than the input dimension [135], [151]. Although, stacking of multiple layers (increasing depth) may learn diverse feature representations, but may not necessarily increase the learning power of the NN. One major problem linked with deep architectures is that some layers or processing units may not learn useful features. To tackle this problem, the focus of research shifted from deep and narrow architecture towards thin and wide architectures.

4.4.1 WideResNet

It is concerned that the main drawback associated with deep residual networks is the feature reuse problem in which some feature transformations or blocks may contribute very little to learning [152]. This problem was addressed by WideResNet [34]. Zagoruyko and Komodakis suggested that the main learning potential of deep residual networks is due to the residual units, whereas depth has a supplementary effect. WideResNet exploited the power of the residual blocks by making ResNet wide rather than deep [31]. WideResNet increased width by introducing an additional factor k , which controls the width of the network. WideResNet showed that the widening of the layers may provide a more effective way of performance improvement than by making the residual networks deep. Although, deep residual networks improved

representational capacity, but they have some demerits such as time intensive training, inactivation of many feature maps (feature reuse problem), and gradient vanishing and exploding problem. He et al. addressed feature reuse problem by incorporating dropout in residual blocks to regularize network in an effective way [31]. Similarly, Huang et al. introduced the concept of stochastic depth by exploiting dropouts to solve vanishing gradient and slow learning problem [105]. It was observed that even fraction improvement in performance may require the addition of many new layers. An empirical study showed that WideResNet was twice the number of parameters as compared to ResNet, but can be trained in a better way than the deep networks [34]. Wider residual network was based on the observation that almost all architectures before residual networks, including the most successful Inception and VGG, were wider as compared to ResNet. In WideResNet, learning is made effective by adding a dropout in-between the convolutional layers rather than inside a residual block.

4.4.2 Pyramidal Net

In earlier deep CNN architectures such as AlexNet, VGG, and ResNet, due to the deep stacking of multiple convolutional layers, depth of feature maps increase in subsequent layers. However, the spatial dimension decreases, as each convolutional layer is followed by a sub-sampling layer [21], [29], [31]. Therefore, Han et al. argued that in deep CNNs, enriched feature representation is compensated by a decrease in feature map size [35]. The drastic increase in the feature map depth and at the same time the loss of spatial information limits the learning ability of CNN. ResNet has shown remarkable results for image classification problem. However in ResNet, the deletion of residual block, where dimension of both spatial and feature map (channel) varies (feature map depth increases, while spatial dimension decreases), generally deteriorates performance. In this regard, stochastic ResNet, improved the performance by reducing information loss associated with the dropping of the residual unit [105]. To increase the learning ability of ResNet, Han et al. proposed, Pyramidal Net [35]. In contrast to the drastic decrease in spatial width with an increase in depth by ResNet, Pyramidal Net increases the width gradually per residual unit. This strategy enables pyramidal Net to cover all possible locations instead of maintaining the same spatial dimension within each residual block until down-sampling occurs. Because of a gradual increase in the depth of features map in a top-down fashion, it was named

as pyramidal Net. In pyramidal Net, depth of feature maps is regulated by factor l , and is computed using equation (9).

$$D_l = \begin{cases} 16 & \text{if } l = 1, \\ \left\lfloor D_{l-1} + \frac{\lambda}{n} \right\rfloor & \text{if } 2 \leq l \leq n+1 \end{cases} \quad (9)$$

Where, D_l denotes the dimension of l^{th} residual unit, n is the total number of the residual units, whereas λ is a step factor and $\frac{\lambda}{n}$ regulates the increase in depth. The depth regulating factor tries to distribute the burden of an increase in feature maps. Residual connections were inserted in between the layers by using zero-padded identity mapping. The advantage of zero-padded identity mapping is that it needs less number of parameters as compared to the projection based shortcut connection, hence may result in better generalization [153]. Pyramidal Net uses two different approaches for the widening of the network including addition, and multiplication based widening. The difference between the two types of widening is that additive pyramidal structure increases linearly, multiplicative one increases geometrically [50], [54]. However, major problem with Pyramidal Net is that with the increase in width, a quadratic times increase in both space and time occurs.

4.4.3 Xception

Xception can be considered as an extreme Inception architecture, which exploits the idea of depthwise separable convolution introduced by AlexNet [21], [114]. Xception modified the original inception block by making it wider and replacing the different spatial dimensions (1x1, 5x5, 3x3) with a single dimension (3x3) followed by 1x1 to regulate computational complexity. Architecture of Xception block is shown in Fig. 9. Xception makes the network computationally efficient by decoupling spatial and feature map (channel) correlation. It works by first mapping the convolved output to low dimensional embeddings using 1x1 convolution and then spatially transforms it k^{th} times, where k is a width defining cardinality, which determines the number of transformations. Xception makes computation easy by separately convolving each feature map across spatial axes, which is followed by pointwise convolution (1x1 convolutions) to perform

cross-channel correlation. In Xception, 1×1 convolution is used to regulate feature map depth. In conventional CNN architectures; conventional convolutional operation uses only one transformation segment, inception block uses three transformation segment, whereas in Xception number of transformation segment is equal to the number of feature maps. Although, the transformation strategy adopted by Xception does not reduce the number of parameters, but it makes learning more efficient and results in improved performance.

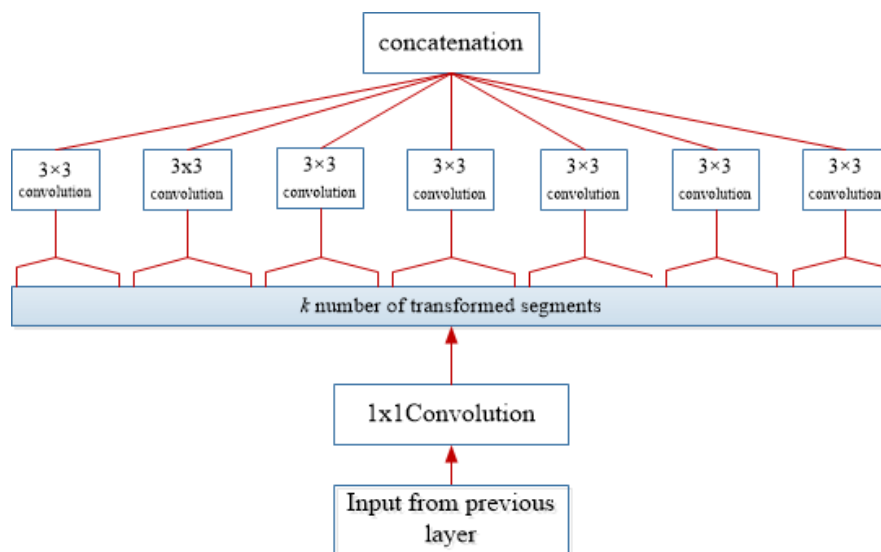


Fig. 9: Xception building block.

4.4.4 Inception Family

Inception family of CNNs also comes under the class of width based methods [33], [99], [100]. In Inception networks, within a layer, varying sizes of the filters were used which increased the output of the intermediate layers. The use of the different sizes of filters are helpful in capturing the diversity in high-level features. Salient characteristics of Inception family are discussed in section 4.1.4 and 4.2.3.

4.5 Feature Map (Channel_{FMap}) Exploitation based CNNs

CNN became popular for MV tasks because of its hierarchical learning and automatic feature extraction ability [12]. Selection of features play an important role in determining the performance of classification, segmentation, and detection modules. Conventional feature extraction techniques are generally static and limit the performance of classification module because of limited types of features [154]. In CNN, features are dynamically set by tuning the weights associated with a kernel (mask). Also, multiple stages of feature extraction are used, which can extract diverse types of features (known as feature maps or channels in CNN). However, some of the feature maps impart little or no role in object discrimination [116]. Enormous feature sets may create an effect of noise and thus lead to over-fitting of the network. This suggests that apart from network engineering, selection of feature maps can play an important role in improving generalization of the network. In this section, feature maps and channels will be interchangeably used as many researchers have used the word channels for the feature maps.

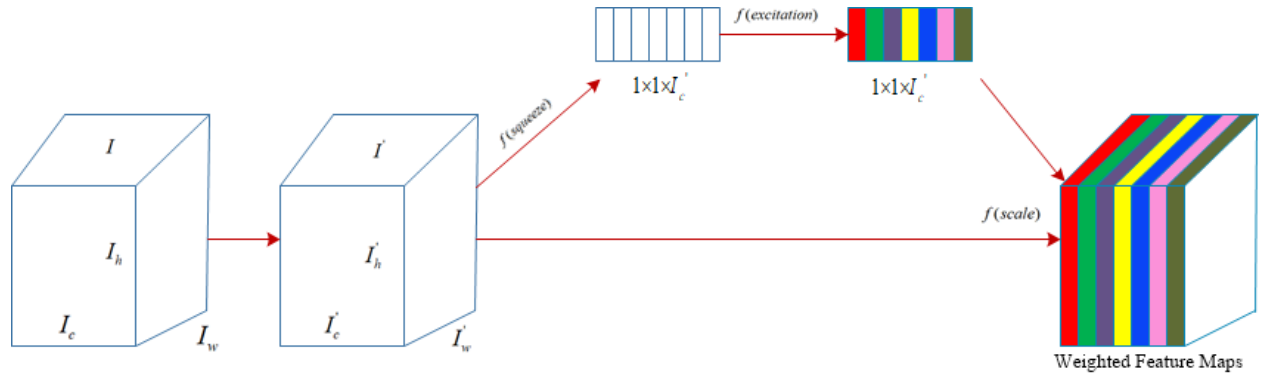


Fig. 10: Squeeze and Excitation block.

4.5.1 Squeeze and Excitation Network

Squeeze and Excitation network (SE-Network) was reported by Hu et al. [116]. They proposed a new block for the selection of feature maps (commonly known as channels) relevant to object discrimination. This new block was named as SE-block (shown in Fig. 10), which suppresses the less important feature maps, but gives high weightage to the class specifying feature maps. SE-Network reported record decrease in error on ImageNet dataset. SE-block is a processing unit that is design in a generic way, and therefore can be added in any CNN architecture before the convolution layer. The working of this block consists of two operations; squeeze and excitation. Convolution kernel captures information locally, but it ignores contextual relation of features (correlation) that are outside of this receptive field. To obtain a global view of feature maps, the squeeze block generates feature map wise statistics by suppressing spatial information of the convolved input. As global average pooling has the potential to learn the extent of target object effectively, therefore, it is employed by the squeeze operation to generate feature map wise statistics using the following equation [57], [155]:

$$D_M = \frac{1}{m*n} \sum_{i=1}^m \sum_{j=1}^n x_c(i, j) \quad (10)$$

Where, D_M is a feature map descriptor, and $m*n$ is a spatial dimension of input. The output of squeeze operation; D_M is assigned to the excitation operation, which models motif-wise interdependencies by exploiting gating mechanism. Excitation operation assigns weights to feature maps using two layer feed forward NN, which is mathematically expressed in equation (11).

$$V_M = \sigma(w_2 \delta(w_1 D_M)) \quad (11)$$

In equation (11), V_M denotes weightage for each feature map, where δ and σ refer to the ReLU and sigmoid function, respectively. In excitation operation, w_1 and w_2 are used as a regulating factor to limit the model complexity and aid the generalization [50], [51]. The output of squeeze-block is preceded by ReLU activation function, which adds non-linearity in feature maps. Gating mechanism is exploited in SE-block using sigmoid activation function, which models

interdependencies among feature map and assigns a weight based on feature map relevance [156]. SE-block is simple and adaptively recalibrates each layer feature maps by multiplying convolved input with the motif responses.

4.5.2 Competitive Squeeze and Excitation Networks

Competitive Inner-Imaging Squeeze and Excitation for Residual Network also known as CMPE-SE Network was proposed by Hu et al. in 2018 [118]. Hu et al. used the idea of SE-block to improve the learning of deep residual networks [116]. SE-Network recalibrates the feature maps based upon their contribution in class discrimination. However, the main concern with SE-Net is that in ResNet, it only considers the residual information for determining the weight of each channel [116]. This minimizes the impact of SE-block and makes ResNet information redundant. Hu et al. addressed this problem by generating feature map wise statistics from both residual and identity mapping based features. In this regard, global representation of feature maps is generated using global average pooling operation, whereas relevance of feature maps is estimated by making competition between residual and identity mapping based descriptors. This phenomena is termed as inner imaging [118]. CMPE-SE block not only models the relationship between residual feature maps but also maps their relation with identity feature map and makes a competition between residual and identity feature maps. The mathematical expression for CMPE-SE block is represented using the following equation:

$$y = F_{se}(u_r, x_{id}).F_{res}(x_{id}, w_r) + x_{id} \quad (12)$$

where x_{id} is the identity mapping of input, F_{se} represents the squeeze operation applied on residual feature map u_r and identity feature map x_{id} , and F_{res} shows implementation of SE-block on residual feature maps. The output of squeeze operation is multiplied with the SE-block output F_{res} . The backpropagation algorithm thus tries to optimize the competition between identity and residual feature maps and the relationship between all feature maps in the residual block.

4.6 Channel_(Input) Exploitation based CNNs

Image representation plays an important role in determining the performance of the image-processing algorithms including both conventional and deep learning algorithms. A good

representation of the image is one that can define the salient features of an image from a compact code. In literature, various types of conventional filters are applied to extract different levels of information for a single type image [157], [158]. These diverse representations are then used as an input of the model to improve performance [159], [160]. Now CNN is an effective feature learner that can automatically extract discriminating features depending upon the problem [161]. However, the learning of CNN relies on input representation. The lack of diversity and absence of class discernable information in the input may affect CNN performance as a discriminator. For this purpose, the concept of channel boosting (input channel dimension) using auxiliary learners is introduced in CNN to boost the representation of the network [36].

4.6.1 Channel Boosted CNN using TL

In 2018, Khan et al. proposed a new CNN architecture named as Channel boosted CNN (CB-CNN) based on the idea of boosting the number of input channels for improving the representational capacity of the network [36]. Block diagram of CB-CNN is shown in Fig. 11. Channel boosting is performed by artificially creating extra channels (known as auxiliary channels) through deep generative models and then exploiting it through the deep discriminative models. It provides the concept that TL can be used at both generation and discrimination stages. Data representation plays an important role in determining the performance of a classifier, as different representations may present different aspects of information [84]. For improving the representational potential of the data, Khan et al. exploited the power of TL and deep generative learners [24], [162], [163]. Generative learners attempt to characterize the data generating distribution during the learning phase. In CB-CNN, autoencoders are used as a generative learner to learn explanatory factors of variation behind the data. The concept of inductive TL is used in a novel way to build a boosted input representation by augmenting learned distribution of the input data with the original channel space (input channels). CB-CNN encodes channel-boosting phase into a generic block, which is inserted at the start of a deep Net. For training, Khan et al. used a pre-trained network, to reduce computational cost. The significance of the study is that multi-deep learners are used where generative learning models are used as auxiliary learners that enhance the representational capacity of deep CNN based discriminator. Although the potential of the channel boosting was only evaluated by inserting boosting block at the start, however, Khan et al. suggested that this idea can be extended by providing auxiliary channels at any layer

in the deep architecture. CB-CNN has also been evaluated on medical image dataset, where it also shows improved results compared to previously proposed approaches. The convergence plot of CB-CNN on mitosis dataset is shown in Fig. 12.

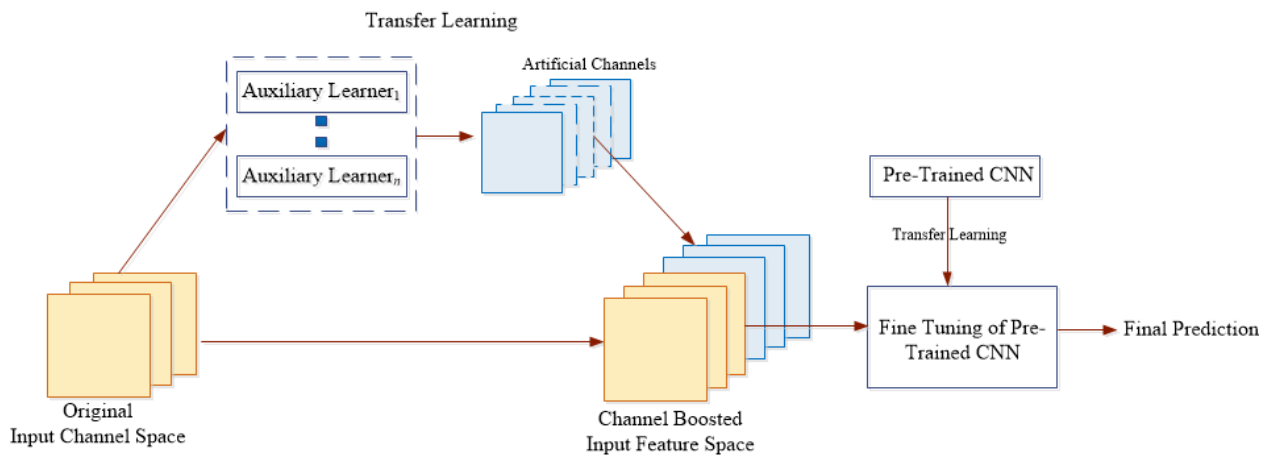


Fig. 11: Basic architecture of CB-CNN.

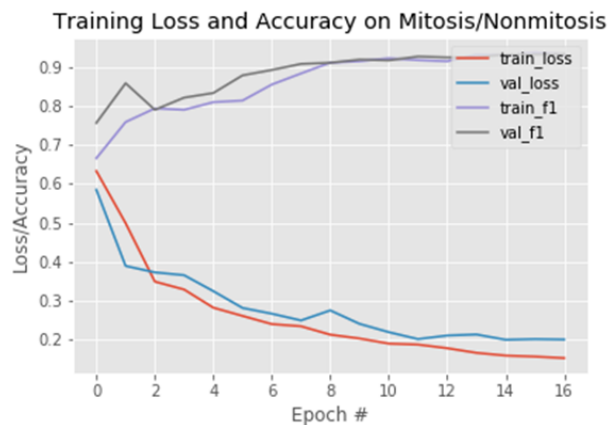


Fig. 12: Convergence plot of CB-CNN on mitosis dataset. Loss and accuracy is shown on y-axis, whereas x-axis represents epochs. Training plot of CB-CNN shows that the model converges after about 14 epochs.

4.7 Attention based CNNs

Different levels of abstraction have an important role in defining discrimination power of the NN. In addition to learning different levels of abstraction, focusing on features relevant to the context also play a significant role in image localization and recognition. In human visual system, this phenomenon is referred as attention. Humans view the scene in a succession of partial glimpses and pay attention to context-relevant parts. This process not only serves to focus selected region but also deduces different interpretations of objects at that location and thus helps in capturing visual structure in a better way. A more or less similar kind of interpretability is added into RNN and LSTM [147], [148]. RNN and LSTM networks exploit attention module for generation of sequential data and the new samples are weighted based on their occurrence in previous iterations. The concept of attention was incorporated into CNN, by various researchers to improve representation and overcome the computational limits. This idea of attention also helps in making CNN intelligent enough to recognize objects even from cluttered backgrounds and complex scenes.

4.7.1 Residual Attention Neural Network

Wang et al. proposed a Residual Attention Network (RAN) to improve feature representation of the network [38]. The motivation behind the incorporation of attention in CNN was to make network capable of learning object aware features. RAN is a feed forward CNN, which was built by stacking residual blocks with attention module. Attention module is branched off into trunk and mask branches that adopt bottom-up top-down learning strategy. The assembly of two different learning strategies into the attention module enables fast feed-forward processing and top-down attention feedback in a single feed-forward process. Bottom-up feed-forward structure produces low-resolution feature maps with strong semantic information. Whereas, top-down architecture produces dense features in order to make an inference of each pixel. In the previously proposed studies, a top-down bottom-up learning strategy was used by Restricted Boltzmann Machines [164]. Similarly, Goh et al. exploited the top-down attention mechanism as a regularizing factor in Deep Boltzmann Machine (DBM) during the reconstruction phase of the training. Top-down learning strategy globally optimizes network in such a way that gradually output the maps to input during the learning process [82], [164], [165]. Attention module in

RAN generates object aware soft mask $S_{i,FM}(x_c)$ at each layer [166]. Soft mask, $S_{i,FM}(x_c)$ assigns attention towards object using equation (13) by recalibrating trunk branch $T_{i,FM}(x_c)$ output and thus, behaves like a control gate for every neuron output.

$$A_{i,FM}(x_c) = S_{i,FM}(x_c) * T_{i,FM}(x_c) \quad (13)$$

In one of the previous studies, Transformation network [167], [168] also exploited the idea of attention in a simple way by incorporating it with convolution block, but the main problem was that attention module in Transformation network are fixed and cannot adapt to changing circumstances. RAN was made efficient towards recognition of cluttered, complex, and noisy images by stacking multiple attention modules. Hierarchical organization of RAN endowed the ability to adaptively assign weight to each feature map based on their relevance in the layers [38]. Learning of deep hierarchical structure was supported through residual units. Moreover, three different levels of attention: mixed, channel, and spatial attention were incorporated thus, leveraging the capability to capture object-aware features at different levels [38].

4.7.2 Convolutional Block Attention Module

The significance of attention mechanism and feature map exploitation is validated through RAN and SE-Network [38], [111]. In this regard, Woo et al. came up with new attention based CNN; named as Convolutional Block Attention Module (CBAM) [37]. CBAM is simple in design and similar to SE-Network. SE-Network only considers the contribution of feature maps in image classification, but it ignores the spatial locality of the object in images. Spatial location of the object has an important role in object detection. CBAM infer attention maps sequentially by first applying feature map (channel) attention and then spatial attention, to find the refined feature maps. In literature, generally, 1x1 convolution and pooling operations are used for spatial attention. Woo et al. showed that pooling of features along spatial axis generates an efficient feature descriptor. CBAM concatenates average pooling operation with max pooling, which generate a strong spatial attention map. Likewise, feature map statistics were modeled using a combination of max pooling and global average pooling operation. Woo et al. showed that max pooling can provide the clue about distinctive object features, whereas use of global average

pooling returns suboptimal inference of feature map attention. Exploitation of both average pooling and max-pooling improves representational power of the network. These refined feature maps not only focus on the important part but also increase the representational power of the selected feature maps. Woo et al. empirically showed that formulation of 3D attention map via serial learning process helps in reduction of the parameters as well as computational cost. Due to the simplicity of CBAM, it can be integrated easily with any CNN architecture.

4.7.3 Concurrent Spatial and Channel Excitation Mechanism

In 2018, Roy et al. extended the work of Hu et al. by incorporating the effect of spatial information in combination with feature map (channel) information to make it applicable to segmentation tasks [111], [112]. They introduced three different modules: (i) squeezing spatially and exciting feature map wise (cSE), (ii) squeezing feature map wise and exciting spatially (sSE) and (iii) concurrent spatial and channel squeeze & excitation (scSE). In this work, autoencoder based convolutional NN was used for segmentation, whereas proposed modules were inserted after the encoder and decoder layer. In cSE module, the same concept as that of SE-block is exploited. In this module, scaling factor is derived based on the combination of feature maps in object detection. As spatial information has an important role in segmentation, therefore in sSE module, spatial locality has been given more importance than feature map information. For this purpose, different combinations of feature map are selected and exploited spatially to use them for segmentation. In the last module; scSE, attention to each channel is assigned by deriving scaling factor both from spatial and channel information and thus to selectively highlight the object specific feature maps [112].

5 Applications of CNN

CNN has been successfully applied to different ML related tasks, namely object detection, recognition, classification, regression, segmentation, etc [169]–[171]. However, CNN generally needs a large amount of data for learning. All of the aforementioned areas in which CNN has shown tremendous success have relatively abundant labeled data, such as traffic sign recognition, segmentation of medical images, and the detection of faces, text, pedestrians, and human in natural images. Some of the interesting applications of CNN are discussed below.

5.1 Natural Language Processing

Natural Language Processing (NLP) converts language into a presentation that can easily be exploited by any computer. CNN has been utilized in NLP based applications such as speech recognition, language modeling, and analysis etc. Especially, language modeling or sentence molding has taken a twist after the introduction of CNN as a new representation-learning algorithm. Sentence modeling is performed to know semantics of the sentences and thus offer new and appealing applications according to customer requirements. Traditional methods of information retrieval analyze data, based on words or features, but ignore the core of the sentence. In [172], the authors use a dynamic CNN and dynamic *k-max* pooling during training. This approach finds the relations between words without taking into account any external source like parser or vocabulary. In a similar way, Collobert et al. [173] proposed CNN based architecture that can perform various MLP related tasks at the same time like chunking, language modeling, recognizing name-entity, and role modeling related to semantics. In another work, Hu et al. proposed a generic CNN based architecture that performs matching between two sentences and thus can be applied to different languages [174].

5.2 Computer Vision related Applications

Computer vision (CV) focuses to develop artificial system that can process visual data including images and videos and can effectively understand and extract useful information from it. CV includes number of areas such as face recognition, pose estimation, activity recognition, etc.

Face recognition is one of the difficult tasks in CV. The recent research on face recognition is working to cope with the challenges that put the original image into big variations even when they do not exist in reality. This variation is caused by illumination, change in pose, and different facial expressions. Farfadi et al. [175] proposed deep CNN for detecting face from different pose and also able to recognize occluded faces. In another work, Zhang et al. [176] performed face detection using a new type of multitask cascaded CNN. Zhang's technique showed good results when comparison is shown against latest state-of-the-art techniques [177]–[179].

Human pose estimation is one of the challenging task related to CV because of the high variability in body pose. Li et al. [180] proposed a heterogeneous deep CNN based pose

estimation related technique. In Li's technique, empirical results have shown that the hidden neurons are able to learn the localized part of the body. Similarly, another cascade based CNN technique is proposed by Bulat et al. [181]. In their cascaded architecture, first heat maps are detected, whereas, in the second phase, regression is performed on the detected heat maps.

Action recognition is one of the important areas of activity recognition. The difficulties in developing an action recognition system are to solve the translations and distortions of features in different patterns, which belong to the same action class. Earlier approaches involved the construction of motion history images, use of Hidden Markov Models, action sketch generation, etc. Recently, Wang et al. [182] proposed a three dimensional CNN architecture in combination with LSTM for recognizing different actions from video frames. Experimental results have shown that Wang's technique outperforms the latest activity recognition based techniques [183]–[187]. Similarly, another three dimensional CNN based action recognition system is proposed by Ji et al. [188]. In Ji's work, three-dimensional CNN is used to extract features from multiple channels of input frames. The final action recognition based model is developed on combined extracted feature space. The proposed three dimensional CNN model is trained in a supervised way and is able to perform activity recognition in real world applications.

5.3 Object Detection

Object detection focuses on identifying different objects in images. Recently, region-based CNN (R-CNN) has been widely used for object detection. Ren et al. (2015) proposed an improvement over R-CNN named as fast R-CNN for object detection [189]. In their work fully convolutional neural network is used to extract feature space that can simultaneously detect boundary and score of object located at different positions. Similarly, Dai et al. (2016) proposed region-based object detection using fully connected CNN [190]. In Dai's work, results are reported on the PASCAL VOC image dataset. Another object detection technique is reported by Gidaris et al. [191], which is based on multi-region based deep CNN that helps to learn the semantic aware features. In Gidaris's approach, objects are detected with high accuracy on PASCAL VOC 2007 and 2012 dataset.

5.4 Image Classification

CNN has been widely used for image classification [192]–[194]. One of the major applications of CNN is in medical images especially, for diagnoses of cancer using histopathological images [195]. Recently, Spanhol et al. (2016) used CNN for the diagnosis of breast cancer images and results are compared against a network trained on a dataset containing handcrafted descriptors [196], [197]. Another recently proposed CNN based technique for breast cancer diagnosis is developed by Wahab et al. [198]. In Wahab’s work, two phases are involved. In the first phase, hard non-mitosis examples are identified. Whereas, in second phase data augmentation is performed to cope with the class skewness problem. Similarly, Ciresan et al. [96] used German benchmark dataset related to traffic sign signal. They designed CNN based architecture that performed traffic sign classification related task with good recognition rate.

5.5 Speech Recognition

Speech is considered as a communication link between human beings. In ML field, before the availability of hardware resources, speech recognition models didn’t show promising results. With the advancement in hardware resources, training of DNN with large training data becomes possible. Deep CNN is mostly considered as the best option for image classification, however, recent studies have shown that it also performs good on speech recognition tasks. Hamid et al. reported a CNN based speaker independent speech recognition system [199]. Experimental results showed ten percent reduction in error rate in comparison to the earlier reported methods [200], [201]. In another work, various CNN architectures, which are either based on the full or limited number of weight sharing within the convolution layer, are explored [202]. Furthermore, the performance of a CNN is also evaluated after the initialization of whole network using pre-training phase [200]. Experimental results showed that almost all of the explored architectures yield good performance on phone and vocabulary recognition related tasks.

6 CNN Challenges

Deep CNN has achieved good performance on data that either is of the time series nature or follows a grid like topology. However, there are also some other challenges where deep CNN architectures have been put to tasks. In vision related tasks, one shortcoming of CNN is that it is

generally, unable to show good performance when used to estimate the pose, orientation, and location of an object. In 2012, AlexNet solved this problem to some extent by introducing the concept of data augmentation. Data augmentation can help CNN in learning diverse internal representations, which ultimately lead to improved performance. Similarly, Hinton reported that lower layers should handover its knowledge only to the relevant neurons of the next layer. In this regard, Hinton proposed the Capsule Network approach [203], [204].

In another work, Szegedy et al. showed that training of CNN architecture on noisy image data can cause an increase of misclassification error [205]. The addition of the small quantity of random noise in the input image is capable to fool the network in such a way that the model will classify the original and its slightly perturbed version differently.

Interesting discussions are made by the different researchers related to performance of CNN on different ML tasks. Some of the challenges faced during the training of deep CNN model are given below:

- Deep NN are generally like a black box and thus may lack in interpretation and explanation. Therefore, sometimes it is difficult to verify them, and in case of vision related tasks, CNN may offer little robustness against noise and other alterations to images.
- Each layer of CNN automatically tries to extract better and problem specific features related to the task. However, for some tasks, it is important to know the nature of features extracted by the deep CNN before classification. The idea of feature visualization in CNNs can help in this direction.
- Deep CNNs are based on supervised learning mechanism, and therefore, availability of a large and annotated data is required for its proper learning. In contrast, humans have the ability to learn and generalize from a few examples.
- Hyperparameter selection highly influences the performance of CNN. A little change in the hyperparameter values can affect the overall performance of a CNN. That is why careful selection of parameters is a major design issue that needs to be addressed through some suitable optimization strategy.

- Efficient training of CNN demands powerful hardware resources such as GPUs. However, it is still needed to explore that how to efficiently employ CNN in embedded and smart devices. A few applications of deep learning in embedded systems are wound intensity correction, law enforcement in smart cities, etc [206]–[208].

7 Future Directions

The exploitation of different innovative ideas in CNN architectural design has changed the direction of research, especially in MV. Good performance of CNN on grid like topological data presents it as a powerful representation model for image data. CNN architecture design is a promising research field and in future, it is likely to be one of the most widely used AI techniques.

- Ensemble learning [209] is one of the prospective areas of research in CNNs. The combination of multiple and diverse architectures can aid model in improving generalization on diverse categories of images by extracting different levels of semantic representations. Similarly, concepts such as batch normalization, dropout, and new activation functions are also worth mentioning.
- The potential of a CNN as a generative learner is exploited in image segmentation tasks, where it has shown good results [210]. The exploitation of generative learning capabilities of CNN at supervised feature extraction stages (learning of filter using backpropagation) can boost the representation power of the model. Similarly, new paradigms are needed that can enhance the learning capacity of CNN by incorporating informative feature maps that are learnt using auxiliary learners at the intermediate stages of CNN [36].
- In human visual system, attention is one of the important mechanisms in capturing information from images. Attention mechanism operates in such a way that it not only extracts the essential information from image, but also stores its contextual relation with other components of images [211], [212]. In future, research will be carried out in the direction that preserves the spatial relevance of object along with discriminating features of object at later stages of learning.

- The learning capacity of CNN is enhanced by exploiting the size of the network and it is made possible with the advancement in hardware processing units and computational resources. However, the training of deep and high capacity architectures is a significant overhead on memory usage and computational resources. This requires a lot of improvements in hardware that can accelerate research in CNNs. The main concern with CNNs is the run-time applicability. Moreover, use of CNN is hindered in small hardware, especially in mobile devices because of its high computational cost. In this regard, different hardware accelerators are needed for reducing both execution time and power consumption [213]. Some of the very interesting accelerators are already proposed, such as Application Specific Integrated Circuits, Eyeriss and Google Tensor Processing Unit [214]. Moreover, different operations have been performed to save hardware resources in terms of chip area and power, by reducing precision of operands and ternary quantization, or reducing the number of matrix multiplication operations. Now it is also time to redirect research towards hardware-oriented approximation models [215].
- Deep CNN has a large number of hyperparameters such as activation function, kernel size, number of neurons per layers, and arrangement of layers, etc. The selection of hyperparameters and its evaluation time makes parameter tuning quite difficult in the context of deep learning. Hyper-parameter tuning is a tedious and intuition driven task, which cannot be defined via explicit formulation. In this regard, Genetic algorithms can also be used to automatically optimize the hyper-parameter by performing search both in a random fashion as well as by directing search by utilizing previous results [216]–[218].
- The learning capacity of deep CNN model has a strong correlation with the size of the model. However, capacity of deep CNN model is restricted due to hardware resources [219]. In order to overcome hardware limitations, the concept of pipeline parallelism can be exploited to scale up deep CNN training. Google group has proposed a distributed machine learning library; GPipe [220] that uses synchronous stochastic gradient descent and pipeline parallelism for training. In future, the concept of pipelining can be used to accelerate the training of large models and to scale the performance without tuning hyperparameters.

8 Conclusion

CNN has made remarkable progress, especially in vision related tasks and has thus revived the interest of scientists in ANNs. In this context, several research works have been carried out to improve the CNN's performance on vision related tasks. The advancements in CNNs can be categorized in different ways including activation, loss function, optimization, regularization, learning algorithms, and restructuring of processing units. This paper reviews advancements in the CNN architectures, especially, based on the design patterns of the processing units, and thus has proposed the taxonomy for CNN architectures. In addition to categorization of CNNs into different classes, this paper also covers the history of CNNs, its applications, challenges, and future directions.

Learning capacity of CNN is significantly improved over the years by exploiting depth and other structural modifications. It is observed in recent literature that the main boost in CNN performance has been achieved by replacing the conventional layer structure with blocks. Nowadays, one of the paradigm of research in CNN architectures is the development of new and effective block architectures. The role of these blocks in a network is that of an auxiliary learner, which by either exploiting spatial or feature map information or boosting of input channels improves the overall performance. These blocks play a significant role in boosting of CNN performance by making problem aware learning. Moreover, block based architecture of CNN encourages learning in a modular fashion and thereby, making architecture more simple and understandable. The concept of block being a structural unit is going to persist and further enhance CNN performance. Additionally, the idea of attention and exploitation of channel information in addition to spatial information within a block is expected to gain more importance.

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