

Write Up for P3: Traffic Sign Classifier

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Introduction:

This document is a write up for the 3rd project. As mentioned in the write up template, the objectives are:

- Load the data set (see below for links to the project data set)
- Explore, summarize and visualize the data set
- Design, train and test a model architecture
- Use the model to make predictions on new images
- Analyze the softmax probabilities of the new images
- Summarize the results with a written report

The submission includes this writeup + code in a single file ***Traffic_Sign_Classifier*** in ipynb and html format.

Data set summary and exploration

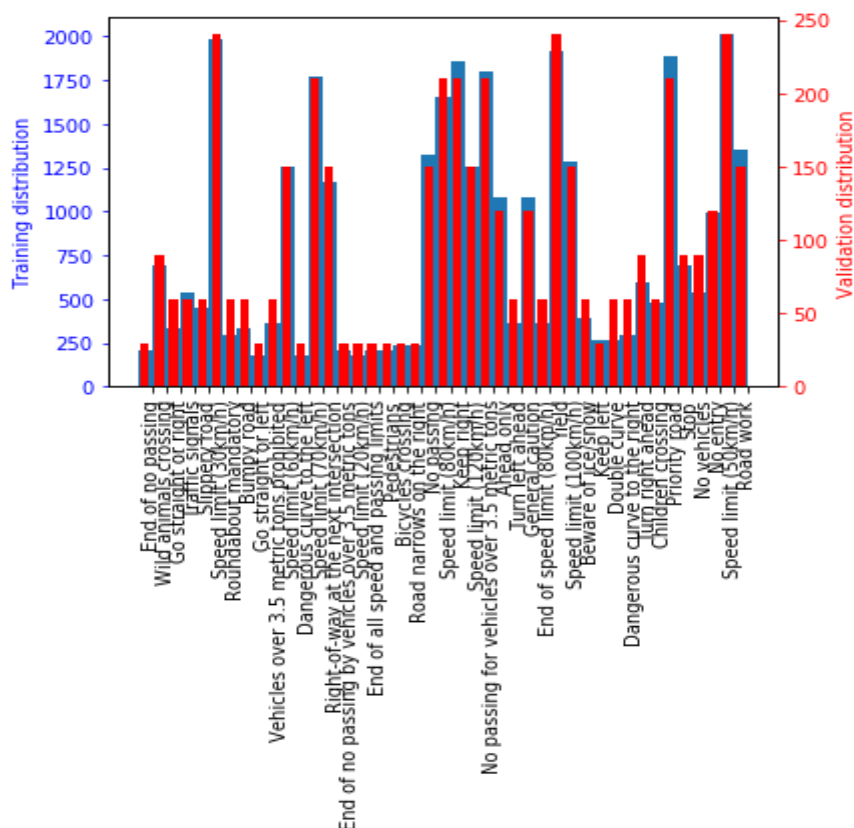
Number of training examples = 34799

Number of testing examples = 12630

Image data shape = (32, 32, 3)

Number of classes = 43

Training/ Validation classes histogram



Remarks concerning distribution:

Classes are not equally distributed. On the other side, distribution is similar between training and validation. So as a first approximation, we can use the current training distribution to teach our model.

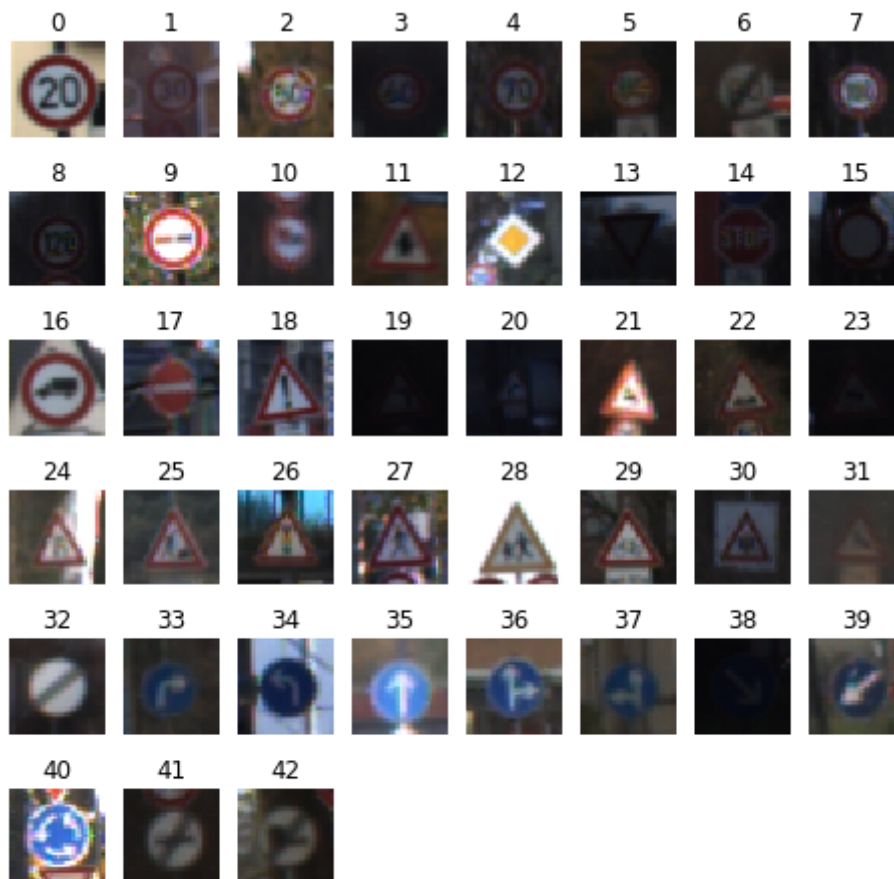
Design and test a model architecture

Preprocessing

Here're the 43 classes, it is interesting to notice that even though color is not a differentiating factor (still an important factor though). That is, no 2 signs are identical in all aspects except color.

⇒ For that reason I change signs to grayscale

Additionally, I scale the data between -1..1 for reasons that are now obvious and that were discussed in the course and many papers (example: "Efficient Backprop" by Yahn Lecun).



Model architecture

Layer	Description	Output Shape
Input	32x32x1 scaled	-
CONV 3x3 -> ReLU	Stride: 1x1, same padding, filter depth: 16	N_train x 32x32x16
Max POOL 2x2	Stride: 2x2	N_train x 16x16x16
CONV 3x3 -> ReLU	Stride: 1x1, same padding, filter depth: 32	N_train x 16x16x32
Max POOL 2x2	Stride: 2x2	N_train x 8x8x32
FC -> ReLU		N_train x 120
Dropout 0.8		N_train x 120
FC -> ReLU		N_train x 120
Dropout 0.8		N_train x 84
FC -> Softmax		N_train x 43

Model training

Learning rate: 1e-3

Batch size: 64

Optimization: Adam (did not tweak parameters)

Epochs: 15

Approach discussion

To select these parameters, I did several runs displaying both validation error and training error. My approach was first to reach near 100% training accuracy then apply some regularization to increase the validation accuracy.

Training error optimization

Tried increasing the number of layers and filter depth in each layer. For simplicity, I chose a SAME padding followed by Max POOL layer which would divide size by 2. It's easier for me to keep track of image size (in case it gets big!).

⇒ I found that 3 convolutional layers overfit the model so I settled for 2 layers.

I also tried different learning rates and found that 1e-3 was best.

Validation error optimization

Whenever I got satisfactory training error with minimum configuration, I tried 2 measures to improve validation error: Early stopping and dropout.

I found that 15 epochs coupled with dropout=0.8 provided good results !

Errors report

Training error: 0.999

Validation error: 0.962

Test error: 0.938

Test model on new images

Classification difficulty for the model discussion

Here're the images found on the web for the german dataset. Corresponding classes from left to right: [1,38,34,18,3,11,12,25]



To illustrate the difference between the images on the internet and the challenge, I take 2 examples from the chosen classes in the training data. When comparing these images to those collected on the internet, we notice for both images:

- Different in shape: Maybe due to camera distortion?
- Difference in blurriness: probably due to the fact that training data were taking from a mounted camera inside a car

⇒ Internet images can serve as an additional test for the model's generalization capabilities.



Classification results and significance analysis

Model accuracy on internet data = **100%**, **size = 5**. This result looks **6.2%** different than test accuracy (**93.8%**, **size=12630**)


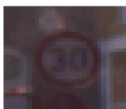
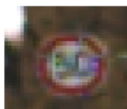
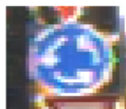



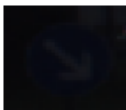
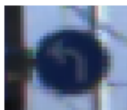
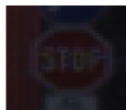
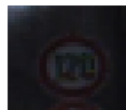
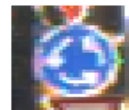


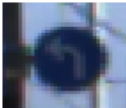
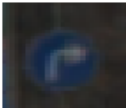
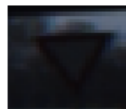
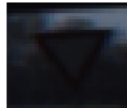
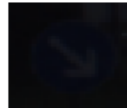


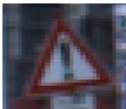






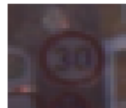
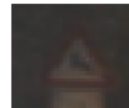

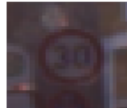
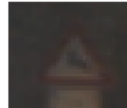

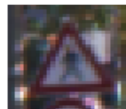
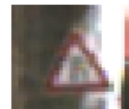




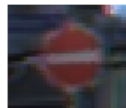
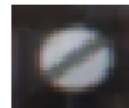



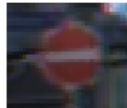

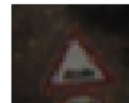



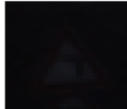

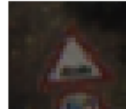

However, this is not statistically significant because test sample size is too small (5 observations). Our new test accuracy given the new data becomes:
 $(1 * 5 + 0.938 * 12630) / (5 + 12630) = 0.938024$ which means an impact of **0.0024%**

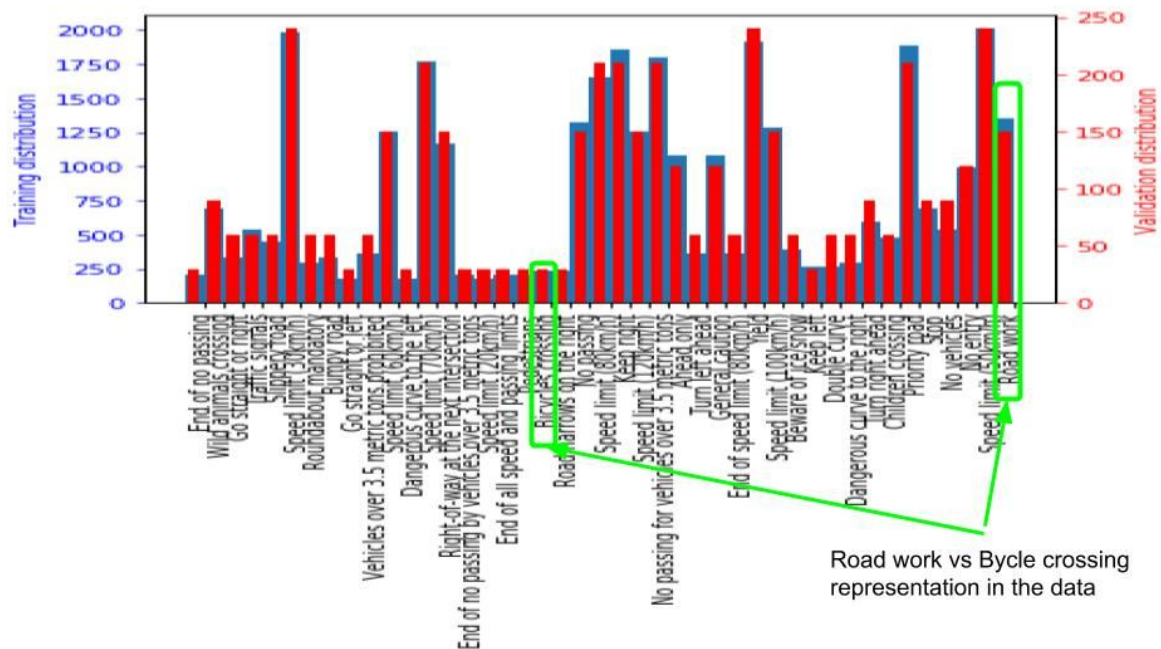
During the course, it was explained that we need a change of **at least 3%** (if the classes are well balanced) to be significant.

Visualizing model predictions

The model was certain of all classes with high confidence except the “road work” sign ($p=0.619$). For this sign, the second most likely is “bicycle crossing” ($p=0.35$). In my opinion, this “doubt” can have at least 2 reasons:

- True label is blurry and contains a complex shape (construction worker) in a small box. Possibly leading to oversimplification of that class.
- Second label is not highly represented in the data compared to the true label (please check plot below). Potentially leading the algorithm to confusion.

Test label	1.0	2.83323e-07	2.20568e-11	2.50329e-12	5.98641e-13
					
	1.0	4.8681e-26	2.0583e-26	2.88066e-29	9.13113e-36
					
	1.0	4.7599e-10	1.39934e-10	5.56219e-11	5.31266e-11
					
	1.0	7.85499e-16	1.45398e-16	4.99732e-21	1.21188e-21
					
	0.999996	3.79181e-06	4.07495e-07	4.52454e-08	4.93336e-10
					
	1.0	1.06534e-08	7.75013e-09	3.08953e-11	2.86293e-15
					
	1.0	9.11894e-15	1.59654e-17	2.13767e-20	6.1462e-21
					
	0.619612	0.351879	0.0126058	0.00889646	0.004412
					



Discussion

Keeping the same architecture, I believe the model can be further improved in at least 2 ways:

1. Batch normalization
2. Data augmentation in the training set to balance badly classified classes (confusion matrix)

Additionally, one can try a different architecture (inception for example) or transfer learning.

NB: I have written wrote my own NN and CNN from scratch but I was not familiar with tensorflow. After taking this course, I appreciate the ease and efficiency with which one can program such complicated models, thus allowing more time for prototyping!