



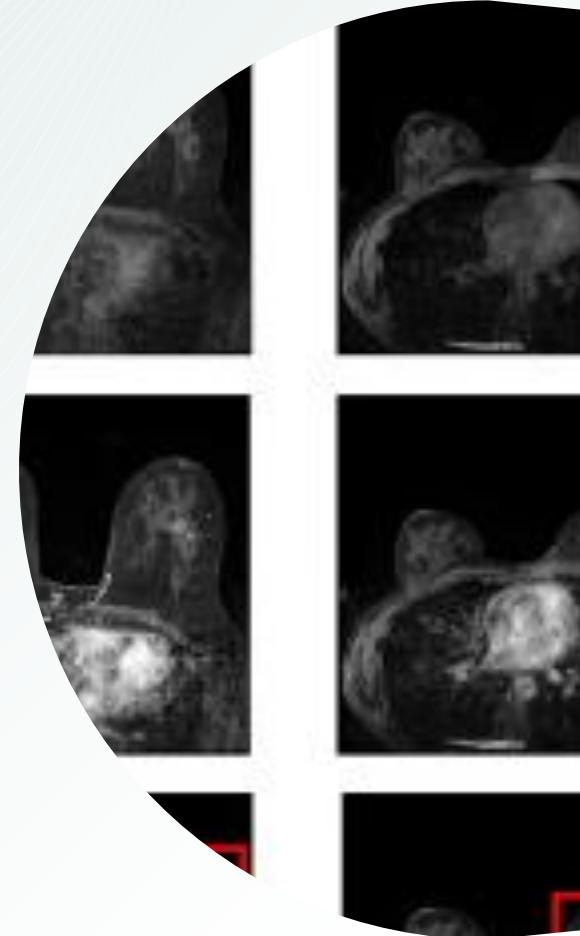
UNIVERSITÄT  
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SAARLANDES

# A U-Net Ensemble for breast lesion segmentation in DCE MRI

Roa'a Khaled, Joel Vidal, Joan C Vilanova, Robert Martí

Seminar: Biomedical Image Analysis

*Nazlıgül Keske*



# OUTLINE

1 **Breast Cancer Detection:** Breast cancer statistics and detection methods.

2 **Premise of the study:** Previous approaches and aim of the study

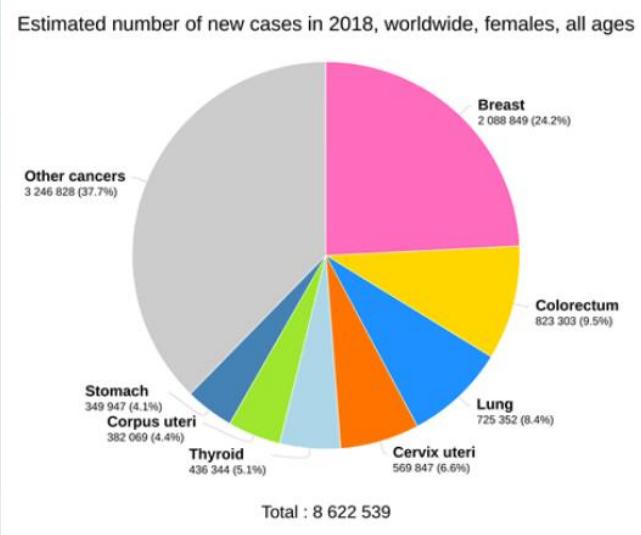
3 **Frameworks:** Original and modified U-Net architectures

4 **Experiments and results**

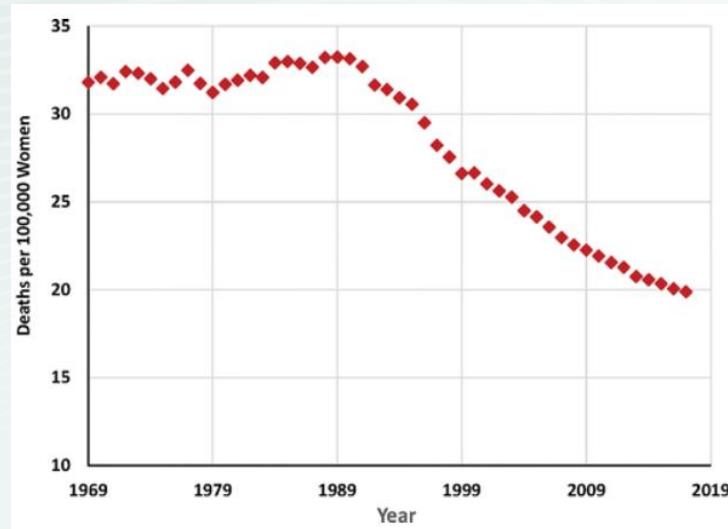
5 **Limitations and future works**

6 **References**

## 1.1. Breast cancer



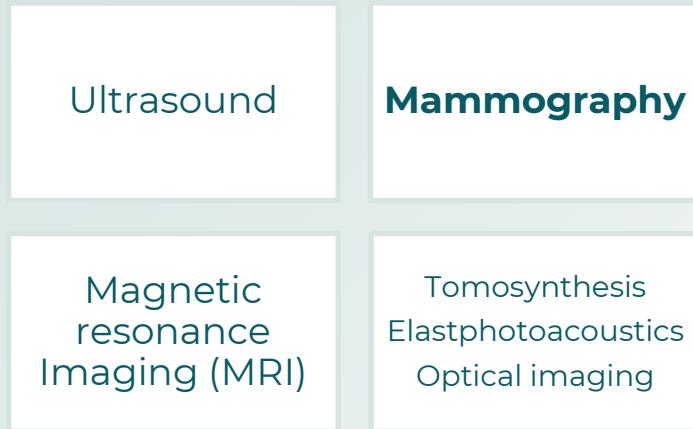
(Khazaei et al., 2018)



(Hendrick et al., 2021)

□ Early detection is key

## 1. 2. Imaging-based detection methods

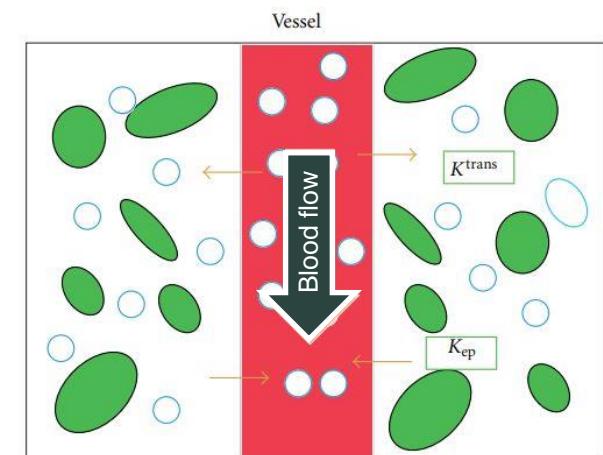
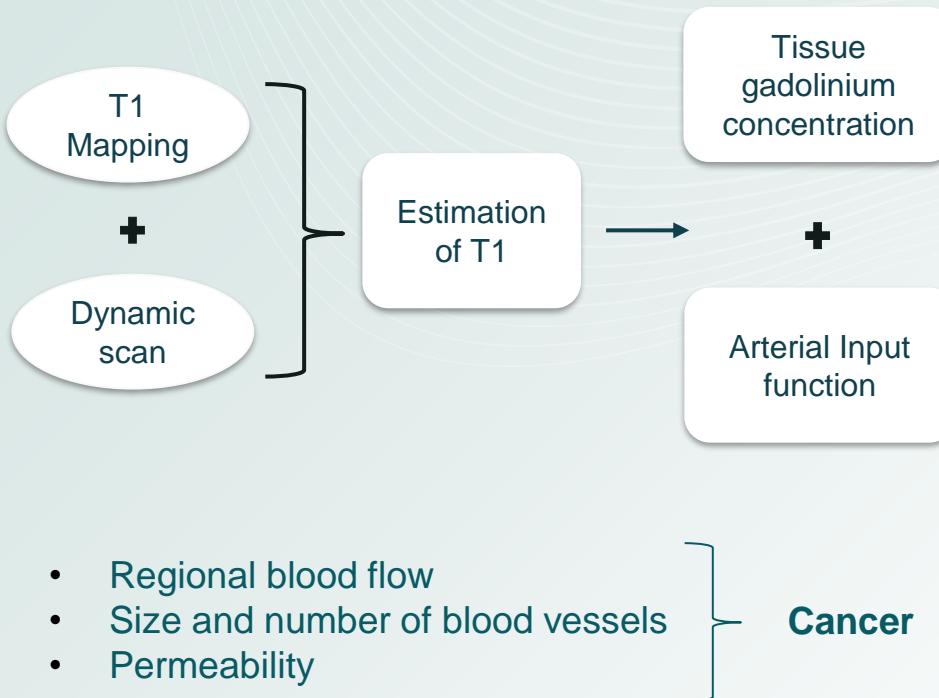


- **Mammography:** Sensitivity (true positive rate) decline from 75% to 50% in middle aged patients (Sree, 2011)
- **Ultrasound:** Operator dependent and having an increased false positive rate(Sree, 2011)
- **MRI:** Higher sensitivity than mammography and ultrasound in dense breasts, no radiation



Dynamic contrast enhanced MRI  
(DCE-MRI)

## 1. 2. DCE-MRI



$K_{trans}$  Inward volume transfer constant  
 $K_{ep}$  Forward volume transfer constant

(Chikui, T. et al. 2012)

## 2. Premise of the study

DCE-MRI analysis:

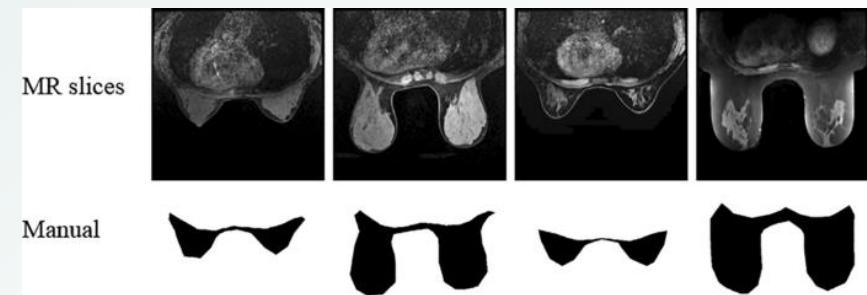
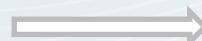
- Time consuming
- Requires experienced radiologists
- Large amount of 4-D information

Automated feature extraction is required:

- Lesion morphology
- Texture
- Enhancement kinetics



**Accurate segmentation is the first step  
for feature extraction**



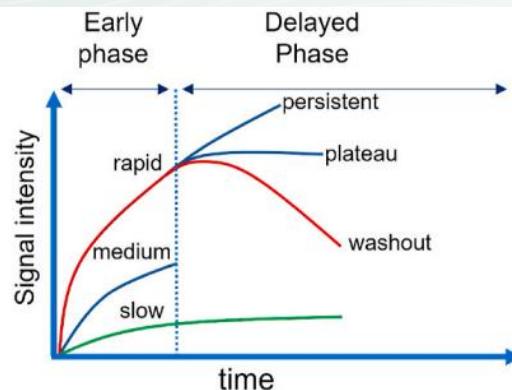
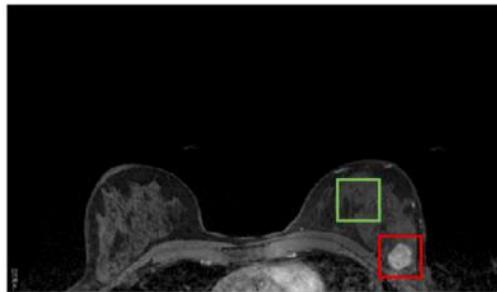
## 2.1. Previous approaches for breast tissue segmentation

Semi-Automated methods

- Radiologists need to define lesion regions first

Traditional machine-learning methods

- Gubern-Mérida et al., 2015 – Segmentation by kinetic features
- Hu et al., 2015 – Kinetic features of each voxel in ROI



**Left figure:** Second post-contrast Volume from DCE-MRI.

**Right figure:** Time Intensity Curves (TIC) of normal tissue (in green) and a malignant lesion (in red)

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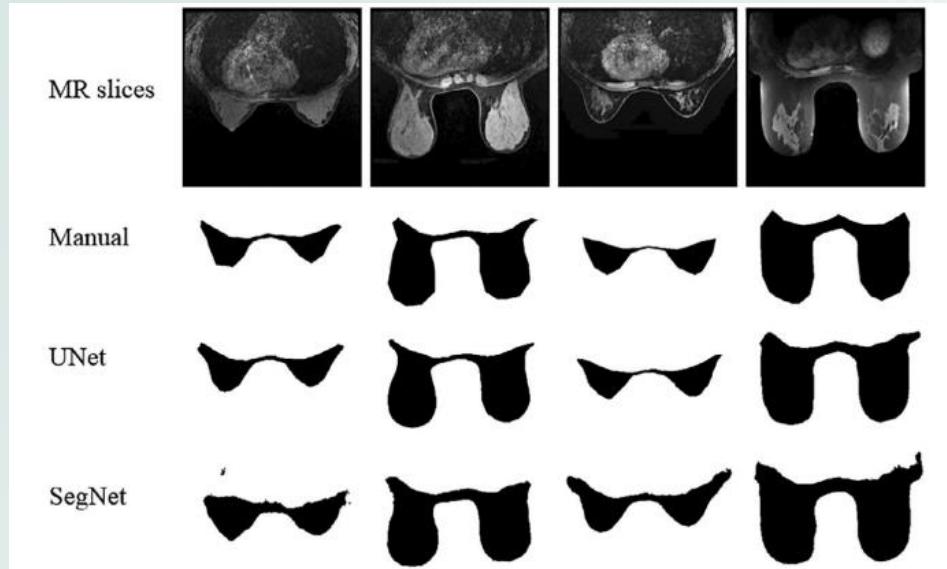
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### Deep-learning methods

- Badrinarayanan et al., 2017 - SegNet
- Ronneberger et al., 2015 – U-Net



## 2.1. Previous approaches for breast tissue segmentation:



(Zhang, L. et al. 2019)

Data	Model	Dice Coefficient
DCE dataset 1	UNet	$0.92 \pm 0.07$
	SegNet	$0.84 \pm 0.11$
DCE dataset 2	UNet	$0.87 \pm 0.06$
	SegNet	$0.80 \pm 0.06$

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- Zhang et al., 2019 - mask-guided hierarchical learning (MHL) U-Net framework

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Original 4-layered U-Net is selected and modified in this study

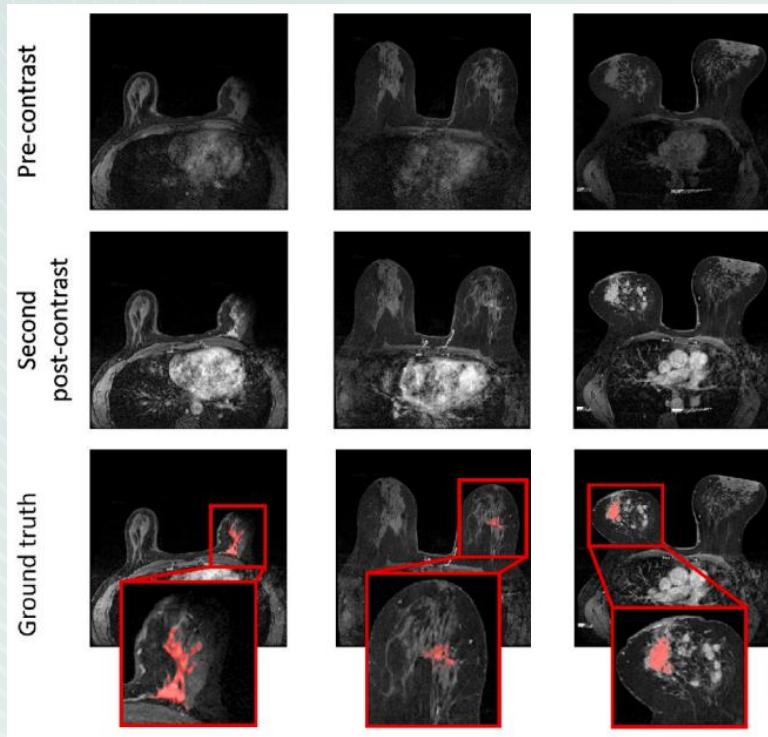


## 2.2. Premise of the study

**Aim:** Developing an effective and accurate method for segmenting breast lesions in DCE-MRI using a modified deep learning model, U-Net ensemble.

- Improving previous approach, Region of Interest (ROI) guided, 3D patch based U-Net framework
- Incorporation of residual basic blocks
- Integrating three distinct models

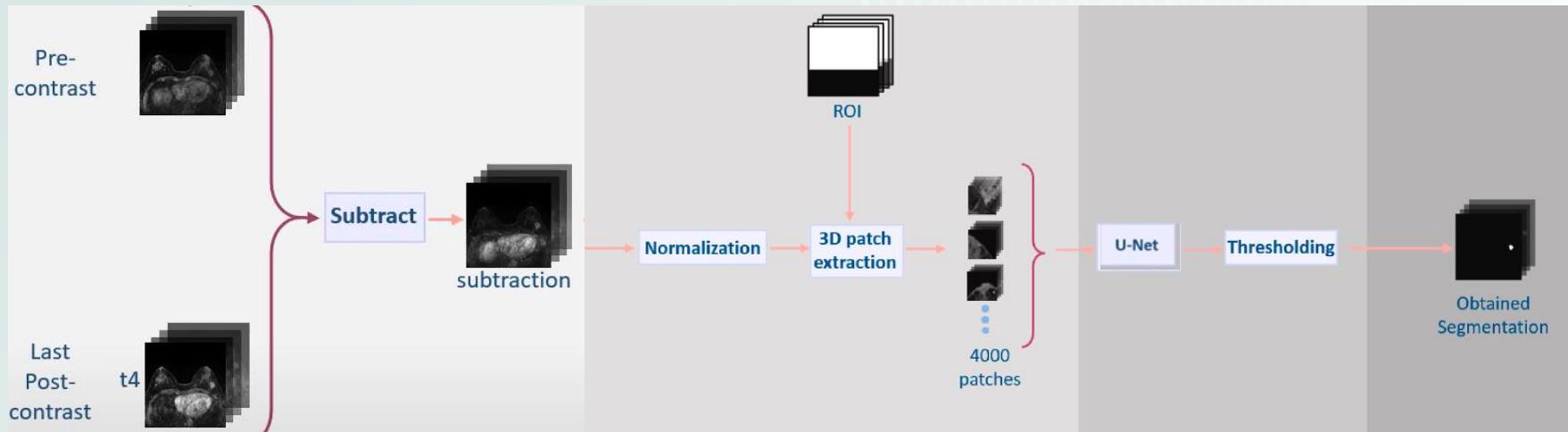
### 3. 1. Data



- 46 cases from the TCGA-BRCA
- All cases have at least one lesion  
(verified by needle biopsy)
- Complex and challenging: various sizes, shapes, locations and intensity enhancements also multiple lesions

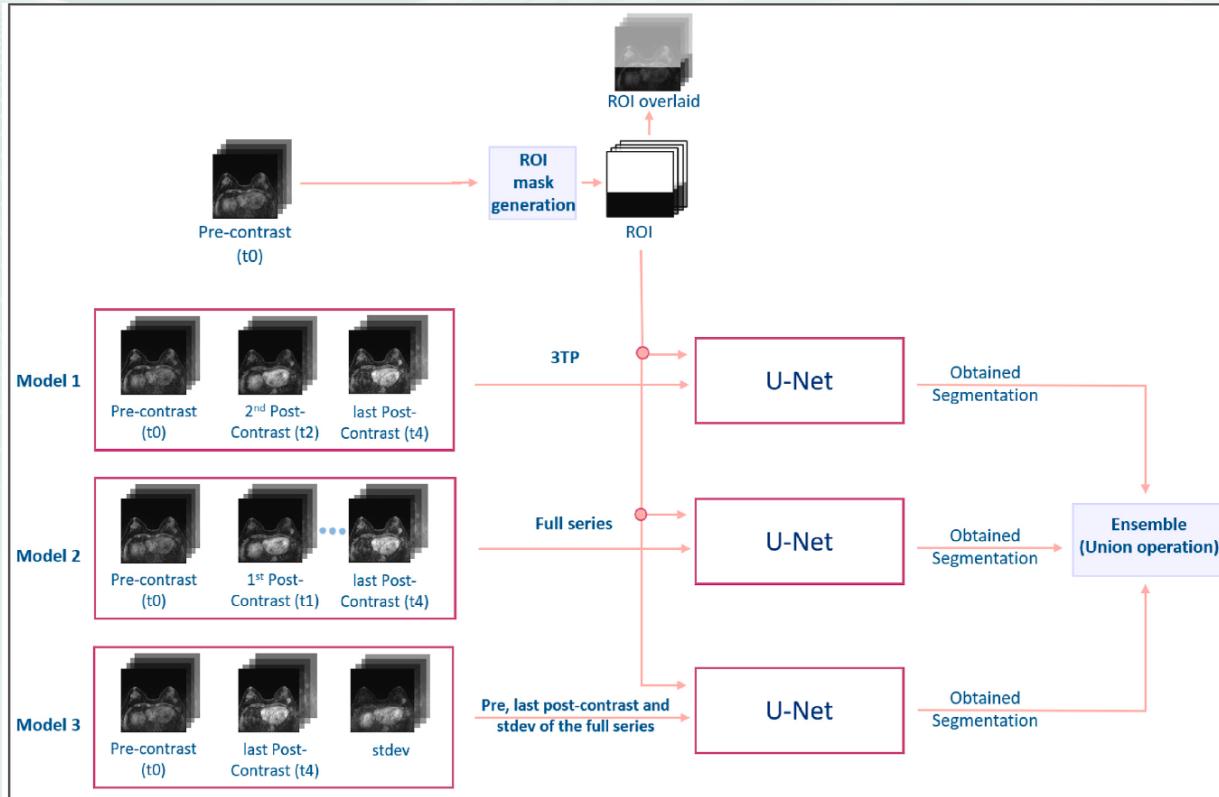


### 3.2. Framework of U-Net with 3D patching method



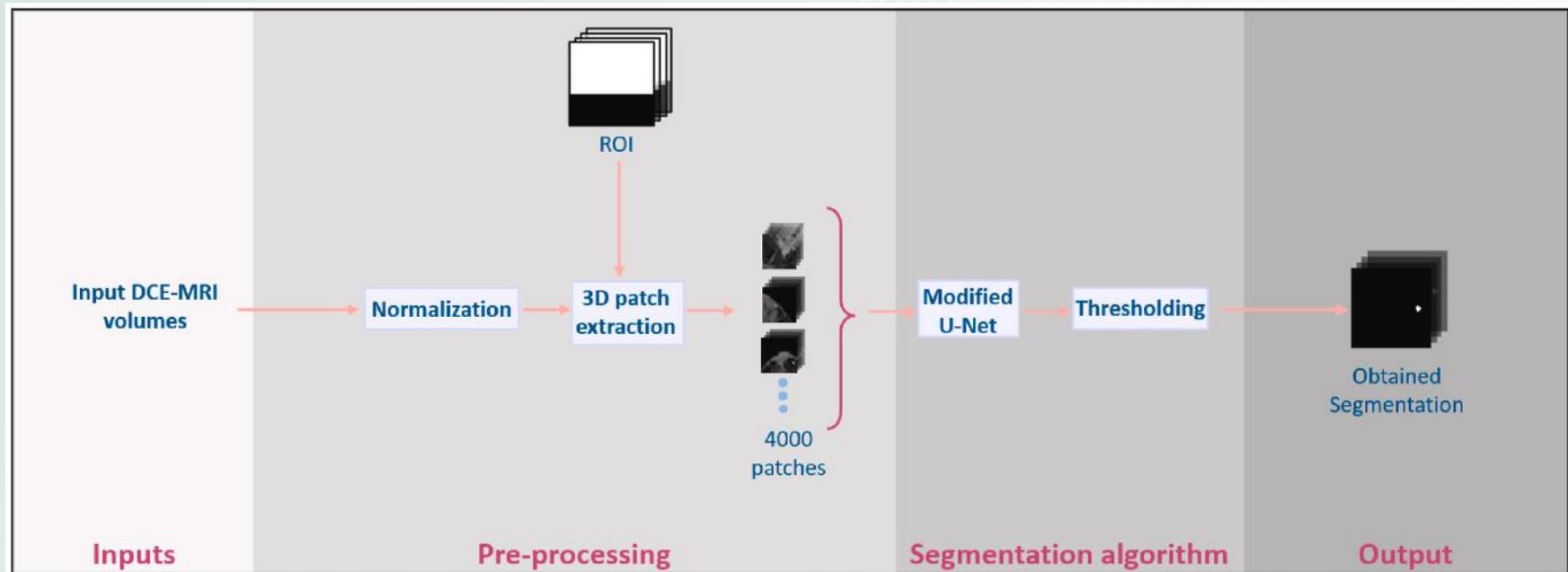
(Khaled et al., 2021)

### 3.3. Framework of proposed method with Modified U-Net





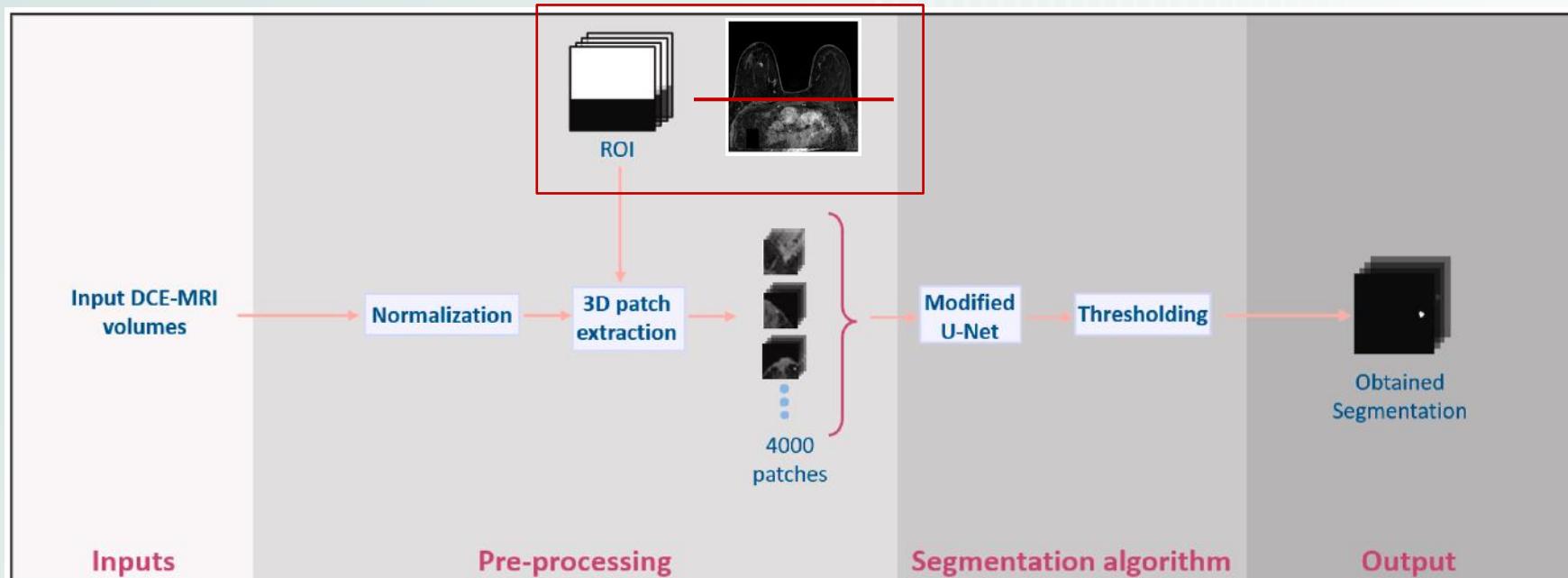
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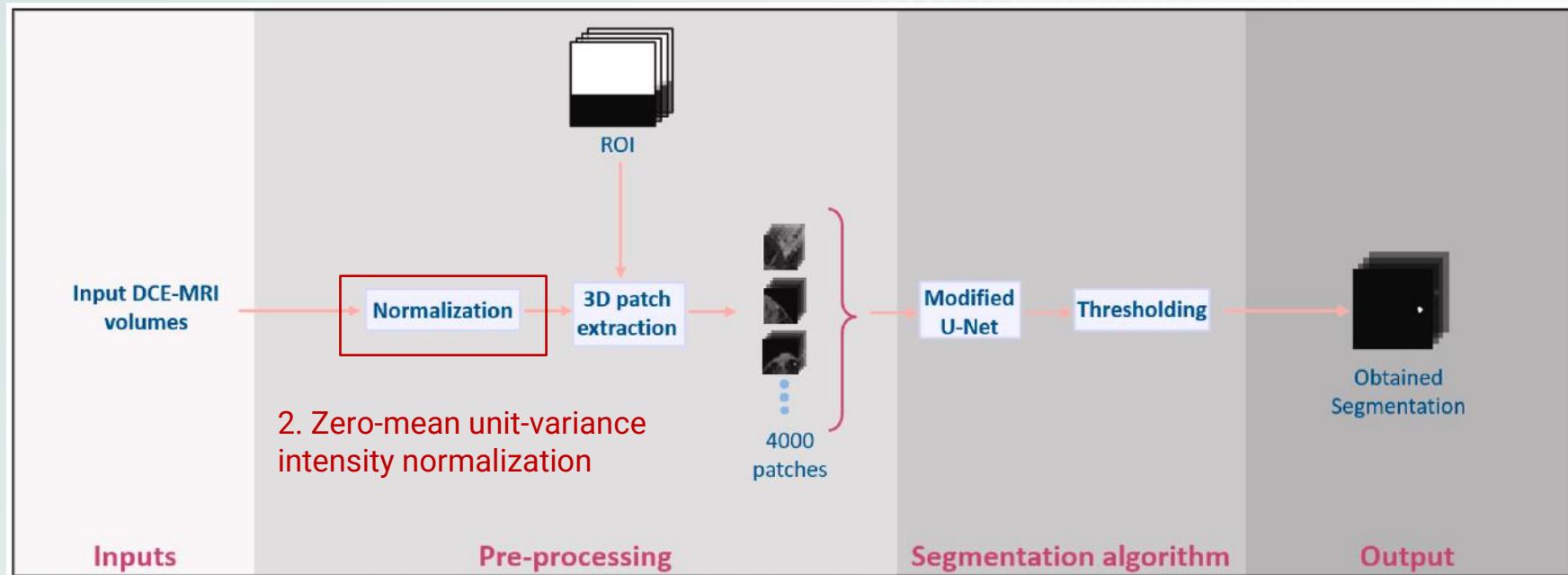
### 3.3. Framework of proposed method with Modified U-Net

#### 1. Breast ROI masks generation



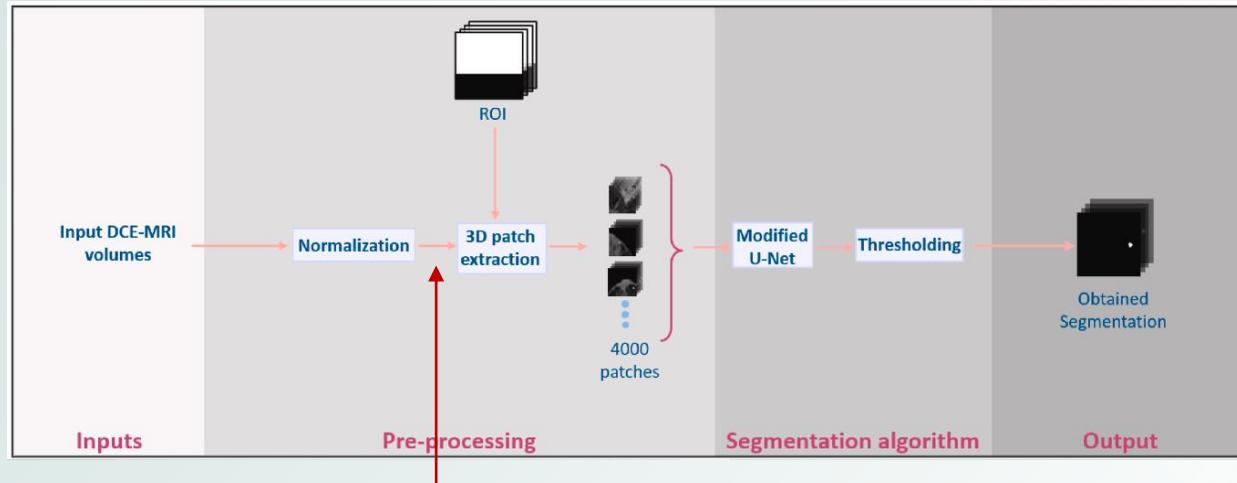


### 3.3. Framework of proposed method with Modified U-Net





### 3.3. Framework of proposed method with Modified U-Net



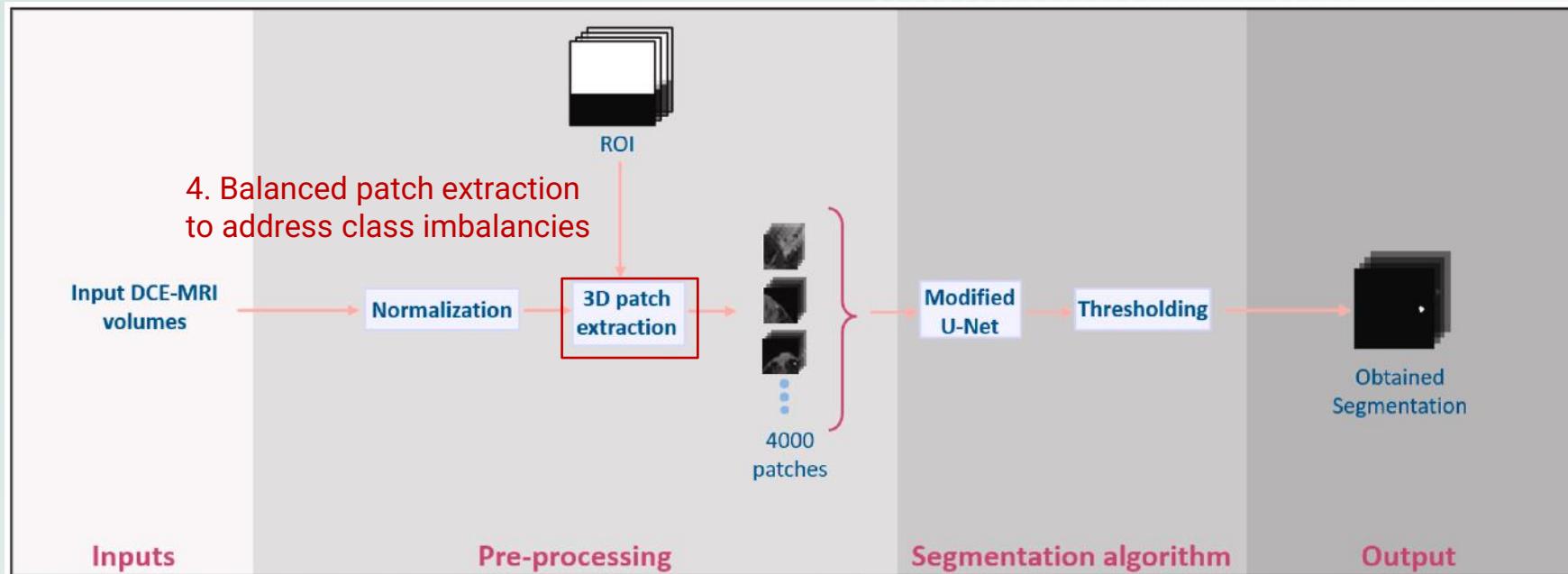
3. Zero padding with padding width equal to half of the patch size

A 7x7 matrix representing a 3x3 patch with zero padding. The central 3x3 block contains the original patch data, while the surrounding 4x4 area is filled with zeros.

123	94	83	2	0	0	0	0	0
34	44	187	92	0	0	0	0	0
34	76	232	124	0	0	0	0	0
67	83	194	202	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	123	94	83	2	0	0	0
0	0	34	44	187	92	0	0	0
0	0	34	76	232	124	0	0	0
0	0	67	83	194	202	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

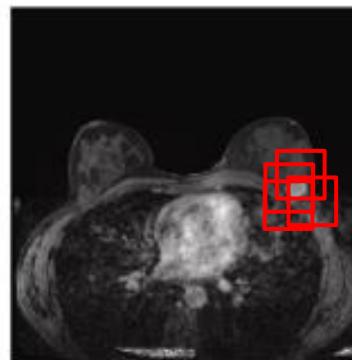
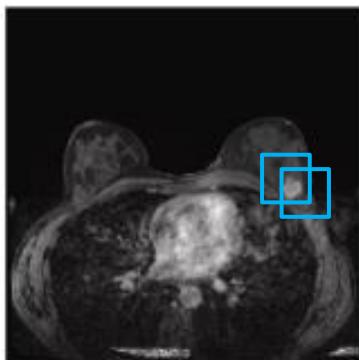


### 3.3. Framework of proposed method with Modified U-Net



### 3.3. Balanced Patch Extraction

- ❖ Obtaining coordinates of positive voxels from the ground truth
- ❖ Random shifting of patch centers
- ❖ Generating more positive patches



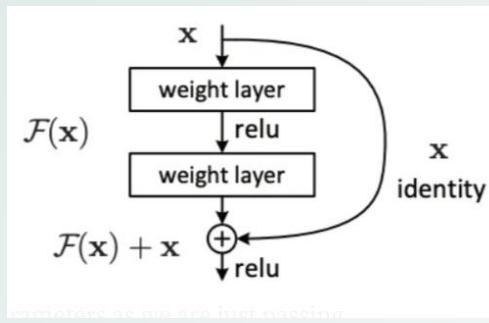
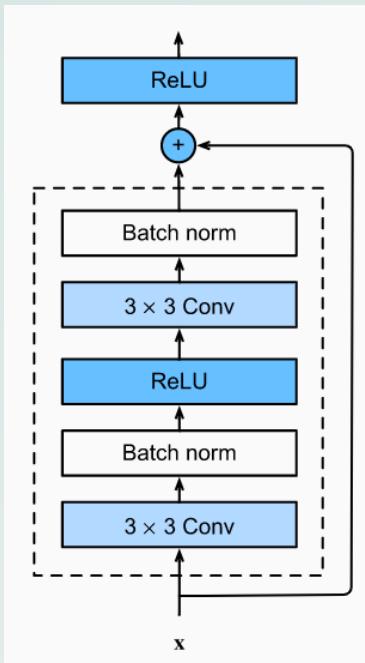
*Uniform patch sampling*

*Balanced patch sampling*

*Per case:*  
• 2000 positive patches  
• 2000 negative patches



### 3.4. Residual basic blocks

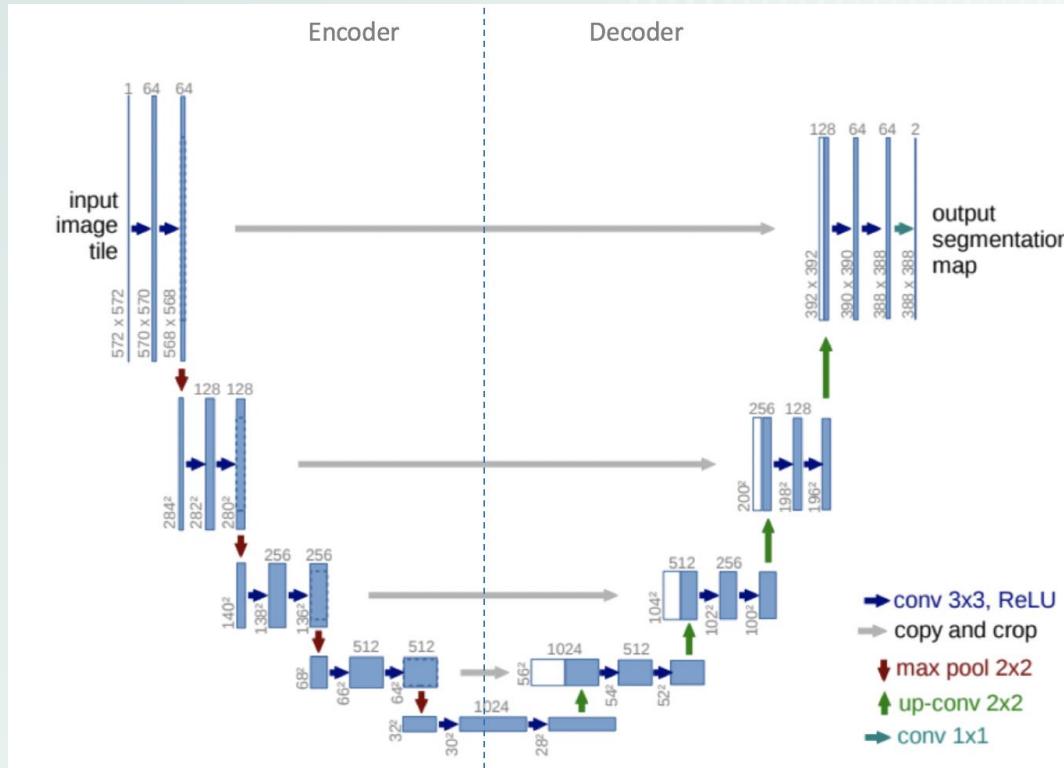


- Batch normalization layer then, a non-linear activation function.
- Layer fed directly into the layers about 2–3 hops next
- Skipping connections convenient in deep networks.

(Sahoo, 2022)

### 3. 5. U-Net Architectures

□ Original:

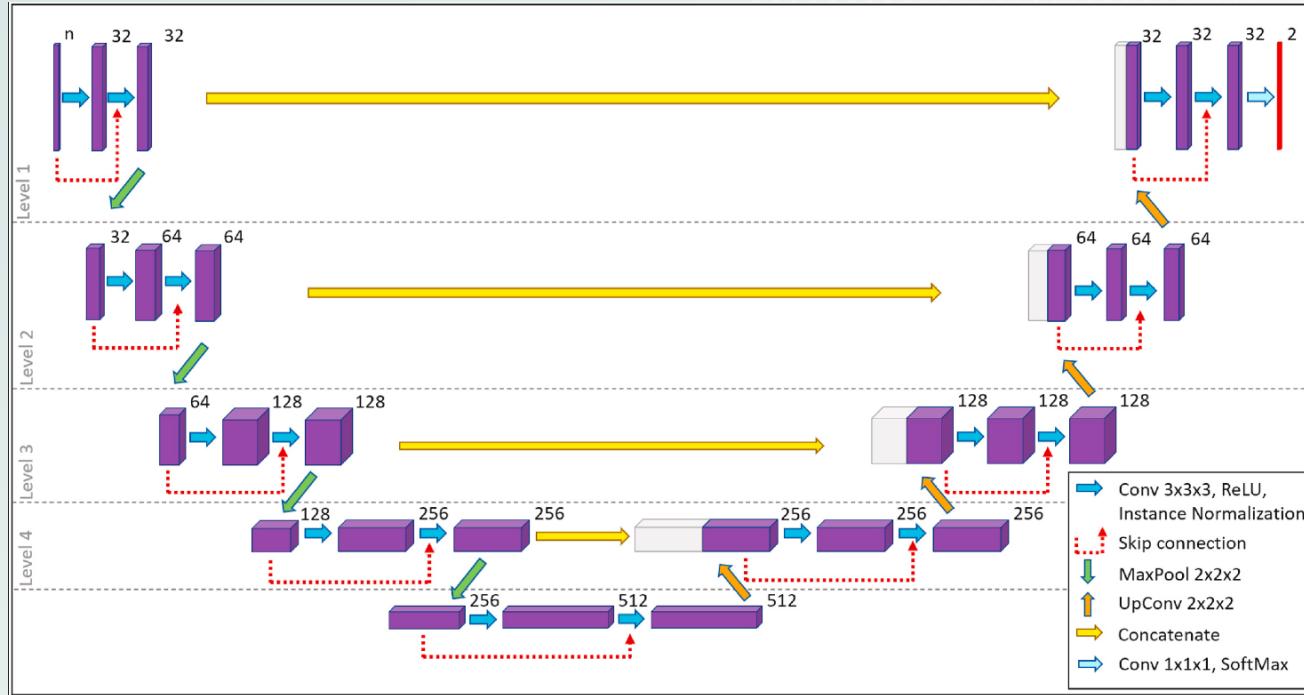


(Ronneberger, O. et al., 2015)

### 3. 5. U-Net Architectures



#### □ Modified



## 4. Experiments

**Experiment 1:**  
Volume Re-sampling

**Experiment 2:**  
Input Volumes

**Experiment 3:**  
U-Net  
Architecture

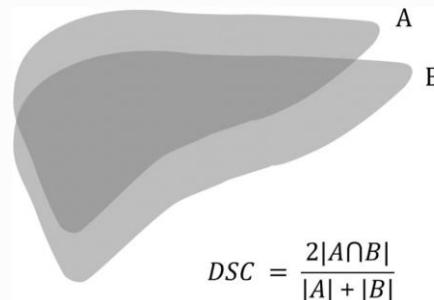
**Experiment 4:**  
Detection  
evaluation and  
complemented  
GT

**Experiment 5:**  
Comparison  
with non-linear  
methods

- ✓ 5 fold cross-validation
- ✓ 20 epochs per fold
- ✓ 9 cases for testing set (10 cases for the last fold).
- ✓ Remainings are randomly shuffled  $\Rightarrow$  80% for training and 20% for testing

## 4. 1. Metrices for performance assesments

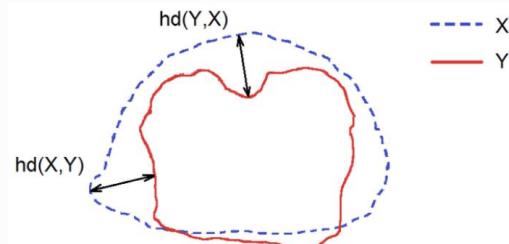
**Dice Similarity Coefficient (DSC):** Measures the overlap between two sets of data, which are sets of pixels or voxels representing segmented regions in two different images.



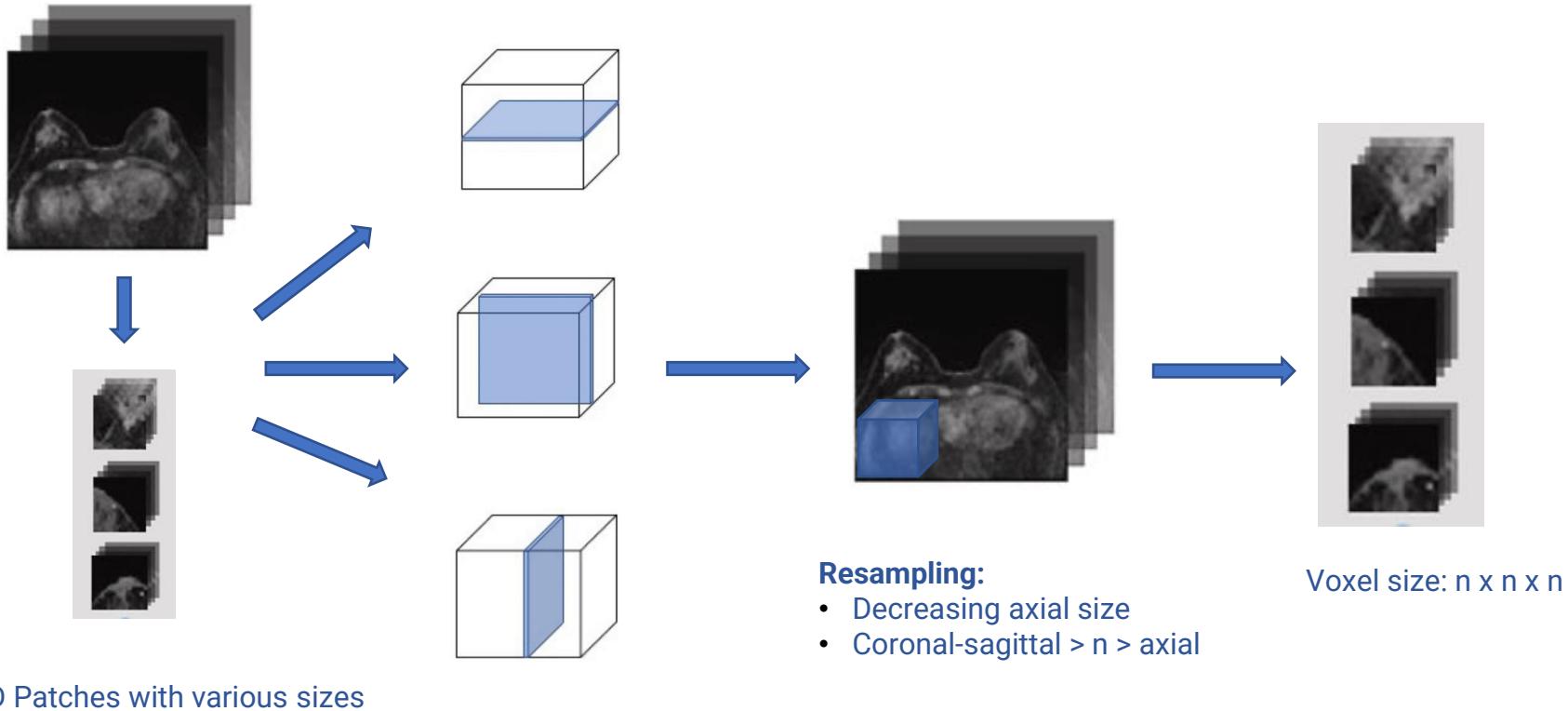
DSC: Dice similarity coefficient

**Hausdorff Distance (HD):** Measure of the dissimilarity between two sets of points. It quantifies the maximum distance between each point in one set and its closest point in the other set.

$$\tilde{\delta}_H(A, B) = \max_{a \in A} \min_{b \in B} \|a - b\|$$



## *Experiment 1: Volume re-sampling*





## Results of volume resampling

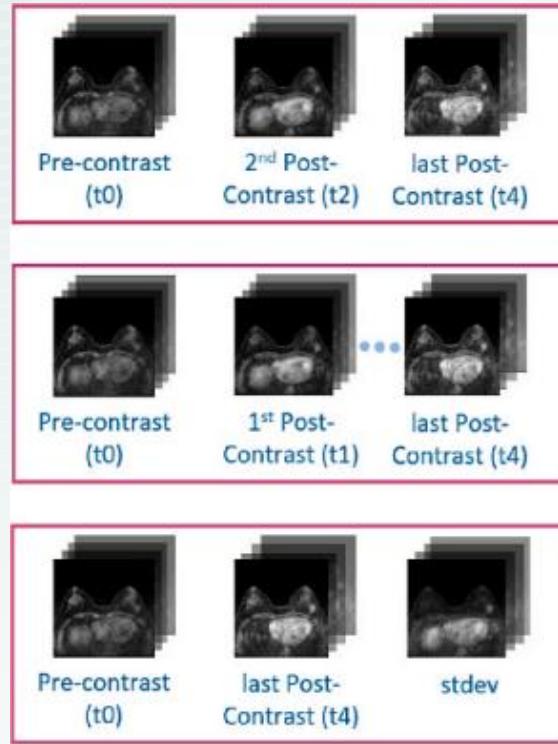
Voxel Size	$DSC$	$DSC_L$
Original (non-isotropic)	<b><math>0.649 \pm 0.258</math></b>	<b><math>0.719 \pm 0.250</math></b>
Isotropic 1	$0.580 \pm 0.274$ ( $p=.008$ )	$0.693 \pm 0.267$ ( $p=.200$ )
Isotropic 2	$0.579 \pm 0.260$ ( $p=.003$ )	$0.633 \pm 0.277$ ( $p < .001$ )



Isotropic volumes did not improve the performance

## Experiment 2: Input volumes

1. Pre and last post contrast
2. Pre, last post contrast subtraction
3. 3 TP ( Pre, second post, last post contrast)
4. Full series ( Pre, all post contrasts)
5. Pre, last post, stdev of full series
6. Ensemble (Majority voting) of 3, 4 and 5
7. Ensemble (Union) of 3, 4 and 5



## Experiment 2: Input volumes

1. Pre and last post contrast

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3. 3 TP ( Pre, second post, last post contrast)

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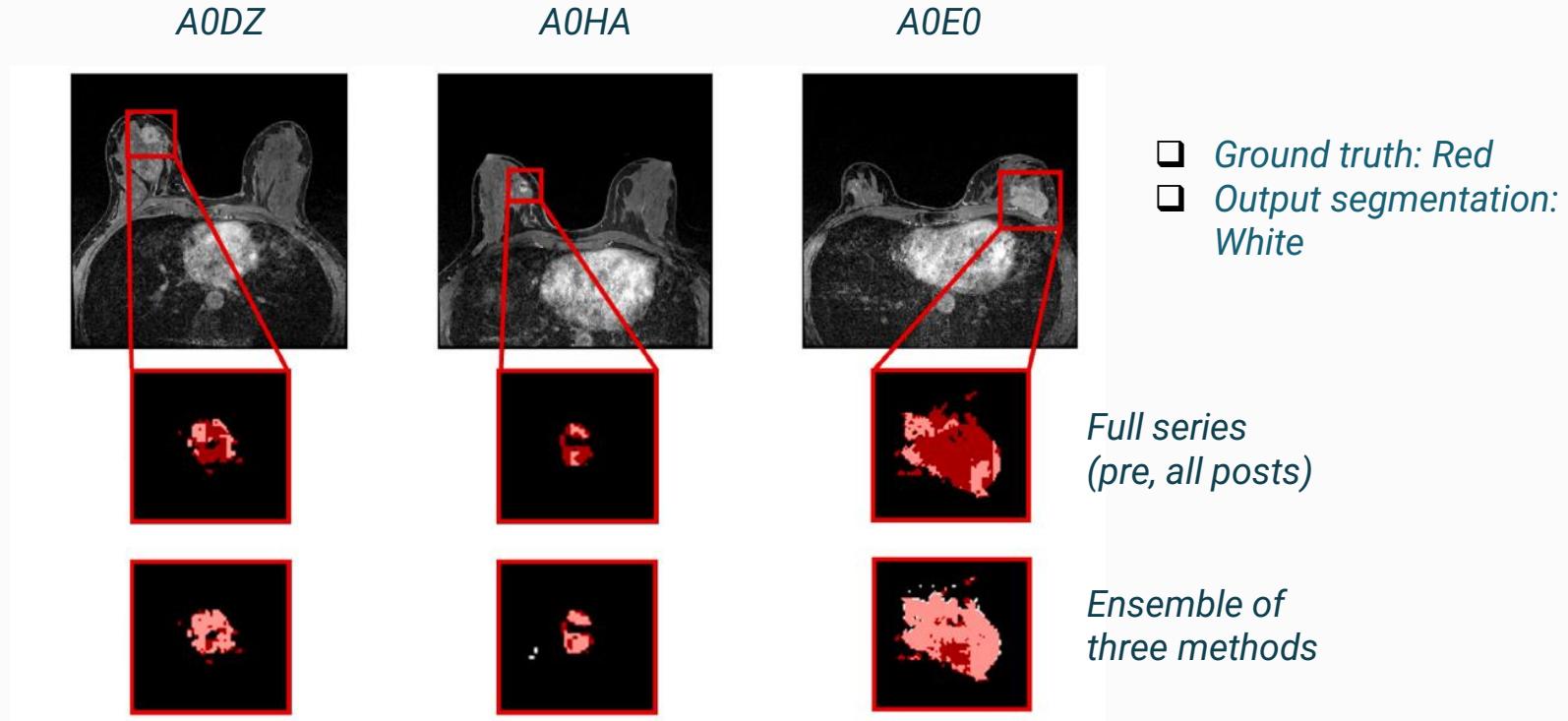
5. Pre, last post, stdev of full series

6. Ensemble (Majority voting) of 3, 4 and 5

7. Ensemble (Union) of 3, 4 and 5

Input Model	DSC <sub>L</sub>	HD <sub>L</sub>
1	$0.652 \pm 0.283$	23.281
2	$0.649 \pm 0.248$	16.291
3	$0.716 \pm 0.241$	11.996
4	$0.730 \pm 0.222$	11.879
5	$0.719 \pm 0.250$	13.098
6	$0.728 \pm 0.243$	11.561
7	<b><math>0.790 \pm 0.172</math></b>	<b>11.256</b>

## Results: Input volumes



## ***Experiment 3: U-Net architecture***

Basic U-Net with four levels along with a ***cross-entropy*** loss function.

Two hierarchical basic U-Nets with ***dice-sensitivity-like*** and ***dice-like loss***

U-Net architecture with ***residual blocks***

## Results: U-Net architecture

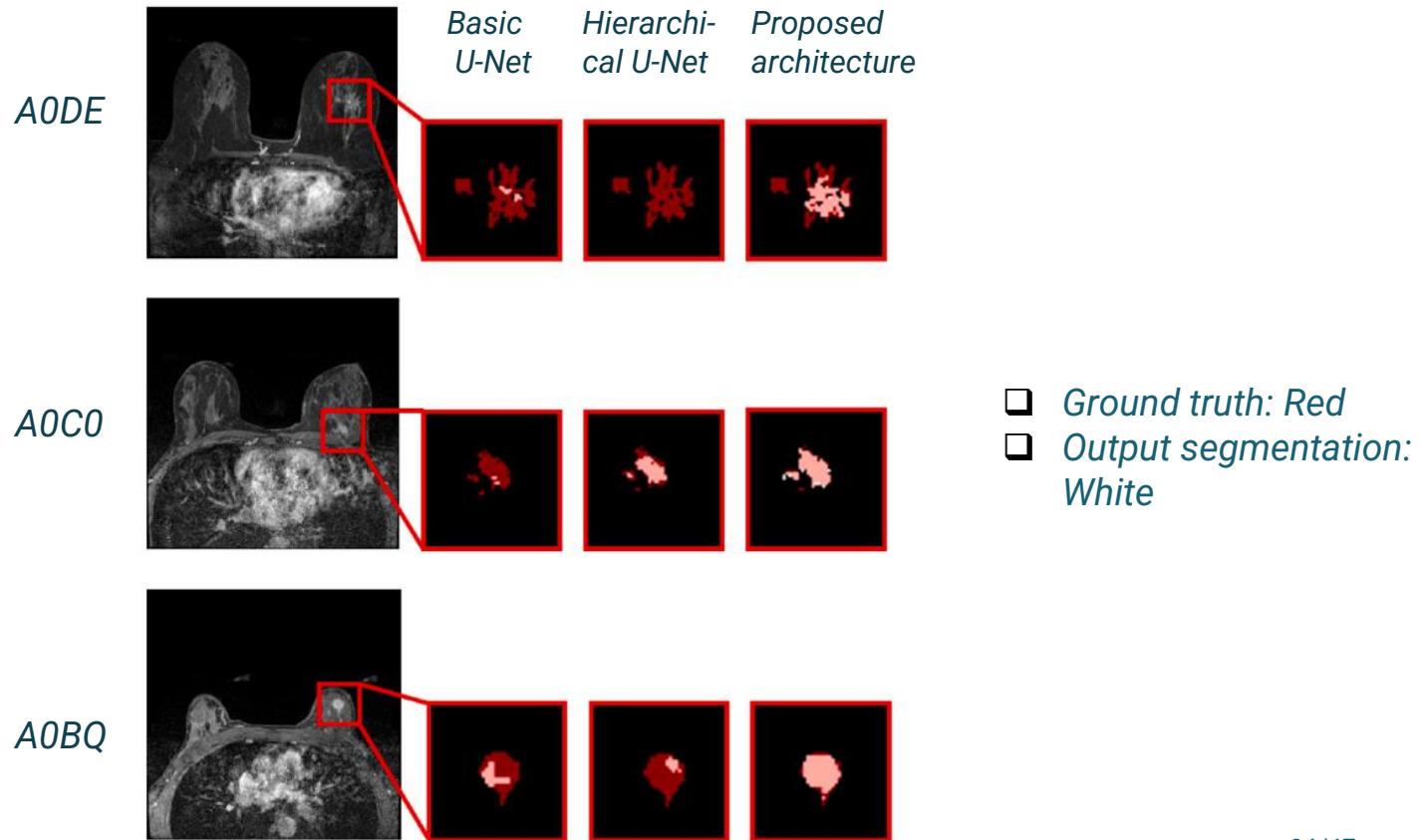
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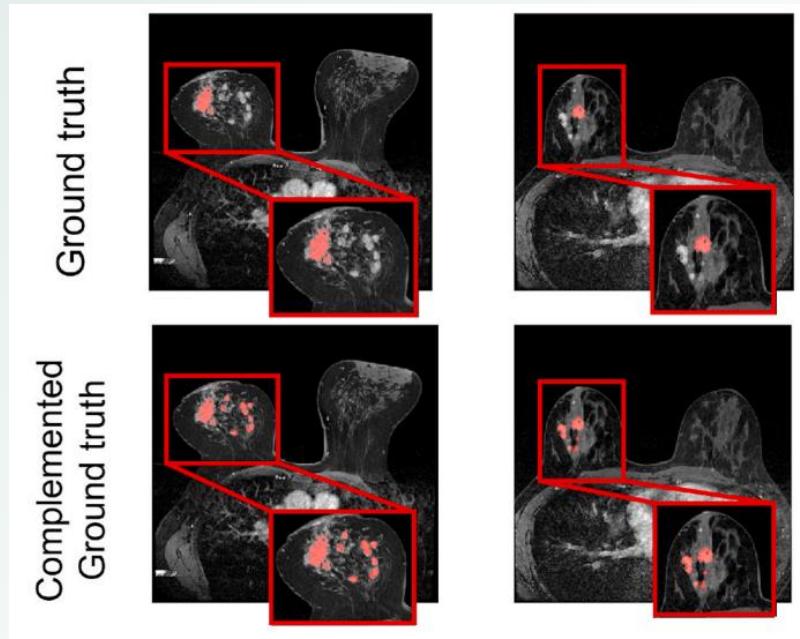
Network	DSC	DSC <sub>L</sub>	HD	HD <sub>L</sub>	FPR
Single Model	0.551±0.286	0.590±0.302	123.939 (p	16.369	1.21E-04
Basic U-Net	(p=.001)	(p<.001)	<.001)	(p=.001)	(p=.910)
Single Model	0.615±0.266	0.669±0.275	212.123	15.885	1.29E-04
Two hierarchical U- Nets	(p=.277)	(p=.137)	(pp=.320)	(p=.034)	(p=.729)
Single Model U- Net with residual blocks	<b>0.649 ± 0.258</b>	<b>0.719 ± 0.250</b>	226.873	<b>13.097</b>	1.24E-04

## Results: U-Net architecture



## Experiment 4: Detection evaluation and complemented GT

- Only one lesion per case (primary lesion)
- Incomplete ground truth annotations affects the results → lowers dice values.
- Annotations were complemented with the help of an experienced radiologist (11 of 46 cases)



## **Results:** Detection evaluation and complemented GT

Data	DSC	$DSC_L$	HD	$HD_L$	FPR
Before complementing	$0.674 \pm 0.224$	$0.790 \pm 0.172$	278.548	11.256	1.73E-04
After complementing	<b><math>0.680 \pm 0.221</math></b>	<b><math>0.802 \pm 0.156</math></b>	<b>275.013</b>	<b>11.042</b>	<b>1.71E-04</b>



Improvement was significant only marginally

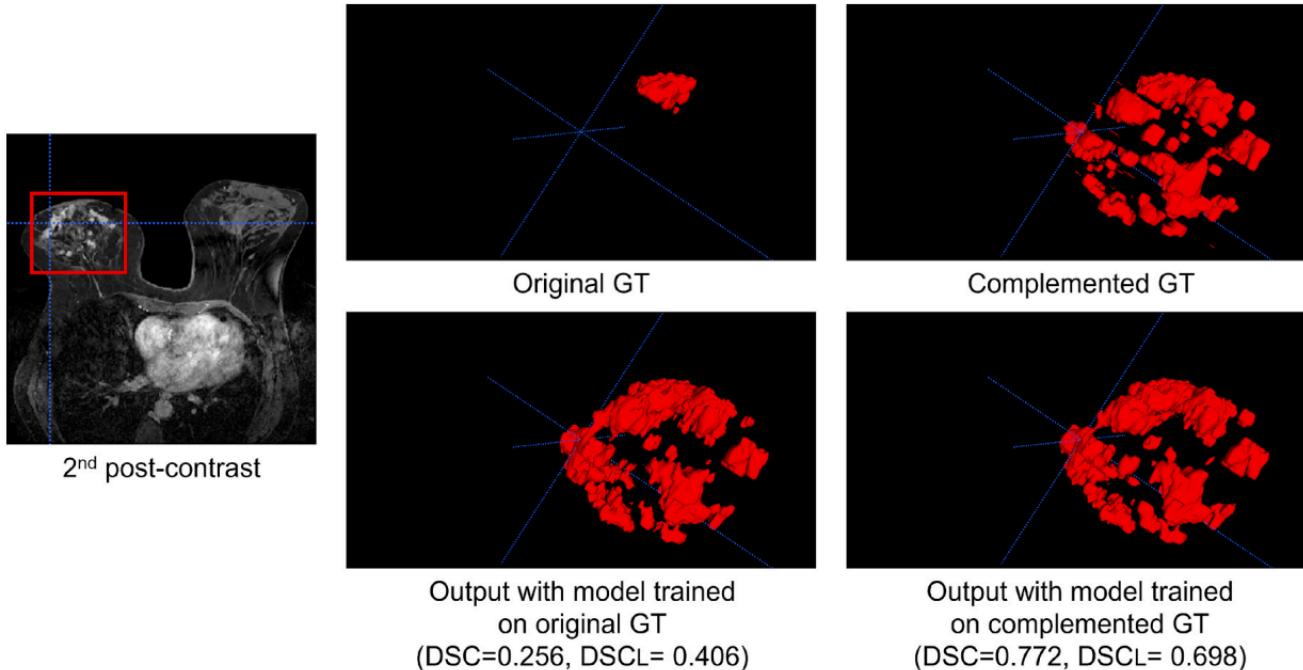
## Results: Detection evaluation and complemented GT

Complicated multiple lesions with many small lesions.

Data	Detected Lesions (I >= 0.2)	Detected Lesions (I >= 0.5)	FP lesions (before filtering)	FP lesions (after filtering)	Mean I
Before complementing	97.8% (45/46 lesions)	89.1% (41/46 lesions)	1736	382	0.811
After complementing (all 46 cases)	78.8% (89/113 lesions)	69% (78/113 lesions)	1834	426	0.761
After complementing (excluding case A0B1)	89.6% (60/67 lesions)	82.1% (55/67 lesions)	1809	424	0.785

Complexity of the dataset and the lesions that were added

## Results: Detection evaluation and complemented GT



## **Experiment 5:** Comparison with non-learning methods (Fuzzy c-means)

Data	DSC	$DSC_L$	HD	$HD_L$	FPR
Before complementing	$0.102 \pm 0.092$	<b><math>0.560 \pm 0.340</math></b>	365.340	21.439	3.57E-03
After complementing	<b><math>0.112 \pm 0.105</math></b>	$0.5491 \pm 0.33$	<b>360.923</b>	<b>21.164</b>	<b>3.55E-03</b>

## Experiment 5: Comparison with non-learning methods (Fuzzy c-means)

Data	Detected	Detected	FP lesions	FP lesions	Mean
	Lesions ( $I \geq 0.2$ )	Lesions ( $I \geq 0.5$ )	(before filtering)	(after filtering)	$I$
Before complementing	97.8% (45/46 lesions)	82.6% (38/46 lesions)	113 234	12 520	0.730
After complementing (all 46 cases)	96.5% (109/113 lesions)	78.8% (89/113 lesions)	113 425	12 711	0.687
After complementing (excluding case A0B1)	94% (63/67 lesions)	70.1% (47/67 lesions)	112 195	12 547	0.675

*Number of FP lesion detections increases (25-fold of Modified U-Net)*

## Comparison with existing deep-learning methods

	Architecture	2D/ 3D	Number of cases (public/private)	Inputs	Loss function	Evaluation criteria and score	Scanner
Zhang et al., 2019b [34]	U-Net	2D	1246 slices (private)	2nd post-contrast (lesion bounding boxes)	Cross-entropy	DSC = 0.91	–
	U-Net	3D	158 cases (private)	2nd post-contrast (lesion bounding boxes)	Cross-entropy	DSC = 0.92	
El Adoui et al., 2019 [15]	U-Net	2D	5452 slices (private)	Post-contrast	Cross-entropy	IoU = 0.761 4	1.5T Siemens
	SegNet	2D	5452 slices (private)	Post-contrast	Cross-entropy	IoU = 0.688 8	
Piantadosi et al., 2019 [21]	U-Net	2D	35 case (256x128x80) (private)	Pre-contrast, 2 min post- contrast, and 6 min post- contrast	Dice	DSC = 0.612 4	1.5T Siemens
Zhang et al., 2019a [33]	Two hierarchical U- Nets	3D	272 cases (private)	Pre-contrast, post-contrast, and subtraction (breast mask guided)	First stage: Dice- sensitivity-like Second stage: Dice-like	DSC = 0.72	1.5T GE and 3.0T Siemens
Our proposed work	Ensemble of 3 U-Nets with ResNet basic blocks	3D	46 cases (public)	Ensemble (Union) of 3 models, each with different inputs (ROI mask guided)	Cross- entropy	DSC = 0.680 (0.802 for primary lesions only)	1.5T GE

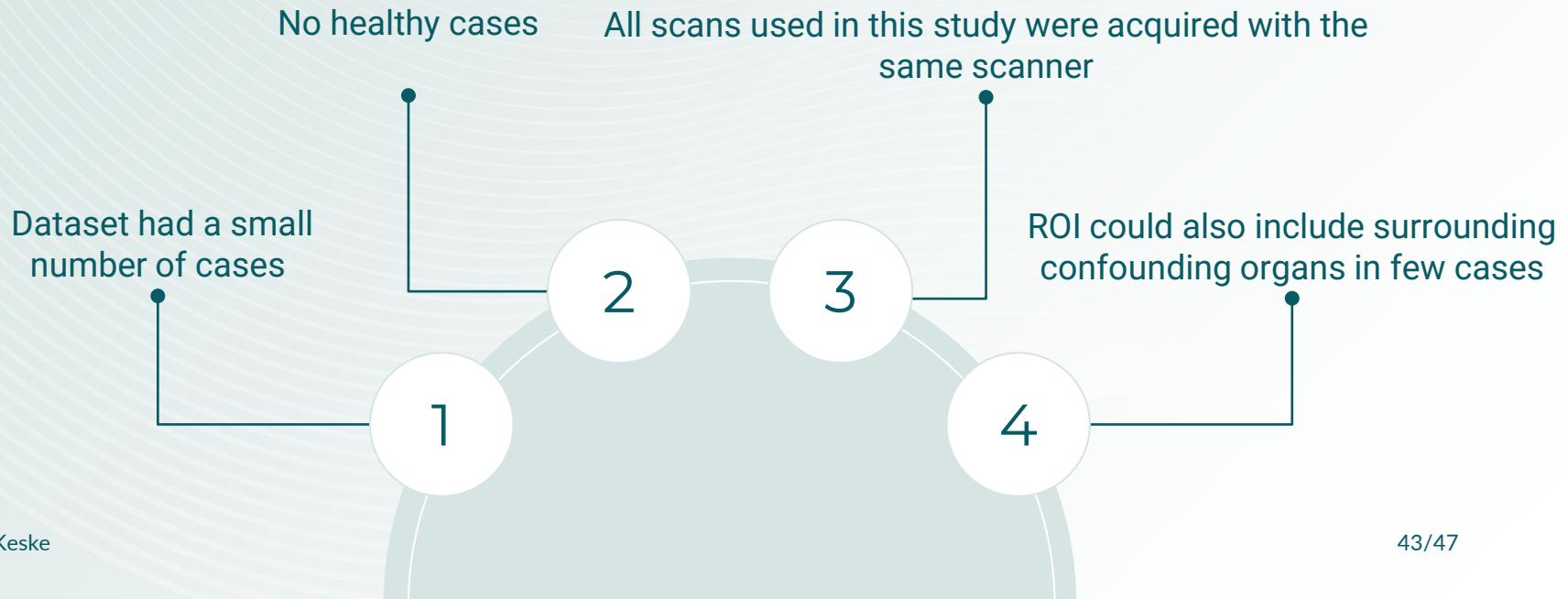
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*Lesion bounding  
boxes are used as  
input*

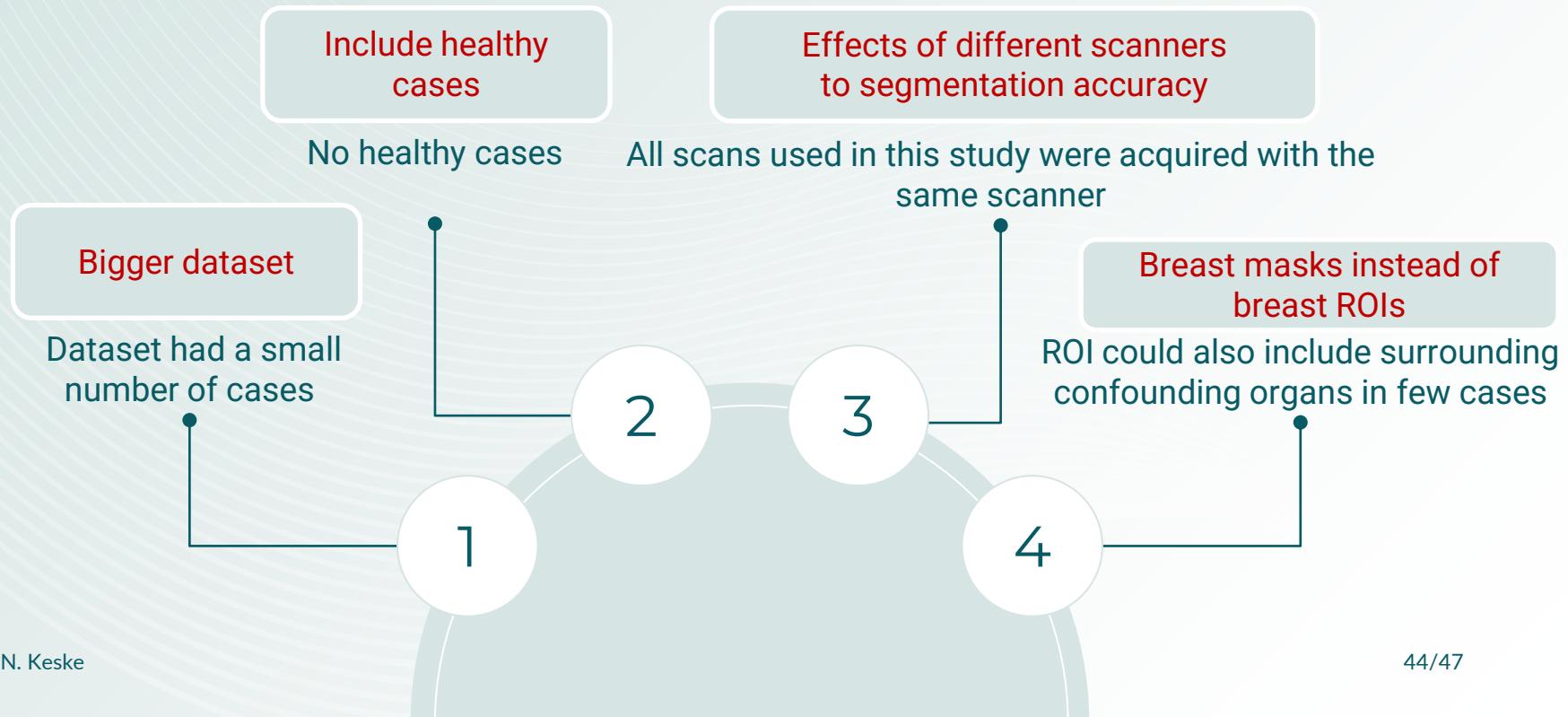
*Fully automatic*

## 5. Limitations





## 5. Limitations - Future work





## Limitations - Future work

- ❑ Using more complex models
- ❑ Representing of the 4D data in a single volume as a compressed input
- ❑ Effective capture of TIC for each voxel



- ★ Decrease the computational requirements
- ★ Enhance the classification performance

## 5. References

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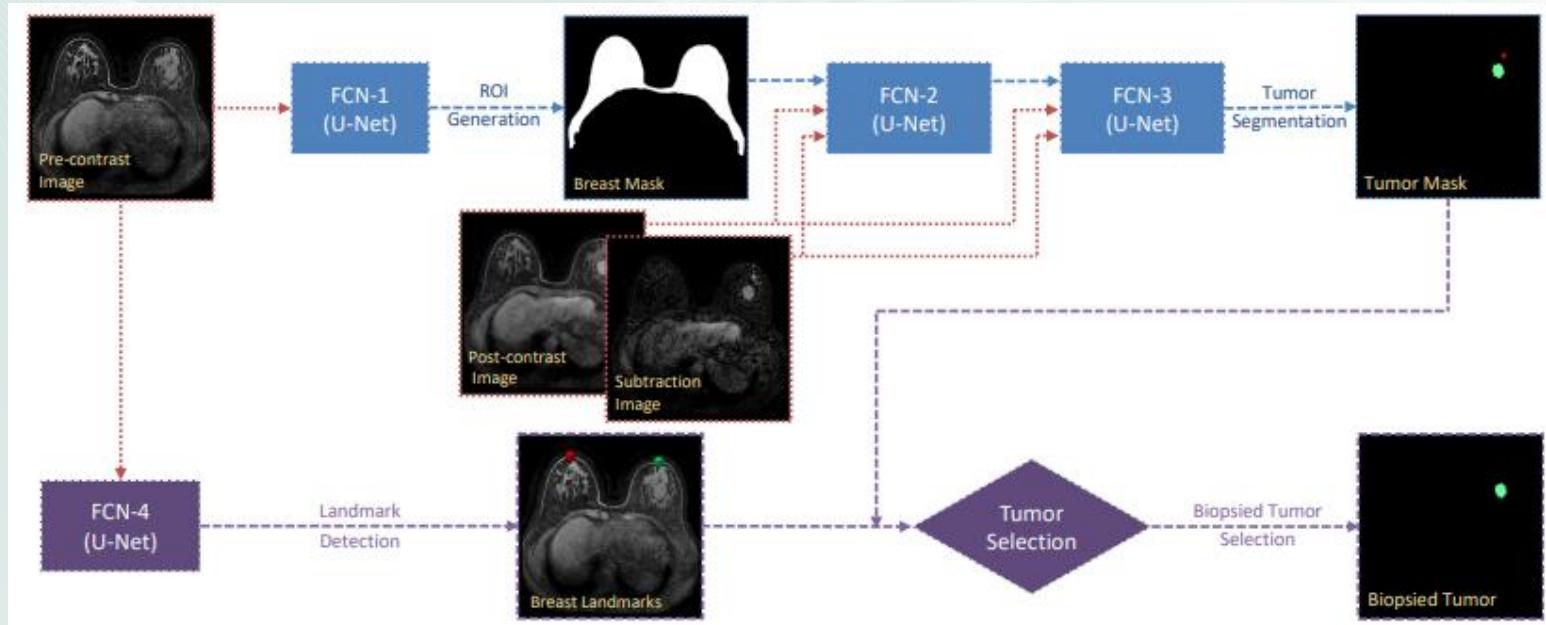


# THANK YOU



# **SUPPLEMENTARY**

# Mask-guided hierarchical learning (MHL) U-Net framework



(Zhang et al., 2019)

- A FCN-1 model is trained to estimate the breast mask, and two additional FCN-2, 3 models are trained to obtain rough and refined segmentation results.
- A landmark detection model is also developed to identify biopsied tumors. These components are presented in detail in the following sections.



## Dice-like loss function

$$\Omega_2(\mathbf{W}_3) = 1 - \frac{1}{N} \sum_{n=1}^N \underbrace{\frac{2 \sum_{v=1}^V S_{n,v} g(X'_{n,v}, \mathbf{W}_3)}{\sum_{v=1}^V S_{n,v}^2 + \sum_{v=1}^V g(X'_{n,v}, \mathbf{W}_3)^2}}_{\text{DSC}},$$

- $g(X'_{n,v}, \mathbf{W}_3)$  is the estimated probability map by using the network coefficients  $\mathbf{W}_3$  of FCN-3
- $X'_{n,v}$  is the  $v$ -th ( $v = 1, \dots, V$ ) voxel of the input data  $X_0$   $n$  with 3 channel

- 1 minus the Dice coefficient is used to minimize the distance between the predicted segmentation and the ground truth segmentation.
- The Dice loss function is particularly useful for imbalanced datasets

## Dice-sensitivity-like loss function

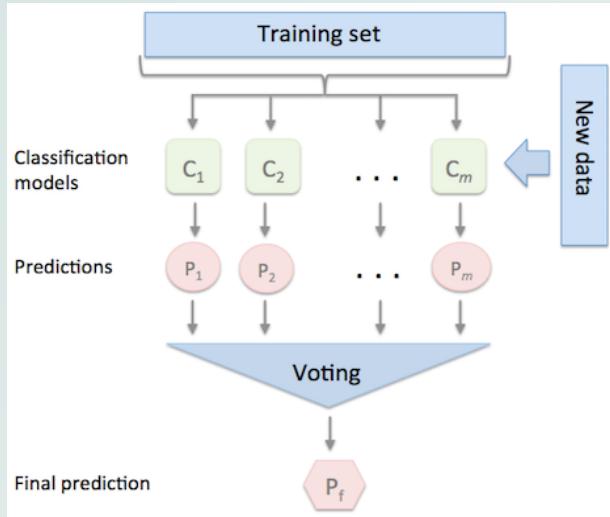
$$\Omega_1(\mathbf{W}_2) = 2 - \underbrace{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{n=1}^N \frac{2 \sum_{v=1}^V S_{n,v} f(X_{n,v}, \mathbf{W}_2)}{\sum_{v=1}^V S_{n,v}^2 + \sum_{v=1}^V f(X_{n,v}, \mathbf{W}_2)^2}}_{\text{DSC}}$$
$$- \underbrace{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{n=1}^N \frac{\sum_{v=1}^V S_{n,v} f(X_{n,v}, \mathbf{W}_2)}{\sum_{v=1}^V S_{n,v}^2}}_{\text{SEN}},$$



- $f(X_{n,v}, W_2)$  is the estimated probability for  $X_{n,v}$  by using the network coefficients  $W_2$  of FCN-2
- $N$  is the number of training images in a batch.

- The sensitivity loss function is used to penalize false negatives, which occur when the model fails to detect a positive sample.
- DSLL function that not only penalizes incorrect segmentations, but also penalizes false negatives.

# Union vs. Majority voting



## Majority voting:

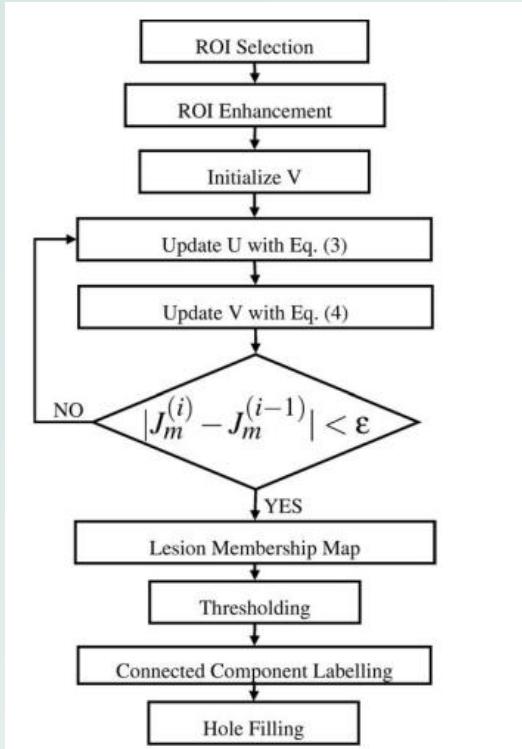
- Each model predicts a class label for the image.
- Final prediction is the label that receives the most votes.

## Union operation:

- Merging the predictions of multiple models into a single prediction by taking the union of all predicted object regions in the image
- Final segmentation will include all the labels that were assigned by any of the models



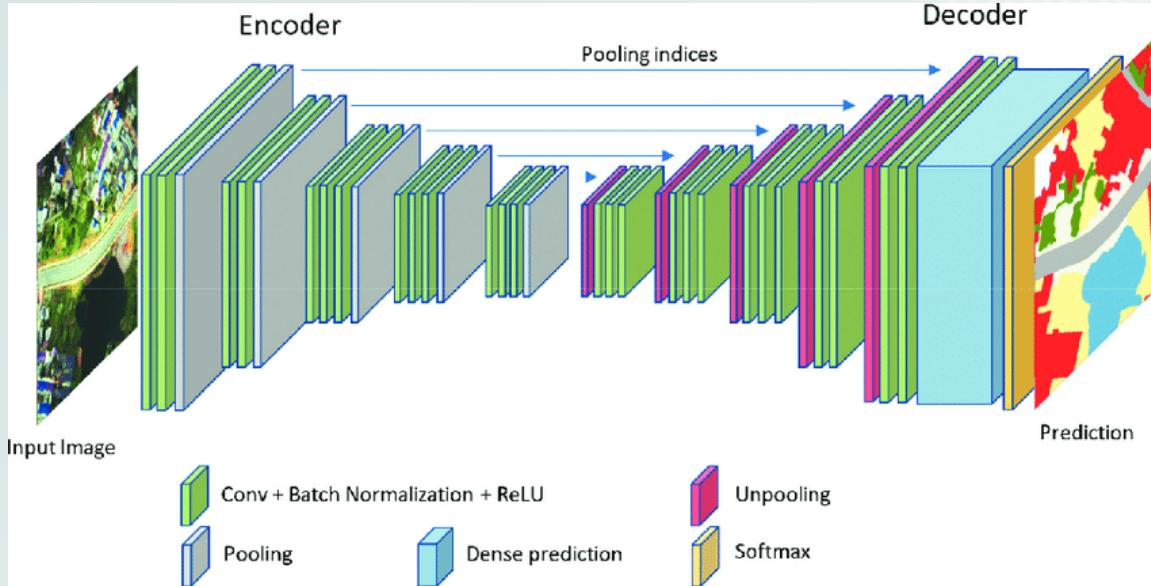
# Fuzzy c-means



- Each data point is assigned a membership value to each cluster
- Belonging to multiple clusters with varying degrees of membership
- Cluster is represented by a centroid
- Iteratively updating the membership values and centroids until a convergence criterion is met
- $U$ : partition matrix,  $V$ : class centers



# SegNet



Badrinarayanan et al., 2017

- Pooling layers that progressively reduce, while U-Net's encoder consists of a series of convolutional layers that gradually increase the number of channels
- "unpooling" vs. "up-sampling"

# Complete results: Input volumes

1. Pre and last post contrast

2. Pre, last post contrast subtraction

3. 3 TP ( Pre, second post, last post contrast)

4. Full series ( Pre, all post contrasts)

5. Pre, last post, stdev of full series

6. Ensemble (Majority voting) of 3, 4 and 5

7. Ensemble (Union) of 3, 4 and 5

Inputs	DSC	$DSC_L$	HD	$HD_L$	FPR
(1) Pre, last post	$0.591 \pm 0.279$ (p = .001)	$0.652 \pm 0.283$ (p < .001)	253.061 (p = .081)	23.481 (p = .141)	1.25E-04 (p = .001)
(2) Pre, last post, subtraction (post-pre)	$0.587 \pm 0.260$ (p < .001)	$0.649 \pm 0.248$ (p < .001)	250.651 (p = .036)	16.291 (p = .099)	1.42E-04 (p = .010)
(3) 3 TP (pre, 2nd post, last post)	$0.654 \pm 0.262$ (p = .403)	$0.716 \pm 0.241$ (p < .001)	219.712 (p < .001)	11.996 (p = .453)	1.07E-04 (p < .001)
(4) Full series (pre, all posts)	$0.664 \pm 0.234$ (p = .572)	$0.730 \pm 0.222$ (p = .005)	227.654 (p < .001)	11.879 (p = .135)	1.14E-04 (p < .001)
(5) Pre, last post, stdev of the full series	$0.649 \pm 0.258$ (p = .220)	$0.719 \pm 0.250$ (p < .001)	226.873 (p < .001)	13.098 (p = .315)	1.24E-04 (p < .001)
Ensemble (Majority voting) of (3), (4) and (5)	$0.679 \pm 0.258$ (p = .835)	$0.728 \pm 0.243$ (p = .002)	135.415 (p < .001)	11.561 (p = .593)	1.00E-04 (p < .001)
Ensemble (Union) of (3), (4) and (5)	$0.674 \pm 0.224$	$0.790 \pm 0.172$	278.548	<b>11.256</b>	1.73E-04