Chapter 20: Case Studies in NeuroAl

## **Chapter Goals**

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

- Analyze real-world applications where neuroscience has successfully informed AI development
- Evaluate the practical benefits of incorporating neuroscience principles into AI systems
- Identify common patterns and successful strategies across different NeuroAl projects
- Apply lessons from case studies to your own research or development projects
- Understand the specific challenges and solutions in translating neuroscience insights to Al
  implementations
- Recognize key success factors for interdisciplinary collaboration between neuroscience and Al

#### Note

This chapter features interactive examples to help you explore key concepts. Click the "launch binder" button at the top of the page or access the interactive notebook to experiment with:

- Interactive PredNet visualization
- Prioritized Experience Replay simulation
- Vision Transformer attention mechanism
- Interactive glossary with neural-Al connections

For an enhanced learning experience, we've also integrated Jupyter AI assistance to help you generate code, get explanations, and create visualizations based on the case studies.

## 20.1 Introduction: From Theory to Practice

Throughout this handbook, we've explored the theoretical foundations of both neuroscience and artificial intelligence, examining how these fields inform and enrich each other. This chapter shifts our focus to real-world implementations, presenting detailed case studies that demonstrate how neuroscience principles have been successfully translated into practical Al systems.

These case studies represent the cutting edge of NeuroAl—where theory meets application, where biological insights drive technological innovation, and where interdisciplinary collaboration yields solutions that neither field could achieve alone. By examining these concrete examples, we gain valuable insights into the practical challenges and benefits of neuroscience-inspired Al approaches.

## 20.2 Case Study: Deep Predictive Coding Networks

## 20.2.1 Background and Motivation

Predictive coding is a neuroscience theory proposing that the brain constantly generates predictions about incoming sensory information and updates its internal models based on prediction errors. This first case study examines how predictive coding has been implemented in deep learning architectures to improve robustness and efficiency.

## 20.2.2 Implementation: PredNet Architecture

The PredNet architecture, developed by William Lotter, Gabriel Kreiman, and David Cox, implements hierarchical predictive coding in a deep learning framework:

```
import numpy as np
import tensorflow as tf
from tensorflow.keras import layers, Model
class PredNetBlock(layers.Layer):
   Implementation of a single layer of the PredNet architecture
   def __init__(self, num_channels, **kwargs):
       Initialize PredNet block
       Parameters:
       num channels : int
           Number of feature channels in this layer
       super(PredNetBlock, self).__init__(**kwargs)
        self.num channels = num channels
       # Convolutional layers
       self.conv_pred = layers.Conv2D(num_channels, (3, 3), padding='same', acti
        self.conv_error_pos = layers.Conv2D(num_channels, (3, 3), padding='same',
        self.conv_error_neg = layers.Conv2D(num_channels, (3, 3), padding='same',
        self.conv_representation = layers.Conv2D(num_channels, (3, 3), padding='s
       # Pooling and upsampling
       self.pool = layers.MaxPooling2D((2, 2))
   def call(self, inputs, training=None):
        Forward pass through the PredNet block
       Parameters:
       inputs : tuple
            (current input, representation from higher layer)
       Returns:
        _____
       outputs : tuple
            (error, updated representation, pooled representation)
       current_input, higher_representation = inputs
       # Generate prediction from higher layer representation
       if higher representation is not None:
            prediction = self.conv_pred(higher_representation)
       else:
            # For the top layer, prediction is zeros
            prediction = tf.zeros_like(current_input)
```

```
# Compute prediction error
        error = current input - prediction
        # Split error into positive and negative components
        pos error = tf.nn.relu(error)
        neg error = tf.nn.relu(-error)
        # Process error
        error_processed_pos = self.conv_error_pos(pos_error)
        error processed neg = self.conv error neg(neg error)
        # Combine processed errors
        combined error = tf.concat([error processed pos, error processed neg], ax
        # Update representation based on combined error
        representation = self.conv representation(combined error)
        # Pool representation for the next higher layer
        pooled_representation = self.pool(representation)
        return error, representation, pooled_representation
class PredNet(Model):
    Implementation of the PredNet architecture for predictive coding
    def __init__(self, stack_sizes=(3, 16, 32, 64), **kwargs):
        Initialize PredNet model
        Parameters:
        stack_sizes : tuple of int
            Number of channels in each layer of the network,
            from input to highest layer
        \Pi^{\dagger}\Pi^{\dagger}\Pi
        super(PredNet, self).__init__(**kwargs)
        self.stack sizes = stack sizes
        self.num_layers = len(stack_sizes)
        # Create PredNet blocks for each layer
        self.blocks = [PredNetBlock(stack_sizes[i]) for i in range(self.num_layer
        # Upsampling layers for top-down connections
        self.upsample layers = [layers.UpSampling2D((2, 2)) for in range(self.n)
    def call(self, inputs, training=None):
        Forward pass through the PredNet
        Parameters:
        inputs : tf.Tensor
```

```
Returns:
        _____
        outputs : dict
            Dictionary containing predictions, errors, and representations
        # Initialize lists to store layer-wise outputs
        errors = []
        representations = []
        # Bottom-up pass
        current input = inputs
        higher_representations = [None] * self.num_layers
        for i in range(self.num layers):
            # Process through current layer
            error, representation, pooled = self.blocks[i]([current_input, higher
            # Store results
            errors.append(error)
            representations.append(representation)
            # Set input for next layer
            if i < self.num_layers - 1:</pre>
                current input = pooled
        # Top-down pass to update higher representations
        for i in reversed(range(self.num_layers - 1)):
            # Upsample representation from higher layer
            higher_rep = self.upsample_layers[i](representations[i + 1])
            higher representations[i] = higher rep
        # Return all outputs
        outputs = {
            'errors': errors,
            'representations': representations
        }
        return outputs
def build prednet model(input shape=(128, 128, 3), sequence length=10):
    Build a PredNet model for sequence prediction
    Parameters:
    input shape : tuple
        Shape of input images (height, width, channels)
    sequence length: int
        Number of frames in input sequences
    Returns:
```

Input image or sequence

```
model : tf.keras.Model
    Complete PredNet model
# Create input layer for sequence
inputs = layers.Input(shape=(sequence length,) + input shape)
# Time-distributed PredNet to process sequences
prednet = PredNet()
td_prednet = layers.TimeDistributed(prednet)(inputs)
# Combine outputs across time steps
outputs = []
for t in range(1, sequence length):
    # Use previous frame's representation to predict next frame
    prev_representation = td_prednet[:, t-1]['representations'][-1] # Top la
    prediction = layers.Conv2D(3, (3, 3), padding='same', activation='sigmoid
    outputs.append(prediction)
# Stack predictions along time dimension
predictions = layers.Lambda(lambda x: tf.stack(x, axis=1))(outputs)
# Create model
model = Model(inputs=inputs, outputs=predictions)
return model
```

#### 20.2.3 Results and Evaluation

The PredNet architecture was evaluated on several computer vision tasks:

- 1. **Video prediction**: PredNet demonstrated superior performance in predicting future frames in natural video sequences, particularly in handling object motion and occlusion.
- 2. **Sample efficiency**: Compared to standard CNNs, PredNet required significantly fewer training examples to achieve comparable performance on object recognition tasks.
- 3. **Error representation**: The explicit representation of prediction errors allowed the model to highlight unexpected or novel events in sequences.

#### 20.2.4 Neuroscience Connection

This implementation connects to neuroscience in several ways:

• **Hierarchical processing**: The layer-wise organization mirrors the hierarchical structure of the visual cortex.

- **Prediction errors**: The explicit computation of prediction errors corresponds to theories about error-signaling neurons in the brain.
- **Bidirectional processing**: The combination of bottom-up and top-down signals aligns with bidirectional information flow in the visual system.

#### 20.2.5 Limitations and Future Directions

While successful, the PredNet implementation faced several challenges:

- 1. **Computational efficiency**: The bidirectional processing increases computational demands compared to standard feed-forward networks.
- 2. **Hyperparameter sensitivity**: Performance is sensitive to the balance between bottom-up and top-down signals.
- 3. **Future work**: Ongoing research is exploring adaptive weighting of prediction errors and integration with reinforcement learning frameworks.

# 20.3 Case Study: Hippocampal Replay for Reinforcement Learning

## 20.3.1 Background and Motivation

The hippocampus plays a crucial role in memory consolidation, with "replay" events during sleep and rest periods helping to transfer experiences to long-term memory. This case study examines how hippocampal replay mechanisms have been incorporated into reinforcement learning systems to improve learning efficiency and generalization.

## 20.3.2 Implementation: Prioritized Experience Replay

Deep Q-Networks with Prioritized Experience Replay, developed by researchers at DeepMind, implement a biologically-inspired memory system:

```
import numpy as np
import tensorflow as tf
import random
from tensorflow.keras import layers, Model, optimizers
from collections import deque
class SumTree:
    A sum tree data structure for efficient sampling based on priorities
    def __init__(self, capacity):
        Initialize the sum tree
        Parameters:
        capacity : int
            Maximum number of experiences to store
        self.capacity = capacity
        self.tree = np.zeros(2 * capacity - 1)
        self.data = np.zeros(capacity, dtype=object)
        self.n_entries = 0
        self.write index = 0
    def _propagate(self, idx, change):
        Update the sum tree by propagating a value change up the tree
        parent = (idx - 1) // 2
        self.tree[parent] += change
        if parent != 0:
            self._propagate(parent, change)
    def retrieve(self, idx, s):
        \Pi/\Pi/\Pi
        Find the index of the leaf node where s falls within its priority range
        left = 2 * idx + 1
        right = left + 1
        if left >= len(self.tree):
            return idx
        if s <= self.tree[left]:</pre>
            return self._retrieve(left, s)
        else:
            return self._retrieve(right, s - self.tree[left])
    def total(self):
```

```
Return the total priority sum
        return self.tree[0]
    def add(self, p, data):
        Add a new experience with priority p
        idx = self.write index + self.capacity - 1
        self.data[self.write_index] = data
        self.update(idx, p)
        self.write index = (self.write index + 1) % self.capacity
        if self.n_entries < self.capacity:</pre>
            self.n entries += 1
    def update(self, idx, p):
        Update the priority of an existing experience
        change = p - self.tree[idx]
        self.tree[idx] = p
        self._propagate(idx, change)
    def get(self, s):
        Get an experience using priority-based sampling
        idx = self._retrieve(0, s)
        data_idx = idx - self.capacity + 1
        return idx, self.tree[idx], self.data[data idx]
class PrioritizedReplayBuffer:
    Prioritized experience replay buffer for efficient and effective learning
    def __init__(self, capacity=10000, alpha=0.6, beta=0.4, beta_increment=0.001,
        Initialize the prioritized replay buffer
        Parameters:
        capacity: int
            Maximum number of experiences to store
        alpha : float
            Controls how much prioritization is used (0 = no prioritization, 1 = no
        beta : float
            Controls importance sampling weights (0 = no correction, 1 = full cor
```

```
beta increment : float
        Amount to increase beta over time
    epsilon : float
        Small value added to priorities to ensure non-zero probabilities
    self.tree = SumTree(capacity)
    self.capacity = capacity
    self.alpha = alpha
    self.beta = beta
    self.beta increment = beta increment
    self.epsilon = epsilon
    self.max_priority = 1.0
def add(self, experience):
    Add an experience to the buffer with maximum priority
    priority = self.max priority ** self.alpha
    self.tree.add(priority, experience)
def sample(self, batch size):
    Sample a batch of experiences based on their priorities
    0.00
    batch = []
    indices = []
    weights = np.zeros(batch_size, dtype=np.float32)
    priorities = np.zeros(batch size, dtype=np.float32)
    # Calculate the priority segment
    total_priority = self.tree.total()
    segment = total_priority / batch_size
    # Increase beta each time we sample
    self.beta = min(1.0, self.beta + self.beta_increment)
    for i in range(batch_size):
        # Sample a value from the segment
        a = segment * i
        b = segment * (i + 1)
        s = random.uniform(a, b)
        # Retrieve the experience
        idx, priority, experience = self.tree.get(s)
        # Store the experience and its index
        batch.append(experience)
        indices.append(idx)
        priorities[i] = priority
    # Calculate importance sampling weights
    sampling probabilities = priorities / total priority
    weights = (self.capacity * sampling_probabilities) ** (-self.beta)
    weights /= weights.max() # Normalize weights
```

```
return batch, indices, weights
    def update priorities(self, indices, priorities):
        Update the priorities of sampled experiences
        for idx, priority in zip(indices, priorities):
            # Add a small value to ensure non-zero probabilities
            priority = (priority + self.epsilon) ** self.alpha
            self.max_priority = max(self.max_priority, priority)
            self.tree.update(idx, priority)
class DQNWithPER:
    Deep Q-Network with Prioritized Experience Replay
    def __init__(self, state_dim, action_dim,
                 learning_rate=0.001,
                 gamma=0.99,
                 per alpha=0.6,
                 per beta=0.4,
                 per beta increment=0.001,
                 replay_capacity=10000,
                 batch size=64,
                 target_update_freq=100):
        0.00
        Initialize the DQN with PER agent
        Parameters:
        -----
        state_dim : tuple
            Dimensions of the state space
        action dim : int
            Dimension of the action space
        learning rate : float
            Learning rate for the optimizer
        gamma : float
            Discount factor for future rewards
        per_alpha : float
            Controls how much prioritization is used
        per beta : float
            Controls importance sampling weights
        per beta increment : float
            Amount to increase beta over time
        replay capacity: int
            Capacity of the replay buffer
        batch size : int
            Size of batches for training
        target_update_freq : int
            Frequency of target network updates
        self.state dim = state dim
```

```
self.action_dim = action_dim
    self.gamma = gamma
    self.batch size = batch size
    self.target_update_freq = target_update_freq
    self.step counter = 0
   # Create replay buffer
    self.replay_buffer = PrioritizedReplayBuffer(
        capacity=replay_capacity,
        alpha=per alpha,
        beta=per beta,
        beta_increment=per_beta_increment
   )
   # Create Q networks
    self.q network = self. build q network()
   self.target_q_network = self._build_q_network()
   # Use Mean Squared Error for loss
   self.optimizer = optimizers.Adam(learning_rate=learning_rate)
   # Initialize target network weights to match Q-network
   self. update target network()
def _build_q_network(self):
   Build the Q-network
   Returns:
   model : tf.keras.Model
       The Q-network model
   inputs = layers.Input(shape=self.state dim)
   x = layers.Conv2D(32, (8, 8), strides=(4, 4), activation='relu')(inputs)
   x = layers.Conv2D(64, (4, 4), strides=(2, 2), activation='relu')(x)
   x = layers.Conv2D(64, (3, 3), strides=(1, 1), activation='relu')(x)
   x = layers.Flatten()(x)
   x = layers.Dense(512, activation='relu')(x)
   outputs = layers.Dense(self.action dim, activation='linear')(x)
   model = Model(inputs=inputs, outputs=outputs)
   return model
def _update_target_network(self):
   Update target network weights
    self.target_q_network.set_weights(self.q_network.get_weights())
def select action(self, state, epsilon=0.1):
   Select an action using epsilon-greedy policy
```

```
Parameters:
    state: np.ndarray
        Current state
    epsilon : float
        Exploration rate
    Returns:
    action : int
        Selected action
    if random.random() < epsilon:</pre>
        # Explore: select a random action
        return random.randint(0, self.action dim - 1)
    else:
        # Exploit: select the best action according to the Q-network
        state = np.expand_dims(state, axis=0)
        q_values = self.q_network.predict(state)[0]
        return np.argmax(q values)
def store_experience(self, state, action, reward, next_state, done):
    Store an experience in the replay buffer
    Parameters:
    state : np.ndarray
        Current state
    action : int
        Selected action
    reward : float
        Received reward
    next_state : np.ndarray
        Next state
    done : bool
        Whether the episode is done
    experience = (state, action, reward, next_state, done)
    self.replay buffer.add(experience)
def train(self):
    Train the Q-network
    Returns:
    loss : float
       Training loss
    # Check if we have enough experiences
    if self.replay_buffer.tree.n_entries < self.batch_size:</pre>
        return 0
```

```
# Sample a batch from the replay buffer
batch, indices, weights = self.replay buffer.sample(self.batch size)
# Unzip the batch
states, actions, rewards, next states, dones = zip(*batch)
# Convert to numpy arrays
states = np.array(states)
next states = np.array(next states)
actions = np.array(actions)
rewards = np.array(rewards)
dones = np.array(dones, dtype=np.float32)
weights = np.array(weights)
# Calculate target Q-values
target_q_values = self.target_q_network.predict(next_states)
max target q values = np.max(target q values, axis=1)
targets = rewards + (1 - dones) * self.gamma * max_target_q_values
# Train the Q-network
with tf.GradientTape() as tape:
    # Get the Q-values for the selected actions
    q_values = self.q_network(states, training=True)
    one_hot_actions = tf.one_hot(actions, self.action_dim)
    selected q values = tf.reduce sum(q values * one hot actions, axis=1)
    # Calculate TD errors for priority update
    td_errors = targets - selected_q_values
    # Calculate weighted loss
    losses = tf.square(td_errors) * weights
    loss = tf.reduce_mean(losses)
# Get gradients and apply them
grads = tape.gradient(loss, self.q_network.trainable_variables)
self.optimizer.apply_gradients(zip(grads, self.q_network.trainable_variab
# Update priorities in the replay buffer
priorities = np.abs(td errors.numpy())
self.replay buffer.update priorities(indices, priorities)
# Update target network periodically
self.step counter += 1
if self.step_counter % self.target_update_freq == 0:
    self. update target network()
return loss.numpy()
```

#### 20.3.3 Results and Evaluation

PER demonstrated significant improvements over standard experience replay in reinforcement learning tasks:

- 1. **Faster learning**: Systems with PER converged to optimal policies in 50% fewer training steps on Atari games.
- 2. **Better performance**: Final performance was improved by approximately 20% across a range of reinforcement learning benchmarks.
- 3. **Improved exploration**: The prioritization of surprising experiences led to more effective exploration of the state space.

#### 20.3.4 Neuroscience Connection

The implementation connects to hippocampal replay in several ways:

- **Memory prioritization**: Just as the hippocampus preferentially replays behaviorally relevant experiences, PER revisits experiences with high learning value.
- **Surprise-based learning**: The prioritization based on TD error parallels the brain's tendency to strengthen memories associated with unexpected outcomes.
- **Interleaved learning**: Both biological replay and PER address the stability-plasticity dilemma by interleaving experiences.

#### 20.3.5 Limitations and Future Directions

Key challenges and future directions include:

- 1. **Efficient implementation**: The tree-based sampling structure introduces additional computational overhead.
- 2. **Parameter sensitivity**: Performance depends on appropriate settings for alpha and beta parameters.
- 3. **Future work**: Ongoing research is exploring integrating episodic memory structures and context-dependent replay strategies.

# 20.4 Case Study: Attention Mechanisms in Vision Transformers

## 20.4.1 Background and Motivation

Visual attention in humans allows for selective processing of relevant information while filtering out distractions. This case study examines how principles from visual neuroscience informed the development of Vision Transformers (ViT), which revolutionized computer vision by applying attention mechanisms to visual data.

## 20.4.2 Implementation: Vision Transformer

The Vision Transformer, developed by researchers at Google, applies the transformer architecture to image classification:

```
import tensorflow as tf
from tensorflow.keras import layers, Model
class PatchExtractor(layers.Layer):
   Extract patches from images
   def __init__(self, patch_size):
        super(PatchExtractor, self).__init__()
        self.patch size = patch size
   def call(self, images):
       batch_size = tf.shape(images)[0]
       patches = tf.image.extract_patches(
            images=images,
            sizes=[1, self.patch_size, self.patch_size, 1],
            strides=[1, self.patch size, self.patch size, 1],
            rates=[1, 1, 1, 1],
            padding="VALID"
        )
       patch_dims = patches.shape[-1]
       patches = tf.reshape(patches, [batch size, -1, patch dims])
       return patches
class PositionalEmbedding(layers.Layer):
   Add positional embeddings to patch embeddings
   def __init__(self, num_patches, projection_dim):
        super(PositionalEmbedding, self). init ()
        self.position embedding = layers.Embedding(
            input_dim=num_patches + 1, # +1 for the class token
            output dim=projection dim
        )
   def call(self, patch embeddings, class token):
       batch_size = tf.shape(patch_embeddings)[0]
       # Add class token to patch embeddings
       cls tokens = tf.repeat(
            tf.expand dims(class token, 0), batch size, axis=0
       embeddings = tf.concat([cls_tokens, patch_embeddings], axis=1)
       # Add positional embeddings
       positions = tf.range(start=0, limit=embeddings.shape[1], delta=1)
       position embeddings = self.position embedding(positions)
       return embeddings + position_embeddings
class MultiHeadSelfAttention(layers.Layer):
   Multi-head self-attention mechanism
   def __init__(self, num_heads, projection_dim):
```

```
super(MultiHeadSelfAttention, self).__init__()
        self.num heads = num heads
        self.projection dim = projection dim
        self.head dim = projection dim // num heads
        self.scale = self.head dim ** -0.5
        self.query = layers.Dense(projection_dim)
        self.key = layers.Dense(projection dim)
        self.value = layers.Dense(projection_dim)
        self.combine heads = layers.Dense(projection dim)
   def split heads(self, x, batch size):
       x = tf.reshape(
            x, (batch_size, -1, self.num_heads, self.head_dim)
       return tf.transpose(x, perm=[0, 2, 1, 3])
   def call(self, inputs):
       batch_size = tf.shape(inputs)[0]
       # Linear projections
       query = self.query(inputs)
       key = self.key(inputs)
       value = self.value(inputs)
       # Split heads
       query = self.split_heads(query, batch_size)
        key = self.split heads(key, batch size)
       value = self.split_heads(value, batch_size)
       # Scaled dot-product attention
       attention_scores = tf.matmul(query, key, transpose_b=True) * self.scale
       attention_weights = tf.nn.softmax(attention_scores, axis=-1)
       # Apply attention to values
       context = tf.matmul(attention weights, value)
       context = tf.transpose(context, perm=[0, 2, 1, 3])
       context = tf.reshape(context, [batch_size, -1, self.projection_dim])
       # Combine heads
       output = self.combine heads(context)
       return output
class TransformerBlock(layers.Layer):
   Transformer block with self-attention and MLP
   def __init__(self, num_heads, projection_dim, mlp_dim, dropout=0.1):
        super(TransformerBlock, self). init ()
        self.attention = MultiHeadSelfAttention(num heads, projection dim)
        self.mlp = tf.keras.Sequential([
            layers.Dense(mlp dim, activation=tf.nn.gelu),
            layers.Dropout(dropout),
            layers.Dense(projection dim),
```

```
layers.Dropout(dropout)
        1)
        self.layer norm1 = layers.LayerNormalization(epsilon=1e-6)
        self.layer norm2 = layers.LayerNormalization(epsilon=1e-6)
        self.dropout1 = layers.Dropout(dropout)
        self.dropout2 = layers.Dropout(dropout)
    def call(self, inputs, training):
        # Normalize and apply attention
        x = self.layer norm1(inputs)
        attention_output = self.attention(x)
        attention_output = self.dropout1(attention_output, training=training)
        out1 = layers.add([inputs, attention output])
        # Normalize and apply MLP
        x = self.layer norm2(out1)
        mlp\_output = self.mlp(x)
        mlp output = self.dropout2(mlp output, training=training)
        return layers.add([out1, mlp_output])
class VisionTransformer(Model):
    Vision Transformer (ViT) model for image classification
    def __init__(
        self,
        image_size=224,
        patch size=16,
        num_layers=12,
        num heads=12,
        projection_dim=768,
        mlp_dim=3072,
        num_classes=1000,
        dropout=0.1
    ):
        super(VisionTransformer, self). init ()
        # Calculate number of patches
        num_patches = (image_size // patch_size) ** 2
        self.patch_size = patch_size
        # Patch extraction and projection
        self.patch_extractor = PatchExtractor(patch_size)
        self.projection = layers.Dense(projection dim)
        # Class token
        self.class token = tf.Variable(
            initial_value=tf.zeros([1, projection_dim]),
            trainable=True,
            name="class token"
        )
        # Positional embedding
        self.position embedding = PositionalEmbedding(
```

```
num_patches, projection_dim
       )
       # Transformer blocks
        self.transformer blocks = [
            TransformerBlock(num_heads, projection_dim, mlp_dim, dropout)
            for _ in range(num_layers)
        1
       # Layer normalization and classifier
        self.layer norm = layers.LayerNormalization(epsilon=1e-6)
        self.classifier = layers.Dense(num_classes)
   def call(self, inputs, training=False):
       # Extract patches from images
       patches = self.patch extractor(inputs)
       # Project patches to embedding dimension
       patch_embeddings = self.projection(patches)
       # Add positional embeddings
       x = self.position_embedding(patch_embeddings, self.class_token)
       # Apply transformer blocks
       for transformer_block in self.transformer_blocks:
            x = transformer block(x, training=training)
       # Layer normalization
       x = self.layer_norm(x)
       # Get class token output
       class_token_output = x[:, 0]
       # Classification
       return self.classifier(class_token_output)
def build vit model(
   image_size=224,
   patch_size=16,
   num layers=12,
   num heads=12,
   projection dim=768,
   mlp_dim=3072,
   num classes=1000
):
   Build a Vision Transformer model
   Parameters:
   _____
   image_size : int
       Size of input images (assuming square images)
   patch size : int
       Size of image patches
```

```
num layers : int
    Number of transformer blocks
num heads : int
    Number of attention heads
projection dim : int
    Dimension of patch embeddings
mlp dim : int
    Hidden dimension in the MLP
num classes : int
    Number of output classes
Returns:
model : tf.keras.Model
    Vision Transformer model
inputs = layers.Input(shape=(image_size, image_size, 3))
vit = VisionTransformer(
    image_size=image_size,
    patch_size=patch_size,
    num_layers=num_layers,
    num_heads=num_heads,
    projection_dim=projection_dim,
    mlp_dim=mlp_dim,
    num classes=num classes
)
outputs = vit(inputs)
return Model(inputs=inputs, outputs=outputs)
```

#### 20.4.3 Results and Evaluation

Vision Transformers have demonstrated impressive performance on computer vision tasks:

- 1. **Competitive accuracy**: When trained on sufficient data, ViT outperformed CNNs on image classification benchmarks like ImageNet.
- 2. **Data efficiency**: With pre-training on large datasets, ViTs showed better transfer learning efficiency than CNNs.
- 3. **Interpretability**: The attention maps provide visual explanations of which image regions contribute to decisions.

#### 20.4.4 Neuroscience Connection

The ViT architecture connects to visual neuroscience in several ways:

- **Parallel processing**: Like the visual system, ViT processes multiple parts of the visual field in parallel.
- **Hierarchical integration**: The transformer layers build increasingly abstract representations similar to the visual cortex.
- **Attention allocation**: The self-attention mechanism parallels how humans selectively attend to parts of a scene.
- **Context integration**: ViT's ability to relate distant parts of an image mirrors how the visual system integrates across the visual field.

#### 20.4.5 Limitations and Future Directions

Key challenges and future directions include:

- 1. **Computational efficiency**: ViTs typically require more computation than CNNs for similar performance at small scales.
- 2. **Data requirements**: ViTs need more data to achieve good results without pre-training.
- 3. **Future work**: Ongoing research is exploring hybrid architectures combining CNNs and transformers, and biologically-inspired attention constraints.

## 20.5 Case Study: Neural Data Analysis with Latent Variable Models

## 20.5.1 Background and Motivation

Analyzing high-dimensional neural data requires methods that can identify underlying patterns and structures. This case study examines how latent variable models influenced by neuroscience principles have been used to extract meaningful representations from neural recordings.

## 20.5.2 Implementation: Latent Factor Analysis via Dynamical Systems (LFADS)

LFADS, developed by researchers at Stanford and Google, uses recurrent neural networks to model neural population dynamics:

```
import tensorflow as tf
from tensorflow.keras import layers, Model
import numpy as np
class Encoder(layers.Layer):
   Bidirectional RNN encoder for LFADS
   def __init__(self, hidden_size=100, **kwargs):
        super(Encoder, self). init (**kwargs)
        self.hidden_size = hidden_size
       # Forward and backward RNNs
        self.forward rnn = layers.GRU(
            hidden_size, return_sequences=True, return_state=True,
            name="encoder forward rnn"
        )
        self.backward rnn = layers.GRU(
            hidden_size, return_sequences=True, return_state=True, go_backwards=T
            name="encoder backward rnn"
        )
   def call(self, inputs):
       # Forward pass
       forward outputs, forward state = self.forward rnn(inputs)
       # Backward pass
       backward outputs, backward state = self.backward rnn(inputs)
       backward_outputs = tf.reverse(backward_outputs, axis=[1])
       # Combine states
       encoder_state = tf.concat([forward_state, backward_state], axis=-1)
       return encoder state
class LatentDistribution(layers.Layer):
   Variational distribution for latent variables
   def init (self, latent dim=50, **kwargs):
        super(LatentDistribution, self). init (**kwargs)
        self.latent dim = latent dim
       # Dense layers for mean and logvar
        self.mean_layer = layers.Dense(latent_dim, name="mean_layer")
        self.logvar layer = layers.Dense(latent dim, name="logvar layer")
   def call(self, inputs, training=False):
       # Compute mean and logvar
       mean = self.mean layer(inputs)
       logvar = self.logvar layer(inputs)
       # If training, sample from the distribution
```

```
if training:
            epsilon = tf.random.normal(shape=tf.shape(mean))
            sample = mean + tf.exp(0.5 * logvar) * epsilon
           sample = mean
       return sample, mean, logvar
class Controller(layers.Layer):
   Controller RNN for generating inputs to the generator
   def init (self, hidden size=100, **kwargs):
        super(Controller, self). init (**kwargs)
        self.hidden size = hidden size
       # Controller RNN
       self.rnn = lavers.GRU(
            hidden_size, return_sequences=True, return_state=True,
            name="controller rnn"
       )
       # Dense layer for controller outputs
        self.dense = layers.Dense(hidden size, name="controller output")
   def call(self, initial state, sequence length):
       # Create dummy input tensor
       batch size = tf.shape(initial state)[0]
       dummy_input = tf.zeros([batch_size, sequence_length, 1])
       # Initialize RNN state
       state = initial state
       # Run RNN and get outputs
       outputs, _ = self.rnn(dummy_input, initial_state=state)
       # Apply dense layer to outputs
       controller_outputs = self.dense(outputs)
       return controller_outputs
class Generator(layers.Layer):
   Generator RNN for modeling neural dynamics
   def __init__(self, hidden_size=100, factors_dim=50, output_dim=100, **kwargs)
       super(Generator, self). init (**kwargs)
        self.hidden size = hidden size
        self.factors dim = factors dim
       self.output dim = output dim
       # Generator RNN
       self.rnn = layers.GRU(
            hidden_size, return_sequences=True, return_state=True,
```

```
name="generator rnn"
        )
       # Dense layers for outputs
        self.factors layer = layers.Dense(factors dim, name="factors layer")
        self.rates layer = layers.Dense(output dim, activation=tf.nn.softplus, na
   def call(self, initial state, controller outputs):
       # Run RNN with controller outputs as inputs
       outputs, = self.rnn(controller outputs, initial state=initial state)
        # Generate factors (latent neural dynamics)
       factors = self.factors layer(outputs)
       # Generate rates (expected neural firing rates)
       rates = self.rates layer(factors)
       return rates, factors
class LFADS(Model):
   Latent Factor Analysis via Dynamical Systems (LFADS) model
   def __init__(
       self,
       encoder dim=100,
       latent_dim=50,
       controller dim=100,
       generator_dim=100,
       factors_dim=50,
       **kwargs
    ):
       super(LFADS, self).__init__(**kwargs)
       # Model components
        self.encoder = Encoder(hidden size=encoder dim)
        self.latent distribution = LatentDistribution(latent dim=latent dim)
        self.controller = Controller(hidden size=controller dim)
        self.generator_initial_dense = layers.Dense(generator_dim, activation="ta")
   def build(self, input shape):
       # Build the generator once we know the output dimension
        self.generator = Generator(
            hidden size=self.generator initial dense.units,
            factors dim=50,
            output_dim=input_shape[-1]
        )
        super(LFADS, self).build(input_shape)
   def call(self, inputs, training=False):
       # Get sequence length
        sequence_length = tf.shape(inputs)[1]
```

```
# Encode input
    encoder state = self.encoder(inputs)
    # Sample from latent distribution
    latent sample, mean, logvar = self.latent distribution(encoder state, tra
    # Generate controller outputs
    controller outputs = self.controller(latent sample, sequence length)
    # Generate initial state for generator
    generator_initial_state = self.generator_initial_dense(latent_sample)
    # Generate neural rates and factors
    rates, factors = self.generator(generator_initial_state, controller_outpu
    # Create model outputs dictionary
    outputs = {
        "rates": rates,
        "factors": factors,
        "latent_mean": mean,
        "latent logvar": logvar
    }
    return outputs
def compute_loss(self, x, training=False):
    Compute LFADS loss function
    Parameters:
    x : tf.Tensor
        Input spike data
    training : bool
        Whether model is in training mode
    Returns:
    total loss : tf.Tensor
        Combined loss
    reconstruction loss : tf.Tensor
        Poisson reconstruction loss
    kl loss : tf.Tensor
        KL divergence loss
    0.00
    # Get model outputs
    outputs = self(x, training=training)
    rates = outputs["rates"]
    latent_mean = outputs["latent_mean"]
    latent_logvar = outputs["latent_logvar"]
    # Compute Poisson reconstruction loss
    \# \log p(x|z) = \sup_{x \in \mathbb{Z}} t \sup_{x \in \mathbb{Z}} (x_i, t) + \log(r_i, t) - r_i, t - \log(x_i, t!)
    # We drop the factorial term as it's constant with respect to the paramet
```

```
reconstruction_loss = tf.reduce_sum(
            rates - x * tf.math.log(rates + 1e-8),
            axis=[1, 2]
        reconstruction loss = tf.reduce mean(reconstruction loss)
        # Compute KL divergence loss
        \# KL(q(z|x) \mid | p(z)) = 0.5 * sum_j (1 + log(sigma_j^2) - mu_j^2 - sigma_j
        kl_{loss} = -0.5 * tf.reduce_sum(
            1 + latent logvar - tf.square(latent mean) - tf.exp(latent logvar),
            axis=1
        )
        kl loss = tf.reduce mean(kl loss)
        # Combine losses
        # Optionally add weight for KL term (beta-VAE style)
        kl_weight = 1.0
        total loss = reconstruction loss + kl weight * kl loss
        return total_loss, reconstruction_loss, kl_loss
def build_lfads_model(
    input_shape,
    encoder dim=100,
    latent_dim=50,
    controller dim=100,
   generator_dim=100,
   factors dim=50
):
    Build an LFADS model
    Parameters:
    input_shape : tuple
        Shape of input data (sequence length, num neurons)
    encoder dim : int
        Hidden dimension of encoder RNN
    latent dim : int
        Dimension of latent variables
    controller dim : int
        Hidden dimension of controller RNN
    generator dim : int
        Hidden dimension of generator RNN
    factors dim : int
        Dimension of latent factors
   Returns:
    _____
   model : LFADS
        LFADS model
    # Create LFADS model
   model = LFADS(
```

```
encoder_dim=encoder_dim,
    latent_dim=latent_dim,
    controller_dim=controller_dim,
    generator_dim=generator_dim,
    factors_dim=factors_dim
)

# Build the model with sample input
sample_input = tf.zeros((1,) + input_shape)
model(sample_input)

return model
```

#### 20.5.3 Results and Evaluation

LFADS has demonstrated several benefits in analyzing neural data:

- 1. **Improved decoding**: Using LFADS-inferred latent factors improved neural decoding accuracy by 40% compared to raw neural data.
- 2. **Single-trial analysis**: By inferring the underlying dynamics from noisy spike trains, LFADS enables meaningful analysis of individual trials rather than requiring trial averaging.
- 3. **Identification of dynamics**: LFADS successfully recovered the underlying dynamical structure in both simulated and real neural populations.

#### 20.5.4 Neuroscience Connection

The LFADS model connects to neuroscience theories in several ways:

- Low-dimensional dynamics: LFADS is built on the neuroscience insight that high-dimensional neural activity often reflects low-dimensional latent dynamics.
- Temporal constraints: The recurrent generator mirrors the continuous-time dynamics of neural circuits.
- **Initial condition encoding**: The model's focus on initial state mirrors theories about how neural trajectories are initialized based on sensory inputs.

#### 20.5.5 Limitations and Future Directions

Key challenges and future directions include:

- 1. Model complexity: The full LFADS model is computationally intensive to train.
- 2. **Interpretability**: The biological meaning of extracted latent factors requires careful interpretation.
- 3. **Future work**: Ongoing research is exploring extensions to multi-area recordings and incorporating more detailed biophysical constraints.

## 20.6 Lessons from Successful Neuro Al Integration

Across these case studies, several patterns emerge that highlight successful strategies for integrating neuroscience and AI:

#### 20.6.1 Common Patterns of Success

- 1. **Focus on computational principles**: Successful NeuroAl implementations focus on computational principles rather than precise biological details.
- 2. **Iterative refinement**: The most successful projects involved multiple iterations between neuroscience insights and AI implementations.
- 3. **Cross-disciplinary teams**: Projects typically involved researchers with expertise in both neuroscience and AI working closely together.
- 4. **Translation flexibility**: Successful implementations allowed for flexible translation of neuroscience principles to match the constraints of deep learning architectures.

## 20.6.2 Practical Implementation Strategies

Based on these case studies, several practical strategies emerge:

```
def neuroai_implementation_framework(neuroscience_principle, existing_ai_system):
    A framework for implementing neuroscience principles in AI systems
    Parameters:
    neuroscience principle : dict
        Description of the neuroscience principle to implement
    existing_ai_system : object
        The AI system to enhance
    Returns:
    enhanced_system : object
        The enhanced AI system
    # Step 1: Extract the computational essence of the neuroscience principle
    computational essence = extract computational essence(neuroscience principle)
    # Step 2: Analyze compatibility with existing AI system
    compatibility_analysis = analyze_compatibility(computational_essence, existin
    # Step 3: Implement a minimal version to test the principle
    prototype = implement_minimal_version(computational_essence, existing_ai_syst
    # Step 4: Evaluate and iterate
    evaluation_results = evaluate_prototype(prototype)
    enhanced system = iterative refinement(prototype, evaluation results)
    # Step 5: Scale up implementation
    enhanced system = scale implementation(enhanced system)
    return enhanced system
def extract computational essence(neuroscience principle):
    Extract the core computational principle from neuroscience findings
    # Focus on functional aspects, not biological implementation
    # Identify the information processing role
    # Abstract away biological details
    # Identify the computational advantage
    pass
def analyze_compatibility(computational_essence, existing_ai_system):
    Analyze how compatible the principle is with existing AI
    # Identify integration points
    # Assess computational overhead
    # Determine architectural modifications needed
    # Evaluate training implications
    pass
```

```
def implement minimal version(computational essence, existing ai system):
    Implement a minimal version to test the principle
    # Focus on core functionality
    # Implement the simplest version that could work
    # Ensure measurable outcomes
    # Document assumptions and simplifications
def evaluate_prototype(prototype):
    Evaluate the prototype against baselines
    # Compare to baseline
    # Test on simplified tasks
    # Analyze failure modes
    # Identity promising directions
    pass
def iterative_refinement(prototype, evaluation_results):
    Refine implementation based on evaluation
    # Address failure modes
    # Optimize computational efficiency
    # Reduce complexity where possible
    # Enhance successful components
    pass
def scale_implementation(enhanced_system):
    Scale up implementation for real-world use
    # Optimize for computational efficiency
    # Address edge cases
    # Add necessary complexity for general use
    # Document implementation details
    pass
```

## 20.6.3 Interdisciplinary Collaboration Best Practices

The case studies highlight the importance of effective collaboration between neuroscientists and Al researchers:

1. **Establish shared vocabulary**: Develop a common language that bridges neuroscience and Al concepts.

- 2. **Focus on translatable insights**: Prioritize neuroscience findings with clear computational implications.
- 3. **Prototype and iterate**: Build small-scale prototypes to test neuroscience concepts before large-scale implementation.
- 4. **Mutual education**: Invest time in cross-disciplinary education to ensure deep understanding of both fields.

# 20.7 Practical Exercise: Implementing a Neuroscience-Inspired Al Component

This exercise guides you through implementing a simplified hippocampal-inspired memory system for reinforcement learning:

```
import numpy as np
from collections import deque
import random
class EpisodicMemoryBuffer:
    A simple episodic memory buffer inspired by hippocampal function
    def __init__(self, capacity=1000, similarity_threshold=0.8):
        Initialize the episodic memory buffer
        Parameters:
        capacity: int
            Maximum number of episodes to store
        similarity_threshold : float
            Threshold for determining similar experiences
        self.buffer = deque(maxlen=capacity)
        self.similarity threshold = similarity threshold
    def add_experience(self, state, action, reward, next_state, done):
        Add an experience to the buffer
        Parameters:
        state: np.ndarray
            Current state
        action : int
            Action taken
        reward : float
            Reward received
        next state : np.ndarray
            Next state
        done : bool
            Whether the episode is done
        experience = (state, action, reward, next_state, done)
        self.buffer.append(experience)
    def find_similar_experiences(self, query_state, k=5):
        Find experiences with similar states
        Parameters:
        query_state : np.ndarray
            State to compare against
        k: int
            Number of similar experiences to retrieve
```

```
Returns:
    similar experiences : list
        List of similar experiences
    similarities = []
    for experience in self.buffer:
        state = experience[0]
        # Compute cosine similarity
        similarity = np.dot(query_state, state) / (np.linalg.norm(query_state)
        similarities.append((similarity, experience))
    # Sort by similarity
    similarities.sort(reverse=True, key=lambda x: x[0])
    # Filter by threshold and get top k
    similar_experiences = [exp for sim, exp in similarities if sim >= self.si
    return similar experiences
def sample batch(self, batch size=32, include similar=True, query state=None)
    Sample a batch of experiences
    Parameters:
    batch_size : int
        Size of the batch to sample
    include similar : bool
        Whether to include similar experiences
    query_state : np.ndarray or None
        State to find similar experiences for
    Returns:
    _____
    batch : list
        Sampled batch of experiences
    # Regular random sampling
    if len(self.buffer) <= batch size:</pre>
        return list(self.buffer)
    # Regular random batch
    random batch = random.sample(self.buffer, batch size - 5 if include simil
    if include_similar and query_state is not None:
        # Find similar experiences
        similar_experiences = self.find_similar_experiences(query_state, k=5)
        # Combine random and similar experiences
        combined_batch = random_batch + similar_experiences
```

```
return combined_batch
        return random batch
class EpisodicReinforcementLearningAgent:
    A reinforcement learning agent with episodic memory
    def __init__(self, state_dim, action_dim, learning_rate=0.001, gamma=0.99):
        Initialize the agent
        Parameters:
        state dim : int
            Dimension of the state space
        action_dim : int
            Dimension of the action space
        learning_rate : float
            Learning rate for the model
        gamma : float
            Discount factor
        0.00
        self.state_dim = state_dim
        self.action_dim = action_dim
        self.learning_rate = learning_rate
        self.gamma = gamma
        # Create episodic memory
        self.episodic_memory = EpisodicMemoryBuffer()
        # Simple Q-table for this example
        self.q table = np.zeros((state dim, action dim))
    def select_action(self, state, epsilon=0.1):
        Select an action using epsilon-greedy policy with episodic memory
        Parameters:
        state: np.ndarray
           Current state
        epsilon: float
           Exploration rate
        Returns:
        action : int
            Selected action
        if random.random() < epsilon:</pre>
            # Random exploration
            return random.randint(0, self.action_dim - 1)
```

```
else:
        # Check episodic memory for similar states
        similar experiences = self.episodic memory.find similar experiences(s
        if similar experiences and random.random() < 0.3: # 30% chance to us
            # Use action from a similar experience with high reward
            similar_experiences.sort(key=lambda x: x[2], reverse=True) # Sor
            return similar experiences[0][1] # Return action from highest-re
        else:
            # Use Q-table
            return np.argmax(self.q table[self.discretize state(state)])
def discretize state(self, state):
   Discretize continuous state (simplification for this example)
   # This is a placeholder; in a real implementation,
   # you would properly discretize the state space
   return int(sum(state) * 10) % self.state_dim
def store experience(self, state, action, reward, next state, done):
   Store experience in episodic memory
    self.episodic_memory.add_experience(state, action, reward, next_state, do
def learn(self, state, action, reward, next_state, done):
   Update Q-table based on experience
    0.00
   # Discretize states for Q-table
    state idx = self.discretize state(state)
   next_state_idx = self.discretize_state(next_state)
   # Q-learning update
   best_next_action = np.argmax(self.q_table[next_state_idx])
   td_target = reward + (1 - done) * self.gamma * self.q_table[next_state_id
   td_error = td_target - self.q_table[state_idx, action]
    self.q table[state idx, action] += self.learning rate * td error
   # Store experience in episodic memory
    self.store experience(state, action, reward, next state, done)
def train from episodic memory(self, batch size=32):
   Train using experiences from episodic memory
   # Sample batch from episodic memory
   batch = self.episodic memory.sample batch(batch size)
   # Learn from each experience
   for state, action, reward, next state, done in batch:
        self.learn(state, action, reward, next_state, done)
```

```
# Example usage
def run episodic_memory_example():
    Run a simple example of episodic memory in reinforcement learning
    # Create environment (simplified for this example)
    state dim = 100
    action dim = 4
    # Create agent
    agent = EpisodicReinforcementLearningAgent(state dim, action dim)
   # Run episodes
    num episodes = 100
   max\_steps = 200
   for episode in range(num_episodes):
        # Reset environment
        state = np.random.rand(10) # 10-dimensional state
        total_reward = 0
        for step in range(max_steps):
            # Select action
            action = agent.select_action(state)
            # Take action (simplified environment dynamics)
            next_state = state + 0.1 * np.random.randn(10)
            next state = np.clip(next state, 0, 1)
            # Get reward (simplified)
            reward = 1.0 if np.sum(next_state) > np.sum(state) else -0.1
            done = step == max_steps - 1 or np.sum(next_state) >= 9.0
            # Learn from experience
            agent.learn(state, action, reward, next_state, done)
            # Update state and total reward
            state = next state
            total reward += reward
            if done:
                break
        # Train from episodic memory
        agent.train_from_episodic_memory()
        # Print progress
        if episode % 10 == 0:
            print(f"Episode {episode}, Total Reward: {total reward:.2f}")
if __name__ == "__main__":
    run episodic memory example()
```

## 20.8 Chapter Take-aways

- Successful NeuroAl implementations focus on computational principles rather than precise biological details
- The most effective implementations involve iterative refinement between neuroscience insights and AI implementations
- Key areas where neuroscience has informed AI include attention mechanisms, memory systems, predictive processing, and neural data analysis
- Effective cross-disciplinary collaboration requires establishing shared vocabulary and mutual education
- Implementing neuroscience principles in AI often requires creative adaptations to match the constraints of current deep learning frameworks
- The most successful projects demonstrate measurable improvements in performance, generalization, or sample efficiency

### 20.9 Interactive Materials and Exercises

To deepen your understanding of the case studies presented in this chapter, we've created several interactive examples and exercises. These materials allow you to explore key concepts through hands-on experimentation.



Tip

Access the interactive notebook to experiment with:

- 1. **PredNet Visualization**: Adjust parameters to see how predictive coding works in practice
- 2. **Prioritized Experience Replay**: Compare standard and prioritized replay in reinforcement learning
- 3. **Vision Transformer Attention**: Visualize attention mechanisms on different image patches
- 4. **Interactive Glossary**: Explore definitions with popup explanations of neural-Al connections

The interactive examples include sliders to adjust parameters, visualizations that update in realtime, and explanatory annotations to help you connect theoretical concepts with their practical implementations.

## **AI-Assisted Learning**

We've also integrated Jupyter AI to enhance your learning experience. With Jupyter AI, you can:



Tip

Explore the Al-Assisted Learning notebook to:

- 1. Generate Code: Get implementation help for neuroscience-inspired Al models
- 2. **Receive Explanations**: Ask for clarification on complex concepts
- 3. **Debug Implementations**: Fix and improve your code
- 4. Create Visualizations: Generate custom visualizations for neural data

This integration of AI assistance allows for a more dynamic, personalized learning experience that adapts to your specific interests and questions about the case studies.

## **Presentation Materials**

For educators and presenters, we've created a guide to developing slide presentations from the handbook content:



Tip

Check out our RISE presentation guide to learn how to:

- 1. Create Interactive Slides: Transform notebook content into polished presentations
- 2. Execute Live Code: Run code demonstrations during presentations
- 3. Add Interactive Elements: Include widgets and visualizations in slides
- 4. Customize Styling: Adjust themes and transitions for your audience

RISE (Reveal.js - Jupyter/IPython Slideshow Extension) allows you to create engaging presentations directly from Jupyter notebooks, perfect for teaching the concepts covered in this chapter.

## 20.10 Further Reading

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