Precision Localization in Particle Detection: A Machine Learning Approach with Resistive Silicon Detectors

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***Abstract*—This paper addresses the challenge of accurately localizing particle interactions within Resistive Silicon Detectors (RSD) by leveraging a machine learning model capable of interpreting complex signal patterns. The proposed solution employs the CatBoostRegressor, optimized through GridSearchCV for hyperparameter tuning, to predict the (x, y) coordinates based on data from detector pads. Our preprocessing included rigorous data cleaning, noise reduction, and innovative feature engineering. The model's performance, evaluated using the Euclidean distance metric, showcases its potential to significantly contribute to experimental particle physics by improving the accuracy of event localization.**

***Index Terms*—Particle interactions, Resistive Silicon Detector, Machine Learning, CatBoostRegressor, Feature Engineering, Hyperparameter Tuning.**

I. Problem Overview

Particle physics experiments frequently utilize detectors, such as the Resistive Silicon Detector (RSD), to observe and record particle interactions. These events generate complex signals captured by sensing pads on the detector's surface. Precise localization of these interactions is paramount for reconstructing particle trajectories and understanding fundamental physics processes. This project's challenge was to develop a predictive model that accurately determines the (x, y) coordinates of particle events using signal data from the RSD, with the potential to advance data analysis in experimental particle physics significantly.

II. Proposed Approach

A. Preprocessing

The preprocessing phase is crucial when handling complex sensor data. Our approach involved multiple steps to ensure data quality and relevance for model training.

1) Data Cleaning: We initially inspected the dataset for missing values and duplicates, confirming data integrity and uniqueness using the `isna()` and `duplicated()` functions from pandas, thus ensuring our dataset was devoid of issues that could affect the results.

2) Noise Reduction: The sensitivity of the RSD pads necessitates a stringent noise reduction process. We conducted a statistical analysis to identify and remove outlier readings that could distort our predictive model. This step was essential to decrease the model's complexity and improve computational efficiency, ensuring that only the most relevant features influence our predictions.

a) Box Plots of pmax Values: Figure 1 displays box plots for 'pmax' values of each sensor pad pre-noise reduction, emphasizing the median (central line), interquartile range (box edges), and full data range (whiskers), with outliers shown separately. A key focus was on pads with diverse signal values and numerous outliers for high-variance identification. In our analysis, pads **[0, 7, 12, 15, 16, 17]** displayed minimal correlation with 'x' and 'y', indicating their limited predictive power. Particularly, the 'pmax' values for these pads, barring **[15]**, uniformly distributed, hinting at their negligible contribution to particle event prediction. Excluding these pads sharpens our dataset, bolstering model accuracy and interpretability, reflecting our commitment to a meticulous, data-centric approach in feature selection for superior predictive performance.

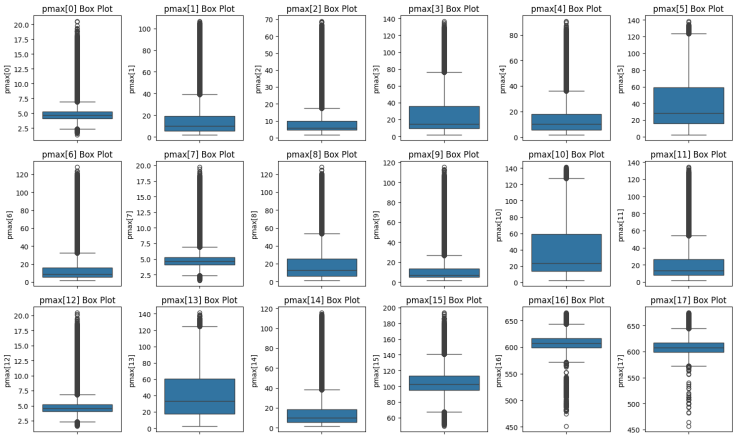

Fig. 1. Box plots of pmax values across sensor pads before noise reduction.

b) Pad Locations and Event Density on RSD: Figure 2 illustrates the spatial distribution of events across the RSD by plotting the pad locations and corresponding event density. Each hexagonal bin represents a concentration of events, with the color intensity indicating the relative density of events in that area. The blue markers denote the central location of each pad, providing a clear reference for the spatial layout of the sensor array. This visualization aids in understanding how events are distributed in relation to the pads and highlights areas with higher event frequencies, which could be indicative of regions within the RSD that are more active or significant in terms of particle interaction detection.

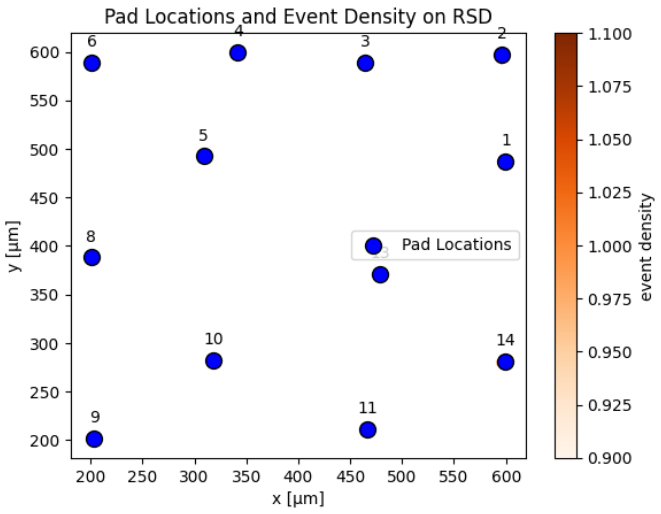

Fig. 2. Pad locations and event density on the RSD, illustrating the spatial distribution of events.

3) Feature Engineering: Feature engineering is a pivotal step in improving the model's predictive capabilities regarding the localization of particle events. We devised a feature encapsulating the signal peak compared to the average signals of neighboring pads. This approach is predicated on the notion that the relative signal strength can provide insights into the spatial significance of a signal, particularly in distinguishing events localized near a specific pad.

a) Pads Mapping (Focus on Pad 4): Figure 3 displays the focused mapping of sensor pads, with a special emphasis on pad 4 and its immediate neighboring pads. The visualization aids in understanding the relative signal strengths and their distribution across the pad and its vicinity. This mapping is instrumental in the feature engineering process as it allows us to capture the localized intensity and distribution of signals which is critical for accurate event localization.

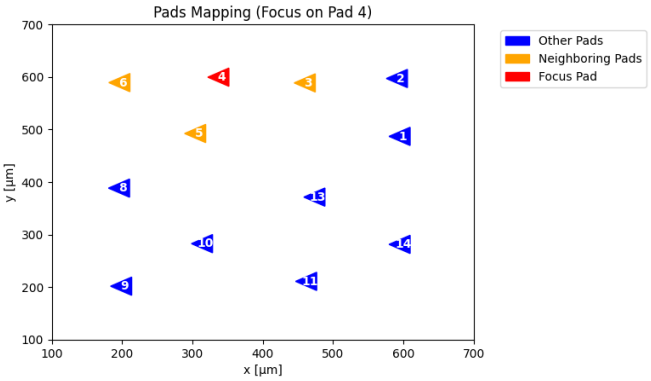

Fig. 3. Focused mapping of pads highlighting the relationships between pad 4 and its neighbors.

b) Pads Mapping (Focus on Pad 13): Similarly, Figure 4 illustrates the focused mapping for pad 13. The diagram shows pad 13 in relation to its neighbors, providing a visual representation of the inter-pad signal dynamics. These mappings are crucial for developing features that encapsulate not just the individual signal strengths but also the collective pattern of signals across the neighboring pads, which may significantly influence the accuracy of predicting the event locations.

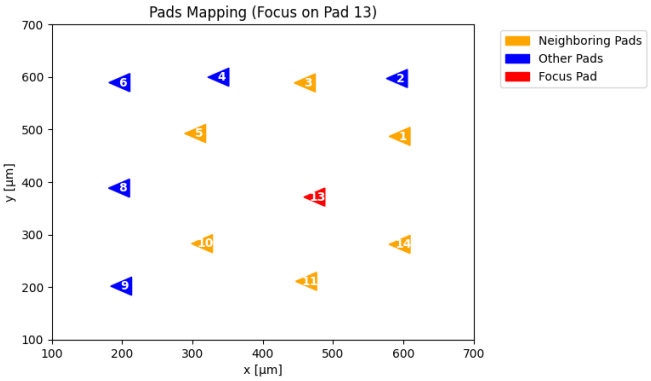

Fig. 4. Focused mapping of pads highlighting the relationships between pad 13 and its neighbors.

The feature $pmax\_ratio_i$ is defined as the ratio of the peak signal $pmax_i$ for the i-th pad to the average of the peak signals of its neighboring pads. This ratio is computed as follows:

$$pmax\_ratio_i = \frac{pmax_i}{\frac{1}{N}\sum_{j \in neighbors} pmax_j} \tag{1}$$

Here, $pmax_i$ represents the peak signal value of the i-th pad, $neighbors$ indicates the set of indices for the neighboring pads, and N is the count of these neighbors. The engineered feature $pmax\_ratio_i$ serves to normalize the signal strengths and accentuate pads that exhibit significantly higher readings, which are likely to be proximal to the actual event locations.

4) Summary of Preprocessing: The table below provides a summary of the dataset's characteristics before and after preprocessing.

TABLE I
DATASET SUMMARY BEFORE AND AFTER PREPROCESSING

Characteristic	Before	After
Number of Features	92	60
Number of Instances	385500	385500
Missing Values	0	0
Duplicate Entries	0	0
Noise Reduction	Not Applied	Applied
Feature Engineering	Not Applied	Applied

B. Model Selection

For the task of predicting particle interaction locations in the RSD, we explored several machine learning models. Our criteria for model selection included accuracy, computational efficiency, and the ability to handle complex datasets with a mix of categorical and continuous features. After evaluating various models, we settled on the CatBoostRegressor.

1) Why CatBoost?: CatBoost, an algorithm based on gradient boosting, is particularly adept at dealing with categorical data and complex interactions between features. Its robustness against overfitting and capability to process large datasets efficiently made it an ideal choice for our application. Additionally, CatBoost's built-in handling of missing data further streamlined our preprocessing requirements.

C. Hyperparameters Tuning

To refine the performance of our predictive model, we engaged in hyperparameter tuning using the GridSearchCV framework. This methodical process is integral to identifying the most effective hyperparameters for the CatBoostRegressor, ensuring the model's accuracy and generalizability.

1) Tuning Process: We concentrated on three critical hyperparameters for tuning: learning rate, depth of trees, and number of iterations. The learning rate dictates the pace at which the model assimilates new information, potentially preventing overfitting when set appropriately. The depth of the trees influences the model's complexity and its ability to capture subtle patterns in the data. Lastly, the number of iterations or trees in the ensemble affects the comprehensiveness of the learning process. By employing a 5-fold cross-validation technique, we ensured a robust evaluation of each parameter setting's impact on model performance.

2) Selection of Optimal Hyperparameters: The process of selecting the optimal hyperparameters is critical to the performance of the CatBoostRegressor. Table II encapsulates the culmination of the tuning process, delineating the best-performing parameters.

TABLE II
OPTIMAL HYPERPARAMETERS FROM GRIDSEARCHCV

Hyperparameter	Optimal Value
Learning Rate	0.2
Depth	8
Iterations	1500

The optimal learning rate was found to be 0.2, which balances the model's need to learn from new data without over-adjusting to the training set. A tree depth of 8 allows the model to sufficiently capture the interactions between signals without becoming overly complex. Finally, setting the number of iterations to 1500 ensures that the model has ample opportunity to learn from the data, yet it remains computationally feasible.

By adjusting the key settings of our model with precision, we anticipate creating a highly accurate tool that can reliably predict outcomes even on new data. This demonstrates the power of machine learning to tackle intricate scientific challenges.

III. RESULTS

The evaluation of the CatBoostRegressor model was based on the Euclidean distance metric to assess the precision of the predicted particle interaction locations against their actual coordinates within the Resistive Silicon Detector (RSD). The Euclidean distance, a direct measure of model accuracy, is defined mathematically for position vectors $\mathbf{p}$ (predicted) and $\mathbf{q}$ (actual) as follows:

$$d(\mathbf{p}, \mathbf{q}) = \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^{n} (q_i - p_i)^2} \tag{2}$$

The model achieved an impressively low average Euclidean distance of 0.01836 over the test dataset, indicating high localization accuracy. This finding suggests that the model is highly effective in identifying the precise sites of particle interactions.

A. Distribution of Euclidean Distances

A histogram of Euclidean distances (Figure 5) was generated to examine the distribution of the model's prediction errors. The histogram shows that most predictions are concentrated within a small interval around zero, which is indicative of the model's high accuracy.

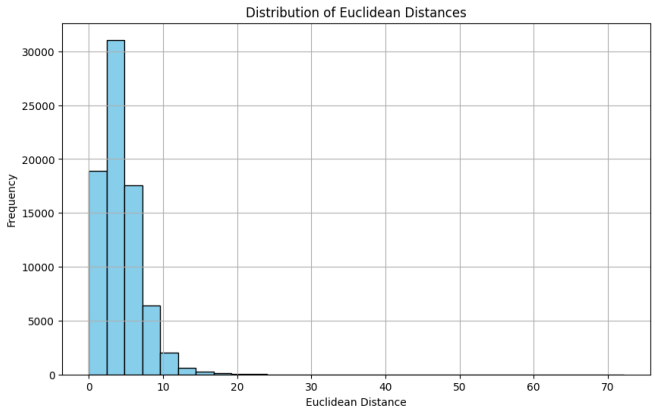

Fig. 5. Histogram of the Euclidean distances between the predicted and true particle interaction locations. A concentration of values near zero suggests high predictive accuracy of the model.

B. True vs. Predicted Coordinates

To visualize the comparative accuracy of the model's predictions, a scatter plot was created (Figure 6). This plot overlays the predicted coordinates (in red) over the actual coordinates (in blue), providing a direct visual comparison.

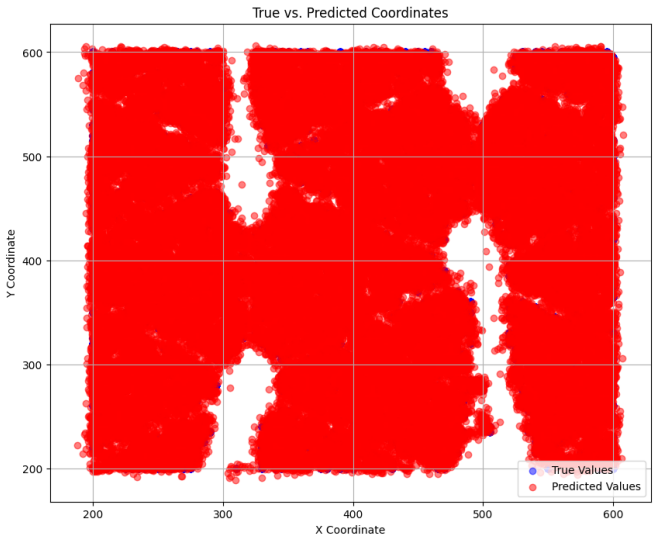

Fig. 6. Scatter plot of the actual (blue) versus predicted (red) particle interaction locations. Close overlap between the two sets of points denotes a higher accuracy of the model.

The scatter plot reveals a strong correlation between the predicted and true locations, as evidenced by the overlap of red and blue points. This overlap demonstrates the model's capability to accurately predict particle interaction locations with a high degree of precision.

IV. Discussion

The empirical results gleaned from the CatBoostRegressor model elucidate the considerable promise of machine-learning techniques in the domain of particle physics. Notably, the model's high predictive accuracy post extensive hyperparameter optimization via GridSearchCV is indicative of the robustness of the feature engineering and preprocessing methodologies employed. This attests to the machine learning model's capacity to discern and harness the quintessential attributes of the sensor data intrinsic to the RSD.

The proficiency of the model in generalizing to unseen data is particularly noteworthy. This aptitude is indispensable for practical applications where the model is expected to predict outcomes in real-world experimental settings, which are inherently variable and unpredictable. The model's ability to maintain high accuracy across different data subsets is a testament to its reliability and potential utility in ongoing and future particle physics research.

Looking ahead, there are several avenues for further research and development. Scaling the model to accommodate larger datasets could potentially enhance its predictive power and utility. Moreover, incorporating additional modalities of sensor data may enrich the model's input, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of particle interactions. Continuous refinement of the model's architecture and tuning could also yield improvements in performance.

In conclusion, the successful application of the CatBoostRegressor model in localizing particle interactions within the RSD underscores the transformative impact that machine learning can have on particle physics, paving the way for more sophisticated analysis and understanding of particle interactions.

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