

Corso di laurea in Data Science and Management

Cattedra Machine Learning

Breast Cancer Segmentation and Classification with Artificial Intelligence 3reast Cancer Segmentation and Classification

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1. Introduction

Breast Cancer (BC) is the most frequent type of cancer and the second most common cause of cancer-related death among women; therefore, early detection is growing in importance. The main test to run while looking for breast cancer is a mammogram but an additional important technology that is employed in various settings is breast Ultrasound (US). It is especially recommended to be performed as a primary examination in young women and as a follow-up examination after mammography when a woman is pregnant or nursing, but US exams still rely on the doctor conducting the work.

Artificial intelligence has become increasingly prevalent in breast ultrasound recently. The need to improve the accuracy and efficiency of diagnosis is driving this trend. Notably, innovative techniques have shown encouraging improvements in the field of cancer segmentation and classification. Models like the U-Net, for the segmentation task, proposed by this research [\[1\]](#page-41-1) have achieved an accuracy score of 95%. For the classification task, some research like [\[2\]](#page-41-2) were able to achieve 90% with an ensemble Meta-Model technique, while others, such as [\[3\],](#page-41-3) were able to reach an accuracy score of 85.83% at most, Despite these advancements, existing methods often struggle with subjective interpretation and variability, highlighting the need for further innovation.

The current state of the art in breast cancer image classification predominantly utilizes deep learning models such as VGG16, ResNet50, and various Inception variants. Such studies have shown that deep learning can achieve high levels of accuracy in breast cancer diagnosis.

In contrast, this study uses a multiclass classification technique tailored to breast ultrasound pictures, discriminating between benign, malignant, and normal tissues. This more granular approach enables more detailed and clinically relevant diagnosis. Furthermore, this study provides many preprocessing and data augmentation approaches that are specifically adapted for breast ultrasound pictures. This helped in achieving an accuracy of 99%.

These changes considerably increase the classification performance of the deep learning models used. This work uses an open-source collection of breast ultrasound images to provide a potentially less intrusive and more accessible diagnostic alternative to regularly used mammographic datasets.

Other research in the field have used generative adversarial networks (GANs) to enhance ultrasound images and different types U-Net model for segmentation. These methods involve employing GANs with nonlinear identity blocks, label smoothing, and novel loss functions, which provide amazing results ranging from 92% and 95% accuracy.

The key distinctions and advancements of this study in comparison with the most relevant research include the employment of targeted preprocessing and data augmentation methodologies, and the segmentation via the U-Net model that was able to reach 98% of accuracy. The preliminary work presented in this thesis proposes a pioneering method that besides segmenting the lesion, also classifies the breast cancer using Artificial Intelligence in ultrasound images, which does not yet have an equivalent in the state of the art.

For that reason, this integrated approach aims at improving diagnostics, reducing the subjectivity of the outcomes, and increasing the possibilities of early diagnosis as well as patients' success rate in the sphere of breast cancer treatment. That is why this methodology not only simplifies the diagnostic process by uniting two steps, segmentation and classification, but also points to a perspective of further development of extreme precision medicine and applied healthcare. The seemingly great outcome of this study suggests the possibility to extend and apply it actually in clinical practice, which will significantly transform the way to diagnose breast cancer efficiently and accurately as well as have a great impact on the advancements of medical imaging. This new approach can be labelled as pioneering and highly effective, which may provide a better solution as a set of tests currently applied and base for the healthcare improvement.

1.1 Organization of the Thesis

The structure of the thesis is as follows:

- Introduction: Describes the issue statement, lays out the rationale for the research, and sets up the goals of the investigation.
- The Role of AI in the Medical Sector: Gives an overview of the need of AI in medicine with the possible applications and solutions.
- Methodology: explains the research technique used in this study, which includes model architecture selection, data preprocessing, and assessment measures.
- Results and Discussion: Examines and explains the findings, talks about the advantages, and disadvantages of the suggested strategy, and contrasts it with other approaches already in use.
- Conclusion: Provides an overview of the study's main conclusions, highlights its contributions, and suggests future avenues of inquiry for the field of deep learning-based automated breast cancer diagnosis.

2. The Role of AI in the Medical Sector

2.1 Introduction

Artificial Intelligence is a sphere in the middle of a big change. AI applications like unlocking our smartphones using facial recognition or self-driving cars pose significant revolutionary potential of AI as it expands its reach and diversify itself.

Healthcare stands out as one of the sectors that will undergo most significant changes because of this revolution. In hospitals and medical institutions, there is an enormous amount of data being produced, such as patient's medical records, imaging scans and vast genetic sequences. Nonetheless, effectively surfacing through and analyzing this overflow remains one of the greatest challenges facing health care practitioners. Conventional methodologies, which depend on human expertise alone, often fall short when it comes to identifying subtle patterns within these datasets and harnessing its full potential for better medical services.

This is where the emerging influence of AI on healthcare becomes imperative. These AI algorithms can learn much more than we ever thought possible once trained on large datasets, picking up even the most complex relationships between data points with increased accuracy levels. Such a capability carries great promise for optimizing healthcare service delivery through efficient use of information by clinicians.

2.2 Elements Driving AI's Rise in Medicine

The booming popularity of artificial intelligence in healthcare is due to a powerful combination of factors that has created a perfect storm. This section looks at the 4 of the main drivers behind AI adoption in medicine.

2.2.1 The Overflow of Data

Healthcare industry is experiencing an unprecedented flood of data. For instance, electronic health records (EHR), complex medical imaging scans such as X-rays, MRIs, and vast genomic sequencing data amount to some of the growing mounds of data that are produced by hospitals and clinics. It is possible to enhance medical knowledge and patient care through this information overload. However, effectively analyzing this data remains a major challenge for healthcare professionals because traditional methods often fail to identify subtle patterns and hidden correlations.

This challenge can be surmounted by resorting to AI. Machine learning-based AI algorithms can be trained on large datasets to achieve this purpose. They will eventually learn from the data, uncover intricate connections among variables and become better predictors over time.

This permits artificially intelligent systems to unlock the potential of healthcare data, hence:

- Enhanced Medical Diagnosis: AI can track patterns and trends that human intelligence would never identify. This allows early intervention and better precision in diagnosis, which may be critical to good patient outcomes.
- The Personalized Medicine: The strength of AI lies in the uncovering subtle patterns from complex datasets. Therefore, it is possible to leverage this knowledge to develop individualized treatment programs grounded on patients'

distinct health records and unique genetic compositions thereby marking a new era of personal medicine.

2.2.2 Increasing Human Skill

Medical professionals have an exceptional level of expertise due to extensive training and experience. Despite this fact, human ability for internalizing information has several inherent weaknesses such as:

- Cognitive Bias: Human decision-making may be influenced by their unconscious biases, which might result in misdiagnosis or inappropriate prescription.
- Fatigue and Human Error: Fatigue and human error can set in when there are long working hours as well as a huge amount of data being processed even the most skilled medical personnel at work.
- Limited Processing Power: The human brain is capable but limited in its capacity to process and analyze vast amounts of data.

The limitations mentioned above can be addressed by using AI to enhance human expertise in medicine. By analyzing data without prejudice, AI can reduce the impact of unconscious bias on clinical decision-making. AI can automate routine tasks as well as point out probable red flags in data; thus, enabling health care professionals to concentrate on more challenging patient care aspects. The capacity of AI to deal with a big amount of data may allow for the identification of hidden patterns and trends that human evaluation may not find, thus leading to better clinical decisions.

2.2.3 Multiplicity of Personalized Medicine.

Evidenced through this process, the outdated, "one-size-fits-all" approach is gradually yielding to the more individualized health care model. This change is mainly due to the fact that patients are not all the same as they have their own unique genetic makeup, medical history, and personal response to medicines.

Personalized medicine can be possible with the help of AI by:

- Identifying Patient Subgroups: From these big datasets, highly effective artificial intelligence algorithms can be developed, which enable many patients with similar gene profiles or disease symptoms to be found. Through this, customized treatment protocols are devised for addressing ailing individual needs.
- Predicting Treatment Response: AI can be employed to scrutinize patient information and to make guesses how they are going to react to different methods of treatment. A targeted and individualized treatment can raise the curative effectiveness lowering side effects as well.

2.2.4 The Need for Efficiency

The present-day healthcare sector faces two tasks which are hard to accomplish simultaneously. The issue here is that we must make sure that the service is of the highest quality while, at the same time, putting a lid on the costs. AI could be of significant use in eliminating the redundancy of administrative jobs and could help in reducing health system's operational costs.

AI can do the boring and repetitive stuff that people hate to do, like booking appointments, issuing insurance claims, and keeping patient records. Such automation saves time for medical professionals, thus promoting them to devote a quality time in taking care of the patients more productively.

AI will be able to dig deep into data to find places where wasteful expenditure can be avoided and resource use in health systems can be improved. This is the way to a more economical use of resources, and in the end, it will benefit both patients and healthcare providers.

2.3 Revolutionizing Diagnosis and Treatment

The impact of AI in medicine goes beyond just data analysis. AI algorithms are continuously remodeling medical diagnostic and treatment avenues, indicating the rise of a new era of precision medicine. Here, we explore 2 key areas where AI is making significant strides.

2.3.1 Medical Imaging Analysis

To address the diagnostic challenge, medical imaging has for a long time been a mainstay in identifying the diseases [\[5\].](#page-41-4) X-rays, MRIs, and CT-scans are the tools that give us the opportunity to see inside the human body, and the doctors can find out the changes that are going on in it and even assess the disease progression. Even though direct images provide many details, the process of their decoding is still slow and comparatively complicated, even for top radiologists. AI is revolutionizing medical imaging analysis by:

Enhanced Detection of Anomalies: The AI algorithms, having been trained on huge sets of medical imaging, can show superhuman performance both in detecting abnormalities and differentiating those from normal cellular structures. Early and precise diagnosis for diseases like cancer is thus made possible with timely data acquisition, which is critical for successful treatment.

Faster Workflow and Improved Efficiency: AI should automate certain entry-level image processing operations, like image segmentation and basic analyses. This provides radiologists with more time to work on demanding situations and patient interaction than just routinely defining findings; consequently, healthcare systems' overall workflow efficiency gets improved.

Standardization of Diagnosis: AI algorithms can provide consistent and objective interpretations of medical images, which can reduce the variability often seen in diagnoses based on human interpretation.

2.3.2 AI-powered Diagnosis

AI will be the next generation of screening methodology that will see the general diagnostic introduced by means of machine enabled techniques. AI algorithms are presented with drug history, laboratory tests and genetic databases and capable to uncover sets of patterns for safety and health issues. This allows for:

Early Disease Detection: AI makes the data processing and thus it helps in diagnosing the disease at the first signs when the symptoms are not yet present.

Risk Stratification: AI can find the diseases and it can also be the means of pinpointing patients who are most likely to face some of the diseases. This facilitates the development of a device that healthcare professionals can utilize to identify those at risk as the priority for prevention and monitoring.

Personalized Treatment Plans: AI can now make inferences out of individuals' specific medical data to develop an individualized therapy plan, that is most suitable for a patient with consideration of that person's genetic and gene-health characteristics. This system contribution will bring fundamental changes in the treatment of deadly diseases and taking a step toward alleviated side effects.

Finally, the diagnostic and treatment process has been revolutionized by the power of AI. AI is making it possible to detect and even rectify small flaws in the medical images used to estimate health risks and help form unique treatment plans for the patients that would otherwise lose their lives. With AI technology, much more changes not only are going to happen in the diagnosis of the patients, but also in the treatment strategies of the doctors in a few years to come.

2.4 AI's Expanding Reach

The AI in medicine is not only diagnostic and curative but it has also the potential of transforming the entire medical sector. Such AI algorithms are making tremendous headway in different fields, right on the front line of medicine, and pioneering new wave of innovation. Here, we explore 2 prominent examples.

2.4.1 Drug Discovery and Development

The classical drug development method is usually slow and costly, as well as unsuccessful. It may require a time of 10 years or more and the investment of trillion dollar to ready a new drug for the market. AI offers a powerful solution [\[6\]](#page-41-5) to streamline this process by:

Analyzing Vast Chemical Libraries: AI algorithms represent a super-processor that can inspect immense databases of chemical molecules for prospective drug candidates presenting distinct therapeutic capability. This is the time and resources needed for the old kind of drug screening procedures.

Predicting Drug Interactions and Side Effects: There is several ways how AI can be used at preliminary stages of new drug development, for example, to predict how a drug might interact with a human body avoiding excessive side effects during clinical trials.

Personalized Medicine Applications: AI will have access to patient information and can identify genetic variations that enhance their efficiency to some particularly certain medications. This customized approach can create more specific and effective therapies.

2.4.2 Robot-assisted Surgery

The role of minimally invasive surgical techniques in patients' healthcare care is extremely favorable as it offers a shorter healing period and less post-operation pain. The roles of robots in surgical assistance are changing the landscape of minimally invasive surgery by making it possible for the surgeon to have superior ability, control of the task at hand as well as accuracy. AI plays a crucial role in the advancement of RAS [\[7\]](#page-41-6) by:

Improved Surgical Planning and Navigation: AI algorithms can read medical images to create 3D models of the patient's anatomy, which enables surgeons to better plan their procedures and use the models to navigate the complex surgical sites with more precision.

Real-time Decision Support: AI can process data during consultations. During surgery, tissue samples or blood tests in real time may deliver immediate information to a surgeon thus, finally, it may lead to better decision-making.

Enhanced Autonomy in Robotic Systems: Thanks to AI technology in RAS systems, this might happen to be more profound in the future as the systems get the capacity for more autonomy with an aim of performing procedures that are not only autonomous but also extremely complex.

Concisely, AI in medicine is not confined to decisions about examinations and treatment. AI is enhancing drug discovery; thus, the development of life-saving drugs is now at a faster pace than it was before. Using robotics in surgery, AI-powered systems are increasing surgical precision and cut depth, thus improving patient outcomes. Given the rapid development of AI, its contribution to the issues like health care will be increasingly striking.

2.5 Conclusion

The rapid increase of AI's influence within the medical sphere comes from its unparalleled ability to go through and analyze the massive amounts of healthcare data that are being created. This integration carries a high population of trends that are likely to evolve in every facet of the healthcare delivery system. By virtue of AI's capacity to spot intricate patterns in X-rays, patient charts, and diagnoses, at times even in complex cases like cancer, may be executed quicker and with greater precision as compared to the traditional methods, thereby obviating the need for repeat diagnosis, and augmenting the odds favorably for the patient. On the other hand, AI plays a key role in the transition to personalized medicine, where treatments are designed to fit the genetic predispositions and medical history of each patient, thus improving their recovery. Simultaneously, AI robots outsource time, resource consuming administrative work, and ensure that healthcare systems function better owing to highly operational efficiency. This allows medical staff to concentrate on delivering the best possible care to their patients. Furthermore, in drug development AI, the screening of the entire chemical library within the shortest time as well as the quick identification and development of novel drug candidates is accelerated, and the undeserved risks of a side effects are therefore reduced. AI-driven robotic systems have brought about a new era of surgical precision and innovation, enabling surgeons to perform minimally invasive procedures and make real time decisions with the assistance of these systems. Below the many thresholds, the encompassing AI in healthcare delivery is spearheading an unparalleled revolution toward exactness in diagnostics, time-saving treatment methods, and a new paradigm of personalized medicine that ensures precision at every step of the way. This translates to the potency of the healthcare system to solve more cases and be more effective in patient-centered approach.

3. Methodology

This section provides a comprehensive explanation of the various stages of building the final model, from segmentation to classification tasks. At the beginning, we will describe the techniques of the preprocessing of the raw medical images, which are normalization, augmentation, and noise reduction, for improving the image quality and ensuring the same quality across the dataset. Furthermore, we get to the method of architecture design where we first see the segmentation component, in which U-Net is used to separate the regions of the image into the regions of interest. Then, we see the incorporation of DenseNet121 for the classification task, which is presented as the deep learning model that classifies the segmented regions into benign, malignant, or normal. In addition, we will talk about the training process, which includes the selection of the appropriate loss functions, optimization algorithms and the use of cross-validation that helps to fine-tune the model parameters and to avoid overfitting.

Finally, we will conduct an analysis of the evaluation metrics used in the model's performance, such as accuracy, precision, recall, specificity, and the way these metrics help the iterative process of the model refinement. Through its explicit presentation of the entire process, from data preprocessing to final evaluation, this section explains the wide-ranging method used to create a strong and efficient AI-driven diagnosis system.

The script used for the thesis can be found in the Google Colaboratory link [8].

3.1 Data Collection, Preprocessing, and Augmentation

The first crucial step was to find the data [\[9\].](#page-41-2) The data used in this research are from the opensource platform Kaggle. Breast ultrasound images among women aged between 25 and 75 years were collected in 2018. The number of patients was 600 women, and the dataset contained 780 images with an image size of 500*500 pixels. The images are in PNG format and are categorized into 3 classes: normal, malignant, and benign. The data consist of the Ultrasound image with the combined mask representing the Cancerous area.

The picture above, [Fig. 1] shows a sample of the dataset. The images (blue) and the masks (red) overlap to show the presence and area of cancer.

To prepare the data for the AI models, a Python class called 'data_preparation' has been used $[10]$. The data preparation class is designed to manage multifaceted tasks of data processing and improvement, which helps in training deep learning models to be robust and accurate.

The instantiation of the class requires the following parameters:

- datasetpath: A string that determines the location of the dataset.
- imageShape: A tuple (height, width) with the target dimensions for resizing all input pictures. This standardization is critical for ensuring that input data meet the needs of neural networks, which require consistent input dimensions. The picture dimensions are set to 128 x 128 pixels.

These arguments are needed to identify and resize the images, and they are saved as instance variables that may be accessed throughout the class's functions.

The "imagesPath" function allows efficient extraction of image file paths from the dataset. This technique construct routes dynamically, allowing the analysis of images stored in structured folders.

The `readImages` method manages the bulk of image preprocessing:

- Reading: Images are read from their paths using TensorFlow's file reading functions, ensuring compatibility with later TensorFlow operations.
- Decoding: Images can be decoded according to the case of its format (PNG is used in the case), which is also needed for further processing.
- Normalization: Normalization of pixel values to the [0, 1] range is one way to standardize the input values for neural network training.

With this approach, the process of data conversion from image files to trained format is expedited because the natural input/output scenario does not involve any intermediate steps.

The pipeline for obtaining, processing, and assembling picture and mask data in an organized manner is proved by the allDataset function:

• Image and Mask Retrieval: A distinction between character input and classified goal provides an opportunity for the correct execution of each. This is done by pulling and processing the images and their corresponding masks separately.

• Mask Thresholding: The latter are called soft masks (or probabilities) and are converted into binary masks used for classification via a binarization.

The finalDataset technique is used to integrate data from the benign, malignant, and normal categories to train the model with only one dataset. This integration is crucial for tasks that involve classification or segmentation across multiple classes, ensuring that the model can generalize across diverse types of input data.

In the augmentation phase, the first distinction has been made between the segmentation and classification tasks. The augmentation methods, `dataAugmentation`, and `dataAugmentation_classification`, introduce variability into the dataset:

- Segmentation Augmentations: These include adjustments to image brightness, contrast, and the application of random transformations like flips and rotations, simulating different lighting conditions and angles.
- Classification Augmentation: Particularly in `dataAugmentation classification`, augmentations are applied consistently to images and masks, which is vital for maintaining the correspondence between images and their annotations in tasks like semantic segmentation.

These augmentations help in creating a robust model by exposing it to varied conditions that it might encounter in real-world applications, thus improving its ability to generalize from the training data.

Before the augmentation stage, 60 random images have been removed from the dataset, 20 for each class, so the final model could be tested on the images that were not seen before. The images were removed in a random way through the 'select random subset' function.

In summary, the data_preparation class has all the features necessary for effective and systematic preprocessing to enhance image collection. The topics mentioned here speed up the work via avoiding the overhead and complications that come with preparing image datasets which in turn help train deep learning models, while also enhance the image processing pipeline. The methods applied in this section ensure that the resulting datasets will be the best in quality and will support the construction of efficient models that are well-adapted globally.

3.2 Image Segmentation

One of the most important tasks in medical image analysis is image segmentation. Regarding breast cancer, segmentation plays a crucial role in finding the regions of interest (ROIs), which include tumors in ultrasound images. The U-Net model [\[11\],](#page-41-7) which was developed for biomedical image segmentation, is an efficient architecture thanks to its ability to produce accurate segmentations. The U-Net model is suited for medical image segmentation since it makes use of a special symmetric expanding route that allows for localization together with a contracting path that captures context.

In this section of the thesis, the application of the U-Net model to the problem of breast cancer segmentation in ultrasound images will be explained. First, we examine the U-Net architecture, highlighting its features that make it appropriate for medical image analysis. Next, we will go into detail in the training process, and preparation processes used to train the U-Net model on the dataset.

Furthermore, we provide an analysis of the model's performance using metrics like accuracy, precision, and recall. This assessment will be helpful in deciding how well the U-Net model segments cancers in ultrasound images, offering information about its use in clinical cases.

3.2.1 Data Preparation for Segmentation

The first step in the process of building and training the model is the partitioning of the data into 3 parts: the training, validation, and testing sets. This separation is of significant importance for the appropriate generalization of the model on new, unseen data and is not just the memorizing of the training data.

The entire dataset is first shuffled to ensure a random distribution of the images, which thereby helps in cutting the any possible biases. The validation set is composed of 450 images that will be employed to fine-tune the model and check its performance throughout the training phase. These images are of significant importance in the process of modifying the model's hyperparameters and the early stopping techniques to stop the overfitting problem.

Likewise, another set of 50 images is created, which is the test set. This is the set that is meant for the final inspection of the model after the training is completed. It is a separate test that gives an objective idea of how well the model is performing on data that it has not seen before; hence, the real-life performance of the model is assuredly measured.

The rest of the images were used for training the convolutional neural network (CNN). This larger portion of data allows the model to learn the underlying patterns and features necessary for accurate segmentation tasks. Through the appropriate division of the dataset into training, validation, and test sets, we created a solid structure for the development of a reliable and effective AI model for medical image analysis.

3.2.2 Description of the U-Net Architecture

The proposed model is a U-Net Convolutional Neural Network (CNN), which is specialized in medical image segmentation. The protocol of U-Net for its high power of deep learning considers the presence of similar images and intensity features. This layout facilitates the segregation of anatomical parts and pathological abnormalities, which are essential in the medical diagnostics. The U-Net model is structured into 2 parts, one for downsampling and the other for upsampling. Skip connections are included to refine the recover feature.

The U-Net encoding path is designed to process the input images through parametric layers and downsampling techniques. This approach extracts comprehensive information from each image, providing a detailed overview of their features. The encoding procedure is as follows:

• Convolutional Layers: These layers form the foundation of the encoder. They employ filters to extract various features from the images. Each convolutional layer applies these filters to the input image, generating feature maps that highlight the presence of specific features at designated points within the image.

- Activation Functions: After each convolution, a Rectified Linear Unit (ReLU) activation function is used. The nonlinearity of the ReLU function makes it highly effective for the model to understand and learn complex patterns. By obtaining the decision function in a nonlinear form, the network can learn and uncover a wide range of information that cannot be defined by the rules of linear functions.
- Batch Normalization: Batch normalization is performed alongside each convolutional process. This step normalizes the mean and standard deviation of the output to be close to zero and one, ensuring that the activations of the preceding layer are normalized for each batch. In addition, batch normalization helps stabilize neural networks by reducing internal covariate shifts, allowing for more stable and efficient training even at higher learning rates.
- Downsampling: Average pooling is implemented in the downsampling stages of the model to reduce the spatial dimensions of the feature maps. This technique significantly decreases the computational complexity of the network by lifting the heavy burden of data processing, allowing the model to concentrate on extracting higher-order features. Downsampling methods such as average pooling, play a crucial role in enabling the model to abstract and encapsulate essential features relevant to the task, even at reduced spatial resolutions. Despite their lower dimensionality, these methods ensure that the most critical information is retained, enhancing the model's effectiveness and efficiency.

The purpose of the decoding part of the U-Net is to generate an image using the encoded characteristics. The process mirrors the encoding phases; however, it runs in the opposite order, emphasizing the reconstruction of the original image's spatial dimensions.

- Upsampling: This type of algorithm is known as the upsampling process that replicates the feature map size by using upsampling layers. Usually, convolutional transform layers are used for this, which help reinforce the dimensions that got flattened out due to downsampling.
- Skip Connections: It is a direct concatenation of feature maps between the encoder and decoder. These links are a fundamental parameter for the network

that allows it to transpose the quite minute, details that have been written in the prior layers during the last phases of reconstruction. This feature is the key factor in the model that can correctly localize and delineate unique features in the image, so the quality of the segmentation is significantly improved.

• Feature Integration and Refinement: In the upsampling process, the output features are concatenated with the corresponding batch from the encoder via skip connections. This step helps to reintegrate critical information lost during downsampling. Subsequent convolution is then applied to these combined features, refining them further to enhance small and precise details in the segmentation maps. The following convolution, batch normalization and ReLU activation are implemented. These steps ensure consistent normalization of features and introduce nonlinearity, which is crucial for maintaining the robustness and accuracy of the model's output.

What makes the U-Net model an outstanding example in medical image segmentation is that it not only leads to the segment of the images with the highest accuracy possible, but it also preserves the spatial integrity and contextual coherence. The comprehensive process of creating and improving each layer and link in the U-Net architecture emphasizes its importance and efficacy. The intentional and meticulous improvement of the U-Net architecture illustrates its practical use and proven effectiveness in these crucial applications.

3.2.3 Training Procedure

This section discusses the approaches used to train the model, with an emphasis on loss functions, optimization methods, performance measurements, and training procedures designed to improve the model's efficiency.

Adopting the Binary Focal Crossentropy loss function is an important part of the model's training process. This loss function is designed to distinguish between the foreground and background of the image, which is a typical case in medical imaging processing. The focal aspect of this loss function is essential; it compounds the penalty for misclassified pixels, particularly those misclassified with high confidence, thereby focusing the model's learning efforts on tougher, more ambiguous circumstances.

The Adam optimizer is used in the optimization process, which is widely known as the best optimization process in the field of signal processing especially for handling sparse gradients and estimated gradients adaptively. This optimizer is designed to employ a low learning rate, which is useful for achieving stability in training.

The model's performance was assessed using standard measures for medical picture segmentation. The Dice coefficient, a statistic used to compare the pixel-wise agreement between the predicted segmentation and the ground truth mask, is a fundamental measure. Pixel accuracy is also recorded to provide a simple metric of the proportion of properly found pixels over the total number of pixels, allowing for a direct assessment of segmentation success.

The training of the model will be conducted for 100 epochs with a batch size of 8. This batch size was designed to achieve a balance between the memory limitations and the need for the accurate gradient estimation. Small batches allow for more frequent weight adjustments, resulting in a smoother and finer-grained learning trajectory.

An EarlyStopping callback is a vital component of training. This approach monitors validation loss during the training process and terminates training if no progress is observed after 12 consecutive epochs. In addition, this helps both to save computational resources and avoiding falling into the trap of overfitting. Such situations often occur in the process of machine learning when a model absorbs something that is just noise coming from training data, rather than universal patterns being learned by it. What needs to be emphasized is the "restore_best_weights" option, as it guarantees that the network will go back to the point of the best accuracy on the validation data, thus going into the most optimizing learning phase.

3.2.4 Model Results

The results of the training process are as follows:

Fig. 2

From Fig. 2, which shows the trends in training and validation accuracy, loss, recall, and precision over the epochs, we can derive several key insights into the performance

and generalization capability of our model. This graph is useful for analyzing how effectively the model learns and verifies across many measures as training occurs.

The training loss curve gives information about how effectively the model learns the training data. The steady decrease in the training loss suggests that the model successfully learns the underlying patterns in the training dataset. Simultaneously, the behavior of the validation loss is important because it displays the model's ability to generalize to new unknown data. In this case, the validation loss is consistent with the training loss, showing that the model is not memorizing the training data but rather learning generalizable characteristics. This constant loss across the training and validation stages indicates a well-balanced learning process that avoids the frequent dangers of underfitting and overfitting.

The accuracy scores for training and validation are increasing, indicating that the model's ability to segment images improving on a continuous basis. Growing validation accuracy, especially supported with growing training accuracy, is particularly encouraging because it demonstrates the model's stability and effective translation from training to validation data. This improvement in accuracy demonstrates the effectiveness of the model design and training schedule.

Because the cost of false negatives and false positives is significant, recall and precision are critical in medical imaging task. Recall measures a model's ability to identify all relevant instances within a dataset. In medical imaging, this would mean the model's effectiveness in detecting all areas affected by a disease. High recall indicates that the model misses few of these areas, which is crucial for ensuring no potential issues go undetected. Precision, on the other hand, assesses the accuracy of the predictions made by the model. It reflects the proportion of the model's positive identifications that were correct. In the context of medical imaging, high precision means that when the model identifies an area as diseased, it is likely to be accurate, minimizing the risk of false positives and unnecessary treatments. In clinical applications, maintaining a balance between recall and precision is essential because of the significant consequences of errors. High recall is critical because it ensures that the model misses as few instances of a condition as possible, which is vital to avoid overlooking any potential diseases. On the other hand, high precision is necessary to ensure that when a condition is identified by the model, the diagnosis is accurate, thereby reducing the likelihood of misdiagnosis. Misdiagnosis can lead to inappropriate treatments, thereby adding unnecessary risks and complications. Hence, both high recall and precision are crucial to minimize errors and improve patient outcomes.

In summary, Fig. 2 shows an upward trend in model training and validation stages for key performance indicators. The model performs a clear demonstration of its ability to learn as well as generalize well enough to be utilized in critical areas such as medical image analysis. The increase of training and validation accuracy, recall, and precision, shows that the model is qualified to be applied in the real-world settings.

The following results can be seen by applying this model to the test data:

Accuracy Score	98.662659
Precision Score	92.953053
Recall Score	89.058874
F1 Score	90.964305
specificity	99.447932
dice Score	90.964305
sensitivity	89.058874
	Table 1

Metrics for Test Data

Table 1 shows the model's evaluation metrics, which comprise measures of its accuracy in segmentation. The resulting metrics are as follows:

Accuracy Score: The model has an accuracy of 98.66%, which is highly reliable and has a good predictive capability on all the test data. This means demonstration of the model's ability to discern between the ill and healthy pixels.

Precision Score: This statement shows the model's ability to make more correct predictions than mistakes with a precision score of 92.95%, which is calculated with the relation of the true positives to all positive's predictions. This elevated level of precision is very important in therapeutic settings because false positives (healthy regions that are mistaken for unwell) can cause unnecessary procedures.

Recall Score: The achieved 89.06 % recall shows the good model performance. It can locate all the real places of disease in test pictures. This is of much higher significance when we deal with medical diagnostics in which you could not find a disease and the consequences would be bad.

F1 Score: The F1 Score of 90.96% is even more remarkable as it is a balanced precision and recall and thus, a single measure of the model's robustness.

Specificity: One of the model's key features is its high negative predictive value which can be seen from the specificity of 99,44%. This high specificity is key in averting the situation whereby patients who are not suffering from the disease are falsely determined to be in possession of it.

Dice Score: The Dice Score for this model is 90.96%. This represents how well the model overlaps. Such score represents the measure of model's predictability in terms of detecting true positives and discriminating diseased area dimension and explicitness.

Sensitivity: The sensitivity score of 89.05% once again shows that the model is able to accurately identify the positives. It reinforces the recall plan and reviews the model as one that has the capability of diagnosing right all-important cases of disease or irregularities.

This model shows quite high level of accuracy in recognizing between malignant and benign pixels. Several observations concerning the U-Net model's effectiveness in tumor segmentation may be drawn from a visual examination of Fig. 3 shown below, which compares the model's predictions to actual segmented pictures from a section of the test data. The model segments the tumoral regions across the exhibited pictures with an excellent level of precision. The model can precisely identify and define the tumor areas. For clinical applications, this exact delineation is essential since it guarantees that the afflicted regions are correctly recognized for diagnosis and subsequent therapy planning. It soon becomes evident, though, that there are situations in which the model does not precisely segment the tumor regions, or where the delineation is not optimal. Similarly, in certain images, the segmented tumor area boundaries may not be correctly defined, resulting in somewhat erroneous delineation. Despite significant flaws, the model is still able to accurately represent many tumor locations. Even when the

segmentation is imperfect, the model correctly recognizes and highlights the presence of tumoral tissue, proving its overall efficacy in tumor segmentation tasks.

Whether U-Net model really pertains to clinical practice hinges heavily upon its segmentation performance on tumor area. The model has high level of accuracy in most cases, which shows that it can be a useful tool for clinicians to identify and evaluate the presence of tumor in medical images. Although there is still need for improvement in terms of tumor border delineation and alignment, the model's capacity to accurately identify tumoral tissue underscores its applicability in both treatment planning and diagnostic decision-making processes.

To conclude, Fig. 3 provides illustrated validation of the U-Net model's performance in tumor segmentation, highlighting its capacity to properly detect and discriminate tumoral areas in medical images. Despite the uncommon fault, the model's overall performance suggests that it is acceptable for clinical application, where it can help medical professionals identify and evaluate cancers.

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Fig. 3

3.3 Image Classification

This section of the thesis focuses on the utilization of a specific convolutional neural network (CNN) architecture, DenseNet121, to classify breast cancer. The DenseNet121 architecture has a high network density that is recognized by the reuse and sharing of features between different layers. This promotes the information flow and feature extraction across the network levels. The aim is to create a reliable and trustworthy model that can distinguish between the malignant, the normal and the benign breast tissue for the ultrasound images. Diagnostic decision-making including prognosis, choice of therapy, and diagnosis become more effective when breast cancer is classifiable. Conventional diagnostic methods often include pathologists doing manual examinations, which can be unpredictable and subjective. DenseNet121 is the perfect choice for medical image classification jobs since it provides many benefits. The model's dense connection strategy makes it possible to capture spatial relationships and hierarchical characteristics within the images.

To assess the performance of the constructed model metrics like accuracy, precision, recall, and F1 score will be used. Another thing that will be done is to test the model's extrapolation skills by the means of cross-validation.

3.3.1 Data Preparation for Classification

As for the Segmentation model, the first stage in developing a deep learning model for the classification is to split the data into different subsets for training, validation, and testing. The 'train test split' function from the sklearn is employed for the division of the dataset into the testing and training set. By implementing the `model_selection` module, the set of images with labels is chunked into 3 sets for training, validation, and testing. Data preparations for this classification process as segmentation method uses data preparation idem class from section [3.1](#page-13-1) but differs in classifications-related specifications like enhancement and labeling.

3.3.2 Description of DenseNet121 Architecture

DenseNet121 is a pre-trained deep learning architecture that excels in processing images due to its unique design and training on the extensive ImageNet dataset. This model is particularly adept at extracting a wide array of rich and generalized features from a large collection of images. What sets DenseNet121 apart is its highly interconnected structure, where each layer is directly connected to every subsequent layer in a feed-forward fashion. This dense connectivity facilitates the seamless transmission and reuse of features across the network, enhancing gradient flow during training and improving the efficiency of feature extraction. This structure makes DenseNet121 especially effective for tasks like classifying breast cancer, where precise and robust feature detection is critical.

DenseNet121 is modified at the top layers to make it suited for our breast cancer classification objective. In other words, we deleted the old classification head and replace it with a new set of layers which are designed to be especially suitable for our categorization application.

- 1. Global Average Pooling 2D Layer (GAP): Global Average Pooling 2D is our initial layer. This layer aggregates the spatial features from all feature maps. GAP is a nice way to make the connection between the convolutional layers and the fully connected layers, and it also helps in the reduction of the dimensionality of the feature maps.
- 2. Fully Connected Dense Layer: Following the GAP layer is the fully connected dense layer with 256 neurons and the activation function Rectified Linear Unit (ReLU). This layer can gather very elaborate structures of such feature space and thereby obtains a nonlinear learning capability.
- 3. Dropout Layer: We include a dropout layer with a dropout rate of 0.2 to reduce overfitting and enhance model generalization. During training, dropout randomly deactivates a portion of neurons, pushing the network to acquire more resilient and broadly applicable properties.
- 4. Final Dense Output Layer: The last layer in our redesigned DenseNet121 architecture is a dense layer with 3 neurons, representing the 3 classes—normal, malignant, and benign—in our classification job. In this layer, we use a softmax activation function to create a probability distribution across the class labels, which allows for effective classification. The model is compiled with the Adam optimizer, the sparse categorical cross-entropy loss function, and a learning rate

of 0.01. The training process is conducted with the use of the ModelCheckpoint callback that is used to save the best model based on the validation accuracy.

DenseNet121 is a huge improvement for the breast cancer classification because it has a dense connection and pre-trained features for the efficient feature extraction and classification. The model will be able to recognize images of breast tissue even after it has been altered and trained on our own particular data. The new method will make the patient reception and the diagnosis of the condition more effective in the clinic.

3.3.3 Training Procedure

To make sure that the model is reliable and able to cope with new data, the cancer classification training has been done using the StratifiedKFold cross-validation technique, where the data has been split into 5 folds, and it has been trained and tested 5 times. This strategy is, in particular, especially important for decreasing overfitting, enhancing model generalization, and getting accurate performance evaluations.

The batch size is set to 128 and the models trains for 25 epochs. Both training and validation accuracy are used to measure the model's training progress, and ModelCheckpoint is used to save the best model (as determined by the validation accuracy). This approach guarantees that the most universally applicable model is captured over all epochs.

The generalization potential of the model is evaluated by analyzing its performance on the held-out test set after each fold has been trained. To measure the model's performance on omitted data, test accuracy and loss metrics are calculated. The average test accuracy and loss over all folds is computed by adding the acquired test accuracy and loss data from each fold. This offers a thorough assessment of the model's overall effectiveness and capacity for generalization across various dataset subsets.

By following this training and evaluation method, we ensure the development of a robust and dependable breast cancer classification model, capable of accurately distinguishing between benign, malignant, and normal breast tissue with high accuracy and generalization.

3.3.4 Model Results

The performance of the model on one of the folds is visually represented below,

displaying the training and validation curves for both loss and accuracy over the epochs.

The loss curve (Fig. 4) shows the training and validation loss over the epochs. The model is properly acquiring the hidden patterns in the training data and not overfitting. The training and validation accuracy over the epochs are depicted in the curve of accuracy (Fig. 5). They are constant across the epochs, much as the loss curve. The convergence of the training and validation accuracy curves shows that the model is learning effectively from the training data and can generalize well to unseen data. The visual analysis of the loss and accuracy curves proves that the model is trained optimally, with no signs of overfitting.

The average accuracy for the model on the test data from the K-Fold Cross Validation is 92.92% and the average loss is 0.20742, showing a high strength in the classification task. Looking at the evaluation on the test data we can analyze the model's performance with more metrics results together with the confusion matrix.

Benign Precision	0.939929
Benign Recall	0.970802
Benign F1 Score	0.955116

Metrics for Test Data

Malignant Precision	0.956896
Malignant Recall	0.902439
Malignant F1 Score	0.928870
	T_2 \sim \sim \sim

Metrics for Test Data

Table 3

Metrics for Test Data

Normal Precision	0.919354
Normal Recall	0.890625
Normal F1 Score	0.904761
Table 4	

The performance metrics reported above offer a view of the classification model's ability to classify benign, malignant, and normal classes in Breast Cancer Ultrasound images.

The model proves excellent precision and recall for the benign class, Table 2, with values of 93.99% and 97.08% respectively, resulting in a strong F1 score of 95.51%. This implies that the model has a low false positive rate and is especially good at identifying benign situations.

Can be seen in Table 3 that the malignant class has an accuracy of 95.69%, but a recall of 90.24%, indicating a little larger chance of missing malignant instances than benign ones. Nonetheless, the resultant F1 score of 92.89% shows that the model balances precision and recall effectively for malignant detections.

The performance metrics for the normal class, Table 4, show a precision of 91.94% and a recall of 89.06%, leading to an F1 score of 90.48%. Although these figures are slightly lower than those for the other 2 classes, also due to the lower number of instances in this class, they still show robust performance in correctly finding normal cases and differentiating them from pathological ones.

The confusion matrix [Fig. 6] offered gives a detailed insight into how the classification model differentiates between benign, malignant, and normal cases:

- Benign:
	- o True Positives: 266 cases were correctly predicted as benign.
	- o False Positives: 5 cases were incorrectly predicted as benign that were normal, and 3 that were malignant, making a total of 8 cases misclassified as benign.
	- o False Negatives: 8 benign cases were misclassified (3 as malignant and 5 as normal).
- Malignant:
	- o True Positives: 111 cases were correctly identified as malignant.
	- o False Positives: 2 cases were incorrectly labeled as malignant, which were normal.
	- o False Negatives: 12 malignant cases were incorrectly classified as benign, indicating a challenge in detecting some malignant conditions effectively.
- Normal:
	- o True Positives: 57 cases were correctly predicted as normal.
	- o False Positives: 7 cases were incorrectly predicted as normal (5 benign and 2 malignant).
	- o False Negatives: 7 normal cases were misclassified as either benign (5) or malignant (2).

Overall, these findings demonstrate the model's strength in medical picture categorization, which is essential for dependable diagnostic help in clinical settings. The model has good prediction accuracy and balanced precision-recall trade-offs across several classes.

3.4 Models Evaluation Method

Thus, the final stage is the combination of the DenseNet121 Classification model and the U-Net segmentation model to generate a unique output for the images. A function labeled plot predicted actual images has been created for this purpose. This function gives the plot of the test images removed at the beginning, together with the predicted mask and the predicted label, and the actual mask and the class.

To achieve this, the function repeatedly goes over each image and makes predictions using both models. Next, it leaves the mask as is if the prediction is Normal, colors it red if Malignant, and colors it green if Benign.

The function takes several parameters:

- `model`: The trained model used for prediction (combined segmentation and classification model).
- `images`: A list of input images to be evaluated.
- `masks`: A list of corresponding ground truth masks for each image.
- `labels`: A list of true labels for each image.
- `masks_pred`: A list of predicted masks generated by the segmentation model.
- class_names: A list of class names ('Benign', 'Malignant', 'Normal').

The function initializes the figure size to ensure clear visualization. It sets initial variables for the number of images, rows, and columns to be displayed in the visualization. Then, it iterates over the images in the input data, facilitating their representation in the specified format. This systematic approach ensures that the images are displayed in an organized manner, optimizing their visibility, and aiding in effective analysis.

It uses the combined model for all images to get the expected probability and class label. It then takes the real class label out of the `labels` parameter and puts the original image next to the predicted mask and label. The mask is visually depicted via the application of the true mask over the original picture, using green for benign and red for malignant regions. This technique provides an adequate solution that names each plot correctly as both, the real and the expected ones.

The visualizations show the outcomes of the combined segmentation and classification algorithms' performance. To measure the reliability and effectiveness of the models in detecting diverse types of anomalies in medical pictures, users may compare and evaluate the predicted and the original labels and masks.

In conclusion, this function is a helpful tool for the evaluation of the combined segmentation and classification models, thus, giving a complete picture of how well they work on test data.

4. Results and Discussion

This section is dedicated to the results of the function explain in section [3.4.](#page-34-0) Below the prediction on the test images are shown. The left side of each image is the prediction with the right side being the actual tumor image with the corresponding mask.

Predicted: Benign

Predicted: Benign

Predicted: Benign

Predicted: Benign

Predicted: Benign

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True: Benign

True: Benign

Predicted: Benian

Predicted: Benign

Predicted: Normal

 $Fig. 7$ Fig. 8

The images on the left, [Fig. 7- 8], show the Benign Cancer images from the test data.

It is clear how the model can segment the images in a precise way, although the models still make a couple of mistakes:

Segmentation 7: The model for the seventh prediction is correct in finding the tumor but it is not accurate in segmenting the mask in its entirety.

Misclassification 19: The model classified the Benign Tumor as a Normal Tumor.

Predicted: Malignant

Predicted: Malignant

Predicted: Malignant

Predicted: Malignant

Predicted: Malignant

Predicted: Malignant

Predicted: Malignant

Predicted: Malignant

Predicted: Malignant

True: Malignant

True: Malignant

True: Malignant

True: Malignant

True: Malignant

True: Malignant

Predicted: Malignant

Predicted: Malignant

Predicted: Malignant

True: Malignant

The mistakes the model made are the following:

Segmentation 1: The model is correct in the location but does not delimit the Tumor correctly.

Segmentation 15: The model is correct in the location but does not delimit the Tumor correctly. Segmentation 19: The predicted location is partially correct because the model segments a

tumor area that is not present in the actual tumor.

There are no Classification mistakes.

True: Malignant

Predicted: Malignant

Predicted: Malignant

Predicted: Malignant

Predicted: Malignant

Predicted: Malignant

True: Malignant

Predicted: Normal

Predicted: Normal

Predicted: Normal

True: Normal

True: Normal

True: Normal

True: Normal

True: Normal

True: Normal

Predicted: Normal -14

Predicted: Normal

Predicted: Normal

Fig. 11 Fig. 12

True: Normal

The last pair of images shown, [Fig. 11-12], are from the Normal Class.

The Segmentation model here is not used since there is not a mask to segment.

The classification model does not make any mistakes.

The U-Net segmentation model on these 60 images obtained a pixel accuracy of 99.12%, with a precision of 91.29% and a recall of 94.4%, which results on an F1 score of 92.82%. Also, the model obtained a specificity score of 99.42%, a Dice score of 92.82% and a Sensitivity score of 94.40%.

The DenseNet121 Classification model on the same images obtained an accuracy of 98.33%, misclassifying only one Benign Cancer as a Normal Cancer.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, this research is a great leap forward in the use of Artificial Intelligence in the medical imaging of breast cancer, specifically, the detection of it. The AI methods that have been integrated such as the combination of DenseNet121 for the classification tasks and U-Net for segmentation have made breast cancer detection more accurate and efficient.

5.1 Strengths and Weaknesses of the Models

The probe of the created framework on the collection of different test datasets showed excellent performance metrics, such as high scores for accuracy, precision, recall, and specificity. These indicators altogether verify the effectiveness of the models in accurately detecting the diseased areas and distinguishing between the benign, malignant, and normal areas presentations.

Although the benefits of these innovations are undeniable, it is imperative to be aware of the still present difficulties and restrictions. The test findings showed that there were some of the misclassification and segmentation problems that had to be corrected, thus, the AI-based diagnostic techniques still need to be improved and optimized. The above problems show the need of constant, joint work from different disciplines that make a good combination of clinical knowledge and modern technology. Such collaboration is the main factor in eliminating interpretive subjectivity and increasing the segmentation accuracy.

The emerging of the present difficulties creates the basis for the subsequent research. Accompanied by the studies that should be conducted, the model architectures should be systematically improved, the training protocols should be refined, and the interpretive biases should be minimized. The so-called efforts must be backed up by academic research and the extensive clinical validation to make sure that the advancements are applied in the real-life clinical practice. Through the realization of these directions, we can improve the diagnostic accuracy and thus fortify the diagnostic weapon against breast cancer.

Besides, the consequences of this study have a wider range and are not just limited to the technical aspect. The successful implementation of AI in this situation highlights the possibility of AI-guided diagnostic tools to change the face of medical imaging. The actualization of the potential of these technologies will be dependent on the uninterrupted collaboration among scholars and the unremitting quest for translational excellence. This combination of ideas and approaches will assist patients by providing them with a more accurate and reliable diagnosis, which is critical for the early detection and treatment of breast cancer.

5.2 Final Remarks

Briefly, this study is a significant addition to the already large field of knowledge on AI-driven medical imaging. It reveals a bright way ahead for breast cancer detection, which is accurate and speedy diagnosis and there is better patient success. The forthcoming of the breast cancer diagnosis will be regulated by the combined efforts of the clinical experts and the AI researchers who will help to bring the maximum of the modern technologies in the utilization. By taking the extra steps to prevent the later stages of breast cancer, sustained collaboration, and the constant striving for excellence, we can make important advances in the attempt to eliminate breast cancer, thus paving the way for a future where early and precise diagnosis is the norm, leading to better prognosis and survival rates for the worldwide patients.

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