Fully Convolutional Networks for physical and logical structure analysis of historical newspapers

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State of the art

Fully convolutional networks

Preliminary results

Conclusion

Historical newspapers analysis:

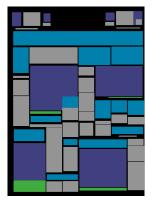
• Field identification in a page

➡ title level 1, 2,..., text, advertisement, image, caption, ...

- Structure analysis
 - ➡ articles, sections, reading order.
- Information extraction
 - ➡ article classification, name entities retrieval,...

Field identification in a page, it's difficult!

- Class imbalance
- Not always rectangular blocks
- Various scales
- Various fonts and printed styles
- Confusing classes



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Newspaper analysis

- HOG features in input of a random forest classifier, rectangular bounding boxes [Lang et al., 2018]
- Contour classification and morphological operations [Vasilopoulos and Kavallieratou, 2017]

Related domains

- Localization of handwritten fields [Lemaitre et al., 2018]
 - ➡ rule-based system
- dhSegment [Oliveira et al., 2018]
 - → Fully Convolutional Network (from a ResNet-50)
- Tools and software (PIVAJ [Tranouez et al., 2015], DMOS [Couasnon and Lemaitre, 2017])

History of PIVAJ

- An offline article analyser and an online viewer and transcription editor
- From a research project to a licensed software suite
- Currently used by National Libraries of Finland and Wales



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State of the art - PIVAJ

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PIVAJ offline

- 1. Pixel level classification (Text, Image, Separators)
- 2. Connected component, bounding boxes
- 3. Bottom up structural grid and reading order
- 4. Text level classification with Random Forests
- 5. Section and articles assembly through regular expressions

The goal of this current work is twofold:

- Investigate deep learning methods for physical and logical structure analysis,
- Gain in generalization capabilities (being less data-dependent).

State of the art PIVAJ

Fully convolutional networks FCN Improvements of convolutional networks Proposed architectures

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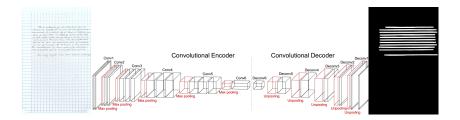
Fully convolutional networks (FCN) were first introduced in semantic segmentation [Long et al. 2014].

FCN are convolutional networks without a dense layer.

Removing dense layers has many advantages:

- the number of parameters is highly reduced,
- they can deal with variable input size,
- spatial information is kept inside the network: we can produce a pixel labeling.

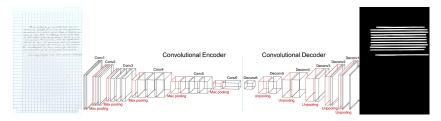
Pixel labeling → How to get an output with the same dimension as the input image?



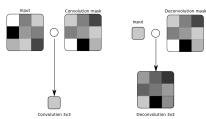
- Transposed convolutions,
- Unpooling layers,
- Dilated convolutions.

FCN

Pixel labeling How to get an output with the same dimension as the input image?

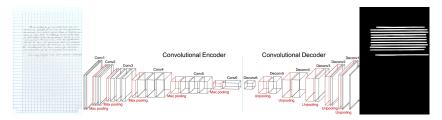


• Transposed convolutions,

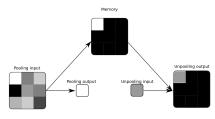


FCN

Pixel labeling How to get an output with the same dimension as the input image?

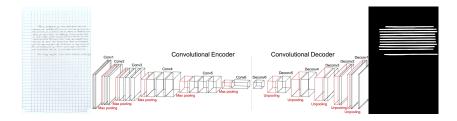


Unpooling layers



FCN

Pixel labeling How to get an output with the same dimension as the input image?



• Dilated convolutions.





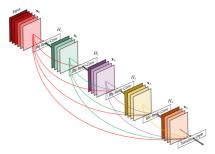
r = 4



Improvements of convolutional networks

Strengthen the capacities of convolutional networks

- Dense Nets
 - ➡ Generalize a residual architecture



• Gated Nets

➡ Auto-attention mechanism



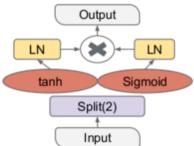
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We experiment 3 network architectures:

- Dilated FCN 22: FCN with 21 dilated convolutions (7 convolutional blocks with dilation rates 1-2-4-8-4-2-1)
- Dense Net 22: the same architecture than the Dilated FCN 22 with a dense architecture between blocs.
- **Gated Net 22**: the same architecture than the Dense Net with a gate at the end of each bloc.



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Data sets

Historical newspapers:

Le Matin

French daily newspaper from 1883 to 1944. 801 examples in training, 9 classes (6 in the experiments)

GBNLA

ICDAR competition on historical newspapers. 66 examples in training from 6 newspapers, 4 classes

• Luxembourg Historical Newspapers 980 examples in training from 1877, 11 classes



Input image size are reduced to at least 1200×750 by keeping the ratio.

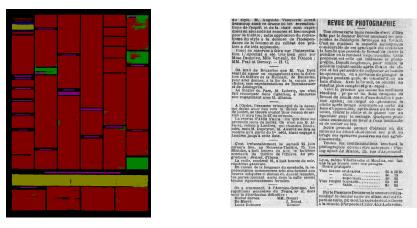
Accuracy (%) on each newspaper, training from scratch.

	Le Matin	GBNLA	Luxembourg
Dilated FCN 22	85.73	87.17	81.55
Dense Net 22	86.31	89.06	81.66
Gated Net 22	85.19	86.57	82.23

- Dense architecture improves performance,
- Having half the feature maps for the gates can be beneficial,
- Gated networks are prone to overfitting.

Additional observations (1/3)

Doubt is generally legitimate

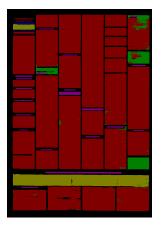


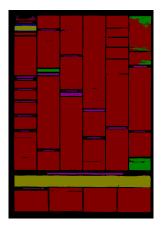
Le Matin newspaper.

- This is observed in case of confusing observations,
- There is sometimes labelling errors and clumsy labelling.

Additional observations (2/3)

Fine-tuning on a specific time period is important





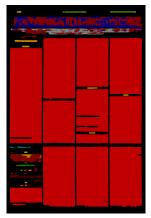
Le Matin newspaper.

- Predicted blocs are more precise and more confident,
- The model tends to overfit (help to label confusing classes).

Additional observations (3/3)

Class imbalance must be taken into account





GBNLA (left) and Luxembourg (right) newspapers.

- Text parts are well identified,
- Infrequent classes (e.g. levels of title) are difficult to recognize (even if there is highly similar pages in training).

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We investigate Fully Convolutional Networks for analyzing historical newspapers

- FCN can manage input images of variable size,
- FCN provide pixel labeling,
- Recent improvements (e.g. Gate, denseNet) strengthen the model capacities with auto-attention and multiscale analysis.

Regarding future works

- Increase the receptive fields → more context in prediction,
- Hierarchical analysis 🛥 class imbalance,
- Joint multi-scale analysis (dense-like architecture) with attention mechanism → recognize blocks of various scales,
- Extract polygon boxes further analysis (removing regions without interest, reading order...).

Thanks for your attention!