Espinosa, J.E., Velastin, S.A. y Branch, J.W. (2017). Motorcycle classification in urban scenarios using convolutional neural networks for feature extraction. In 8th International Conference of Pattern Recognition Systems (ICPRS 2017).

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1049/cp.2017.0155
Motorcycle Classification in Urban Scenarios using Convolutional Neural Networks for Feature Extraction

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Keywords: Motorcycle classification, Convolutional Neural Network, Feature Extraction, Support Vector Machine, Deep Learning.

Abstract

This paper presents a motorcycle classification system for urban scenarios using Convolutional Neural Network (CNN). Significant results on image classification has been achieved using CNNs at the expense of a high computational cost for training with thousands or even millions of examples. Nevertheless, features can be extracted from CNNs already trained. In this work AlexNet, included in the framework CaffeNet, is used to extract features from frames taken on a real urban scenario. The extracted features from the CNN are used to train a support vector machine (SVM) classifier to discriminate motorcycles from other road users. The obtained results show a mean accuracy of 99.40% and 99.29% on a classification task of three and five classes respectively. Further experiments are performed on a validation set of images showing a satisfactory classification.

1 Introduction

Urban traffic analysis is crucial for traffic management. Traditionally, urban traffic analysis is carried using inductive loop sensor information and video. Video detection is a complex problem and under high vehicle densities frequent occlusions complicate the analysis. Motorcycles are becoming important and numerous road users. Therefore, motorcycle detection is becoming very important, specially in developing countries, where they are involved in a large share of the traffic and so high accident rates are reported, due to the high vulnerability of this kind of vehicle. Until now most motorcycle video detection systems are implemented using conventional feature extraction techniques such as 3D models [1] [2], vehicle dimensions [3] [4] [5], symmetry, color, shadow, geometrical features and texture and even wheel contours [6]. Other works report the use of stable features [7], HOG for evaluation of helmet presence [8] [9], variations of HOG [10] [11], and the use of SIFT, DSIFT and SURF [12].

On the other hand, deep learning theory (DL) applied to image processing has been a breakthrough in computer vision especially in tasks such as image recognition. Since 2010 an annual image recognition challenge known as the ImageNet Large-Scale Visual Recognition Competition (ILSVRC) [13] has been established, showing impressive results, even overcoming human classification skills. Given these results, DL is a promising technology for vehicle recognition on Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS).

Deep learning strategies are successfully implemented for vehicle detection as 2D deep belief network (2D-DBN) [14], appearance-based vehicle type classification method [15], hybrid architecture (HDNN) which overcomes the issue of the single scale extraction features in DNNs [16], also color based features [17], convolutional binary classifier (CNNB) [18], and working on low-resolution images in [19]. Nevertheless, as far as we know, there are no reports of DL strategies used for motorcycle classification, nor on the use of CNNs already trained for feature extraction to perform vehicle discrimination.

This work uses an already trained CNN network for the task of classifying motorcycles images, first applied to static images and then extended to evaluate ambiguous images. The paper is organized as follows: section 2 gives a brief explanation of deep learning along with an overview of convolutional neural networks and the advantage of the use of an already-trained network for feature extraction. Section 3 shows the classification task, describing the advantages of using GPU architectures to accelerate the entire process. Section 4 shows the results of applying the strategy on different kind of images. Section 5 presents the conclusions and proposes some future work.

2 Deep Learning and CNN overview

Deep learning (DL) theory has revolutionized the field of computer vision. DL mimics the principles governing the information representation in mammal brains, allowing to design new network structures facing different tasks. For pattern recognition, the techniques have shown robustness in classifications tasks, being able to deal with different ranges of transformations or distortions such as noise, scale, rotation, displacement, illuminance variance, etc. [20]. In object recognition, CNN’s feature representation often outperforms man crafted features such as LBP, SURF, HOG [21] [22] [23] extensively used for object detection.
CNNs [22] [24] are an evolution of Multilayer perceptron networks especially suited for capturing local “spatial” patterns in data, such as in images and videos. They are a type of neural network inspired by the retina function of the human visual system. This network has a special architecture that exploits spatial relationships, reducing the number of parameters to learn and improving the performance of back propagation training algorithms. CNNs require minimal preprocessing of data before being introduced to the network. The input is analyzed dividing it in small areas, where a filter is applied to derive information and features representation. This information is propagated through different layers of the network, applying different kinds of filters and obtaining salient features from the analysed data. This strategy allows obtaining features invariant to rotation, scale or shift since the receptive fields give to the neuron access to basic features such as corners or oriented edges.

2.1 Pre-training CNN

Since training Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN) is a difficult and time-consuming process, in this work we start with a CNN already trained on a large dataset, and then adapted to the current problem. A pre-trained network can be used for two purposes:

- Feature extraction: where a CNN is used to extract features from data (in this case images) and then use the learned features to train a different classifier, e.g., a support vector machine (SVM). (This is the approach of this paper).
- Transfer learning: Where a network already trained on a big dataset is retrained in the last few layers on a more compact dataset.

The importance of using features from an already trained CNN network was remarked in the work of Razavian et al. in [25], where they showed that generic descriptors extracted from convolutional neural networks are very powerful. This work uses the OverFed [26] network to tackle a different recognition task and object classification. Moreover, they report superior results compared to the state-of-the-art algorithms.

3 Motorcycle Classification Approach

In this work, vehicles are classified on two categories: motorcycles and cars. The classifier is constructed using a multiclass linear SVM trained with features obtained from a pre-trained CNN. Those features have been extracted for a set of 80 images per category, including the “urbTree” category created from the urban traffic environment. This approach to image category classification is based on the work published by Matlab in “Image category classification using deep learning” [28] and follows the standard practice of training an off-the-shelf classifier, using features extracted from images. The difference here is that features are extracted using a pretrained CNN instead of using conventional image features such as HOG or SURF. The classifier trained using CNN features provides close to 100% accuracy, which is higher than the accuracy achieved using methods such as Bag of Features and SURF.

The sets of images categories have been created corresponding to images related to motorcycles, cars and urban environment related objects (“urbTree”). The images were taken from different angles and perspectives in urban traffic in Medellin City (Colombia). One example of each category and a selection of the two sets can be observed in Figure 1

Using the selected images, a pre-trained CNN model is used for feature extraction. Pre-trained networks have gained popularity. Most of these have been trained on the ImageNet dataset [29]. We implement the classification by using the pre-trained network "AlexNet", from MatConvNet [21] [30]. The architecture of "AlexNet" has 23 layers. Integrating 5 convolution layers, 5 ReLu layers (Rectified units), 2 layers for normalization, 3 pooling layers, 3 fully connected layers, one probabilistic layer with softmax units and finally a classification layer ending in 100 neurons for 1000 categories. (Figure 2)

![Figure 1 Three categories for classification, and examples of cars and motorbikes.](image1.png)

![Figure 2 Alex Net Architecture. “An illustration of the architecture of our CNN, explicitly showing the delineation of responsibilities between the two GPUs. One GPU runs the layer-parts at the top of the figure while the other runs the layer-parts at the bottom. The GPUs communicate only at certain layers. The network’s input is 150,528-dimensional, and the number of neurons in the network’s remaining layers is given by 253,440–186,624–64,896–64,896–43,264–4096–4096–1000.” [22](image2.png)
227 × 227 pixels, with RGB channels. That is 227 × 227 × 3.
The first layer defines the input dimensions. Each CNN has a
different input size requirements. The one used in this work
("AlexNet") requires image input that is 227 × 227 × 3.

The intermediate layers make up the bulk of the CNN.
These are a series of convolutional layers, interspersed with
rectified linear units (ReLU) and max-pooling layers [22].
Following these layers are 3 fully-connected layers.

The final layer is the classification layer and its properties
depend on the classification task. Originally, the loaded CNN
model was trained to solve a 1000-way classification
problem, thus the classification layer has 1000 classes to
identify. For this work, the AlexNet network is only used to
classify three categories. This pre-trained network was used
to learn motorcycles and cars features obtained from the
extended dataset, with 80 images per category and 80
examples of the class “urbTree” created from the urban
environment. At the end, the total number of examples is 240.

A simple preprocess step is done to prepare the analyzed
images on an RGB 227 × 227 pixels. If the images come in
grayscale, the gray channel should be replicated emulating the
RGB channel requirement. There is not a preservation of the
aspect ratio, nevertheless, the car and motorcycles classes are
defined in the above resolution.

To avoid overfitting, the created data set is split into
training and validation data. 30% of images are used as
training data (72 images), and the remaining 70% (168
images), for validation. The split selection is randomized to
avoid biasing the results. Since each layer of a CNN produces
a response, or activation, the task is to identify which layer
recover more informative features. As mentioned in [23],
there are only a few layers within a CNN that can be used for
image feature extraction. This work shows that the firsts
layers of the network capture basic image features, such as
edges, corners or blobs. Zeiler and Fergus [23] explain the
power of convolution, and the information that can be found
on each single layer of a given CNN network, from this it is
understandable why the features extracted from deeper layers
of a CNN are suitable for image recognition.

One of the strengths of these networks is the ability to
combine “primitive” features as we go deep in the
architecture, structuring high-level image features which
involve more complexity. These high-level features, which
have more information, are used on a recognition task, since
they enclose a richer image representation [31]. We tested
the different convolutional layers, and verified that the deeper
ones have more information. For this work, the layer before
the classification was selected to extract the features (Figure
3). This corresponds to the fully connected layer 7.

To extract the features, the training set is propagated
through the network up to a specific layer, extracting
activations responses to create a training set of features,
which is used later for classification.

The activation process implies taking the end fully
connected layer (fc7) and to evaluate every single training
example through the network. In this case as result we have a
vector of features with dimension 4096 × 72, corresponding
to the activation obtained with every single example (24
examples per category) propagated through the network, until
this fully connected layer.

3.1 GPU Use
Results in the ImageNet Large Scale Visual Recognition
Challenge (ILSVRC) [13] have shown a dramatic
improvement not just since the adoption of DL architectures,
but also with implementation on GPU architectures, speeding
up processing time and performance.

Because neural networks are created from large numbers
of identical neurons, and the parameters that need to learn in
the convolutional layers (where the filters are located) are
highly parallel by nature, this parallelism can be exploited by
GPUs, which provide a significant speed-up over CPU-only
training. In a benchmarking using cuDNN with a CAFFE
[32] neural network package, more than a 10-fold speed-up is
obtained when training the “reference Imagenet” DNN model
on an NVIDIA Tesla K40 GPU, compared to an Intel
IvyBridge CPU [33].

In this work, the capabilities of CUDA GPU GeForce GT
750M are used for the features extraction. The time employed
for the feature extraction is 1.95 seconds. Having 72 training
examples (24 for each category) and using 4096 parameters
of the fully connected layer. Using just CPU processing the
time employed was 3.08 seconds.

3.2 Classification Stage
For the classification process, a multiclass SVM classifier is
trained using the image features obtained from the CNN.
Given the length of the feature vector (4096), the fast
stochastic gradient descent solver was used as training
algorithm. Note that the classifier is trained with only 72
examples (24 per category).
Once the classifier is trained, it is used to classify the validation set, which corresponds to the remaining 168 examples (56 by category). Classifier accuracy is evaluated now with the features obtained on this set. Figure 4 shows the results represented in a confusion matrix. The classifier only mismatches a car example, giving it a “Motorcycle” label. The mean accuracy obtained is 0.9940.

![Confusion Matrix](image)

**Figure 4** Confusion Matrix of the experiments. (Class 1=Cars, 2 = Motorcycles, 3 = urbTree)

To minimise any overfitting, cross validation process was implemented. Working with bins of 10 examples and evaluating in two strategies: 90% for training examples and 10% of evaluation with 100% of accuracy. After swapping the sets with 10% for training and 90% for evaluation, the mean accuracy obtained was 99.31%.

When features are obtained using different images classes but without re-training the SVM, the results show an accuracy of only 67%.

### 4 Experiments and Results

Given the behaviour obtained, the set is extended to deal with other two categories already presented in the Caltech dataset, this extension is made to evaluate the possible conflictive features that can be obtained in the experiment (Figure 5).

![Experiment Set extension](image)

**Figure 5** Experiment Set extension. (Class 1=Cars, Class 2 = Motorcycles, Class 3 = urbTree, Class 4=Car side, Class 5=Motorcycles side)

With this extension, the classification task includes five different categories, including two very related ones: cars and motorcycles extracted from the urban traffic. This images are obtained from side views and are already collected in the Caltech dataset. The training set corresponds to 24 examples for each category, the validation set on 56 examples for each category as well. The results are shown in the confusion matrix (Figure 6). In this case the classifier mismatches two “urbTree” examples, giving it the label of cars from the side. The mean accuracy obtained is 0.9929.

![Confusion Matrix](image)

**Figure 6** Confusion Matrix of the extended experiments. (Class 1=Cars, 2 = Motorcycles, 3 = urbTree, 4 = car side, 5 = Motorcycles side)

Evaluating the classifier with a different set of images, the results can be sorted in decreasing order of confidence, or $P(y_k|x_i)$. The results describe the evaluation or confidence given to each class. (Figure 7 and Figure 8) Note the evaluation in ambiguity situations as in Figure 9.

![Classification results](image)

**Figure 7** Classification results. (Source: Internet) (Car 83% Motorcycle 49% UrbTree 50%)

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Note: The images and the confusion matrices are placeholders and should be replaced with actual images from the dataset.
5 Conclusions and Future Work

This paper has proposed the implementation of a motorbike classification scheme in urban scenarios using CNNs for feature extraction. The strategy takes already trained CNNs trained with millions of examples and being able to classify 1000 categories and uses its feature extraction capabilities to train a linear SVM for classifying three different classes. The feature extraction strategy is evaluated on different types of images, showing interesting results related to the classification confidence reached.

Future work will move toward the analysis of urban traffic videos, where detection and classification will be applied and enriched with a wider set of urban road user classes (e.g., trucks, vans, cyclists, pedestrians).

Acknowledgements

S.A. Velastin is grateful to funding received from the Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, the European Union’s Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration under grant agreement no. 600371, el Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad (COFUND2013-51509) and Banco Santander.

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