

**A Knowledge Based System for Diagnosis of Lung Diseases from Chest X-Ray
Images**

By

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Abstract

The thesis develops a model (that includes a conceptual framework and an implementation) for analysing and classifying traditional X-ray images (MACXI) according to the severity of diseases as a Computer-Aided-Diagnosis tool with three initial objectives.

- The first objective was to interpret X-ray images by transferring expert knowledge into a knowledge base (CXKB): to help medical staff to concentrate only on the interest areas of the images.
- The second objective was to analyse and classify X-ray images according to the severity of diseases through the knowledge base equipped with an image processor (CXIP).
- The third objective was to demonstrate the effectiveness and limitations of several image-processing techniques for analysing traditional chest X-ray images.

A database was formed based on collection of expert diagnosis details for lung images. Five important features from lung images, as well as diagnosis rules were identified and simplified. The expert knowledge was transformed into a Knowledge base (KB) for analysing and classifying traditional X-ray images according to the severity of diseases (CXKB). Finally, an image processor named CXIP was developed to extract the features of lung images features and image classification.

CXKB contains 63 distinct lung diseases with detailed descriptions. Some 80-chest X-ray images with diagnosis details were collected for the database from different sources,

including online medical resources. A total of 61 images were used to determine the important features; 19 chest X-ray images were not used because of low visibility or the difficulty of diagnosis. Finally, only 12 images were selected after examining the diagnosis details, image clarity, image completeness, and image orientation. The most important features of lung diseases are a pattern of lesions with different levels of intensity or brightness. The other major anatomical structures of the chest are the hilum area, the rib area, the trachea area, and the heart area.

Seven different severity levels of diseases were determined. Development and simplification of rules based on the image library were analysed, developed, and tested against the 12 images. A level of severity was labelled for each image based on a personal understanding of all the image and diagnosis details. Then, MACXI processed the selected 12 images to determine the level of severity. These 12 images were fed into the CXIP for recognition of the features and classification of the images to an accurate level of severity. Currently, the processor has the ability to identify diseased lung areas with approximately 80% success rate.

A step by step demonstration of several image processing techniques that were used to build the processor is given to highlight the effectiveness and limitations of the techniques for analysing traditional chest X-ray images is also presented.

Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1. Background and Motivations	2
1.2. Aims and Objectives	3
1.3. Research Questions	4
1.4. Chapter Summary	4
Chapter 2: Review of Literature	5
2.1. Importance of Traditional Chest X-ray Imaging	5
2.2. Importance of CAD.....	6
2.3. X-ray Image Processing Review.....	9
2.3.1. General Processing.....	9
2.3.1.1. Image Enhancement.....	10
2.3.1.2. Subtraction Technique	10
2.3.2. Segmentation and Analysis.....	10
2.3.2.1. Extraction of Lung Area	11
2.3.2.2. Extraction of the Rib Area	13
2.3.2.3. Extraction of Other Structures	15
2.3.2.4. Abnormality Detection.....	16
2.4 MACXI Architecture	17
2.5. Selection of Image Processing Techniques and Tools.....	21
Chapter 3 Reflection on the Research Method	26
3.1. Research Method Construction.....	26
3.2. Data Collection Procedure	27
3.3. Data Analysis Procedure.....	28
3.4. My Contribution to Knowledge	28

Chapter 4: Knowledge Base Development 30

4.1. CXR Image Diagnosis Domain 31

4.2. Computational Representation of Chest 32

4.3. Expert Diagnosis Representation 34

4.4. Image Manipulation 36

4.5. Disease Description and Interpretation 38

4.6. Interpretation of Diagnosis Details 41

 4.6.1. X-ray Image Interpretations 41

 4.6.2. Symptom Interpretation 46

4.7. X-ray Image Features Construction 48

4.8. Formulation of Important Features 49

4.9. Feature Selection 53

4.10. Development of Rules 53

4.11. Simplification of Rules 59

4.12. Determining the Severity Level 61

Chapter 5: The MACXI Model, Algorithms and Implementation 66

5.1. CXIP's Manipulation of Images 66

5.2. System Requirements 67

5.3. CXIP Implementation and Functionality 68

 5.3.1. CXIP Interface 69

 5.3.2. Image Selection Menu 70

 5.3.3. Perform Dilation 75

 5.3.4. Perform Erosion 76

 5.3.5. Calculate the Normal Gradient 77

 5.3.6. Calculate the Morphological Gradient 78

 5.3.7. Calculate the Morphological Reconstruction 78

 5.3.8. Determine the Regional Minima and Maxima 80

 5.3.9. Label Minima and Maxima 81

 5.3.10. Distance Calculation 82

 5.3.11. Histogram Analysis 83

5.3.12. Propagate Regions	85
5.3.13. Lung Region Extraction.....	86
5.3.14. Smoothing the Image	87
5.3.15. Isolation of the Left and Right Lung Areas	88
5.3.16. Abnormality Detection.....	90
5.3.17. Determine Lesion.....	92
5.3.18. Classification Process	94
Chapter 6: Evaluation and Results	96
6.1. Value to the Research Community	96
6.2. Implications.....	97
6.3. Performance	98
Chapter 7: Limitations, Future Directions and Conclusion.....	102
7.1. Fulfilment of Project Objectives.....	102
7.2. Conclusion	102
7.3. Research Limitations	103
7.4. Future Directions	104
Appendices.....	105
Appendix A : Image diagnosis details	105
Appendix B: Image manipulation and selection.....	105
Appendix C: Lung disease details.....	105
Appendix D: Individual rule for 80 images	105
Appendix E: CXIP and CXKB	105
Appendix F: Classified Images.....	106
Appendix G: Image Library.....	108
Appendix H: Pseudocode.....	109
Pseudocode for Propagation	109
Pseudocode for Smoothing Operation	111
Pseudocode for Left and Right Lung determination.....	113
Pseudocode for Lesion Determination.....	118

Bibliography 120

List of Figures

Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework of MACXI.....	18
Figure 2.2: Hough circle detection with gradient information.	24
Figure 4.1: Chest anatomical structure	32
Figure 4.2: Hierarchical representation of lung diseases	38
Figure 4.3: Hierarchical representation of a lung tumour and its characteristics	38
Figure 4.4: Images used every feature (Graphical Representation).....	50
Figure 4.5: Instance of the symptoms diagnosis process	55
Figure 4.6: Instance of the lung abnormality diagnosis process	59
Figure 5.1: Traditional CXR CXIP interface (before loading image)	70
Figure 5.2: Image selection menu	71
Figure 5.3: CXIP interface	72
Figure 5.4: Mouse driven frame box.....	73
Figure 5.5: Histogram analysis board	74
Figure 5.6: Pixel values are shown inside the histogram analysis board.....	74
Figure 5.7: Dilated images: $dI(x,y)$	76
Figure 5.8: Eroded images: $eI(x,y)$	77
Figure 5.9: Normal gradient image	77
Figure 5.10: Morphological gradient images.....	78
Figure 5.11: Morphologically reconstructed images (multiple reconstructions).....	80
Figure 5.12: Images of regional minima labelled (in red)	82
Figure 5.13: Distance images.....	83
Figure 5.14: Histogram of an actual image.....	84
Figure 5.15: Histogram of a morphologically reconstructed(multiple) image	84
Figure 5.16: Image after propagation.....	85
Figure 5.17: Lung region extracted image (with noise, blobs and holes).....	86

Figure 5.18: Lung region extracted image after smoothing.....	88
Figure 5.19: Left and Right Lung region extracted images	90
Figure 5.20: Lesion extracted images	94
Figure 6.1: Examples of classified images from MACXI	100

List of Tables

Table 4.1: Examples of image diagnosis details with image number and source.....	35
Table 4.2: Example of lung disease details preceded by disease type and source stored in CXKB	40
Table 4.3: Explanation of several important linguistic expressions used in the diagnosis of chest images	46
Table 4.4: Images used in every feature (Tabular Representation)	52
Table 4.5: Number of Images used for feature and image interpretation	52
Table 4.6: Rule Group classification for lung disease symptoms.....	57
Table 4.7: Sample rule descriptions taken from CXKB	58
Table 4.8: Rule Description in Linguistic terms	60
Table 4.9: Decision matrix in linguistic expression.....	61
Table 4.10: Rules for the classification of images according to the severity order of diseases	62
Table 4.11: Traditional CXR image diagnosis and severity level	65
Table 5.1: Classification of images (in severity order) by MACXI	95
Table 6.1: Comparison of classification in severity order between human expert (based on expert diagnosis details) and MACXI.....	99

List of Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
ANN	Artificial Neural Network
CAD	Computer Aided Diagnosis
CRT	Cathode Ray Tube
CT	Computed Tomography
CXR	Chest X-ray
FL	Fuzzy Logic
HLND	Hybrid Lung Nodule Detection system
IDL	Interactive Data Language
IS	Information Systems
KB	Knowledge Base
MATLAB	Matrix Laboratory
MACXI	Model for Analysing and Classifying Traditional Chest X-ray Images
CXIP	Image processor for Analysing and Classifying Traditional Chest X-ray Images
CXKB	Knowledge base for Analysing and Classifying Traditional Chest X-ray Images
MRI	Magnetic Resonance Imaging
MSAccess	Microsoft Access
MSVB	Microsoft Visual Basic 6.0
OS	Operating System
PA	Posterior Anterior
ROC	Receiver Operating Characteristic
ROI	Region of Interest

RSNA	Radiological Society of North America
SD	Systems Development
SDLC	Systems Development Life Cycle
SDRM	Systems Development Research Method

Glossary

Throughout the thesis, new items were highlighted when first encountered. Here, the most significant of these terms are presented with brief definitions.

Computed Tomography (CT)

Computed tomography is a tomographic image acquisition system using X-ray transmissions for gathering cross sectional slice-image from projection images: used primarily in medical imaging applications (Baxes, 1994)

Computer Aided Diagnosis (CAD)

Computer Aided Diagnosis is a computer-based automated tool to diagnose medical images to a certain extent.

Fluoroscopy

Fluoroscopy is based on the same techniques as traditional X-ray, with the photographic plate replaced by a fluorescent screen (Columbia University Press, 2005).

IDL

IDL is a programming application.

Image Analysis

The processing of an image to extract quantitative object measurements and then classify the results (Baxes, 1994).

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)

A tomographic image acquisition system using magnetic excitation for gathering cross sectional slice images from projection images; used primarily in medical imaging applications (Baxes, 1994). MRI is a non-invasive procedure that uses powerful magnets and radio waves to construct pictures of the body.

MATLAB

MATLAB stands for MATrix LABoratory. It is a software tool for a range of engineering works.

Morphological Process

A morphological process is a group of processes that evaluates each pixel in a binary or gray scale image along with its neighbouring pixels. Resulting pixel brightness is determined by looking at the input pixel brightness patterns (binary image case) or minimum and maximum values (gray-scale image case) (Baxes 1994).

Traditional Chest X-ray Image (CXR)

Traditional Chest X-ray Image is A stream of photons, that has a penetrating power, is passed through any organ of human body (e.g.-lung) to produce a photograph on a plastic photographic plate (Columbia University Press, 2005).

X-ray

X-ray is a relatively high-energy photon having a wavelength in the approximate range from 0.01 to 10 nanometres (Columbia University Press, 2005)