Dedicated to

My family and friends

Declaration

I certify that

- The work contained in the dissertation is original and has been done by myself under the general supervision of my supervisors.
- The work has not been submitted to any other Institute for any degree or diploma.
- I have followed the guidelines provided by Tezpur University in writing the thesis.
- I have conformed to the norms and guidelines given in the Ethical Code of Conduct of the university.
- Whenever I have used materials (data, theoretical analysis, and text) from other sources, I have given due credit to them by citing them in the text of the dissertation and giving their details in the references.

Deena Hijam



Department of Computer Science & Engineering Tezpur University

Napaam, Tezpur- 784028, Assam, India.

Dr. Sarat Saharia Professor Phone: Fax: E-Mail : sarat@tezu.ernet.in

Certificate

This is to certify that the thesis entitled "Convolutional Neural Network Assisted Off-line Handwritten Character Recognition of Meitei Mayek" submitted to Tezpur University in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering under the School of Engineering in partial fulfillment of the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Computer Science and Engineering is a record of research work carried out by Deena Hijam under my supervision and guidance.

All helps received by her from various sources have been duly acknowledged. No part of this thesis has been submitted elsewhere for award of any other degree.

Signature of Supervisor (Sarat Saharia) Professor Department of Computer Science and Engineering Tezpur University Assam, India-784028



Certificate

This is to certify that the thesis entitled "Convolutional Neural Network Assisted Off-line Handwritten Character Recognition of Meitei Mayek" submitted by Deena Hijam to Tezpur University in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering under the School of Engineering in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Computer Science and Engineering has been examined by us on .14...09...9.4.. and found to be satisfactory.

The Committee recommends for award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Signature of Principal Supervisor

Signature of External Examiner

Acknowledgment

This PhD dissertation would not have been possible without the help of numerous people, who with their kind cooperation and active support have made this research work a reality. Writing this dissertation has been a memorable journey in which I was accompanied by many. First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Sarat Saharia for the useful comments, remarks and engagement through the learning process of this PhD thesis. He gave me freedom to pursue my ideas and work at my own pace, and was always available to discuss various problems on the way. I acknowledge my indebtedness and deep sense of gratitude to him for his patience, guidance and admirable support throughout the entire process of writing this dissertation.

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the anonymous experts for their valuable comments which helped me dive more into my research topic and improve the quality of the thesis.

I am grateful to my parents, my sisters and my brother who continue to be my constant source of inspiration and support behind my endeavors. This PHD thesis wouldn't have been possible without the moral support and encouragement I receive from them. I would like to thank my husband for his motivation and understanding academically and personally which has enabled me to complete my PhD work. I would like to extend my love to my newborn baby for being my motivator in his own way during the last days of writing this dissertation.

I am indebted to the Department of Computer Science and Engineering of Tezpur University and its faculty members from whom I have gained most of my knowledge in my area of research. I would like to acknowledge my sincere gratitude to all the doctoral committee members of my research especially Prof. Utpal Sharma for his valuable comments and suggestions. I extend my sincere thanks to other faculty members with a special mention of Dr. Arindam Karmakar and the non-teaching staff of the Department, for their generous help in various ways towards the completion of the work.

I would like to express my gratitude to the teachers and students of Dhanamanjuri College of Arts, Manipur Public School, St. Joseph's School, Brighter Academy, Manu English School, Maria Montessori and Comet School for their cooperation and support during the sample collection process. I extend my gratitude to my brothers Jackson Moirangthem and Lamjingkhomba Hijam for helping with the dataset creation. I would like to thank Nirmal da for always being there to clear my doubts in Meitei Mayek.

I consider myself very fortunate to have had the company of some wonderful people who I can call my friends. I would like to thank Carynthia, Piyali, Arundhati, Binayak, Nirmal da and che Margaret and their families who made my stay at Tezpur University very pleasurable. I will always cherish the times spent with them.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who have directly or indirectly helped me in different capacities to complete my research work.

Deena Hijam

List of Figures

1-1	Characters of Meitei Mayek script	11
2-1	Steps followed for dataset creation	22
2-2	Samples of collected data	24
2-3	The number of writers who contributed in the data creation and their age group	24
2-4	Steps for cropping out characters from tabular forms	25
2-5	Samples from some of the classes	26
2-6	Histogram of Oriented Gradients with different cell sizes $\ . \ . \ .$	29
2-7	Approximation and detail coefficients of $db1$ wavelet at three dif- ferent decomposition levels	30
2-8	Classwise classification rates for different feature-classifier combi- nations	33
3-1	Convolution operation of stride 1 between a filter and an input image to produce a feature map.	37
3-2	Max pooling and average pooling	38
3-3	Performance of state-of-the-art pre-trained CNN models against TUMMHCD using transfer learning (TL) with fine tuning (FT).	44
3-4	Base CNN architecture used for hyper-parameter tuning $\ . \ . \ .$	44
3-5	(a) Accuracies and (b) Losses using different mini-batch sizes	46

3-6	(a) Accuracies and (b) Losses at different learning rates	46
3-7	(a) Accuracies and (b) Losses at different learning rate decay values	47
3-8	(a) Losses and (b) accuracies using base CNN model $\ . \ . \ .$.	47
3-9	Overall structure of the proposed CNN architecture. $x@y \times y$ in- dicates x output feature maps of size $y \times y$. $z \times z$ Convolution or Max-pooling indicates convolution or max-pooling with kernel masks of size $z \times z$ respectively	48
3-10	Summary of details of each layer in the proposed CNN model $~$.	50
3-11	Recognition accuracies using different feature-classifier combinations	51
3-12	Classwise classification rates achieved using state-of-the-art CNN models and proposed CNN model	51
3-13	Performance comparison of state-of-the-art CNN models and pro- posed CNN against TUMMHCD	52
3-14	Different noises introduced in TUMMHCD. The values inside the brackets for the gaussian noise represent the mean and standard deviation respectively and those of salt and pepper noise indicate the percentages of salt and pepper noise in the image respectively.	52
3-15	Recognition accuracies achieved when noises are added to TUMMHCD	53
4-1	Conceptual framework flow of the proposed methodology \ldots	59
4-2	Second level recognition module	65
4-3	CNN architecture used for extracting deep features. $i@j \times j$ indicates i output feature maps of size $j \times j$	66
4-4	Recognition accuracies achieved using different values of the filtering threshold parameter with SVM, KNN and RF	70
5-1	Example samples of highly similar-shaped character pairs	77
5-2	Word consisting of characters in all three zones	78

5-3	Examples of words consisting of different number of zones. (a) Word with only middle zone (b) Word with upper and middle zones (c) Word with middle and lower zones	78
5-4	Example words consisting of <i>ee-lonsum</i> $(\mathbf{\overline{x}})$ and <i>ee</i> $(\mathbf{\overline{x}})$	79
5-5	Frequency of occurrence of characters in the cleaned corpus	80
5-6	Words divided into zones	81
5-7	Vowels in Meitei Mayek Character Set	81
5-8	Conceptual framework of the proposed two-stage recognition sys- tem. The dotted lines represent interactions of the units with the databases	82
5-9	Confusion matrix obtained on the test set of TUMMHCD using CNN to be used for first stage recognition as well as to find vul- nerable set. The x-axis indicates predicted class and the y-axis indicates true class. $cnf[i, j]$ indicates the number of characters in class <i>i</i> which has been misclassified as class <i>j</i> (when $i \neq j$), where cnf is the name of the confusion matrix	85
5-10	Character pairs with highest number of misclassification. The arrows from left to right indicate the percentage of character images of the character on the left which has been misclassified as the one on the right and vice-versa.	87
5-11	Preprocessing steps for the segmentation of word into its con- stituent characters	88
5-12	The row-wise first and last white pixels are depicted by the red and purple dots and those of column-wise are depicted by the orange and blue dots, respectively	88
5-13	Zone identification based on the uppermost and lowermost pixel (represented by dotted red lines) of a word image	89
5-14	Weighted average precision, recall, f-measure and accuracy values of the system with and without the second stage	95

5-15	Confusion matrix obtained with the system without second stage on 100 words database. The x-axis indicates predicted class and	
	the y-axis indicates true class	96
5-16	Confusion matrix obtained with the system with second stage on	
	100 words database. The x-axis indicates predicted class and the y-axis indicates true class	97
6-1		106
6-2	The workflow of the test images through the trained CNN and trained LSTM-LM. The orange lines depict the class probabilities (CP) generated by the CNN and the green lines depict the condi-	100
	tional probabilities (CoP) generated by the LSTM-LM	109
6-3	Confusion matrix obtained using the proposed CNN+LSTM system	113

List of Tables

2.1	Training, testing and total number of samples in each class	27
2.2	Recognition accuracies achieved using HOG descriptors with dif- ferent cell sizes. Figures in bold signify highest test accuracy for concerned classifier	30
2.3	Recognition accuracies achieved using different wavelets and de- composition levels. Figures in bold signify highest test accuracy for concerned classifier	31
2.4	Recognition accuracies achieved using IPI values with different clas- sifiers. Figures in bold signify highest test accuracy for concerned classifier	32
4.1	Recognizers for second level recognition	63
4.2	Statistics of results obtained in multilevel recognition with fusion of features strategy	68
4.3	Performance results of different training scenarios	69
4.4	Performance of the proposed strategy on MNIST, DIDA and CArDIS datasets	70
5.1	Statistics of The TDIL Hindi-Manipuri Agriculture & Entertain- ment Text Corpus ILCI-II	79
5.2	Performance results of zone identification algorithm	92

5.3	Total number of instances and values of precision, recall and f- measure of each class obtained with systems with and without the second stage. The highlighted values in bold indicate the improve- ments	94
5.4	Comparison with other methodologies. The last column "Improve- ment in test accuracy" indicates the improvement achieved by the multi-stage feature extraction/recognition in terms of recognition accuracy as compared to single-stage approach	99
6.1	Results obtained with different weights	111
6.2	Test samples with classification results of CNN, LSTM-LM and CNN+LSTM-LM. The last column provides the correct sequence of characters.	112
6.3	Total number of instances and values of precision, recall and f- measure of each class obtained with systems with and without the incorporation of LM. The highlighted values in bold indicate the	114
	improvements	114

Glossary of Terms

HCR	Handwritten Character Recognition
OCR	Optical Character Recognition
NN	Neural Network
HMM	Hidden Markov Model
SVM	Support Vector Machine
KNN	K-Nearest Neighbor
RF	Random Forest
DT	Decision Tree
HOG	Histogram of Oriented Gradients
SIFT	Scale-Invariant Feature Transform
SURF	Speeded Up Robust Features
CNN	Convolutional Neural Network
RNN	Recurrent Neural Network
LSTM	Long Short-Term Memory
LM	Language Model
ILSVRC	ImageNet Large Scale Visual Recognition Challenge
MLP	Multi-Layer Perceptron
LBP	Local Binary Pattern
TUMMHCD	Tezpur University Meitei Mayek Handwritten Character
	Dataset
CMATER	Center for Microprocessor Application for Training Edu-
	cation and Research
CENPARMI	Centre for Pattern Recognition and Machine Intelligence
DWT	Discrete Wavelet Transform
ORB	Oriented FAST and Rotated BRIEF
IPI	Image Pixel Intensity
ReLU	Rectified Linear Unit
HHR	Handwritten Hangul Recognition
ELU	Exponential Linear Unit

VLAD	Vector of Locally Aggregated Descriptors
ELM	Extreme Learning Machine
TDIL	Technology Development for Indian Languages
TIFF	Tagged Image File Format
BN	Batch Normalization
TL	Transfer Learning
FT	Fine Tuning

Symbols and Notations

$\psi(t)$	Mother wavelet function
$\langle f, \phi_n \rangle$	Inner product of the two functions
C_i	i^{th} convolutional layer
P_i	p^{th} pooling layer
FC_i	i^{th} fully-connected layer
\mathbb{R}	Set of real numbers
ϑ	Validation set of TUMMHCD
T	Test set of TUMMHCD
c_i	Character class with class id i
ϑ_i	Set of images in the validation set belonging to class c_i
α	Initial learning rate
$lpha_i$	Learning rate decay after iteration i
$i@j \times j$	i output feature maps of size $j\times j$
Rec_set	Set of second-level recognizers
G	Magnitude of image gradient
heta	Direction of image gradient
V_{in}	L2 normalized vector
$char_i$	i^{th} character in a word
u_i	y co-ordinate of the uppermost pixel of $char_i$
l_i	y co-ordinate of the lowermost pixel of $char_i$