

A PROPOSED SIGN LANGUAGE MODEL FOR SPEECHLESS PERSONS USING EEG SIGNALS

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Abstract- Recently, algorithms of machine learning are widely used in the field of electroencephalography (EEG)-Brain-Computer interfaces (BCI). In this paper, a sign language software model based on the EEG brain signal was implemented, to help the speechless persons to communicate their thoughts to others. The preprocessing stage for the EEG signals was performed by applying the Principle Component Analysis (PCA) algorithm to extract the important features and reducing the data redundancy. A model for classifying ten classes of EEG signals, including Facial Expression (FE) and some Motor Execution (ME) processes, had been designed. A neural network of three hidden layers with a deep learning classifier had been used in this work. Data set from four different subjects were collected using a 14 channels Emotiv epoc + device. A classification results with an accuracy of 95.75% were obtained for the collected samples. An optimization process was performed on the predicted class with the aid of the user, and then the signing class will be connected to the specified sentence under a predesigned lock-up table.

I. INTRODUCTION

It is well known that, the system which connects human brain signals with appliances or devices without requiring of any physical contact is called BCI. It has been seen as a new way for communication, where the Brain activity has been used as a refected form by electric brain signals to control external systems such as computers, wheelchairs, switches, or neuroprosthetic extensions [1]- [6]. Electroencephalographic (EEG) signals mean that the continuous potential or voltage fluctuation collected in a non- invasive manner from a human's scalp. A special EEG headset having many EEG sensors (electrodes) put on special points on the head depending on the international 10/20 system electrode pattern. The obtained signal is interpreted as a randomly determined time-series signal with multiple lengths and tiny amplitudes (tens of microvolts)[2], [3]. EEG signals are modelled and classified into five types: (Theta, Delta, Beta, Alpha, and Gamma waves), which are responsible to capture different associated brain activities inside the brain [7], [8]. EEG signals contain a high redundancy in the collected data, so the important stage before being classifying those signals, is the feature extraction stage. In fact, a feature illustrates a distinctive attribute, identifiable measure, and functional element getting from a segment of samples. Feature extraction used to maintain the significant information in the signal and minimizing its loss as much as possible, as well as to simplify the needed resources for describing the huge amount of data accurately. So, this will lead to a simple implementation that reduces the processing cost for the information, and eliminates the need for data compression [3], [9]-[13]. In this work, Principle Component Analysis (PCA) method was used for the unsupervised feature extraction process. This method is a descriptive statistical technique that describes the differences between the samples of the dataset and the most correlated samples. PCA detects the principal component of the dataset of the signal, so it will perform the dimension reduction of the data [14]-[16]. Algorithms for classifying EEG-based BCIs were classified into four main classes: matrix and tensor, adaptive, deep learning, and transfer learning classifiers as well as a few other diverse classifiers [16]-[20]. In EEG researches, machine learning had been used to discover the related information for neuroimaging and

neural classification. The advances in machine learning and the availability of huge EEG data sets led to deep learning deployment in analyzing EEG signals and in the field of understanding brain functionality by defining collected information inside it [17], [18], [22]-[25].

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The work in this paper focuses on EEG signal features to identify the EEG signals classes for facial expressions (FEs) and some motor execution actions. FEs include: surprise, smile, left wink, right wink, and mouth opened. While, motor execution actions include:right-hand lifting, left-hand lifting, head rotating to right, head rotating to left and clapping. All these signals first collected by EMOTIV EPOC + 14 Channel Mobile Brain wear headset, and fetched by the licensed software of EMOTIV Pro with python environment. A model for classifying those signals had been designed. Fig. 1 shows the research methodology block diagram. The details of each step will be explained in the next subsections.

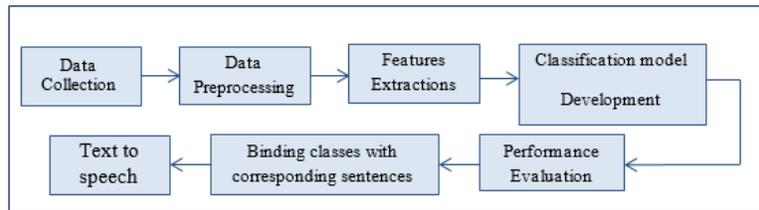


Figure 1: Research methodology block diagram

A. Data Collection

The EEG signal data set samples were collected using 14 channels EMOTIV EPOC + headset device with a sampling frequency of 128 Hz and a built-in digital notch filter at 50 Hz and 60 Hz and a digital band-pass filter of 0.16-45 Hz. The 14 channels extended around the head according to international 10/20 system electrode pattern placement as shown in Fig. 2. The data was collected from four subjects of different ages (10-50 years), males and females while they are doing of the required facial expressions and the motor execution actions. The EEG signals were recorded by the monthly licensed Emotiv software (Emotiv PRO) and saved as excel files (.csv files) to be used later in training the neural network within the python environment. During the recording process, about 6487 EEG samples were collected. Table I shows some samples of the collected EEG data for lifting the left hand for one subject.

B. Data Pre-Processing

This stage is the removal of the artefacts of EEG signals, which is doing by the Emotiv headset itself, where the data is recorded directly as it is received from the headset. There is a good amount of signal processing and filtering in the headset to remove artifacts and harmonic frequencies. So, the signals appear clean when we gained a good contact quality. The signals had been sampled at 2048 Hz sampling frequency, and then applied to a dual notch filter at 50 Hz and 60 Hz as well as a low pass filter at 64 Hz cutoff frequency. Finally, the data was sampled down to 128 Hz or 256 Hz.

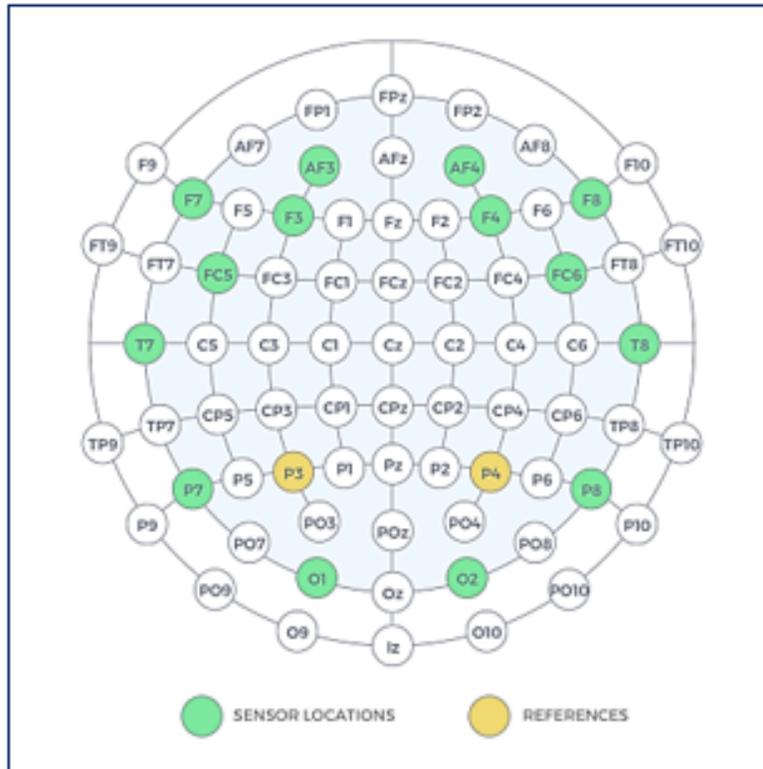


Figure 2: International 10/20 system electrode pattern placement

TABLE I
 EEG Datasets Samples for Left-Hand Lifting

	start	stop	timestamp		headset	headset	headset	subject	sampling																				
titlesamples	4889.508	p:159829	p:159829	4559.508	type:EPO	serial:38	firmware	name:dr.	channels:	rate:eeg_128,mot_64;pm	0.1;pow	8	283	0	version:2														
1	exportAree	185	452	CPLUS	9AD980	:3011	eija-2019	165	64;pm	0.1;pow	8	283	0	version:2															
2	Timestamp	EEG.Count	EEG.Intery	EEG.AF3	EEG.F7	EEG.F3	EEG.FC5	EEG.T7	EEG.P7	EEG.O1	EEG.O2	EEG.P8	EEG.T8	EEG.FC6	EEG.F4	EEG.F8	EEG.AF4	EEG.RawC											
3	1598294890	34	0	4627.308	6175.769	7376.923	7018.461	7112.82	3223.461426	3223.846	1274.103	3862.051	629.7436	8023.974	7521.795	8334.743	3344.359	47606											
4	1598294893	243	0	7502.436	5615.513	6324.231	6095.513	1287.821	7299.871582	7261.41	6439.615	1462.692	7645.513	3923.974	3256.539	107.6923	6799.615	57867											
5	1598294894	141	0	5662.18	5518.461	4492.308	3957.436	5409.359	4291.666504	715.6411	4300.897	3987.821	6205.385	7224.103	7947.18	3203.974	4669.103	36448											
6	1598294894	14	1	5591.566	5528.655	4493.29	4027.343	5410.139	4219.964355	713.8898	4265.287	3929.946	6159.411	7237.689	7829.861	3138.312	4696.339	60652											
7	1598294894	15	1	5520.952	5538.849	4494.271	4097.25	5410.919	4148.262207	732.1386	4229.675	3872.07	6113.437	7251.276	7712.542	3072.649	4723.576	18343											
8	1598294894	16	1	5450.338	5549.042	4495.254	4167.158	5411.699	4076.550303	740.3873	4194.064	3814.195	6067.463	7264.864	7595.224	3006.986	4750.813	35825.53											
9	1598294894	17	1	5379.725	5559.236	4496.236	4237.065	5412.479	4004.858154	748.6361	4158.453	3756.32	6021.489	7278.451	7477.905	2941.323	4778.05	35618.04											
10	1598294894	18	1	5309.111	5569.43	4497.218	4306.972	5413.26	3933.156006	756.8849	4122.842	3698.445	5975.516	7292.038	7360.586	2875.66	4805.287	35410.55											
11	1598294894	19	1	5238.497	5579.624	4498.2	4376.879	5414.04	3861.453857	765.1337	4087.231	3640.57	5929.542	7305.625	7243.268	2809.997	4832.523	35203.06											
12	1598294894	20	1	5167.883	5589.817	4499.182	4446.787	5414.82	3789.751709	773.3824	4051.62	3582.695	5883.568	7319.212	7125.949	2744.334	4859.76	34995.57											
13	1598294894	21	1	5097.27	5600.011	4500.164	4516.694	5415.6	3718.049561	781.6312	4016.009	3524.82	5837.594	7332.799	7008.631	2678.672	4886.997	34788.09											
14	1598294894	22	1	5026.656	5610.205	4501.146	4586.601	5416.38	3646.347412	789.88	3980.398	3466.945	5791.62	7346.386	6891.312	2613.009	4914.233	34580.6											
15	1598294894	23	1	4956.042	5620.398	4502.127	4656.508	5417.16	3574.645508	798.1287	3944.787	3409.07	5745.646	7359.973	6773.994	2547.346	4941.47	34373.11											
16	1598294894	24	1	4885.428	5630.592	4503.11	4726.416	5417.94	3502.943359	806.3775	3909.176	3351.195	5699.673	7373.56	6656.675	2481.683	4968.707	34165.62											
17	1598294894	25	1	4814.814	5640.786	4504.092	4796.323	5418.721	3431.241211	814.6263	3873.565	3293.32	5653.699	7387.147	6539.356	2416.02	4995.944	33958.13											
18	1598294894	26	1	4744.201	5650.979	4505.074	4866.23	5419.501	3359.539063	822.8751	3837.954	3235.445	5607.725	7400.734	6422.038	2350.357	5023.181	33750.64											
19	1598294894	27	1	4673.587	5661.173	4506.056	4936.138	5420.281	3287.836914	831.1238	3802.343	3177.57	5561.751	7414.321	6304.719	2284.695	5050.417	33543.15											
20	1598294894	28	1	4602.973	5671.367	4507.038	5006.045	5421.061	3216.134766	839.3726	3766.732	3119.695	5515.777	7427.908	6187.4	2219.032	5077.654	33335.66											
21	1598294894	29	1	4532.359	5681.56	4508.02	5075.952	5421.841	3144.432617	847.6214	3731.121	3061.819	5469.804	7441.495	6070.082	2153.369	5104.891	33128.17											
22	1598294894	30	1	4461.746	5691.754	4509.001	5145.859	5422.622	3072.730469	855.8702	3695.51	3003.944	5423.83	7455.082	5952.763	2087.706	5132.127	32920.68											
23	1598294894	31	1	4391.132	5701.948	4509.983	5215.767	5423.401	3001.02832	864.119	3659.899	2946.069	5377.856	7468.669	5835.445	2022.043	5159.364	32713.19											

C. Feature Extraction

The goal of this step is to characterize the EEG signals depending on few related values called "features" , which should capture the related information within the EEG signals which is relevant to characterize the distinctive nature of the brain mental states to be identified, while refusing the noise and other non-relevant information [26]. In this stage, the obtained preprocessed data from the EMOTIV headset is processed with a PCA algorithm to improve the classifier's accuracy. PCA is a technique used for the reduction of dimensionality of the large data sets. This can be achieved by converting the huge set of variables into a smaller one which contains most of the information in the large set. To implement PCA, the mean values must be computed firstly, so that we can compute the standardization (Z) of the initial values of the dataset to transform all the variables to the same range [16], [27], [28] .

$$Z = \frac{value - mean}{Standard\ deviation} \quad (1)$$

The second step of PCA is to compute the covariance matrix, to check if there is any relationship or correlation between the variables of the dataset to reduce the information redundancy as much as possible. First of all, the covariance between all potential pairs of the initial dataset variables was computed using Eq. 2, to instruct the entries of the covariance matrix, which is a $p \times p$ symmetric matrix.

$$cov[X, Y] = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^p X_i Y_i - p \bar{X} \bar{Y}}{p} \quad (2)$$

Where: \bar{X} means the mean value of variable X ,

p is the dimension's number

The third step of PCA is to compute the eigenvectors and eigenvalues for the dataset values, to locate their principal components. The principal components are the new uncorrelated variables and have the most of information about the dataset is compressed in the first components and it gradually descends. The fourth step is to find the feature vector, which is represented by a matrix with columns of eigenvectors for the required component from the previous step. This will lead to keeping only k components (eigenvectors) instead of the total number of them (p). The final step of PCA is the reformation of the original dataset axis to the axis of the selected principal components, by multiplying the transpose of the feature vector as in Eq. 3

$$Final\ dataset = FeatureVector^T * ZT \quad (3)$$

D. Classification Model Development

In this work, a neural network with deep learning was built to classify the EEG signals for the ten actions including facial expression and motor execution. The main facility of applying a deep learning mechanism is that, it often continues to improve as the size of the dataset increases. This task was implemented with spider3.3.1/ Python environment by importing keras libraries, which is a deep learning API written in Python. A Sequential model, which is a linear stack of layers with 3 hidden layers which contain (1024, 512 and 256) neurons respectively, was built with an activation function of type $\tanh(X)$. The output layer consists of 10 output neurons with an activation function of type $\text{SoftMax}(X)$. Fig. 3 shows the sequential model of the work.

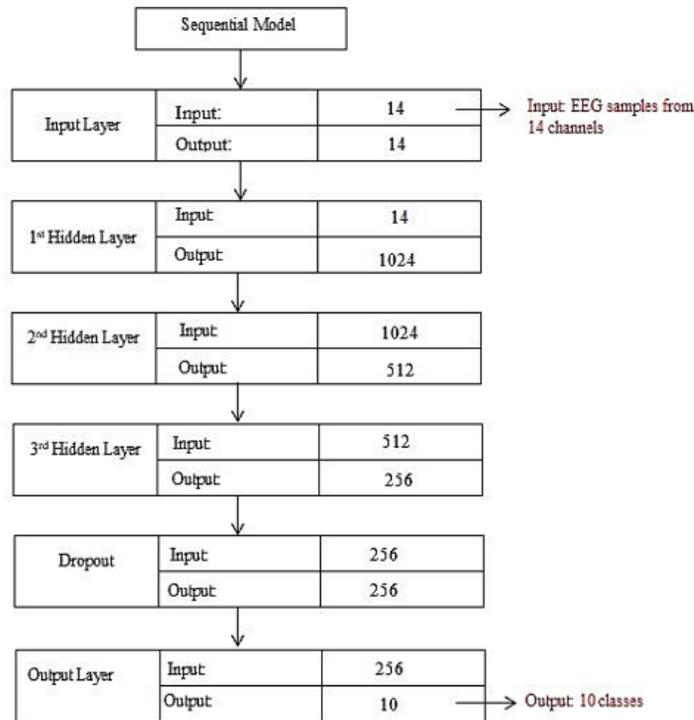


Figure 3: Sequential model representation

E. Performance Evaluation

The collected dataset samples are divided into two groups: 80% training dataset and 20% testing dataset to construct the sequential model of the classification to be tested. The performance is evaluated in each epoch concerning two parameters: loss-values and accuracy of the classification. Accuracy calculates the percentage of predicted values (y_{Pred}) that match with actual values (y_{True}). When running the model, important parameters effect must be observed since they significantly affect the accuracy and the processing time of the classification process. The parameters include: number of samples for each class, the total number of samples, and the type of the activation function applied within the hidden and output layers neurons. When using an equal number of samples for each class, this will give better classification accuracy than those with a different number of samples per class as well as to the obvious reduction in the number of epochs required to train the neural network, and hence the overall processing time will be reduced, as shown in Fig. 4. The total number of samples is the size of the collected samples, as this size increases the deep learning will give a better classification result but this increment cannot be continued since the processing time will be increased as well as to the stability of the accuracy results to a specific value. Finally, there are many types of activation functions such as: sigmoid, relu, SoftMax, tanh and exponential activation function. So, after implementing those types within the neurons of the hidden layer, the most acceptable accuracy level was obtained when using tanh(X) activation function, while the SoftMax(X) was used within

the output layers neurons. Root Mean Square (RMS) was used as an optimizer to minimize the error while learning the neural network.

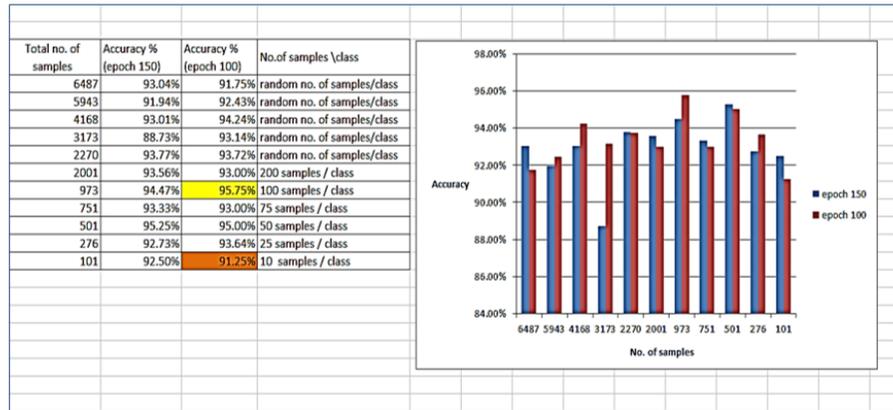


Figure 4: Classification accuracy levels

F. Binding Classes with Corresponding Sentences

After acquiring the predicted class of the specific sign an optimization process will be followed, by asking the user about the validity of the detected sign, if it is true then a lockup table will be searched to bind the sign with the corresponding sentence, else the prediction process will be repeated until reaching the required sign. Table II shows the binding of sings with sentences. Then the selected sentence will be transferred to a speech by intended text to speech instruction in python.

TABLE II
Binding of Sings with Sentences

EEG Signal Type	Class Number	Class Label	Sentence
FE	1	Surprise	I have headache
	2	Smile	Thank you
	3	Right wink	I have eye pain
	4	Left wink	I need help
	5	Mouth opened	I'm hungry
ME	6	Left-hand lifting	I need my son
	7	Right-hand lifting	I need my daughter
	8	Head to right	I need my parents
	9	Head to left	I have stomach
	10	Clipping	I want to go outside

III. CONCLUSION

In this paper, the classification of EEG time series signal was done by building a deep neural network and implementing deep learning techniques. Ten classes of EEG signal were classified from specialized dataset samples recording. In the offline training, the classification accuracy results reached to 95.75% with minimum processing requirements. So, the sign language model for binding those classes with the corresponding sentences, became more accurate and faster than those models which take the images for EEG signal segments to feed the deep learning neural network.

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