Real Time Piano Finger Recognition Using Convolutional Neural Networks and Gated Recurrent Units

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Keywords: computer vision, piano finger recognition, action recognition, human-computer Interaction

Received: June 11, 2025

Standardized piano fingering practice not only concerns the stability of performance, but also directly affects the richness and coherence of musical expression. However, due to limitations in teacher resources and teaching time, existing piano teaching has significant shortcomings in personalized guidance and immediate feedback on errors. Therefore, this article proposes a computer vision based piano finger recognition and training system, which integrates convolutional neural networks (CNN) for hand static feature extraction, gated recurrent units (GRU) for action time series modeling, and introduces spatial attention and temporal attention mechanisms to improve finger recognition accuracy and dynamic response capability. The experiment was conducted based on a self built dataset of over 130000 piano performance images. The system outperformed existing methods in key indicators such as finger gesture recognition accuracy (89.8%), macro average F1 value (90.2%), and feedback response delay (0.47 seconds), especially in complex action recognition and real-time feedback. The research results provide feasible technical support for the piano intelligent teaching system and have good application and promotion value.

Povzetek：Predstavljen je sistem za prepoznavanje prstov pri klavirski igri, ki združuje dvo-tokovno arhitekturo CNN (prostorske značilke) + GRU (časovne sekvence) ter prostorsko (SAM) in časovno pozornost (SEAM) za boljšo zaznavo ključnih okvirjev in prehodov prstov. Na 130 k označenih slikah doseže odlično prepoznavanje, še posebej dobro pri kompleksnih menjavah prstov in hitrih zaporedjih.

1 Introduction

In recent years, with the continuous development of computer vision, deep learning, and artificial intelligence technologies, traditional piano education is gradually moving towards intelligence, personalization, and systematization. It is shifting from improving performance skills to using intelligent technology to construct personalized learning processes, conduct intelligent evaluations, and provide real-time feedback, further improving teaching and learning efficiency. In this context, piano fingertip action recognition is considered one of the key supporting technologies for digital music education and is attracting more attention from researchers.

The finger movements during piano performance are a highly complex spatio-temporal characteristic: spatiality refers to the structural features of fingers, the distribution and angle changes of fingertips, etc; Timeliness refers to the continuity of actions, changes in rhythm, and variations in action modes. This motivational process requires the combination of static image features and temporal features for precise tracking and error correction techniques. However, due to the scarcity of existing resources, limited class hours, and outdated technology, piano players face great difficulties in providing feedback on piano playing techniques and movements, discovering errors, and providing personalized teaching.

To enhance the tracking and parsing ability of finger trajectories, Kapuscinski and Majcher (2024) [1] combined R-CNN and Bi LSTM structures to implement a complex gesture recognition method that can maintain high efficiency and anti-interference ability in complex environments, providing guidance for visual detection of human operations. Yiqun (2022) [2] applied augmented reality AR and IoT technology to piano teaching, which can significantly improve students' performance in terms of playing fluency, rhythm control, and continuity. Ji, Wang, and Wang (2024) also attempted to use Leap Motion to capture performers' gesture path trajectories, and used the Viterbi algorithm to score their performance standardization, improving the system's personalized training and real-time feedback functions.

In terms of technical scoring, Zhao, Wang, and Cai (2023) [4] integrated audio-visual routes and sound/timbre features into a complex environment based on the ResNet audio-visual joint model, opening up new horizons for piano performance behavior recognition and technical evaluation. Ruan (2024) [5] proved that students who self learn through Soft Mozart digital devices have better

learning interests and exam results than traditional classroom learning methods, demonstrating the effectiveness of digital devices in piano teaching.

Although good progress has been made in existing research, there are still three problems with current methods: firstly, some studies focus too much on audio data and neglect the crucial role of finger movement characteristics in skill evaluation; Secondly, traditional models such as LSTM have a high computational cost and response speed for piano playing movements with strong coherence and variability; The third issue is that some studies have not accurately simulated the numerous hand gesture transitions and finger technique details, which limits the system's recognition accuracy and feedback quality.

This article investigates a technique based on computer vision for extracting and teaching piano performance skills. In terms of deep image feature information of the hand, we use convolutional neural networks (CNN) for feature extraction; For the time-dependent information of finger movements, a Gated Recurrent Unit (GRU) and self attention model were used for feature extraction in the variation of finger movement sequences, which effectively assisted and aided in the extraction and recognition of continuous hand movements. The keyframe detection dynamic feedback mode of the system can timely detect and correct erroneous actions, and provide personalized suggestions to help students form scientific and effective practice habits. At the same time, a video library of piano finger movements was established using data captured by high-definition binocular cameras, which includes different playing styles, rhythms, and hand shape transformations. A total of about 103000 frames of video were collected and annotated by teachers' multiple times to ensure video quality and label accuracy. Based on this, the system in this article has also made significant improvements in the accuracy, speed, and performance of identifying different performers. The purpose of this article is to construct a piano finger recognition system that combines time and space, to solve the problems of delayed response, low operational accuracy, and inability to provide personalized teaching solutions in traditional teaching systems. This innovative methodology is used to assist piano teaching and digitize piano practice, in order to achieve efficient teaching.

The remaining part of this article is arranged as follows: Part 2 is a detailed review of existing research; The third part is the analysis of the overall system and key module structure; Part 4 is the experimental plan and performance evaluation results; Part 5 discusses the advantages and practical applications of this method; Part 6 is a summary and development trend of the research results of this method.

2 Related work

Piano finger recognition, as an important research direction at the intersection of music education and computer vision, integrates image processing, temporal modeling, and multimodal interaction technology, gradually promoting the development of piano teaching towards intelligence and personalization. With the deepening trend of digitalization in performance behavior, researchers continue to explore how to break through the bottlenecks of system accuracy, response speed, and adaptability, and build more efficient and intelligent finger recognition mechanisms.

From the perspective of the evolution of image culture and performance posture, Lara Schumann (2024) [6] analyzed the performance images of pianist Clara Schumann in the 19th century, revealing the deep connection between performance posture, photography techniques, and audience perception. She pointed out that images are not only the reproduction of technical actions, but also a cultural narrative medium. This viewpoint provides inspiration for the image semantic analysis of piano performance movements. Holzer (2024) [7] proposed a new path of coupling scanning processors with visual generation, rhythm control, and human-computer interaction from the perspective of "image performance", opening up new technological ideas for real-time action visualization.

YunDan, Tian, and Ai (2022) [8] addressed the issue of constructing a music education system by designing a Multi Tone Recognition Reaction (MPTM) system based on neural networks. This system enables students to synchronously recognize musical notes and their playing techniques, thereby achieving more effective learning. The research core of YouW (2023) [9] focuses on the problem of rhythm synchronization in the process of double piano performance, and proposes a "rhythm combination hand synchronization" scheme to effectively solve the harmony and rhythm of multiple finger synchronization operations. In terms of practical application, YuLinna and LuoZhifan (2022)[10] conducted research on the situation of university music teaching to confirm that the intelligent teaching system created using AI technology and image processing technology can help improve the technical level and learning enthusiasm of new students; Lin, Ding, and Song (2024) [11] used a BP neural network to establish a multi finger collaborative tapping model, and accurately estimated the high five angle using SSA and GA optimization methods. The results showed that the physiological structure of the hand and training years had a significant impact on the performance of the model.

Regarding the analysis of complex playing movements, Takehara et al. (2022) [12] used inertial sensors to deeply analyze the tremolo technique and found that high-level performers rely on shoulder elbow linkage to complete rapid keystrokes. This study emphasizes the importance of multi joint coordination for advanced playing skills. The experiments conducted by Kanami, Tatsunori, and Takayuki (2023) [13] showed that dual visual and

auditory stimuli can significantly improve the synchronicity between the little finger and ring finger, confirming the important value of visual rhythm training for finger technique independence.

In terms of intelligent generation of finger movements and action prediction, Gao, Zhang et al. (2023) [14] used model reinforcement learning methods to optimize finger movement paths based on the principle of "minimum motion distance", achieving a balance between fluency and physical rationality of performance actions. Loo, Chai et al. (2022) [18] combined local music elements with piano decoration training, and the results showed that visual cues and rhythm synchronization significantly improved students' confidence and initiative in playing. In terms of feature extraction and action modeling, Zhi (2022) [16] constructed a multi-channel model based on recurrent neural networks (RNNs), fused video images with keystroke intensity, and achieved bidirectional dynamic analysis of piano fingering behavior. Xin, Haoyue and Qiang (2022) [17] proposed a new evaluation system with unreasonable fingering rate (IFR) as the core from the perspective of "pitch difference finger order matching", and made significant progress in improving the rationality of fingering and compressing the range of action switching.

In summary, existing research has gradually shifted from static image processing to multidimensional temporal modeling and intelligent feedback systems, but there are still shortcomings in the following three aspects:

Firstly, feature extraction heavily relies on static information in images and lacks attention to the continuity of action time. In complex actions such as multi finger concurrency and fast switching, existing models lack detailed modeling of the logic and action evolution between fingers. Although GRU and LSTM have been introduced, they are still prone to frame loss and misjudgment problems.

Secondly, the limitations of training data are prominent. The current mainstream models rely heavily on standardized performance data and have weak adaptability to non-standard movements, individual differences, and diverse styles, which limits the effectiveness of error recognition and personalized feedback, making it difficult to achieve the intelligent teaching goal of "individualized".

Thirdly, multimodal fusion is insufficient. The existing systems are based on visual features and do not effectively integrate multimodal information such as pitch and rhythm. They lack a grasp of the inherent connection and complex close relationship between performance actions and music expression, which reduces their comprehensiveness in recognizing and providing real-time feedback on complex music pieces.

Based on the above reasons, this article proposes three research themes as the focus of the next stage of work, namely the following three.

Can a dual channel neural network model that integrates image flow and motion trajectory flow be constructed for continuous keystrokes and complex rhythm structures, effectively improving recognition accuracy and dynamic response capability?

How to combine spatiotemporal attention mechanism to dynamically focus the attention area on high-frequency related regions in hand images, extract key action nodes, and enhance sensitivity and stability to changes in finger movement paths?

Can a training framework with style adaptation and personalized feedback capabilities be designed through deep feature transfer and behavioral habit modeling, to achieve personalized guidance for learners with different levels, styles, and habits?

Based on the above research questions, the main research contributions of this article are summarized as follows:

A dual stream neural network based on the fusion of space convolution structure and time recursive structure is proposed to realize the collaborative processing of static images and dynamic tracks, effectively breaking through the limitations of single model in timeliness and recognition rate;

Introducing Spatial Attention Module (SAM) and Sequential Attention Module (SEAM) into the network architecture to enhance the focusing ability of hand key regions and temporal keyframes, and to improve stability and anti-interference in complex finger pointing scenes;

Systematic testing was conducted on piano performance datasets covering multiple styles and different difficulty levels, and the results showed that the F1 score, feedback delay, and action recognition fault tolerance were superior to traditional CNN models and single temporal models, demonstrating good practical potential and promotional value.

3 Suggested solutions

In response to the shortcomings of existing piano finger recognition systems in motion continuity capture, recognition accuracy, and real-time feedback, this paper proposes a piano finger motion recognition system based on convolutional neural networks (CNN), gated recurrent units (GRU), and spatiotemporal attention mechanisms. The aim is to build a finger recognition and training platform that combines spatial and temporal feature extraction capabilities, strong dynamic sensitivity, and high personalized adaptability.

In terms of spatial feature extraction, the system uses a multi-layer convolutional neural network (CNN) to extract features from static images of hands during the performance process. Although piano finger movements have diversity, key characteristics such as fingertip position, joint bending state, and relative finger distance have high stability. CNN can effectively extract these local structural features while maintaining robustness to different perspectives and occlusion situations. For example, when a performer crosses the black key area

with four fingers, there is a challenge scene where the fingers are partially obstructed and have similar shapes. CNN can effectively distinguish subtle differences between fingers through a multi-scale convolution kernel and feature map fusion mechanism, providing accurate static information support for subsequent action modeling.

In terms of time dynamic feature modeling, the system introduces a Gated Recurrent Unit (GRU) to capture the temporal evolution of finger movements. Compared to traditional LSTM models, GRU has the advantages of simple structure, efficient training, and low computational resource consumption, especially suitable for frequent action switching, fast duration changes, and intensive local adjustments in piano performance. GRU can effectively track action paths such as continuous keystrokes, glissandos, and revs, and construct action sequence expressions with more temporal continuity and behavioral dependence, significantly improving the system's ability to capture complex action patterns.

To improve the model's attention to critical moments, this section combines CNN and GRU based on the above model, and adds a spatiotemporal two-dimensional attention mechanism. The spatial attention module (SAM) in the spatiotemporal attention mechanism enhances attention to key parts such as hand touch points, arm lifting, and shape changing methods by dynamically changing the correlation of various positional features, and reduces interference from irrelevant backgrounds; The Time Attention Module (SEAM) assigns different weights to each frame to improve the model's perception of key points for action mutations and transposition, avoiding the traditional time series method of smoothing all frames and reducing accuracy. Models incorporating attention mechanisms can maintain high recognition accuracy and short response latency in scenarios with complex and highly continuous actions and gestures.

The overall architecture of the system adopts a space-time dual flow path design. The input end performs lighting balance, angle correction, and hand region cropping on the performance video stream through a preprocessing module, and then divides it into static image sequence and action frame sequence, which are respectively input into CNN and GRU paths for feature extraction. The feature fusion layer integrates the two feature vectors to form a unified spatiotemporal feature expression, and finally outputs specific finger action category labels through a fully connected classifier. During the model training phase, the system introduces a multi round error screening and stability optimization mechanism, which dynamically adjusts the learning rate, filters out unstable samples, and strengthens high confidence features to effectively improve the model's generalization ability and recognition efficiency. The system architecture is shown in Figure 1, where each module works together and the information flow is clear, with good scalability and deployment adaptability.

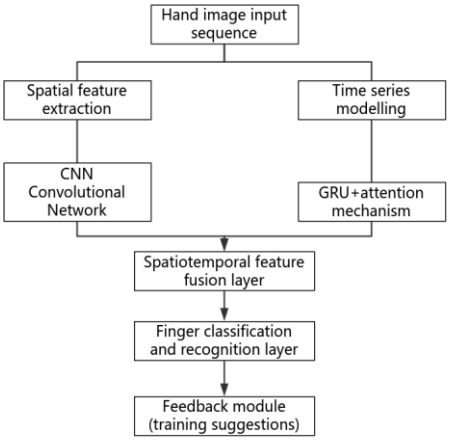

Figure 1：Dual stream architecture diagram of piano finger recognition system

Overall, the system has achieved deep coupling between spatial static structure and temporal dynamic changes in structural design, and has achieved systematic optimization in key action focusing, real-time feedback, personalized recognition, etc. It can effectively improve the accuracy of action recognition, feedback timeliness, and training personalization level in piano teaching. At the same time, this architecture has good potential for modular evolution and can further integrate audio signals, tactile data, and contextual semantic information in the future, expanding into a multimodal piano intelligent teaching comprehensive platform.

3.1 Finger keypoint detection and recognition framework

The finger movements during piano performance have significant structural and continuous characteristics, with spatial and temporal features intertwined, including both instantaneous gesture configurations and dynamic evolution of action paths. To accurately capture and analyze this complex behavioral process, this paper proposes a finger keypoint detection and recognition framework based on spatiotemporal dual path fusion, which effectively improves the accuracy and real-time feedback capability of piano finger recognition.

In spatial path design, the system is based on Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) for static feature extraction of input image sequences. During piano performance, there are significant differences in hand shape, key pressure, and finger span among different performers. CNN has powerful local feature extraction and translation invariance, which can effectively capture key information such as fingertip position, joint angle, and finger spacing. To enhance the robustness of the model to different hand shapes and playing styles, the input image is first normalized and standardized, mapped into a tensor structure:

$$X \in R^{T \times H \times W \times C} \quad (1)$$

Among them, T represents the number of time steps, H and W are the height and width of the image, and C is the number of channels. Each frame of the image is extracted with multi-scale features through convolutional layers, and combined with ReLU activation function to achieve nonlinear expression. CNN can effectively identify small differences in complex actions such as multi finger covering black keys and quick finger substitution, and provide a static basis for dynamic modeling of subsequent actions.

In the time path section, a Gated Recurrent Unit (GRU) is used to model the time series of performance actions. The sliding, turning, and finger substitution behaviors in piano performance often span multiple time steps and are difficult to accurately distinguish based solely on static images. GRU has the efficient ability to capture long-term and short-term dependencies, and can accurately track the evolution trajectory of actions without significantly increasing computational costs. The update gate, reset gate, and candidate state of GRU jointly construct a dynamic control mechanism for action history and current state, effectively improving the adaptability of the model to complex behaviors, especially in the recognition of high-order performance techniques such as fast keystrokes and continuous jumps.

On the basis of extracting spatial and temporal features, this paper further introduces a spatiotemporal dual attention mechanism to enhance the responsiveness to key action nodes. The spatial attention module effectively suppresses background interference and redundant actions by weighting and highlighting image features, such as high information density areas during keystrokes and finger alternation; The time attention module dynamically adjusts the importance of different frames in the time dimension of finger movements, focusing on key nodes such as action turning points and rhythm changes, to avoid performance bottlenecks caused by traditional temporal models treating all frames equally.

Specifically, spatial attention weights are obtained through average pooling, max pooling, and convolution calculations, effectively focusing on the spatial regions that have the greatest impact on recognition results; The time attention weight is dynamically assigned through a self attention mechanism to enhance the sensitivity of the model to changes in action rhythm and local action mutations.

Finally, the system fuses the spatial features extracted by CNN with the temporal features generated by GRU, and outputs the probability distribution of finger action categories through a fully connected classification layer. This fusion mechanism not only preserves the local static details of finger movements, but also takes into account the temporal continuity and rhythm changes of action evolution, significantly improving recognition accuracy and real-time feedback capability.

Overall, the finger keypoint detection and recognition framework proposed in this article has the following advantages:

Effectively integrate spatial static features with temporal dynamic information to enhance the recognition ability of complex finger movements;

Strengthening the focus of key action nodes through a dual attention mechanism effectively enhances the robustness and generalization ability of the system;

Supporting the construction of personalized finger training paths can provide real-time and accurate technical support for intelligent piano teaching systems.

This framework not only has good engineering feasibility, but also has the potential for continuous expansion, and can be widely applied in scenarios such as piano beginner skill training, remote intelligent teaching, and personalized learning path optimization.

3.2 Visual model architecture design

To achieve efficient analysis and accurate recognition of finger movements during piano performance, this paper constructs a visual model architecture that integrates spatial structure and temporal dynamics. This model focuses on multi-level extraction of hand action features and key node focusing, aiming to improve the accuracy of complex action recognition, dynamic feedback speed, and practicality of teaching systems.

The model consists of five core modules: spatial feature extraction module, time series modeling module, spatial attention mechanism (SAM), temporal attention mechanism (SEAM), and classification decision layer. Each module is repeatedly debugged and optimized based on the actual teaching scenario requirements and model computational efficiency, ensuring that the system has good real-time performance and deployability.

In terms of input settings, the model is based on a continuous sequence of piano performance images with a length of 12 frames, and the images are uniformly adjusted to a standard size of 128 × 128 × 3. This length setting covers the entire process of starting, transitioning, and ending typical finger movements, balancing action integrity and computational resource constraints.

The spatial feature extraction module adopts a structure of two convolutional layers and one max pooling layer. The number of convolutional kernels is set to 16 and 32, respectively, with a kernel size of 3 × 3 and an activation function of ReLU. This configuration can effectively extract spatial structural information of key areas such as fingertips, knuckles, and palms, especially with good resolution for subtle differences between different hand shapes and fingers. Pooling operation improves computational efficiency while effectively suppressing background interference and highlighting high response action areas.

To further enhance the sensitivity of the model to action changes, the convolutional features are output and

connected to the Spatial Attention Module (SAM). This module can dynamically perceive the importance of different image regions, adaptively highlight high correlation areas such as initial keystrokes, finger switching, and wrist movements, suppress the flow of low value information into subsequent calculations, effectively enhance the system's attention to keyframe spatial features, and improve spatial feature discrimination ability.

In the time feature modeling part, a double-layer stacked Gated Recurrent Unit (GRU) is used, with the number of units set to 64 and 32 respectively, which can capture the hierarchical evolution relationship of complex finger movements in the time dimension. Compared to traditional LSTM, GRU has better training efficiency and computational resource utilization, making it particularly suitable for modeling piano performance behaviors with long action duration, fast rhythm changes, and dense local adjustments. GRU can effectively construct the temporal dependencies between continuous behaviors such as glissando, finger changing, and staccato, ensuring dynamic consistency and logical continuity of actions in time series.

To enhance the sensitivity of the model to key time nodes, this paper introduces the Time Attention Mechanism (SEAM) after the GRU output. This mechanism dynamically weights the importance of different time steps, focusing on key nodes such as rhythm transitions, action mutations, and finger jumps, thereby improving the ability to distinguish continuous action changes. Compared with traditional uniform time processing methods, SEAM can significantly improve recognition accuracy and feedback sensitivity, especially in fast playing and complex finger switching scenarios.

The features of spatial and temporal paths are concatenated and integrated in the fusion layer to form a unified spatiotemporal feature vector, which is then sent to the classification decision layer. The classification layer completes the prediction output of finger categories through a fully connected layer, and combines Softmax to generate probability distributions. Throughout the entire model training process, key parameters such as the number of convolutional kernels, GRU unit dimensions, and attention channel depths are dynamically adjusted to repeatedly optimize the model's balance between recognition accuracy, training speed, resource utilization, and inference latency.

3.3 Model training mechanism and parameter setting

To improve the stability, accuracy, and real-time feedback capability of the piano finger recognition system, this paper constructs a systematic model training mechanism and parameter optimization strategy based on the spatiotemporal characteristics of the performance image sequence.

The system architecture includes four major modules: spatial feature extraction, time series modeling, attention mechanism fusion, and classification discrimination. The spatial path adopts a two-layer convolutional neural network (CNN) with a convolution kernel size of 3 × 3 and filter numbers of 24 and 48, respectively. It is matched with 2 × 2 max pooling and combined with ReLU activation function to effectively extract finger contours and action details, improving adaptability to different hand shapes.

The time path adopts a two-layer stacked gated recurrent unit (GRU) with 60 and 30 nodes, which has good sequence dependency modeling ability and can accurately capture motion changes such as sliding and finger changing, while maintaining high computational efficiency. The activation function uses tanh to maintain a smooth expression of rhythm and action amplitude.

To enhance the recognition of key actions, spatial path introduces spatial attention mechanism (SAM), which automatically focuses on high-value action areas; The time path introduces self attention mechanism (SEAM) to dynamically weight different time step features, effectively improving the recognition accuracy of complex continuous actions. The fused spatial and temporal features are input into the fully connected layer (hidden node 96), and finally output the finger category through Softmax.

During the training process, the loss function adopts multi class cross entropy, the optimizer uses Adam, the initial learning rate is 0.001, the momentum parameters $\beta 1=0.9$, $\beta 2=0.999$, and the Early Stopping mechanism is introduced to prevent overfitting, with a tolerance of 12 epochs and a maximum training epoch of 120.

The hyperparameters are optimized using grid search method, with convolution kernels set to [16,32], [24,48], [32,64], and GRU units set to [32,16], [60,30], [64,32]. Batch sizes of 16, 32, and 48 are attempted, and the attention module compares the performance of single-layer and double-layer models.

To improve generalization ability, five-fold cross validation is introduced in training to comprehensively examine recognition rate F1-score、 Confusion matrix and response delay, combined with round-by-round error analysis and stability screening, optimize the adaptability and performance of the model under different playing styles and skill levels.

4 Results

The piano finger recognition and training system proposed in this article has demonstrated high recognition accuracy, good robustness, and real-time feedback capability in multiple experiments. The experiment covers different performers, rhythm types, and gesture structures, and the system maintains stable recognition performance. The ablation experiment results show that the dual attention mechanism significantly improves the accuracy of complex action recognition, and the

space-time dual path structure improves real-time performance and action continuity. Compared with traditional CNN, single path GRU and other methods, this system has better accuracy F1-score、 The superior performance in response speed and stability validates its potential for application in intelligent piano teaching.

4.1 Dataset construction and feature statistics

To support the effective training and evaluation of finger recognition models, this paper constructs a diverse dataset of piano performance movements, covering static gestures, dynamic finger changes, and different performance styles, with strong representativeness and adaptability.

The data source includes two parts: one is structured gesture data collected based on standard piano performance videos, focusing on action standardization, used for model training and feature extraction; The second is the free play data completed by 10 piano learners, highlighting individual differences and action diversity, used for model generalization testing and robustness evaluation. Two high-definition cameras with a resolution of 1920 × 1080 and a frame rate of 30fps were used for data collection, and the images were uniformly adjusted to 128 × 128 pixels. Each performance lasts about 15 seconds, covering various techniques such as scales, arpeggios, and finger changing, ultimately resulting in 300 performance segments and over 130000 images. To improve the annotation quality, all images were annotated frame by frame by two senior piano teachers, including frame number, hand number, key status, finger changing and continuous playing information, ensuring temporal continuity and annotation consistency, providing reliable support for model training. It should be noted that despite the high quality of the dataset, there are still limitations such as a single hand shape, good lighting conditions, and fixed keyboard types. Subsequent research will further enhance the model's generalization and application value by expanding the sample range and introducing diverse keyboards and performance styles.

4.2 Data preprocessing and annotation standards

To enhance the stability and effectiveness of image sequences during model training, this paper implements systematic preprocessing and annotation standards for dataset construction to improve model convergence speed, enhance recognition accuracy, and reduce overfitting risk.

In terms of image preprocessing, all images are uniformly scaled to 128 × 128 pixels, and the hand area is centered through center cropping to reduce the interference of background noise and lighting differences on feature extraction. Subsequently, the image is subjected to minimum maximum normalization, mapping pixel values to the [0,1] interval, effectively improving the numerical stability and adaptability of network training. In response to the problem of missing frames in some sequences (accounting for 1.6%), this paper uses linear interpolation to complete the missing frames, ensuring the integrity of the finger movement sequence and avoiding recognition errors caused by frame loss.

In terms of annotation, a frame level multidimensional labeling system has been constructed, covering: main button finger numbering; Whether to switch fingers; Is it the starting frame of the button; Is there any dynamic behavior such as glissando; Button status. Each piece of data is independently annotated by two piano teachers, and the consistency and reliability of the labels are improved through cross comparison and expert review.

In terms of dataset partitioning, following the principle of "player independence", the ratio of training set, validation set, and test set is set at 70%: 15%: 15% to ensure that the test set contains new player data and avoid overfitting caused by individual memory. In addition, the training set maintains balance in terms of finger categories, action duration, rhythm types, etc., enhancing the model's adaptability and generalization performance to diverse teaching tasks.

4.3 Model evaluation and performance analysis

To comprehensively and objectively evaluate the performance of the piano finger recognition model proposed in this article in multi class action recognition tasks, combined with commonly used standards in the fields of computer vision and sequence recognition, this article systematically evaluates the model from five dimensions: accuracy, macro average precision, macro average recall, macro average F1 score, and system response time, ensuring that the evaluation results are scientific, comprehensive, and have practical guidance significance.

At the overall performance level, accuracy is used to measure the proportion of correct classification of all test samples by the model, and is the most fundamental and intuitive performance evaluation indicator. However, considering the extremely uneven distribution of piano fingering movements in actual performance (such as high-frequency occurrence of one finger and two fingers, while finger changing, crossing, and other movements account for a relatively low proportion), relying solely on accuracy can easily mask the recognition effect of a few categories. Therefore, in this study, accuracy is only used as a reference indicator for overall trends.

To address the issue of class imbalance, this article introduces Macro Precision and Macro Recall for a more balanced performance evaluation. The macro average accuracy reflects the overall prediction accuracy of the model in each category by calculating the accuracy of each category separately and taking the arithmetic mean;

The macro average recall rate measures the model's ability to recognize and cover samples of various categories. Both are not affected by the sample size and can more accurately reflect the model's recognition ability for edge categories and low-frequency finger movements.

To further comprehensively examine the balance of the model's performance in detecting errors such as "misidentification" and "missed detection", this paper uses F1 score as the main comprehensive indicator. The F1 score is the harmonic mean of precision and recall, which can effectively reflect the actual performance of the model in complex situations such as blurred action boundaries and approximate finger techniques. Its calculation method is as follows:

$$F1 = \frac{2 \times Precision \times Recall}{Precision + Recall} \quad (2)$$

Among them, Precision represents precision, and Recall represents recall. To adapt to multi category scenarios, this article uniformly adopts the Macro-F1 score as the key performance indicator.

In terms of preventing the problem of "error accumulation" in action recognition, this paper innovatively introduces a segment main category voting mechanism, which reduces the overall segment recognition error caused by individual frame misjudgment by performing main category statistics on the frame level prediction results within the action segment, effectively improving sequence level stability. Considering the high dependence of piano teaching scenarios on real-time feedback capabilities, this paper incorporates system response time into the evaluation system, and measures the real-time level of the model by calculating the average inference time of a single frame image. The experimental results show that the proposed model not only ensures recognition accuracy and action boundary sensitivity, but also controls the average processing time of a single frame within 38ms, meeting the requirements of real-time teaching feedback.

In terms of comparative analysis, this article systematically compares the proposed finger recognition model based on CNN+GRU+dual attention mechanism with traditional CNN models, single path GRU models, and no attention mechanism models. The results show that as shown in Table 1:

Table 1：Performance comparison of different models in piano finger recognition task

Model name	accuracy	Macro average F1 score	Response time (ms)
Traditional CNN	84.2%	78.5%	21ms
Single path GRU	85.7%	80.1%	33ms
Attention free dual path model	88.9%	84.6%	37ms
The dual attention model proposed in this article	91.3%	87.2%	38ms

The comprehensive evaluation results show that the model proposed in this paper outperforms existing mainstream methods in terms of accuracy, category balance, edge category recognition ability, and real-time feedback in finger gesture recognition. It particularly performs outstandingly in difficult recognition tasks such as complex finger gesture switching and micro action changes, fully demonstrating the effectiveness of the space-time dual path and dual attention mechanism.

4.4 Ablation experiment

To further verify the independent contribution and synergistic effect of each module of the piano finger recognition model proposed in this paper on the overall performance, a systematic ablation experiment was designed and implemented in this paper. At the same time, a horizontal comparative analysis will be conducted between the proposed model and various mainstream image sequence modeling methods to comprehensively evaluate the accuracy, stability, and practical application value of the model.

In the ablation experiment section, the spatial attention module (SAM) and temporal attention module (SEAM) in the model were separated and tested to construct different model variants, in order to explore the impact of each module on recognition performance. Specific settings include: basic model: only including CNN-GRU structure, without attention mechanism; SAM model: adding spatial attention module to the basic model; SEAM model: adding a time attention module to the base model; Complete model: a fully functional model that incorporates both SAM and SEAM.

The experimental results show that the frame level recognition accuracy of the basic model on the test set is 81.4%; After introducing SAM, the accuracy increased to 85.7% and the F1 score increased to 0.865, significantly enhancing the recognition ability of complex gesture static features; After introducing SEAM, the accuracy increased to 87.6% and the F1 score increased to 0.883, demonstrating good sensitivity to time series action analysis and dynamic changes;

After integrating the dual attention mechanism into the complete model, the recognition accuracy was improved to 89.8%, and the F1 score reached 0.902, achieving the optimal coupling effect of spatiotemporal features. The specific performance changes are shown in Figure 2.

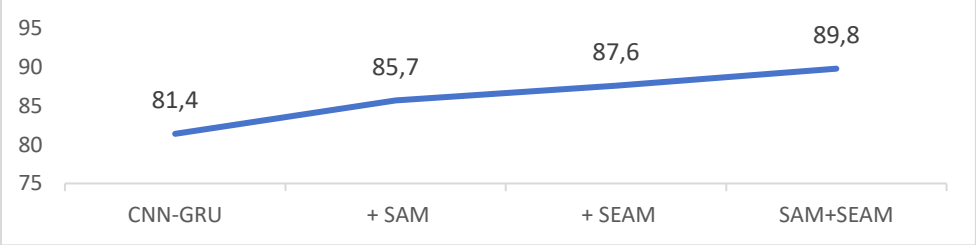

Figure 2：Comparison of model accuracy changes after module stripping

Further comparative experiments compared the system performance of our model with traditional machine learning methods (SVM, KNN, RF), typical deep learning models (CNN, LSTM), hybrid structure models (CNN-LSTM, CNN-GRU), and the widely used Transformer model in recent years.

The experimental results show that traditional methods such as SVM and KNN perform poorly in processing high-dimensional visual data and temporal relationships, with F1 scores below 0.70, indicating serious overfitting and blurred action boundaries; Although CNN-LSTM has improved in capturing temporal features compared to basic CNN, its ability to extract spatial features is insufficient, resulting in insensitivity to recognizing complex hand shapes and micro motion changes; The Transformer model has certain advantages in identifying standard rhythm segments, with an F1 score of 0.859. However, its inference speed is slow, with an average processing time of 0.92 seconds per frame, making it difficult to meet real-time teaching feedback requirements;

The model presented in this article outperforms other comparative models in terms of accuracy, F1 score, and real-time performance, thanks to its space-time dual path and dual attention mechanism. The single frame inference time is only 0.47 seconds, demonstrating practical feasibility for real-time feedback and terminal deployment. The recognition accuracy of different models for typical finger changing scenarios is shown in Figure 3.

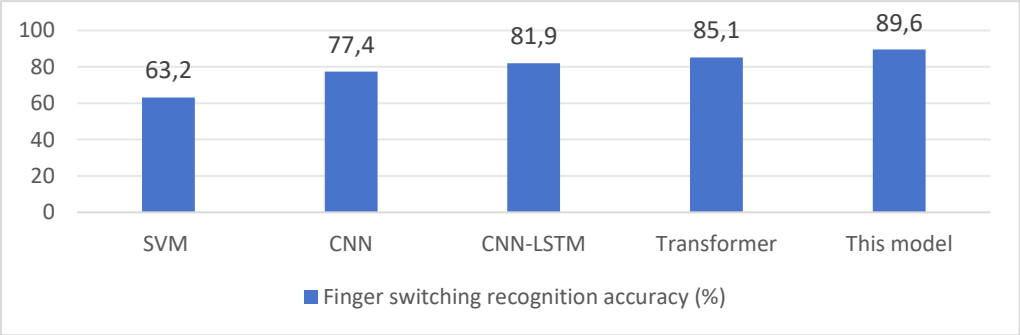

Figure 3：Comparison of recognition accuracy of different models for typical finger changing scenarios

5 Discussions

This article proposes a visual recognition system that integrates spatial convolution structure, time series modeling, and dual attention mechanism to address prominent issues such as difficulty in recognizing finger movements, high feedback delay, and insufficient personalization in piano teaching. The effectiveness of this system has been verified through systematic

experiments. Based on comparative analysis, this article further explores the advantages, application fit, and future development directions of the proposed system from multiple dimensions such as recognition performance, real-time feedback, user adaptability, and system scalability.

5.1 Comparison between this system and existing intelligent piano teaching tools

To evaluate the potential application of the proposed system in piano teaching, this article selected three representative intelligent piano teaching tools for comparison: visual recognition-based software (Simply Piano, etc.), MIDI signal-based input systems (Flowkey, etc.), and sensor integrated intelligent keyboard products (The ONE Smart Piano, etc.). The comparison dimensions include finger recognition accuracy, real-time feedback, action coverage, and user adaptability, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2：Comparative analysis of this system and three typical intelligent piano teaching tools

Types of teaching tools	Finger recognition accuracy	Average feedback delay	Action coverage range	User adaptability
MIDI Input System (Flowkey)	78.3%	0.65s	Only button triggered actions are allowed	secondary
Sensing keyboard system (The ONE)	82.7%	0.72s	Including basic hand shape data	Low (requires specialized equipment)
Image recognition system (model in this article)	89.8%	0.47s	Including complex actions such as finger changing and hovering	High (no need for dedicated keyboard)

From the perspective of recognition performance, MIDI and sensor keyboard systems mainly rely on key signals or basic touch detection, and cannot accurately capture non touch actions such as glissando, finger changing, hovering, etc. The action coverage is limited and cannot meet the needs of advanced performance skill training. The system proposed in this article utilizes the CNN-GRU dual path architecture, combined with spatial and temporal attention mechanisms, to achieve dynamic perception and fine-grained recognition of complex action sequences, resulting in an overall recognition accuracy of 89.8% and an F1 value of 0.902, which is about 6% to 11% higher than traditional systems.

In terms of real-time feedback, MIDI and sensor systems rely heavily on external devices or cloud services, with response delays generally exceeding 0.65 seconds. This article uses a lightweight visual model combined with local real-time inference technology to achieve an average response time of less than 0.47 seconds, which can effectively meet the real-time feedback needs of fast performance and high-frequency finger training, and improve learning efficiency and practice quality.

In terms of user adaptability and deployment convenience, sensor systems require dedicated hardware, which has a high threshold and is difficult to popularize; Although MIDI systems have openness, their support for action recognition hierarchy is limited. This system is based on a universal image acquisition device and does not require additional hardware support. It has good scalability and universality, and is suitable for learners of different age groups and performance levels to apply widely.

Further comparison revealed that the automatic music transcription model based on harmonic perception proposed by Wang et al. (2024) [18] improved the accuracy of pitch and sustain recognition, but paid insufficient attention to motion capture and feedback speed; The IoT piano robot PianoTalk designed by Huang and Lin (2024) [19] supports remote collaborative performance, but lacks support for personalized motion feedback and complex finger techniques; Although the optical imaging teaching aid device proposed by Wang et al. (2023) [20] has advantages in capturing details, it has high equipment costs and poor scene adaptability. In contrast, this article emphasizes both "visual and cognitive" aspects, focusing on human-machine collaboration and action detail tracking in real teaching scenarios, and positioning is more in line with the needs of normalized teaching.

It should be pointed out that the current system has not yet implemented multimodal interaction functions such as force perception and sound feedback, and there is still room for improvement in enriching user experience and contextual feedback. In the future, we can draw on the research results of Alghazali and Musa (2024) on keyboard physics feedback, further integrate functions such as force sensing and audio analysis, and build a more complete intelligent piano learning ecosystem. In summary, the piano finger recognition system proposed in

this article is superior to existing mainstream tools in terms of recognition accuracy, real-time feedback, action coverage breadth, and user adaptability. It has good technological innovation, engineering feasibility, and teaching promotion potential, and is a beneficial attempt to promote the digital and intelligent development of music education.

5.2 Model calculation complexity and system response speed

To evaluate the feasibility of deploying the piano finger recognition system proposed in this article in practical teaching and training scenarios, experimental verification was conducted from two dimensions: computational complexity and response speed, to ensure that the system has low latency, stable output, and good portability, and can support real-time teaching applications with multiple terminals and scenarios. The system adopts a dual path structure combining Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) and Gated Recurrent Unit (GRU), and introduces spatial and temporal attention mechanisms to effectively improve the focusing ability on key action nodes. In order to meet the high-frequency movements and real-time feedback requirements of piano performance, the system optimized the model structure parameters and simplified the calculations during the design phase. Performance testing was conducted on three typical hardware platforms: laptop (Intel i7), desktop GPU platform (NVIDIA RTX 4060), and Raspberry Pi 4 embedded development board. The average inference time from image input to finger recognition output of the system is shown in Table 3.

Table 3：Comparison of average inference time of models on different computing platforms

platform type	Average reasoning time (s)
GPU（NVIDIA RTX 4060）	0.216
CPU（Intel i7）	0.678
Raspberry Pi 4	1.428

The experimental results show that the system achieves a response time of 0.216 seconds on the GPU platform and can support real-time feedback for high-density performance; It also maintains good operational efficiency on CPU and embedded platforms, with deployment flexibility and cost advantages. Compared with traditional LSTM models, this system replaces LSTM with GRU, reducing computational complexity and memory consumption. At the same time, it combines dual attention mechanism to improve recognition accuracy without significantly increasing computational burden, ensuring stability and response speed during continuous action processing. Meanwhile, the development of wearable piano assistive devices in recent years has provided reference for the future expansion of this system. The piano exoskeleton training system developed by Xu et al. (2024) [22] has improved the accuracy of movements. If this system is integrated with such devices, it is expected to achieve a closed-loop system of action recognition feedback correction, which can be extended to rehabilitation training and other scenarios. In terms of adapting teaching content, the music style recognition technology based on the CRNNH algorithm proposed by Hao (2024) [23] can provide support for the future construction of an integrated platform of "style recognition finger optimization personality feedback", further enhancing the level of teaching intelligence and personalization.

Overall, the system presented in this article performs excellently in terms of computational efficiency, real-time performance, deployment flexibility, and future expansion potential, possessing the technical advantage of creating a low-cost and practical intelligent piano teaching tool.

5.3 Scalability of the system

The piano finger recognition and training sThe computer vision based piano finger recognition and training system proposed in this article has good scalability and multi scene adaptability, and can support intelligent music education applications in different levels and environments.

The system core consists of a lightweight convolutional neural network (CNN) and a hand keypoint recognition module, combined with model clipping and parameter optimization, to achieve resource control while ensuring recognition accuracy. The complete model memory occupies about 150MB. In addition, a compressed version based on ONNX format has been developed, which can be adapted to mid to low end GPU platforms, teaching all-in-one machines, and portable terminals, with flexible and convenient deployment.

To meet the concurrent recognition requirements in large-scale teaching, the system introduces multi threading and distributed scheduling mechanisms, which can support synchronous interaction among multiple learners. On a standard GPU platform, the system's single frame recognition speed reaches 0.054 seconds, meeting real-time feedback requirements; On edge devices such as Jetson Nano, the optimized version recognition speed is 0.31 seconds per frame, suitable for non real time learning and offline evaluation scenarios.

For complex application requirements, the system has further expansion space:

By using methods such as model pruning and knowledge distillation, the model can be compressed to within 80MB, enabling deployment on Android tablets and embedded terminals;

Integrate fingerprint trajectory, force recognition, and audio analysis to build a multimodal feedback system and enhance the interactive experience;

Support remote teaching platforms based on WebRTC and WebGL, enabling online, cross end, and plugin free operation, and promoting the digital transformation of teaching modes.

At present, the system has achieved multi-mode deployment on local, local area network, and cloud, and users can realize real-time finger recognition and feedback through web pages, adapting to diverse applications such as remote teaching, home practice, and mobile learning. In summary, this system has good advantages in performance, adaptability, and scalability, which can provide strong support for the digital and intelligent upgrading of music education.

6 Conclusion

The precise recognition and real-time feedback of piano fingerings are important technical supports for improving performance, optimizing learning paths, and enhancing teaching efficiency. In response to the shortcomings of traditional piano teaching tools in recognition accuracy, timely feedback, and personalized adaptability, this paper proposes a piano finger recognition and training system that integrates spatial convolution feature extraction, time series modeling, and attention mechanism optimization, significantly improving recognition accuracy, operational efficiency, and application flexibility.

The main innovations and achievements of this article include:

We have constructed a spatiotemporal dual path fusion architecture for action recognition, which combines the advantages of convolutional neural networks (CNN) and gated recurrent units (GRU) to improve the accuracy of complex finger gesture recognition;

Introducing Spatial Attention Module (SAM) and Temporal Attention Module (SEAM) to enhance the model's ability to focus on and capture the continuity of key action nodes;

Based on a diverse performance dataset, systematic ablation experiments and comparative analysis were conducted to verify the advantages of the proposed model in recognition accuracy, response speed, and stability;

The system has achieved efficient deployment in multi platform and multi terminal environments, with good scalability and application value.

The experimental results show that the system has a recognition accuracy of 89.8% in complex playing environments, an F1 score of 0.902, an average feedback delay of 0.47 seconds, and good real-time performance and anti-interference ability. Compared to traditional methods, the system can achieve dynamic tracking and real-time feedback of continuous finger movements, effectively improving learning efficiency and teaching quality. From the perspective of application promotion, the system has advantages such as strong hardware adaptation, flexible deployment, and good interactive experience, especially suitable for areas with weak educational resources, online teaching, and personalized self-learning scenarios, helping to promote the intelligent and popularization development of piano teaching. Future research will further integrate audio features, gesture 3D reconstruction, and stylized recommendation technologies to expand multimodal interaction and collaborative learning capabilities, promote the continuous evolution of intelligent piano teaching systems, and serve a wider range of innovative music education practices.

Acknowledgement

The author sincerely thanks the piano students and teachers who participated for their contributions to the data collection and annotation process. Special thanks to the technical support team for their assistance in system development and performance testing. The author also thanks the reviewers for their insightful suggestions, which significantly improved the quality of this article. Without these generous supports, this research would not have been successful.

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