Using textual context for improving OCR performance in biomedical literature retrieval

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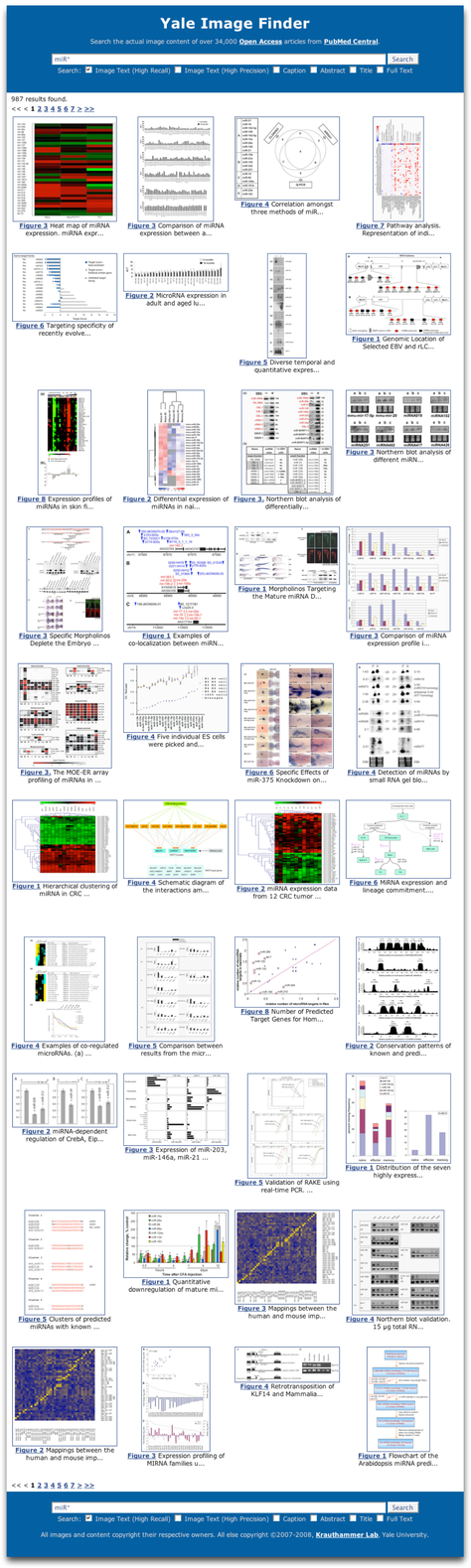
http://krauthammerlab.med.yale.edu/imagefinder

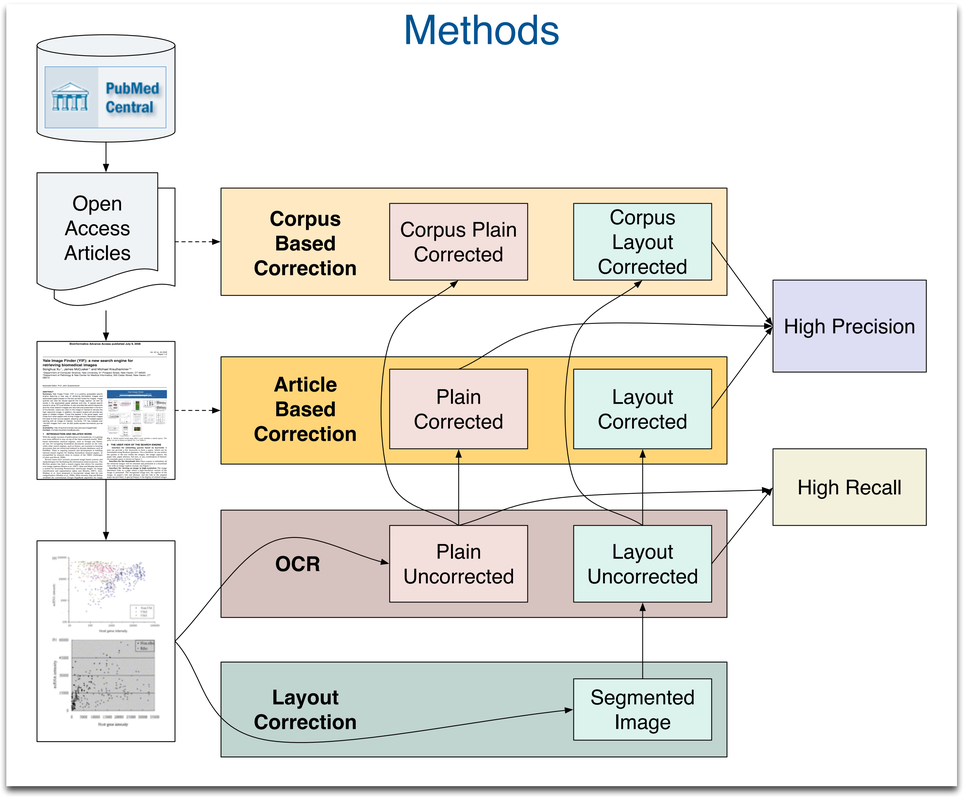
Abstract

Today's information retrieval (IR) techniques are mostly text-based, which fail in situations when textual information is not easily accessible, such as in biomedical images and figures. We propose to augment IR with optical character recognition (OCR) capabilities, and describe a context-based method for boosting OCR performance.



Yale Image Finder search results for "miR*" in high-recall mode.

Methods



Advantages of OCR-based image text extraction

	Query	Search Target Domain	Graph	Gel	Microscopy	Diagram	List	Misc.	Total	Relevant	Precision
1	diet AND insulin	Caption	17	0	0	0	0	2	19	19	100%
		Caption & Image Text (HR)	17	1	0	6	0	3	27	25	93%
		Δ	0	1	0	6	0	1	8 42%	6 32%	75%
2	apoptosis AND p53	Caption	11	1	5	11	0	14	42	42	100%
		Caption & Image Text (HR)	12	1	5	18	4	15	55	54	98%
		Δ	1	0	0	7	4	1	13 31%	12 29%	92%
3	miR* AND brain AND heart	Caption	1	1	0	0	1	2	5	4	80%
		Caption & Image Text (HR)	1	3	0	0	6	3	13	11	85%
		Δ	0	2	0	0	5	1	8 160%	7 175%	88%

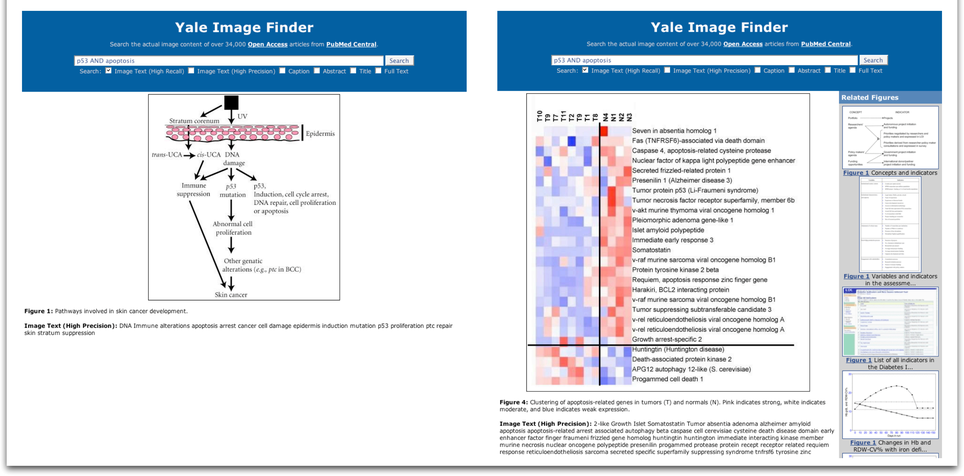


Figure 1: Pathways involved in skin cancer development.

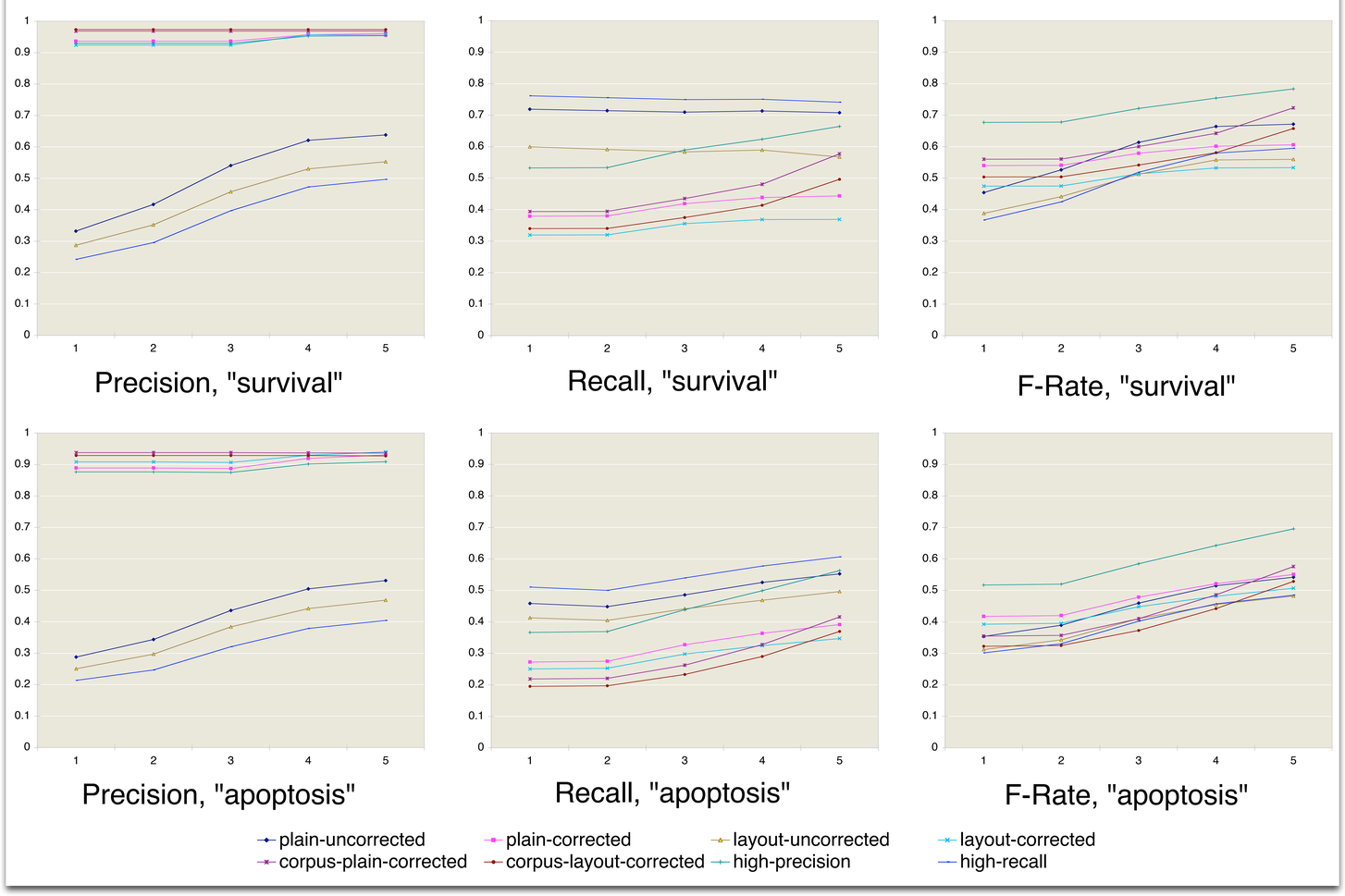
Image Text (High Precision): DNA Immune alterations apoptosis arrest cancer cell damage epidermis induction mutation p53 proliferation ptc repair skin stratum suppression

Figure 4: Clustering of apoptosis-related genes in tumors (T) and normals (N). Pink indicates strong, white indicates moderate, and blue indicates weak expression.

Image Text (High Precision): 2-like Growth Islet Somatostatin Tumor absentia adenoma alzheimer amyloid apoptosis apoptosis-related arrest associated autophagy beta caspase cell cerevisiae cysteine death disease domain early enhancer factor finger fraumeni frizzled gene homolog huntington huntington immediate interacting kinase member murine necrosis nuclear oncogene polypeptide presenilin programmed protease protein receptor related requiem response reticuloendotheliosis sarcoma secreted specific superfamily suppressing syndrome tnfrsf6 tyrosine zinc

Figures with short or insufficient captions are often missed by caption-based search. A combination of captions and image text offers the greatest range of searchable text. This is especially true in diagrams, lists, and heatmaps.

Evaluation



Precision, Recall, and F-Rate for 8 different techniques on images with captions containing "survival" and "apoptosis". Scores are for words that are *N* or more characters in length. Corpus correction is less accurate on smaller words.

Technology

	Jython	Apache Tapestry
OCR	Lucene	
VMWare	Linux	

Conclusion

There are several pre- and post-processing techniques that improve OCR-based text extraction. Combinations of image layout analysis (Lienhart and Wernicke, 2002; Wu et al., 1999) and context-based correction (Kukich, 1992; Ringlstetter et al., 2007) are most beneficial. Our high recall option provides an excellent basis for text indexing and search, while our high precision option works well for more general image text extraction.

References

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