OPEN ACCESS

Volume: 13

Special Issue: 3

Month: February

Year: 2026

P-ISSN: 2321-788X

E-ISSN: 2582-0397

Citation:
S.Thilagavathi, et al. "PLANEXA : Hierarchical Reasoning Systems for Medical Diagnostic Support." *Shanlax International Journal of Arts, Science and Humanities,* vol. 13, no. 3, 2026, pp. 398–405.

DOI:
https://doiorg/10.34293/sijash.v13iS3-i2-Feb.10311

PLANEXA : Hierarchical Reasoning Systems for Medical Diagnostic Support

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Abstract

PLANEXA is a hierarchical reasoning system that aims to assist in medical diagnostic decision-making in a complex clinical environment. PLANEXA structures medical knowledge into multiple levels of reasoning, from basic patient information such as symptoms, vital signs, lab results, and medical history. It progresses to higher-level tasks such as forming diagnostic hypotheses and assisting in clinical decision-making. PLANEXA employs rule-based reasoning, probabilistic inference, and knowledge-driven models to effectively address diagnostic uncertainty and interdependencies among clinical variables. The system's design enables it to decompose complex diagnostic problems into smaller, more tractable sub-problems. This strategy enables efficient reasoning, hypothesis refinement, and learning from new patient data as it becomes available. PLANEXA is also concerned with explainability, as it develops well-defined diagnostic pathways that help clinicians understand why particular diagnoses and recommendations are made. This helps to establish trust, usability, and its integration into the clinical workflow. Results from experimental evaluations conducted on representative clinical cases and standard benchmark problems demonstrate that PLANEXA enhances diagnostic performance, reduces reasoning complexity, and improves decision consistency relative to traditional flat or single-layer models. PLANEXA has immense potential for scalability across multiple domains of medicine and evolving with changes in clinical knowledge. PLANEXA marks an important advancement toward smart, understandable, and dependable AI-driven medical diagnostic support systems that aim to reduce diagnostic errors and improve patient outcomes.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Explainable Artificial Intelligence (XAI), Clinical Decision Support Systems (CDSS), Hierarchical Reasoning, Medical Diagnosis, Probabilistic Inference, Rule-Based Reasoning, Diagnostic Decision Support, Healthcare Analytics, Interpretable Machine Learning, Uncertainty Modeling, Human-Centered AI, PLANEXA Framework, Medical Informatics, Intelligent Healthcare Systems

Introduction

Medical professionals encounter one of their most challenging yet critical responsibilities when they need to establish medical diagnoses. Physicians need to integrate multiple sources of data which include patient symptoms and medical histories and lab results and imaging reports and their clinical findings. Accurate diagnostic results direct treatment choices while they protect patient health and reduce medical expenses and improve treatment results. The current medical environment faces three major challenges which include handling increasing amounts of healthcare data and managing the fast-paced development of medical knowledge and providing treatment to patients under tight time limits.

The combination of these elements creates a situation that leads to incorrect diagnosis results. The research results from healthcare informatics studies show that diagnostic mistakes continue to be a worldwide problem. This demonstrates the requirement for advanced systems that provide clinician support without eliminating their professional knowledge. Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a powerful technology which enables healthcare organizations to enhance their decision-making processes through its ability to discover patterns and forecast results and perform automated reasoning. The first AI medical systems used a rule-based expert system approach which organized clinical knowledge into logical rules to aid diagnosis. Although these systems provided clear information to users, they struggled to handle unpredictable situations which emerged from incomplete or unclear patient data. Data-driven approaches which machine learning developed in recent times have demonstrated their ability to predict outcomes with great accuracy. The majority of these models function as black boxes which do not provide clear understanding of their internal mechanisms. Clinicians experience difficulties when they need to use AI tools because they require transparent explanations for all recommendations to establish trust and proper application of the tools.

The actual clinical work of doctors requires them to use a systematic process which includes multiple steps as they assess medical cases instead of using unprocessed data to reach their conclusions. They start the process by collecting vital patient data which helps them to find medical patterns before they create initial medical hypotheses which they will test through additional research and contextual analysis. The systematic method enables organizations to divide their challenges into manageable portions which helps their team members to concentrate better while making choices. Current AI diagnostic systems fail to replicate the essential reasoning framework which results in difficulties that medical professionals experience when they attempt to understand and apply these procedures to solve intricate patient cases.

The paper presents PLANEXA which stands for Hierarchical Reasoning Systems for Medical Diagnostic Support as a framework that replicates human clinical reasoning through its multi-level structured design. The diagnostic decision-making process of PLANEXA begins with data collection and feature interpretation before it advances to its first hierarchical layer. The system uses rule-based hypothesis generation to create hypotheses while it implements probabilistic inference to handle uncertainty. The system uses symbolic reasoning together with statistical models which enables it to maintain transparent operation while providing dependable diagnostic recommendations that users can understand. The system contains learning methods which enable it to process new clinical data and develop its system based on ongoing medical advancements and healthcare developments.

The creation of PLANEXA exists because healthcare organizations require explainable artificial intelligence systems. Clinicians need to understand why a specific diagnosis is made, what factors influenced that decision, and how uncertainty was addressed in the reasoning process. The system requires medical staff to follow its established reasoning pathways which lead to confirmed diagnostic results through their assessment of evidence. This approach fosters trust and encourages educational use as well as collaboration among multidisciplinary care teams.

Literature Review

The development of AI-based diagnostic systems has changed significantly over the past few decades. The first expert systems used decision trees together with predefined rules to build their operational framework. The systems operated with simple design but they faced difficulties when handling incomplete or uncertain information. The systems proved computer systems could help with diagnosis however their fixed structure made it challenging to use them across different medical environments.

Later developments produced probabilistic techniques that utilized Bayesian networks together with statistical inference models to handle uncertain situations. The system used evidence to determine disease probabilities which enhanced its decision-making accuracy and flexible operations. The models maintained low visibility which prevented doctors from finding them acceptable for use. The machine learning field developed data-driven models that used data to make predictions because these models showed strong results. The majority of systems functioned as black boxes which provided minimal understanding.

The latest studies demonstrate that healthcare requires explanation-based AI systems. Clinicians need to see obvious reasoning before they accept algorithmic suggestions. The combination of symbolic reasoning with probabilistic methods creates hybrid models that show success in this area. The introduction of hierarchical reasoning models enables developers to structure their inference process into multiple sequential stages. This method enables clinicians to solve their most difficult medical problems by dividing them into smaller and easier to handle tasks.

The existing systems face difficulties because they cannot achieve three essential requirements which include handling hierarchical reasoning together with uncertainty and providing understandable explanations. The PLANEXA system solves this problem through its unified diagnostic system which combines these elements to assist clinical decision-making processes.

PLANEXA Architecture and Methodology

Hierarchical Knowledge Representation

The medical reasoning process of PLANEXA divides into multiple interconnected layers. The first layer focuses on gathering raw patient data, including symptoms, vital signs, demographics, and lab results. The second layer identifies key clinical features and detects patterns that might indicate underlying conditions. The later layers use logical and probabilistic reasoning methods to refine diagnostic ideas. This design uses multiple layers to create a system that mimics clinical reasoning through its stepwise process while making it easier to understand how decisions are made.

Rule-Based Diagnostic Reasoning

The initial analysis of PLANEXA uses rule-based reasoning as its fundamental element. Clinical guidelines and expert knowledge are expressed as logical rules that connect symptoms and findings to possible diagnoses. The rules enable straightforward reasoning which ensures that recommendations match established medical knowledge while clinicians can easily track the reasoning process.

Probabilistic Inference and Uncertainty Management

Medical diagnosis often involves uncertainty because of incomplete or conflicting information. PLANEXA uses probabilistic inference methods to estimate the likelihood of a diagnosis based on available evidence. The system improves confidence levels through real-time updates which combine probabilities with rule-based outputs while it collects more data.

Explainability and Decision Transparency

The system of PLANEXA requires explainability as its fundamental element. The system shows the diagnostic process through its reasoning pathways which demonstrate how each clinical variable and rule affects the final outcome. This transparency helps clinicians validate recommendations, spot reasoning errors, and incorporate their expertise into the final decision.

Adaptive Learning and Knowledge Expansion

The system of PLANEXA requires ongoing development through new clinical data and medical guideline updates. The system offers scalability and flexibility across different medical fields because its layered framework enables specific reasoning layer updates without requiring complete system replacement.

Experimental Setup and Evaluation

The researchers investigated the PLANEXA framework through multiple testing experiments. The researchers assessed its diagnostic capabilities and its reasoning speed and its ability to explain findings through tests with standard diagnostic support systems. The study aimed to find out which decision-making approach helps people process complex clinical information that contains multiple uncertain elements.

Experimental Environment

The study used simulated medical case datasets to conduct its experiments. The datasets mirrored actual diagnostic testing situations which occur in typical healthcare environments. The case studies provided information about patient symptoms and vital signs and medical history and laboratory results. The datasets contained both clear and ambiguous cases to evaluate the system's performance in uncertain situations.

PLANEXA developed a reasoning system which processed data through four stages starting with data preprocessing and ending with explanation generation through rule-based inference and probabilistic analysis. The evaluation environment permitted repeated testing across multiple patient profiles to ensure consistent and reliable results. The team used standard computational resources to create deployment conditions which matched actual system performance instead of using high-performance laboratory equipment. The system demonstrated its functionality through testing in actual operational environments.

Evaluation Metrics

- We selected several evaluation metrics to provide a fair assessment of system performance.
- Diagnostic Accuracy: This test determines whether the system correctly identifies the diagnosis that most closely matches the expected clinical outcome.
- Reasoning Complexity: This metric evaluates how many reasoning steps are required to reach a final decision.
- Decision Consistency: This test examines whether similar cases produce consistent and replicable diagnostic results.

- Explanation Clarity: The system generates explanations that clinicians assess for their clarity and usefulness.
- Response Time: This metric measures how quickly the system produces diagnostic results.

The medical diagnostic system requires these metrics because it must achieve accurate results while maintaining user-friendly and understandable features. The system cannot succeed through predictive performance alone; it must also provide transparency, consistency, and efficiency.

Comparative Models

The researchers used two baseline approaches to evaluate how hierarchical reasoning impacts the performance of PLANEXA.

- Flat Rule-Based Model: This model functions as a traditional expert system in which all operational rules exist within a single reasoning stage.
- Probabilistic-Only Model: This model generates diagnoses using statistical methods that rely exclusively on probability estimation without incorporating analytical reasoning processes.

Both baseline systems were evaluated using identical input data to ensure equitable comparison conditions.

Experimental Procedure

The three systems processed each patient case through their complete assessment procedures. The PLANEXA system developed its reasoning process through six distinct stages:

- Interpreting the patient information.
- Performing feature extraction to group patient symptoms.
- Generating hypotheses through a rule-based reasoning approach.
- Calculating probabilistic confidence values.
- Producing the final diagnostic output.
- Generating a structured diagnostic explanation.

These stages enabled the system to maintain a systematic reasoning workflow while ensuring transparency and reliability in the diagnostic decision-making process.

Results and Observations

The results showed that PLANEXA achieved better diagnostic accuracy than both the flat reasoning model and the probabilistic-only system. The system design which used a hierarchical structure enabled the system to determine possible diagnoses at an early stage leading to shorter reasoning time and better operational performance.

The study found evidence which demonstrated that decision-making consistency had greatly advanced. The baseline models produced different output results for similar patient cases but PLANEXA maintained consistent decisions through its defined reasoning structure. The system maintained consistent performance through various testing conditions which required dependable operation for all clinical applications.

Clinician reviewers found that PLANEXA's direct process explanations provided more comprehension about its conclusion development than its automated decision explanations. Users developed more confidence in probabilistic outputs because they could trace back decisions to particular rules and evidence instead of using black-box systems. The system maintained acceptable response times because the multi-layer system processed requests without causing major computational slowdowns during hierarchical operations.

Case-Based Analysis

The clinical cases showed that hierarchical reasoning offered multiple advantages through its implementation in actual medical situations. The system started with multiple diagnostic hypotheses for cases which showed overlapping symptoms. The system used natural physician reasoning to achieve its objectives while reducing the chance of making premature judgments.

The system used rule-based logic in combination with probabilistic confidence to identify diagnosis differences between cases which had similar respiratory symptoms yet used distinct underlying medical conditions. The explanation module clearly documented why alternative diagnoses were ruled out, adding transparency that was lacking in baseline systems.

Discussion of Evaluation Outcomes

The evaluation shows that using layered reasoning together with uncertainty management leads to better performance in diagnostic support systems. PLANEXA enables users to solve complicated clinical problems through its system that breaks down these challenges into logical reasoning components which leads to reduced mental demands and better system performance. The generated explanations also help increase user acceptance, which is a major limitation in many existing AI-based healthcare systems.

The experimental results show promise but they still contain certain restrictions. The evaluation used representative datasets as its primary focus while it evaluated large-scale hospital records. Future research should aim for broader clinical validation and integration with electronic health record systems.

Discussion

The experimental results demonstrate that PLANEXA framework uses its hierarchical reasoning structure to deliver better diagnostic support than existing traditional methods. The evaluation revealed a crucial finding which showed that the system can replicate how doctors think when they make patient diagnoses. The PLANEXA system develops its diagnostic assumptions through multiple reasoning stages instead of making immediate decisions based on its unprocessed evidence. The approach enhances decision-making through its improved stability and decision-making process transparency.

The system's main feature enables users to achieve both precise results and understandable results at the same time. Current AI models establish reliable prediction capabilities, yet they function as black boxes because their internal processes remain hidden. Clinicians find it difficult to develop trust in their recommendations because of this problem. The process of PLANEXA implementation combines rule-based reasoning with probabilistic inference to resolve this problem. The system uses this approach to handle clinical data that contains both uncertain and incomplete information while maintaining its ability to provide understandable results. Healthcare settings need transparency because decision-making impacts patients and clinicians must provide reasons for their treatment decisions.

The study discovered that hierarchical decomposition methods decrease the complexity of reasoning tasks. The system prevents information overload, which occurs in flat reasoning models, through its method of dividing complicated diagnostic tasks into smaller, manageable steps. The system uses its layered system to detect irrelevant elements from the beginning, which helps concentrate on essential details during advanced reasoning work. The process of diagnosis achieves greater organization through this method, which resembles how medical experts identify their potential patient conditions during actual medical situations. The evaluation results demonstrated that PLANEXA generates identical results when testing multiple patient conditions which exhibit similar characteristics. Clinical decision-support tools require consistent output because their unpredictable results create trust problems which restrict their actual usage. The structured reasoning process in PLANEXA led to reliable diagnostic outcomes, suggesting that hierarchical frameworks may provide a stronger basis for future healthcare AI systems.

The system has certain limitations which need identification. The evaluation process used clinical datasets which represent typical clinical situations instead of using actual hospital data from active treatment facilities. Real-world implementation of this technology would encounter difficulties which include incomplete information and unreliable data and the need to connect with electronic health record systems. The explainability module offers better visibility for operations but requires explanation depth adjustments according to user competence and clinical situations based on clinician input.

The development of PLANEXA should pursue two main goals which involve acquiring extensive datasets from multiple institutions and establishing ongoing learning methods which will enable the system to adapt to new medical advancements. The system would achieve better operational results through electronic health record integration and real-time clinical decision-making connection. The system would enhance diagnostic accuracy through its ability to foster joint reasoning capabilities between different medical experts. Artificial intelligence systems that use hierarchical reasoning to support medical diagnosis show potential according to this analysis. The system demonstrates that structured reasoning combined with uncertainty control and explanatory capabilities enables advanced AI methods to address actual clinical requirements, which results in systems that assist medical professionals instead of taking their place.

Conclusion

The new system named PLANEXA provides medical diagnostic decision support through its transparent and organized decision-making process. The system's hierarchical reasoning mechanism mimics the step-by-step process that medical professionals normally follow in making a diagnosis. The system establishes better control over complicated medical data through its developed functions.

The study demonstrated that the hierarchical system mechanism improved diagnostic consistency while also simplifying the reasoning process which exceeded the performance of traditional systems that used a flat reasoning approach. The explainability feature of the system enhances trustworthiness for its results which makes it better suited for real-world usage. The proposed system, which has not undergone complete testing yet, shows great potential to function as a dependable medical diagnostic tool in upcoming times. The proposed system demonstrates successful human-centered AI design which enhances both the safety and the consistency of medical diagnostic procedures.

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