

Undersea Target Classification Using Canonical Correlation Analysis

Ali Pezeshki, *Member, IEEE*, Mahmood R. Azimi-Sadjadi, *Senior Member, IEEE*, and Louis L. Scharf, *Life Fellow, IEEE*

Abstract—Canonical correlation analysis is employed as a multi-aspect feature extraction method for underwater target classification. The method exploits linear dependence or coherence between two consecutive sonar returns, at different aspect angles. This is accomplished by extracting the dominant canonical correlations between the two sonar returns and using them as features for classifying mine-like objects from nonmine-like objects. The experimental results on a wideband acoustic backscattered data set, which contains sonar returns from several mine-like and nonmine-like objects in two different environmental conditions, show the promise of canonical correlation features for mine-like versus nonmine-like discrimination. The results also reveal that in a fixed bottom condition, canonical correlation features are relatively invariant to changes in aspect angle.

Index Terms—Canonical correlations, linear dependence and coherence, multi-aspect feature extraction, underwater target classification.

I. INTRODUCTION

THE problem of classifying underwater targets using active sonar has attracted a lot of attention in recent years, e.g., see [1]–[6]. This problem involves discrimination between targets and nontargets. Some of the factors that complicate this process include the following: nonrepeatability and variation of target signatures with aspect angle, range, and grazing angle; diverse sizes, shapes, and scattering properties of the targets; presence of natural and man-made clutter; and a highly variable and reverberant operating environment. The problem is even more complicated when bottom targets are encountered, especially if they are buried or obscured by bottom features.

Due to the aforementioned factors, it is often difficult to detect and classify objects of interest based on the measurement

from a single object-sensor orientation. There are often orientations at which different objects may look nearly identical. Consequently, in real-life situations, the decision about the presence and type of an object is generally made based upon observations of the received signals at several aspect angles.

In recent years, several multi-aspect-based methods for detection and classification of underwater targets from acoustic backscattered signals have been developed, e.g., see [1]–[6]. A detailed review of these methods is provided in [1]. However, in all these methods, multi-aspect classification is performed using different classification fusion methods, namely, *decision-level* fusion [3] or *feature-level* fusion [1], [2], [4], [5]. In decision-level fusion, an intermediate decision about the presence and type of the object (target or nontarget) is made for every sonar return. The final decision is then made at the fusion center by optimally combining several single-aspect intermediate decisions. In feature-level fusion, feature vectors extracted from multiple sonar returns are simultaneously given to a decision making system to generate the final classification decision.

In [7]–[10], a different approach for multi-aspect detection and classification of underwater objects is reported. In this approach, multi-aspect detection and classification is performed by exploring the correlation between two backscattered signals at different aspects and analyzing the variations in the so-called *angular correlation function*. The angular correlation methods reported in [7]–[10] have been shown to provide better clutter suppression and finer resolution than conventional field imaging methods. The reader is referred to [7]–[10] and the references therein for more details.

The approach taken in this paper is similar to that in [7]–[10] in the sense that we also explore the correlation or similarities between two backscattered signals. However, we use a different method for the analysis of correlation. We exploit the linear dependence (or coherence) between two sonar returns, with certain aspect separation, to extract features that capture common target/nontarget attributes in these two returns. The idea is that linear dependence between the sonar returns is an indication of the presence of a common signature, whereas linear independence indicates the absence of a common signature. This is the basic idea behind multichannel tests for linear dependence [11] and the multiple coherence test of [12] and [13].

The linear dependence between two data channels is measured by the canonical correlations [11], [14]–[16] of the channels. This implies that canonical correlations can be viewed as features that capture linear dependence or coherence between the two data channels, and hence may be used for detection and classification purposes. We intend to exploit this idea for classifying underwater mine-like objects (targets) from nonmine-like objects (nontargets). In this approach, the channels correspond

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A. Pezeshki is with the Program in Applied and Computational Mathematics, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 08544 USA (e-mail: pezeshki@math.princeton.edu).

M. R. Azimi-Sadjadi is with the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523 USA (e-mail: azimi@engr.colostate.edu).

L. L. Scharf is with the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and the Department of Statistics, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523 USA (e-mail: scharf@engr.colostate.edu).

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to acoustic backscattered signals at two aspect angles, as we describe in Section IV.

Using canonical correlations, we exploit the linear dependence (coherence) between two backscattered signals or sonar returns to determine the presence of common signatures associated with targets or nontargets. Owing to the differences in shape, size, and composition of the mine-like and nonmine-like objects, we hypothesize that the level of coherence between the sonar returns at different pings/aspects for a mine-like object is different than that of a nonmine-like object. Therefore, the dominant canonical correlations, which capture most of the coherence between the two sonar returns, may be used as features to classify the objects at the corresponding aspect angles. We test this hypothesis on a subset of a wideband data set that was collected at the Applied Research Laboratory, University of Texas (ARL-TU, Austin, TX), and benchmark our results against those in [1] on the same data set.

II. REVIEW OF CANONICAL CORRELATION ANALYSIS

In this section, we review canonical coordinates and canonical correlations and show how linear dependence and coherence between two data channels may be determined using canonical correlation analysis. The material presented here and much of the language and terminology are drawn from [14].

Consider the composite data vector \mathbf{z} consisting of two random vectors $\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^m$ and $\mathbf{y} \in \mathbb{R}^n$, $m \leq n$, i.e.,

$$\mathbf{z} = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{x} \\ \mathbf{y} \end{bmatrix} \in \mathbb{R}^{(m+n)}. \quad (1)$$

We assume that \mathbf{x} and \mathbf{y} have zero means and share the composite covariance matrix

$$\mathbf{R}_{zz} = E[\mathbf{z} \mathbf{z}^T] = E \left[\begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{x} \\ \mathbf{y} \end{pmatrix} (\mathbf{x}^T \ \mathbf{y}^T) \right] = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{R}_{xx} & \mathbf{R}_{xy} \\ \mathbf{R}_{yx} & \mathbf{R}_{yy} \end{bmatrix}. \quad (2)$$

This composite covariance matrix may be taken to block tridiagonal form as follows [14]:

$$\begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{F}^T & \mathbf{0} \\ \mathbf{0} & \mathbf{G}^T \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{R}_{xx}^{-1/2} & \mathbf{0} \\ \mathbf{0} & \mathbf{R}_{yy}^{-1/2} \end{bmatrix} \mathbf{R}_{zz} \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{R}_{xx}^{-T/2} & \mathbf{0} \\ \mathbf{0} & \mathbf{R}_{yy}^{-T/2} \end{bmatrix} \\ \times \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{F} & \mathbf{0} \\ \mathbf{0} & \mathbf{G} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{I} & \mathbf{\Sigma} \\ \mathbf{\Sigma}^T & \mathbf{I} \end{bmatrix}. \quad (3)$$

The trick is to choose \mathbf{F} , $\mathbf{\Sigma}$, and \mathbf{G} to be the singular value decomposition (SVD) of the *coherence matrix* $\mathbf{C} = E[(\mathbf{R}_{xx}^{-1/2} \mathbf{x})(\mathbf{R}_{yy}^{-1/2} \mathbf{y})^T] = \mathbf{R}_{xx}^{-1/2} \mathbf{R}_{xy} \mathbf{R}_{yy}^{-T/2}$. That is

$$\mathbf{C} = \mathbf{R}_{xx}^{-1/2} \mathbf{R}_{xy} \mathbf{R}_{yy}^{-T/2} = \mathbf{F} \mathbf{\Sigma} \mathbf{G}^T \quad (4)$$

where $\mathbf{F} \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times m}$ and $\mathbf{G} \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$ are orthogonal matrices, i.e., $\mathbf{F}^T \mathbf{F} = \mathbf{F} \mathbf{F}^T = \mathbf{I}(m)$, $\mathbf{G}^T \mathbf{G} = \mathbf{G} \mathbf{G}^T = \mathbf{I}(n)$, and $\mathbf{\Sigma} = [\mathbf{\Sigma}(m) \ \mathbf{0}] \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$ is a diagonal singular value matrix, with $\mathbf{\Sigma}(m) = \text{diag}[\sigma_1, \sigma_2, \dots, \sigma_m]$ and $1 \geq \sigma_1 \geq \sigma_2 \geq \dots \geq \sigma_m > 0$.

Then, the transformation

$$\begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{u} \\ \mathbf{v} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{F}^T & \mathbf{0} \\ \mathbf{0} & \mathbf{G}^T \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{R}_{xx}^{-1/2} & \mathbf{0} \\ \mathbf{0} & \mathbf{R}_{yy}^{-1/2} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{x} \\ \mathbf{y} \end{bmatrix} \quad (5)$$

resolves $\mathbf{z}^T = [\mathbf{x}^T, \mathbf{y}^T]$ into their canonical coordinates $\mathbf{w}^T = [\mathbf{u}^T, \mathbf{v}^T]$, with the composite covariance matrix

$$\mathbf{R}_{ww} = E[\mathbf{w} \mathbf{w}^T] = \begin{bmatrix} (\mathbf{R}_{uu} = \mathbf{I}) & (\mathbf{R}_{uv} = \mathbf{\Sigma}) \\ (\mathbf{R}_{vu} = \mathbf{\Sigma}^T) & (\mathbf{R}_{vv} = \mathbf{I}) \end{bmatrix}. \quad (6)$$

We refer to the elements of $\mathbf{u} = [u_i]_{i=1}^m \in \mathbb{R}^m$ and $\mathbf{v} = [v_i]_{i=1}^n \in \mathbb{R}^n$ as the *canonical coordinates* of \mathbf{x} and \mathbf{y} , respectively. The diagonal cross-correlation matrix $\mathbf{\Sigma}$

$$\mathbf{\Sigma} = E[\mathbf{u} \mathbf{v}^T] = E \left[\left(\mathbf{F}^T \mathbf{R}_{xx}^{-1/2} \mathbf{x} \right) \left(\mathbf{G}^T \mathbf{R}_{yy}^{-1/2} \mathbf{y} \right)^T \right] = \mathbf{F}^T \mathbf{C} \mathbf{G} \quad (7)$$

is called the *canonical correlation matrix* of *canonical correlations* σ_i , with $1 \geq \sigma_1 \geq \sigma_2 \geq \dots \geq \sigma_m > 0$. An important property of canonical correlations is that they are invariant under uncoupled nonsingular transformations of \mathbf{x} and \mathbf{y} [14].

The linear dependence L between \mathbf{x} and \mathbf{y} may be measured as [14]

$$L = \det(\mathbf{I} - \mathbf{\Sigma} \mathbf{\Sigma}^T) = \prod_{i=1}^m (1 - \sigma_i^2), \quad 0 \leq L \leq 1. \quad (8)$$

The measure L takes the value 0 iff there is linear dependence between elements of \mathbf{x} and \mathbf{y} ; it takes the value 1 iff the elements of \mathbf{x} and \mathbf{y} are mutually uncorrelated. Equation (8) shows that the linear dependence or coherence between the two channels (e.g., sonar returns at two consecutive aspect angles) depends only on the canonical correlations of the channels and may be easily computed after the decomposition. They also show that each canonical coordinate pair, e.g., (u_i, v_i) , contributes to the linear dependence according to its canonical correlation σ_i . This shows that the linear dependence between \mathbf{x} and \mathbf{y} is decomposed into the linear dependence between their canonical coordinates, each of which is determined by a canonical correlation. Thus, only canonical coordinates with large canonical correlations have significant contribution to the linear dependence and coherence. Therefore, they are the only ones that need to be retained for detection and classification.

Remark 1: A conventional method of canonical coordinate decomposition as in (5) does not offer a simple way to compute a small subset of canonical coordinates and correlations. A full SVD for the coherence matrix, along with square root inverses of data covariances, has to be computed, regardless of the rank reduction. This makes the conventional method computationally intractable, especially when the data channels have large dimensions. In [17], simple algorithms called *alternating power methods with deflation* have been reported to recursively compute the canonical coordinates and correlations one-by-one or in groups. Provided that the singular values of the coherence matrix are not close together, alternating power methods can be more efficient in computation than the conventional method. The reader is referred to [17] for details.

Remark 2: It is worth mentioning that canonical coordinates have been used in many other two-channel signal processing problems, including reduced-rank estimation [14], [18], low-rank Gauss–Gauss detection [19], and reduced-rank quantization of noisy sources [20]. In this paper, we explore the use of canonical correlation analysis for feature extraction specifically for underwater target classification.

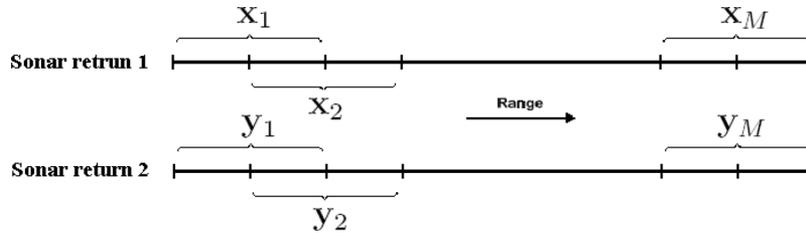


Fig. 1. Building the ensembles of the two channels (x and y) for canonical correlation analysis from two sonar returns.

III. WIDEBAND SONAR DATA SET

The sonar data set used in this paper is a subset of a wideband acoustic backscattered data set collected at the ARL-UT, Lake Travis test station (LTTS) [21]. This subset contains acoustic backscattered signals from three mine-like and three nonmine-like objects in two different bottom conditions, namely, smooth and rough. For the rough bottom condition, the sand is raked, giving it rippled effects. The mine-like objects are two cylindrical steel objects (targets 6 and 7) of different sizes, and a truncated cone shape plastic object (target 2). The nonmine-like objects are a water-filled steel drum, a concrete pipe, and a telephone pole.

During the data collection, the objects were placed on a rotating seabed, 7.62–9.14 m below the lake surface, with minimal embedding/scouring. The diameter of the seabed was 7.62 m. The center of the object was positioned as near to the center of the circular platter (seabed) as possible. The objects were rotated in a horizontal plane while the acoustic panel was set at a depression/elevation (D/E) angle of 13.5° and a range of 32 m from the center of the seabed. A single rotation was executed while acoustic backscattered signals at nearly uniform 1° increments were collected.

The receiver array consisted of 16 channels with 2.54-cm separation. The transmit signal was a linear frequency modulated (LFM) waveform with a bandwidth of 85 kHz in the range of 15–100 kHz, and was approximately 7 ms long. The backscattered signals were recorded for approximately 16 ms at 500-kHz sampling rate, resulting in 8192 samples. In our experiments, we use the averaged data of four channels to yield a beamwidth that is just wide enough to insonify the object and not much of the surroundings. The beamwidth (in degrees) is computed approximately using $180/\pi\ell$, where ℓ is the aperture length in wavelengths. At 100 kHz (i.e., wavelength = 1.52 cm), the length of the four-channel aperture is 6.6 wavelengths, hence giving a beamwidth of approximately 8.6° . At a distance of 32 m, this results in a coverage width of 4.27 m, which is wide enough to cover the entire length of the objects and narrow enough to avoid the side edges of the seabed.

An inverse matched filtering algorithm (see [3] for details) is used to remove the artifacts and secondary reflections caused by the straps and supporting barge of the experimented setup. The idea is to apply a window in matched filter domain to extract a clean signal and then perform the inverse matched filtering to obtain a “clean backscattered” signal. The clean backscattered signals (or from hereon backscattered signals) are then used in the feature extraction process described in Section IV.

IV. FEATURE EXTRACTION PROCESS

In this section, we describe how canonical correlation analysis may be used to extract a set of features that capture common target/nontarget attributes among two consecutive sonar returns, with certain aspect separation. In Section V, we will apply the feature extraction method presented here to the wideband ARL-UT data set and use the extracted features for classifying mine-like objects from nonmine-like objects.

To build the ensembles of the two channels (x and y) for canonical correlation analysis, we partition two backscattered signals from an object, with certain aspect separation, into overlapping blocks, as illustrated in Fig. 1. In this figure, sonar return 1 is the backscattered signal from an object at aspect angle, say β_1 , and sonar return 2 is the backscattered signal from the same object at aspect angle $\beta_2 = \beta_1 + \Delta\beta$, where $\Delta\beta$ is the aspect separation between these two returns. The blocks of sonar return 1 are taken as the samples of the first channel (the x-channel) and the blocks of sonar return 2 are taken as the samples of the second channel (the y-channel). Referring to Fig. 1, the data sample \mathbf{x}_i is the vector of the time series associated with the i th block of range cells in sonar return 1, and \mathbf{y}_i is the vector of the time series associated with the i th block of range cells in sonar return 2. The collections of these data vector samples form the sample data matrices $\mathbf{X} = [\mathbf{x}_1, \dots, \mathbf{x}_M]$ and $\mathbf{Y} = [\mathbf{y}_1, \dots, \mathbf{y}_M]$. Thus, in the canonical correlation analysis formulation of Section II, the covariance matrices \mathbf{R}_{xx} , \mathbf{R}_{yy} , and \mathbf{R}_{xy} are replaced by their corresponding sample estimates $\mathbf{S}_{xx} = (1/M)\mathbf{X}\mathbf{X}^T$, $\mathbf{S}_{yy} = (1/M)\mathbf{Y}\mathbf{Y}^T$, and $\mathbf{S}_{xy} = (1/M)\mathbf{X}\mathbf{Y}^T$. The dominant canonical correlations between these sample data matrices \mathbf{X} and \mathbf{Y} , which capture most of the coherence, will be used as features to represent the sonar signal at aspect angle β_1 .

Note that taking blocks of range cells of the sonar returns as snapshot vectors to build sample covariance matrices requires the second-order statistics of the sequence of underlying random vectors to be time invariant. The Appendix discusses the conditions for which this will hold.

The aspect separation $\Delta\beta$ should be large enough so that the bottom reverberation effects are almost uncorrelated, but small enough so that the returns from the objects remain coherent. Clearly, this choice depends on many factors including specific properties of the sonar such as speed of movement, range and elevation of the vehicle, and size and orientation of the object. For the ARL-UT data set, we have experimentally determined that an aspect separation of $\Delta\beta = 16^\circ$ is a reasonable choice. Therefore, in the simulations performed in Section V, the

sonar returns are paired according to aspect angles as follows: $\{1, 17\}, \{2, 18\}, \dots, \{344, 360\}, \{345, 1\}, \dots, \{360, 16\}$. The dominant canonical correlations extracted from each pair of aspects $\{\beta, \beta + 16\}$ will be used as features to represent the return at aspect angle β .

V. CANONICAL CORRELATION FEATURES AND CLASSIFICATION RESULTS

In this section, the feature extraction process described in Section IV is applied to the sonar returns in the ARL-UT data set, and the extracted features are used to classify mine-like objects from nonmine-like objects. In the experiments performed here, the backscattered signals are partitioned into blocks of size 50 samples, with 50% (25 samples) overlap, leading to 50-dimensional \mathbf{x} and \mathbf{y} channels. Although, the block size is determined experimentally here, there are several factors that must be considered. These include duration of the transmit signal, sampling rate, and the shape and size of the objects. Since the length of the backscattered signals is 8192 samples, dividing each backscattered signal into blocks of size 50 samples with 25 samples overlap results in $M = 327$ vector samples for \mathbf{x} - and \mathbf{y} -channels. As a result, the sample data matrices \mathbf{X} and \mathbf{Y} will each have size 50×327 . The 50×327 data matrices \mathbf{X} and \mathbf{Y} share 50 canonical correlations. We use the first (largest) 15 out of 50 canonical correlations between data matrices \mathbf{X} and \mathbf{Y} , which are associated with a pair of angles $(\beta, \beta + 16)$, as features to represent the aspect angle β . The first 15 canonical correlations capture a major portion of the coherence between the sonar returns.

Experiment 1: The objective here is to demonstrate the usefulness of canonical correlation features for classifying mine-like from nonmine-like objects in both smooth and rough bottom conditions. The training data set for classification is formed from the feature vectors extracted at 90 aspect angles of the *smooth bottom* data, at aspect increments of 4° . The feature vectors extracted from the rest of the aspect angles of the smooth bottom data (270 aspect angles) are kept to validate the trained classifier. This validation data set is primarily used to select the best trained classifier. To see how well the trained classifier generalizes, the feature vectors extracted from the backscattered signals in the *rough bottom* condition are used as a testing data set.

Fig. 2(a)–(c) shows the scatter plots of the first two canonical correlation features for the training, validation, and testing data sets, respectively. As can be seen, for the training data set [Fig. 2(a)] and the validation data set [Fig. 2(b)], the features of mine-like objects (targets 2, 6, and 7) are packed together and almost completely separated from those of the nonmine-like objects (steel drum, concrete pipe, and telephone pole). Additionally, the extracted features for the training and validation data sets, for the objects in the smooth bottom condition, are consistent (occupying the same regions in the scatter plots).

In the rough bottom test condition [Fig. 2(c)], features of target 2, target 6, and the telephone pole stay in the same regions as in the smooth bottom condition, while those of the drum and concrete pipe become more compact and move slightly towards the right-hand side of the plot. Nonetheless, they still occupy almost the same regions as in the training and validation data sets. Features of target 7, however, move from the upper right-hand corner and spread out to the left-hand side and mix with those of the steel drum and concrete pipe. The reason for the changes

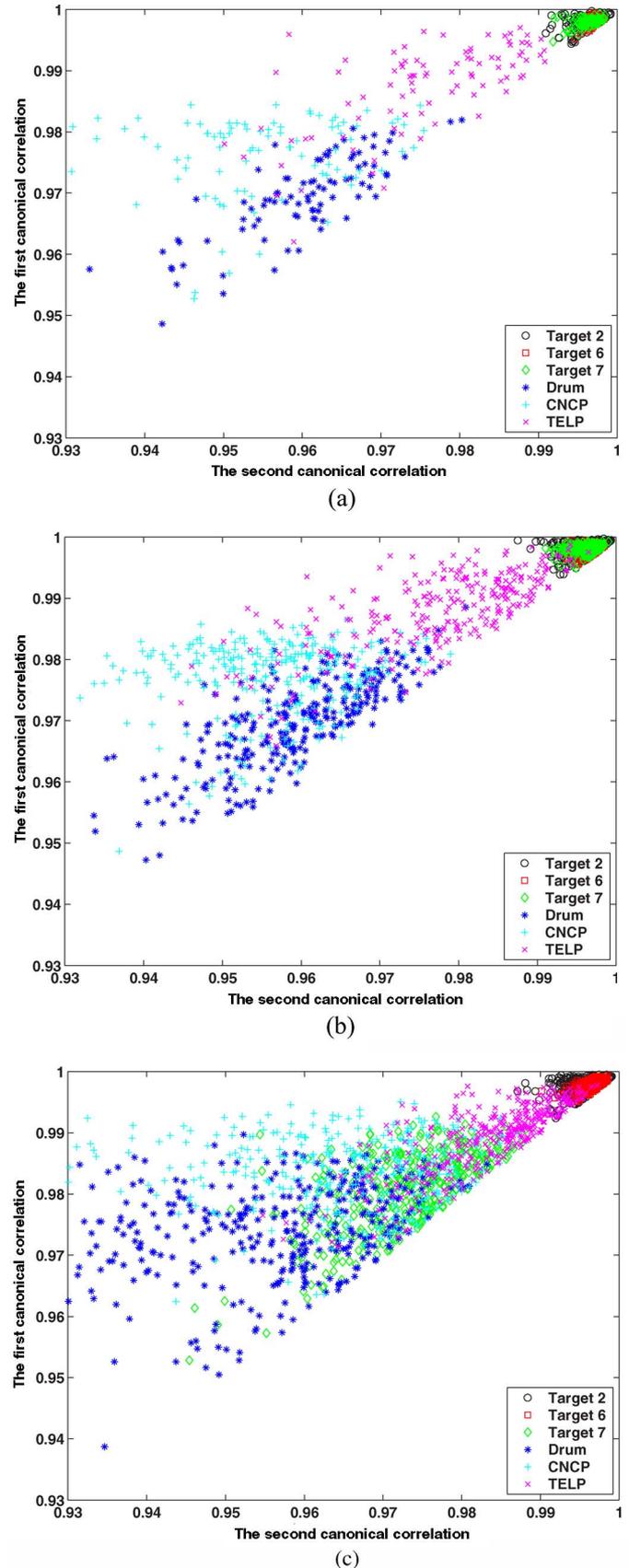


Fig. 2. Scatter plots of the first two canonical correlation features for (a) training, (b) validation, and (c) testing data sets. The scatter plots show that, for five out of six objects, canonical correlations are fairly robust (only slightly change) to the changes in the bottom condition.

TABLE I
CONFUSION MATRICES OF THE BPNN CLASSIFIER TRAINED
WITH CANONICAL CORRELATION FEATURES

	Validation Data Set (Smooth Bottom Data)		Testing Data Set (Rough Bottom Data)	
	Target	Nontarget	Target	Nontarget
Object				
Target 6	270	0	360	0
Target 7	270	0	2	358
Target 2	270	0	360	0
Drum	0	270	0	360
Concrete Pipe	0	270	0	360
Telephone Pole	22	248	52	308

TABLE II
CONFUSION MATRICES OF THE BPNN CLASSIFIER TRAINED WITH LPC
SUBBAND FEATURES. THE CLASSIFICATION PROBLEM IS A TWO-CLASS
(MINE-LIKE OBJECT VERSUS NONMINE-LIKE OBJECT) PROBLEM

	Validation Data Set (Smooth Bottom Data)		Testing Data Set (Rough Bottom Data)	
	Target	Nontarget	Target	Nontarget
Object				
Target 6	215	55	224	136
Target 7	177	93	214	146
Target 2	265	5	349	11
Drum	57	213	128	232
Concrete Pipe	56	214	92	268
Telephone Pole	17	253	22	338

in features of target 7 may be attributed to the secondary reflections and the rather large size of this cylindrical target, which is comparable to that of the drum. Clearly, the movement of target 7 features leads to some degradation in classification performance in the rough bottom condition. These scatter plots show that for five out of six objects, canonical correlations are fairly robust (only slightly change) to the changes in the bottom condition. The same observation is also valid for the third and fourth canonical correlation features.

Subsequently, the extracted canonical correlation features are used to train a backpropagation neural network (BPNN) [22] to classify the mine-like objects from nonmine-like objects. The goal is to determine whether an object is mine-like or nonmine-like, rather than classifying all the objects. In other words, the problem is a two-class classification problem. To find a good network structure, eight different two-layer BPNN structures were tried. The number of hidden layer neurons was varied from 26 to 46. Each network was trained for ten different weight initializations. The training was performed for 10 000 epochs, where an epoch was a complete sweep over the entire training data set. The best BPNN classifier, which was selected based on the average classification rates on training and validation data sets, gave an overall correct classification rate of 99.1% on the training data set, 98.6% on the validation data set, and 81.0% on the testing data set. These percentages are obtained based on a hard-limiting decision threshold. We compare these re-

sults with those in [1] obtained by using linear predictive coding (LPC) subband features and decision-level fusion method. As reported in [1], the correct classification rates on the training, validation, and testing data sets are 99.6%, 82.5%, and 75.2%, respectively. Comparing these results indicates almost 16% and 6% improvements on the validation and testing data sets when canonical correlation features are used. We note that these improvements are achieved without requiring any multispect classification fusion, like the one used in [1]. The confusion matrices obtained for the classifiers, trained using these two feature types, are shown in Table I (for the canonical correlation features) and in Table II (for the LPC subband features). These results demonstrate the promise of the canonical correlation features for classifying targets from nontargets in different bottom conditions.

It is interesting to note that the classifier trained using canonical correlation features has correctly classified targets 2 and 6 at all aspect angles in both smooth and rough bottom conditions, while the classifier trained using the LPC subband features has poor performance on these targets. Additionally, the canonical correlation features provide substantially lower false alarm rates (2.7% for validation and 4.8% for testing) compared to the LPC subband features (16.1% for validation and 22.4% for testing). However, the classifier trained with the LPC subband features provides better performance for target 7 in the rough bottom condition compared to the canonical-correlation-based classifier.

Experiment 2: Our goal in this experiment is to investigate the robustness of the canonical correlation features with respect to aspect angle variation in a fixed bottom condition, namely, the smooth bottom. The training data set for each object is formed from the feature vectors extracted for 1/4 of the aspect angles that correspond to one side of the objects (aspect angles 0° – 179°) only. The feature vectors extracted from the rest of the aspect angles between 0° and 179° in the smooth bottom condition are kept to validate the trained classifier. The generalization and robustness of the trained classifier is tested, in the same bottom condition, using the features extracted from sonar returns from the other side of the objects, i.e., aspect angles 180° – 359° . Clearly, in this experiment, the classifier is not exposed to the information on the other side of the objects during the training and validation processes.

Fig. 3(a)–(c) shows the scatter plots of the first two canonical correlation features for the training, validation, and testing data sets. As can be seen, the canonical correlation features for targets are similar and almost completely separated from those of the nontargets. Additionally, the extracted features for the training, validation, and testing data sets for the objects are fairly consistent, implying that the canonical correlation features are relatively invariant to aspect angle variation.

For this experiment, the best two-layer BPNN classifier, trained with the extracted canonical correlation features, gave an overall correct classification rate of 99.6% on the training data set, 98.1% on the validation data set, and 99.8% on the testing data set. The confusion matrices of this classifier for validation and testing data sets are shown in Table III. It is seen that only at a few aspect angles in the validation data set the telephone pole is misclassified as a mine-like object. Similarly, in the testing data set, there are only four misclassifications. These results demonstrate that canonical correlation features of an object are relatively invariant to changes in aspect angle, provided that the environmental condition remains unchanged.

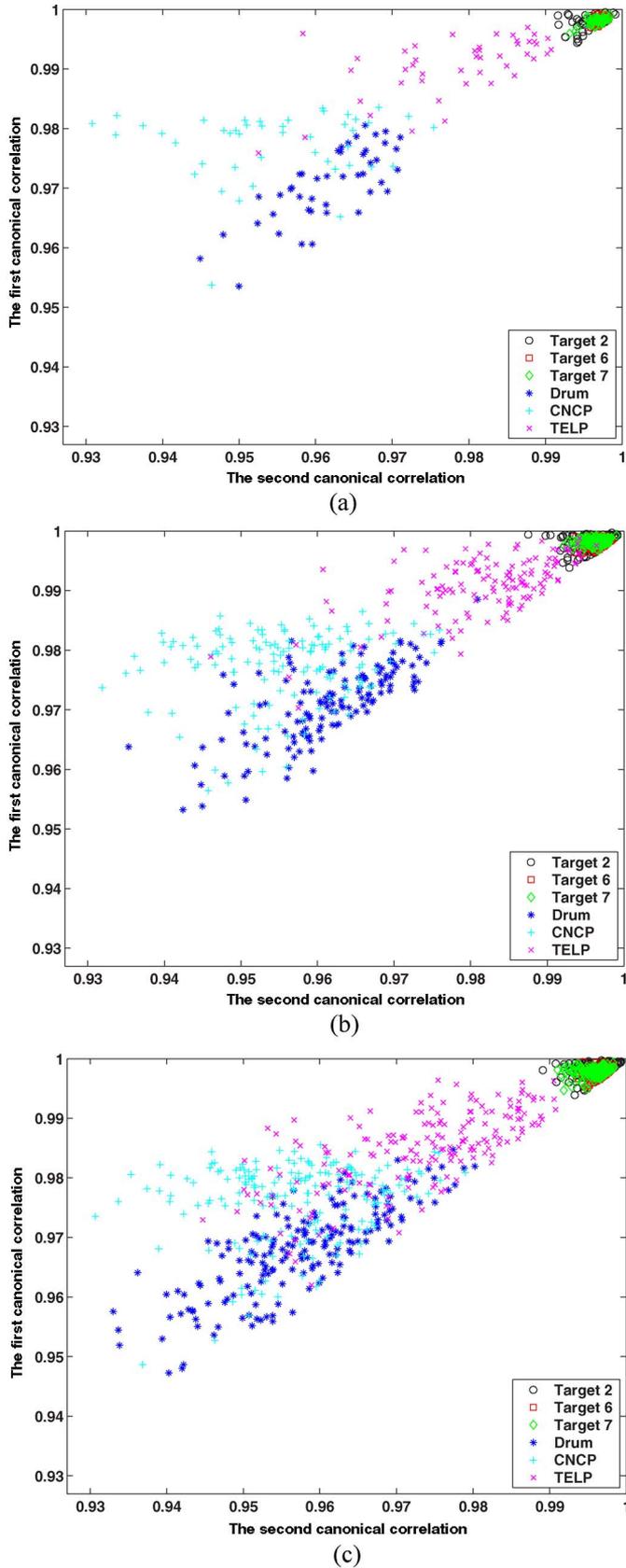


Fig. 3. Scatter plots of the first two canonical correlations for (a) training, (b) validation, and (c) testing data sets. The plots show that canonical correlation features are relatively invariant to aspect angle variation.

TABLE III
CONFUSION MATRICES OF THE BPNN CLASSIFIER TRAINED WITH THE CANONICAL CORRELATION FEATURES THAT ARE EXTRACTED FROM ONE SIDE OF THE OBJECTS. THE CLASSIFICATION PROBLEM IS A TWO-CLASS (MINE-LIKE OBJECT VERSUS NONMINE-LIKE OBJECT) PROBLEM

	Validation Data Set (Smooth Bottom Data)		Testing Data Set (Smooth Bottom Data)	
	Target	Nontarget	Target	Nontarget
Target 6	135	0	180	0
Target 7	135	0	179	1
Target 2	135	0	178	2
Drum	0	135	0	180
Concrete Pipe	0	135	0	180
Telephone Pole	15	120	1	179

VI. CONCLUSION

In this paper, canonical correlation analysis was exploited to develop a multiaspect feature extraction method for underwater target classification from a wideband sonar data set. The basic idea is that when an object (target or nontarget) is present in the environment, consecutive sonar returns exhibit a change in the coherence compared to the case when there is no object. Further, we hypothesized that the amount of coherence captured by the dominant canonical correlations of the two sonar returns from a mine-like object is different than that of a nonmine-like object. Our experiments on the wideband ARL-UT data set demonstrated that canonical correlation features offer good separation between mine-like and nonmine-like objects. The results show that except for one of the objects, namely, target 7 which is of comparable size to the drum, the canonical correlation features are robust to changes in the bottom condition. Moreover, we showed that in a fixed bottom condition, canonical correlation features are relatively invariant to changes in aspect angle. Recent results [23] on buried object scanning sonar (BOSS) data collected in St. Andrew's Bay, Panama City, FL, further validate the potential of the proposed canonical-correlation-based feature extraction method for detection and classification of buried underwater objects.

APPENDIX

The backscattered signal at aspect angle θ , denoted by $r(t; \theta)$, may be written as a linear convolution of the form

$$r(t; \theta) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} h(\tau; \theta) s(t - \tau) d\tau \quad (\text{A.1})$$

where $s(t)$ is the transmit pulse and $h(t; \theta)$ is the target random impulse response at time t and aspect angle θ .

The instantaneous cross-correlation function between complex amplitudes $r(t_1; \theta_1)$ and $r(t_2; \theta_2)$, corresponding to two sonar returns at angles θ_1 and θ_2 , is given by

$$r(t_1; \theta_1) r^*(t_2; \theta_2) = \int \int s(t_1 - \tau) h(\tau; \theta_1) h^*(\tau'; \theta_2) \times s^*(t_2 - \tau') d\tau d\tau' \quad (\text{A.2})$$

where $*$ denotes complex conjugate.

Assume that the random impulse response $h(t; \theta)$ is wide sense stationary and uncorrelated over time. Then, the cross correlation $R_{rr}(t_1, t_2; \theta_1, \theta_2)$ between $r(t_1; \theta_1)$ and $r(t_2; \theta_2)$ is

$$\begin{aligned} R_{rr}(t_1, t_2; \theta_1, \theta_2) &= E[r(t_1; \theta_1)r^*(t_2; \theta_2)] \\ &= \int \int R_{hh}(\tau; \theta_1, \theta_2) \delta(\tau - \tau') s(t_1 - \tau) \\ &\quad \times s^*(t_2 - \tau') d\tau d\tau' \\ &= \int R_{hh}(\tau; \theta_1, \theta_2) \\ &\quad \times s(t_1 - \tau) s^*(t_2 - \tau) d\tau \quad (\text{A.3}) \end{aligned}$$

where $R_{hh}(\tau; \theta_1, \theta_2)$ is the target scattering function. In the feature extraction procedure in Section IV, t_1 and t_2 correspond to two different time samples (range cells) within a block, and θ_1 and θ_2 correspond to aspect angles β and $\beta + \Delta\beta$.

The transmit pulse $s(t)$ in this paper is an LFM signal. The baseband representation of an LFM signal with time duration T and bandwidth B is

$$s(t) = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{\sqrt{T}} e^{j\frac{\pi B}{T} t^2}, & |t| \leq \frac{T}{2} \\ 0, & |t| > \frac{T}{2} \end{cases} \quad (\text{A.4})$$

Inserting (A.4) in (A.3) yields

$$\begin{aligned} R_{rr}(t_1, t_2; \theta_1, \theta_2) &= \frac{1}{T} \int_{\max[t_1, t_2] - T/2}^{\min[t_1, t_2] + T/2} R_{hh}(\tau; \theta_1, \theta_2) \\ &\quad \times e^{j\frac{\pi B}{T}(t_1^2 - t_2^2 - 2\tau(t_1 - t_2))} d\tau. \quad (\text{A.5}) \end{aligned}$$

Let $t_1 = t + \Delta t$ and $t_2 = t$. Then, we can write (A.5) as

$$\begin{aligned} R_{rr}(t + \Delta t, t; \theta_1, \theta_2) &= \frac{1}{T} \int_{t + \Delta t - T/2}^{t + T/2} R_{hh}(\tau; \theta_1, \theta_2) e^{j\frac{\pi B}{T}(2t\Delta t + \Delta t^2 - 2\tau\Delta t)} d\tau \\ &= \frac{1}{T} e^{j\frac{\pi B}{T}(2t\Delta t + \Delta t^2)} \\ &\quad \times \int_{t + \Delta t - T/2}^{t + T/2} R_{hh}(\tau; \theta_1, \theta_2) e^{-j\frac{\pi B}{T} 2\tau\Delta t} d\tau. \quad (\text{A.6}) \end{aligned}$$

Note that the integral in (A.6) is equal to zero for $\Delta t > T$.

If the pulse length T is short compared to the variation length of R_{hh} , then we can write

$$\begin{aligned} R_{rr}(t + \Delta t, t; \theta_1, \theta_2) &\approx R_{rr}(\Delta t; \theta_1, \theta_2) \\ &= \frac{1}{T} e^{j\frac{\pi B}{T}(2t\Delta t + \Delta t^2)} R_{hh}(\tau; \theta_1, \theta_2) \\ &\quad \times \int_{t + \Delta t - T/2}^{t + T/2} e^{-j\frac{\pi B}{T} 2\tau\Delta t} d\tau \\ &= \left(\frac{T - \Delta t}{T}\right) \text{sinc}\left[\frac{\pi B}{T} \Delta t(T - \Delta t)\right] \\ &\quad \times R_{hh}(t; \theta_1, \theta_2). \quad (\text{A.7}) \end{aligned}$$

If R_{hh} is time invariant, then

$$R_{yy}(\Delta t; \theta_1, \theta_2) = \frac{T - \Delta t}{T} \text{sinc}\left[\frac{\pi B}{T} \Delta t(T - \Delta t)\right] R_{hh}(\theta_1, \theta_2) \quad (\text{A.8})$$

and the correlation function $R_{rr}(\Delta t; \theta_1, \theta_2)$ becomes time invariant. Alternatively, if the pulse is much longer than the target length so that the pulse scans the entire target, then R_{hh} can be assumed to be time invariant during the insonification period.

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Ali Pezeshki (S'95–M'05) received the B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees in electrical engineering from the University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran, in 1999 and 2001, respectively, and the Ph.D. degree in electrical engineering from the Colorado State University, Fort Collins, in 2004.

During 2005, he was a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the Signal Processing and Communications Laboratory, Colorado State University. Since January 2006, he has been a Postdoctoral Research Associate with the Program in Applied and

Computational Mathematics, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ. His research interests are in statistical signal processing and coding theory, as they apply to wireless communications, passive/active sensing, and data networking.



Mahmood R. Azimi-Sadjadi (S'81–M'81–SM'89) received the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Imperial College of Science and Technology, University of London, London, U.K., in 1978 and 1982, respectively, both in electrical engineering, with specialization in digital signal/image processing.

Currently, he is a Full Professor at the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department, Colorado State University (CSU), Fort Collins. He is also the Director of the Digital Signal/Image Laboratory, CSU. His main areas of interest include digital signal

and image processing, wireless sensor networks, target detection, classification and tracking, adaptive filtering, system identification, and neural networks. His research efforts in these areas resulted in over 250 journals and refereed conference publications. He is the coauthor of the book *Digital Filtering in One and Two Dimensions* (New York: Plenum, 1989).

Prof. Azimi-Sadjadi is the recipient of the 1999 Abell Faculty Teaching Award, 1993 American Society of Engineering Education (ASEE)/Navy Senior Faculty Fellowship Award, 1991 CSU Dean's Council Award, and 1984 DOW Chemical Outstanding Young Faculty Award. He has served as an Associate Editor of the *IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON SIGNAL PROCESSING* and the *IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON NEURAL NETWORKS*.



Louis L. Scharf (S'67–M'69–SM'77–F'86–LF'07) received the Ph.D. degree from the University of Washington, Seattle.

From 1971 to 1982, he was a Professor of Electrical Engineering and Statistics at Colorado State University (CSU), Fort Collins. From 1982 to 1985, he was a Professor and Chairman of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Rhode Island, Kingston. From 1985 to 2000, he was a Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Colorado, Boulder. In January

2001, he rejoined CSU as a Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering and statistics. He has held several visiting positions here and abroad, including the Ecole Supérieure d'Electricité, Gif-sur-Yvette, France; Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Télécommunications, Paris, France; EURECOM, Nice, Italy; the University of La Plata, La Plata, Argentina; Duke University, Durham, NC; the University of Wisconsin, Madison; and the University of Tromsø, Tromsø, Norway. His interests are in statistical signal processing, as it applies to adaptive radar, sonar, and wireless communication. His most important contributions to date are to invariance theories for detection and estimation; matched and adaptive subspace detectors and estimators for radar, sonar, and data communication; and canonical decompositions for reduced dimensional filtering and quantizing. His current interests are in rapidly adaptive receiver design for space-time and frequency-time signal processing in the wireless communication channel.

Prof. Scharf was Technical Program Chair for the 1980 IEEE International Conference on Acoustics, Speech, and Signal Processing (ICASSP), Denver, CO; Tutorial Chair for ICASSP 2001, Salt Lake City, UT; and Technical Program Chair for the Asilomar Conference on Signals, Systems, and Computers 2002. He is past-Chair of the Fellow Committee for the IEEE Signal Processing Society and serves on its Technical Committees for Theory and Methods and for Sensor Arrays and Multichannel Signal Processing. He has received numerous awards for his research contributions to statistical signal processing, including an IEEE Distinguished Lectureship, an IEEE Third Millennium Medal, and the Technical Achievement Award from the IEEE Signal Processing Society.