

# The Semivariogram in Comparison to the Co-Occurrence Matrix for Classification of Image Texture

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**Abstract**— Semivariogram functions are compared to co-occurrence matrices for classification of digital image texture, and accuracy is assessed using test sites. Images acquired over the following six different spectral bands are used:

- 1) SPOT HRV, near infrared;
- 2) Landsat thematic mapper (TM), visible red;
- 3) India Remote Sensing (IRS) LISS-II, visible green;
- 4) Magellan, Venus, S-band microwave;
- 5) shuttle imaging radar (SIR)-C, X-band microwave;
- 6) SIR-C, L-band microwave.

The semivariogram textural measure provides a larger classification accuracy than a classifier based on a co-occurrence matrix for the microwave images and a smaller classification accuracy for the optical images.

**Index Terms**— Correlation, covariance analysis, image classification, image texture analysis, pattern classification.

## I. INTRODUCTION

**T**EXTURE information is assumed to be contained in the overall, or average, spatial relationship among gray levels for a particular image [1]. Of primary importance to this work, this spatial relationship is considered to be the covariance of pixel values as a function of distance between pixels. Such textural information can be extracted from an image using gray-tone spatial-dependence matrices [1] or co-occurrence matrices [2], [3]. Alternatively, texture can be extracted using a spatial autocorrelation function [2], [4]. The semivariogram is one example [5]. Classification of texture in microwave imagery based on the semivariogram has yielded compelling, albeit qualitative results, because classification accuracy was not measured [6]–[8]. Computer algorithms [9] are subsequently used to develop quantitative comparisons of textural classifications based on the semivariogram and spatial dependence (co-occurrence) matrices. This comparison is attempted primarily because the spatial co-occurrence matrix method is widely accepted for classifying texture, and the semivariogram is logically compared to it. Such a comparison is not attempted or forwarded as a means for criticizing the use of spatial co-occurrence matrices; in fact, subsequent

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classification results show that the spatial co-occurrence matrix method is a powerful and accurate textural classifier.

## II. SPATIAL AUTOCORRELATION: THE SEMIVARIOGRAM

Let the gray levels comprising a given digital image be represented as  $G(x, y)$ . Then, the variogram for these gray levels is written [5] as

$$2\gamma(h) = \int_x \int_y [G(x, y) - G(x', y')]^2 dy dx$$

in which  $h$  is the Euclidean distance (lag distance) between the pixel value  $G$  at row  $x$ , pixel  $y$ , and the pixel value  $G$  at row  $x'$ , pixel  $y'$ . In practice, this integral is approximated as

$$2\gamma(h) = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N [G(x, y) - G(x', y')]^2$$

in which  $N$  is the total number of pairs of pixel values  $[G(x, y)$  and  $G(x', y')]$  that are separated by a distance  $h$ ; note that this accommodates the compression from a double integral to a single summation. In practice, the semivariogram is computed rather than the variogram

$$\gamma(h) = \frac{1}{2N} \sum_{i=1}^N [G(x, y) - G(x', y')]^2.$$

The semivariogram often approaches the value of the statistical variance  $s^2$  of  $G$  as the spatial correlation of  $G$  approaches zero (as separation distance  $h$  becomes large).

Calculation of the semivariogram can be constrained to particular spatial directions, hence, implying a vector calculation. The following four examples show E–W, N–S, NE–SW, and NW–SE calculations, respectively:

E–W:

$$\gamma(h) = \frac{1}{2N} \sum_{i=1}^N [G(x, y) - G(x+h, y)]^2.$$

N–S:

$$\gamma(h) = \frac{1}{2N} \sum_{i=1}^N [G(x, y) - G(x, y+h)]^2.$$

NE–SW:

$$\gamma(h) = \frac{1}{2N} \sum_{i=1}^N [G(x+h, y) - G(x, y+h)]^2.$$

NW-SE:

$$\gamma(h) = \frac{1}{2N} \sum_{i=1}^N [G(x, y) - G(x+h, y+h)]^2.$$

In each of these equations,  $N$  is the total number of pairs of pixel values separated by a distance  $h$  in a particular spatial direction. Moreover, the NE and NW computations assume the pixel distance to be even increments of  $h$ , even though technically the actual distance is equal to  $h[\sqrt{(2)}]$ . The assumption is invoked for simplicity. Moreover, a further simplification uses the absolute value, rather than the square, of pixel difference [9]

$$\gamma(h) = \frac{1}{2N} \sum_{i=1}^N \text{ABS}[G(x, y) - G(x', y')].$$

When applied for image processing, the semivariogram function is obtained by starting at  $h = 1$  (a one-pixel offset), then incrementing  $h$  by one through a maximum of 20 increments. This is the present software limitation [9]; such a restriction is arbitrary and can be changed depending on the complexity and spatial extent of a texture (fewer increments for some textures, more increments for others). Some texts on geostatistics show example hand calculations demonstrating the procedure for computing a semivariogram [10].

A semivariogram, either directional or omnidirectional, depending on the nature of the texture, is computed for each class using training sites of size  $M \times M$ . Then, classification of texture in an entire image proceeds pixel by pixel. A semivariogram is computed for a region, also of size  $M \times M$ , surrounding a pixel to be classified. The essential premise of this classification experiment is to compare the semivariogram for a neighborhood surrounding a pixel to be classified to those for the chosen classes. This comparison necessarily requires semivariograms be computed for similar-sized regions in an effort to match semivariogram signatures of textures as closely as possible. A numerical distance metric is used when comparing these signatures

$$\text{distance} = \sum_{i=1}^K [\gamma_t(i) - \gamma_p(i)]$$

wherein  $K$  is the number of increments of  $h$  allowable given the constraint of the window size  $M$  and the subscripts  $t$  and  $p$  represent the training site and pixel neighborhood semivariograms, respectively. A pixel is assigned to the class for which the value, distance, is a minimum (a minimum-distance algorithm).

*Example:* Given the following  $5 \times 5$  digital image:

$$\begin{array}{ccccc} 1 & 1 & 2 & 2 & 5 \\ 3 & 2 & 3 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 1 \\ 3 & 2 & 4 & 0 & 1 \\ 2 & 1 & 1 & 2 & 2 \end{array}$$

compute semivariogram values for  $h = 1$  and  $h = 2$ , E-W direction only [assume the simplified procedure based on

absolute value]. Solution

For  $h = 1$  [pairs]:

$$\begin{aligned} & |1-1| + |1-2| + |2-2| + |2-5| + |3-2| \\ & + |2-3| + |3-1| + |1-1| + |0-1| + |1-1| \\ & + |1-0| + |0-1| + |3-2| + |2-4| + |4-0| \\ & + |0-1| + |2-1| + |1-1| + |1-2| + |2-2| \\ & = 0 + 1 + 0 + 3 + 1 + 1 + 2 + 0 + 1 + 0 + 1 + 1 \\ & + 1 + 2 + 4 + 1 + 1 + 0 + 1 + 0 \\ & = 21/(2N) = 21/40 = 0.53. \end{aligned}$$

For  $h = 2$  [pairs]:

$$\begin{aligned} & |1-2| + |1-2| + |2-5| + |3-3| + |2-1| \\ & + |3-1| + |0-1| + |1-0| + |1-1| + |3-4| \\ & + |2-0| + |4-1| + |2-1| + |1-2| + |1-2| \\ & = 1 + 1 + 3 + 0 + 1 + 2 + 1 + 1 \\ & + 0 + 1 + 2 + 3 + 1 + 1 + 1 \\ & = 19/(2N) = 19/30 = 0.63. \end{aligned}$$

Note in this example that the value of the semivariogram increases as  $h$  increases. This is the anticipated behavior if image pixels are spatially correlated; pixels located closer together are more similar in value than pixels spaced farther apart. This change in semivariance with increasing  $h$  is the statistical signature that is relied upon for classifying texture.

### III. CO-OCCURRENCE MATRICES

Co-occurrence (spatial dependence) matrices are widely accepted for the classification of texture [2], [3].

*Example:* Given the  $5 \times 5$  digital image used in the foregoing example, a co-occurrence matrix is developed as follows (E-W direction only). First, the number of different pixel values are determined. Second, these pixel values are ranked, smallest to largest. Third, the digital image is scanned in the direction noted (E-W in this case) to determine the frequency with which one of these pixel values follows another.

With respect to the digital image presented earlier, six different pixel values are observed: 0-5. Hence, the co-occurrence matrix is a  $6 \times 6$  matrix (note that, in this case, the co-occurrence matrix is *larger* than the input image); let this matrix be called [A]

$$[A] = \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{cccccc} 0 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 \\ \hline 0: & 0 & 3 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 1: & 1 & 4 & 2 & 0 & 0 \\ 2: & 0 & 1 & 2 & 1 & 1 \\ 3: & 0 & 1 & 2 & 0 & 0 \\ 4: & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 5: & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{array} \end{array}$$

Once this matrix is determined, seven statistical parameters are computed as follows [3] (these seven parameters are chosen for this study; more parameters may be computed

for higher orders of element difference and inverse element difference).

- 1) Each entry in matrix [A] is divided by  $n$ , the number of pixels that satisfy the algorithm (in this case, one pixel to the right); in this example,  $n$  is 20; let this resultant matrix be called [C].
- 2) Once step 1) is finished, the first statistical parameter is extracted, and it is the maximum value for any entry in [C]; in this example, the maximum value is  $4/20$  or 0.2.
- 3) First-order element difference moment is computed

$$\sum_i \sum_j (i-j) c_{ij}.$$

Notice that if  $\text{ABS}(i-j)$  is used instead of  $(i-j)$ , the simplified semivariogram computation (Section II) is obtained for a lag distance equal to what is used to develop the co-occurrence matrix (a lag distance  $h=1$ , E-W direction in this example).

- 4) Second-order element difference moment is computed

$$\sum_i \sum_j (i-j)^2 c_{ij}.$$

Moreover, this value represents the value of the *variogram* at a lag distance equal to that used to develop the co-occurrence matrix. Therefore, the co-occurrence matrix and [semi] variogram capture the same information; except, the variogram represents spatial variation over all possible lags, whereas the co-occurrence matrix is developed for a particular lag. Only in the case for which texture obeys a Markov law [2] does the co-occurrence matrix capture spatial variation over all possible lags. We address this issue later when discussing classification results.

- 5) First-order inverse element difference moment is computed

$$\sum_i \sum_j \frac{c_{ij}}{(i-j)}.$$

- 6) Second-order inverse element difference moment is computed

$$\sum_i \sum_j \frac{c_{ij}}{(i-j)^2}.$$

- 7) Entropy is computed

$$-\sum_i \sum_j c_{ij} \log c_{ij}.$$

- 8) Uniformity is computed

$$\sum_i \sum_j c_{ij}^2.$$

Once these statistical parameters are computed for an  $M \times M$  training class, a similar sized window is used, centered over pixels to be classified. Similar statistical measures are computed, from which a minimum distance metric is computed to determine to which class, or threshold, pixels are assigned.



Fig. 1. India Remote Sensing (IRS) LISS-II, band 2 (visible green) image of a portion of the Grand Canyon, AZ. A 400 row  $\times$  400 pixel region is displayed. Image courtesy of EOSAT Corporation (see Acknowledgment).

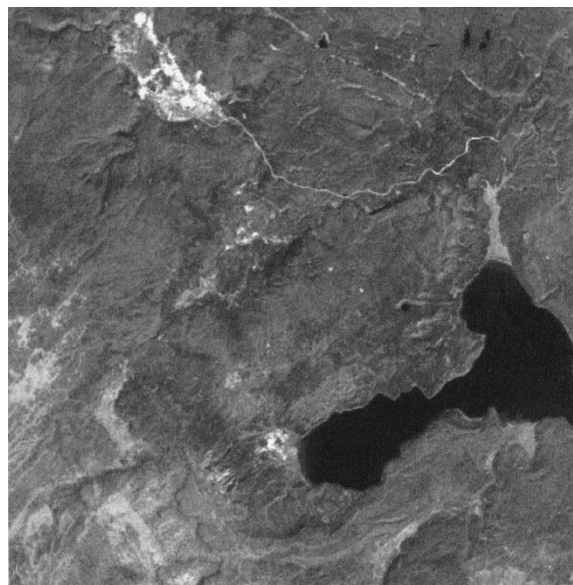


Fig. 2. 1988 Landsat TM, band 3 (visible red) image of a portion of Yellowstone National Park, WY. The Old Faithful geyser is in the upper left portion of this image (bright deposits); Shoshone Lake is in the right center portion of the image. A 400 row  $\times$  400 pixel region is displayed. Copyright EOSAT, 1988.

#### IV. APPLICATIONS

Digital images representing the following six different spectral bands are classified:

- 1) India Remote Sensing (IRS) LISS-II band-2, visible-green image of the Grand Canyon, AZ (Fig. 1);
- 2) Landsat thematic mapper (TM), band-3, visible-red image of Old Faithful geyser and Shoshone Lake, Yellowstone National Park, WY (Fig. 2);
- 3) SPOT HRV band-3, near-infrared image of 1989 Brazilian deforestation (Fig. 3);

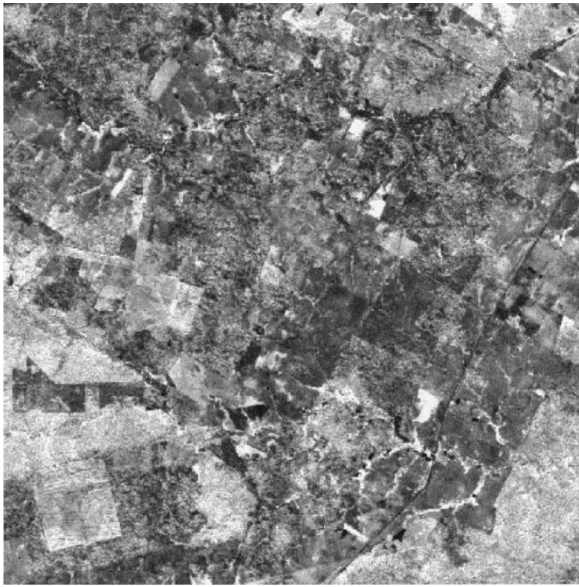


Fig. 3. 1989 SPOT HRV, band 3 (near-infrared) image of Brazilian rain-forest deforestation. Regular geometric patterns mark deforested ground. A 400 row  $\times$  400 pixel region is displayed. Copyright CNES/SPOT Image, 1989.



Fig. 4. Magellan, *S*-band microwave image of Venus. Mass-wasting features are noted in the central portion of the image. These features are near 10 S, 188 E. A 400 row  $\times$  400 pixel region is displayed. See Acknowledgment for image source.

- 4) Magellan, *S*-band microwave image of mass wasting features on Venus, located near 10 S, 188 E (Fig. 4);
- 5) shuttle imaging radar (SIR)-C, *X*-band microwave image of San Francisco, CA (Fig. 5);
- 6) SIR-C, *L*-band microwave image, horizontally transmitted and vertically received, of Mt. Rainier, WA (Fig. 6).

Training and test site data are reviewed (Table I). Classification accuracy is summarized for each of the six images using a recommended procedure [11]. A mean digital number (DN) was used with both the semivariogram and co-occurrence



Fig. 5. SIR-C, *X*-band microwave image of San Francisco, CA. Image was acquired in April 1994. A 400 row  $\times$  346 pixel region is displayed. Image courtesy of NASA/Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), Pasadena, CA.



Fig. 6. SIR-C, *L*-band (horizontally transmitted and vertically received) microwave image of Mt. Rainier, WA. Image was acquired October 1, 1994. A 400 row  $\times$  400 pixel region is displayed. Image courtesy of NASA/JPL.

matrix methods when computing the minimum distance to each class.

#### A. IRS LISS-II, Landsat TM, and SPOT HRV Images

Classification accuracy in terms of training site homogeneity and test site accuracy is presented as contingency

TABLE I  
TRAINING AND TEST SITE INFORMATION. ROW AND PIXEL  
COORDINATES ARE RELATIVE TO IMAGE SIZES REPORTED IN CAPTIONS

Image	Class, Code	Upper, Left Coordinates					
		Training Site			Test Site		
		Row #	Pixel #	Size	Row #	Pixel #	Size
LISS-II	1 A	116	271	7x7	191	381	10x10
	2 B	81	361	7x7	31	281	10x10
	3 C	281	81	7x7	361	201	10x10
Landsat-TM	1 D	240	360	7x7	310	240	9x9
	2 E	200	320	7x7	280	360	9x9
	3 F	65	120	7x7	250	25	9x9
	4 C	6	360	7x7	320	380	9x9
SPOT	5 C	6	260	7x7	180	80	9x9
	1 A	6	6	7x7	385	360	9x9
	2 A	44	6	7x7	258	380	9x9
Magellan, S	3 G	120	6	7x7	360	180	9x9
	1 H	244	201	7x7	181	241	9x9
	2 I	241	241	7x7	260	156	9x9
SIR-C, X	3 J	6	6	7x7	280	380	9x9
	1 D	11	11	7x7	101	331	9x9
	2 K	221	101	7x7	246	246	9x9
SIR-C, L	3 C	351	11	7x7	11	131	9x9
	1 G	361	61	7x7	381	81	10x10
	2 A	91	191	7x7	11	202	10x10
	3 L	281	181	7x7	241	241	10x10

Codes: A = vegetated (several types); B = canyon; C = native/sparsely vegetated; D = deep water; E = shallow water/silty; F = geyser deposits; G = deforested ground; H = hummocky ground/landslide; I = radar dark; J = radar bright/nonhummocky ground; K = urban; L = nonvegetated volcanics

TABLE II  
CONTINGENCY TABLE FOR IRS LISS II IMAGE. CLASSES ARE  
INDICATED BY NUMBER; T REPRESENTS LOSS TO THRESHOLD

Method	Training				Test				
	1	2	3	T	1	2	3	T	
Semi-variogram	1	88	0	12	0	100	0	0	0
	2	27	53	20	0	41	34	25	0
	3	6	2	92	0	2	0	98	0
						average			77
Co-occurrence	1	98	0	2	0	99	0	1	0
	2	0	88	12	0	0	50	50	0
	3	31	0	69	0	100	0	0	0
						average			50
Min Dist	1	73	27	0	0	100	0	0	0
	2	25	55	20	0	39	39	22	0
	3	0	8	92	0	0	0	100	0
						average			80

TABLE III  
CONTINGENCY TABLES, LANDSAT TM IMAGE. CLASSES ARE  
INDICATED BY NUMBER; T REPRESENTS LOSS TO THRESHOLD

Method	Training						Test							
	1	2	3	4	5	T	1	2	3	4	5	T		
Semi-variogram	1	100	0	0	0	0	0	95	5	0	0	0	0	
	2	47	53	0	0	0	0	47	40	0	12	1	0	
	3	0	0	63	0	37	0	0	0	65	0	35	0	
	4	0	0	0	96	4	0	0	0	0	65	35	0	
	5	0	0	0	12	88	0	0	0	0	11	89	0	
													average	71
Co-occurrence	1	100	0	0	0	0	0	96	0	0	4	0	0	
	2	67	33	0	0	0	0	41	25	0	15	19	0	
	3	0	2	51	0	2	45	0	0	30	0	3	67	
	4	2	0	0	98	0	0	0	0	0	27	73	0	
	5	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	
													average	56
Min Dist	1	76	24	0	0	0	0	57	43	0	0	0	0	
	2	27	73	0	0	0	0	4	83	0	12	1	0	
	3	0	0	84	0	16	0	0	0	74	0	26	0	
	4	0	0	0	90	10	0	0	0	0	75	25	0	
	5	0	0	0	8	92	0	0	0	0	6	94	0	
													average	76

TABLE IV  
CONTINGENCY TABLES FOR SPOT HRV IMAGE. CLASSES ARE  
INDICATED BY NUMBER; T REPRESENTS LOSS TO THRESHOLD

Method	Training				Test				
	1	2	3	T	1	2	3	T	
Semi-variogram	1	84	0	16	0	67	0	33	0
	2	0	63	37	0	0	22	78	0
	3	37	14	49	0	32	35	33	0
						average			41
Co-occurrence	1	90	0	10	0	77	0	23	0
	2	4	78	18	0	37	41	22	0
	3	47	2	51	0	67	0	0	33
						average			39
Min Dist	1	84	0	16	0	81	0	19	0
	2	2	86	12	0	2	58	40	0
	3	22	10	68	0	15	30	55	0
						average			65

tables (Tables II-IV). A simple minimum-distance-to-mean classification based solely on mean DN yields largest accuracy for all three images. It is further noted that, whereas the co-occurrence method yields smaller accuracy in comparison to the semivariogram textural classifier and minimum-distance-

to-mean classifier for two of these images, IRS LISS-II (band 2) and Landsat TM (band 3), and yields comparable accuracy to the semivariogram method for the SPOT HRV near-infrared image, it does provide the largest accuracy for the second class of the IRS LISS-II band 2 image of the Grand Canyon. This pertains to both training site

TABLE V  
CONTINGENCY TABLES, MAGELLAN IMAGE. CLASSES ARE INDICATED BY NUMBER; *T* REPRESENTS LOSS TO THRESHOLD

Method	Training				Test				
	1	2	3	T	1	2	3	T	
Semi-variogram									
	1	78	4	18	0	79	3	18	0
	2	0	100	0	0	0	100	0	0
	3	0	0	100	0	0	1	99	0
						average			93
Co-occurrence									
	1	47	10	25	18	61	12	17	10
	2	57	31	8	4	30	0	0	70
	3	61	10	21	8	44	2	0	54
						average			20
Min Dist									
	1	59	18	23	0	63	7	30	0
	2	0	100	0	0	4	96	0	0
	3	16	0	84	0	23	0	77	0
						average			79

homogeneity and test site accuracy. This class represents the canyon, and its textural characteristics, as described by a co-occurrence matrix, evidently outweigh in importance its DN and semivariogram signatures. The co-occurrence matrix method also yields largest accuracy for two of the classes associated with the Landsat TM image of a portion of Yellowstone National Park: class 1, deep water (Shoshone Lake); and class 5 (native ground, type II, a subjective assignment). The semivariogram method yields accuracy comparable to that of the co-occurrence method for class 1 (deep water), and both yield classification accuracy for this class larger than that from the minimum-distance-to-mean classifier based solely on DN. In general, minimum-distance-to-mean classification based on mean DN yields largest classification accuracy for these images acquired in the visible and near-infrared portions of the electromagnetic spectrum. Occasionally, either the semivariogram or co-occurrence matrix methods of textural classification may yield larger accuracy for a class.

B. Microwave Imagery

Classification accuracy for the three microwave images is summarized as contingency tables (Tables V–VII). Average classification accuracy is largest for all three images using textural classification based on the semivariogram. In the case of the Magellan *S*-band microwave image of mass-wasting features on Venus, all three classes (Table V) are identified more accurately using the semivariogram than when using the co-occurrence matrix (smallest accuracy) or minimum-distance-to-mean classification based solely on mean DN (intermediate accuracy). In this microwave image, the spatial autocorrelation (semivariogram) signature for a class seems to be its most consistently identifiable feature. Furthermore, the semivariogram classifier yields a 14% larger accuracy with respect to minimum-distance-to-mean classification. Classifi-

TABLE VI  
CONTINGENCY TABLES, SIR-C IMAGE OF SAN FRANCISCO. CLASSES ARE INDICATED BY NUMBER; *T* REPRESENTS LOSS TO THRESHOLD

Method	Training				Test				
	1	2	3	T	1	2	3	T	
Semi-variogram									
	1	100	0	0	0	100	0	0	0
	2	0	92	8	0	0	73	27	0
	3	0	22	78	0	0	56	44	0
						average			72
Co-occurrence									
	1	100	0	0	0	100	0	0	0
	2	0	39	34	27	0	2	3	95
	3	0	18	27	55	0	8	25	67
						average			42
Min Dist									
	1	100	0	0	0	100	0	0	0
	2	0	94	6	0	0	59	41	0
	3	0	25	75	0	0	48	52	0
						average			70

TABLE VII  
CONTINGENCY TABLES, SIR-C IMAGE OF MT. RAINIER. CLASSES ARE INDICATED BY NUMBER; *T* REPRESENTS LOSS TO THRESHOLD

Method	Training				Test				
	1	2	3	T	1	2	3	T	
Semi-variogram									
	1	98	2	0	0	99	1	0	0
	2	55	35	10	0	26	38	36	0
	3	2	33	65	0	4	12	84	0
						average			74
Co-occurrence									
	1	18	17	57	8	8	18	58	16
	2	14	43	43	0	17	33	21	29
	3	12	12	76	0	6	38	39	17
						average			26
Min Dist									
	1	86	14	0	0	86	14	0	0
	2	14	76	10	0	9	51	40	0
	3	0	39	61	0	0	0	53	47
						average			63

cation based on the co-occurrence matrix is associated with a significant number of pixels lost to thresholding. With respect to the SIR-C, *X*-band microwave image of San Francisco, the semivariogram method yields the largest accuracy for two of the three classes (Table VI); minimum-distance-to-mean classification based solely on DN yields largest accuracy for the third class (native; nonurban). As happened with the Magellan, *S*-band microwave image, the co-occurrence method resulted in a majority of pixels lost to thresholding.

Finally, in application to the SIR-C, *L*-band image (horizontally transmitted and vertically received) of Mt. Rainier, the semivariogram method yields largest accuracy for two of

TABLE VIII

CONTINGENCY TABLES, RECLASSIFICATION OF THE MAGELLAN IMAGE USING ALGORITHMS OPERATING IN THE NORTH-SOUTH DIRECTION ONLY. CLASSES ARE INDICATED BY NUMBER; *T* REPRESENTS LOSS TO THRESHOLD

Method	Training				Test				
	1	2	3	T	1	2	3	T	
Semi-variogram	1	71	4	25	0	48	0	52	0
	2	0	100	0	0	0	100	0	0
	3	0	0	100	0	4	0	96	0
								average	81
Co-occurrence	1	63	0	37	0	5	0	95	0
	2	0	92	8	0	25	38	37	0
	3	24	0	76	0	80	11	9	0
								average	17

TABLE IX

CONTINGENCY TABLES, RECLASSIFICATION OF THE LANDSAT TM IMAGE USING ALGORITHMS OPERATING IN THE NORTH-SOUTH DIRECTION ONLY. CLASSES ARE INDICATED BY NUMBER; *T* REPRESENTS LOSS TO THRESHOLD

Method	Training						Test						
	1	2	3	4	5	T	1	2	3	4	5	T	
Semi-variogram	1	76	24	0	0	0	0	84	16	0	0	0	0
	2	31	69	0	0	0	0	36	38	26	0	0	0
	3	0	0	92	0	8	0	0	0	22	0	78	0
	4	0	0	0	76	24	0	0	0	0	46	54	0
	5	0	0	0	8	92	0	0	0	0	14	86	0
										average		55	
Co-occurrence	1	98	2	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0
	2	63	37	0	0	0	0	30	30	7	6	27	0
	3	0	0	43	0	0	57	0	0	51	0	7	42
	4	8	0	0	92	0	0	0	0	0	63	37	0
	5	0	0	0	6	94	0	0	0	1	1	98	0
										average		68	

three classes (class 1, clear-cut, deforested ground and class 3, nonvegetated volcanics). For class 2, vegetated/river valley, a minimum-distance-to-mean classification based solely on DN yields largest accuracy. The co-occurrence matrix method yields the smallest accuracy; moreover, as with the other two microwave images, a significant number of pixels are lost to thresholding.

V. DISCUSSION

Results (Tables II-VII) pertain only to an E-W classification scheme imposed on the co-occurrence matrix and semivariogram methods. Another analysis of two of the images (Tables VIII and IX) shows the effect when imposing a N-S classification scheme. In the case of the Magellan, S-band microwave image (Table VIII), the semivariogram method for textural classification yields largest accuracy, although its ability to classify the first class (hummocky ground/landslide) is substantially diminished. The co-occurrence classification

TABLE X

RECLASSIFICATION OF MICROWAVE IMAGES USING THE CO-OCCURRENCE MATRIX METHOD WITH A TWO-PIXEL SPACING, EAST-WEST SPATIAL DIRECTION ONLY. CLASSES ARE INDICATED BY NUMBER; *T* REPRESENTS LOSS TO THRESHOLD

Image	Training				Test				
	1	2	3	T	1	2	3	T	
Magellan, S-band	1	33	6	20	41	47	0	27	26
	2	0	92	0	8	0	96	0	4
	3	18	29	6	47	0	37	0	63
								average	48
SIR-C, L-band	1	100	0	0	0	67	20	6	7
	2	31	33	14	22	1	32	20	47
	3	2	57	25	16	0	13	30	57
								average	43

method still yields smallest accuracy, yet interestingly no pixels are lost to thresholding. With respect to the Landsat TM image (Table IX), the co-occurrence matrix method yields larger accuracy in comparison to the semivariogram method when these methods are applied in the N-S direction only.

An additional aspect to consider with respect to the spatial co-occurrence matrix method is its algorithmic implementation in terms of pixel distance. Results (Tables II-IX) are developed using a one-pixel distance, as was done in the example presented in Section III. Results (Table X) show the change in classification accuracy for this method using a two-pixel distance when applied to two of the three microwave images. Although overall accuracy remains small, substantial increases in accuracy did occur for some classes (class 2, Magellan, and class 1, SIR-C, L-band). Changing the algorithmic design of the co-occurrence matrix method can result in larger classification accuracy for microwave imagery than what is reported herein.

Furthermore, at least with respect to microwave imagery, the fact that the semivariogram textural classifier yields larger accuracy than what is obtained using the co-occurrence matrix method suggests that texture in the microwave domain may not obey a Markov law [2]. The co-occurrence matrix at one spatial distance (one pixel to the east) does not seem to capture the entire autocorrelation function. With respect to Landsat TM, SPOT HRV, and IRS LISS-II data, the co-occurrence and semivariogram textural classifiers yield similar accuracy. This may indicate that a Markov law for texture is valid for visible and near-infrared imagery.

VI. CONCLUSION

The semivariogram function has been applied previously for remote-sensing and image processing applications [12]-[15]. Its application to image classification, however, is relatively new [6]-[9]. Therefore, this method is necessarily compared to the well-known and accepted co-occurrence method [2] for classification of texture. For visible and near-infrared, optically acquired imagery, the semivariogram classifier may yield larger accuracy, but textural classification may not yield as great an accuracy as simple minimum-distance-to-mean

classification based on mean DN. When textural classification is attempted for optically acquired imagery, the co-occurrence matrix method often results in larger accuracy in comparison to the semivariogram method.

Previous studies [6]–[8], although subjective, suggest large accuracy when using semivariogram signatures for classifying microwave imagery. No quantitative assessment was attempted in these early studies. Some quantitative testing as well as extending the semivariogram method to multispectral classification using the notion of the cross semivariogram is presented [9]. These previous studies, as well as quantitative results presented in this present study, suggest that the semivariogram method is particularly useful for classifying texture in microwave imagery.

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