

Adaption of the Chumbley Score to matching of bullet striation marks

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Abstract

Keywords: 3 to 6 keywords, that do not appear in the title

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1 Introduction

1.1 Problem statement and motivation

'considered to be unique' by AFTE - that is right, but we should not use this argument, and I don't think we have to. It's better to focus on the problem at hand: striation marks are used to determine same source for bullets. XXX we could include some figures here XXX Current standards ask for a visual inspection of the marks under a comparison microscope by a firearms examiner. One of the problems raised by the NAS report in 2009 is the subjectivity involved in this comparison and the need for determining error rates (National Research Council 2009). There are different approaches used to achieve more objectivity and assess error rates. XXX here we need some examples of approaches XXX For toolmarks, the Chumbley score has been suggested to determine same-source. XXX summary of results from original paper and the adjustment XXX In this paper we are interested in how this method has to be adjusted to best be applied to the smaller marks on bullets. done

Striation marks are used to determine same source for bullets. Current standards ask for a visual inspection of the marks under a comparison microscope by a firearms examiner. One of the problems raised by the NAS report in 2009 is the subjectivity involved in this comparison and the need for determining error rates (National Research Council 2009). The issue of subjectivity of a firearms examiner has been reviewed by many authors where things like scientific principle testability and error rates are considered to be defining aspects for an objective analysis such that without identifying the uncertainties associated with a method of comparison, it is inconclusive to regards an analysis complete. This means that with the usual method of visual comparison that is adopted by firearms examiners, lies the problem of lack of any systemized quantification and as such there seems no certain way of associating it with any kind of mathematical probability. Since determining error rates has been duly noted as a fundamental problem in forensic science (National Research Council 2009), there is a need of methods that address this problem. Some of the methods that have been used to estimate error rates in firearm examinations include Automatic cartridge case comparison where same source identification of cartridge cases and associated error rates

have been provided by (Riva & Champod 2014), although as noted by (Hare et al. 2016), in this case alignments of striae involves roation of planes, which cannot be generalized for bullets. In case of methods that use machine learning algorithms some methods which are bootsrap based methods often tend to give over-estimated error rates (Efron & Tibshirani 1993), but there are alternate error estimation techniques as described by (Hare et al. 2016), (Efron & Tibshirani 1993) and (Vorburger et al. 2016) which give better results.

In case of methods that do not use machine learning algorithm, matching two striation marks with each other in order to identify if it is from the same source, can also be done using a well defined comparative statistical algorithm. The statistical algorithm is therefore expected to go through a step by step procedure of identifying the class characteristics i.e striation marks for bullets, choosing the striae, and then follow a systematic procedure of comparing two striae with each other on the basis of criteria like cross-correlation (or others). Such a methodology would make it possible to determine error rates too and give definite results regarding what proportion of cases would the analysis be successful in identifying a match correctly and in how many cases would it end up being a false positive.

Identification criteria like consecutively matching striae (CMS) as first seen by Biasotti 1959 Biasotti (1959) and later mentioned in Chu et al. (2013) more often than not include subject bias and are error prone and as seen in the work of Miller (1998) the number of CMS may turn to out to be high even when the bullet is not fires by the same firearm. Parameters like cross-correlation factor as seen in the extensive comparisons made by (Hare et al. 2016) seem to perform much better matching purposes.

An important aspect of same source matching in firearms is identification of bullet microtopographies that are unique to be chosen for a match, Bullet profiles and signatures prove to be such features. The choice of a bullet signature to uniquely define a bullet depends on finding first, a stable region on a Bullet land which minimal noise and many pronounced striation marks. Hare et al. (2016)

The method employed by Hare et al. (2016) uses the cross correlation factor as a means to identify the stable region. The markings or striae in this region are supposed to have a high CCF with each other. Therefore a Bullet profile is chosen from this region by taking the cross section at a given height. A loess fit on the bullet profile produces residuals which

are termed as signatures and can be used as a unique identifier that can be used while matching two bullets to a firearm.

Comparing pairs of toolmarks on the otherhand, with the intention of matching it to a tool has been studied relatively more in the past as compared to bullets, and Chumbley et al. (2010) have described in their paper an algorithm and analytic method that compares two toolmarks and come to the conclusion if they are from the same tool or not. The method also determines the error rates, reduces subject bias and designate the two toolmarks as matches or non-matches with respect to a source. Chumbley et al. (2010) used an empirical based setup to validate their proposed analytic and quantitative algorithm.

(Chumbley et al. 2010) found that the algorithm gives false-positives in slightly over 2 cases (or 2%) of the time and about 9 false-negatives (or 9%) for every 100 comparisons. (Hadler & Morris n.d.) on the other hand, in the improved version of the algorithm first described by (Chumbley et al. 2010) found false-positives for 0 cases and 3 false-negatives (or 6%) for 50 comparisons of known matches.

1.2 Existing solution for toolmarks: Chumbley Score

XXX anything to do with motivation has to come first - move this to the first paragraph of the intro XXX XXX data and results come after the intro to chumbley. XXX start with defining the data, i.e. we are working with random processes $x(t)$ and $y(t)$... you should also go into the coarseness parameter here - that is a pre-processing step before the optimization. done

The Chumbley score algorithm takes input as two vectorized processes $x(t_1)$ and $y(t_2)$ which denote two sets of marks or striae. These marks or striae are potentially from two different bullets or two different toolmarks whose source needs to be identified as being same or different. The marks or striae are indexed by the pixel location where t_1 is for the first striae referred to as x and t_2 is for the second striae which is referred as y . t_1 and t_2 need not be the same but are usually of similar lengths. The similarity is then judged by the algorithm on the basis of cross-correlation of a fixed and constant number consecutive pixels say k taken from the two indexed marks $x(t_1)$ and $y(t_2)$ such that in theory k remains smaller than length of the two striae or marks which is the same as t_1 and t_2 . Depending on

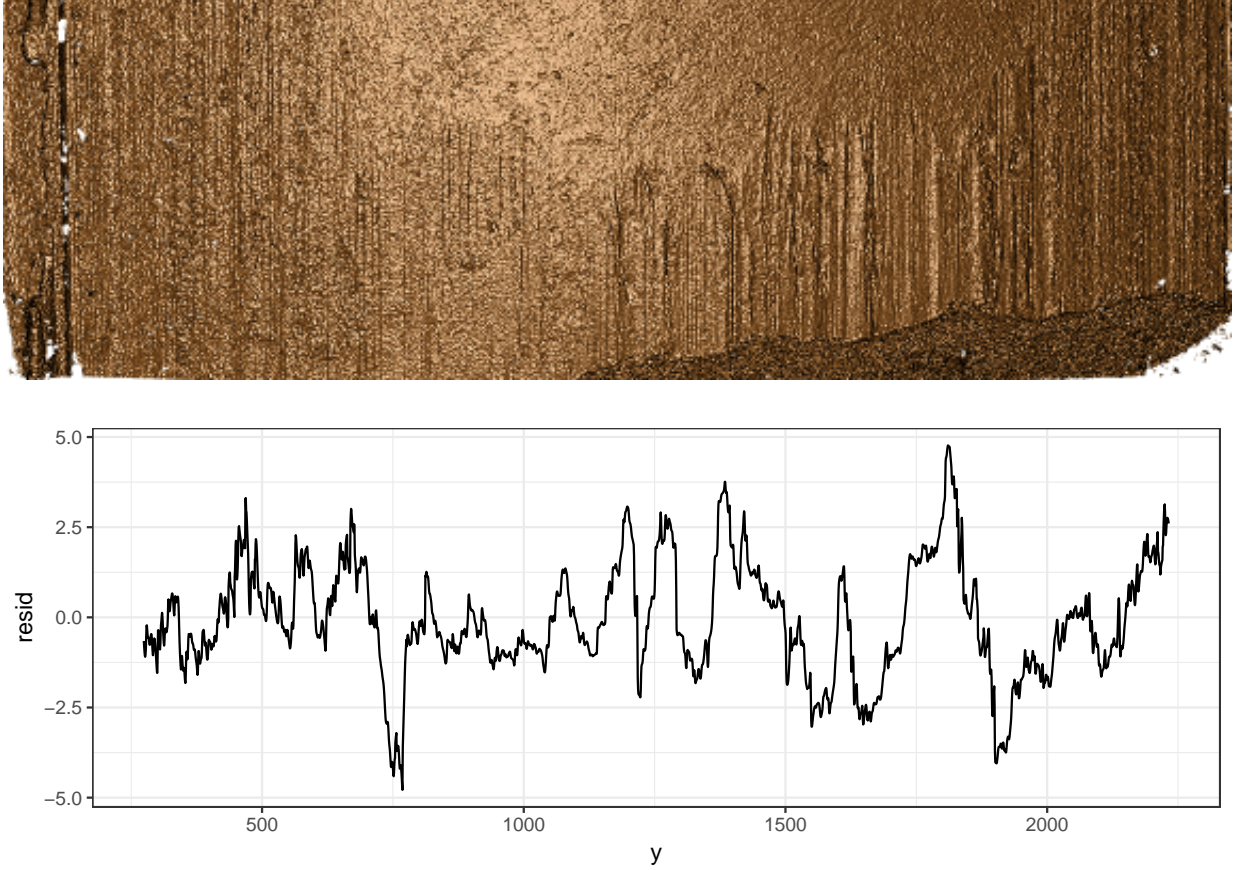


Figure 1: Image of a bullet land from a confocal light microscope at 20 fold magnification.

the what stage of the algorithm we are in, matching of different pixel lengths and locations is done, which at the end effectively compares all possible windows that would guarantee in quantifying the two marks or striae as coming from the same source or not, which also lets us assess the error rates by checking for a large number of cases.

The algorithm works in two phases, namely, an optimization step and a validation step, at the end of which a Mann Whitney U statistic is calculated. A pre-processing step to the algorithm is to choose a coarseness value which is used as a parameter to the LOWESS smoothing function. The coarseness essentially gives the proportion of points which influence the smooth at each value, which means larger values lead to more smoothness. The LOWESS smoothing is applied to each of two sets of vectorized striae or marks $x(t_1)$ and $y(t_2)$, before proceeding to the algorithm.

Hadler & Morris (n.d.) in their paper proposed an improvement to this algorithm by trying to remove mutual dependence of parameters (due to serial correlation in surface depth values of a toolmark and because of a random sampling sub step in the validation phase which makes a group of pixels to be chosen more than once and hence introduces lack of independence) in certain steps, especially because the Mann-Whitney U statistic that is later calculated in the algorithm and used as a measure to differentiate between matches and non-matches works under the assumption of independence of parameters.

Since we are only interested in a non-parameteric U statistic, Hadler et al. proposed a normalization procedure in the Validation step that goes to some extent to address the issue of mutual dependence. Also the same shift and different shift substep was modified to use a deterministic rule for sampling sam-shhif and dofferent shift-samples as opposed to the originally proposed random samples.

The data that is used by Chumbley et al. (2010) is generated by a surface profilometer that gives the height in terms of distance along a linear trace. This is taken perpendicular to the striations present in the toolmark. Two such trace are then compared using the algorithm.

1.3 Chumbley Algorithm and Chumbley score

1.3.1 Optimization step

The idea behind this step is to first identify the area of best agreement in the two toolmark data. Comparison window size is predefined by the user, which in case of screwdriver toolmarks was chosen by Chumbley et al and Hadler et al as around 10 percent of the length of the toolmarks, which was around 500. This window is henceforth referred to as Window of optimization.

A maximum correlation statistic is used to identify the region of best agreement, with the maximum usually seen being near 1 for both cases which is what we intuitively expect for matches, and something which we do not intuitively expect for non matches doneXXX get rid of the parentheses - put the content into a sentence after your first statement.

XXX the process you describe below is the cross-correlation of two series $x(t)$ and $y(t)$.

First, there are a very large number of cross-correlations calculated for the two series of striae or marks $x(t_1)$ and $y(t_2)$, for eg if the window of optimization was defined as 200 and toolmark pixel length is around 1000 then we have $1200 - (200 - 1) = 1001$. Can be thought of ordered arrangements without replacement where $n = 1001$ and $r = 1$.

This is the number of windows we have for one toolmark and each window is compared with all windows of the second toolmark (the number of windows is again similar), and the window with the maximum correlation is identified to be the region where the toolmarks are in maximum agreement with each other

1.3.2 Validation Step

Same-shift: In this step a series of windows are chosen at random (originally by chumbley et al) and deterministically (by hadler et al), but at a common distance (rigid-shift) from the window identified as the region of best agreement in the validation step. The correlation of these windows would be as intuitively assumed i.e. lower than the maximum correlation window (Optimization step), but the significance is that these same shift windows will still have large enough correlation values for two toolmarks or signatures that are in reality a match.

This also validates that if in the optimization step the maximum correlation window

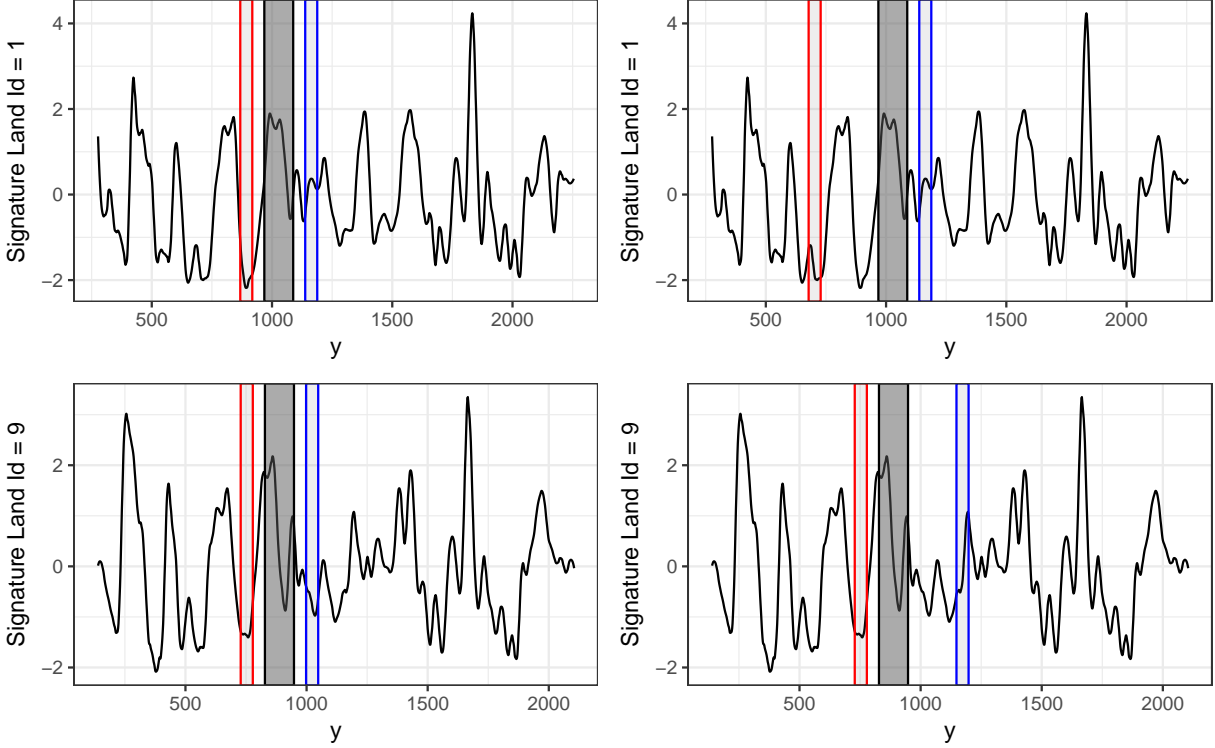


Figure 2: The two plots on the left show how the same shift behaves in case of a matching pair and the two plots on the right show how the different shift behaves in case of a matching pair.

chosen (with correlation value near 1) was by accident (like in case of signatures that in reality are a non-match), all these same- shift correlations (A fixed number of these trace segments are identified) would not be anywhere large enough for all same-shift windows.

	Classification	Match	Non-Match
1	Match	47	3
2	Non-Match	0	50

Different Shift: Primary reason for this substep is to give perspective to the correlation values of the same shift window correlation values.

This time there are no rigid-shifts but different shifts (distance from Window of Opt with max correlation) chosen randomly by Chumbley et al. (2010) and deterministically by

Hadler et al. such that there is an equal possibility of comparing a trace segment from one signature or toolmark to any one in the second signature or toolmark.

Neither of above sets of correlation are allowed to include the maximum correlation window as identified earlier.

Therefore the assumption is that if two toolmarks or signatures match each other the same-shift correlations would be larger than the different-shift windows, and if they are not a match the correlations in the two sets will be very similar.

1.3.3 U Statistic:

This is computed from the joint rank of all correlations of both the same and different shift samples. As given by Hadler & Morris (n.d.)

Null Hypothesis: If the toolmarks were not match i.e not made by the same tool.

Let n_s and n_d be the number of same shift and different shift windows $N = n_s + n_d$

The mann whitney U statistic is given by $U = \sum_{i=1}^{n_s} R_s(i)$

with the standardized version which includes provision for rank ties

$$\bar{U} = \frac{U - M}{\sqrt{V}}$$

where prior to normalization the U-statistic has the mean as

$$M = n_s \left(\frac{N + 1}{2} \right)$$

and variance

$$V = \frac{n_s n_d}{N(N-1)} [\sum_{i=1}^{n_s} R_s(i)^2 + \sum_{j=1}^{n_d} R_d(j)^2] - \frac{n_s n_d (N+1)^2}{4(N-1)}$$

1.4 Potential limitations in the application to striation marks on bullet lands: smaller in width and curved - need to adjust parameter settings; something similar is done in Grieve et al. (2014) for toolmark comparisons of slip-joint pliers.

Bullets are much smaller in length, width, are not flat and curved in the cross-sectional topography as opposed to tools like screw driver tips which produced longer and pronounced markings. This means the markings made by barrels in comparison to toolmarks may have a problem in distinctiveness. The majority of Bullet profiles and signatures extracted by

procedures mentioned by Hare et al. (2016) are almost 1/4 th the size of toolmarks as used by Chumbley et al. (2010) or even smaller. Striations on Bullets are made on their curved surfaces, whereas the algorithm developed by Chumbley et al. (2010) and Hadler & Morris (n.d.) has only been tested for flatter and wider surfaces which have negligible curvature. Therefore, using methods proposed for toolmarks may need adaptation in order to give tangible results for bullets. Moreover, in order to get flat bullet signatures and remove the curvatures some kind of smoothing needs to be applied as a pre-step which needs further investigation as to whether the level of smoothing does effect the working of the algorithm on Bullets.

Also when in the optimization step, the Window of optimization for bullets will be shorter as the signatures are smaller. The idea is to keep the number of windows of optimization sufficiently large, which means shorter Trace segments (partition of signature or toolmark with length = size of window of optimization) that lets us compare smaller segments of one signature to another.

This introduces a problem as, if we go too small in the window of optimization, the unique features of the trace segments are lost and seem similar, while too large sizes vastly reduces the weight of small features that would otherwise uniquely classify a signature and hence identify the region of agreement.

Thus the Window of Optimization has a direct influence on whether we are Falsely rejecting the null when it is true (Type I) or Falsely accepting the null when it is false (Type II) making identification of the optimum size of window of optimization very important.

1.5 Using cross-validation setup to identify appropriate parameter settings for (a) signatures and (b) profiles directly

Following on similar lines to the setup of toolamrks, the first step here is to first identify what difference does different window sizes of optimization and the validation step have, when adapting the toolmark method to bullets.

The marking made on bullets are smaller than toolmarks and is also less wider. The idea is to find out possible areas of error while adapting the score based method proposed for toolmarks.

Bullet signatures being compared at this time are from the Hamby 44 and Hamby 252 data, which have the best set of known-matched and known non-matches.

Bullet signatures are chosen by 1. Filtering out Land_id for Profiles from the Hamby 44 and Hamby 252 data and removing all NA values 2. run_id = 3 is chosen, Seems like the signatures generated from this run_id give the closest match. Different run_id's have some different settings for generating the signatures (The level of smoothing does not seem to be one of them)

The bullet signatures when generated already included the LOWESS smoothing. Therefore, the coarseness factor is set to 1 while running the chumbley_non_random() which generates the same_shift, different_shift, U-Stat and P_value parameters.

window Optimization 320 Window Validation 50

	match	
signif	FALSE	TRUE
	FALSE 77564	412
	TRUE 4022	674

window Optimization 120 Window Validation 50

	match	
signif	FALSE	TRUE
	FALSE 79249	386
	TRUE 4523	854

window Optimization 80 Window Validation 50

	match	
signif	FALSE	TRUE
	FALSE 78817	450
	TRUE 4680	775

Table 1: Overview of parameter settings used for optimization and validation windows for bullet land signatures.

wo	50	50	60	60	80	80	90	90	100	100	110	110	120	120	120	120	120	130	130	140	140	150	150	160	160	200	200	200	240	240	280	280	320
wv	30	50	30	50	30	50	30	50	30	50	30	50	10	20	30	50	60	30	50	30	50	30	50	30	50	20	30	50	30	50	30	50	50

2 Results

2.1 Signatures

Signatures of lands for all Hamby-44 and Hamby-252 scans made available through the NIST ballistics database (Zheng 2016) were considered. Both of these sets of scans are part of the larger Hamby study (Hamby et al. 2009) and each consist of twenty known bullets (two each from ten consecutively rifled Ruger P85 barrels) and fifteen questioned bullets (each matching one of the ten barrels). Ground truth for both of these Hamby sets is known and was used to assess correctness of the tests results.

We used the adjusted Chumbley method as proposed in Hadler & Morris (n.d.) and implemented in the R package `toolmaRk` (Hadler 2017) on all pairwise land-to-land comparisons of the Hamby scans (a total of 85,491 comparisons) in the following manner:

2.1.1 Signatures

Figure 3 gives an overview of type II error rates observed when varying the window size in the optimization step.

Figure 4 compares nominal (fixed) type I error and actually observed type I errors for the parameter settings in table XXX. With an increasing size of the window used in the optimization step the observed type I error rate decreases (slightly). This might be related to the increasing number of tests that fail for larger window sizes, in particular for non-matching striae (see fig 5).

Figure 5 gives an overview of the number of failed tests, i.e. tests in which a particular parameter setting did not return a valid result. This happens, when the shift to align two signatures is so large, that the remaining overlap is too small to accommodate windows for validation. The problem is therefore exacerbated by a larger validation window. Figure

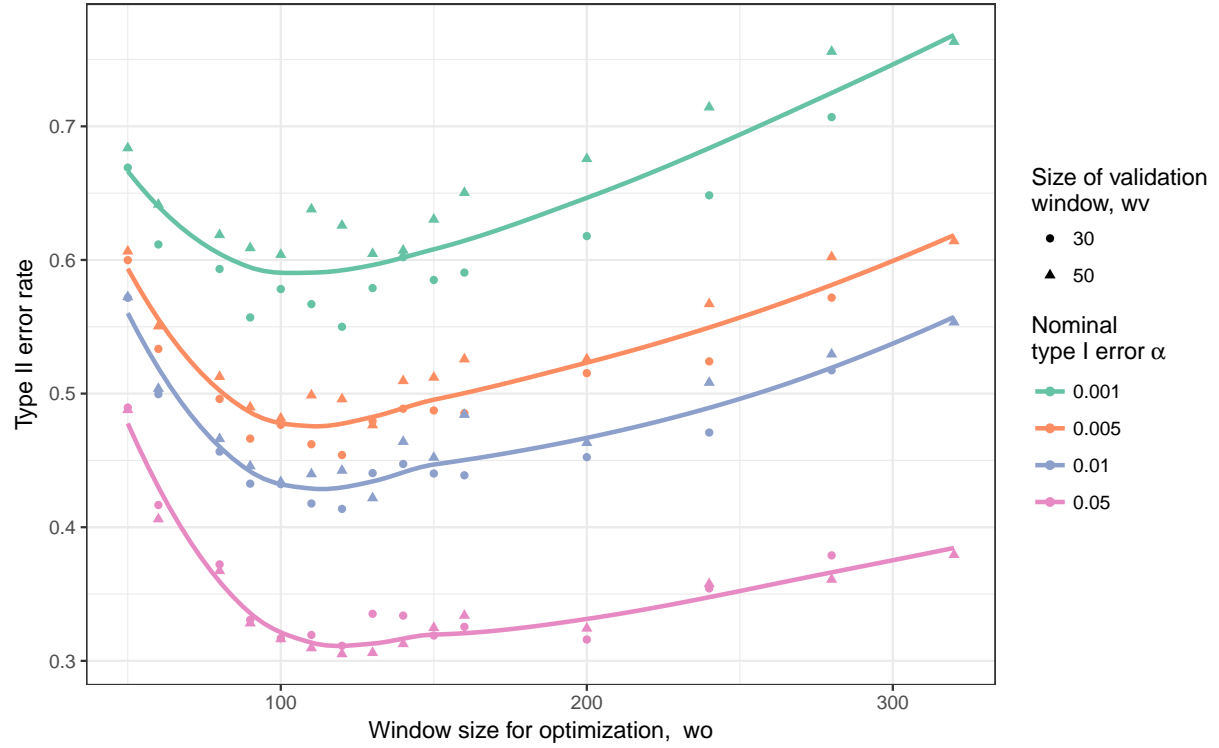


Figure 3: Type II error rates observed across a range of window sizes for optimization wo . For a window size of $wo = 120$ we see a drop in type II error rate across all type I rates considered. Smaller validation sizes wv are typically associated with a smaller type II error.

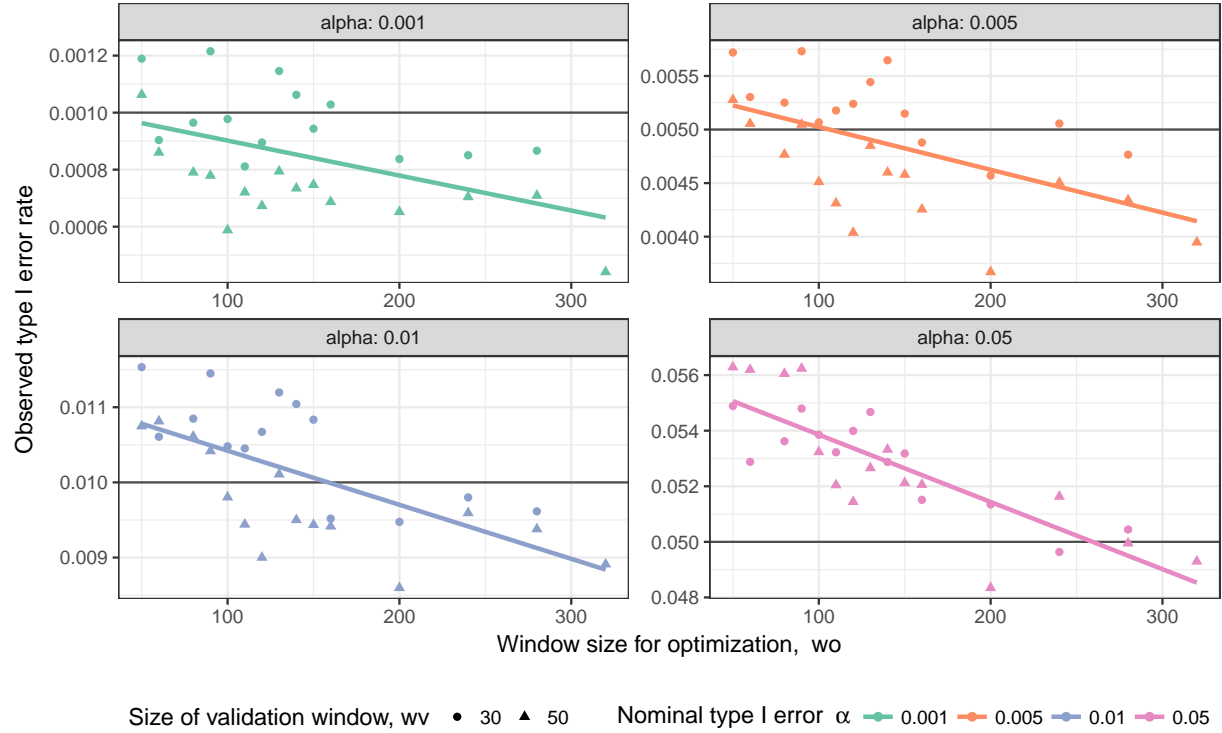


Figure 4: Comparison of observed and nominal type I error rates across a range of window sizes for optimization w_o . The horizontal line in each facet indicates the nominal type I error rate. As the optimization window increase the observed type I error rate gets smaller. A smaller validation window tends to be associated with a higher type I error rate.

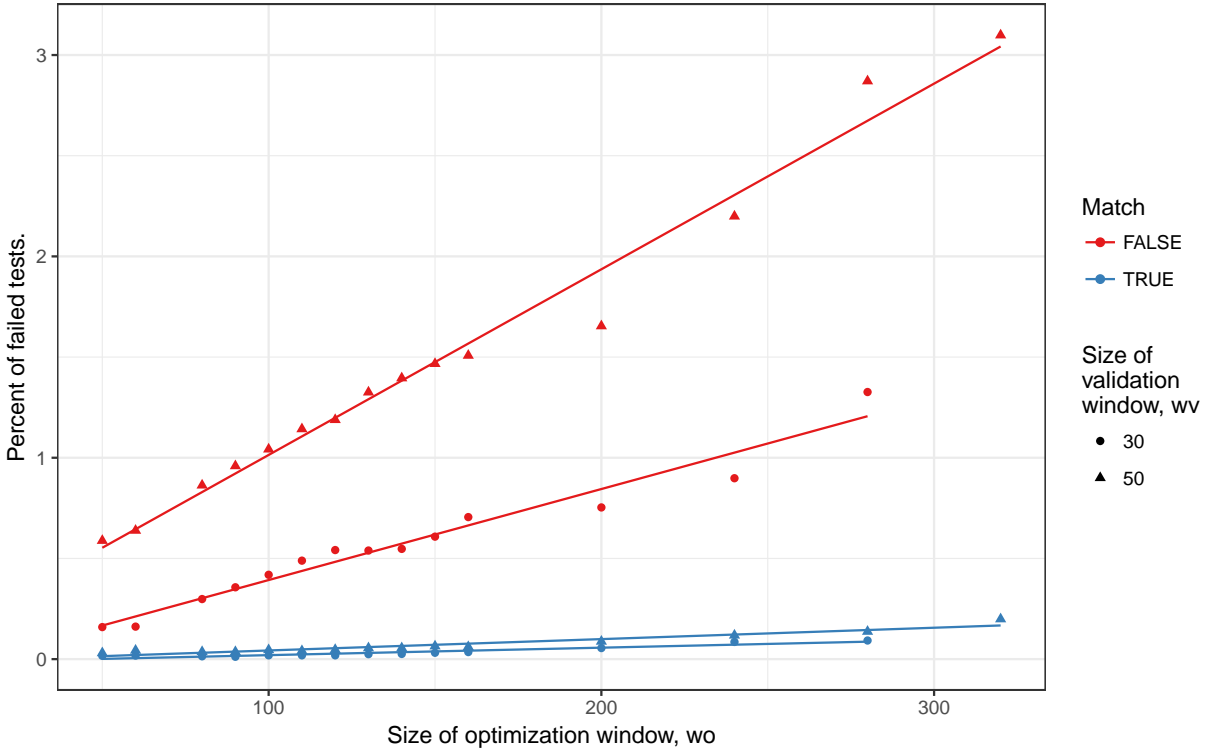
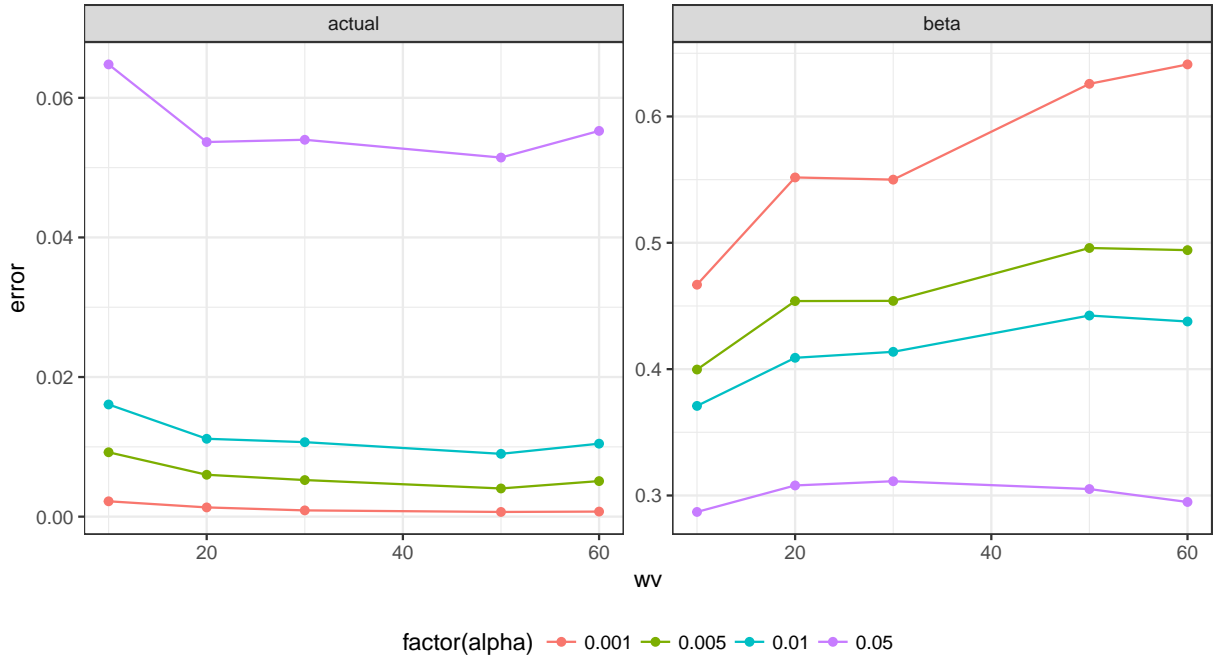


Figure 5: Number of failed tests by the window optimization size, w_o , and ground truth. Test results from different sources have a much higher chance to fail, raising the question, whether failed tests should be treated as rejections of the null hypothesis of same source.

Table 2: Estimates of the increase in percent of failed tests corresponding to a 100 point increase in the optimization window.

match	wv	estimate	std.error
FALSE	30	0.452	0.027
FALSE	50	0.922	0.035
TRUE	30	0.037	0.004
TRUE	50	0.056	0.005

5 also shows that the number of failed tests is approximately linear in the size of the optimization window.



2.1.2 Profiles

The profiles are cross-sectional values of the the bullet striation mark which are chosen at an optimum height (x as used by Hare et al. (2016)). This x or height is not a randomly chosen level. The rationale behind the choice has been explained by Hare et al. (2016). A region is first chosen where the cross-correlation seems to change very less and in this

region an optimum height is chosen. The profiles generally resemble a curve which is more or less similar to a quadratic curve (a quadratic fit to the raw data values of the profile is not an exact fit but it does show a similar trend). Profiles are the set of raw values representing the striation marks, and signatures are generated from these by removal of the inherent curvature and applying some smoothing (the signatures generated by Hare et al. (2016) use a loess function for smoothing).

Coming back to the database of Hamby-44 and Hamby-252 datasets, the `run_id = 3` was used when applying the chumbley algorithm on the signatures. The `run_id` not only defines the level of smoothing but also signifies the chosen height at which the profiles were selected initially. Another important aspect is the range of horizontal values (which is referred to as the `y` values in Hare et al. (2016)) in the signatures. These have already been pre-processed in the database to not include any grooves.

Therefore for the sake of comparison the `run_id = 3` is still chosen so as to ensure that the horizontal values remain the same as that of the signatures. This also gives us profiles with the grooves removed.

The idea therefore is to first use these raw values of the profile directly in the chumbley algorithm, and see how the algorithm performs for different coarseness values (smoothing parameter as referred in the function `LOWESS` used in the chumbley algorithm)

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