

# Roundness Estimation of Sedimentary Rocks Using Elliptic Fourier and Deep Neural Networks

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**Abstract**—Sedimentary rocks analysis is useful in geological science, economic sector, and risk evaluation. Roundness is a morphological parameter that provide information to characterize and classify sedimentary material. Roundness degrees is estimated from the contour of the particle. Waddell (1932) proposed a remarkable method based on the measurement of particle's curvature. This method is accurate; nevertheless, it is not invariant to scale and rotation. This problem can be solved by mapping the contour to the frequency-domain, however, spectral analysis is a difficult task. Based on these two approaches, we propose to use a deep neural network whose input is the elliptical Fourier spectrum and target is roundness proposed by Wadell. The training database consists of 1125 real-rocks images from some geological phenomena. We have found the neural networks perform very well on the 91% of rocks.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Sedimentary rocks are the most abundant in the Earth's crust, covering around 80%. Their study is key to understanding the geological processes that have occurred on earth. Sedimentary rocks are very important in the economy field because they are related to oil, natural gas, coal, salt, sulfur, potassium, gypsum, limestone, phosphate, uranium, among other minerals [1]. Furthermore, in some cases, they represent a risk for populations settled near volcanoes or large sediments [2].

Sedimentary rocks are characterized by their physical, chemical, and mineralogical composition. Physical characteristics are described by three parameters; size, morphology, and fabric (orientation). Accurate measurement of these parameters enables inferences about the origin, transport processes, rheological and climatic environment, and the deposition of the sediment. Size and fabric have been extensively studied and there are well-established techniques for measuring them [3]. On the other hand, morphology is a recent concept, in comparison to the others and is still in development and search for universal

concepts [4]. Morphology describes the shape of rocks using contour measurements. Morphology of rocks by three parameters: form, roundness, and surface texture (roughness). Morphology of rocks consists of three parameters: form, roundness, and surface texture (roughness). These three parameters are hierarchical and of different scales, so one does not affect the other. Form is the highest-hierarchy feature that is related to the general appearance of the rock. Roundness is an intermediate-hierarchy feature superimposed on form. The degree of roundness or angularity is related to the curves and the main corners of the contour. Roughness or surface texture refers to finer irregularities overlapping on form and roundness [5]. These parameters are illustrated in hierarchical order in Fig. 1.

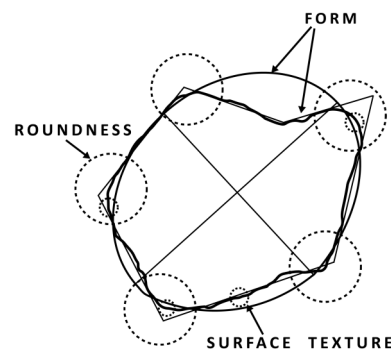


Fig. 1. Hierarchical order proposed by Barret. Features corresponding to irregularities of form, roundness, and surface texture.

Form describes the general appearance of the rock, it is a coarse sketch of contour. There are some expressions to measure form, the most used, in the geological field, is the proposed by Wadell [6] which is obtained from the relationship between the radius of the circle whose area is equal to the particle and the radius of the smallest circle that inscribes the particle. Form is a well-established concept. On the other hand, roundness is a complex concept that is difficult to estimate. For this reason, we dedicate

the present work to this parameter. To measure the degree of roundness, there are two approaches; those based on curvature [7] and those using frequency analysis [8]. The curvature-based method defines the degree of roundness as the ratio of the mean radius of curvature of the corners of a particle to the radius of the largest circumscribed circle possible. This method is simple and accurate, however it is a scale dependent method. The Fourier-based methods are invariant to scale, rotation and translation, however analyzing the spectrum is a complicated issue and of high computational cost [8].

In this work, we propose to use neural networks to estimate the roundness of sedimentary rocks. The input variable to the neural network is the first component of principal components analysis (PCA) of the elliptical Fourier spectrum. The Fourier spectrum was chosen as the input variable because it is invariant to scale, rotation, and translation. The degree of roundness, calculated with the curvature method proposed by Wadell [6], was used as the objective of the neural network. To calculate the roundness, we use the algorithm developed by Zheng and Hryciw [7]. The proposed neural network has the following architecture: 6-layer neural network, the input layer with 1000 neurons and Rectified Linear Unit (ReLU) activation function, 27 hidden layers with several different quantities of neurons each, with ReLU activation function. The output layer with a single neuron with a linear activation function. The database to train the neural network contains 1125 real-rocks images from some geological phenomena. The neural network model has a mean squared error of  $6E-4$  and a mean error of  $6E-3$ . The neural network enables much faster processing. The roundness is estimated at 2800 times faster than the algorithm developed by Zheng and Hryciw. In addition, the method proposed is invariant to scale, rotation, and translation. Using a neural network we have combined the potentialities of the method based on curvature and frequency analysis.

## II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this section, we explain the concepts and mathematical expressions to estimate the roundness. The input variable to the neural network, elliptical Fourier, is described too.

### A. Roundness

Roundness is a second-order property which is independent of the form. Roundness is related to the smoothness (or angularity) of particles. These variations are expressed in corners and edges. The degree of roundness can be estimated by two approaches: curvature and frequency contour analysis. Frequency analysis is described in section elliptical Fourier. The curvature approach was proposed Wadell[6]. The curvature approach consists of finding the most significant curvatures in the contour. These curvatures are associated with the angularity of the particle.

The smaller radius of curvature, the greater corner angle. The more significant curvatures there are, the more angular the contour will be. An example is shown in Fig. 2. Roundness is a second-order property which is independent of the form. Roundness is related to the smoothness (or angularity) of particles. These variations are expressed in corners and edges. The degree of roundness can be estimated by two approaches: curvature and frequency contour analysis. Frequency analysis is described in section elliptical Fourier. Wadell's procedure [6] consists of finding the corners and fitting of circles to them. The concept is clear; however the algorithm to estimate this roundness is not easy to implement. Zheng and Hryciw [7] developed an algorithm which has four main steps: (1) find the maximum inscribed circle, (2) noise reduction, (3) identify the corners, and (4) fit circles to the corners. An example is shown in Fig. 2.

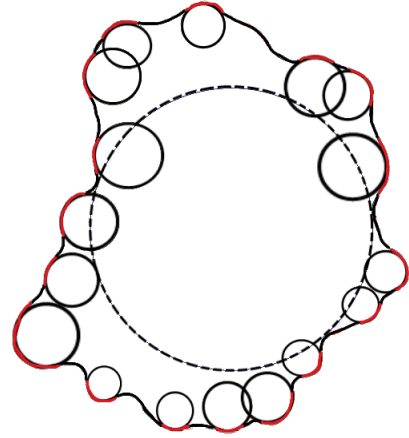


Fig. 2. Illustration of the method, proposed by Wadell, to measure the degree of roundness. The circle dotted line corresponds to maximum inscribed circle and the circles solid line correspond to main corners.

The maximum inscribed circle is used to normalize. This fact is important because the maximum circumscribed circle can be used to normalize. Thus the degree of roundness of a corner can be expressed as  $r_n/R$ , where  $r_n$  is the radius of curvature of the corner  $n$  and  $R$  is the radius of the maximum circumscribed circle. Wadell [6] expressed the total roundness of a particle as

$$D_g = \sum_{n=0}^{N-1} \frac{r_n}{R}, \quad (1)$$

where  $N$  is the number of total corners in the contour. In this way, the range of roundness is between 0 and 1, being 0 a contour without corners (perfect circle) and 1 a contour with the possible maximum number of corners. The algorithm works properly, however, the threshold to identify between corners and non-corners depends on the scale. An inappropriate value, for this threshold, can lead to a considerable error.

To link curvatures and frequency approaches, we proposed using deep neural networks to estimate the roundness of sedimentary rocks. The input variable to the neural network is PC 1 of the elliptical Fourier magnitude spectrum. We chose the spectrum as the input variable because it is invariant to scale, rotation, and translation. PCA was applied to reduce the dimensionality of the spectra resulting from elliptical Fourier. The degree of roundness obtained by the radius of the curvature (method described above) is used as the target value.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To explain the methodology used, Fig. 5 sketches the flow diagram of the proposed method.

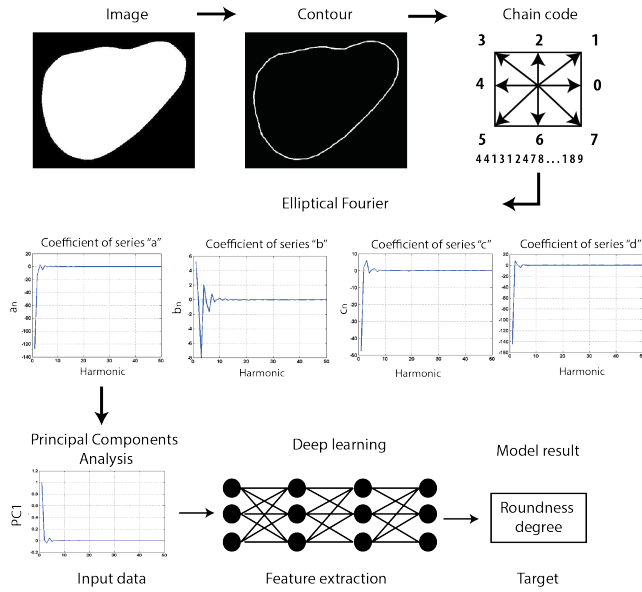


Fig. 5. Flow-chart of the developed method to measure the roundness of sedimentary rocks

The database to train and test the deep neural network was built from 1125 images of real rocks. The rocks analyzed correspond to pyroclastic falls, block and ash flow, debris avalanche and lahars. The database is available at [https://github.com/Gamalielmch/DNN\\_roundness.git](https://github.com/Gamalielmch/DNN_roundness.git).

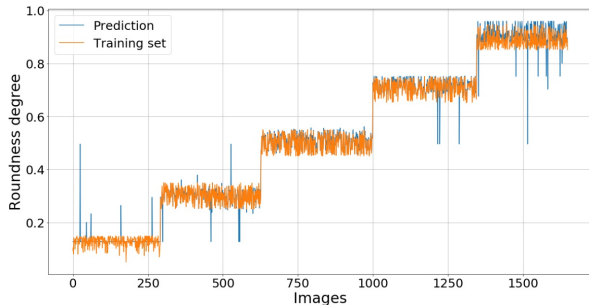


Fig. 6. Result of deep neural network training

Results of analysis reveal that the deep neural network with 29 layers, single input and output layer and twenty seven hidden layers, is the most appropriate architecture. The input layer with 1000 neurons with ReLU activation function, 27 hidden layers with several quantities of neurons each with ReLU activation function and the output layer with a single neuron with activation function linear is the most appropriate approach to measure roundness degree.

The ReLU activation function was chosen for hidden layers because the gradient of the Sigmoid and the TanH function can disappear with each iteration, which would

affect the error propagation. The output layer consists of single neuron with linear activation function because the degree of roundness is a real number. Deep neural network training was performed in Python v3.7.3 using the Jupyter Notebook v5.7.8 platform, using the keras and sklearn libraries [13]. The result of the training is shown in Fig. 6.

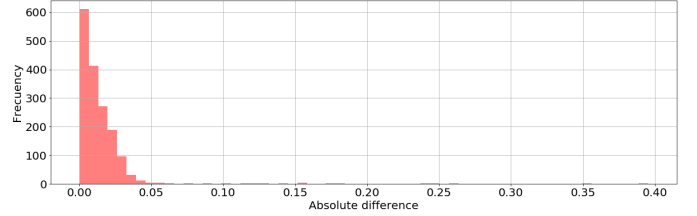


Fig. 7. Absolute differences Histogram. Difference between the predicted value of the neural network and the roundness measured by the Zheng and Hryciw algorithm

As can be seen from Fig. 6, almost all model predictions simulate the roundness degree properly. The deep neural network has a mean squared error (MSE) of  $6E - 4$  and a mean error of  $6E - 3$ . For more detail, the histogram of absolute difference is shown in Fig. 7. The 98% shows a difference of less than 0.05 and 79 % of less than 0.02.

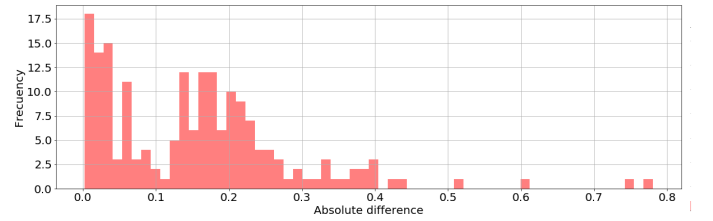


Fig. 8. Absolute differences Histogram. Difference between the predicted value of the neural network and the roundness measured by the Zheng and Hryciw algorithm

To test the deep neural network we have reserved a set of 180 images from the database which were chosen randomly. Fig. 9 shows the results of estimation for test set. The MSE is 0.041 and mean error is 0.016.

The fitting of the deep neural network is accurate for 98% of cases, since a difference of less than 0.05 is very acceptable in geological studies. However, Fig. 8 shows the lack to predict new examples, with only 26% below of 0.05.

### IV. CONCLUSIONS

This work describes the implementation of a deep neural network to estimate the roundness of sedimentary rocks. We use two approaches, curvature and frequency analysis. The input data are the 6 to 50 coefficients of elliptical Fourier and the target data are the curvature of the main corners of the contour. Using these two approaches, we developed an invariant method to scale, rotation, and translation. Based on several architectures, it is concluded that the deep neural network with 28 layers, with several

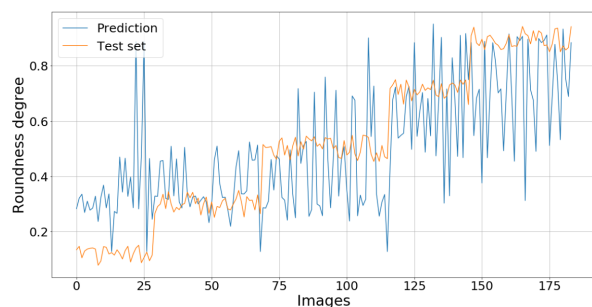


Fig. 9. Result of deep neural network for test set

different quantities of neurons, is the most appropriate to prediction roundness degree.

The deep neural network was trained and tested using 1125 images of real rocks from some geological phenomena. The fitting of the network shows that 91 % of the training data have a difference of less than 0.05. On the other hand, the MSE of the test data was 0.0011 and the mean error was 0.019, a highly acceptable difference in the geological field. The deep neural network model, proposed in this manuscript, can be easily used by readers. The model is freely distributed and available in the repository [https://github.com/Gamalielmch/DNN\\_roundness](https://github.com/Gamalielmch/DNN_roundness).

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Author also extends thanks to Conacyt for Retention Grant No. 2019-000010-01NACV-00020 and support the project No. ZAC-2018-05-125266.

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