

Experimental Laboratory 2

Analysis of the velocity field in the wake of a circular cylinder

Sergio M. Vanegas A.
Francesco de Pas
Department of Mathematics
Polimi—Politecnico di Milano
Milano, Italia

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Abstract

The goal of this laboratory is to analyze the velocity field around a cylinder in a water channel flow, focusing on the wake region. Reference is made to experimental data obtained through the Particle Streak Velocimetry (PSV) technique, which essentially resides on seeding the flow with small particles and shoot a video of the light-sheet illumination plane. The camera has a high exposure time, intended as the time duration of a frame, so that each particle leaves a streak on the image, as exemplified in Figure 1 below. The images then are processed to get the velocity field. In the case study proposed, the Reynolds number of the cylinder $Re = \frac{DU_\infty}{\nu}$ is within the range of the “sub-critical regime”; therefore, it will be not surprising to notice that the flow separates at a certain distance from the front stagnation point, causing a recirculation zone behind of it, and that a turbulent oscillating wake is created by the shedding of two counter-rotating vortices.[1]

The scheme of the experiment is reported in the figure. The flow is from right to left in order to be consistent with the location of the PSV acquisition system in the water channel setup. The framing

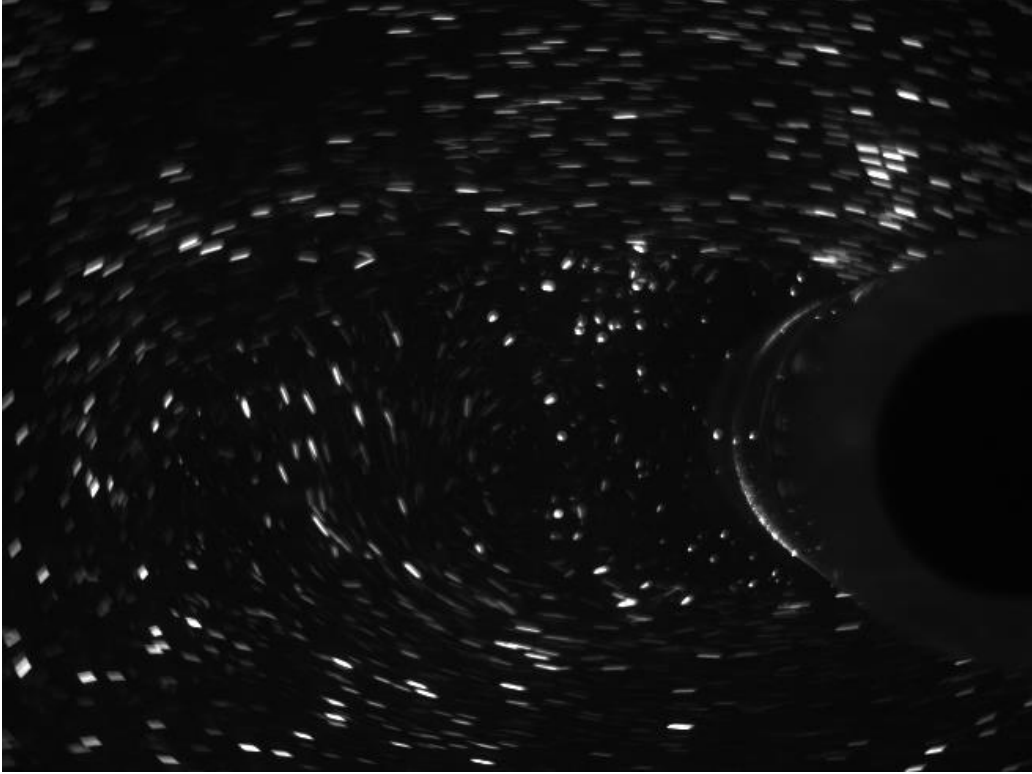


Figure 1: Exemplary image from the camera acquisition

of the camera, which is the measurement field, is a vertical plane in the mid-section of the channel. The coordinate system of the PSV acquisition is (X, Y) , as reported in Figure 2.

1 Introduction

The input data of the problem are summarized in Table 1.

For the post-processing of the PSV data, the frame was divided into a regular grid of 23×30 uniform cells along the directions X and Y , indicated in Figure 2 (left). The number of time steps is 1499, and the duration of each of them is equal to $1/f_s$, being f_s the sampling frequency. The complete set of acquisition data is provided in the MATLAB workspace *PSVdata.mat*, which includes the variables reported in Table 2.

A static snapshot of the PSV frame with a ruler close to the cylinder has

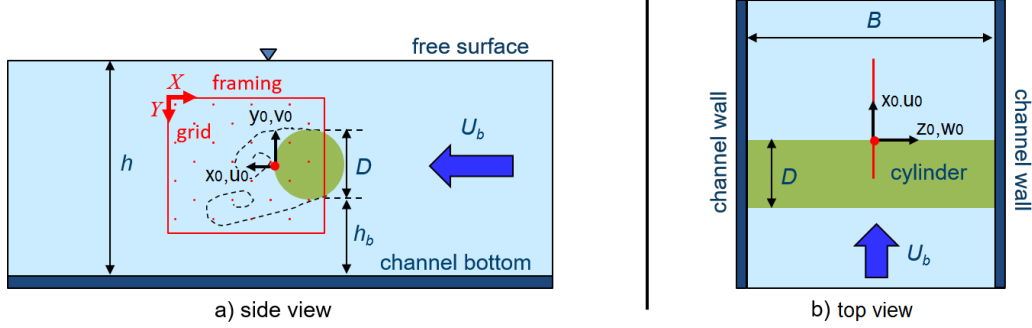


Figure 2: Sketch of the experiment with the PSV frame and the two coordinate systems

Symbol	Parameter	Value	Units
B	Width of the Channel	0.5	m
D	Diameter of the Cylinder	0.06	m
f_s	Sampling Frequency	50	Hz
h	Water level in the channel upstream of the cylinder	0.42	m
h_b	Distance of the cylinder wall from the channel bottom	0.18	m
Q	Volumetric flow rate of water	35	l/s
res	Resolution of the images	3040	px/m
ρ	Density of water	998	kg/m^3
μ	Dynamic viscosity of water	0.001	$Pa \cdot s$

Table 1: Experimental settings - Input data

been taken before running the experiment, and it is provided as an image file (*ref_image.png*). A small preview of the image file is reported below in Figure 3. The scope of this preliminary step is two-fold. On the one hand, it has been used to estimate the resolution of the image as $res = 3040px/cm$, which is here already given as input for the sake of simplicity. On the other hand, it is used to turn the “pixel-based” matrixes *Grid_Xpx*, *Grid_Ypx*, *SXpx*, and *Sypx* into the corresponding dimensional matrixes in the new coordinate system (x_0, y_0), centered in the rear stagnation point and directed, as shown in Figure 2 (left).

The remainder of the report is organized as follows: in Section 2, we

Variable	Type	Value
<i>Grid_Xpx</i>	23x30 matrix	X-coordinates of grid centers in the framing [in px]
<i>Grid_Ypx</i>	23x30 matrix	Y-coordinates of grid centers in the framing [in px]
<i>SXpx</i>	23x30x1499 matrix	X displacement [in px] for every time step
<i>SYpx</i>	23x30x1499 matrix	Y displacement [in px] for every time step

Table 2: Acquisition Data - Parameters

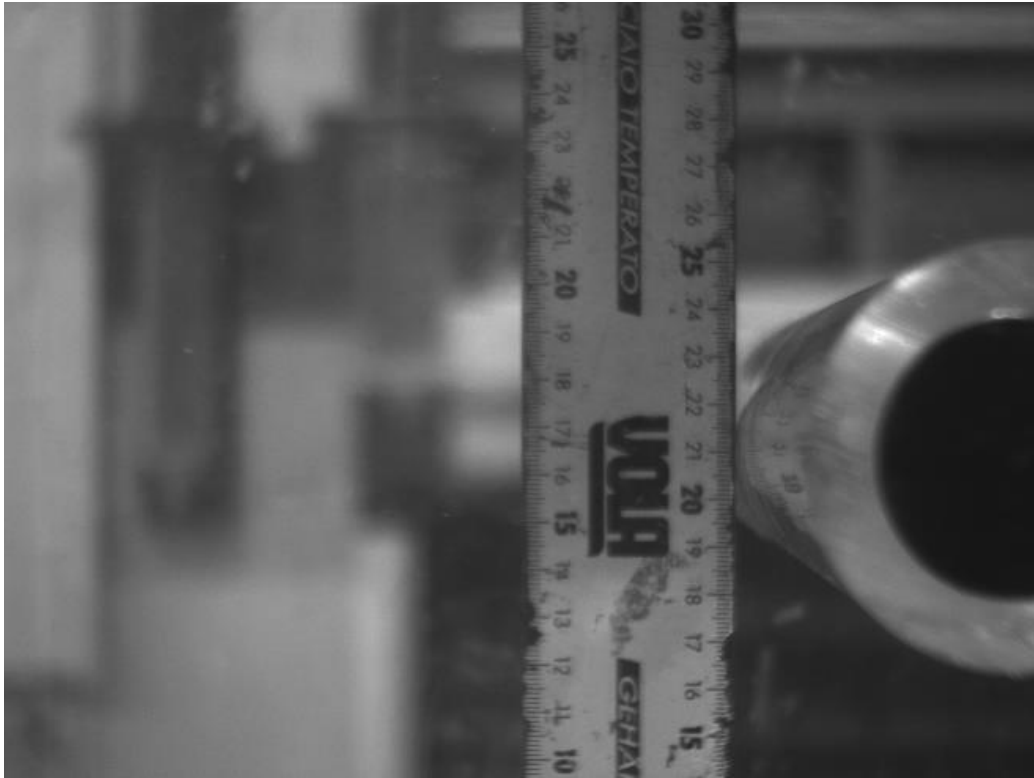


Figure 3: Small preview of the reference image

approximate the channel Bulk velocity, which will be fundamental for the analysis of the experimental data; in Section 3, we transform the pixel-based data inside the MATLAB file in order to adjust the axis and variables to

real-world units of measurement; in Section 4, we calculate the Reynolds-average velocity field from the transformed data; in Section 5, we investigate the dynamic evolution of the flow both in the time and frequency domains; finally, in Section 6 we discuss the point-based spectra of the individual velocity fields.

For the animated view of the experimental data, refer to the attached script.

2 Bulk Velocity Approximation

3 Data dimensional treatment

4 Reynolds-average velocity

5 Flow Dynamic Evolution

6 Frequency Spectra Analysis

References

- [1] Prof. G. V. Messa and Dr. G. Ferrarese. Test case 2: Analysis of the velocity field in the wake of a circular cylinder. Lab Guide, Fluid Labs, 2021.