

An Evaluation of Convolutional Neural Networks for Lithological Mapping Based on Hyperspectral Images

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Abstract—Hyperspectral remote sensing images are characterized by nanoscale spectral resolution and hundreds of continuous spectral bands, dominating significantly in geological applications ranging from lithological mapping to mineral exploration. A major challenge lies in how to incorporate spectral and spatial information, therefore promoting classification performance for detecting closely resembling and mixed minerals and lithologies. Recent advances in deep learning techniques have facilitated the application of hyperspectral images in geological studies, especially experts at handling high-dimensional data with strong neighboring correlation. As a result, this study focuses on the evaluation of deep learning algorithms for lithological mapping based on hyperspectral images and further provides guidance on mineral exploration. Four deep convolutional neural networks (CNNs), including 1-D CNN, 2-D CNN, 3-D CNN, and a hybrid of 1-D and 2-D CNN, were constructed for spectral, spatial, and spatial–spectral feature extraction. The proposed frameworks were verified through the case studies of lithological mapping to aid in prospecting rare metal deposits using Gaofen-5 hyperspectral images in the Cuonadong dome, Tibet, China. Lithological classification maps indicated that the dual-branch 1D–2D CNN yields better performance than others in both visual and quantitative comparisons, owing to the support of joint spatial–spectral feature learning. An overall classification accuracy of up to 97.4% further illustrates the feasibility of CNN models for lithological mapping based on hyperspectral images, which provides a realizable and promising approach for mineral exploration by mapping specific lithologies.

Index Terms—Convolutional neural networks (CNNs), Gaofen-5 (GF-5), hyperspectral image, lithological mapping.

I. INTRODUCTION

HYPERSPECTRAL remote sensing refers to a technology that images targets in tens to hundreds of spectral bands using a hyperspectral sensor [1]. The combination of imagery and spectra increases the capability of detecting more detailed surface materials than multispectral images, thus has been extensively used in the fields of agriculture [2], military [3], environmental monitoring [4], geological mapping, and mineral exploration [5], [6], [7]. Taking geological mapping

as an example, minerals have specific spectral absorption and texture properties in the visible- and near-infrared (VNIR) and shortwave infrared (SWIR) spectral ranges, owing to various compositions in the crystal structure, physical, and chemical patterns [8]. Therefore, targeted lithologies and surroundings can be distinguished and recognized using specific spectral diagnostic features [9], [10].

Hyperspectral remote sensing images can be regarded as a 3-D data cube, including spectral and spatial information [11]. The spectral domain records the spectral reflectance of targets with a change in wavelength; the spatial domain is a 2-D image that reflects the position of each pixel and its neighborhoods, providing complementary information for the extraction of spectral features [12]. Hyperspectral image classification is fundamentally implemented by assigning a unique label to each pixel or image [13], [14], which can be divided into two categories: feature extraction approaches [15], such as principal component analysis (PCA) [16], independent component analysis [17], spectral feature fitting [18], minimum noise fraction transformation [19], manifold learning [20], linear discriminant analysis [21], band selection [22], and metric learning [23]; classification approaches, such as k-means [24], spectral angle mapper [25], support vector machine [26], random forest [27], subspace learning [28], and more recent deep learning algorithms, such as convolutional neural network (CNN) [29], graph neural network [30], recurrent neural network [31], deep belief networks [32], stacked autoencoders (SAE) [33], and generative adversarial networks [34].

The pixelwise approaches regard hyperspectral images as an ensemble of spectral information that ignores the spatial structure of adjacent pixels, potentially resulting in isolated and discrete classifications [35]. Alternatively, other methods are based on spatial features, such as the Markov random field [36], extended morphological profiles [37], gray-level co-occurrence matrix [38], and Gabor filters [39]. Spatial information from adjacent pixels is extracted by such kind of methods to improve classification accuracy. However, these patchwise approaches break the original spectral sequence without any concerns about the spectral features of hyperspectral images, which are equally important for classification.

Each pixel and its neighborhoods in a hyperspectral image are locally spatially correlated and composed of continuous spectral curves in a sequence. Therefore, the joint integration of spatial–spectral features within neighboring regions as the input can lead to learning more discriminating features than spatialwise or spectralwise classification [40], [41], [42], [43].

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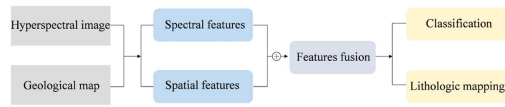


Fig. 1. Brief framework of lithological mapping based on hyperspectral images.

As an end-to-end deep learning algorithm that can perform representation learning and classification tasks simultaneously, CNNs are designed to learn complex nonlinear distribution features in images by automatically extracting high-level spatial features, which are especially suitable for dealing with high-dimensional hyperspectral images with strong neighboring correlations [44], [45]. In this aspect, 3-D CNN [46], fully convolutional network [47], convolutional capsule network [48], and multiple deep learning or dual-channel frameworks, such as ConvLSTM [49], [50], 1D–2D CNN [51], 3D–2D CNN [52], [53], convolutional autoencoder [54], graph convolutional network [55], CNN-local discriminant embedding [56], CNN-SAE [57], CNN-transformer learning [58], and joint attention network [59], have been introduced for spectral–spatial hyperspectral classification and achieved state-of-the-art performance.

The combined use of CNNs and hyperspectral data provides the potential to assist in geological mapping involving mineral exploration [60], [61], [62], [63]. On this account, this study focused on using CNNs to exploit hyperspectral data for lithological mapping. Four CNN models, namely, 1-D CNN, 2-D CNN, 3-D CNN, and 1D–2D CNN, were constructed for spectral, spatial, and joint spatial–spectral feature extraction, respectively. The 1D–2D CNN is a dual-branch structure model (see Fig. 1) that incorporates a 1-D CNN with a 2-D CNN, in which 1-D convolutions are employed to extract spectral features by exploring the contextual information between spectral bands, and 2-D convolutions are used to extract local spatial features and neighboring relationships. The four CNNs were demonstrated by a case study of lithological mapping in the Cuonadong dome, the northeastern Himalayan orogenic belt, based on Gaofen-5 (GF-5) hyperspectral images. Notably, mineralogical research supports the high potential of rare metal mineralization, such as Be, W, Li, and Sn in this area [64], [65], [66], [67], further promoting the significance of lithological mapping to aid in mineral exploration. The main contributions of this study include the following:

- 1) evaluating the feasibility of CNNs for lithological mapping based on GF-5 hyperspectral remote sensing images;
- 2) providing a realizable and valuable approach for mineral exploration by mapping specific lithological units.

II. METHODS

A. CNN Architecture Setting

CNN is a deep learning algorithm with multiple hidden layers based on the idea of local connections and weight sharing [68], [69]. A typical CNN architecture consists of input, convolutional, pooling, and fully connected layers [70]. The first three layers perform feature extraction, and the fourth

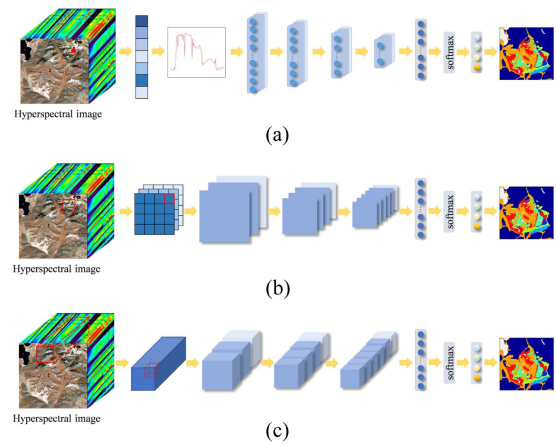


Fig. 2. Network architectures of (a) 1-D CNN, (b) 2-D CNN, and (c) 3-D CNN.

layer maps the extracted features to the output and performs classification [71]. Especially, the convolutional layer extracts spatial dependencies in the input image through convolutional filters with kernels. Features ranging from low to high level are gradually and adaptively learned per layer. The shared weights and locally connected layers equipped in the convolutional operation significantly increase the model efficiency by reducing the number of parameters. The pooling layer is responsible for the downsampling operation and reduces the spatial size of the convolved features. This process decreases computational complexity, therefore reducing overfitting through dimensionality reduction [72]. The last fully connected layer is also called the output layer, designed to make predictions using the SoftMax activation function, such as the probabilities of each class in lithological mapping tasks. Depending on the dimensions of the convolution kernel, CNNs can be divided into the following three types.

1) *One-Dimensional CNN*: Each pixel in a hyperspectral image is composed of a continuous spectral vector, which can be regarded as a sequence-based data structure. The 1-D CNN is specifically designed to handle 1-D data by performing pixelwise classification using 1-D convolutional kernels/filters [73]. Benefiting from a few computational complexities and parameters, 1-D CNN is easier to implement by capturing the contextual spectral information of each pixel within a sequence. The 1-D CNN used in this study shares the basic structure of a common CNN, including three convolution layers with 3×1 kernels, three max-pooling layers with 2×1 kernels, two batch normalization layers, a SoftMax function as a fully connected layer, and a ReLU as the activation function [see Fig. 2(a)]. Here, the normalization operation normalizes the input data in each batch to prevent gradient explosions as well as accelerates the training process.

2) *Two-Dimensional CNN*: 1-D CNN usually reshapes the hyperspectral image into a vector and loses the spatial features. As an alternative, 2-D convolution is introduced to extract spatial neighboring information by taking the data patch delimited in a given window around each pixel. In a 2-D CNN, the kernel slides

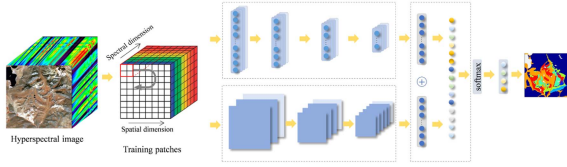


Fig. 3. Network architecture of 1D–2D CNN.

along two dimensions on the image, as shown in Fig. 2(b), which considers the local spatial correlations among the neighboring pixels [74]. The 2-D CNN used in this study comprised three convolutional layers, followed by two batch normalizations, three max-pooling, and two fully connected layers (dense layers). Each convolutional layer with a size of 3×3 was utilized to extract spatial information. Then, max-pooling layers with 2×2 kernels helped to reduce the data dimensions and the number of parameters. The ReLU activation function was also selected to improve the nonlinear mapping ability of the network [see Fig. 2(b)].

3) *Three-Dimensional CNN*: The 3-D CNN is a variant of CNNs that can extract features directly in both spectral and spatial dimensions through 3-D convolution operations [46], [75]. Fig. 2(c) illustrates the architecture of the 3-D CNN used in this study. In a 3-D convolution operation, the 3-D kernel slides in three directions, and the input cube is convolved with three 3-D kernels ($3 \times 3 \times 3$), inserting by three 3-D pooling operations with a kernel size of $2 \times 2 \times 2$ and two fully connected layers. The 3-D CNN preserves the original 3-D data structure of hyperspectral images, thus contributing to a higher classification performance owing to the simultaneous learning of spectral–spatial features.

B. 1D–2D CNN Architecture Setting

The 1D–2D CNN architecture involves using 2-D convolutional layers for spatial feature representation combined with 1-D convolutional layers to support spectral sequence prediction, avoiding the loss of either spectral or spatial information [51], [76]. The 1D–2D CNN is a dual-branch structure comprising three parts: spectral information extraction by a 1-D CNN, spatial information extraction by a 2-D CNN, and integration of spatial–spectral information by a fusion operation. Fig. 3 describes how a hybrid 1D–2D CNN work for lithological mapping. The networks of 1-D and 2-D branches remain the same as those described above. The 1D–2D CNN starts with an input layer that is regarded as the combination of 1-D vectors corresponding to each pixel and spatial neighborhoods centered around the pixel. Then, spectral and spatial features were extracted using 1-D and 2-D convolutional kernels, respectively. Subsequently, the extracted spectral and spatial features were flattened into a 1-D vector and connected end-to-end. The joint features were finally fed into the fully connected layer where the SoftMax function serves as the classifier.

Hyperspectral images are presented in the form of 3-D data cubes. In general, the input of a 1-D CNN is a 1-D vector corresponding to each pixel in a hyperspectral image. The input

TABLE I
NETWORK ARCHITECTURES OF 1-D CNN

Layer name	Number	Filter size	Feature dimensions
Input	/	/	1×30
Convolution layer	16	3×1	30×16
Batch normalization	/	/	30×16
Max-pooling layer	/	2×1	15×16
Convolution layer	32	3×1	15×32
Batch normalization	/	/	15×32
Max-pooling layer	/	2×1	7×32
Convolution layer	64	3×1	7×64
Max-pooling layer	/	2×1	3×64
Flatten	/	/	192
Dense	/	/	64
Dense	/	/	8
SoftMax	/	/	8
Output	/	/	8
Total parameters		20904	

TABLE II
NETWORK ARCHITECTURES OF 2-D CNN

Layer name	Number	Filter size	Feature dimensions
Input	/	/	$21 \times 21 \times 30$
Convolution layer	16	3×3	$21 \times 21 \times 16$
Batch normalization	/	/	$11 \times 11 \times 16$
Max-pooling layer	/	2×2	$11 \times 11 \times 16$
Convolution layer	32	3×3	$11 \times 11 \times 32$
Batch normalization	/	/	$11 \times 11 \times 32$
Max-pooling layer	/	2×2	$6 \times 6 \times 32$
Convolution layer	64	3×3	$6 \times 6 \times 64$
Max-pooling layer	/	2×2	$3 \times 3 \times 64$
Flatten	/	/	2304
Dense	/	/	64
Dense	/	/	8
SoftMax	/	/	8
Output	/	/	8
Total parameters		65112	

TABLE III
NETWORK ARCHITECTURES OF 3-D CNN

Layer name	Number	Filter size	Feature dimensions
Input	/	/	$21 \times 21 \times 30$
Convolution layer	16	$3 \times 3 \times 3$	$21 \times 21 \times 30 \times 16$
Batch normalization	/	/	$21 \times 21 \times 30 \times 16$
Max-pooling layer	/	$2 \times 2 \times 2$	$10 \times 10 \times 15 \times 16$
Convolution layer	32	$3 \times 3 \times 3$	$10 \times 10 \times 15 \times 32$
Batch normalization	/	/	$10 \times 10 \times 15 \times 32$
Max-pooling layer	/	$2 \times 2 \times 2$	$5 \times 5 \times 7 \times 32$
Convolution layer	64	$3 \times 3 \times 3$	$5 \times 5 \times 7 \times 64$
Max-pooling layer	/	$2 \times 2 \times 2$	$2 \times 2 \times 3 \times 64$
Flatten	/	/	768
Dense	/	/	64
Dense	/	/	8
SoftMax	/	/	8
Output	/	/	8
Total parameters		119,592	

of a 2-D CNN is a 2-D spatial patch centered on a certain pixel. And a 3-D CNN takes 3-D cubes within the neighborhood of each pixel as inputs to the network. The detailed architectures of these three networks are presented in Tables I–III, respectively.

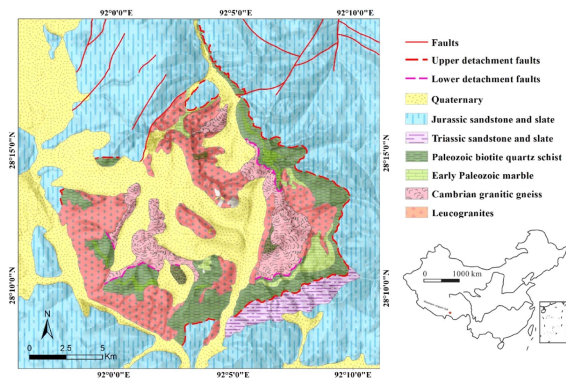


Fig. 4. Simplified geological map of the Cuonadong dome, northeast Tibet, China [79].

C. Metrics

Three quantitative metrics, such as classification accuracy, overall accuracy, and kappa coefficient, were employed to measure the performance of the four networks. The classification accuracy is defined as the ratio of each category being correctly classified. The overall accuracy is the percentage of total sample correctly classified. The kappa coefficient is a robust index used for consistency testing, that is, whether the predicted results are consistent with the actual classification results [77]. These metrics are essentially calculated based on a confusion matrix. A confusion matrix is a visual representation of the performance of a model, which summarizes the percentages of categories being correctly classified and misclassified into others.

III. STUDY AREA AND DATASET

A. Geological Background

The study area, Cuonadong dome, is located in the eastern part of the Himalayan orogenic belt and belongs to the famous Zhaxikang ore concentration region [78]. Fig. 4 describes the simplified geological map of the Cuonadong dome [79]. This area is a gneiss dome cut by E–W and N–W faults, which is basically covered with sandstone, slate, granitic gneiss, marble, biotite quartz schist, and leucogranite [80], [81]. Abundant rare metal mineralization has been discovered in this area, such as Be, Nb, Ta, Sn, Pb, W, U, and Li. For example, Li et al. [64] reported the W–Sn and Be–Rb rare metal mineralization hosted in skarn marble, pointing out that large-scale Be–W–Sn deposits are closely related to Himalayan leucogranites in the Cuonadong dome. Xia et al. [82] recommended that the exploration of rare metal deposits should be carried out around granite pegmatite belts in which the possible targets are skarn and leucogranites. Cao et al. [67] systematically analyzed stream sediment geochemical data in the Himalayan orogenic belt, indicating positive rare metal anomalies associated with leucogranites compared with the upper continental crust. However, an average altitude of 5000 m and poor environment limits the conduct of field geological survey. Consequently, delineating the distribution of lithological classes using remote sensing technology is of great significance to assist in discovering rare metal deposits in the study area.

The main mineral compositions of leucogranite include quartz (35%–42%), orthoclase (15%–20%), plagioclase (30%–40%), muscovite (7%–10%), and biotite (1%–2%), with particle diameters ranging from 1 mm to 1 cm [83]. These minerals are in response to various spectral absorption that can be discriminated via the diagnostic signatures in the VNIR and SWIR regions (0.4–2.5 μm). For example, research has confirmed that granodiorite shows an absorption peak from 0.45–0.52 μm due to ferromagnetic minerals. In contrast, absorption peak positions of carbonate minerals (such as calcite and dolomite) occur from 2.30–2.39 μm [5], [6], [84]. Spatially contiguous spectra captured by hyperspectral images are more sensitive to subtle variations in spectral absorption features, providing the potential to quantitatively identify mineral categories and delineate the spatial distribution of lithological units [62].

B. Hyperspectral Images

The GF-5 is the latest comprehensive hyperspectral observation satellite launched by China. The 30-m-spatial-resolution advanced hyperspectral imager installed on GF-5 provides 330 spectral bands ranging from 0.4 to 2.5 μm . What is more, GF-5 poses more advantages over a multispectral image in the ability to distinguish similar minerals owing to 150 VNIR bands with a spectral resolution of 5 nm and 180 SWIR bands with a spectral resolution of 10 nm [85].

The GF-5 hyperspectral image used in this study is a level 1 product acquired on Oct. 13, 2019, covering an area of approximately 600 km^2 . Preprocessing of the GF-5 data comprised band selection, radiometric calibration, atmospheric correction, noise reduction, and geometric correction. Band selection was attempted to remove 35 repeated and affected bands due to water vapor absorption. Radiometric calibration and atmospheric correction were then implemented to convert raw digital images from satellites into actual physical surface reflectance and eliminate scattering and absorption effects from the atmosphere. These two operations were primarily carried out using the FLAASH module in the ENVI software [86]. Regarding the geometric correction, it corrects the geometric distortions and positional errors with the help of a reference coordinate system, for example, the Landsat-8 imagery used in this study [87]. Finally, 815 \times 786 image with 30m resolution and 295 hyperspectral bands was adopted for lithological mapping in the study area (see Fig. 5).

Seven lithological units, including Jurassic sandstone and slate (class 1), early Paleozoic marble (class 2), Triassic sandstone and slate (class 3), Cambrian granitic gneiss (class 4), Paleozoic biotite quartz schist (class 5), Quaternary strata (class 6), Himalayan leucogranites (class 7), and an additional class representing lakes and snow (class 8), were designed to identify in the study area. Table IV lists the areas and mineral compositions of each category [79]. The spectral curves of these lithological units are shown in Fig. 6. It was observed that the seven lithological units remain consistent in the overall spectral shape while varying slightly in absorption and reflection peaks, implying strong band correlation. More detailly, these seven lithological units present similar reflection features near 0.60 and 0.792 μm in VNIR and 1.249, 1.418, and 1.839 μm in SWIR, and

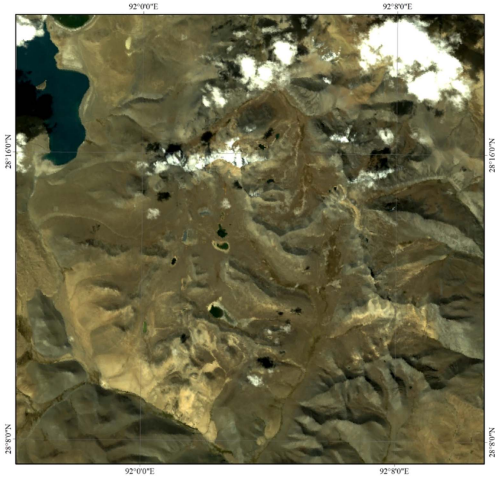


Fig. 5. GF-5 hyperspectral image of the study area.

TABLE IV
AREAS AND MINERAL COMPOSITIONS OF EACH LITHOLOGICAL UNIT IN THE STUDY AREA [79]

Class	Lithological unit	Mineral composition	Areas (km ²)
1	Jurassic sandstone and slate	Mudstone, metamorphic sandstone, or carbonaceous calcareous slate	286.6
2	Early Paleozoic marble	Calcite, dolomite, muscovite, and quartz	11.5
3	Triassic sandstone and slate	Feldspar, shale, slate, quartz sandstone, and sandy slate	13.0
4	Cambrian granitic gneiss	Potassium feldspar, quartz, and biotite	29.5
5	Paleozoic biotite quartz schist	Quartz, biotite, plagioclase, garnet	47.8
6	Quaternary	Gravel, sand, and clay	125.9
7	Himalaya Leucogranite	Quartz, potash feldspar, plagioclase, muscovite, biotite, tourmaline	62.8
8	Lakes and snow	-	26.2

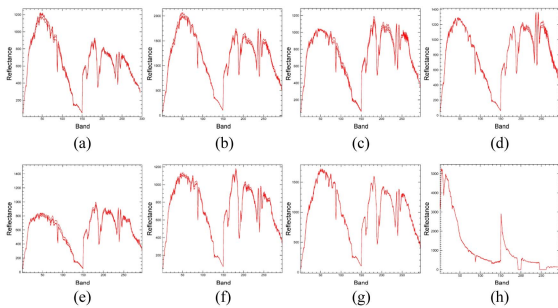


Fig. 6. Spectral curves of lithological units in the study area. (a) Jurassic sandstone and slate. (b) Early Paleozoic marble. (c) Triassic sandstone and slate. (d) Cambrian granitic gneiss. (e) Paleozoic biotite quartz schist. (f) Quaternary. (g) Himalaya leucogranite. (h) Lakes and snow.

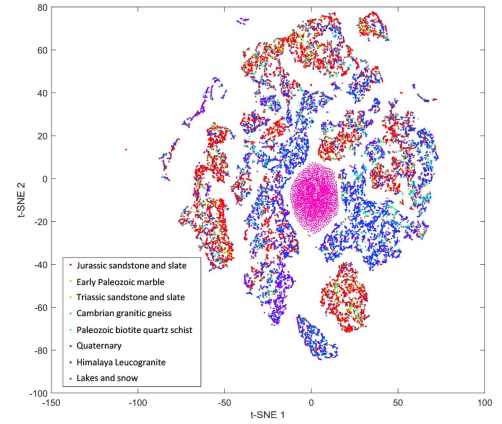


Fig. 7. Separability visualization of the hyperspectral image obtained by t-SNE.

absorption features near 0.771 , 1.334 , and $1.713 \mu\text{m}$. The reason can be attributed to mixture spectra caused by intense weathering and erosion. Triassic sandstone and slate exhibit discernable spectral characteristics during $1.839\text{--}2.0 \mu\text{m}$; Paleozoic biotite quartz schist is distinguishable from others around $1.206 \mu\text{m}$. As the same silicate minerals, Himalaya leucogranite can be identified by the absorption feature from 2.0 to $2.4 \mu\text{m}$. The premise of hyperspectral image classification is based on the separability of spectral features into different classes. Fig. 7 visualizes the separability of the GF-5 hyperspectral image using the t-distributed stochastic neighbor embedding (t-SNE) algorithm. t-SNE is a popular unsupervised cluster analysis method for visualization of high-dimensional data in a 2-D space [88]. Visual inspection indicates that the lithological units in the study area are separated by clustering, revealing that they are distinguishable from each other and can be identified using hyperspectral classification methods.

IV. EXPERIMENTAL SETTINGS

A. Training Sample Preparation

The size of the input hyperspectral data was $815 \times 786 \times D$, where D is the number of bands. A 1-D CNN typically reshapes the input into 1-D vectors and performs convolution operations in the spectral direction. A total of 10% of pixels in each class were randomly selected to train the 1-D CNN model. The training samples were labeled based on the reference geological map of the study area. The 2-D CNN creates patch-based samples by drawing a spatial neighborhood around each pixel as the center, thereby capturing the local spatial information contained in this patch. This process was implemented using the sliding window method at a stride of one, which also provides sufficient samples for model training. Theoretically speaking, a larger patch will bring better performance; however, an increased computational burden needs to be borne. The size of the neighboring region was empirically set to 21×21 ; in this context, more than 620 000 patches were produced. The 3-D CNN takes a cube as the input formed by every pixel along with its $21 \times 21 \times D$ neighbors, covering a 21×21 spatial extent and D spectral bands, making

TABLE V
PARAMETERS SETTING OF FOUR MODELS

Parameters	1-D CNN	2-D CNN	3-D CNN	1D-2D CNN
Epoch	300	300	300	300
Batch size	128	128	128	128
Learning rate	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001
optimizer	Adam	Adam	Adam	Adam
Loss function	Cross Entropy	Cross Entropy	Cross Entropy	Cross Entropy
Window size	1	21	21	21

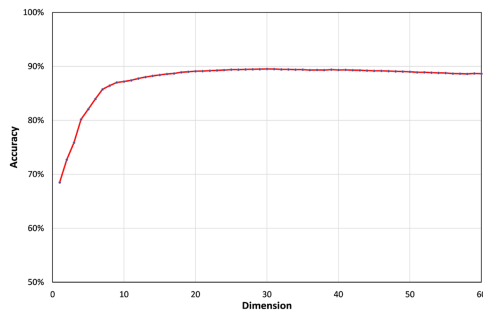


Fig. 8. Classification accuracy versus the hyperspectral dimension.

it possible to learn spectral-spatial information simultaneously. Regarding the 1D-2D CNN, the network and size of training samples were consistent with those of the 1-D and 2-D CNNs. The 10% of each class is randomly selected as a training sample set, of which 80% is for training and the remaining 20% is for verification.

B. Parameters Setting

Three parameters, including batch size, learning rate, and number of training epochs, need to be optimized for the CNN architectures [89]. The number of epochs refers to the number of times a learning process passes through the entire training dataset. The batch size defines the total number of training examples that work through a single batch, where the training dataset is usually divided into one or more batches for better computational efficiency. The learning rate is an important parameter determining whether a network can converge to the global minimum, which is set to control the apportioned error of a model [90]. These parameters are commonly determined via a grid search method optimized by the cross-entropy function. Table V provides the detailed parameter settings for the four networks.

C. Dimension Reduction

It was worth noting that hyperspectral bands should be dimensionally diminished to remove spectral redundancy. Fig. 8 presents how the spectral dimension influences the classification accuracy under different components, which was evaluated using the PCA. The model obtained the highest performance when the number of spectral bands was set to 30. As a result, the GF-5

TABLE VI
ABLATION EXPERIMENT OF NETWORK ARCHITECTURE

Model	Conv1	Pool1	Conv2	Pool2	Conv3	Pool3	Accuracy
1	√	√					87.95%
2	√	√	√				93.55%
3	√	√	√	√			93.36%
4	√	√	√	√	√		93.97%
5	√	√	√	√	√	√	94.21%

Conv—convolutional layer; Pool—max-pooling layer

hyperspectral image was reduced to 30 dimensions by PCA for the latter case studies.

D. Ablation Experiment

Understanding the influence of each network structure is crucial. An ablation experiment here was carried out to optimize the proposed network architectures. The ablation experiment is a set of studies to find the best-suited network by removing the parts of model components [91]. Table VI lists the classification accuracies of 2-D CNN with various architectures. The ablation study illustrates that the proposed network architecture reaches the best performance, on the other side, also provides a way to measure the contribution of each convolutional/pooling layer to the overall model.

E. Convergence Curves

The convergence curves of the epochs versus loss function/accuracy (see Fig. 9) remained steady after 300 epochs, suggesting that all models were well trained by the training sets. 1D-2D CNN converges faster in the training samples, whereas slower in the validation samples [see Fig. 9(a) and (c)], probably owing to a deeper network and more parameters needed to learn. In the case of the 3-D CNN, low loss values were obtained benefit from simpler network architecture [see Fig. 9(b) and (d)]. However, the use of hybrid CNNs reduces the computational complexity compared with 3-D CNN, thus outputting higher training accuracy.

V. RESULTS

The construction of CNNs' models and classifications of lithological units were carried out based on the TensorFlow platform. The GF-5 hyperspectral image was first segmented into patches of the same size using the sliding window method. All patches were then input into the trained models by coordinate order and output the corresponding categories. Fig. 10 shows the lithological classification maps obtained using 1-D, 2-D, 3-D, and 1D-2D CNN. The 1-D CNN [see Fig. 10(a)] suffers from salt pepper noise, resulting in poor performance visually. The 2-D CNN [see Fig. 10(b)] overcomes this drawback by learning the spatial correlation of each spectral dimension. The 3-D [see Fig. 10(c)] and 1D-2D [see Fig. 10(d)] CNNs achieved the best visual classification quality with fewer noisy and misclassified pixels than the 1-D and 2-D CNNs. The 3-D CNN performs roughly equivalently to the 1D-2D CNN

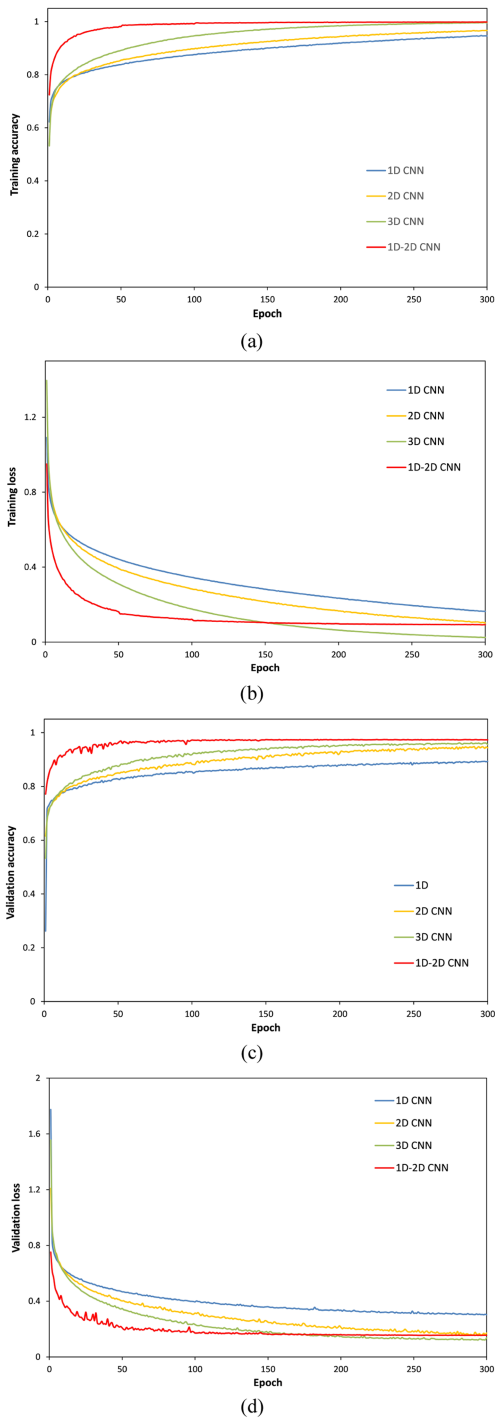


Fig. 9. Convergence curves of model training and validation. (a) Epoch versus training accuracy. (b) Epoch versus training loss. (c) Epoch versus validation accuracy. (d) Epoch versus validation loss.

due to the support of spatial-spectral feature learning, whereas the joint network suppresses more noise, leading to smoother boundaries and local details [see Fig. 11] compared with the direct extraction of spatial and spectral information by the 3-D CNN.

In addition to visual comparison, the confusion matrices of the four networks [see Fig. 12] also reveal that the 1D-2D CNN

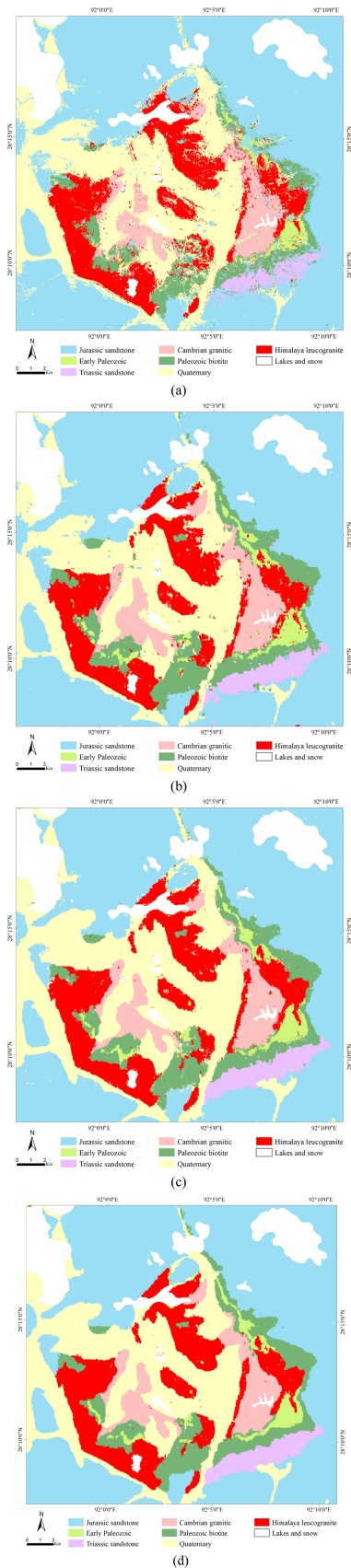


Fig. 10. Lithological classification maps obtained by (a) 1-D CNN, (b) 2-D CNN, (c) 3-D CNN, and (d) 1D-2D CNN.

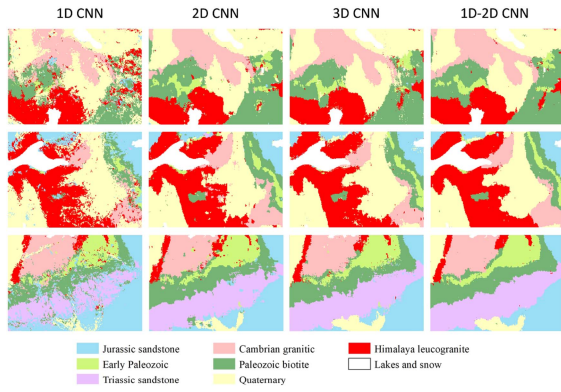


Fig. 11. Zoom of classification maps obtained by the four networks.

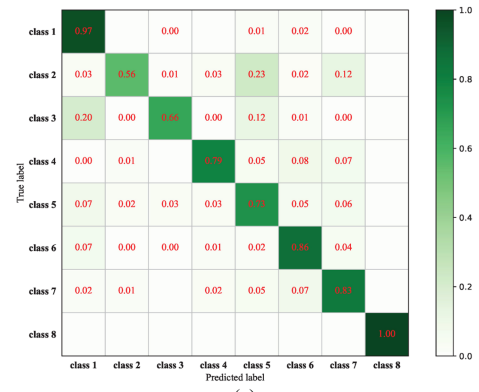
TABLE VII
QUANTITATIVE CLASSIFICATION COMPARISONS OF THE FOUR CASE STUDIES

Class	Lithological unit	1-D CNN	2-D CNN	3-D CNN	1D-2D CNN
1	Jurassic sandstone and slate	96.70%	96.98%	97.87%	99.10%
2	Early Paleozoic marble	55.82%	72.74%	77.57%	84.38%
3	Triassic sandstone and slate	66.00%	93.93%	94.64%	97.12%
4	Cambrian granitic gneiss	78.83%	93.35%	91.43%	95.86%
5	Paleozoic biotite schist	73.07%	89.02%	87.25%	93.66%
6	Quaternary	86.17%	93.76%	97.68%	96.55%
7	Himalaya Leucogranite	82.85%	90.79%	92.92%	96.42%
	Overall accuracy	89.21%	94.21%	95.71%	97.39%
	Kappa	0.86	0.92	0.94	0.97
	Runtime (s)	660	839	6705	3490

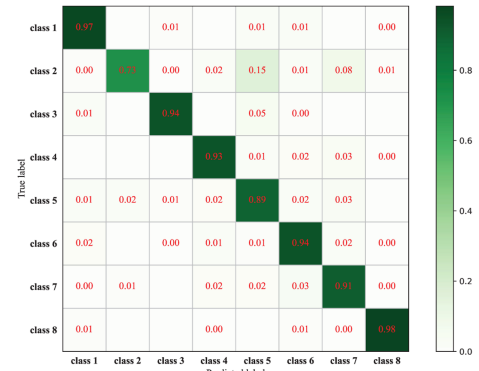
outperforms others both in classification accuracy, overall accuracy, and kappa coefficient, agreeing with the aforementioned visual comparison. Two factors make 1D-2D CNN significantly improve the classification accuracy of each lithological unit. On the one hand, 1D-2D CNN makes full use of spectral and spatial features in hyperspectral data; on the other hand, the dual-branch structure integrates the two processes into a unified network, reducing the computational complexity that enables learning more discriminant information for lithological mapping.

VI. DISCUSSION

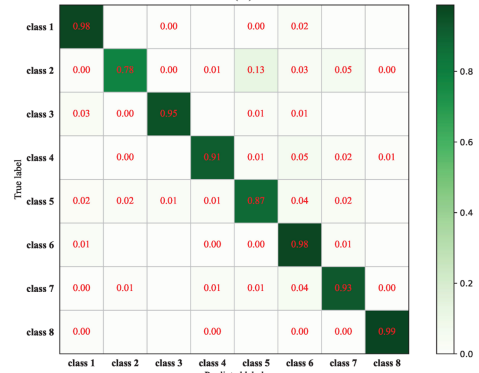
Table VII reports the quantitative comparison of the four networks, presenting varying performance for each lithological unit. In general, the joint extraction of spatial and spectral



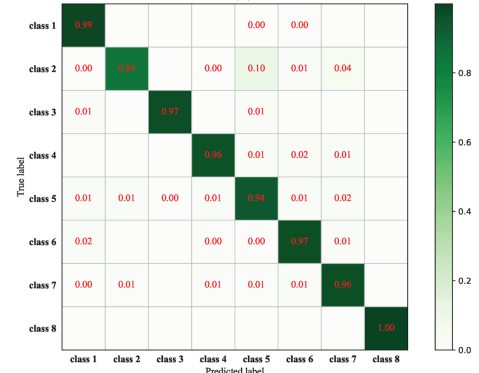
(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)

Fig. 12. Confusion matrices of classification maps obtained by (a) 1-D CNN, (b) 2-D CNN, (c) 3-D CNN, and (d) 1D-2D CNN. Class 1: Jurassic sandstone and slate; Class 2: Early Paleozoic marble; Class 3: Triassic sandstone and slate; Class 4: Cambrian granitic gneiss; Class 5: Paleozoic biotite quartz schist; Class 6: Quaternary; and Class 7: Himalaya Leucogranite.

information by 3-D and 1D–2D CNNs improves approximately 5%–10% classification accuracy than using either spatial or spectral features. The execution time reflects the complexity of CNN model from another side. It is obvious that 1-D CNN costs less time due to the simplest network structure and least parameters. The 1D–2D CNN has a more complex network architecture, and unexpectedly, it performs more efficiently than 3-D CNN, indicating that 3-D convolution occupies more computational burden and parameters than 2-D convolution. The detailed analysis of the classification performance related to each lithological unit is summarized as follows.

Jurassic sandstone and slate (Class 1): For the Jurassic sandstone and slate with the largest areas, each model predicts high and unified classification accuracy (>96%). The main reason is that these models were completely trained with sufficient samples.

Early Paleozoic marble (Class 2): The Early Paleozoic marble exposes the smallest areas compared with other classes, leading to poor performance for all models. Using only spectral information causes the 1-D CNN to fail to extract more discriminative features, whereas adding spatial information from adjacent pixels significantly enhances the classification accuracy.

Triassic sandstone and slate (Class 3): Triassic sandstone and slate occupy independent parts of the study area. The 1-D CNN correctly identified 66% of this lithological unit, while most of them are misclassified as Jurassic sandstone and slate (Class 1). The indistinguishable spectral curves of these two classes caused by similar mineral compositions are regarded as the main limitations. The extraction of spatial information by 2-D CNN improved the separability between various classes, increasing the classification accuracy by 40%. Furthermore, the integration of spatial–spectral features facilitated a classification accuracy of over 97%, significantly reducing the misclassification of highly similar lithological units. This finding implies that spatial features play essential roles in identifying this type of lithological unit.

Cambrian granitic gneiss (Class 4): The Cambrian granitic gneiss is scattered throughout the core of the study area. It can be observed from the confusion matrix that the spectral information is unhelpful in improving the classification accuracy for this unit. The 2-D CNN wrongly classifies a part of the Cambrian granitic gneiss into the early Paleozoic marble (Class 2); however, the 3-D and 1D–2D CNNs correct this error, suggesting that the recognition of Cambrian granitic gneiss mainly depends on texture features.

Paleozoic biotite quartz schist (Class 5): The Paleozoic biotite quartz schist spreads over the periphery of the study area in strip form. A broad misclassification occurred in the four networks. A reasonable explanation for this lies in the extensive contact with other lithological units, resulting in similar lithologies caused by intense metamorphism. Mixed spectral curves make it more difficult to distinguish between these lithological units. Similar to the Cambrian granitic gneiss (Class 4), spectral information brings no contribution for improving the classification performance. On the contrary, the fusion of spectral features instead reduces classification accuracy, indicating from the side that 3-D CNN is more suitable for those lithological classes with regular

shapes. Fortunately, the joint network of 1-D and 2-D CNNs yields a satisfactory overall accuracy higher than 93%, which implies that 1D–2D CNN can distinguish subtle differences in highly similar lithological units through deep-level networks, rather than focusing on simple features, such as spectra or textures.

Quaternary (Class 6): The Quaternary strata are mainly distributed in the center of the study area, which are in contact with all other lithological units. Extracting either spectral or spatial information is meaningless for improving classification accuracy. However, extracting both spatial and spectral information can enhance classification performance to a certain extent. The 1D–2D CNN yields 3-D CNN by wrongly dividing part of the Quaternary into Jurassic sandstone and slate (Class 1). This is more likely due to the correlated spectral curves caused by weathering and erosion.

Himalayan leucogranite (Class 7): The Himalayan leucogranite is considered the primary target for exploring rare metal deposits in this area. Satisfactory identifications were realized by all four networks. However, some leucogranites are still misclassified as other classes. These lithological units belong to silicates that are beyond the diagnosis of GF-5 hyperspectral image. The 2-D CNN achieved 90.79% classification accuracy, and 3-D CNN earned a 2% improvement with the support of spatial–spectral information. The mixed spectral curves and indistinguishable spatial texture caused by similar geochemical and geophysical characteristics of adjacent lithological units are the main reasons for this misclassification. Nevertheless, a classification accuracy of up to 96.4% was sufficient to demonstrate the potential application of 1D–2D CNN in lithological mapping.

Hyperspectral remote sensing image combines high-resolution spectral bands with spatial information that represent the distribution and texture features, enabling to discriminate closely resembling minerals for fine lithological mapping. CNNs can automatically extract deep-level spatial–spectral features through layer-by-layer convolution operations, providing a way for handling high dimensionality and mixed pixels of hyperspectral data. Case studies in this article illustrated that the proposed dual-branch 1D–2D network achieved a marked improvement in both visual and quantitative comparisons. The 1D–2D CNN captures more training data to mine deeper prior knowledge, thereby greatly enhancing the discrimination of spectrally closed minerals. Regarding the misclassification of lithological units, this might be addressed by conducting mineral spectral analysis in fieldwork and laboratories, in conjunction with fusing more multisource data, such as thermal infrared images, geochemical, and geophysical information.

However, although CNNs have evolved extensively in geological applications, there are still several challenges raised. The 1-D CNN fails to extract spatial and texture features, resulting in noisy result when applied to lithological mapping; 2-D CNN considers local spatial information around each pixel; however, 2-D CNN is not suitable for lithological mapping with irregular shapes due to fixed convolution kernels; 3-D CNN enables to learn spectral–spatial features simultaneously, significantly improving the classification accuracy, which comes with computational costs as a result of the increased number of

parameters. In addition, multiscale and multilevel feature fusion strategies [42] can be employed to deeply integrate spectral–spatial information to improve classification performance and time–cost, which deserves further study. In a word, this study provides a view of lithological mapping to support mineral exploration using hyperspectral images and deep learning methods. The proposed workflow is worthy of promotion for geological mapping work under harsh environments and is applicable to a variety of lithologies or minerals mapping.

VII. CONCLUSION

Hyperspectral images provide both spectral and spatial information that occupy an important position in remote sensing geology, such as geological mapping and mineral exploration. Recent advances in deep learning techniques have facilitated the application of hyperspectral images from qualitative discrimination to quantitative identification. On this account, this study focuses on the evaluation of CNNs to extract spectral and spatial features from hyperspectral data for lithological mapping and further provides guidance on mineral prospectivity mapping for rare metal deposits. The main conclusions of this study are as follows.

- 1) Four deep learning networks, 1-D CNN, 2-D CNN, 3-D CNN, and 1D–2D CNN, were compared for lithological mapping based on hyperspectral images. The 1-D and 2-D CNNs consider spectral or spatial information of hyperspectral data, respectively, whereas the 3-D and 1D–2D CNNs can learn spatial and spectral information simultaneously.
- 2) The four CNNs were illustrated by mapping seven lithological units in the Cuonadong dome using GF-5 hyperspectral images, which have been confirmed to be closely related to rare metal mineralization. Classification maps with a maximum overall accuracy of up to 97.4% were achieved, indicating the potential value of CNN models for lithological mapping.
- 3) The 1D–2D CNN yields better results in both visual and quantitative comparisons. Satisfactory performance benefits from the joint extraction of spatial and spectral features, providing a realizable and valuable approach for mineral exploration by mapping specific lithological units.

COMPUTER CODE AVAILABILITY

The detailed codes used in this study are provided in GitHub (<https://github.com/ziyewangcug/CNNs> for lithological mapping.git).

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