
Context Learning and Neural Network Architectures for 3D Data Processing: A Survey

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Abstract

The field of 3D data processing has witnessed significant advancements through the integration of context learning and advanced neural network architectures, enhancing the understanding and manipulation of complex spatial environments. This survey explores the role of techniques such as Stratified Transformers and PointStack frameworks in improving feature extraction and processing capabilities, crucial for applications like object recognition and scene reconstruction. Innovations in neural network architectures, including the PanoNet3D and ParaPoint frameworks, demonstrate substantial improvements in handling the irregular and unordered nature of point clouds, addressing challenges related to computational complexity and data quality. The survey highlights the transformative impact of context learning methodologies, such as self-supervised and in-context learning, in enhancing model robustness and adaptability. Real-world applications in domains like autonomous driving, robotics, and computer vision underscore the practical significance of these advancements. However, challenges related to computational demands, data scarcity, and noise handling persist, necessitating ongoing research to optimize scalability, generalization, and explainability. Future directions include refining neural architectures for better integration of contextual and geometric information and exploring novel applications in 3D vision tasks. The continuous evolution of these methodologies promises to drive further innovations in artificial intelligence and machine learning, expanding the applicability of 3D data processing across diverse technological and scientific domains.

1 Introduction

1.1 Significance of 3D Data Processing

3D data processing is fundamental to advancements in artificial intelligence and machine learning, particularly in applications requiring a nuanced comprehension of spatial and geometric properties. The manipulation and analysis of 3D point clouds are critical in fields such as autonomous driving and robotics, where precise object detection and localization are essential. For instance, identifying and localizing obstacles within LiDAR point clouds is crucial for the navigation systems of autonomous vehicles [1]. Moreover, processing point clouds addresses challenges from incomplete datasets, often arising from limited sensor resolution and occlusions.

In computer vision, 3D data processing enhances the management of unordered and irregular data structures typical of point clouds, which are vital for semantic learning and accurate object classification in augmented and virtual reality applications. Additionally, 3D data processing plays a key role in modeling skeleton sequences, which are essential for interpreting human motion and interactions within AI systems [2].

The challenge of handling large-scale point clouds, characterized by irregular sampling and varying densities, necessitates sophisticated techniques for feature learning and point cloud generation. These methods aim to preserve structural integrity and improve the quality of generated point clouds.

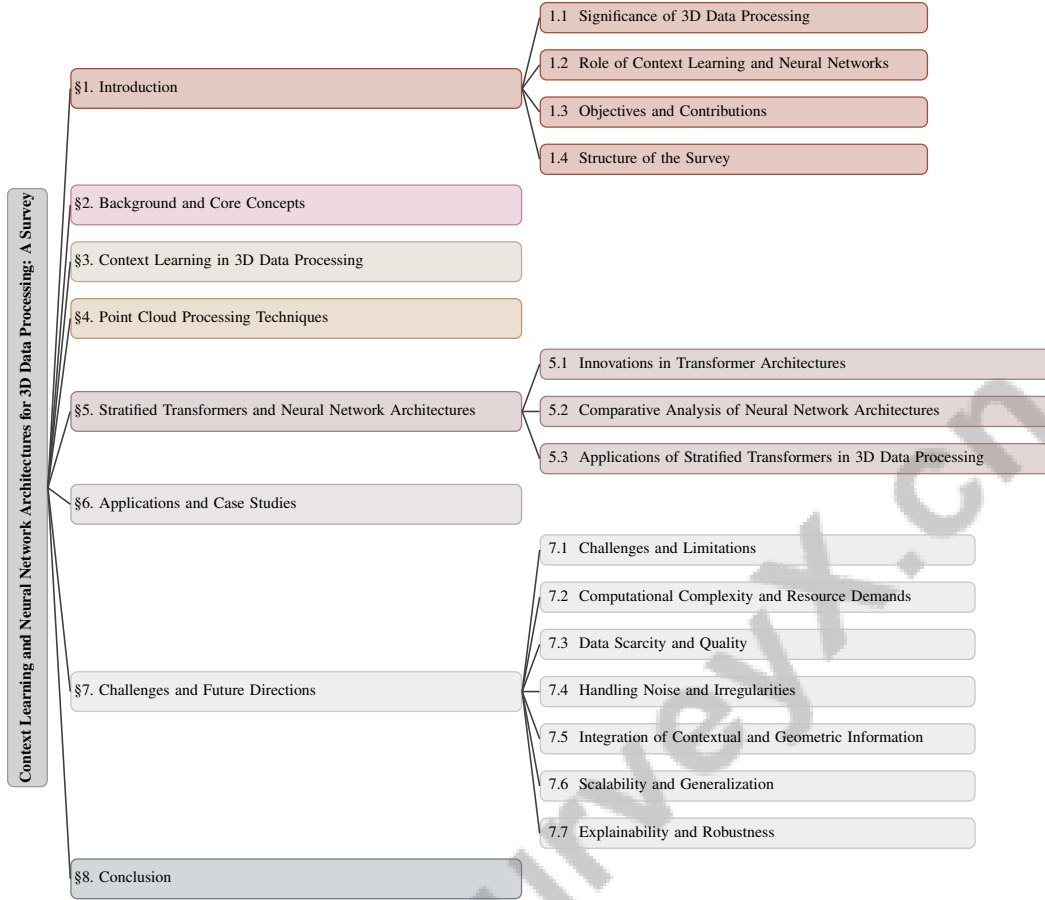


Figure 1: chapter structure

Addressing issues such as UV unwrapping on unstructured 3D point clouds, particularly in the absence of high-quality triangulations, exemplifies ongoing advancements in 3D data processing [3].

As 3D data processing evolves, its integration across various technological and scientific domains is expected to spur further innovations, underscoring its growing importance in AI [4]. The capacity to accurately represent and process 3D data not only resolves technical challenges but also unlocks new opportunities for understanding and interacting with complex environments. This survey aims to comprehensively review recent developments in deep learning methods for 3D point clouds, addressing unique challenges and knowledge gaps in neural network processing of such data [5].

1.2 Role of Context Learning and Neural Networks

Context learning and neural networks are crucial for advancing 3D data processing by facilitating the extraction and interpretation of complex spatial and semantic features within point clouds. These methodologies enable the development of robust algorithms that tackle challenges like domain adaptation and classification performance enhancement, as demonstrated by integrating GRU and LSTM for effective point cloud classification [6]. The Sphere as Prior Generative Adversarial Network (SP-GAN) utilizes centroids from point clouds as topological priors, improving the quality of generated point clouds and highlighting the significance of context learning in refining generative models [7].

The introduction of spherical convolutional kernels, which adapt convolution operations to the spherical geometry of 3D point clouds, illustrates how context learning and neural networks enhance feature representation and processing capabilities [4]. Innovations like PointStack further showcase context learning's ability to effectively represent both global and local contexts, thereby bolstering the robustness of 3D data processing [8].

In neural network architectures, the Point Transformer V3 (PTv3) emphasizes design simplicity and efficiency, facilitating better scalability for large-scale 3D data processing [9]. The integration of global context-aware convolutions addresses the challenge of effective rotation-invariant convolutions for 3D point clouds, enhancing feature distinctiveness [10].

The ParaPoint framework applies unsupervised learning pipelines to establish point-wise mappings between 3D points and 2D UV coordinates, demonstrating context learning’s potential to improve adaptability and precision in 3D data processing [3]. Additionally, the PST convolution method addresses the irregular and unordered nature of point cloud sequences, further emphasizing the transformative impact of context learning and neural networks in 3D data processing [11].

Recent advancements in in-context learning (ICL) reflect a shift from maximum likelihood estimation (MLE) to approximating the true posterior distribution, signaling an evolution in training methods and data availability [12]. Collectively, these innovations underscore the significant role of context learning and neural networks in enhancing the accuracy, efficiency, and adaptability of 3D data processing models across diverse applications [5].

1.3 Objectives and Contributions

This survey systematically investigates advancements in context learning and neural network architectures tailored for 3D data processing. A key objective is to enhance model robustness and efficiency by incorporating innovative approaches such as the PanoNet3D framework, which improves detection performance in LiDAR point clouds by leveraging both semantic and geometric information [13]. The survey also explores novel neural parameterization techniques like ParaPoint, demonstrating effective UV mapping of unstructured 3D point clouds while learning reasonable cutting seams in an unsupervised manner [3].

Further objectives include evaluating hybrid approaches like the GRU-LSTM model, which achieved an impressive accuracy of 0.99 in classifying objects from 3D point clouds, significantly surpassing traditional methods [6]. Additionally, the survey examines the incorporation of topological priors into generative models, as evidenced by the SP-GAN framework, which substantially enhances the quality of generated point clouds [7].

The development of methods for efficiently processing irregular 3D point clouds using spherical convolutional neural networks (-CNN) is another focal point, aiming to improve feature representation and processing capabilities [4]. The PointStack method is highlighted for its effectiveness in addressing information loss in point cloud feature learning networks, thereby enhancing representation capacity [8].

By pursuing these objectives, this survey not only emphasizes the transformative potential of context learning and neural network architectures in advancing 3D data processing but also promotes broader applications across diverse domains. The comprehensive analysis of these methodologies aims to enhance the accuracy, efficiency, and adaptability of 3D data models, contributing to the field’s growth and evolution [5].

1.4 Structure of the Survey

This survey is organized to provide an in-depth analysis of recent advancements in context learning and neural network architectures, focusing on their applications in 3D data processing. It highlights the significance of contextual information in enhancing object recognition and scene understanding, discussing innovative frameworks and methodologies such as Point-In-Context and in-context learning that address the unique challenges posed by 3D point clouds and related tasks [14, 15, 16, 17]. The introduction underscores the significance of 3D data processing and the pivotal role of context learning and neural networks, outlining the survey’s objectives and contributions.

The subsequent section delves into the background and core concepts, offering definitions and explanations of key terms such as point clouds, stratified transformers, and spatial context, which are essential for understanding the complexities of 3D data processing.

Following this, the survey examines context learning in 3D data processing, focusing on spatial relationships and hierarchical structures within point clouds. It investigates advanced techniques, particularly self-supervised learning and in-context learning approaches, which significantly enhance

comprehension and processing of 3D data. The innovative Point-In-Context framework is tailored for 3D point clouds, addressing challenges like token masking and information leakage, and presents a self-supervised pretraining method that utilizes single-view depth scans, achieving state-of-the-art results in various benchmarks for object detection, semantic segmentation, and classification. This exploration underscores the potential of contextual information in enhancing performance across different 3D vision tasks [18, 14, 16, 19].

The survey then shifts to point cloud processing techniques, highlighting the challenges of irregularity and lack of ordering in point cloud data. It discusses the role of neural network architectures and transformer-based approaches in addressing these challenges, with a detailed exploration of the SMTransformer method and its contributions to point cloud processing [20].

In the section on stratified transformers and neural network architectures, the survey highlights innovations in transformer architectures and provides a comparative analysis of different neural network architectures used in 3D data processing, including specific applications of stratified transformers.

The survey examines real-world applications and case studies illustrating effective implementation of context learning and advanced neural network architectures across diverse fields such as autonomous driving, robotics, and computer vision. It demonstrates how contextual information enhances tasks like object detection and image classification by improving recognition accuracy and scene understanding, and discusses the performance of various models, including transformers and multi-layer perceptrons (MLPs), in adapting to real-time input without weight updates. Additionally, it categorizes different types of context utilized in these domains and explores promising future research directions in context learning [21, 14, 22, 23].

Finally, the survey identifies current challenges and future directions in the field, addressing issues such as computational complexity, data scarcity, and the integration of contextual and geometric information. It concludes by summarizing key findings and insights, emphasizing the critical role of context learning—such as appearance and semantic context—in enhancing recognition accuracy in 3D data processing. The significance of advanced neural network architectures, including transformer models and novel frameworks like Point-In-Context, is highlighted for their role in addressing the challenges of in-context learning in 3D point clouds. These advancements improve the understanding of complex scenes and pave the way for future research directions in machine learning applications for 3D data [21, 14, 15, 16, 24].

This structured approach provides a thorough exploration of the topic and offers a novel framework for understanding current methods by categorizing existing research into three taxonomies: implementation-based, data representation-based, and task-based [25]. The survey covers major tasks such as 3D shape classification, object detection and tracking, and point cloud segmentation, while excluding methods not directly related to point cloud processing [26]. The following sections are organized as shown in Figure 1.

2 Background and Core Concepts

2.1 Definition and Importance of Point Clouds

Point clouds are pivotal in 3D data processing, capturing objects and environments through discrete spatial points, often enriched with attributes like color or intensity. This data structure is crucial for applications such as shape classification, scene reconstruction, and semantic segmentation [27, 6]. However, their unordered and irregular nature poses challenges for traditional neural networks that rely on structured data [4]. This irregularity necessitates specialized techniques to manage the lack of topological connectivity and address data sparsity and high dimensionality [5].

Reconstructing complete point clouds from partial data is essential for creating comprehensive 3D models, particularly in autonomous driving, where LiDAR-generated point clouds provide critical geometric information for object detection and navigation [1]. Innovations like the GCAConv operator enhance robustness and accuracy by integrating local and global features, producing rotation-invariant outputs [10]. Advanced feature learning techniques aim to preserve shape information despite potential information loss from sampling and pooling operations [8].

Research continues to focus on generating high-quality 3D point clouds that accurately represent physical objects and environments, addressing inherent challenges and expanding applications across various domains [7].

2.2 Context Learning and Spatial Context

Context learning enhances the understanding of spatial relationships within 3D point clouds. The Point-In-Context (PIC) framework utilizes in-context learning tailored for 3D applications, effectively modeling inputs and outputs as coordinates, overcoming challenges of applying 2D techniques to 3D data. The Joint Sampling module within PIC advances segmentation and classification by dynamically adjusting model parameters based on spatial distribution [16, 28].

In localization tasks, context learning improves accuracy by integrating semantic and geometric features, as demonstrated in PanoNet3D. The UnPNet framework exemplifies the integration of 3D point-based and 2D image-based operations, enhancing adaptability and precision [29]. The SiC framework showcases model adaptability to varying spatial contexts [2].

Context learning is crucial for understanding spatial context in 3D data, particularly as traditional methods face limitations [16]. The in-context estimation (ICE) problem illustrates the significance of context learning for processing noisy 3D data [30]. Wang et al. emphasize integrating context into existing models to enhance performance, underscoring the transformative impact of context learning in 3D data processing [14]. These methodologies highlight context learning's role in improving neural network models' accuracy and efficiency in complex 3D environments.

2.3 Stratified Transformers and Neural Network Architectures

Stratified transformers represent a significant advancement in neural network architectures for 3D data processing, leveraging permutation invariance and attention mechanisms to manage the unordered nature of point clouds. PatchFormer, with its Multi-Scale Attention block, enhances computational efficiency in point cloud processing [31]. These architectures explore coarse- and fine-grained relationships within 3D data, improving segmentation through hierarchical processing layers [1].

Innovations like the PST convolution method provide point-based convolutional operations tailored to point cloud sequences, highlighting stratified transformers' adaptability and efficiency [11]. The -CNN employs spherical convolutional kernels for effective feature extraction, enhancing representation capabilities [4]. The integration of GRU and LSTM networks exemplifies the versatility of stratified transformers in 3D data classification [6]. Understanding inductive biases in neural architectures is crucial for enhancing posterior approximation [12].

Stratified transformers enhance neural network models' ability to process 3D data by employing advanced attention mechanisms and hierarchical strategies, facilitating better handling of point cloud irregularities. This integration promotes improved performance in various tasks, such as classification and segmentation, by effectively capturing long-range dependencies and optimizing in-context learning through gradient descent [32, 33, 34, 35, 25]. These advancements not only enhance accuracy and efficiency but also broaden neural networks' applicability across diverse domains, driving further innovations in AI and machine learning.

In recent years, the exploration of context learning within 3D data processing has gained significant traction, particularly in its ability to improve the adaptability and efficiency of neural network models. This review will delve into the various techniques and methods that have emerged, emphasizing the importance of understanding spatial relationships and hierarchical structures. To illustrate this, Figure 2 presents a comprehensive figure that depicts the hierarchical categorization of context learning in 3D data processing. This figure details not only the spatial relationships and hierarchical structures but also highlights key frameworks, innovations, and conceptual shifts that are crucial for advancing the field. By examining these elements, we can better appreciate how self-supervised approaches contribute to the overall enhancement of 3D data processing methodologies.

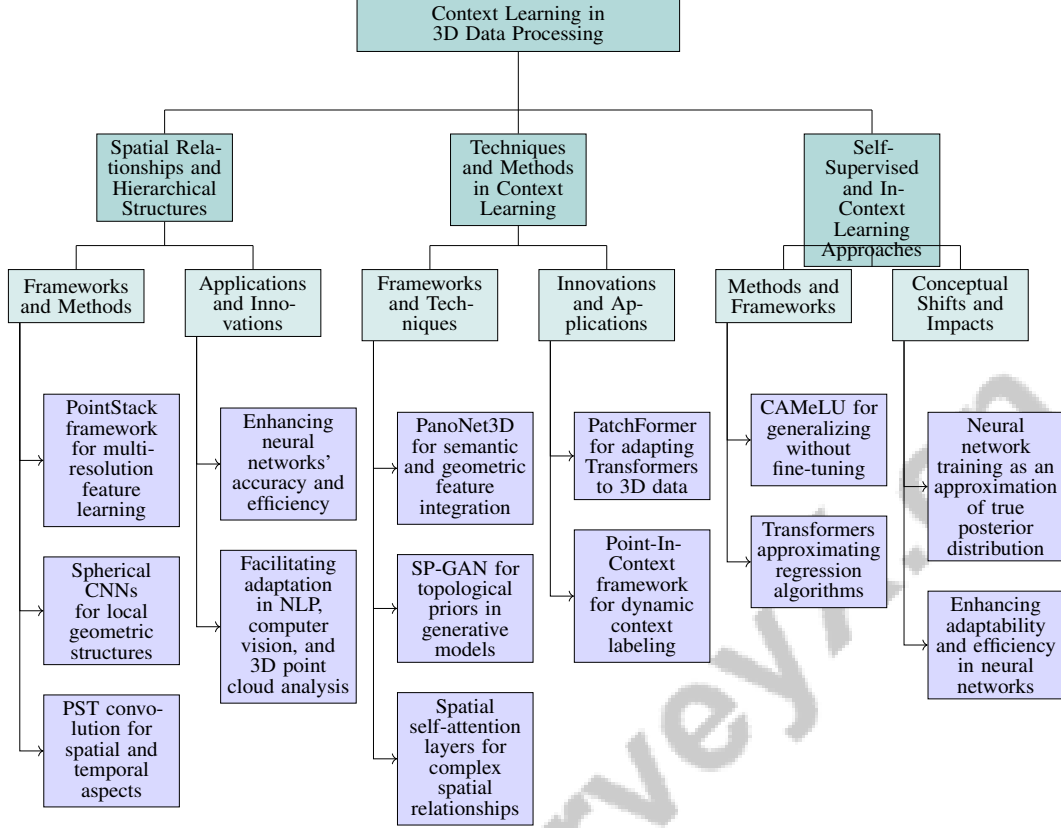


Figure 2: This figure illustrates the hierarchical categorization of context learning in 3D data processing, detailing spatial relationships, hierarchical structures, techniques, methods, and self-supervised approaches. It highlights key frameworks, innovations, and conceptual shifts that enhance neural network models' adaptability and efficiency in processing 3D data.

3 Context Learning in 3D Data Processing

3.1 Spatial Relationships and Hierarchical Structures

Context learning is pivotal for understanding and processing 3D data, leveraging spatial relationships and hierarchical structures in point clouds to extract key features for tasks like object recognition and scene reconstruction. The PointStack framework illustrates this by employing multi-resolution feature learning to capture both global and local contexts [8].

Recent methods strive to balance classification accuracy with training speed, addressing the limitations of traditional models that require extensive training or yield suboptimal accuracy [6]. Spherical convolutional neural networks (-CNN) improve processing of complex 3D environments by utilizing spherical kernels to capture local geometric structures [4].

The PST convolution method emphasizes disentangling spatial and temporal aspects in point cloud sequences, enhancing dynamic and spatial relationship representation [11]. Advanced methodologies like in-context learning significantly enhance neural networks' accuracy and efficiency in complex 3D environments by learning from contextual examples, facilitating adaptation across applications such as natural language processing, computer vision, and 3D point cloud analysis. Incorporating contextual information enables networks to interpret intricate scenes more effectively, leading to robust performance across diverse tasks [21, 14, 36, 16, 12].

As illustrated in Figure 3, the hierarchical categorization of advanced methodologies for 3D data processing emphasizes feature learning, convolution methods, and in-context learning within neural networks. Leveraging spatial relationships and hierarchical structures is crucial for advancing 3D data processing, driving innovations in AI and machine learning.

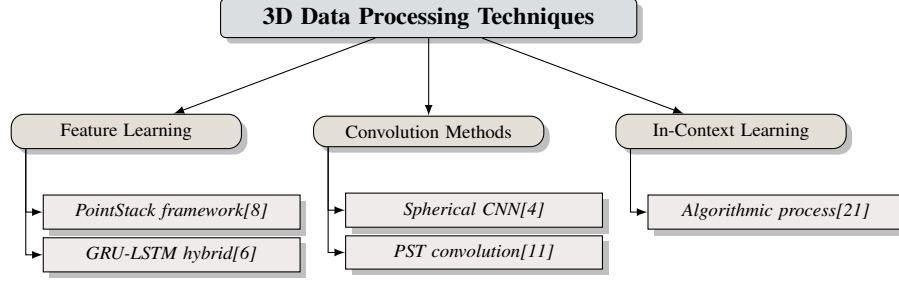


Figure 3: This figure illustrates the hierarchical categorization of advanced methodologies for 3D data processing, emphasizing feature learning, convolution methods, and in-context learning within neural networks.

3.2 Techniques and Methods in Context Learning

The evolution of context learning techniques in 3D data processing is marked by innovative spatial and semantic feature representation approaches, enhancing neural network models' performance and adaptability. The PanoNet3D framework's two-stage context learning process exemplifies this by integrating deep semantic feature extraction with geometric feature generation, improving detection performance in LiDAR point clouds [13].

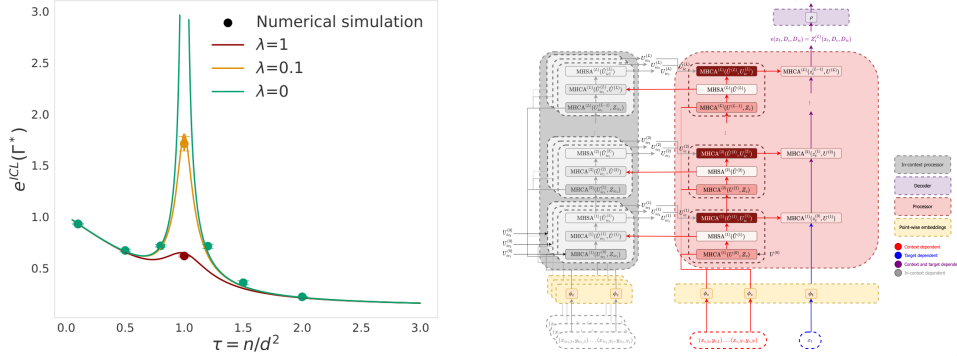
Incorporating topological priors into generative models, such as the SP-GAN framework's strategic centroid usage, advances context learning techniques by improving global feature learning efficiency and structural coherence in generated point clouds [7].

Advancements like spatial self-attention layers encode relative distances and orientations, enhancing models' capabilities to interpret complex spatial relationships. Techniques like Multi-Scale Tokenization and spatial information enhancement capture more representative features, improving accuracy in shape classification and object detection while reducing computational costs [37, 38, 39]. Kernel correlation and graph pooling methods facilitate local geometric structure extraction and robust feature aggregation, essential for effective context learning in 3D data.

Innovations like PatchFormer, using local patch-based attention, address the adaptation challenges of Transformers to 3D data, efficiently extracting relevant features while minimizing computational overhead. The Point-In-Context framework, with its Joint Sampling module, tackles masked modeling challenges in 3D environments, enhancing generalization and performance across segmentation tasks and datasets [16, 28].

These techniques highlight the transformative potential of in-context learning for 3D data processing, particularly through the Point-In-Context framework, which captures and interprets complex spatial and semantic features in point clouds. By treating inputs and outputs as coordinates, it addresses challenges like information leakage and fixed label-coordinate assignments. The Joint Sampling module enhances adaptability, leading to improved generalization across tasks and datasets, including dynamic context labeling and novel part segmentation. Extensive experimentation shows significant advancements in understanding and processing 3D point clouds [16, 28]. Continuous innovation in context learning methodologies not only enhances neural network models' accuracy and efficiency but also broadens their applicability across diverse applications and domains.

As shown in Figure 4, context learning is crucial in 3D data processing, enhancing systems' ability to interpret and utilize data effectively. The first figure illustrates a numerical simulation demonstrating the impact of parameter α on a system's distribution, comparing output distributions across different values ($\alpha = 1$, $\alpha = 0.1$, and $\alpha = 0$) with the x-axis labeled as $x = n/d^2$. Such simulations are vital for understanding data-driven models' sensitivity to parameter variations. These second figures showcase a neural network model's block diagram, context processor, responsible for processing input data contextually, enabling efficient adaptation and learning from [15].



(a) Numerical simulation of the effect of a parameter on the distribution of a system[40]

(b) A Block Diagram of a Neural Network Model[15]

Figure 4: Examples of Techniques and Methods in Context Learning

3.3 Self-Supervised and In-Context Learning Approaches

Self-supervised and in-context learning (ICL) approaches are pivotal in advancing 3D data processing by developing robust models that minimize reliance on extensive labeled datasets. These methodologies facilitate extracting meaningful representations from sparse and irregular 3D data. The CAMELU method exemplifies self-supervised learning’s potential to generalize across unseen tasks without fine-tuning, highlighting its utility where labeled data is scarce or costly [41].

Transformers, known for their adaptability, have effectively approximated traditional regression algorithms, such as ordinary least squares and ridge regression, even under distributional shifts. This adaptability is enhanced by induction heads, which align learned representations with specific task requirements in ICL scenarios, enabling transformers to mimic human cognitive strategies [42].

In 3D data processing, the Point-In-Context framework exemplifies ICL’s strength, achieving superior performance compared to traditional task-specific models. This framework leverages ICL’s adaptability to enhance performance across various 3D applications, demonstrating its transformative impact [16]. Additionally, the dynamics of induction heads in transformers provide insights into their learning capabilities, essential for advancing their application in complex 3D environments [35].

The conceptual shift proposed by Müller et al., viewing neural network training as an approximation of the true posterior distribution instead of maximum likelihood estimation (MLE), is vital for understanding ICL’s underlying mechanisms [12]. This perspective enhances interpretability and effectiveness, paving the way for further innovations in artificial intelligence and machine learning. Collectively, these advancements underscore the significant contributions of self-supervised and in-context learning approaches to 3D data processing, fostering the development of more adaptable and efficient neural network models.

4 Point Cloud Processing Techniques

Category	Feature	Method
Neural Network Architectures for Point Cloud Processing	Semantic and Geometric Integration	PN3D[13], TP-SP-GAN[7]
	Point Transformation and Pooling	PP[3], PS[8]
	Multi-Scale and Hierarchical Processing	-CNN[4]
Transformer-based Approaches	Efficiency Optimization	VRDC[43]
	Data Reconstruction	PT[1]
	Structural Understanding	SEFormer[44], PIC[16]

Table 1: This table provides a comprehensive overview of recent advancements in neural network architectures and transformer-based approaches for point cloud processing. It categorizes various methods based on their features and methodologies, highlighting innovations in semantic and geometric integration, efficiency optimization, and structural understanding. These developments illustrate significant improvements in handling the unordered and irregular nature of 3D data, enhancing the accuracy and efficiency of point cloud processing.

The advancement of point cloud processing techniques has been instrumental in overcoming the challenges associated with representing and manipulating 3D data. Table 1 presents a detailed categorization of contemporary neural network and transformer-based methods for point cloud processing, underscoring their contributions to advancing 3D data manipulation and representation. Table 3 offers a comprehensive comparison of various neural network and transformer-based methods, elucidating their unique strategies for improving point cloud processing. This section delves into innovative neural network architectures that enhance point cloud processing capabilities, elucidating their foundational principles and methodologies.

4.1 Neural Network Architectures for Point Cloud Processing

Recent progress in neural network architectures has significantly improved point cloud processing by addressing the unordered and irregular nature of 3D data. The SeFormer framework, which employs a multi-scale approach to extract both point-level and object-level features from LiDAR point clouds, exemplifies this progress by enhancing 3D object detection [44]. Similarly, the PoinTr framework utilizes a transformer encoder-decoder architecture to predict missing components of point clouds, demonstrating the efficacy of transformers in managing incomplete 3D data [1].

Innovative architectures like the PIC framework leverage a masked point modeling approach, treating point clouds as tokens to learn from contextual examples, thereby enhancing neural network adaptability [16]. The PanoNet3D framework further integrates deep semantic and geometric features, significantly improving object recognition accuracy in complex environments [13].

The SP-GAN framework exemplifies the integration of topological priors into generative models, refining generated point clouds by incorporating topological information during training [7]. The ParaPoint framework facilitates effective point-wise mapping from 3D points to 2D UV coordinates while preserving geometric integrity through adaptive boundary deformation, emphasizing geometric features' importance in point cloud processing [3].

The -CNN architecture enhances processing by efficiently managing irregular point clouds without dynamic kernel generation, thus improving the model's capacity to handle complex environments [4]. The PointStack framework introduces a learnable pooling function that aggregates information from all point features, enhancing feature representation [8]. Meanwhile, the PSTNet framework captures the dynamics of point cloud sequences with computational efficiency, underscoring the significance of temporal dynamics in processing [11].

These advancements collectively enhance the accuracy, efficiency, and adaptability of point cloud processing, paving the way for more robust models and diverse applications in artificial intelligence and machine learning.

As depicted in Figure 5, this figure illustrates the categorization of neural network architectures for point cloud processing, highlighting frameworks for feature extraction, integration of geometric and semantic information, and efficient processing techniques. The first example illustrates a comparative analysis of ModelNet40 accuracies across various point cloud networks, showing a progression in accuracy from 87 to 94 between January 2017 and July 2020. The second example features the Permutation Invariant Network (SO-Net), which effectively manages the spatial distribution of point clouds through hierarchical feature extraction and includes a point cloud autoencoder for improved performance across applications, positioning it favorably against state-of-the-art methods [45, 46].

4.2 Transformer-based Approaches

Method Name	Data Handling	Task Adaptability	Performance Efficiency
SEFormer[44]	Irregular Lidar Data	Diverse 3D Tasks	Processing Speed Improvements
PT[1]	Geometric Structures	Other 3D Tasks	State-of-the-art
VRDC[43]	Unordered Point Clouds	Compress Point Clouds	Computationally Efficient
PIC[16]	Joint Sampling Module	Various 3D Tasks	State-of-the-art Results

Table 2: Comparison of transformer-based methods for 3D point cloud processing, focusing on data handling, task adaptability, and performance efficiency. The table highlights the unique capabilities of each method in addressing the complexities of 3D data, including the handling of irregular data, adaptability to diverse tasks, and improvements in computational efficiency.

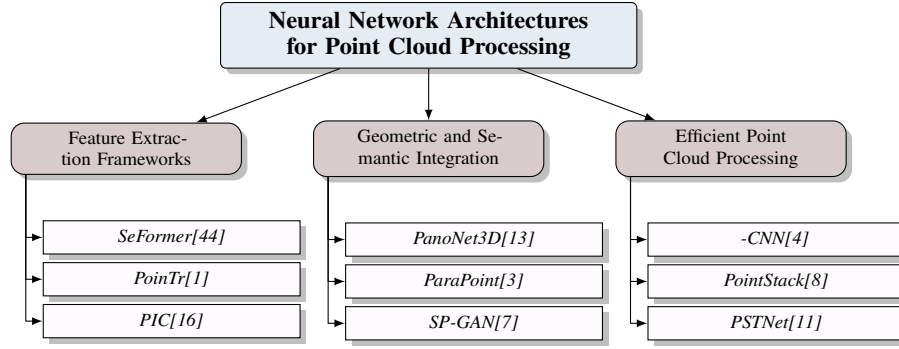


Figure 5: This figure illustrates the categorization of neural network architectures for point cloud processing, highlighting frameworks for feature extraction, integration of geometric and semantic information, and efficient processing techniques.

Transformer-based approaches have revolutionized point cloud processing by addressing the irregular and unordered characteristics of 3D data through attention mechanisms that capture complex spatial relationships. The SeFormer framework demonstrates this by employing a structure embedding transformer to extract multi-scale features from LiDAR point clouds, thereby enhancing 3D object detection and recognition [44].

Transformers’ ability to process incomplete data is notably advantageous, as evidenced by the PoinTr framework, which effectively predicts missing parts of point clouds using a transformer encoder-decoder architecture, crucial for precise object modeling and scene reconstruction [1]. The VRDC method further illustrates transformers’ adaptability by enabling variable bitrate compression, enhancing data transmission efficiency for real-time applications [43].

Innovations like the PIC framework treat point clouds as tokens within a masked point modeling approach, bolstering neural networks’ robustness across diverse tasks [16].

Advancements in transformer-based approaches have significantly improved neural networks’ accuracy, efficiency, and adaptability for various 3D tasks such as classification, segmentation, and object detection. Frameworks like the Point Cloud Transformer (PCT) leverage permutation invariance and local context capture through advanced sampling techniques, achieving state-of-the-art performance. Additionally, innovations such as the Point Transformer V3 (PTv3) emphasize model simplicity and efficiency, leading to improvements in processing speed and memory efficiency, thereby solidifying the role of transformers in advancing 3D computer vision applications [47, 48, 25, 37, 9]. These developments not only address inherent challenges of 3D data but also expand potential applications across various domains in artificial intelligence and machine learning. Table 2 provides a comparative analysis of various transformer-based approaches for processing 3D point clouds, illustrating their distinct methodologies and efficiencies in handling complex data.

Feature	SeFormer	PoinTr	PIC
Feature Extraction	Multi-scale Approach	Encoder-decoder Architecture	Masked Point Modeling
Handling Incompleteness	Not Specified	Predicts Missing Components	Contextual Learning
Geometric Integration	Lidar Point Clouds	Not Specified	Not Specified

Table 3: This table provides a comparative analysis of three advanced frameworks—SeFormer, PoinTr, and PIC—highlighting their distinct methodologies for feature extraction, handling incompleteness, and geometric integration in point cloud processing. The table underscores the diverse approaches employed by each framework to enhance 3D data representation and manipulation, reflecting the ongoing innovation in this field.

5 Stratified Transformers and Neural Network Architectures

The evolution of AI has introduced advanced architectures like stratified transformers, which enhance neural networks’ processing capabilities, especially for 3D data. This section examines innovations

in transformer architectures, focusing on their ability to manage unordered and irregular point clouds, crucial for improving 3D data processing accuracy and efficiency.

5.1 Innovations in Transformer Architectures

Recent innovations in transformer architectures have substantially improved 3D data processing by effectively handling unordered and irregular point clouds. The PoinTr framework's geometry-aware block enhances the capture of local geometric relationships within point clouds [1]. Similarly, PanoNet3D's multi-view framework improves detection capabilities in LiDAR point clouds, offering a comprehensive spatial understanding [13]. ParaPoint advances global mappings and free boundaries, facilitating direct handling of unstructured point clouds and enhancing adaptability [3].

The SP-GAN framework integrates topological priors into generative models, enhancing global feature learning and structural coherence [7]. -CNNs utilize spherical kernels for nuanced point cloud data representation, improving feature extraction [4]. PointStack's learnable pooling function retains non-maximum features, enhancing neural networks' representation capacity [8].

Müller et al. provide insights into neural networks as approximators of the true posterior, enhancing the understanding of transformer architectures in 3D data processing [12]. These innovations collectively improve neural network models' accuracy, efficiency, and applicability in 3D data processing, driving advancements in AI and machine learning, particularly in 3D vision, segmentation, and classification [49, 16].

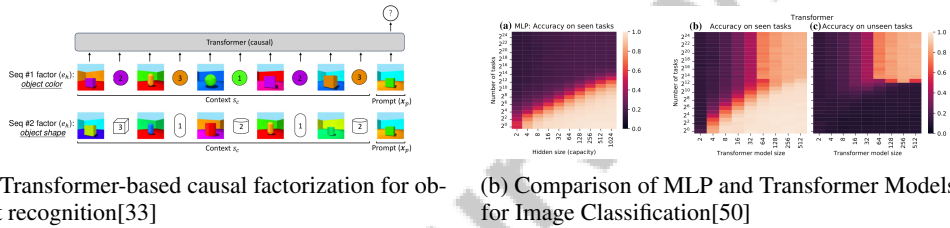


Figure 6: Examples of Innovations in Transformer Architectures

As shown in Figure 6, stratified transformers have advanced neural network architectures in object recognition and image classification. The "Transformer-based causal factorization for object recognition" model uses sequential factors to predict object attributes, demonstrating transformers' capabilities in complex visual tasks. The "Comparison of MLP and Transformer Models for Image Classification" highlights transformers' superior accuracy over traditional MLPs, showcasing their adaptability and efficiency [33, 50].

5.2 Comparative Analysis of Neural Network Architectures

A comparative analysis of neural network architectures for 3D data processing reveals substantial advancements in managing point cloud complexities. PointWeb's Adaptive Feature Adjustment module dynamically adjusts point interactions, enhancing segmentation and classification performance. Transferring pretrained 2D model architectures to 3D point-cloud understanding yields competitive results with reduced training time, advancing applications in autonomous driving and robotics [51].

VRDC effectively compresses point clouds, preserving data integrity compared to traditional voxelization methods [43]. ConvPoint excels in permutation and translation invariance, crucial for robust performance across varying input sizes [52]. PointNL, as part of a cascaded non-local neural network, demonstrates superior segmentation accuracy by capturing long-range dependencies [53].

Finetuned models outperform training-from-scratch approaches, highlighting the advantages of pretrained models in 3D processing [51]. PointNetLK's learned alignment mechanism improves registration task accuracy, surpassing traditional methods like ICP [54]. PointDAN enhances 3D domain adaptation by aligning local and global features, increasing versatility across domains [55]. Li et al.'s lightweight architecture operates without GPUs, suitable for real-time applications [56]. 3DAC's deep learning approach outperforms existing methods in attribute compression, essential for efficient data storage and transmission [27].

These insights into neural network architectures for 3D point cloud data reveal innovative strategies addressing irregular data formats, including PointNet, PointNet++, LocAL-Net, and HEA-Net, which optimize performance in 3D classification and segmentation tasks [57, 58, 59, 60, 61].

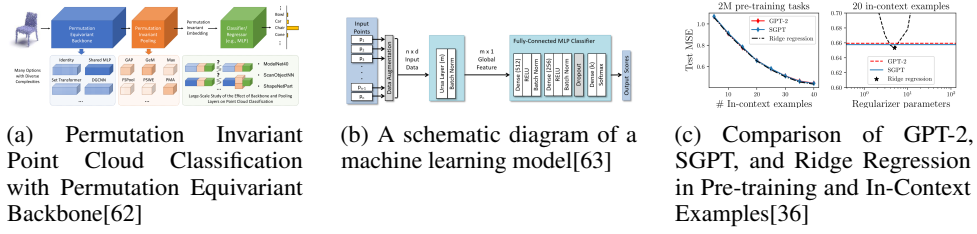


Figure 7: Examples of Comparative Analysis of Neural Network Architectures

As depicted in Figure 7, the study of "Stratified Transformers and Neural Network Architectures" provides a comprehensive analysis through illustrative examples. The first example highlights a backbone designed for permutation invariance. The second example details a fully-connected MLP classifier, emphasizing input points and data augmentation. The third compares GPT-2, SGPT, and Ridge Regression models, illustrating performance differences in test MSE across varying in-context examples and regularization parameters [62, 63, 36].

5.3 Applications of Stratified Transformers in 3D Data Processing

Stratified transformers significantly enhance 3D data processing applications by managing complex spatial relationships and hierarchical structures within point clouds. The SegVoxelNet framework improves detection performance in scenarios like autonomous driving [64]. The PCT method enhances real-time applications, improving processing speed and accuracy [65]. The CA-aug approach creates realistic 3D scenes, improving detection accuracy for challenging targets [66]. SPLATNet captures detailed geometric and semantic information from point clouds [67]. The ViL3DRel model enhances object grounding tasks within 3D scenes, showcasing the versatility of stratified transformers [68].

The GFA method focuses on domain adaptation and generating realistic 3D models using GANs [69]. The FBI method enhances explainability and effectiveness in processing point cloud data [70]. These applications underscore the transformative impact of stratified transformers in advancing 3D data processing, enabling more accurate, efficient, and adaptable models across diverse domains [25, 35, 32].

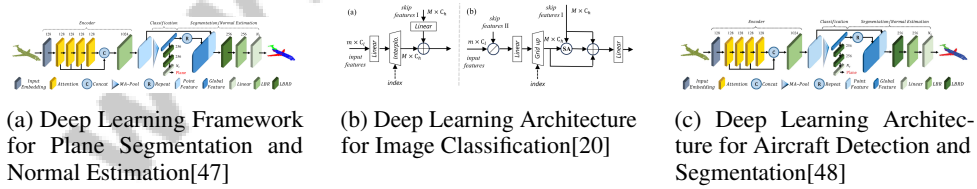


Figure 8: Examples of Applications of Stratified Transformers in 3D Data Processing

As illustrated in Figure 8, the exploration of Stratified Transformers in neural network architectures reveals their versatility in 3D data processing. The first example employs an encoder for plane segmentation and normal estimation. The second showcases CNN architectures with skip connections for image classification. The third presents an encoder-decoder structure for aircraft detection and segmentation, utilizing CNNs and fully connected layers for accuracy [47, 20, 48].

6 Applications and Case Studies

The integration of advanced neural network architectures and context learning techniques in 3D data processing has catalyzed transformative applications across numerous domains. This section delves

into real-world applications and case studies, showcasing the profound impact of these technologies in practical scenarios.

6.1 Real-world Applications and Case Studies

Advanced neural network architectures and context learning techniques have significantly advanced 3D data processing applications across various fields. The PanoNet3D framework exemplifies its utility in autonomous vehicle systems by enhancing 3D object detection from LiDAR point clouds, crucial for safety and navigation [13]. In industrial design, the TransCAD framework highlights the use of hierarchical transformers to recover CAD sequences from point clouds, emphasizing real-world applicability [71].

In dynamic environments like virtual reality and gaming, MEEPO demonstrates superior performance in point cloud segmentation, offering faster processing speeds and improved memory efficiency [72]. MRTNet provides versatile 3D shape processing solutions, underscoring its relevance in fields demanding detailed modeling [73]. Yang et al.'s method supports high-precision shape generation and interpolation applications [74], while BoxNet effectively estimates bounding boxes for vehicles and pedestrians, validated using the KITTI dataset [75].

PatchFormer achieves comparable accuracy to existing methods with reduced processing time, suitable for real-time 3D data processing [31]. PointTr's performance in point cloud completion is critical for reconstructing incomplete data, benefiting cultural heritage preservation and architectural modeling [1]. The SP-GAN framework, by integrating topological priors, enhances point cloud generation quality, validated through metrics like FPD and JSD [7]. These examples illustrate the extensive applications and potential of advanced neural networks and context learning in 3D data processing.

6.2 Autonomous Driving

In autonomous driving, 3D data processing is crucial for enhancing vehicle navigation systems' safety and efficiency. Advanced neural networks and context learning techniques are vital for interpreting complex spatial information in 3D point clouds, essential for real-time object detection. The Pillar R-CNN framework exemplifies integrating LiDAR and image-based detection, achieving competitive 3D object detection performance [76]. Efficient processing of large outdoor point clouds is vital for safe navigation in dynamic environments, as highlighted by Li et al. [29].

Accurate 3D data interpretation allows autonomous vehicles to better understand their surroundings and make informed decisions. Techniques like PointWeb's contextual feature extraction and SegVoxelNet's depth-aware mechanisms enhance navigation in complex environments, including urban areas with dense traffic [35, 64]. Ongoing advancements in 3D data processing methodologies promise further improvements in autonomous driving capabilities, driving innovations in AI and machine learning for safer vehicles.

6.3 Robotics and Computer Vision

3D data processing integration in robotics and computer vision enhances the ability to interpret and interact with complex environments. In robotics, 3D point clouds from sensors like LiDARs and RGB-D cameras facilitate accurate navigation and manipulation, essential for autonomous exploration and industrial automation [25, 26]. Enhanced perception capabilities enable tasks like obstacle avoidance and path planning.

In computer vision, 3D data processing advances scene understanding and object recognition. The ParaPoint framework demonstrates unsupervised learning pipelines' effectiveness in building mappings between 3D points and 2D coordinates, crucial for feature extraction [3]. Improved 3D processing capabilities enhance vision systems' spatial relationship understanding, vital for augmented and virtual reality [31].

Spherical CNNs (-CNN) improve feature representation in 3D data processing, allowing accurate scene interpretation [4]. These advancements enable detailed scene analysis and object classification, crucial for applications from surveillance to interactive media. Integrating 3D data processing in robotics and computer vision improves system accuracy and efficiency, broadening applications

across fields like autonomous driving and object reconstruction. Sophisticated algorithms and deep learning techniques enhance 3D environment analysis, enabling tasks like semantic segmentation and object recognition [25, 49]. Evolving neural network architectures and context learning continue to drive innovations in AI and machine learning.

7 Challenges and Future Directions

The progression of 3D data processing is hampered by challenges such as the irregular nature of point clouds, data quality issues, and the computational demands of advanced neural network architectures. Overcoming these obstacles is crucial for improving the efficacy and applicability of 3D data processing techniques across various fields.

7.1 Challenges and Limitations

3D data processing faces notable challenges impacting the performance of neural network architectures and context learning methods. The irregular and unordered nature of point clouds complicates feature extraction, often necessitating reliance on 2D detection frameworks, which diminishes the advantages of 3D information [13]. LiDAR data quality can further hinder detection performance in high-precision applications [13]. Loss of structural information during encoding affects the recovery of fine details, impacting model accuracy [1]. Current methods often inadequately address the compounded loss of granularity and non-maximum point features, which are crucial for preserving detailed geometric information [8].

The computational complexity of deep learning methods presents challenges, particularly in tasks requiring fine-grained local feature extraction and large-scale labeled datasets. Neural networks can produce unreliable predictions when extrapolating beyond prior support due to architectural constraints affecting posterior approximation [12]. Complex topologies and class imbalances within datasets further complicate the landscape, with methods struggling with intricate topologies requiring refined mappings [3] and class imbalances leading to low F1-Score values [6]. Performance improvements vary across categories, especially for car point clouds with high structural similarity, necessitating more robust models [7]. Octree structures in spherical CNNs may not be optimal for all point cloud types, indicating a need for more adaptable data structures [4].

The reliance on small datasets and challenges in generalizing across different environments limit the applicability of current studies, highlighting the need for extensive and diverse datasets to enhance model robustness and generalizability [5]. Addressing these challenges is vital for advancing 3D data processing and expanding its applications.

7.2 Computational Complexity and Resource Demands

The computational complexity and resource demands of 3D data processing present significant challenges, particularly with large-scale datasets and sophisticated neural network architectures. The complexity of point cloud data, characterized by sparsity, noise, and 3D view variations, complicates annotation and presents substantial computational challenges [77]. Transformer models, while powerful, increase resource requirements due to their self-attention mechanisms [25]. Techniques like Linformer aim to reduce computational load, yet challenges persist [78].

The TPST method exemplifies the computational burden associated with processing extremely large datasets [79]. The dual feature extraction process in PanoNet3D adds to computational complexity, impacting model efficiency [13]. The adaptive weight generation process in LSANet further complicates resource demands, affecting inference speed [80].

Efforts to mitigate these challenges involve optimizing neural network architectures to balance performance with resource demands. Streamlining self-attention mechanisms can reduce the computational complexity of Transformer models [25]. Aligning model design with available computational resources, such as leveraging efficient hardware configurations, can enhance performance without compromising scalability.

Future research should focus on developing explicit semantic representations and enhancing uncertainty reasoning through advanced methodologies to streamline the automatic reconstruction of objects from images and 3D data. Integrating human cognitive strategies and large language models

(LLMs) with 3D spatial data is anticipated to improve reasoning, planning, and navigation within complex environments, advancing embodied artificial intelligence systems [81, 49]. Optimizing trade-off parameters and refining model architectures will help address the computational complexity inherent in 3D data processing.

7.3 Data Scarcity and Quality

Data scarcity and quality pose significant challenges in 3D data processing, affecting neural network model development and deployment. Point cloud quality is often compromised by noise, occlusions, and sparsity, hindering the accuracy and robustness of 3D models. Methods like PoinTr illustrate these issues, particularly in complex or occluded point clouds where structural information is lost [1].

Enhancing control over point cloud generation processes is essential, as demonstrated by StarNet, which refines generation quality [82]. The FBI method provides insights into dataset biases, improving network training strategies and robustness to data quality variations [70].

The scarcity of task-related ground truth data poses challenges for robust sampling strategies in point cloud processing. High-quality ground truth data is crucial for developing robust models, as highlighted in task-aware sampling layers [83]. Future research should explore lossless compression techniques and attribute interpolation to enhance decompressed point cloud quality, vital for maintaining data integrity during processing [27].

Investigating MLP performance on complex tasks and conditions affecting adaptability can yield insights for improving model performance amid data scarcity [23]. Integrating newer architectures and rotation invariance could enhance point cloud classification models, addressing data quality challenges [62].

A comprehensive strategy is essential for tackling data scarcity and quality challenges. This strategy should focus on enhancing data generation methods, improving model resilience to data quality variations, and investigating advanced techniques for data compression and representation. Recent studies emphasize the need for innovative algorithms enabling direct processing of compressed 3D point cloud data, reducing the computational burden of decompression. Knowledge-driven approaches can enhance object reconstruction and recognition, while edge-aware learning methodologies can mitigate noise, improving classification and segmentation outcomes. A multifaceted approach is crucial for advancing 3D data processing capabilities [58, 60, 49, 25, 84].

7.4 Handling Noise and Irregularities

Effectively managing noise and irregularities in 3D point cloud data is critical for ensuring the accuracy and robustness of processing models. The irregular distribution and susceptibility to noise complicate feature extraction and recognition tasks. For instance, methods like ExpPointMAE, while improving interpretability, may still struggle with noise and irregularities, affecting 3D data processing performance [37]. Similarly, variable-rate compression methods may not perform optimally with highly irregular point distributions, underscoring the need for robust techniques [43].

Noise and irregularities impact recognition accuracy, as seen in rotation-invariant local-to-global representation learning, where addressing these challenges remains significant [85]. TransCAD demonstrates improved robustness against noise and input perturbations, addressing some challenges associated with irregularities in point cloud data [71].

Context-aware data augmentation techniques, such as CA-aug, help mitigate noise effects by ensuring augmented objects do not overlap with existing ones, preserving data integrity [66]. The integration of LLMs with diverse 3D data types presents computational challenges, particularly in processing high-dimensional information, exacerbating noise and irregularity issues [81]. Future research should explore deeper networks with more Shrinking units to enhance performance on complex point cloud datasets, as suggested by graph convolution-based methods [86].

Best practices for processing 3D point clouds in the compressed domain remain an open question, indicating further exploration of techniques capable of managing noise and irregularities while maintaining data integrity [84]. Addressing these challenges is essential for advancing 3D data processing and improving the robustness and accuracy of neural network models in complex and noisy environments.

7.5 Integration of Contextual and Geometric Information

Integrating contextual and geometric information is vital for enhancing the accuracy and efficiency of 3D data processing, providing a comprehensive understanding of spatial relationships and object characteristics within point clouds. This integration is particularly crucial for applications like object recognition and scene reconstruction, where local and global contexts are essential. The SCN model exemplifies this integration by capturing both local and global context through attentional mechanisms, thereby improving recognition performance [87]. This approach highlights the importance of leveraging contextual cues to enhance geometric understanding in 3D environments.

PatchFormer effectively integrates contextual information by leveraging geometric similarities in local point clusters, maintaining essential information while optimizing resource efficiency [31]. The InOrNet framework emphasizes the critical role of contextual information in maintaining performance through category-guided geometric reasoning [88].

Addressing uneven terrains is achieved by integrating contextual information into geometric processing, exemplified by the piece-wise constant representation for ground surface estimation proposed by Li et al. [56]. Future research could optimize memory efficiency and explore complex potential functions in convolutional models to improve contextual and geometric information integration [89]. Understanding the causal roles of CMR-like characteristics in Transformer architectures may also address integration challenges [42].

Analysis of learning dynamics in Transformers reveals a four-phase training process, which could inform strategies for integrating contextual and geometric information in 3D data processing [35]. Future directions include incorporating self-supervised learning techniques and adaptive set abstraction methods to enhance performance in 3D point cloud processing [25]. Unanswered questions regarding scalability, robustness to noise and occlusion, and the need for comprehensive datasets to train models effectively remain critical [5].

The integration of contextual and geometric information is essential for advancing 3D data processing, enabling models to interpret complex environments accurately and enhancing performance across various applications. This approach leverages both semantic features derived from object appearance and context and geometric structures representing actual 3D shapes. By employing methods like in-context learning and unified multi-view frameworks, researchers aim to improve object detection and reconstruction, leading to more efficient and reliable digital representations of the physical world. This dual focus facilitates critical geometrical element extraction and guides algorithms in recognizing and classifying objects, addressing limitations of traditional methods in complex scenarios [49, 16, 13].

7.6 Scalability and Generalization

Scalability and generalization are critical challenges in 3D data processing as the field evolves with increasingly complex datasets and applications. Neural networks must scale effectively while maintaining robust generalization across diverse tasks for practical deployment. A significant challenge is the high computational cost of processing large-scale point cloud data, often exacerbated by inefficient nearest neighbor searches, a critical component in many existing methods [90].

Robustness to varying point cloud densities is crucial for scalability and generalization. Methods like RGCNN demonstrate resilience to noise and density variations, making them suitable for practical applications where data characteristics can fluctuate significantly [91]. Future research should enhance models' adaptability to these variations, evaluate the importance of different context levels, and improve model performance across diverse environmental conditions [92].

Integrating additional sensory modalities and developing robust context integration methods are emerging trends that could enhance scalability and generalization in 3D data processing [14]. Exploring deep learning architectures incorporating these modalities may provide a comprehensive understanding of spatial and semantic information, improving model performance across a wider range of applications.

Transformers' potential to discover and implement a broader range of algorithms presents another avenue for addressing scalability challenges. Applying current research insights to more complex learning problems could enhance transformers' generalization capabilities across diverse tasks and datasets [21]. Additionally, future research could enhance methods to include factors affecting repre-

sentation quality and robustness in deep neural networks, addressing scalability and generalization challenges in 3D data processing [60].

Understanding the implications of preferred priors for approximation and developing a practical definition of support in neural network training are crucial for advancing scalability and generalization in 3D data processing models. These efforts could significantly impact language model development in various sequence tasks, highlighting the interconnectedness of different domains in artificial intelligence [12]. Addressing these challenges is essential for the continued advancement and application of 3D data processing technologies across diverse fields.

7.7 Explainability and Robustness

The explainability and robustness of 3D data processing methods are critical factors influencing their adoption and effectiveness in practical applications. Explainability encompasses the capacity to provide clear insights into decision-making processes, fostering user trust and enhancing debugging efforts. Recent advancements in explainable AI (XAI) techniques, such as Feature Based Interpretability (FBI) for point cloud networks, allow for pointwise importance computation, facilitating a better understanding of model properties critical for safety in high-stakes applications. Furthermore, real-time feedback during inference can significantly reduce uncertainty and bolster robustness. As machine learning models evolve, particularly in the context of in-context learning (ICL), interpreting their behavior as approximations of the true posterior becomes increasingly essential, enabling predictions of generalizations to unseen tasks. Thus, effective explainability aids in model transparency and plays a crucial role in advancing reliability and performance of complex neural networks [35, 70, 12]. Robustness pertains to a model's ability to maintain performance in the presence of noise, adversarial attacks, or input data variations.

Recent advancements in 3D data processing have focused on enhancing both explainability and robustness. Integrating attention mechanisms, such as those in transformer-based models, significantly improves neural network interpretability by highlighting the importance of specific features or regions within point clouds [31]. This capability allows for a more transparent understanding of how models prioritize different aspects of the data during processing.

Context-aware data augmentation techniques, such as CA-aug, contribute to robustness by ensuring models are trained on diverse and realistic scenarios, improving their ability to generalize across varying environments [66]. These techniques help models better handle noise and irregularities, common challenges in real-world applications.

Moreover, methods like the FBI framework provide valuable insights into network behavior, enhancing the explainability of point cloud processing models by revealing their inner workings and decision-making processes [70]. Such frameworks are crucial for identifying potential weaknesses and improving overall model robustness.

Efforts to enhance robustness also involve exploring deeper network architectures and more complex potential functions, which can bolster a model's performance against adversarial attacks or input perturbations [86]. The exploration of self-supervised learning techniques and adaptive set abstraction methods promises to further enhance the robustness and explainability of 3D data processing models [25].

Ongoing improvements in explainability and robustness in 3D data processing methods are critical for effective real-world application, enabling more accurate object reconstruction, improved object recognition and segmentation, and better management of complex and noisy data. By integrating human cognitive strategies and employing advanced algorithms, such as edge-aware learning and Transformer architectures, these methods can navigate the intricacies of 3D representations, leading to reliable outcomes in various fields, including analysis, planning, and visualization [58, 49, 25, 60]. Enhancing these aspects aims to build more reliable and trustworthy models capable of effectively handling the complexities and challenges of diverse 3D environments.

8 Conclusion

The survey emphasizes the transformative potential of context learning and advanced neural network architectures in 3D data processing, highlighting their pivotal roles in enhancing model accuracy, effi-

ciency, and robustness across various applications. Techniques like PointStack exemplify the superior performance of advanced architectures in shape classification and part segmentation, showcasing sophisticated feature learning strategies [8]. Similarly, CloudAttention achieves state-of-the-art results in shape classification and competitive performance in part segmentation, significantly boosting computational efficiency [38].

Innovations such as GCACnv demonstrate exceptional performance across multiple tasks, surpassing existing rotation-invariant convolution methods and illustrating the promise of context-aware convolutional strategies [10]. The Geom-DeepONet further highlights the capabilities of deep operator networks in predicting solution fields for variable 3D geometries, providing valuable insights for design engineers [93].

The SiC framework underscores the integration of context learning with neural architectures, achieving state-of-the-art performance in multi-task skeleton modeling and indicating future research potential in 3D data processing [2]. Additionally, the effective approximation of instance-based and feature-based domain adaptation algorithms by Transformers illustrates the adaptability and versatility of these models within the in-context learning framework [94].

Future research may focus on enhancing the performance of existing models in challenging environments, as suggested for SEFormer, and exploring new applications in 3D vision tasks beyond object detection [44]. Further exploration of seamless surface parameterization and the development of more generalizable neural architectures present promising avenues for advancing 3D data processing [3]. The impressive performance of methods like GFA in unsupervised domain adaptation for 3D point cloud classification underscores the significance of synthetic data generation in propelling the field forward [69].

The ongoing evolution of context learning and neural network architectures is crucial for addressing the inherent challenges of 3D data processing. These innovations enhance the precision and adaptability of 3D models while broadening their applicability across diverse domains, fostering further advancements in artificial intelligence and machine learning. Identifying state-of-the-art methods in 3D point cloud processing, along with insights into their strengths and limitations, paves the way for future research directions [5]. Moreover, experiments indicate that PSTNet significantly improves accuracy in 3D action recognition and 4D semantic segmentation tasks by effectively modeling point cloud sequences [11].

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