
Neural Highlighting of Affordance Regions

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TASK OVERVIEW

reference paper: [3D highlighter](#)

This project aims to explore and familiarize with novel neural field advancements applied to the affordance detection task.

The goal of the project is to build a label-free pipeline for affordance generation leveraging pre-trained language vision models.

You will use the architecture proposed in *3D Highlighter: Localizing Regions on 3D Shapes via Text Description* and adapt it for generating affordance labels on real-world point clouds.

Literature:

Before starting the project take time to familiarize yourself with the literature on Vision Language models, Neural Fields, and Task Affordance.

Neural Fields

Neural fields are an enticing new technique used for encoding continuous signals into a compact smooth representation parametrized in part or fully by a neural network, they work by taking in input a set of coordinates and generating as output the value of the field at the specified coordinates. Thus the network itself becomes a representation of the desired signal. For general applications of Neural Fields and an overview of the paradigm, you can read [2].

Contrastive Vision Language Model

CLIP [3] has unlocked various applications by providing a bridge between visual data and language. Read the paper that introduced it and familiarize yourself with the concept of contrastive vision language models.

Training such models requires huge amounts of data, unfortunately in the field of 3D deep learning, there aren't datasets with as much diversity and quantity as needed.

The solution that is usually adopted is to bypass the lack of data by casting the problem to the 2D vision domain. Differentiable rendering techniques enable the creation of 2D renderings starting from 3D data while retaining the differentiability of the whole pipeline.

In this project you will use the same trick, we will render our generated outputs to 2D images enabling the use of CLIP without additional pretraining.

Object Affordances

Object affordance regions are a useful concept for defining the human-object interaction. An affordance region in the context of objects is defined as the object part that is most useful for achieving a specific task. For example, a chair has an affordance region that includes sitting, standing on, or using it as a makeshift ladder. Predicting affordance regions is very useful for improving robotic applications that require fine manipulation skills. For a more detailed description on affordance regions and their applications read [4]



PROJECT GOALS

First Part

The initial goal of this project is to allow you to get familiar with the neural highlighter architecture. As a result, the first part of the project is pure code writing and does not involve performing training. To reach this result you should thoroughly study the reference paper [1] and any other paper that you may find among its references and that could be useful to get a better insight on the task.

Look at the code provided in the original repo of [1] to better understand how the model works <https://github.com/threedle/3DHighlighter>.

After writing your implementation of neural highlighter test it on sample meshes provided in the project files and meshes that you can find online, there are several resources available that you can use.

The [objaverse dataset](#) provides an exploration tool where you can search for 3D cad models and then find the reference to the [Sketchfab](#) page for the download

Explore different architectural choices, try different numbers of MLPs, different types of positional encoding, and different types of augmentations.

Validate your choice of architecture by comparing the speed of convergence of the CLIP score, the final CLIP score, and the visual quality of the obtained samples.

Due to the generative nature of the model, rigorous quantitative evaluation is difficult, therefore visualize often your results to assess the performance of the model.

When reporting your results report both the CLIP score and a sampled visualization of your results commenting on how and why the results differ from previous experiments.

Second Part

Neural highlighter as proposed is limited to only work on meshes, while it is a useful data type most common 3D real-world scans are collected in the form of point clouds. Point clouds in general are much more flexible and can originate from a wide variety of sources, they can be sampled from meshes but they can also be collected from RGB-D cameras and Lidar sensors.

The goal of this part is to adapt the previously implemented pipeline to work on point cloud data, you are free to choose the approach you best see fit for the task, some possible approaches are:

1. Use a differentiable point cloud renderer instead of a differentiable mesh renderer https://pytorch3d.org/tutorials/render_colored_points
2. Approximate a mesh from the 3D point cloud
http://www.open3d.org/docs/latest/tutorial/Advanced/surface_reconstruction.html

To test your results download pointclouds from the AffordanceNet dataset.

In the end, you should be able to generate highlights given an arbitrary point cloud, and explore how different rendering techniques and different numbers of sampled points impact the quality of the results.

Third Part

Use the previously defined pipeline to generate affordance information for the AffordanceNet benchmark [4].

The goal is to test how viable the pipeline you built for generating affordance labels without any kind of direct supervision.

You should focus on common household items and labels that deal with hand-object interaction e.g. Grasp Push Wrapp etc.

Define two small subsets of samples from the training set as your validation and test sets, and focus on a few types of annotations that you think are best suited for the model.

Define CLIP prompts for each of the possible selected affordance labels and test the segmentation accuracy using the ground truth labels of the benchmark. Explore and

compare different prompting strategies for generating the affordance highlighting, depending on the affordance label and the type of chosen rendering there could be different optimal prompts.

END OF PROJECT FOR DAAI COURSE

Extensions

In this part of the project, you can propose your contribution to expand the proposed pipeline, if you have interesting ideas you are free to implement them. You should at least implement one extension, possible extensions are:

1. Use Other models for the language supervision part, you can try to use models that work natively on 3D data without the need for differentiable rendering techniques like OpenShape [5] or advanced 2d to 3D clip models like PointClip [6, 7]
2. Expand your evaluation for the part segmentation task, try to define a similar benchmarking suit from the part-net dataset, and repeat the previously proposed evaluation
3. Try the learnable prompts strategy proposed in Learning to Prompt for Vision-Language Models [7], by using the ground truths from the validation set, you can optimize the prompts fed to the clip encoder. Test the learned prompts on your test set
4. If you have a 3D camera at your disposal (Some modern iPhones or iPads have a lidar sensor integrated) you can also try to collect a few scans of real-world household objects and use them to test your model
5. Try if different training augmentations produce more reliable training dynamics and better results, you could try adding a background to the rendering and see if it improves over a regular mono-color background
6. Try different positional encoding, in the original paper no positional encoding was used, try using classical Nerf positional embedding or others you can find in the literature
7. Implement your idea

At The End

- Deliver PyTorch scripts for all the required steps.
- Write a complete PDF report (with paper-style). The report should contain a brief introduction, a related work section, a methodological section for describing the algorithm that you're going to use, an experimental section with all the results and discussions, a final brief conclusion. Follow this [link](#) to open and create the template for the report.

Example Of Questions you should be able to answer at the end of the project

1. What are object affordances?
2. What are the various types of 3D representations commonly used in DL?
3. What is a neural field?
4. How does CLIP work?
5. What is differentiable rendering and why is it useful?

References

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