Learning Generalizable Manipulation Policies with Object-Centric 3D Representations

Abstract: We introduce GROOT, an imitation learning method with object-centric and 3D priors to learn robust policies for vision-based manipulation. GROOT is able to train policies that generalize beyond their initial training conditions. GROOT first constructs object-centric 3D representations that are robust to background changes and camera views, and reason over the representations using a transformer-based policy. At test time, we introduce a segmentation correspondence model that allows policies to reuse their strategies in the case of new object manipulation. Through comprehensive experiments, we validate the robustness of GROOT policies against perceptual variations in both simulated and real-world environments. Their performance excels in all aspects of considered generalization in perception, outperforming traditional pixel-based or object proposal prior methods. We also extensively evaluate GROOT policies on real robots, where we demonstrate the efficacy under very wild changes in setup. More videos and model details can be found in the appendix and the project website https://sites.google.com/view/groot-manipulation.

Keywords: Manipulation, Object-Centric Representation, Imitation Learning

1 Introduction

Building robots capable of performing diverse manipulation tasks necessitates a rich repertoire of sensorimotor skills. These skills must operate on real-world perception and generalize across changing environments. Imitation learning (IL) [1–8] has recently emerged as a practical and efficient approach for training neural network-based visuomotor policies to tackle complex manipulation tasks. However, existing IL methods face difficulties in generalizing beyond the exact environments from which the demonstrations are collected. Consequently, applying these methods to real-world tasks would entail time-consuming data collection and model re-training for each deployment setting.

In order to harness the strengths of IL algorithms in learning visuomotor policies for real-world tasks, enhancing their robustness and adaptability to environmental variations becomes crucial. Prior work [9–13] has suggested that end-to-end learning policies are particularly vulnerable to even slight visual variations in the environment, including changes in the background, shifts in camera viewpoints, and presence of new object instances. As a result, IL policies trained on a limited set of demonstrations are commonly evaluated in the same workspace with strictly controlled conditions such as backgrounds and cameras.

In this work, we argue that incorporating **structured visual representations** into the design of IL policies is important for enhancing their capability to handle visual variations naturally encountered in real-world deployments. In particular, a desirable visual representation should possess the following two properties: **object-centric** and **3D-aware**. The object-centric property exploits the compositional structure of visual scenes as a set of objects and entities. It encourages the policies to focus on task-relevant factors while minimizing the impacts of visual distractors. The 3D-aware

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Figure 1: **GROOT Overview.** GROOT learns closed-loop visuomotor policies from demonstrations under a single setup, and generalizes to setups with different conditions, namely different visual distractions, changed camera angles, and new objects.

property lifts the spatial reasoning from the 2D plane to a unified reference frame of 3D coordinates. It improves the representation's spatial invariance against changes in camera viewpoints.

We present GROOT (**G**eneralizable **RO**bot Manipulation Policies for Visu**O**motor Con**T**rol), which aims to learn visuomotor policies that generalize beyond initial training conditions. Fig. 1 provides an overview of our approach. Central to GROOT is building object-centric 3D representations that exhibit robustness against visual variations. To achieve this, we harness the power of large-scale, open-vocabulary visual recognition models newly developed by the vision community [14–18]. Building our representations involves three major steps. First, GROOT uses an interactive segmentation model [19] that allows demonstrators to annotate instance segmentation masks of *task-relevant* objects by simply scribbling on a single frame. Task-relevant objects here refer to foreground objects involved in a specific manipulation task. Second, GROOT propagates the segmentation masks to the rest of the demonstration frames using a pretrained Video Object Segmentation (VOS) model [17]. Finally, GROOT back-projects the 2D segmentation masks into 3D point clouds using depth, which can be obtained from the RGB-D observations [20]. These point clouds are then transformed into a predetermined reference frame invariant to the camera viewpoints, such as the robot base frame. We construct our representations from the segmented point clouds, capturing object information like geometry and their spatial relations in 3D space. Finally, the depth point clouds of individual objects are encoded into a discrete set of tokens, which are further processed by a transformer-based policy [3, 21] to predict actions. We train our encoders and policies end-to-end with behavior cloning objectives.

To generalize to new object instances during deployment, we introduce a segmentation correspondence model. This model utilizes an open-vocabulary segmentation model [14] to generate a set of object masks from visual observations of deployment environments. For each annotated object mask from the training phase, the model identifies its closest match based on DINOv2 [16] semantic feature similarities. The model can therefore propagate the object masks from training environments to test scenes, enabling GROOT to apply the learned policies to previously unseen objects from the same categories. For example, the policy trained to manipulate one mug can be reused to perform the same task with new mugs.

We conduct comprehensive experiments in both simulation and real-world. In simulation, results show the that our learned policies excel at handling all generalization cases, while baseline methods based on pixels or object proposal priors fail at large variations in perception. In five real-robot tasks, we demonstrate that GROOT can also generalize to diverse backgrounds, different camera angle, and new object manipulation.

2 Related Work

Deep Imitation Learning for Robot Manipulation Deep imitation learning (IL) has emerged as a highly efficient method for learning end-to-end manipulation policies in the real world [1, 6,

8, 22–25]. New IL algorithms have also shown promise in handling long-horizon and multi-stage manipulation tasks [3, 26]. However, most of these approaches assume the test environments closely resemble the development environments in which the demonstrations are collected. This assumption hampers learned policies from being deployed beyond their training conditions. To improve the broader applicability of IL methods, GROOT focuses on training policies using data from a single environment and enabling them to generalize across various visual variations, including background changes, different camera viewpoints, and new object instances.

Representations Learning for Vision-Based Manipulation Prior work has investigated various types of visual representations for learning vision-based manipulation policies. Early work commonly uses intermediate visual representations, such as bounding boxes, of known objects [27–29], making it hard to generalize to new object instances. End-to-end learning methods seek to directly map sensory inputs to actions with neural networks [23, 30], but they are susceptible to covariate shifts and causal confusion [31]. A plethora of literature has investigated inductive biases and learning techniques to overcome issues of end-to-end learning. They include but not limited to pretraining on large dataset [32, 33], generative augmentation [34–36], spatial attention [37, 24], affordances [25, 38]. However, these inductive biases are either deliberately designed for well-defined motion primitives or require finetuning but yet have shown limited performance in downstream tasks [39]. Recent work has also shown great efficacy in leveraging task-agnostic object-centric priors to solve challenging manipulation tasks [3, 40]. However, their outstanding performance is only limited to the training setting. Our work also uses object-centric priors, but unlike prior works, our approach is able to learn robust policies that generalize beyond the training settings.

Object-Centric Representation Learning Robotics and vision communities have extensively explored object-centric representations as a vehicle to reason about visual scenes in a modular way. In robotics, researchers commonly use poses [41–43] and bounding boxes [44, 45] to represent objects presented in a scene. These representations are confined to known object categories or instances. Recent work leverages unsupervised learning approaches [46, 47] to endow the manipulation policies with object awareness [48, 49], but these approaches are limited to simulation domains and fall short in generalizing to real-world tasks. Recent advances in visual recognition have produced large models for open-world visual recognition, including image segmentation [14], video object segmentation [17], and semantic features [15, 16]. These models show great generalization abilities that can perceive objects beyond certain categories, making them suitable for robot manipulation tasks, where the ability to perceive and understand a large variety of objects is required. GROOT leverages these pretrained models to construct effective object-centric 3D representations for more generalizable policies than prior works.

3   GROOT

We present GROOT, an imitation learning method for learning generalizable policies of vision-based manipulation. Our core idea is to factorize raw RGB-D images observed from a calibrated camera into segmented point clouds of task-relevant objects, forming object-centric 3D representations for policy learning. Fig. 2 illustrates our method. We first formulate the problem of learning vision-based manipulation policies and define the dimensions of generalization we focus on. We then introduce how we build our object-centric 3D representations. Following the representations, we describe our transformer-based policy. Finally, we introduce the segmentation correspondence model that allows our policies to generalize to new object instances.

3.1   Problem Formulation

We formulate a vision-based manipulation task as a finite-horizon Markov Decision Process (MDP), which is described by a tuple $< \mathcal{S}, \mathcal{A}, \mathcal{P}, T, \mu, R >$, where $\mathcal{S}$ is the state space of raw sensory data including RGB-D images and robot proprioception, $\mathcal{A}$ is the action space of low-level motor commands (typically 20Hz OSC commands), $\mathcal{P}$ is the transition dynamics $\mathcal{S} \times \mathcal{A} \mapsto \mathcal{S}$, T is the maximal horizon of a task, μ is the initial state distributions of a task, and R is the sparse reward function that returns reward +1 when the task goals are satisfied. This work considers task goals with clear semantic interpretation, such as "a mug is placed on the coaster." Such task definitions

Figure 2: **GROOT Model Architecture.** GROOT leverages an interactive segmentation model, S2M to obtain a single-frame annotation from demonstrators. Then a Video Object Segmentation model, XMem, is used to propagate segmentation masks across time frames. The object masks are then back-projected into point clouds, and a transformer policy is used to process the point clouds to output actions. During deployment, GROOT uses a segmentation correspondence model based on an open-vocabulary segmentation model (SAM) and a pretrained semantic feature model (DINOv2) to allow generalization to new objects.

allow us to clearly define the goals for manipulating unseen objects from the same category. Our objective is to find a visuomotor policy π that maximizes the expected task success rates.

We assume that we are given N demonstration trajectories $D = \{\tau_i\}_{i=1}^N$ collected through teleoperation. Each trajectory τ_i is a sequence of state-action pairs $(s_1, a_1, s_2, \ldots, a_{T-1}, s_T)$. Our method uses the Behavioral Cloning (BC) algorithm to learn π from D.

Dimensions of Generalization   As detailed in Sec.1, this work examines three dimensions of policy generalization against visual variations: background changes, different camera viewpoints, and new object instances. We outline the scope of generalization considered in this work to avoid ambiguities: 1) *Background changes*: Except for the foreground objects that are involved in a specific manipulation task, any other visual changes in the scene are considered background changes. 2) *Different camera viewpoints*: The cameras during deployment can be mounted at different angles from the training scene. We assume the camera configurations (both extrinsic and intrinsic) are known, as these values can be easily obtained through camera calibration in the deployment environments. 3) *New object instances*: We consider new objects in the same category as those seen in the demonstration trajectories. They differ mainly in color, size, and geometry. Fig. 5 in Appendix visualizes the range of new objects we use for evaluation.

3.2   Building Object-Centric 3D Representations

Our main goal is to build representations with both object-centric and 3D-aware properties that allow policies to generalize beyond the initial training conditions. In the following, we describe the three major steps of building the object-centric 3D representations: 1) scribble annotation to identify task-relevant objects, 2) tracking the objects at the segmentation level to keep models task-focused and exclude the irrelevant visual factors; 3) back-project object segmentation to 3D point clouds to be invariant to camera view changes.

Scribble Annotation of Task-Relevant Objects   In order to build representations that consistently attend to task-relevant objects, the first step is to inform our model of what they are in image observations. Prior work on the unsupervised discovery of objects requires extensive data while being limited to toy domains [46]. Instead, we adopt a semi-supervised approach that annotates objects on a single image with an instance segmentation mask after demonstrations are collected.

To operationalize the semi-supervised approach, we leverage an interactive segmentation model, S2M [19], to allow demonstrators to simply scribble on an image frame with a few mouse clicks, specifying the foreground objects involved in a specific manipulation task, namely the task-relevant objects. More importantly, the annotation only needs to be done on a single image. We leverage a

pretrained vision model to track object segmentation in the rest of the datasets, which we describe below. We select the first frame from a demonstration trajectory where task-relevant objects are visible for the demonstrator to provide the scribble annotations. We annotate objects in segmentation which brings two-fold benefits: First, segmentation makes it possible to draw objects directly on the pixel levels, allowing demonstrators to annotate objects with fine-grained contours. Secondly, segmentation can effectively exclude irrelevant visual features as opposed to less-flexible representations such as bounding boxes, improving the robustness of policies.

Tracking Task-Relevant Objects Over Time   The first step of scribble annotation indicates task-relevant objects in a single frame. To keep policies focused on these objects while being robust to large visual variations, we need to track them across temporal frames. We employ a pretrained Video Object Segmentation (VOS) model, XMem [17], that takes in the single-frame instance mask from the scribble annotation step and returns a sequence of instance masks that track objects across all the demonstration frames. For all the trajectories in the demonstrations, we can apply XMem to propagate the annotation across trajectories by simply adding the annotated frame at the beginning of the trajectories. In this way, we can annotate the 2D segmentation of task-relevant objects on all images in the datasets. During deployment, we treat the annotated frame as the initial observation and subsequently stream the temporal observations to XMem. In this way, GROOT can segment the objects from image observations and back-project them into point clouds for policy inference.

Backprojection to Point Clouds   Tracking objects across time frames gives us 2D segmentation masks. However, objects on 2D images are tailored to the specific camera viewpoint; henceforth they are not robust to camera view changes. To overcome this issue, we need 3D-aware representations that are not specific to camera angles. Concretely, we back-project the segmented objects from 2D images to point clouds using depth images [20]. The point clouds can encode object geometry and allow spatial reasoning while avoiding overfitting to a specific instance as opposed to its RGB-D counterpart. Using point clouds also allows easy generalization to new objects, which we describe later in Sec. 3.4. Then to represent the point clouds regardless of camera locations, we transform the point clouds into a predetermined reference frame through SE(3) transformation based on the known camera extrinsic [50]. We choose the robot base as the reference frame of coordinates, which is a fixed-base frame of coordinates that does not change with joint configurations or camera setups. Consequently, the transformed point clouds are spatially invariant to changes in camera views, ruling out the potential of significant distribution shifts introduced by viewpoint changes.

3.3 Policy Design

In order to harness our object-centric representations, we design a policy architecture, which first encodes the point clouds into a discrete set of tokens and processes them with a transformer-based architecture. GROOT encodes the point clouds as follows: First, each point cloud is divided into clusters of points in the same procedure as in Point-MAE [51]. Explicitly dividing point clouds into clusters encourage policies to attend to the local geometry of point clouds, and the division is amenable to performing random masking on the inputs. As we show in our ablation study, random masking improves the robustness of policies in terms of large camera changes. Before performing random masking, we pass each point cloud cluster through a shared PointNet [52] to compactly represent object geometry and spatial information in latent vectors, making the subsequent transformer training and inference computationally tractable.

Random masking prevents policies from overfitting to global features of point clouds such that the representations remain robust when partial point clouds are missing due to realistic noise in sensing or large shifts in camera viewpoints. These masked latent vectors, also known as tokens, are passed through a transformer-based architecture that is designed for processing object-centric representations [3]. In practice, we pass a H-timestep sequence of tokens, allowing the policy to keep track of the temporal information and mitigate the partial observability issue (*e.g.*, a single image does not inform the velocities) and bypassing the non-Markovian property of gripper actions (*e.g.*, a single image cannot differentiate ongoing actions of opening versus closing). Because input to transform-

ers is permutation-invariant, we add temporal positional encoding [21], where the input tokens are added with a sinusoidal encoding based on their position in the temporal sequence. Further detail can be found in Appendix B.

The action generation of the transformer architecture follows the design of prior work, where an action token is appended to the input sequence, and the transformer outputs the corresponding latent vector for performing downstream tasks. Such designs allow the output latent vector implicitly encodes the object-centric and 3D information from the input sequence through the self-attention mechanisms. The output latent vector is subsequently processed through a Gaussian-Mixture-Moel-based multi-layer perception (MLP) [1, 53], outputting a distribution of robot action. During training, the network is optimized over a negative log-likelihood objective to mimic the distribution of actions from demonstrations. At test time, the robot samples action from the distribution at every decision-making step, performing closed-loop manipulation at 20 Hz.

3.4 Segmentation Correspondence Model

To generalize to new object instances during deployment, we also introduce a segmentation correspondence model that propagates instance segmentation masks to new object instances, without additional human annotations.

This model first uses an open-vocabulary segmentation model, SAM [14], to generate a set of object masks from visual observations of deployment environments. Then, the model identifies the object masks that match closest to the ones among the training objects. The closest match is determined by a pretrained semantic feature model, DINOv2 [16]. DINOv2 is a large vision model that is optimized to map similar concepts to close embeddings in its feature space, making it possible to find the closest match by computing the cosine similarity scores between DINOv2 features between objects. In our model, we first compute the DINOv2 feature of every segmentation mask from SAM and every annotated object mask from the training phase. For each pair of SAM segmentation masks and annotated masks, we find the closest matching SAM masks by deciding the mask with the highest cosine similarity score. For every annotated object mask, we select a mask from SAM outputs with the highest similarity score, resulting in a new instance segmentation. This model can therefore propagate the object masks from training environments to test scenes with previously unseen objects. Once we have the segmentation of new objects, we can back-project the object masks into point clouds. Consequently, our policies can generalize based on these point clouds, due to their similarity with the point clouds of the training objects. As shown in Fig. 1, this correspondence model allows the policy to manipulate different mugs even though it only trains on a single mug during training.

4 Experiments

We conduct experiments to answer the following questions: 1) Are object-centric 3d representations in GROOT better at generalization compared to other baseline methods? 2) What design choices are essential for good performance of GROOT policies? 3) How well does GROOT generalize in real-world settings in the face of background changes, different camera angles, and unseen objects?

4.1 Experimental Setup

We conduct quantitative evaluations in physical simulation and the real world. We validate our approach by evaluating policies on three simulation tasks and five real robot tasks, which cover a wide range of contact-rich manipulation behaviors involving prehensile and non-prehensile motions.

Task Descriptions   For simulation experiments, we use three simulation tasks from a recent benchmark based on robosuite [54, 55]. These three simulation tasks are namely "Put the moka pot on the stove", "Put the frying pan on the stove", and "Reposition the yellow and white mug". For real robot experiments, we evaluate five tasks, namely "Pick Place Cup", "Stamp The Paper", "Take The Mug", "Put the Mug On The Coaster", and "Roll the Stamp", which involve behaviors from pick-and-place to non-prehensile motions such as rolling the stamp. We describe how we decide the success conditions of these five tasks in Appendix C.

Figure 3: Changes in success rates (%) with design choices for GROOT.

Figure 4: Success rates (%) of GROOT in real-robot tasks.

In our experiments, we have the following testing setups that evaluate the generalization abilities of our policies: 1) `Canonical`: All the objects and sensors are initialized in the same distributions as in demonstrations; 2) Three variants for generalization tests: , `Camera-Shift`, and `New-Object`. In the simulation, because of the limited availability of object assets, we mainly focus on generalizing different background changes and camera angles. Specifically, we consider two levels of difficulty for each generalization test in simulation, denoted as `Background(Easy)`, `Background(Hard)`, `Camera(Easy)`, and `Camera(Hard)`. Fig. 6 visualizes these variations in the appendix.

Evaluation Metric   We quantify the policy performance by evaluating their task success rates. In the simulation, we evaluate all the models for 20 episodes and average the results over models trained with three random seeds. In real-world settings, for `Canonical`, and `Camera-Shift`, we evaluate 10 episodes for each task. For , we evaluate 30 episodes that cover a diverse range of table colors, lighting conditions, and distracting objects. For `New-Object`, we evaluate new objects three times. Fig. 5 visualizes the new objects we use for evaluation.

Tasks	Evaluation Setting	BC-RNN	VIOLA	MAE	GROOT
Put the moka pot on the stove	`Canonical`	56.7 ± 15.5	61.7 ± 27.2	73.3 ± 6.2	$\mathbf{80.0}\pm 8.2$
	`Background(Easy)`	11.7 ± 16.5	$\mathbf{77.5}\pm 17.5$	56.7 ± 29.5	63.3 ± 13.1
	`Background(Hard)`	0.0 ± 0.0	0.0 ± 0.0	31.7 ± 16.5	$\mathbf{63.3}\pm 8.5$
	`Camera(Easy)`	0.0 ± 0.0	0.0 ± 0.0	45.0 ± 20.4	$\mathbf{81.7}\pm 9.4$
	`Camera(Hard)`	0.0 ± 0.0	0.0 ± 0.0	26.7 ± 9.4	$\mathbf{61.7}\pm 9.4$
Put the frying pan on the stove	`Canonical`	51.7 ± 6.2	$\mathbf{90.0}\pm 4.1$	81.7 ± 4.7	65.0 ± 10.8
	`Background(Easy)`	10.0 ± 10.8	62.5 ± 2.5	$\mathbf{73.3}\pm 16.5$	61.7 ± 11.8
	`Background(Hard)`	0.0 ± 0.0	6.7 ± 4.7	52.5 ± 7.5	$\mathbf{58.3}\pm 11.8$
	`Camera(Easy)`	0.0 ± 0.0	1.7 ± 2.4	$\mathbf{76.7}\pm 20.5$	71.7 ± 12.5
	`Camera(Hard)`	0.0 ± 0.0	1.7 ± 2.4	65.0 ± 7.1	$\mathbf{73.3}\pm 8.5$
Reposition the yellow and white mug	`Canonical`	63.3 ± 16.5	$\mathbf{85.0}\pm 8.2$	66.7 ± 8.5	73.3 ± 2.4
	`Background(Easy)`	53.3 ± 30.9	81.7 ± 6.2	38.3 ± 12.5	$\mathbf{81.7}\pm 12.5$
	`Background(Hard)`	0.0 ± 0.0	48.3 ± 31.7	6.7 ± 9.4	$\mathbf{83.3}\pm 6.2$
	`Camera(Easy)`	0.0 ± 0.0	3.3 ± 4.7	55.0 ± 16.3	$\mathbf{61.7}\pm 18.9$
	`Camera(Hard)`	0.0 ± 0.0	5.0 ± 4.1	8.3 ± 8.5	$\mathbf{38.3}\pm 12.5$

Table 1: We conducted a quantitative evaluation in simulation to investigate policy generalization. The table reports the success rates (%) averaged over three random seeds.

4.2 Experimental Results

We answer the question (1) by comparing GROOT policies in the three simulation tasks against three baselines that also learn closed-loop visuomotor policies: BC-RNN [1, 8] that directly conditions on raw perception, VIOLA [3] that uses object-centric priors, and MAE-POLICY [56] that uses random masking on image patches for learning policies. BC-RNN is a baseline to present the lowest bound of performance we can achieve in the canonical settings of the presented simulation tasks. More details in Appendix B for baseline implementations.

Table 1 presents the full simulation results that show the effectiveness of our representations in learning robust policies. As the table shows, while previous approach such as VIOLA excels at the canonical settings in some tasks, GROOT significantly outperforms baselines methods in most of the generalization tests by an amount of 22% success rates compared to the best baseline, MAE-POLICY. The comparison between VIOLA and suggests that while task-agnostic object priors

are good at handling easy background changes, such priors significantly fail when the background changes are more adversarial, as in the `Background(Hard)` case. This result supports the choice of our representations that directly attend to task-relevant objects, excluding task-irrelevant visual factors. The comparison between GROOT and MAE-POLICY policies shows that random masking in general help the robustness of policy learning across different variations. However, naively dividing observations into patches impede the policies from having decent performance in hard levels of generalization tests. This comparison further supports our policy learning centered around objects, which consistently give us a good performance on hard levels of generalization tests.

Important Design Choices Here we present an ablation study on the task "Put the moka pot on the stove" to answer question (2), showing how our model takes advantage of the representations. Fig. 3 visualizes the change in performance in using point clouds, removing point clouds of the robots, and using random masking on point clouds for training policies. We start with the base model that naively takes in RGB-D observations. This base model fails to generalize in all four test settings. To mitigate irrelevant visual factors, we adopt an ablative model that inputs only point clouds of objects and the robot, enhancing generalization for different background changes and validating the effectiveness of our object-centric priors. Despite these improvements, the model struggles with camera view changes due to the inclusion of unseen robot parts in the observations. To address these distribution shifts, we exclude the robot point clouds from observations, leveraging known robot models *a priori*. This adjustment enhances performance under minor camera view changes, yet struggles with substantial view alterations. To accommodate large view changes, we incorporate random masking into the point cloud representation as detailed in Sec. 3. Consequently, we achieve a substantial performance boost in handling camera view changes, albeit at a modest reduction in background change generalization capability.

Real Robot Experiments We answer question (3) by presenting results in Fig. 4. The table shows that our policies successfully generalize to all three variations with high success rates despite the challenging settings. Our real-robot experiments validate the effectiveness of our approach in the experiments. We include all the videos of evaluation rollouts on our project website. Despite the great performance of GROOT, the policies still fail to achieve perfect success rates. Most of the failures come from missing the grasp by a few millimeters This is within our expectation as the workspace cameras do not have enough resolution to take into account this level of location errors, and we do not include the eye-in-hand cameras in our real robot experiments. Eye-in-hand cameras have been proven effective in learning robust grasping [57]. We expect a performance boost by adding the eye-in-hand camera for precise grasping, but this hardware setup is orthogonal to our research topic, and we leave this for future work.

5 Conclusion

We present GROOT, an imitation learning approach to learn closed-loop manipulation policies based on object-centric 3D representations. Our approach leverages object segmentation and point clouds to build effective representations that allow the policy to generalize to background changes, different camera angles, and new objects. Our results show that GROOT outperforms state-of-the-art baselines in terms of its generalization abilities, and we validate our methods in five real robot tasks, showcasing its superior generalization in settings beyond its training conditions.

Limitations This work is based on the assumption that no ambiguities of task-relevant objects exist in the environment. If multiple instances of the same object category are present, the segmentation correspondence will consider all instances as candidate objects. In the future, we will consider condition policies on language with a spatial specification to address the challenges of ambiguities.

Our approach focuses on achieving wide generalization across variations in perception, but assuming the robot morphology must be the same. Extending to generalization across different morphologies will be an interesting extension (e.g. between different tabletop manipulators, or even between tabletop and mobile manipulators). Such transfer would require a unified design of action space, which we leave for future work.

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