Robust Instance Segmentation through Reasoning about Multi-Object Occlusion

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Abstract

Analyzing complex scenes with Deep Neural Networks is a challenging task, particularly when images contain multiple objects that partially occlude each other. Existing approaches to image analysis mostly process objects independently and do not take into account the relative occlusion of nearby objects. In this paper, we propose a deep network for multi-object instance segmentation that is robust to occlusion and can be trained from bounding box supervision only. Our work builds on Compositional Networks, which learn a generative model of neural feature activations to locate occluders and to classify objects based on their non-occluded parts. We extend their generative model to include multiple objects and introduce a framework for the efficient inference in challenging occlusion scenarios. In particular, we obtain feed-forward predictions of the object classes and their instance and occluder segmentations. We introduce an Occlusion Reasoning Module (ORM) that locates erroneous segmentations and estimates the occlusion ordering to correct them. The improved segmentation masks are, in turn, integrated into the network in a top-down manner to improve the image classification. Our experiments on the KITTI INStance dataset (KINS) and a synthetic occlusion dataset demonstrate the effectiveness and robustness of our model at multi-object instance segmentation under occlusion.

1. Introduction

Scenes in images most often depict multiple objects that partially occlude each other. Recent studies [36, 16] showed that deep networks are less robust at recognizing partially occluded objects compared to Humans. The main difficulties are raised by the combinatorial variability of the object ordering and positioning, as well as the fact that scenes can contain known and unknown object classes.

One approach to address the problem of occlusion in deep networks is data augmentation [4, 33]. While this increases the robustness of deep networks, the classification performance on partially occluded objects still remains substantially worse compared to non-occluded objects. Recent work introduced compositional deep networks (CompositionalNets) and showed that these are more robust to partial occlusion compared to data augmentation approaches [13, 30, 14]. CompositionalNets are deep neural network architectures in which the fully connected classification head is replaced with a differentiable compositional model. The structure of the compositional model enables CompositionalNets to decompose images into objects and context, as well as to further decompose objects into their individual parts. The generative nature of the compositional model enables it to segment objects and occluders [27] and to recognize objects based on their non-occluded
parts. However, CompositionalNets, as well as other popular architectures, treat each object in an image independently and do not explicitly exploit the mutual relationship of nearby objects.

In this paper, we introduce a deep network for multi-object instance segmentation that is robust to occlusion and can be trained from bounding box supervision only. Our work builds on and significantly extends CompositionalNets. Specifically, we extend the generative model in CompositionalNets to allow for instance segmentation of multiple mutually occluding objects in an image. This multi-object generative model is hard to optimize because of the mutual dependencies between objects. To solve this optimization efficiently, we introduce an Occlusion Reasoning Module (ORM) that takes as input the independent predictions of each objects label, the instance segmentation and the occluder segmentation (Figure 1). We proceed to estimate possibly erroneous predictions through an occlusion voting mechanism. During occlusion voting, each object in the image votes for every pixel in its bounding box if the pixel is occupied by the object or if is occluded. Pixels which receive ambiguous votes from multiple objects indicate segmentation errors. To correct these we leverage the occlusion order of overlapping bounding boxes based on the classification scores. The corrected instance and occlusion segmentation masks are fed back into the CompositionalNet to mask out those features that induced segmentation errors, and to improve the prediction of the object class.

We perform extensive experiments on the KITTI Instance dataset (KINS). We further introduce a synthetic dataset that comprises artificially generated images of partially occluded objects, which are generated by superimposing segmented objects from the KITTI. The synthetic generation of partially occluded images enables us to evaluate custom types of occlusion challenges such as: pairwise occlusion, multi-object occlusion and mixed occlusion containing both known and unknown object classes as occluders. Our experimental results highlight that reasoning about multi-object occlusion significantly enhances the robustness of deep networks as it enables them to detect erroneous feed-forward predictions and self-correct through reasoning about multi-object occlusion. In summary, our contributions in this work are:

1. We introduce a deep network for multi-object instance segmentation that is robust to occlusion and can be trained from bounding box super-vision only. Specifically, our network defines a generative model of multiple objects and achieves enhanced robustness through reasoning about multi-object occlusion.

2. We introduce an Occlusion Reasoning Module (ORM) that enables efficient inference in generative models with multiple objects. In particular, it detects erroneous feed-forward predictions and and corrects them through reasoning about the occlusion order of objects.

3. We achieve state-of-the-art performance at instance segmentation under occlusion on the KITTI Instance (KINS) dataset.

4. We introduce an occlusion challenge generated from real-world segmented objects with accurate annotations and propose a taxonomy of occlusion scenarios that pose a particular challenge for computer vision.

2. Related Work

**Occlusion reasoning.** A number of approaches have been proposed to integrate occlusion reasoning in areas including object detection [29], segmentation [6, 31] and tracking [32]. Gao et al. [6] introduce binary variables to infer the visible cells in a bounding box. Hsiao and Hebert [11] model occlusions by reasoning about 3D relationship of objects approximated by their bounding boxes. Recent works on pixel-level occlusion reasoning include a probabilistic model proposed by George et al. [8] that contains mutual occlusion inference on text-based CAPTCHAs by approximating MAP solution through message passing. Another probabilistic framework by Yang et al. [32] introduce occlusion priori modeled by Markov random field to tackle mutual occlusion in object tracking task. Tiehe et al. [28] introduce an inter-class occlusion prior to parse scenes and refine pixel-level labels. OFNet designed by Lu et al. [20] considers the relevance between occlusion contours and pixel orientations, but no semantic information is included. Zhan et al. [34] propose pair-wise order recovery by comparing the amodal mask completion of neighboring objects in a self-supervised way, while lack the ability of handling unknown occlusion. Our proposed architecture performs pixel-level occlusion reasoning and ensures the consistence of object shape by object-level occlusion order recovery. Note that we can handle both the unknown occlusion and multi-object occlusion at the same time.

**Weakly-supervised instance segmentation.** While instance segmentation performance was significantly advanced by CNN based architectures [9, 2, 19, 1], pixel-level semantic annotation is required for training by fully supervised methods. Weakly-supervised segmentation methods require only image-level supervision [26, 21] and bounding-box-level annotations [24, 18] to reduce the cost of dense labeling. DeepCut proposed by Rajchl et al. [24] extends GrabCut [25] by training a CNN as classifier from bounding box annotations and address instance segmentation as energy minimisation problem based on conditional random fields. Zhou et al. [35] present an instance mask extraction by class response maps indicating visual
Figure 2: Proposed deep network architecture for multi-object instance segmentation under occlusion. Given an input image, we crop objects based on their bounding box. Each crop is processed by a Compositional Network to obtain independent estimates of the object class, instance segmentation and occlusion segmentation. Subsequently, these are processed by the multi-object reasoning module, which detects inconsistent segmentations and corrects them by taking into account the occlusion order of the objects. The corrected instance segmentation mask is used in a top-down manner to mask out occluded features, which, in turn, improves the classification score. Note we draw two Compositional Networks for illustrative purpose, in practice the images are processed sequentially by the same network.

3. Robustness through Occlusion Reasoning

**Notation.** The output of the layer $l$ in a DCNN is referred to as feature map $F^l = \psi(I, \Omega) \in \mathbb{R}^{H \times W \times D}$, where $I$ and $\Omega$ are the input image and the parameters of the feature extractor, respectively. Feature vectors are vectors in the feature map, $f^l_i \in \mathbb{R}^D$ at position $i$, where $i$ is defined on the 2D lattice of $F^l$ with $D$ being the number of channels in the layer $l$. We omit subscript $l$ in the following for clarity since the layer $l$ is fixed a priori in the experiments.

**3.1. Prior Work: CompNets for Single Objects**

CompositionalNets [13] are deep neural network architectures in which the fully connected classification head is replaced with a differentiable compositional model. In particular, the classification head defines a generative model $p(F|\theta_y)$ of the features $F$ for an object class $y$:

$$p(F|\theta_y) = \sum_{m=1}^{M} \nu_m p(F|\theta^m_y), \quad \nu_m \in \{0, 1\}, \quad \sum_{m=1}^{M} \nu_m = 1 \quad (1)$$

Here $M$ is the number of mixtures of compositional models per each object category and $\nu_m$ is a binary assignment variable that indicates which mixture component is active. $\Theta_y = \{\theta^m_y = \{A^m_y, \chi^m_y, \Lambda\}\}_{m=1, \ldots, M}$ are the overall compositional model parameters for the category $y$. The individual mixture components are defined as:

$$p(F|\theta^m_y) = \prod_i p(f_i|A^m_{i,y}, \chi^m_{i,y}, \Lambda) \quad (2)$$

Note how the distribution decomposes the feature map $F$ into a set of individual feature vectors $f_i$. $A^m_y = \{A^m_{i,y}\}_{i \in [H, W]}$ and $\chi^m_y = \{\chi^m_{i,y}\}_{i \in [H, W]}$ are the parameters of the mixture components.

The feature likelihood is defined as composition of a foreground and a context likelihood:

$$p(f_i|A^m_{i,y}, \chi^m_{i,y}, \Lambda) = p(i|m, y) p(f_i|A^m_{i,y}, \Lambda)$$

$$+ (1 - p(i|m, y)) p(f_i|\chi^m_{i,y}, \Lambda). \quad (3)$$

The parameters of the foreground and context likelihood are $A^m_{i,y}$ and $\chi^m_{i,y}$ respectively. $p(i|m, y)$ is a prior that models how likely a feature vector at position $i$ is to be located in the foreground. In particular, $A^m_{i,y} = \{a^m_{i,k,y}|k = \ldots\}$

**3.2. Occlusion Reasoning**

In practice the images are processed sequentially by the same network.}

\[
\text{Compositional Network} \quad \text{Class mixture} \quad \text{Context mixture} \quad \text{Likelihood map} \\
\begin{align*}
I_1 & \quad \Downarrow \quad \downarrow \quad \Downarrow \quad \downarrow \\
I_2 & \quad \Downarrow \quad \downarrow \\
\end{align*}
\]

The output of the layer $l$ in a DCNN is referred to as feature map $F^l = \psi(I, \Omega) \in \mathbb{R}^{H \times W \times D}$, where $I$ and $\Omega$ are the input image and the parameters of the feature extractor, respectively. Feature vectors are vectors in the feature map, $f^l_i \in \mathbb{R}^D$ at position $i$, where $i$ is defined on the 2D lattice of $F^l$ with $D$ being the number of channels in the layer $l$. We omit subscript $l$ in the following for clarity since the layer $l$ is fixed a priori in the experiments.

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In practice the images are processed sequentially by the same network.
1, \ldots, K$ are mixture coefficients and $\Lambda = \{\lambda_k = \{\sigma_k, \mu_k\}|k = 1, \ldots, K\}$ are the parameters of von-Mises-Fisher distributions:

$$p(f_i|A^m_{i,y}, \Lambda) = \sum_k \alpha_k^m p(f_i|\lambda_k),$$

(5)

$$p(f_i|\lambda_k) = e^{\sigma_k \mu_k^T f_i} / Z(\sigma_k), ||f_i|| = 1, ||\mu_k|| = 1.$$  

(6)

The context likelihood $p(f_i|\chi^m_{i,y}, \Lambda)$ is defined accordingly. Note that $K$ is the number of components in the vMF mixture distributions and $\sum_{k=0}^{K} \alpha_k^m = 1$. $Z(\sigma_k)$ is the normalization constant. The priors $p(i|m, y)$ and likelihood parameters can be learned by segmenting the training images into foreground and background. We follow the approach introduced in [30] which uses weakly supervised segmentation based on the bounding box annotation to segment the context from the object. All model parameters $\{\Omega, \{\Theta_y\}\}$ can be trained end-to-end as discussed in [13, 27].

**Partial Occlusion.** Compositional networks can be augmented with an outlier model to enhance their robustness to partial occlusion. The intuition is that at each position $i$ in the image either the object model $p(f_i|A^m_{i,y}, \chi^m_{i,y}, \Lambda)$ or an outlier model $p(f_i|\beta, \Lambda)$ is active:

$$p(F|\theta^m, \beta) = \prod_i p(f_i|\beta, \Lambda)^{1-z_i^m} p(f_i|A^m_{i,y}, \Lambda)^{z_i^m}.$$  

(7)

The binary variables $Z^m = \{z_i^m \in \{0, 1\}|i \in P\}$ indicate if the object is occluded at position $i$ for mixture component $m$.

The outlier model is defined as:

$$p(f_i|\beta, \Lambda) = \sum_k \beta_{n,k} p(f_i|\sigma_k, \mu_k).$$  

(8)

Note that the model parameters $\beta$ are independent of the position $i$ in the feature map and thus the model has no spatial structure. The parameters of the occluder models $\beta$ are learned from clustered features of random natural images that do not contain any object of interest [14].

**Instance segmentation with CompositionalNets.** Sun et al.[27] showed that instance segmentation can be achieved with CompositionalNets by simply comparing the likelihood terms of the model. In particular, we can predict the pixel-wise labels to be foreground $F$, context $C$ or occlusion $O$ by computing the respective likelihoods:

$$p(f_i = O) = p(i|m, y) p(f_i|\beta, \Lambda)$$  

(9)

$$p(f_i = F, y) = p(i|m, y) p(f_i|A^m_{i,y}, \Lambda)$$  

(10)

$$p(f_i = C, y) = (1 - p(i|m, y)) p(f_i|\chi^m_{i,y}, \Lambda).$$  

(11)

### 3.2. Compositional Networks for Multiple Objects

The main limitation of Compositional Networks is that they assume only one object is present in an image. They can be trivially generalized to multiple objects by treating each object independently [30, 14]. However, assuming independence between objects neglects the relations between them and leads to inconsistencies in the segmentation results. For example Figure 3 shows how two objects with overlapping bounding boxes both predict that they are visible in the overlapped region. Whereas, it is clear that only one object can be visible per pixel in an image.

In this work, we aim to resolve such inconsistencies by enabling deep networks to reason about multi-object occlusion. In particular, we generalize the generative model in compositional networks to multiple objects by extending...
the model likelihood:

\[ p(F|\theta_{y_1}, \ldots, \theta_{y_N}, \beta) = \prod_{i} \prod_{n=1}^{N+1} p_n(f_i)^{z_{i,n}}, \tag{12} \]

with \( \sum_{n} z_{i,n} = 1 \) and \( z_{i,n} \in \{0, 1\} \). This generalized likelihood includes \( n = \{1, \ldots, N\} \) object models \( p_n(f_i) = p(F|\theta_{y_n}, \beta) \), which correspond to the number of objects in the image, and the outlier model \( p_{N+1}(f_i) = p(F|\beta, \Lambda) \). Note that, by the design of the likelihood, only one object model can be active at any location \( i \) in the feature map \( F \). Maximizing the model likelihood defined in Equation 12 is difficult because it involves multiple objects and the visibility at each pixel \( z_{i,n} \) depends on the visibility of the neighboring pixels. We solve this complex optimization problem by introducing a multi-object reasoning module into the architecture of CompositionalNets.

### 3.3. Reasoning about Multi-Object Occlusion

In this section, we introduce a deep network for multi-object instance segmentation that is robust to occlusion and can be trained from bounding box super-vision only. To make our discussion concise, we constrain ourselves in this section to images that contain two objects, where one partially occludes the other. Note, however, that our model trivially extends to multiple objects.

**Feed-forward extraction of likelihood maps.** Our proposed network architecture is illustrated in Figure 2. We draw two CompositionalNet architectures to enhance the clarity of the illustration, in practice they are sequentially processed by the same network. The objects in the input image \( I \) are cropped based on their bounding box and first independently processed by a CompositionalNet. For each image crop \( I_1, I_2 \) we obtain a class prediction \( \hat{y}_1, \hat{y}_2 \) and three likelihood maps that encode the foreground, context and occlusion likelihood in the feature map:

\[
\mathcal{F}_1 = \{p(f_i = \mathcal{F}, \hat{y}_1) | \forall i \in \mathcal{P}\}; \tag{13}
\]

\[
\mathcal{C}_1 = \{p(f_i = \mathcal{C}, \hat{y}_1) | \forall i \in \mathcal{P}\}; \tag{14}
\]

\[
\mathcal{O}_1 = \{p(f_i = \mathcal{O}) | \forall i \in \mathcal{P}\}; \tag{15}
\]

we compute \( \mathcal{F}_2, \mathcal{C}_2, \mathcal{O}_2 \) respectively. We illustrate the likelihood maps throughout the paper as a two-dimensional heat map that is color coded. In particular, we visualize at each pixel which likelihood has the highest value by coloring occluder red, foreground blue and context green. The pixel intensity encodes the difference between the three likelihood terms. For dark pixels all likelihoods have similar values, hence indicating that the model is uncertain, whereas at bright pixels one likelihood is clearly higher compared to the other. As shown in Figure 3, instance segmentation based on the likelihood maps can be incorrect in the region where the two bounding boxes overlap (yellow box), particularly, for the occluded object. In practice, we observe that errors occur most often when an object is occluded by another object of the same category. As discussed earlier, this is caused by the fact that the segmentation is performed independently of other objects in an image, and in addition also per pixel independently. While these independence assumptions enable an efficient feed-forward inference, they neglect important relationships in images. For example in the overlapping region of the bounding boxes in Figure 3, we want all pixels to be assigned to the same object. It is very unnatural to treat every pixel independently. We propose a multi-object reasoning module that resolves such segmentation conflicts by taking into account additional relationships between objects at minimal computational overhead.

**Pixel-level competition.** Figure 3 illustrates the pipeline of the occlusion reasoning module. We first detect segmentation conflicts as those image pixels which are classified by both object models as foreground (Figure 3, I). We denote this conflict set as \( \mathcal{C} \). Note that for the occludee (the occluded object), some of the feature vectors in the occluded region are mis-classified as foreground, however, their likelihoods are lower compared to those of the occluder at the same pixel (indicated by the intensity of the color).

We exploit this by taking into account the relationship between both objects. In particular, we assign the feature vector \( f_i \) to one of the two objects by comparing their foreground likelihoods (Figure 3, II):

\[
z_{i,1} = \begin{cases} 
1, & \text{if } p(f_i = \mathcal{F}, \hat{y}_1) > \max\{p(f_i = \mathcal{F}, \hat{y}_2), p(f_i = \mathcal{O})\} \\
0, & \text{otherwise}
\end{cases}
\]

\[ (16) \]

We compute the visibility variables of the second object \( z_{i,2} \) and the outlier model \( z_{i,3} \) accordingly. Using the estimated
visibility variables, we can re-assign each pixel in the corresponding segmentation maps (Figure 3, III).

Order recovery. At this stage, each pixel has been updated independently. However, it is natural to assume that in the overlapping region of two bounding boxes only one object is the foreground object, whereas the other object is in the background. Hence all pixels should be assigned to either of the two objects. To encode this property we estimate the occlusion order between the objects (Figure 3, IV). Specifically, we estimate the occlusion order between two objects $R(I_1, I_2)$ by comparing the number of pixels assigned to each object in the region of the segmentation conflict:

$$R(I_1, I_2) = \begin{cases} 
1, & \sum_{i \in \mathcal{C}} z_{i,1} > \sum_{i \in \mathcal{C}} z_{i,2} \\
-1, & \text{otherwise}
\end{cases}$$  

Figure 4 illustrates the effectiveness of this approach at recovering the occlusion order, even in challenging, multi-object occlusion scenarios. Using the predicted occlusion order $R(I_1, I_2)$, we reassign the visibility variables $z_{i,n}$ in an "all or nothing" manner, such that all the variables that are not assigned to the outlier model are assigned to the object in the front. Our visualization of the output in Figure 3 illustrates how the multi-object occlusion reasoning benefits the instance segmentation compared to the input segmentation which was achieved by processing the images independently.

Self-correction through occlusion updates. Compared to the occlusion variables $Z^m$, which were estimated in the feed-forward stage, the newly estimated visibility variables $z_{i,n}$ take into account the knowledge of neighboring objects and their occlusion order graph. This newly acquired knowledge can subsequently be used to recompute the model likelihood $p(F|\Theta_y)$ of the occluded object, by replacing the occlusion variables in Equation 7. As our experimental results demonstrate, this top-down refinement enables CompositionalNets to correct miss-classifications that were induced by wrongly estimated occlusion variables. This will particularly improve the classification performance of occluded objects by a large margin. We repeat the self-correction through multi-object reasoning recurrently as the updated classification score can lead to changes in the assignment of the mixture models, and hence can lead to improved segmentations.

4. Experiments

We evaluate our deep network for multi-instance segmentation under occlusion on the KINS dataset and on an artificially generated occlusion challenge dataset. We will present experimental results of weakly-supervised modal and amodal instance segmentation, and ablate the occlusion reasoning module for order recovery. We benchmark different baselines for each task respectively.

4.1. Datasets

KINS. The KINS dataset [23] is augmented from KITTI [7] with more instance pixel-level annotation for 8 categories including amodal instance segmentation and relative occlusion order. Amodal instance segmentation aims at segmenting the complete instance shape, even when the object is only partially visible. The dataset contains 7474 images for training and 7517 for testing.

Occlusion Challenge. For the purpose of studying different types of occlusion challenges, we introduce a dataset with custom artificially generated occlusion scenarios. For this, we crop non-occluded objects from images in KITTI.
based on their segmentation mask, and place them in images with random backgrounds (Figure 5).

Since only complete visible objects are selected and the exact shape of each object is available, our occlusion challenge provides more accurate annotation for amodal masks compared with the human estimated masks in KINS. Most importantly, the synthetic nature of the dataset allows us to design challenging scenarios occlusion scenarios. In particular, we propose three types of occlusion challenges: 1) The basic and simplest occlusion scenario includes two objects, where one occludes the other. 2) A much more complex occlusion relationship is defined when four objects occlude each other with different amounts partial occlusion. Recovering the occlusion order and modal as well as amodal segmentation requires significant reasoning processes, even for humans. 3) Another challenging scenario is defined when the occluders contain a mixed set of object classes, some of which are known at training time, while some are natural objects that are not part of the training data, such as street signs, bushes, and etc.

4.2. Implementation Details

**Baselines.** We implement Mask R-CNN[9] as baseline method for the modal instance segmentation. We further compare to CompositionalNets [27] with and without our proposed multi-object reasoning module. We apply multi-object reasoning either with one reasoning iteration (iter=1) or recurrently with two iterations (iter=2). Note that the CompositionalNets perform segmentation in a weakly-supervised manner from bounding box annotations only. For investigating the performance of amodal instance segmentation, we compare our method with BBTP [12] and PCNet-M [34]. BBTP uses a bounding box tightness prior to perform weakly-supervised instance segmentation using box-level annotations. PCNet-M performs amodal mask completion in a self-supervised manner. PCNet-M is trained to recover the amodal mask with a given artificially occluded modal mask. In contrast, our model predicts amodal masks with bounding box supervision only and is capable of handling both known and unknown occluder classes.

**Training setup.** We follow the training strategy as proposed in [13, 27]. CompositionalNets are trained from the feature activations of a ResNeXt-50 [10] model that is pre-trained on ImageNet[3] and fine-tuned on the respective datasets using back propagation. We set the number of mixture components to $M = 8$. We train for 60 epochs using stochastic gradient descent with momentum $r = 0.9$ and a learning rate of $lr = 0.01$.

4.3. Instance segmentation under Occlusion

**Modal segmentation.** We report modal instance segmentation performance in the top Tabulars in Table 1 on KINS and Table 2 on our occlusion challenge. Four occlusion levels of objects are defined as: L0: 0%-1%, L1: 1%-30%, L2: 30%-60%, L3: 60%-90% of the object area being occluded. To prevent the performance from being affected by a poor bounding box prediction, all models are given the ground truth amodal bounding boxes during training and testing. For the KINS data, we observe that the fully supervised method outperforms weakly-supervised methods. However, our proposed multi-object extension with occlusion reasoning manages to significantly reduce the gap between weakly supervised methods and the fully supervised baseline. We outperform the baseline CompNet performance in every occlusion level, especially in higher occlusion levels by L2 (9.6%) and L3 (11.3%) in terms of mIoU. We observe similar performance patterns on the data for our occlusion challenge. While the CompNet performs similarly for the first and third occlusion challenge,
| Occ Level | 2 Objects | 4 Objects | 2 Objects + Unknown Occlusion |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------------|
|           | L0 | L1 | L2 | L3 | Mean | L0 | L1 | L2 | L3 | Mean | L0 | L1 | L2 | L3 | Mean |
| Mask R-CNN | 88.2 | 86.3 | 69.1 | 58.2 | 82.3 | 88.7 | 88 | 74.8 | 63 | 78.6 |
| CompNet    | 77.8 | 67.3 | 51.0 | 26.3 | 66.9 | 76.7 | 67.1 | 50.2 | 26.1 | 56.0 |
| Ours (iter=1) | 78.0 | 75.3 | 65.4 | 45.6 | 72.9 | 75.2 | 72.9 | 61.9 | 43.0 | 65.0 |
| Ours (iter=2) | 78.0 | 75.3 | 65.7 | 47.2 | 73.1 | 75.2 | 72.9 | 62.2 | 44.0 | 65.3 |

Table 2: Modal and amodal instance segmentation on our occlusion challenge (top and bottom respectively). We compare to fully-supervised Mask R-CNN, PCNet-M, and weakly-supervised BBTP, and CompNets with and without ORM. Occlusion levels L0-L3 are defined as: L0: 0%-1%, L1: 1%-30%, L2: 30%-60%, L3: 60%-90% of the object are occluded. Comparison between different times of occlusion reasoning iteration is also reported. Note that PCNet-M by design cannot handle unknown occlusion, and therefore cannot be applied in the last challenge.

| Occ Level | 2 Objects | 4 Objects | 2 Objects + Unknown Occlusion |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------------|
|           | L0 | L1 | L2 | L3 | Mean | L0 | L1 | L2 | L3 | Mean | L0 | L1 | L2 | L3 | Mean |
| PCNet-M   | 82.4 | 81 | 69.3 | 47 | 70 | 87.2 | 79.3 | 63.7 | 41.3 | 67.9 |
| BBTP      | 80.5 | 73.6 | 69.5 | 72.8 | 74.1 | 80.5 | 71.9 | 64 | 66 | 70.6 |
| Ours (iter=1) | 79.9 | 80.0 | 79.2 | 77.7 | 79.7 | 78.6 | 78.9 | 78.1 | 76.6 | 78.2 |
| Ours (iter=2) | 79.9 | 80.0 | 79.3 | 78.1 | 79.7 | 80.0 | 80.0 | 79.3 | 78.1 | 79.5 |

Table 3: Ablation study for order recovery. We compare the modal and amodal instance segmentation results for each synthetic occlusion challenge with and without order recovery.

4.4. Ablation study

As an ablation study, we verify the effectiveness of the order recovery on our model. We evaluate on our proposed occlusion challenge with all three different occlusion challenges and report modal and amodal segmentation results in Table 3. We perform experiments without pair-wise order (NOD), and with our predicted pair-wise order (OD). The results demonstrate the benefit of the order recovery, since per pixel competition cannot always correctly indicate the occluder and the occludee.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, we introduced a deep network for multi-object instance segmentation that is robust to occlusion and can be trained from bounding box supervision only. In particular, our network defines a generative model of multiple objects and achieves enhanced robustness through reasoning about multi-object occlusion. We further extended our architecture with an occlusion reasoning module that enables efficient inference in generative models with multiple objects. In particular, it detects erroneous feed-forward predictions and corrects them through reasoning about the occlusion order of objects. Our experiments demonstrate the robustness of our proposed deep network for instance segmentation under occlusion on the KITTI INstance dataset and a dataset with synthetic occluders.
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