

Object Assembly, a Spatial-Geometric Reasoning Pathway to Physical Intelligence

Guest Lecture – CS6301 – UT Dallas

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Minnesota Robotics Institute (MnRI)

Department of Computer Science and Engineering



**Robotics:
Perception & Manipulation
(RPM) Lab**

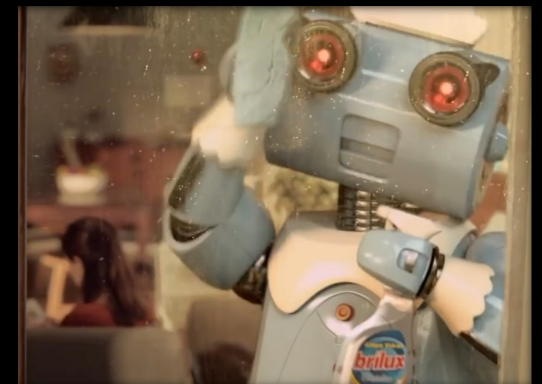
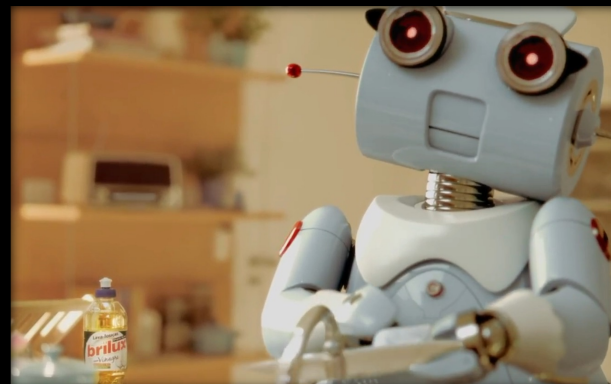
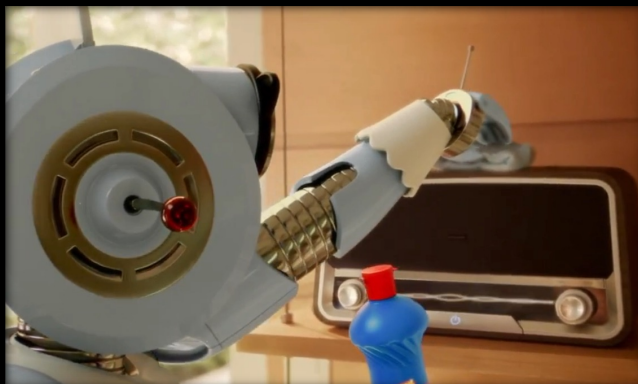
Why is **Object Assembly
such an important task to focus on in
robotics?**

Why is **Object-Object Interaction**
such an important task to focus on in
robotics?

General Purpose Robot - *the dream*



Why is **Object-Object Interaction** such an important task to focus on in robotics?



Why is **Object Assembly**
such an important task to focus on in
robotics?

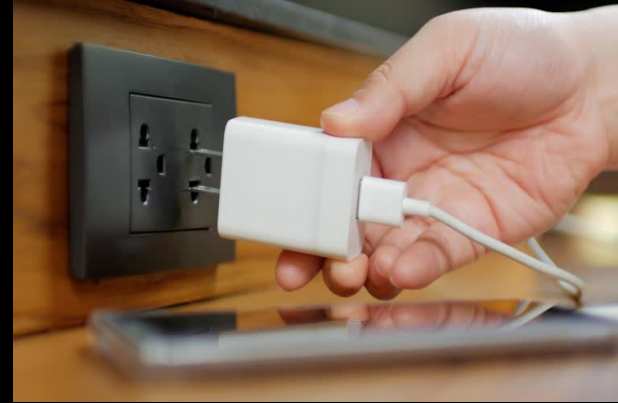
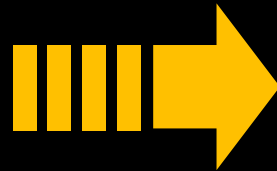


... could lead to
robot's **physical
intelligence.**



A form of **physical intelligence** is where the agent is able to **interact with novel objects seamlessly.**





We posit that **object assembly** task could lead to this **physical intelligence**.

How do we enable robot to perform
object assembly tasks?



Video speed 8X

Francisco Suárez-Ruiz et al. Can robots assemble an IKEA chair?.
Sci. Robot. **3**, eaat6385(2018). DOI: [10.1126/scirobotics.aat6385](https://doi.org/10.1126/scirobotics.aat6385)

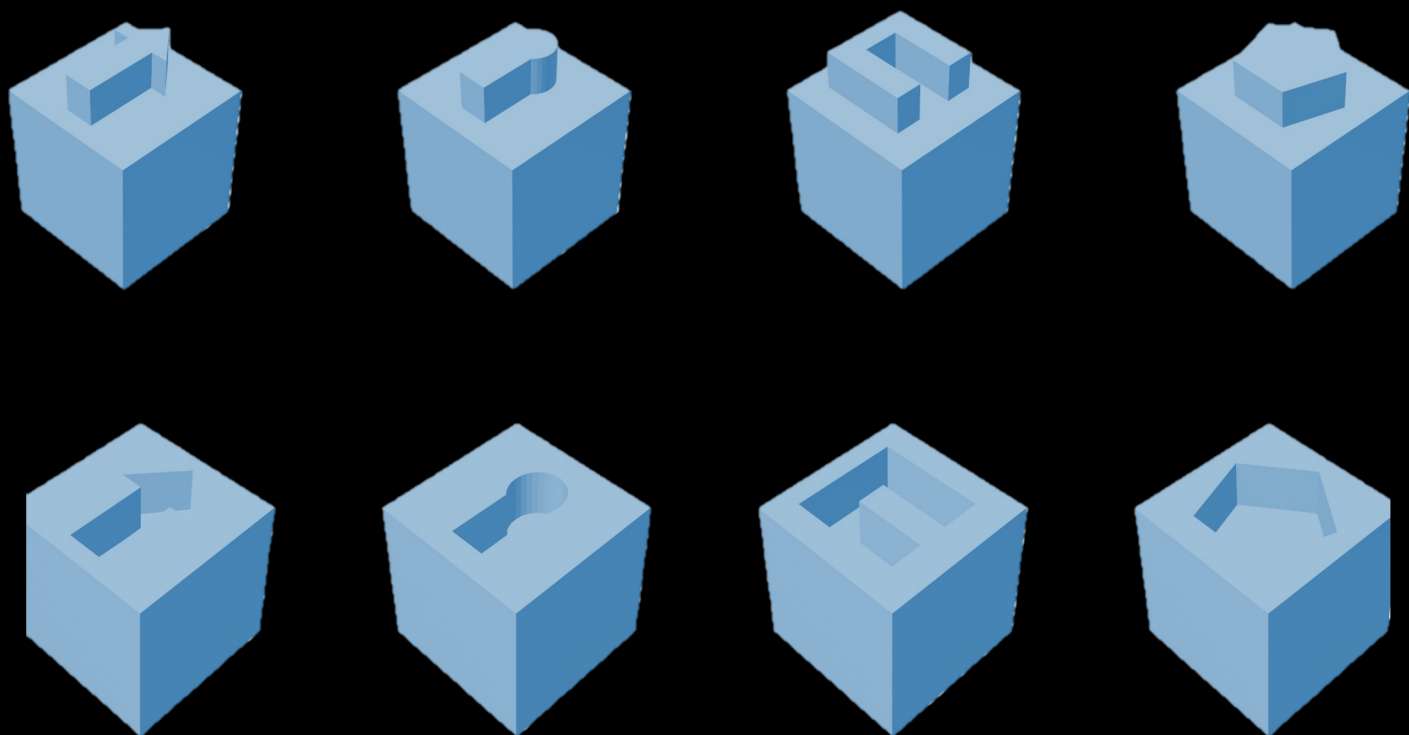
How do we enable robot to perform
object assembly tasks on **novel objects**?

Evidence from neuroscience and cognitive science supports the notion that humans employ **spatio-geometric features**, mediated by specific neural pathways and cognitive processes, to perform **object assembly tasks**.

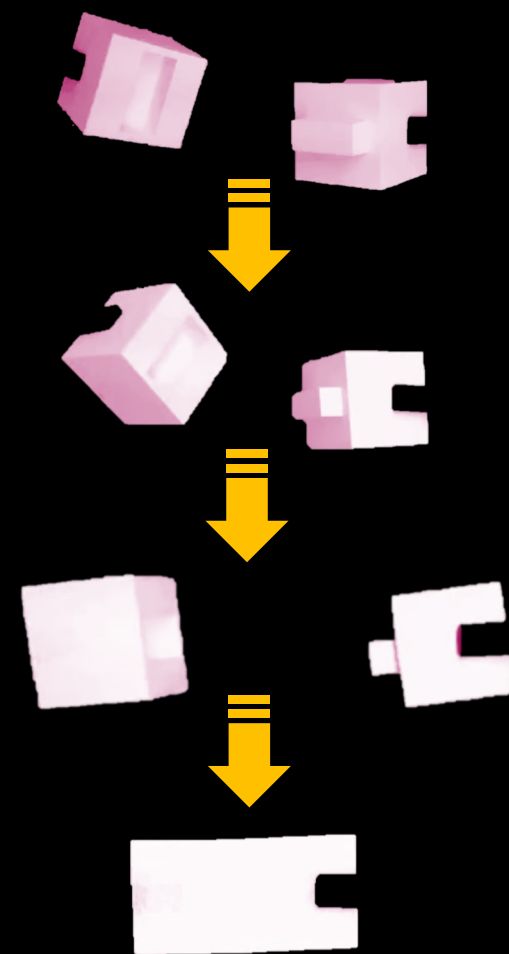
Evidence from neuroscience and cognitive science supports the notion that humans employ **spatio-geometric features**, mediated by specific neural pathways and cognitive processes, to perform **object assembly tasks**.

We posit that **robots** need representations that can capture **spatio-geometric features** to learn **novel-object assembly skills** from demonstrations.

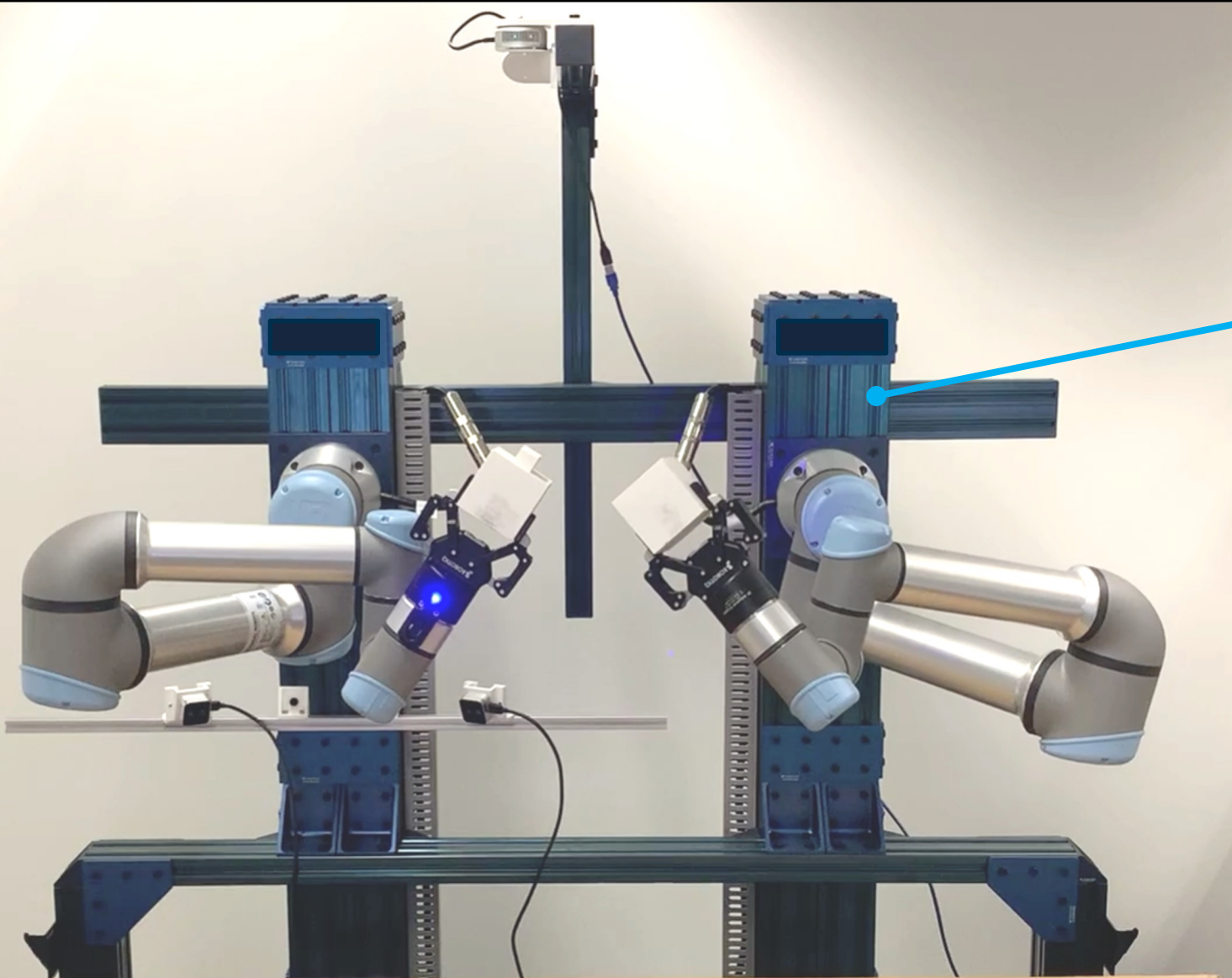
Inspired by LEGO puzzles we designed object pairs with various peg and hole geometries



Assembly Process



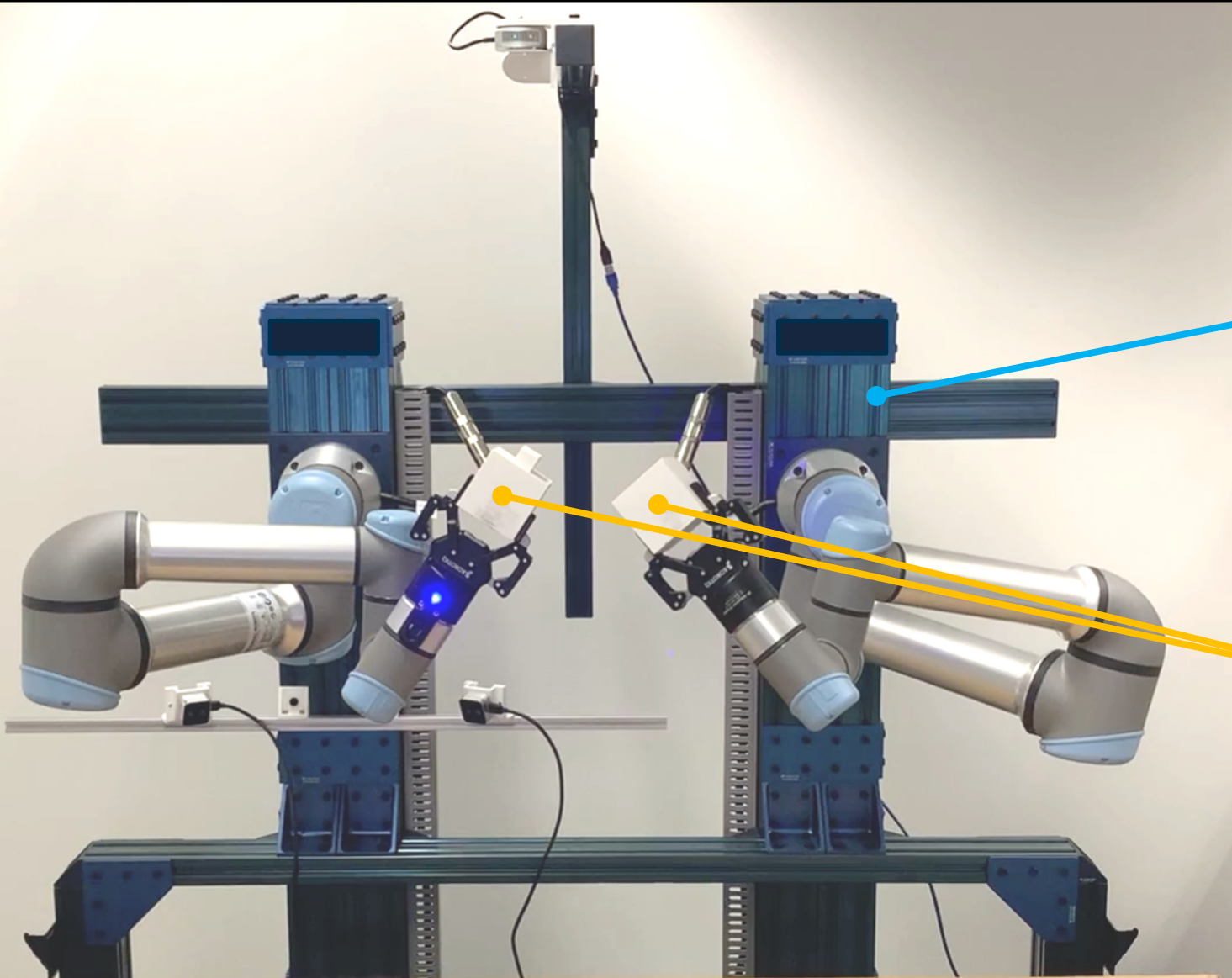
Task: Geometry Informed Object Assembly



Dual-arm Robot is tasked to assemble the object parts held by its grippers



Task: Geometry Informed Object Assembly



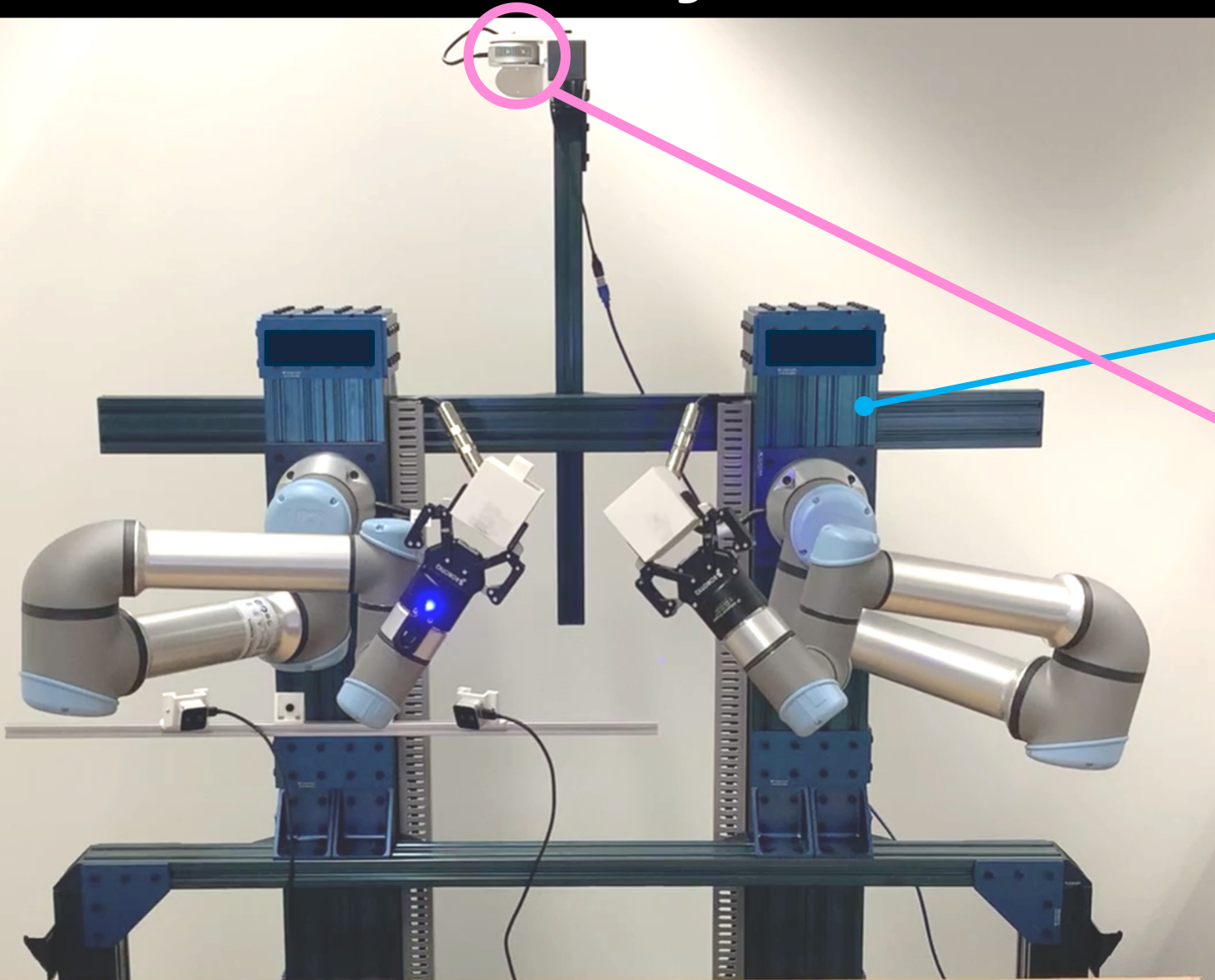
Dual-arm Robot is tasked to assemble the object parts held by its grippers



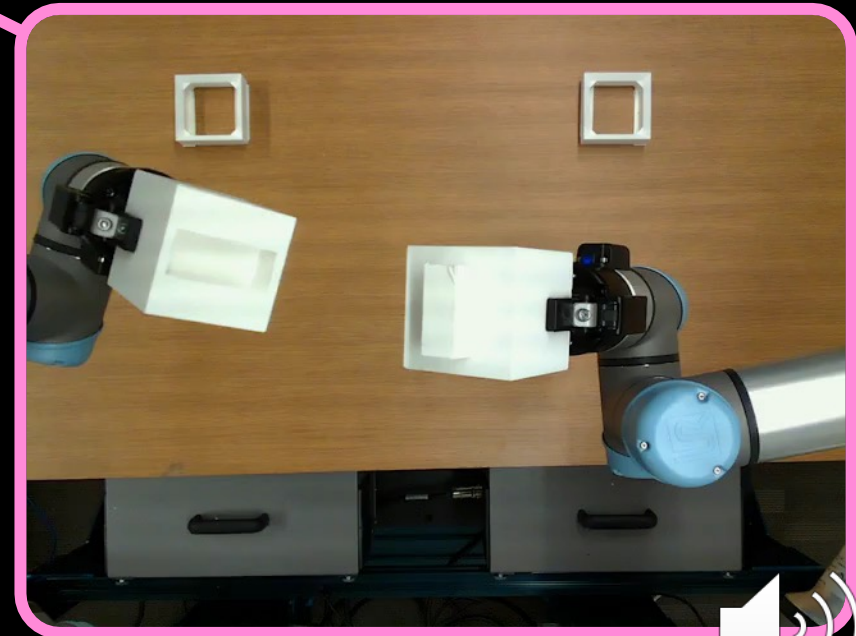
Pair of object parts with extruded and intruded geometries



Task: Geometry Informed Object Assembly



Dual-arm Robot is tasked to assemble the object parts held by its grippers



Sensor view

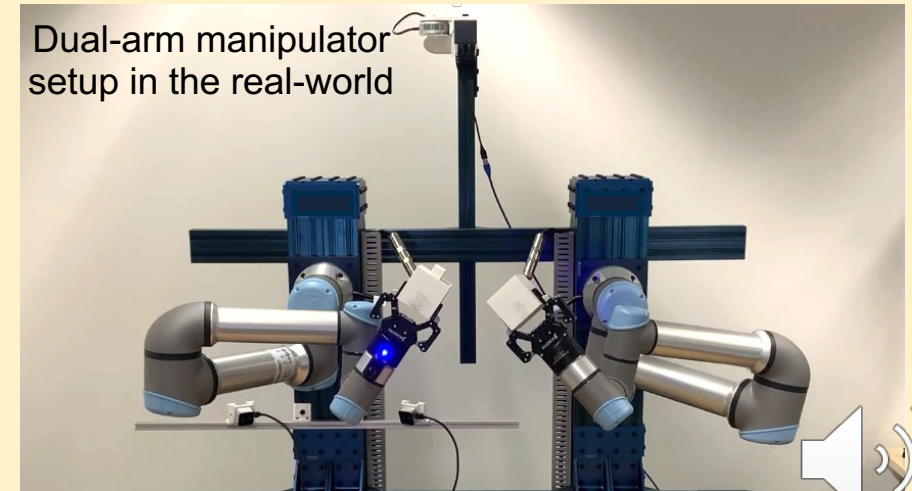
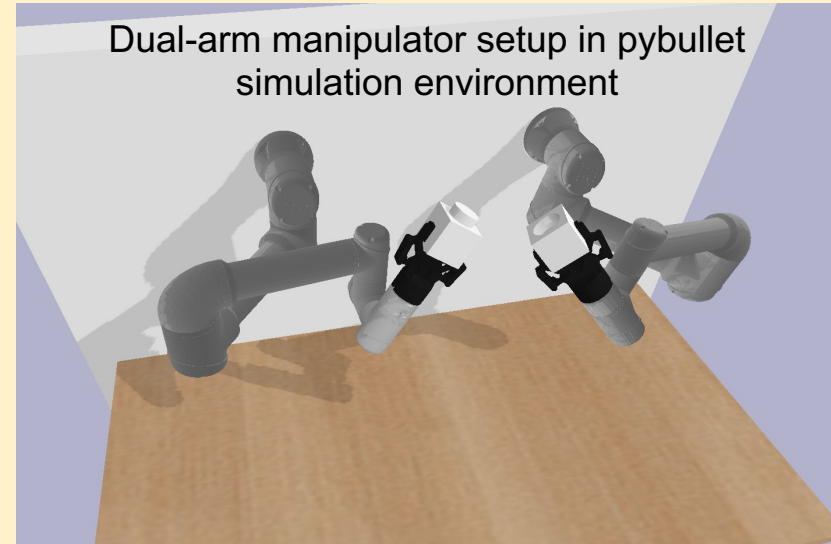
Objectives of the project



Objectives of the project



To learn dual-arm manipulation policy for object assembly



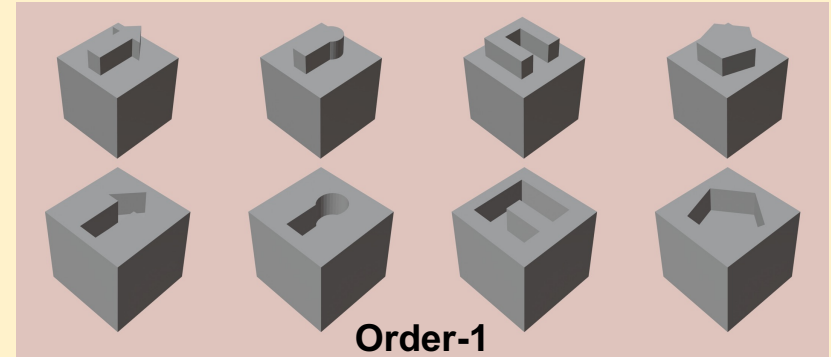
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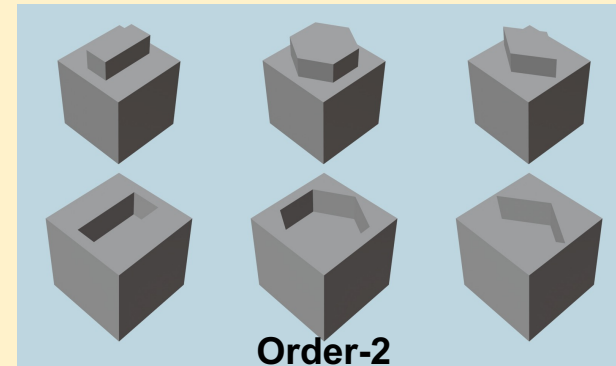


To implicitly perform spatio-geometric reasoning



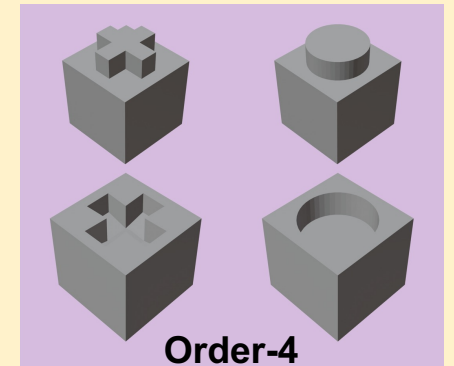
Order-1

One unique solution



Order-2

Two rotationally symmetric solutions



Order-4

Four rotationally symmetric solutions



Objectives of the project



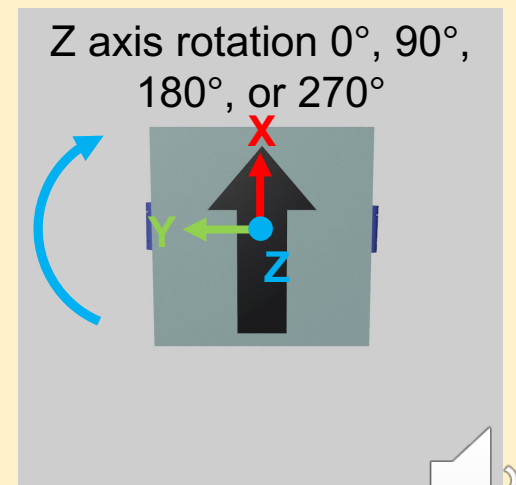
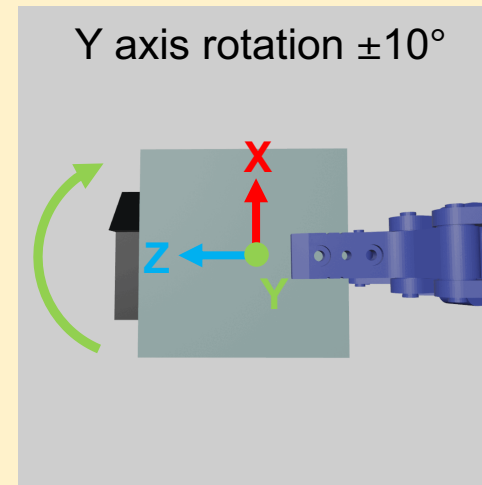
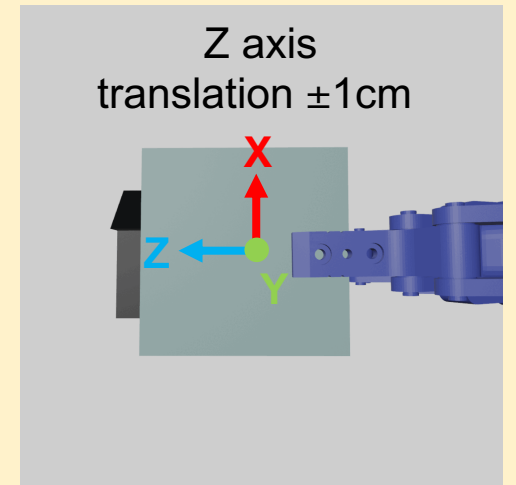
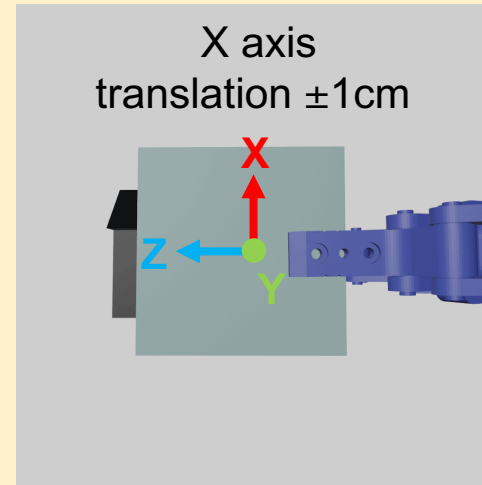
To learn dual-arm manipulation policy for object assembly



To implicitly perform spatio-geometric reasoning



To be robust to grasp variations



We posit that **robots** need representations that can capture **spatio-geometric features** to learn **novel-object assembly skills** from demonstrations.

CLIP

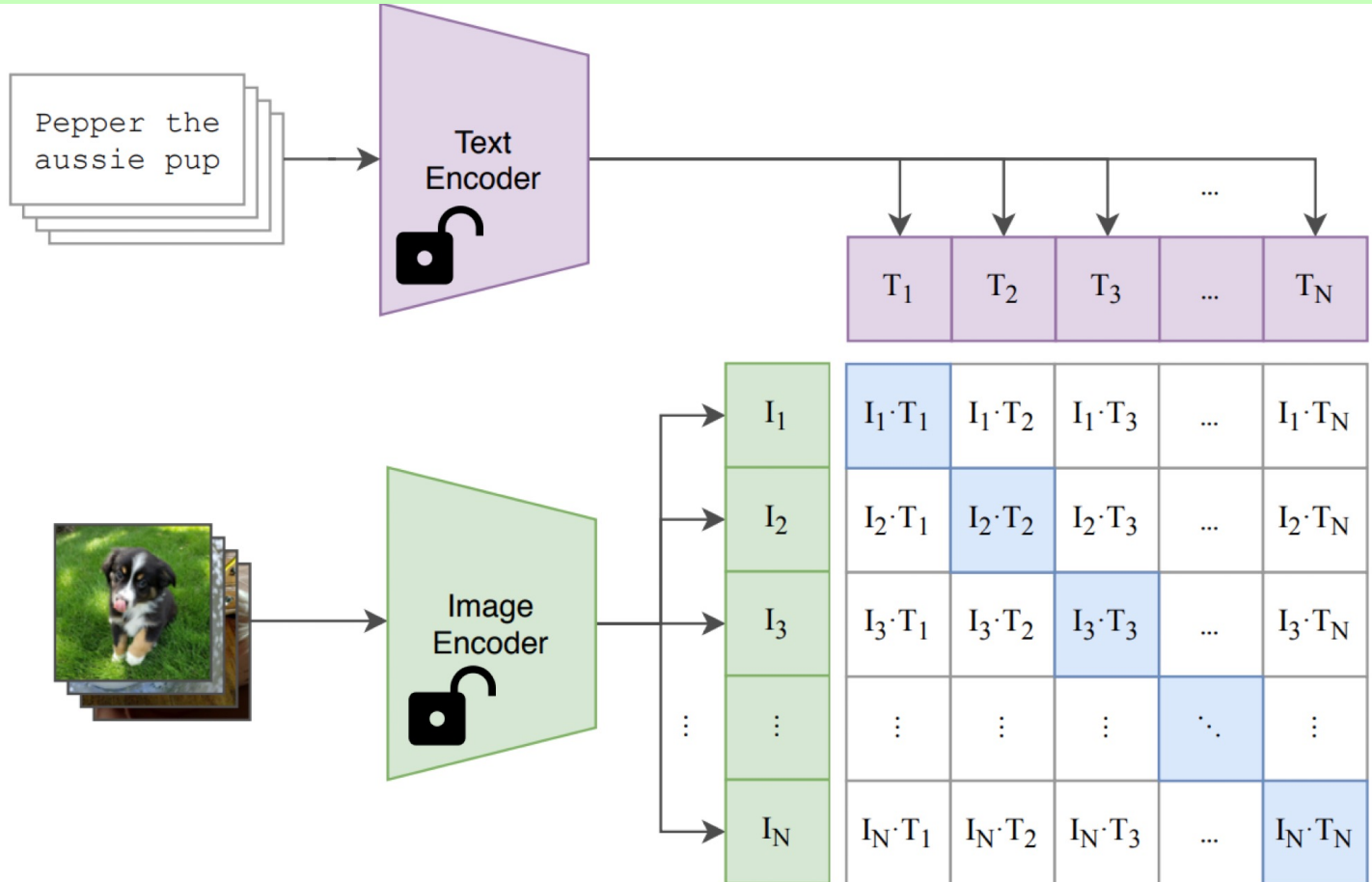
MAE

R3M

CLIP

MAE

R3M



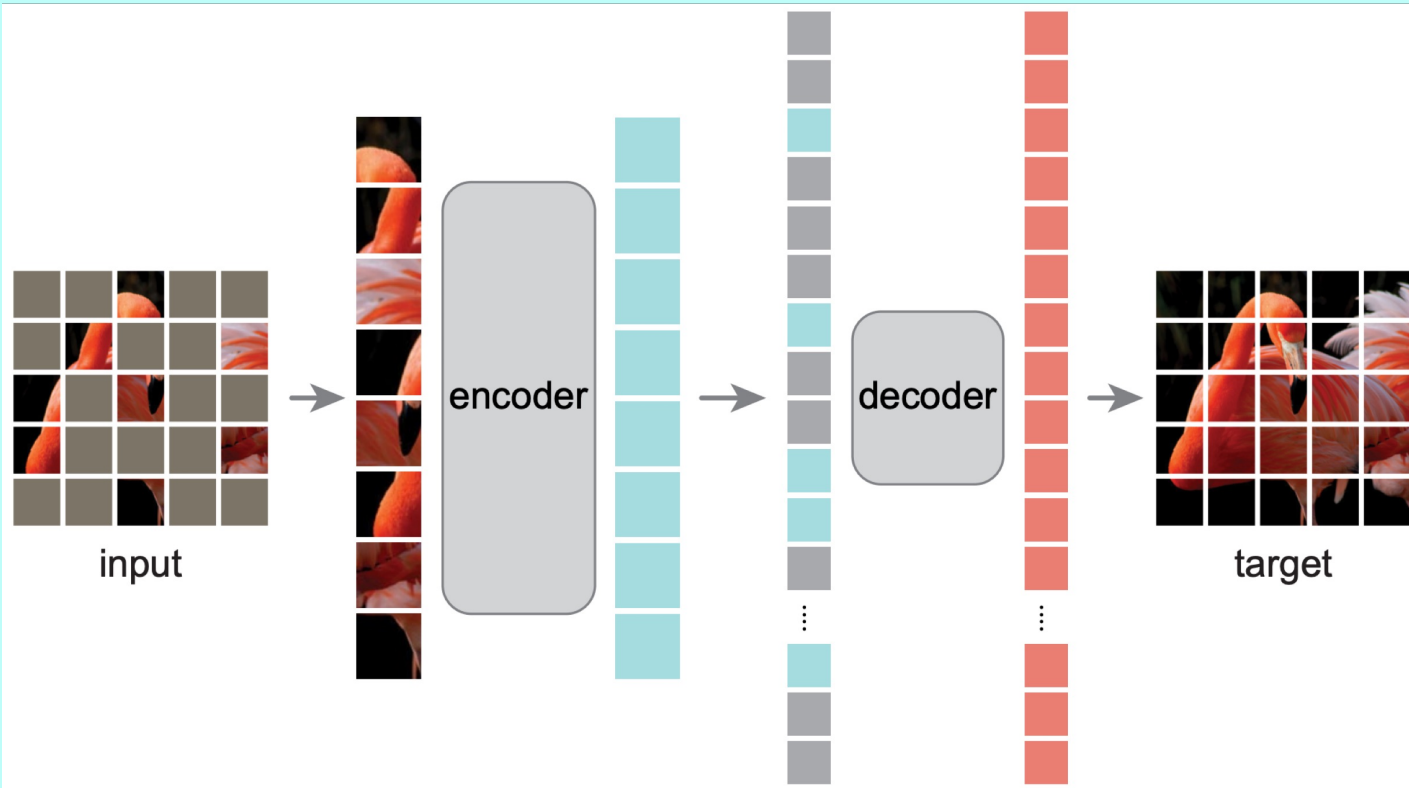
Contrastive Language Image Pre-training

Alec Radford, Jong Wook Kim, Chris Hallacy, Aditya Ramesh, Gabriel Goh, Sandhini Agarwal, Girish Sastry, Amanda Askell, Pamela Mishkin, Jack Clark, Gretchen Krueger, and Ilya Sutskever. Learning Transferable Visual Models From Natural Language Supervision. In International Conference on Machine Learning (ICML) 2021, Vol. 139. 8748–8763.

CLIP

MAE

R3M



Masked Auto Encoder

He, K., Chen, X., Xie, S., Li, Y., Dollár, P., & Girshick, R. (2022). Masked autoencoders are scalable vision learners. In *Proceedings of the IEEE/CVF conference on computer vision and pattern recognition (CVPR)* (pp. 16000-16009).

CLIP

MAE

R3M

Ego4D Video +
Language



Time Contrastive Learning



Language-Video Alignment



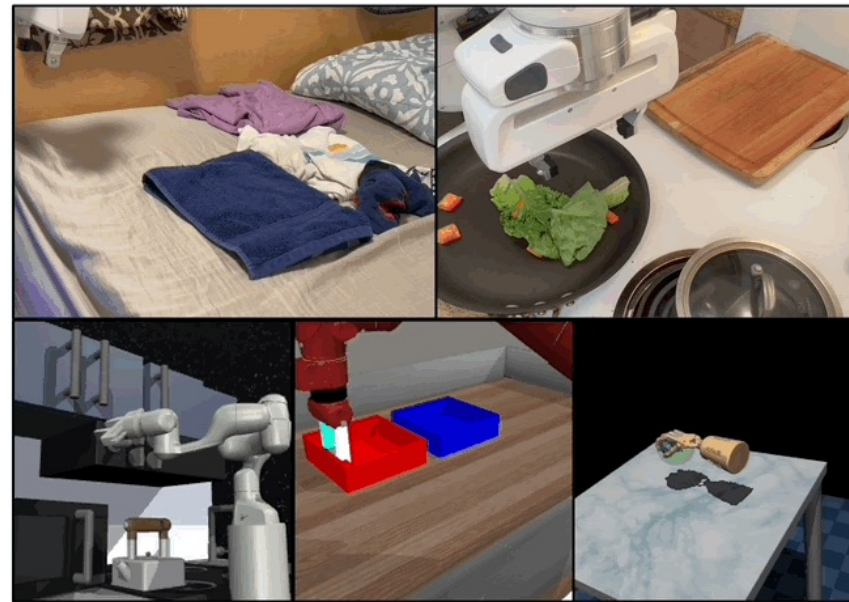
"stirs the
snacks..." "removes the
battery..."

L1 Sparsity Penalty

R3M: Reusable Representations for Robotic Manipulation

Efficient Robot Learning
New Environment, New Tasks

Pre-Trained R3M
Representation



Nair, S., Rajeswaran, A., Kumar, V., Finn, C., & Gupta, A. R3M: A universal visual representation for robot manipulation. In Conference on Robot Learning (CoRL) 2022.

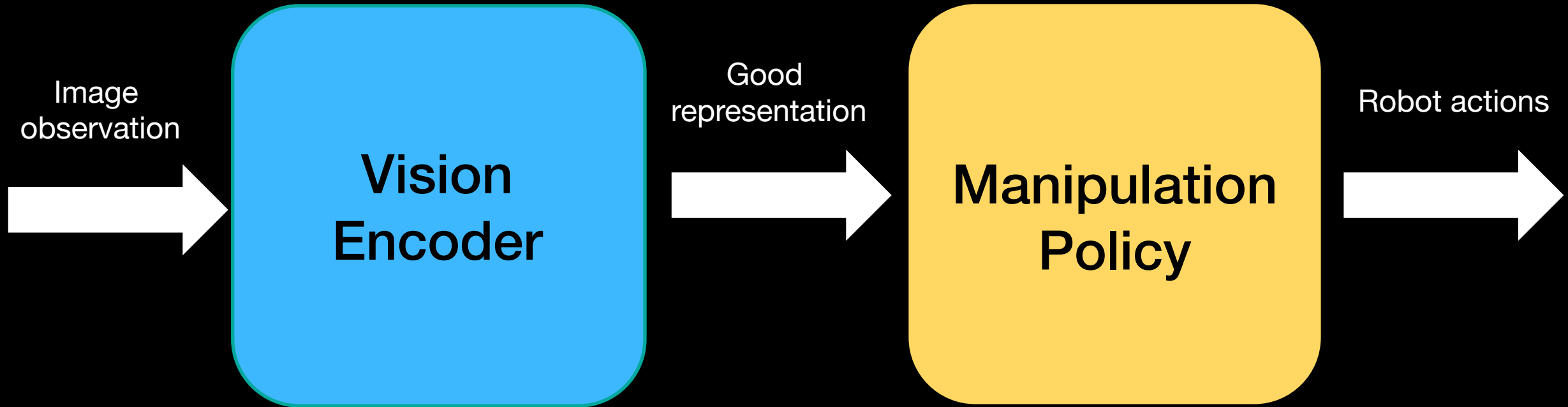
CLIP

MAE

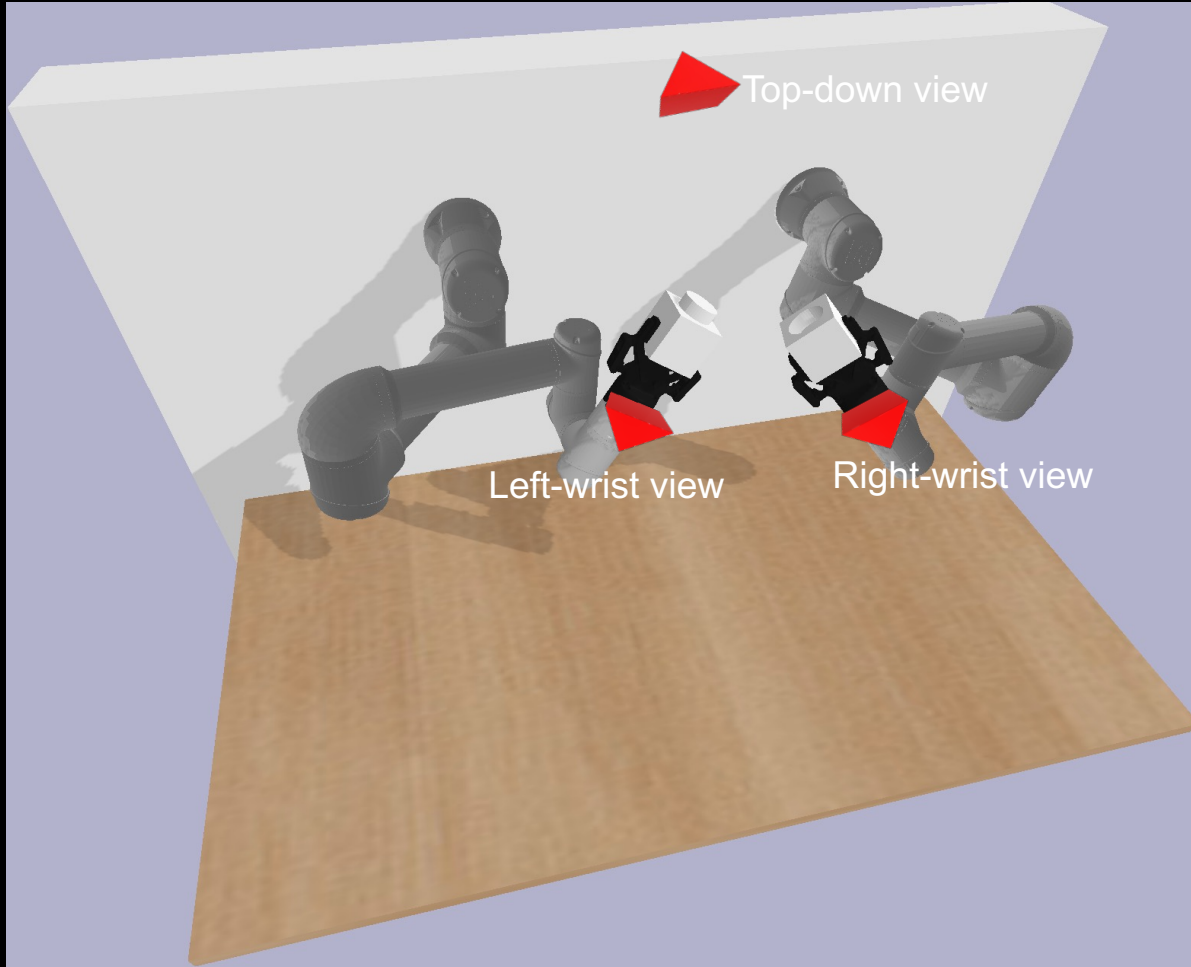
R3M

**Vision
Encoder**

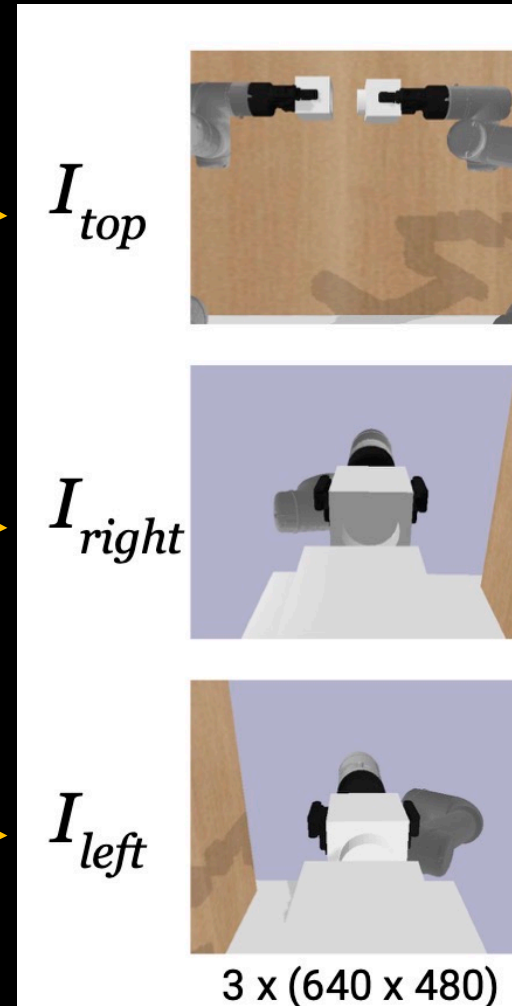
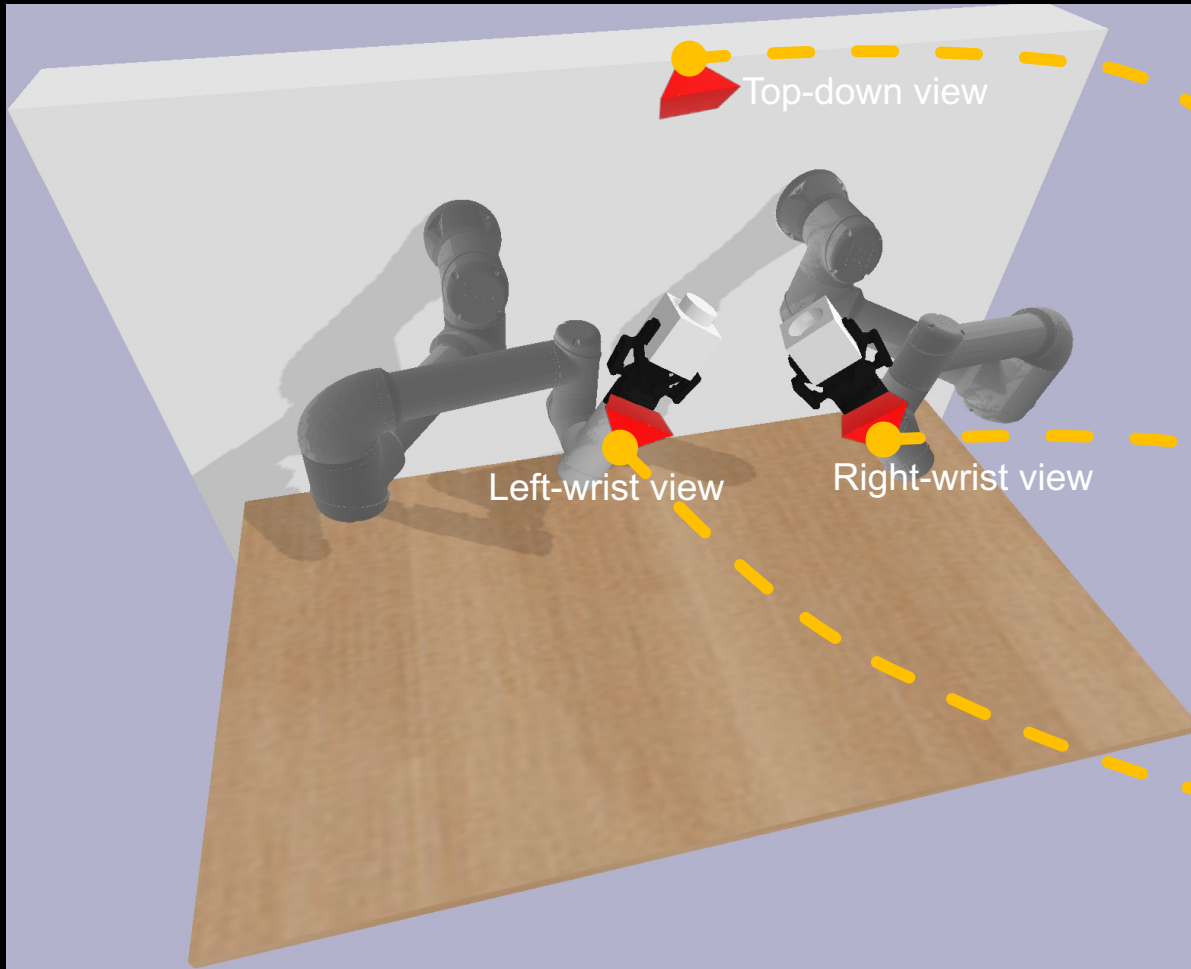
Behavior cloning from demonstrations



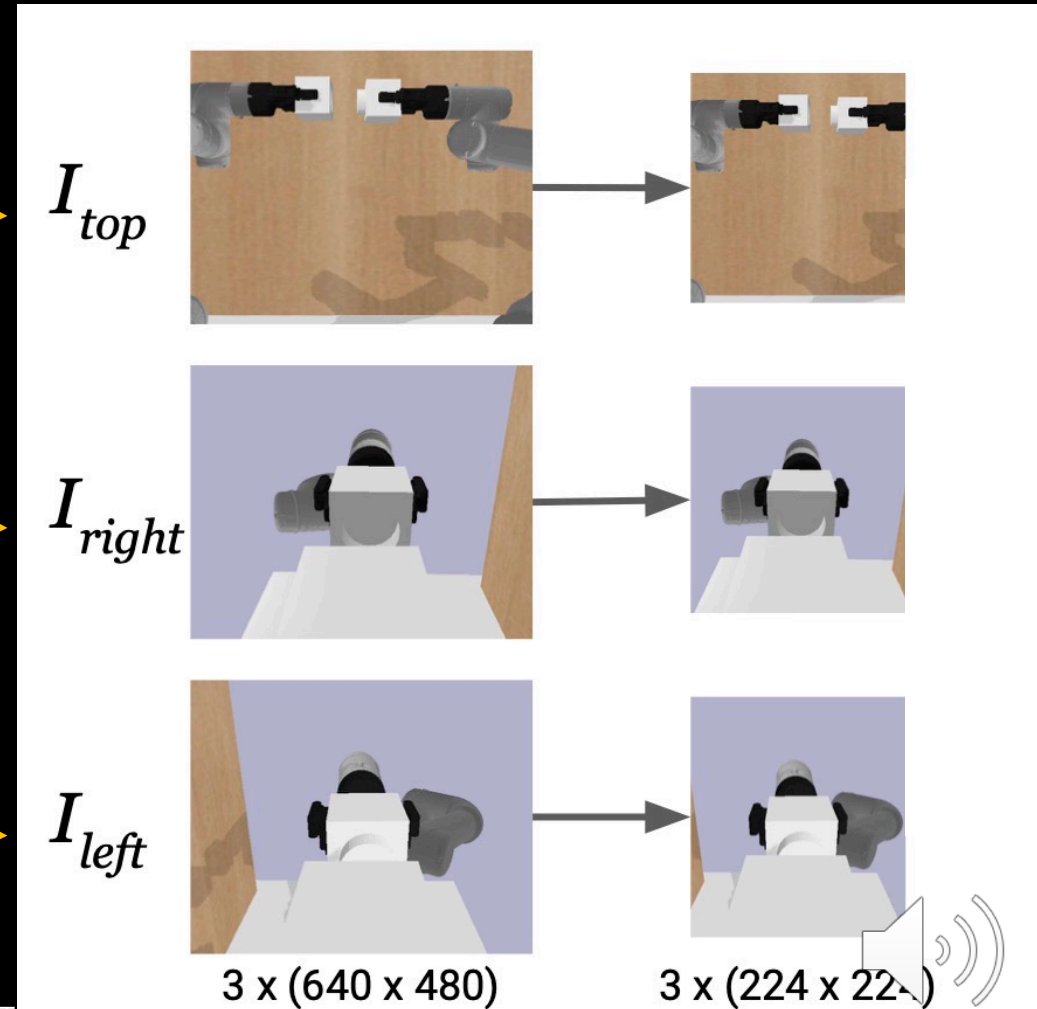
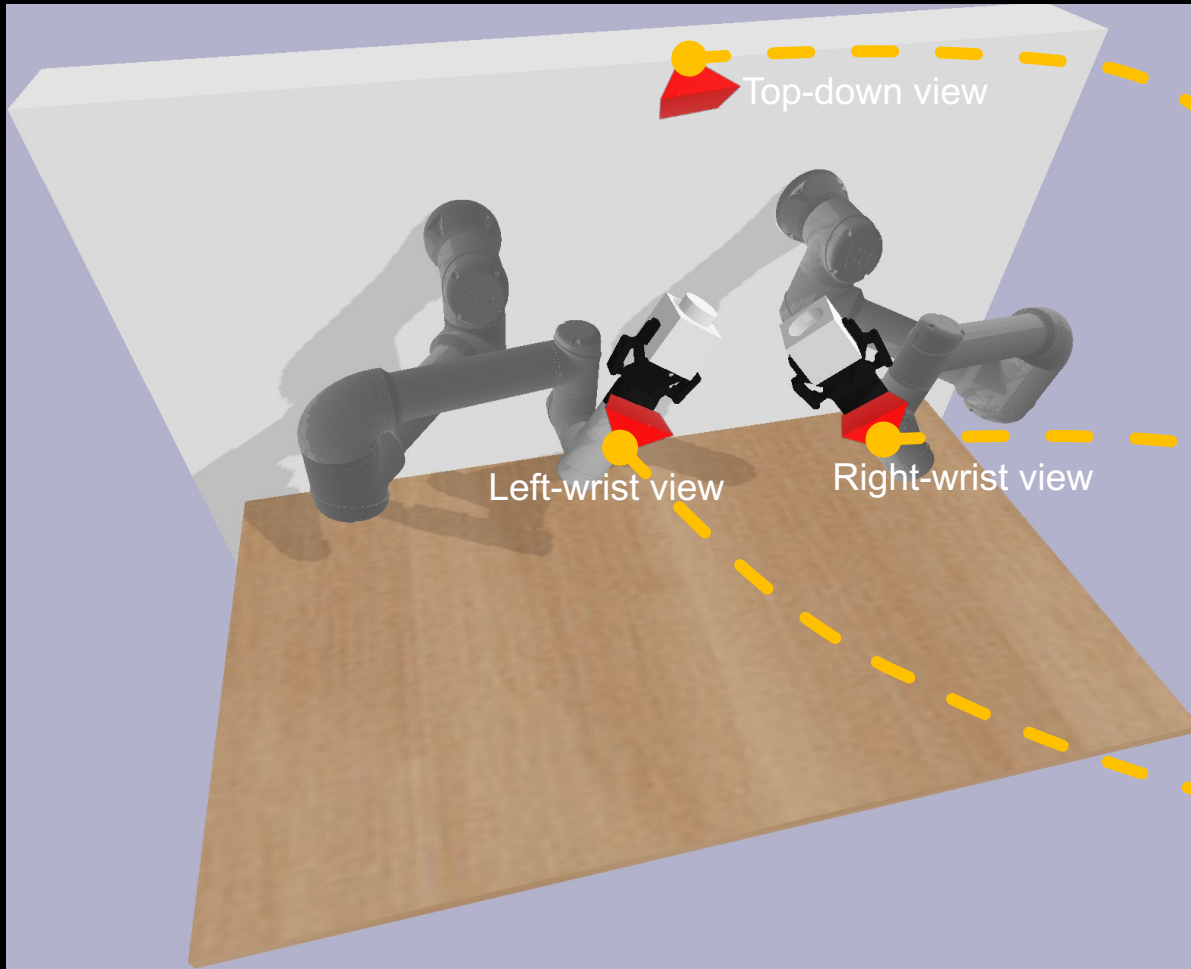
Dual-arm Manipulation Policy Learning Framework



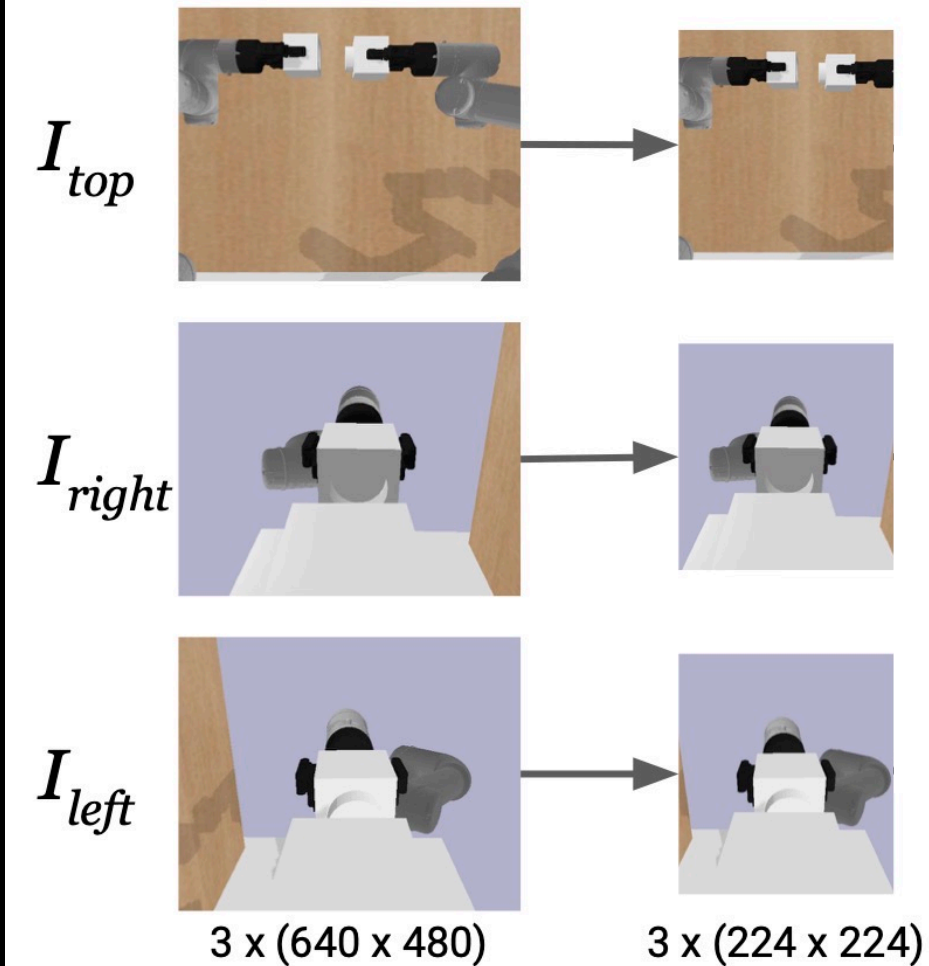
Dual-arm Manipulation Policy Learning Framework



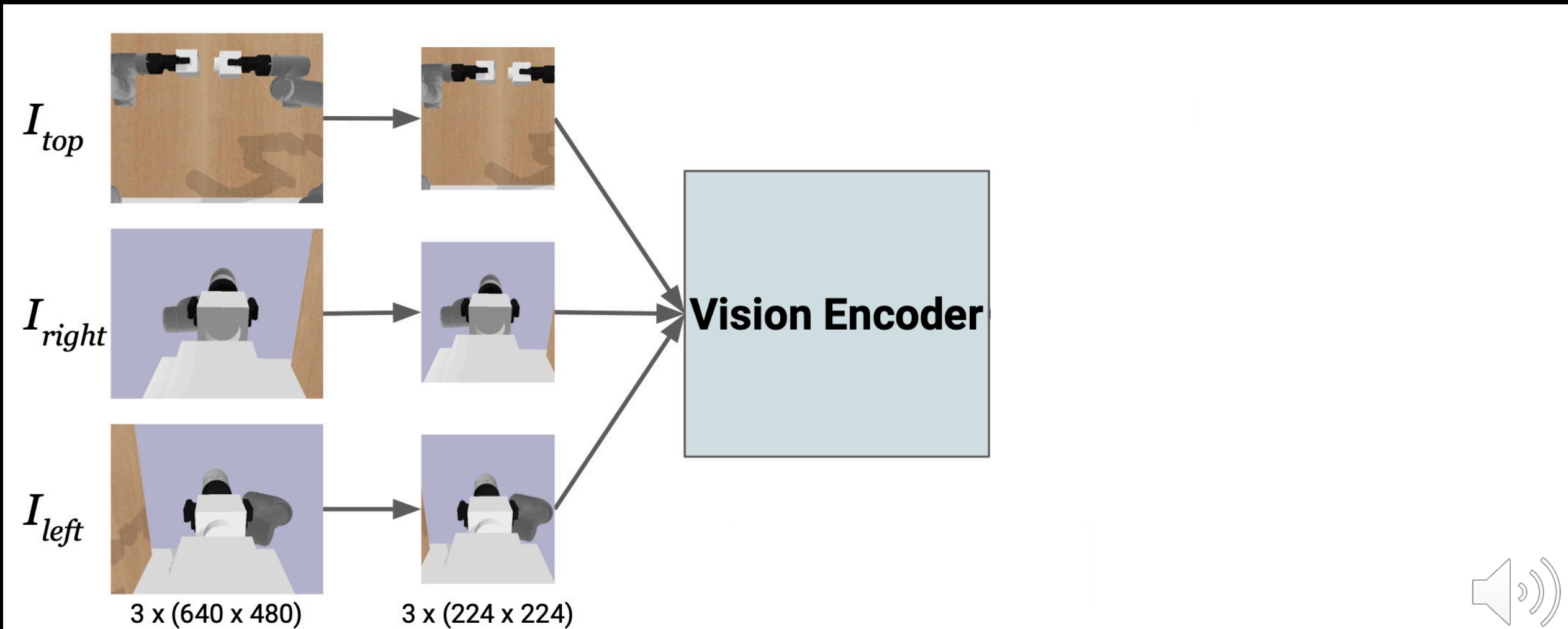
Dual-arm Manipulation Policy Learning Framework



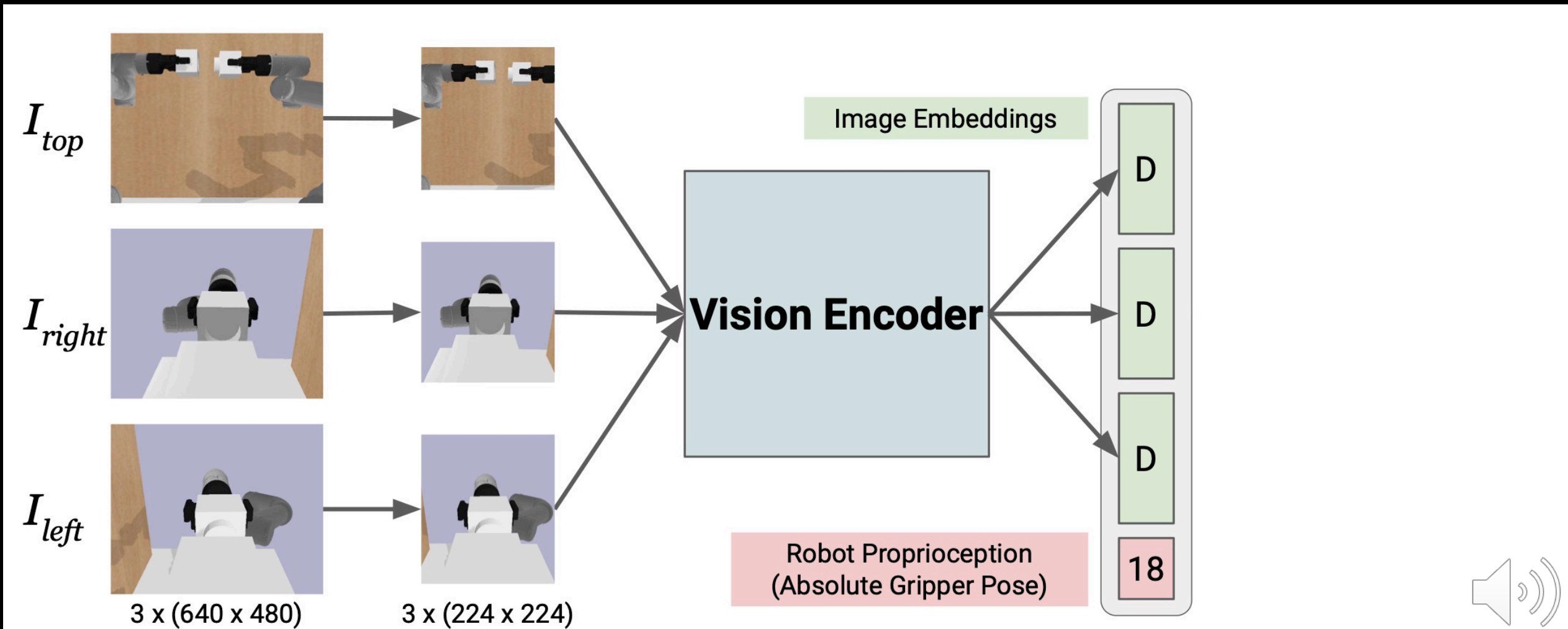
Dual-arm Manipulation Policy Learning Framework



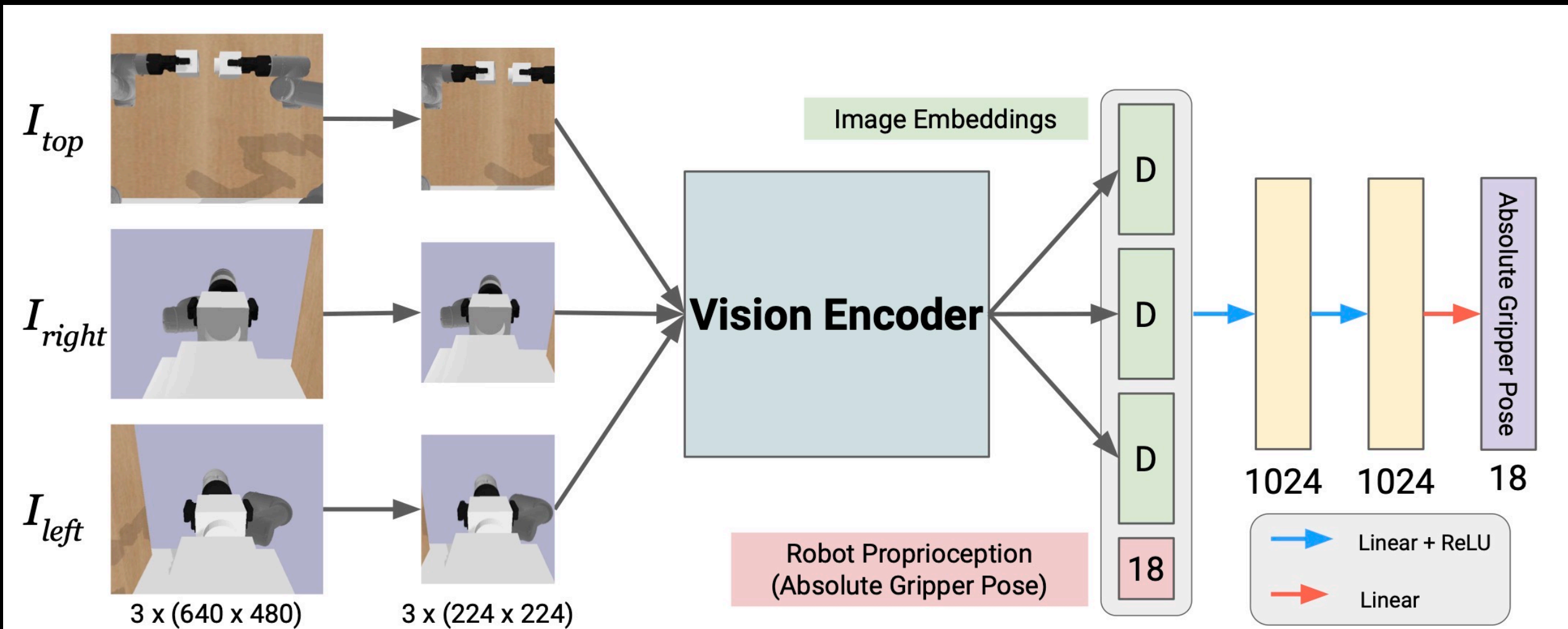
Dual-arm Manipulation Policy Learning Framework



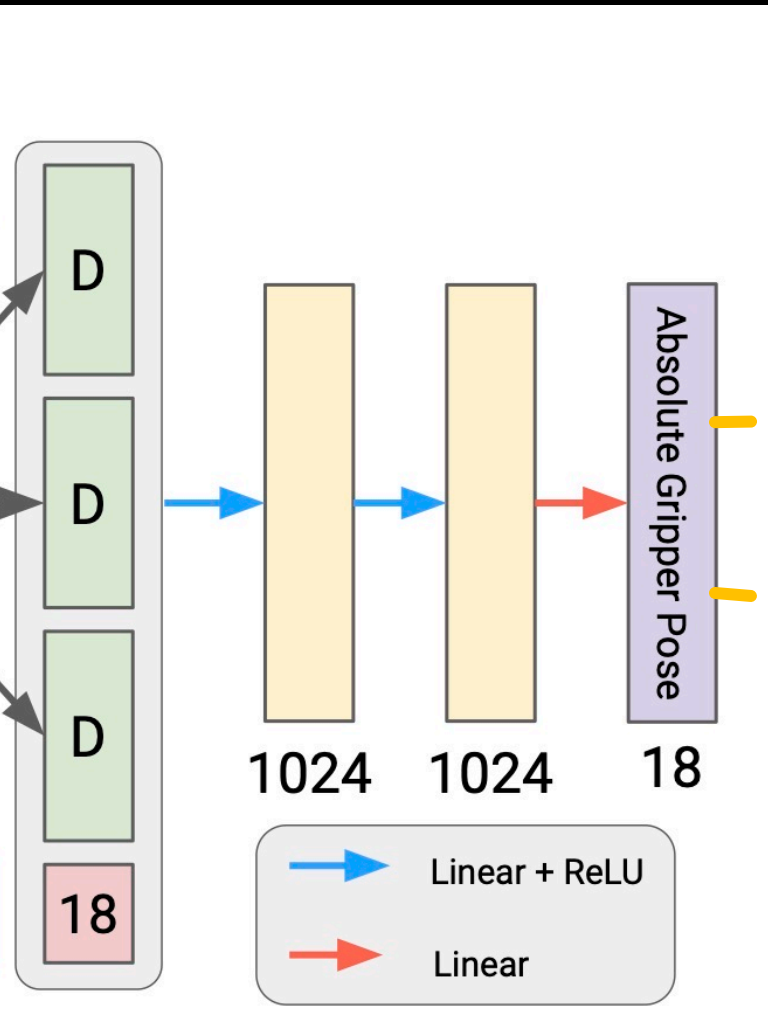
Dual-arm Manipulation Policy Learning Framework



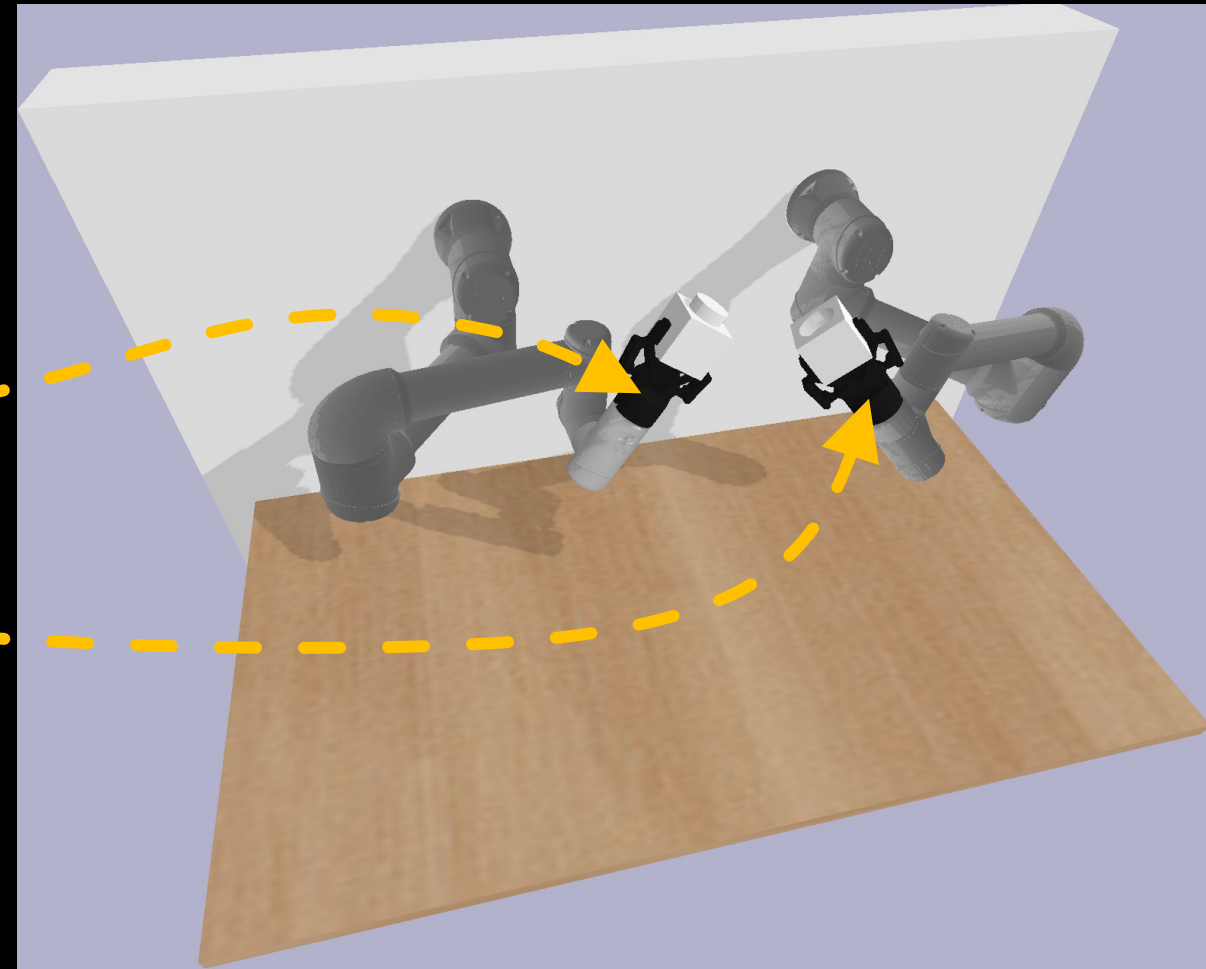
Dual-arm Manipulation Policy Learning Framework



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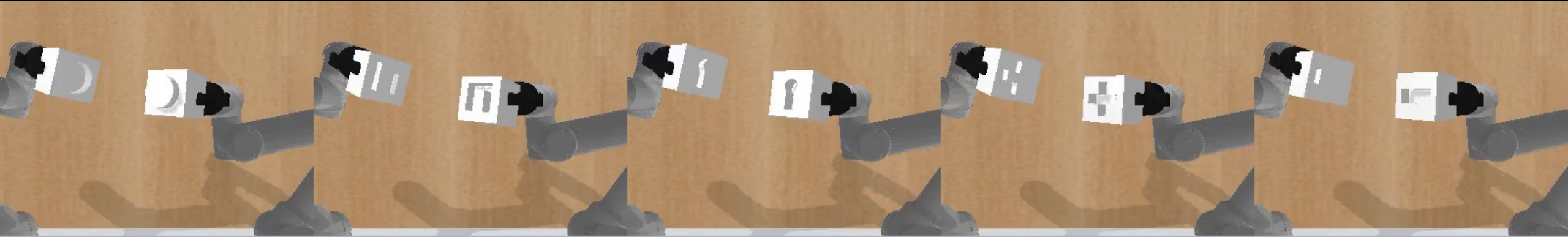


9 values representing the gripper pose with 3 values for x, y, z and 6 values from first two columns of rotation matrix [Zhou et al. 2019]

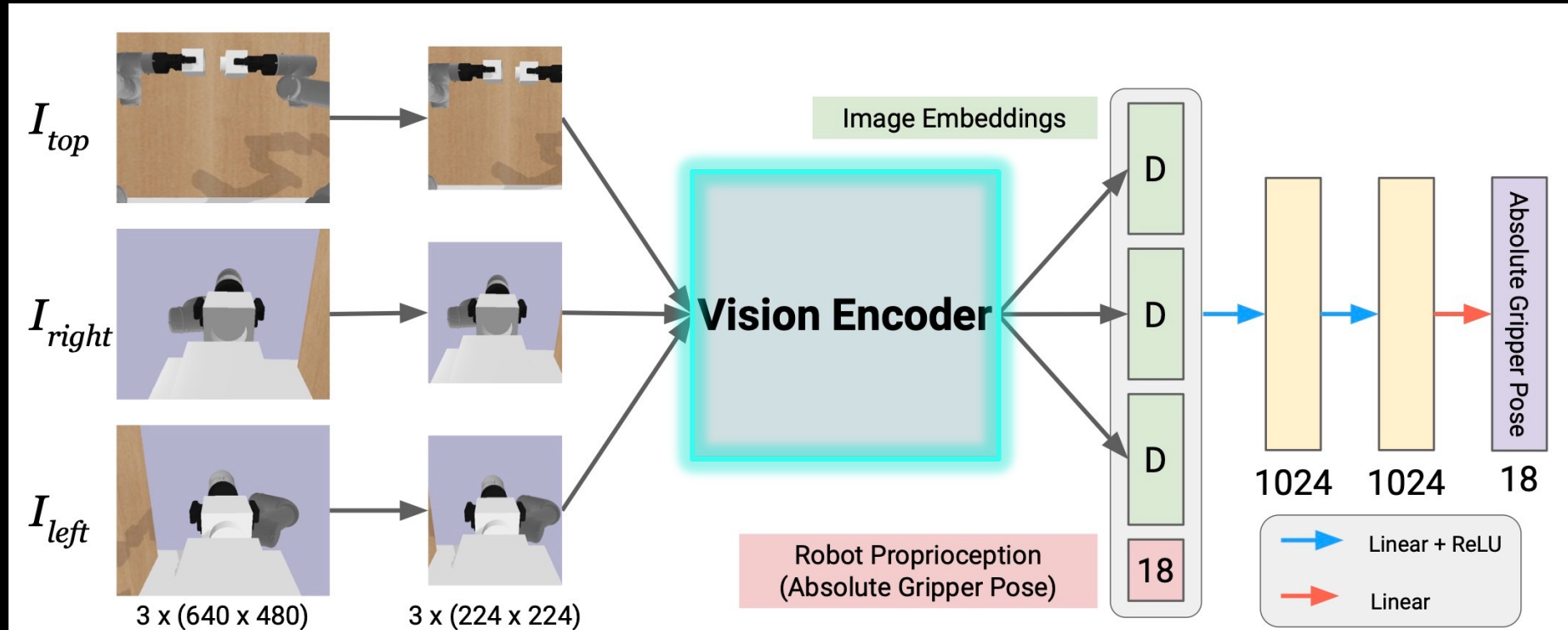


Demonstration Data in Simulation Experiments

Sampled videos. Note: 3 views are collected in simulation experiments



Evaluations with Existing Visual Encoders



To our surprise, the pre-trained representations did not do well than a ResNet trained from scratch.

ViT-B/16

ResNet-50

Non-pretrained ResNet-50

Non-pretrained ResNet-18

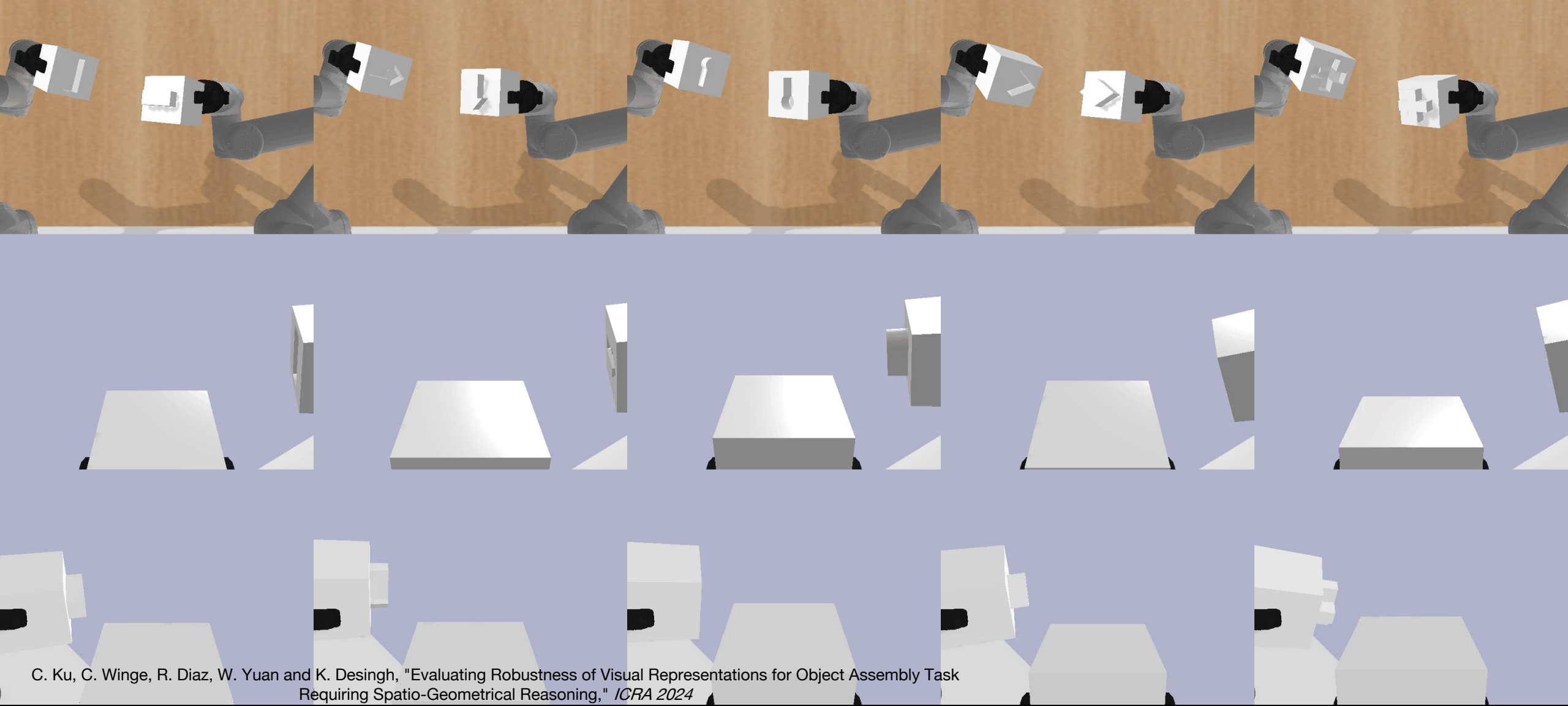
CLIP ResNet-50

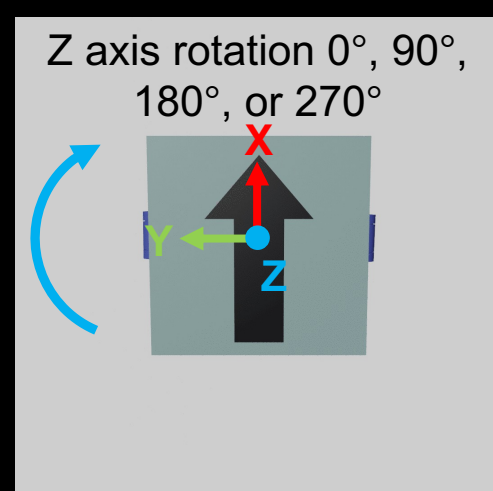
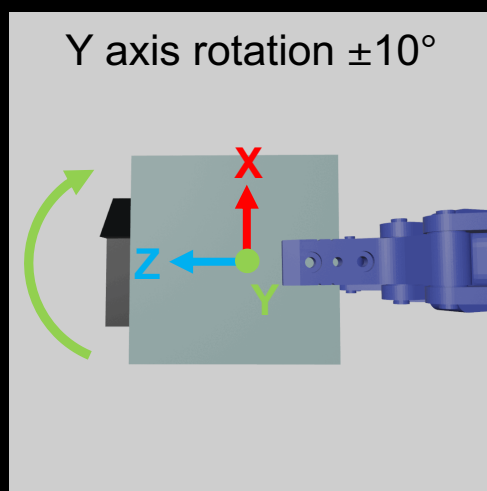
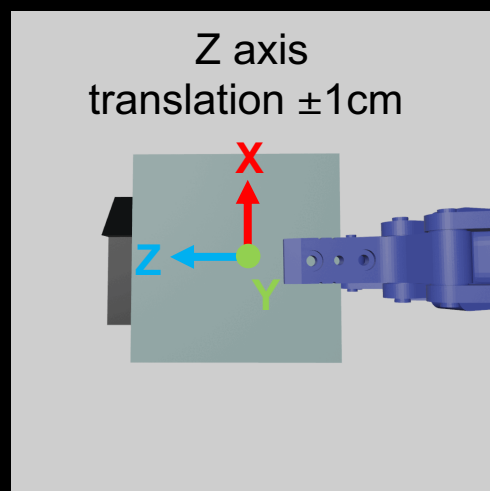
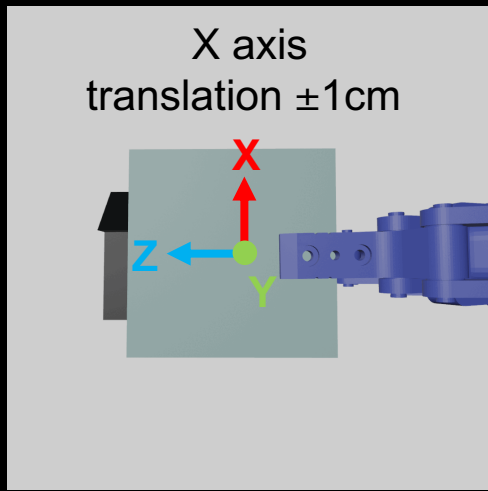
ViT-B/16

R3M ResNet-50

Evaluation in Simulation

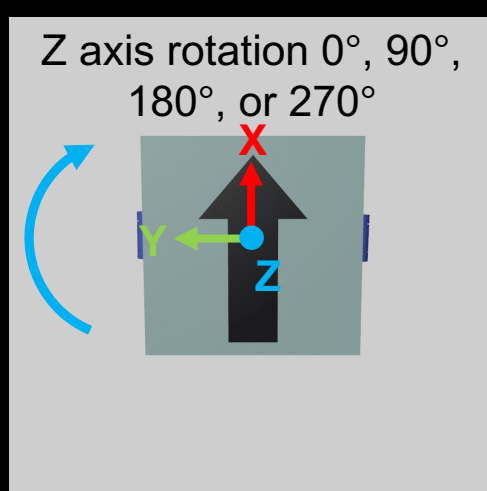
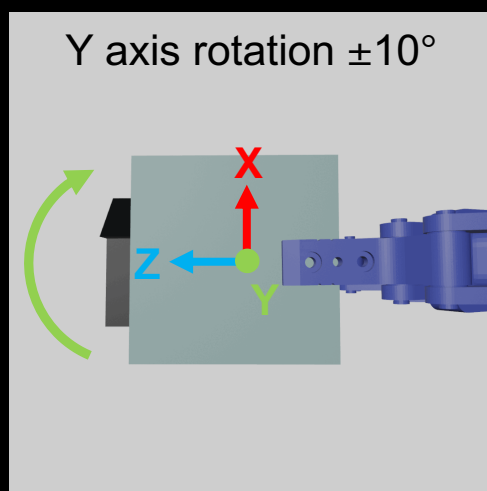
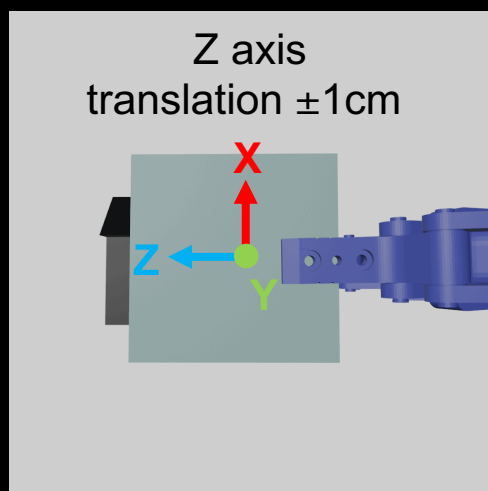
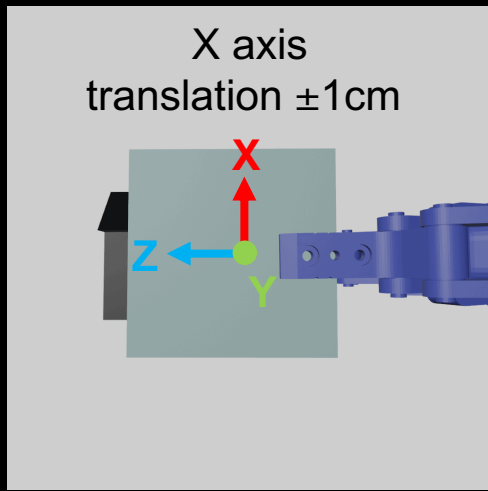
Sampled results from **successful** results with **Non-pretrained ResNet-18** model.





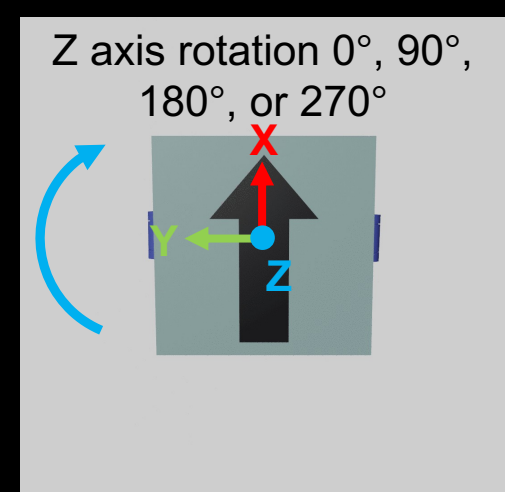
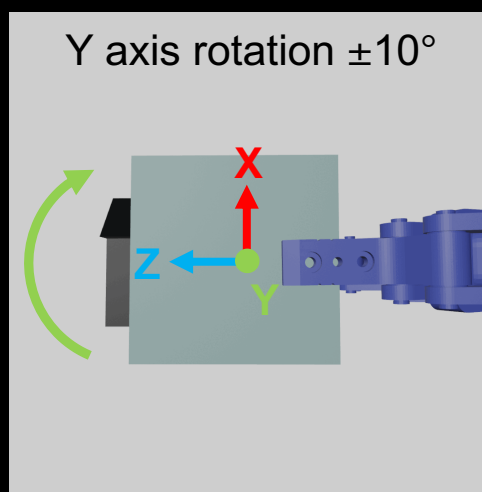
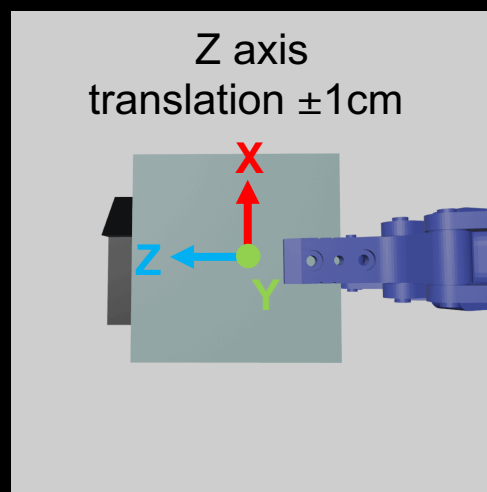
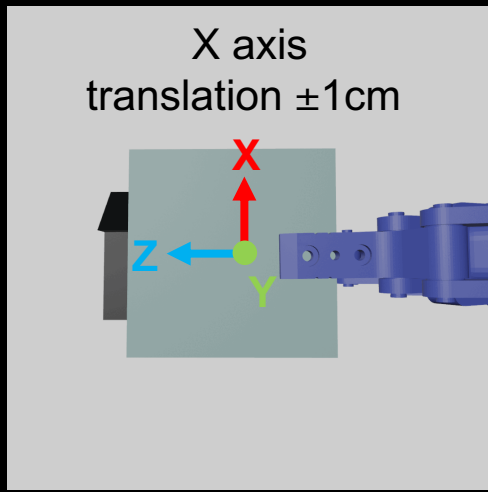
	XT	ZT	YR	ZR
Non-pretrained ResNet-18	1.000	1.000	1.000	0.775
Non-pretrained ResNet-50	1.000	1.000	1.000	0.825
ImageNet ResNet-50	1.000	1.000	0.925	0.425
R3M ResNet-50	0.950	1.000	1.000	0.275
CLIP ResNet-50	1.000	1.000	0.975	0.625
ImageNet ViT-base	0.950	1.000	0.975	0.450
CLIP ViT-base	1.000	1.000	0.900	0.575
MAE ViT-base	1.000	1.000	0.925	0.350

TABLE I: Success rates of all visual representations trained with 100 demonstrations of indicated task variation. Non-pretrained ResNets clearly outperform pretrained models on ZR.



	XTZR	ZTZR	YRZR	XZTYZR
Non-pretrained ResNet-18	0.825	0.825	0.675	0.275
Non-pretrained ResNet-50	0.425	0.775	0.300	0.075
ImageNet ResNet-50	0.225	0.225	0.175	0.050
R3M ResNet-50	0.150	0.275	0.05	0.050
CLIP ResNet-50	0.500	0.575	0.250	0.150
ImageNet ViT-base	0.150	0.300	0.225	0.025
CLIP ViT-base	0.300	0.250	0.200	0.050
MAE ViT-base	0.375	0.25	0.175	0.050

TABLE II: Success rates of all visual representations trained with 1000 demonstrations of indicated task variation using all objects.

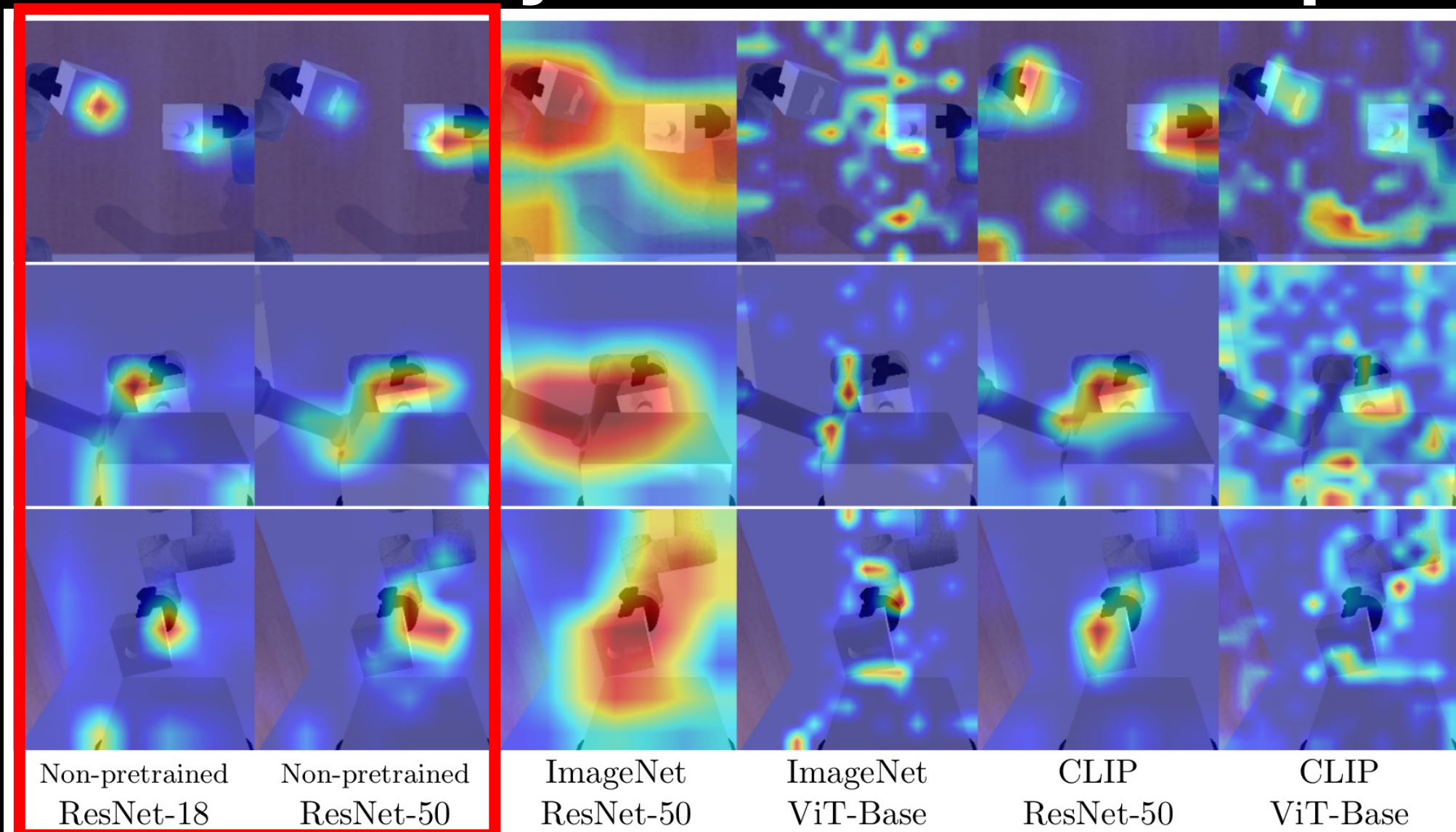


Decreasing Order of Symmetry

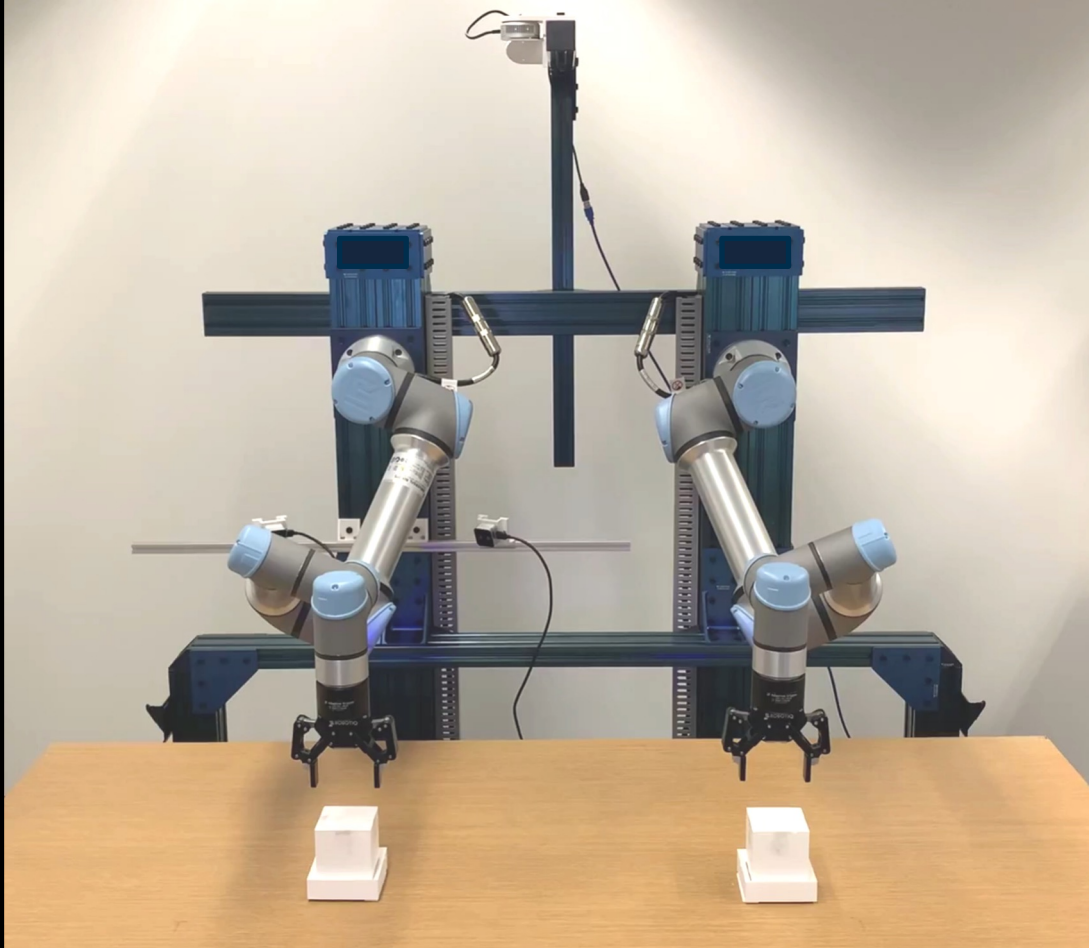
Objects	XTZR	ZTZR	YZR	XZTYZR
circle	0.85 ± 0.07	1.00 ± 0.00	0.83 ± 0.05	0.43 ± 0.07
plus	0.93 ± 0.04	1.00 ± 0.00	0.77 ± 0.01	0.38 ± 0.04
minus	0.80 ± 0.03	0.98 ± 0.00	0.44 ± 0.10	0.33 ± 0.10
diamond	0.77 ± 0.06	1.00 ± 0.00	0.33 ± 0.08	0.34 ± 0.08
hexagon	0.71 ± 0.08	1.00 ± 0.00	0.38 ± 0.08	0.30 ± 0.08
u	0.37 ± 0.08	0.54 ± 0.06	0.12 ± 0.06	0.17 ± 0.03
pentagon	0.34 ± 0.10	0.56 ± 0.04	0.10 ± 0.07	0.18 ± 0.07
arrow	0.38 ± 0.07	0.66 ± 0.08	0.18 ± 0.03	0.17 ± 0.05
key	0.38 ± 0.07	0.66 ± 0.08	0.17 ± 0.04	0.19 ± 0.05
all	0.61 ± 0.02	0.82 ± 0.03	0.37 ± 0.05	0.28 ± 0.03

TABLE III: Success rates of Non-pretrained ResNet-18 trained on 1000 demonstrations including all objects. Mean and standard deviations over 3 different evaluations of 40 randomized rollouts.

Qualitative Analysis of Activation Maps



Real world setup for data collection & evaluation

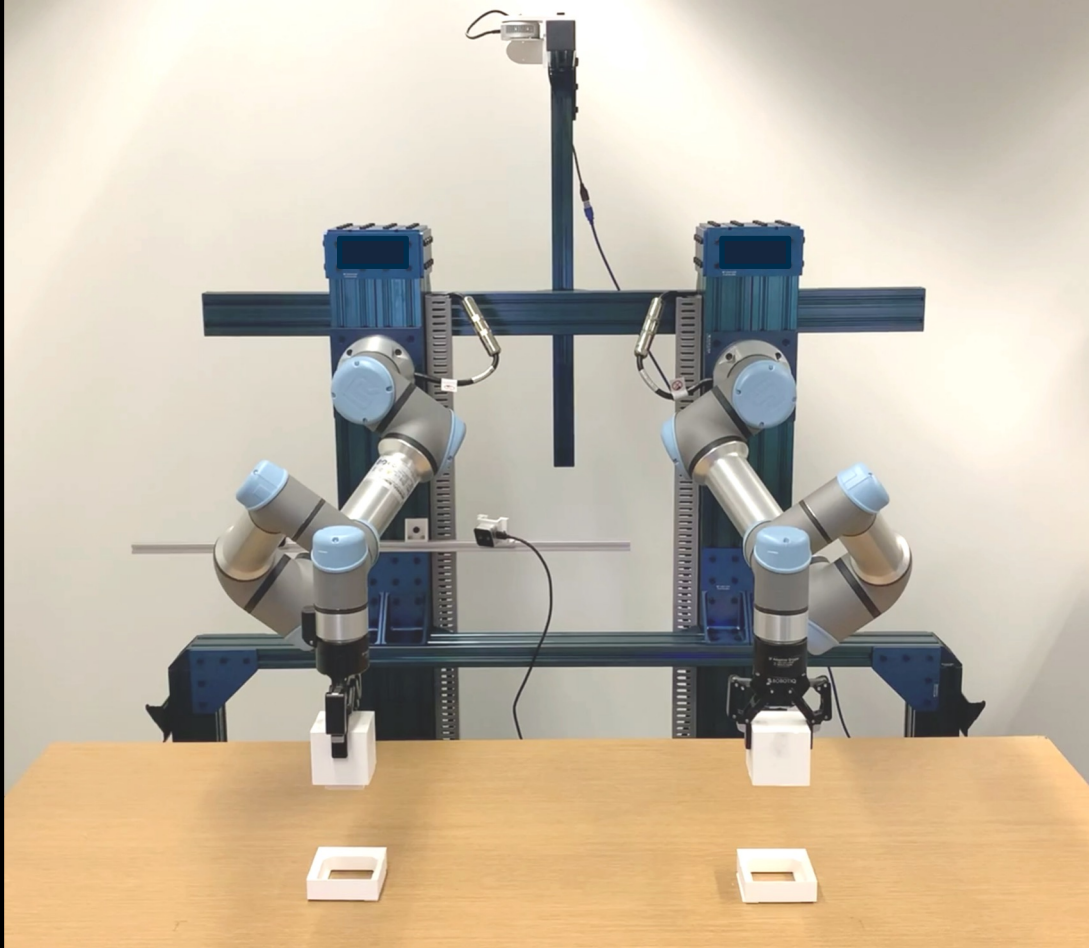


For each episode, objects are picked up with a random grasp variation

Note: the geometrical information is not available to the robot during grasping until seen by the top-view camera



Real world setup for data collection & evaluation



For each episode, objects are picked up with a random grasp variation

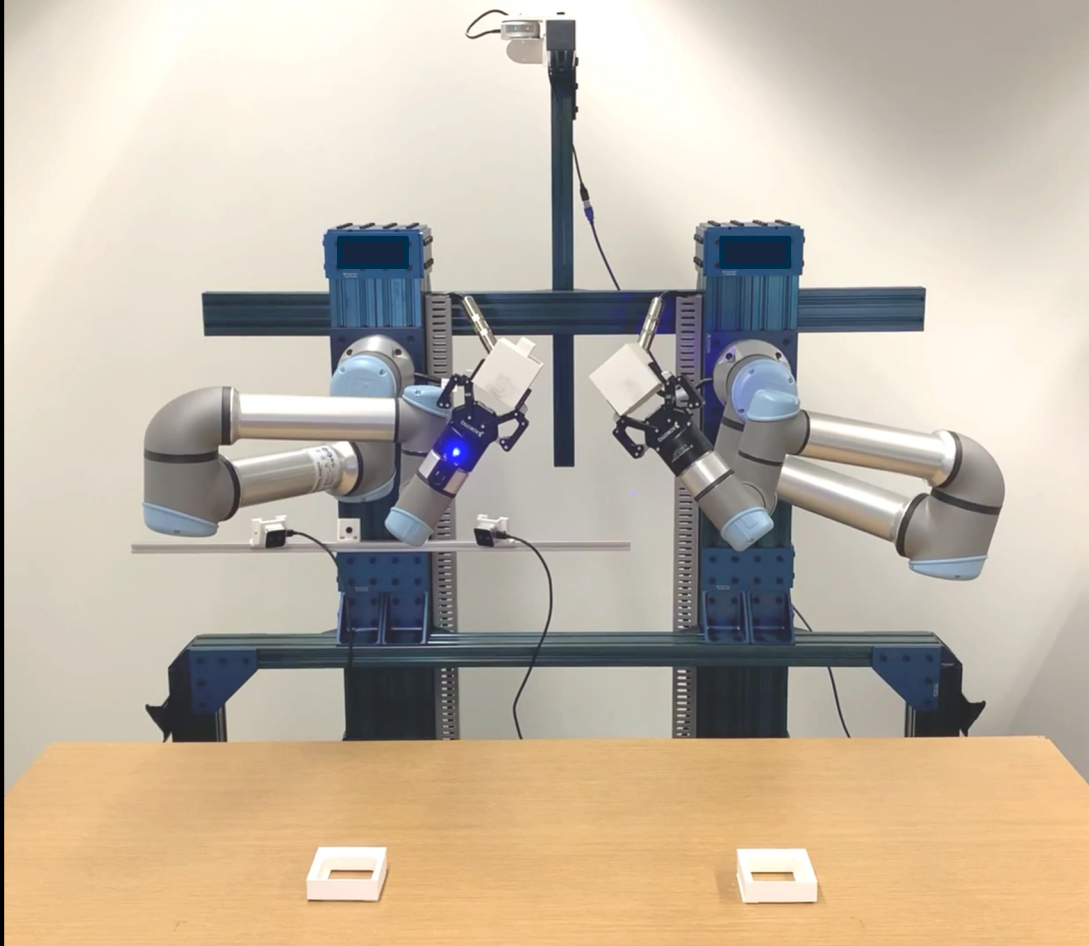
Note: the geometrical information is not available to the robot during grasping until seen by the top-view camera

The object parts are shown to the top-view camera.

Note: the extrusions and intrusions are randomized between left and right grippers



Real world setup for data collection & evaluation



For each episode, objects are picked up with a random grasp variation

Note: the geometrical information is not available to the robot during grasping until seen by the top-view camera

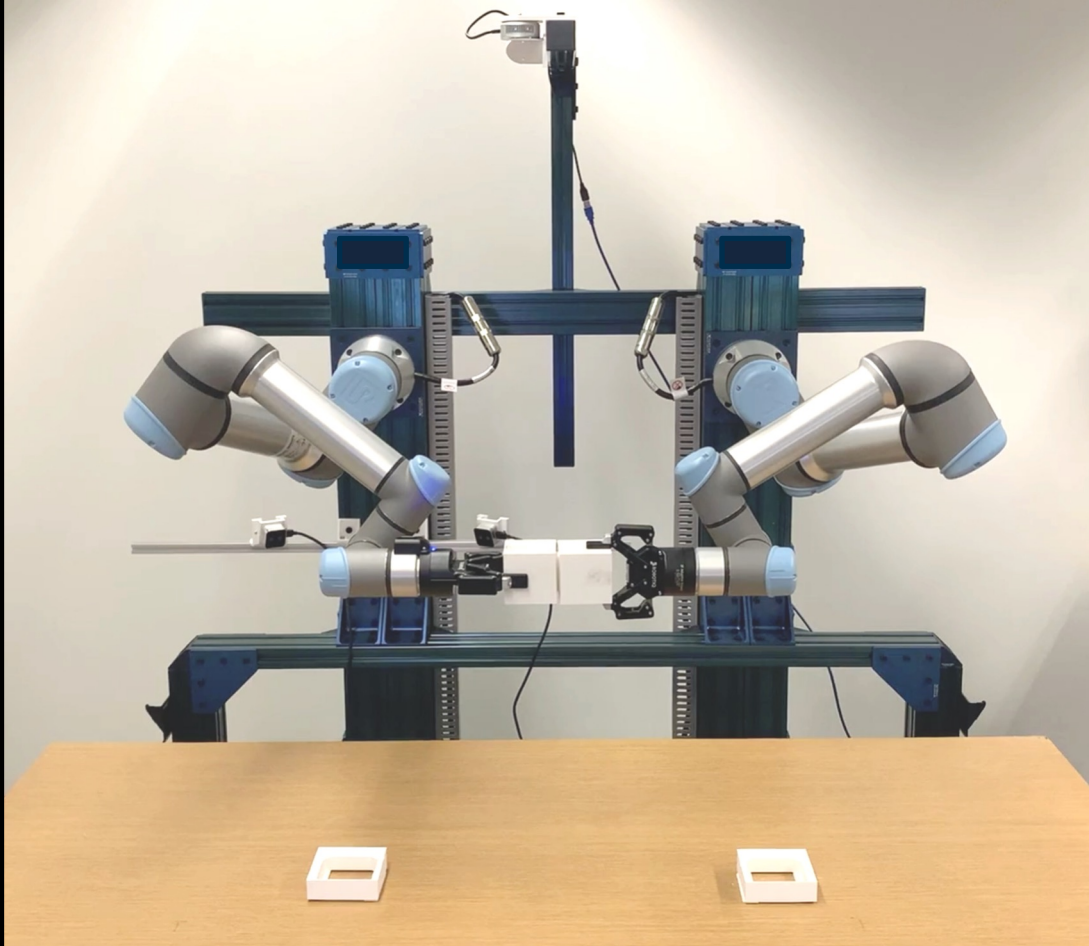
The object parts are shown to the top-view camera.

Note: the extrusions and intrusions are randomized between left and right grippers

Scripted expert trajectories are used to perform the assembly task to collect the demonstrations



Real world setup for data collection & evaluation



For each episode, objects are picked up with a random grasp variation

Note: the geometrical information is not available to the robot during grasping until seen by the top-view camera

The object parts are shown to the top-view camera.

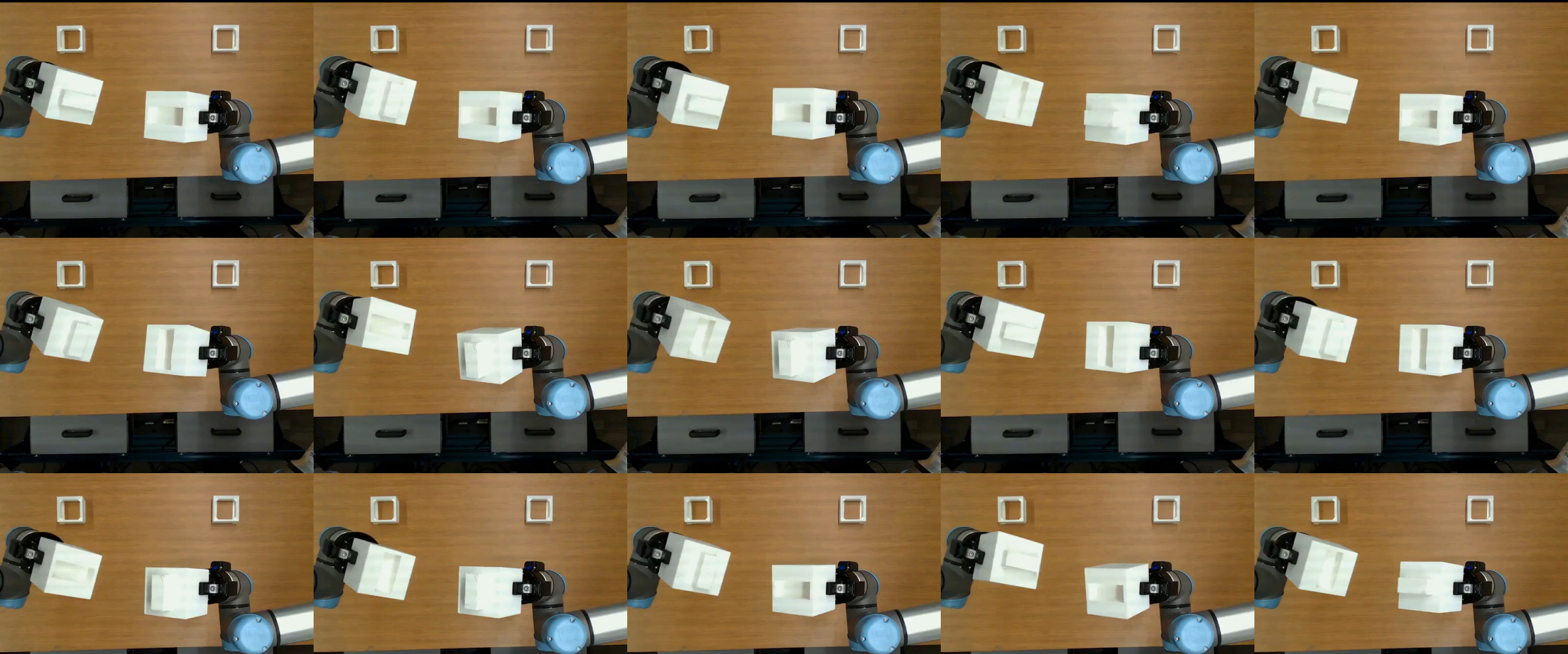
Note: the extrusions and intrusions are randomized between left and right grippers

Scripted expert trajectories are used to perform the assembly task to collect the demonstrations

Object parts are placed back on the supporting wedges before grasping for the next episode in data

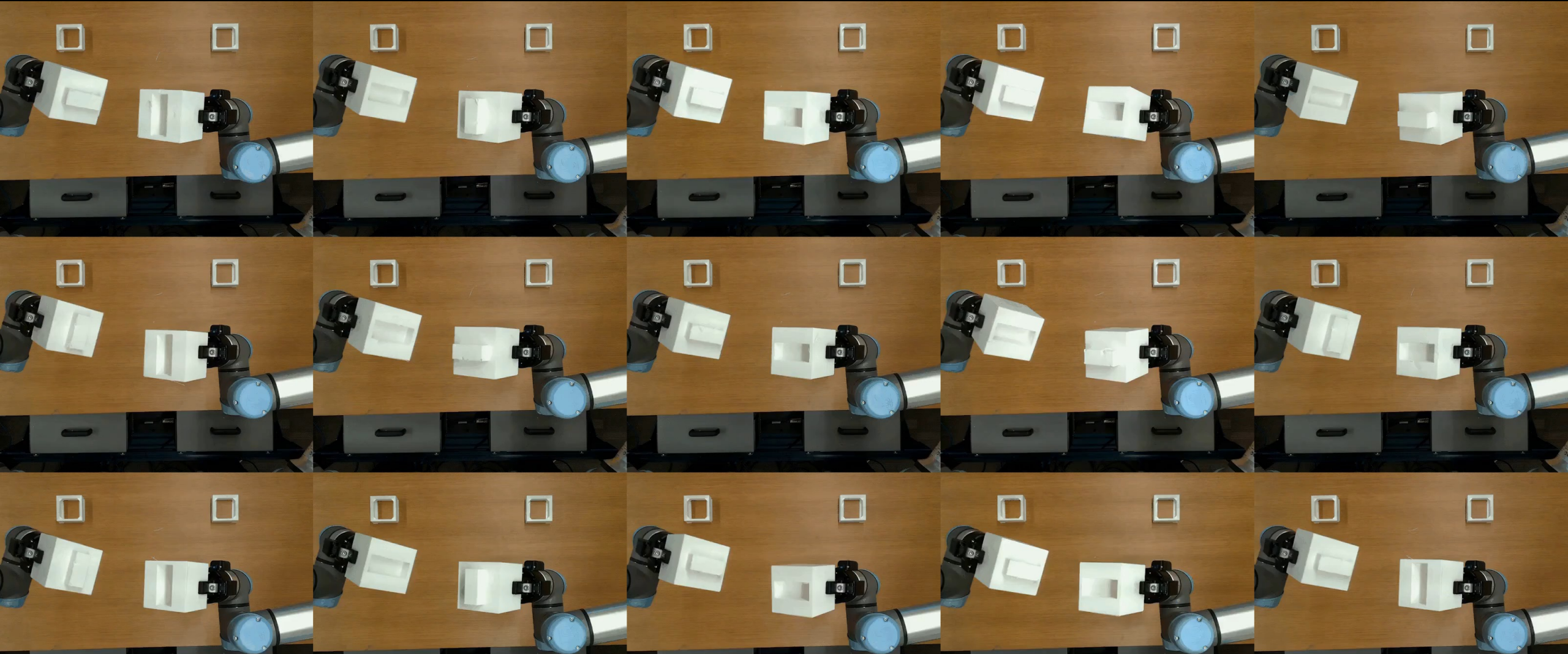


Real World Demonstration Data Examples



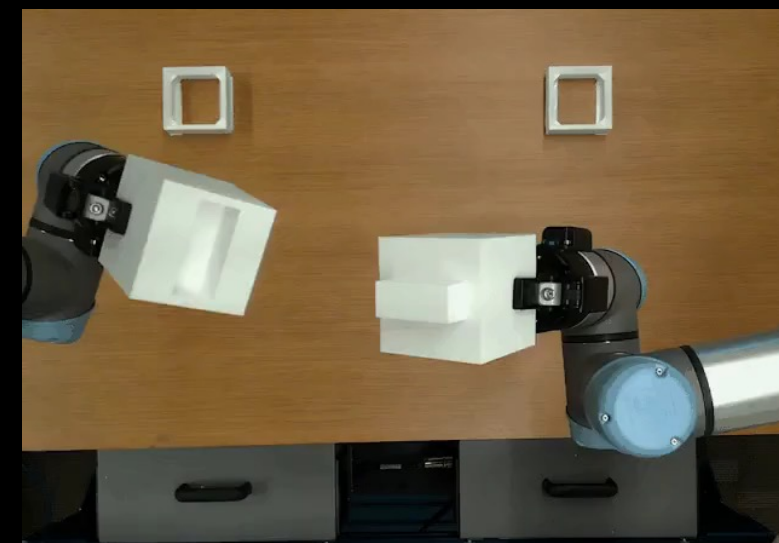
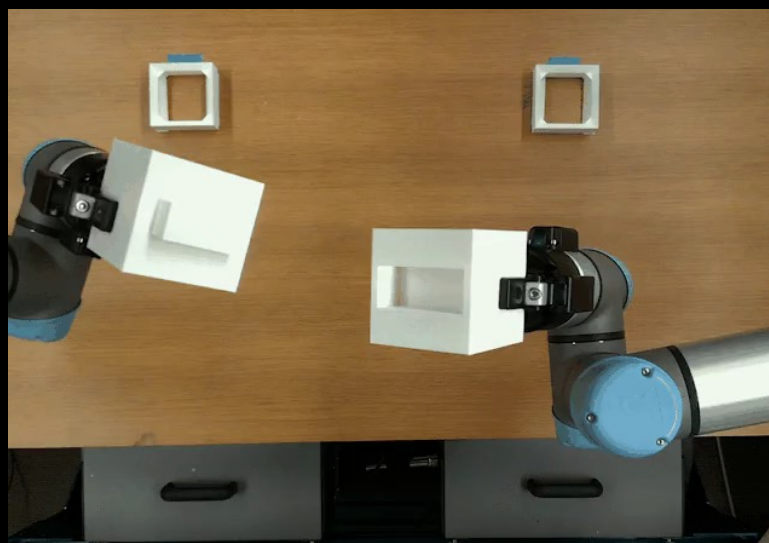
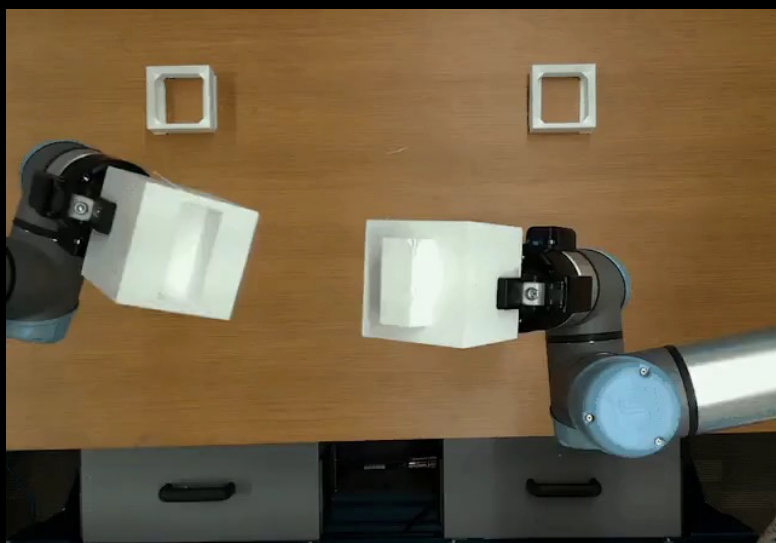
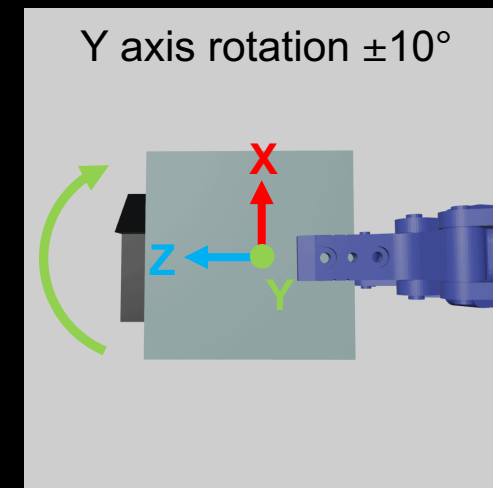
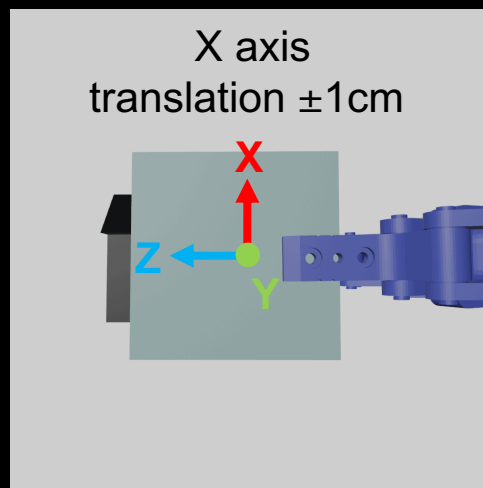
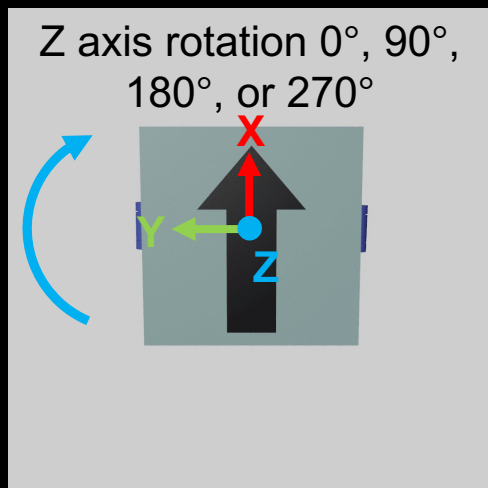
Real World Evaluation

Sampled results from **successful** experiments. Note: real world experiments do not use wrist camera views



Real World Failure Examples

Sampled results from **failed** experiments. One from each grasp variation is shown.



We experimented on a number of things!

- What if we can finetune the pre-trained models?
- What if we give more data?
- How much impact does proprioception have?
- Does object texture help in performance?
- How does the model perform when the geometries are perturbed from the training distribution?

2024 IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA)
May 13-17, 2024. Yokohama, Japan

Evaluating Robustness of Visual Representations for Object Assembly Task Requiring Spatio-Geometrical Reasoning

Chahyon Ku¹, Carl Winge¹, Ryan Diaz¹, Wentao Yuan² and Karthik Desingh¹

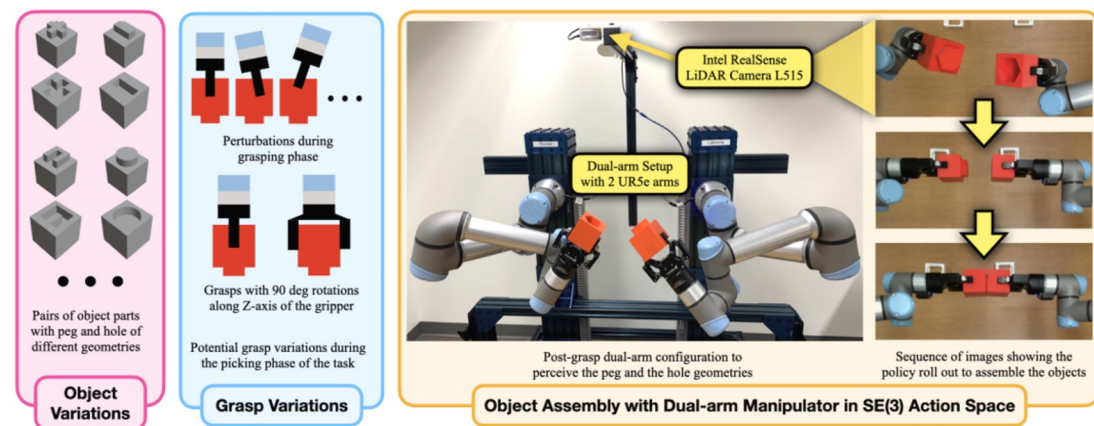


Fig. 1: An overview of our benchmarking setup. Benchmarking robustness under object variations (left) and grasp variations (center) of visual policy learning methods on object assembly task with a dual-arm manipulator in SE(3) action space (right)

We posit that **robots** need representations that can capture **spatio-geometric features** to learn novel-object assembly skills from demonstrations.

- No explicit object-geometric knowledge
- Maybe visual information is good enough ← **Requires F/T sensing**
- Maybe pretrained visual representations are good enough to give us these features.

Not necessarily true due to distributional shift

AugInsert: Learning Robust Visual-Force Policies via Data Augmentation for Object Assembly Tasks

Ryan Diaz¹, Adam Imdieke¹, Vivek Veeriah², Karthik Desingh¹

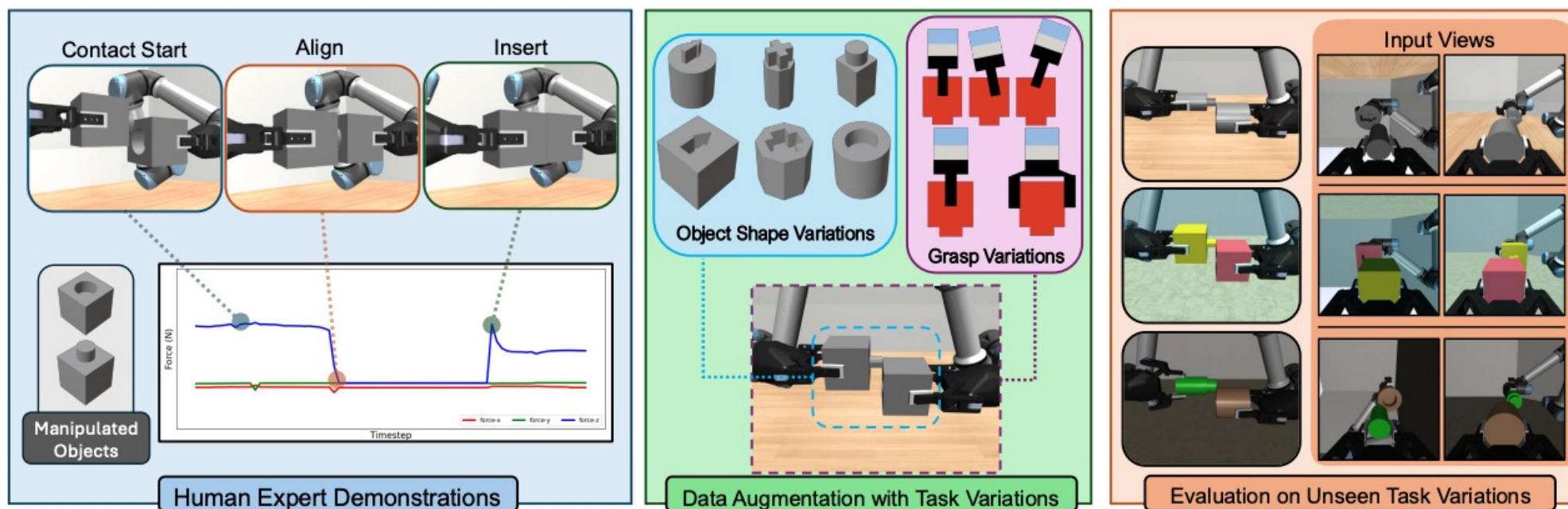
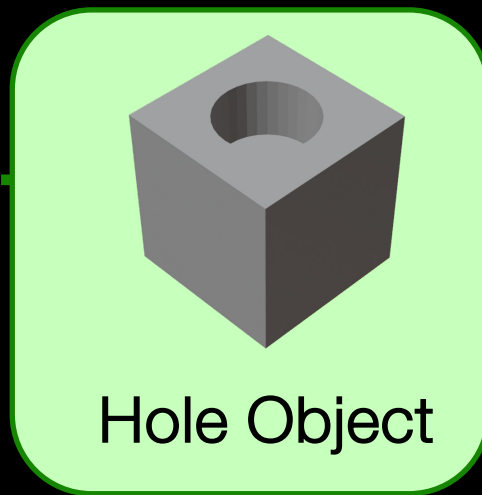
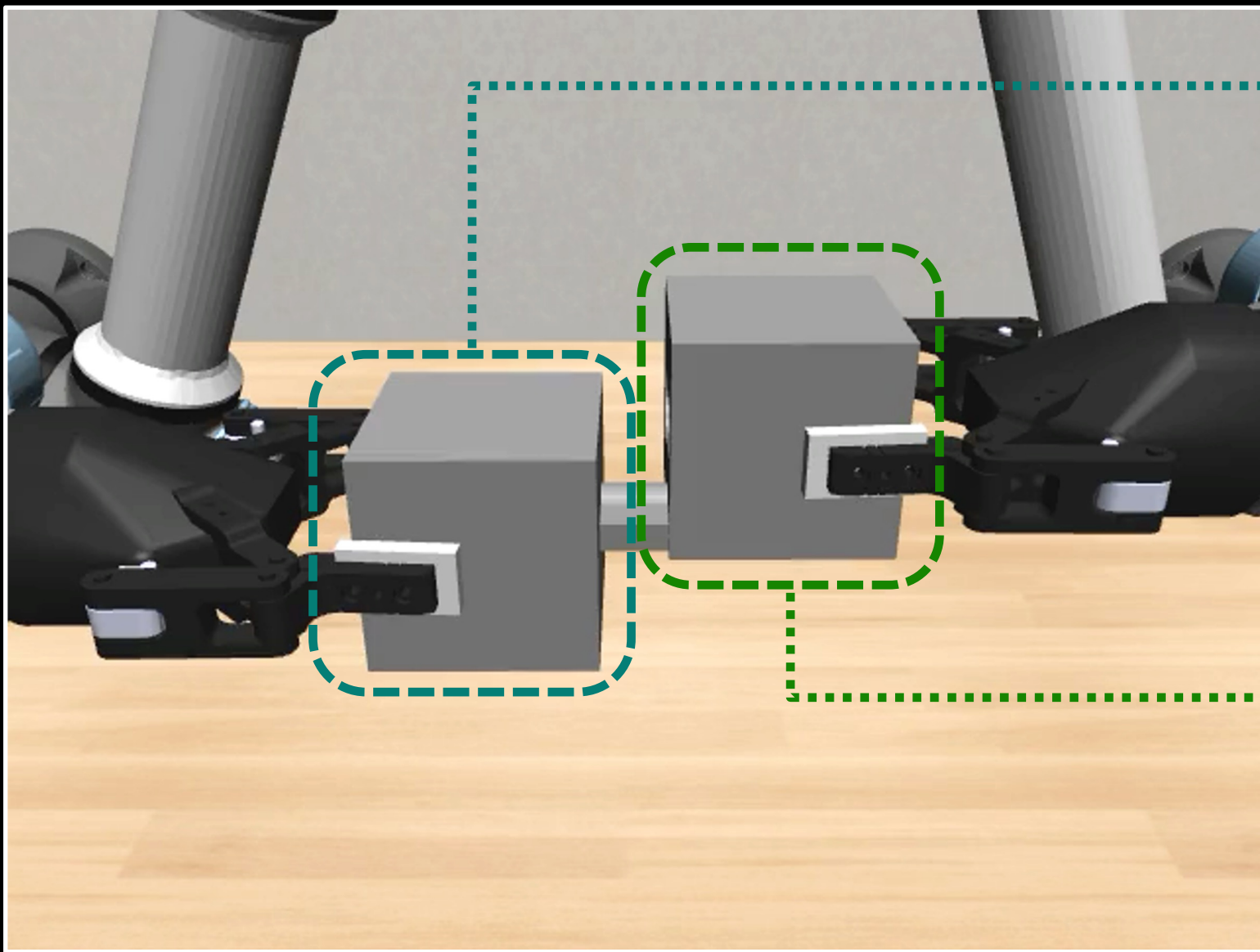
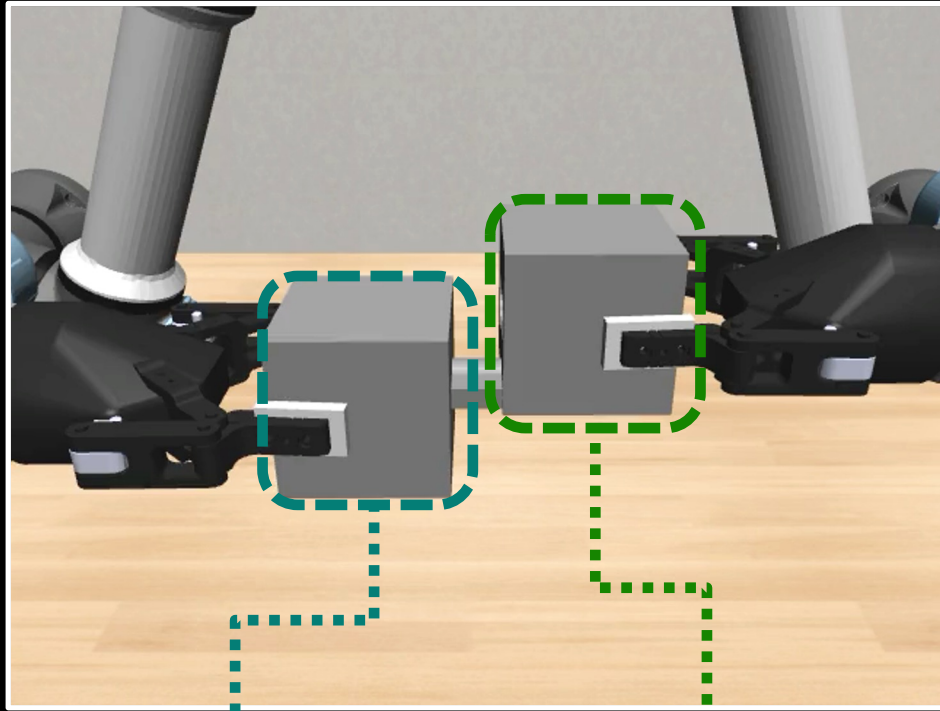


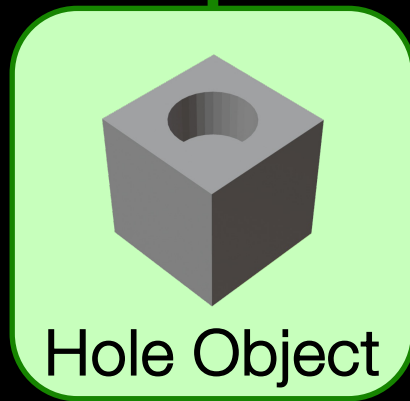
Fig. 1: AugInsert is a data collection and policy evaluation pipeline aimed towards analyzing the robustness of a multisensory (vision, force-torque, and proprioception) model with respect to different observation-level task variations in object shape, grasp pose, and visual environmental appearance. Our framework introduces task variations to a dataset of human-collected demonstrations through a system of online data augmentation.



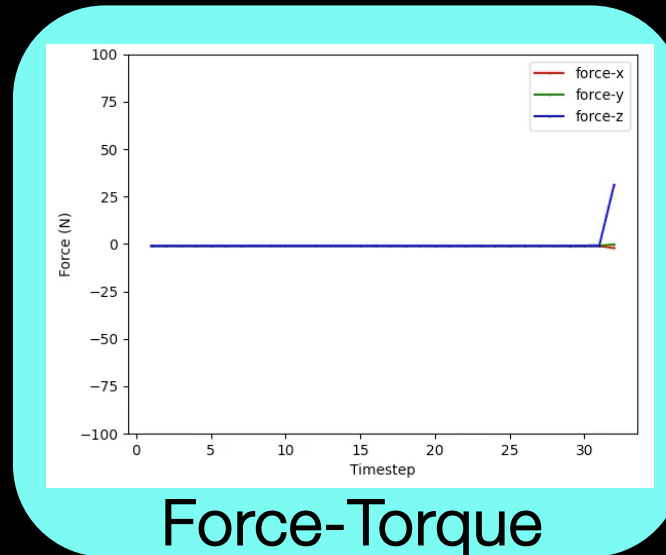
Sensory Inputs



Peg Object



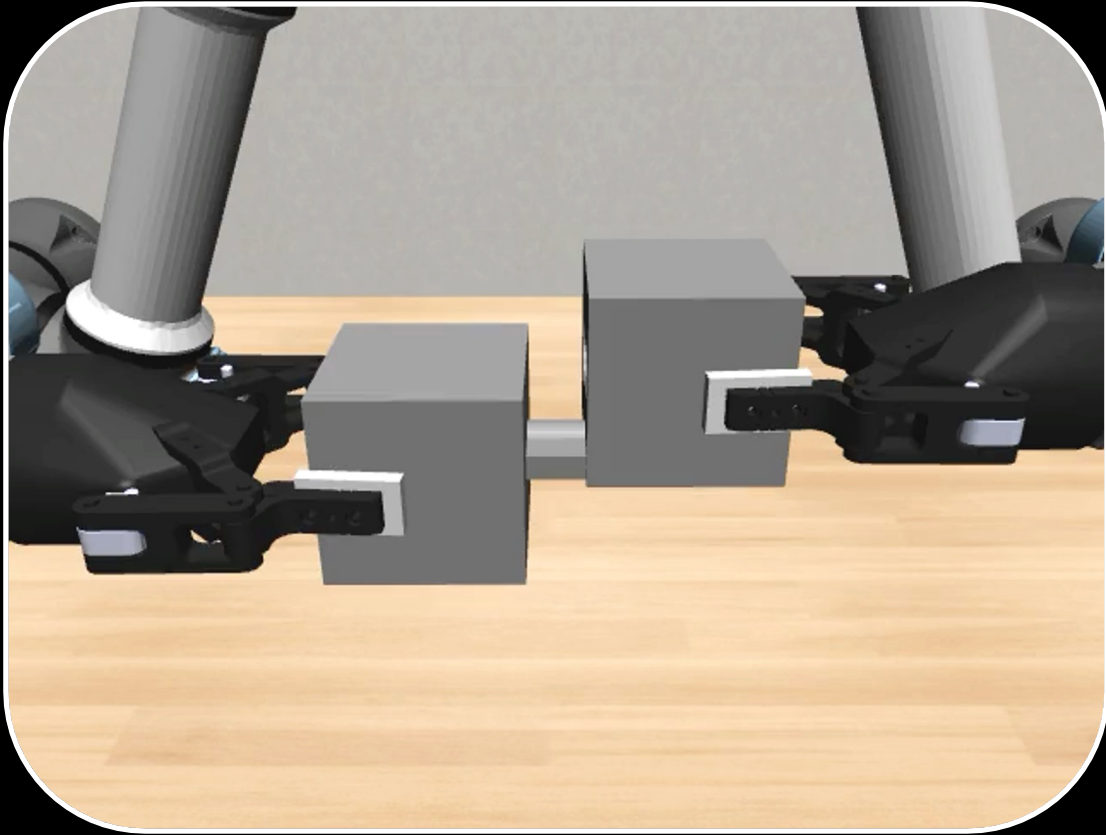
Hole Object



Force-Torque

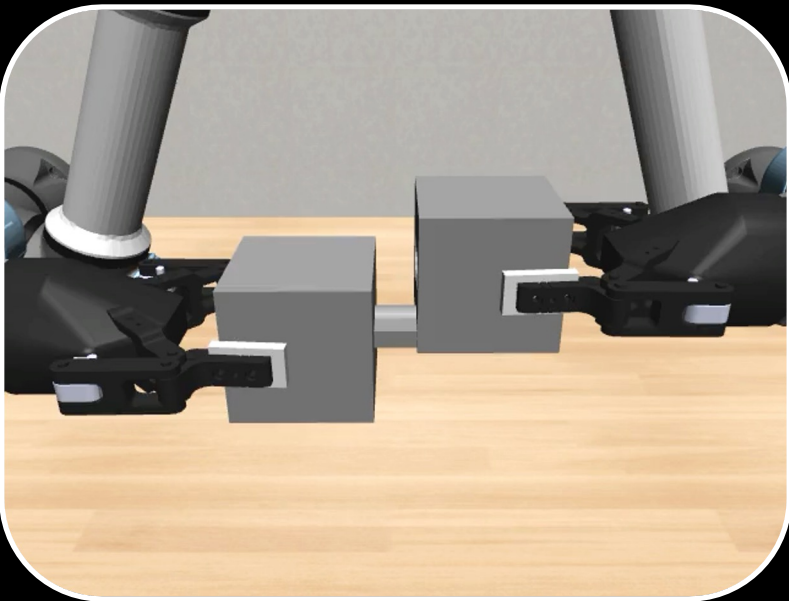
Proprioception
End-Effector Poses

Canonical (no variations)

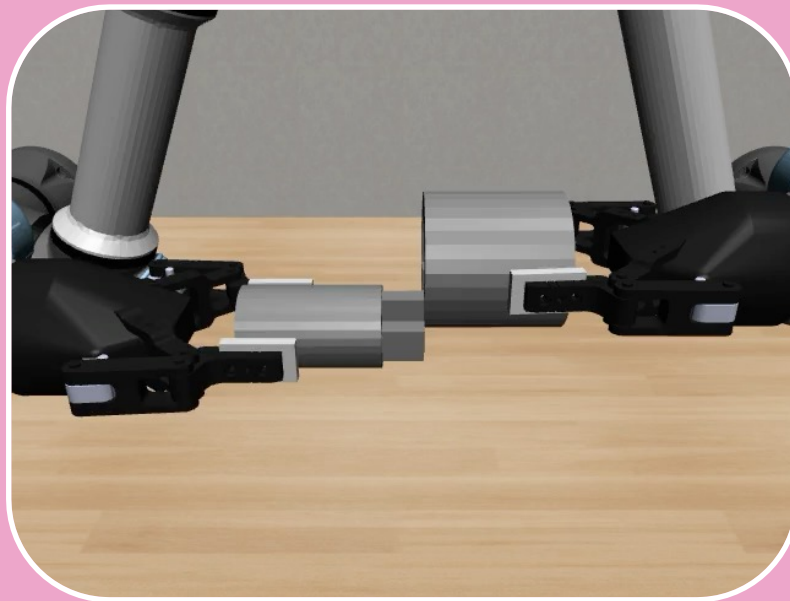


Introduce observation-level task variations

Canonical

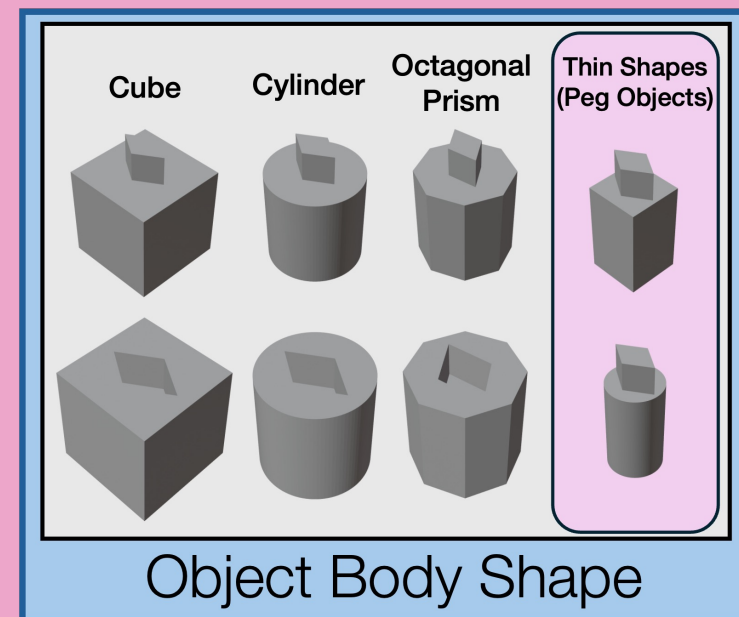
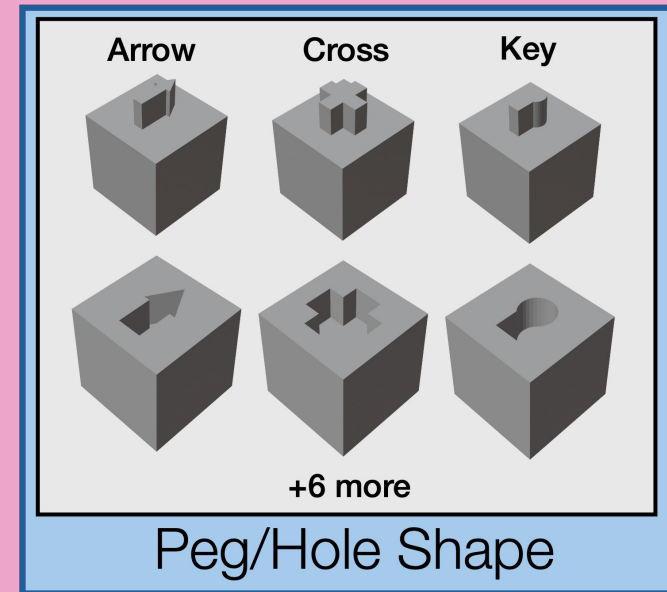


Task Variation

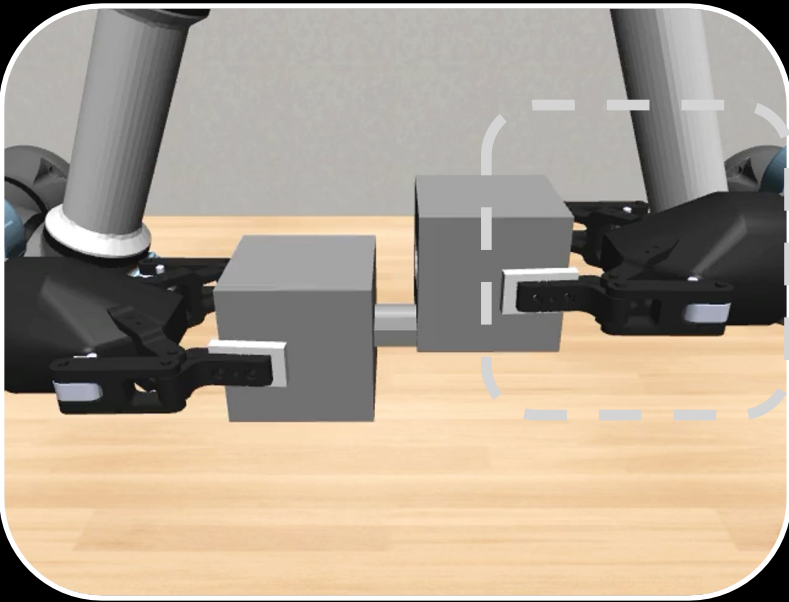


9 peg/hole shapes
6 object body shapes
(3 full size, 3 thin)

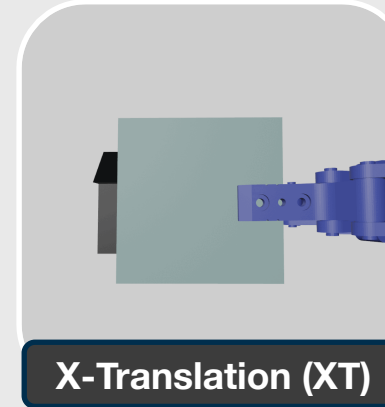
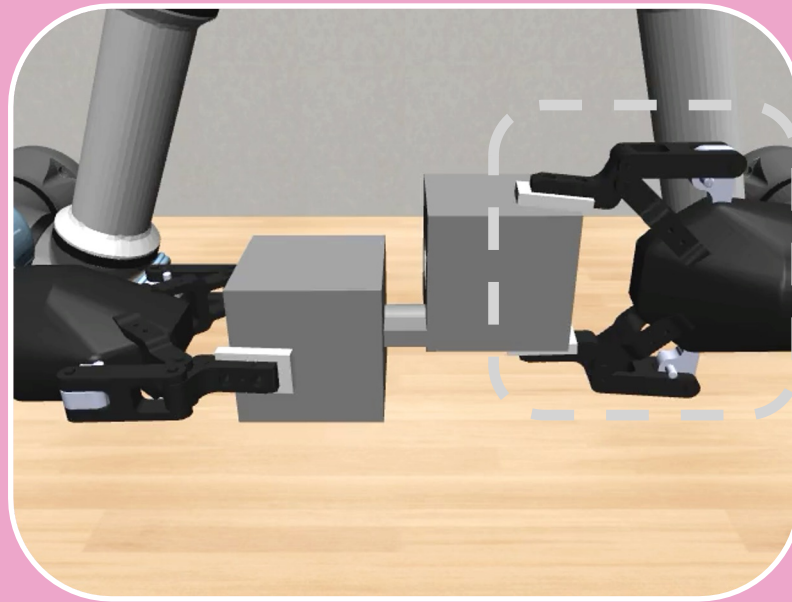
54 total object shapes



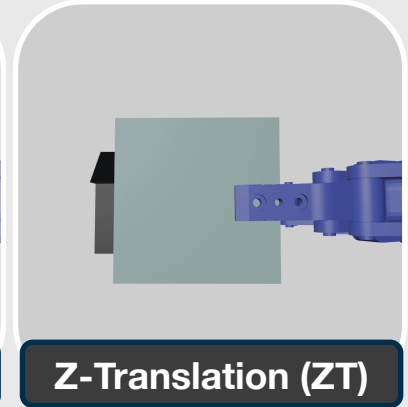
Canonical



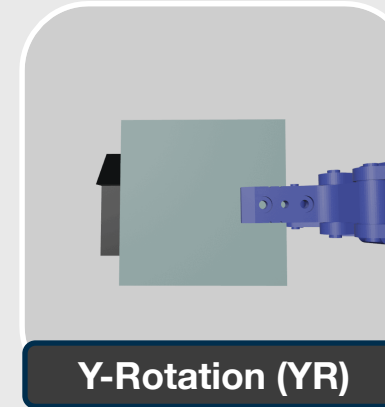
Task Variation



X-Translation (XT)



Z-Translation (ZT)



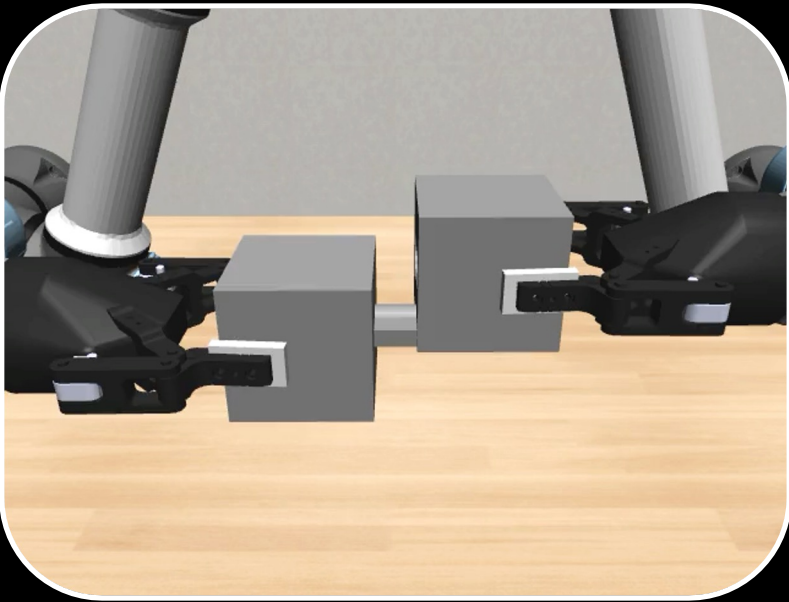
Y-Rotation (YR)



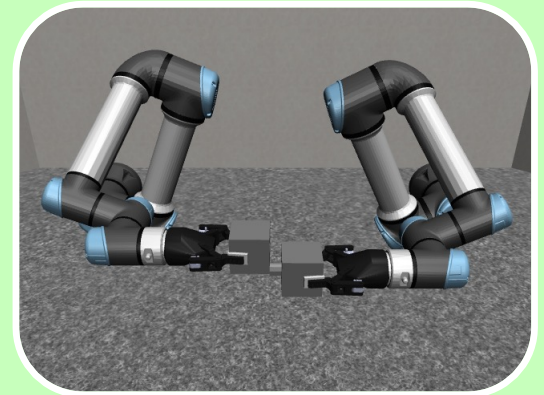
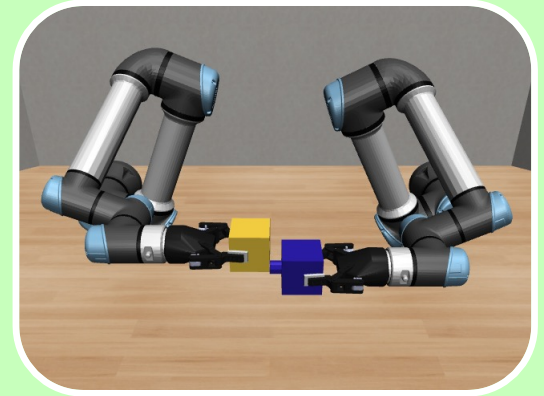
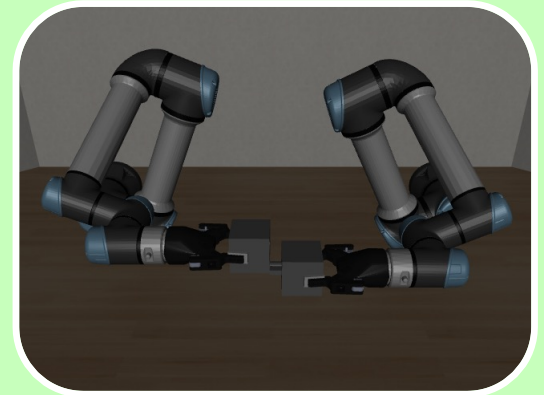
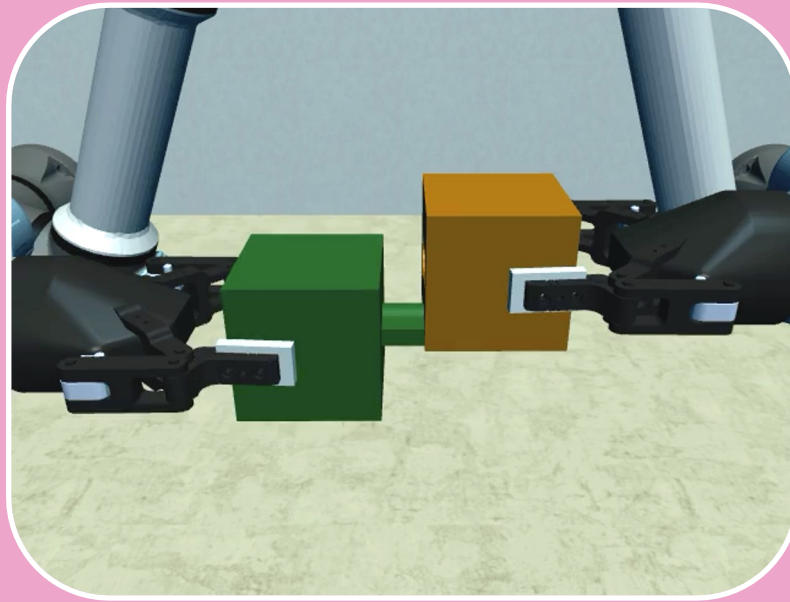
Z-Rotation (ZR)

Grasp Pose

Canonical



Task Variation

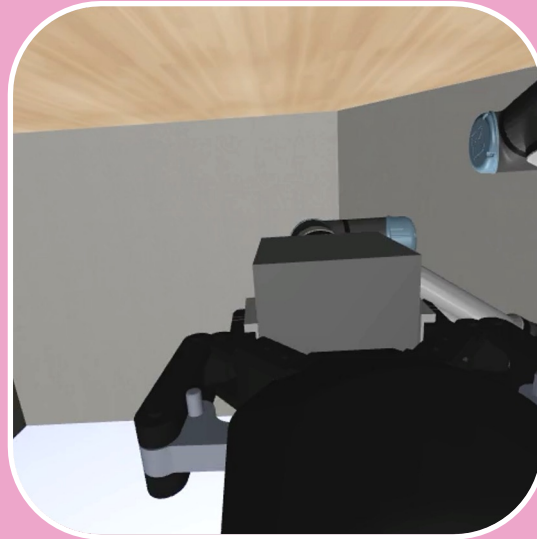
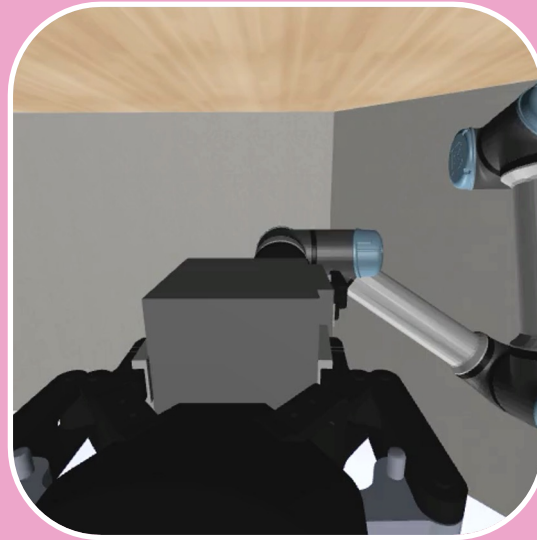


Scene Appearance

Canonical

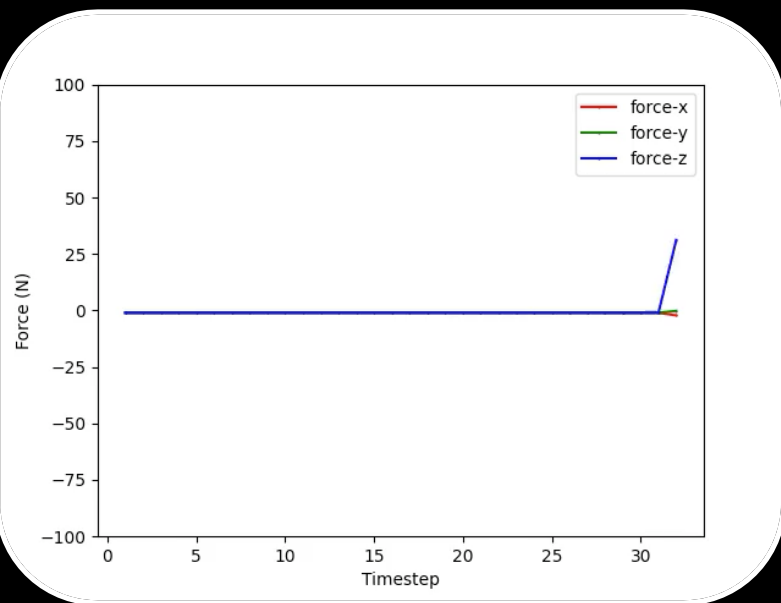


Task Variation

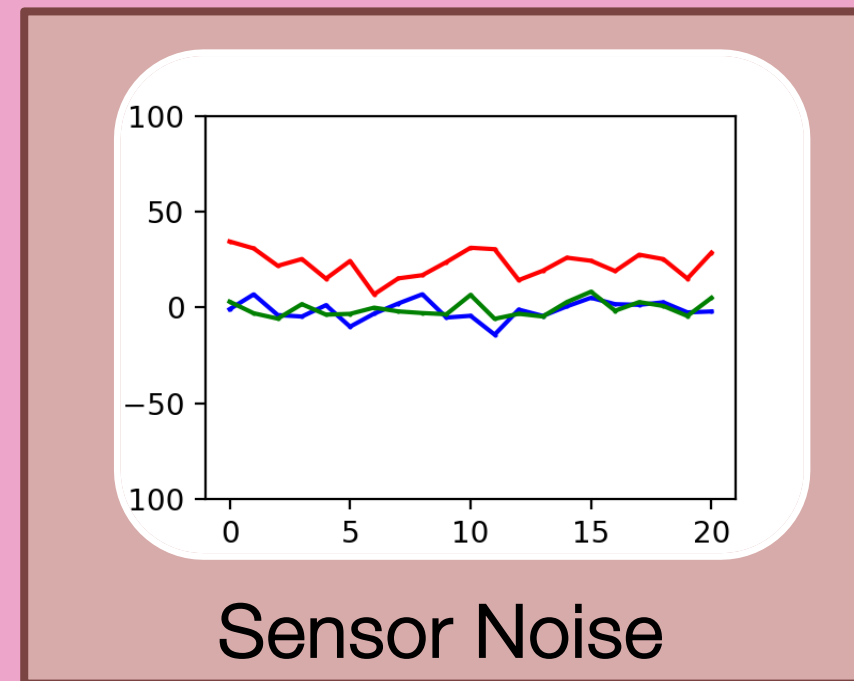
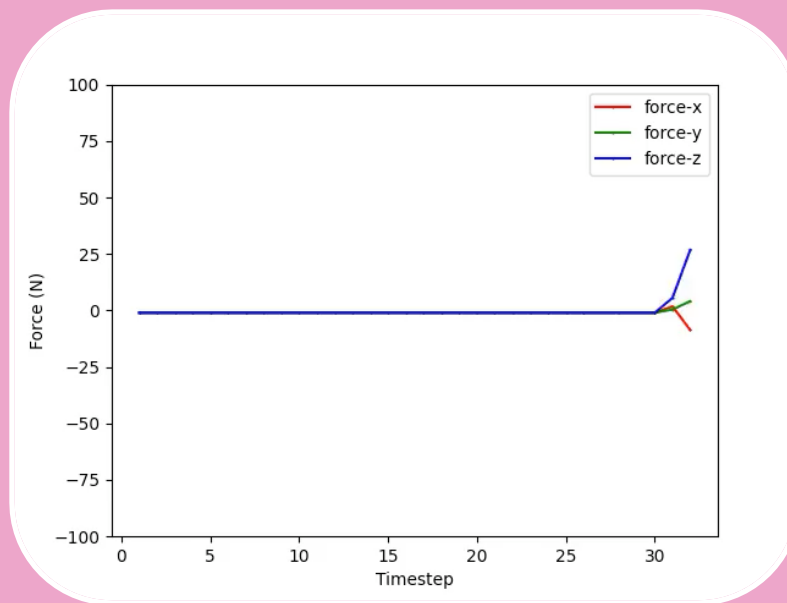


Camera Angle

Canonical



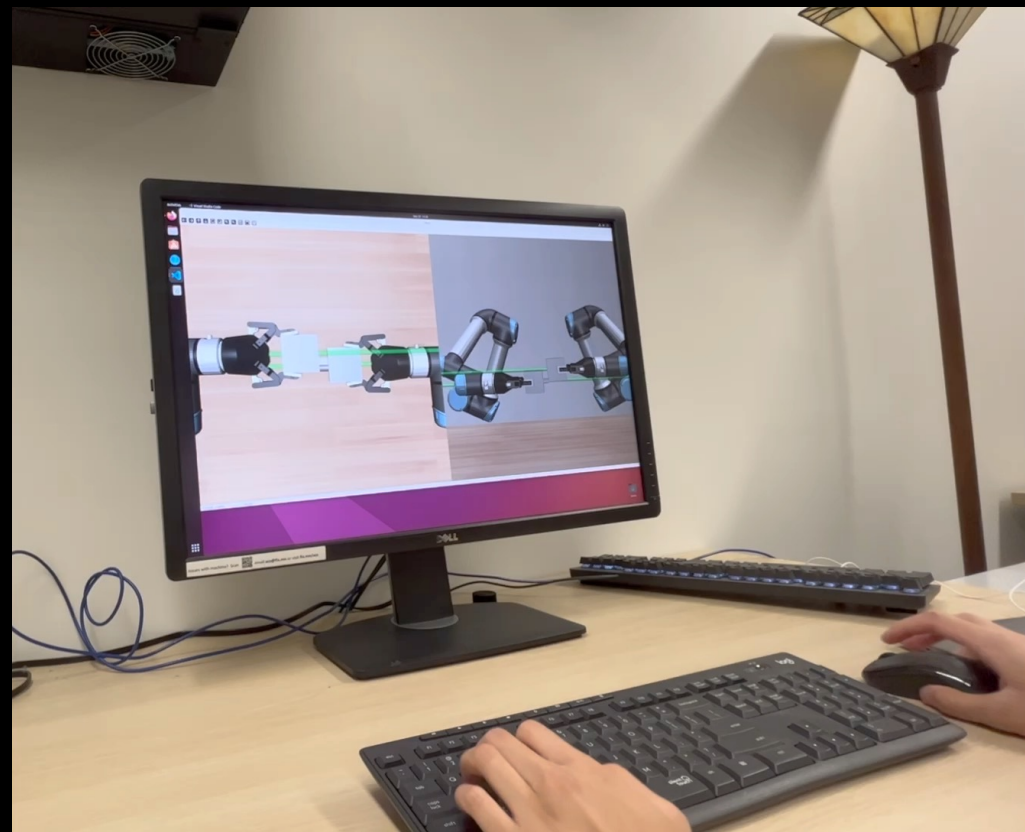
Task Variation



Sensor Noise

Data Collection

Teleoperated demonstrations collected in “canonical” (no variations) environment

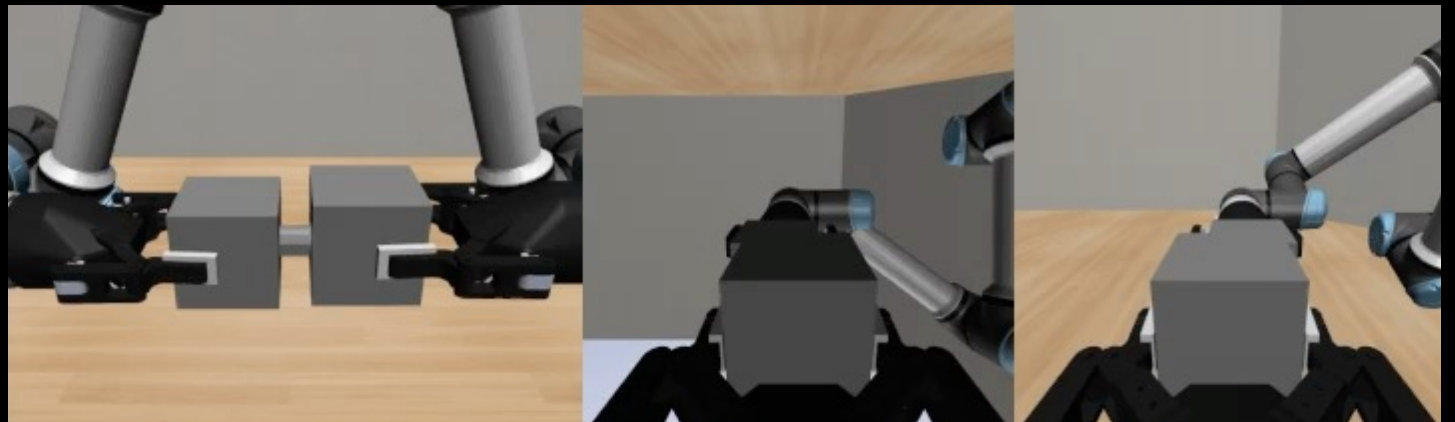


Video sped up x5



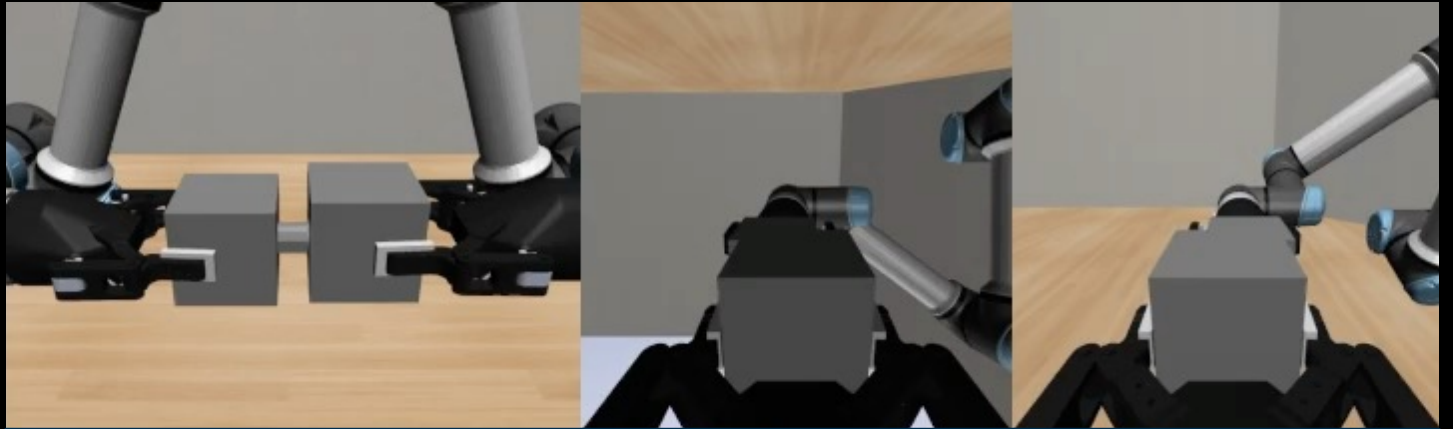
Video sped up x4

Human Demos

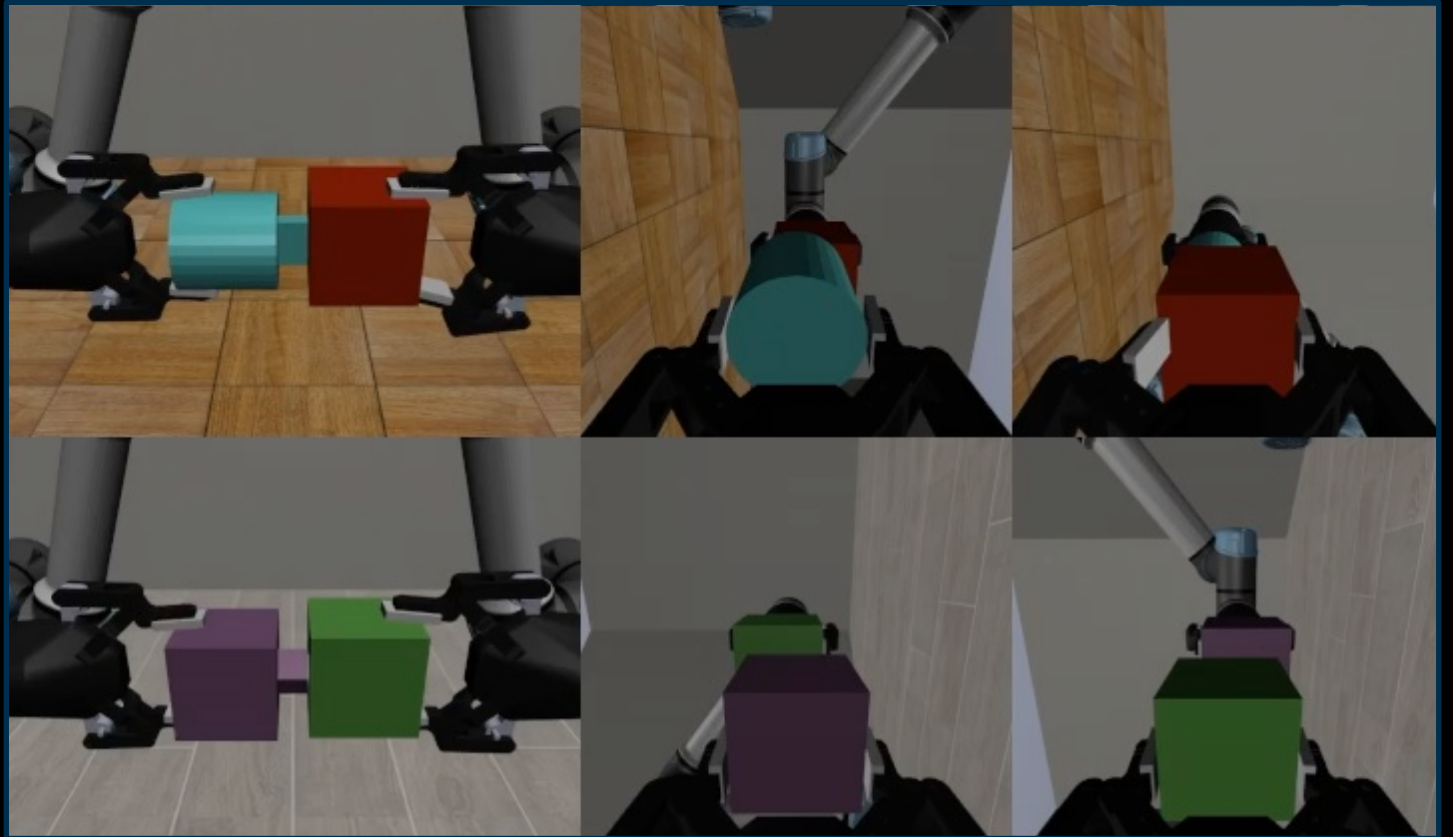


Video sped up x5

Human Demos



Data Augmentation



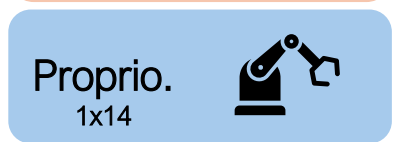
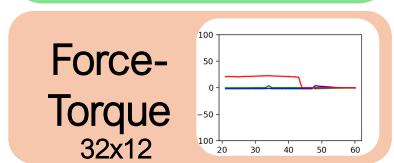
Data Collection

Online data augmentation via trajectory replay on environments with task variations applied

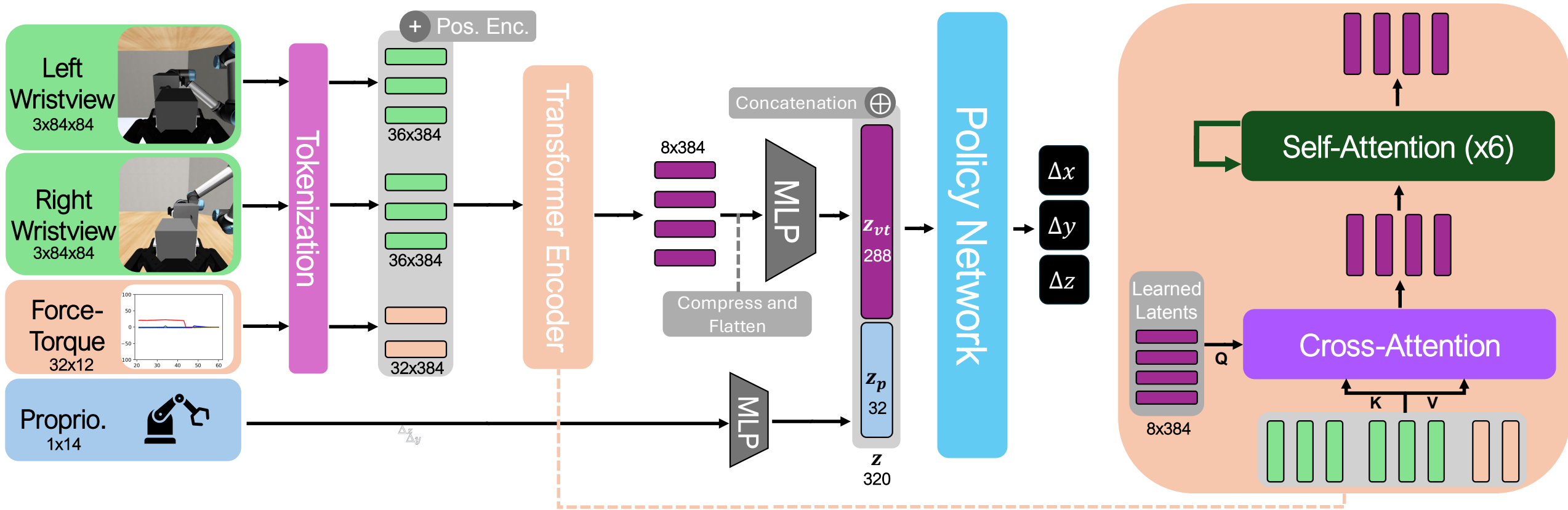


Model Architecture

Model Architecture



Model Architecture

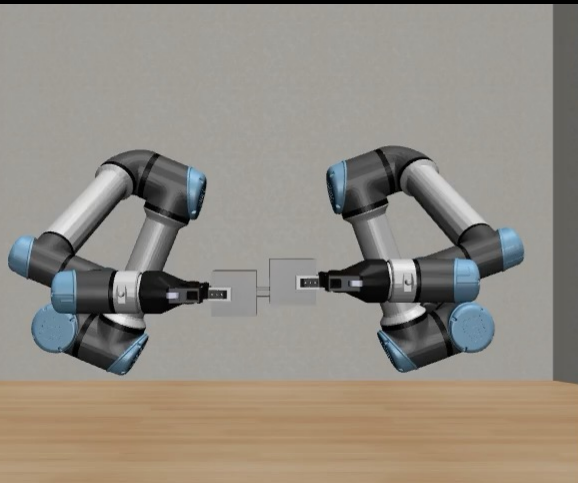


Feed output embedding into MLP policy network, predict actions

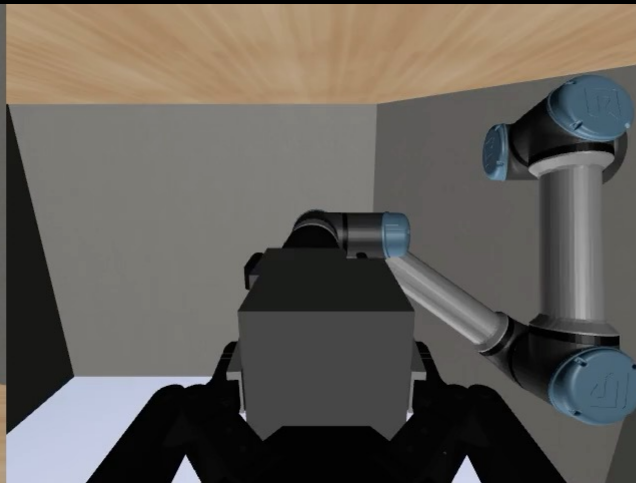


Policy Trained on No Variations

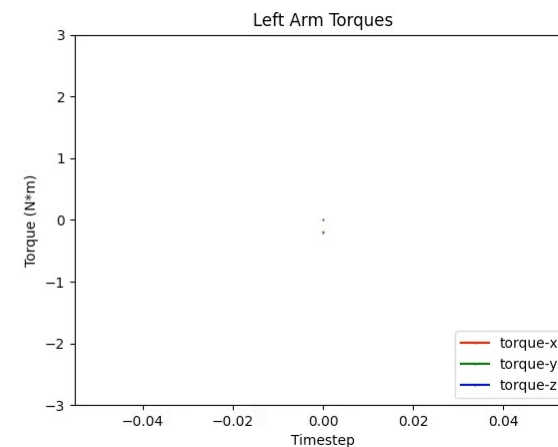
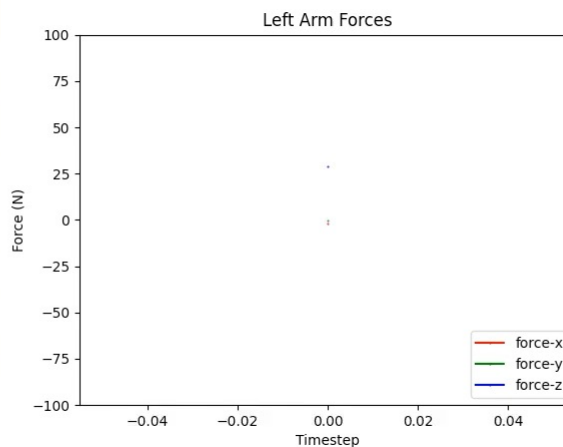
Frontview
(Visualization)



Wristview
(Part of Policy Input)

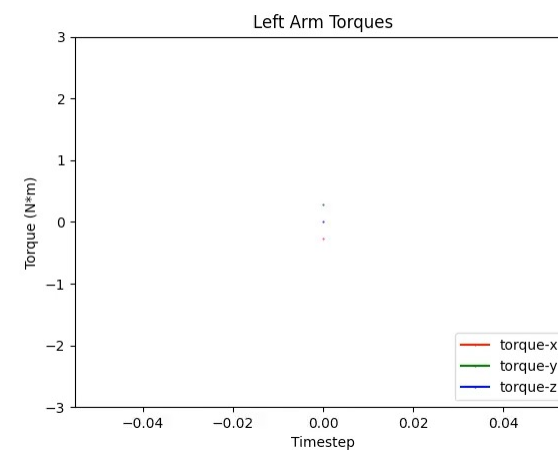
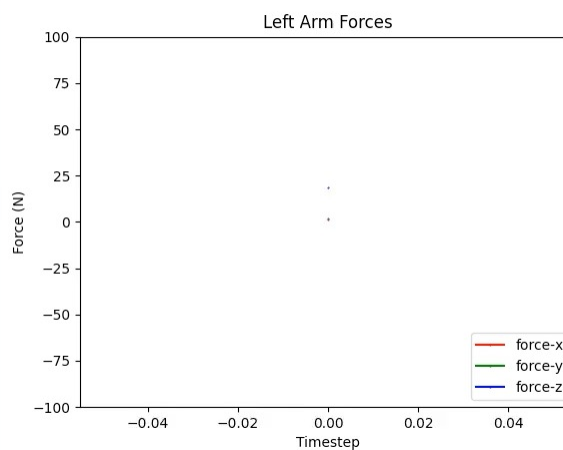
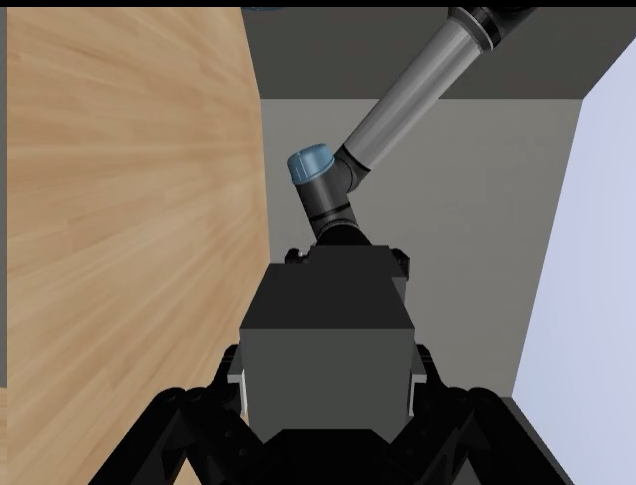
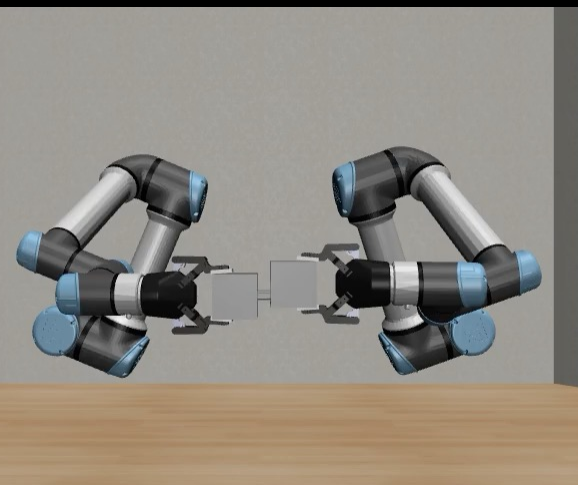


Force-Torque
(Part of Policy Input)



Rollouts in *Canonical* environment: **0.980** mean success rate*

*Success rates over 50 rollouts averaged over 6 training seeds

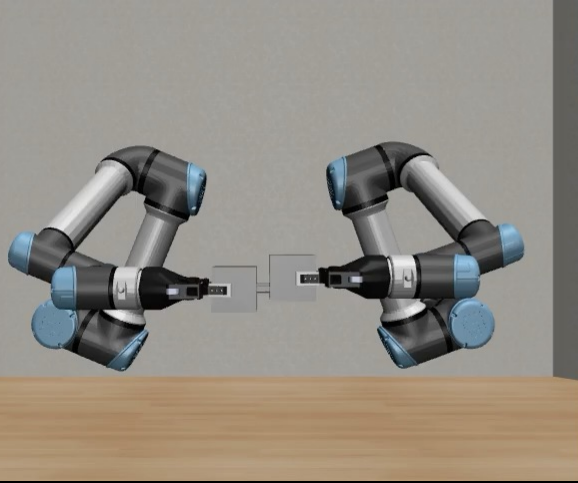


Rollouts in *Grasp Pose* environment: **0.060** mean success rate*

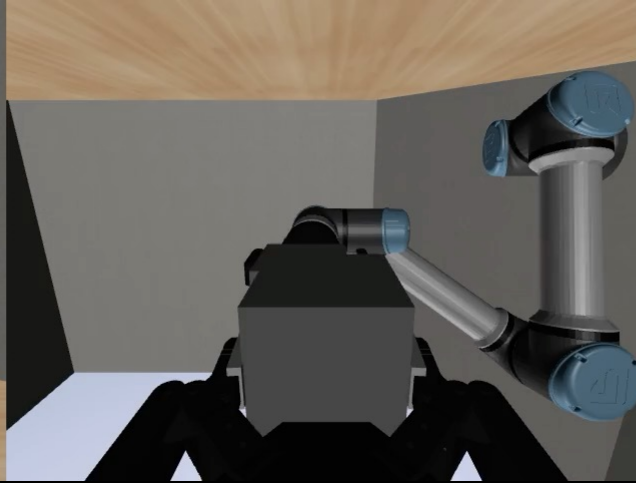
Videos sped up x5

Policy Trained on Visual Variations + Sensor Noise

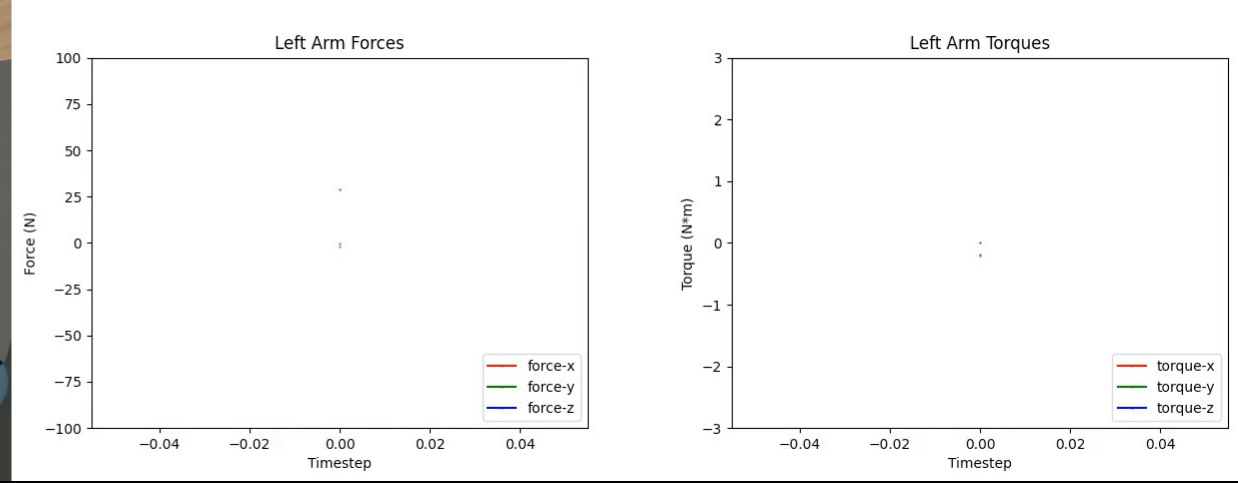
Frontview
(Visualization)



Wristview
(Part of Policy Input)

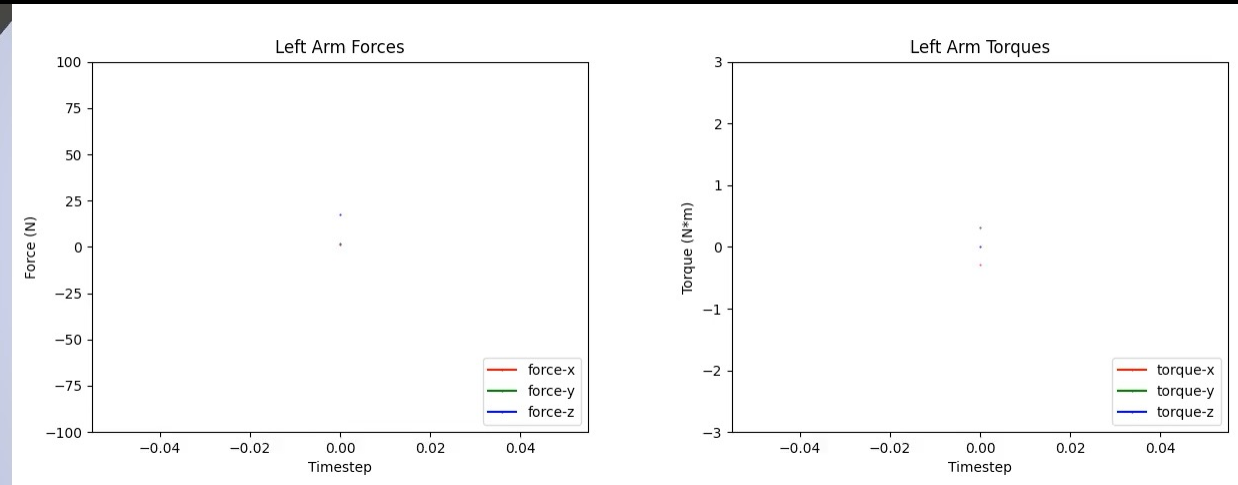
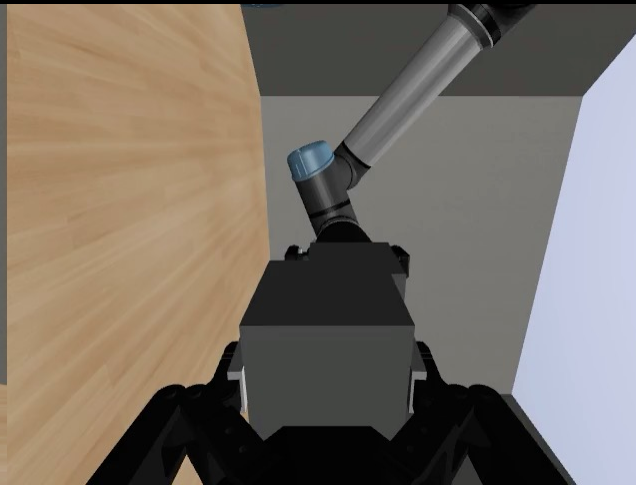
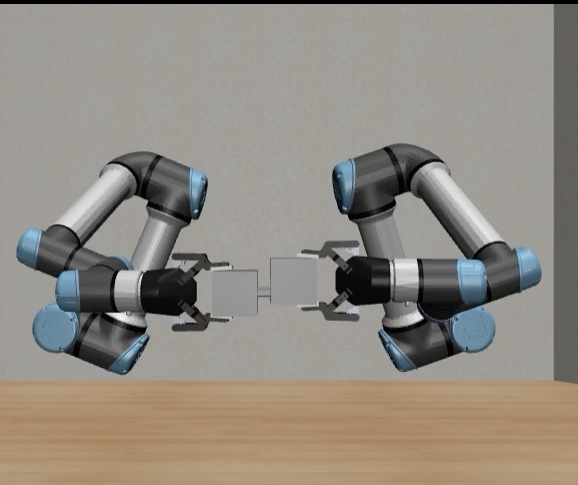


Force-Torque
(Part of Policy Input)



Rollouts in *Canonical* environment: **0.973** mean success rate*

*Success rates over 50 rollouts averaged over 6 training seeds

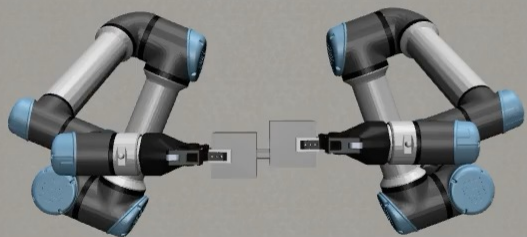


Rollouts in *Grasp Pose* environment: **0.173** mean success rate*

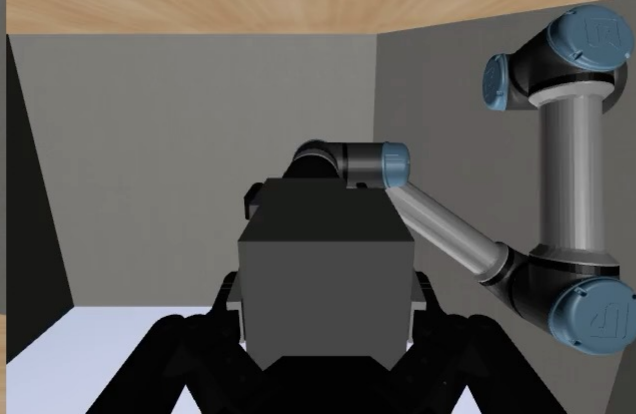
Videos sped up x5

Policy Trained on Object Shape + Grasp Variations

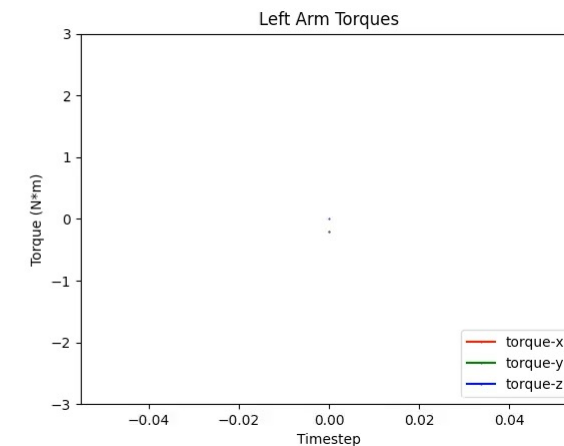
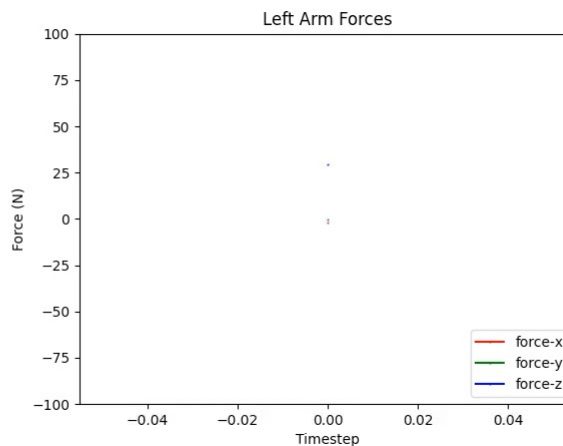
Frontview
(Visualization)



Wristview
(Part of Policy Input)

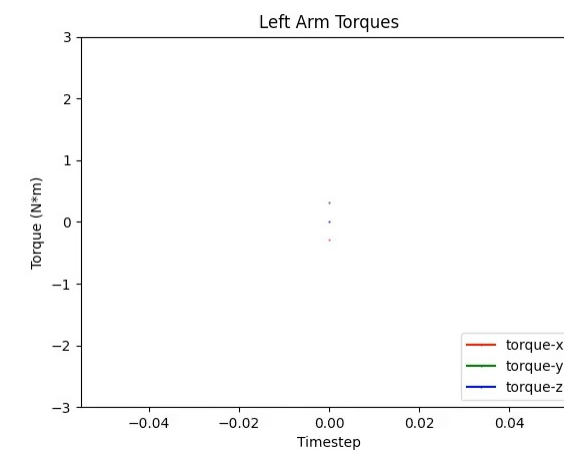
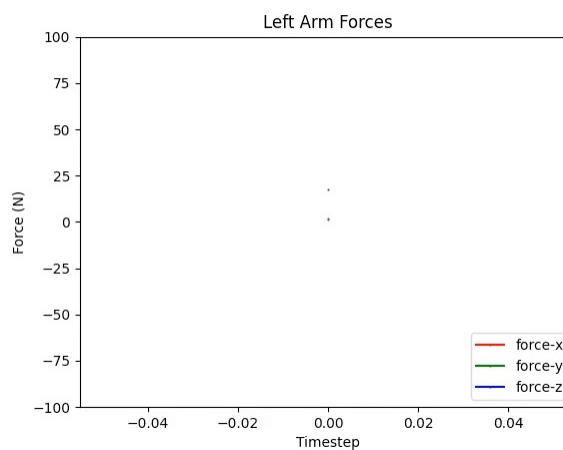
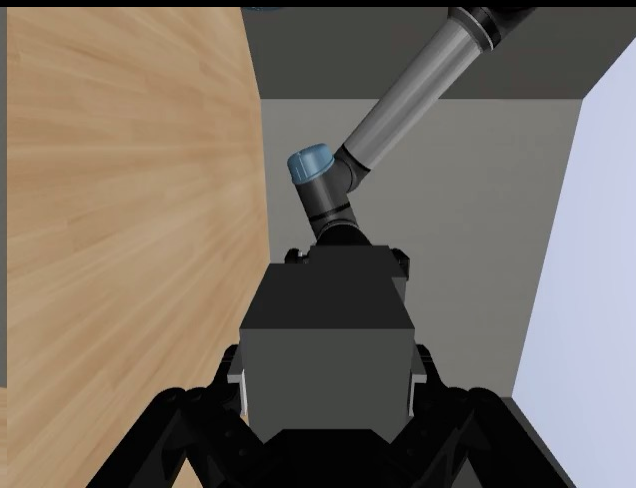
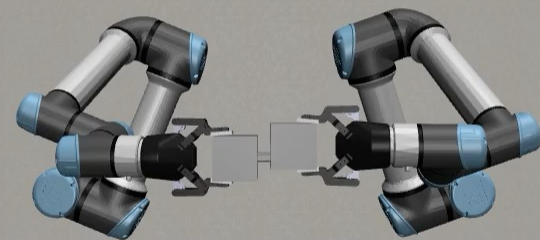


Force-Torque
(Part of Policy Input)



Rollouts in *Canonical* environment: **0.957** mean success rate*

*Success rates over 50 rollouts averaged over 6 training seeds

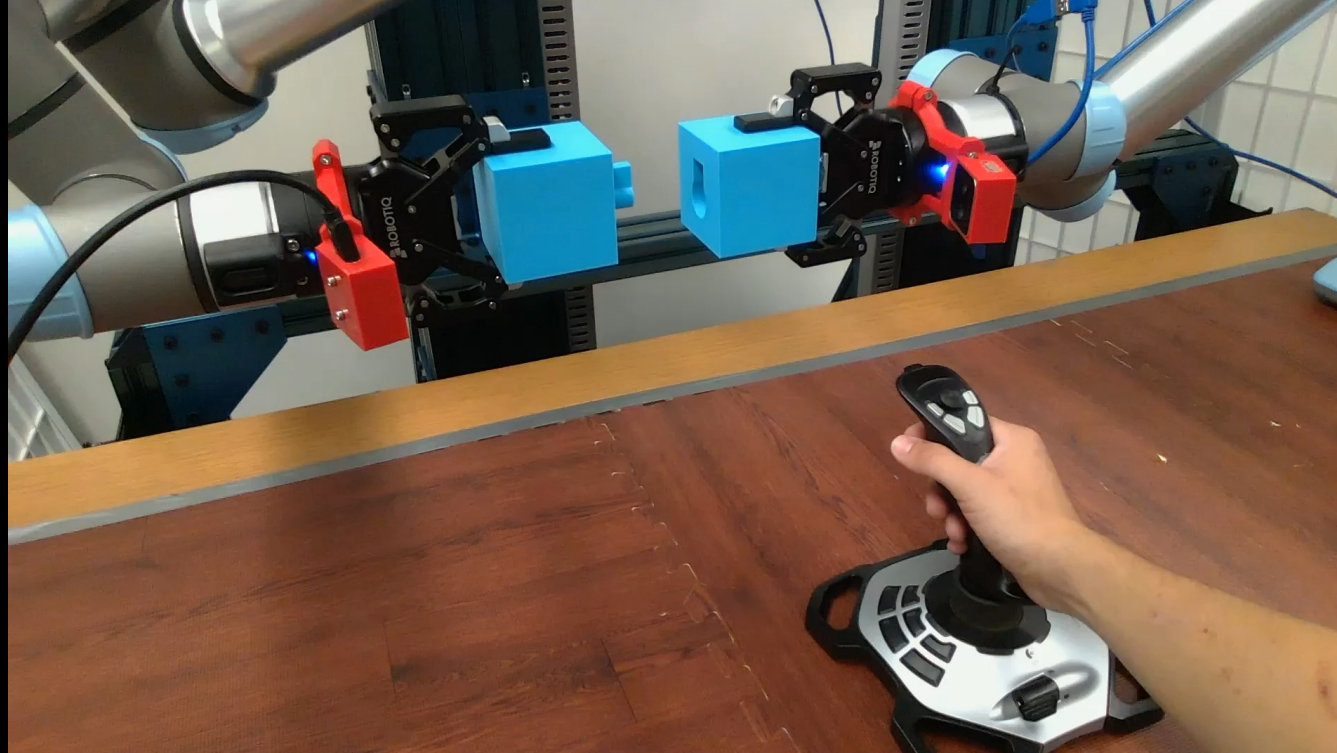


Rollouts in *Grasp Pose* environment: **0.620** mean success rate*

Videos sped up x5

Real World Data Collection

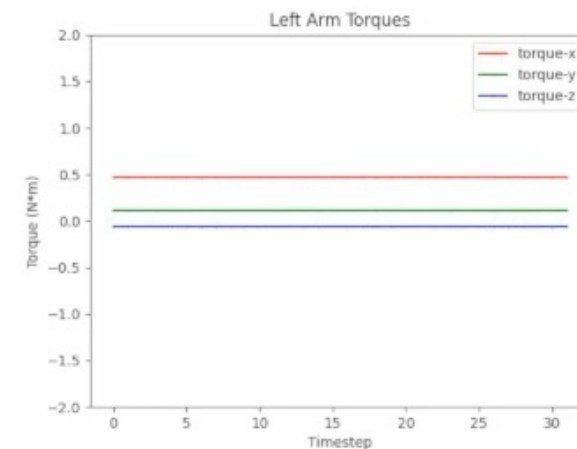
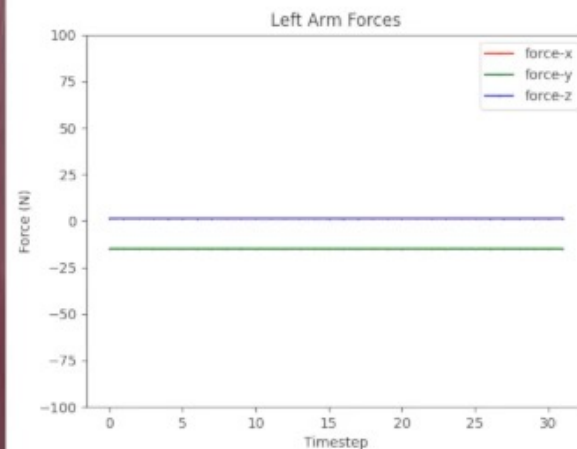
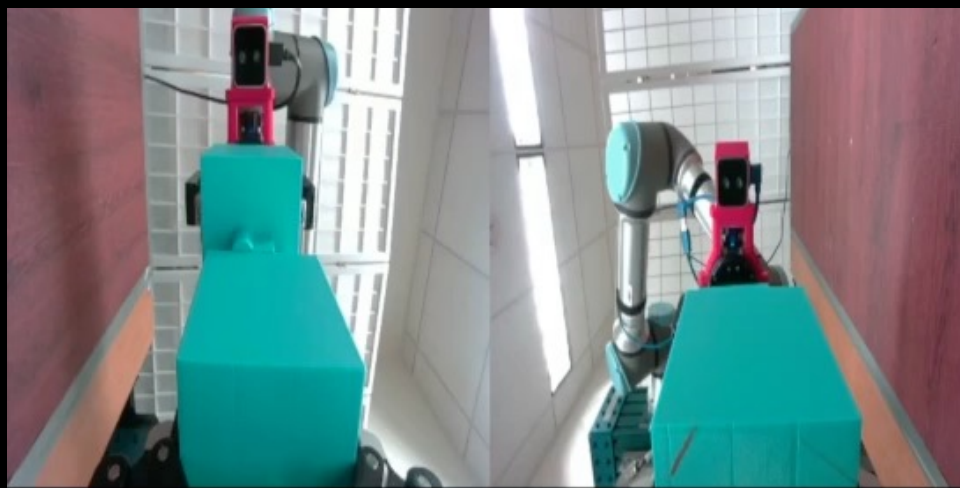
Teleoperated demonstrations collected in “canonical” (no variations) environment



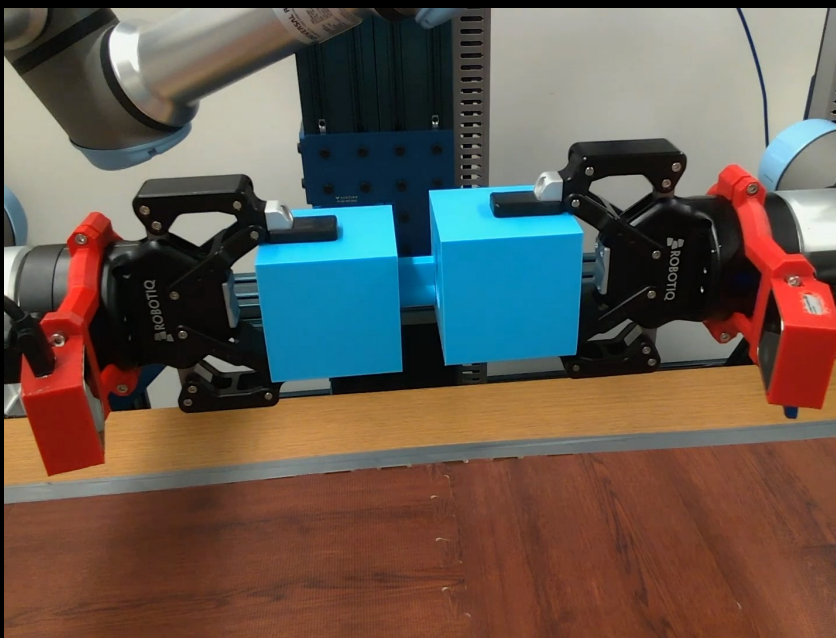
Videos sped up x4



Human Demos

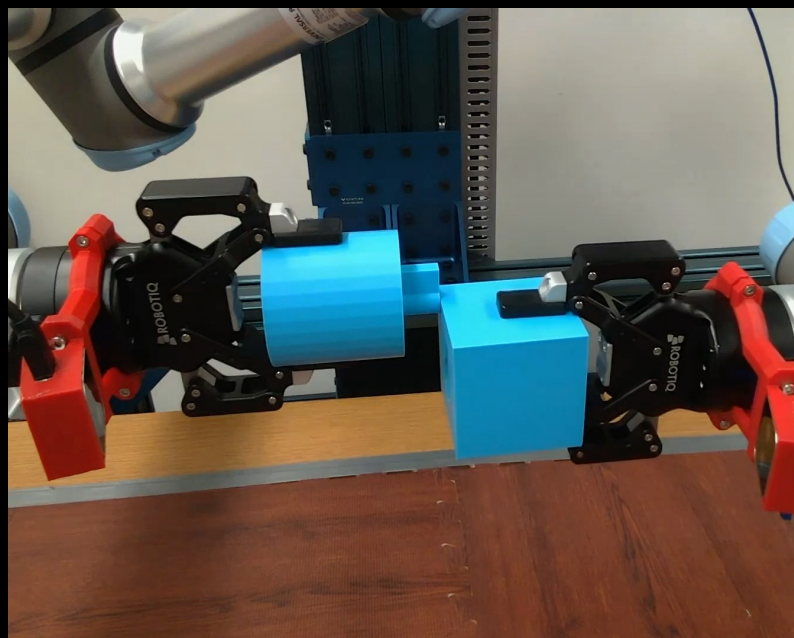


Real World Evaluation: Policy Trained on No Variations



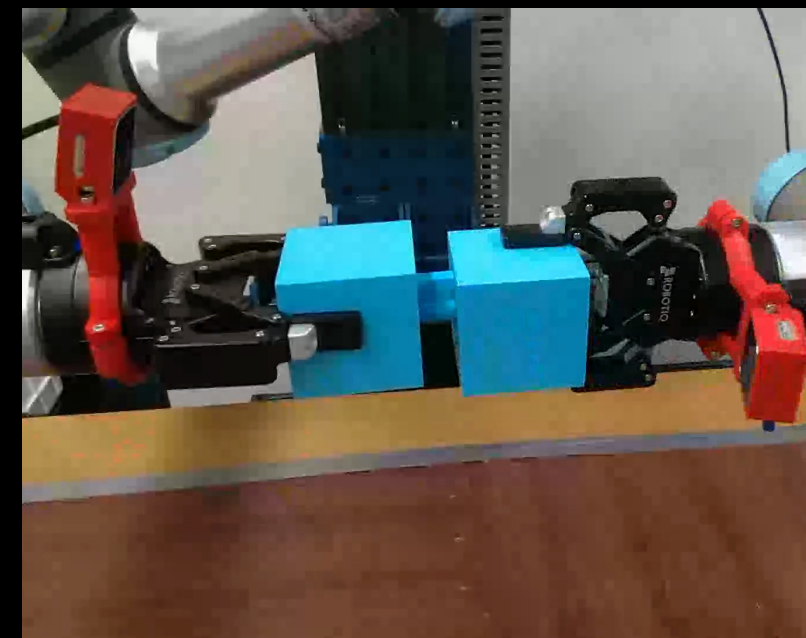
Rollouts in *Canonical* environment

0.900 success rate*



Rollouts in *Object Body Shape* environment

0.800 success rate*



Rollouts in *Grasp Pose* environment

0.150 success rate*

Data augmentation may be necessary to improve robustness

Evidence from neuroscience and cognitive science supports the notion that humans employ **spatio-geometric features**, mediated by specific neural pathways and cognitive processes, to perform **object assembly tasks**.

We posit that **robots** need representations that can capture **spatio-geometric features** to learn novel-object assembly skills from demonstrations.

- No explicit object-geometric knowledge
- Maybe visual information is good enough ← **Requires F/T sensing**
- Maybe pretrained visual representations are good enough to give us these features.

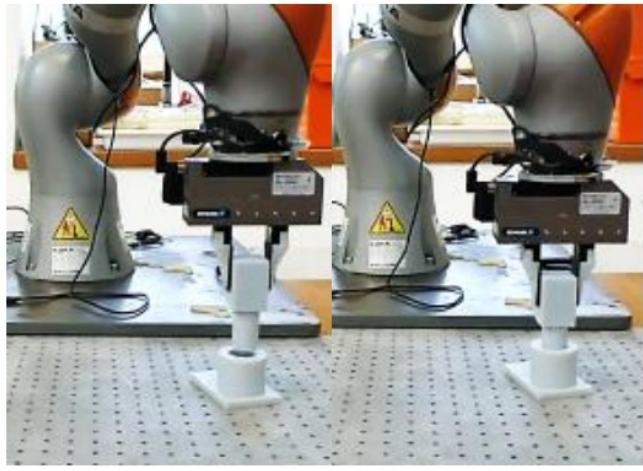
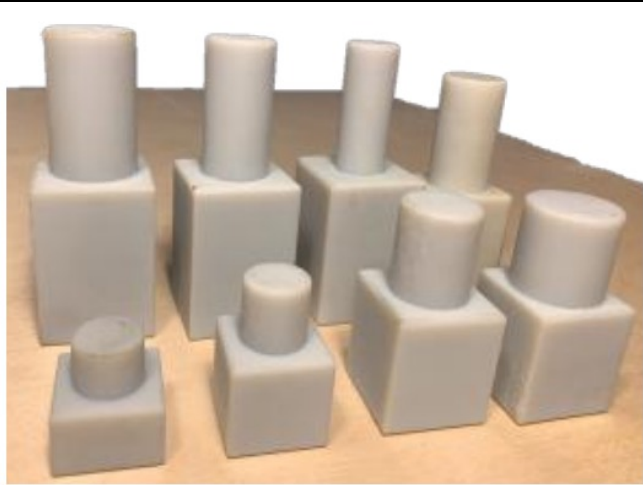
Not necessarily true due to distributional shift

Take aways!

- **Grasp variations** are hard to be robust to in object assembly learning.
- **Visual pre-trained models** on internet data is not necessarily best for object assembly – probably not the spatio-geometric features we hoped for.
- **Force-Torque data** is vital during the contact-rich phase of object assembly. Spatio-geometric feature learning should also incorporate tactile information.
- **Data augmentation tricks** can help with accommodating observation level variations in object assembly task.

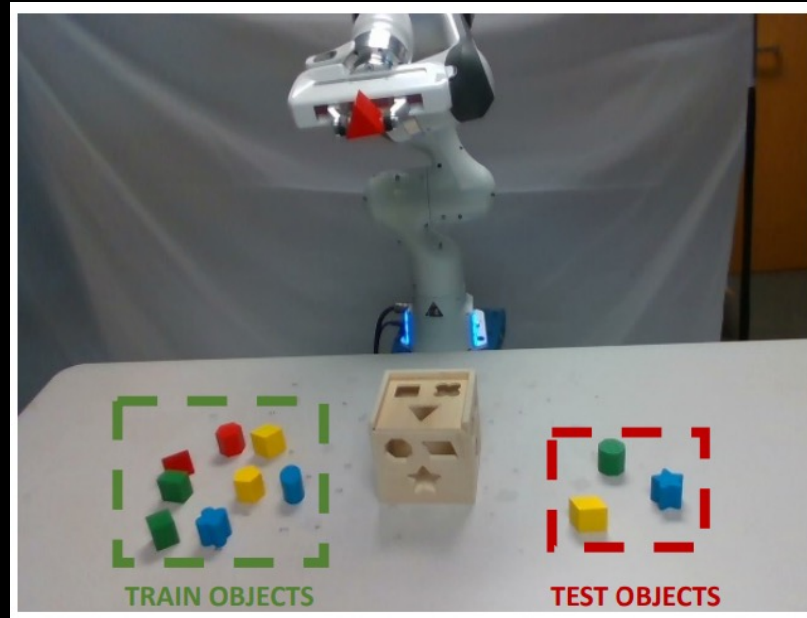
Some Related Works

Peg-hole Insertion



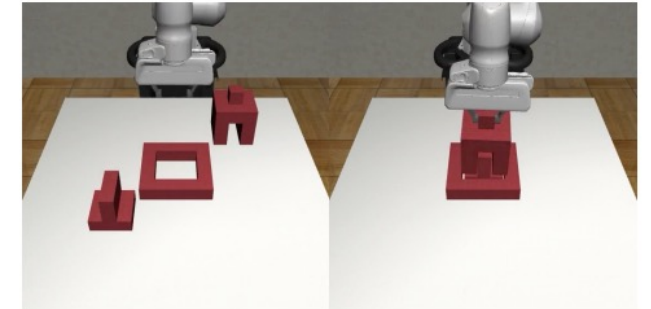
Gao, Wei, and Russ Tedrake. "kpm 2.0: Feedback control for category-level robotic manipulation." *IEEE Robotics and Automation Letters* 6, no. 2 (2021): 2962-2969.

Shape Sorting

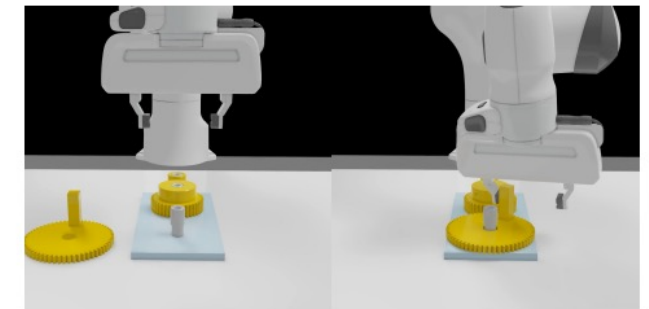


Dasari, Sudeep, Jianren Wang, Joyce Hong, Shikhar Bahl, Yixin Lin, Austin S. Wang, Abitha Thankaraj et al. "RB2: Robotic Manipulation Benchmarking with a Twist." In *Thirty-fifth Conference on Neural Information Processing Systems Datasets and Benchmarks Track (Round 2)*.

Multi-part Assembly



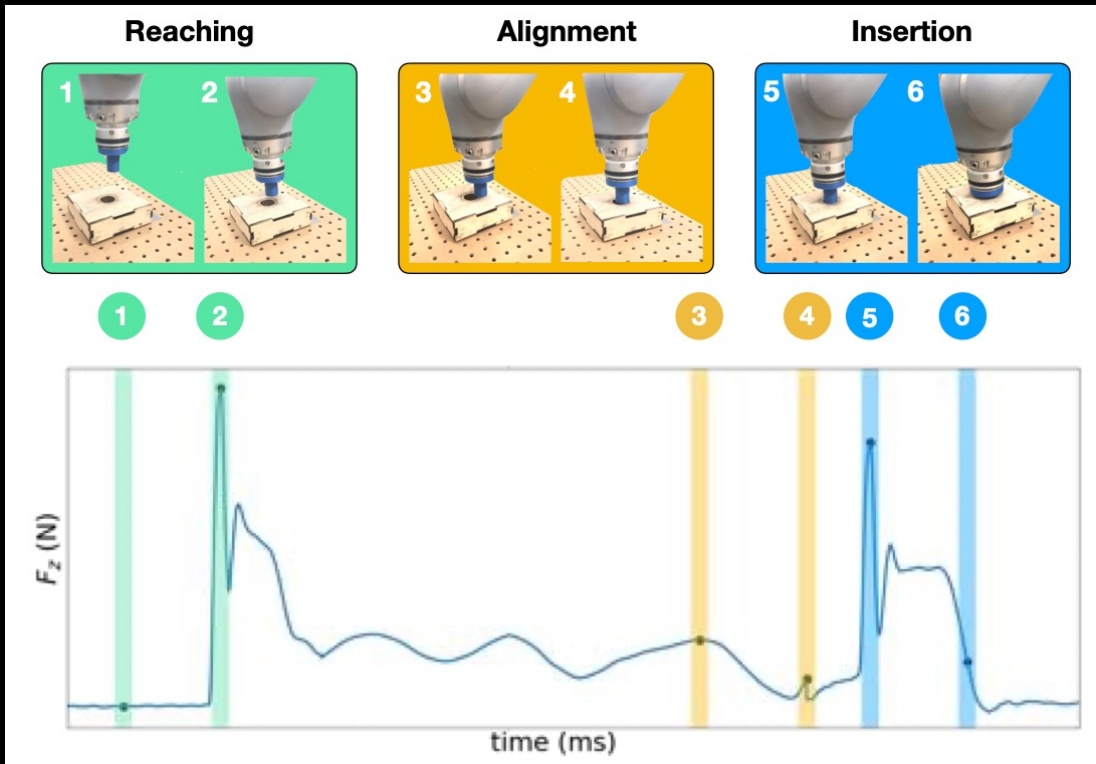
(d) 3 Pc. Assembly



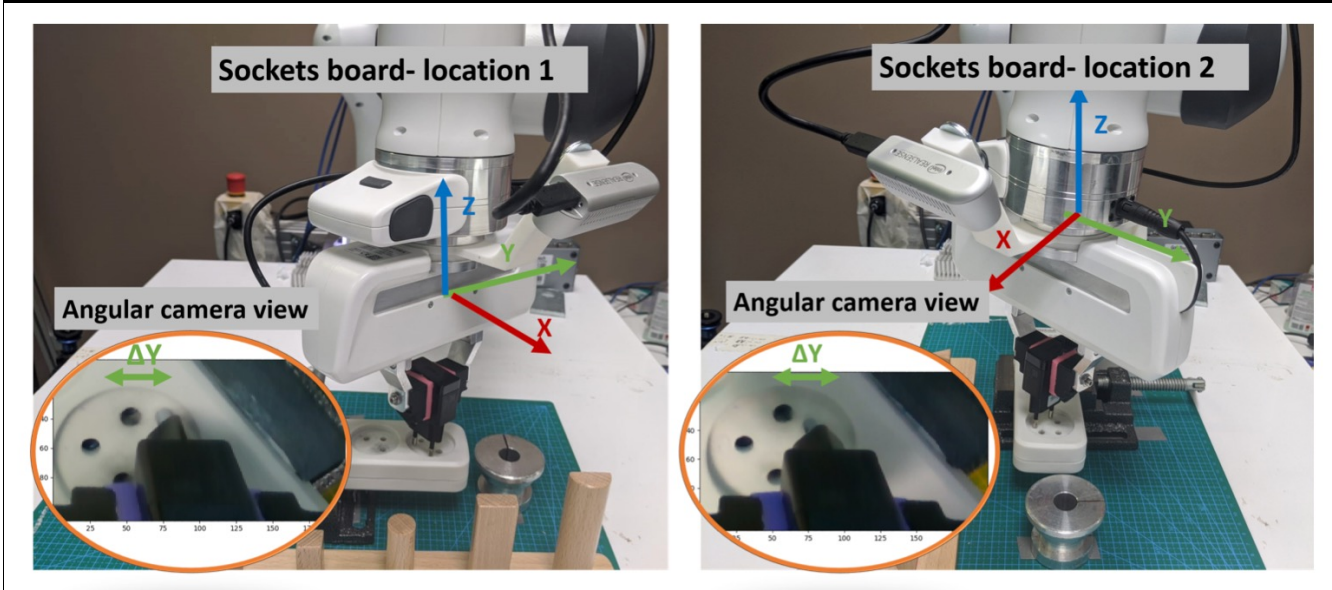
(i) Gear Assembly

Mandlekar, Ajay, Soroush Nasiriany, Bowen Wen, Iretoiayo Akinola, Yashraj Narang, Linxi Fan, Yuke Zhu, and Dieter Fox. "MimicGen: A Data Generation System for Scalable Robot Learning using Human Demonstrations." In *7th Annual Conference on Robot Learning*.

Some Related Works



M. A. Lee, Y. Zhu, K. Srinivasan, P. Shah, S. Savarese, L. Fei-Fei, A. Garg, and J. Bohg, "Making sense of vision and touch: Self-supervised learning of multimodal representations for contact rich tasks," in 2019 International conference on robotics and automation (ICRA). IEEE, 2019, pp. 8943–8950.



O. Spector and D. Di Castro, "Insertionnet-a scalable solution for insertion," IEEE Robotics and Automation Letters, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 5509–5516, 2021.

Other works from RPM Lab

Grasping for Manipulation of Larger Objects



SuperQ-GRASP: Superquadrics-based Grasp Pose Estimation on Larger Objects for Mobile-Manipulation

Xun Tu and Karthik Desingh
University of Minnesota Twin Cities

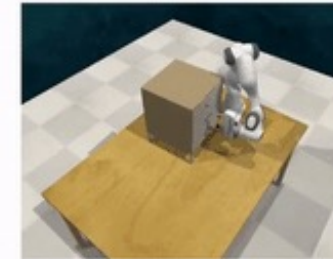
End User Directed Robot Learning Via Natural Language Based Interaction

Level 1



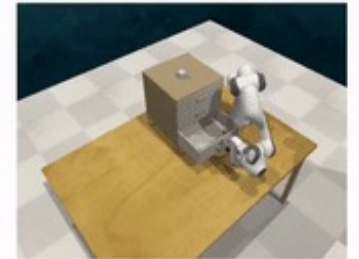
"move in front of the top handle"

Level 2



"open the middle drawer"

Level 3



"put the block in the bottom drawer"



"move above the green button"



"push the yellow button"



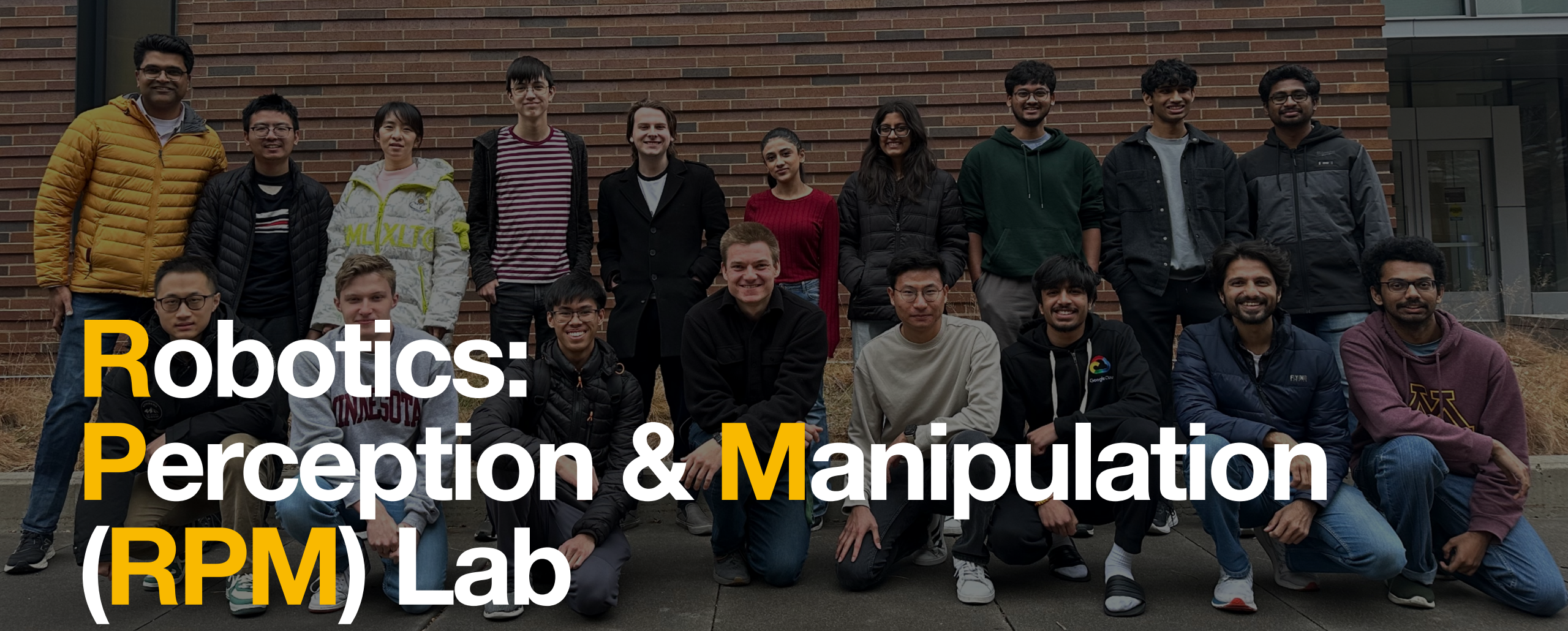
"push the maroon button,
then push the green button"

IEEE ROBOTICS AND AUTOMATION LETTERS, VOL. 9, NO. 9, SEPTEMBER 2024

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Talk Through It: End User Directed Manipulation Learning

Carl Winge , Adam Imdieke , Bahaa Aldeeb, Dongyeop Kang, and Karthik Desingh , Member, IEEE



Robotics: Perception & Manipulation (RPM) Lab

Karthik Desingh
Assistant Professor, University of Minnesota
Minnesota Robotics Institute (MnRI)
Department of Computer Science and Engineering

