

Geosci. Model Dev. Discuss., author comment AC2
<https://doi.org/10.5194/gmd-2022-117-AC2>, 2022
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Reply on RC2

Zhengfa Bi et al.

Author comment on "DeepISMNet: three-dimensional implicit structural modeling with convolutional neural network" by Zhengfa Bi et al., Geosci. Model Dev. Discuss., <https://doi.org/10.5194/gmd-2022-117-AC2>, 2022

To reviewer 2:

We would like to thank all your wonderful work so that we could get the reviewed manuscript promptly. We appreciate your time in reviewing the work and providing your insightful feedback, which has certainly helped improve the quality and clarity of our manuscript. In this document, we try to address your comments in detail. Let's discuss more if some of our explanations in the responses are not clear to you. The related modifications are not shown in the responses but are all marked in the manuscript revision history.

Thanks!

▪ **Issues/Suggestions/Questions:**

- The deep learning architecture is trained using a 2D network (2D convolutions): Section 2.1, P13 L267, P24 L489-491. This is a flaw for 3D applications. The biggest issue is that applying the 2D trained network on a very sparse 3D dataset. 2D slices of your 3D grid must have sampled data points otherwise input to the network is all zero (your binary mask has all zero elements), yielding a scalar field with all zeros. This greatly reduces its applicability for 3D real-world scatter datasets. The presented 3D "real-world" case study had interpretations that covered the modeling domain such that each 2D slice used for inference had sampled data points. To capture geometrical characteristics of 3D geology, 3D convolutions must be employed.

Thanks for your comments. Instead of applying the method to each 2-D slice of very sparse 3-D structural data, we implement a 3-D CNN architecture that constructs a volumetric model from the unevenly distributed scattered horizon and fault points interpreted from geological field observations. We have modified the corresponding words,

figures, and captions that might confuse readers in the subsection of “Network Architecture” to improve their understanding to the solutions of the 3-D structural modeling. Although the used 2-D and 3-D CNNs share the same network architecture, the spatial dimensions of the kernel functions are different in their convolutional and pooling layers. As is shown in Figure 2a, we use square brackets to represent the expansion of the corresponding 2-D network to three-dimensional space. To visualize the CNN-based modeling process, Figure 3 displays the hidden representations at each resolution scale of the 3-D CNN that the structural data are passed through. In the subsection of “Real World 3-D Case Studies” of the manuscript, we train a 3-D network with the same architecture to the 2-D network by using the automatically generated synthetic dataset to capture geometrical characteristics of 3-D geology. To demonstrate the performance of our method, we use the trained CNN to construct full models from unevenly distributed structural points sampled from the two totally different field surveys. As shown in Figure 11 and 12, the geologically valid and structurally consistent results verify the modeling capacities of the CNN in representing complex geological structures.

- The manuscript shows this approach produces good modelling results for applications where there are significant interpretations. The inputted interpretations provide densely sampled points along horizons forcing strong lateral continuity. How would the trained CNN generalize on ‘real world’ field observation datasets that are very heterogenous? E.g., sampled points are sparse (large varying distances/gaps between points on the same interface) in some regions along with possible dense sampling from exposed outcrop or borehole in localized parts. It is claimed in the discussion “It is a significant reason why our network could be applied to the real-world datasets acquired in different geological surveys with distinct structural patterns”. This is not substantiated. Most geological survey real world datasets are noisy and very heterogenous, this type of data hasn’t been used. Interpretative datasets with near continuous sampling along interfaces (horizons/faults) were used. Manuscript would provide larger impact if it can be shown it can be applied to noisy and very heterogenous 3D datasets.

Thanks for your constructive suggestion. We have modified the related texts and discussions in the subsection “Real World 3-D Case Studies” and changed to use more challenging structural data in the first 3-D field data application to demonstrate the proposed method can achieve its reliable generalization in real-world applications. As is displayed in Figure 11, the heterogeneously sampled scattered points are sparse in some localized regions because of the large varying distances among points occur around the geological interface. Based on the automating of data generation workflow, we train a 3-D CNN to correctly capture the geometrical characteristics of 3-D geology. We adopt the trained network in the 3-D field seismic datasets obtained from the totally different surveys to validate its modeling capability. The modeling results shown in Figure 11c demonstrate our CNN architecture is beneficial for 3-D structural modeling and can produce a geologically valid and structurally consistent model. The predicted structural models even maintain the variations of the folded layer structures (highlighted by arrows in Figure 11c and 11d) without global plunge information used to constrain the modeling process. By visual comparison, Figure 11c shows that a group of horizon points sampled at the same geological layer can be accurately located on the corresponding iso-surface of the model, which again demonstrates an excellent fitting characteristic of our network. Additionally, the deep neural network, after training, can be highly efficient to achieve a real-time 3-D structural modeling by using parallel computation in the current GPU platform.

- 2 Diverges from how UNet (encoder/decoder) architecture is normally illustrated and

makes it confusing. Update so that readers can understand the flow of representations and the figure in general. Clearly indicate tensor dimensionalities. The bracket [x256] I presume means for 3D convolutions which are not employed in any results so why is it here? Expansion mean increasing dimension of representations by 1x1 convolutions right? why is 1.5? Show where the bottleneck is, since you refer to it in the text.

Thanks for your suggestion. We guess this question is similar to your Question 1). We have modified the corresponding texts and figures to improve the reader's comfort and ease his/her understanding of the content to the 2-D and 3-D network architectures of our CNN. We adopt a linear bottleneck and inverted residual architecture In the encoder branch to make an efficient convolutional structure by leveraging the low-rank nature of the structural interpolation in each learning unit. This structure is composed of an expansion convolutional layer, a depth-wise convolutional layer, and another projection convolutional layer, and each convolution is followed by a Batch Normalization and a Rectified Linear Unit. The two convolutional layers at the ends of the depth-wise convolutional layer are designed to expand the input features to higher-dimensional feature space (one and a half times of the input channels) and project them back to the output channels, such that the block forms a compact feature embedding to improve the expressiveness of the nonlinear transformation at each channel. We did not try a larger expansion factor because of the GPU memory limitation and computation efficiency consideration, but we would suggest to choose a larger size if the GPU memory is allowed.

- How scattered points are sampled from voxel/pixel grids, e.g., jittering method, how do the 7x7 patches work, how 2 nd order scalar gradients are computed from the voxel/pixels. Requires figure.

Thanks for your comments.

- How scattered points are sampled from voxel/pixel grids?

We have modified the related contents to improve readers' understanding to how scattered points are sampled from voxel grids. The input structural data of our network consists of scattered points that are gridded into a volumetric mesh with valid annotations (larger than zeros) on structures and zeros elsewhere. As is displayed in Figure 4b and Figure 5b, we label the points near the faults within one pixel to ones and zeros elsewhere to obtain the input fault data. To obtain the input horizon data, we set the points near the horizon surfaces within one pixel to the corresponding iso-values of the structural model, which ensures the points on the same horizon have consistent annotations. Furthermore, we randomly remove some points from the horizon data in each run of the data generation to simulate the unevenly distributed horizon interpretations in field geological surveys. As the geological interfaces are implicitly embedded in the scalar field with the iso-values and can be obtained by iso-surface extraction methods, we adopt Jittered sampling to randomly choose iso-values and compute their horizons. Specifically, we first divide all the iso-values into uniformly spaced intervals in descending order and then randomly choose one within every interval to extract the corresponding horizons, such that the extracted horizons can be varying instead of being spaced closely. To remove some points from the horizon data, the simplest way is to randomly generate many square patches and mask the scattered points within the patches, but it might negatively impact the CNN to be well generalized in real-world applications as the inaccessible regions are unlikely in the shape of squares. To solve this issue, we randomize this process by randomly removing some segments from an individual horizon to prevent the network from learning a specific pattern that all the horizon data are partially missing in

the same square regions. Specifically, we first sort the points on this horizon into groups in descending order according to their vertical coordinates, and then randomly mask out the points in one or more groups to generate the incomplete data.

- How do the 7x7 patches work?

In training the CNN, we point-wisely crop square patches from the reference and processed models being measured and compute the loss function within each patch, in which we empirically set every dimensional size of the patch to 7. In this study, all the parameters are selected according to many prior numerical experiments for better modeling performance of our method and kept fixed throughout the study. Although we cannot make sure the used parameter combination is the best one, further parameter tuning is much more time-consuming for a 3-D deep network but hardly obtain further improvements.

- How 2-nd order scalar gradients are computed from the voxel/pixels?

We have added the corresponding texts and reference citations in the subsection “”. Within the deep learning architecture, we can make full use of the various type of geological information in modeling process. For example, we can use structural angles that represent local orientations of geological layers to permit geometrical relationships in the gradient of the scalar function to be considered. The orientation loss is aimed to measure the structural orientation errors between the directional derivatives of the predicted model and the field observations. We adopt the second-order accurate central differences method using the Taylor series approximation to estimate the local orientation at each interior point of the structural model being measured.

- To produce a model for scattered dataset, there is a preprocessing step that requires the associated scattered points to grid cells to obtain the mask m . Correct? If so, it's important to mention.

Thanks for your constructive comment. We have added the related texts in a new subsection “Structural Data Preprocessing” to demonstrate the preprocessing step that associates the structural scattered points into the grid cells of the model.

In most cases, the structural data collected from field surveys are discrete and not necessarily located on the sampling grid of the model, such that there is a preprocessing step that integrates the structural data into a volumetric mesh with the corresponding annotations.

In our method, we simply shift the horizon and fault interpretations to their nearest sampling grids of the volumetric field and obtain the corresponding scattered points. In the synthetic and the real data applications, the annotation of fault scattered points is straightforward by assigning ones near the faults and zeros elsewhere. However, although the points along the horizons can be assigned to the corresponding iso-values of the structural model in the synthetic data experiments, this might not be feasible when modeling real-world geological structures. As the ground truth of subsurface structures is typically inaccessible before modeling it, how to properly annotate the horizon scattered points still remains a problem. We thus implement a numerical experiment using the horizons with the different annotations from a simulated model to study how they impact the resultant models of our CNN. As is shown from Figure 8b to 8f, the horizons with different values, together with the same faults, are used as inputs in our network. By visual comparison, the modeling results are nearly identical to each other indicating that our method is not sensitive to the annotations of the inputs, which is what we expect.

Based on this observation, we thus recommend assigning the scattered points on each horizon to their average vertical coordinate for correctly following the stratigraphic sequences of geology.

- While authors have their own limited 3D geological model simulation workflow the following work should be referenced. This could be leveraged for future CNN training, and a potential solution to challenges with training 3D CNN UNet architecture.

Jessell, M., Guo, J., Li, Y., Lindsay, M., Scalzo, R., Giraud, J., Pirot, G., Cripps, E., and Ogarko, V.: Into the Noddyverse: a massive data store of 3D geological models for machine learning and inversion applications, *Earth Syst. Sci. Data*, 14, 381–392, <https://doi.org/10.5194/essd-14-381-2022>, 2022.

Thanks for your comment. We have modified the corresponding texts and added the related reference citation in the subsection “Current Limitations and Improvements” of our manuscript. Although working well to recover faulted and folded structures, the proposed method might not represent other geological structures that are not considered in the training dataset, such as unconformities and igneous intrusions. The trained network also might not correctly construct low dip-angle thrust faults in predicted models because we still do not include this type of fault in the currently used data generator. Despite the current limitations, the proposed CNN architecture still shows promising potential to compute a geological valid and structurally consistent model honoring the observed structures. Considering the used training dataset is still not sufficiently large to train a 3-D deep network, future works will focus on further complicating the simulation workflow by adding more complex and diverse geological structural patterns in the models. Considering the used training dataset is still not sufficiently large to train a 3-D deep network, future works will focus on expanding our training dataset to a broader range of geological geometries and relationships. For example, we can further complicate the used simulation workflow by adding more complex and diverse features in the structural models, or adopting a recently developed 3-D geological modeling dataset (Jessell et al., 2022) where dykes, plugs, and unconformities are incorporated.

- **Detailed Comments/Edits:**

- P1 L2-L8. All approaches are formulated in terms of a spatial interpolation problem. Within each approach there are numerous mathematical methods to solving the problem. There are very few that setup the problem as a variation problem in which PDEs are solved. Update this part.

Thanks for your advice. We have corrected the “solving PDE” and modified the related words in section “Abstract” of the manuscript. Most advanced implicit approaches formulate structural modeling as least-squares minimization or spatial interpolation problem and use various mathematical methods to solve for a scalar field that optimally fits all the input data under smooth regularization assumption. However, solving the complex mathematical equations with iterative optimization solvers could be computationally expensive in 3-D.

- P1 L17: Reword. Suggest not using the term ‘reasonable geological’ until what this

means is defined.

Thanks for your comment. We have replaced the term "A reasonable geological model" as "A geological model structurally consistent with subsurface".

- P1 L20 Incorrect reference. Given reference is for implicit modeling! There is a suite of good reference for explicit methods.

Thanks for your comment. We have corrected the reference citation in this sentence.

- P1 L20-L21: "It intends"?

Thanks. Corrected.

- P2 L27-L33: Suggest clearly identifying the advantages over explicit: Fast, reproducible, updatable.

Thanks for your suggestion. Corrected.

- P2L31-L32: "resultant model from a global respective"?

Thanks, Corrected. We have replaced "respective" with "view" in this sentence.

- P2 L33: spelling "File"

Thanks, Corrected.

- P2 L37: "or regional available in"?

Thanks, Corrected. We have removed the phrase "or regional available in" in this sentence.

- P2 L38: "simplification as structural constraints"? explain.

Thanks for your suggestion. We have added the related interpretations in this paragraph. As it is hardly possible to observe ground truth of subsurface, the geological structures are often heterogeneously sampled in a limited number of highly developed mining and oil fields. This arises the necessity of adding prior geological rules and assumptions as structural constraints to guide the modeling process. For example, the existing implicit interpolants typically impose explicit smoothness criteria to simplify local variations for computing a unique structural model.

- P2 L45-47: To deal with this, discontinuous structures are modeled first, which are used to produce a constrained unstructured mesh. Modeling domains are assigned, for which different scalar fields can operate given the geological history. This can work well. Update this.

Thanks for your comment. We have updated the associated discussions in the subsection "Introduction" of our manuscript to demonstrate this problem. Because the scalar function is always continuous on the mesh elements, the mesh elements prohibit from crossing structural discontinuities. Therefore, the conventional methods might not correctly estimate the gradients of the scalar function near the faults or unconformities. To deal with this issue, we typically require to produce a constrained unstructured mesh by carefully modeling the discontinuous structures, such that the DSI methods can still work well in these cases.

- P3 L65. Incorrect reference de Kemp EA, Jessell MW, Aillères L, Schetselaar EM, Hillier M, Lindsay MD, Brodaric B (2017). Earth model construction in challenging geologic terrain: designing workflows and algorithms. that make sense. In: Proceedings of exploration 17: sixth decennial international conference on mineral exploration, pp 419–439.

Thanks. We have corrected the related reference citation according to your advice.

- P3 L74. 'sophisticated' remove.

Thanks. Corrected.

- P3 L75 'is essential for its' remove.

Thanks. Corrected.

- P4 Fig 3: Unclear why features @ zmax have large activations on encoder branches (there isn't any data there) and is horizontally consistent (same value at ~zmax). How is the output restricted to [0, 1]? You use tanh or softmax activation function in final layer? If so, please provide details.

Thanks for your advice. Instead of using tanh or soft-max activation function in final layer of the network, we apply normalization to hidden representations at each resolution scale of our CNN. We have added the related sentences in this paragraph to explain this problem. Figure 3 visualizes the normalized hidden representations at each resolution scale of our 3-D structural modeling network that the inputs are passed through. Because the amplitude ranges of the hidden representations are much varying from each other, we rescale them to obtain the normalized features with values restrained from zero and one for a visual purpose. The unexpected activations appearing on the top of the hidden features in the encoder are attributed to the boundary effect caused by operating zero-padding in the convolutional layers. However, as is displayed in Figure 3, the artifacts can be effectively eliminated and corrected in the decoder branch and thus would not negatively impact the resultant modeling quality of our CNN. Also, this is why we need to construct a sufficiently deep network to model geological structures.

- P4 L80 – 83. Please add: Kirkwood, C., Economou, T., Pugeault, N. et al. Bayesian Deep Learning for Spatial Interpolation in the Presence of Auxiliary Information. *Math Geosci* 54, 507–531 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11004-021-09988-0>.

Thanks for your suggestion. We have added this reference citation here.

- P5 L88-89. Method can reproduce results, just not exactly/perfectly.

Thanks for your suggestion. We have modified the related sentences in the manuscript.

- P6 L125-126 trade accuracy for efficiency?

Thanks for your comment. An optimal trade-off between accuracy and efficiency means that we expect the proposed CNN can produce a model structurally consistent with the inputs while saving computational costs. However, we also would suggest to use a larger network architecture by increasing the expansion factor in each inverse residual module of the encoder branch or doubling the feature channels in the convolutional layers to derive an even better modeling performance if the GPU memory is allowed.

- P6 L127 regraded (spelling)

Thanks. Corrected.

- P6 L133 “hierarchical constraints” these are not constraints. They multi-scale features have the capacity to influence structural predictions if the learned multi scale features improve prediction accuracy.

Thanks for your suggestions. We have modified the related texts in the manuscript.

- P6 L141 “doubles its channels” discrepancy with fig 1 if I interpreted correctly (2->38->76->153->307->614), “linear bottleneck” linear?

Thanks. Corrected. We have replaced “doubles its channels” with “increases its feature channels” in the associated sentences of our manuscript.

- P6 L142 “low rank nature”?

Thanks for. Corrected. The developed CNN architecture leverages the low-rank nature of the sparse and heterogeneously sampled structural data to adaptively suppress uninformative features by using a linear bottleneck and inverted residual structure in each of the encoded convolutional layers. The input structural data have the characteristic of low-rank because they are highly biased with mostly zeros but only very limited valid

labels (annotations) larger than zeros on horizon and fault structures.

- P6 L147-149 "the block is ..."?

Thanks. This block represents the inverse residual block. We have modified the related sentences to improve readers' understanding to our network architecture.

- P7 L151 spare (spelling)

Thanks. Corrected.

- P7 L152 "might" From empirical tests, what do the results indicate? In many applications, it is fine to some elements of the features to be zero.

Thanks for your comment. We have modified the corresponding texts in the manuscript. Although the encoder layers aggregate abundant information through recursive channel expansions, not all the features are useful for modeling geological structures. There exist many structurally irrelevant features with mostly zeros across channels due to the spare and heterogeneous characteristics of the inputs. Therefore, treating all channel-wise features equally would waste unnecessary computations to focus on the informative features and thus negatively influences the representational power of the network.

- P7 L157-159 reference?

Thanks. We have added the corresponding reference citation.

- P7 L168 "fusing and combining" are the same thing? define MAdds.

Thanks for your comment. We have modified the related texts in the manuscript. By splitting the standard convolution as a two-step process of spatial convolution and channel combination, we can construct a lightweight decoder and effectively reduce the computation complexity and CNN model size. The computational complexity of the method is typically represented as Multiply-Accumulate Operations (MAdds). "MAdds" refers to the total number of multiply and accumulate operations.

- P7 L173 "non-linear convolutional filters" convolutions are linear transformations.

Thanks for your comment. Our method is designed to progressively complete structural features layer by layer through sequential nonlinear convolutional units that are conditioned on the previous convolutions. Each nonlinear convolutional unit represents a combination of a standard convolutional layer and an activation function that takes the features generated by the convolutional layer and creates the nonlinear activation map as its output.

- P8 L185 to 189. Indicate the dimensions of m , "points" you mean voxels/pixels? define f , where is y used in the paper?

Thanks for your comment. We have modified the related texts in the subsection "Loss Function" to improve readers' understanding to the notations and formal definitions used in the loss function. In this paragraph, we introduce notations and formal definitions used in this loss function. \mathbf{x} represents reference structural model, and \mathbf{m} denotes its binary mask where the pixels or voxels (2-D or 3-D) on the input horizons are set to ones and the rests are set to zeros. We keep the dimensional sizes of the reference model and binary mask consistent with the samples in our training dataset. In addition, f_θ represents the trained CNN model with trainable parameters θ . We denote the predicted structural model that is replaced with the inputs on the points of the horizon data as \mathbf{y} .

- P9 L197 reword. N represents the total number of points within a patch p ?

Thanks for your comment. In this sentence, N represents the total number of points within a patch and we crop the patches from the same spatial location in the two structural models being compared.

- P10 L210 define the gaussian filter

Thanks. Corrected.

- P10 L216 "might" it will influence

Thanks. Corrected.

- P10 Eqn 3. Instead of fine-tuning one parameter G_sigma_g , many new parameters are added in which you fix according to Wang 2003. They use those parameters for an entirely different application. How the results compare with just fssim.

Thanks for your suggestion. We have modified the corresponding texts in the manuscript. We set the parameter γ in the MS-SSIM function according to many numerical experiments. These parameters are set to weight the SSIM losses computed in the different scale levels for computing the final MS-SSIM loss. Although we cannot ensure the used parameter combination is the best one, further parameter tuning is much more time-consuming for training a deep network but hardly obtain further improvements.

- P11 Eqn 5. So m and p represent the same thing? A patch?

Thanks for your comment. We have modified the related texts to improve readers' understanding to the notations and formal definitions used in the loss function. According to the formal definitions in starting paragraph of the subsection "Loss Function", \mathbf{m} denotes its binary mask where the pixels or voxels (2-D or 3-D) on the known horizons are set to

ones and the rests are set to zeros. \mathbf{p} represents the patch cropped from the same spatial location from the structural model. \mathbf{x} represents reference structural model.

- P11 L241. Unclear on size of each patch to 7×7 . Need a figure to know the relations between pixels/voxels, sampled points, and patches surrounding data inputs, jittering, etc. Would "these parameters" require tuning for very different structural settings?

Thanks for your comment. We have reworded the corresponding texts to improve readers' understanding to the notations and formal definitions used in the loss function. We guess this question is similar to your Question 34). In training the CNN, we point-wisely crop square patches from the structural models being measured (2-D or 3-D) and compute the loss within each patch, in which we empirically set the dimensional size of each patch to 7. The total loss is estimated by averaging the losses computed for the whole cropped patches. All the parameters in the loss function are selected based on many numerical experiments and kept fixed throughout the study to avoid the need for tuning. Although we cannot ensure the used parameter combination is the best one, further parameter tuning is much more time-consuming for training a deep CNN but hardly obtain further improvements.

- P13 L280-281 unclear

Thanks. We have modified the associated sentences in this paragraph to improve readers' understanding to the horizon iso-value selection. With the jittered sampling method, we first sort all the iso-values into a uniformly spaced grid in descending order and then randomly extract one within each grid unit to compute the corresponding horizon. Therefore, the horizons extracted from the structural model can be spatially varying and not spaced closely.

- P14 Table 2. How many epochs were performed here? Also, negligible differences, since the input constraints are sampled randomly, you can repeat the experiment and other loss functions could come out first/better

Thanks for your comment. As is shown in Figure 6a, we perform 120 epochs and find the training and validation loss curves converge to low levels when the optimization stops. Table 2 shows the average of the quality metrics on the validation dataset. The CNN trained with the hybrid loss function of MS-SSIM and MAE can outperform the others on all the quality metrics even including the quality metrics which we use as cost function to train the network (MSE and MAE).

- P14 L297 "much varying"?

Thanks. Corrected.

- P14 L298-299 Re: Normalization. Clearly indicate what is normalized? I assume its scalar values.

Thanks for your suggestion. We have modified the related texts of the normalization in the manuscript. Considering the coordinate ranges of the field geological datasets can be much different from each other, we rescale every structural model to obtain the normalized one that ranges from zero to one. This normalization is implemented by first subtracting the minimum and then dividing the maximum and thus would not change its geological structures. When normalizing the structural data, we assign the scattered points on the same geological interface to the corresponding iso-values of the normalized model.

- P14 L300 "bath" spelling.

Thanks. Corrected.

- P15 L306-307 reword "has captured...". "very few structural data" subjective term. 5,10, 100, 1000 points?

Thanks. We have modified the corresponding texts to eliminate these subjective terms in the sentences. The training and validation loss curves gradually converge to low levels when the optimization stops after 120 epochs. The convergence of the loss function demonstrates that the CNN has successfully learned representative geometries and relationships of geological structures from the training dataset.

- P15 L309 stability in terms of what? From iteration to iteration? HFA would be computational expensive if the points from iso-surfaces are used. What are the details on how it's computed? Are a sub sample of those points used?

Thanks for your suggestions. We have modified the related texts and added the discussions in the subsection "Training and Validation". We evaluate the modeling accuracy and stability of our network in terms of the perturbations of the input structures created from the same geological model. In this experiment, we randomly choose 100 synthetic models from the validation dataset and run 20 times of the trained network to calculate the MSE and MAE for each model. By using the iso-surface extraction approach, we can exactly align the sampled points of the horizon surfaces to the input horizon data on the same horizontal grid coordinates. In each modeling process, we randomly generate the horizon scattered points to ensure that the input structural data are different from each other even for the same geological model. Additionally, we propose to use Horizon Fitting Error (HFA) as a quality metric to measure the modeling accuracy of every geological interface associated with the input horizon data by computing an average vertical distance along the depth axis between the horizon scattered points and the iso-surfaces extracted from the predicted model. By using the iso-surface extraction approach, we can exactly align the sampled points of the horizon surfaces to the input horizon data on the same horizontal grid coordinates.

- P15 L311 provide the details on the validation dataset ($2400 * 0.1$). Why not use the entire validation dataset instead of running 20 x of the random sample of 240? Why compute MSE since it is mentioned (and is correct) that it's not a useful error metric (over bias outliers, etc)?

Thanks for your comments.

- Why not use the entire validation dataset instead of running 20 x of the random sample of 240?

In this experiment, we evaluate the modeling stability of our CNN in terms of the perturbations of the input structures created from the same geological model. On the one hand, we randomly choose a subset of synthetic models from the validation dataset and run many times of the trained network to calculate the MSE and MAE for each model. On the other hand, we also randomly generate the horizon scattered points to ensure that the input data are different from each other even for the same structural model in each modeling process. Therefore, they are sufficient to demonstrate the great modeling stability of our approach. Additionally, we also show the modeling results and discuss the prediction accuracy of the trained CNN by using the validation dataset in the following subsection "Synthetic Data Examples".

- Why compute MSE since it is mentioned (and is correct) that it's not a useful error metric (over bias outliers, etc)?

Although the CNN trained by using MAE and MSE might not correctly guide the network to capture geometrical features whereas blurring high-frequency and sharp discontinuous structures as is discussed in the subsection "Loss Function", they are still appropriate quality metrics that measure the differences between the two structural models being compared.

- P15 L312-313 unclear.

Thanks. We have reworded the corresponding sentence.

- P15 L320 "complexly".

Thanks. Corrected.

- P16 Fig 8. The scalar value differences (0.3) between interfaces are the same. What happens when the differences change? I presume that as delta between scalar values adjacent interfaces (ds) gets larger, accuracy is improved. While as ds gets smaller, accuracy is decreased. If 50 horizons are modelled ds between adjacent surfaces is ~ 0.02 . Does ds impose/bias constant unit thickness between interfaces?

Thanks for your comment. We have added the new experiments and modified the corresponding texts in the newly added subsection "Structural Data Preprocessing". As the ground truth of geological structures is typically inaccessible before modeling, how to properly annotate the interpreted horizons still remains a problem. We have changed the numerical experiment and utilized the horizon data labeled with different iso-values in a synthetic structural model (Figure 8a) to study how they impact the predictions of our CNN. In this experiment, the scattered points on two horizons are assigned by the normalized iso-values that range from 0.3 to 0.8 with three distinct intervals of 0.2, 0.3, and 0.4. As shown from Figure 8b to 8f, the network takes the horizon data with various iso-values and the same fault data to produce full structural models as outputs. By visual comparison, the nearly identical modeling results indicate that the method is not sensitive

to the different data annotations within a reasonable range, which is what we expect. Additionally, we can observe a larger interval of the horizon annotations is contributed to a more significant displacement of geological layers on the opposite of the fault structures in the predicted model (Figure 8c and 8e). Based on this observation, we recommend to label the scattered points on each horizon with their average vertical coordinate for correctly following the stratigraphic sequences of geology. Note that the annotations on horizons require to be consistently rescaled by the model size to keep consistent with the normalized training dataset.

- P16 L348 "scatted" spelling

Thanks. Corrected.

- P17 L369 "partially missing horizon" a tiny % is missing, "might not be"? are they or aren't they fully annotated?

Thanks for your comment. We have modified the corresponding texts to better demonstrate the potential challenges of obtaining a geologically reasonable and structurally consistent model. As is shown in Figure 9a, the ambiguous reflections are difficult to be continuously tracked across the entire seismic images, which causes the partially missing horizon data shown by different colors in Figure 9b. In addition, not all the faults are detected from the seismic images because of data-incoherent noise and stratigraphic features apparent to discontinuous structures. Moreover, the structural contradictions and hard-to-reconcile features in the inputs might negatively impact the modeling quality of geological structures.

- P18 L372-373. For the datasets used in the manuscript, traditional methods can make good geological models consistent with the inputs.

Thanks for your suggestion. We guess this question is similar to your Question 2). We have changed the input interpretation data of the first 3-D field data application and modified the related texts in the subsection "Real World 3-D Case Studies". As is shown in Figure 11, the heterogeneously sampled scattered points are sparse or clustered in some localized regions because of the large variations of the distances among the points occur along the same geological interface. The modeling results shown in Figure 11c demonstrate that the CNN architecture is beneficial for 3-D structural modeling by predicting a geologically valid model, where the structural discontinuities and the interfaces are consistent with the given scattered points. The predicted models even maintain the variations of the folded layer structures (highlighted by arrows in Figure 11c and 11d) without global plunge information used to constrain the modeling process. By visual comparison, Figure 11c shows that a group of horizon points sampled at the same geological layer can be accurately located on the corresponding iso-surface of the model, which again demonstrates a great fitting characteristic of our network.

- P21 Fig 13. "Geological uncertainty analysis" Multiple realizations are made given different interpretations. What "analysis" was done? How is uncertainty here quantified?

Thanks for your suggestion. We have changed the subtitle as "Structural Uncertainty

Characterization” and modified the corresponding contents in this subsection of our manuscript. The heterogeneously distributed structural data pose an ill-posed problem that there exist multiple plausible structural models which equally fit the inputs. For this reason, data uncertainty analysis is necessarily critical to looking for an optimal solution, especially for the noisy and hard-to-reconcile structural observations and interpretations. Although the existing implicit methods can generate various models by perturbing the inputs to characterize uncertainties, they might not explore a broad range of possible geological patterns and structural relationships in nature by using a single model suit for stochastic simulation. Working on the automating of modeling workflow, our CNN is beneficial for a flexible interpretation of aleatory and epistemic uncertainties by generating diverse modeling realizations instead of one best due to its high computational efficiency. We use various combinations of modeling objects with the horizons and faults interpreted from the borehole and the outcrop observations to study the uncertainties associated with the position variations of geological structures. The simplest possible structural model consists of multiple continuous and conformal horizons in the first data example. By contrast, the modeling situations become more complex when considering additional geometrical objects of faults that dislocate the geological layers. In addition, we randomly perturb horizon positions to yield the variations in layer thickness because the stratigraphic interface transition might not be accurately observed from the vertical boreholes. These structural data are used as inputs of the network in modeling geological structures to demonstrate the proof of concept.

- P21 L428-429 And relies on the availability of knowledge and how those methods incorporate that knowledge particularly for data sparsity increases.

Thanks for your comment. We formulate implicit modeling as image inpainting with deep learning, in which a full structural model is estimated from the sparse and heterogeneously sampled data based on the past experiences and knowledge learned from a sufficiently large training dataset. That also means, when the network is trained well, the modeling experiences and knowledge learned from the synthetic dataset are implicitly embedded in the CNN model parameters. This characteristic permits a flexible introduction of empirical geometrical relations and structural interpolation constraints by defining an appropriate loss function to measure the structural differences between the CNN predictions and the reference models. Our network can produce a structural scalar field as an implicit representation of all the structures from various types of the structural data such as horizons that encode the stratigraphic sequence of the sampled interfaces, and faults in the presence of the geological boundaries.

- P21 L432-434. Given a scattered data set of geological observations, the trained CNN produces 1 model. It doesn't generate a "diverse [set] of possible modeling realization" ([] grammar fix). Fig 13 shows given different interpretative inputs, different realizations are produced. Generating interpretative inputs is extremely time consuming, so the point that the CNN are very computational efficient for generating ensemble realizations is incorrect until the method can generate those realizations without interpretative inputs.

Thanks for your comments. Corrected. We guess this question is similar to your Question 55). Working on the automating of modeling workflow, our CNN is beneficial for a flexible interpretation of aleatory and epistemic uncertainties by generating diverse modeling realizations instead of one best due to its high computational efficiency. We can use various combinations of modeling objects with the horizons and faults interpreted from the borehole and the outcrop observations to study the uncertainties associated with the

position variations of geological structures. For example, we can randomly perturb positions of interpreted interfaces to yield the variations in layer thickness as the stratigraphic interface transition might not be accurately observed from the vertical boreholes. These structural data are used as a diverse set of inputs of the network for modeling the possible structural geometries and relationships to demonstrate the proof of concept.

- P23 L453-454 z variable? Predicted model was \hat{y} before. Show formula for $\text{grad } \hat{y}/z$. This uses the neighbouring cells surrounding a given pixel/point?

Thanks for your suggestions. We have added the corresponding discussions in the subsection "Structural Orientation Constraint" of the manuscript. The loss function of orientation constraint is proposed to measure the angle errors between the directional derivatives of the predicted structural model and the orientation observations by using cosine similarity. We adopt a second-order accurate central differences method with the Taylor series approximation to estimate the local orientation at each interior point of the given structural model \mathbf{z} . We compute the cosine similarity between the normal vector and the orientations in the reference model \mathbf{x} and the predicted model \mathbf{y} , respectively. Therefore, the orientation loss function is proposed to measure the structural angle errors between the two models being compared.

- P23 Eqn 8. You manually tune lambda, beta? Apply MTL principles? What values did you use?

Thanks for your suggestions. We guess this question is similar to your Question 4). We have added the corresponding discussions in the manuscript. β and λ are empirically set to 1.00 and 1.25, respectively. All the parameters in the loss function are empirically selected according to many prior numerical experiments for better modeling performance of the CNN and kept fixed throughout the study to avoid the need for tuning. Although we cannot make sure the used parameter combination is the best one, further parameter tuning is much more time-consuming for a deep network but hardly obtain further improvements.

- P24 L489-491 "the used training dataset is still not sufficiently large to train a 3D deep network" To create 3D model, you slice 3D grid into 2D slices, each of which you perform inference on using the trained 2D network? Critical issues here if this is the case.

Thanks for your comments. We guess this question is similar to your Question 1). Our proposed 2-D and 3-D CNNs have the same architecture, and the only difference is their kernel spatial dimensions in the convolutional and pooling layers. As is shown in Figure 2a, we use square brackets to represent the expansion of the corresponding 2-D network to three-dimensional space. Although working well to recover faulted and folded structures, the proposed method might not represent other geological structures that are not considered in the training dataset, such as unconformities and igneous intrusions. Considering the used training dataset is still not sufficiently large to train a 3-D deep network, future works will focus on expanding our training dataset to a broader range of geological geometries and relationships. For example, we can further complicate the used simulation workflow by adding more complex and diverse features in the structural models, or adopting a recently developed 3-D geological modeling dataset where dykes,

plugs, and unconformities are incorporated.

- P25 L497 "spare" spelling.

Thanks. Corrected.

- P25 L506 "noisy structures" sample interfaces are not noisy. You can clearly see scattered points on sampled interface there is no positional (or orientational) fluctuation in adjacent/nearby points.

Thanks. We have modified the corresponding sentence as "In both synthetic data and real-world data applications, we verify its modeling capacities in representing complex structures with a model geologically reasonable and structurally consistent with the inputs." in the section "Conclusions" of the manuscript.

Please also note the supplement to this comment:

<https://gmd.copernicus.org/preprints/gmd-2022-117/gmd-2022-117-AC2-supplement.pdf>