

# Learning in Imperfect Environment: Multi-Label Classification with Long-Tailed Distribution and Partial Labels

Wenqiao Zhang<sup>1</sup>   Changshuo Liu<sup>2</sup>   Lingze Zeng<sup>2</sup>   Bengchin Ooi<sup>2</sup>   Siliang Tang<sup>1</sup>  
Yueting Zhuang<sup>1</sup>

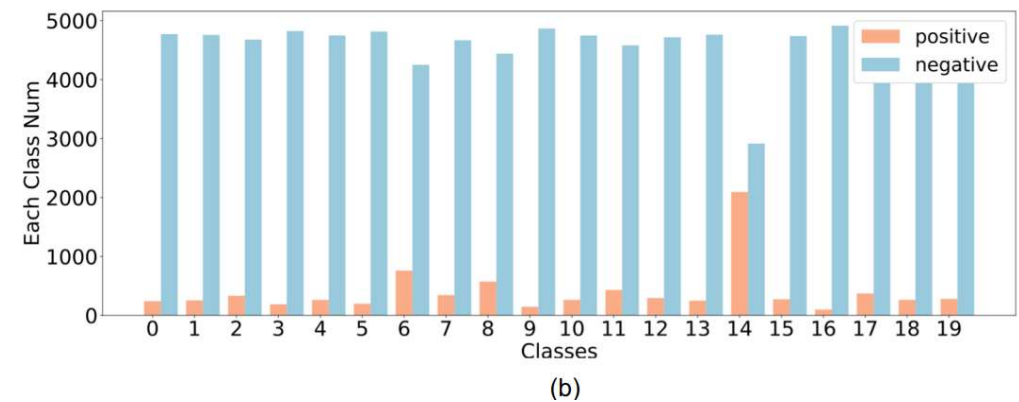
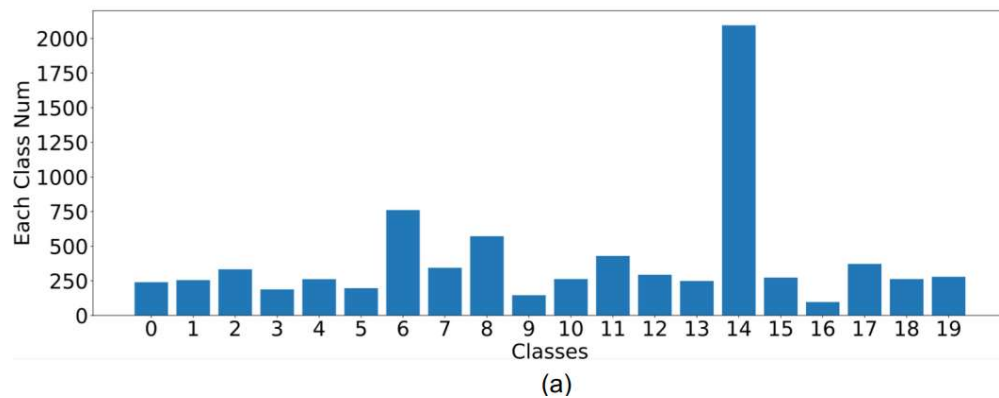
<sup>1</sup> Zhejiang University, China, <sup>2</sup> National University of Singapore, Singapore,  
wenqiaozhang@zju.edu.cn, liu717@comp.nus.edu.sg, Zenglz\_pro@163.com, ooibc@comp.nus.edu.sg,  
siliang@zju.edu.cn, yzhuang@zju.edu.cn

# Background

## Imbalance between different classes

### Imbalance exists in ratio of positives to negatives for each class

- Head class have a large ratio
- Tail classes have a small ratio



# Background

## Complexities that typically arise in real-world applications:

- i) Long-Tailed (LT) Class Distribution.
- ii) Partial Labels (PL) of Instances.



illustrates an overview of the proposed PLT-MLC task.

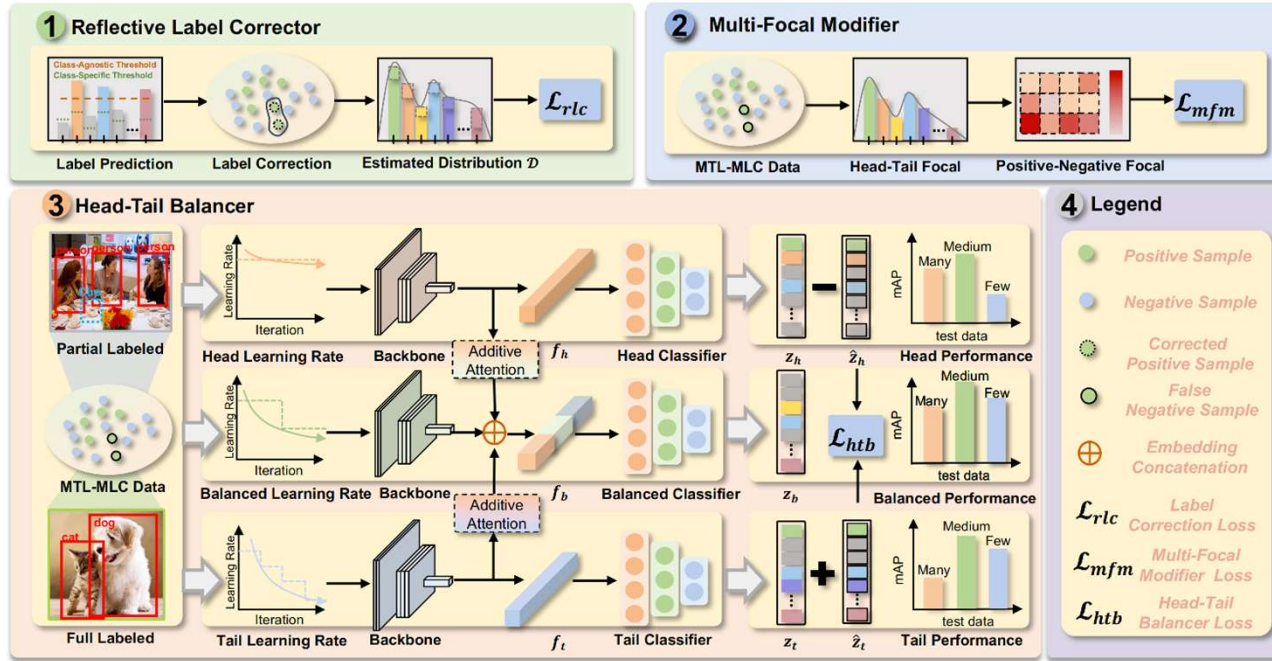
- i) False Negative Training.
- ii) Head-Tail and Positive-Negative Imbalance.
- iii) Head Overfitting and Tail Underfitting.

Consequently, a robust PLT-MLC model should address the co-occurring imbalances simultaneously.

# Methods

Correction→Modification→Balance

Reflective Label Corrector(RLC), Multi-Focal Modifier(MFM) and Head-Tail Balancer(HTB)



RLC module (Correction) corrects the missing labels along with the training and dynamically re-weights the sample weight according to the estimated class distribution.

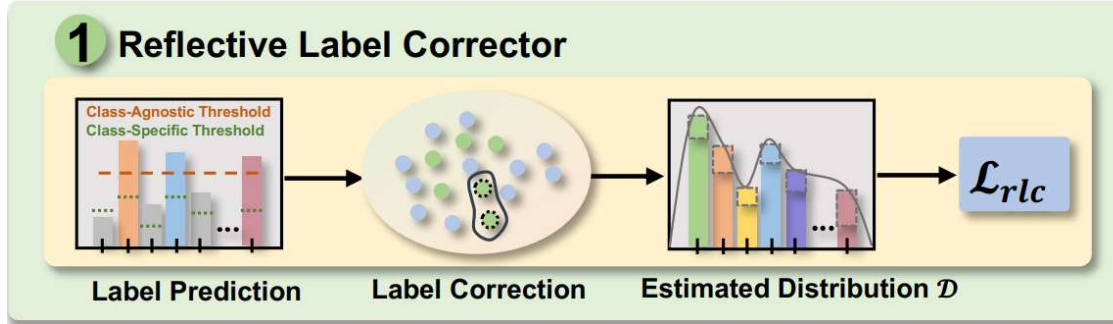
MFM module (Modification) adjusts the focal of different instances according to head-tail and positive-negative imbalance under the extreme LT distribution.

HTB module (Balance) measures the model's optimization direction and correspondingly develops a balanced learning scheme to produce stable PLT-MLC performance.

$$\underbrace{\mathcal{L}((\mathcal{S}); \Theta_b)}_{\text{COMIC Loss}} = \underbrace{\lambda_c \cdot \mathcal{L}_{rlc}}_{\text{RLC Loss}} + \underbrace{\lambda_m \cdot \mathcal{L}_{mfm}}_{\text{MFM Loss}} + \underbrace{\lambda_b \cdot \mathcal{L}_{htb}}_{\text{HTB Loss}}$$

# Methods

## Reflective Label Corrector (RLC):

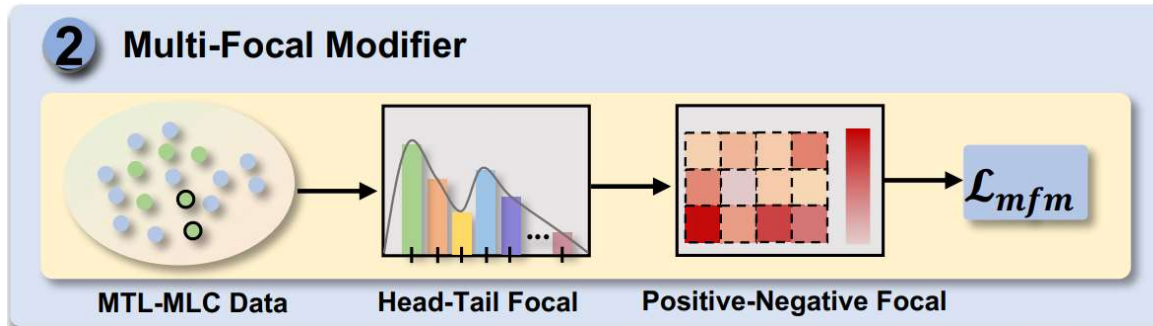


the average category possibility of past trained data with class  $c$

$$\hat{y}_c = \begin{cases} 1, & \text{if } p_c > \max\{\tau, P_c\}, y_c = 0 \\ 0, & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

$$\mathcal{L}_{rlc}(p) = \begin{cases} \mathcal{L}_{mfm}^+(p), & \text{if } \hat{y} = 1 \\ \mathbb{1}_{(y=1)} \mathcal{L}_{mfm}^+(p) + \mathbb{1}_{(\hat{y}=0)} \mathcal{L}_{mfm}^-(p), & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

## Multi-Focal Modifier (MFM) :



$$\mathcal{L}_{fl}(p) = \begin{cases} \mathcal{L}_{fl}^+ = (1-p)^\gamma \log(p), & \text{if } y = 1 \\ \mathcal{L}_{fl}^- = p^\gamma \log(1-p), & \text{if } y = 0 \end{cases}$$

$$\gamma^{(i)} = \begin{cases} \gamma^{(i)+} = \gamma_{pn}^+ + w^+ \cdot \gamma_{ht}^{(i)}, & \text{if } y = 1 \\ \gamma^{(i)-} = \gamma_{pn}^- + w^- \cdot \gamma_{ht}^{(i)}, & \text{if } y = 0 \end{cases}$$

the static class distribution  $D$  of training set with max normalization function

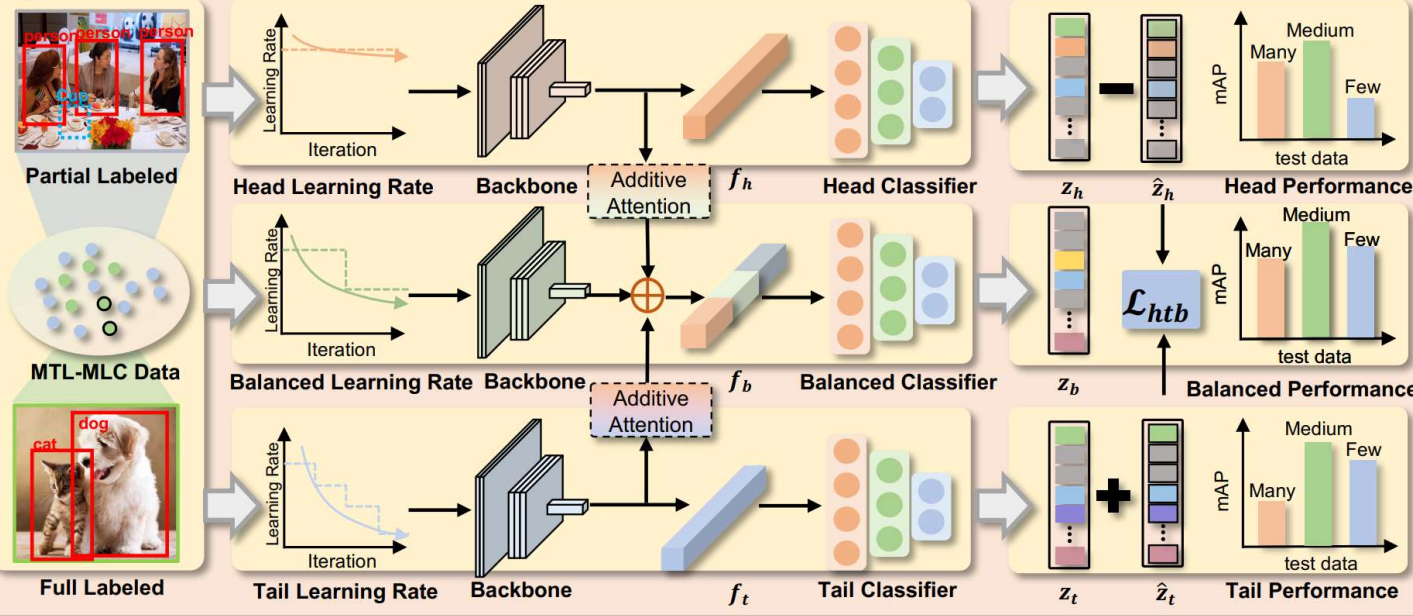
$$\mathcal{L}_{mfm}(p) = \begin{cases} \mathcal{L}_{mfm}^+ = \sum_{i=1}^C (1-p)^{\gamma^{(i)+}} \log(p), & \text{if } y = 1 \\ \mathcal{L}_{mfm}^- = \sum_{i=1}^C p^{\gamma^{(i)-}} \log(1-p), & \text{if } y = 0 \end{cases}$$



# Methods

## Head-Tail Balancer

### 3 Head-Tail Balancer



the accumulated gradient

$$\mathbf{e}_t = \mu \cdot \mathbf{e}_{t-1} + \text{sum}(g_t), \forall t = 1, \dots, T.$$

$$\mathbf{f}_b = \text{Attn}(\hat{\mathbf{f}}_b, [\mathbf{f}_h, \mathbf{f}_t]) + \hat{\mathbf{f}}_b$$

$$\mathbf{z}_x = \frac{\rho}{N_g} \sum_{k=1}^{N_g} \frac{w_k^\top \mathbf{f}_x}{(\|w_k\| + \eta) \|\mathbf{f}_x\|}, x \in \{h, t, b\}$$

$\rho$ : a scaling factor akin to the inverse temperature in Gibbs distribution  
 $\eta$ : a class-agnostic baseline energy  
 $W_k$ : the  $k$ -th learned parameter matrix.

$$\hat{\mathbf{z}}_x = \mathbf{z}_x \pm \frac{\rho}{N_g} \sum_{k=1}^{N_g} \frac{\text{sim}(\mathbf{z}_x, \mathbf{e}_t) \cdot (w_j)^\top \mathbf{e}_t}{\|w_k\| + \eta}, x \in \{h, t\}$$

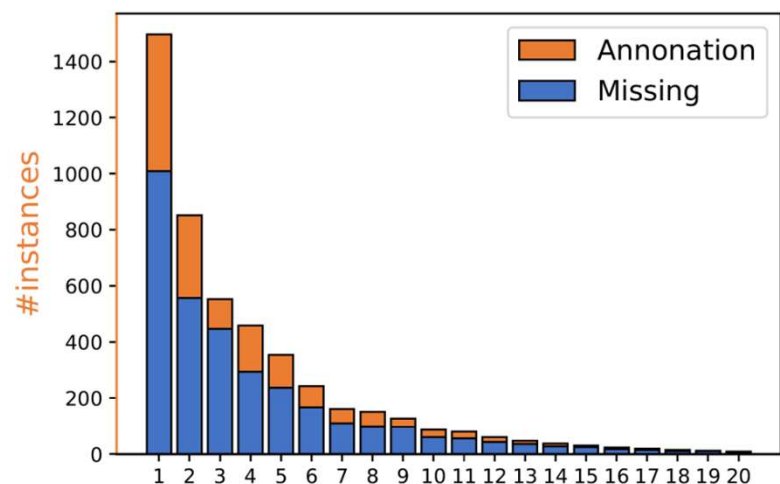
$$\mathcal{L}_{htb} = \kappa_h \cdot \mathcal{L}_{\text{softmax}}(\phi(\hat{\mathbf{z}}_h) \cdot \phi(\mathbf{z}_b)) + \kappa_t \cdot \mathcal{L}_{\text{softmax}}(\phi(\hat{\mathbf{z}}_t) \cdot \phi(\mathbf{z}_b))$$

$$\kappa_h = \frac{(\mathcal{L}(\hat{\mathbf{z}}_h))^\alpha}{(\mathcal{L}(\hat{\mathbf{z}}_t))^\alpha + (\mathcal{L}(\hat{\mathbf{z}}_h))^\alpha} \text{ and } \kappa_t = \frac{(\mathcal{L}(\hat{\mathbf{z}}_t))^\alpha}{(\mathcal{L}(\hat{\mathbf{z}}_t))^\alpha + (\mathcal{L}(\hat{\mathbf{z}}_h))^\alpha}$$

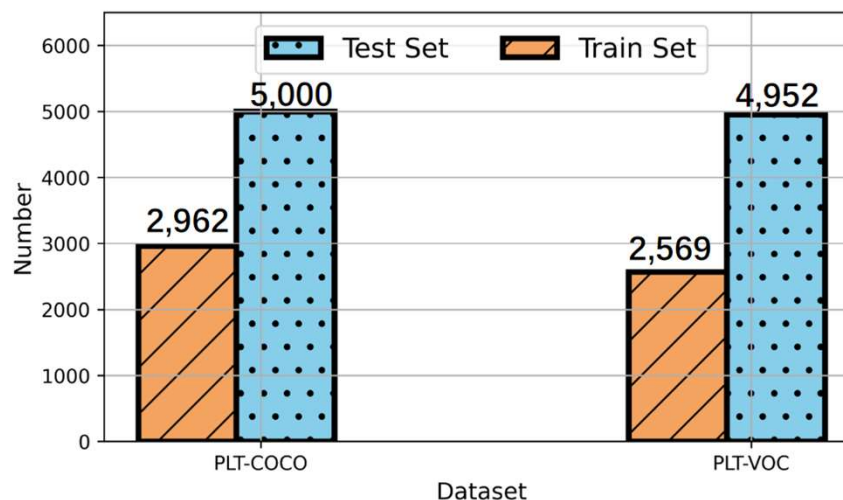
# Experiments



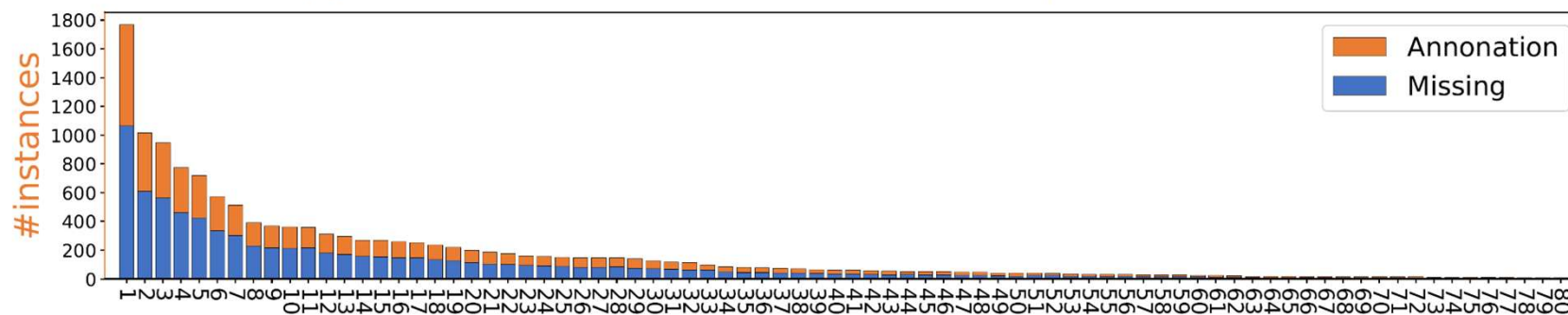
南京航空航天大学  
NANJING UNIVERSITY OF AERONAUTICS AND ASTRONAUTICS



(a) PLT-VOC Dataset



(b) Statistics of Two Datasets



# Experiments

$E2E^*$  indicates that the PLT model is learned in an end-to-end manner.

We color each row as the **best**, **second best** and **lowest score**

Category	Methods	$E2E^*$	PLT-COCO Dataset				PLT-VOC Dataset			
			Many Shot	Medium Shot	Few Shot	Total Shot	Many Shot	Medium Shot	Few Shot	Total Shot
MLC	BCE [45]	✓	42.57±0.11	56.67±0.19	46.40±0.60	48.92±0.23	67.37±0.18	88.27±0.39	83.79±0.41	78.79±0.14
	Focal [26]	✓	41.05±0.07	58.33±0.12	53.58±0.31	51.39±0.15	67.02±0.11	87.49±0.18	82.82±0.78	78.13±0.23
	ASL [3]	✓	41.60±0.17	58.15±0.15	52.67±0.17	51.20±0.08	67.67±0.10	87.79±0.13	82.23±0.55	78.35±0.11
LT-MLC	DB [37]	✓	44.83±0.31	58.96±0.24	53.82±0.47	52.16±0.36	69.22±0.28	88.56±0.42	83.72±0.35	78.86±0.23
	DB-Focal [37]	✓	45.76±0.25	59.74±0.21	53.85±0.16	52.57±0.27	68.96±0.22	88.89±0.18	83.42±0.20	78.90±0.26
	LWS [13]	-	44.86±0.58	58.79±0.63	53.48±0.51	52.86±0.60	69.08±0.44	88.24±0.55	83.46±0.47	78.28±0.49
PL-MLC	Pseudo-Label [15]	-	41.41±0.41	57.46±0.35	53.12±0.33	51.67±0.37	67.38±0.24	87.58±0.35	83.26±0.42	78.32±0.30
	ML-GCN [5]	✓	43.43±0.53	58.46±0.61	53.74±0.48	52.14±0.55	68.46±0.44	88.17±0.61	82.46±0.38	79.02±0.56
	Hill [44]	✓	42.50±0.16	56.89±0.19	47.31±0.37	49.28±0.09	68.79±0.15	86.70±0.17	78.15±0.99	77.40±0.22
	P-ASL [2]	✓	43.09±0.05	57.67±0.07	53.46±0.22	51.75±0.17	68.95±0.22	87.24±0.13	83.37±0.33	78.96±0.16
PLT-MLC	Head Model (Ours)	✓	47.59±0.09	59.07±0.12	52.35±0.28	53.30±0.19	72.91±0.28	88.59±0.31	82.12±0.27	80.70±0.30
	Tail Model (Ours)	✓	46.30±0.25	58.76±0.29	53.38±0.14	53.09±0.27	71.65±0.34	88.68±0.41	83.51±0.24	80.58±0.36
	COMIC (Ours)	✓	49.21±0.22	60.08±0.13	55.36±0.21	55.08±0.14	73.10±0.35	89.18±0.45	84.53±0.48	81.53±0.35
Improv. ↑	-	-	1.62 ~ 8.16	0.34 ~ 3.41	0.53 ~ 8.96	1.78 ~ 6.16	0.19 ~ 6.08	0.29 ~ 2.48	-0.3 ~ 6.38	0.83 ~ 4.13

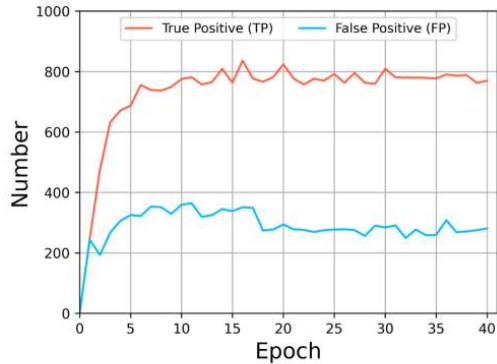


# Experiments

Missing Ratio	PLT-COCO Dataset			
	Total Shot	Many Shot	Medium Shot	Low Shot
0%	57.07±0.09	52.21±0.11	59.98±0.12	61.12±0.24
30%	55.80±0.17	49.97±0.11	62.59±0.15	54.56±0.17
40%	54.75±0.19	48.93±0.24	60.31±0.21	54.14±0.21
50%	54.69±0.15	48.74±0.12	56.68±0.16	57.25±0.24

Performance comparison under different missing labeled settings. 0% indicates an LT dataset that is fully labeled.

In-depth analysis of label correction.



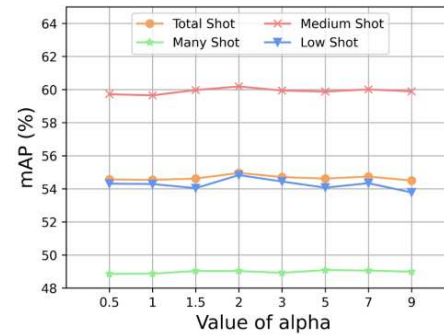
(a) Number of TP and FP

$$\mathcal{L}_{htb} = \kappa_h \cdot \mathcal{L}(\phi(\hat{\mathbf{z}}_h) \cdot \phi(\mathbf{z}_b)) + \kappa_t \cdot \mathcal{L}(\phi(\hat{\mathbf{z}}_t) \cdot \phi(\mathbf{z}_b))$$

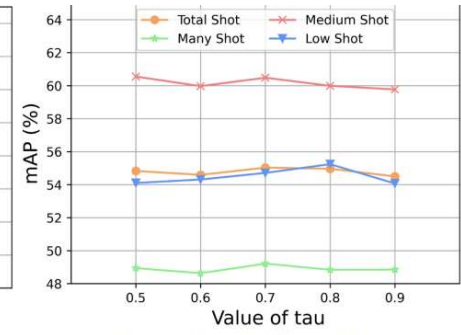
$$\kappa_h = \frac{(\mathcal{L}(\hat{\mathbf{z}}_h))^\alpha}{(\mathcal{L}(\hat{\mathbf{z}}_t))^\alpha + (\mathcal{L}(\hat{\mathbf{z}}_h))^\alpha} \text{ and } \kappa_t = \frac{(\mathcal{L}(\hat{\mathbf{z}}_t))^\alpha}{(\mathcal{L}(\hat{\mathbf{z}}_t))^\alpha + (\mathcal{L}(\hat{\mathbf{z}}_h))^\alpha}$$

$$\hat{y}_c = \begin{cases} 1, & \text{if } p_c > \max\{\tau, P_c\}, y_c = 0 \\ 0, & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

Ablations with respect to coefficient  $\alpha$  and  $\tau$ .



(a) mAP of different  $\alpha$



(b) mAP of different  $\tau$

# Experiments

Ablation study of different modules.

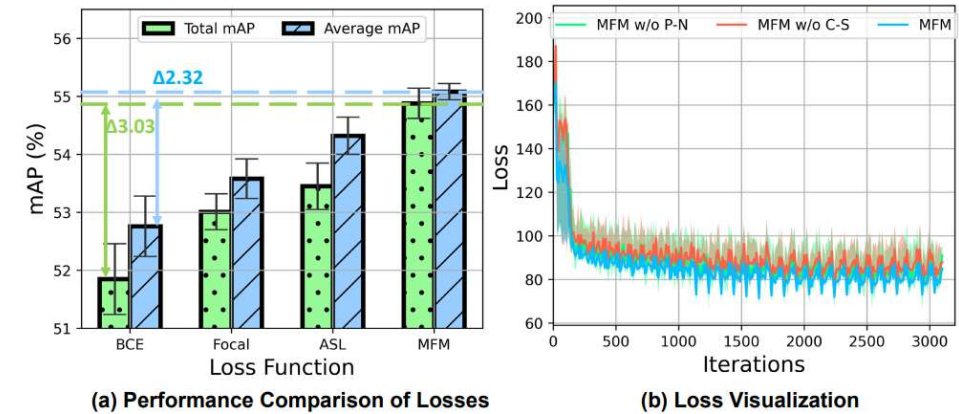
M,C,B represent modification, correction and balance learning

Models	Setting			PLT-COCO Dataset		
	M	C	B	Total mAP	Average mAP	Recall
-RLC		✓	✓	54.70±0.13	54.42±0.15	85.26±0.08
-MFM	✓		✓	54.60±0.13	54.33±0.13	84.59±0.19
-HTB	✓	✓		53.65±0.31	53.36±0.31	84.19±0.23
COMIC	✓	✓	✓	<b>55.08±0.14</b>	<b>54.88±0.19</b>	<b>88.19±0.22</b>

Ablation of MFM. ↓ indicates the mAP decay

MFM Factor		PLT-COCO Dataset			
P-N	H-T	Total Shot	Many Shot	Medium Shot	Low Shot
	✓	54.44 (↓ 0.64)	48.65 (↓ 0.56)	60.00 (↓ 0.08 )	53.81 (↓ 1.55 )
✓		53.70 (↓ 1.38)	48.38 (↓ 0.83 )	58.99 (↓ 1.09 )	52.91 (↓ 2.45)
✓	✓	55.08	49.21	60.08	55.36

MLT-MLC results using different losses



Thanks