Lecture 03: Machine Translation

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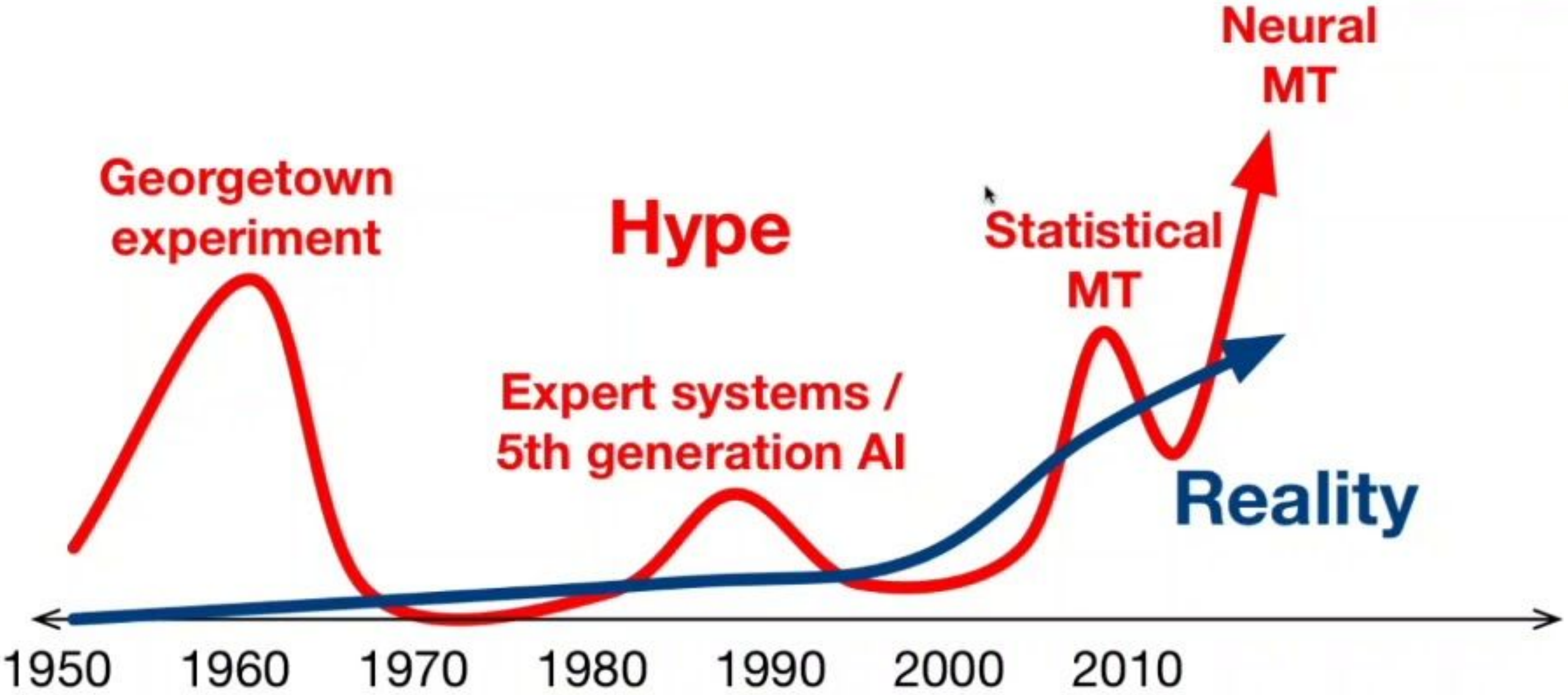
Outline

- Machine Translation historical overview
  - Statistical Machine Translation
  - Word alignments
- Neural Machine Translation (NMT)
  - Seq2Seq
  - Beam Search
- Measuring the quality of translation

Based on: http://web.stanford.edu/class/cs224n/slides/cs224n-2019-lecture08-nmt.pdf

Historical overview



Before Deep Learning

1950s: first Machine Translation

- Georgetown experiment (7 Jan 1954)
    - Automatic Russian-English translation of 60 sentences
    - 250 vocabulary articles
    - 6 grammar rules
    - Calculated on Mainframe IBM 701
- The same experiment in the USSR (1954 too)
    - Rule-based translation
    - Calculated on BESM

1990-2010: Statistical Machine Translation

We want to find best English sentence y, given French sentence x

Let’s use Bayes Rule to break this down into two components:

$$\operatorname{argmax}_y P(y|x)$$
$$= \operatorname{argmax}_y \underbrace{P(x|y)}\underbrace{P(y)}$$

Translation Model

Models how words and phrases should be translated (*fidelity*). Learnt from parallel data.

Language Model

Models how to write good English (*fluency*). Learnt from monolingual data.

Source: http://web.stanford.edu/class/cs224n/slides/cs224n-2019-lecture08-nmt.pdf

1990-2010: Statistical Machine Translation

How to learn translation model from the parallel corpus?

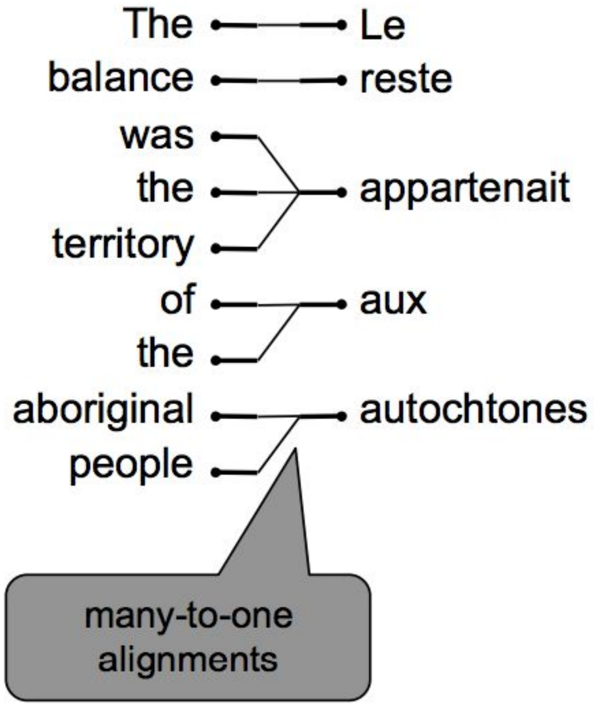
Let's calculate

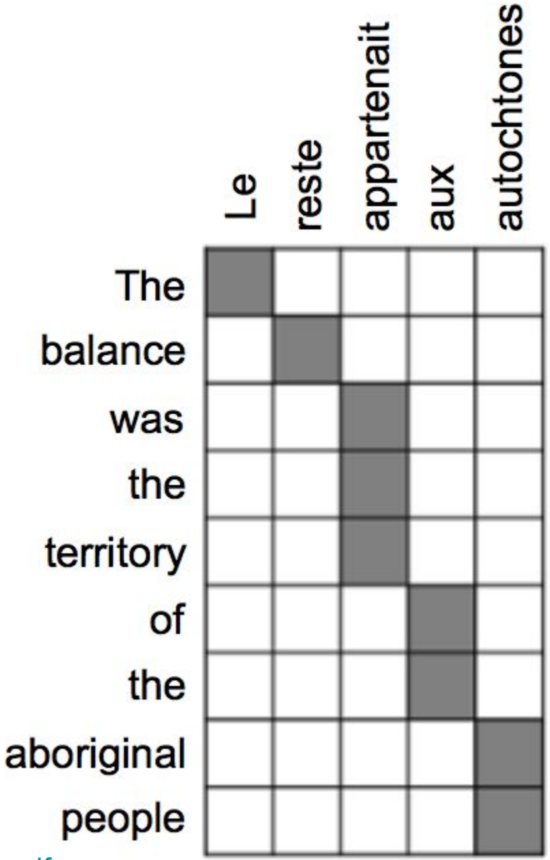
$$P(x, a|y)$$

Where **a** is an **alignment** (word-level correspondence between French sentence x and English sentence y)

1990-2010: Statistical Machine Translation

Alignment can be: **many-to-one**





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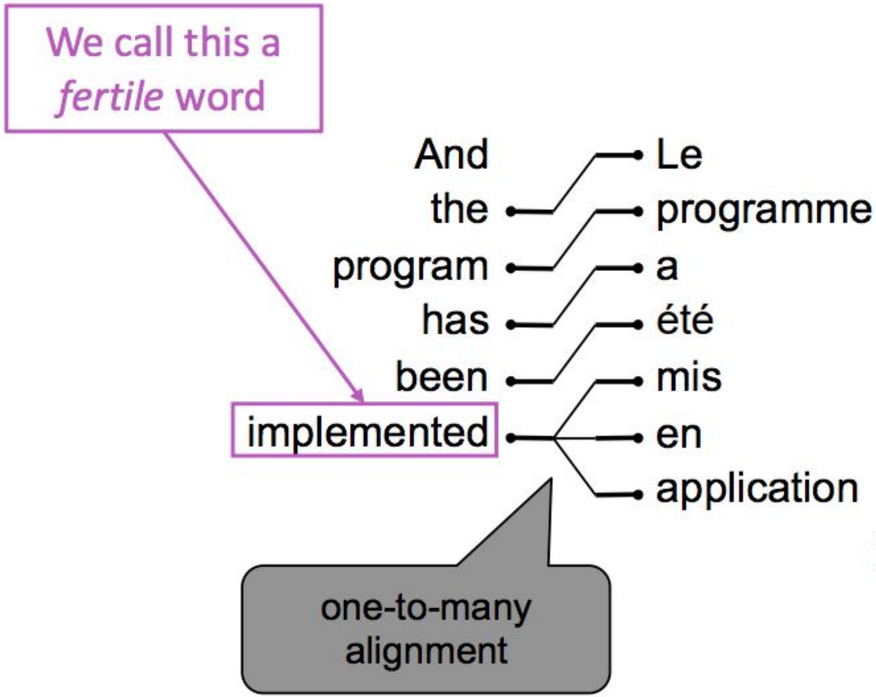
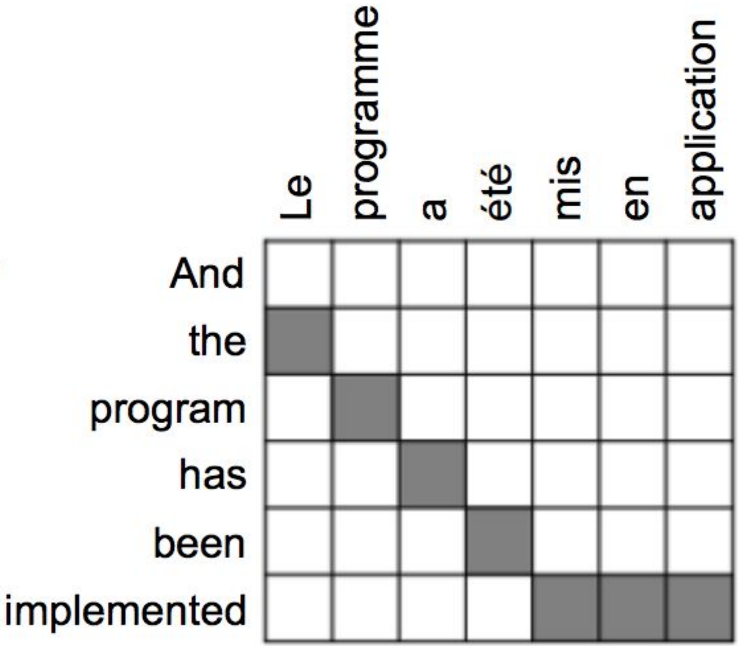
1990-2010: Statistical Machine Translation

Alignment can be: **one-to-many**





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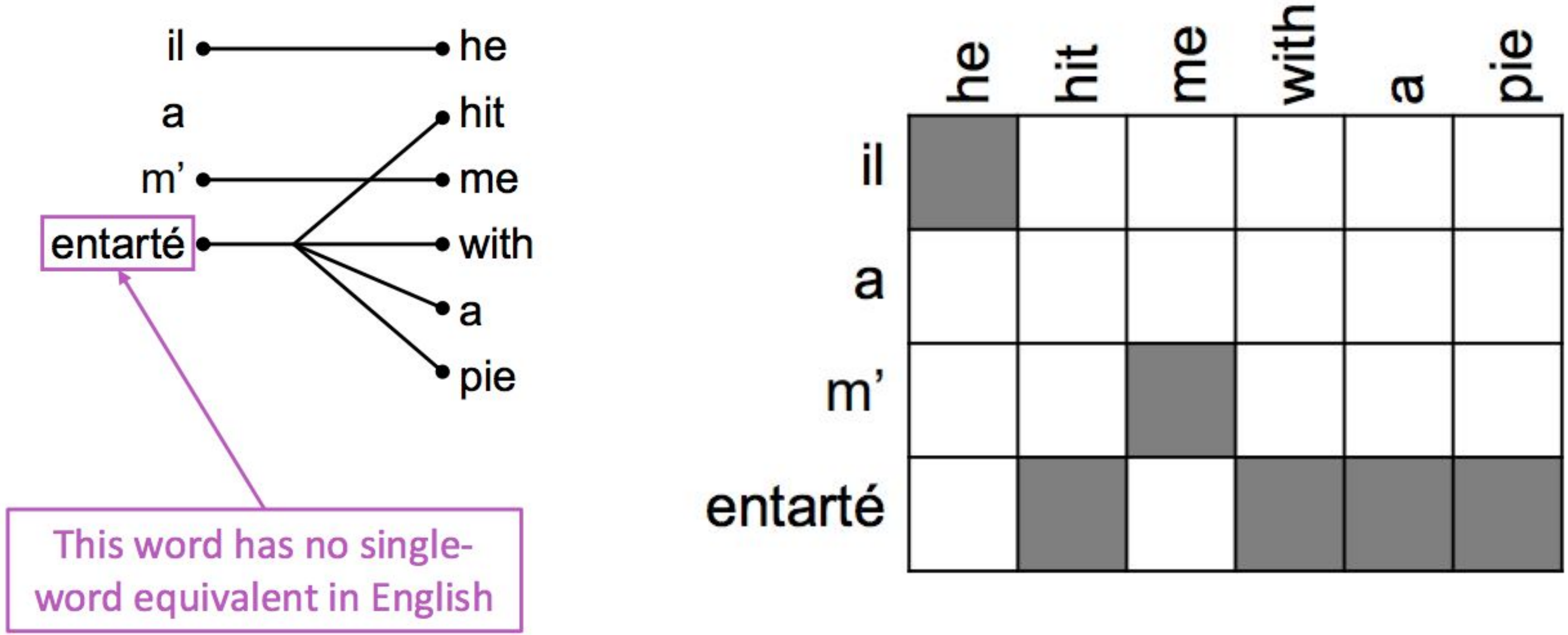
1990-2010: Statistical Machine Translation

Some words are very fertile!



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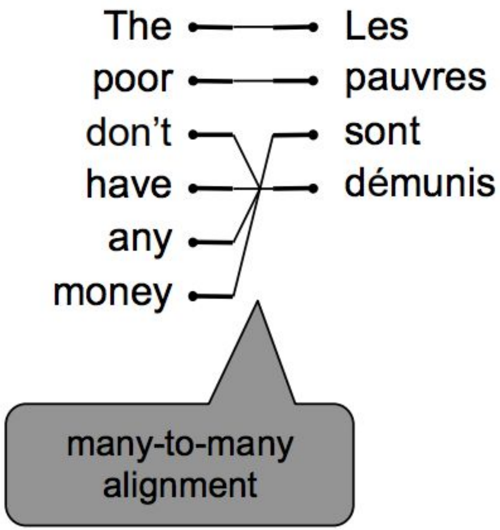
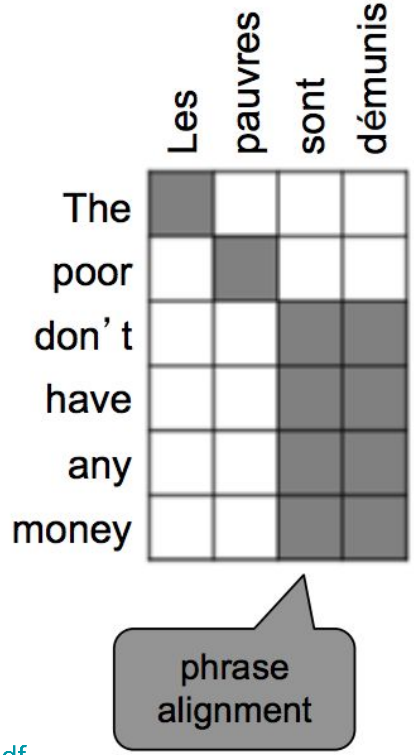
1990-2010: Statistical Machine Translation

Alignment can be: **many-to-many**





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1990-2010: Statistical Machine Translation

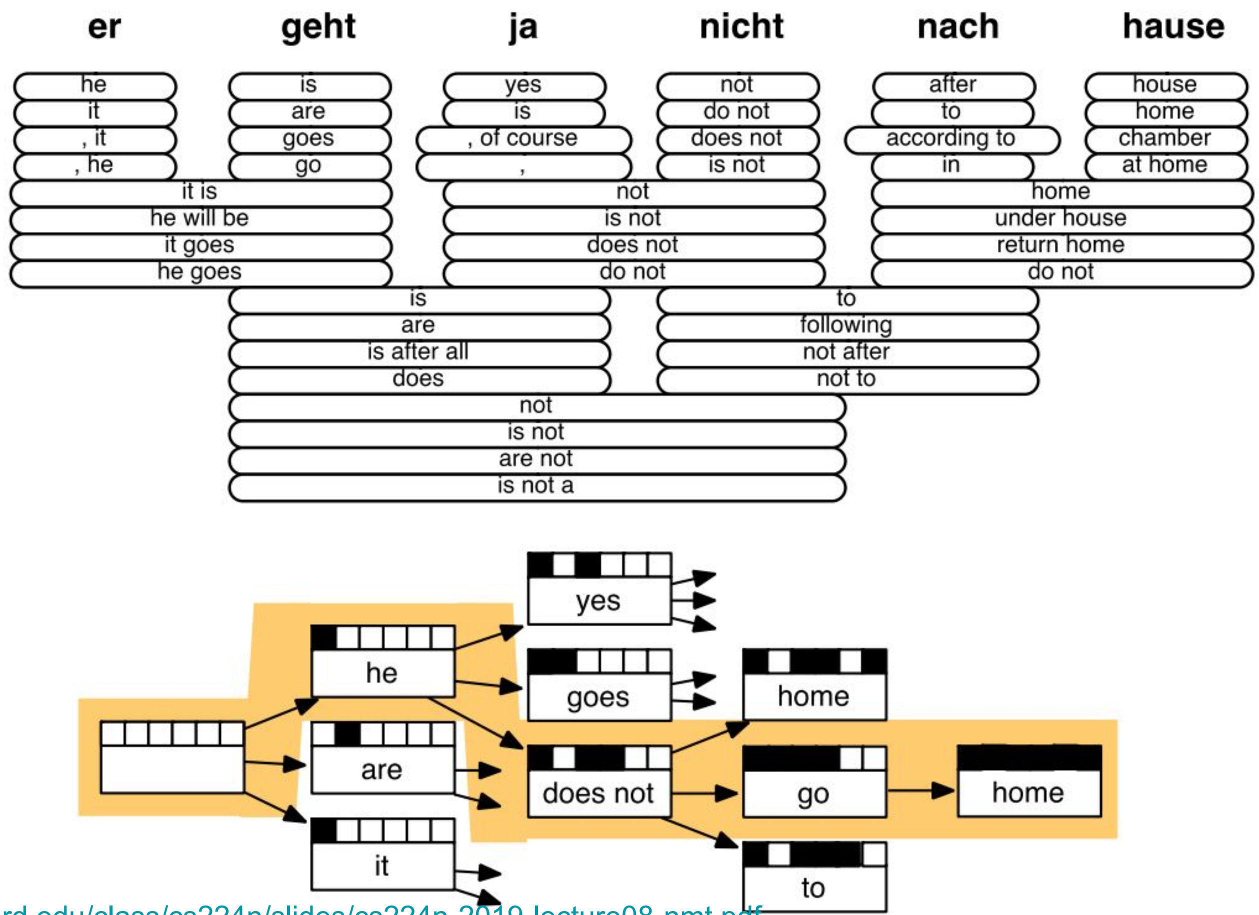
$$\underbrace{\operatorname{argmax}_y}_{\text{Question: How to compute this argmax?}} \underbrace{P(x|y)}_{\text{Translation Model}} \underbrace{P(y)}_{\text{Language Model}}$$

Enumerate every possible y and calculate the probability? No!

Use a heuristic search algorithm to search for the best translation, discarding hypotheses that are too low-probability

Source: http://web.stanford.edu/class/cs224n/slides/cs224n-2019-lecture08-nmt.pdf

1990-2010: Statistical Machine Translation



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1990-2010: Statistical Machine Translation

- Systems had many separately-designed subcomponents
- Lots of feature engineering
- Need to design features to capture particular language phenomena
- Require compiling and maintaining extra resources (tables of equivalent phrases)
- Lots of human effort to maintain
- Repeated effort for each language pair!

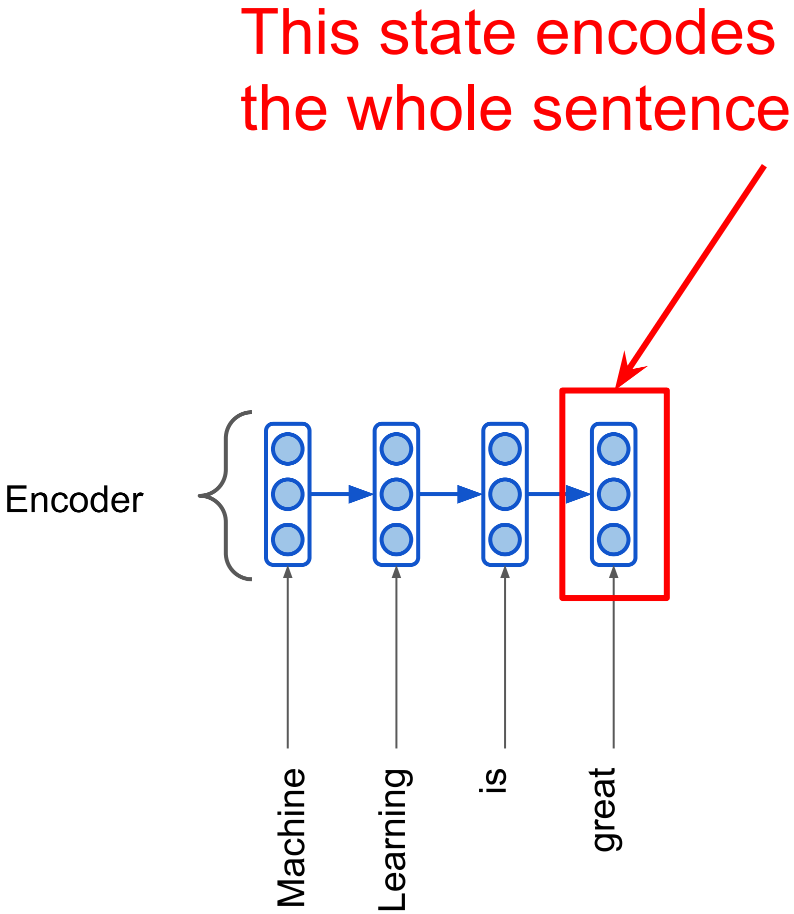
Neural Machine Translation

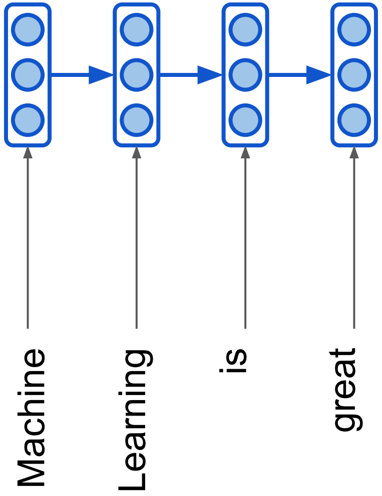
What is Neural Machine Translation?

- Neural Machine Translation (NMT) is a way to do Machine Translation with a single neural network

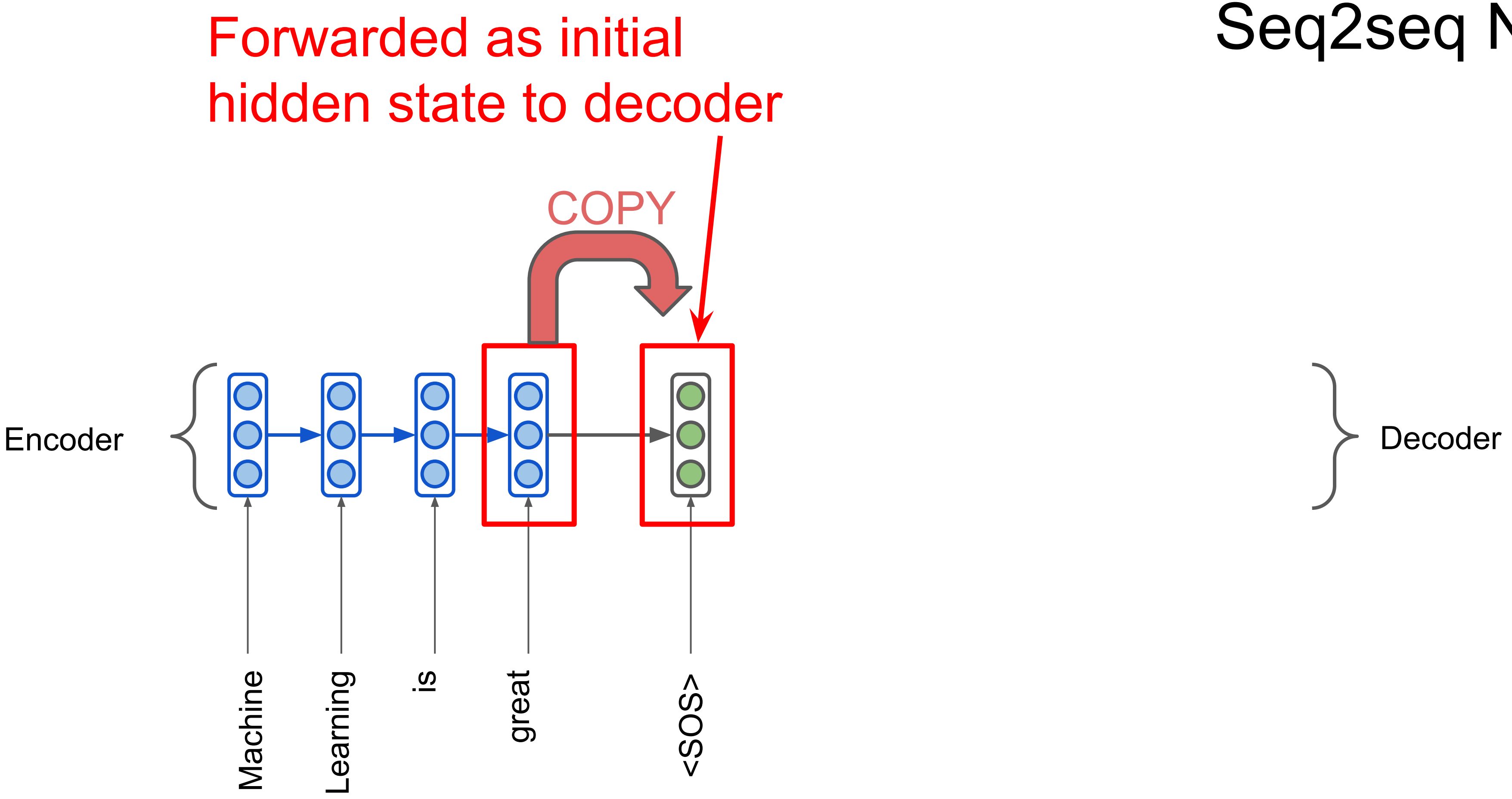
- The neural network architecture is called sequence-to-sequence (aka **seq2seq**), it involves two **RNNs**

Seq2seq NMT

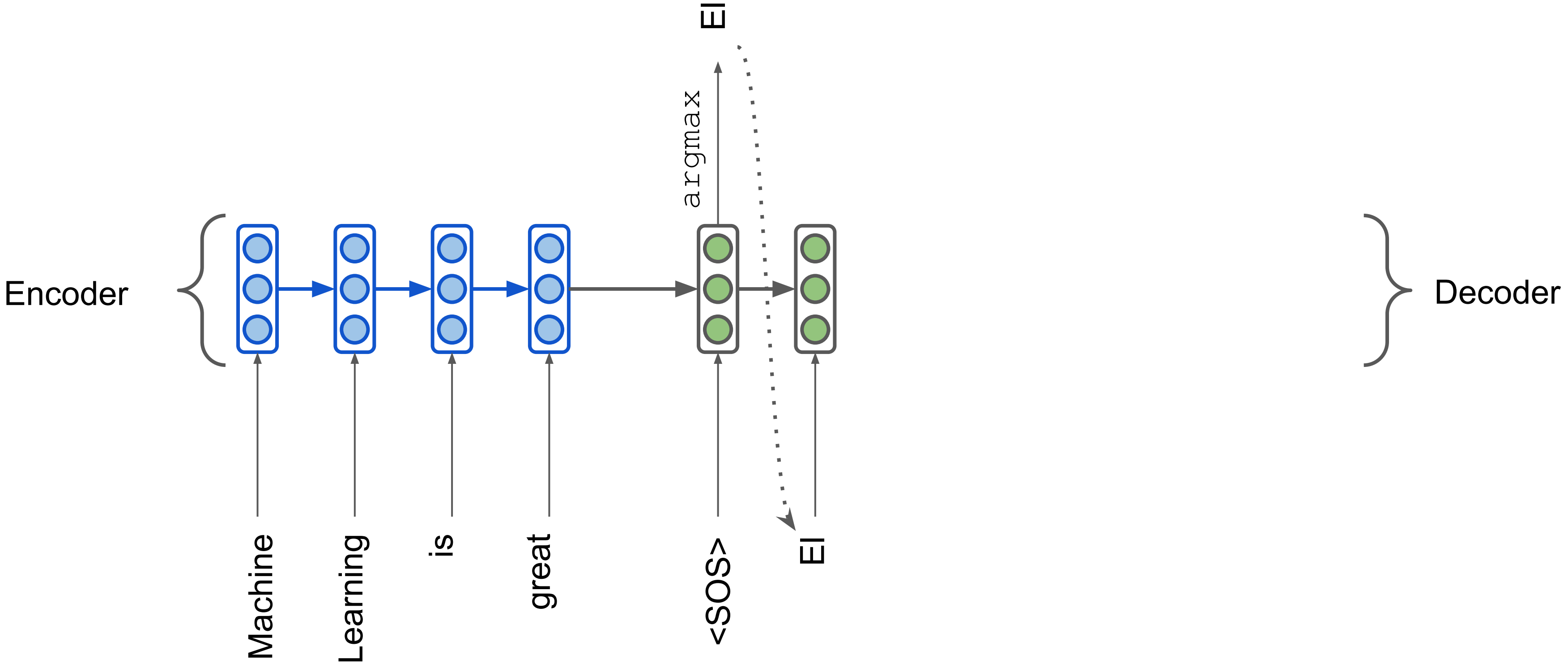

This state encodes the whole sentence
Encoder
Machine
Learning
is
great


Machine
Learning
is
great

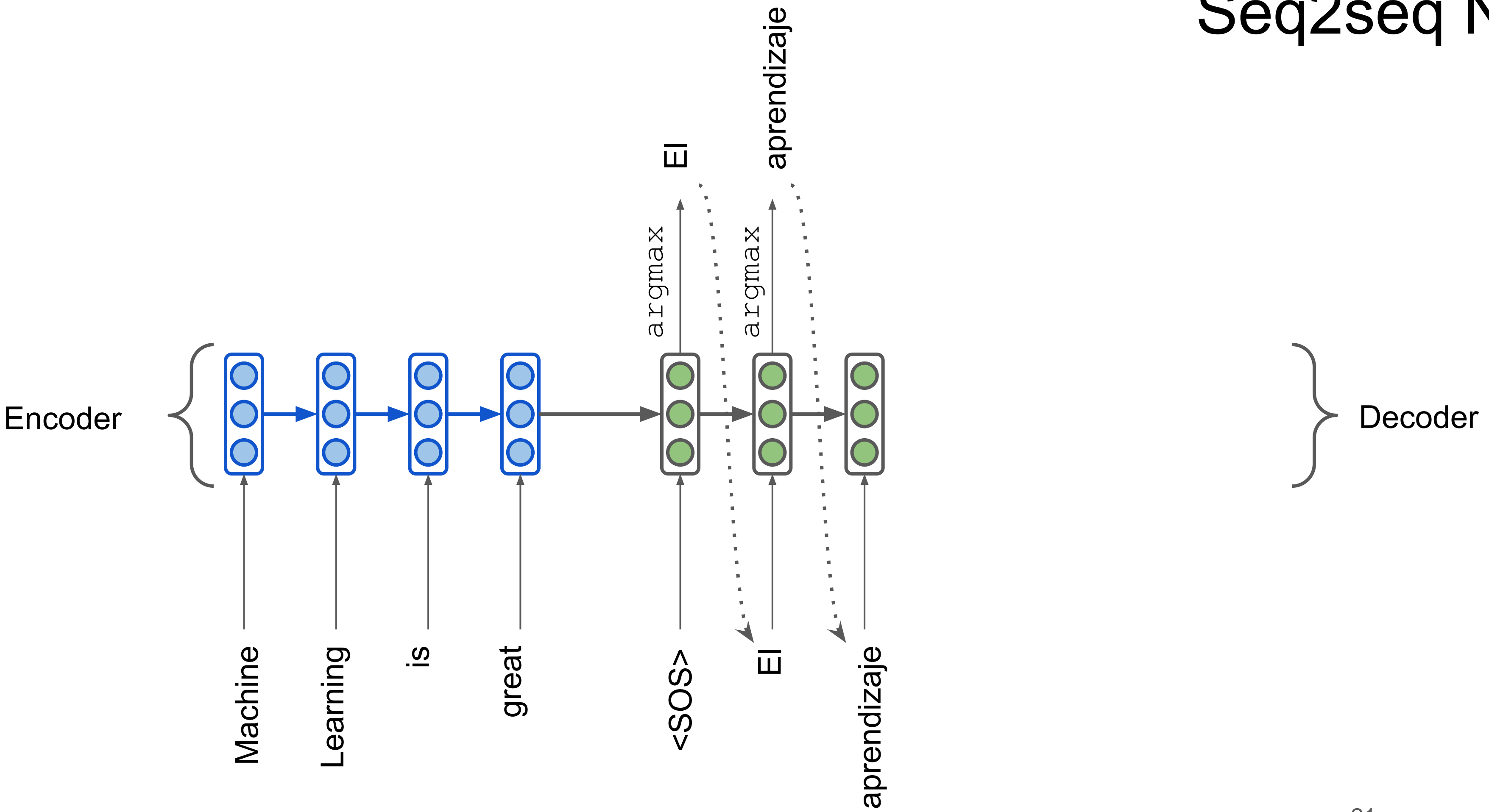
Seq2seq NMT


Forwarded as initial
hidden state to decoder
COPY
Encoder
Decoder
Machine
Learning
is
great
<SOS>

Seq2seq NMT



Seq2seq NMT



Encoder
Decoder
Machine
Learning
is
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El
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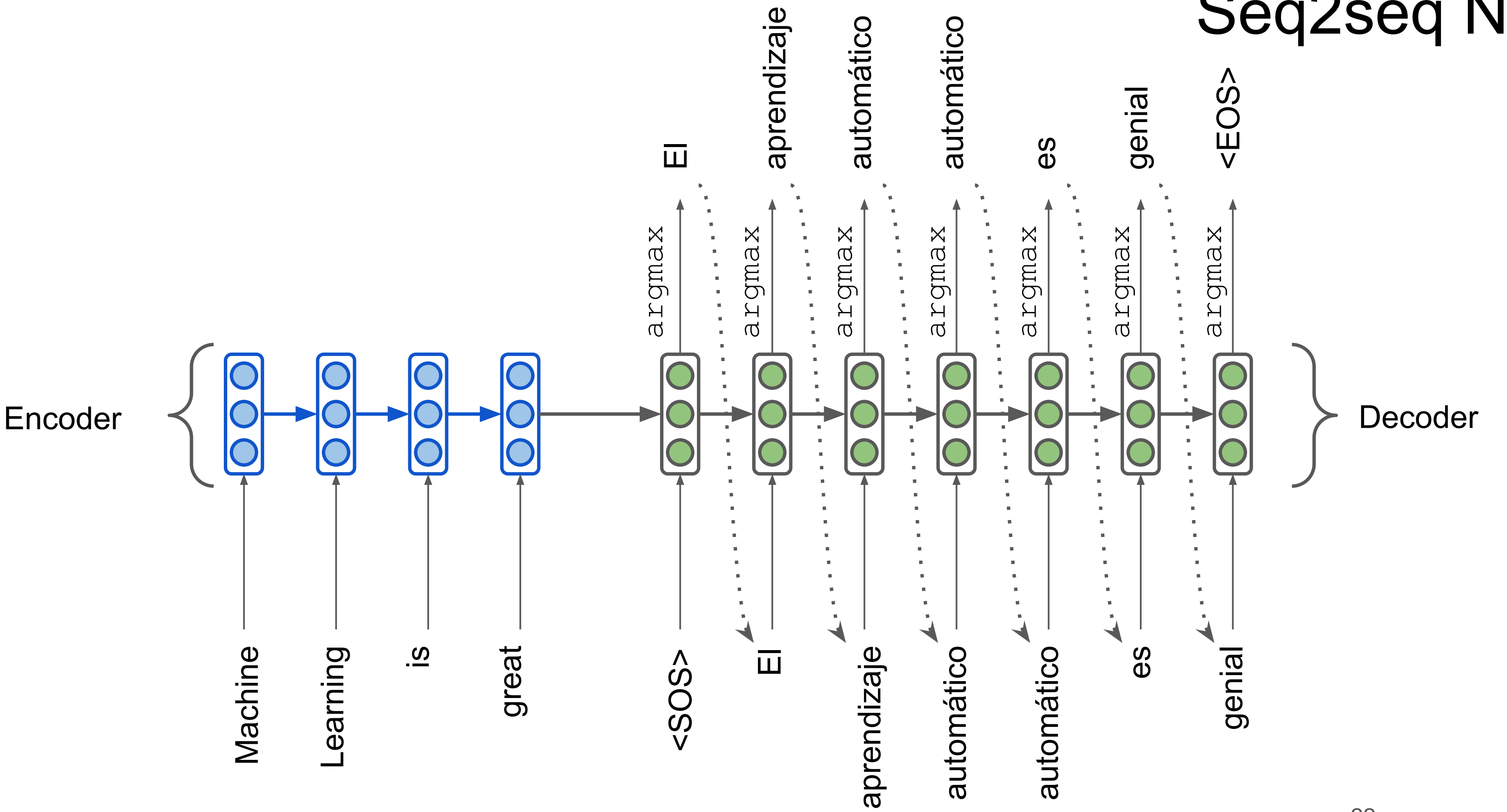
Seq2seq NMT



Encoder
Decoder
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El
aprendizaje
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El
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automático
es
genial
<EOS>

NMT: how does it work?

- NMT directly calculates P(y|x)
  - y – target sentence, x – source sentence

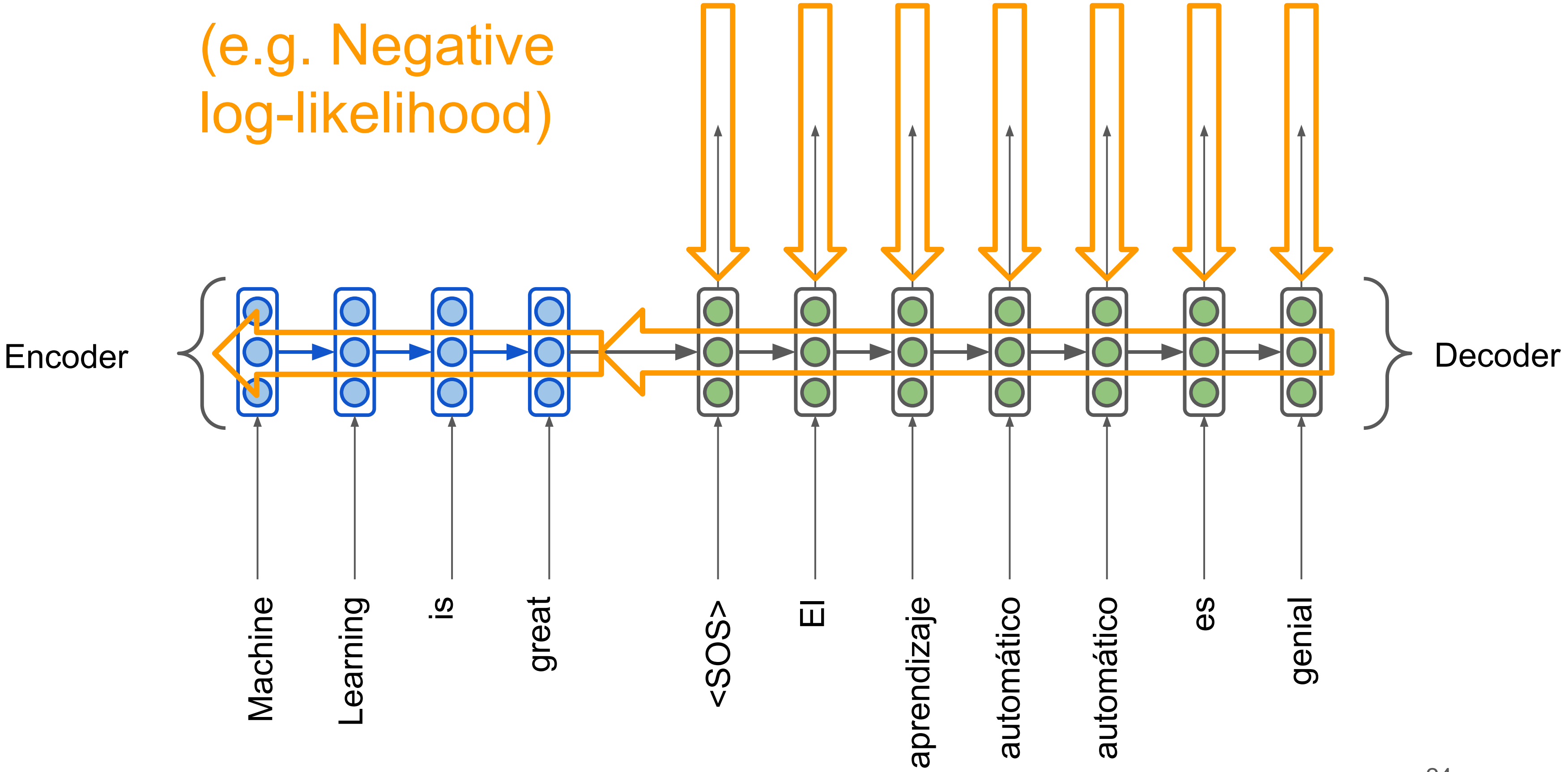
$$P(y|x) = P(y_2|y_1, x)P(y_3|y_1, y_2, x) \dots \underbrace{P(y_T|y_1, y_2, \dots, x)}$$

Probability of next word
in target language

- To train it we need a huge parallel corpus.

Seq2seq is trained end-to-end

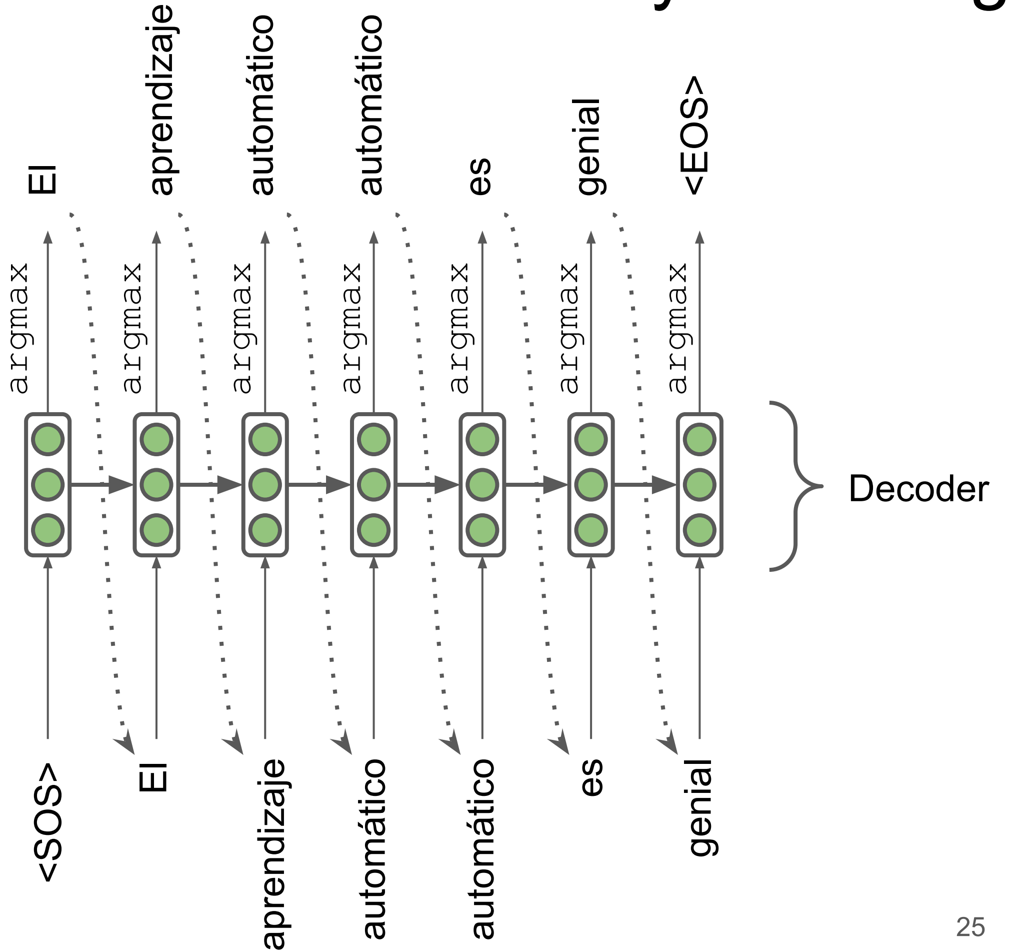
Loss
(e.g. Negative log-likelihood)



Greedy decoding

- Decoder predicts the most probable token (argmax) on each step

- The approach is **greedy**



Any problems with it?

Any mistake is treated as input on the next step!

Exhaustive search

- We want the translation that maximizes the likelihood:

$$P(y|x) = P(y_1|x)\prod_{t=2}^{T} P(y_t|y_1,\ldots y_{t-1},x)$$

- We cannot compute all the possible sequences (exponential complexity)

Beam search

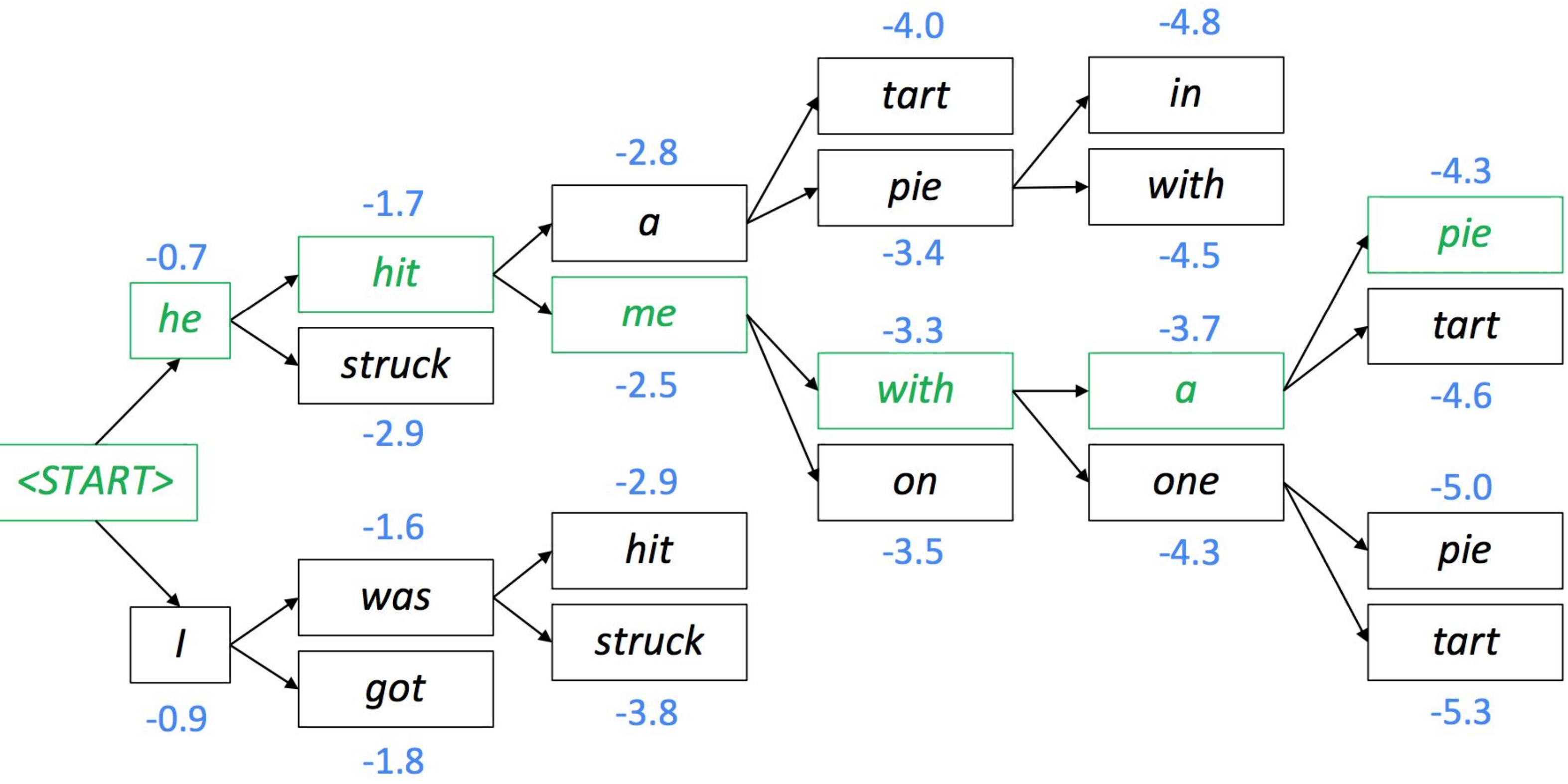
- On each step of decoder, keep track of the k most probable partial translations (which we call hypotheses)
- k is the beam size (in practice around 5 to 10)
- A hypothesis has a score which is its log probability:

$$\text{score}(y_1, \ldots, y_t) = \log P_{\text{LM}}(y_1, \ldots, y_t | x) = \sum_{i=1}^{t} \log P_{\text{LM}}(y_i | y_1, \ldots, y_{i-1}, x)$$

- We search for high-scoring hypotheses, tracking top k on each step
- Beam search does not guarantee finding optimal solution

Beam search decoding: example

Beam size = k = 2. Blue numbers = $\text{score}(y_1, \ldots, y_t) = \sum_{i=1}^{t} \log P_{\text{LM}}(y_i | y_1, \ldots, y_{i-1}, x)$



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Beam search decoding: stopping criterion

- In **greedy decoding**, usually we decode until the model produces <EOS> token
- In **beam search decoding**, different hypotheses may produce <EOS> tokens on different timesteps
  - When a hypothesis produces <EOS>, that hypothesis is complete.
  - Place it aside and continue exploring other hypotheses via beam search.
- Usually we continue beam search until:
  - We reach pre-defined timestep T
  - We have at least n completed hypotheses

Beam search decoding: finishing up

- How to select top one with highest score?
- Each hypothesis on our list has a score:

$$\text{score}(y_1, \dots, y_t) = \log P_{\text{LM}}(y_1, \dots, y_t | x) = \sum_{i=1}^{t} \log P_{\text{LM}}(y_i | y_1, \dots, y_{i-1}, x)$$

- **Problems?**

  Longer hypotheses have lower scores

- **Fix:** Normalize by length. Use this to select top one instead:

$$\frac{1}{t} \sum_{i=1}^{t} \log P_{\text{LM}}(y_i | y_1, \dots, y_{i-1}, x)$$

NMT: Quality Evaluation

BLEU (Bilingual Evaluation Understudy) compares the machine-written translation to human-written translation, and computes a similarity score based on:

- n-gram precision
- penalty for too-short system translations (brevity penalty)

$$BLEU = \text{brevity penalty} \cdot \left(\prod_{i=1}^{n} \text{precision}_i \right)^{1/n} \cdot 100\%$$

$$\text{brevity penalty} = min\left(1, \frac{\text{output length}}{\text{reference length}}\right)$$

BLEU

BLEU (Bilingual Evaluation Understudy) compares the machine-written translation to human-written translation, and computes a similarity score based on:

- n-gram precision
- brevity penalty

SYSTEM A: Israeli officials responsibility of airport safety
2-GRAM MATCH 1-GRAM MATCH

REFERENCE: Israeli officials are responsible for airport security

SYSTEM B: airport security Israeli officials are responsible
2-GRAM MATCH 4-GRAM MATCH

Metric	System A	System B
precision (1gram)	3/6	6/6
precision (2gram)	1/5	4/5
precision (3gram)	0/4	2/4
precision (4gram)	0/3	1/3
brevity penalty	6/7	6/7
BLEU	0%	52%

$$BLEU = \text{brevity penalty} \cdot \left(\prod_{i=1}^{n} \text{precision}_i \right)^{1/n} \cdot 100\%$$

BLEU

BLEU is imperfect:

- There are many valid ways to translate a sentence
- So a good translation may get a poor BLEU score just because of low n-gram overlap with the human translation

Other ways to estimate translation quality

- **ROUGE** (Recall-Oriented Understudy for Gisting Evaluation)
- **METEOR** (Metric for Evaluation of Translation with Explicit ORdering)
  - Uses synonyms from WordNet
- **NIST** (от US National Institute of Standards and Technology)
  - More weight to rare n-grams, less punishment for short texts
- **TER**
  - Uses the number of changes that should be made to get to the reference translation

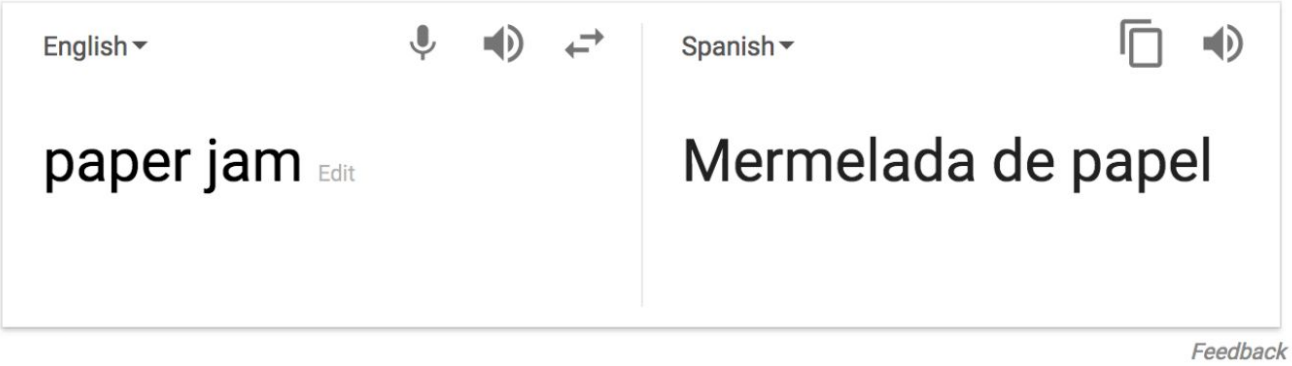
NMT: advantages

- Better performance
  - More fluent
  - Better use of context
  - Better use of phrase similarities
- A single neural network to be optimized end-to-end
  - No subcomponents to be individually optimized
- Requires much less human engineering effort
  - No feature engineering
  - Same method for all language pairs

NMT: disadvantages

- NMT is less interpretable
  - Hard to debug
- NMT is difficult to control
  - For example, can’t easily specify rules or guidelines for translation
  - Safety concerns!

NMT: disadvantages



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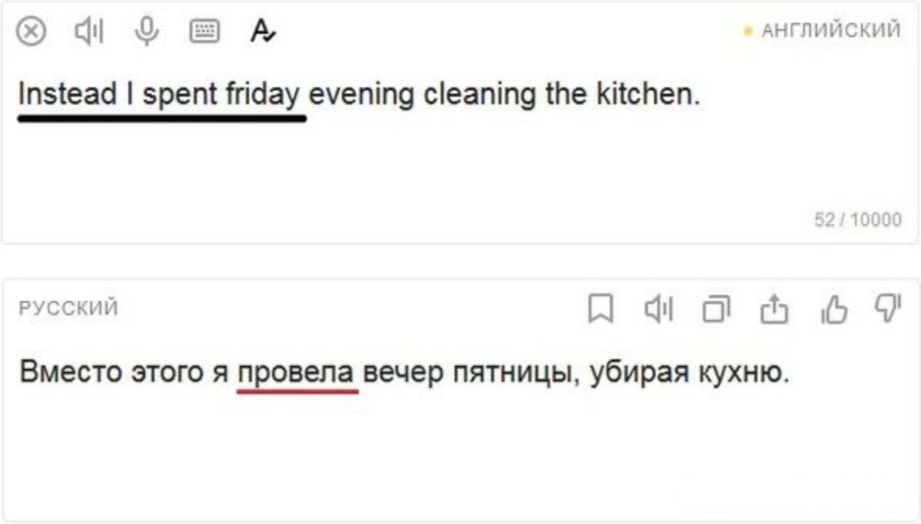
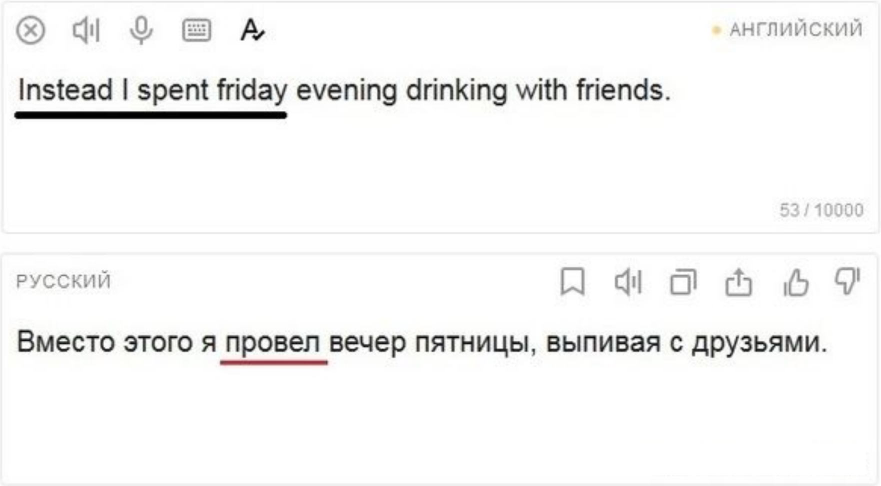
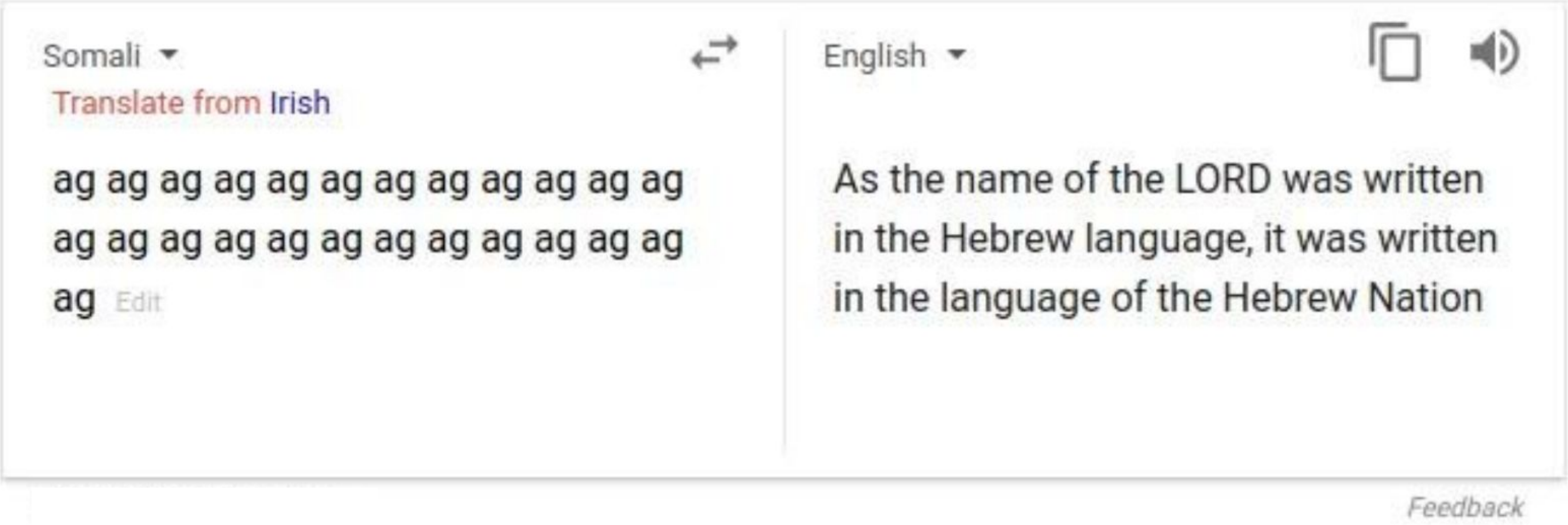
NMT: disadvantages

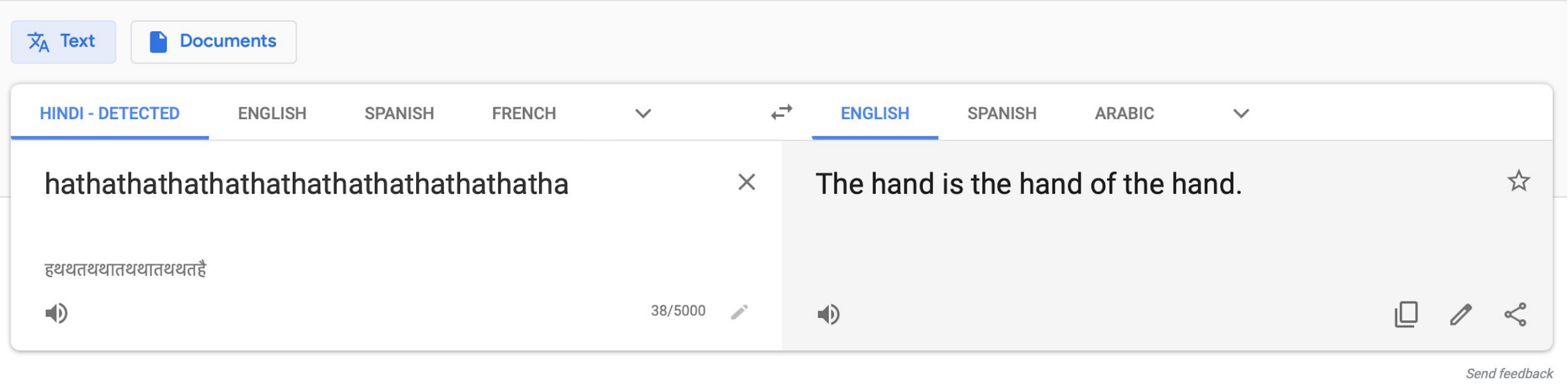




NMT: disadvantages



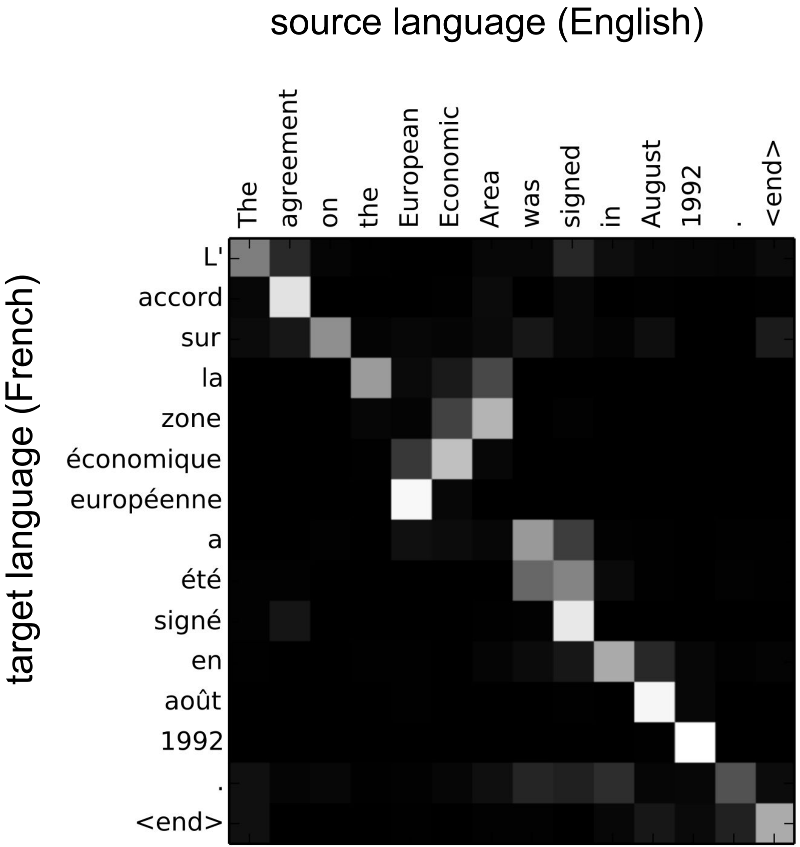
NMT: disadvantages

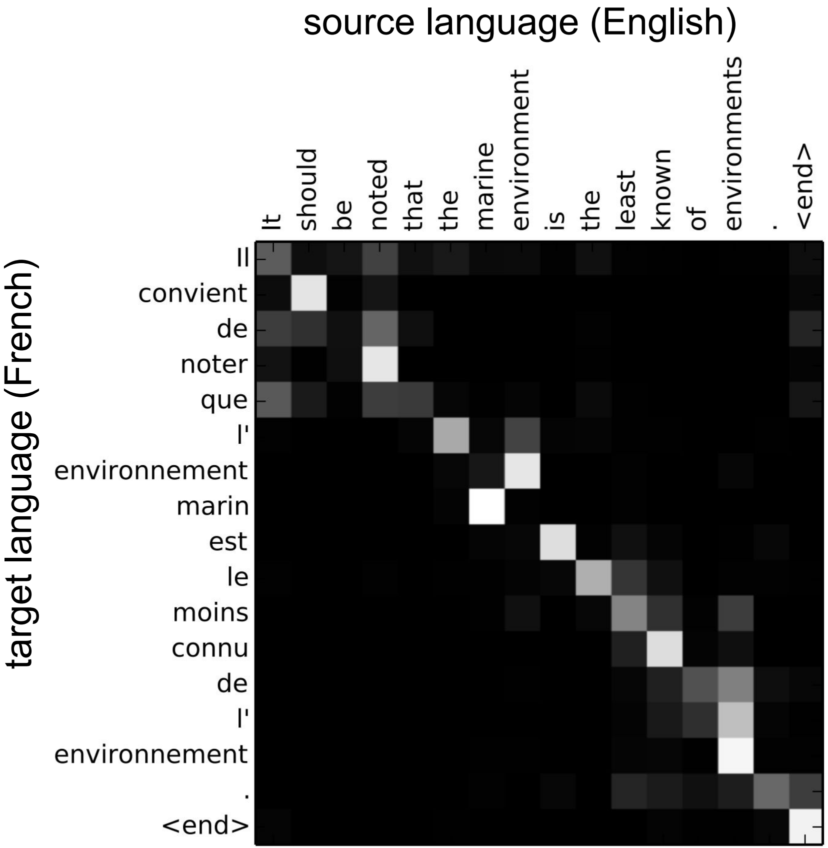


Is Machine Translation solved?

- Many difficulties remain:
  - Out-of-vocabulary words
  - Domain mismatch between train and test data
  - Maintaining context over long texts
  - Low-resource language pairs (no big parallel corpora)

Attention outro





Bahdanau et al. "Neural Machine Translation by Jointly Learning to Align and Translate", 2014