

# Image Captioning

**Danna Gurari**

University of Colorado Boulder

Fall 2022



<https://home.cs.colorado.edu/~DrG/Courses/NeuralNetworksAndDeepLearning/AboutCourse.html>

# Review

- Last week
  - Visual question answering applications
  - Visual question answering datasets
  - Visual question answering evaluation
  - Mainstream challenge 2015 winner: baseline approach
  - Mainstream challenge 2019 winner: transformer-based approach
  - Programming tutorial
- Assignments (Canvas)
  - Lab assignment 4 due next week
- Questions?

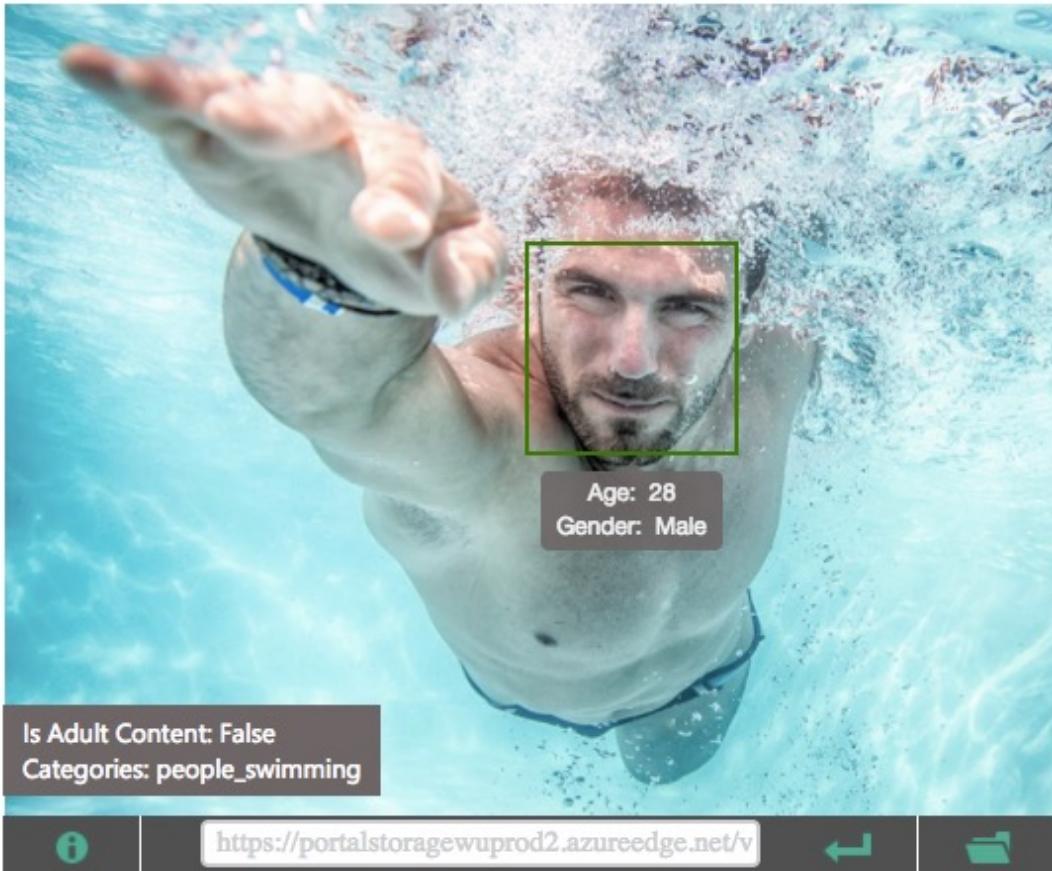
# Today's Topics

- Image captioning applications
- Image captioning datasets
- Image captioning evaluation
- Challenge winners

# Today's Topics

- Image captioning applications
- Image captioning datasets
- Image captioning evaluation
- Challenge winners

# A “Human-Like” Description

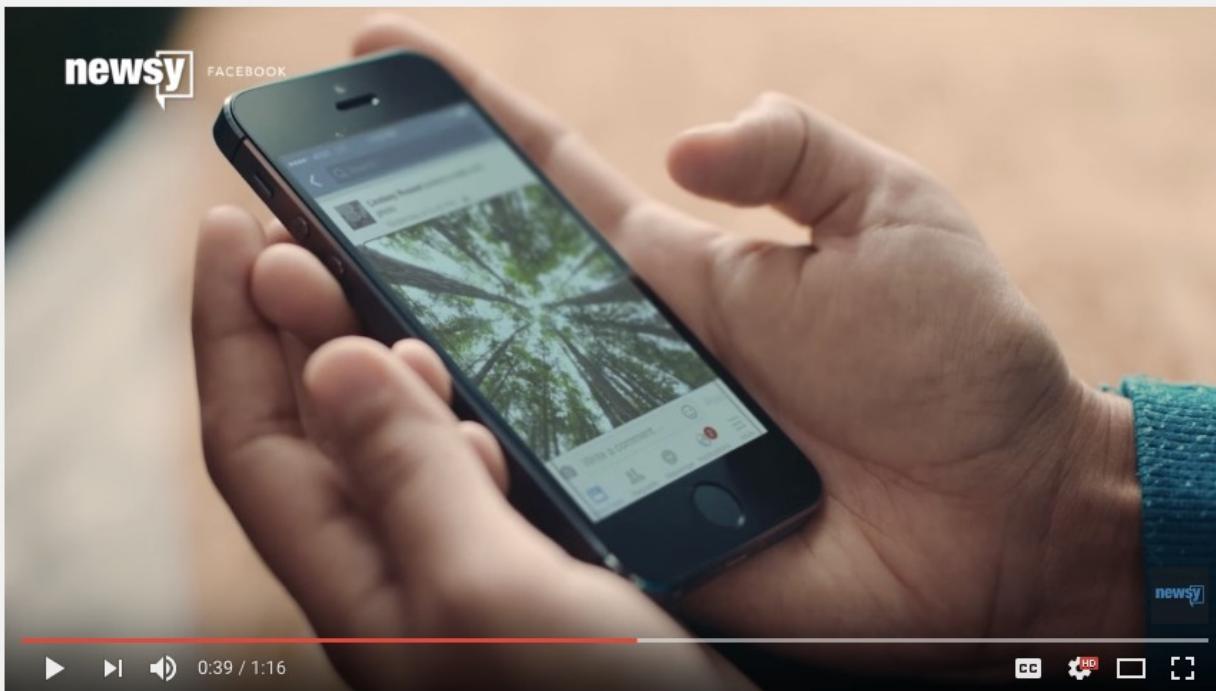


Features:	
Feature Name	Value
Description	{ "type": 0, "captions": [ { "text": "a man swimming in a pool of water", "confidence": 0.7850108693093019 } ] }
Tags	[ { "name": "water", "confidence": 0.9996442794799805 }, { "name": "sport", "confidence": 0.9504992365837097 }, { "name": "swimming", "confidence": 0.9062818288803101, "hint": "sport" }, { "name": "pool", "confidence": 0.8787588477134705 }, { "name": "water sport", "confidence": 0.631849467754364, "hint": "sport" } ]
Image Format	jpeg
Image Dimensions	1500 x 1155
Clip Art Type	0 Non-clipart
Line Drawing Type	0 Non-LineDrawing
Black & White Image	False

Captions: <https://www.microsoft.com/cognitive-services/en-us/computer-vision-api>

# Visual Assistance for People with Visual Impairments

Facebook



Facebook's New AI Tool Is Helping Blind Users 'See' Photos - Newsy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tjugc8a836Q>

Microsoft



Saqib Shaikh : Microsoft Developer Can 'See' Using Artificial Intelligence Headset

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2mC-NUAmMk>

# Alt Text for People with Visual Impairments

A photograph of six people standing in a row in front of a grey wall. On the wall, there is a circular logo with the letters 'SI' and the word 'SCHOOL' stacked vertically next to it. To the right of the logo, the word 'information' is written in a large, lowercase, sans-serif font. Below the wall, there is a window showing an interior space with some furniture and decorations. The people in the photo are dressed in casual attire, including shirts, pants, and a sweater.

Alt Text

How would you describe this object and its context to someone who is blind?  
*(1-2 sentences recommended)*

A group of people posing for a photo  
Description generated with very high confidence

Generate a description for me

e.g., Microsoft Power Point (Office 365 demo)

# Image Captioning for Newspaper Articles

BBC NEWS UK EDITION

Last Updated: Friday, 23 September 2005, 18:00 GMT 19:00 UK

[E-mail this to a friend](#) [Printable version](#)

## Apple-growing Pole feels squeeze

By Oana Lungescu  
Brussels correspondent

**As part of our ongoing season "Who Runs Your World," the BBC took a Polish apple-grower to meet the movers and shakers of Brussels.**

Aid for farmers has become one of the most hotly disputed issues in the European Union.

When Poland was one of the 10 countries to join the EU last year, six million farmers feared they would be put out of business by their heavily-subsidised colleagues in western Europe.

But it has been a good year for Polish farmers.

Those who feared the worst from EU membership are now the first to harvest its fruit. With more than 1.6bn euros (£1.1bn) in subsidies so far, farmers have practically doubled their income.

Marcin Hermanowicz grows apples on 30 hectares of land, in a region south of Warsaw often described as Europe's largest orchard.



Marcin and Florent face intense competition from outside Europe

# Aiding Tourism with Captioned Images



Figure 7: Tourists from three different tour groups at the Salt Lake of Uyuni in Bolivia



Figure 8: The Cathedral of Cuzco, Peru, in different viewing angles (right, left and front)



Figure 3: Examples for people shots  
(Peruvian Children, Korean Guards, Russian Singers)



Figure 4: Examples for animal photos  
(Humpback Whale, Kangaroos, Galapagos Giant Turtle)

# Describing and Responding to Images Posted to Social Media with “Personality”



<b>Standard captioning output:</b> A plate with a sandwich and salad on it.	
<b>Our model with different personality traits (215 possible traits, not all shown here):</b>	
<i>Sweet</i>	That is a lovely sandwich.
<i>Dramatic</i>	This sandwich looks so delicious! My goodness!
<i>Anxious</i>	I'm afraid this might make me sick if I eat it.
<i>Sympathetic</i>	I feel so bad for that carrot, about to be consumed.
<i>Arrogant</i>	I make better food than this
<i>Optimistic</i>	It will taste positively wonderful!
<i>Money-minded</i>	I would totally pay \$100 for this plate.

# Describing Products

Title: Stand Collar A-Line Dress

**Fashion Caption:** A pearly button accents the stand collar that gives this so-simple, yet so-chic A-line dress its retro flair

Color: Black and ivory

Meta: - 33" petite length (size 8P) - Hidden back-zip closure - **Stand collar** - Cap sleeves - Side-seam pockets – **A-Lined** - 63% polyester, 34% rayon, 3% spandex - Dry clean or hand wash, dry flat - Imported – **Dress**

**Image Caption:** A person in a dress



What are other potential applications for image captioning?

# Today's Topics

- Image captioning applications
- Image captioning datasets
- Image captioning evaluation
- Challenge winners

# Sample of Existing Dataset Challenges

coco



*Woman on  
a horse jumping  
over a pole jump.*



*A glass bowl contains  
peeled tangerines and  
cut strawberries.*

VizWiz



*A person is holding a  
small container of cream  
upside down.*

TextCaps



*The billboard displays  
'Welcome to Yakima The  
Palm Springs of Washington'.*

Conceptual Captions



*Cars are on the streets.*



*Small stand of trees, just  
visible in the distance in  
the previous photo.*

Fashion Captioning



*A decorative leather  
padlock on a compact bag  
with croc embossed leather.*

CUB-200

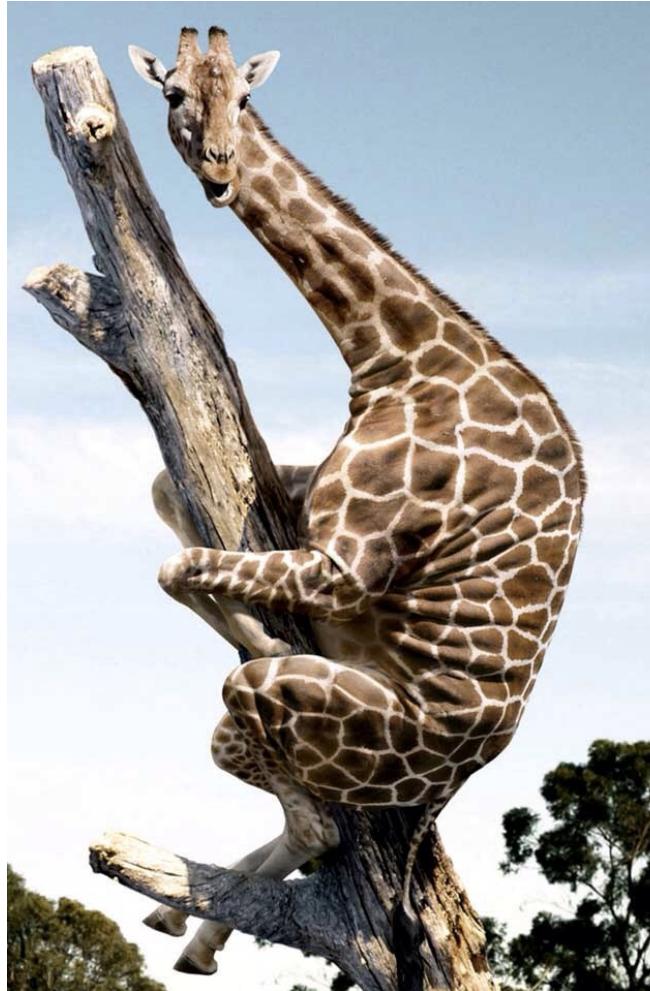


*This bird is blue with  
white on its chest and has  
a very short beak.*

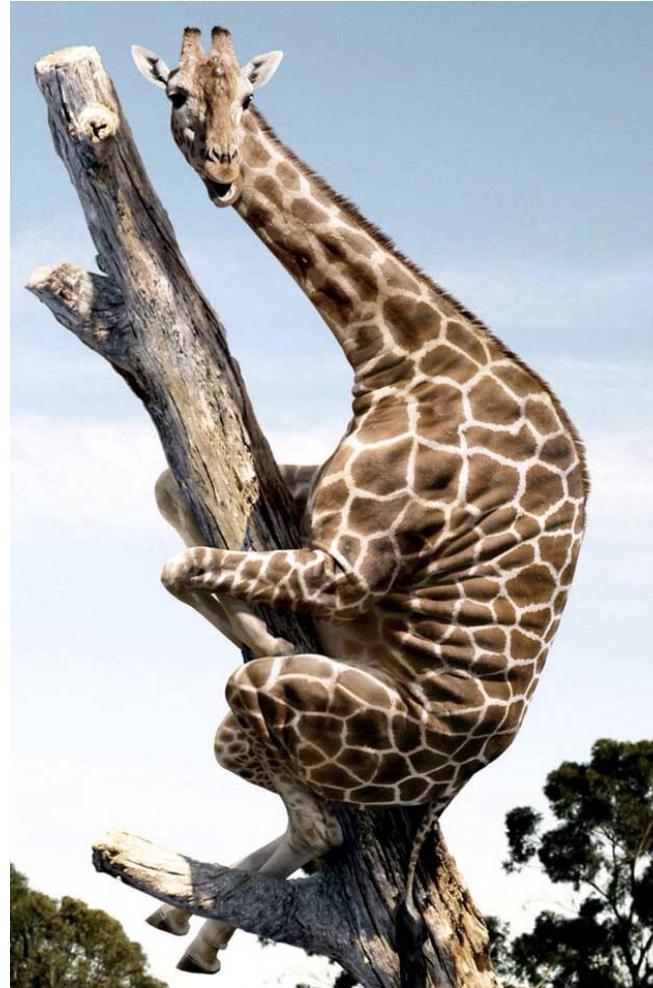
# Sample of Existing Dataset Challenges

	Domain	Nb. Images	Nb. Caps (per Image)	Vocab Size	Nb. Words (per Cap.)
COCO [128]	Generic	132K	5	27K (10K)	10.5
Flickr30K [129]	Generic	31K	5	18K (7K)	12.4
Flickr8K [19]	Generic	8K	5	8K (3K)	10.9
CC3M [130]	Generic	3.3M	1	48K (25K)	10.3
CC12M [131]	Generic	12.4M	1	523K (163K)	20.0
SBU Captions [4]	Generic	1M	1	238K (46K)	12.1
VizWiz [132]	Assistive	70K	5	20K (8K)	13.0
CUB-200 [133]	Birds	12K	10	6K (2K)	15.2
Oxford-102 [133]	Flowers	8K	10	5K (2K)	14.1
Fashion Cap. [134]	Fashion	130K	1	17K (16K)	21.0
BreakingNews [135]	News	115K	1	85K (10K)	28.1
GoodNews [136]	News	466K	1	192K (54K)	18.2
TextCaps [137]	OCR	28K	5/6	44K (13K)	12.4
Loc. Narratives [138]	Generic	849K	1/5	16K (7K)	41.8

# Challenge: What Instructions Should Be Provided When Collecting Captions from Human Annotators?



# Class Task: How Would You Describe This Image?



Form: <https://forms.gle/Nbue5HcdP9Dib8Co8>

# VLT2K

## Guidelines and Examples:

**Read these guidelines carefully. You must write exactly two sentences.**



A man is reading a newspaper.  
It is cloudy and there are  
skyscrapers in the background.



A boy is typing on a laptop.  
There is a brown bookshelf  
behind him and a bright window.



A man is talking on the telephone.  
There is a red lampshade and  
three red chairs in the background.

# Flickr8K and 30K

## Guidelines:

- You must describe each of the following five images with one sentence.
- Please provide an accurate description of the activities, people, animals and objects you see depicted in the image
- Each description must be a single sentence under 100 characters. Try to be concise.
- Please pay attention to grammar and spelling.
- We will accept your results if you provide a good description for all five images, leaving nothing blank.

## Examples of good and bad descriptions.



**(1) The dog is wearing a red sombrero.**

Very Good: This describes the two main objects concisely and accurately.

**(2) White dog wearing a red hat.**

Good: Incomplete sentences like this are fine.

**(3) The white dog is wearing a pink collar.**

Okay: This describes the dog, but it ignores the hat.

**(4) The red hat is adorned with gold sequins.**

Bad: This ignores the dog.

**(5) The dog is angry because he is hungry.**

Bad: This is speculation.

**(6) The dog.**

Very Bad: This could describe any image of any dog.

# MSCOCO



Please describe the image:

Enter description here

prev

next

**Instructions:**

- Describe all the **important parts** of the scene.
- **Do not** start the sentences with "There is".
- **Do not** describe unimportant details.
- **Do not** describe things that might have happened in the future or past.
- **Do not** describe what a person might say.
- **Do not** give people proper names.
- The sentence should contain at least **8 words**.

# VizWiz



## Step 1: Please describe the image in one sentence.

- Describe all parts of the image that may be **important to a person who is blind**.  
*E.g., imagine how you would describe this image on the phone to a friend.*
- DO NOT** speculate about what people in the image might be saying or thinking.
- DO NOT** describe things that may have happened in the future or past.
- DO NOT** use more than one sentence.
- If text is in the image, and is important, then you can summarize what it says.  
**DO NOT** use all the specific phrases that you see in the image as your description of the image.
- DO NOT** describe the image quality issues. This is covered in Step 3.  
If the image quality issues make it **impossible to recognize the visual content** (e.g., image is totally black or white), then use the following description (you can copy-paste):

Quality issues are too severe to recognize visual content. [Copy to description](#)

- Your description should contain at least **8 words**.

Type here. Do not start the description with:

- "There is/are ..."
- "This is / These are ..."
- "The/This image/picture ..."
- "It is/ It's ..."

# Personality-Captions

215 personalities selected from this list: <http://ideonomy.mit.edu/essays/traits.html>

## Comment on an Image

### Description

In this task, you will be shown 5 images, and will write a comment about each image. The goal of this task is to write something about an image that someone else would find engaging.

### STEP 1

With each new photo, you will be given a **personality trait** that you will try to emulate in your comment. For example, you might be given "**snarky**" or "**glamorous**". The personality describes **YOU**, not the picture. It is *you* who is snarky or glamorous, not the contents of the image.

### STEP 2

You will then be shown an image, for which you will write a comment *in the context of your given personality trait*. Please make sure your comment has at least **three words**. Note that these are *comments*, not captions.

E.g., you may be shown an image of a tree. If you are "**snarky**", you might write "What a boring tree, I bet it has bad wood;" or, if you were "**glamorous**", you might write "What an absolutely beautiful tree! I would put this in my living room it's so extravagant!"

## Image



Your assigned personality is:

**Adventurous**

*Reminder - please do not write anything that involves any level of discrimination, racism, sexism and offensive religious/politics comments, otherwise the submission will be rejected.*

# Today's Topics

- Image captioning applications
- Image captioning datasets
- **Image captioning evaluation**
- Challenge winners

# Group Discussion: How Would You Evaluate Captions from an Algorithm?



FEATURE	VALUE
NAME:	
Description	{ "tags": [ "outdoor", "giraffe", "animal", "mammal", "standing", "field", "top", "branch", "bird", "eating", "head", "grazing", "neck", "water", "large", "man", "grassy", "tall", "group", "dirt", "zoo" ], "captions": [ { "text": "a giraffe standing in the dirt", "confidence": 0.982929349 } ] }

# Evaluation: Human Judgments

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6

- The description accurately describes the image (Kulkarni et al., 2011; Li et al., 2011; Mitchell et al., 2012; Kuznetsova et al., 2012; Elliott & Keller, 2013; Hodosh et al., 2013).
- The description is grammatically correct (Yang et al., 2011; Mitchell et al., 2012; Kuznetsova et al., 2012; Elliott & Keller, 2013).
- The description has no incorrect information (Mitchell et al., 2012).
- The description is relevant for this image (Li et al., 2011; Yang et al., 2011).
- The description is creatively constructed (Li et al., 2011).
- The description is human-like (Mitchell et al., 2012).

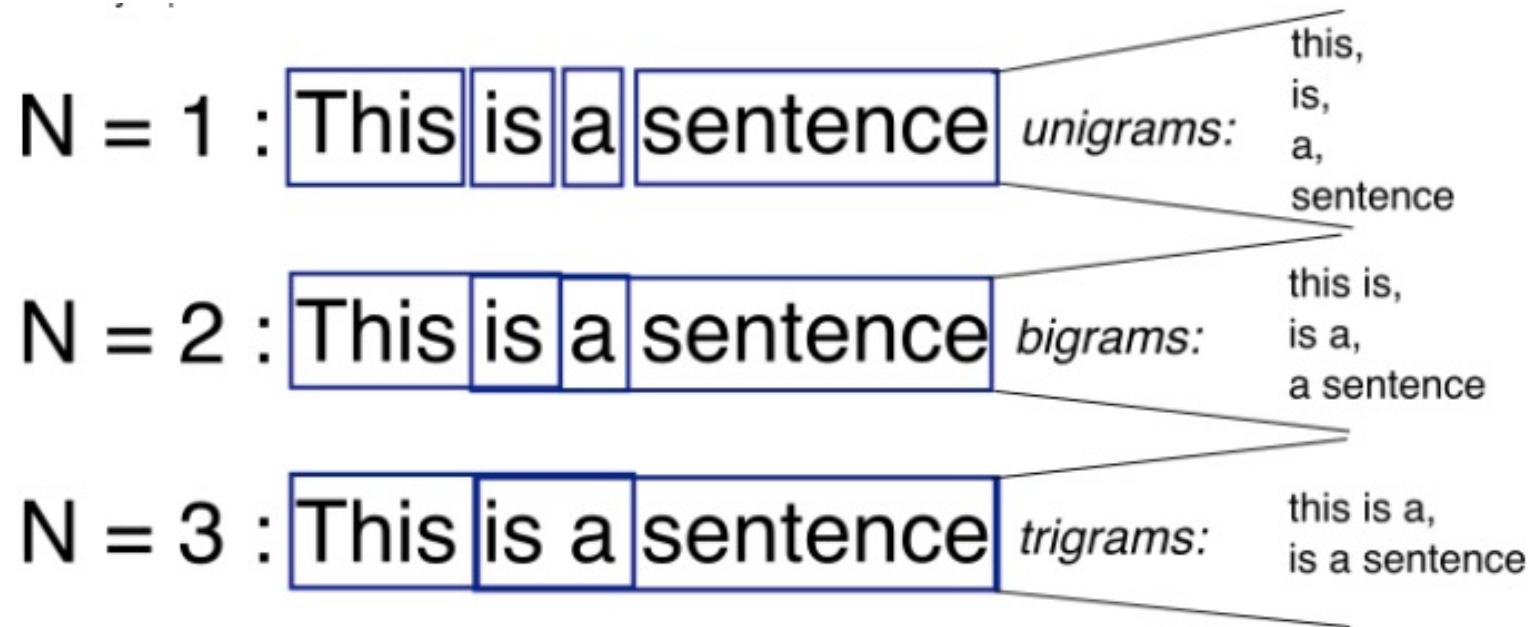
# Evaluation: Automated

- BLEU
- METEOR
- Rouge
- CIDEr
- SPICE

# Evaluation: Automated

- BLEU
- METEOR
- Rouge
- CIDEr
- SPICE

Idea: compute similarities of n-grams between a predicted caption and each ground truth caption



<http://recognize-speech.com/language-model/n-gram-model/comparison>

# Evaluation: Automated

- BLEU
- METEOR
- Rouge
- CIDEr
- SPICE

Idea: measure similarity of a predicted caption to how most people describe an image based on  $n$ -grams unique to the image



**A cow is standing in a field.**

**A cow with horns and long hair covering its face stands in a field.**

**A cow with hair over its eyes stands in a field.**

This horned creature is getting his picture taken.

A furry animal with horns roams on the range.

# Evaluation: Automated

- BLEU
- METEOR
- Rouge
- CIDEr
- SPICE

What content do most people describe in this image?



**A cow is standing in a field.**

**A cow with horns and long hair covering its face stands in a field.**

**A cow with hair over its eyes stands in a field.**

This horned creature is getting his picture taken.

A furry animal with horns roams on the range.

# Evaluation: Automated

- BLEU

Do you think these two captions describe the same image?

- METEOR

- (a) A young girl *standing on top of a* tennis court.
- (b) A giraffe *standing on top of a* green field.

- Rouge

- CIDEr

- SPICE

# Evaluation: Automated

- BLEU
  - Problem: n-gram methods scores these as very similar
- METEOR
  - (a) A young girl *standing on top of a* tennis court.
  - (b) A giraffe *standing on top of a* green field.
- Rouge
- CIDEr
- SPICE

# Evaluation: Automated

- BLEU
  - METEOR
  - Rouge
  - CIDEr
  - SPICE
- Do you think these two captions describe the same image?
- (c) A shiny metal pot filled with some diced veggies.  
(d) The pan on the stove has chopped vegetables in it.

# Evaluation: Automated

- BLEU
  - Problem: n-gram methods scores these as very different
- METEOR
  - (c) A shiny metal pot filled with some diced veggies.
  - (d) The pan on the stove has chopped vegetables in it.
- Rouge
- CIDEr
- SPICE

# Evaluation: Automated

Idea: compare scene graph of prediction to scene graph of ground truth

- BLEU
- METEOR
- Rouge
- CIDEr
- SPICE



"two women are sitting at a white table"

"two women sit at a table in a small store"

"two women sit across each other at a table smile for the photograph"

"two women sitting in a small store like business"

"two woman are sitting at a table"

# Evaluation: Automated

What is the meaningful semantic content in these captions?

- BLEU
- METEOR
- Rouge
- CIDEr
- SPICE



- "two women are sitting at a white table"
- "two women sit at a table in a small store"
- "two women sit across each other at a table smile for the photograph"
- "two women sitting in a small store like business"
- "two woman are sitting at a table"

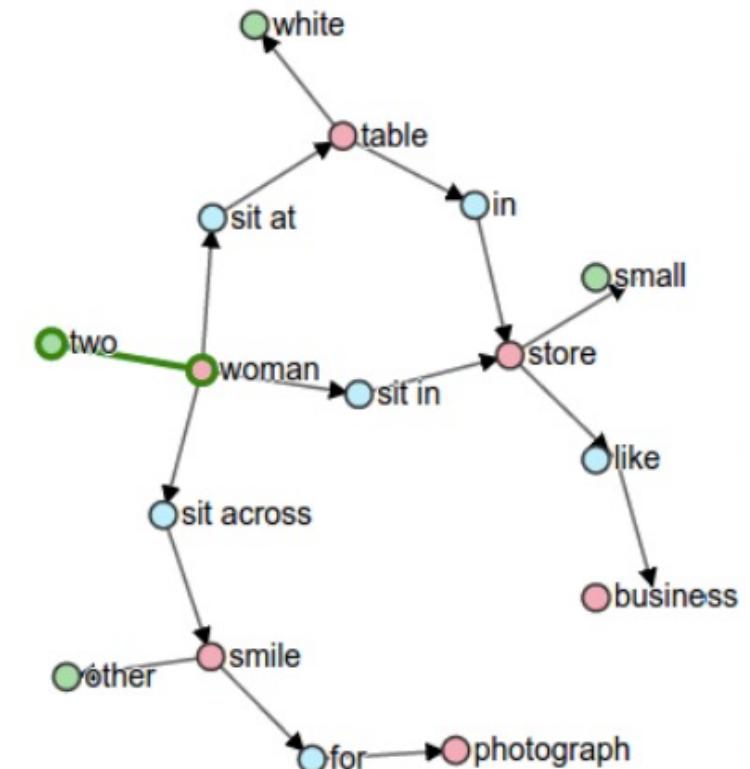
# Evaluation: Automated

Meaningful semantic content in these captions:

- BLEU
- METEOR
- Rouge
- CIDEr
- SPICE



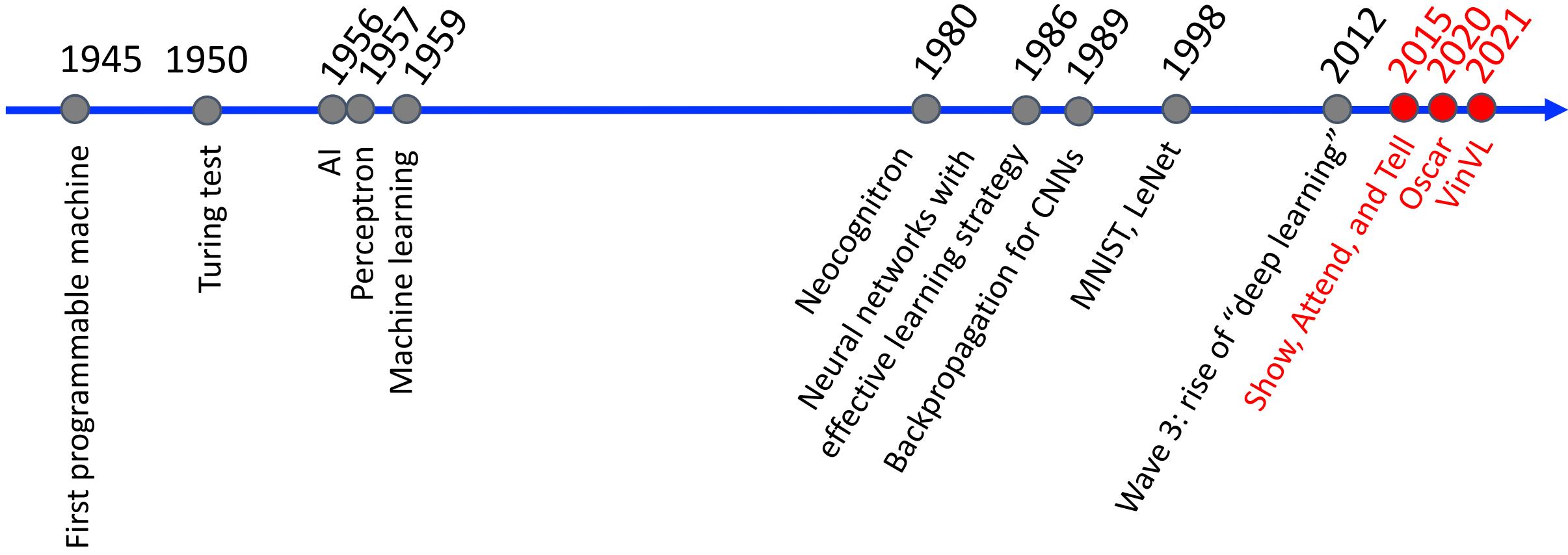
"two women are sitting at a white table"  
"two women sit at a table in a small store"  
"two women sit across each other at a table smile for the photograph"  
"two women sitting in a small store like business"  
"two woman are sitting at a table"



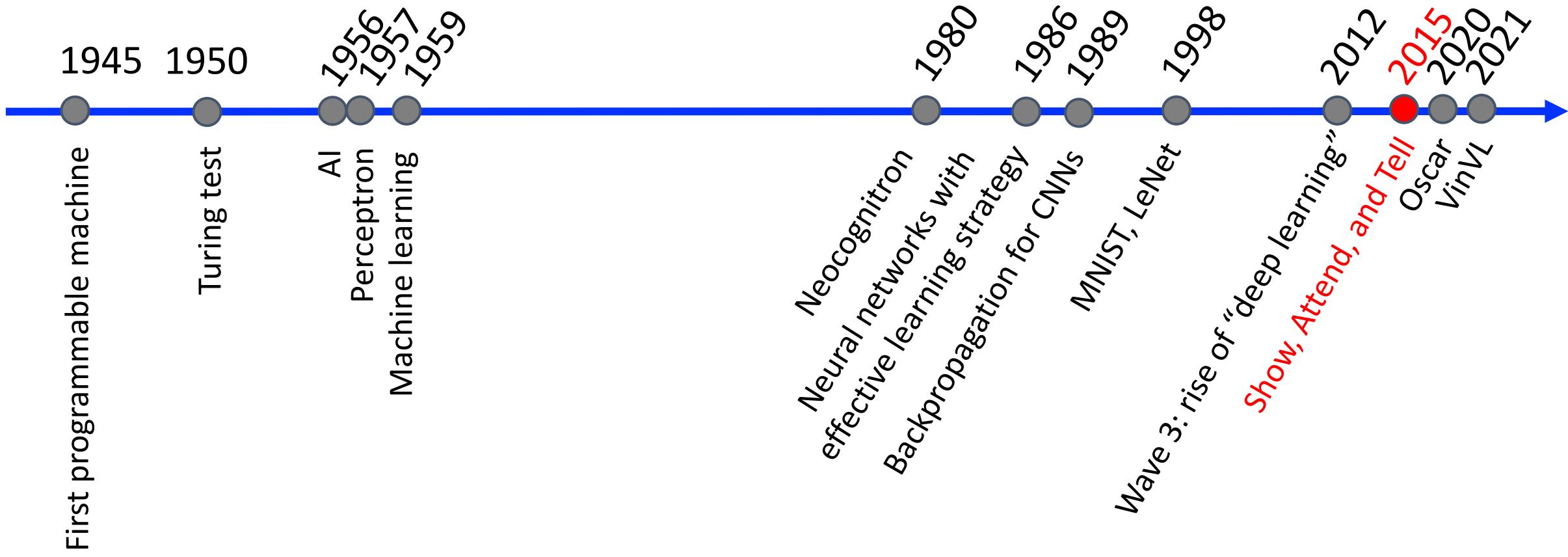
# Today's Topics

- Image captioning applications
- Image captioning datasets
- Image captioning evaluation
- Challenge winners

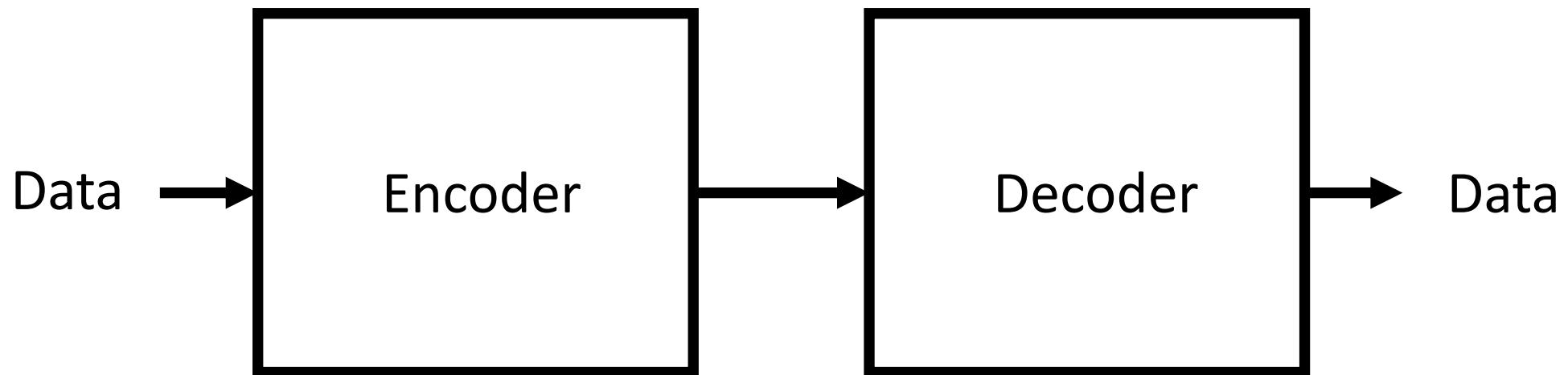
# Historical Context



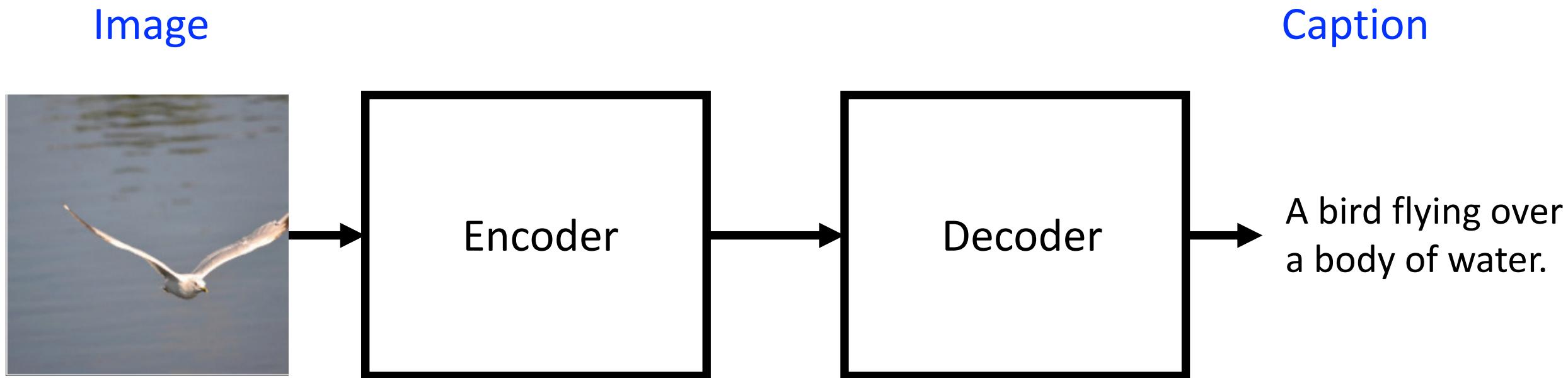
# Historical Context



# Idea: Treat Problem Like Machine Translation



# Idea: Treat Problem Like Machine Translation

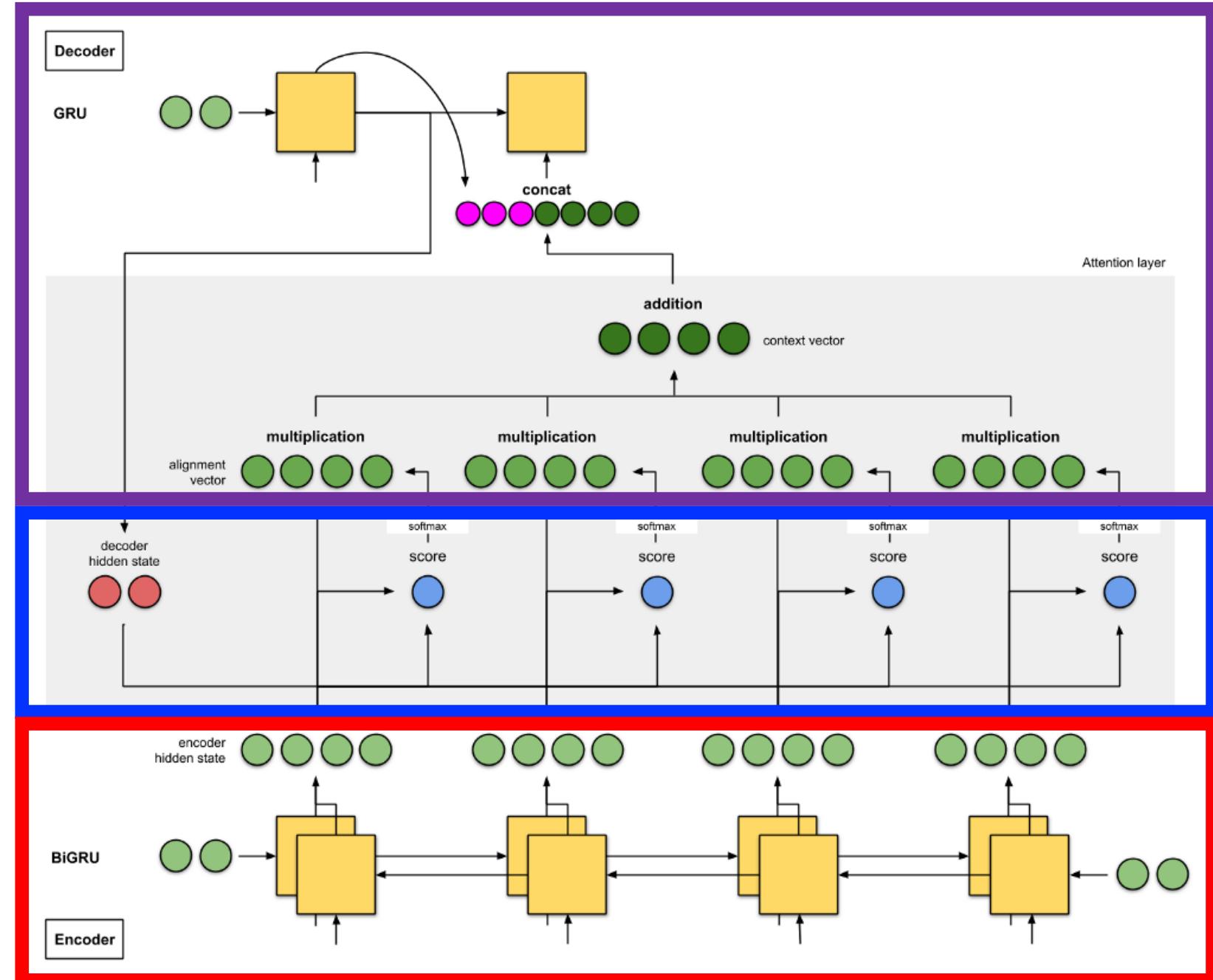


# Recall Solution:

3. At each decoder time step, a prediction is made based on the weighted sum of the inputs

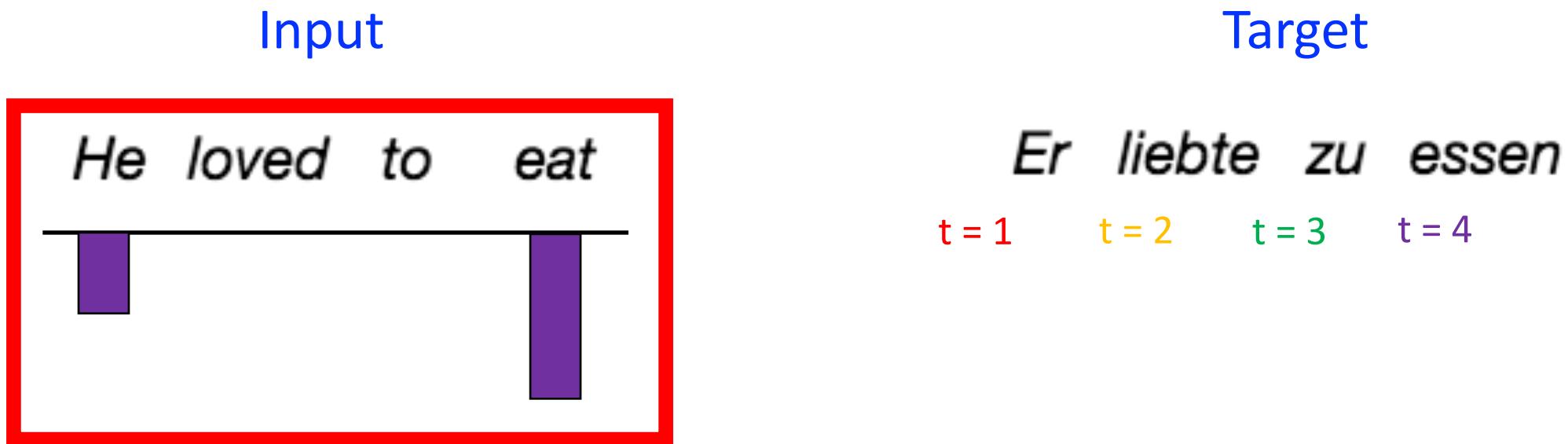
2. At each decoder time step, attention weights are computed that determine each input's relevance for the prediction

1. Encoder produces hidden state for every input



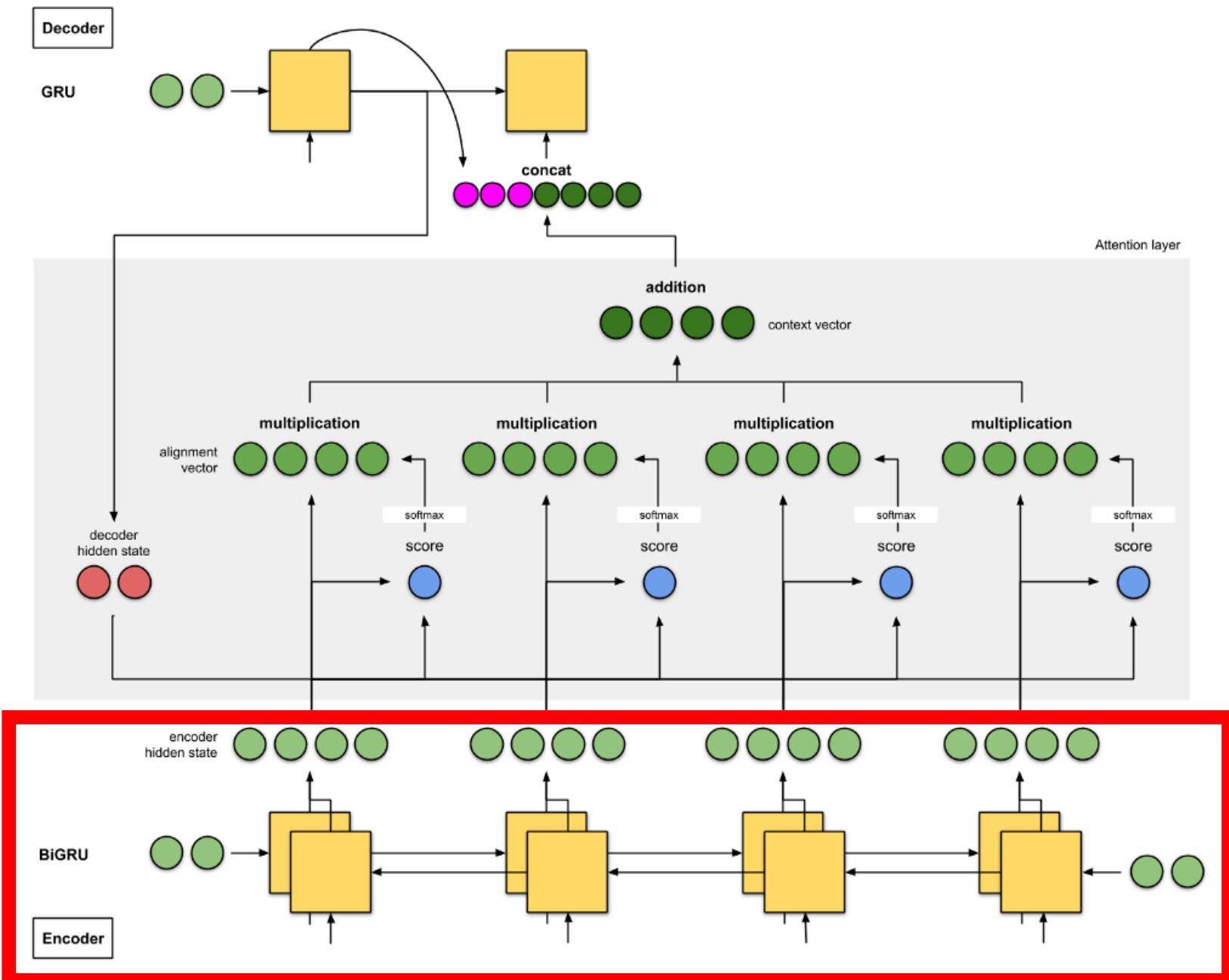
# Recall Intuition

Decoder decides which inputs are needed for prediction at each time step;  
e.g., “soft attention” uses a weighted combination of the input



Model learns how to weight each input!

# Approach: Key Difference



1. Input represents an image

# Intuition

Decoder decides which inputs are needed for prediction at each time step;  
e.g., “soft attention” uses a weighted combination of the input

Input



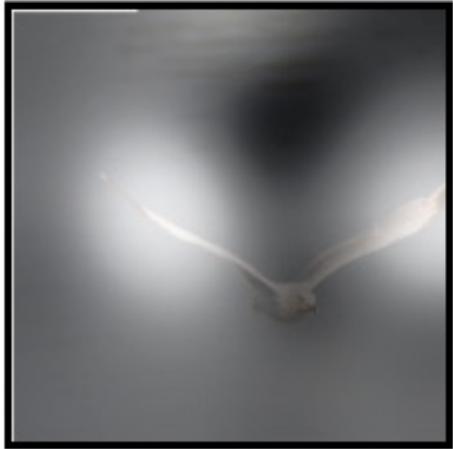
Target

A            bird        is        flying...  
 $t = 1$        $t = 2$        $t = 3$        $t = 4$

# Intuition

Decoder decides which inputs are needed for prediction at each time step;  
e.g., “soft attention” uses a weighted combination of the input

Input



Target

A

$t = 1$

# Intuition

Decoder decides which inputs are needed for prediction at each time step;  
e.g., “soft attention” uses a weighted combination of the input

Input



Target

A      bird  
 $t = 1$        $t = 2$

# Intuition

Decoder decides which inputs are needed for prediction at each time step;  
e.g., “soft attention” uses a weighted combination of the input

Input



Target

A      bird      is  
 $t = 1$        $t = 2$        $t = 3$

# Intuition

Decoder decides which inputs are needed for prediction at each time step;  
e.g., “soft attention” uses a weighted combination of the input

Input



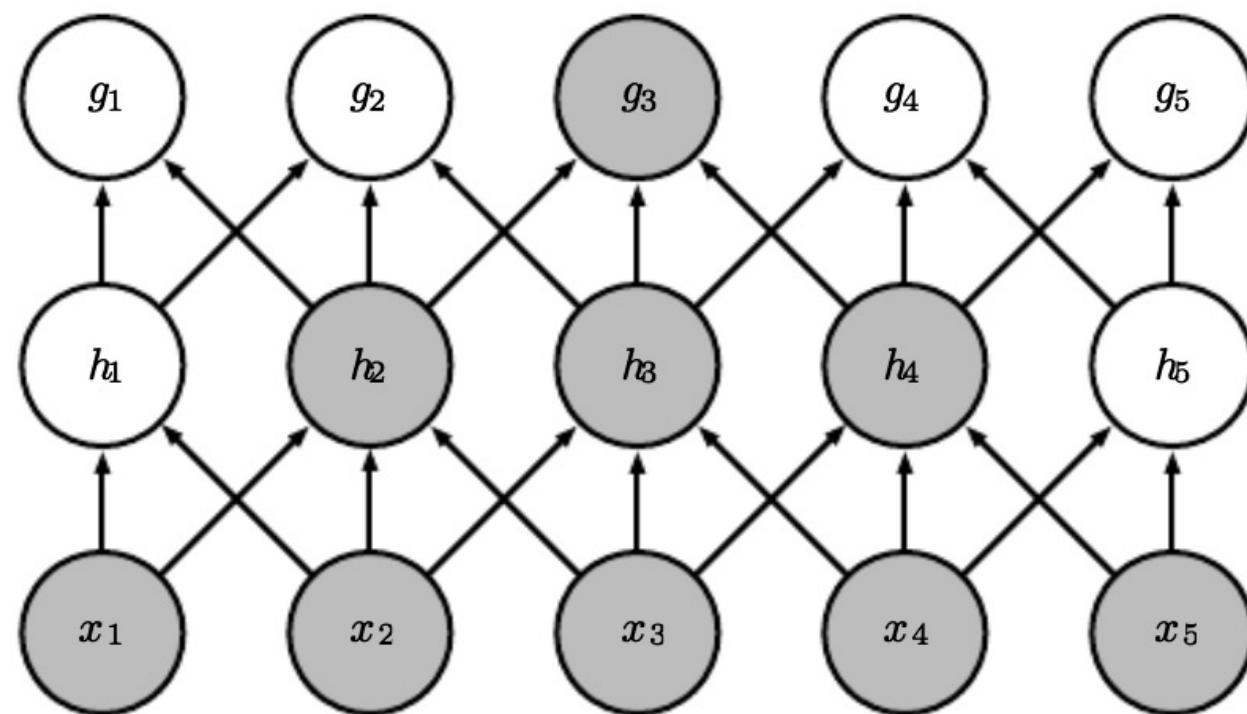
Target

A      bird      is      flying  
 $t = 1$      $t = 2$      $t = 3$      $t = 4$

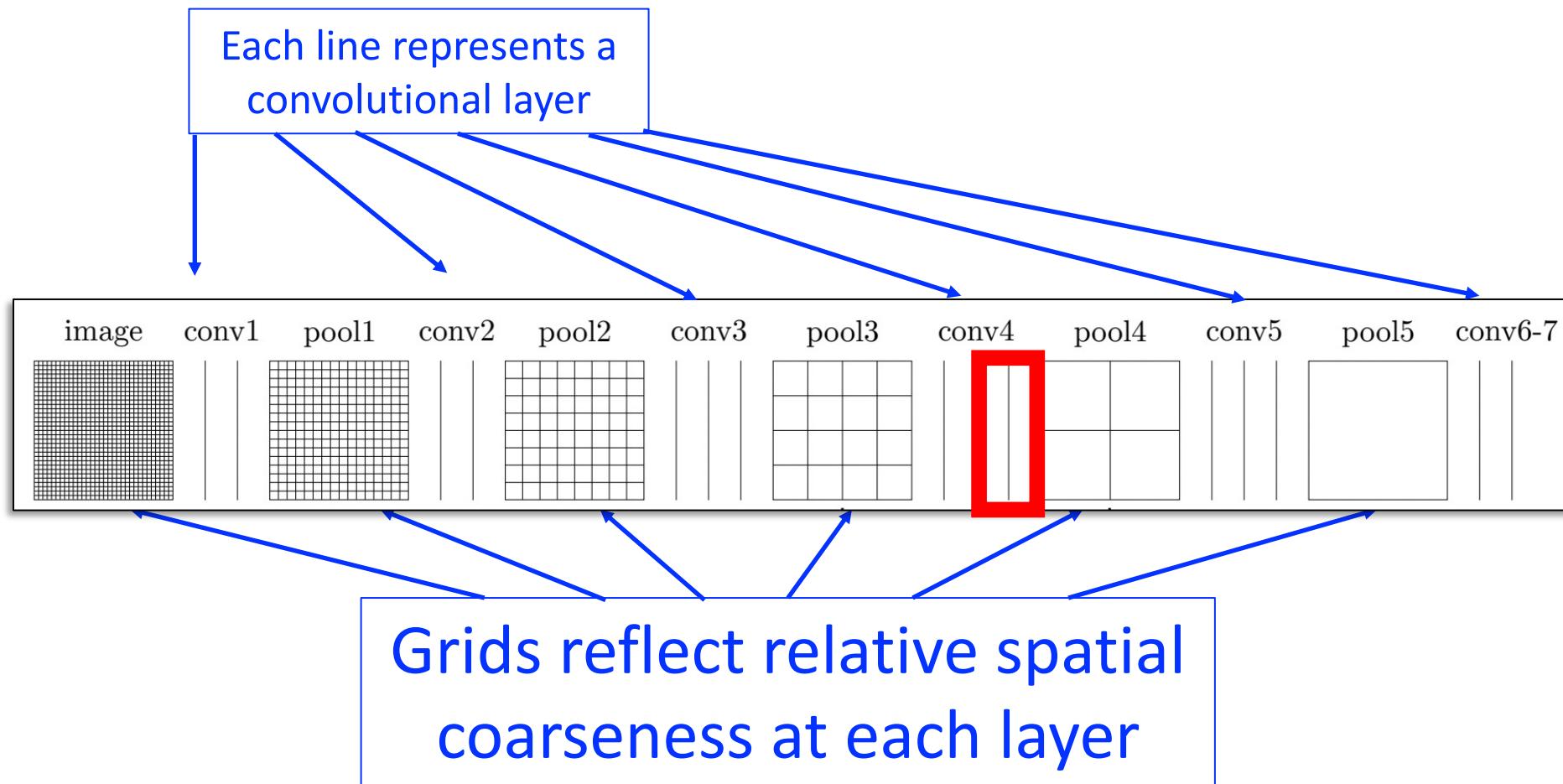
•••

# Input Representation: Idea

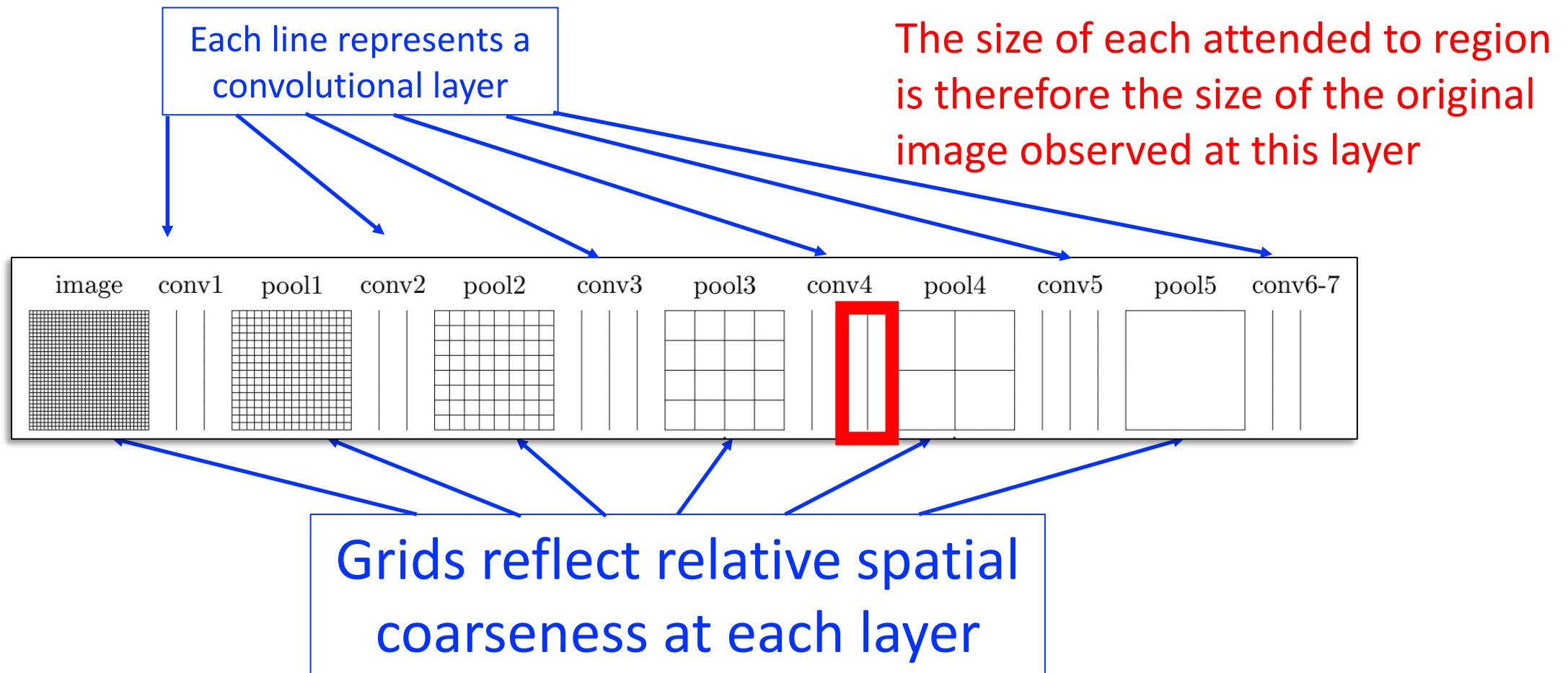
Use convolutional layer that map to **regions of the input (e.g., pixel) space**; e.g., 1rst layer with  $h$  values



# Input Representation: Implementation



# Input Representation: Implementation



# Experimental Results

State-of-the-art performance on three dataset challenges  
(Flickr8k, Flickr30k, and MS COCO)

# Experimental Results: Visualizations

Examples where correct content was attended to when predicting the word:



A woman is throwing a frisbee in a park.



A dog is standing on a hardwood floor.



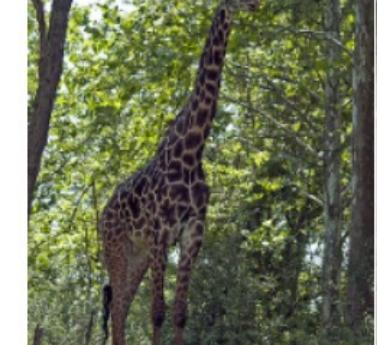
A stop sign is on a road with a mountain in the background.



A little girl sitting on a bed with a teddy bear.



A group of people sitting on a boat in the water.



A giraffe standing in a forest with trees in the background.

# Experimental Results: Visualizations

Examples where incorrect content was attended to when predicting the word:



A large white bird standing in a forest.



A woman holding a clock in her hand.



A man wearing a hat and a hat on a skateboard.



A person is standing on a beach with a surfboard.

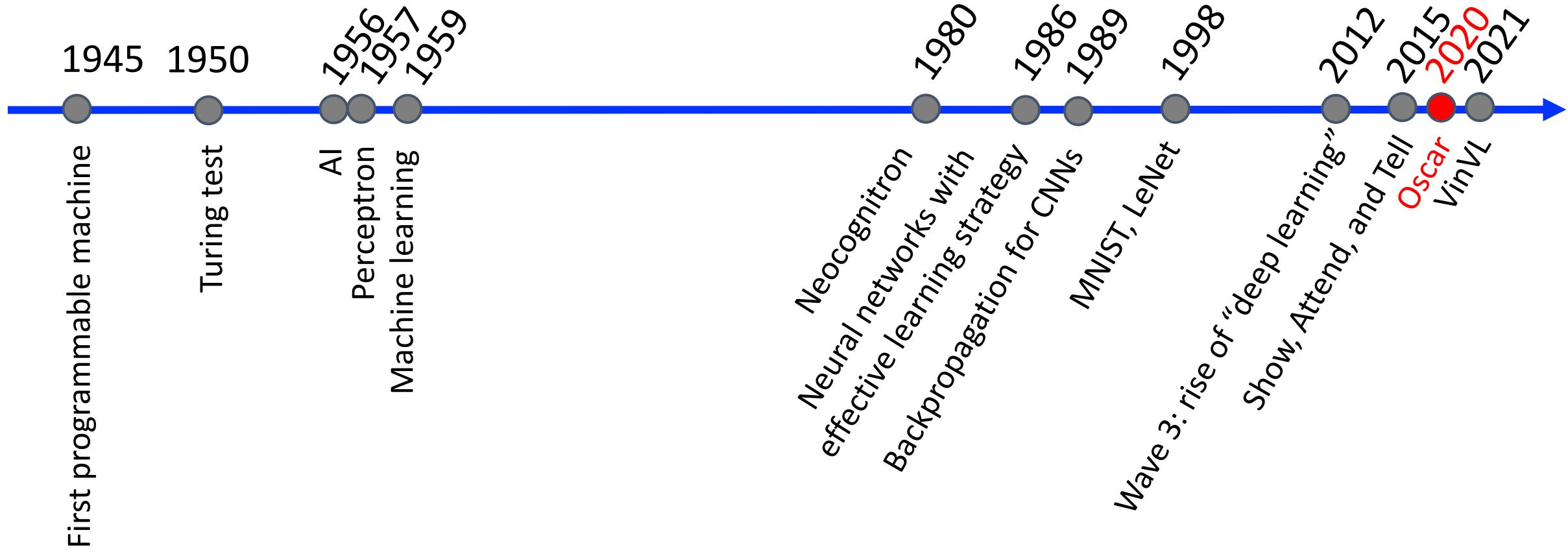


A woman is sitting at a table with a large pizza.

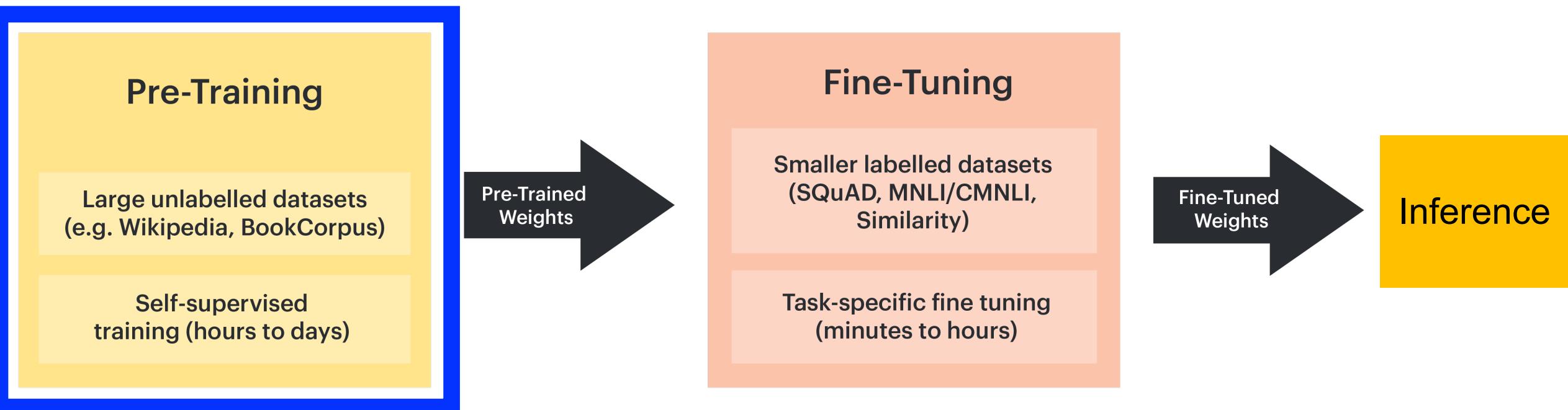


A man is talking on his cell phone while another man watches.

# Historical Context

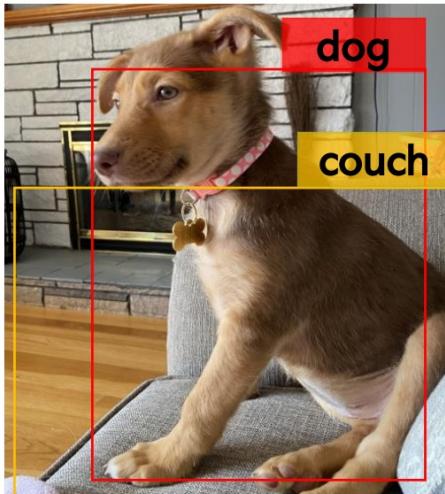


# Oscar: Transformer Design



# Novelty: Adds Explicit Alignment Between Visual and Textual Concepts

- **Idea:** rather than have algorithm learn alignment between text and features describing image regions, **align them explicitly**
- **Motivating observations:** often, salient objects are mentioned in image descriptions and can be located by object detection algorithms

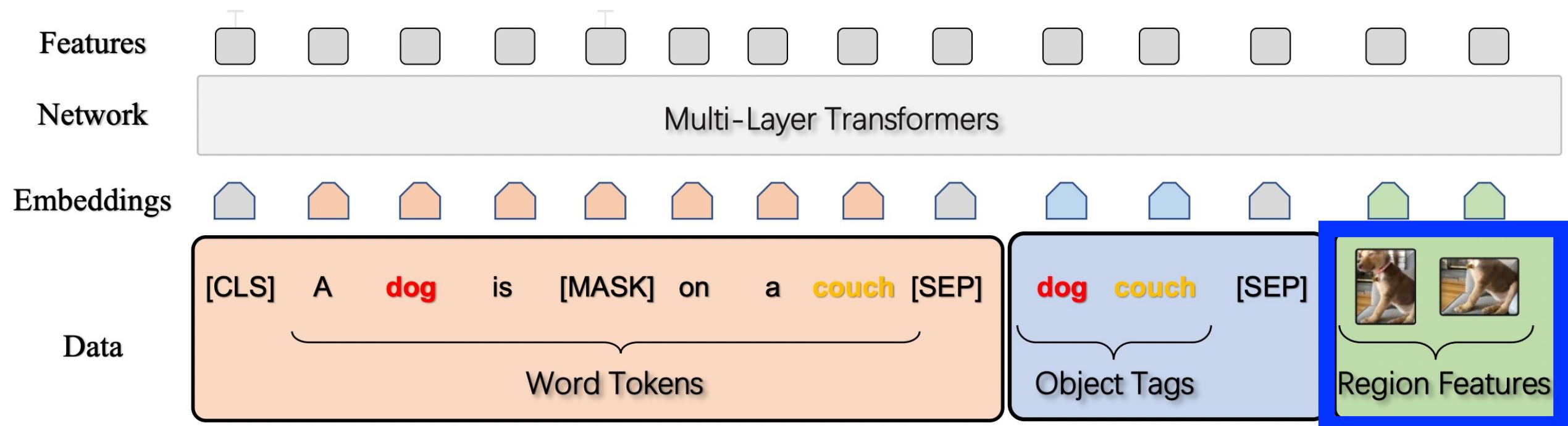


VS



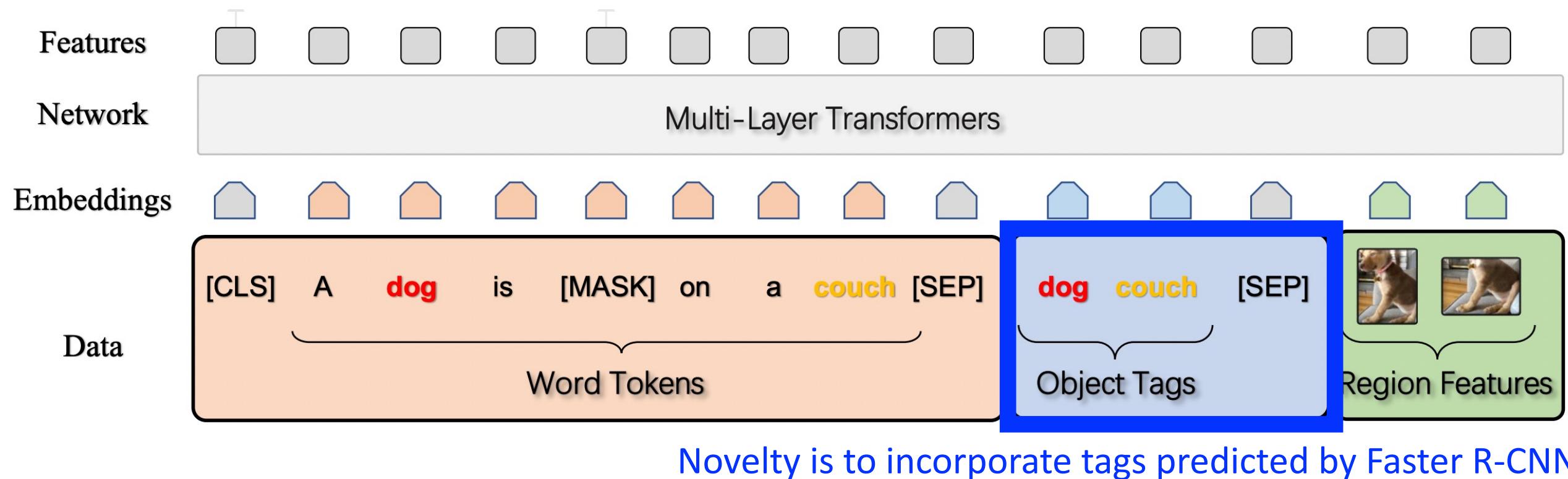
A **dog** is sitting on a **couch**

# Oscar: Architecture

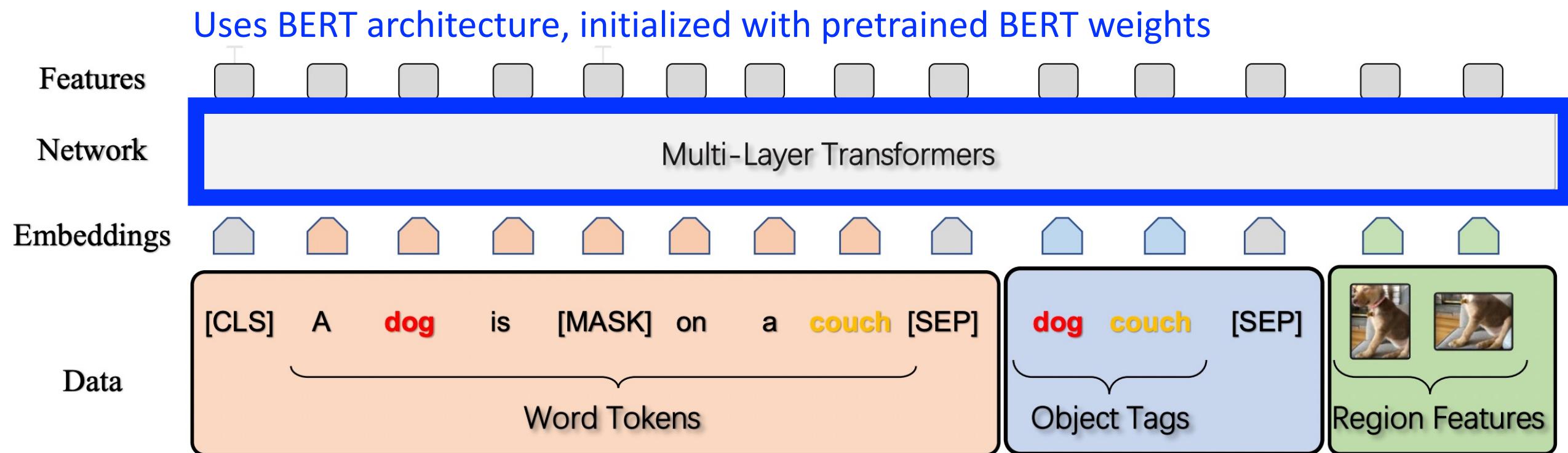


Like LXMERT, each image is represented as a description of objects detected with Faster R-CNN using features from Faster R-CNN

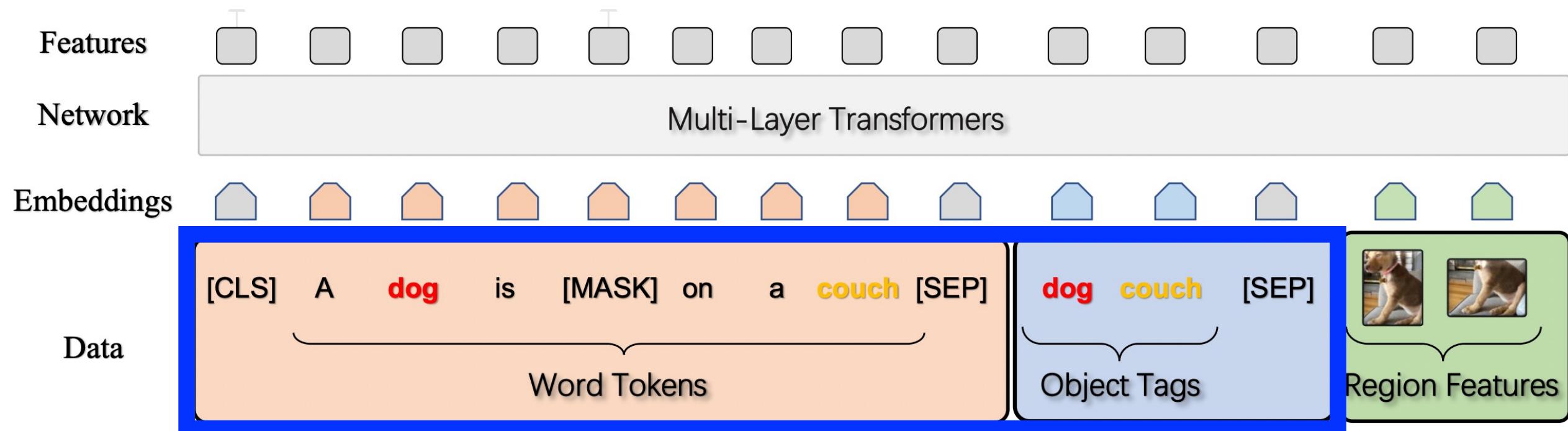
# Oscar: Architecture



# Oscar: Architecture



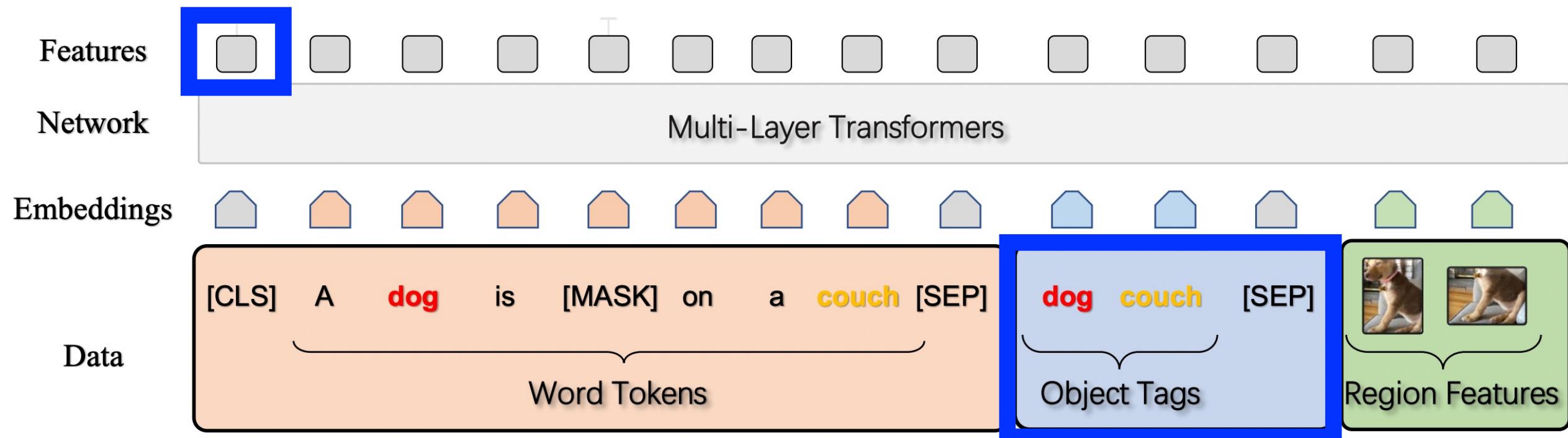
# Oscar: 2 Pretraining Tasks (Masked Token Loss and Contrastive Loss)



Like BERT, predict randomly masked tokens based on surrounding words, tags, and image information

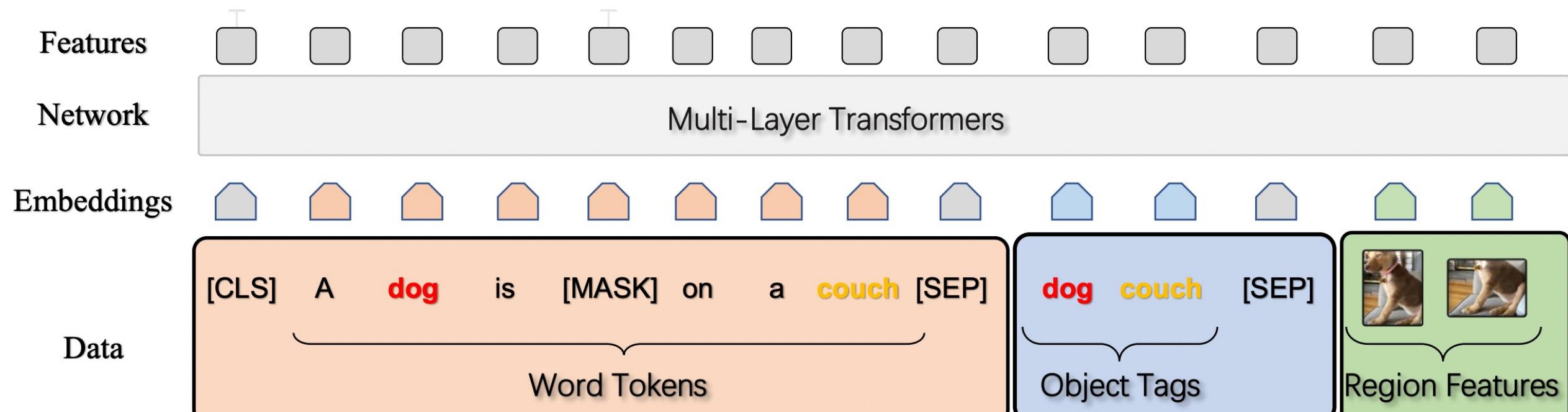
# Oscar: 2 Pretraining Tasks (Masked Token Loss and Contrastive Loss)

Fully-connected layer added to enable binary classification based on the fused vision-language token representation



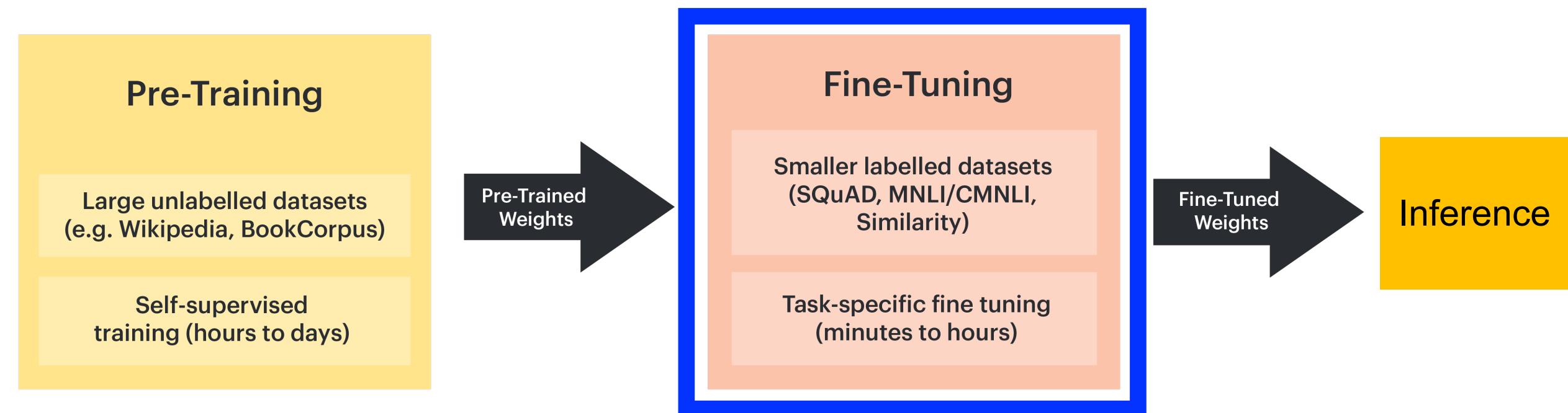
Goal is to determine whether tags are original when 50% of tags are replaced with randomly selected tag sequence in the dataset

# Oscar: 2 Pretraining Dataset

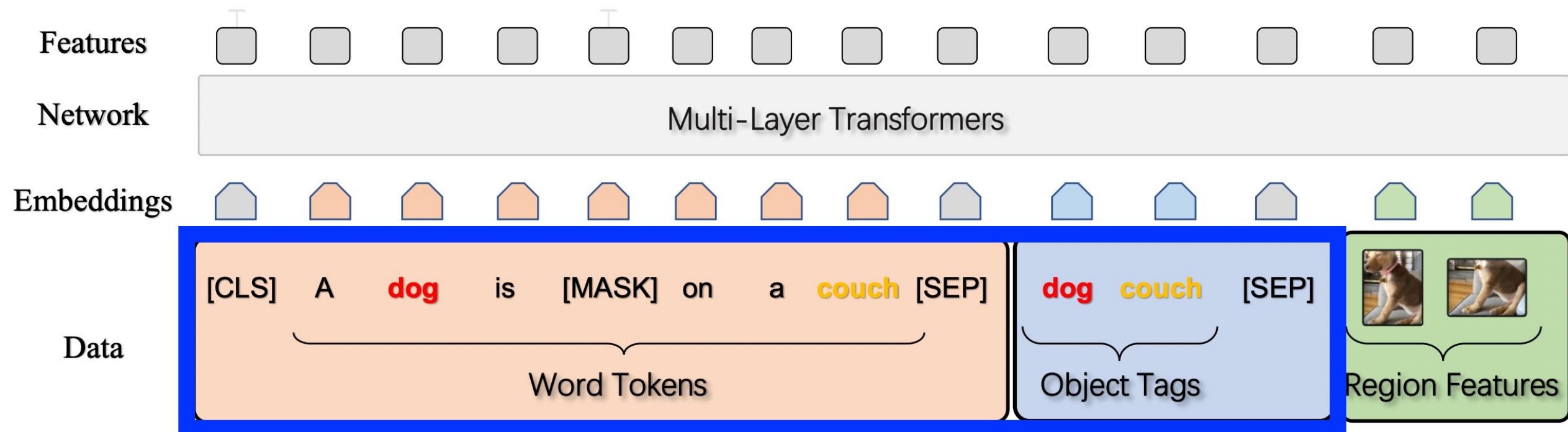


6.5 million text-tag-image triplets derived from existing V+L datasets

# Oscar: Transformer Design

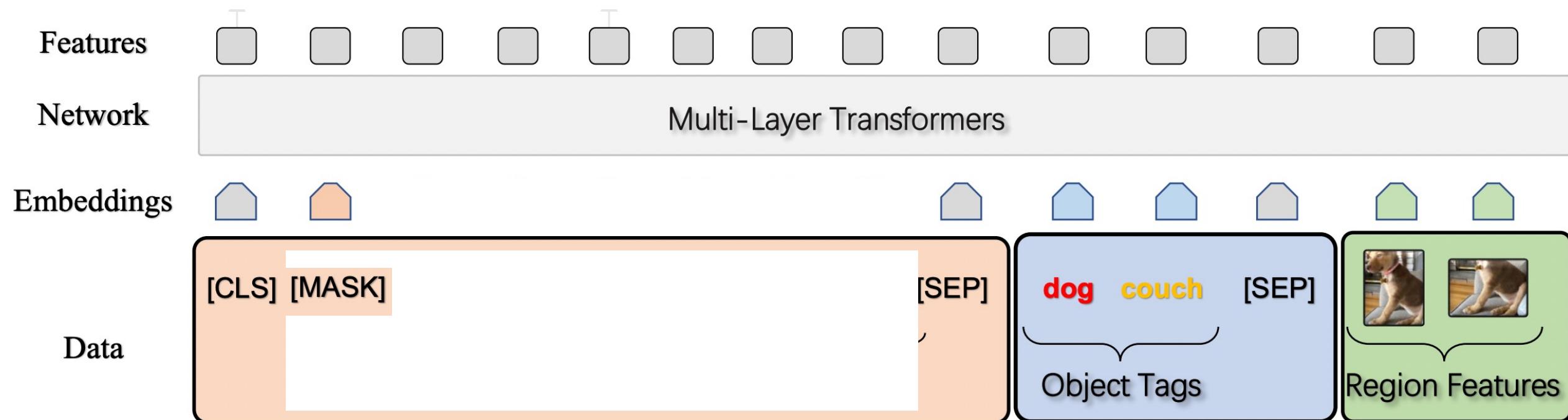


# Oscar: 2 Fine-Tuning Task (Masked Token Loss)



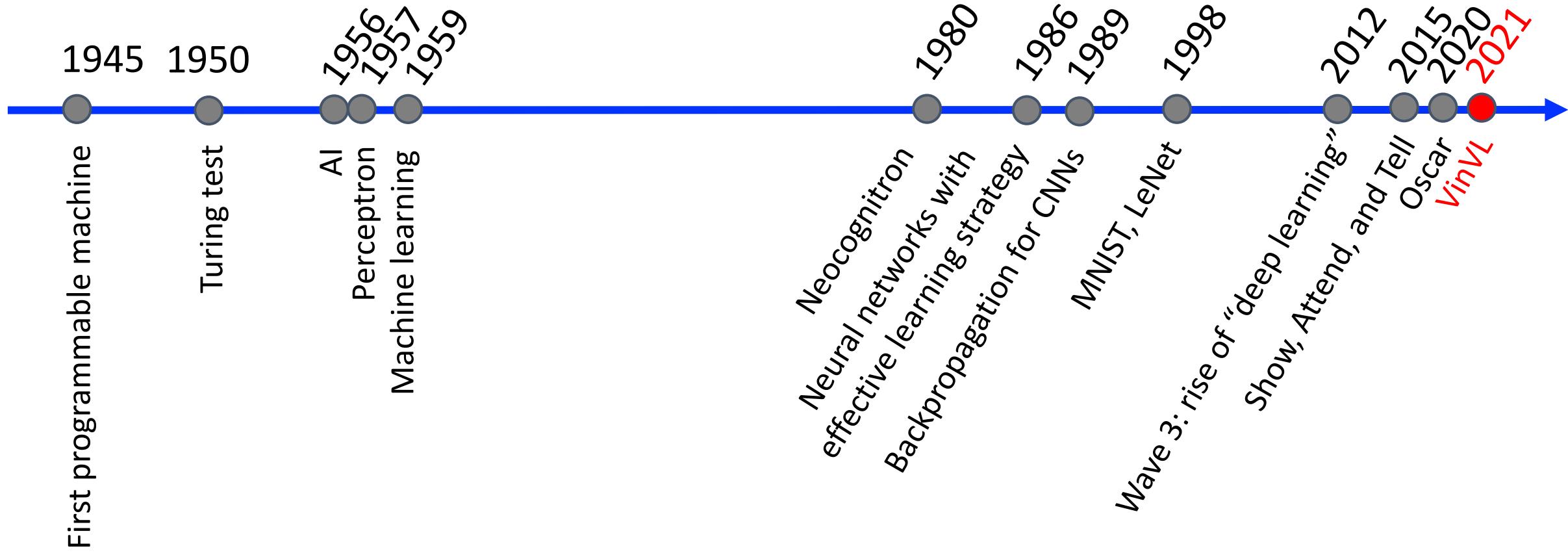
Similar to pre-training, predict randomly masked tokens based on surrounding words, tags, and image information (on COCO dataset)

# Oscar: Inference Time



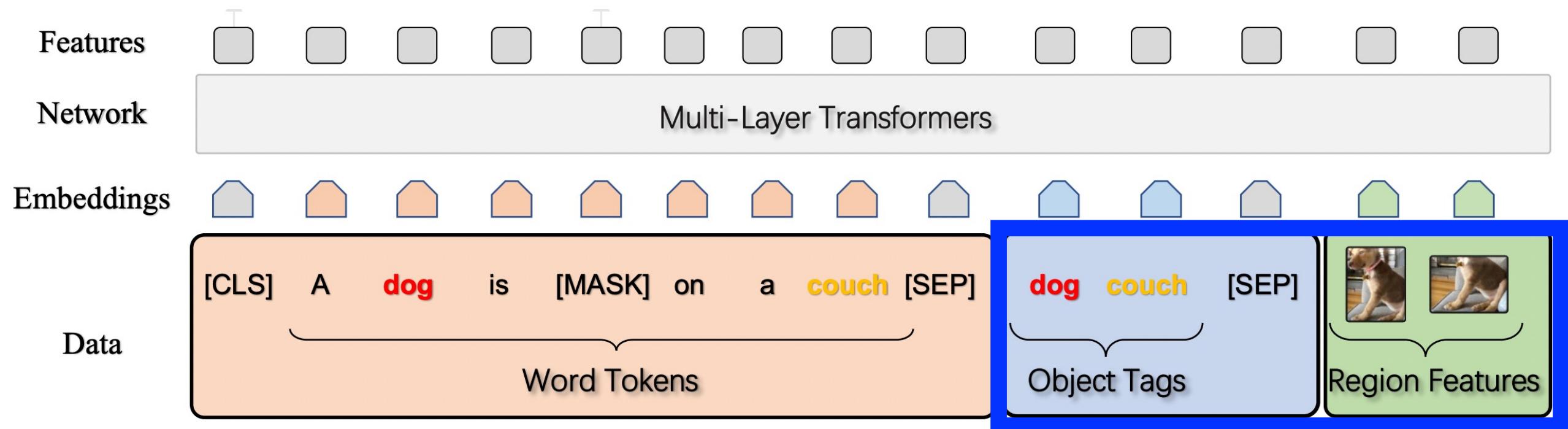
Repeatedly predict a new [MASK] token, incorporating the predicted word into the sequence, until [STOP] is predicted.

# Historical Context



Idea: Oscar + Improved Visual Representation

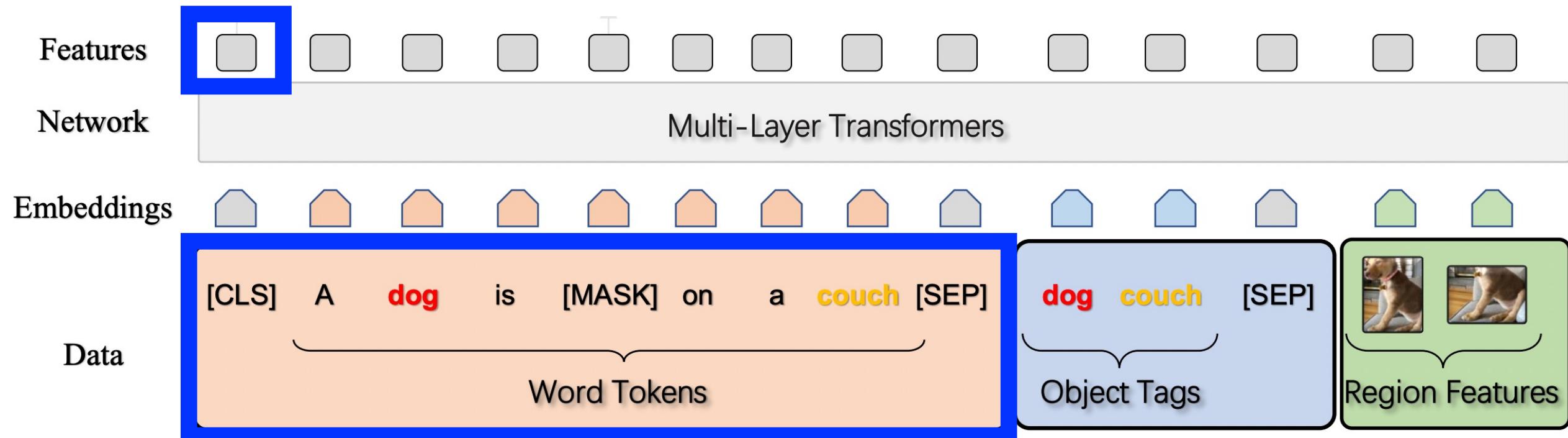
# VinVL Architecture: Oscar + New Object Detector



Improved object detector to predict more diverse categories and train larger models on larger datasets

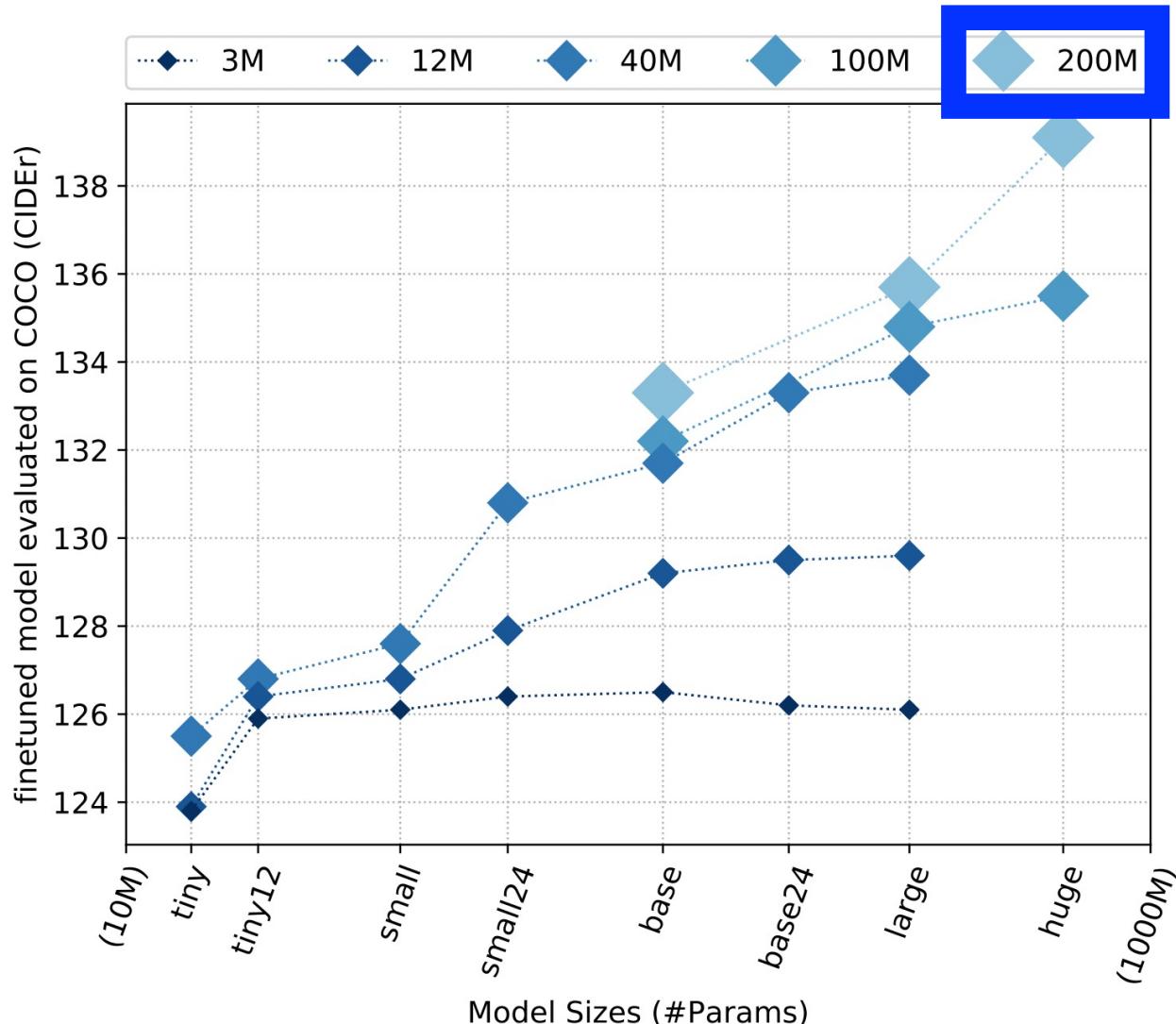
# VinVL: 2 Pretraining Tasks (Masked Token Loss and Contrastive Loss)

Fully-connected layer added to enable 3-way classification  
based on the fused vision-language token representation



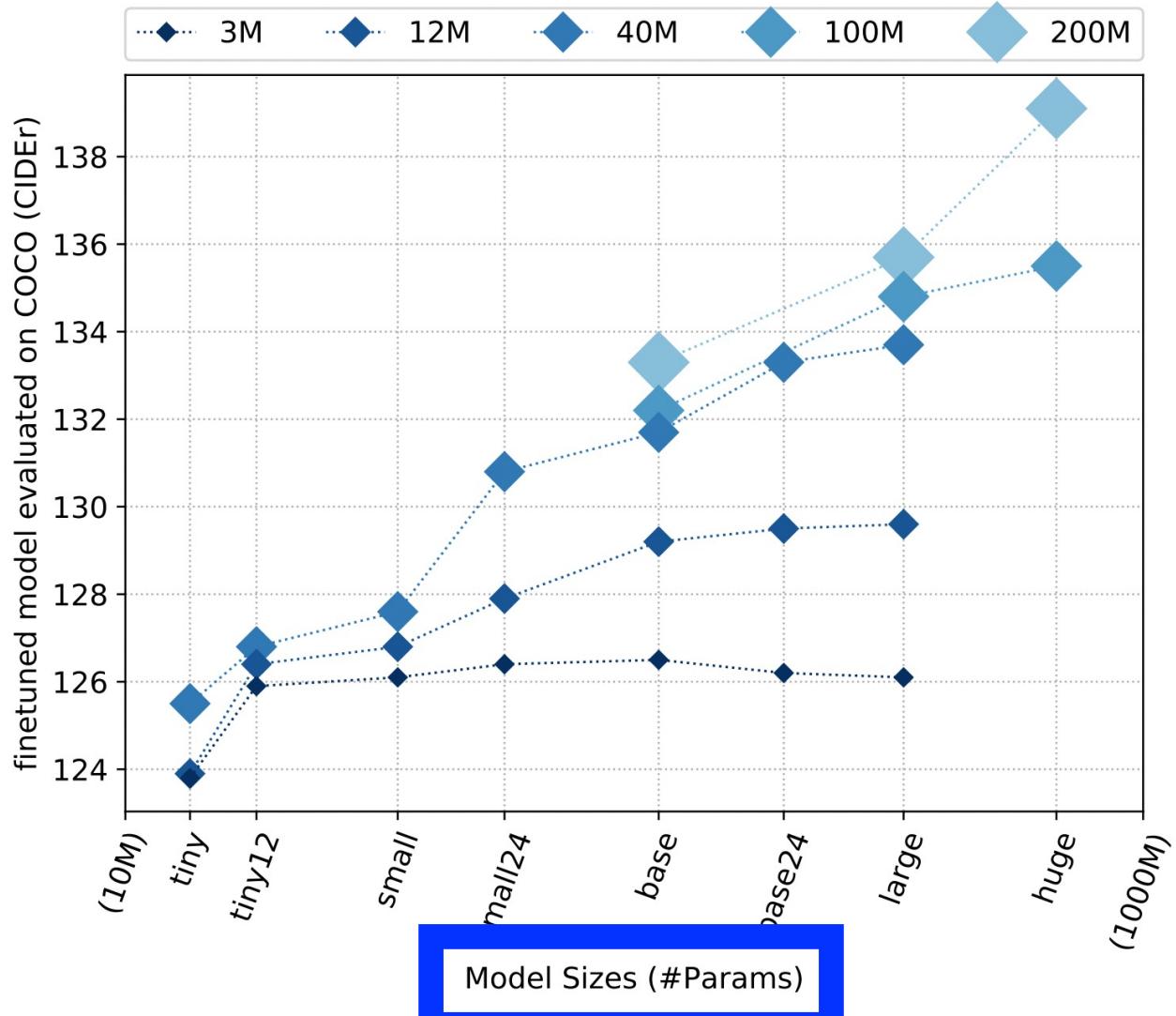
Trained on 8.85 million text-image pairs to decide whether either captions or answers are corrupted (50% are not) for caption-tags-image triplets and question-answer-image triplets

# VinVL: Influence of Model and Dataset Sizes



200M images, each with 1 alt text  
description, collected from Internet

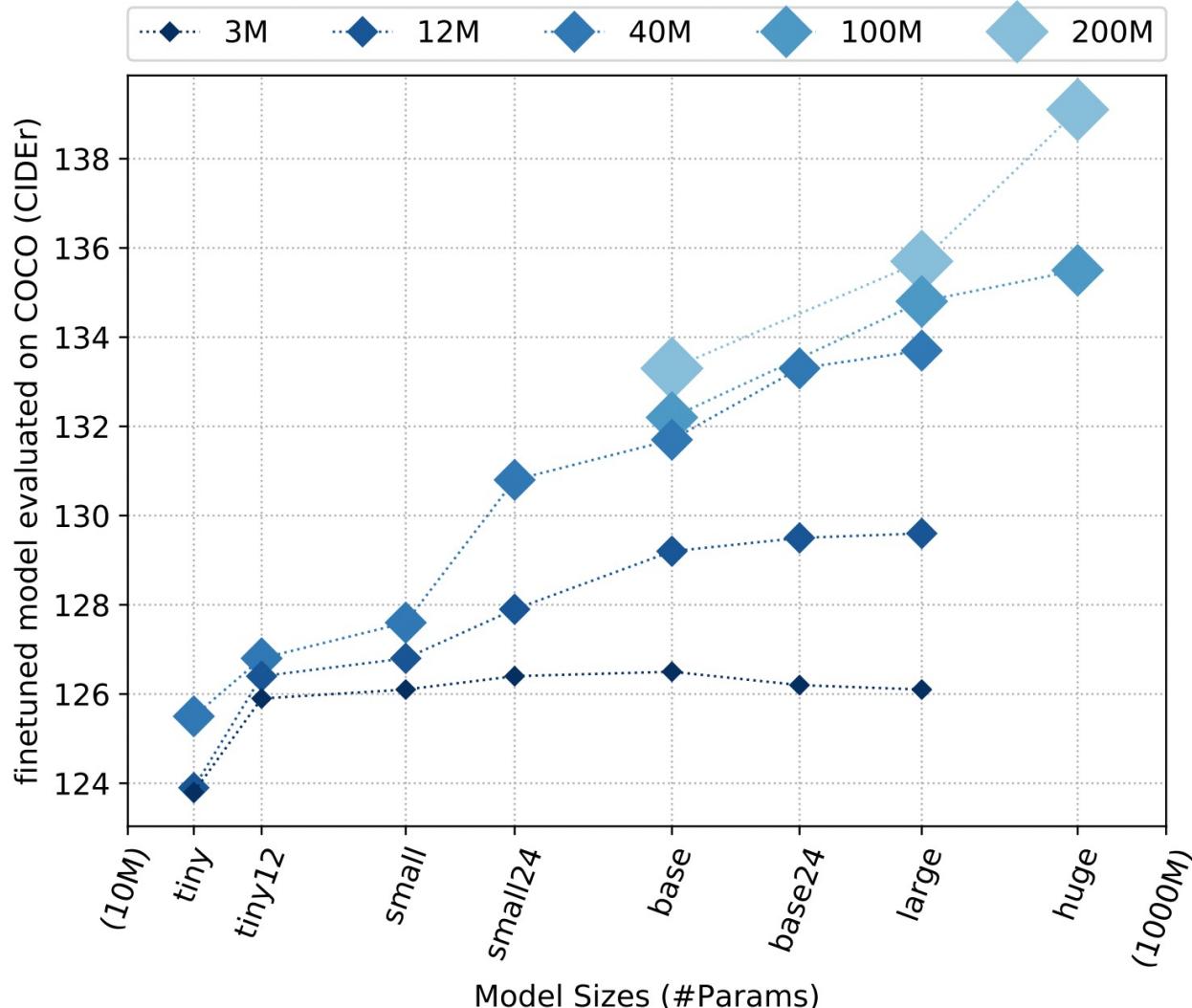
# VinVL: Influence of Model and Dataset Sizes



8 model sizes tested on COCO dataset

Model	Layers	Width	MLP	Heads	Param (M)
tiny	6	256	1024	4	13.4
tiny12	12	256	1024	4	18.1
small	12	384	1536	6	34.3
small24	24	384	1536	6	55.6
base	12	768	3072	12	111.7
base24	24	768	3072	12	196.7
large	24	1024	4096	16	338.3
huge	32	1280	5120	16	675.4

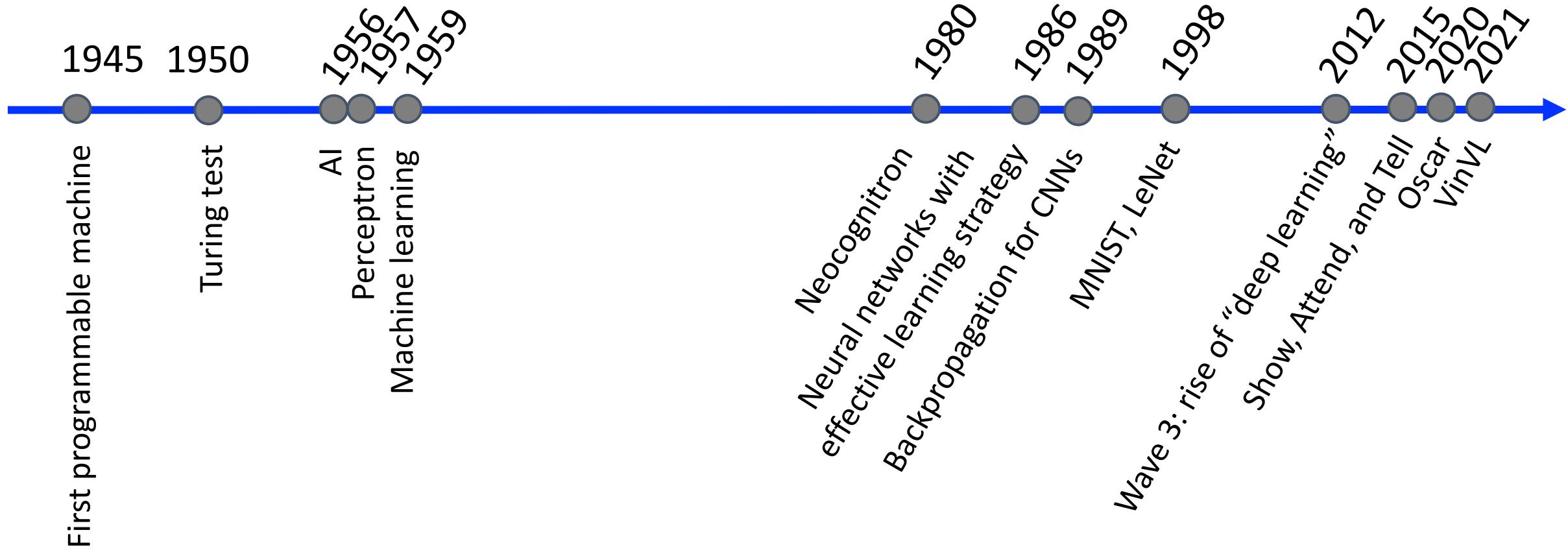
# VinVL: Influence of Model and Dataset Sizes



What trend(s) do you observe?

The trends of improved performance for large models and training datasets is generally observed for transformers

# Historical Context



# Today's Topics

- Image captioning applications
- Image captioning datasets
- Image captioning evaluation
- Challenge winners

*The End*