

# Neurosymbolic Knowledge Bases

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10/29/2024

CMSC 491/691 - INTERACTIVE FICTION AND TEXT GENERATION  
DR. LARA J. MARTIN

SLIDES ADAPTED FROM THE [ACL 2020 COMMONSENSE TUTORIAL](#) BY YEJIN CHOI,  
VERED SHWARTZ, MAARTEN SAP, ANTOINE BOSSELUT, AND DAN ROTH

# Learning Objectives

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- Recall how neural networks and symbolic methods can be combined
- Follow examples of integrated and post-hoc knowledge graph integration

# Review: Definition of Common Sense

The basic level of **practical knowledge** and **reasoning** concerning **everyday situations** and events that are **commonly shared** among **most** people.

It's OK to keep the closet door open

It's not OK to keep the refrigerator door open because the food might go bad

Essential for humans to live and interact with each other in a reasonable and safe way

Essential for AI to understand human needs and actions better

# **Review: Desirable properties for a commonsense resource**

## **Coverage**

Large scale

Diverse knowledge types

## **Useful**

High quality knowledge

Usable in downstream tasks

Multiple resources tackle different  
knowledge types

# Review: ATOMIC: knowledge of *cause and effect*

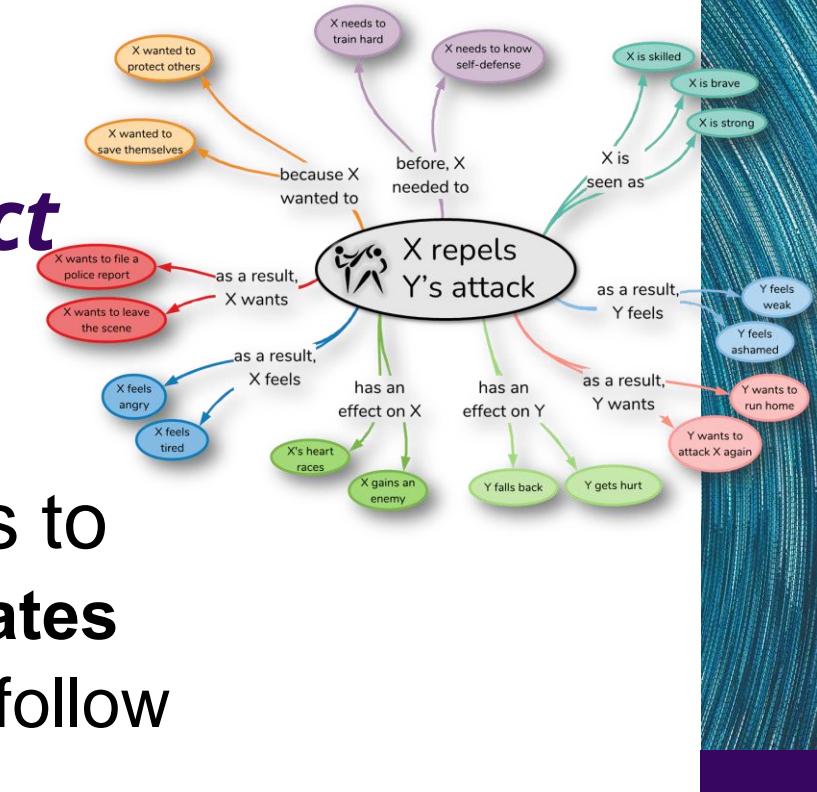
Humans have **theory of mind**, allowing us to

- make inferences about **people's mental states**
- understand **likely events** that precede and follow  
(Moore, 2013)

AI systems struggle with ***inferential*** reasoning

- only find **complex correlational patterns** in data
- **limited to the domain** they are trained on

(Pearl; Davis and Marcus 2015; Lake et al. 2017; Marcus 2018)



M. Sap *et al.*, "ATOMIC: An Atlas of Machine Commonsense for If-Then Reasoning," *AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence (AAAI)*, vol. 33, no. 1, pp. 3027–3035, 2019,  
doi: [10.1609/aaai.v33i01.33013027](https://doi.org/10.1609/aaai.v33i01.33013027).

# Review: Ways of categorizing existing knowledge bases

Represented in **symbolic logic**  
(e.g., LISP-style logic)

*NELL*  
(Mitchell et al., 2015)

*OpenCyc 4.0*  
(Lenat, 2012)

Represented in **natural language**  
(how humans *talk* and *think*)

*ConceptNet 5.5*  
(Speer et al., 2017)

Knowledge of “**what**”  
(taxonomic: A isA B)

Knowledge of “**why**” and  
“**how**”

(inferential: causes and effects)

*ATOMIC*  
(Sap et al., 2019)

# Review: Some commonsense cannot be extracted

Text is subject to reporting bias  
(Gordon & Van Durme, 2013)

Noteworthy events

- Murdering 4x more common than exhaling

Commonsense is not often written

- Grice's maxim of quantity



found when extracting commonsense knowledge on four large corpora using Knext (Gordon & Van Durme, 2013)

When communicating, people try to be as informative as they possibly can, and give as much information as is needed, and no more.

# **Review: Why combine [neural and symbolic methods]?**

## **Neural Networks**

Statistical patterns over data

Easy to generate new text from

Need a lot of data to train (and might  
need to be labeled)

Hard to control

Examples: sequence-to-sequence  
networks, transformers (LLMs)

## **Symbolic Methods**

Structured information

Easy for people to understand  
(interpretable)

Hard to make

- Need experts or a lot of time

Limited set of information

Examples: knowledge bases, planning  
domains/problems, scripts

# Ways of combining them

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- During training
  - Such as in reinforcement learning or retrieval-augmented generation (RAG)
- After training
  - Like a symbolic “wrapper” – helps validate what the NN is doing
- Others??

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- After training
  - Like a symbolic “wrapper” – helps validate what the NN is doing
- Others??

# Adding neural networks to knowledge bases

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Katrina had the financial means to afford a new car while Monica did not, since \_\_\_\_\_ had a high paying job.



WINOGRANDE: An Adversarial Winograd Schema Challenge at Scale.  
*Keisuke Sakaguchi, Ronan Le Bras, Chandra Bhagavatula, and Yejin Choi.* AAAI 2020.

# Neural Architecture

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[CLS] Katrina had the financial means to afford a new car while Monica did not, since [SEP] **Katrina** had a high paying job.

[CLS] Katrina had the financial means to afford a new car while Monica did not, since [SEP] **Monica** had a high paying job.



**0.51**

**0.49**

# Masked Language Models

**Sentence:**

Katrina had the financial means to afford a new car while Monica did not, since [MASK] had a high paying job.

**Predictions:**

11.8% 

8.8% **She**

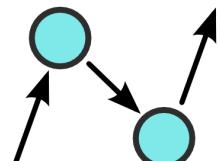
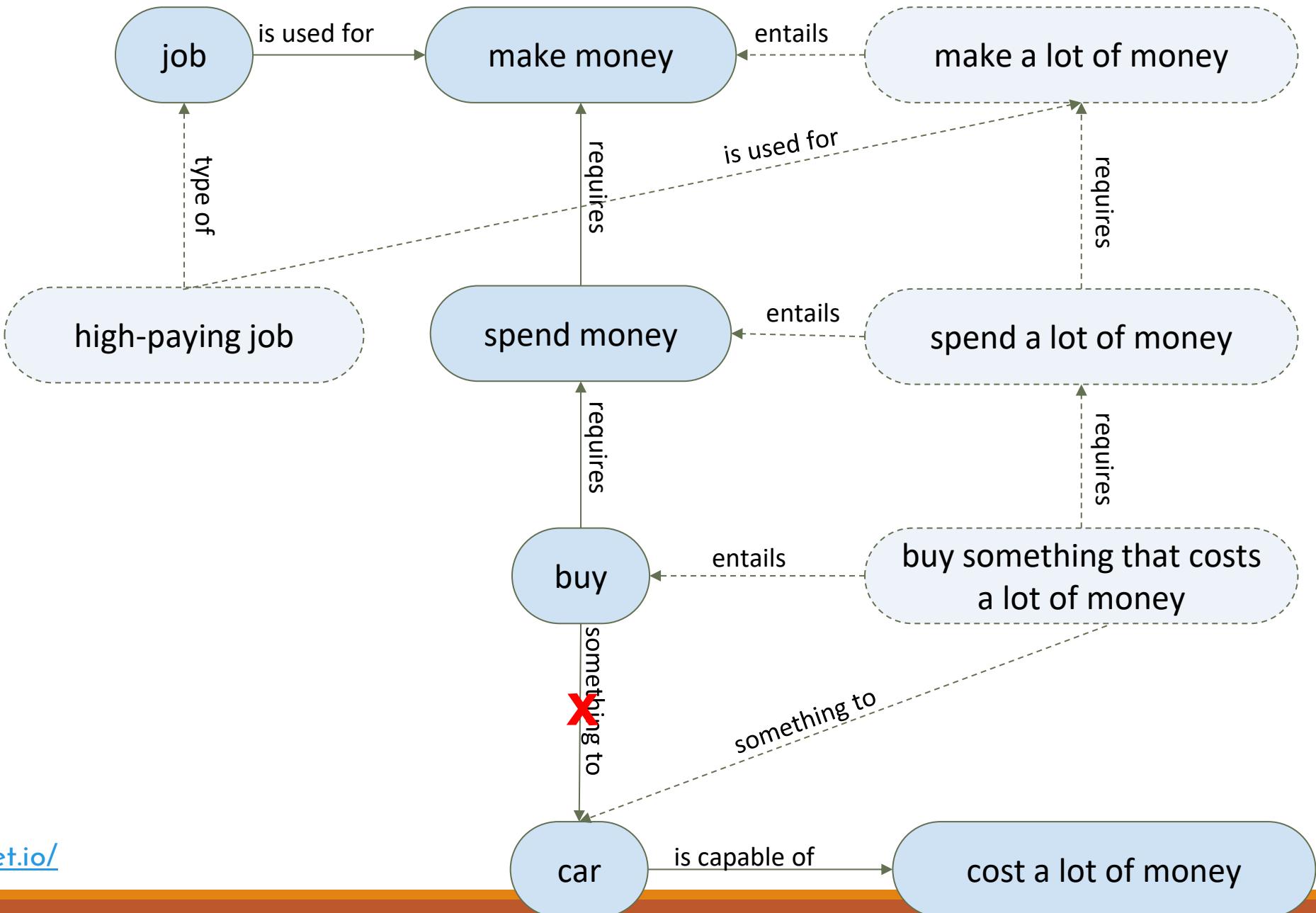
6.3% **I**

6.2% **So**

5.2% **Monica**

 **Undo**

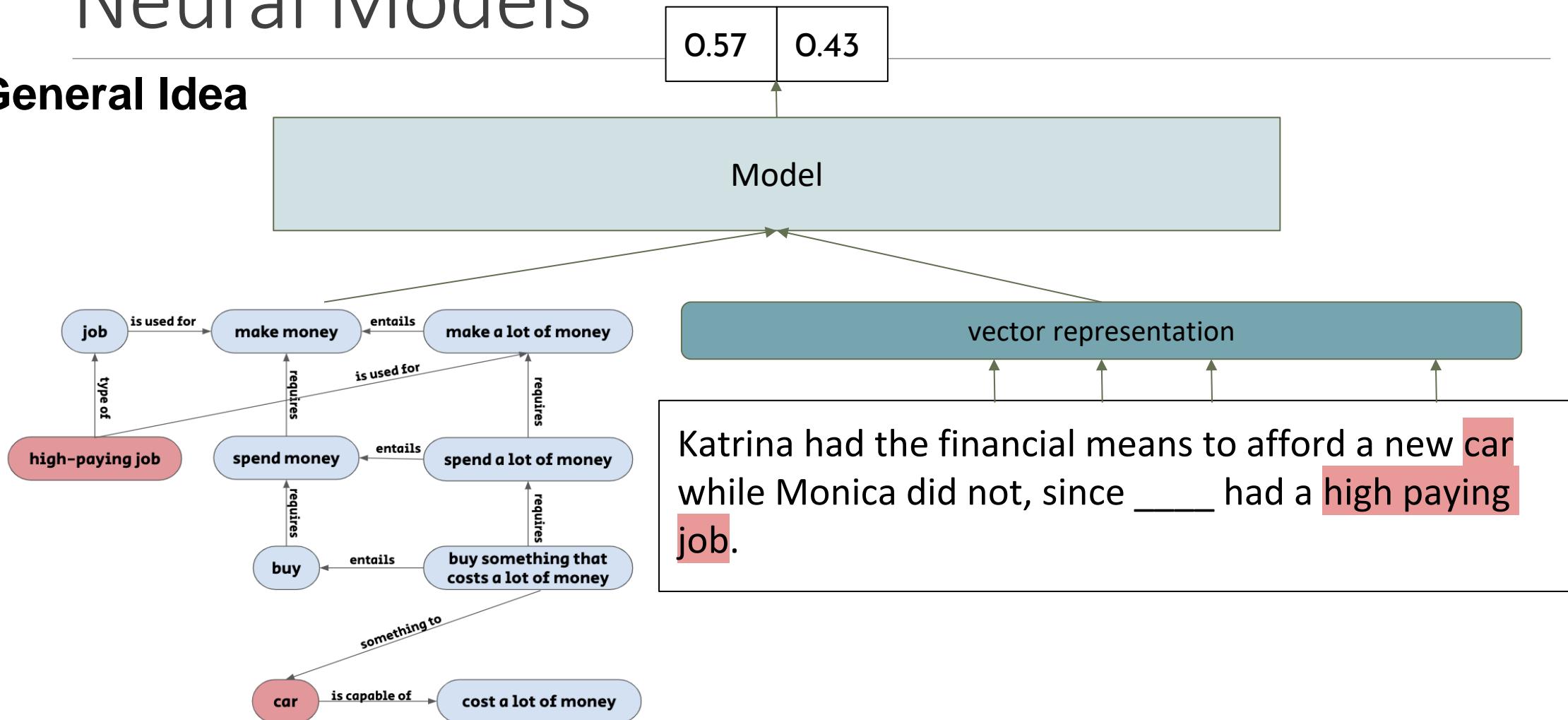
<https://demo.allennlp.org/masked-lm>



<https://conceptnet.io/>

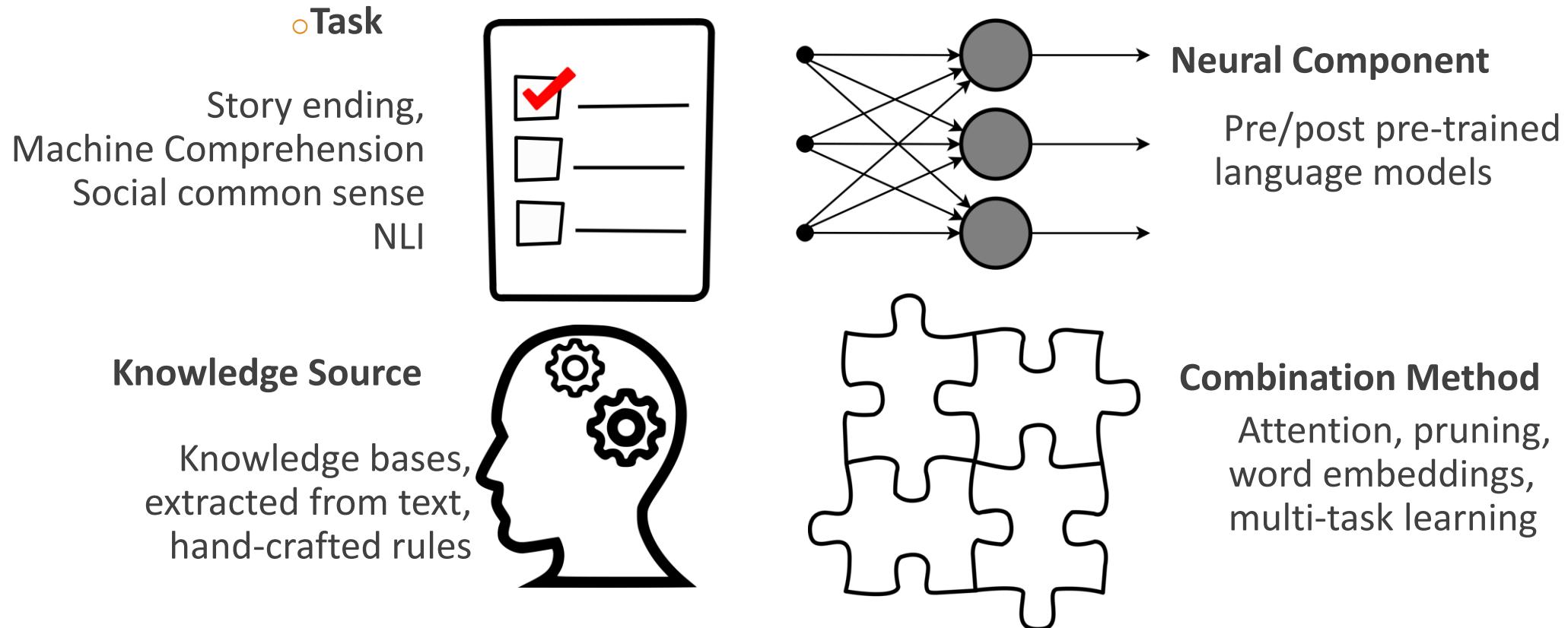
# Incorporating External Knowledge into Neural Models

## General Idea



# Incorporating External Knowledge into Neural Models

## Recipe



# Story Ending Task (RocStories)

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Agatha had always wanted pet birds.  
So one day she purchased two pet finches.  
Soon she couldn't stand their constant noise.  
And even worse was their constant mess.

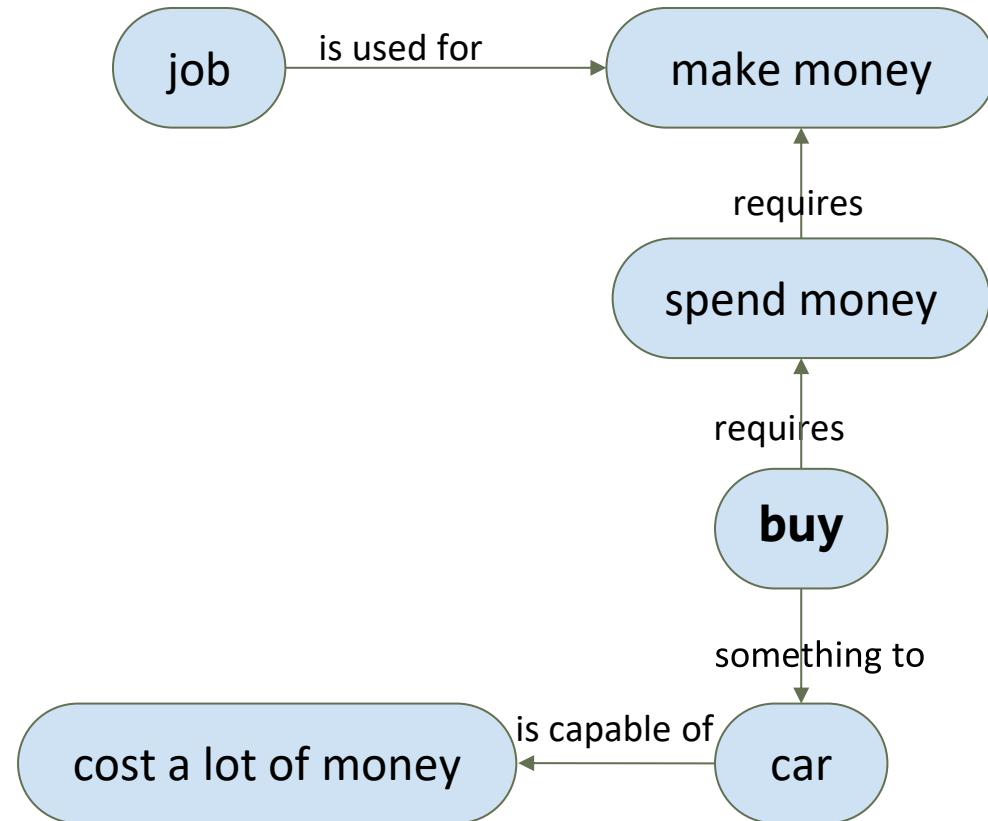
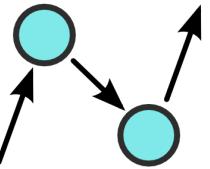


Agatha decided to buy two more. (Wrong)  
Agatha decided to return them. (Right)

Task

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	—
<input type="checkbox"/>	—
<input type="checkbox"/>	—

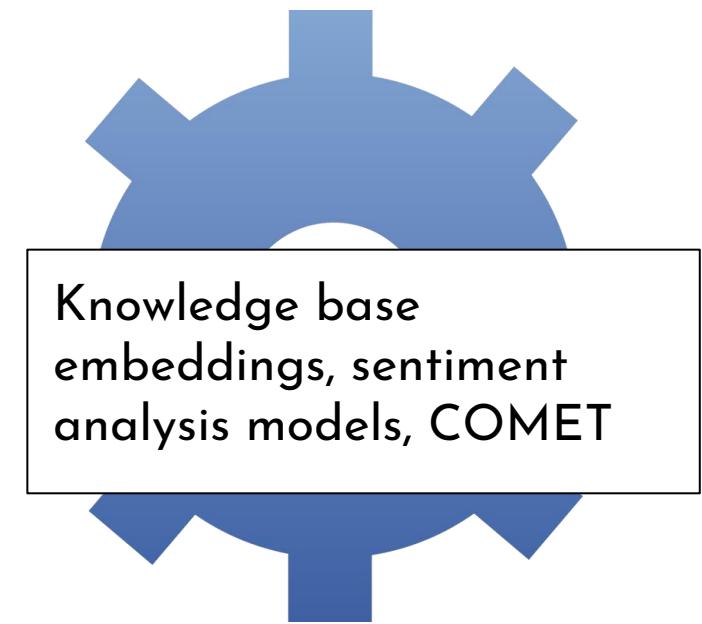
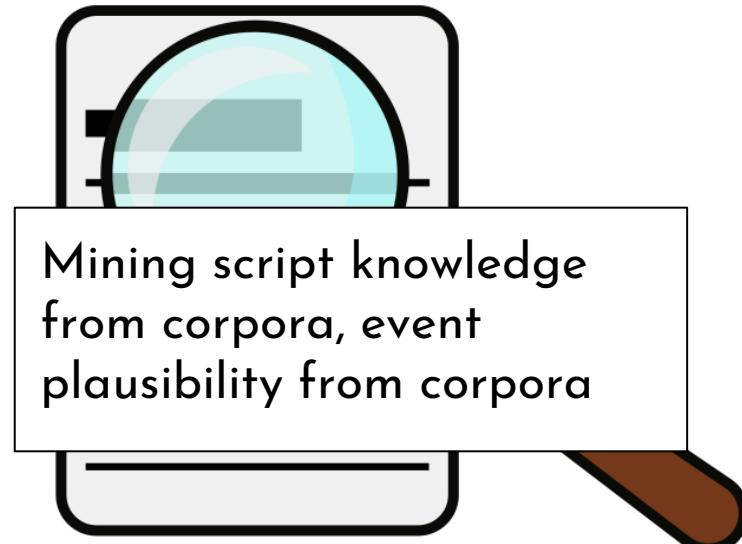
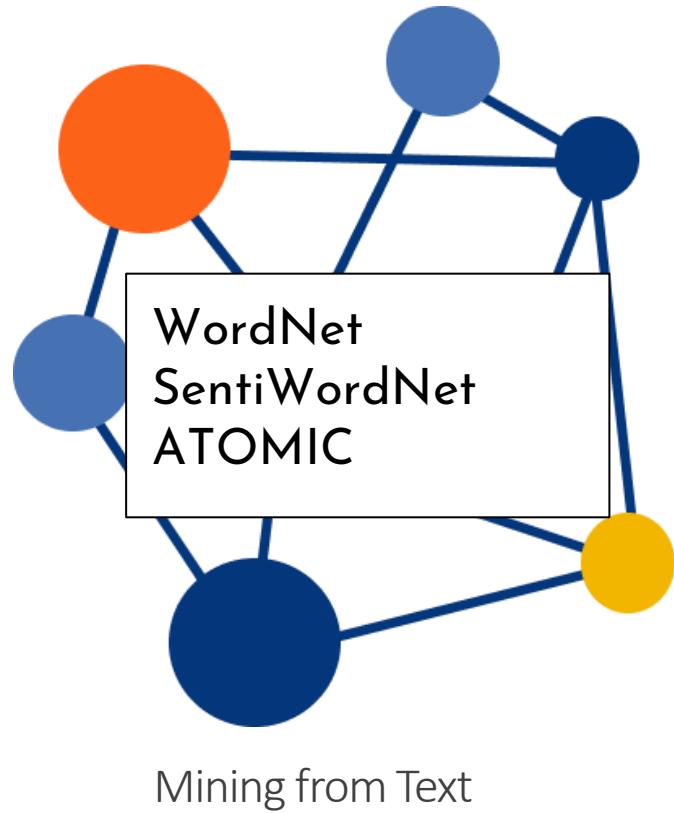
# ConceptNet



Conceptnet 5.5: An open multilingual graph of general knowledge. Robyn Speer, Joshua Chin, and Catherine Havasi. AAAI 2017.

# Other Knowledge Sources

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# Neural Component

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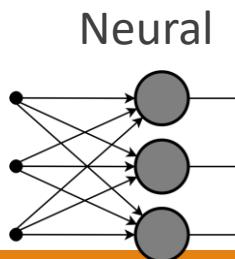
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# Combination Method

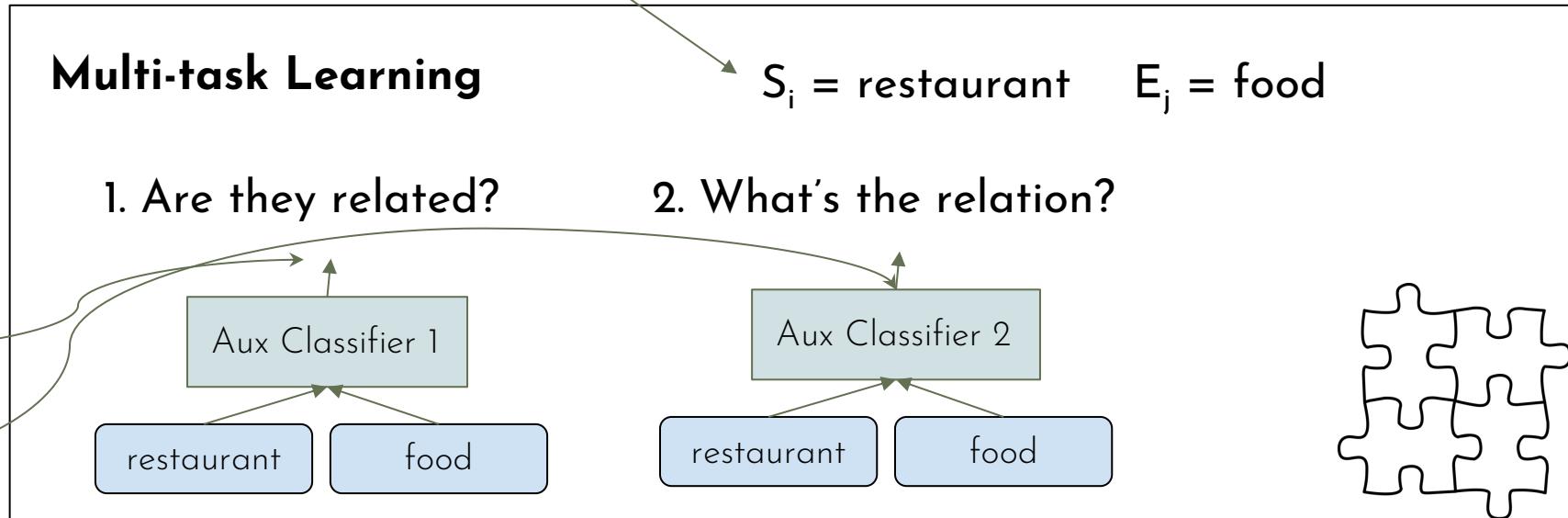
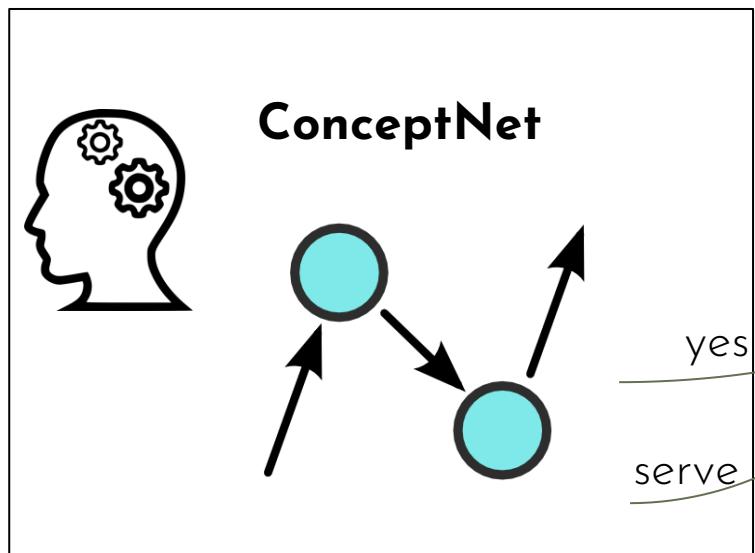
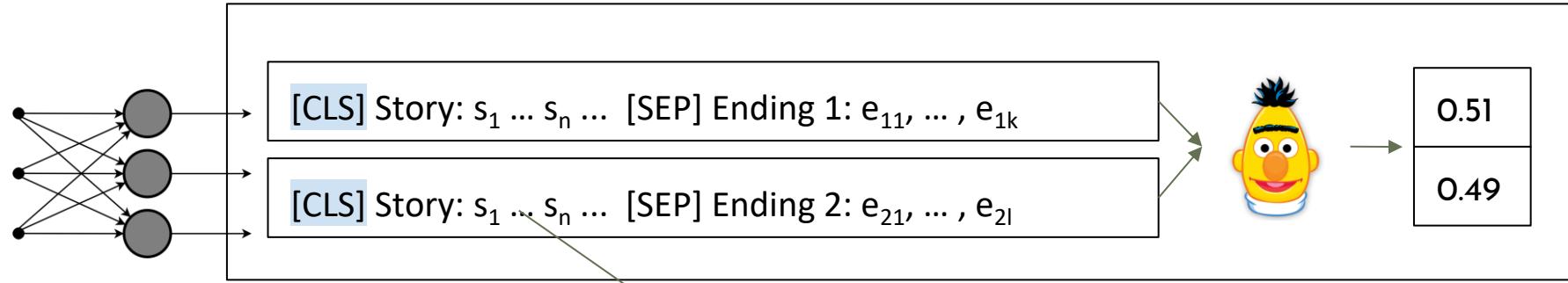
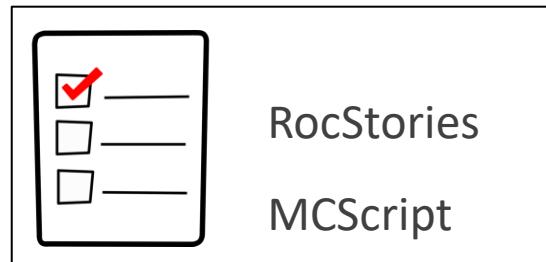
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- Incorporate into scoring function
- Symbolic → vector representation  
(+attention)
- Multi-task learning



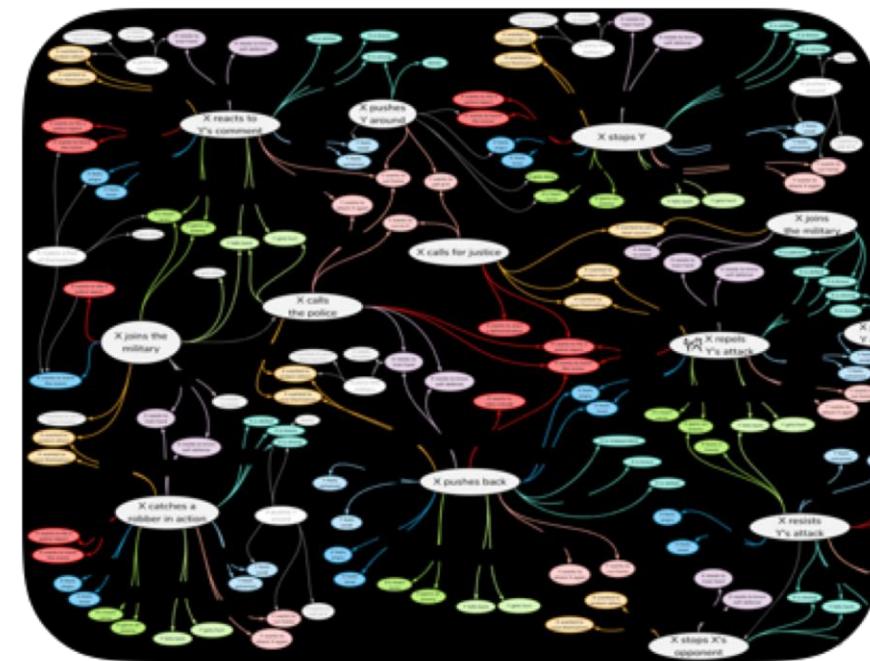
# Incorporating External Knowledge into Neural Models

Example



# Limitations of Knowledge Graphs

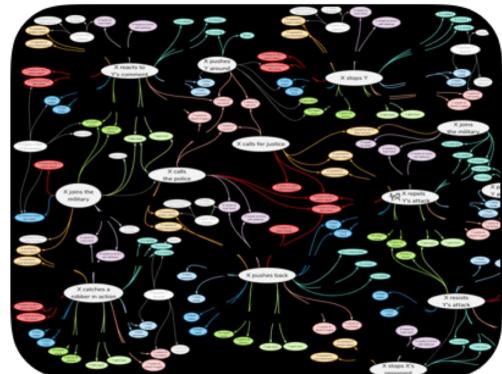
- Insufficient Coverage
- Not 100% Accurate
- Limited expressivity



# Limitations of Knowledge Graphs

- Situations rarely found **as-is** in commonsense knowledge graphs

ATOMIC



(Sap et al., 2019)

(X goes to the mall,  
Effect on X, buys  
clothes)

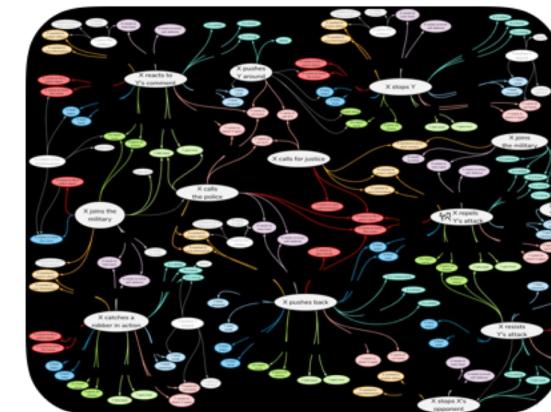
(X goes the mall,  
Perception of X, rich)

(X gives Y some money,  
Reaction of Y, grateful)

# Limitations of Knowledge Graphs

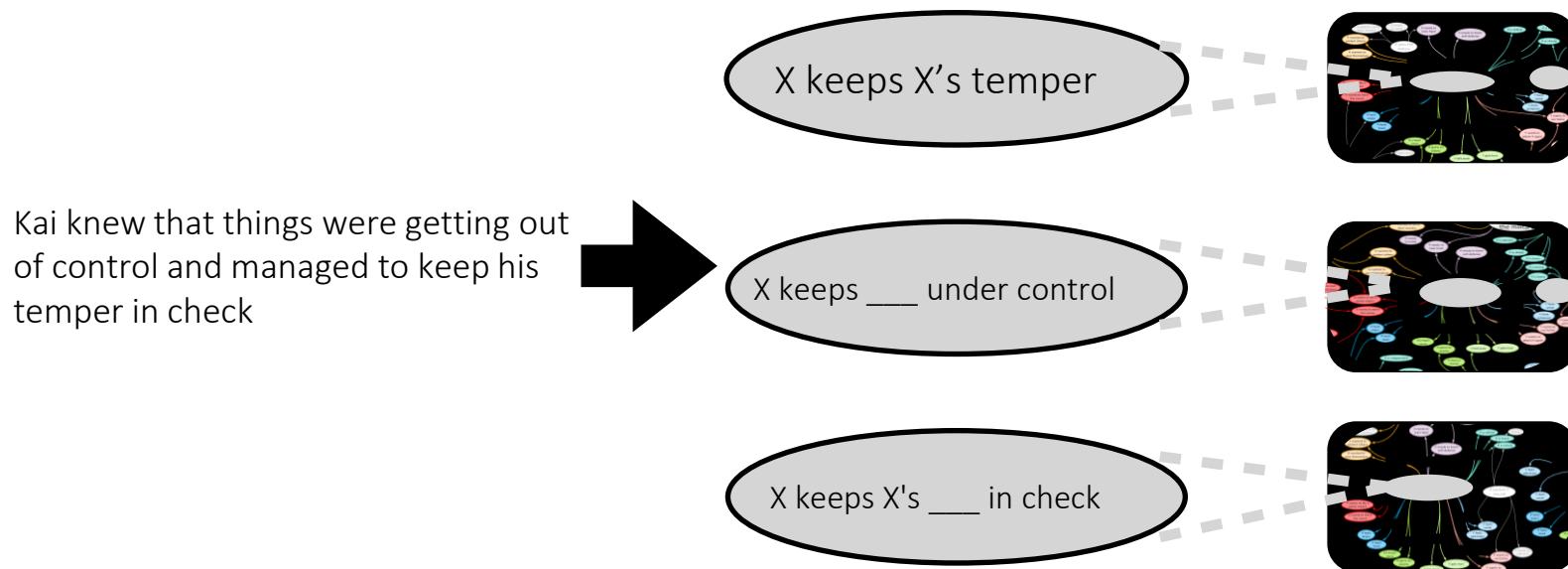
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Kai knew that things were getting out of control and managed to keep his temper in check



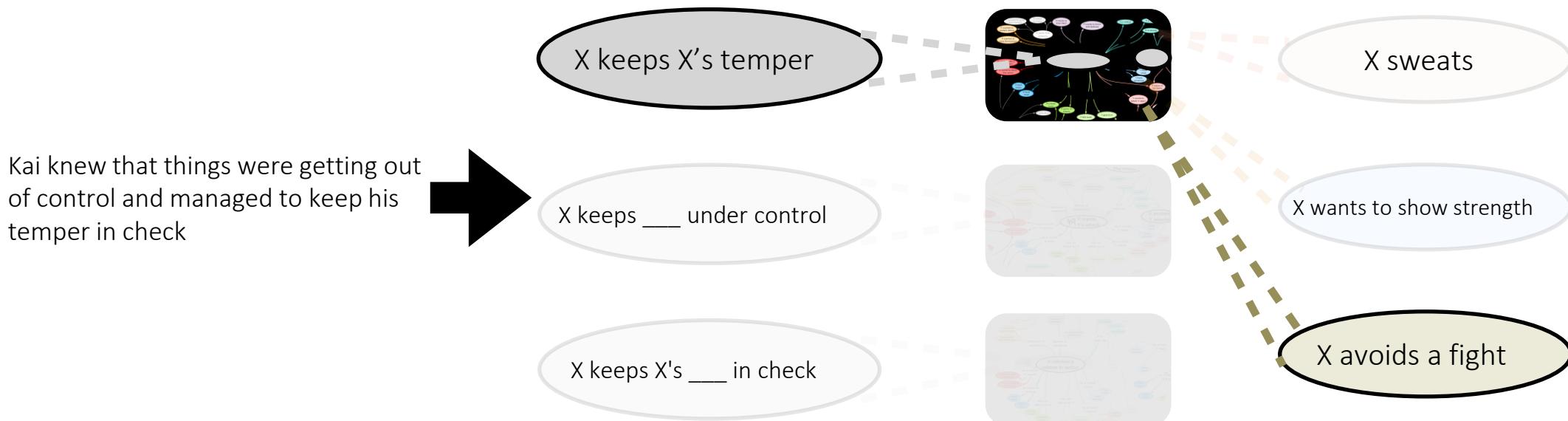
# Limitations of Knowledge Graphs

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- Connecting to knowledge graphs can yield **incorrect** nodes



# Limitations of Knowledge Graphs

- Situations rarely found **as-is** in commonsense knowledge graphs
- Connecting to knowledge graphs can yield **incorrect** nodes
- Suitable nodes are often **uncontextualized**

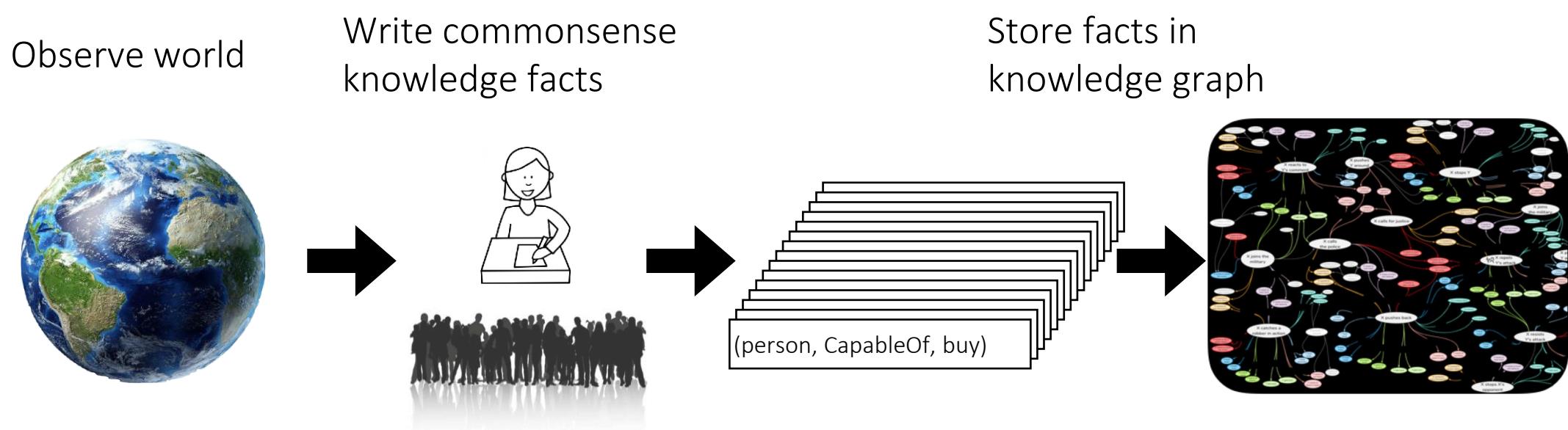


# Challenge

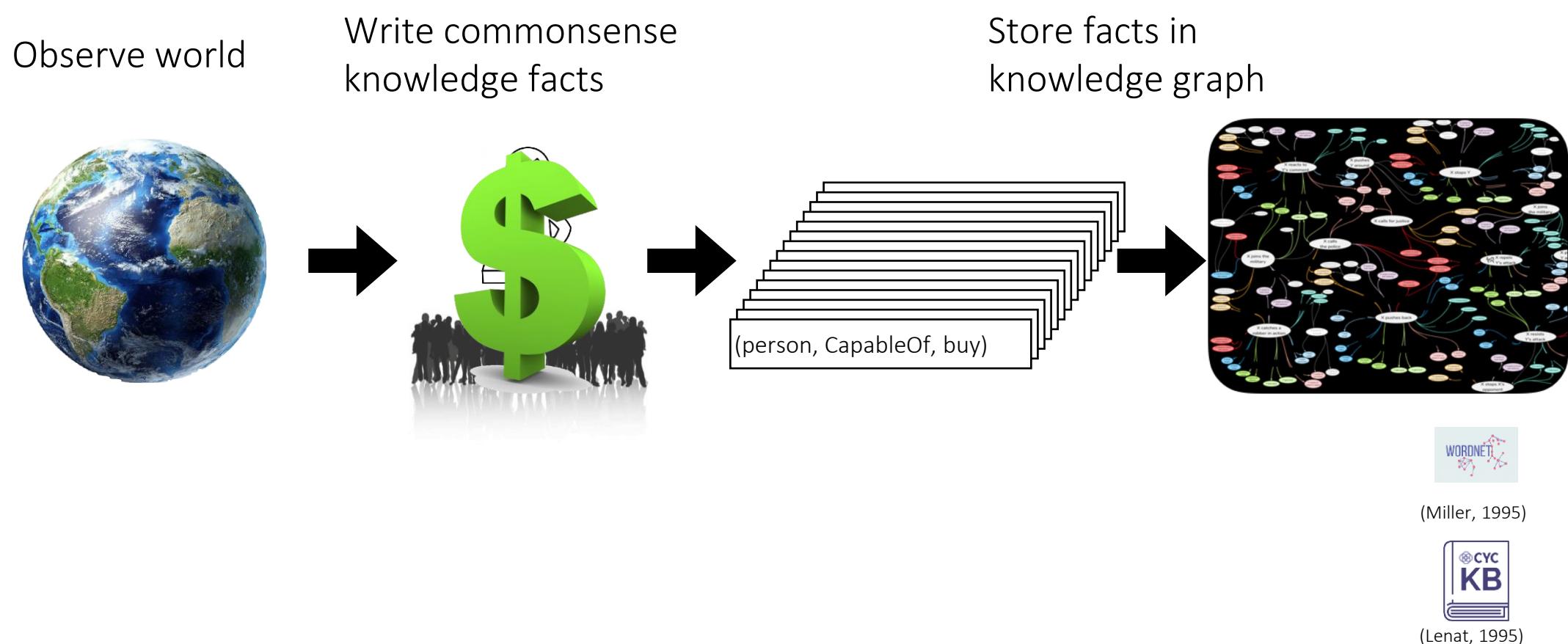
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- How do we provide machines with large-scale commonsense knowledge?

# Constructing Knowledge Graphs



# Constructing Symbolic Knowledge Graphs



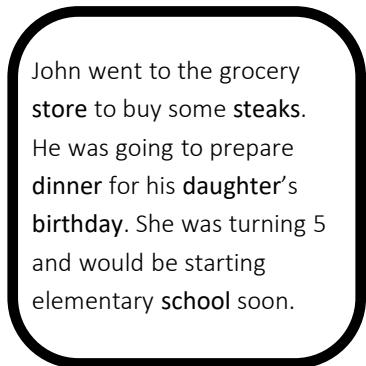
# Challenges of Prior Approaches

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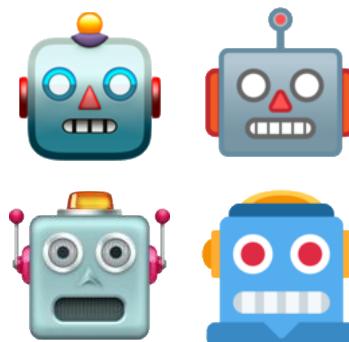
- Commonsense knowledge is immeasurably vast, making it impossible to manually enumerate

# Constructing Knowledge Graphs Automatically

Gather Textual Corpus



Automatically extract knowledge



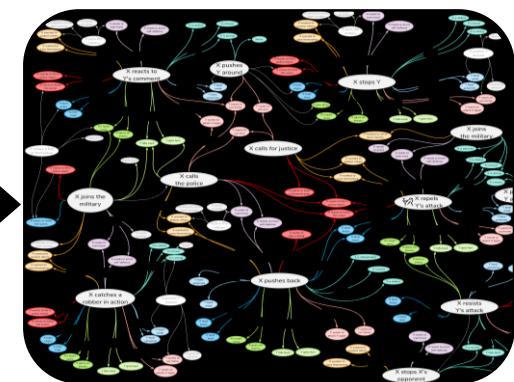
(Schubert, 2002)

(Banko et al., 2007)

(Zhang et al., 2020)

(person, CapableOf, buy)

Store in knowledge graph



 **ConceptNet**  
An open, multilingual knowledge graph

(Speer et al., 2017)

**Webchild**  


(Tandon et al., 2019)

# Encyclopedic vs. Commonsense Knowledge

Encyclopedic Knowledge

Explicitly written in text

Ontological Mentions

Deviations rarely written

Commonsense Knowledge

Often assumed  
Grice's Maxim of Quantity

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Reporting Bias  
murders 4x more common than bretaining

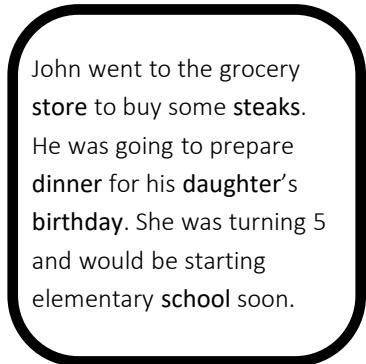
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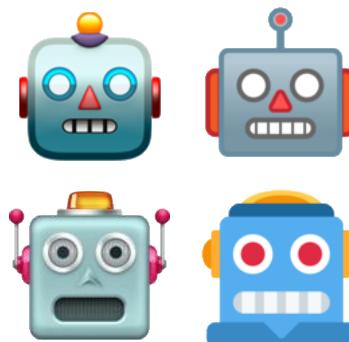
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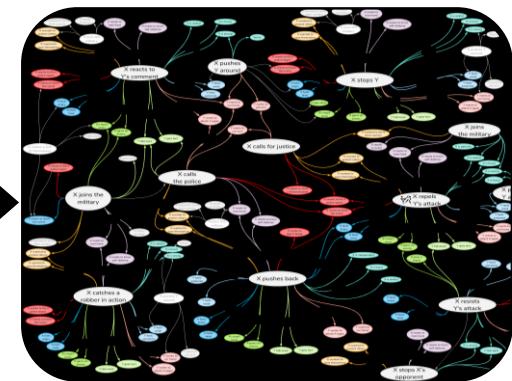
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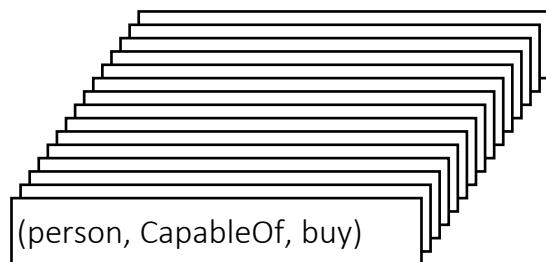
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**Webchild**  

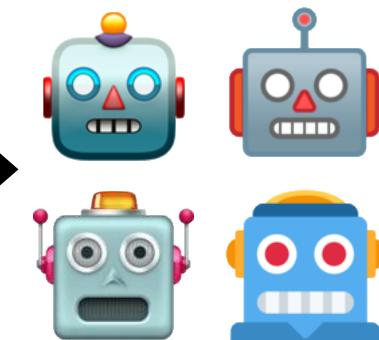

(Tandon et al., 2019)

# Knowledge Base Completion

Gather training set  
of knowledge tuples



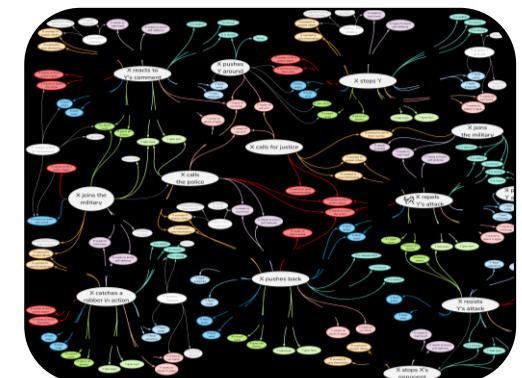
Learn relationships  
among entities



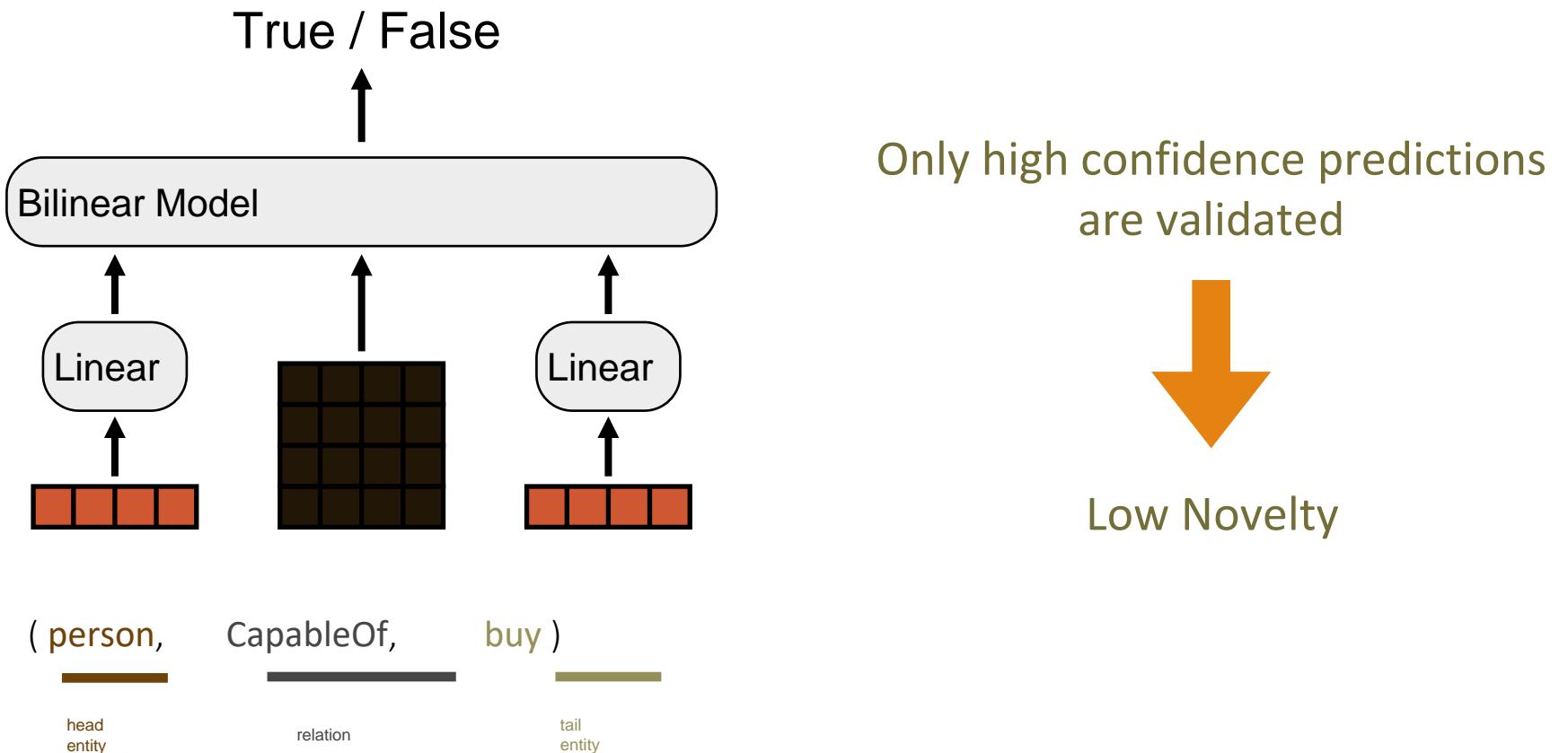
Predict new relationships

(person, CapableOf, ?)

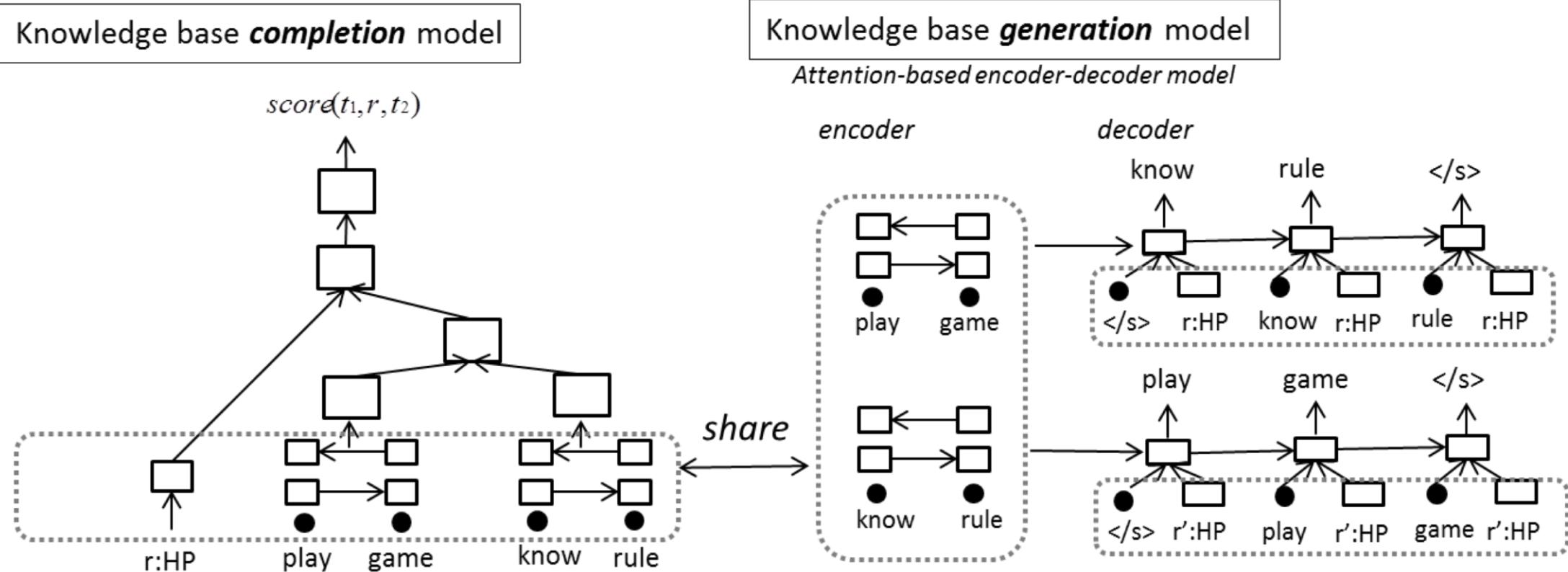
Store in knowledge graph



# Commonsense Knowledge Base Completion



# Commonsense Knowledge Base Completion and Generation!



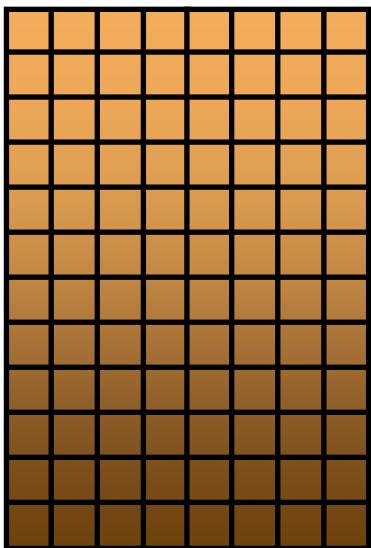
# Challenges of Prior Approaches

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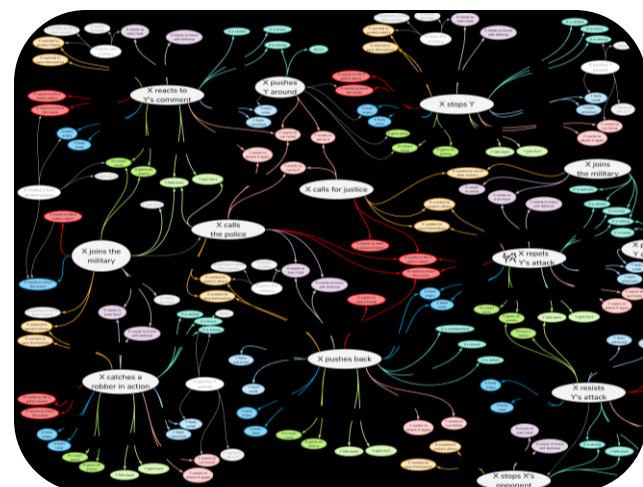
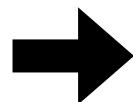
- Commonsense knowledge is immeasurably vast, making it impossible to manually enumerate
- Commonsense knowledge is often implicit, and often can't be directly extracted from text
- Commonsense knowledge resources are quite sparse, making them difficult to extend by only learning from examples

# Solution Outline

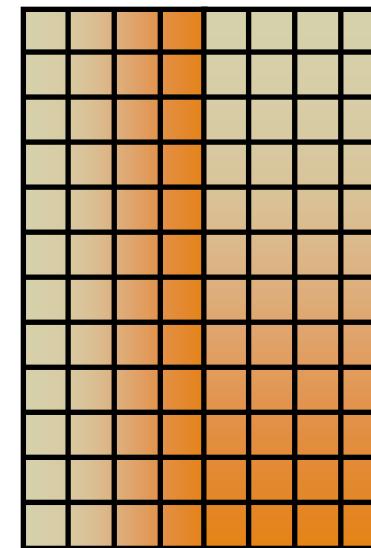
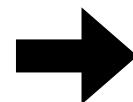
- Leverage manually curated commonsense knowledge resources
- Learn from the examples to induce new relationships
- Scale up using language resources



Learn word embeddings  
from language corpus



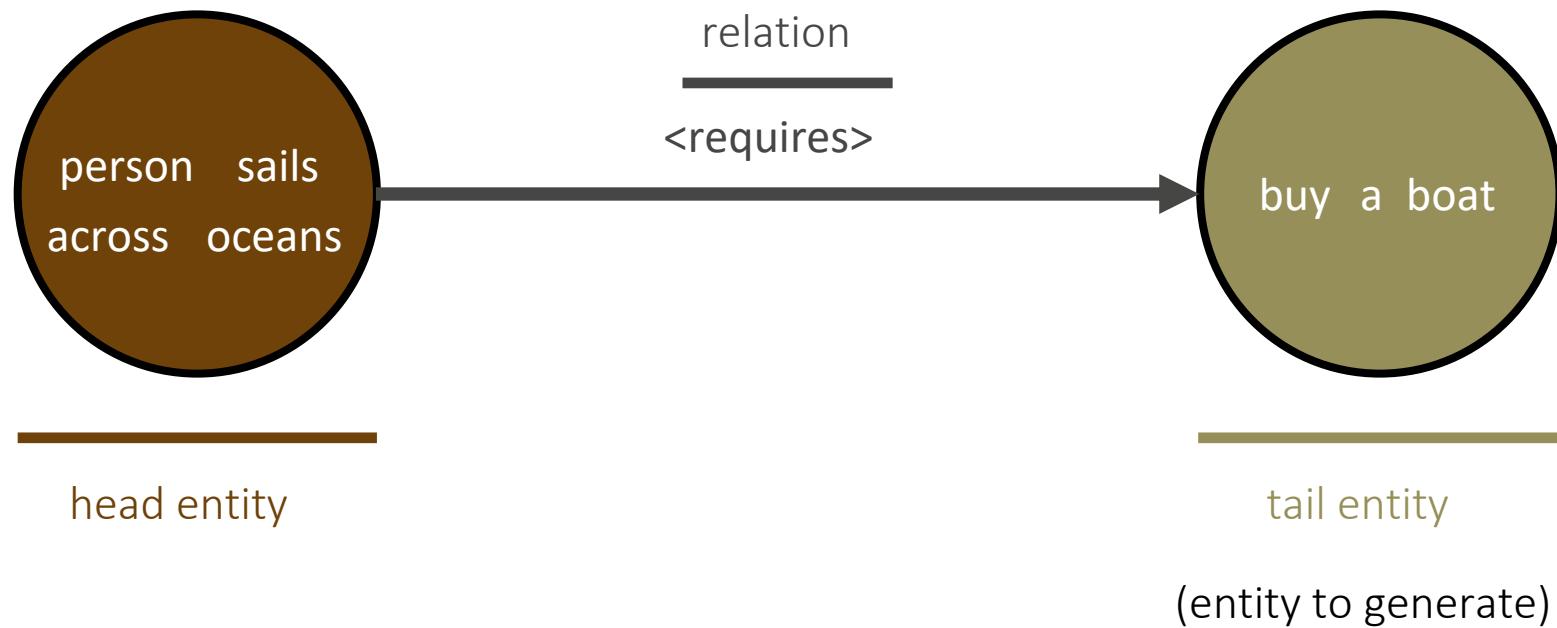
Retrofit word embeddings  
on semantic resource



Learn knowledge-  
aware embeddings

# Structure of Knowledge Tuple

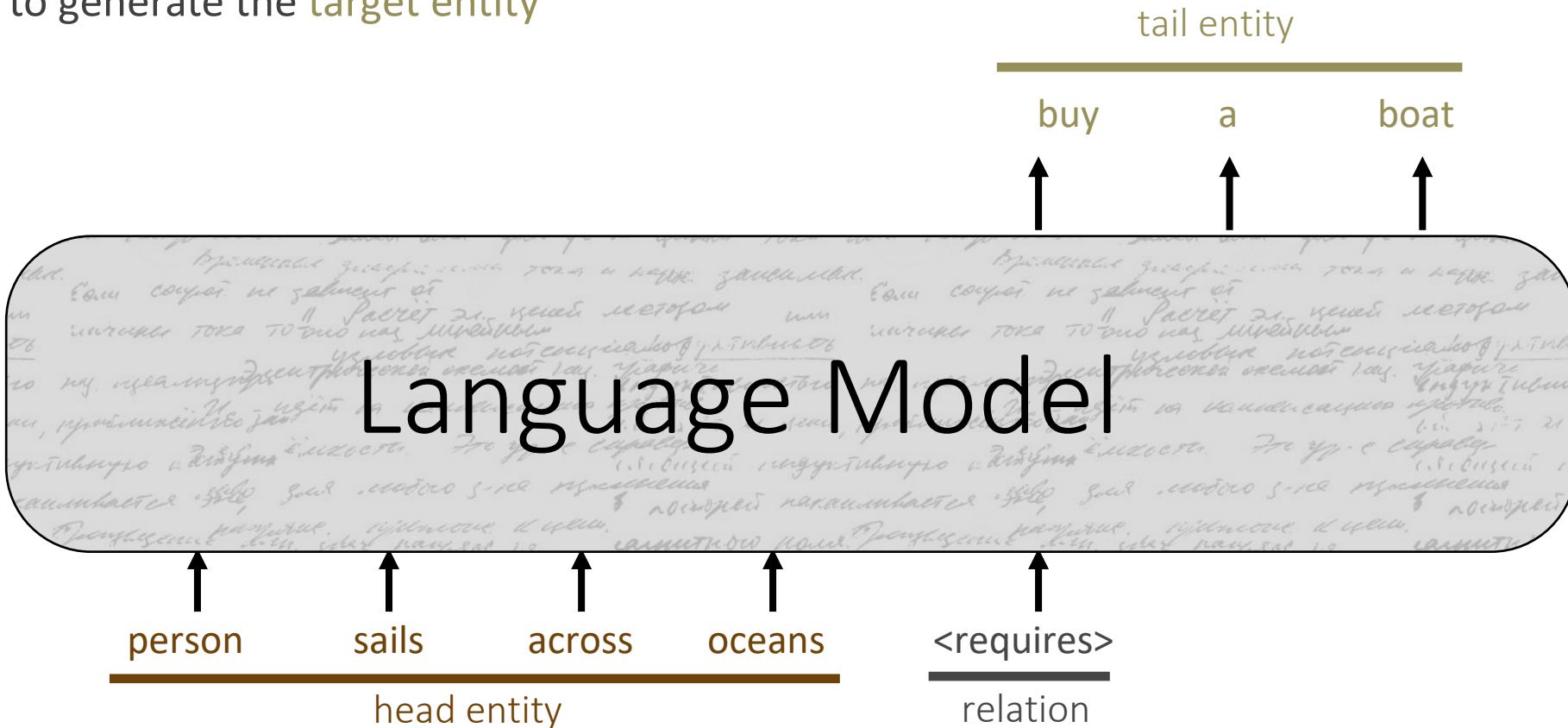
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# Learning Structure of Knowledge

- Given a seed entity and a relation, learn to generate the target entity

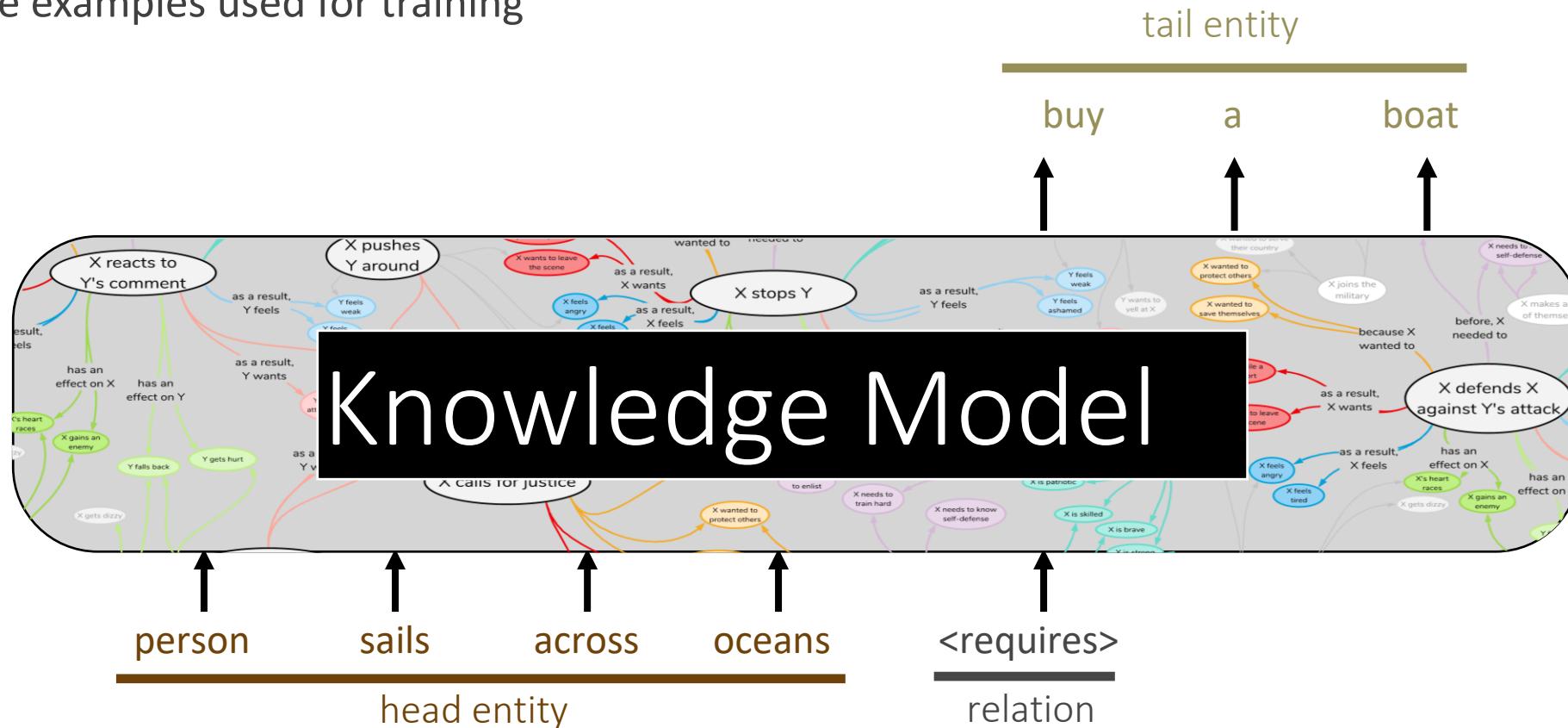
$$\mathcal{L} = -\sum \log P(\text{target words} | \text{seed words, relation})$$



(Bosselut et al., 2019)

# Learning Structure of Knowledge

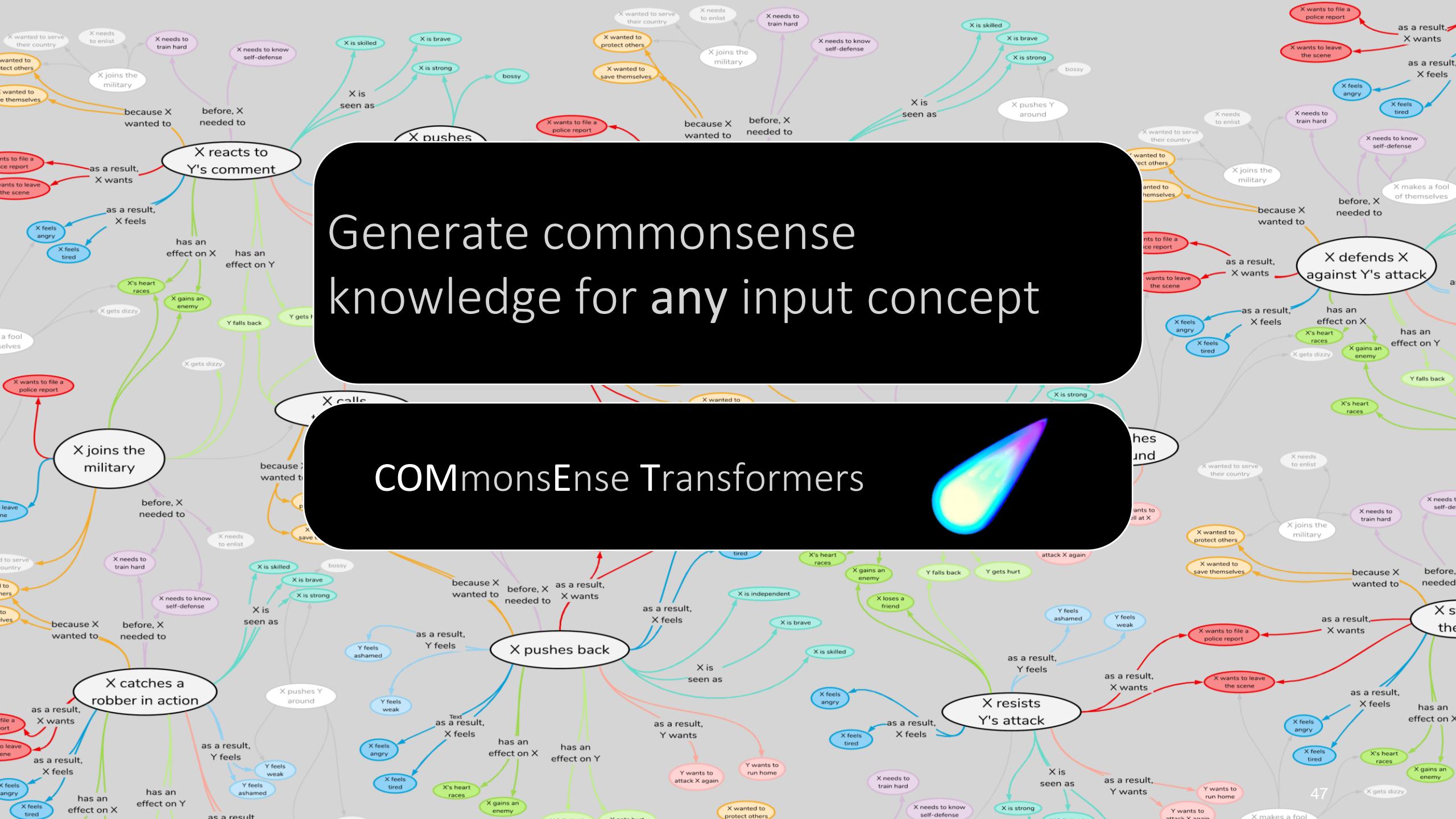
- Language Model → Knowledge Model: generates knowledge of the structure of the examples used for training



(Bosselut et al., 2019)

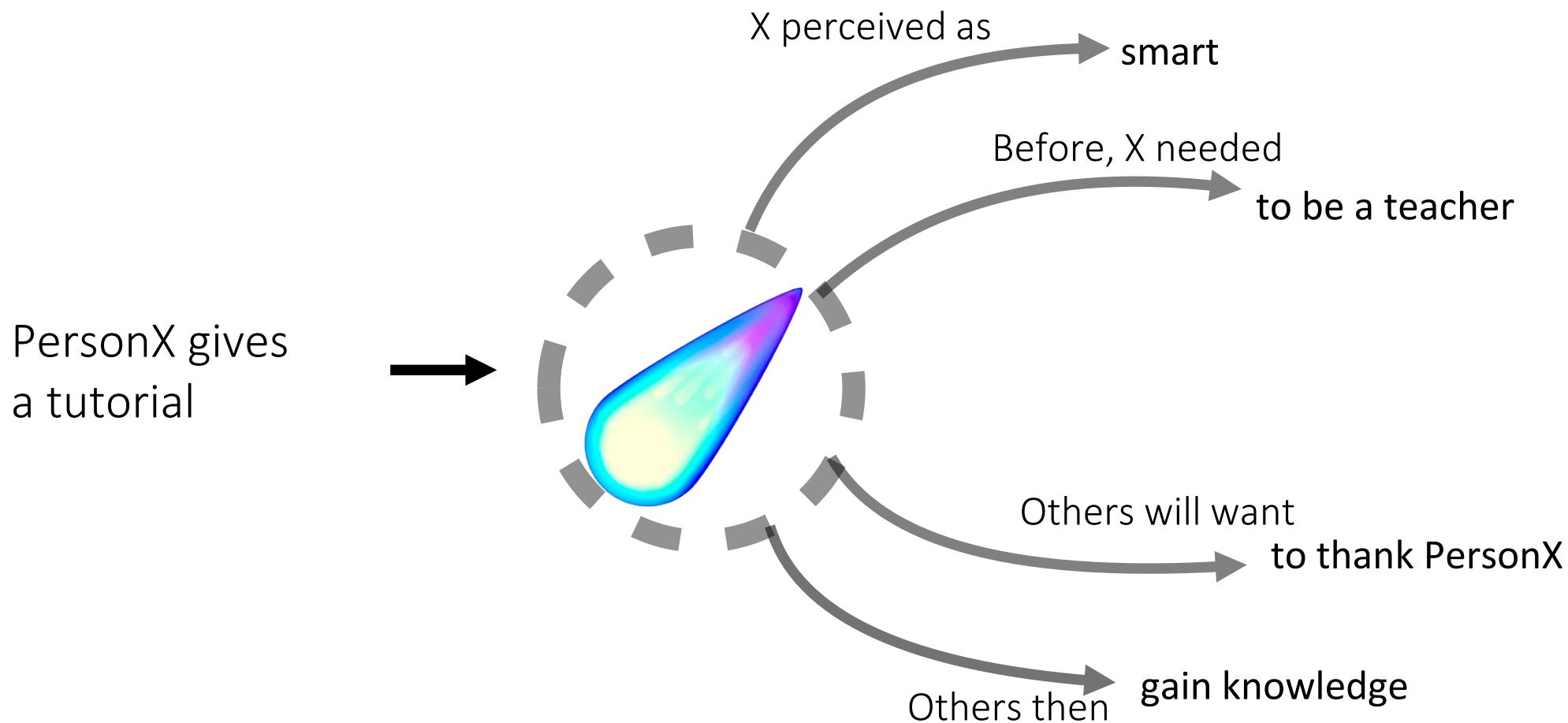
Generate commonsense knowledge for any input concept

COMmonsEnse Transformers



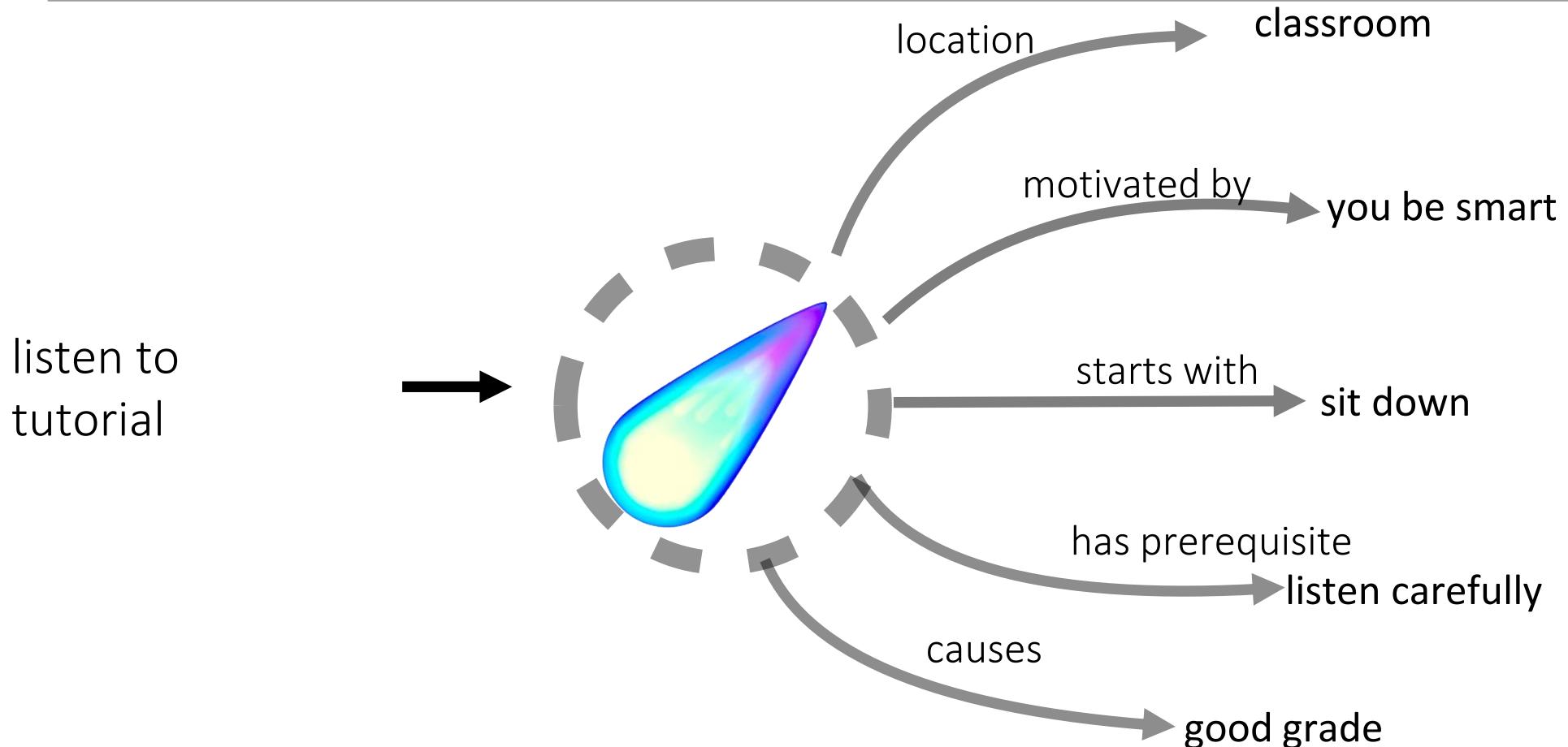
# COMET - ATOMIC

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# COMET - ConceptNet

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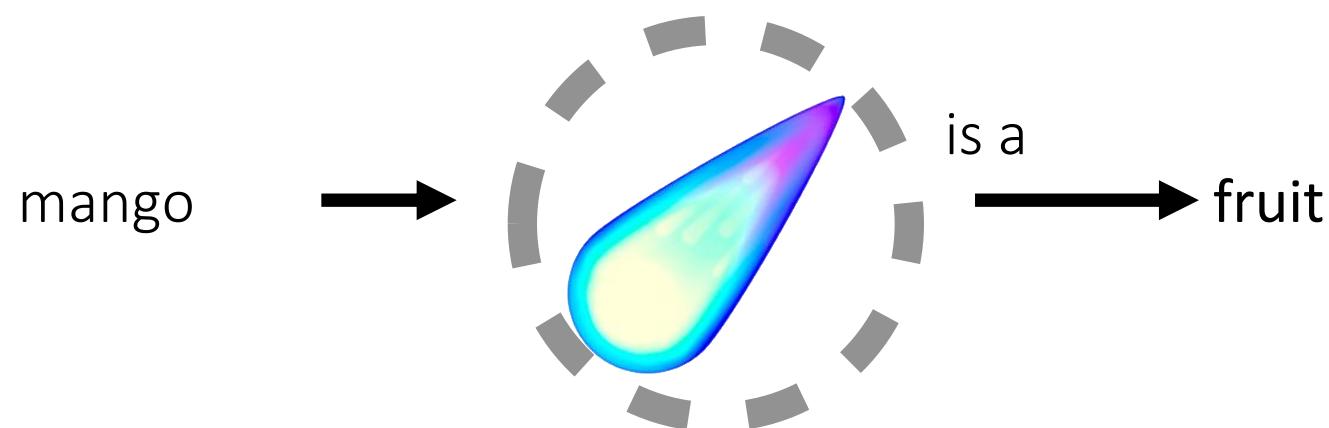
# Question

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Why does this work?

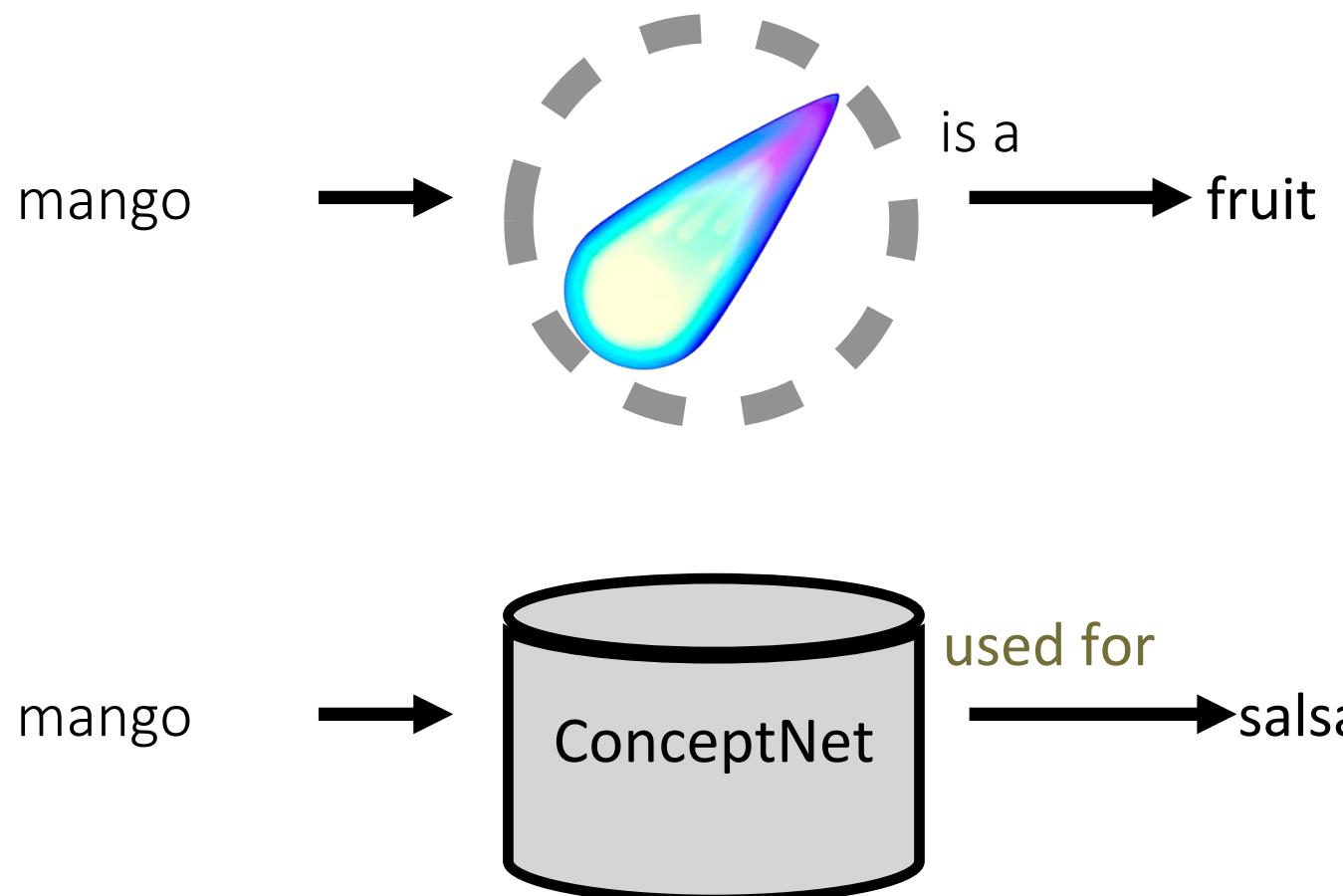
# Transfer Learning from Language

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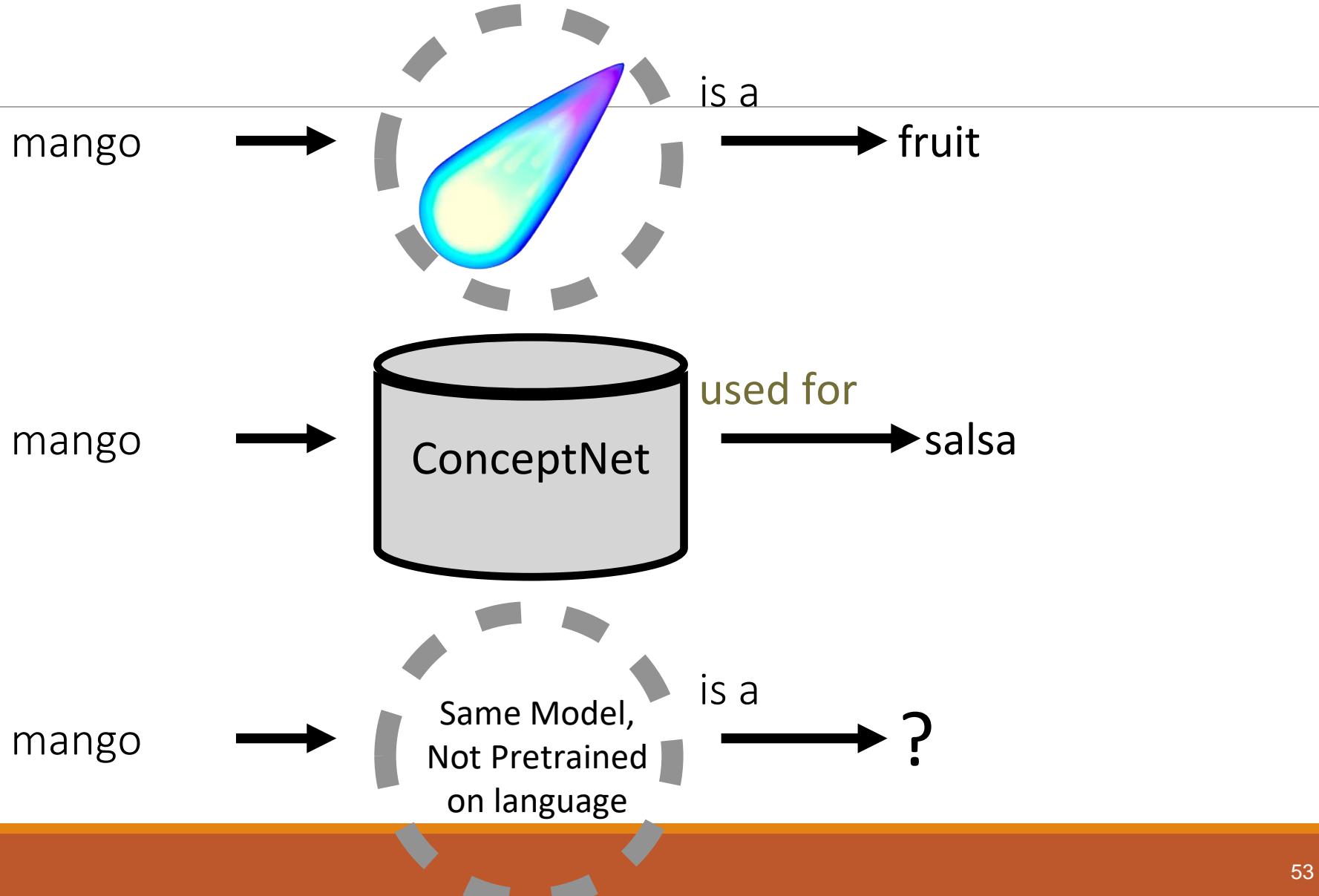


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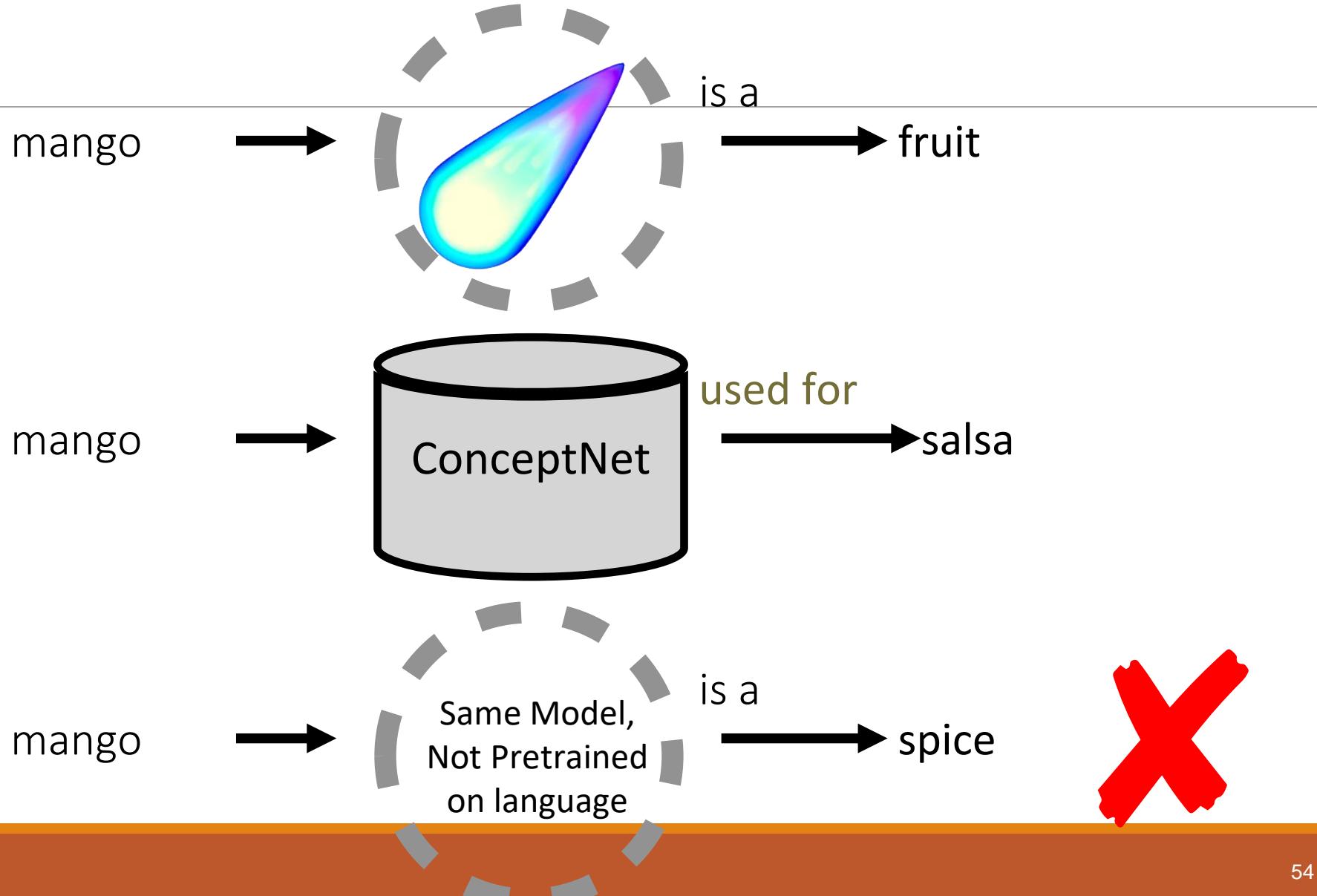
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# Transfer Learning from Language



# Transfer Learning from Language



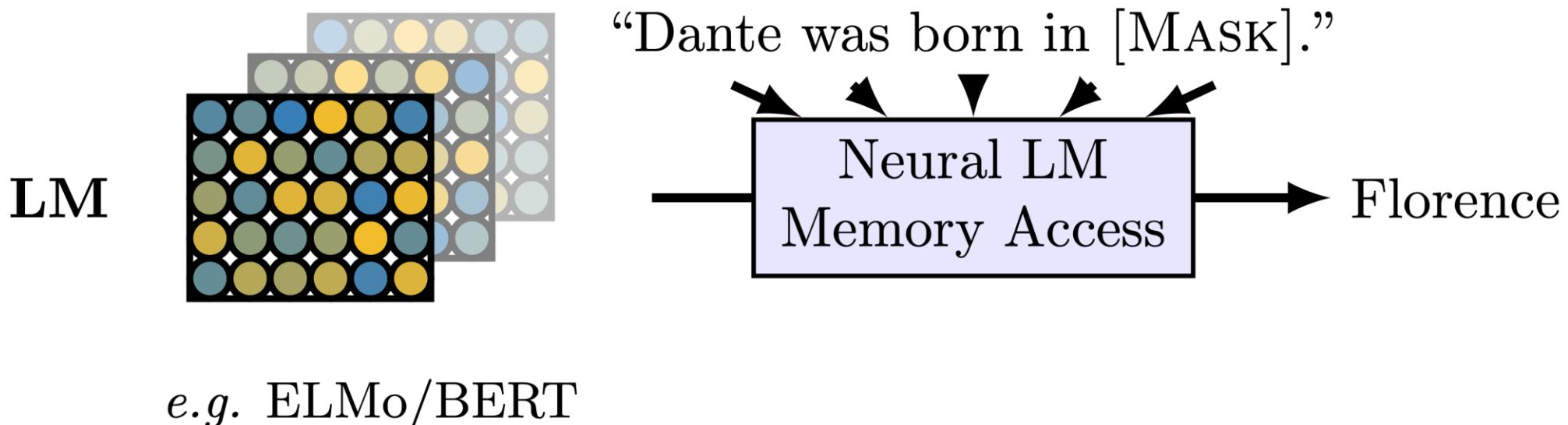
# Question

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Can't a off-the-shelf language model do the same thing?

# Unsupervised Commonsense Probing

( Dante, <born\_in>, ? )



Petroni et al., 2019; Feldman et al., 2019

# Do Language Models know this?

---

Sentence:

mango is a

Predictions:

- 2.1% **great**
  - 1.9% **very**
  - 1.2% **new**
  - 1.0% **good**
  - 1.0% **small**
- ← Undo

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← Undo

a mango is a

4.2% **good**

4.0% **very**

2.5% **great**

2.4% **delicious**

1.8% **sweet**

← Undo

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Sentence:

A mango is a

Predictions:

- 4.2% **fruit**
  - 3.5% **very**
  - 2.5% **sweet**
  - 2.2% **good**
  - 1.5% **delicious**
- ← Undo

# Do Masked Language Models know this?

Sentence:

mango is a [MASK]

Mask 1 Predictions:

69.7% .  
9.3% ;  
1.7% !  
0.8% **vegetable**  
0.7% ?

Sentence:

mango is a [MASK].

Mask 1 Predictions:

7.6% **staple**  
7.6% **vegetable**  
4.6% **plant**  
3.5% **tree**  
3.5% **fruit**

Sentence:

A mango is a [MASK].

Mask 1 Predictions:

16.0% **banana**  
12.1% **fruit**  
5.9% **plant**  
5.5% **vegetable**  
2.5% **candy**

# Sensitivity to cues

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Candidate Sentence $S_i$	$\log p(S_i)$
“musician can playing musical instrument”	−5.7
“musician can be play musical instrument”	−4.9
“musician often play musical instrument”	−5.5
“a musician can play a musical instrument”	<b>−2.9</b>

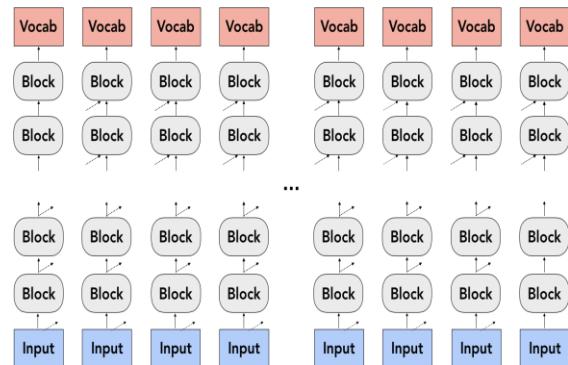
Feldman et al., 2019

Prompt	Model Predictions
A ____ <i>has fur.</i>	dog, cat, fox, ...
A ____ <i>has fur, is big, and has claws.</i>	cat, <b>bear</b> , lion, ...
A ____ <i>has fur, is big, has claws, has teeth, is an animal, eats, is brown, and lives in woods.</i>	<b>bear</b> , wolf, cat, ...

Weir et al., 2020

# Commonsense Transformers

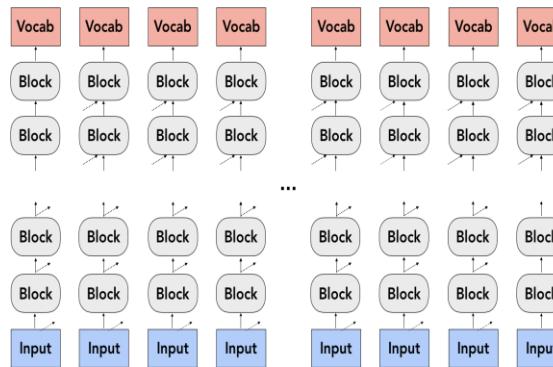
- Language models implicitly represent knowledge



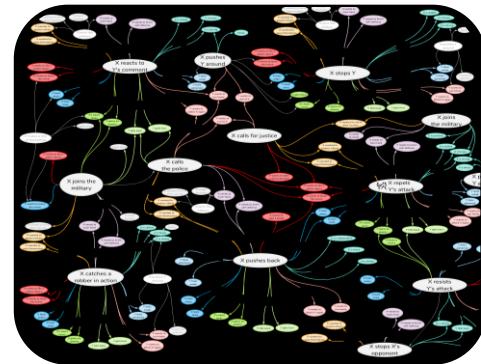
Pre-trained  
Language Model

# Commonsense Transformers

- Language models implicitly represent knowledge
- Re-train them on knowledge graphs to learn structure of knowledge



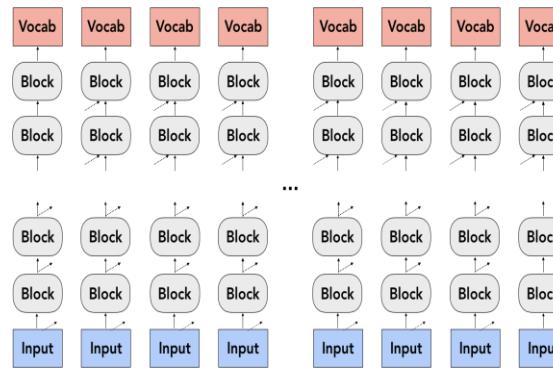
Pre-trained  
Language Model



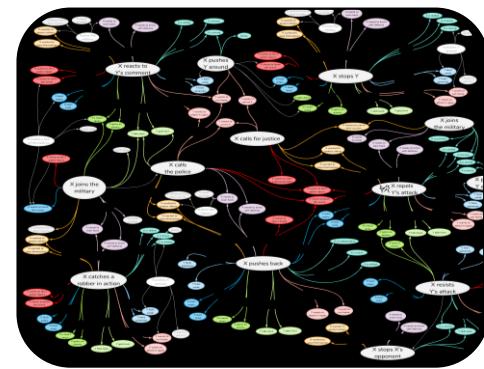
Seed Knowledge  
Graph Training

# Commonsense Transformers

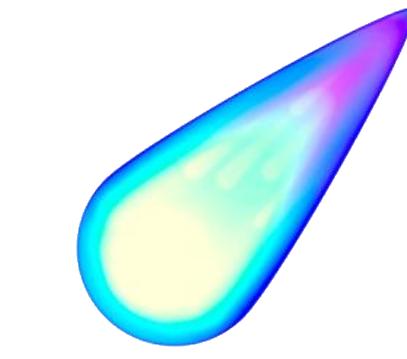
- Language models implicitly represent knowledge
- Re-train them on knowledge graphs to learn structure of knowledge
- Resulting knowledge model generalizes structure to other concepts



Pre-trained  
Language Model



Seed Knowledge  
Graph Training



COMET

# Question

---

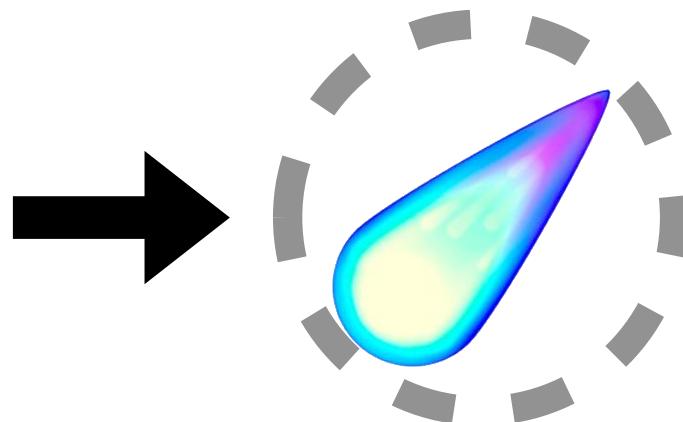
What are the implications of this knowledge representation?

# Commonsense Knowledge for any Situation

---

- transformer-style architecture — input format is natural language
  - event can be fully parsed

Kai knew that things were getting out of control and managed to keep his temper in check

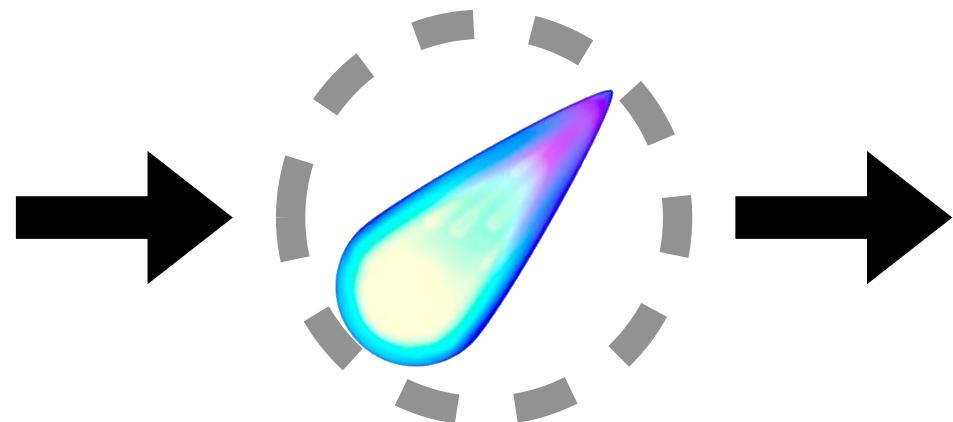


# Commonsense Knowledge for any Situation

---

- transformer-style architecture — input format is natural language
  - event can be fully parsed
  - knowledge generated **dynamically** from neural knowledge model

Kai knew that things were getting out of control and managed to keep his temper in check



Kai wants to avoid trouble  
Kai intends to be calm  
Kai stays calm  
Kai is viewed as cautious

# But sometimes LMs can't be trusted

---

BREAKING

## Lawyer Used ChatGPT In Court—And Cited Fake Cases. A Judge Is Considering Sanctions

**Molly Bohannon** Forbes Staff

*Molly Bohannon has been a Forbes news reporter since 2023.*

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Jun 8, 2023, 02:06pm EDT

Updated Jun 8, 2023, 03:42pm EDT

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/mollybohannon/2023/06/08/lawyer-used-chatgpt-in-court-and-cited-fake-cases-a-judge-is-considering-sanctions/>

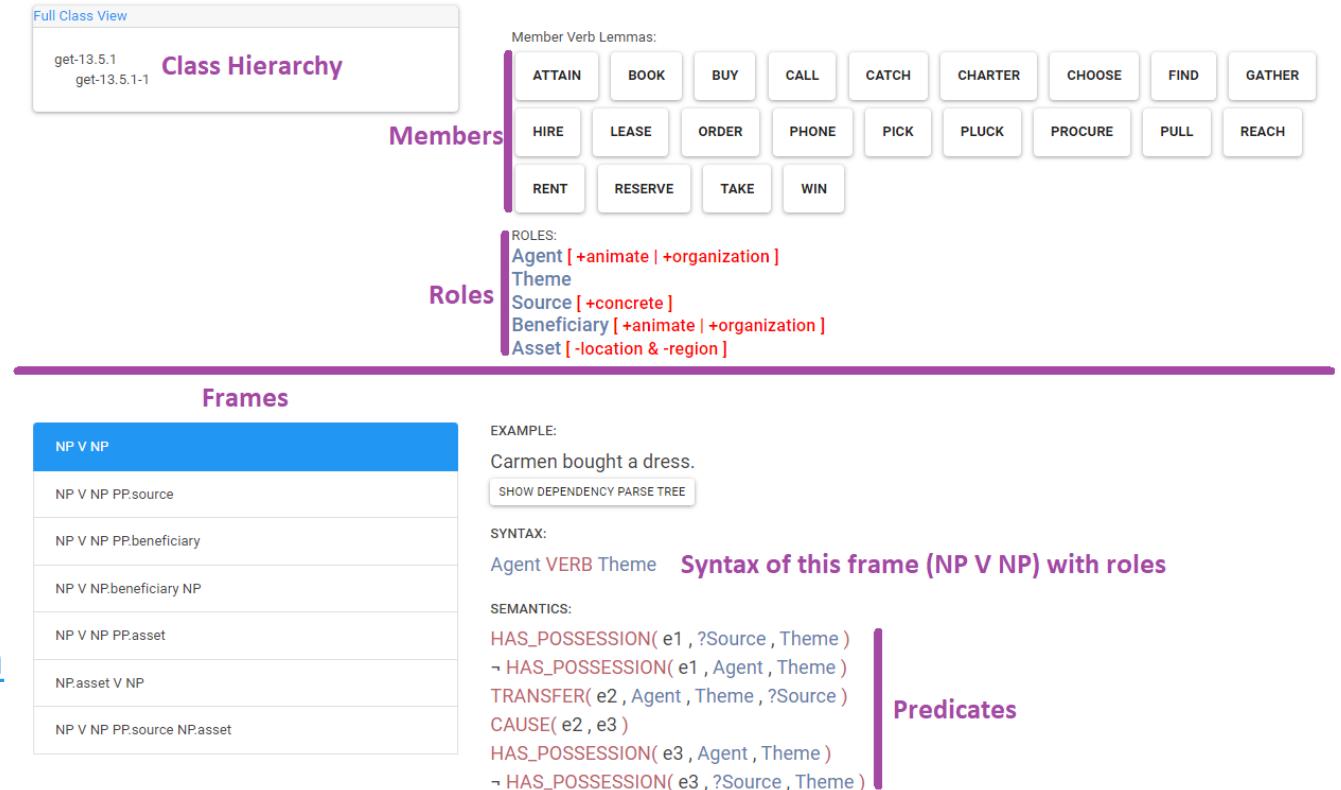
# Ways of combining them

---

- During training
  - Such as in reinforcement learning or retrieval-augmented generation (RAG)
- After training
  - Like a symbolic “wrapper” – helps validate what the NN is doing
- Others??

# VerbNet v3.4

- <https://verbs.colorado.edu/verbnet/>
- Verb classes based on Beth Levin (1993)
- **Data Source:** hand-crafted
- **Languages:** English
- **Use:** [raw data](#) or my code
- **Demo:** [https://uvi.colorado.edu/uvi\\_search](https://uvi.colorado.edu/uvi_search)



K. Kipper Schuler, "VerbNet: A Broad-Coverage, Comprehensive Verb Lexicon," University of Pennsylvania, 2005.

Levin, B. (1993) "English Verb Classes and Alternations: A Preliminary Investigation", University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL.

# Using VerbNet



# Pre-Conditions and Effects

---

**Jen sent the book to Remy from Baltimore.**

## Pre-Conditions

has\_location(e1, **book**, **Baltimore**)  
do(e2, **Jen**)

cause(e2, e3)

motion(e3, **book**)

!has\_location(e3, **book**, **Baltimore**)

has\_location(e4, **book**, **Remy**)

## Effects

~~**Baltimore** : location~~

~~**book** : concrete~~

**Jen** : animate or organization

# Pre-Conditions and Effects

---

**Jen sent the book to Remy from Baltimore.**

## Pre-Conditions

has\_location(e1, book, Baltimore)

Baltimore : location

book : concrete

Jen : animate or organization

## Effects

~~do(e2, Jen)~~

~~cause(e2, e3)~~

~~motion(e3, book)~~

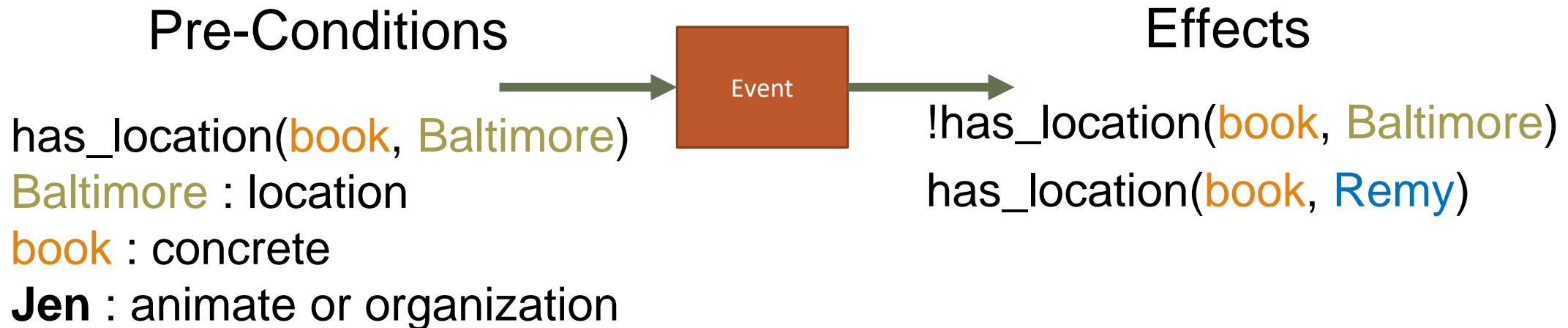
!has\_location(e3, book, Baltimore)

has\_location(e4, book, Remy)

# Pre-Conditions and Effects

---

Jen sent the book to Remy from Baltimore.



# Resulting State Representation

---

**Jen** sent the **book** to **Remy** from **Baltimore**.

```
Baltimore : location  
book : concrete  
Jen : animate or organization  
!has_location(book, Baltimore)  
has_location(book, Remy)
```

# How does a neural network fit in here?

