

# **Molecule Optimization with Deep Generative Models**

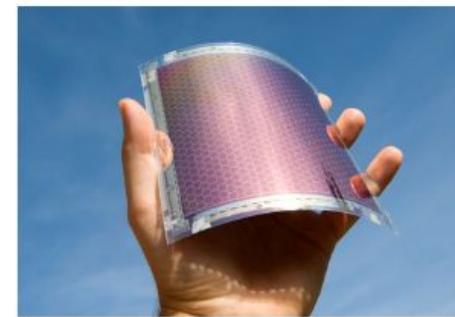
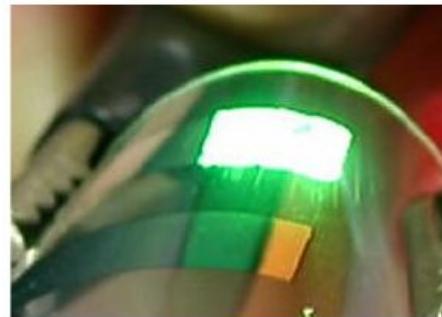
**(LIKE22)**

**José Miguel Hernández–Lobato**  
Department of Engineering  
University of Cambridge

<http://jmhl.org>, jmh233@cam.ac.uk

## Drug and material design

**Goal:** find novel molecules that optimally fulfill various metrics.



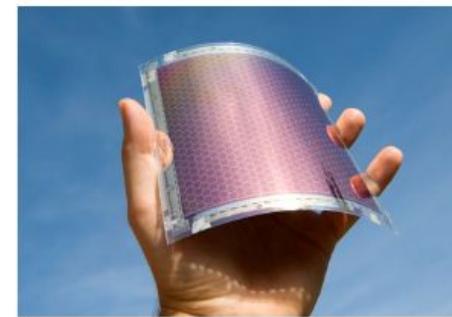
About  $10^8$  compounds in databases, potential ones:  $10^{20} – 10^{60}$ .

### Challenges:

- Evaluating molecular properties is slow and expensive.
- Chemical space is huge.

## Drug and material design

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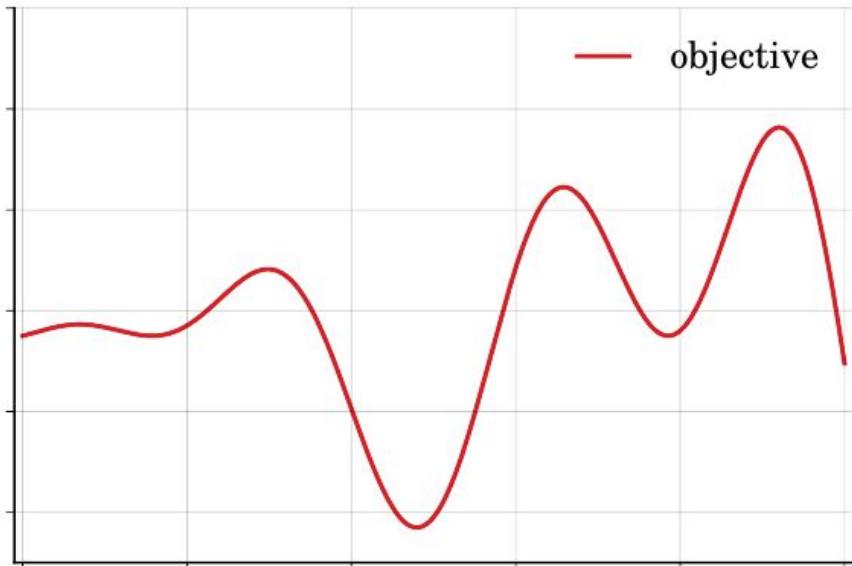
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### Challenges:

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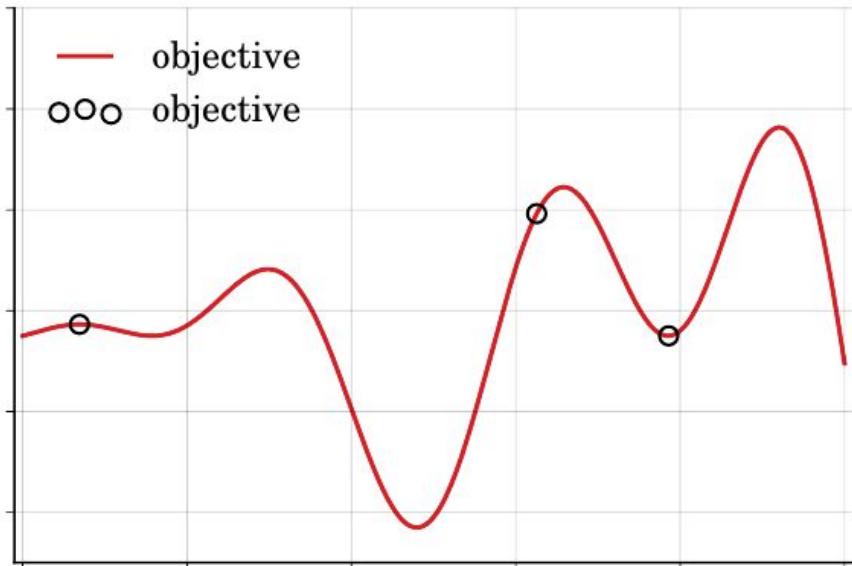
**Bayesian optimization** can accelerate the search.

# Bayesian optimization



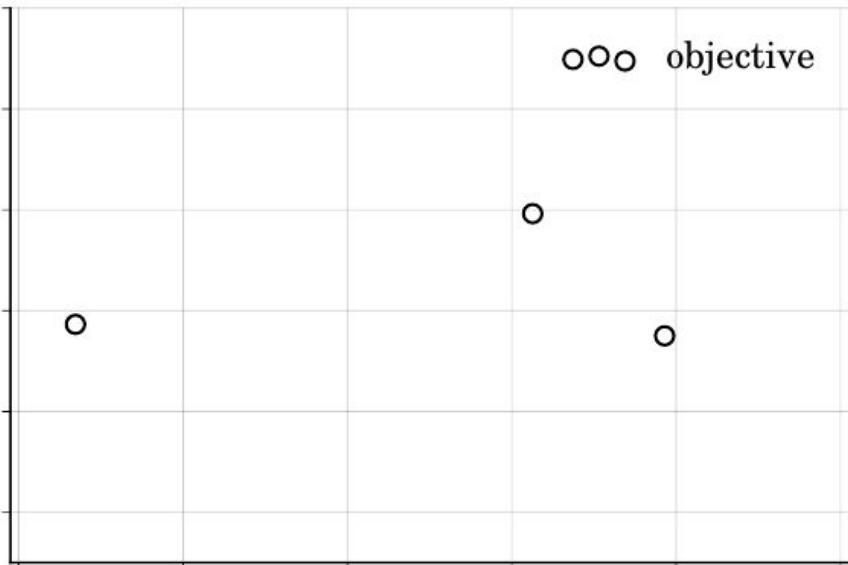
- ① Get initial sample.

# Bayesian optimization



① Get initial sample.

# Bayesian optimization

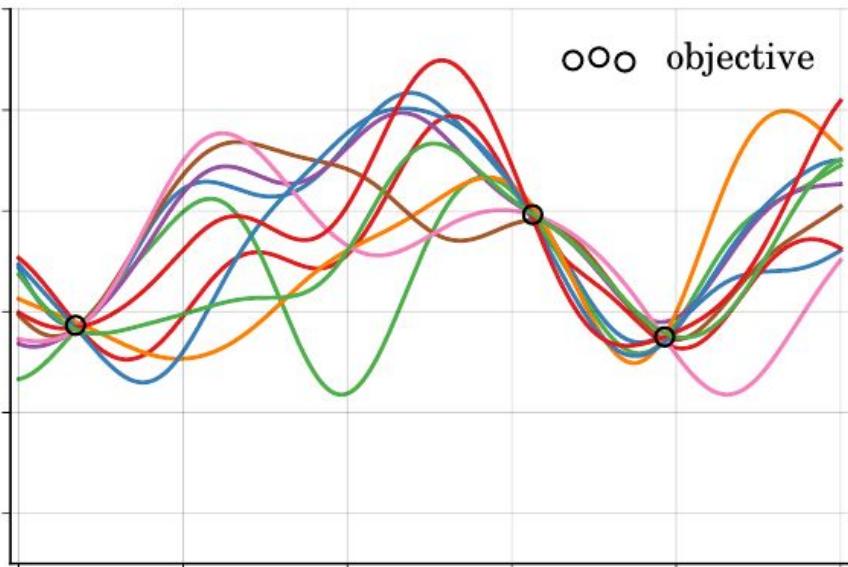


① Get initial sample.

② Fit a model to the data:

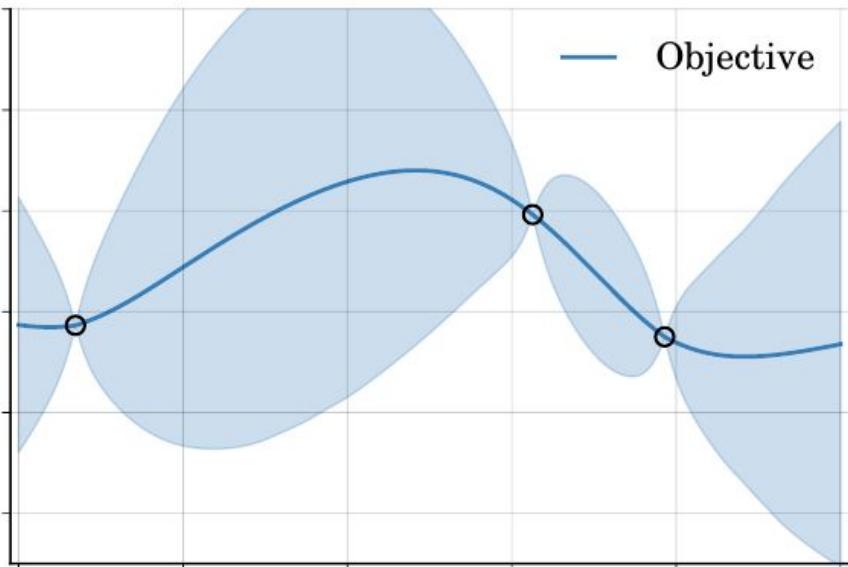
$$p(y|x, \mathcal{D}_n).$$

# Bayesian optimization



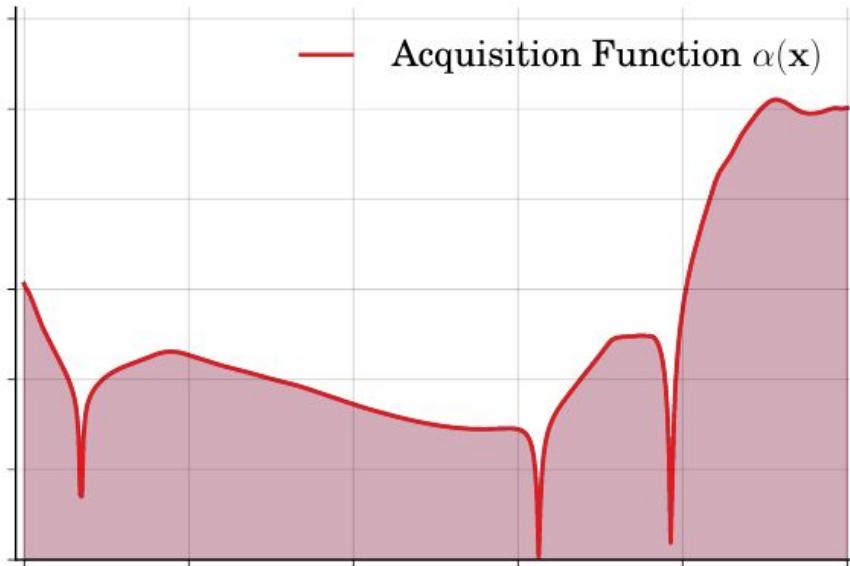
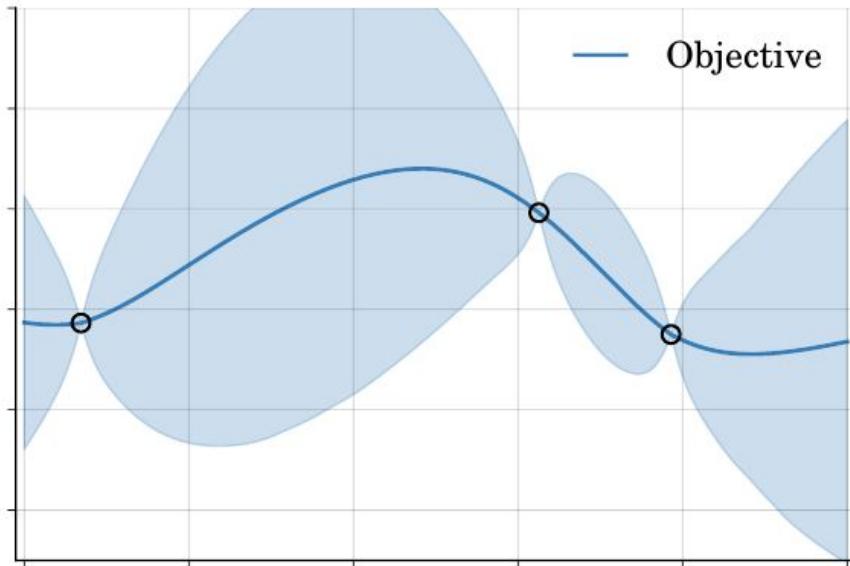
- ① Get initial sample.
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# Bayesian optimization



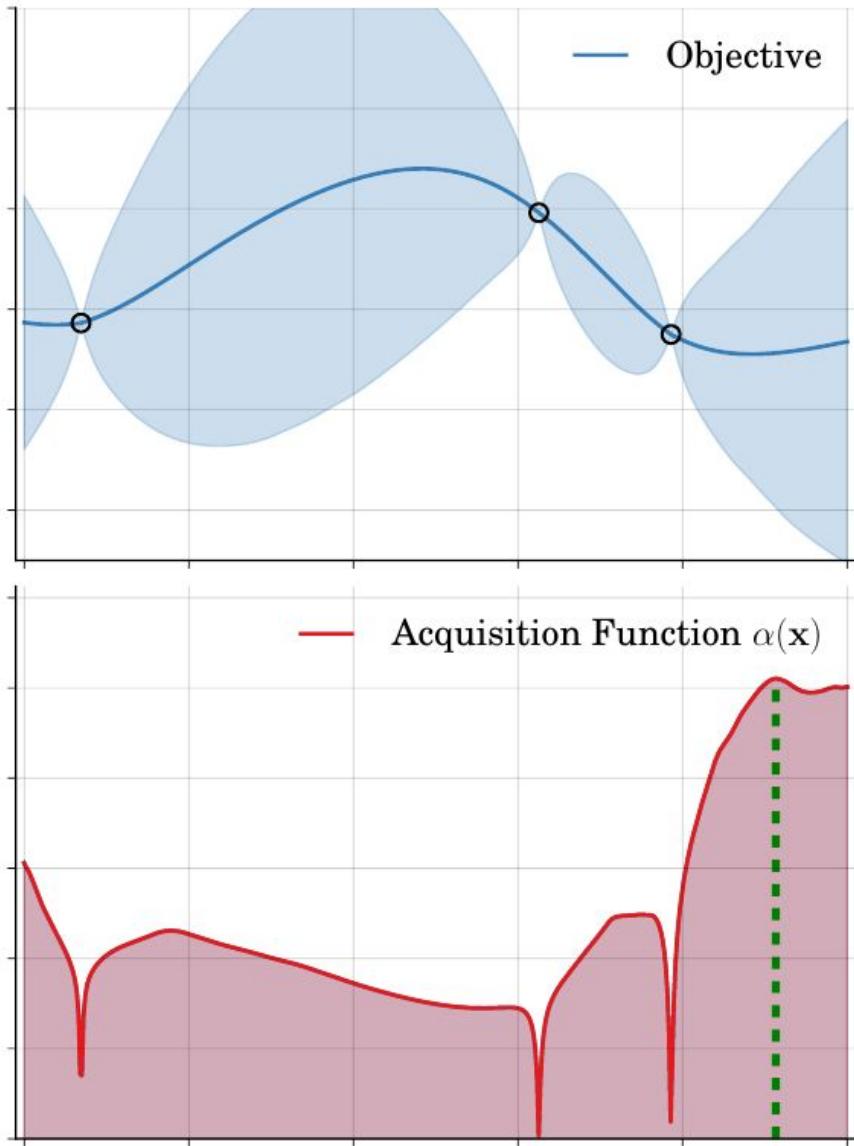
- ① Get initial sample.
- ② Fit a model to the data:  
 $p(y|x, \mathcal{D}_n)$ .
- ③ Select data collection strategy:  
 $\alpha(x) = E_{p(y|x, \mathcal{D}_n)}[U(y|x, \mathcal{D}_n)]$ .

# Bayesian optimization



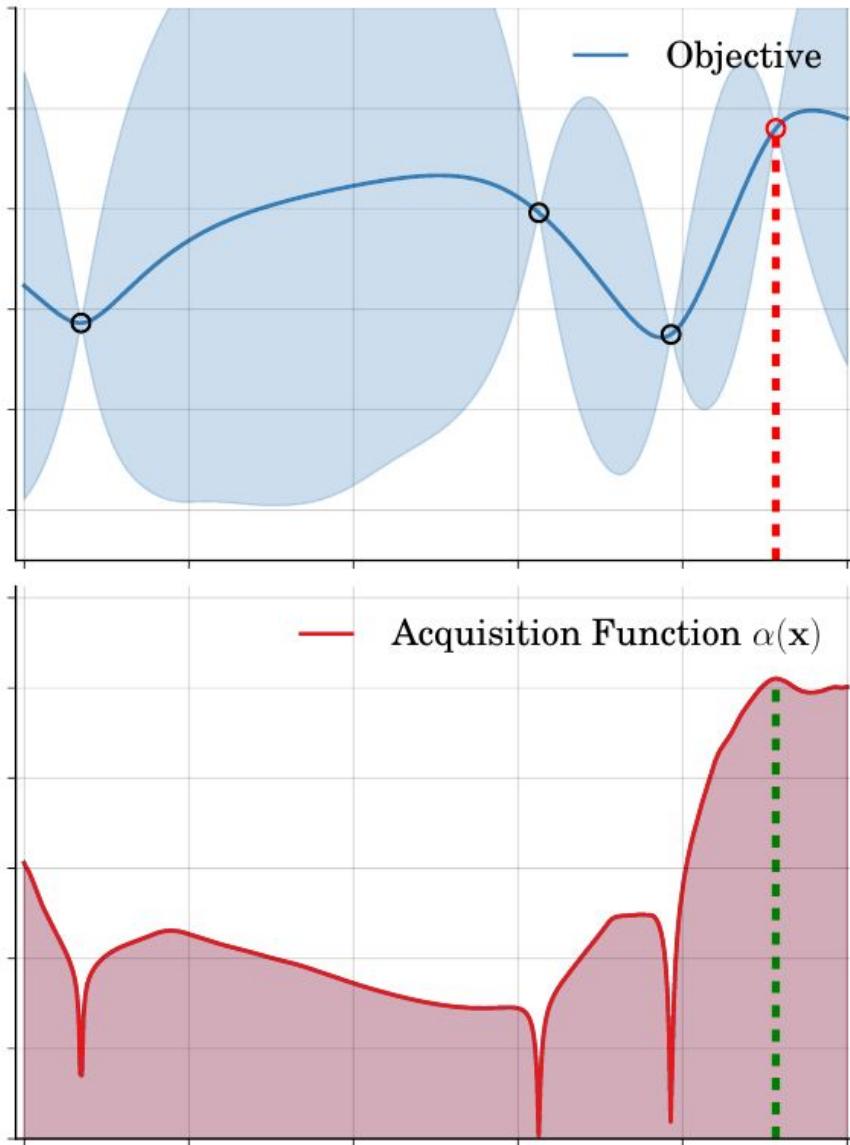
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 $p(y|x, \mathcal{D}_n)$ .
- ③ **Select data collection strategy:**  
 $\alpha(x) = E_{p(y|x, \mathcal{D}_n)}[U(y|x, \mathcal{D}_n)]$ .
- ④ Optimize acquisition function  $\alpha(x)$ .

# Bayesian optimization



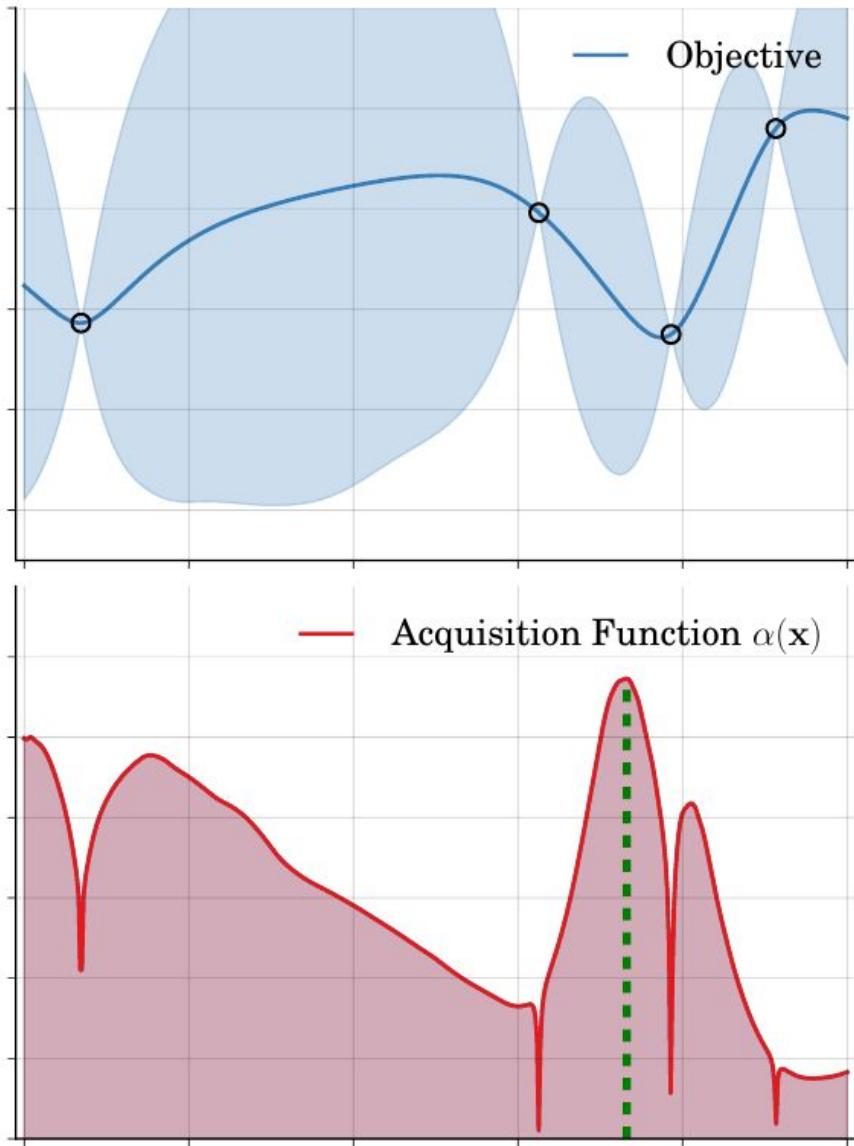
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- ④ **Optimize acquisition function  $\alpha(x)$ .**
- ⑤ Collect data and update model.

# Bayesian optimization



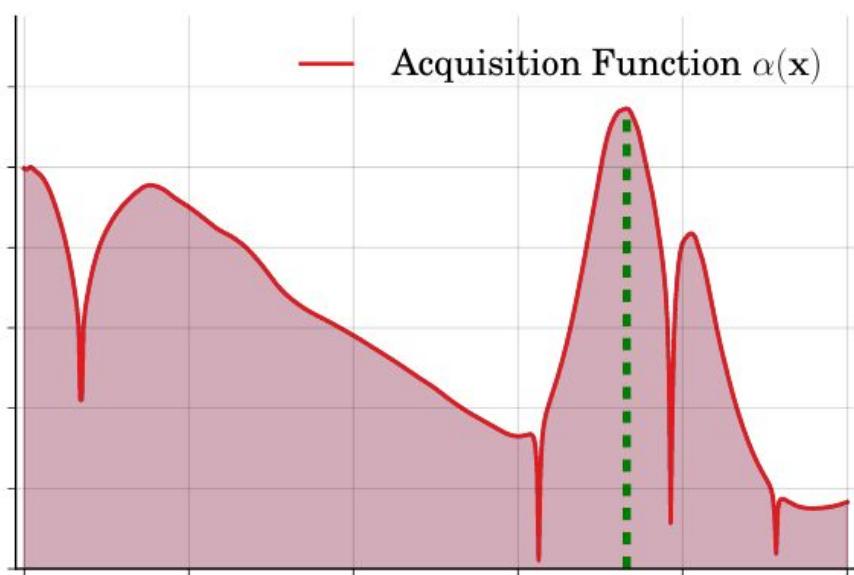
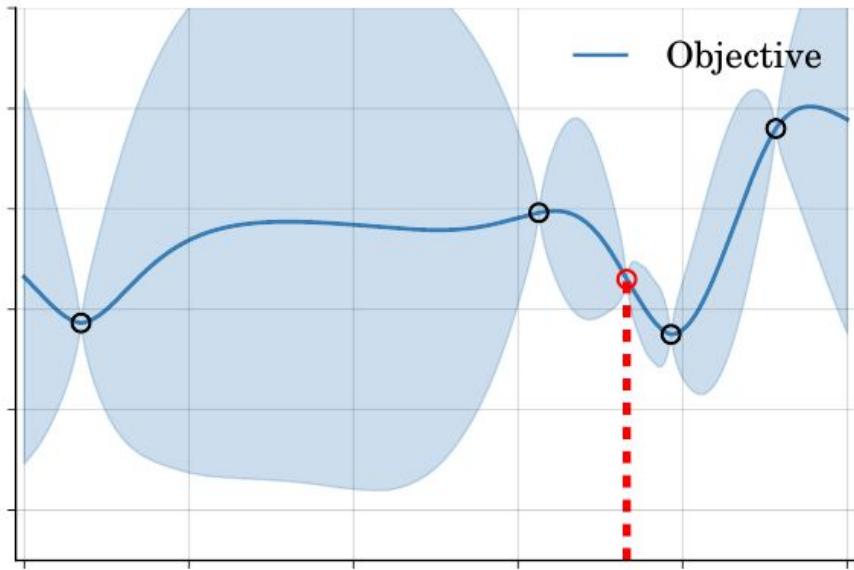
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- ④ Optimize acquisition function  $\alpha(x)$ .
- ⑤ **Collect data and update model.**
- ⑥ Repeat!

# Bayesian optimization



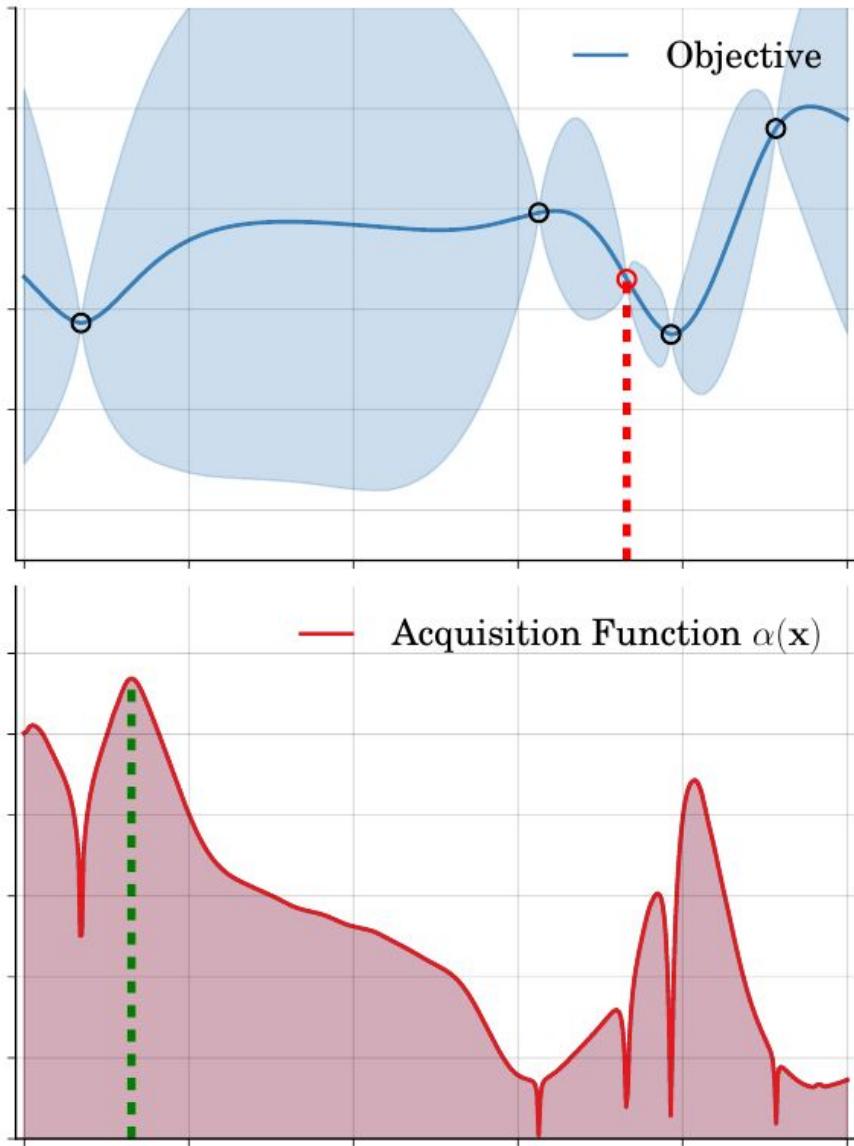
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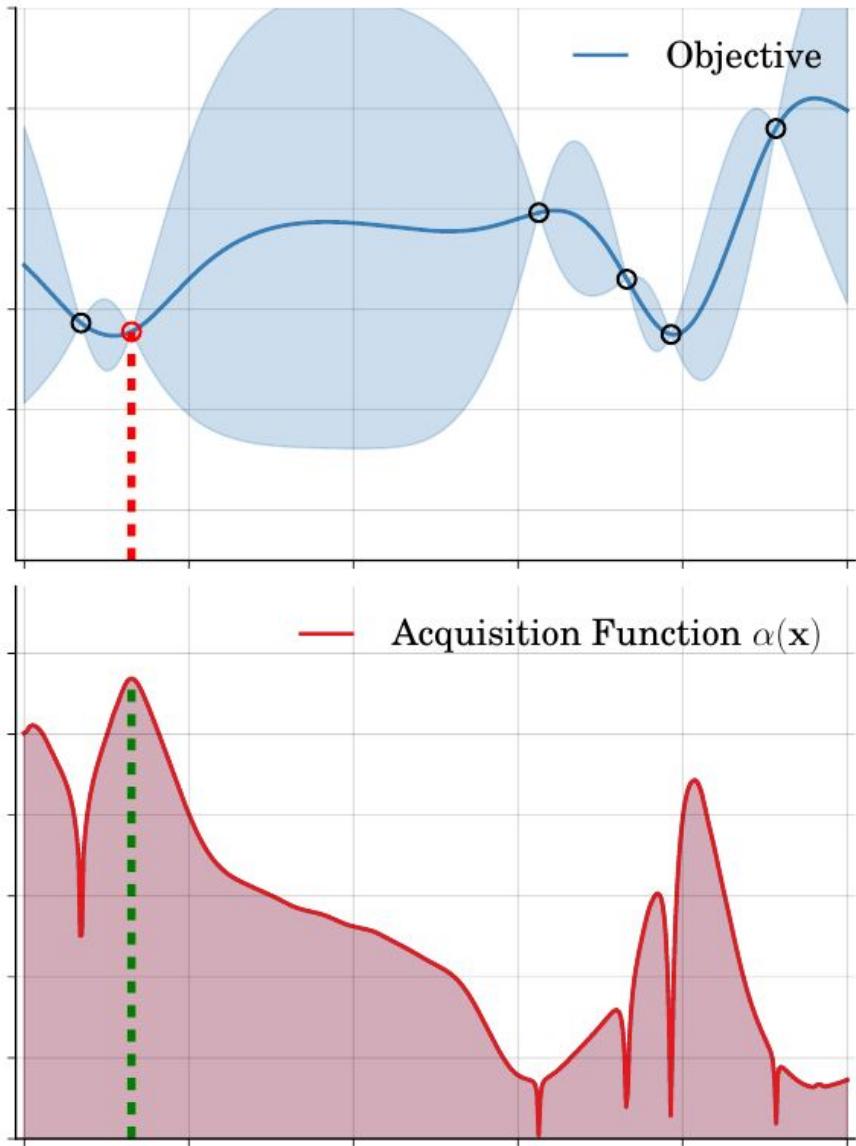
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  - ⑤ Collect data and update model.
  - ⑥ Repeat!
- A red curved arrow points from the text "Select data collection strategy:" to the acquisition function plot.

# Bayesian optimization



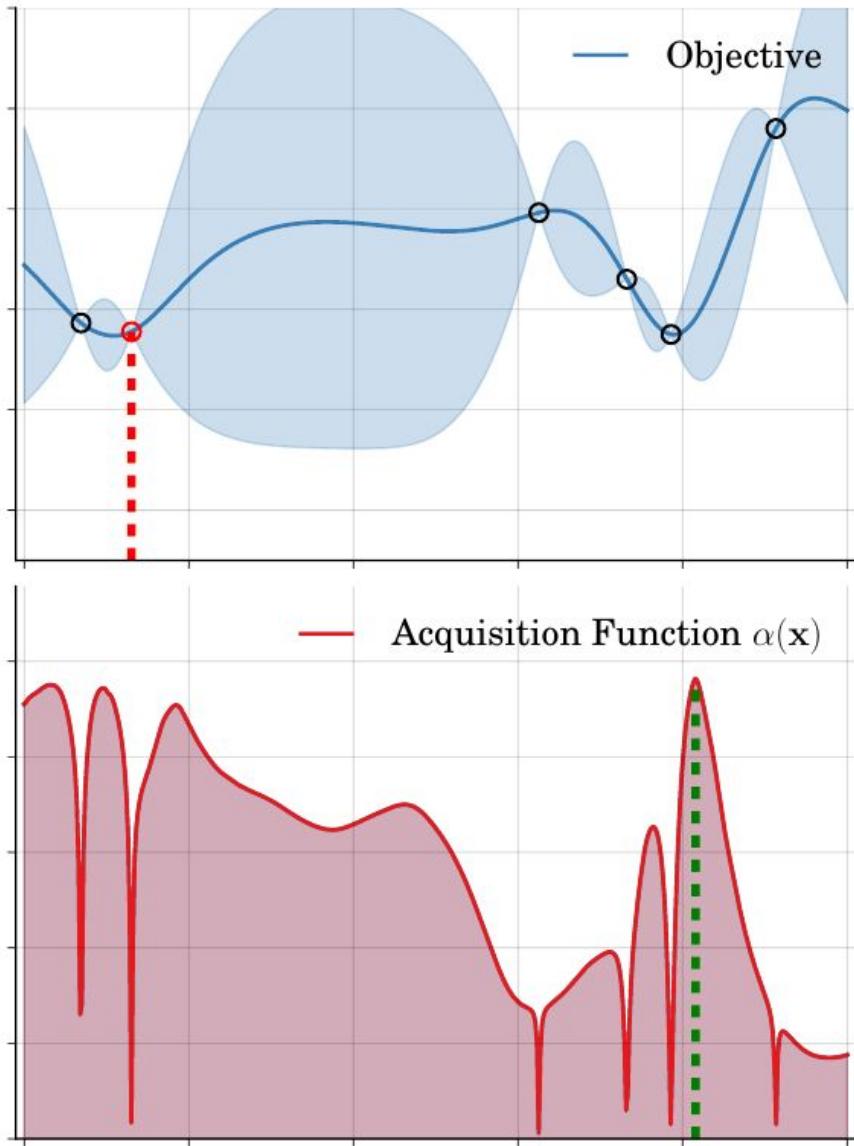
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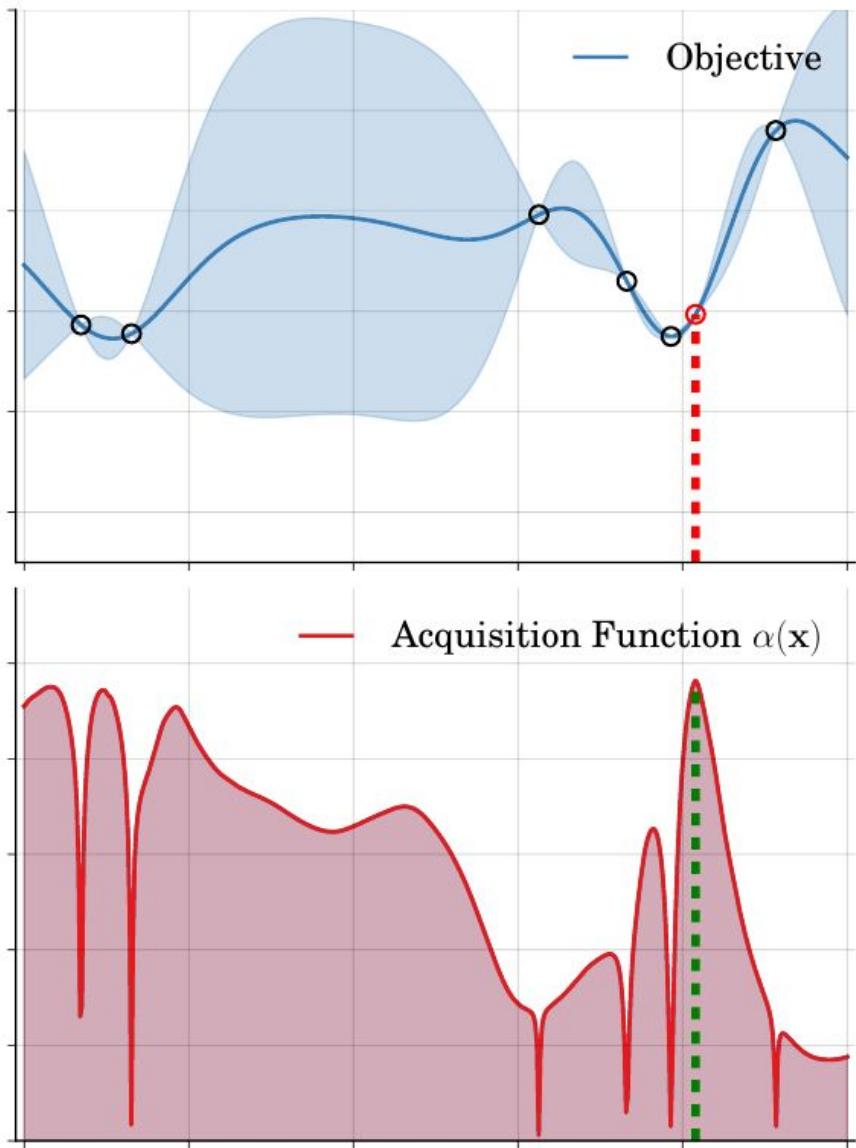
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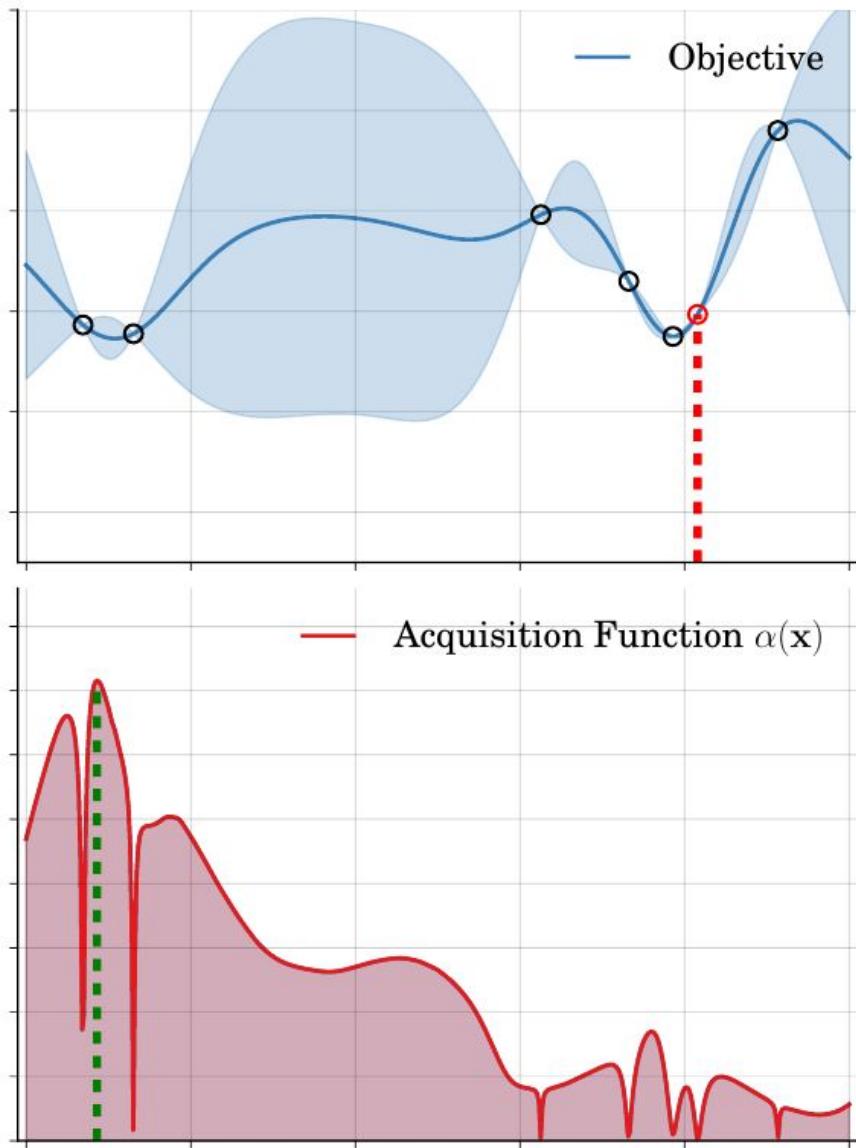
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  - ⑥ Repeat!
- A red curved arrow starts from the text 'Select data collection strategy:' and points to the vertical dashed green line in the bottom plot.

# Bayesian optimization



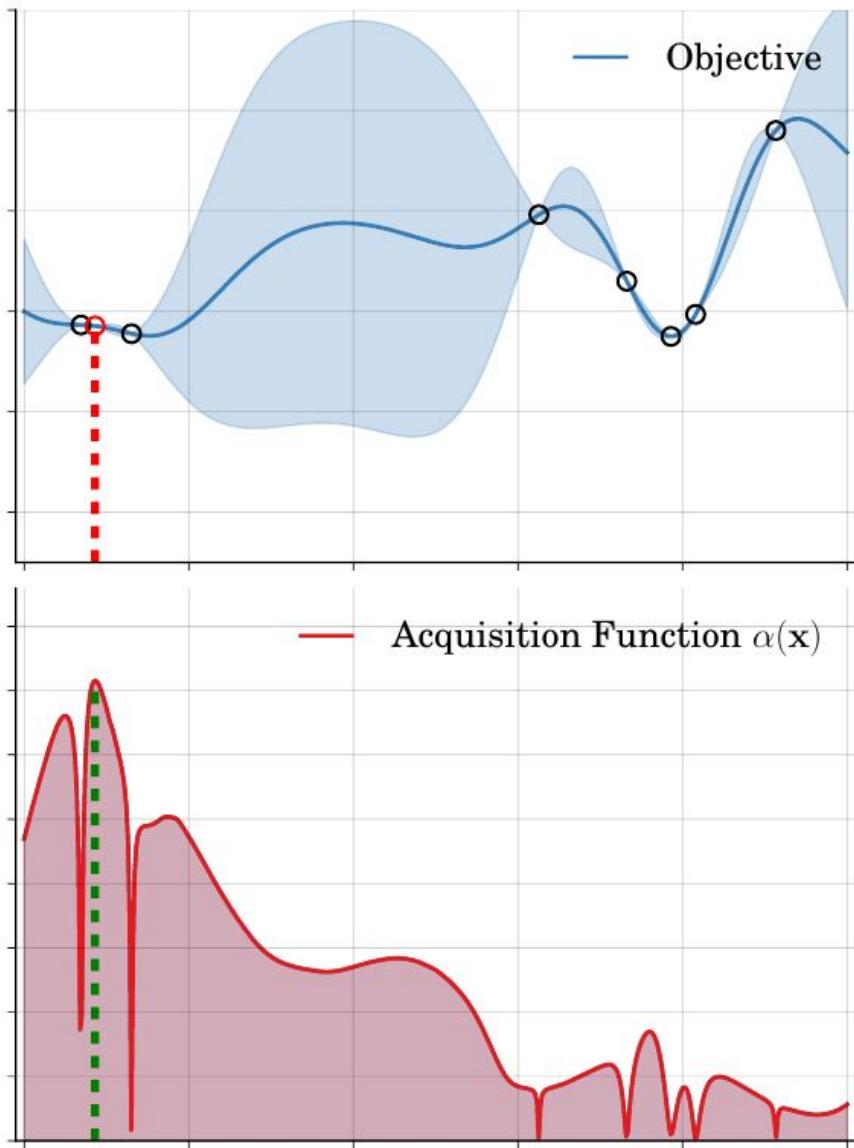
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  - ④ Optimize acquisition function  $\alpha(x)$ .
  - ⑤ Collect data and update model.
  - ⑥ Repeat!
- A red curved arrow starts from the end of step 3 and points back to the start of step 3, indicating an iterative loop.

# Bayesian optimization



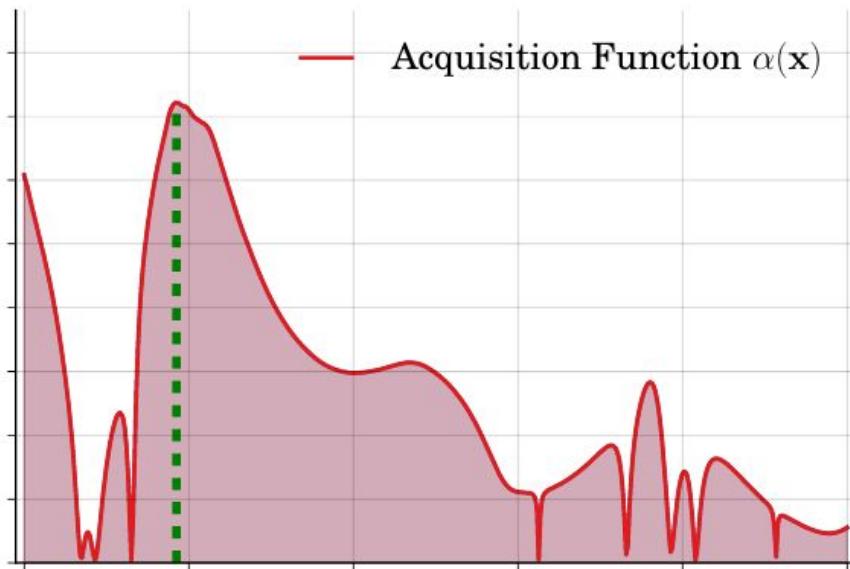
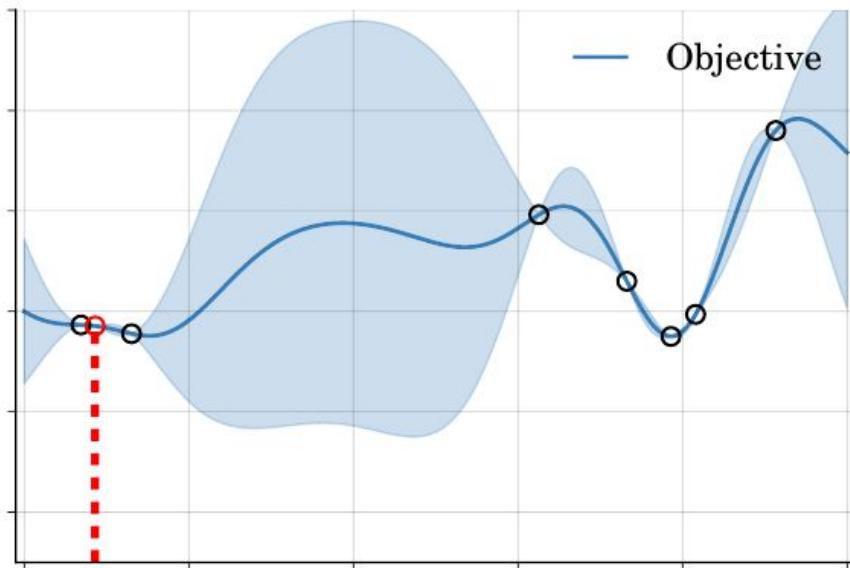
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  - ⑥ Repeat!
- A red curved arrow starts from the end of step 5 and points back to the start of step 3.

# Bayesian optimization



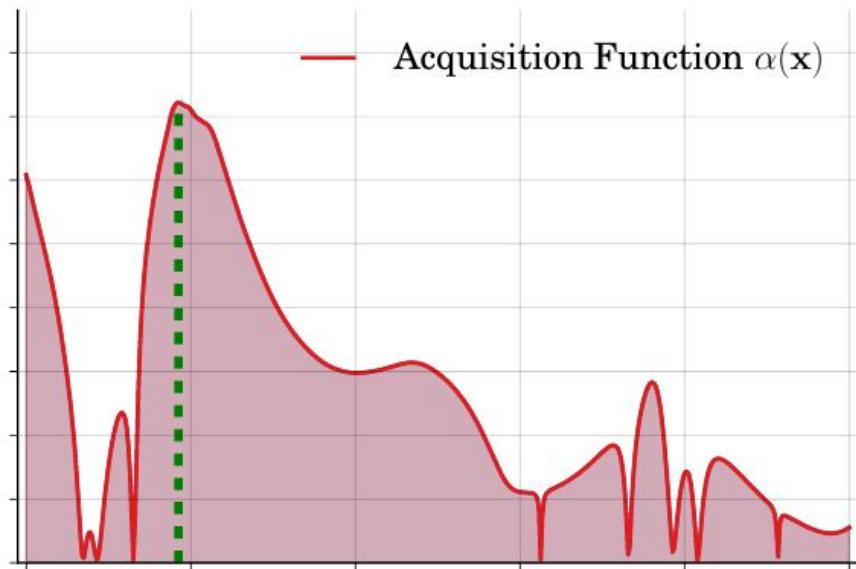
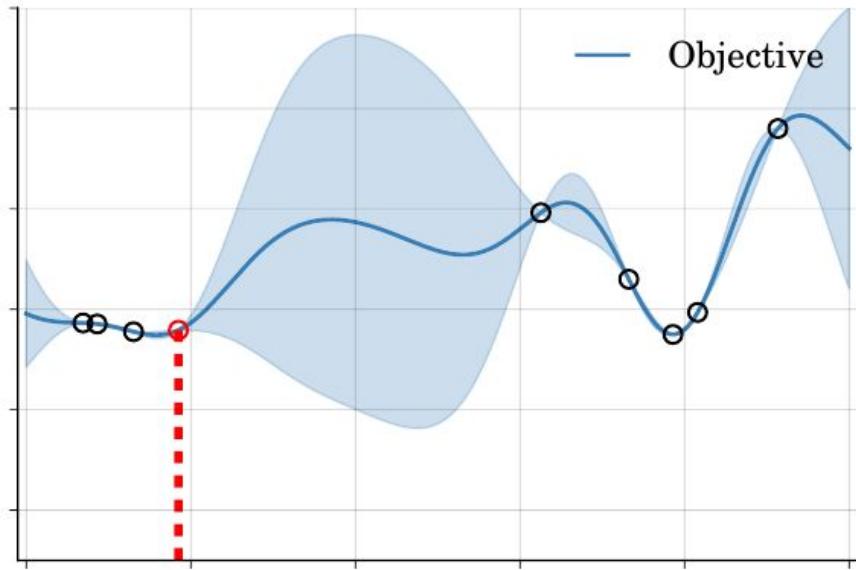
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- ④ Optimize acquisition function  $\alpha(x)$ .
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# Bayesian optimization



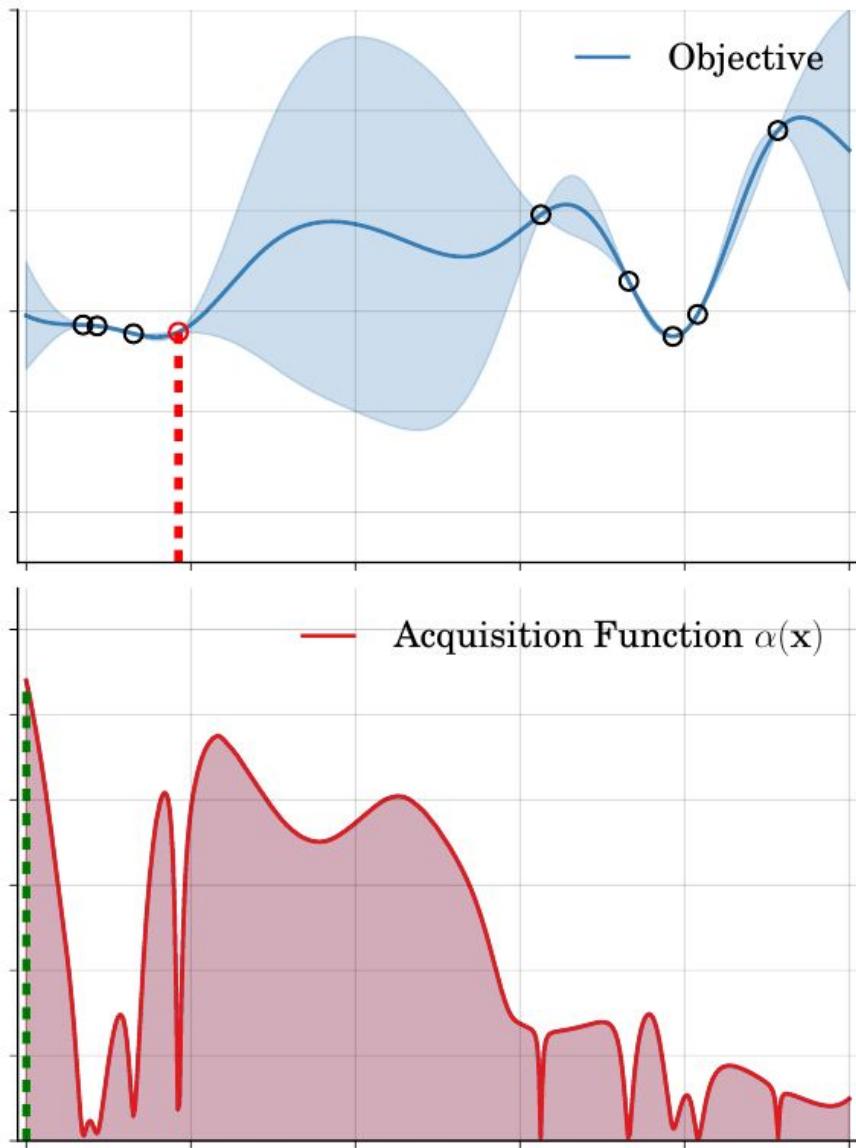
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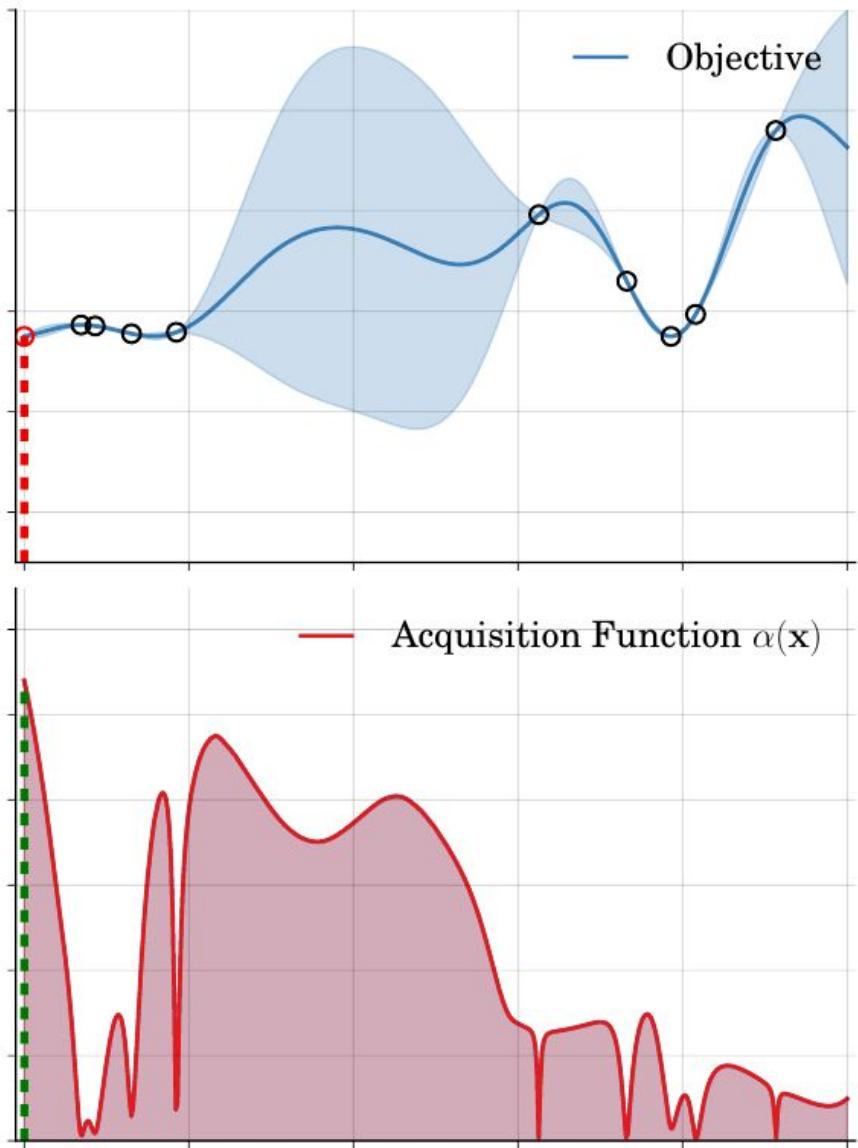
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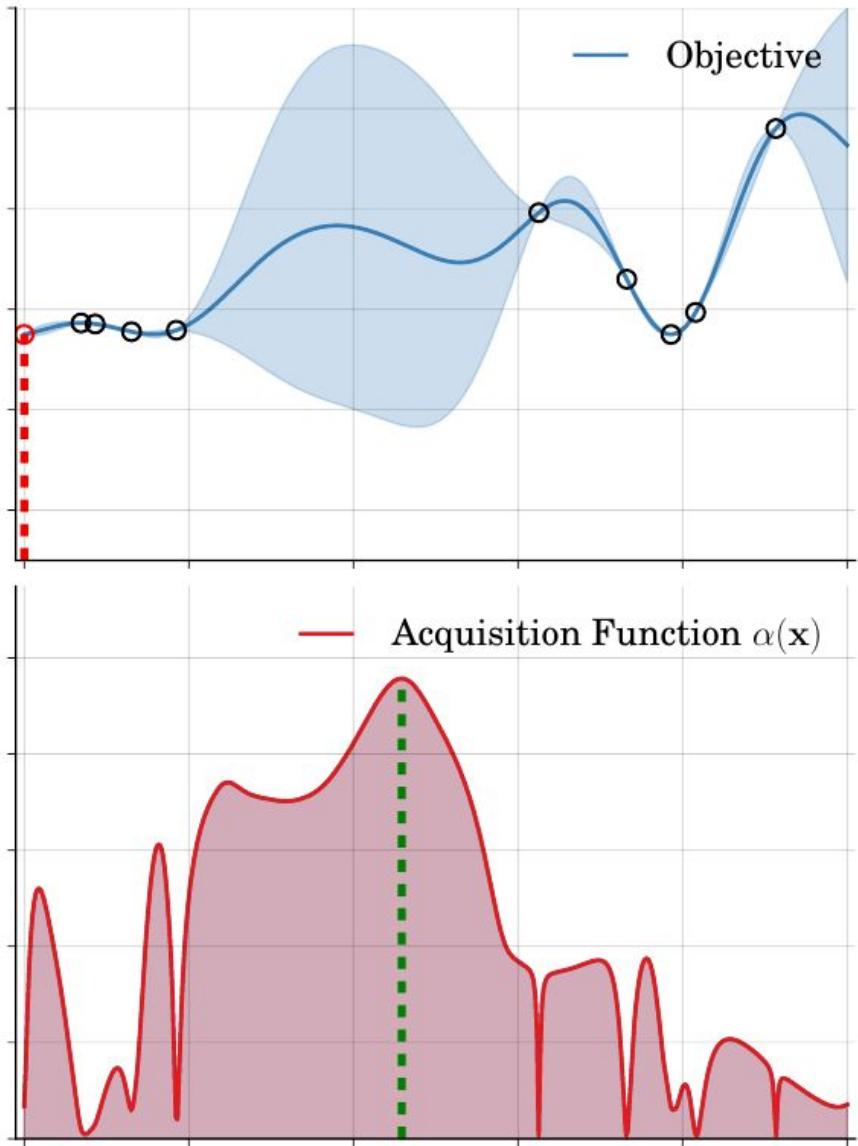
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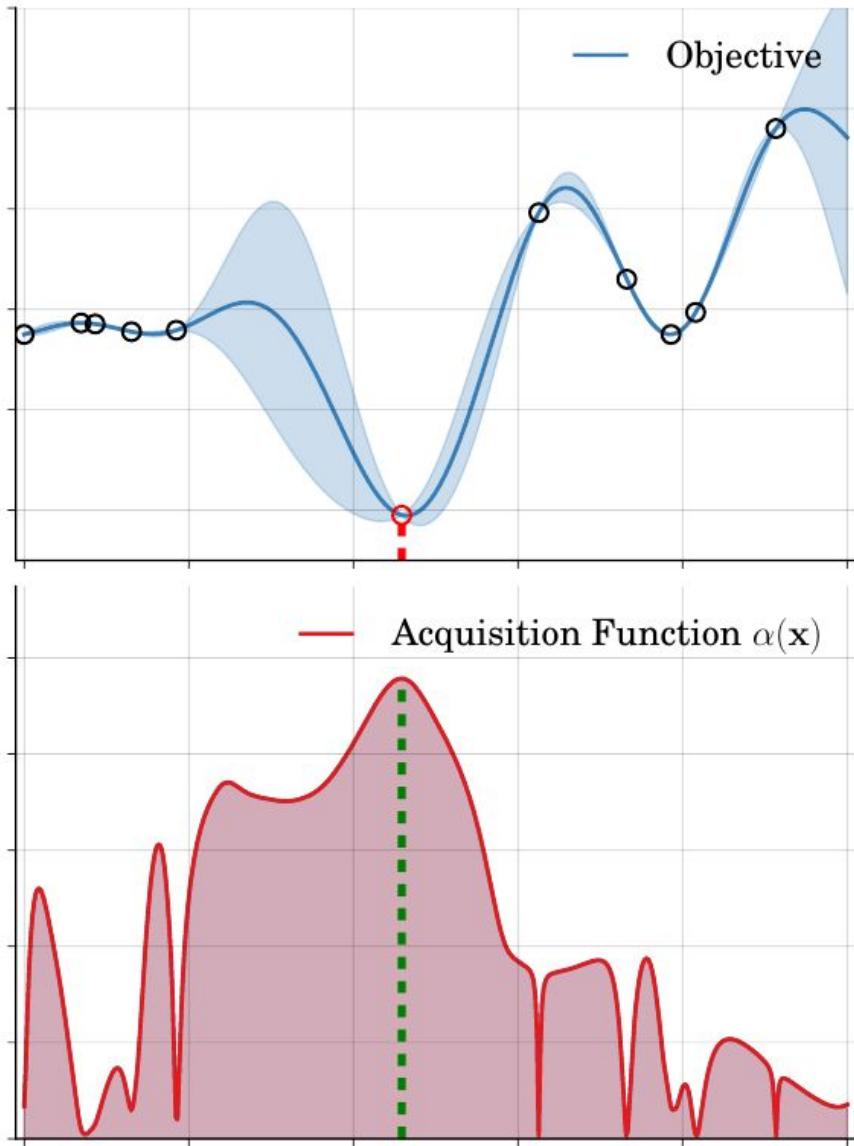
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- A red curved arrow points from the text 'Select data collection strategy:' to the equation  $\alpha(x) = E_{p(y|x, \mathcal{D}_n)}[U(y|x, \mathcal{D}_n)]$ .

# Bayesian optimization



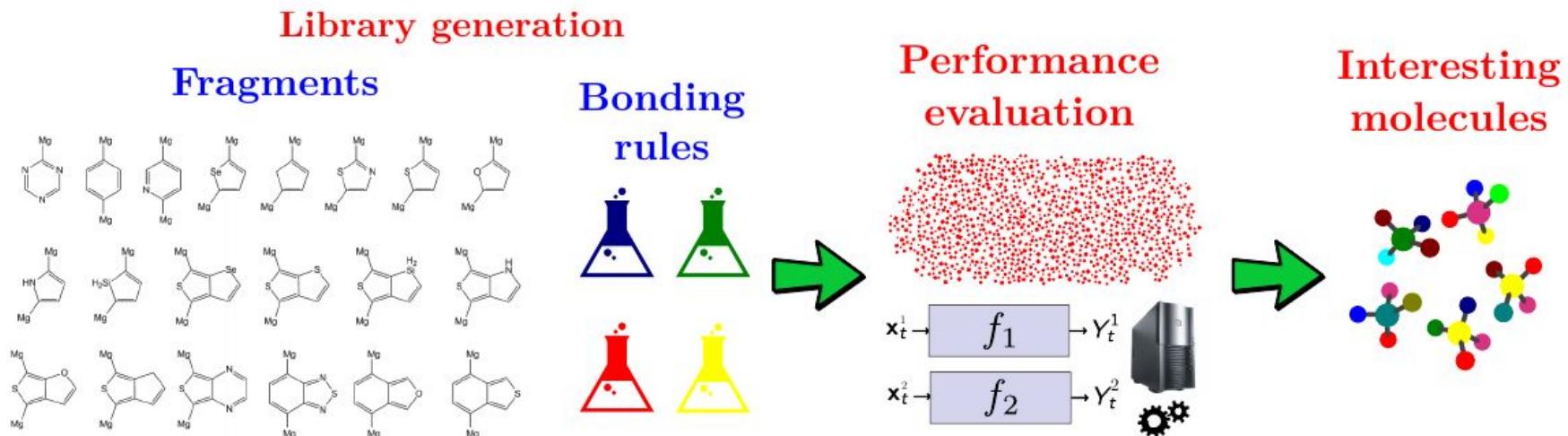
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# Bayesian optimization

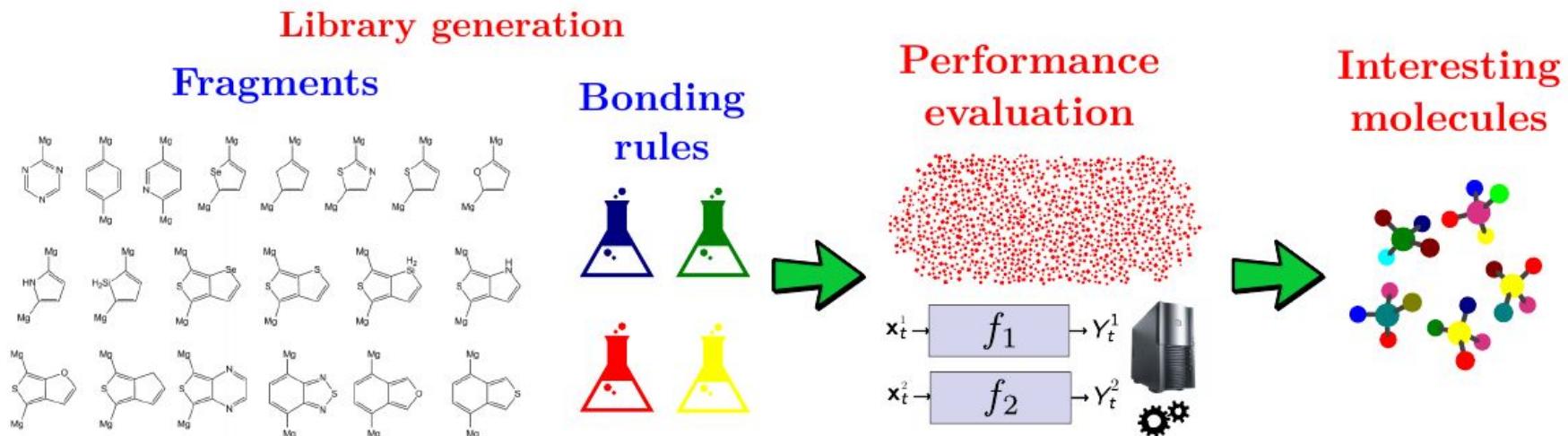


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# Discovering new optimal molecules

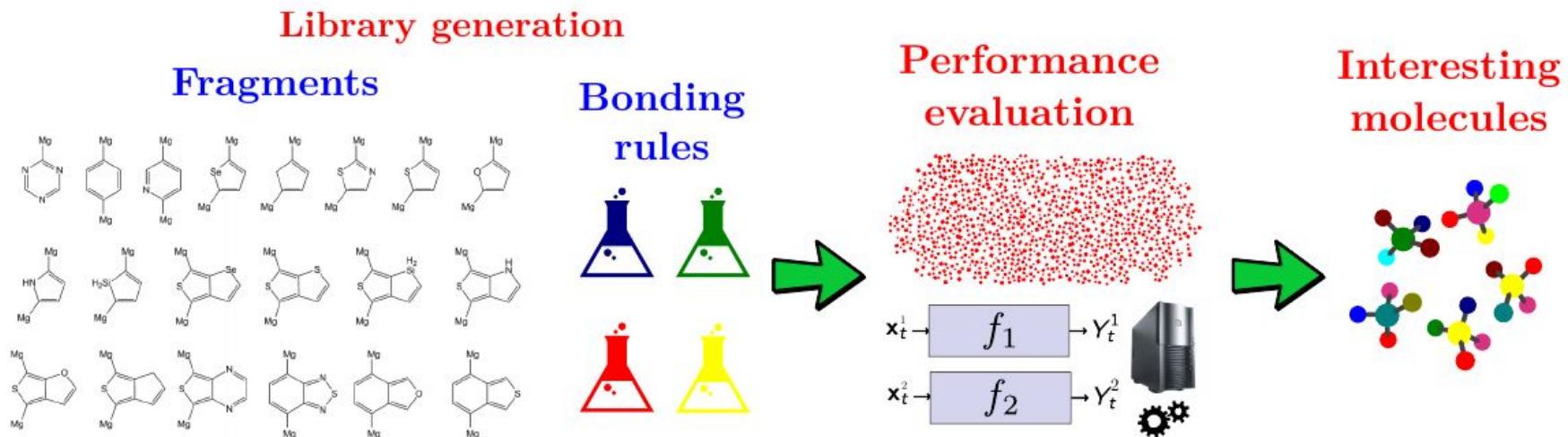


# Discovering new optimal molecules



Bayesian optimization (BO) can accelerate the search!

# Discovering new optimal molecules

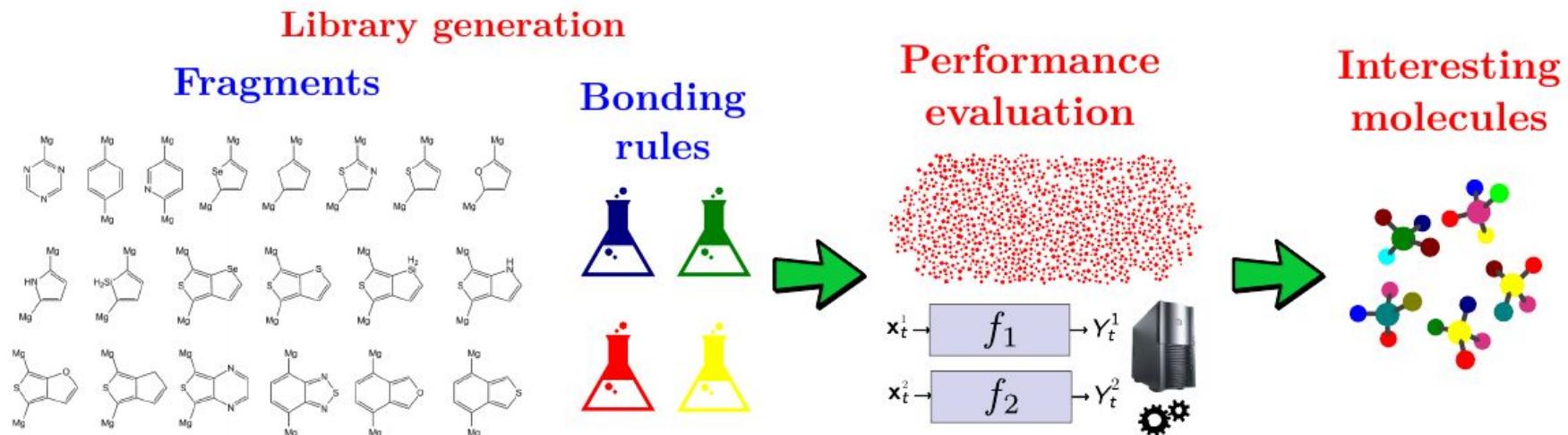


Bayesian optimization (BO) can **accelerate** the search!

## Challenges:

- The search space is discrete and structured.
- BO output should exhibit regularities found in real-world molecules.

# Discovering new optimal molecules



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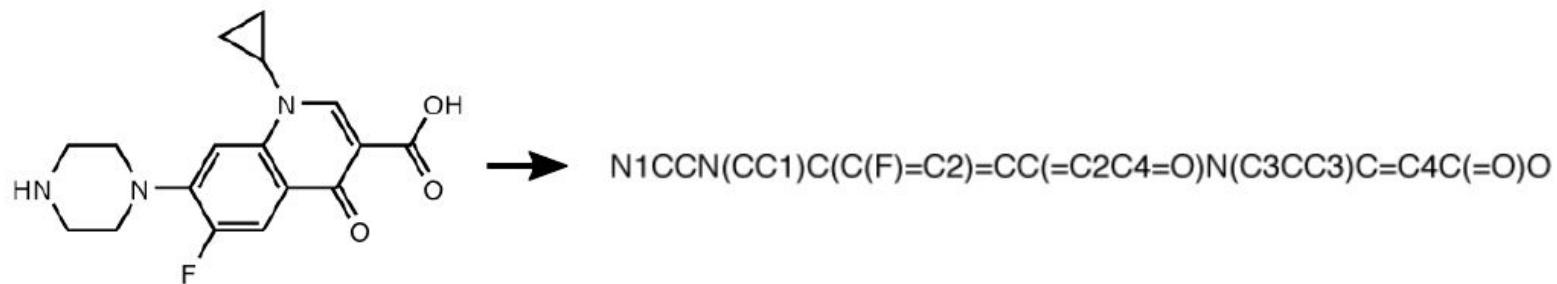
## Challenges:

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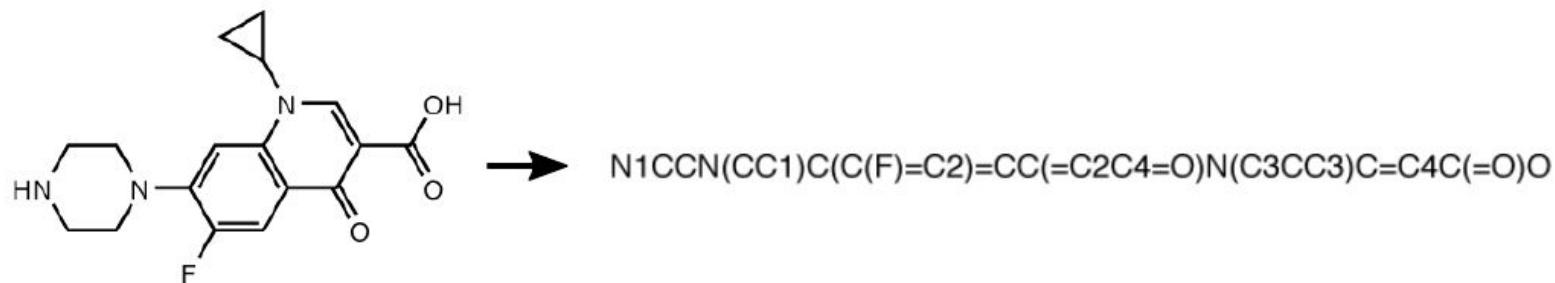
Solution: combine BO methods with generative models of molecules.

Gómez-Bombarelli\*, Wei\*, Duvenaud\*, Hernández-Lobato\*, Sánchez-Lengeling, Sheberla, Aguilera-Iparraguirre, Hirzel, Adams and Aspuru-Guzik, 2018. (\* equal contributors).

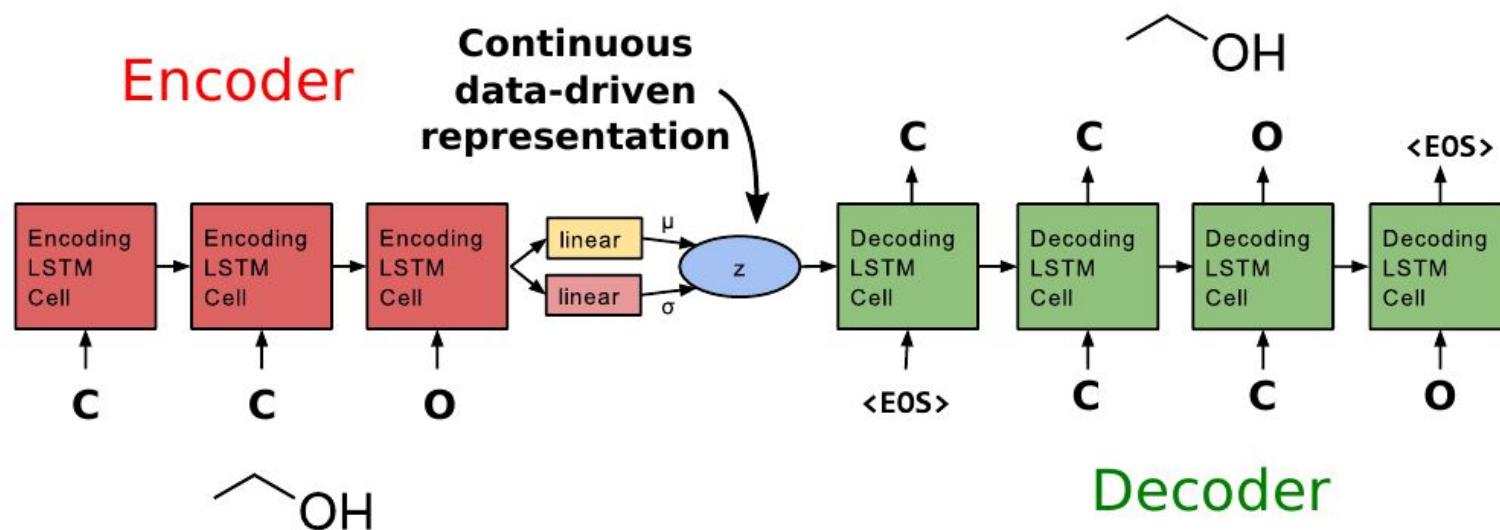
Molecules encoded as **character strings** using SMILES language.



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A **generative model** on SMILES is obtained using a **seq2seq VAE**.



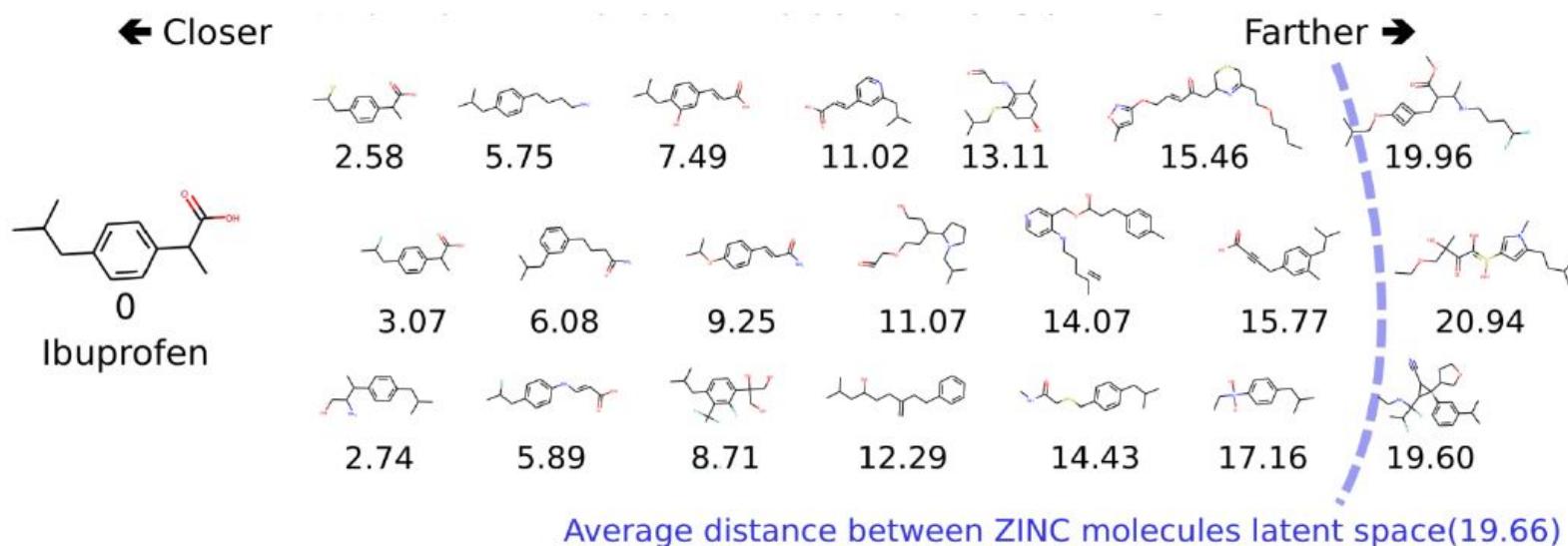
Sampled molecules have **statistics similar** to those of real molecules:

source	data set	logP	SAS	QED
Data	ZINC	2.46 (1.43)	3.05 (0.83)	0.73 (0.14)
GA	ZINC	2.84 (1.86)	3.80 (1.01)	0.57 (0.20)
VAE	ZINC	2.67 (1.46)	3.18 (0.86)	0.70 (0.14)
Data	QM9	0.30 (1.00)	4.25 (0.94)	0.48 (0.07)
GA	QM9	0.96 (1.53)	4.47 (1.01)	0.53 (0.13)
VAE	QM9	0.30 (0.97)	4.34 (0.98)	0.47 (0.08)

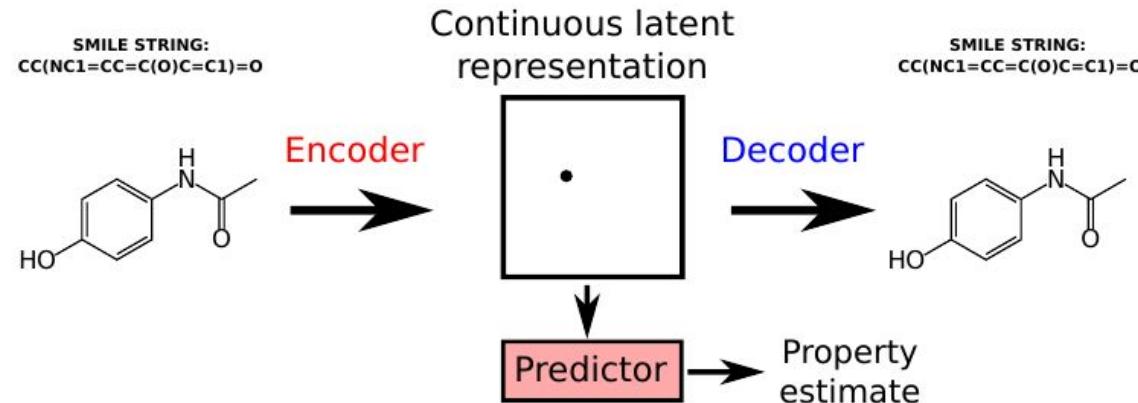
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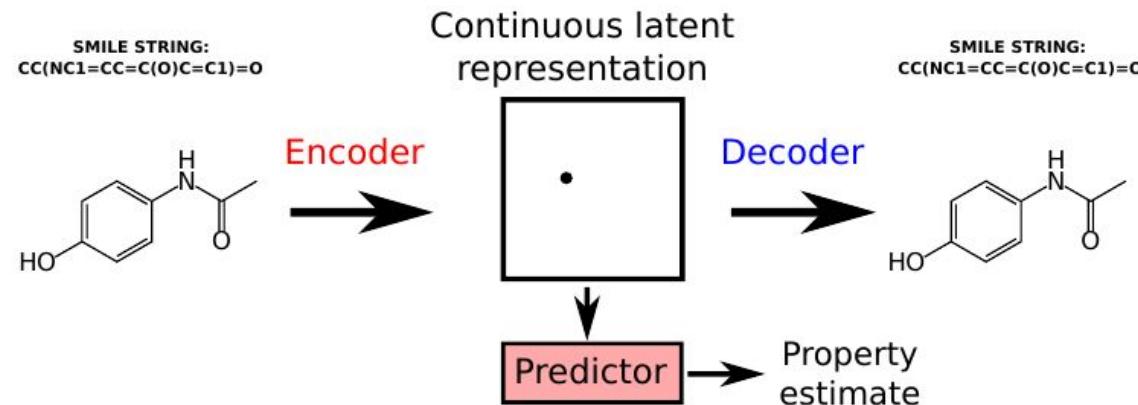
Nearby latent representations decode into similar molecules:



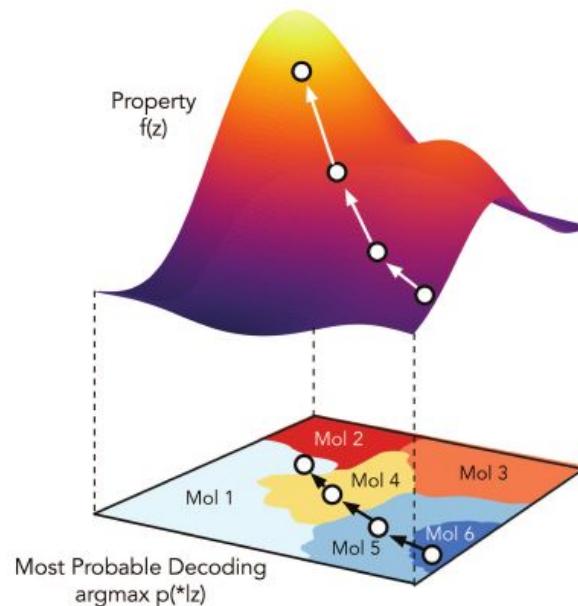
Easy to add a **surrogate model** from latent space to property.



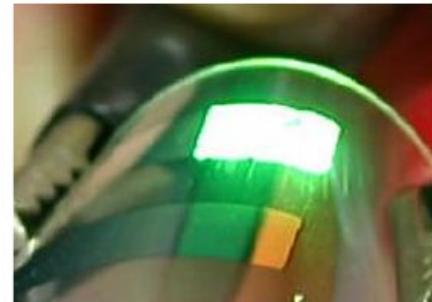
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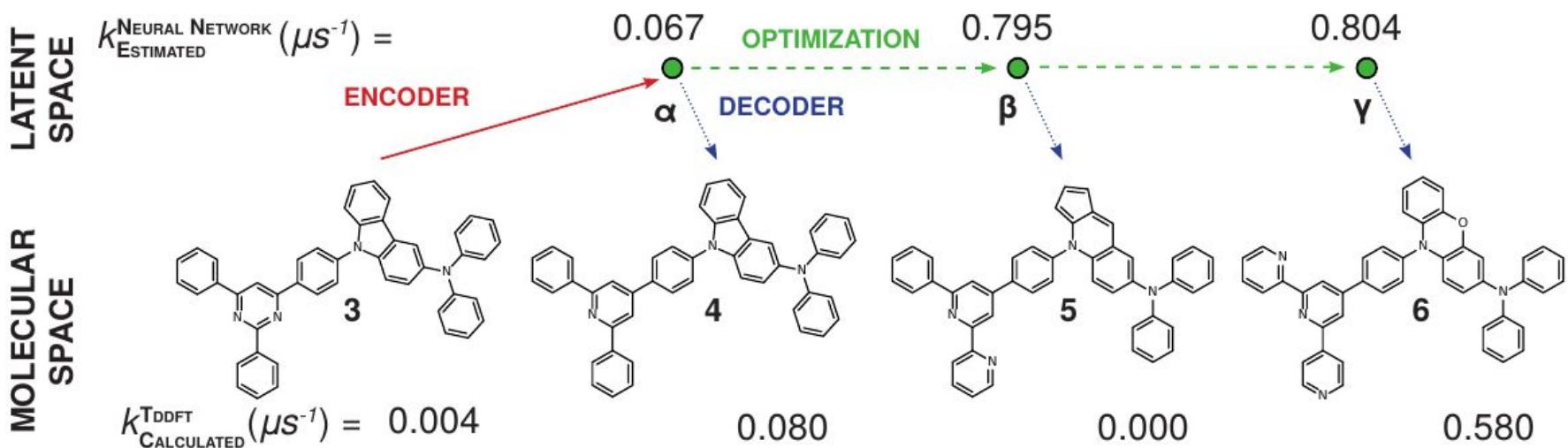
**Gradient-based** optimization can be used in latent space.



## Local optimization of OLED molecules



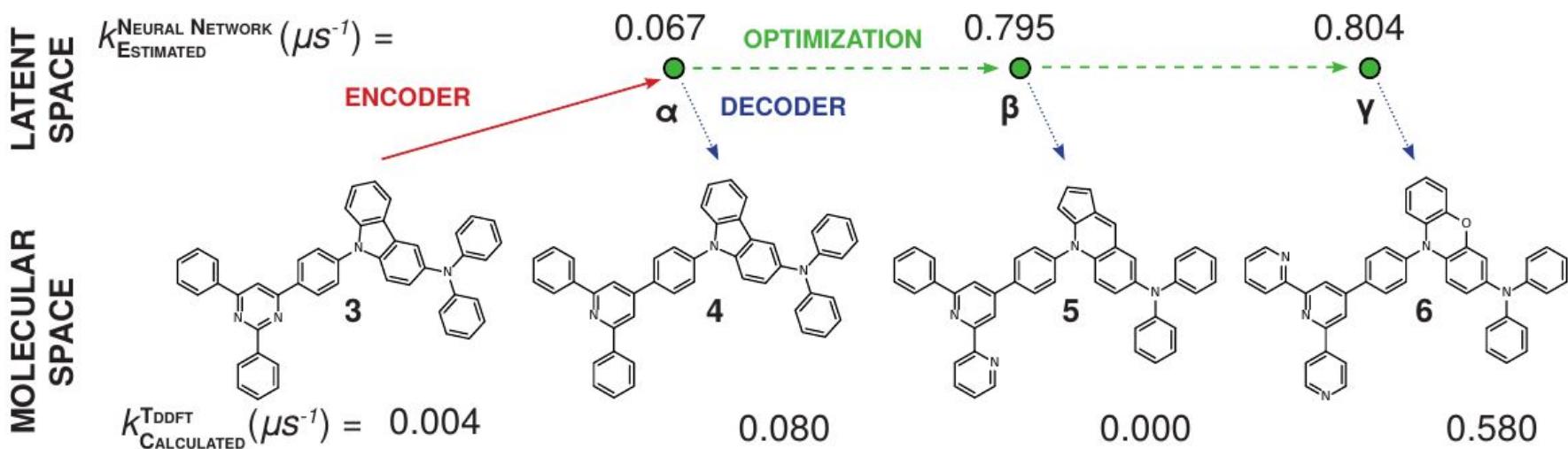
We optimize the delayed fluorescence decay rate  $\kappa_{\text{TADF}}$ , as estimated from TDDFT computations on 150,000 molecules.



## Local optimization of OLED molecules



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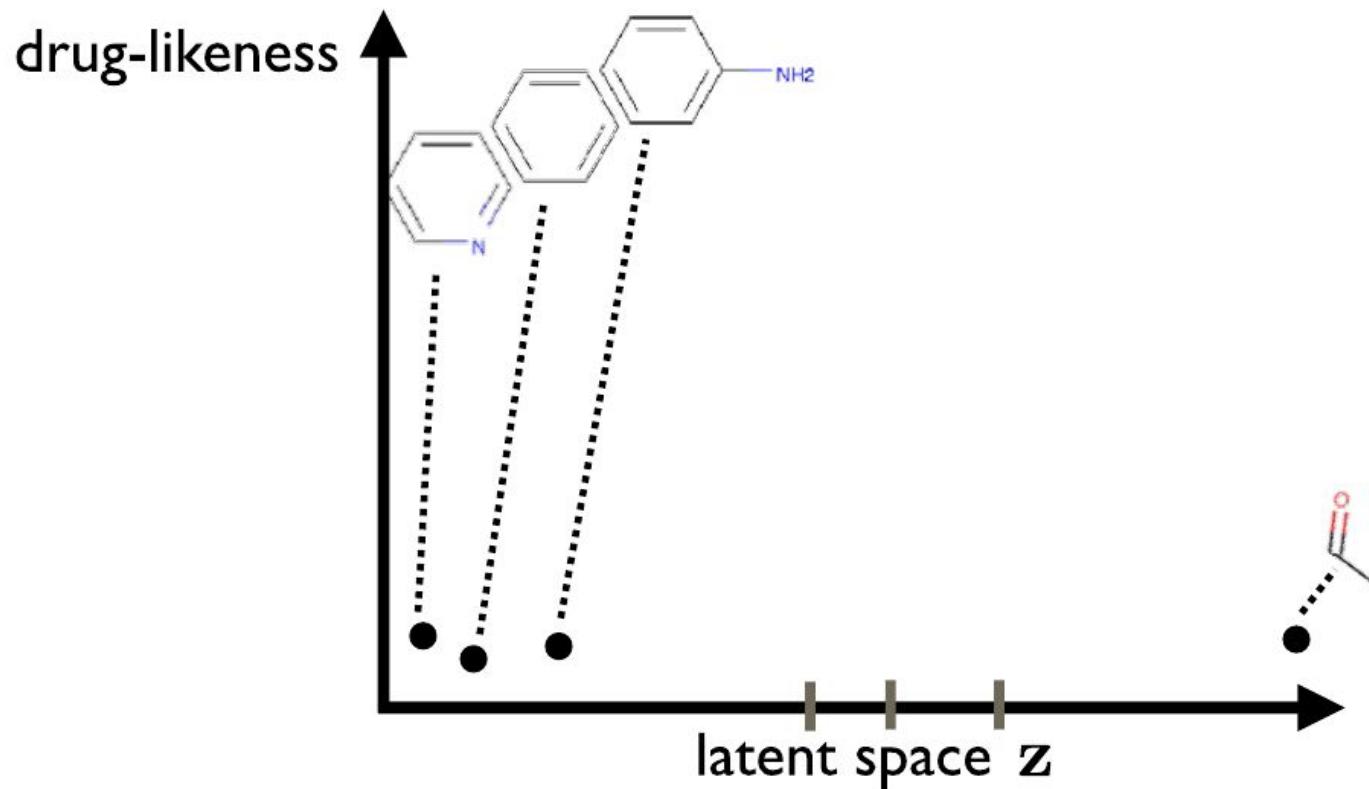


However, many of the sampled SMILES strings are not valid molecules.

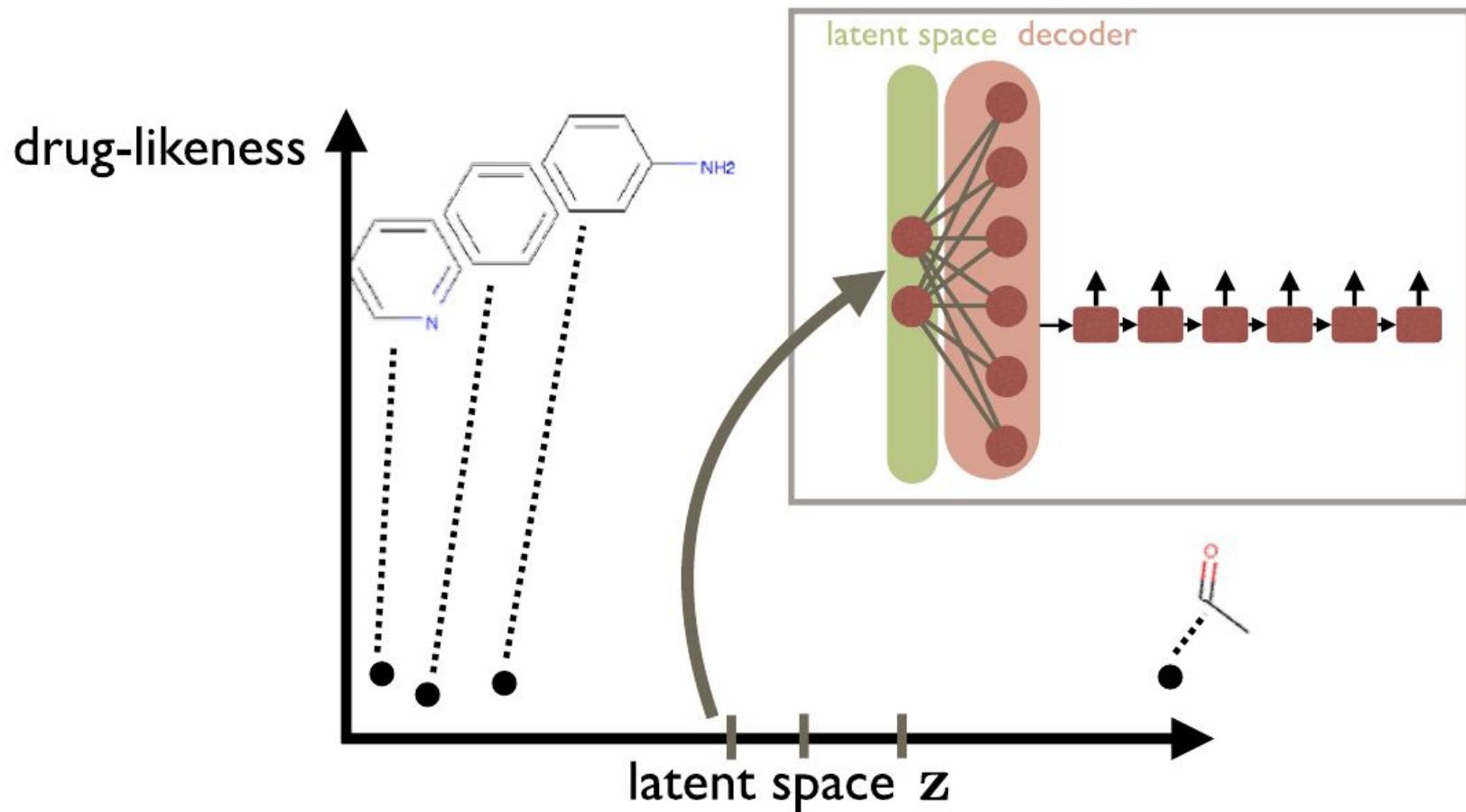
# **Grammar Variational Autoencoder**

Kusner M. J., Paige B. and Hernández-Lobato J. M.  
Grammar Variational Autoencoder,  
In ICML, 2017.

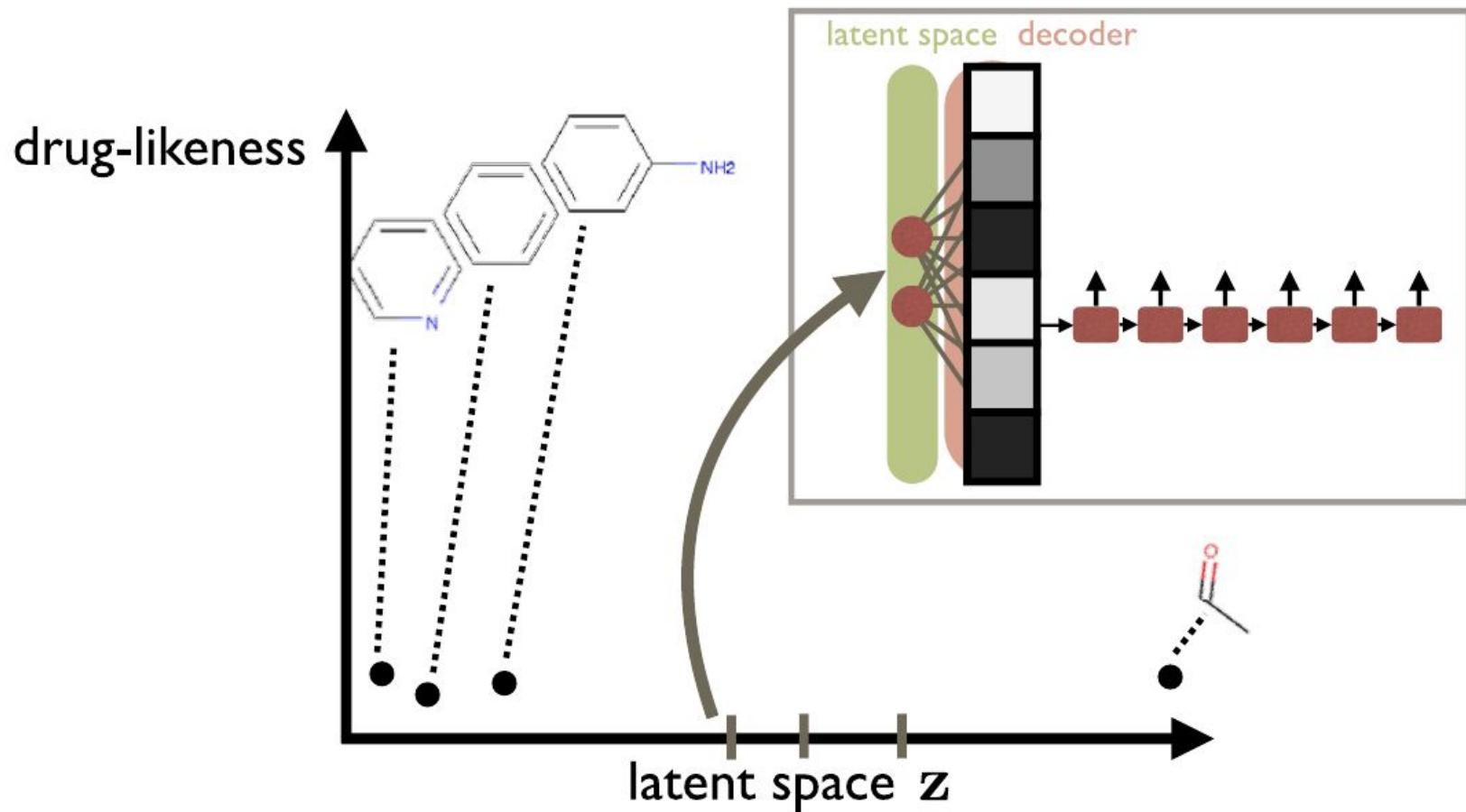
# THE PROBLEM



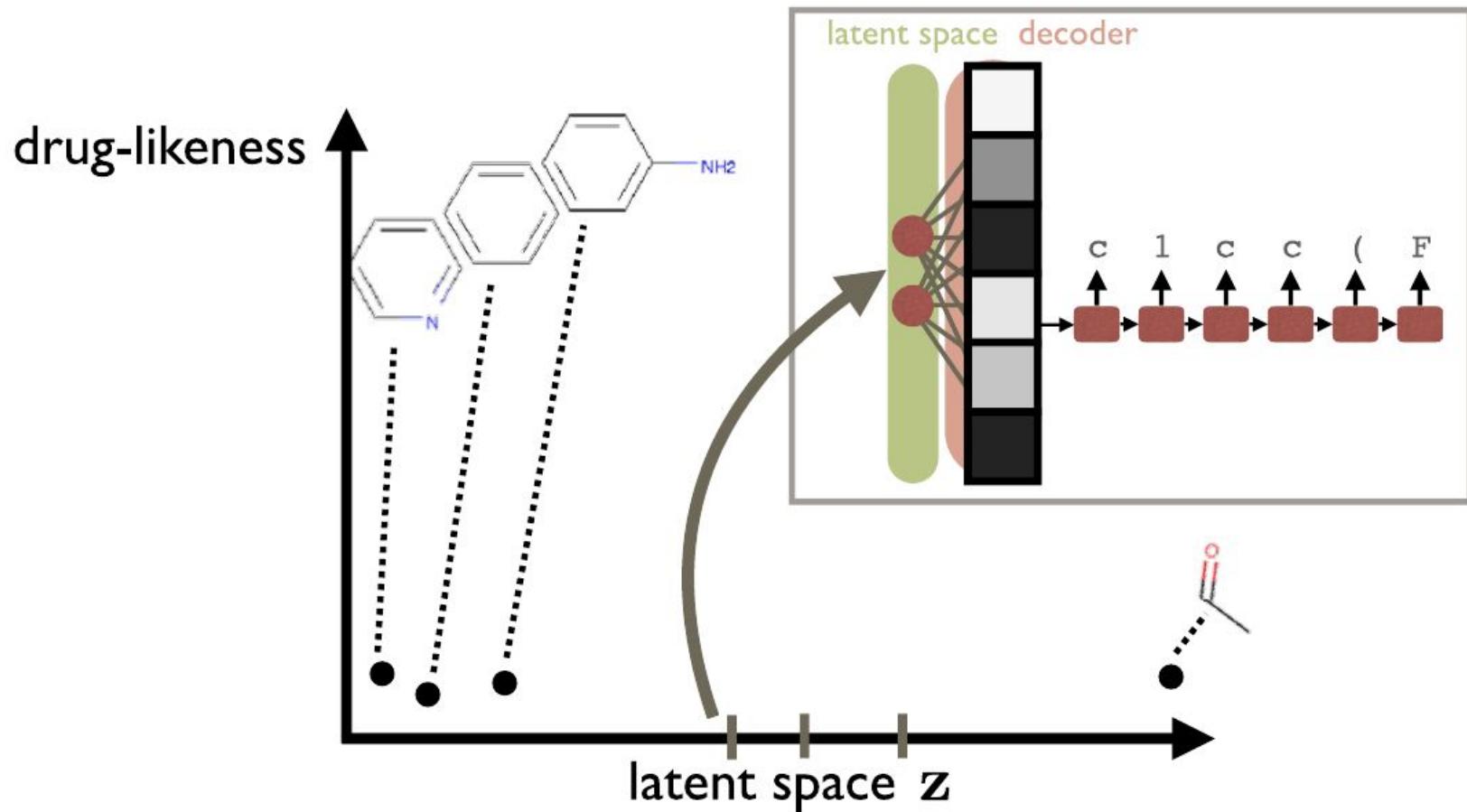
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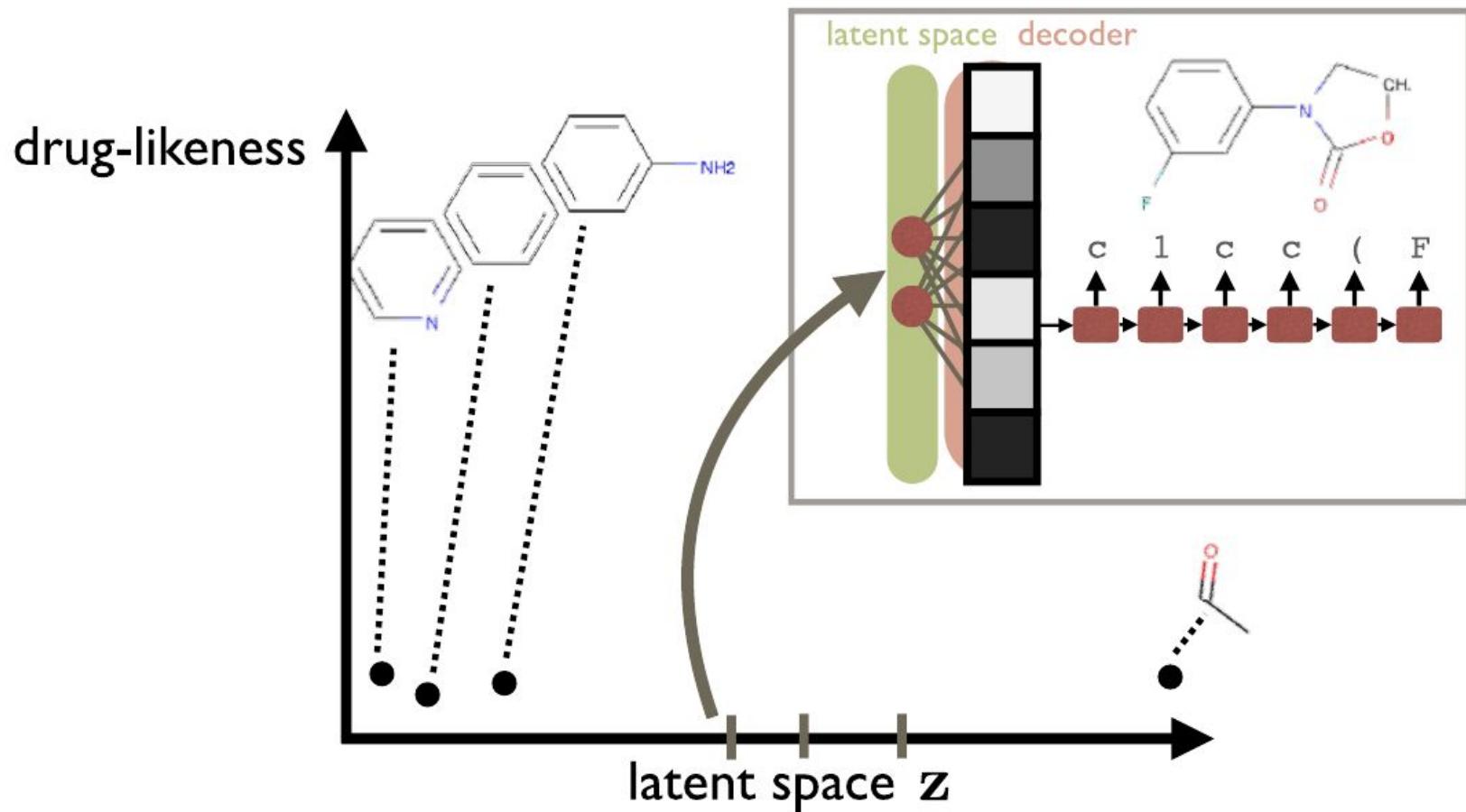
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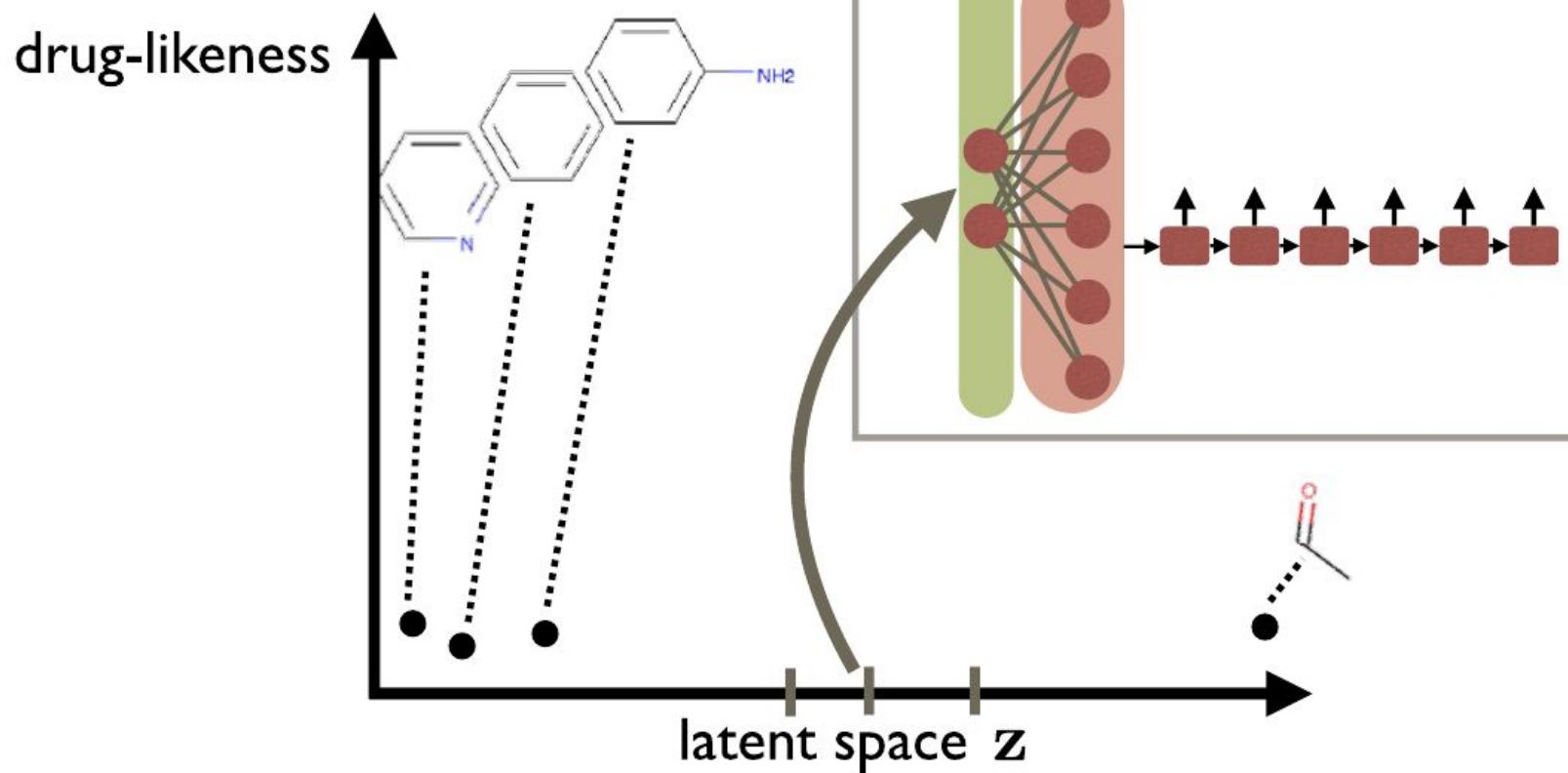
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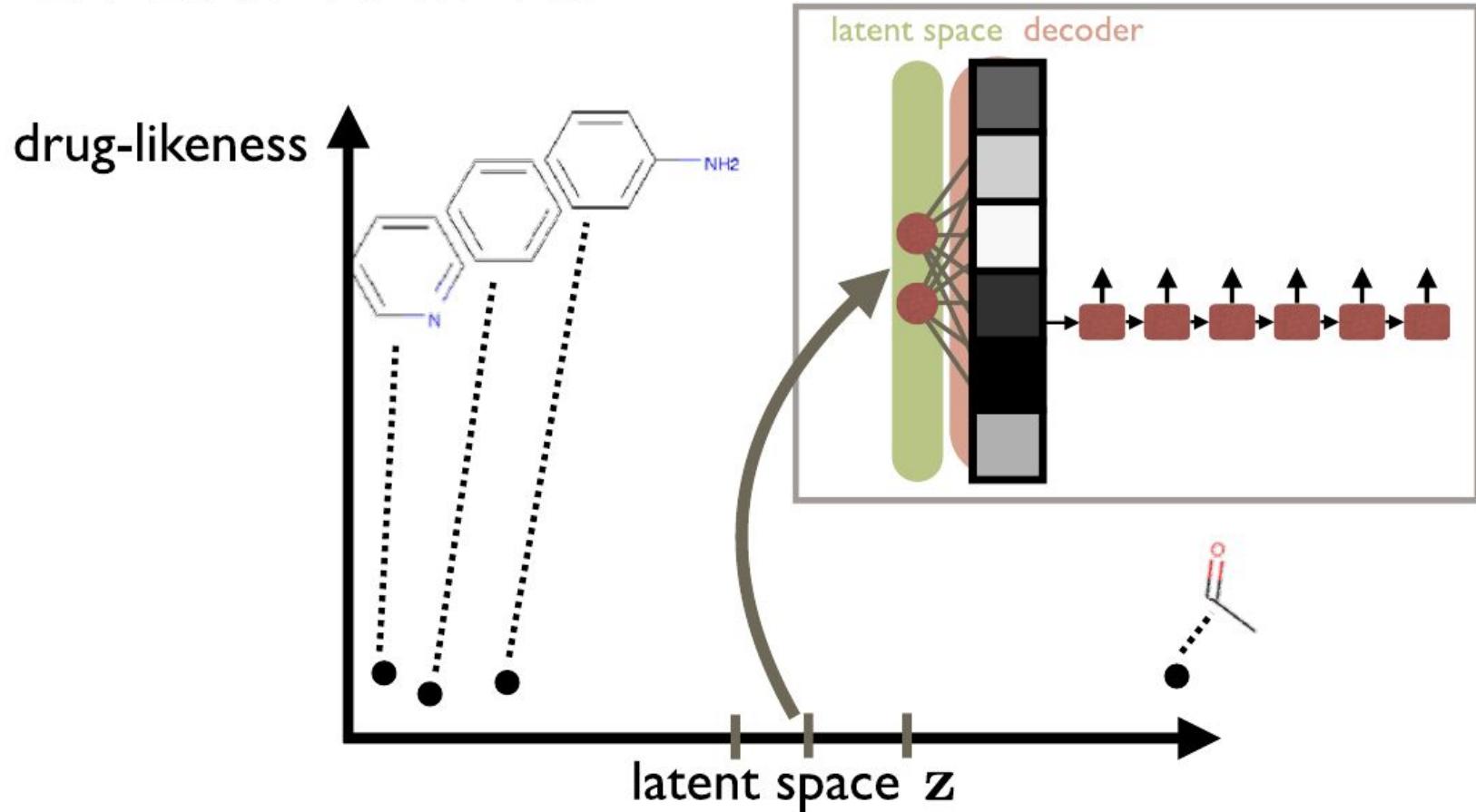
# THE PROBLEM



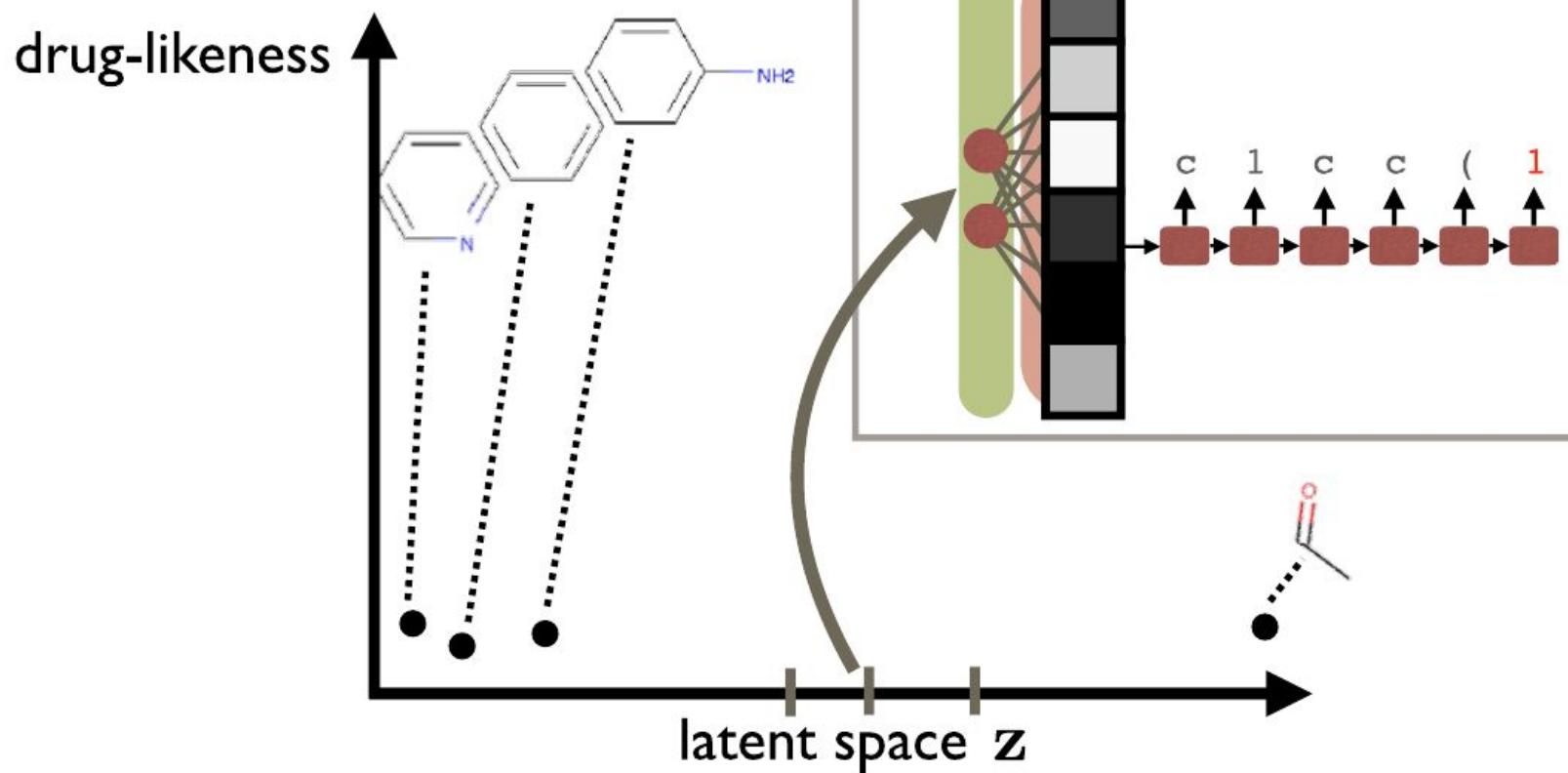
# SMALL CHANGES RUIN EVERYTHING



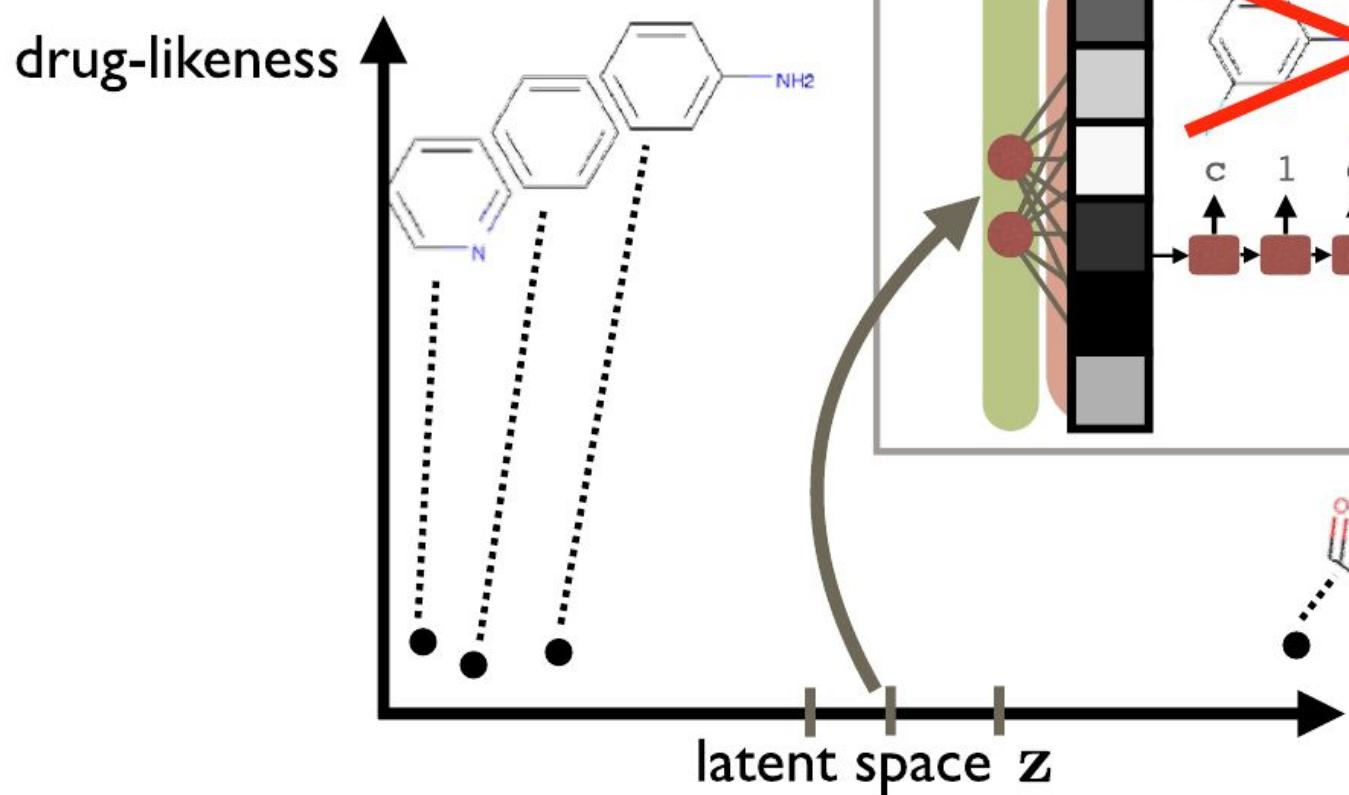
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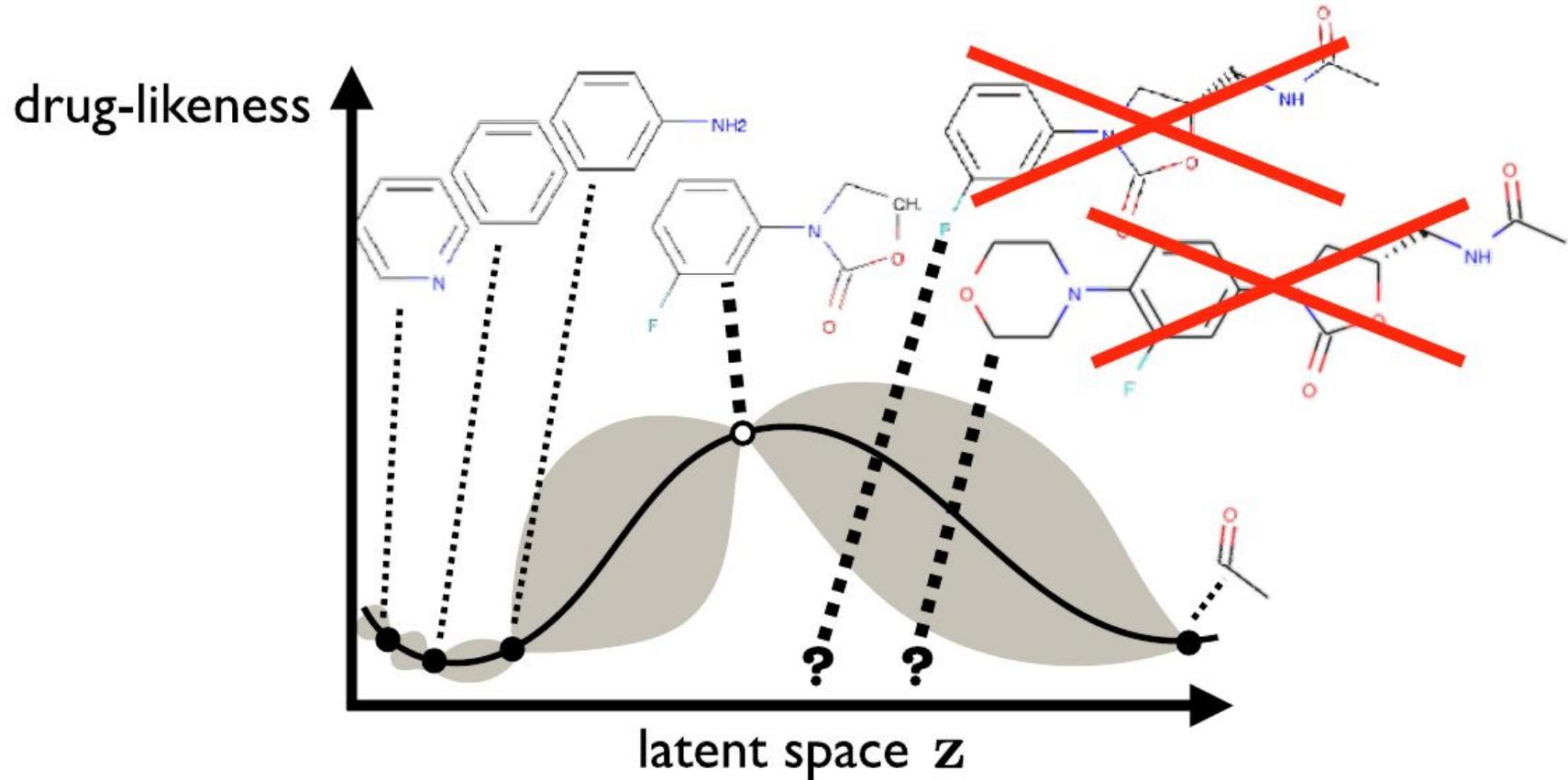


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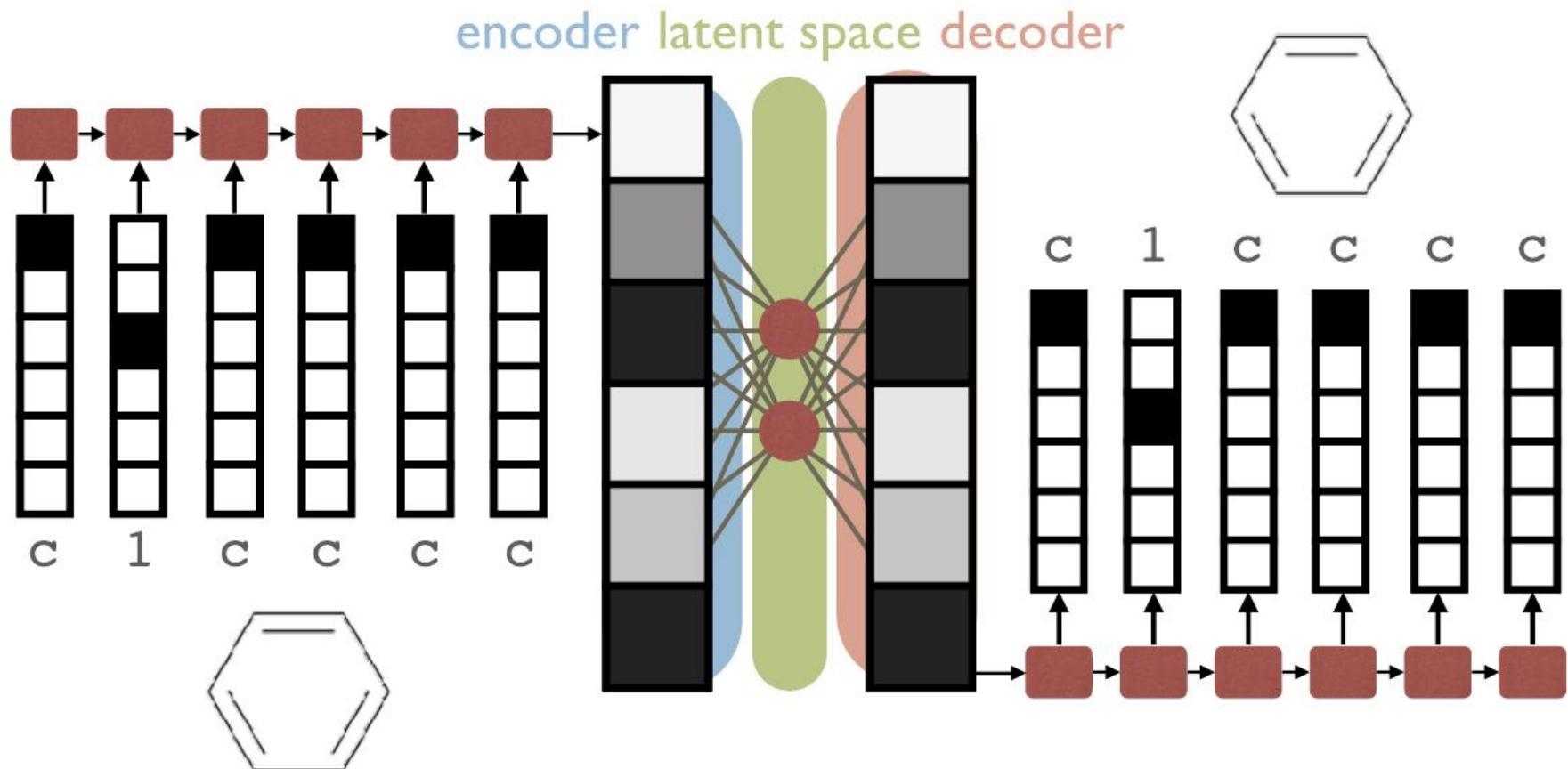


latent space decoder

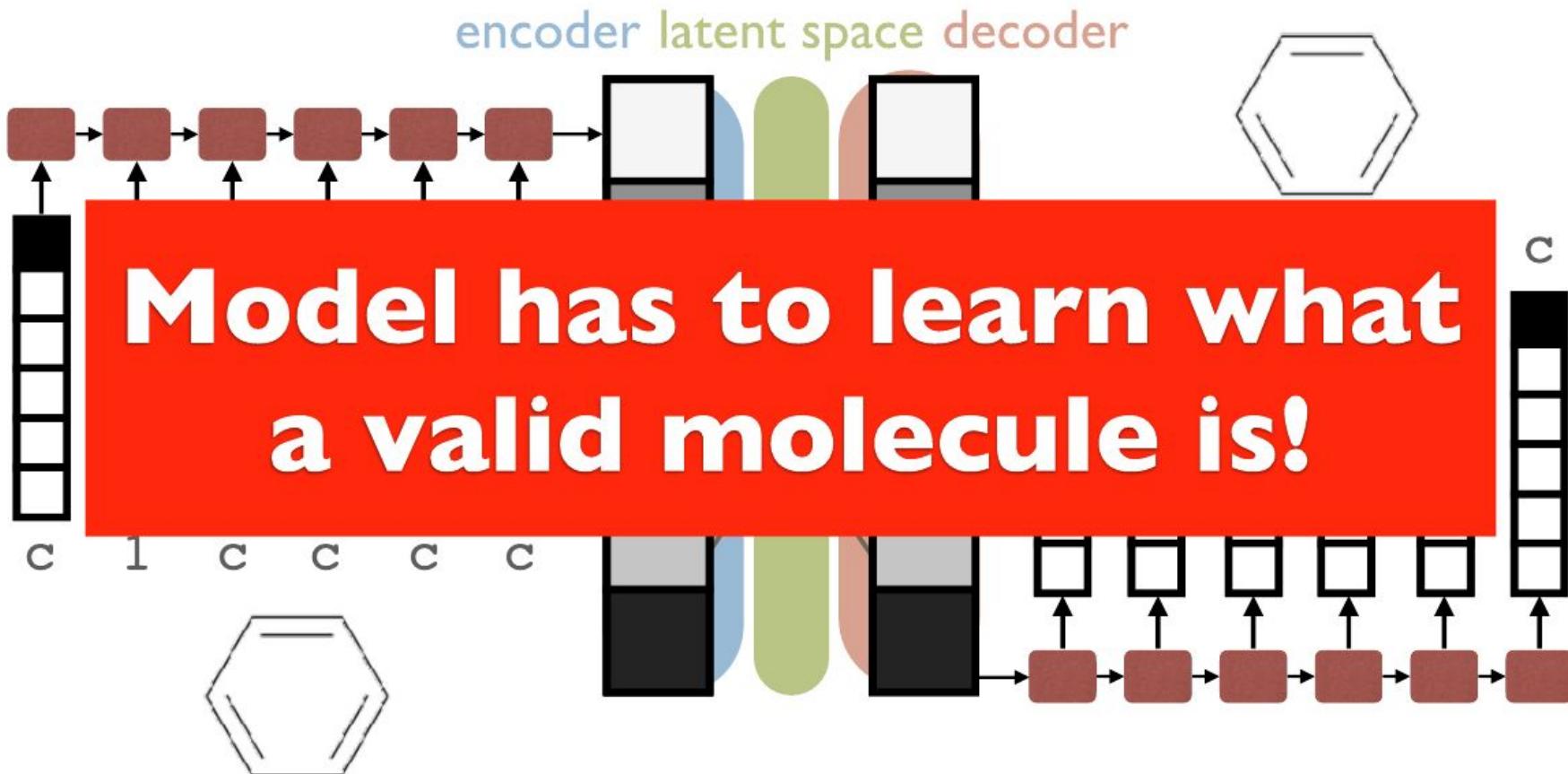
# SMALL CHANGES RUIN EVERYTHING



# DISCRETE GENERATIVE MODELS: CAN WE DO BETTER?



# DISCRETE GENERATIVE MODELS: CAN WE DO BETTER?



# A NEW REPRESENTATION

[Kusner, Paige, Hernández-Lobato, 2017]

## Context-Free Grammar

[James et al., 2015]

smiles  $\longrightarrow$  chain

chain  $\longrightarrow$  chain, branched atom

chain  $\longrightarrow$  branched atom

branched atom  $\longrightarrow$  atom, ringbond

branched atom  $\longrightarrow$  atom

atom  $\longrightarrow$  aromatic organic

atom  $\longrightarrow$  aliphatic organic

ringbond  $\longrightarrow$  digit

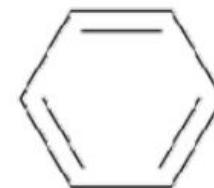
aromatic organic  $\longrightarrow$  'c'

aliphatic organic  $\longrightarrow$  'C'

aliphatic organic  $\longrightarrow$  'N'

digit  $\longrightarrow$  '1'

digit  $\longrightarrow$  '2'



c 1 c c c c c 1

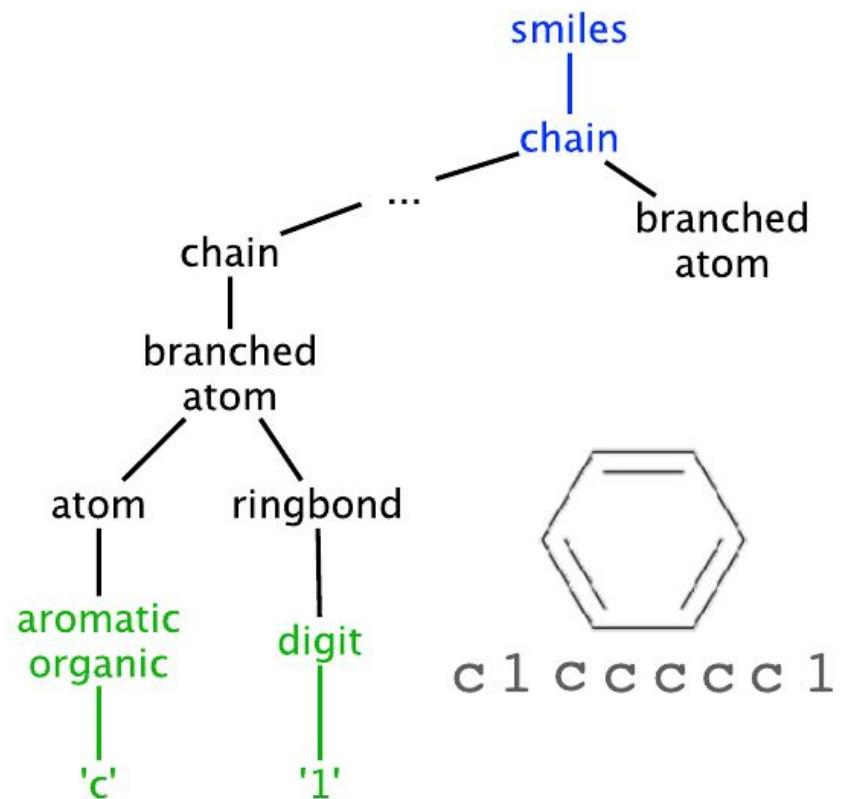
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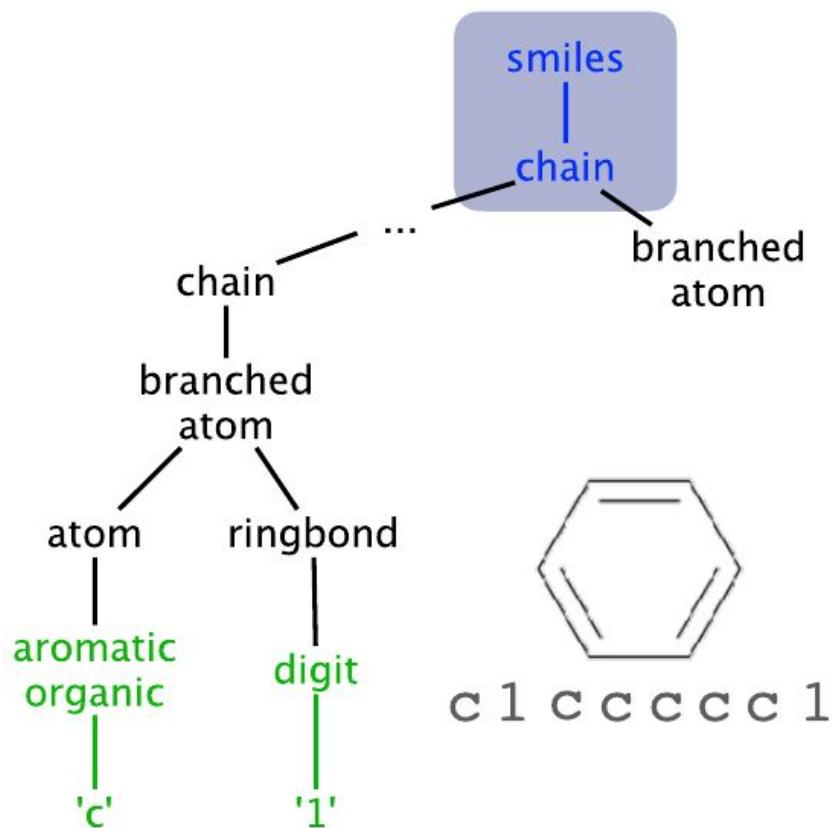
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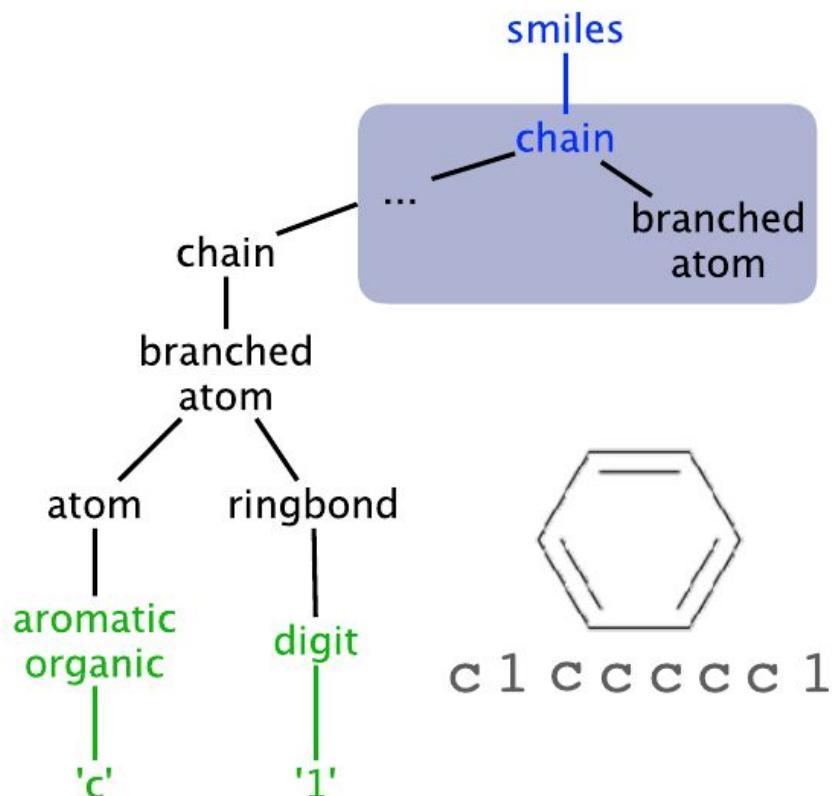
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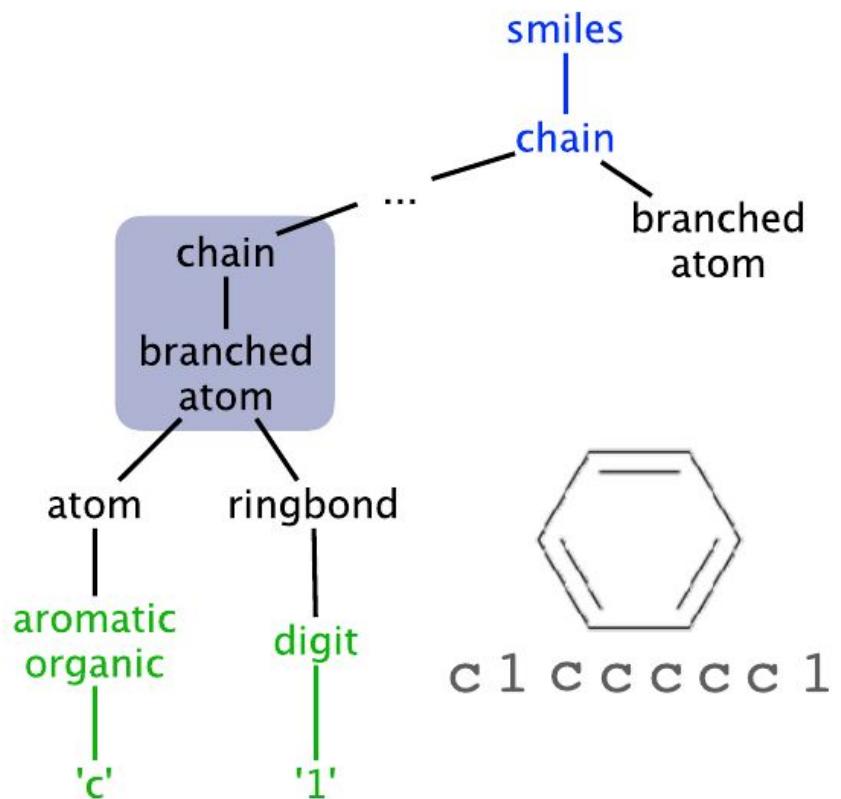
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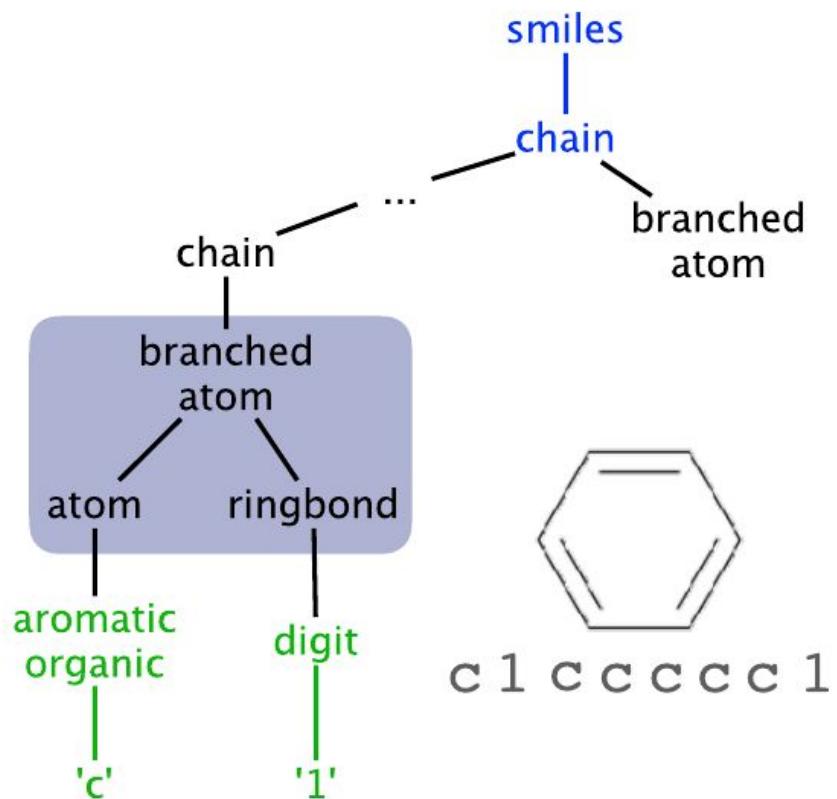
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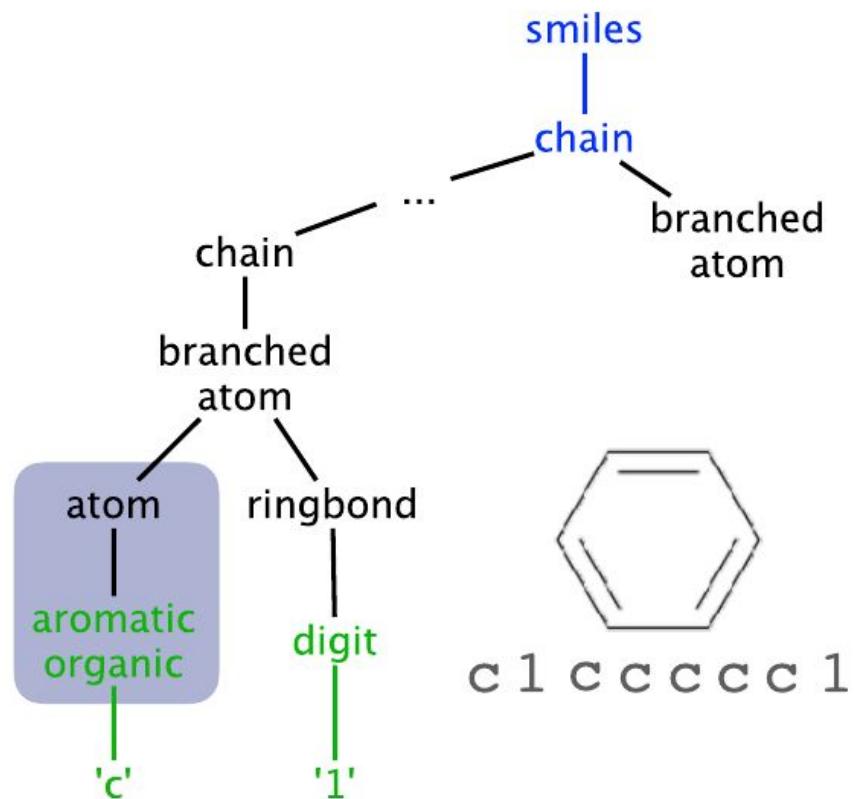
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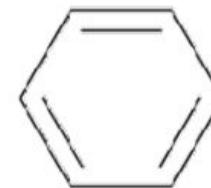
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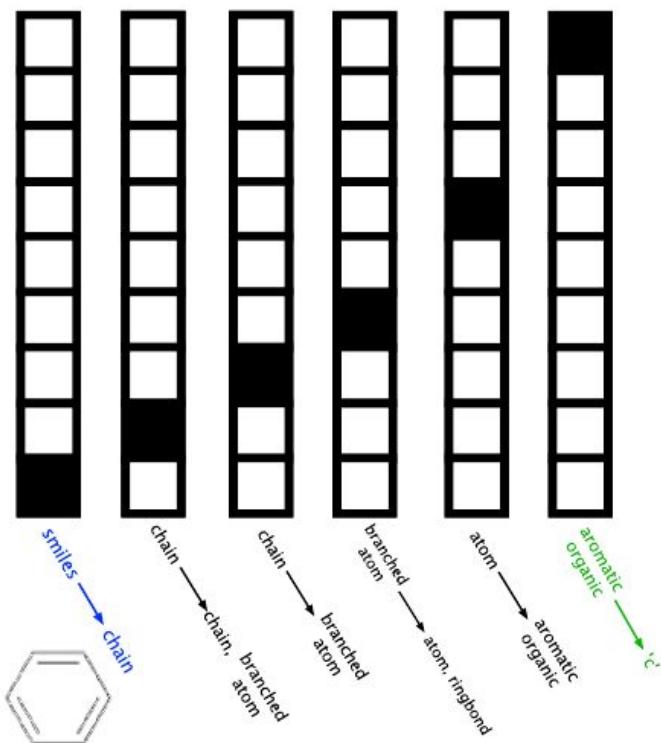
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...

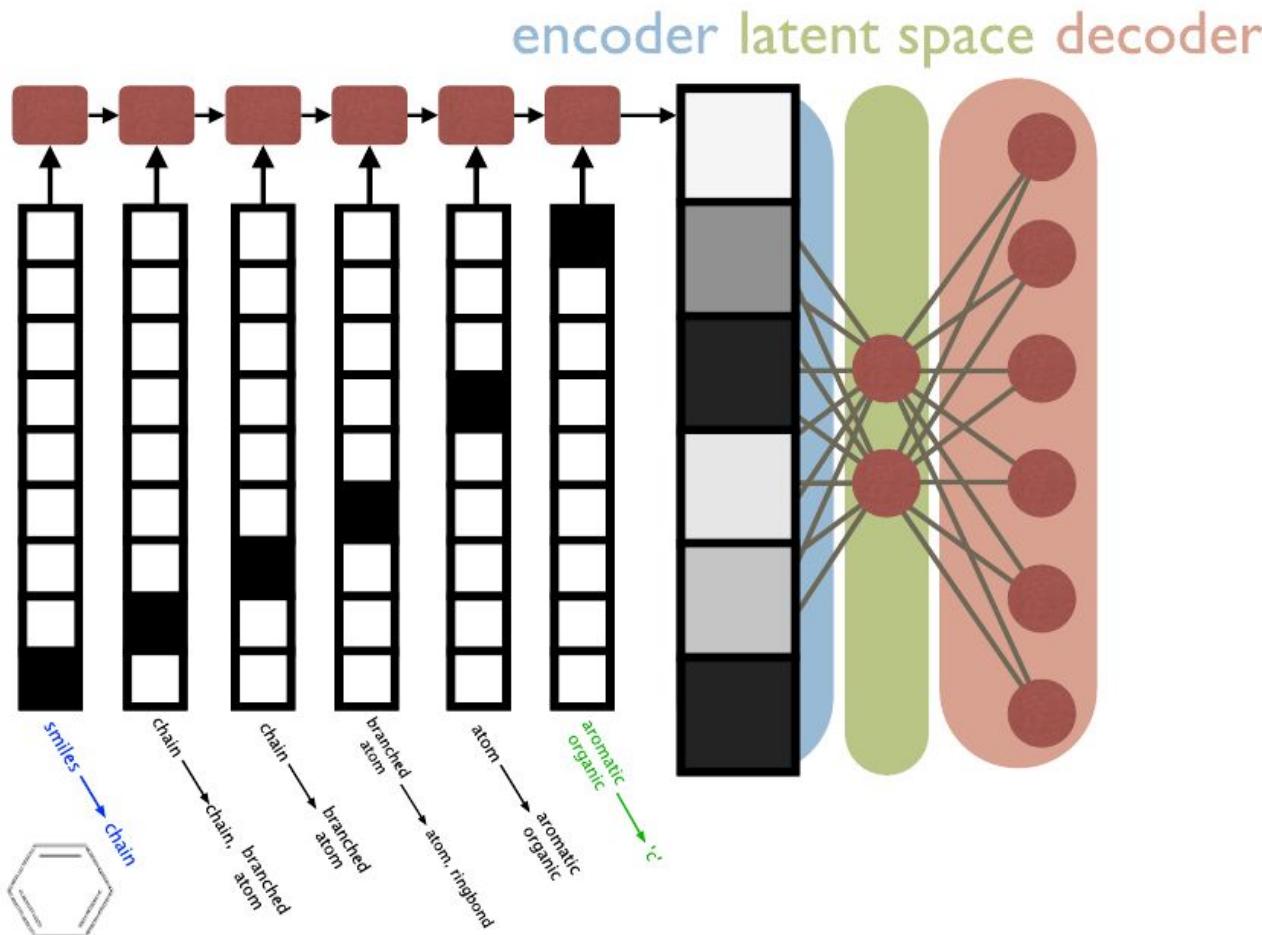
# ENCODER

[Kusner, Paige, Hernández-Lobato, 2017]



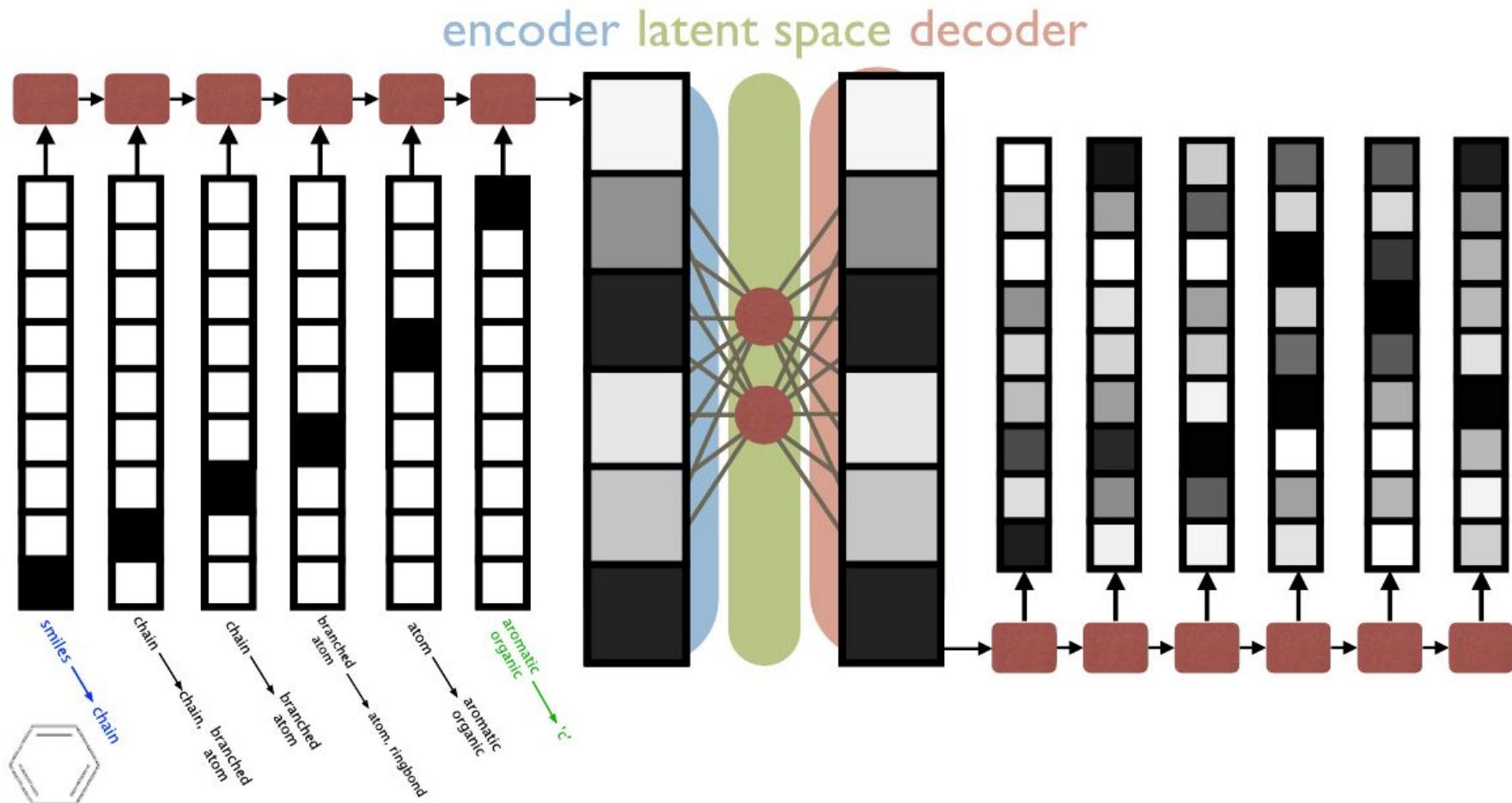
# ENCODER

[Kusner, Paige, Hernández-Lobato, 2017]



# DECODER

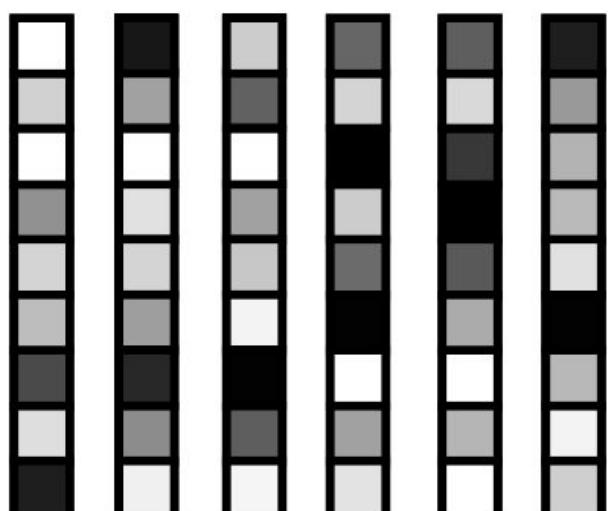
[Kusner, Paige, Hernández-Lobato, 2017]



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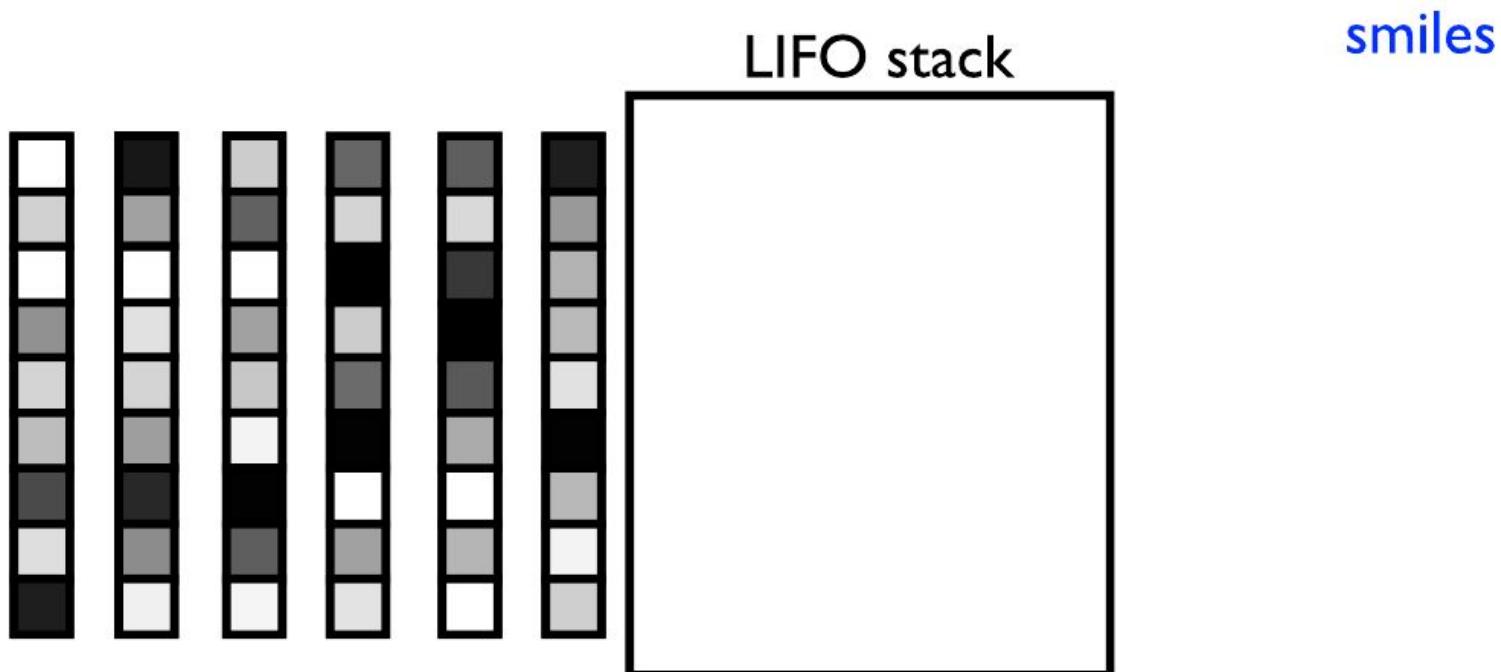
[Kusner, Paige, Hernández-Lobato, 2017]

LIFO stack



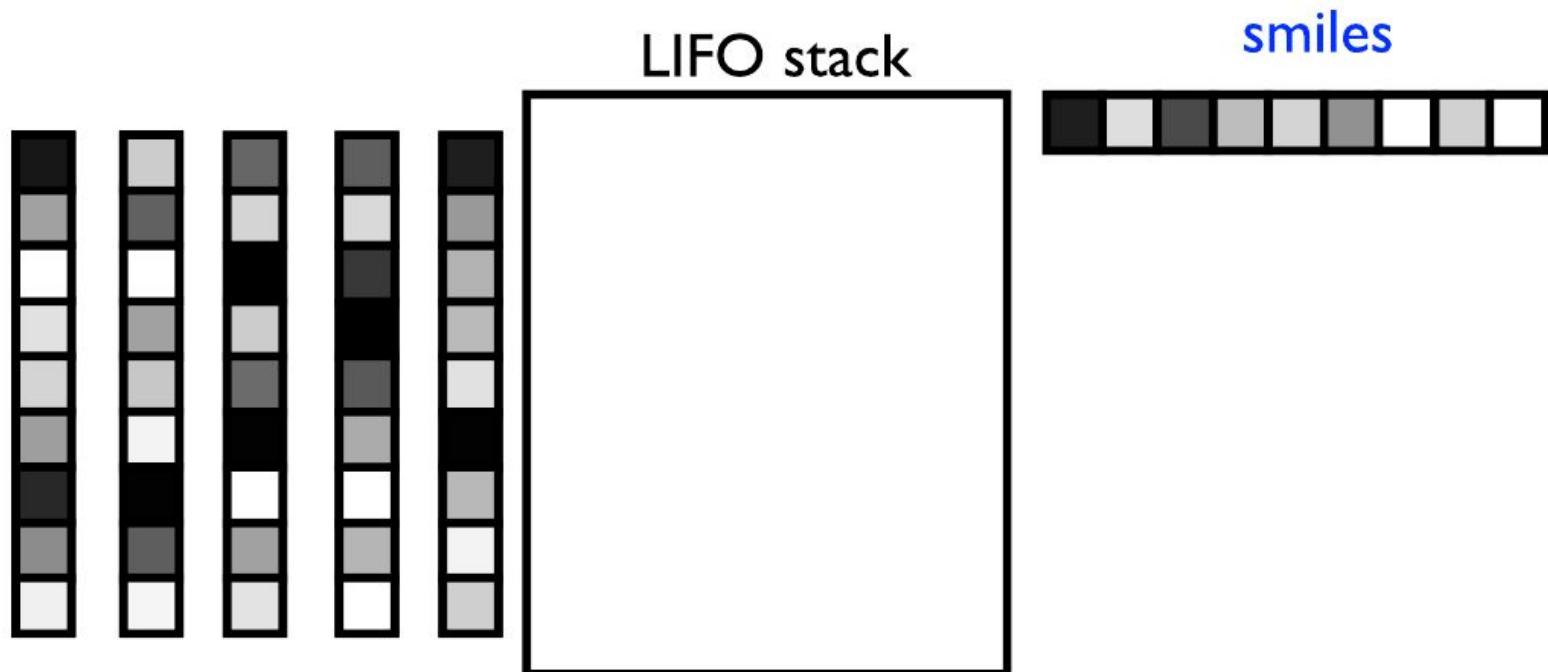
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[Kusner, Paige, Hernández-Lobato, 2017]



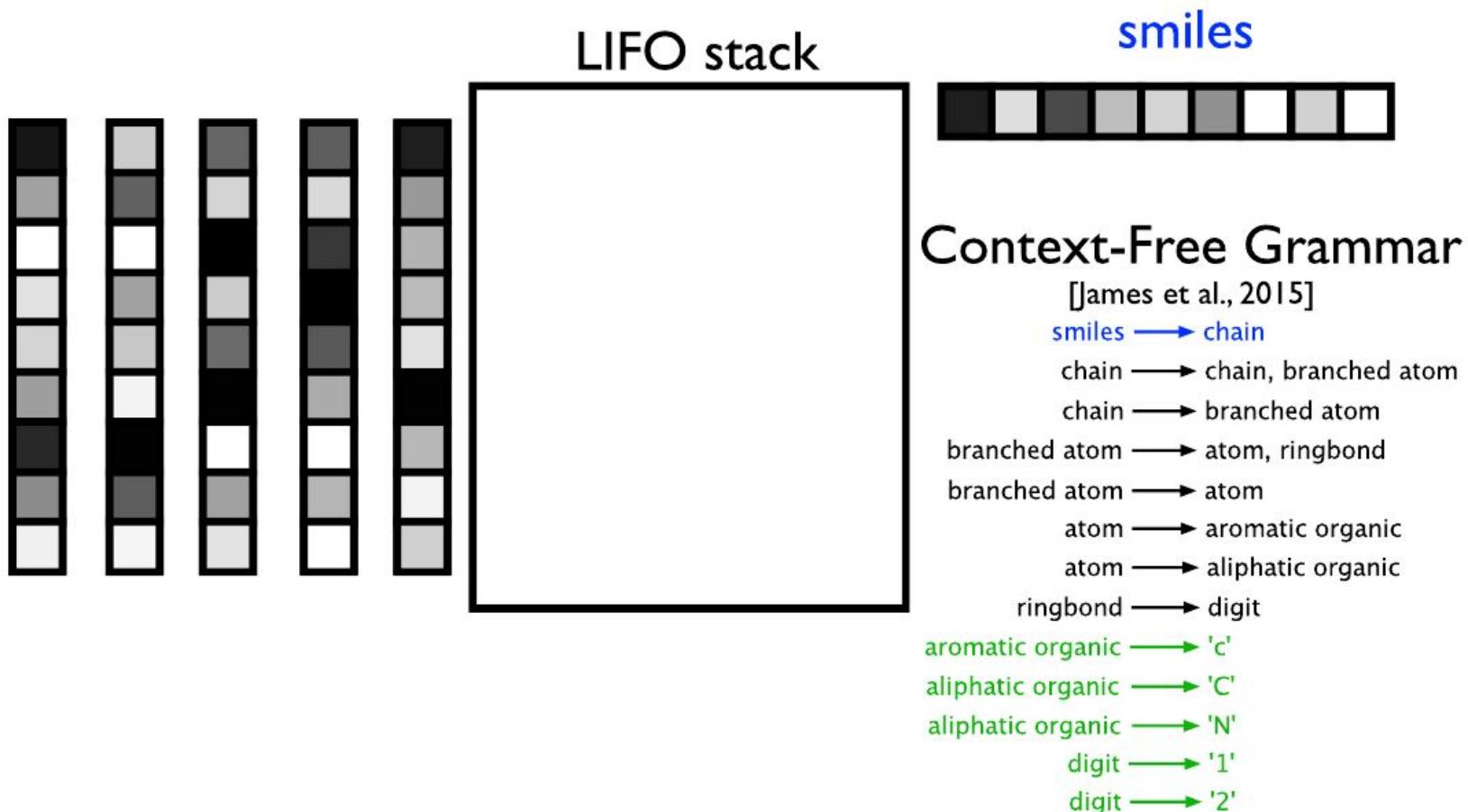
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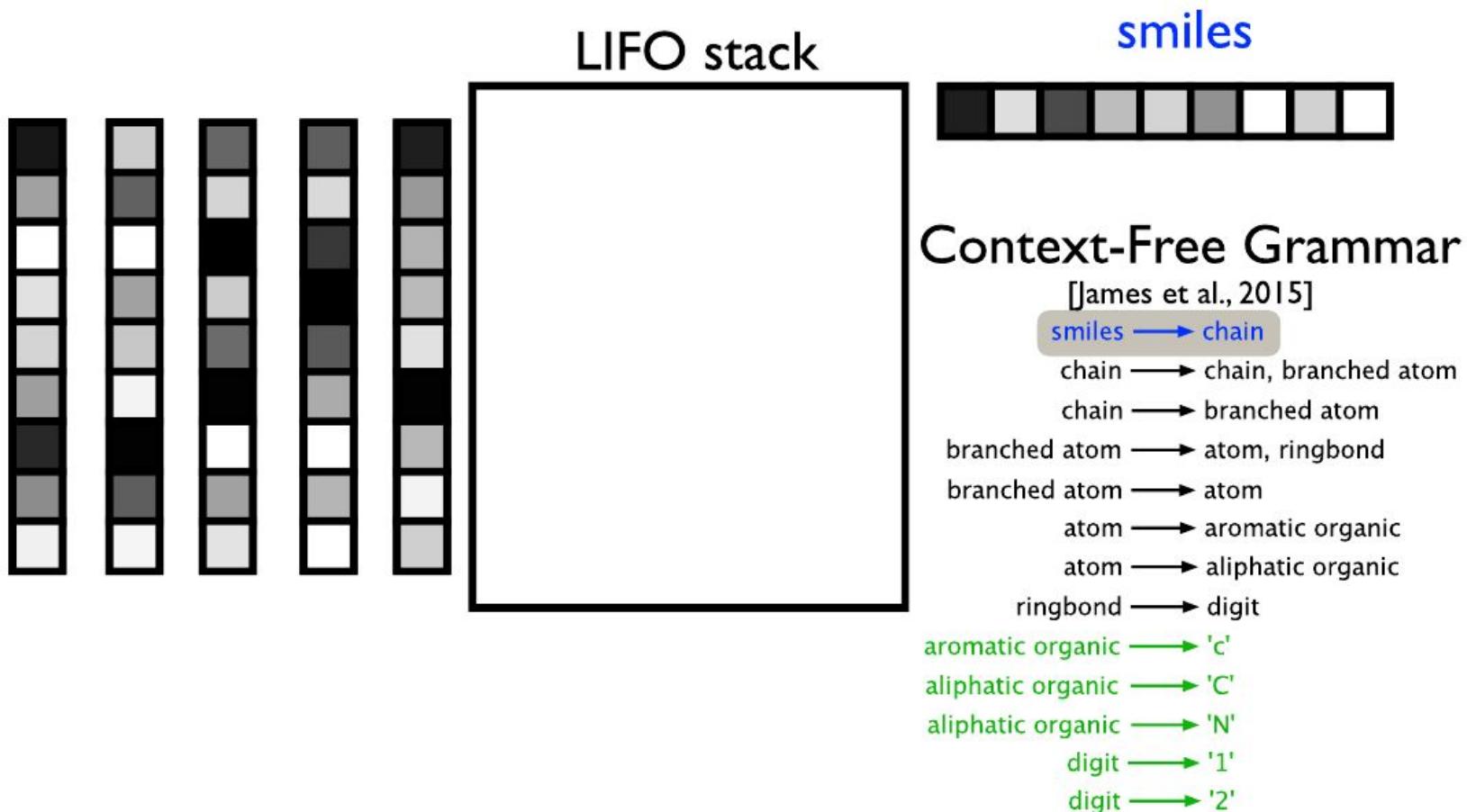
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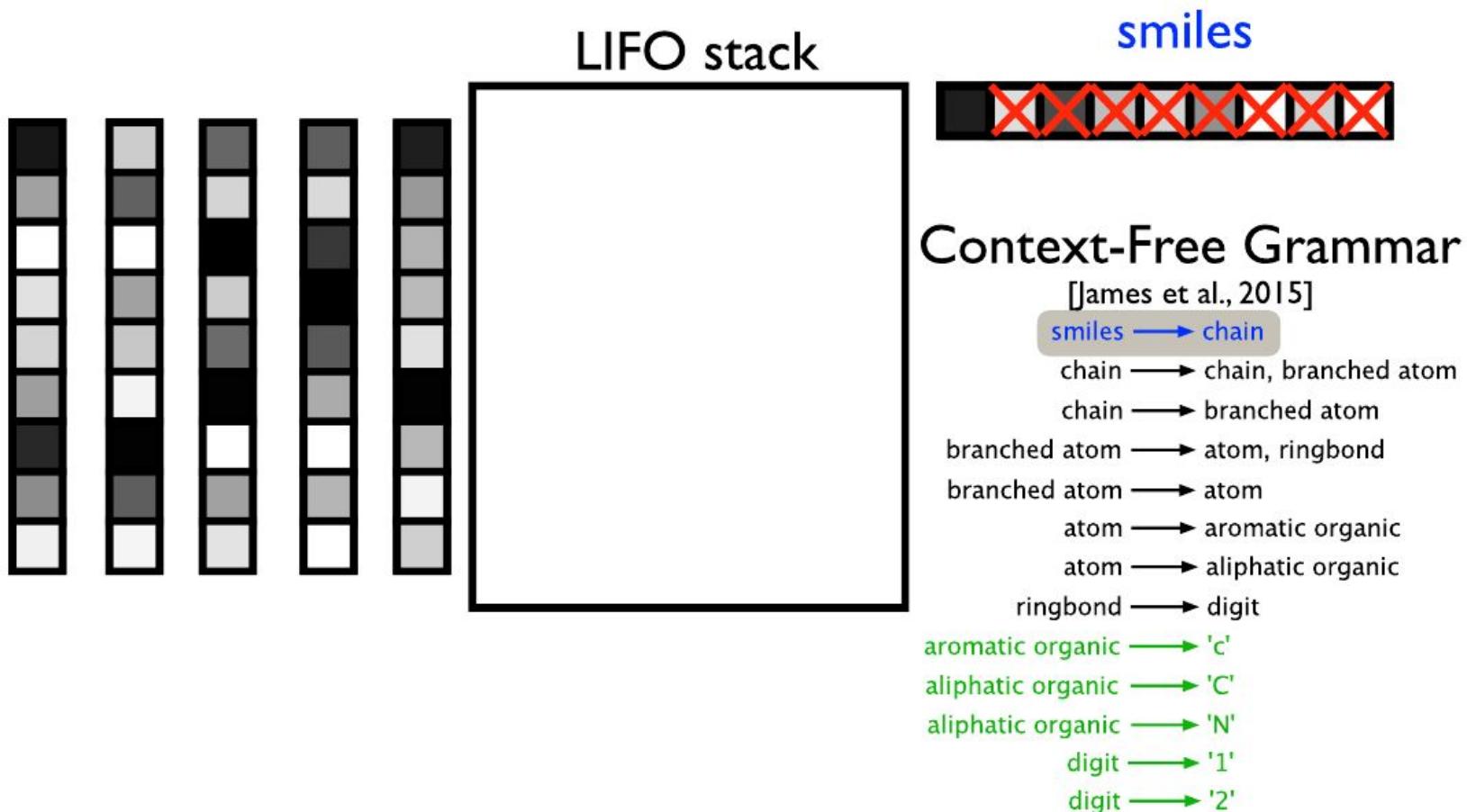
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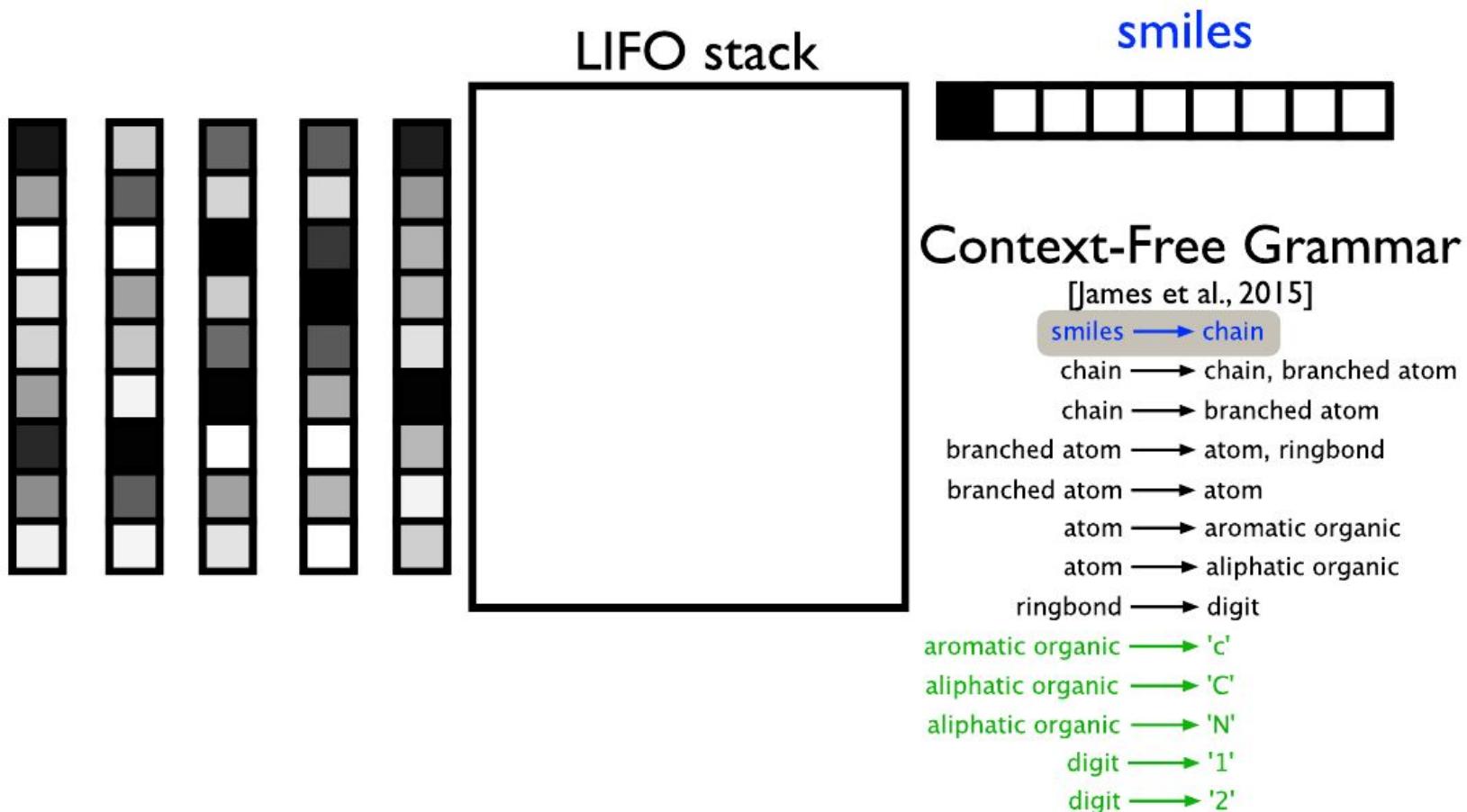
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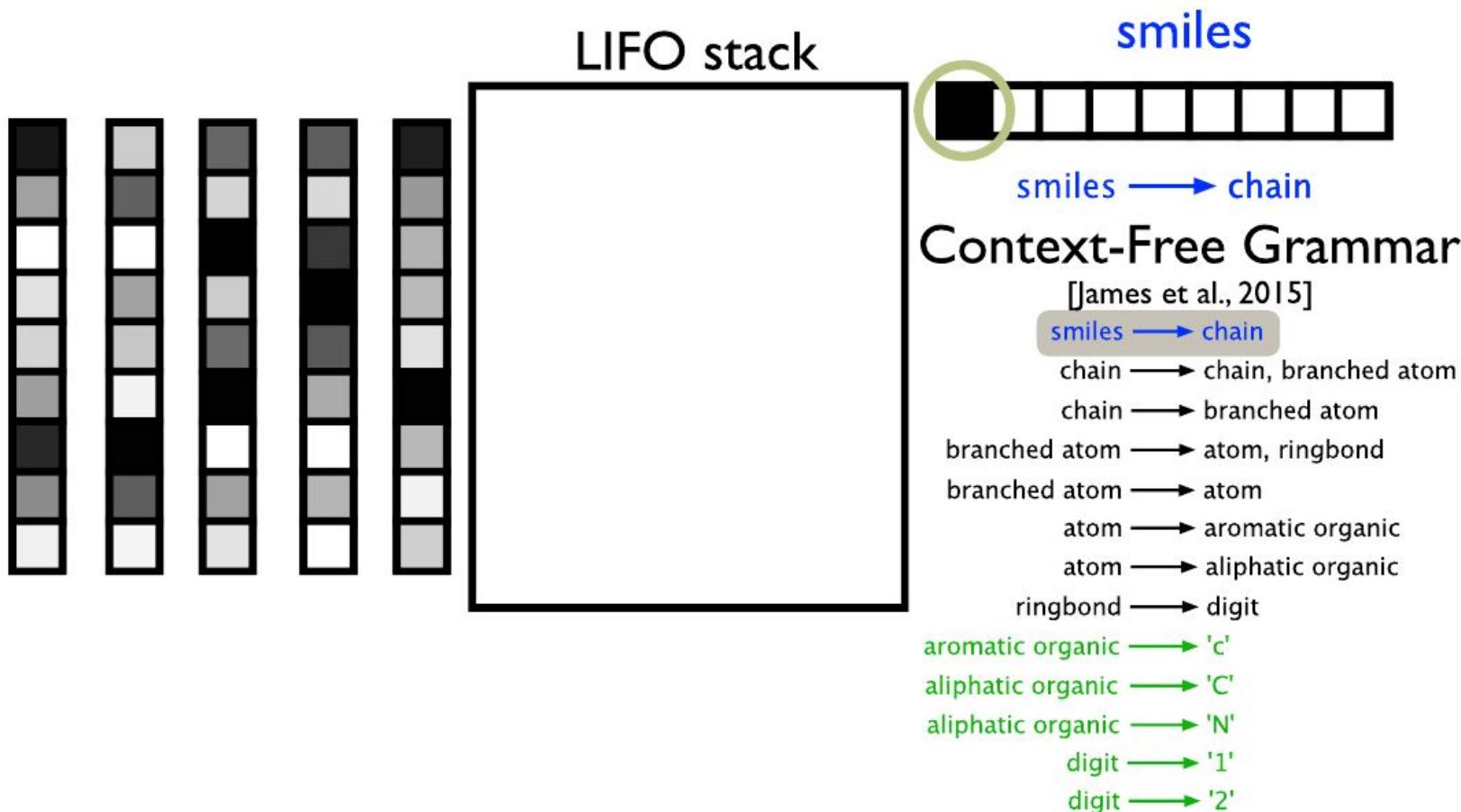
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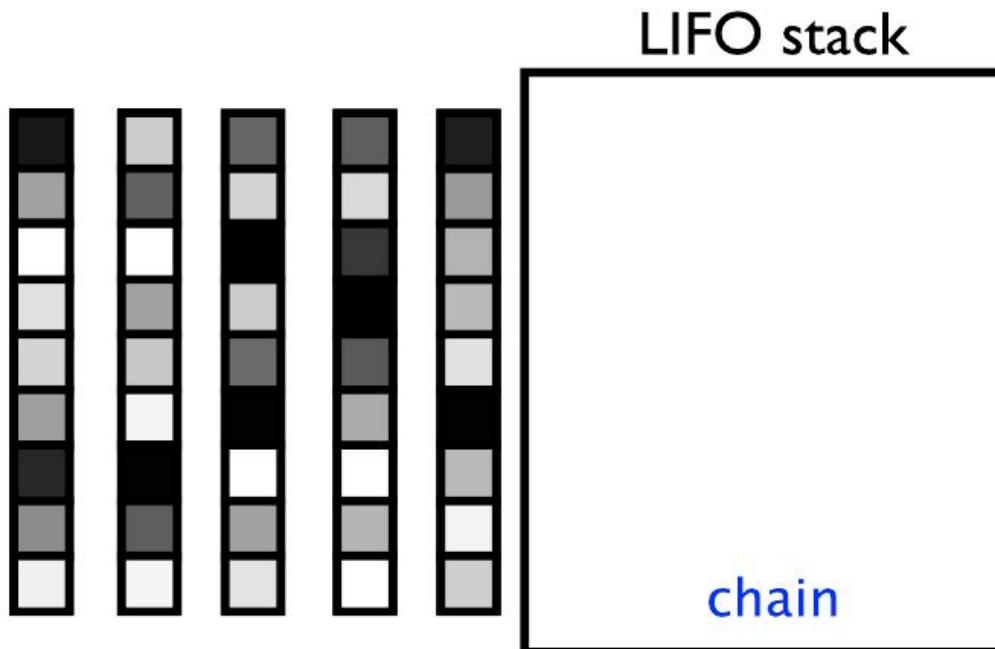
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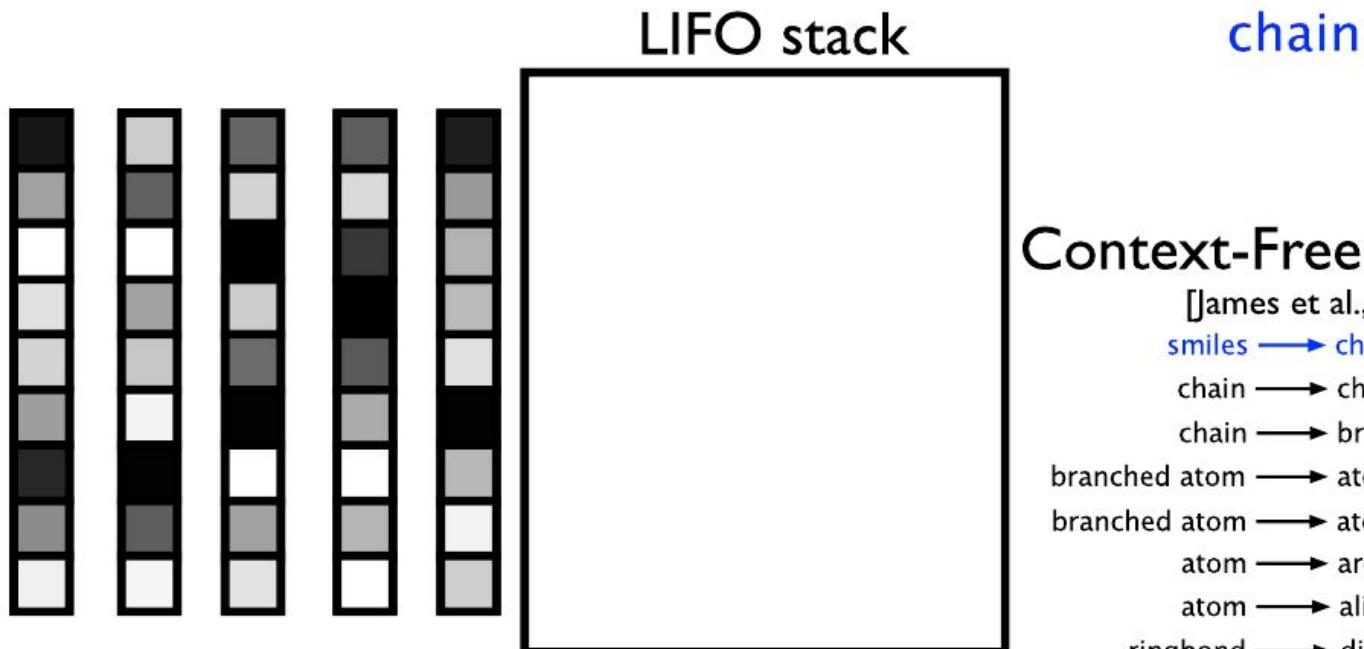
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[James et al., 2015]

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- chain  $\rightarrow$  branched atom
- branched atom  $\rightarrow$  atom, ringbond
- branched atom  $\rightarrow$  atom
  - atom  $\rightarrow$  aromatic organic
  - atom  $\rightarrow$  aliphatic organic
- ringbond  $\rightarrow$  digit
- aromatic organic  $\rightarrow$  'c'
- aliphatic organic  $\rightarrow$  'C'
- aliphatic organic  $\rightarrow$  'N'
- digit  $\rightarrow$  '1'
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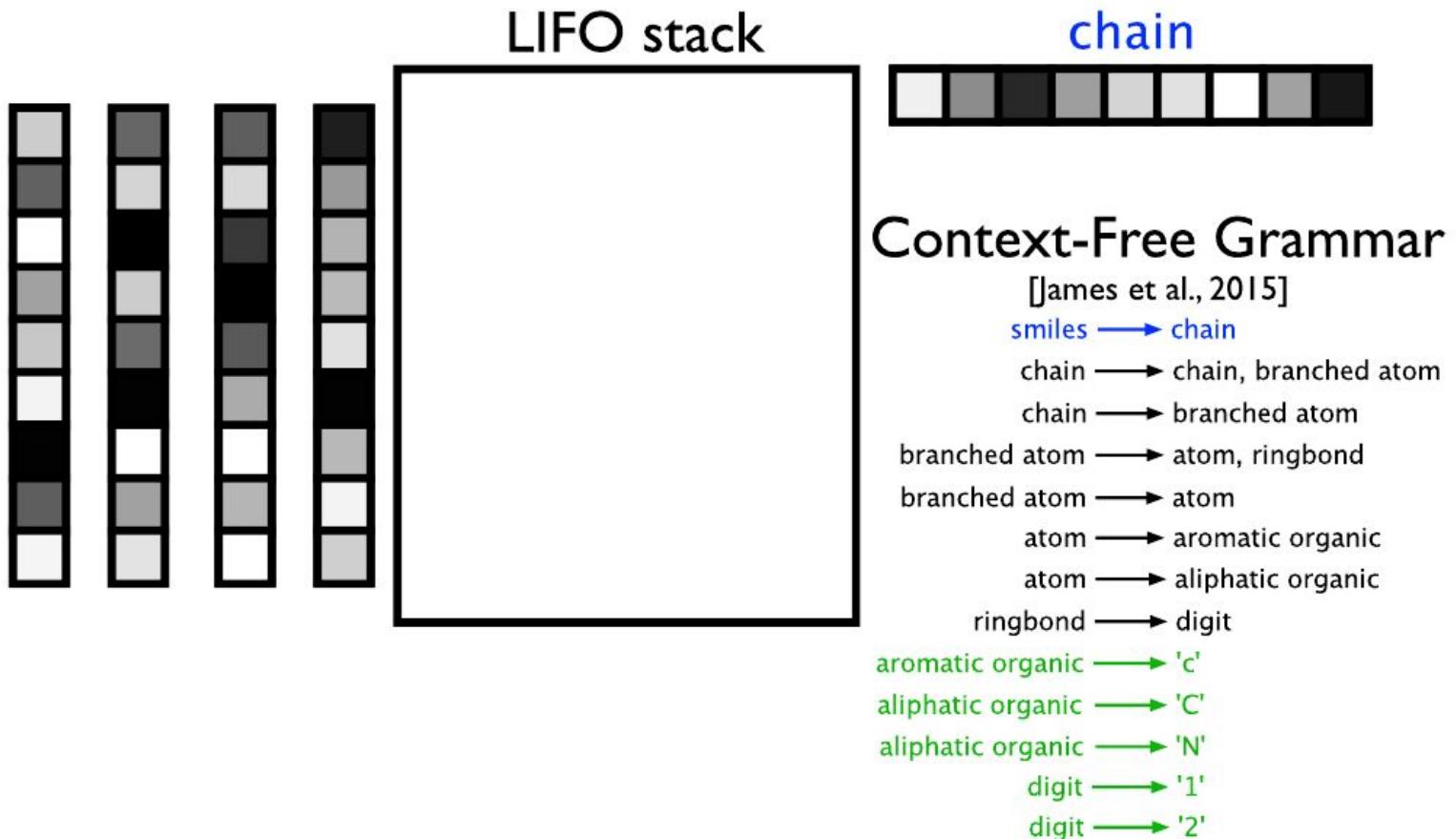
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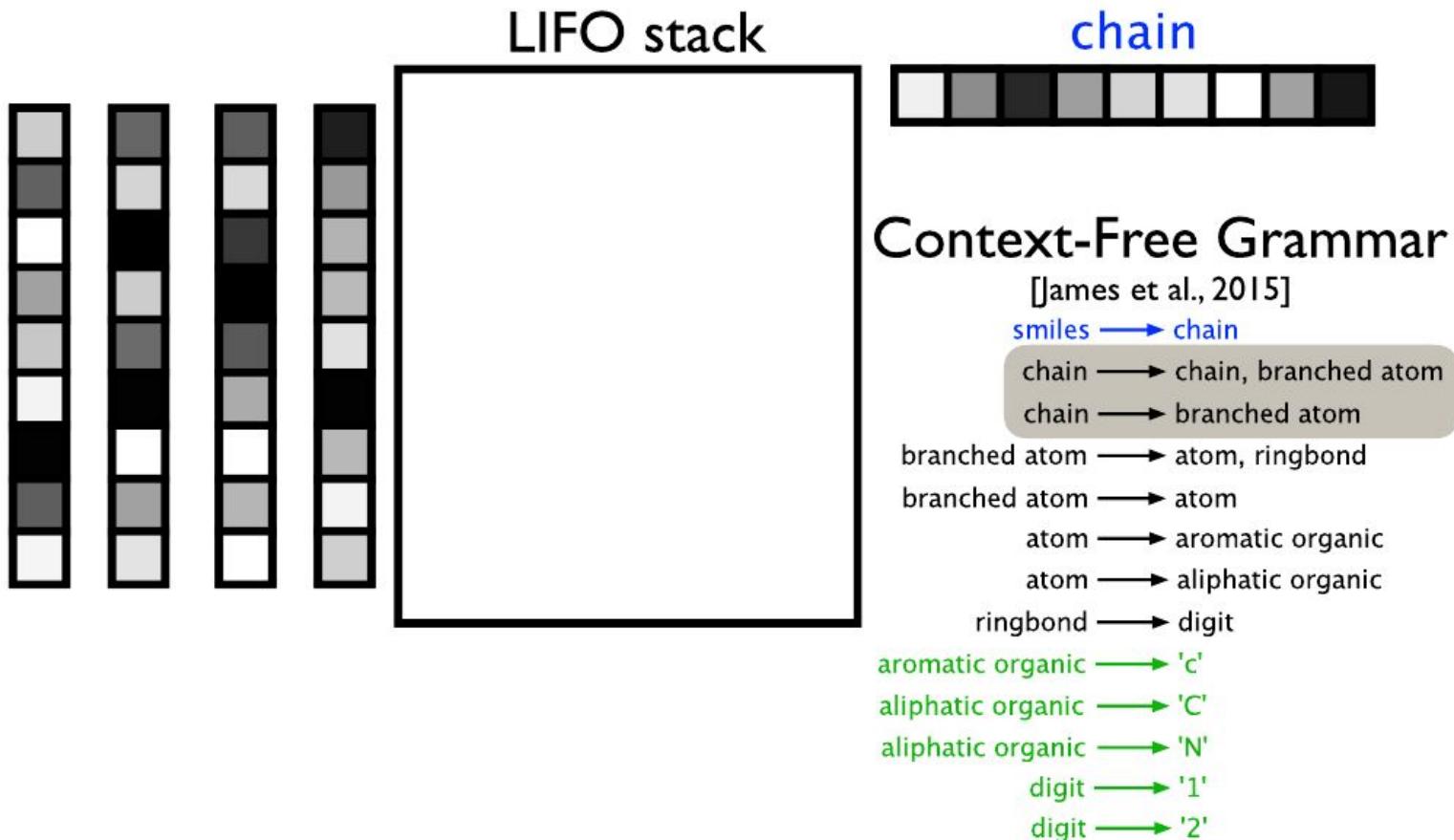
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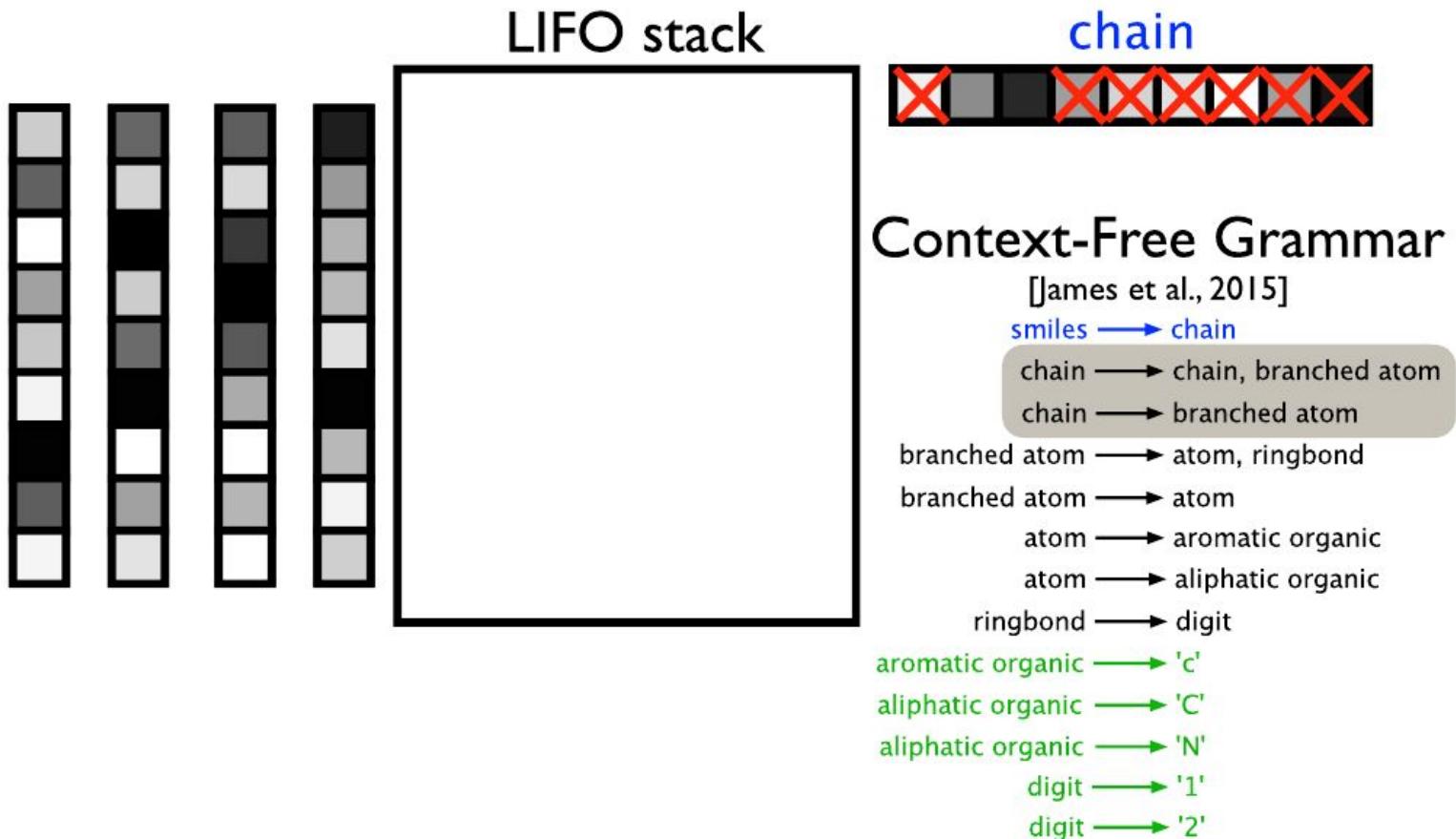
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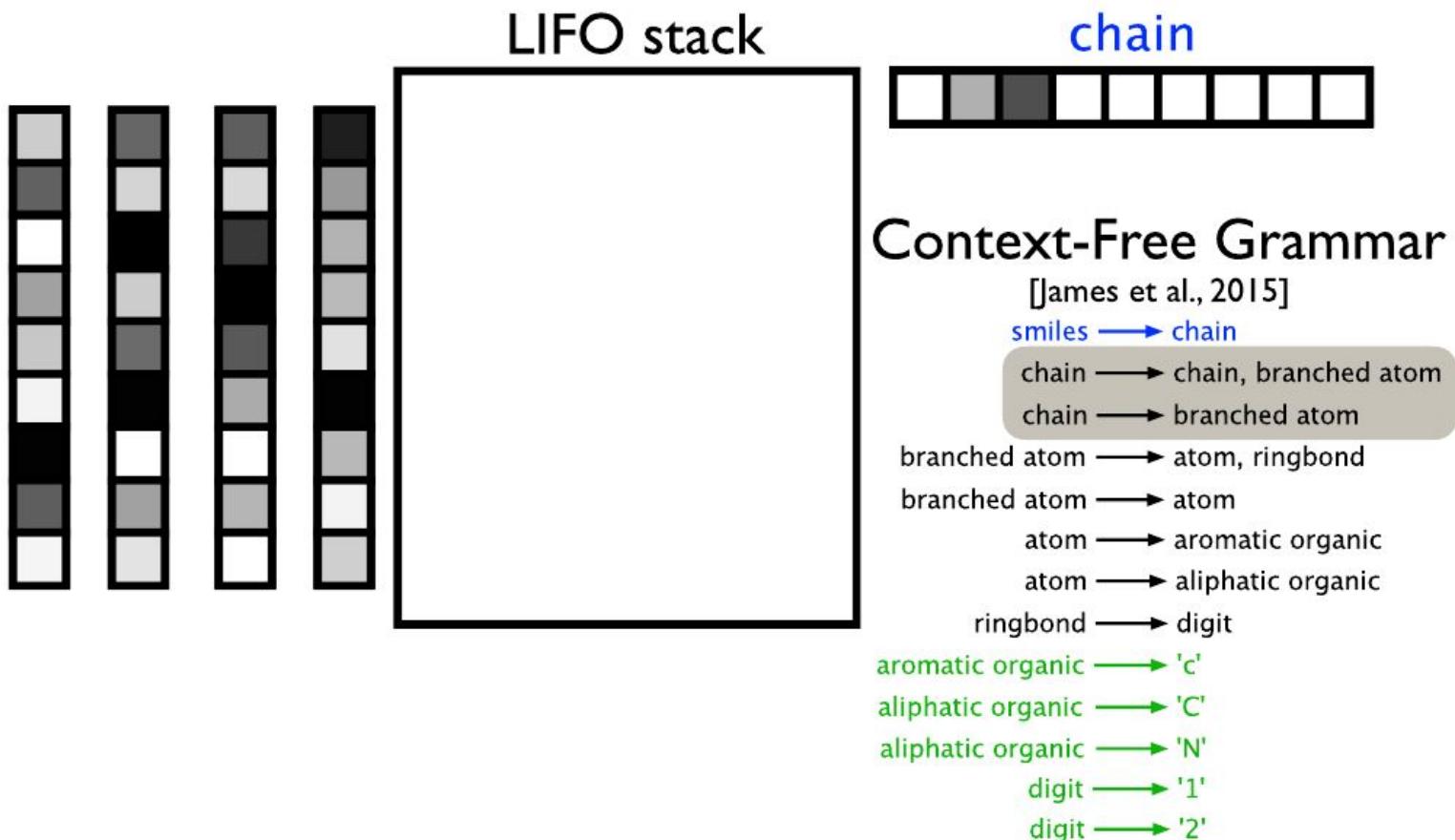
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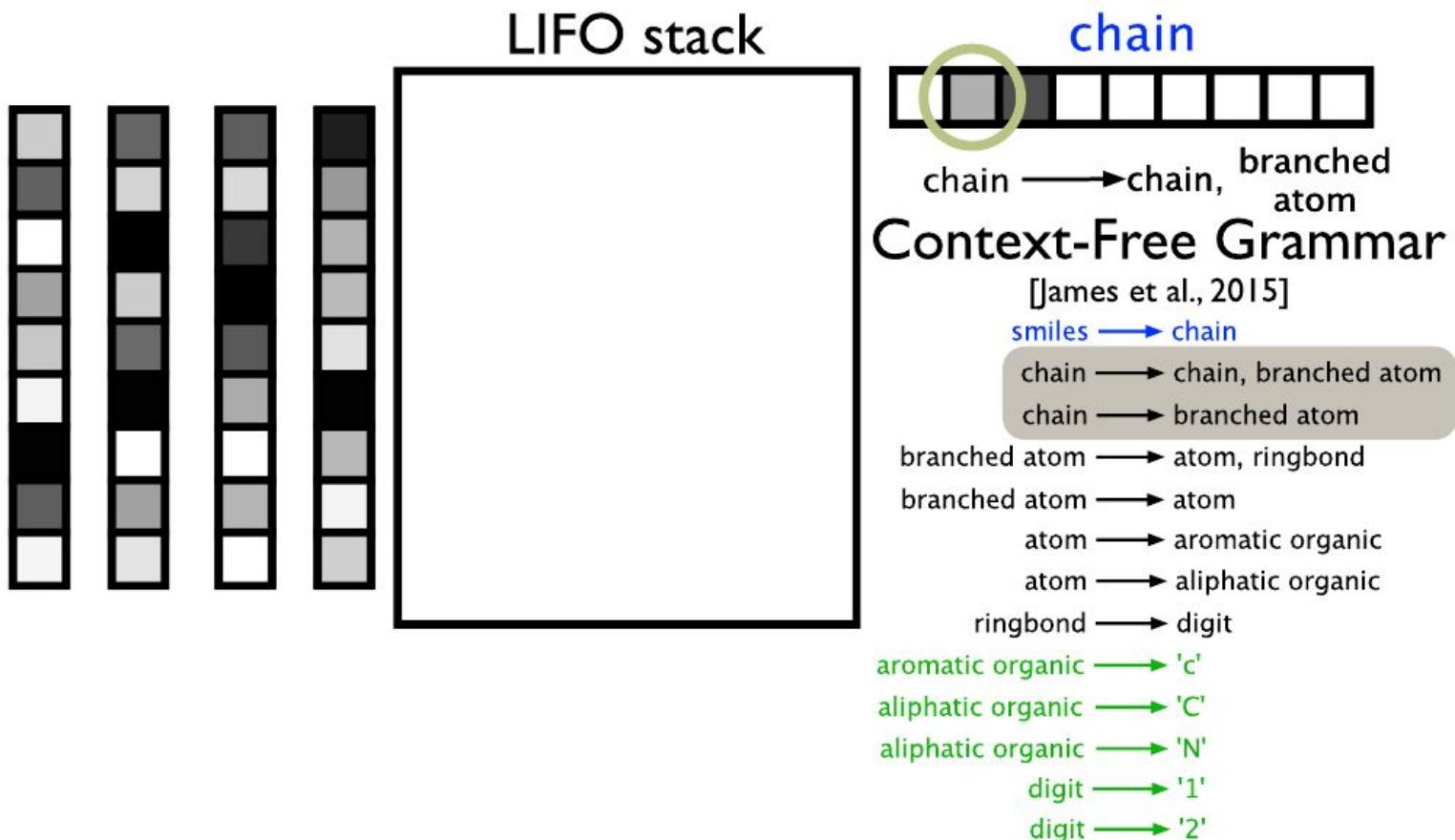
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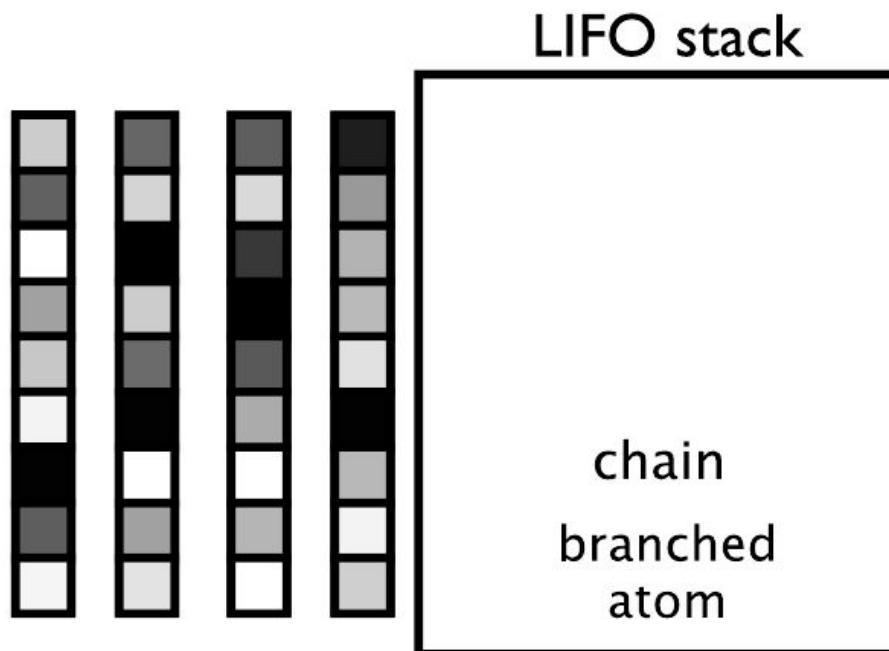
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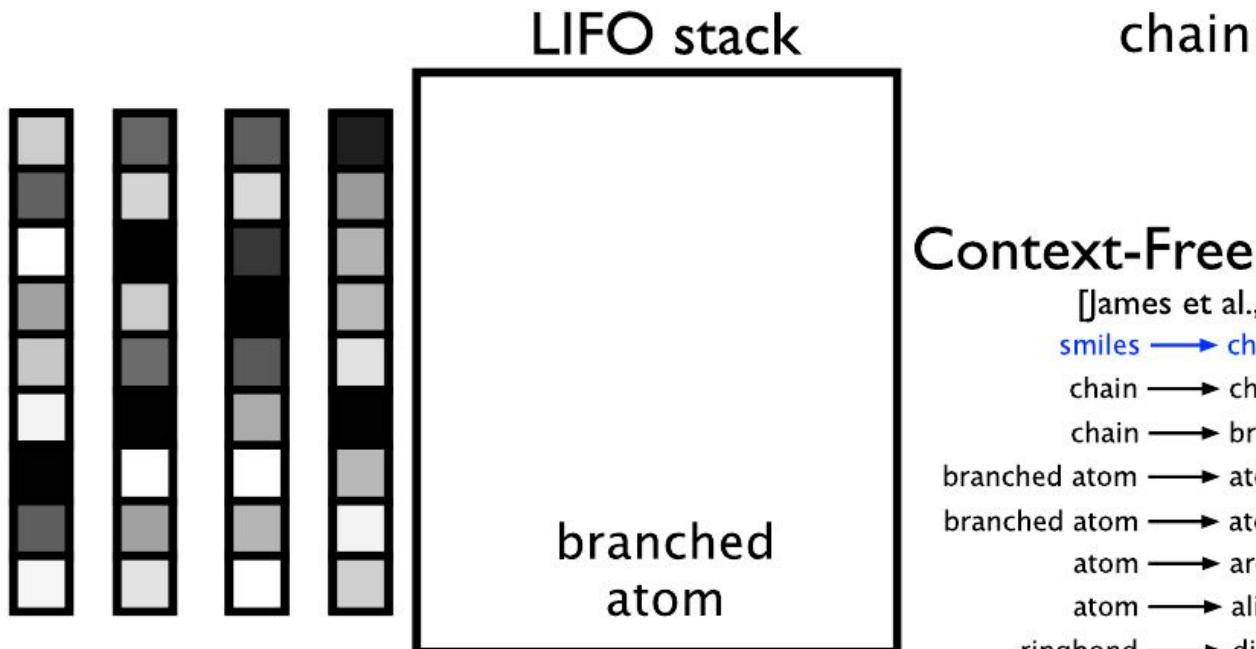
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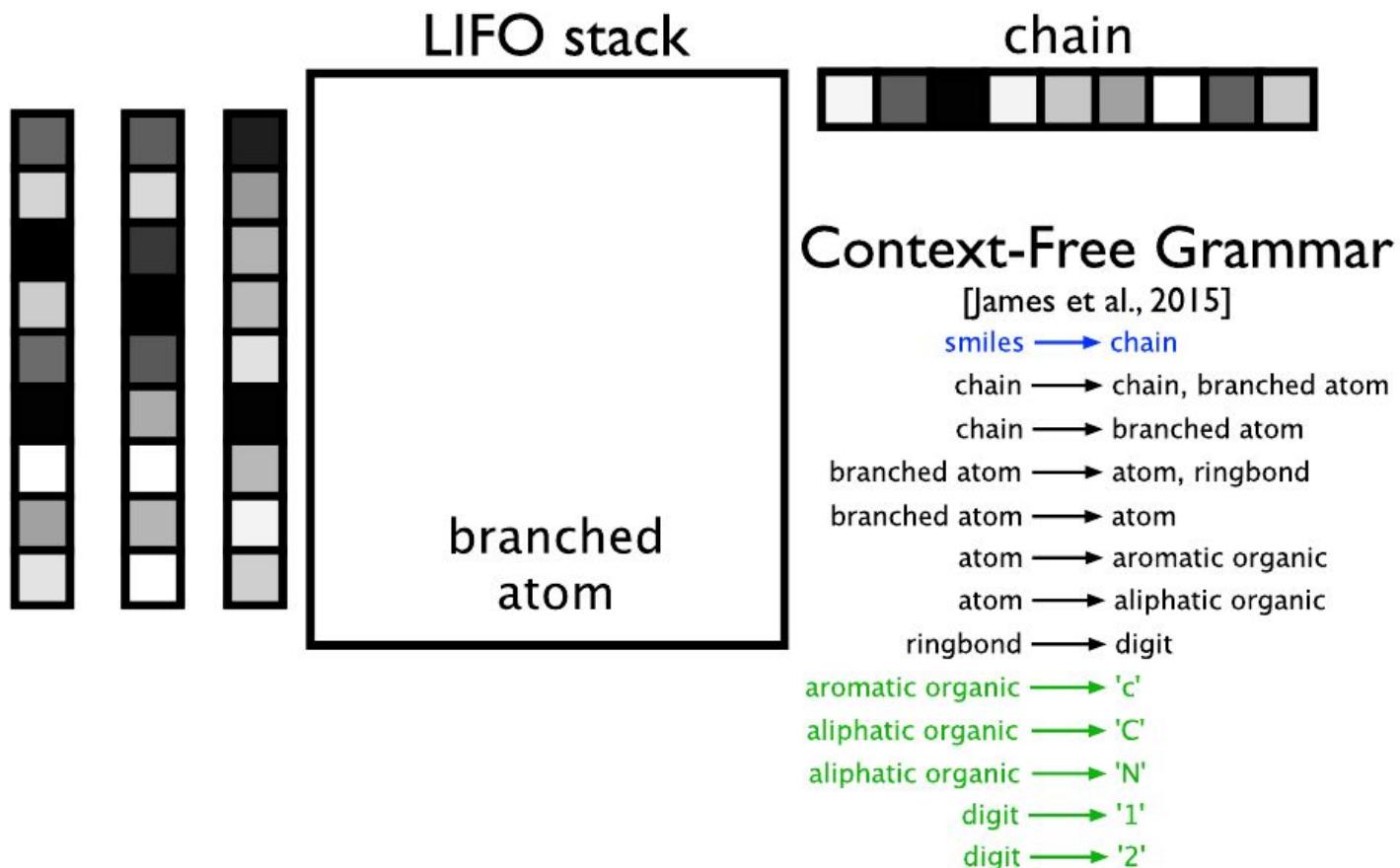
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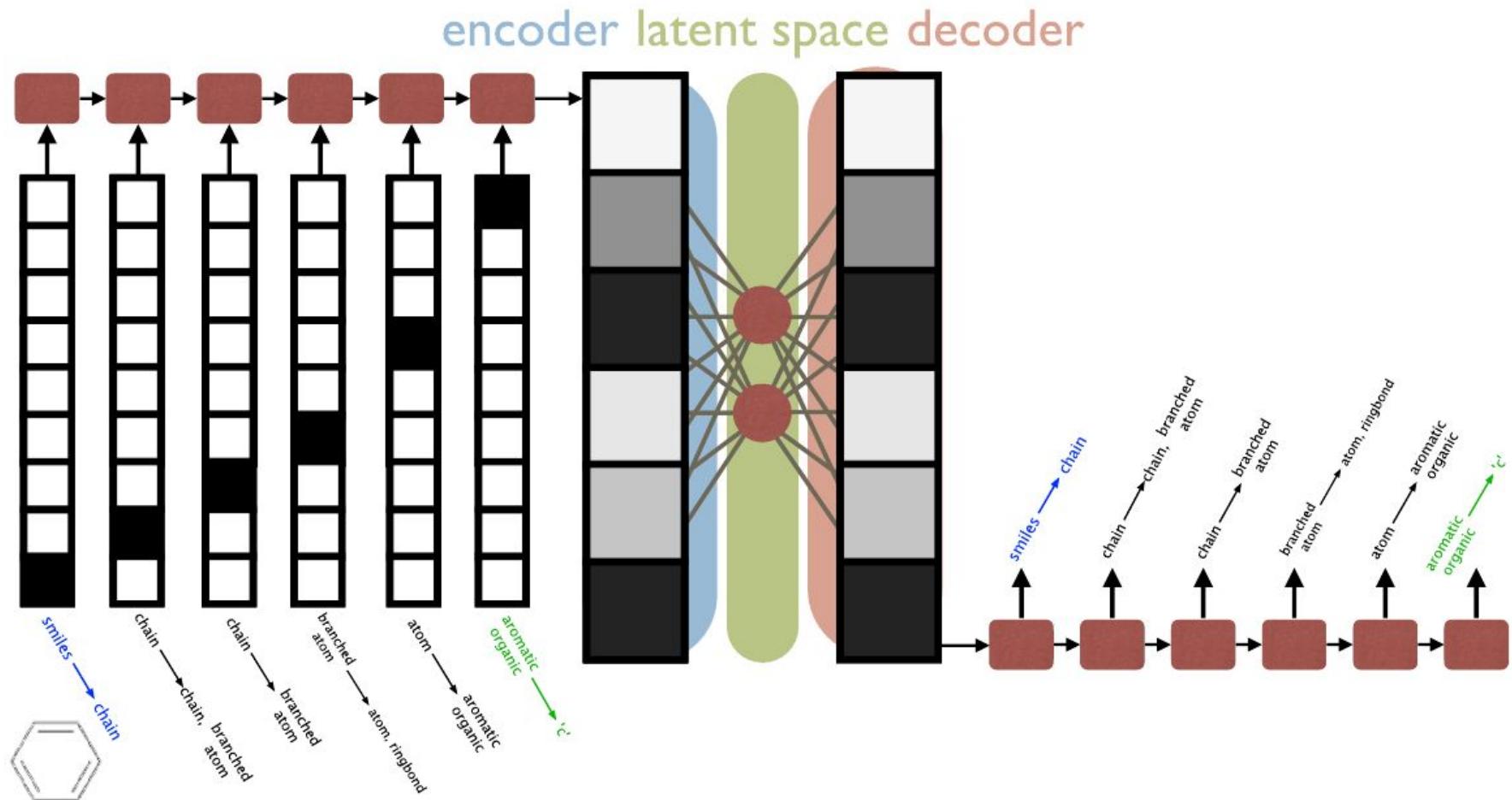
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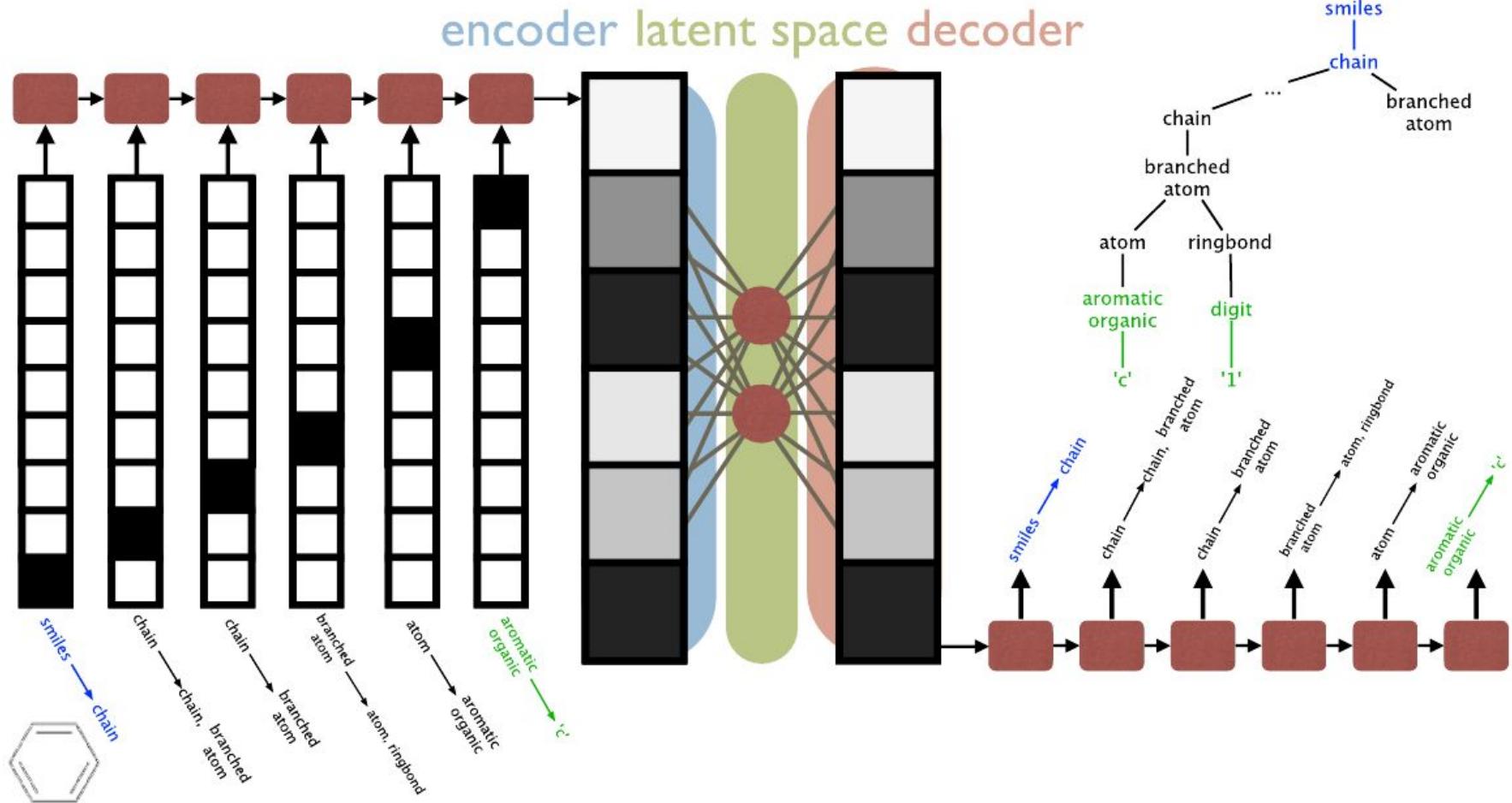
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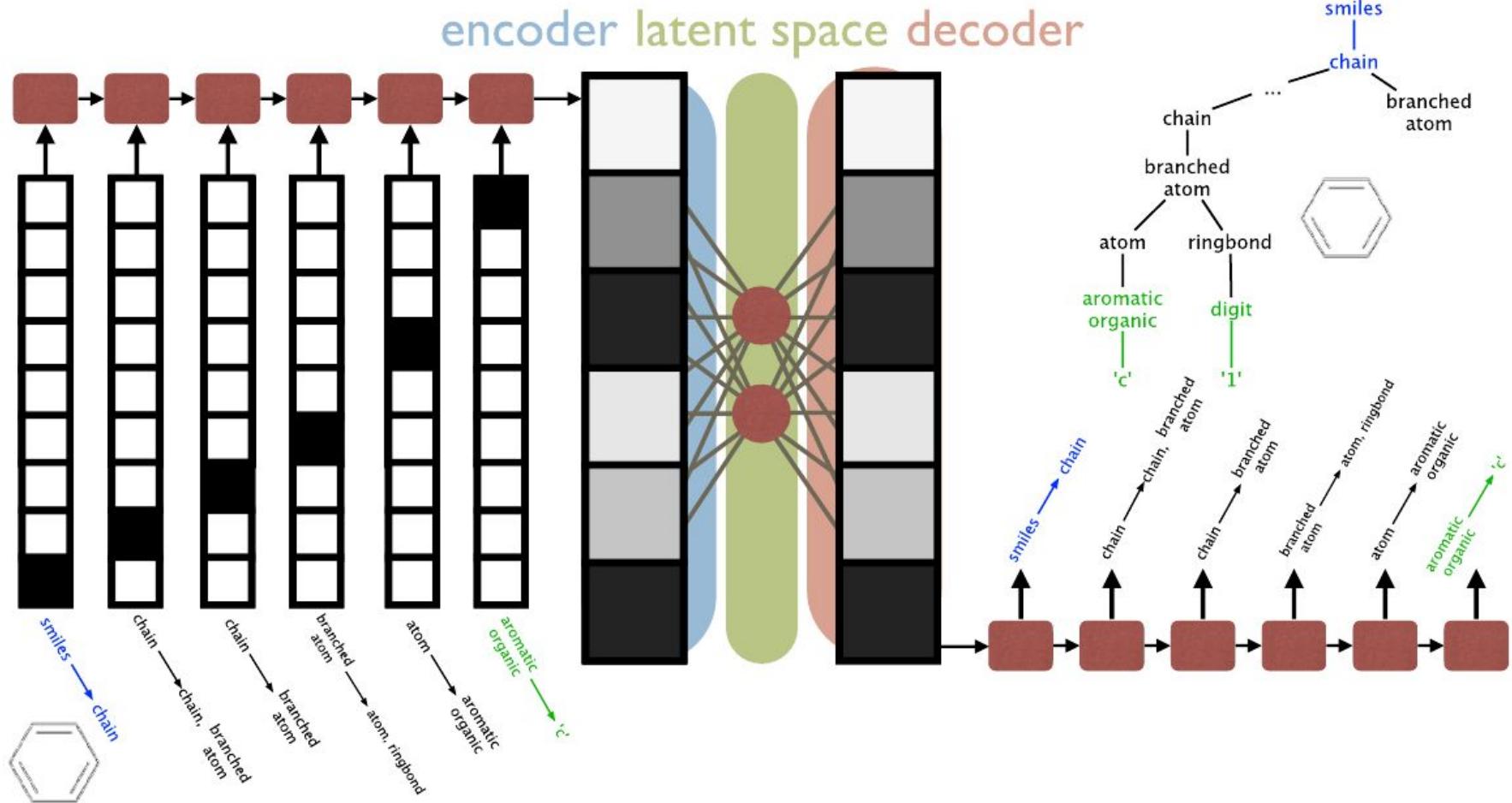
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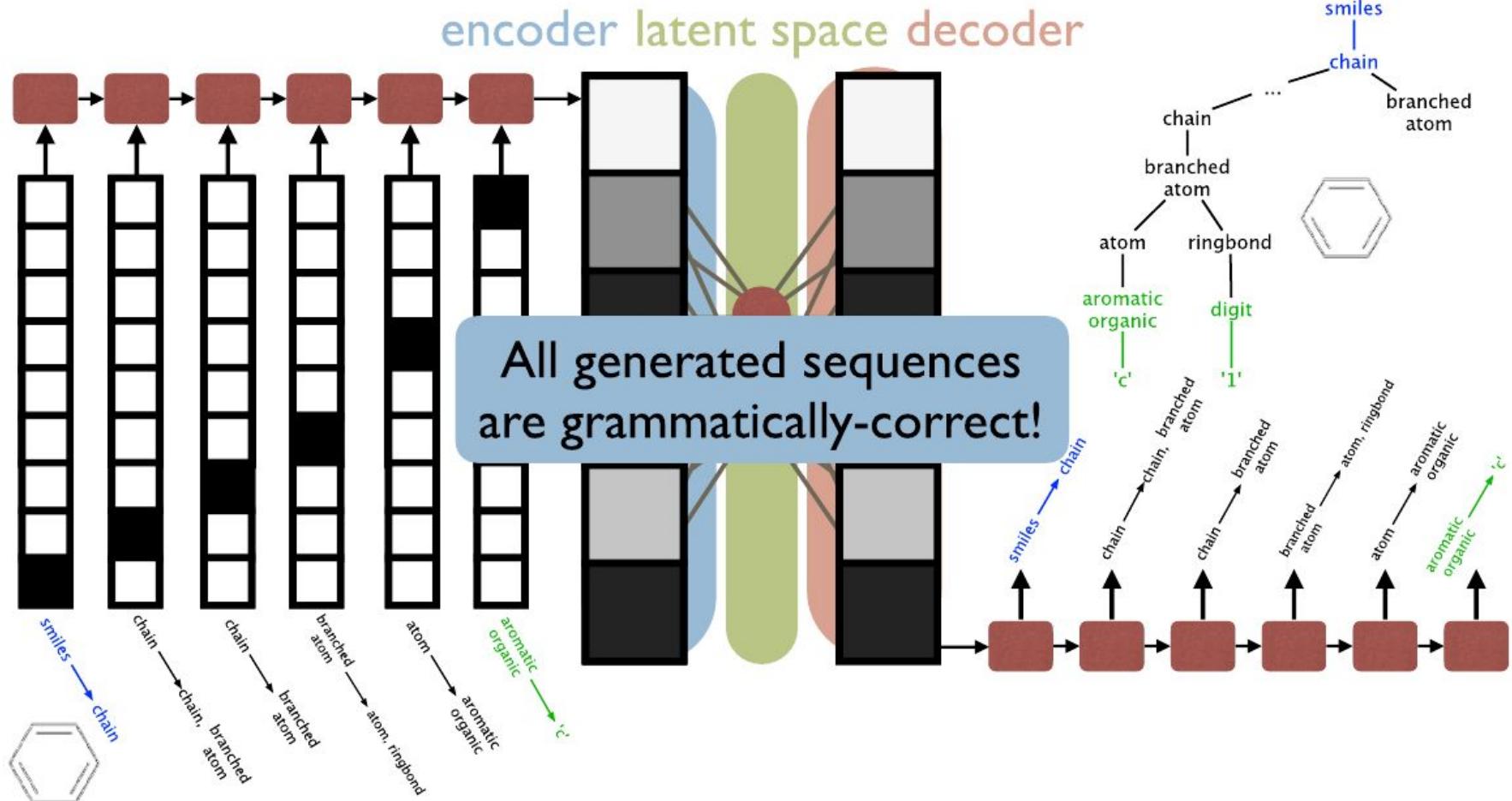
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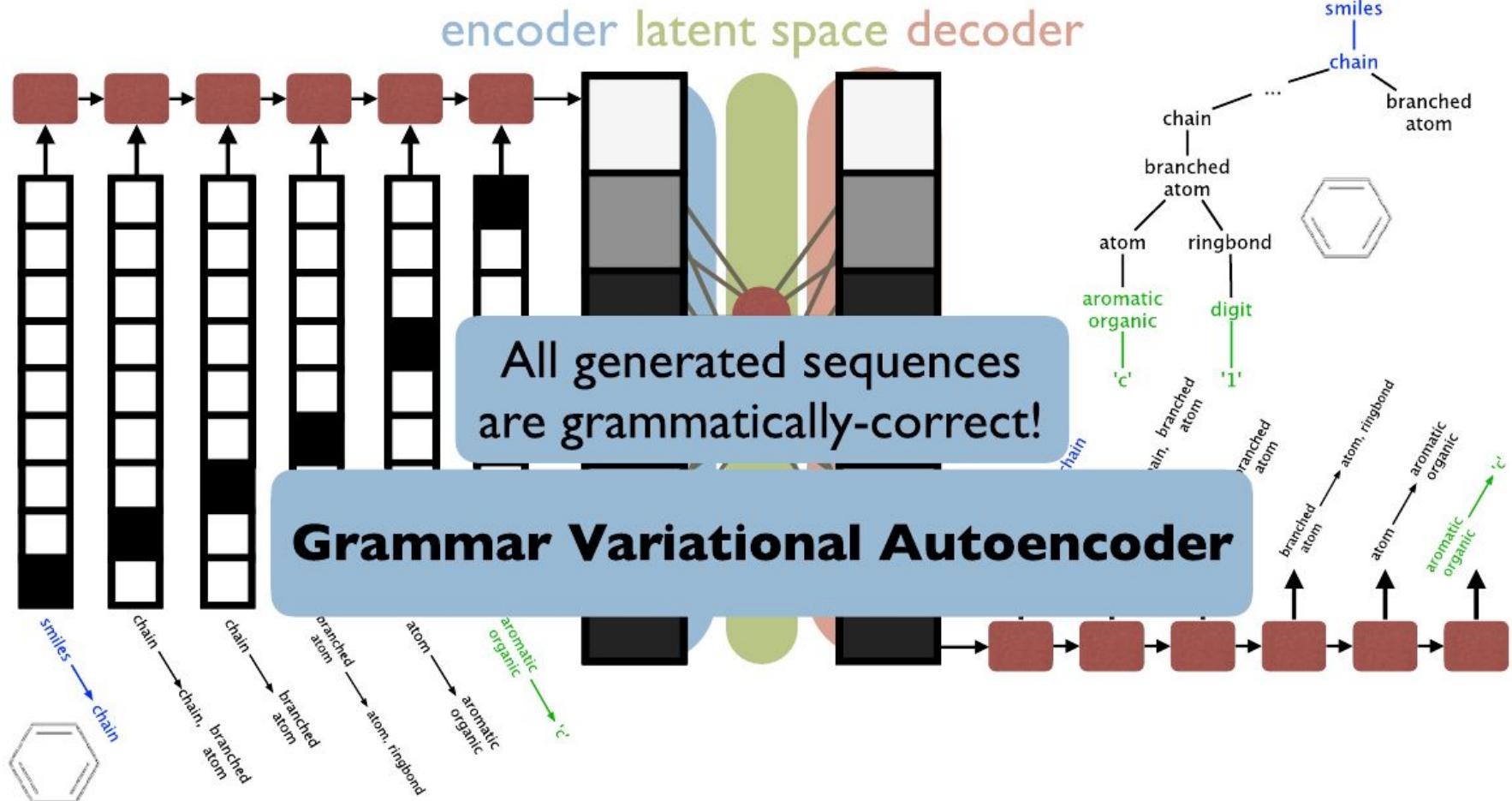
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[Kusner, Paige, Hernández-Lobato, 2017]



# DECODER

[Kusner, Paige, Hernández-Lobato, 2017]



# HOW WELL DOES THIS WORK?

## Reconstruction accuracy and sample validity results.

Method	% Reconstruct	% Prior Valid
GVAE	<b>53.7</b>	<b>7.2</b>
CVAE	44.6	0.70

## Results finding best molecule

Method	Frac. valid	Avg. score
GVAE	<b>0.31±0.07</b>	<b>-9.57 ±1.77</b>
CVAE	0.17±0.05	-54.66±2.66

## Test Log-likelihood (LL) and RMSE for predictions from latent space

Objective	Method	Molecules
LL	GVAE	<b>-1.739 ±0.004</b>
	CVAE	-1.812±0.004
RMSE	GVAE	<b>1.404 ±0.006</b>
	CVAE	1.504±0.006

# DRUG SEARCH

Trained on **ZINC**  
250K molecules  
maximum 120 chars

**GVAE**  
[Kusner, Paige,  
Hernández-Lobato, 2017]

drug-likeness:

1st



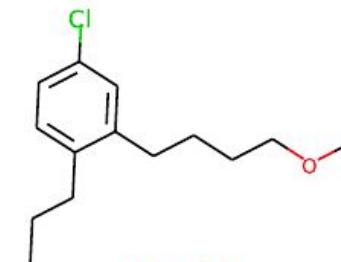
2.94

2nd



2.89

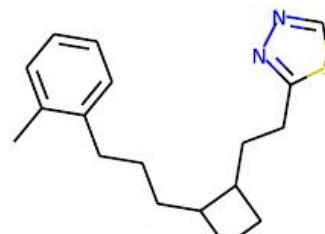
3rd



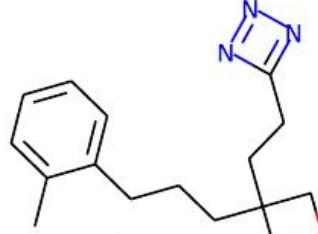
2.80

**CVAE**  
[Gómez-Bombarelli et al., 2016]

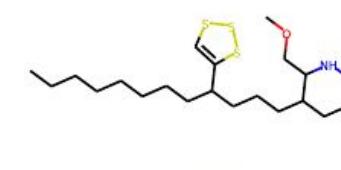
drug-likeness:



1.98



1.42



1.19

# Take home messages

## Generative models of molecules...

- ① **Data-driven approach** to molecule generation, no expertise needed.
- ② Sampled molecules are **realistic**, unlike those generated with rules.
- ③ Create a **continuous latent space** which is useful for optimization.

## Grammar variational autoencoder...

- ① Produces a **larger fraction of valid molecules** when decoding.
- ② Produces **better predictions of molecule properties** from latent space.
- ③ **Molecule optimization** results are **improved**.

# A lot of work going on this area...

## Adding semantic constraints into GVAE:

- Dai, Tian, Dai, Skiena, and Song, 2018.

## Generative models of graphs:

- Li, Vinyals, Dyer, Pascanu and Battaglia, 2018.
- Liu, Allamanis, Brockschmidt and Gaunt, 2018.
- Jin, Barzilay and Jaakkola, 2018.

## Semi-supervised generative models:

- Kang and Cho, 2018.

## Using GANs instead of VAEs:

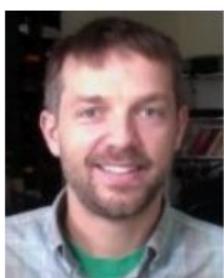
- Guimaraes, Sanchez-Lengeling, Outeiral, Farias and Aspuru-Guzik, 2017.
- De Cao and Kipf, 2018.

and many more!

# Collaborators



R. P. Adams J. Aguilera-Ipaguirre A. Aspuru-Guzik D. Duvenaud R. Gomez-Bonbardelli



T. Hirzel

M. Kusner

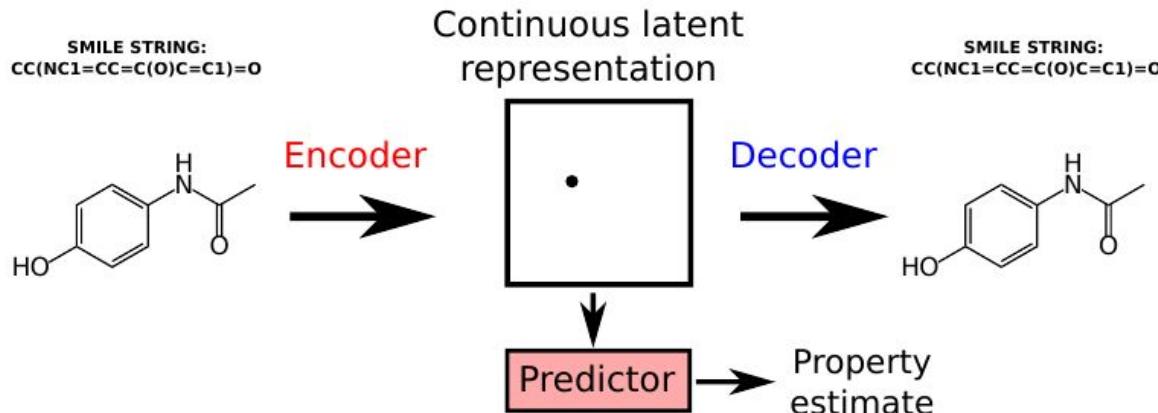
B. Paige

B. Sánchez-Lengeling

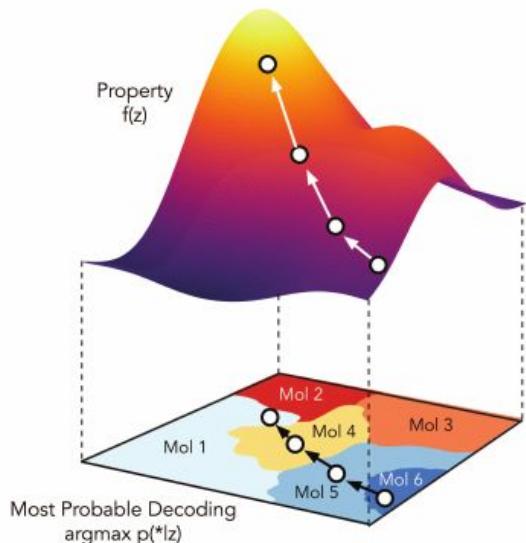
D. Sheberla

J. Wey

# Latent space optimization (LSO)



**Data Efficient optimization** possible in the latent space of a **deep generative model**.



We avoid directly working with structured high-dimensional input spaces.

Off-the-shelf data efficient optimization methods can be used in latent space.

The generated points will exhibit similar patterns to those found in training set.

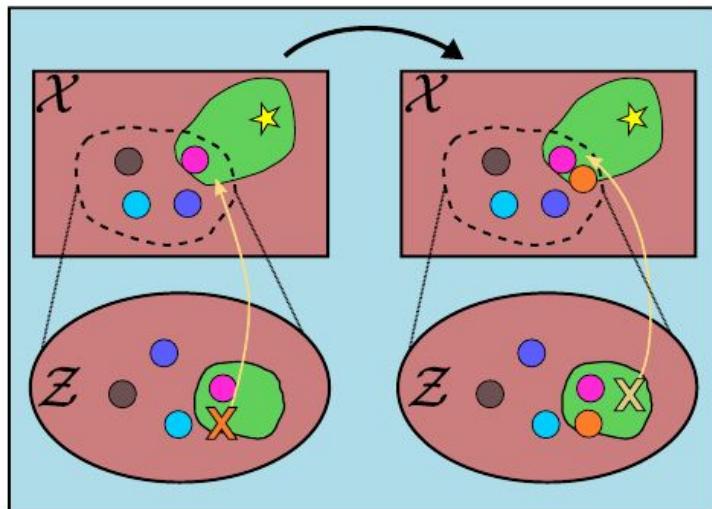
However, several **limitations** still exist.

# Weighted Retraining

Austin Tripp\*, Erik Daxberger\* and José Miguel Hernández-Lobato,  
Sample-Efficient Optimization in the Latent Space of Deep Generative Models  
via Weighted Retraining,  
In NeurIPS 2020. (\* equal contributors).

# Limitations of current LSO methods

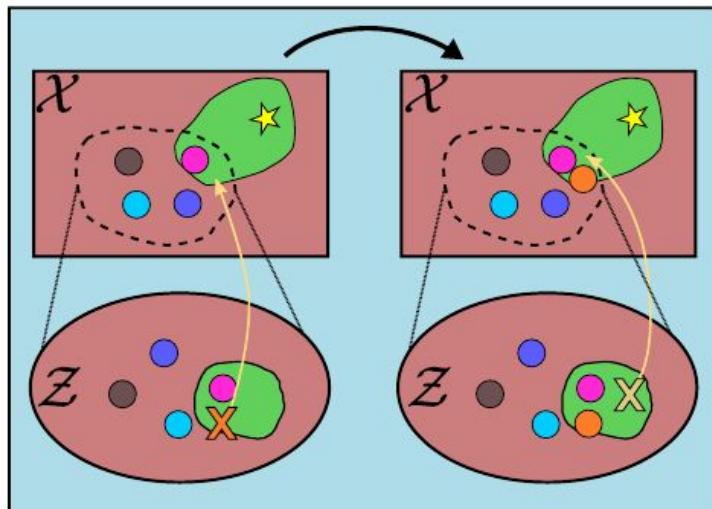
- ① The generative model **is not retrained** after collecting new data.  
LSO cannot find an optimum lying far from the training data.
- ② Even if the model is retrained, **the new data has a diminishing effect**.



Standard Latent Space Optimization

# Limitations of current LSO methods

- ① The generative model **is not retrained** after collecting new data.  
LSO cannot find an optimum lying far from the training data.
- ② Even if the model is retrained, **the new data has a diminishing effect**.



Standard Latent Space Optimization

We address

- ① by **retraining** the generative model  
and
- ② by **weighting** the data.

# Weighted retraining

- We **retrain** the generative model after collecting new data (e.g. 50 points).
- We fit the model by optimizing the **weighted** objective  $\sum_{n=1}^N w_n \mathcal{L}(x_n)$ ,

where

$$w_n \propto \frac{1}{kN + \text{rank}(x_n) - 1},$$

$k$  controls the weighting:

$k = \infty$  is uniform weighting,  $k = 0$  places all weight on single point with highest value.

# Weighted retraining

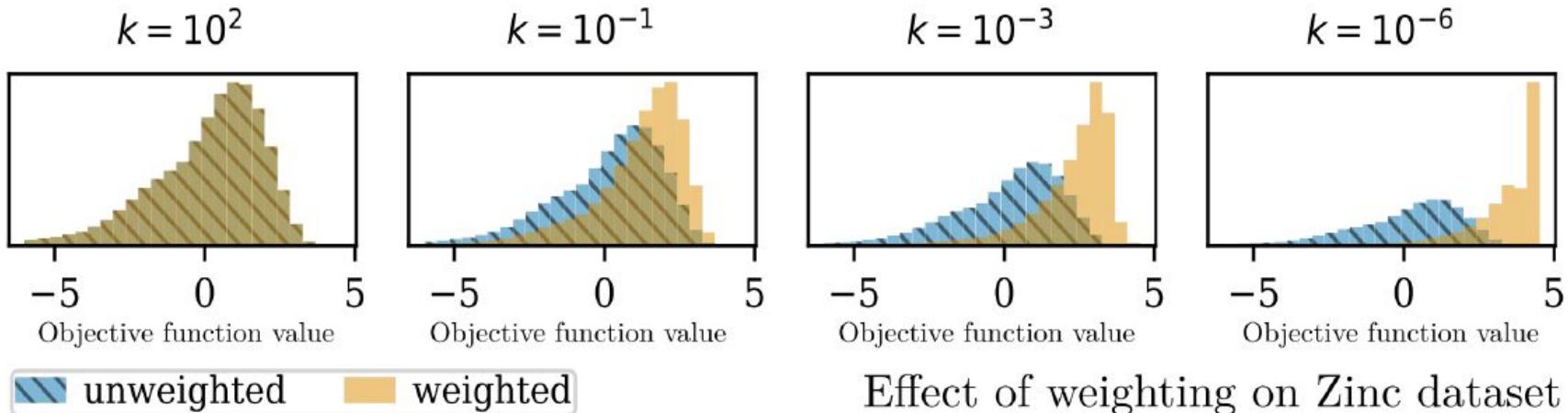
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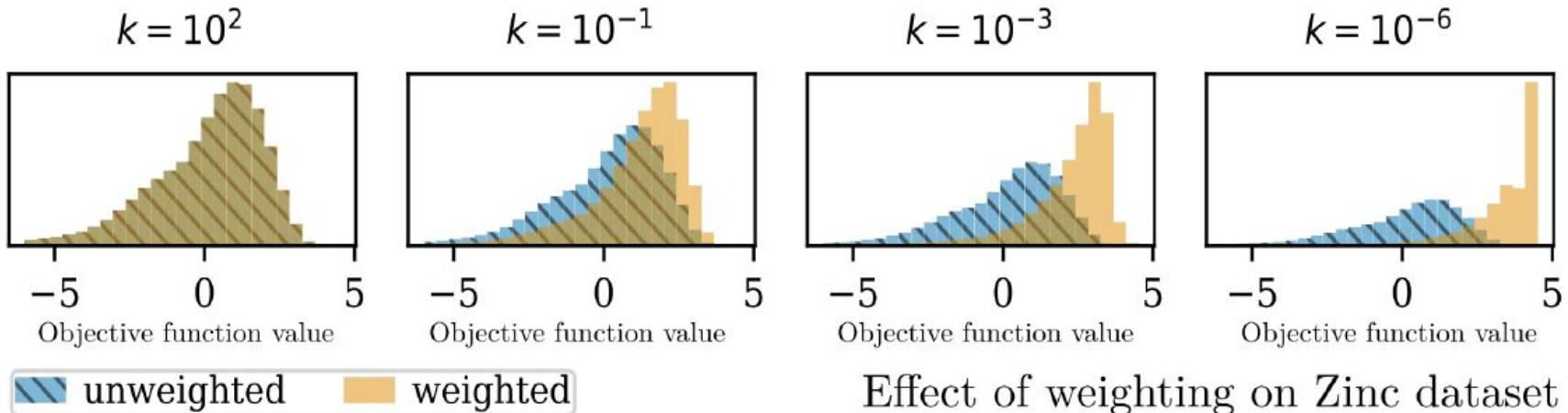
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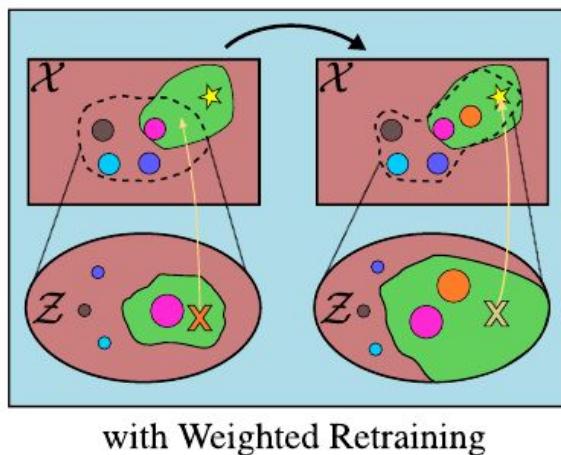
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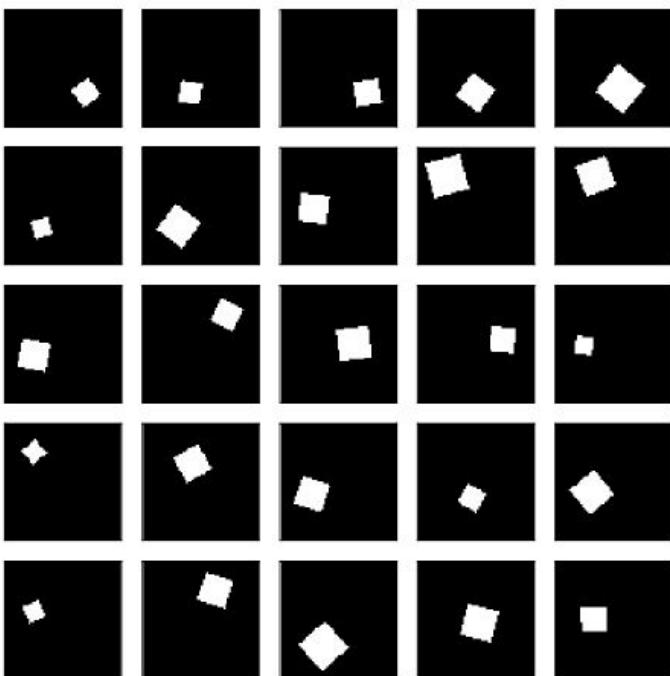
With our approach, a larger fraction of latent space maps into regions of input space with high objective values.

# 2D shape area maximization

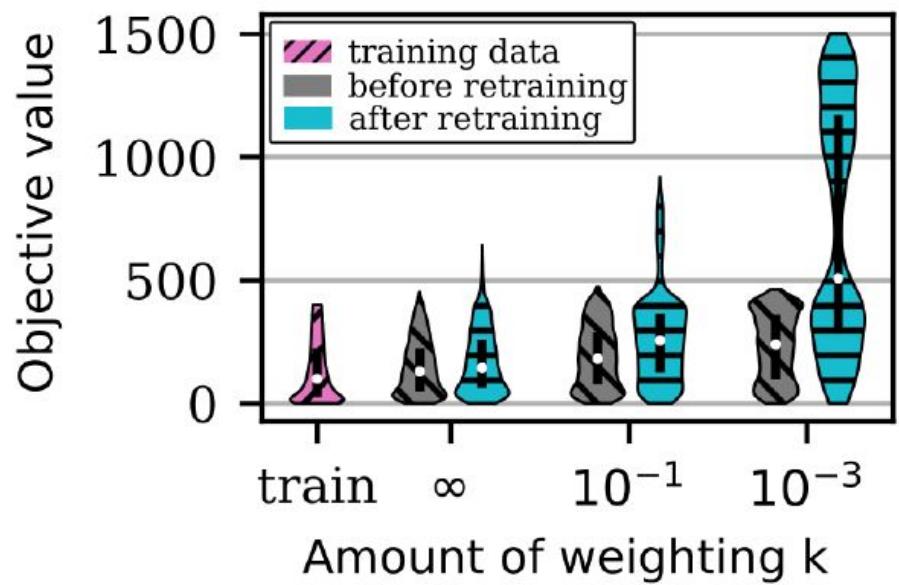
We train a conv-VAE on the dSprites dataset with 245,760 **square shapes**.

Goal: generate shape with **max. area**. Exhaustive search in 5D latent space.

**We retrain after each 50 iterations.**



Objective values for data sampled from the conv-VAE after 500 function evaluations.

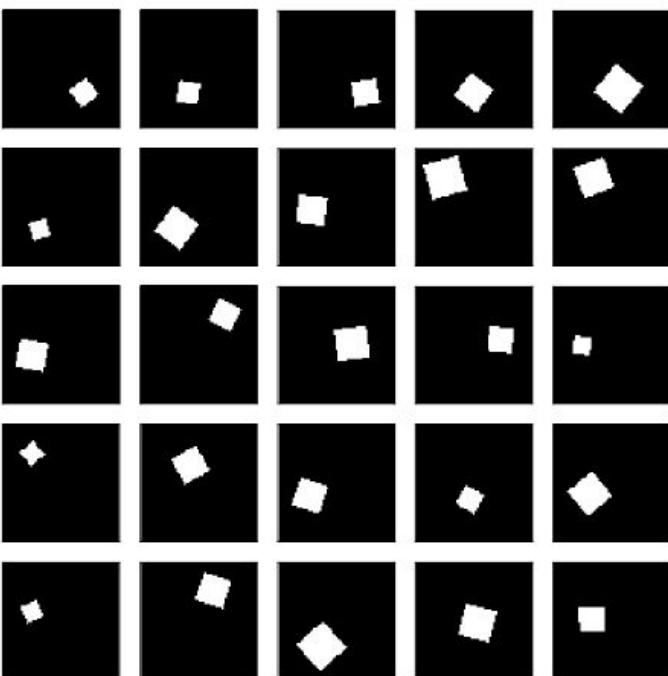


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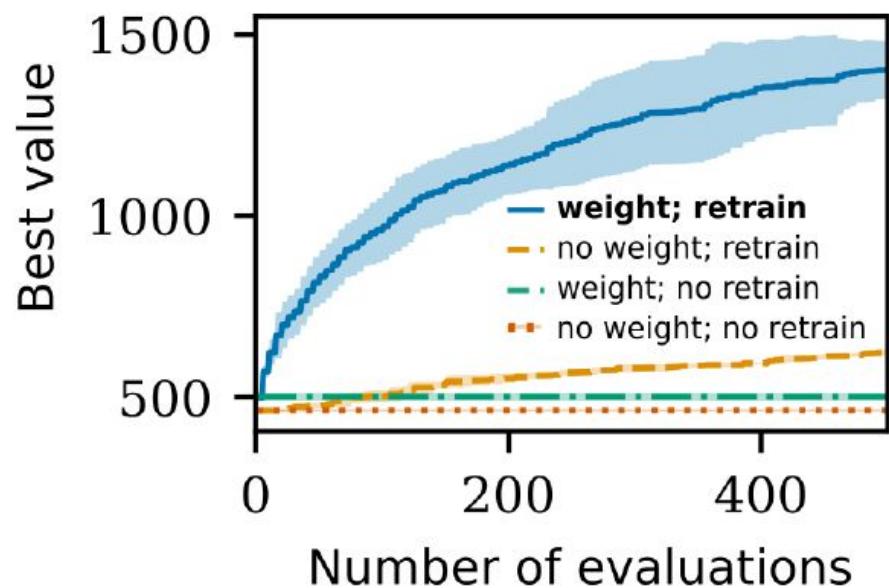
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Best objective value of the shapes generated during the optimization process,  $k = 10^{-3}$ .

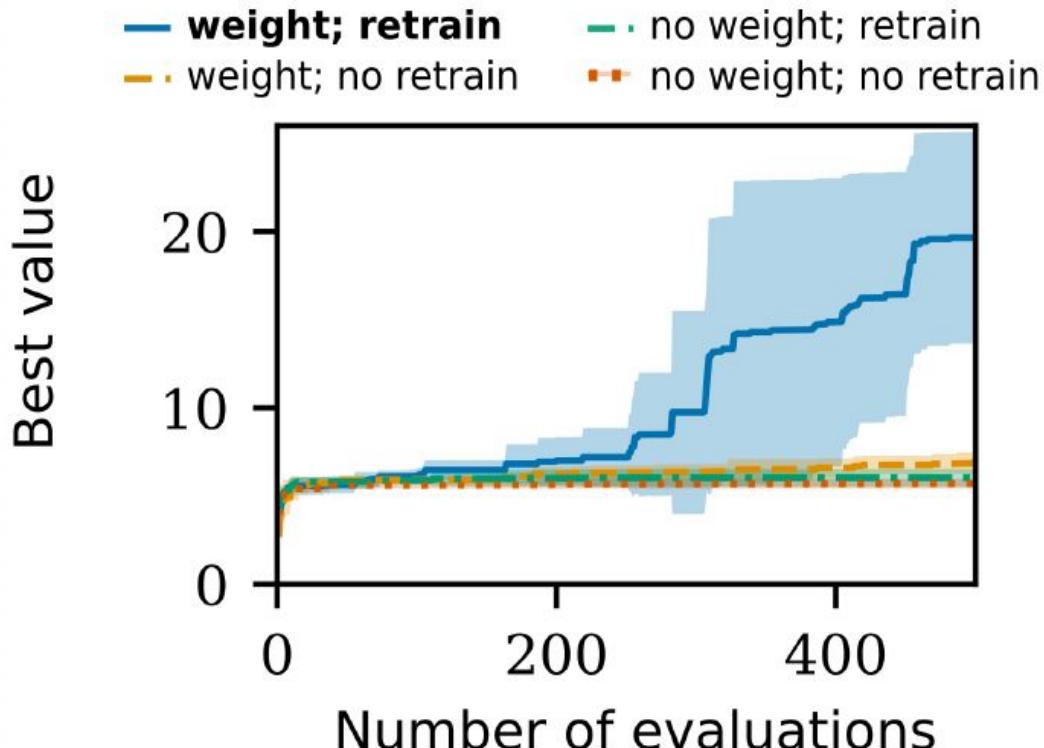


# Chemical design task

Optimize the water-octanol partition coefficient ( $\log P$ ).

Initial data: 250,000 molecules from ZINC database.

We use  $k = 10^{-3}$  and a **junction tree** VAE with **sparse GPs**.



# Take home messages

**Weighted retraining** is an approach for latent space optimization that

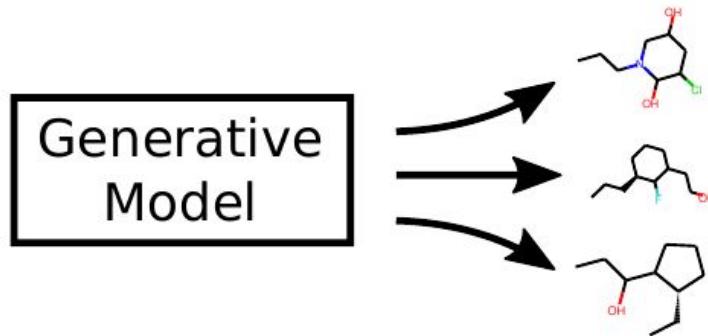
- ① results in **latent spaces** that are highly **useful for optimization**.
- ② is conceptually **simple and easy** to implement.
- ③ significantly improves **data efficiency and final performance**.

# Deep Generative Models of Molecules via Chemical Reactions

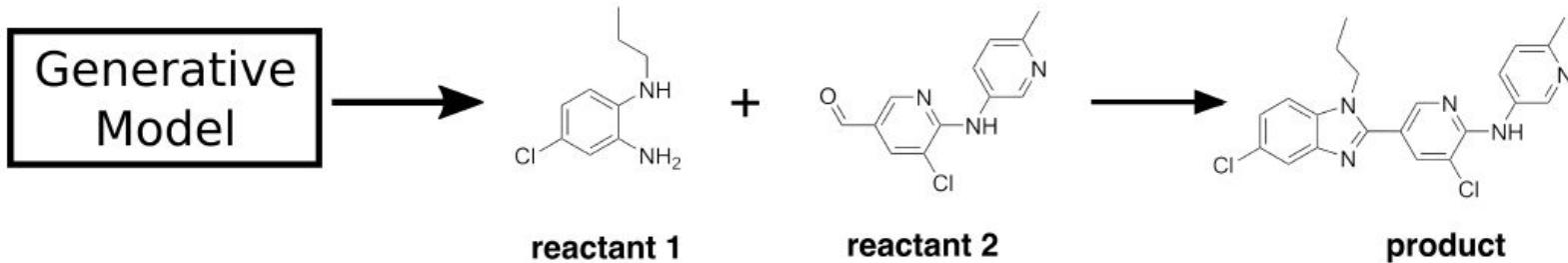
John Bradshaw, Brooks Paige, Matt J. Kusner, Marwin Segler and  
José Miguel Hernández-Lobato,  
Barking up the right tree: an approach to search over molecule synthesis DAGs,  
In NeurIPS 2020.

# Limitations of generative models of molecules

Most models will not tell you how to **synthesize** the generated molecules:



We want models that generate molecules via **chemical reactions**, like humans!



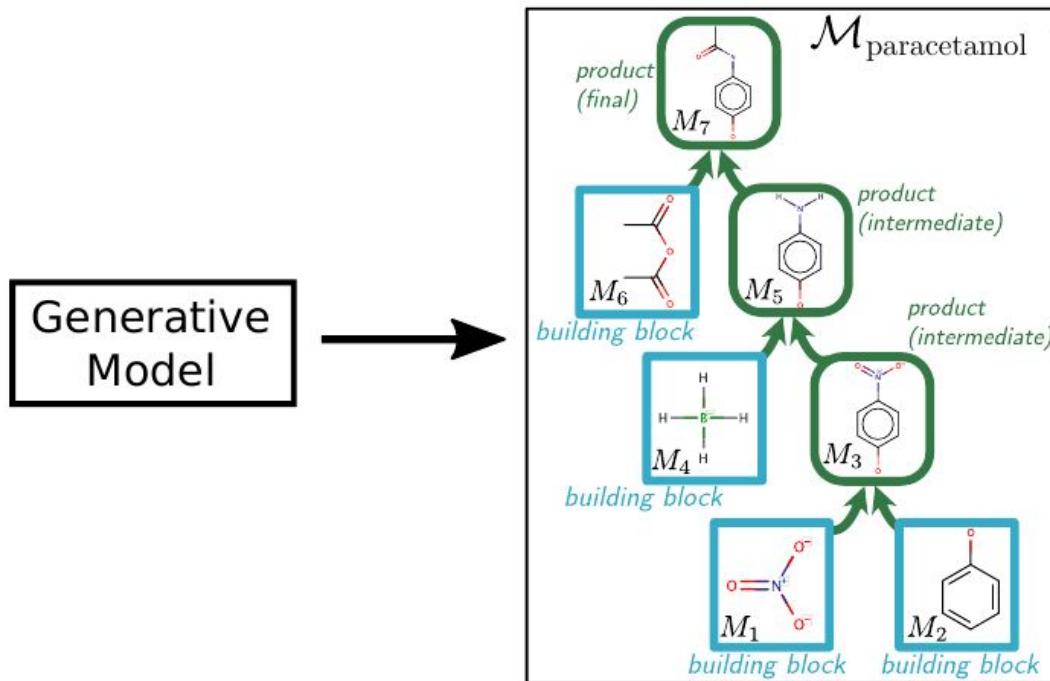
Advantages:

- Generated molecules more likely to be synthesizable in practice.
- Synthesis information is available right away.
- Generated molecules exhibit more realistic properties (e.g. improved stability).

# Proposed approach

A multi-step reaction can be encoded as a **directed acyclic graph (DAG)**.

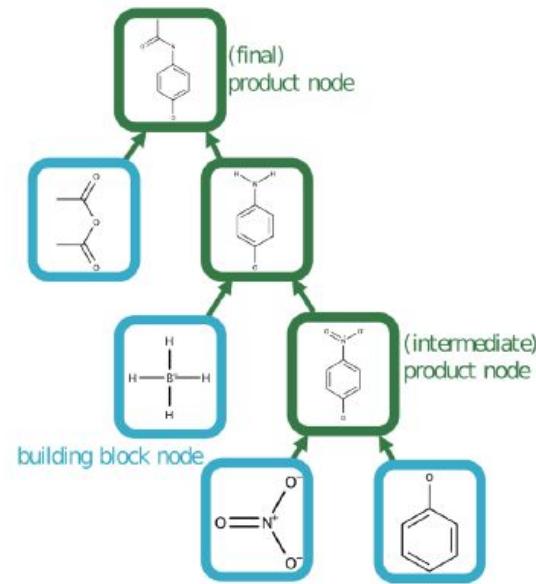
We generate the whole molecule synthesis DAG:



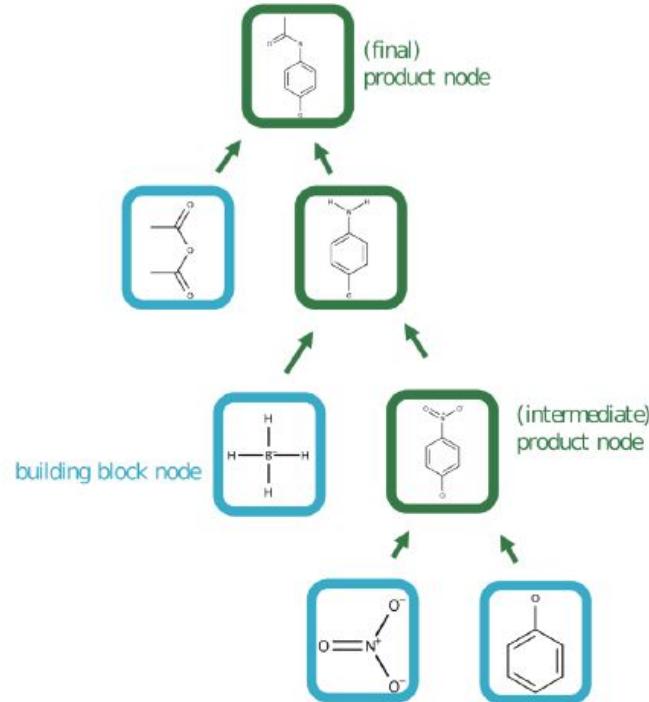
We call our model **DoG** since it generates DAGs Of (molecular) Graphs (DoGs).

We use as training data 72,008 synthesis DAGs obtained from the **USPTO dataset**.

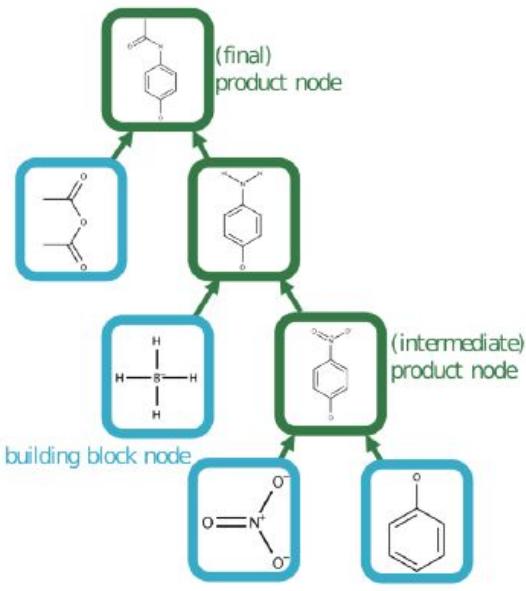
# Serializing molecule synthesis DAGs



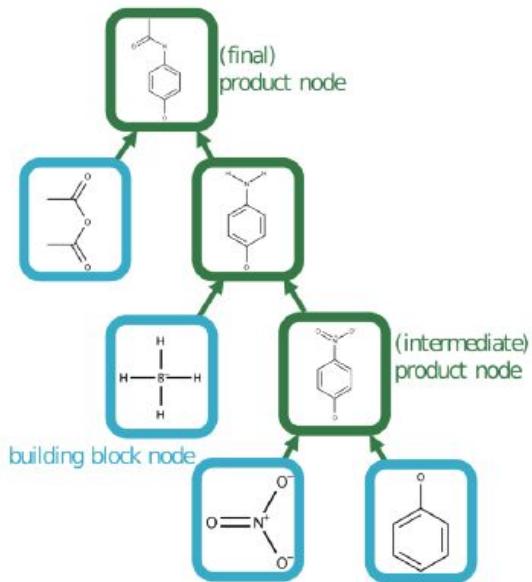
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# Serializing molecule synthesis DAGs



# Serializing molecule synthesis DAGs



Target DAG

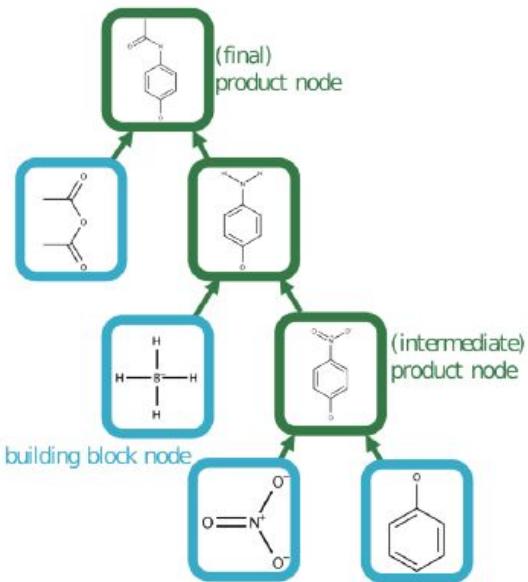


DAG so far



Actions

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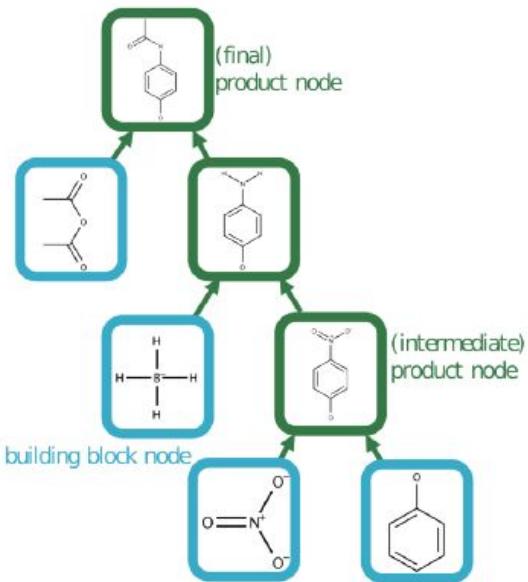


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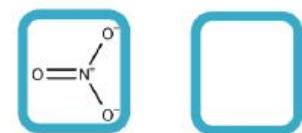


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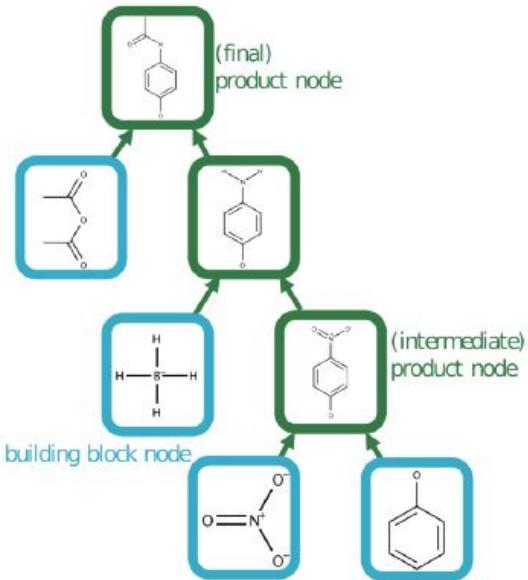


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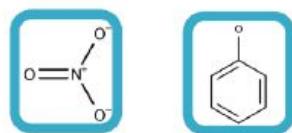


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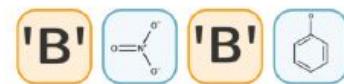
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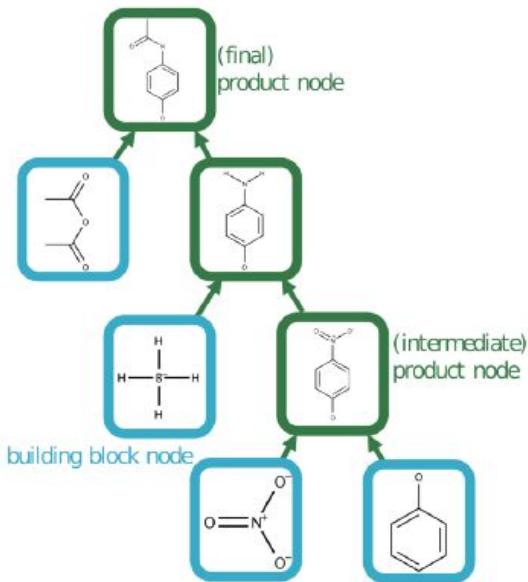


DAG so far

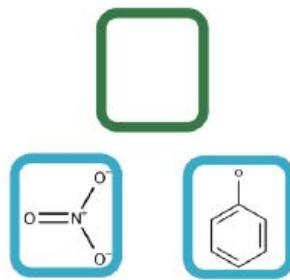


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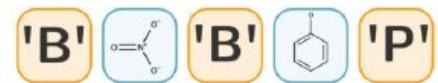
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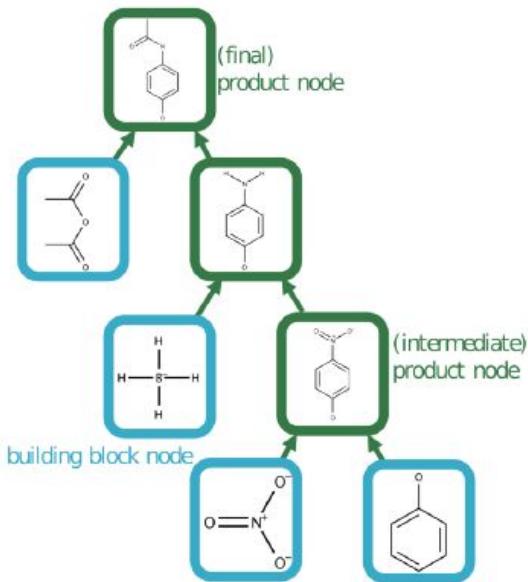


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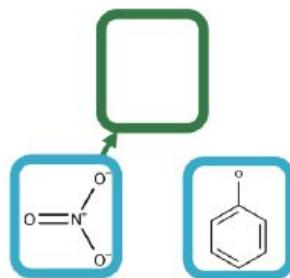


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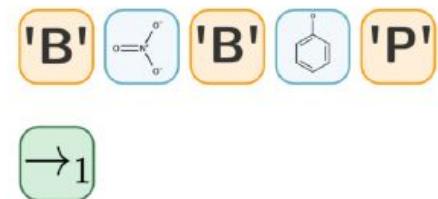
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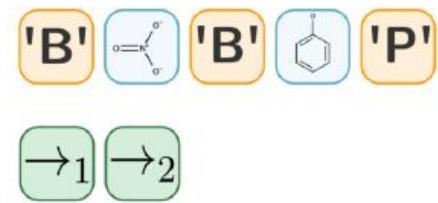
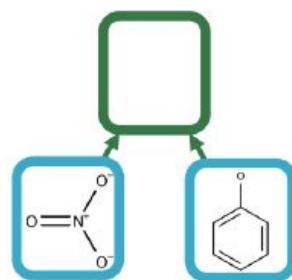
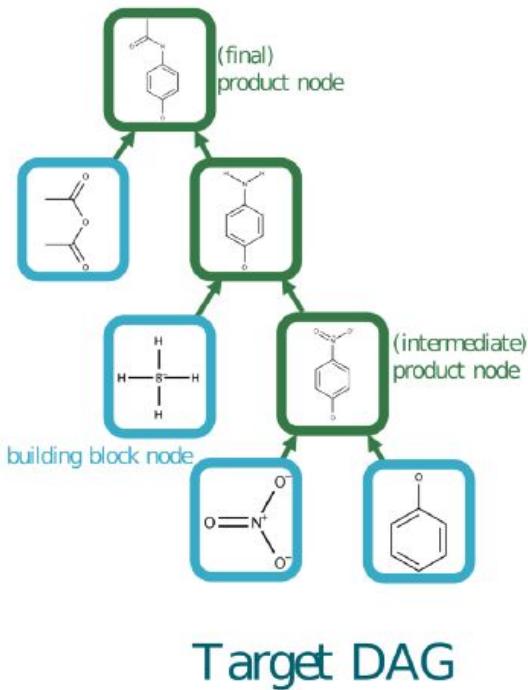


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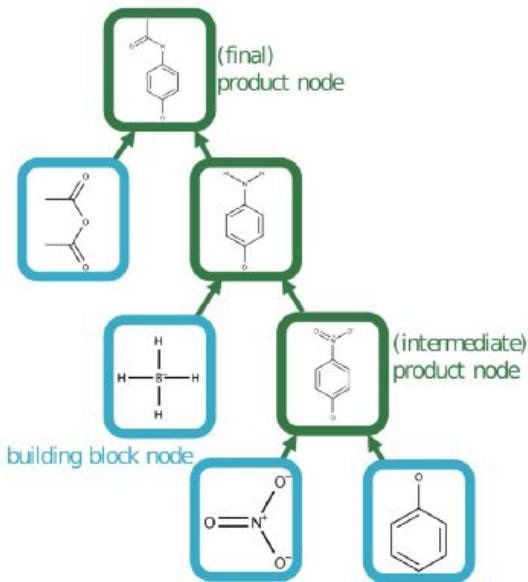


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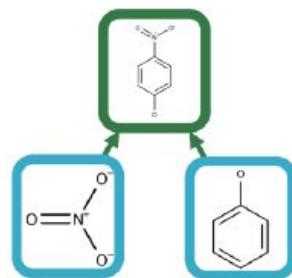
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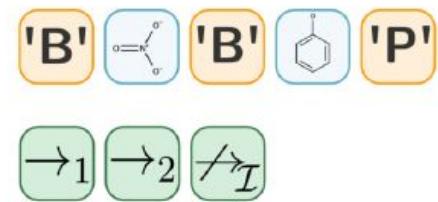
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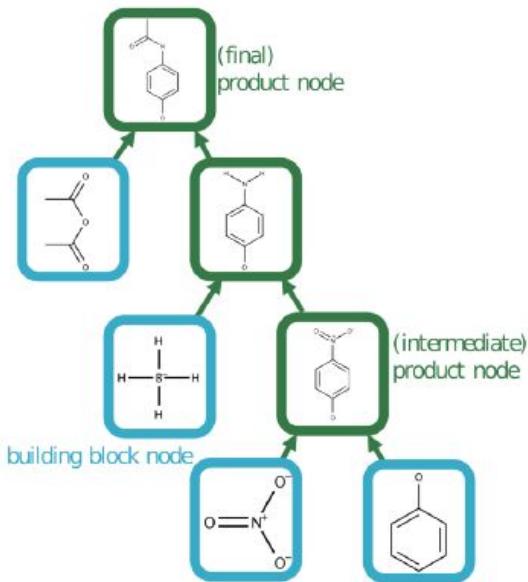


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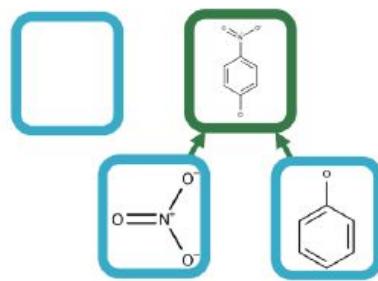


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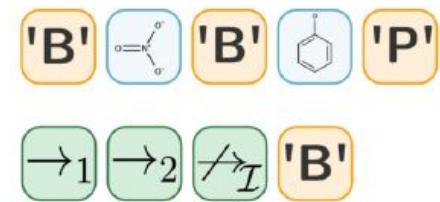
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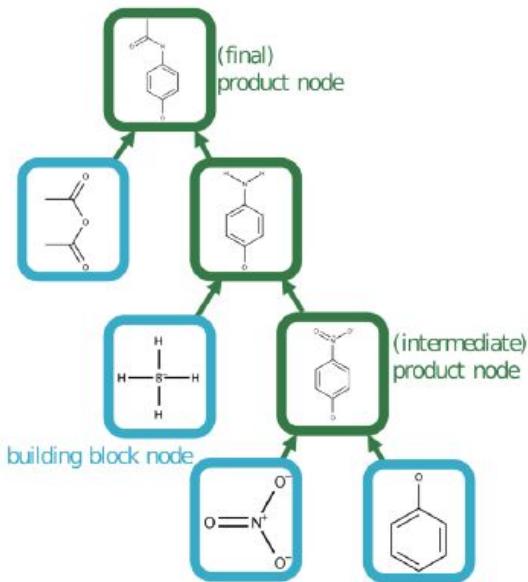


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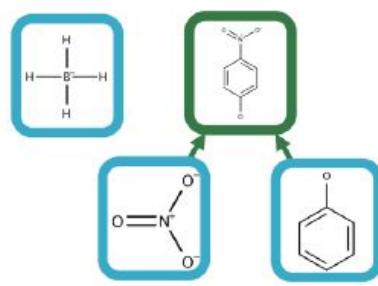


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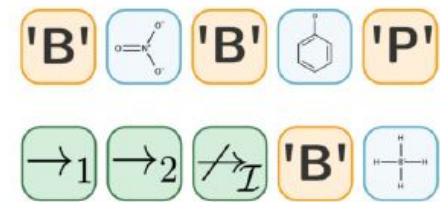
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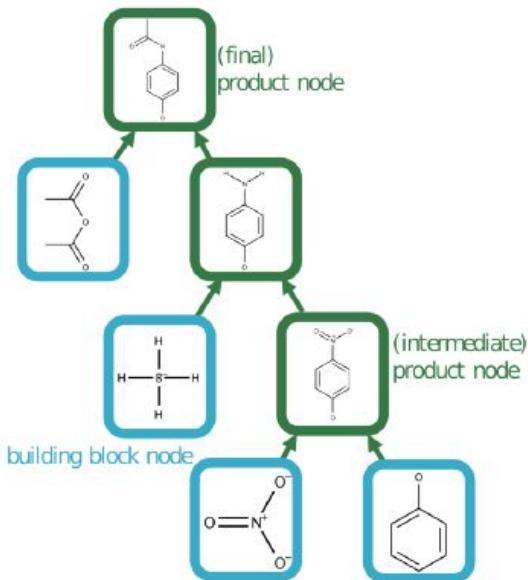


DAG so far

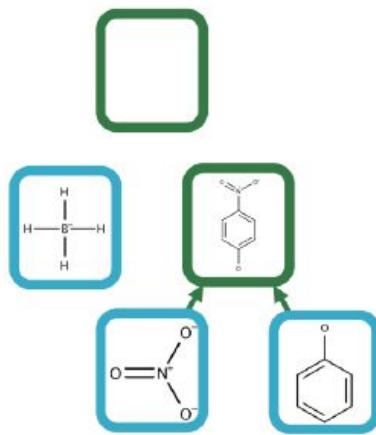


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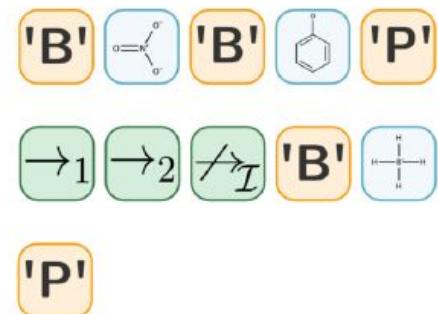
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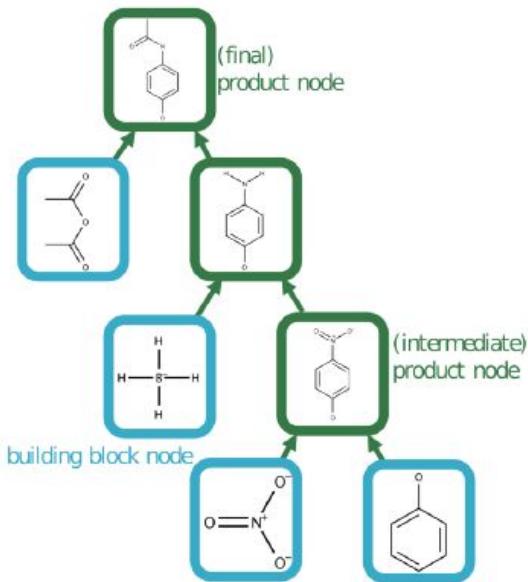


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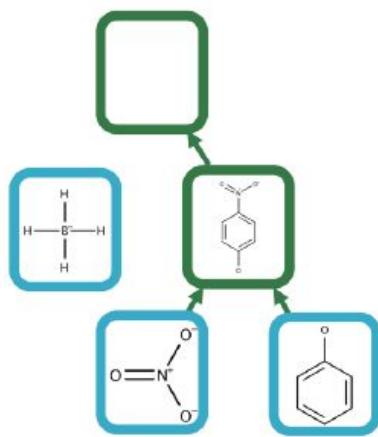


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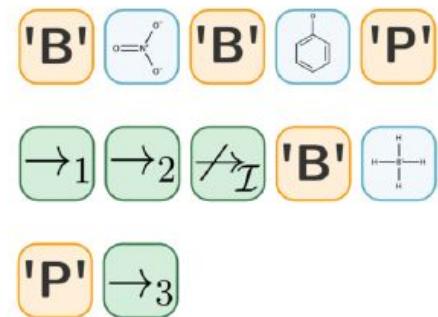
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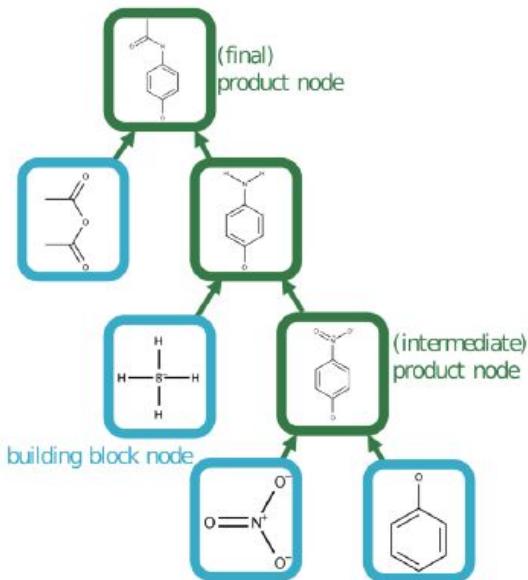


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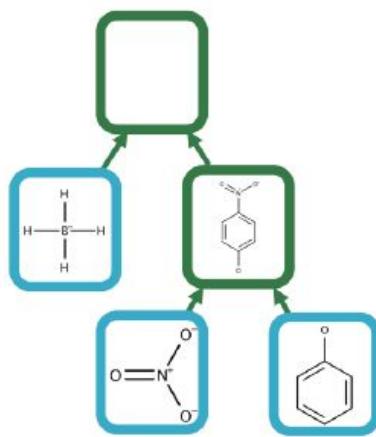


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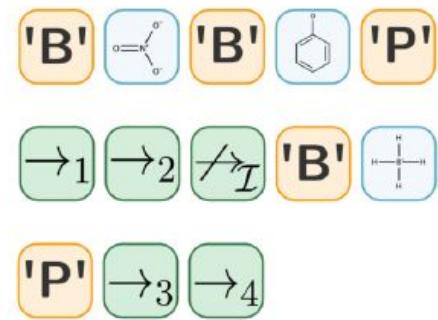
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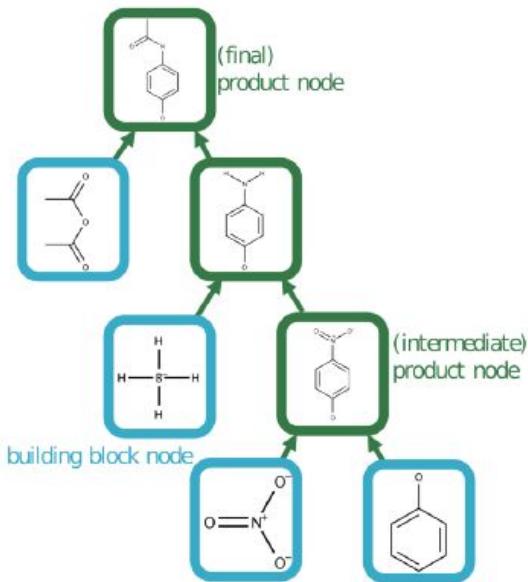


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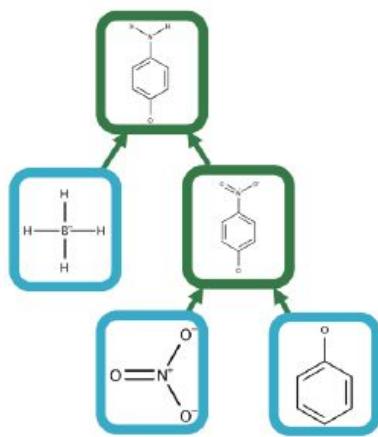


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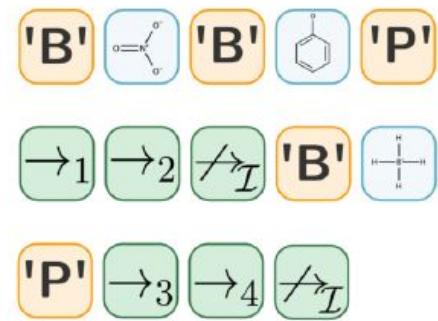
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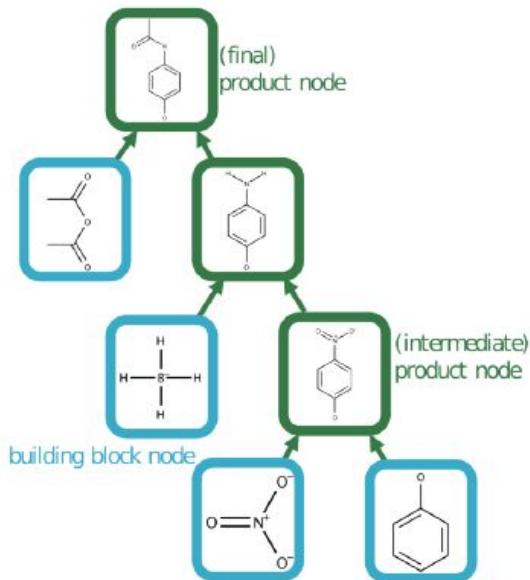


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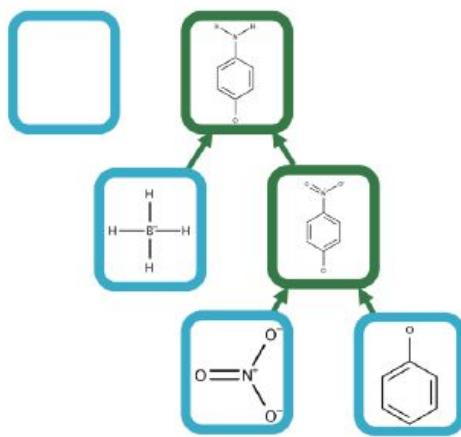


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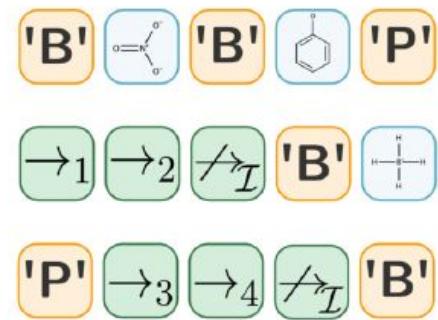
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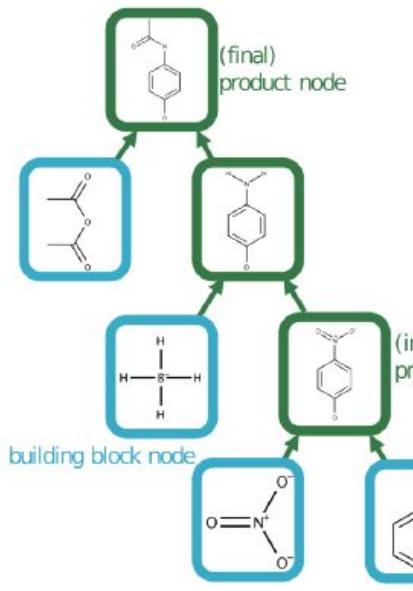


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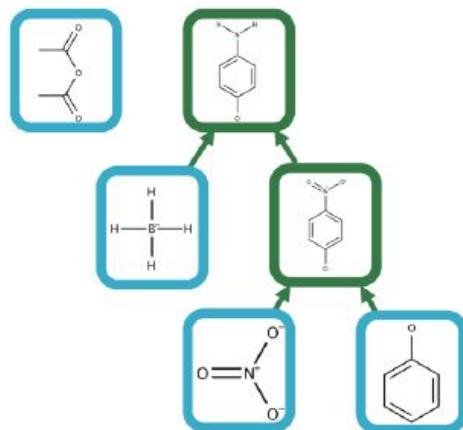


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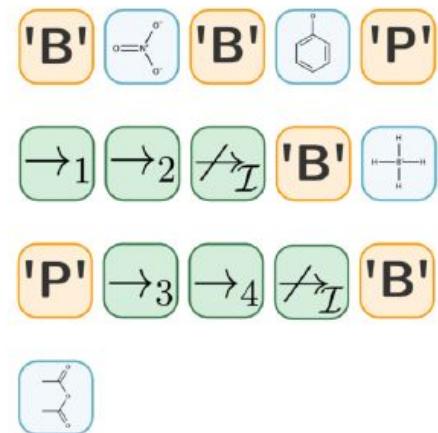
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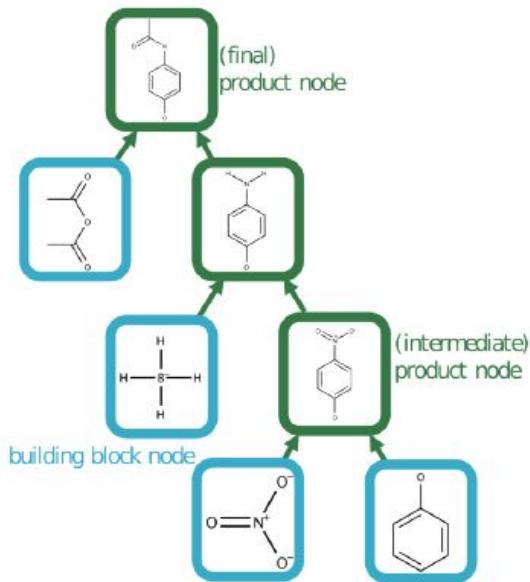


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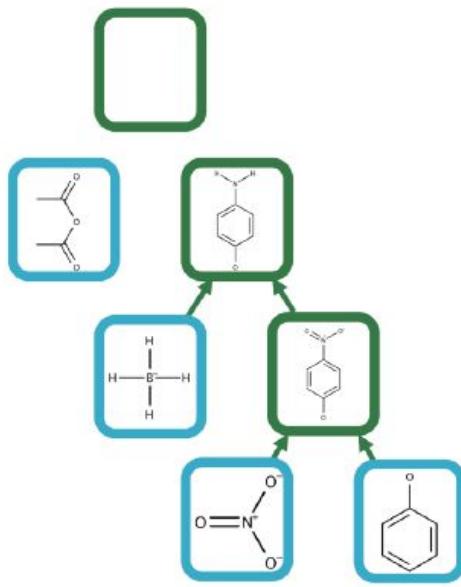


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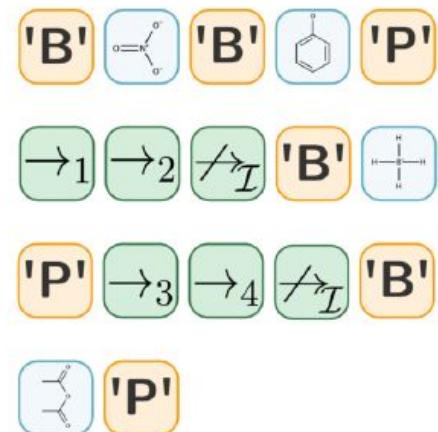
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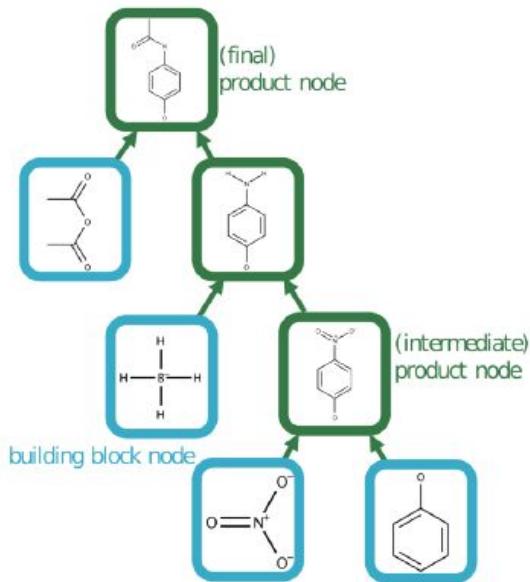


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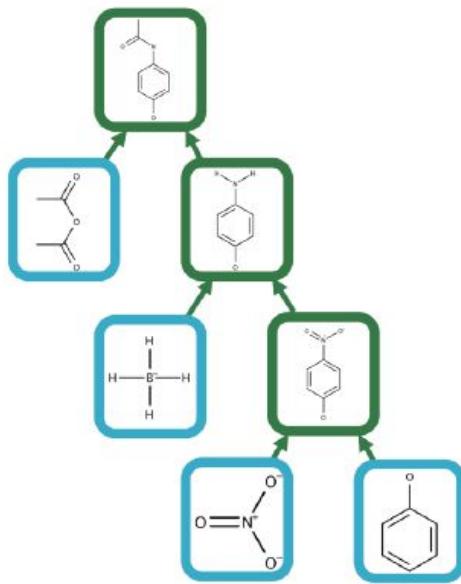


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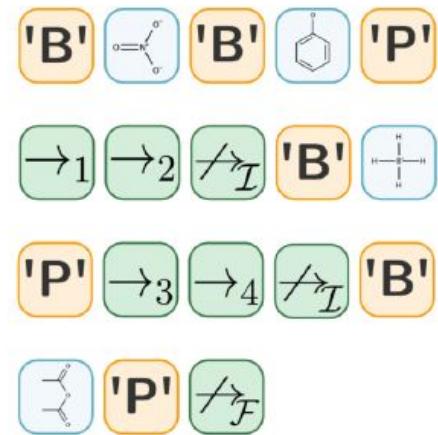
# Serializing molecule synthesis DAGs



Target DAG



DAG so far



Actions

# Modeling the sequential generation of DAGs

An **autoregressive model** describes the sequential generation of the synthesis DAG:

$$p_{\theta}(\text{DAG}) = \prod_{t=1}^T p_{\theta}(\text{action}_t | \text{action}_{t-1}, \text{action}_{t-2}, \dots).$$

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Molecule embeddings are generated using **graph neural networks**.

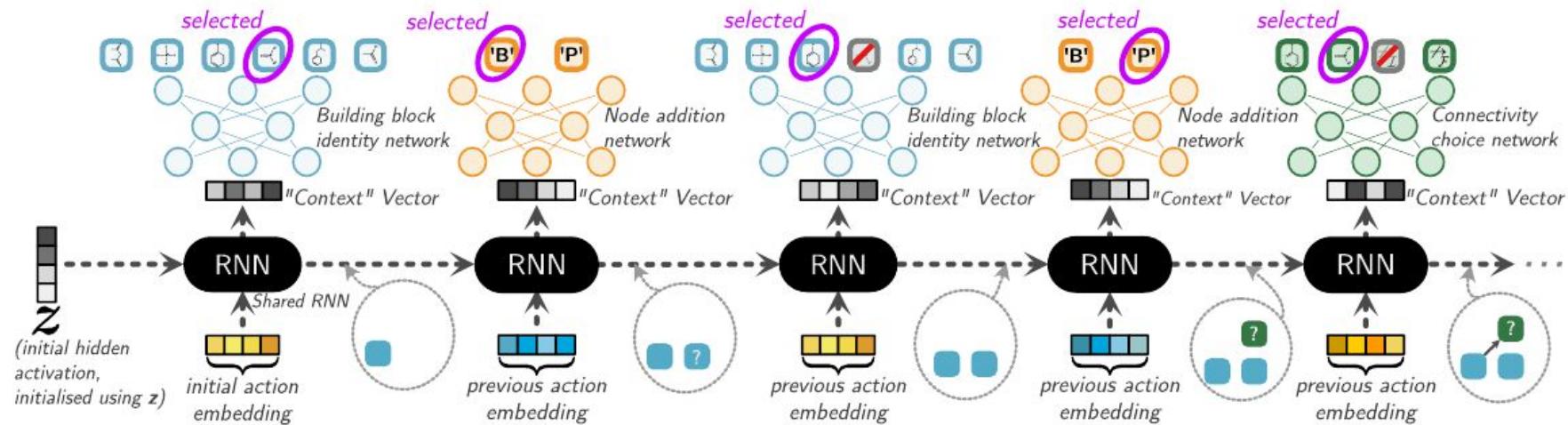
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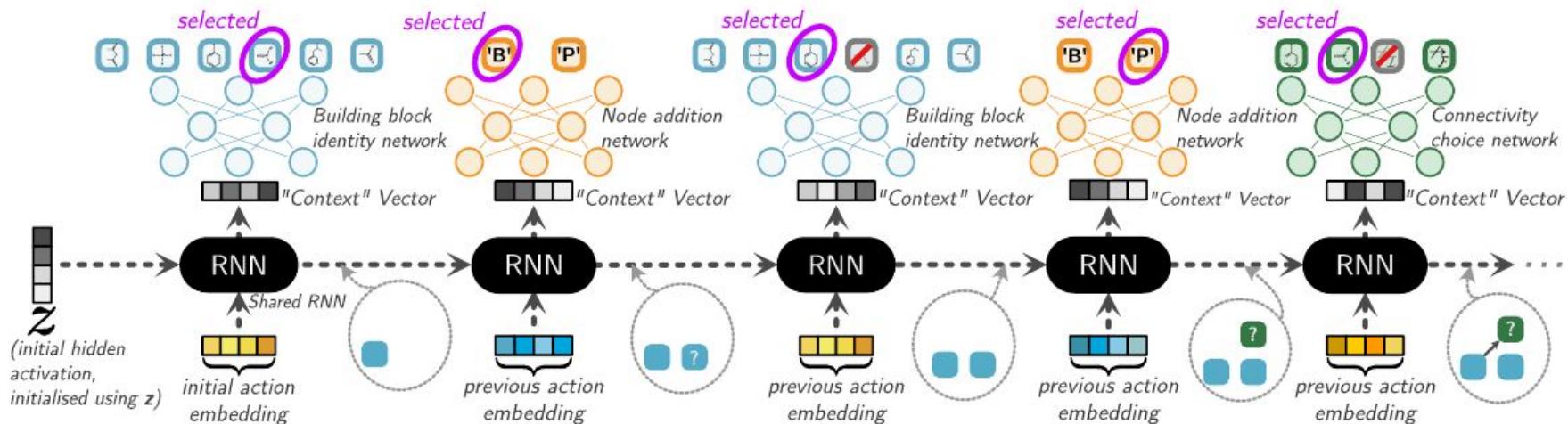
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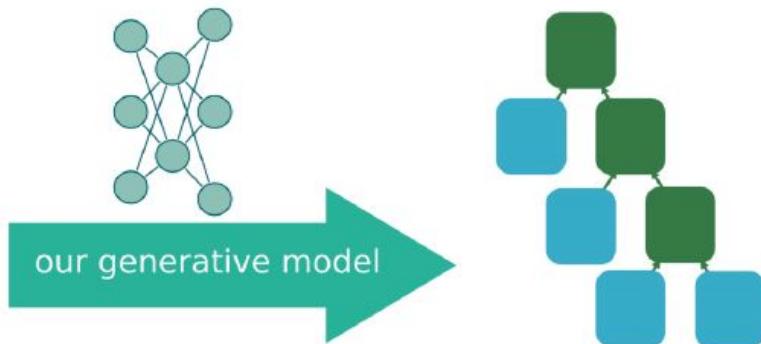


Content of product nodes generated by calling the **molecular transformer** [1].

# Two deep generative approaches

## 1. **DoG-Gen**, an autoregressive model

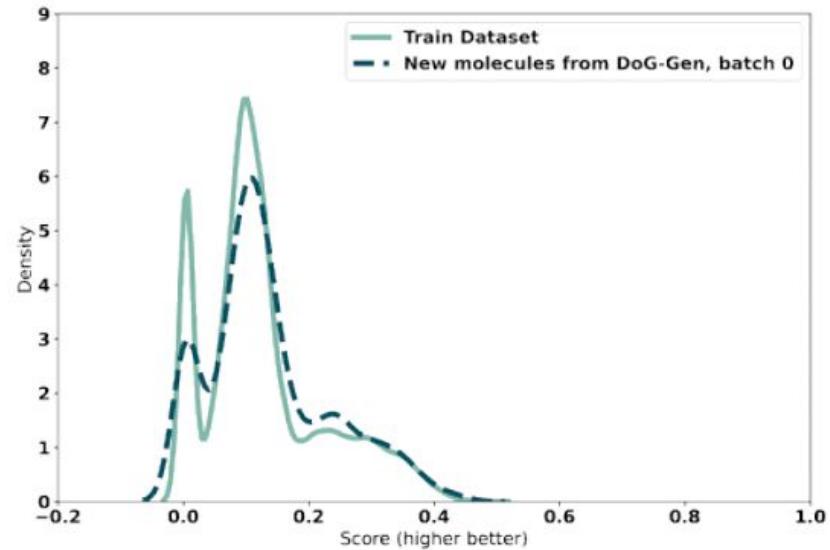
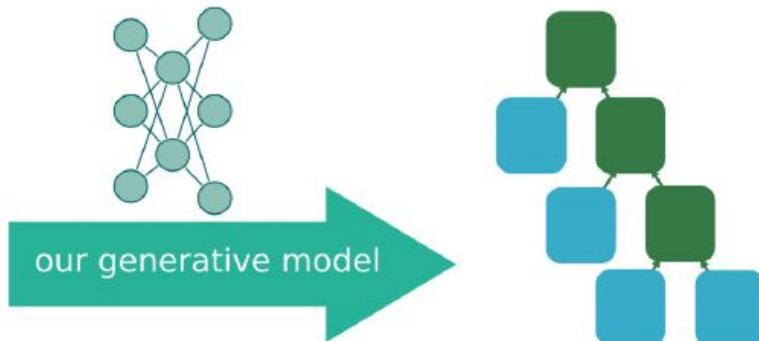
Can still be used for optimization  
(e.g. cross entropy method) [1,2]



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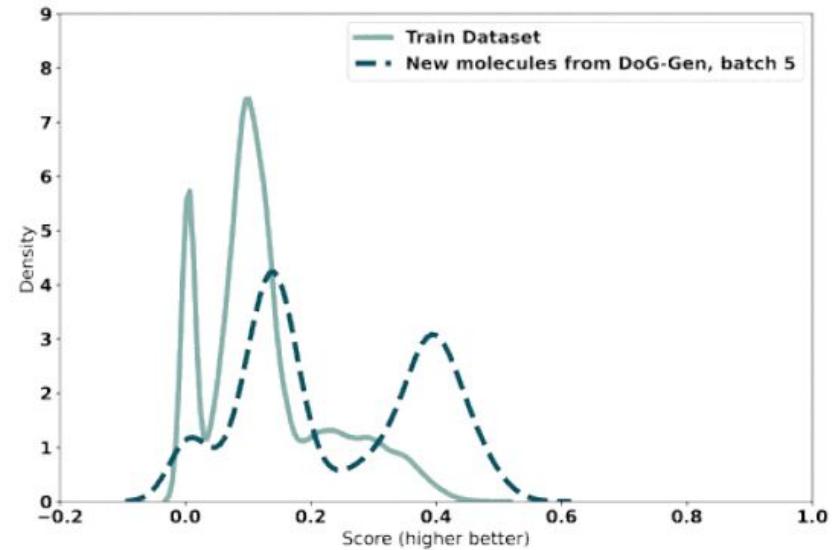
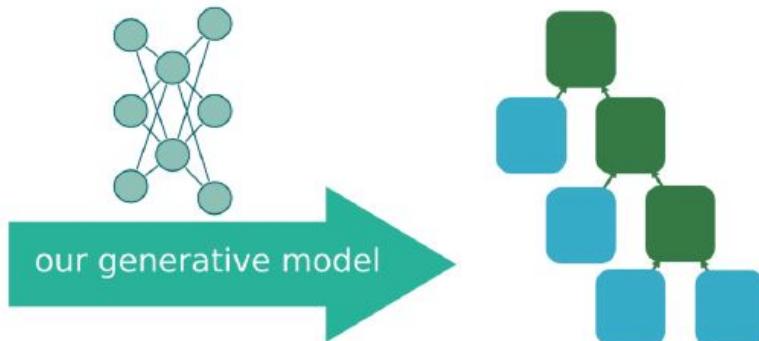
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# Two deep generative approaches

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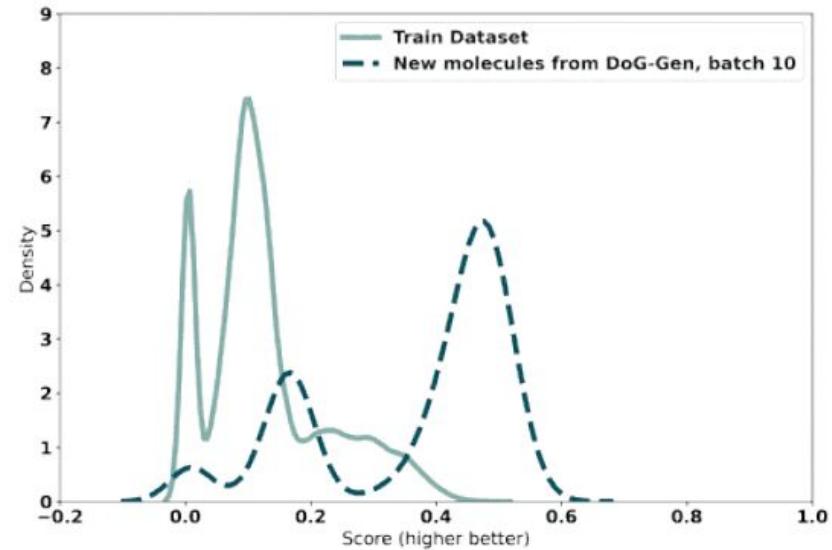
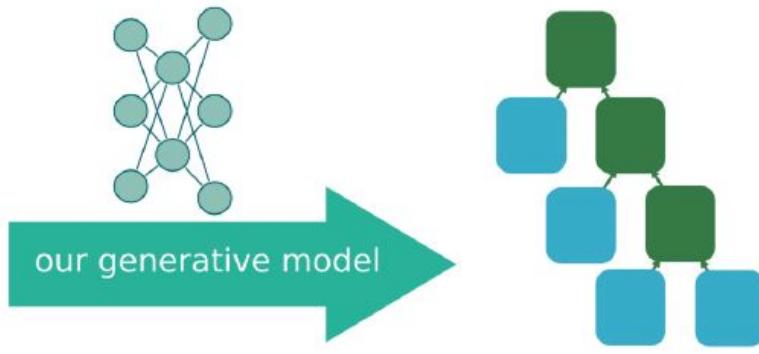
Can still be used for optimization  
(e.g. cross entropy method) [1,2]



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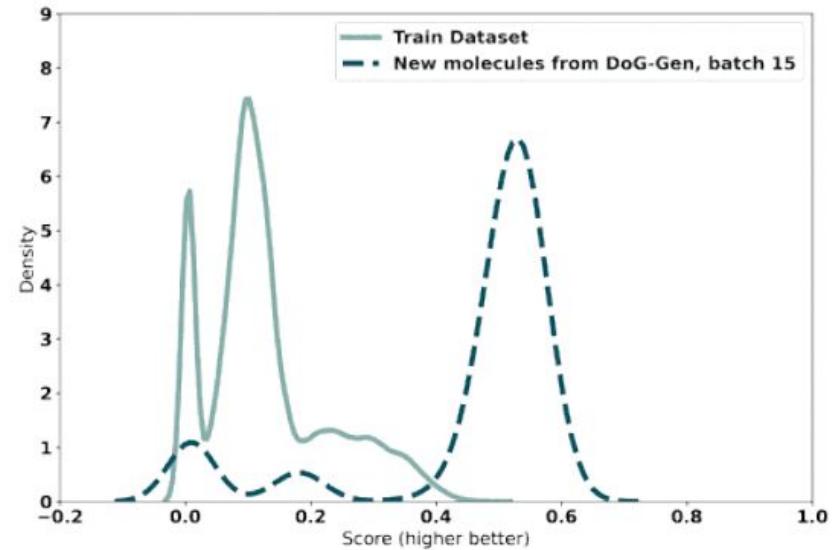
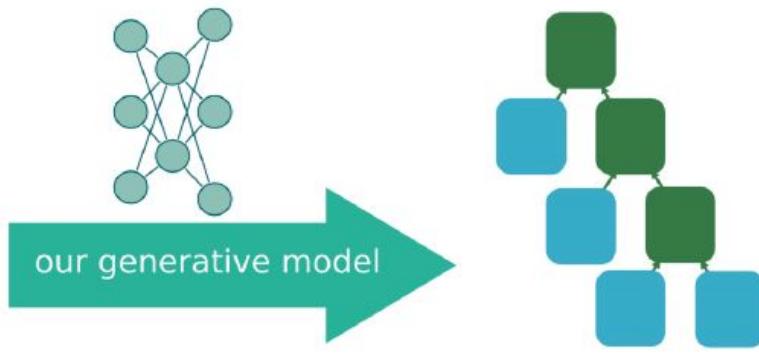
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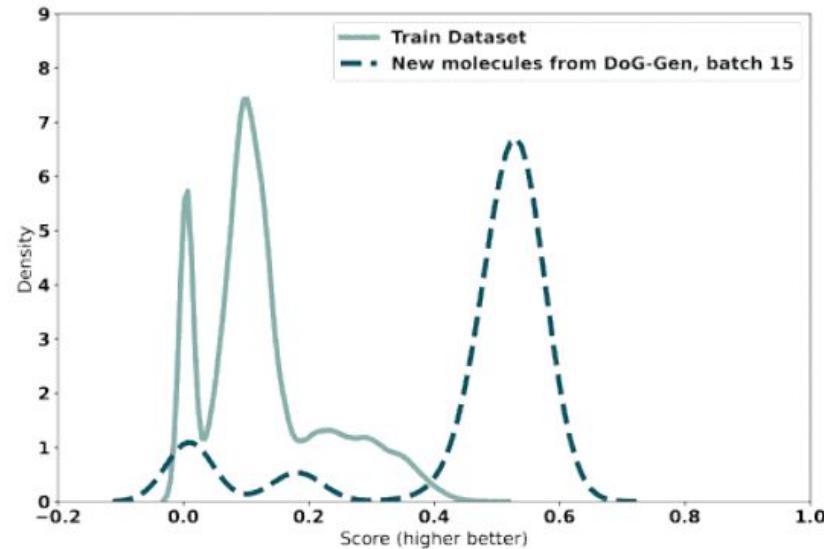
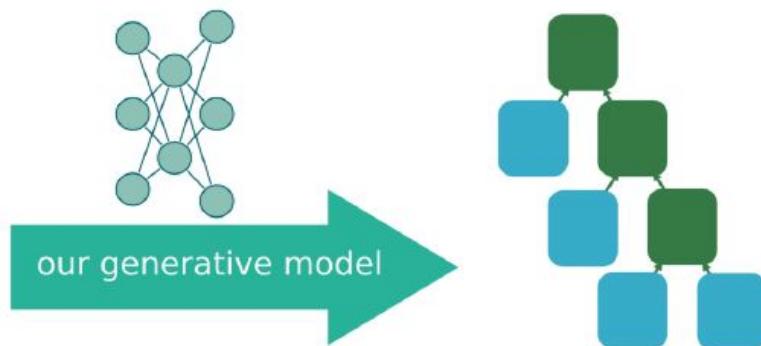
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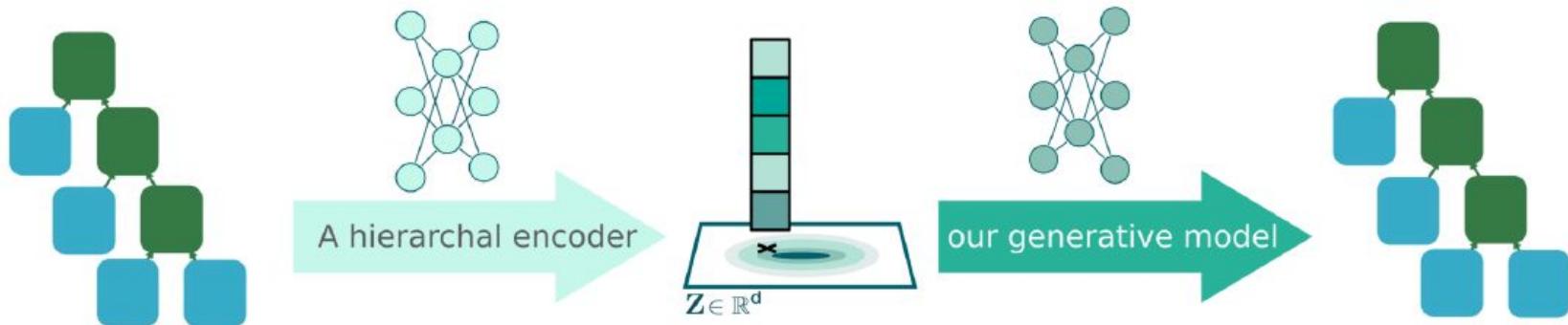
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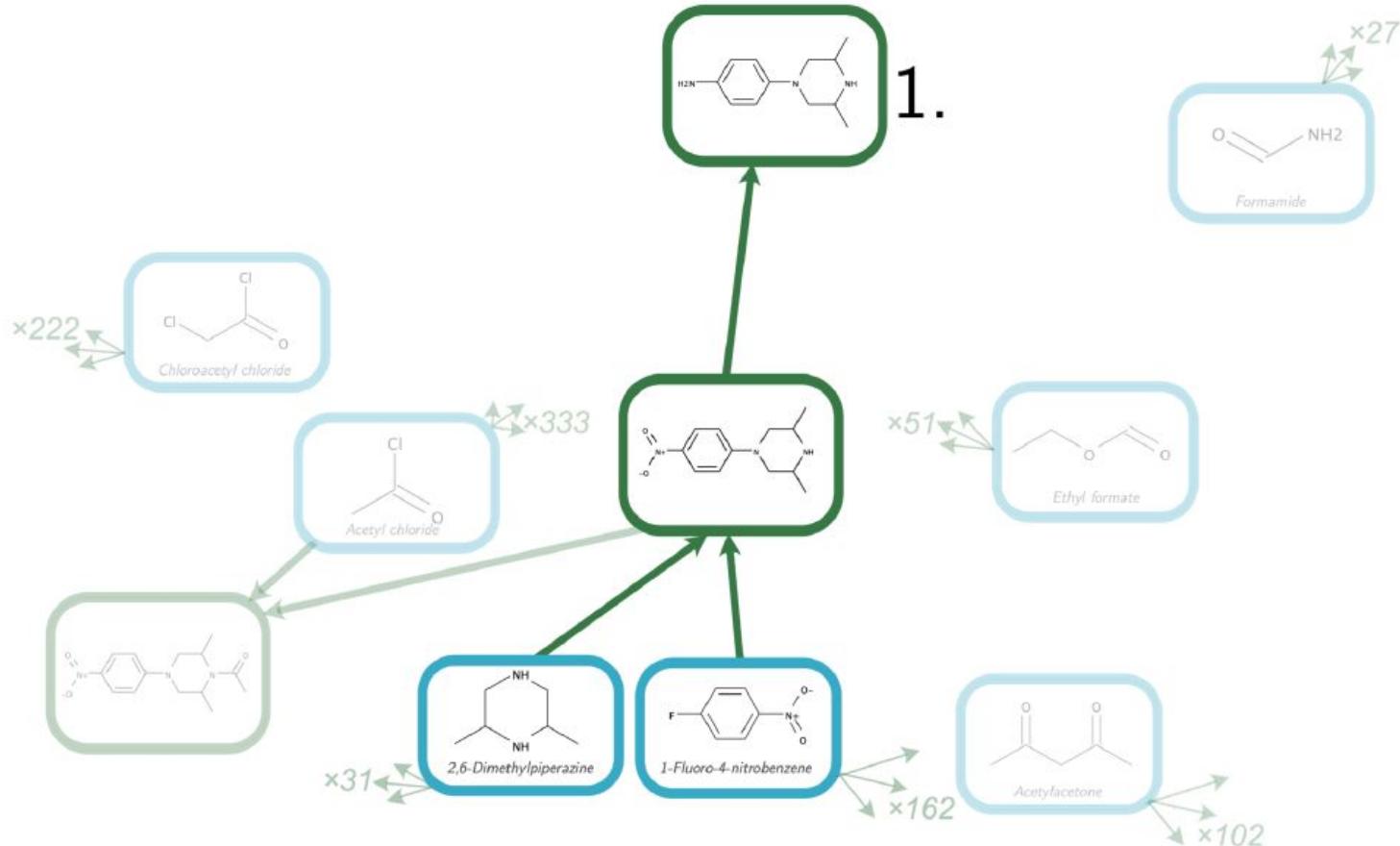
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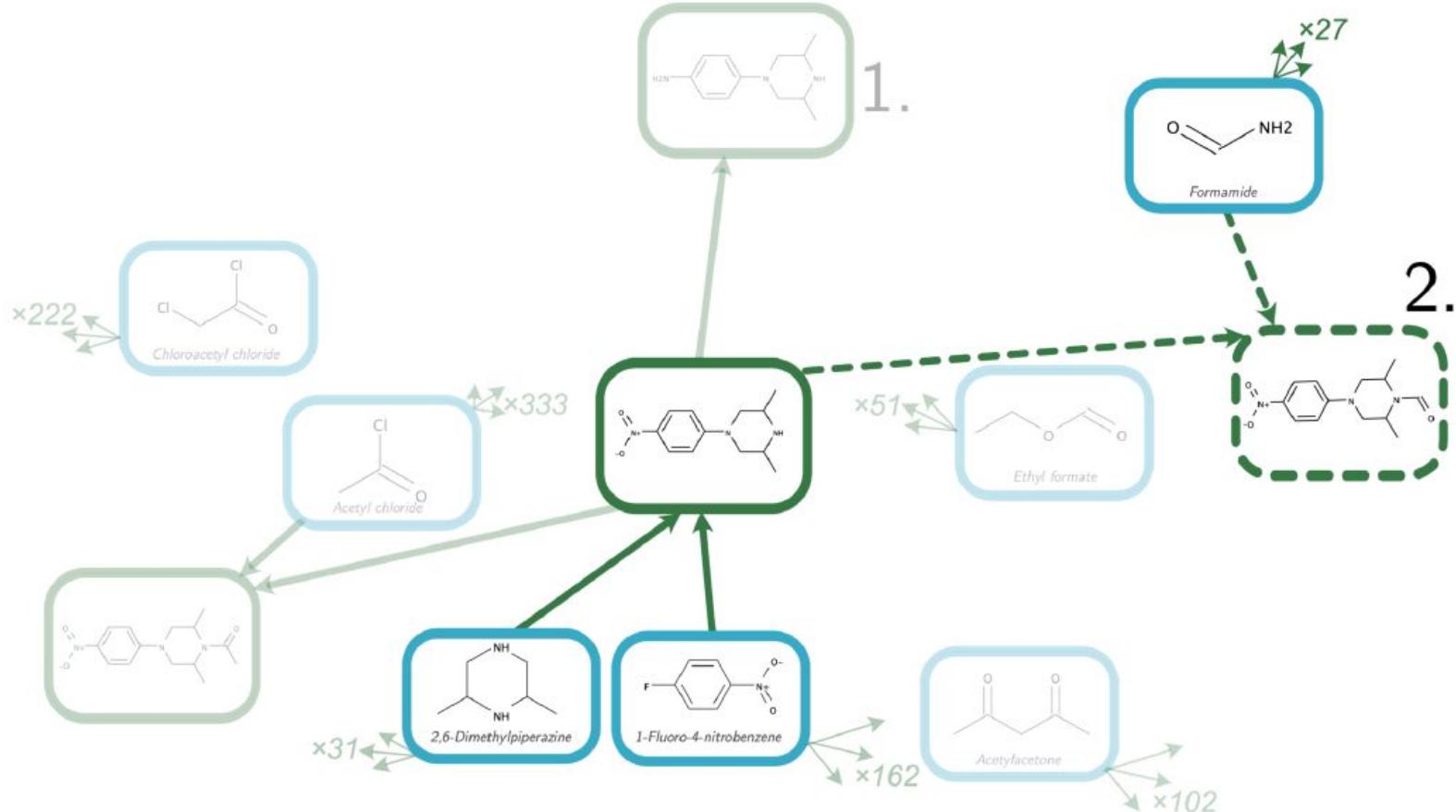
## 2. DoG-AE, an autoencoder model



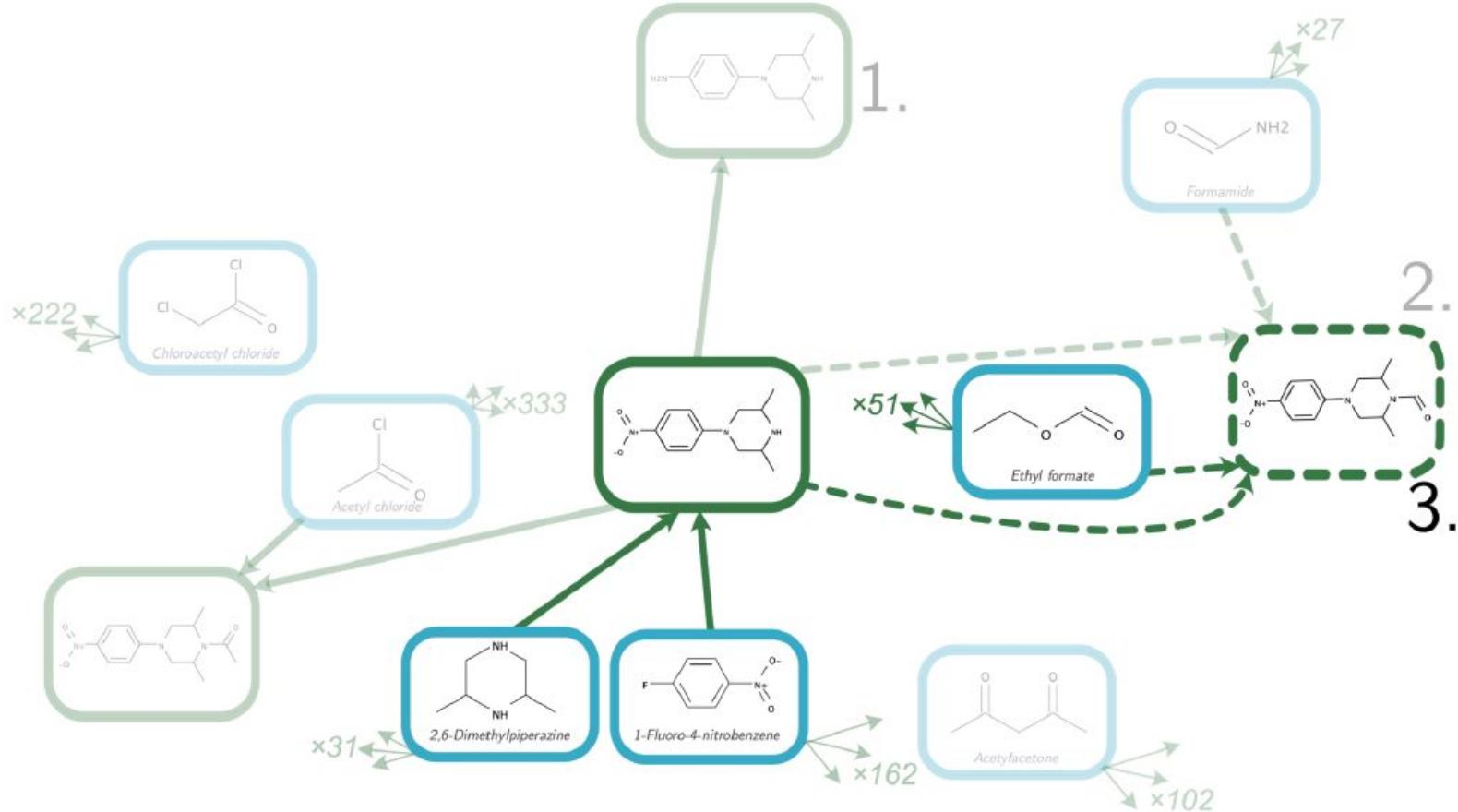
# Latent space interpolation



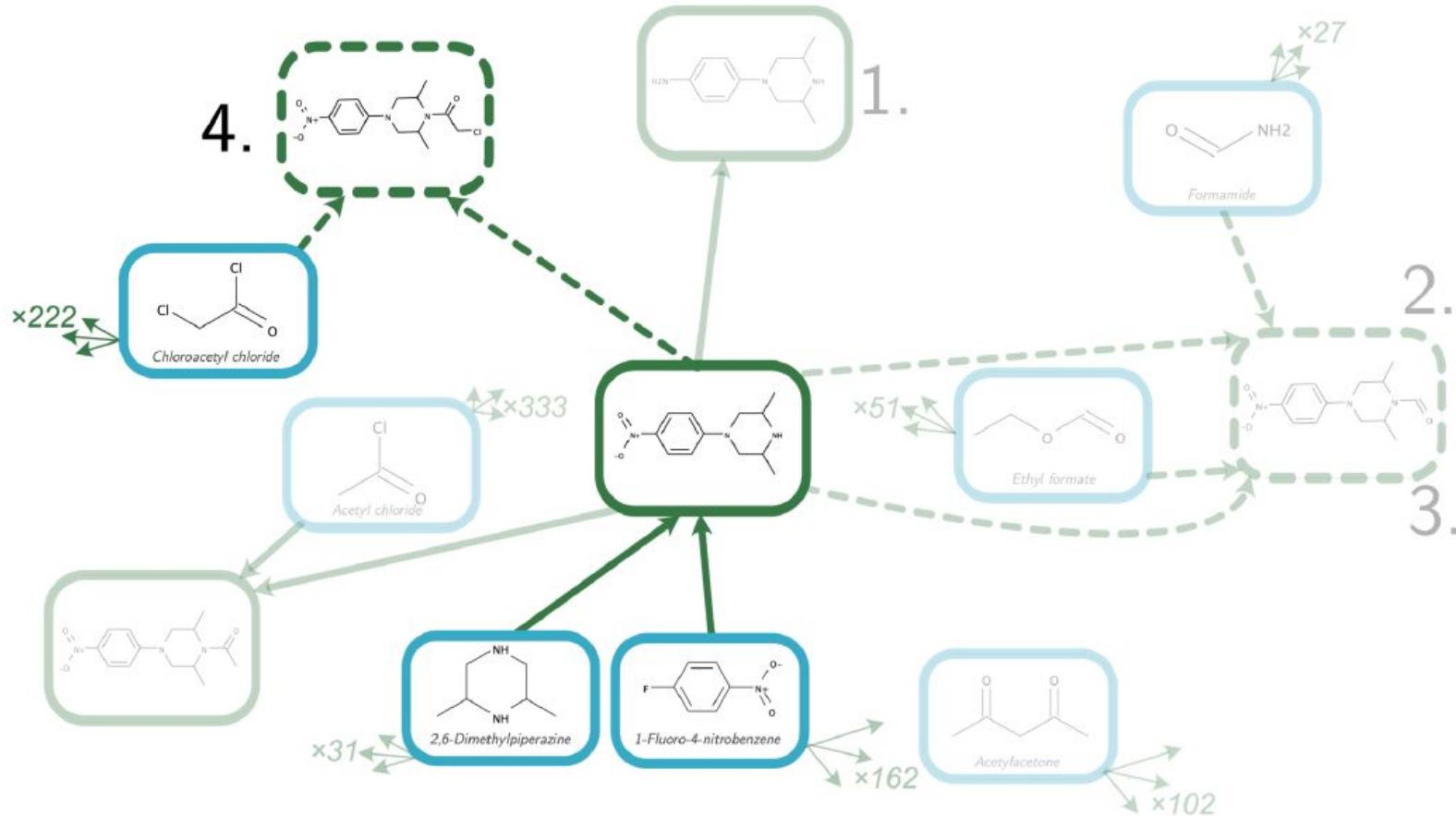
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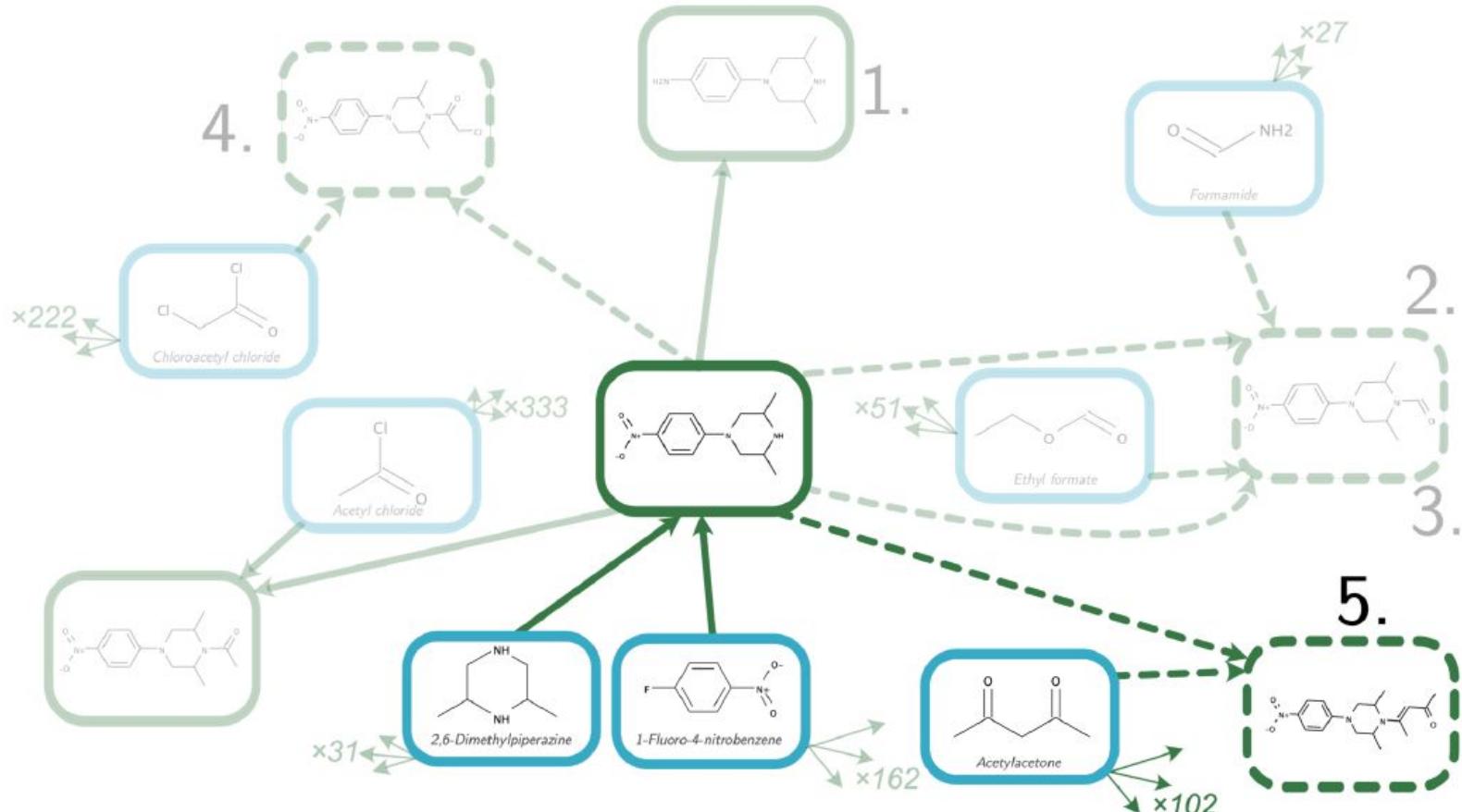
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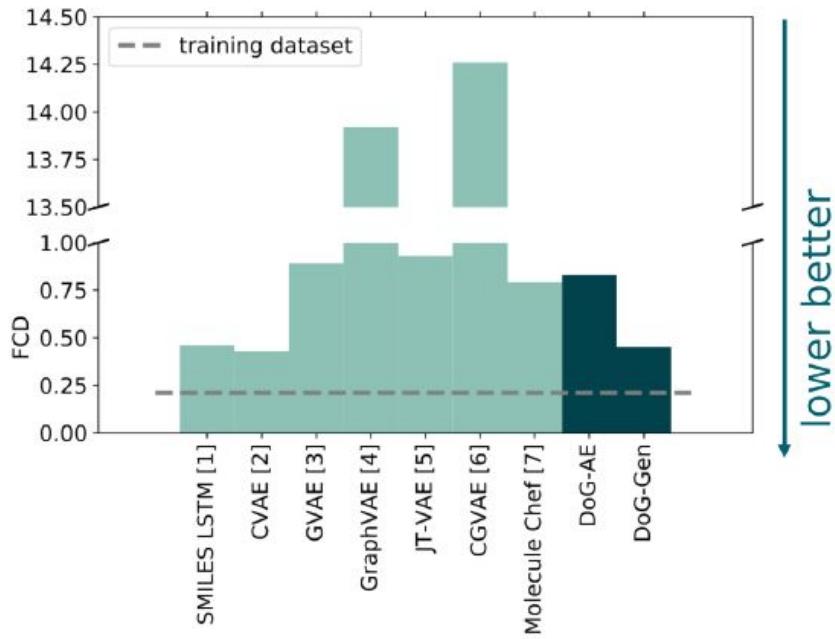


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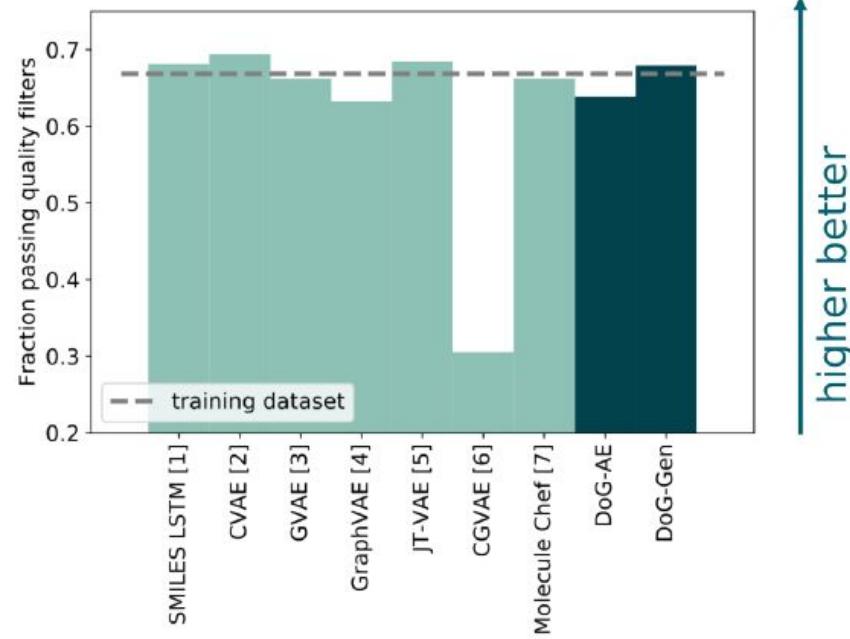


# How good are our generated molecules?

With our model, **constrained to generate synthesizable molecules**, we match the quality and space coverage of many previous, **more flexible**, generative models:



Fréchet ChemNet Distance [9]

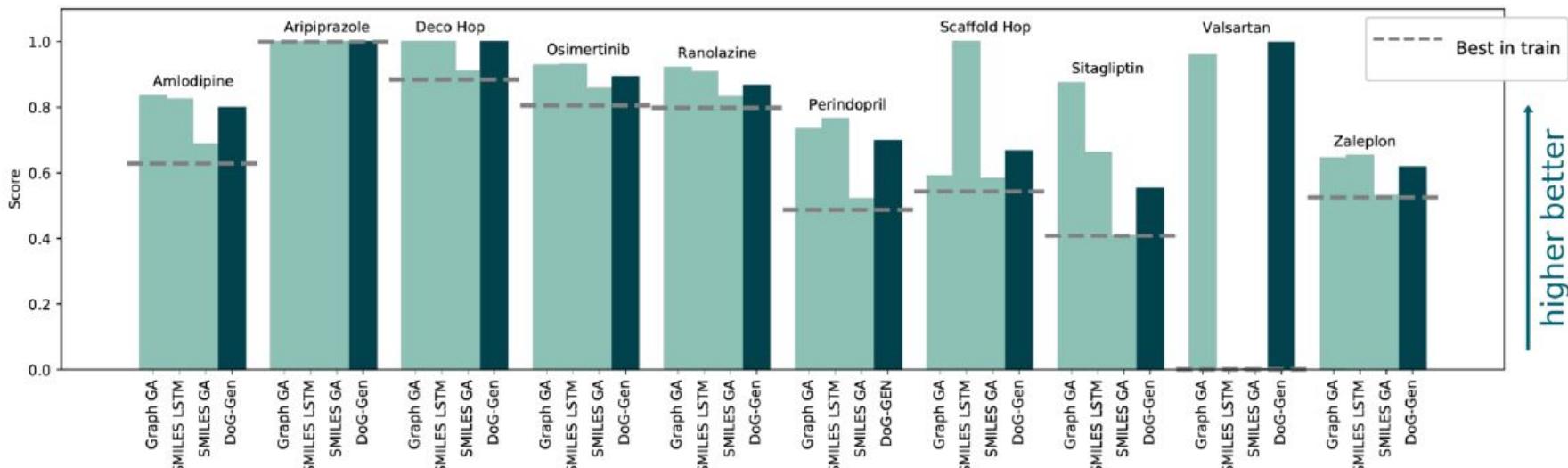


Quality filters (assess stability) [8]

[1] (Segler et al., 2017) doi.org/10.1021/acs.centsci.7b00512; [2] (Gómez-Bombarelli et al., 2018) doi.org/10.1021/acs.centsci.7b00572; [3] (Kusner et al., 2017) proceedings.mlr.press/v70/kusner17a; [4] (Simonovsky and Komodakis, 2018) arxiv.org/abs/1802.03480; [5] (Jin et al., 2018) proceedings.mlr.press/v80/jin18a.html; [6] (Liu et al., 2018) arxiv.org/abs/1805.09076; [7] (Bradshaw et al., 2019b) arxiv.org/abs/1906.05221; [8] (Brown et al., 2019) doi.org/10.1021/acs.jcim.8b00839; [9] (Preuer et al., 2018) doi.org/10.1021/acs.jcim.8b00234

# How good is our molecule optimization?

We obtain competitive results when compared to strong baselines that **do not consider synthesizability**:

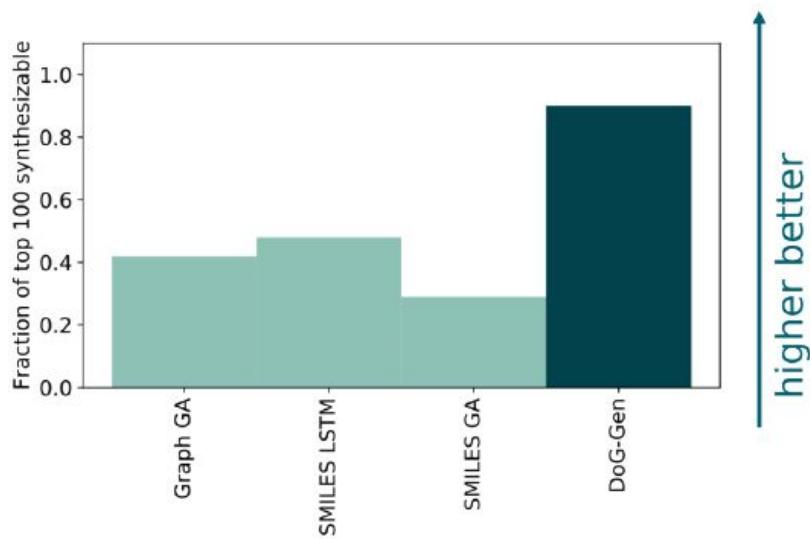


10 GuacaMol tasks [1]

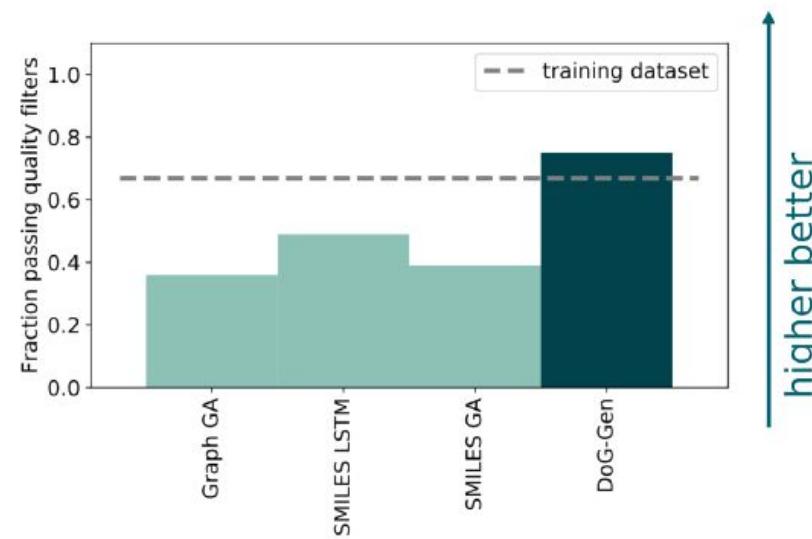
[1] (Brown et al, 2019) [doi.org/10.1021/acs.jcim.8b00839](https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.jcim.8b00839)

# How good are our optimized molecules?

We suggest molecules that are **synthesizable** and that **pass the quality checks**:



Plot showing fraction synthesizable as judged by running through retrosynthetic pipeline [1,2]



Plot showing fraction of optimized molecules passing quality filters (assess stability) [3]

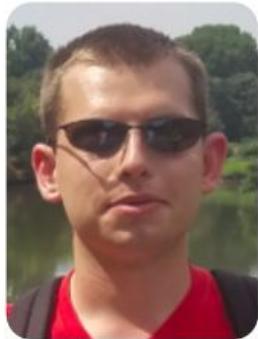
[1] (Segler et al, 2018) [nature.com/articles/nature25978](https://nature.com/articles/nature25978) ; [2] (Gao and Coley, 2020) [doi.org/10.1021/acs.jcim.0c00174](https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.jcim.0c00174) ; [3] (Brown et al, 2019) [doi.org/10.1021/acs.jcim.8b00839](https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.jcim.8b00839)

# Take home messages

**DoG** is a deep generative model of molecules that

- ① generates **synthesizable** molecules up-front.
- ② works by generating **molecular synthesis DAGs** in a serial way.
- ③ obtains **competitive results** in molecule generation and optimization.
- ④ produces optimal molecules with higher degrees of **stability and synthesizability**.

# Collaborators



Austin Tripp



Erik Daxberger



John Bradshaw



Matt Kusner



Brooks Paige



Marwin Segler

# Thanks!

# Questions?