

# Practical Second-Order CPA Attack on Ascon with Proper Selection Function

Viet-Sang Nguyen

joint work with Vincent Grosso and Pierre-Louis Cayrel

CASCADE Conference

Saint-Etienne, 2 April, 2025



PROPHY ANR-22-CE39-0008-01



NIST

2018



Lightweight cryptography competition

# NIST

2018



Lightweight cryptography competition

2023



Selected Ascon

# NIST

2018

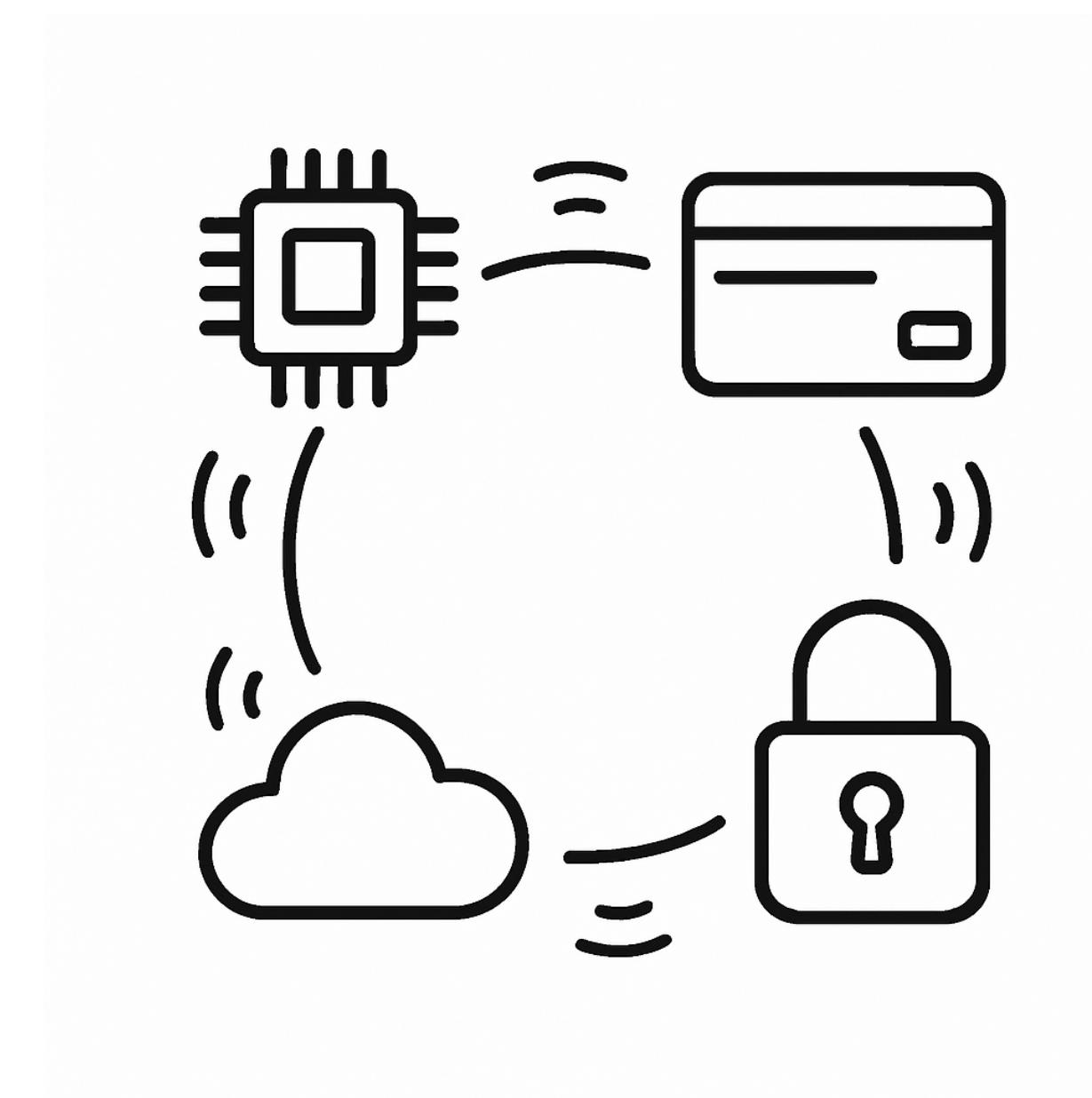


Lightweight cryptography competition

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# NIST



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Possible attacks



Secure implementations

# In this talk

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Possible attacks

# In this talk

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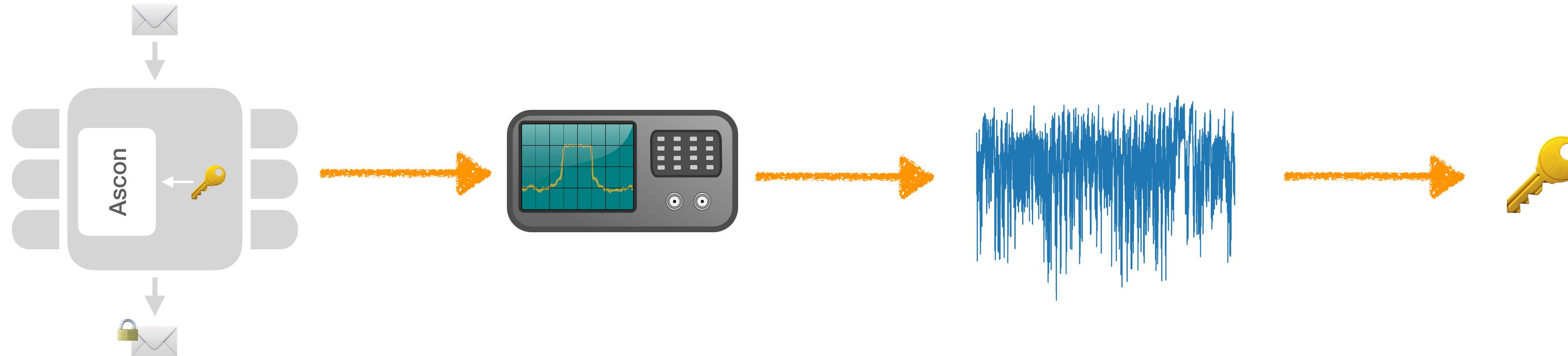


Possible attacks

Correlation Power Analysis (CPA) attack

# In this talk

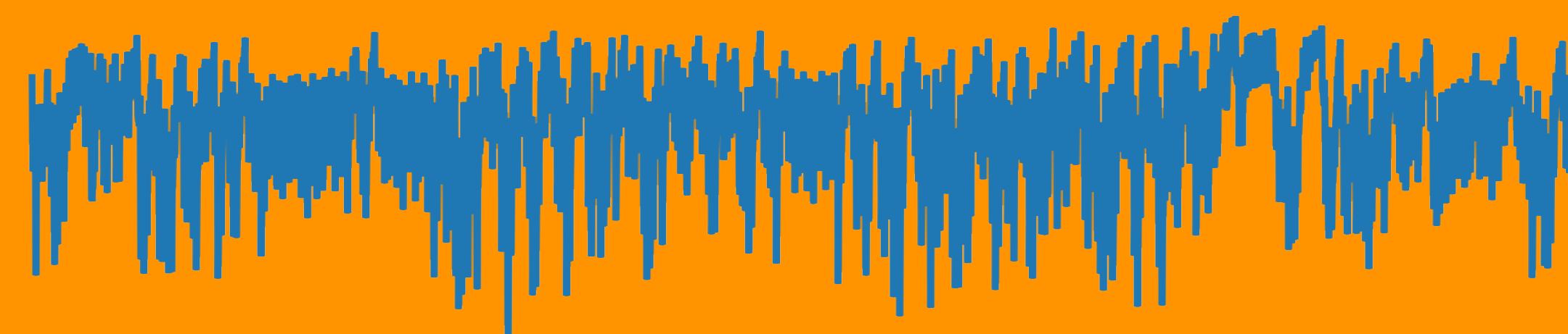
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Possible attacks

Correlation Power Analysis (CPA) attack

# CPA attack



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known non-constant data  part of the key

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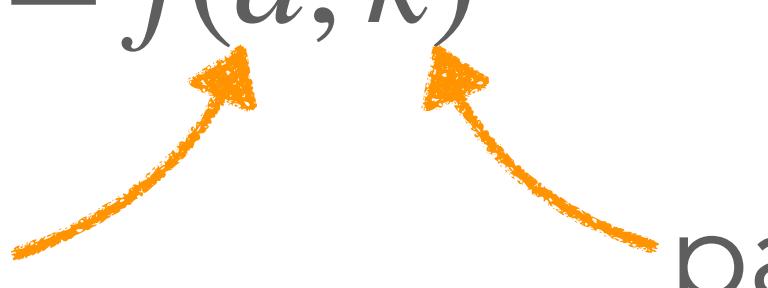
Well-known CPA on AES:  $v = \text{Sbox}(\text{plaintext}, \text{key})$

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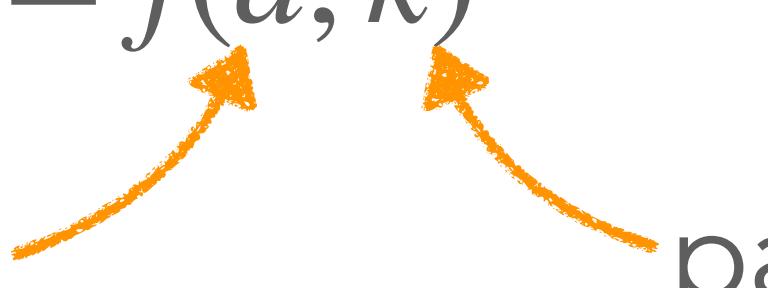
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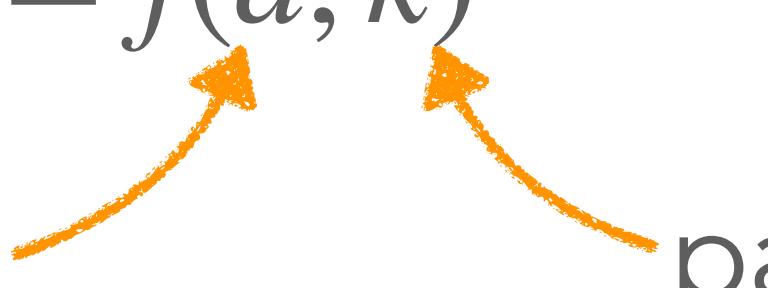
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Hypothetical power consumption:  $h = \text{HW}(v) = \text{HW}(f(d, k))$

# CPA attack

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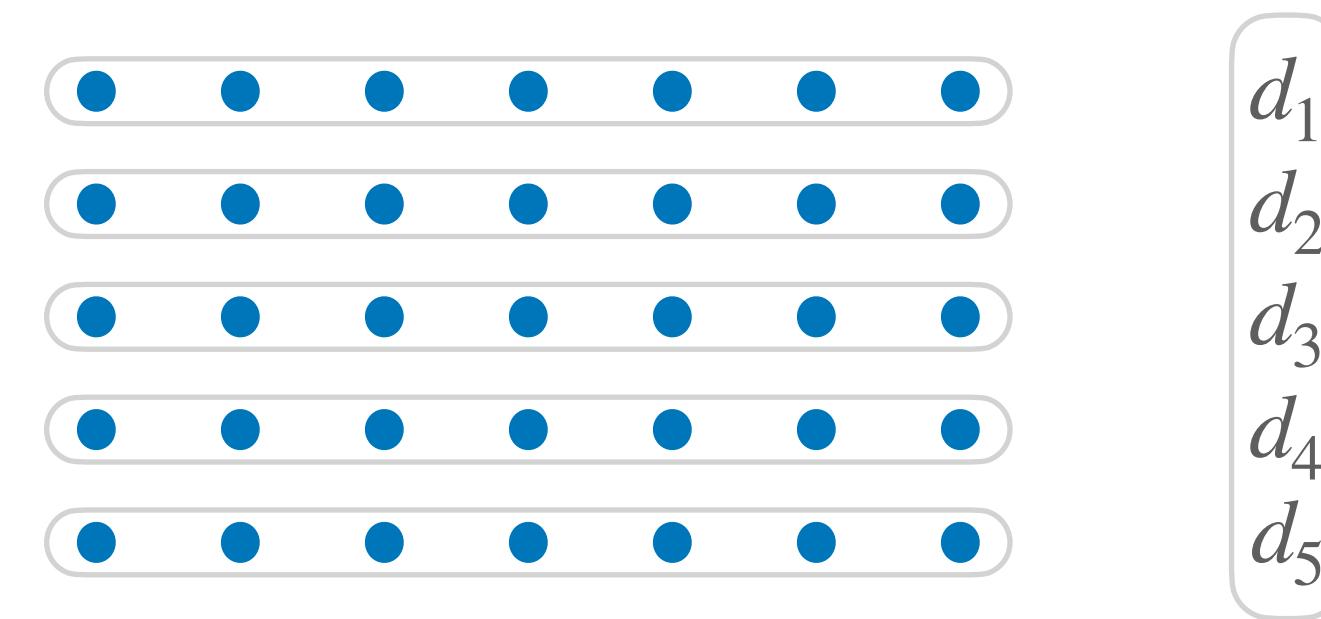
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- ◆ Measure power consumption traces  
and record  $d$

# CPA attack

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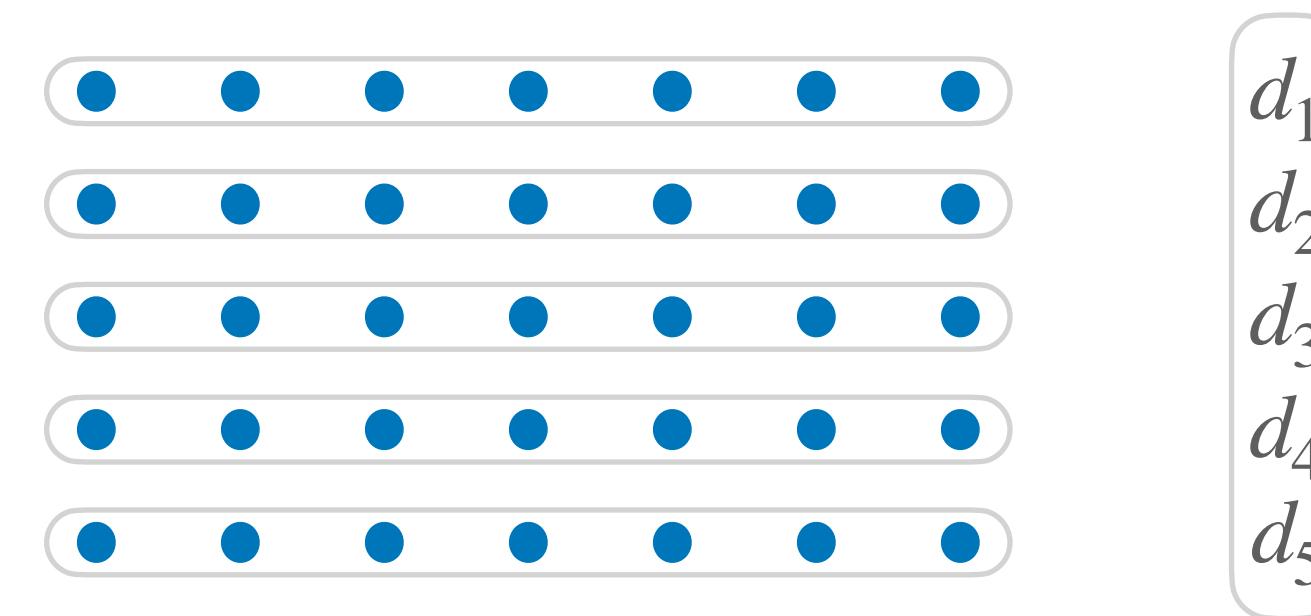
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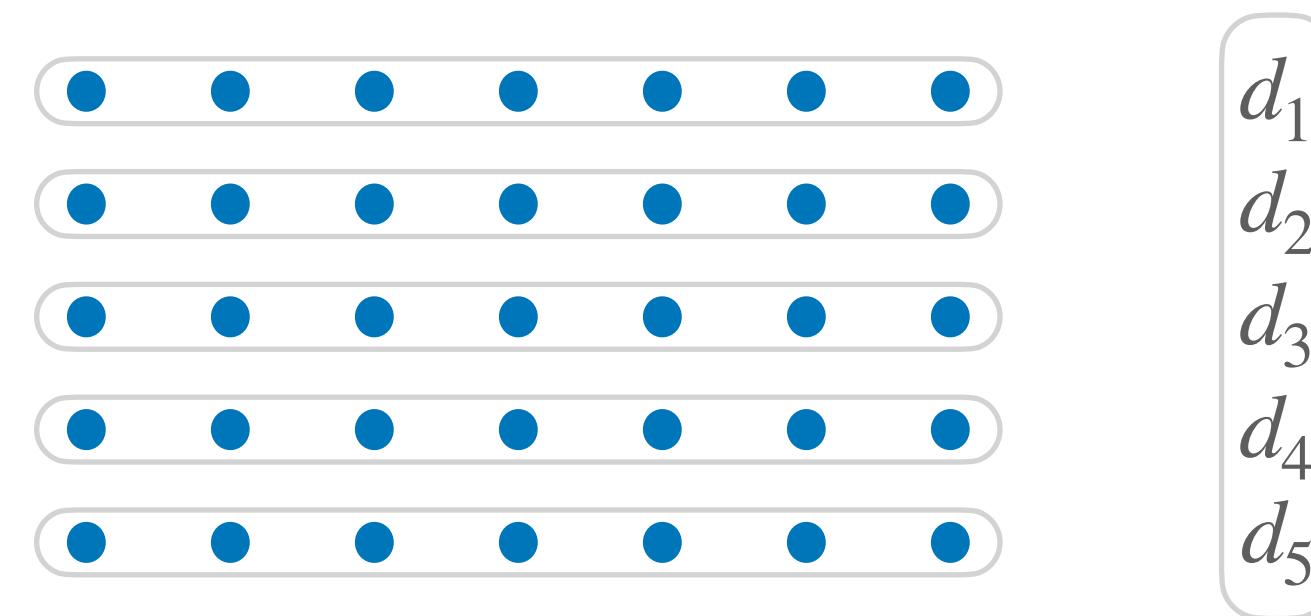


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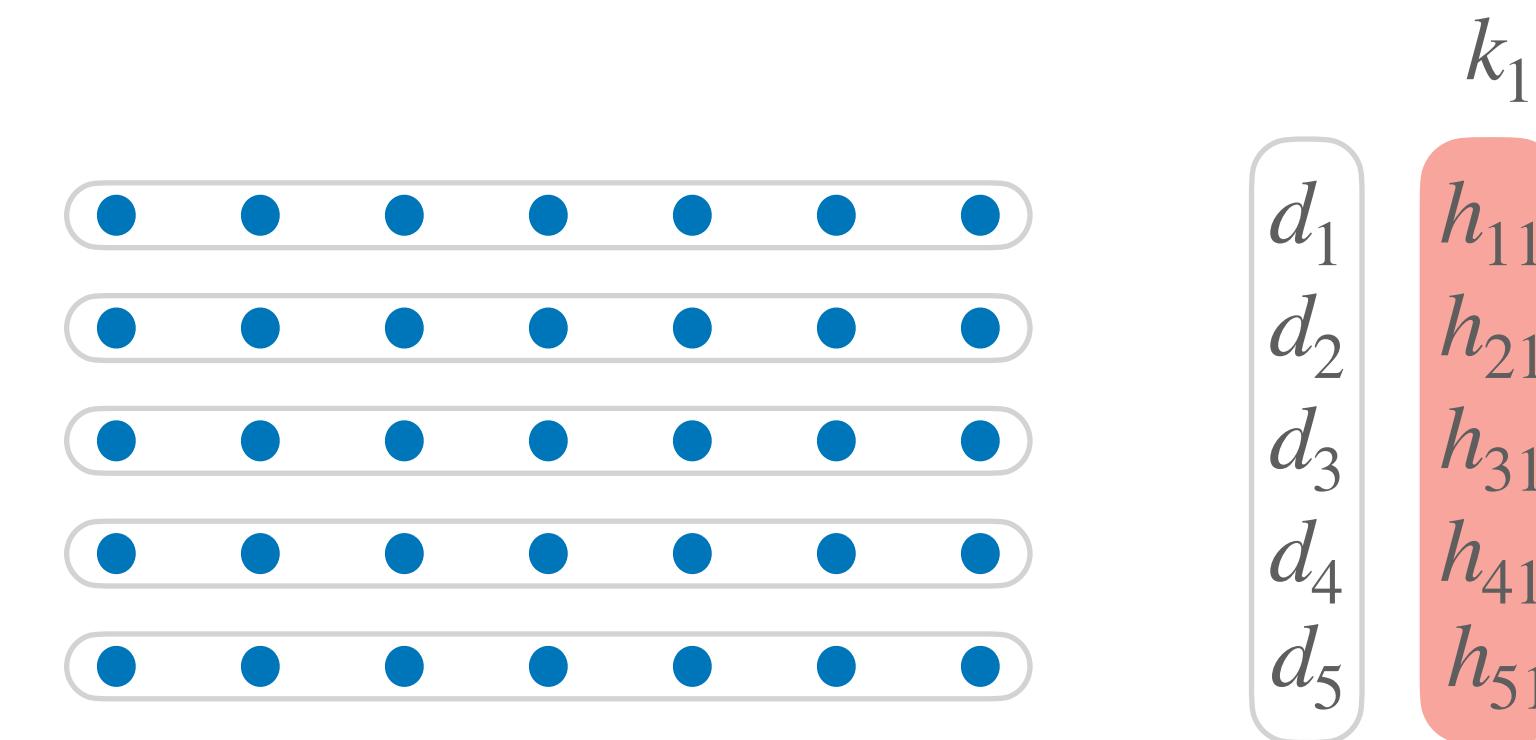
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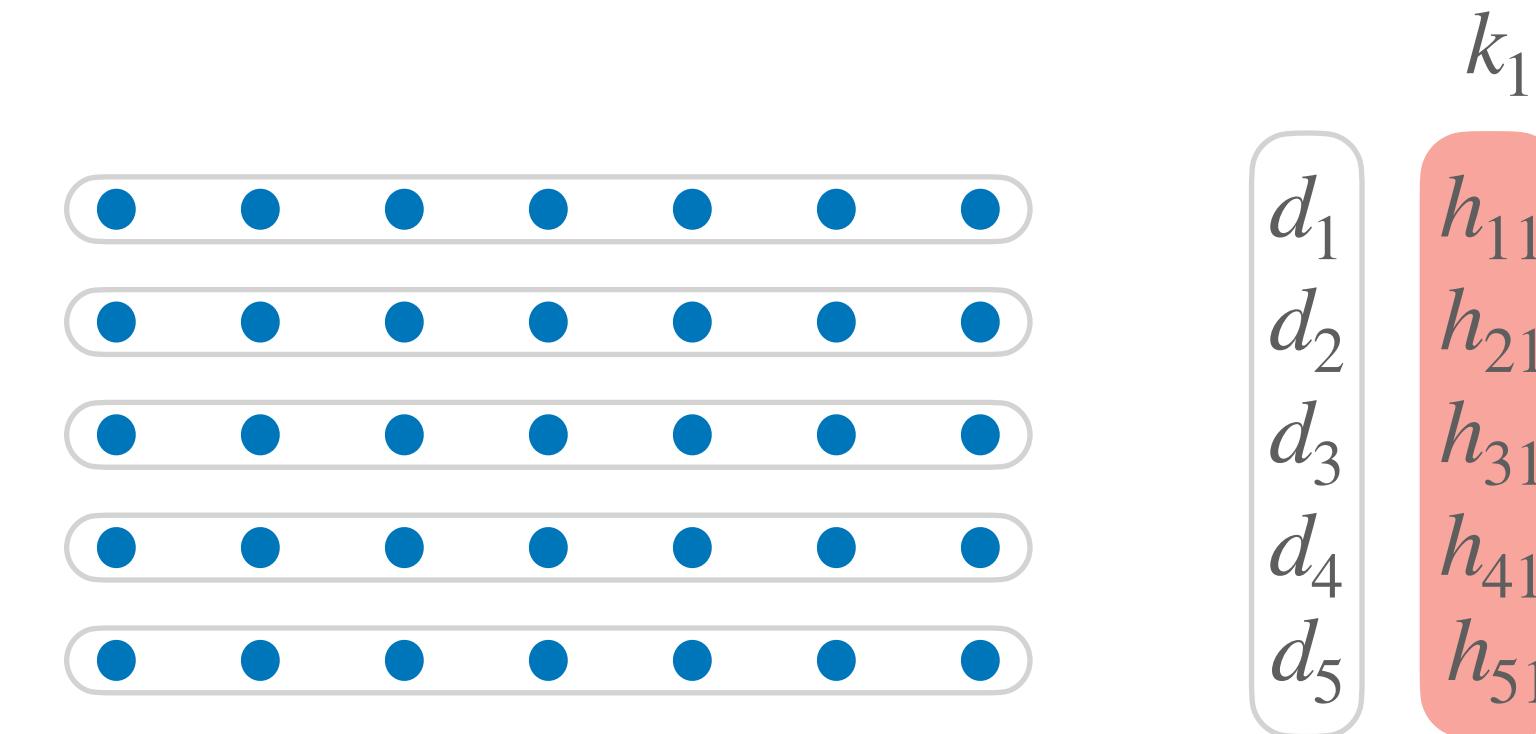
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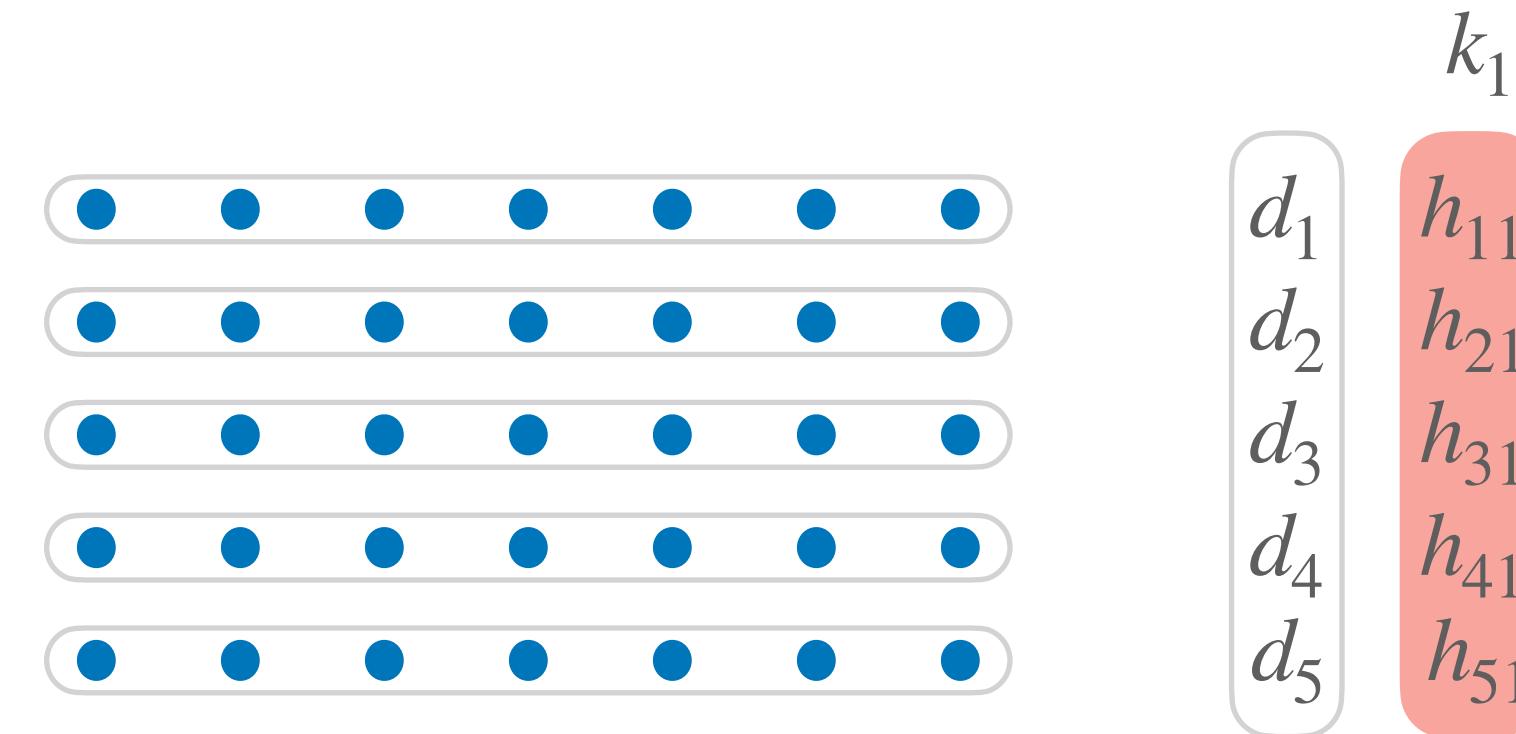


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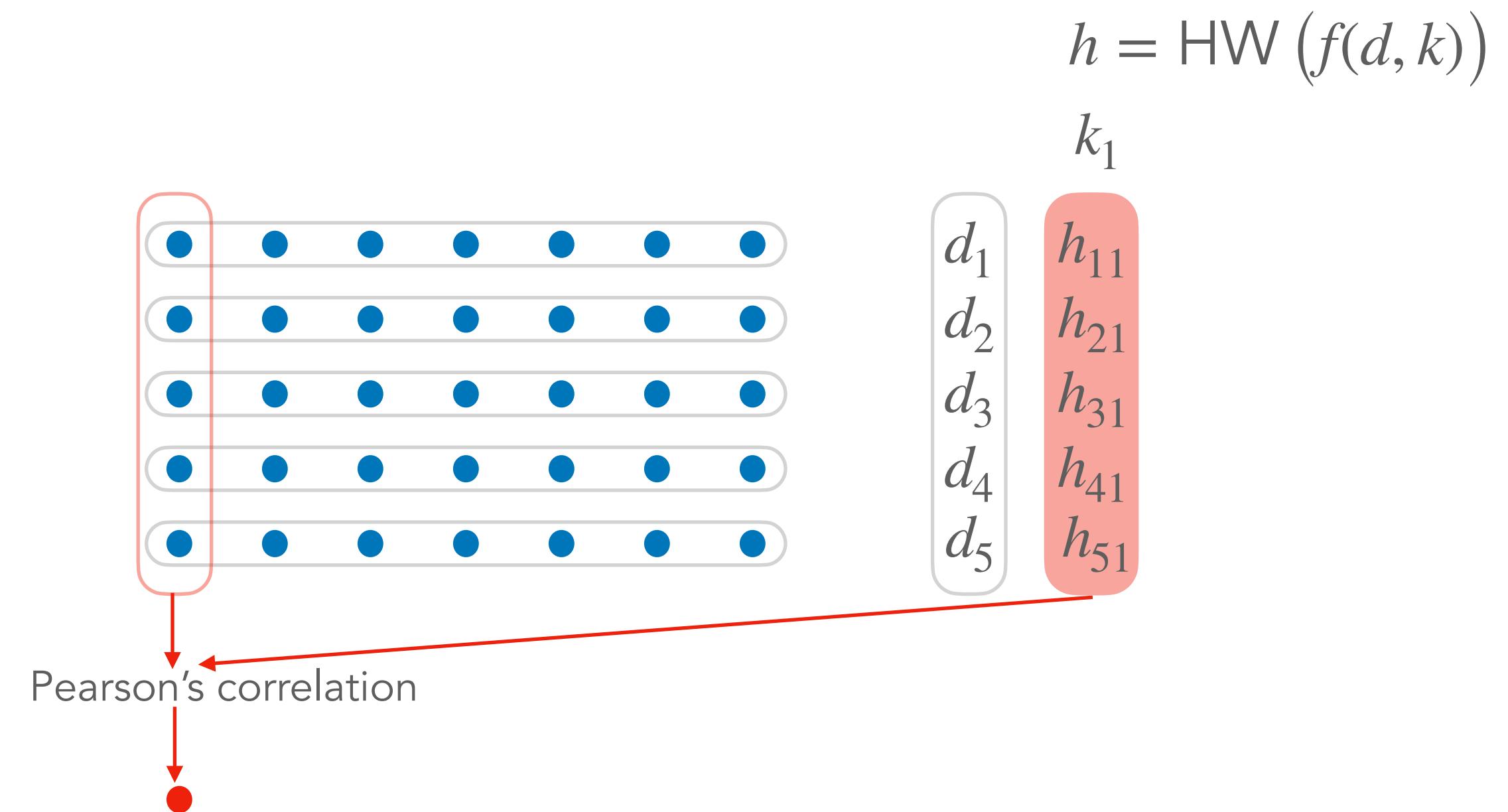
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Linearity relationship with Pearson's correlation coefficient

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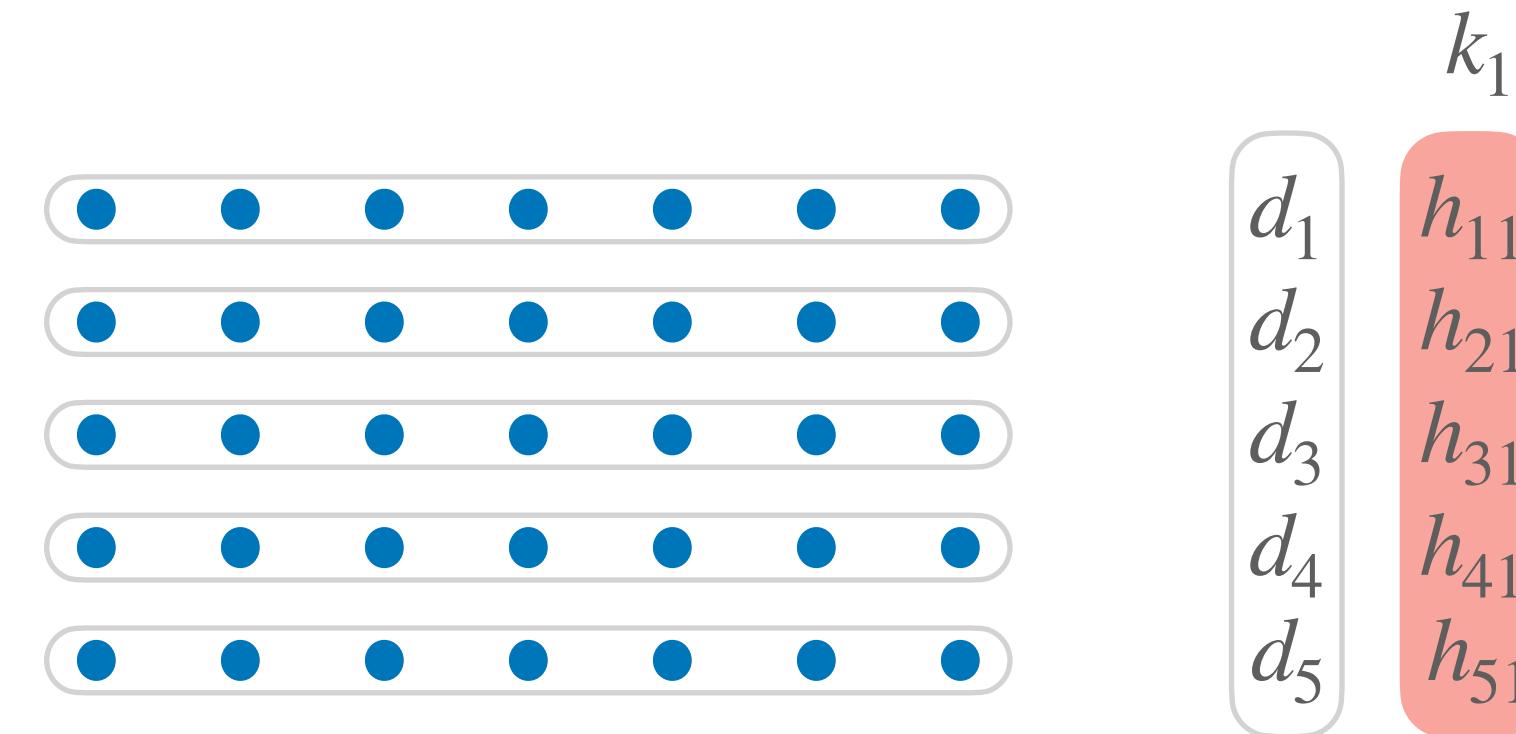


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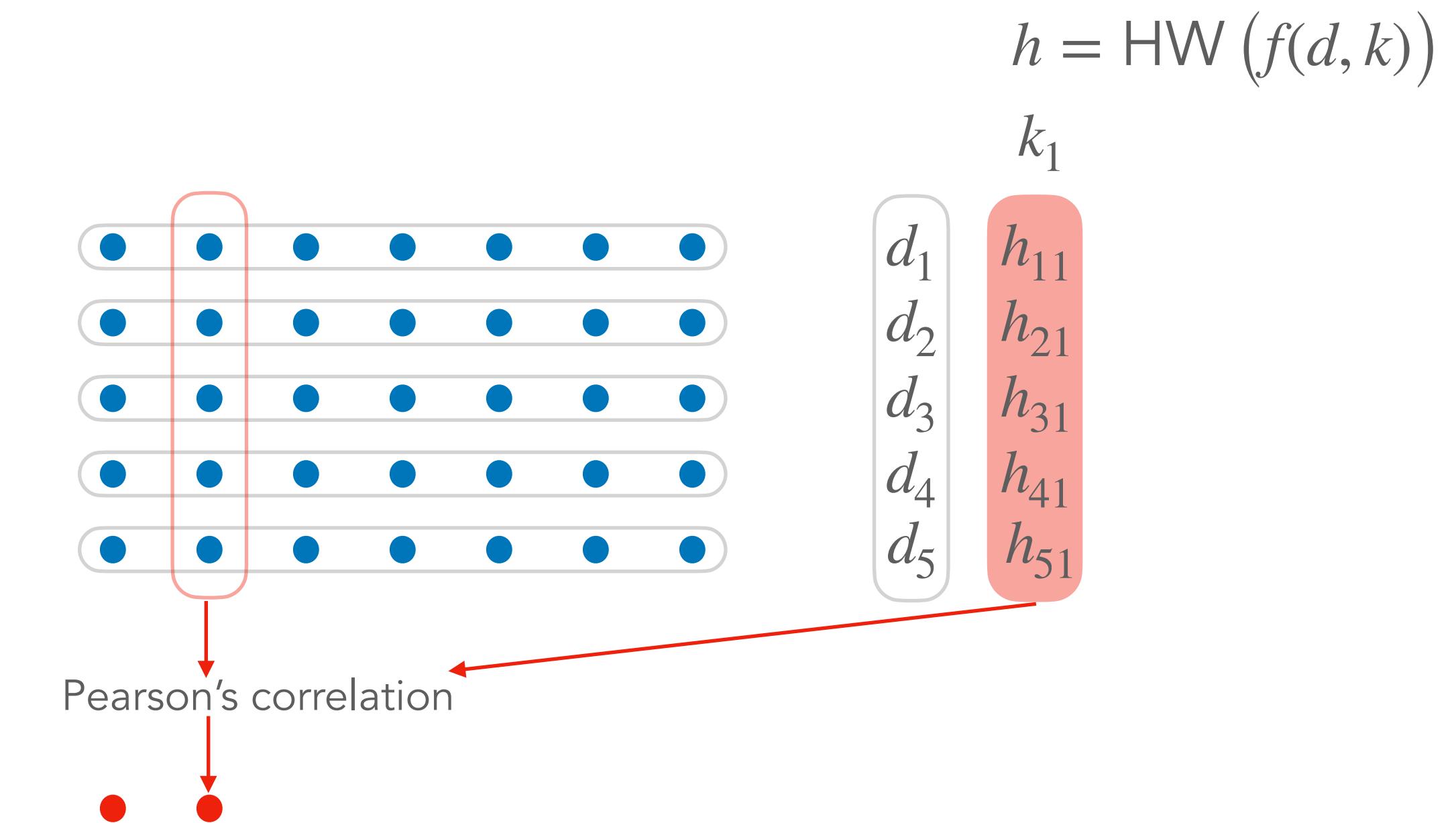
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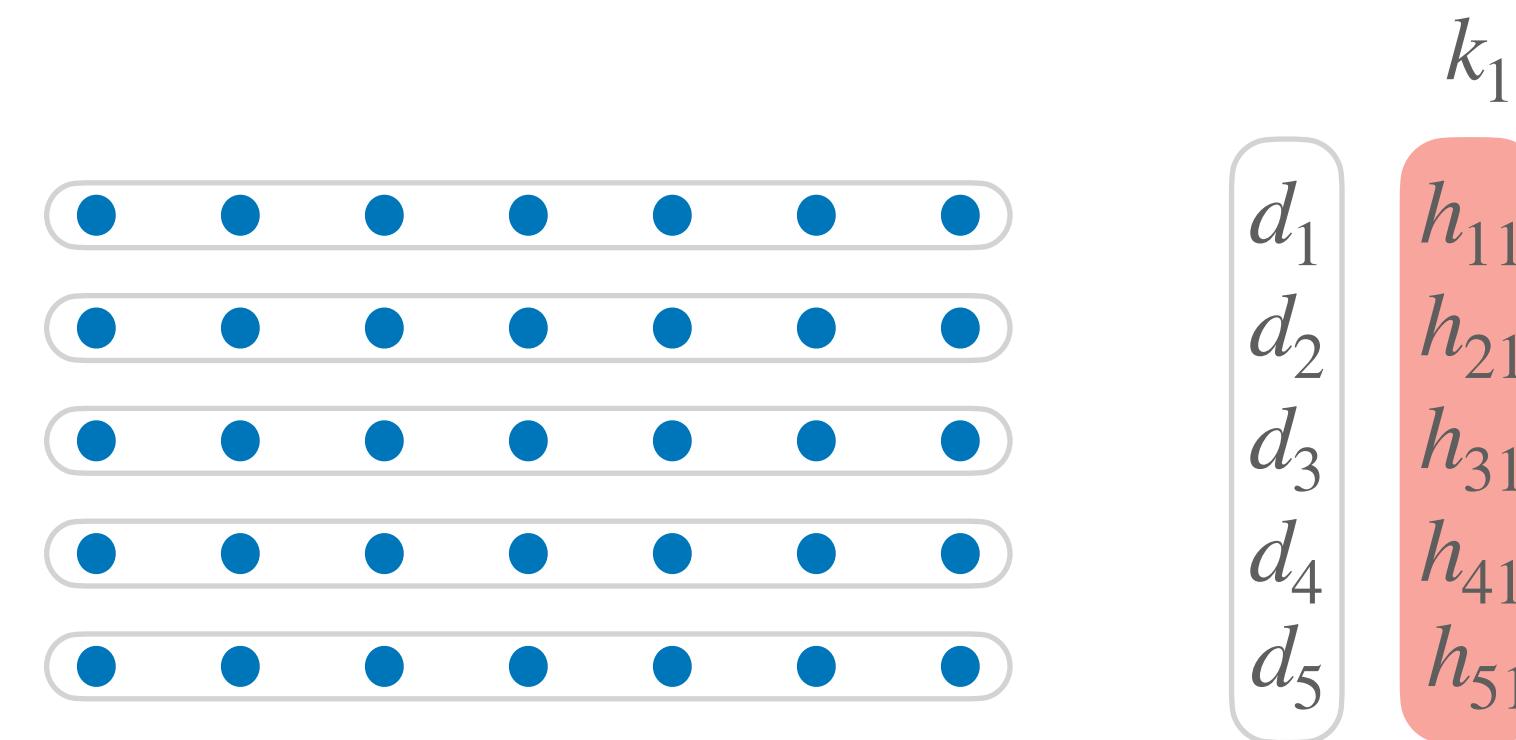


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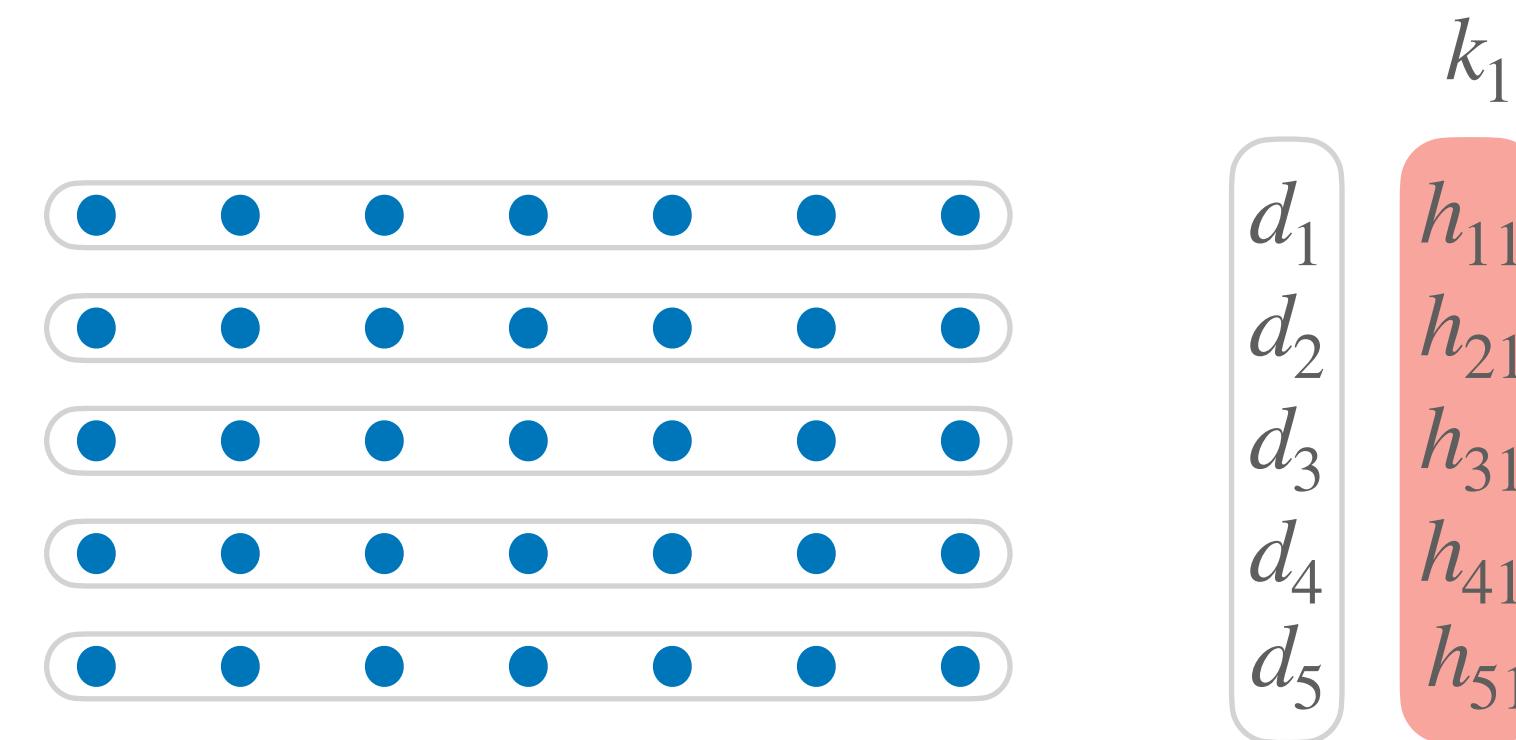


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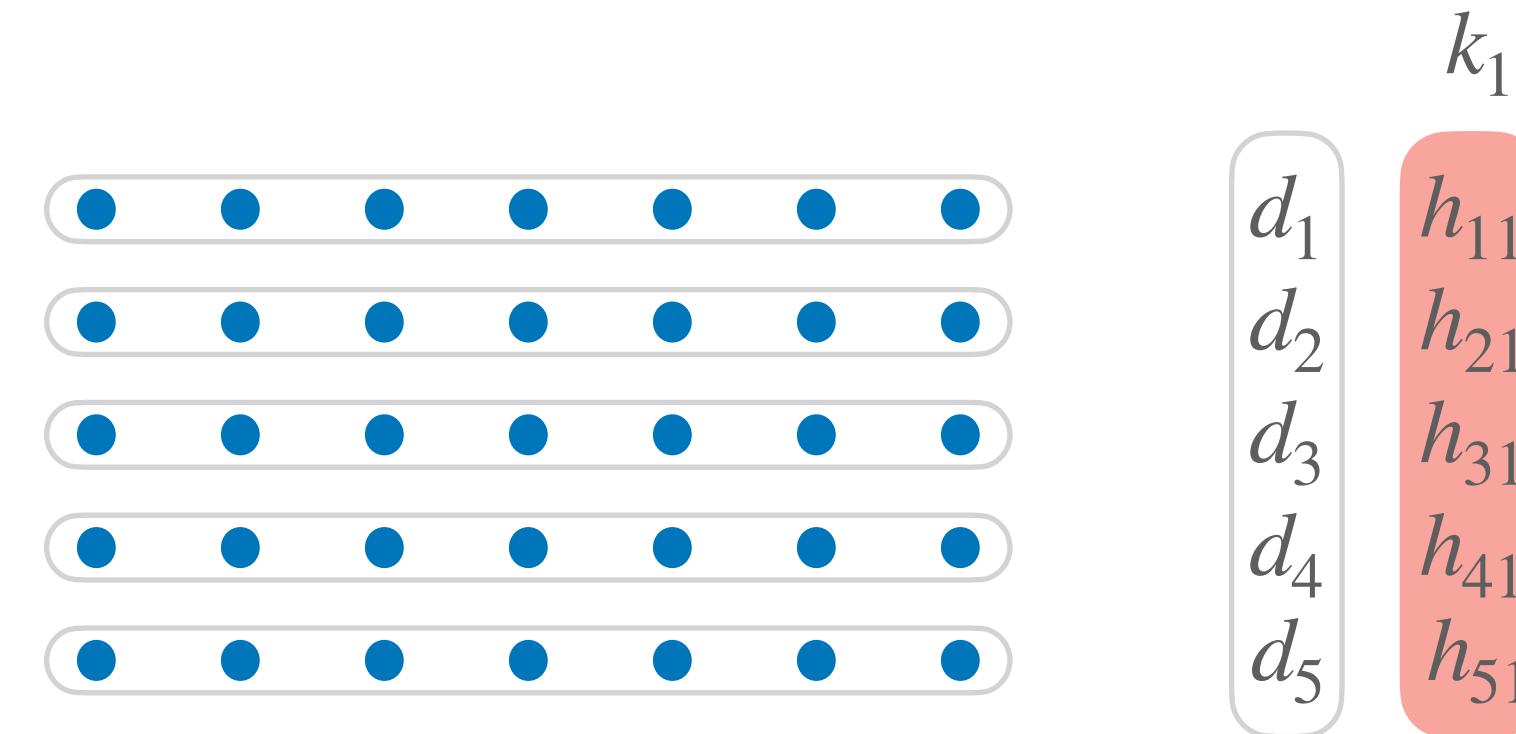
$k_1$  ● ● ● ● ● ●

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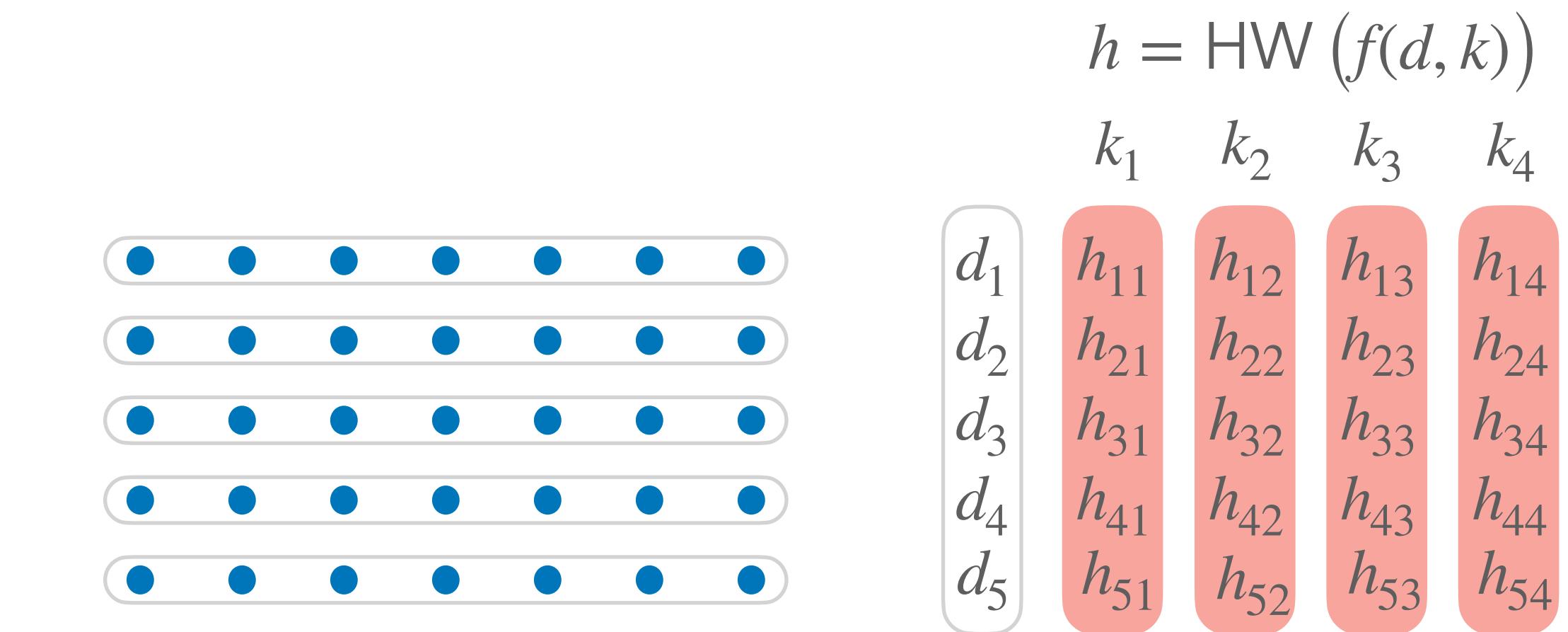
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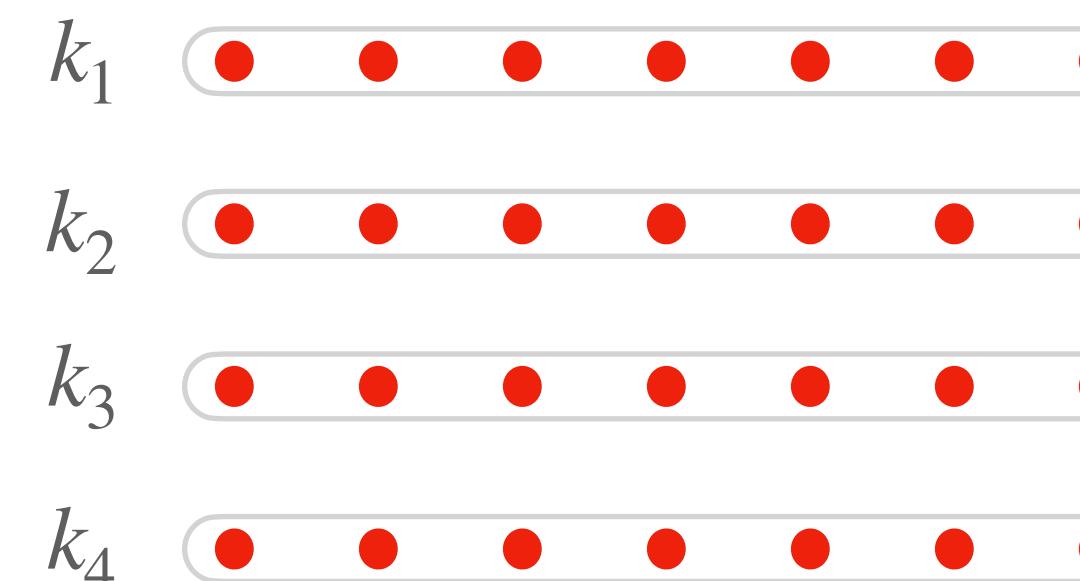
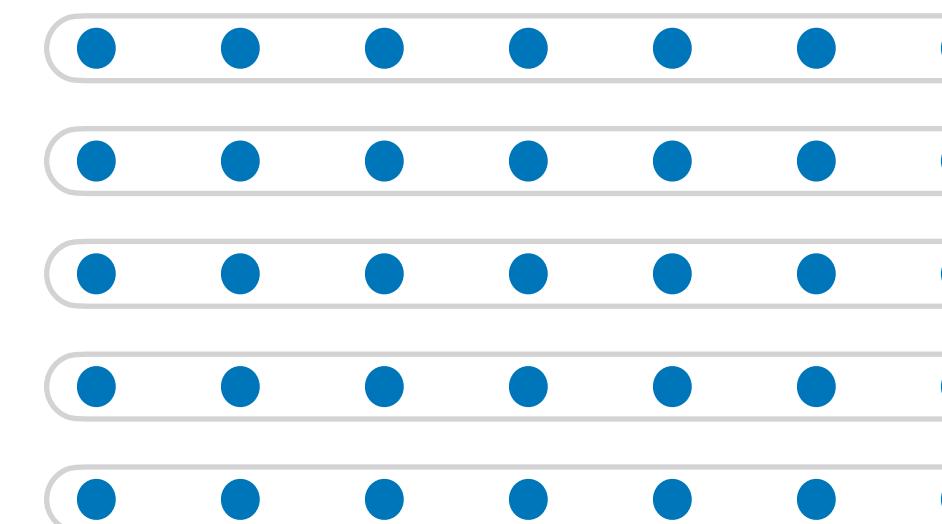
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Linearity relationship with Pearson's correlation coefficient

$$h = \text{HW}(f(d, k))$$

$$k_1 \quad k_2 \quad k_3 \quad k_4$$

$d_1$	$h_{11}$	$h_{12}$	$h_{13}$	$h_{14}$
$d_2$	$h_{21}$	$h_{22}$	$h_{23}$	$h_{24}$
$d_3$	$h_{31}$	$h_{32}$	$h_{33}$	$h_{34}$
$d_4$	$h_{41}$	$h_{42}$	$h_{43}$	$h_{44}$
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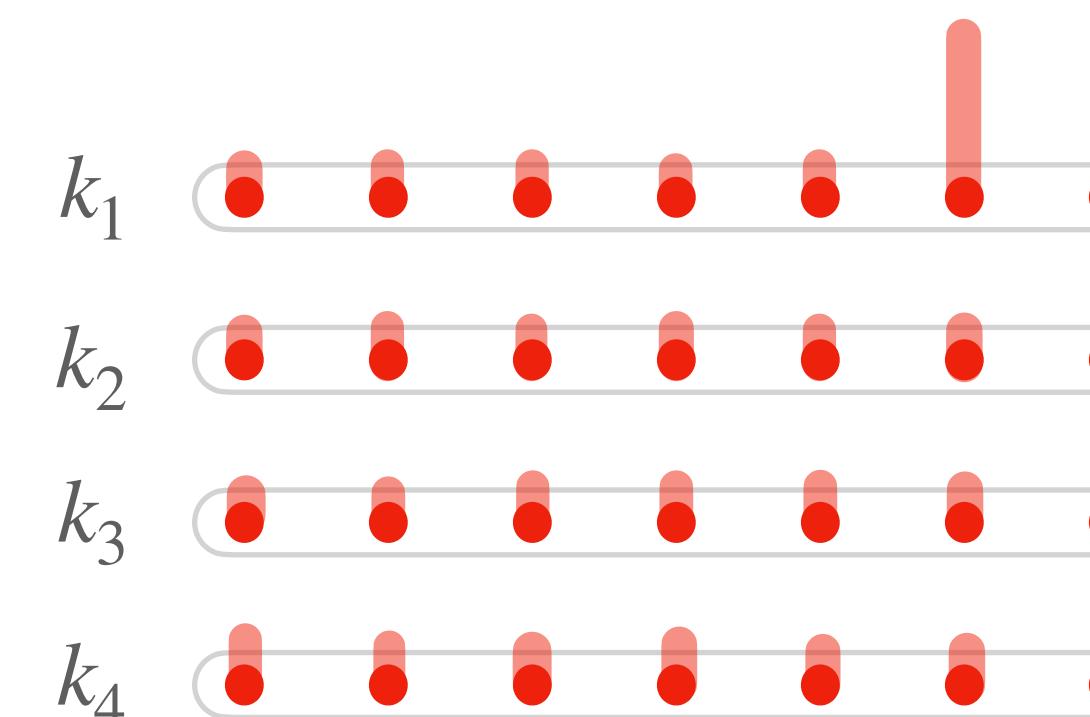
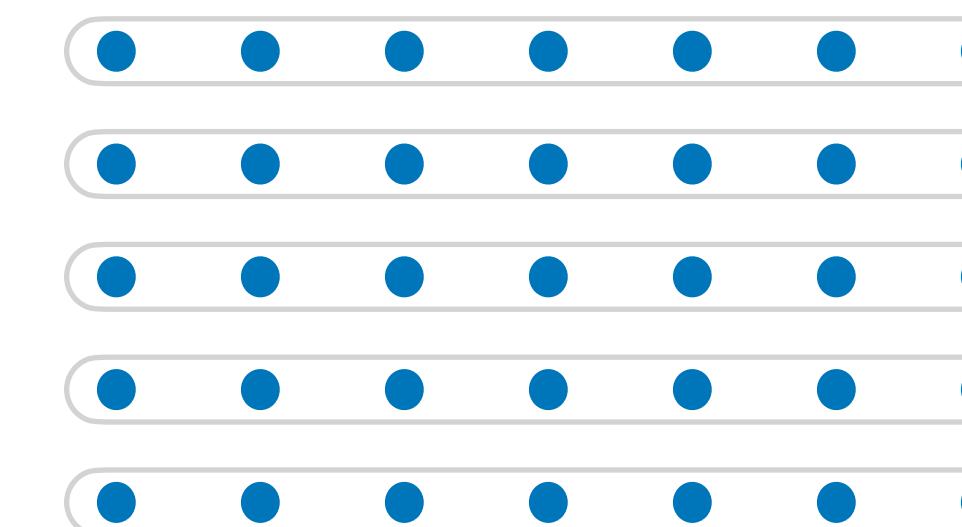
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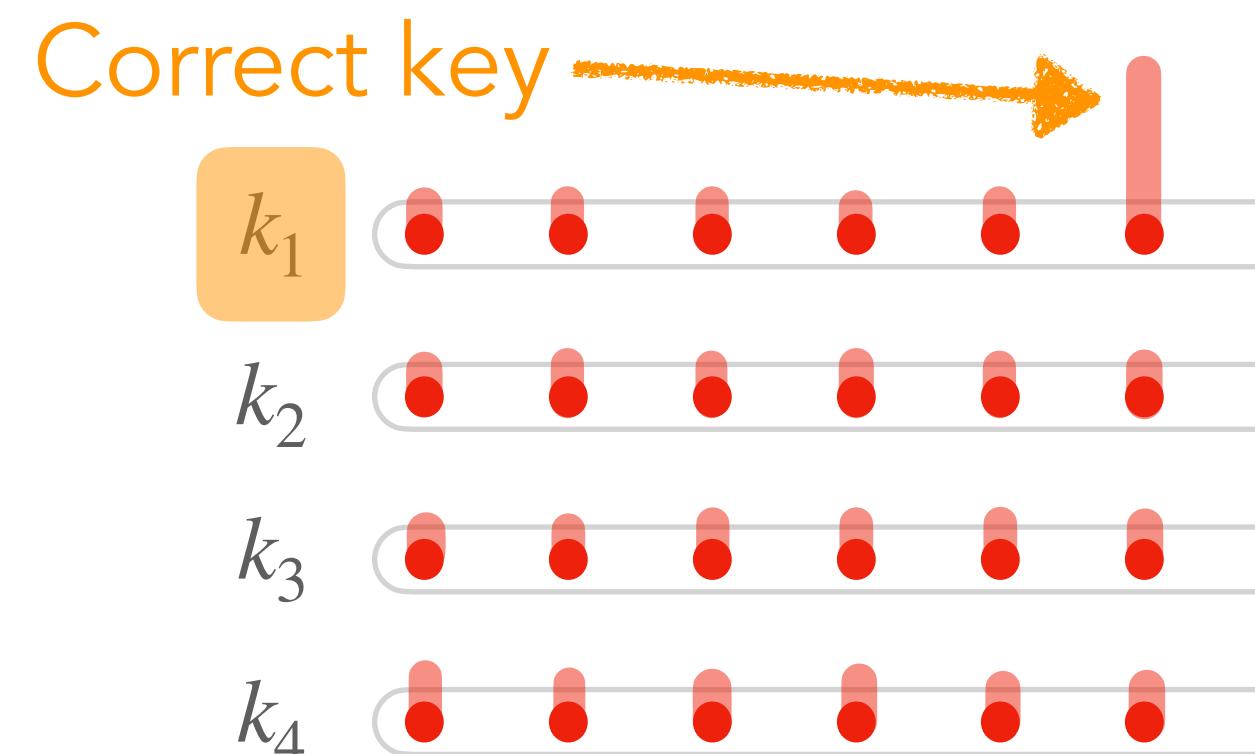
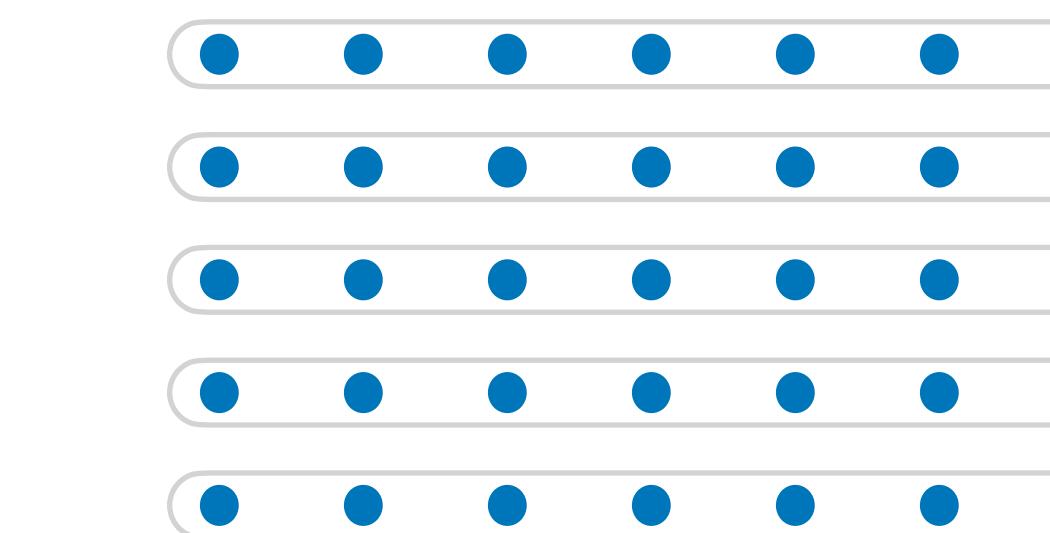
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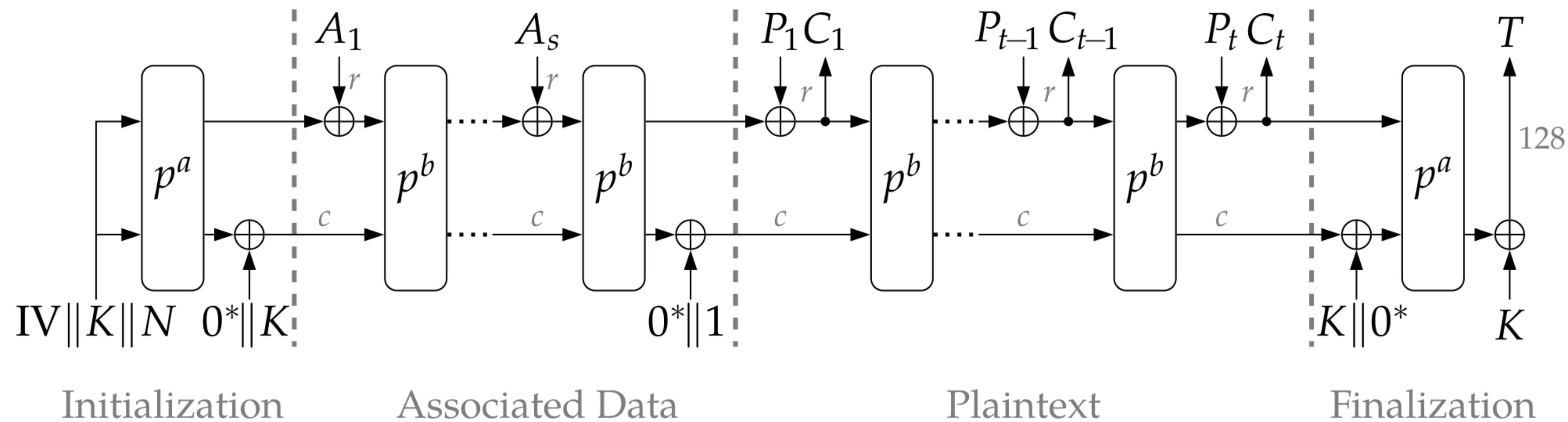
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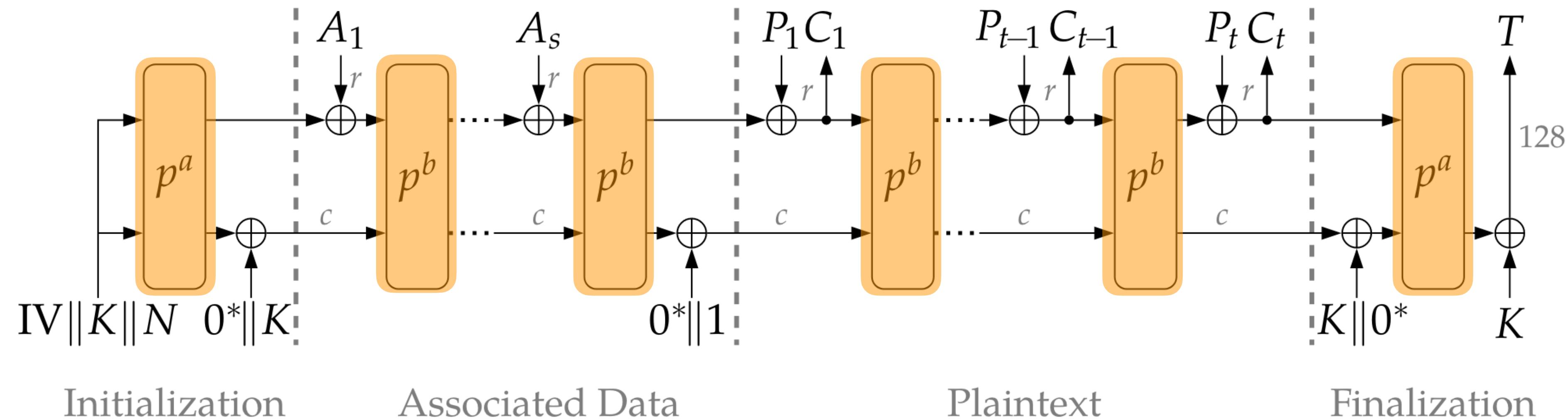
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# Ascon

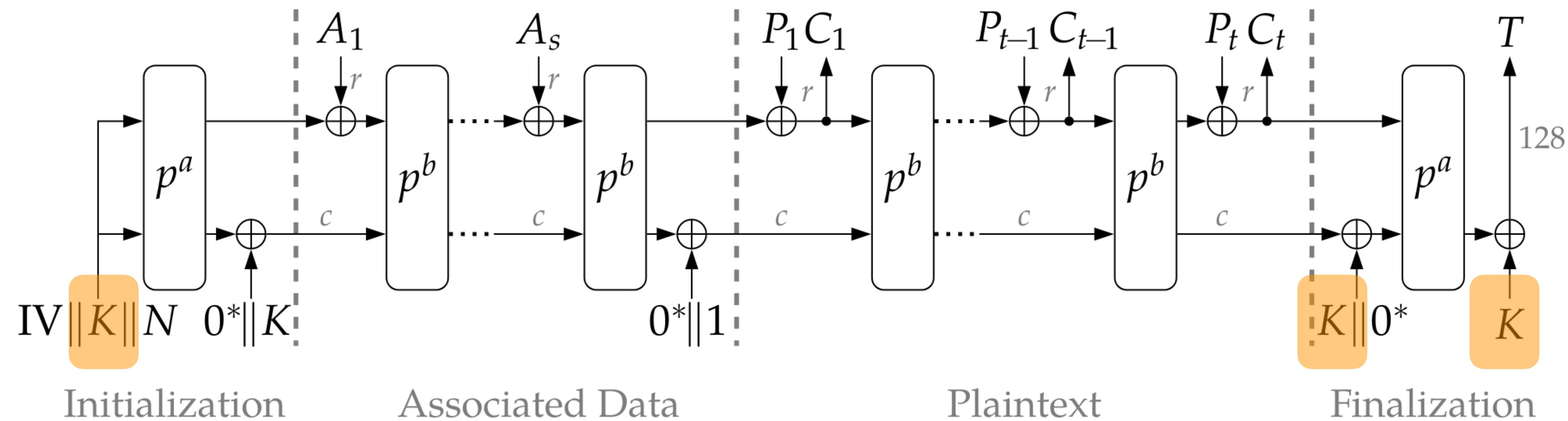


# Permutation blocks

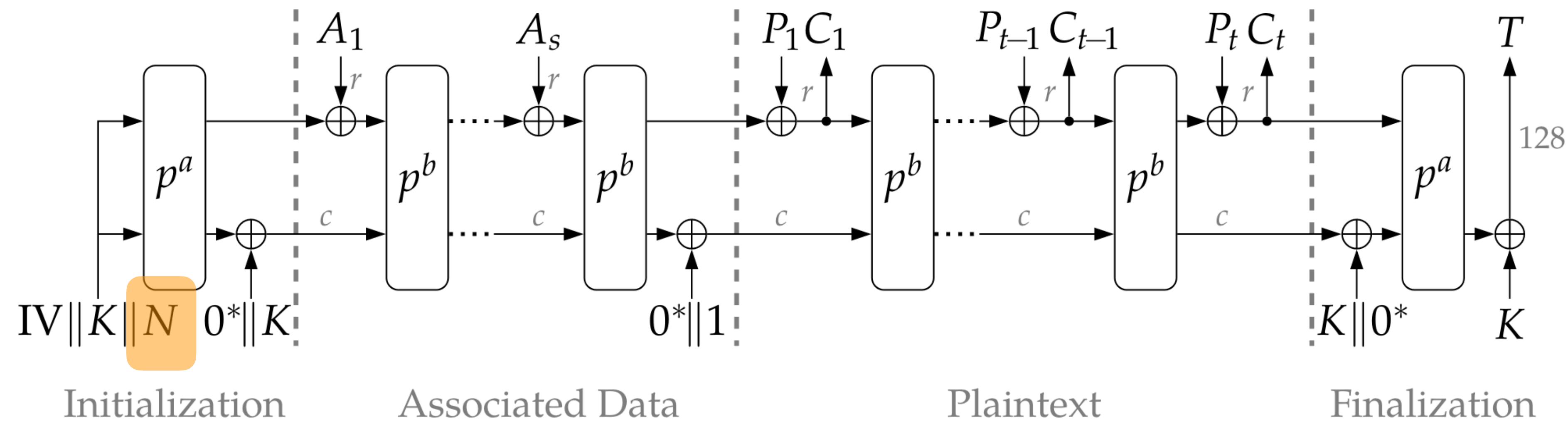


- ▶  $p^a$ : 12 rounds
- ▶  $p^b$ : 6 rounds

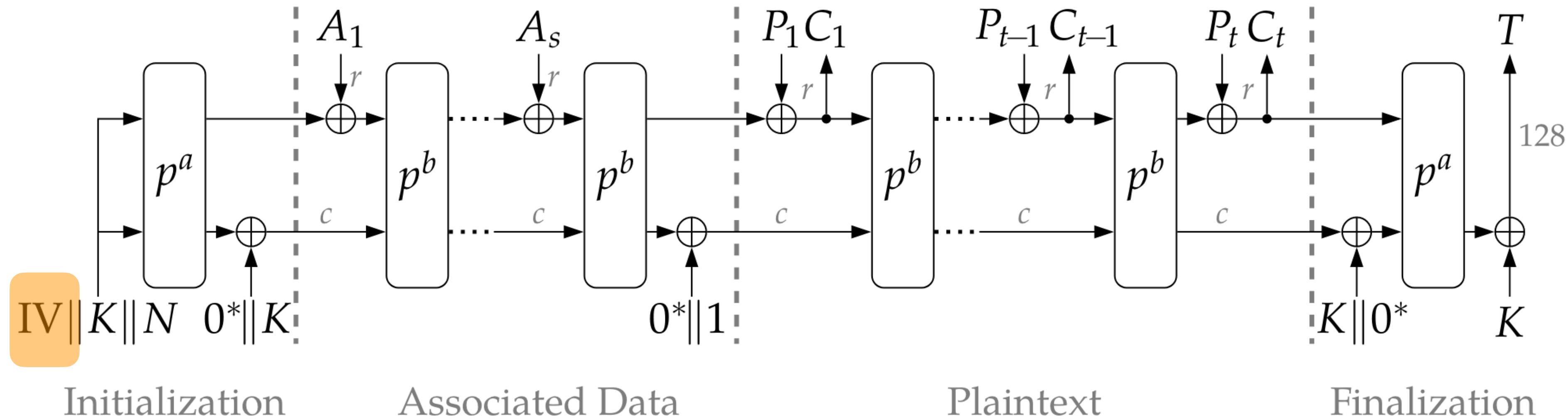
# Key (128 bits)



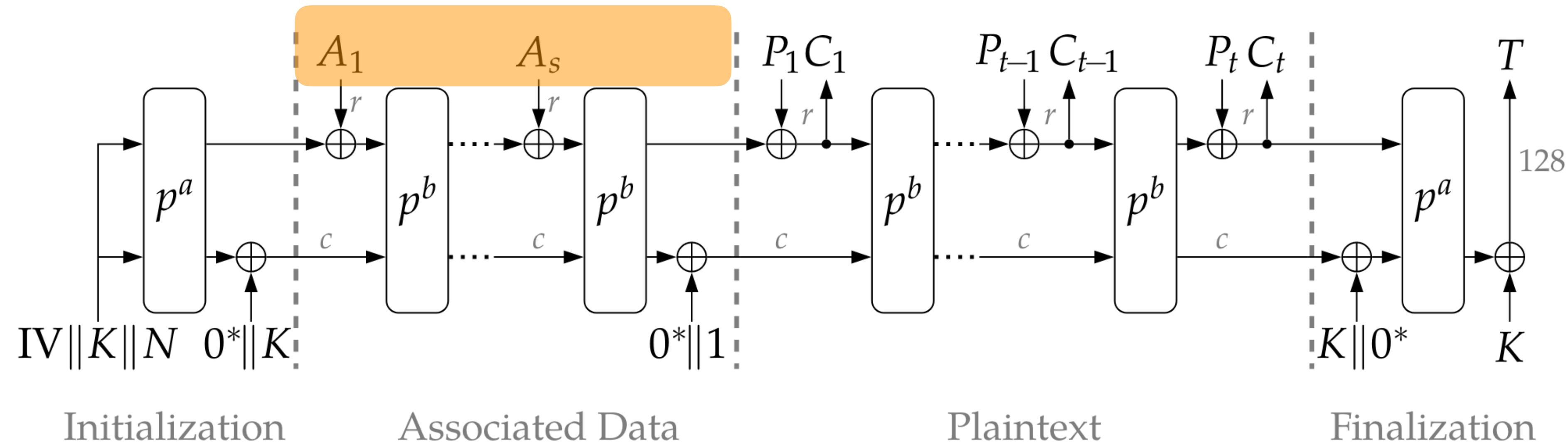
# Nonce (128 bits)



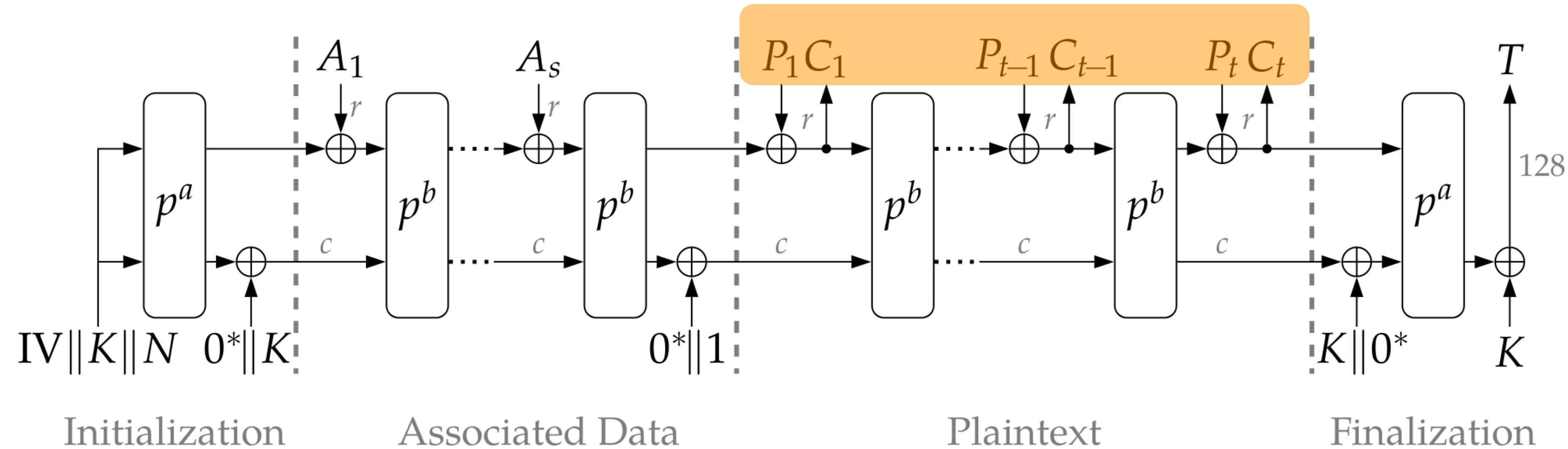
# Initialization vector



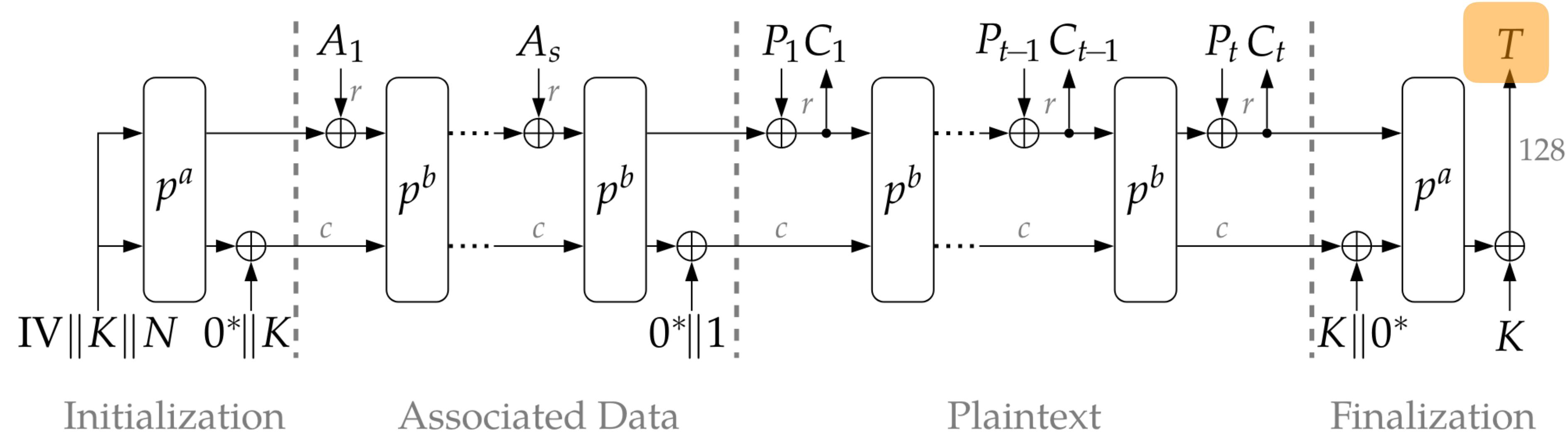
# Associated data



# Plaintext / Ciphertext



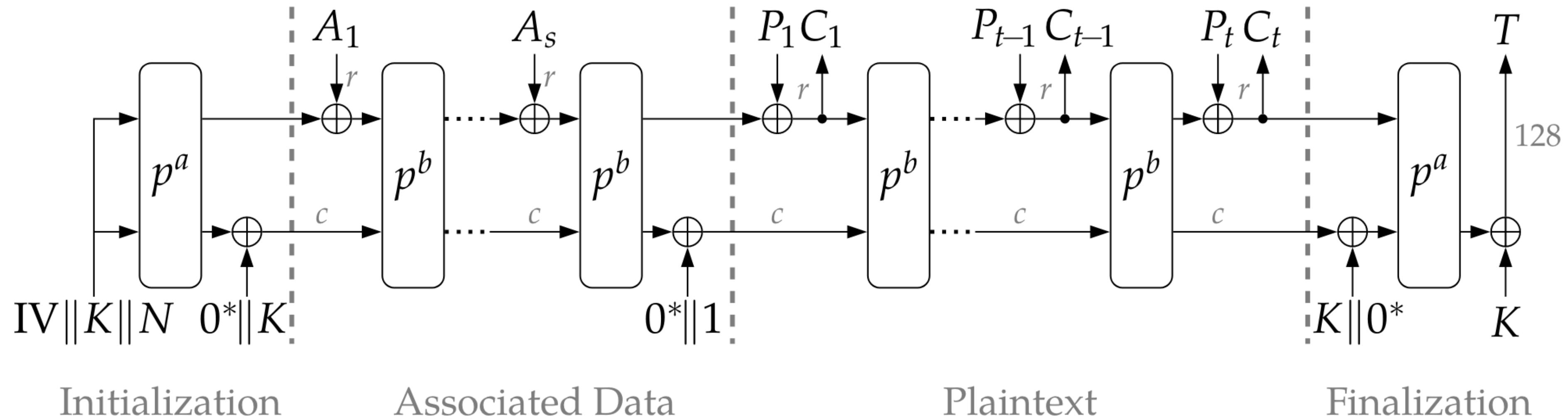
# Verification Tag



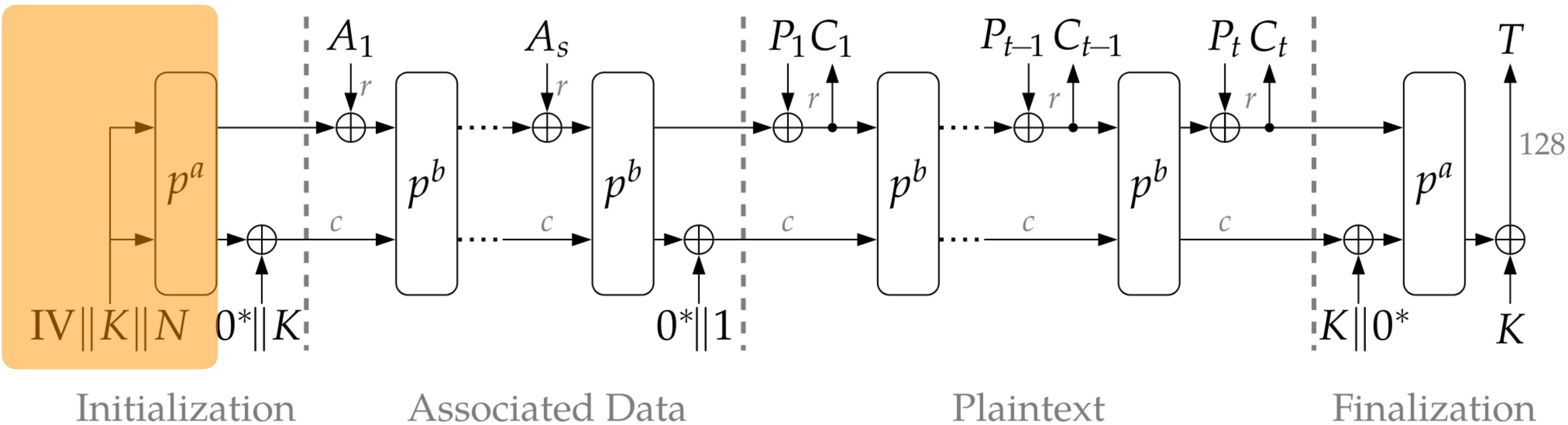


# Existing CPA attacks on Ascon

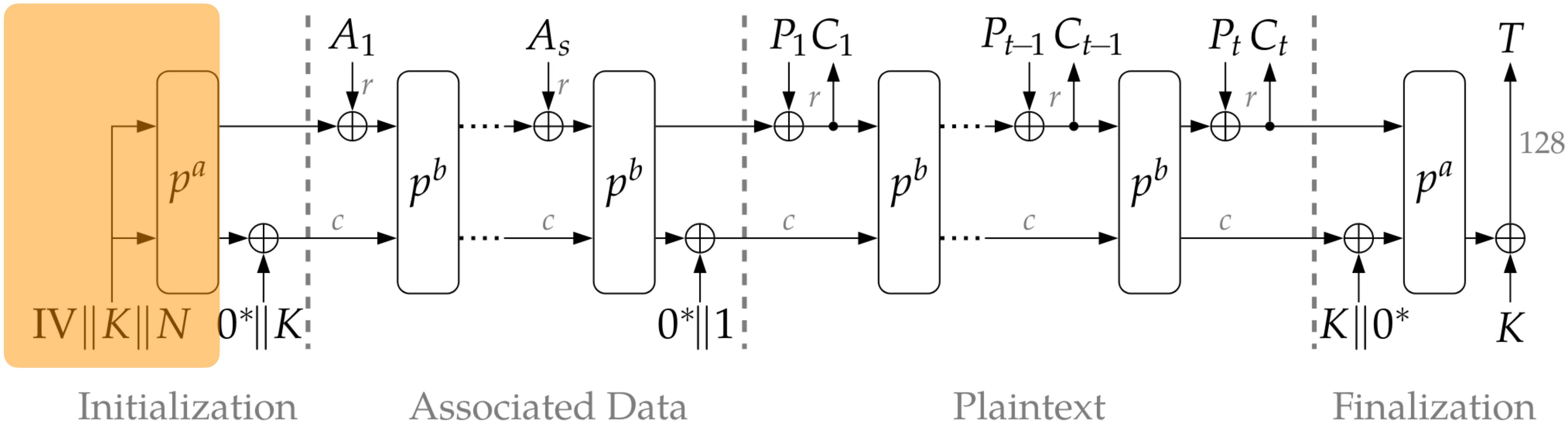
# Selection function $v = f(d, k)$



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Choose  $v = f(\text{nonce}, \text{key})$

intermediate variable  $v$  in the *first round*

round computation

# Round computation

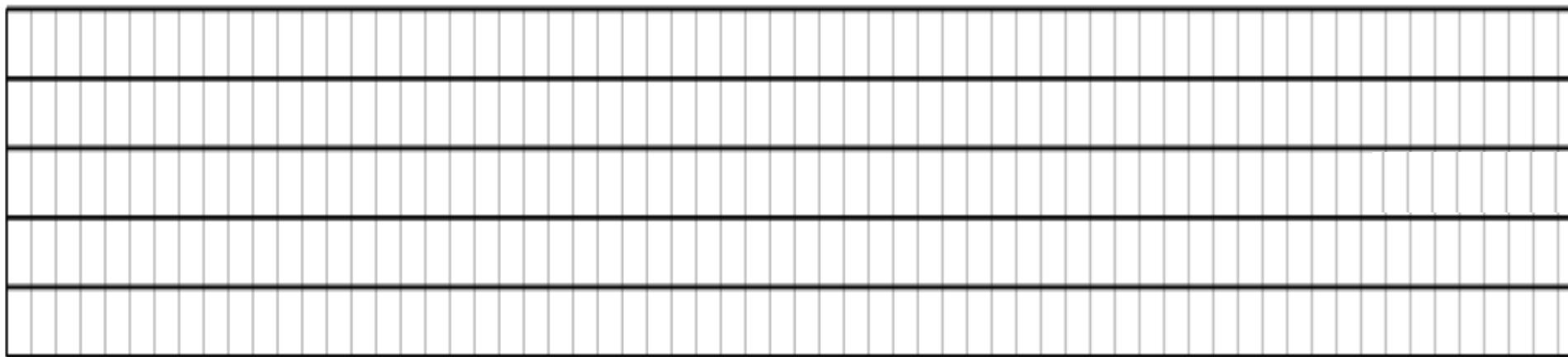
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# Round computation

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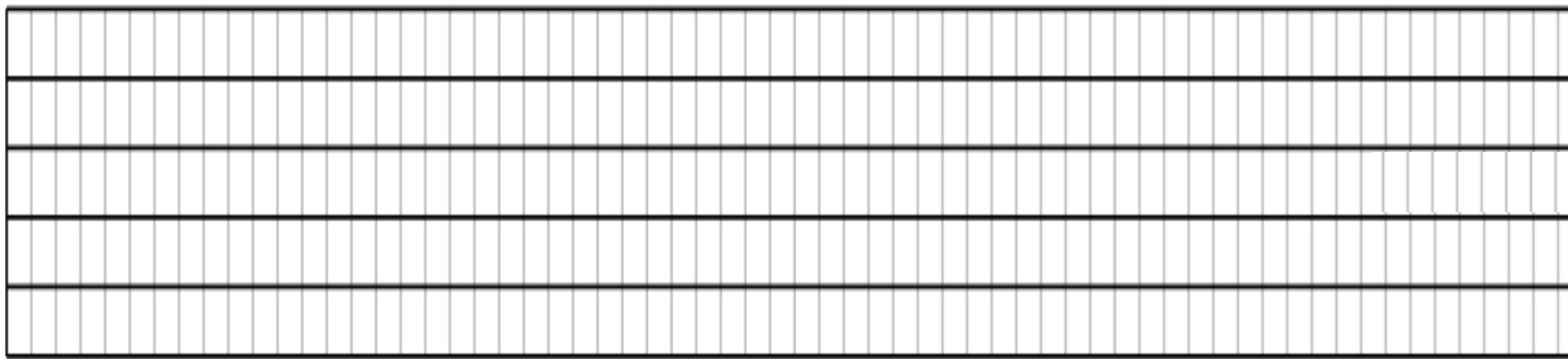
On 320-bit state =  $5 \times 64\text{-bit words}$



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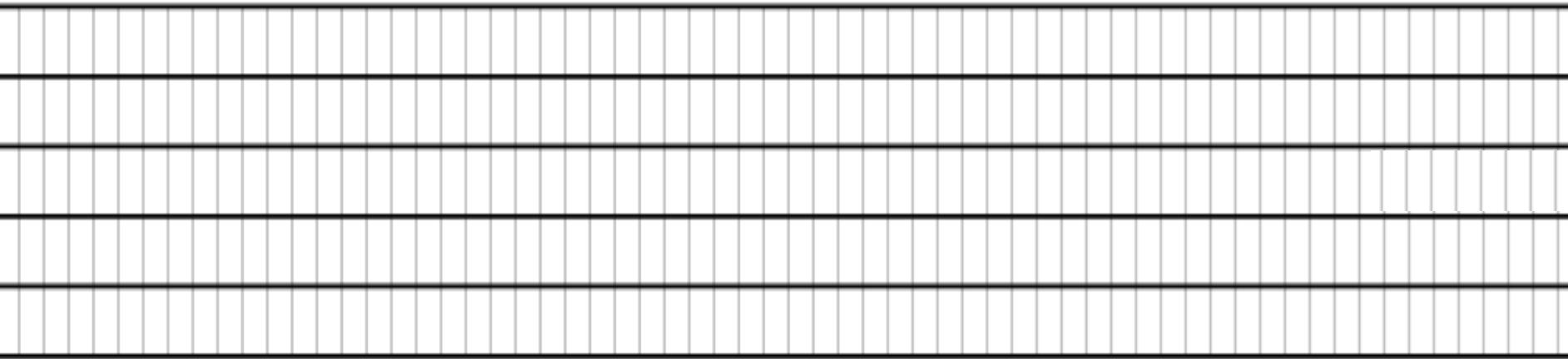


Input of the first round:

# Round computation

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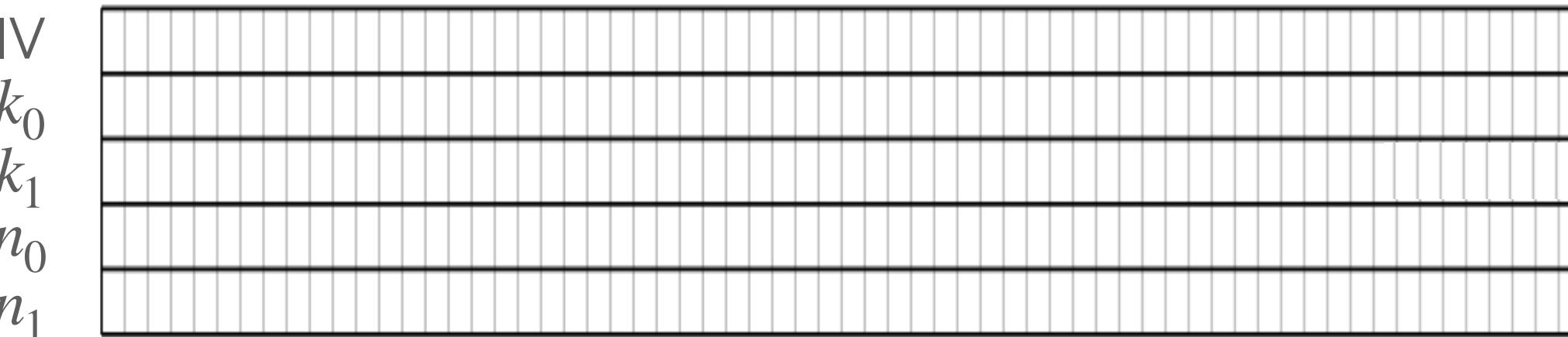
Input of the first round:

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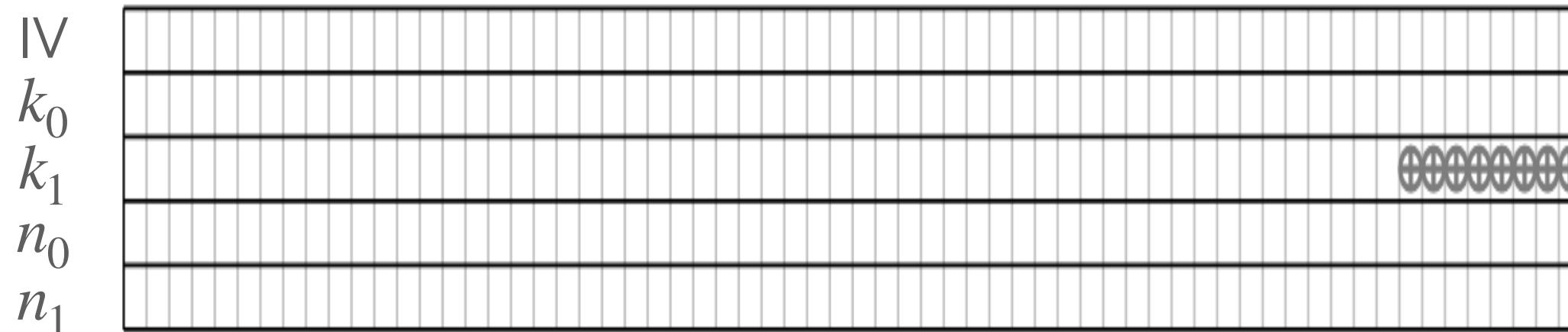


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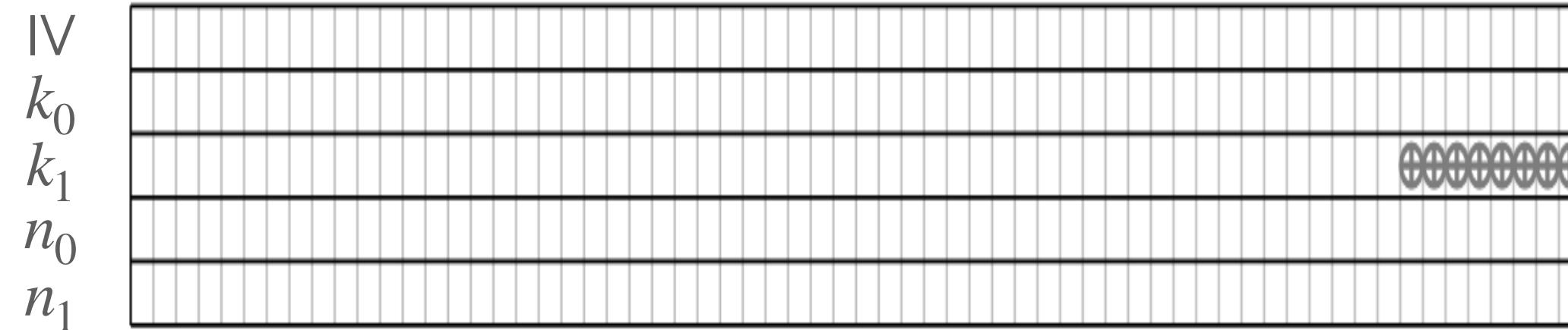
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(1) Round constant addition

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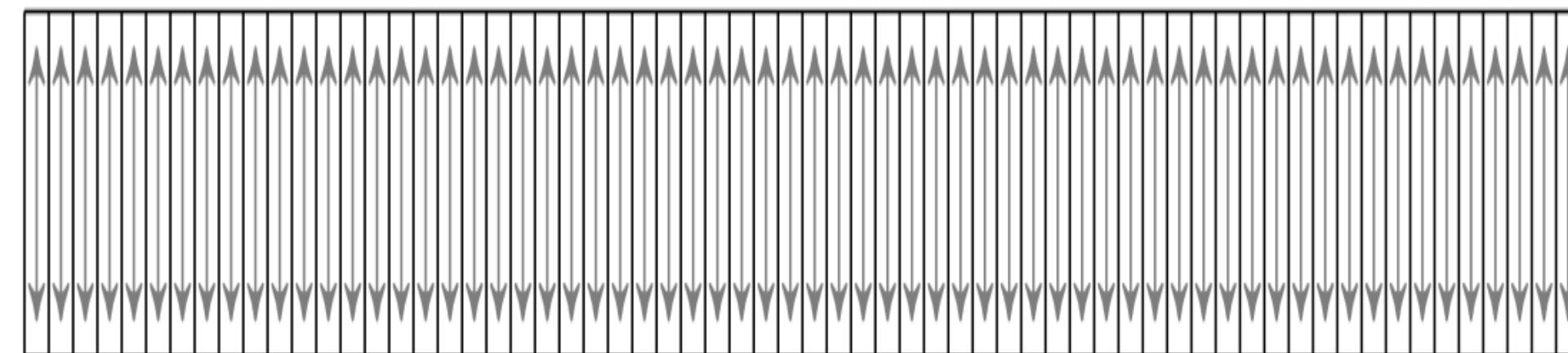
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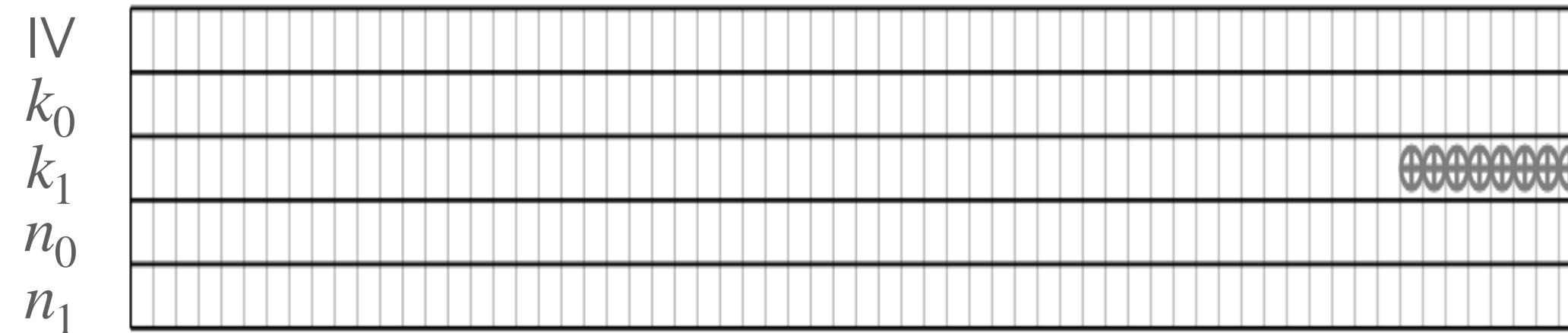
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(2) Substitution *(vertical)*

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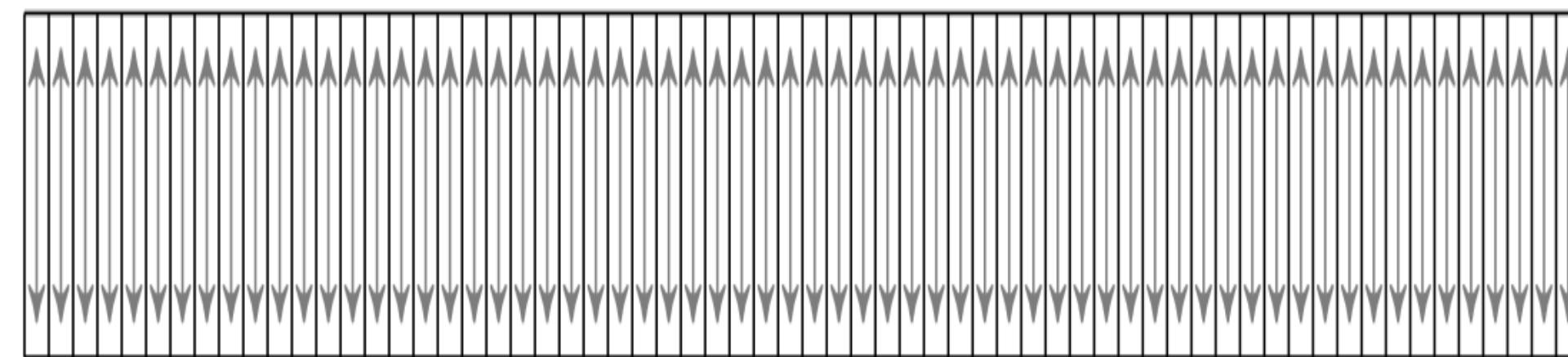
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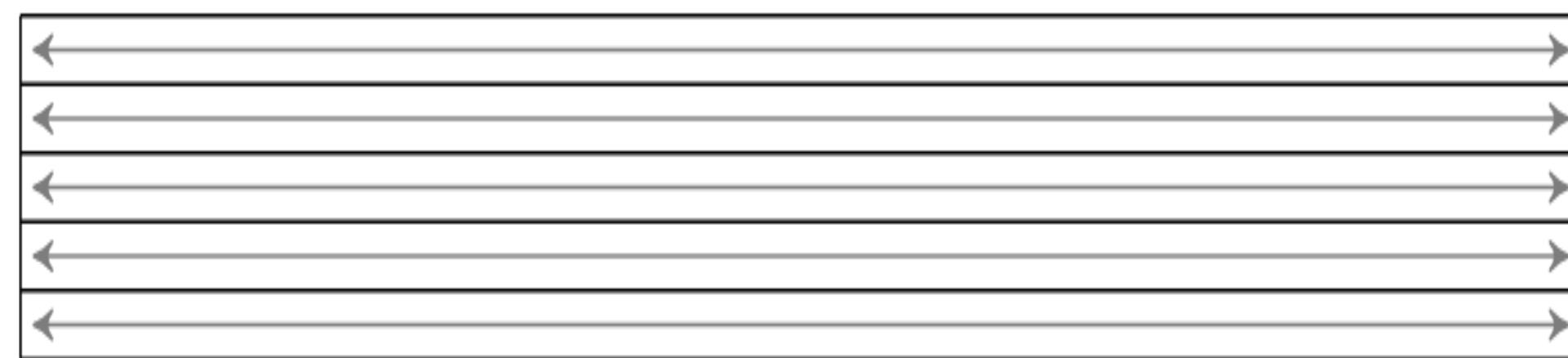
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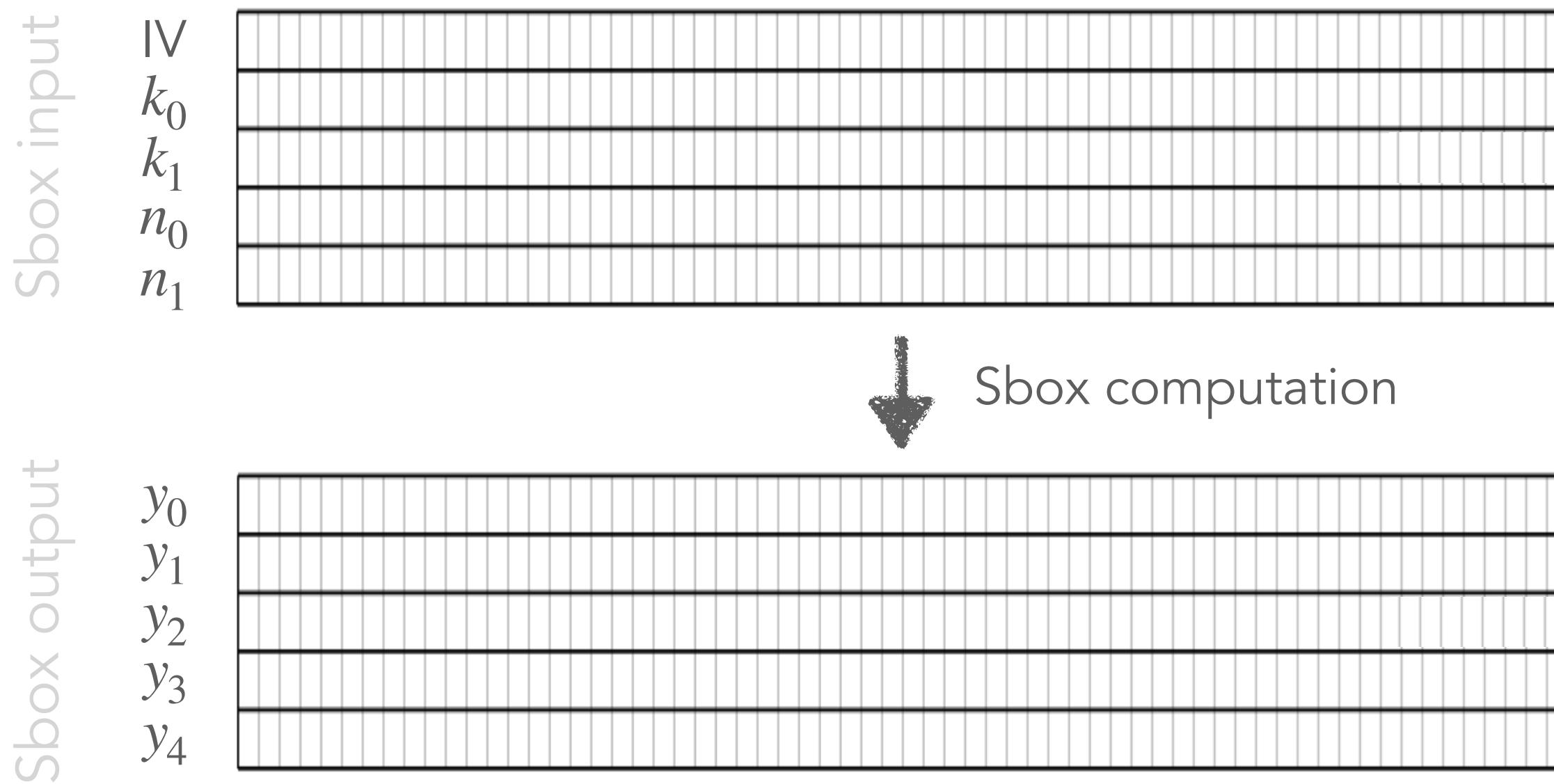


(3) Linear diffusion *(horizontal)*

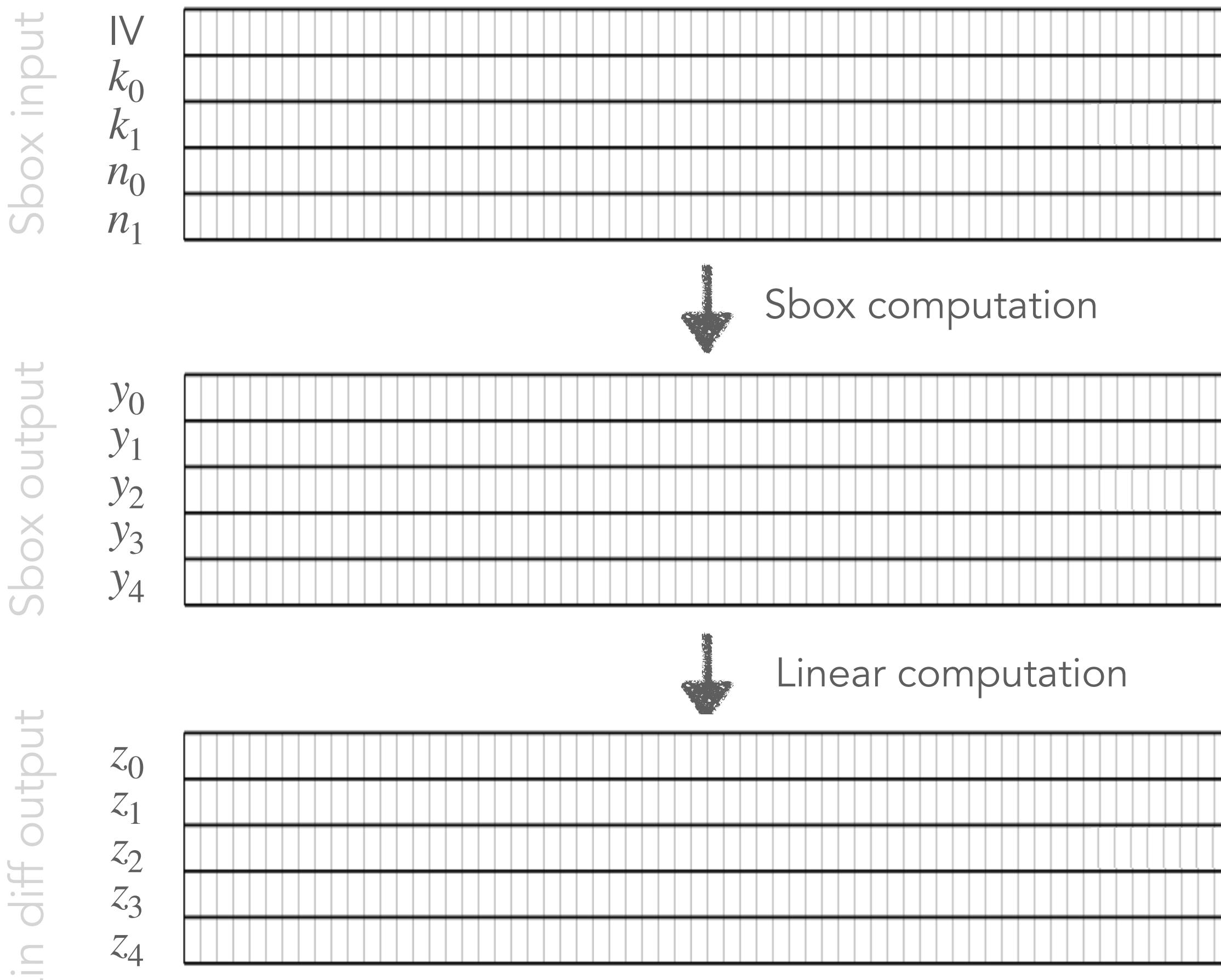
# State changes

Sbox input

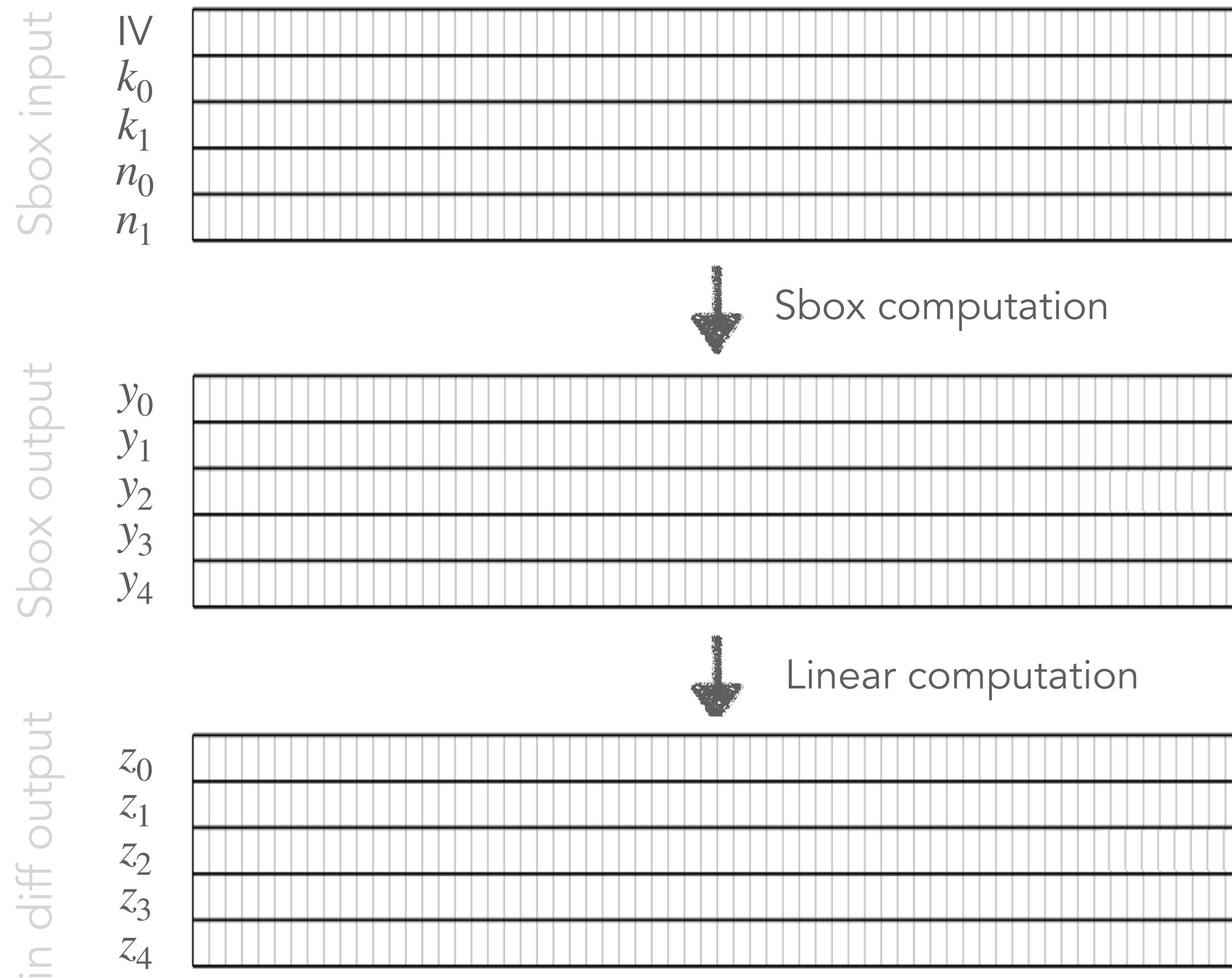
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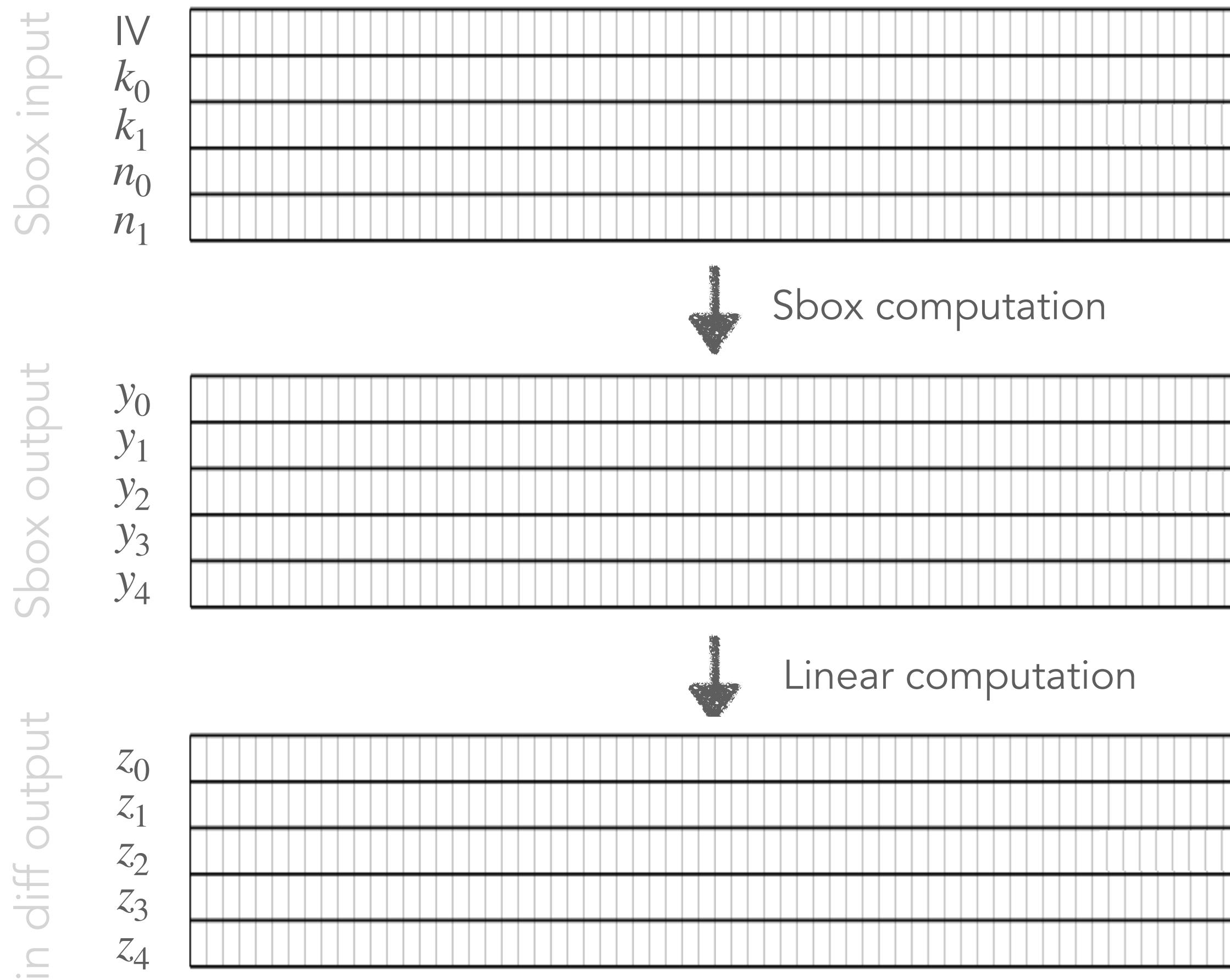
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Ramezanpour et al., 2020

Choose Sbox output as attack point

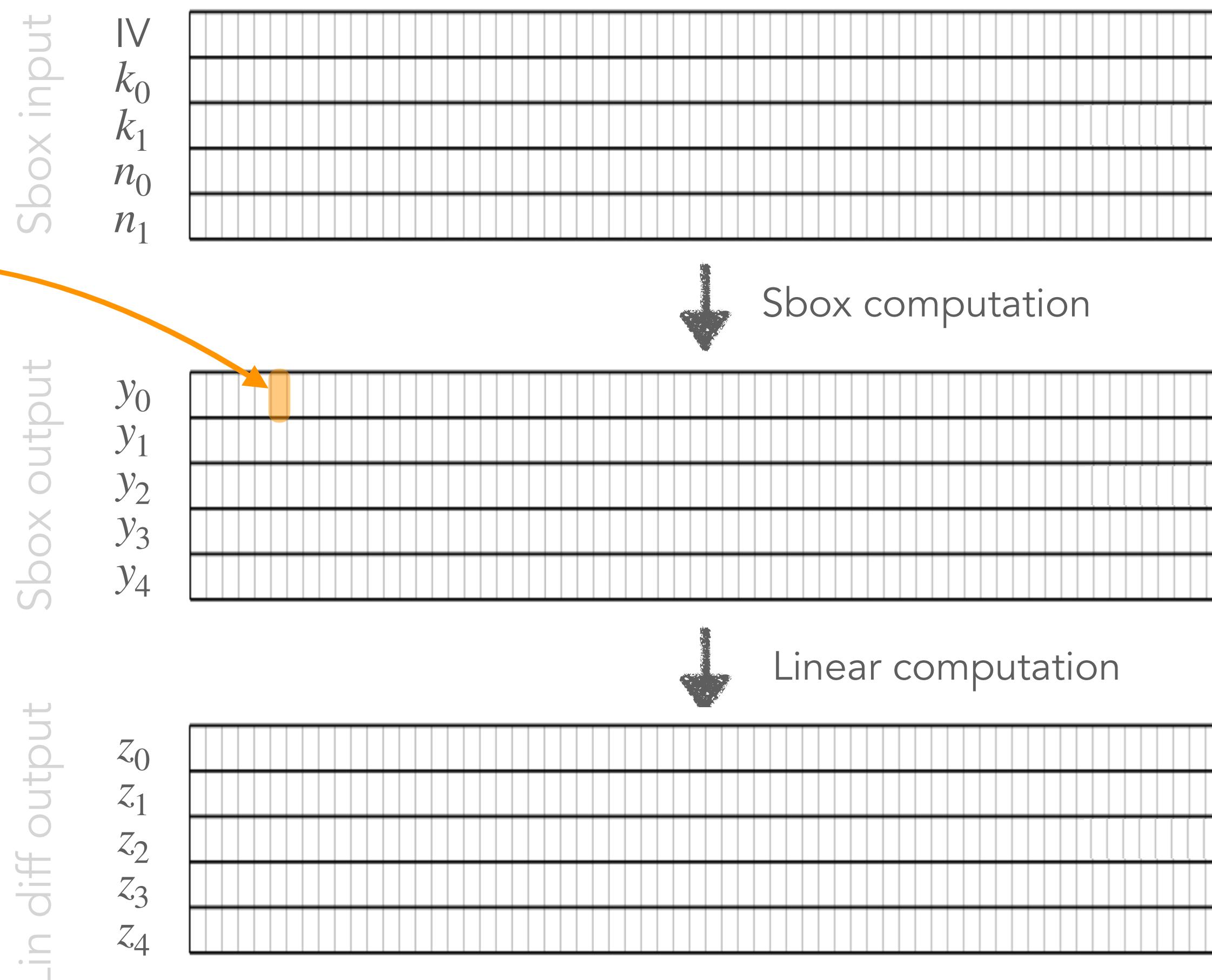


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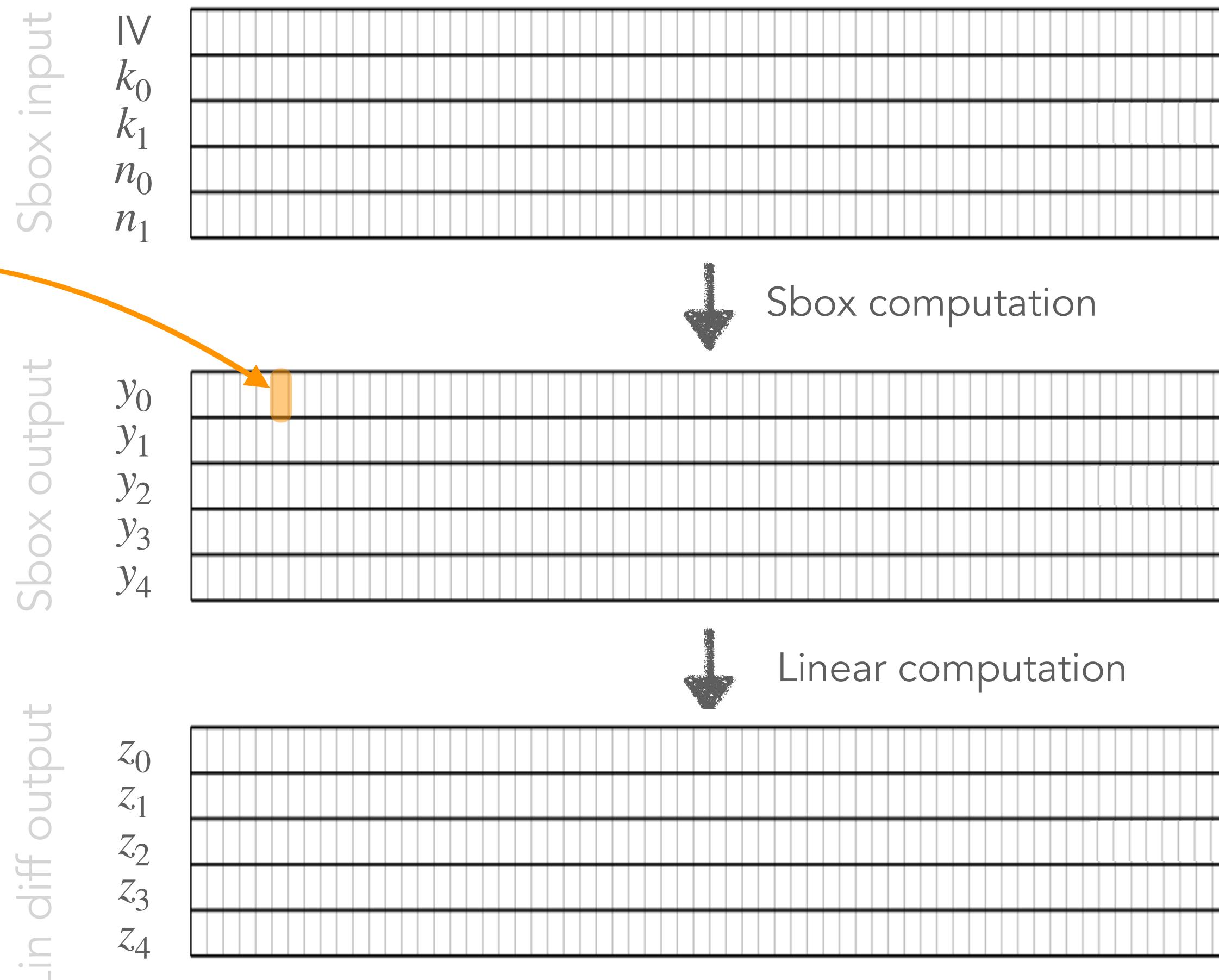


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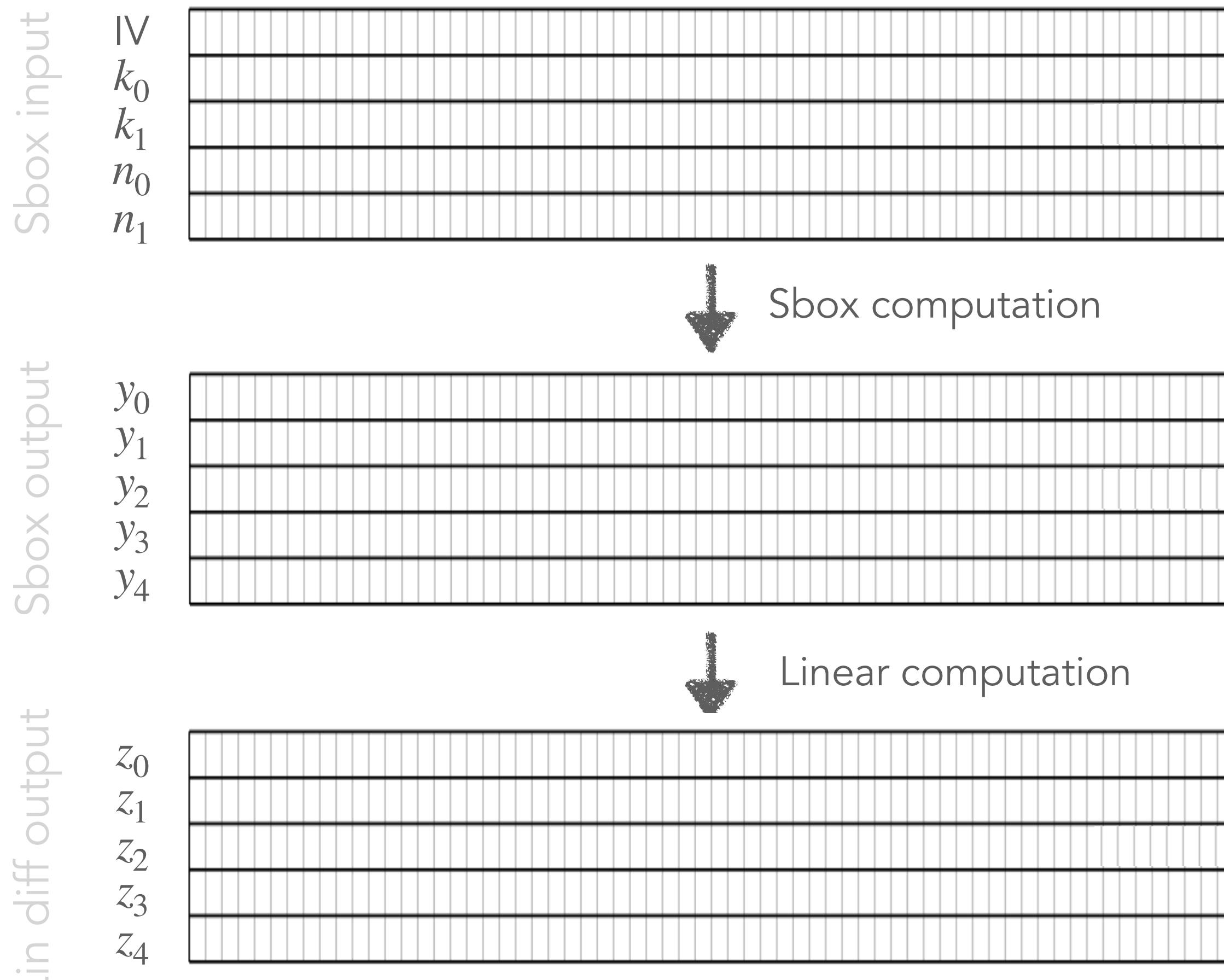


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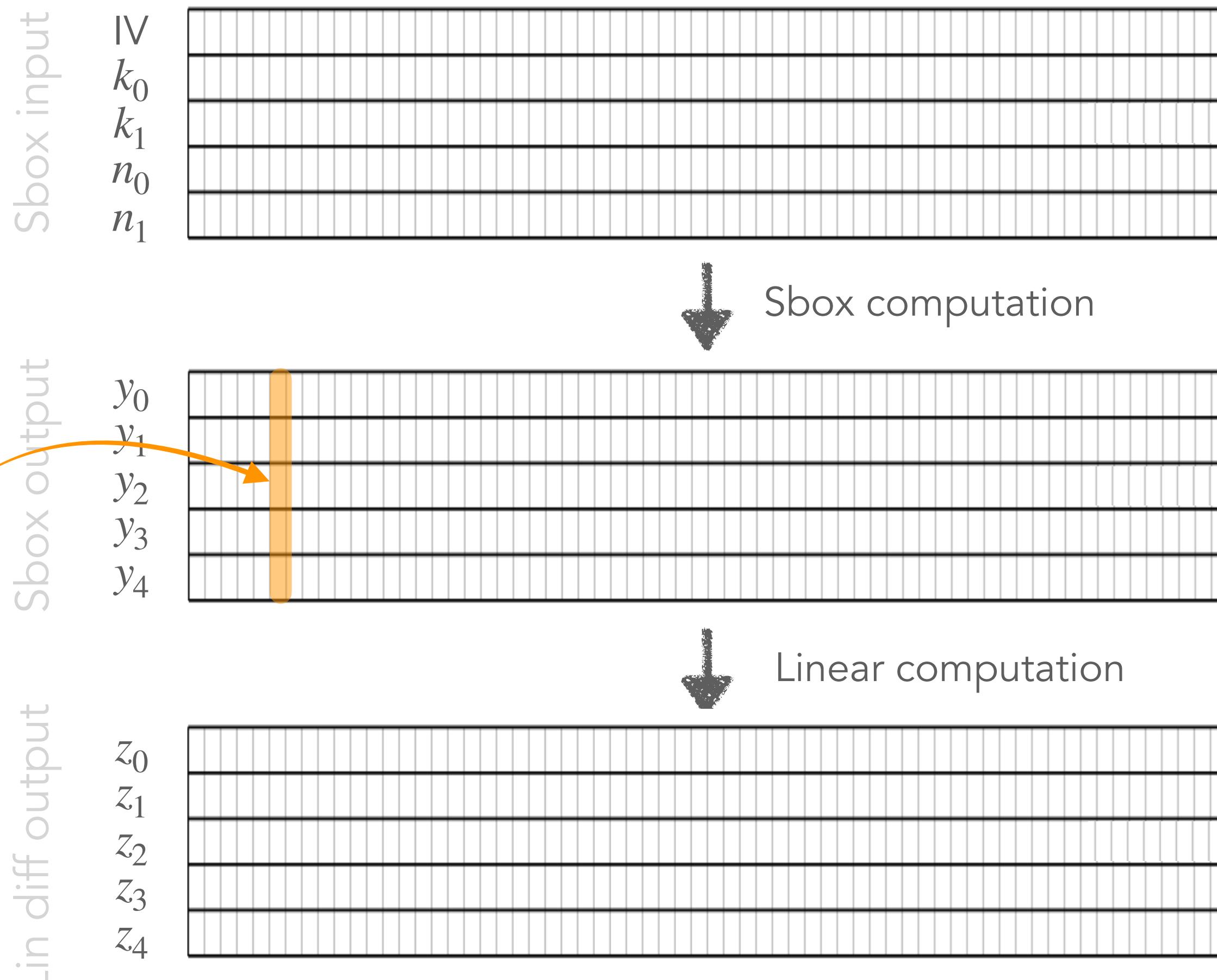


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- Intermediate variable:  $y_0^j$   
→ Failed (with 40K traces)
- Intermediate variable:  $(y_0^j | y_1^j | y_2^j | y_3^j | y_4^j)$   
HW of Sbox output

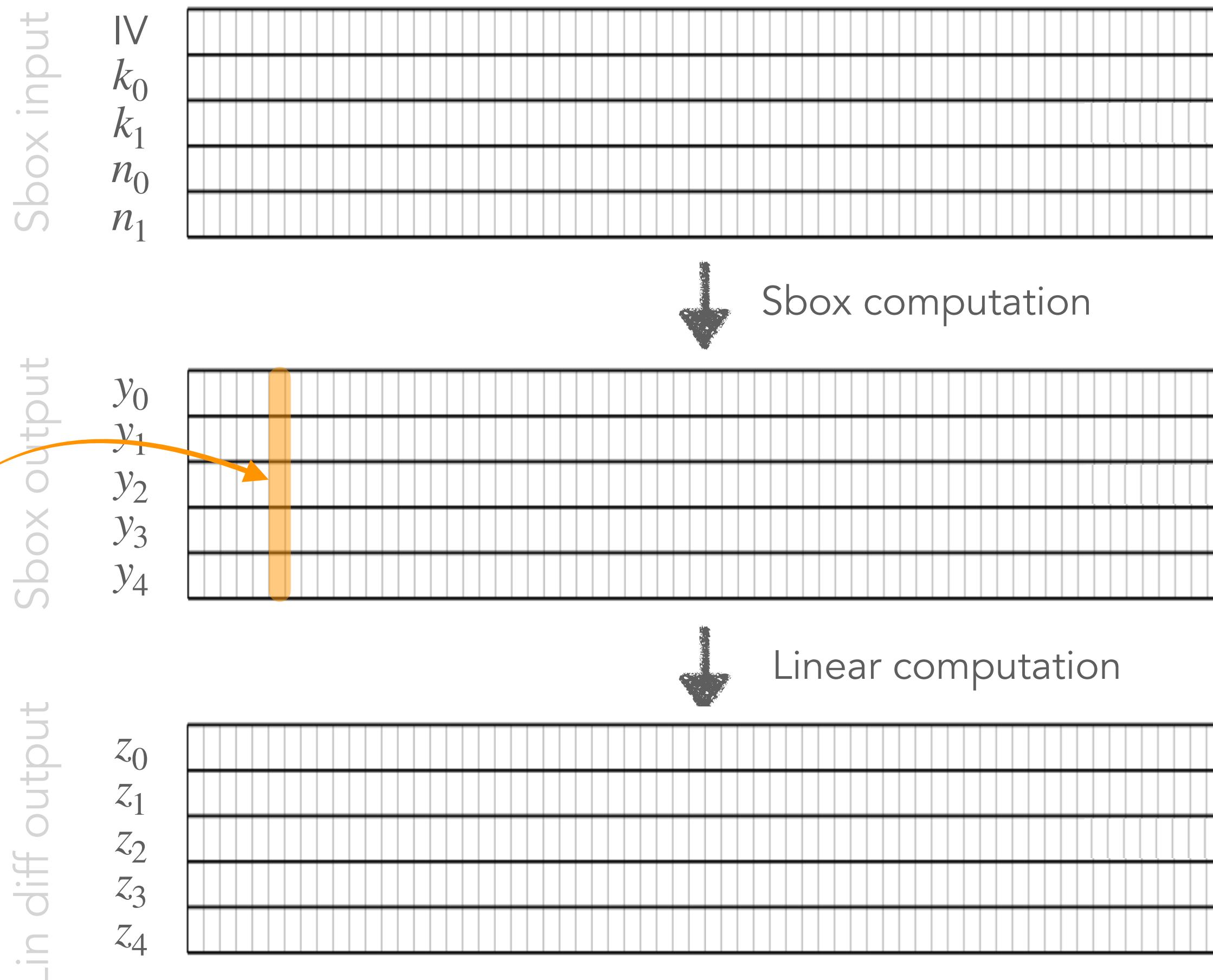


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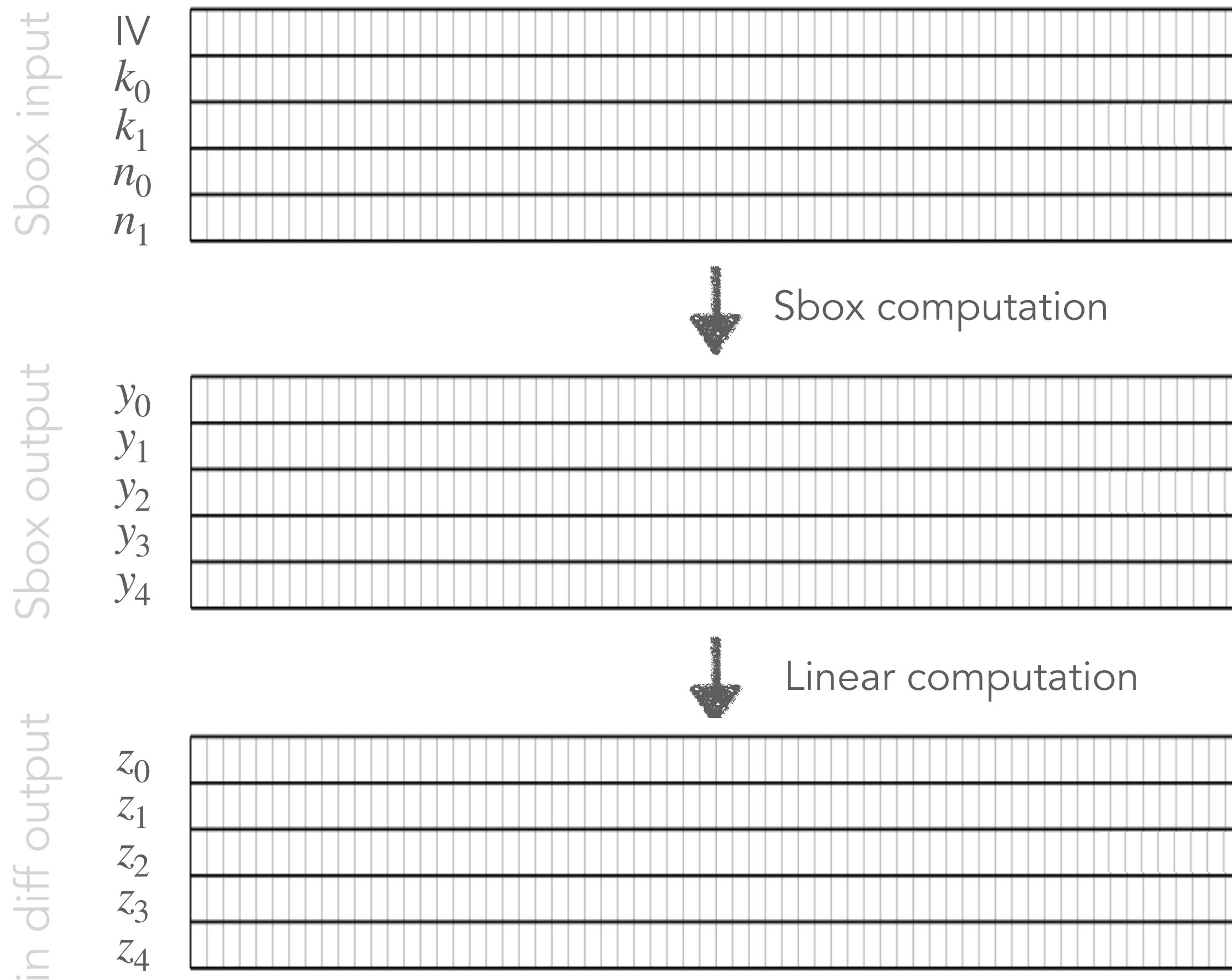
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- Intermediate variable:  $y_0^j$   
→ Failed (with 40K traces)
- Intermediate variable:  $(y_0^j | y_1^j | y_2^j | y_3^j | y_4^j)$   
HW of Sbox output  
→ Failed (with 40K traces)



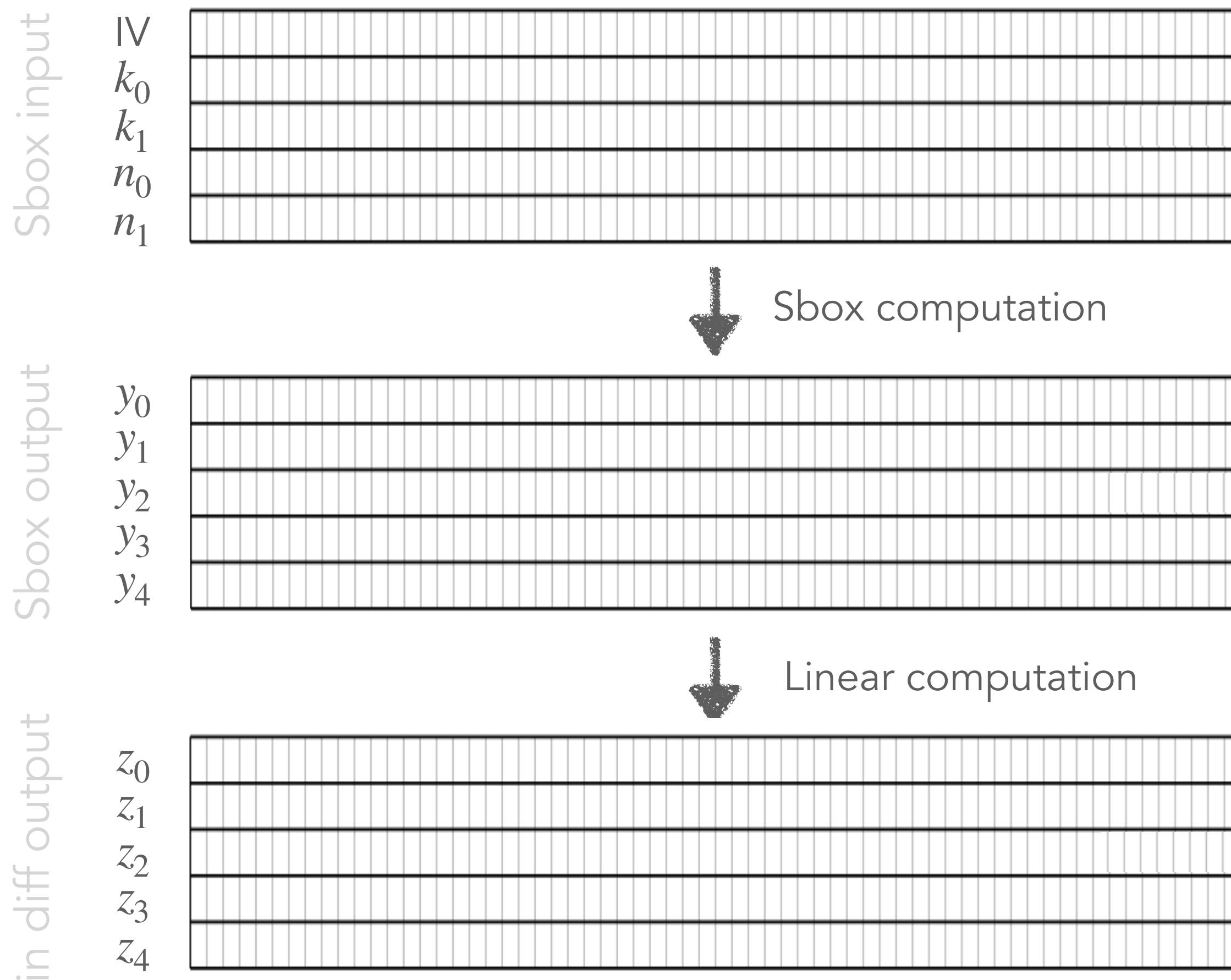
# Previous CPA (2)



# Previous CPA (2)

Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Choose linear diffusion output  
as attack point

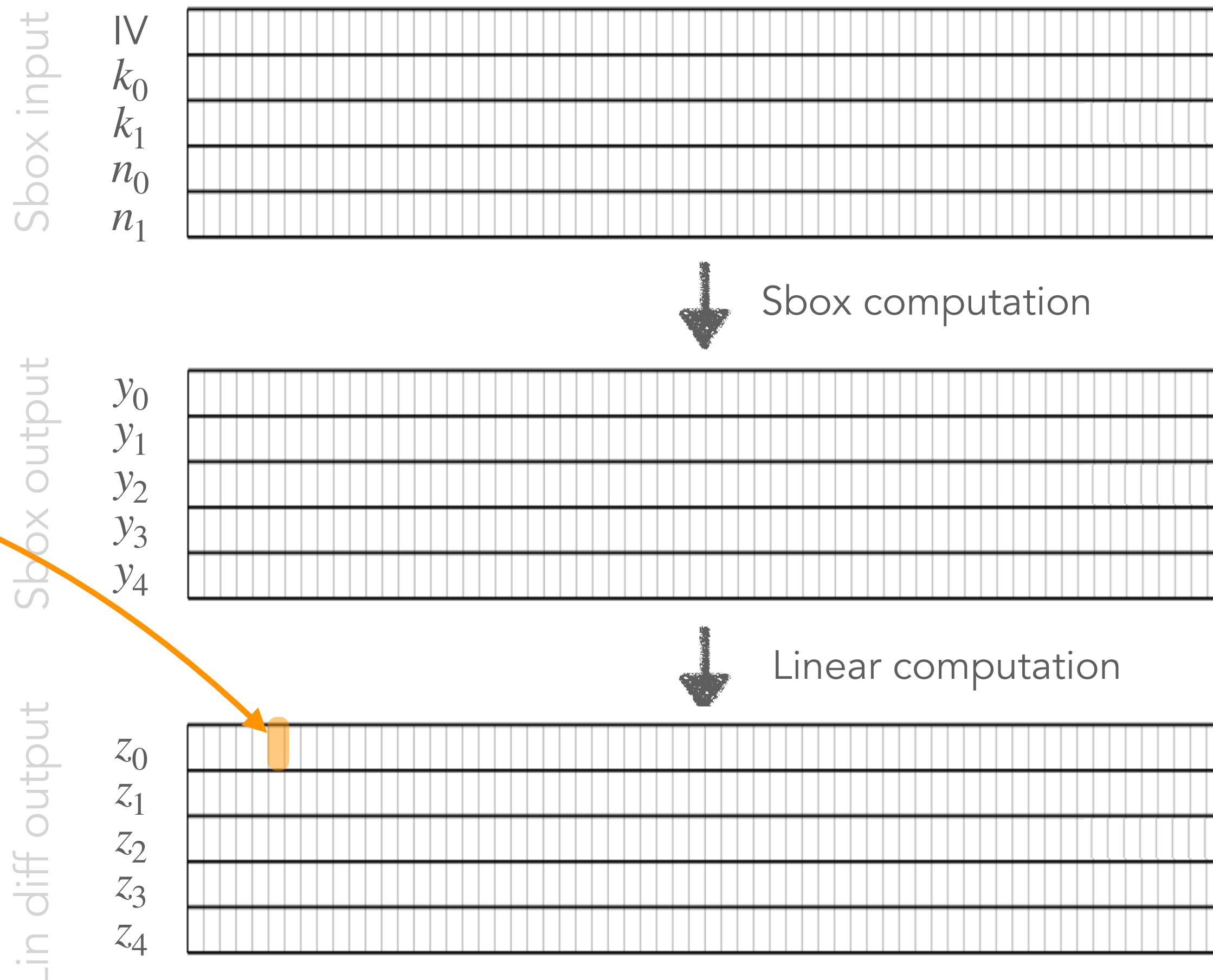


# Previous CPA (2)

Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Choose linear diffusion output  
as attack point

Intermediate variable:  $z_0^j$



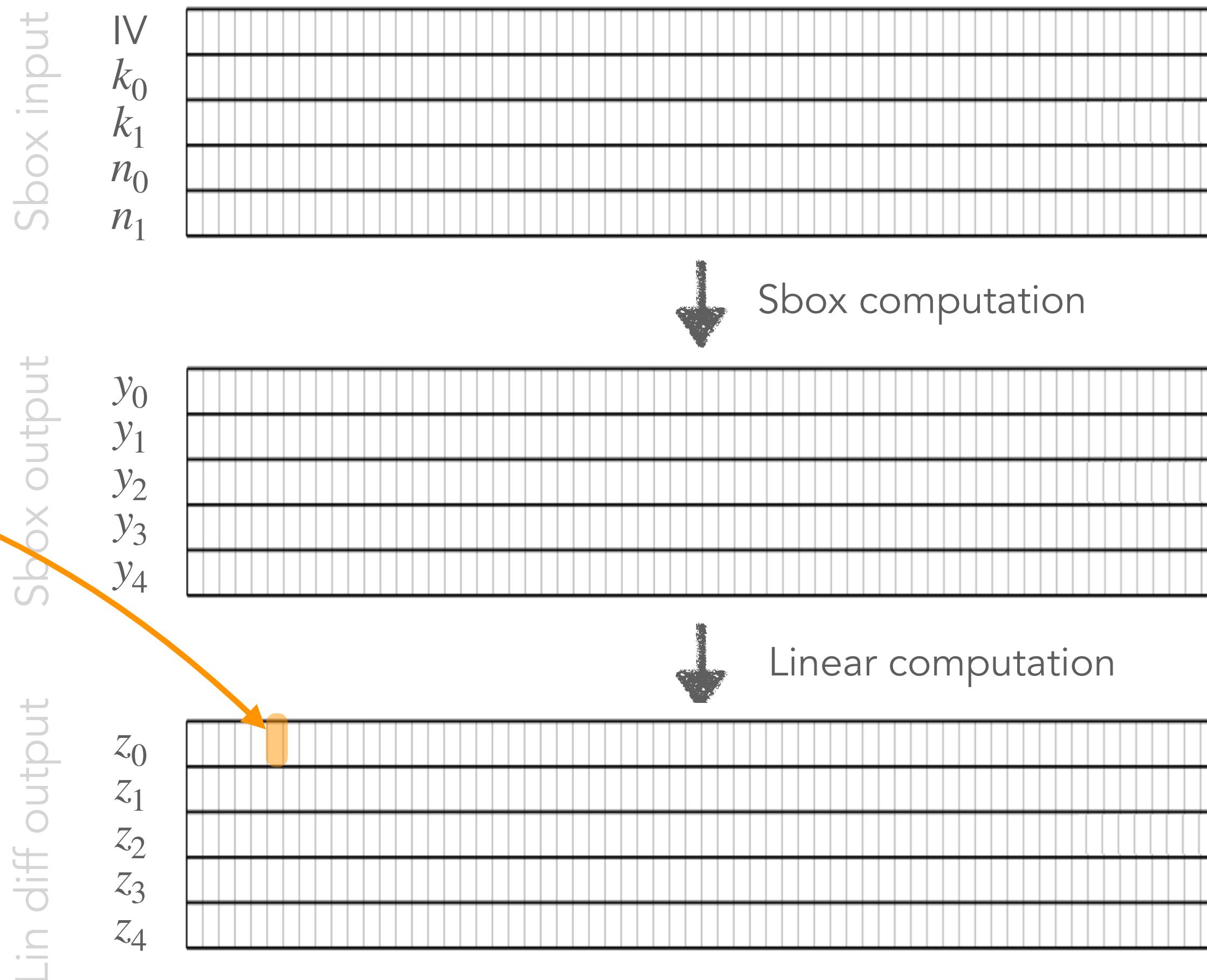
# Previous CPA (2)

Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Choose linear diffusion output  
as attack point

Intermediate variable:  $z_0^j$

Fine-tune computation:  $z_0^j \rightarrow \tilde{z}_0^j$



# Previous CPA (2)

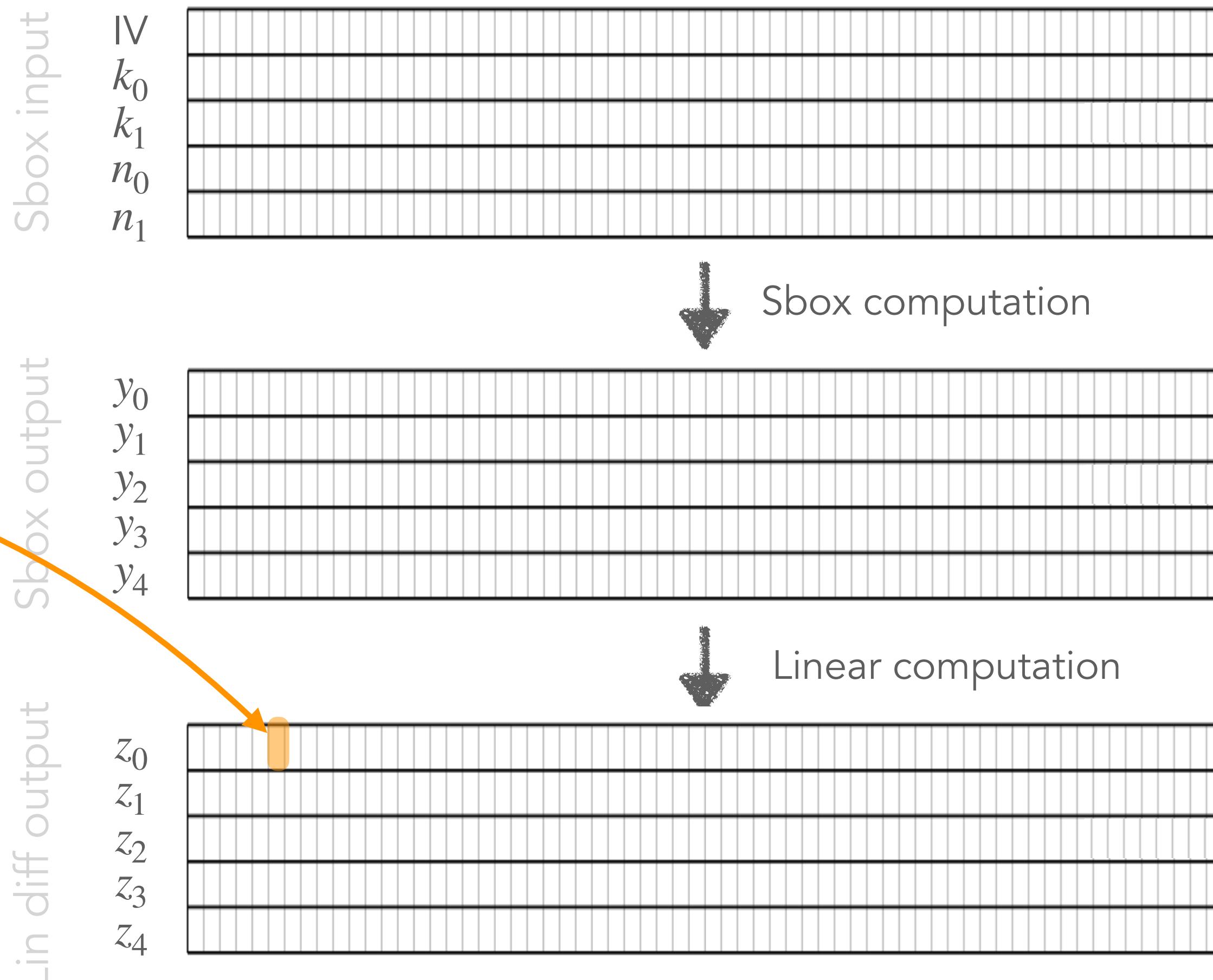
Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Choose linear diffusion output  
as attack point

Intermediate variable:  $z_0^j$

Fine-tune computation:  $z_0^j \rightarrow \tilde{z}_0^j$

→ Succeeded



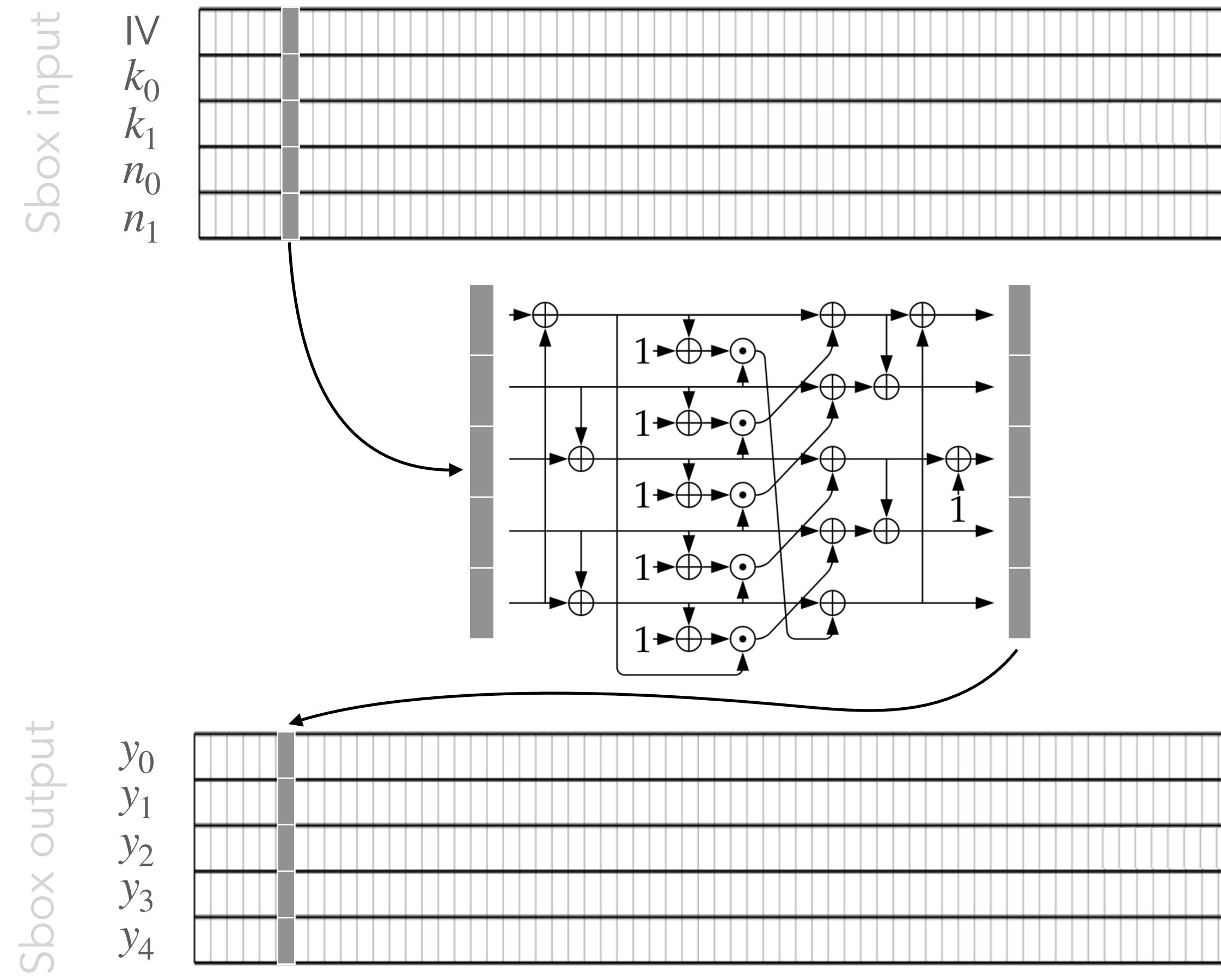


What are the reasons of this difference ?

# (1) Sbox output as attack point

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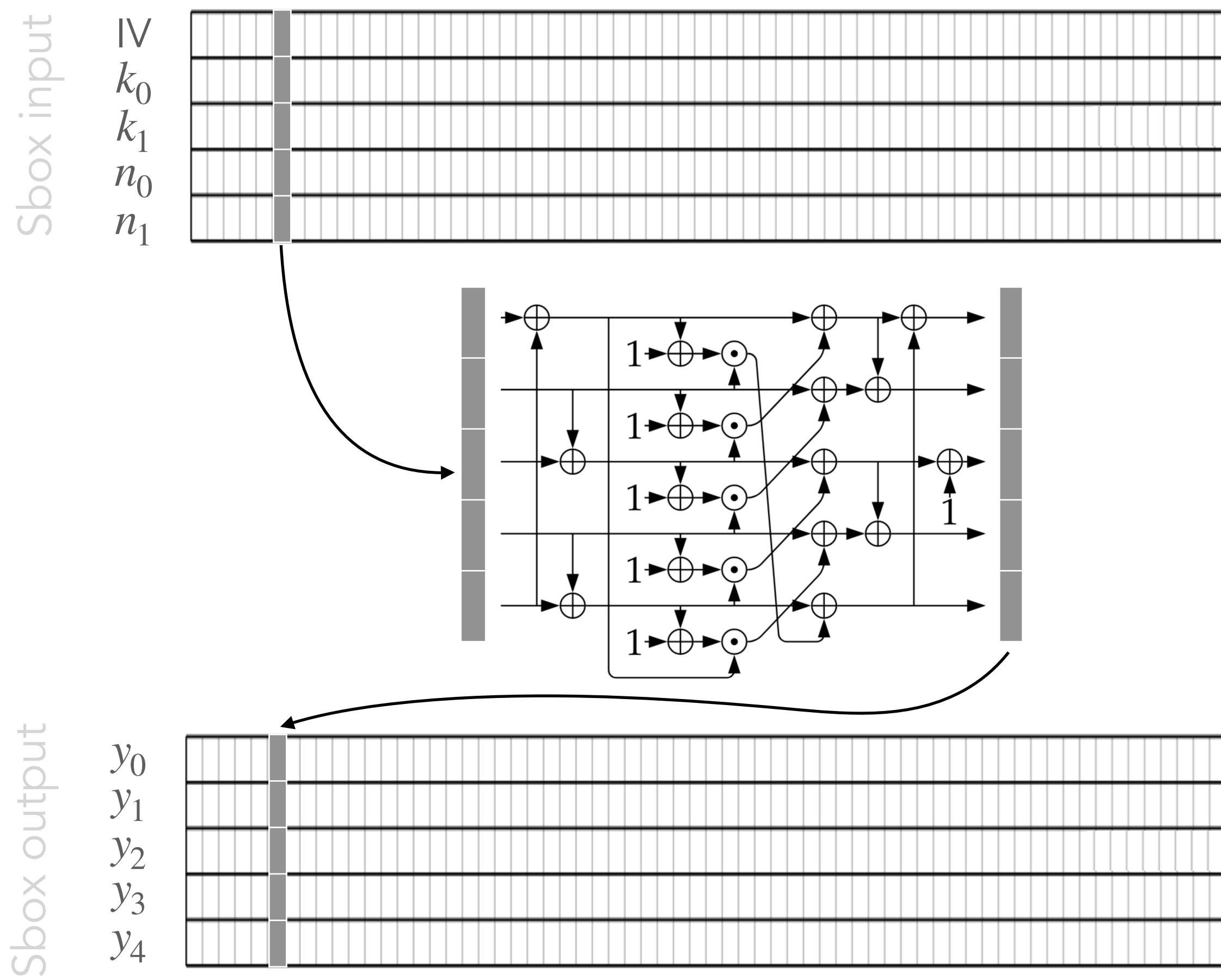
# (1) Sbox output as attack point



# (1) Sbox output as attack point

In an Sbox computation  $y_0^j$ :

- 2 bits of key :  $(k_0^j, k_1^j)$
- 2 bits of nonce :  $(n_0^j, n_1^j)$

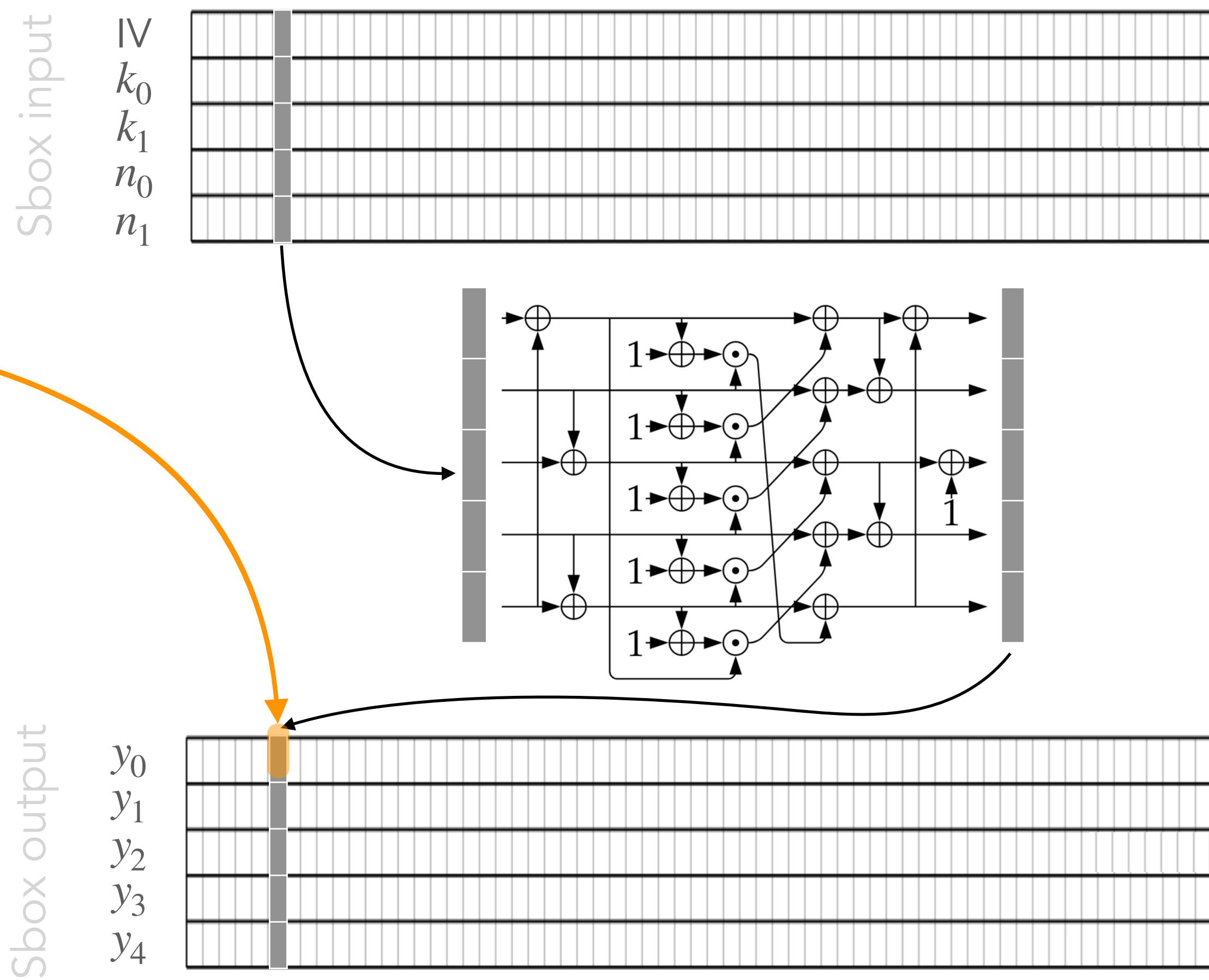


# (1) Sbox output as attack point

In an Sbox computation  $y_0^j$ :

- 2 bits of key :  $(k_0^j, k_1^j)$
- 2 bits of nonce :  $(n_0^j, n_1^j)$

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j \text{IV}^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus \text{IV}^j$$



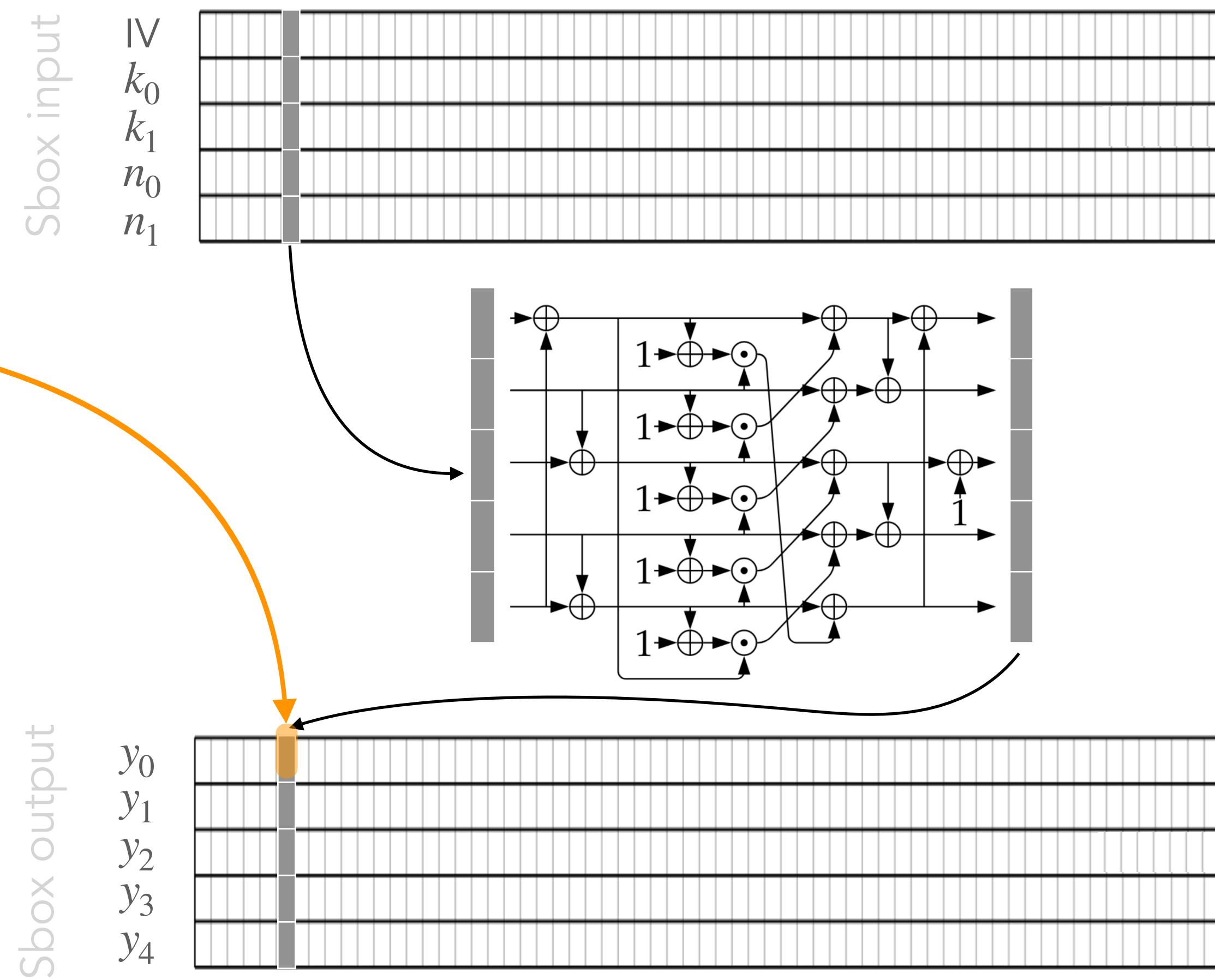
# (1) Sbox output as attack point

In an Sbox computation  $y_0^j$ :

- 2 bits of key :  $(k_0^j, k_1^j)$
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$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j \text{IV}^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus \text{IV}^j$$

		$(k_0^j, k_1^j)$			
		$(0,0)$	$(0,1)$	$(1,0)$	$(1,1)$
$(n_0^j, n_1^j)$	$(0,0)$	0	1	1	1
$(0,1)$	0	1	0	0	
$(1,0)$	1	0	0	0	
$(1,1)$	1	0	1	1	
Correlation	-1		1		



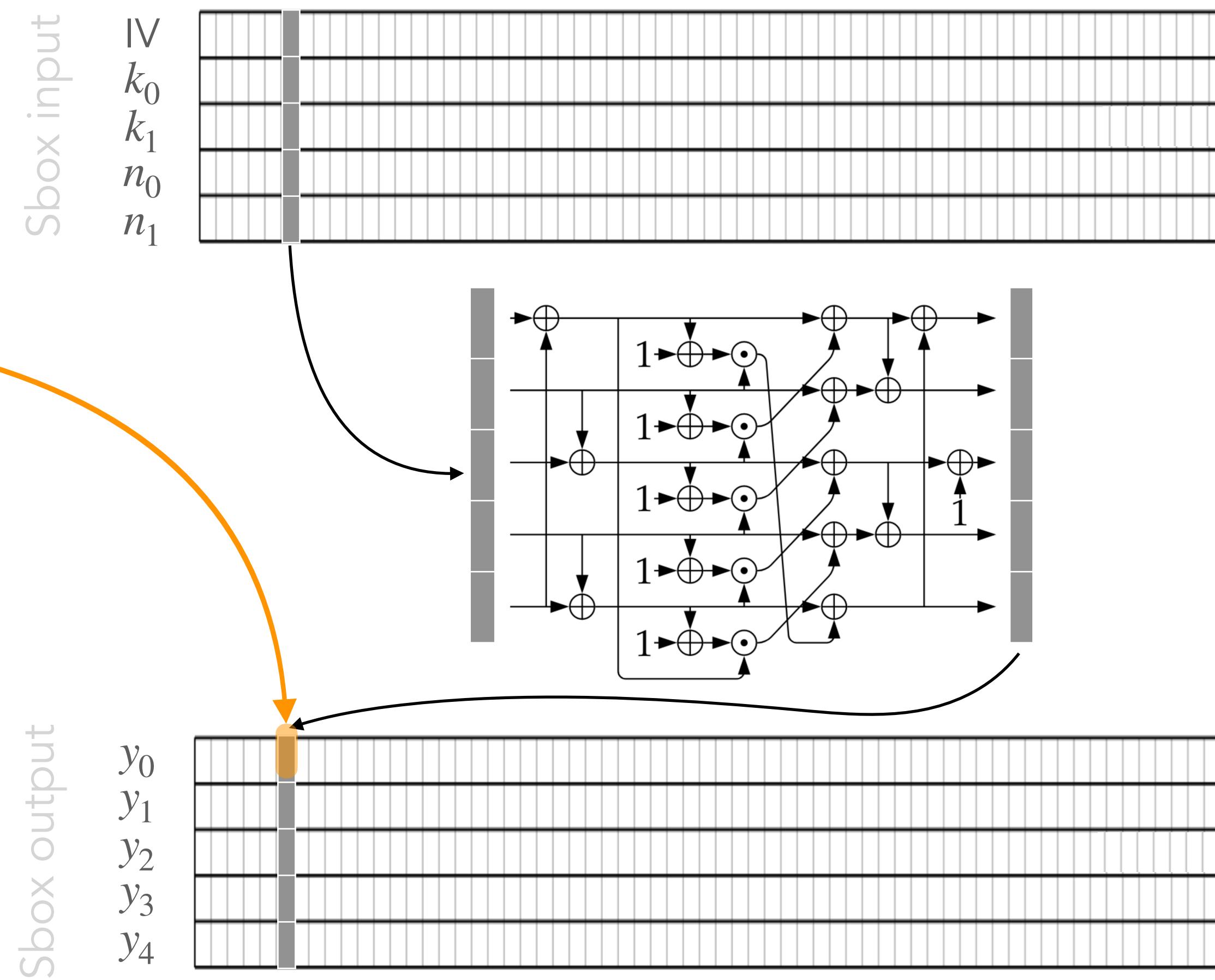
# (1) Sbox output as attack point

In an Sbox computation  $y_0^j$ :

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		$(k_0^j, k_1^j)$			
		$(0,0)$	$(0,1)$	$(1,0)$	$(1,1)$
$(n_0^j, n_1^j)$	$(0,0)$	0	1	1	1
$(0,1)$	0	1	0	0	
$(1,0)$	1	0	0	0	
$(1,1)$	1	0	1	1	
Correlation	-1		1		

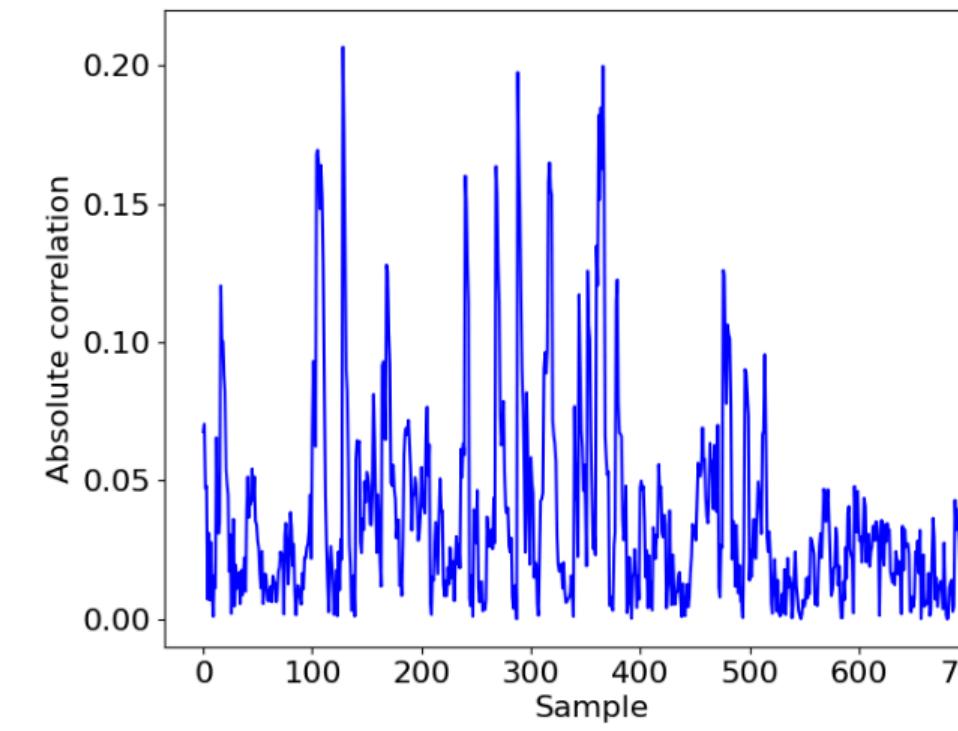


→ We cannot obtain unique (correct) key candidate

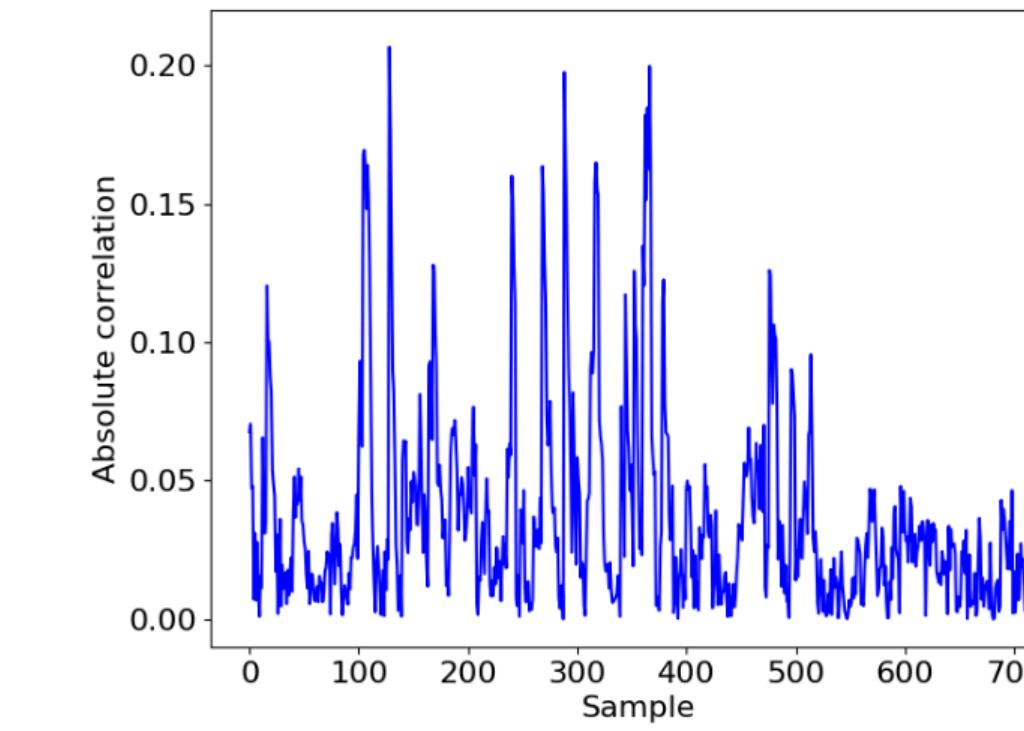
# (1) Sbox output as attack point

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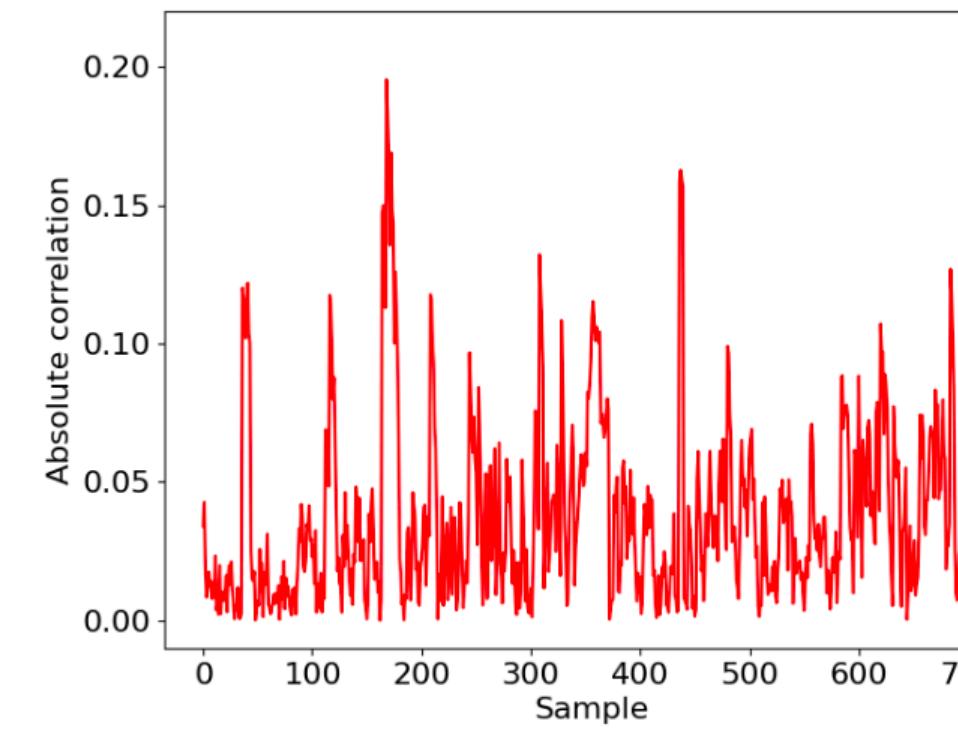
Correlation traces for all key candidates



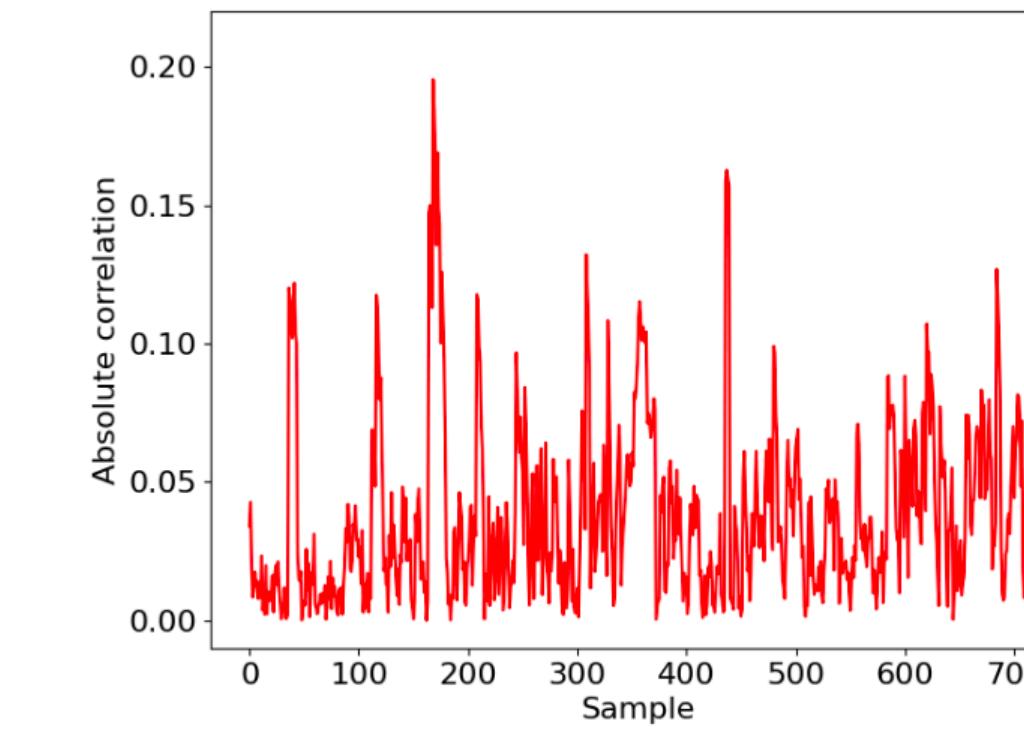
(a)  $(k_0^j, k_1^j) = (0, 0)$



(b)  $(k_0^j, k_1^j) = (0, 1)$



(c)  $(k_0^j, k_1^j) = (1, 0)$



(d)  $(k_0^j, k_1^j) = (1, 1)$

# (1) Sbox output as attack point

---

Correlations of distributions associated to all key pairs

$(k_0^j, k_1^j)$	(0,0)	(0,1)	(1,0)	(1,1)
(0,0)	1	1	-	-
(0,1)	1	1	-	-
(1,0)	-	-	1	1
(1,1)	-	-	1	1

$y_0^j$

# (1) Sbox output as attack point

---

Correlations of distributions associated to all key pairs

$(k_0^j, k_1^j)$	(0,0)	(0,1)	(1,0)	(1,1)
(0,0)	1	1	-	-
(0,1)	1	1	-	-
(1,0)	-	-	1	1
(1,1)	-	-	1	1

$y_0^j$

$(k_0^j, k_1^j)$	(0,0)	(0,1)	(1,0)	(1,1)
(0,0)	1	1	1	1
(0,1)	1	1	1	1
(1,0)	1	1	1	1
(1,1)	1	1	1	1

$y_2^j$  and  $y_3^j$

$(k_0^j, k_1^j)$	(0,0)	(0,1)	(1,0)	(1,1)
(0,0)	1	-	-	1
(0,1)	-	1	1	-
(1,0)	-	1	1	-
(1,1)	1	-	-	1

$y_1^j$

$k_0^j$	0	1
0	1	0
1	0	1

$y_4^j$

# (1) Sbox output as attack point

---

Hamming weight of Sbox output:  $\text{HW}(y_0^j | y_1^j | y_2^j | y_3^j | y_4^j)$

# (1) Sbox output as attack point

---

Hamming weight of Sbox output:  $\text{HW}(y_0^j | y_1^j | y_2^j | y_3^j | y_4^j)$

Correlations of distributions associated to all key pairs

$(k_0^j, k_1^j)$	(0,0)	(0,1)	(1,0)	(1,1)
(0,0)	1.00	0.15	0.89	0.87
(0,1)	0.15	1.00	0.48	0.09
(1,0)	0.89	0.48	1.00	0.90
(1,1)	0.87	0.09	0.90	1.00

# (1) Sbox output as attack point

---

Hamming weight of Sbox output:  $\text{HW}(y_0^j | y_1^j | y_2^j | y_3^j | y_4^j)$

Correlations of distributions associated to all key pairs

$(k_0^j, k_1^j)$	(0,0)	(0,1)	(1,0)	(1,1)
(0,0)	1.00	0.15	0.89	0.87
(0,1)	0.15	1.00	0.48	0.09
(1,0)	0.89	0.48	1.00	0.90
(1,1)	0.87	0.09	0.90	1.00

# (1) Sbox output as attack point

---

Hamming weight of Sbox output:  $\text{HW}(y_0^j | y_1^j | y_2^j | y_3^j | y_4^j)$

Correlations of distributions associated to all key pairs

$(k_0^j, k_1^j)$	(0,0)	(0,1)	(1,0)	(1,1)
(0,0)	1.00	0.15	0.89	0.87
(0,1)	0.15	1.00	0.48	0.09
(1,0)	0.89	0.48	1.00	0.90
(1,1)	0.87	0.09	0.90	1.00

→ Not effective for CPA attacks

# (1) Sbox output as attack point

---

Hamming weight of Sbox output:  $\text{HW}(y_0^j | y_1^j | y_2^j | y_3^j | y_4^j)$

Correlations of distributions associated to all key pairs

$(k_0^j, k_1^j)$	(0,0)	(0,1)	(1,0)	(1,1)
(0,0)	1.00	0.15	0.89	0.87
(0,1)	0.15	1.00	0.48	0.09
(1,0)	0.89	0.48	1.00	0.90
(1,1)	0.87	0.09	0.90	1.00

→ Not effective for CPA attacks

This may explain why

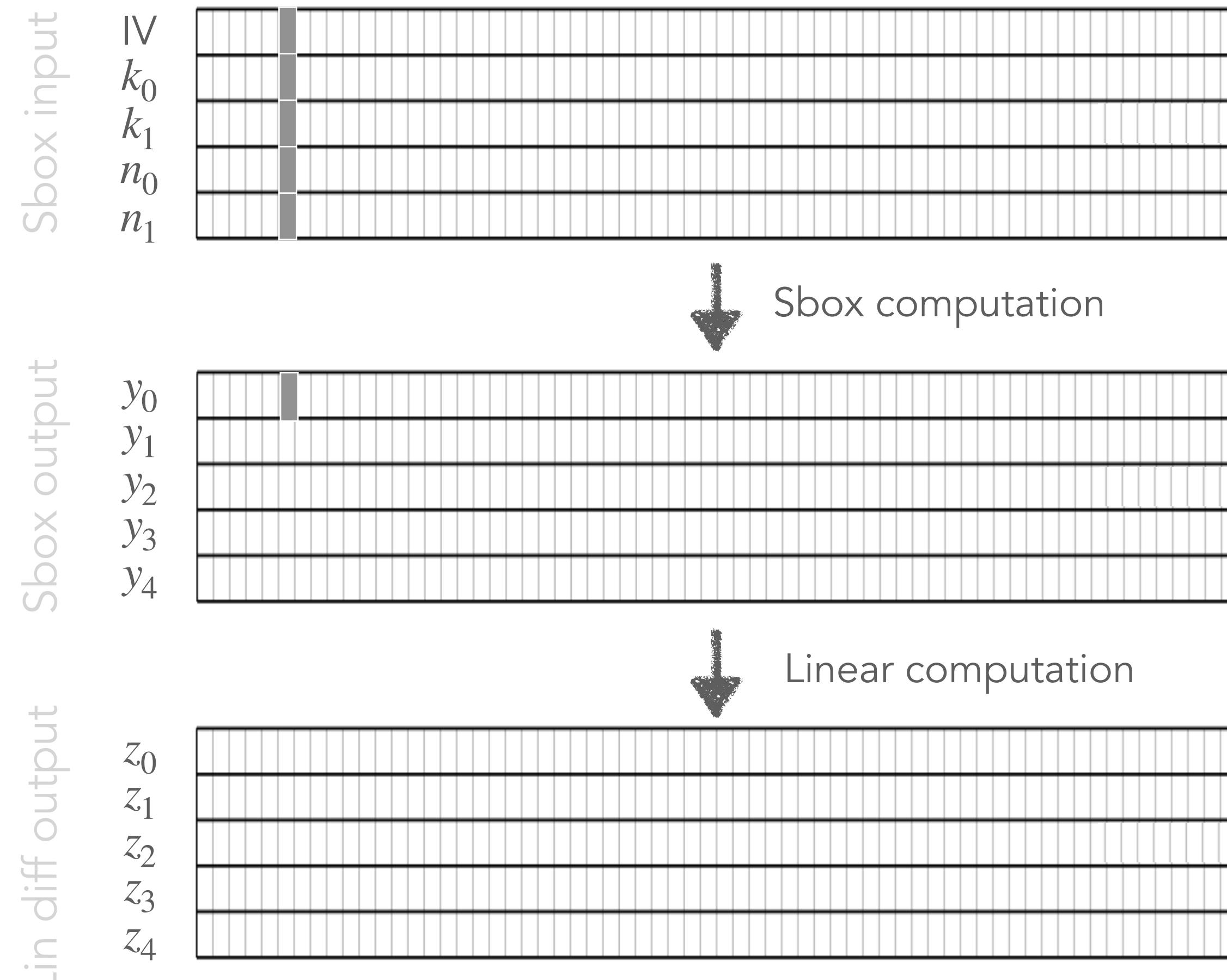
Ramezanpour et al., 2020

failed

## (2) Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

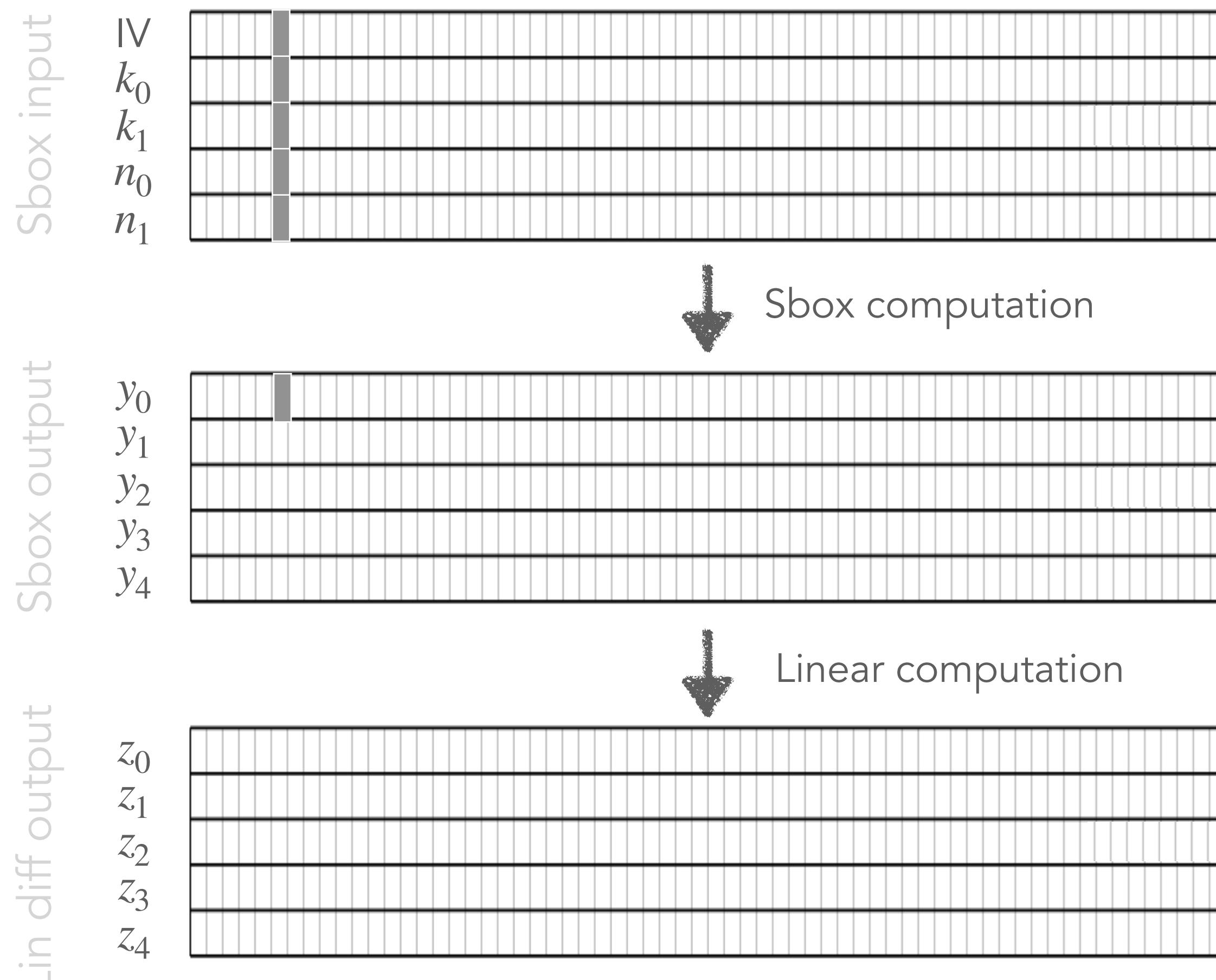
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## (2) Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point



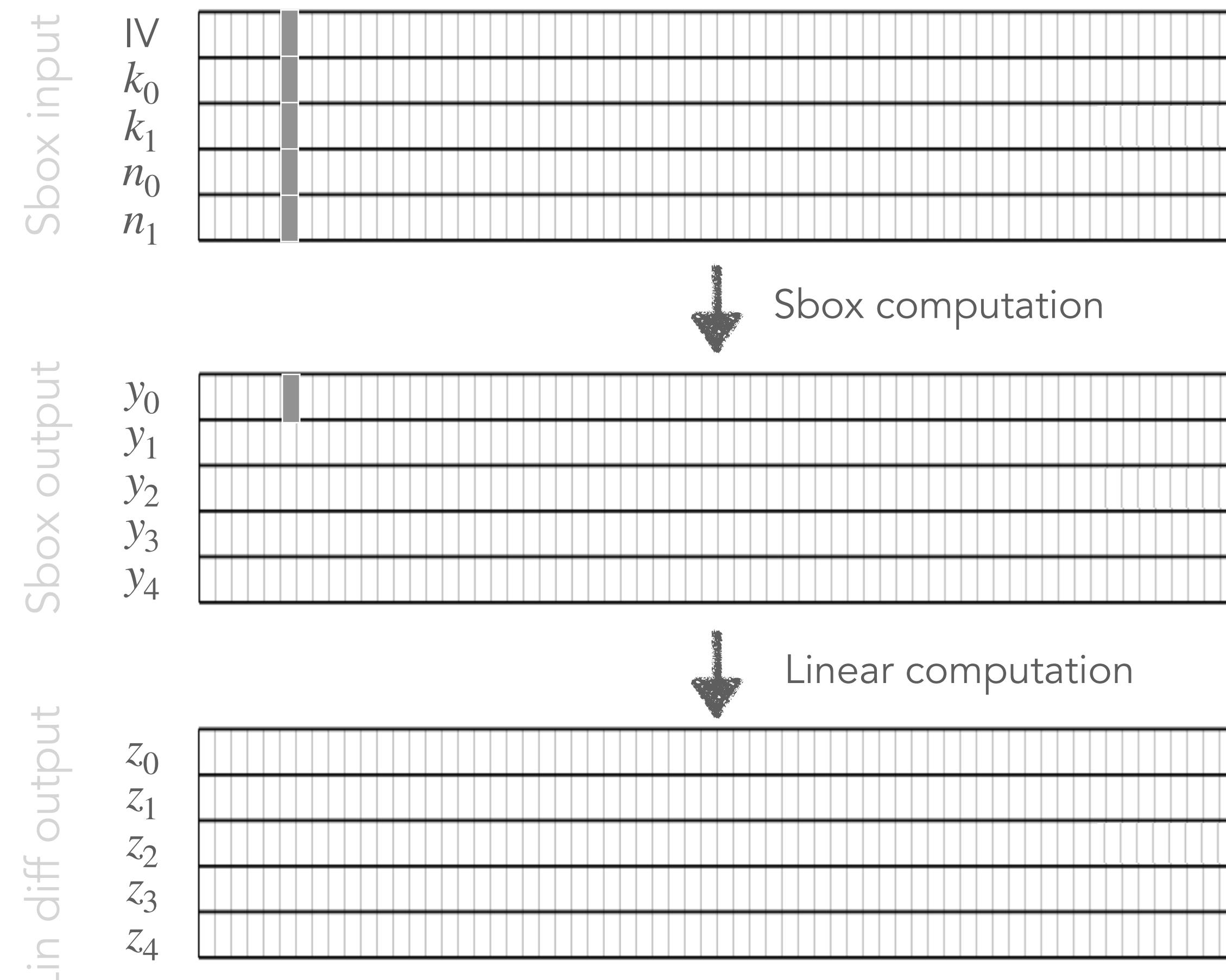
## (2) Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j \text{IV}^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus \text{IV}^j$$



## (2) Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

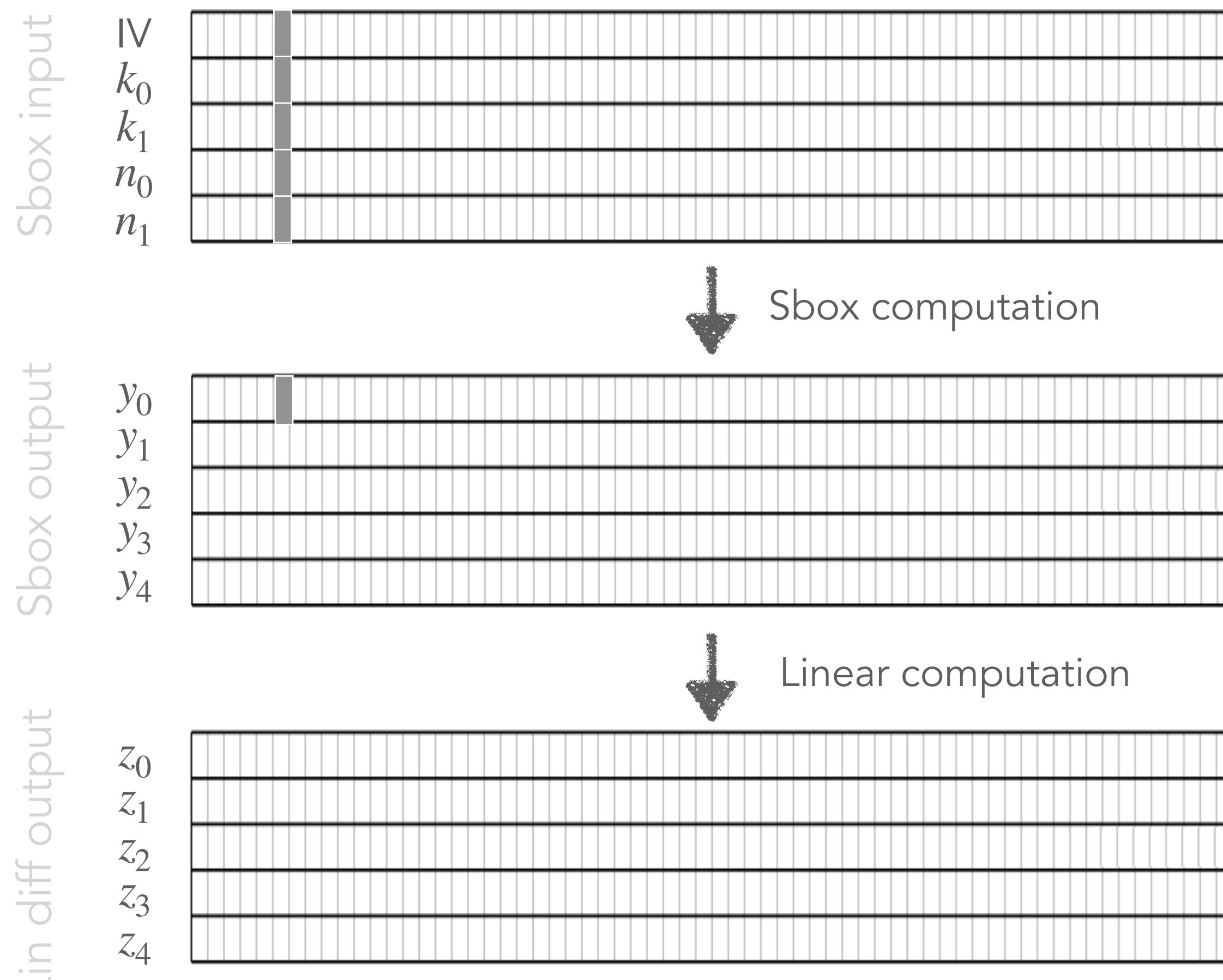
$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j \text{IV}^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus \text{IV}^j$$



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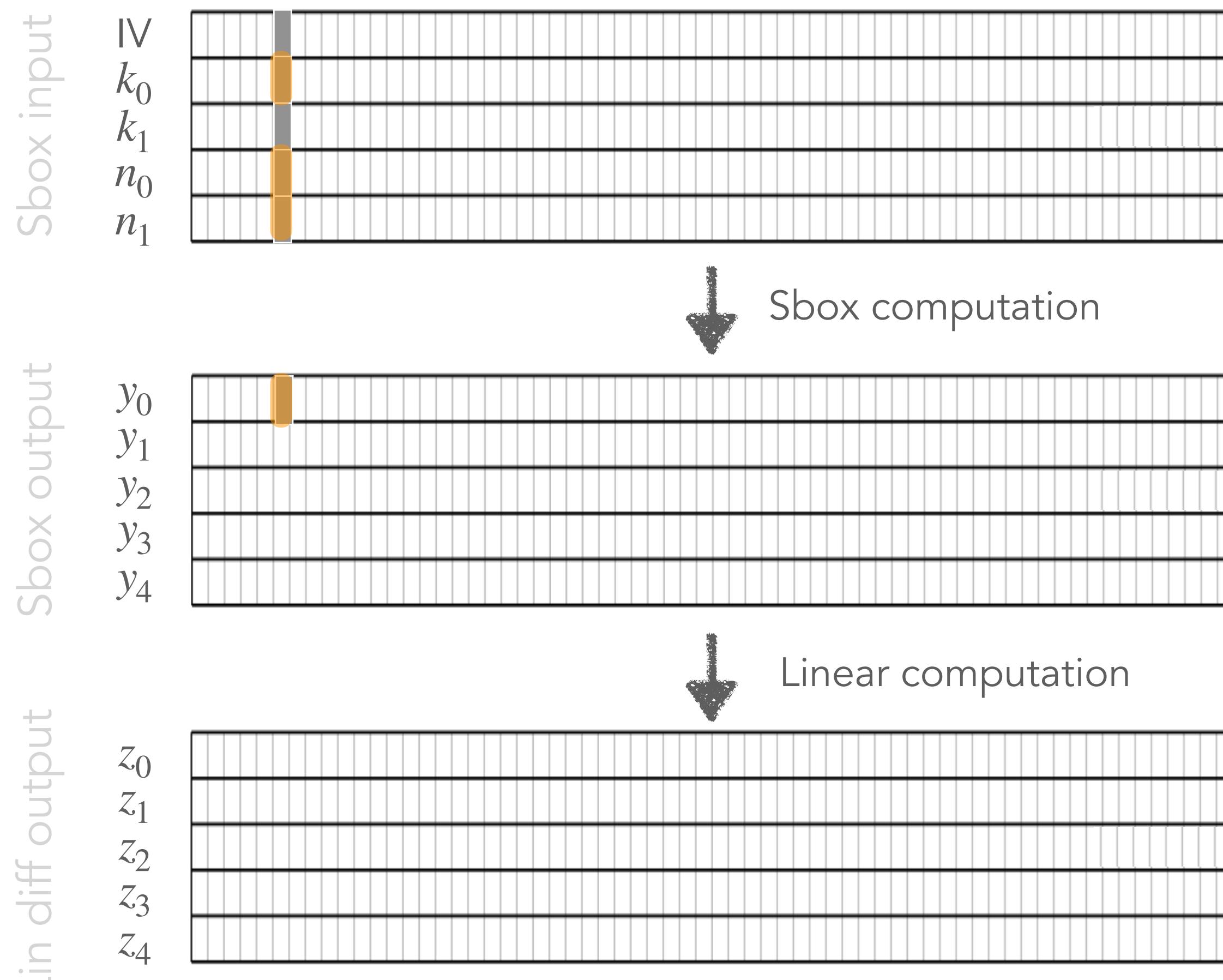
$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$



## (2) Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j \text{IV}^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus \text{IV}^j$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

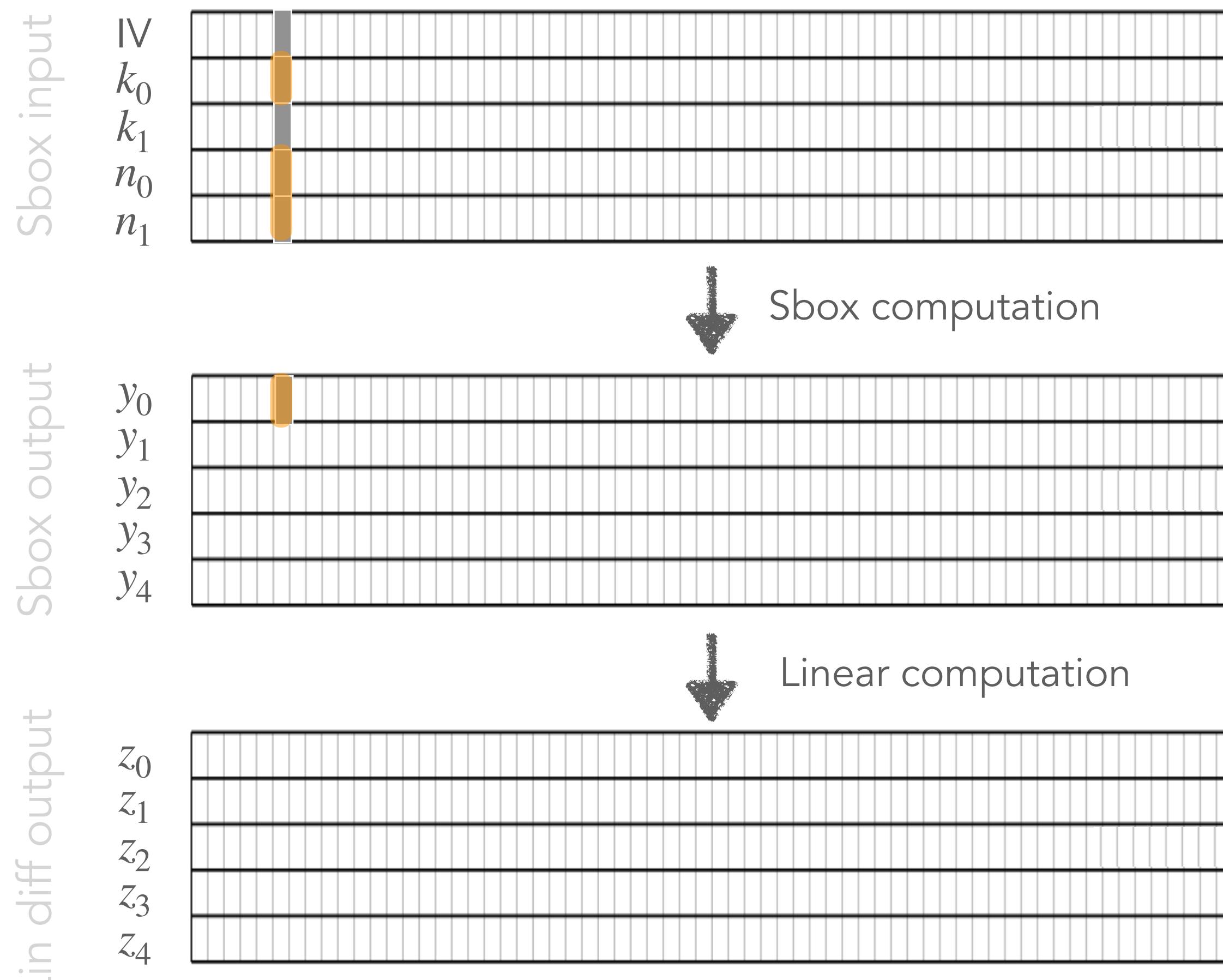


## (2) Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j \text{IV}^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus \text{IV}^j$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

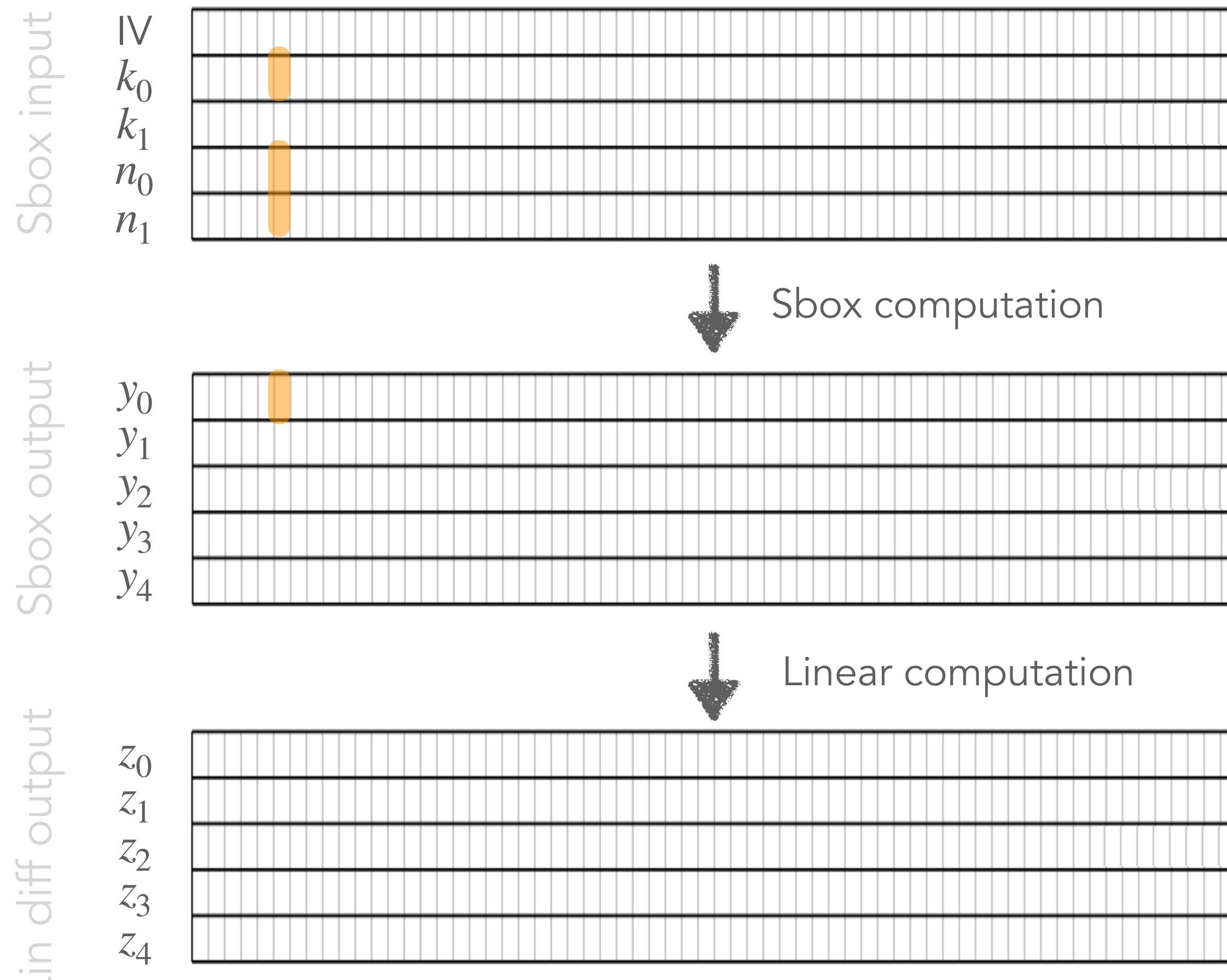
	$k_0^j$
$(n_0^j, n_1^j)$	0 1
(0,0)	0 1
(0,1)	0 0
(1,0)	1 0
(1,1)	1 1
Correlation	0



# Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j \text{IV}^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus \text{IV}^j$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$



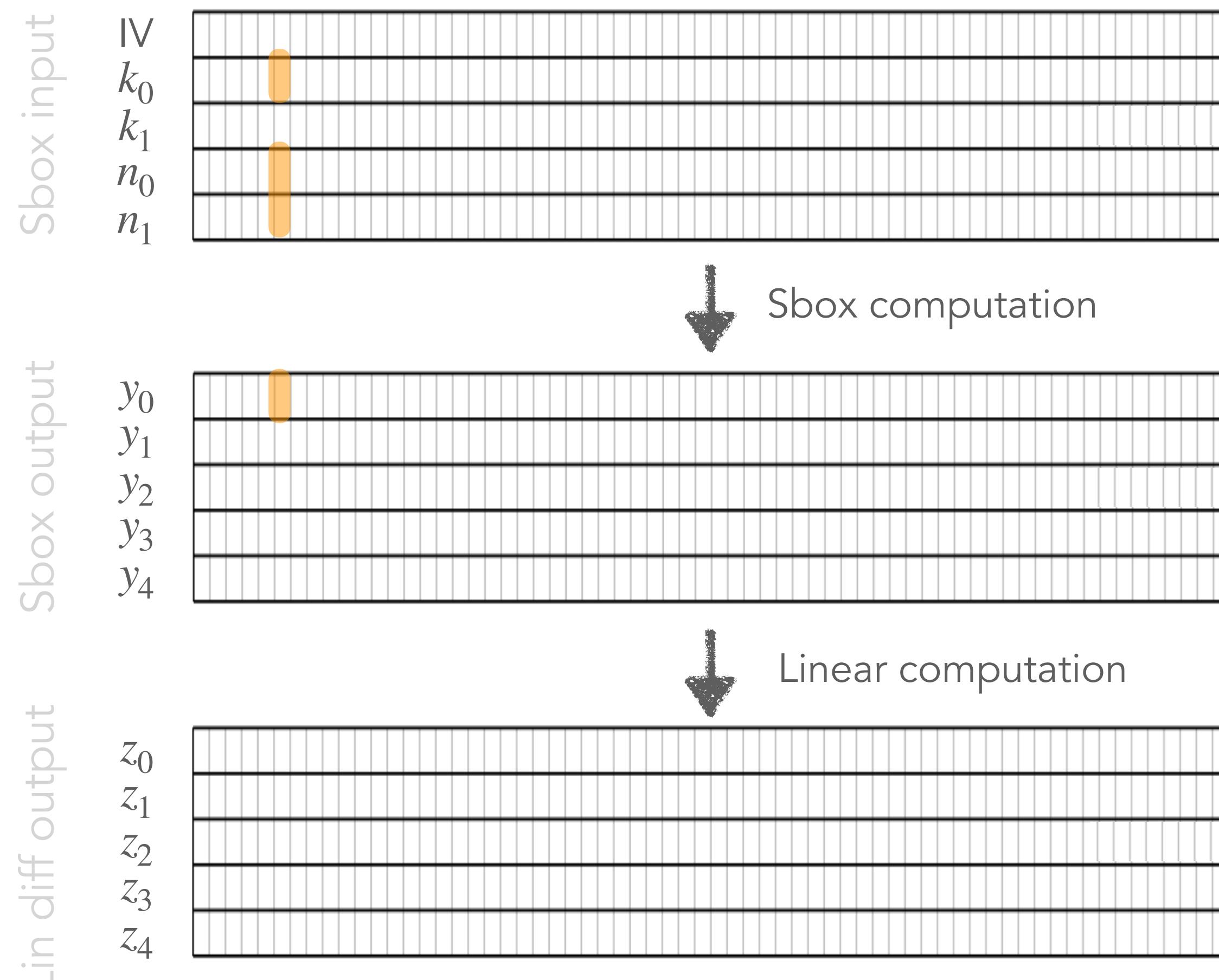
# Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j IV^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus IV^j$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation  
with register at linear layer output ( $z_0^j$ )



# Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j IV^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus IV^j$$

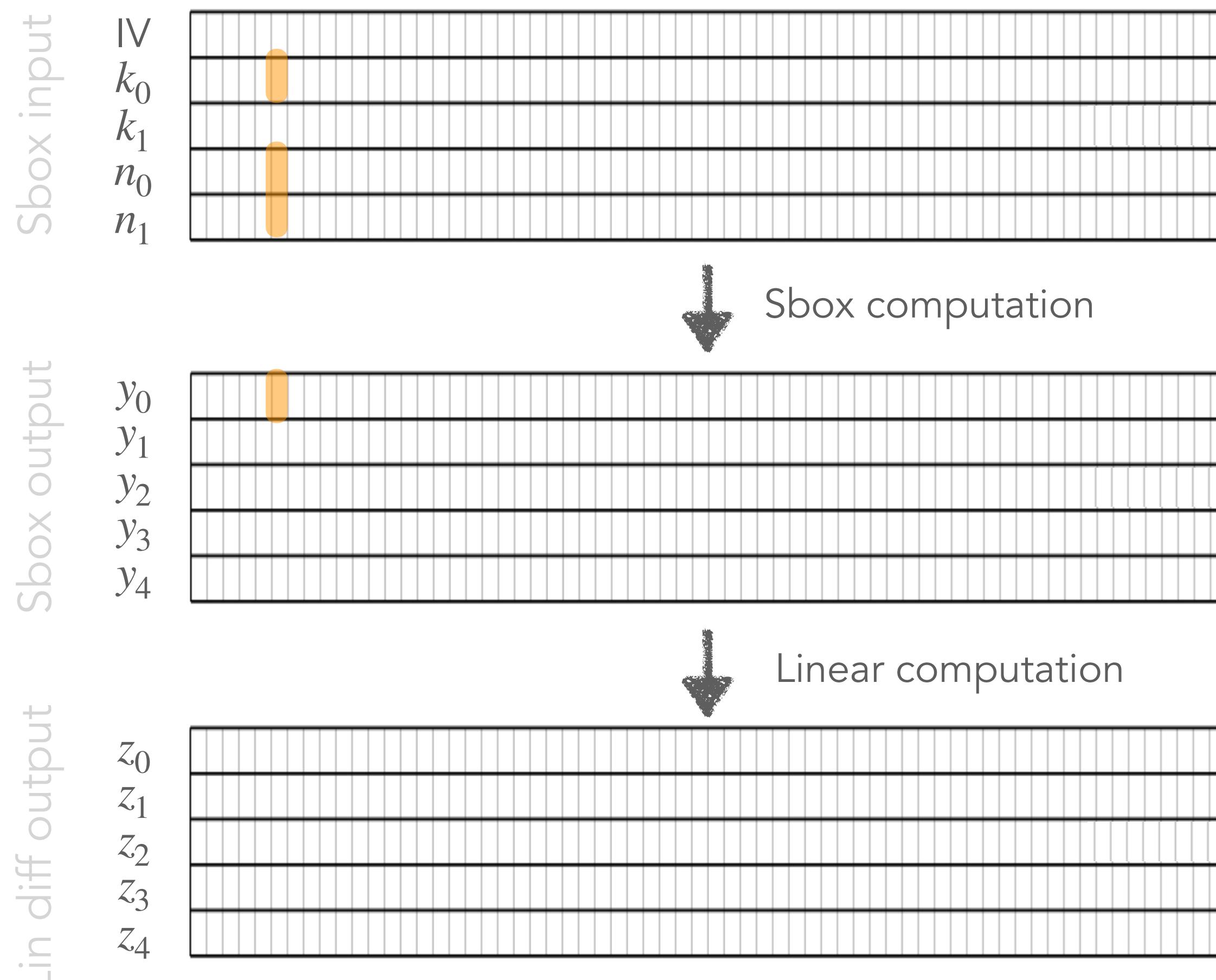
$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation  
with register at linear layer output ( $z_0^j$ )

Similarly:

$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+36} = k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36}$$



# Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j IV^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus IV^j$$

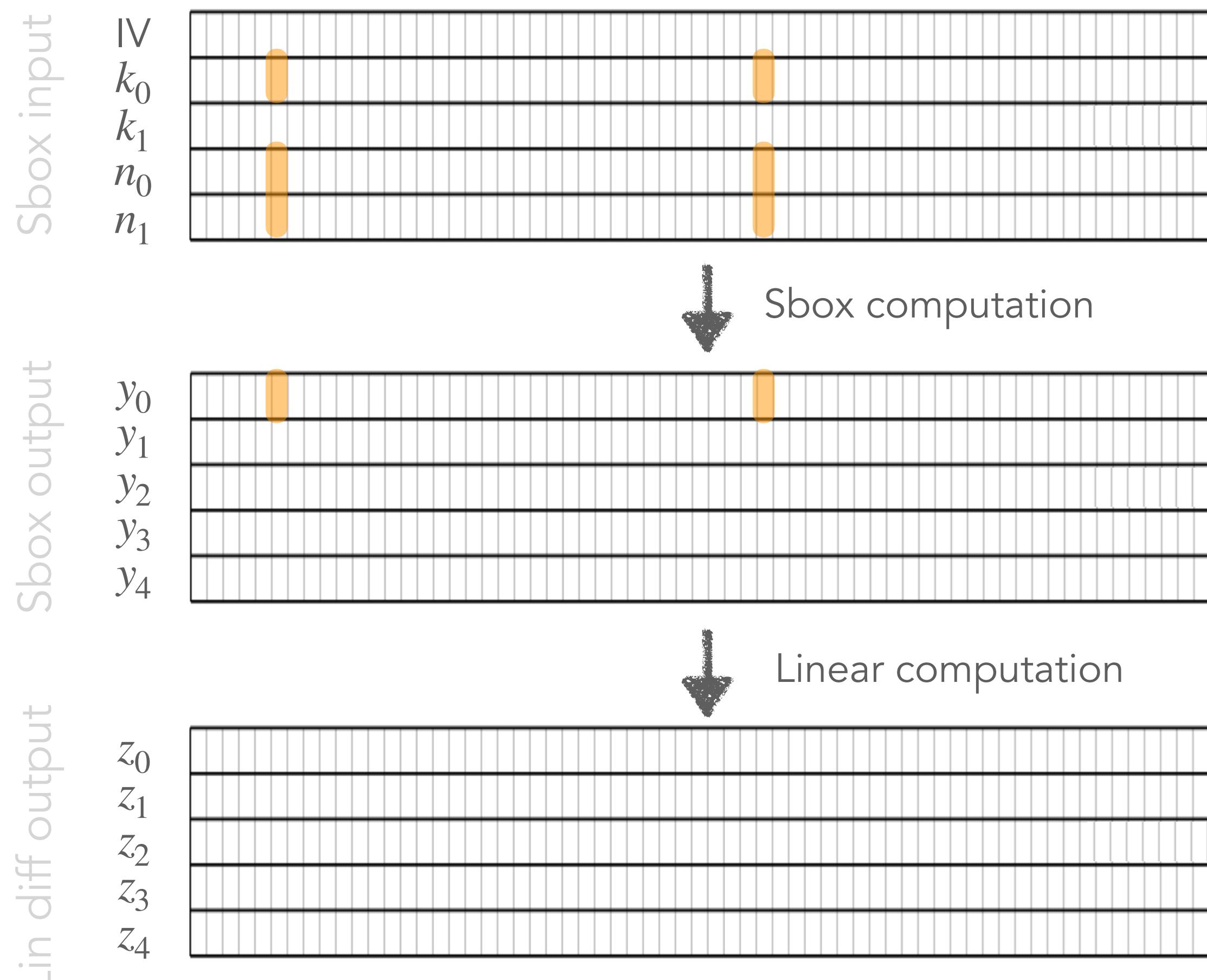
$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation  
with register at linear layer output ( $z_0^j$ )

Similarly:

$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+36} = k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36}$$



# Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j \text{IV}^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus \text{IV}^j$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

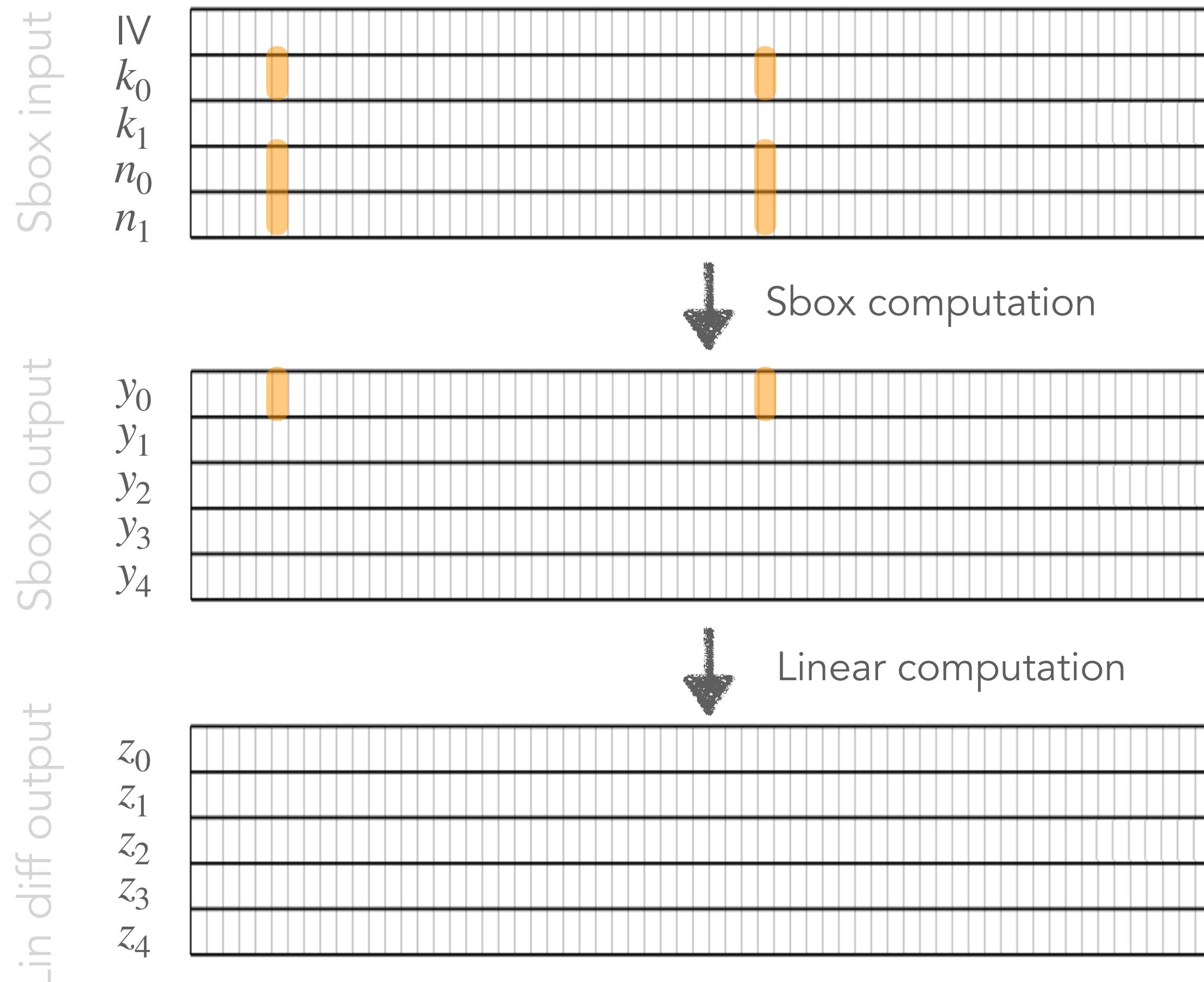
Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation  
with register at linear layer output ( $z_0^j$ )

Similarly:

$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+36} = k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36}$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+45} = k_0^{j+45}(n_1^{j+45} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+45}$$



# Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j \text{IV}^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus \text{IV}^j$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

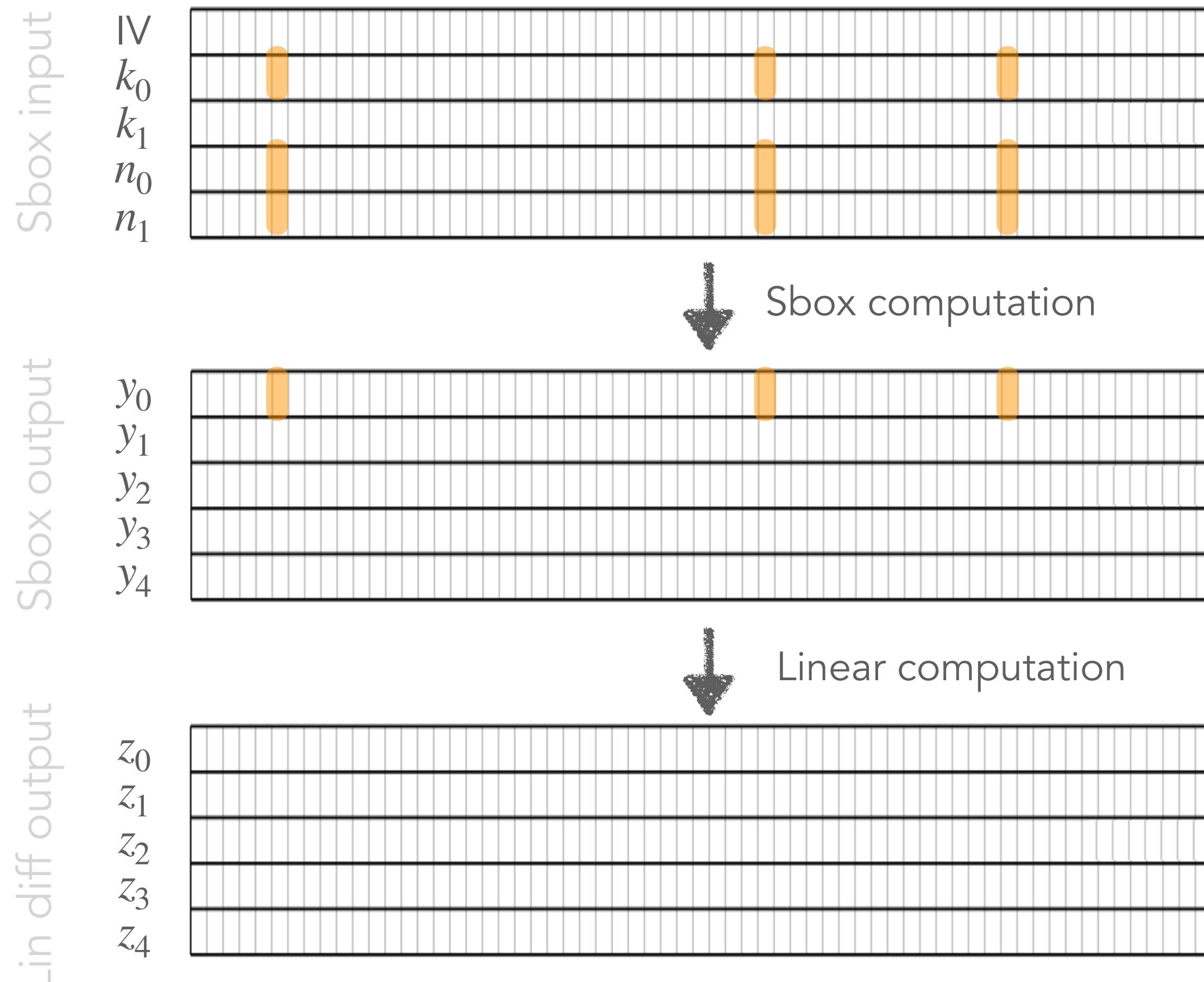
Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation  
with register at linear layer output ( $z_0^j$ )

Similarly:

$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+36} = k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36}$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+45} = k_0^{j+45}(n_1^{j+45} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+45}$$



# Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j \text{IV}^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus \text{IV}^j$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation  
with register at linear layer output ( $z_0^j$ )

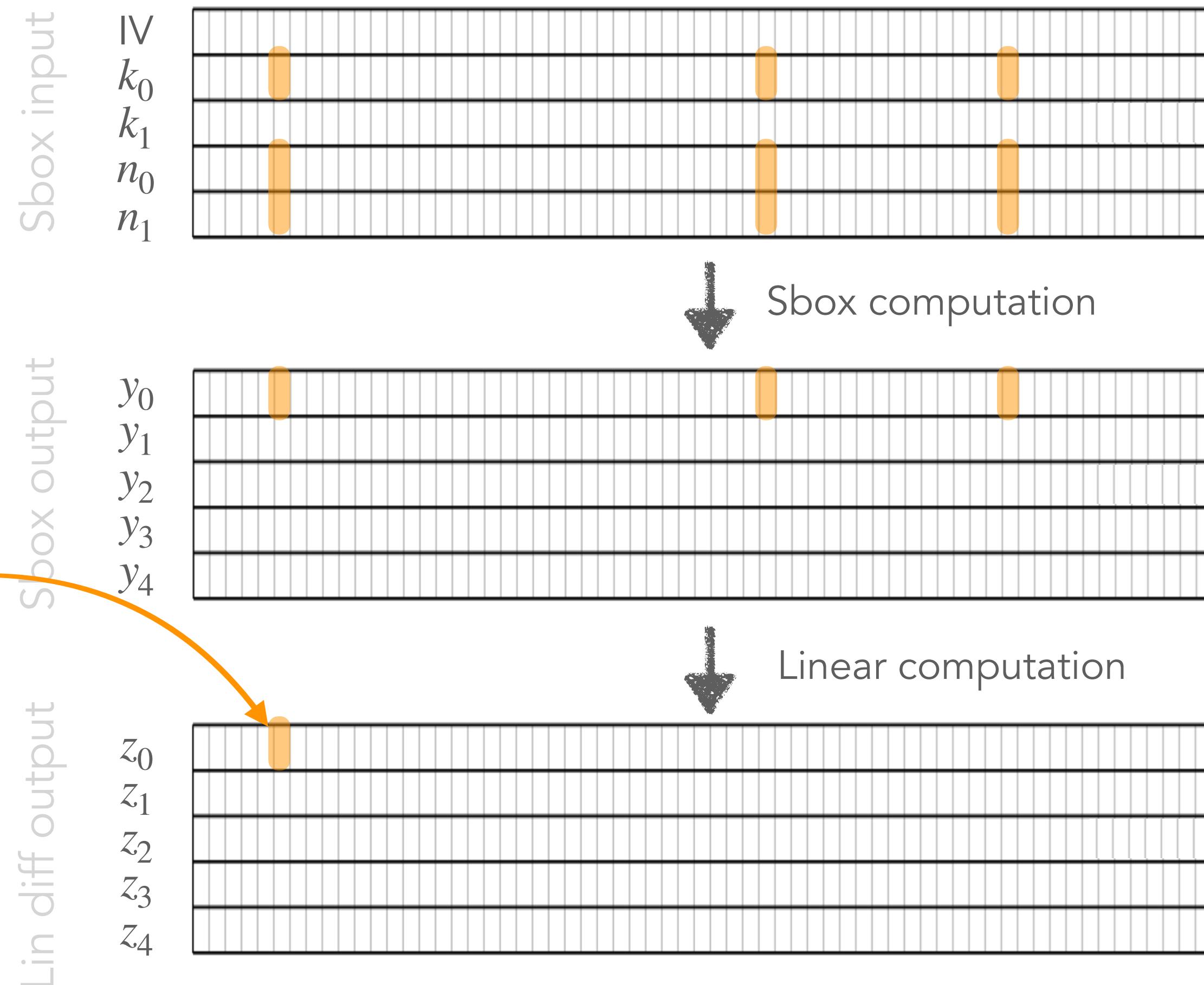
Similarly:

$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+36} = k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36}$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+45} = k_0^{j+45}(n_1^{j+45} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+45}$$

Linear computation:

$$\tilde{z}_0^j = \tilde{y}_0^j \oplus \tilde{y}_0^{j+36} \oplus \tilde{y}_0^{j+45}$$



# Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j \text{IV}^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus \text{IV}^j$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation  
with register at linear layer output ( $z_0^j$ )

Similarly:

$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+36} = k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36}$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+45} = k_0^{j+45}(n_1^{j+45} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+45}$$

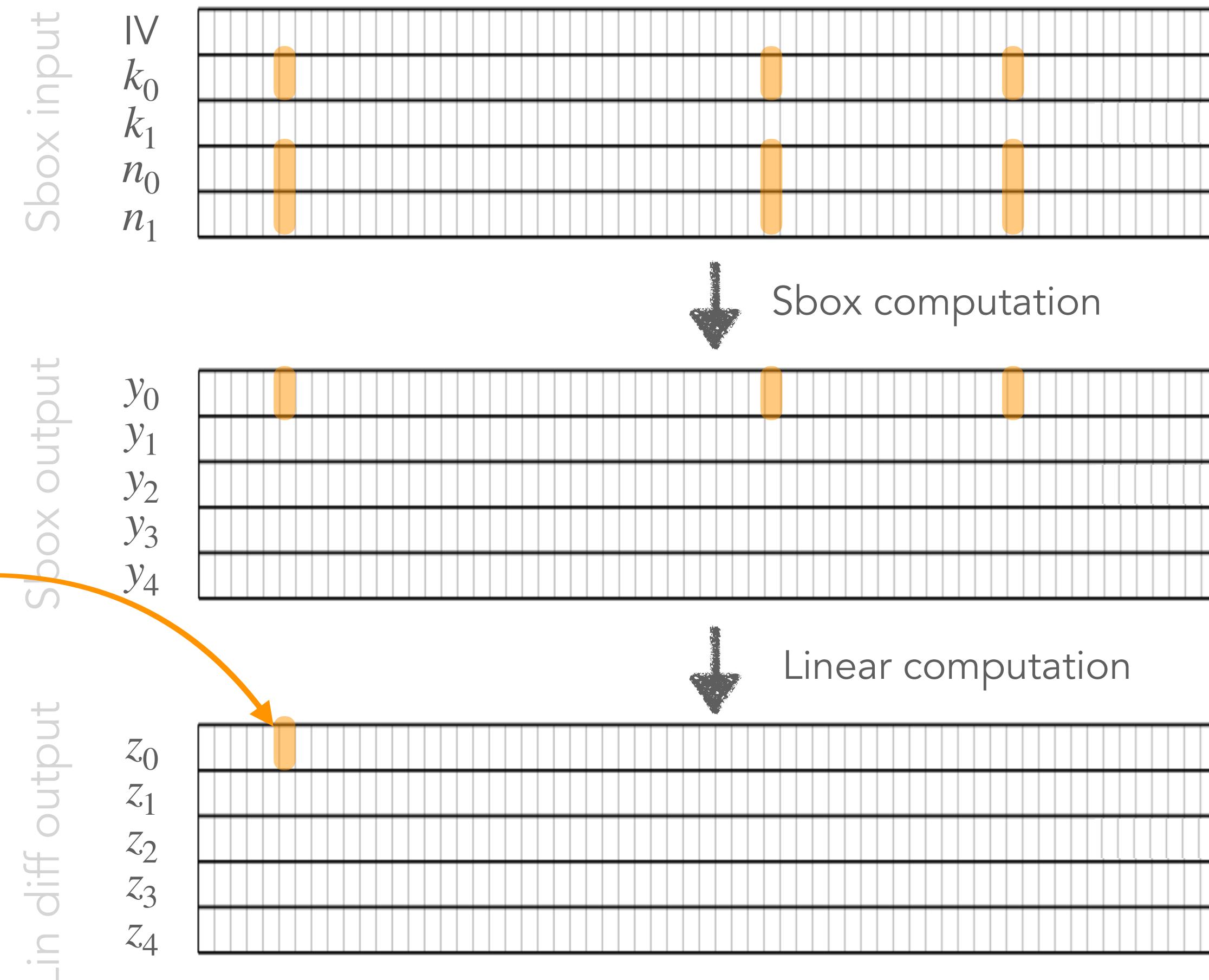
Linear computation:

$$\tilde{z}_0^j = \tilde{y}_0^j \oplus \tilde{y}_0^{j+36} \oplus \tilde{y}_0^{j+45}$$

$$\tilde{z}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

$$\oplus k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36}$$

$$\oplus k_0^{j+45}(n_1^{j+45} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+45}$$



# Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

---

$$\begin{aligned}\tilde{z}_0^j &= k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \\ &\oplus k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36} \\ &\oplus k_0^{j+45}(n_1^{j+45} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+45}\end{aligned}$$

# Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

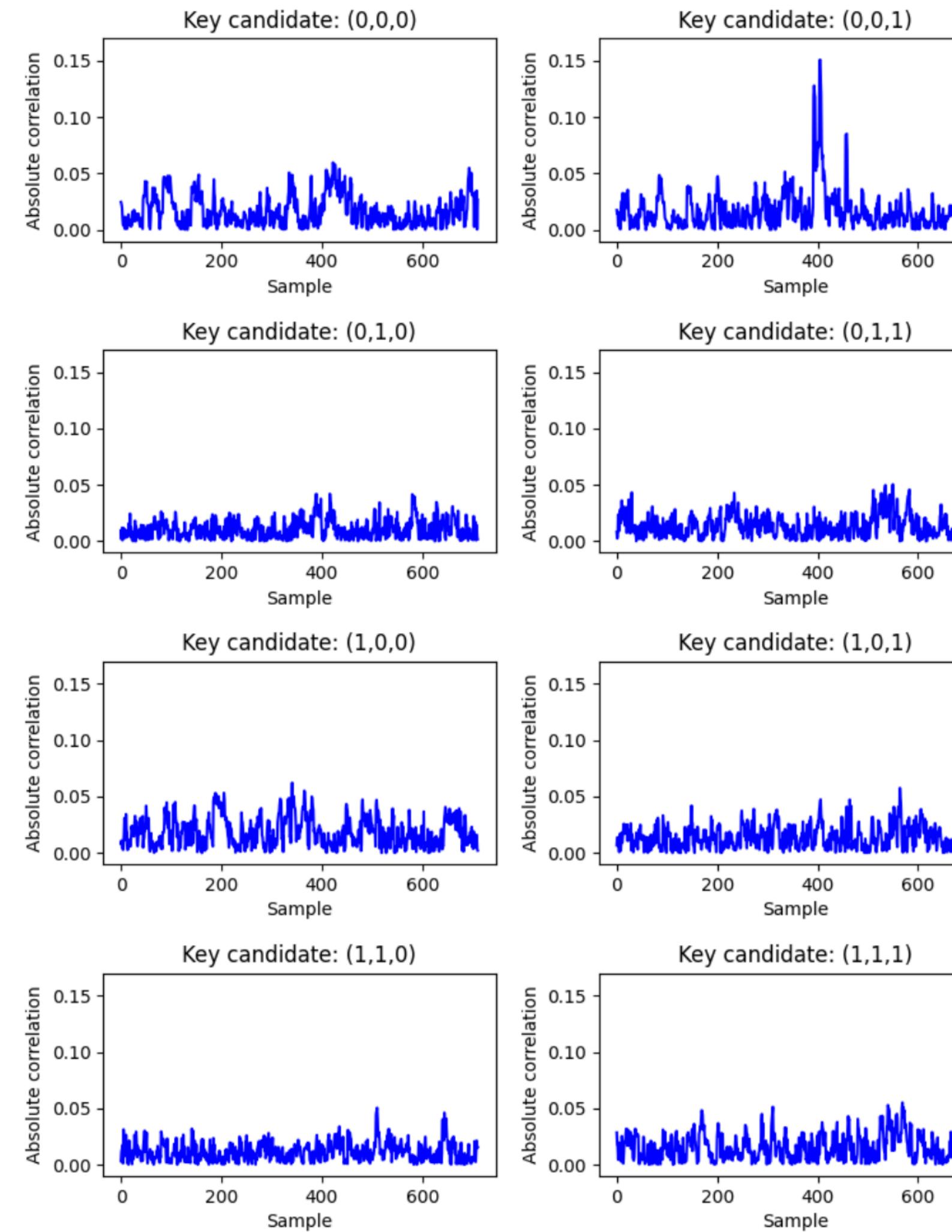
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Correlations of distributions associated to all key pairs

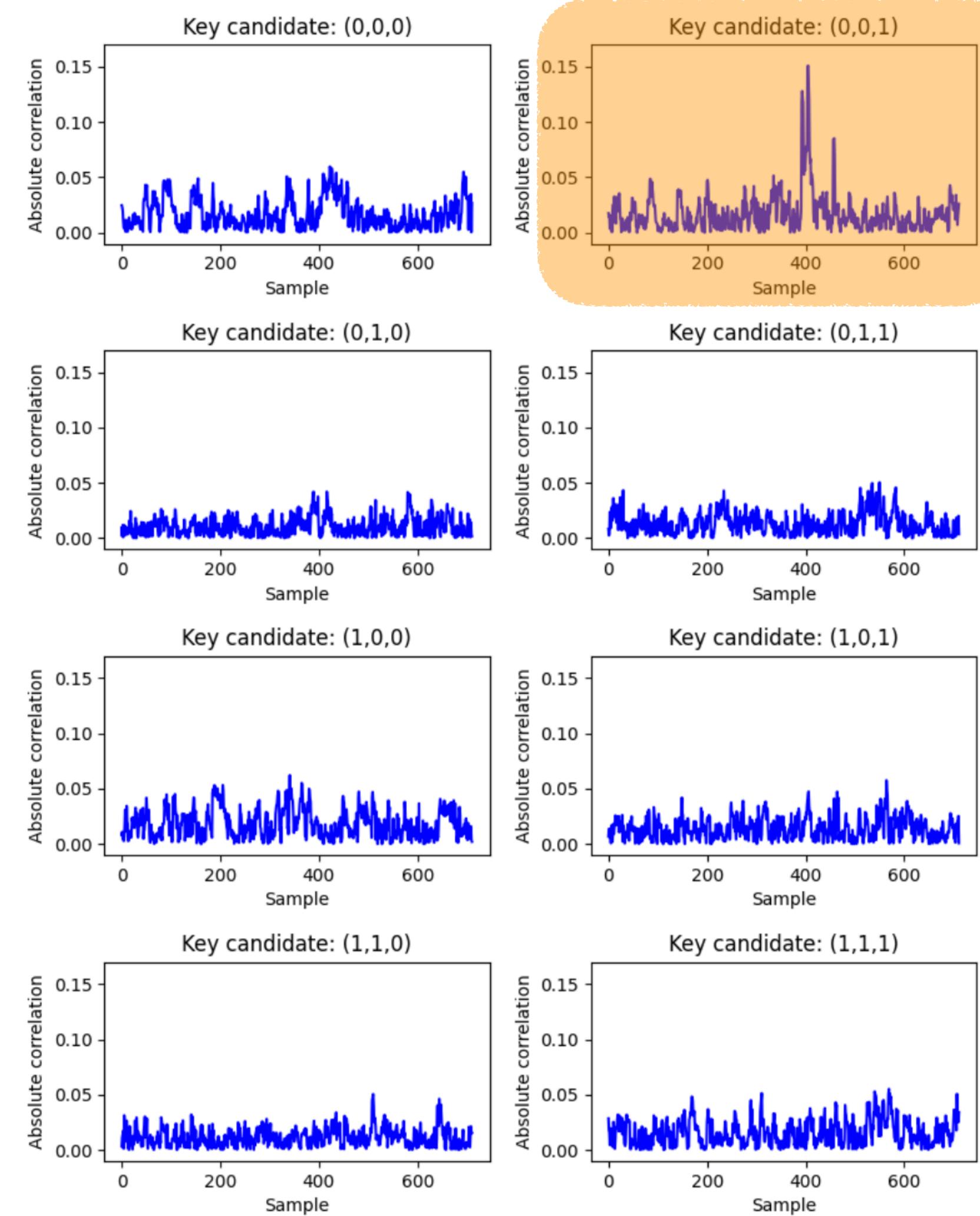
$(k_0^j, k_0^{j+36}, k_0^{j+45})$	(0,0,0)	(0,0,1)	(0,1,0)	(0,1,1)	(1,0,0)	(1,0,1)	(1,1,0)	(1,1,1)
(0,0,0)	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(0,0,1)	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
(0,1,0)	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
(0,1,1)	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
(1,0,0)	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
(1,0,1)	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
(1,1,0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
(1,1,1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

$$\begin{aligned}\tilde{z}_0^j &= k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \\ &\oplus k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36} \\ &\oplus k_0^{j+45}(n_1^{j+45} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+45}\end{aligned}$$

# Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point



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# $\tilde{y}_0^j$ as attack point ?

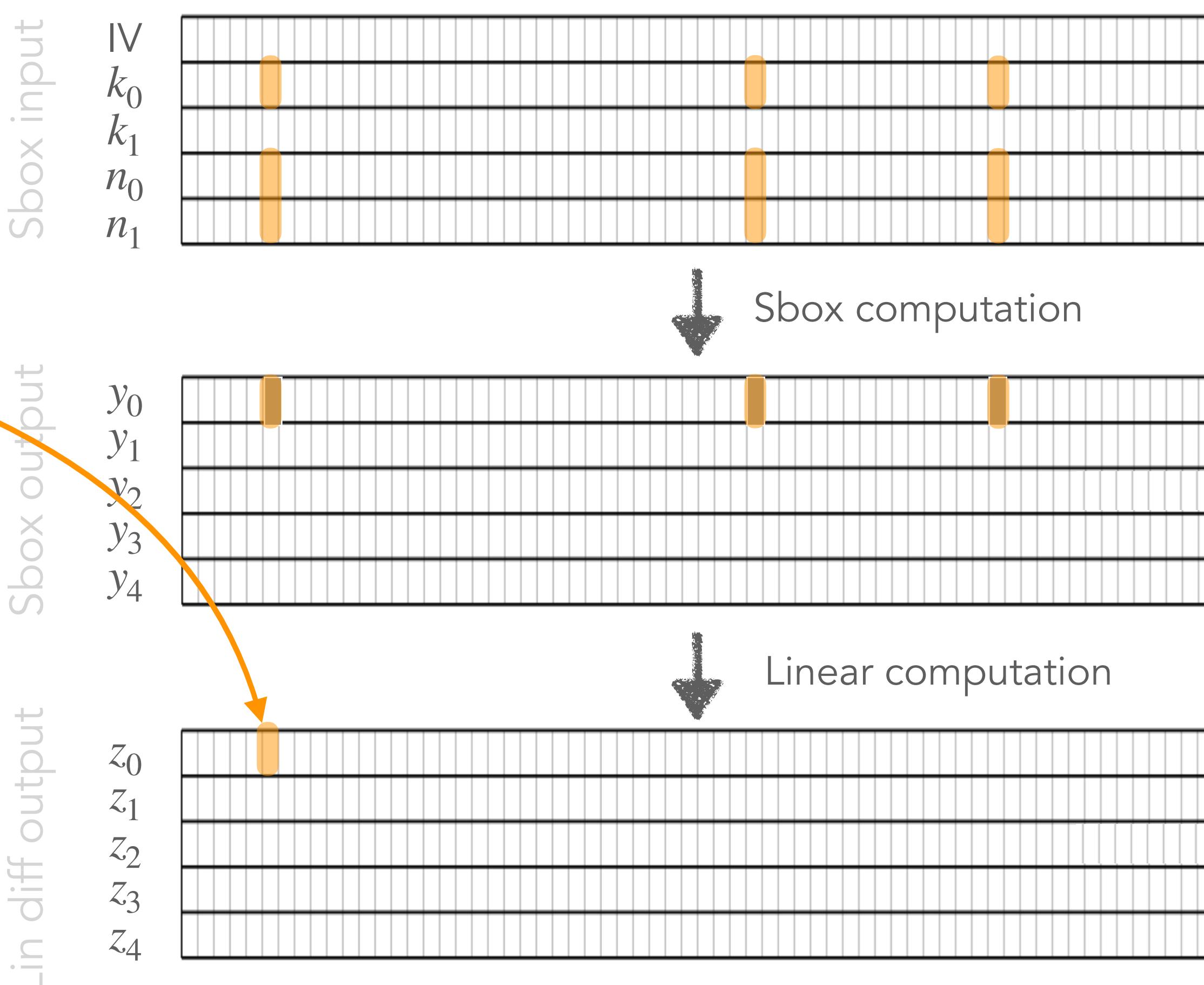
$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j \text{IV}^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus \text{IV}^j$$

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Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation

with register at linear layer output ( $z_0^j$ )



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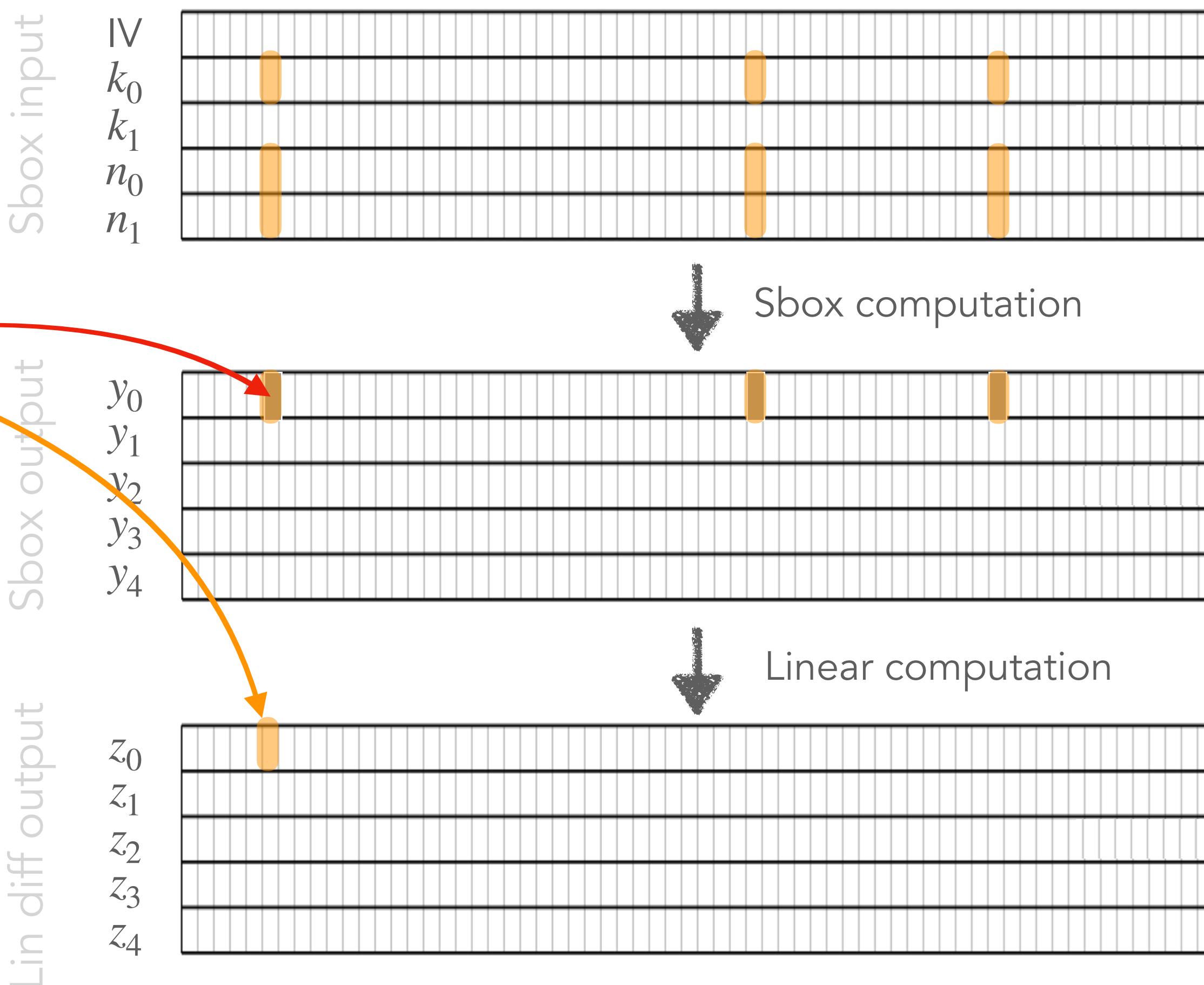
Samwel and Daemen, 2018

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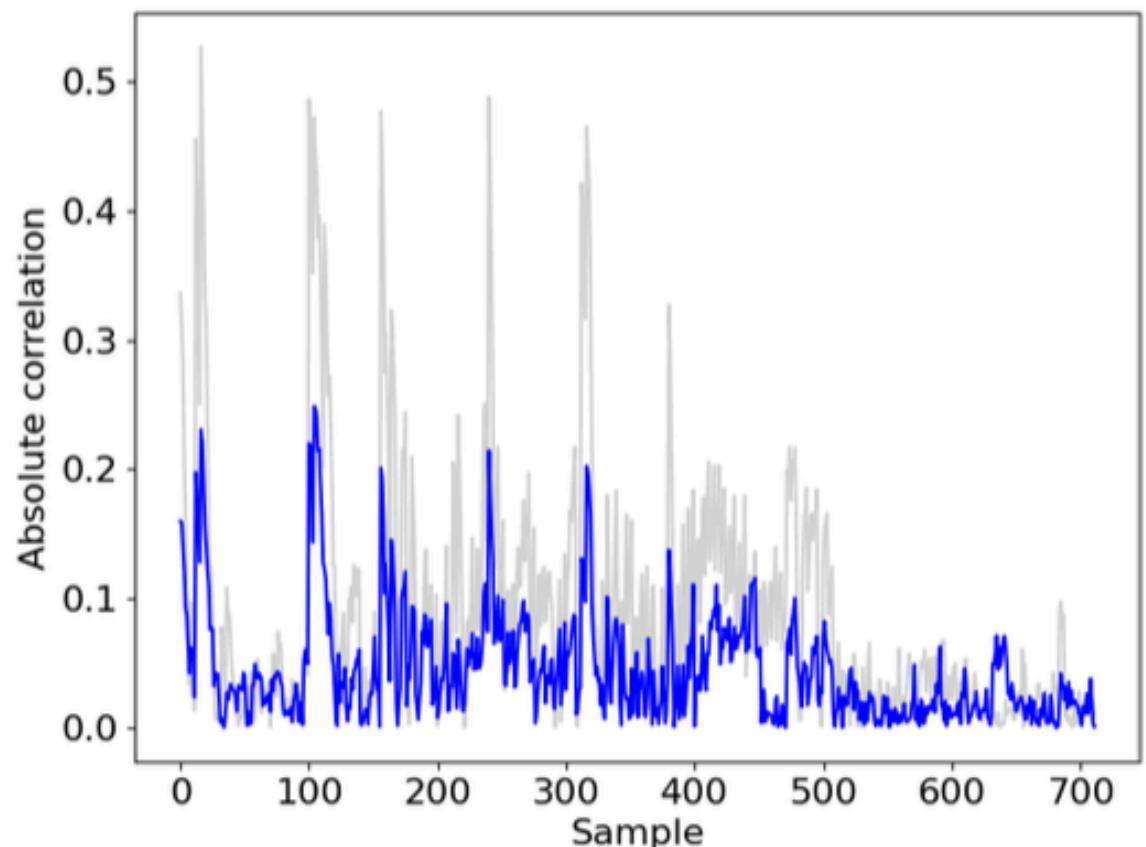
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Samwel and Daemen, 2018

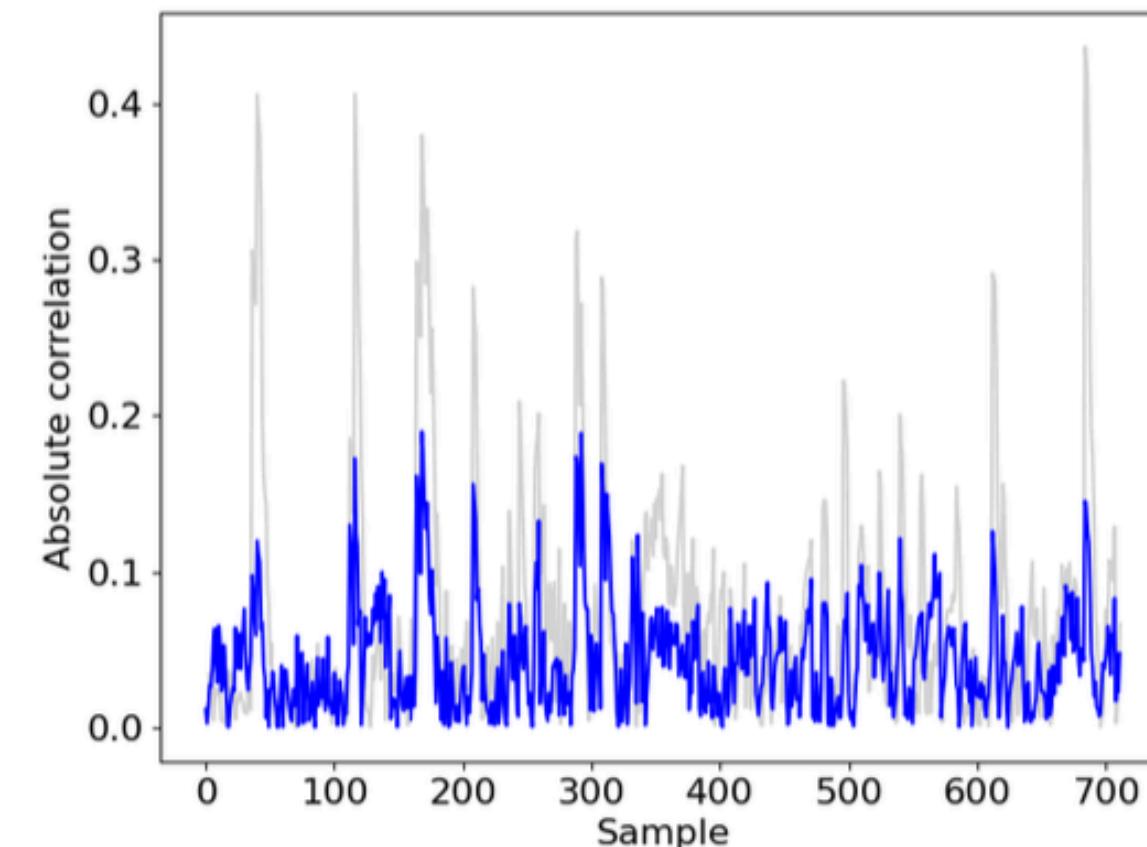
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(a)  $k_0^j = 0$



(b)  $k_0^j = 1$

- Correlated with activity of  $n_0$
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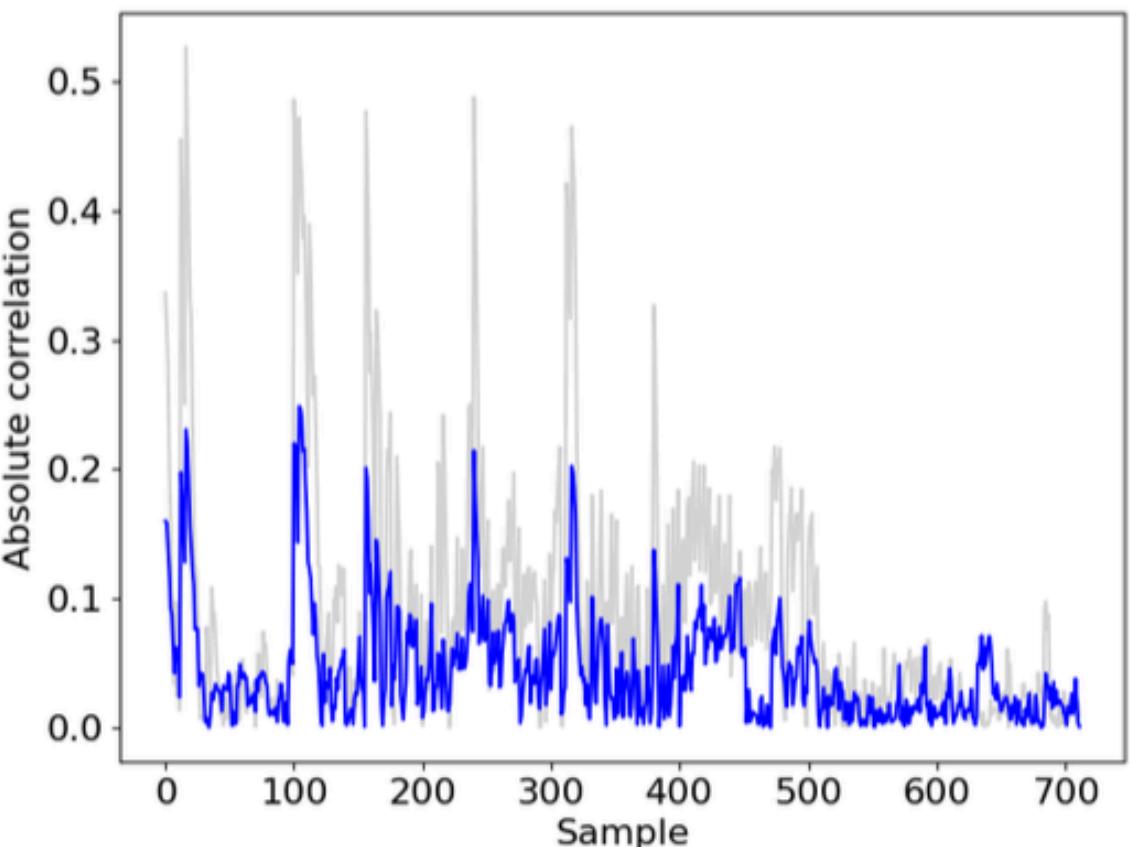
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Samwel and Daemen, 2018

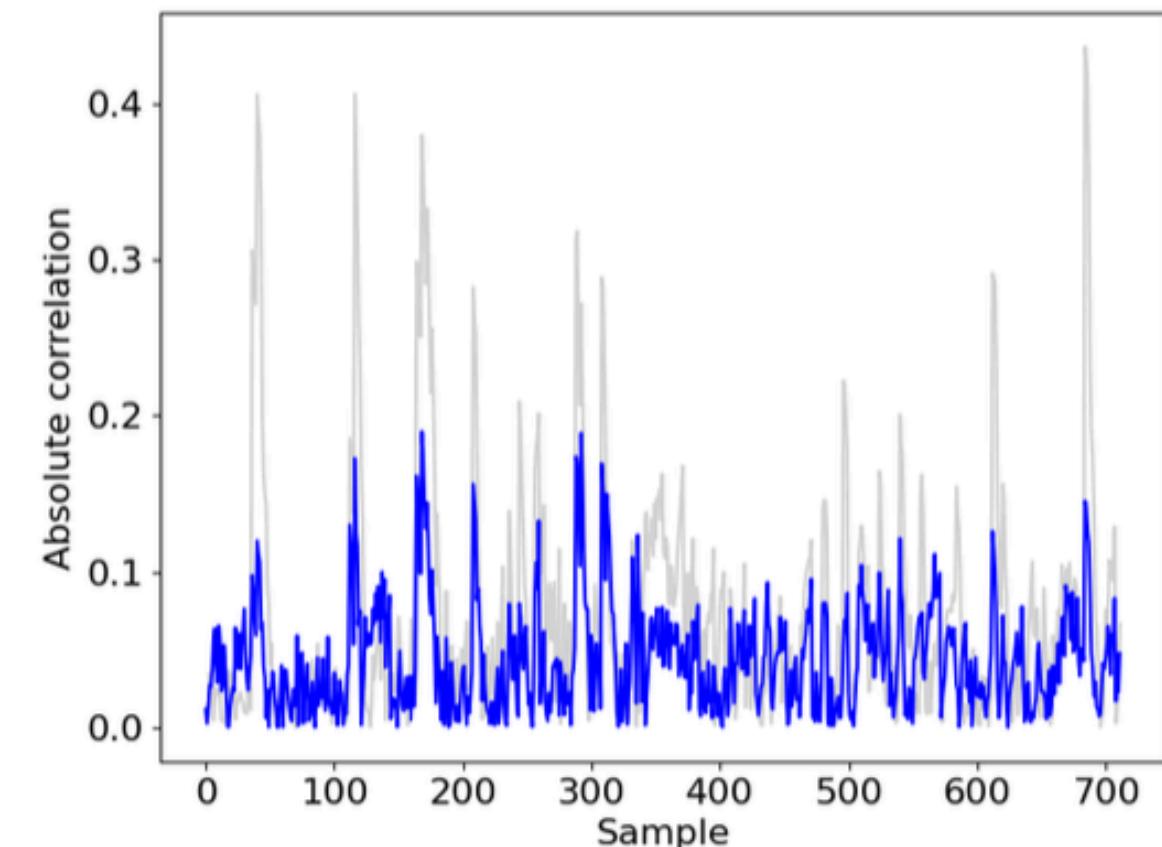
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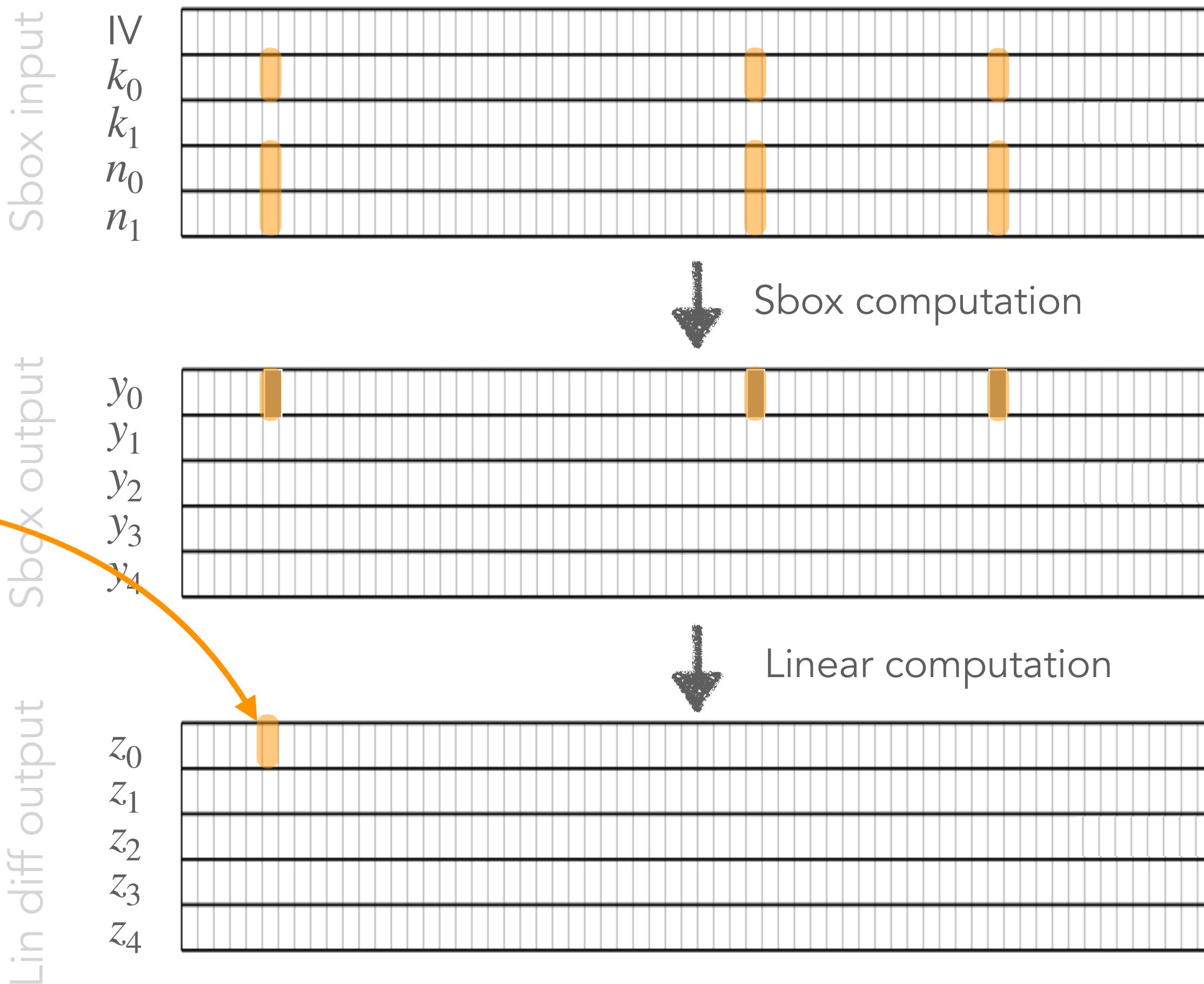
→ Not effective for CPA attacks

# The best choice

for both hardware and software implementations

Samwel and Daemen, 2018

$$\begin{aligned}\tilde{z}_0^j &= k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \\ &\oplus k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36} \\ &\oplus k_0^{j+45}(n_1^{j+45} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+45}\end{aligned}$$



# Second-Order CPA attack

# Target implementation

Masked software implementations with 2 shares  
by Ascon team

<https://github.com/ascon/simpleserial-ascon>

The screenshot shows the GitHub repository page for 'simpleserial-ascon' owned by 'ascon'. The repository is public and has 7 watchers, 2 forks, and 11 starred users. It contains 1 branch and 1 tag. The main branch has 19 commits from 'mschlaeffe' and others, dated 3 years ago. The repository description is 'Masked Ascon Software Implementations' and it links to 'ascon.iak.tugraz.at/'. The repository also includes a 'Readme' file, a 'CC0-1.0 license', and an 'Activity' section.

Code Issues Pull requests Actions Projects Security Insights

simpleserial-ascon Public

main 1 Branch 1 Tag

mschlaeffe Add more t-test results ca4a609 · 3 years ago 19 Commits

Documents Use single jupyter notebook for plain and shared interface 3 years ago

Implementations/crypto\_aead/ascon128v12 Add initial version of masked Ascon implementations 3 years ago

jupyter Note that SS\_VER\_2\_1 only works on the CW develop bra... 3 years ago

About

Masked Ascon Software Implementations

ascon.iak.tugraz.at/

Readme

CC0-1.0 license

Activity

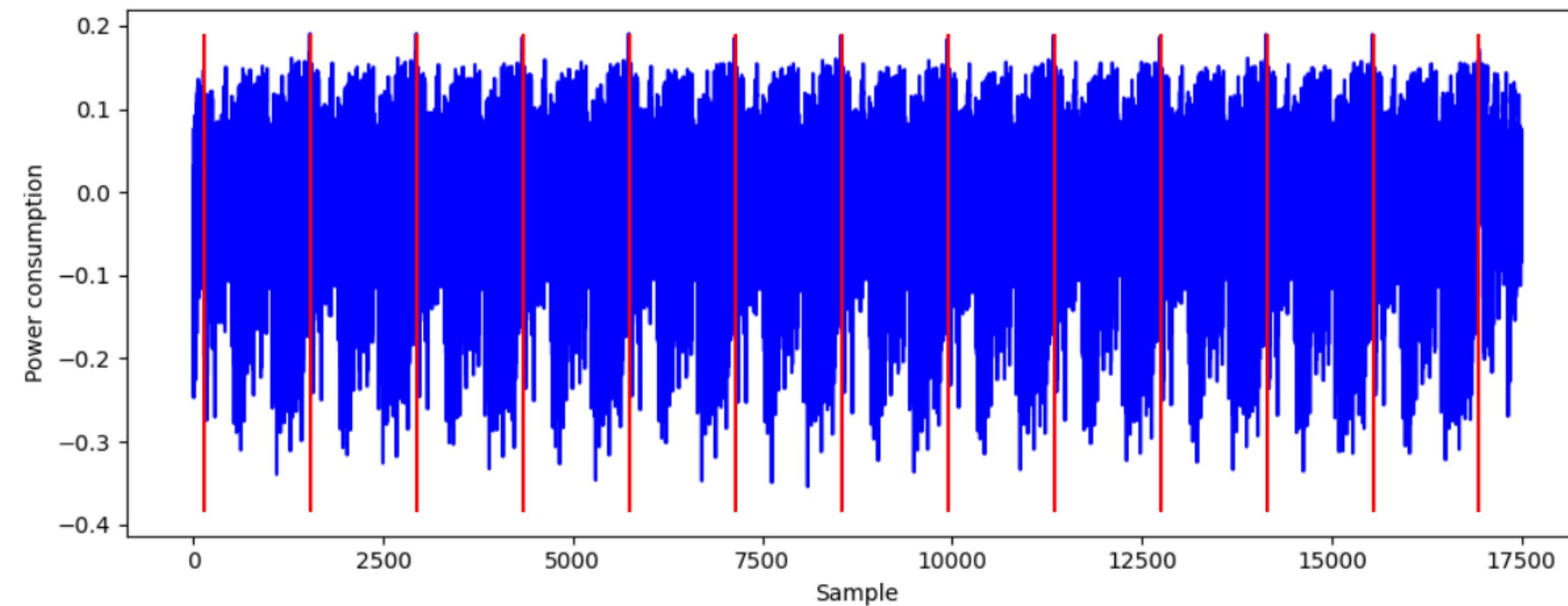
# Target implementation

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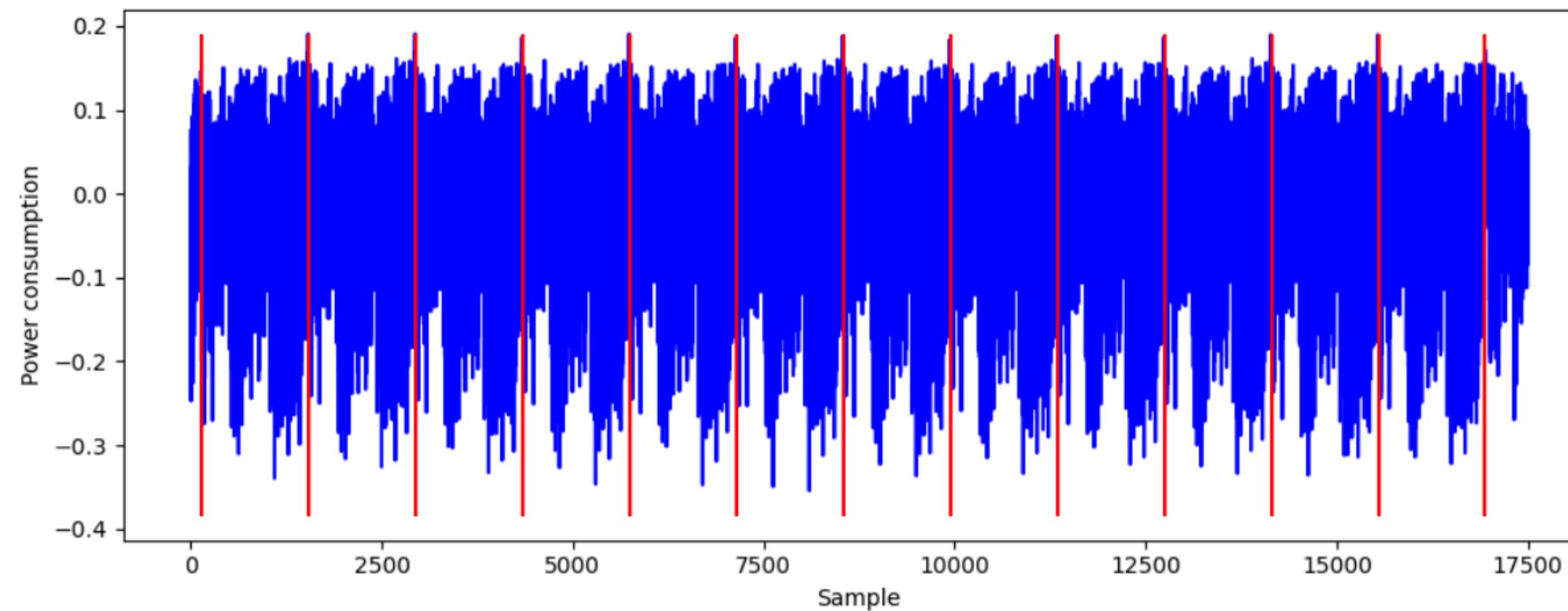
Power consumption of the first 12 rounds from ChipWhisperer ARM with Cortex-M3 core:



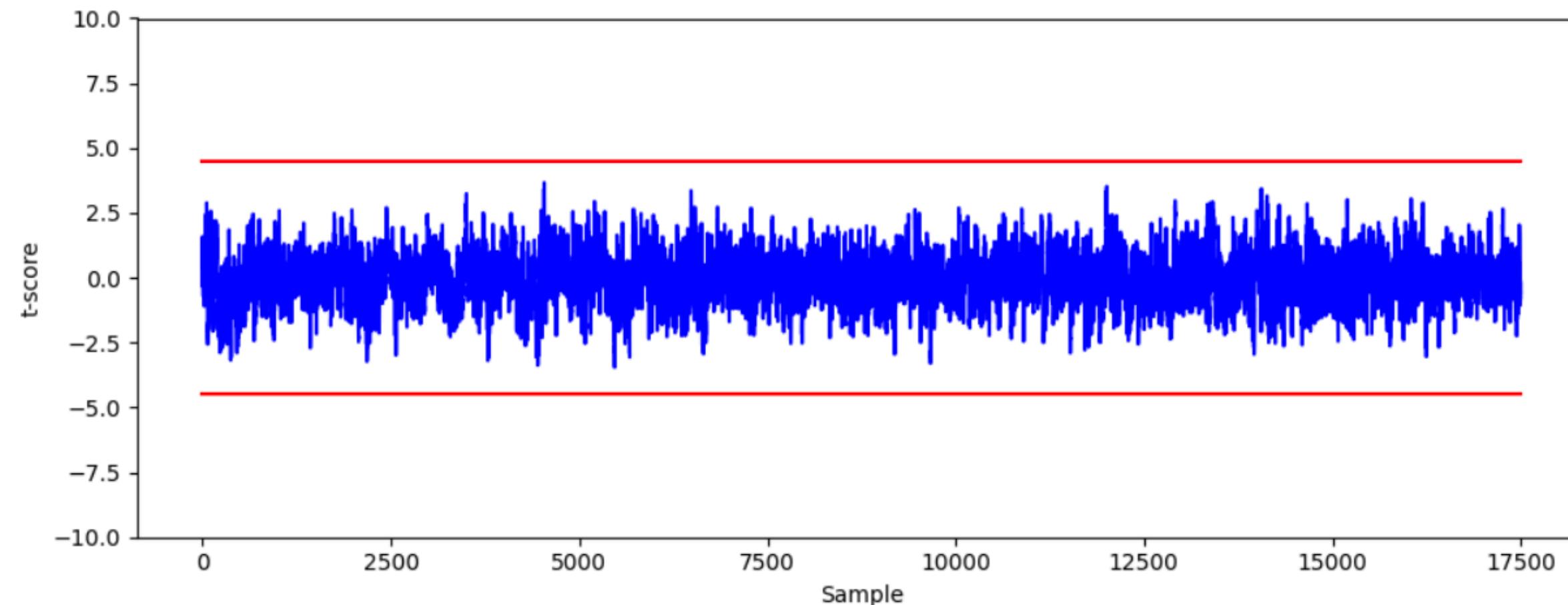
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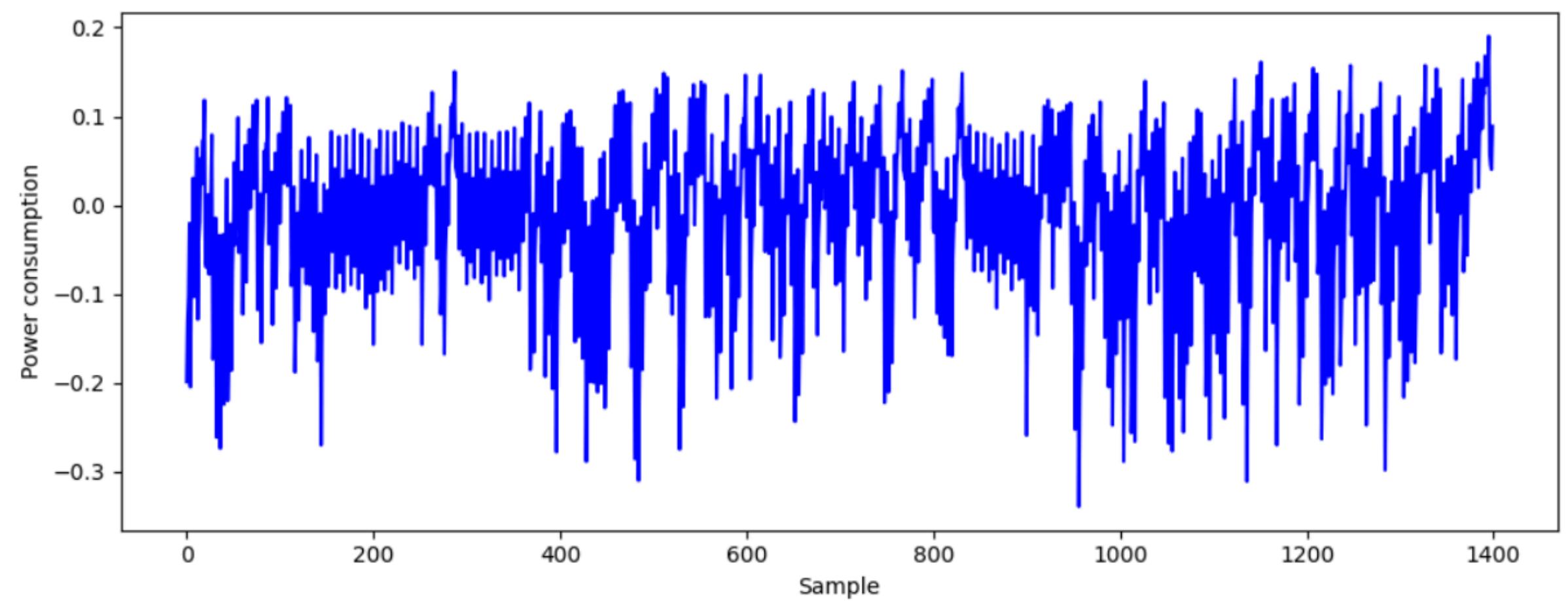


Verify first-order leakage by TVLA:



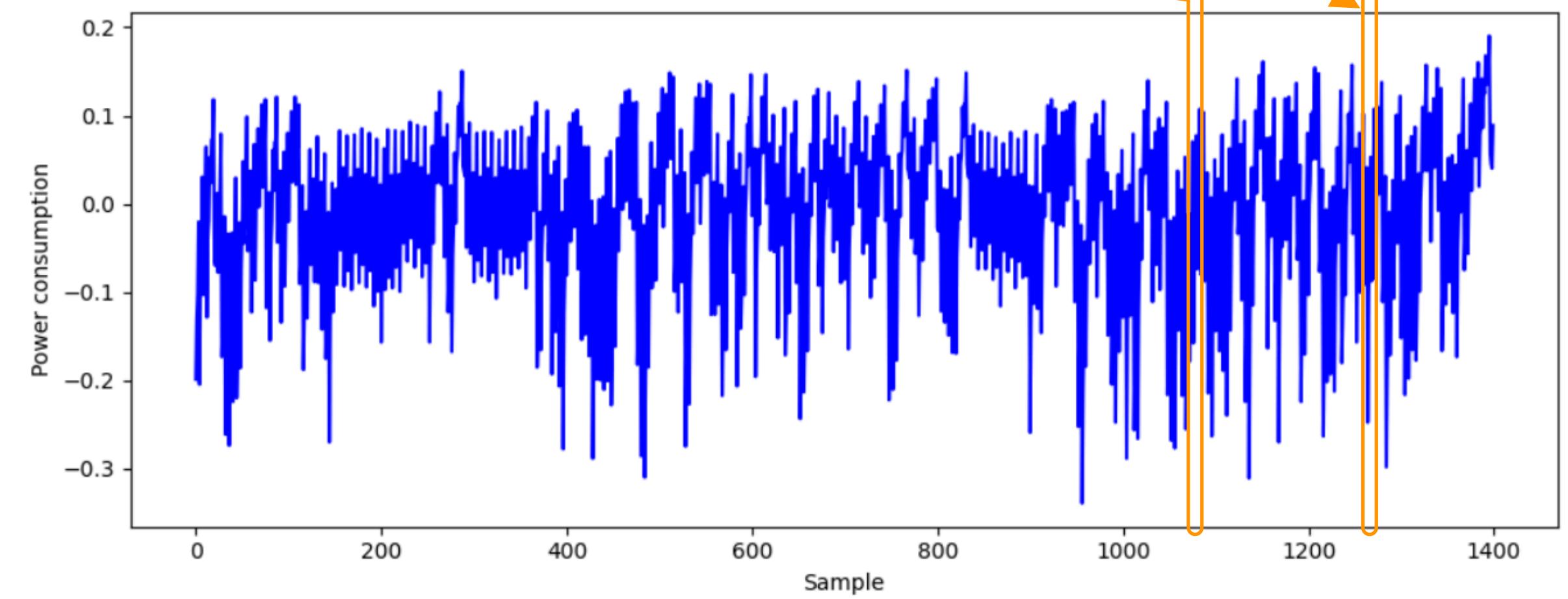
# Second-Order CPA

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# Second-Order CPA

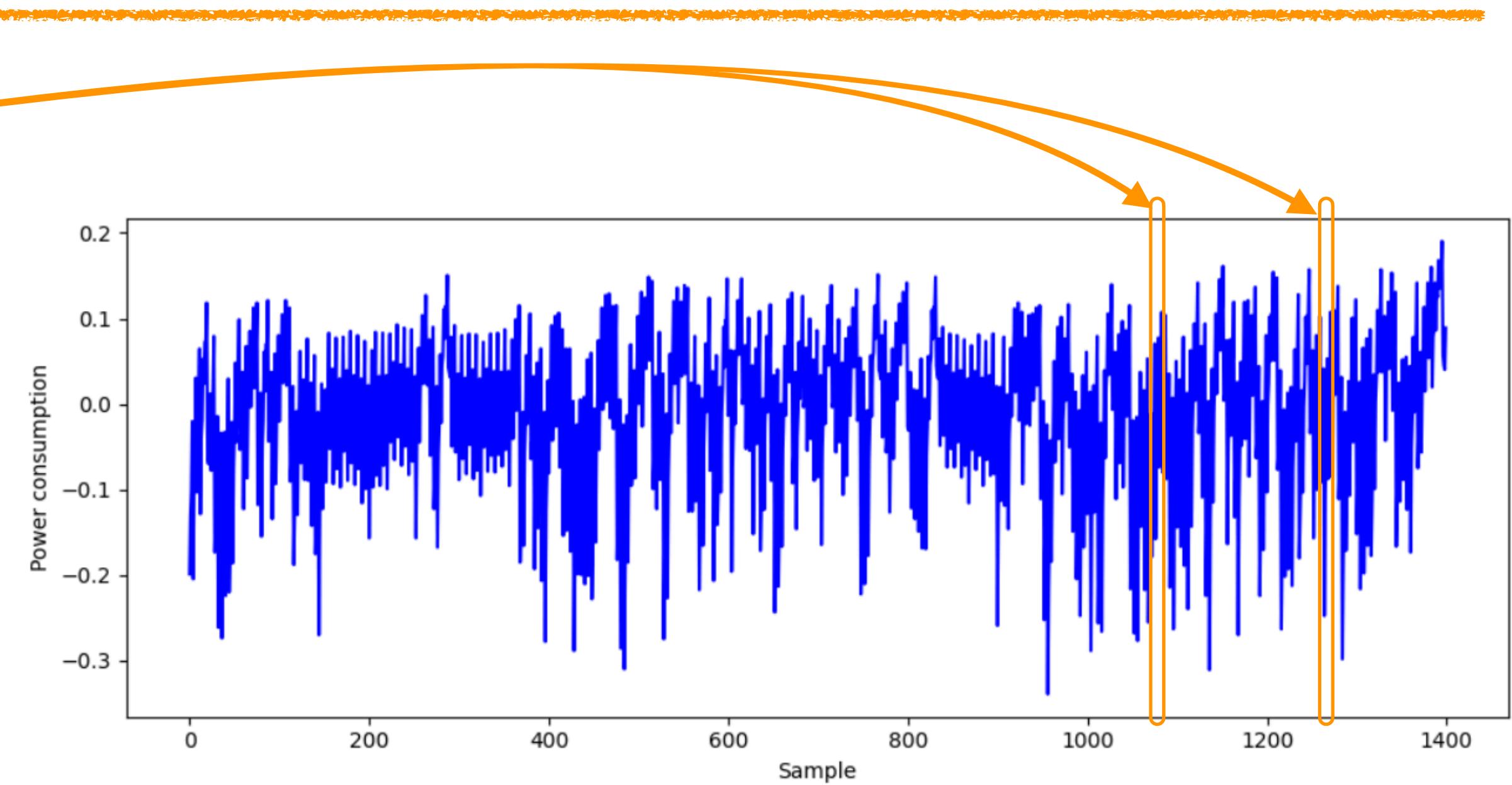
Combine two points on the trace  
(by normalized product)



# Second-Order CPA

Combine two points on the trace  
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Optimizations:

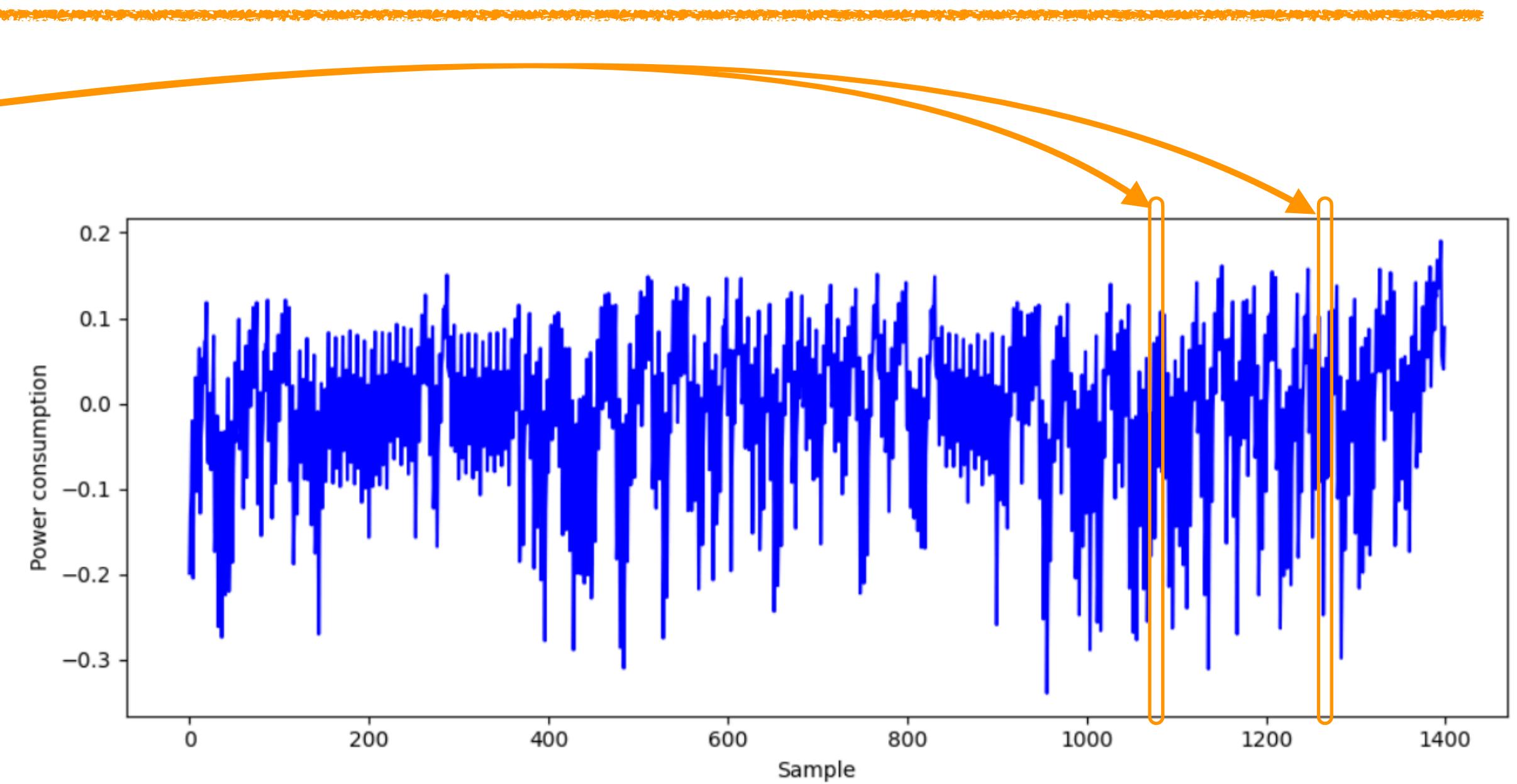


# Second-Order CPA

Combine two points on the trace  
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Optimizations:

- Attack point at linear layer output

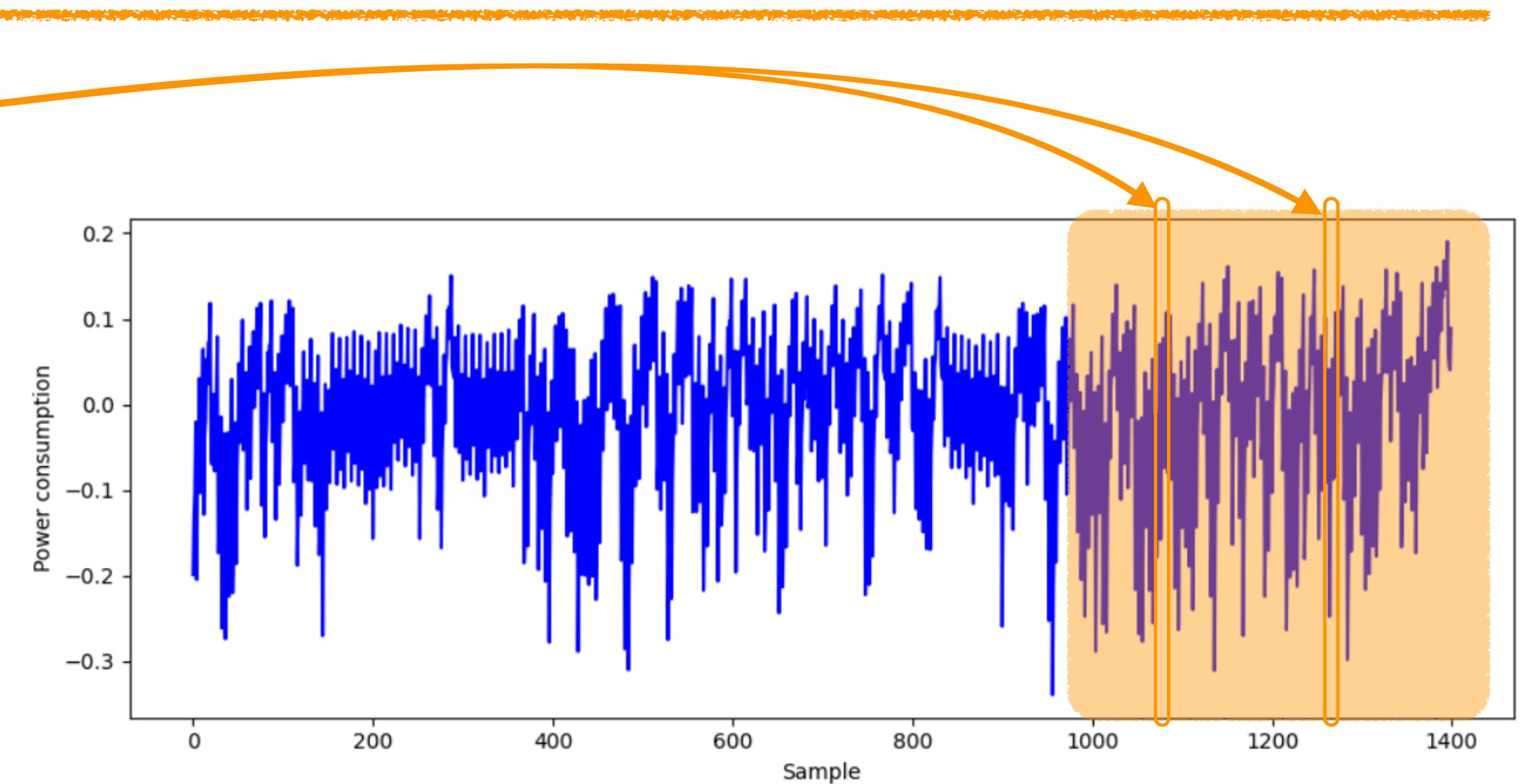


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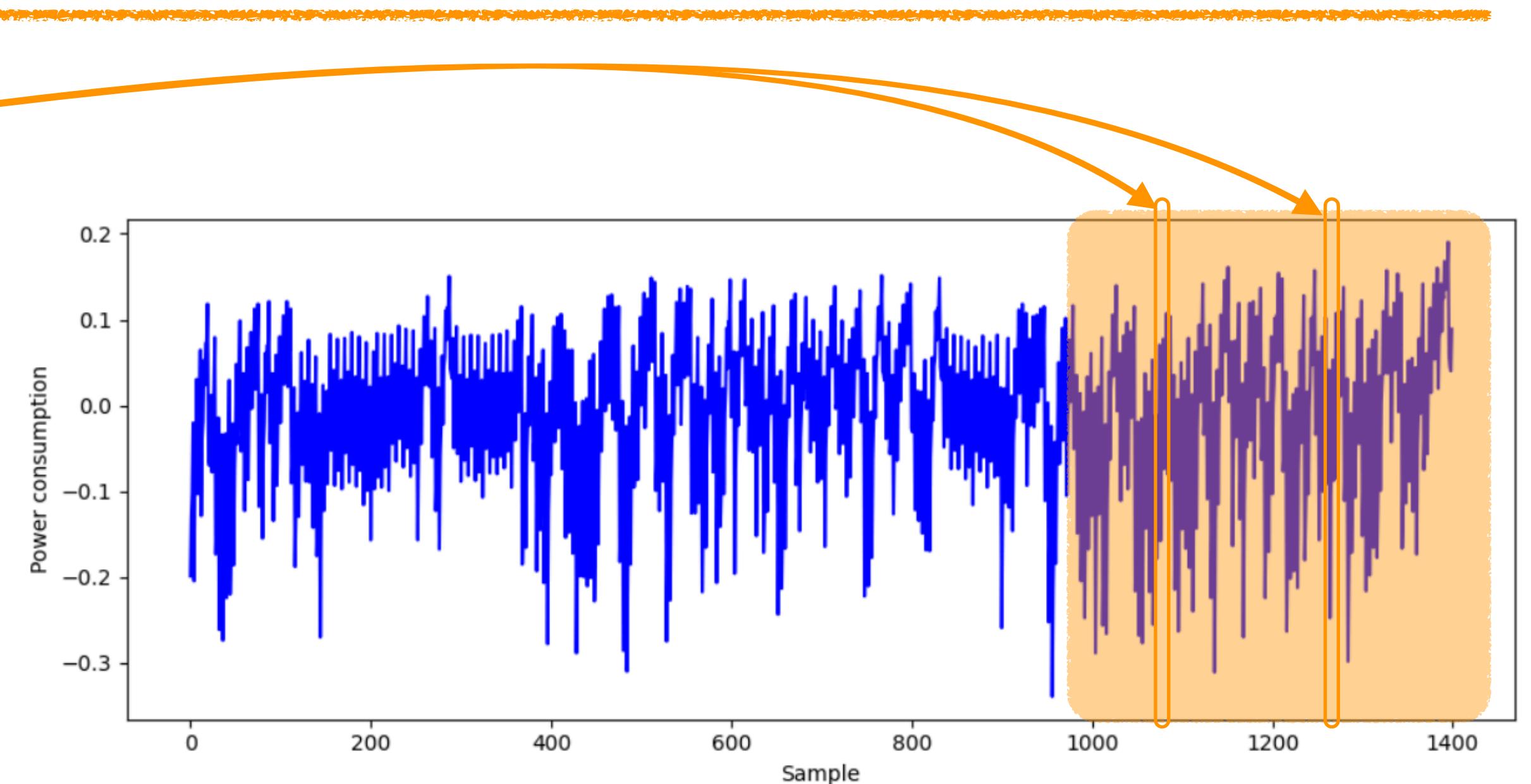


# Second-Order CPA

Combine two points on the trace  
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Optimizations:

- Attack point at linear layer output  
→ focus on the right part of the trace

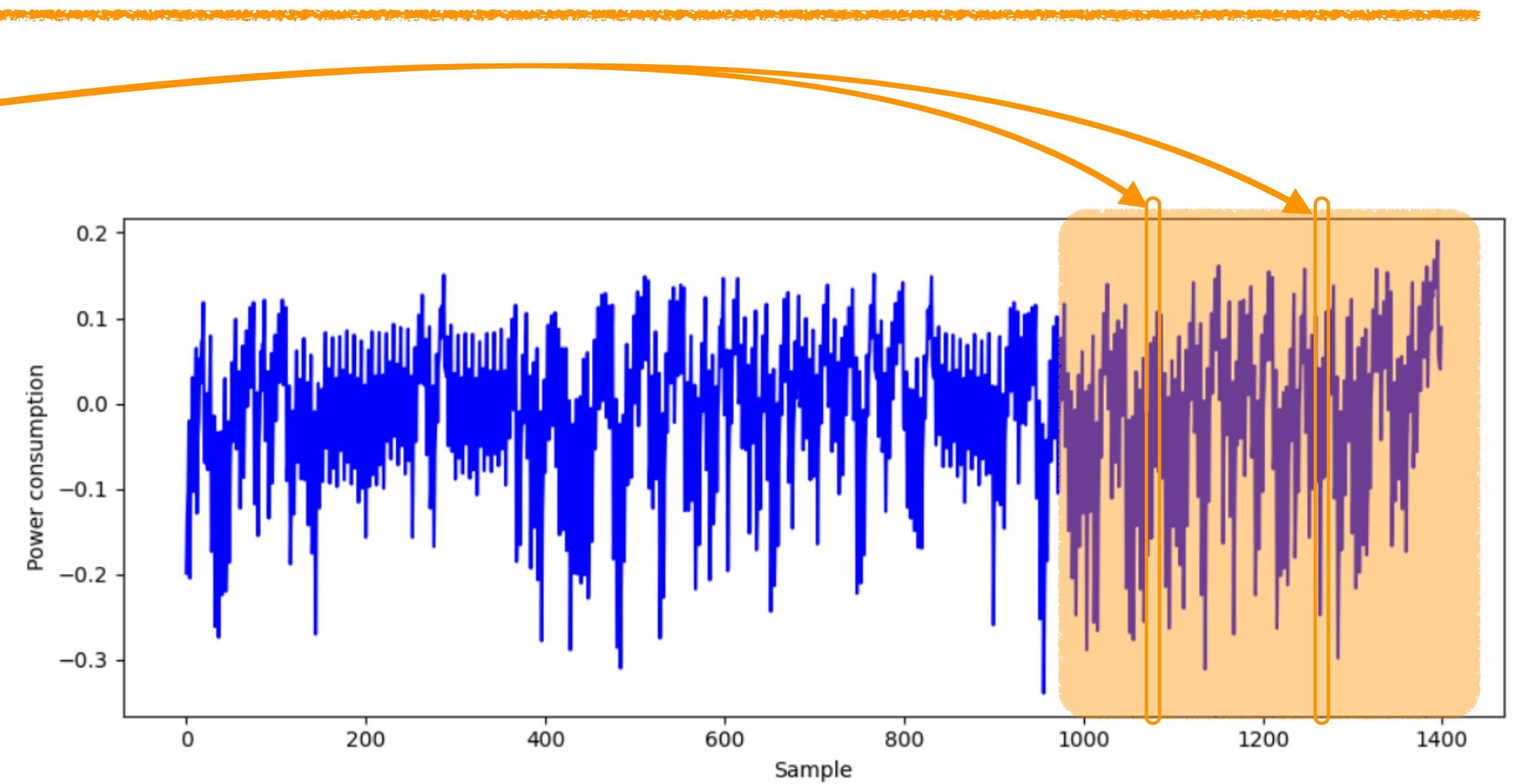


# Second-Order CPA

Combine two points on the trace  
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Optimizations:

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- Two shares occur in a time span

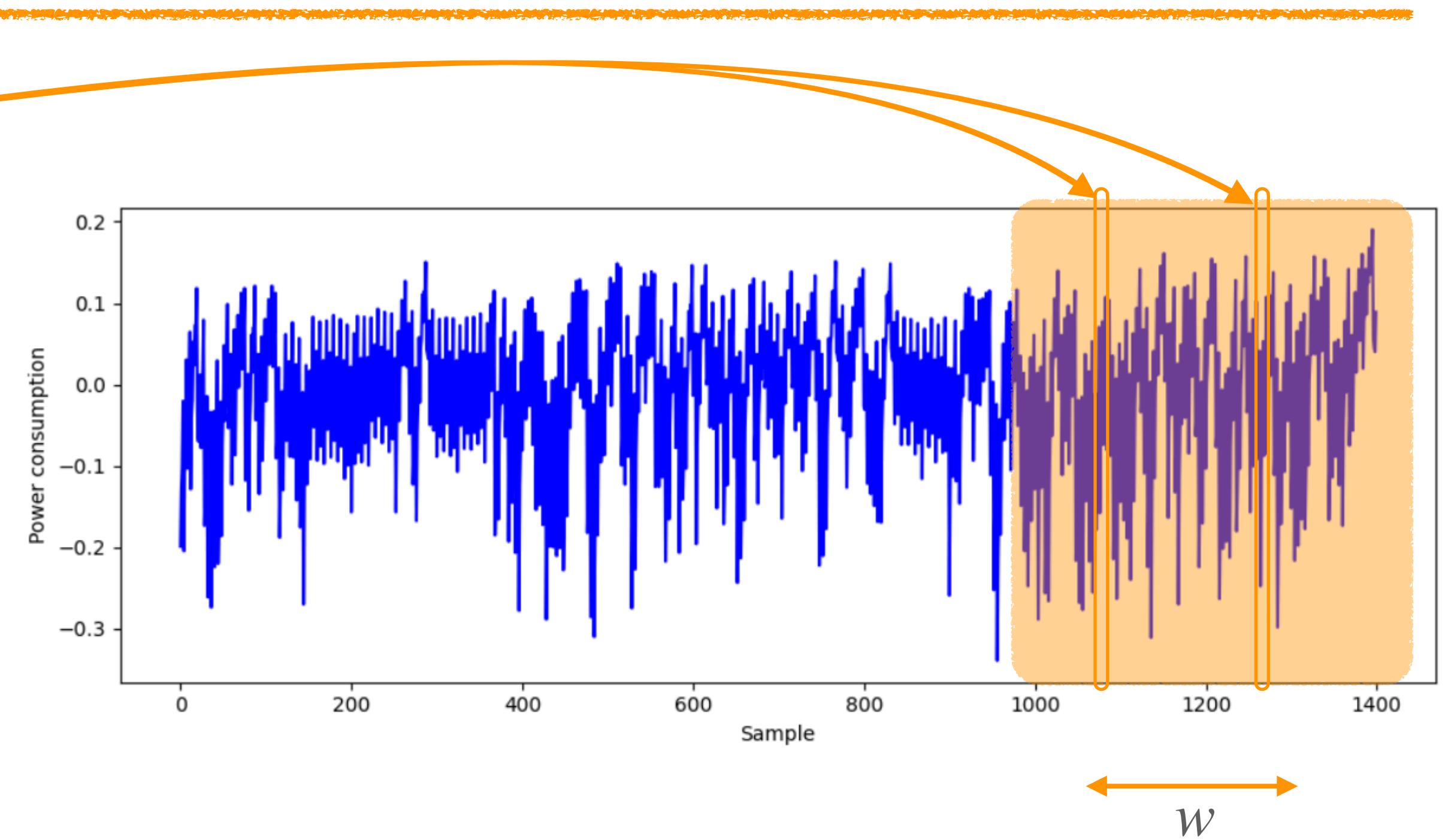


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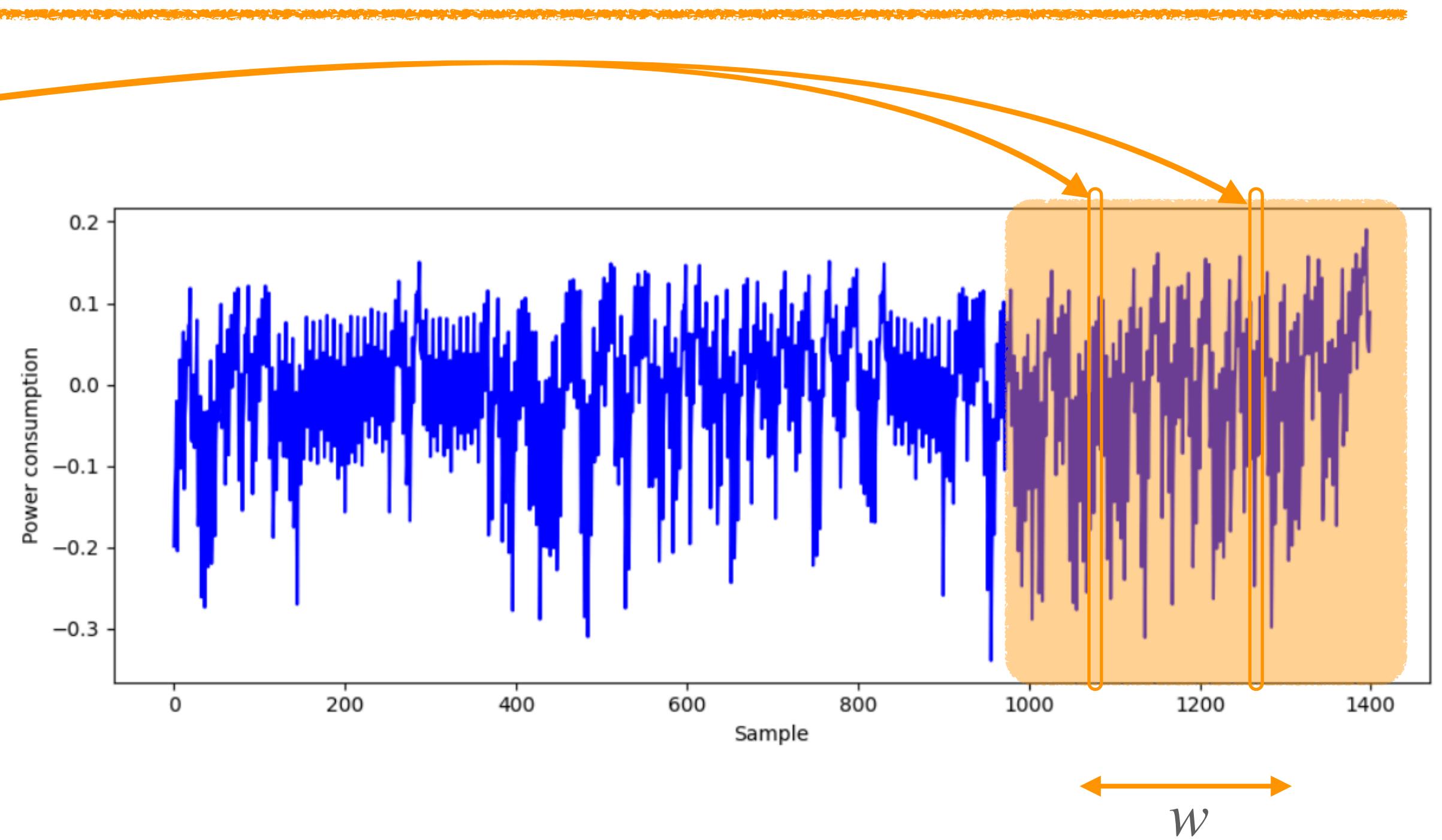


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→ parameter window  $w$

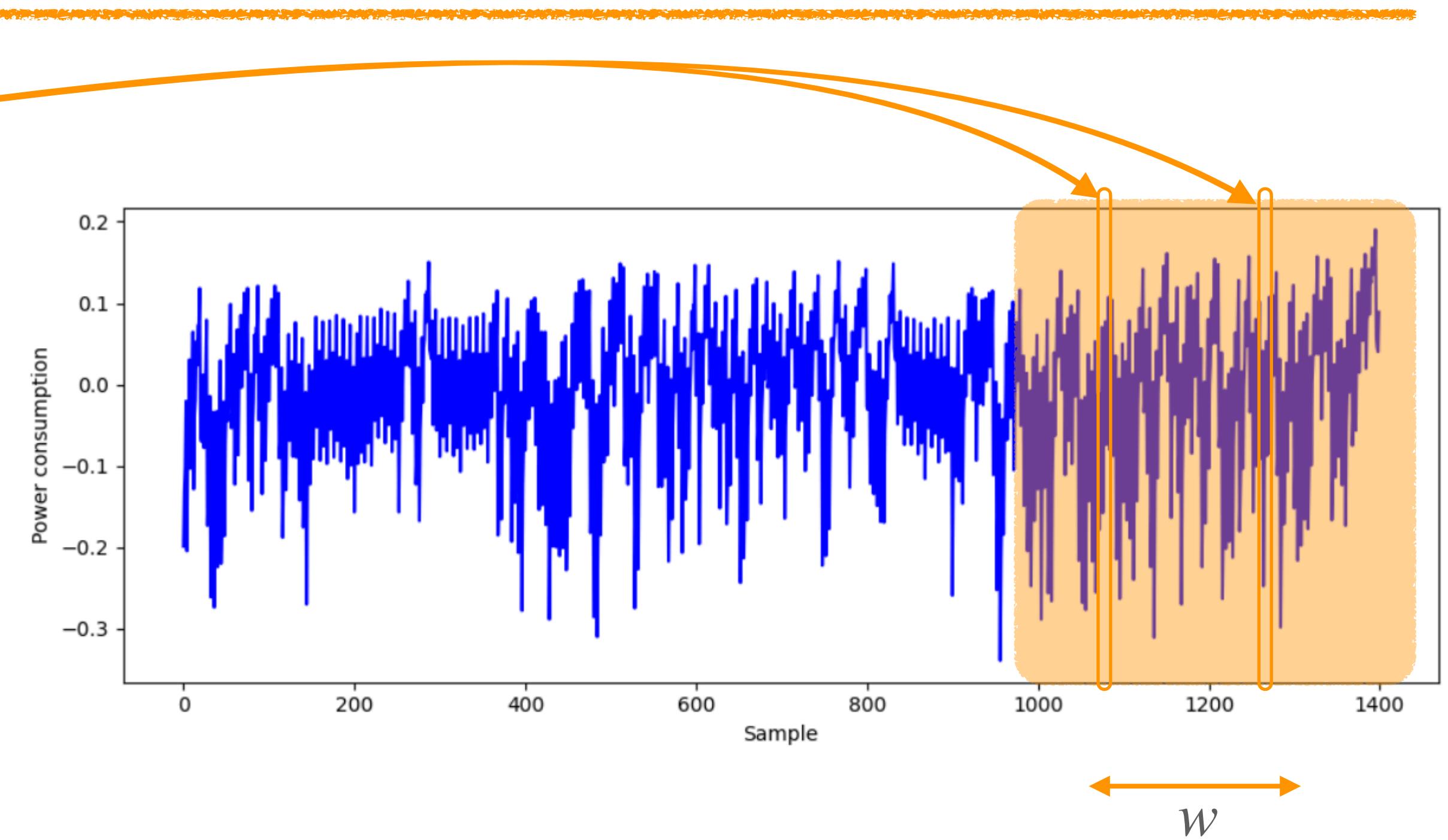


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Our attack considers the last 350 samples  
 $w = 50$

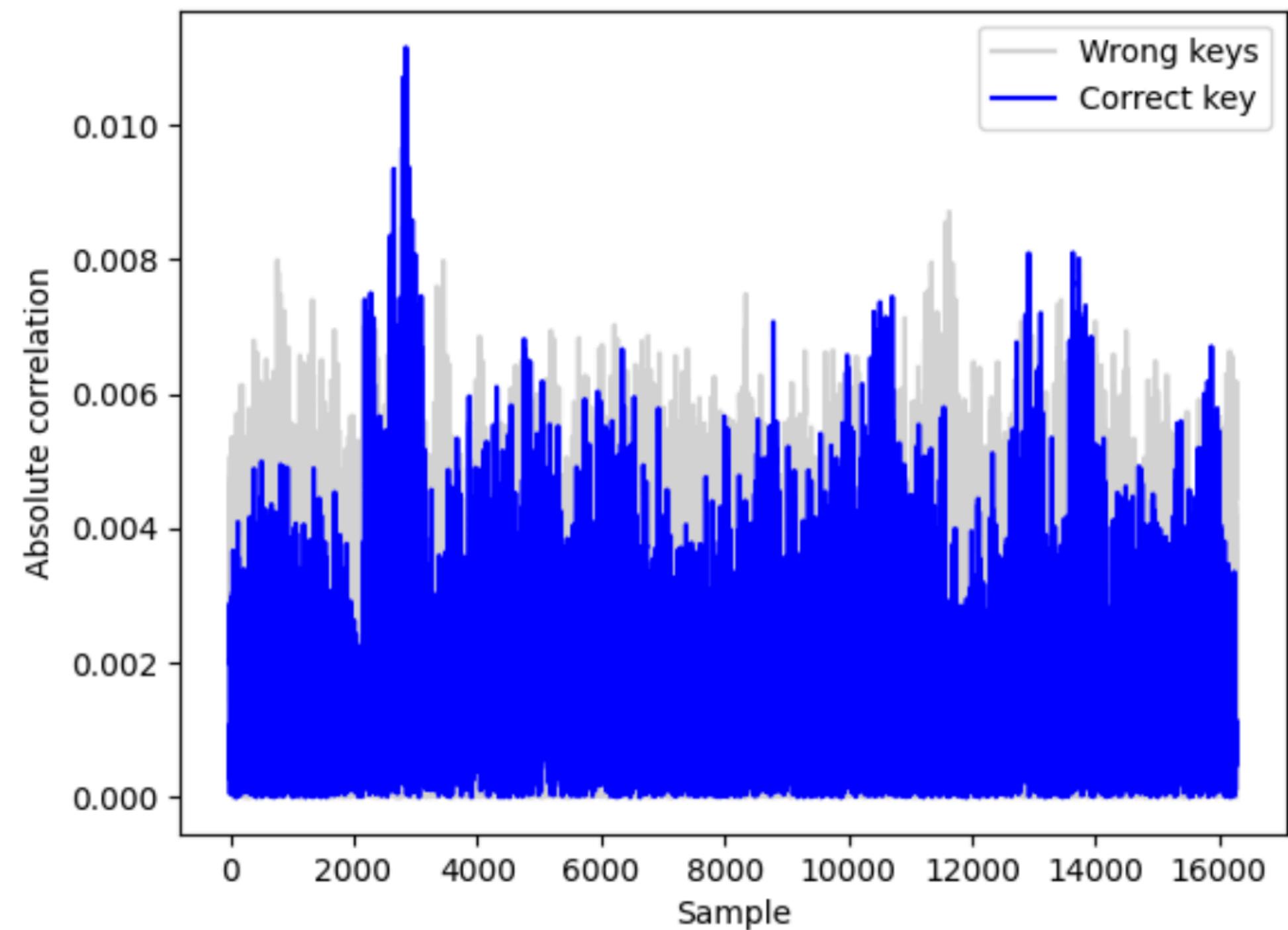
# Results

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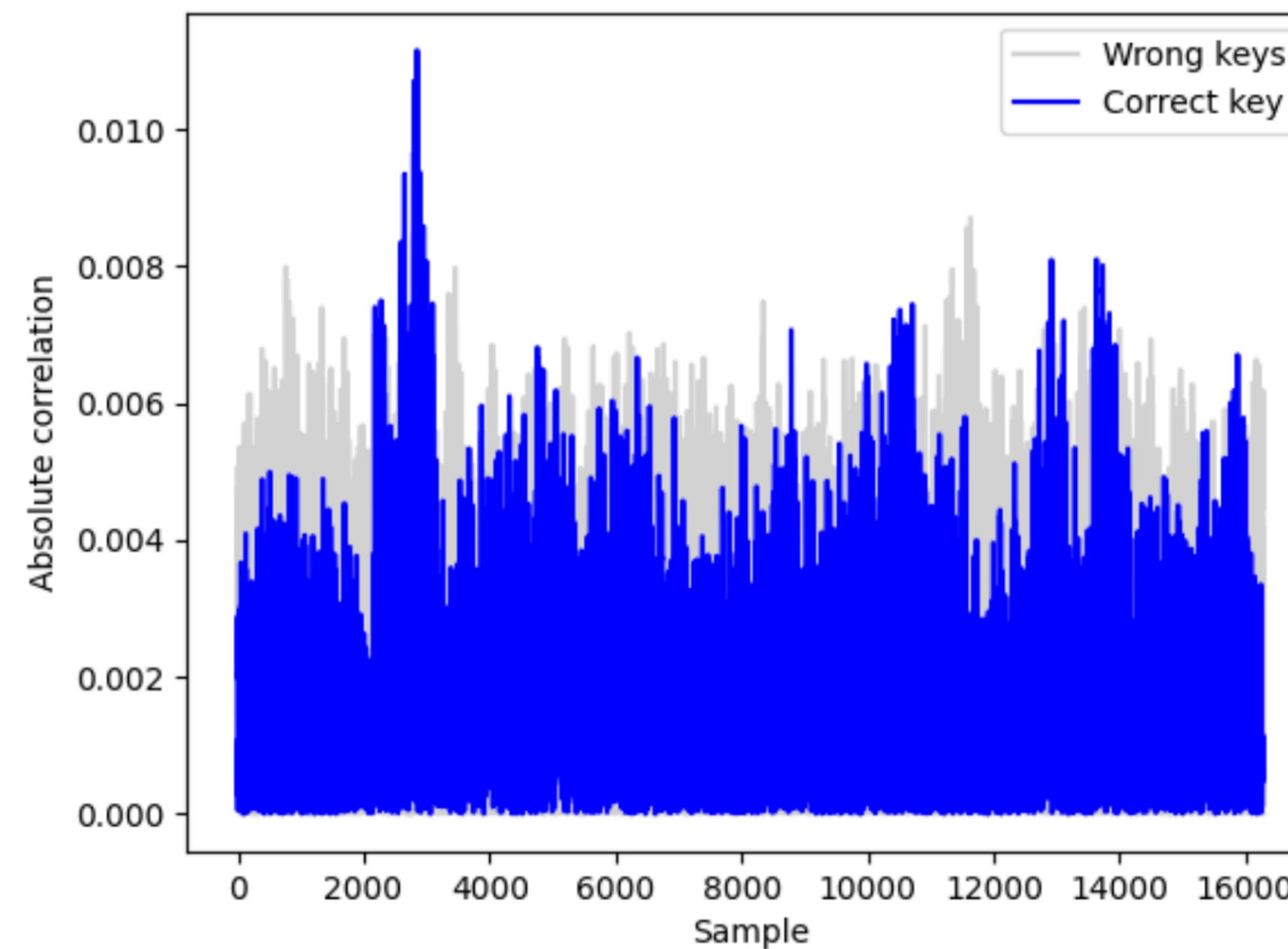
## Correlation traces



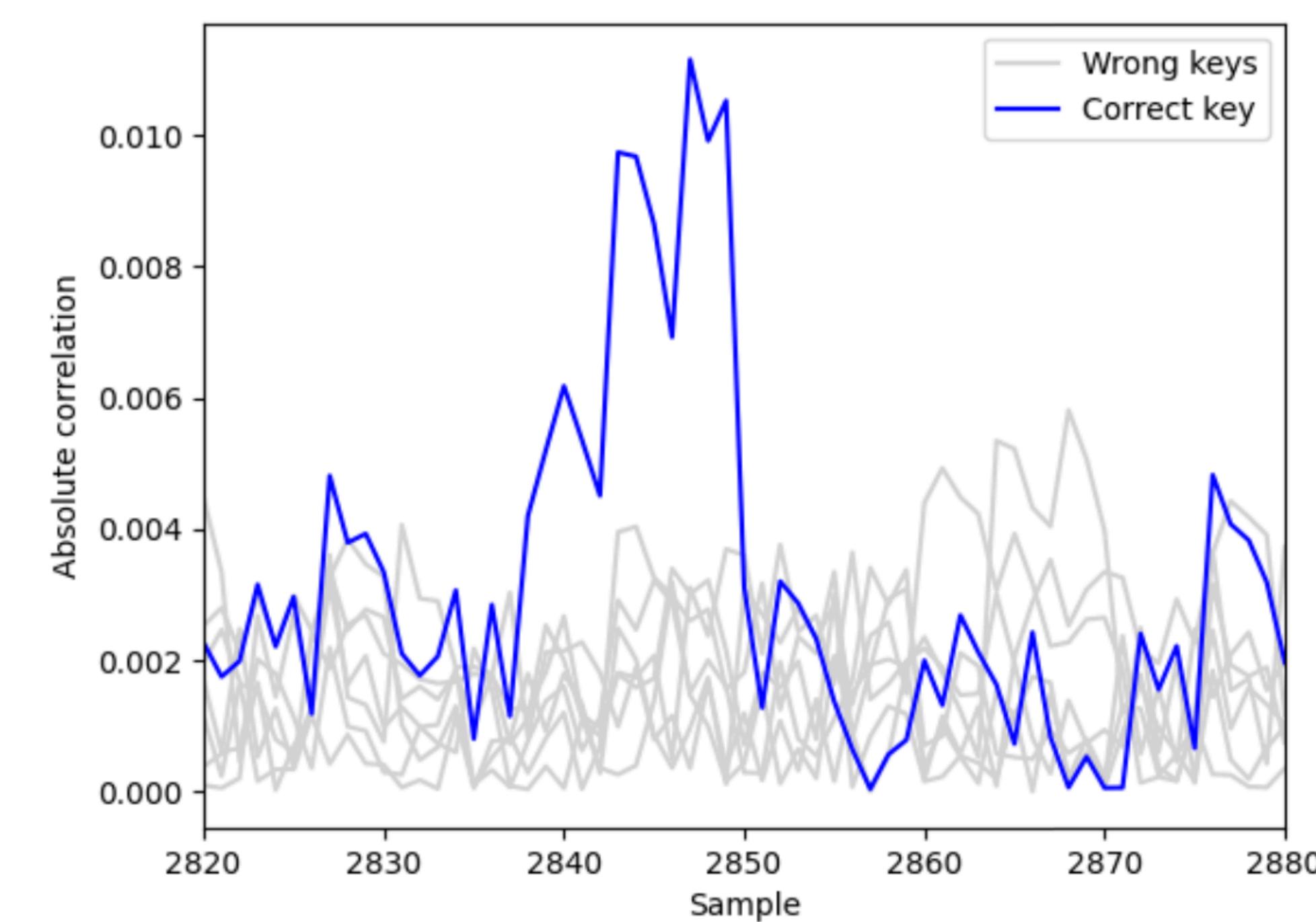
# Results

---

Correlation traces



Correlation peak



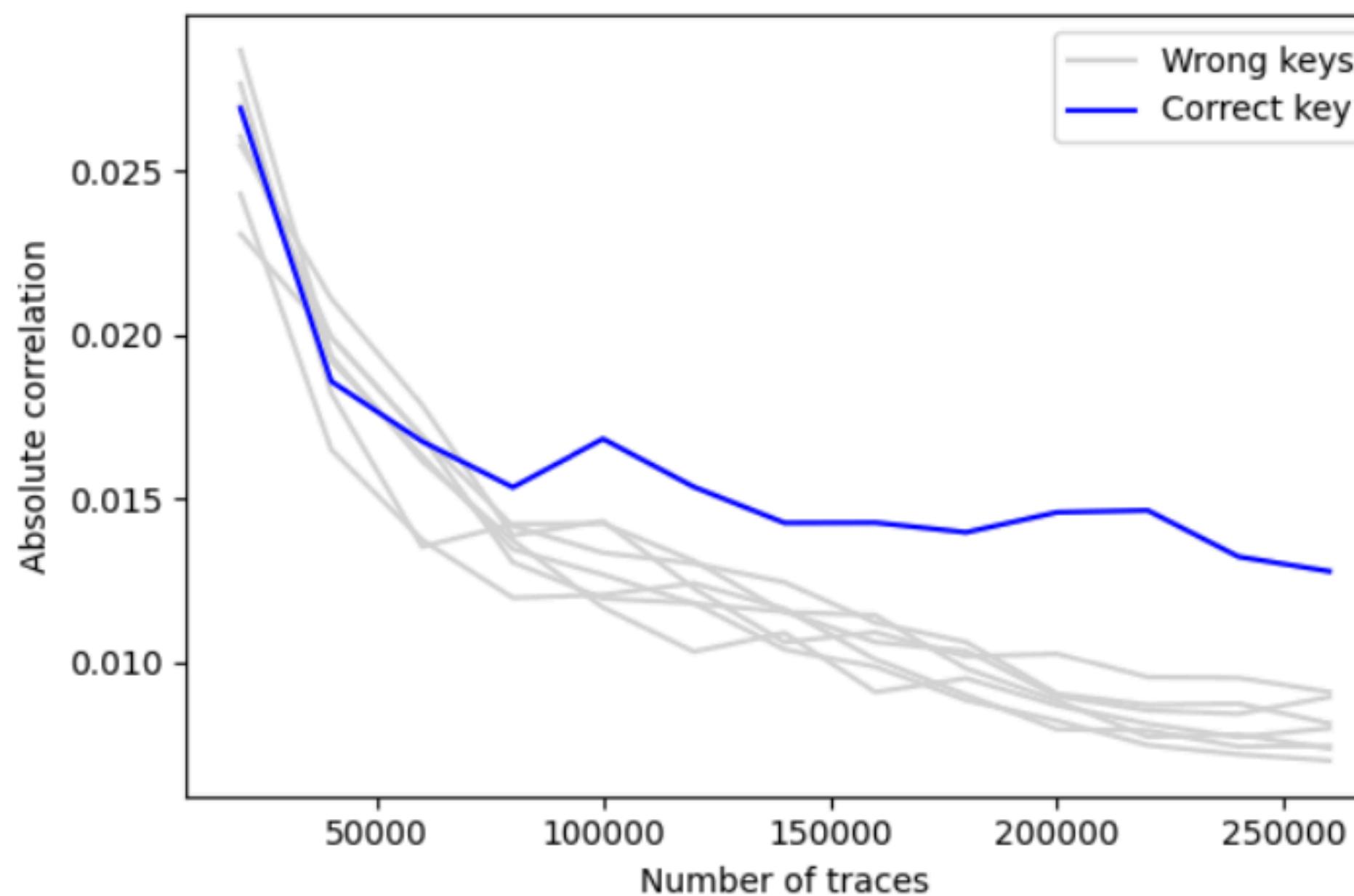
# Results

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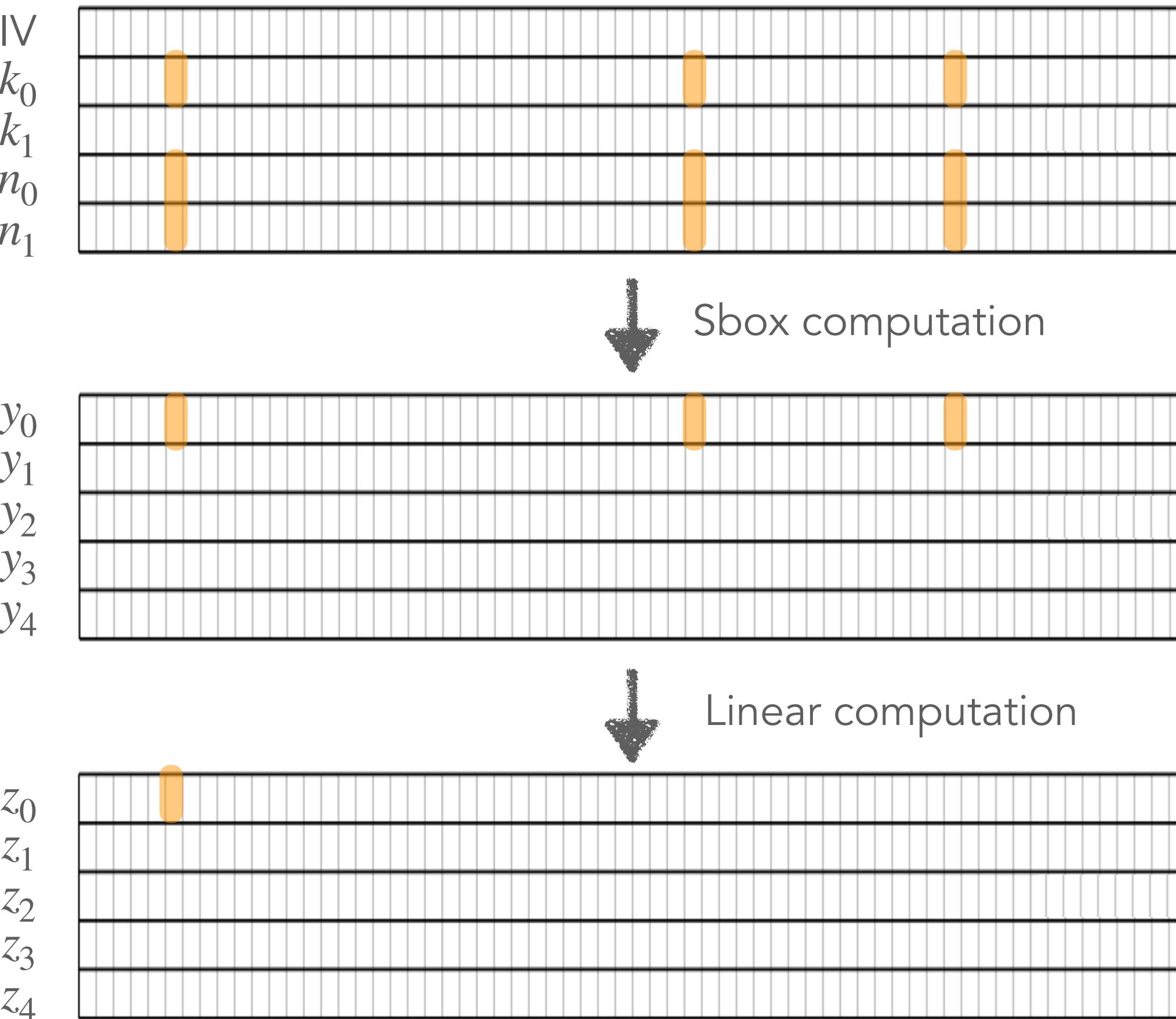
# Results

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Correlation with increasing number of traces

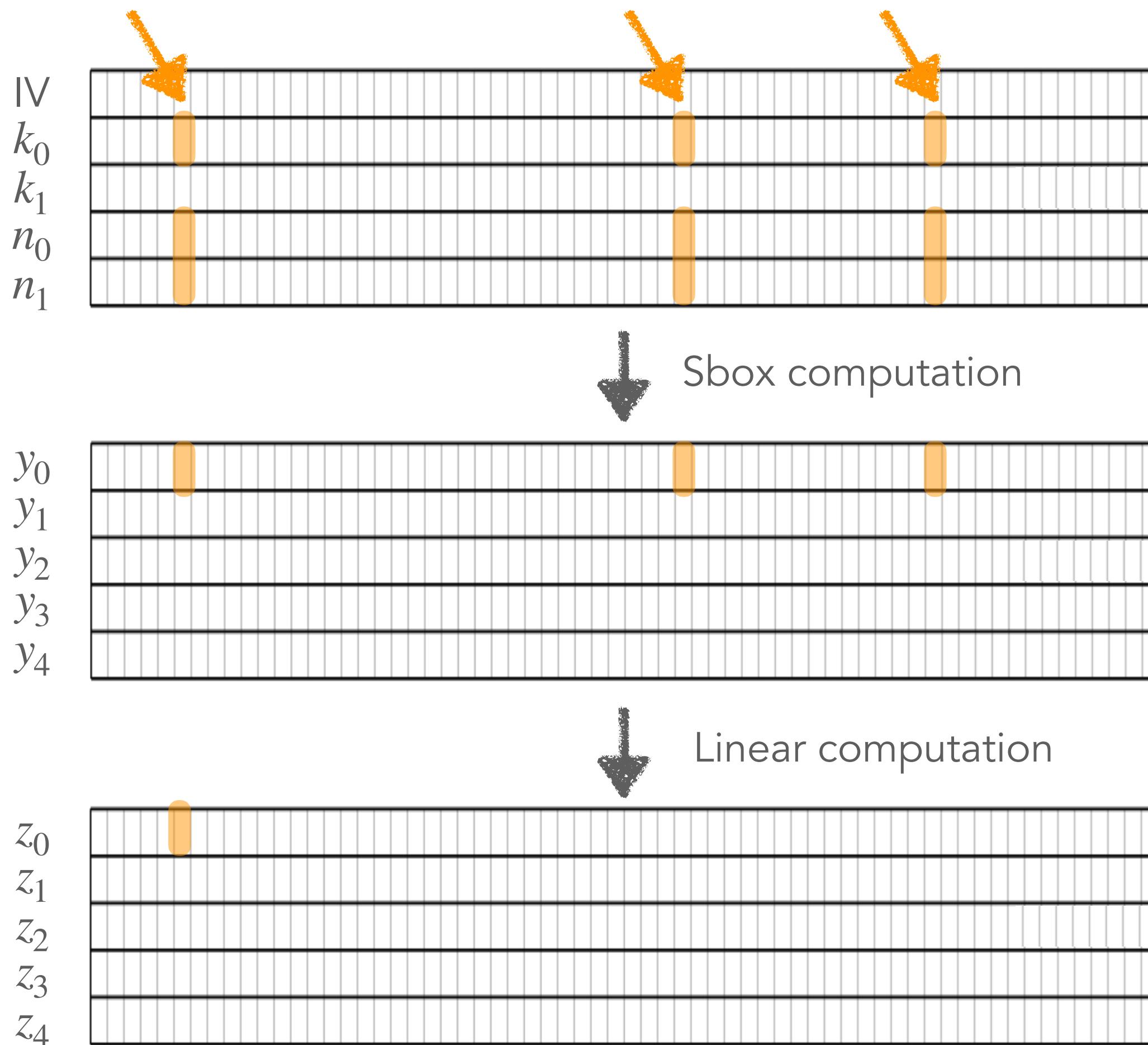


# CPA runs for full-key recovery



# CPA runs for full-key recovery

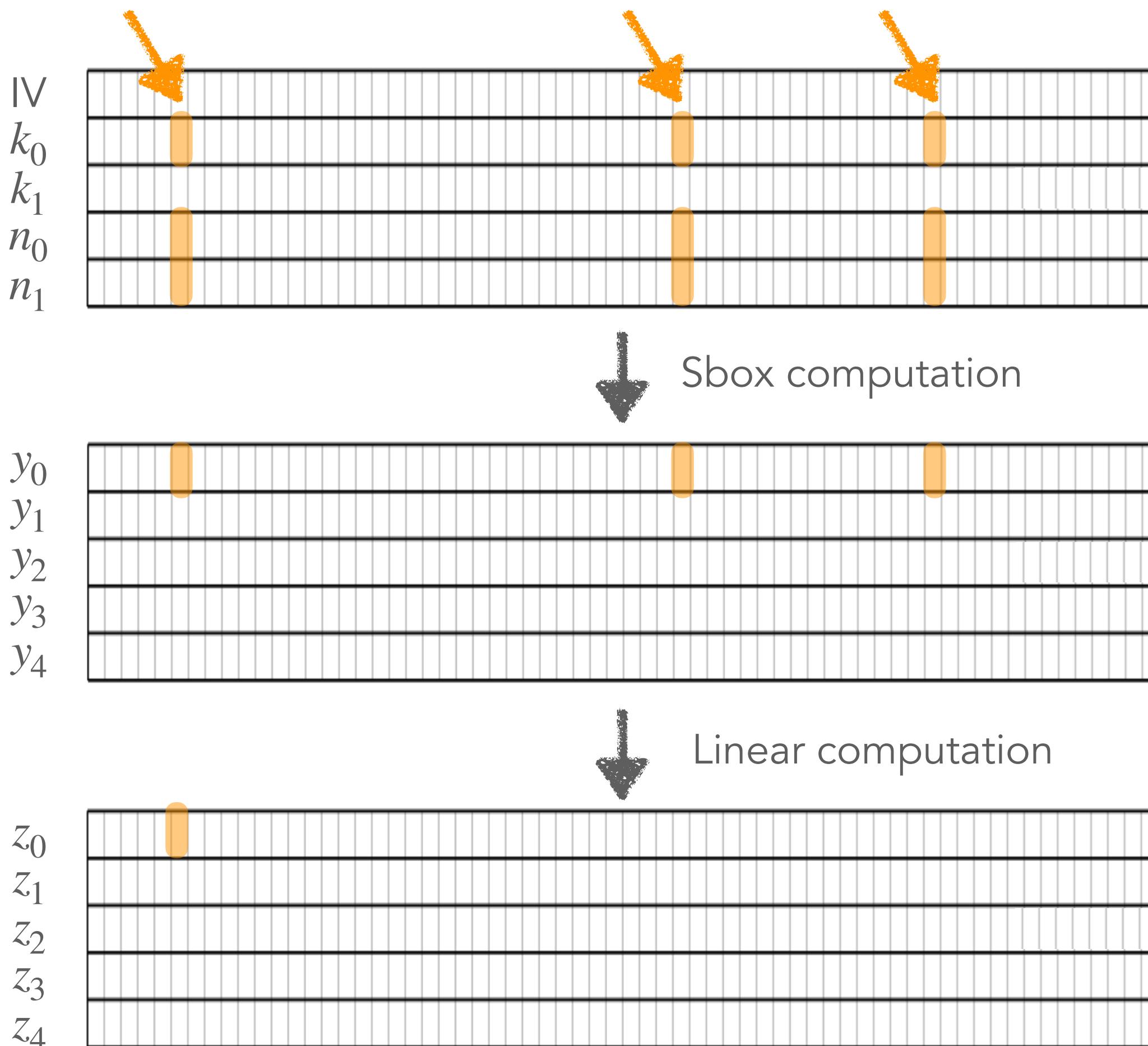
Each CPA run recovers 3 key bits



# CPA runs for full-key recovery

Each CPA run recovers 3 key bits

How many CPA runs to recover 128 key bits?



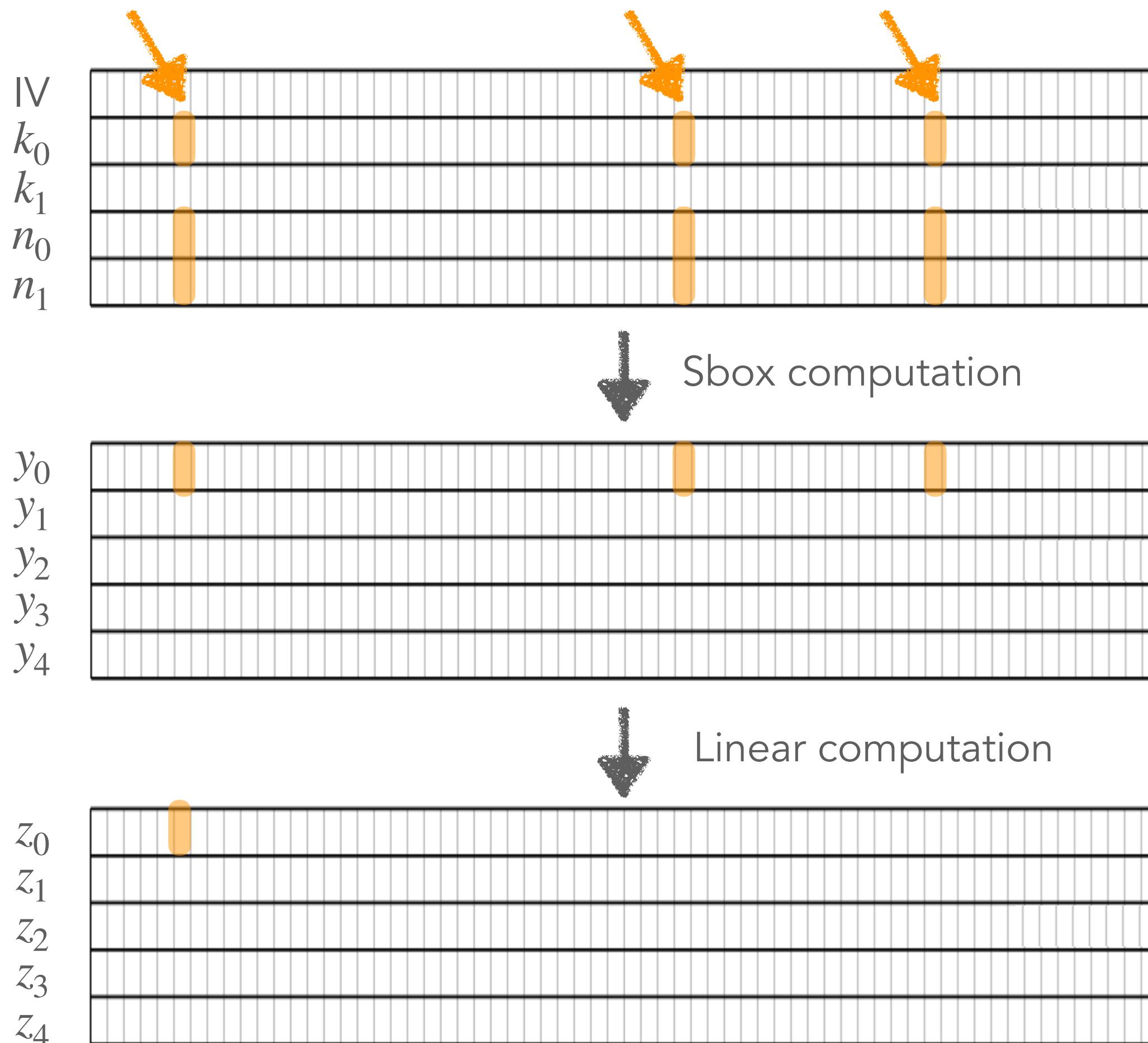
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Weissbart and Picek, 2023

63 CPA runs



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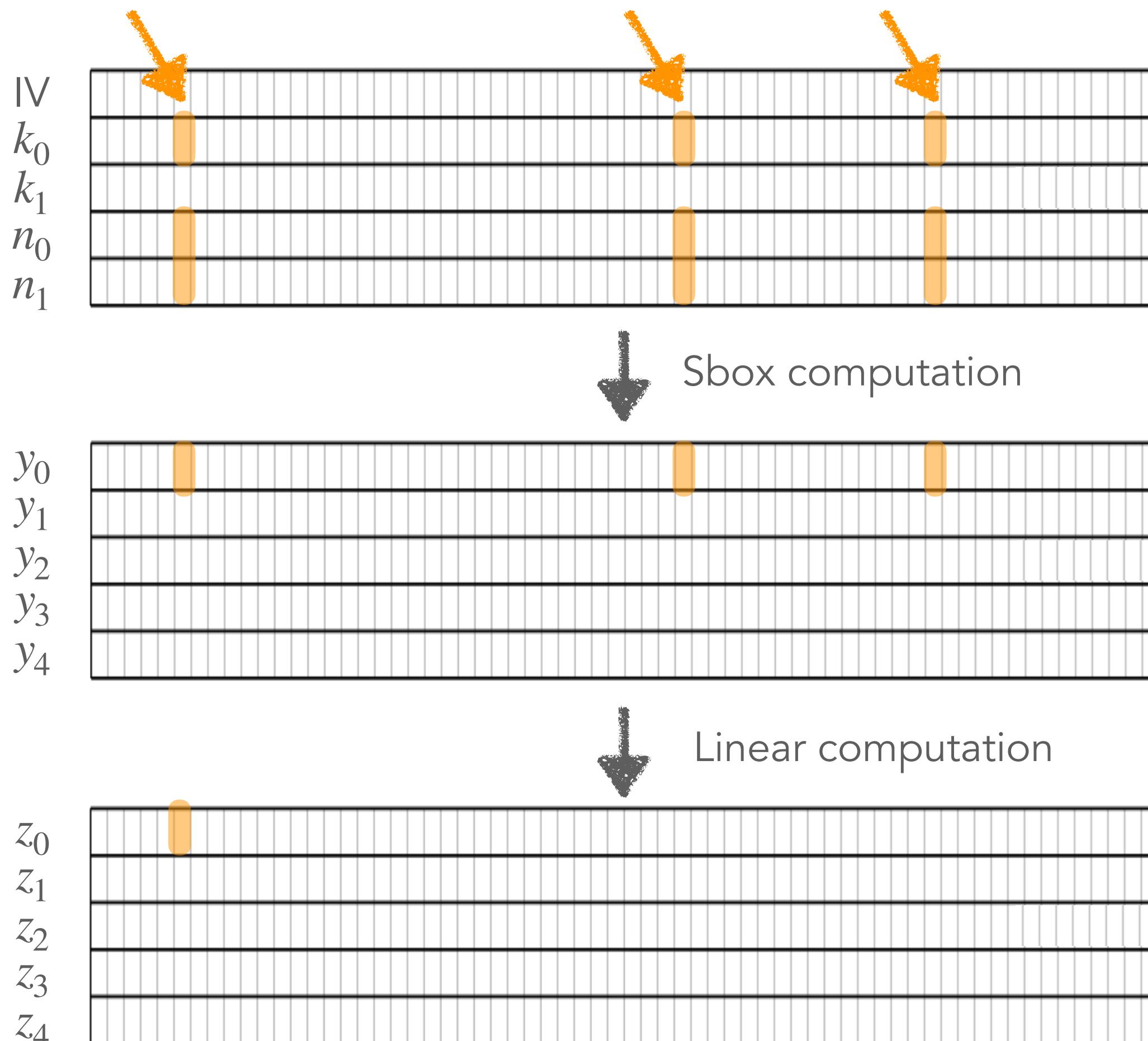
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This work:

- formalizes a *set cover problem*
- uses a SAT solver



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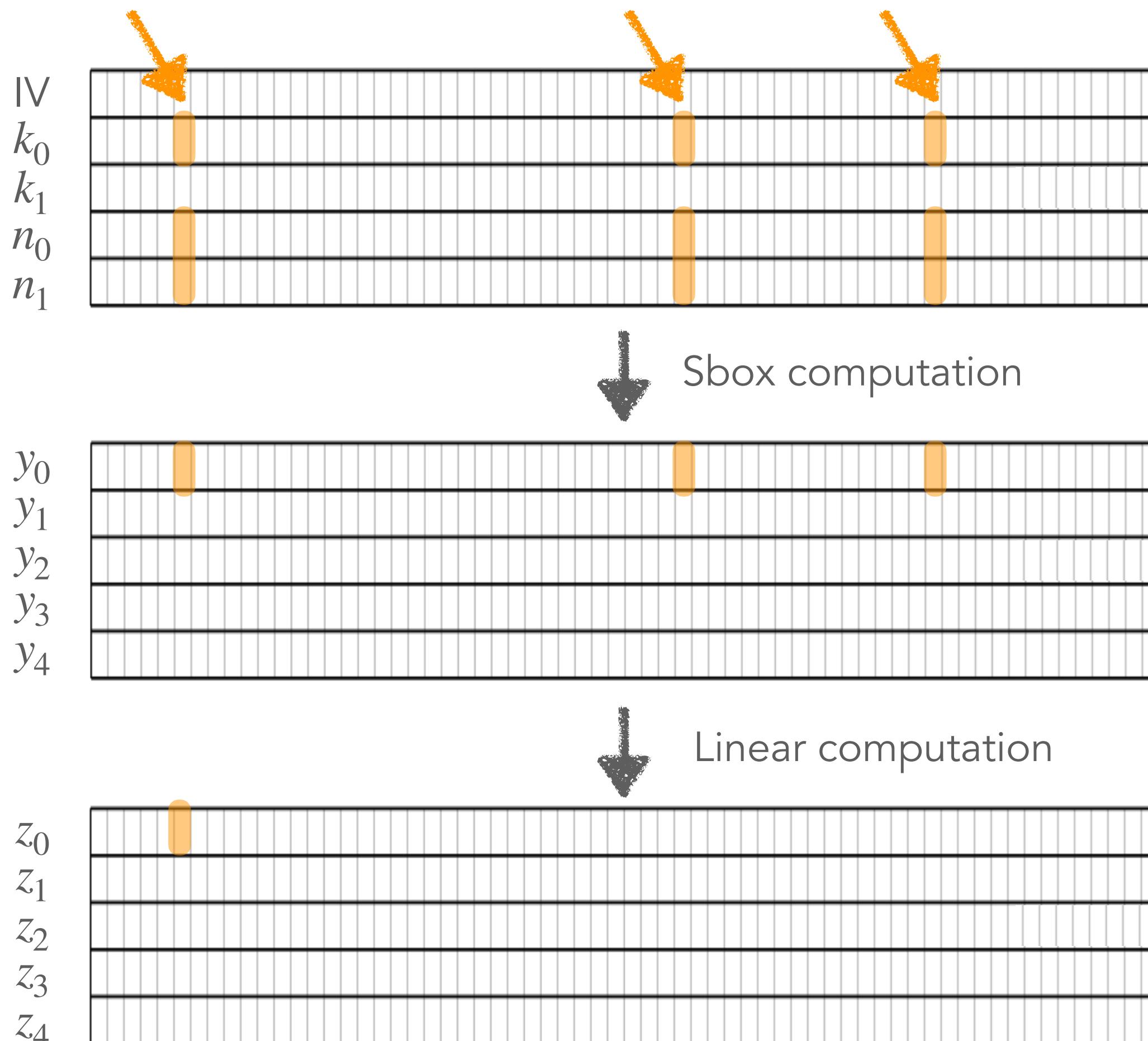
Weissbart and Picek, 2023

63 CPA runs

This work:

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- uses a SAT solver

→ 47 CPA runs (optimal)



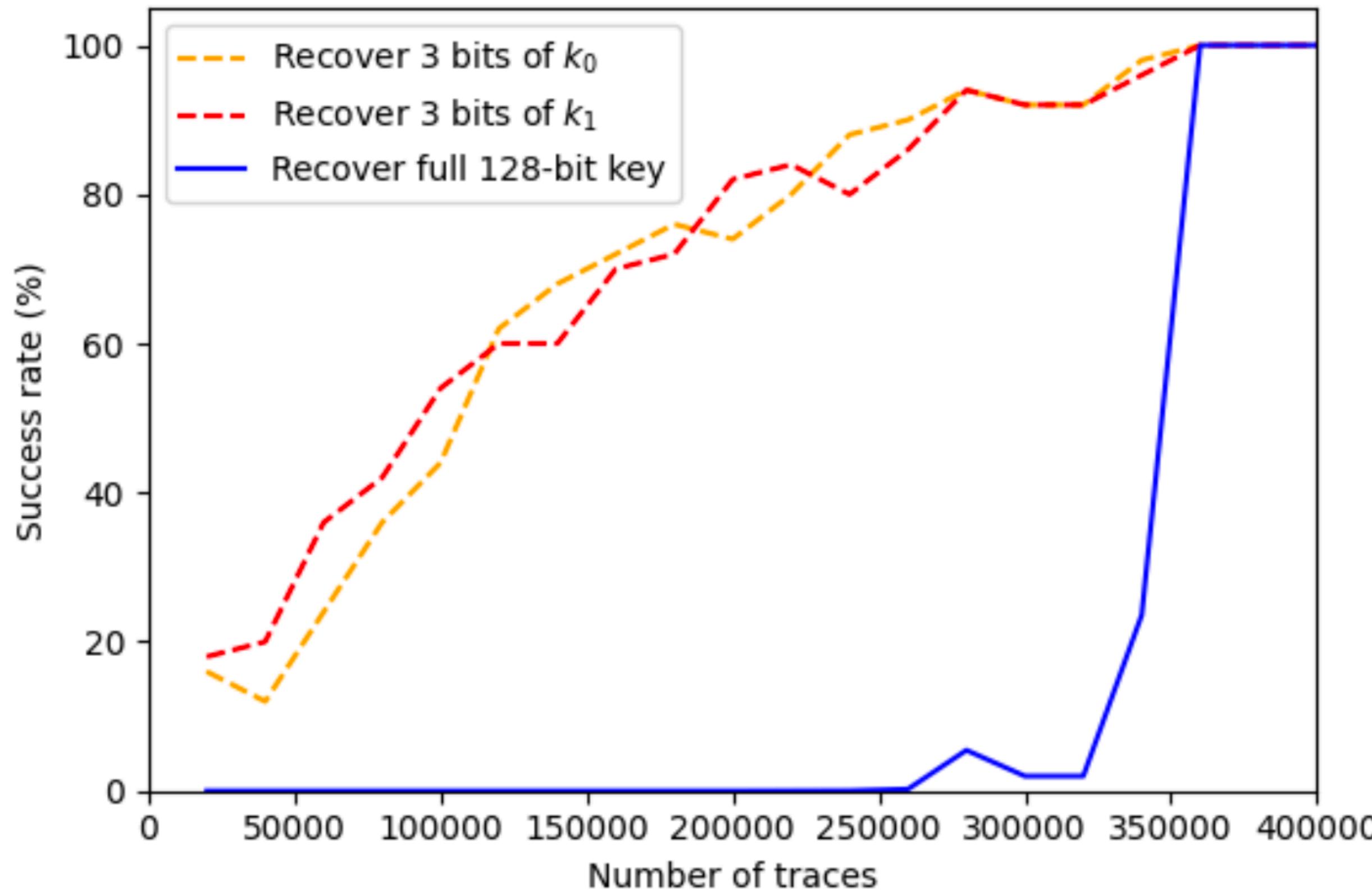
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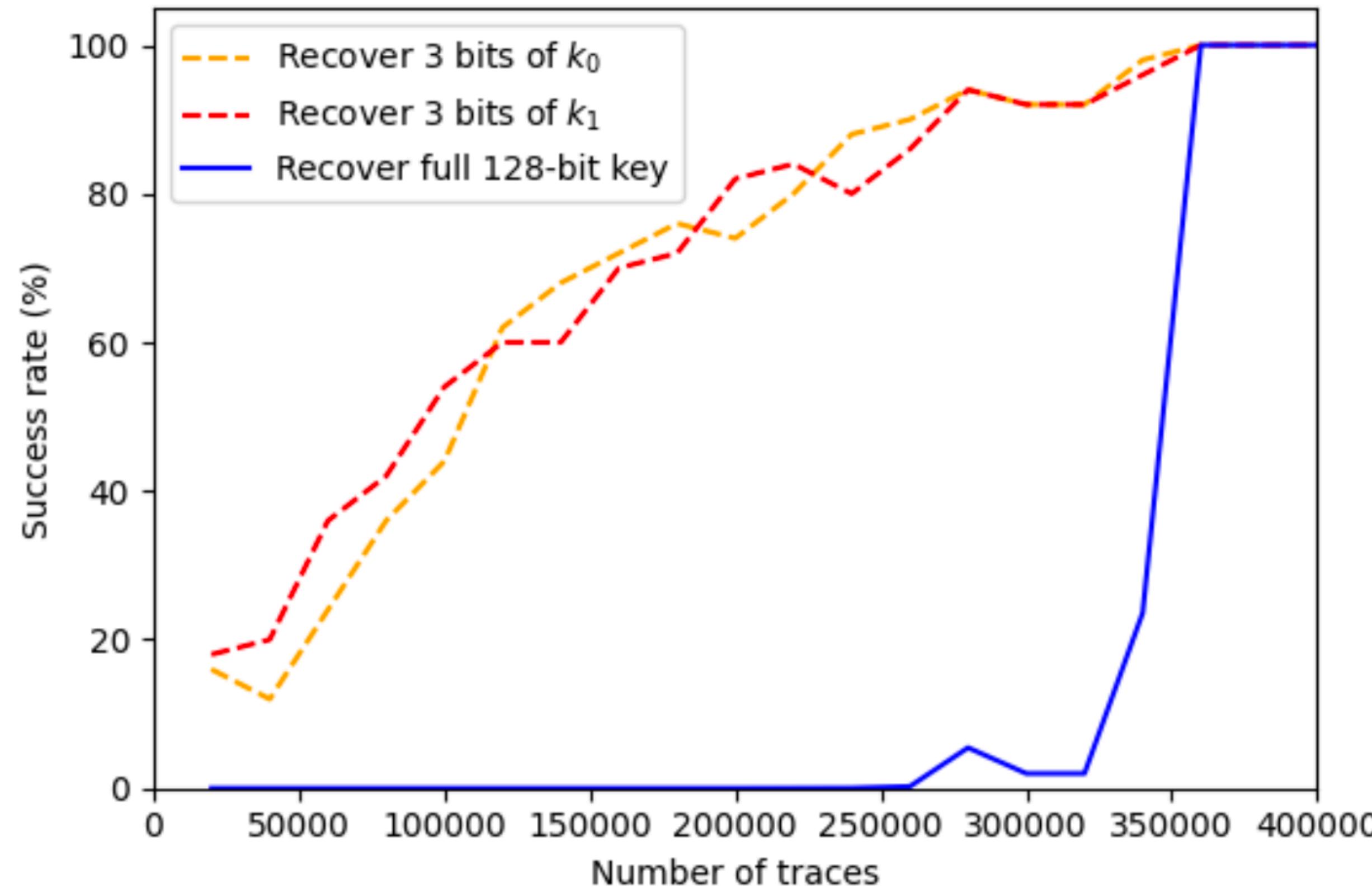
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Success rates



# Full-key recovery

Success rates



360K traces ensure 100% success rates

Recover full key in 4.7 hours

# Summary

# CPA attack on Ascon

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# CPA attack on Ascon

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- ◆ Quadratic boolean Sbox function
  - ▶ choose the selection function carefully

# CPA attack on Ascon

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- ◆ Quadratic boolean Sbox function
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- ◆ Optimal number of CPA runs for full-key recovery: 47

# CPA attack on Ascon

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- ◆ Quadratic boolean Sbox function
  - ▶ choose the selection function carefully
- ◆ Optimal number of CPA runs for full-key recovery: 47
- ◆ First results on practical second-order CPA

# Practical Second-Order CPA Attack on Ascon with Proper Selection Function

Viet-Sang Nguyen

joint work with Vincent Grosso and Pierre-Louis Cayrel

CASCADE Conference

Saint-Etienne, 2 April, 2025

