Large Language Models (LLMs)

Fine-Tuning

Learning goals

- comprehend the different subtleties in the space of fine-tuning and prompting

RECAP

- language modeling objectives
  - token prediction
  - no explicit understanding of tasks
- this is true for encoder and decoder models
- So we need to do additional work if we want to use language models for solving tasks!

HOW TO SOLVE A TASK WITH LANGUAGE MODELS? (1)

- "old-style" single-task fine-tuning
  - supervised training on a task-specific training set of size k (where k is not small, e.g., $k = 100$)
  - the output can be an arbitrary category (e.g., "0", "1" for sentiment analysis)
  - alternatively, the output can be a meaningful "verbalizer" (e.g., "negative", "positive" for sentiment analysis) ▸ Schick et al., 2020
  - this was the typical way encoder models like BERT were used
  - still very much relevant if you need to deploy a small efficient model for a focused task

HOW TO SOLVE A TASK WITH LANGUAGE MODELS? (2)

- few-shot prompting
  - provide, in-context, k (where k is small, e.g., $k = 5$) examples of what the model is supposed to do
  - the model will then often complete the task just based on analogy to these few shots
  - this is the most typical way of using current autoregressive models for tasks
  - no change to the parameters of the model!

HOW TO SOLVE A TASK WITH LANGUAGE MODELS? (3)

- multi-task finetuning
  - finetuning on a large training set of *many* tasks
  - the more the better
  - method 1: consistent task format, e.g., each task is reformulated into a question-answering format
  - method 2: more open task format
  - ideally: consistent with language model objective (similar to verbalizer)
  - Examples: T5 and FLAN, see below

HOW TO SOLVE A TASK WITH LANGUAGE MODELS? (4)

- instruction tuning (short for instruction finetuning)
  - you teach the model a *general* capability of being “helpful”
  - it then solves arbitrary tasks without few-shot prompting and without additional finetuning
  - theory/hope: you no longer have to explicitly train on specific tasks, the instruction-tuned model can solve new tasks without having been trained on them
  - next lecture

ANOTHER TYPE OF FINETUNING

- Finetuning has yet another meaning.
- Continued pretraining is also sometimes called finetuning.
- Continued pretraining: given a language model that has been trained on generic data (web, reddit etc), adapt it to a new domain (e.g., company-internal data) by training it on a large corpus from this new domain.
- objective: standard language modeling objective
- This results in a language model that has all the nice capabilities of a generic language model (e.g., MISTRAL family), but also understands the special domain.

FINETUNING: TERMINOLOGY

- single-task finetuning
- multi-task finetuning
- instruction tuning
- prompting
- continued pretraining
- **Question:** terminology clear?

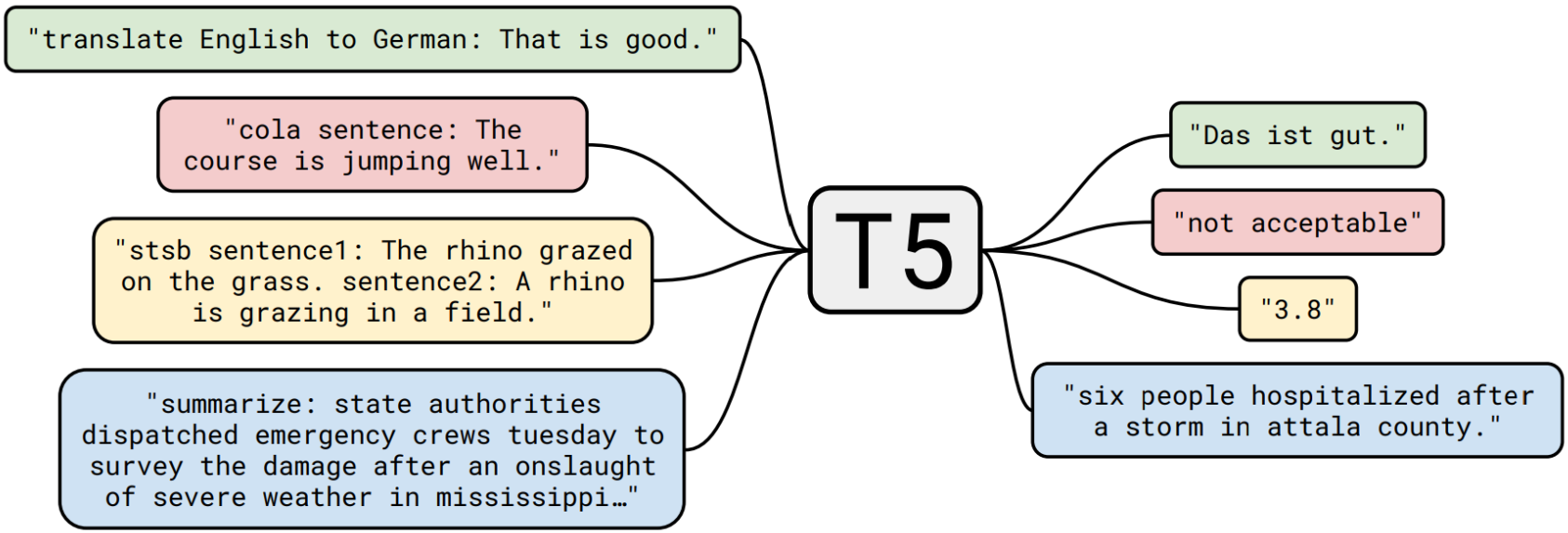
ISSUES WITH SINGLE-TASK FINE-TUNING

- The result is a single-task model.
- Sequential transfer learning instead of multi-task learning
- Generalization of the model only w.r.t. to one task / data distribution
- Requires quite a bit of annotated data (e.g., $k = 100$)
- Poor few-shot capabilities of fine-tuned models
- **Question:** Could there be other tasks that might benefit?
- **Question:** What about related domains / languages?

ISSUES WITH PROMPTING

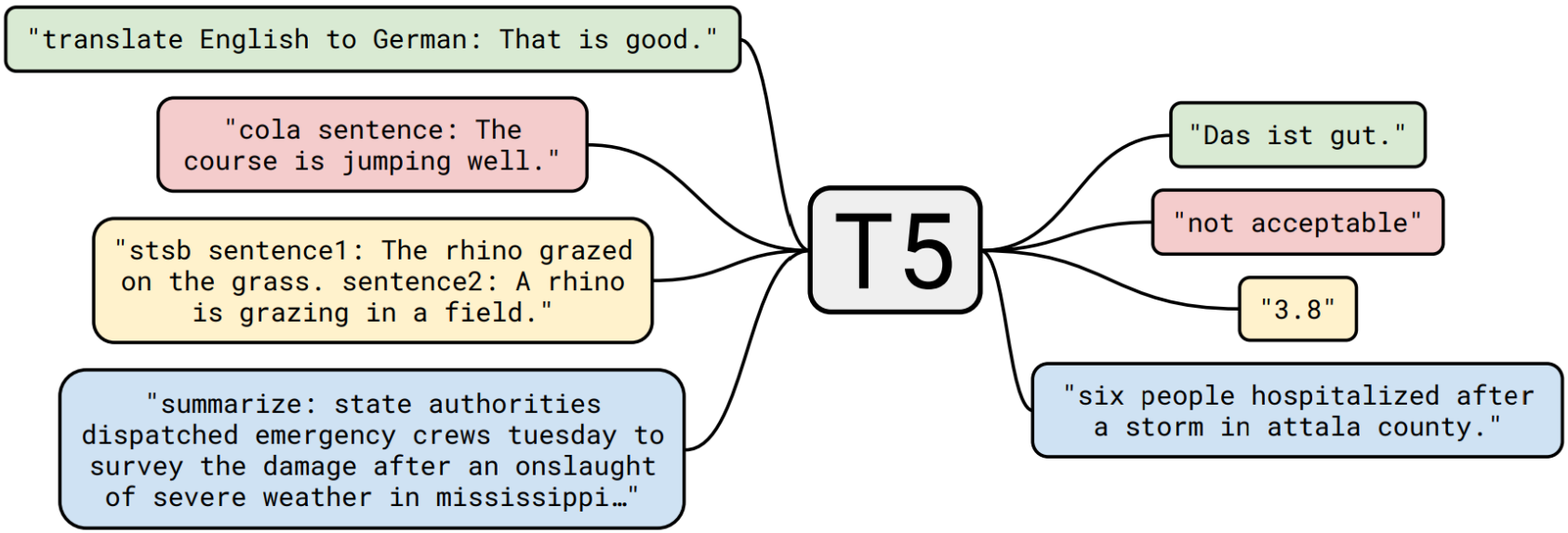
- Assumption: Model has learned about the task during (unsupervised) pre-training
- A direct response is expected
- Just a label, just yes/no answer, just a name in QA
- This is not natural dialogic behavior: humans typically don't just answer with a label, yes/no, a name (although sometimes they do)
- See next lecture
- Again: Prompting works best if the task has occurred during unsupervised training.
- **Question:** For which tasks is this expected to work well?

MULTITASK FINETUNING: BEST OF BOTH WORLDS (FINETUNING AND PROMPTING)



▸ Source: Raffel et al., 2020

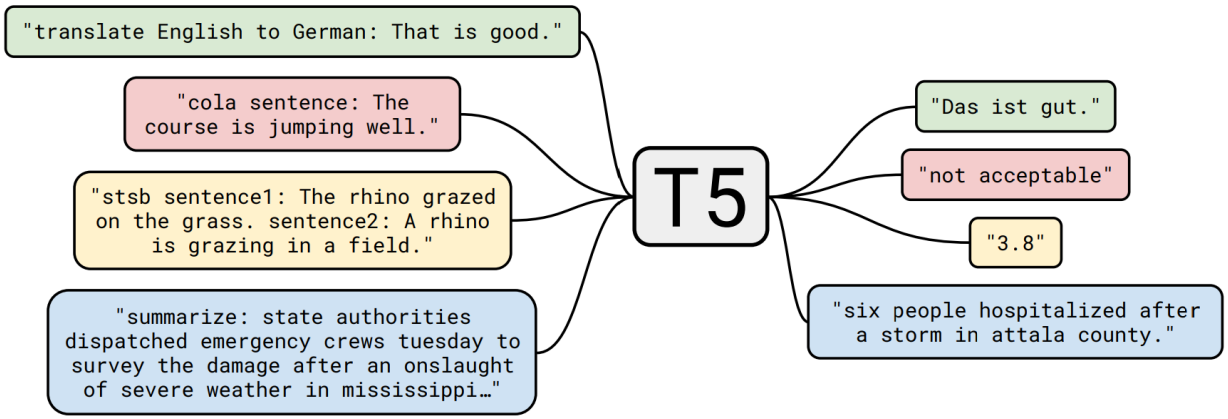
MULTITASK FINETUNING: BEST OF BOTH WORLDS (FINETUNING AND PROMPTING)



▸ Source: Raffel et al., 2020

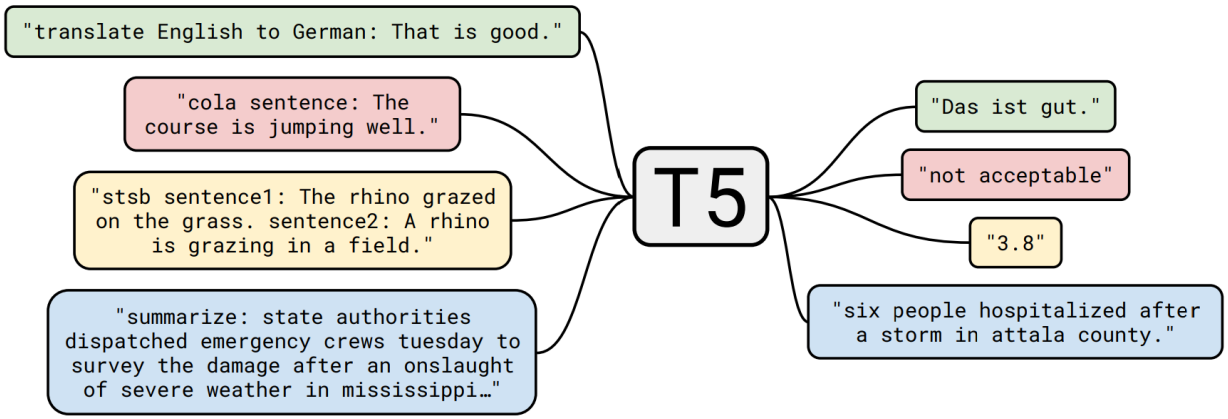
Question: **Why does this result in multi-task learning?**

ONE FORMAT CONSISTENTLY USED FOR ALL TASKS



▸ Source: Raffel et al., 2020

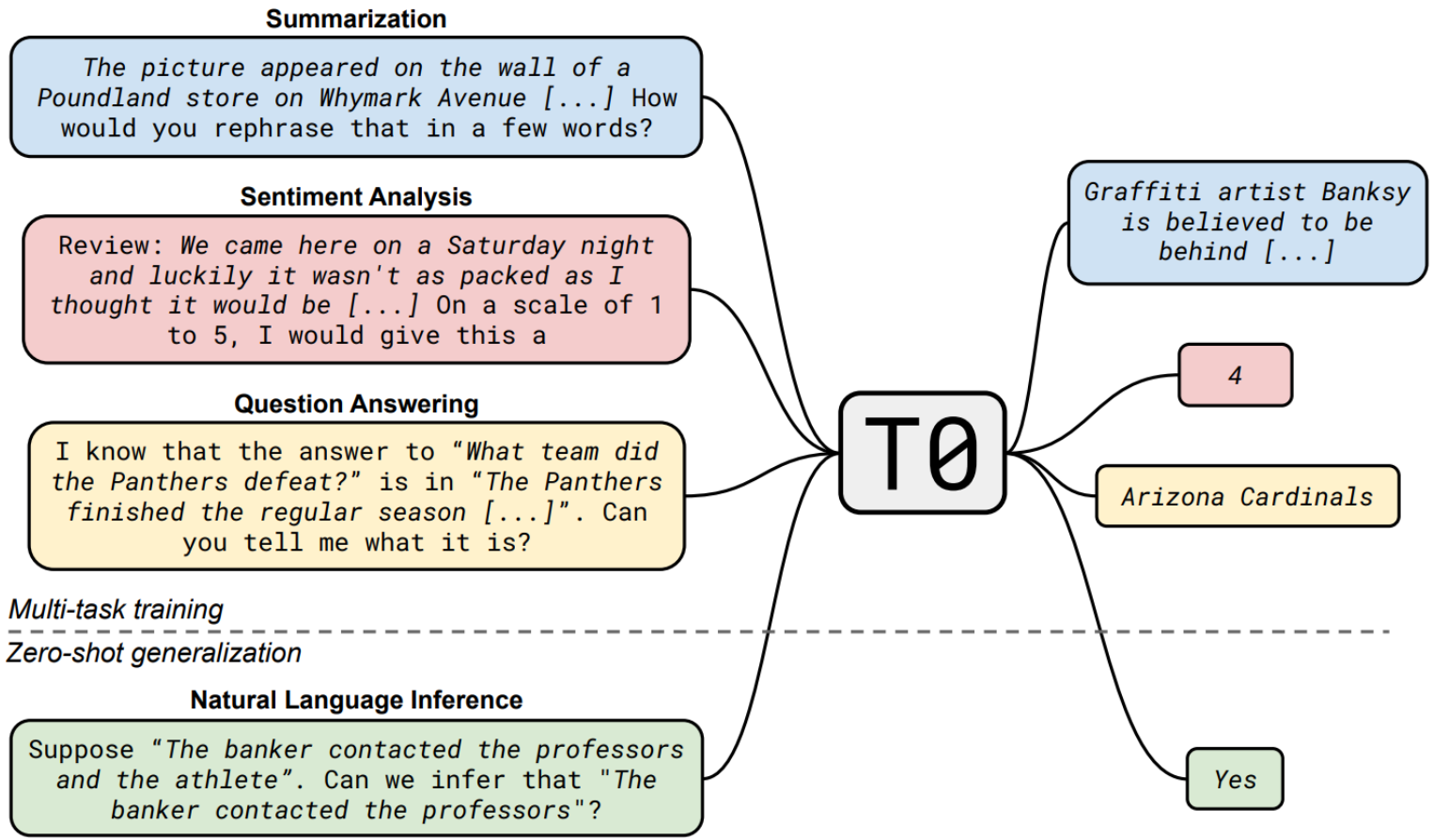
ONE FORMAT CONSISTENTLY USED FOR ALL TASKS



▸ Source: Raffel et al., 2020

- A consistent format (as in T5) is desirable.
- **Question:** The format used in T5 is not just any format, but it has a special property. Which property is this?

CAREFULLY DESIGNING TASK FORMATS (MOSTLY PREFIXES)



▸ Source: Sanh et al., 2021

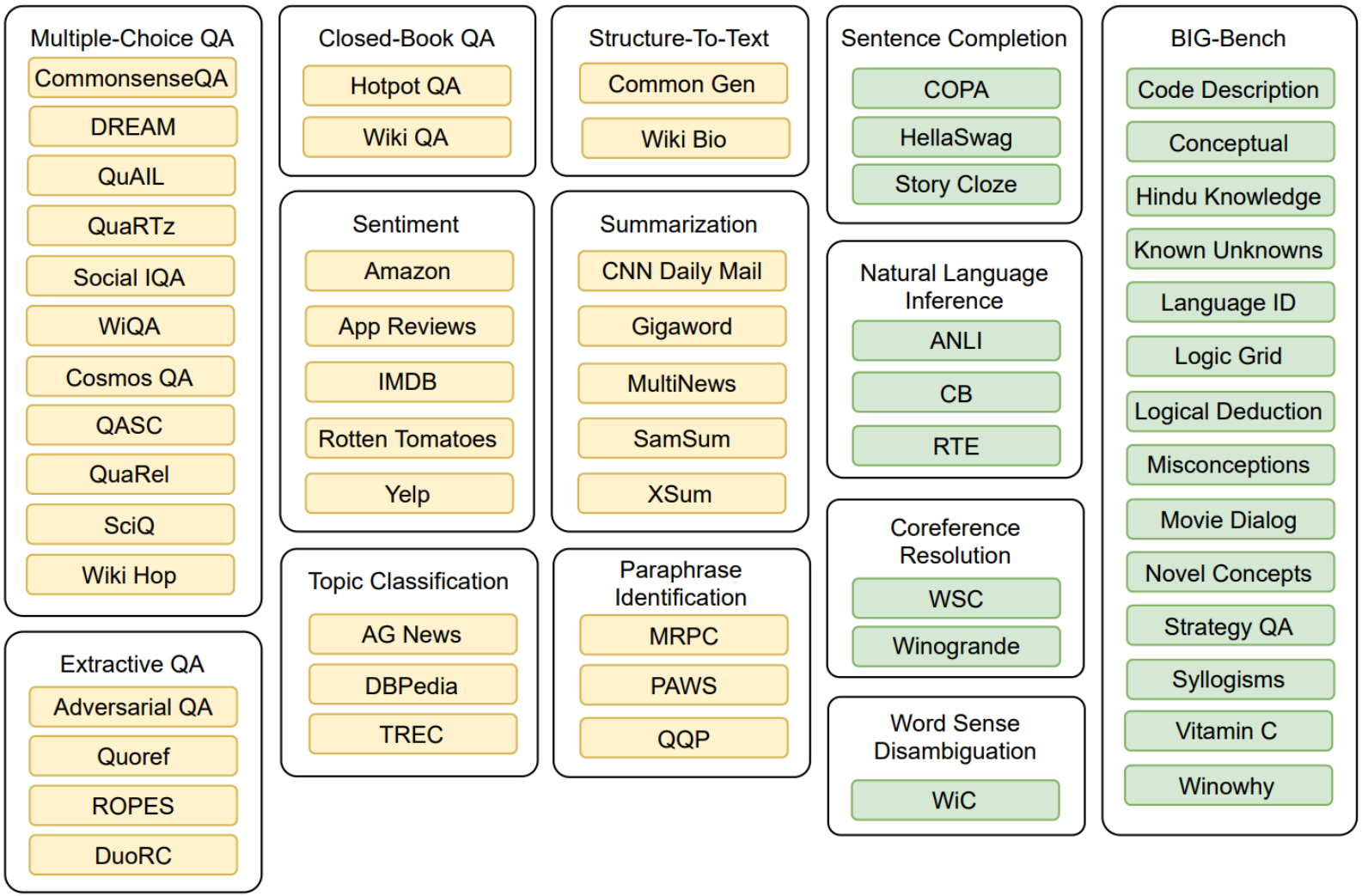
MULTITASK PROMPTED TRAINING

- *Multitask Prompted Training:* This training method involves learning from multiple tasks using unified prompt formats as a means to improve generalization to new, unseen tasks.
- This means that the model can perform well on tasks it hasn't been explicitly trained on.
- The key for this lies in the set of shared prompts it has learned from during fine-tuning.

MULTITASK PROMPTED TRAINING

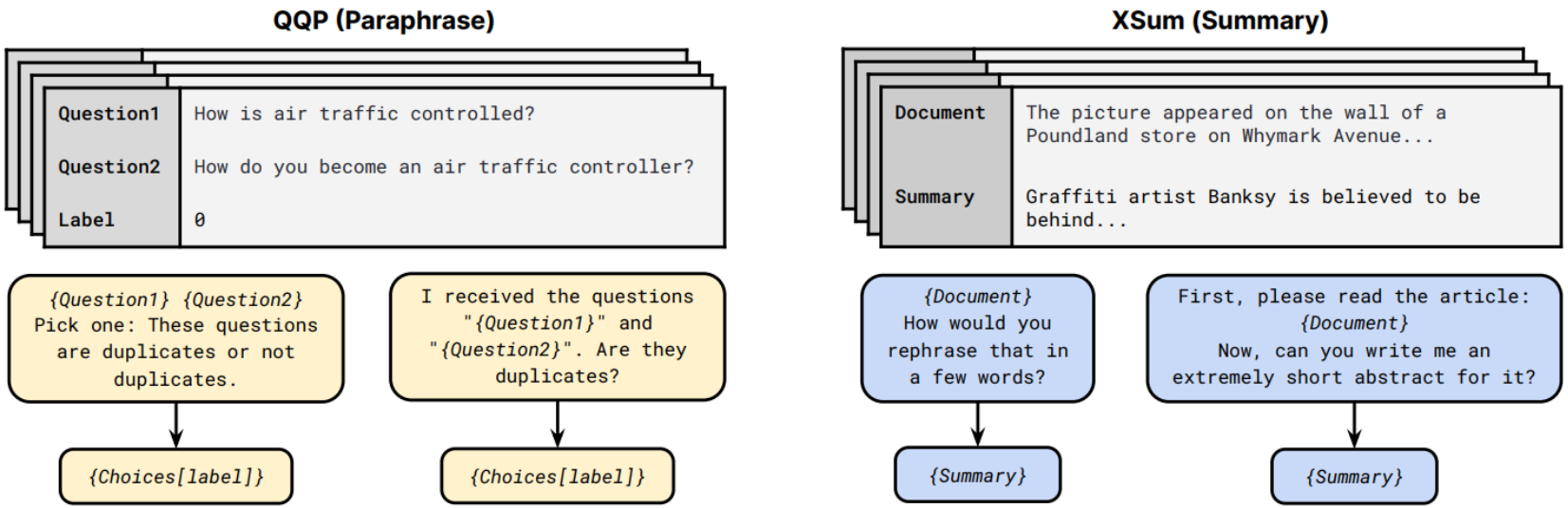
- Benchmark for Evaluation:
  - Instead of using held-out *samples* (as is standard in NLP)
    ...
  - ...we now use held-out *tasks*
  - All data sets belonging to a held-out task go to the test set
  - Generalization across tasks / data distributions
- Highlights the importance of prompts: The paper emphasizes the importance of prompts in facilitating transfer to new tasks, as the model can generalize to new tasks by relying on the learned prompts and the ability to generate text outputs.

T0 – DATA SPLITS



▸ Source: Sanh et al., 2021

T0 – PROMPT TEMPLATES



▸ Source: Sanh et al., 2021

FINETUNED LANGUAGE NET (FLAN)

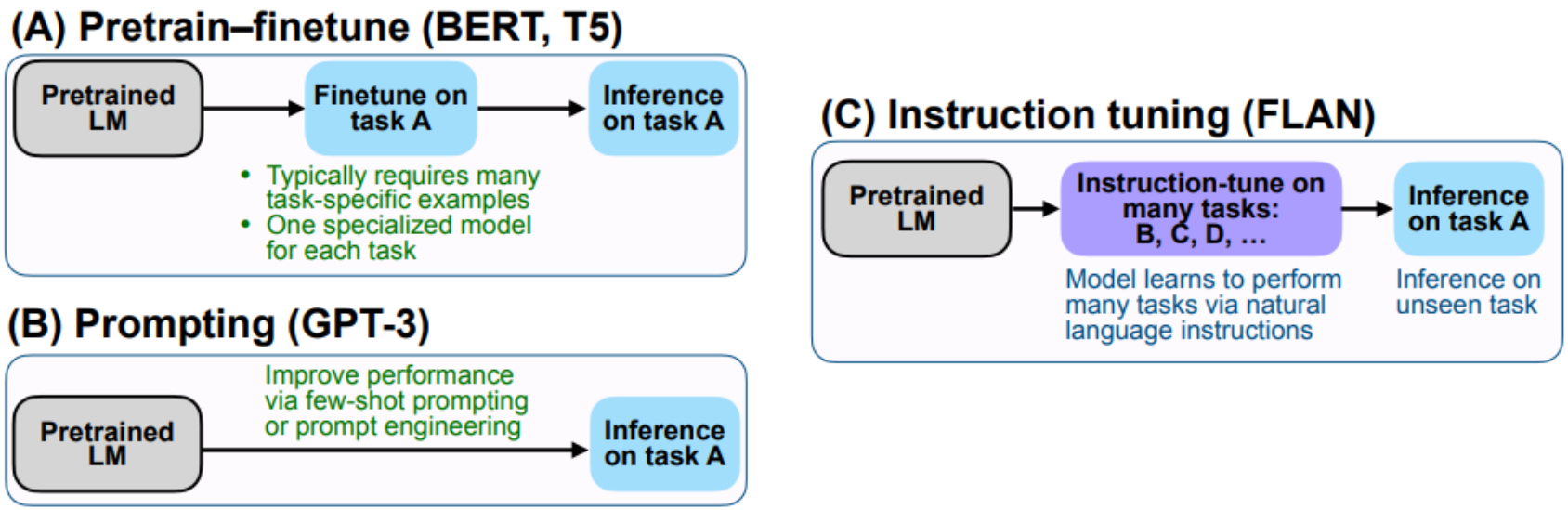
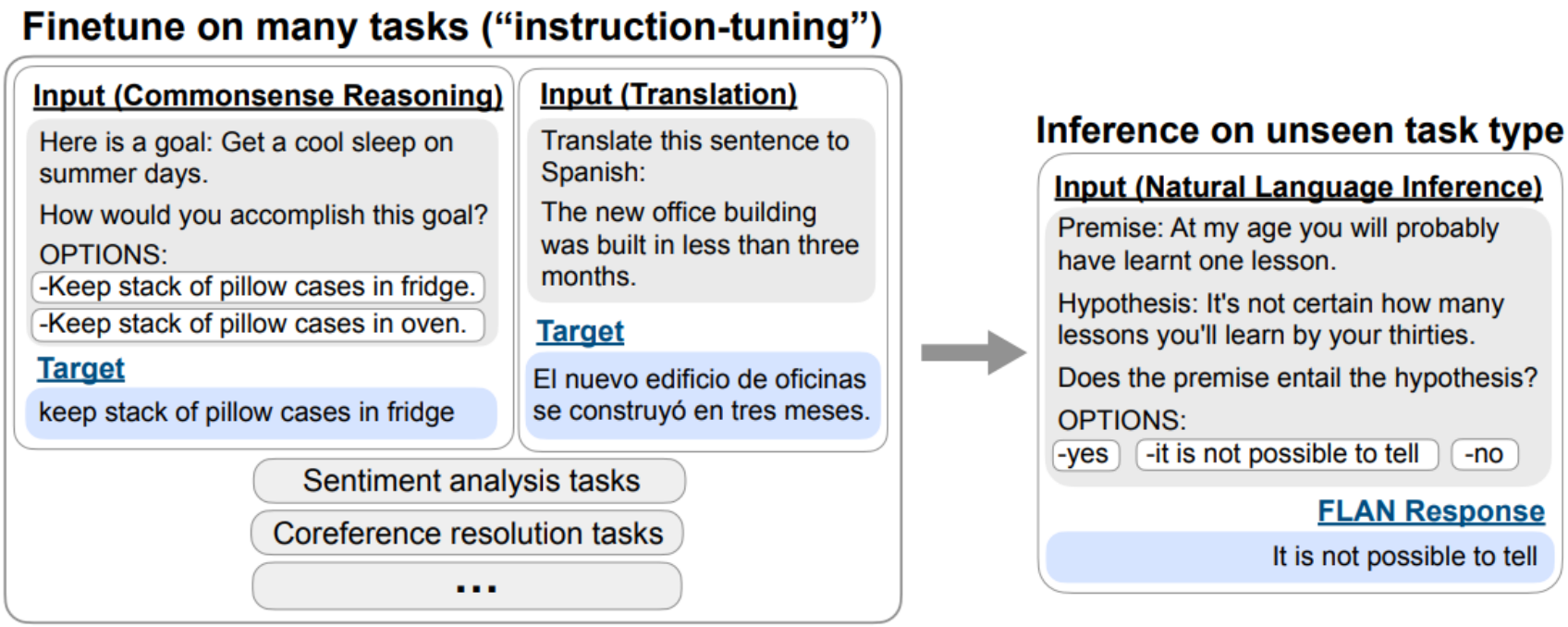


Figure 2: Comparing instruction tuning with pretrain–finetune and prompting.

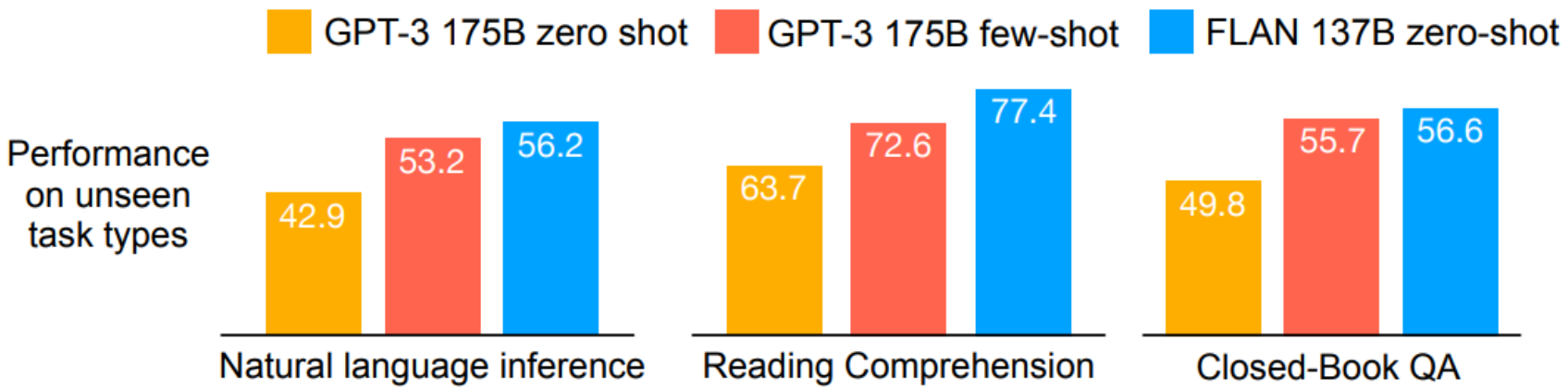
▸ Source: Wei et al., 2021

FLAN FINETUNING



▸ Source: Wei et al., 2021

FLAN PERFORMANCE



▸ Source: Wei et al., 2021

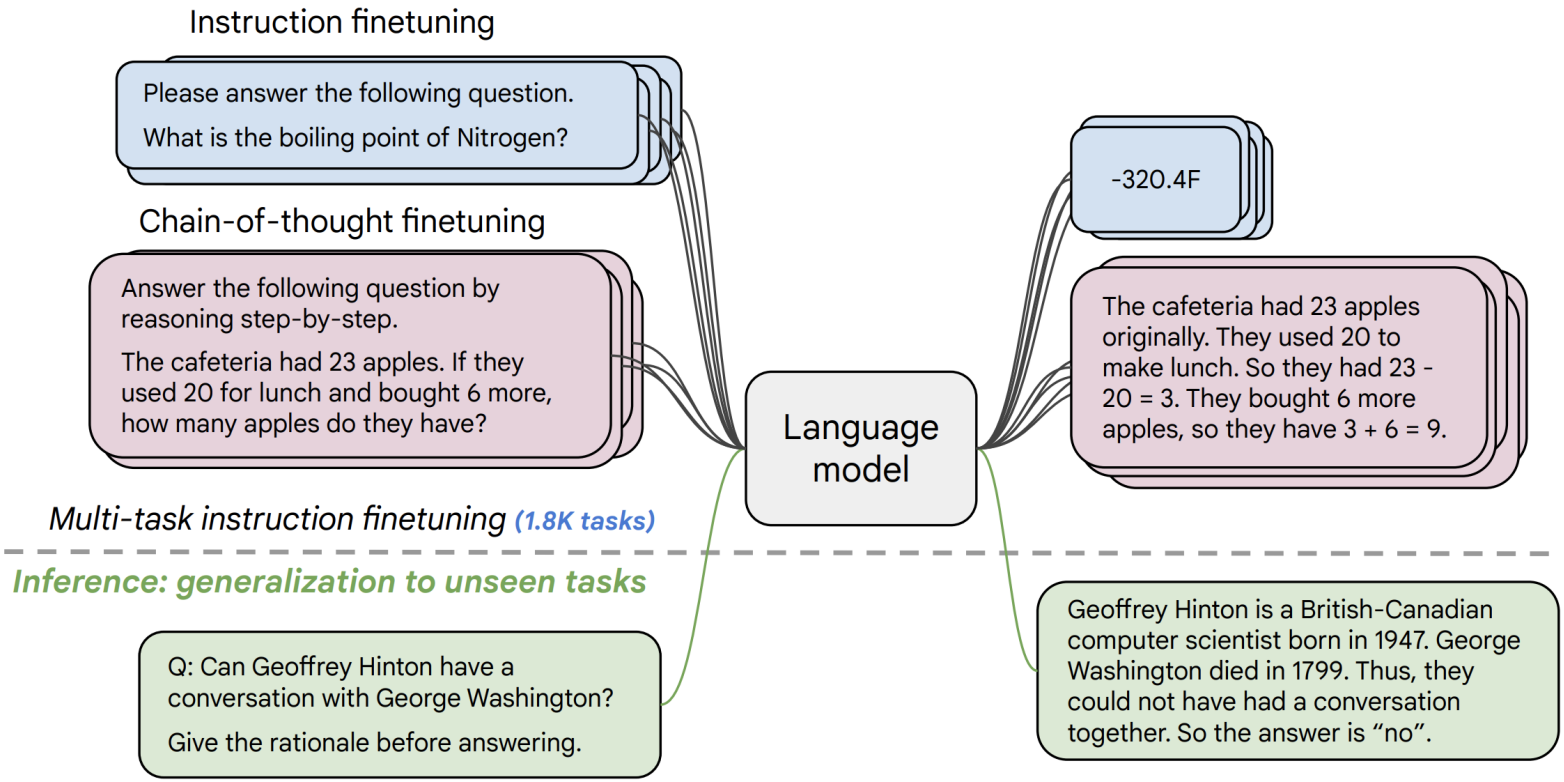
FLAN FINE-TUNING

Extend multi-task learning

- Scaling the number of tasks and data
  - NIV2 (1554 tasks)
  - T0-SF (193 tasks)
  - Muffin (80 tasks)
  - CoT (reasoning tasks, cf. next chapter)
- Scaling model sizes
  - PaLM 8 B
  - PaLM 62 B
  - PaLM 540 B

FLAN UPSCALING

Fine-tuning in 1.8 K tasks



▸ Source: Chung et al., 2022

MULTI-TASK TRAINING VS INSTRUCTION TUNING

- The term “instruction tuning” was introduced by FLAN paper,
  - Source: Wei et al., 2021
- However, today “instruction tuning” refers to a wide variety of methods that train on instruction-output pairs, not just tasks
- Open-ended generation and “alignment” is now included under the rubric “instruction tuning”: brainstorming, writing a joke, give me ten analogies for concept X, don’t use hate language, don’t take positions on controversial political issues etc
- These are not classical NLP tasks.
- See next lecture
- Our use of terminology in this class:
- multi-task finetuning = tasks in the classical NLP sense
- instruction-tuning: a broad approach to changing the behavior of a raw language model (i.e., trained on next-word prediction) to be “helpful, harmless and honest”. This includes training on classical NLP tasks, but it’s just one part.

FINE-TUNING CONCLUSIONS

- The more the better
  - The more parameters the better
  - The more training tasks the better
- Multi-task finetuning generalizes across models
  - It works well on different architectures
- Greatly improves usability
- It is relatively compute-efficient
  - Pretraining is hugely expensive, finetuning and instruction tuning are usually much cheaper.
  - For PaLM 540 B it takes 0.2 % of pre-training compute, but improves by 9.4 %