

# Faithful Rule Learning and Extraction with Applications

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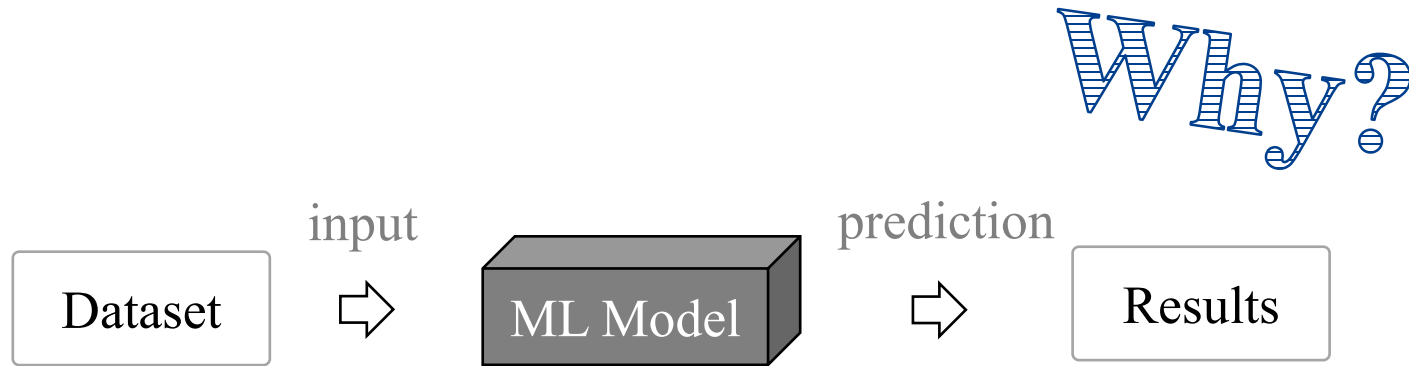
29<sup>th</sup> May 2025



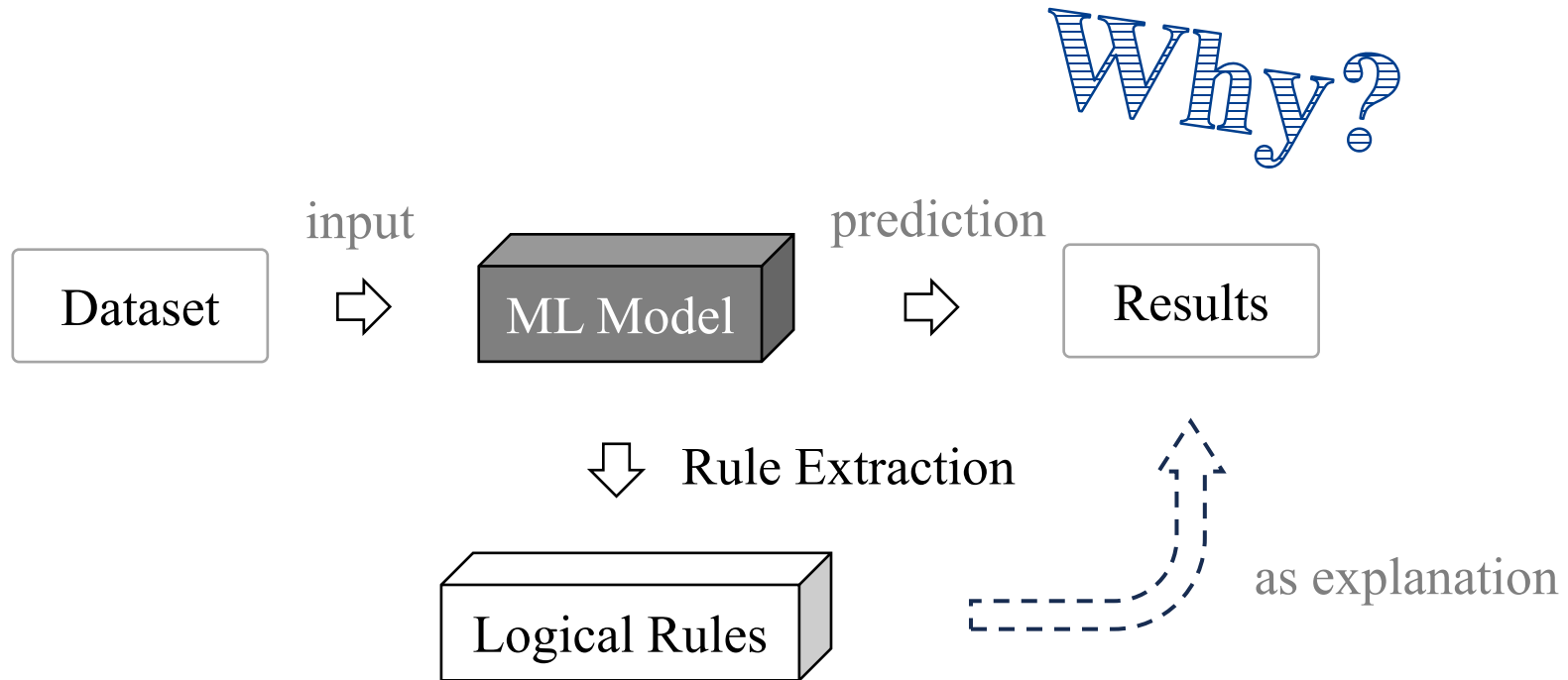
DEPARTMENT OF  
**COMPUTER  
SCIENCE**

1. Background
2. Motivation
3. Faithful Rule Learning for Knowledge Graph Completion
4. Faithful Rule Learning over Databases
5. Future Directions

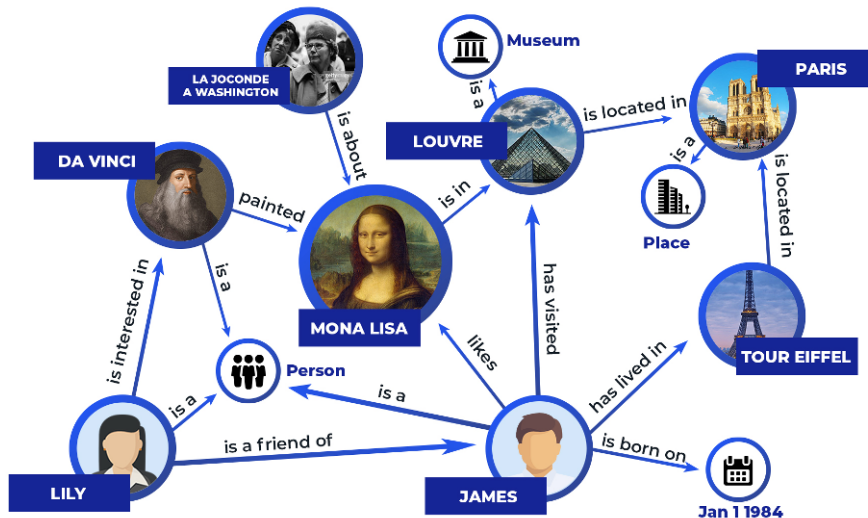
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- Rule extraction **improves the explainability** of ML models
- We focus on ML models for graph data, e.g., knowledge graphs (KGs)



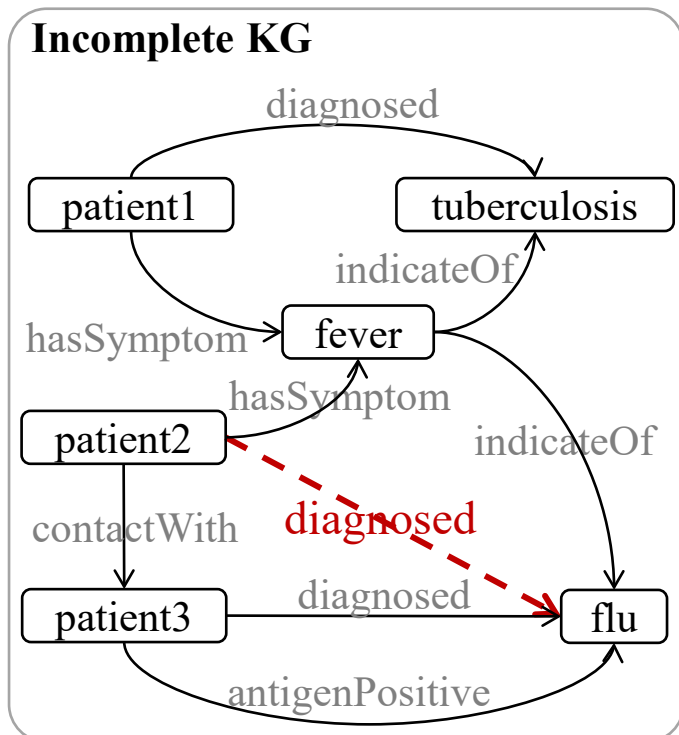
<https://deeppavlov.ai/research/tpost/bn15u1y4v1-improving-knowledge-graph-completion-wit>

An example KG

Knowledge graph: a structured data representation

- each node: a real-world entity
- each directed edge: a relationship between entities, expressed as a fact *relation(subject, object)*, e.g., *painted(DA\_VINCI, MONA\_LISA)*
- a KG is a set of facts

- An example task: Knowledge Graph Completion (KGC)
  - real-world KGs are usually **incomplete**
  - KGC: to infer missing facts based on existing facts in the KG
  - given a query *relation(subject, ?)*, to predict the object that matches ?



input  
➡



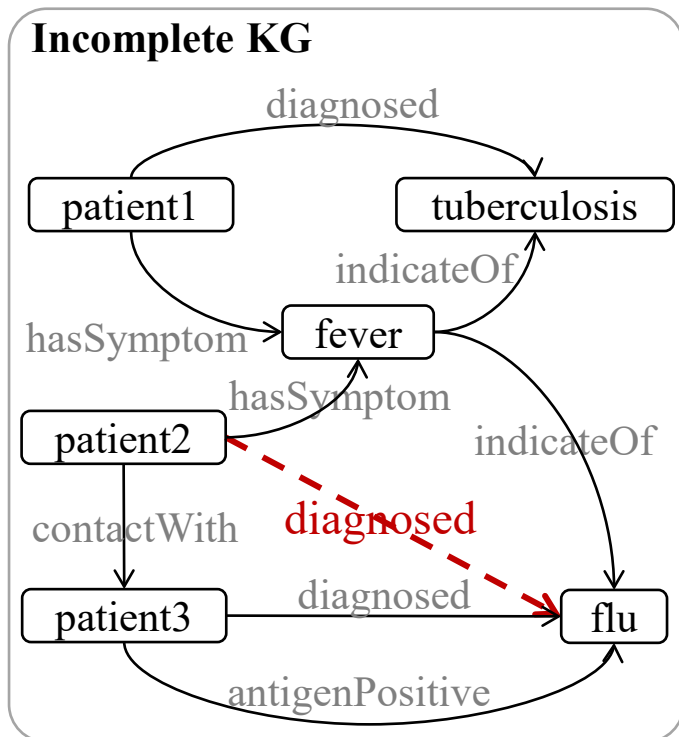
prediction  
➡

Query: diagnosed(patient2, ?)

diagnosed(patient2, flu)

Why?

- An example task: Knowledge Graph Completion (KGC)
- Rule extraction **improves the explainability** of ML models
  - by providing human-readable rules as explanation



input



prediction



Query: `diagnosed(patient2, ?)`

`diagnosed(patient2, flu)`



Rule Extraction

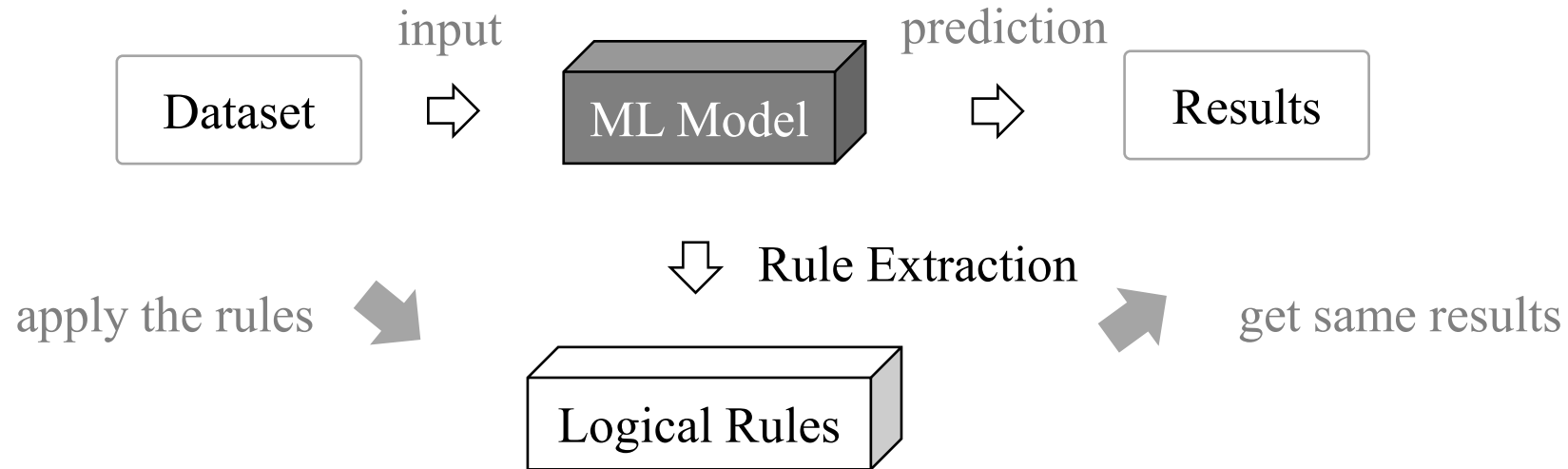


as explanation

## Extracted Rules

```
diagnosed(x, y) ← hasSymptom(x, z) ∧ indicateOf(z, y) ∧ contactWith(x, v) ∧ diagnosed(v, y)
diagnosed(x, y) ← antigenPositive(x, y)
```

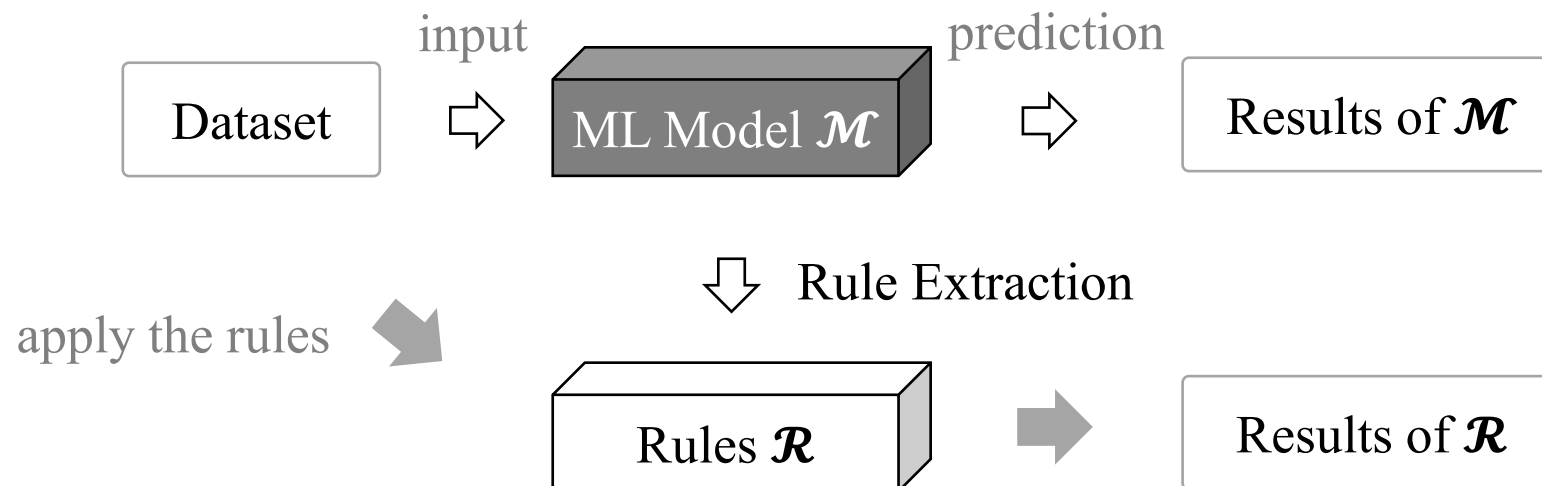
- Requirement: The extracted rules **must be “equivalent”** to the ML model
  - produce the same result on the same input
- Why is this important? — Otherwise, we cannot trust the rules to be explanation



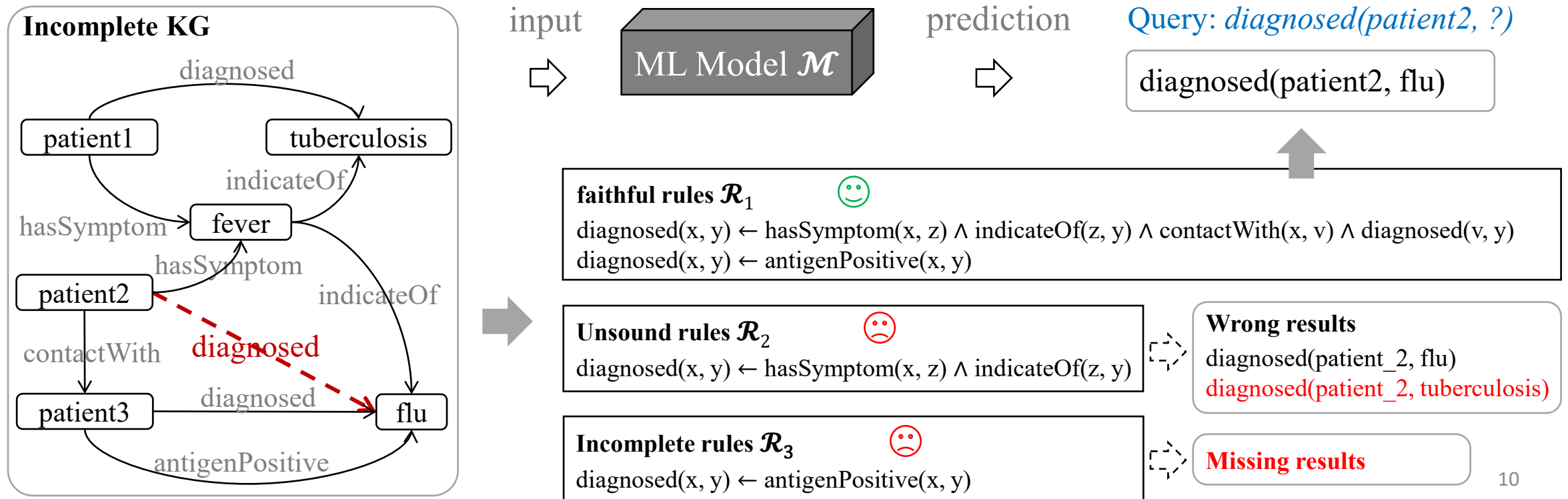
\*apply rules to a dataset: the fact (as a grounded rule head) is derived, if the rule body is grounded on the dataset



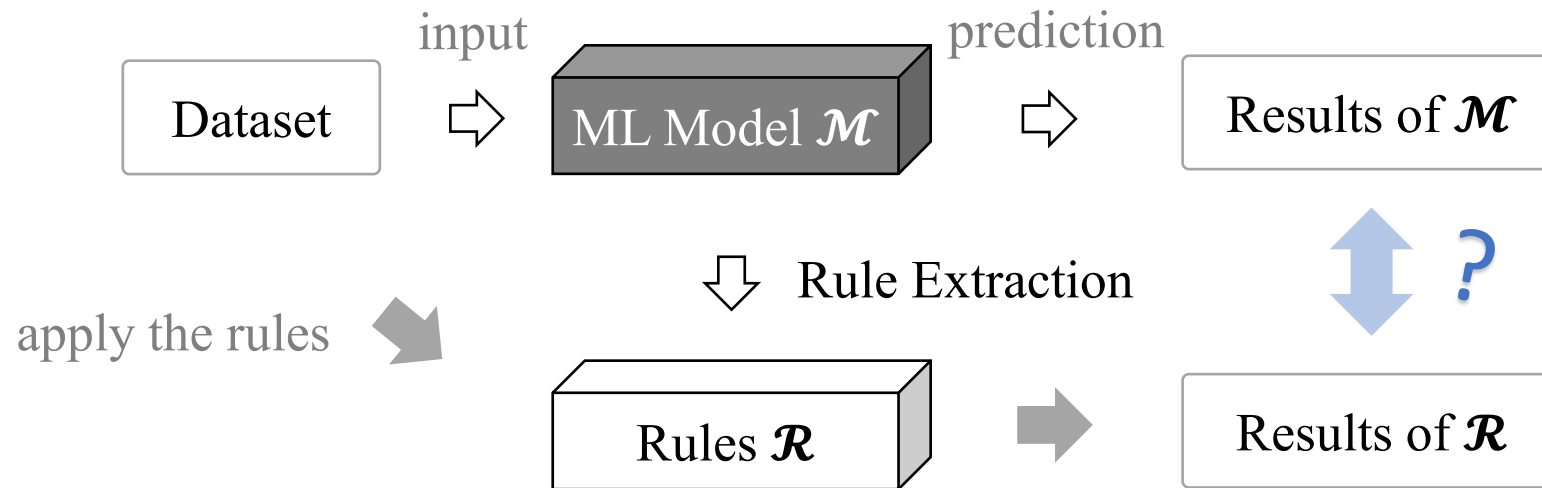
- Requirement: The extracted rules **must be “equivalent”** to the ML model
  - produce the same result on the same input
- Formally, let  $\mathcal{M}$  and  $\mathcal{R}$  denote the model and the set of extracted rules
  - $\mathcal{R}$  is **sound** for  $\mathcal{M}$  if for any input dataset,  $\{\text{result of } \mathcal{R}\} \subseteq \{\text{result of } \mathcal{M}\}$
  - $\mathcal{R}$  is **complete** for  $\mathcal{M}$  if for any input dataset,  $\{\text{result of } \mathcal{R}\} \supseteq \{\text{result of } \mathcal{M}\}$
  - $\mathcal{R}$  is **faithful** to  $\mathcal{M}$  if both sound and complete



- Requirement: The extracted rules **must be “equivalent”** to the ML model
  - produce the same result on the same input
- **Issues** with unsound or incomplete rules

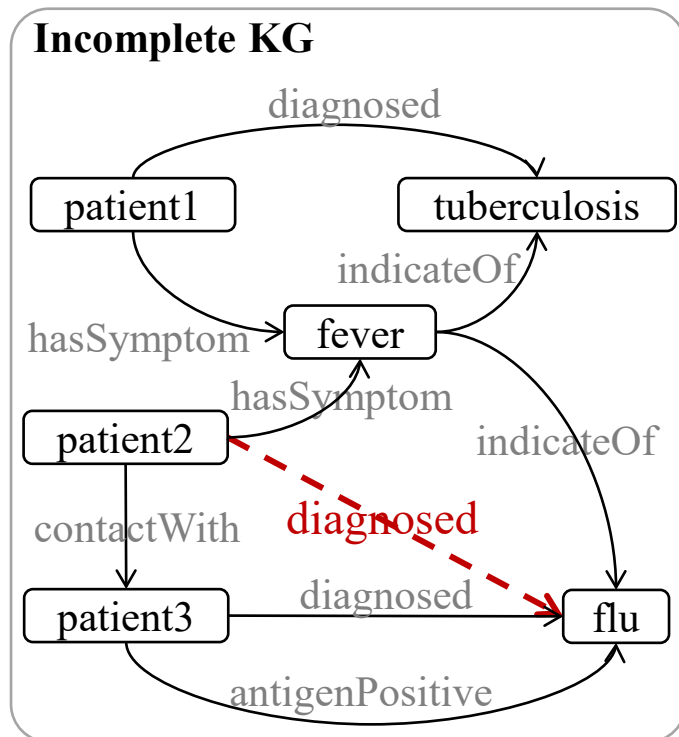


- Requirement: The extracted rules **must be “equivalent”** to the ML model
  - produce the same result on the same input
- **Issues** with unsound or incomplete rules
- Prior works<sup>[1–4]</sup> on rule extraction have **NO** formal guarantee of faithfulness

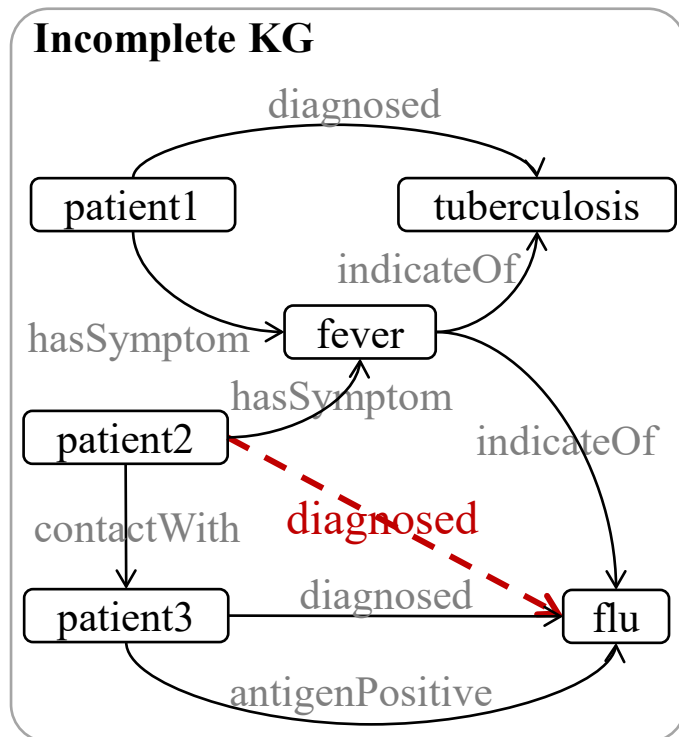


[1] Yang et al. Differentiable Learning of Logical Rules for Knowledge Base Reasoning. NeurIPS 2017  
[2] Sadeghian et al. DRUM: End-To-End Differentiable Rule Mining On Knowledge Graphs. NeurIPS 2019  
[3] Xiong et al. TILP: Differentiable Learning of Temporal Logical Rules on Knowledge Graphs. ICLR 2023  
[4] Han et al. Logical Entity Representation in Knowledge-Graphs for Differentiable Rule Learning. ICLR 2023

- **Question 1:** Do existing approaches hold faithfulness?
- We consider DRUM<sup>[2]</sup>, a representative rule learning approach for KGC
  - model: predict “missing” facts based on existing facts
  - rule extraction algorithm: obtain a set of chain-like rules  
e.g.,  $\text{diagnosed}(x, y) \leftarrow \text{contactWith}(x, z) \wedge \text{diagnosed}(z, y)$

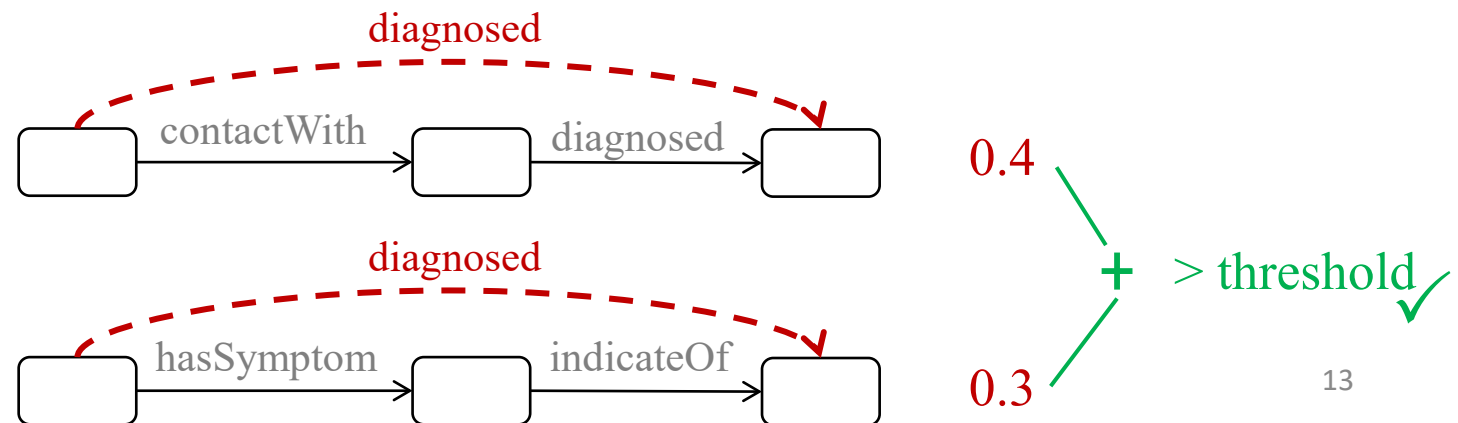


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## How does the model work?

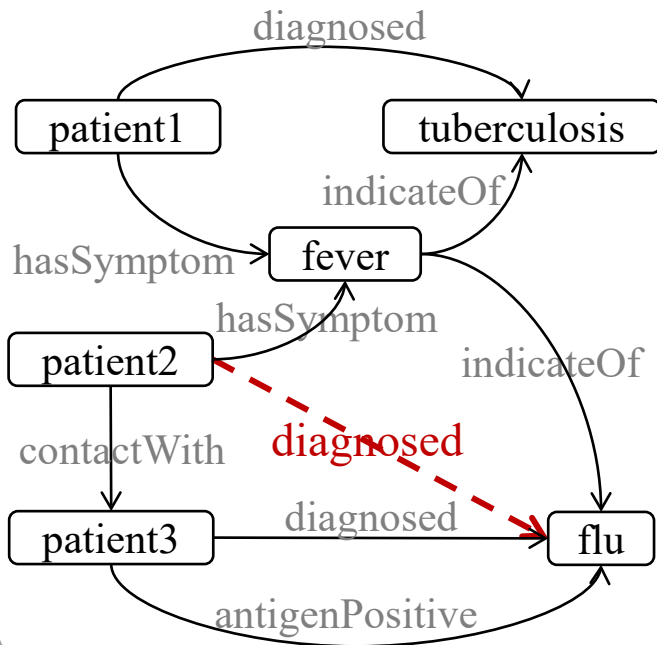
- for each relation, e.g., *diagnosed*
- it learns a weight for each “chain pattern”
- given a query  $\text{diagnosed}(s, ?)$ , it **sums up** all paths from  $s$  to the target node



- **Question 1:** Do existing approaches hold faithfulness?
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  - rule extraction algorithm: obtain a set of chain-like rules  
e.g.,  $diagnosed(x, y) \leftarrow contactWith(x, z) \wedge diagnosed(z, y)$
  - **a single chain-like rule body cannot capture the “sum up” behavior**

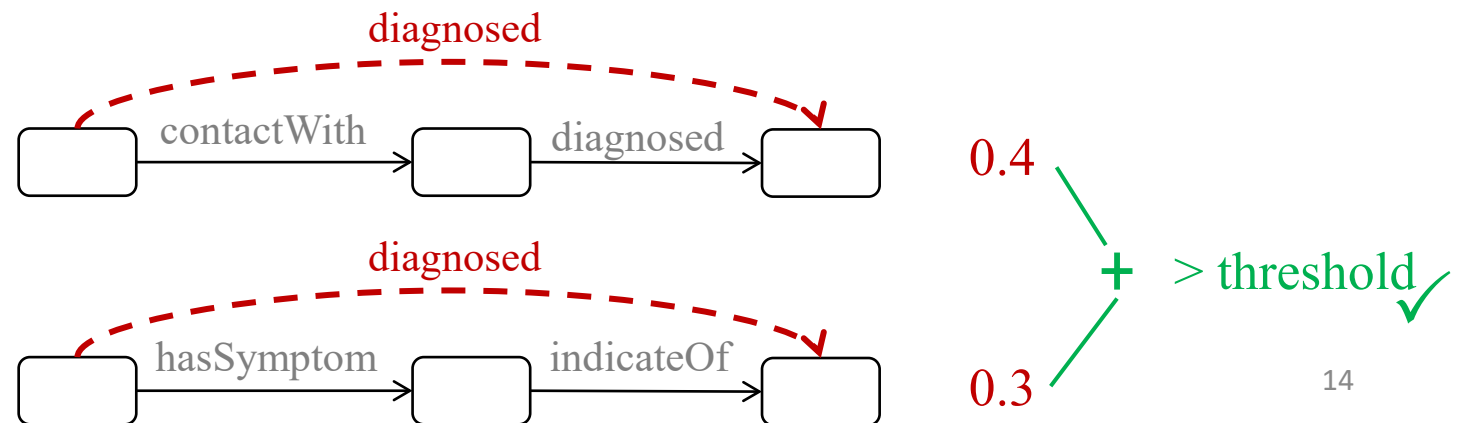
NO

## Incomplete KG



## How does the model work?

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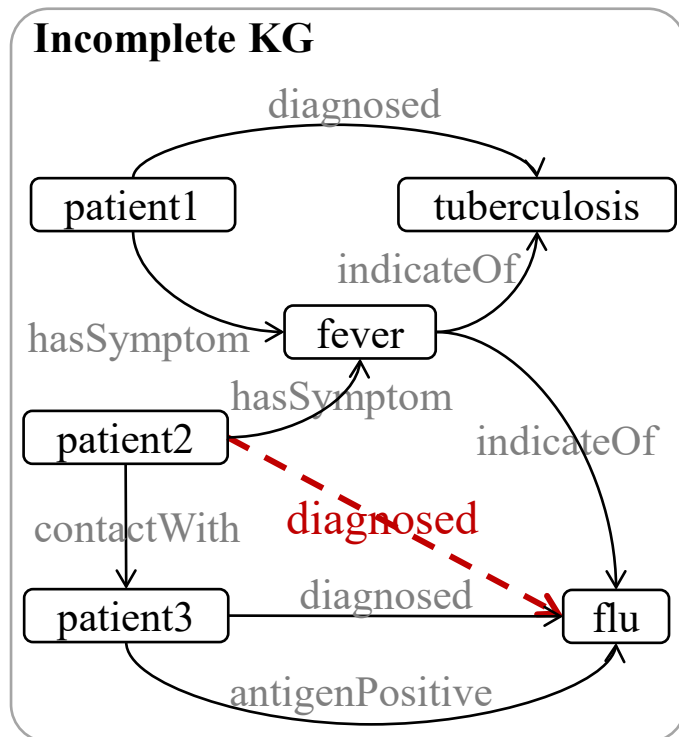


➤ **Question 2:** How to solve the problem and ensure faithfulness?

➤ We provide 2 solutions:

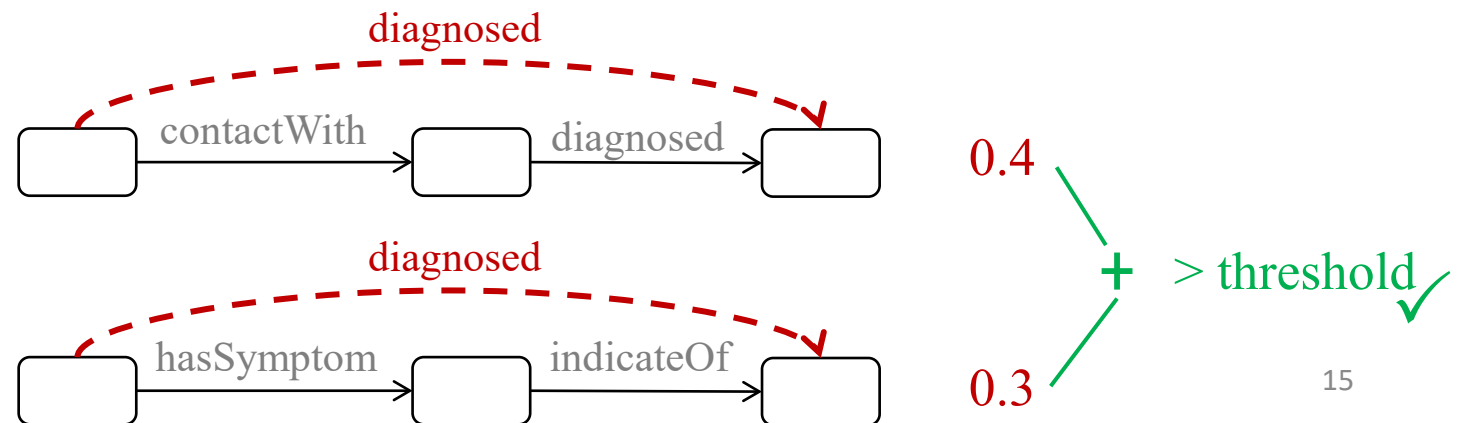
1. a new rule extraction algorithm to support the “sum up” behavior

- e.g.,  $\text{diagnosed}(x, y) \leftarrow \text{contactWith}(x, z) \wedge \text{diagnosed}(z, y) \wedge \text{hasSymptom}(x, v) \wedge \text{indicateOf}(v, y)$
- by analyzing the underlying mechanism of the model, and proving the faithfulness

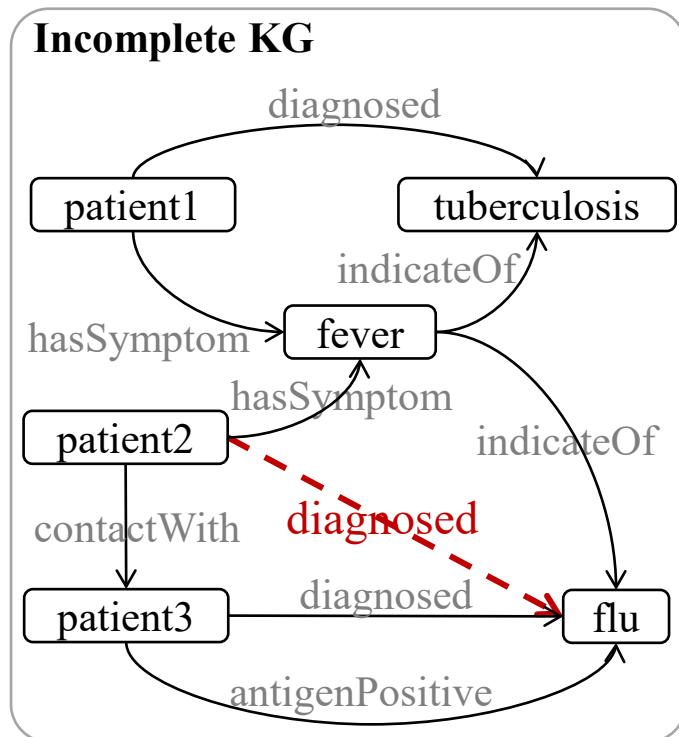


*How does the model work?*

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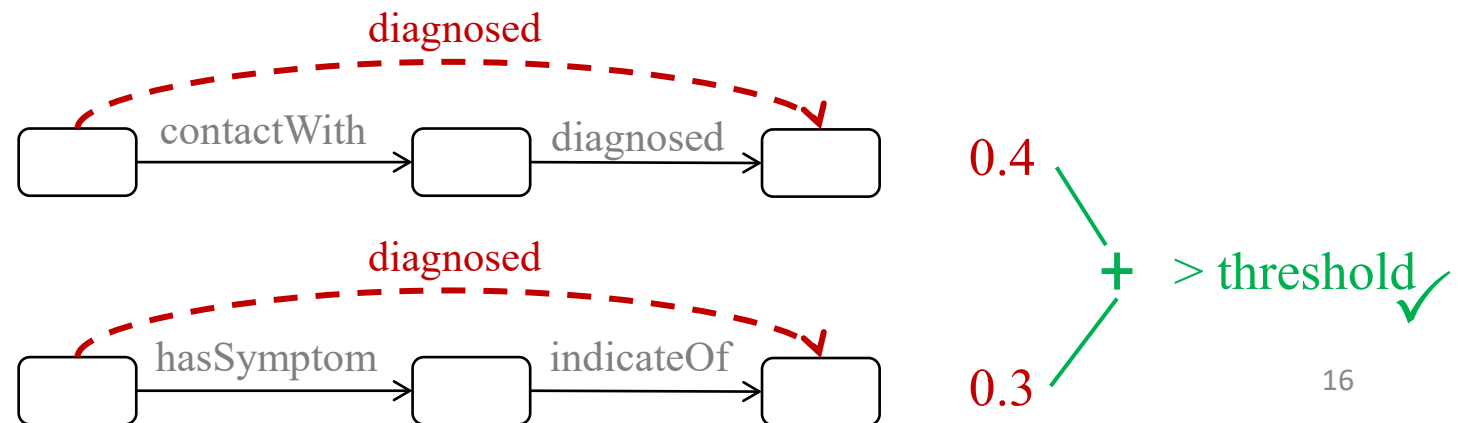


- **Question 2:** How to solve the problem and ensure faithfulness?
- We provide 2 solutions:
  1. a new rule extraction algorithm to support the “sum up” behavior
  2. a new (simplified) model with max aggregation for all paths
    - it only considers one path with max weight—can be captured by chain-like rules



## How does the model work?

- for each relation, e.g., *diagnosed*
- it learns a weight for each “chain pattern”
- given a query *diagnosed(s, ?)*, it **sums up** all paths from *s* to the target node





- **Question 2:** How to solve the problem and ensure faithfulness?
- We provide 2 solutions<sup>[5]</sup>:
  1. a new rule extraction algorithm to support the “sum up” behavior
  2. a new (simplified) model with max aggregation for all paths
    - it only considers one path with max weight—can be captured by chain-like rules
- **Takeaways**
  - faithful rule extraction has **high computational complexity**
  - the simplified model: trade-off between expressive power vs. ease of rule extraction
  - similar conclusions exist for other rule learning models, *e.g.*, NeuralLP<sup>[1,6]</sup>

[1] Yang et al. Differentiable Learning of Logical Rules for Knowledge Base Reasoning. NeurIPS 2017

[5] Wang et al. Faithful Rule Extraction for Differentiable Rule Learning Models. ICLR 2024

[6] Tena Cucala et al. Faithful Approaches to Rule Learning. KR 2022

➤ **Question 3:** Can we extend to **more complex** graph data?

- from knowledge graphs to databases (hypergraphs)
- each fact contains multiple entities

Name	City	Country
<i>Alice</i>	<i>Boston</i>	<i>US</i>
...	...	...

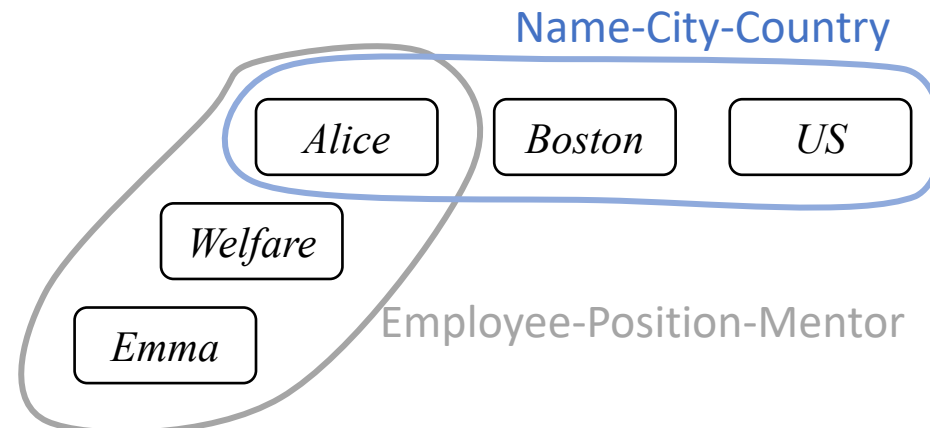
Employee	Position	Mentor
<i>Emma</i>	<i>Welfare</i>	<i>Alice</i>
...	...	...

Name	Org.	Country
<i>Emma</i>	<i>MIT</i>	<i>US</i>
...	...	...

An example database instance

Relational databases:

- each value in a row: a node (entity)
- each row (fact): a hyperedge containing multiple nodes



## ➤ Task: Tabular data cell completion

- real-world tables are usually **incomplete** with **missing values**
- data cell completion: to infer the missing value based on existing facts
- given a query *relation(a, b, ?, c, ...)*, to predict the entity that matches ?

Name	City	Country
Alice	Boston	US
...	...	...
Emma	Boston	?

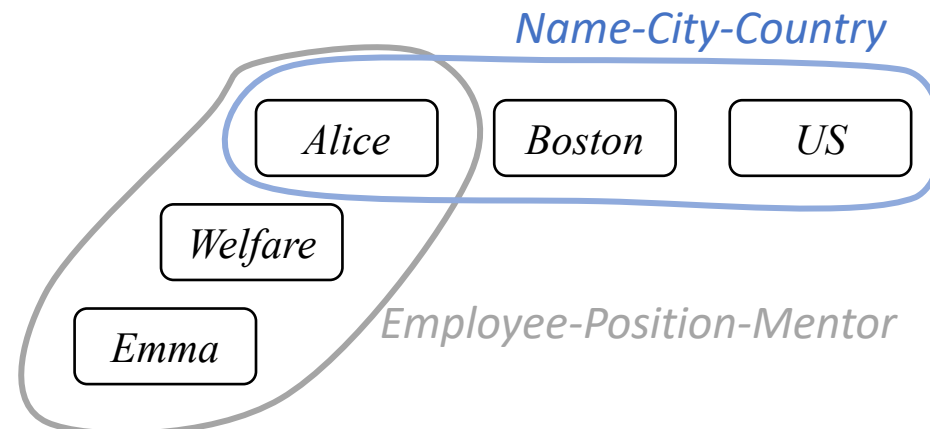
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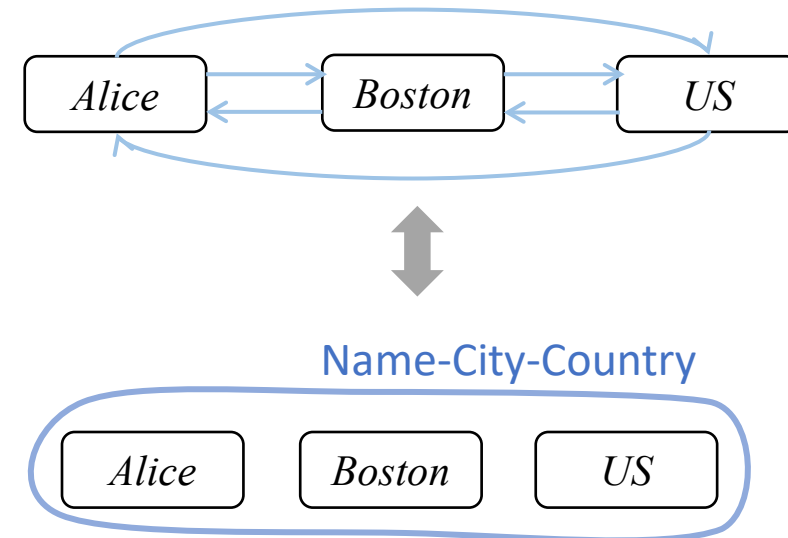
- **Task:** Tabular data cell completion
  - given a query  $relation(a, b, ?, c, \dots)$ , to predict the entity that matches ?
- We consider binary relationships between entities

Name	City	Country
Alice	Boston	US
...	...	...
Emma	Boston	?

Employee	Position	Mentor
Emma	Welfare	Alice
...	...	...

Name	Org.	Country
Emma	MIT	US
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An example database instance



➤ **Task:** Tabular data cell completion

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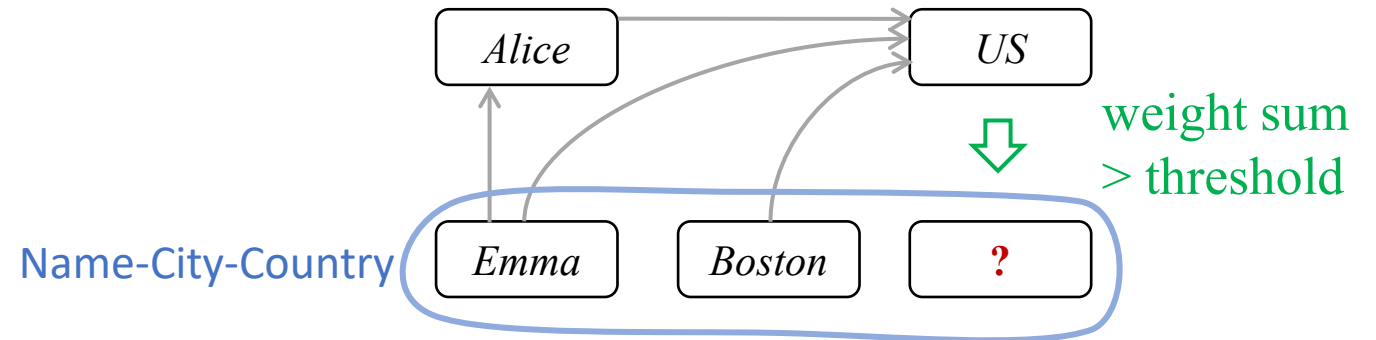
➤ We propose a **model**: predict missing value by aggregating paths from existing entities

Name	City	Country
Alice	Boston	US
...	...	...
Emma	Boston	?

Employee	Position	Mentor
Emma	Welfare	Alice
...	...	...

Name	Org.	Country
Emma	MIT	US
...	...	...

An example database instance



- aggregate paths from existing entities in the query
- weight of each path: learned by the model

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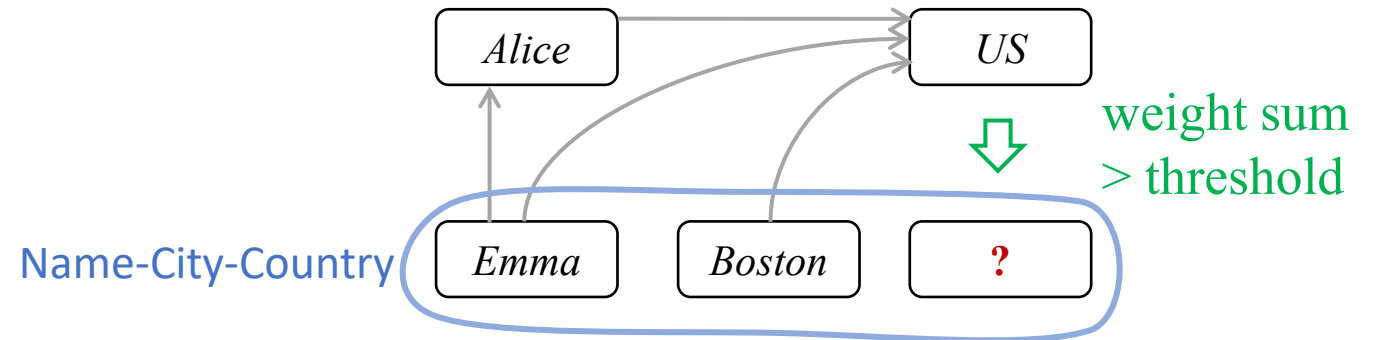
➤ We propose a **model**: predict missing value by aggregating paths from existing entities

➤ We propose **faithful rule extraction** algorithms for the model

➤ **Evaluation results**

- SOTA performance for the task
- better explainability

(compared to hypergraph neural networks)



- aggregate paths from existing entities in the query
- weight of each path: learned by the model

➤ **We aim to:** enhance the explainability of ML models by **faithful rule extraction**

➤ **Future Directions**

1. Diversified applications
  - *e.g.*, entity resolution by answer set programming<sup>[7]</sup>, question answering
2. Features of the extracted rule set
  - *e.g.*, rule multiplicity
3. Practical & Reasonable benchmark generation
  - instead of using random splits for evaluation

[7] Xiang et al. ASPEN: ASP-Based System for Collective Entity Resolution. KR 2024

# Thank You!

## Q & A

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