

# Natural Language Processing

## COMS 4705



COLUMBIA  
ENGINEERING

John Hewitt

Self-Attention and Transformers

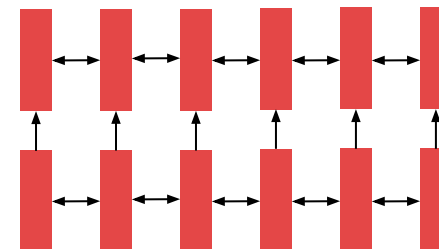
*Adapted from slides by Anna Goldie, John Hewitt*

# Lecture Plan

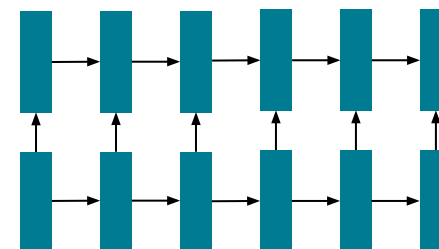
1. Towards attention-based NLP models
2. The Transformer model
3. Great results with Transformers
4. Drawbacks and variants of Transformers

# Historically: recurrent models for (most) NLP!

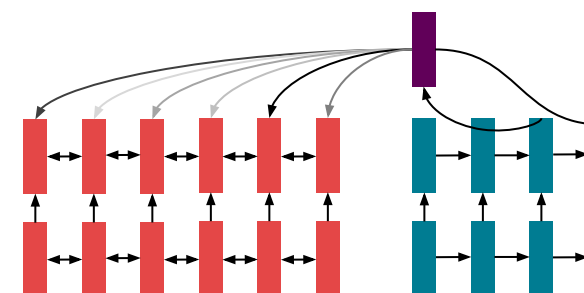
- Circa 2016, the de facto strategy in NLP is to **encode** sentences with an RNN:  
(for example, the source sentence in a translation)



- Define your output (parse, sentence, summary) as a sequence, and use an RNN to generate it.

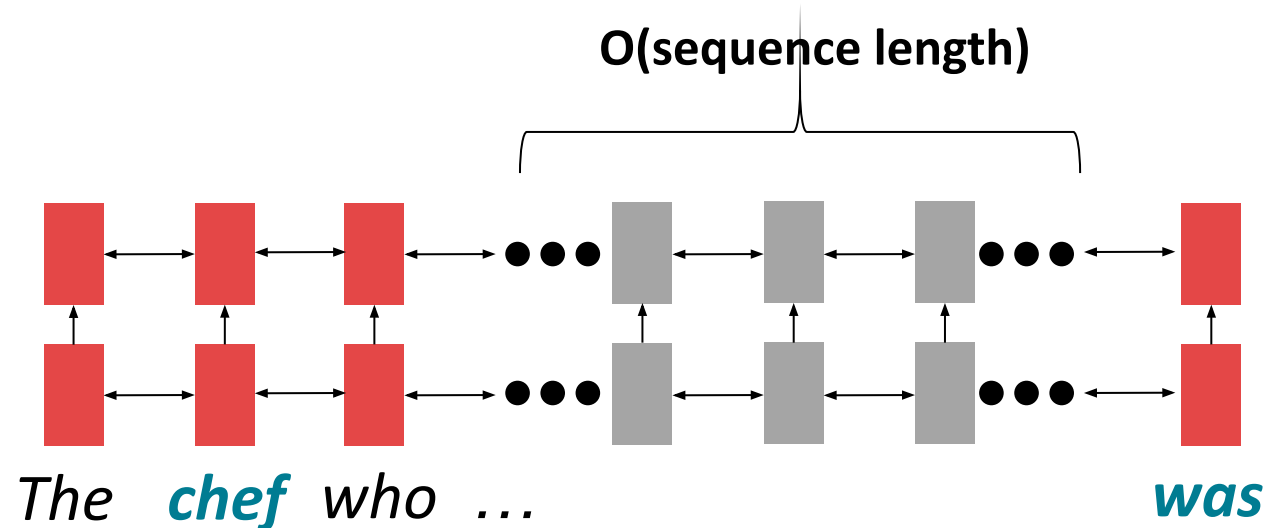
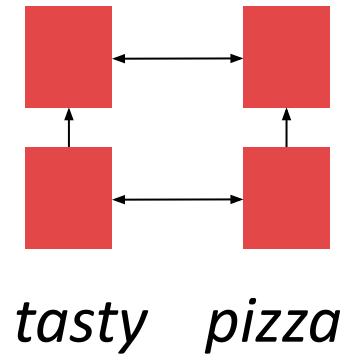


- Use attention to allow flexible access to memory



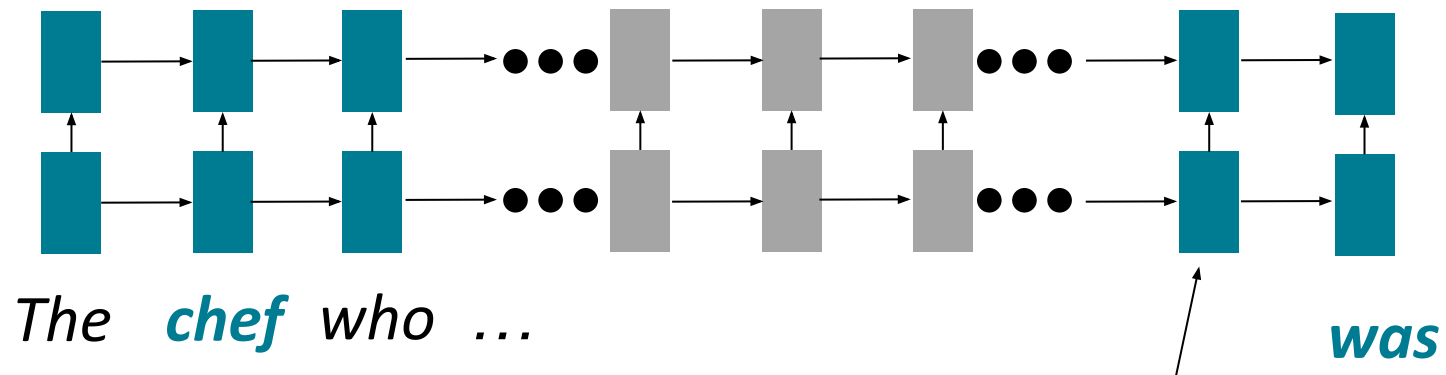
# Issues with recurrent models: Linear interaction distance

- RNNs are unrolled “left-to-right”.
- This encodes linear locality: a useful heuristic!
  - Nearby words often affect each other’s meanings
- **Problem:** RNNs take  $O(\text{sequence length})$  steps for distant word pairs to interact.



# Issues with recurrent models: Linear interaction distance

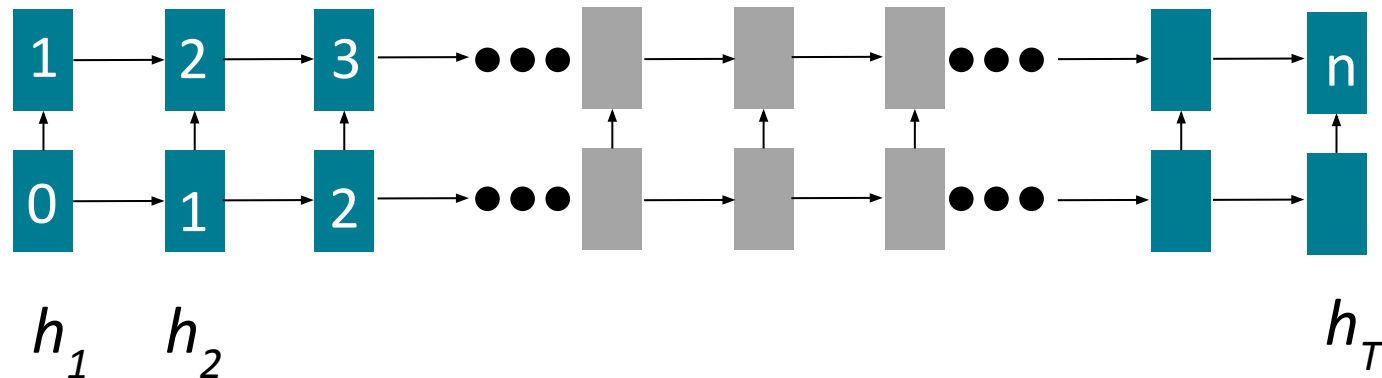
- **O(sequence length)** steps for distant word pairs to interact means:
  - Hard to learn long-distance dependencies (because gradient problems!)
  - Linear order of words is “baked in”; we already know linear order isn’t the right way to think about sentences...



Info of *chef* has gone through  
 $O(\text{sequence length})$  many layers!

# Issues with recurrent models: Lack of parallelizability

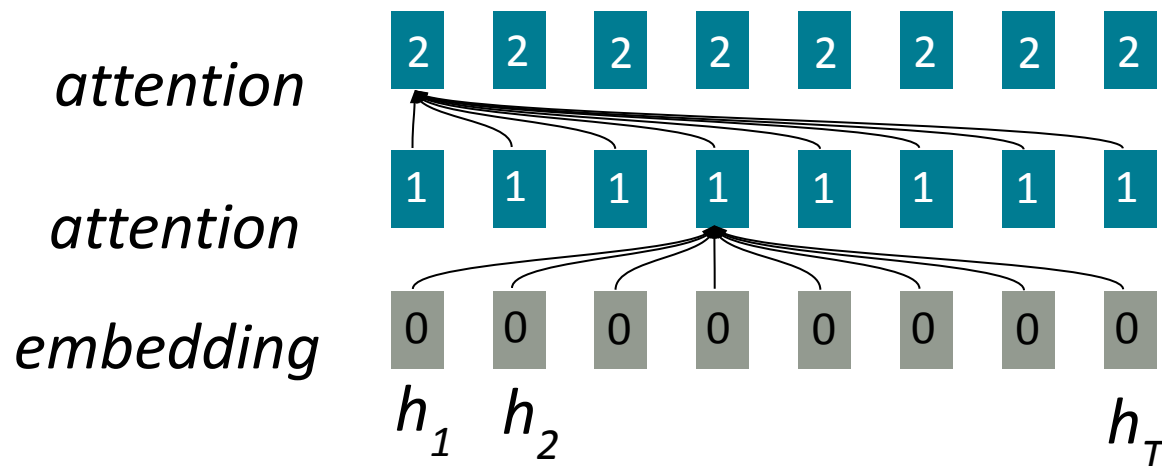
- Forward and backward passes have  **$O(\text{sequence length})$**  unparallelizable operations
  - GPUs can perform a bunch of independent computations at once!
  - But future RNN hidden states can't be computed in full before past RNN hidden states have been computed
  - Inhibits training on very large datasets!



Numbers indicate min # of steps before a state can be computed

# If not recurrence, then what? How about attention?

- **Attention** treats each word's representation as a **query** to access and incorporate information from a **set of values**.
  - We saw attention from the **decoder** to the **encoder**; today we'll think about attention **within a single sentence**.
- Number of unparallelizable operations does not increase with sequence length.
- Maximum interaction distance:  $O(1)$ , since all words interact at every layer!

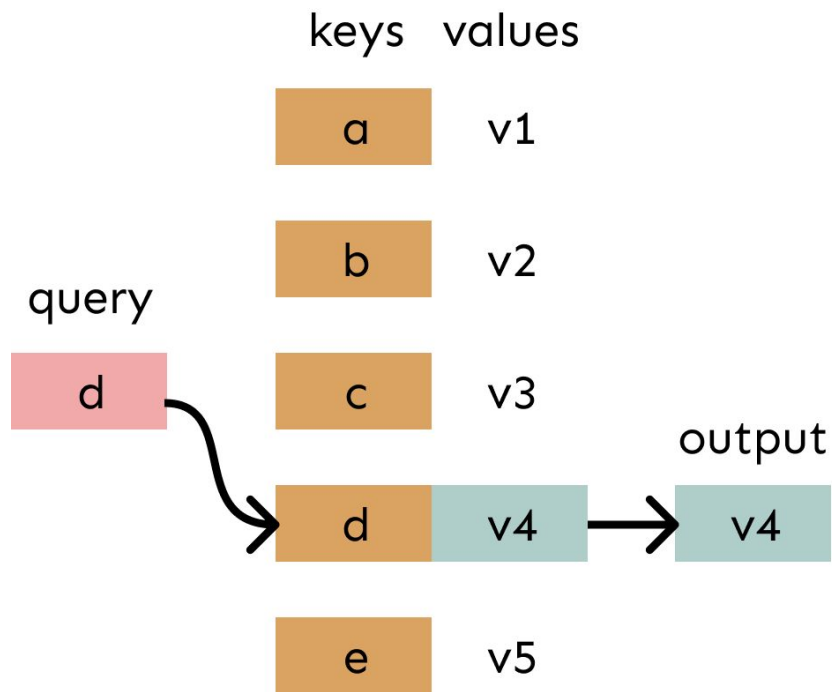


All words attend to all words in previous layer; most arrows here are omitted

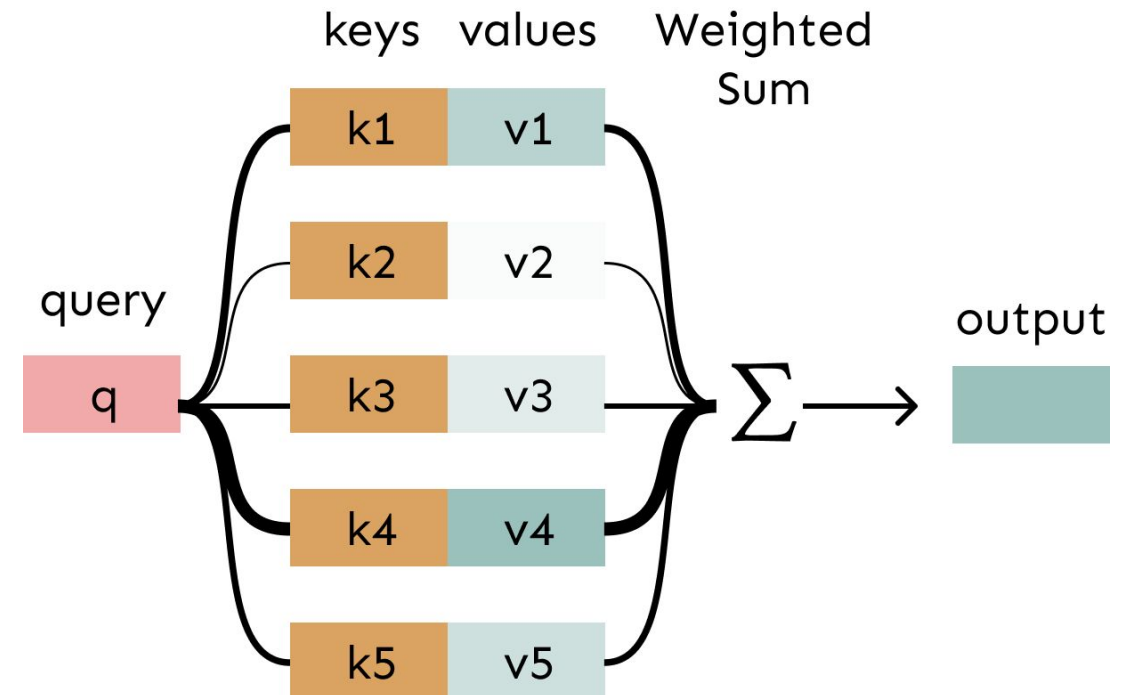
# Attention as a soft, averaging lookup table

We can think of **attention** as performing fuzzy lookup in a key-value store.

In a **lookup table**, we have a table of **keys** that map to **values**. The **query** matches one of the keys, returning its value.

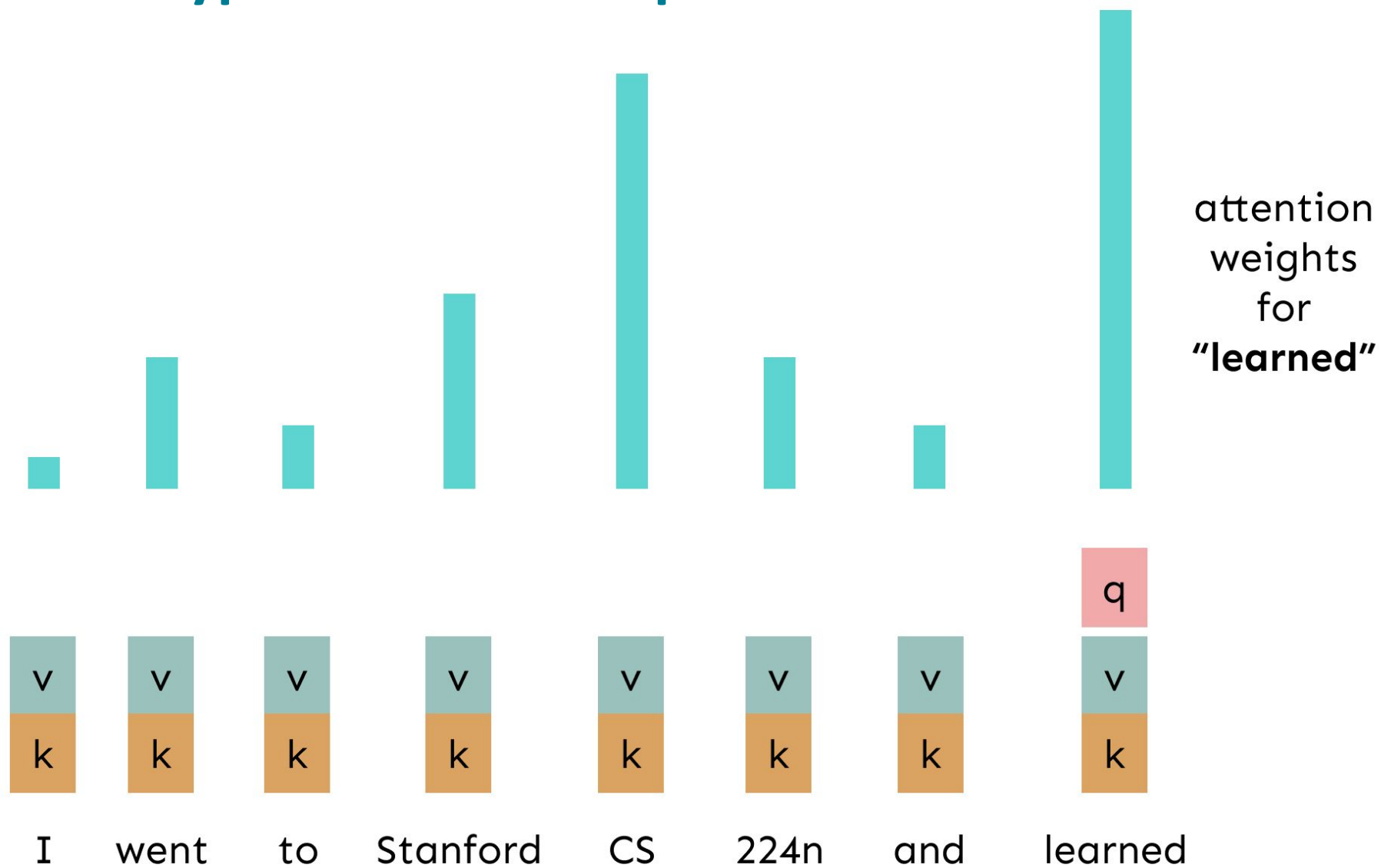


In **attention**, the **query** matches all **keys softly**, to a weight between 0 and 1. The keys' **values** are multiplied by the weights and summed.





# Self-Attention Hypothetical Example



# Self-Attention: keys, queries, values from the same sequence

Let  $\mathbf{w}_{1:n}$  be a sequence of words in vocabulary  $V$ , like *Zuko made his uncle tea*.

For each  $\mathbf{w}_i$ , let  $\mathbf{x}_i = E\mathbf{w}_i$ , where  $E \in \mathbb{R}^{d \times |V|}$  is an embedding matrix.

1. Transform each word embedding with weight matrices  $Q, K, V$ , each in  $\mathbb{R}^{d \times d}$

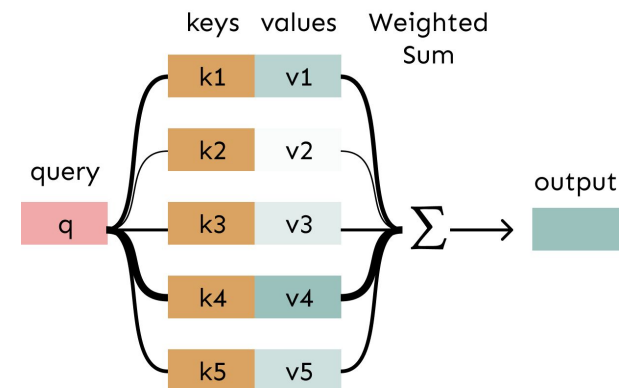
$$\mathbf{q}_i = Q\mathbf{x}_i \text{ (queries)} \quad \mathbf{k}_i = K\mathbf{x}_i \text{ (keys)} \quad \mathbf{v}_i = V\mathbf{x}_i \text{ (values)}$$

2. Compute pairwise similarities between keys and queries; normalize with softmax

$$\mathbf{e}_{ij} = \mathbf{q}_i^\top \mathbf{k}_j \quad \alpha_{ij} = \frac{\exp(\mathbf{e}_{ij})}{\sum_{j'} \exp(\mathbf{e}_{ij'})}$$

3. Compute output for each word as weighted sum of values

$$\mathbf{o}_i = \sum_j \alpha_{ij} \mathbf{v}_j$$



# Barriers and solutions for Self-Attention as a building block

## Barriers

- Doesn't have an inherent notion of order!



## Solutions

# Fixing the first self-attention problem: **sequence order**

- Since self-attention doesn't build in order information, we need to encode the order of the sentence in our keys, queries, and values.
- Consider representing each **sequence index** as a **vector**

$\mathbf{p}_i \in \mathbb{R}^d$ , for  $i \in \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$  are position vectors

- Don't worry about what the  $p_i$  are made of yet!
- Easy to incorporate this info into our self-attention block: just add the  $\mathbf{p}_i$  to our inputs!
- Recall that  $\mathbf{x}_i$  is the embedding of the word at index  $i$ . The positioned embedding is:

$$\tilde{\mathbf{x}}_i = \mathbf{x}_i + \mathbf{p}_i$$

In deep self-attention networks, we do this at the first layer! You could concatenate them as well, but people mostly just add...

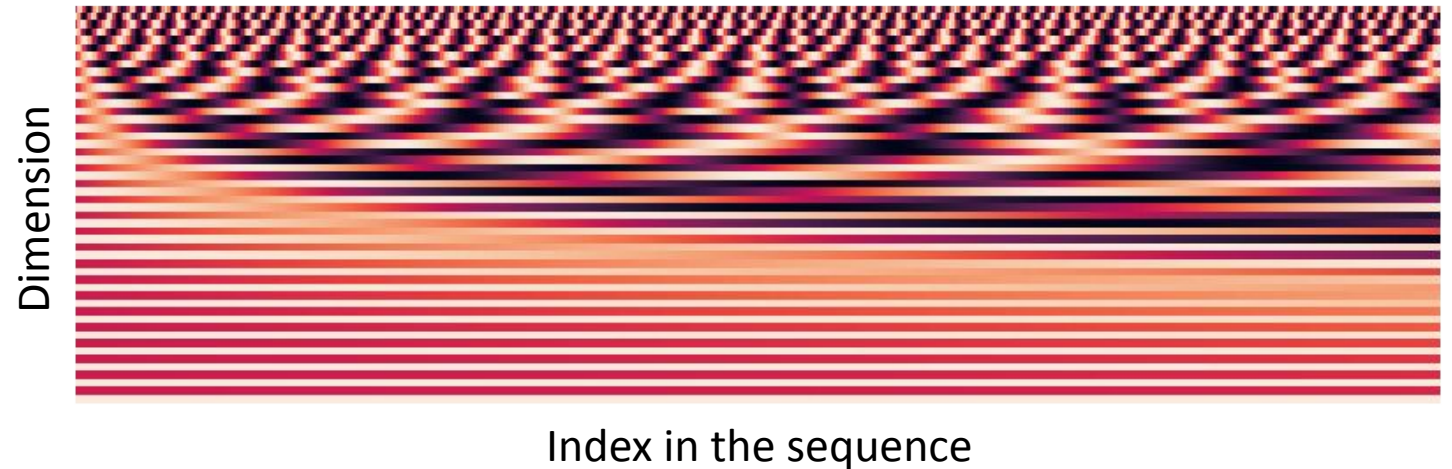
# Position representation vectors learned from scratch

- **Learned absolute position representations:** Let all  $p_i$  be learnable parameters!  
Learn a matrix  $\mathbf{p} \in \mathbb{R}^{d \times n}$ , and let each  $\mathbf{p}_i$  be a column of that matrix!
- Pros:
  - Flexibility: each position gets to be learned to fit the data
- Cons:
  - Definitely can't extrapolate to indices outside  $1, \dots, n$ .
- Most systems use this!
- Sometimes people try more flexible representations of position:
  - Relative linear position attention [\[Shaw et al., 2018\]](#)
  - Dependency syntax-based position [\[Wang et al., 2019\]](#)

# Position representation vectors through sinusoids

- **Sinusoidal position representations:** concatenate sinusoidal functions of varying periods:

$$\mathbf{p}_i = \begin{pmatrix} \sin(i/10000^{2*1/d}) \\ \cos(i/10000^{2*1/d}) \\ \vdots \\ \sin(i/10000^{2*\frac{d}{2}/d}) \\ \cos(i/10000^{2*\frac{d}{2}/d}) \end{pmatrix}$$



- Pros:
  - Periodicity indicates that maybe “absolute position” isn’t as important
  - Maybe can extrapolate to longer sequences as periods restart!
- Cons:
  - Not learnable; also the extrapolation doesn’t really work!

# Barriers and solutions for Self-Attention as a building block

## Barriers

- Doesn't have an inherent notion of order!
- No nonlinearities for deep learning! It's all just weighted averages



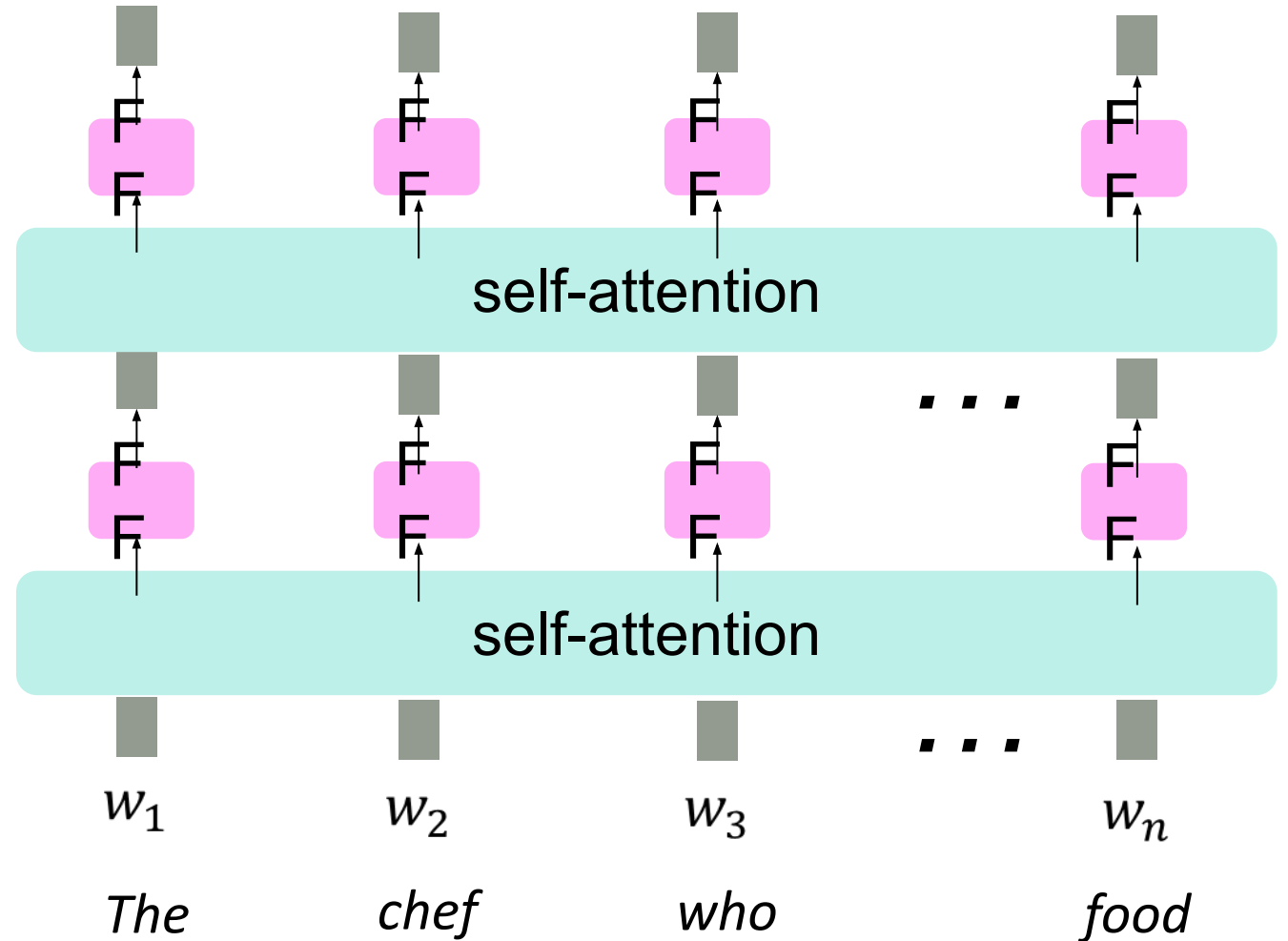
## Solutions

- Add position representations to the inputs

# Adding nonlinearities in self-attention

- Note that there are no elementwise nonlinearities in self-attention; stacking more self-attention layers just re-averages **value** vectors (Why? Look at the notes!)
- Easy fix: add a **feed-forward network** to post-process each output vector.

$$\begin{aligned} m_i &= MLP(\text{output}_i) \\ &= W_2 * \text{ReLU}(W_1 \text{output}_i + b_1) + b_2 \end{aligned}$$



Intuition: the FF network processes the result of attention



# Barriers and solutions for Self-Attention as a building block

## Barriers

- Doesn't have an inherent notion of order!
- No nonlinearities for deep learning magic! It's all just weighted averages
- Need to ensure we don't "look at the future" when predicting a sequence
  - Like in machine translation
  - Or language modeling



## Solutions

- Add position representations to the inputs
- Easy fix: apply the same feedforward network to each self-attention output.

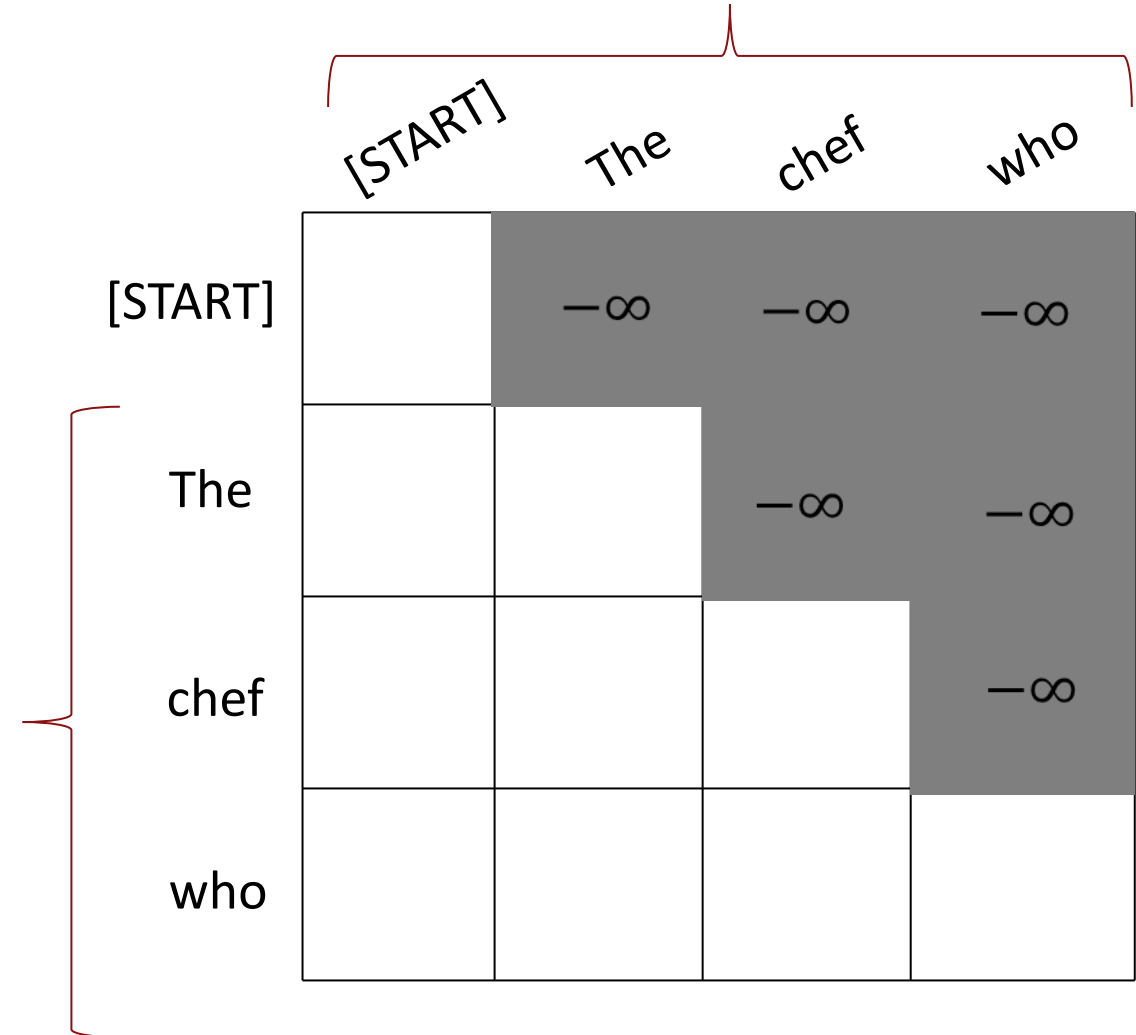
# Masking the future in self-attention

- To use self-attention in **decoders**, we need to ensure we can't peek at the future.
- At every timestep, we could change the set of **keys and queries** to include only past words. (Inefficient!)
- To enable parallelization, we **mask out attention** to future words by setting attention scores to  $-\infty$ .

$$e_{ij} = \begin{cases} q_i^\top k_j, & j \leq i \\ -\infty, & j > i \end{cases}$$

For encoding these words

We can look at these (not greyed out) words



# Barriers and solutions for Self-Attention as a building block

## Barriers

- Doesn't have an inherent notion of order!
- No nonlinearities for deep learning magic! It's all just weighted averages
- Need to ensure we don't "look at the future" when predicting a sequence
  - Like in machine translation
  - Or language modeling

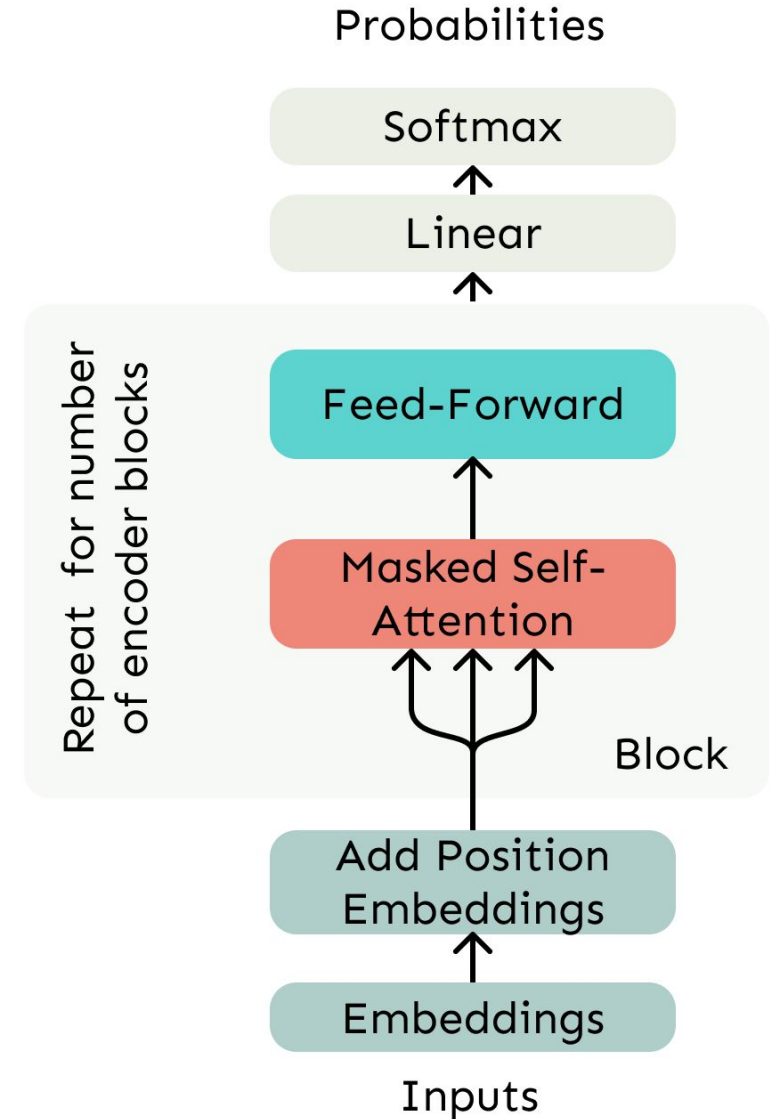


## Solutions

- Add position representations to the inputs
- Easy fix: apply the same feedforward network to each self-attention output.
- Mask out the future by artificially setting attention weights to 0!

# Necessities for a self-attention building block:

- **Self-attention:**
  - the basis of the method.
- **Position representations:**
  - Specify the sequence order, since self-attention is an unordered function of its inputs.
- **Nonlinearities:**
  - At the output of the self-attention block
  - Frequently implemented as a simple feed-forward network.
- **Masking:**
  - In order to parallelize operations while not looking at the future.
  - Keeps information about the future from “leaking” to the past.

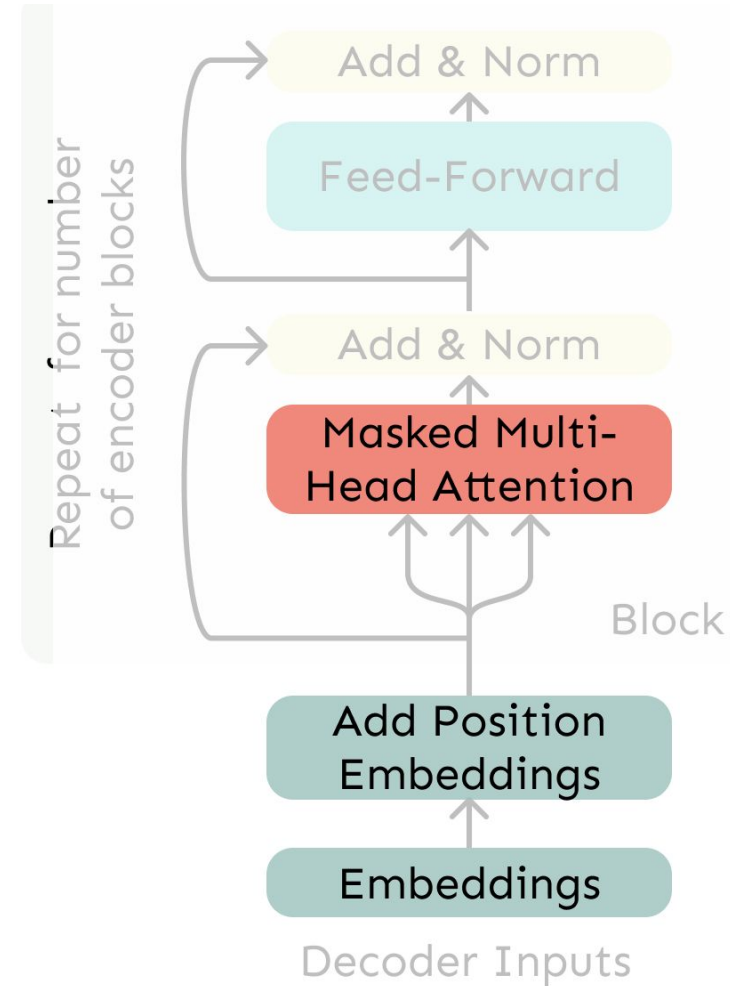


# Outline

1. From recurrence (RNN) to attention-based NLP models
2. **The Transformer model**
3. Great results with Transformers
4. Drawbacks and variants of Transformers

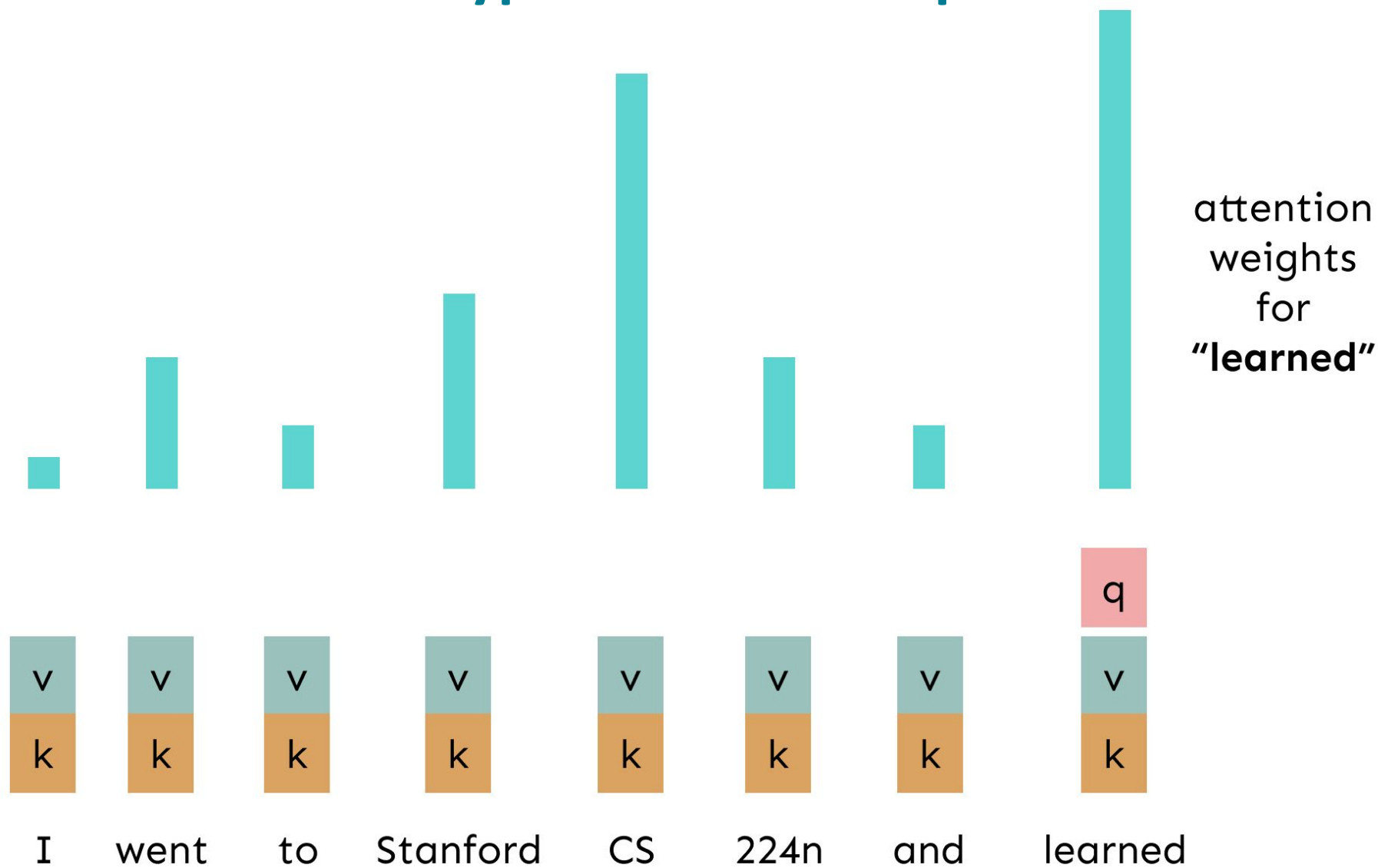
# The Transformer Decoder

- A Transformer decoder is how we'll build systems like **language models**.
- It's a lot like our minimal self-attention architecture, but with a few more components.
- The embeddings and position embeddings are identical.
- We'll next replace our self-attention with **multi-head self-attention**.

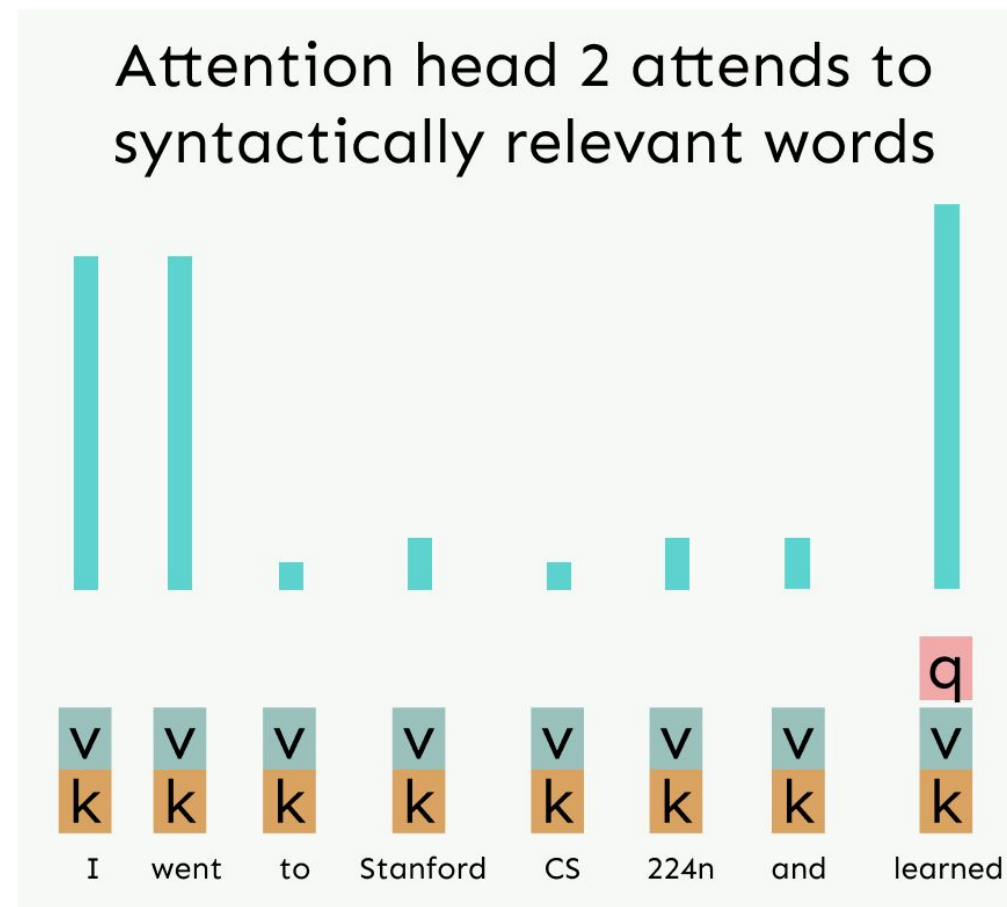
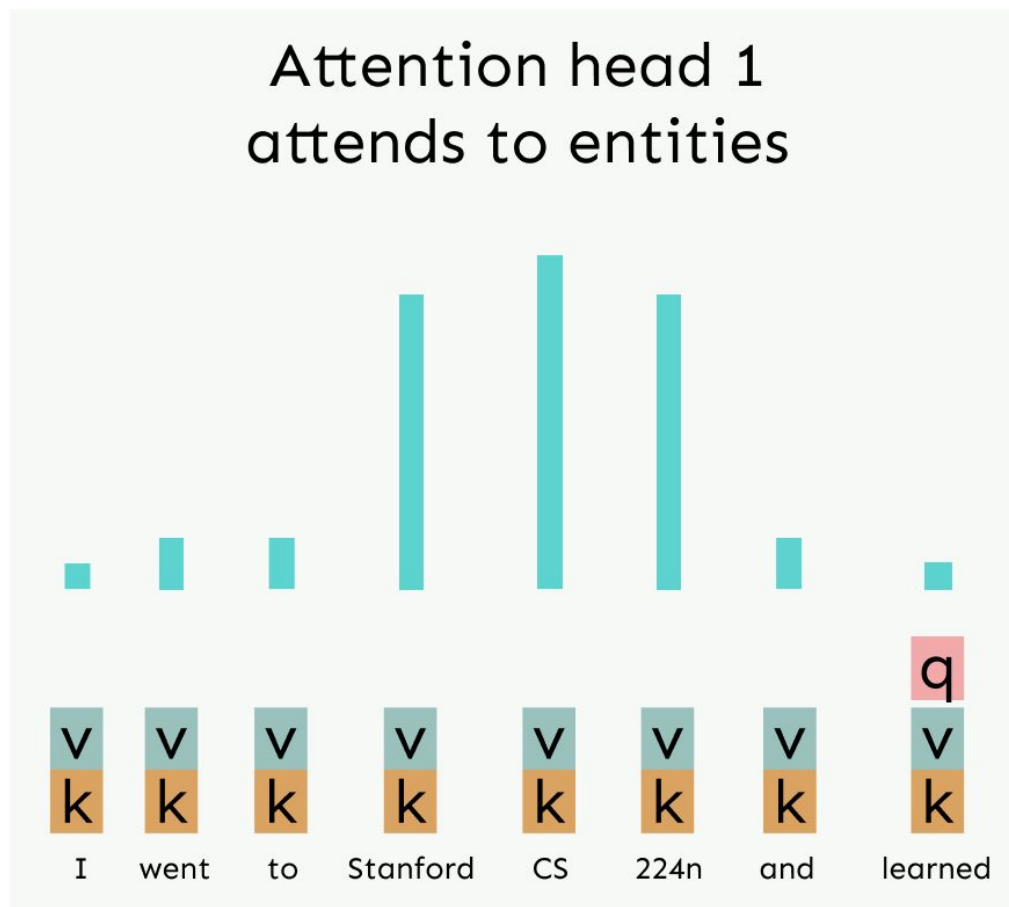


Transformer Decoder

# Recall the Self-Attention Hypothetical Example



# Hypothetical Example of Multi-Head Attention



I went to Stanford

CS 224n and learned



# Sequence-Stacked form of Attention

- Let's look at how key-query-value attention is computed, in matrices.
  - Let  $X = [x_1; \dots; x_n] \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times d}$  be the concatenation of input vectors.
  - First, note that  $XK \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times d}$ ,  $XQ \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times d}$ ,  $XV \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times d}$ .

First, take the query-key dot products in one matrix multiplication:  $XQ(XK)^\top$

$$XQ \cdot K^\top X^\top = XQK^\top X^\top \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$$

All pairs of attention scores!

Next, softmax, and compute the weighted average with another matrix multiplication.

$$\text{softmax} \left( XQK^\top X^\top \right) \cdot XV = \text{output} \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times d}$$

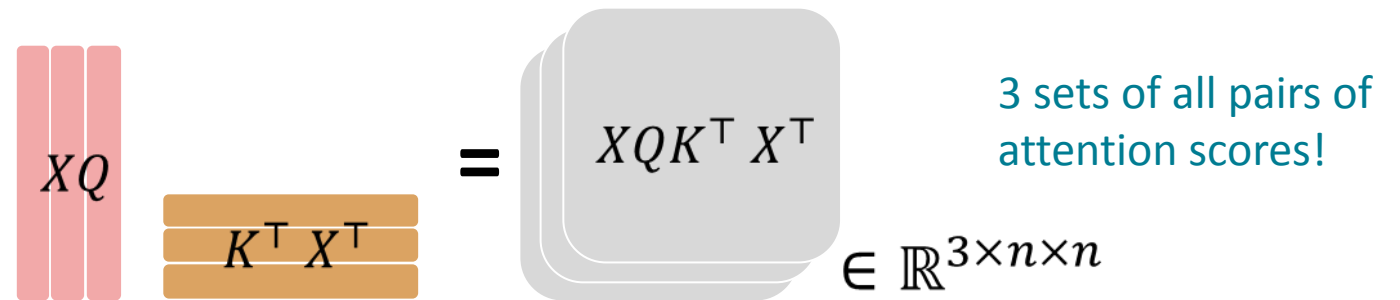
# Multi-headed attention

- What if we want to look in multiple places in the sentence at once?
  - For word  $i$ , self-attention “looks” where  $x_i^\top Q^\top K x_j$  is high, but maybe we want to focus on different  $j$  for different reasons?
- We’ll define **multiple attention “heads”** through multiple Q,K,V matrices
- Let,  $Q_\ell, K_\ell, V_\ell \in \mathbb{R}^{d \times \frac{d}{h}}$ , where  $h$  is the number of attention heads, and  $\ell$  ranges from 1 to  $h$ .
- Each attention head performs attention independently:
  - $\text{output}_\ell = \text{softmax}(X Q_\ell K_\ell^\top X^\top) * X V_\ell$ , where  $\text{output}_\ell \in \mathbb{R}^{d/h}$
- Then the outputs of all the heads are combined!
  - $\text{output} = [\text{output}_1; \dots; \text{output}_h] Y$ , where  $Y \in \mathbb{R}^{d \times d}$
- Each head gets to “look” at different things, and construct value vectors differently.

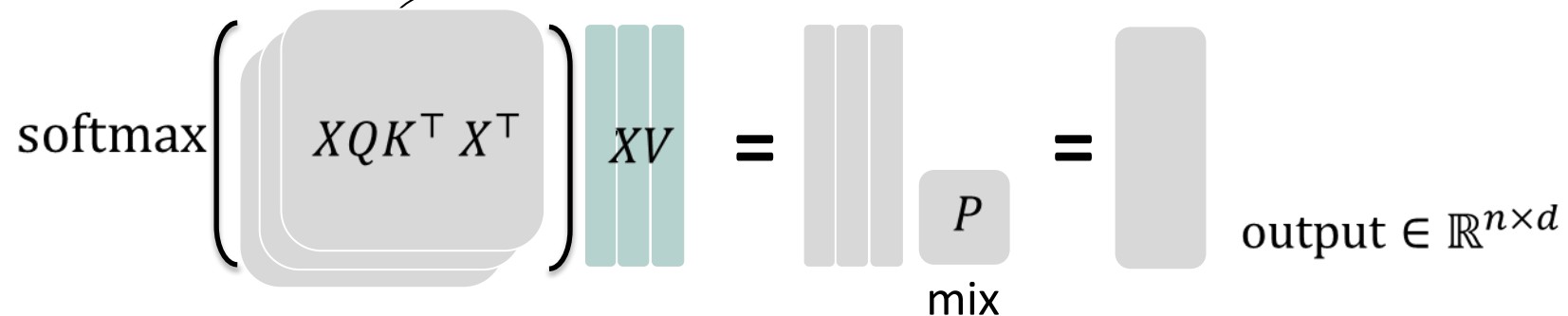
# Multi-head self-attention is computationally efficient

- Even though we compute  $h$  many attention heads, it's not really more costly.
  - We compute  $XQ \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times d}$ , and then reshape to  $\mathbb{R}^{n \times h \times d/h}$ . (Likewise for  $XK, XV$ .)
  - Then we transpose to  $\mathbb{R}^{h \times n \times d/h}$ ; now the head axis is like a batch axis.

First, take the query-key dot products in one matrix multiplication:  $XQ(XK)^\top$



Next, softmax, and compute the weighted average with another matrix multiplication.



## Scaled Dot Product [Vaswani et al., 2017]

- “**Scaled Dot Product**” attention aids in training.
- When dimensionality  $d$  becomes large, dot products between vectors tend to become large.
  - Because of this, inputs to the softmax function can be large, making the gradients small.

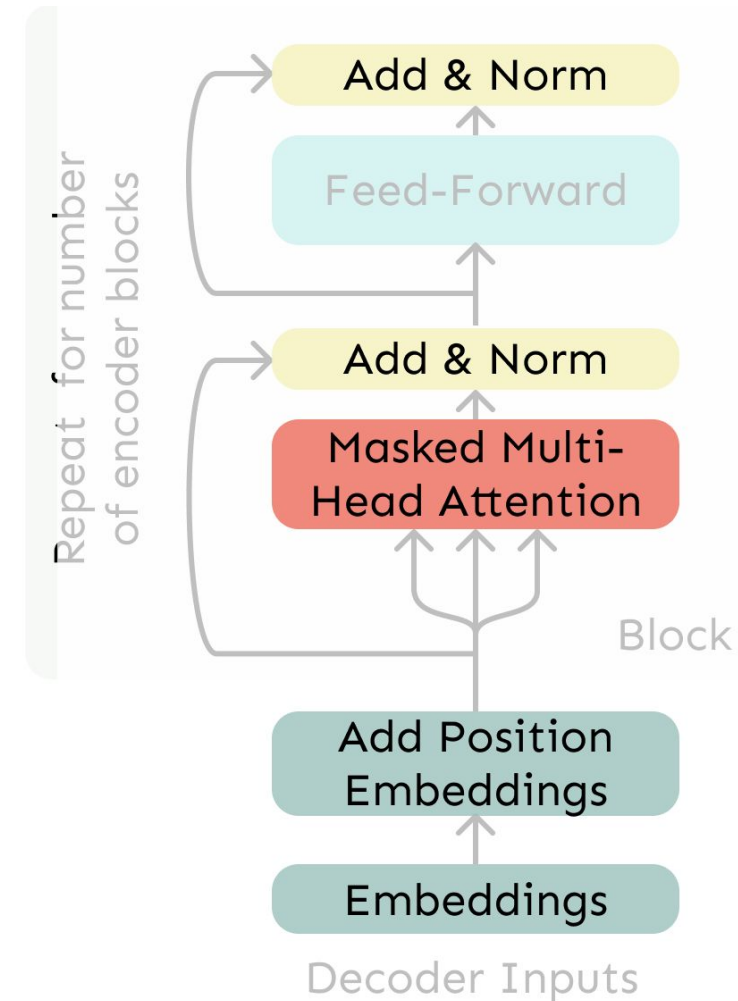
- Instead of the self-attention function we’ve seen:

$$\text{output}_\ell = \text{softmax}(XQ_\ell K_\ell^\top X^\top) * XV_\ell$$

- We divide the attention scores by  $\sqrt{d/h}$ , to stop the scores from becoming large

# The Transformer Decoder

- Now that we've replaced self-attention with multi-head self-attention, we'll go through two **optimization tricks** that end up being :
  - **Residual Connections**
  - **Layer Normalization**
- In most Transformer diagrams, these are often written together as "Add & Norm"



Transformer Decoder

# The Transformer Encoder: Residual connections [He et al., 2016]

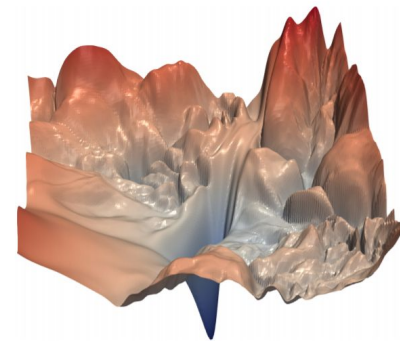
- **Residual connections** are a trick to help models train better.
  - Instead of  $X^{(i)} = \text{Layer}(X^{(i-1)})$  (where  $i$  represents the layer)



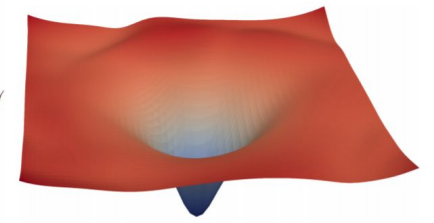
- We let  $X^{(i)} = X^{(i-1)} + \text{Layer}(X^{(i-1)})$  (so we only have to learn “the residual” from the previous layer)



- Gradient is **great** through the residual connection; it's 1!
- Bias towards the identity function!



[no residuals]



[residuals]

[Loss landscape visualization,  
[Li et al., 2018](#), on a ResNet]

# The Transformer Encoder: **Layer normalization** [[Ba et al., 2016](#)]

- **Layer normalization** is a trick to help models train faster.
- Idea: cut down on uninformative variation in hidden vector values by normalizing to unit mean and standard deviation **within each layer**.
  - LayerNorm's success may be due to its normalizing gradients [[Xu et al., 2019](#)]
- Let  $x \in \mathbb{R}^d$  be an individual (word) vector in the model.
- Let  $\mu = \sum_{j=1}^d x_j$ ; this is the mean;  $\mu \in \mathbb{R}$ .
- Let  $\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{1}{d} \sum_{j=1}^d (x_j - \mu)^2}$ ; this is the standard deviation;  $\sigma \in \mathbb{R}$ .
- Let  $\gamma \in \mathbb{R}^d$  and  $\beta \in \mathbb{R}^d$  be learned “gain” and “bias” parameters. (Can omit!)
- Then layer normalization computes:

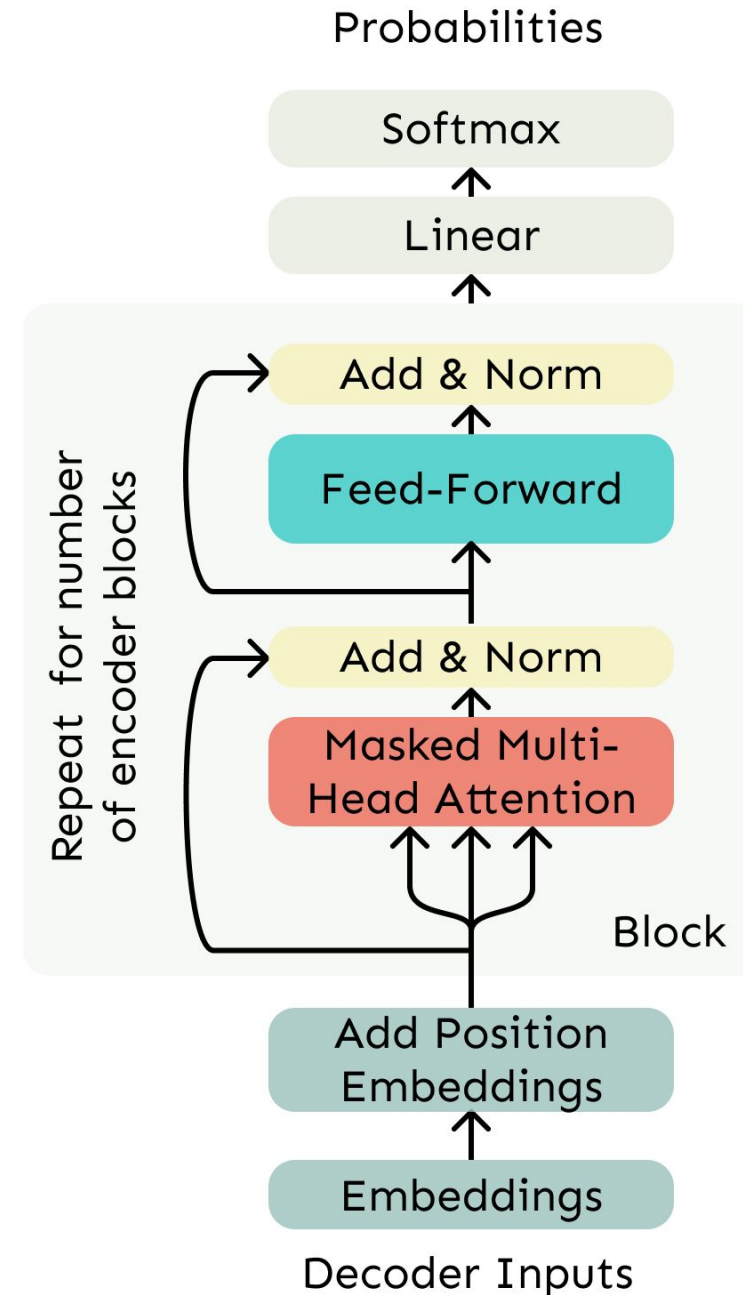
Normalize by scalar  
mean and variance



Modulate by learned  
elementwise gain and bias

# The Transformer Decoder

- The Transformer Decoder is a stack of Transformer Decoder **Blocks**.
- Each Block consists of:
  - Self-attention
  - Add & Norm
  - Feed-Forward
  - Add & Norm
- That's it! We've gone through the Transformer Decoder.

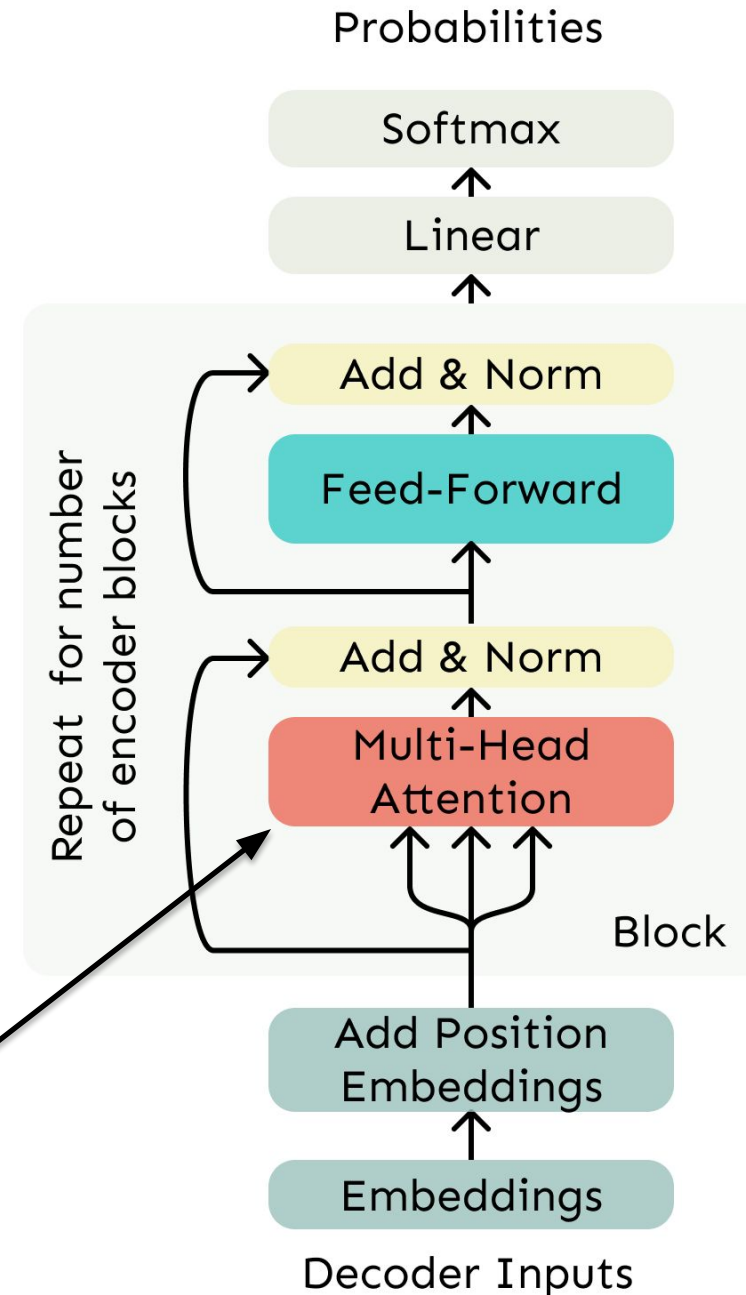




# The Transformer Encoder

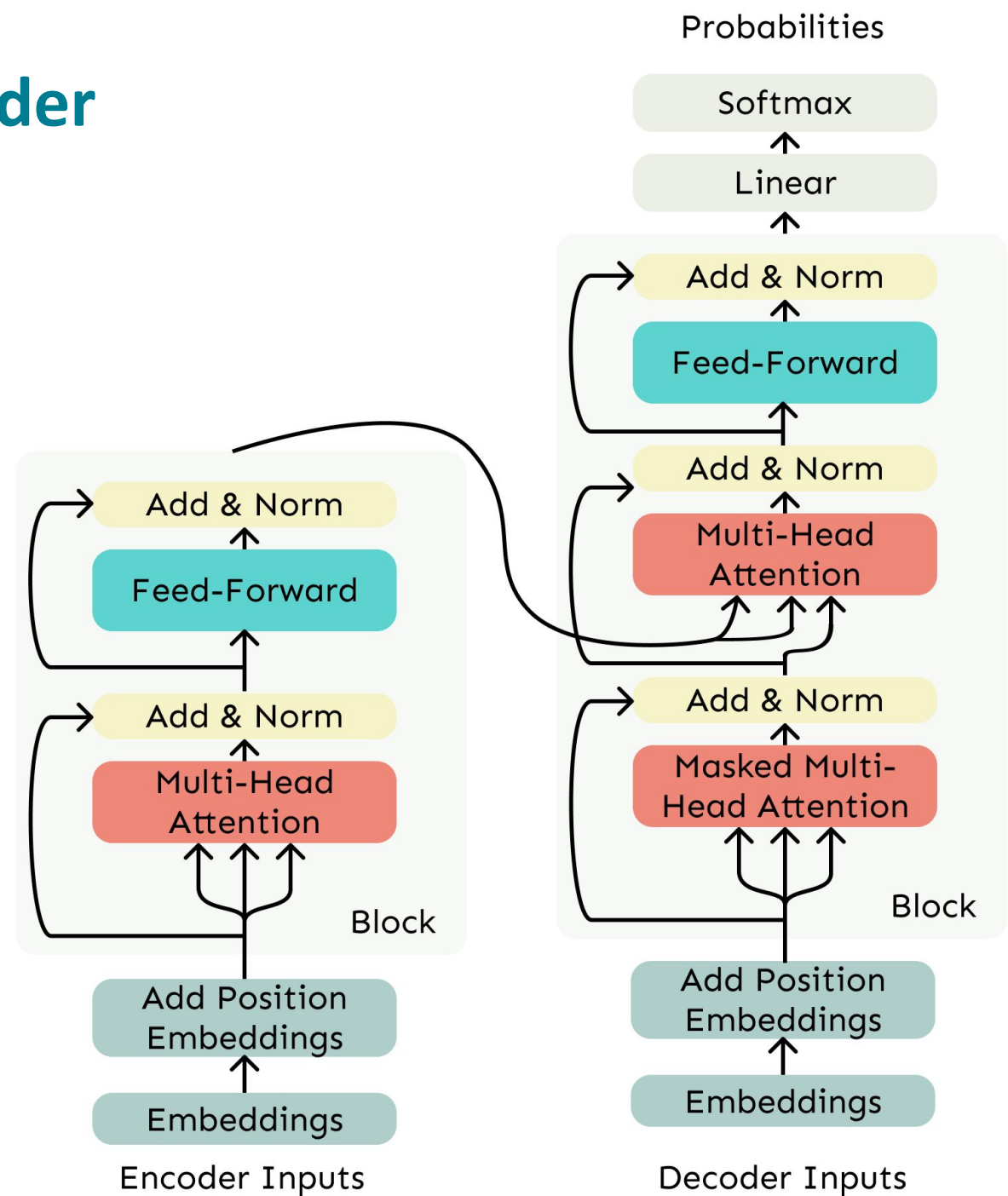
- The Transformer Decoder constrains to **unidirectional context**, as for **language models**.
- What if we want **bidirectional context**, like in a bidirectional RNN?
- This is the Transformer Encoder. The only difference is that we **remove the masking** in the self-attention.

**No Masking!**



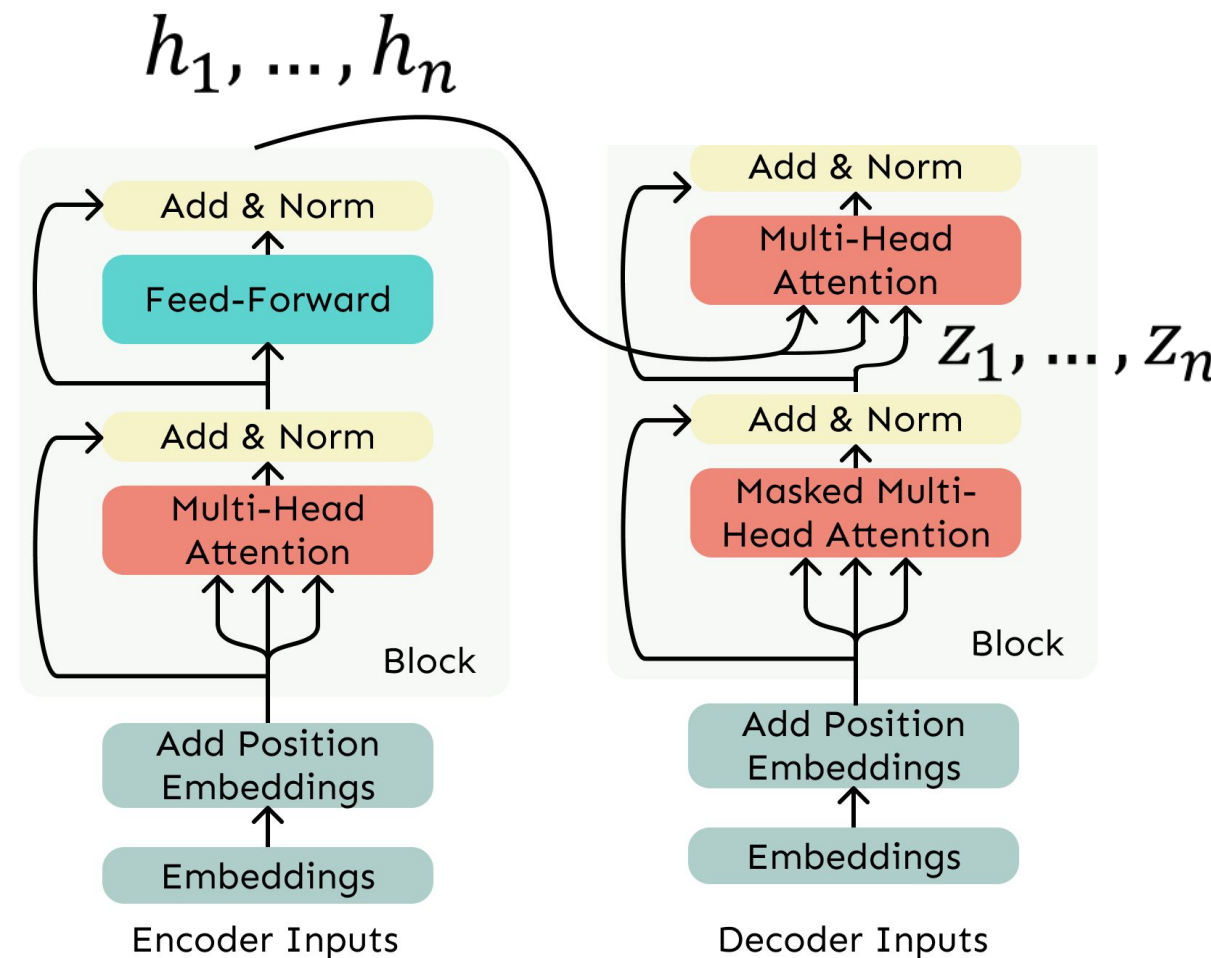
# The Transformer Encoder-Decoder

- Recall that in machine translation, we processed the source sentence with a **bidirectional** model and generated the target with a **unidirectional model**.
- For this kind of seq2seq format, we often use a Transformer Encoder-Decoder.
- We use a normal Transformer Encoder.
- Our Transformer Decoder is modified to perform **cross-attention** to the output of the Encoder.



# Cross-attention (details)

- We saw that self-attention is when keys, queries, and values come from the same source.
- In the decoder, we have attention that looks more like what we saw last week.
- Let  $h_1, \dots, h_n$  be **output** vectors from the Transformer **encoder**;  $x_i \in \mathbb{R}^d$
- Let  $z_1, \dots, z_n$  be input vectors from the Transformer **decoder**,  $z_i \in \mathbb{R}^d$



# Cross-attention (details)

- Let's look at how cross-attention is computed, in matrices.
  - Let  $H = [h_1; \dots; h_T] \in \mathbb{R}^{T \times d}$  be the concatenation of encoder vectors.
  - Let  $Z = [z_1; \dots; z_T] \in \mathbb{R}^{T \times d}$  be the concatenation of decoder vectors.

First, take the query-key dot products in one matrix multiplication:  $ZQ(HK)^\top$

$ZQ$   $K^\top H^\top$  =  $ZQK^\top H^\top \in \mathbb{R}^{T \times T}$

All pairs of attention scores!

Next, softmax, and compute the weighted average with another matrix multiplication.

$\text{softmax} \left( ZQK^\top H^\top \right) HV = \text{output} \in \mathbb{R}^{T \times d}$

# Outline

1. From recurrence (RNN) to attention-based NLP models
2. Introducing the Transformer model
3. **Great results with Transformers**
4. Drawbacks and variants of Transformers

# Great Results with Transformers

First, Machine Translation from the original Transformers paper!

| Model                           | BLEU  |              | Training Cost (FLOPs) |                     |
|---------------------------------|-------|--------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
|                                 | EN-DE | EN-FR        | EN-DE                 | EN-FR               |
| ByteNet [18]                    | 23.75 |              |                       |                     |
| Deep-Att + PosUnk [39]          |       | 39.2         |                       | $1.0 \cdot 10^{20}$ |
| GNMT + RL [38]                  | 24.6  | 39.92        | $2.3 \cdot 10^{19}$   | $1.4 \cdot 10^{20}$ |
| ConvS2S [9]                     | 25.16 | 40.46        | $9.6 \cdot 10^{18}$   | $1.5 \cdot 10^{20}$ |
| MoE [32]                        | 26.03 | 40.56        | $2.0 \cdot 10^{19}$   | $1.2 \cdot 10^{20}$ |
| Deep-Att + PosUnk Ensemble [39] |       | 40.4         |                       | $8.0 \cdot 10^{20}$ |
| GNMT + RL Ensemble [38]         | 26.30 | 41.16        | $1.8 \cdot 10^{20}$   | $1.1 \cdot 10^{21}$ |
| ConvS2S Ensemble [9]            | 26.36 | <b>41.29</b> | $7.7 \cdot 10^{19}$   | $1.2 \cdot 10^{21}$ |

# Great Results with Transformers

Next, document generation!

| Model  | Test perplexity | ROUGE-L |
|--|-----------------|---------|
| <i>seq2seq-attention, L = 500</i>                | 5.04952         | 12.7    |
| <i>Transformer-ED, L = 500</i>                   | 2.46645         | 34.2    |
| <i>Transformer-D, L = 4000</i>                   | 2.22216         | 33.6    |
| <i>Transformer-DMCA, no MoE-layer, L = 11000</i> | 2.05159         | 36.2    |
| <i>Transformer-DMCA, MoE-128, L = 11000</i>      | 1.92871         | 37.9    |
| <i>Transformer-DMCA, MoE-256, L = 7500</i>       | 1.90325         | 38.8    |

The old standard

Transformers all the way down.



# Great Results with Transformers

Before too long, most Transformers results also included **pretraining**, a method we'll go over on Thursday.

Transformers' parallelizability allows for efficient pretraining, and have made them the de-facto standard.

On this popular aggregate benchmark, for example:



All top models are Transformer (and pretraining)-based.

| Rank | Name                     | Model                 | URL | Score |
|------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----|-------|
| 1    | DeBERTa Team - Microsoft | DeBERTa / TuringNLPv4 |     | 90.8  |
| 2    | UFI / FLYTK              | MacAI BERT + DKM      |     | 90.7  |
| + 3  | Alibaba DAMO NLP         | StructBERT + TAPT     |     | 90.6  |
| + 4  | PING-AN Omni-Simic       | ALBERT + DAAI + NAS   |     | 90.6  |
| 5    | ERNIE Team - Baidu       | ERNIE                 |     | 90.4  |
| 6    | T5 Team - Google         | T5                    |     | 90.3  |

More results Thursday when we discuss pretraining.

[Liu et al., 2018]



# Outline

1. From recurrence (RNN) to attention-based NLP models
2. Introducing the Transformer model
3. Great results with Transformers
4. Drawbacks and variants of Transformers

# What would we like to fix about the Transformer?

- **Quadratic compute in self-attention (today):**
  - Computing all pairs of interactions means our computation grows **quadratically** with the sequence length!
  - For recurrent models, it only grew linearly!
- **Position representations:**
  - Are simple absolute indices the best we can do to represent position?
  - Relative linear position attention [Shaw et al., 2018]
  - Dependency syntax-based position [Wang et al., 2019]

# Quadratic computation as a function of sequence length

- One of the benefits of self-attention over recurrence was that it's highly parallelizable.
- However, its total number of operations grows as  $O(n^2d)$ , where  $n$  is the sequence length, and  $d$  is the dimensionality.



$XQ$   $K^T X^T$  =  $XQK^T X^T \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$

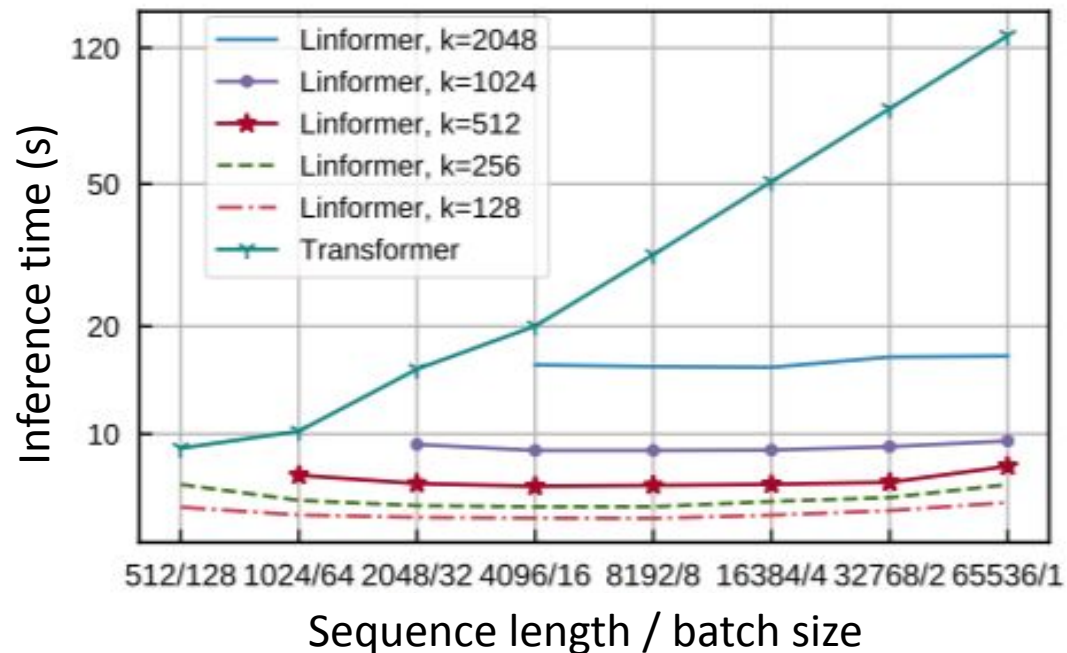
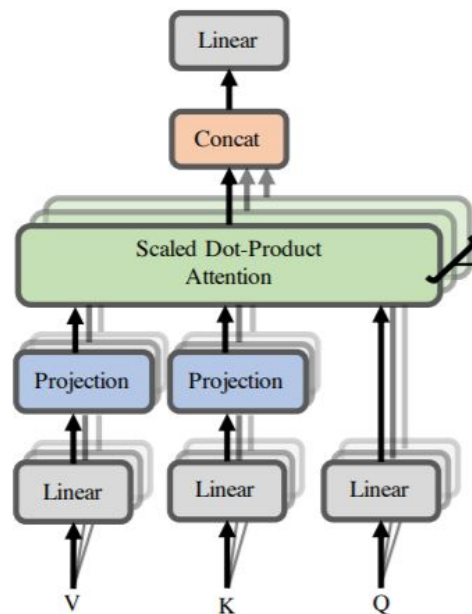
Need to compute all pairs of interactions!  
 $O(n^2d)$

- Think of  $d$  as around **1,000** (though for large language models it's much larger!).
  - So, for a single (shortish) sentence,  $n \leq 30$ ;  $n^2 \leq \mathbf{900}$ .
  - In practice, we set a bound like  $n = 512$ .
  - **But what if we'd like  $n \geq 50,000$ ?** For example, to work on long documents?

# Work on improving on quadratic self-attention cost

- Considerable recent work has gone into the question, *Can we build models like Transformers without paying the  $O(T^2)$  all-pairs self-attention cost?*
- For example, **Linformer** [\[Wang et al., 2020\]](#)

Key idea: map the sequence length dimension to a lower-dimensional space for values, keys



# Do we even need to remove the quadratic cost of attention?

- As Transformers grow larger, a larger and larger percent of compute is **outside** the self-attention portion, despite the quadratic cost.
- In practice, **almost no large Transformer language models use anything but the quadratic cost attention we've presented here.**
  - The cheaper methods tend not to work as well at scale.
- So, is there no point in trying to design cheaper alternatives to self-attention?
- Or would we unlock much better models with much longer contexts (>100k tokens?) if we were to do it right?

# Do Transformer Modifications Transfer?

- "Surprisingly, we find that most modifications do not meaningfully improve performance."

| Model                                    | Params | Ops    | Step/s | Early loss    | Final loss   | SGLUE        | XSum         | WebQ         | WMT          | EnDe |
|--|--------|--------|--------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------|
| Vanilla Transformer                      | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.50   | 2.182 ± 0.005 | 1.838        | 71.66        | 17.78        | 23.02        | 26.62        |      |
| GeLU                                     | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.58   | 2.179 ± 0.003 | 1.838        | <b>75.79</b> | <b>17.86</b> | <b>25.13</b> | 26.47        |      |
| Swish                                    | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.62   | 2.186 ± 0.003 | 1.847        | <b>73.77</b> | 17.74        | <b>24.34</b> | <b>26.75</b> |      |
| ELU                                      | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.56   | 2.270 ± 0.007 | 1.932        | 67.83        | 16.73        | 23.02        | 26.08        |      |
| GLU                                      | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.59   | 2.174 ± 0.003 | <b>1.814</b> | <b>74.20</b> | <b>17.42</b> | <b>24.34</b> | <b>27.12</b> |      |
| GeGLU                                    | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.55   | 2.130 ± 0.006 | <b>1.792</b> | <b>75.96</b> | <b>18.27</b> | <b>24.87</b> | <b>26.87</b> |      |
| ReLU                                     | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.57   | 2.145 ± 0.004 | <b>1.803</b> | <b>76.17</b> | <b>18.36</b> | <b>24.87</b> | <b>27.02</b> |      |
| Selu                                     | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.55   | 2.315 ± 0.004 | 1.948        | 68.76        | 16.76        | 22.75        | 25.99        |      |
| SwiGLU                                   | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.53   | 2.127 ± 0.003 | <b>1.789</b> | <b>76.00</b> | <b>18.20</b> | <b>24.34</b> | <b>27.02</b> |      |
| LiGLU                                    | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.59   | 2.149 ± 0.005 | <b>1.798</b> | <b>75.34</b> | <b>17.97</b> | <b>24.34</b> | 26.53        |      |
| Sigmoid                                  | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.63   | 2.291 ± 0.019 | 1.867        | <b>74.31</b> | 17.51        | 23.02        | 26.30        |      |
| Sofplus                                  | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.47   | 2.207 ± 0.011 | 1.850        | <b>72.45</b> | 17.65        | <b>24.34</b> | <b>26.89</b> |      |
| RMS Norm                                 | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.68   | 2.167 ± 0.008 | <b>1.821</b> | <b>75.45</b> | <b>17.94</b> | <b>24.07</b> | <b>27.14</b> |      |
| Resero                                   | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.51   | 2.262 ± 0.003 | 1.939        | 61.69        | 15.64        | 20.90        | 26.37        |      |
| Resero + LayerNorm                       | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.26   | 2.223 ± 0.006 | 1.858        | 70.42        | 17.58        | 23.02        | 26.29        |      |
| Resero + RMS Norm                        | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.34   | 2.221 ± 0.009 | 1.875        | 70.33        | 17.32        | 23.02        | 26.19        |      |
| Fixup                                    | 223M   | 11.1T  | 2.95   | 2.352 ± 0.012 | 2.067        | 58.56        | 14.42        | 23.02        | 26.31        |      |
| 24 layers, $d_v = 1536, H = 6$           | 224M   | 11.1T  | 3.33   | 2.200 ± 0.007 | 1.843        | <b>74.89</b> | 17.75        | <b>25.13</b> | <b>26.89</b> |      |
| 18 layers, $d_v = 2048, H = 8$           | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.38   | 2.185 ± 0.005 | <b>1.831</b> | <b>76.45</b> | 16.83        | <b>24.34</b> | <b>27.10</b> |      |
| 8 layers, $d_v = 4096, H = 18$           | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.69   | 2.190 ± 0.005 | 1.847        | <b>74.58</b> | 17.69        | <b>23.28</b> | <b>26.85</b> |      |
| 6 layers, $d_v = 6144, H = 24$           | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.70   | 2.201 ± 0.010 | 1.857        | <b>73.55</b> | 17.59        | <b>24.60</b> | <b>26.66</b> |      |
| Block sharing                            | 65M    | 11.1T  | 3.91   | 2.407 ± 0.037 | 2.164        | 64.50        | 14.53        | 21.96        | 25.48        |      |
| + Factorized embeddings                  | 45M    | 9.4T   | 4.21   | 2.631 ± 0.305 | 2.183        | 60.84        | 14.00        | 19.84        | 25.27        |      |
| + Factorized & shared embeddings         | 20M    | 9.1T   | 4.37   | 2.907 ± 0.313 | 2.385        | 53.95        | 11.37        | 19.84        | 25.19        |      |
| Encoder only block sharing               | 170M   | 11.1T  | 3.68   | 2.298 ± 0.023 | 1.929        | 69.60        | 16.23        | 23.02        | 26.23        |      |
| Decoder only block sharing               | 144M   | 11.1T  | 3.70   | 2.352 ± 0.029 | 2.082        | 67.93        | 16.13        | <b>23.81</b> | 26.08        |      |
| Factorized Embedding                     | 227M   | 9.4T   | 3.80   | 2.208 ± 0.006 | 1.855        | 70.41        | 15.92        | 22.75        | 26.50        |      |
| Factorized & shared embeddings           | 202M   | 9.1T   | 3.92   | 2.320 ± 0.010 | 1.952        | 68.69        | 16.33        | 22.22        | 26.44        |      |
| Tied encoder/decoder input embeddings    | 248M   | 11.1T  | 3.55   | 2.192 ± 0.002 | 1.840        | <b>71.70</b> | 17.72        | <b>24.34</b> | 26.49        |      |
| Tied decoder input and output embeddings | 248M   | 11.1T  | 3.57   | 2.187 ± 0.007 | <b>1.827</b> | <b>74.86</b> | 17.74        | <b>24.87</b> | <b>26.67</b> |      |
| Unified embeddings                       | 273M   | 11.1T  | 3.53   | 2.195 ± 0.005 | <b>1.834</b> | <b>72.99</b> | 17.58        | <b>23.28</b> | 26.48        |      |
| Adaptive input embeddings                | 204M   | 9.2T   | 3.55   | 2.250 ± 0.002 | 1.899        | 66.57        | 16.21        | <b>24.07</b> | <b>26.66</b> |      |
| Adaptive softmax                         | 204M   | 9.2T   | 3.60   | 2.364 ± 0.005 | 1.982        | <b>72.91</b> | 16.67        | 21.16        | 25.56        |      |
| Adaptive softmax without projection      | 223M   | 10.8T  | 3.43   | 2.229 ± 0.009 | 1.914        | <b>71.82</b> | 17.10        | 23.02        | 25.72        |      |
| Mixture of softmaxes                     | 232M   | 16.3T  | 2.24   | 2.227 ± 0.017 | <b>1.821</b> | <b>76.77</b> | 17.62        | 22.75        | <b>26.82</b> |      |
| Transparent attention                    | 223M   | 11.1T  | 3.33   | 2.181 ± 0.014 | 1.874        | 54.31        | 10.40        | 21.16        | <b>26.80</b> |      |
| Dynamic convolution                      | 257M   | 11.8T  | 2.65   | 2.403 ± 0.009 | 2.047        | 58.30        | 12.67        | 21.16        | 17.03        |      |
| Lightweight convolution                  | 224M   | 10.4T  | 4.07   | 2.370 ± 0.010 | 1.989        | 63.07        | 14.86        | 23.02        | 24.73        |      |
| Envelop Transformer                      | 217M   | 9.9T   | 3.09   | 2.220 ± 0.003 | 1.863        | <b>73.47</b> | 10.76        | <b>24.07</b> | 26.58        |      |
| Synthesizer (dense)                      | 224M   | 11.4T  | 3.47   | 2.334 ± 0.021 | 1.962        | 61.03        | 14.27        | 16.14        | <b>26.63</b> |      |
| Synthesizer (dense plus)                 | 243M   | 12.6T  | 3.22   | 2.191 ± 0.010 | 1.840        | <b>73.98</b> | 16.96        | <b>23.81</b> | <b>26.71</b> |      |
| Synthesizer (dense plus alpha)           | 243M   | 12.6T  | 3.01   | 2.180 ± 0.007 | <b>1.828</b> | <b>74.25</b> | 17.02        | <b>23.28</b> | 26.61        |      |
| Synthesizer (factorized)                 | 207M   | 10.1T  | 3.94   | 2.341 ± 0.017 | 1.968        | 62.78        | 15.39        | <b>23.55</b> | 26.42        |      |
| Synthesizer (random)                     | 254M   | 10.1T  | 4.08   | 2.326 ± 0.012 | 2.009        | 54.27        | 10.35        | 19.56        | 26.44        |      |
| Synthesizer (random plus)                | 292M   | 12.0T  | 3.63   | 2.189 ± 0.004 | 1.842        | <b>73.32</b> | 17.04        | <b>24.87</b> | 26.43        |      |
| Synthesizer (random plus alpha)          | 292M   | 12.0T  | 3.42   | 2.186 ± 0.007 | <b>1.828</b> | <b>75.24</b> | 17.08        | <b>24.08</b> | 26.39        |      |
| Universal Transformer                    | 84M    | 40.0T  | 0.88   | 2.406 ± 0.036 | 2.053        | 70.13        | 14.09        | 19.05        | 23.91        |      |
| Mixture of experts                       | 648M   | 11.7T  | 3.20   | 2.146 ± 0.006 | <b>1.788</b> | <b>74.55</b> | <b>18.13</b> | <b>24.08</b> | <b>26.84</b> |      |
| Switch Transformer                       | 1100M  | 11.7T  | 3.18   | 2.135 ± 0.007 | <b>1.768</b> | <b>75.38</b> | <b>18.02</b> | <b>26.19</b> | <b>26.81</b> |      |
| Funnel Transformer                       | 223M   | 1.9T   | 4.30   | 2.288 ± 0.008 | 1.918        | 67.34        | 16.26        | 22.75        | 23.20        |      |
| Weighted Transformer                     | 280M   | 71.0T  | 0.59   | 2.378 ± 0.021 | 1.989        | 69.04        | 16.98        | 23.02        | 26.30        |      |
| Product key memory                       | 421M   | 386.6T | 0.25   | 2.155 ± 0.003 | <b>1.798</b> | <b>73.16</b> | 17.04        | <b>23.55</b> | <b>26.73</b> |      |

## Do Transformer Modifications Transfer Across Implementations and Applications?

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# Parting remarks

- Pretraining on Tuesday!
- Good luck on assignment 4!
- Remember to work on your project proposal!