

NPFL099 Statistical Dialogue Systems

11. Multimodal Systems

(+some notes on voice-based systems & domain adaptation)

<http://ufal.cz/npfl099>

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19. 12. 2024



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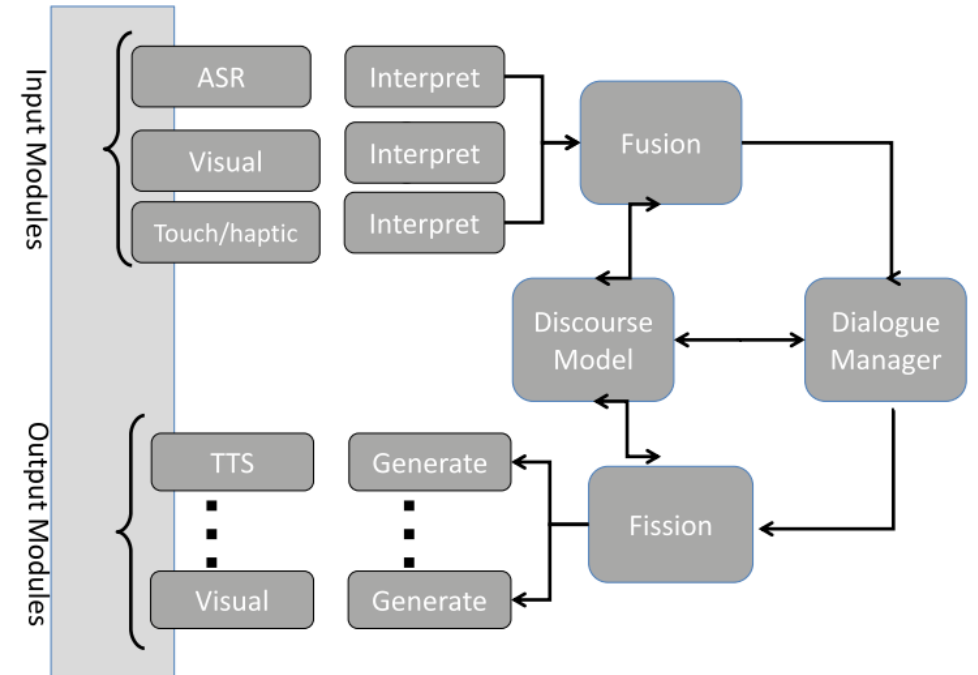
unless otherwise stated

Multimodal Dialogue Systems

- adding more modalities to voice/text
 - input:
 - touch
 - drawing
 - gaze, gestures, facial expressions
 - voice pitch/tone
 - image
 - output:
 - graphics
 - gaze, gestures, facial expressions, body movement
- either traditional/modular and mostly rule-based systems, or very experimental (not much use in practice)

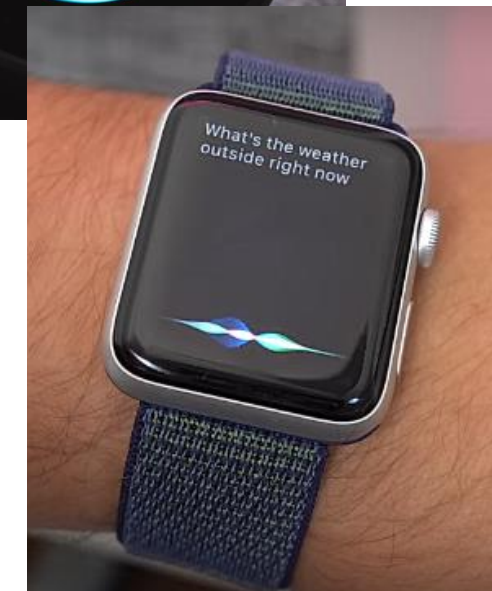
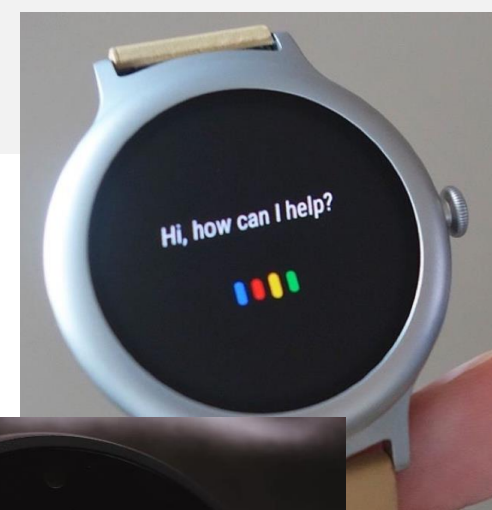
Standard Multimodal DS Schema

- basically the same as voice/text DSs
- adding multiple input modules
 - for multiple modalities
 - each with its own NLU-like interpretation
 - interpretations are merged
- multiple output modules
 - each with its own generation
 - dialogue manager output is split
- typically ready-made off-the-shelf modules
 - it's too complex/costly to build these custom



Smart Devices

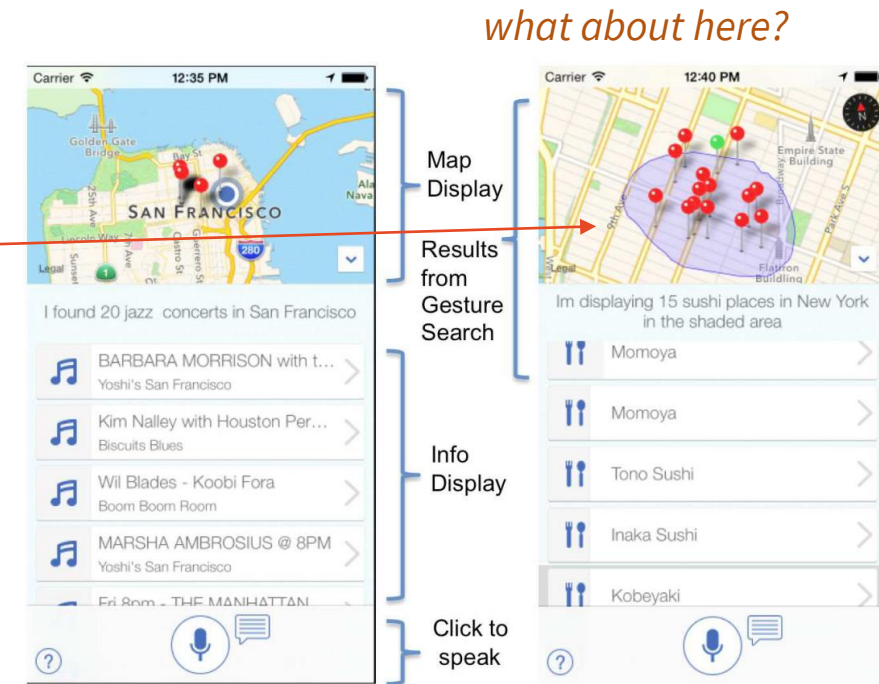
- Phones, wearables, smart speakers with a display
 - incl. Google Assistant, Alexa & Siri
 - admittedly not so much dialogue, more of commands
 - cloud-based operation for most
- Input
 - touch: active & passive gestures (touch/accelerometer)
 - “raise to speak”
 - rarely visually sensing gestures
 - doesn't support gaze
- Output
 - graphics: card interface
 - generation functions rule-based/low-level



<https://www.wearable.com/android-wear/how-to-use-voice-commands-on-android-wear>
<https://www.cnet.com/reviews/amazon-echo-spot-review/>
<https://www.macrumors.com/how-to/use-siri-raise-to-speak-watchos-5/>

“Classical” Multimodal Systems

- closed-domain task-oriented dialogue systems
- map-based: town information with map input & output
 - touch / pen – drawing, map display
 - reacting to zooming, area selection
 - handwriting recognition (as alternative input)
 - similar to Google Assistant, but more interactive
- in-car: voice & button control
- custom architectures
 - off-the-shelf modules
 - rule-based touch input processing



*S: I found 3 albums by The Beatles in your collection
<shows listing on screen>*

U: Play the third one.

U: Which songs are on this one?

<selects an album from listing on screen>

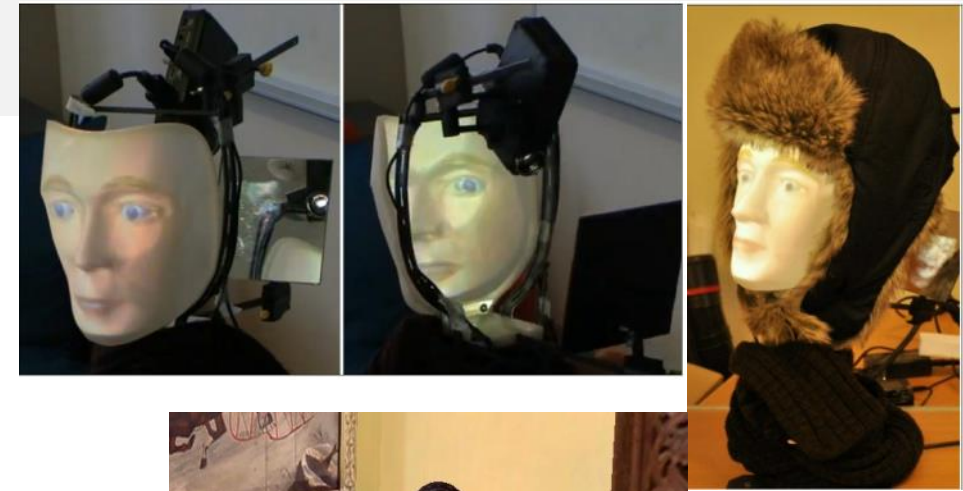
(Johnston et al., 2002) <https://www.aclweb.org/anthology/P02-1048/>
(Johnston et al., 2014) <https://www.aclweb.org/anthology/W14-4335>
(Becker et al., 2006) <https://www.aclweb.org/anthology/P06-4015>

Virtual Agents

<https://youtu.be/ejczMs6b1Q4>
<https://vhtoolkit.ict.usc.edu/>

- character face/full body
 - on screen or 3D projected (FurHat)
- a lot more outputs
 - full motion video – facial expressions, gaze, gestures, body movement
 - a lot of it “automatic”, designed to look natural/match what’s said
- additional inputs – gaze & facial expression
 - checking user engagement/sentiment
- dialogue management mostly rule-based
 - retrieval with non-linguistic inputs (Virtual Humans/SimSensei)
 - limited-domain custom rules (FurHat)
- tutoring/training, healthcare

FurHat



SimSensei

Virtual Humans

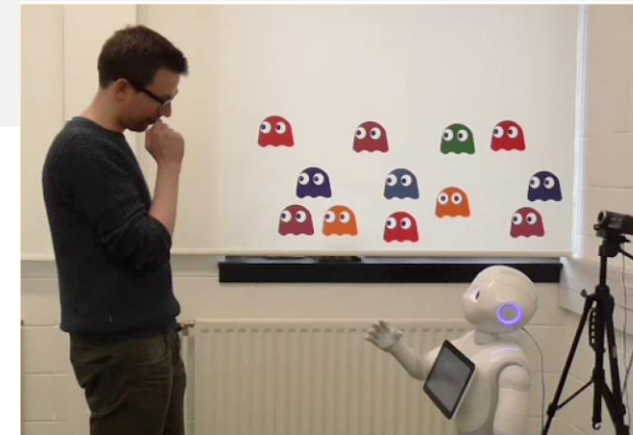


(Al Moubayed et al., 2012)
(Rushforth et al., 2009)
(DeVault et al., 2014)

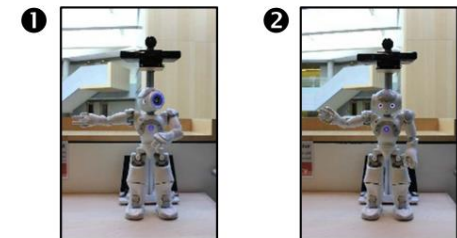
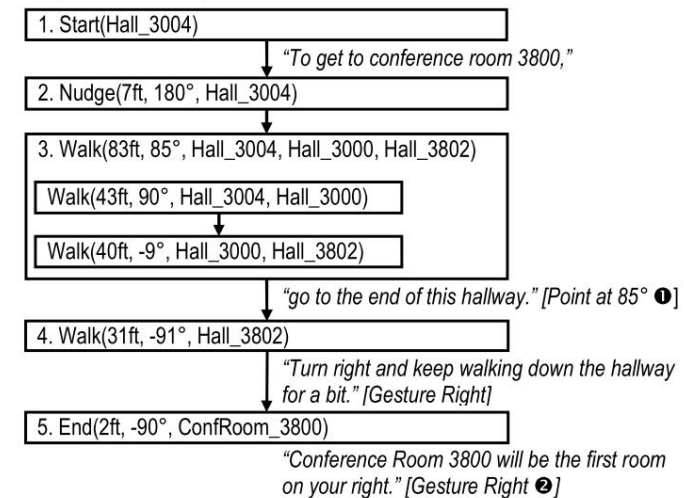
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-34584-5_9
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-04380-2_82
<https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.5555/2615731.2617415>

Robots

- similar to virtual agents, but with actual hardware
 - different user's perception
 - body gestures more prominent, touch is possible
 - situated deployment – need to track user engagement
 - is the user still talking to the robot?
 - hardware limitations
 - mostly no facial expr./gaze output, some sensors missing etc.
- off-the-shelf robots (Nao, Pepper, QTRobot)
 - built-in & additional sensors (e.g. Kinect)
 - custom rule-based gesture generation
 - remote-controlled (Nao, Pepper) / autonomous (QTRobot)
- “receptionist”, education...

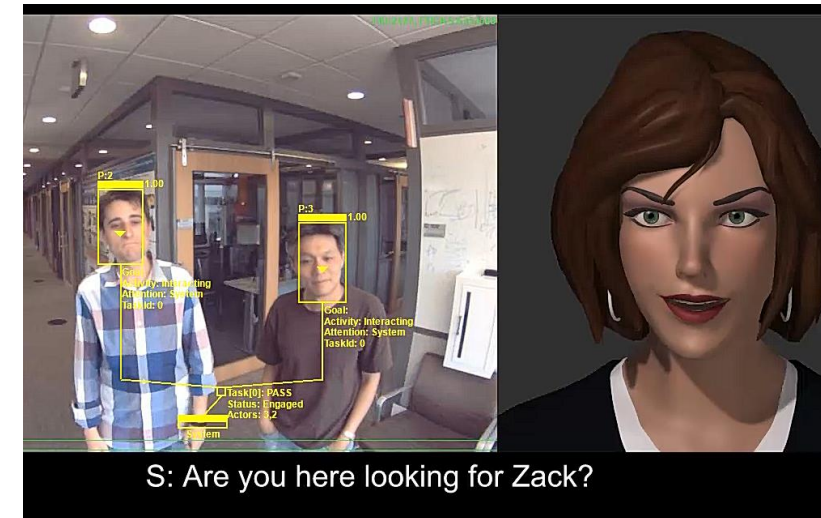


Path(ConfRoom_3800)



Multi-party Dialogue

- Relevant for both virtual agents & robots
 - supported by most previously mentioned projects
- How to handle multiple counterparts?
 - users or other robots/virtual agents
- gaze/engagement/speech detection
 - who's speaking/looking etc.
- rules for multiple counterparts
 - switching gaze to address them
 - here, 3D is better than 2D (otherwise gaze ambiguous)
 - telling one to wait for another
- customer service, information



Interaction 1 (Socially inappropriate)

One person, A, approaches the bar and turns towards the bartender
Robot (to A): How can I help you?
A: A pint of cider, please.
A second person, B, approaches the bar and turns towards the bartender
Robot (to B): How can I help you?
B: I'd like a pint of beer.
Robot: (Serves B)
Robot: (Serves A)

Interaction 2 (Socially appropriate)

One person, A, approaches the bar and turns towards the bartender
Robot (to A): How can I help you?
A: A pint of cider, please.
A second person, B, approaches the bar and turns towards the bartender
Robot (to B): One moment, please.
Robot: (Serves A)
Robot (to B): Thanks for waiting.
How can I help you?
B: I'd like a pint of beer.
Robot: (Serves B)

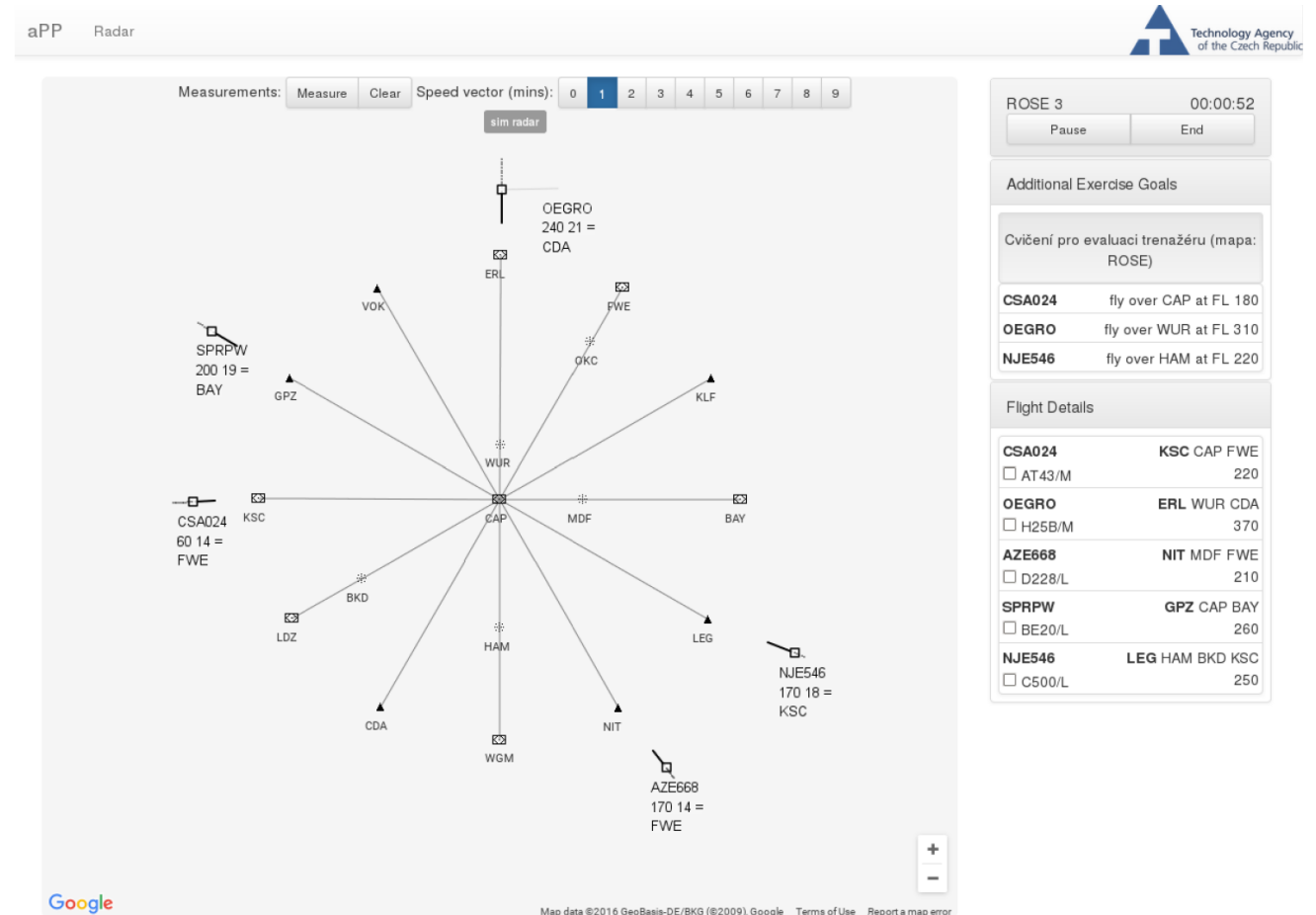
https://youtu.be/oOp4XP_ziMw
<http://www.danbohus.com/>

(Foster et al., 2012)
(Bohus et al., 2014)
(Skantze & Al Moubayed, 2012)

<http://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?doid=2388676.2388680>
<https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.5555/2615731.2615835>
<https://doi.org/10.1145/2388676.2388698>

Specific uses

- Air traffic controller training – radar as a modality
 - multiple agents/systems representing pilots
 - radar charting each agent's behavior
 - single ASR, many TTSS
 - varied accents
 - all rule-based
 - very limited domain
 - bearings, flight levels

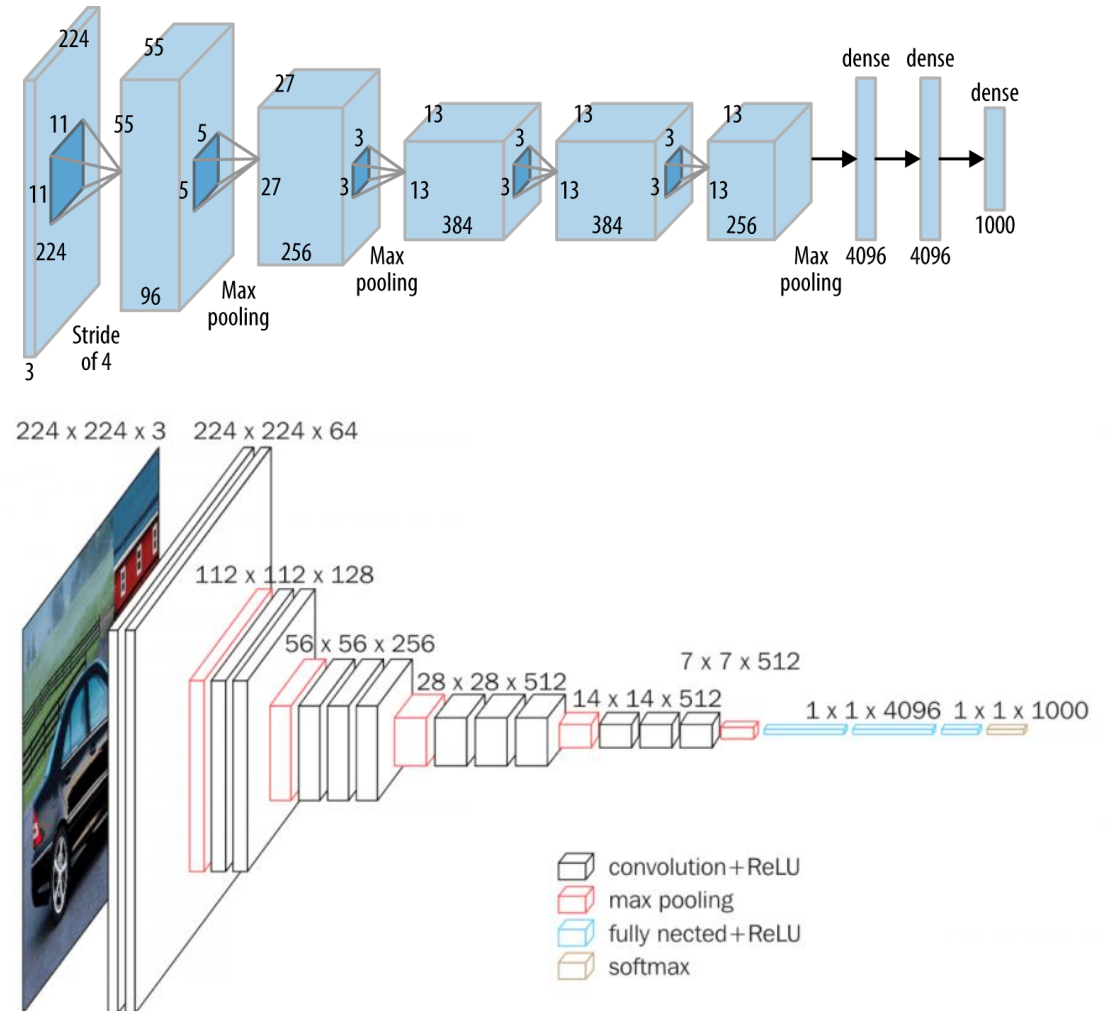


End-to-end Multimodal

- mostly experimental (save for latest LLMs)
- enhancing end-to-end DS architectures with image input
 - typically no video input
 - no avatars, facial expressions, gestures etc.
 - not much graphics output either
- also using off-the-shelf components
 - image input: ready-made convolutional/Transformer architectures
 - textual: known architectures (HRED, MemNN...) or pretrained Transformer models
- mostly just end-to-end prediction
 - pretrained image recognition parts are kept fixed, no end-to-end training

Image Classification

- Data: ImageNet Challenge
 - >1M images, 1000 classes
 - just classify the object in the image
 - CNNs are way better than anything that came before them
- **AlexNet** – 1st deep CNN
 - 5 conv layers, ReLU activations, max pooling & 3 dense layers
- **VGGNet** – improvement
 - more layers, smaller CNN kernels (3x3, 2x2 pooling with stride 2)
 - reduces # of parameters, same function



<https://towardsdatascience.com/the-w3h-of-alexnet-vggnet-resnet-and-inception-7baaaecccc96>

(Krizhevsky et al., 2012) <https://papers.nips.cc/paper/4824-imagenet-classification-with-deep-convolutional-neural-networks>

(Simonyan & Zisserman, 2015) <http://arxiv.org/abs/1409.1556>

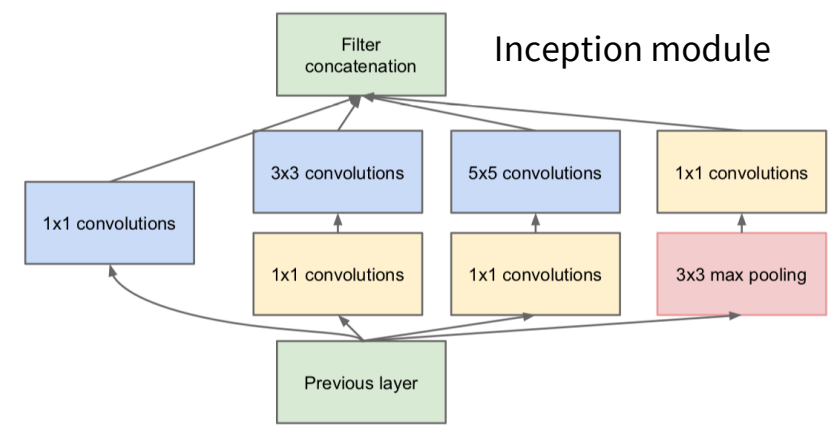
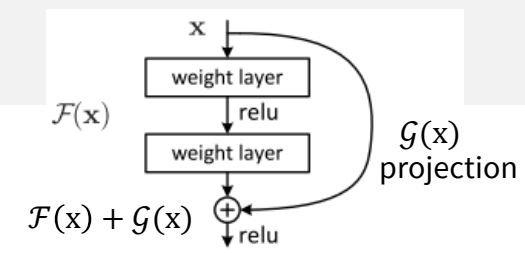
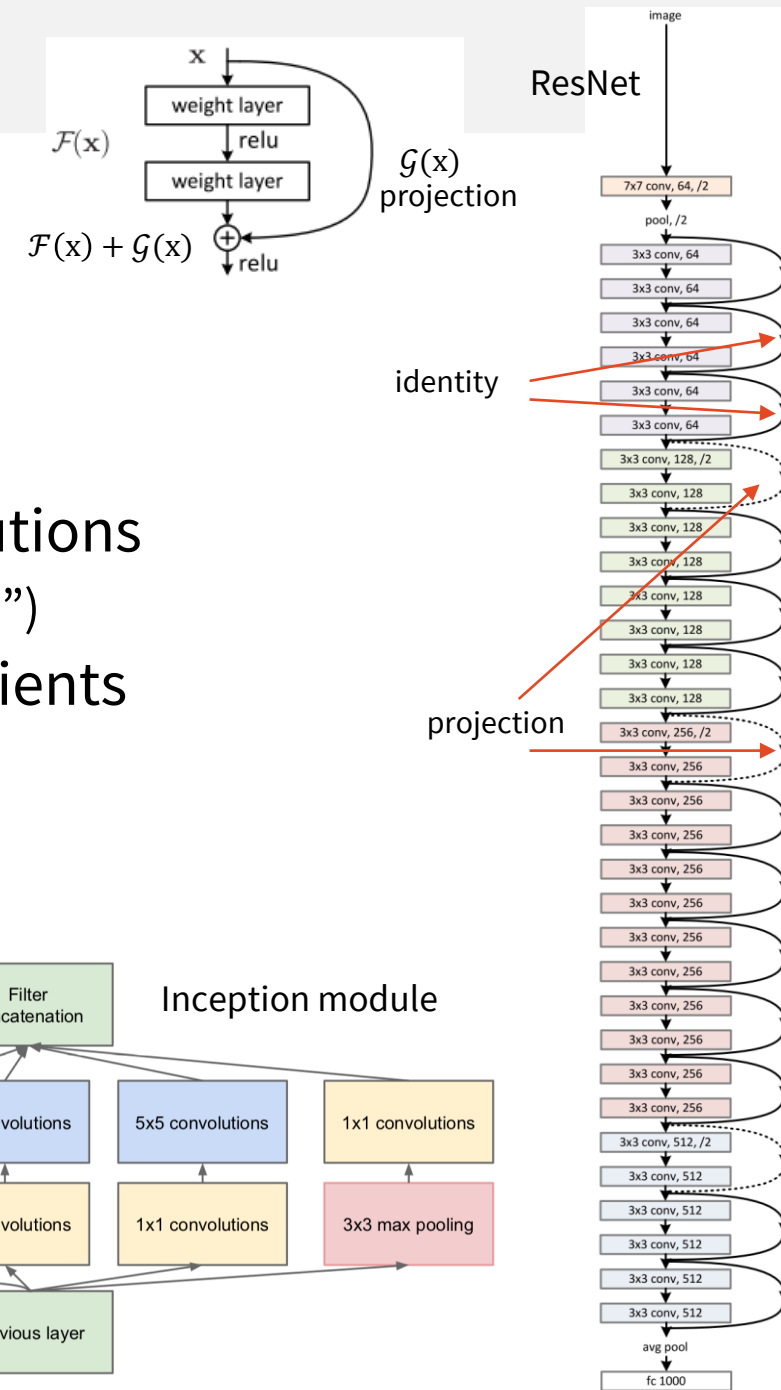
Pretrained CNNs

- **ResNet** – residual networks

- trying to simplify the mappings found by CNNs
 - with regular CNNs, deeper might not be better (vanishing gradient problem)
- “shortcuts”: adding identity / linear projection to convolutions
 - learning a residual CNN mapping (“what projection can’t handle”)
- allows much deeper networks – alleviates vanishing gradients

- **Inception** – more CNN kernels in parallel

- for detecting different-sized object features
- 1x1 depth reductions, depth-wise concatenations
- better results with shallower networks



<https://towardsdatascience.com/the-w3h-of-alexnet-vggnet-resnet-and-inception-7baaaecccc96>

(He et al., 2016) <https://arxiv.org/abs/1512.03385>
(Szegedy et al., 2015) <http://arxiv.org/abs/1409.4842>

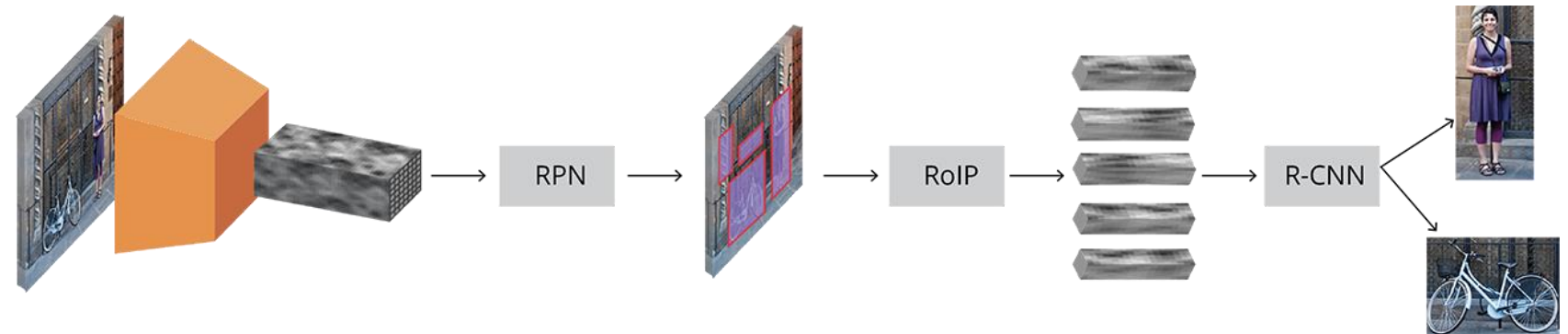
<https://tryolabs.com/blog/2018/01/18/faster-r-cnn-down-the-rabbit-hole-of-modern-object-detection/>

- **Faster R-CNN**

- object detection – harder task
- detecting boxes (regions) for multiple objects in image

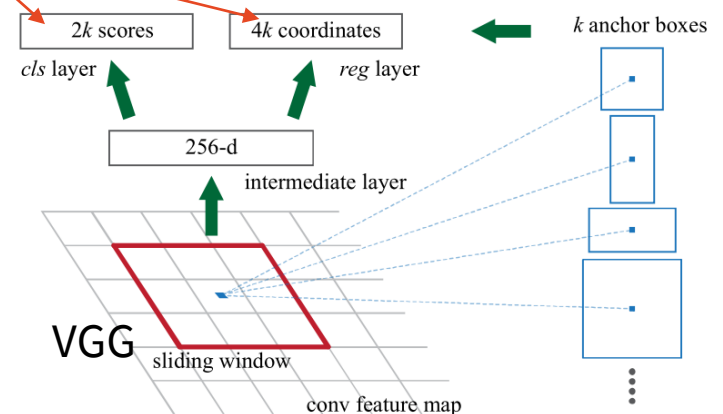
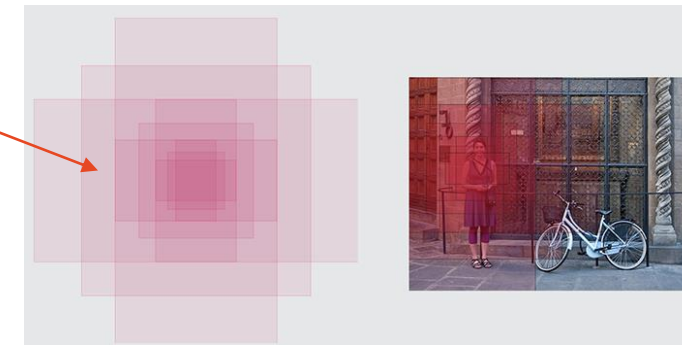
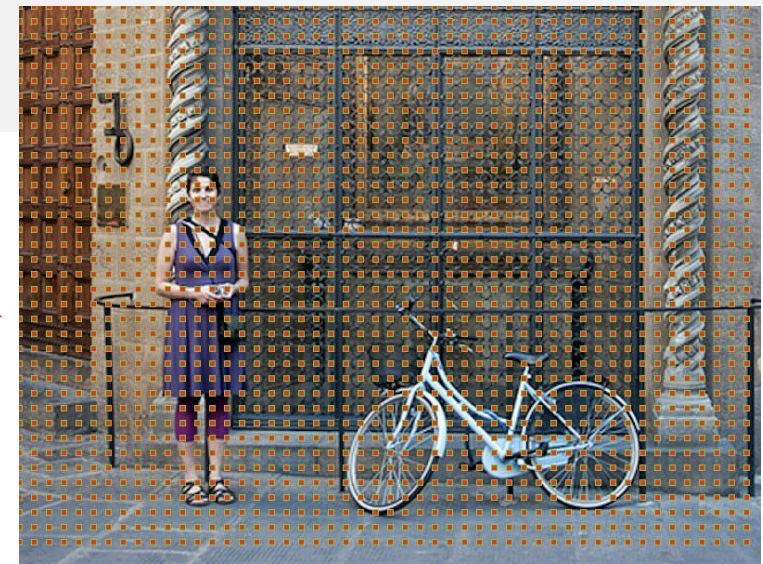
- Pipeline:

- Region prediction network (detect salient boxes)
- Region-of-interest pooling (consolidate features)
- Region-based CNN (classify)



Region prediction

- pretrained VGG as feature extraction
 - features for each of the anchor points (regularly spaced in the image)
- for each anchor point, predict:
 - anchor base size & h/w ratio (e.g. 64-128-256px, 0.5/1/1.5)
 - $p(\text{this is object})$ & $p(\text{this is background})$
 - anchor $\Delta x, \Delta y, \Delta h, \Delta w$
 - all of this via convolutions 😊
- trained using object/non-object anchors
- overlapping predictions unified

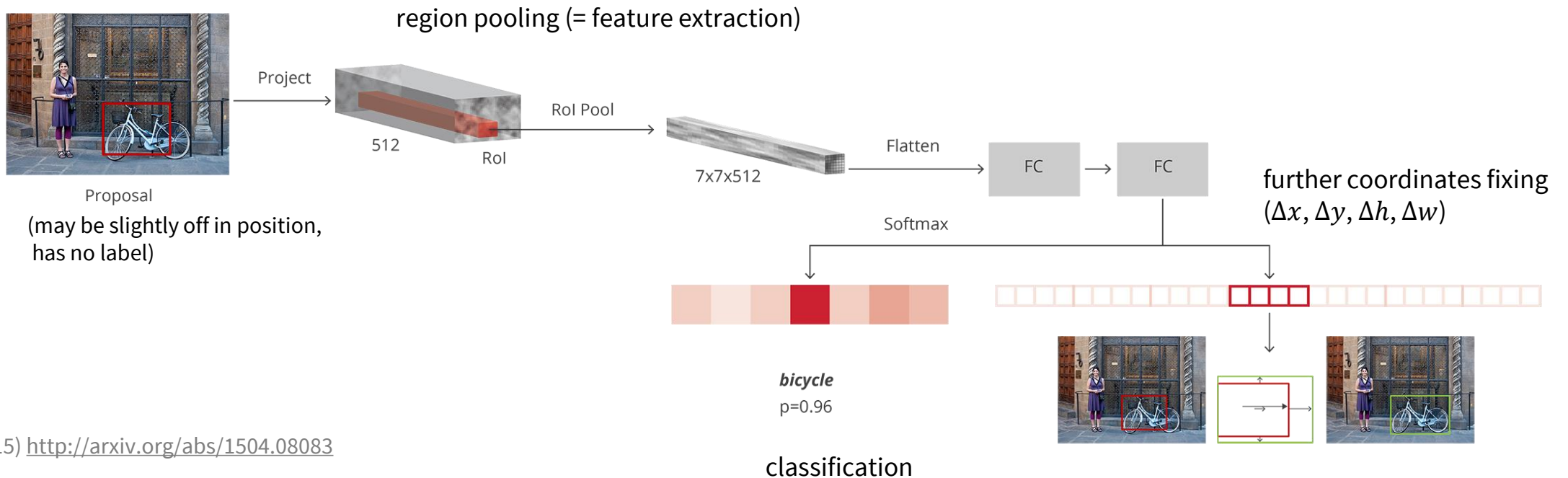


(Ren et al., 2015) <https://arxiv.org/abs/1506.01497>

<https://tryolabs.com/blog/2018/01/18/faster-r-cnn-down-the-rabbit-hole-of-modern-object-detection/>

R-CNN classification

- basically the same as image classification (given region)
 - with one more box coordinates fix
- sharing VGG features from RPN
 - this makes it much faster (only the pooling & prediction layers are new)



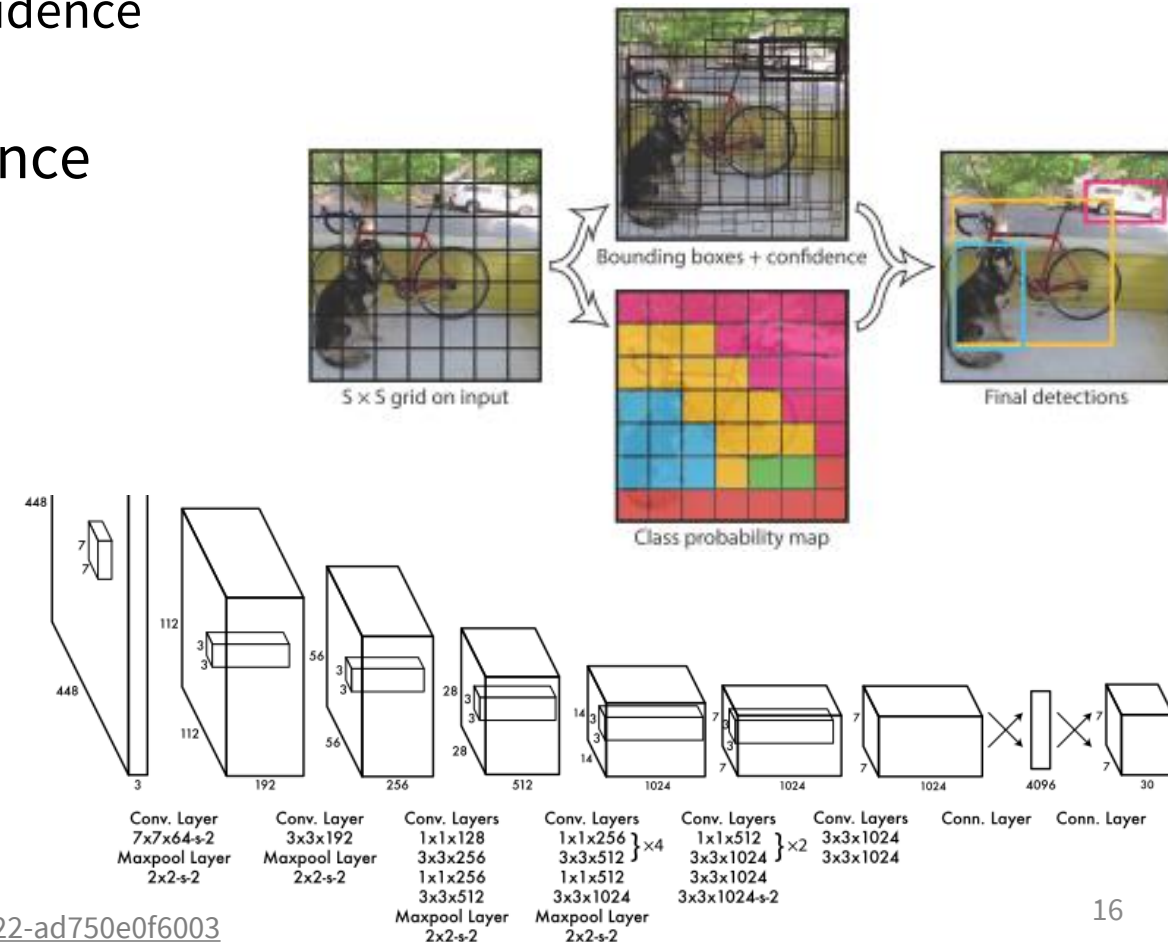
(Girschick, 2015) <http://arxiv.org/abs/1504.08083>

<https://tryolabs.com/blog/2018/01/18/faster-r-cnn-down-the-rabbit-hole-of-modern-object-detection/>

YOLO: Single-shot object detection

You Only Look Once

- Use CNN + fully connected grid to detect all objects in an image at once
 - Divide input to a grid
 - For each grid point (in parallel, via fully connected layer):
 - predict bounding boxes & object detection confidence
 - predict class probability
 - Threshold output objects on model confidence
- CNN processes whole image
 - unlike R-CNN which is local
- Works on real-time video
- Iteratively improved
 - multiple versions with better CNNs & other tricks



(Redmon et al., 2016) <http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/7780460/>

(Wang et al., 2022) <http://arxiv.org/abs/2207.02696>

<https://www.v7labs.com/blog/yolo-object-detection>

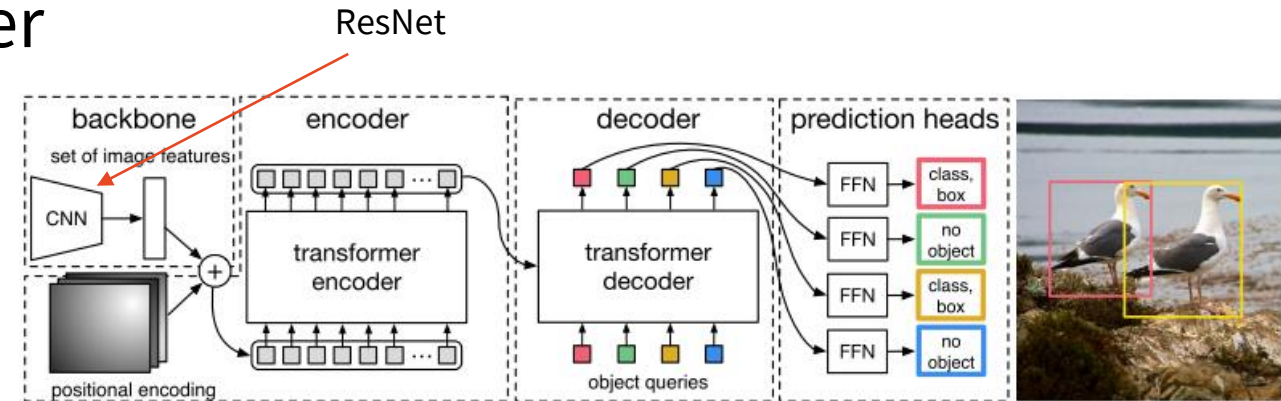
<https://medium.com/@pedroazevedo6/object-detection-state-of-the-art-2022-ad750e0f6003>

Using Transformers

(Carion et al., 2020)

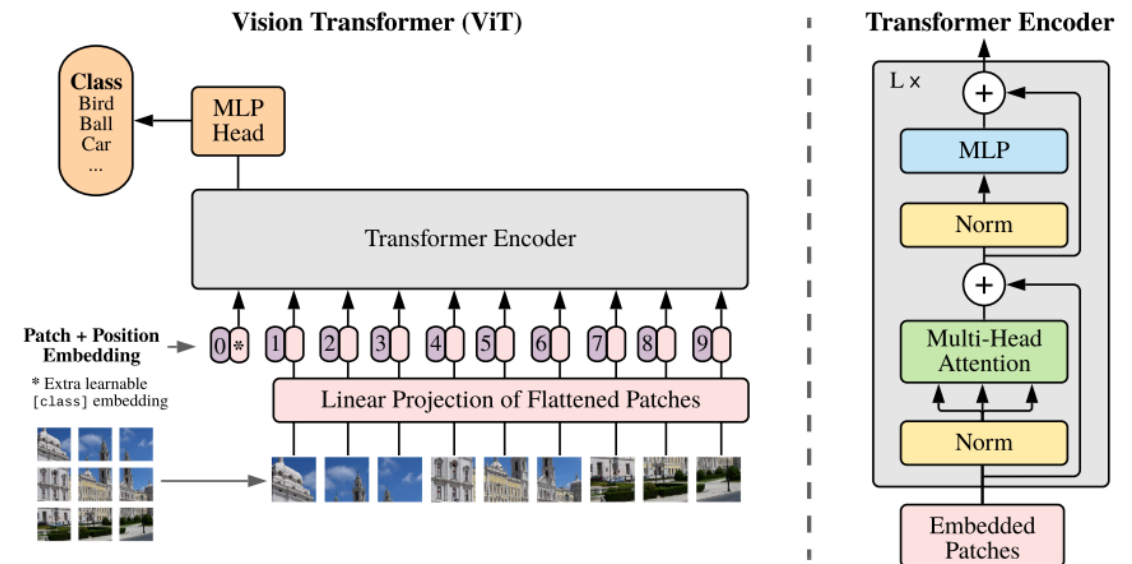
<https://arxiv.org/abs/2005.12872>

- Object detection: CNN + Transformer
 - trained end-to-end
 - predicts all objects at once
 - max. k objects: class + box (or “null”)
 - set-based loss (any order allowed)



- Classification: Transformer-only (**Vision Transformer**)

- split image into 16x16 patches
 - flatten (256xRGB=768-dim)
 - pass through a single “embedding” matrix
 - feed into standard transformer
- adding positional embeddings
- special “start” token
 - attention here used in a feed-forward classifier

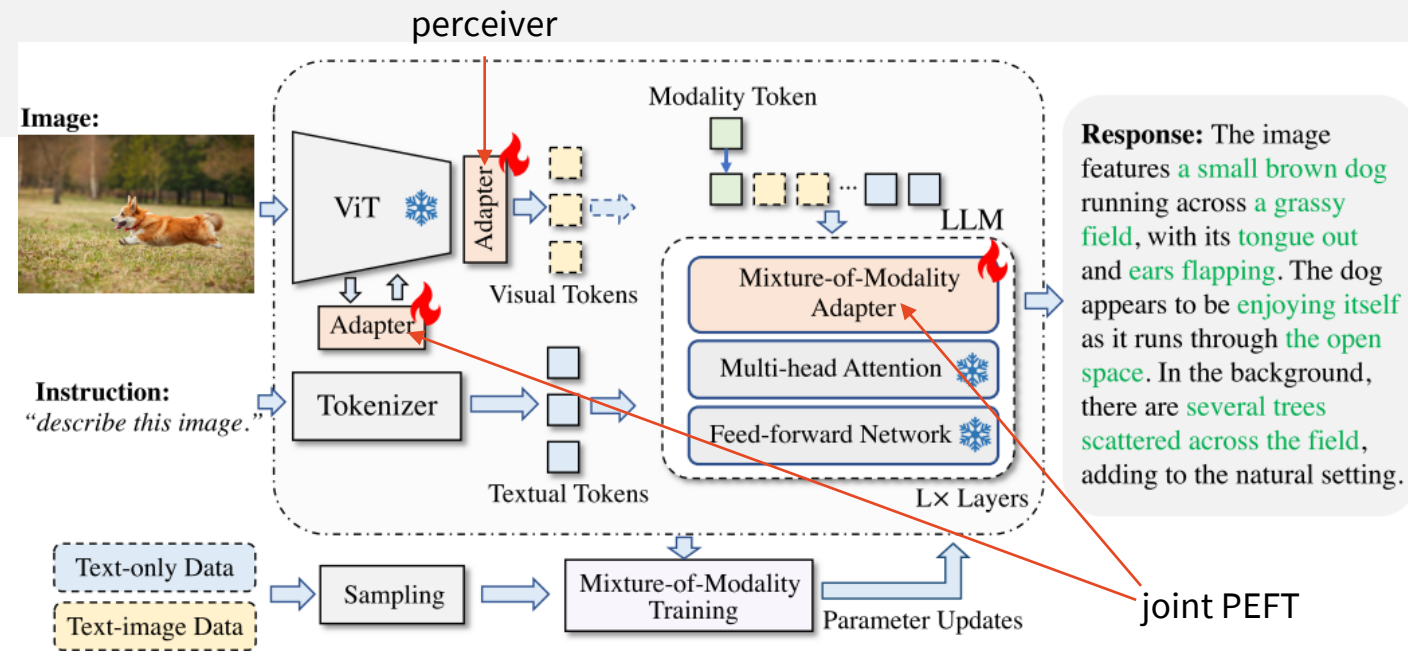


(Dosovitskiy et al., 2020)

<http://arxiv.org/abs/2010.11929> https://youtu.be/TrdevFK_am4

Multimodal LLMs

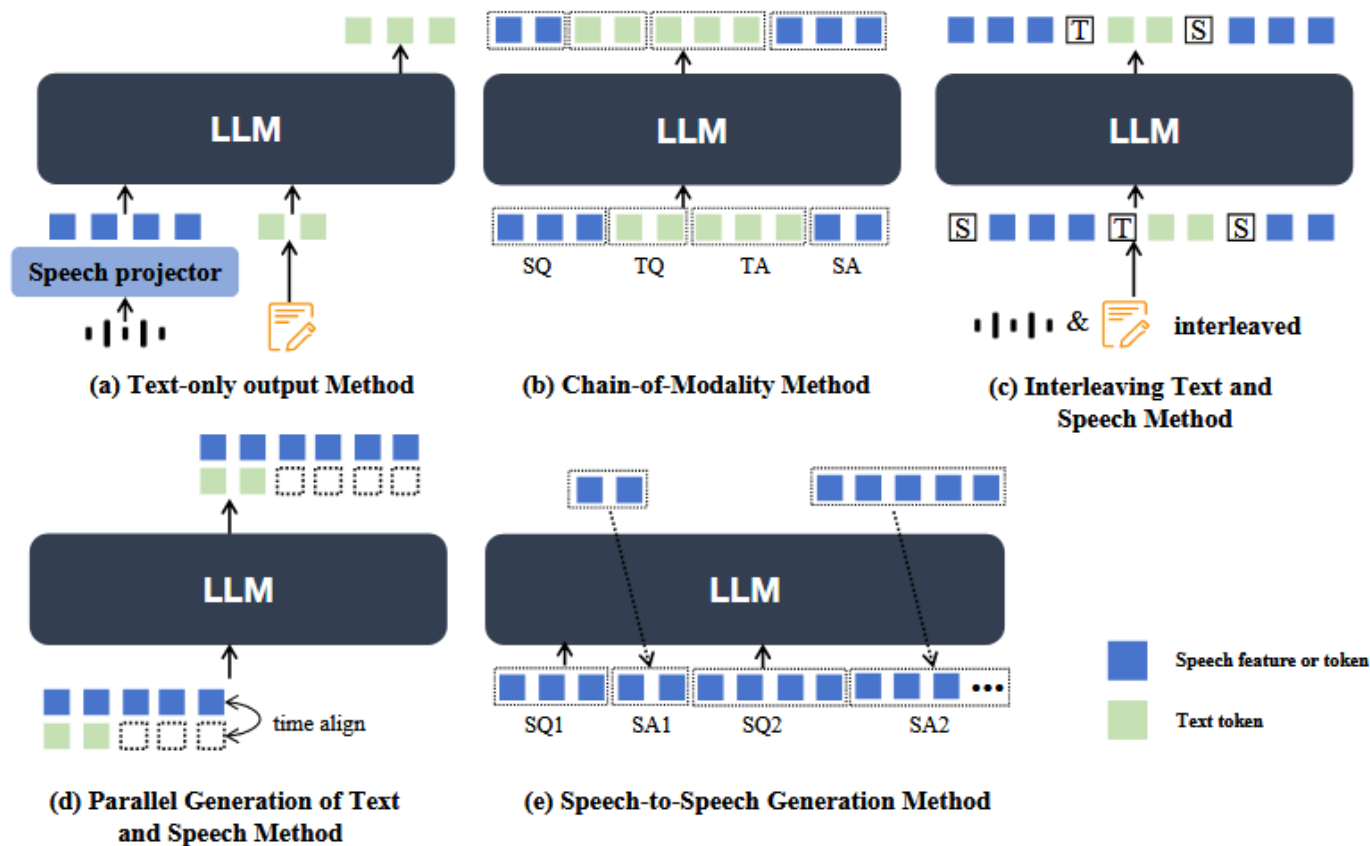
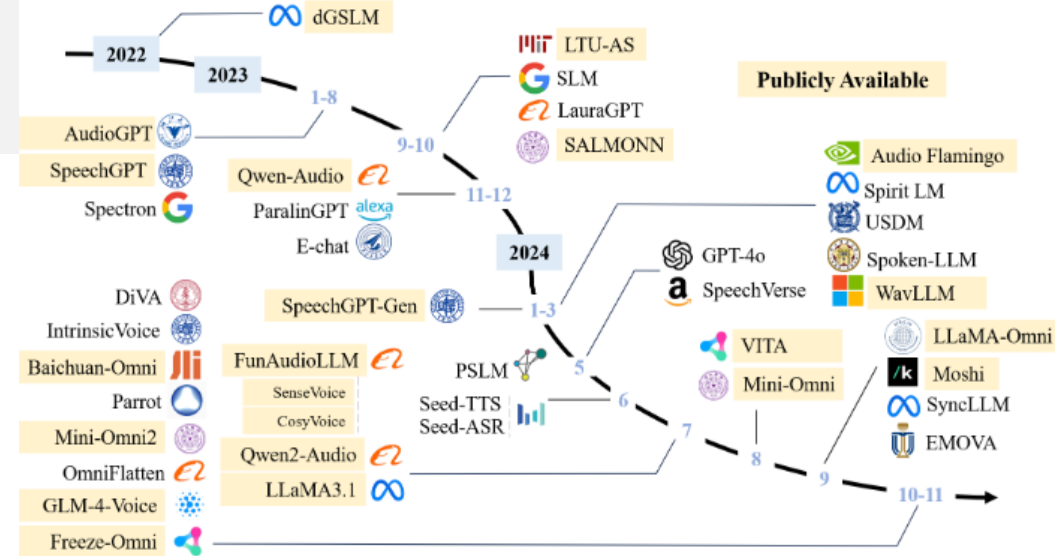
- Text-based LLM + image/video/audio encoders
 - mostly based on existing architectures (e.g. Vision Transformer + Llama)
- Aligning representations
 - interfacing – **perceiver modules**: produce sequences of trainable tokens
 - i.e. expanding LLM vocabulary for image/audio tokens
 - alternative: (“expert model”) translate to text & use standard LLM
- Instruction tuning on multimodal tasks
 - e.g. image description, image QA
 - 2-step (training adapter + instruction tuning) vs. joint parameter-efficient



(Yin et al., 2023) <http://arxiv.org/abs/2306.13549>
(Luo et al., 2023) <http://arxiv.org/abs/2305.15023>
(Zhao et al., 2023) <http://arxiv.org/abs/2305.16103>
(Li et al., 2023) <http://arxiv.org/abs/2305.03726>

Speech End-to-End LLMs

- Very similar, work with audio tokens
- Multiple paradigms, different capabilities
 - voice input only (+external TTS) / input & output
 - internal use of text ?
- Aim: full duplex
 - = listen & speak at the same time
 - no explicit turns & waiting
- Aim: minimal latency
- Some are video + speech + text
- Work but worse than text LLMs



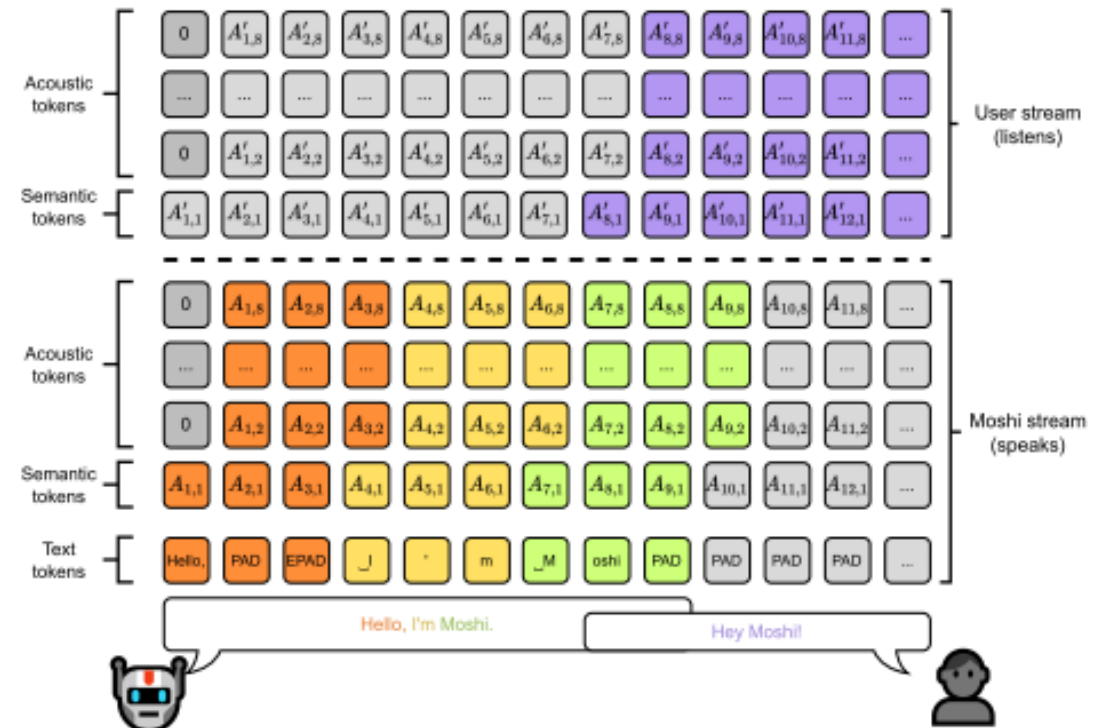
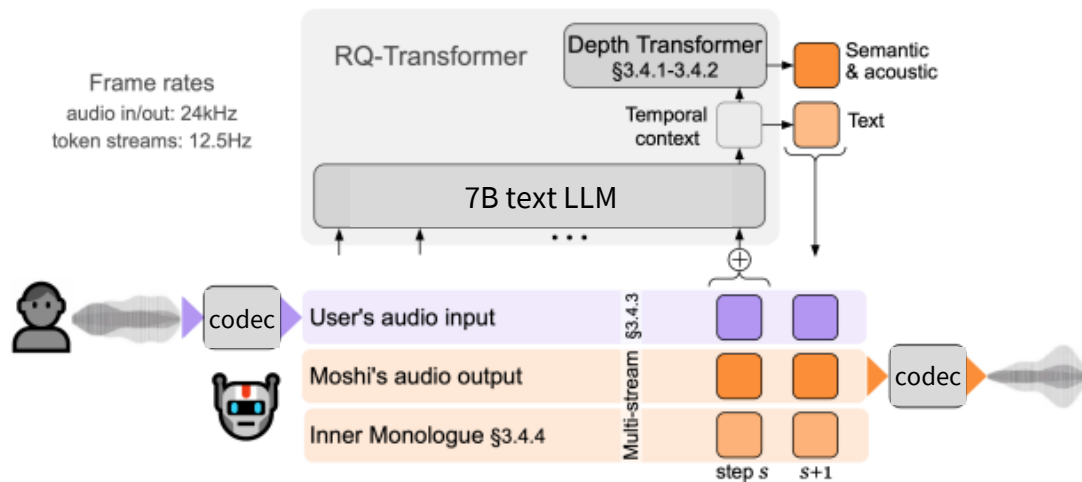
SQ = speech question
 SA = speech answer
 TQ = text question
 TA = text answer

(Ji et al., 2024)
<https://arxiv.org/abs/2411.13577>

Speech LLM example: Moshi

(Defossez et al., 2024)
<https://arxiv.org/abs/2410.00037>

- Parallel speech & text, full duplex (200ms latency)
- Text LLM + audio codec network distilled from pretrained ASR Model
 - 2.1T tokens of text
 - 7M hrs of audio transcribed with Whisper
 - 20k synthetic speech instruction data (TTS, consistent voice)



- **Task:** have a meaningful dialogue about an image
 - close to visual QA: **human asks, system responds**
 - but VD is multi-turn & human doesn't see the image (just a caption)
 - follow-up questions possible – coreference
 - people are not primed by the image when asking questions
- not much realistic purpose other than to test the models
 - dataset of 10-turn dialogues on 120k images
 - collected via crowdsourcing
 - connecting 2 people live to talk about an image
 - not very deep dialogue: history only needed in ~11% cases

(Agarwal et al., 2020)

<https://www.aclweb.org/anthology/2020.acl-main.728>



Caption: A man and woman on bicycles are looking at a map.

Person A (1): where are they located

Person B (1): in city

Person A (2): are they on road

Person B (2): sidewalk next to 1

Person A (3): any vehicles

Person B (3): 1 in background

Person A (4): any other people

Person B (4): no

Person A (5): what color bikes

Person B (5): 1 silver and 1 yellow

Person A (6): do they look old or new

Person B (6): new bikes

Person A (7): any buildings

Person B (7): yes

Person A (8): what color

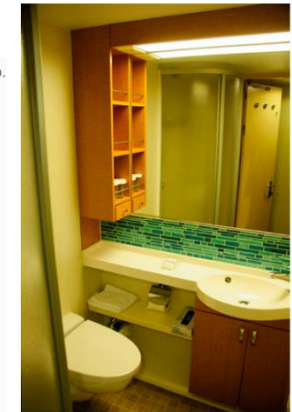
Person B (8): brick

Person A (9): are they tall or short

Person B (9): i can't see enough of them to tell

Person A (10): do they look like couple

Person B (10): they are



Caption:
A sink and toilet in a small room.

Q3: can you see anything else ?

A3: there is a shelf with items on it

Q4: is anyone in the room ?

A4: nobody is in the room

Q5: can you see on the outside ?

A5: no, it is only inside

Q6: what color is the sink ?

A6: the sink is white

Q7: is the room clean ?

A7: it is very clean

Q8: is the toilet facing the sink ?

A8: yes the toilet is facing the sink

Q9: can you see a door ?

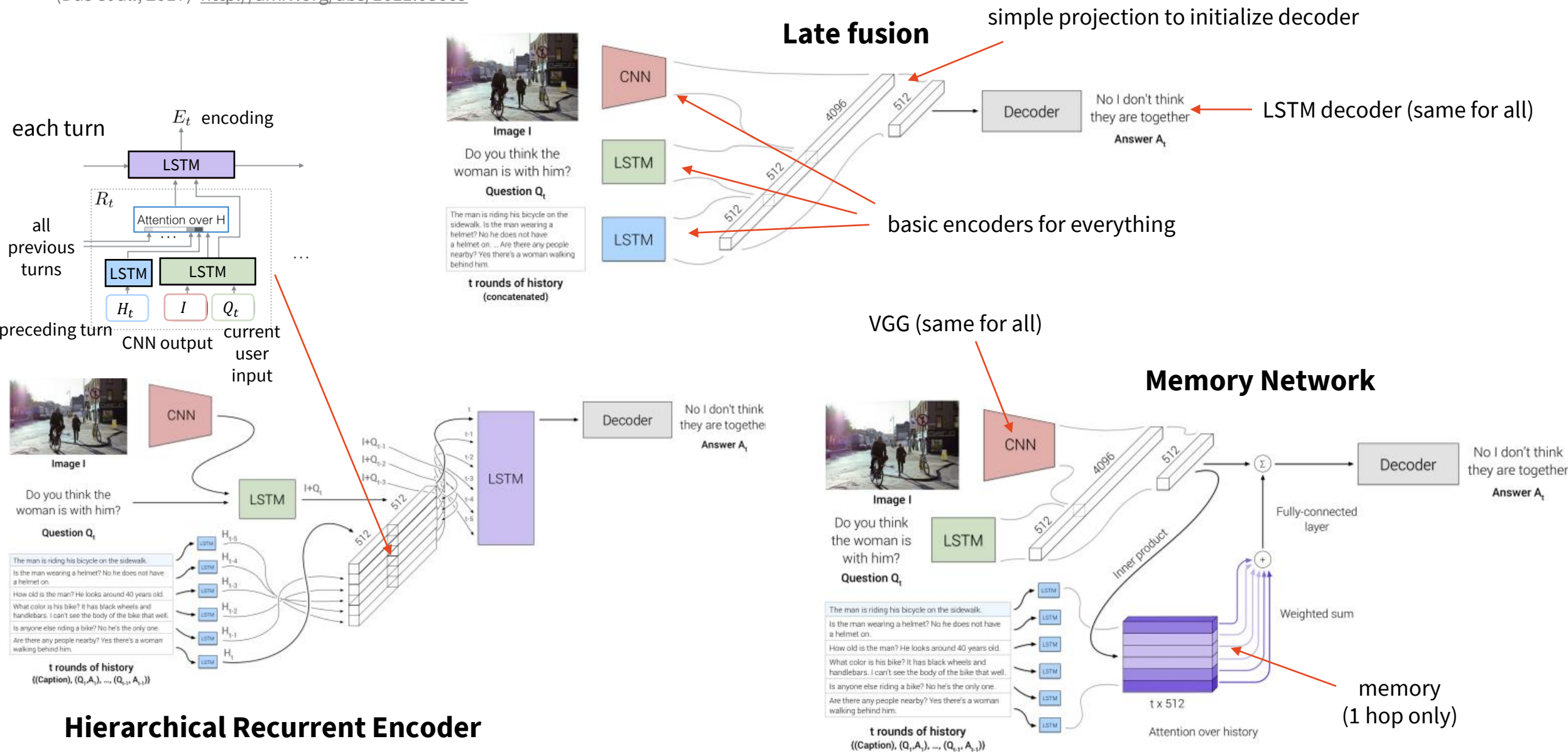
A9: yes, I can see the door

Q10: what color is the door ?

A10: the door is tan colored

Base Visual Dialogue Models

(Das et al., 2017) <http://arxiv.org/abs/1611.08669>



Hierarchical Recurrent Encoder

Late fusion

Memory Network

VGG (same for all)

simple projection to initialize decoder

LSTM decoder (same for all)

basic encoders for everything

memory (1 hop only)

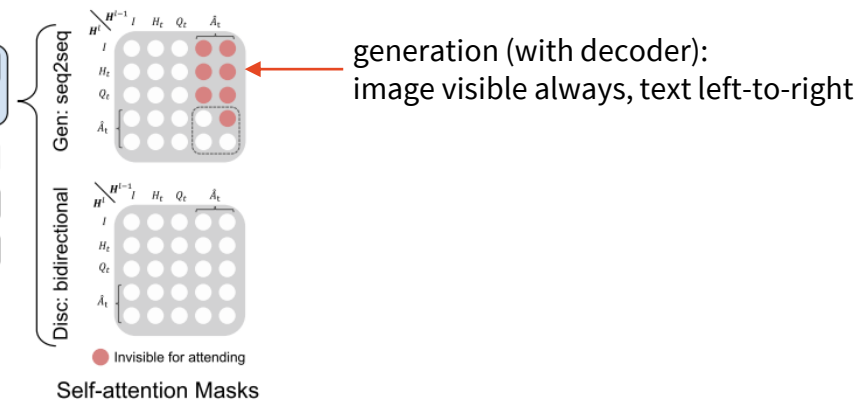
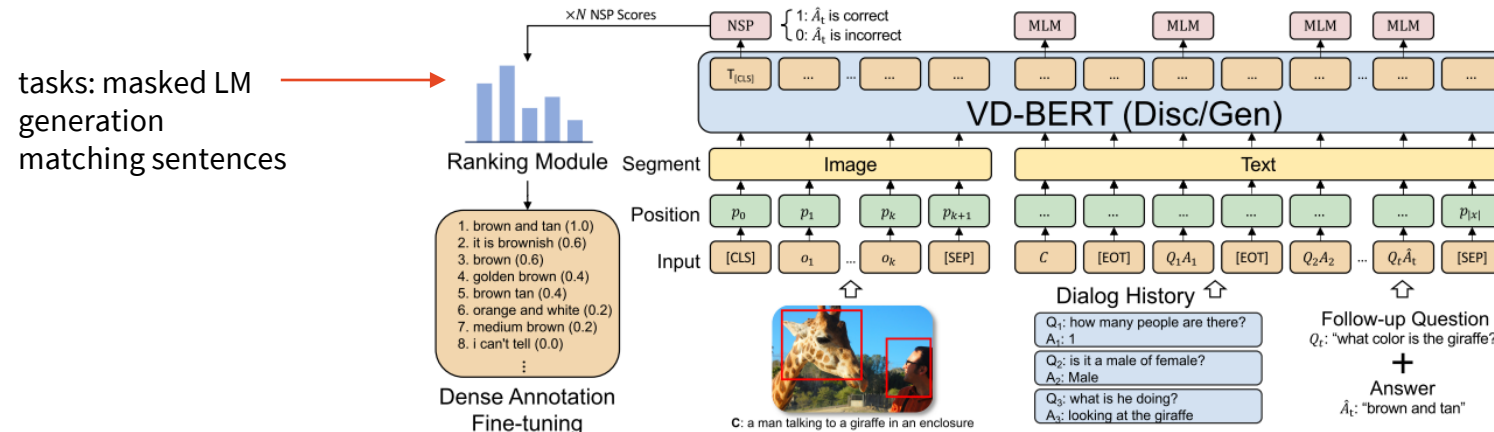
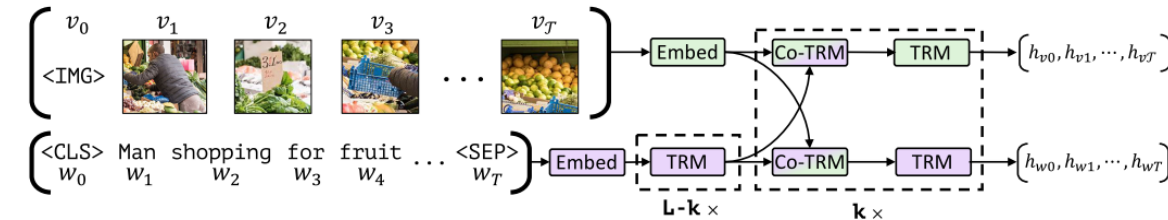
Visual Dialogue Evaluation

- BLEU etc. possible but not used here
- IR setup used instead
 - system given ground-truth dialogue history + user input & 100 candidate answers to score/rank
- IR metrics:
 - **ground-truth response rank** (average)
 - **recall@k** (% cases where ground-truth is included in top k)
 - **mean reciprocal rank**: $\frac{1}{\text{ground truth rank}}$ (1 if ground truth is first, 0.5 if second etc.)
 - **normalized discounted cumulative gain**
 - for multiple acceptable answers out of the 100 candidates
 - DCG: $\sum_{i=1}^{100} \frac{c_i \text{ relevant?}}{\log_2(i+1)}$, normalize by highest possible DCG (all good answers on top)
- problem: images only give modest gain over text-only models

Visual Dialogue

- Pretrained vision & language models
 - BERT as text features
 - R-CNN labels & positions as image features
 - cross-attention
 - additional Transformer decoder

(Lu et al., 2019) <http://arxiv.org/abs/1908.02265>



(Wang et al., 2020) <https://aclanthology.org/2020.emnlp-main.269/>

- Option: synthetic data generation & retraining
 - retrieve additional images, generate dialogues, add to training data

(Kang et al., 2023) <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/10203535>

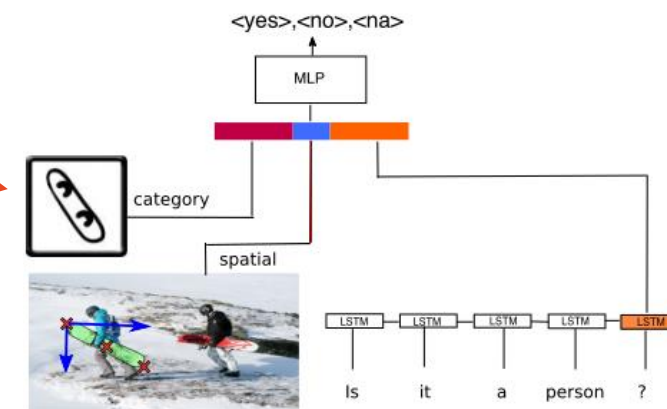
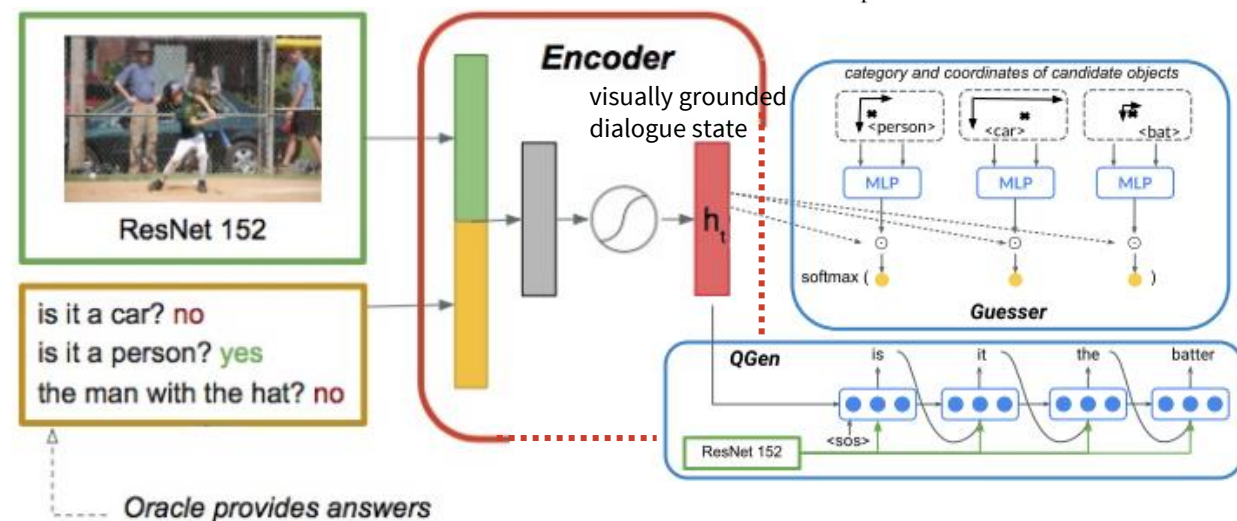
Guess What

(Strub et al., 2017) <https://www.ijcai.org/proceedings/2017/385>
(Shekhar et al., 2019) <https://aclanthology.org/N19-1265>



Is it a person? **No**
Is it an item being worn or held? **Yes**
Is it a snowboard? **Yes**
Is it the red one? **No**
Is it the one being held by the person in blue? **Yes**

- guessing one of the objects in an image
 - GuessWhat data (150k guessing dialogues)
- 3 models:
 - question generator – seq2seq decoder
 - encoder: fusion of image & text encodings
 - guesser – classifier: softmax from candidates
 - uses the same encoder as Q-gen
 - oracle – reply classifier (Y/N/NA)
 - seq2seq question encoding
 - + object category + object size & position in image
- (potentially) trained jointly with RL



extensions: (Suglia et al., 2020) <https://www.aclweb.org/anthology/2020.coling-main.95>
(Chaudhary et al., 2022) <https://aclanthology.org/2022.inlg-main.24/>

Shopping Dialogues

(Saha et al., 2018)
<http://arxiv.org/abs/1704.00200>

- a more practical task: fashion e-shop
 - both user & system can show images
 - user can reference/talk about images
- semi-automatic data (150k dialogues)
 - 84 predefined intents
 - generated dialogue flows
 - based on predefined state automata over intents
 - utterances for each intent written by annotators
 - backed by a large manually curated DB of fashion items with images (1M items)
 - taxonomy (man > apparel > lower body > trousers)
 - (generated) celebrity profiles/endorsements

SHOPPER: Hello

AGENT: Hello, is there anything i can help you with today?

SHOPPER: show me some espadrilles in beige/blue within \$200.

AGENT: Sure. let me just quickly browse through my catalogue



AGENT:

AGENT: What you can see in the fifth item, michael michael kors brings you an effortless weekend look with the wrapped espadrille heel and crisscross styling of these dana flats. And what you see in the 3rd item, steve madden, the company, was founded by steve madden, the man, in 1990 in brooklyn, where he started out making trend-advancing shoes one pair at a time.

SHOPPER: List more in the upper material as in the 5th image and style as the 3rd and the 5th



AGENT:

AGENT: The 2nd one, viscata espadrilles are 100% authentic and handcrafted in spain inspired by the mediterranean, viscata shoes are lightweight and made of natural jute rope, premium leathers, suedes and woven cloth.

SHOPPER: Can you list images of the 1st result from all orientations?



AGENT: Image from the front,right and back orientations respectively

SHOPPER: And the 3rd one?

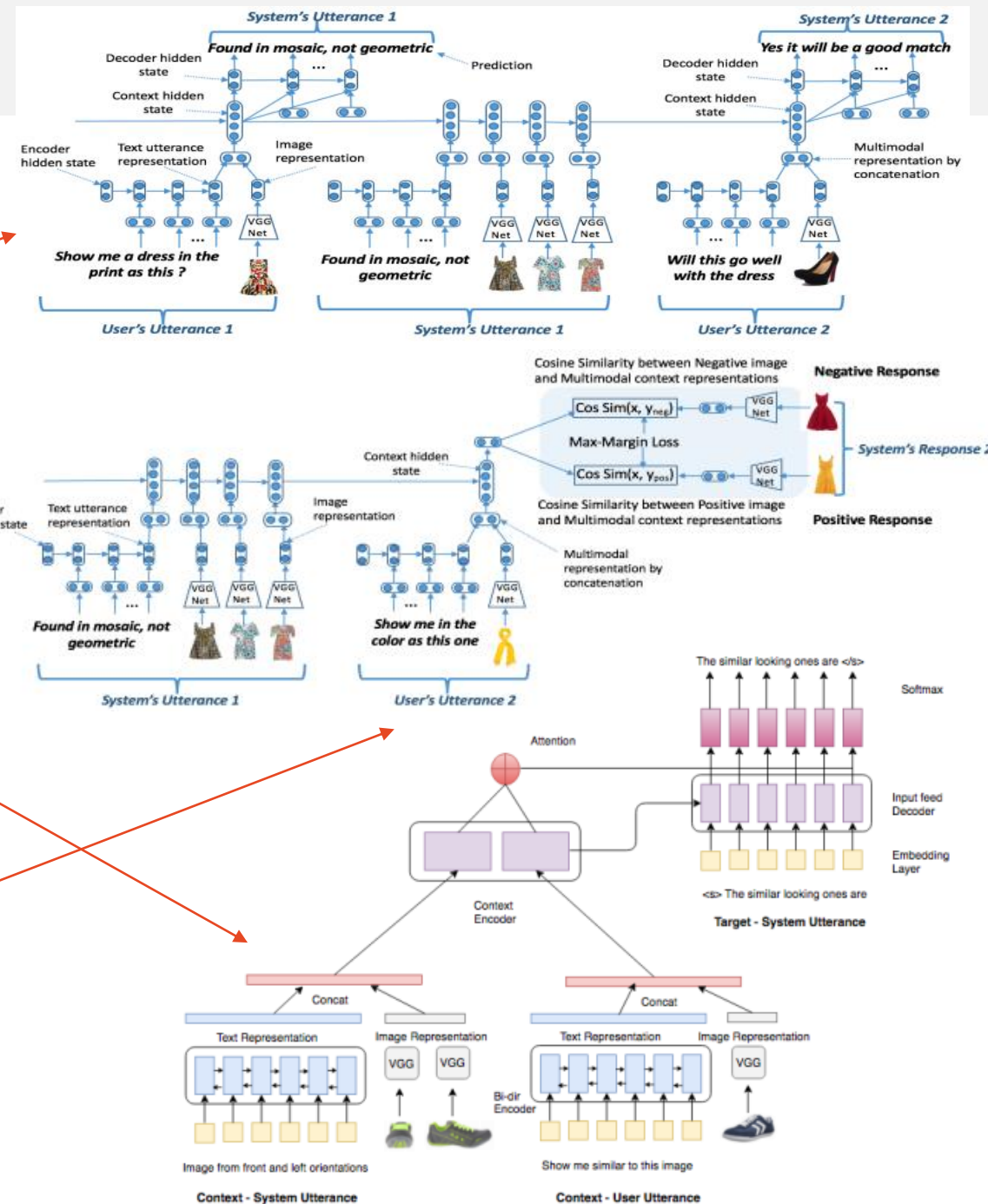


AGENT: Image from the front,right,back and left orientations respectively

Id	Automata State Type	State Description
1	greeting	Shopper greets
2	self-info	Shopper gives information about him/herself
3	give-criteria	describes his requirements
4	show-image	Agent shows relevant responses for the Shopper's query
5	give-image-description	Agent generates short description of the product, using visual and catalog information
6	Like/Dislike specific items / overall items, show-more	Shopper expresses negative or positive preference specifically towards one or more items previously or currently shown, or a overall general preference towards all the items and optionally shows a new image to possibly modify his requirements and wants to see more
7	show-orientation	Shopper wants to see an item from different orientations
8	show-similar	Shopper wants to see similar to a particular item

Shopping Dialogues

- Models similar to visual dialogue
 - variants of multimodal HRED
 - VGG image input
- image input
 - turn-level
 - concatenated with utterance
 - seems to work better (fewer turns)
- text/image responses
 - shared encoder
 - text generation (word-by-word)
 - image ranking (needs rough retrieval)
 - so far just “select 1 out of 5”



(Saha et al., 2018) <http://arxiv.org/abs/1704.00200>

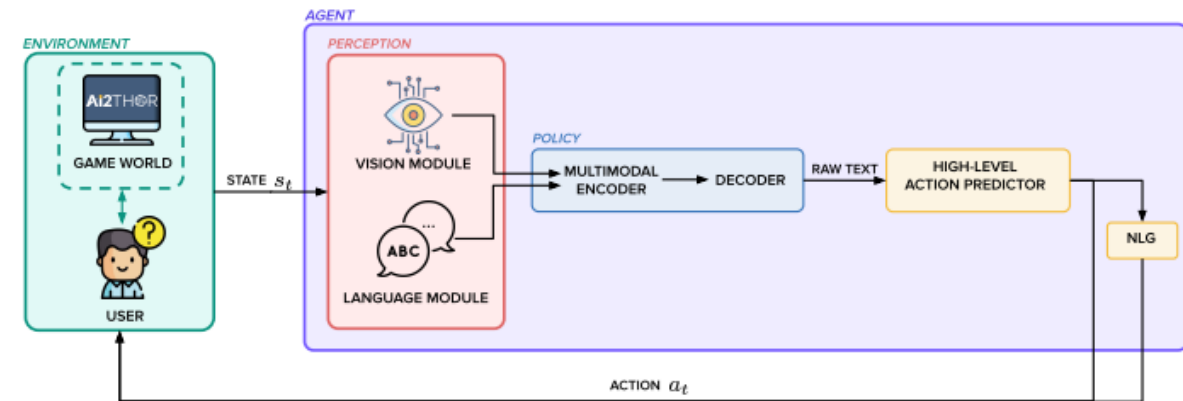
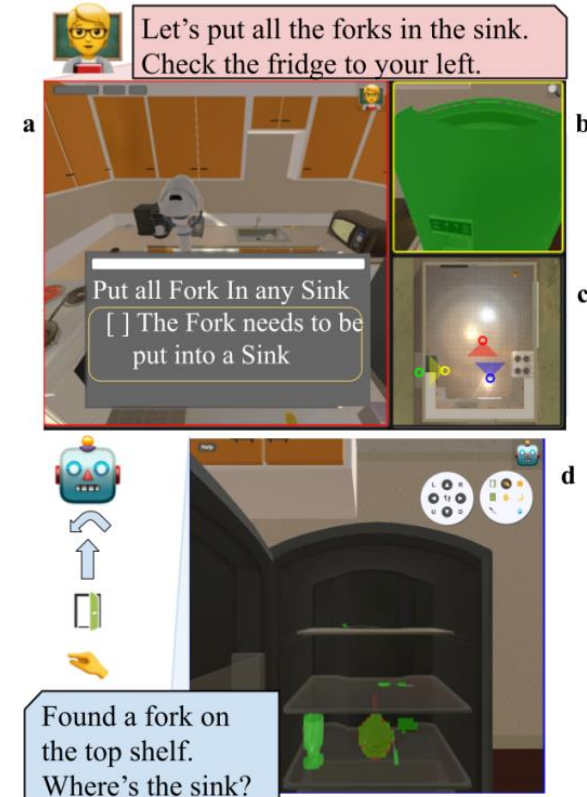
(Agarwal et al., 2018) <http://aclweb.org/anthology/W18-6514>

Situated Tasks (Amazon SimBot Challenge)

- Home tasks – commander & follower
 - find best trajectory of actions to complete task
 - include dialogue, ask if unsure
- EMMA – integrated architecture for this
 - core: Transformer LM (+sparse attention)
 - “visual tokens” to represent video input
 - explicit actions / words on the output
 - pretraining on many vision & language tasks
 - captioning, image QA, location, relations

(Padmakumar et al., 2022)
<https://arxiv.org/abs/2110.00534>

(Suglia et al., 2022)
<https://aclanthology.org/2022.sigdial-1.62/>



Domain Adaptation

- pretraining
 - BERT, but also any other model
 - weight sharing: copy weights for similar slots in target domain
- delexicalization
 - assuming your domains are similar (e.g. TVs → PCs)
- pseudo in-domain data selection
 - find data similar to your domain in the source domain
- forcing shared latent space (see few-shot end-to-end models)
- multi-task training
 - your task in source domain & different task in target domain
- partial handcrafting (see Hybrid Code Networks)

Summary

- “traditional” multimodal systems, with components
 - combination of off-the-shelf components
 - parallels for ASR/NLU & NLG/TTS in I/O modalities
 - dialogue typically quite simple
 - modalities: static graphics / touch / gaze / facial expr. / avatars / robots
 - often support multi-party dialogue
- end-to-end multimodal systems
 - mostly experimental, based on HRED/Transformer with pretrained CNNs
 - VGG, ResNet, Inception (just image classification), Faster R-CNN, YOLO (+object detection)
 - MLLMs: multimodal instruction tuning, adapter modules, visual & audio tokens
 - visual dialogue: questions & answers about an image, finding an object in image
 - task-oriented: shopping dialogue with product images
 - situated tasks: discussing & executing household actions

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Get the slides here:

<http://ufal.cz/npfl099>

References/Inspiration/Further:

- Volha Pethukova's course (Uni Saarland):
<https://www.lsv.uni-saarland.de/multimodal-dialogue-systems-summer-2019/>
- McTear et al. (2016): The Conversational Interface – Talking to Smart Devices
- Delgado & Araki (2005): Spoken, Multilingual and Multimodal Dialogue Systems: Development and Assessment
- papers referenced on slides