

# CS 229br Lecture 3: Unsupervised / Self-Supervised Learning

## Boaz Barak



Ankur Moitra  
MIT 18.408



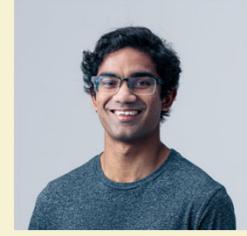
Yamini Bansal  
**Official TF**



Dimitris Kalimeris  
Unofficial TF



Gal Kaplun  
Unofficial TF



Preetum Nakkiran  
Unofficial TF



#lectures | #qanda | #sys-help | #admin | #hw0 | #project | #papers

# Unsupervised and semi-supervised learning

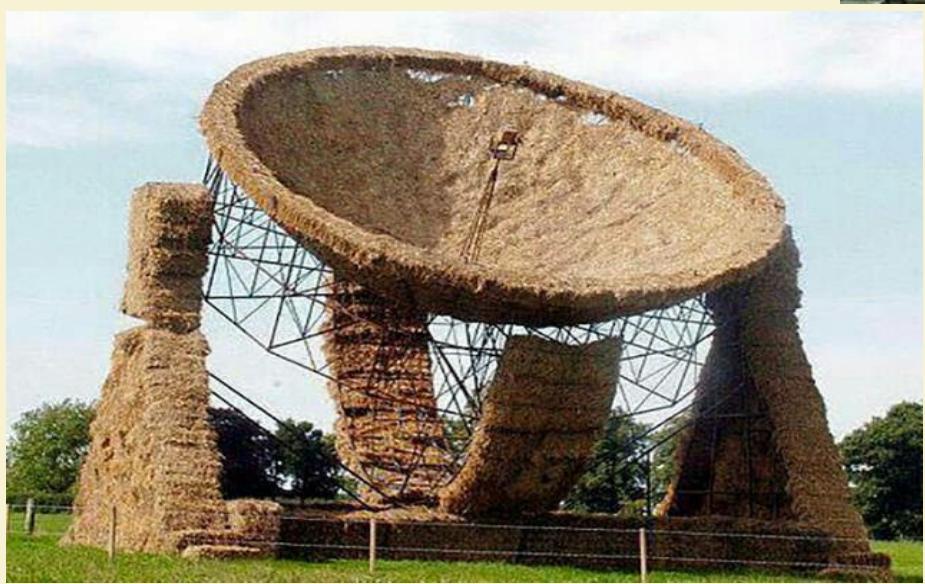
"No more  $y$ 's!"

Input:  $x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n \sim p \subseteq \mathbb{R}^d$

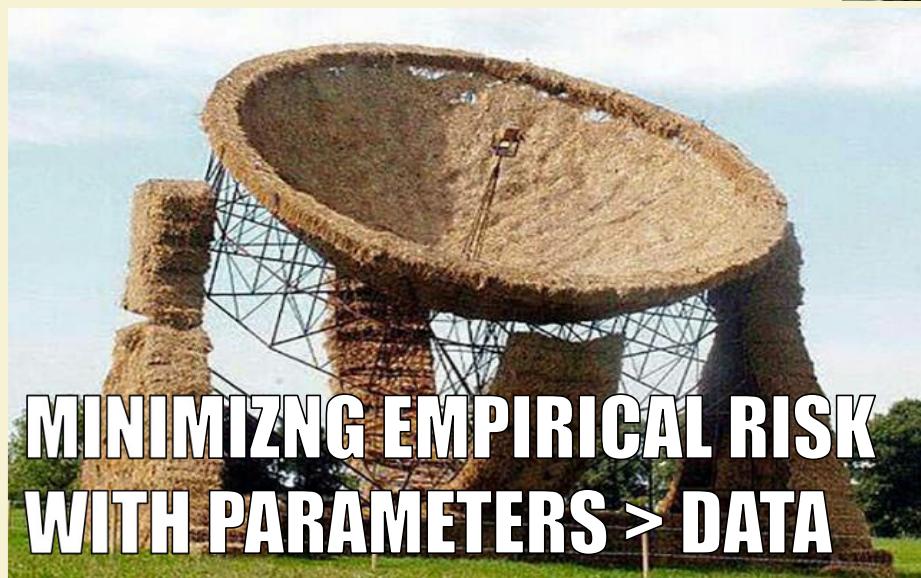
Goal: "understand"  $p$

- Compute/approximate  $x \mapsto p(x)$
- Sample fresh  $x \sim p$
- Predict  $x_A$  from  $x_B$
- Find "good" representation  $r: \mathbb{R}^d \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^r$

# Digressions



# Is deep learning a cargo cult?



## Two scenarios

Murphy's Law: "*Anything that can go wrong will go wrong*"

Marley's Law: "*Every little thing gonna be alright*"

# Two technical digressions

1) Distance between distributions

2) Optimizing multiple objectives

# Distances between probability distributions

$p, q$  probability distributions over some domain  $D$

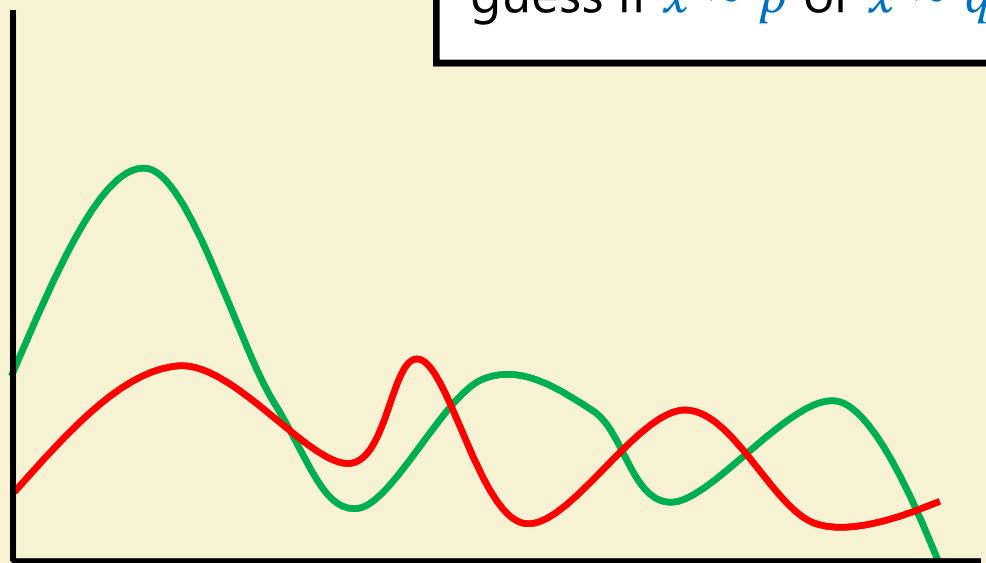
$$\Delta_{TV}(p, q) = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{x \in D} |p(x) - q(x)| = \max_{f: D \rightarrow \{0, 1\}} |\mathbb{E}_p f - \mathbb{E}_q f|$$

$$\Delta_{KL}(p \parallel q) = \mathbb{E}_{x \sim p} \left[ \log \frac{p(x)}{q(x)} \right] \geq 0$$

If  $\Delta_{KL}(p \parallel q) = \delta$ ,  
 $\approx 1/\delta$  samples from  $p$  to rule out  $q$

If  $\Delta_{KL}(p \parallel q) = k$ ,  $k$  bits of "surprise"  
 $q \approx p$  after revealing  $k$  bits

Advantage over  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  
guess if  $x \sim p$  or  $x \sim q$



# Distances between probability distributions

$p, q$  probability dists

$$\Delta_{TV}(p, q) = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{x \in D} |p(x) - q(x)|$$

Example:

- $p$  dist over documents
- $q$  dist over documents with topic  $y$

$$\Delta_{KL}(p \parallel q) \approx H(y)$$

$$\Delta_{KL}(p \parallel q) = \mathbb{E}_{x \sim p} \left[ \log \frac{p(x)}{q(x)} \right] \geq 0$$

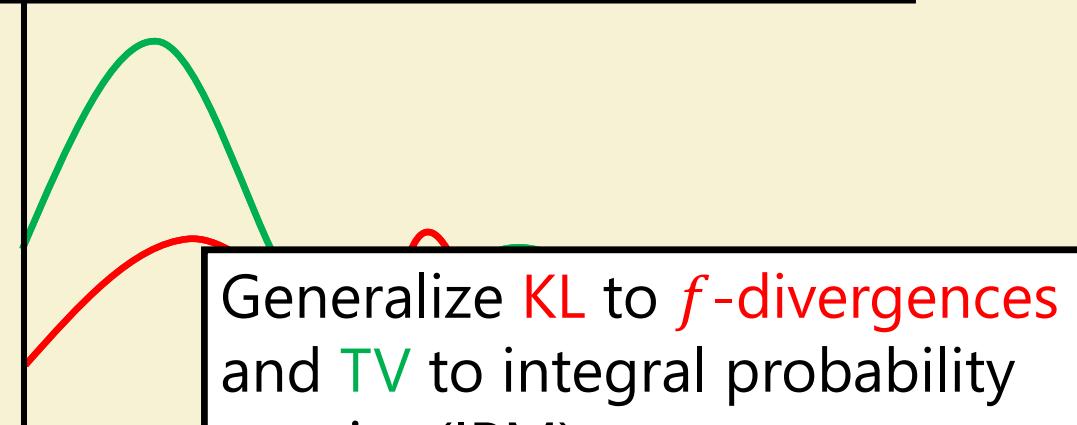
If  $\Delta_{KL}(p \parallel q) = \delta$ ,

$\approx 1/\delta$  samples from  $p$  to rule out  $q$

If  $\Delta_{KL}(p \parallel q) = k$ ,  $k$  bits of "surprise"

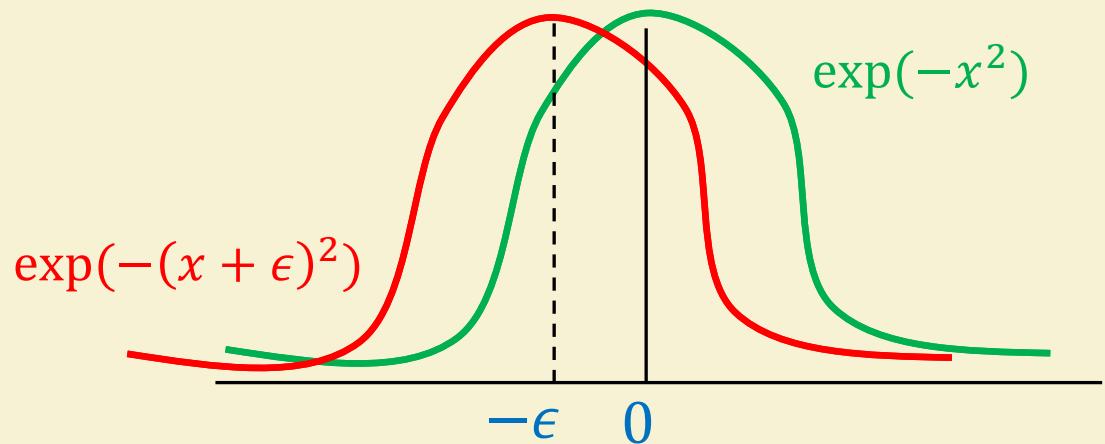
$q \approx p$  after revealing  $k$  bits

to  
 $\sim q$



# Normal Distribution

$$p = N(0,1), q = N(-\epsilon, 1)$$



For const  $x > 0$ ,  $\frac{p(x)}{q(x)} \approx \frac{\exp(-x^2)}{\exp(-(x+\epsilon)^2)} \approx \exp(2\epsilon x) \approx (1 + c \cdot \epsilon)$

TV: With prob  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $p(x) \geq (1 + c \cdot \epsilon) \cdot q(x) \Rightarrow \Delta_{TV}(p, q) \approx \epsilon$

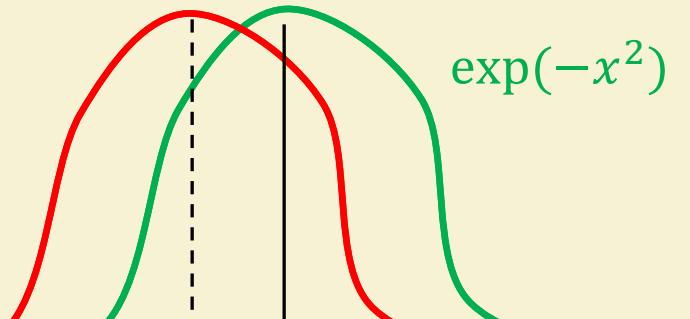
KL: For  $x \sim p$ , w.p.  $\frac{1}{2} + \epsilon$  ,  $\frac{p(x)}{q(x)} \approx 1 + \epsilon$  ,  $\log \frac{p(x)}{q(x)} \approx \epsilon$   
 $\Rightarrow \Delta_{KL}(p \parallel q) \approx \epsilon^2$

w.p.  $\frac{1}{2} - \epsilon$  ,  $\frac{p(x)}{q(x)} \approx 1 - \epsilon$  ,  $\log \frac{p(x)}{q(x)} \approx -\epsilon$

# Normal Distribution

$$p = N(0,1), q = N(-\epsilon, 1)$$

$$\exp(-(x + \epsilon)^2)$$



High dim case:  $p = N(0, I), q = N(\mu, I)$

- $\Delta_{TV}(p, q) \approx \|\mu\|$  (for small  $\|\mu\|$ )
- $\Delta_{KL}(p \parallel q) \approx \|\mu\|^2$

For

$$-\epsilon$$

$$1 + c \cdot \epsilon)$$

TV: With prob  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $p(x) \geq (1 + c \cdot \epsilon) \cdot q(x) \Rightarrow \Delta_{TV}(p, q) \approx \epsilon$

KL: For  $x \sim p$ , w.p.  $\frac{1}{2} + \epsilon$ ,  $\frac{p(x)}{q(x)} \approx 1 + \epsilon$ ,  $\log \frac{p(x)}{q(x)} \approx \epsilon$   
 $\Rightarrow \Delta_{KL}(p \parallel q) \approx \epsilon^2$

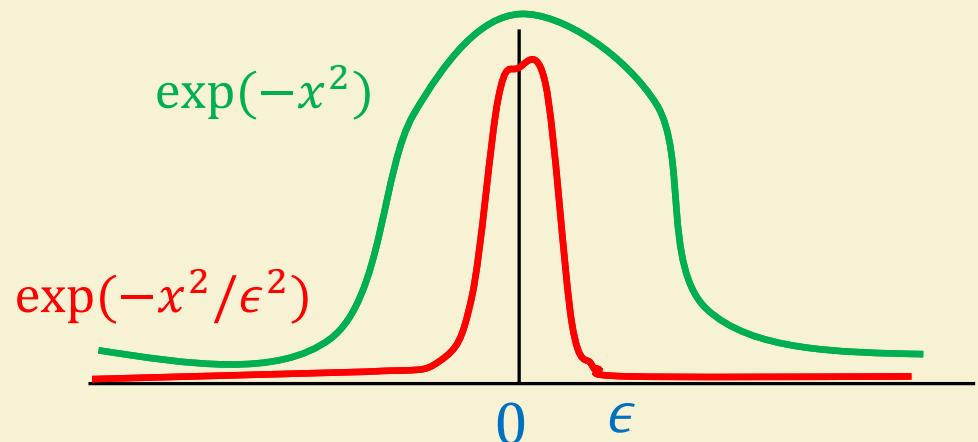
w.p.  $\frac{1}{2} - \epsilon$ ,  $\frac{p(x)}{q(x)} \approx 1 - \epsilon$ ,  $\log \frac{p(x)}{q(x)} \approx -\epsilon$

# Normal Distribution II

$$p = N(0,1), q = N(0, \epsilon^2)$$

$$\text{TV: } \Delta_{TV}(p, q) \approx 1$$

$$\text{KL: With const prob, } \log \frac{p(x)}{q(x)} \approx \log \frac{\exp(-x^2)}{\exp(-x^2/\epsilon^2)} = \frac{x^2}{\epsilon^2} - x^2 \Rightarrow \Delta_{KL}(p \parallel q) \approx \frac{1}{\epsilon^2}$$



High dim case:  $p = N(0, I_d), q = N(0, V)$

$$\begin{aligned}\Delta_{KL}(p \parallel q) &\approx \text{Tr}(V^{-1}) - d + \ln \det V \\ &= \sum \lambda_i^{-1} - d + \sum \ln \lambda_i\end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Example: } V = \epsilon^2 I \Rightarrow \Delta_{KL}(p \parallel q) \approx d/\epsilon^2 - d - 2d \ln 1/\epsilon$$

If  $q$  discrete then  $\Delta_{KL}(p \parallel q) = \infty$

# Matching Distributions

If  $p$  is given distribution, and  $g$  is candidate generator, then

$$\Delta_{KL}(p \parallel g) = \mathbb{E}_{x \sim p} \left[ \log \frac{p(x)}{g(x)} \right] = \underbrace{\mathbb{E}_{x \sim p} [\log p(x)]}_{-H(p)} - \underbrace{\mathbb{E}_{x \sim p} [\log g(x)]}_{H(p, g)}$$

Minimizing KL = Maximizing  $\mathbb{E}_{x \sim p} [\log g(x)]$

Log likelihood /  
neg cross entropy

Want model  $g$  such that typical  $x \sim p$  are likely under  $g$

Can evaluate with samples from  $p$  and  $g$ 's density map  $x \mapsto g(x)$

# Matching Distributions

If  $p$  is given distribution, and  $g$  is candidate generator, then

Minimizing KL = Maximizing  $\mathbb{E}_{x \sim p} [\log g(x)]$

Log likelihood /  
neg cross entropy

Want model  $g$  such that typical  $x \sim p$  are likely under  $g$

Can evaluate with samples from  $p$  and  $g$ 's density map  $x \mapsto g(x)$

Memorizing model: Given  $x_1, \dots, x_n$  output  $g = U(\{x_1, \dots, x_n\})$

For train  $g(x_i) = \frac{1}{n}$ : huge!

Useless for test

# Two technical digressions

1) Distance between distributions

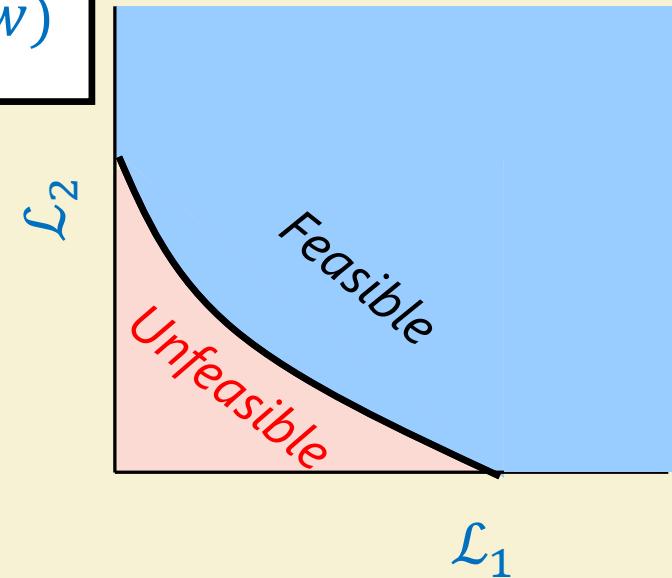
2) Optimizing multiple objectives

# Multiple objectives

Want  $\mathcal{L}_1(w)$  and  $\mathcal{L}_2(w)$  to be small.

Pareto curve:  $\mathcal{P} = \{(a, b) \in \text{Im}(\mathcal{L}_1, \mathcal{L}_2): \forall w \in \mathcal{W}, \mathcal{L}_1(w) \geq a \vee \mathcal{L}_2(w) \geq b\}$

THM: If  $\mathcal{L}_1, \mathcal{L}_2$  convex,  $\forall (a, b) \in \mathcal{P} \exists \lambda \geq 0$  s.t.  
 $a, b = \mathcal{L}_1(w), \mathcal{L}_2(w)$  for  $w = \arg \min \mathcal{L}_1(w) + \lambda \mathcal{L}_2(w)$



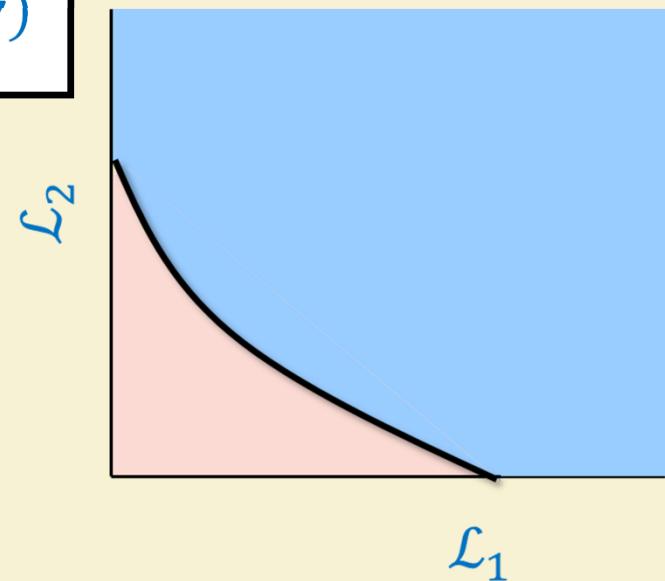
# Multiple objectives

Want  $\mathcal{L}_1(w)$  and  $\mathcal{L}_2(w)$  to be small.

Pareto curve:  $\mathcal{P} = \{(a, b) \in \text{Im}(\mathcal{L}_1, \mathcal{L}_2): \forall w \in \mathcal{W}, \mathcal{L}_1(w) \geq a \vee \mathcal{L}_2(w) \geq b\}$

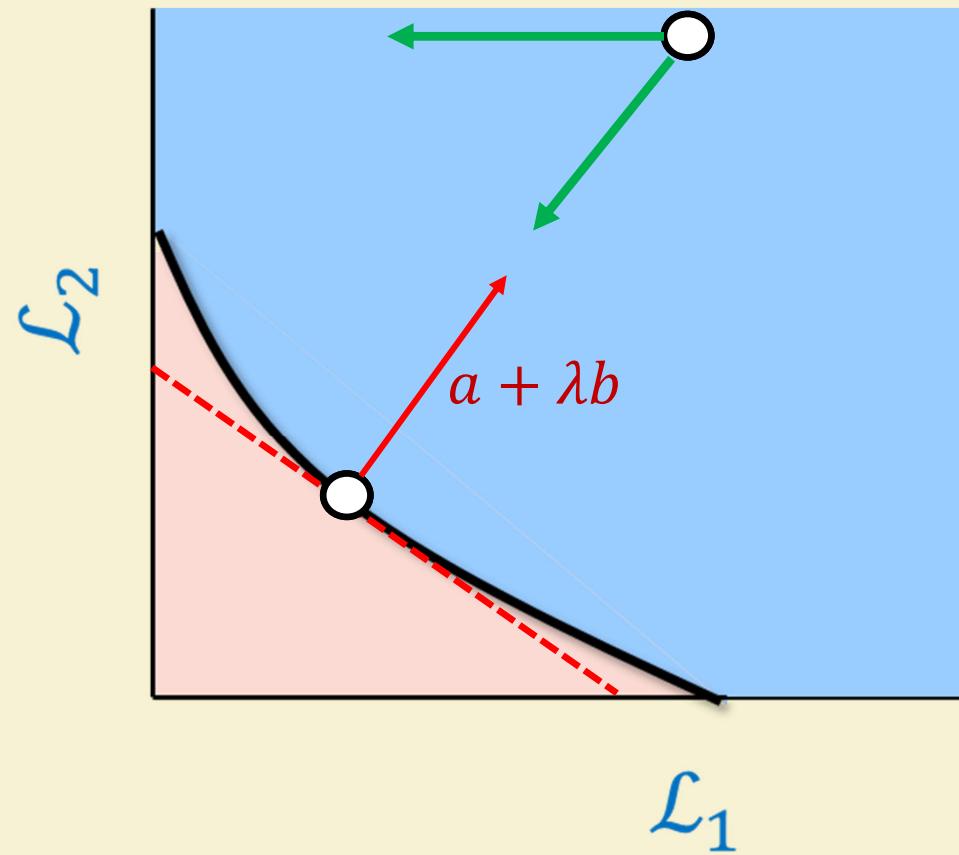
THM: If  $\mathcal{L}_1, \mathcal{L}_2$  convex,  $\forall (a, b) \in \mathcal{P} \exists \lambda \geq 0$  s.t.  
 $a, b = \mathcal{L}_1(w), \mathcal{L}_2(w)$  for  $w = \arg \min \mathcal{L}_1(w) + \lambda \mathcal{L}_2(w)$

Proof by picture



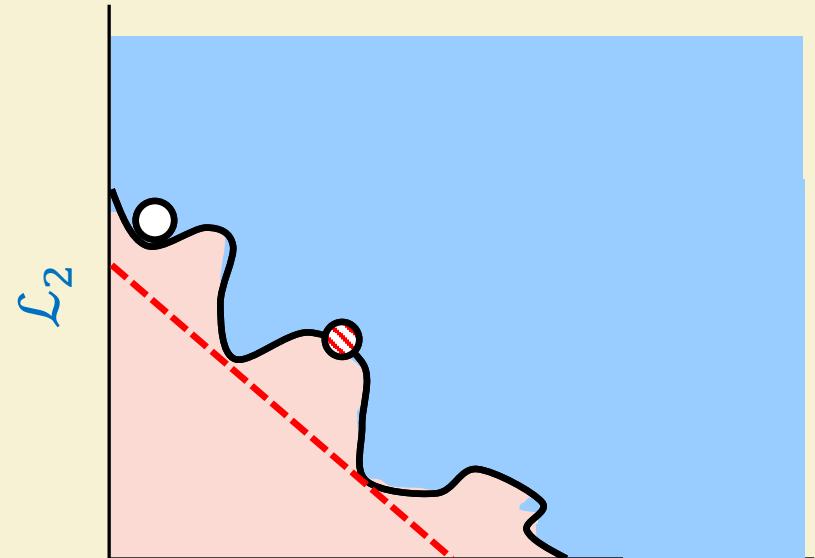
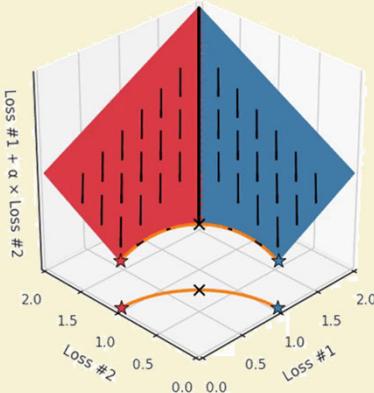
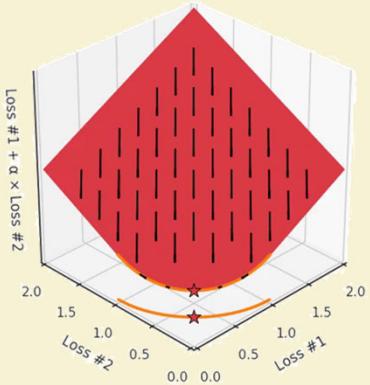
**THM:** If  $\mathcal{L}_1, \mathcal{L}_2$  convex,  $\forall (a, b) \in \mathcal{P} \exists \lambda \geq 0$  s.t.  
 $a, b = \mathcal{L}_1(w), \mathcal{L}_2(w)$  for  $w = \arg \min \mathcal{L}_1(w) + \lambda \mathcal{L}_2(w)$

Proof by picture



# Non convex case

- Some points on  $\mathcal{P}$  not minima of any  $\mathcal{L}_1 + \lambda\mathcal{L}_2$
- $\mathcal{L}_1 + \lambda\mathcal{L}_2$  can have multiple minima
- Depending on path, could get stuck in local minima



<https://engraved.ghost.io/why-machine-learning-algorithms-are-hard-to-tune/>

$\mathcal{L}_1$

End of digressions

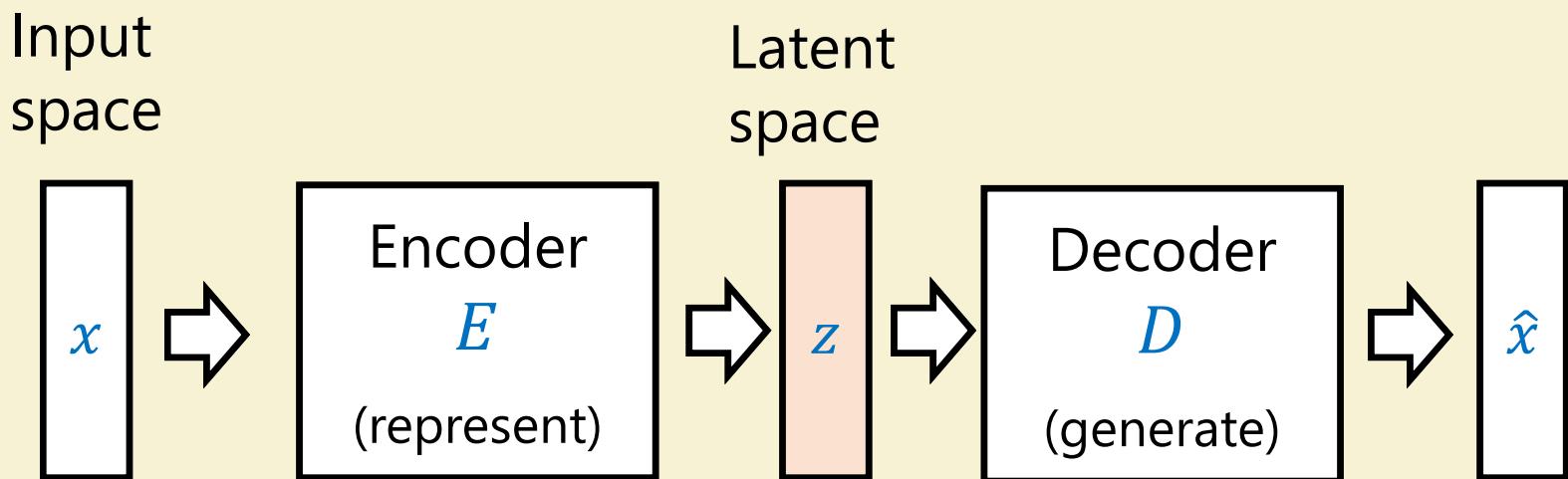
# Unsupervised and semi-supervised learning

Input:  $x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n \sim p \subseteq \mathbb{R}^d$

Goal: "understand"  $p$

- Compute/approximate  $x \mapsto p(x)$
- Sample fresh  $x \sim p$
- Predict  $x_A$  from  $x_B$
- Find "good" representation  $r: \mathbb{R}^d \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^r$

Dream: Solve all via



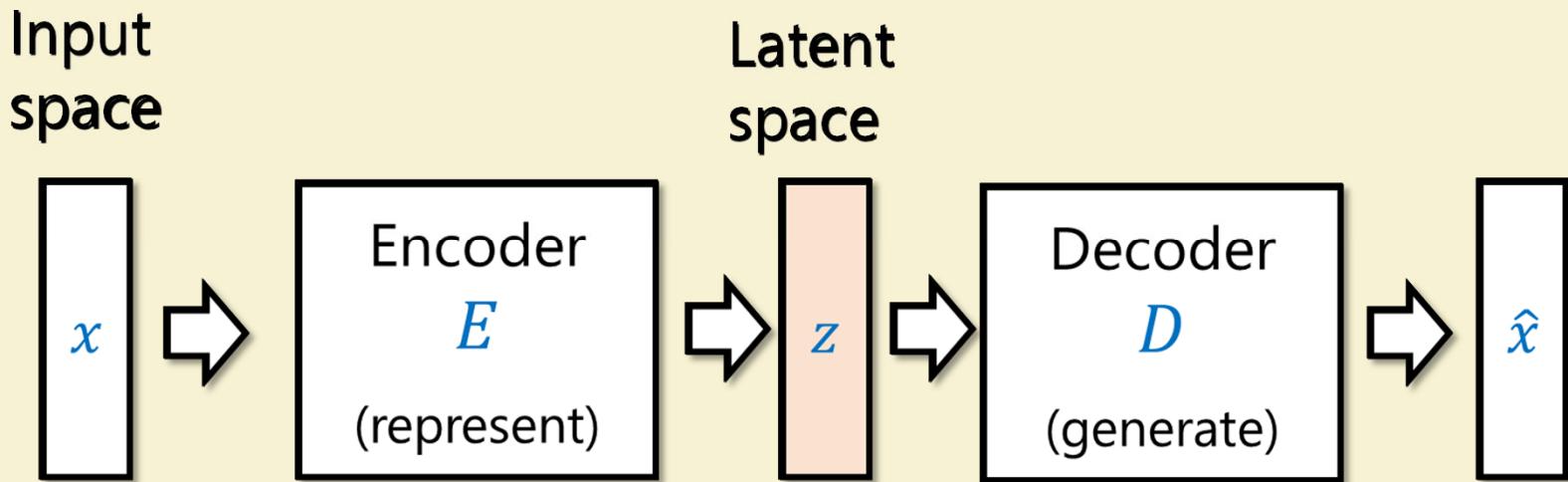
# Unsupervised and semi-supervised learning

**Input:**  $x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n \sim p \subseteq \mathbb{R}^d$

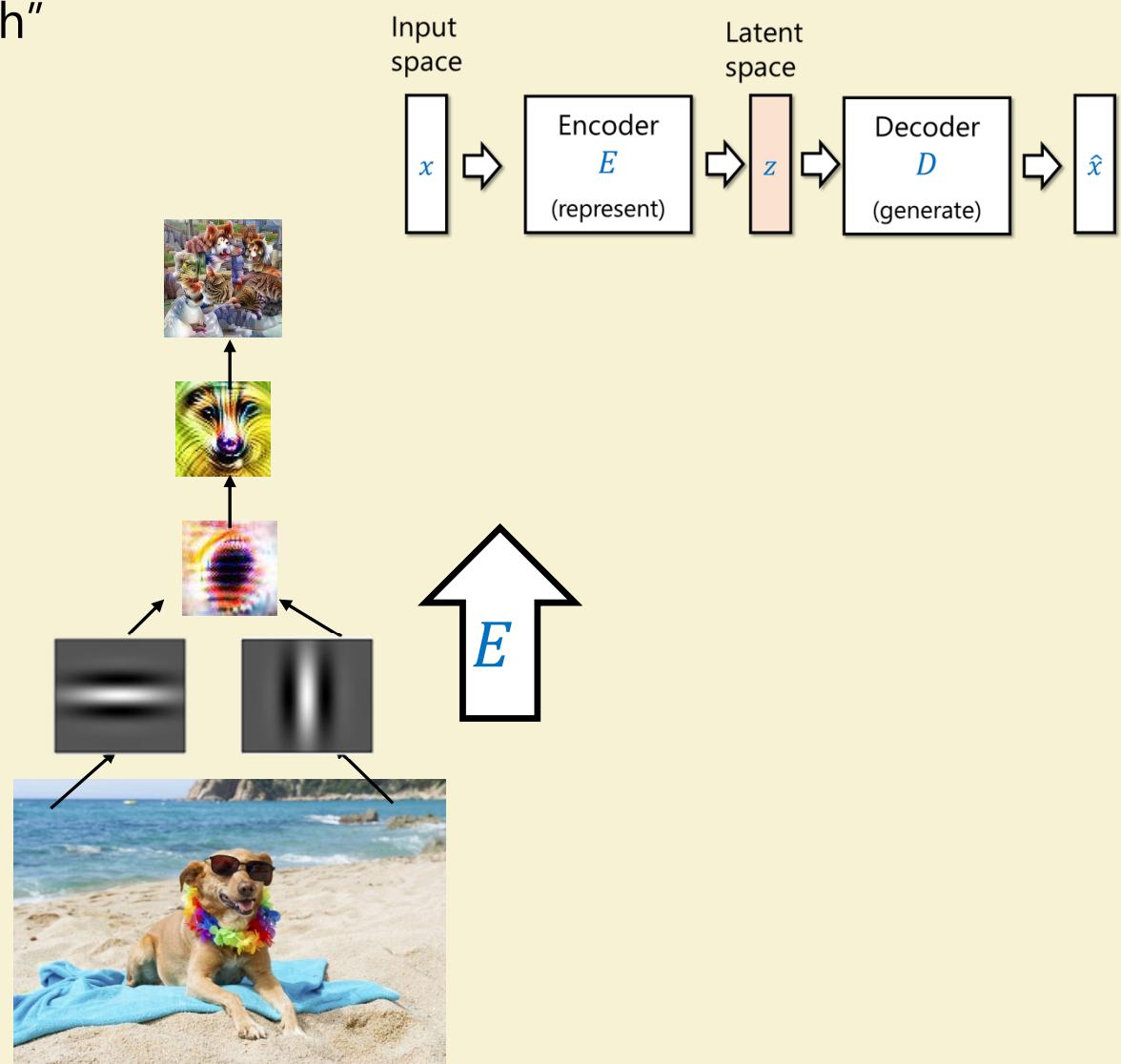
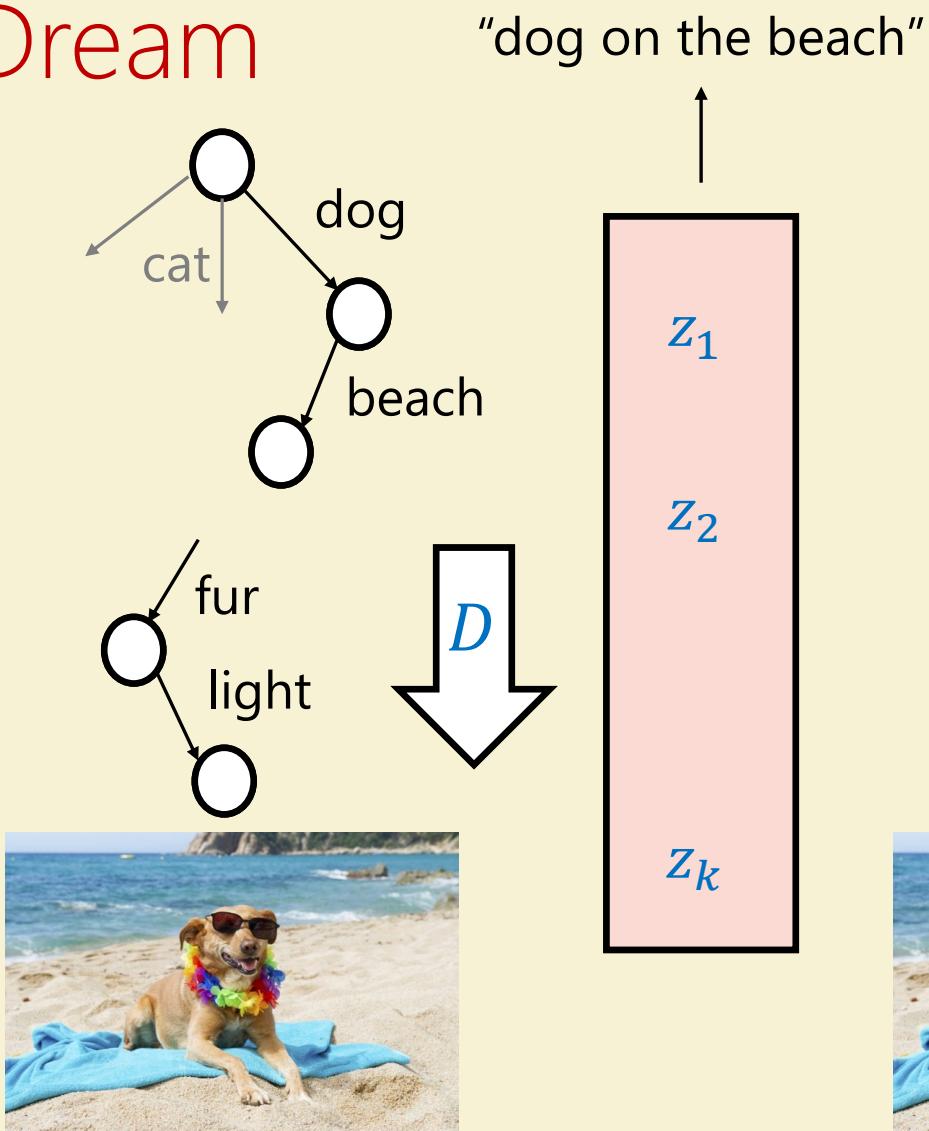
**Goal:** “understand”  $p$

- Compute/approximate  $x \mapsto p(x)$
- Sample fresh  $x \sim p$
- Predict  $x_A$  from  $x_B$
- Find “good” representation  $r: \mathbb{R}^d \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^r$

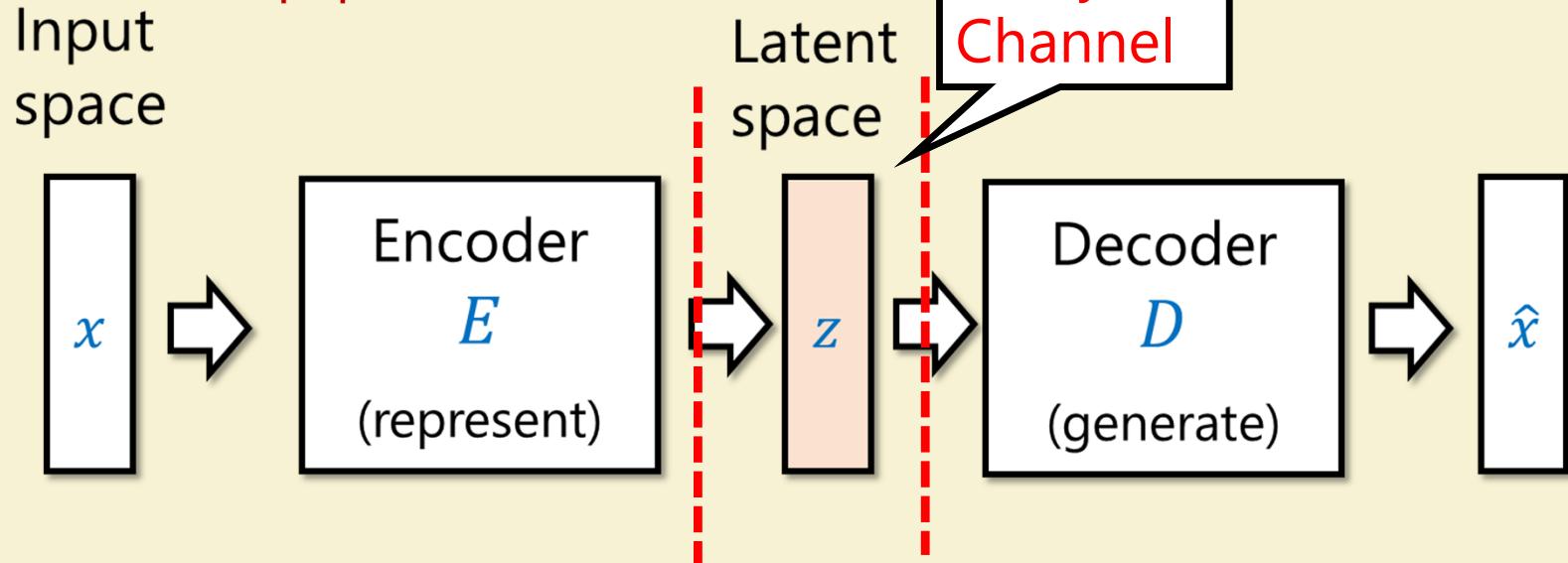
**Dream:** Solve all via



# Dream



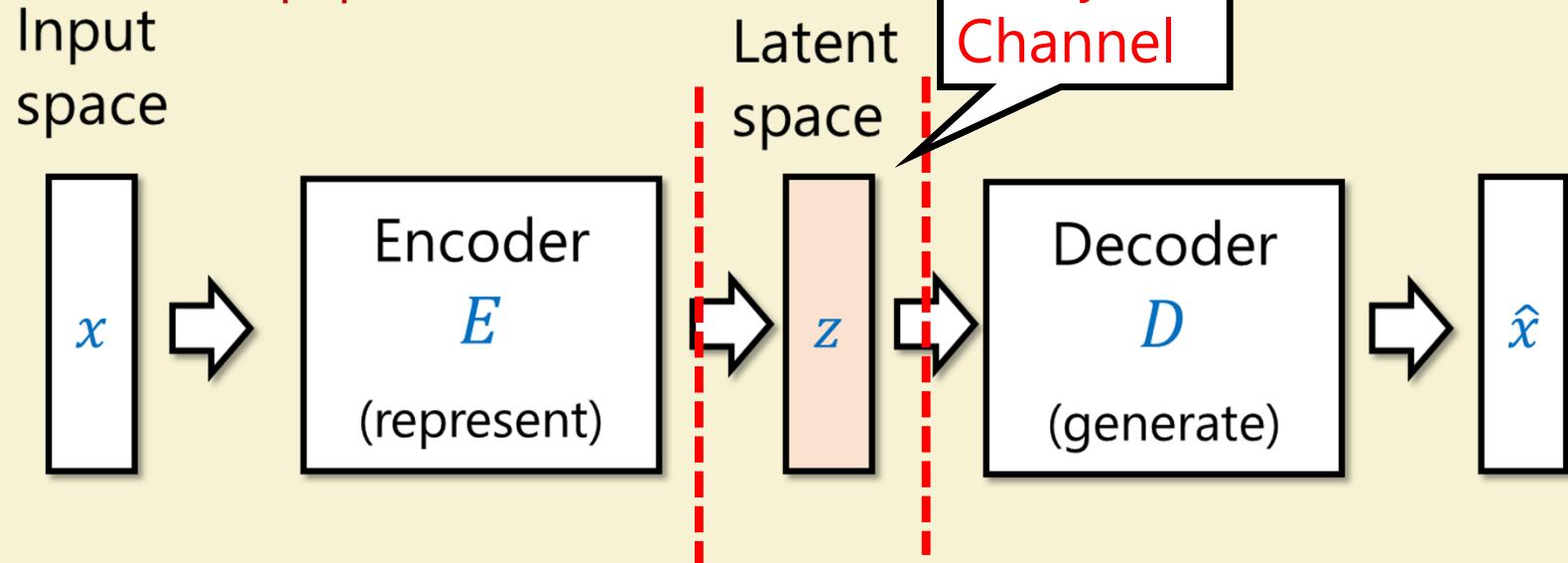
# Common approach



**Hope:** Restricting channel requires “meaningful” latents

- Semantic dimensions
- $x$  “similar” to  $x' \Rightarrow z \approx z'$
- Sampleable  $z$  (e.g.,  $z \sim N(0, I)$ )

# Common approach

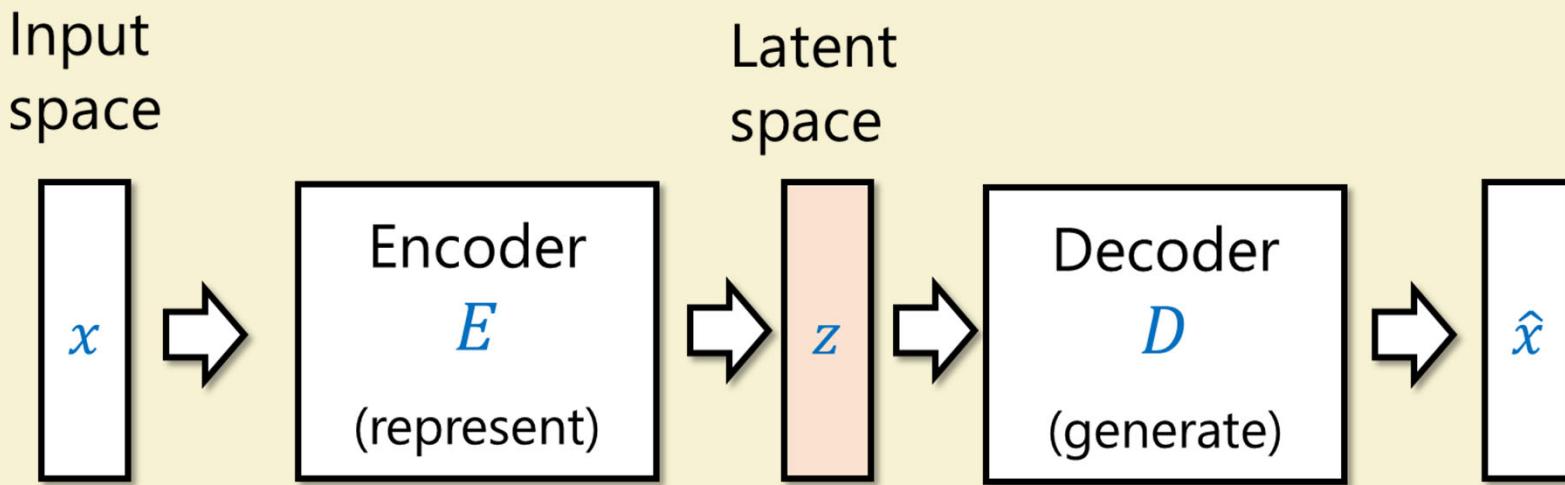


Auto Encoders: Noiseless short  $z$

VAE/Flow: Normal noise (minimize  $\Delta_{KL}(N(0, I) \parallel z)$ )

VQ-VAE: Other noise model?

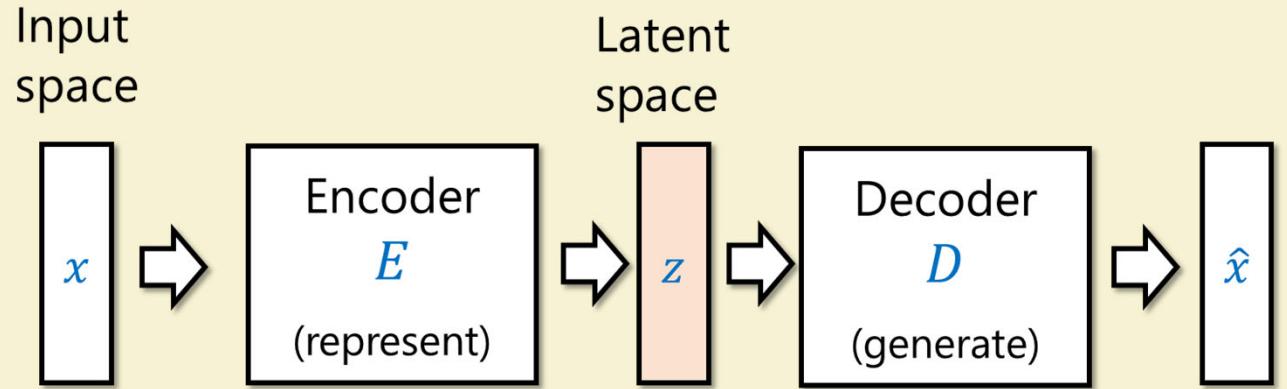
# Auto Encoder



Force “understanding” by setting  $r = \dim(z) \ll \dim(x) = d$

$$\min \frac{1}{n} \sum \|x_i - D(E(x_i))\|^2$$

# Example: PCA

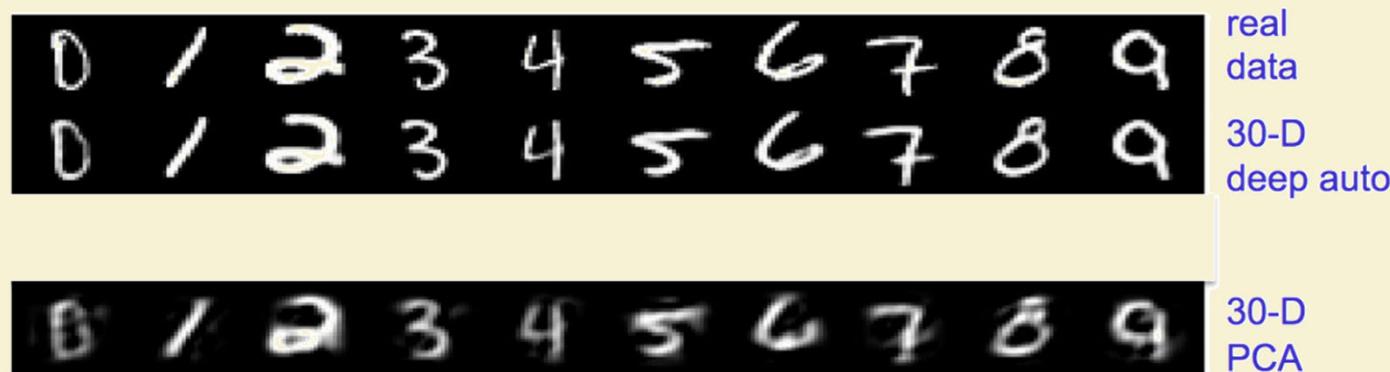
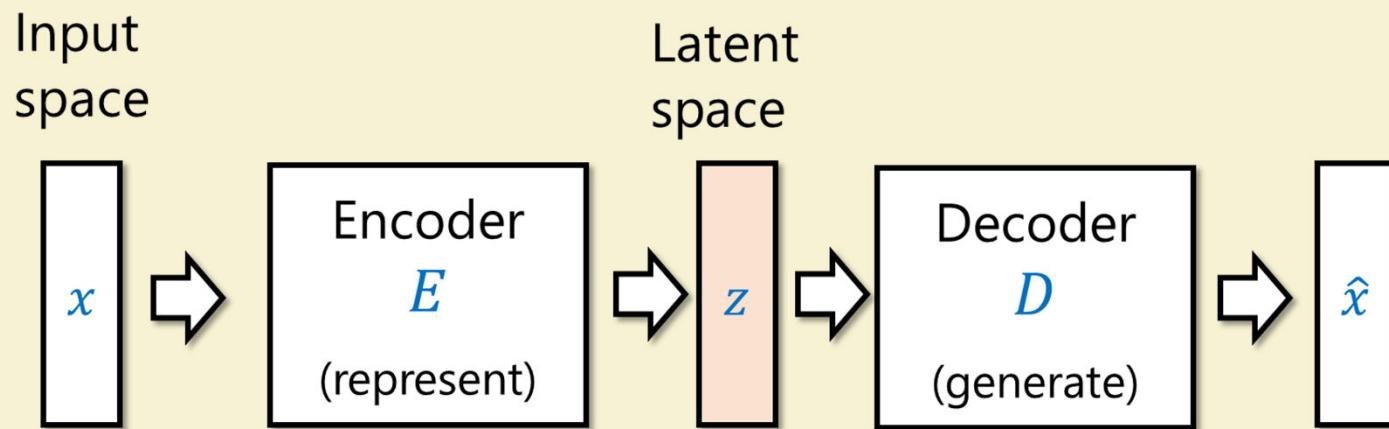


Find  $E: \mathbb{R}^d \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^r$ ,  $D: \mathbb{R}^r \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^d$  minimizing  $\sum_i \|x_i - DEx_i\|^2$

Find rank  $r$  matrix  $L$  minimizing  $\|(I - L)X\|^2 = \text{Tr}((I - L)(I - L)^\top \cdot XX^\top)$

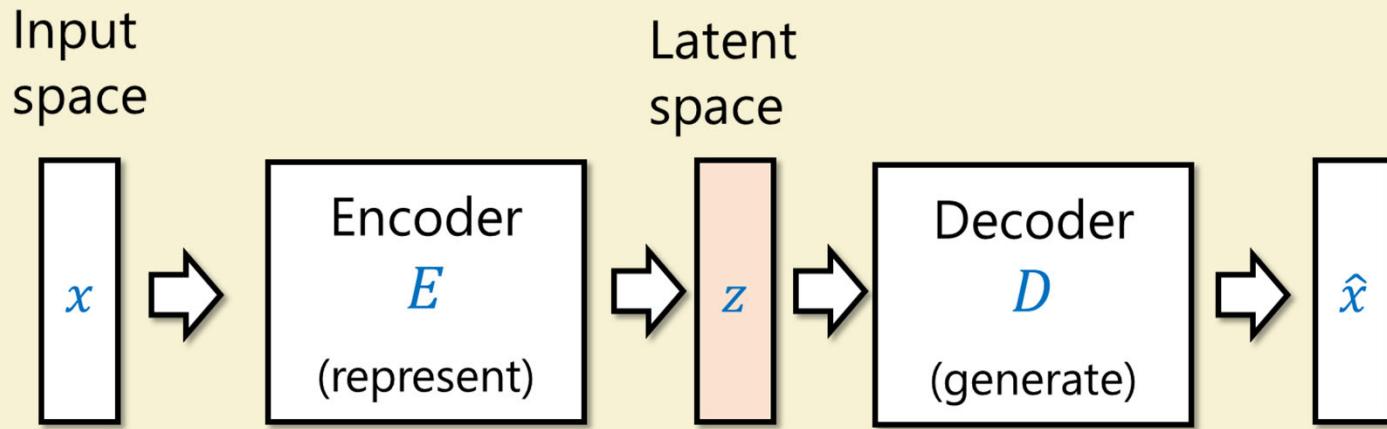
$$XX^\top = \begin{pmatrix} \lambda_1 & \cdots & \\ \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ & \cdots & \lambda_d \end{pmatrix} \Rightarrow L = 1_{\text{Span}\{\nu_1, \dots, \nu_R\}}$$

# Auto Encoder



# Auto Encoder

$$\min \|x - D(E(x))\|^2$$

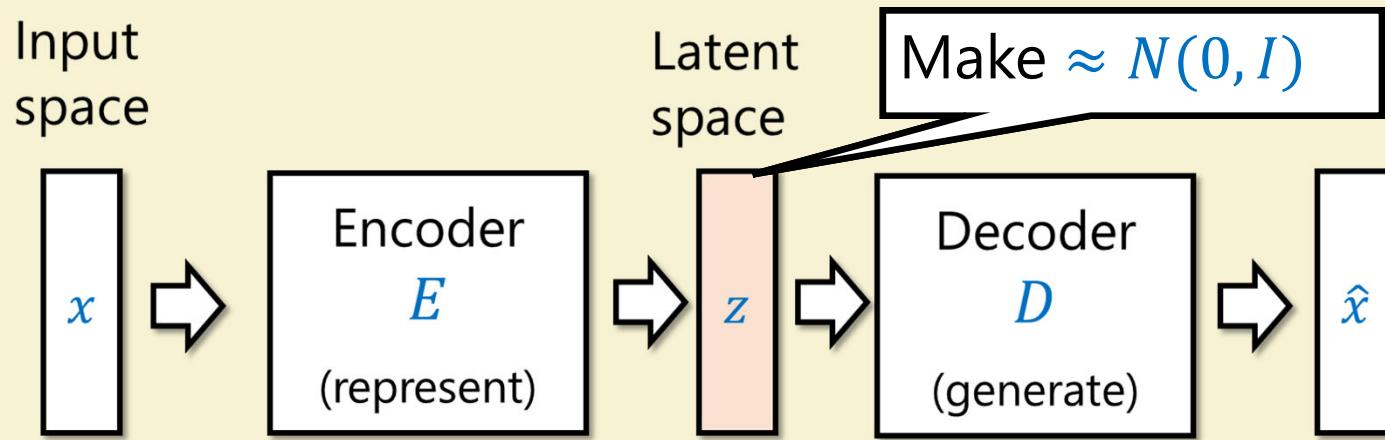


**Hope:** "Marley's law"  $\Rightarrow z$  is informative,  $D(N(0, I)) \approx$  real data

**Reality:** "Murphy's law"  $\Rightarrow z \approx \text{JPEG}(x)$

# Variational Auto Encoder

$$\min \|x - D(E(x))\|^2$$



Also  $\min \Delta_{KL}(E(x) \parallel N(0, I))$

w.r.t. *fixed*  $x$   
 $\Rightarrow E$  is *randomized*

$$\begin{aligned} \mu, \sigma &\rightarrow v \sim N(\mu, \sigma^2) \\ v = \mu + \sigma t &\quad t \sim N(0, 1) \end{aligned}$$

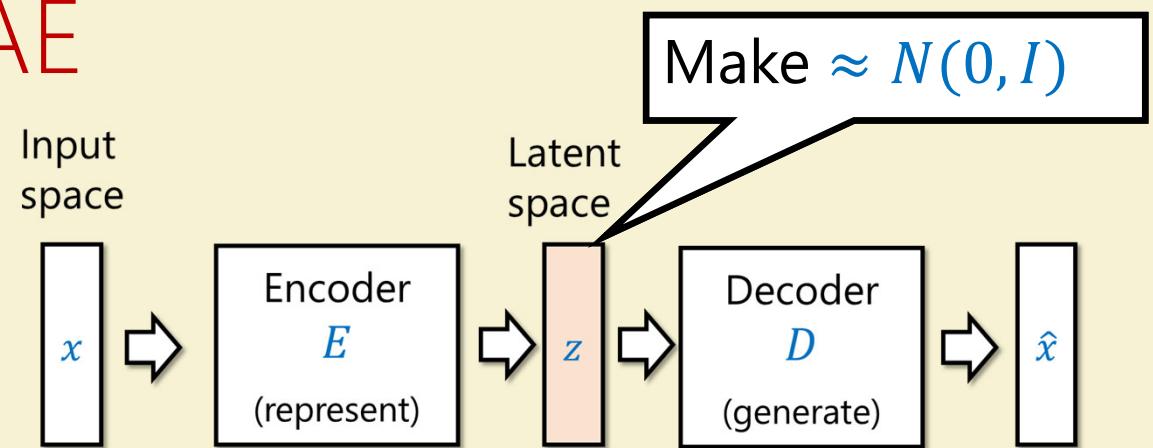
# Another view on VAE

$$\min \|x - D(E(x))\|^2$$

Also  $\min \Delta_{KL}(E(x) \parallel N(0, I))$

Let  $p_x = z \sim N(0, I) | D(z) = x$

$$q_x = E(x)$$



$$\begin{aligned}
 0 \leq \Delta_{KL}(q_x \parallel p_x) &= H(q_x) - \mathbb{E}_{z \sim q_x} [\log p_x(z)] = H(q_x) - \mathbb{E}_{z \sim q_x} \left[ \log \left( \frac{\Pr[N=z \wedge D(z)=x]}{\Pr[D(N)=x]} \right) \right] \\
 &= \underbrace{\log \Pr[D(N) = x]}_{\text{Log likelihood}} - \underbrace{\left( \mathbb{E}_{z \sim q_x} [\log \Pr[N = z \wedge D(z) = x]] - H(q_x) \right)}_{\text{ELBO}}
 \end{aligned}$$

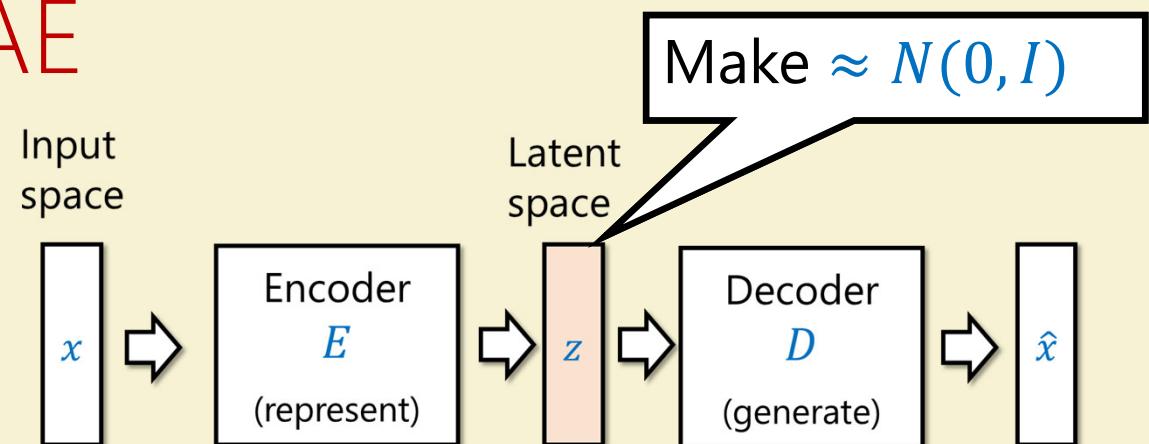
# Another view on VAE

$$\min \|x - D(E(x))\|^2$$

Also  $\min \Delta_{KL}(E(x) \parallel N(0, I))$

Let  $p_x = z \sim N(0, I) | D(z) = x$

$$q_x = E(x)$$



$$0 \leq \Delta_{KL}(q_x \parallel p_x) = H(q_x) - \mathbb{E}_{z \sim q_x}[\log p_x(z)] = H(q_x) - \mathbb{E}_{z \sim q_x} \left[ \log \left( \frac{\Pr[N=z \wedge D(z)=x]}{\Pr[D(N)=x]} \right) \right]$$

$$= \underbrace{\log \Pr[D(N) = x]}_{\text{Log likelihood}} - \left( \mathbb{E}_{z \sim q_x} [\log \Pr[N = z \wedge D(z) = x]] - H(q_x) \right)$$

Log likelihood

$$\approx -\|x - D(E(x))\|^2$$

**reconstruction term**

$$\approx k - \Delta_{KL}(E(x) \parallel N(0, I))$$

**divergence term**

# In practice (?)

Sunglasses direction

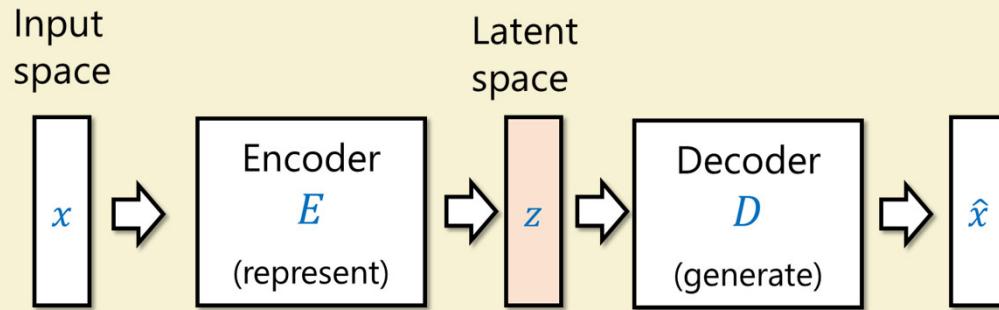


Blond hair direction

Hou, Shen, Sun, Qiu, 2016

See also <https://www.comphree.com/blog/autoencoder/>

# VAE pros & cons



$E$  (and\*  $D$ ) randomized

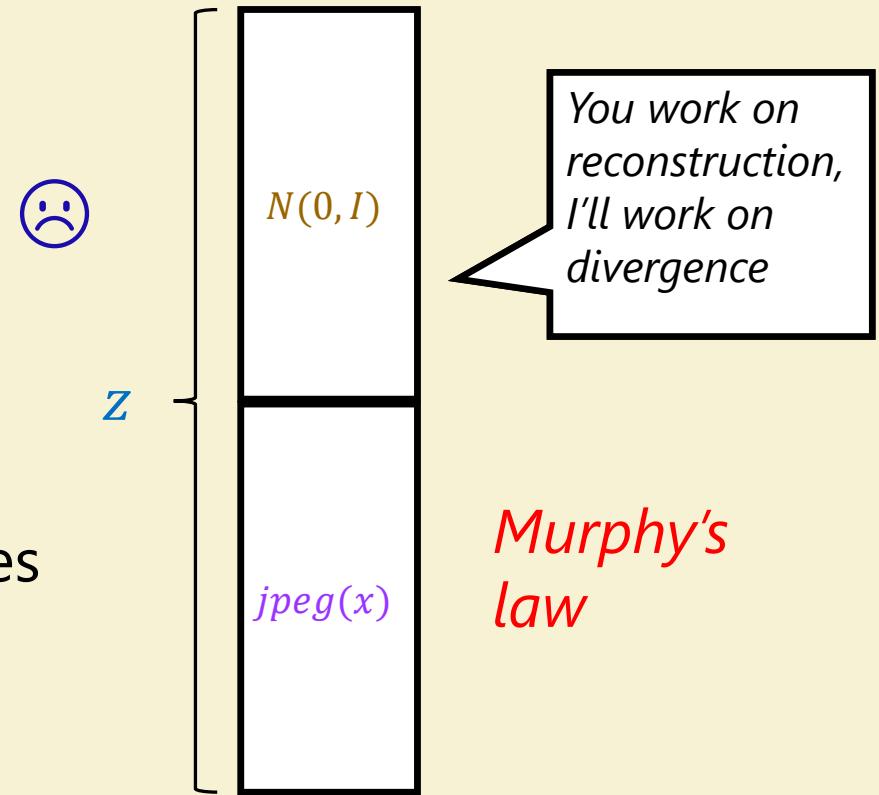
:( Blurry images

: Induces geometry on latent variables

$$z \approx z' \Rightarrow D(z) \approx D(z')$$

$$\min \|x - D(E(x))\|^2$$

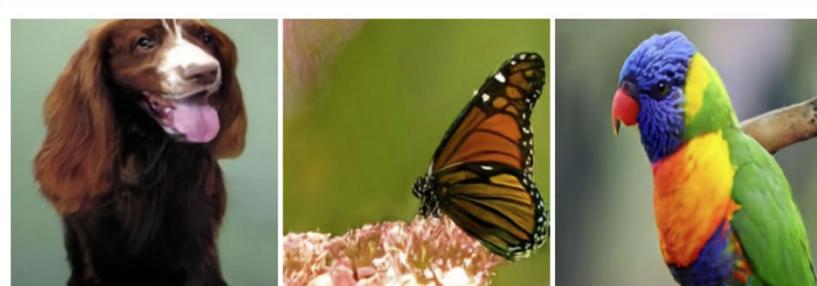
Also  $\min \Delta_{KL}(E(x) \parallel N(0, I))$



Murphy's  
law

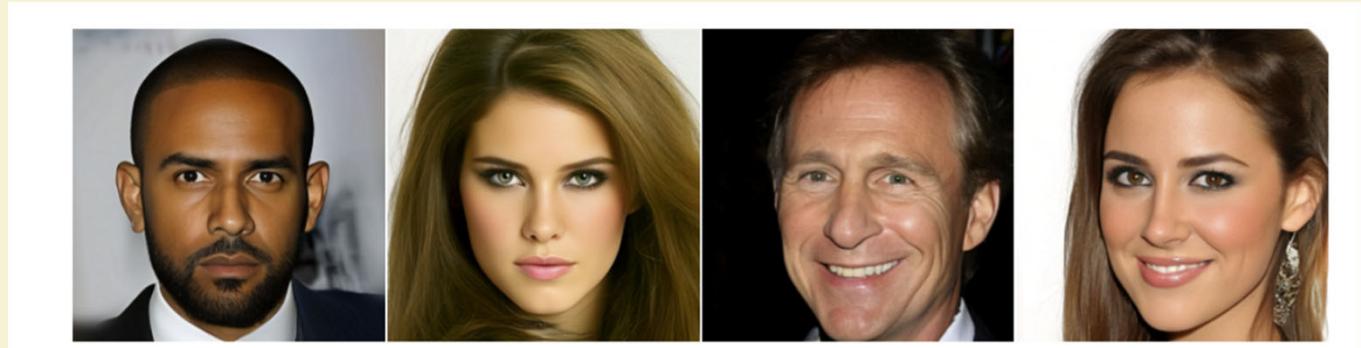
# Improved VAEs

Vector quantized VAEs



van den Oord, Vinyals, Kavukcuoglu, 17  
Razavi, van den Oord, Vinyals, 19

Hierarchical VAEs



Vahdat, Kautz , 20

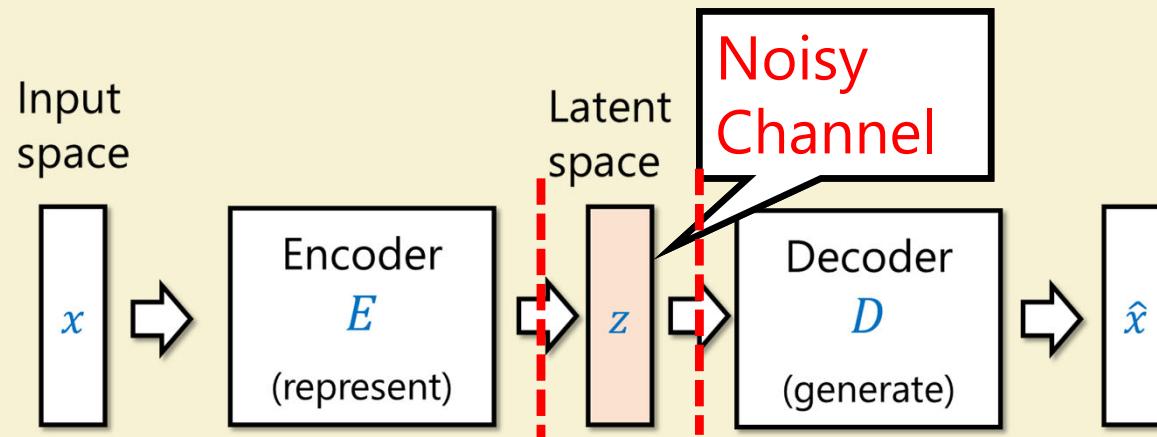
# Vector quantization (VQ-VAE, Attention)

Given  $S = \{v_1, \dots, v_m\} \in \mathbb{R}^d$

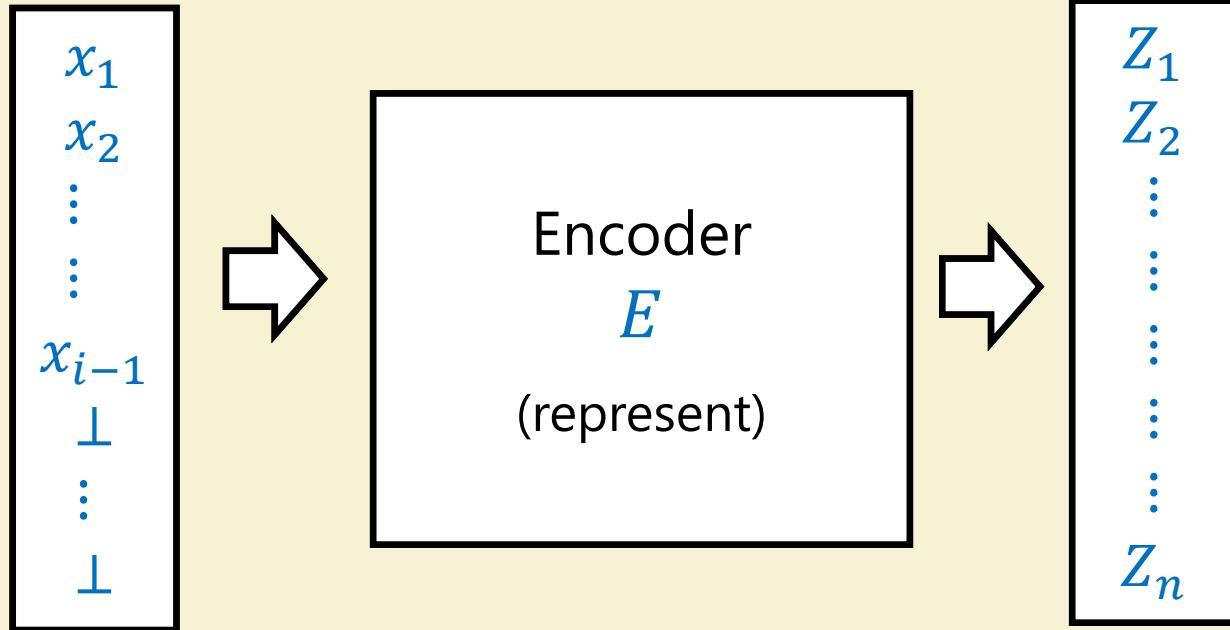
map  $w \in \mathbb{R}^d$  to  $\arg \max_{v \in S} \langle w, v_i \rangle$

or to  $\sum \alpha_i v_i$  where  $\vec{\alpha} = \text{softmax}(\langle w, v_1 \rangle, \dots, \langle w, v_m \rangle)$

Form of encoding / noise resilience



# Auto-regressive models



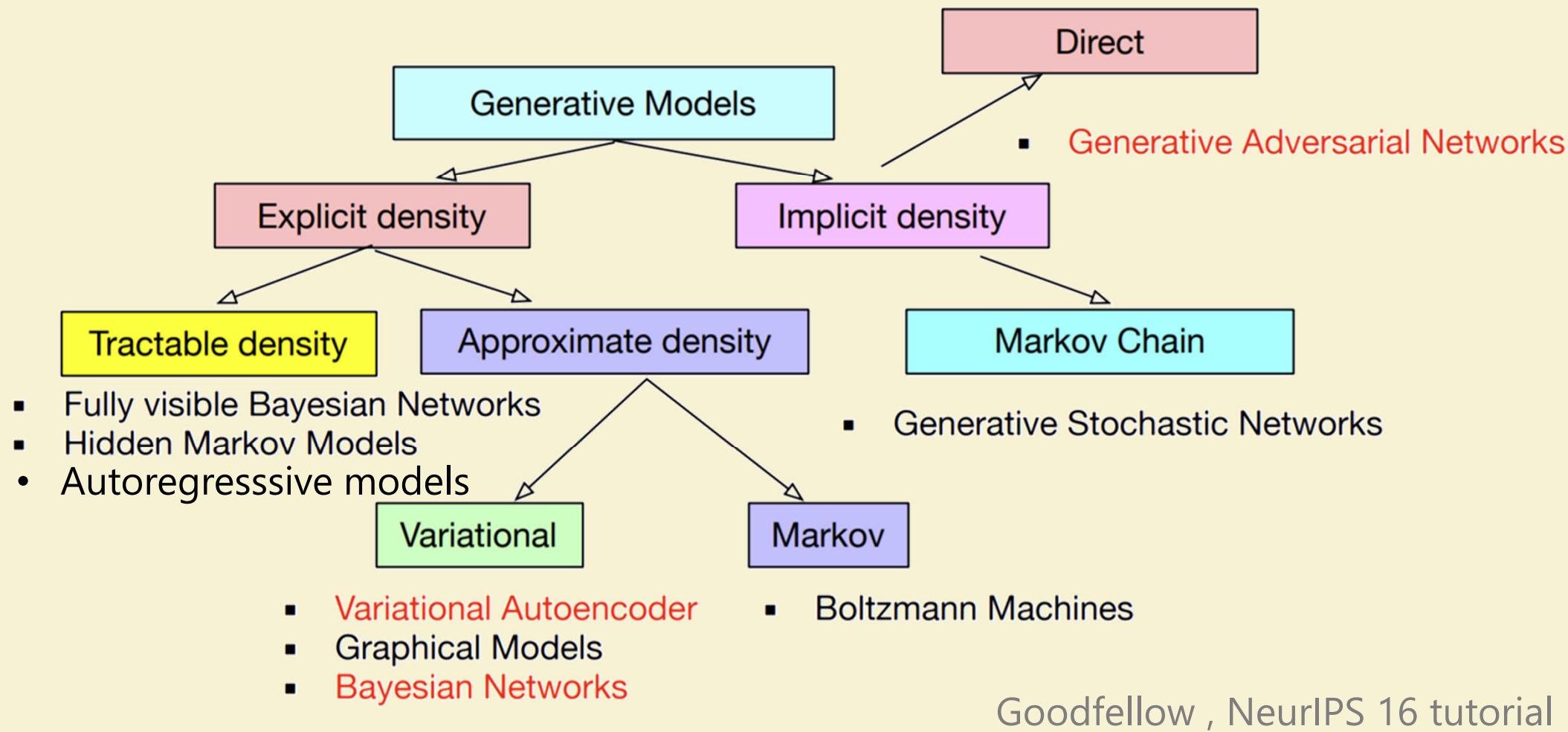
$x_1, \dots, x_n$  elements in  $S \cup \{ \perp \}$

$D_i$  distribution over  $S$

$$D_i = D_i(x_1 \dots x_{i-1})$$

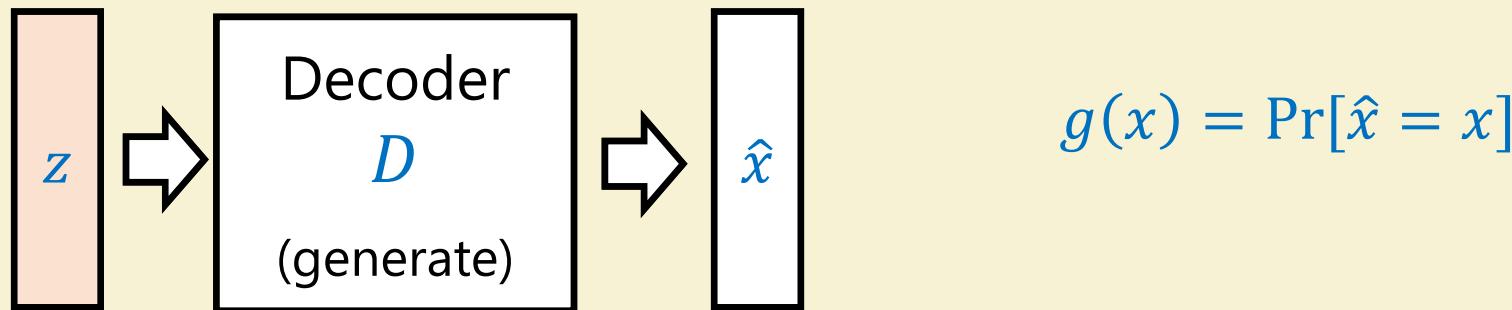
$$D_i \approx D_i | x_1 \dots x_{i-1}$$

# Metrics for generative models



Goodfellow , NeurIPS 16 tutorial

# Metrics for generative models



Negative log likelihood:  $-\mathbb{E}_{x \sim X} \log g(x)$

Bits per pixel:  $-\frac{\mathbb{E}_{x \sim X} \log g(x)}{d}$

Log Perplexity:  $-\frac{\log \mathbb{E}_{x \sim X} g(x)}{d} = \log \left( \prod_{i=1}^d g(x_i | x_{<i}) \right)^{1/d}$

# Metrics without density

Know it when I see it?

$y$ : random class

$IN(\hat{x})$ : probability dist of  $y(\hat{x})$  according to Inception v3

$$\text{Log inception score: } \Delta_{KL}(IN(\hat{x}) \parallel y) = I(\hat{x} ; IN(\hat{x}))$$

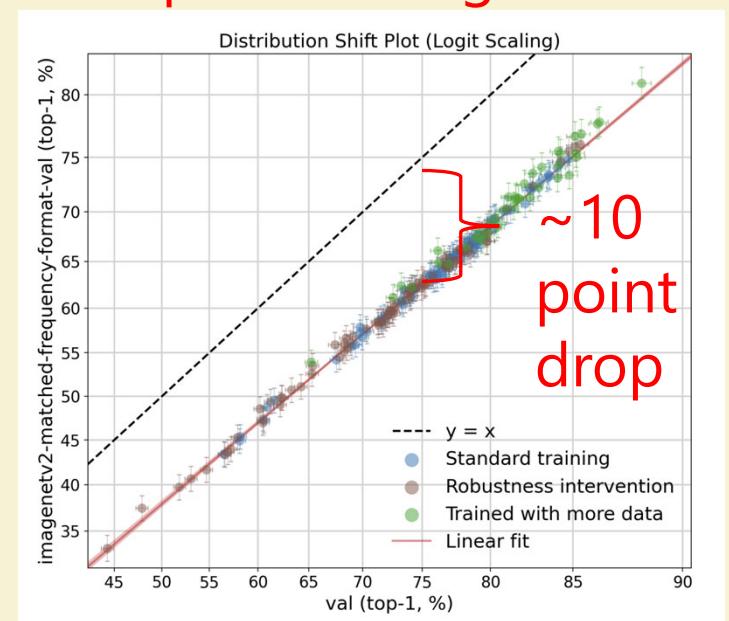
Compare w ImageNet v2

Ravuri-Vinyalis 2019:

Train with BigGAN instead of ImageNet

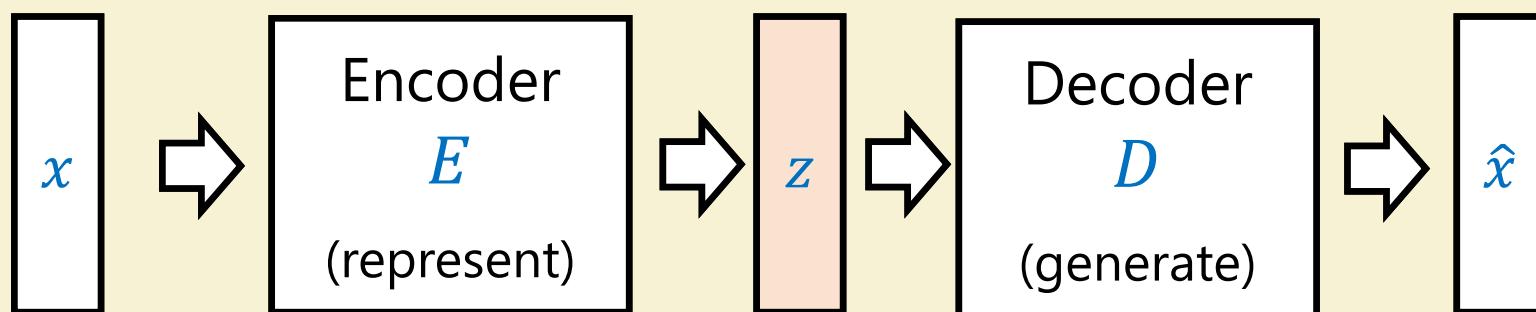
Accuracy drops from 74% to 5%-43%

Uncorrelated with Inception score

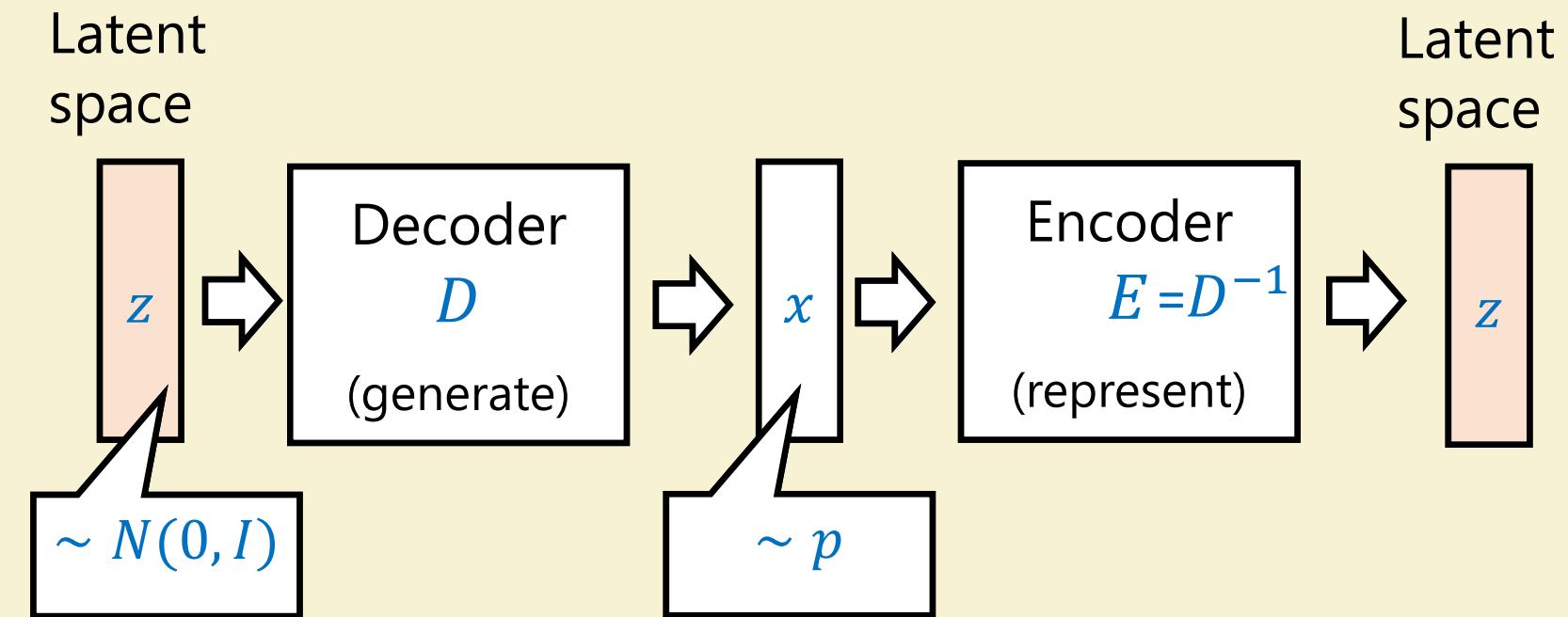


# Flow models

Input  
space



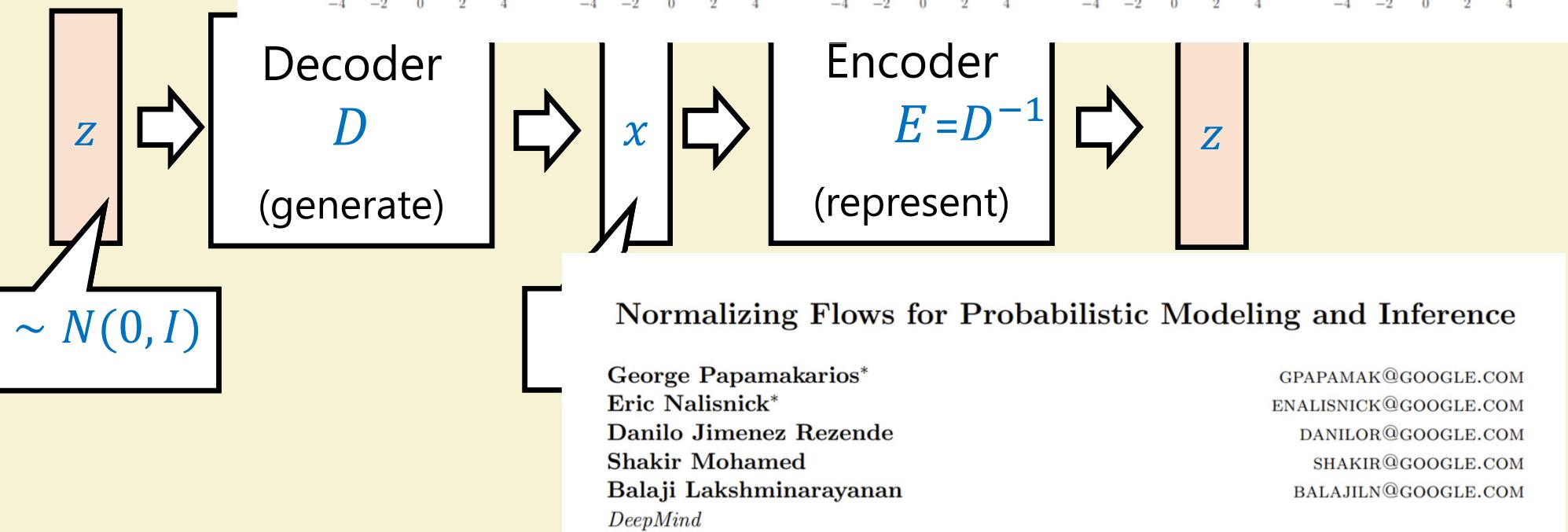
# Flow models



Invertible and differentiable map  $D: \mathbb{R}^d \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^d$  s.t.  $D(N) = p$

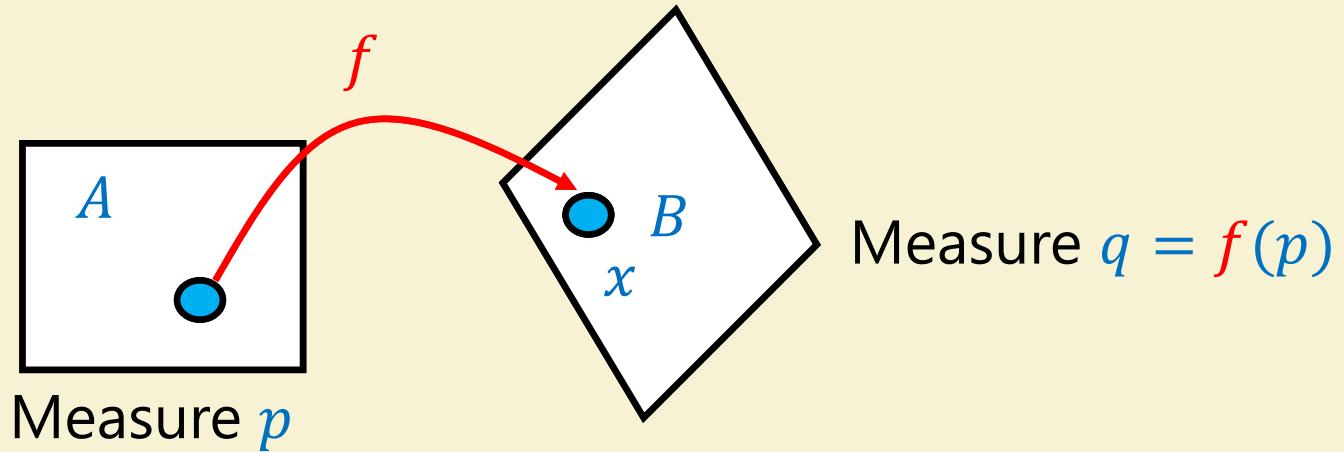
# Flow models

Latent space



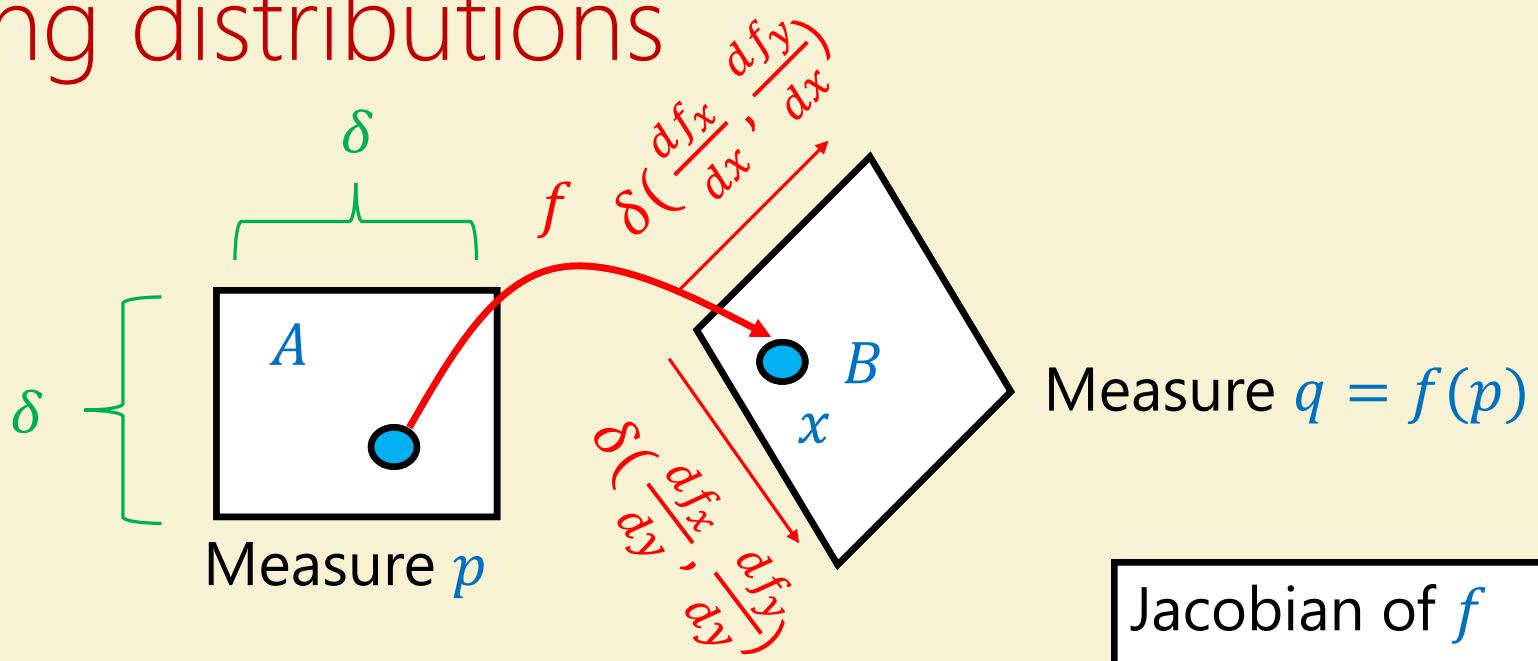
Invertible and differentiable map  $D: \mathbb{R}^d \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^d$  s.t.  $D(N) = p$

# Mapping distributions



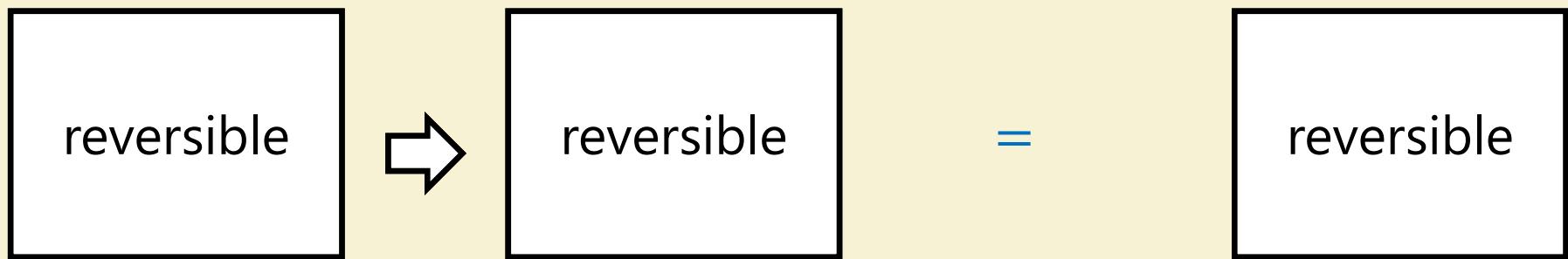
$$q(x) = p(f^{-1}(x)) \cdot \frac{Vol(A)}{Vol(B)}$$

# Mapping distributions

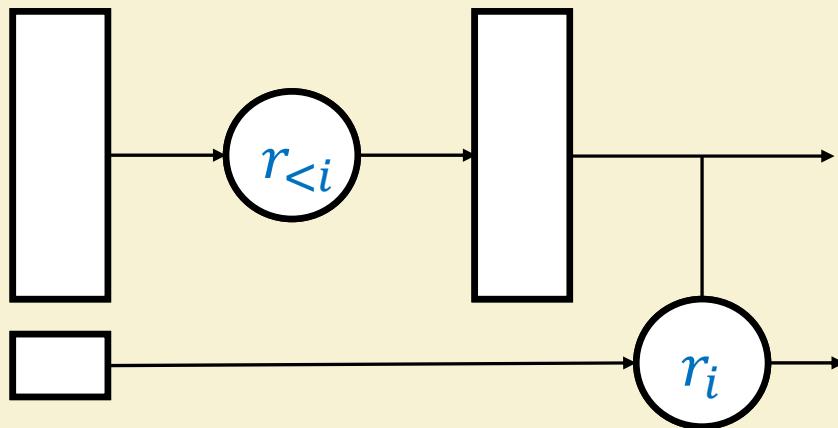


$$q(x) = p(f^{-1}(x)) \cdot \frac{Vol(A)}{Vol(B)} = p(f^{-1}(x)) \cdot \frac{\delta^2}{\delta^2} \cdot \left( \det \begin{pmatrix} \frac{\partial f_x}{\partial x} & \frac{\partial f_y}{\partial x} \\ \frac{\partial f_x}{\partial y} & \frac{\partial f_y}{\partial y} \end{pmatrix} \right)^{-1}$$

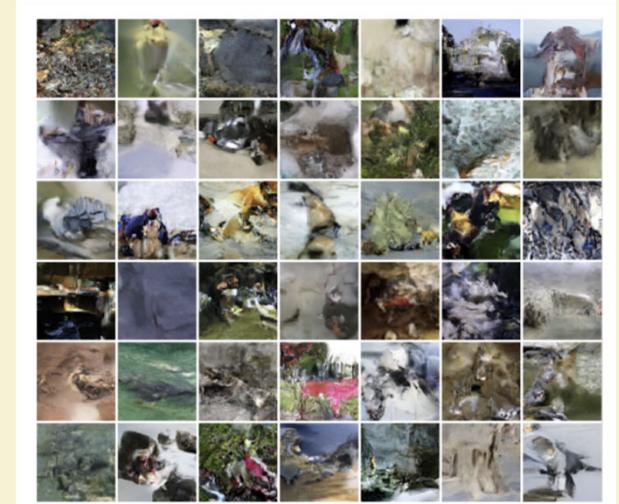
# Constructing flow model



Making computation **reversible** (c.f. quantum, block ciphers)



# Flows in practice



Dinh, Sohl-Dickstein, Bengio 17

Ho,Chen, Srinivas, Duan, Abbeel 19

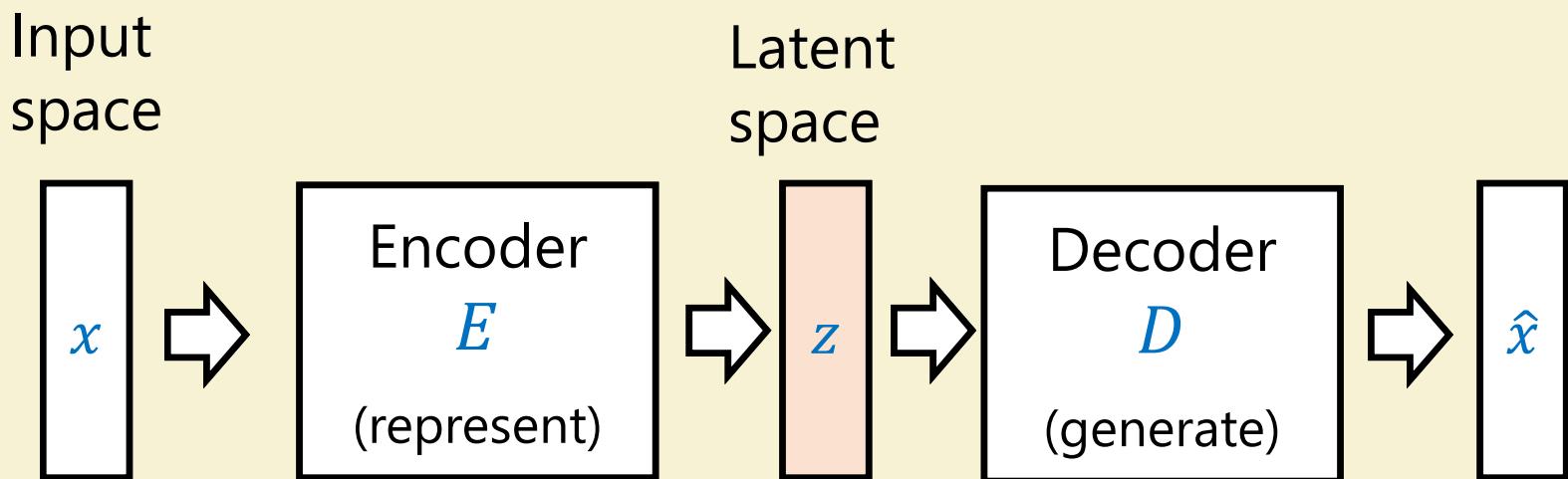
# Unsupervised and semi-supervised learning

Input:  $x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n \sim p \subseteq \mathbb{R}^d$

Goal: "understand"  $p$

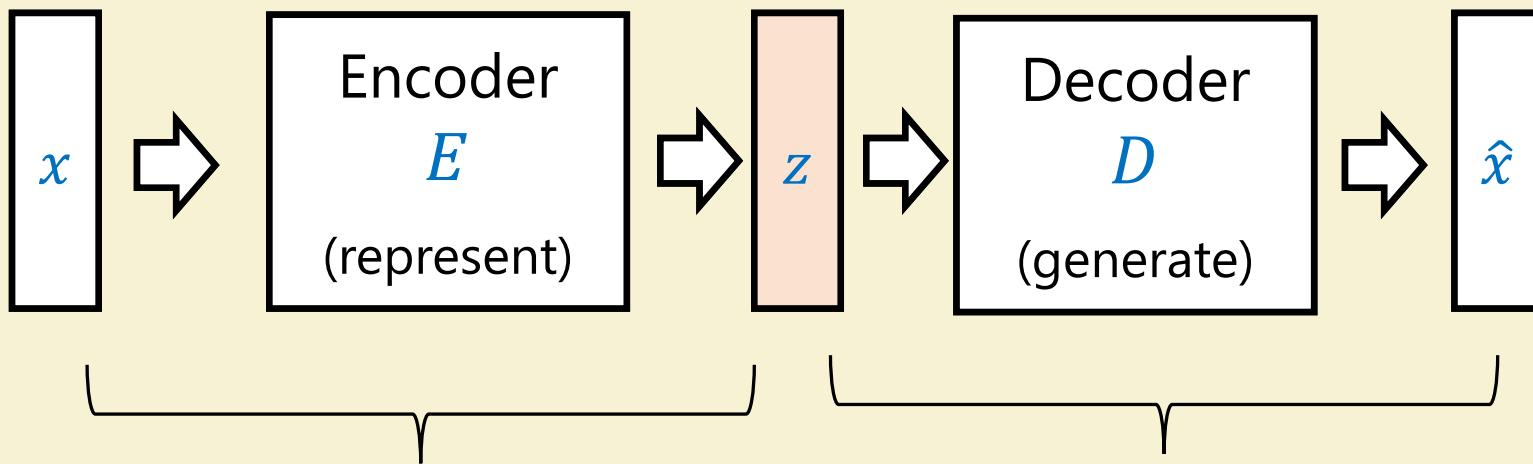
- Compute/approximate  $x \mapsto p(x)$
- Sample fresh  $x \sim p$
- Predict  $x_A$  from  $x_B$
- Find "good" representation  $r: \mathbb{R}^d \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^r$

Dream: Solve all via



# Giving up on (part of) the dream

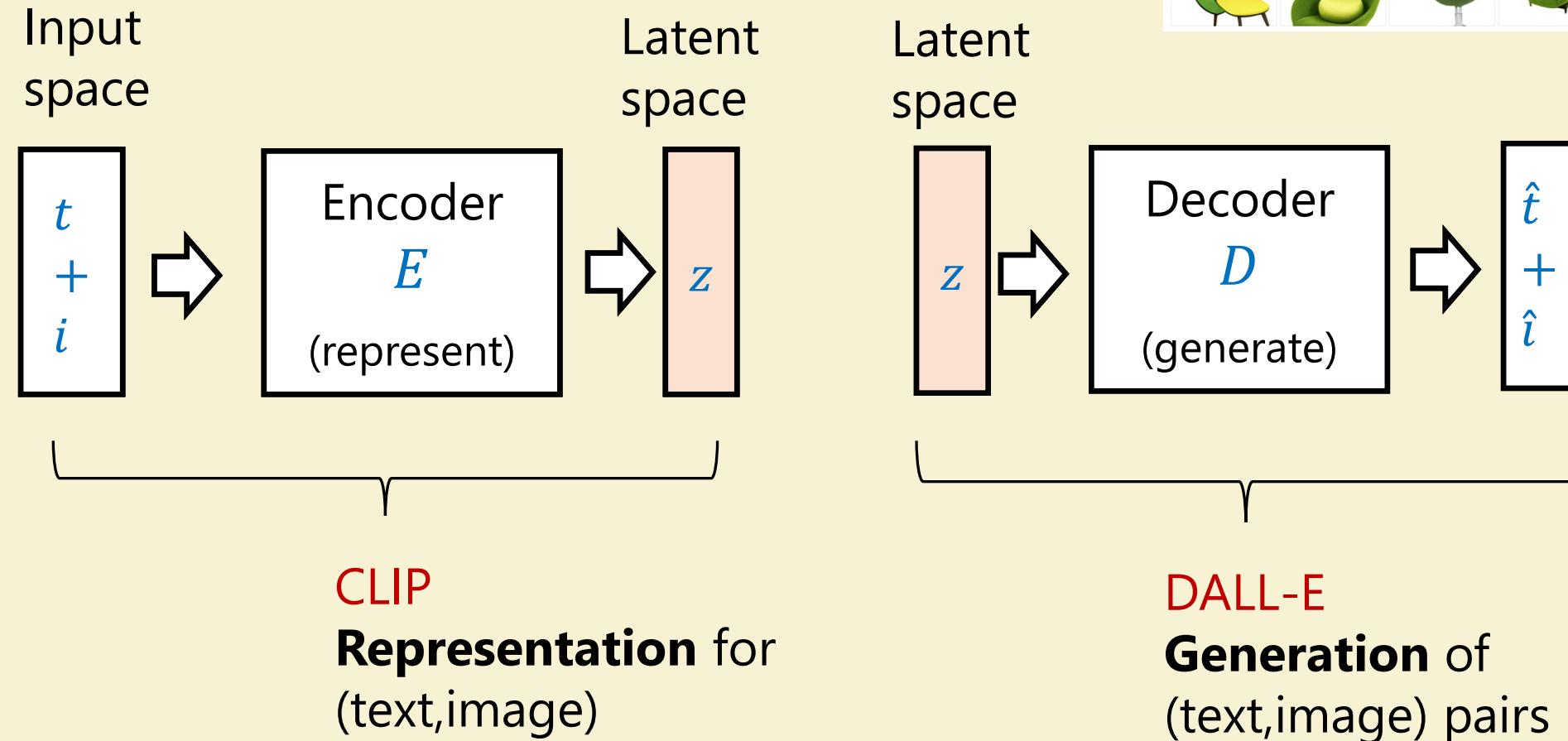
Input  
space



**Self-Supervised learning**  
**Representation** without  
generation

**GAN**  
**Generation** without  
representation /  
density estimation

# CLIP + DALL-E / Text+ Image



# Contrastive learning

**Loss:** Representations  $u_1, \dots, u_n$  and  $v_1, \dots, v_n$

$u_i$  represents “similar object” to  $v_i$

Define  $M_{i,j} = f(u_i \cdot v_j)$  for monotone  $f: \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  (e.g,  $f(x) = \exp(\tau \cdot x)$ )

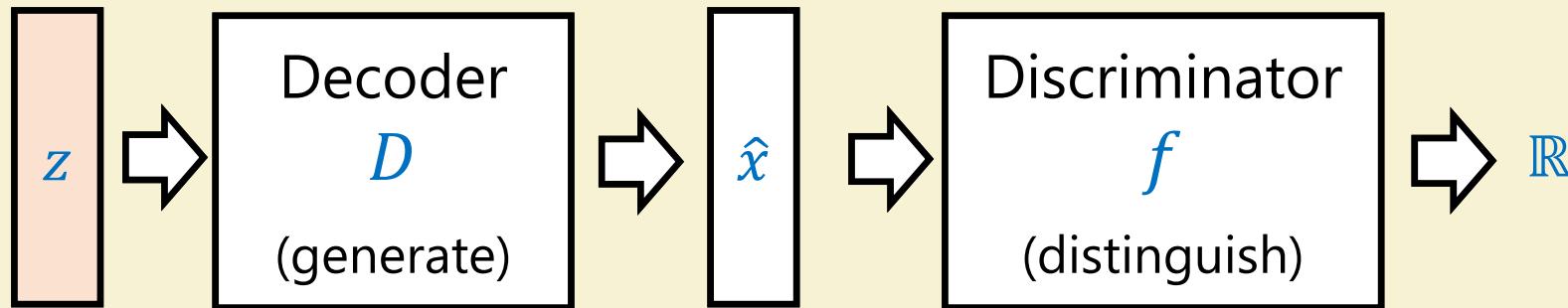
$$\text{Loss} = \frac{\sum_i M_{i,i}}{\sum_{i \neq j} M_{i,j}}$$

Similar objects have nearby representation

**SIMCLR:**  $x_1, \dots, x_n$  images,  $u_i, v_i$  independent augmentations of  $x_i$

**CLIP:**  $(u_i, v_i)$  matching text/image pair

# Generative Adversarial Networks



$$\text{loss} = \max_{f \in \mathbb{R}^d \rightarrow \mathbb{R}} \left| \mathbb{E}_{\hat{x} \sim D(z)} f(\hat{x}) - \mathbb{E}_{x \sim p} f(x) \right|$$

Trained via best response equilibrium

Performance?

