

# Recurrent Neural Networks

CS 6384 Computer Vision

Professor Yu Xiang

The University of Texas at Dallas

Some slides of this lecture are courtesy Stanford CS231n

# Single Images

- Convolutional neural networks



Image



CNN



High-level information

- Depth
- Object classes
- Object poses
- Etc.

# Sequential Data

- Data depends on time

- Video



$t-1$



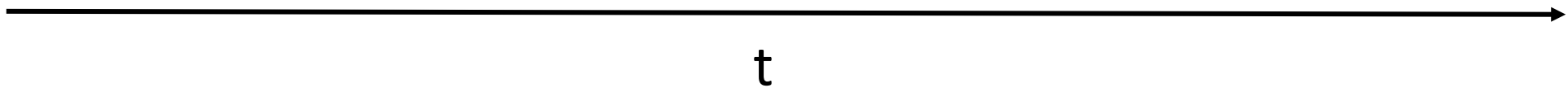
$t$



$t+1$

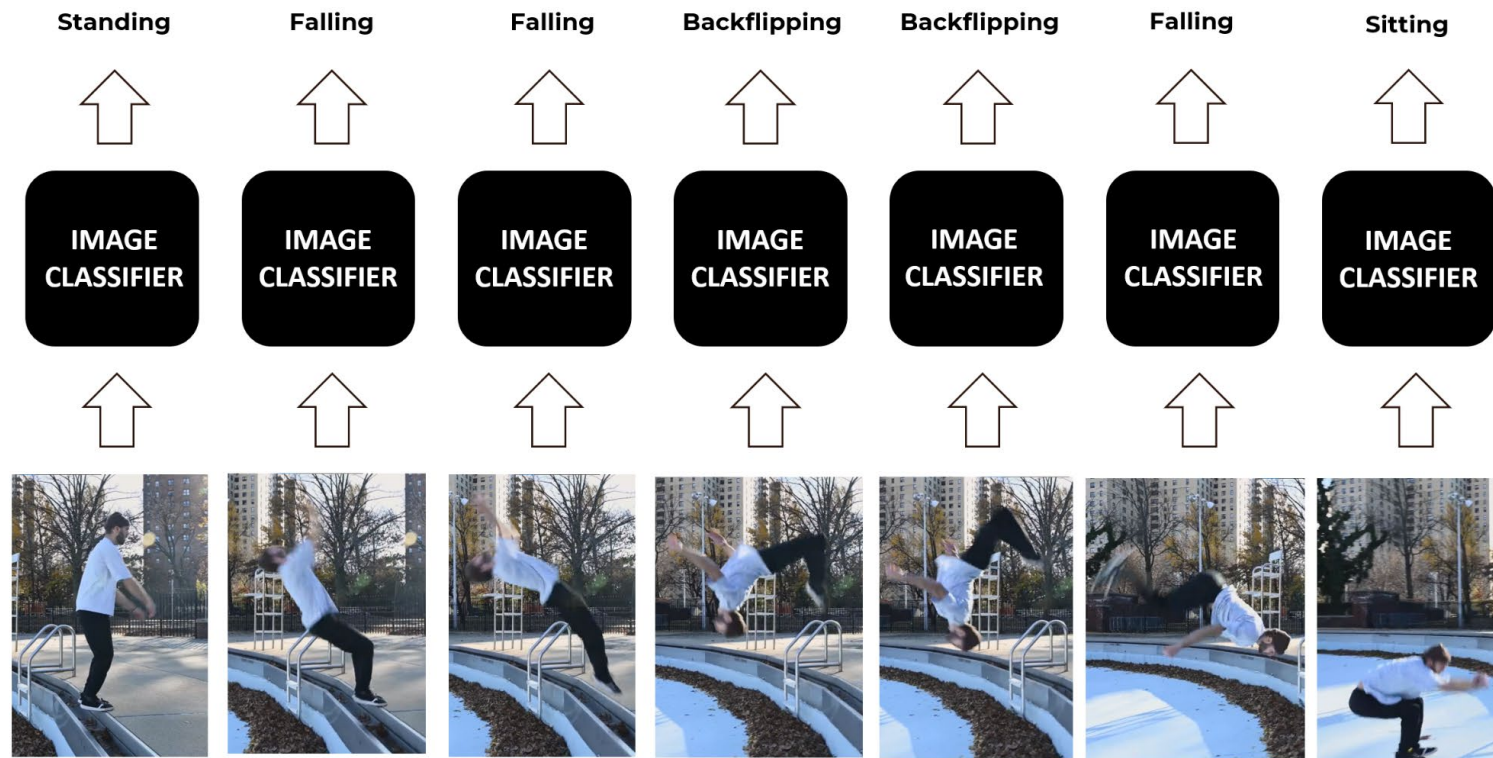
- Sentence

UT Dallas is a rising public research university in the heart of DFW.



# Sequential Data Labeling

- Video frame labeling

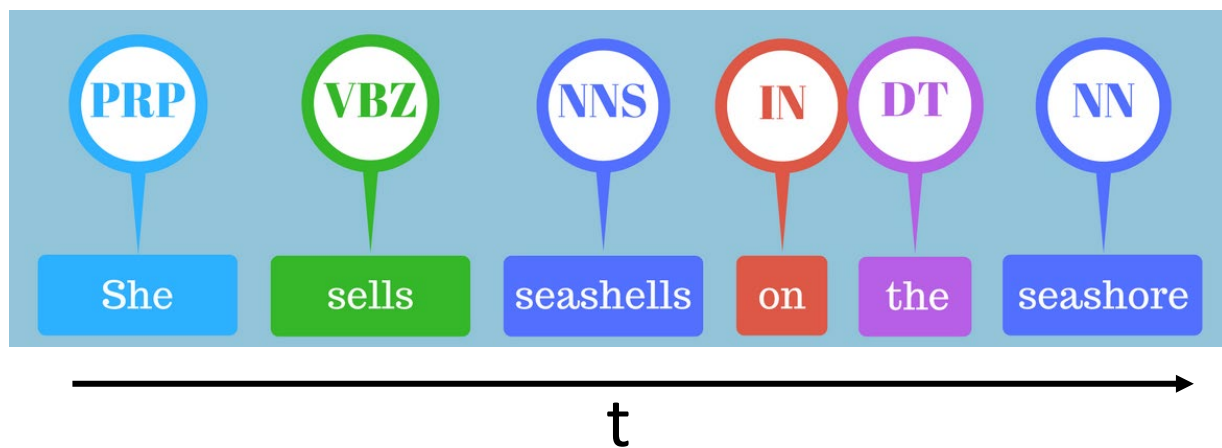


Frames of a Video

<https://bleedai.com/human-activity-recognition-using-tensorflow-cnn-lstm/>

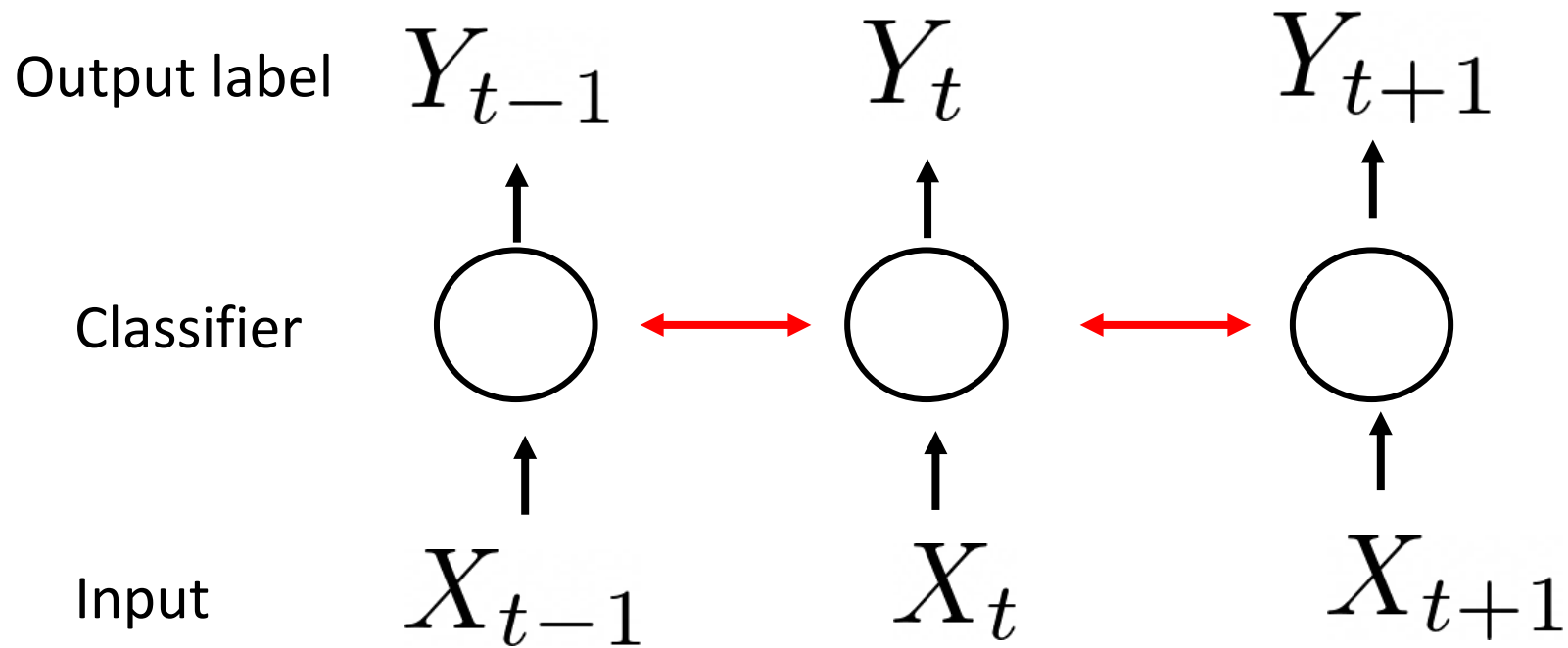
# Sequential Data Labeling

- Part-of-speech tagging (grammatical tagging)



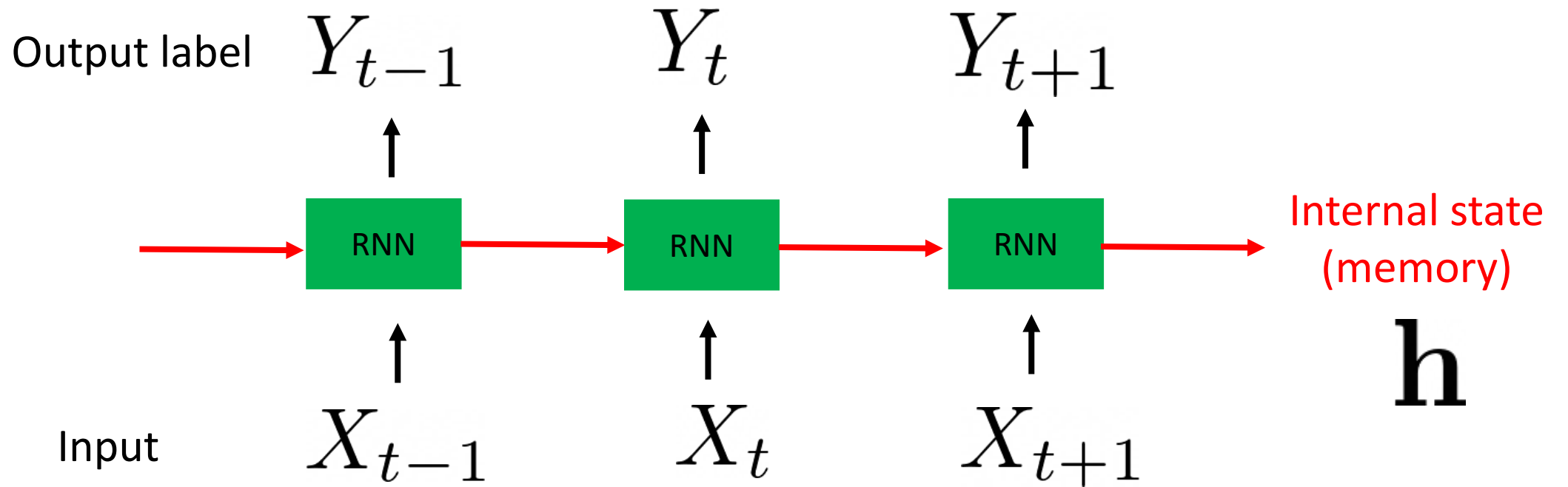
Tag	Meaning	English Examples
ADJ	adjective	<i>new, good, high, special, big, local</i>
ADP	adposition	<i>on, of, at, with, by, into, under</i>
ADV	adverb	<i>really, already, still, early, now</i>
CONJ	conjunction	<i>and, or, but, if, while, although</i>
DET	determiner, article	<i>the, a, some, most, every, no, which</i>
NOUN	noun	<i>year, home, costs, time, Africa</i>
NUM	numeral	<i>twenty-four, fourth, 1991, 14:24</i>
PRT	particle	<i>at, on, out, over per, that, up, with</i>
PRON	pronoun	<i>he, their, her, its, my, I, us</i>
VERB	verb	<i>is, say, told, given, playing, would</i>
.	punctuation marks	<i>. , ; !</i>
X	other	<i>ersatz, esprit, dunno, gr8, univeristy</i>

# Sequential Data Labeling

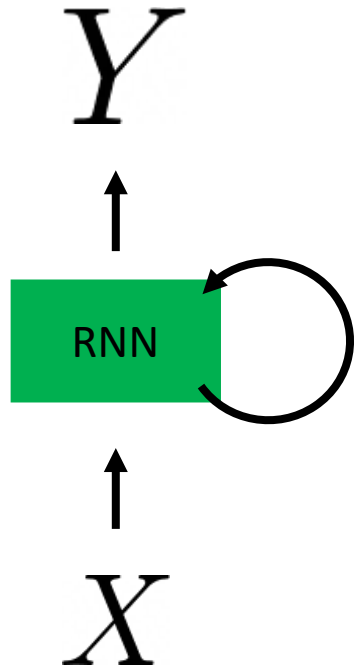


How to capture information across time?

# Recurrent Neural Networks



# Hidden State Update



Updating function  
with parameters  $W$

$$\mathbf{h}_t = f_W(\mathbf{h}_{t-1}, \mathbf{x}_t)$$

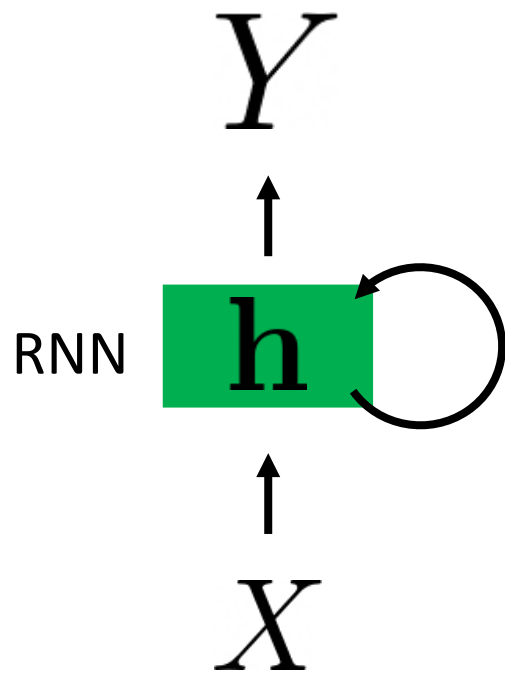
Hidden state  
at time  $t$

Hidden state  
at time  $t-1$

Input at  
time  $t$



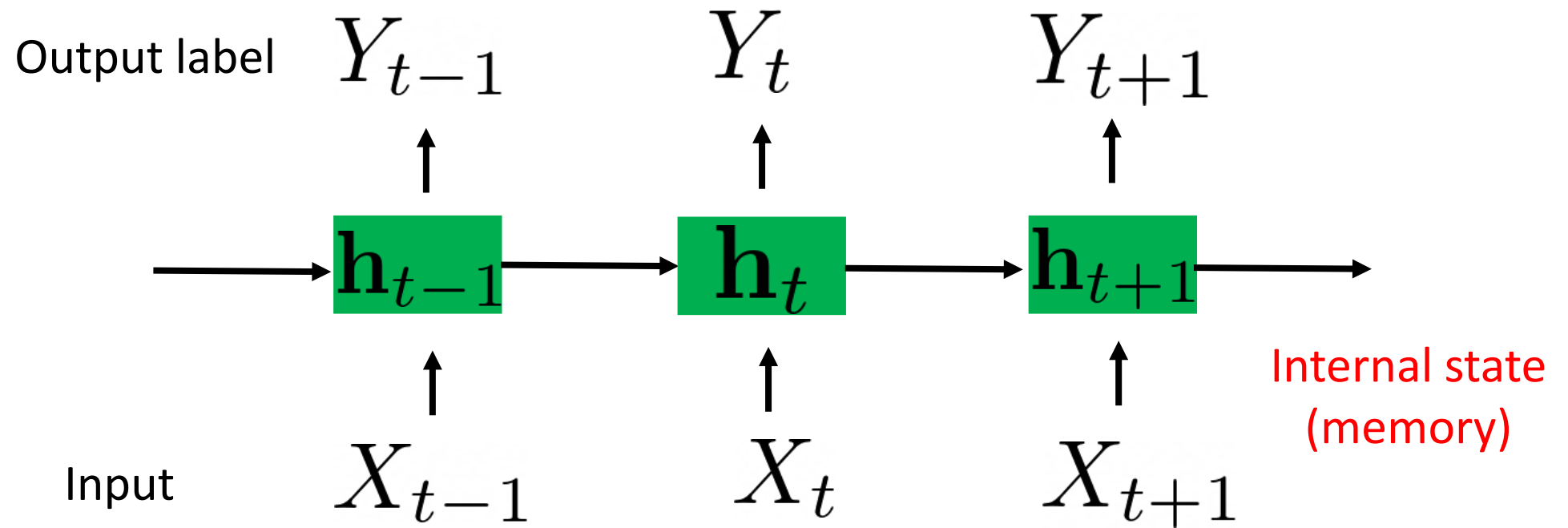
# Using the Hidden State



$$\mathbf{h}_t = f_W(\mathbf{h}_{t-1}, \mathbf{x}_t)$$

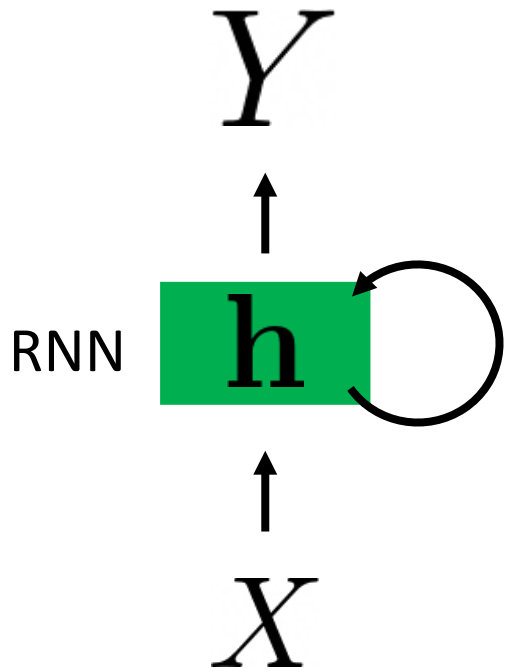
$$\mathbf{y}_t = f_{W'}(\mathbf{h}_t)$$

# Recurrent Neural Networks



# Vanilla RNN

Hidden state updating rule

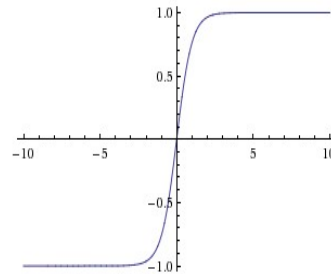


$$\mathbf{h}_t = \tanh(W_{hh}\mathbf{h}_{t-1} + W_{xh}\mathbf{x}_t)$$

$m \times 1$        $m \times m$        $m \times 1$        $m \times n$        $n \times 1$

**tanh**     $\tanh(x)$

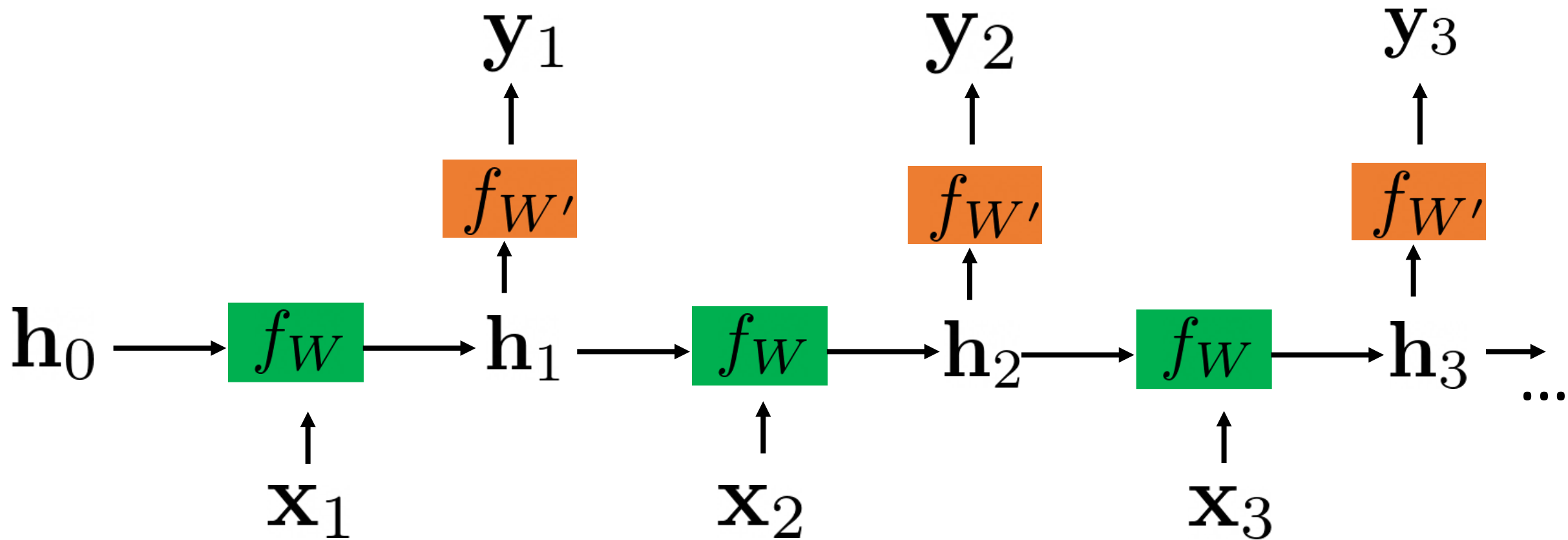
$$\frac{e^{2x} - 1}{e^{2x} + 1}$$



$$\mathbf{y}_t = W_{hy}\mathbf{h}_t$$

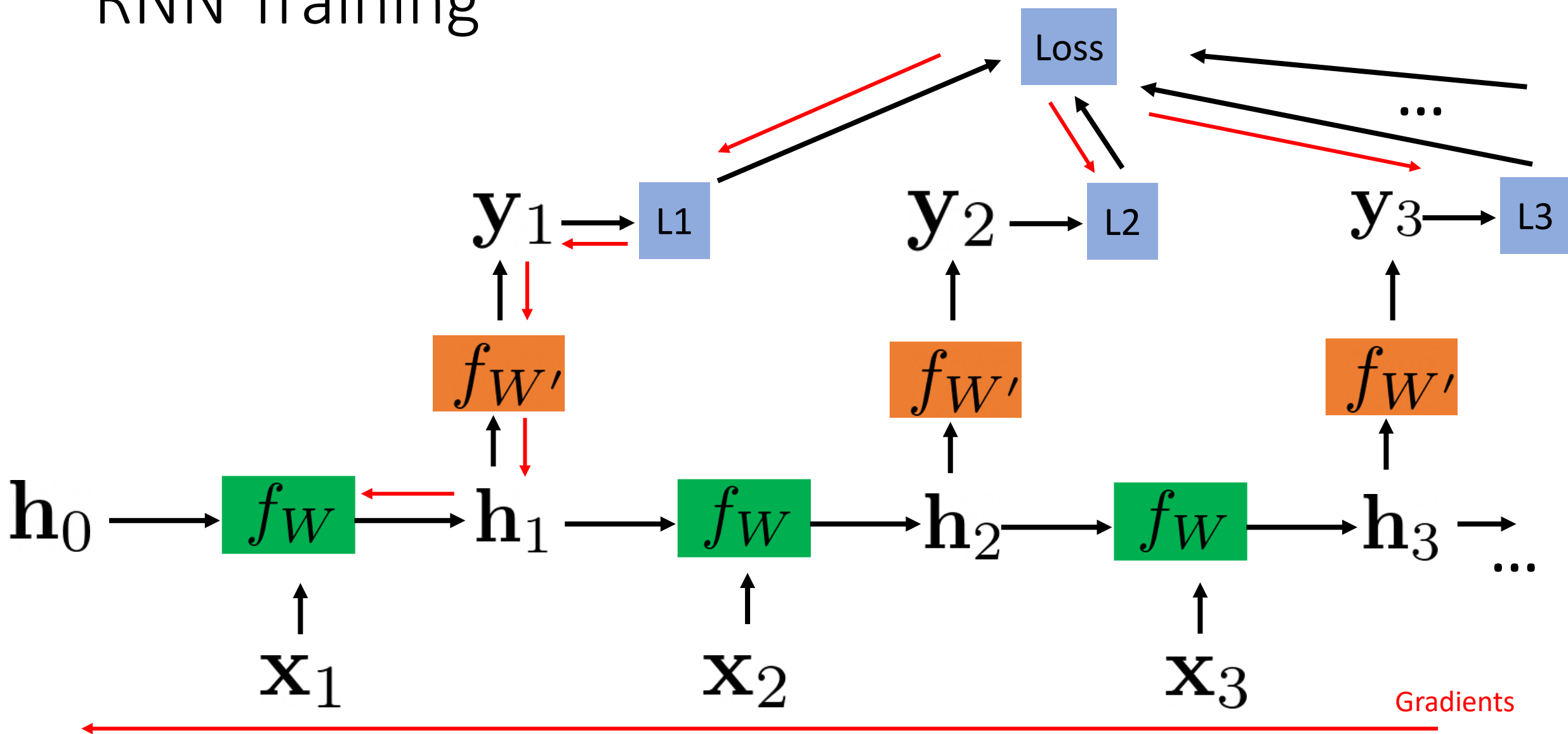
$l \times 1$        $m \times 1$

# RNN Computation Graph

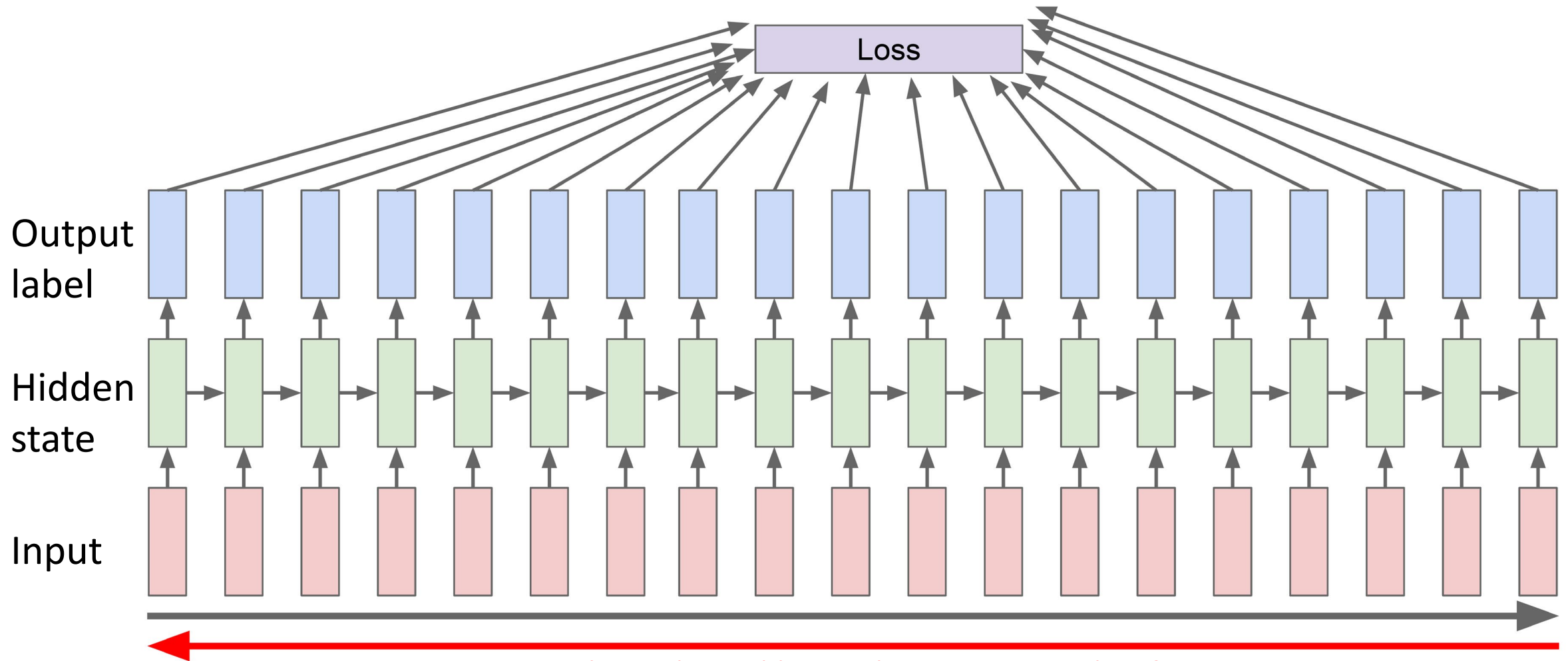


The same set of weights for different time steps  $f_W$   $f_{W'}$

# RNN Training

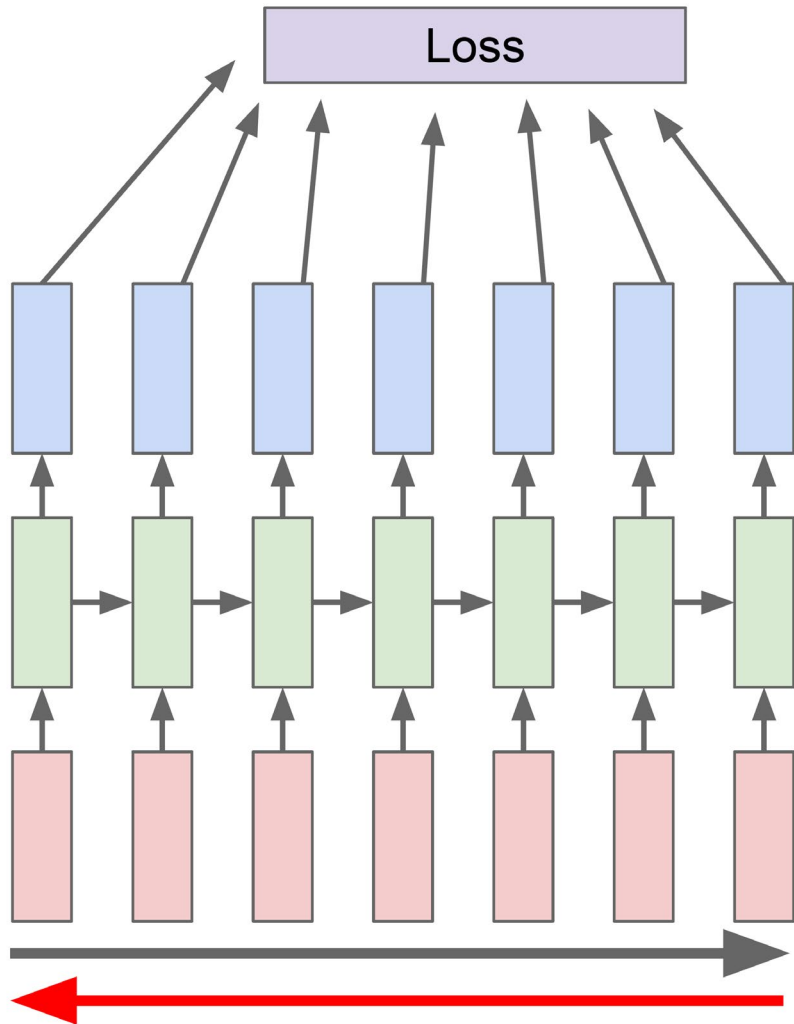


# Backpropagation through Time



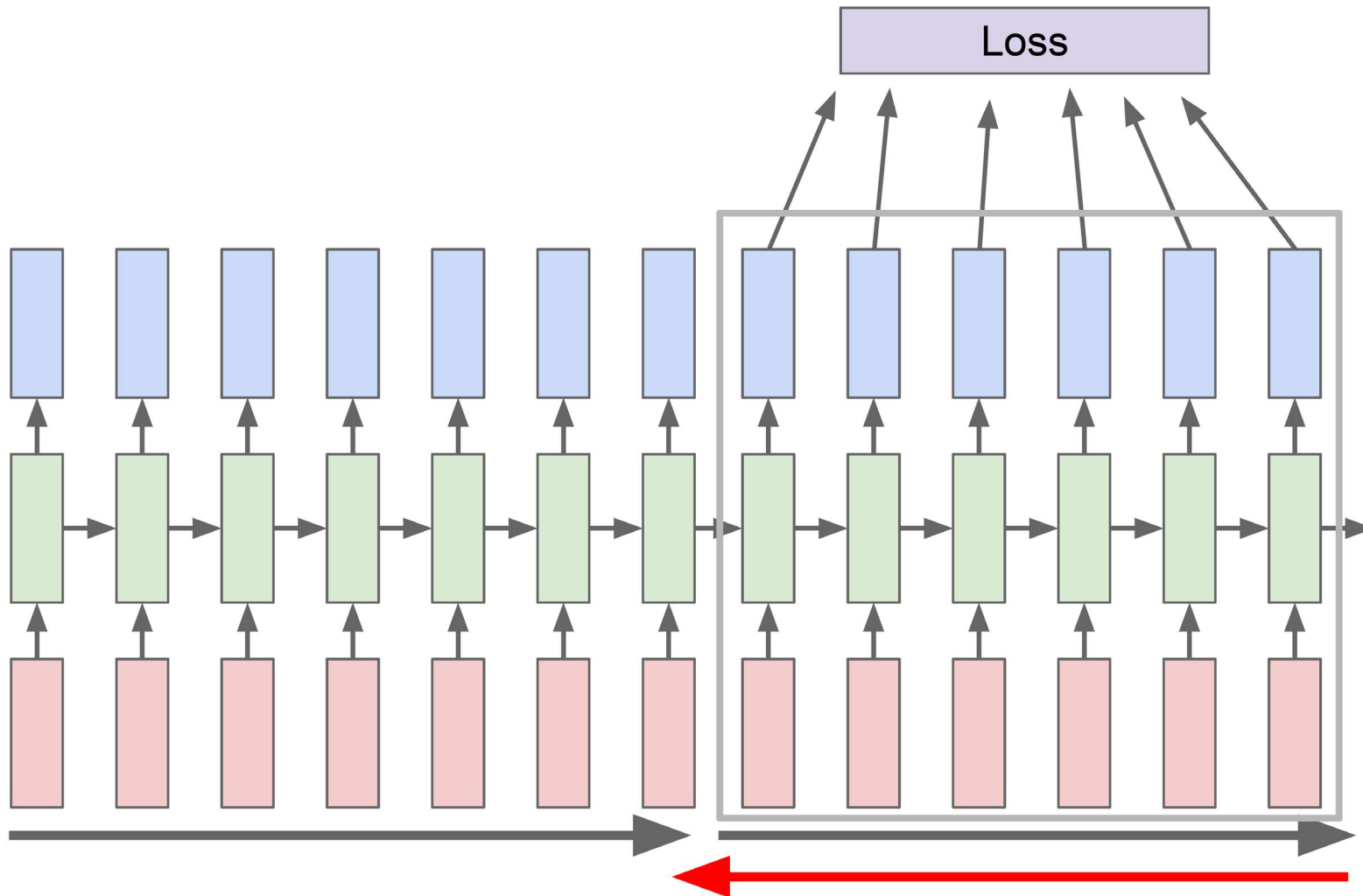
What is the problem in this training paradigm?

# Truncated Backpropagation through Time



Run forward and backward through chunks of the sequence instead of whole sequence

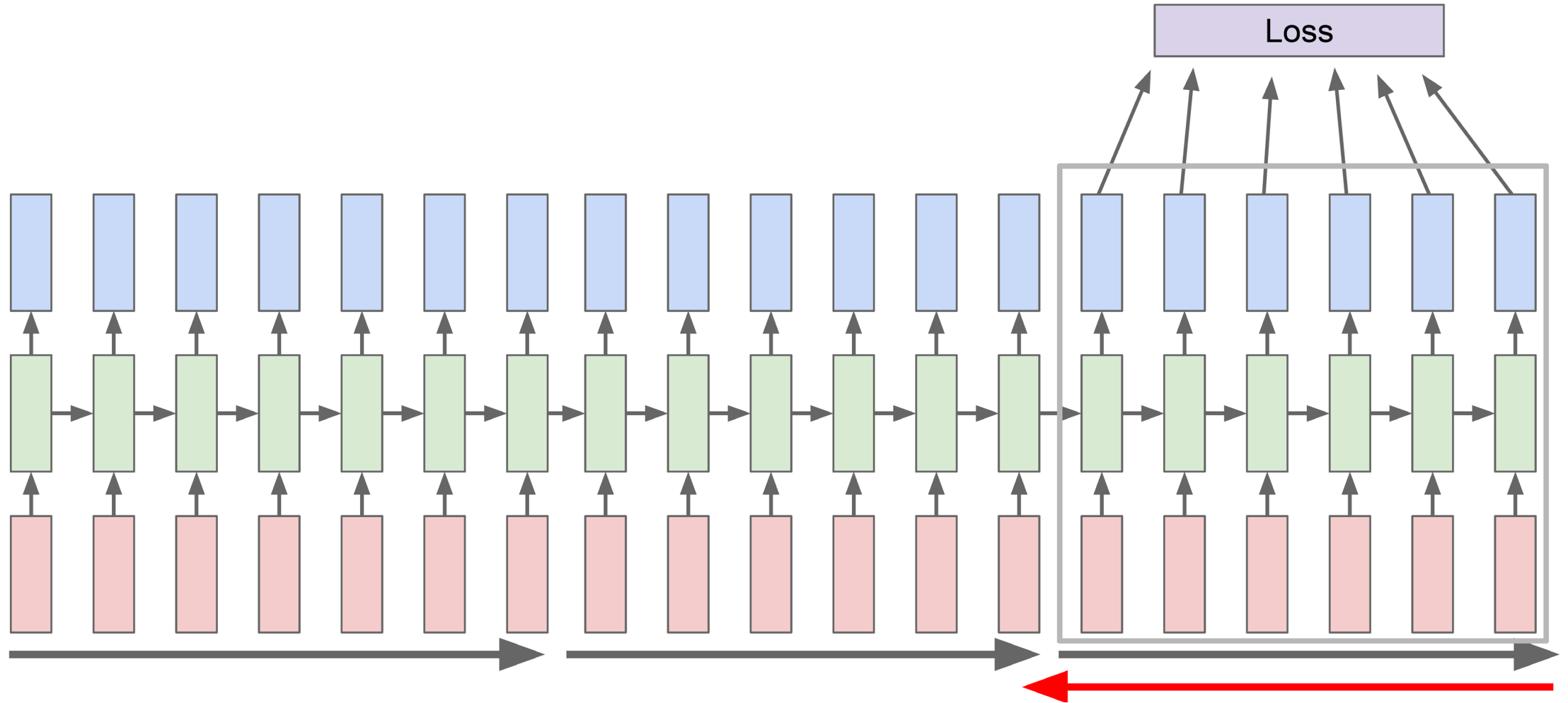
# Truncated Backpropagation through Time



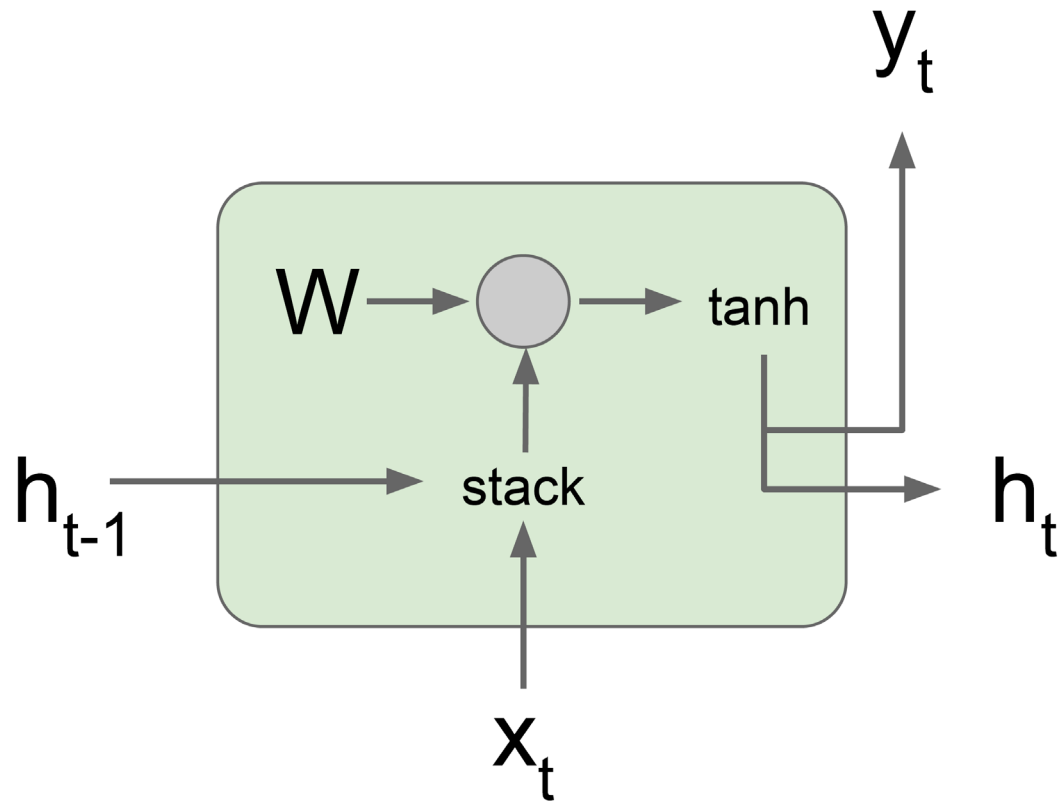
Carry hidden states forward in time forever, but only backpropagate for some smaller number of steps



# Truncated Backpropagation through Time

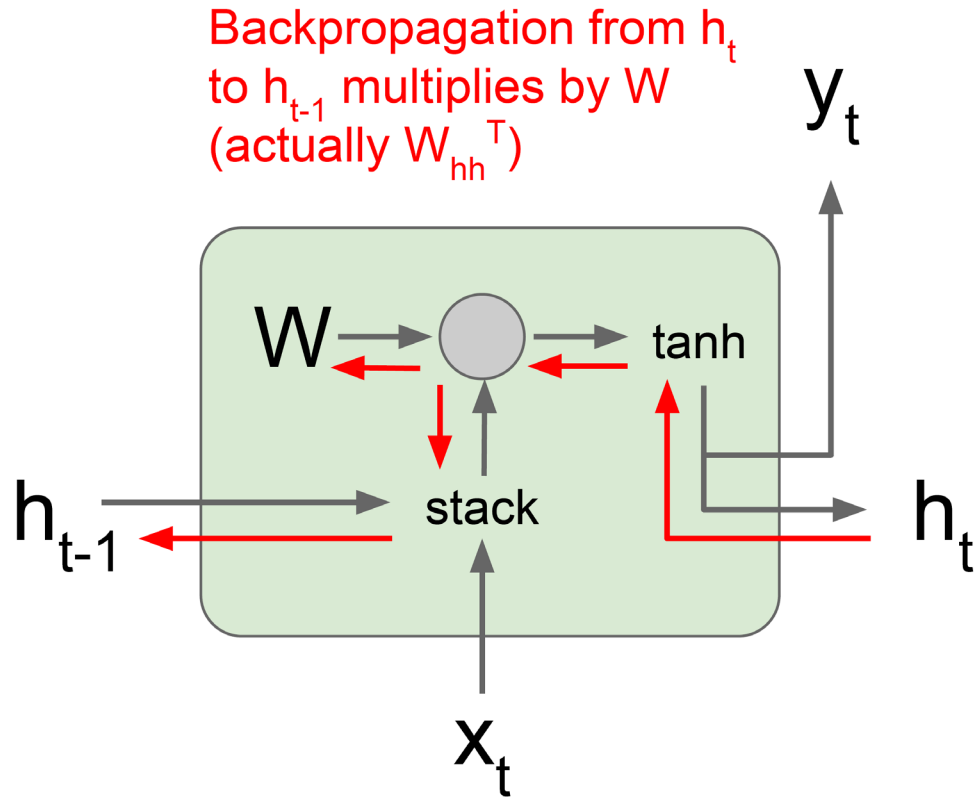


# Vanilla RNN Gradient Flow



$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{h}_t &= \tanh(W_{hh}\mathbf{h}_{t-1} + W_{hx}\mathbf{x}_t) \\ &= \tanh\left(\begin{pmatrix} W_{hh} & W_{hx} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} h_{t-1} \\ x_t \end{pmatrix}\right) \\ &= \tanh\left(W \begin{pmatrix} h_{t-1} \\ x_t \end{pmatrix}\right) \end{aligned}$$

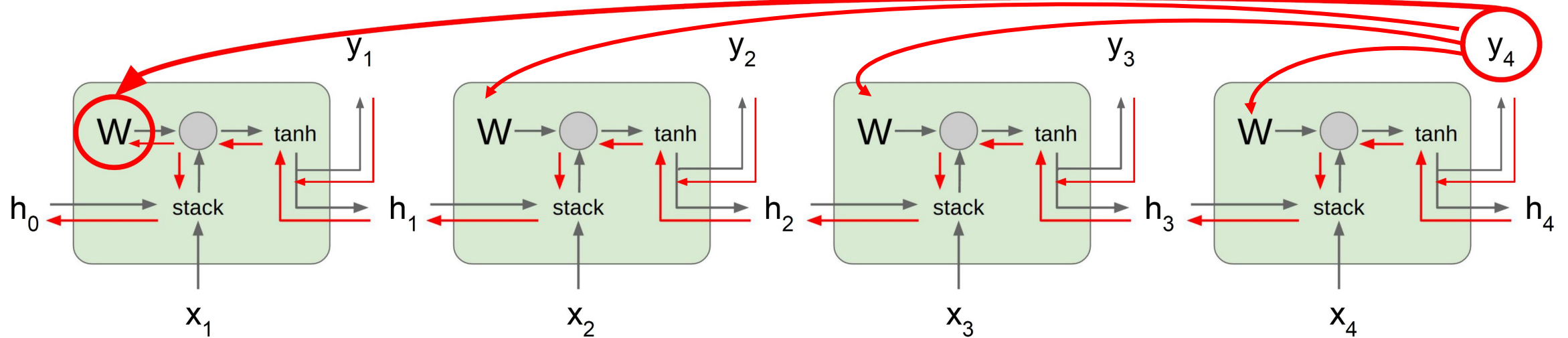
# Vanilla RNN Gradient Flow



$$\begin{aligned}
 h_t &= \tanh(W_{hh}h_{t-1} + W_{xh}x_t) \\
 &= \tanh\left(\begin{pmatrix} W_{hh} & W_{hx} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} h_{t-1} \\ x_t \end{pmatrix}\right) \\
 &= \tanh\left(W \begin{pmatrix} h_{t-1} \\ x_t \end{pmatrix}\right)
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\frac{\partial h_t}{\partial h_{t-1}} = \tanh'(W_{hh}h_{t-1} + W_{xh}x_t)W_{hh}$$

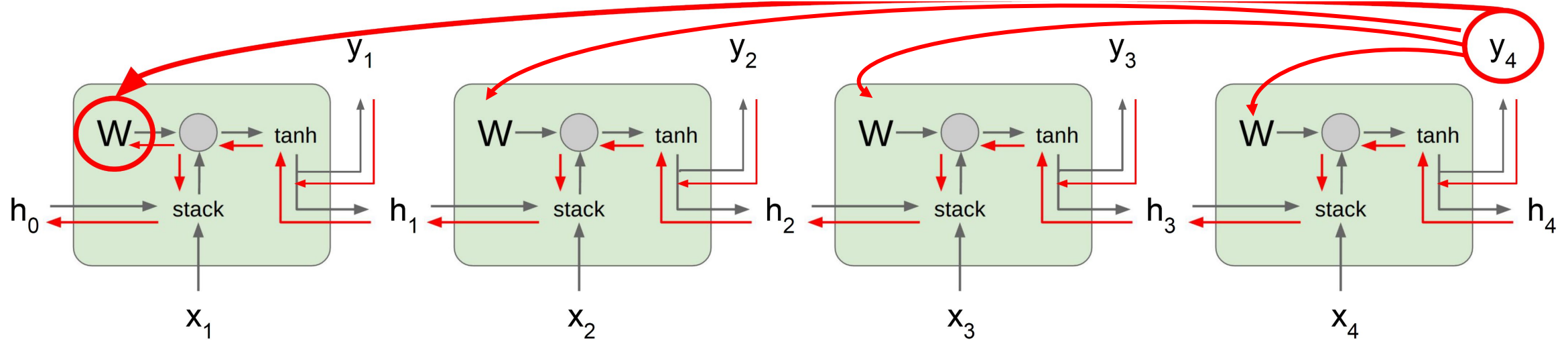
# Vanilla RNN Gradient Flow



$$\frac{\partial L}{\partial W} = \sum_{t=1}^T \frac{\partial L_t}{\partial W}$$

$$\frac{\partial L_T}{\partial W} = \frac{\partial L_T}{\partial h_T} \frac{\partial h_t}{\partial h_{t-1}} \cdots \frac{\partial h_1}{\partial W} = \frac{\partial L_T}{\partial h_T} \left( \prod_{t=2}^T \frac{\partial h_t}{\partial h_{t-1}} \right) \frac{\partial h_1}{\partial W}$$

# Vanilla RNN Gradient Flow



$$\frac{\partial L_T}{\partial W} = \frac{\partial L_T}{\partial h_T} \left( \prod_{t=2}^T \frac{\partial h_t}{\partial h_{t-1}} \right) \frac{\partial h_1}{\partial W}$$

- Vanishing gradients
- Exploding gradients

$$\left\| \frac{\partial h_t}{\partial h_{t-1}} \right\|_2 < 1$$

$$\left\| \frac{\partial h_t}{\partial h_{t-1}} \right\|_2 > 1$$

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matrix\\_norm](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matrix_norm)

# Vanilla RNN Gradient Flow

- Exploding gradients  $\left\| \frac{\partial h_t}{\partial h_{t-1}} \right\|_2 > 1$

- Gradient clipping

```
grad_norm = np.sum(grad * grad)
if grad_norm > threshold:
    grad *= (threshold / grad_norm)
```

- Vanishing gradients  $\left\| \frac{\partial h_t}{\partial h_{t-1}} \right\|_2 < 1$

- Change RNN architecture

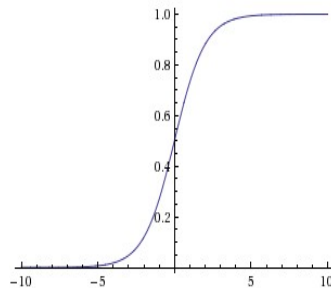
# Long Short Term Memory (LSTM)

Vanilla RNN

$$h_t = \tanh \left( W \begin{pmatrix} h_{t-1} \\ x_t \end{pmatrix} \right)$$

**Sigmoid**

$$\sigma(x) = 1 / (1 + e^{-x})$$



LSTM

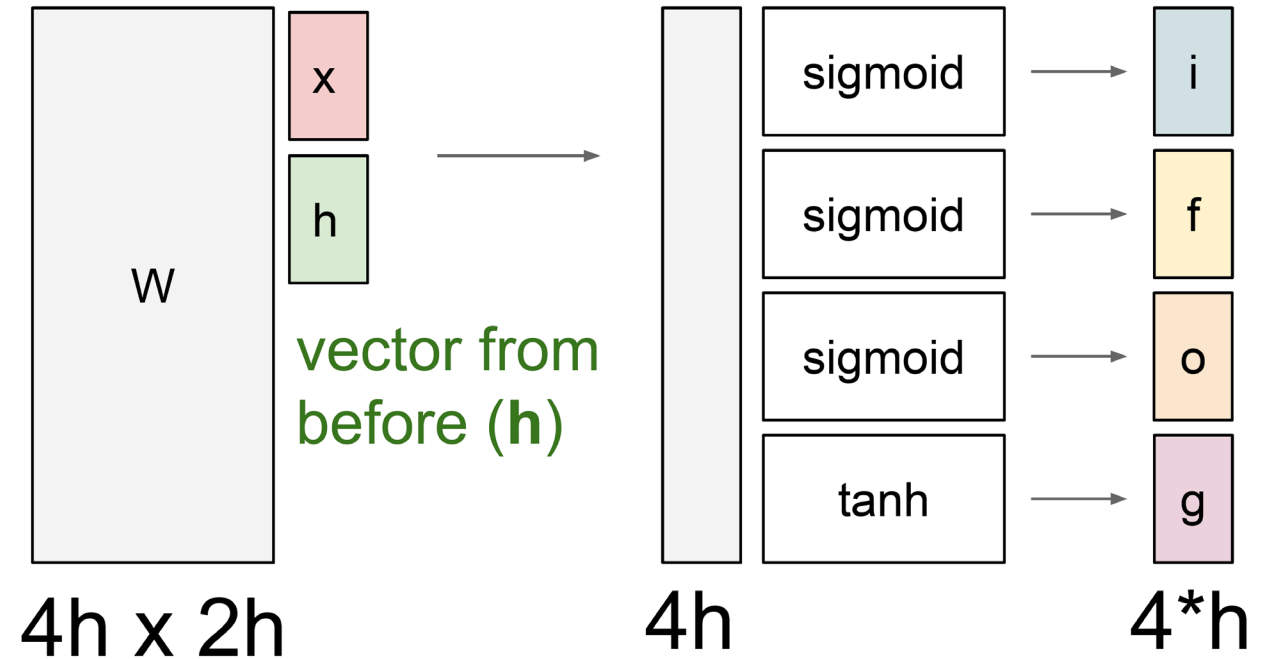
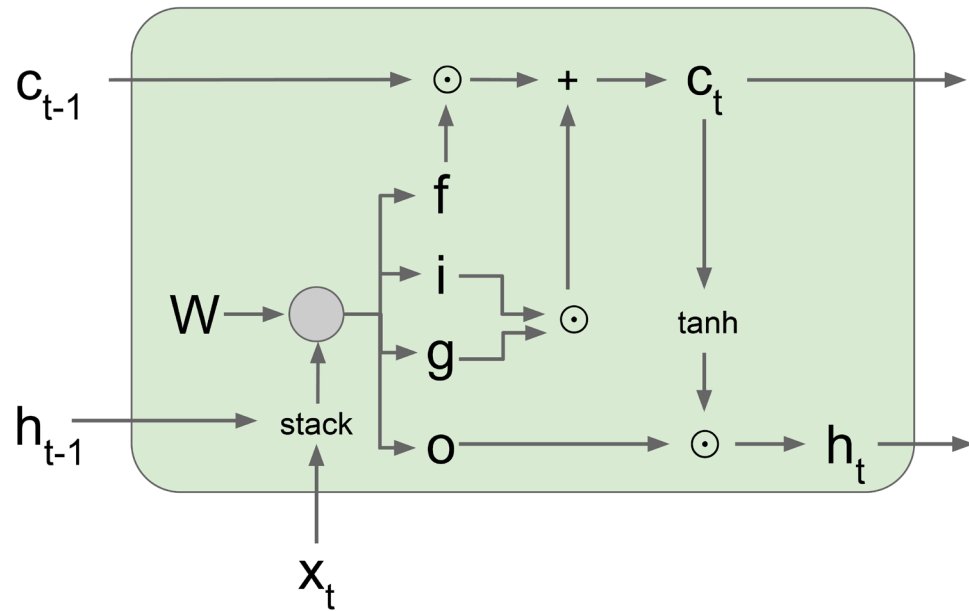
$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Input gate} \\ \text{forget gate} \\ \text{output gate} \\ \text{gate gate} \end{array} \begin{pmatrix} i \\ f \\ o \\ g \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \sigma \\ \sigma \\ \sigma \\ \tanh \end{pmatrix} W \begin{pmatrix} h_{t-1} \\ x_t \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\text{Cell} \quad c_t = f \odot c_{t-1} + i \odot g$$

$$\text{Hidden state} \quad h_t = o \odot \tanh(c_t)$$

Store Cell and hidden states

# Long Short Term Memory (LSTM)



$$\begin{pmatrix} i \\ f \\ o \\ g \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \sigma \\ \sigma \\ \sigma \\ \tanh \end{pmatrix} W \begin{pmatrix} h_{t-1} \\ x_t \end{pmatrix}$$

$$c_t = f \odot c_{t-1} + i \odot g$$

$$h_t = o \odot \tanh(c_t)$$

- **g**: Gate gate, how much to write to cell
- **i**: Input gate, whether to write to cell
- **f**: Forget gate, whether to erase cell
- **o**: Output gate, how much to reveal cell



# Long Short Term Memory (LSTM)

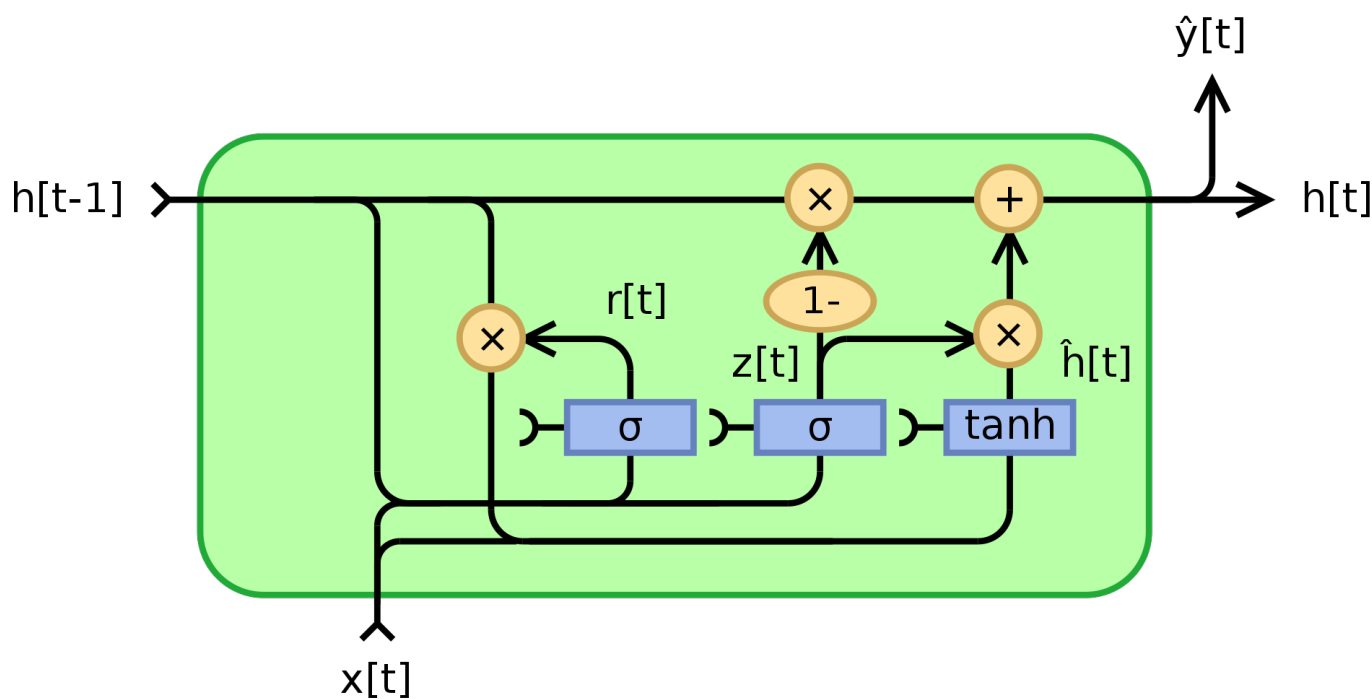
- Make the RNN easier to preserve information over many steps
  - E.g.,  $f = 1$  and  $i = 0$
  - This is difficult for vanilla RNN
- LSTM does not guarantee that there is no vanishing or exploding gradient
- It provides an easier way to learn long-distance dependencies

$$\begin{pmatrix} i \\ f \\ o \\ g \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \sigma \\ \sigma \\ \sigma \\ \tanh \end{pmatrix} W \begin{pmatrix} h_{t-1} \\ x_t \end{pmatrix}$$

$$c_t = f \odot c_{t-1} + i \odot g$$

$$h_t = o \odot \tanh(c_t)$$

# Gated Recurrent Unit (GRU)



$$z_t = \sigma_g(W_z x_t + U_z h_{t-1} + b_z)$$
$$r_t = \sigma_g(W_r x_t + U_r h_{t-1} + b_r)$$
$$\hat{h}_t = \phi_h(W_h x_t + U_h(r_t \odot h_{t-1}) + b_h)$$
$$h_t = (1 - z_t) \odot h_{t-1} + z_t \odot \hat{h}_t$$

- $x_t$ : input vector
- $h_t$ : output vector
- $\hat{h}_t$ : candidate activation vector
- $z_t$ : update gate vector
- $r_t$ : reset gate vector
- $W$ ,  $U$  and  $b$ : parameter matrices and vector

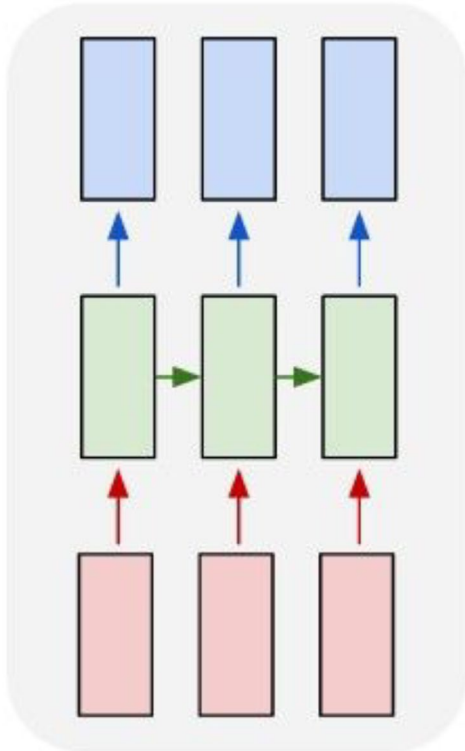
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gated\\_recurrent\\_unit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gated_recurrent_unit)

# GRUs vs. LSTMs

- Both have a forget gate
- GRU has fewer parameters, no output gate
- GRUs have similar performance compared to LSTMs, have shown better performance on certain datasets

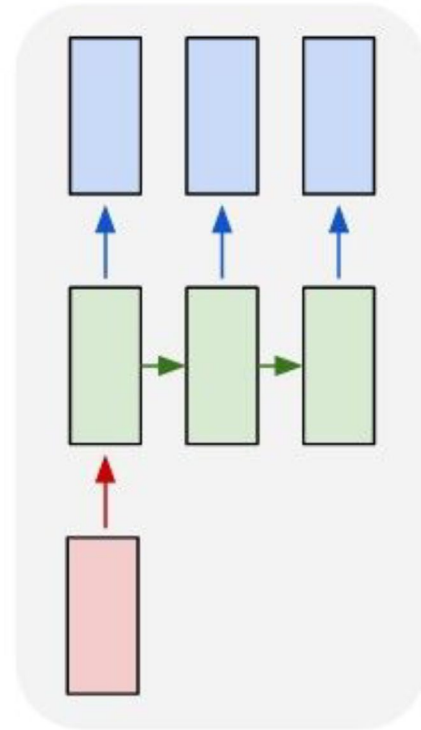
# Recurrent Neural Networks

many to many



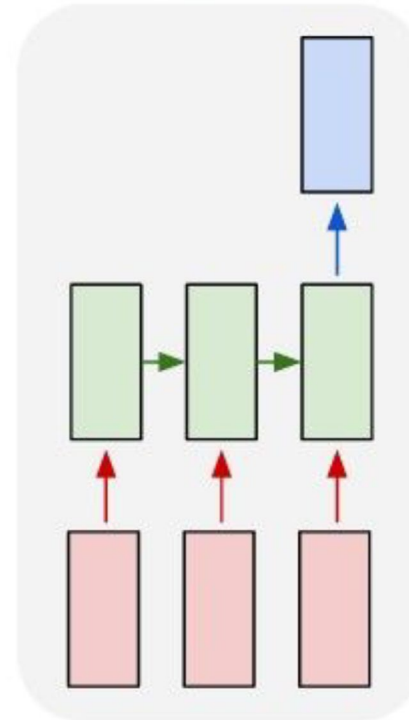
E.g., action recognition on video frames

one to many



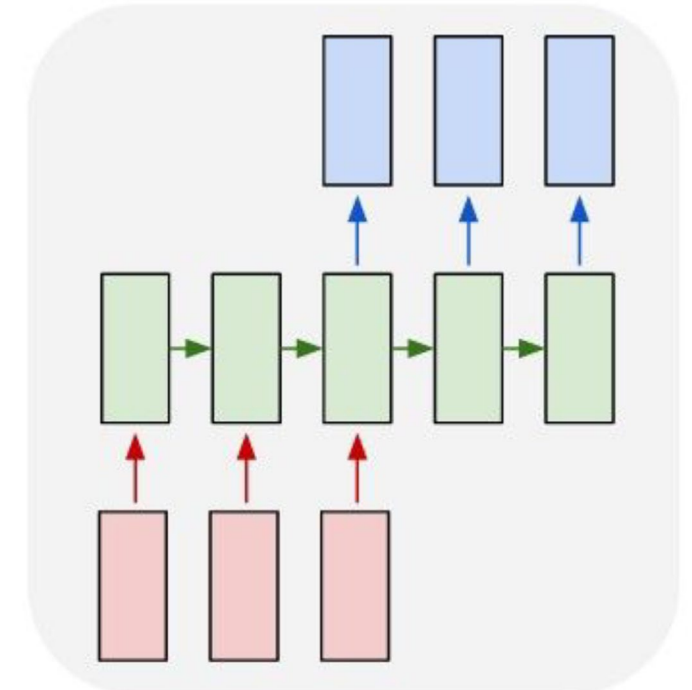
E.g., image captioning, image -> sequences of words

many to one



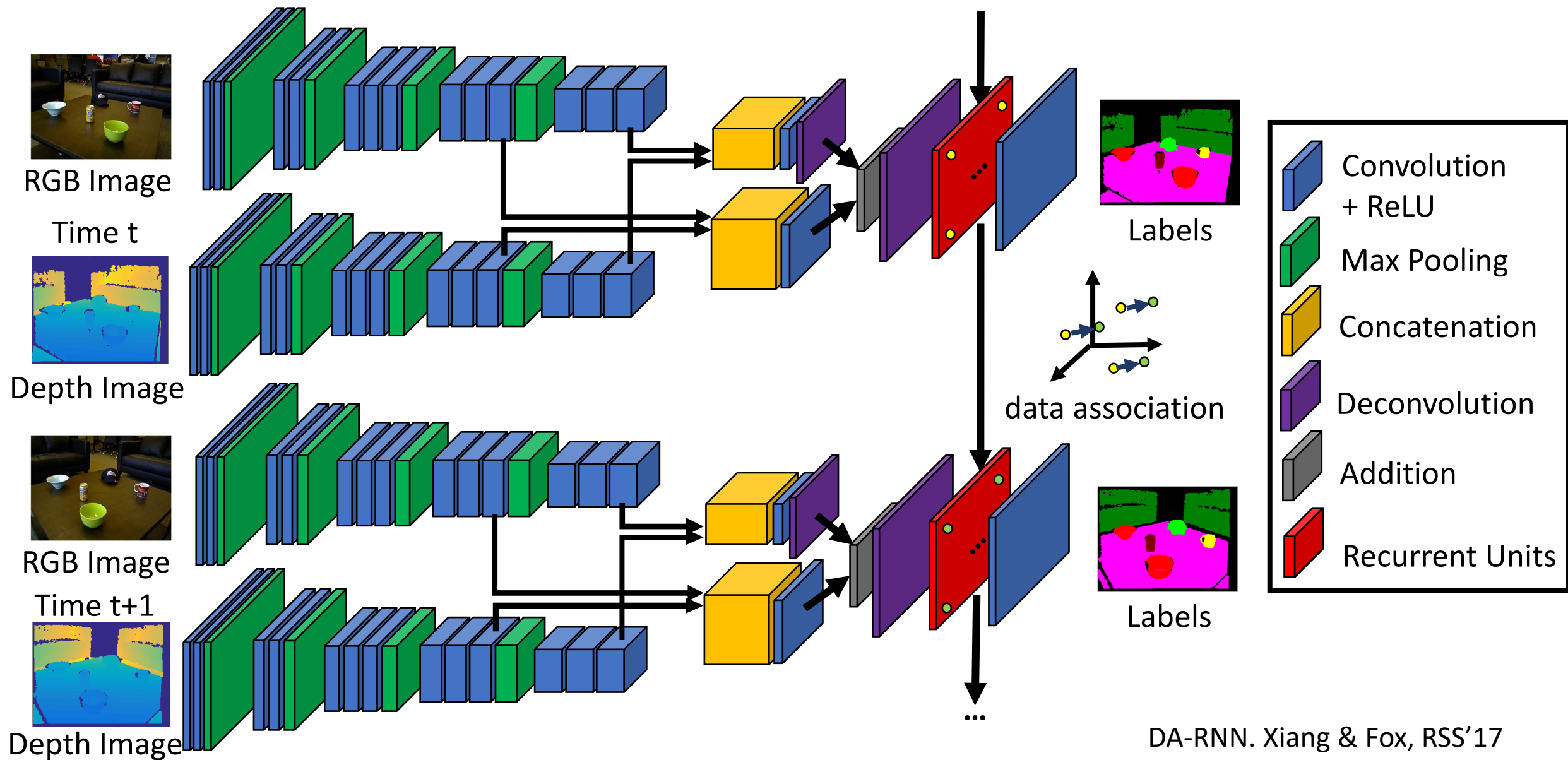
E.g., action prediction, sequences of frames -> action class

many to many



E.g., Video Captioning  
Sequence of video frames -> caption

# Recurrent Units on CNN Features



DA-RNN. Xiang & Fox, RSS'17

# Summary

- RNNs can be used for sequential data to capture dependencies in time
- LSTMs and GRUs are better than vanilla RNNs
- It is difficult to capture long-term dependencies in RNNs
- Use transformers (next lecture)

# Further Reading

- Stanford CS231n, lecture 10, Recurrent Neural Networks  
<http://cs231n.stanford.edu/>
- Long Short Term Memory  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/13853244\\_Long\\_Short-term\\_Memory](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/13853244_Long_Short-term_Memory)
- Gated Recurrent Units <https://arxiv.org/pdf/1412.3555.pdf>