

Practical Second-Order CPA Attack on Ascon with Proper Selection Function

Viet-Sang Nguyen

joint work with Vincent Grosso and Pierre-Louis Cayrel

CASCADE Conference

Saint-Etienne, 2 April, 2025





2018



Lightweight cryptography competition



2018



Lightweight cryptography competition

2023



Selected Ascon

NIST

2018



Lightweight cryptography competition

2023



Selected Ascon





2018



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Selected Ascon



Possible attacks



Secure implementations



In this talk



Possible attacks

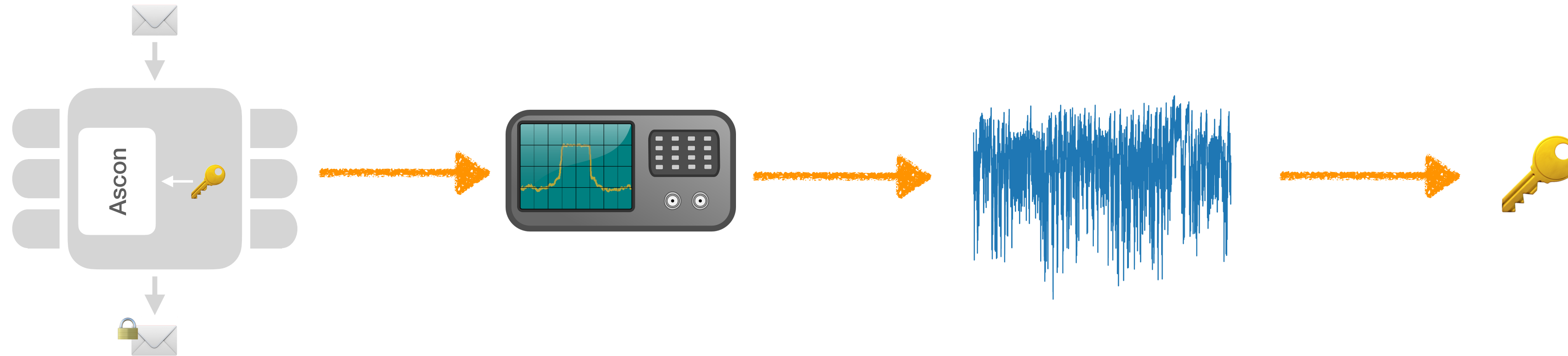
In this talk



Possible attacks

Correlation Power Analysis (CPA) attack

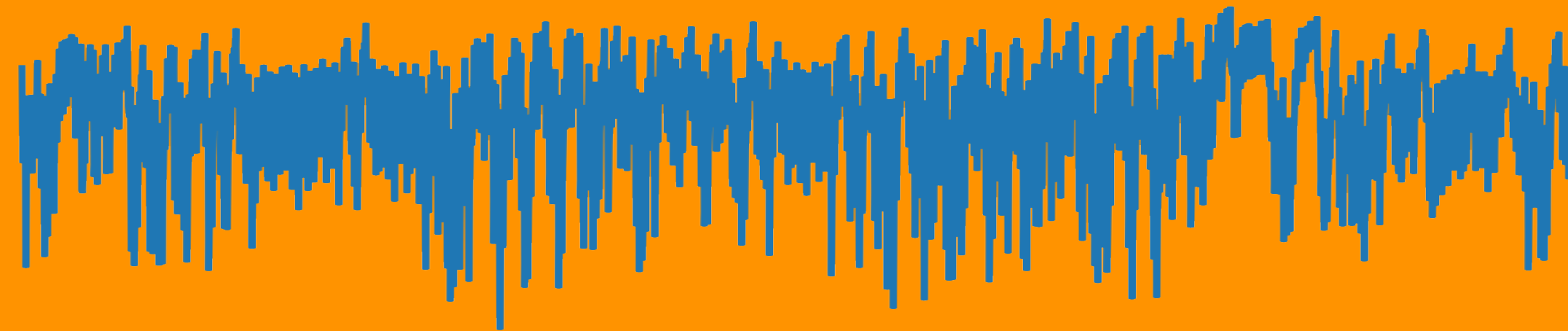
In this talk



Possible attacks

Correlation Power Analysis (CPA) attack

CPA attack



CPA attack

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- ✦ Choose attack point: intermediate variable v

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known non-constant data  $f(d, k)$  part of the key

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Well-known CPA on AES: $v = \text{Sbox}(\text{plaintext}, \text{key})$

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CPA attack

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This work: Hamming weight

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Hypothetical power consumption: $h = \text{HW}(v) = \text{HW}(f(d, k))$

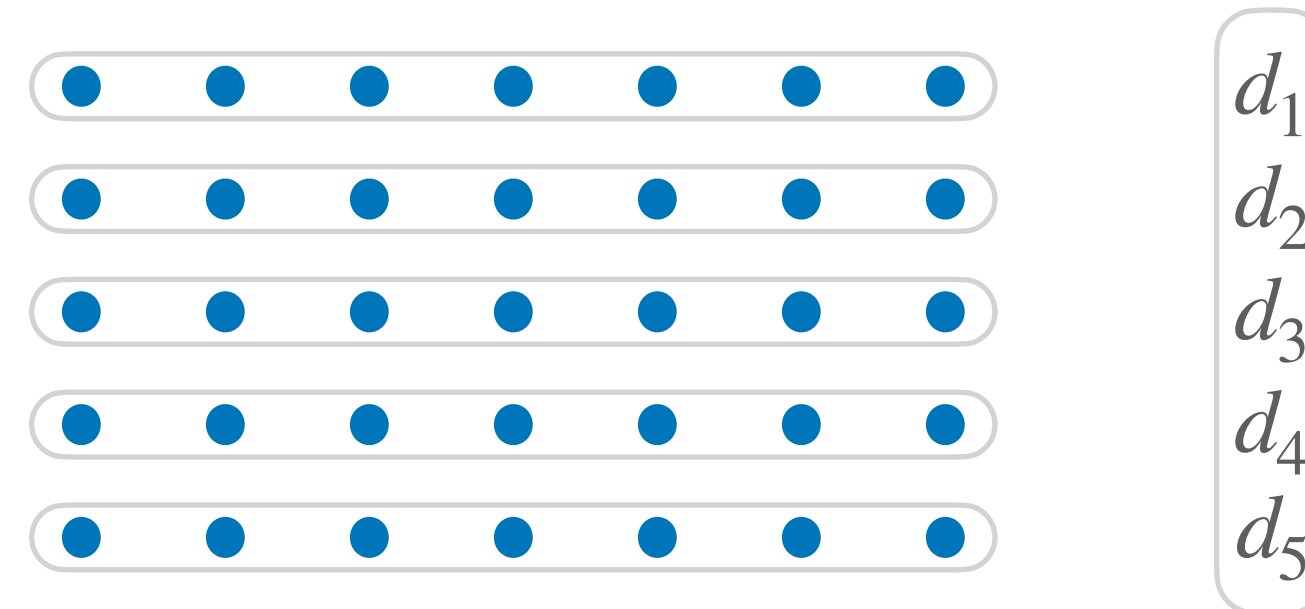
CPA attack

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- ✦ Measure power consumption traces and record d

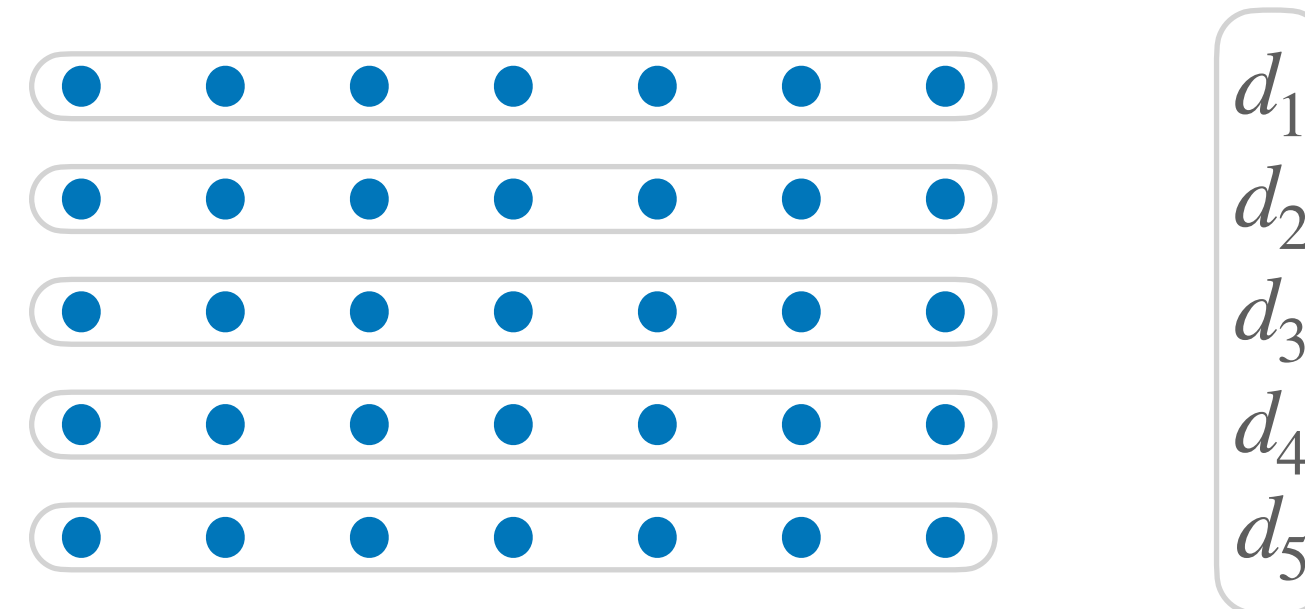
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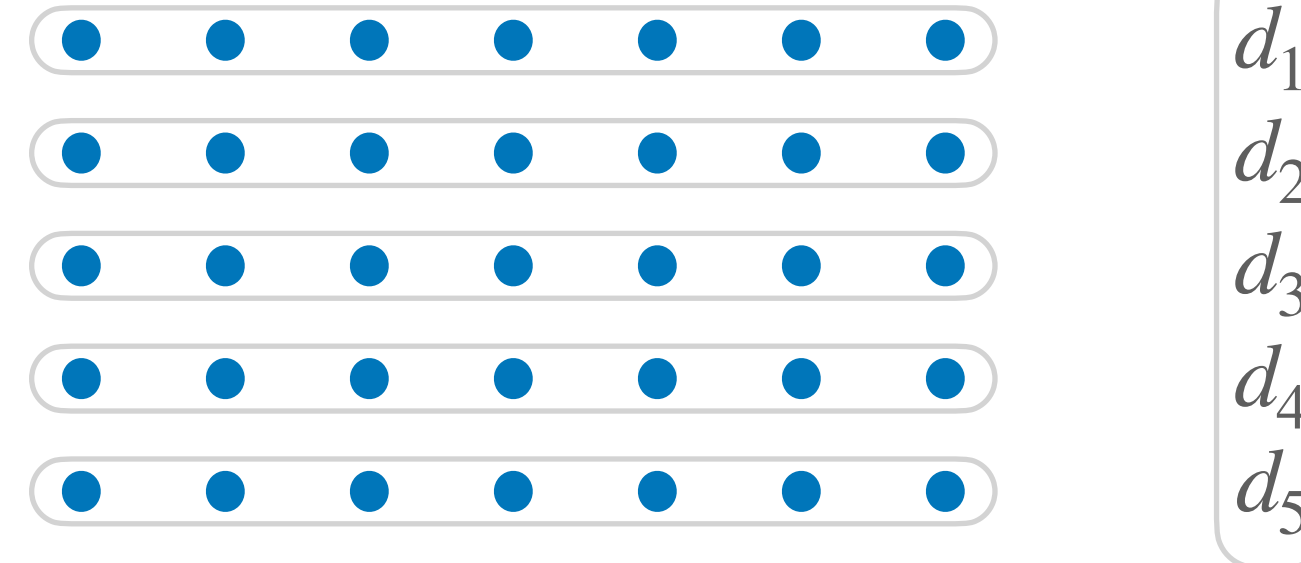
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CPA attack

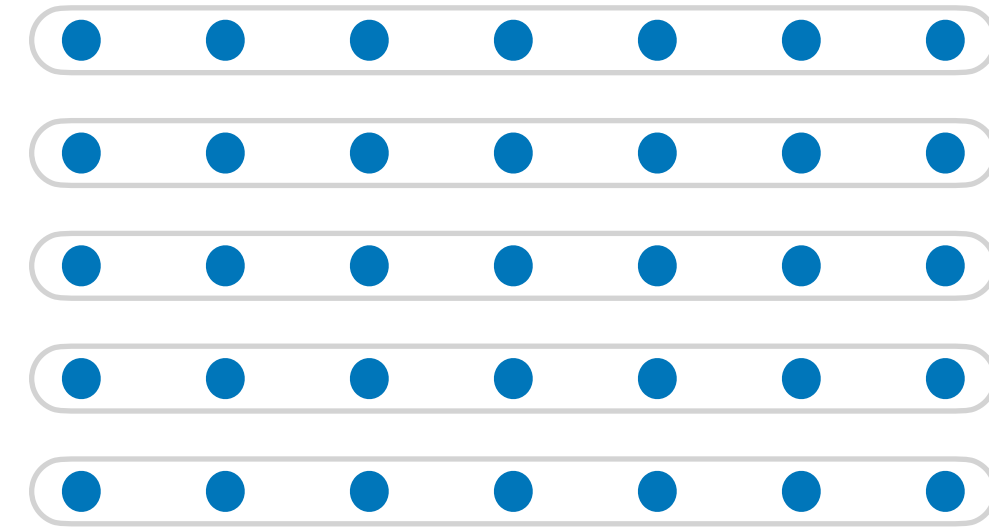
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$$h = \text{HW} (f(d, k))$$

CPA attack

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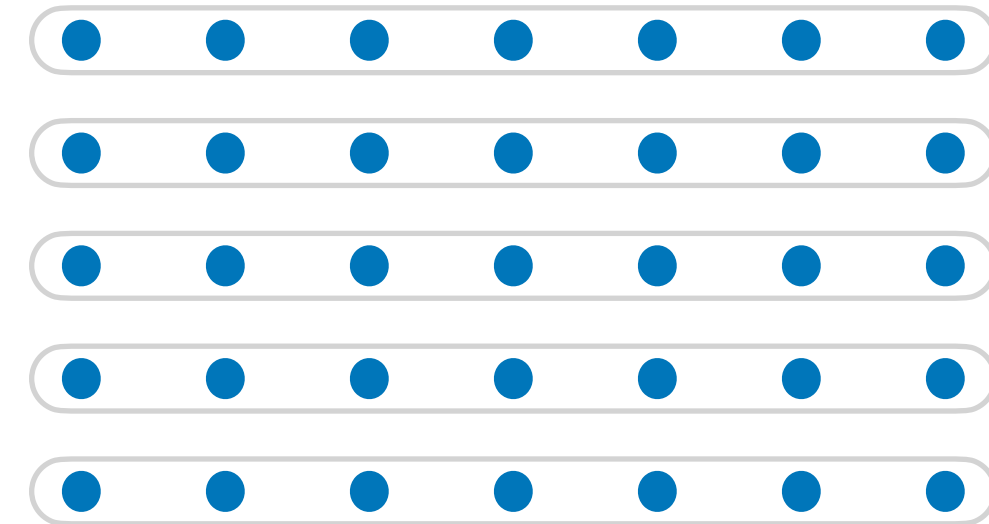
$$h = \text{HW} (f(d, k))$$

k_1

d_1	h_{11}
d_2	h_{21}
d_3	h_{31}
d_4	h_{41}
d_5	h_{51}

CPA attack

- ✦ Measure power consumption traces and record d
- ✦ Compute hypothetical power consumption
- ✦ Compare with measured power consumption



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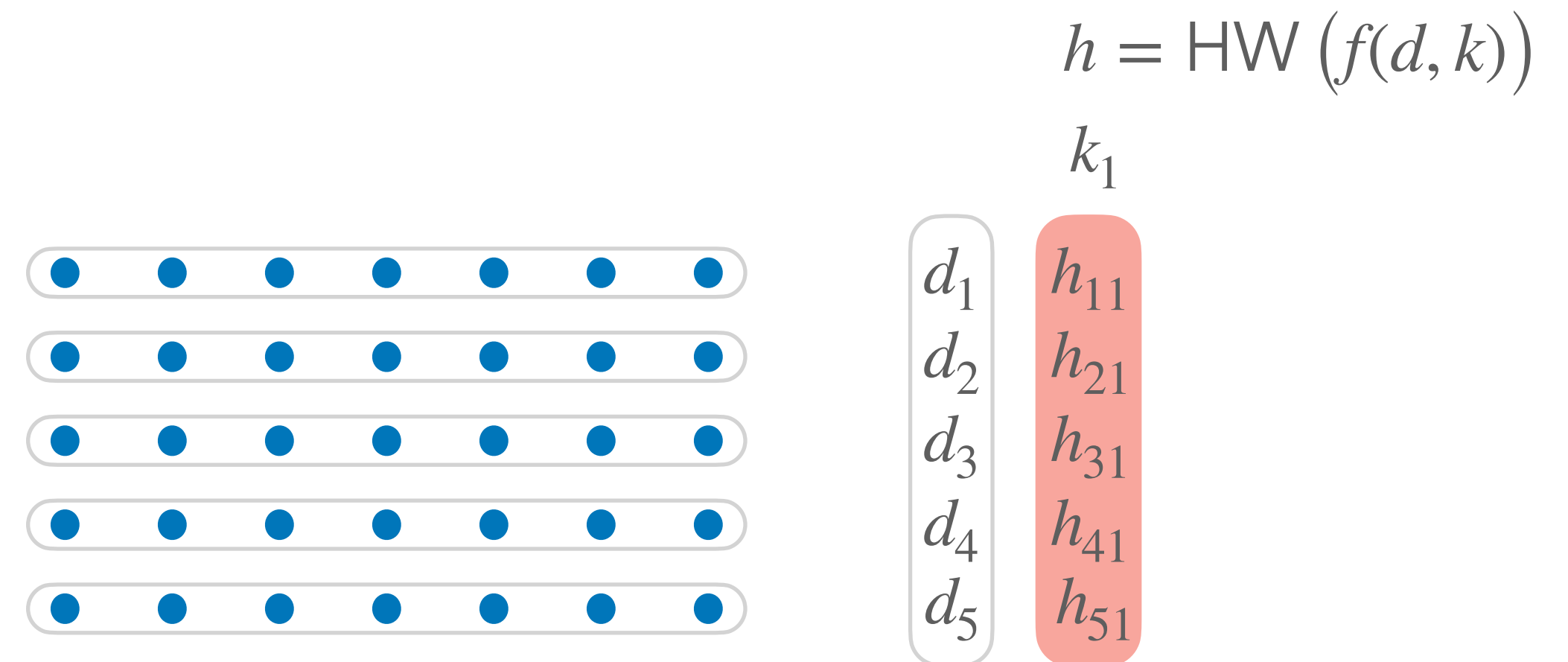
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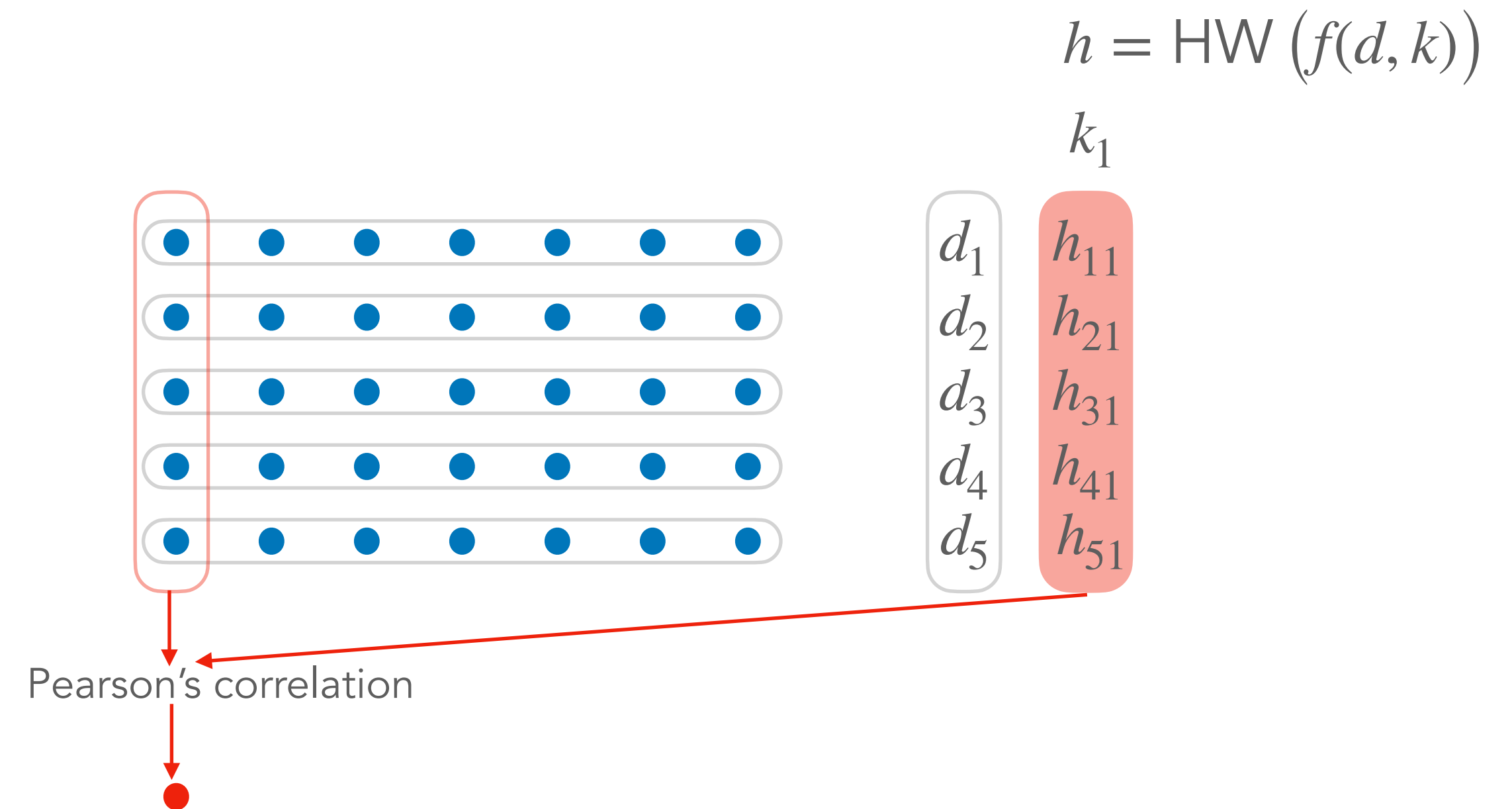
Linearity relationship
with Pearson's correlation coefficient



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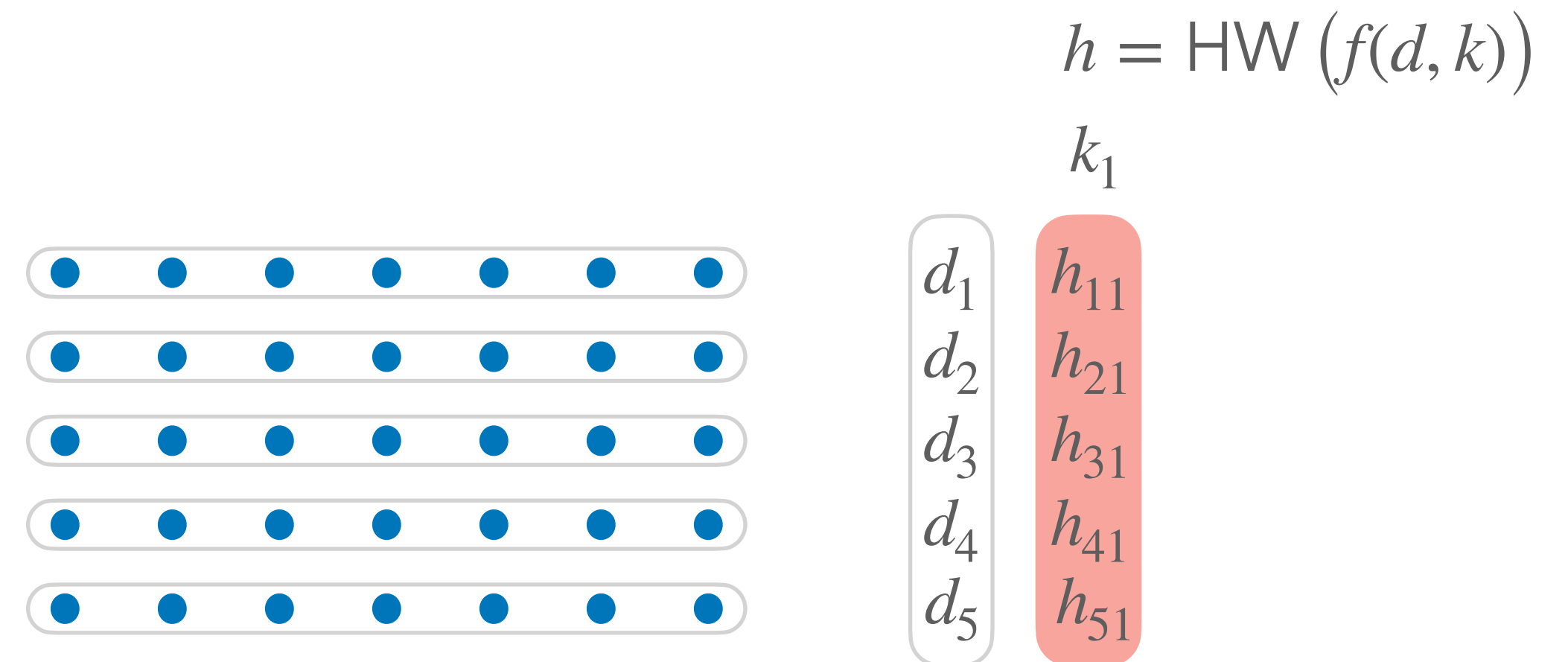
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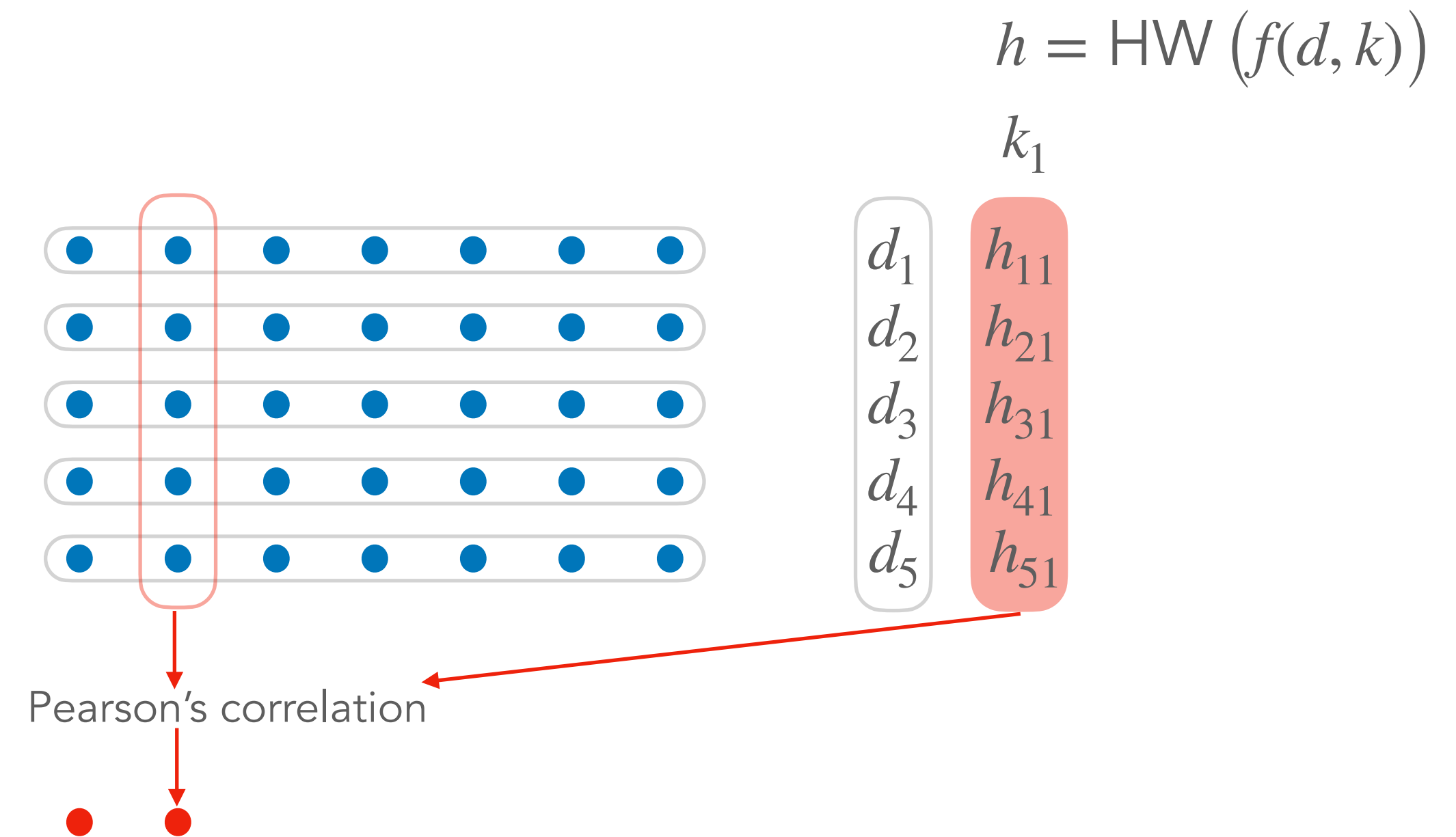
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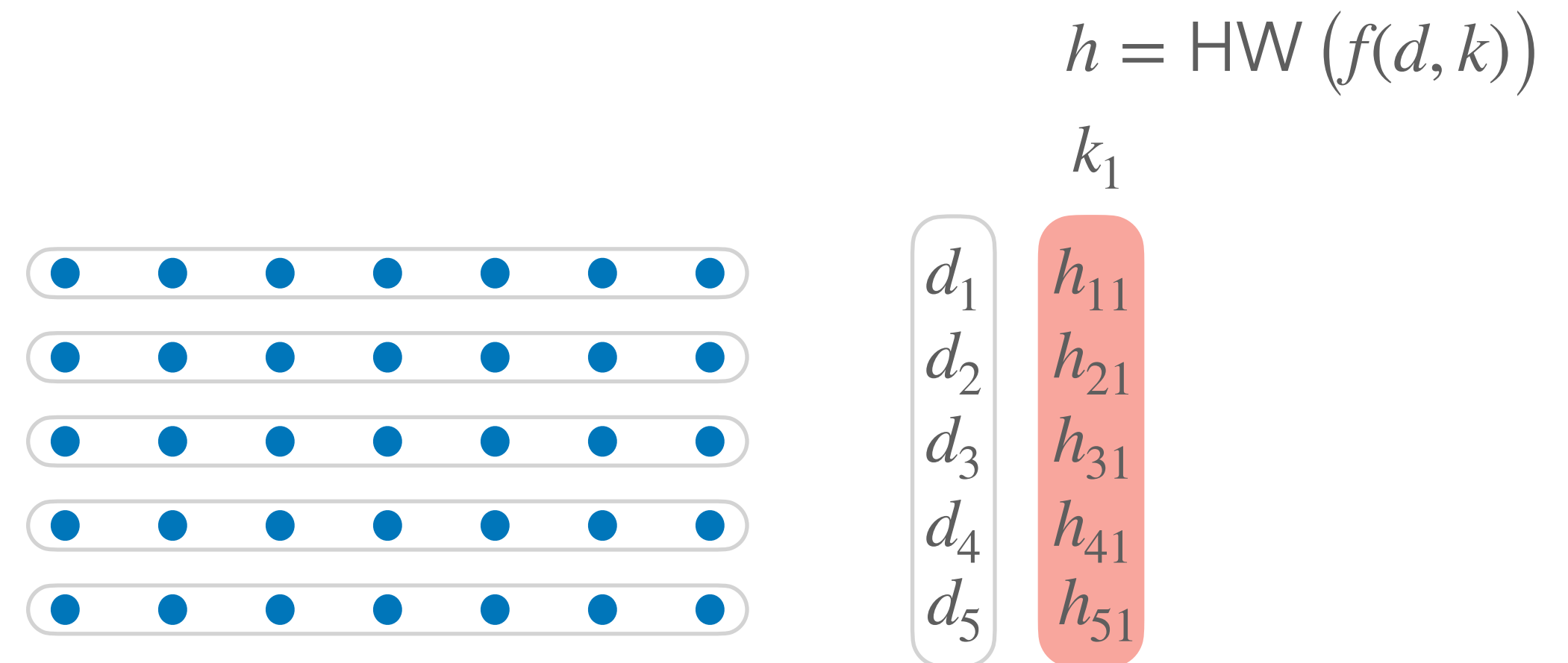
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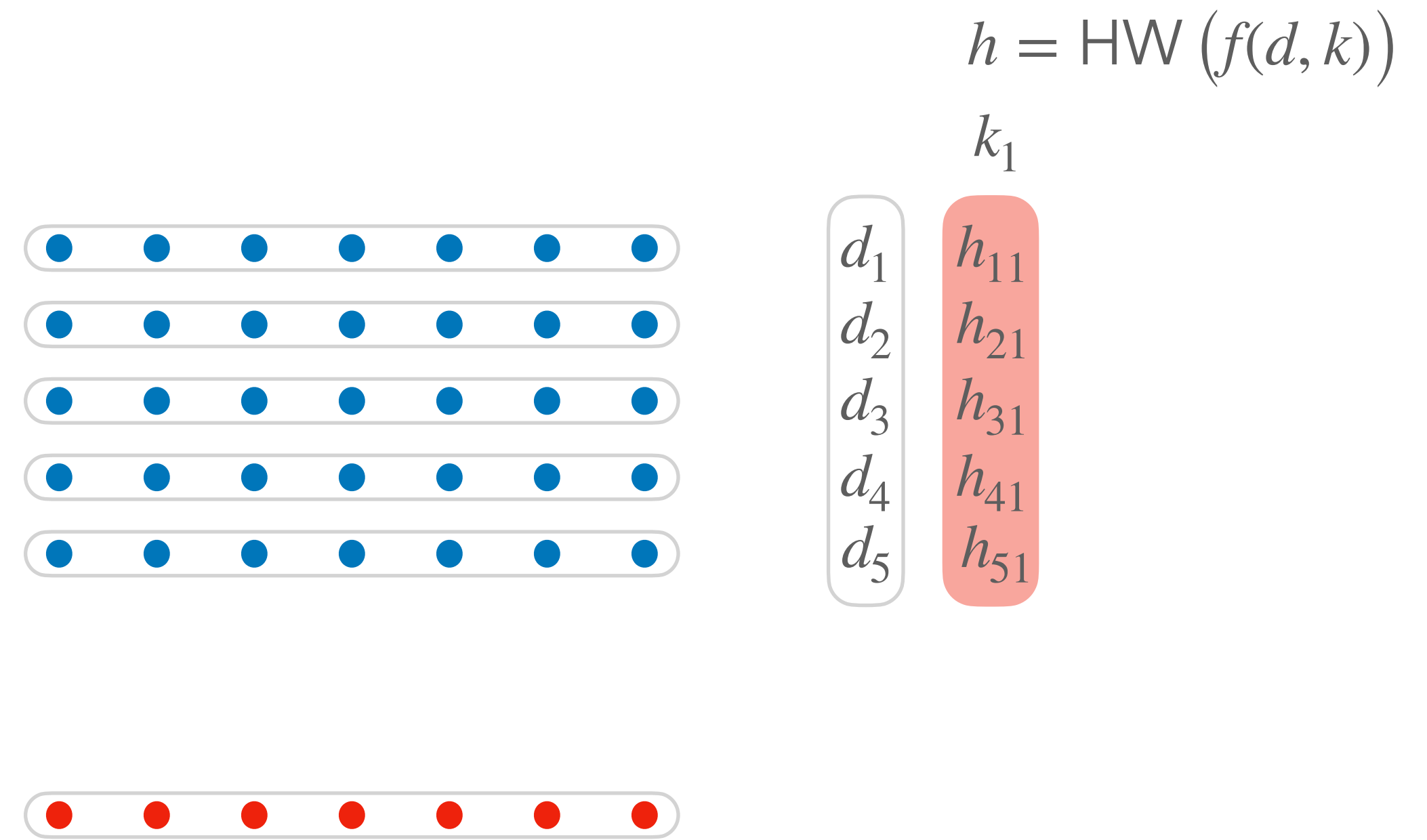
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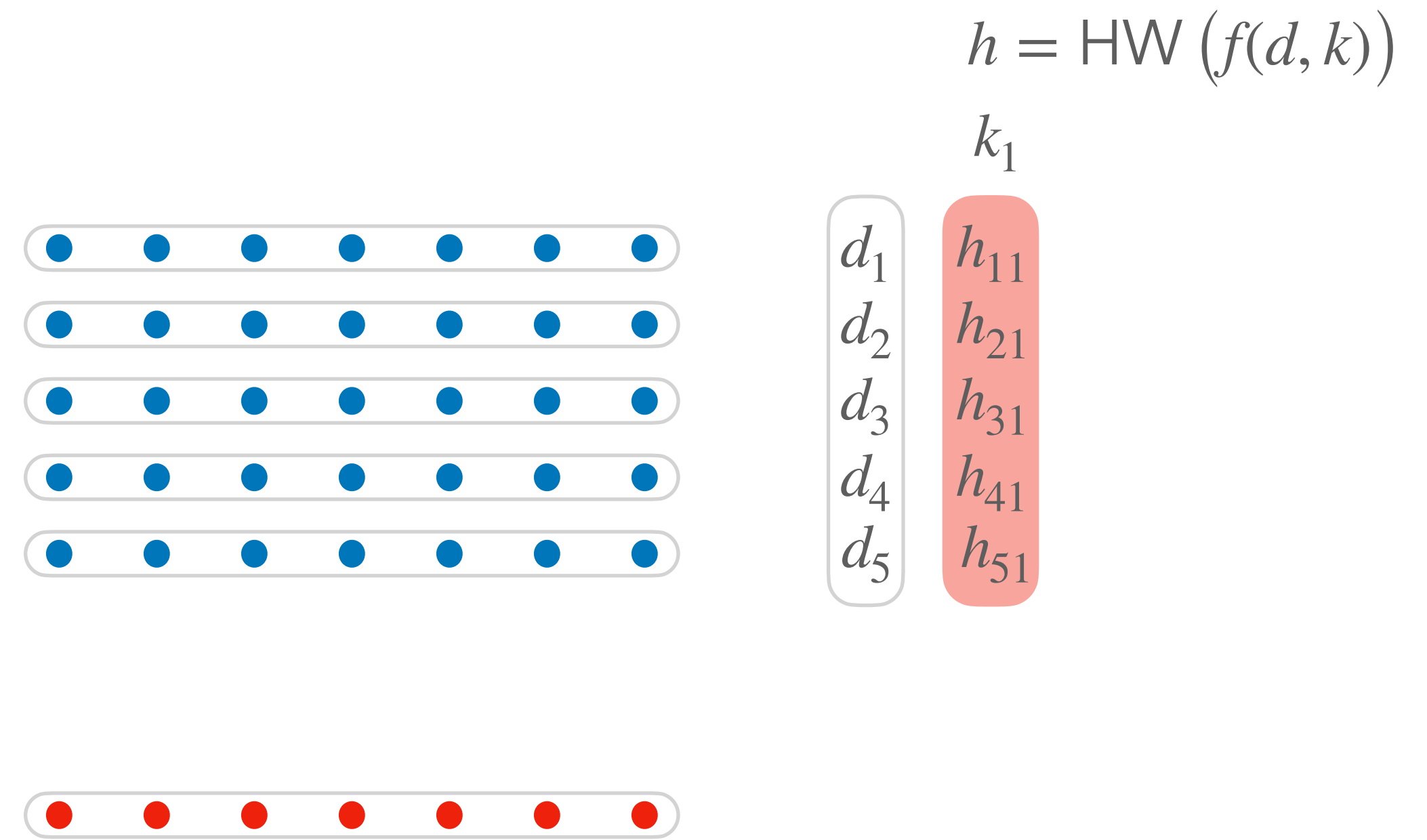
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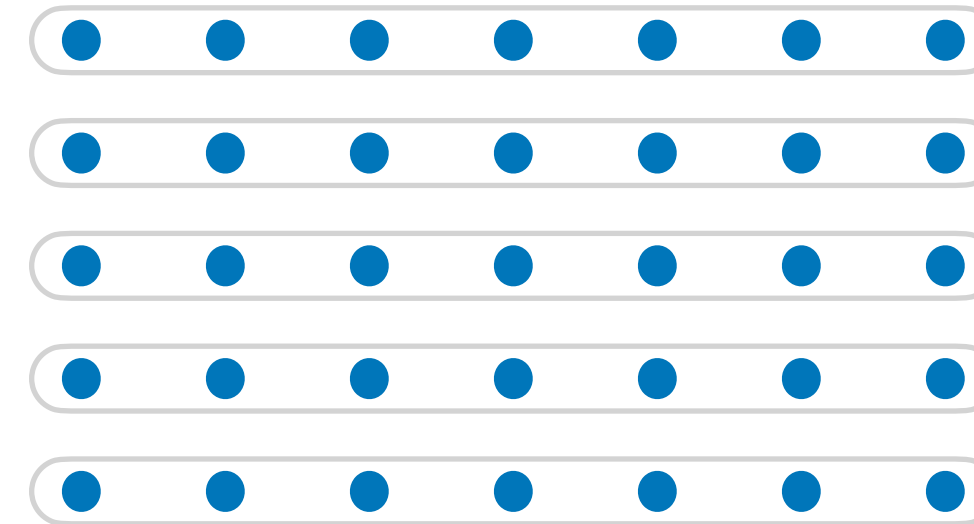
CPA attack

✦ Measure power consumption traces and record d

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Linearity relationship
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$$h = \text{HW} (f(d, k))$$

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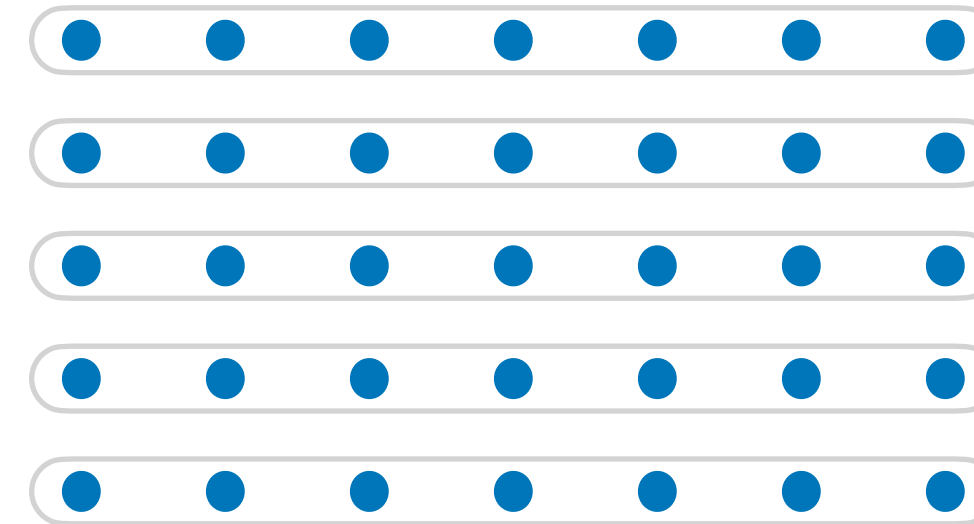
CPA attack

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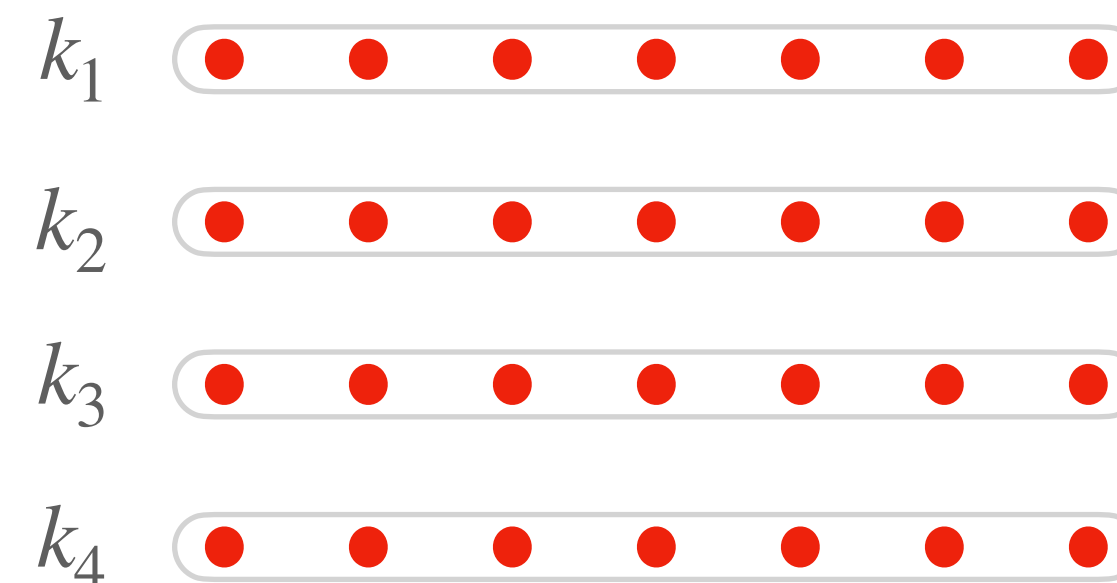
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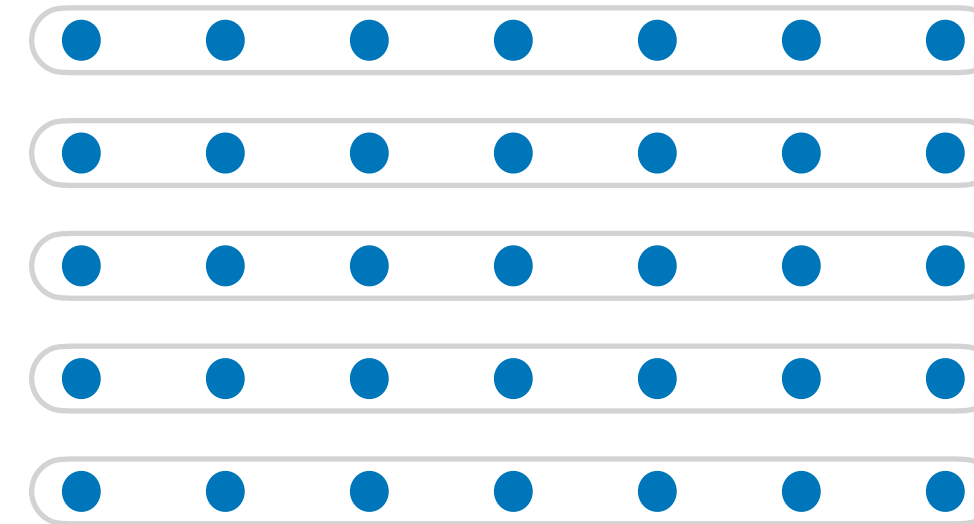
CPA attack

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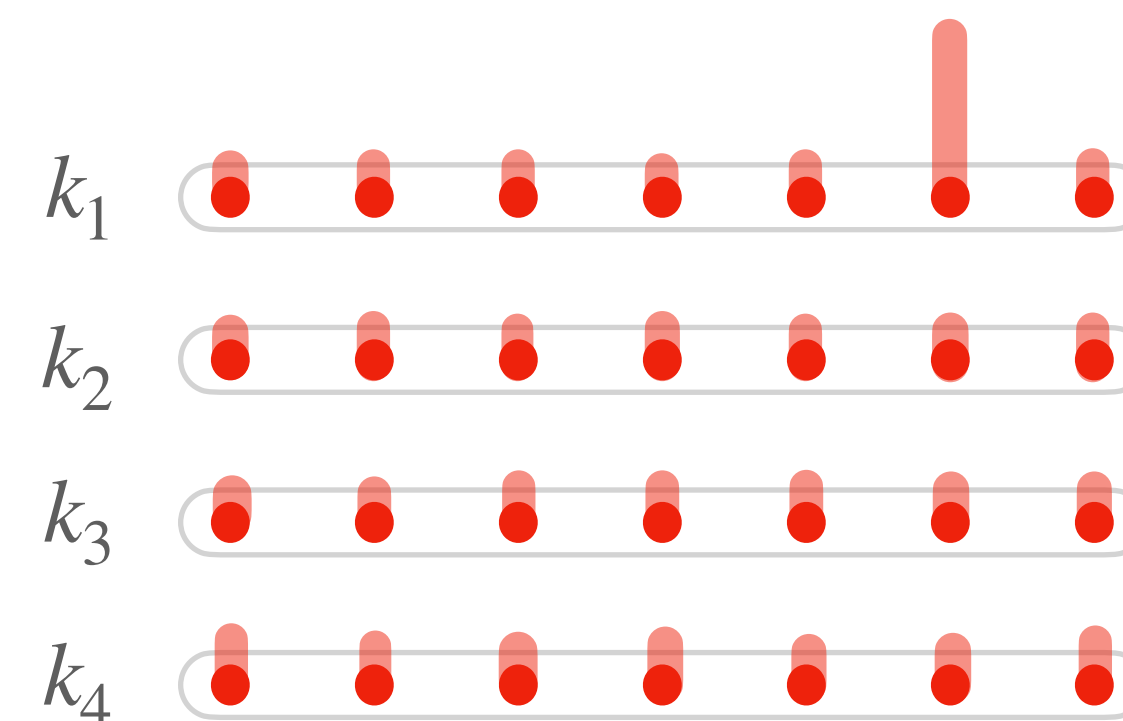
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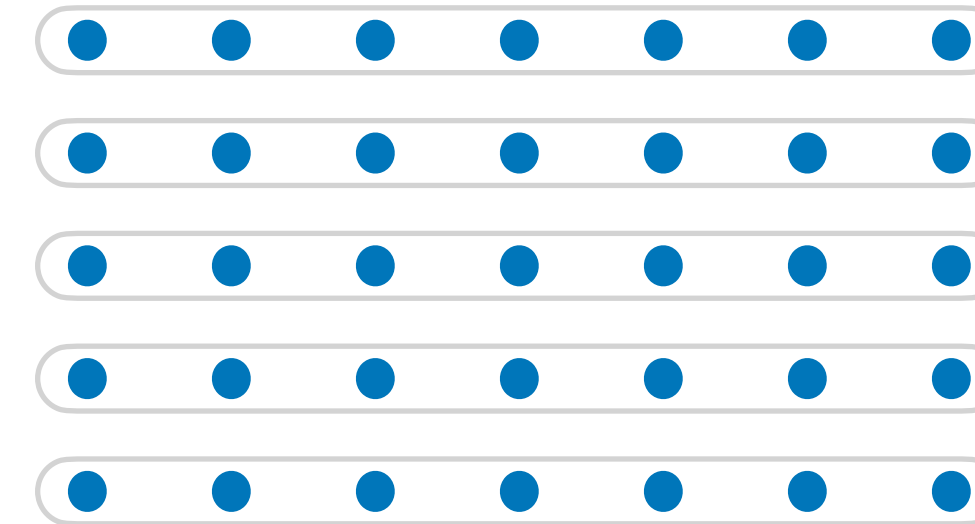
CPA attack

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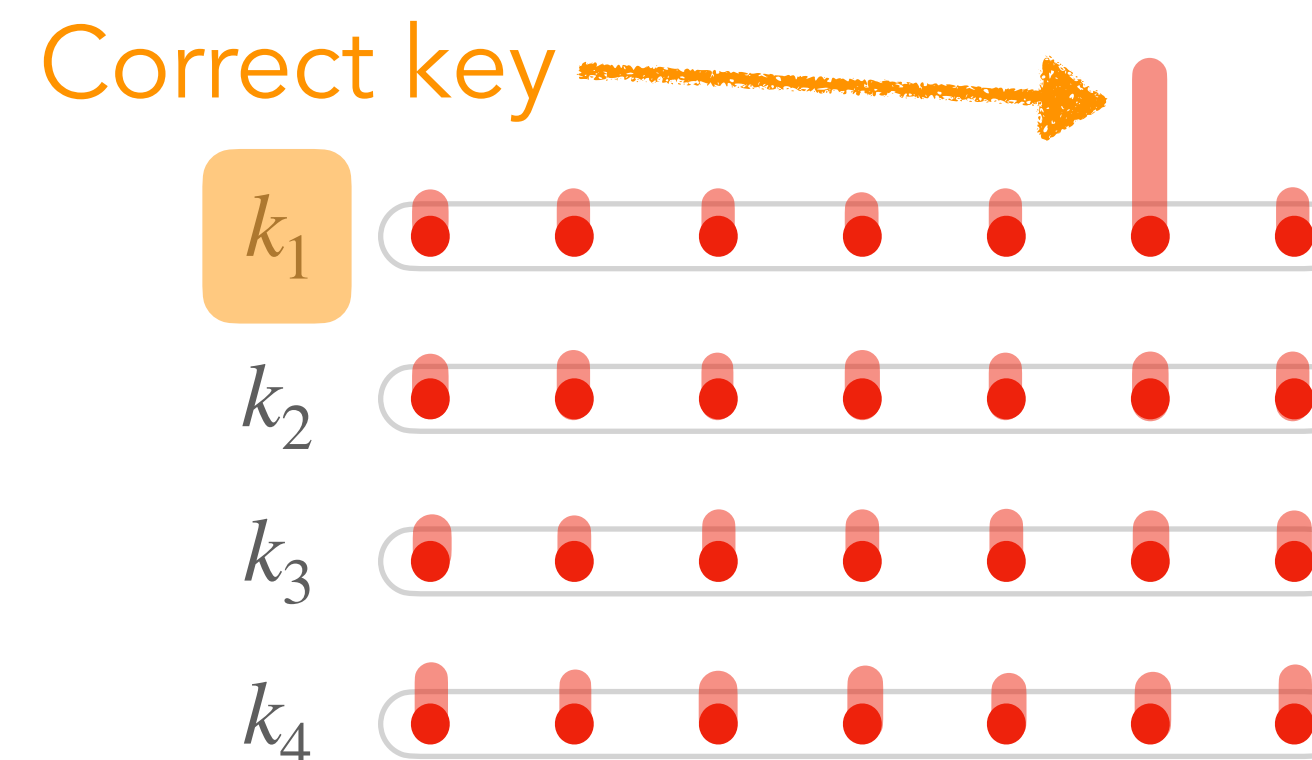
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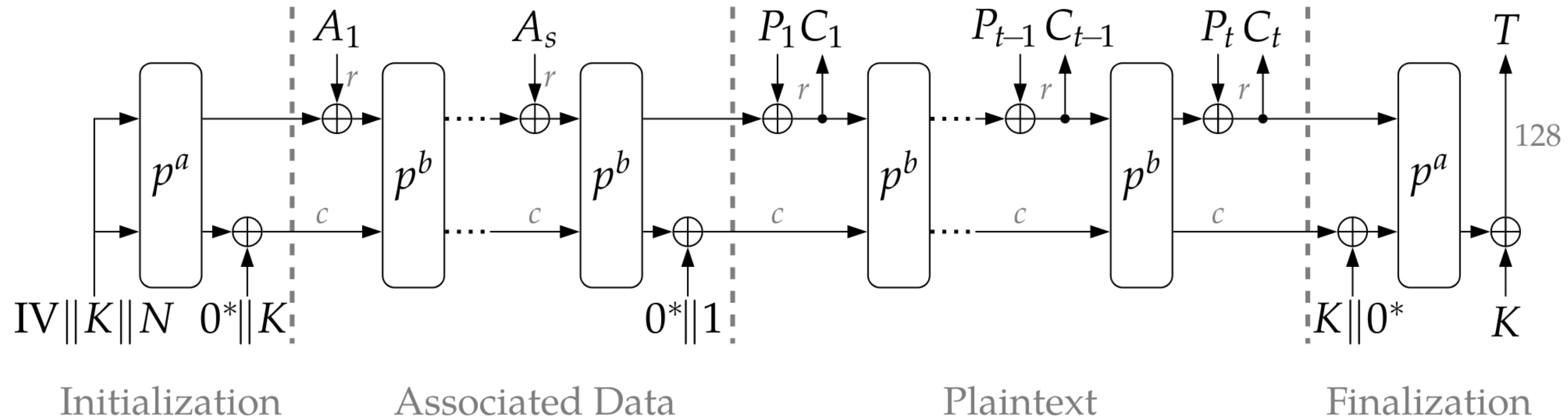
Linearity relationship
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$$h = \text{HW}(f(d, k))$$

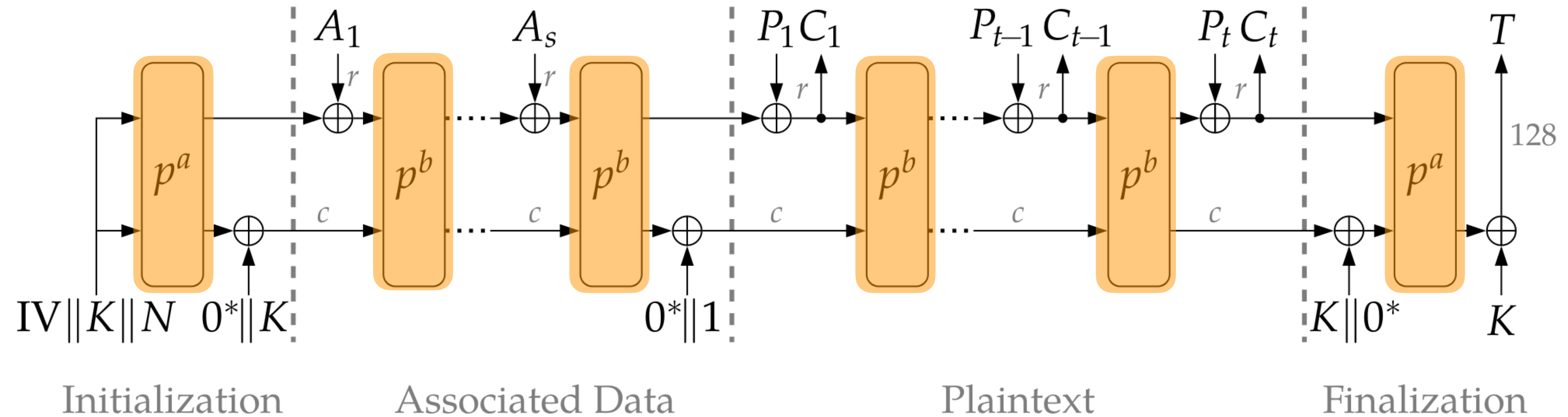
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Ascon

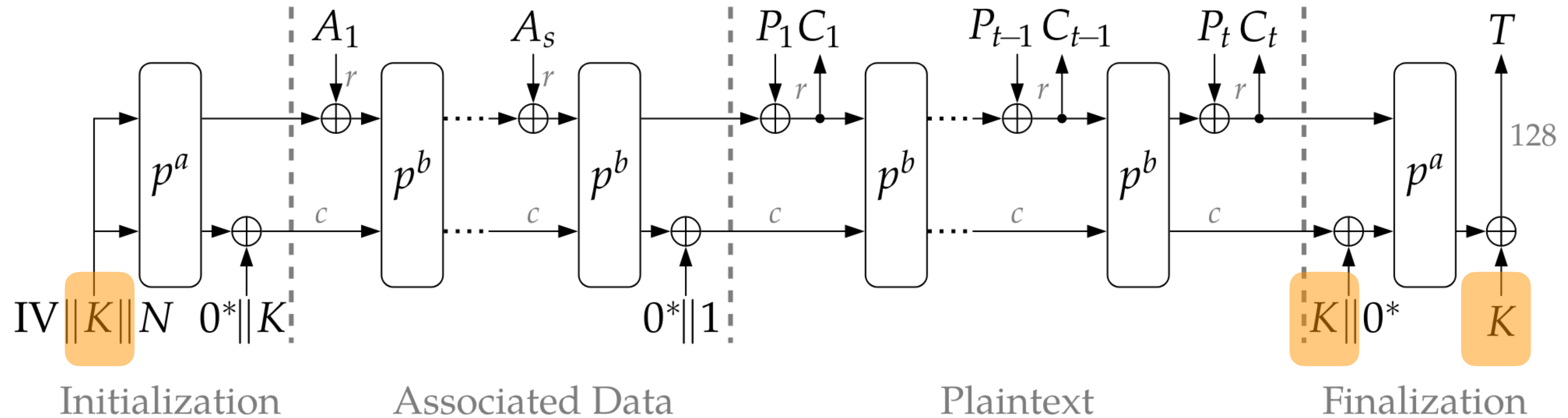


Permutation blocks

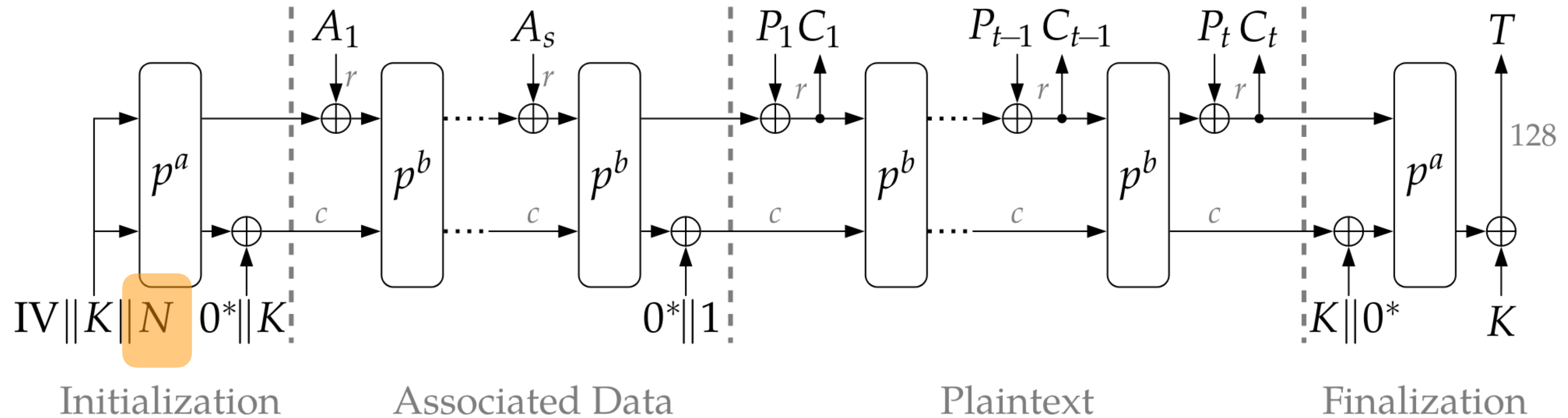


- p^a : 12 rounds
- p^b : 6 rounds

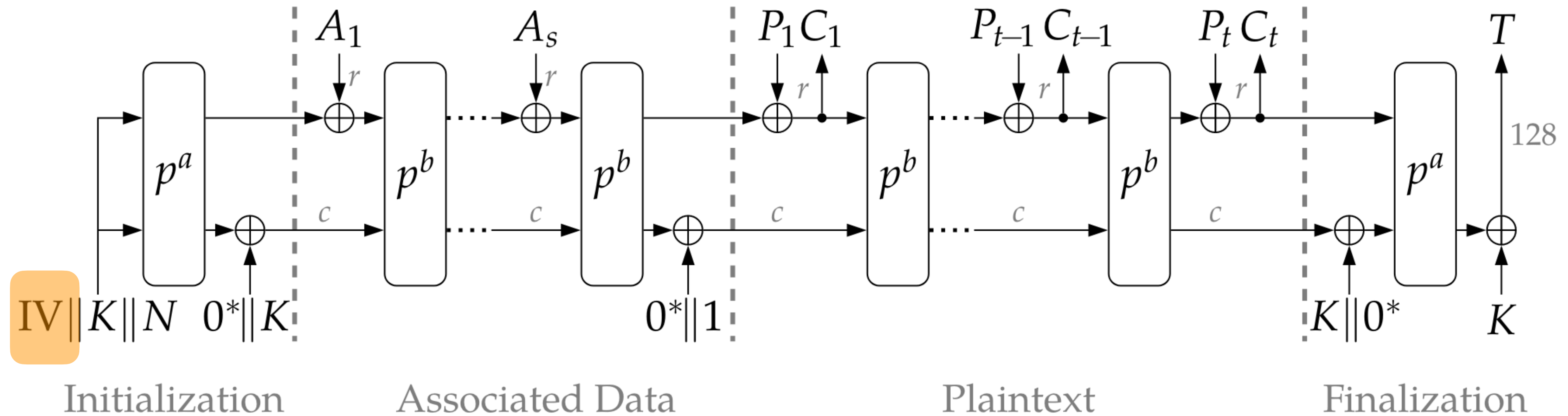
Key (128 bits)



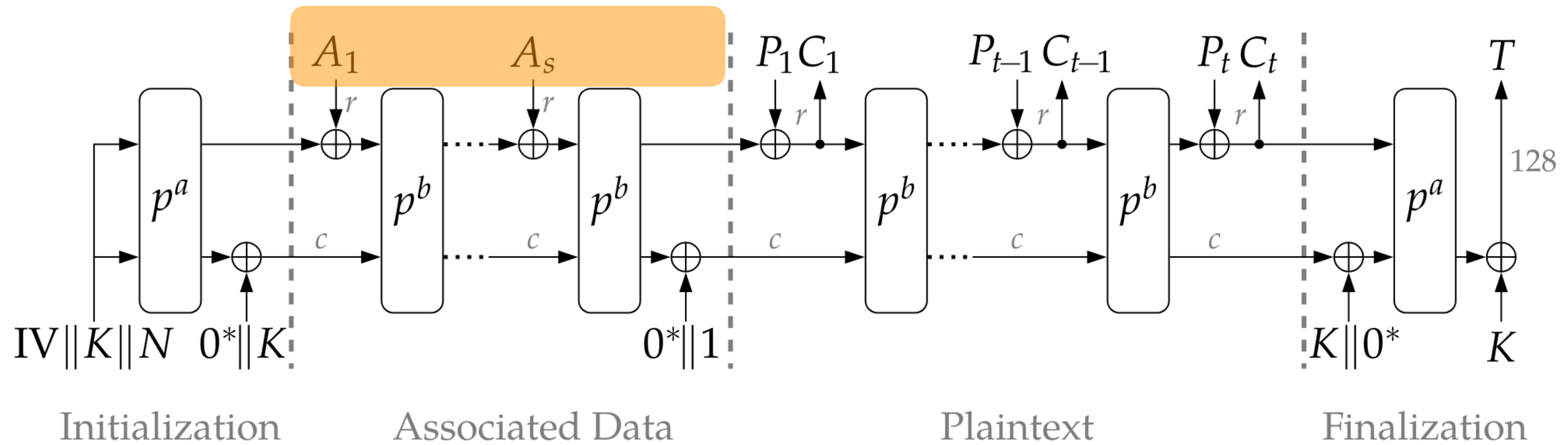
Nonce (128 bits)



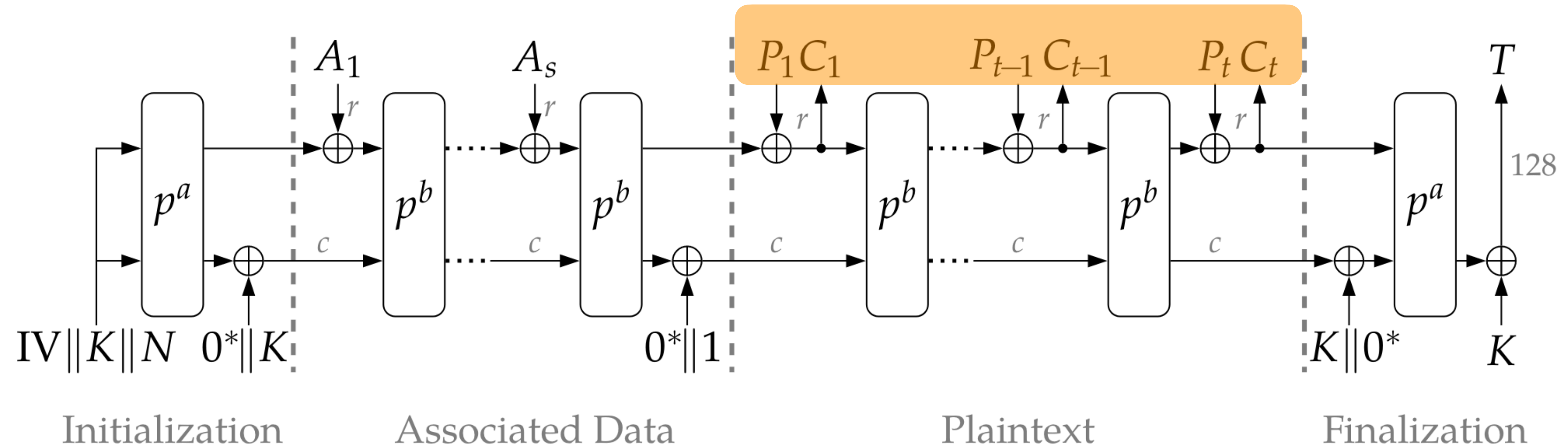
Initialization vector



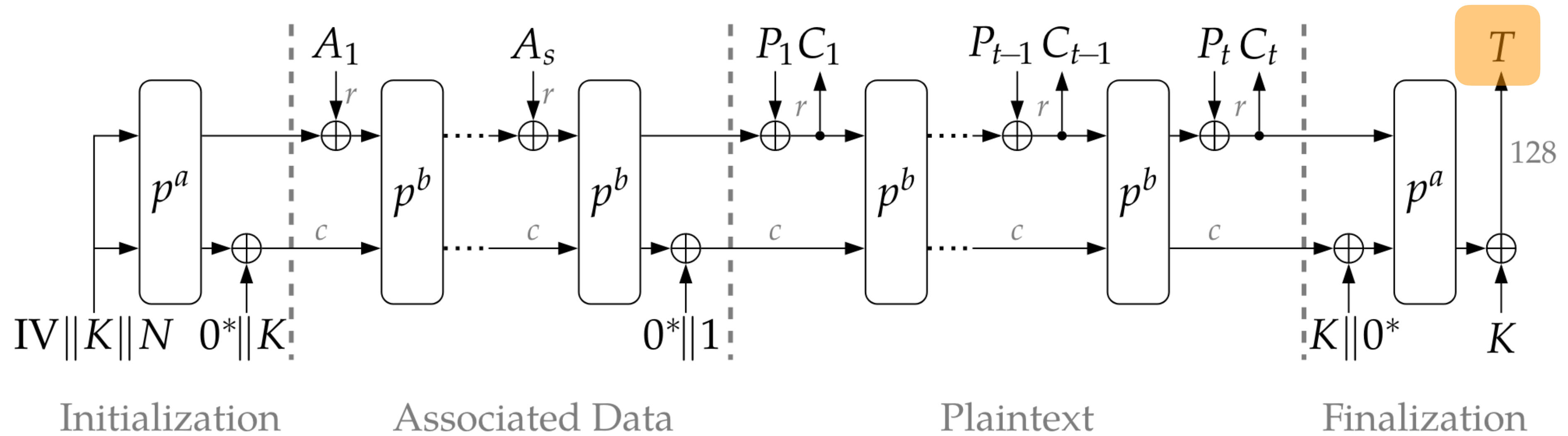
Associated data

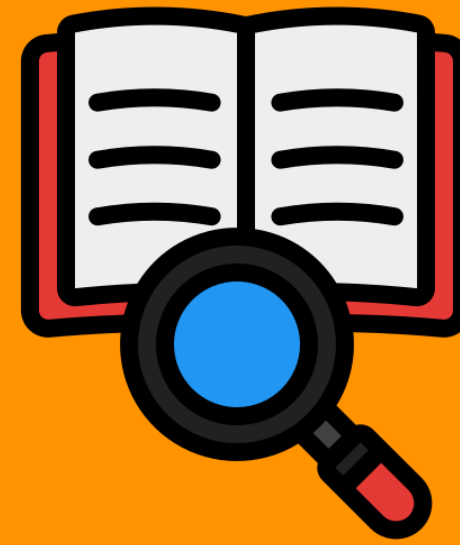


Plaintext / Ciphertext



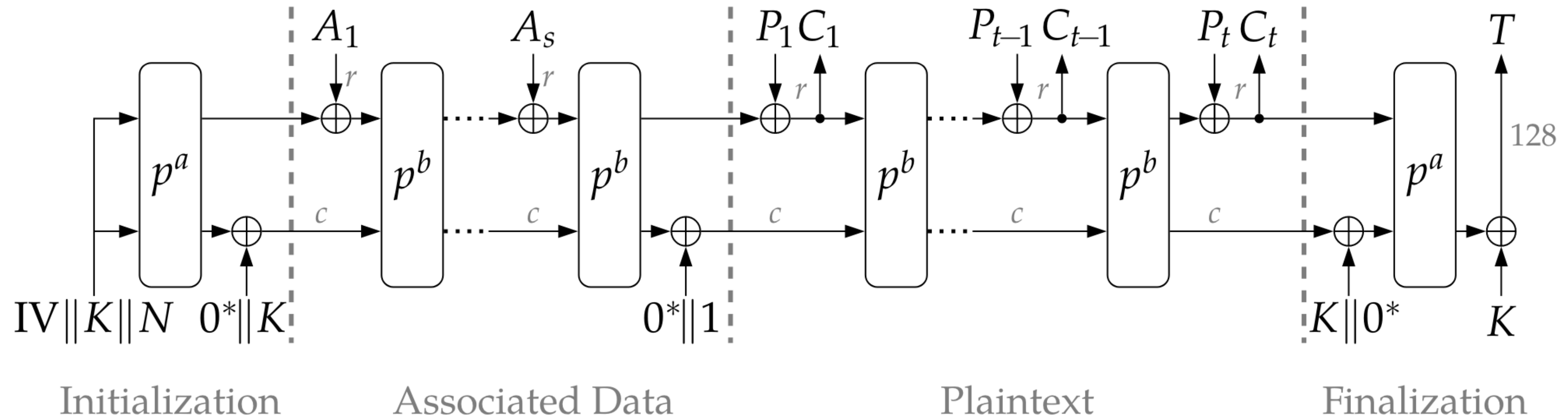
Verification Tag



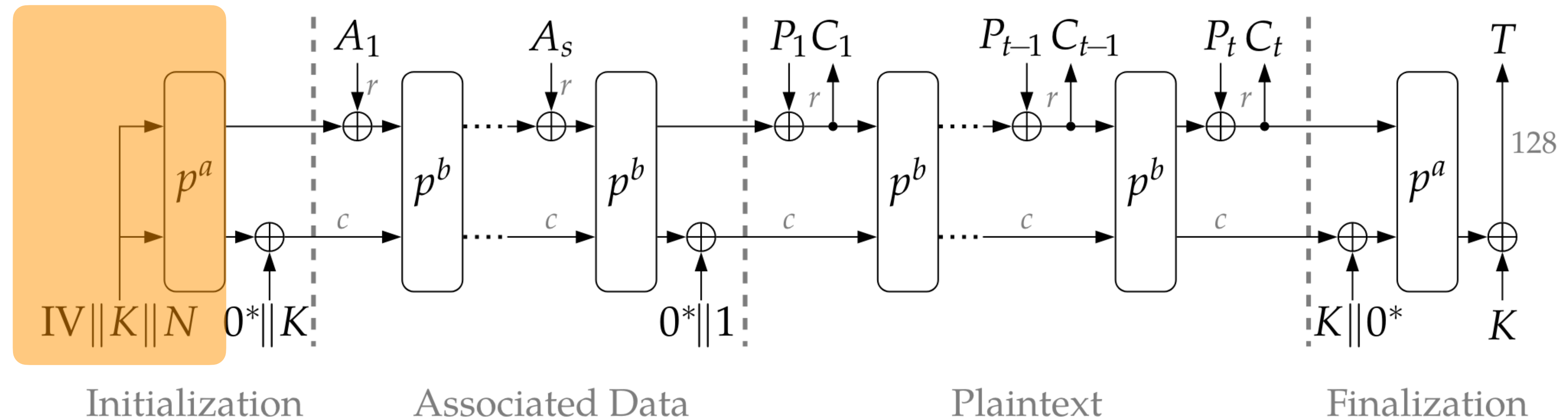


Existing CPA attacks on Ascon

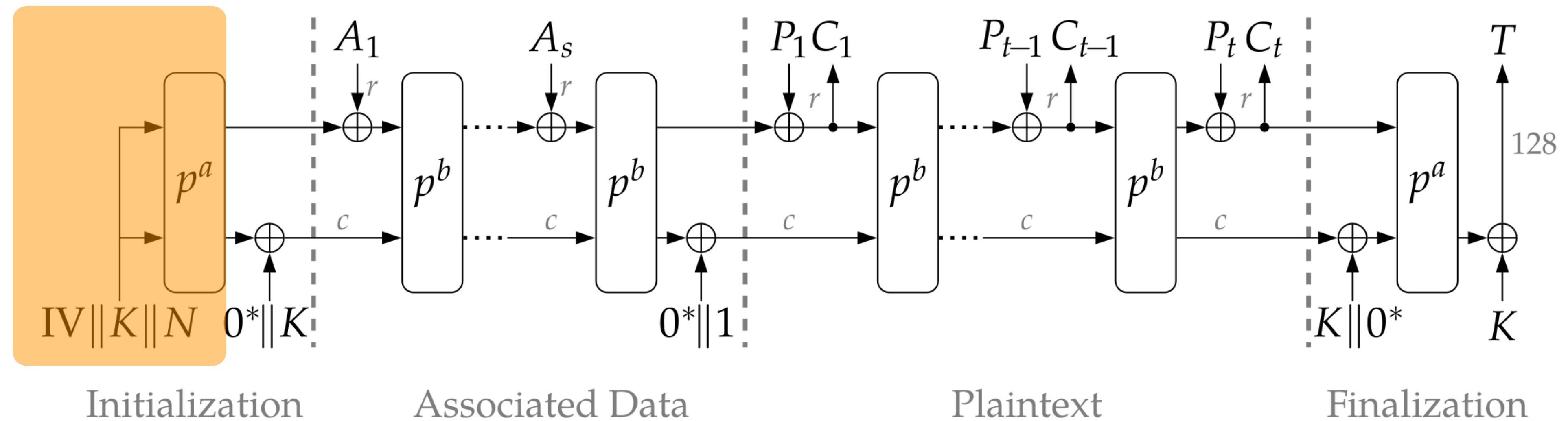
Selection function $v = f(d, k)$



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Selection function $v = f(d, k)$



Choose $v = f(\text{nonce}, \text{key})$

intermediate variable v in the *first round*

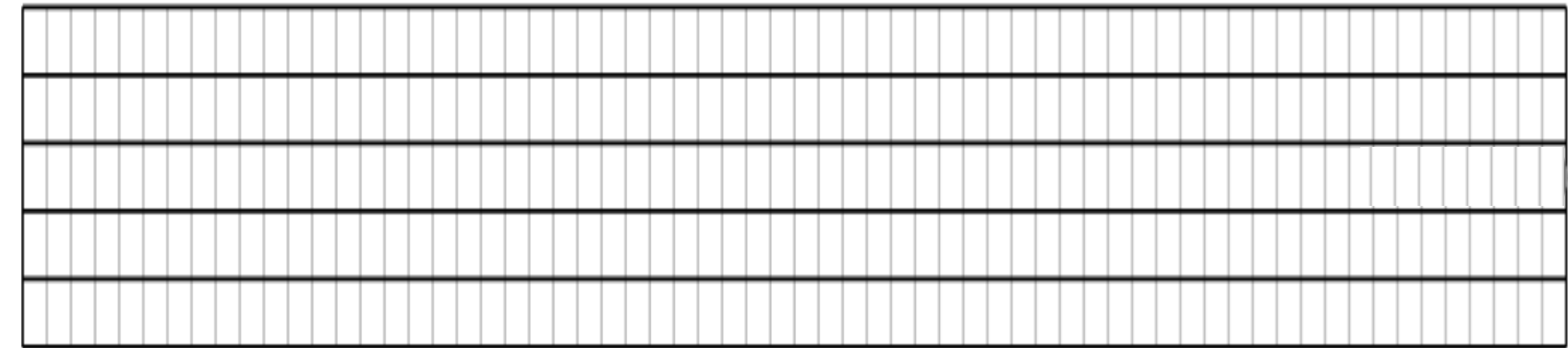
round computation

Round computation



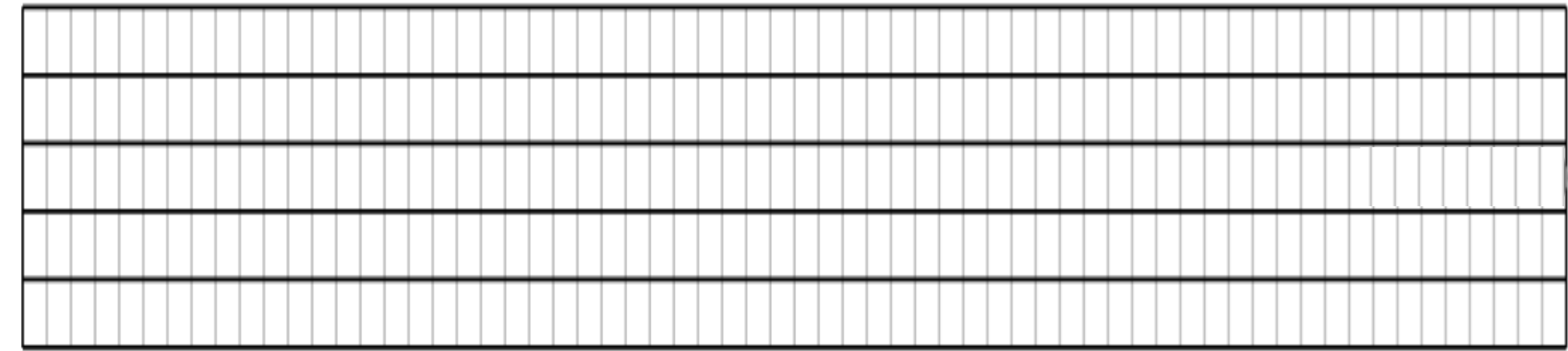
Round computation

On 320-bit state = 5 x 64-bit words



Round computation

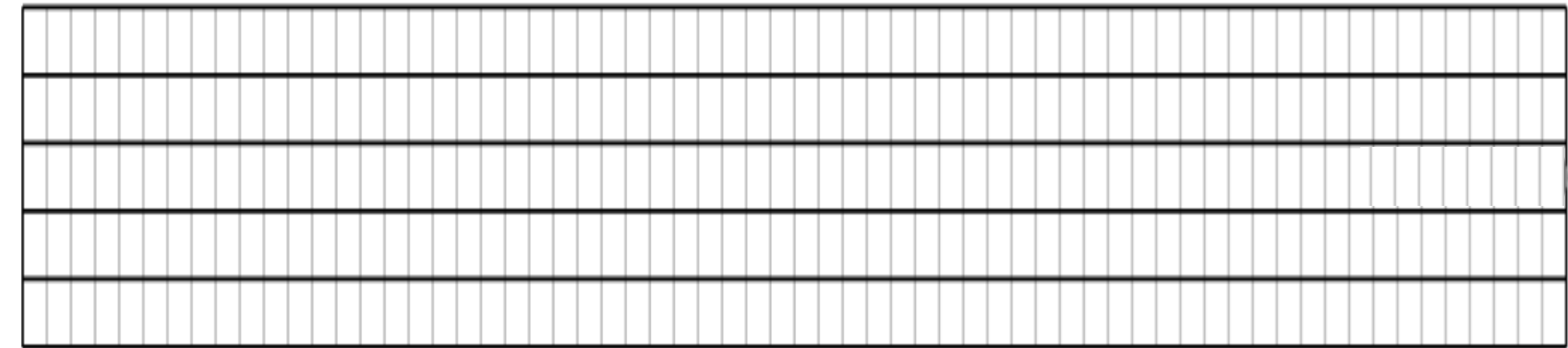
On 320-bit state = 5 x 64-bit words



Input of the first round:

Round computation

On 320-bit state = 5 x 64-bit words

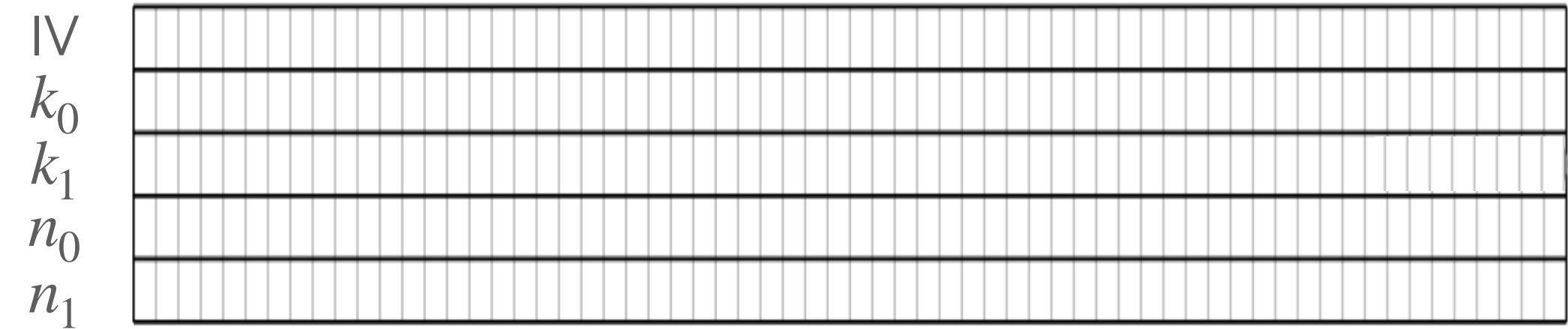


Input of the first round:

- 128-bit key : $K = (k_0, k_1)$
- 128-bit nonce : $N = (n_0, n_1)$
- 64-bit init. vector : IV

Round computation

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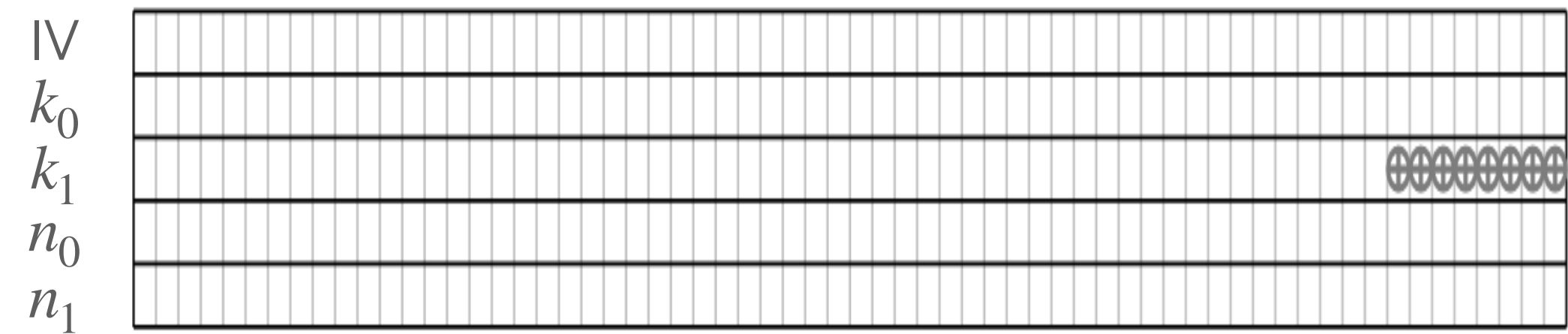
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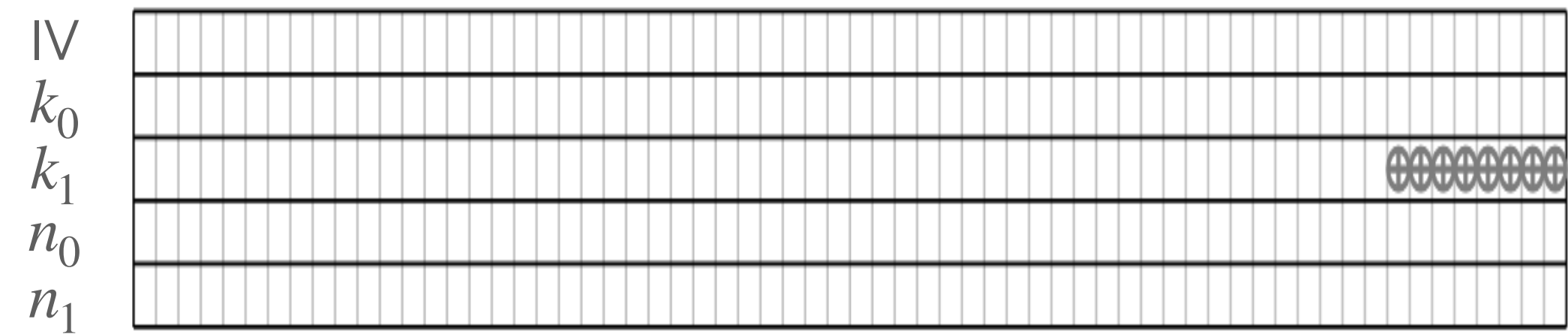
(1) Round constant addition

Round computation

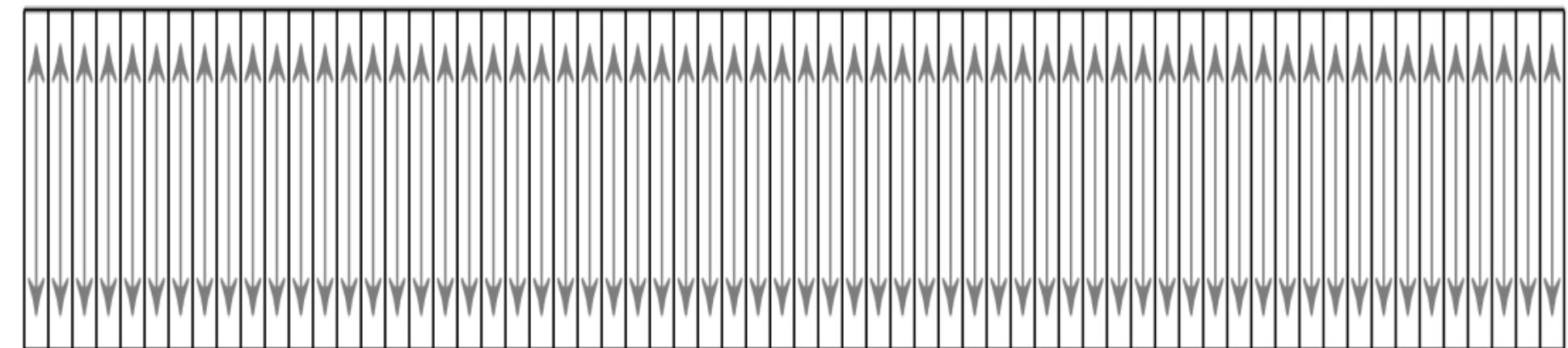
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(1) Round constant addition



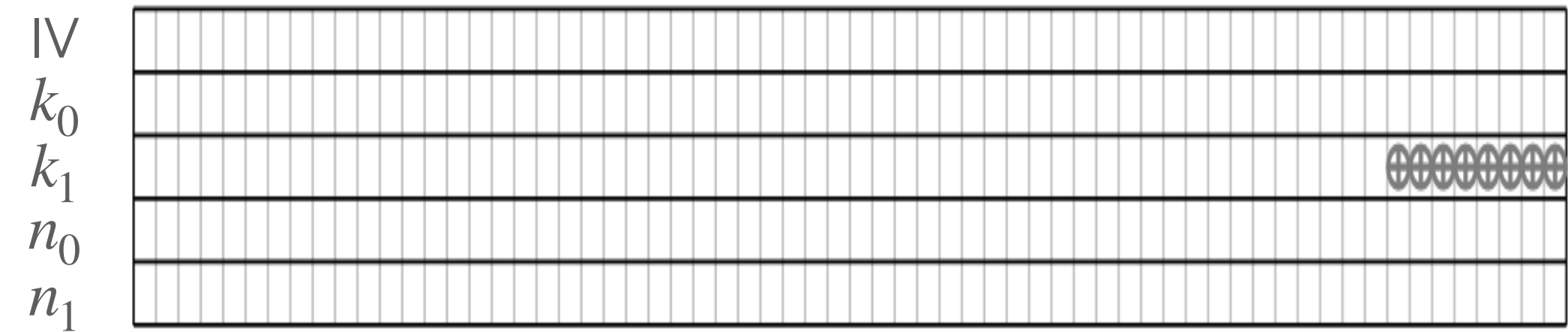
(2) Substitution *(vertical)*

Round computation

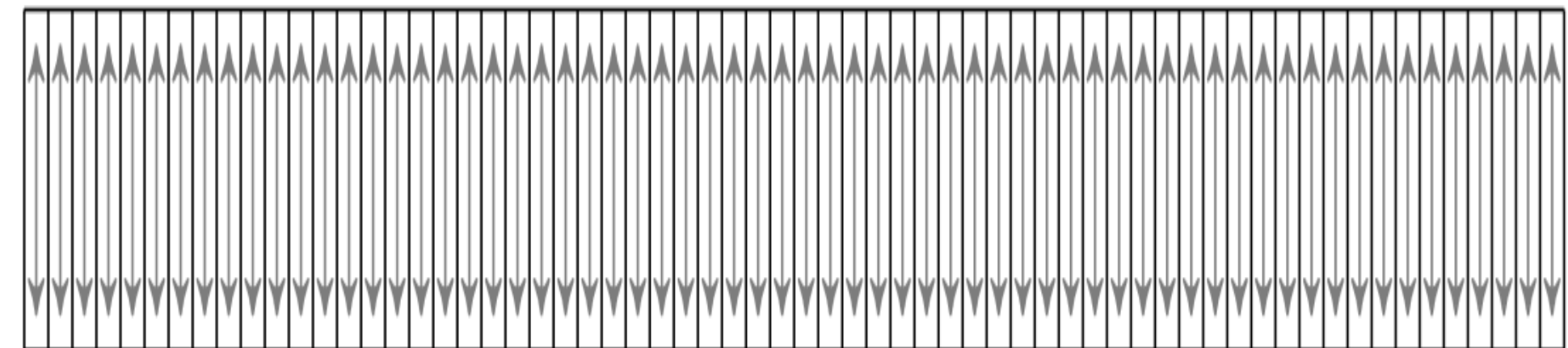
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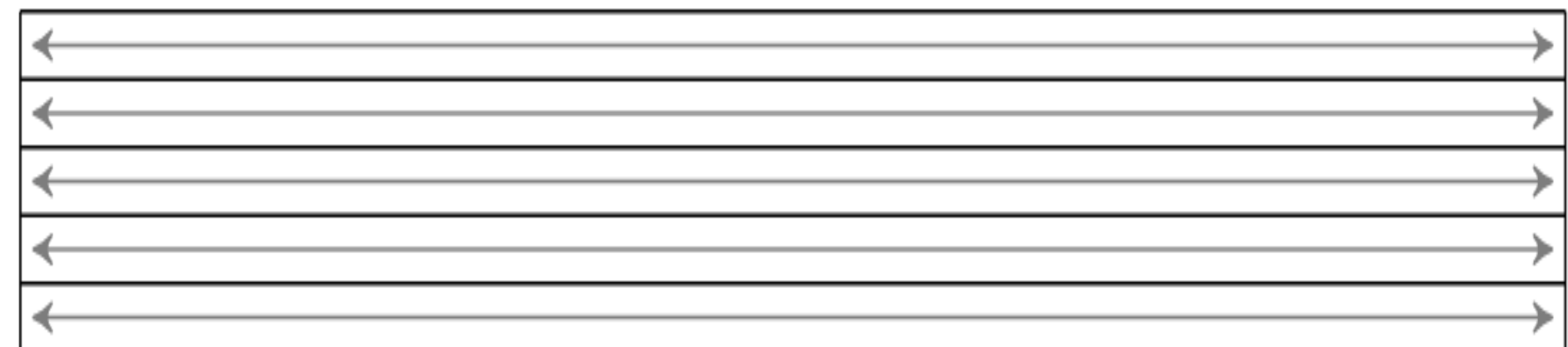
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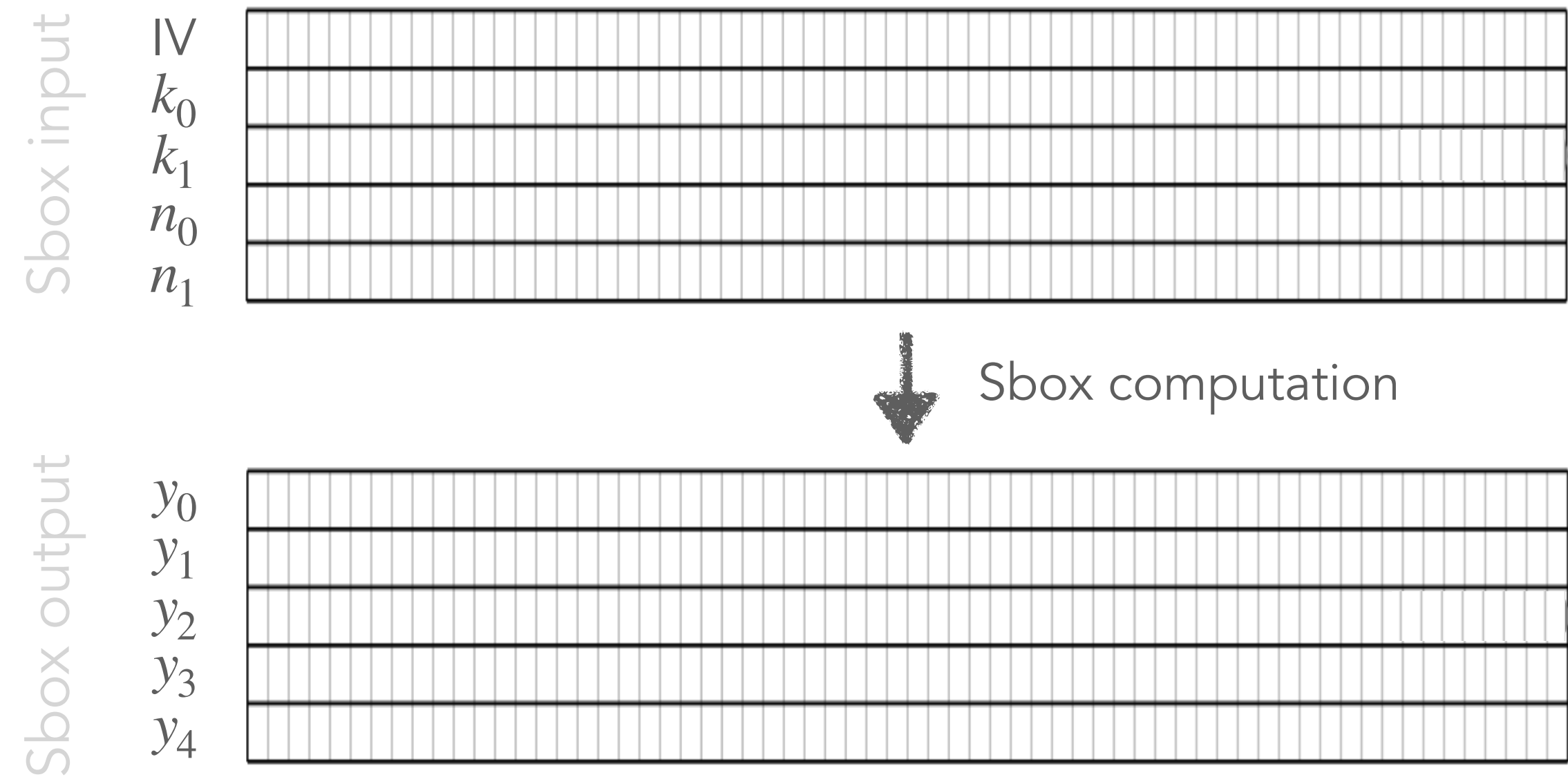


(3) Linear diffusion *(horizontal)*

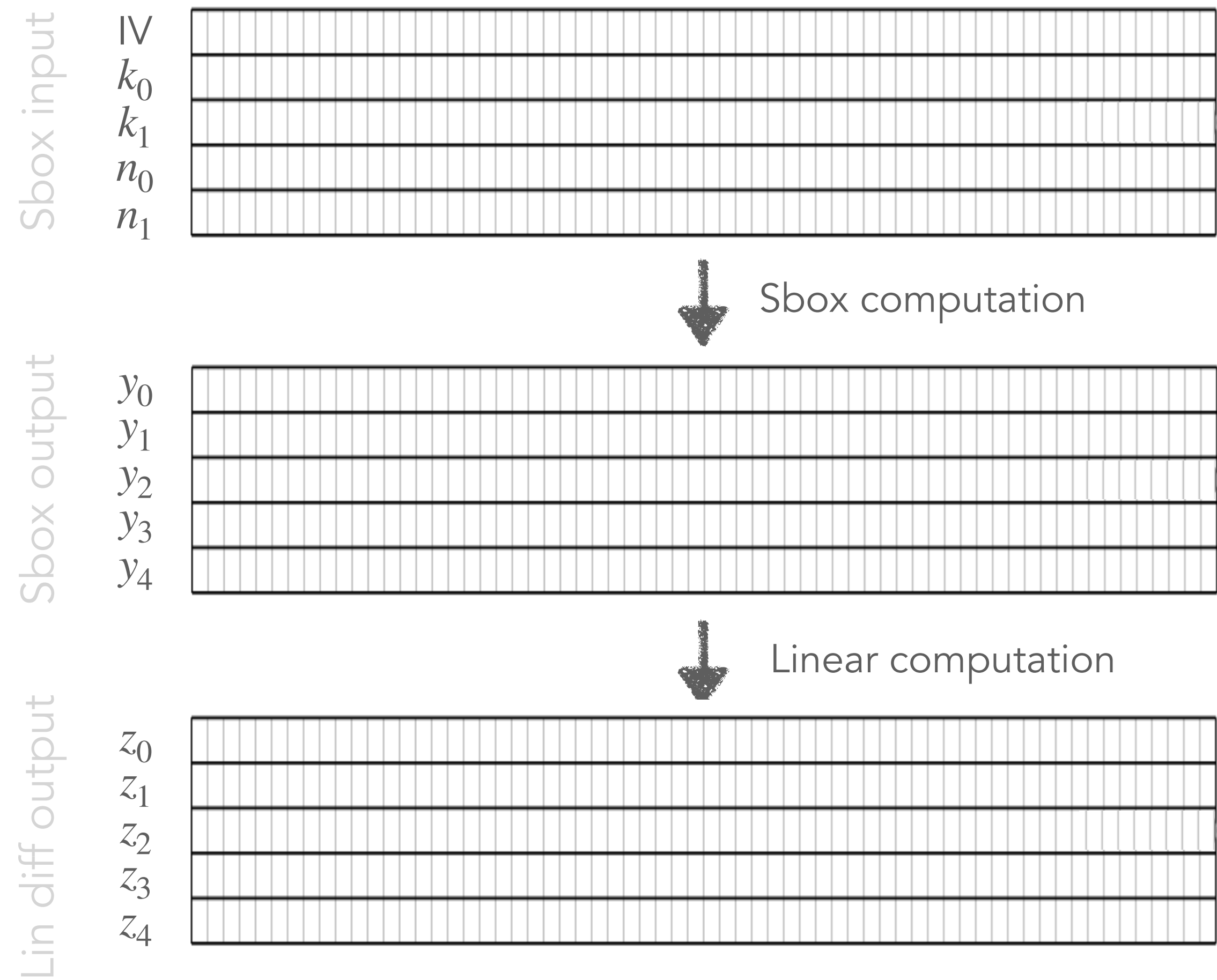
State changes

Sbox input	IV	
	k_0	
	k_1	
	n_0	
	n_1	

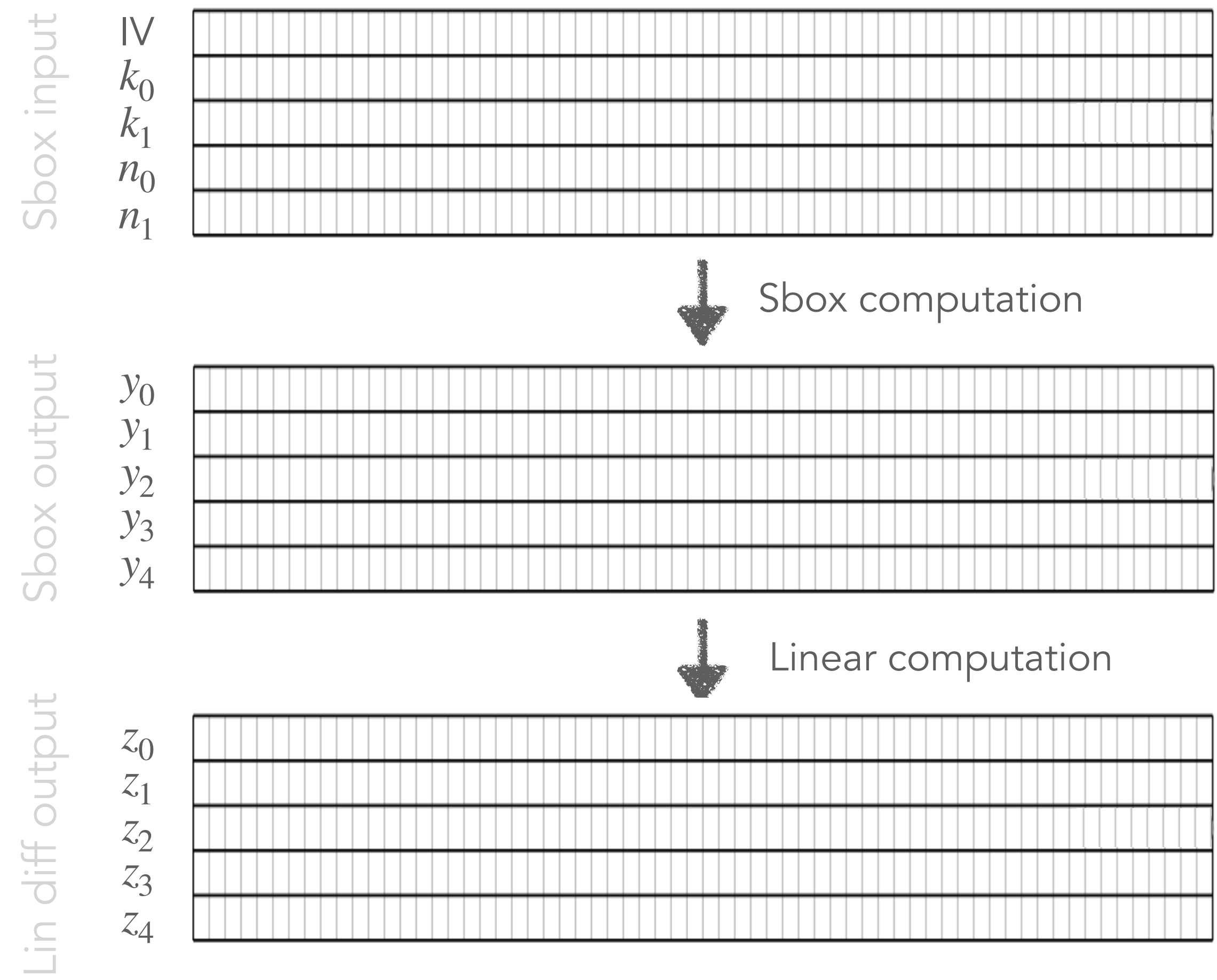
State changes



State changes



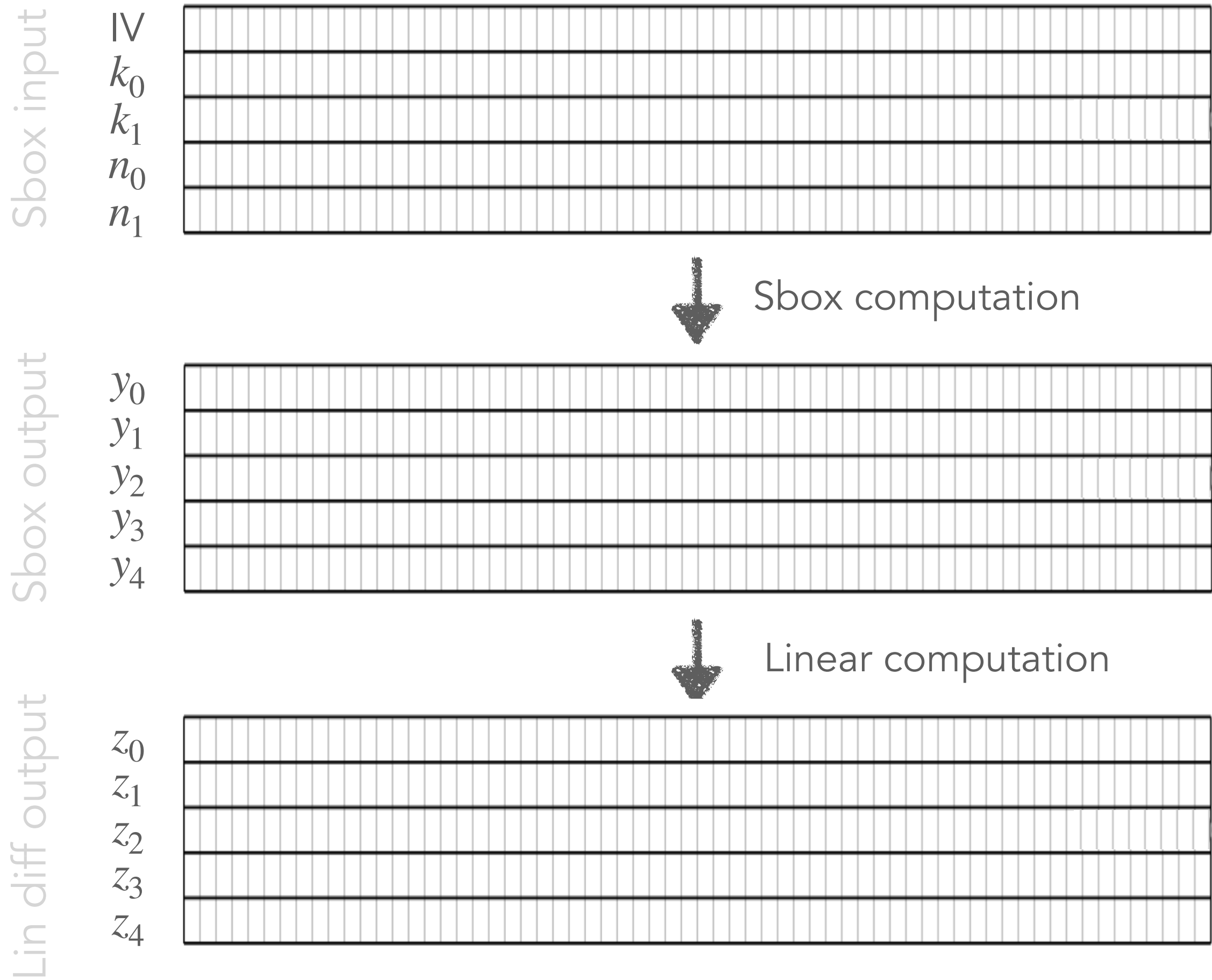
Previous CPA (1)



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Ramezanpour et al., 2020

Choose Sbox output as attack point

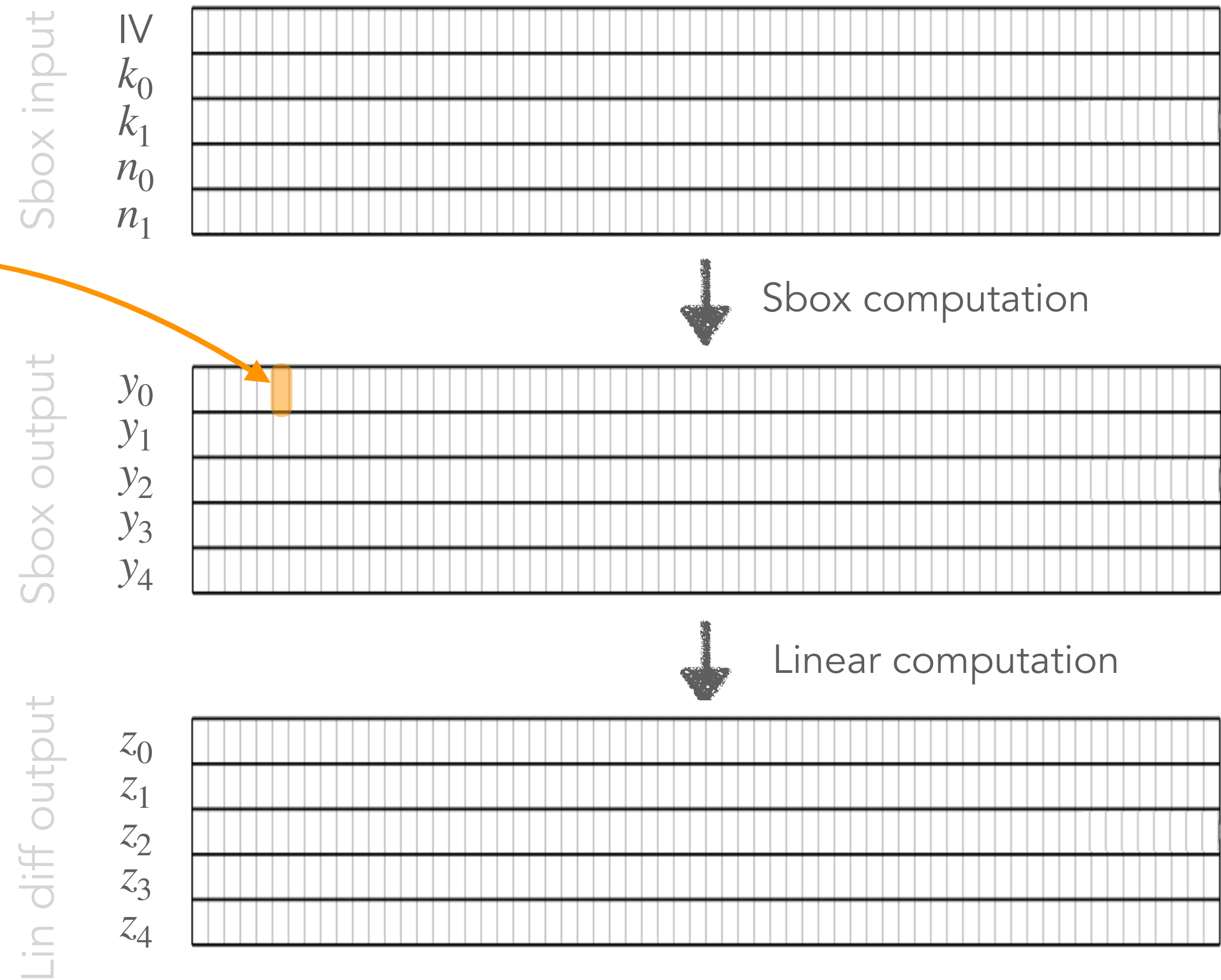


Previous CPA (1)

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Choose Sbox output as attack point

- Intermediate variable: y_0^j

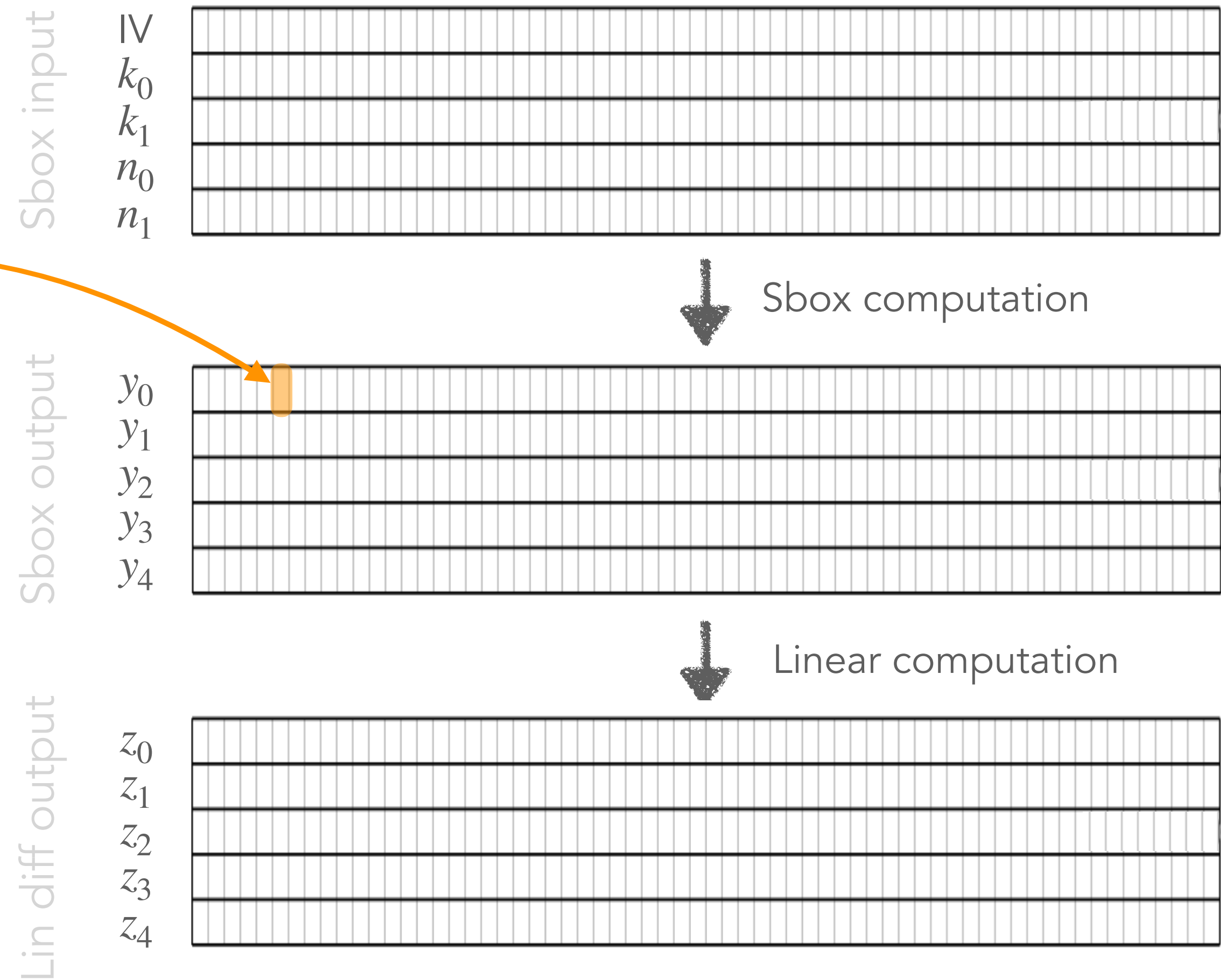


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Ramezanpour et al., 2020

Choose Sbox output as attack point

- Intermediate variable: y_0^j
- Failed (with 40K traces)

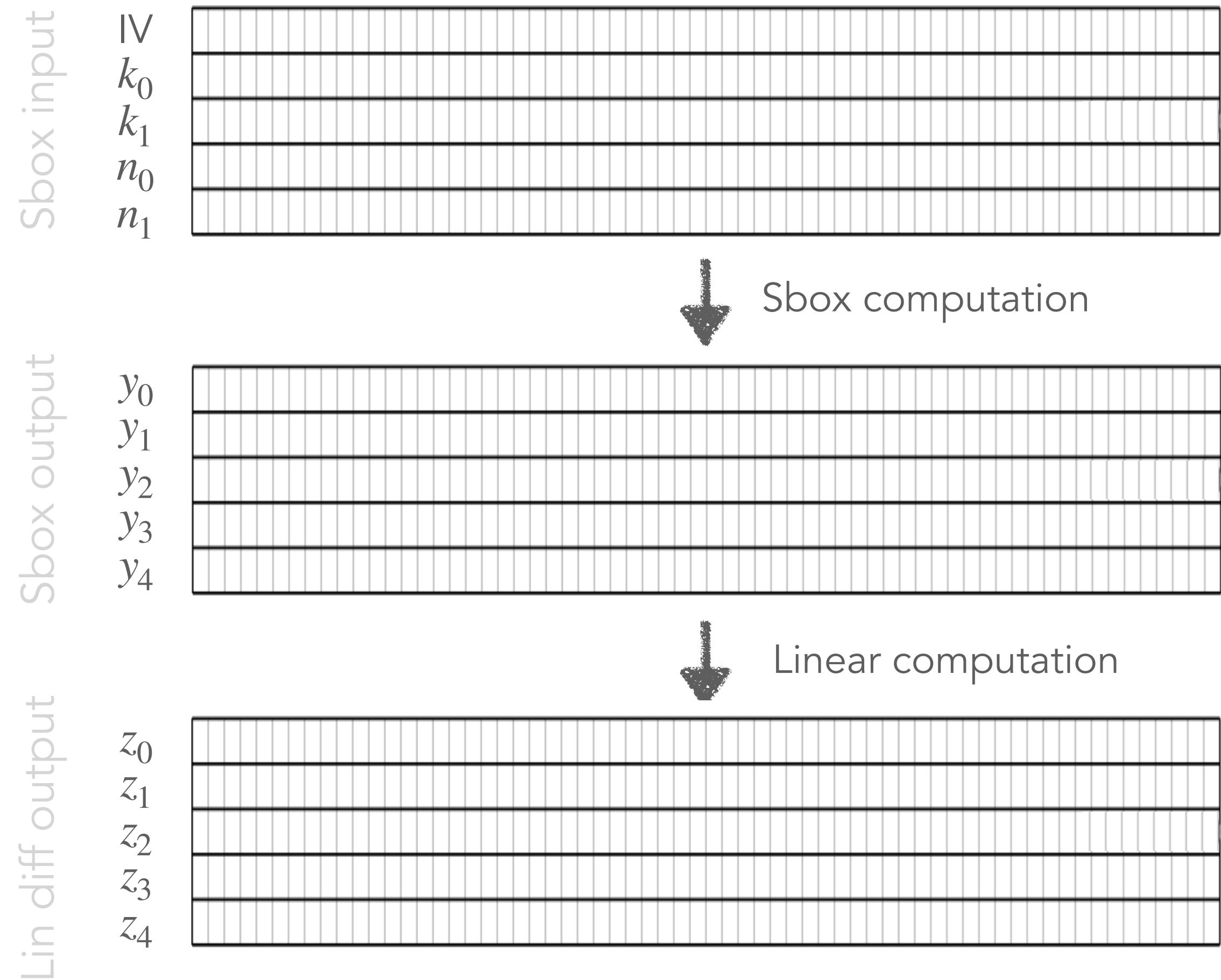


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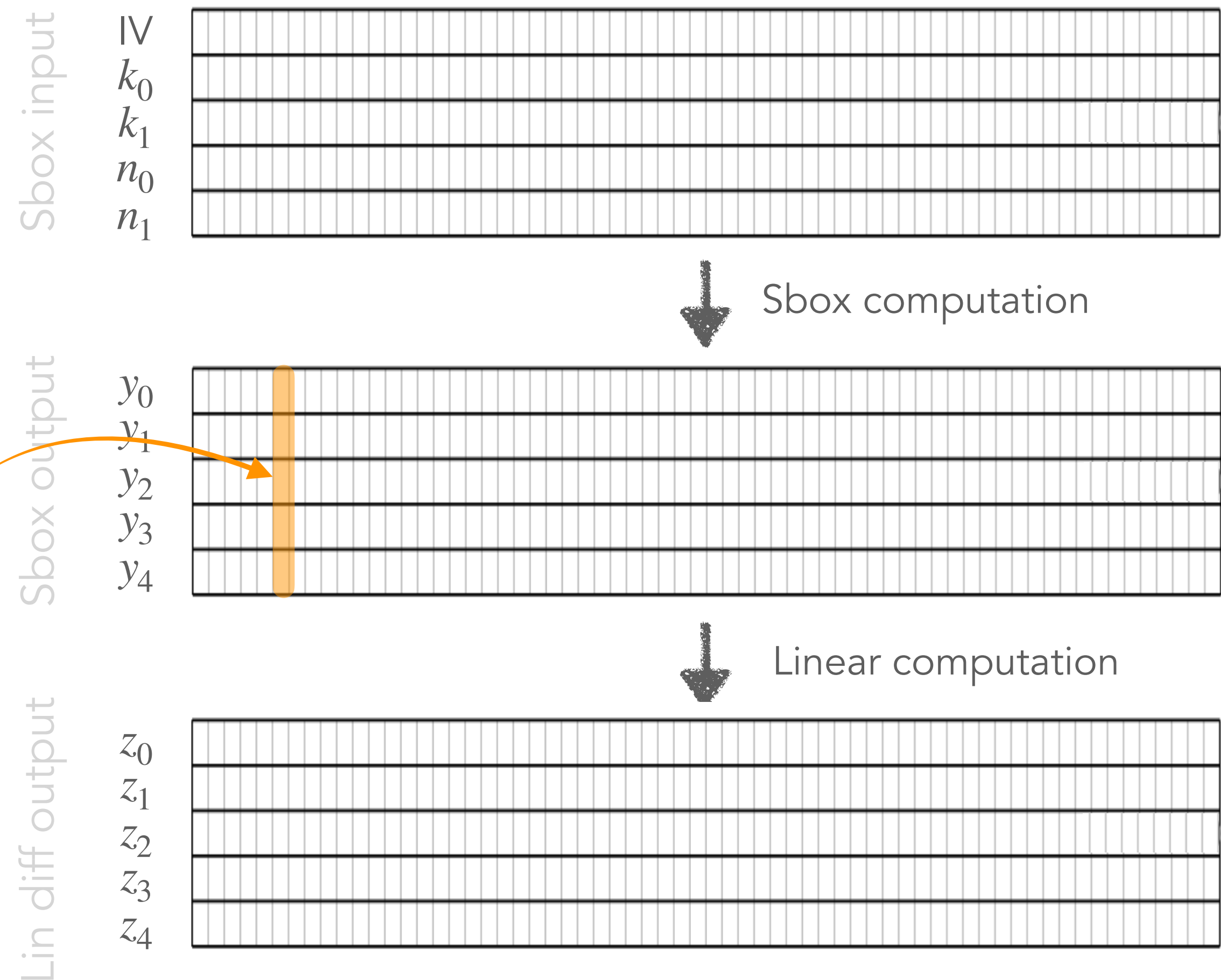
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Choose Sbox output as attack point

- Intermediate variable: y_0^j
→ Failed (with 40K traces)
- Intermediate variable: $(y_0^j | y_1^j | y_2^j | y_3^j | y_4^j)$

HW of Sbox output



Previous CPA (1)

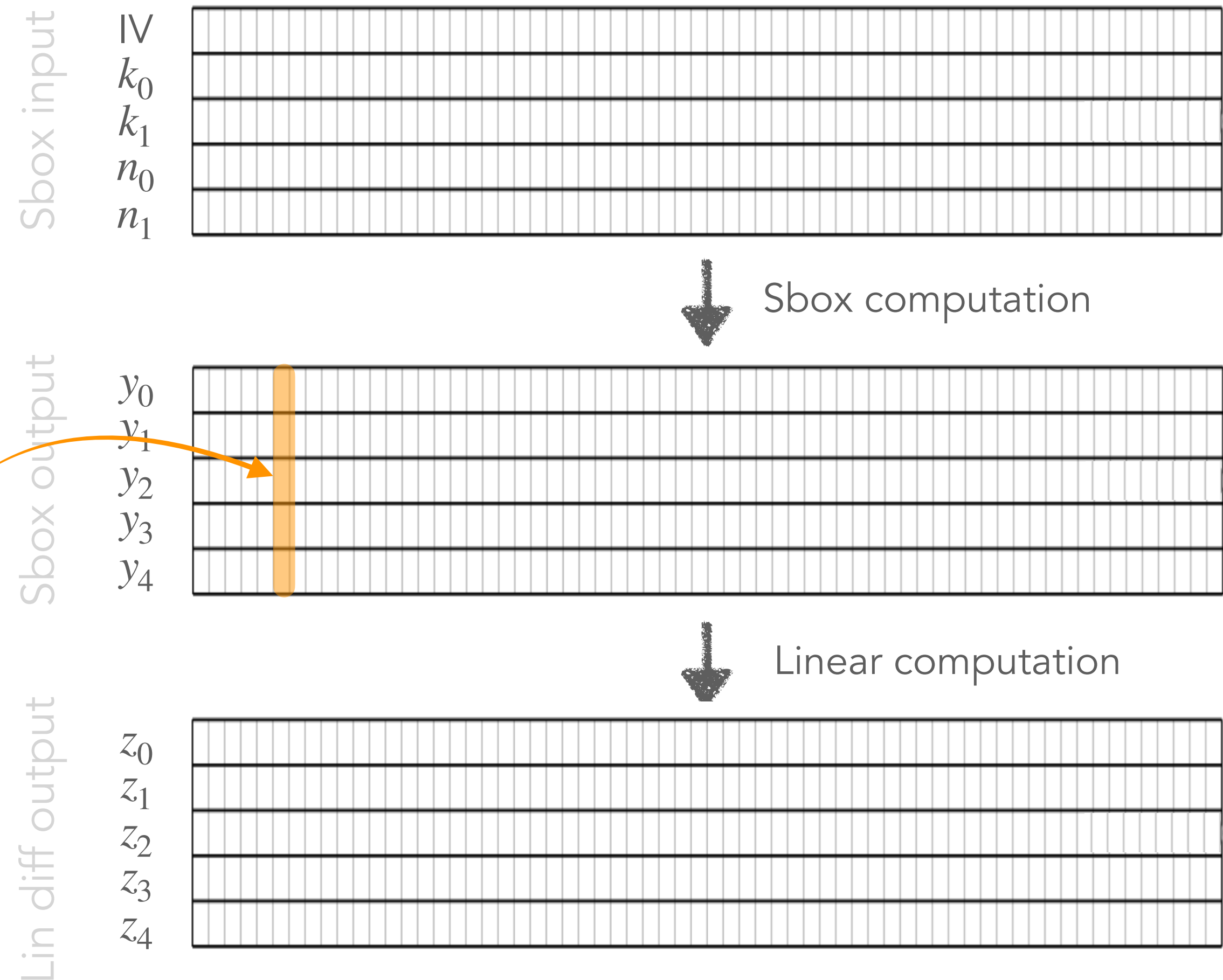
Ramezanpour et al., 2020

Choose Sbox output as attack point

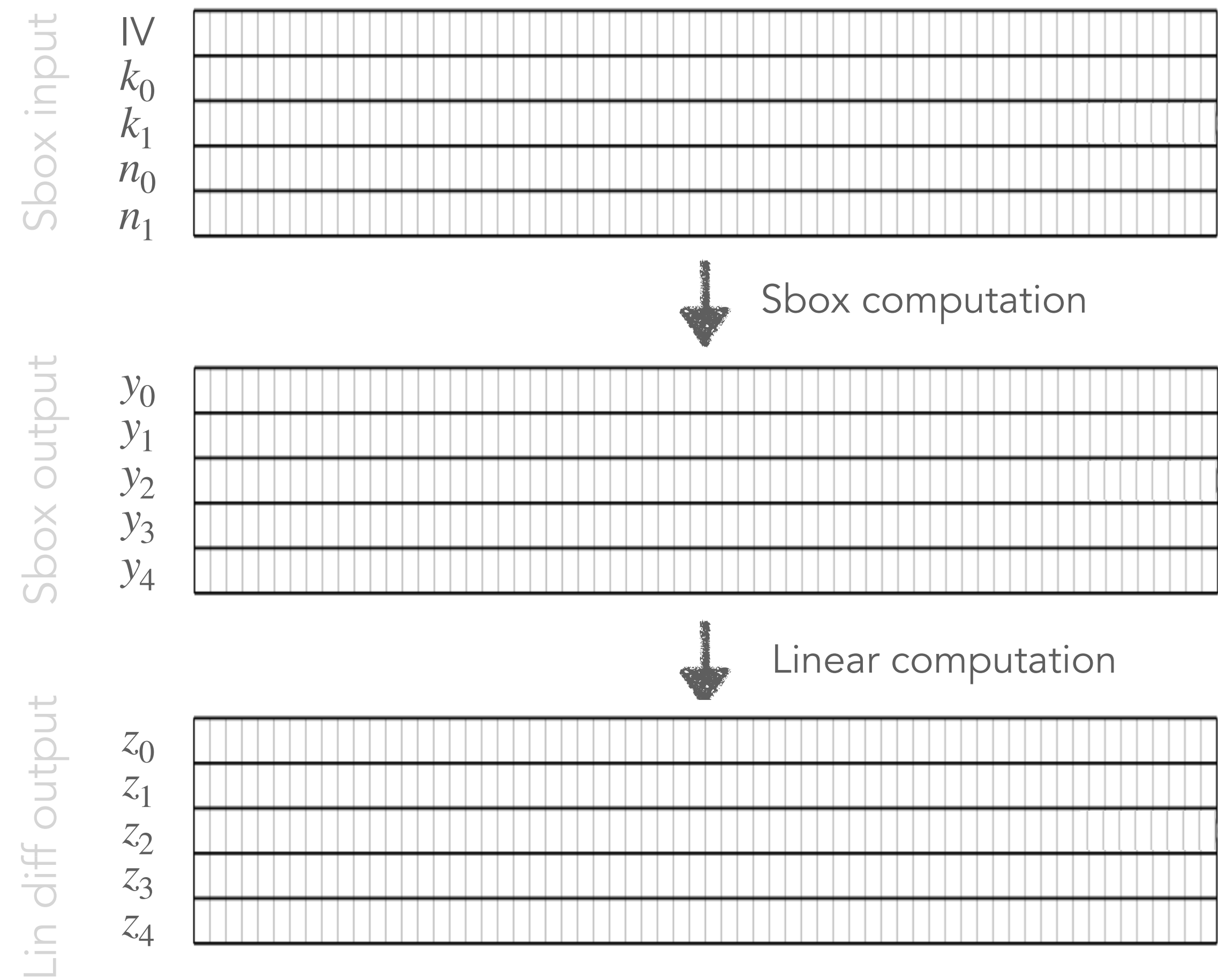
- Intermediate variable: y_0^j
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HW of Sbox output

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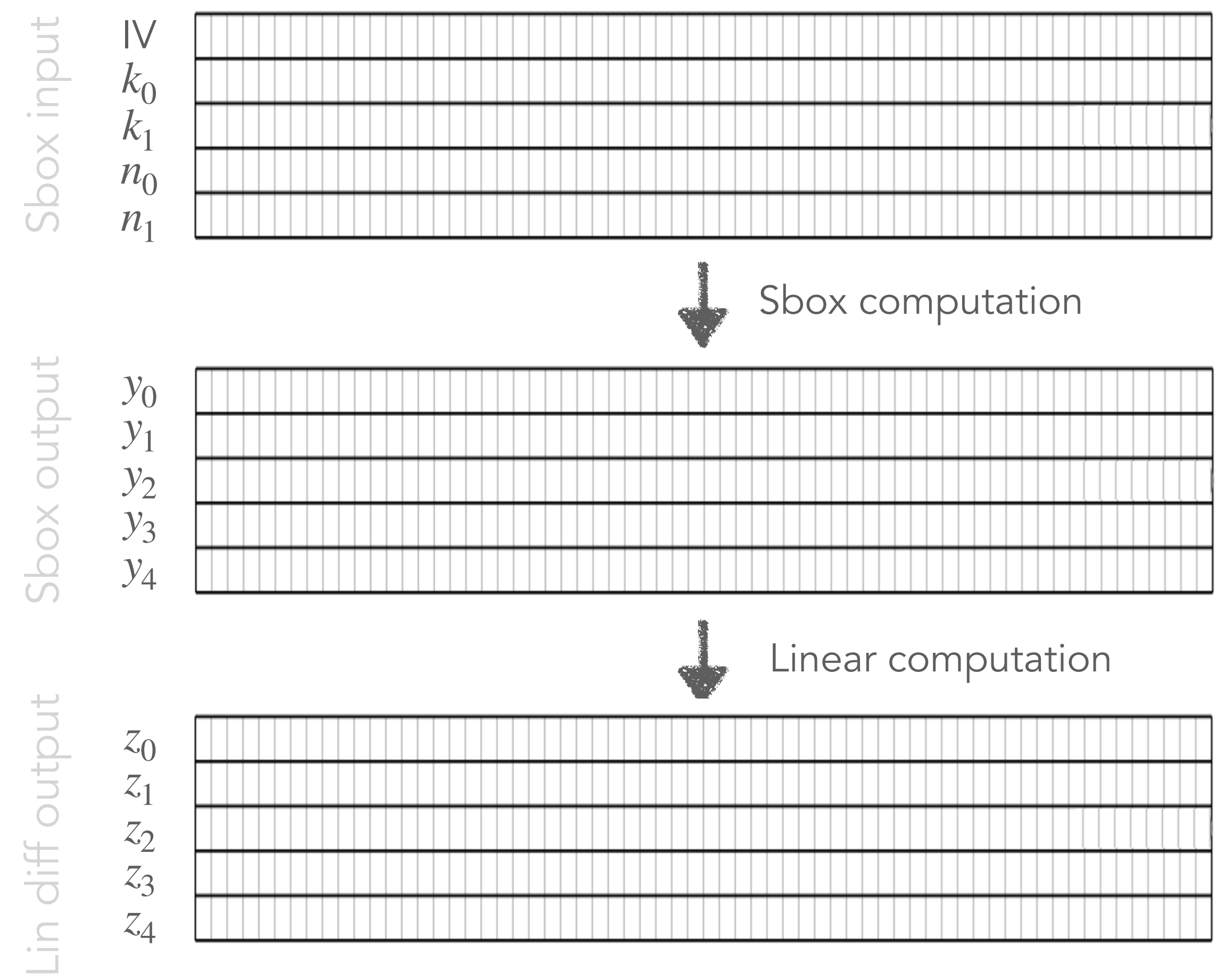
Previous CPA (2)



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Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Choose linear diffusion output
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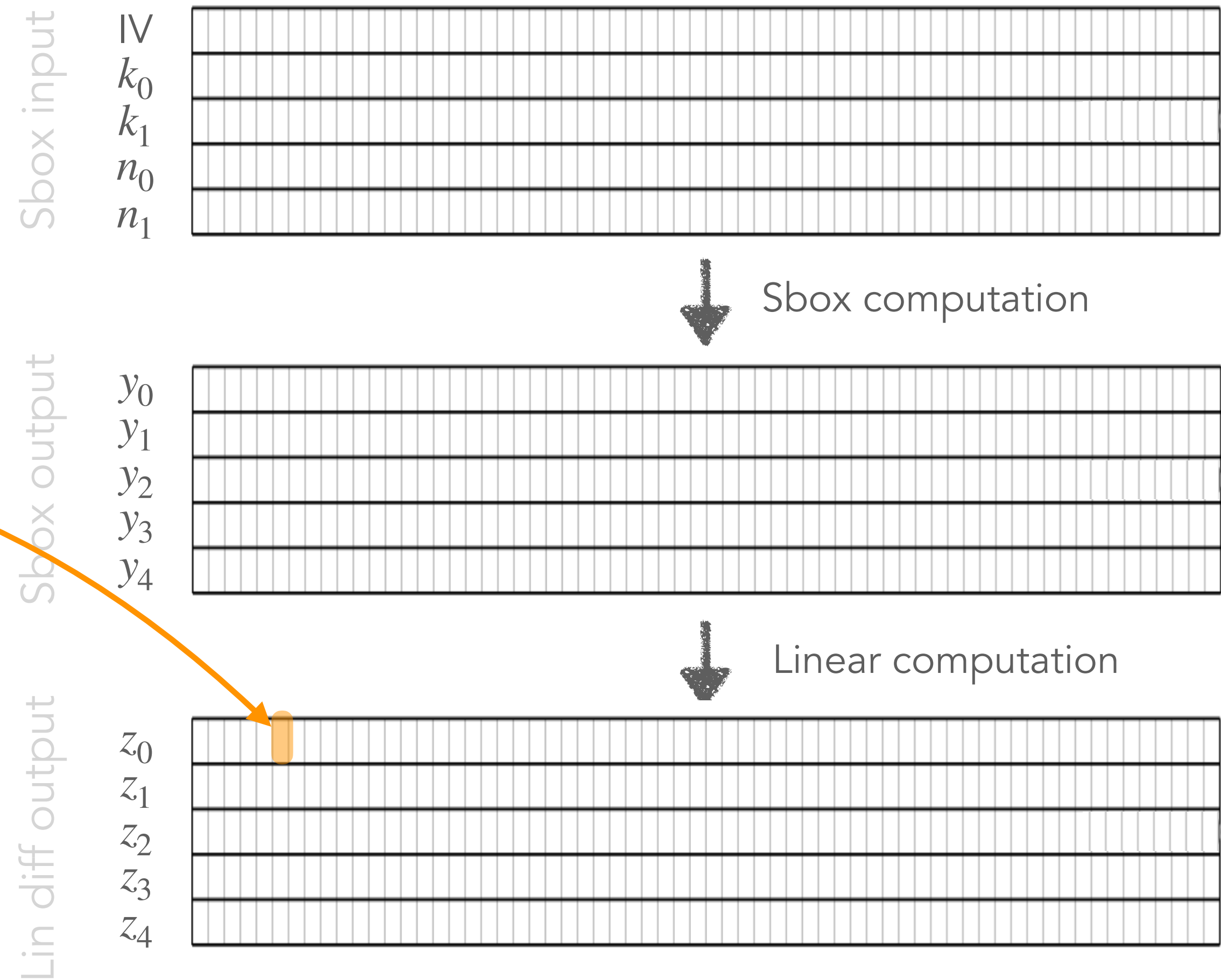


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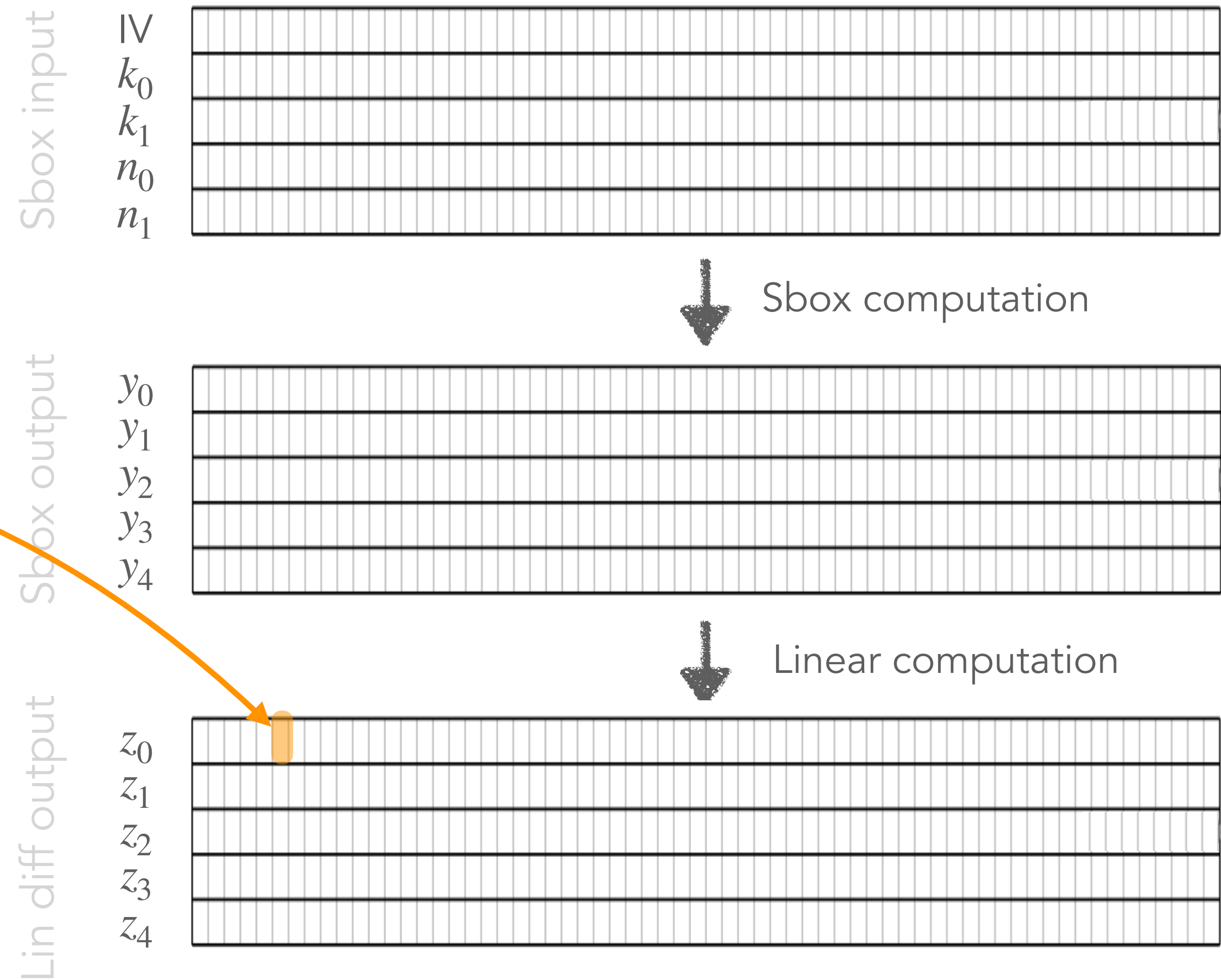
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Fine-tune computation: $z_0^j \rightarrow \tilde{z}_0^j$



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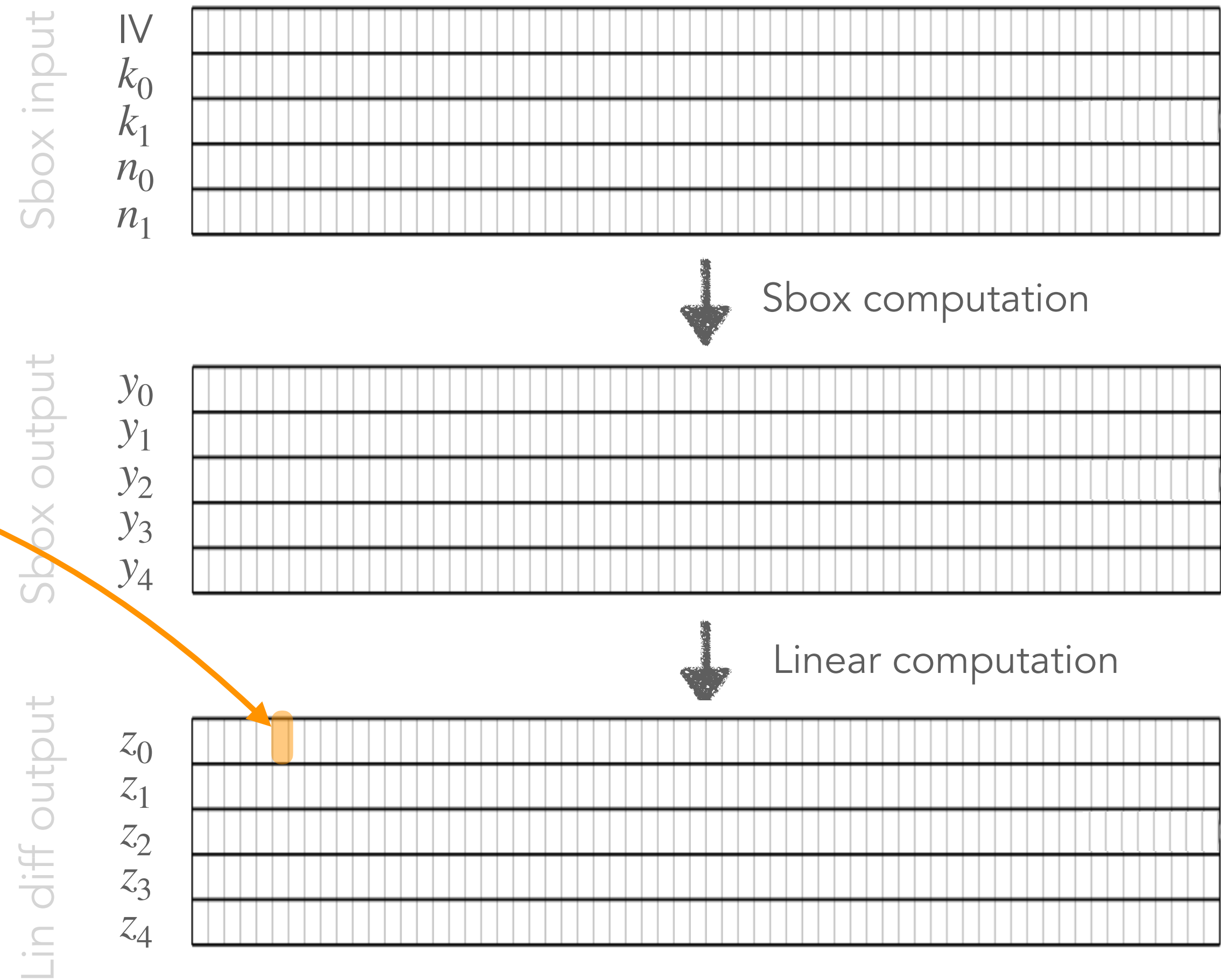
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Choose linear diffusion output
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Fine-tune computation: $z_0^j \rightarrow \tilde{z}_0^j$

→ Succeeded

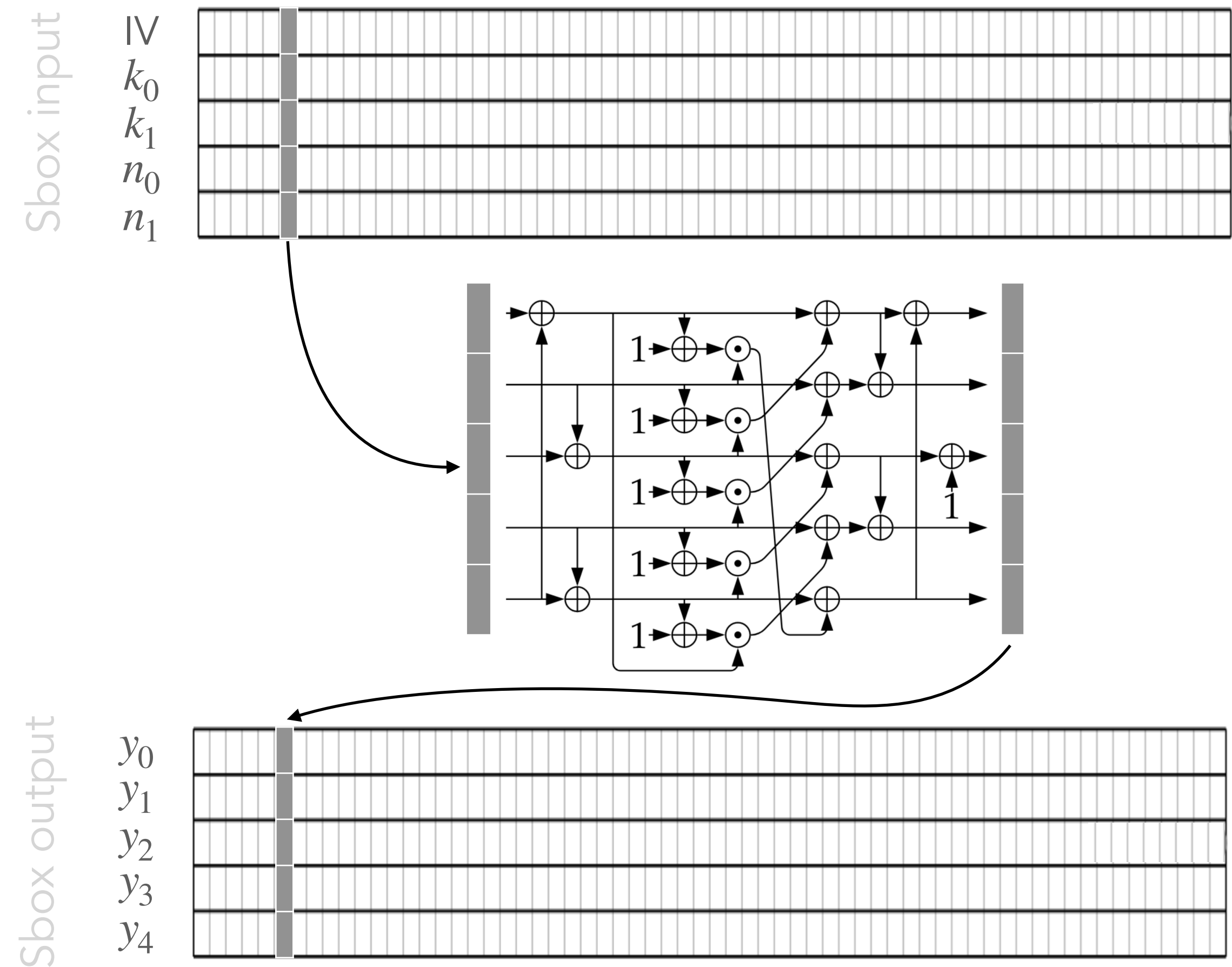




What are the reasons of this difference ?

(1) Sbox output as attack point

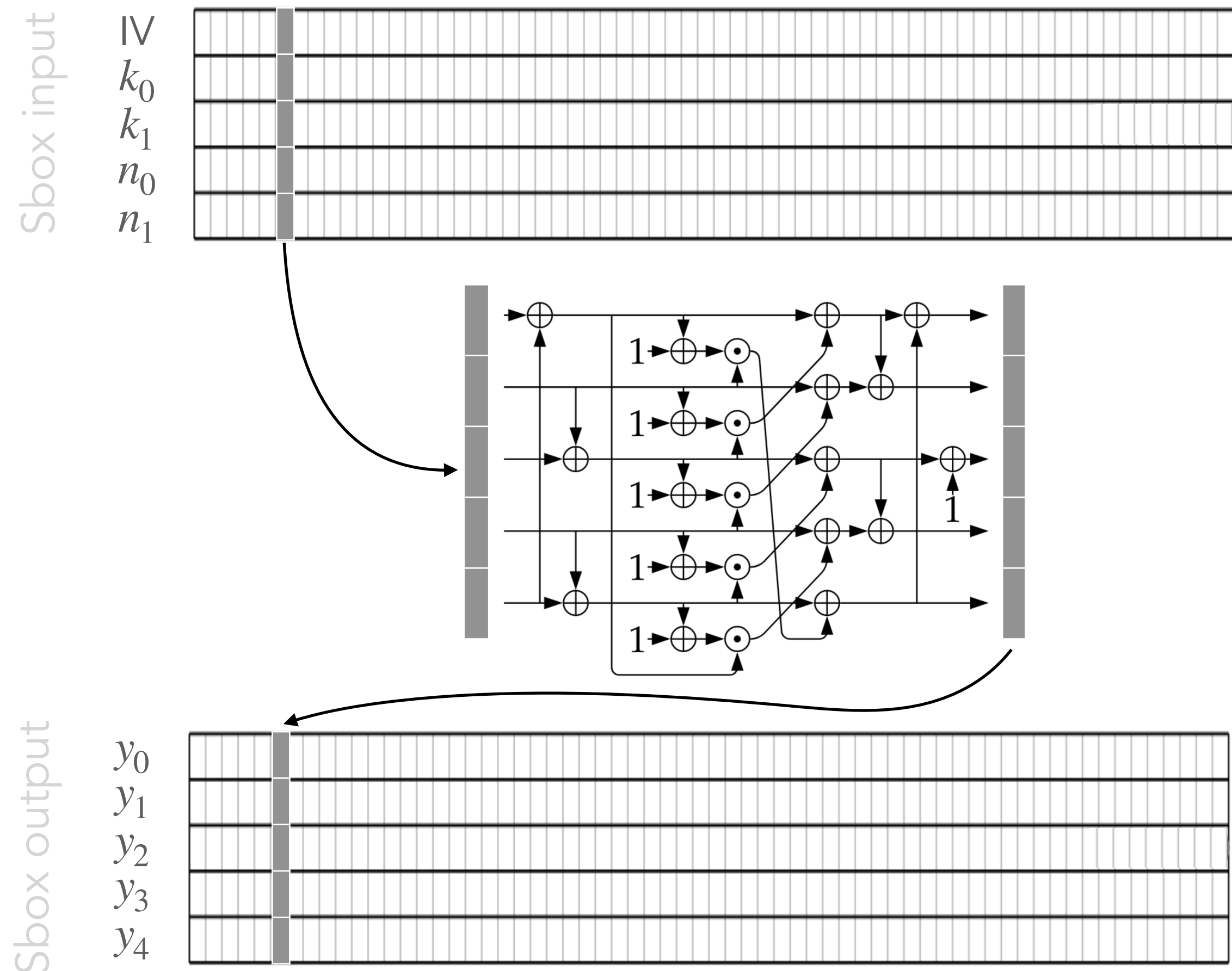
(1) Sbox output as attack point



(1) Sbox output as attack point

In an Sbox computation y_0^j :

- 2 bits of key : (k_0^j, k_1^j)
- 2 bits of nonce : (n_0^j, n_1^j)

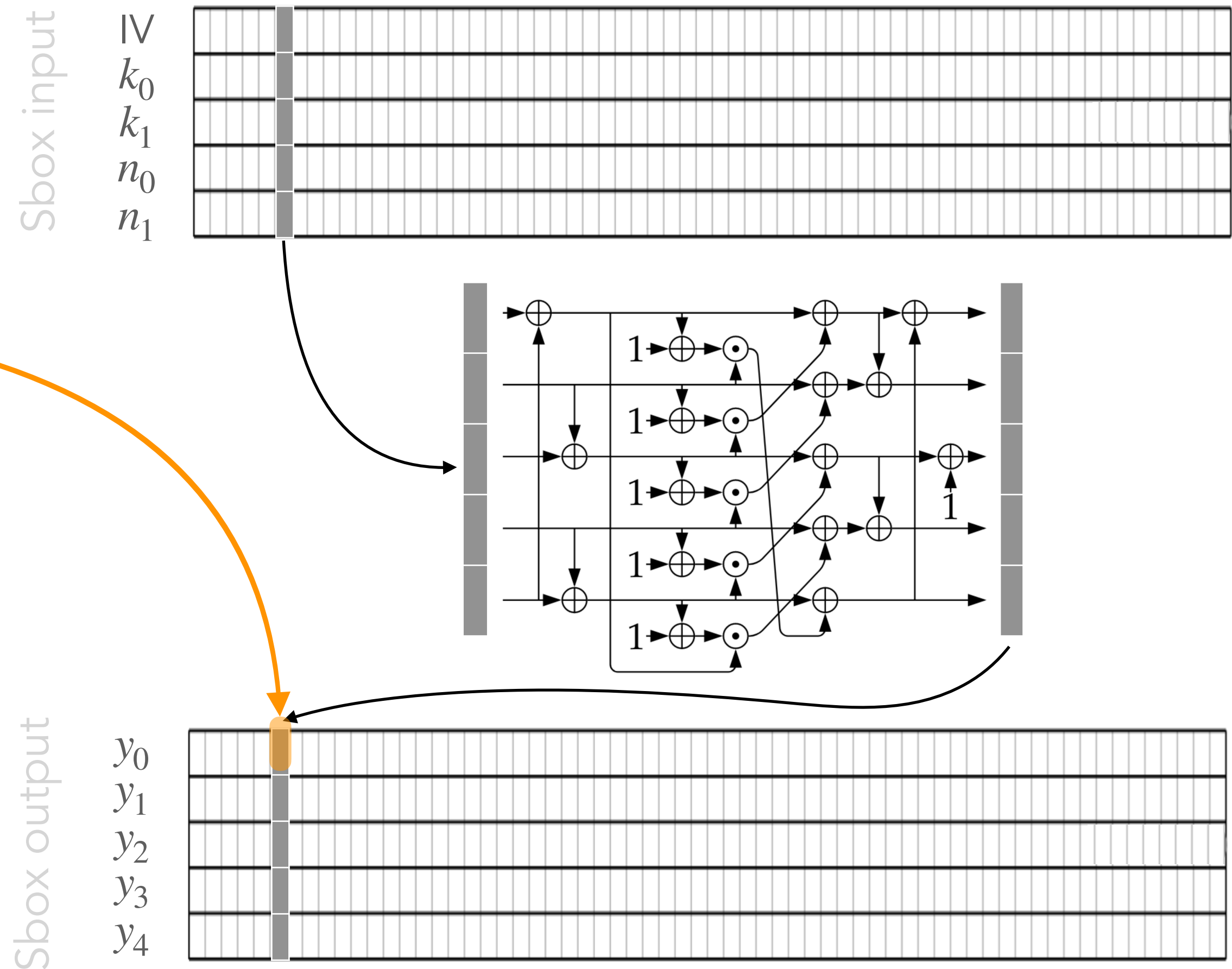


(1) Sbox output as attack point

In an Sbox computation y_0^j :

- 2 bits of key : (k_0^j, k_1^j)
- 2 bits of nonce : (n_0^j, n_1^j)

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j IV^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus IV^j$$



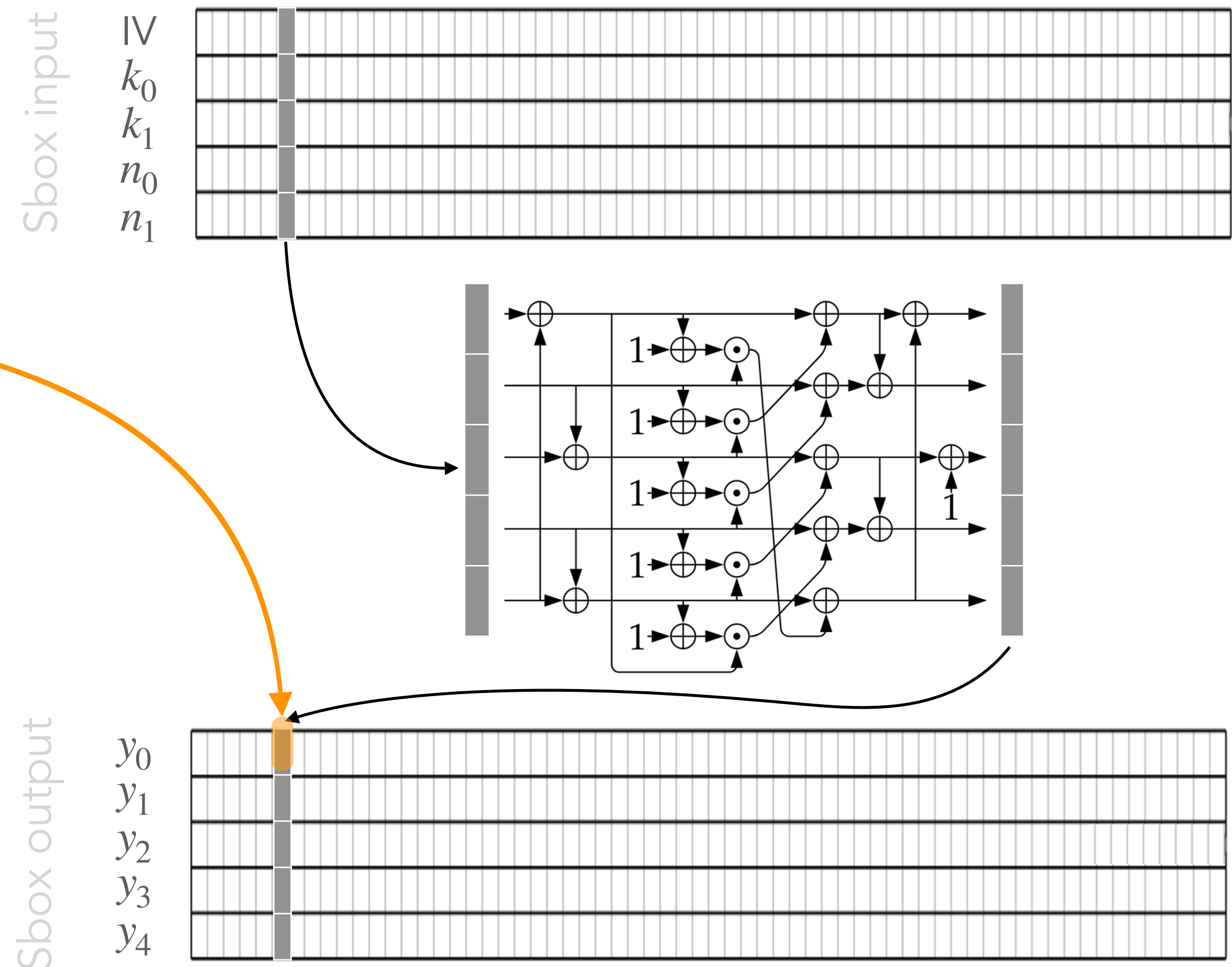
(1) Sbox output as attack point

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	(k_0^j, k_1^j)			
(n_0^j, n_1^j)	(0,0)	(0,1)	(1,0)	(1,1)
(0,0)	0	1	1	1
(0,1)	0	1	0	0
(1,0)	1	0	0	0
(1,1)	1	0	1	1
Correlation	-1		1	



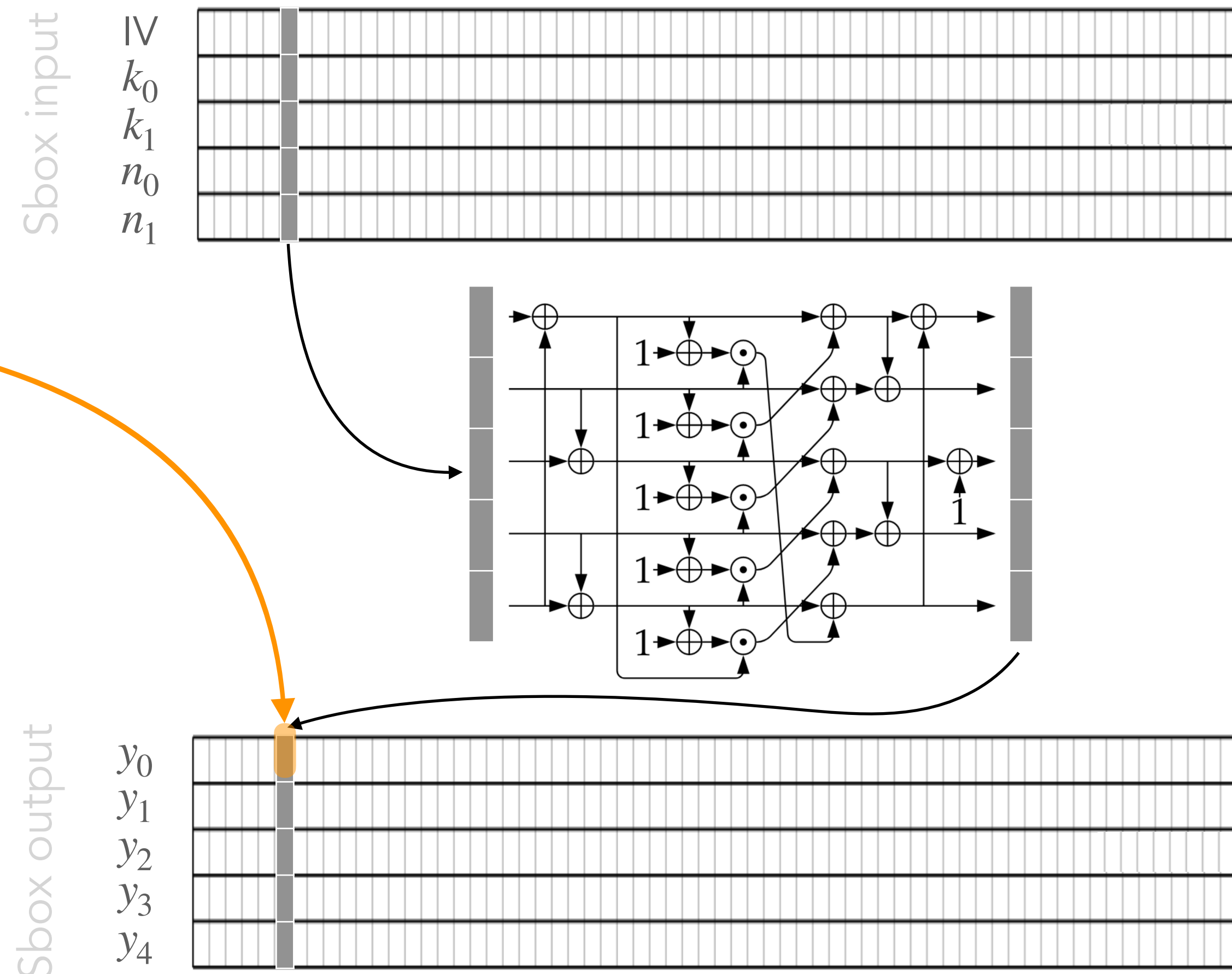
(1) Sbox output as attack point

In an Sbox computation y_0^j :

- 2 bits of key : (k_0^j, k_1^j)
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$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j IV^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus IV^j$$

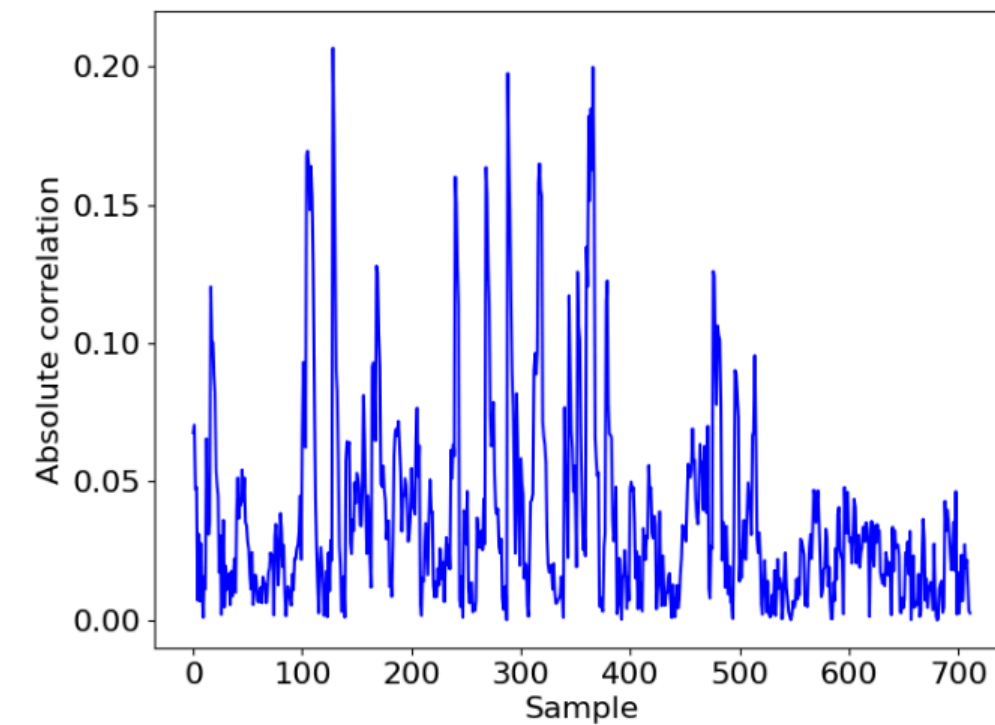
	(k_0^j, k_1^j)			
(n_0^j, n_1^j)	(0,0)	(0,1)	(1,0)	(1,1)
(0,0)	0	1	1	1
(0,1)	0	1	0	0
(1,0)	1	0	0	0
(1,1)	1	0	1	1
Correlation	-1		1	



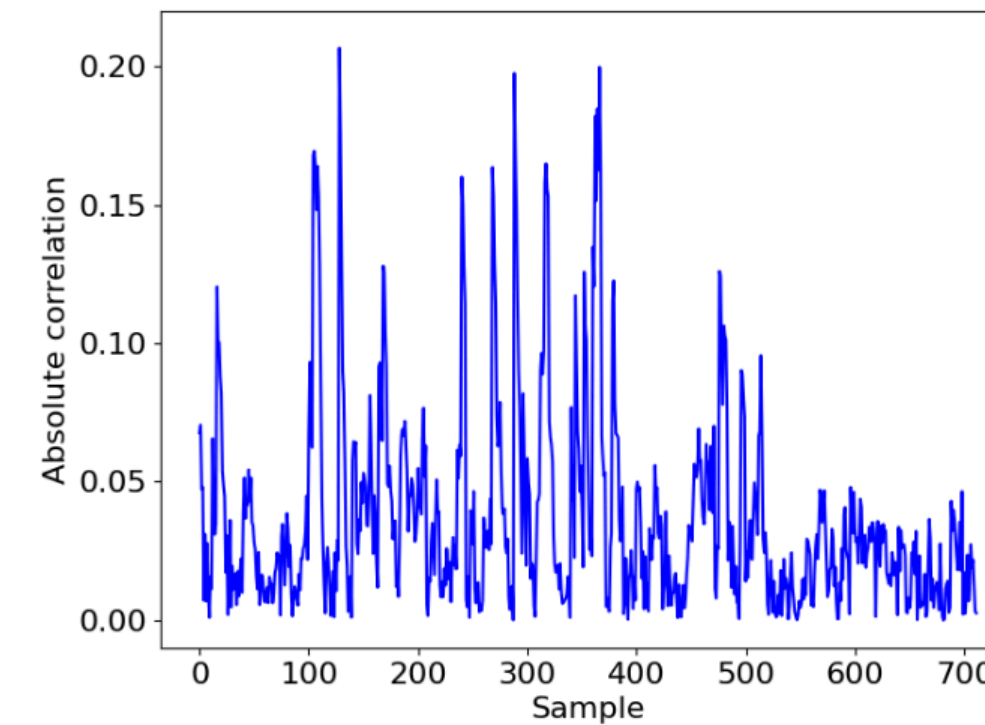
→ We cannot obtain unique (correct) key candidate

(1) Sbox output as attack point

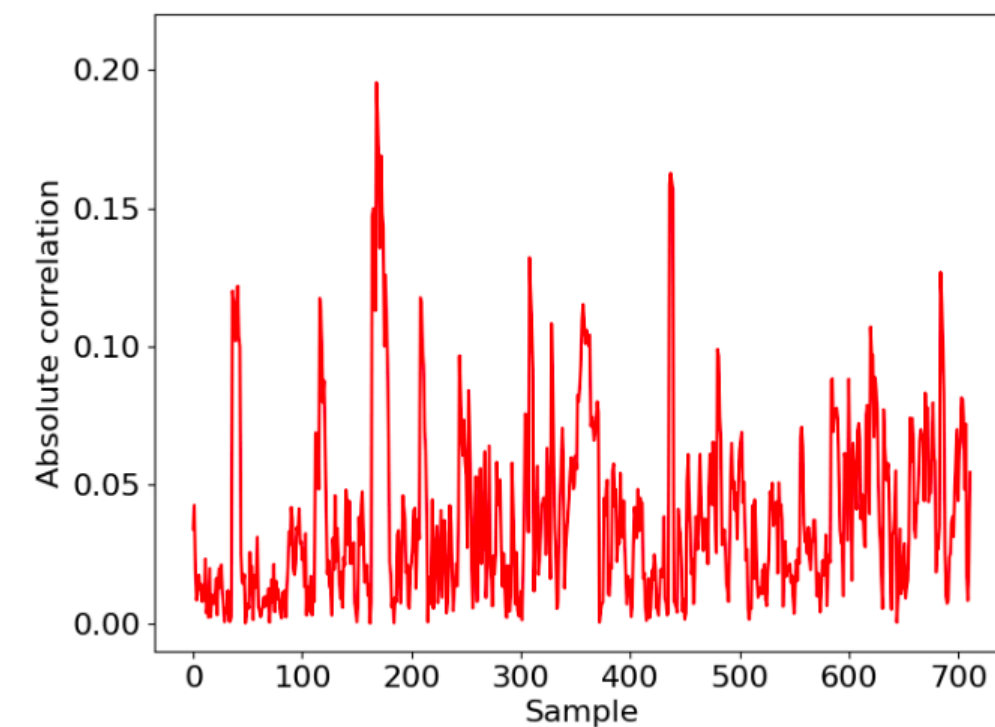
Correlation traces for all key candidates



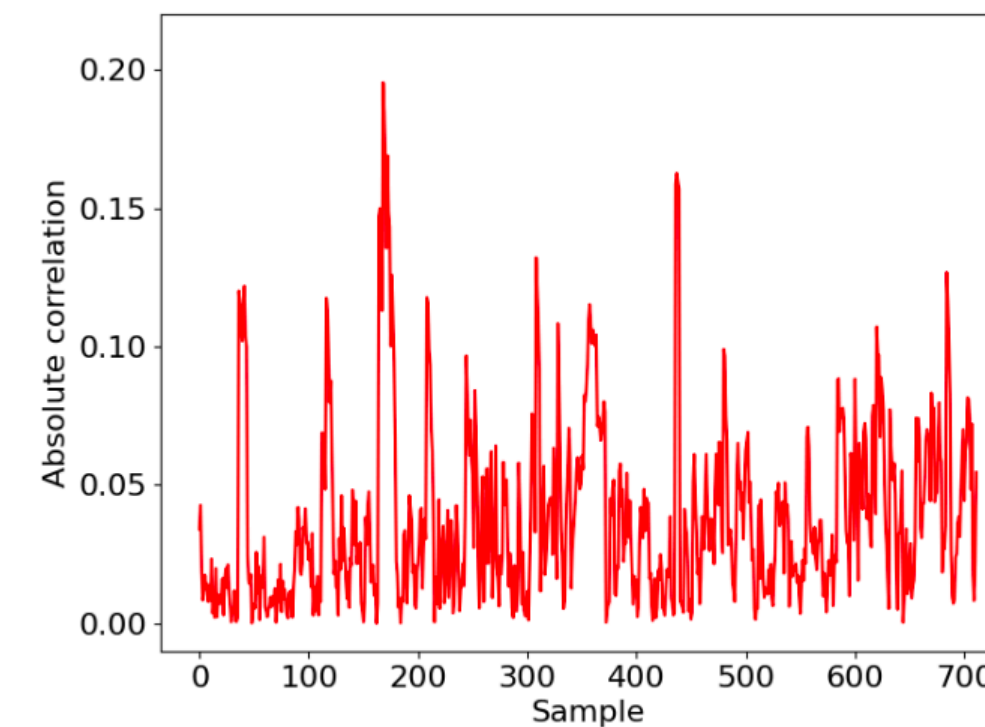
(a) $(k_0^j, k_1^j) = (0, 0)$



(b) $(k_0^j, k_1^j) = (0, 1)$



(c) $(k_0^j, k_1^j) = (1, 0)$



(d) $(k_0^j, k_1^j) = (1, 1)$

(1) Sbox output as attack point

Correlations of distributions associated to all key pairs

(k_0^j, k_1^j)	(0,0)	(0,1)	(1,0)	(1,1)
(0,0)	1	1	-	-
(0,1)	1	1	-	-
(1,0)	-	-	1	1
(1,1)	-	-	1	1

y_0^j

(1) Sbox output as attack point

Correlations of distributions associated to all key pairs

(k_0^j, k_1^j)	(0,0)	(0,1)	(1,0)	(1,1)
(0,0)	1	1	-	-
(0,1)	1	1	-	-
(1,0)	-	-	1	1
(1,1)	-	-	1	1

y_0^j

(k_0^j, k_1^j)	(0,0)	(0,1)	(1,0)	(1,1)
(0,0)	1	1	1	1
(0,1)	1	1	1	1
(1,0)	1	1	1	1
(1,1)	1	1	1	1

y_2^j and y_3^j

(k_0^j, k_1^j)	(0,0)	(0,1)	(1,0)	(1,1)
(0,0)	1	-	-	1
(0,1)	-	1	1	-
(1,0)	-	1	1	-
(1,1)	1	-	-	1

y_1^j

k_0^j	0	1
0	1	0
1	0	1

y_4^j

(1) Sbox output as attack point

Hamming weight of Sbox output: $\text{HW}(y_0^j | y_1^j | y_2^j | y_3^j | y_4^j)$

(1) Sbox output as attack point

Hamming weight of Sbox output: $\text{HW}(y_0^j | y_1^j | y_2^j | y_3^j | y_4^j)$

Correlations of distributions associated to all key pairs

(k_0^j, k_1^j)	(0,0)	(0,1)	(1,0)	(1,1)
(0,0)	1.00	0.15	0.89	0.87
(0,1)	0.15	1.00	0.48	0.09
(1,0)	0.89	0.48	1.00	0.90
(1,1)	0.87	0.09	0.90	1.00

(1) Sbox output as attack point

Hamming weight of Sbox output: $\text{HW}(y_0^j | y_1^j | y_2^j | y_3^j | y_4^j)$

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(k_0^j, k_1^j)	(0,0)	(0,1)	(1,0)	(1,1)
(0,0)	1.00	0.15	0.89	0.87
(0,1)	0.15	1.00	0.48	0.09
(1,0)	0.89	0.48	1.00	0.90
(1,1)	0.87	0.09	0.90	1.00

(1) Sbox output as attack point

Hamming weight of Sbox output: $\text{HW}(y_0^j | y_1^j | y_2^j | y_3^j | y_4^j)$

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(1,0)	0.89	0.48	1.00	0.90
(1,1)	0.87	0.09	0.90	1.00

→ Not effective for CPA attacks

(1) Sbox output as attack point

Hamming weight of Sbox output: $\text{HW}(y_0^j | y_1^j | y_2^j | y_3^j | y_4^j)$

Correlations of distributions associated to all key pairs

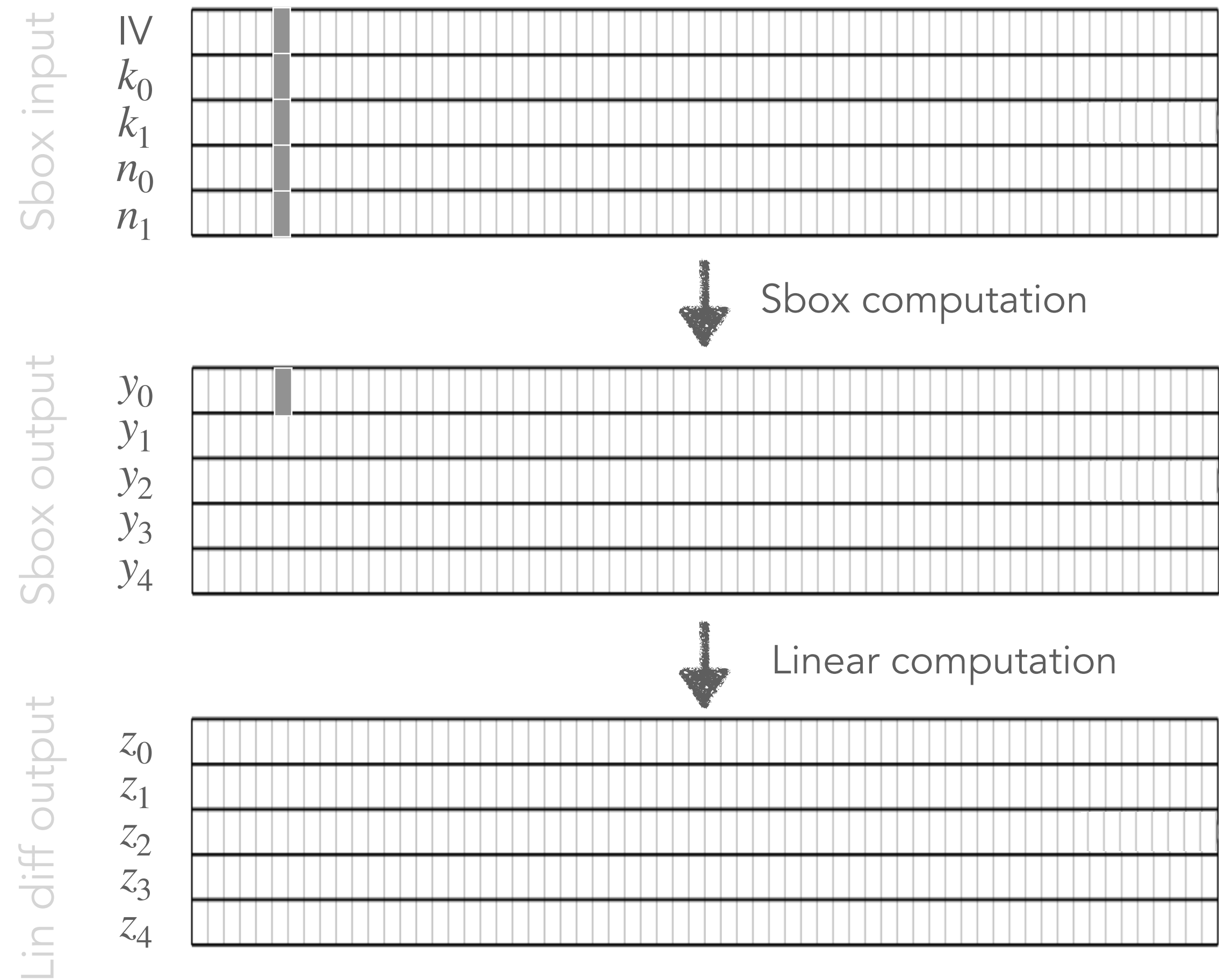
(k_0^j, k_1^j)	(0,0)	(0,1)	(1,0)	(1,1)
(0,0)	1.00	0.15	0.89	0.87
(0,1)	0.15	1.00	0.48	0.09
(1,0)	0.89	0.48	1.00	0.90
(1,1)	0.87	0.09	0.90	1.00

→ Not effective for CPA attacks

This may explain why Ramezanpour et al., 2020 failed

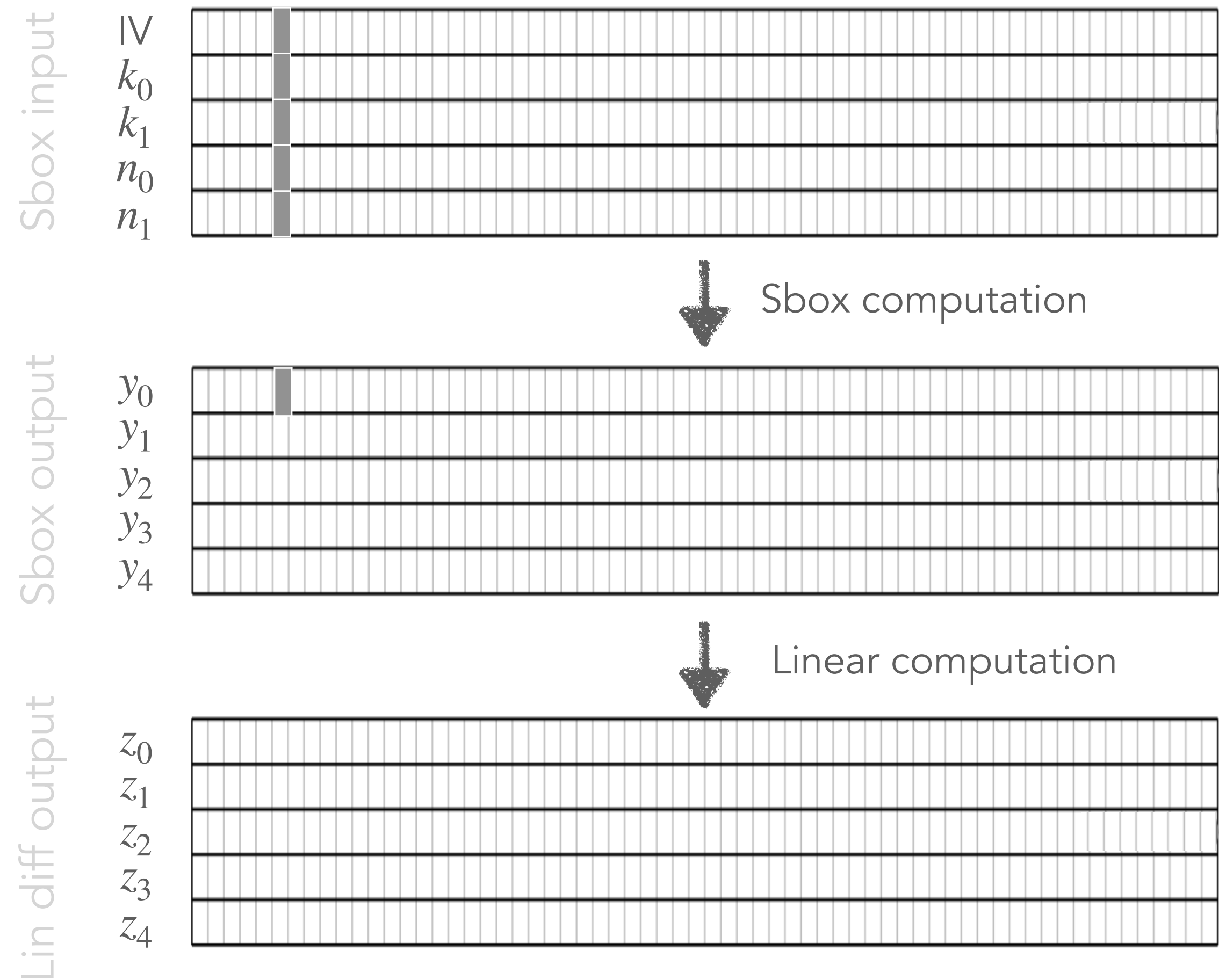
(2) Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

(2) Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point



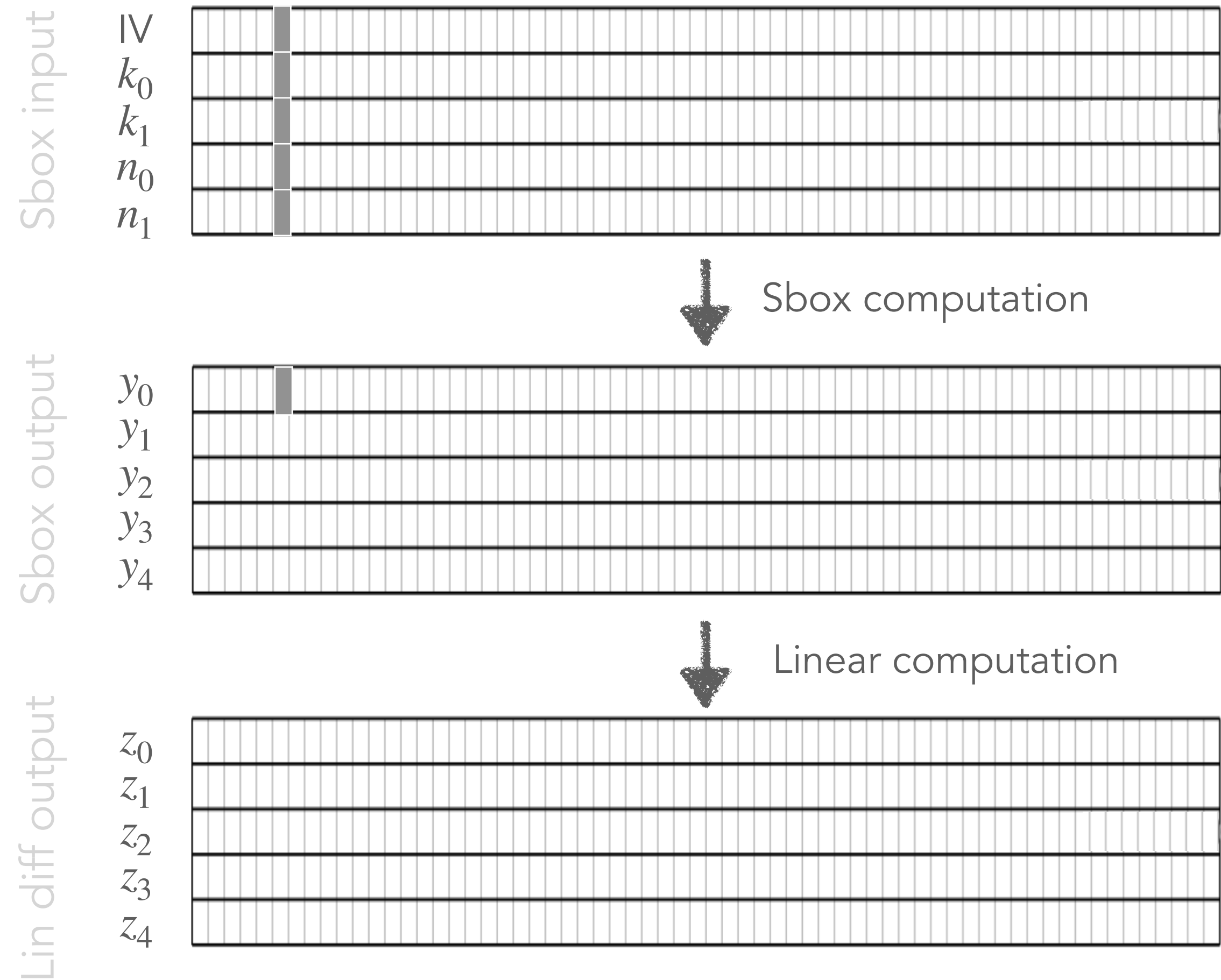
(2) Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j IV^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus IV^j$$



(2) Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

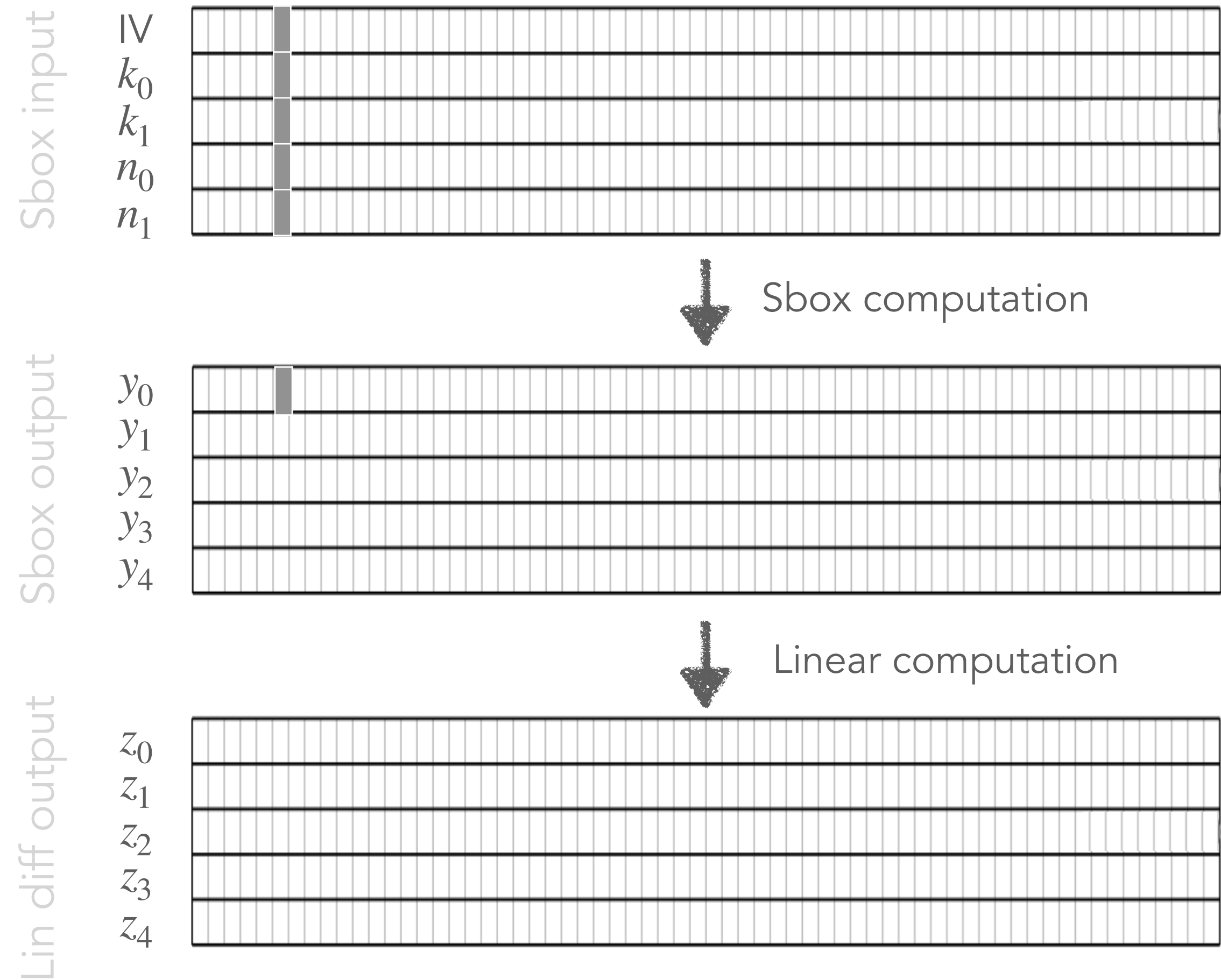
$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j IV^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus IV^j$$



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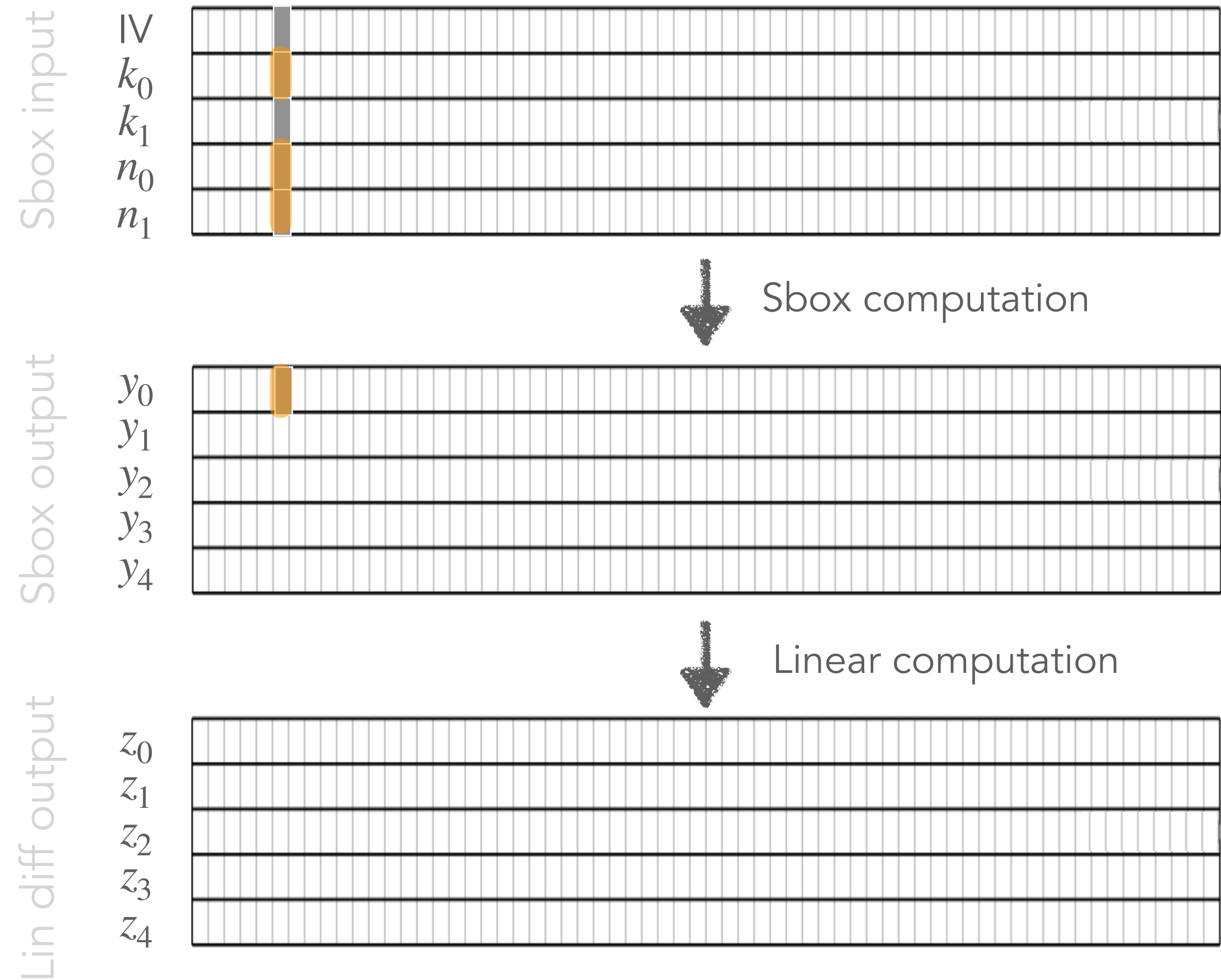
$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$



(2) Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j IV^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus IV^j$$

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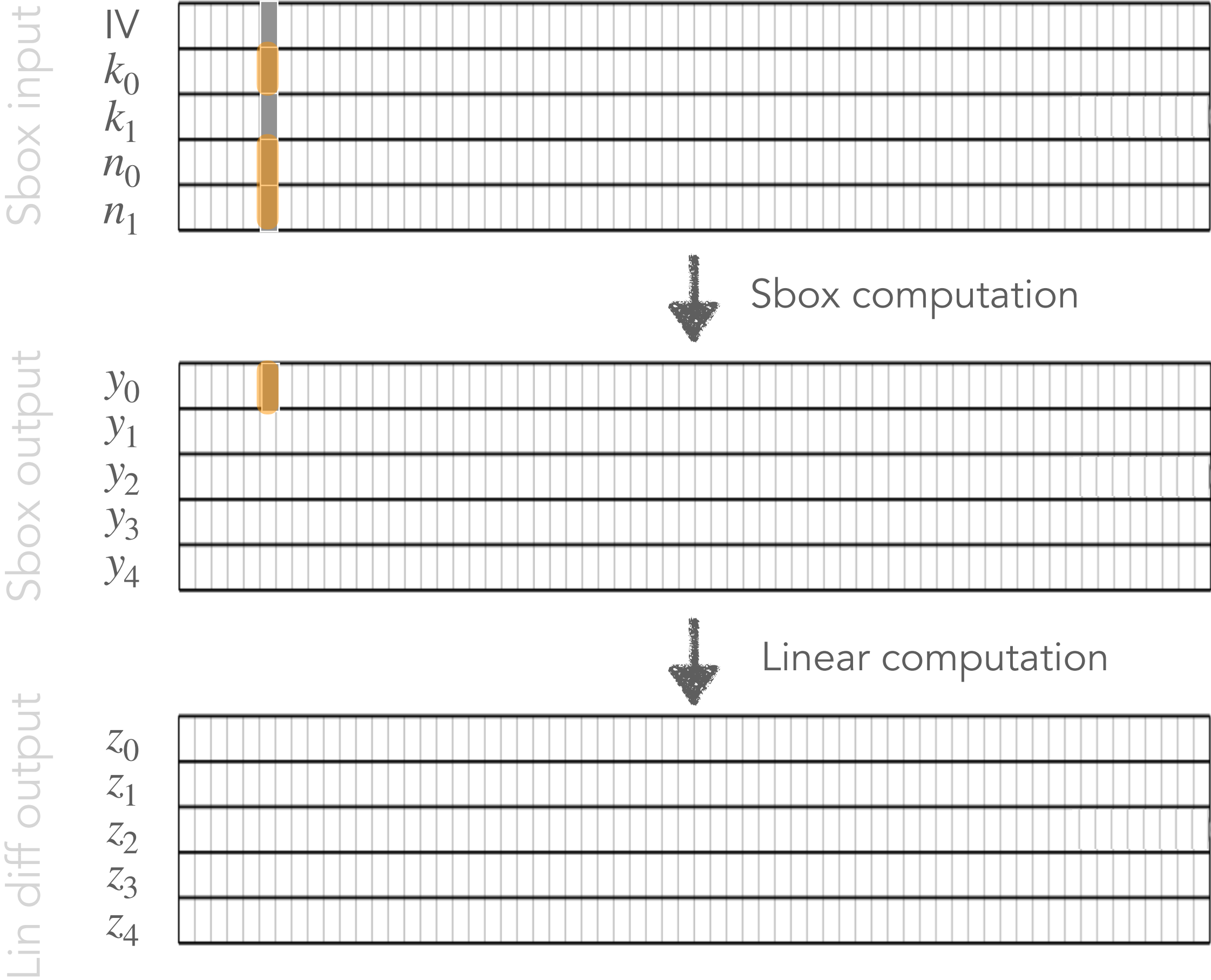


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$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

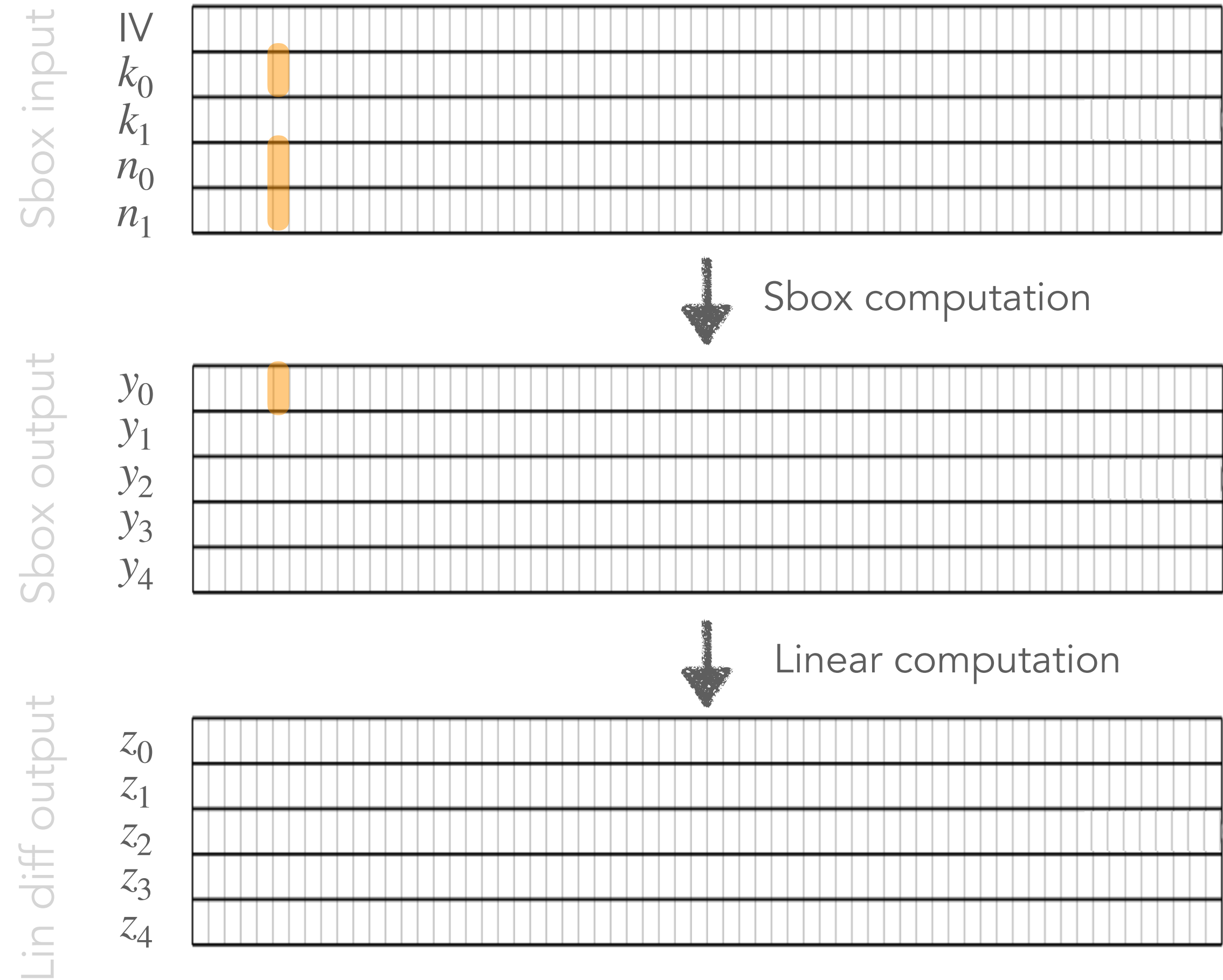
	k_0^j	
(n_0^j, n_1^j)	0	1
(0,0)	0	1
(0,1)	0	0
(1,0)	1	0
(1,1)	1	1
Correlation	0	



Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j IV^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus IV^j$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$



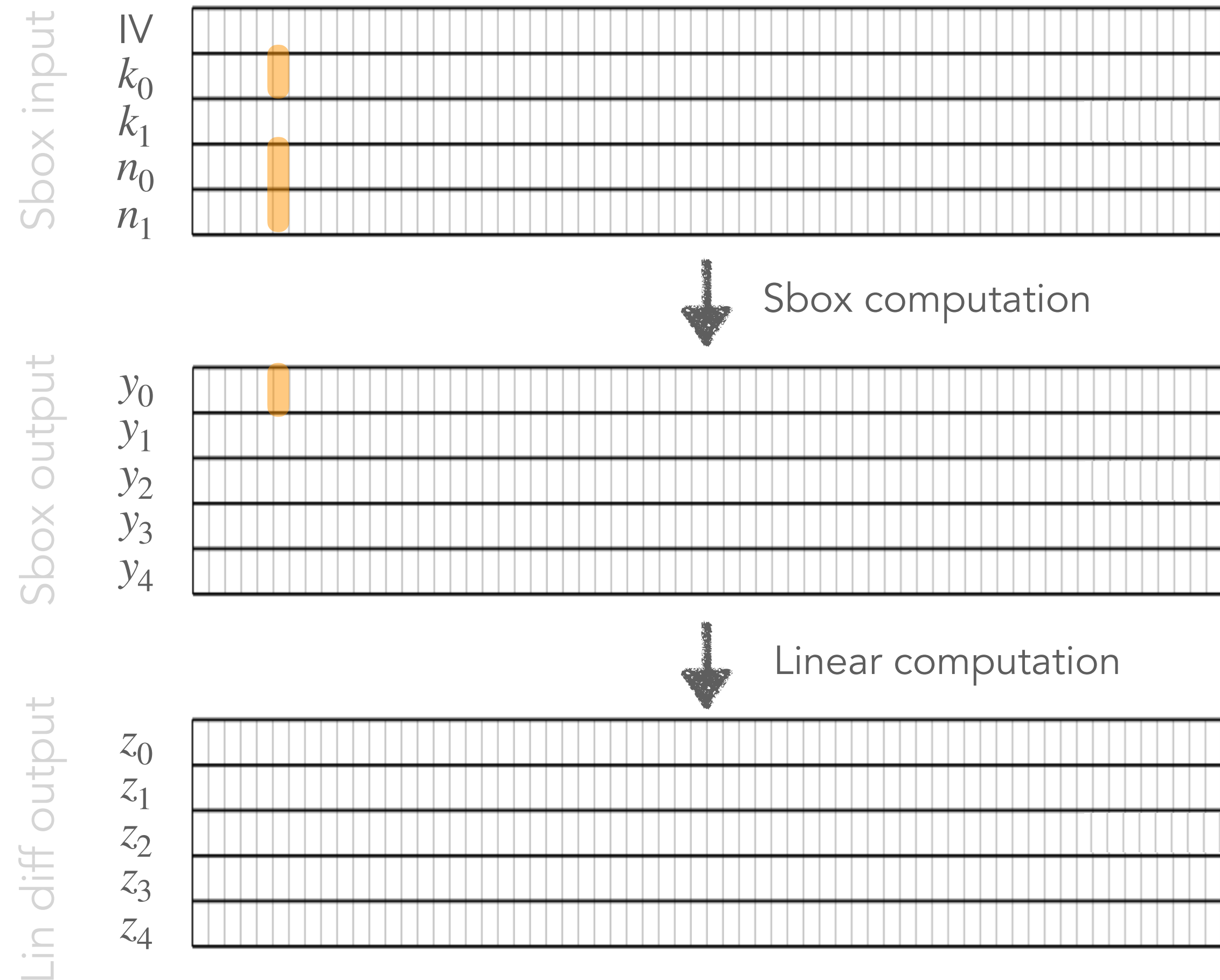
Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j IV^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus IV^j$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation
with register at linear layer output (z_0^j)



Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j IV^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus IV^j$$

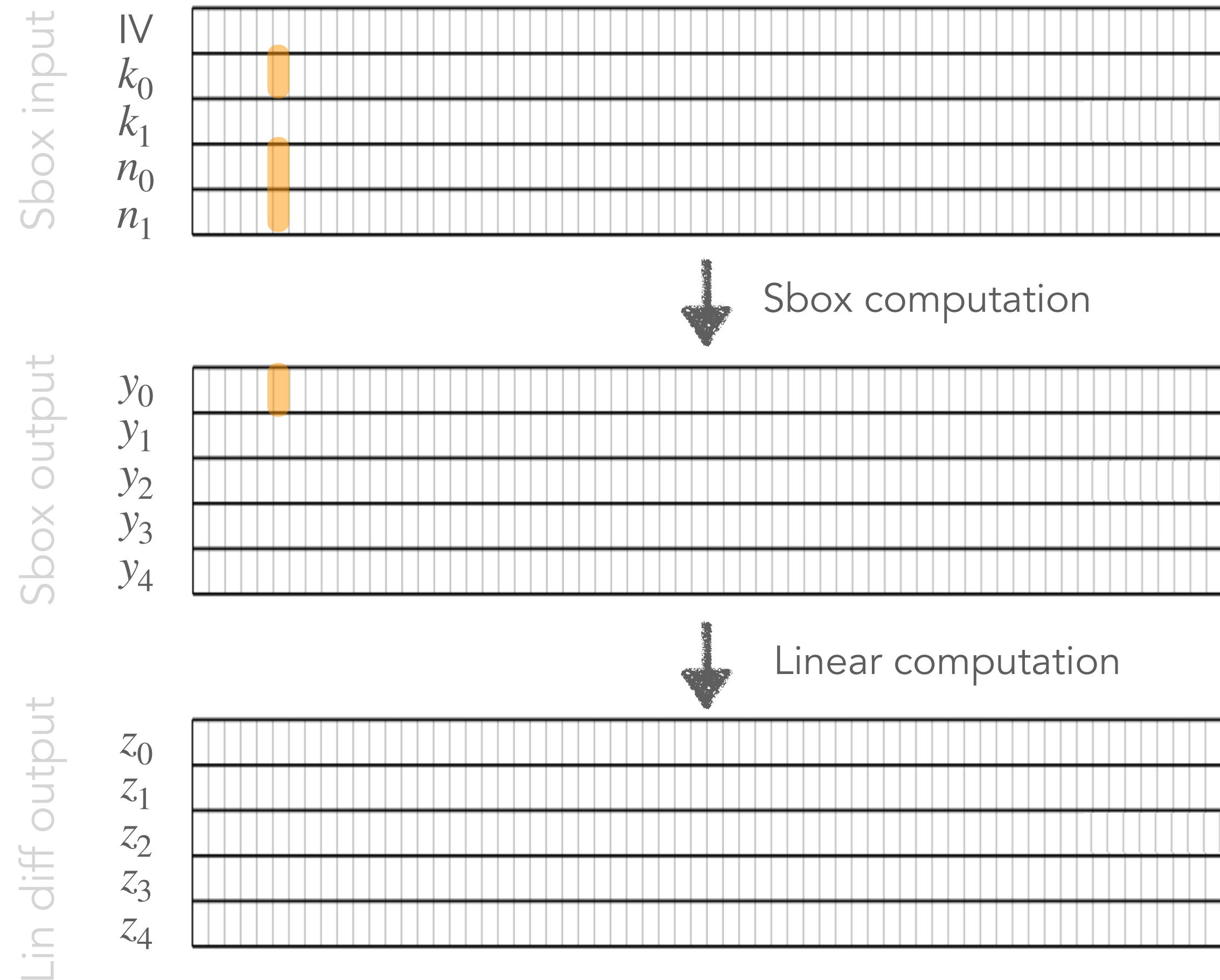
$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation
with register at linear layer output (z_0^j)

Similarly:

$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+36} = k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36}$$



Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j IV^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus IV^j$$

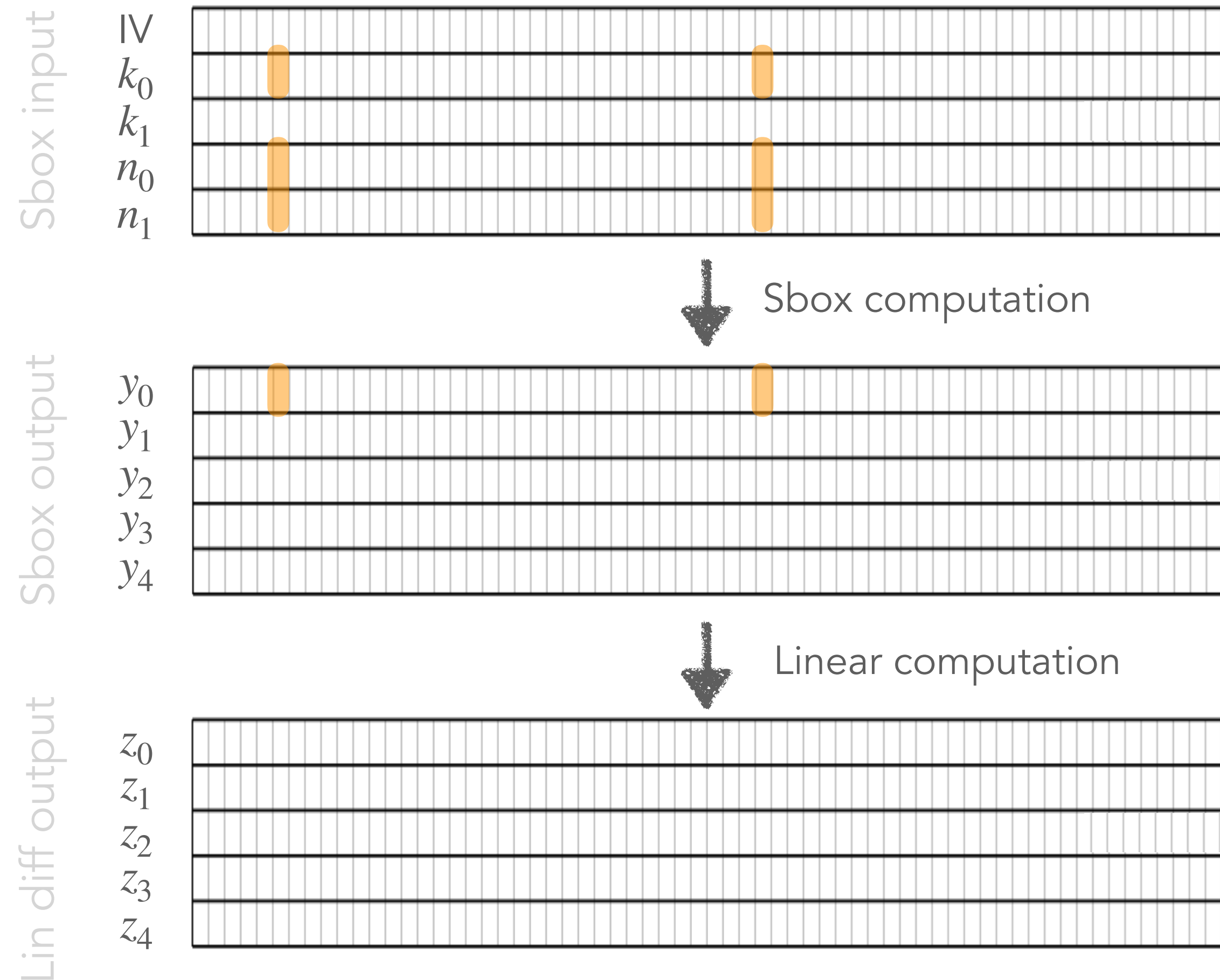
$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation
with register at linear layer output (z_0^j)

Similarly:

$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+36} = k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36}$$



Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j IV^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus IV^j$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

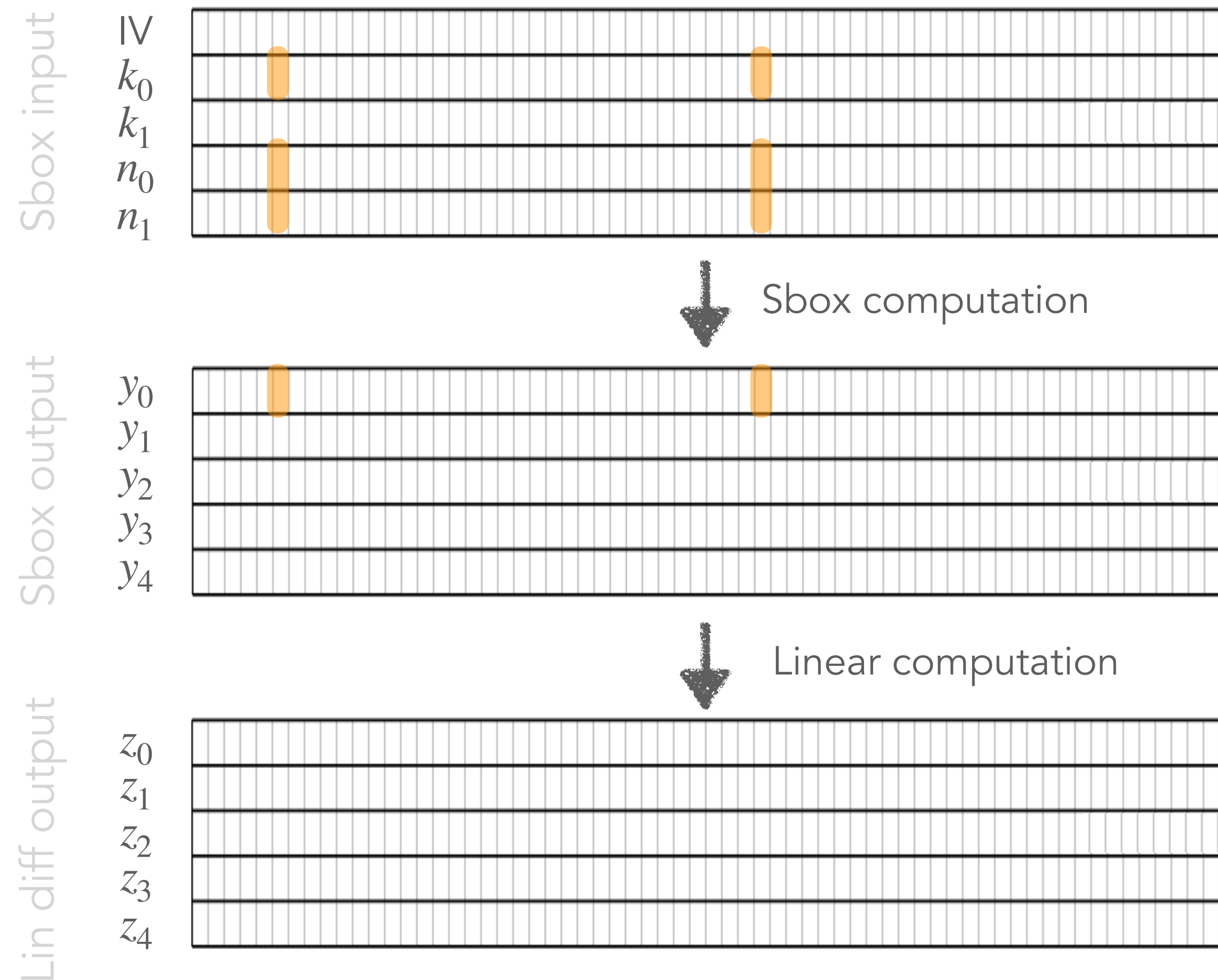
Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation
with register at linear layer output (z_0^j)

Similarly:

$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+36} = k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36}$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+45} = k_0^{j+45}(n_1^{j+45} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+45}$$



Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j IV^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus IV^j$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

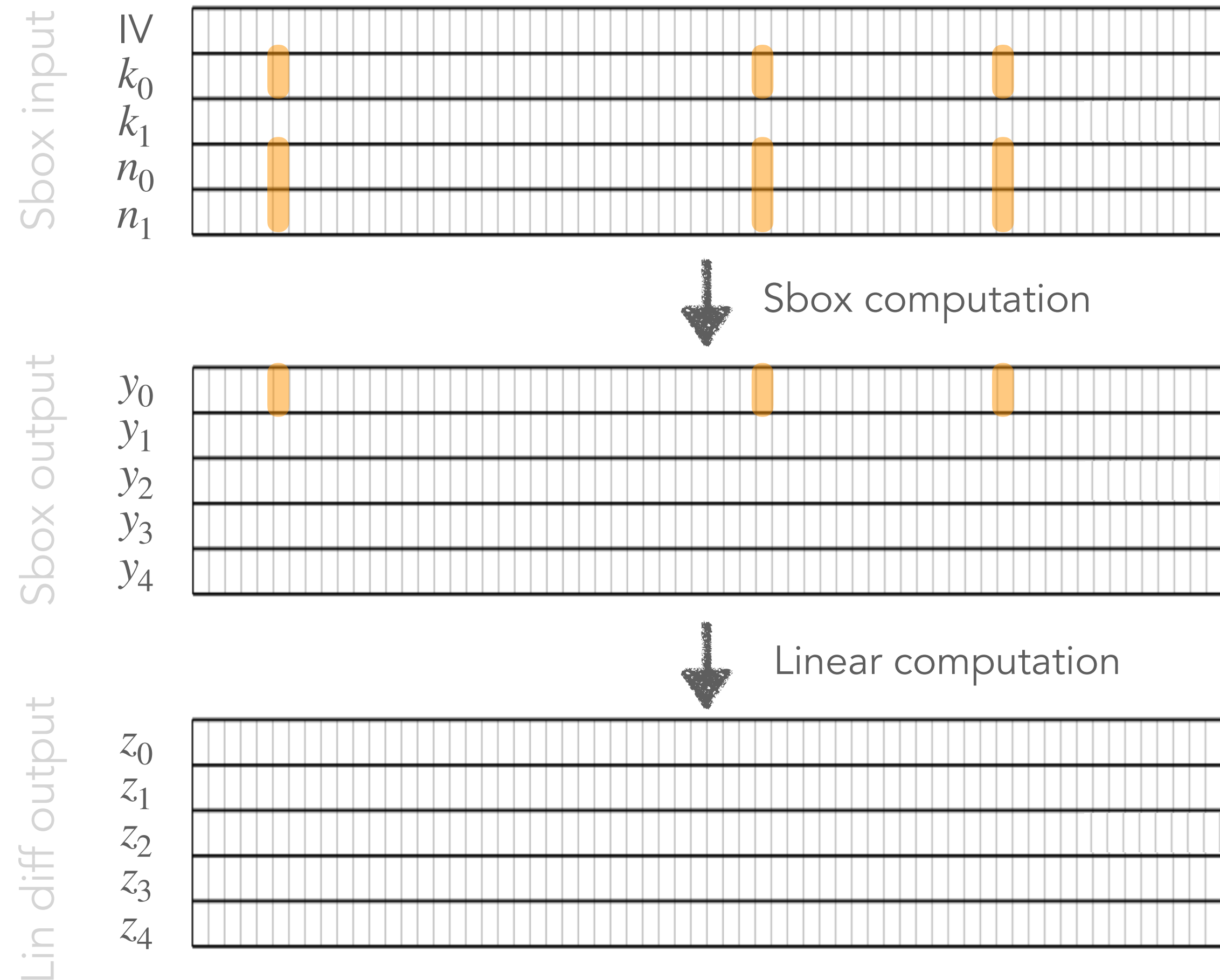
Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation
with register at linear layer output (z_0^j)

Similarly:

$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+36} = k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36}$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+45} = k_0^{j+45}(n_1^{j+45} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+45}$$



Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j IV^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus IV^j$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation
with register at linear layer output (z_0^j)

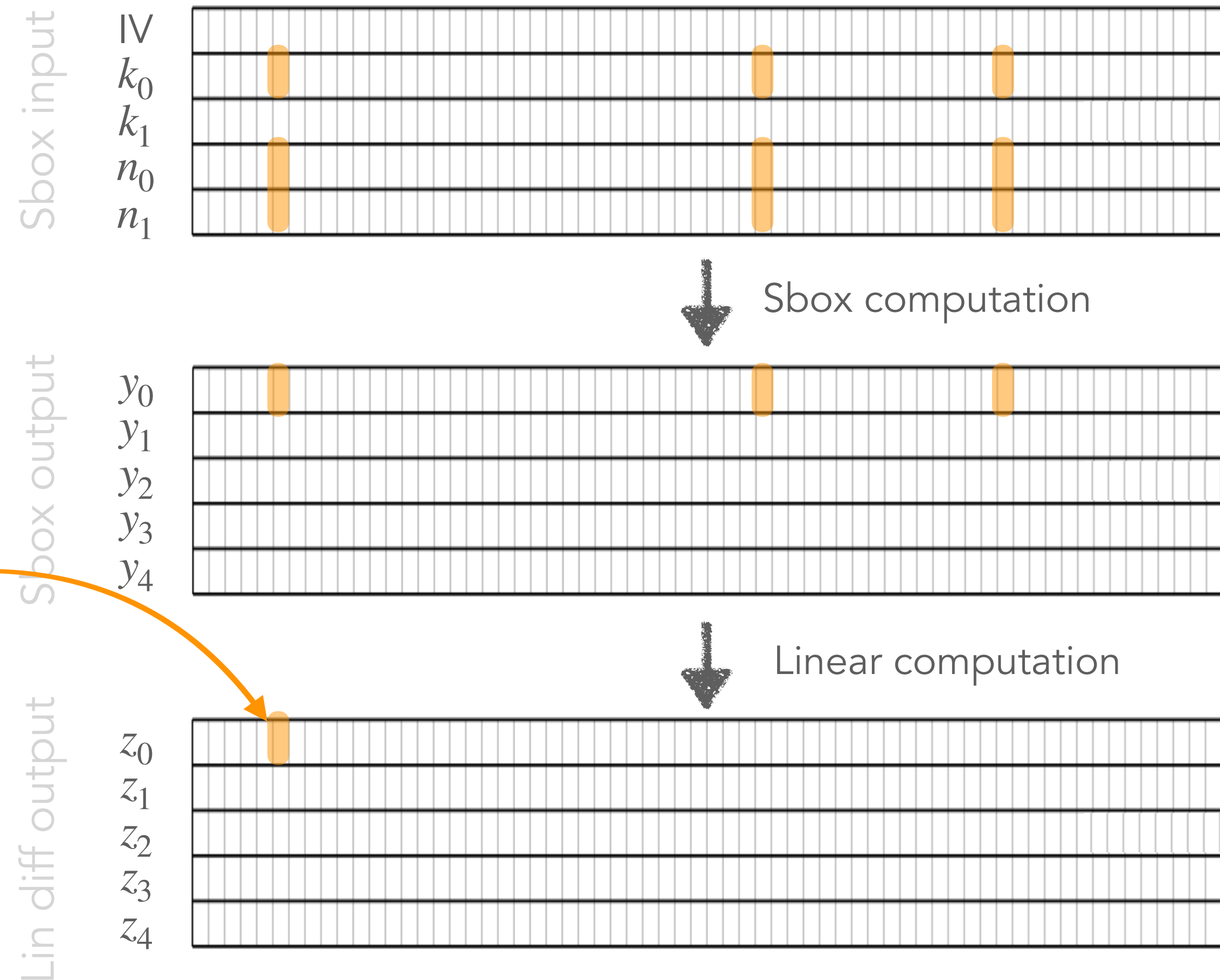
Similarly:

$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+36} = k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36}$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+45} = k_0^{j+45}(n_1^{j+45} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+45}$$

Linear computation:

$$\tilde{z}_0^j = \tilde{y}_0^j \oplus \tilde{y}_0^{j+36} \oplus \tilde{y}_0^{j+45}$$



Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j IV^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus IV^j$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation
with register at linear layer output (z_0^j)

Similarly:

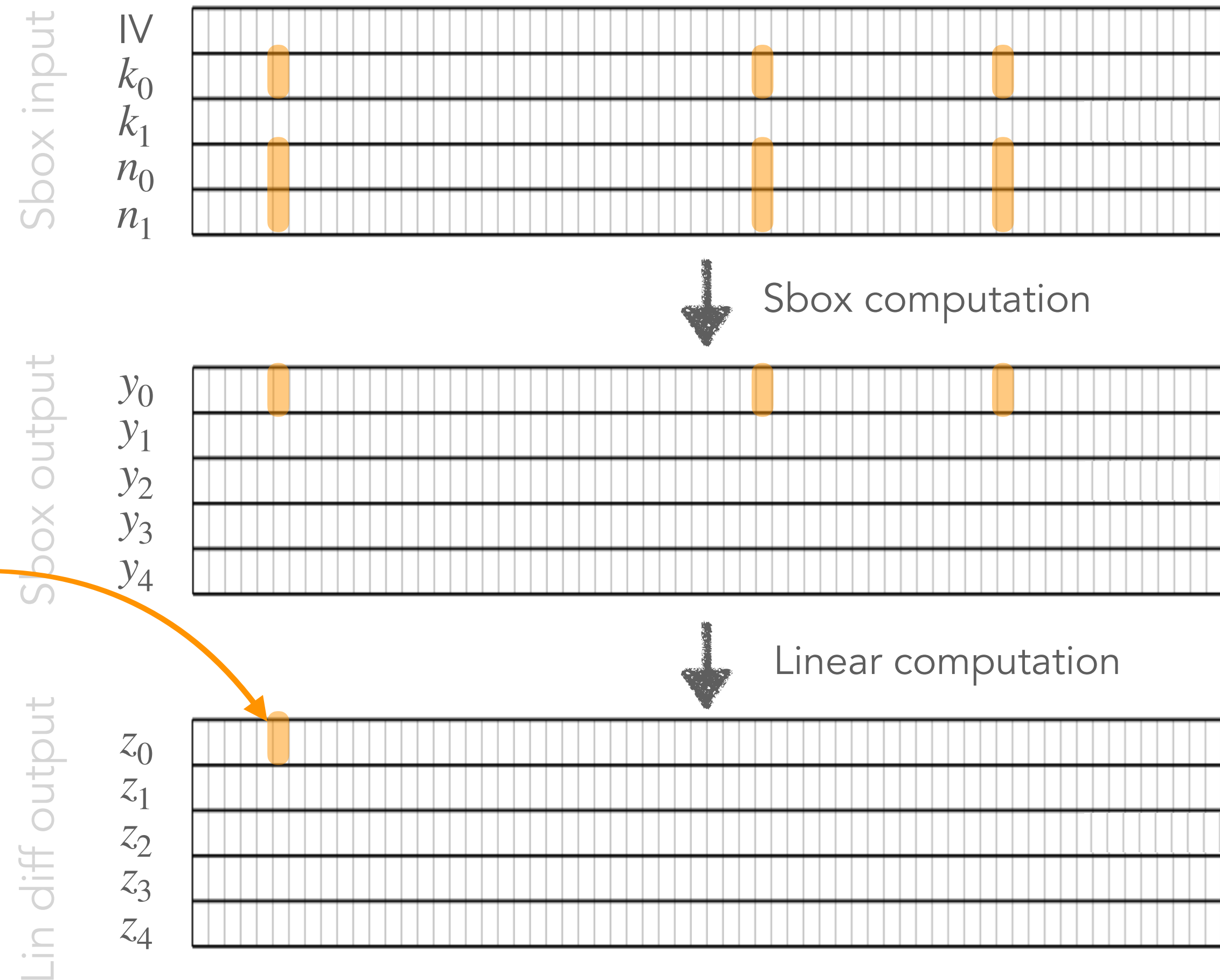
$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+36} = k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36}$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^{j+45} = k_0^{j+45}(n_1^{j+45} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+45}$$

Linear computation:

$$\tilde{z}_0^j = \tilde{y}_0^j \oplus \tilde{y}_0^{j+36} \oplus \tilde{y}_0^{j+45}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \tilde{z}_0^j &= k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \\ &\oplus k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36} \\ &\oplus k_0^{j+45}(n_1^{j+45} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+45} \end{aligned}$$



Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

$$\begin{aligned}\tilde{z}_0^j &= k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \\ &\oplus k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36} \\ &\oplus k_0^{j+45}(n_1^{j+45} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+45}\end{aligned}$$

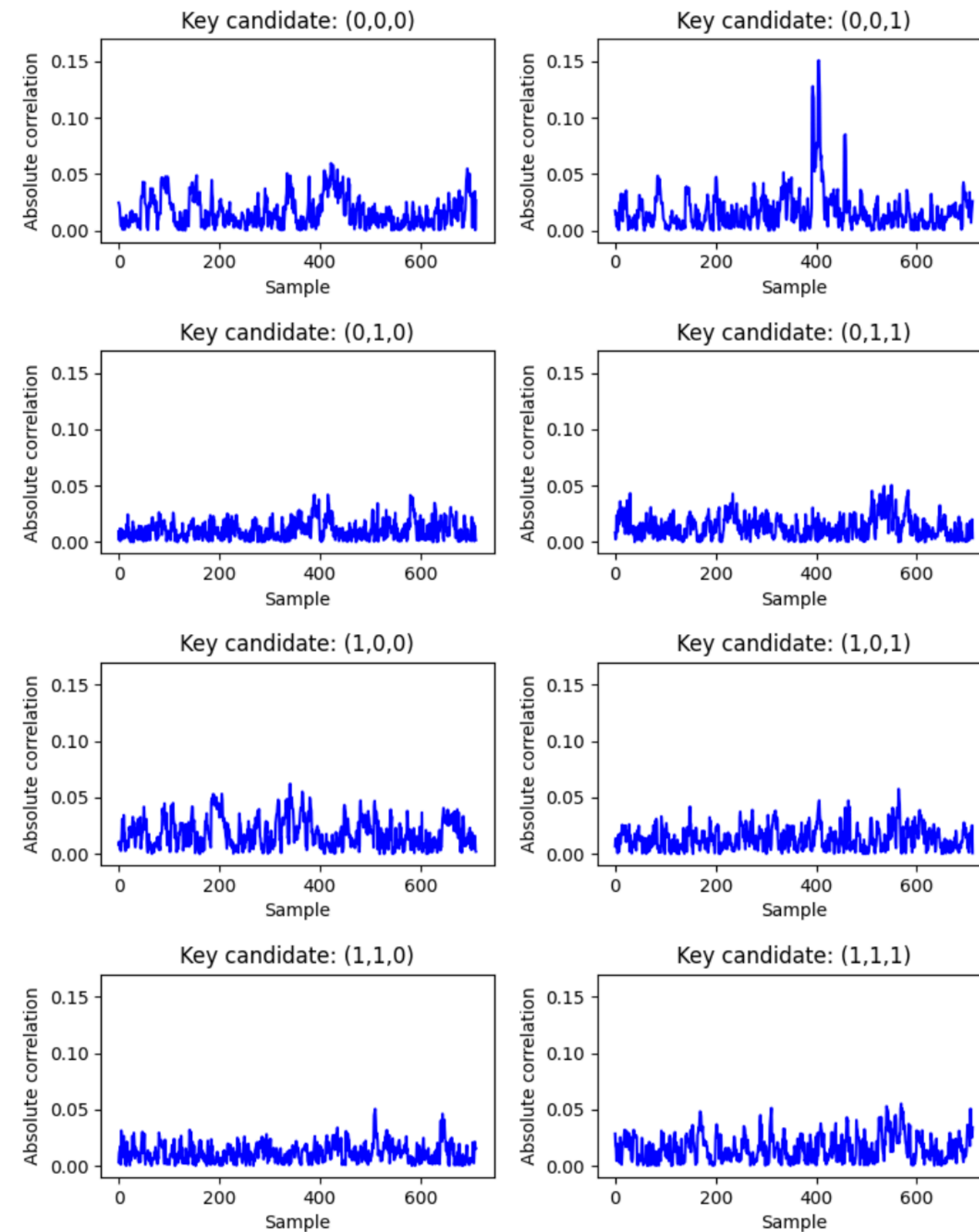
Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point

Correlations of distributions associated to all key pairs

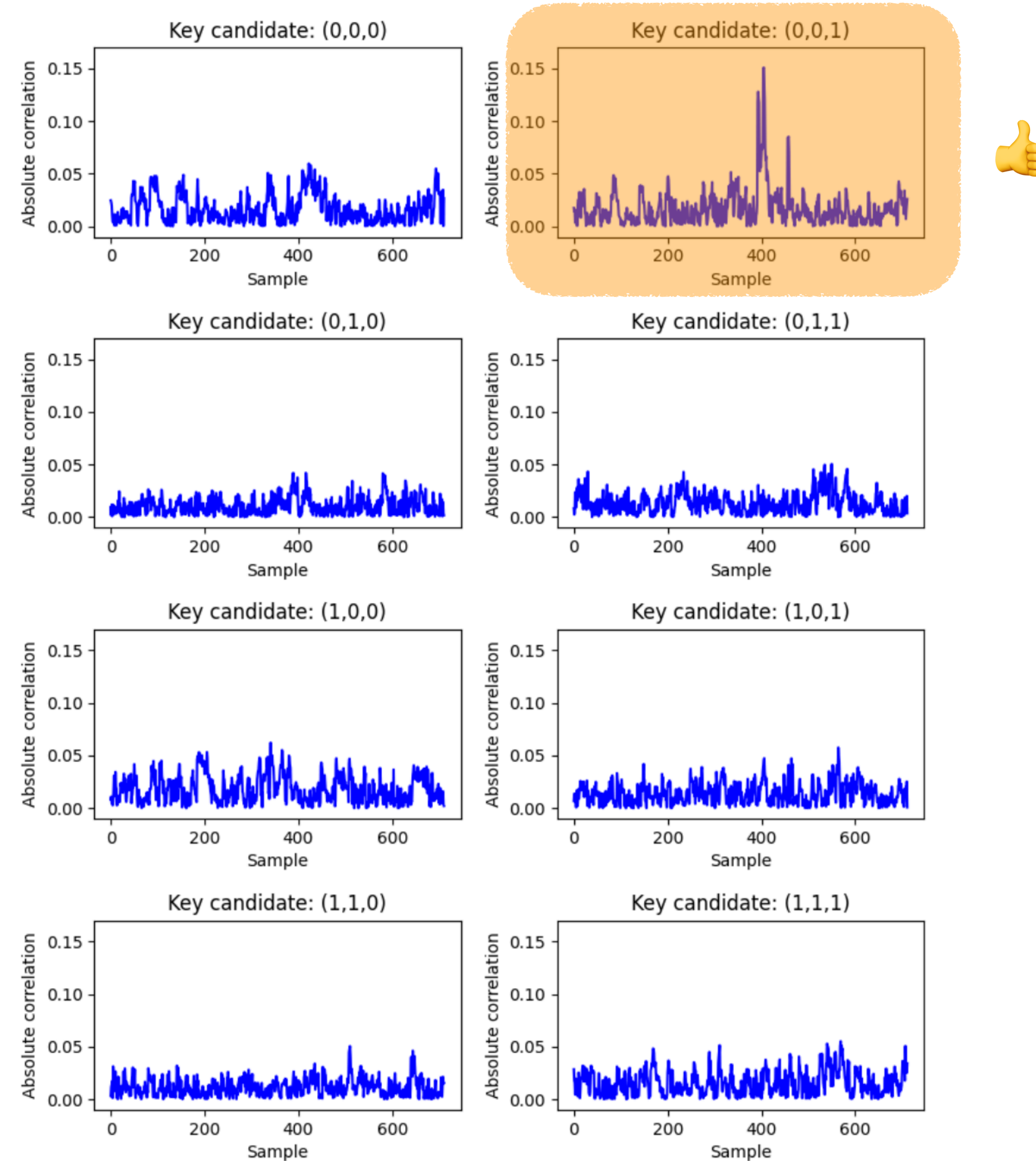
$(k_0^j, k_0^{j+36}, k_0^{j+45})$	(0,0,0)	(0,0,1)	(0,1,0)	(0,1,1)	(1,0,0)	(1,0,1)	(1,1,0)	(1,1,1)
(0,0,0)	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(0,0,1)	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
(0,1,0)	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
(0,1,1)	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
(1,0,0)	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
(1,0,1)	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
(1,1,0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
(1,1,1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

$$\begin{aligned}\tilde{z}_0^j &= k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \\ &\oplus k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36} \\ &\oplus k_0^{j+45}(n_1^{j+45} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+45}\end{aligned}$$

Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point



Fine-tuned linear diffusion output as attack point



$\tilde{y}_0^j$ as attack point ?

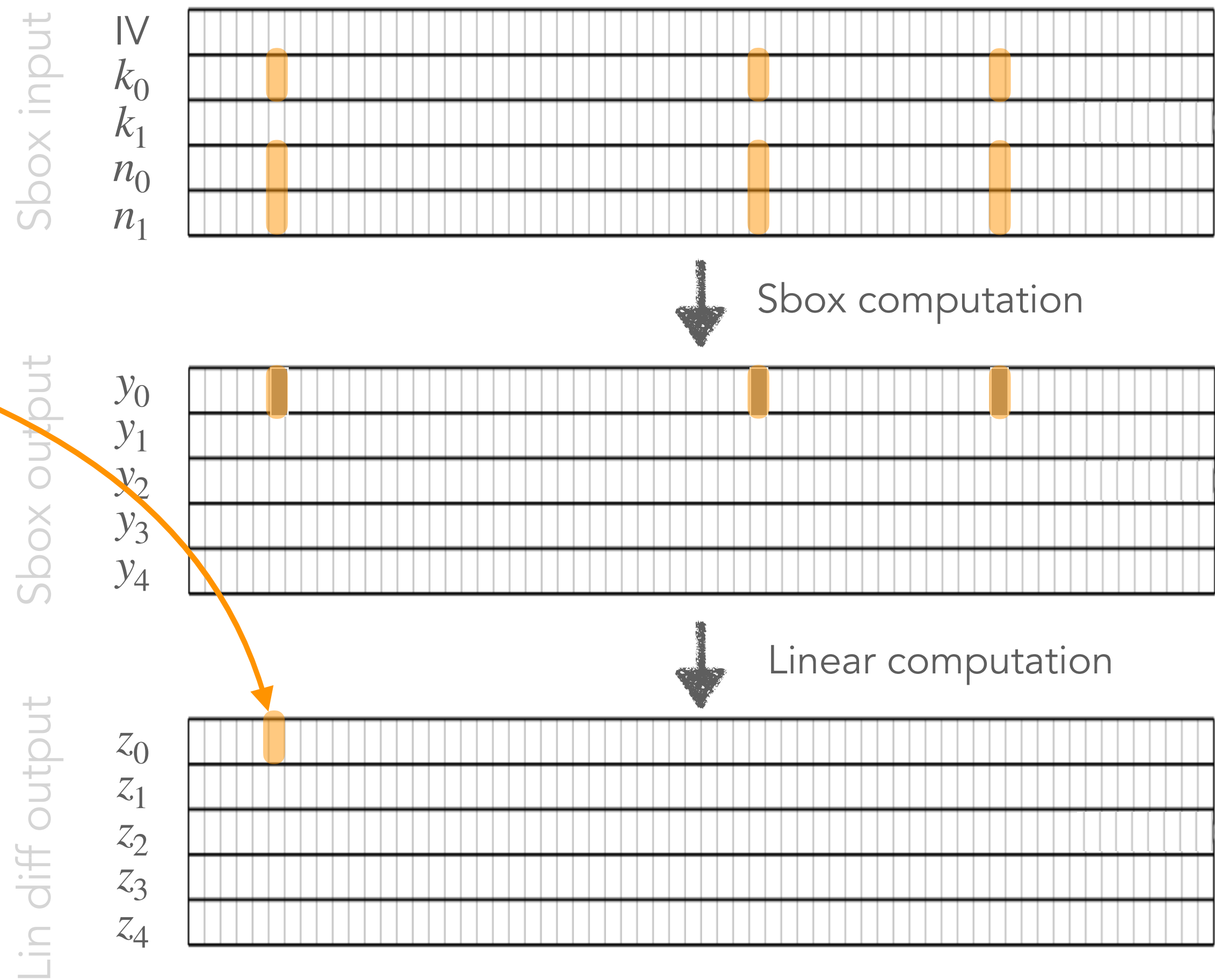
$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j IV^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus IV^j$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation

with register at linear layer output (z_0^j)



$\tilde{y}_0^j$ as attack point ?

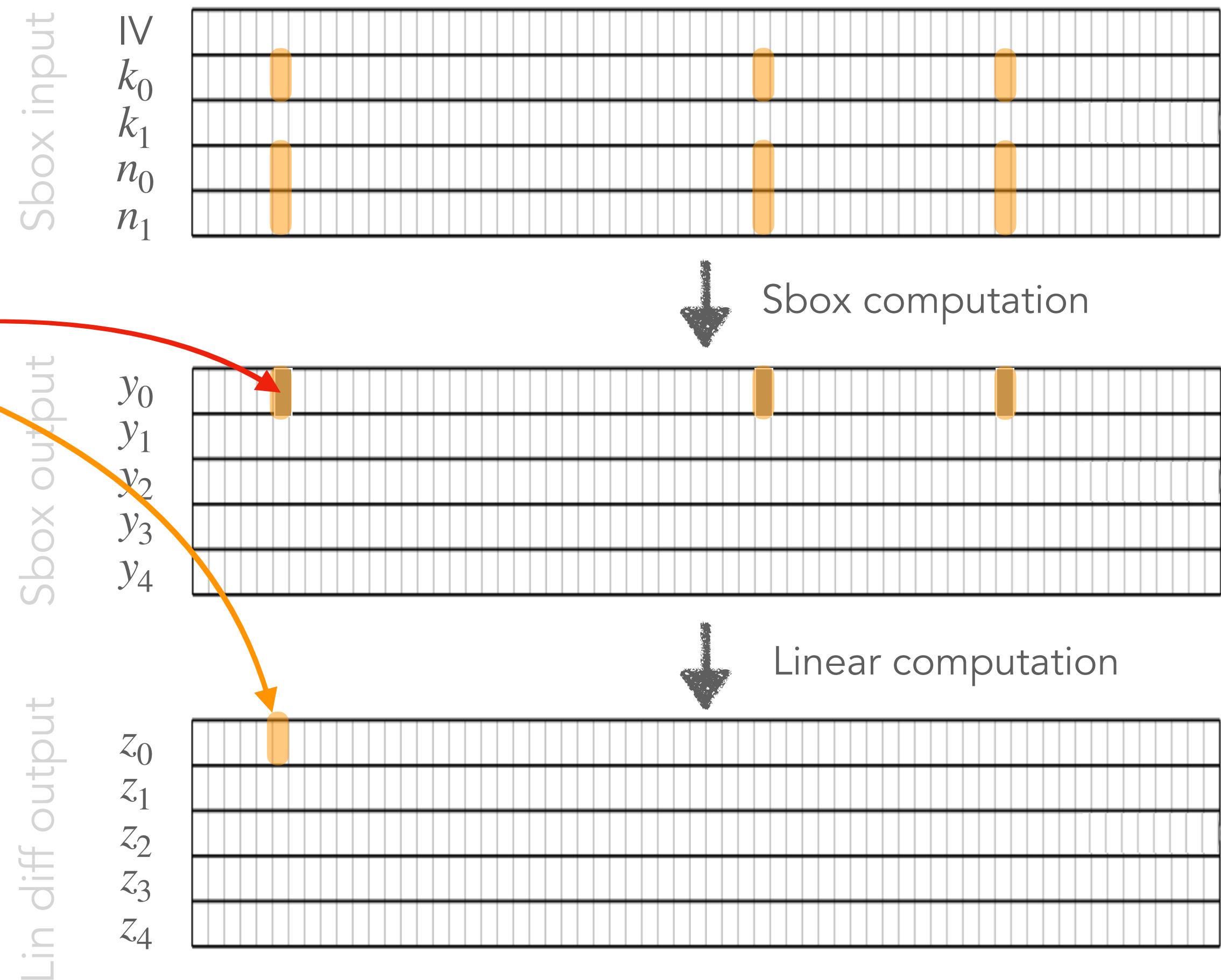
$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j IV^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus IV^j$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation
with register at linear layer output (z_0^j)

Software implementation:
Can we use $\tilde{y}_0^j$ as attack point ?



$\tilde{y}_0^j$ as attack point ?

$$y_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \oplus \cancel{k_1^j k_0^j \oplus k_0^j IV^j \oplus k_1^j \oplus IV^j}$$

$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j$$

Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation

with register at linear layer output (z_0^j)

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Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation

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$$\tilde{y}_0^j = k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j = \begin{cases} n_0^j & \text{if } k_0^j = 0, \\ n_0^j \oplus n_1^j \oplus 1 & \text{if } k_0^j = 1. \end{cases}$$

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Samwel and Daemen, 2018

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with register at linear layer output (z_0^j)

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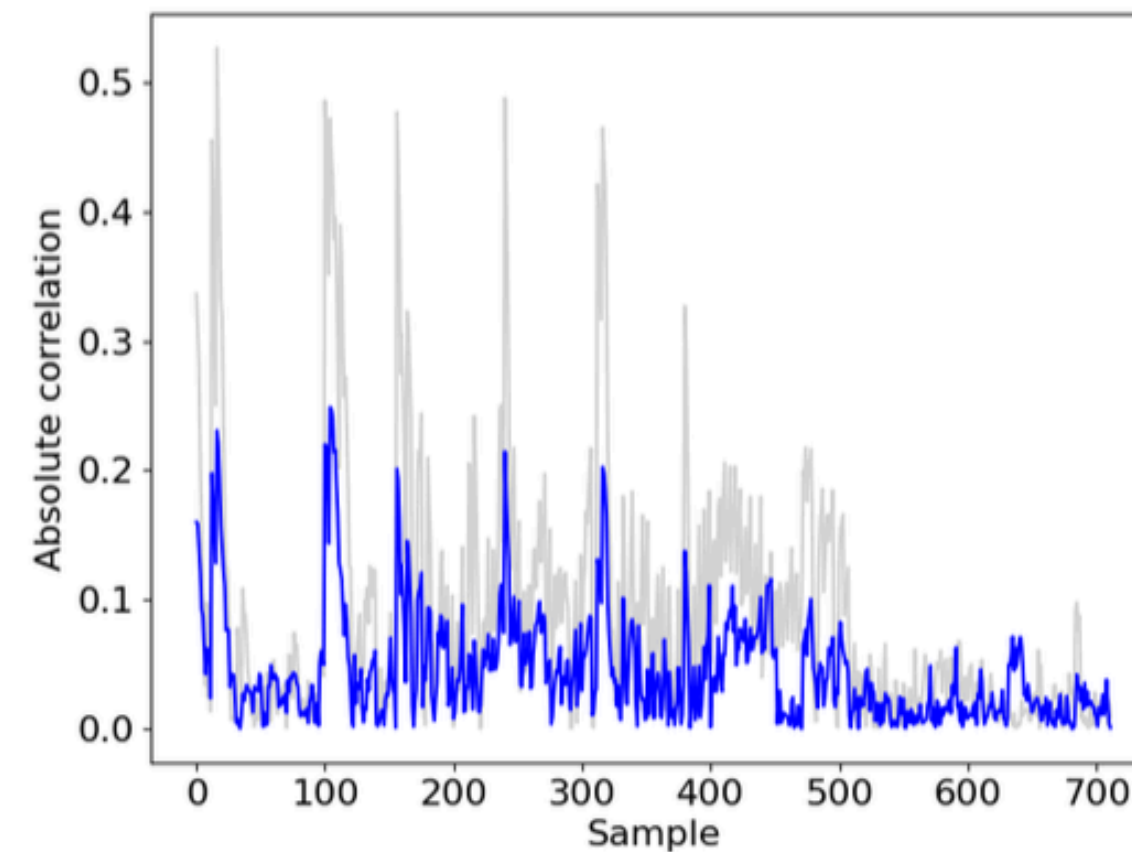
Samwel and Daemen, 2018

Hardware implementation
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Can we use $\tilde{y}_0^j$ as attack point ?

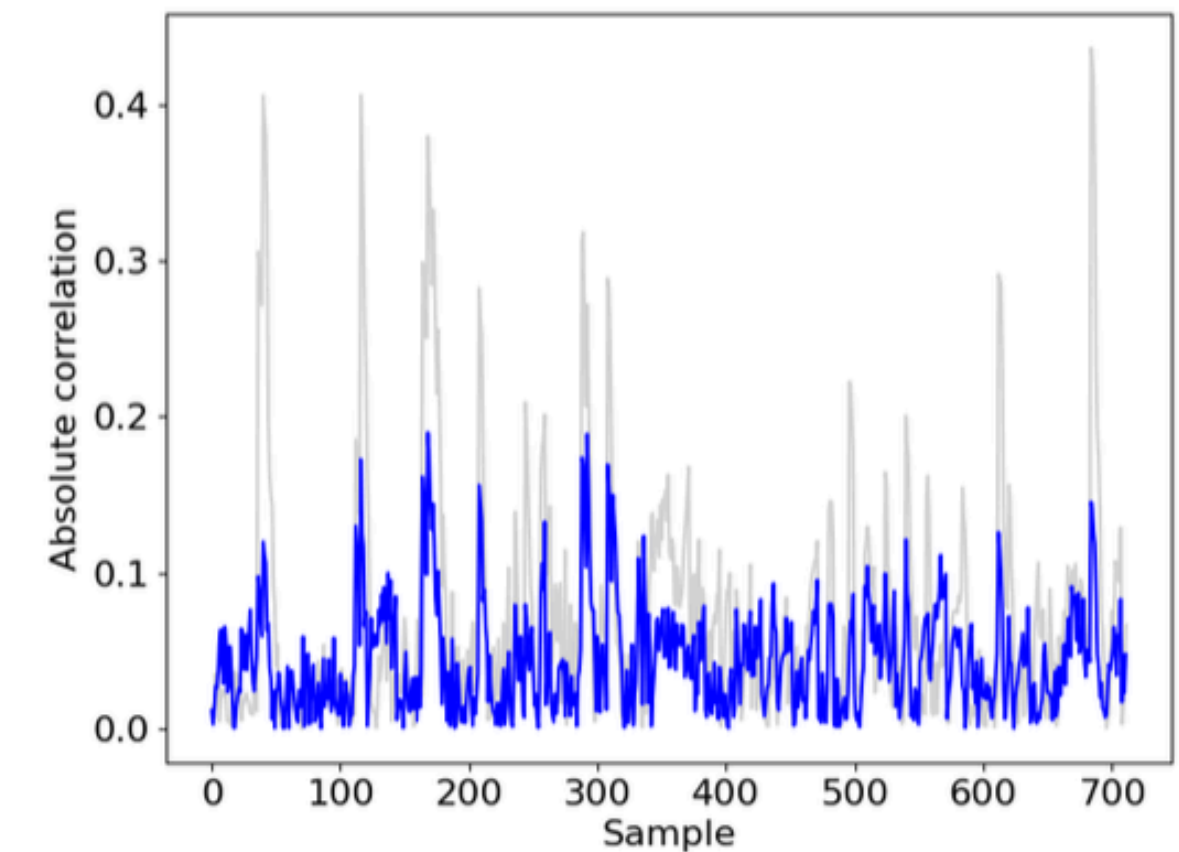
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(a) $k_0^j = 0$

→ Correlated with activity of n_0

→ Correlated with activity of $n_0 \oplus n_1$



(b) $k_0^j = 1$

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Samwel and Daemen, 2018

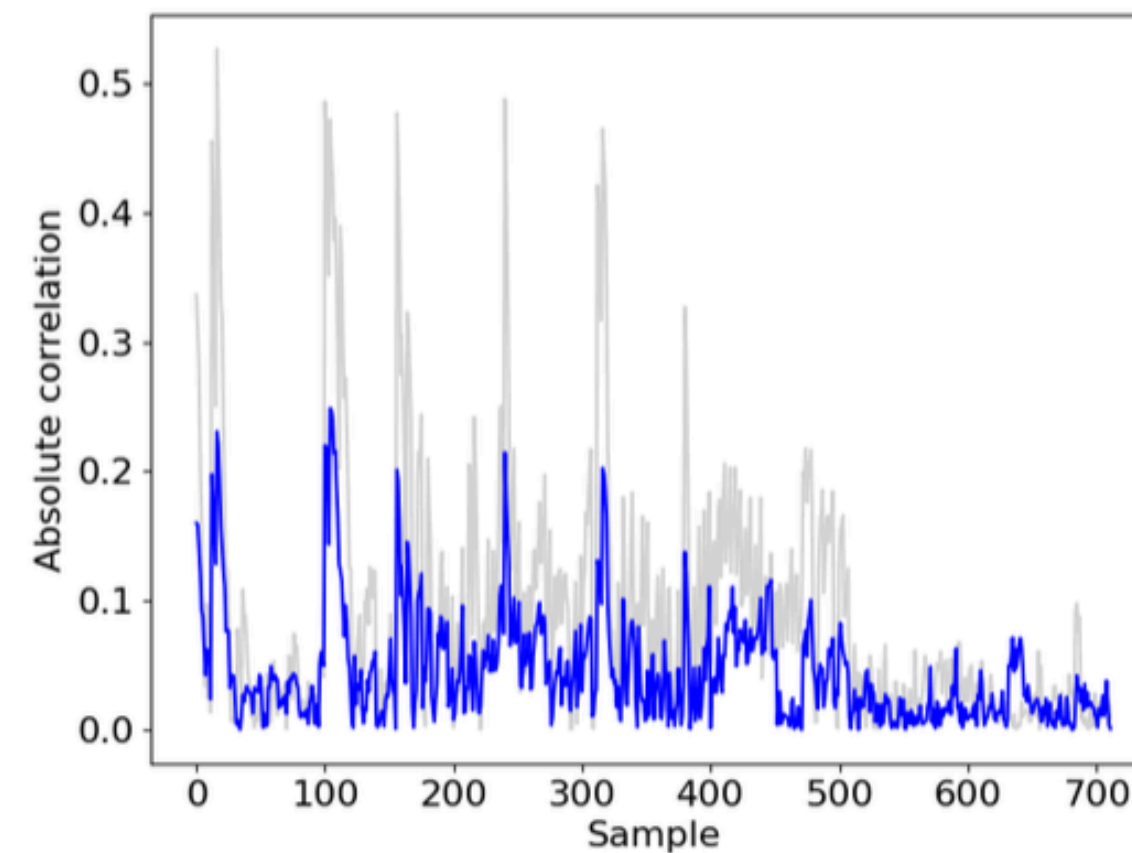
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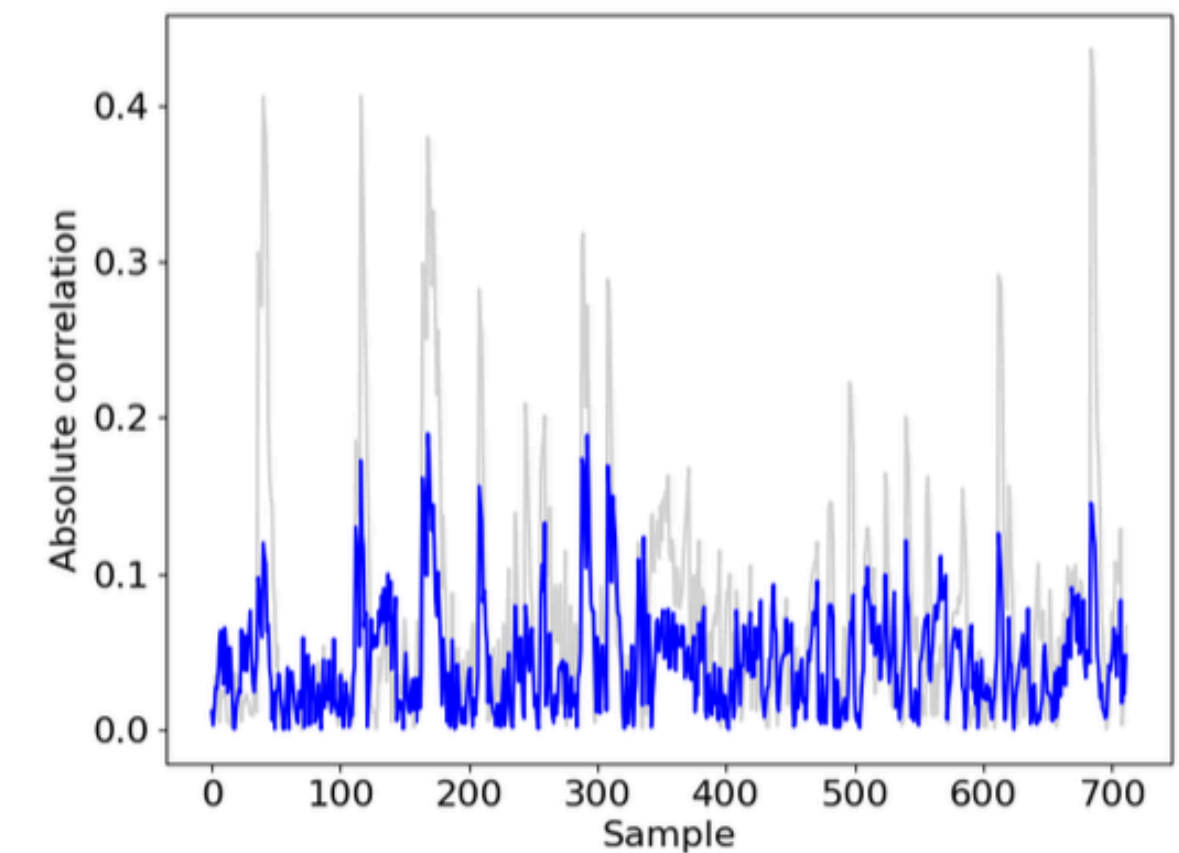
→ Not effective for CPA attacks



(a) $k_0^j = 0$

→ Correlated with activity of n_0

→ Correlated with activity of $n_0 \oplus n_1$



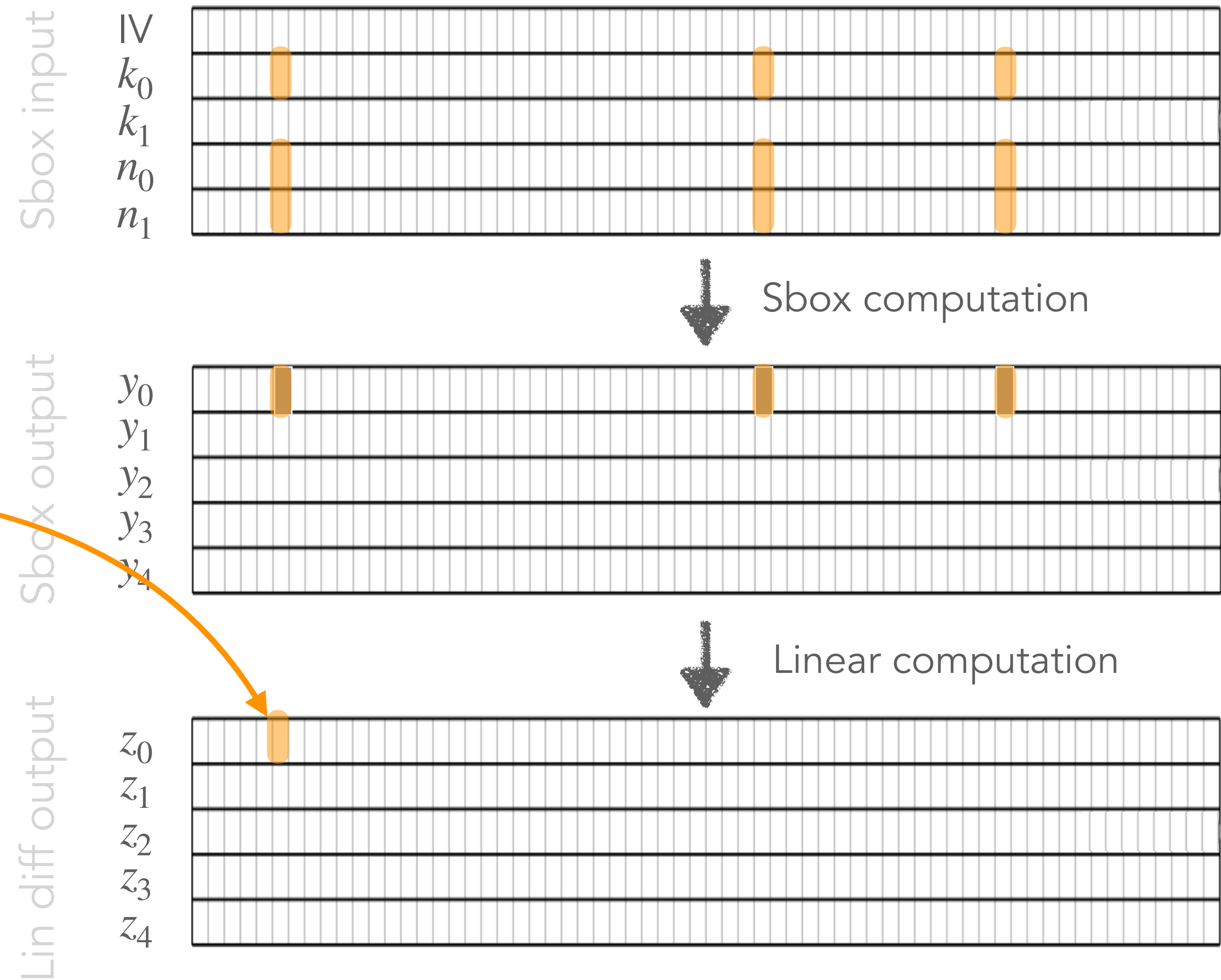
(b) $k_0^j = 1$

The best choice

for both hardware and software implementations

Samwel and Daemen, 2018

$$\begin{aligned}\tilde{z}_0^j &= k_0^j(n_1^j \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^j \\ &\oplus k_0^{j+36}(n_1^{j+36} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+36} \\ &\oplus k_0^{j+45}(n_1^{j+45} \oplus 1) \oplus n_0^{j+45}\end{aligned}$$

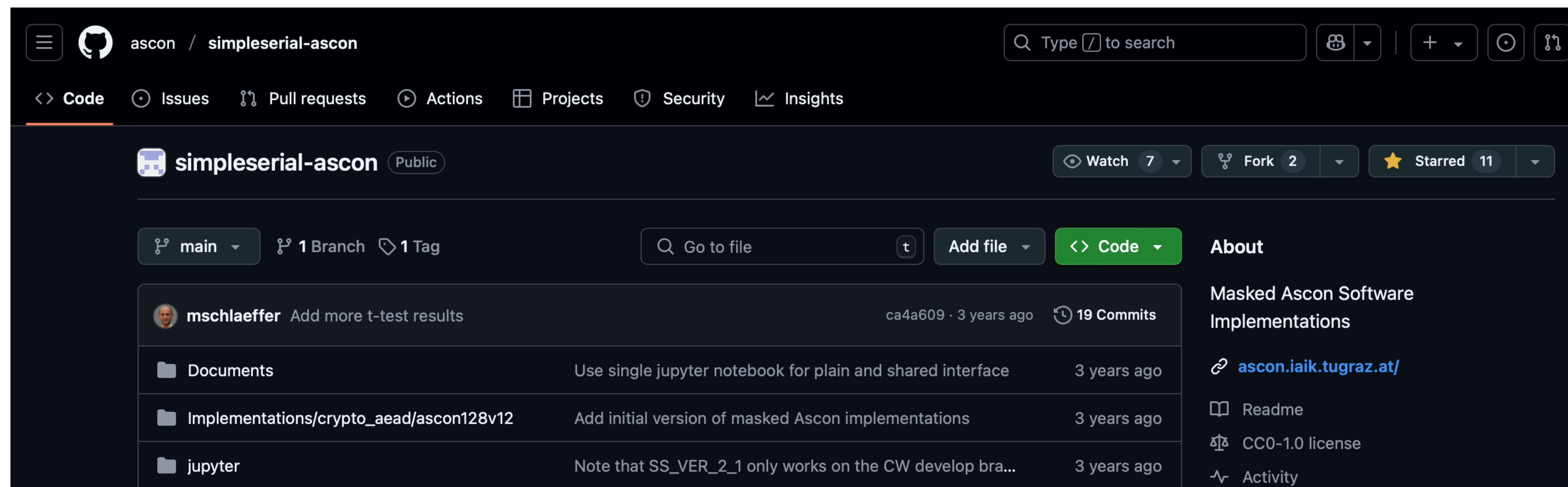


Second-Order CPA attack

Target implementation

Masked software implementations with 2 shares
by Ascon team

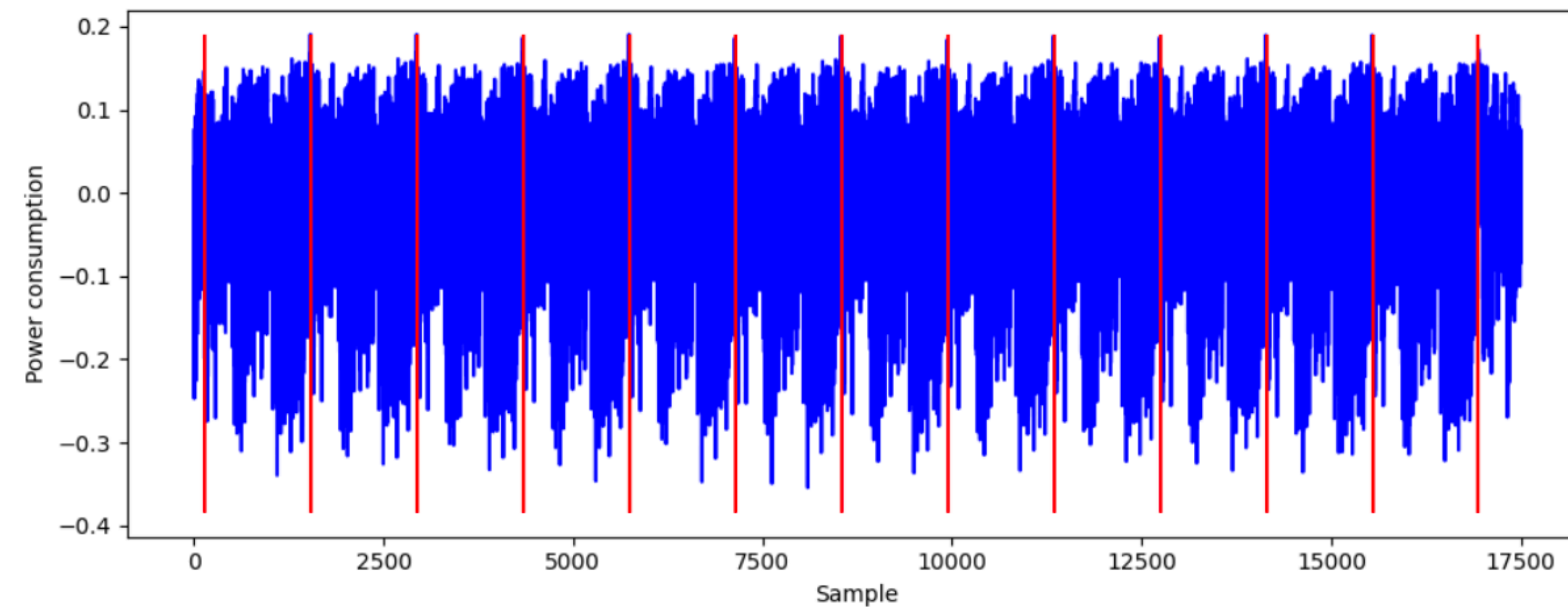
<https://github.com/ascon/simpleserial-ascon>



Target implementation

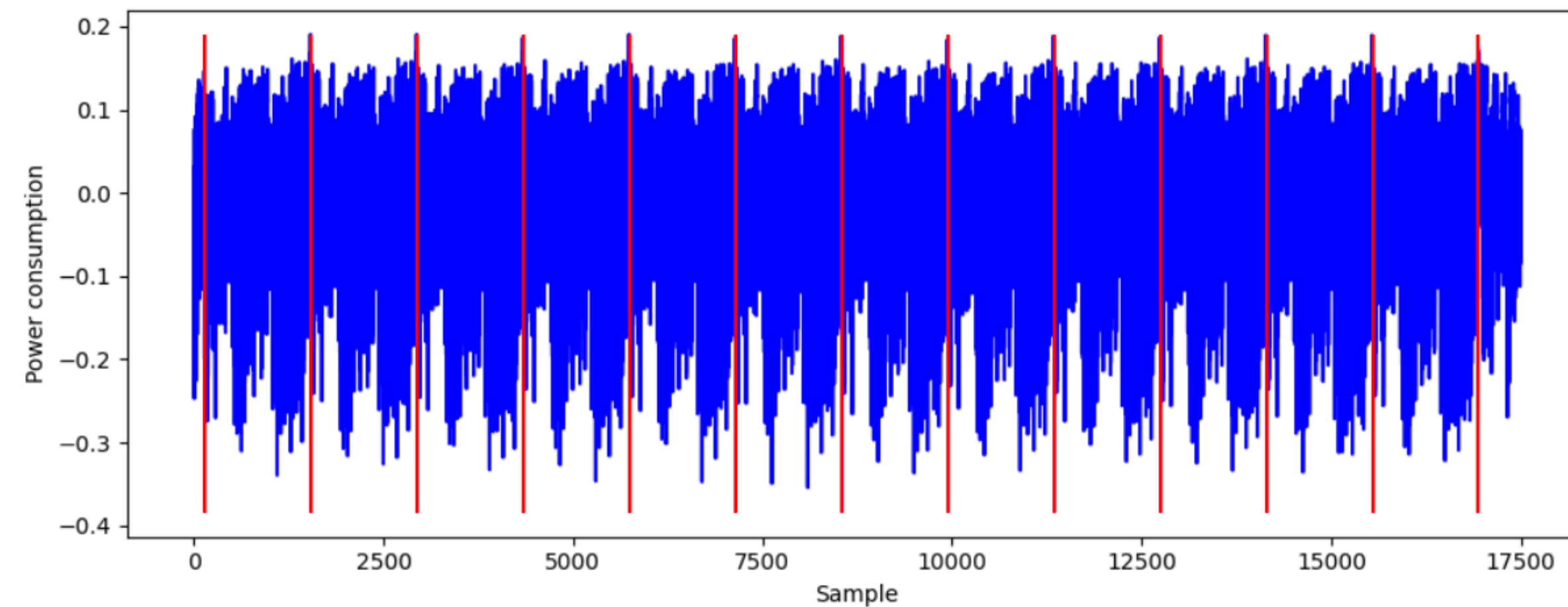
Target implementation

Power consumption of the first 12 rounds from ChipWhisperer ARM with Cortex-M3 core:

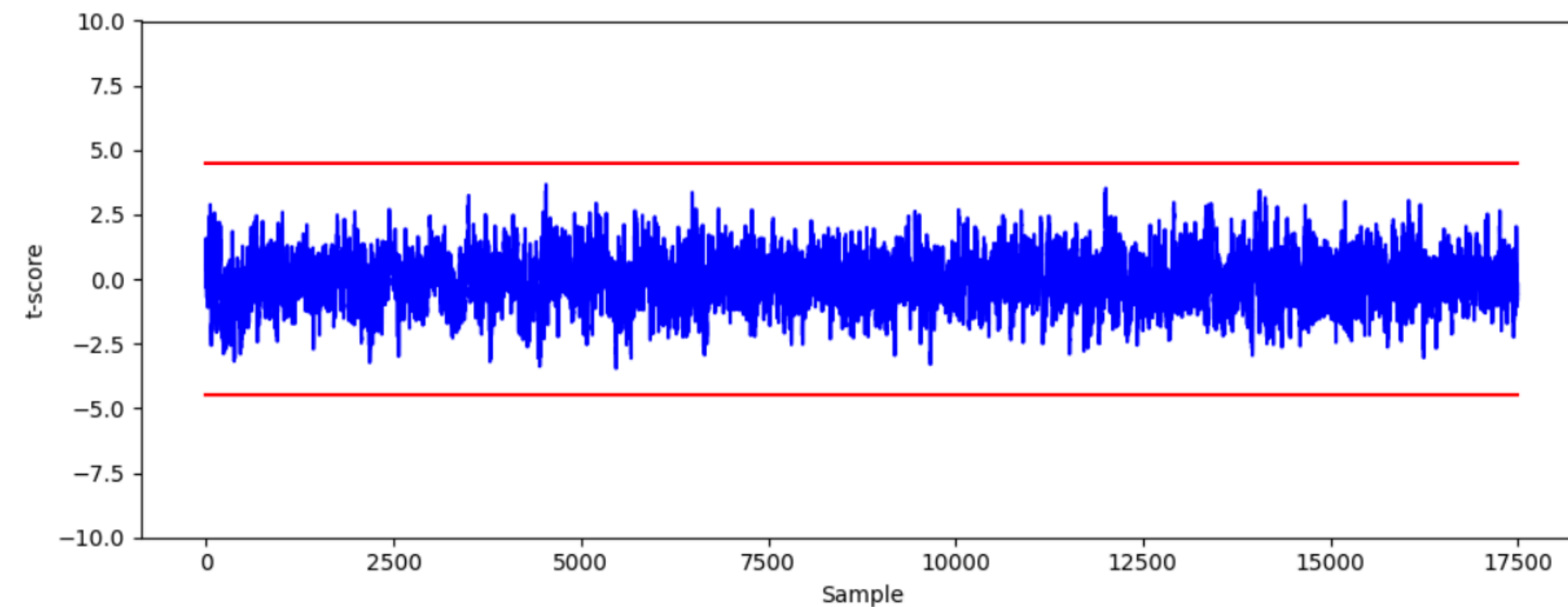


Target implementation

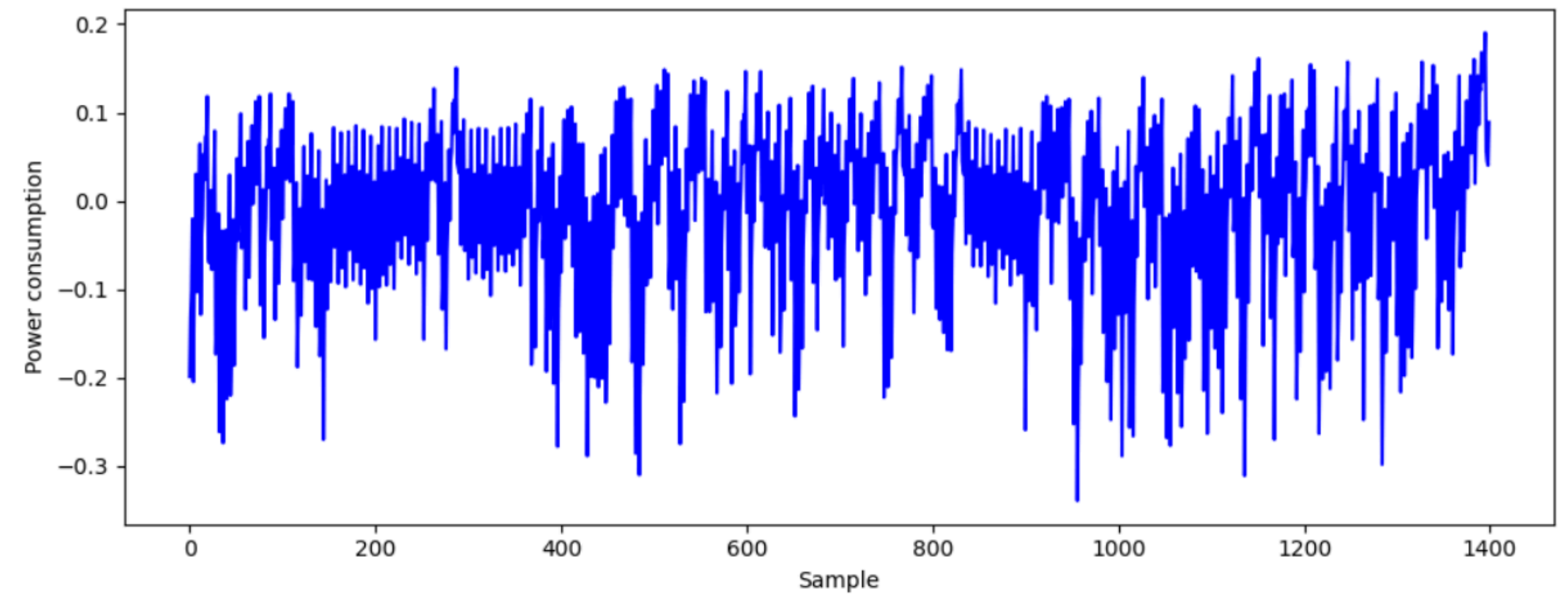
Power consumption of the first 12 rounds from ChipWhisperer ARM with Cortex-M3 core:



Verify first-order leakage by TVLA:

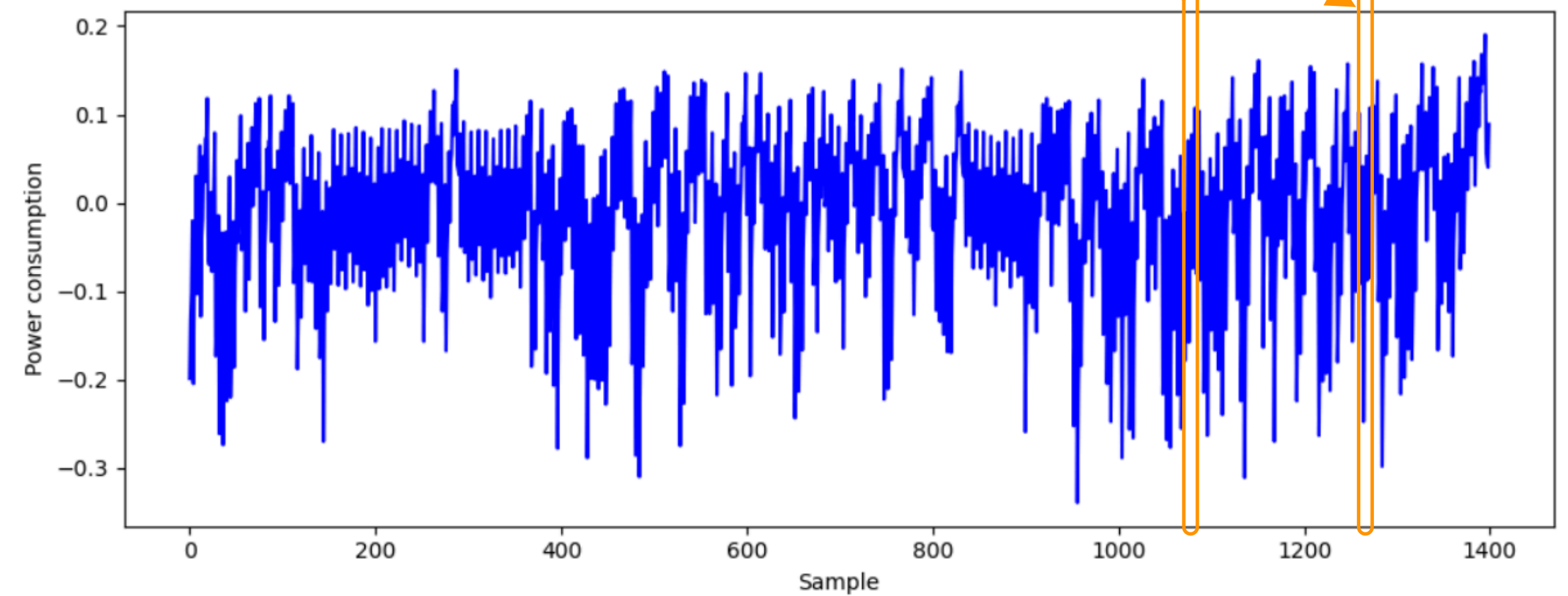


Second-Order CPA



Second-Order CPA

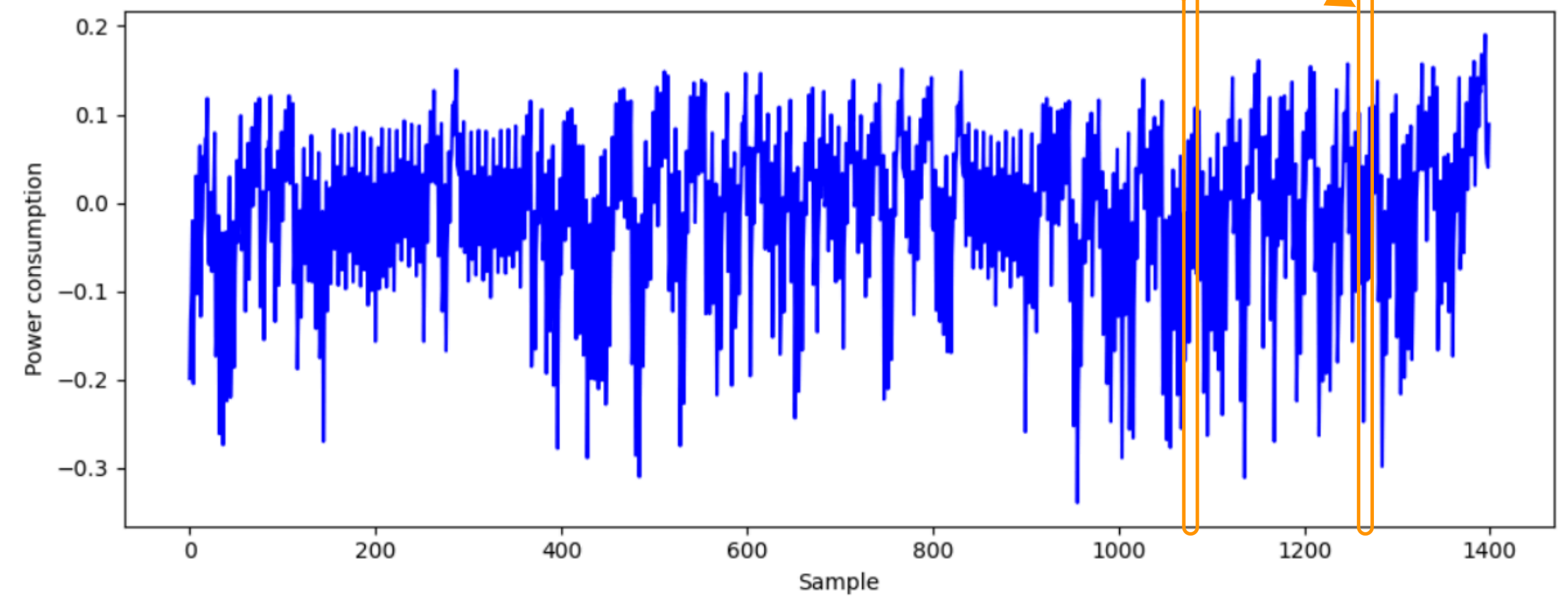
Combine two points on the trace
(by normalized product)



Second-Order CPA

Combine two points on the trace
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Optimizations:

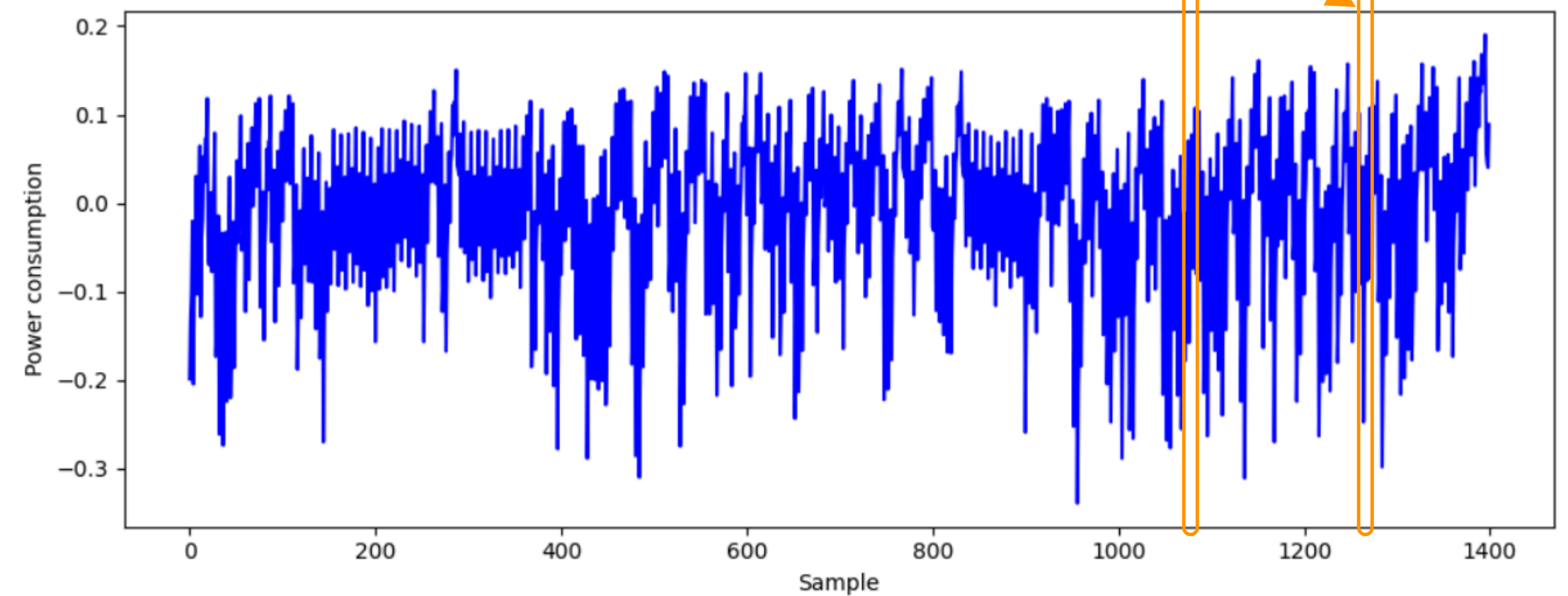


Second-Order CPA

Combine two points on the trace
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Optimizations:

- Attack point at linear layer output

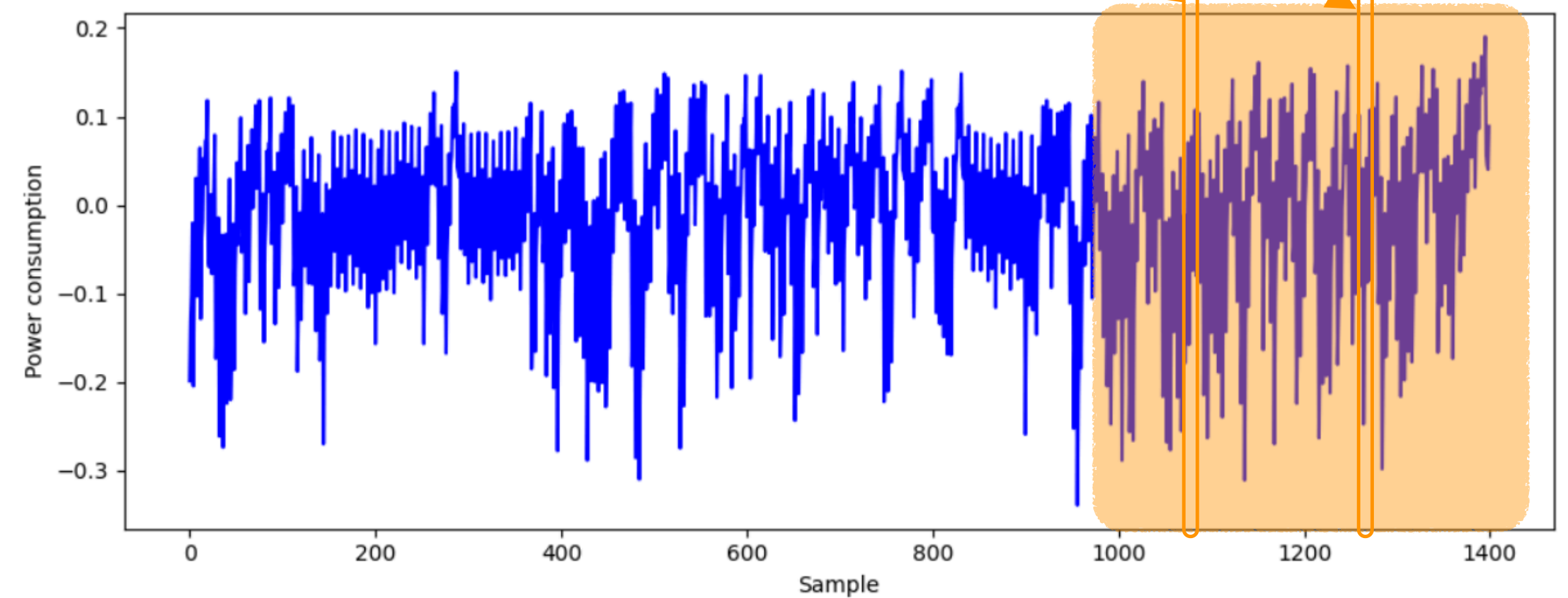


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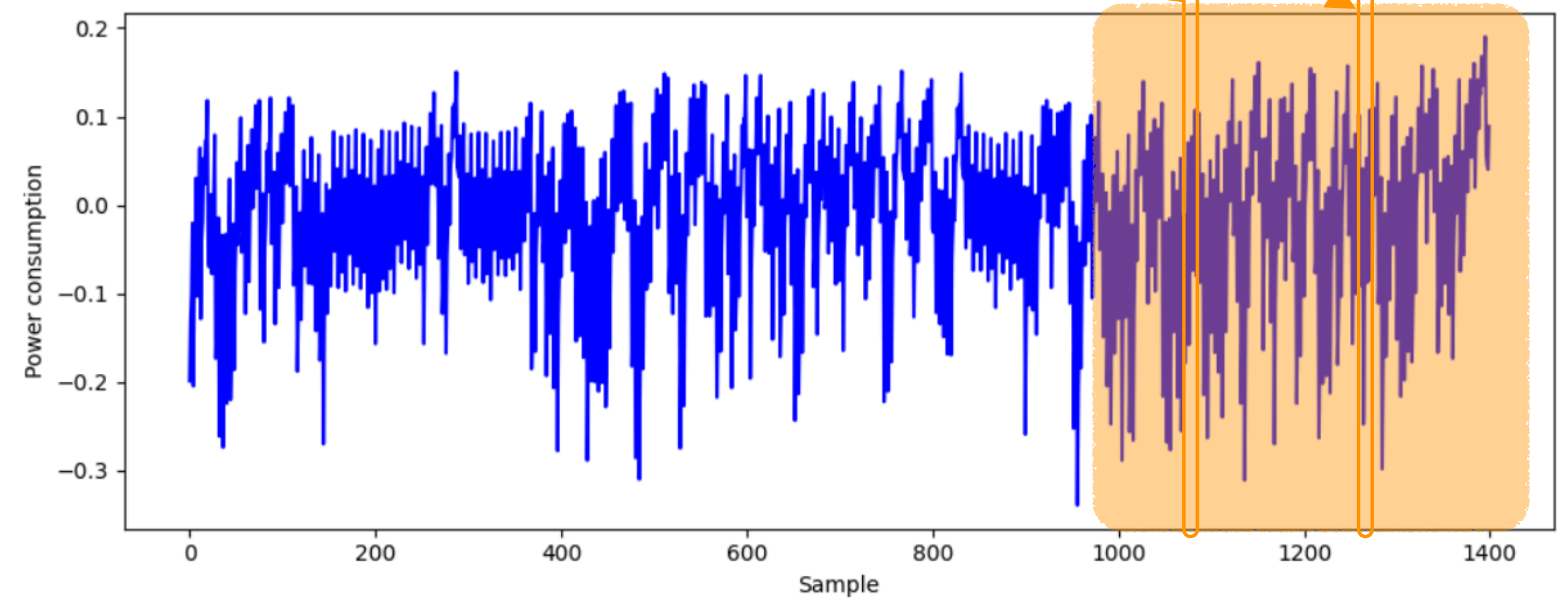


Second-Order CPA

Combine two points on the trace
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Optimizations:

- Attack point at linear layer output
→ focus on the right part of the trace

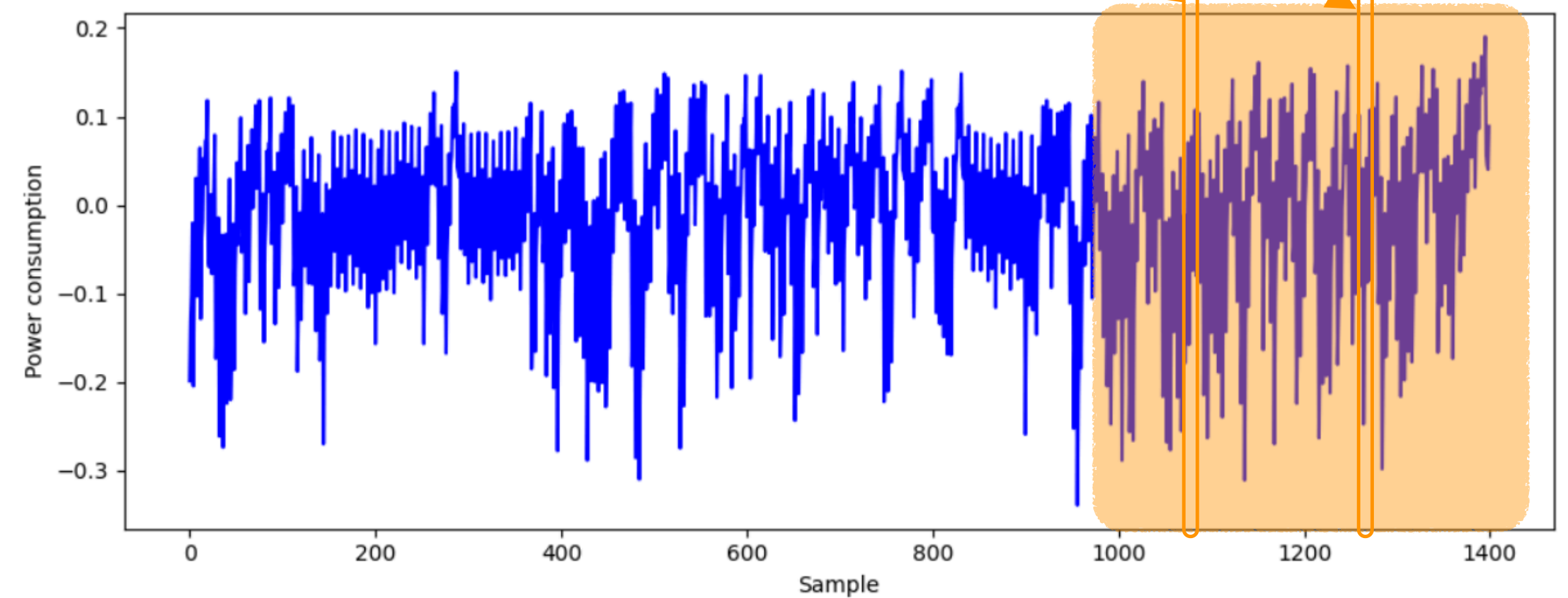


Second-Order CPA

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Optimizations:

- Attack point at linear layer output
→ focus on the right part of the trace
- Two shares occur in a time span

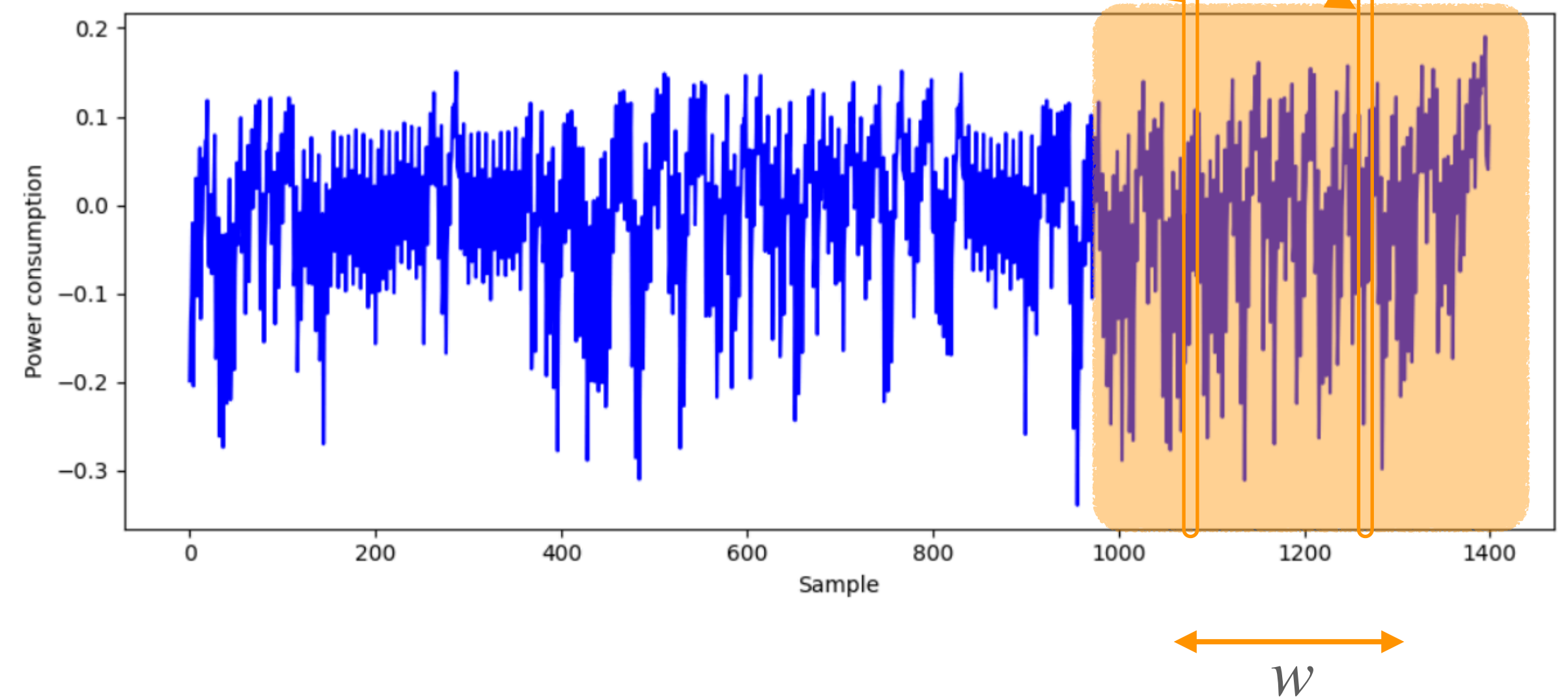


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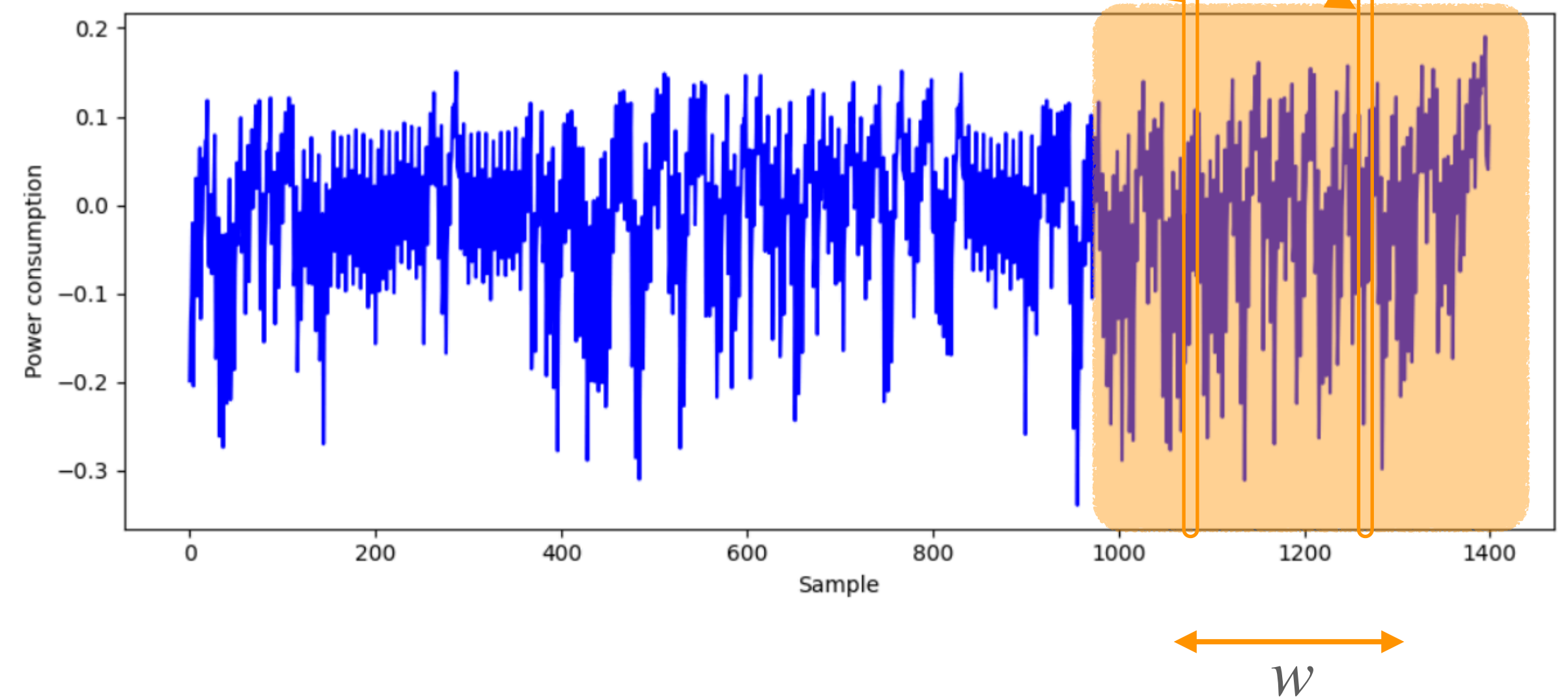


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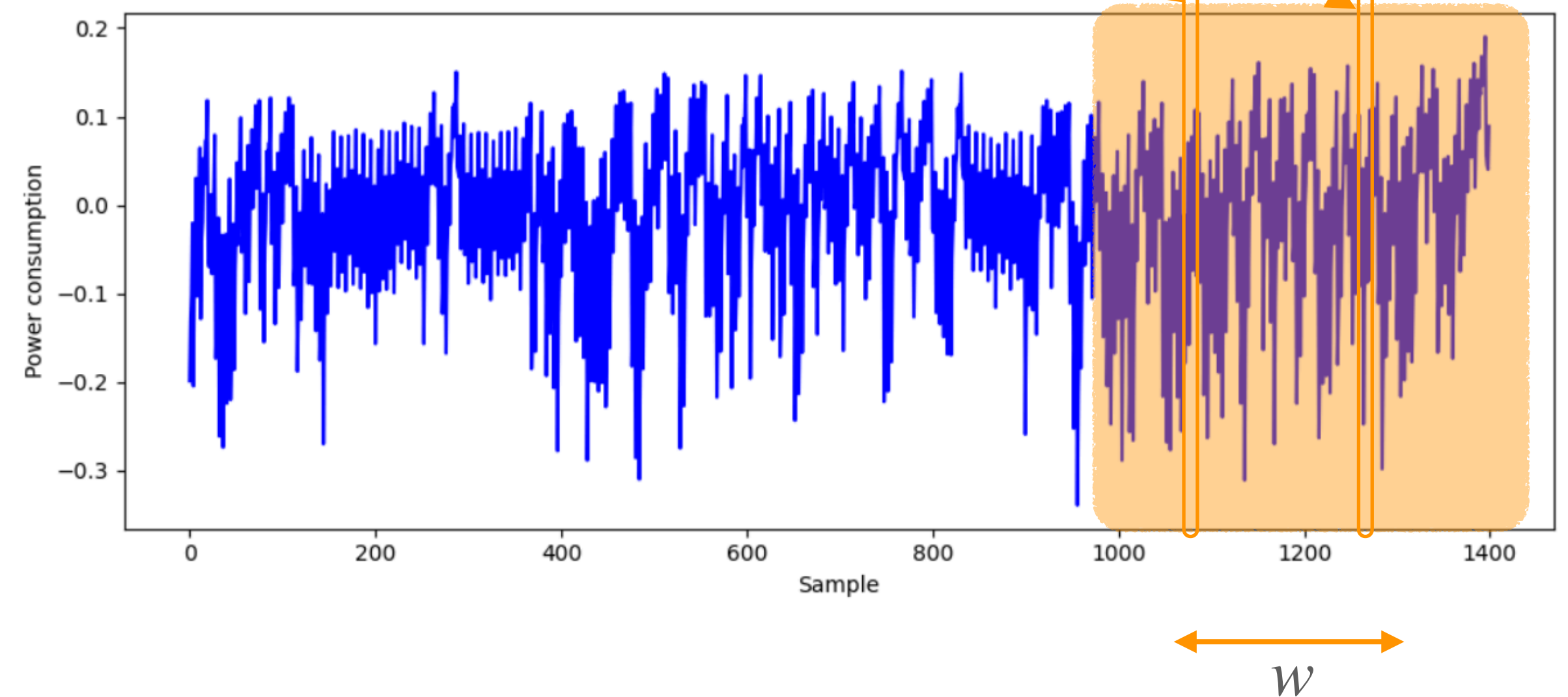


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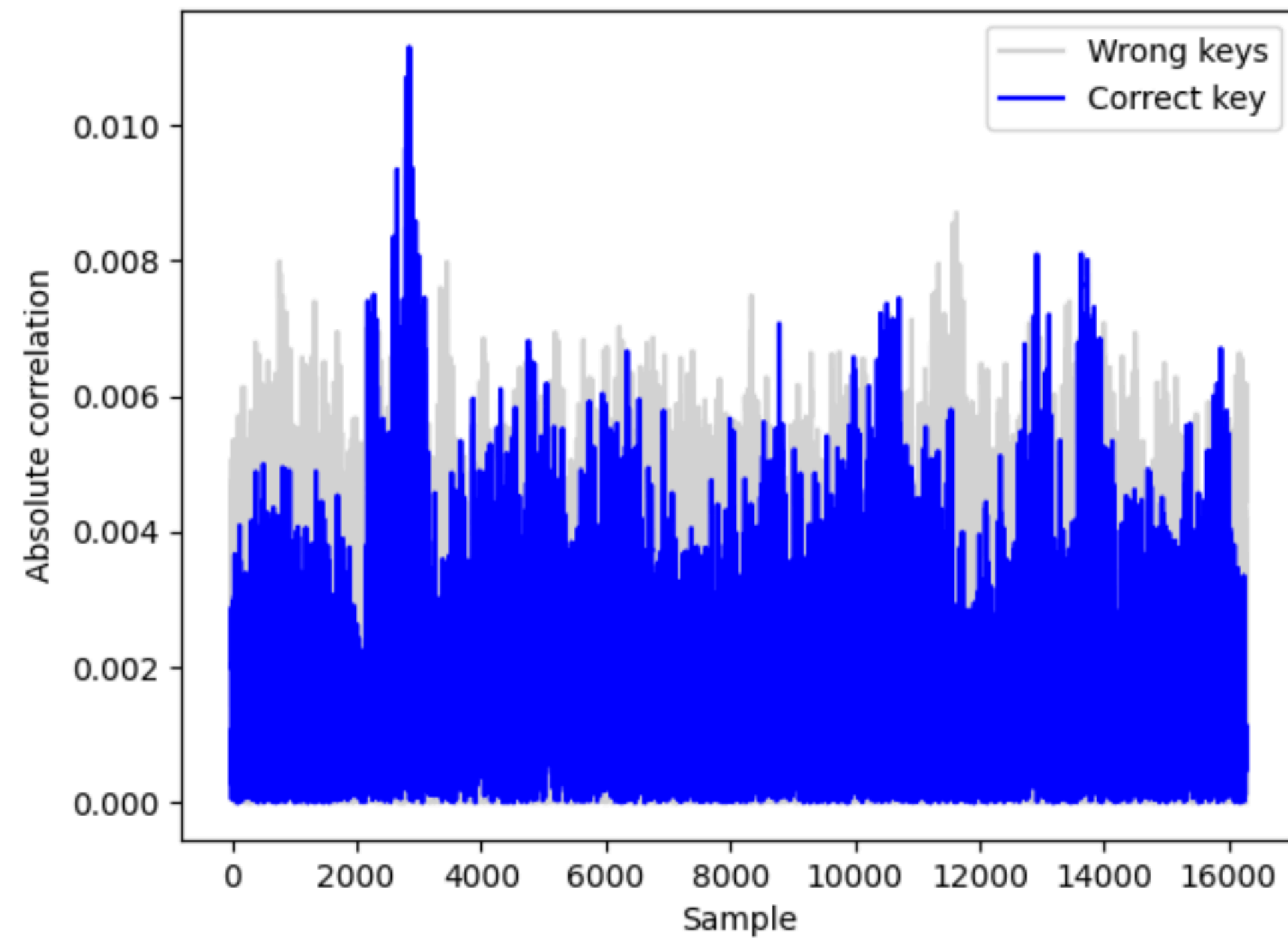


Our attack considers the last 350 samples
 $w = 50$

Results

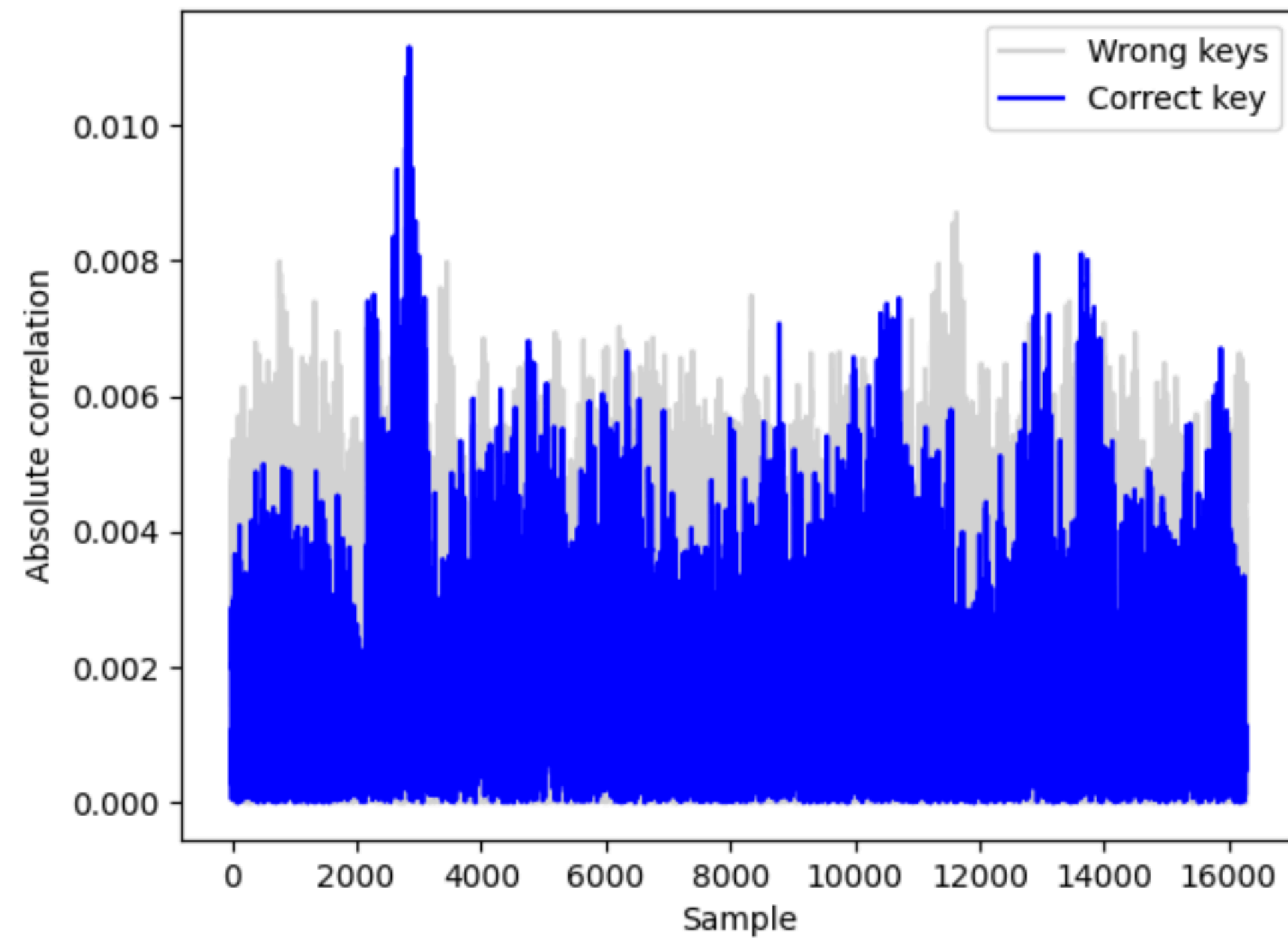
Results

Correlation traces

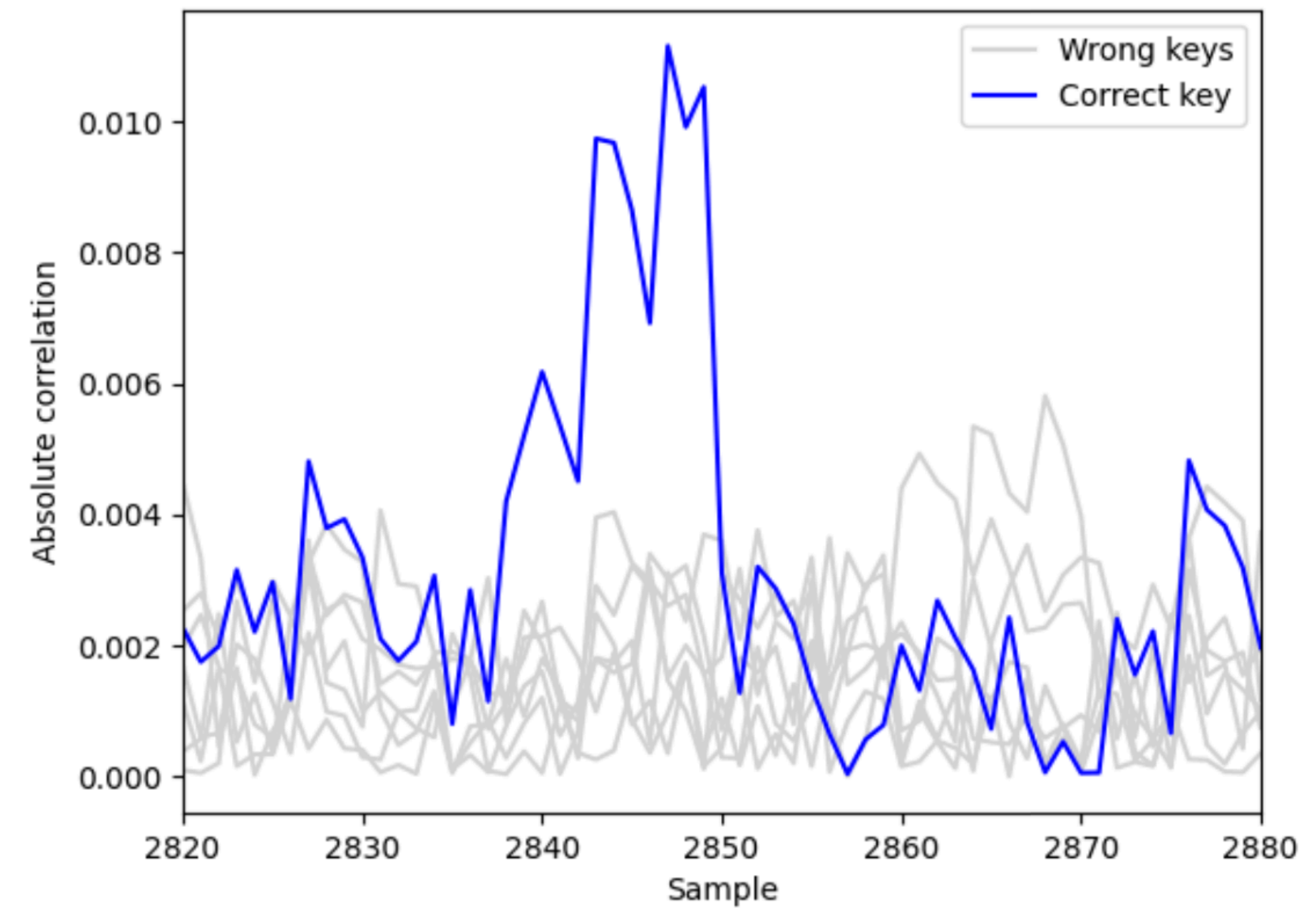


Results

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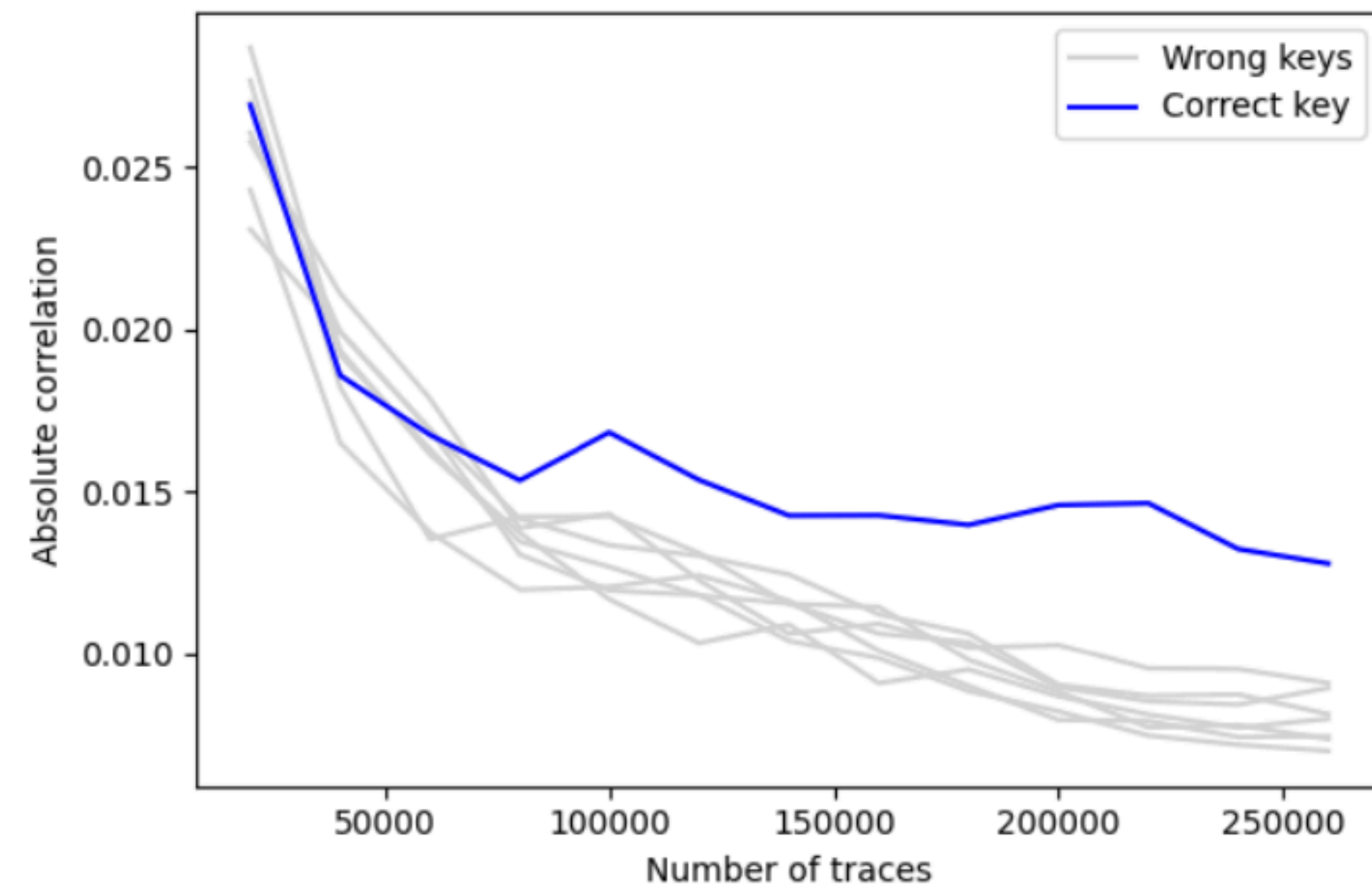
Correlation peak



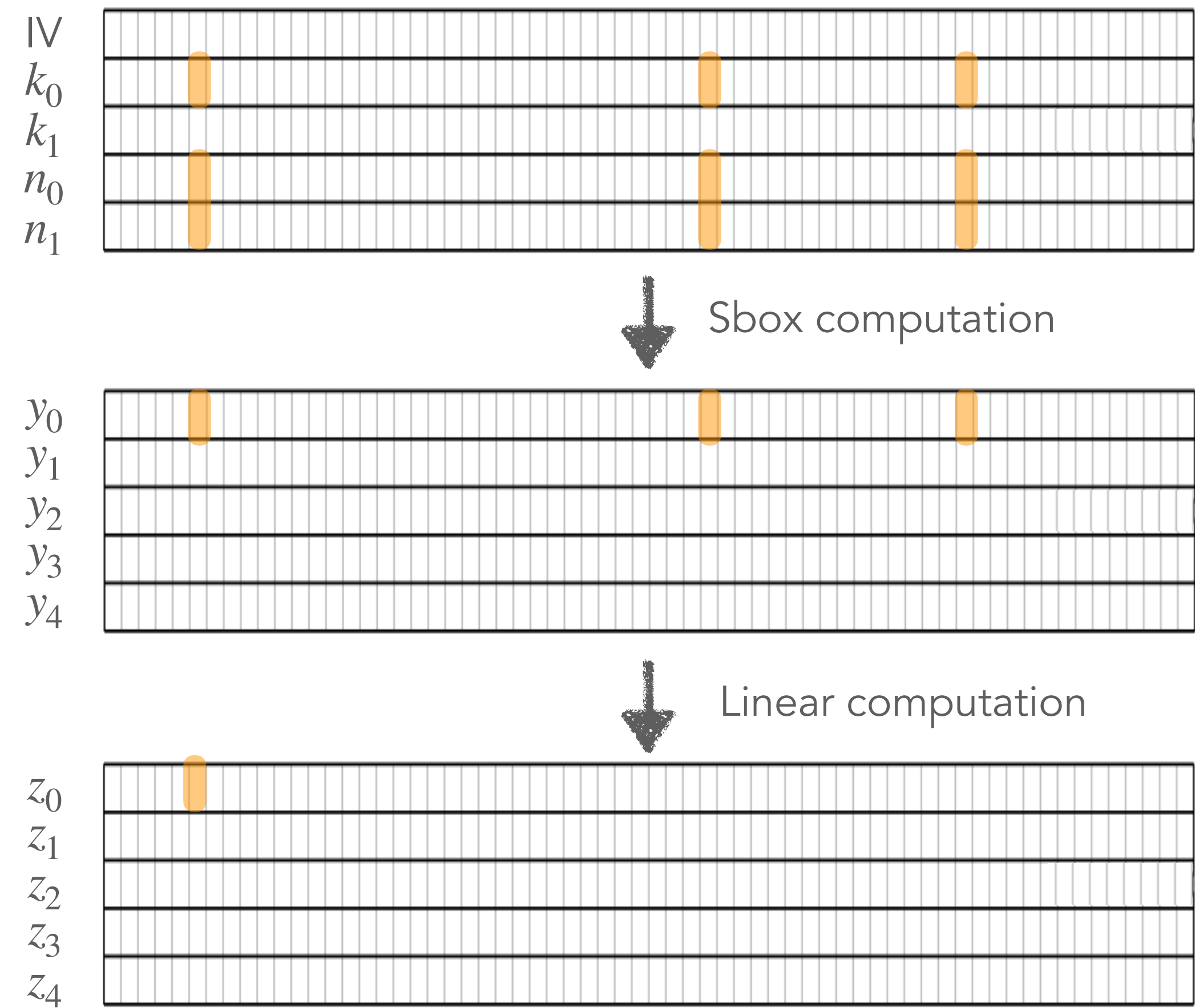
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Correlation with increasing number of traces

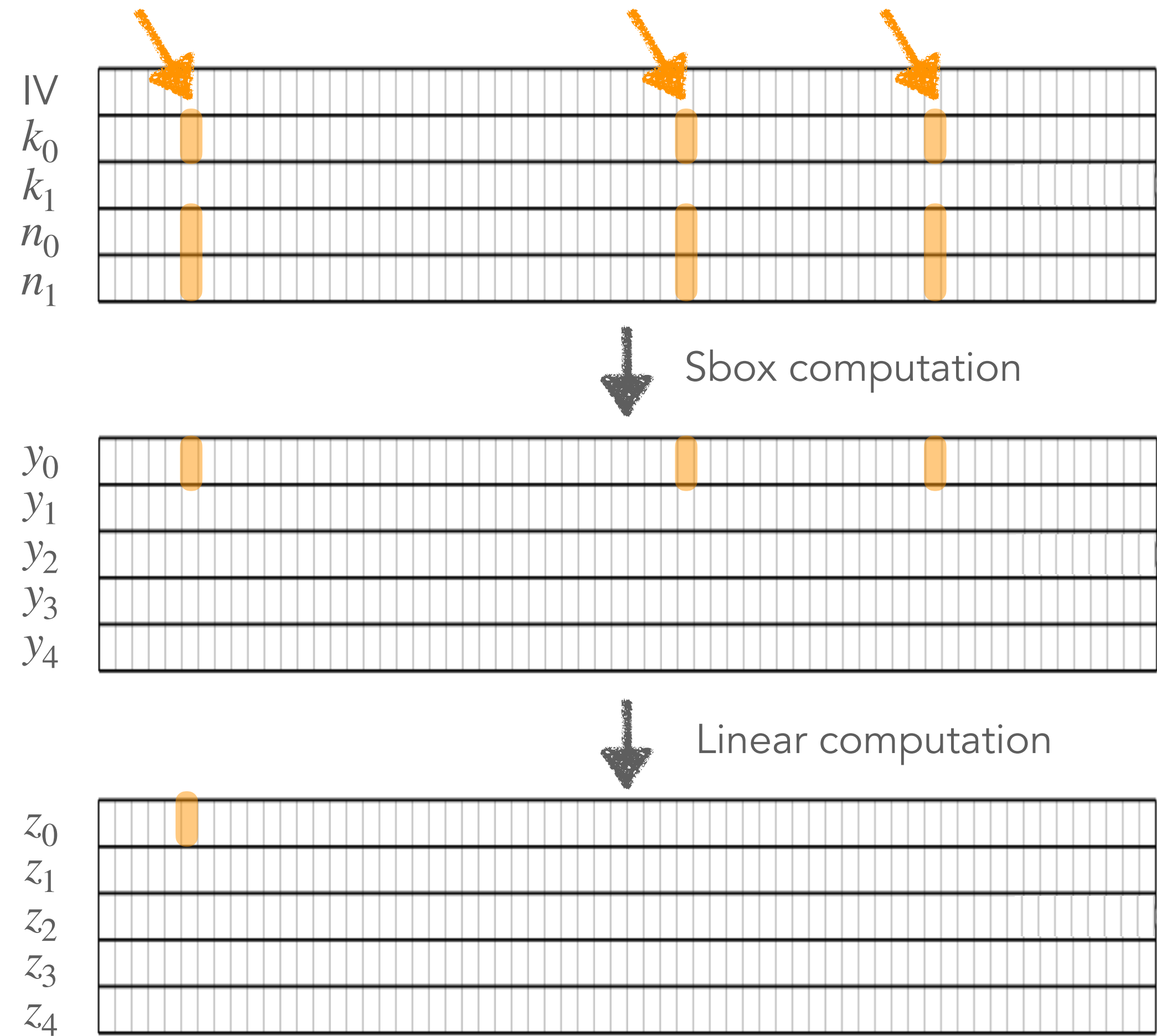


CPA runs for full-key recovery



CPA runs for full-key recovery

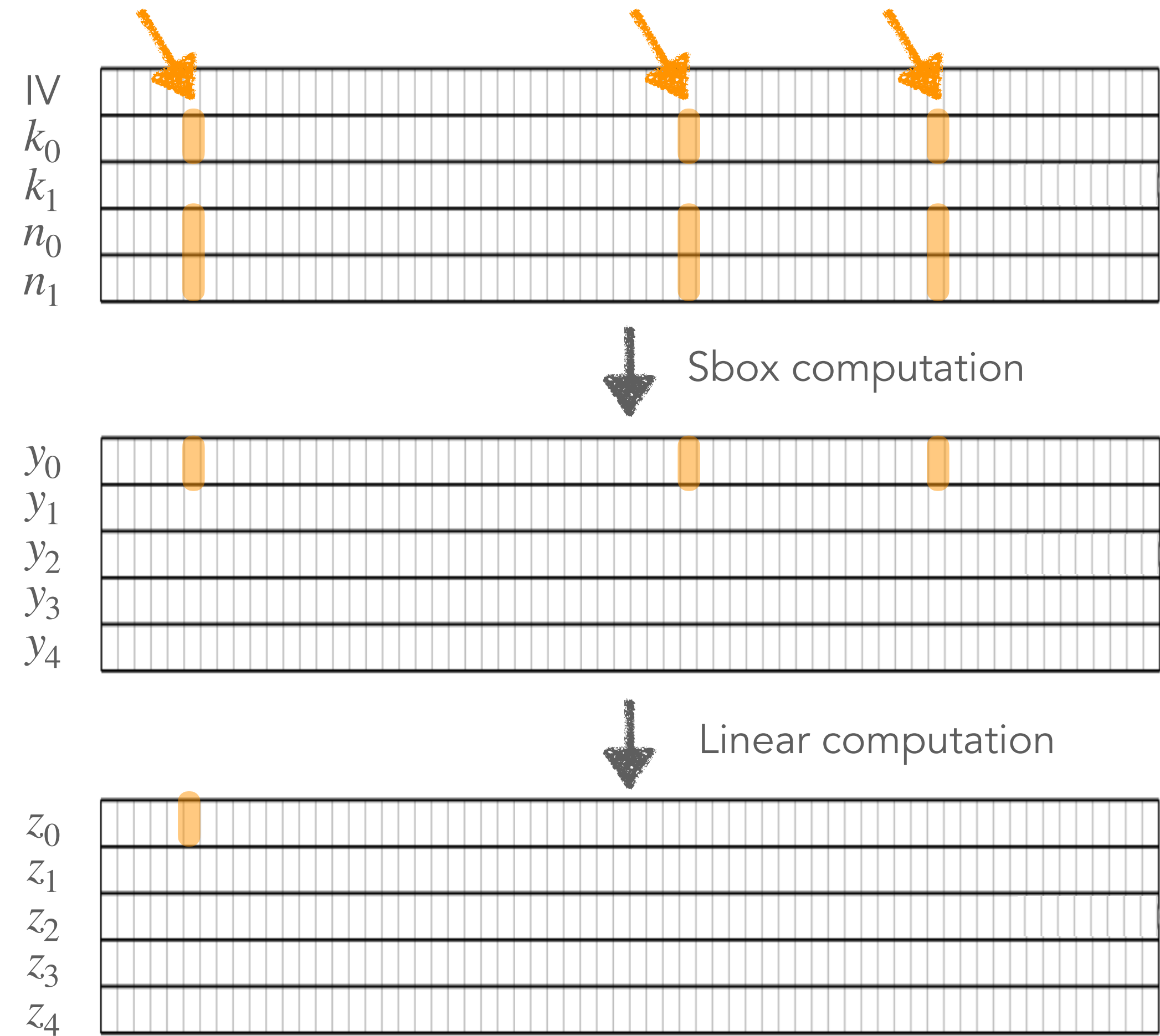
Each CPA run recovers 3 key bits



CPA runs for full-key recovery

Each CPA run recovers 3 key bits

How many CPA runs to recover 128 key bits?



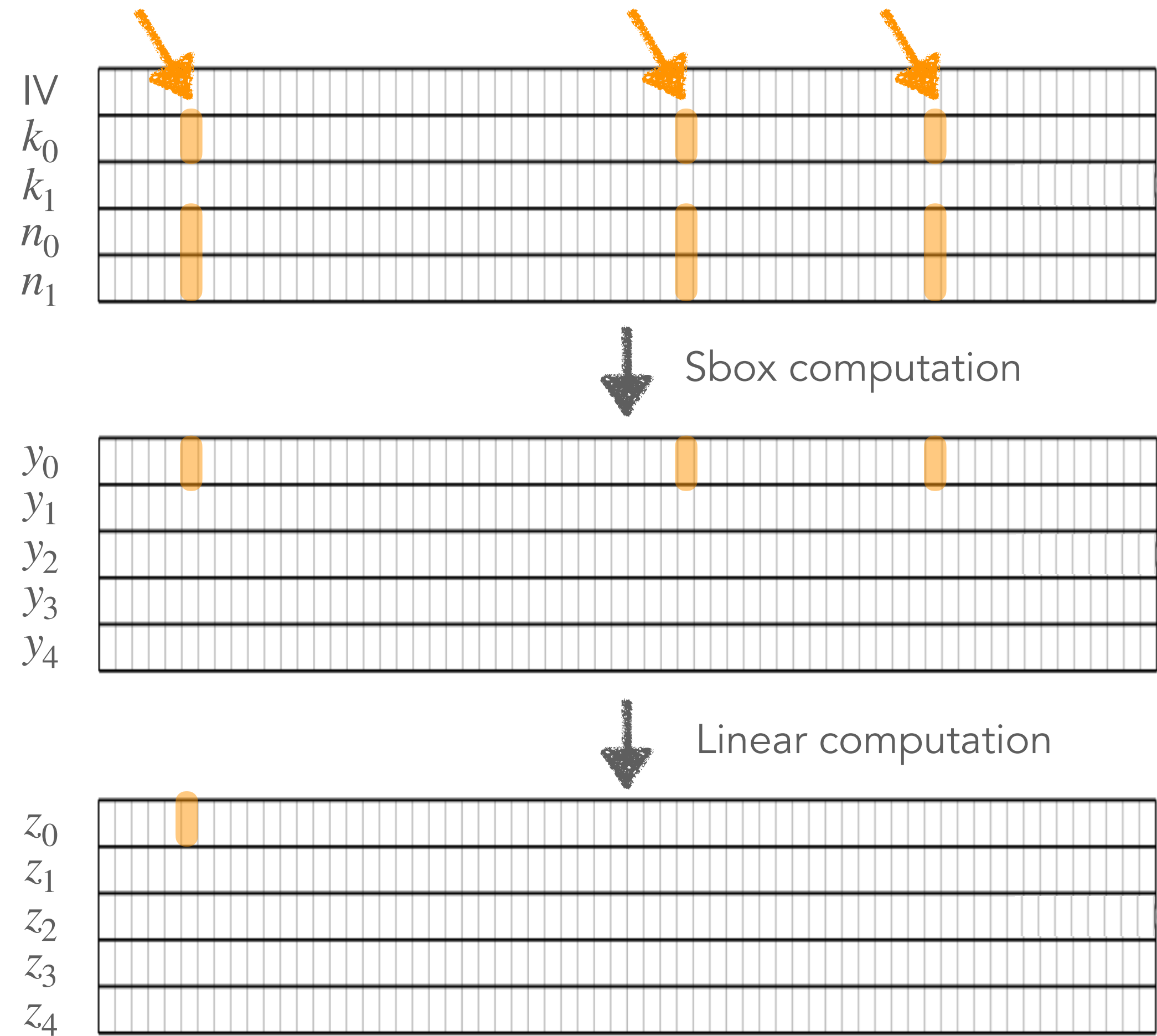
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Weissbart and Picek, 2023

63 CPA runs



CPA runs for full-key recovery

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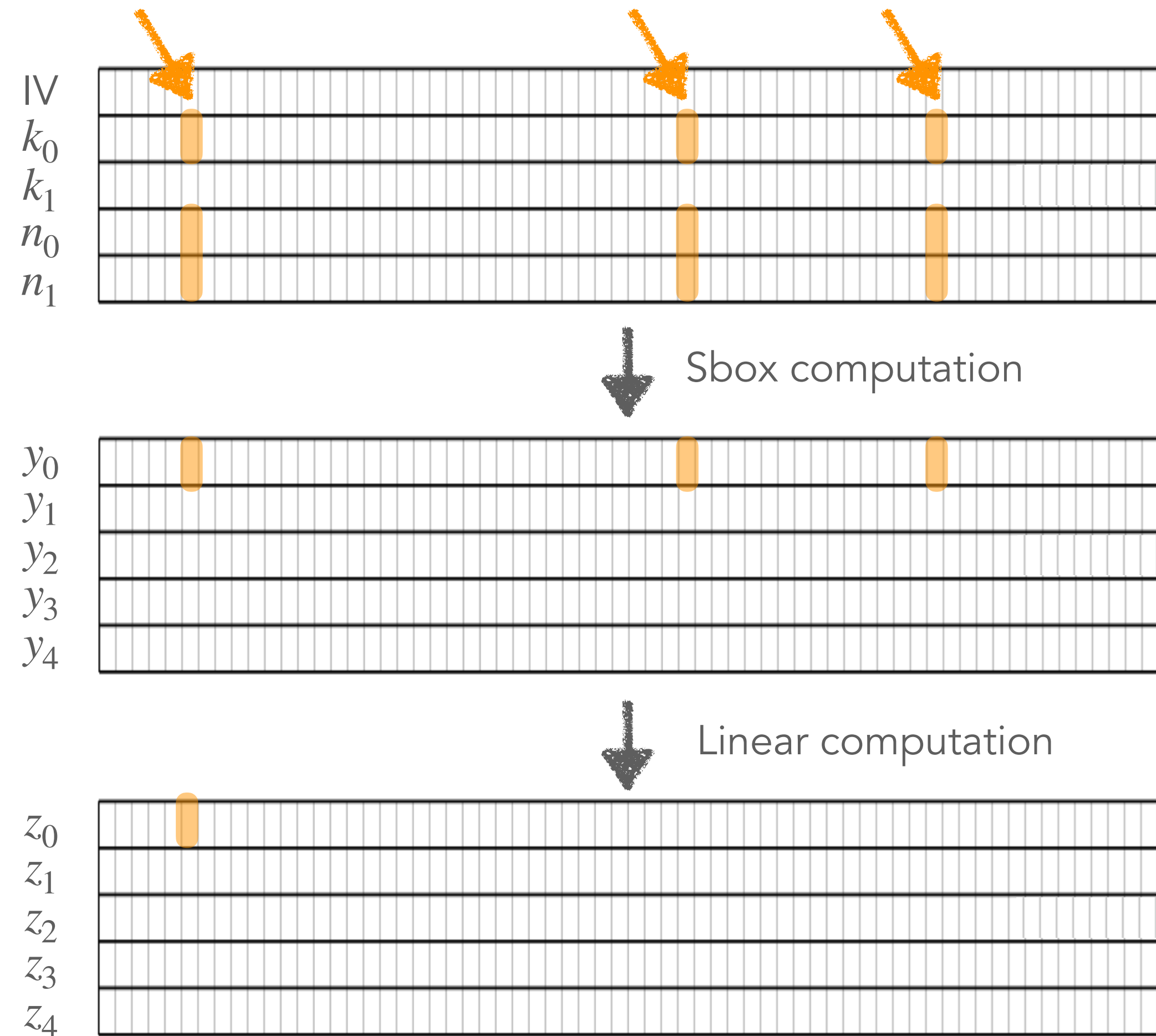
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Weissbart and Picek, 2023

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This work:

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- uses a SAT solver



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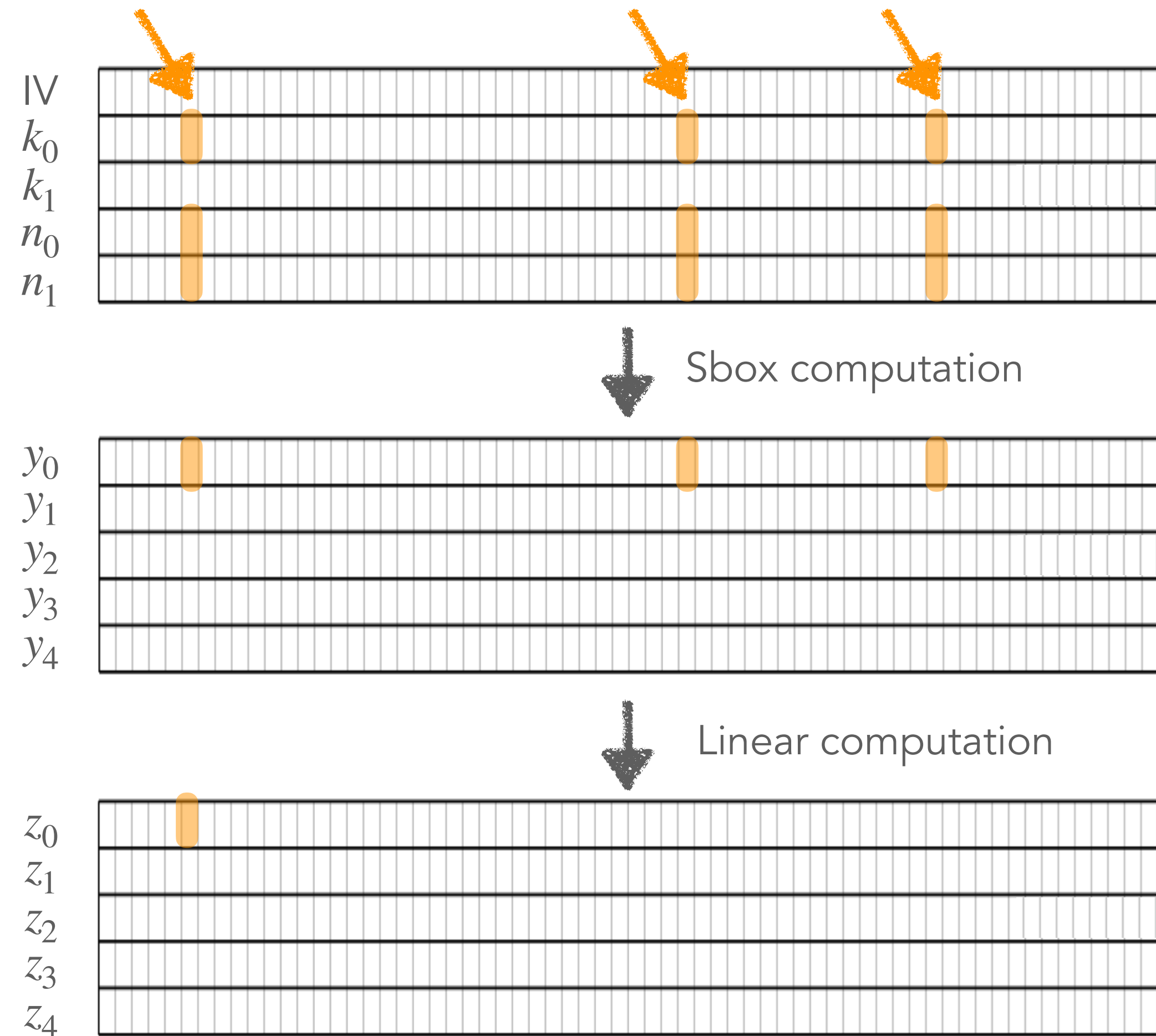
Weissbart and Picek, 2023

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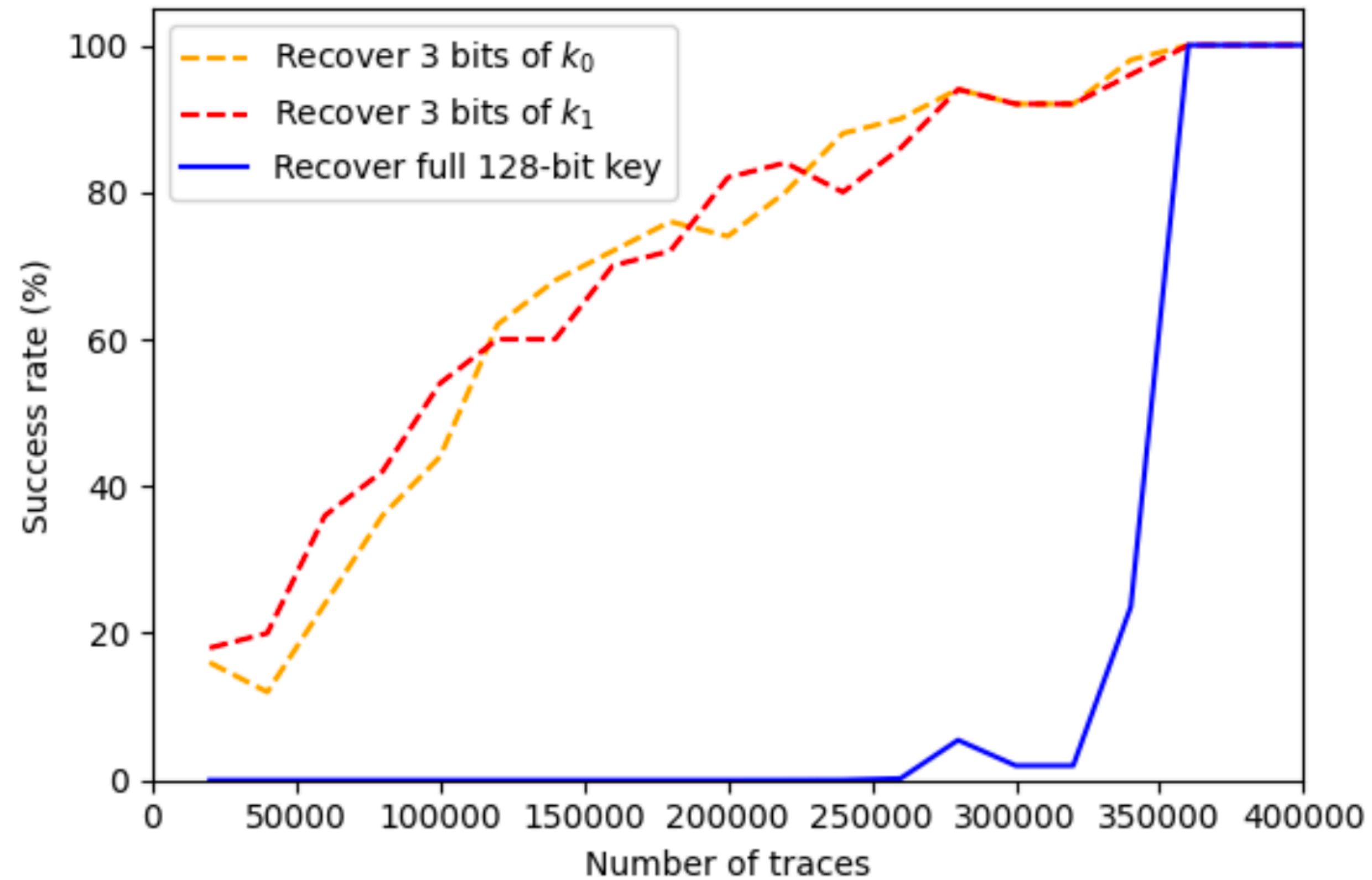
→ 47 CPA runs (optimal)



Full-key recovery

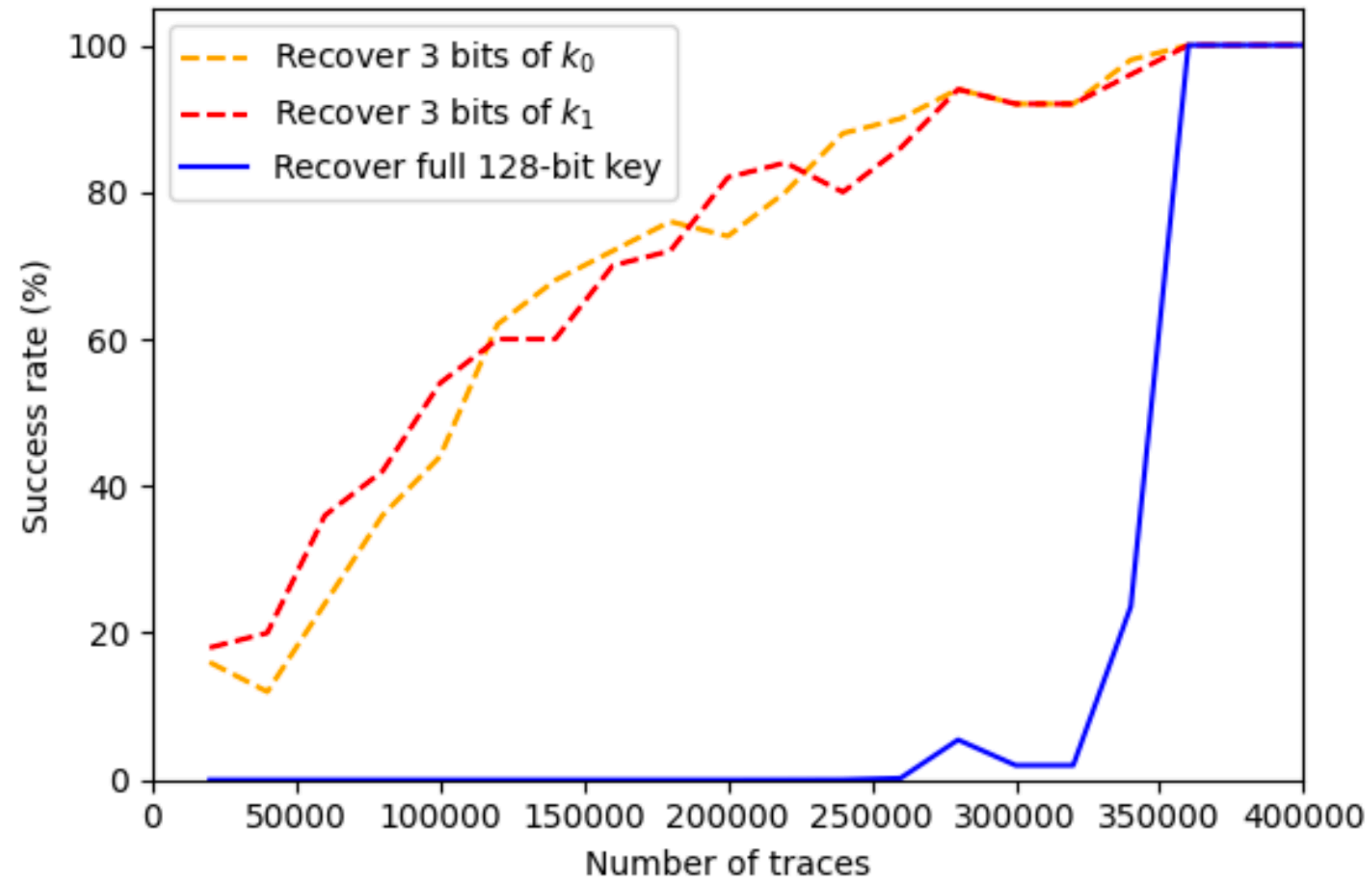
Full-key recovery

Success rates



Full-key recovery

Success rates



360K traces ensure 100% success rates

Recover full key in 4.7 hours

Summary

CPA attack on Ascon

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- ✦ Quadratic boolean Sbox function
 - ▶ choose the selection function carefully

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- ✦ First results on practical second-order CPA

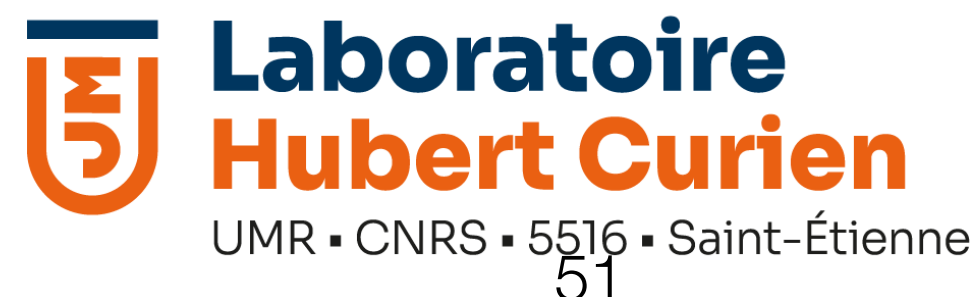
Practical Second-Order CPA Attack on Ascon with Proper Selection Function

Viet-Sang Nguyen

joint work with Vincent Grosso and Pierre-Louis Cayrel

CASCADE Conference

Saint-Etienne, 2 April, 2025



PROPHY ANR-22-CE39-0008-01