Diversity Enhances an LLM's Performance in RAG and Long-context Tasks

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Abstract

The rapid advancements in large language models (LLMs) have highlighted the challenge of context window limitations, primar-003 ily due to the quadratic time complexity of the self-attention mechanism $(O(N^2))$, where N denotes the context window length). This 007 constraint impacts tasks such as retrievalaugmented generation (RAG) in question answering (Q&A) and long context summarization. A common approach involves selecting content with the highest similarity to the query; however, this often leads to redundancy and the 013 exclusion of diverse yet relevant information. Building on principles from Maximal Marginal 014 Relevance (MMR) and Farthest Point Sampling (FPS), we integrate diversity into the content 017 selection process. Our findings reveal that incorporating diversity substantially increases the recall of selecting relevant sentences or chunks before LLM-based Q&A and summarization. These results highlight the importance of maintaining diversity in future LLM applications to further improve summarization and Q&A outcomes.

1 Introduction

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The remarkable success of Transformer models (Vaswani et al., 2023), BERT (Devlin et al., 2019), and GPT (OpenAI et al., 2024) can be largely attributed to their robust self-attention mechanisms. However, the self-attention module's quadratic time complexity, $O(N^2)$, where N represents the context window length, has imposed limitations on the size of the context window.

Recent advances in LLMs have partially addressed this constraint. For instance, GPT-3.5 demonstrates the capability to process context windows of up to 16,385 tokens, while GPT-4 extends this capacity to an impressive 128,000 tokens. Despite these notable improvements, the challenge of



Figure 1: For both Q&A and summarization tasks, the initial dataset is divided into sentences or chunks, and corresponding embeddings are extracted. In a traditional pipeline, query embeddings are generated and used to select relevant materials to LLMs for downstream tasks. In contrast, methods like MMR and FPS incorporate diversity in a greedy manner when selecting relevant sentences. This approach increases the likelihood of including the correct answer within the chosen sentences or chunks.

processing even longer sequences remains a critical area of research for several compelling reasons. First, many real-world applications, such as question-answering systems operating on extensive datasets, cannot accommodate entire document collections within the LLM's context window. This limitation has led to the development of Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG) systems (Lewis et al., 2021), which selectively retrieve and process relevant text segments for specific queries. Second, while current context window sizes may suffice for conventional Natural Language Processing (NLP) tasks, they prove inadequate for highfrequency signal processing applications. For example, audio processing and medical vibrational signal analysis often require handling data streams with sampling rates reaching one million samples per second, far exceeding current context window capabilities (Gu and Dao, 2024). Furthermore, em-

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pirical studies have revealed a concerning trend: LLM performance tends to degrade as input lengths approach the maximum context window capacity, highlighting the need for more robust solutions to long-sequence processing (Nvidia et al., 2024).

Various strategies have been devised to address the limited context window issue in LLMs. Longformer (Beltagy et al., 2020) applies attention to immediate local neighbors, reducing the time complexity from $O(N^2)$ to O(NM), with M representing the considered neighbors. This approach, however, necessitates significant alterations to the attention mechanism, which is not commonly adopted in contemporary LLMs such as GPT(OpenAI et al., 2024), Llama(Touvron et al., 2023), and Gemini(Team et al., 2024). An alternative strategy is to expand the context window at inference (Jin et al., 2024). Although this can mitigate the modification during the training process, it still demands changes to the attention architecture during the inference time, which is not accessible for close-source models like GPT.

Several strategies have been proposed to address the limited context window in LLM from the training perspective. The Longformer model (Beltagy et al., 2020) employs attention mechanisms focused on immediate local neighbors, reducing the time complexity from $O(N^2)$ to O(NM), where M denotes the number of neighbors considered. However, this method requires substantial modifications to the attention mechanism, which are not widely adopted by contemporary LLMs such as GPT (OpenAI et al., 2024), LLaMA (Touvron et al., 2023), and Gemini (Team et al., 2024). Another approach involves extending the context window during inference (Jin et al., 2024). While this mitigates the need for training-time modifications, it necessitates changes to the attention mechanism at inference and full access to the model architecture-an obstacle for closed-source models like GPT.

Previous methods primarily focus on modifying LLMs to increase their context window. However, a more straightforward approach is to first select the most relevant documents while ensuring they fit within the LLM's context window. For a given query, multiple documents are split into smaller chunks or sentences. The embeddings for both the query and the split documents are then computed. Similarity metrics, such as cosine similarity or Euclidean distance, are subsequently used to identify the most relevant sentences.

However, relying solely on the similarity be-

tween a query and segmented documents can result 111 in overlooking critical information due to exces-112 sive focus on similar content. Previous studies 113 have introduced greedy algorithms, such as MMR 114 (Carbonell and Goldstein, 1998) and FPS (Qi et al., 115 2017), to improve diversity during the selection 116 process. Related work introduced Hypothetical 117 Document Embedding (HyDE) and LLM reranking 118 to enhance diversity in Q&A tasks, claiming their 119 method outperforms MMR (Eibich et al., 2024; 120 Pickett et al., 2024). However, these studies did not 121 address the recall of relevant documents prior to 122 LLM generation, which is more pertinent to diver-123 sity considerations. Additionally, they did not ex-124 plore various hyperparameters within MMR. Then, 125 they have not explored the impact of reordering of 126 selected sentences or chunks on the downstream 127 tasks. In this paper, we aim to address this gap 128 by conducting experiments to demonstrate the sig-129 nificance of diversity in long context summariza-130 tion and RAG-based Q&A tasks at multiple levels: 131 sentence-level for single documents, chunk-level 132 across entire datasets, and sentence-level in sum-133 marization. 134

The contributions of this paper are summarized as follows:

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- 1. We demonstrate the benefits of diversity using MMR and FPS with proper hyperparameters, i.e., α and w on downstream tasks, including Q&A and summarization.
- 2. We discover that MMR achieves slightly better recall than FPS while maintaining significantly lower latency.
- 3. We prove the ordering selected sentences within the original document and ordering selected chunks based on the scores has the best downstream performances.

2 Methodology

In this section, we will start with a brief introduction of MMR and FPS to consider diversity during the search process. Then, the integration with LLM will be discussed.

MMR and FPS for Diversity 2.1

MMR The concept of MMR involves selecting 154 a subset S from a large dataset T (Carbonell and 155 Goldstein, 1998). MMR uses a greedy algorithm 156 that starts with the selected set S being empty and 157 the remaining set R being the entire dataset T. In 158

each iteration, an element is chosen based on a lo-159 cally optimal selection process, as defined in Eq. 1. 160 The parameter α balances the trade-off between re-161 wards and diversity. Let r_i denote the reward of the 162 *i*-th item, and cos(i, j) represent the cosine similar-163 ity between the i-th and j-th items in the selected 164 subset. W is a subset of S that includes the most 165 recently selected examples, reducing the empha-166 sis on earlier selections. For example, if w = 10, W consists of the last 10 selected samples from 168 S, while all previously selected examples are excluded from diversity considerations. The objective 170 of MMR is to maximize rewards while ensuring 171 sufficient diversity among the selected items. This 172 iterative process continues until a termination cri-173 terion, such as reaching a predefined maximum 174 number of tokens, is met. 175

$$\underset{i \in R}{\operatorname{argmax}} \left[\alpha \cdot r_i - (1 - \alpha) \cdot \underset{j \in W}{\max} \cos(i, j) \right] \quad (1)$$

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FPS The concept of FPS originates from the field 177 of 3D computer vision (Qi et al., 2017). Its primary 178 goal lies in selecting a diverse set of points from a 179 given point cloud, which aids in hierarchical feature 180 extraction for downstream applications. The process begins with a randomly selected initial point. 182 183 In each subsequent iteration, a new point is chosen based on its distance from all previously selected 184 points. When comparing FPS to MMR, we find 185 that both are greedy methods that promote diversity by selecting points that differ from those chosen. 187 However, FPS does not incorporate the concepts of a context window or reward. If we modify FPS to 189 include these elements, the modified FPS will be 190 equivalent to MMR, with the key difference being that MMR uses cosine similarity, while FPS relies on Euclidean distance for measuring similarity. 193

$$\underset{i \in R}{\operatorname{argmax}} \left[\max_{j \in S} \operatorname{dist}(i, j) \right]$$
(2)

2.2 Combine MMR and FPS with LLM for Diversity on Q&A and Summarization

Extending MMR and FPS techniques for LLMs in tasks such as Q&A and summarization is relatively straightforward as shown in Fig. 1. These techniques employ a greedy approach to iteratively balance the similarity of selected sentences or chunks to the query with the diversity among the selected sentences or chunks. This method enhances the likelihood of selecting the most relevant sentences or chunks for LLMs in downstream tasks. Lastly, inspired by (Liu et al., 2023), a heuristic rearrangement scheme is implemented to enhance the likelihood of identifying the correct answer from the retrieved documents.

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Q&A To evaluate the ability of LLMs on accurately extracting the correct answer, a query, a document, and a corresponding answer are initially provided. Documents are pre-processed by dividing them into sentences or chunks, and their embeddings are extracted beforehand. Both the query and the segmented documents are processed using encoder-only models to generate embeddings. In MMR, similarity is measured using the cosine angle, whereas in FPS, Euclidean distance is used to assess similarity. For benchmarking Q&A performance, two metrics should be evaluated:

- 1. Pre-LLM recall: whether the answer exists in the selected content before being sent to the LLM.
- 2. Post-LLM recall: whether the answer appears in the LLM's output.

If the first metric shows significant improvement, the benefit of diversity becomes evident. Otherwise, the advantage of diversity may be limited. If the first metric improves while the second metric does not, it indicates that the performance of downstream tasks may be constrained by the capabilities of the LLM (Liu et al., 2023).

Summarization In summarization tasks, datasets typically consist of a document paired with a corresponding golden summary created by experts. When no specific query is provided, the process begins by dividing the document into manageable chunks. Encoder-only models are employed to generate embeddings for these chunks, and the mean of these embeddings is used to represent the query embedding. Following this, the same methodology as in the previous Q&A task is applied to extract content that optimizes both reward and diversity.

The selected chunks are ordered to align with their original sequence in the document. These ordered chunks are sent to the LLM for summarization. We recognize that evaluating the extracted content before it is submitted to the LLM for summarization may not be particularly meaningful. Instead, we assess the quality of the LLM-generated summary by comparing it to the golden summary



Figure 2: The impact of different hyperparameters: α , w, c_r on the recall of the Natural Question dataset of single document Q&A. The first and second subfigures illustrate the recall ratios of answers contained in the selected documents for SB+MMR and SB+FPS. When the weight parameter w = 1, they are equivalent to SB. From the results, we can conclude that both SB+MMR and SB+FPS outperform SB. The last two subfigures display the latency of SB+MMR and SB+FPS. SB+FPS shows slightly worse performances than SB+MMR, and the latency of SB+MMR is significantly lower, especially when the context window is very long. Considering these two aspects, SB+MMR is more suitable for practical use compared to SB+FPS.

using metrics such as ROUGE (Lin, 2004) or LLMas-a-judge (Hsu et al., 2024).

3 Experiments

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The experiments conducted in this paper focus on three main topics: 1. Single Document Question Answering (Q&A), 2. Multiple Documents Question Answering (Q&A), and 3. Single Document Summarization.

For Single Document Q&A, the goal is to choose the correct answer from a set of candidate sentences within a single document. In Multiple Document Q&A, all documents in the dataset are firstly divided into chunks and then combined, and a query is used to find the correct answers across the entire dataset. Because the dataset size is too large, approximation methods are used to enhance efficiency and speed. Specifically, two metrics are evaluated: 1. recall of the correct answer in the extracted document, and 2. recall of the correct answer in the LLM response. The benefit of diversity is primarily reflected in the improvement of the first metric, while performance improvements in Q&A and summarization are mainly indicated by the second metric.

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For summarization, various hyperparameters are considered in the optimization process:

- 1. The weight balance between reward and diversity, denoted as α ,
- 2. The context window size, w,
- 3. The compression ratio, c_r , or the maximum number of selected tokens, T_{max} .

3.1 Single Document Q&A

For single document Q&A, three datasets are included: 1. Natural Question (Kwiatkowski et al., 2019), 2. Trival QA (Joshi et al., 2017) and 3. Narrative QA (Kočiský et al., 2017). For each dataset, it is composed of thousands of (query, document, answer) pairs where the answer exists within the document and answers the query. For each document, we split it into sentence using Spacy package (Honnibal et al., 2020). SentenceBERT (SB) is utilized as the encoder to extract embeddings from sentences in different experiments (Reimers and Gurevych, 2019). Then, different compression ratios, i.e., $c_r = 0.05, 0.1, 0.2$ are utilized. Here, $c_r = 0.05$ represents that the fraction of the number of selected tokens over the total number of tokens should be 0.05, i.e., the termination condition when 0.05 of all tokens are selected for answering the query. As for α and w, different hyperparameters are tested in a two-level iteration. The first coarse-level iteration utilizes α from [0, 0.25, 0.5, 0.7, 0.8, 0.9, 0.95, 1] and w from [0, 10, 100, 1000, 1000000]. Then, the best performing from the first coarse-level iteration is selected. For the second granular-level iteration, it further divides the neighbors of the best performing first coarse-level hyperparameters and select the ones that have the best performance. An example of the best performing hyperparameters in the Natural Question dataset in the coarse level can be found in Fig. 2. In particular, for Natural question, $\alpha = 0.55$ and w = 1is the best for MMR and $\alpha = 0.5$ and w = 1 is the best for FPS. For Narrative Q&A, $\alpha = 0.55$ and w = 5 is the best for both MMR and FPS. For

084	Natural Question			T	rival Q&A		Narrative Q&A		
Q&A	$c_r = 0.05$	$c_r = 0.1$	$c_r = 0.2$	$c_r = 0.05$	$c_r = 0.1$	$c_r = 0.2$	$c_r = 0.05$	$c_r = 0.1$	$c_r = 0.2$
SB	46.28	58.60	69.41	63.44	71.64	78.33	18.60	21.04	25.61
SB+MMR	50.43	63.18	72.47	65.29	74.02	80.47	20.88	24.09	27.59
SB+FPS	50.88	63.23	72.33	65.25	73.18	80.07	21.34	24.24	27.44

Table 1: This table compares the performance of SB+MMR and SB+FPS against SB across three different datasets and three compression ratios, focusing on the recall of the correct answer within the selected documents.

O&A	Nati	ural Quest	ion	Т	rival Q&A		Na	rrative Q&	zА
Q&A	$c_r = 0.05$	$c_r = 0.1$	$c_r = 0.2$	$c_r = 0.05$	$c_r = 0.1$	$c_r = 0.2$	$c_r = 0.05$	$c_r = 0.1$	$c_r = 0.2$
SB (index sort)	40.44	51.74	64.25	75.66	75.95	76.25	15.40	17.98	18.60
SB (sort)	40.25	50.81	60.61	75.76	76.15	76.38	13.72	15.55	17.07
SB (1:1)	40.25	51.55	60.24	75.29	76.33	76.47	14.18	16.31	17.99
SB (2:1)	41.28	50.99	61.08	75.31	76.33	76.87	14.18	16.46	17.84
SB (3:1)	39.41	51.09	60.05	75.56	76.13	76.57	14.63	16.01	17.23
SB+MMR (index sort)	45.76	57.25	67.90	75.73	76.20	76.72	18.60	19.05	20.27
SB+MMR (sort)	44.45	55.19	64.35	76.20	76.85	77.00	16.31	16.46	17.38
SB+MMR (1:1)	45.48	55.57	63.60	76.23	76.77	77.34	16.46	16.62	16.92
SB+MMR (2:1)	45.20	55.29	63.32	75.90	76.20	76.65	15.09	15.55	16.01
SB+MMR (3:1)	43.80	55.85	63.51	76.05	76.72	76.92	16.16	16.92	16.31
SB+FPS (index sort)	46.79	59.12	67.71	75.93	76.13	76.60	17.68	17.68	19.05
SB+FPS (sort)	45.76	57.25	63.32	75.83	76.45	76.87	16.31	16.62	17.23
SB+FPS (1:1)	46.14	57.90	62.76	75.78	76.35	77.09	16.62	17.07	16.77
SB+FPS (2:1)	45.76	56.13	62.20	75.88	76.23	77.02	15.85	16.62	16.46
SB+FPS (3:1)	44.27	55.10	63.69	76.40	76.77	76.95	15.70	16.46	16.01

Table 2: This table compares the performance of SB+MMR and SB+FPS against SB across three different datasets and three compression ratios, focusing on the recall of the correct answer within the LLM responses.

Trival Q&A, $\alpha = 0.6$ and w = 3 is the best for MMR and $\alpha = 0.7$ and w = 1 is the best for FPS.

Based on the results across various datasets, we can assert that diversity significantly enhances the recall of the correct answer within the selected document, as demonstrated in Table 1, showing an improvement of 2% to 5%. When the extracted sentences are summarized by GPT4 using the prompt shown in Figure 3, the advantages of SB+MMR and SB+FPS over SB alone remain evident, as shown in Table 2. Additionally, we observe that the performance of Trivial Q&A after LLM is better than the retrieved sentences, with a consistent result of approximately 76%. This suggests that the performance is largely influenced by the LLM, possibly due to pretraining on Trivial Q&A, even when the retrieved documents are provided. FPS, using distance as the evaluation metric, performs slightly worse than MMR, which uses cosine similarity. Moreover, MMR is faster than FPS because computing cosine similarity is quicker than Euclidean distance in Python, especially as the compression ratio increases, as shown in Figure 2. This conclusion generally holds true across different datasets. The speed advantage of MMR becomes more critical as the number of candidates increases with the dataset size. Consequently, MMR will be used in the multiple document comparison in the next

section.

Inspired by the paper "Lost in the Middle" (Liu et al., 2023), we sorted the selected sentences by different methods. The term "index sort" refers to sorting the sentences in their original order within the document. In comparison, "SB (m:n)" refers to allocating the first selected m sentences with highest scores at the beginning, the next n sentences with highest scores at the end, and then another m sentences at the beginning, continuing this pattern until all sentences are allocated. Specifically, "SB (sort)" is equivalent to "SB (1:0)" and does not alter the sequence of selected sentences. As shown in Table 2, SB (index sort) performs best because the original sequential information of the selected sentences in the document, despite missing some internal information, makes the most sense for GPT-4 in downstream tasks.

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3.2 Mutiple Documents Q&A

For multiple documents Q&A, the same three datasets are utilized. In these datasets, the number of documents and the length of documents are relatively long, making it impractical to split each document into sentences. Instead, we follow the general framework of RAG to split each document into chunks of 512 tokens, with an overlapping ratio of 0.5 (i.e., 256 tokens) between any two ad-

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Natural Quastian		GPT4			GPT3.5	
Natural Question	T_{max} =120k	T_{max} =50k	$T_{max}=20k$	$T_{max}=10k$	T_{max} =5k	$T_{max}=2k$
E5	70.7	69.4	68.5	66.2	64.2	57.4
E5+MMR	71.5	71.5	69.8	67.2	65.1	57.8
Narrative O&A		GPT4			GPT3.5	
Nallalive Q&A	$T_{max}=120k$	T_{max} =50k	$T_{max}=20k$	$T_{max}=10k$	T_{max} =5k	$T_{max}=2k$
E5	13.42	10.06	6.7	4.88	4.88	4.57
E5+MMR	22.56	20.43	15.85	14.94	12.20	7.01
Trival O&A		GPT4			GPT3.5	
IIIval Q&A	T_{max} =120k	T_{max} =50k	$T_{max}=20k$	$T_{max}=10k$	T_{max} =5k	$T_{max}=2k$
E5	84.62	81.15	74.01	70.24	65.08	56.55
E5+MMR	88.99	85.81	82.24	78.57	74.01	65.08

Table 3: This table compares the performance of E5+MMR against E5 across three different datasets, focusing on the recall of the correct answer within the selected documents.

Natural Question		GPT4		GPT3.5				
Natural Question	$T_{max}=120k$	T_{max} =50k	$T_{max}=20k$	$T_{max}=10k$	T_{max} =5k	$T_{max}=2k$		
E5 (index sort)	45.7	50.5	52.7	45.9	49.2	45.4		
E5 (sort)	55.2	56.6	54.6	51.5	50.5	47.8		
E5 (1:1)	53.5	55.9	55.8	50.5	50.9	46.9		
E5 (2:1)	54.5	57.5	56.4	51	50.5	47.1		
E5 (3:1)	54.7	57	54.8	51.3	49.8	47.4		
E5+MMR (index sort)	46.2	50.3	53.2	47.6	50.9	48.6		
E5+MMR (sort)	56.4	57.9	57	51.3	51.4	47.7		
E5+MMR (1:1)	55	57.2	55.9	50.8	50.7	47.8		
E5+MMR (2:1)	57.2	55.3	56.2	50.7	52.2	48.7		
E5+MMR (3:1)	56.3	56.4	55.6	51.6	52.3	47.4		

Table 4: This table compares the performance of E5+MMR against E5 on Natural Question, focusing on the recall of the correct answer within the LLM responses.

Narrative O&A		GPT4		GPT3.5				
Narrative Q&A	T_{max} =120k	T_{max} =50k	$T_{max}=20k$	$T_{max}=10k$	T_{max} =5k	$T_{max}=2k$		
E5 (index sort)	10.37	9.15	8.54	5.18	4.57	4.88		
E5 (sort)	10.67	10.59	8.23	6.1	4.57	5.18		
E5 (1:1)	9.76	9.45	7.93	4.88	4.88	5.18		
E5 (2:1)	10.06	9.15	7.93	5.18	3.96	5.18		
E5 (3:1)	10.98	9.45	7.93	5.79	4.57	4.88		
E5+MMR (index sort)	10.67	10.37	11.28	4.88	6.1	4.88		
E5+MMR (sort)	12.8	10.67	10.37	6.1	6.1	4.27		
E5+MMR (1:1)	11.89	10.06	11.28	6.4	6.71	4.88		
E5+MMR (2:1)	11.59	10.67	10.98	6.4	5.79	5.49		
E5+MMR (3:1)	11.89	10.98	10.06	6.7	7.01	4.88		

Table 5: This table compares the performance of E5+MMR against E5 on Narrative Q&A, focusing on the recall of the correct answer within the LLM responses.

Trival O&A		GPT4		GPT3.5				
Trival Q&A	$T_{max}=120k$	T_{max} =50k	$T_{max}=20k$	$T_{max}=10k$	T_{max} =5k	$T_{max}=2k$		
E5 (index sort)	74.21	73.21	73.12	65.18	64.19	64.68		
E5 (sort)	73.81	73.91	72.42	63.59	65.08	65.57		
E5 (1:1)	74.4	73.12	72.92	64.29	64.29	64.98		
E5 (2:1)	73.81	73.81	72.72	64.09	64.58	64.29		
E5 (3:1)	73.31	74.11	72.72	63.99	64.38	64.78		
E5+MMR (index sort)	74.7	74.9	73.51	66.47	66.87	64.88		
E5+MMR (sort)	74.9	74.8	73.12	64.29	65.57	66.07		
E5+MMR (1:1)	75.2	75.5	73.31	65.38	65.38	65.08		
E5+MMR (2:1)	74.6	74.11	72.62	64.88	65.77	65.38		
E5+MMR (3:1)	74.7	74.31	73.02	65.67	65.48	64.98		

Table 6: This table compares the performance of E5+MMR against E5 on Trival Q&A, focusing on the recall of the correct answer within the LLM responses.

jacent chunks. To extract embeddings from these 374 chunks and adhere to the standard pipeline of RAG, 375

we apply the E5 model (Wang et al., 2024). After applying the chunking strategy, the number of

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chunks can still reach nearly 1 million, which is 378 impractical for exact search. To facilitate approximate search, principal component analysis (PCA) (Maćkiewicz and Ratajczak, 1993) is first applied to reduce the dimensionality of the embeddings, followed by clustering (Bishop and Nasrabadi, 2006) to ensure the average number of chunks is less than 384 10k. Unlike single document Q&A, we set the maximum number of tokens rather than the compression ratio as the threshold for the maximum number of tokens selected. Specifically, T_{max} is set to 2k, 5k, or 10k for GPT-3.5 and 20k, 50k, or 120k for GPT-4. Other settings remain the same. Different hyperparameters for α and w are tested. For the Natural Questions dataset, $\alpha = 0.9$ and w = 5yield the best results for GPT-3.5, while $\alpha = 0.7$ and w = 5 are optimal for GPT-4 in MMR. For Narrative Q&A, $\alpha = 0.8$ and w = 30 are best for GPT-3.5, and $\alpha = 0.7$ and w = 300 are best for 396 GPT-4 in MMR. For Trivia Q&A, $\alpha = 0.7$ and w = 20 are best for GPT-3.5, and $\alpha = 0.8$ and w = 300 are best for GPT-4 in MMR. From the results, we observe that the optimal values for α 400 and w are generally larger for multiple document 401 402 Q&A compared to single document Q&A.

When evaluating the performance of multiple-403 document Q&A systems, we observe a pattern sim-404 ilar to that of single-document Q&A. Specifically, 405 the E5+MMR method shows a significant improve-406 ment over E5 in recall of the answers in retrieved 407 documents, as demonstrated in Table 3, with a mar-408 gin exceeding 10%. Additionally, E5+MMR out-409 performs E5 for post-LLM recall as shown in Ta-410 bles 4, 5, and 6. However, future research should 411 prioritize enhancing the LLM's ability to utilize the 412 retrieved documents effectively, rather than merely 413 focusing on retrieving more accurate documents, 414 as the LLM itself is the bottleneck. This observa-415 tion is further corroborated in Trivial Q&A, where 416 the results consistently achieve 64% accuracy for 417 GPT3.5 and 76% for GPT4, irrespective of the re-418 trieved document. Last, unlike single-document 419 Q&A, placing important chunks at the beginning 420 and ending positions of the prompt can provide 421 benefits, particularly in Natural Question scenar-422 423 ios, as shown in Table 4, which can lead to a 10%improvement. This finding aligns with the conclu-424 sions of the paper "Lost in the Middle". The most 425 relevant chunks to the query should be positioned 426 either at the beginning or the end of the prompt. 427

3.3 Sentence and Chunk Splitter Comparison on SquAD

For the comparison between sentence and chunk splitters on multiple documents Q&A, only the SQuAD dataset will be considered. The dataset sizes for Natural Questions, TriviaQA, and NarrativeQA are too large, making sentence-level experiments difficult. For the sentence-level splitter, Spacy is used. For the chunk-level splitter, a threshold of 256 or 512 tokens with 50% overlap between adjacent chunks is applied. All segmented sentences or chunks are mixed, reduced in dimension through PCA, and clustered for downstream tasks. Similar to previous experiments, T_{max} is set to 2k, 5k, or 10k for GPT3.5. For the sentencelevel splitter, the best parameters are $\alpha = 0.25$ and w = 1000. For the 256-token chunk-level splitter, the best parameters are $\alpha = 0.5$ and w = 300. For the 512-token chunk-level splitter, the best parameters are $\alpha = 0.3$ and w = 300. The results are consistent with previous findings. SB/E5+MMR significantly outperforms SB/E5, as shown in Table 7, with a 10% increase in recall of the correct answer within the selected documents. This recall increment of SB/E5+MMR over SB/E5 still exists in the LLM response, as shown in Table 8. "Index sort" generally performs better for sentence-level splitting, while sorting based on score is usually beneficial for chunking. A new takeaway is that chunk-level performance is better than sentencelevel, with even better results for larger chunk sizes.

3.4 Single Document Summarization

For single document summarization, we include two datasets: the gov report (Huang et al., 2021) and legal documents (Shukla et al., 2022). We utilize GPT3.5 for summarization. To achieve this, we filter examples that are less than 15k tokens and then apply MMR to select sentences within each document until it reaches the predetermined threshold of 8k tokens. For the 1. gov report, the best parameters are $\alpha = 0.9$ and w = 10. For the legal documents, the best parameters are $\alpha = 0.925$ and w = 300. After selecting and ordering the selected sentences based on their original sequence, they are sent to GPT3.5 to generate the final summary using a specific prompt in Figure. 4. For both datasets, expert-written golden summaries are provided for each document. We evaluate the quality of generated summary using the ROUGE score by comparing with the golden summary. In addition,

SquAD	Sentence			Chunk size: 256			Chunk size: 512		
SquAD	10k	5k	2k	10k	5k	2k	10k	5k	2k
SB/E5	86.8	83.7	78.5	95	92.7	86.3	96.7	94.3	86.6
SB/E5+MMR	90.1	89.4	86.6	97	96.6	95.4	99	97.8	96.7

Table 7: This table compares the performances of sentence splitter and chunk splitter of size 256 and 512 on SquAD, focusing on the recall of the correct answer within the selected documents.

Sau A D		Sentence	e	Chunk size: 256			Chu	Chunk size: 512		
SquAD	10k	5k	2k	10k	5k	2k	10k	5k	2k	
SB/E5 (index sort)	70.4	73	71.7	78.2	81.1	79.2	80.2	82.9	78.2	
SB/E5 (sort)	71.3	70.1	67.9	79.9	80	76.6	82.9	82.2	76.5	
SB/E5 (1:1)	72	71.8	69.5	80.3	80.4	77.5	82.7	82	77.4	
SB/E5 (2:1)	71.9	71.7	69.4	80.4	80.1	77.4	82.9	81.9	77.5	
SB/E5 (3:1)	71.8	71	68.7	81.4	79.9	77.7	82.7	82.2	77.3	
SB/E5+MMR (index sort)	68.7	74.2	75	76.5	81.4	83	76.1	84.2	84.9	
SB/E5+MMR (sort)	71.5	71.8	72.5	82	81.9	82.6	84.1	84.5	84.7	
SB/E5+MMR (1:1)	72.5	73.6	72.9	81.3	82.2	81.7	82.3	82.9	84.6	
SB/E5+MMR (2:1)	71.9	73.1	73.2	81.8	82.5	83.1	84.5	84.5	85	
SB/E5+MMR (3:1)	71.7	73.4	71.9	81.4	82.5	82.9	83.4	84.3	84.5	

Table 8: This table compares the performances of sentence splitter and chunk splitter of size 256 and 512 on SquAD, focusing on the recall of the correct answer within the LLM responses.

Summarization Datasets		gov_report	legal		
Summarization Datasets	Rouge	GPT4 WR	Rouge	GPT4 WR	
SB	17.7	24.24	11.3	35.82	
SB+MMR	18	$\frac{72.65+77.86}{2}$ = 75.26	11.8	$\frac{71.64+56.72}{2} = 64.18$	

Table 9: This table compares the performance of SB+MMR against SB on gov report and legal, using ROUGE and LLM-as-a-judge.

summaries by SB and SB+MMR are compared us-478 479 ing LLM-as-a-Judge through GPT4. To address the position bias problem, we switch the sequences 480 of the two summaries in two runs and average the win rate (WR). Our experiments reveal that 482 diversity improves summary quality, as indicated 483 by increased ROUGE scores and a higher LLM-484 as-a-Judge WR. Additionally, experiments on our 485 internal data show that diversity is particularly ben-486 eficial for long emails, articles, and logs, where redundancy is a significant issue due to repetitive 488 content, greetings, and long URLs. Diversity avoid 489 overestimating information similar to the query. 490

Conclusion 4

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This study proves the benefits of diversity through MMR and FPS to LLM performances on Q&A and summarization. From the retrival viewpoint, the recall is greatly improved both for sentence and chunk-level splitter, especially when α and ware properly selected. This recall rate increment is maintained after LLM generation. However, future research should pay more attention to improve the LLM's capability to find answers from the retrieved documents. MMR shows slightly better performances compared with FPS, and its latency property is much better, which greatly increase the potential of usage in application. For sentencelevel splitter, arranging the selected sentences in their original sequence is usually beneficial and for chunk-level splitter, putting more important chunks at the beginning and ending positions are beneficial. Lastly, given a multiple document Q&A like SquAD, chunk-level splitter usually has a better performance compared with sentence-level splitter. Lastly, these conclusion on Q&A can be extended to summarization task.

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Limitation 5

There are several limitation on this works. To begin with, we only work on English dataset, while multilingual datasets should be tested to prove the importance of diversity on other language. In addition, this work focuses on research dataset while more work is supposed to be conducted on industrial datasets. Lastly, for extremely large dataset, more engineering work on parallelization like tree structures should be conducted to reduce latency.

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A	Example Appendix	1187
A.1	Prompts for Q&A and Summarization	1188
Here	e are the prompts for Q&A in Figure. 3 and	1189

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summarization in Figure. 4.

```
You are tasked with answering a query based on the provided context.
Respond concisely by directly citing a relevant portion of the original context.
query:
###
{query}
###
context:
###
{context}
###
answer (exactly copy from the context):
```

Figure 3: Prompts for Q&A

Please summarize based on the following context. The summary should incorporate both qualitative and quantitative information. The qualitative section should highlight central themes, emerging trends, and critical elements. Meanwhile, the quantitative section should present supporting statistics and numerical data relevant to the summary. Context:

###
{context}
###

Summary:

Figure 4: Prompts for Summarization