

Appendix

A. Additional details regarding our approach

A.1. Pseudocode for classifier-free guidance

Below, we provide pseudocode for greedy decoding with classifier-free guidance. Note that, in practice, we perform decoding in batches.

```
# captioner: Captioning model (returns token log probs)
# img_embed: Image embedding
# gamma: Classifier-free guidance scale
# max_length: Maximum number of tokens in caption
# BOS: Beginning of sequence token
# EOS: End of sequence token

tokens = [BOS]
for i in range(0, max_length):
    # Eq. 3 (without the softmax, since it does not affect the argmax).
    cond_log_probs = captioner(tokens, img_embed)
    uncond_log_probs = captioner(tokens, zeros_like(img_embed))
    scores = uncond_log_probs + gamma * (cond_log_probs - uncond_log_probs)

    # Greedily take the next token.
    next_token = argmax(scores)
    tokens.append(next_token)
    if next_token == EOS: break
```

A.2. Derivation of language model guidance

Assume that we have two joint distributions of captions x and images y , $p(x, y)$ and $q(x, y)$, and these distributions have the same pointwise mutual information between any image-caption pair, i.e. $\log \frac{q(x, y)}{q(x)q(y)} = \log \frac{p(x, y)}{p(x)p(y)}$, and thus $\frac{q(x, y)}{q(x)q(y)} = \frac{p(x, y)}{p(x)p(y)}$. Starting with the leftmost expression from Eq. 2, there exists an expression that uses the joint distribution from p but only marginals of captions from q ,

$$q(x) \left(\frac{q(x|y)}{q(x)} \right)^\gamma = q(x) \left(\frac{q(x, y)}{q(x)q(y)} \right)^\gamma \quad (5)$$

$$= q(x) \left(\frac{p(x, y)}{p(x)p(y)} \right)^\gamma. \quad (6)$$

In Eq. 4, we further decouple the exponents for the numerator and denominator of the above equation. As we note, this decoupling is reminiscent of pmi^k . To see this relationship, first note that $\frac{p(x, y)}{p(x)p(y)}$ is the exponential of $\text{pmi}(x, y) = \log \frac{p(x, y)}{p(x)p(y)}$.

Replacing $\text{pmi}(x, y)$ with $\text{pmi}^k(x, y) = \log \frac{p(x, y)^k}{p(x)^k p(y)^k}$, Eq. 6 becomes $q(x) \left(\frac{p(x, y)^k}{p(x)^k p(y)^k} \right)^\gamma$. Setting $\alpha = k\gamma$ and $\beta = \gamma$ gives

$$q(x) \left(\frac{p(x, y)^\alpha}{p(x)^\beta p(y)^\beta} \right) = q(x) \left(\frac{p(x|y)^\alpha}{p(x)^\beta p(y)^{\beta-\alpha}} \right) \propto q(x) \left(\frac{p(x|y)^\alpha}{p(x)^\beta} \right), \quad (7)$$

where the proportionality holds because $p(y)$ is fixed.

A.3. Pseudocode for language model guidance

```
# captioner: Captioning model (returns token log probs)
# lm: Language model (returns token log probs)
# prompt_tokens: Tokenized prompt for language model
# img_embed: Image embedding
# alpha, beta: Cond/uncond exponents from Eq. 4
# max_length: Maximum number of tokens in caption
# BOS: Beginning of sequence token
```

```

# EOS: End of sequence token
# NEWLINE: Newline token

tokens = [BOS]
for i in range(0, max_length):
    # Log of Eq. 4.
    lm_log_probs = lm(concat(prompt_tokens, tokens))
    cond_log_probs = captioner(tokens, img_embed)
    uncond_log_probs = captioner(tokens, zeros_like(img_embed))
    scores = lm_log_probs + alpha * cond_log_probs - beta * uncond_log_probs

    # Transfer probability mass from NEWLINE to EOS.
    scores[EOS] = logsumexp([scores[EOS], scores[NEWLINE]])
    scores[NEWLINE] = -inf

    # Greedily take the next token.
    next_token = argmax(scores)
    tokens.append(next_token)
    if next_token == EOS: break

```

A.4. Manually written prompts

Below, we include the manually written prompts that we use in our language model guidance experiments. Each caption is separated by two newlines.

A.4.1 Descriptive caption prompt

```

a bathroom with goldenrod circular patterned tiles contains a toilet bidet sink mirror
  tissue dispenser and hairdryer\n
donuts being sorted on the conveyor belt of a device labeled donut robot in an industrial
  kitchen\n
a green glass mug containing 3 toothbrushes and 1 tube of toothpaste sitting on a windowsill
  \n
a man wearing sunglasses and a gray shirt poses with a woman wearing a white shirt next to a
  giraffe with a fence behind them\n
a snow covered wooden bench in front of a fence with snow covered evergreen plants behind it
  \n
two white horses pull a plow with a man in a white shirt and cyan cap and a man in a red
  shirt with sunglasses behind them next to a fence under a sky with cumulus clouds\n
a man in a blue shirt and a small child in a red striped shirt play frisbee next to trees in
  a park\n
a black clock tower with a lit up white clock face with roman numerals in front of a
  dilapidated five story warehouse after dusk\n
a decorative pool flanked by palm trees in front of a stone clock tower next to a large ten
  story building with a bright advertisement on top in a city at night\n
cows with gray bodies and white heads eating grass on a hill with a foggy mountain in the
  background\n

```

A.4.2 Counting prompt

```

a photo of four clouds\n
a photo of one cat\n
a photo of three horses\n
a photo of seven candles\n
a photo of sixteen keys\n
a photo of one rat\n
a photo of five carrot sticks\n

```

a photo of one turtle\n
 a photo of two boats\n
 a photo of one orange\n
 a photo of nine books\n
 a photo of ten fingers\n
 a photo of twelve eggs\n
 a photo of one microwave\n
 a photo of two children\n
 a photo of six leaves\n
 a photo of two monitors\n
 a photo of one toilet\n
 a photo of one house\n
 a photo of five pairs of pants\n
 a photo of eight apples\n
 a photo of eleven stars\n
 a photo of one hat\n
 a photo of two chairs\n
 a photo of seven coins\n
 a photo of three birds\n

A.5. Difference between attention pooling and bottleneck CoCa architecture

Yu et al. [47] perform attentional pooling over the token representations of the image encoder and pass the resulting tokens into the multimodal text decoder (Figure A.1 left). By contrast, our bottleneck architecture uses the same embedding for the contrastive loss and multimodal text decoder (Figure A.1 right). We create this bottleneck because a goal of our work is to invert contrastive embeddings, producing a caption that lies close to the contrastive image embedding when it is embedded by the text encoder. As we show below in Appendix B.1, this bottleneck is not necessary for CFG to yield improvements. The attention pooling architecture is equally compatible with our approach and yields slightly better performance.

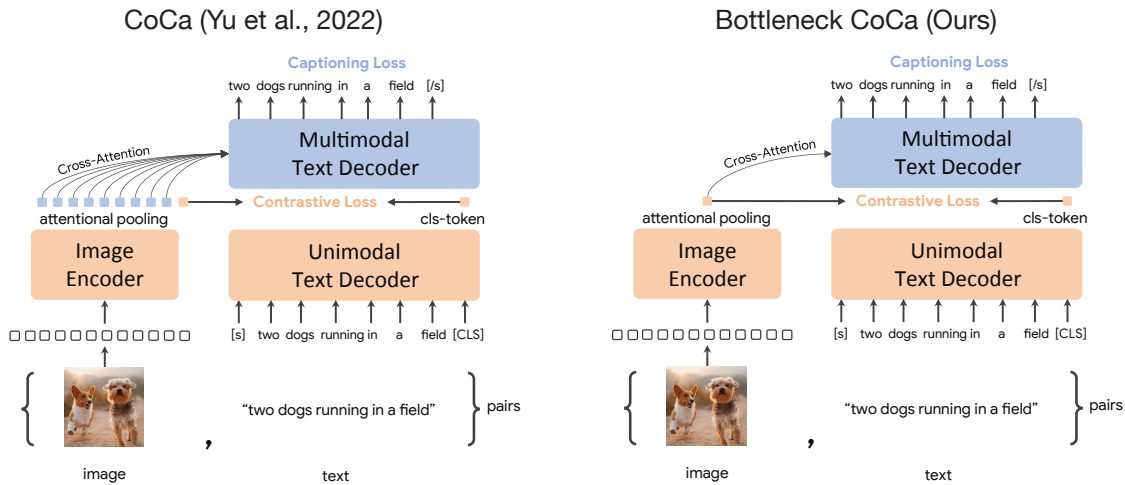


Figure A.1. Comparison of CoCa architecture introduced by Yu et al. [47] (left) with our bottleneck CoCa architecture (right).

B. Additional experimental results

B.1. Attention pooling CoCa architecture

Classifier-free guidance yields similar qualitative results (and slightly better quantitative results) when using the standard CoCa architecture with attention pooling (Figure A.1 left) rather than the bottleneck architecture used in the main text (Figure A.1 right). We fine-tune CoCa-Base for 20,000 steps with a max learning rate of 1×10^{-5} and a conditioning masking proportion of 0.5, following the same procedure that gave the near-optimal bottleneck model described in Section 3.3. Figure B.1 plots reference-based metrics on the x-axis and reference-free metrics on the y-axis, showing a similar trade-off to Figure 2. Table B.1 provides quantitative results demonstrating that the attention pooling architecture performs slightly better

across both reference-based and reference-free evaluations. Nonetheless, we adopt the bottleneck architecture for our main experiments for the reasons described in Appendix A.5 above.

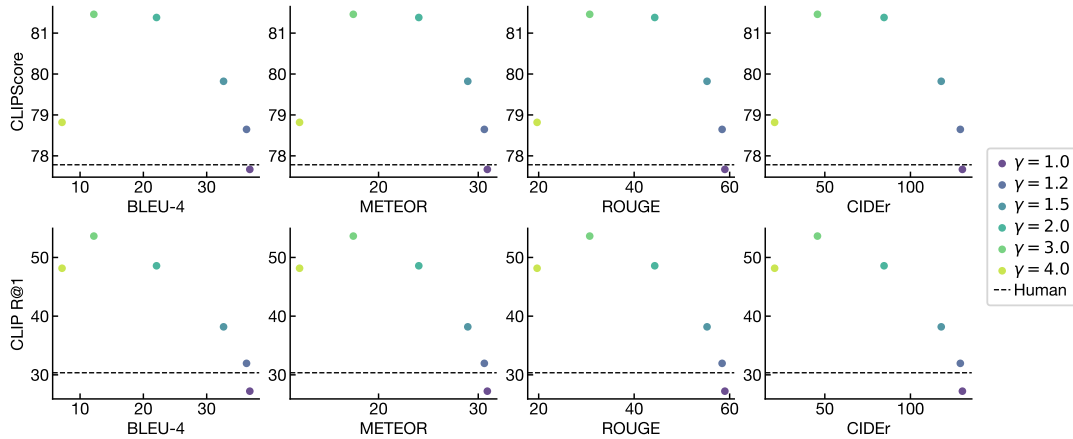


Figure B.1. Effect of classifier-free guidance on captioning metrics with the attention pooling CoCa model. All points reflect the same fine-tuned model; each color represents a γ value used to decode. Models are evaluated with different guidance scales γ , using reference-free captioning metrics based on CLIP ViT-B/32 (y-axes; top: CLIPScore, bottom: recall@1) and reference-based captioning metrics (x-axes). The dashed line reflects the value of the reference-free captioning metric for the ground-truth captions obtained from MS-COCO. See Figure 2 for results with the bottleneck model.

Model	Reference-Based Metrics					Reference-Free Metrics				RefCLIP-S
	BLEU-4	METEOR	ROUGE	CIDEr	RefOnlyCLIP-S	CLIP-S	R@1	R@5	R@10	
Bottleneck ($\gamma = 1.0$)	36.1	30.5	58.2	126.1	0.900	0.775	26.5	51.9	64.1	0.830
Bottleneck ($\gamma = 1.2$)	35.1	30.0	57.5	124.1	0.899	0.785	31.3	57.4	69.3	0.835
Bottleneck ($\gamma = 1.5$)	31.5	28.4	54.4	113.2	0.891	0.796	36.6	64.0	75.0	0.838
Bottleneck ($\gamma = 2.0$)	20.9	23.3	43.0	78.6	0.862	0.808	44.6	71.7	81.7	0.831
Bottleneck ($\gamma = 3.0$)	11.5	17.1	29.4	41.7	0.820	0.808	49.4	75.7	84.7	0.811
Bottleneck ($\gamma = 4.0$)	6.5	12.3	18.4	17.3	0.766	0.782	44.7	71.3	80.9	0.771
Att. Pooling ($\gamma = 1.0$)	36.8	30.9	59.0	130.3	0.901	0.777	27.2	52.7	64.6	0.832
Att. Pooling ($\gamma = 1.2$)	36.3	30.6	58.4	129.1	0.901	0.786	32.0	58.0	69.4	0.837
Att. Pooling ($\gamma = 1.5$)	32.7	29.0	55.3	118.0	0.892	0.798	38.2	64.9	75.6	0.840
Att. Pooling ($\gamma = 2.0$)	22.1	24.0	44.3	84.6	0.861	0.814	48.6	73.7	83.5	0.833
Att. Pooling ($\gamma = 3.0$)	12.2	17.5	30.7	45.7	0.816	0.815	53.6	78.2	86.0	0.812
Att. Pooling ($\gamma = 4.0$)	7.2	12.1	19.7	20.7	0.767	0.788	48.2	72.1	80.1	0.773

Table B.1. Quantitative comparison of results obtained with bottleneck and attention pooling architectures.

B.2. Quantitative assessment of specificity

B.2.1 Evaluation on Stanford Dogs

γ	% Containing Breed	% Breeds Correct
1.0	1.9	61.7
1.2	6.2	69.0
1.5	15.9	69.7
2.0	42.4	58.5
3.0	67.0	53.3

Table B.2. We generate captions for the 8,580 captions in the Stanford Dogs test set and measure the percentage of the captions that contain the name of one of the 120 dog classes (“% Containing Breed”) and the percentage of those captions where that name is correct (“% Breeds Correct”).

B.2.2 Human evaluation

We performed a human evaluation in which we presented crowdsourcing workers with each image and the two possible captions. We experimented with asking subjects to pick the better caption and the more descriptive caption either on different forms or the same form. When asking subjects to pick only the better caption, we provided the following instructions:

Please answer a survey about comparing the quality of two captions for each image.

We will present to you an image and ask which caption is better.

When asking subjects to pick the more descriptive caption, we instead provided the following instructions:

Please answer a survey about comparing the descriptiveness of two captions for each image.

We will present to you an image and ask which caption is a more detailed description of the image. Please ignore grammatical errors that do not affect readability.

When asking both questions simultaneously, we instructed the subjects as follows:

Please answer a survey about comparing two captions for each image.

We will present to you an image and ask a couple questions about:

- 1) descriptiveness: "Which caption is a more detailed description of the image?"
- 2) quality: "Which caption is better?"

In each case, subjects saw the image along with the two captions (in random order) as well as the option "I'm indifferent." Subjects clicked the radio button next to their preferred choice. We excluded 55 images for which the captions generated without guidance and at $\gamma = 2.0$ were identical, resulting in a total of 4,945 images. We obtained a single rating for each image in each condition.

Results are shown in Table B.3. When we asked which caption was "better" and which was "more descriptive" in separate surveys, we found that subjects preferred each caption at a statistically indistinguishable rate. When we asked subjects to pick the "better" and "more descriptive" captions in the same survey, we found that $\gamma = 1.0$ was more likely to be chosen as "better" whereas $\gamma = 2.0$ was more likely to be chosen as "more specific." Comparing the odds ratios obtained with the two ways of posing the questions using Fisher's exact test, we find that the difference between them is statistically significant ("better": $p = 0.004$; "more descriptive": $p = 0.01$) indicating that human judgments are significantly affected by whether the questions are posed on the same form or separately.

Question	$\gamma = 1.0$	$\gamma = 2.0$	Indifferent	p -value
<i>Separate forms:</i>				
Better	48.0% (2375)	49.8% (2461)	2.2% (109)	$p = 0.22$
More descriptive	47.7% (2359)	49.5% (2446)	2.8% (140)	$p = 0.21$
<i>Same form:</i>				
Better	50.5% (2497)	46.6% (2306)	2.9% (142)	$p = 0.006$
More descriptive	45.8% (2265)	52.7% (2606)	1.5% (74)	$p = 10^{-6}$

Table B.3. Human evaluation results. We report the percentage and overall number of the 5,000 MS-COCO Karpathy test set images where subjects preferred captions generated at $\gamma = 1.0$ or $\gamma = 2.0$ or were indifferent, as well as the p -value for the null hypothesis that users are equally likely to select the captions generated at $\gamma = 1.0$ and $\gamma = 2.0$, computed by a binomial test. When $p < 0.05$, we bold-face the best result in each row. Otherwise, we bold-face both results.

B.3. Reference-free metrics with retrieval models

In Table B.4, we show cosine similarity between generated captions and image embeddings and caption→image retrieval accuracy for the CoCa 2B model and the CoCa-Base model fine-tuned on MS-COCO that was used to generate the captions. In both cases, we find that $\gamma > 1$ yields much better metrics than no guidance. Retrieval accuracies (but not cosine similarities) are directly comparable across models; both models offer better retrieval accuracy than CLIP ViT-B/32.

γ	CoCa 2B				Captioning Model (CoCa Base)			
	Cos.	R@1	R@5	R@10	Cos.	R@1	R@5	R@10
1.0	0.125	40.1	65.3	75.1	0.843	49.4	75.0	84.1
1.2	0.128	46.5	72.0	80.3	0.859	56.2	80.1	88.1
1.5	0.131	55.5	78.9	86.4	0.877	64.6	85.9	91.5
2.0	0.135	64.9	86.4	91.3	0.887	73.0	91.6	95.3
3.0	0.134	66.5	87.0	91.4	0.890	77.7	92.4	95.8
4.0	0.126	60.3	81.8	87.5	0.875	74.7	90.1	94.0

Table B.4. CFG improves caption→image retrieval in the embedding spaces of CoCa models on MS-COCO. “Cos.” = mean cosine similarity between the image and text embeddings.

