
simNet: Stepwise Image-Topic Merging Network for Generating Detailed and Comprehensive Image Captions

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1 Introduction



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simNet: Stepwise Image-Topic Merging Network for Generating Detailed and Comprehensive Image Captions



Soft-Attention: a open laptop computer sitting on top of a table

ATT-FCN: a dog sitting on a desk with a laptop computer and mouse

simNet: a open laptop computer and mouse sitting on a table with a dog nearby

Figure 1: Examples of using different attention mechanisms.

•**Soft-Attention:** Show, attend and tell: Neural image caption generation with visual attention. In PMLR 2015

•**ATT-FCN :** Image captioning with semantic attention. In CVPR 2016



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Introduction: Soft-Attention



Soft-Attention: a open laptop computer sitting on top of a table

→ omitting “dog” and “mouse”

ATT-FCN: a dog sitting on a desk with a laptop computer and mouse

simNet: a open laptop computer and mouse sitting on a table with a dog nearby



•**Soft-Attention:** Show, attend and tell: Neural image caption generation with visual attention. In PMLR 2015



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Introduction: ATT-FCN



Soft-Attention: a open laptop computer sitting on top of a table

ATT-FCN: a dog sitting on a desk with a laptop computer and mouse

→ missing “open” and mislocating “dog”

simNet: a open laptop computer and mouse sitting on a table with a dog nearby



•ATT-FCN : Image captioning with semantic attention. In CVPR 2016



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Introduction: SimNet



Soft-Attention: a open laptop computer sitting on top of a table

ATT-FCN: a dog sitting on a desk with a laptop computer and mouse

simNet: a open laptop computer and mouse sitting on a table with a dog nearby



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Introduction: Main idea

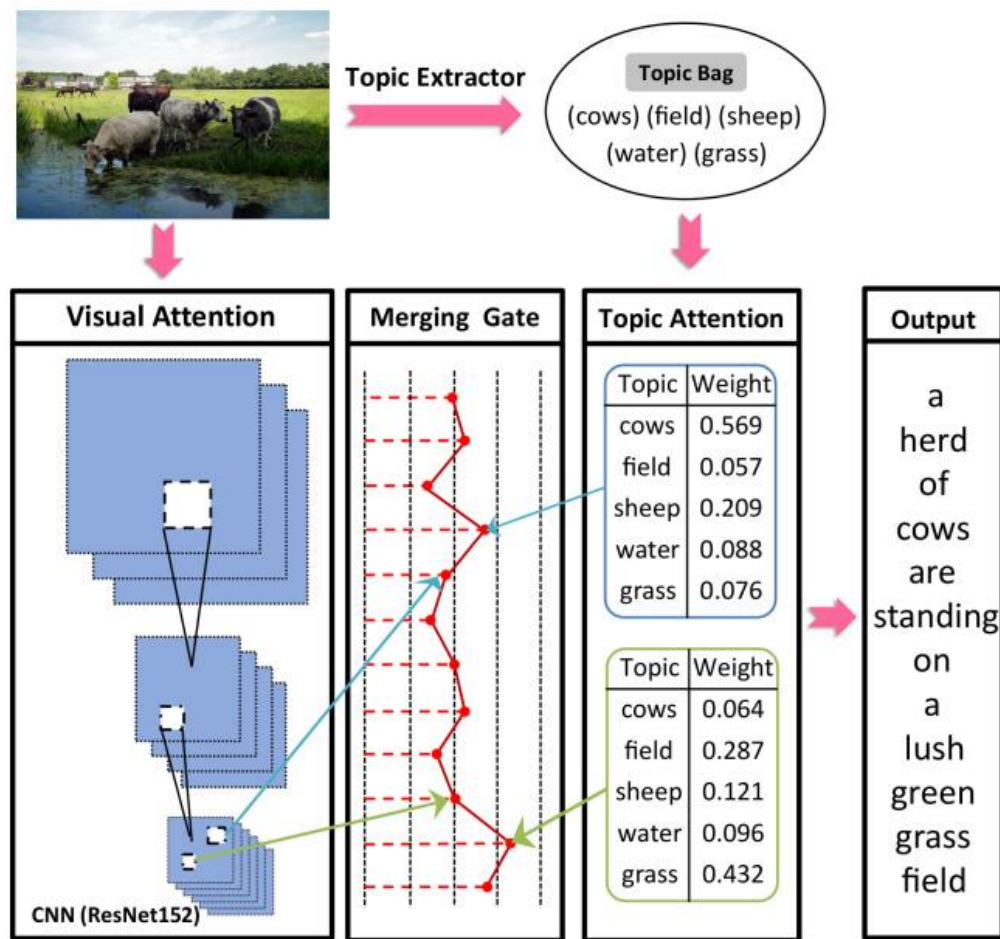


Figure 2: Illustration of the main idea.

- The visual information captured by CNN
- The topics extracted by a topic extractor
- The merging gate then **adaptively adjusts the weight** between visual attention and topic attention

Contributions

- We propose a novel approach that can effectively merge the **information in the image** and the **topics**.
- The generated captions are both **detailed** and **comprehensive**.
- The proposed approach **outperforms** previous works in terms of SPICE, which correlates the best with human judgments.



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Approach



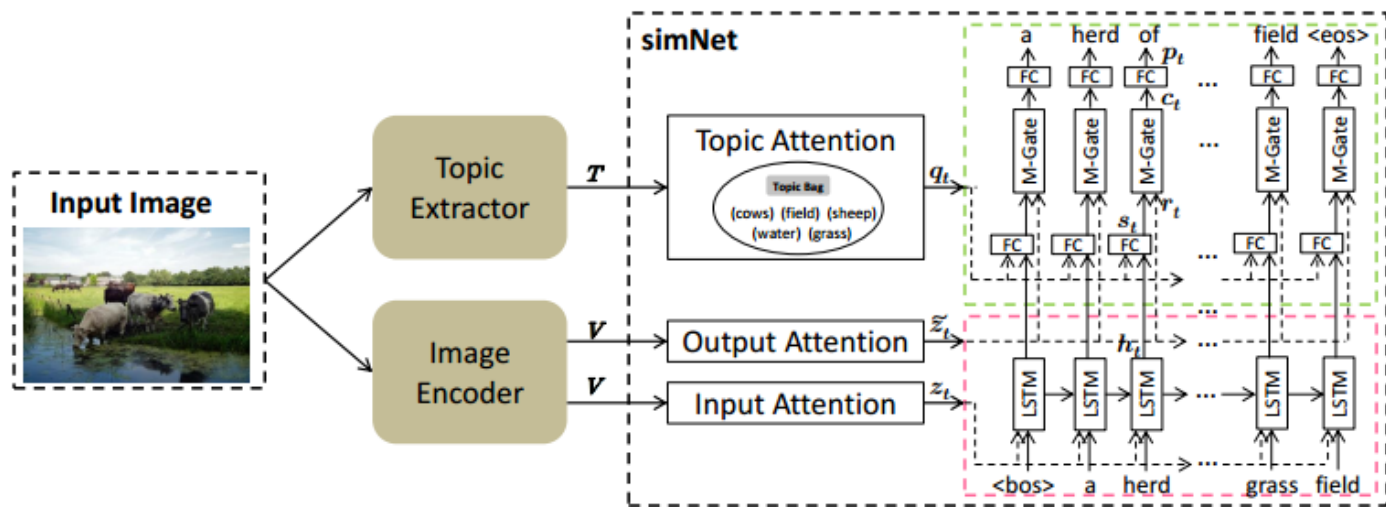
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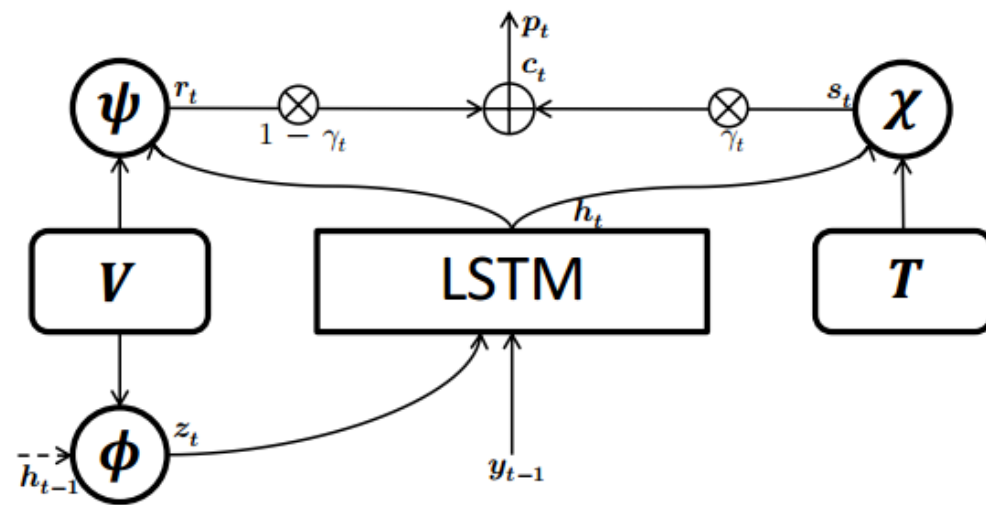


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Overview



(a) The overall framework.



(b) The data flow in the proposed simNet.

Figure 3: Illustration of the proposed approach. In the right plot, we use ϕ, ψ, χ to denote input attention, output attention, and topic attention, respectively.

Approach: Image Encoder

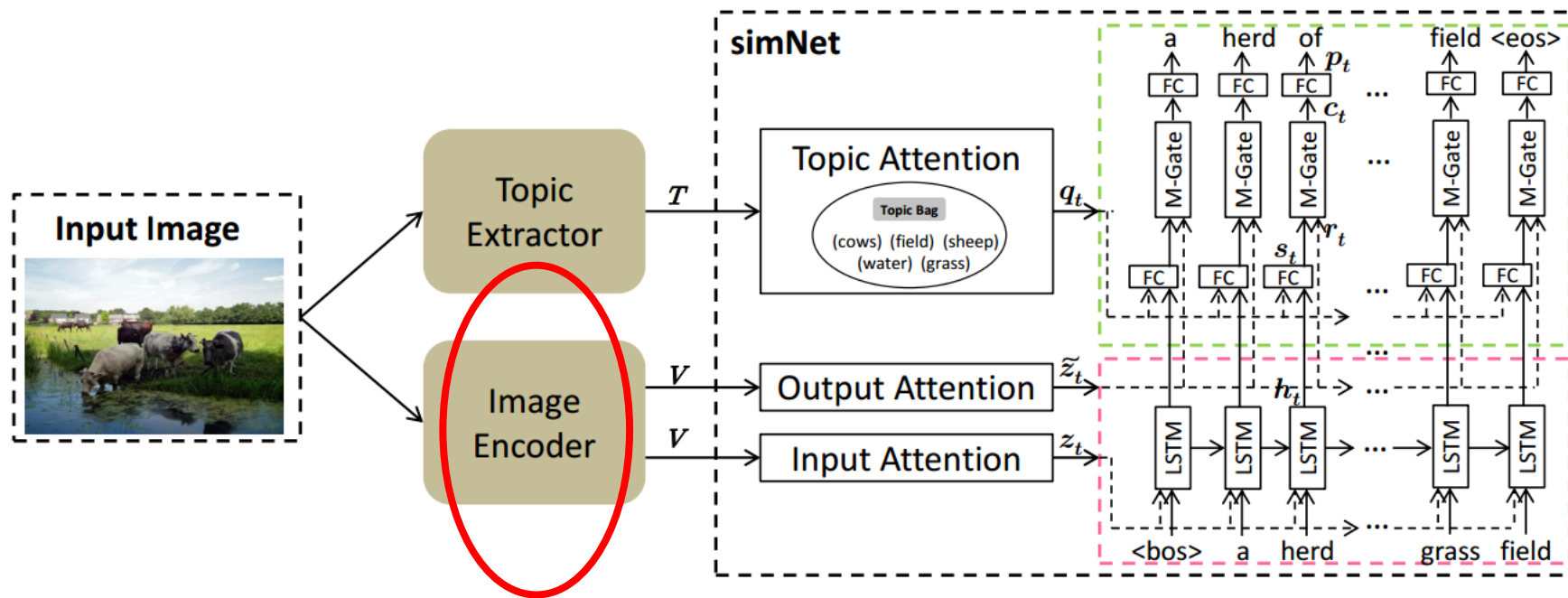
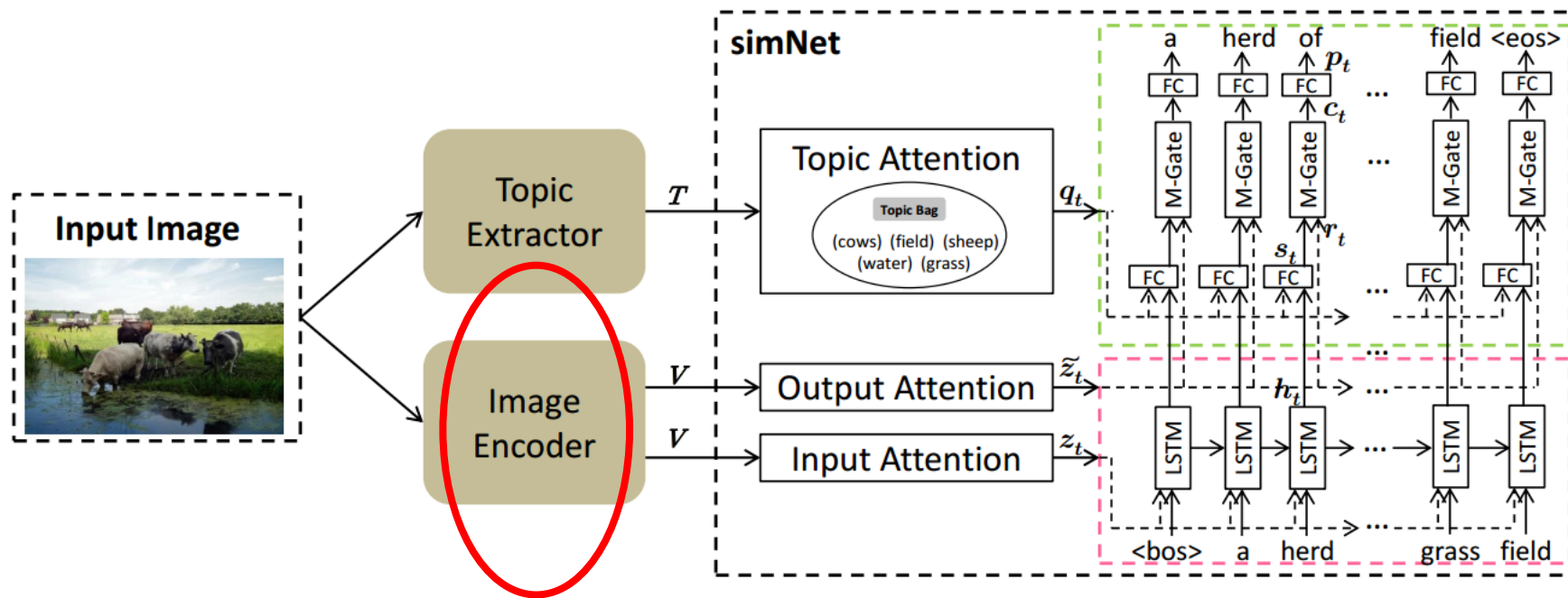


Image Encoder: ResNet152

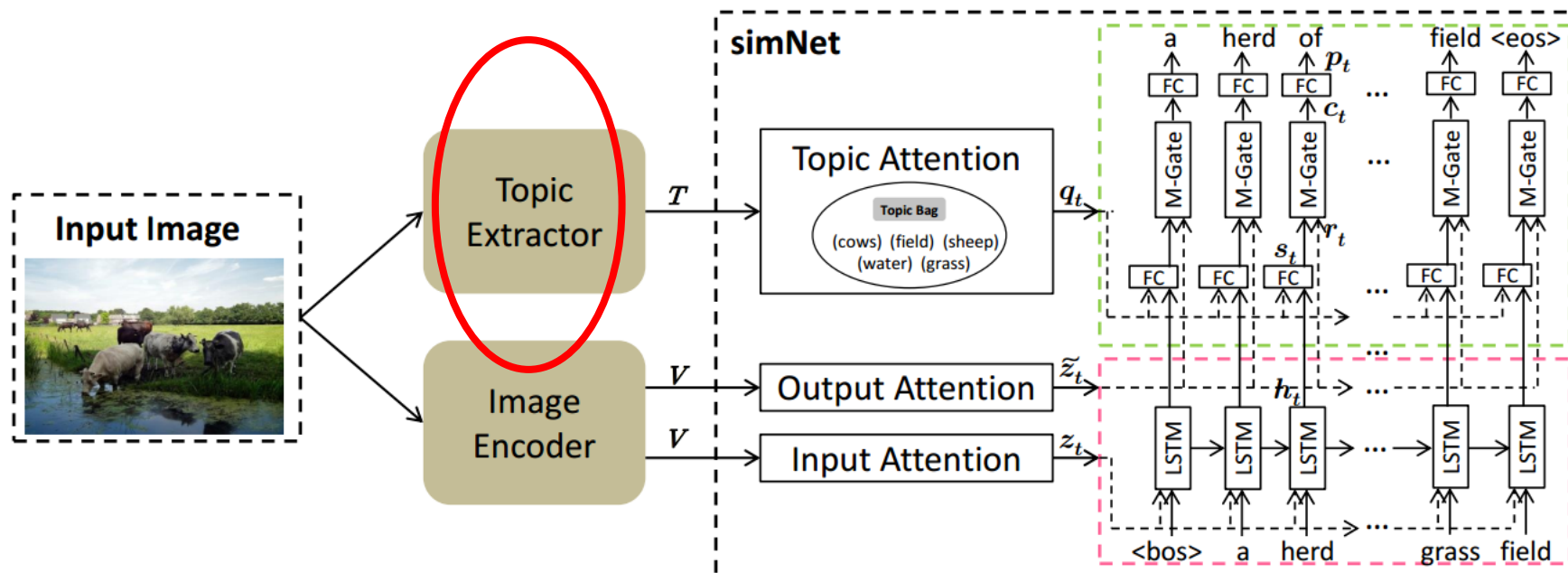
Approach: Image Encoder



$$\text{Feature map: } V = W^{V,I} \text{CNN}(I) \quad (1)$$

where I is the input image, and $W^{V,I}$ shrinks the last dimension of the output.

Approach: Topic Extractor



Topic Extractor: Multiple Instance Learning

Zhang et al., 2006: Multiple instance boosting for object detection. In NIPS 2006.

Fang et al., 2015: From captions to visual concepts and back. In CVPR2015

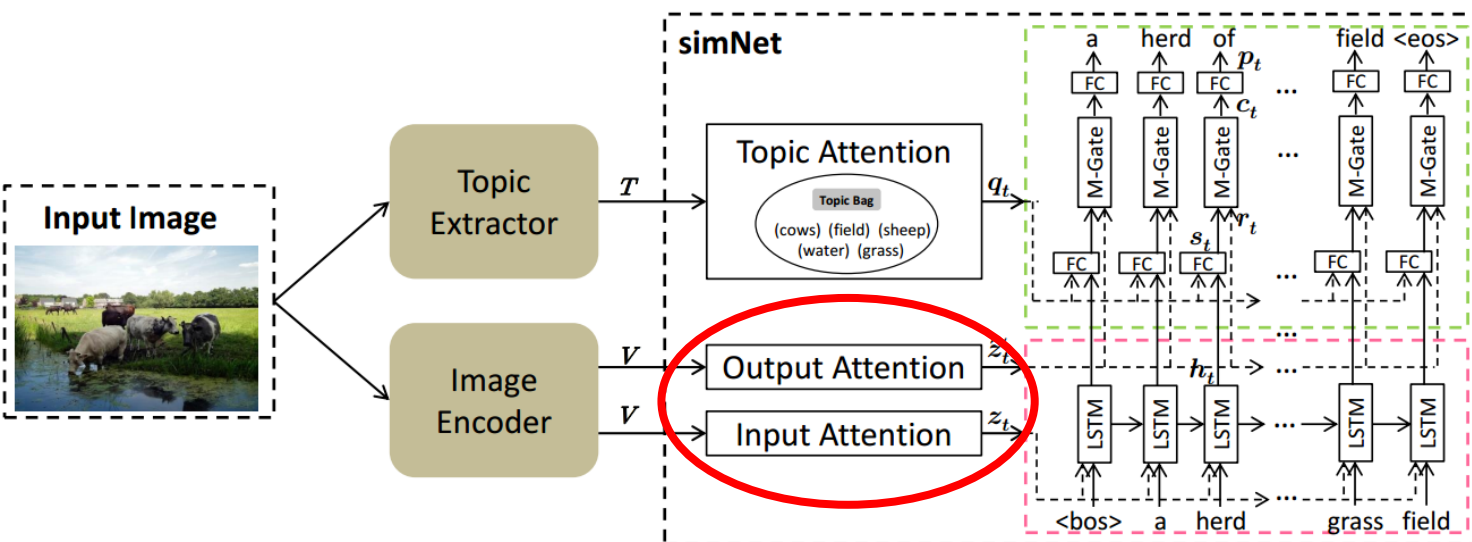


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Approach: Input Attention



Input Attention:

$$Z_t = \tanh(W^{Z,V} V \oplus W^{Z,h} \underline{h_{t-1}}) \quad (2)$$

$$\alpha_t = \text{softmax}(Z_t w^{\alpha,Z}) \quad (3)$$

$$z_t = V \alpha_t \quad (4)$$

$$h_t = \text{LSTM}\left(\begin{bmatrix} z_t \\ y_{t-1} \end{bmatrix}, h_{t-1}\right) \quad (5)$$

Xu et al., 2015 : Show, attend and tell: Neural image caption generation with visual attention. In PMLR 2015

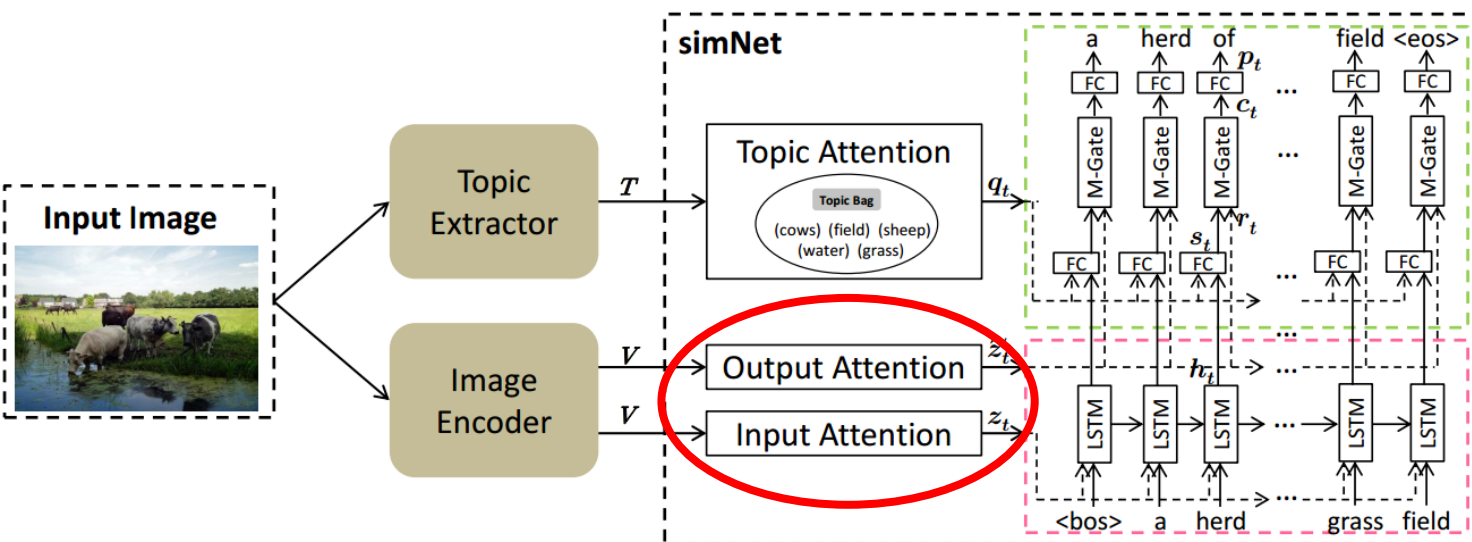


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Approach: Output Attention



Output Attention:

$$\tilde{Z}_t = \tanh(\tilde{W}^{Z,V} V \oplus \tilde{W}^{Z,h} h_t) \quad (6)$$

$$\tilde{\alpha}_t = \text{softmax}(\tilde{Z}_t \tilde{w}^{\alpha,Z}) \quad (7)$$

$$\tilde{z}_t = V \tilde{\alpha}_t \quad (8)$$

You et al., 2016 : Image captioning with semantic attention. In CVPR 2016

Lu et al., 2017 : Knowing when to look: Adaptive attention via a visual sentinel for image captioning. In CVPR 2017

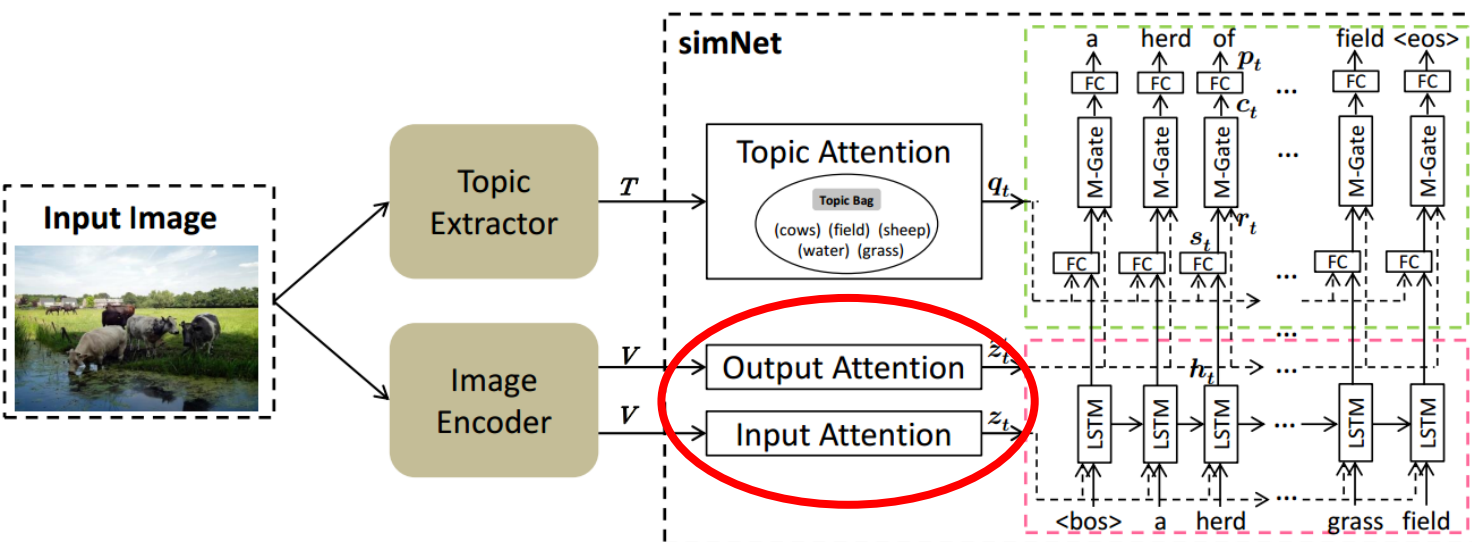


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Approach: Visual Information



Output Attention:

$$\tilde{Z}_t = \tanh(\tilde{W}^{Z,V} V \oplus \tilde{W}^{Z,h} h_t) \quad (6)$$

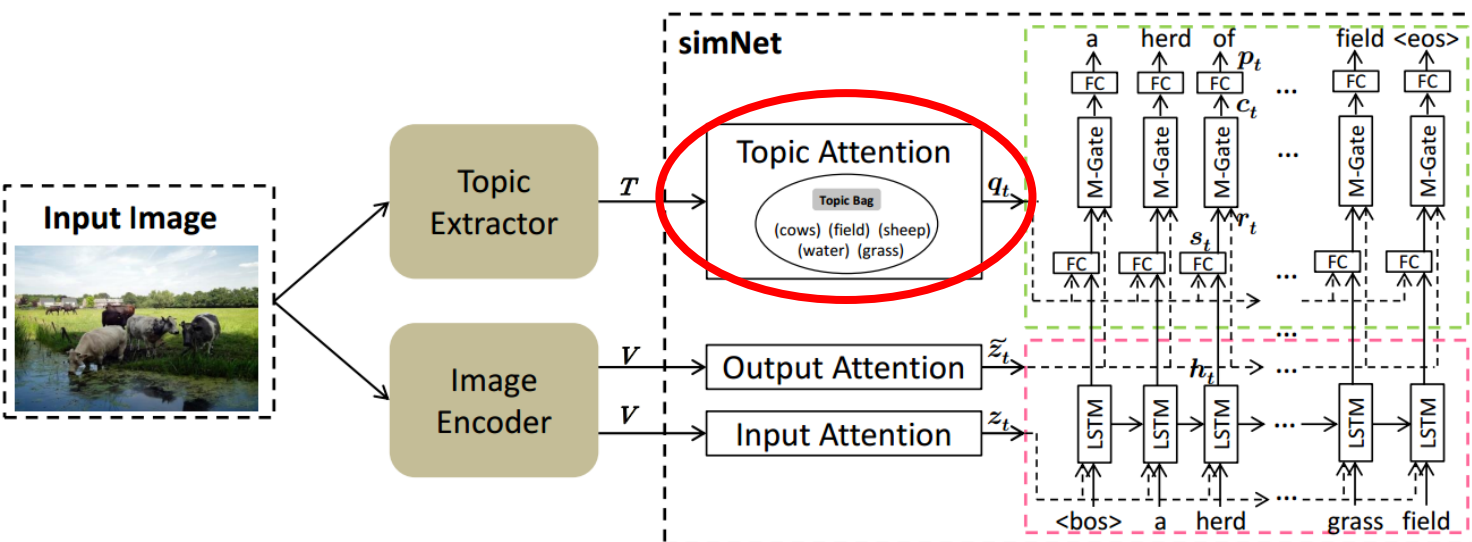
$$\tilde{\alpha}_t = \text{softmax}(\tilde{Z}_t \tilde{w}^{\alpha,Z}) \quad (7)$$

$$\tilde{z}_t = V \tilde{\alpha}_t \quad (8)$$

the visual information: $r_t = \tanh(W^{s,z} \tilde{z}_t)$



Approach: Previous Topic Attention



Topic Attention (Previous work):

$$\beta_t = \text{softmax}(T^T U y_{t-1}) \quad (9)$$

Lacking the attentive visual information when selecting topic!

You et al., 2016 : Image captioning with semantic attention. In CVPR 2016

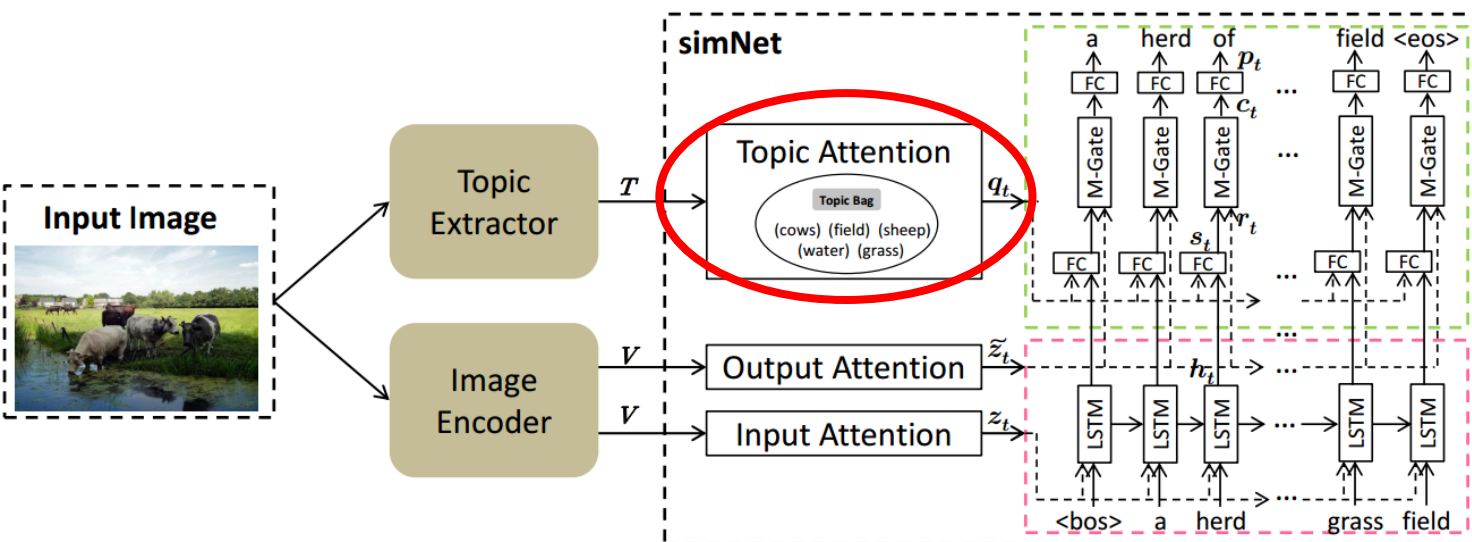


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Approach: Our Topic Attention



Topic Attention (Our):

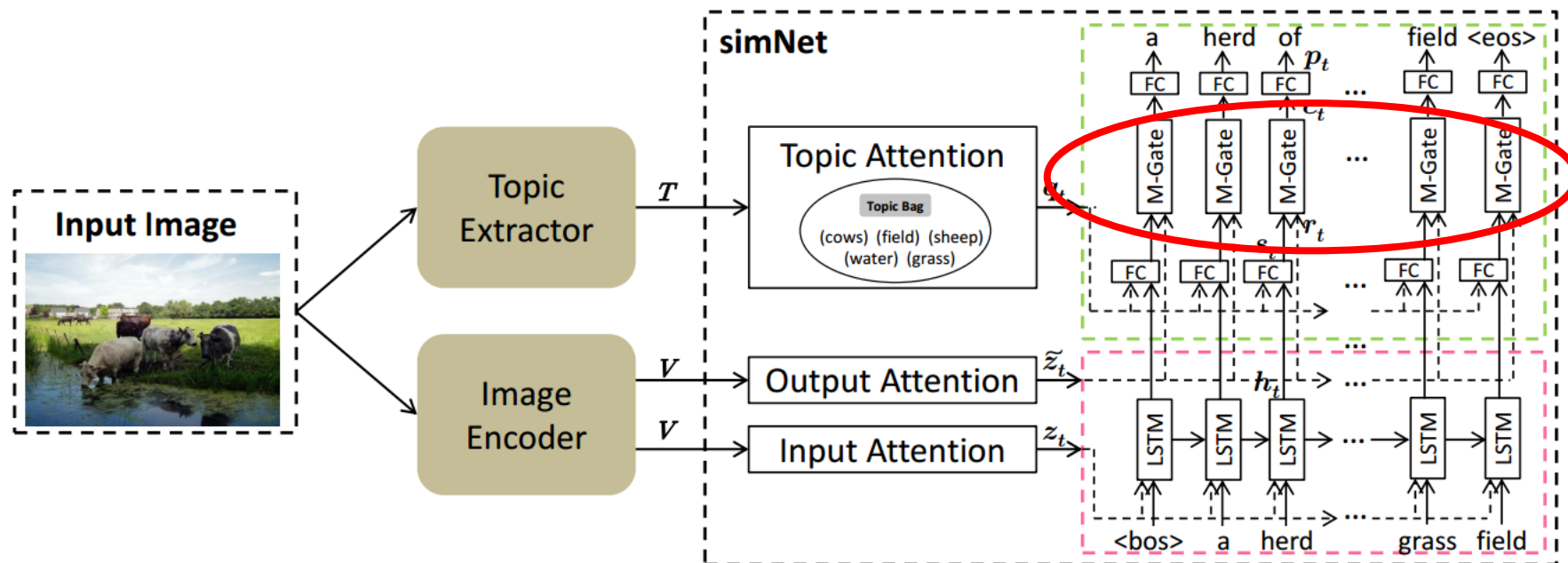
$$Q_t = \tanh(W^{Q,T}T \oplus W^{Q,h}h_t) \quad (10)$$

$$\beta_t = \text{softmax}(Q_t w^{\beta,Q}) \quad (11)$$

$$q_t = T\beta_t \quad (12)$$

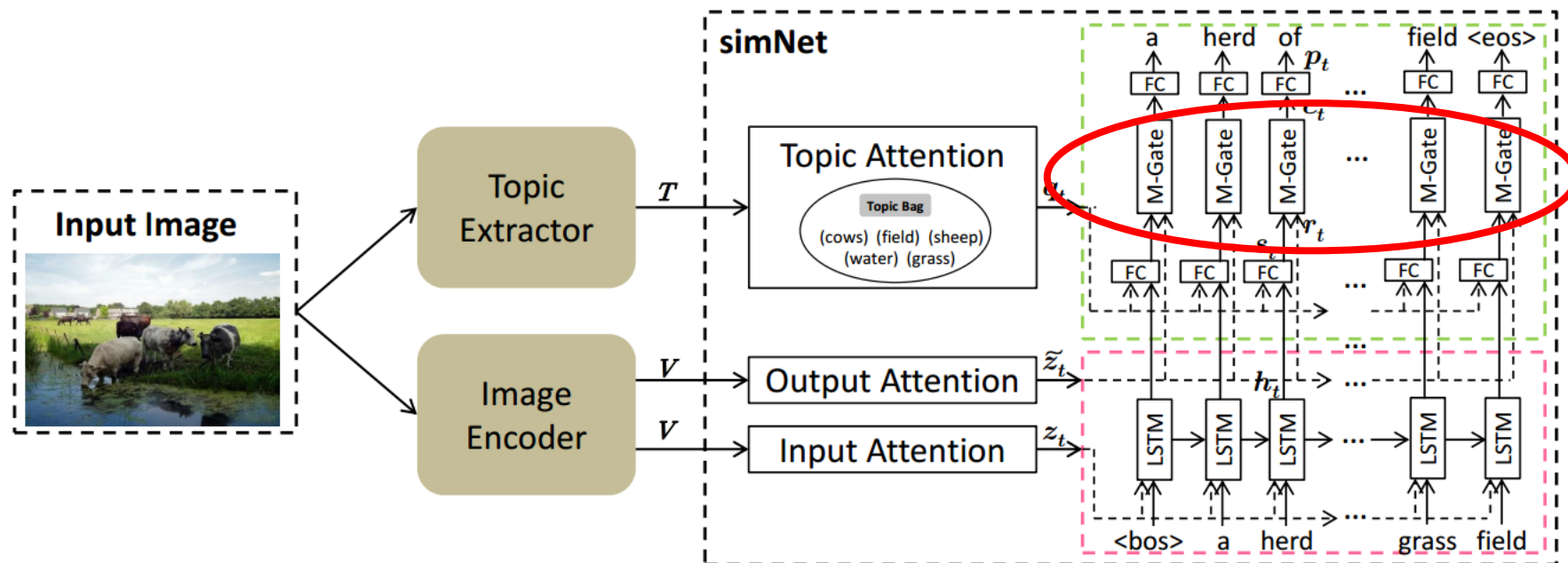


Approach: Merging Gate



How to make full use of the visual information and the contextual information?

Approach: Merging Gate



Visual information
(e.g., “*behind*”, “*red*” is better)

VS

Contextual information
(e.g., “*people*”, “*table*” is better)

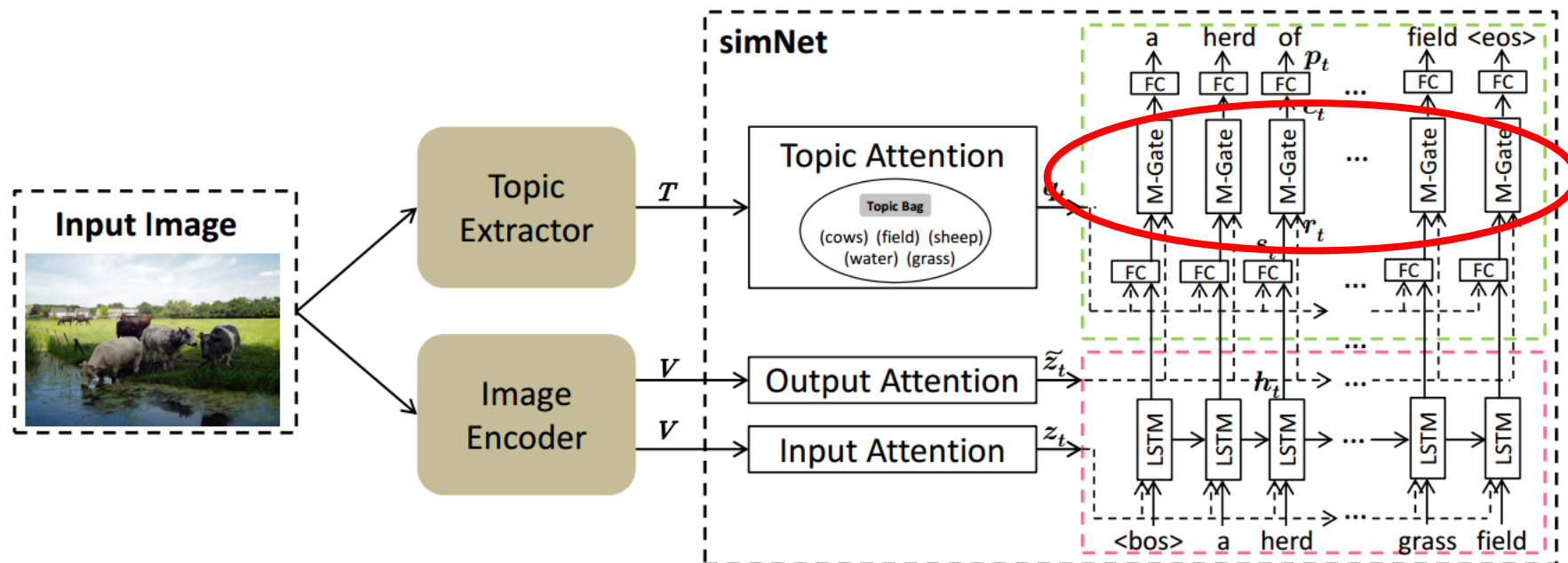


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Approach: Merging Gate



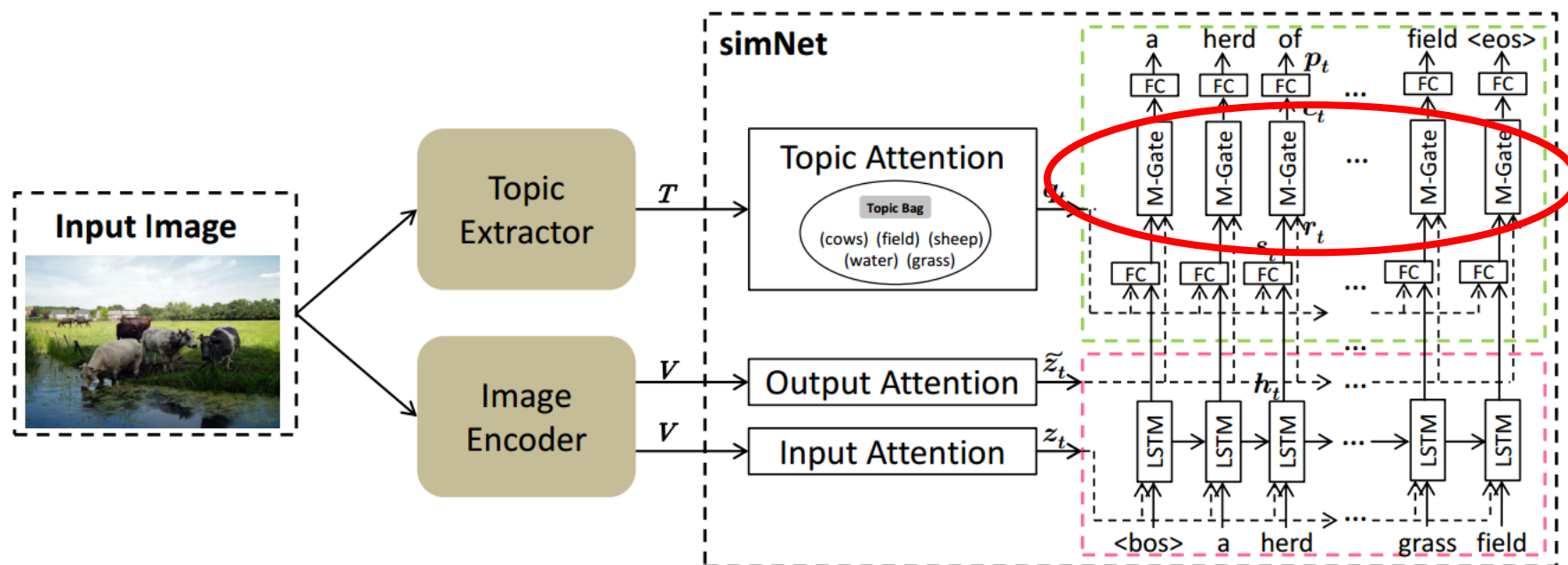
$$\gamma_t = \sigma(S(\mathbf{s}_t) - S(\mathbf{r}_t))$$

$$\mathbf{c}_t = \gamma_t \mathbf{s}_t + (1 - \gamma_t) \mathbf{r}_t$$

(Where σ is the sigmoid function)



Approach: Merging Gate



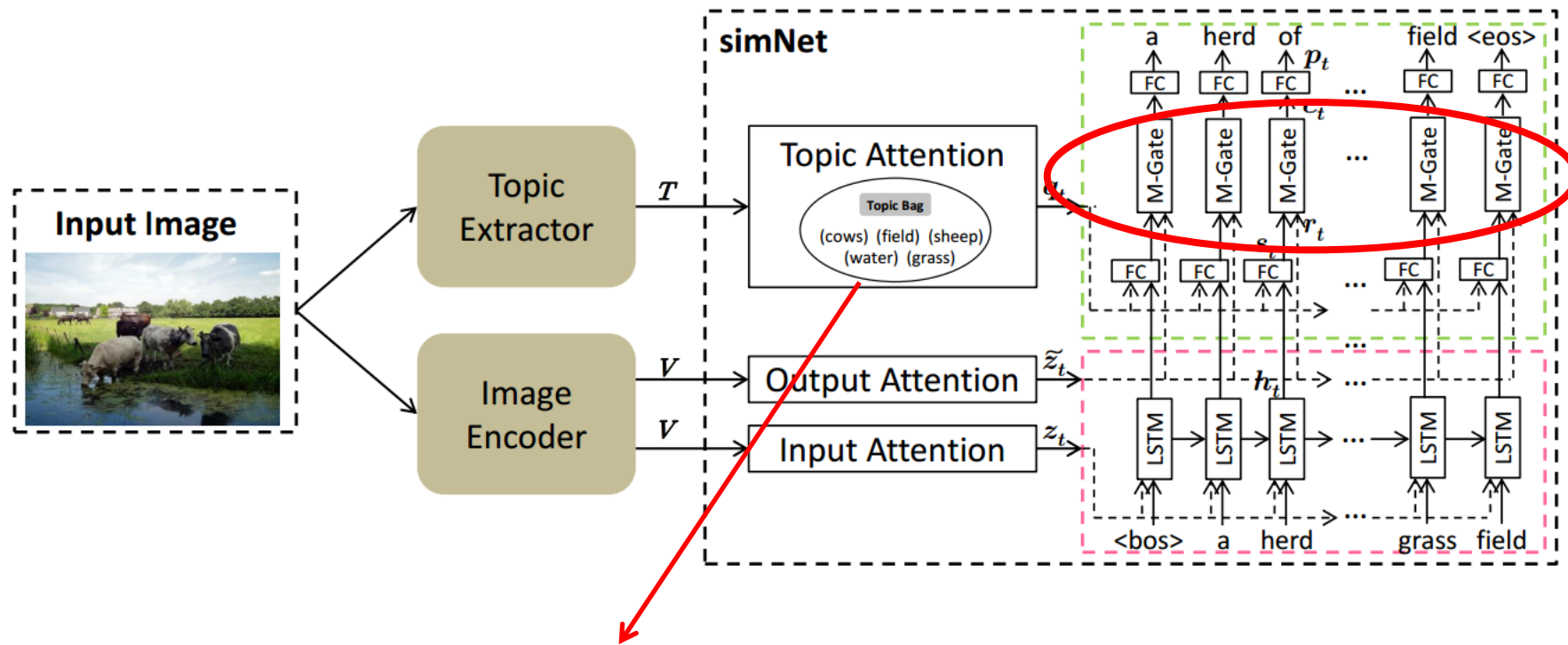
$$\gamma_t = \sigma(S(s_t) - S(r_t))$$

$$c_t = \gamma_t s_t + (1 - \gamma_t) r_t$$

The **scoring function S** is designed to evaluate the importance of the topic attention.



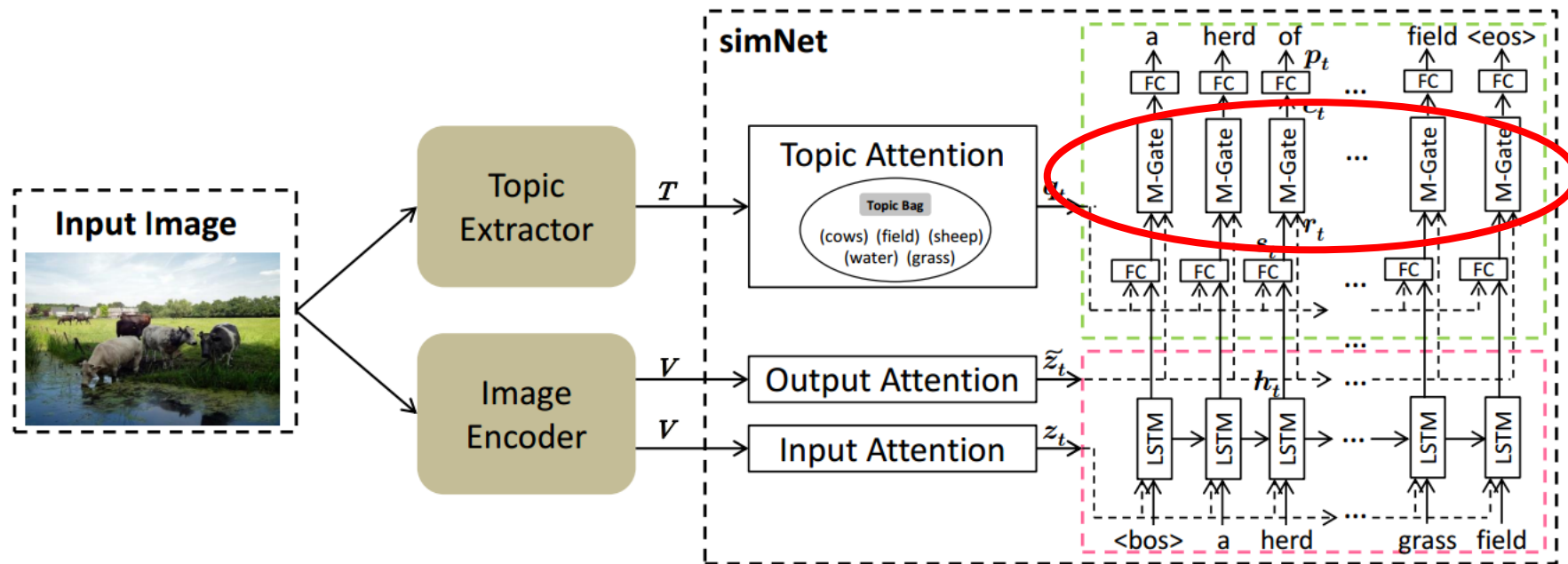
Approach: Merging Gate



$$Q_t = \tanh(W^{Q,T}T \oplus W^{Q,h}h_t) \quad (10)$$

$$\beta_t = \text{softmax}(Q_t w^{\beta,Q}) \quad (11)$$

Approach: Merging Gate



Share Weights

$$Q_t = \tanh(W^{Q,T}T \oplus W^{Q,h}h_t) \quad (10)$$

$$\beta_t = \text{softmax}(Q_t w^{\beta,Q}) \quad (11)$$

$$S(s_t) = \tanh(W^{S,h}h_t + W^{S,s}s_t) \cdot w^S \quad (16)$$

$$S(r_t) = \tanh(W^{S,h}h_t + W^{S,r}r_t) \cdot w^S \quad (17)$$

Share Weights

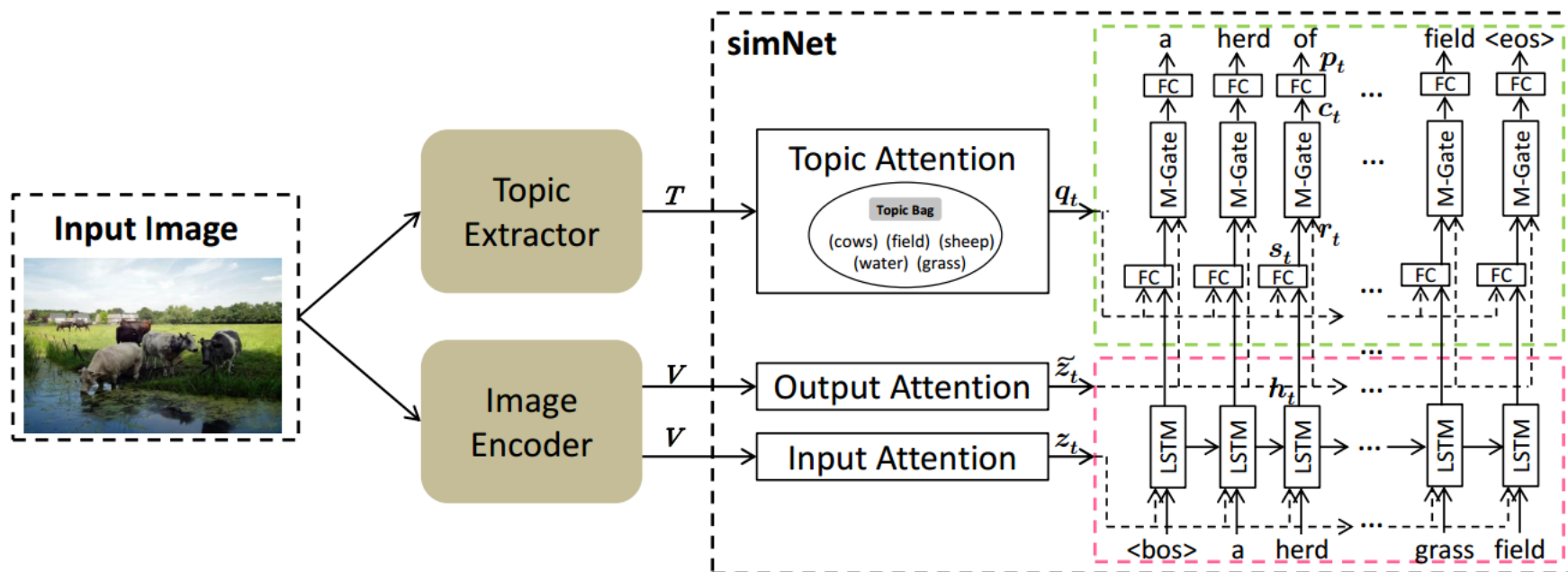


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Generating Words



the contextual information: $y_t \sim p_t = \text{softmax}(W^{p,c} c_t)$

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Experiments



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Experiments

Dataset

Microsoft COCO(MSCOCO) and Flickr30k



- ✓ Sparrow bird on branch, with beak inspecting leaves on branch.
- ✓ A bird sitting on the branch of a tree near leaves.
- ✓ A bird that is sitting in a tree.
- ✓ a bird sitting on a branch of a tree.
- ✓ a bird that is on a small branch of a tree.

Evaluation Metrics

- ✓ SPICE
- ✓ CIDEr
- ✓ BLEU
- ✓ METEOR
- ✓ ROUGE

Correlates the best with human Judgments !



Experiments: Results (MSCOCO)

Comparable
Models

COCO	SPICE	CIDEr	METEOR	ROUGE-L	BLEU-4
HardAtt (Xu et al., 2015)	-	-	0.230	-	0.250
ATT-FCN (You et al., 2016)	-	-	0.243	-	0.304
SCA-CNN (Chen et al., 2017)	-	0.952	0.250	0.531	0.311
LSTM-A (Yao et al., 2017)	0.186	1.002	0.254	0.540	0.326
SCN-LSTM (Gan et al., 2017)	-	1.012	0.257	-	0.330
Skeleton (Wang et al., 2017)	-	1.069	0.268	0.552	0.336
AdaAtt (Lu et al., 2017)	0.195	1.085	0.266	0.549	0.332
NBT (Lu et al., 2018)	0.201	1.072	0.271	-	0.347
DRL (Ren et al., 2017b)*	-	0.937	0.251	0.525	0.304
TD-M-ATT (Chen et al., 2018)*	-	1.116	0.268	0.555	0.336
SCST (Rennie et al., 2017)*	-	1.140	0.267	0.557	0.342
SR-PL (Liu et al., 2018)* [†]	0.210	1.171	0.274	0.570	0.358
Up-Down (Anderson et al., 2018)* [†]	0.214	1.201	0.277	0.569	0.363
simNet	0.220	1.135	0.283	0.564	0.332



Experiments: Results (MSCOCO)

COCO	SPICE	CIDEr	METEOR	ROUGE-L	BLEU-4
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Competitive



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Analysis



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Analysis: The Contributions of The Sub-modules

Comprehensiveness

Detailedness

Methods	SPICE							CIDEr	METEOR	ROUGE-L	BLEU-4
	All	Objects	Attributes	Relations	Color	Count	Size				
Baseline (Plain Encoder-Decoder Network)	0.150	0.295	0.048	0.039	0.022	0.004	0.023	0.762	0.220	0.495	0.251
Up-Down (Anderson et al., 2018)* [†]	0.214	0.391	0.100	0.065	0.114	0.184	0.032	1.201	0.277	0.569	0.363
Baseline + Input Att.	0.164	0.316	0.060	0.044	0.030	0.038	0.024	0.840	0.233	0.512	0.273
Baseline + Output Att.	0.181	0.329	0.094	0.053	0.089	0.184	0.044	0.968	0.253	0.534	0.301
Baseline + Input Att. + Output Att.	0.187	0.338	0.101	0.055	0.115	0.161	0.048	1.038	0.259	0.542	0.311
Baseline + Topic Att.	0.184	0.348	0.074	0.051	0.047	0.064	0.037	0.915	0.250	0.517	0.260
Baseline + Topic Att. + MGate	0.189	0.355	0.080	0.051	0.055	0.090	0.033	0.959	0.256	0.527	0.281
Baseline + Input Att. + Output Att. + Topic Att.	0.206	0.381	0.091	0.060	0.075	0.094	0.045	1.068	0.273	0.556	0.320
simNet (Full Model)	0.220	0.394	0.109	0.070	0.088	0.202	0.045	1.135	0.283	0.564	0.332



Analysis: Output Attention

The output attention is much more effective than the input attention

Methods	SPICE							CIDEr	METEOR	ROUGE-L	BLEU-4
	All	Objects	Attributes	Relations	Color	Count	Size				
Baseline (Plain Encoder-Decoder Network)	0.150	0.295	0.048	0.039	0.022	0.004	0.023	0.762	0.220	0.495	0.251
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Analysis: Visual Attention

A combination of the input attention and the output attention makes the results even better

Methods	SPICE							CIDEr	METEOR	ROUGE-L	BLEU-4
	All	Objects	Attributes	Relations	Color	Count	Size				
Baseline (Plain Encoder-Decoder Network)	0.150	0.295	0.048	0.039	0.022	0.004	0.023	0.762	0.220	0.495	0.251
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Analysis: Topic Attention

The topic attention is better at identifying objects but worse at identifying attributes.

Methods	SPICE							CIDEr	METEOR	ROUGE-L	BLEU-4
	All	Objects	Attributes	Relations	Color	Count	Size				
Baseline (Plain Encoder-Decoder Network)	0.150	0.295	0.048	0.039	0.022	0.004	0.023	0.762	0.220	0.495	0.251
Up-Down (Anderson et al., 2018)* [†]	0.214	0.391	0.100	0.065	0.114	0.184	0.032	1.201	0.277	0.569	0.363
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Analysis: Visual Attention + Topic Attention

Combining the visual attention and the topic attention directly results in a huge boost in performance

Methods	SPICE							CIDEr	METEOR	ROUGE-L	BLEU-4
	All	Objects	Attributes	Relations	Color	Count	Size				
Baseline (Plain Encoder-Decoder Network)	0.150	0.295	0.048	0.039	0.022	0.004	0.023	0.762	0.220	0.495	0.251
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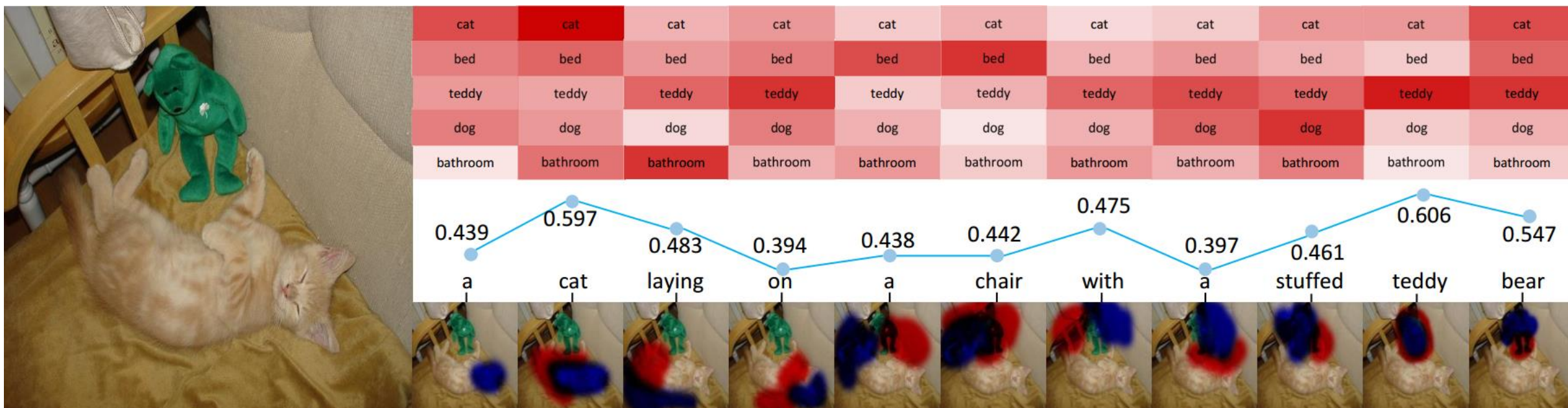
Analysis: Full Model

Applying the merging gate is essential to the overall performance.

Methods	SPICE							CIDEr	METEOR	ROUGE-L	BLEU-4
	All	Objects	Attributes	Relations	Color	Count	Size				
Baseline (Plain Encoder-Decoder Network)	0.150	0.295	0.048	0.039	0.022	0.004	0.023	0.762	0.220	0.495	0.251
Up-Down (Anderson et al., 2018)* [†]	0.214	0.391	0.100	0.065	0.114	0.184	0.032	1.201	0.277	0.569	0.363
Baseline + Input Att.	0.164	0.316	0.060	0.044	0.030	0.038	0.024	0.840	0.233	0.512	0.273
Baseline + Output Att.	0.181	0.329	0.094	0.053	0.089	0.184	0.044	0.968	0.253	0.534	0.301
Baseline + Input Att. + Output Att.	0.187	0.338	0.101	0.055	0.115	0.161	0.048	1.038	0.259	0.542	0.311
Baseline + Topic Att.	0.184	0.348	0.074	0.051	0.047	0.064	0.037	0.915	0.250	0.517	0.260
Baseline + Topic Att. + MGate	0.189	0.355	0.080	0.051	0.055	0.090	0.033	0.959	0.256	0.527	0.281
Baseline + Input Att. + Output Att. + Topic Att.	0.206	0.381	0.091	0.060	0.075	0.094	0.045	1.068	0.273	0.556	0.320
simNet (Full Model)	0.220	0.394	0.109	0.070	0.088	0.202	0.045	1.135	0.283	0.564	0.332

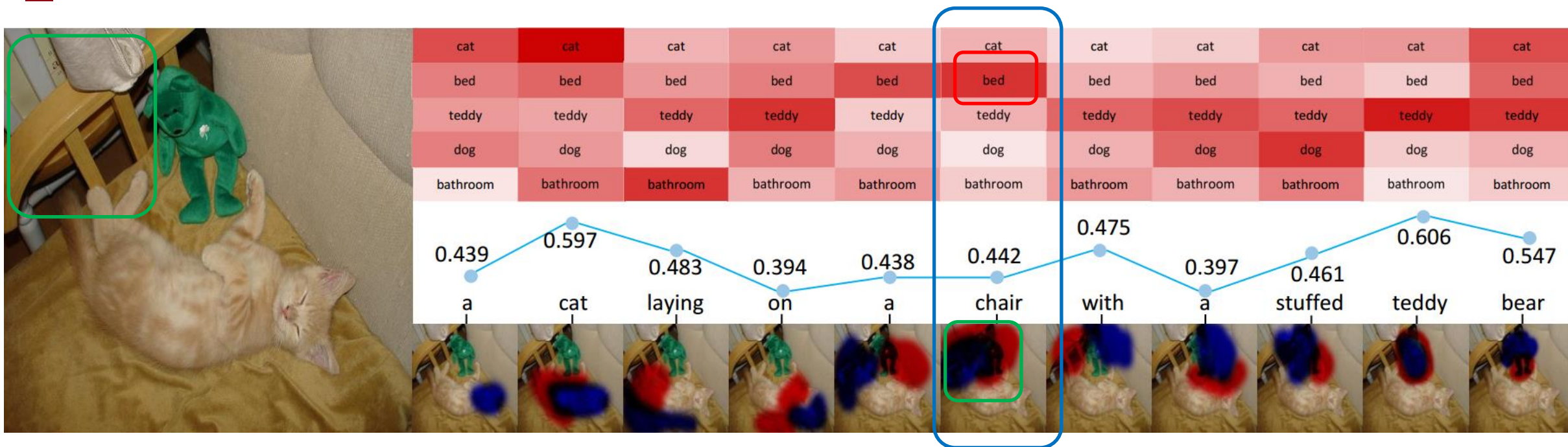


Analysis: Visualization



- The upper part shows the attention weights of each of 5 extracted topics. —————> Deeper color means larger in value.
- The middle part shows the value of the merging gate. —————> Determines the importance of the topic attention.
- The lower part shows the visualization of visual attention. —————> The blue shade indicates the output attention. The red shade indicates the input attention.

Analysis: Visualization



Visual information “*chair*” is **more important** than contextual information “*bed*”



Analysis: Examples

Comparison of Models



Topics

woman girl
baby bear
kitchen

computer
keyboard
laptop mouse
desk

pizza cheese
table plate
toppings

Visual Attention

a girl
and a baby
are holding a
stuffed animal

a computer ke
yboard sitting
on top of a
wooden desk

two pizzas
with toppings
on a table

Topic Attention

a woman
holding a
teddy bear
in a kitchen

a computer
keyboard and a
mouse sitting
on a desk

a pizza with
a lot of
toppings on it

simNet

a woman
and a baby
are holding a
stuffed animal

a computer
keyboard and
mouse on a
wooden desk

two pizzas sitting
on a table with
two different ki
nds of toppings

erroneous
topic "kitchen"

→ lacking "mouse"

→ missing "wooden"

→ error count



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Conclusion

- Stepwise image-topic merging network can adaptively combine the visual and the semantic attention to achieve substantial improvements.
- The generated captions are both detailed and comprehensive
- Our approach outperforms previous works in terms of SPICE on COCO and Flickr datasets.



Thank you!

If you have any questions about our paper, you can send a email to lfl@bupt.edu.cn



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