Zekun Li

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RESEARCH INTERESTS	My research interests are centered on Large Language Models (LLMs), with a specific focus on two key areas: (1) LLM Prompt Optimization and Alignment, and (2) Safety, Robustness, and Functionality of LLMs. Beyond these, I am also interested in text-to-image generation, and AI in Healthcare.	
EDUCATION	University of California, Santa Barbara Ph.D. in Computer Science	Sep 2021 - Present
	Univ. of Chinese Academy of Sciences MEng in Computer Science	Sep 2018 - June 2021
	Shandong University BEng in Computer Science and Technology (Excellent class)	Sep 2014 - June 2018
EXPERIENCES	AI Research Intern, Meta Reality Labs	Jun 2023 - Seq 2023
	Mentors: Paul Crook, Shane Moon, Zoey Chen, ZhaojiaResearch topics: Task-oriented Dialogues with LLMs	ng Lin
	Research Intern, Microsoft Research	Nov 2022 - May 2023
	Mentors: Baolin Peng, Pengcheng He, Michel Galley, Jianfeng GaoResearch topics: LLM alignment and robustness	
	Amazon Alexa Prize Challenge	Sep 2021 - May 2023
	• Led the UCSB Gauchobot team to participate Amazon Alexa Prize Taskbot Challenge, developing a chatbot that can help users accomplish complex tasks like cooking and DIY. We constantly received the highest feedback ratings from Amazon Alexa users, ranking 1st place for 43/70 days during the finals.	
	• Contributed to the UCSB GauchoChat team in the Amazon Alexa Prize So- cialbot Challenge 5, focusing on building an engaging and proactive socialbot. We won the overall 1st place in the finals.	
PREPRINTS	1. Evaluating the Instruction-Following Robustness of Large Language Models to Prompt Injection [paper]	
	- Zekun Li, Baolin Peng, Pengcheng He, Xifeng Yan	
	2. InstaStyle: Inversion Noise of a Stylized Image is Secretly a Style Adviser [paper]	
	- Xing Cui, Zekun Li , Pei Pei Li, Huaibo Huang, Zhaofeng	g He

- 3. AlpaCare: Instruction-tuned Large Language Models for Medical Application [paper][code]
 - Xinlu Zhang, Chenxin Tian, Xianjun Yang, Licahng Chen, **Zekun Li**, Linda Ruth Petzold
- 4. Enhancing Large Language Model Induced Task-Oriented Dialogue Systems Through Look-Forward Motivated Goals [paper]
 - Zhiyuan Hu, Yue Feng, Yang Deng, **Zekun Li**, See-Kiong Ng, Anh Tuan Luu, Bryan Hooi
- 5. Explanations from Large Language Models Make Small Reasoners Better [paper]
 - Shiyang Li, Jianshu Chen, Yelong Shen, Zhiyu Chen, Xinlu Zhang, **Zekun Li**, Hong Wang, Jing Qian, Baolin Peng, Yi Mao, Wenhu Chen and Xifeng Yan.

PUBLICATIONS 1. Guiding Large Language Models via Directional Stimulus Prompting [paper] [code] [website] [media coverage]

- Zekun Li, Baolin Peng, Pengcheng He, Michel Galley, Jianfeng Gao, Xifeng Yan
- NeurIPS 2023
- 2. Time Series as Images: Vision Transformer for Irregularly Sampled Time Series [paper] [code]
 - Zekun Li, Shiyang Li, Xifeng Yan
 - NeurIPS 2023
- 3. ChatEdit: Towards Multi-turn Interactive Facial Image Editing via Dialogue [paper]
 - Xing Cui*, Zekun Li*, Peipei Li, Yibo Hu, Hailin Shi, Zhaofeng He
 - EMNLP 2023
- 4. Limitations of Language Models in Arithmetic and Symbolic Induction [paper]
 - Jing Qian*, Hong Wang*, Zekun Li, Shiyang Li, Xifeng Yan.
 - ACL 2023
- 5. Controllable Dialogue Simulation with In-Context Learning [paper] [code]
 - Zekun Li, Wenhu Chen, Shiyang Li, Hong Wang, Jing Qian, and Xifeng Yan.
 - EMNLP 2022 Findings
- 6. Making Something out of Nothing: Building Robust Task-oriented Dialogue Systems from Scratch [paper] [demo]
 - Zekun Li*, Hong Wang*, Alon Albalak, Yingrui Yang, Jing Qian, Shiyang Li, Xifeng Yan
 - 1st Proceedings of Alexa Prize TaskBot (Alexa Prize 2021).
- 7. DyGCN: Dynamic Graph Embedding with Graph Convolutional Network [paper]
 - Zeyu Cui*, Zekun Li*, Shu Wu, Xiaoyu Zhang, Qiang Liu, Liang Wang, Mengmeng Ai.
 - IEEE Trans. Neural Netw. Learn. Syst. 2022
- 8. Weakly-supervised action localization via embedding-modeling iterative optimization [paper]
 - Xiaoyu Zhang, Haichao Shi, Changsheng Li, Peng Li, Zekun Li, Peng Ren.
 - Pattern Recognition 113 (2021): 107831

- 9. Cold-start Sequential Recommendation via Meta Learner [paper]
 - Yujia Zheng, Siyi Liu, **Zekun Li**, and Shu Wu.
 - The 35th AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence (AAAI 2021).
- 10. DGTN: Dual-channel Graph Transition Network for Session-based Recommendation [paper]
 - Yujia Zheng, Siyi Liu, Zekun Li, and Shu Wu.
 - The 21th IEEE International Conference on Data Mining Workshop (NeuRec@ICDM 2020).
- 11. Fi-GNN: Modeling Feature Interactions via Graph Neural Networks for CTR Prediction [paper] [code]
 - Zekun Li*, Zeyu Cui*, Shu Wu, Xiaoyu Zhang, Liang Wang.
 - The 28th ACM International Conference on Information and Knowledge Management (CIKM 2019).
- 12. Semi-supervised Compatibility Learning across Categories for Clothing Matching [paper] [code]
 - Zekun Li*, Zeyu Cui*, Shu Wu, Xiaoyu Zhang, Liang Wang.
 - 2019 IEEE International Conference on Multimedia and Expo (ICME 2019).
- 13. Dressing as a Whole: Outfit Compatibility Learning Based on Node-wise Graph Neural Networks [paper] [code]
 - Zeyu Cui*, Zekun Li*, Shu Wu, Xiaoyu Zhang, Liang Wang.
 - The World Wide Web Conference. 2019. (WWW 2019).
- 14. NeuroStylist: Neural Compatibility Modeling for Clothing Matching [paper] [code] [data]
 - Xuemeng Song, Fuli Feng, Jinhuan Liu, Zekun Li, Liqiang Nie, Jun Ma.
 - The 25th ACM international conference on Multimedia. 2017 (ACM MM 2017).
- TALKSOct 2023, @Walmart Global TechFeb 2023, @Microsoft Azure TeamMarch 2023, @Tencent AI Lab
- SERVICES ICLR 2024 Reviewer AAAI 2024 Reviewer NeurIPS 2023 Reviewer EMNLP 2023 Reviewer ACL 2023 Reviewer NAACL 2022 Reviewer EMNLP 2022 Reviewer EMNLP 2022 Reviewer AAAI 2022 PC member IEEE Trans. Neural Netw. Learn. Syst. Reviewer IEEE Trans. Knowl. Data Eng. Reviewer

AWARDS 1. Alexa Taskbot Competition Finalist

- 2. Academic Excellence Fellowship, Department of CS at UCSB
- 3. Next Generation Internet Technology Innovation Competition, 1st Prize in East China District.