Geza Kovacs

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Education

Ph.D, Computer Science - Stanford University 2019

Thesis: HabitLab: In-the-wild Behavior Experimentation at Scale. Advisor: Michael Bernstein. GPA: 4.0/4.0

B.S. and M.Eng, Computer Science - Massachusetts Institute of Technology 2013

Thesis: Multimedia for Language Learning. Advisor: Robert Miller. GPA: 5.0/5.0

Experience

Senior Research Scientist - Lilt, San Francisco. Manager: John DeNero 2019 - present

Lilt is a human-in-the-loop machine translation startup. I lead the HCI research group, which consists of 3 FTEs. Improved speed interactive MT system by shifting computation client-side and reusing computation via heuristics. Ran user studies to evaluate where translators spend their time during translation, and identify features of translator behaviors that predict better performance. Ran A/B tests to evaluate the return-on-investment of translating websites, and developed a data-driven system to recommend which pages to translate into which languages.

Ph.D Student - Stanford University. Advisor: Michael Bernstein 2013 - 2019

My thesis project was HabitLab http://habitlab.stanford.edu/ an app for Chrome + Android with **12,000+ daily active users** which helps users reduce time online. Published first-author papers about HabitLab at CHI 2021, CHI 2019, and CSCW 2018. I also published first-author papers at Learning at Scale 2016 (Effects of In-Video Quizzes on MOOC Lecture Viewing) and CHI 2014 (Smart Subtitles for Foreign Language Learning).

Research Intern - Microsoft Research, Redmond. Manager: Merrie Morris Summer 2015

Designed and built an educational social feed app usable by pre-literate children. Published at CSCW 2017.

Research Intern - Microsoft Research, Beijing. Manager: Darren Edge Summer 2014

Built QuizCram, a quiz-driven MOOC lecture viewer that improves learning outcomes. Published at CHI 2015 SRC.

Research Intern - Google Research, Mountain View. Manager: Shumin Zhai Summer 2013

Developed a machine learning system for detecting taps on the phone bezel, for use in Android input methods.

Software Engineering Intern - Google, Mountain View Summer 2012

Developed an NLP system to detect vocabulary and generate glossaries from book text (used MapReduce).

Software Engineering Intern - Google, Mountain View Summer 2011

Developed a machine learning system to predict the quality of user reviews, now deployed on Google Play.

Software Development Engineering Intern - Microsoft, Redmond Summer 2010

Built the intellsense code completion system for a scientific computing language, and contributed to its compiler.

Open-source Projects

UNetbootin (LiveUSB Creator) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UNetbootin
40 million downloads. UNetbootin creates bootable USB flash drives for various (50+) Linux distributions.

Ubuntu Installer for Windows (Wubi) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wubi_(software)
Now part of Ubuntu. Built the first versions of Wubi, which allows Ubuntu to be installed from Windows.

HabitLab (In-the-wild Behavior Change Research Platform) https://habitlab.stanford.edu
12,000+ daily active users. I built HabitLab over my Ph.D, and it is still used for research at Stanford Medical School.

Conference and Journal Papers

Geza Kovacs, Zhengxuan Wu, Michael Bernstein. "Not Now, Ask Later: Users Weaken Their Behavior Change Regimen Over Time, But Expect To Re-Strengthen It Imminently" ACM annual conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI) 2021 (to appear).

Samuel Läubli, Patrick Simianer, Joern Wuebker, **Geza Kovacs**, Rico Sennrich, Spence Green. "The Impact of Text Presentation on Translator Performance." Target: International Journal of Translation Studies, 2021 (to appear).

Geza Kovacs, Drew Mylander Gregory, Zilin Ma, Zhengxuan Wu, Golrokh Emami, Jacob Ray, Michael Bernstein. "Conservation of Procrastination: Do Productivity Interventions Save Time Or Just Redistribute It?" ACM annual conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI) 2019.

Geza Kovacs, Zhengxuan Wu, Michael Bernstein. "Rotating Online Behavior Change Interventions Increases Effectiveness But Also Increases Attrition." ACM annual conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW) 2018.

Rajan Vaish, Neil Gaikwad, **Geza Kovacs**, Andreas Veit, Ranjay Krishna, Imanol Arrieta Ibarra, Camelia Simoiu, Michael Wilber, Serge Belongie, Sharad Goel, James Davis, Michael Bernstein. "Crowd Research: Open and Scalable University Laboratories." ACM Symposium on User Interface Software and Technology (UIST) 2017.

Kiley Sobel, **Geza Kovacs**, Galen McQuillen, Andrew Cross, Nirupama Chandrasekaran, Nathalie Riche, Ed Cutrell, Meredith Morris. "EduFeed: A Social Feed to Engage Preliterate Children in Educational Activities." ACM annual conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW) 2017.

Geza Kovacs. "Effects of In-Video Quizzes on MOOC Lecture Viewing." ACM annual conference on Learning at Scale (L@S) 2016.

Geza Kovacs and Robert C. Miller. "Smart Subtitles for Vocabulary Learning." ACM annual conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI) 2014.

Peer-Reviewed Extended Abstracts

Stanford Crowd Research, **Geza Kovacs**, Rajan Vaish, Michael Bernstein. "Daemo: A Self-Governed Crowdsourcing Marketplace". ACM Symposium on User Interface Software and Technology (UIST) 2015, Poster.

Geza Kovacs. "FeedLearn: Using Facebook Feeds for Microlearning." ACM annual conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI) 2015, Extended Abstracts.

Geza Kovacs. "QuizCram: A Question-Driven Video Studying Interface." ACM annual conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI) 2015, Extended Abstracts.

Joseph Jay Williams, **Geza Kovacs**, Caren Walker, Samuel G Maldonado, Tania Lombrozo. "Learning Online via Prompts to Explain." ACM annual conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI) 2014, Extended Abstracts.

Geza Kovacs and Robert C. Miller. "Foreign Manga Reader: Learn Grammar and Pronunciation while Reading Comics." ACM Symposium on User Interface Software and Technology (UIST) 2013, Demo.

Geza Kovacs. "Smart Subtitles for Language Learning." ACM annual conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI) 2013, Extended Abstracts.

Geza Kovacs. "ScreenMatch: providing context to software translators by displaying screenshots." ACM annual conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI) 2012, Extended Abstracts.

Invited Talks

Geza Kovacs. "Predictive Translation Memory in the Wild: A Study of Interactive Machine Translation Use on Lilt." Association for Machine Translation in the Americas (AMTA) Workshop on the Impact of Machine Translation (iMpacT 2020).

Awards and Honors

Stanford Human-Centered AI Grant (for my research project HabitLab) 2018
National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate Fellowship 2013
National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship 2013
1st place, Most Useful, ACM UIST (User Interface Software and Technology) Student Innovation Contest 2012
1st place, ACM CHI (Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems) Student Research Competition 2012
Member of Phi Beta Kappa (Liberal Arts), Tau Beta Pi (Engineering), Eta Kappa Nu (EECS) honor societies 2012
1st place, MIT Autonomous Robotics Competition (MASLAB) 2010

Academic Service

Reviewer, ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI) 2015, 2018, 2019, 2021
Reviewer, ACM Symposium on User Interface Software and Technology (UIST) 2017, 2018
Reviewer, ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW) 2021
Reviewer, ACM Interactive, Mobile, Wearable and Ubiquitous Technologies (IMWUT) 2019

Teaching Experience

Understanding Users (CS 377U) – Teaching Assistant, at Stanford Spring 2019

Human Computer Interaction Research (CS 376) – Teaching Assistant, at Stanford Fall 2018

Natural Language Processing (6.863) – Teaching Assistant, at MIT Fall 2012

Introduction to C++ IAP (6.096) – Instructor, at MIT January 2011
My lectures and teaching materials for this course are available on MIT OpenCourseWare:
http://ocw.mit.edu/courses/electrical-engineering-and-computer-science/6-096-introduction-to-c-january-iap-2011

MASLAB Mobile Autonomous Systems Lab (6.186) – Software Director, at MIT January 2011
Gave lectures on computer vision and managed the software stack for MIT's autonomous robotics competition.

Relevant Coursework

Deep Learning (CS 230), Natural Language Processing (6.864, 6.863), Artificial Intelligence (6.034), Data Mining (CS 224w), Statistical Models (6.804), Statistics (18.440), Linear Algebra (18.700), Security (6.857), Bioinformatics (6.047), HCI (6.803), Algorithms (6.006, 6.046), Linguistics (24.900), Compilers (CS 143)

Selected Press

HabitLab

The HabitLab Browser Extension Curbs Your Time Wasted on the Web. WIRED, January 2019.
https://www.wired.com/story/habitlab-browser-extension/

Prevent Procrastination With This Chrome Extension. Lifehacker, February 2019.
https://lifehacker.com/prevent-procrastination-with-this-chrome-extension-1832723418

Finding It Hard to Focus? Maybe It's Not Your Fault. The New York Times, August 2018.
https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/14/style/how-can-i-focus-better.html

Be More Mindful of the Time You Waste Online With HabitLab. Lifehacker, August 2018.
https://lifehacker.com/be-more-mindful-of-the-time-you-waste-online-with-habit-1828118354

HabitLab Subtly Helps You Change Bad Online Habits. How-To Geek, August 2018.
https://www.howtogeek.com/fyi/free-download-habitlab-subtly-helps-you-change-bad-online-habits/

Use These Strategies to Maximize Productivity – Without Inventing an Extra Weekday. Entrepreneur, May 2018.
https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/312764

The Chrome Extensions We Can't Live Without. WIRED, February 2018.
https://www.wired.com/story/best-chrome-extensions/

Crowd Research / Daemo

Amazon's Turker Crowd Has Had Enough. WIRED, August 2017.
https://www.wired.com/story/amazons-turker-crowd-has-had-enough/

A Stanford-led platform for crowdsourced research gives experience to global participants. Stanford University News, October 2017.
https://news.stanford.edu/2017/10/23/crowdsourced-research-gives-experience-global-participants/

UNetbootin

How To Try Linux Without Making Any Changes To Your PC. Forbes, September 2018.
https://www.forbes.com/sites/jasonevangelho/2018/09/18/how-to-safely-try-linux-on-your-mac-or-windows-pc/

Create a Bootable Linux Flash Drive in Three Easy Steps. PCWorld, February 2012.
https://www.pcworld.com/article/249870/create_a_bootable_linux_flash_drive_in_three_easy_steps.html

The Complete Guide to Saving Your Windows System with a Thumb Drive. Lifehacker, March 2010.
https://lifehacker.com/the-complete-guide-to-saving-your-windows-system-with-a-5504531

Wubi

Wubi arrives: a look at Ubuntu 8.04 alpha 5. Ars Technica, February 2008.
https://arstechnica.com/information-technology/2008/02/wubi-arrives-a-look-at-ubuntu-8-04-alpha-5/

Install Ubuntu on a Windows Netbook, No Partitioning Needed. Lifehacker, May 2008.
https://lifehacker.com/install-ubuntu-on-a-windows-netbook-no-partitioning-ne-5542387

The Ubuntu guide for displaced Windows users. PCWorld, March 2013.
https://www.pcworld.com/article/2030132/the-ubuntu-guide-for-displaced-windows-users.html

Management and Mentorship

Sai Gouravajhala, Research Scientist at Lilt.	August 2020 – present
Hannah Yan, Data Scientist at Lilt.	September 2020 – present
Jessy Lin, Research Intern at Lilt. Now a Ph.D student at UC Berkeley.	August 2019 – August 2020
Zhengxuan Wu, MS student researcher at Stanford.	2018 – 2019
Zilin Ma, undergraduate researcher at Stanford. Now a Ph.D student at Harvard.	Summer 2018
Drew Mylander Gregory, undergraduate researcher at Stanford.	Summer 2018
Golrokh Emami, undergraduate researcher at Stanford.	Summer 2018
Jacob Ray, undergraduate researcher at Stanford.	Summer 2018