

Igor Shalyminov

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About me

I'm an applied scientist at Amazon AWS AI working on Conversational NLP. I obtained my PhD from the Interaction Lab, Heriot-Watt University (Edinburgh, UK) working under the supervision of Prof Oliver Lemon and Dr Arash Eshghi on Machine Learning/Natural Language Processing methods for data-efficient, robust, and practically applicable dialogue systems. If you think my background could be useful for you, please feel free to contact me.

Education

PhD, Computer Science Oct 2016 — Oct 2020
Heriot-Watt University

Thesis title: Data-efficient methods for neural dialogue systems
Supervisors: Prof Oliver Lemon, Dr Arash Eshghi
Examiners: Dr Andreas Vlachos, Dr Ioannis Konstas

Professional Retraining in Data Analysis (MSc equiv.) Sep 2010 — Jun 2012

Yandex School of Data Analysis (Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology)
Major: Computer Science
GPA: 4,66

Specialist (MSc equiv.) - with distinction Sep 2005 — Jun 2010

Moscow State University of Instrument Engineering and Computer Science
Major: Computing machines, systems, and networks
GPA: 5,0

Defended thesis "A module for generating data for equipment reliability estimation in the 'Prognosis' software suite"

Awards

2019

Dialogue System Technology Challenge (DSTC) 8, Fast Domain Adaptation - 1st place
EMNLP 2019 - Student Travel Scholarship

2018

SCAI workshop@EMNLP 2018 - travel grant from sponsors (Microsoft, Facebook, Google, and TextKernel)
Amazon Alexa Prize 2018 (part of team Alana) - 3rd place prize + research grant

2017

Amazon Alexa Prize 2017 (part of team Alana) - 3rd place prize + research grant

2016

James Watt Scholarship from Heriot-Watt University

2010

Featured in Moscow's Best Graduates journal

Work experience

Amazon AWS AI

Dec 2022 — Present

Applied Scientist

Conversational NLP research

Amazon Alexa

Jun 2021 — Dec 2022

Applied Scientist

Automatic Speech Recognition research

Alana

Jun 2020 — Apr 2021

Research Engineer

End-to-end goal-oriented dialogue system bootstrapping

Microsoft Research Montréal

Jul 2019 — Oct 2019

Research Intern

Mentor: Dr. Hannes Schulz

Project: Dialogue State Tracking Challenge (DSTC) 8 - Fast Domain Adaptation

Microsoft Research AI

Jun 2018 — Sep 2018

Research Intern

Mentor: Dr. Sungjin Lee

Project title: "Improving robustness of goal-oriented dialog systems in an unsupervised way".

Yandex

Aug 2013 — Sep 2016

Software Engineer

Projects I participated in:

- Voice interfaces for applications - dialogue management module
- Voice analytics for callcenters - search engine for voice data
- Russian National Corpus - search engine for linguistic research

Yandex School of Data Analysis (Yandex / Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology)

Sep 2013 — Jun 2015

Teaching Assistant

Natural Language Processing course taught by Dr. Alexey Zobnin (Computer Science department, final year course).

My responsibilities for the course were:

- designing problems for the seminar classes;
- conducting the classes;
- helping the professor with designing home assignments and reviewing students' submissions.

Microsoft Research

May 2014 — Aug 2014

Research Intern

Mentors: Dr. Yuxiong He, Dr. Sameh Elnikety

I worked on a query optimizer for a term distributed search engine. During my internship, I completed the following tasks:

- built combined analytical and statistical models of a search query for estimating its latency and amount of data for network communication;
- designed and implemented algorithms for producing optimal query plans in terms of minimizing either of the two objectives: latency or network communication.

The prototype of the query optimizer and distributed experimental platform was implemented in Java and Python.

Yandex

May 2012 — Aug 2013

Junior Software Engineer

Participated in development of Russian National Corpus . I maintained the search engine at its existing architecture and explored the possibilities of improving it for better performance and reliability.

Yandex

Jun 2011 — Dec 2011

Software Engineer Intern

Mentor: Dr. Alexey Zobnin

Built a prototype of an N-gram search service for Russian National Corpus. The service consisted of two components:

- N-grams storage - a compressed delta-encoded word trie written in C++;
- Search client - an http server in Python receiving user requests and fetching the results from the N-gram storage.

Intel Corporation

June 2010 — Aug 2010

Software Engineer Intern

Mentor: Dr. Denis Makoshenko

As a part of Intel Summer School 2010, I participated in Intel C/C++ Compiler development with a research project "Enhancing the methodology to access the bottom boundary of software pipelined cycle execution time as the application of an algorithm for finding a maximum cycle in a directed graph".

Moscow State University of Instrument Engineering and Computer Science

2006 — 2012

Software Engineer

Participated in the development of "Prognosis" - a software suite for reliability calculation of the equipment used in nuclear energetics.

Additional Education

Summer Schools attended:

- Microsoft School on Algorithms for Massive Data (ALMADA). Attended lectures on the effective algorithms for External Memory computational model, algorithms and techniques for large-scale graph problems. Did theoretical assignments on graph algorithms and a Linq programming assignment in Linq (2013)
- Yandex Summer School On Distributed Computing. Attended lectures on Information Retrieval and MapReduce computing model. Did a practice assignment in Hadoop (2011)
- Intel Summer School. Attended lectures and webinars on parallel computing and processor architectures. Learned Intel IA64 architecture (Itanium I and II), participated in Intel C++ Compiler development. (2010)

University Courses Taken:

- Formal Semantics and Typology of Anaphora taught by Barbara H Partee. National Research University Higher School Of Economics (2014)

MOOCs Taken:

- Generative Adversarial Networks (GANs) Specialization - Coursera (2022)
- Natural Language Processing Specialization - Coursera (2021)
- Practical Reinforcement Learning - Coursera (2019)
- Bayesian Statistics: Techniques and Models - Coursera (2019)
- Bayesian Statistics: From Concept to Data Analysis - Coursera (2019)
- Bayesian Methods for Machine Learning - Coursera (2018)
- Deep Learning Specialization - Coursera (2018)
- Neural Networks For Machine Learning - Coursera (2017)
- Artificial Intelligence for Robotics - Udacity (2016)
- Deep Learning - Udacity (2016)
- Machine Learning: Reinforcement Learning - Udacity (2015)
- Intro to Artificial Intelligence - Udacity (2013)
- Intro To Statistics - Udacity (2012)

Certifications:

- Microsoft Certified Professional - 70-536 Microsoft .NET Application Development Foundation
- Electronic office programmer - C++ and Pascal programming (Specialist Training Centre at the Bauman Moscow State Technical University)

Language Ability

Russian - native, English - upper-intermediate (C1), Spanish - beginner (A1)

Relevant Skills

Programming Languages: Python, C++, Java, Perl | **Frameworks:** Tensorflow, PyTorch, scikit-learn, numpy/scipy, pandas, Lucene | **Databases:** mongodb, MySQL | **Tools:** Jupyter notebook, matplotlib | **Core Technical Skills:** classic algorithms and data structures, mathematical foundations, machine learning algorithms, natural language processing

Interests

Languages, photography, electronic music production.

References

Oliver Lemon, PhD

Professor, School of Mathematical & Computer Sciences, Heriot-Watt University

Email: o.lemon@hw.ac.uk

Arash Eshghi, PhD

Assistant Professor, School of Mathematical & Computer Sciences, Heriot-Watt University

Email: a.eshghi@hw.ac.uk

Sungjin Lee, PhD

Principal Machine Learning Scientist, Amazon Alexa AI

Email: sungjinl@amazon.com

Hannes Schulz, PhD

Senior Researcher, Microsoft Research Montréal

Email: haschulz@microsoft.com

Publications

2021

Igor Shalyminov, Alessandro Sordoni, Adam Atkinson, Hannes Schulz. GRTr: Generative-Retrieval Transformers for Data-Efficient Dialogue Domain Adaptation. IEEE/ACM TASLP Special Issue On Eighth Dialog System Technology Challenge

2020

Igor Shalyminov. Data-Efficient Methods for Dialogue Systems. PhD thesis, Heriot-Watt University

Igor Shalyminov, Alessandro Sordoni, Adam Atkinson, Hannes Schulz. Fast Domain Adaptation For Goal-Oriented Dialogue Using a Hybrid Generative-Retrieval Transformer. ICASSP 2020 (to appear)

Igor Shalyminov, Alessandro Sordoni, Adam Atkinson, Hannes Schulz. Hybrid Generative-Retrieval Transformers for Dialogue Domain Adaptation. DSTC8@AAAI 2020

2019

Igor Shalyminov, Sungjin Lee, Arash Eshghi, Oliver Lemon. Data-Efficient Goal-Oriented Conversation with Dialogue Knowledge Transfer Networks. EMNLP 2019

Igor Shalyminov, Sungjin Lee, Arash Eshghi, Oliver Lemon. Few-Shot Dialogue Generation Without Annotated Data: A Transfer Learning Approach. SigDial 2019

Sungjin Lee and **Igor Shalyminov**. Contextual Out of domain Utterance Handling with Counterfeit Data Augmentation. ICASSP 2019

2018

Igor Shalyminov and Sungjin Lee. Improving Robustness of Neural Dialog Systems in a Data-Efficient Way with Turn

Dropout. NeurIPS 2018 workshop on Conversational AI

Igor Shalyminov, Arash Eshghi, and Oliver Lemon. Multi-Task Learning for Domain-General Spoken Disfluency Detection in Dialogue Systems. SemDial 2018

Igor Shalyminov, Ondrej Dusek, and Oliver Lemon. Neural Response Ranking for Social Conversation: A Data-Efficient Approach. Search-Oriented Conversational AI, an EMNLP 2018 Workshop

Amanda Cercas Curry, Ioannis Papaioannou, Alessandro Suglia, Shubham Agarwal, **Igor Shalyminov**, Xinnuo Xu, Ondřej Dušek, Arash Eshghi, Ioannis Konstas, Verena Rieser and Oliver Lemon. Alana v2: Entertaining and Informative Open-domain Social Dialogue using Ontologies and Entity Linking. Alexa Prize proceedings, 2018

2017

Igor Shalyminov, Arash Eshghi, and Oliver Lemon. Challenging Neural Dialogue Models with Natural Data: Memory Networks Fail on Incremental Phenomena. SemDial 2017

Arash Eshghi, **Igor Shalyminov**, and Oliver Lemon. Bootstrapping incremental dialogue systems from minimal data: the generalisation power of semantic grammars. EMNLP 2017

Arash Eshghi, **Igor Shalyminov**, and Oliver Lemon. Bootstrapping Dialogue Systems: Using a Semantic Model of Dialogue to Generalise from Minimal Data. LaML 2017

Arash Eshghi, **Igor Shalyminov**, and Oliver Lemon. Interactional Dynamics and the Emergence of Language Games. FADLI 2017

Ioannis Papaioannou, Amanda Cercas Curry, Jose L. Part, **Igor Shalyminov**, Xinnuo Xu, Yanchao Yu, Ondrej Dušek, Verena Rieser, Oliver Lemon. Alana: Social Dialogue using an Ensemble Model and a Ranker trained on User Feedback. 2017 Alexa Prize Proceedings

Ioannis Papaioannou, Amanda Cercas Curry, Jose L. Part, **Igor Shalyminov**, Xinnuo Xu, Yanchao Yu, Ondrej Dušek, Verena Rieser, Oliver Lemon. An Ensemble Model with Ranking for Social Dialogue. NIPS Workshop on Conversational AI 2017

2010

Igor Shalyminov. Using Policies in Designing of a Library for Cell Operations in 'Prognoz' Software Package. Software for PC-based systems for various purposes #13, pp. 101–107. ISBN 978-5-8068-0462-5

2009

Igor Shalyminov. Algorithms for calculation of constructions fault probability in 'Prognoz' software package. Applied Mathematics and Mathematical Modelling, pp. 70–77. ISBN 978-5-8122-1023-6

2008

Aleksandr Aleksandrov, Alexey Vostrikov, and **Igor Shalyminov**. An algorithm for generation geometric objects for crack formation analysis. Software for PC-based systems for various purposes #11, pp. 145–148. ISBN 978-5-8068-0418-2

2007

Aleksandr Aleksandrov and **Igor Shalyminov**. An algorithm for definition of crack formation probability in statistical modeling. Software for PC-based systems for various purposes #10, pp. 11–15. ISBN 978-5-8068-0393-2

Professional Service

Program committee/reviewing:

2023

AAAI 2023, ICASSP 2023, ACL 2023 (main + industry tracks)

2022

AAAI 2022, NAACL 2022 Industry Track, COLING 2022

Transactions on Audio, Speech and Language Processing (IEEE/ACM TASLP) 2022

2021

AAAI 2021, EACL 2021, NAACL-HLT 2021 (main + industry tracks), ACL 2021

Transactions on Audio, Speech and Language Processing (IEEE/ACM TASLP) 2021

2020

ACL 2020 (main + demo tracks), AAAI 2020, EMNLP 2020, COLING 2020, SCAI@EMNLP 2020

2019

EMNLP 2019, SCAI@IJCAI 2019, ACL 2019

2018

ACL 2018 (last-minute reviewer), COLING 2018, EMNLP 2018 (secondary reviewer), SCAI@EMNLP 2018