

# Yating Wu

PhD Student

yating.wu@utexas.edu  
lingchensanwen.github.io  
in wuyating  
YatingWu96

## Research Overview

My research focuses on natural language processing, with an emphasis on developing methods that help language models better understand, organize, and generate text through **questions**. I work on:

- 💡 Developing evaluation methods to measure structure, coherence, and information flow in text.
- 💡 Identifying important parts of text to improve model learning and generalization to new texts and tasks.
- 💡 Applying question-based representations to tasks such as elaborative generation and document understanding.

## Education

- 2022 – Now **Ph.D. in Electrical and Computer Engineering**, *The University of Texas at Austin*  
Advisors: Jessy Li, Alex Dimakis
- 2020 – 2022 **M.S. in Electrical and Computer Engineering**, *The University of Texas at Austin*
- 2014 – 2019 **B.Eng. in Computer Science & B.A. in Japanese**, *Dalian University of Technology*
- 2017 - 2018 **Exchange student in Computer Science**, *The University of Tokyo*  
Advisor: Toshihiko Yamasaki

## Publications

- [1] Ramya Namuduri, **Yating Wu**, Anshun Asher Zheng, Manya Wadhwa, Greg Durrett and Junyi Jessy Li “QUDsim: Quantifying Discourse Similarities in LLM-Generated Text.” Conference on Language Modeling (**COLM**), 2025 [\[Paper\]](#)
- [2] **Yating Wu\***, Ritika Rajesh Mangla\*, Alexandros G. Dimakis, Greg Durrett, Junyi Jessy Li. “Which questions should I answer? Salience Prediction of Inquisitive Questions.” Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing (**EMNLP Oral**), 2024. **Outstanding Paper Award**. [\[Paper\]](#)
- [3] Negin Raoof\*, **Yating Wu\***, Carlos Bonilla\*, Junyi Jessy Li, Stephanie M Grasso, Alex Dimakis, Zoi Gkalitsiou. “Modeling Bilingual Disfluencies with Large Language Models.” Workshop on LLMs and Cognition in International Conference on Machine Learning (**ICML Workshop**), 2024. [\[Paper\]](#)

- [4] **Yating Wu**, Ritika Rajesh Mangla, Greg Durrett, Junyi Jessy Li. “QUDeval: The Evaluation of Questions Under Discussion Discourse Parsing.” Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing (**EMNLP Oral**), 2023. [\[Paper\]](#)
- [5] **Yating Wu\***, William Sheffield\*, Kyle Mahowald, and Junyi Jessy Li. “Elaborative Simplification as Implicit Questions Under Discussion.” Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing (**EMNLP**), 2023. [\[Paper\]](#)
- [6] Wei-Jen Ko, **Yating Wu**, Cutter Dalton, Dananjay Srinivas, Greg Durrett and Junyi Jessy Li. “Discourse Analysis via Questions and Answers: Parsing Dependency Structures of Questions Under Discussion.” Findings of the Association for Computational Linguistics (**ACL**), 2023. [\[Paper\]](#)
- [7] Venelin Kovatchev, Trina Chatterjee, Venkata S Govindarajan, Jifan Chen, Eunsol Choi, Gabriella Chronis, Anubrata Das, Katrin Erk, Matthew Lease, Junyi Jessy Li, **Yating Wu**, Kyle Mahowald. “longhorns at DADC 2022: How many linguists does it take to fool a Question Answering model? A systematic approach to adversarial attacks.” DADC Workshop in The Nations of the Americas Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics (**NAACL Workshop**), 2022 [\[Paper\]](#)

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## Industry Experiences

- Jun - Spt. 2025 **Applied Scientist Intern**, *AWS AI Lab*, Santa Clara, CA
  - Long-context memory support for LLM agents
- May - Aug. 2024 **Applied Scientist Intern**, *Amazon Alexa AGI*, Sunnyvale, CA
  - Enhancing planning and tool-use capabilities in LLM agents
- Jun. - Aug. 2023 **Software Engineer Intern**, *Amazon Prime Video*, Austin, TX
  - Implemented an in-game notification system
- Jun. - Sept. 2021 **Software Engineer Intern**, *Amazon Prime Video*, Austin, TX
  - Implemented a live events ranking system

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## Teaching Experience

### Head Teaching Assistant

- CS391L **Machine Learning (Graduate)**, Summer 2022 – Present  
Instructors: Adam Klivans, Qiang Liu, UT Austin
- CS391L **Machine Learning (Graduate)**, Fall 2021 – Spring 2022  
Instructors: Adam Klivans, Qiang Liu, UT Austin

### Recitation Instructor

- EE422C **Software Design and Implementation II (Undergraduate)**, Spring 2021  
Instructor: Edison Thomaz, UT Austin
- EE422C **Software Design and Implementation II (Undergraduate)**, Summer 2020  
Instructor: Vallath Nandakumar, UT Austin

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## Mentoring Experience

- Master’s student **Ritika Mangla**, 2022-2024, co-authored paper [1] and [3]

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## Honors

- Nov. 2024 **Outstanding paper award in EMNLP 2024**  
Jul. 2021 **1st place in VMware Codehouse Palo Alto**  
Jun. 2019 **Outstanding graduates of Dalian University of Technology**

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## Invited Talks

- Mar. 2025 Outstanding Student Lecture Series, UT Austin  
Apr. 2024 MLL Research Symposium, UT Austin

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## Service

### Conference Reviewer

ACL Rolling Review, ACL 2024–2025, EMNLP 2024, COLM 2024-2025  
Workshops: ICML 2025 XAI4Science, AAAI MARW, 2025NeurIPS 2024  
Behavioral ML, ICML 2024 DMLR, ICML 2024 LLMs and Cognition,

### Department Service

Graduate student representative on faculty hiring panel  
TA representative on online course infrastructure

### Student Volunteer

ACL 2023