Maria Teleki

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SUMMARY

I am a fourth-year PhD Student in Computer Science at Texas A&M University, advised by Prof. James Caverlee. **My research rethinks spoken language understanding by modeling disfluency, spontaneity, and variability as fundamental features of human communication.** I aim to develop next-generation conversational AI that thrives under real-world conditions — systems that generalize across speakers, domains, and contexts to power scalable, speech-centric applications in information access, recommendation, and decision support.

EDUCATION

2022 - Present	**PhD Computer Science at Texas A&M University**	(GPA: 4.0/4.0)
2017 - 2022	**B.S. Computer Science at Texas A&M University**	(GPA: 3.9/4.0)
	– Summa Cum Laude	

PREPRINTS

- <u>Maria Teleki</u>, Sai Janjur, Haoran Liu, Oliver Grabner, Ketan Verma, Thomas Docog, Xiangjue Dong, Lingfeng Shi, Cong Wang, Stephanie Birkelbach, Jason Kim, Yin Zhang, and James Caverlee (2025b). "**DRES: Benchmarking LLMs for Disfluency Removal**". In: *arXiv*

- <u>Maria Teleki</u>, Sai Janjur, Haoran Liu, Oliver Grabner, Ketan Verma, Thomas Docog, Xiangjue Dong, Lingfeng Shi, Cong Wang, Stephanie Birkelbach, Jason Kim, Yin Zhang, and James Caverlee (2025a). "**Z-Scores: A Metric for Linguistically Assessing Disfluency Removal**". In: *arXiv*

- Xiangjue Dong*, <u>Maria Teleki</u>*, and James Caverlee (2024). "**A Survey on LLM Inference-Time Self-Improvement**". In: *ArXiv*

- Xiangjue Dong, Cong Wang, <u>Maria Teleki</u>, Millennium Bismay, and James Caverlee (2025). "CHOIR: Collaborative Harmonization fOr Inference Robustness". In: *arXiv 2025*

PUBLICATIONS

- <u>Maria Teleki</u>, Vedangi Bengali, Xiangjue Dong, Sai Tejas Janjur, Haoran Liu, Tian Liu, Cong Wang, Ting Liu, Yin Zhang, Frank Shipman, and James Caverlee (2025). "**A Survey on LLMs for Story Generation**". In: *EMNLP Findings*

- <u>Maria Teleki</u>, Lingfeng Shi, Chengkai Liu, and James Caverlee (2025). "**I want a horror – comedy – movie: Slips-of-the-Tongue Impact Conversational Recommender System Performance**". In: *Interspeech*

- <u>Maria Teleki</u>, Xiangjue Dong, Haoran Liu, and James Caverlee (2025). "**Masculine Defaults via Gendered Discourse in Podcasts and Large Language Models**". In: *ICWSM 2025*

  – Presented at IC2S2 2025 [nominated for a 🏆 methodology award] and SICon@ACL 2025.

- <u>Maria Teleki</u>, Xiangjue Dong, Soohwan Kim, and James Caverlee (2024). "**Comparing ASR Systems in the Context of Speech Disfluencies**". In: *Interspeech 2024*

- <u>Maria Teleki</u>, Xiangjue Dong, and James Caverlee (2024). "**Quantifying the Impact of Dis-**

fluency on Spoken Content Summarization". In: *LREC-COLING*

- Rohan Chaudhury, <u>Maria Teleki</u>, Xiangjue Dong, and James Caverlee (2024). "**DACL: Disfluency Augmented Curriculum Learning for Fluent Text Generation**". In: *LREC-COLING*

- Xiangjue Dong, Ziwei Zhu, Zhuoer Wang, <u>Maria Teleki</u>, and James Caverlee (2023). "**Co2PT: Mitigating Bias in Pre-trained Language Models through Counterfactual Contrastive Prompt Tuning**". In: *Findings of EMNLP*

- Majid Alfifi, Xiangjue Dong, Timo Feldman, Allen Lin, Karthic Madanagopal, Aditya Pethe, <u>Maria Teleki</u>, Zhuoer Wang, Ziwei Zhu, and James Caverlee (2022). "**Howdy Y'all: An Alexa TaskBot**". In: *Alexa Prize TaskBot Challenge Proceedings*

MENTORING

MS Students
Rohan Chaudhury [★▲] – *First Employment: Software Engineer at Amazon*
Sai Janjur [♠♣] – *Presented at Student Research Week [🏆 1st Place Category Award]*
Cong Wang [♠♣]

Undergraduate Students
Soohwan Kim [★♦♣] – *First Employment: Software Engineer at UPS*
Stephanie Birkelbach [♠♣]
Anna Irmetova [♣]
Oliver Grabner [♠♣] – *Presented at Student Research Week*
Thomas Docog [♠♣]
Anna Irmetova [♣]
Ketan Verma [♠♣]
Jason Kim [♠♣]
Suhani Saxena [♣]

> ★ *indicates that the student was an author on a published paper during the mentorship;*
> ♠ *indicates that the student was an author on an arXiv paper during the mentorship;*
> ▲ *indicates that the student completed their thesis during the mentorship;*
> ♦ *indicates that the student received course credit as part of the mentorship (i.e. CSCE 485);*
> ♣ *indicates that the student had no publications prior to mentorship.*

SERVICE

Program Committee (Reviewer) for ACL ARR: Aug '24, Oct '24, Dec '24, May '25, Oct '25
Program Committee (Reviewer) for ICWSM: Jan '24, May '24, Sep '24, Jan '25, Sep '25
External Program Committee (External Reviewer) for RecSys: '24

AWARDS & FUNDING

To date, I have received >\$210,000 in funding.

(2022-2026)	Dr. Dionel Avilés '53 and Dr. James Johnson '67 Fellowship in Computer Science and Engineering – *$115,625 plus tuition and fees (∼$69,496), and health insurance (∼$9,241)*
(2025)	Department Travel Grant – *$1,000*
(2024)	Department Travel Grant – *$1,000*
(2024)	CRA-WP Grad Cohort for Women – *∼$1,000*
(2017-2021)	President's Endowed Scholarship – *$12,000*
(2018)	Bertha & Samuel Martin Scholarship – *$1,000*

INVITED TALKS

(2025)	*Guest Lecture on Speech Language Models* Texas A&M University, CSCE 676 Data Mining & Analysis
(2025)	*Conversational AI* Revionics
(2025)	*The Other AI: An Intuitive Understanding of Artificial Intelligence* Ross University – School of Veterinary Medicine, Veterinary Business Management Association Club
(2025)	*How does ChatGPT work? & My research!* Texas A&M University, Club of Aggie Female Engineers (C.A.F.E.)
(2025)	*Guest Lectures on IR Evaluation and Learning to Rank* Texas A&M University, CSCE 670 Information Storage & Retrieval
(2024)	*The Other AI: An Intuitive Understanding of Artificial Intelligence* Texas Tech University – School of Veterinary Medicine, Veterinary Business Management Association Club

CERTIFICATIONS

(Spring 2025)	Professional Development **Mastery Certificate in Instruction & Assessment** – *GRAD Aggies, CIRTL@TAMU*
(Spring 2025)	**Academy for Future Faculty** Certificate – *CIRTL@TAMU*

WORK

Software Enginering Intern at RetailMeNot   May 2021 - August 2021

Used Amazon SageMaker and spaCy to get BERT embeddings for concatenated coupon titles and descriptions. Analyzed the relationship between each dimension of the BERT embeddings and uCTR using Spearman's correlation coefficient, and used PCA to find dimensions with the strongest correlations for coupon ranking.

Software Engineering Intern at RetailMeNot   May 2020 - August 2020

Developed the "RetailMeNot DealFinder" Alexa Skill to help users activate cash back offers. Presented on Alexa Skill Development at the Data Science Sandbox with both Valassis and RetailMeNot teams.

Peer Teacher at Texas A&M University   Dec 2018 - Dec 2019

Helped students with programming homework and answered conceptual questions by hosting office hours and assisting at lab sessions for CSCE 121 and 181. Developed notes with exercises and examples to work through as a group during CSCE 121 reviews.

Applications Engineering Intern at Silicon Labs May 2019 - August 2019

Designed and implemented the Snooper library to (1) systemize IC bus traffic snooping (I2C, UART, SPI, etc.) across different snooping devices (Saleae, Beagle, etc.), and (2) translate the traffic to a human-readable form for debugging. Responded to multiple tickets from customers using the library.

Afterschool Instructor at The Y (YMCA) Sep 2016 - July 2017

Taught multiple weekly classes at local elementary schools for the YMCA Afterschool program, and developed curriculum for the program for Lego Mindstorms Robotics and "Crazy Science."