Sashank Santhanam

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Education

University of North Carolina – Charlotte — Charlotte, NC
Ph.D. in Computer Science — expected May 2021

- Research area: Dialogue Systems, Human Behavior Modeling
- Advisors: Dr. Samira Shaikh
- Committee: Dr. Wlodek Zadrozny, Dr. Minwoo Jake Lee, Dr. Nicholas Davis

University of North Carolina – Charlotte — Charlotte, NC
MS in Computer Science — Dec 2015

Anna University — Tamil Nadu, India
BE in Computer Science and Engineering — May 2014

Journal Publications

Shaikh, S., **Santhanam S**., Srinivasan, V., Mahajan, K., "Towards Understanding the Pragmatics of Emojis through Solidarity Expressed during Crisis Events", Under Review in ACM Transaction of Social Computing,2019

Santhanam, S., Shaikh, S., "Survey of Natural Language Generation: A Perspective from Traditional Statistical Approaches to Deep Learning Approaches With a Focus on Dialogue Systems", Under Review in Journal of Intelligent Information Systems, 2019,

Conference Publications

Santhanam S., Shaikh, S., "Salient Context Identification from Memory for Neural Dialog Systems", [Under Review, 2019]

Wesslen, R., **Santhanam, S.**, Karduni, A., Cho, I., Shaikh, S., Dou, W., "Investigating Effects of Visual Anchors on Decision-Making about Misinformation", in 21st International IEEE Conference on Visualization (EuroVis), Porto, Portugal, to appear,

Karduni, A., Cho, I. Wesslen, R., **Santhanam, S.**, Volkova, S., Arendt, D., Shaikh, S., Dou, W., "Vulnerable to Misinformation? Verifi!", in 24th ACM Conference on Intelligent User Interfaces, Los Angeles, USA, Mar. 16-20 2019,

Karduni, A., Wesslen, R., **Santhanam, S.**, Cho, I., Volkova, S., Arendt, D., Shaikh, S., Dou, W., "Can You Verifi This? Studying Uncertainty and Decision-Making about Misinformation in Visual Analytics.", in 12th International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media, Stanford, USA, Jun. 25-28 2018, (***Acceptance Rate**: 16%*)

Santhanam S., Srinivasan, V., Glass, S., Shaikh, S., "I Stand With You: Using Emojis to Study Solidarity in Crisis Events", in Proceedings of 1st International Workshop on Emoji Understanding and Applications in Social Media (ICWSM), Stanford, USA, Jun. 25-28 2018, published by AAAI.

Santhanam S., Shaikh, S., "I Stand With You: Detecting and Characterizing Expressions of Solidarity in Social Media", in 4th International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2), Chicago, USA, July. 12-15 2018.

Cho, I., Wesslen, R., Karduni, A., **Santhanam, S.**, Shaikh, S., Dou, W., "The Anchoring Effect in Decision-Making with Visual Analytics", in 12th International IEEE Conference Visual Analytics Science and Technology, Phoenix, Arizona, Oct. 1-6 2017, (***Acceptance Rate**: 22% - 25%*)

Poster Presentations

Santhanam S., Shaikh, S., "Salient Context Identification from Memory for Neural Dialog Systems", in 2nd Southern Data Science Conference, Atlanta, USA, Apr. 13-14 2019.

Dalton, A.,Zemal, A., Masoumzadeh, A., Bhatia, A., Dorr, B., Mather, B., Hebenstreit, B., Al-Shaer, E., Khoja, E., Castillo, E.J., Bunch, L., Vlahovic, M., Liu, P., Pirolli, P., Shah, R., Cartacio, S., Shaikh, S., **Santhanam S**., Dhaduvai, S., Strzalkowski, T., Karimi, Y., "Modeling Social Engineering Risk using Attitudes, Actions, and Intentions Reflected in Language Use", in 32nd International FLAIRS Conference, Florida, USA, May. 19-22 2019. [Alphabetical Ordering]

Santhanam S., Shaikh, S., "Propaganda or Clickbait? Understanding and Classifying Types of Misinformation using Recurrent Neural Networks", in 1st Southern Data Science Conference, Atlanta, USA, Apr. 13-14 2018.

Press Coverage

Santhanam S., Shaikh, S., "Understanding the emoji of solidarity", in The Conversation, July 16, 2018

Research Experience

University of North Carolina – Charlotte Charlotte, NC
Ph.D. Candidate
Conversational Agents 2018 – Present

- Creating conversational agents that adapt cognitive architectures using different kinds of memories.
- Building conversational agents that produce emotional messages and engage countermeasures for social engineering and phishing attacks [DARPA Grant]

Human Behavior Modeling 2017 – Present

- Analysis of Twitter and Gab.com to understand how the online community comes together to express messages of solidarity.
- Cross-platform analysis on Twitter and Gab.com for abusive language through various crisis events.

Understanding Decision Making 2017 – Present

- Evaluating the impact of anchoring and confirmation bias on decision making through visual analytics tasks on misinformation.

Professional Experience

Walmart, Global Shared Service Charlotte, NC
Data Analyst 2015 – 2016

- Developed software to help the associates at Walmart to process invoices and other receipts.
- Reduced workload of the associates by auto-matching invoices and the receipts.
- Developed workflows in alteryx and dashboards using Tableau to help in tracking of the backlogs.

Indian Institute of Technology,Madras Tamil Nadu, India
Intern 2015 – 2016

- Mentor: Dr. Saji K. Matthew
- Implemented a scoring algorithm in R to analyze the emotional variation on Twitter data during sporting events

Awards

Visual Dialog - Best Project Award — Lowell, MA
Conversational International Summer School — 2019

Association for Advancement of Artificial Intelligence — Stanford, CA
Graduate Travel Support — 2017 – Present

University of North Carolina – Charlotte — Charlotte, NC
Graduate Assistant Support Plan(GASP) — 2017 – Present

Professional Activities

1) Reviewing

- Reviewer of the **2nd International Workshop on Emoji Understanding and Applications in Social Media Co-located with The Web Conference 2019.**
- Reviewer of **NAACL 2019.**
- Reviewer of **ACL 2019.**
- Reviewer of **ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, 2019.**
- Reviewer **of WiNLP 2019**

2) Invited Lectures

- **Natural Language Processing** - Neural Networks for Natural Language Generation
- **Natural Language Processing** - Machine Translation
- **Computation Human Behavior Modeling (ITCS 8050/6050, PSYC-6099)** – Survey of Natural Language Generation Techniques
- **Applied Machine Learning -** Introduction to Reinforcement Learning