

# Victoria (Viktoriia\*) Firsanova

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Saint Petersburg, Russia (born in Tula, Tula Oblast, Russia)

\*In papers and everywhere else, I spell my name as "Victoria", but in official documents it is spelled as "Viktoriia"

## Research interests

Conversational Artificial Intelligence, Machine Translation, Natural Language Understanding, Natural Language Generation, Transfer Learning

## Projects

- 2020 – Present     **Autism Spectrum Disorder Question Answering (ASD-QA)**  
*The dataset for Closed-domain Question Answering in Russian include question-answer pairs about Autism Spectrum Disorder and inclusive education. The dataset can be used to build dialogue systems such as chatbots and extractive question answering models.*  
Project web site: [asd-qa.org](https://asd-qa.org)
- 2022 – Present     **Empathic Machine Processors for Inclusion (EMPI)**  
*The development of a mobile app for supporting the inclusion of people with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families.*  
Source code, layouts, supporting material: [GitHub](#)
- 2023 – Present     **The Black Box podcast**  
*Podcast about Artificial Intelligence and Natural Language Processing and series of popular science lectures in Russian.*  
Public page: [VK](#)

## Education

- 2022 – Present     **Saint Petersburg State University** – Saint Petersburg, Russia  
PhD in Philology; Theoretical, Applied and Comparative linguistics  
Dissertation: *Neural Transfer Learning for Natural Language Processing in for Tasks in Social Sector*  
Dissertation Advisor: Mitrofanova O. A., PhD, Associate Professor.

- 2020 – 2022     **Saint Petersburg State University** – Saint Petersburg, Russia  
 MA in Philology: Computer and Applied Linguistics  
 Concentrations: Machine Learning, Linguistics  
 Thesis: *Approaches to Building a Dialogue System on Autism Spectrum Disorder with Transformer Architecture*  
 Thesis Advisor: Mitrenina O. V., PhD, Associate Professor.
- 2016 – 2020     **Higher School of Economics** – Saint Petersburg, Russia  
 BA in Philology  
 Concentrations: Linguistics  
 Thesis: *Classification of Messages of Drug Addicts in Social Networks Using Neural Networks*  
 Thesis Advisor: Mitrenina O. V., PhD, Associate Professor.

## Professional Development

- Apr 2023     **Coursera Project Network** – Coursera, Online  
 Course “*Get Started with Figma*”
- Jan 2022     **TU Berlin Winter University** – TU Berlin, Online  
 Course “*Introduction to Artificial Intelligence*”
- Dec 2021     **Professional Development Courses** – ITMO University, Saint Petersburg, Russia  
 Course “*Commercialization of Smart Digital Objects*”
- Oct 2021     **Tomsk State University, The Vladimir Potanin Foundation** – Online  
 Course “*Stress Management*”
- Oct 2021     **Tomsk State University, The Vladimir Potanin Foundation** – Online  
 Course “*Conflict Management*”
- Sep 2021     **Tomsk State University, The Vladimir Potanin Foundation** – Online  
 Course “*Design Thinking*”
- Jul 2021     **The Vladimir Potanin Foundation Summer School** – Online  
 Tracks “*Pro-Bono*”, “*Agile*”, “*Networking*”
- Apr 2021     **DeepLearning.AI** – Coursera, Online  
 Course “*Natural Language Processing with Attention Models*”
- Mar 2021     **University of California, Santa Cruz** – Coursera, Online  
 Course “*Bayesian Statistics: From Concept to Data Analysis*”

- Jan 2021 **Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology, Huawei** – Stepik, Online  
Course “*Huawei: Natural Language Processing*”
- Aug 2020 **Summer School of Machine Learning (SMILES)** – Skoltech, Online
- Jul 2020 **IBM** – Coursera, Online  
Course “*IBM: Introduction to Artificial Intelligence (AI)*”
- Sep 2019 **Fall School for Formal Syntax and Formal Semantics (3-FS)** – Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russia

## Honors and scholarships

- Dec, 2022 Literature [Prize](#) Nominee  
*Author of a short novel*
- Dec, 2022 Literature [Open-Call](#) Participant  
*Author of short read stories*
- Oct, 2021 Winner of the Vladimir Potanin Foundation Competition “[Practices of Personal Philanthropy and Altruism](#)” (Vladimir Potanin Foundation)  
*The project “The Development of the Informational Chat-bot about Autism Spectrum Disorder” was supported by funding provided by the Competition Organizers.*
- Aug, 2021 Winner of the Vladimir Potanin Foundation Summer School Competition [Vladimir Potanin Foundation Summer School Competition](#) (Vladimir Potanin Foundation)  
*The charity project “Accompanied Growing up for Mentally Disabled People” launched by an NGO.*
- Feb, 2020 [The Vladimir Potanin Foundation Scholarship](#) (Vladimir Potanin Foundation)
- Dec, 2020 ODS Awards ([Open Data Science](#))  
*Winner in two nominations: Best Project, Best Organizer.*

## Publications

- April, 2023 **Towards Building a Mobile App for People on the Spectrum**  
Firsanova, V.  
[WWW '23 Companion: Companion Proceedings of the ACM Web Conference 2023.](#)
- May, 2022 **A Quick Guide to Low-Resource NLP**  
Firsanova, V.  
[MLOps Community. May, 2022, online.](#)

- Feb, 2022      **Question Answering Systems and Inclusion: Pros and Cons**  
 Firsanova, V.  
*Internet and Modern Society 2021: Proceedings of the International Conference "Internet and Modern Society" (IMS-2021), St. Petersburg, Russia 23-26 June 2021. (CEUR Workshop Proceedings; Vol. 3090). RWTH Aachen University. <http://ceur-ws.org/Vol-3090/>.*
- Jan, 2022      **Transformer Models for Question Answering on Autism Spectrum Disorder QA Dataset**  
 Firsanova, V.  
*In D. A. Alexandrov, A. V. Chugunov, Y. Kabanov, O. Koltsova, I. Musabirov, S. Pashakhin, A. V. Boukhanovsky, & A. V. Chugunov (Red.), Digital Transformation and Global Society - 6th International Conference, DTGS 2021, Revised Selected Papers: 6th International Conference, DTGS 2021, St. Petersburg, Russia, June 23–25, 2021 (pp. 122-133). (Communications in Computer and Information Science; Vol 1503 CCIS). Springer Nature. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-030-93715-7\_9.*
- Dec, 2021      **Two Approaches to Building Dialogue Systems for People on the Spectrum**  
 Firsanova, V.  
*Conference on Neural Information Processing Systems 2021. Data-Centric AI Workshop.*
- Dec, 2021      **The Advantages of Human Evaluation of Sociomedical Question Answering Systems**  
 Firsanova, V.  
*International Journal of Open Information Technologies, 9(12), 53-59.*
- Jun, 2021      **The Description of the Autism Spectrum Disorder Question Answering Dataset**  
 Firsanova, V.  
*Dialogue 2021 Student Session.*
- Jan, 2021      **Supporting the Inclusion of People with Asperger Syndrome: Building a Customizable Chatbot with Transfer Learning**  
 Firsanova, V.  
*AINL: Artificial Intelligence and Natural Language Conference. Workshop on Human-AI Interaction. 7.-9.10.2020, online.*
- Jan, 2021      **Automatic Recognition of Messages from Virtual Communities of Drug Addicts**  
 Firsanova, V.  
*Journal of applied linguistics and lexicography, 2 (1), 16-27.*

- Jul, 2020     **The Functioning of Drug Addict's Jargon in Social Networks**  
 Firsanova, V.  
[\*Studia Slavica XVIII. — 04.07.2020. — P. 152—164. ISSN 2674-2160.\*](#)
- Jul, 2020     **The Classification of Drug Addicts' Messages in Social Networks with Neural Networks**  
 Firsanova, V.  
[\*Dialogue 2020 Student Session.\*](#)

## Conferences

- May 2023     **ACM Web Conference**  
[PhD Symposium](#)  
*Towards Building a Mobile App for People on the Spectrum*
- Apr 2023     **AINL: Artificial Intelligence and Natural Language Conference**  
[Main track](#)  
*What Do Text-to-Image Models Know about the Languages of the World?*
- Mar 2023     **51st L.A. Verbitskaya International Scientific Philological Conference (IPC 2023)**  
[Applied and computational linguistics](#)  
*The Development of a Chatbot about Autism Spectrum Disorders*
- Mar 2023     **OpenTalks.AI 2023**  
[Poster Presentation](#)  
*The Development of an AI-Powered Chatbot for Inclusive Education*
- Dec 2021     **Conference on Neural Information Processing Systems**  
[Data-Centric AI Workshop](#)  
*Two Approaches to Building Dialogue Systems for People on the Spectrum*
- Jul 2021     **TRITON 2021: Forum for recent advances in technologies for translation and interpreting and more**  
[Brainstorming Session](#)  
*Karelian Machine Translation*
- Jun 2021     **Internet and Modern Society - IMS**  
[International Workshop "Computational Linguistics"](#)  
*Question Answering Systems and Inclusion: Pros and Cons*

- Jun 2021     **6th International Conference Digital Transformation & Global Society (DTGS 2021)**  
[Communications in Computer and Information Science](#)  
*Transformer Models for Question Answering on Autism Spectrum Disorder QA Dataset*
- Jun 2021     **Dialogue International Conference on Computational Linguistics and Intellectual Technologies**  
[Student session](#)  
*Autism Spectrum Disorder Question Answering Dataset*
- Oct 2020     **AINL: Artificial Intelligence and Natural Language Conference 2020**  
[Human-AI Interaction Workshop](#)  
*Supporting the Inclusion of People with Asperger Syndrome: Building a Customizable Chatbot with Transfer Learning*
- Jun 2020     **Dialogue International Conference on Computational Linguistics and Intellectual Technologies**  
[Student session](#)  
*The classification of drug addicts' messages in social networks with neural networks*
- Feb 2019     **XX International Conference of Young Slavists**  
[Language. Text. Society](#)  
*The Functioning of Drug Addict's Slang in Social Networks*

## Industry experience

- Autumn 2021     **Speech Technology Center (Internship)** – Saint Petersburg, Russia  
 Project Management Department, Dialogue System Integration

## Talks and tutorials

- Apr 2023     Why a Philologist Needs Neural networks?  
*Saint Petersburg State University, International Conference of Philology Students, Plenary Session, [program](#)*
- Apr 2023     EMPI: Artificial Intelligence (AI) for People with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)  
*Normal'noe Mesto (Charity Organization), Saint Petersburg, Russia, [program](#)*
- Aug 2022     My First Crowdsourcing  
*Lecture on Information Technology, OLYMP Union, ITMO University, Saint Petersburg, Russia, [available on YouTube](#)*

- Oct 2021      Transformers  
*Seminar on Computational Linguistics, Saint Petersburg State University, Saint Petersburg, Russia, [available on YouTube](#)*
- Jun 2021      Evolution of Chat-bots  
*Lecture on Computational Linguistics, OLYMP Union, ITMO University, Saint Petersburg, Russia, [available on YouTube](#)*

## Mentorship and service

- Nov 2022 – Dec 2022      **Corpora 2023 International Conference at St. Petersburg State University (Organizing Committee manager)**  
 Translation, mailing, typesetting, editing, technical support.
- Apr 2022      **XXV Open Conference for Philology Students at St. Petersburg State University (Co-organizer of the section "Psycholinguistics")**  
 Conference holding, review and selection of applications.
- Feb 2022 – Jun 2022      **Non-governmental organization for children and parents of children with mental disability, Irkutsk, Russia ([Website](#) Developer)**  
 Website development.
- Sep 2021 – Jun 2022      **Non-governmental organization of care for people with mental disability, Irkutsk, Russia (Project Manager)**  
 Development and maintenance of a project to update the organization's website.
- Jan 2021 – Jul 2021      **Corpora 2021 International Conference at St. Petersburg State University (Organizing Committee manager)**  
 Translation, mailing, typesetting, editing, technical support.
- Jan 2021 – Jul 2021      **[Internet and Modern Society \(IMS-2021\) International Conference at ITMO University](#) (Organizing Committee manager)**  
 Translation.
- Sep 2020 – Dec 2020      **OLYMP Union at ITMO University (Active member and NLP Discussion Club organizer)**  
 Creator and organizer of a student discussion club.

## Technical skills

**Programming and markup languages**

Proficient in: Python, HTML, CSS, XML

Familiar with: JavaScript

**Software**

L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X, Git, Jupiter

**Languages**

English (IELTS Certificate 7.5 C1 Advanced), German (Upper-Intermediate), Spanish (Intermediate), French (Intermediate), Italian (Elementary), Russian (Native)

**Other interests**

Ancient languages, computer vision, charity, ecology, fine arts.