

SIYAN ZHAO

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCHER

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Work Experience

Carnegie Mellon University

Doctoral Researcher, Aug 2015 - Present

- Created machine-learning models to predict the medium through which social interactions occur using sensor data from smartphones.
- Conducted hierarchical linear regression analyses on longitudinal survey data to understand how social interactions affect well-being.
- Designed and ran multiple longitudinal studies with over 1000 participants to collect survey and smartphone sensor data.

Facebook

Research Consultant, May 2019 - Aug. 2019

- Scoped research questions and lead qualitative analyses on a large-scale cross-cultural survey dataset about social interactions.
- Applied linear regression, topic modeling, and thematic analysis to qualitatively and qualitatively understand what makes social interactions meaningful.

Facebook

Research Consultant, June 2017 - Aug. 2017

- Worked in a cross-functional team of engineers, product managers, and research managers to prioritize research directions.
- Designed and lead psychophysics studies on perception of haptic phonemes.
- Presented the first set of haptic phonemes to senior researchers and managers.

Disney Research

Research Consultant, Aug. 2015 - Dec. 2015

- Built a haptic toolkit for media designers to easily create haptic experiences.
- Conducted multiple design workshops with designers and design researchers to iterate the design of the toolkit.

Disney Research

Research Associate, Aug. 2014 - Jul. 2015

- Lead psychophysical studies to understand how people perceive haptics signals.
- Used ANOVA to understand how perception thresholds of haptic signals vary based on the frequency and amplitude of the signals.

University of Pittsburgh Medical Center

UX Research Lead, Jan. 2014 - May 2014

- Worked with doctors, engineers and designers to build a decision aid for emphysema patients to decide if they need a lung transplant.
- Lead user studies, e.g., interviews, observations, and think-aloud sessions, with patients, caretakers, and other stockholders to uncover their needs.

Skills

Programming

Python,
Stata, R, SQL,
HTML/CSS/JavaScript

Statistical Tools

T-test, ANOVA,
Regression, Clustering,
Principal Component Analysis

Research Methods

Surveys, Interviews,
Contextual Inquiry,
Think-Aloud

Design Methods

Persona, Storyboarding,
Wireframing, Prototyping,
Paper Sketching

Education

Ph.D. in Human-Computer Interaction

Aug. 2015 - Present

Carnegie Mellon University, School of Computer Science
Advisor: Jason I. Hong, Robert E. Kraut

M.S. in Human-Computer Interaction

Dec. 2020

Carnegie Mellon University, School of Computer Science

B.S. in Cognitive Science and Human-Computer Interaction

May 2014

Carnegie Mellon University, GPA: 3.72 / 4.00

Selected Publications

What Are Meaningful Social Interactions in Today's Media Landscape? A Cross-Cultural Survey

E. Litt, S. Zhao, R. E. Kraut, M. Burke
2020 Social Media + Society

Coding Tactile Symbols for Phonemic Communication

S.Zhao, A.Israr, F. Lau, F. Abnoui
2018 ACM Proceedings of the Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems