

Saloni Naik

+1(408)-466-5164 | saloninaikwork@gmail.com | salonisnaik.github.io

EDUCATION

• University of California, Merced

August 2021 - May 2025

Graduate

Merced, CA

- GPA: 3.942/4.00
- Double Major: Cognitive Science B.S. & Psychology B.A.
- Received Graduation High Honors and Cognitive Science Honors

EXPERIENCE

• Cognitive and Information Sciences Honors Program

May 2024 - May 2025

Advisors: Dr. Rachel Ryskin & Dr. Tyler Marghetis | Honors Scholar

Merced, CA

- Conducted independent research on the role of embodied cognition during algebraic tasks under the supervision of Dr. Rachel Ryskin & Dr. Tyler Marghetis
- Utilized eye-tracking technology, to observe participant's scan-paths during algebraic tasks
- Analyzed data in R to develop insights into how people understand algebra
- Completed and received committee approval for honors thesis: "*Algebra Eyes: Evidence from eye movements during algebraic reasoning*"

• Language, Interaction, and Cognition Lab

June 2024 - May 2025

Principal Investigator: Dr. Rachel Ryskin | Undergraduate Research Assistant

Merced, CA

- Assisted graduate students and research staff with EEG setup and cleanup, ensuring proper electrode placement and data quality
- Acted as experimenter on a study focusing on pragmatic inferences through language comprehension
- Attended and contributed to weekly lab meetings, discussing research findings, workshops, and tutorials

• Center for Early Cognition and Language

June 2023 - May 2025

Principal Investigator: Dr. Rose Scott | Undergraduate Research Assistant

Merced, CA

- Acted as experimenter for several different studies, focusing on children's social understanding, and attitudes towards different social categories
- Engaged in several different coding types such as tracking eye movements, transcribing, and interaction tasks
- Prepared consent forms, documents and paperwork for participants
- Contacted and screened participants for study eligibility requirements

• Marghetis Lab

November 2022 - May 2024

Principal Investigator: Dr. Tyler Marghetis | Undergraduate Research Assistant

Merced, CA

- Acted as a team leader, developing a poster, which was presented at *Cognitive Linguistics Association of North America*
- Acted as experimenter on study focusing on embodied cognition and gesture
- Attended and contributed to weekly lab meetings, discussing research findings, workshops, and tutorials

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

- [1] Naik, S., Ryskin, R., & Marghetis, T. (in preparation). *Visual exploration of algebraic equations is shaped by mathematical expertise*
- [2] Naik, S., Ryskin, R., & Marghetis, T. (2025). *Mathematics as visual skill: Evidence from eye movements during algebraic reasoning*. Presented poster at the COGSCI 2025 Theories of the Past, Theories of the Future, July 2025.
- [3] Naik, S., Dohnke, I., Ram, K., Ton, J., Muralidharan, H., Nosrati, S., Niehorster-Cook, L., & Marghetis, T. (2024). *Making sense of time-travel: Dissociation between co-speech gesture and temporal reasoning*. Poster prepared for the conference of the *Cognitive Linguistics Association of North America*, June 2024.

HONORS AND AWARDS

- **Robert J. Glushko Prize for Distinguished Undergraduate Cognitive Science Research** May 2025
University of California, Merced: Cognitive & Information Sciences Honors Committee
 - The Glushko Prize for Undergraduate Research is awarded to a graduating Cognitive Science major in recognition of outstanding research accomplishments.
 - Awarded \$1,000 for outstanding undergraduate research in cognitive science through senior honors thesis project: *Algebra Eyes: Evidence from eye movements during algebraic reasoning*
- **Cognitive Science Honors** May 2025
University of California, Merced, Cognitive & Information Sciences Department
 - Received Cognitive Science Departmental Honors for my thesis: *Algebra Eyes: Evidence from eye movements during algebraic reasoning*
 - Thesis received a grade of an A+ from the UC Merced Cognitive Science Honors Committee
- **Graduation High Honors** May 2025
University of California, Merced
 - UC Merced Graduates who receive high honors are students who are in the top 6% of the School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts
- **Chancellor's Honors List**
University of California, Merced
 - Awarded to students who have a grade point average of 3.5 or above for both semesters in an academic year
 - Academic years awarded: 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024

SKILLS

- **Languages:** English (Native Fluency) & Marathi (Proficiency level)
- **Programming Languages:** Python (Beginner) & R (Beginner)
- **Web Technologies:** HTML & CSS
- **DevOps & Version Control:** GitHub
- **Specialized Area:** EyeLink
- **Research Skills:** Experimental Design, Statistical Analysis, Survey Design, Literature Review and Scientific Writing
- **Other Tools & Technologies:** Qualtrics, SONA, ELAN, Microsoft Office Suite, Slack, Overleaf and G Suite

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

- **Secretary** August 2024 - May 2025
UC Merced: Cognitive Science Student Association
 - Sent professional emails, announcements, and opportunities to members and faculty
 - Maintained and organized records, documents, and meeting minutes for reference
 - Prepared and submitted official forms, reports, and paperwork to ensure compliance with organizational requirements
 - Delivered presentation on topics: Eye Tracking and Electroencephalogram, The Cognitive Science behind Attraction; to facilitate learning and engagement
 - Contributed to the successful hosting of our Brain Waves Symposium, by coordinating logistics and event registration

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

- **Volunteer** September 2024 - May 2025
UC Merced: Community Engagement Center
 - Central Valley Heart and Stroke Walk 2024: Helped with set up, running the refreshments booth, talking with event participants, and clean up
 - Cultiva Central Valley: 3rd Annual Zombie Bike Ride: Set up and ran a refreshments booth along bike trail
 - Health and Hope: Hygiene Kits for the Unhoused Event: Assisted in assembling hygiene kits for members of the community
 - Playhouse Merced: Put together volunteer packets, and handed out raffle tickets

CERTIFICATIONS

- **CITI Program:** Social/Behavioral Research Course Issued February 2023