

Nicholas Tomlin

Employment	Toyota Technological Institute at Chicago Assistant Professor	Beginning Sep 2026
	New York University Faculty Fellow, Center for Data Science	Aug 2025 – Aug 2026
Education	University of California, Berkeley Ph.D. Candidate, EECS <i>Advisor: Dan Klein</i>	Aug 2019 – July 2025
	Brown University B.A. Mathematics and Linguistics <i>Advisor: Ellie Pavlick</i>	Aug 2015 – May 2019
Awards & Honors	Superalignment Grant , FAR AI (\$150K)	2024
	Best Paper Award , CVPR Workshop on Multimodal Algorithmic Reasoning	2024
	Evergreen Award for Undergraduate Researcher Mentoring, Berkeley EECS	2024
	Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor , UC Berkeley	2023
	Highest Score ¹ , American Crossword Puzzle Tournament	2021
	NSF Graduate Research Fellowship	2020
	Undergraduate Teaching and Research Award , Brown University	2017
Papers	Characterizing Language Use in a Collaborative Situated Game Nicholas Tomlin* , Naitian Zhou*, Eve Fleisig, Liangyuan (Circle) Chen, Téa Wright, Lauren Vinh, Laura X. Ma, Seun Eisape, Ellie French, Tingting Du, Tianjiao Zhang, Alexander Koller, Alane Suhr. Preprint, 2025.	
	Measuring General Intelligence with Generated Games Vivek Verma, David Huang, William Chen, Dan Klein, Nicholas Tomlin . Preprint, 2025.	
	Efficacy of Language Model Self-Play in Non-Zero-Sum Games Austen Liao*, Nicholas Tomlin* , Dan Klein Language Gamification Workshop @ NeurIPS (Spotlight), 2024.	
	Autonomous Evaluation and Refinement of Digital Agents Jiayi Pan, Yichi Zhang, Nicholas Tomlin , Yifei Zhou, Sergey Levine, Alane Suhr COLM, 2024.	

¹In April 2021, an early version of the Berkeley Crossword Solver (in conjunction with Dr.Fill) was the first AI system to outscore all human participants at the American Crossword Puzzle Tournament.

Decision-Oriented Dialogue for Human–AI Interaction

Jessy Lin*, **Nicholas Tomlin***, Jacob Andreas, Jason Eisner
TACL, 2024.

Ghostbuster: Detecting Text Ghostwritten by Large Language Models

Vivek Verma, Eve Fleisig, **Nicholas Tomlin**, Dan Klein
NAACL, 2024.

Revisiting Entropy Rate Constancy in Text

Vivek Verma*, **Nicholas Tomlin***, Dan Klein
EMNLP Findings, 2023.

Pragmatics in Grounded Language Learning (Survey Paper)

Daniel Fried*, **Nicholas Tomlin***, Jennifer Hu, Roma Patel, Aida Nematzadeh
EMNLP Findings, 2023.

Neural Unsupervised Reconstruction of Protolanguage Word Forms

Andre He, **Nicholas Tomlin**, Dan Klein
ACL, 2023.

Understanding Game-Playing Agents with Natural Language Annotations

Nicholas Tomlin, Andre He, Dan Klein
ACL, 2022.

Automated Crossword Solving

Eric Wallace*, **Nicholas Tomlin***, Albert Xu*, Kevin Yang*, Eshaan Pathak*, Matthew L. Ginsberg, and Dan Klein
ACL, 2022.

LingView: A Web Interface for Viewing FLEx and ELAN Files

Kalinda Pride*, **Nicholas Tomlin***, Scott Anderbois
Language Documentation and Conservation, 2020.

Emergent Compositionality in Signaling Games

Nicholas Tomlin, Ellie Pavlick
Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, 2019.

Incremental Pragmatics and Emergent Communication

Nicholas Tomlin, Ellie Pavlick
Emergent Communication Workshop @ NeurIPS, 2018.

Popular
Articles

The Unspoken Language of Crossword Puzzles

Scott AnderBois, Kyle Mahowald, **Nicholas Tomlin**
The Atlantic, 2023.

Work

Microsoft Semantic Machines

Visiting Researcher
Hosts: Jacob Andreas and Jason Eisner

Aug 2022 – May 2024

Stanford University
Research Intern, CSLI REU
Advisor: Christopher Potts

May 2018 – Aug 2018

Teaching	NYU DS-GA 1003 , Introduction to Machine Learning (Instructor)	Spring 2026
	Berkeley CS188 , Introduction to Artificial Intelligence (Instructor)	Summer 2023
	Berkeley CS288 , Natural Language Processing (Head TA)	Spring 2022
	Brown CSCI1570 , Design and Analysis of Algorithms (TA)	Fall 2018
	Brown LING0030 , Introduction to Linguistic Theory (TA)	Fall 2018
	Brown MATH1530 , Abstract Algebra (Head TA)	Fall 2017
Invited Talks	Scalable Evaluation of Language Models NYU, CILVR Seminar	Feb 2025
	Training Language Models with User Simulators Percepta Northeastern University TTIC COLM Workshop on Visions of Language Modeling NYU, Psychology Department UT Austin, South by Semantics Workshop NYU, ML2 Seminar	Feb 2025 Feb 2025 Jan 2025 Oct 2025 Oct 2025 Oct 2025 Oct 2025
	Reasoning with Language Models University of Queensland, Data Science Seminar NYU Stanford NLP Seminar Johns Hopkins University UMass Amherst TTIC BAIR Seminar Brown University, LUNAR Lab	May 2025 May 2025 Apr 2025 Apr 2025 Mar 2025 Feb 2025 Feb 2025 Jan 2025
	Language Models as Rational Agents BAIR Natural Language Processing Workshop Johns Hopkins University USC Natural Language Processing Group	Oct 2024 Apr 2024 Oct 2023
	Detecting Text Ghostwritten by Language Models Stanford University, Hoover Institute	Oct 2024
	Decision-Oriented Dialogue for Human–AI Collaboration Berkeley Multi-Agent Learning Seminar	Sep 2023
	Language Generation, Grounding, and Pragmatics in Game-Playing Domains DeepMind Multi-Agent Learning Group Brown University Computer Science Department	Mar 2023 Oct 2022

Guest Lectures	NYU DS-GA 1012: User Modeling and Evaluating Interaction.	Spring 2026
	Berkeley CS288: Philosophy of Data and Evaluation. Panelist.	Fall 2024
	Brown CLPS 350: The Linguistics of Crossword Puzzles.	Spring 2024
	Berkeley CS188: Computational Rationality and LLMs.	Fall 2023
	Berkeley CS288: Philosophy of Evaluation and Data. Panelist.	Fall 2023
	Berkeley CS288: The Future of Natural Language Processing. Panelist.	Spring 2023
	Berkeley CS288: The Future of Natural Language Processing. Panelist.	Spring 2022
	Berkeley CS288: Pragmatics and Language Grounding.	Spring 2022
	Berkeley CS288: Pragmatics and Language Grounding.	Spring 2021
Department Service	Berkeley Equal Access for Application Assistance	2023
	Volunteer reviewer to provide feedback on PhD application materials to students from under-represented backgrounds.	
	Berkeley Student Committee for Faculty Hiring	2022-2023
	Attended and organized student interviews for EECS faculty candidates.	
	Berkeley PhD EECS Admissions	2019-2022, 2024
	Reviewed applications to Berkeley EECS for the Berkeley NLP Group.	
	Berkeley AI4ALL	2019, 2021-2022, 2024
	Co-instructor for one week-long AI program for high school students from underrepresented backgrounds. Designed and taught NLP course materials for four years.	
	Berkeley EECS Mentoring	2019-2022
	Mentor with the Berkeley AI Research Undergraduate Mentoring Program, EECS Buddy, and EECS Peers programs. Held weekly peer mentoring office hours.	
Program Committee	Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society (CogSci)	2026
	Workshop on Pragmatic Reasoning in Language Models (PragLM)	2025
Reviewing	NeurIPS (Outstanding Reviewer)	2021-2025
	COLM	2024-2026
	ACL Rolling Review	2022-2026
	ICLR	2021-2024, 2026
	ICML	2020-2022, 2025
	Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society (CogSci)	2022-2023, 2026
	ACL Student Research Workshop (ACL-SRW)	2021, 2024-2025
	Workshop on Underspecified and Implicit Language (Unimplicit)	2022
	Workshop on Visually Grounded Interaction and Language (ViGIL)	2021
	Workshop on Scaling Environments for Agents (SEA)	2025
Advising	Georgia Zhou. Undergraduate	2024 – Ongoing
	Maggie Huan. MS Computer Science	2024 – Ongoing
	Austen Liao. Undergraduate (→ JHU PhD)	2023 – 2025
	Vivek Verma. BS/MS Computer Science (→ OpenAI)	2022 – 2025
	Andre He. Undergraduate (→ CMU PhD)	2021 – 2024
	Lily Zhang. MS Computer Science (→ Waymo)	2020 – 2021