

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	Discovering High-Quality Chess Puzzles Through One Billion Plays with Offline Reinforcement Learning Allen Nie*, Anirudhan Badrinath*, Nicholas Tomlin* , Timothy Dai, Carissa Yip, Rose E Wang, Emma Brunskill, Christopher J Piech RLC, 2026.	
	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.	
	Decision-Oriented Dialogue for Human–AI Interaction Jessy Lin*, Nicholas Tomlin* , Jacob Andreas, Jason Eisner TACL, 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.

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.

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 <i>Hosts: Jacob Andreas and Jason Eisner</i>	Aug 2022 – May 2024
	Stanford University Research Intern, CSLI REU <i>Advisor: Christopher Potts</i>	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	Training Language Models with User Simulators	
	University of Cambridge	June 2026
	Cornell University	Apr 2026
	Percepta	Feb 2026
	Northeastern University	Feb 2026
	TTIC	Jan 2026
	COLM Workshop on Visions of Language Modeling	Oct 2025
	NYU, Psychology Department	Oct 2025
	UT Austin, South by Semantics Workshop	Oct 2025
	NYU, ML2 Seminar	Oct 2025
	Scalable Evaluation of Language Models	
	NYU, CILVR Seminar	Feb 2025
	Reasoning with Language Models	
	University of Queensland, Data Science Seminar	May 2025
	NYU	May 2025
	Stanford NLP Seminar	Apr 2025
	Johns Hopkins University	Apr 2025
	UMass Amherst	Mar 2025
	TTIC	Feb 2025
	BAIR Seminar	Feb 2025
	Brown University, LUNAR Lab	Jan 2025
	Language Models as Rational Agents	
	BAIR Natural Language Processing Workshop	Oct 2024
	Johns Hopkins University	Apr 2024
	USC Natural Language Processing Group	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	Mar 2023
	Brown University Computer Science Department	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	PNAS	2026
	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