

Ming Li

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Education

University of Maryland, Ph.D. in Computer Science	Aug 2023 – Present
Texas A&M University, M.S. in Computer Science	Aug 2021 – May 2023
Xi'an Jiaotong University, B.S. Computer Science	Aug 2016 – June 2020

Research Experience

University of Maryland <ul style="list-style-type: none">Supervisor: Prof. Tianyi ZhouFocus: Topics related to LLM/VLM Post-training, Reasoning, and Interpretability.	Aug 2023 – Present
Texas A&M University <ul style="list-style-type: none">Supervisor: Prof. Ruihong HuangFocus: Natural Language Processing, Natural Discourse Parsing.	Aug 2021 – Aug 2023
Shenzhen Institute of Advanced Technology, Chinese Academy of Science <ul style="list-style-type: none">Supervisor: Prof. Yu QiaoFocus: Computer Vision, Scene Text Recognition and Text Detection.	Jun 2019 – Jun 2021

Internship Experience

Amazon - Applied Scientist Internship <ul style="list-style-type: none">Reinforcement learning on multi-turn conversation optimization for LLMs	May 2025 – Aug 2025
Microsoft - Research Internship <ul style="list-style-type: none">Interpretability and efficient collaborative decoding systems for LLMs	Feb 2025 – May 2025
Adobe Incorporated - Research Scientist/Engineer Internship <ul style="list-style-type: none">Visual grounding and instruction fine-tuning for Multimodal LLMs	May 2024 – Nov 2024
Ping An Technology - Research Internship <ul style="list-style-type: none">Automatic data selection for instruction tuning on LLMs	May 2023 – Aug 2023

Selected Publications

- [1] Yijun Liang*, **Ming Li***, Chenrui Fan, Ziyue Li, Dang Nguyen, Kwesi Cobbina, Shweta Bhardwaj, Jiu Hai Chen, Fuxiao Liu, Tianyi Zhou. ColorBench: Can VLMs See and Understand the Colorful World? A Comprehensive Benchmark for Color Perception, Reasoning, and Robustness. *NeurIPS'25*.
- [2] **Ming Li**, Nan Zhang, Chenrui Fan, Hong Jiao, Yanbin Fu, Sydney Peters, Qingshu Xu, Robert Lissitz, Tianyi Zhou. Understanding the Thinking Process of Reasoning Models: A Perspective from Schoenfeld's Episode Theory. *EMNLP'25*.
- [3] Chenrui Fan*, **Ming Li***, Lichao Sun, Tianyi Zhou. Missing Premise exacerbates Overthinking: Are Reasoning Models losing Critical Thinking Skill? *COLM'25*.
- [4] **Ming Li**, Yanhong Li, Tianyi Zhou. What Happened in LLMs Layers when Trained for Fast vs. Slow Thinking: A Gradient Perspective. *ACL'25 Oral*.
- [5] **Ming Li**, Pei Chen, Chenguang Wang, Hongyu Zhao, Yijun Liang, Yupeng Hou, Fuxiao Liu, Tianyi Zhou. Mosaic-IT: Free Compositional Data Augmentation Improves Instruction Tuning. *ACL'25*.
- [6] Zhixun Chen*, **Ming Li***, Yuxuan Huang, Yali Du, Meng Fang, Tianyi Zhou. ATLaS: Agent Tuning via Learning Critical Steps. *ACL'25*.
- [7] **Ming Li**, Han Chen, Chenguang Wang, Dang Nguyen, Dianqi Li, Tianyi Zhou. RuleR: Improving LLM Controllability by Rule-based Data Recycling. *NAACL'25*.
- [8] Hongyu Zhao, **Ming Li**, Lichao Sun, Tianyi Zhou. BenTo: Benchmark Task Reduction with In-Context Transferability. *ICLR'25*.
- [9] **Ming Li**, Yong Zhang, Shwai He, Zhitao Li, Hongyu Zhao, Jianzong Wang, Ning Cheng, Tianyi Zhou. Superfiltering: Weak-to-Strong Data Filtering for Fast Instruction-Tuning. *ACL'24*.
- [10] **Ming Li**, Lichang Chen, Jiu Hai Chen, Shwai He, Jiuxiang Gu, Tianyi Zhou. Selective Reflection-Tuning: Student-Selected Data Recycling for LLM Instruction-Tuning. *ACL'24*.
- [11] **Ming Li**, Jiu Hai Chen, Lichang Chen, Tianyi Zhou. Can LLMs Speak For Diverse People? Tuning LLMs via Debate to Generate Controllable Controversial Statements. *ACL'24*.
- [12] **Ming Li**, Yong Zhang, Zhitao Li, Jiu Hai Chen, Lichang Chen, Ning Cheng, Jianzong Wang, Tianyi Zhou, Jing Xiao. From Quantity to Quality: Boosting LLM Performance with Self-Guided Data Selection for Instruction Tuning. *NAACL'24*.
- [13] **Ming Li**, Bin Fu, Han Chen, Junjun He, Yu Qiao. Dual relation network for scene text recognition. *IEEE Transactions on Multimedia*.

Additional Information

- Selected Open Source Projects:** Cherry_LLM (400 stars), Reflection_Tuning (360 stars), Superfiltering (180 stars)
- Invited Talks & Tutorials:** "Data Synthesis for Data Mining", ACM CIKM 2025 Tutorial
- Awards:** 2026 Apple PhD Scholar in AI/ML, UMD Graduate School Dean's Fellowship
- Area Chair:** ACL, EMNLP, NAACL **Reviewer:** ACL, EMNLP, NAACL, ICLR, ICML, NeurIPS