

Kefan Yu

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Education **Northwestern University**, Evanston, IL *2022 - 2026 (Expected)*
B.S. Computer Science

Research

- Evaluation and Interpretability of LLMs

Interests

- Pragmatics of LLMs
- Natural Language Processing

Publications **Kefan Yu***, Qingcheng Zeng*, Weihao Xuan, Wanxin Li, Jingyi Wu, Rob Voigt, 2025, [The Pragmatic Mind of Machines: Tracing the Emergence of Pragmatic Competence in Large Language Models](#), *In Proceedings of the 19th Conference of the European Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics (EACL), 2026. To appear.*

Zihan Wang*, Kangrui Wang*, Qineng Wang*, Pingyue Zhang*, Linjie Li*, Zhengyuan Yang, Xing Jin, **Kefan Yu**, Minh Nhat Nguyen, Licheng Liu, Eli Gottlieb, Yiping Lu, Kyunghyun Cho, Jiajun Wu, Li Fei-Fei, Lijuan Wang, Yejin Choi, Manling Li, 2025, [RAGEN: Understanding Self-Evolution in LLM Agents via Multi-Turn Reinforcement Learning](#), *Preprint*.

Research **Toyota Technological Institute at Chicago** *June 2025 - Present*
Appointments *Research Assistant*

- Working with [Zhewei Sun](#)
- Leading an ongoing project on multilingual slang generation.

MLL-Lab, Northwestern University *Jan 2025 - Present*

Intern

- Working with [Zihan Wang](#) and [Manling Li](#)
- Designed and produced publication-quality figures, including the teaser figure and experimental settings.
- Conducted comprehensive experimental evaluation for the RAGEN framework.

LingMechLab, Northwestern University

Feb 2024 - Present

Research Assistant

- Working with [Qingcheng Zeng](#) and [Rob Voigt](#)
- Executed data preprocessing protocols and performed dataset annotation to support research initiatives.
- Led the development of the AltPrag paper, including dataset creation, experiments, figures, and writing contributions.

Teaching

CS336: Design & Analysis of Algorithms

Spring 2025

Peer Mentor

CS449: Deep Learning

Winter 2024

Peer Mentor

Industry

CDK Global, Hoffman Estates, IL

June 2024 – Aug 2024

Experience

Software Engineer Intern

Awards

Dean's List, Northwestern University

2023 – 2025

Skills

Tools & Packages

Python, Linux, Conda, Jupyter, Git, Pytorch, Numpy, Huggingface

Language

Mandarin (native), English (proficient), Japanese (intermediate)