

Multilingual and Multicultural LLMs

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<https://emnlp2026-multilingual-cultural-llm.github.io/>

While large language models (LLMs) have substantially expanded support for non-English languages, their ability to generalize across typologically diverse languages and produce contextually appropriate, culturally grounded responses remains a significant challenge. This tutorial examines the rapidly evolving area of understanding, evaluating, and improving the multilingual capabilities and multicultural alignment of LLMs. We will primarily focus on cutting-edge advances and latest publications from 2025–2026, while incorporating selected introductory material to provide necessary background and to ensure accessibility for a broad audience. Participants will gain an up-to-date view of both methods and practical insights, including multilingual pre-, mid- and post-training, multilingual-specific optimization techniques, culturally aware evaluation, and key open problems in developing more fair, inclusive, and robust LLMs.

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Wei Xu is an Associate Professor in the College of Computing and Machine Learning Center at the Georgia Institute of Technology. Her research interests include evaluation, robustness, multilingualism, cultural alignment, user simulation, and reasoning of LLMs. She is a recipient of the NSF CAREER Award, faculty research awards from Google, Sony, Crowdfunder, and Criteo, paper awards and honorable mentions at COLING’18, ACL’23, and ACL’24, including the Best Social Impact Paper Award at ACL 2024, titled “Having Beer after Prayer? Measuring Cultural Bias in Large Language Models.” She is confirmed to serve as a Program Chair for EMNLP 2027 and has regularly served as a senior area chair for *ACL conferences. She has given a tutorial on “Automatic and Human-AI Interactive Text Generation” at ACL 2024.

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David Ifeoluwa Adelani is an Assistant Professor at the McGill University School of Computer Science, a Core Academic Member at Mila - Quebec AI Institute, a Canada CIFAR AI Chair, and an IVADO Professor. His research interests include multilingual natural language processing and speech processing with a focus on low-resource languages. Some of his research on AfricaNLP have received Paper Awards including Best Paper Award (Global Challenges) at COLING 2022 for AfroX-LMR, a multilingual pre-trained language model for African languages, Area Chair Award at IJCNLP-AACL 2023 for MasakhaNEWS topic classification dataset, Outstanding Paper Award at NAACL 2025 for “IrokoBench—an LLM evaluation benchmark on African languages”, and the Best Theme Paper Award for “WorldCusines—a multicultural multilingual Visual QA dataset” at NAACL 2025. Previously, he gave a tutorial on “A Journey Through the Opportunity of Low Resourced Natural Language Processing — An African Lens” at NeurIPS 2021.

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Vinodkumar Prabhakaran is a Senior Staff Research Scientist at Google Research, where he co-leads the interdisciplinary Technology, AI, Society and Culture (TASC) team. His research focuses on questions at the intersection of AI and society, with a focus on global and cross-cultural considerations. Before Google, he was a postdoc at Stanford University, and obtained his PhD from Columbia University. His prior research focused on building scalable ways using language technologies to identify and address large-scale societal issues such as racial disparities in policing, workplace incivility, and online abuse. He has published over 50 articles in top-tier venues such as the PNAS, ACL, TACL, NAACL, EMNLP, NeurIPS, and FAccT.

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Sara Hooker is a co-founder and CEO of Adaption Labs. She previously served as Vice President of Research at Cohere from 2022 to 2025, where she led Cohere Labs, a fundamental AI research lab that seeks to solve complex machine learning problems. Since 2026, she has been the Co-Founder and CEO of Adaptation Labs. Her research interests include model efficiency and AI accessibility, with a focus on multilingual, multimodal, model compression, ethical AI practices and fair LLM evaluation. She is a co-founder of the Trustworthy ML Initiative, serves on Kaggle’s ML Advisory Board and the World Economic Forum Council on the Future of Artificial Intelligence, and is a member of the MLC research group. Sara was also named one of TIME’s 100 Most Influential People in AI in 2024, and named one of AI’s “Top 13 Innovators” by Fortune in 2023. She received the Best Paper Award at ACL 2024, titled “Aya Model: An Instruction Finetuned Open-Access Multilingual Language Model”.

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Alan Ritter is an Associate Professor in the College of Computing at the Georgia Institute of Technology. His research focuses on natural language processing and machine learning. He received his Ph.D. in Computer Science and Engineering from the University of Washington and subsequently completed a postdoctoral fellowship in the Machine Learning Department at Carnegie Mellon University. Alan served as Program Chair for NAACL 2025 and is the recipient of an NSF CAREER Award, an Amazon Research Award, a Sony Faculty Innovation Award, and a Google Academic Research Award, as well as Paper Awards at ACL 2023, 2024, and 2025. His research has been featured in media outlets including WIRED, TNW, Bloomberg, and VentureBeat.