

# ZHUOFENG LI

[zhuofeng-li.github.io](https://github.com/zhuofeng-li)[Zhuofeng-Li](#)[zhuofengli12345@gmail.com](mailto:zhuofengli12345@gmail.com)[Zhuofeng Li](#)

## EDUCATION

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**Stanford University**, 450 Jane Stanford Way Stanford, CA 94305–2004

*Aug, 2025 – Current*

**Visiting Student**

Advisor: Prof. [Yejin Choi](#) and Prof. [James Zou](#)

**Texas A&M University**, 1226 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843

*Aug, 2025 – Aug, 2030 (expected)*

**Ph.D.** in Computer Science

Advisor: Prof. [Yu Zhang](#)

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

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**Fields** Reasoning LLMs/VLMs, Reinforcement Learning, NLP, Data Mining

## RESEARCH

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\* indicates equal contribution

### Open Source Projects

1. **VerlTool: A unified and easy-to-extend tool-agent training framework based on verl.** (500+ Stars)

Donfu Jiang\*, Yi Lu\*, **Zhuofeng Li\***, Zhiheng Lv, Ping Nie, Chao Du, Tianyu Pang, **Wenhu Chen**

### Preprints

1. **In-The-Flow Agentic System Optimization for Effective Planning and Tool Use.** [\[website\]](#)  
**Zhuofeng Li\***, Haoxiang Zhang\*, Seungju Han, Sheng Liu, Jianwen Xie, Yu Zhang, **Yejin Choi**, **James Zou**, Pan Lu
2. **Verltool: Towards Holistic Agentic Reinforcement Learning.** In a submission to *ICLR 2026*.  
[\[arXiv\]](#) [\[code\]](#)  
Donfu Jiang\*, Yi Lu\*, **Zhuofeng Li\***, Zhiheng Lv, Ping Nie, Chao Du, Tianyu Pang, **Wenhu Chen**.
3. **VideoEval-Pro: Robust and Realistic Long Video Understanding Evaluation.** In a submission to *ICLR 2025*.
4. **VideoScore2: Think before You Reward in Video Generation.** In a submission to *ICLR 2025*.
5. **ImagenWorld: Stress-Testing Image Generation Models with Explainable Human Evaluation on Open-ended Real-World Tasks.** In a submission to *ICLR 2025*.

### Publications

1. **GReF: A Unified Generative Framework for Efficient Reranking via Ordered Multi-token Prediction.** *CIKM 2025*.  
Zhijie Lin\*, **Zhuofeng Li\***, ChengLei Dai, Wentian Bao, Shuai Lin, Yun En Yu, Haoxiang Zhang, Liang Zhao

2. **Avoiding Structural Pitfalls: Self-Supervised Low-Rank Feature Tuning for Graph Test-Time Adaptation.** *TMLR 2025*.  
Haoxiang Zhang\*, **Zhuofeng Li\***, Qiannan Zhang, Ziyi Kou, Juncheng Li, Shichao Pei.
3. **StructEval: Benchmarking LLMs’ Capabilities to Generate Structural Outputs.** *Findings of EMNLP 2025*. [\[arXiv\]](#)
4. **TEG-DB: A Comprehensive Dataset and Benchmark of Textual-Edge Graphs.** *NeurIPS 2024*. [\[arXiv\]](#)[\[code\]](#)  
**Zhuofeng Li\***, Zixing Gou\*, Xiangnan Zhang, Zhongyuan Liu, Sirui Li, Yuntong Hu, Chen Ling, Zheng Zhang, **Liang Zhao**.
5. **Learning from Novel Knowledge: Continual Few-shot Knowledge Graph Completion.** *CIKM 2024*. [\[arXiv\]](#)  
**Zhuofeng Li\***, Haoxiang Zhang\*, Qiannan Zhang, Ziyi Kou, Shichao Pei.
6. **Contrastive zero-shot relational learning for knowledge graph completion.** *Knowledge-Based Systems 2024*. [\[arXiv\]](#)

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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**Stanford University**, 450 Jane Stanford Way Stanford, CA 94305-2004

Department of Computer Science *Zou’s Group Choi’s xlab*

June, 2025 – current

Research Assistant, Advisor: Prof. **James Zou** and Prof. **Yejin Choi**

**Project: In-the-Flow Agentic System Optimization** [\[website\]](#)

- Introduce AgentFlow, a trainable tool-integrated agentic system to overcome the scalability and generalization limits of today’s tool-augmented reasoning approaches.
- Pioneer a novel RL paradigm to directly optimize the agent within the system in an online fashion.
- Achieve strong performance on 10 benchmarks with a 7B backbone: +14.9% search, +14.0% agentic, +14.5% math, +4.1% scientific tasks; **surpassing larger-scale models like GPT-4o**.

**University of Waterloo**, 200 University Ave. West, Waterloo, Ontario

Department of Computer Science *TIGER-AI-Lab*

February, 2025 – current

Research Assistant, Advisor: Prof. **Wenhu Chen**

**Project: Agentic Tool-Use LLMs through RL** [\[arXiv\]](#) [\[code\]](#)

- Propose a novel agentic async tool-use RL training framework.
- Achieve strong performance across diverse benchmarks, including math and search tasks.
- **Open-source tool-agent training framework Verl-Tool (500+ stars now)** and submit work to ICLR 2026.

**Kuaishou**, Haidian District, Beijing

Machine Learning Researcher

October, 2024 – February, 2025

**Project: Generative Personalized Re-ranking Recommendation**

- Develop an end-to-end generative training framework for re-ranking recommendations powered by LLM, enhancing Recommendation System generalization and personalization.
- Deliver significant online gains on Kuaishou (300 M+ DAUs) and recognized as an excellent LR (launch review).
- **Accepted by CIKM 2025**.

**Emory University**, 201 Dowman Dr, Atlanta, GA 30322

*Department of Computer Science*

*March, 2024 – October, 2024*

Research Assistant, Advisor: Prof. [Liang Zhao](#)

**Project: LLMs for Textual Graph Mining** [\[arXiv\]](#) [\[code\]](#)

- Propose a novel framework for link prediction on textual-edge graphs by jointly leveraging graph topology and semantic information. The method integrates coherent document composition and LLM-enhanced self-supervised training to equip GNNs with language understanding.
- Conduct extensive experiments on four real-world datasets, demonstrating that our method boosts the performance of general GNNs and achieves competitive results compared to edge-aware GNNs.
- **Accepted by NeurIPS 2024.**

## PROGRAMMING SKILLS

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**Proficient**      Verl, OpenRLHF, VLLM, Sglang, Ray, DeepSpeed, Pytorch.