I firmly believe in the importance of fostering a diverse and inclusive environment, particularly in academia. Doing so promotes equity, encourages creativity and innovation, and paves the way for continuous excellence. To this end, open, transparent, and constructive discussions on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are vital, and continual commitments and endeavors by the entire community are necessary to maintain productive and collegial working environments.

I am honored to have taken part in the Paul G. Allen School’s efforts to establish a DEI community. By attending EPIC, the Empowering Prevention and Inclusive Communities training program at the UW, I learned how to systematically prevent discrimination and build an inclusive environment. I actively participate in academic events and mentorship programs aimed at promoting the voices of underrepresented groups, including mentorship programs in international conferences. These experiences provided me with a solid foundation for combating prejudice, discrimination, and exclusion in the workplace.

Throughout my Ph.D. experience, I have had the invaluable opportunity to work with talented and motivated individuals from a variety of ethnic groups and identities. I also mentored students of various levels and from various backgrounds. In my teaching and mentorship, I aim to foster a sense of community and support. For example, as a teaching assistant, I interacted with a student who had serious health problems that required surgery. I worked with the professor to keep assignments as flexible as possible so that she could prioritize her health above all; we were extremely happy to see that she resolved her health problem while fully benefiting from her course experience. I am dedicated to supporting students from all backgrounds and with diverse needs.

One of my core research goals is to make artificial intelligence (AI) and natural language processing (NLP) more accessible to a more diverse population. Specifically, I develop efficient alternatives to state-of-the-art AI models that are deployable to less-well-funded fields or institutions [1, 2, 3] as well as reliable evaluation methods for AI models that improve information accessibility for people with visual impairments [4]. Moreover, I believe that one crucial problem in the current AI community is that many models and resources are overly English-centric. I intend to pursue massively multilingual NLP that benefits speakers of the 7000+ non-English languages around the world. I consistently contribute to creating linguistically diverse resources and advancing models that can be used for applications in many global languages [5, 6, 7]. My colleagues and I organized a workshop on multilingual information access at NAACL 2022; we hosted a shared task on multilingual question answering and invited talks from underrepresented institutions and topics, including recent research progress on the Kinyarwanda language [8], a low-resource and morphologically rich language unlike English. As AI technology becomes further intertwined with daily life, I believe that researchers must be aware of its limitations and societal impact and committed to making this technology accessible and inclusive.

Looking ahead, I will continue to foster a culture of inclusion, equity, and diversity through my teaching, mentorship, and community service. I am passionate about teaching specialized courses on, for example, multilingual NLP and efficient machine learning, and I continually organize workshops on these topics. I will help my students learn about research efforts to develop diverse, multilingual resources and applications. Further, I will make explicit efforts to recruit passionate researchers from all cultural backgrounds and diverse identities and to encourage my students to both participate in events and training on diversity and put their learning into practice in all their collaborations. I will guide my students based on my own experiences in collaborations and cross-disciplinary education for scholars in the humanities. I will continue to educate myself on pedagogical techniques to

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prevent unconscious bias and discuss my learning with my students and colleagues. To broaden the scope of these efforts, I will also develop and contribute to training workshops that help faculty, instructors, postdocs, and teaching and research assistants to deepen their understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

References


