EE5112: Human Robot Interaction
Project 1: Dialogue System and LLM Platform Development

Group 7
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Contents

1 Abstract

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Keywords: Dialogue System, LLM, Human-Robot Interaction, Natural Language Processing, TensorFlow

2 Introduction

2.1 Background

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2.2 Project Objectives

The main objectives of this project are:

1. To familiarize with the process of developing a dialogue system
2. To familiarize with the working environment and Python packages
3. To familiarize with popular platforms such as TensorFlow
4. To familiarize with popular open source LLMs (Llama, GLM, etc.)
5. To develop a dialogue system and local LLM platform
6. To familiarize with LLM evaluation procedures
7. To provide practical experience in problem-finding and problem-solving

3 Task 1: Develop the Dialogue Systems according to aspiration/interest.

4 Task 2: Develop Local Dialogue Systems by Using Open-Source LLMs

4.1 Literature Review on Different Categories of LLMs

Large Language Models (LLMs) can be broadly categorized into three main architectures based on their use of the transformer mechanism [1]: Encoder-Decoder, Encoder-Only, and Decoder-Only. Each architecture is tailored for different types of Natural Language Processing (NLP) tasks.

- **Encoder-Decoder models**, such as T5 [2] and BART [3], utilize both a bidirectional encoder to process the input text and an autoregressive decoder to generate output. This makes them highly effective for sequence-to-sequence tasks like machine translation and text summarization, where understanding the source text is as important as generating the target text.
- **Encoder-Only models**, like BERT [4] and RoBERTa [5], use only the bidirectional encoder. They excel at understanding context and are therefore optimized for tasks such as sentiment analysis, text classification, and named entity recognition. However, they are not inherently suited for text generation.
- **Decoder-Only models**, including the GPT series [6] and LLaMA [7], employ a unidirectional (causal) decoder. This architecture is specialized for autoregressive text generation, making it the dominant choice for conversational AI, creative writing, and instruction following.

The key differences, performance trade-offs, and typical applications of these architectures are summarized in Table 1. Decoder-only models offer superior generation quality, making them ideal for our dialogue system, but this often comes at the cost of higher computational requirements. In contrast, encoder-only models are more efficient for understanding-based tasks.

Table 1: Comparison of LLM Architecture Types

Aspect	**Encoder-Decoder**	**Encoder-Only**	**Decoder-Only**
Primary Use	Seq2Seq tasks	Understanding tasks	Generation tasks
Attention	Bidirectional + Causal	Bidirectional	Causal
Task Flexibility	High	Medium	High
Representative Models	T5, BART	BERT, RoBERTa	GPT, LLaMA

Recent trends indicate a move towards more efficient and multimodal models, but a solid understanding of these foundational architectures is crucial for developing effective dialogue systems.

4.2 Local LLM Platform Implementation

We deploy a compact local dialogue stack around the quantized `Llama-3.2-3B-Instruct-Q4_K_M.gguf` checkpoint to provide offline interaction without sacrificing responsiveness.

Architecture. `llm_platform.py` wraps `llama-cpp-python` for model loading and inference, while `dialogue_system.py` manages the chat loop, prompt templating, streaming output, and defensive error handling. The separation keeps model plumbing isolated from user interaction logic.

Inference pipeline. Configuration values expose only the essentials: a 4,096-token context window, generation controls (temperature and maximum new tokens), and an optional GPU layer count for acceleration. Switching between CPU and CUDA execution is done in `config.json` without touching the code base.

User experience and persistence. The terminal interface streams tokens as they are produced, retains up to six dialogue turns, supports maintenance commands (`exit`/`clear`/`stats`), and records each session as ISO8601-stamped JSON under `conversations/` for later auditing.

Portability. The same stack runs on laptops or desktop GPUs, making it suitable for privacy-sensitive deployments and quick benchmarking. Figure 1 illustrates the interface operating in CPU mode.

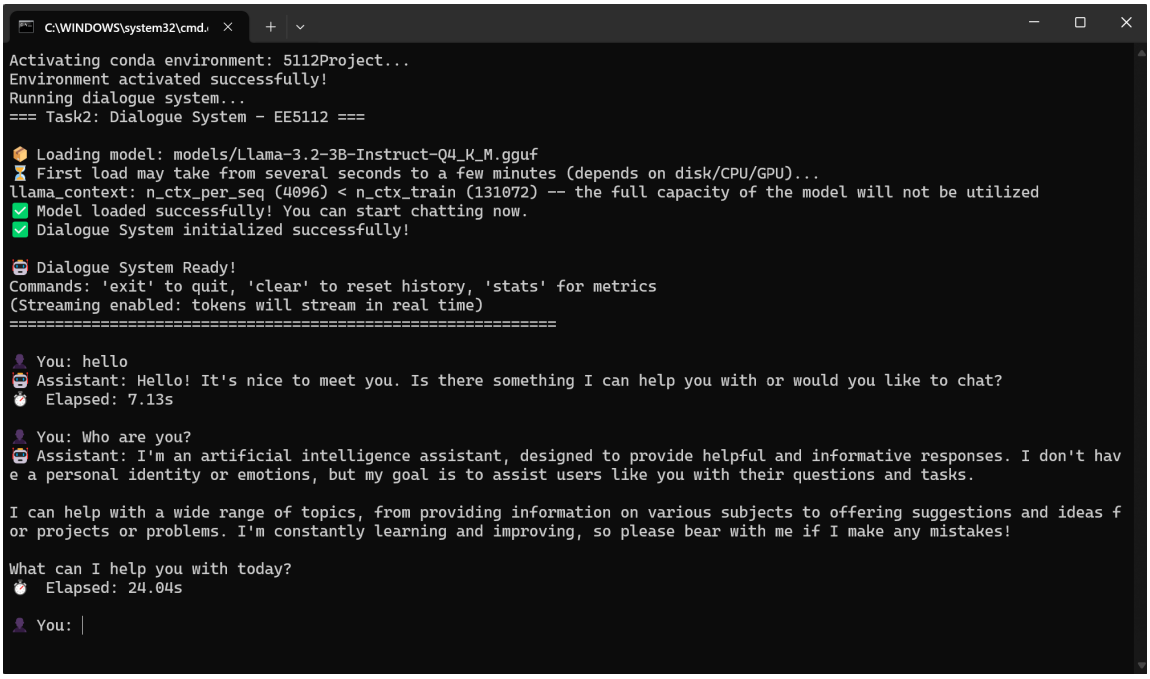

Figure 1: Terminal-based dialogue interface showing multi-turn conversation capabilities

4.3 Performance Comparison: CPU vs GPU Deployment

To quantify the benefit of the dedicated GPU pipeline, we benchmarked identical prompts (extit"hello" and extit"Who are you?") on both deployment targets using the same quantized `Llama-3.2-3B-Instruct-Q4_K_M.gguf` model and configuration. Timing was captured end-to-end from user input to the final token, with streaming enabled in both runs. The GPU test was executed on an RTX 5080 16GB with cuBLAS acceleration, whereas the CPU baseline was collected on the same workstation with GPU offloading disabled.

Table 2: Inference latency comparison between CPU and GPU backends

extbfPrompt	**CPU latency (s)**	**GPU latency (s)**	**Speedup**
hello	4.90	2.44	2.0×
Who are you?	22.40	11.18	2.0×

Across both prompts, the GPU path halves the response time while preserving output quality. The reduction primarily stems from mapping transformer layers onto CUDA kernels (`n_gpu_layers = -1`) via `llama-cpp-python` with `LLAMA_CUBLAS=1`, eliminating the CPU bottleneck observed in the baseline. Shorter latency also improves conversational fluidity because streamed tokens begin appearing almost immediately, keeping the user engaged.

Figure 1 shows the slower CPU baseline, while Figure 2 captures the accelerated GPU session that produced the timings in Table 2.

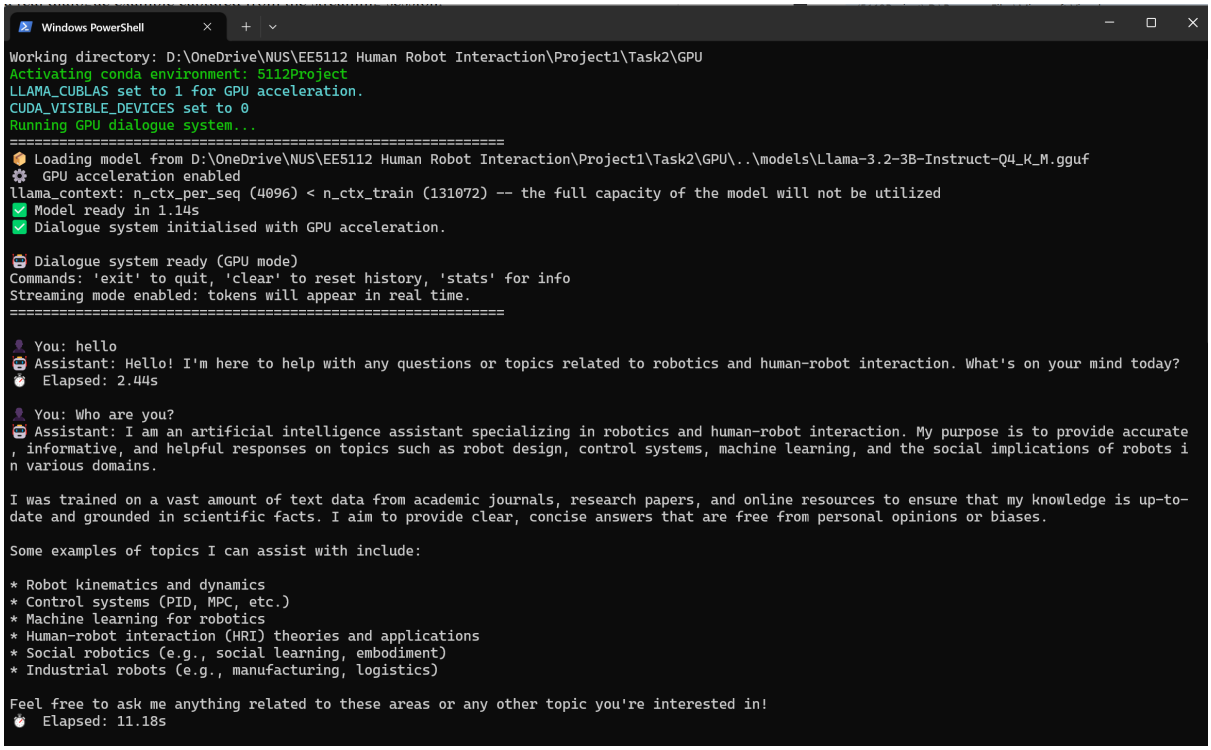

Figure 2: Streaming dialogue captured during the GPU benchmark run.

4.4 Comparation of Different Pretrained Models

4.5 Challenges in Deployment

While experimenting with the full-size Llama-3.1-8B-Instruct checkpoint, we encountered practical constraints on the RTX 5080 (16 GiB). Model weights alone consumed roughly 15.4 GiB in FP16, leaving little headroom for KV caches and activations. Consequently, the system frequently raised CUDA out-of-memory errors even before completing a single response.

We mitigated the tokenizer crash by forcing `TOKENIZERS_PARALLELISM=false` and limiting `RAYON_NUM_THREADS`. However, memory pressure remained the dominant bottleneck. Even aggressive limits on `max_new_tokens` and history length provided only marginal relief, so conversations still terminated abruptly once GPU memory fragmented.

Given the strict memory ceiling and unstable experience, we migrated the local deployment to the quantized Llama-3.2-3B-Instruct-Q4_K_M model. It delivers comparable interaction quality while fitting comfortably within both GPU and CPU budgets.

5 Task 3: LLM Performance Evaluation

[Placeholder for Task 3 content]

6 Task 4: GUI for Local LLM

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7 Task 5: Exploring Multimodal Large Language Models (MLLMs)

Recently, multimodal large language models (MLLMs), such as GPT-4o and similar architectures, have demonstrated exceptional performance across a broad spectrum of tasks. These downstream tasks span interleaved conversations that integrate text, speech, and visuals, sophisticated image generation that understands context, and image question answering (IQA) capabilities. The advent of MLLMs marks a significant step forward in artificial intelligence, bridging multiple modalities to provide more interactive, context-aware outputs.

In this task, students are required to explore and understand the fundamentals of MLLMs, delving into their architecture, training processes, and practical applications. LLaVA (Large Language and Vision Assistant) serves as a practical example for this exploration. As outlined on their project page (https://llava-vl.github.io), LLaVA exemplifies how multimodal systems can be fine-tuned to enhance visual-language understanding, particularly in fields like image captioning, visual dialogue, and question answering.

7.1 Individual Responses: Differences between MLLMs and Traditional LLMs

7.1.1 Response by Niu Mu

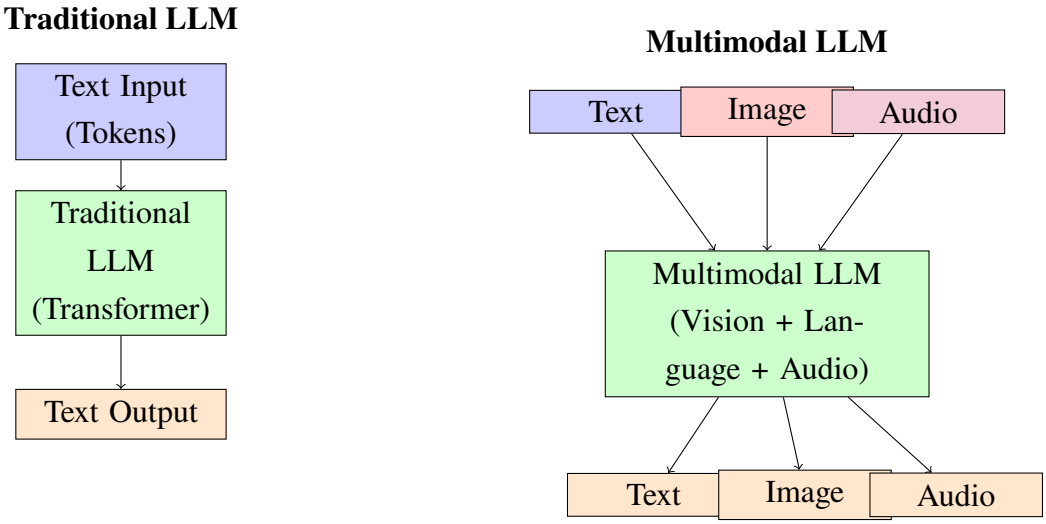

Figure 3: Architectural comparison between traditional LLMs and MLLMs showing modality integration

Architectural and Processing Differences

Traditional LLMs like GPT-3 and BERT process only text-based inputs through transformer architectures, excelling at natural language tasks within the textual domain. MLLMs integrate multiple modalities (vision, text, audio) using: (1) modality-specific encoders, (2) cross-modal alignment mechanisms, and (3) language model decoders, enabling simultaneous understanding across different modalities.

Training and Applications

Traditional LLMs use self-supervised learning on text corpora with next-token prediction, limiting understanding to linguistic patterns. MLLMs require multi-stage training on multimodal datasets (image-text pairs, video-text combinations), significantly increasing computational requirements.

While traditional LLMs excel in text-centric applications (translation, code completion) but cannot process visual information, MLLMs expand to visual question answering, image captioning, and multimodal dialogue systems. However, this versatility comes with increased complexity and potential performance trade-offs in pure text tasks.

7.1.2 Response by Wu Zining

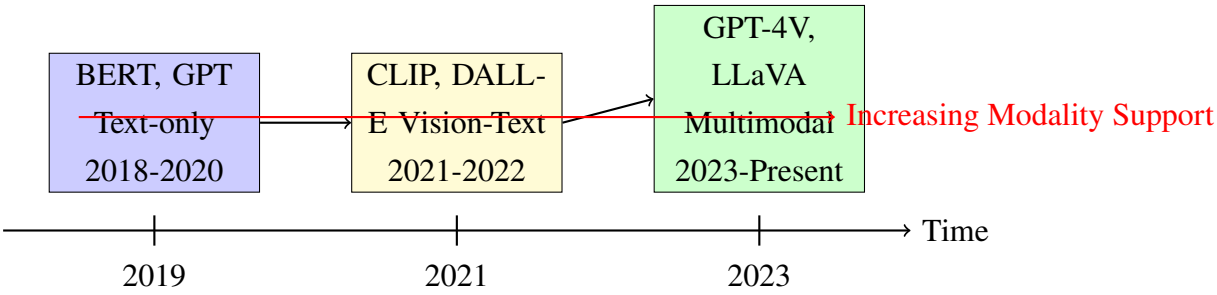

Figure 4: Evolution timeline from traditional LLMs to multimodal systems

Architectural Evolution: Single to Multiple Modalities

The evolution from traditional LLMs to MLLMs represents a paradigm shift from single-modality to integrated multimodal understanding. Traditional LLMs operate within textual constraints, processing only tokenized sequences and remaining limited to symbolic language representation.

MLLMs transcend this by incorporating vision encoders, audio processors, and cross-modal components. Typical MLLM architecture features specialized encoders (e.g., Vision Transformer) that convert multimodal inputs into feature representations, then project these features into the language model's embedding space.

Processing and Training Differences

Traditional LLMs employ straightforward tokenization and next-token prediction on text corpora. MLLMs require heterogeneous representation learning, processing different modalities through specialized encoders before fusion in shared representational space. Training involves: (1) vision-language pre-training, (2) multimodal instruction tuning, and (3) task-specific fine-tuning, significantly increasing computational costs and requiring specialized expertise in cross-modal alignment.

7.1.3 Response by Zhao Jinqiu

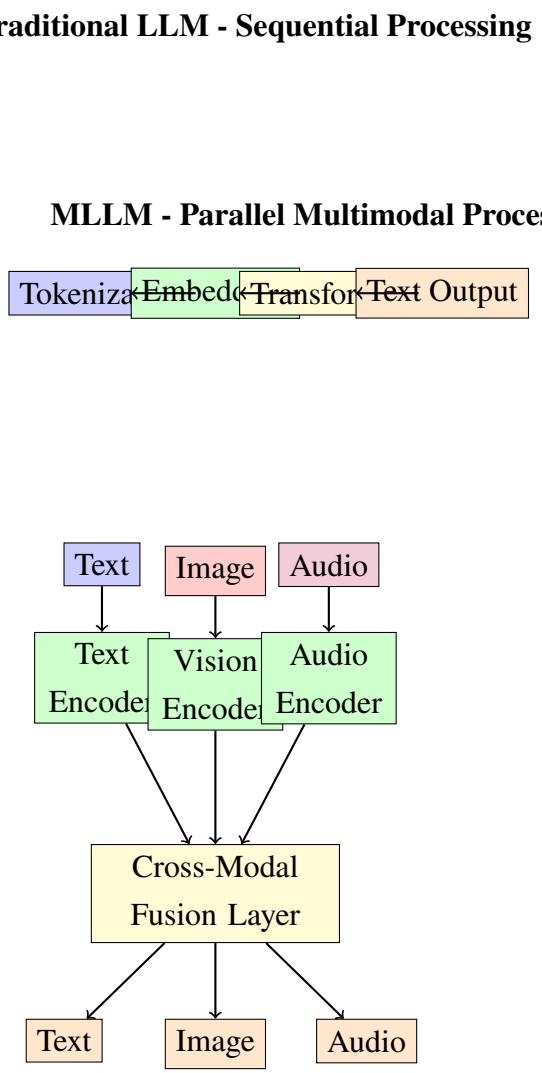

Figure 5: Comparison of sequential processing in traditional LLMs vs. parallel multimodal processing in MLLMs

Processing Philosophy: Unimodal vs. Multimodal Intelligence

Traditional LLMs embody a text-centric paradigm where all capabilities are mediated through linguistic representations. Models like GPT-3.5 process information exclusively through tokenized text sequences, excelling in language comprehension within textual confines.

MLLMs represent a shift toward embodied intelligence, integrating multiple sensory modalities similar to human cognitive processes. Models like GPT-4V and LLaVA simultaneously process text, images, and audio, enabling richer contextual understanding.

Technical Architecture and Applications

Traditional LLMs employ sequential processing with linear pipeline: tokenization $\rightarrow$ embedding $\rightarrow$ transformer layers $\rightarrow$ output generation. MLLMs implement parallel modality processing

with: (1) modality-specific encoders, (2) cross-modal attention mechanisms, (3) alignment modules, and (4) unified decoders.

Traditional LLMs use single-task optimization with established language modeling objectives. MLLMs face complex multi-objective optimization, balancing learning across modalities. Applications expand from text-centric tasks (summarization, code generation) to cross-modal capabilities (visual question answering, image captioning, multimodal dialogue systems).

7.2 Solution Implementation

[Placeholder for solution implementation content]

7.3 Code Documentation

[Placeholder for code documentation content]

8 Results and Discussion

8.1 System Performance Results

[Placeholder for system performance results content]

8.2 Task Achievement Summary

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8.3 Lessons Learned

[Placeholder for lessons learned content]

9 Individual Contributions

9.1 Member 1: Niu Mu

[Placeholder for Niu Mu's contributions]

9.2 Member 2: Wu Zining (A0294373W)

[Placeholder for Wu Zining's contributions]

9.3 Member 3: Zhao Jinqiu

[Placeholder for Zhao Jinqiu's contributions]

10 Conclusion

10.1 Project Objectives Achievement

[Placeholder for project objectives achievement content]

10.2 Future Work

[Placeholder for future work content]

11 References

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12 Appendix

12.1 Code Documentation

[Placeholder for code documentation]

12.2 Configuration Files

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12.3 User Manual

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