Language & Mind – Linguistics and Cognitive Studies

WELCOME!

https://language-mind.unisi.it/en
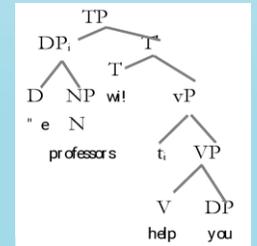
Who are we? The L&M Community

The largest international MA program in the University of Siena
Students from 20+ countries

❖ We meet regularly (3 meetings every year) to discuss what we are doing, and what we are going to do.

❖ We engage in active learning in the research seminars and workshops hosted by CISCL: Interuniversity Center for Cognitive Studies on Language
(U Siena & U Milan–Bicocca) www.ciscl.unisi.it

  and by our laboratory (referent: prof. Enzo Moscati)
  Experimental Linguistics and Syntactic Cartography Lab
  https://www.dispoc.unisi.it/en/research/coworking-lab/

❖ We support individual learning by close contact between students and professors.

Our challenges, and our aims

A wide variety of backgrounds:
different didactic systems in different countries
different BAs (linguistics; philosophy; psychology; speech & hearing)

We aim to create a common basis of cross-disciplinary competences in formal linguistics and
 theoretical philosophy (first year courses)

We aim to create individual learning paths in the two curricula, leading to MA thesis projects that are
 relevant for the research interests and professional objectives of each student (mostly second year):

12 "free choice" credits
3 credits for guidance and job training

-Erasmus exchanges
-Double Degree program – Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne (referent: prof. Salvatore Pistoia Reda)

Overview of the program

The Master in Language and Mind is a highly interdisciplinary program aimed at providing a comprehensive understanding of language as a human cognitive capacity, combining theoretical perspectives in linguistics and philosophy with their applications in domains such as computational linguistics, psycholinguistics, text analysis. Special attention is devoted to the domain of language acquisition in diverse modalities and in different populations.

The Master offers two curricula: "Linguistics and Cognition" and "Philosophy and Cognition", with flexible options to combine teachings from both.

In addition, a Double Degree program is active in collaboration with the Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, as well as several Erasmus agreements with various departments and laboratories across Europe .

Overview of the program

o As the title and the description of the MA indicates at the outset, in this program we address the study of language by considering it a fundamental human cognitive capacity.

o This is a capacity that all humans have and acquire spontaneously in their childhood, during the first years of life, in the absence of forms of pathology and given an adequate social linguistic environment. Such capacity characterizes the human mind, and thus situates the study of human languages within the domain of cognitive psychology.

o A crucial role is given in the program to the descriptive comparative analyses of properties of different languages also through corpus studies, according to explicit formal tools, including syntactic relations, semantic interpretations, phonological analyses.

o This is the preliminary basis that enables us to address possible applied domains, from types of language acquisition (first language acquisition, forms of multilingualism), to forms of language pathology, to computational applications using natural languages.

o The logical structure manifested by natural languages also has a central role in the overall program for a proper characterization of such human cognitive capacity.

o The philosophical and epistemological status of this property of the human mind complete the fundamental ingredients that design the program.

Overview of the program

o Graduate students will be able to read research papers in the relevant literature and to formulate original research projects; to report their work in seminars and in written essays; to actively participate in discussions in a research team; to design and implement psycholinguistic experiments.

   i) For graduates from the "Linguistics and Cognition" curriculum, their scientific profile and the professional skills acquired will allow them to apply theories and methods of linguistic research to the description and analysis of natural languages, in the domain of advanced theoretical, experimental and applied research, also from an interdisciplinary perspective;

   ii) graduates from the "Philosophy and Cognition" curriculum will be able to carry out advanced research at the intersection between cognitive science, philosophy of mind and philosophy of language.

o The main professional fields for Language and mind graduates include research in universities and in other research centers, modeling of new diagnostic tools for language pathologies, didactics of languages, computational linguistics.

o Several students of the MA have continued their academic career in the domains of linguistics and analytical philosophy and have pursued their studies in the frame of a doctorate. The acceptance rate of our students in doctoral and post-doctoral programs in Italy and abroad have been quite high over the years:
Milano-Bicocca, IUSS-Pavia, Firenze, Trento-Rovereto, Cambridge-UK, Tours, Ghent, Reading, Edinburgh, Frankfurt, Oslo, Paris-ENS, Berlin, Geneva, UCLA, CUNY, etc.

The teaching committee

- organizes and monitors the working of the didactic activities
- examines students' requests about their study plans
- discusses issues raised by the students through their representatives

President, as of now: Giuliano Bocci   giuliano.bocci@unisi.it

The tutor students
- have a calendar of meeting hours
- support students with the bureaucratic procedures and direct them to relevant offices
- cooperate with the teaching committee in organizing the three meetings and in preparing the newsletter

(as of now) Federica Interlandi   f.interlandi1@student.unisi.it

The study plan – First year 2024-25 (subject to minor changes)

Common path

Casalicchio	Syntactic structures and compositional semantics Module A: Syntactic structures	6 credits
Bianchi	Syntactic structures and compositional semantics Module B: compositional semantics	+ 6 credits
Bocci	Phonetics and phonology	6 credits
Moscati	Language acquisition	6 credits
Cilibrasi	Corpora, cognition, and language learning	6 credits
Varnier	Philosophy of mind I	6 credits +
Varnier	Philosophy of mind II	6 credits
Montesi (to be confirmed)	Philosophy of logic and philosophy of natural languages Module A: Philosophy of logic	6 credits +
Pistoia Reda	Philosophy of logic and philosophy of natural languages Module A: Philosophy of natural languages	6 credits

The study plan – First year 2024-25 (subject to minor changes)

Common path

Casalicchio	Syntactic structures and compositional semantics Module A: Syntactic structures	6 credits
		+
Bianchi	Syntactic structures and compositional semantics Module B: compositional semantics	6 credits
Bocci	Phonetics and phonology	6 credits
Moscati	Language acquisition	6 credits
Cilibrasi	Corpora, cognition, and language learning	6 credits
Varnier	Philosophy of mind I	6 credits
		+
Varnier	Philosophy of mind II	6 credits
Piccolomini D'Aragona (to be confirmed)	Philosophy of logic and philosophy of natural languages Module A: Philosophy of logic	6 credits
		+
Pistoia Reda	Philosophy of logic and philosophy of natural languages Module A: Philosophy of natural languages	6 credits

The study plan – First year 2024-25 (subject to minor changes)

Common path

Casalicchio	Syntactic structures and compositional semantics Module A: Syntactic structures	6 credits +
Bianchi	Syntactic structures and compositional semantics Module B: compositional semantics	6 credits
Bocci	Phonetics and phonology	6 credits
Moscati	Language acquisition	6 credits
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Varnier	Philosophy of mind II	6 credits
Piccolomini D'Aragona (to be confirmed)	Philosophy of logic and philosophy of natural languages Module A: Philosophy of logic	6 credits +
Pistoia Reda	Philosophy of logic and philosophy of natural languages Module A: Philosophy of natural languages	6 credits

The study plan – First year 2024-25

One exam (6 credits) in the first year is specific for each curriculum.

Due to changes in the teaching staff, these activities are being planned right now.

Keep an eye on the MA webpage where the study plan for 2024-25 will be published: https://language-mind.unisi.it/en/study/study-plan

Second year Linguistics & Cognition (2024-25) (subject to minor changes)

2 exams chosen among	Belletti	Morphosyntax and experimental studies on language	6 credits
	Bianchi	Issues in intensional semantics	6 credits
	Bocci	Advanced issues in Phonology and Syntax	6 credits
	Rizzi	Theory of grammar	6 credits
	Zanca	Corpora, language and translation	6 credits
1 exam chosen among	Moscati	Psycholinguistics	6 credits
	Guidi	Methodology of research in cognitive and social psychology	6 credits

Second year   Philosophy & Cognition (2024-25)

Romano	Advanced topics in philosophy of mind	6 credits
Pistoia Reda	Logic of Natural languages	6 credits
Guidi	Methodology of research in cognitive and social psychology	6 credits
Bianchi	Issues in intensional semantics	6 credits

Second year   Common activities

Two «free choice» courses   12 credits

chosen by the student from the MA-level courses offered in English at the University:
– if chosen from within L&M courses, they are automatically accepted
– if chosen from another program, the choice must be approved by the teaching committee

Suitability second language C1 (or C2)   3 credits

See the language courses offered at the CLA (https://www.cla.unisi.it/en)

Job training and guidance   3 credits

presentation of personal thesis project
                                    +
               internship organized individually with a L&M professor
or   participation in research seminars and one students' thesis presentation session

The exams

Each professor decides on the modality according to their didactic objectives (see the syllabi published on-line):

i. Written test

ii. Oral (face-to-face) exam

iii. Seminar (presentation to the class) or written essay on a selected topic

Top grade: 30/30 (cum laude). 18 is the minimum grade to pass the exam.

Extra credits and thesis project

In addition to the regular 120 credits, it is possible to take extra exams up to 24 credits.
The choice of exams must be approved by the teaching committee.
The credits are recorded in the student's diploma supplement .

The thesis project is assigned 18 credits

It is supervised by one L&M professor   (*relatore*)

Thesis reviewed by one L&M professor   (*contro-relatore*)
and discussed in a public defense

The research seminars

The Inter-University Center for Cognitive Studies on Language (CISCL) regularly organizes research seminars, both in presence and online, by the researchers of the centre and by guests:

www.ciscl.unisi.it/events

Online seminars are also offered by the Milan branch of the Center (BIL group).

The seminars are announced via the Newsletter, for enrolled students, and on the CISCL website:

www.ciscl.unisi.it   → events

The double degree program

UNIVERSITÀ DI SIENA – Master in Language and Mind: Linguistics and Cognitive Studies
Language of teaching (taught in English)

UNIVERSITÉ PARIS 1 PANTHEON-SORBONNE - Master « Philosophie», parcours « Logique et Philosophie des Sciences» Language of teaching: French.

In their first-year students in the MA Language and Mind. Linguistics and cognitive studies have the opportunity to participate in the selection for a Double Degree program with the Université Paris 1 Panthéon - Sorbonne.
Successful candidates spend their second year at the Université Paris 1 Panthéon - Sorbonne and get both Degrees.
Participation in the Double Degree favors the gain of further perspectives on topics related to logic, philosophy of science, cognitive and language studies developed in Paris.
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ROGRAM COORDINATORS
University of Siena - Prof. Salvatore Pistoia Reda
 Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne - Prof. Maximilian Kistler

The doctoral program

The host Department of the MA (DISPOC) has a doctoral program in Social Sciences and Humanities, with two curricula:

Mind and Culture
Society and Politics

See the description at:
https://www.dispoc.unisi.it/en/research/phd/social-sciences-and-humanities

General info on doctoral programs at UNISI:
https://www.unisi.it/ricerca/dottorati-di-ricerca/informazioni-dottorandi-e-dottori-di-ricerca

Your application

The admission committee for international students of the MA program evaluates the application dossier based on three main criteria:
- specificity of the candidate's motivation (see "how to write your motivation letter" on the MA webpage)
- academic excellence
- congruence of the academic background to the disciplines of the MA

After the committee has completed the evaluation, the international office sends out the official letter of acceptance or rejection.

For information about the MA program write to: valentina.bianchi@unisi.it

For assistance with the application procedure, do not write to this email. You can find all the information at:
https://admission.unisi.it/
here you also find a form for support requests.

… in bocca al lupo!