

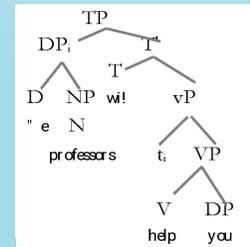
Language & Mind

Linguistics and Cognitive Studies



**UNIVERSITÀ
DI SIENA**
1240

<https://language-mind.unisi.it/en>



Who are we? The L&M Community

The largest international MA program in the University of Siena

- ❖ 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.

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.

The Master offers [two curricula](#): “Linguistics and Cognition” and “Philosophy and Cognition”, with flexible options to combine teachings from both.

Overview of the program

- 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.
- 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.
- The logical structure manifested by natural languages has a central role in the overall program for a proper characterization of such human cognitive capacity.
- The philosophical and epistemological status of this property of the human mind are part of the fundamental ingredients that design the program.
- A crucial role is given 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.
- 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.

Learning outcomes

- o Graduate students will be able to read research papers 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 Several students of the MA have continued their academic career in the domains of linguistics and analytical philosophy in the frame of a doctorate (Milano-Bicocca, IUSS-Pavia, Firenze, Trento-Rovereto, Cambridge-UK, Tours, Ghent, Reading, Edinburgh, Frankfurt, Oslo, Paris-ENS, Berlin, Geneva, UCLA, CUNY, etc.)

Preparation for the beginning of courses

Read the papers (one for formal linguistics, two for philosophy) whose references are on the MA webpage:

<https://language-mind.unisi.it/en/content/notice/suggested-readings-prospective-students-and-candidates>

If you have no background in linguistics, it is advisable to read a manual of general introduction to linguistics. One useful open access textbook is:

<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/essentialsoflinguistics2/>

chapters 1, 3, 4 ,5, 6 up to section 6.12.

Classes start on September 29th 2025

The study plan – First year 2025-26

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
Cilibrasi	Corpora, cognition and language learning	6 credits
Varnier	Philosophy of mind I	6 credits
		+
Romano	Philosophy of mind II	6 credits
Piccolomini d'Aragona	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 2025-26

Common path

Casalicchio	Syntactic structures and compositional semantics Module A: Syntactic structures	6 credits
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		+
Pistoia Reda	Philosophy of logic and philosophy of natural languages Module A: Philosophy of natural languages	6 credits

The study plan – First year 2025-26

Linguistics and Cognition

Language acquisition (Moscati, first semester)

One exam (6 credits, second semester) to be chosen between:

Introduction to formal pragmatics (Bianchi)

Multilingualism (Cilibrasi)

Keep an eye on the MA webpage where the study plan for 2025-26 will be published:

<https://language-mind.unisi.it/en/study/study-plan>

The study plan – First year 2025-26

Philosophy and Cognition

Introduction to formal pragmatics (Bianchi, second semester)

One exam (6 credits) to be chosen between:

Language and thought (Varnier)

Language acquisition (Moscati, first semester)

Keep an eye on the MA webpage where the study plan for 2025-26 will be published:

<https://language-mind.unisi.it/en/study/study-plan>

The study plan - Second year (year 2026-27)

Linguistics and Cognition

<i>2 exams chosen among</i>	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
<i>1 exam chosen among</i>	Moscatti	Psycholinguistics	6 credits
	Guidi	Methodology of research in cognitive and social psychology	6 credits
	Pistoia Reda	Logic of natural languages	6 credits
	Chesi	Computational linguistics	

The study plan - Second year (year 2026-27)

Philosophy and Cognition

1 exam between

Varnier Language and thought 6 credits

Bianchi Issues in intensional semantics 6 credits

1 exam between

Noguera Clofents Foundation of mathematics 6 credits

Guidi Methodology of research in cognitive and social psychology 6 credits

Moscato Psycholinguistics 6 credits

Pistoia Reda Logic of natural languages 6 credits

Romano Philosophy of cognition 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 English C1 (or C2) 3 credits

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

NB. Italian language courses can be registered as extra credits

Job training and guidance 3 credits

COMPULSORY ACTIVITY: presentation of personal thesis project

participation in research seminars and students' thesis presentations

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 (they are not computed in the average for the degree evaluation)

Internship organized individually with a L&M professor also give extra credits.

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 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) on a selected topic
- iv. Project (personal or group)

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

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 – Language and Mind: Linguistics and Cognitive Studies

UNIVERSITÉ PARIS 1 PANTHEON-SORBONNE - Master « Philosophie», parcours « Logique et Philosophie des Sciences». Language of teaching: French (minimum level required: B1)

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. The thesis is written in French or in English and discussed in both Universities.

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.

PROGRAM 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>

Practical information

The enrolment procedure is managed by the International office:

admissionoffice@unisi.it

See <https://admission.unisi.it/> > application guide

The final deadline for pre-enrollment application on University platform is AUGUST 1st:

www.universitaly.it

SEPARATE APPLICATION for scholarship at the Regional Agency DSU:

See <https://www.dsu.toscana.it/-/foreign-students>

The call for applications will be published here:

<https://www.dsu.toscana.it/borsa-di-studio>

meanwhile you can have a look at past year's call (announcement).

tutor students: Marco Mortato - m.mortato@student.unisi.it