

ANNA MAI

anna.mai@mpi.nl ◊ annamai.net ◊ WA: 503.858.3166

EMPLOYMENT

2022–present Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics
Postdoctoral researcher in Language and Computation in Neural Systems

EDUCATION

2017–2022 University of California, San Diego
Ph.D. in Linguistics and Cognitive Science

2015–2017 University of California, San Diego
M.A. in Linguistics

2012–2015 Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri
B.A. in Linguistics and Music, *Magna cum Laude*

JOURNAL ARTICLES

(in prep.) A. Mai & A.E. Martin. Abstract contrasts persist alongside acoustic sensitivity: An MEG study of fricative voicing in Dutch.

(in prep.) A. Mai & G. Albors Zumel. Informational Affordance in Phonological Feature Systems.

(revisions) A. Mai & A.E. Martin. Gray and white matter differences in frequency-dependent spatial resolution during natural speech listening.

(in press) A. McCollum, E. Baković, & A. Mai. On the inevitability of non-myopic harmony. *Phonology*.

2025 A. Mai & A.E. Martin. Linguistic structure as a guiding principle for human neuroscience. *Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews*.

2024 C. Coopmans, A. Mai, & A.E. Martin. ‘Not’ in the brain and behavior. *PLOS Biology*.

2024 A. Mai, S. Riès, S. Ben-Haim, J. Shih, & T. Gentner. Acoustic and language-specific sources for phonemic abstraction from speech. *Nature Communications*.

2024 E. Meinhardt, A. Mai, E. Baković, & A. McCollum. Weak determinism and the computational consequences of interaction. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory*.

2023 C. Coopmans, A. Mai, S. Slaats, H. Weissbart, & A.E. Martin. What oscillations can do for syntax depends on your theory of structure building. *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*.

2022 A. Mai, S. Riès, S. Ben-Haim, J. Shih, & T. Gentner. Phonological contrasts are maintained despite neutralization: an intracranial EEG study. *Supplemental Proceedings of the Annual Meeting on Phonology 2021*.

2022 T. Sainburg, A. Mai, & T. Gentner. Long-range sequential dependencies are phylogenetically pervasive in behavior and precede complex syntactic production in language. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*.

2021 E. Baković, A. Mai. Comparing Positional Licensing Patterns in HG and OT. *Supplemental Proceedings of the Annual Meeting on Phonology 2020*.

2020 A. Mai. Phonetic effects of onset complexity on the English syllable. *Laboratory Phonology*.

- 2020** A. McCollum, E. Baković, A. Mai, & E. Meinhardt. Unbounded circumambient patterns in segmental phonology. *Phonology*.
- 2020** A. Mai & E. Baković. Cumulative constraint interaction and the equalizer of HG and OT. *Supplemental Proceedings of the Annual Meeting on Phonology 2019*.
- 2020** A. Mai, M. Moua, & M. Garellek. Tone-Tune Association and Voice Quality in Green Mong Folk Songs. *Proceedings of the 19th International Congress of Phonetic Sciences*.
- 2018** A. Mai, A. Aguilar, & G. Caballero. Ja'a Kumiai. *Journal of the IPA*.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- October 2024** A. Mai. Linguistic structure on both sides of the braincase. Society for the Neurobiology of Language (SNL), Brisbane, Australia.
- October 2024** A. Mai & A. Martin. Gray matters: Impacts of electrode placement on responses recorded during natural speech listening. Society for the Neurobiology of Language (SNL), Brisbane, Australia.
- October 2023** A. Mai & A. Martin. Coordination of statistical and linguistic information during spoken language comprehension. Society for the Neurobiology of Language (SNL), Marseilles, France.
- June 2023** A. Mai, S. Riès, S. Ben-Haim, J. Shih, & T. Gentner. Phonemic category & higher-order acoustic features jointly drive neural response to speech. PhonoEEGy 2, Amherst, MA.
- October 2021** A. Mai, S. Riès, S. Ben-Haim, J. Shih, & T. Gentner. Phonemic category & higher-order acoustic features jointly drive neural response to speech. Society for the Neurobiology of Language (SNL), Virtual.
- October 2021** A. Mai, S. Riès, S. Ben-Haim, J. Shih, & T. Gentner. Phonological contrasts are maintained despite neutralization: an intracranial EEG study. Annual Meeting on Phonology (AMP).
- September 2021** T. Sainburg, A. Mai, & T. Gentner. Long-range sequential dependencies precede syntactically-rich vocalizations in humans. Protolang 7, Virtual.
- October 2020** A. Mai. Language-specific phonological contrast and neutralization: an intracranial EEG study. Society for the Neurobiology of Language (SNL), Virtual.
- October 2020** T. Sainburg, A. Mai, & T. Gentner. Long-range sequential dependencies precede syntactically-rich vocalizations in humans. Society for the Neurobiology of Language (SNL), Virtual.
- September 2020** E. Baković & A. Mai. Comparing positional licensing patterns in HG and OT. Annual Meeting on Phonology (AMP), Virtual.
- January 2020** E. Meinhardt, A. Mai, E. Baković, & A. McCollum. Questioning to resolve transduction problems. Society for Computation in Linguistics (SCiL), New Orleans, LA.
- October 2019** A. Mai & E. Baković. Cumulative constraint interaction and the equalizer of HG and OT. Annual Meeting on Phonology (AMP), Stony Brook, NY (SBU).
- September 2019** A. Mai, M. Moua, & M. Garellek. Tone-tune association and voice quality in Green Mong folk songs. International Congress of Phonetic Sciences (ICPhS), Melbourne, Australia.

- May 2018** P. Reinagel, T. Gentner, E. Baković, & A. Mai. Using machine learning to discover acoustic cues for emotion in vocalizations. 13th Annual KIBM Symposium on Innovative Research. San Diego, CA (UCSD).
- April 2018** A. Mai. Algebraic characterizations of constraint-based grammars. Southern California Annual Meeting in Phonology (SCAMP), Los Angeles, CA (USC).
- January 2018** A. Mai, E. Baković, & M. Goldrick. Phonological opacity as local optimization in Gradient Symbolic Computation. Annual Meeting of the Society for Computation in Linguistics (SCiL), Salt Lake City, UT.
- December 2017** A. Mai. Phonetic effects of onset complexity on the English syllable. Annual Meeting of the Acoustical Society of America (ASA), New Orleans, LA.
- October 2017** A. McCollum, E. Baković, A. Mai, & E. Meinhardt. Conditional blocking in Tutrugbu requires non-determinism. Annual Meeting of the North East Linguistics Society (NELS), Reykjavik, Iceland (University of Iceland).
- May 2017** A. Mai & M. Garellek. Tone and phonation in Green Mong song. Southern California Annual Meeting in Phonology (SCAMP), Los Angeles, CA (UCLA).

INVITED TALKS

- November 2025** Linking Sensory and Linguistic Processing in the Neural Response to Speech. Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages Seminar Series, City University Hong Kong.
- July 2025** Abstract and Item-Specific Knowledge in the Brain. Abstract and Item-Specific Knowledge Across Domains and Frameworks (ABSPEC) Conference. LSA Summer Institute, University of Oregon.
- November 2023** Phonological structure in the neural response to speech. Linguistics Department Colloquium Series, University of British Columbia.
- January 2022** Phonological structure in the neural response to speech. Early Career Colloquium Series, Johns Hopkins University.
- March 2021** On the relationship between interaction and complexity in phonology. The Phorum, UC Berkeley.

TEACHING

As Instructor of Record, I designed and led semester-long courses. For all courses where I am not listed as Instructor of Record, I was responsible for leading a weekly practical session.

- Spring 2022** Language Processing in the Brain (LIGN181)
Teaching Assistant under Robert Kluender
- Winter 2022** Phonology (LIGN111)
Instructor of Record
- Fall 2021** Phonetics (LIGN110)

	<i>Teaching Assistant under Marc Garellek</i>
Spring 2021	Language Representation in the Brain (LIGN180) <i>Teaching Assistant under Robert Kluender</i>
Winter 2021	Phonology (LIGN111) <i>Teaching Assistant under Sharon Rose</i>
Fall 2020	Phonetics (LIGN110) <i>Teaching Assistant under Marc Garellek</i>
Summer 2019	Introduction to Linguistics (LIGN101) <i>Instructor of Record</i>
Summer 2018	Pre-Fall English Bridge Program <i>Instructor of Record</i>
Summer 2017	Pre-Fall English Bridge Program <i>Instructor of Record</i>
Fall 2016	Pragmatics (LIGN160) <i>Teaching Assistant under Andy Kehler</i>
Spring 2016	Psycholinguistics (LIGN170) <i>Teaching Assistant under So-One Hwang</i>
Winter 2016	First & Second Language Learning: From Childhood through Adolescence (LIGN119) <i>Teaching Assistant under Alicia Muñoz Sánchez</i>
Fall 2015	Introduction to Linguistics (LIGN101) <i>Teaching Assistant under Eric Baković</i>

GRANTS & AWARDS

Spring 2023	2022–23 Jean Fort Dissertation Prize Fellowship
Spring 2023	UC San Diego School of Social Science Dissertation of the Year Honorable Mention
Spring 2021	UC San Diego Linguistic Department Distinguished Service Award
Fall 2019	William Orr Dingwall Dissertation Fellowship in the Cognitive, Clinical, and Neural Foundations of Language (\$30,000)
Fall 2019	Institute for Neural Computation NIMH Training Fellowship (\$23,000)
Summer 2019	UC San Diego Graduate Student Association Travel Grant (\$500) A. Mai, M. Moua, & M. Garellek. Tone-Tune Association and Voice Quality in Green Mong Folk Songs. International Congress of Phonetic Sciences (ICPhS), Melbourne, Australia.
Winter 2019	UC San Diego Summer Graduate Teaching Scholars Fellowship
Fall 2018	Rita L. Atkinson Graduate Fellowship (\$20,000)
Summer 2018	Nancy Lurie Marks Family Foundation Scholarship (\$700) For coursework in the Genetics & Neurobiology of Language at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratories.
Spring 2018	UC San Diego Social Sciences Divisional Research Grant (\$25,000) E. Baković, A. McCollum, A. Mai, E. Meinhardt The complexity of sound patterns in human languages and its relation to learnability.

Fall 2017	UC San Diego Department of Linguistics Travel Grant (\$670) Conditional blocking in Tutrugbu requires non-determinism. Annual Meeting of the North East Linguistics Society (NELS), Reykjavik, Iceland (University of Iceland).
Spring 2017	Kavli Institute for the Brain and Mind Innovative Research Grant (\$45,000) P. Reinagel, T. Gentner, E. Baković, & A. Mai Testing The Vocal-Vagal Hypothesis.
Spring 2016	UCSD Academic Senate Grant (\$15,000) A. Mai & E. Baković Developing a Linguistic Formalism of Rapped Verse.
Spring 2016	UC San Diego Linguistics Department TA Excellence Award
Summer 2015	LSA Linguistic Summer Institute Fellowship

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE & AFFILIATIONS

2022–present	Language and Computation in Neural Systems Group, MPI Psycholinguistics
2016–2022	Gentner Lab, Psychology Department, UC San Diego
2015–2022	Phonetics Lab, Linguistics Department, UC San Diego
2012–2015	Research Assistant, Peelle Lab, Washington University in St. Louis

SERVICE

2026–present	Donders Postdoc Council, Chair
2025–present	Human Sciences Section of the Scientific Council of the Max Planck Society, Scientific Staff Representative for the MPI for Psycholinguistics
2025–present	<i>TalkLing</i> Science Outreach Publication, Editor-in-Chief
2025–present	Donders Postdoc Council, Representative of the MPI for Psycholinguistics
2024–present	Association of Nonbinary and Trans Language Researchers, President
2023–2024	MPI Psycholinguistics Inclusive Language Group, LaCNS Representative
2022–2024	Association of Nonbinary and Trans Language Researchers, Steering Committee
2018–2021	UC San Diego Linguistics Department Head Graduate Student
2018–2021	UC Student-Workers Union (UAW 2685), San Diego Campus Head Steward
Winter 2018	<i>Proceedings of the Annual Meeting on Phonology 2018</i> , Co-editor
2018–2019	UC San Diego Gender Recognition Act Steering Committee, Graduate Student Member
2017–2018	UC San Diego Linguistics Department Space Committee, Graduate Student Member
2016–2017	UC San Diego Linguistics Department Colloquium Committee, Graduate Student Member
2015–2016	UC San Diego Linguistics Department Open House Committee, Graduate Student Member
Jan. 2015	Linguistic Society of America Annual Meeting, Volunteer

Ad hoc reviewer for *Phonology*, *Cognition*, *Cognitive Science*, *PLOS Computational Biology*, *Radical: A Journal of Phonology*, *Glossa*, *Nature Communications*, and *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory*.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Acoustical Society of America; International Phonetic Association; Linguistic Society of America; Society for the Neurobiology of Language; Society for Neuroscience

OTHER

Languages	English – CEFR C2; Dutch – CEFR C1; French – CEFR B2; German – CEFR B1; Dutch Sign Language (NGT) – CEFR A2
Code	Python; R; MATLAB; Praat Script; Java; HTML; L ^A T _E X
Fieldwork	Ja'a Kumiai, 2016–2018
AR Call Sign	AJ6EK