

## Pragmatics

### LING 565

Winter 2020

CRN 16373

M, W 10:05am–11:25pm, 1085 Penfield 002

**Instructor:** Bernhard Schwarz  
**E-mail:** bernhard.schwarz@mcgill.ca  
**Office:** 1085 Dr. Penfield, room 215  
**Office hours:** W 11:30–12:30pm or by appointment

## What this course is about

Pragmatics is concerned with aspects of meaning that are tied to actual language use. Pragmatics therefore requires close attention to the relevant characteristics of the context of utterance, such as the topic of the conversation, the utterance location and the time, the identity of speaker and addressee, and their beliefs, expectations, and shared assumptions. Instead of providing a broad survey, this course offers an in-depth introduction to a selection of central themes from contemporary research in pragmatics. Topics covered include:

- Mind reading and meaning enrichment: the case of quantity implicature (Schwarz 2013)
- Asserting and presupposing (Stalnaker 1978; Singh et al. 2016)
- Mind reading and meaning enrichment: the case of antipresuppositions (Rouillard and Schwarz 2017)
- Pre-enrichment context dependency (Schwarzschild 2006, Scontras and Goodman 2017)
- Taking someone else's perspective (Hinterwimmer 2017)
- Speech acts and grammar: reflexes of conversational force (Rudin 2019, Sauerland and Yatsushiro 2017)

## Readings

We will read a few selected, and mostly recent, journal articles and conference proceedings papers. Those readings primarily target an audience with more background in linguistics than you are likely to have. It will accordingly be essential to attend class, where these readings will be unpacked and interpreted. Readings will be available electronically on MyCourses. Additional required readings may be added over the course of the semester.

1. Hinterwimmer, Stefan. 2017. Two kinds of perspective taking in narrative texts. In *Proceedings of Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT) 27*, ed. Dan Burgdorf and Jacob Collard, 282–301. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University

2. Rouillard, Vincent, and Bernhard Schwarz. 2017. Epistemic narrowing from Maximize Presupposition. In *Proceedings of the 47th annual meeting of the North East Linguistic Society (NELS 47)*, ed. Andrew Lamont and Katerina A. Tetzloff, 49–62. GLSA (Graduate Linguistics Student Association), Department of Linguistics, University of Massachusetts
3. Rudin, Deniz. 2019. Embedded rising declaratives and embedded quotation. In *Proceedings of Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT) 29*, ed. Katherine Blake, Forrest Davis, Kaelyn Lamp, and Joseph Rhyne, 1–21. Linguistic Society of America
4. Sauerland, Uli, and Kazuko Yatsushiro. 2017. Remind-me presuppositions and speech-act decomposition: Evidence from particles in questions. *Linguistic Inquiry* 48:651–678. URL [https://doi.org/10.1162/LING\\_a\\_00257](https://doi.org/10.1162/LING_a_00257)
5. Scontras, Gregory, and Noah D. Goodman. 2017. Resolving uncertainty in plural predication. *Cognition* 168:294–311. URL <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0010027717301993>
6. Schwarz, Bernhard. 2013. *At least* and quantity implicature: Choices and consequences. In *Proceedings of the 19th Amsterdam Colloquium*, ed. Maria Aloni, Michael Franke, and Floris Roelofsen. University of Amsterdam
7. Schwarzschild, Roger. 2006. The role of dimensions in the syntax of noun phrases. *Syntax* 9:67–110
8. Singh, Raj, Evelina Fedorenko, Kyle Mahowald, and Edward Gibson. 2016. Accommodating Presuppositions Is Inappropriate in Implausible Contexts. *Cognitive Science* 40:607–634. URL <https://doi.org/10.1111/cogs.12260>
9. Stalnaker, Robert. 1978. Assertion. In *Syntax and semantics*, ed. Peter Cole, volume 9, 78–95. Academic Press, New York

## Prerequisites

LING 360 and PHIL 210, or instructor's permission

## Requirements and evaluation

class participation:	6%
4 homework assignments:	48%
initial submission: 8% each	
revised submission: 4% each	
midterm exam:	20%
final project:	26%
proposal: 6%	
presentation: 20%	

## Assignments

For each homework assignment, I will provide written comments on your initial submission and/or discuss the assignment in class. You are then given the opportunity to submit a revised version of the assignment that takes into account the comments you received and/or class discussion. A revised

version that you submit will typically receive a higher grade than the original submission, but this is not guaranteed. In particular, a revised version will not be graded unless the changes from the original submission are clearly marked using color or some other form of typographical highlighting.

## Presentations

In pairs, you will choose a topic of your interest for your final project that is related to course material. A final topic will typically include a critical review of one or more research papers, but it may also focus on the outcome of your own research – e.g., propose an analysis of certain data collected data from native speakers or the internet, etc. There will be a separate handout with more details about this later.

## Schedule (subject to revisions)

- Key: ● = homework assignment due (initial submission)  
 ⑦ = homework assignment due (revised submission)  
 ◆ = project proposal due

	TOPIC	READING
<b>WEEK 1</b>		
M 01/06	Introduction	
W 01/08	Mind reading: quantity implicature	Schwarz (2013)
<b>WEEK 2</b>		
M 01/13	Mind reading: quantity implicature (cont.)	Schwarz (2013)
W 01/15		
<b>WEEK 3</b>		
M ● 01/20	Asserting and presupposing	Stalnaker (1978)
W 01/22		Singh et al. (2016)
<b>WEEK 4</b>		
M 01/27	Mind reading: antipresuppositions	Rouillard and Schwarz (2017)
W 01/30		
<b>WEEK 5</b>		
M ● ① 02/03	Mind reading: antipresuppositions (cont.)	Rouillard and Schwarz (2017)
W 02/05		
<b>WEEK 6</b>		
M 02/10	Pre-enrichment context dependency	Schwarzschild (2006)
W 02/12		Scontras and Goodman (2017)
<b>WEEK 7</b>		
M ● ② 02/17	Perspective taking	Hinterwimmer (2017)
W 02/19		
<b>WEEK 8</b>		
M 02/24	Speech acts and their relation to sentence types	Rudin (2019)
W 02/26		
<b>WEEK 9</b>		
M ● ③ 03/09	Reference to speech acts in grammar	Sauerland and Yatsushiro (2017)
W 03/11		
<b>WEEK 10</b>		
M 03/16	TBA/catch-up	
W 03/18		
<b>WEEK 11</b>		

M ④ ↔	03/23	TBA/catch-up	
W	03/25		
<b>WEEK 12</b>			
M	03/30	Student presentations	
W	04/01		
<b>WEEK 13</b>			
M	04/06	Student presentations	
W	04/08		
MIDTERM EXAM: TBA			

## Course rules and procedures

### Academic integrity

McGill University values academic integrity. Wherefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the code of student conduct and disciplinary procedures (see <http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity> for more information).

L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site <http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity>).

Assignments may be done in groups. However, a group may contain a maximum of three students. Also, each student must turn in a separate assignment *written up individually and independently*. If you worked in a group, you must provide the names of the students who you worked with on the first page of your assignment.

### Missed submission deadlines, midterm exam, or presentation

No late assignments will be accepted and no make-up assignments will be offered unless you have a documented medical excuse and I have been notified within 24 hours of when the assignment was due. Any problem with grading on an assignment must be reported within one week of when the assignment or exam was returned.

No make-up midterm exam will be offered unless you have a documented medical excuse and I have been notified within 24 hours of the exam. Any problem with grading on the midterm exam must be reported within one week of when the assignment or exam was returned.

No make-up project presentation will be arranged unless you have a documented medical excuse and I have been notified within 24 hours of the originally scheduled presentation.

## **Course materials and copyright**

© Instructor generated course materials (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions, etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringements of copyright can be subject to follow up by the University under the [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#).

## **Class handouts**

There will be a handout for each class that you will need to have access to in order to follow the lecture. Handouts will usually be posted on MyCourses by 7am the day of the lecture. Print a paper copy to bring to class or read it on a screen.

Revised versions of handouts will sometimes be posted on MyCourses after class. It is your responsibility to make sure that you always consult the latest version of the handout.

## **E-mail**

You can expect me to respond to your e-mail questions and comments. However, please do not expect instant responses. I will try to respond within two working days.

## **Right to submit in French**

In accord with McGill University's [Charter of Students' Rights](#), students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

## **Inclusiveness**

As instructors of this course, I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and [the Office for Students with Disabilities, \(514\) 398-6009](#).