

LING 675 Syntax 4
LING 775 Seminar in Syntax
Topics in Predication

MW 2:45 pm - 4:05 pm
1085 Dr. Penfield Rm 117

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Office hours: Tuesday 1-2 pm & by appointment

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Course Description

The course explores current cross-linguistic issues in syntax and its interfaces. Through in-depth investigations of particular issues, students will learn skills necessary to do independent research, such as (i) constructing arguments by carefully following logical steps, (ii) formulating hypotheses and exploring their consequences, (iii) finding empirical puzzles and developing them into research questions for a project.

This year, we will explore selected topics in the area of predication cross-linguistically. Specific topics include: Predication relations, copular clauses, cleft and pseudo-cleft constructions, connectivity effects and clausal ellipsis. Along the way, we will explore ways in which meaning can be used as evidence for syntactic structure.

Evaluation

For LING 675

Contributions to class discussions: 20%

2 Mini-squibs: 12% (2x6%)

Presentation (critical evaluation of an article): 8%

Final project presentation & paper: 60%

For LING 775 (Pass/Fail)

Contributions to class discussions: 60%

Presentation (critical evaluation of an article): 40%

Contributions to class discussions

Class discussions will assume that you have done the required readings. You are expected to contribute to class discussions by bringing in your own questions and comments on the readings.

Mini-squibs

Mini-squib 1 (1 page): due 2:45 pm, February 21

Mini-squib 2 (1 page): due 2:45 pm, March 21

Mini-squibs let you pick up on and explore questions, issues, data points and so forth that were discussed but left open in class. The purpose of this exercise is to help you with the process of identifying appropriate research questions for your final project.

Presentation (Critical evaluation of an article/articles)

Short presentations (of 15-20 minutes) will give you an opportunity to summarize and critically evaluate a proposal/proposals. You will choose one article in consultation with the instructor that discusses topics related to those covered in class.

Try to include in your presentation:

- A brief summary of the goals and the main issues addressed in the paper.
 - Presentation of the main proposal and critical evaluation of the proposed analysis and arguments presented.
 - Discussion of predictions made by the analysis you are critiquing and new data that bear on the analysis.
- Bring in your own questions.

Final project (presentation and paper)

Your paper will deal with a topic discussed in class or related to those discussed in class that you want to get more into and think more about. **Your paper is expected to go beyond a critical review, by making empirical and/or theoretical contributions that are original.** Make sure that in your paper, it is clear what are your own contributions (data, analyses, criticisms) and what are from the literature. Your paper will also be evaluated as to whether it shows evidence for potential in completing satisfactory evaluation papers (or an MA research paper), as well as whether it shows evidence that you have learned something from the course.

Meeting with me:	by Friday, March 28
Presentation (15-20 minutes):	April (9,) 11, 16
Paper (maximum 12 single-spaced pages, Times 12 pt. or equivalent):	Due 2:45 pm, Friday, April 27

Academic Integrity and Other Statements

Copyright: Instructor-generated course materials

Instructor-generated course materials (e.g., slides, handouts, conference materials, assignments, quizzes, exam questions, answer keys, 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 (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).

Academic integrity

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, 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 www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ 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 www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/).

In case you consider working on related topics for term papers in two courses, it is very important that you bring it up to all the instructors involved and get approval.

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.

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue).

Inclusive learning environment

As the instructor of this course I endeavour 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.

Extraordinary circumstances

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

Schedule

- subject to change -

Wk	Date	Topic & Reading
1	1/8,10	Introduction: Connectivity effect, copular clauses, and ellipsis Ott and de Vries (2016); Ott (2016)
2	1/15,17	Connectivity puzzles Shimoyama et al. (2015)
3	1/22,24	Connectivity puzzles Barros (2016b)
3	1/29,31	Copular clauses Mikkelsen (2004, 2005, 2011)
5	2/5,7	Copular clauses
6	2/12,14	Copular clauses
7	2/19,21	Predication relation in syntax Den Dikken (2006) (Squib 1 due Wed)
8	2/26,28	Predication relation in syntax
Reading Week		
9	3/12,14	Cleft/Pseudo-cleft constructions Higgins (1972); Percus (1997)
10	3/19,21	Cleft/Pseudo-cleft constructions Schlenker (2003); Caponigro and Heller (2007); Romero (2007); Hirsch (2017) (Squib 2 due Wed)
11	3/26,28	Cleft/Pseudo-cleft constructions Aldridge (2002) (mtg by Fri)
12	4/4	Cleft/Pseudo-cleft constructions
13	4/9,11	(continued &) presentations
14	4/16	presentations
	4/23, 2:45 pm	Final project paper due

Other readings [To be expanded] :

Note: You are expected to explore beyond this obviously limited list for identifying a paper for your article presentation, and for identifying your own research project.

- Appositives (nominal), clausal ellipsis, etc.
Griffiths (2015); Griffiths and Lipták (2014); Ott (2016)
- Free relatives
Jacobson (1995); Citko (2004); Riemsdijk (2006); Bhatt (2013)
- Transparent free relatives
Wilder (1998); van Riemsdijk (2000)
- Cleft & Pseudo-cleft constructions
Heycock and Kroch (1999); den Dikken et al. (2000); Hiraiwa and Ishihara (2012); Paul (2008); Potsdam and Polinsky (2011); Caponigro and Polinsky (2011); Merchant (1998); Merchant and Simpson (2012)
- Connectivity effect in clefts & pseudo-clefts
Sharvit (1999, 2009); Heller (2002)
- Island repair and ellipsis sources
Barros et al. (2013); Barros (2014, 2016a)
- Acquisition
Aravind et al. (2017)
- Extra: some more examples of structural diagnostics
 - Negation: scope of NPI
 - Negation: relative scope wrt subject/object quantifiers
 - Scope of relative clause heads
 - Degree operator movement and island effects

References

- Aldridge, Edith. 2002. Nominalization and wh-movement in Seediq and Tagalog. *Language and Linguistics* 3:393–426.
- Aravind, Athulya, Martin Hackl, and Ken Wexler. 2017. Syntactic and pragmatic factors in children's comprehension of cleft constructions. *Language Acquisition* 1–31.
- Barros, Matthew. 2014. Sluicing and identity in ellipsis. Doctoral Dissertation, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.
- Barros, Matthew. 2016a. Specification as an inter-taxonomic phenomenon. [Http://lingbuzz.auf.net/lingbuzz/003117](http://lingbuzz.auf.net/lingbuzz/003117).

- Barros, Matthew. 2016b. Syntactic identity in ellipsis, and deviations therefrom: The case of copular sources in sluicing. [Http://lingbuzz.auf.net/lingbuzz/002940](http://lingbuzz.auf.net/lingbuzz/002940).
- Barros, Matthew, Patrick Elliott, and Gary Thoms. 2013. More variation in island repair: the clausal/non-clausal island distinction. In *Proceedings of Chicago Linguistics Society 49*.
- Bhatt, Rajesh. 2013. Free relatives and correlatives. Handout for guest lecture, LING 417 Topics at the interfaces, McGill University, November 2013.
- Caponigro, Ivano, and Daphna Heller. 2007. The non-concealed nature of free relatives: Implications for connectivity in specificational sentences. In *Direct compositionality*, ed. Pauline Jacobson and Chris Barker, 237–263. Oxford University Press.
- Caponigro, Ivano, and Maria Polinsky. 2011. Relative embeddings: A circassian puzzle for the syntax/semantics interface. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 29:71–122.
- Citko, Barbara. 2004. On headed, headless, and light-headed relatives. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 22:95–126.
- Den Dikken, Marcel. 2006. *Relators and linkers: The syntax of predication, predicate inversion, and copulas*, volume 47. MIT press.
- den Dikken, Marcel, André Meinunger, and Chris Wilder. 2000. Pseudoclefts and ellipsis. *Studia Linguistica* 54:41–89.
- Griffiths, James. 2015. Reformulative appositions and clausal ellipsis. *Lingua* 70–91.
- Griffiths, James, and Anikó Lipták. 2014. Contrast and island sensitivity in clausal ellipsis. *Syntax* 17:189–234.
- Heller, Daphna. 2002. On the relation of connectivity and specificational pseudoclefts. *Natural Language Semantics* 10:243–284.
- Heycock, Caroline, and Anthony Kroch. 1999. Pseudocleft connectedness: Implications for the LF interface level. *Linguistic Inquiry* 30:365–397.
- Higgins, F. R. 1972. The pseudocleft construction in English. Doctoral Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Hiraiwa, Ken, and Shinichiro Ishihara. 2012. Syntactic metamorphosis: Clefts, sluicing, and in-situ focus in Japanese. *Syntax* 15:142–180.
- Hirsch, Aron. 2017. Fragments, pseudo-clefts, and ellipsis. Handout for LSA Annual Meeting, Austin, Texas., January 2017.
- Jacobson, Pauline. 1995. On the quantificational force of English free relatives. In *Quantification in natural languages*, 451–486. Springer.
- Merchant, Jason. 1998. Pseudosluicing?: elliptical clefts in Japanese and English. *ZAS working papers in linguistics* 10:88–112.

- Merchant, Jason, and Andrew Simpson. 2012. *Sluicing: Cross-linguistic perspectives*, volume 38. Oxford University Press.
- Mikkelsen, Line. 2004. Specifying who: On the structure, meaning, and use of specificational copular clauses. Doctoral Dissertation, University of California, Santa Cruz.
- Mikkelsen, Line. 2005. *Copular clauses: Specification, predication and equation*, volume 85. John Benjamins Publishing.
- Mikkelsen, Line. 2011. Copular clauses. In *Semantics: An international handbook of natural language meaning*, ed. Klaus von Stechow, Claudia Maienborn, and Paul Portner, volume 2, chapter 68, 1805–1829. De Gruyter.
- Ott, Dennis. 2016. Ellipsis in appositives. *Glossa: a journal of general linguistics* 1(1):1–46.
- Ott, Dennis, and Mark de Vries. 2016. Right-dislocation as deletion. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 34:641–690.
- Paul, Ileana. 2008. On the topic of pseudoclefts. *Syntax* 11:91–124.
- Percus, Orin. 1997. Prying open the cleft. In *Proceedings of North East Linguistic Society 27*, ed. Kiyomi Kusumoto, 337–351. UMass: Graduate Linguistic Student Association.
- Potsdam, Eric, and Maria Polinsky. 2011. Questions and word order in polynesian. *Topics in Oceanic morphosyntax* 121–153.
- van Riemsdijk, Henk. 2000. Free relatives inside out: Transparent free relatives as grafts. In *PASE Papers in Language Studies: Proceedings of the 8th Annual Conference of the Polish Association for the Study of English*, ed. B Rozwadowska, 223–233. University of Wrocław.
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- Romero, Maribel. 2007. Connectivity in a unified analysis of specificational subjects and concealed questions. In *Direct compositionality*, ed. Pauline Jacobson and Chris Barker, 264–305. Oxford University Press.
- Schlenker, Philippe. 2003. Clausal equations (a note on the connectivity problem). *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 21:157–214.
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- Sharvit, Yael. 2009. Revisiting connectivity in copular sentences. In *Semantics and Linguistic Theory*, volume 19, 427–445.
- Shimoyama, Junko, Alex Drummond, Bernhard Schwarz, and Michael Wagner. 2015. Movement and ellipsis in afterthought right dislocation, sluicing and fragments. In *Proceedings of the 2015 Annual Conference of the Canadian Linguistic Association*, ed. Santa Venerte.
- Wilder, Chris. 1998. Transparent free relatives. *ZAS Papers in Linguistics* 10:191–199.