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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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 -

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<td>Den Dikken (2006)</td>
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<td>presentations</td>
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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

- 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


