

Johanna Alstott

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Education

- 2022–present **Massachusetts Institute of Technology**
PhD in Linguistics (in progress)
- 2018–2022 **Harvard College**
Bachelor of Arts, *summa cum laude* with Highest Honors in Linguistics
Thesis: *An experimental exploration of scalar implicature in adverbial vs. nominal quantifiers*
[\[LINK\]](#)
Advisor: Kathryn Davidson

Publications

Journal articles

- 2025 Alstott, Johanna. *First and last* as superlatives of *before* and *after*. *Natural Language Semantics* 33(1):83–120. [\[LINK\]](#)

Conference proceedings (peer-reviewed abstract)

- to appear Alstott, Johanna. On *very*-intensified superlatives. In *Proceedings of Sinn und Bedeutung (SuB) 29*. [\[LINK\]](#)
- 2024 Alstott, Johanna. Scalar implicature in adverbial vs. nominal quantifiers: Two experiments. In *Proceedings of the Chicago Linguistic Society (CLS) 59*, 13–24. [\[LINK\]](#)
- 2024 Alstott, Johanna. A first semantics for *at first* and *at last*. In *Proceedings of the Linguistic Society of America* 9(1). [\[LINK\]](#)
- 2023 Alstott, Johanna. Ordinal numbers: Not superlatives, but modifiers of superlatives. In *Proceedings of Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT) 33*, 1–20. [\[LINK\]](#)
- 2020 Alstott, Johanna & Jasbi, Masoud. Lexicalization of quantificational forces in adverbial and determiner domains. In *Proceedings of the 42nd Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, 2001-2006*. [\[LINK\]](#)

Presentations

Invited talks

- 2024 Alstott, Johanna. On two types of aspectual coercion and *before-/after*-clauses: Evidence from processing. Invited talk at the Construction of Meaning Workshop, Stanford University.

Conference talks, refereed by abstract

- 2025 Alstott, Johanna. Deriving 'first' and 'last' from 'before' and 'after': Evidence from Kinyarwanda. Talk presented at the 2025 Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America (LSA), Philadelphia. [\[LINK\]](#)
- 2024 Alstott, Johanna. Before and after decomposing *first* and *last*. Talk presented at the 54th Annual Meeting of the North East Linguistic Society (NELS 54), Massachusetts Institute of Technology. [\[LINK\]](#)
- 2024 Alstott, Johanna. A first semantics for *at first* and *at last*. Talk presented at the 2024 Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America (LSA 100), New York. [\[LINK\]](#)

Conference posters, refereed by abstract

- 2024 Alstott, Johanna. On *very*-intensified superlatives. Poster (and lightning talk) presented at Sinn und Bedeutung 29 (SuB 29), Consorzio Universitario Mediterraneo Orientale. [\[LINK\]](#)
- 2024 Alstott, Johanna & Athulya Aravind. Comparing the processing of two types of durative-to-punctual coercion. Poster presented at the 37th Human Sentence Processing conference (HSP 37), University of Michigan. [\[LINK\]](#)
- 2023 Alstott, Johanna. Scalar implicature in adverbial vs. nominal quantifiers: Two experiments. Poster presented at the 49th Annual Meeting of the Society for Philosophy and Psychology (SPP 49), University of Pittsburgh.
- 2023 Alstott, Johanna. Ordinal numbers: Not superlatives, but modifiers of superlatives. Poster (and lightning talk) presented at Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT) 33, Yale University. [\[LINK\]](#)
- 2023 Alstott, Johanna. Scalar implicature in adverbial vs. nominal quantifiers: Two experiments. Poster presented at the 59th Annual Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society (CLS 59), University of Chicago. [\[LINK\]](#)
- 2020 Alstott, Johanna & Masoud Jasbi. Lexicalization of quantificational forces in adverbial and determiner domains. Poster presented at the 42nd Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society (CogSci 42), Virtual. [\[LINK\]](#)

Conference presentations, non-refereed

- 2024 Alstott, Johanna & Athulya Aravind. On two types of aspectual coercion and *before/after*-clauses. Poster presented at the 6th Crete Summer School of Linguistics, University of Crete. [\[LINK\]](#)
- 2023 Alstott, Johanna. *First* and *last*'s before and after pictures. Poster presented at the 5th Crete Summer School of Linguistics, University of Crete.

Teaching

As guest lecturer

- 2024 On ordinal modifiers of superlatives. Guest lecture in Intermediate Semantics, 6th Crete Summer School of Linguistics.

As graduate teaching assistant

- 2025 Language Acquisition, MIT *Instructor: Athulya Aravind*

- 2024 Language and Its Structure III: Semantics & Pragmatics, MIT *Instructor: Martin Hackl*
- 2024 Intermediate Semantics, Crete Summer School of Linguistics *Instructors: Rajesh Bhatt and Yael Sharvit*
- 2024 Introduction to Linguistics, MIT *Instructor: Donca Steriade*
- 2023 Introduction to Semantics, Crete Summer School of Linguistics *Instructor: Cleo Condoravdi*

As undergraduate course assistant

- 2022 Language, Structure, and Cognition, Harvard College *Instructor: Adam Singerman*

Service and experience

Professional service

- 2023–24 Co-organizer, North East Linguistics Society (NELS) 54, MIT
- 2023 Co-organizer, Morris Halle @ 100 Conference (M100), MIT

Departmental service

- 2025– Organizer, MIT LingLunch
- 2024– MIT Graduate Student Union (GSU) Steward, Department of Linguistics & Philosophy
- 2023–24 Organizer, MIT Logical Form Reading Group (LFRG)
- 2023–24 Student representative, MIT Syntax/Semantics Faculty Search
- 2023–24 Manager, MIT Working Papers in Linguistics (MITWPL)

Honors and awards

- 2022 **Sophia Freund Prize**
\$1,000 prize “awarded annually to the students in the senior class of Harvard College who are graduating *summa cum laude* with the highest grade point average.”
- 2021 **Phi Beta Kappa, Junior 24**
The “Junior 24” is Harvard’s earliest PBK election, awarded to 24 out of ~1,900 juniors.
- 2019–2021 **John Harvard Scholar**
Awarded to the top 5% of the class in an academic year at Harvard
- 2019 **Detur Book Prize**
Awarded to the top 5% of freshman class at Harvard

Languages

- English native
- French advanced
- German intermediate with advanced reading knowledge

Skills

- R intermediate
- LaTeX advanced