

# Exhaustivity Implicature and Hungarian Preverbal Focus

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Hungarian is probably the most well-known language with a designated focus position. The focused constituent must move to the immediately preverbal position, which results in an inversion of the verb and the verbal modifier, that also has a default preverbal position:

- (1) a. Kati fel hívta Jánost.  
Kati VM-UP called János-ACC  
'Kati called János.'
- b. [KATI]<sub>F</sub> hívta fel Jánost.  
Kati called VM-UP János-ACC  
'[KATI]<sub>F</sub> called János.'

A sentence with a preverbal focus receives an exhaustive interpretation, meaning that 'Kati and noone else called János'. However, the source of this interpretation has been the subject of debate: is it part of the semantics of the focus, or is it a pragmatic inference? In this talk, I argue that the exhaustive interpretation of the Hungarian preverbal focus is indeed of pragmatic nature: it is a quantity implicature, very similar to scalar implicatures. I present data from Hungarian clearly contradicting a semantic exhaustivity approach, I demonstrate how a similar mechanism to that of scalar implicatures can be applied to utterances with and also without focus and discuss why the implicature gets strengthened in the presence of focus.

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