

## Experimental Investigations on Exhaustivity in German *it*-clefts and Hungarian Preverbal Focus Swantje Tönnis (University of Göttingen)

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In this talk, I present an empirical study directly comparing the exhaustivity inference in *it*-clefts to exhaustivity inferences in definite pseudoclefts, exclusives, and plain focus constructions in German (translated versions in (1)).

- (1)    a. **CLEFT** It is Max who mixed a cocktail.            b. **DEF.** The one who mixed a cocktail is Max.  
         c. **FOCUS** MAX mixed a cocktail.                    d. **EXCL.** Only Max mixed a cocktail.

Our study uses a novel mouse-driven picture-verification task in which the incremental updating of the context allows one to determine at which point participants take exhaustivity into consideration. Our results are compatible with a parallel analysis of clefts and pseudoclefts (see, e.g., Percus 1997, Büring & Križ 2013), albeit one in which exhaustivity is a non-conventionally coded pragmatic inference in both constructions, contra those proposals.

Cross-linguistically, the exhaustive interpretation of *it*-clefts is frequently treated on a par with the exhaustiveness of preverbal focus in Hungarian, as in (2-b). Following É. Kiss (1998), exhaustivity in both constructions is analyzed as a robust semantic inference. However, our results do not support this view for German *it*-clefts. In order to detect potential differences between those and Hungarian preverbal focus, we will conduct a version of our experiment for Hungarian, comparing biclausal clefts, preverbal focus, definite pseudoclefts, and exclusives (see (2)).

- (2)    a. **BICL.** Viktor az, aki kikevert egy koktélt.            b. **PREFOC.** VIKTOR kevert ki egy koktélt.  
         c. **DEF.** Az, aki kikevert egy koktélt, az Viktor.            d. **EXCL.** Csak Viktor kevert ki egy koktélt.