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## The role of focus in exhaustivity effects – Evidence from a novel experimental paradigm

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The paper presents new experimental evidence on the exhaustivity effects associated with German Es-clefts, see (1), compared to sentences with subject focus (2), pseudo-clefts (3) and exclusives (4). We redesigned Experiment II of DeVeagh-Geiss et al. (2018) into an old-school RPG, wherein a school janitor becomes a detective. We argue that the status of exhaustivity associated with (pseudo-)cleft sentences in German is a pragmatic (Horn, 2014) instead of a semantic inference (which is modeled as a maximality presupposition (Percus, 1997) or a homogeneity presupposition (Büring and Križ, 2013)). Compared to Experiment 2 in DeVeagh Geiss et al. (2018), we find much higher rates of exhaustivity inferences with focus in (2) in our experiment, which we attribute to the Gamification paradigm in combination with the capitalization of the subject noun. Apart from this, we replicated their findings, further supporting their analysis of exhaustivity in clefts having the status of a pragmatic inference, rather than a robust semantic effect.

- (1) Es ist John, der getanzt hat.  
It COP.SG John, REL.MASC.SG danced has.  
*‘It is John who danced.’* CLEFT
- (2) JOHN hat getanzt.  
John has danced.  
*‘John danced.’* FOCUS
- (3) Derjenige, der getanzt hat, is John.  
DEF.MASC.SG REL.MASC.SG danced has COP.SG John.  
*‘The one who danced is John.’* PSEUDO-CLEFT
- (4) Nur John hat getanzt.  
Only John has danced.  
*‘Only John danced.’* EXCLUSIVE

**References:** De Veagh-Geiss, J. P., Tönnis, S., Onea, E., & Zimmermann, M. (2018). That’s not quite it: An experimental investigation of (non-) exhaustivity in clefts. *Semantics and Pragmatics*, 11, 3. • Horn, L. (2014). Information structure and the landscape of (non-)at-issue meaning. In Caroline Féry & Shinichiro Ishihara (eds.), *The Oxford handbook of information structure*, Oxford University Press. • Büring, D. & M. Križ. (2013). It’s that, and that’s it! Exhaustivity and homogeneity presuppositions in clefts (and definites). *Semantics and Pragmatics* 6(6). 1–29. • Percus, O. (1997). Prying open the cleft. In Kiyomi Kusumoto (ed.), *North Eastern Linguistic Society (NELS)*, vol. 27, 337–351.