

## **Focus Fronting and non-at-issue meanings**

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### ABSTRACT

In this presentation, I will give an overview of the recent findings and theories on the actual trigger of Focus Fronting (FF) in Italian and of the semantic and pragmatic features associated with this syntactic operation. The availability of FF not only in corrective but also in mirative (i.e. surprise) contexts shows that, contrary to the dominant claims in the literature, contrast and/or givenness of the background are not necessary conditions for FF.

I will claim, instead, that the special interpretations associated with FF are *conventional implicatures* belonging to the non-at-issue dimension of meaning. In support of this claim, I will present the results of both a syntactic experiment on the distribution of Italian FF and a prosodic experiment highlighting the systematic differences between FF in corrective and in mirative contexts. The non-at-issue meanings associated with FF in polar questions in Italian and in Sicilian will also be discussed.

I will finally conclude my talk with some observations and open questions on the differences and potential similarities between Italian and Hungarian FF.