

Contrasting expectations: the Hungarian modal particle *csak*

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Csak as a focus particle

Csak as a modal particle

Stressed CSAK

Unstressed csak

Csak 'only' as a focus particle 1

[_{FP} Csak JÁnost [_{VP} javasolták ösztöndíjra.]]
only John.ACC recommended.3PL scholarship.ONTO
'Only [John]_F was recommended for a scholarship.'

Mari [_{FP} csak HÁrom cikket [_{VP} olvasott el.]]
Mary only three papers.ACC read.3SG VM
'Mary only read [three]_F papers.'

[_{FP} Csak az Ajtó [_{VP} csapódott BE.]]
only the door slammed VM
'Only [the door slammed]_F.'

Interpretation of *csak* – cf. [Horn 1969]:

Presupposition: $B(F)$

Assertion: $\forall F'((F' \in ALT(F) \wedge B(F')) \rightarrow F' = F)$

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- A postverbal stressed CSAK can also associate with the focus:

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- **stressed CSAK**
 - *CSAK* in commands
 - *CSAK* in assertions
 - *CSAK* in questions
- **unstressed csak**
 - *csak* in assertions
 - *csak* in exclamations
 - *csak* in questions
 - *csak* in wishes
 - *csak* in commands

Csak as a focus particle

Csak as a modal particle

Stressed CSAK

Unstressed csak

A: *Nem akarok leülni.*
not want.1SG VM.sit.INF
'I don't want to sit down.'

B: (*Azért*) *CSAK ülj le!*
PRT CSAK sit.2SG.IMP VM
'Still sit down!'

CSAK seems to function in a manner analogous to Dutch accented *toch* in imperatives, according to [Zeevat 2000]: it "presupposes a contrary attitude to the action ordered in the imperative".

Kom TOCH naar Amsterdam.

Come to Amsterdam (although I see why you do not want to).
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'John will not be elected!'

B: *Most hallottam, hogy ő kapta a legtöbb szavazatot!*

now heard.1SG that he got the most vote.ACC

'I've just heard that he got the most votes!'

A: *(Szóval) CSAK megválasztották Jánost.*

so CSAK VM.elected.3PL John.ACC

'So, they did elect him after all.'

CSAK cannot be left out of A's second utterance – he would be attributed contradictory beliefs (cf. [Zeevat 2000] on Dutch *TOCH*).

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[Zeevat 2000] (p. 12): "*Toch* is just an old-marker without a preference for positive or negative antecedents. If the antecedent of *toch* has the same polarity as the current clause, no accent is provided by the speaker because there is no contrast between the clause and the recovered presupposition. If the antecedent has opposite polarity, accent results from the recovery of the antecedent."

CSAK cannot mark that the speaker presupposes the opposite of the statement uttered

A: *Jánost meg fogják választani.*

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'John will be elected.'

B: *Nem hiszem, ő egyáltalán nem népszerű*

not believe.1sg he at.all not popular

'I don't believe, he is not popular at all.'

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[Zeevat 2003] on accented *doch/toch*

- Accented *toch/doch* are adversative markers. NB: They are different from *DOCH/TOCH*, pronounced with contrastive stress, which are corrective markers (*correct*(CG, ψ) holds iff $CG \models \neg\psi$).
- *adversative*(CG, ψ) holds iff $CG \models \textit{normally}(\neg\psi)$ or $CG \models \textit{suggested}(\neg\psi)$
- "the truth of *normally*(p) in an information state requires that the $CG \models \psi_1, \dots, \psi_n$, and that ψ_1, \dots, ψ_n together constitute a reason for thinking that p , while at the same time the CG must not contain a reason for thinking that $\neg p$ " (p. 183)
- *suggested*(ψ) \leftrightarrow *may* $\psi \wedge (\psi \vee O_1\psi \vee \dots \vee O_n\psi \vee \textit{suggested}(\phi))$, where the set $\{O_1, \dots, O_n\}$ contains operators like *x dreams that*, *x suggests that*, *x believes that*.

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Does *CSAK* have the same presuppositions as accented *doch/toch*?

Problem with *suggested*($\neg\psi$) – too weak:

(1) A: I dreamt that John will be elected

B: #*CSAK nem választották meg.*

'He did not get elected after all!'

(2) A: I campaigned for János.

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An assertion with CSAK presupposes that the opposite of the statement made is compatible with what is known in the CG, and has been argued for by one of the participants of the conversation or is entailed by the claims of one of the participants.

A and B listen to somebody making some annoying noise for a while. The noise stops.

A: *CSAK abbahagyta.*

'He did finish it after all'

CSAK be kellene már adni az adóbevallásomat!
only VM must.COND already give the tax.report.MY.ACC
'I should really send off my tax report now after all.'

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The syntactic position of modal CSAK

Only in front of the predicate part of the sentence:

- a. **CSAK** [_{AspP} *megválasztották Jánost.*]
CSAK VM.elected.3PL John.ACC
'They elected John after all.'
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CSAK not elected.3PL VM John.ACC
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'I've just heard that he got the most votes!'

A: *(Szóval) CSAK megválasztották Jánost?*

'So, did they elect John after all?'

ANALYSIS

Probably analogous to that of stressed *TOCH* by [Zeevat 2000]: it must be prompted by a suggestion that is contrary to what the questioner appeared to know.

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A special type of question?

CSAK jár neked valamilyen újság?

CSAK goes 2SG.DAT some.kind.of newspaper

You subscribe to a newspaper, don't you?

Jancsi CSAK felkel dél előtt?

Johnny CSAK vm.gets noon before

'Johnny does get up before noon, doesn't he?'

[Kiefer 1988]: "The speaker thinks that *p* should be the case, but he has got some evidence which makes him believe that *p* may not be the case after all." (p. 109)

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A: János nem készült a tegnapi vizsgájára.

'John had not prepared for his exam yesterday.'

B: *CSAK átmént valahogy!*

CSAK THROUGH.went somehow

'I hope he still passed somehow.'

B': *CSAK nem bukott meg!*

CSAK not failed VM

'I hope he still did not fail.'

Observations

- the above sentences end in a rising tone (normal intonation of polarity questions: rise-fall)
- the particula *vajon*, that is normally said to be insertable into any question ([?] [?]) cannot appear in them: *#Vajon CSAK jár neked valamilyen újság?*
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A: János nem készült a tegnapi vizsgájára.

'John had not prepared for his exam yesterday.'

B: *CSAK átmént valahogy!*

CSAK THROUGH.went somehow

'I hope he still passed somehow.'

B': *CSAK nem bukott meg!*

CSAK not failed VM

'I hope he still did not fail.'

Observations

- the above sentences end in a rising tone (normal intonation of polarity questions: rise-fall)
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- The above construction is a *rising declarative*, cf. [Gunlogson 2003]: the rise signals that the speaker does not commit himself to the truth of the proposition. Typical examples of the same kind: *Meg fog gyógyulni/(?)* 'He will recover, won't he?', *Nem hal meg/(?)* 'He won't die, will he?'
- The presuppositions of the construction are the same as those of 'ordinary' assertions with *CSAK*. (There has to be some suggestion in the CG that the opposite of the claim made by the speaker holds.)
- How do these constructions convey the speaker's hope that the proposition is true? Hypothesis: a speaker puts up a proposition for confirmation whose truth he wants to believe in.

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Csak as a focus particle

Csak as a modal particle

Stressed CSAK

Unstressed csak

Csak in assertions, exclamations and questions

Ő már csak tudja, mi a minőség.

He/she already CSAK knows what the quality

'He surely knows what quality is.'

S ez volt csak a nevetés!

and this was the laughter

'And that was a real laughter!'

Hogy is hívták csak?

how also called csak

'What was his name again?'

ANALYSIS: analogous to that of *toch/doch* – marking the content of the assertion as *familiar* information in the common ground, cf. [Thurmair 1989], [Lindner 1991], [Zeevat 2000], [Zeevat 2003]

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Csak otthon lennénk már!
 only at.home be.1PL.COND already
 'I wish we were at home already!'

EXPLANATION

Along the lines proposed for German *nur/bloß* by [Abraham 1991] (1) *Wenn es aufhören würde zu regnen*
 'If only it would stop raining!'

- there is a conversationally implicated embedding sentence: *Ich wäre froh* 'I would be happy', thus the paraphrase of (1) is 'It does not take more than the ceasing of th rain to make me happy'
- "... the illocutive force of the MP is a derivative of the form of the sentence (subjunctive-irrealis) and the low-limit denotation of the SP-meaning of *nur/bloß*." (p. 224)

A similar proposal for *csak*: [Éföbricz 1986]

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A similar proposal for *csak*: [Éábricz 1986]

Unstressed *csak* in negative imperatives

Légy szíves, csak ne adj tippeket!
be.2SG.IMP kind CSAK not give.2SG.IMP tips.ACC
'Please, don't give tips by any means!'

Te csak ne akarj az én szemembe belenézni!
you CSAK not want.2SG.IMP the my eye.INTO VM.look.INF
'You should not want to look into my eyes by any means!'

EXPLANATION

Following [Abraham 1991]

(1) *Komm nur nicht zu spät!*

come only not too late

'By all means, don't be late!'

'... the warning force of [1] derives from the imperative force denoted directly by the sentence type, and the low limit denotation of *nur/bloß* as a G[rading] P[article] implying that 'anything below 'not coming late' (i.e. coming late)' will not be tolerated.' "(p. 223)

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Unstressed *csak* in positive imperatives – data

Gondold csak meg!

think.2SG.IMP CSAK VM

'You should really think about it!'

Csak beszélj!

CSAK talk.2SG.IMP

'Please, talk!'

POSSIBLE EXPLANATION

Along the lines proposed by [Thurmair 1989] for *nur*:

"in non-negated imperatives, *nur* weakens the command and provides it with a reassuring tone . . ." (p. 183), i.e. turns it into an encouragement

(1) *Komm nur her! Ich tu dir doch nichts.*

'Come here! I won't do any harm to you!'

There are contexts where the meaning of *csak* cannot convey encouragement:

Te csak eredj innét!

you CSAK go.IMP here.FROM

'Get away from here right away!'

[Kocsány 1986]: the above use of modal *csak* – **contrastive**.

But it can also appear in contexts implying no contrast:

A: *Folytathatom?*

continue.1SG.POSSIB

'Can I continue?'

B: *Folytasd csak!*

continue.2SG.IMP CSAK

'Go on!'

B': *Csak folytasd!*

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The examples above remind one of certain uses of German *doch*, e.g. *Nehmen Sie doch Platz!* 'Do have a seat!

[Lindner 1991] (p. 186): "(It is necessary that) If the speaker uses MP *doch* in DIRECTIVES referring to a proposition p then s/he assumes that at the time of speaking t it is not the case that bringing about p is being taken into consideration."

This characterization does not fit *csak*.

Csak cannot signal familiarity with the request

[Thurmair 1989]: *doch* in imperatives signals that

- the speaker's will is familiar to the listener (feature: <FAMILIAR>_H), and
- the listener's observable behaviour is contradicting the latter (feature: <CORRECTION>)

PROBLEM

Csak does not mark familiarity of the listener with the speaker's will, and thus contrasts with *doch*:

[A woman is looking out of the window and sees a small child playing in the street:]

#*Komm doch her!*

'Come here!' [?]

(2) *Gyere csak ide!*
come.2SG.IMP CSAK here
'Come here!'

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Two further uses of *csak* in imperatives

- **as a threat:**

No várj csak!

PRT wait.2SG.IMP CSAK

'Just wait!'

Hiszen csak kerüljön a szemem elé!

PRT CSAK get.3SG.IMP the eye.MY IN.FRONT.OF

'Just let him get in front of me!'

To be differentiated from the 'encouraging' interpretation by prosodic means: higher pitch, smaller pitch range
[Fónagy-Magdics 1967]

- **as a way of 'belittling' the request**

Gyere csak ide!

come.2SG.IMP CSAK here

'Come here!'

- only with postverbal *csak*
- intonation: end-falling contour [Varga 2002]

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- intonation: end-falling contour [Varga 2002]

Csak in positive imperatives: summary

[Kocsány 1986]: certain uses of *csak* in imperatives reflect an **informal relation between speaker and addressee** – it should not be considered a separate category

	preverbal	postverbal
'encouraging' <i>csak</i>	OK	OK
'threatening' <i>csak</i>	OK	OK
'belittling' <i>csak</i>	∅	OK

Hypothesis:

- interpretation of preverbal *csak*: go back to the interpretation of *csak* as an exclusive particle
- interpretation of postverbal *csak*: a *givenness* marker after all?



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