

**“I WILL TELL IT TO YOU IN FIRST PERSON SINGULAR”:  
THE ROLE OF HUNGARIAN FIRST PERSON SINGULAR AND PLURAL VERBAL UTTERANCES  
IN THE CONSTRUAL OF AN INTERSUBJECTIVE RELATIONSHIP IN SLAM POETRY**

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### **Abstract**

This paper focuses on person-marking constructions in Hungarian slam poetry in a functional cognitive framework. With the help of the Slam Poetry subcorpus elaborated by ELTE’s Research Group in Stylistics, person-marking constructions for expressing the speakers in the texts (first person singular and plural verbs) are annotated in the subcorpus. We assume that based on the phenomenon of foregrounding (van Peer–Hakemulder 2006), the role of intersubjectivity increases as these 1st person singular and plural forms help focus on the protagonist, the slammer (Holt–Groeben 2005, Langacker 2008). The utterances are analysed according to speech act theory, based on the functions of social actions (Tátrai 2011: 89–90). The research question aims to determine the types of prototypical semantic and communicative patterns which can be identified in the analysed texts. The results of the analysis 1) show the proportion of first person singular and plural verbs in the subcorpus, 2) help observe those linguistic tools, grammatical, pragmatic and semantic patterns and socio-cultural factors which can play a role in the direction of listeners’ attention, as well as the typical topics on which attention is focused.

**Keywords:** attention, person-marking constructions, first person singular and plural verbs, slam poetry, corpus analysis, annotation, Hungarian language

### **1. Introduction**

Employing a functional cognitive framework, this paper focuses on person-marking constructions in Hungarian slam poetry performances. Special attention is paid to first person singular and plural verbal utterances. The study of first-person deictic elements is essential and relevant, as they represent a central linguistic pattern in pragmatic research. This importance justifies examining their function in various discourse genres, including slam poetry.

The main aim of the paper is to highlight processes which help attention directing in slam poetry performances. We assume that first person singular and plural characters that represent the slammer receive a significant amount of attention, and, consequently, become the focus of attention (Holt–Groeben 2005, Langacker 2008). Thanks to the phenomenon of foregrounding (van Peer–Hakemulder 2006), in the case of the verbs analysed, the protagonists and characters in contact with them can be placed at the centre of the process of directing attention, and intersubjectivity is also elaborated. Slam poetry, because of its performative nature, is particularly relevant for the study of how person-marking constructions construe interpersonal relations.

## 2. Slam poetry as a genre, key questions

It is important to remember that slammers and their audiences participate in a classical rhetorical situation in which a new genre is being created (cf. Vass 2012). Slam poetry as a genre contains many features of “canonical” genres that are familiar to the audience, so the process of the performance can evoke the audience’s previous experiences (cf. Ayosso–Marichez 2010, Sólyom–Pap 2021, 2023, Sólyom 2022).

In this paper, we emphasise the importance of the dynamic and “mixed”, even “hybrid” characteristics of slam poetry (cf. Mészáros 2020: 87), which can be studied and characterised through the experiences and attitudes of language users.

The two key questions of the present corpus-based study are: 1) How do utterances of first person singular and plural verbs support processes of construal in the intersubjective relationship between the speaker (the slammer) and the audience (Tolcsvai Nagy 2017)? 2) What kind of prototypical pragmatic, semantic, and stylistic patterns are elaborated by first person singular and plural verbs in the corpus?

## 3. Hypotheses, main research questions, corpus and methodology

This section outlines the research hypotheses and the main research questions related to them (3.1.). It also presents the research methods, and the corpus analysed (3.2.).

### 3.1. Hypotheses and main research questions

Our study was based on the following hypotheses:

H1: Focusing on characters referred to in first person singular and plural promotes intersubjectivity between the speaker (the slammer) and the audience, as well as the processes of directing attention.

H2: It is possible to identify specific types of prototypical grammatical, pragmatic and semantic patterns, as well as characteristic socio-cultural factors, which are elaborated by first person singular and plural verbs in the corpus.

In relation to the hypotheses, three main research questions were formulated, which formed the basis of the analysis:

RQ 1: What are the prototypical linguistic tools, grammatical patterns and what is the proportion of first-person verbs (singular and plural) in the 108 slam texts?

RQ 2: What are the prototypical pragmatic patterns that have emerged in the use of first person singular and plural verbs in the corpus?

RQ 3: What prototypical semantic patterns and socio-cultural factors characterise the relationship between the slammer and the audience? And what typical topics are the focus of attention in the corpus, as elaborated by the verbs used in the sentences?

### 3.2. Corpus and methodology

The corpus analysed in this study is the Slam Poetry Subcorpus, one of the four subcorpora of the Corpus of Hungarian Lyrical Poetry created by ELTE’s Research Group in Stylistics. The Lyrical Corpus is divided into four subcorpora as follows: 1) lyrical texts belonging to the literary canon (from 1900 to the present); 2) contemporary poetry; 3) lyrics of popular and alternative songs; 4) and finally slam poetry (cf. Horváth–Simon–Tátrai 2022). The Slam Poetry subcorpus is useful for studying a discourse type that displays a high degree of poeticity, with its emphasis on rhythmic sound and

intertextuality. This subcorpus, which forms the basis of the study, contains 108 Hungarian slam poetry texts.

The present analyses focus on verbs grounded in first person. In Hungarian, verb patterns carry complex information: verb forms perform temporal as well as personal grounding (Tátrai 2024: 14). Verb patterns in slam poetry texts can clearly show how the role of the participants, the interpersonal relationship between the speaker and the audience, is constructed in the speech situation. It should be emphasised, however, that the person-marking implied in nouns, the nouns grounded in first person, are also part of the grammatical pattern.

We extracted data from the 108 slam texts of the analysed corpus by means of manual annotation for both first person singular and plural verbs. The extracted data were subjected to quantitative analysis and the results were then analysed according to various aspects (on the relationship between methods and results, cf. Kuna 2024). First person singular and plural verb patterns will be presented by establishing grammatical, pragmatic, and semantic categories. Based on the results, the frequency of first-person verbs shows a significant difference between the singular and the plural: in the case of the 1st person singular type, 2201 verbs were found in the corpus, while 1<sup>st</sup> person plural verbs were identified in only 301 instances.

The analysis has several objectives. Firstly, verbs in the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular and plural were collected to study the grammatical features (e.g. number of the verbs in these groups; mood). Secondly, the different semantic and pragmatic functions of the collected verbs were analysed in the given contexts (i.e. in the slam poetry texts) in both persons to find out whether there were prototypical pragmatic functions and groups in the case of these examples. In the case of this aspect, particular attention was paid to the phenomenon of attention, both in the triadic relationship, in which someone draws someone else's attention to something, and in the dyadic relationship, in which someone pays attention to someone else and vice versa (Tátrai 2011: 115). Thirdly, we focused on the prototypical socio-cultural factors (cf. Tolcsvai Nagy 2012: 34–39) appearing in the analysed texts, with special attention to their types and possible combinations.

#### **4. Person-marking constructions, grammatical patterns, semantic categories, socio-cultural patterns**

In this chapter, the first person singular and plural verb patterns of person-marking in slam poetry texts will be presented by analysing them in different aspects: person-marking constructions and grammatical features (4.1., 4.2.), various pragmatic and semantic functions (4.3., 4.4.), and prototypical socio-cultural factors (4.5.).

##### **4.1. Person-marking constructions**

###### **4.1.1. Person-marking constructions: 1<sup>st</sup> person singular verbs**

Some interesting linguistic data is revealed by examining the first-person singular verb structures in the corpus. In three texts there is no first-person singular verb structure, in two of these texts the slammer tells the story in second person singular, while in the third text the narration is in the general third person (Viktor Fazekas: Mert itt kezdődik, István Pion: Himnusz, Fanni Szegedi: 1920. június 4, Versailles). In 14 slam texts, there are only 10 or fewer first-person verb structures. In all the texts of one slammer (Nikolett Dékány) found in the corpus, there are less than 10 first-person singular verb structures. In contrast, in the texts of another slammer (Tamás Gábor Indiana) there are more than 50 (in order: 61, 64, 50). A play with poetic devices can also be observed in the corpus. In two cases, the slammer uses alliteration throughout the text (SZ: Flóra Quintus: Színészként színpadon számtalan színes személyiség, K: Nikolett Dékány: Kedélyhez kötött kételyeink). Other poetic devices are also present in the first-person singular verb constructions: for example, stacking words or pairing expressions with opposite meanings. Here are some examples: *utálok/-om* ('I hate it'):

14, *szeretem* ('I like it'): 1 (István Zoltán Csider: Tíz dolog, amit utálok benned); *utálok/utálhatok* ('I hate it / I can hate'): 30 (Tamás Gábor Indiana: Utálok, hogy...); *imádom/imádok* ('I love it'): 11 (Mészáros: A szöveg végén fel fogok tenni egy kérdést); *szeretem* ('I like it'): 16, *gyűlölöm* ('I hate it'): 13, *utálok/utállok/utállak* ('I hate it / I hate you'): 7 (Luca Nyáry: Nem szeretni egyszerű...); *köszönöm* ('thank you'): 27 (Márk Süveg: Tényleg, nem gondoltam volna, hogy másodszor is összejön...).

By investigating the role of intersubjectivity in the Slam Poetry Subcorpus, we can observe the types of prototypical linguistic tools, as person-marking constructions, by collecting first person singular and plural verbs. Hungarian, as a language with a complex morphology, indicates person marking also in verb endings.

The first-person singular subject is both the speaker outside the scene in the sentence and the subject marked as a participant in the scene in the sentence (these two points of view also prevail in slam texts): deictic self-reference from the speaker's point of view, deictic reference from the receiver's, the audience's point of view (Tolcsvai Nagy 2021: 15, 22). The first-person singular utterances of the slammer as a participant in the discourse are acts of directing attention (Tátrai 2017): in the first-person singular form, the slammer as a speaker (1) speaks to the audience as a participant in the given speech situation, or (2) narrates an event from the narrator's point of view.

The prototypical person-marking pattern of slam poetry is reflected in the proportions of verbs as well in the 108 slam poems of the subcorpus. The grammatical personification of the lyrical subject (the slammer) with first person singular verb structures occurs in the corpus in a much higher number than the first person plural (Figures 1, 2: first person singular: 2201 tokens vs. first person plural: 301 tokens).

There are 2201 examples of 1st person singular verbs in the corpus. Among these verbs there are 765 (34.8%) with *-ok,-ek-ök* (these are indicatives, indefinite conjugation, and the type of vowel is based on vowel harmony); 693 (31,5%) *-om,-em,-öm* (these are indicatives, definite conjugation); 51 (2,3%) *-lak,-lek* (these are indicatives with special endings that mark a second person object as well as a first person subject); 400 (18,2%) *-tam,-tem* (these are indicatives, past tense); 95 (4,3%) *-nék* (these are conditionals, indefinite conjugation); 72 (3,3%) *-nám,-ném* (these are conditionals, definite conjugation); 84 (3,8%) *-jak,-jek* (these are imperatives, indefinite conjugation); 31 (1,4%) *-jam/-jem* (these are imperatives, definite conjugation); and 10 (0,5%) other types of endings (these are in indicative, imperative or conditional mood: *-talak*: 4, *-telek*: 2, *-nálak*: 1; *-tem volna*: 1; *-jalak*: 1, *-jelek*: 1). The proportion of verbs in 1<sup>st</sup> person singular is shown in Figure 1.

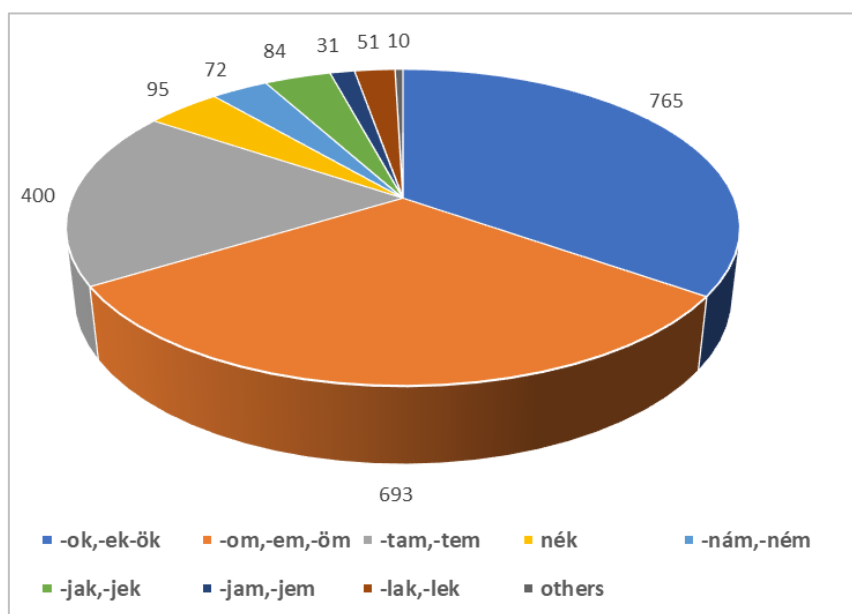


Figure 1. 1<sup>st</sup> person singular verbs in the corpus (total: 2201 verbs)

In the figure above (Figure 1), the first-person singular verb endings clearly show in which grammatical forms the construal of the speaker's role is realised in the analysed slam corpus. The highest proportion of verbs in the corpus are in the present tense (a total of 81% of the eight main types of suffix; in indefinite and definite conjugation), which may also indicate the performative nature of the slam poetry genre ('here and now' speech situation): the slammer speaks to the audience as a participant in the given speech situation.

#### 4.1.2. Person-marking constructions: 1<sup>st</sup> person plural verbs

Contextualisation deals with the processes of shared attention, shared knowledge, and shared actions (Tátrai 2022: 43). In the annotation of the verbs in this group, our aim was to concentrate on Hungarian verbal suffixes that refer to the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural (cf. Horváth–Simon–Tátrai 2022: 25–27).

In the case of these verbs, the speaker in the texts is "I": on the one hand, the slammer stands on the stage, they are parts of the communicative situation, and they are deictically designated. On the other hand, "we" is instantiated in the given context, because the context and the discourse are parts of the process of meaning construal (Laczkó 2024: 12). At this point, the slammer's directing of attention, references to common knowledge and calls to action (if present) become important: in the case of "mi" ('we'), the slammer addresses the audience: they recite a story in which the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural dominates, since the speaker is not the only actor in the stories.

There are 301 examples of 1<sup>st</sup> person plural verbs in the corpus. Among these verbs, there are 109 with *-unk* ending, 75 with *-uk* ending, 71 with *-ünk* ending, 33 with *-ük* ending (these are indicatives or imperatives, indefinite and definite conjugations, the type of the vowel is based on vowel harmony), 10 with *-nénk* ending and 3 with *-nánk* ending (these are conditionals, either indefinite or definite conjugations, the type of the vowel is based on vowel harmony). The proportion of the verbs in the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural is shown in Figure 2.

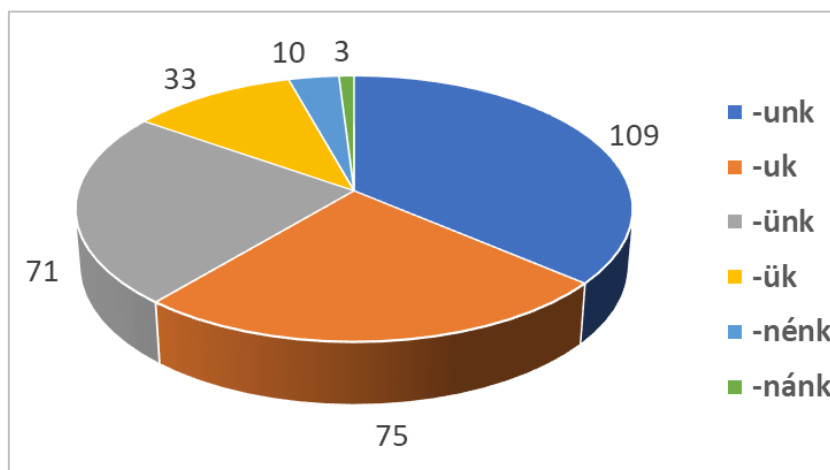


Figure 2. 1<sup>st</sup> person plural verbs in the corpus (total: 301 verbs)

Summarising the analyses presented in Sections 4.1.1., and 4.1.2., based on the verb patterns elaborating the first person, the results indicate (Figures 1, 2) that the first-person singular form is more emphasised in the slam texts, whereas the first person plural verbs appear in a smaller proportion (2201 vs. 301 verbs). The dominance of the first-person singular form could be due to the nature of lyrical discourse: the speaker's role in the given speech context is constructed in the first-person singular. At the same time, the slammer addresses the audience in the given speech situation, while interacting with them: "we" are actualised in the given context, the relationship to the audience is constructed in the first-person plural.

## 4.2. Grammatical patterns

### 4.2.1. Grammatical patterns of 1<sup>st</sup> person singular verbs

In the analysed corpus, as mentioned above, the indicative occurs in the highest proportion (Figure 1: 87%). Conditional (present, past: 8%) and imperative (5%) are found in smaller numbers in the slam texts. All these factors (also: Figure 1) could indicate that slammers mostly use the indicative and present tense in their presentations, expressing an opinion in the present tense (using past tense verb structures in a much smaller proportion) or telling a story about a topic or current events. Thus, in the speech situations of the slam texts, the indicative and present tenses of the first-person singular verbs dominate. In much fewer cases, imperative or conditional forms are used to attract the audience's attention.

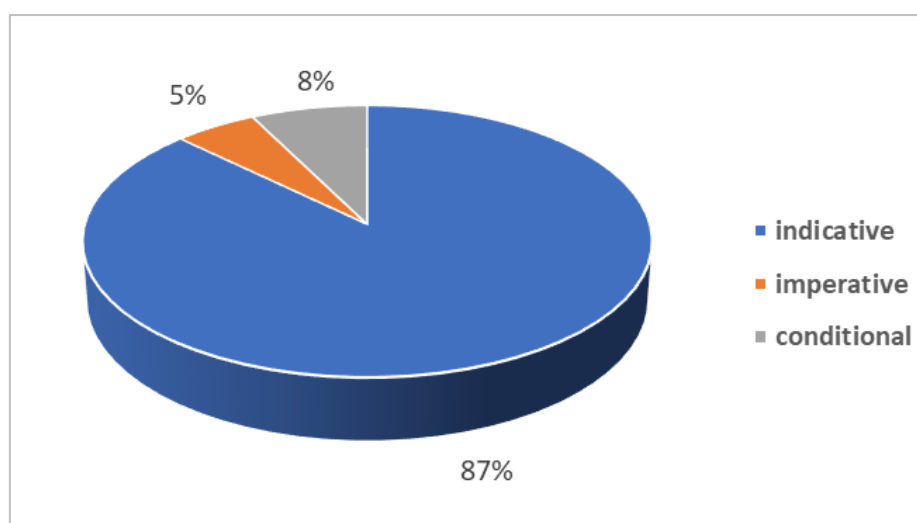


Figure 3. 1<sup>st</sup> person singular verbs (moods)

Summarising the results, the highest proportion of all verb endings in the first-person singular is in the indicative present tense, indefinite conjugation: *-ok* (499), *-ek* (228), *-ök* (38); and in the definite conjugation: *-om* (365), *-em* (248), *-öm* (80). Most occurrences are in the indicative, present tense, back form (verbs with back vowels): *-ok*, *-om*; followed by the front forms (verbs with front vowels): *-ek*, *-ök*; *-em*, *-öm*. The smallest proportion of verb endings are the imperative definite and indefinite: *-jak*, *-jek*, *-jam*, *-jem* (115); and the conditional indefinite and definite conjugation: *-nék*, *-nám*, *-ném* (167).

### 4.2.2. Grammatical patterns of 1<sup>st</sup> person plural verbs

As mentioned above, there are only 13 verbs in the 2<sup>nd</sup> conditional, and one in the 3<sup>rd</sup> conditional in the case of 1<sup>st</sup> person plural forms. This represents 4.65% (14 out of 301 items). This fact might indicate that there are not many hypothetical situations mentioned in the analysed slam poetry texts. Instead, slammers usually talk about situations that had happened (or could have happened) earlier: they often recall stories from the past. It also happens that they draw the attention of the audience by using imperative forms.

Interestingly, there are more verbs containing low (back) vowels in both the indefinite and definite forms. In addition, there are remarkably many *-unk* ending verbs in the whole corpus (109 examples out of 301, i.e. 36.21%).

Summarising the results, by comparing the grammatical patterns presented in Sections 4.2.1. and 4.2.2. we can conclude that in the analysed slam poetry corpus the indicative mood is dominant

for both singular and plural first-person verbs. The main reason for this may be that the slammers tell a story or talk about a topic in the given situation. Furthermore, slammers also use imperative forms to connect with the audience (this is a typical way of constructing a relationship between the speaker and the audience). In the case of first-person plural verbs, imperative mood is also prominent, as it has a specific function in slam texts due to the performative nature of the slam poetry genre (for more details: 4.3.2.). Conditional mood (for expressing hypothetical content), however, occurs less frequently.

### 4.3. Prototypical pragmatic patterns

#### 4.3.1. Prototypical pragmatic patterns of 1<sup>st</sup> person singular verbs

The utterances containing 1st person singular verbs that appear in speech situations play different roles in the realisation of social actions (Tátrai 2011: 89–90). The 1<sup>st</sup> person singular verb structures found in the corpus can also belong to the intersubjective and interpersonal phatic metafunctions (Tátrai 2011: 36–41), typically with indicative verbs.

In the case of 1<sup>st</sup> person singular verbs, there are many speech acts in the slam poetry texts with the metafunction of intersubjectivity and interpersonal relationship as well, such as the following communicative actions (e.g. commissives, directives, expressives): e.g. *thank you, I swear, I please you, I'm sorry, I say, I tell you, I beg you, I suggested*. A group of verbs can be observed that prototypically help construct and develop the interpersonal relationship between the slammer and the audience: these verbs are related to knowing or saying (the numbers indicate how many times they occur in the corpus): e.g. *know* (128 tokens), *say* (67), *ask* (29), *tell* (9), *start* (8), *admit* (5).

First person singular verbs occur most frequently in the indicative in the analysed corpus: e.g.

- (1a) Sejttem még, hogy másé, erre **elmesélem** E/1-ben.  
'I suspect that it belongs to someone else, so I will tell it to you in first person singular.'
- (1b) ...végre egy felelős döntés, hogy most **köszönöm** a figyelmet.  
'At last, a responsible decision that now I thank you for your attention.'
- (1c) De itt **kérek** elnézést minden hölgytől,  
'At this point, I beg every lady's pardon,'
- (1d) Amikor felemelem a kezem, **kérlek**, mondjátok azt, hogy: és akkor mi van?  
'When I raise my hand, please, say: and so what?'
- (1e) És ezért **mondom el** nektek a legnagyobb titkom színpadon, mert így fain.  
'And so I will tell you my greatest secret on stage, because that's how it's cool.'
- (1f) **Bevallom**, félek attól, hogy kiszámíthatatlan időben félni fogok.  
'I admit that I am afraid of being afraid at an unpredictable time.'

Conditional and imperative verbal forms occur in much smaller numbers.

- (2a) Imperative: e.g., *De hát nektek **mondjam** ezt?*  
'Should I tell it to you?'
- (2b) Conditional: e.g., *Ha azt **kérném** tőletek, hogy tegyétek fel a kezeteiket (...)*  
'If I asked you to raise your hands (...)'

The interpersonal relationship between the slammer and the audience can also be expressed with a metalinguistic reference: e.g.,

- (2c) Talán itt az idő, hogy **bevonjam** a közönséget.  
'Maybe it is time for me to involve the audience.'

#### 4.3.2. Prototypical pragmatic patterns of 1<sup>st</sup> person plural verbs

Utterances with 1<sup>st</sup> person singular and plural verbs can play different roles in communicative acts (cf. Tátrai 2011: 89–90). Some of the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular verbal structures in the slam poetry texts have intersubjective-cognitive and interpersonal-phatic metafunctions (Tátrai 2011: 36–41). This is typically the case with indicative verbs. In the case of the interpersonal function, however, imperatives also occur in 1<sup>st</sup> person plural verbs. Prototypically, these verbs help construct the interpersonal relationship between the slammer and their audience.

In the case of the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural verbs, there is a prototypical group that contains imperative verbal forms and promotes the phatic metafunctions mentioned above. The verbs *mondjuk* ('let us say', 24 cases) and *fogadjunk* ('let us bet', 2 cases) occur in this function in the corpus, e.g.,

- (3a) **Mondjuk** a szalagavató kimaradt, legalább most itt vagy.  
'Say we missed the prom, but at least you are here.'
- (3b) Szerinted a jó módszer mégsem a pia lesz, **mondjuk** előbb négy korty Prozac, utána Cipralex.  
'As for you, booze is not going to work after all, let's say at first four sips of Prozac, and then Cipralex.'
- (3c) De **fogadjunk**, az még eszedbe se jutott soha a bűdös életbe, hogy talán te hagytad ott az ágy alatt rohadni hónapokig azt a kurva tányért.  
'But let's bet it has not ever come into your mind in your fucking life that it was you who had let that fucking plate go rotten under the bed for months.'

Other verbs such as *nézzünk* ('let us see'), *képzeljük el* ('let us imagine'), *lássuk* ('let us see/watch'), *lépjünk* ('let us step', in a metaphorical sense), *gyerünk* ('let us go', in a metaphorical sense) occur in the corpus in this function, e.g.,

- (4a) **Nézzünk** is egy-két klasszikus példát!  
'Let's see some classical examples!'
- (4b) **[Képzeljük] el**, milyen lenne, ha mindenki más-más időintervallumot kapna, de nem tudná, mennyit.  
'Let's imagine what it was like if everyone got different time intervals, but no one knew how much.'
- (4c) Szóval **lássuk!**  
'Well, let's see!'
- (4d) (...) és **lépjünk** pár gondolattal előrébb.  
'(...) and let's step further with some thoughts.'
- (4e) **Gyerünk**, anyázzatok!  
'Come on, eff and blind!'

There is one example of a verbal form which only belongs to this function only in one of its meanings, and that is *vesszük*, when it means 'to understand, to see', e.g.,

- (5) Mert akárhogy **vesszük**, ez egy orális élvezet, hogy én beszélek, te hallgatod és élvezed.  
'Anyhow we see it, it is an oral joy, that I am talking, and you are listening to it and enjoy it.'

As we can see in the case of the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular and the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural verbs, they help elaborate the feeling of community (fellowship) in the communication process. The slammer admits something, or communicates something private from their life, or they would like to involve the audience in the case of 1<sup>st</sup> person singular verbs. These intentions and practices can also be witnessed in the case of 1<sup>st</sup> person plural verbs, where the acts of saying, betting, seeing or imagining refer to the whole community who are represented at the event, the slammers and their audience together.

#### 4.4. Main semantic categories

##### 4.4.1. Main semantic categories of 1<sup>st</sup> person singular verbs in the corpus

Regarding the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular verbs, ten major semantic categories have been identified which refer to both mental and physical processes. It can be observed that several slammers employ poetic devices in their texts, playing with words. One such device is the repetition and stacking of words, which occurs frequently in certain categories. This is a common phenomenon in the case of verbs belonging to the group 1) expressing feelings, such as "I love" and "I hate". The semantic categories observed in the slam corpus can be assigned to the following subgroups:

- (6a) **Feelings (positive, negative), attitudes:** *unom* ('I am bored with it'), *szeretem* ('I love it'), *gyűlölöm* ('I hate it'), *röstellem* ('I am ashamed'), *utálom* ('I hate it'), *érezem* ('I feel it'), *irigylem* ('I envy it'), *hiányolnék* ('I would miss it'), *imádok* ('I love'), *szeretlek* ('I love you'), *kívántam* ('I wished'), *bánom* ('I regret it').
- (6b) **Will:** *akarom* ('I want it'), *szeretném* ('I would like it'), *kellek* ('I must do something').
- (6c) **Communication:** *panaszodom* ('I am complaining'), *kérlek* ('I beg you'), *köszönöm* ('thank you'), *elmesélem* ('I tell you'), *mondom* ('I say'), *papolok* ('I am preaching'), *kérlelhetek* ('I can beg you'), *pofáztam* ('I was jawing'), *esküszöm* ('I swear'), *üvöltöm* ('I scream'), *felelek* ('I answer'), *könyörgöm* ('I beg'), *javasoltam* ('I suggested'), *kérdezhetek* ('I can ask'), *szóltam* ('I reminded you'), *köszönök* ('I greet you'), *beszéltem* ('I was talking'), *üzenem* ('I message it'), *kiálthatok* ('I can shout'), *magyarázok* ('I explain'), *bevallom* ('I admit').
- (6d) **Intensive movement:** *kijövök* ('I come out'), *ütközöm* ('I clash'), *kapaszkodom* ('I hang on'), *tegyem össze* ('I should put together'), *elbújok* ('I hide'), *viszem* ('I take it'), *elmegyek* ('I go away'), *mentem* ('I went'), *felszállok* ('I take on'), *utazok* ('I travel'), *hozom* ('I bring it'), *talállak* ('I find you'), *belegabalyodtam* [metaphorically] ('I flounder'), *kapom* ('I get it'), *hajtom* ('I ride it'), *felveszem* [also metaphorically] ('I take it on'), *elmásszak* ('I should crawl'), *dobjam* ('I should throw it'), *kapcsolnám* ('I would switch it'), *dőlhetek* ('I can lean'), *kifutok* ('I run out'), *félrelépek* [metaphorically] ('I slip'), *továbblépek* ('I step further'), *hazaérek* ('I come home'), *telerakom* ('I heap it'), *járok* ('I go'), *szorítom* ('I stress it'), *be/kiálltam* ('I stood in/out'), *bemennék* ('I would go in'), *menekültem* ('I fled'), *leintettem* ('I flagged it down'), *hordom* ('I am wearing it'), *érkeztem* ('I arrived'), *elvetek* [metaphorically] ('I reject'), *felmásztam* ('I climbed up'), *estem* ('I fell').
- (6e) **Action, dealing with something:** *mosom* ('I am washing it'), *henyélek* ('I am lounging'), *állok* ('I am standing'), *adok* ('I give'), *loptam* ('I stole'), *kölcsönvettem* ('I borrowed'), *várok* ('I am waiting'), *mutatom* ('I show it'), *elvesztettem* ('I lost it'), *találom* ('I find it'), *(meg)tartom*

[also metaphorically] ('I keep it'), *találkoznék* ('I would meet'), *vendéglátóztam* ('I worked in the catering trade'), *ültem* ('I was sitting'), *cserélem* ('I exchange it'), *letöröltem* ('I wiped it'), *visszaadnám* ('I would bring it back'), *használtam* ('I used it'), *török* ('I am wiping').

(6f) **Physical functioning:** *megvágom* ('I cut it'), *nézem* ('I am watching it'), *lestem* ('I was peeking'), *iszok* ('I am drinking'), *leettem* ('I spilt food on myself'), *alszom* ('I am sleeping'), *bőgök* ('I am blubbering'), *lehányhatom* ('I can vomit it'), *hugyozhatok* ('I can piss'), *kávézom* ('I drink coffee'), *zokogtam* ('I was sobbing'), *szívom* ('I suck it'), *felkeltem* ('I got up'), *látom* ('I can see it'), *hallom* ('I can hear it'), *maszturbálok* ('I am masturbating'), *önkielégítek* ('I am masturbating'), *törölközöm* ('I dry'), *szarok* ('I shit'), *összefostam* ('I shitted').

(6g) **Existence, state:**  *vagyok* ('I am'), *leszek* ('I will be'), *éltem* ('I lived'), *legyek* ('I be'), *lennék* ('I would be'), *maradtam* ('I stayed'), *váljak [vmivé]* ('I should become'), *születtem* ('I was born'), *megélek* ('I can live'), *meghalok* ('I die'), *kerültem* ('I came'), *élnék* ('I would live').

(6h) **Mental state:** *gondolkodom* ('I am thinking'), *tudom* ('I know'), *elvesztettem* ('I lost'), *kezdem* ('I start'), *értettem* ('I understood'), *hagyom* ('I let it'), *hallgatok* ('I remain silent'), *fáradok* ('I get tired'), *szakosodtam* ('I majored'), *hiszem* ('I believe'), *írom* ('I write it'), *olvasok* ('I am reading'), *észlelem* ('I detect it'), *neveztem* ('I called it'), *tervezgetek* ('I am planning'), *észrevettem* ('I realised'), *élvezek* ('I enjoy it'), *belebuktam* ('I failed'), *tapasztalom* ('I experience it'), *megtérek* ('I convert'), *hazudok* ('I lie'), *vihogok* ('I titter'), *sejtem* ('I assume'), *beágyazom* [metaphorically] ('I impregnate it'), *látom* ('I can see it'), *hallom* ('I can hear it'), *kitaláltam* ('I figured it out'), *kivárhatnám* ('I could wait for it'), *visszacsatoljak* ('I should give a feedback'), *bámulhatok* ('I can stare'), *szabaduljak meg* ('I should get rid of it'), *nyerhetek* ('I can win'), *választottam* ('I chose'), *bírom* ('I can endure it'), *félek* ('I am afraid'), *mertem* ('I dared'), *emlékszem* ('I remember'), *kifelejtettem* ('I forgot it'), *lefordít-sam* ('I should translate it'), *szavazok* ('I vote'), *próbálok* ('I try'), *megbuktatnék* ('I would plough'), *hívom* ('I call it'), *sajnálom* ('I am sorry'), *tippelnék* ('I would estimate'), *meg-tanultam* ('I have learnt'), *elhatároztam* ('I decided'), *dönténék* ('I would decide'), *meglep-ném* ('I would surprise'), *merek* ('I dare'), *elkezdelek* ('I started to ... you'), *folytatnám* ('I would continue'), *reméltem* ('I hoped'), *rábredtem* ('I woke up to the fact'), *agyalok* ('I am thinking'), *megfeszülök* ('I am stretching'), *elrontok* ('I spoil'), *slammelek* ('I am slamming'), *szurkolok* ('I jitter'), *kínlódom* ('I am agonizing'), *rettegek* ('I am in dread of something').

(6i) **Games:** *eljátszottam (a gondolattal)* [metaphorically] ('I toyed with the idea').

(6j) **Creation:** *komponálok* ('I compose'), *[félmondatot] képeztem* ('I made up a half-sentence'), *alkotok* ('I produce'), *kreálok* ('I create'), *dolgoztam* ('I was working'), *rendeztem* ('I arranged'), *csináltam* ('I did'), *tehetném* ('I could do').

By analysing 1<sup>st</sup> person singular verbs in context, it is possible to observe which typical topics are the focus of attention in the corpus that play a role in construing the relationship between the speaker/the slammer and the receivers/the audience. The most common topics containing 1<sup>st</sup> person singular verbs in the corpus are as follows:

### 1) Topics of personal life, failure (often ironic):

(7a) Én meg különösen magas fokon **kapaszzkodom** [??] kamaszkorom karambolos foltjaiba.  
'I am especially hanging on to the shattered stains of my teen-age.'

(7b) **Lehetek** depis, mert megöli az összes kedvencem George R. R. Martin.  
'I can have depression, as George R. R. Martin is killing all of my favourites.'

(7c) Kedves naplóm, azt **hiszem**, poszttraumatikus stressz szindróma jeleit **észlelem** magamon.  
'My dear diary, I think I detect the signs of posttraumatic stress syndrome on myself.'

Ideje beletörődnöm, hogy szép lassan **kifutok** az időből. És **bámulhatom** tehetetlenül a múltó másodperceket.

'I must bow to the fact, that sooner or later I will run out of time. And I can stare at the fleeting seconds.'

## 2) Politics, today's Hungary, Hungarians:

(7d) Szóval néha **szeretném**, hogy fájjon, de tudod, így társadalmilag elfogadott szinten.  
'So sometimes I want it to hurt, but you know, on a socially accepted level.'

(7e) **Panaszkodom**, tehát magyar **vagyok**.  
'I am complaining, so I am Hungarian.'

(7f) Lyukas zászló, tiszta ruha, meg a magyarok istene, hogy **mondhatom**-e valamire, hogy kész?  
'Hollow flag, clean clothes, and the Hungarians' god, how can I say that something is ready?'

## 3) Hardships of the young in general:

(7g) Nem **maradok** tovább veszteg, eleget **lestem** resten Pesten a sok szemnek kedves, hashtag test-es szuperherót (...)  
'I cannot stay put anymore, I have stared the nice-for-the eye, hashtag bodied superheroes idly in Pest.'

(7h) Amikor ilyeneket **hallok**, azért úgy **érezem** élni eléggé terhes itt, de nekem meg, **esküszöm**, nem tudsz mondani semmit (...).  
'When I hear things like that I feel that living here is pretty hard, but I swear you cannot say anything to me (...).'

(7i) De hogy is ne **lennék** vesztes, ha egyre biztosabb **vagyok** abban is, hogy rossz korba **születtem**?  
'But how on Earth would I not be a loser when I am more and more sure that I was born into the wrong age?'

## 4) Criticising, scolding other people:

(7j) **Utálok** benned, hogy gyáva vagy, te szar gyáva, te miért nem utálsz?  
'I hate it in you that you are a coward, you coward shit, why don't you hate it?'

(7k) Ha **megezek** egy tál betűtésztás levest, jobb indokokat **fosok**, mint te (...).  
'If I eat a bowl of soup with alphabet noodles, I shit better arguments than you (...).'

(7l) És méla unalommal **rühellem** az elismerésért könyörgő féltehetségeket (...)  
'And I hate the half-talents with a gloomy boredom who are begging for honourable mention.'

### 4.4.2. Main semantic categories of 1<sup>st</sup> person plural verbs in the corpus

In the case of the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural verbs, seven major semantic categories have emerged. They cover various topics, and they refer to both mental and physical processes. The following subgroups can be characterised (some typical examples follow the subgroups):

- (8a) **Feelings:** *bíztunk* ('we trusted'), *elbasztuk* ('we fucked it up'), *akartunk* ('we wanted'), *kiakadunk* [metaphorically] ('we freak out'), *szórakozunk* ('we are having fun'), *visszavágyunk* ('we are craving'), *köpködünk* [metaphorically] ('we are spitting'), *valljuk be* ('let's admit'), *megszoktuk* ('we got used to it'), *elvárjuk* ('we expect it'), *fogadjuk el* ('let's accept it'), *bántuk* ('let's hurt it'), *éltetjük* ('we vitalize it').
- (8b) **Communication:** *beszélünk* ('we are talking'), *nosztalgizunk* ('we feel nostalgic'), *szentségelünk* ('we are cursing'), *tegeződünk* ('let's thee'), *szidjuk* ('we scold it'), *hallgassunk* ('let's listen'), *tisztázzunk [valamit]* ('let's clarify'), *utaljunk vissza* ('let's refer'), *felolvas-hatunk* ('we can read out loud'), *ne politizáljunk* ('don't talk about politics'), *össze-össze-össze-összesúgjuk* ('go-go-go-gossip'), *boncolgassuk* [metaphorically] ('let's dissect it'), *megköszönjük* ('we thank [somebody] for it'), *megköszönjük [a bókot]* ('we thank [somebody] for the compliment'), *szidjuk* ('we scold it'), *indítványozzuk* ('we propose it').
- (8c) **Intensive movement:** *rohanunk* ('we are rushing'), *lehuppanunk* ('we plop'), *lerobbantunk* ('we broke down'), *haladjunk* ('let's proceed'), *járhatunk* ('we can walk'), *kifaroltunk* ('we swerved out'), *előkúszunk* ('we crawl out'), *ugrálunk* ('we are jumping'), *költöztünk* ('we moved'), *megmász-tuk* ('we climbed'), *telepítjük ki* ('we relocate').
- (8d) **Physical functioning:** *zabálunk* ('we are stuffing'), *hányunk ki* ('we vomit'), *meghalunk* ('we die'), *dugtunk* ('we fucked'), *eszünk* ('we are eating'), *kenegethetjük* ('we can grease it').
- (8e) **Mental status:** *be voltunk baszva* ('we were drunk'), *hibáztunk* ('we made a mistake'), *hibázunk* ('we make a mistake'), *alkalmazunk* ('we apply'), *se hiszünk* ('we do not believe'), *elfelejtettünk* ('we forgot'), *nem működtünk együtt* ('we don't cooperate'), *beleszámoljuk* ('we count it'), *tudjuk* ('we know it'), *nem tudtuk* ('we didn't know'), *megtanuljuk* ('we learn it'), *írjuk le* ('we write it down'), *számoljuk* ('we calculate it'), *ne erőltessük* ('don't push it'), *feledjük* ('we forget it'), *lemeccseljük* ('we battle').
- (8f) **Games:** *játszunk/játsszunk* ('we play / let's play'), *énekeljük* ('let's sing'), *origamizunk* ('we are doing origami').
- (8g) **Creation:** *teremtsünk* ('let's create'), *megcselekedtük* ('we did it').

When these verbs play a role in the sentences in the corpus, they elaborate some typical topics that the slammer talks about and thus attracts the attention of the listeners. The most common topics containing 1<sup>st</sup> person plural verbs in the corpus are as follows:

### 1) Topics of personal life, failure (often ironic):

- (9a) Keresem az Iphone-om, de basszus, válság van, válságos időket **élünk**, bezzeg az én időm-ben, akkor is válság volt, de mi legalább szarni **jártunk** a budira, és nem képeket csinálni.  
'I am looking for my Iphone, but damn it, there is a crisis, we live in critical times, but in my time, there used to be a crisis, but we went to shit to the loo, not to take photos.'
- (9b) Úgy **néztünk ki**, mint féltucat alultáplált G.I. Joe.  
'We looked like half-dozen undernourished G.I. Joes.'
- (9c) Neki ezért **megbocsátjuk**, hogy nőnek született.  
'We forgive her that she was born a woman.'

## 2) Politics, today's Hungary, Hungarians:

- (9d) **Küzdöttünk** és bízva **bíztunk**, de hiába, ez egy nemzet tragédiája.  
'We fought and trustingly trusted, but in vain, this is a nation's tragedy.'
- (9e) Utálom, hogy ennyik **lettünk** csak Ady óta.  
'I hate it that we have become only that much since Ady.'
- (9f) (...) abból a Tátrából, ahol együtt **feleseztünk**, én vagyok a köcsög magyar, a Balatonon meg egy geci szlovák.  
'(...) from that Tatra where we drank shots together, I am the asshole Hungarian, and at lake Balaton I am a Slovak jerk.'

## 3) Hardships of the young in general:

- (9g) Szóval apu, együtt **nőttünk fel**, és köszönöm azt az S betűt.  
'Well, father, we grew up together, and I thank you for that letter S.'
- (9h) Idén Pestről vidékre **költöztünk**.  
'This year we moved from Pest to the countryside.'
- (9i) Amikor Magyarországra **költöztünk**, otthon azt mondták, tápos lettem, amikor a falumból Miskolcra, nagyképű miskolci köcsög, amikor Miskolcraól Pestre, sznob, pesti geci vagyok.  
'When we moved to Hungary, at home I was told that I had become undernourished, when from my village to Miskolc, an arrogant asshole, when from Miskolc to Pest, a snobby jerk from Pest.'

## 4) Criticising, scolding other people:

- (9j) A reptéri várakozás: mint limuzinbérlés egy belvárosi útra, egy óráig gazdagok és szépek **vagyunk**.  
'Waiting at the airport: like hiring a limousine for a ride in the city, we are rich and beautiful for an hour.'
- (9k) Látod, baszd meg, a szeretetre **vagyunk** féltékenyek.  
'You see, fuck you, we are jealous for love.'
- (9l) Komolyan, néha sajnálom szegény neonácikat, hogy itt a hátuk mögött **szidjuk** őket.  
'Really, sometimes I feel sorry for poor neonazis, that we are scolding them behind their backs.'

## 4.5. Socio-cultural patterns

In the case of the analysed corpus, typical features can be observed according to the socio-cultural factors of style (cf. Tolcsvai Nagy 2012: 38). On the basis of the characteristics identified in the analysed slam poetry texts, the following types of 1<sup>st</sup> person singular and plural verbs appear prototypically in the corpus: loose, informal; formal (often ironic); slang; archaic; value deprivation and value saturation. However, these styles are most often combined in the following ways:

### 1) Archaic + formal + value saturation, e.g.

- (10a) De olykor megtörik e szép táj, mikor nem **zárkózom** már köréd  
'But sometimes this beautiful landscape is broken, when I do not shut myself around you'

(10b) Színészként színpadon számtalan színes személyiség szerepében szüntelenül **színlelek**.  
'As an actor on stage I am always pretending in the roles of numerous colourful personas.'

(10c) Szerdánként, szombatonként **színészkedem**.  
'I act on Wednesdays and on Saturdays.'

(10d) (...) **megcselekedtük**, amit amit megkövetelt a fasza.  
'(...) we did what we were expected by his dick.'

(Intertextuality and irony also appear here: *dick* stands here instead of mother country, based on their similar sounding in Hungarian: *fasza* – *haza*. *Megkövetelt a haza* is an intertext referring to the lines of a well-known Hungarian translation by Emil Ponori Thewrewk of Simonides's epigram 'Go Tell the Spartans'.)

(10e) **Küzdöttünk** és bízva **bíztunk** (...)  
'We fought and trustingly trusted (...)'

(Intertextuality also appears here, these lines refer to Imre Madách's *The Tragedy of Man*.)

## 2) Informal + slang + value deprivation, e.g.

(11a) Bármikor **behányhatok?**  
'Can I vomit any time I want to?'

(11b) (...) nem izgatnak a pénzeid, **teszek** a trendingedre, a megtekintésekre, a hastagekre, a megosztásokra.  
'(...) I am not excited by your moneys, I don't give a damn about your trendings, about the views, about the hashtags, about the shares.'

(11c) Magasról **szarok** a lájkokra!  
'I shit on likes from a great height!'

(11d) Valamit **elbasztunk**, valamit elbasztak.  
'We fucked up something, they fucked up something.'

(11e) (...) ahol együtt **feleseztünk**  
'(...) where we drank shots together'

## 5. Conclusions

The aim of this paper was to analyse in a functional cognitive framework the Hungarian slam poetry subcorpus of the Research Group in Stylistics, consisting of a total of 108 Hungarian slam poetry texts. The verb structures listed during the annotation and their contexts were examined in terms of the construction of the intersubjective relationship between the speaker and the listener(s), as well as the directing of attention. In the subcorpus, person-marking constructions for expressing the speakers in the texts (1st person singular and plural verbs) were annotated with the aim of determining the types of prototypical grammatical, semantic and pragmatic patterns that can help increase intersubjectivity and also play a role in directing listeners' attention.

We had three main research questions to answer in relation to the hypotheses. The first (1) question focused on prototypical grammatical patterns, on the proportion of first person singular and plural verbs in the 108 Slam text. Based on the research, the following findings emerged: grammatical person-marking with verb structures of the 1st person singular occurs much more frequently

in slam texts than the 1st person plural (2201 vs. 301). In the case of the first-person singular verb constructions, the indicative present tense shows a higher proportion in the corpus, while in the case of the first person plural verbs, the indicative and imperative forms are more common. The second (2) question of our analysis was related to the prototypical pragmatic patterns that emerged in the use of first person singular and plural verbs in the corpus. In the verb forms analysed, it can be observed that they can also belong to the metafunction of intersubjectivity and interpersonal relationship building. First person singular verbs related to knowing or saying help construct and develop the interpersonal relationship between the slammer and the audience (e.g. *I know, say, ask*). Some of the typical verbs of the first-person plural in the imperative form foreground the phatic metafunction (e.g. *let's say, let's bet*). The third (3) research question related to the semantic patterns and socio-cultural factors regarding the characteristics of the relationship between the slammer and the audience, and to the typical topics in the slam text that promote the directing of attention. The most characteristic semantic patterns included, among others, feelings, communication, intensive movement, physical functioning, and mental state. Typical topics of discussion were personal life, failure (often with a touch of irony), the hardships of youth, politics and criticism. The socio-cultural factors of style most often occurred in the following combinations: archaic + formal + value saturation, informal + slang + value deprivation.

Through an analysis of 1<sup>st</sup> person singular and plural verbs, various grammatical, pragmatic, semantic and stylistic features of the slam poetry texts under study were identified and presented. It was revealed that with the help of these verbs, slammers emphasise a sense of community and a kind of "fellowship". In the case of the pragmatic and semantic features, verbs with similar reference to the rhetorical situation and to the relationship of the slammers and their audiences were revealed. These features contain speech acts, which refer to the situation of the slammer and the audience (e.g. *let us bet, I swear*), similar semantic features in both persons (e.g.: talking about personal life, politics, or scolding, criticising other people). These characteristics of the persons analysed point to the fact that the genre of slam poetry has typical pragmatic, semantic, and stylistic features. In the future, further parts of speech (e.g.: nouns, pronouns) can be analysed to lend further support to (or discover the limitations of) the findings of the present paper.

In summary, the study has shown which typical person-marking patterns, detected in the annotated singular and plural first-person verb structures of the slam poetry subcorpus, are relevant for the directing of attention.

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