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The use of the Dutch additive particle *ook* 'too' to avoid contrast

Abstract – The Dutch discourse particle *ook* 'too' is traditionally described as an additive particle: a proposition is added to the discourse that also applies to at least one alternative. However, this does not straightforwardly account for all uses of *ook*. Following Sæbø (2004) we propose that an important function of *ook* 'too' is to avoid the establishment of a relation of contrast between the proposition that contains *ook* and some other, often implicit, proposition in the discourse. Data from a corpus study as well as a sentence completion task supports this analysis. Although two figures shared similarities, participants interpreted the relation between them as contrastive. If *ook* 'too' was added, the contrastive reading disappeared. This shows that, rather than just adding something to the discourse, *ook* 'too' avoids an otherwise contrastive interpretation.

1 Introduction

Consider the following Dutch sentence containing the additive particle *ook* 'too'.

(1)   Dat   doe   ik   ook
        that   do   I   too
        'I am doing that (too).'

This sentence may be interpreted in various ways, depending on the context and concomitant intonation pattern. Some of these interpretations are the same for the English *too*, which is commonly assumed to be a presupposition trigger (e.g., Spenader 2002). For example, sentence (1) may presuppose that somebody else than the speaker is doing the same thing. In that case, the particle *ook* 'too' is accented and the subject *ik* 'I' bears a secondary accent (Krifka 1998). Krifka notes that such an accentuation pattern is similar in sentences with contrastive topics. In (2), found on an internet forum, speakers A and B's teachers are considered as contrastive topics, but because they do the same thing, an additive particle such as *too* becomes obligatory in this context.[1]

1   http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/showthread.php?t=4086095 (consulted September 2017)

(2)   A: My teacher keeps tearing my essays to shreds!
       B: My teacher is doing that too!

The Dutch *ook,* just like its English counterpart *too,* is called an 'additive' particle because it adds a predication to the discourse that holds for at least one alternative for the expression in focus, called the 'associate' (Krifka 1998). The focus in (1) can also be on *dat* 'that', in which case the presupposition triggered by *ook* 'too' is that the speaker is doing something else on top of doing the thing referred to by 'that', as in (3):[2]

(3)   People tell me to "enjoy my summer" but I am doing that too, just studying as well

In (3) *doing that* refers to *enjoy my summer*, while the alternative predicate that holds for the subject, is *studying*. Whether the use of *ook* 'too' in (1) implies that there is an alternative subject for which the predicate holds (such as A's teacher in (2)), or whether it implies that there is an alternative predicate that holds for the subject (such as *studying* in (3)), in both cases *ook* 'too' indicates the presence of an alternative in the discourse. This is why Hartmann and Zimmermann (2008) call particles such as *too* 'alternative-sensitive'. Additive particles share the same semantics, but they often have extended uses as well, which may differ per language (cf. Forker 2016). For example, van Putten (2013) argues that the additive particle *tsyɛ* 'too' in Avatime does not necessarily associate with elements in focus, but instead indicates that the proposition it occurs in is similar to or compatible with a presupposed alternative proposition. An example of this use of *tsyɛ* 'too' occurs in the last sentence of (4) (van Putten 2013: 65, example (12)):[3]

(4)   Ɔ-nùvɔ-ɛ   ɛ́ɛ́-kpɛ   è-wù-la
       c_1.SG-child-DEF c_1.SG.PROG-put c_3.PL-clothes-DEF
       'The child was putting on his clothes.'

       Ma-m̀ɔ   sì   ɛ-lɛ-pɛ   àkp̀ɔkplɔ-ɛ
       1SG-see   COMP c_1.SG-FUT-look.for   frog-DEF
       'I think he is going to look for the frog.'

       Ka-dṛ̀ṵ-a   tsyɛ   ka-lɛ   ní   yɛ   kapà
       c_6.SG-dog-DEF   too c_6.SG-be   LOC c_1.SG   side
       'The dog is standing beside him.'

Note that the additive particle *tsyɛ* 'too' in Avatime is not and cannot be translated with English *too* in the above example. It is the case that also in Dutch, the additive particle *ook* 'too' has a use that is not found in English. Reconsider sentence (1), but now embedded in the context in (5):

(5)   Vader: Moet   je   geen   huiswerk   maken?
       father   must   you   no   homework   make
       Father: 'Shouldn't you be doing your homework?'

       Zoon: Dat   doe   ik   ook!
       son   that   do   I   too
       Son: 'That's what I'm doing!'

In (5) the discourse particle *ook* 'too' does not have an obvious additive interpretation. There is no presupposition triggered that somebody else other than the son is doing their homework, nor that the son is doing something else besides his homework. The aim of this article is to explain the discourse function of *ook* 'too' in Dutch, including examples such as (5) in which it is not purely additive. We will argue, following Sæbø's (2004) analysis of additives, that *ook* 'too' neutralizes the contrastive implicature that would otherwise be brought about by the accented topic that the additive associates with. As such, *ook* 'too' can be used to avoid the establishment of a contrastive relation between the proposition that contains *ook* 'too' and some other, sometimes implicit, proposition in the discourse. In (5) the father's negatively framed question suggests that the son is not (yet) doing his homework, in contrast with what is expected or desired. The secondary accent in this reading falls on the verb *doe* 'do', but the alternative for *doe* 'do' is not an alternative predicate (verb). Rather, the actuality of the realization of the state of affairs (as expressed by *doe* 'do') is an alternative to the desirability of the realization of the state of affairs (as implicated by father's question). That is to say, the use of *ook* 'too' in (5) is used to stress that in fact there is no contrast between the desired and the actual situation. This is reminiscent of the use of English *too* in a discussion as in (6) (Rullmann 2003: 376, example (69)):

(6)   A: You ate all my cookies
       B: I did not!
       A: You did too!

However, the difference between (5) and (6) is that in (6) the associate of *too* seems to express the same proposition as the 'alternative' which was uttered by speaker A before, but which was subsequently denied by speaker B. That is, *too* indicates that there is no contrast between the current utterance and the previous utterance made by A, despite B's objection. Rullmann calls the use of *too* in (6) an *affirmative* use, and he argues that the difference between the affirmative and additive function of *too* is that the former does not carry any presuppositions. He also notes that in Dutch this function is covered by another particle, namely *wel*. Indeed, in Dutch, *ook* 'too' cannot be used in a context such as (6) above. Instead, the affirmative particle *wel* would be used, which is used to deny an explicit or implicit negation in the context (cf. Hogeweg 2009; Hogeweg & van Gerrevink 2015).

We call *ook*'s function in (5) above *anti-contrastive*. Note that the other readings of *ook* 'too' in (1)-(3) can also be called anti-contrastive, in the sense that they prevent the establishment of a contrastive relation between the two alternative subjects in (2) or the two alternative predicates in (3). While the use of *ook* in (1)-(3) is additive, this reading goes hand in hand with the anti-contrastive rea-

ding. However, whereas the use of *ook* 'too' in (5) can be argued to be anti-contrastive, its additive function is less straightforward. We argue that the anti-contrastive aspect of the semantics of *ook* is able to explain some occurrences that are not explained by additivity alone.

Section 2 proposes a pragmatic analysis of Dutch *ook* 'too', building on insights by Krifka (1998) and Sæbø (2004), and in line with Malchukov's (2004) typology of coordination markers. Section 3 discusses data from the Spoken Dutch Corpus showing that an anti-contrastive function covers more uses of *ook* 'too' in discourse than the merely additive function does. Our predictions about the use of *ook* 'too' are subsequently tested in an experiment discussed in Section 4. In this sentence completion task participants were shown two figures which were similar in two respects (e.g., shape and colour) and different in two other ones (e.g., size and filling). One sentence enumerating the four characteristics of the first figure was given and subjects had to complete a similar sentence about the second figure that either contained the additive particle *ook* 'too' or not. It turned out that the main difference between sentences with and without *ook* lies in the mentioning of dissimilarities between the two figures. While an equal number of similarities was mentioned in the two contexts, independently of the presence of *ook*, no dissimilarities were mentioned in the context with *ook*, whereas in the context without *ook* dissimilarities were consistently mentioned. This result confirms our hypothesis that *ook* in Dutch is used to avoid a relation of contrast in the discourse. The conclusion is presented in Section 5.

2   Additive particles and contrast in discourse

2.1   *The semantics of additive particles*

Additive particles like *too* are traditionally analyzed as presupposition triggers (cf. Zeevat 2002; Rullmann 2003) as they trigger the presupposition that the predication holds for at least one alternative for the associate of *too* (cf. Krifka 1998). This presupposition can be explicitly present in the preceding context but it can also be implicit, in which case accommodation is required. Spenader (2002) studied the London-Lund Corpus of Spoken English and found that identifying the presuppositions induced by *too* was a complicated and very problematic task. She identified the problem that English *too* can focus any of several constituents in an utterance, i.e., the subject, the predicate, part of the predicate, or any other constituent in the utterance. This made correct annotation only possible with greater context. To illustrate this, she discusses the following example (Spenader 2002: 134, example (38)):

(7)   Speaker A: To eighteen Devonshire Close
         Speaker B: That's a nice address too

Without further context, one could hypothesize that *too* adds being a nice address to other nice properties of a certain residence. However, within a greater context, it turns out that there is another nice address, namely Stratford Corner, that is presupposed by the use of *too* (Spenader 2002: 134-135, example (39)):

(8)   Speaker A: And we have a place now. Temporarily for a few days. At Stratford
       Corner which is near Marshall and Snelgrove. Yes really, yes yes, you know, you
       know it is in Oxford Street
       Speaker B: A very nice address
       Speaker A: It's all right temporarily. It's got a Mayfair number! But we are moving
       on Saturday. All this bloody stuff
       […]
       Speaker A: To eighteen Devonshire Close
       Speaker B: That's a nice address too

In (8) *too* is triggered by Speaker B's utterance *A very nice address* which makes
the use of *too* in *That's a nice address too* obligatory. In this case *too* adds a pre-
dication that holds for the subject *that*, which refers to a specific address, but
also for an alternative address in the discourse (Krifka 1998). The two addresses,
i.e., Stratford Corner in Oxford Street and eighteen Devonshire Close, function
as contrastive topics which are subject to Krifka's (1998: 113) Contrastive Topic
Hypothesis: 'The associated constituent of stressed postposed additive particles
is the contrastive topic of the clause in which they occur.' Of the 45 instances of
too that Spenader (2002) found, 43 were of this type, whereas only 2 referred to
an implicit alternative in the discourse, in which this alternative had to be accom-
modated. One example in which the presupposition triggered by *too* needs to be
accommodated is given in (9) (Spenader 2002: 136, example (42)):

(9)   Speaker A: He doesn't see why you should make – bother to make why you
       should – be feel forced to make provision for the disabled
       […]
       Speaker A: And he said the Swedes have gone absolutely overboard on making
       everything possible for the disabled […]
       […]
       Speaker B: Couldn't you have all loos designed so that the disabled people can use
       them too?

Spenader (2002) assumes that in the discourse above the presupposition triggered
by *too* is that someone other than disabled people can use all loos. In such an ana-
lysis, *the disabled people* is the contrastive topic of the sentence and the presuppo-
sition is that there is an alternative to this contrastive topic for which the proposi-
tion holds that they can use all loos (Krifka 1998).
    Sæbø (2004) notes that the analysis of additive particles as presupposition trig-
gers does not explain their occurrence in every context nor the fact that, when
they occur, they are often obligatory, as in (10) (Sæbø 2004: 200, example (3)):

(10)   What do Peter and Paul sing?
       Peter sings tenor, and Paul sings tenor #(too)

As Sæbø (2004: 199) puts it: '[…] the contexts where they are necessary are contexts
where the presuppositions are verified. Thus, *prima facie*, they should be redundant
precisely when instead, they seem to fulfil some important function […].' Sæbø
argues that the obligatory presence of *too* in (10) is explained by the fact that the as-
sociate of *too* is a contrastive topic, evoking the implicature that the predication made
about the contrastive topic does not hold for its alternatives. Thus, *too* is obligatory

in a context where the presupposition that the predication does hold for an alternative to the contrastive topic is verified. Not using *too* would lead to a contradiction between the proposition verifying this presupposition and the implicature caused by the contrastive topic. The additive particle *too* is used to prevent this contradiction. In his analysis, Sæbø partly follows Krifka (1998). While Sæbø argues that it is the associate of *too* that introduces the implicature, Krifka argues that *too* is used to undo a contrastive reading evoked by the alternative of the associate, which is present in the context preceding the utterance containing *too*. For Krifka, *too* is obligatory only when there are two contrastive topics present. Sæbø argues that examples like (11) show that this is not a necessary condition (Sæbø 2004: 207, example (7b)):

(11)   – I want to see Son-of-Thunder. Fetch him
        So Good Care rose, fetched the newborn boy and held him out before his dying
        father. Swift Deer opened his eyes for the last time, and Son-of-Thunder had his
        eyes open #(too)

According to Sæbø, the first sentence in which Swift Deer opened his eyes does not in any way implicate or even suggests that no other relevant being had their eyes open at that moment. Hence, *Swift Deer* is not introduced as a contrastive topic (unlike *Peter* in (10)). As the continuation shows, however, an additive particle such as *too* is obligatory when it is said that Son-of-Thunder had his eyes open. The presupposed alternative does not have to be a contrastive topic. In fact, it can even be a continuing topic, as the Lego blocks in (12) (Sæbø 2004: 207, example (8), boldface and italics added):

(12)   So now you see what I meant about **Lego blocks**. **They** have more or less the same
        properties as those which Democritus ascribed to atoms. And that is what makes
        them so much fun to build with. **They** are first and foremost indivisible. Then
        they have different shapes and sizes. **They** are solid and impermeable. **They** also
        have 'hooks' and 'barbs' so that **they** can be connected to form every conceivable
        figure. […] We can form things out of clay *too*, but clay cannot be used over and
        over […]

In (12) the additive particle *too* is used to avoid the establishment of a contrastive relation between Lego blocks and clay, as both can be used to form things. Therefore, Sæbø argues that the context does not necessarily generate a contrastive reading that is contradicted by *too*, but rather it is the other way around: the associate of *too* comes with a contrastive implicature which is contradicted by the preceding context. Sæbø (2004) assumes that the semantics of *too* consists of two parts: (i) *too* in a sentence triggers the presupposition that there is an alternative to the associate of *too* such that the sentence holds under the substitution of the alternative for the associate (which is the standard analysis); (ii) *too* incorporates this alternative topic under the (contrastive) topic which is the associate of *too,* such that the topic of the output assertion of the sentence containing *too* is the sum of the associate and the alternative. The result of the latter part of the semantics is that the contrastive implicature caused by the contrastive topic which is the associate of *too* does not concern the alternative (because the contrastive topic contains this alternative) and the contradiction that the omission of *too* would have led to, is avoided.

In this paper we follow Sæbø's analysis and assume that *ook* 'too' has an anti-

contrastive function in addition to its additive function. We argue that this anti-contrastive function can explain occurrences of *ook* 'too' which are not straightforwardly explained by its additive function. We will discuss examples of such occurrences in Section 2.3. We will first go into the cross-linguistic connection between additivity and contrast in Section 2.2.

2.2   *Additivity and contrast*

The apparent relation between additivity and contrast is not restricted to the English *too*. Forker (2016) performs a cross-linguistic study on the additional uses of discourse markers. In her sample of 42 languages from 17 different language families, she found that only the additive in Urarina, an isolate language from Peru, does not have any additional function apart from additivity, whereas the additives in the majority of languages (33) cover four or more related functions. One of the core functions commonly fulfilled by additive markers is association with contrastive topics and topic switch.[4] The additive particle can combine with contrastive topics about which the same predication is made, as in example (13) from Manambu (Forker 2016: 75) about two men subsequently performing identical actions.

(13) də-kə-ba:b   krəkiya:p   də-kə-ba:b   krəkiya:p
      he-obl-add   ornament   he-obl-add   ornament

      də-kə-ba:b   gəl   yi-ku   də-kə-ba:b   gəl   yi-ku
      he-OBL-ADD   black.paint   go-COMPL.SS   he-OBL-ADD   black.paint   go-COMPL.SS

      də   ma:pw   ji-ku   də   ma:pw   ji-ku
      he   possum   tie-COMPL.SS   he   possum   tie-COMPL.SS

      ata   ya-ku   ya:kya
      then   come-COMPL.SS   OK

      '(The two got the decoration there at a distance), one (lit. he) got ornaments, the
      other got ornaments, one went in black paint, the other went in black paint, one tied
      possum fur, the other tied possum fur, they then went (lit. having then gone, OK).'

However, an additive particle can also combine with contrastive topics about which distinct or even contradicting information is given, as in example (14) from Sheko (Forker 2016: 75).

(14) Yordanos   ʃik-n-s   tə-k-ə,
      Yordanos   short-DEF-M   COP-REAL-STI

      k'orint'os-k'əra   ʃaad-n-s   tə-k-ə
      Qorinxos-ADD   tall-DEF-M   COP-REAL-STI

      'Yordanos is short, Qorinxos is tall.'

4   The other core functions identified by Forker are: scalar additive, indefinite, concessive, the conjunctional adverb 'and then', and constituent coordination.

Forker explains the relation between additive markers and contrastive topics by assuming that the contrastive topic and the additive work in the same direction as they both indicate or presuppose alternatives. In (15) for example the contrastive-topic intonation on *Pia* indicates that there are alternatives in the discourse for which information of a similar type is required. The additive marker also presupposes that similar information is provided about entities that are alternatives to its associate, in this case *Pia* (Forker 2016: 76).

(15)   Did Peter and Pia eat pasta?
        Péter ate pàsta, and [[Pía]$_{Focus}$]$_{Topic}$ ate pasta, [tòo]$_{Focus}$

This explanation cannot however account for the fact that, at least in English, an additive marker is necessary in constructions like (15).[5] We argue, following Sæbø (2004), that additives are used in constructions like these, as well as in others, because they take away the contrastive reading that the associate of the additive (being a contrastive topic) would otherwise have created.[6] Also following Sæbø, we assume that this function is part of the semantics of additives. As such, the anti-contrastive function is not necessarily an extra function that should be added to the list of additional functions identified by Forker. Rather, the additive function and the anti-contrastive function are interrelated.

Malchukov (2004) also considers the connection between (amongst others) additivity and contrast from a typological perspective by construing a semantic map of coordination markers. Coordination markers can have various functions, such as additive, adversative, contrastive, and disjunctive. It often happens that one marker fulfills several of these functions, which means that the marker is polysemous. Which functions are grouped together under one form can vary across languages. Malchukov (2004) proposes a semantic map that connects the various functions, in which one pole is represented by 'and'-coordination (that covers the additive function), and the other by 'but'-coordination (which reflects the adversative function). Malchukov (2004) argues that these two poles are connected to each other via two different routes: one route goes via the function of contrast, the other one via the function of mirativity. The relevant part of Malchukov's (2004: 178) semantic map can be pictured as follows (note that Malchukov's map includes many more functions):

FIGURE 1   Part of Malchukov's (2004: 178) semantic map for coordinating connectives

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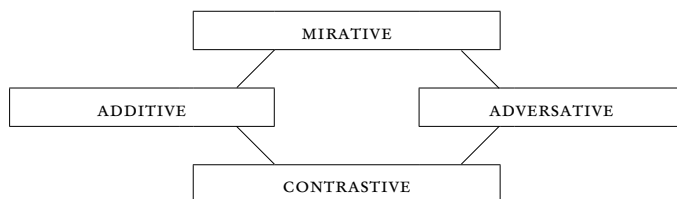
5   Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for pointing this out to us.
6   Recall that Sæbø shows that an additive marker is not only necessary in constructions like these, as the alternative to the associate of *too* is not necessarily a contrastive topic, but the associate itself is (cf. Section 2.1).

Malchukov illustrates the first route (from additivity via contrastivity to adversativity) using the Russian coordinating conjunctions *i*, *a*, and *no*, which differ from each other in that *a*, which has a contrastive function, shows overlap with both the adversative *no* 'but' and the additive *i* 'and'. This is shown in the following three sentences (Malchukov 2004: 183):

(16)   Petja   starateljnyj,   a   Vanja   lenivyi
        Pete   diligent   and/but   Vanja   lazy
        'Pete is diligent, but Vanja is lazy.'

(17)   Vremja   uxodit   bystro,   a/i   s   nim   uxodjat   ljudi
        time   passes   quickly   and   with   it   pass   people
        'Time passes quickly, and with it people pass (away).'

(18)   Zima,   a/no   idet   dozhdj
        winter   but   goes   rain
   'It is winter, but it is raining.'

Malchukov (2004) explains the ambiguity of the Russian contrast marker *a* as illustrated above in terms of Mann and Thompson's (1988) 'similarity and dissimilarity' account of the rhetorical relation of contrast. The relation of contrast is a stronger rhetorical relation than sequence, which would correspond to mere additivity. Whereas the Russian conjunction *i* 'and' is used to indicate a relation of sequence, *no* 'but' is used for contrast. Mann and Thompson define contrast as a relation between two nuclei such that the situations presented in these two nuclei are understood as the same in many respects, but different in a few respects, and they are compared with respect to one or more of these differences. Hence, the establishment of a relation of contrast involves recognizing both similarities and dissimilarities between two propositions in the discourse. This is in line with Umbach (2004) who defines the notion of contrast in terms of comparability which presupposes both similarity and dissimilarity. De Hoop & de Swart (2004: 88) assume that the establishment of a relation of contrast is a common way of satisfying a general constraint on anaphorization in the rhetorical domain (as proposed by e.g., de Hoop & de Swart 2000). People tend to link propositions in the discourse to other propositions via a number of well-established rhetorical relations.

Contrast is a stronger rhetorical relation than sequence, because there is a relation of sequence whenever there is a relation of contrast, but not vice versa. In accordance with Asher and Lascarides' (1998: 99) principle *Maximize discourse coherence* and Hendriks et al.'s (2010: 32) constraint *Don't overlook rhetorical possibilities: Opportunities to establish a rhetorical relation must be seized*, we predict that people prefer establishing a relation of contrast over a relation of sequence. Hence, whenever appropriate, people will interpret discourse relations as contrastive and not just additive or sequential. This explains why, as Malchukov (2004: 183) notes, 'extension of markers of "and"-coordination to contrastive contexts is only natural, given that the identity of predicated parts of conjuncts is avoided for pragmatic (conversational) reasons anyway (in the absence of identity markers like *too*).' In other words, Malchukov (2004) calls *too* an 'identity marker', considering it to express the identity of predicated parts of conjuncts, which

leads to canceling a relation of contrast that would otherwise arise. If we say, *Peter had pizza and Paul had …*, then we assume there will be a relation of contrast, e.g., *Paul had pasta*, unless *too* is added, as in *Peter had pizza and Paul had pizza too*. However, if a relation of sequence is established, as in *Peter had pizza, Paul had pasta, Jane had a salad, and Jackie had …*, then we do not need *too*, even if the proposition that is added holds for an alternative in the discourse. Thus, we can complete the sequence above with *…, and Jackie had pizza*.

The map in Figure 1 does not directly represent the anti-contrastive function that we propose for the Dutch particle *ook* 'too' and one might wonder how such an 'anti'-function can be represented in a semantic map. Semantic maps are well-known for their property of contiguity (Croft 2003), which predicts that if in a language a certain lexical item is used for two different functions on the map, it will be used for the intermediate function(s) on the map as well. However, an alternative representation of a semantic map can be given in terms of sets of features, which de Schepper & Zwarts (2010) did for the modality semantic map. De Schepper & Zwarts (2010) show how functions on semantic maps can be decomposed in terms of more basic properties or features. For example, if there are two features *a* and *b*, then four functions can be defined: [-a,-b], [+a,-b], [+a,+b] and [+b,-a]. A connection between two meanings in a semantic map indicates that the two meanings differ in just one feature. De Schepper & Zwarts emphasize that meanings have properties and that the meanings are related to each other because of these properties. As such, they derive the geometry of a semantic map from more basic properties of meanings. This view enables us to define Dutch *ook* 'too' in the map above not only in terms of a feature [+additive], but crucially also as [-contrastive] and maybe also [-mirative] (see Section 2.3). Figure 2 illustrates the coverage of *ook* 'too' using Malchukov's (2004) semantic map in terms of features. Whereas Dutch *ook* is defined in terms of the features [+additive, -contrastive, -mirative], Russian *a* 'and/but' is defined as [+additive, +contrastive].

FIGURE 2   Part of Malchukov's (2004) semantic map in terms of features
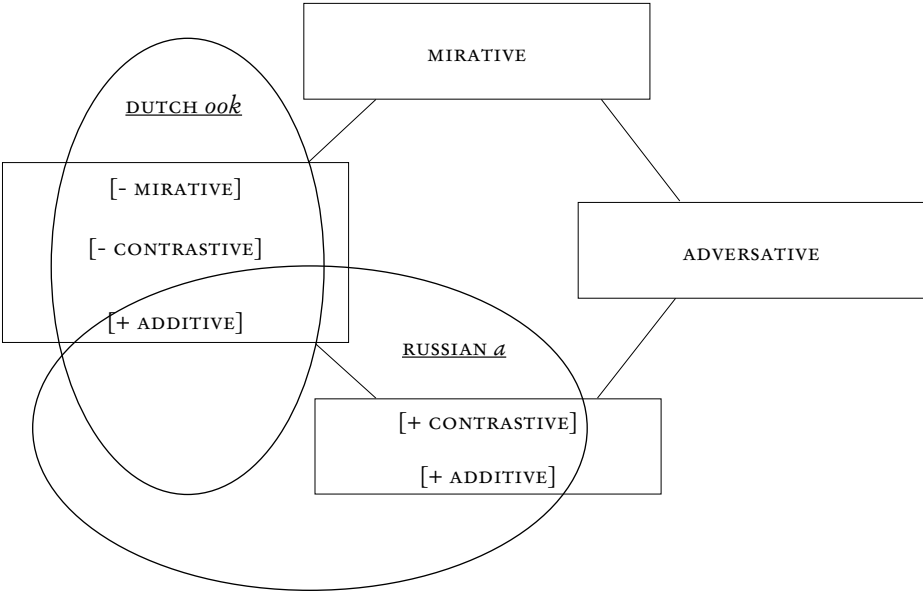
Malchukov's (2004) semantic map indicates that cross-linguistically there is a close relation between additivity and contrast. Furthermore, we saw that often explicit marking is necessary to avoid an interpretation of contrast, as this is a strong rhetorical relation. This strengthens the analysis of additives as anti-contrastivity markers. As Sæbø (2004: 216) puts it, they '[…] steer clear of contrasts that would otherwise be communicated.' And he adds: 'It is not unreasonable to assume that this provides one reason for their existence.' In the next section we will see that the anti-contrastive component of the semantics of *ook* 'too' may offer a better explanation for some of its occurrences than a merely additive analysis.

2.3   *Dutch* ook *and anti-contrastivity*

We propose that *ook* 'too' as an additive particle indeed has an anti-contrastive function. That is to say, the function of *ook* 'too' is not only to indicate that there are alternatives for which the predication holds as well, but also to avoid a relation of contrast that may otherwise be established in the context. Consider for example (19), taken from the Spoken Dutch Corpus.

(19)   Benzinepompen heb   je   ook   niet overal   op   IJsland
   gas.stations have you   too   not   everywhere on   Iceland
   'Iceland does not have that many gas stations.'

The presupposition triggered by *ook* 'too' is that Iceland is rather empty and lacks things, besides gas stations, that are present in other countries. In that sense *ook* 'too' has an additive function. However, *ook* 'too' in this context has another pragmatic effect, namely to indicate that the proposition uttered is what would be expected on the basis of what we know from Iceland. In other words, it does not come as a surprise. Therefore, although we can say that gas stations are added to a set of things that are not abundant in Iceland, *ook* 'too' also indicates that the proposition is not in contrast with what we know about this country, and therefore unsurprising.

  Recall that in Malchukov's (2004) semantic map the additive and the adversative functions are connected to each other via two possible routes: via the function of contrast, or via the function of mirativity. Dutch *ook* 'too' can be conceived of as an anti-contrastive marker in (19), but we could also argue that it functions as an anti-mirative marker here. This might become even clearer if we embed the example in the context in which it occurred, as provided in (20):

(20)   We   zaten op   een gegeven   moment   nog   van   o
   we   sat   on   a   given   moment   PART   QUOT   oh
   jee   als   we   maar genoeg   benzine   hebben want   ja
   gee   if   we   PART enough   gas   have   since yeah
   benzinepompen heb   je   ook   niet   overal   op   IJsland
   gas.stations have you   too   not   everywhere   on   Iceland
   'At a certain point we were afraid to run out of gas, since you know, Iceland does not have that many gas stations.'

By using *ook* 'too' in (20) the speaker appeals to shared knowledge: for the hearer it should not come as a surprise that Iceland does not have that many gas stations.

Thus, it seems that the anti-contrastive and anti-mirative readings are closely related and perhaps sometimes even indistinguishable. Characterizing the function of *ook* as either [-contrastive] or [-mirative] (or both) shows that Dutch *ook* 'too' blocks or inhibits both Malchukov's (2004) semantic routes from additive to adversative meaning.

As our discussion of (20) shows, we are not denying that *ook* 'too' has an additive function. Rather, we are emphasizing instances where it functions as an anti-contrastive or anti-mirative marker. Even for example (5), repeated here as (21), we could argue that *ook* 'too' is additive at some level as the son indicates that the situation in which he is doing his homework is not only desirable but also reality. However, the additive function is not sufficient to explain the use of *ook* 'too' in such cases.

(21)   Vader: Moet   je   geen   huiswerk   maken?
        father   must   you   no   homework   make
        Father: 'Shouldn't you be doing your homework?'

        Zoon: Dat   doe   ik   ook!
        son   that   do   I   too
        Son: 'That's what I'm doing!'

What seems to be special for Dutch, at least compared to English, is that *ook* 'too' can have scope over the whole sentence. We could say that *ook* is still additive in such cases in the sense that it adds a sentence or a proposition to the set of previously uttered sentences or propositions, but as this is not really informative (every uttered proposition adds to the set of previously uttered propositions) the anti-contrastive reading becomes more relevant. For example, this is true for occurrences of *ook* 'too' which have been labeled as *modal particles* in the literature. Modal particles are defined as having scope over the whole sentence, and they are typically unstressed (Foolen 1993). Thurmair (1989) describes the function of the modal *auch* 'too' by means of the features *konnex* 'connected' and *erwarted* 'expected'.[7] In (22), *auch* 'too' indicates that the utterance containing it is connected to the previous utterance and furthermore that the information expressed in the previous utterance is expected based on the information expressed in the utterance containing *auch* 'too' (Thurmair 1989: 155).

(22)   Elke: Stell   dir   vor,   der   Peter   hat   eine   Eins   im
                 imagine   you   for   the   Peter   has   a   one   in.the
                 Staatsexamen!
                 state.exam
        Elke: 'Guess what, Peter got an A for his final exam!'

        Gisi: Der   hat   auch   ziemlich   viel   dafür   geschuftet
                 DEM   has   too   rather   much   for.that   worked.hard
        Gisi: 'Well, he did work really hard for it.'

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7   Thurmair (1989) assumes an additional feature *erwünscht* 'desired' to explain the function of *auch* in polar questions.

One would normally not expect Peter to ace his exams, but if you know that he worked really hard, it is no longer a surprise. In other words, there is no relation of contrast between the situation that Peter worked hard, and the result that he aced his exams. Thus, Thurmair's [+expected] feature is also covered by the anti-contrastive or anti-mirative function.

Similarly, Karagjosova (2003) argues that the modal particle *auch* 'too' indicates that the speaker believes that the utterance containing it stands in an inferential relationship with the preceding utterance. For example, the utterance by B in (23) could be paraphrased as 'it is because he is ill' (Karagjosova 2003: 341).

(23) A: Peter   sieht   sehr   schlecht   aus
          Peter   looks   very   bad   out
          'Peter looks very ill.'

      B: Er   is   auch   lange   krank   gewesen
          he   is   too   long   ill   been
          'Well, he has been ill for a long time.'

This modal function of *auch* 'too', indicating that the information expressed in the preceding sentence is expected or inferred based on the information expressed in the utterance containing the additive particle, is again covered by the anti-mirative or anti-contrastive function. Dutch *ook* 'too' would be used in the same way in (22) and (23). It could have been this meaning ingredient that enabled the development of the modal function of this additive particle.

3 A corpus study on the use of *ook* 'too' in spoken Dutch

3.1 *Methodology*

We have shown that an anti-contrastive function provides an explanation for some of *ook's* occurrences that go beyond a merely additive function. To substantiate the claim that the anti-contrastive function is an important aspect of the use of *ook* we performed a corpus study in the Spoken Dutch Corpus (*Corpus Gesproken Nederlands*). Two-hundred conversations in which *ook* occurred were extracted from the Spoken Dutch Corpus using the COREX exploitation software.[8] The sentences came from the following three subcorpora:

(i)   spontaneous conversations ('face-to-face')
(ii)   telephone dialogues, and
(iii) spontaneous commentaries (a.o. sports) broadcast on radio and television.

Using meta-filters it was assured that all sentences were produced by native speakers of Netherlandic-Dutch. The sentences (57.562 in total) were tagged if they contained *ook* (4.425 hits). This initial selection was subsequently narrowed down to 200 occurrences such that each instance came from a unique conversation in which it was the first use in order to avoid priming effects affecting *ook*'s use.

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8   http://lands.let.ru.nl/cgn/.

Moreover, this way the (linguistic) context was taken into account as well. Two-hundred occurrences of *ook* were annotated for additivity and avoiding contrast by two independent annotators. The Kappa statistic was used to analyze interrater reliability to determine consistency among raters. The interrater reliability was found to be $\varkappa = 0.805$ ($p < .001$), 95% CI (0.717, 0.893). Differences between the annotations were solved through discussion.

Occurrences were coded as 'additive' if they explicitly added an entity to an existing set in the discourse, as in (24), or an additional predicate to a previously mentioned entity, as in (25).

(24) Speaker A: | Maar | ze | zijn | doorzichtig | die | dingen. | Je | ziet |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| but | they | are | transparent | those | things | you | see |
| ze | helemaal | niet | goed | | | | |
| them | all | not | good | | | | |

'But these things are transparent. You can hardly see them.'

Speaker B: | Ja |
|---|
| yes |

'Yeah.'

Speaker A: | Eén | twee | drie | vier | vijf |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| one | two | three | four | five |

'One, two, three, four, five.'

Speaker B: | Katholieken | zouden | nooit | doorzichtige | ballen | ophangen |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| catholics | would | never | transparent | balls | hang |

'Catholics would never hang transparent baubles (on the Christmas tree).'

Speaker A: | Wij | ook | niet |
|---|---|---|
| we | too | not |

'Neither would we.'

(25) Speaker A: | Ja, | 't | was | een | soort | Monopoly | was | 't |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| yes | it | was | a | kind | Monopoly | was | it |

'Yeah, it was a kind of Monopoly.'

Speaker B: | Mmm. |
|---|

'Hmm.'

Speaker A: | En | je | kon | d'r | op | een | gegeven | moment |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| and | you | could | there | on | a | given | moment |
| ook | handelen | in | allerlei | | uh | je | moest |
| too | trade | in | all.kinds.of | | um | you | must.PAST |
| ook | allerlei | opdrachten | doen | | | | |
| too | all.kinds.of | assignments | do | | | | |

'At a certain point you could also trade in all kinds of … um, you had to do all kinds of assignments as well.'

The conversation in (24) is about the Bible's specifications regarding the decoration of the Christmas tree. In the end, Speaker A explicitly adds an element to the set of individuals who would never use transparent baubles to decorate a Christmas tree, namely *wij* 'we'. Thus, *wij* 'we' is added to the Catholics mentioned before, who are also part of that set. In (25) the predicate 'you have to do all kinds of assignments' is added as a property of the game under discussion, which is argued to be similar to Monopoly.

Occurrences of *ook* 'too' were tagged as 'contrast avoiding' if they were explicitly 'additive' as in (24) and (25) above, or when they would still take away a relation of contrast that could otherwise arise in the context. A soccer match commentary in (26) illustrates this use.

(26) Van der Sar wat   nerveus trapt die bal   toch goed   weg ook
      Van der Sar what   nervous kicks that ball   PART good   away too
      al   in   de   op   de   borst en   vervolgens in   de
      already   in   the   on   the chest and   subsequently in the
      voeten   van   Numan
      feet   of   Numan
      'Van der Sar somewhat nervously kicks the ball away o.k., on the chest first and then into Numan's feet.'

      Numan   speelt   de   bal   even   breed
      Numan   plays   the   ball   PART   broad
      'Numan plays the ball wide.'

      't   Klinkt   misschien bij   ons   wat   gehaast
      it   sounds   perhaps   at   us   what   hasty
      'Perhaps it seems a bit rushed.'

      De   wedstrijd   is   ook   gehaast. Laat dat   duidelijk zijn
      the   match   is   too   hasty   let   that   clear   be
      'Indeed, the game is rushed. Let that be clear.'

In (26) the last occurrence of *ook* indicates that the game does not only *seem* rushed, it *is* rushed. Thus, *ook* has scope over the whole proposition, and its function is to prevent a relation of contrast between what the situation looks like and what it is in reality, similar to example (21) above. As in (21)-(23) above, this particular use of *ook* 'too' cannot be translated using the English *too*. If *ook* 'too' in these examples were an instantiation of the common additive use of the particle, we would expect the use of *too* at least to be possible in the English translations (cf. Rullmann 2003), contrary to fact.

Another example of a 'contrast avoiding' instance of *ook* 'too' that was not annotated as 'additive' is found in Speaker A's second utterance in (27).

(27) Speaker A: Ah   op   zich zijn   Nederlandse teams vaak   op
                 ah   on   itself are   Dutch   teams often at
                 zo'n   toernooi   dan   niet   echt   heel   sterk
                 such.a   tournament   PART not   really   very   strong
                 'In and of themselves, Dutch teams are not particularly strong in such tournaments.'

Speaker B:	Nee	maar	die	pakken	het	gewoon	wat
	no	but	DEM	take	it	PART	what
	minder	serieus	aan	gewoon	duidelijk		
	less	serious	on	PART	clearly		

'No, but clearly, they approach these things less thoroughly.'

Speaker A:	Engelsen	die	waren	echt	supergemotiveerd
	English.ones	DEM	were	really	super.motivated
	altijd	is	Hereford	maar	die	spelen	ook best	wel
	always	is	Hereford	but	DEM	play	too rather	PART
	hoog							
	high							

'The English teams were really highly motivated, Hereford always are, but of course they play high division football.'

Speaker B:	Ja
	yeah

'Yeah.'

Speaker A:	Of	is	het	tweede	divisie	of	zo	in
	or	is	it	second	division	or	so	in
	Engeland	of	derde					
	England	or	third					

'Or are they in the second division in England, or the third?'

In (27), *ook* 'too' indicates that the information in the sentence containing it, that they play in a high division, explains the previously mentioned information that they were highly motivated. Hence, there is no contrast between the fact that the English players are highly motivated and that they play in a high division.

3.2   Results

150 occurrences (75%) of *ook* 'too' were annotated as 'additive' and 184 (92%) as 'avoiding contrast'. Note that additive *ook* 'too' by definition also takes away a potential contrast. As a consequence, the number of *ook*s used to avoid a relation of contrast in our corpus study is at least as high as the number of additive uses. The remaining 16 (8%) were mostly fixed combinations, some of which have been independently associated with additive particles, namely indefinites, such as *wat dan ook* 'whatever', and concessives like *ook al* 'even if'/'although' (cf. Forker 2016).

The results of our corpus study provide further evidence for our hypothesis that anti-contrastivity is an important aspect of *ook*'s meaning. Hearers are prompted to establish a relation of contrast whenever appropriate, and a relation of contrast inherently involves both similarities and dissimilarities between alternative propositions (Malchukov 2004; Umbach 2004). Therefore, we hypothesize that *ook* 'too' is not so much used to mark the similarities between two propositions, but rather to ignore or deny dissimilarities between them. In order to corroborate this hypothesis we need not only to find out what information people

express in sentences with *ook* 'too', but also compare it to what information they give in similar sentences without it. We hypothesize that speakers do not so much add similarities between alternatives in sentences with *ook* 'too' in comparison to sentences without it, but rather leave out dissimilarities, i.e., contrastive properties. In the next section we will report on the experiment we carried out to test this hypothesis.

## 4   An experiment on the function of *ook* in a contrast evoking context

4.1   *Participants and design*

We tested 177 participants in an online web-experiment. After exclusion of incomplete responses, 121 participants remained. The participants were recruited via social media, and did not receive a reward for their participation. All participants were native Dutch speakers. Additionally, we made sure that they were not color-blind, as discriminating colors was an important part of the experiment.

The experiment explored one factor: *ook* versus no *ook*. All participants saw both conditions, which led to a within-subjects-design.

4.2   *Material*

Participants saw two figures next to each other in a sentence completion task, as illustrated in Figure 3. Each figure was identifiable by the following four properties: shape (square, triangle, circle), color (red, green, blue), filling (plain-colored, dotted, striped) and size (big, small). The two figures were always similar to each other in two ways, and different in two other ways. In Figure 3, for instance, the two similarities are shape and pattern, and the two differences are color and size. Below the two figures a sentence was placed, containing a statement about the properties of the first figure. Participants, then, had to complete a sentence about the second figure.
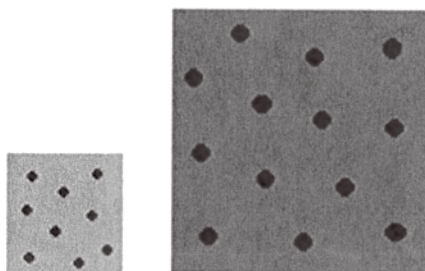
Figuur 1   *Figuur 2*

FIGURE 3   Example of the two figures in a test item

4.2.1   *Experimental items*

The experiment contained 24 test items: 12 with *ook* and 12 without *ook*. This means that in half of the cases, the second sentence started with *Figuur 2 is een…* 'Figure 2 is a …', while in the other half of the cases, it started with *Figuur 2 is ook een …* 'Figure 2 too is a…'.

It was important that participants would not be able to add *ook* themselves in their answers, because this would disturb the data analysis. Therefore, the indefinite article *een* 'a' was included at the end of the second sentence, right before

the completion part. Note that in these sentences in Dutch, *ook* cannot be used in sentence-final position, unlike *too* in English. Thus, as soon as the indefinite article *een* 'a' was encountered, participants could no longer use *ook*.

Because shape was the only property that could be described with a noun (following the indefinite article at the end of the first part of the sentence), we decided to keep the shape constant between all pairs of figures in the test items. That is, the two figures were always similar in shape and one other property, and dissimilar in two other properties. All properties were distributed over the figures via a *Latin Square* and all combinations of different properties were about as likely to occur.

Clearly, making a statement about *figure 1* first and then starting a statement about *figure 2* evokes a relation of contrast, since *figure 1* and *figure 2* are preferably interpreted as contrastive topics (cf. Krifka, 1998). Our hypothesis was that the participants would mention dissimilarities as well as similarities between the two figures when they had to complete the sentence without *ook* 'too', but only similarities and no dissimilarities when they had to complete the sentence with *ook*.

4.2.2   Fillers

The test items were interspersed among 30 fillers. The task was the same as with the experimental items: Participants saw two figures that differed from each other in some way, and had to complete a sentence about these figures. However, the fillers contained three distinct completion paradigms, different from the experimental task:

(1)   Mentioning differences (12). The participants had to complete a sentence starting with *Figuur 1 en 2 verschillen in ...* 'Figure 1 and 2 differ in ...'. The figures had only one difference and three similarities.

(2)   Mentioning similarities (12). The participants had to complete a sentence starting with *Figuur 1 en 2 komen overeen in ...* 'Figure 1 and 2 are the same in ...'. The figures had only one similarity and three differences.

(3)   Completion of negations (6). *Figuur 1 is ... Figuur 2 is niet ...* 'Figure 1 is ... Figure 2 is not ...'. The two figures differed in one, two or three properties. We included this negation-task in order to make *ook* less salient, since with the use of *niet* 'not', *ook* was not the only particle anymore.

Again, the properties were distributed over the figures via a *Latin Square* design. Unlike the experimental items, the figures' shapes could differ as well in the first two filler-tasks, because no indefinite article was required anymore. In the negation-task, the shapes had to be similar, because *niet* 'not' requires an adjective: The combination of *niet* 'not' and the indefinite article *een* 'a' necessarily leads to the use of *geen* 'no' instead of *niet een* 'not a' in Dutch. This is ungrammatical and therefore a difference in shape could not be the answer.

4.3   Procedure

The experiment was made using Qualtrics, an online program to build question-naires.[9] The link was distributed via social media and everybody who had access to the link could participate once. Participants were informed that the task would take approximately ten minutes. The task was described briefly and the properties of the figures in which they could differ or be alike were mentioned. Participants were instructed not to think too long about their answers and to follow their in-tuitions, as there were no right or wrong answers.

The experiment started with two practice items that had the same structure as experimental items without *ook*. After the practice items, the order of all items was randomized per participant, so that no participant would see the same order of items. Furthermore, each participant saw each figure combination exactly one time.

4.4   Data-analysis

In their answers, participants could thus either mention properties similar or dis-similar to the ones mentioned with respect to the first figure. Mentioning dissimi-larities was taken as establishing a relation of contrast between the two figures. A distinction was made between answers with and without a dissimilarity. An an-swer was scored as contrastive when at least one property mentioned was dissim-ilar to the properties of the first figure. Other answers were scored as non-con-trastive. When an answer was not correct regarding the properties of the second figure, the answer was scored as missing. We also counted the number of dissimi-larities and similarities mentioned.

In 0.9% of all answers, participants gave a non-contrastive answer followed by an explicitly marked contrast in an additional phrase, as illustrated in example (28). Because the essential part of the answer (the completed clause) was non-con-trasting, these kinds of answers were scored as non-contrastive.

(28)   Context: Figuur 1 is een groot rood gestreept vierkant. Figuur 2 is ook een …
          'Figure 1 is a big red striped square. Figure 2 too is a …'
        Answer: rood vierkant, *maar dan klein en gestippeld*
          'red square, *but it is small and dotted*'

Another type of answer occurred when a generalization was made about a dissi-milar property, which resulted in a common integrator (hence non-contrastive) reading (cf. Umbach 2004), even though the specific instantiation of the common integrator was dissimilar, as in (29).

(29)   Context: Figuur 1 is een kleine groene effen cirkel. Figuur 2 is ook een …
          'Figure 1 is a small green plain-colored circle. Figure 2 too is a …'
        Answer: kleine *gekleurde* cirkel
          'small *colored* circle'

In (29) the two figures differed in color, but by using the comprehensive term *ge-*

9 www.qualtrics.com.

kleurde 'colored' in the answer, the participant could avoid mentioning this diffe-
rence, and instead turned it into a similarity. In these cases (0.3% of all cases), the
answer was scored as non-contrastive, and the number of mentioned similarities
was scored as three, even though there were only two similarities, because a new,
common integrator of similarity was created.

4.5 Results

A frequency table of the data is shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1   Frequency table of the data

		Sentence type		total
		No *ook*	*ook*	
Answer	Contrastive	1439 (97.0%)	40 (2.8%)	1479
	Non-contrastive	45 (3.0%)	1408 (97.2%)	1453
	total	1484	1448	2932

When the sentence did not contain *ook*, about 97.0% of the answers were contras-
tive, reflecting people's strong tendency to interpret two situations as contrastive.
However, when *ook* was added, the opposite pattern was found: only 2.8% of the
answers were contrastive, but the great majority of 97.2% were non-contrastive.
A visualization of these patterns is given in Figure 4.

A Pearson's chi-square-test revealed a highly significant association between
sentence type (no *ook* vs. *ook*) and whether or not contrastive answers were gi-
ven, $\chi^2(1) = 2601.85$, $p < .001$. Furthermore, the high value of *Cramer's V* (.942,

FIGURE 4   Distribution of the answer types per category
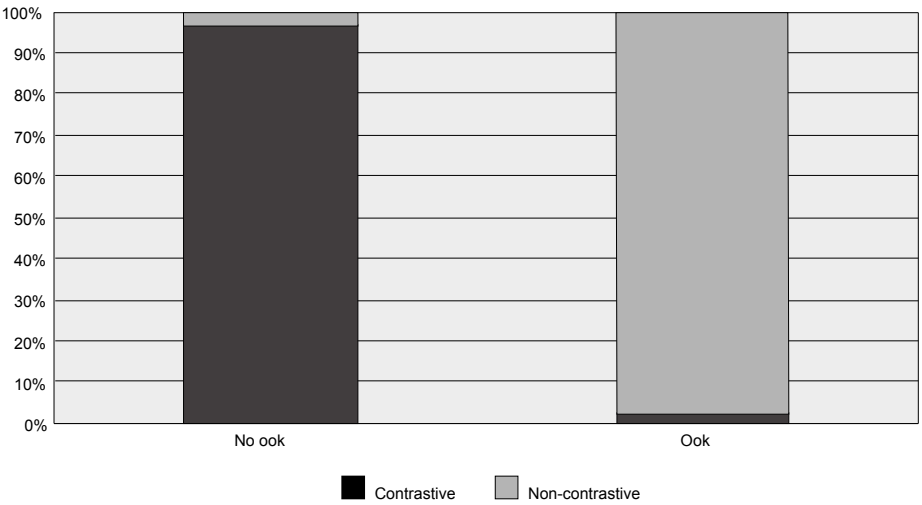
$p < .001$) indicates a very strong and highly significant association between sentence type and answer type as well.

The outcome shows that, based on the ratio, the odds of answers being non-contrastive were 1126 times higher if *ook* was added, compared to sentences without *ook*. Therefore, we can conclude that adding *ook* significantly influences the answers: answers were mainly contrastive without *ook*, but mainly non-contrastive when *ook* was added. This confirms our hypothesis that adding *ook* prevents a contrastive reading that would otherwise arise.

Additionally, the number of properties that participants mentioned was analyzed per category (see Table 2). In each sentence, participants could mention at most four properties, of which at most two could be similarities and two could be differences. While the number of similarities and differences are about the same in sentences without *ook*, it is clearly visible that only similarities remain when *ook* is added and different properties are omitted.

TABLE 2   Average number of mentioned similarities and differences per sentence type

		Sentence type	
		No *ook*	*ook*
Properties	Similarities	1.90	1.81
	Differences	1.89	0.09
	total	**3.79**	**1.9**

To compare the average number of similarities and differences mentioned by the participants per category, we conducted two paired-samples t-tests, with a Sidak adjustment for multiple comparisons. In sentences without *ook*, there was no significant difference between the average number of mentioned similarities (M = 1.9, SE = 0.023) and the average number of mentioned differences (M = 1.9, SE = 0.025), $p = .563$. However, in sentences with *ook*, there was a highly significant difference between the average number of mentioned similarities (M = 1.8, SE = 0.023) and the average number of mentioned differences (M = 0.1, SE = 0.028), $p < .001$. This means that when *ook* is added, people stop mentioning differences and only mention similarities. In accordance with our hypothesis, this indicates that *ook* is not used to mark the presence of similarities between the two figures, but rather to ignore the dissimilarities, in order to avoid an otherwise prevailing contrastive interpretation. Moreover, this means that *ook* is more than an additive particle that groups together several alternatives. Rather, it takes away a relation of contrast between them.

4.6   Discussion

In sentences with *ook*, participants mentioned significantly more similarities than dissimilarities whereas the number of similarities and dissimilarities did not differ significantly in sentences without *ook*. This indicates that, in accordance with our hypothesis, *ook* is not used to mark the presence of similarities between the two figures, but to ignore the dissimilarities, in order to avoid an otherwise prevailing contrastive interpretation. This does not mean that *ook* does not function as an additive particle, as indeed it groups together several alternatives, but it shows that *ook* is more than

that, as it takes away a relation of contrast between those alternatives. These results are in line with the findings of Wolterbeek et al. (2017). In this study they presented children with an oral version of the experiment described above and found that four-year-olds performed at chance-level on sentences with and without *ook* 'too'. Five-year-olds perform better than the four-year-olds on sentence without *ook* 'too' while they become worse on sentences with *ook* 'too'. Wolterbeek et al. argue that this indicates five-year-olds have acquired the contrastive implicature brought about by the associate of *ook* 'too', but have not yet learned that *ook* can be used to cancel this implicature. They conclude that children first need to acquire contrastive implicature before they can learn the meaning of *ook* 'too', which they take as support for the claim that neutralizing contrast is an important function of additives.

5   Conclusion

Although the Dutch discourse particle *ook* 'too' is traditionally described as an additive particle, it is more than just that. Following Sæbø's (2004) analysis of additives, we argued that *ook* 'too' is used to prevent the establishment of a relation of contrast which would otherwise arise. Dutch *ook* 'too' can have scope over the whole proposition, in which case it prohibits the establishment of a relation of contrast between the proposition containing *ook* 'too' and some other proposition in the discourse, that can be left implicit.

Explicit marking is thus used to avoid a relation of contrast between two propositions. Across languages there is a close relation between additivity and contrast (Malchukov 2004; Forker 2016). This explains the use of an additive particle such as *ook* 'too' as an anti-contrastivity marker. By means of a corpus study we have shown that the anti-contrastive component of the semantics of Dutch *ook* 'too' offers a better explanation for some of its occurrences than a mere additive analysis.

Since hearers establish a relation of contrast whenever appropriate, and because a relation of contrast inherently involves both similarities and dissimilarities between two alternatives (Umbach 2004), we hypothesized that *ook* 'too' is used to ignore or deny dissimilarities between two entities. We have tested this by means of a sentence-completion experiment in which participants had to complete sentences with or without *ook* 'too' describing two similar but not identical figures. The results showed that the presence of *ook* 'too' does not affect the number of similarities participants mentioned, but only the number of dissimilarities. That is, the presence of *ook* 'too' led to a major decrease in the number of dissimilarities mentioned. This means that people readily establish a relation of contrast between two propositions in a certain context, but that this contrast is removed or ignored when *ook* 'too' is used.

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