Agree to disagree: on refutational and confirmatory *too*

Intro Most literature on *too* has focused on its uses like in (1) (hf. "regular *too*").

(1) A: Axel likes cats. B: $[\text{BROOK}]_{\text{F}}$ likes cats, TOO.

As a first—simplistic—approximation, regular *too* triggers a presupposition that one of the focus alternatives to its prejacent, distinct from the prejacent itself, is true. Less often discussed is "refutational *too*" (but see, e.g., Rullmann 2003; Schwenter & Waltereit 2010; Sailor 2014), which refutes an antecedent utterance:

(2) a. A: You didn't do your homework. B: {Did too! / I did too! / I did too do my homework!}

b. A: I think I could survive in the woods for, like, a really long time. B: You made this fire with an 'Us Weekly' magazine, gasoline, and a 'Hooters' <bleep> lighter. No, you could not, Steve. A: I could too! 🔊 ('kallmekris' YouTube channel)

Thomas (2023) proposes that refutational *too* is a $[\text{REVERSE}, +]$ response particle (in terms of Roelofsen & Farkas 2015), akin to French *si* and German *doch*, which are used in responses with positive prejacents (the $[+]$ feature) to negative antecedents (thus, reversing the polarity of the antecedent—the $[\text{REVERSE}]$ feature). But he also proposes that refutational *too* has an additional feature, $[\text{REFUTE}]$, which "presupposes that the negation of the content of its prejacent is a member of the addressee's projected discourse commitments".

This paper (i) discusses "confirmatory *too*" (which, to my knowledge, has not been discussed in formal literature), which confirms an antecedent utterance; (ii) argues against the response particle analysis of refutational or confirmatory *too*; and (iii) proposes instead that both share their core semantics with regular *too*, with the main difference being the focus alternatives—alternative projected commitments with respect to a polar issue p? (a subcase or a sibling of *verum focus*) in refutational *too* cases vs. alternative performances of a speech act making the same projected commitment (a subcase of *dictum focus*) in confirmatory *too* cases.

Confirmatory *too*: data In (3), I provide some naturalistic examples of confirmatory *too*. There's no additional context in any of them that would license a 'regular *too*' reading, i.e., the target utterances are meant to be interpreted similarly to 'He does indeed / It is indeed / etc.'; and in the linked sound file for (3c), one can hear that *you* is not accented, but *did* is (and so, of course, is *too*, which it typically is in regular uses, as well).

(3) a. A: Hey! The new frog striker looks like you, Gav! B: Yeah, he does too! (BNC)

b. A: Ann Kidd thought it might also be related to the move from sheep to cows, because sheep didn't... B: Oh, right, yes. A: It's very interesting. B: Yes, that's interesting. It is too. Yes, Trish. (LDaCA)

c. A: We defeated her! B: You did too. A: Yeah. 🔊 ('The Weekly Planet' podcast)

There appears to be variation regarding availability of refutational vs. confirmatory *too*. All naturalistic examples of confirmatory *too* I have collected so far come from British or Australian English speakers/corpora. Out of 10 speakers I have polled so far (4 US, 4 England, 1 Scotland, 1 Australia), there is a tendency for refutational *too* to be associated with AmE and confirmatory *too* with Br/AusE, but 5 speakers accept both.

Thomas also notes the existence of refutational *either* for negative prejacents in some speakers. Gary Thoms (p.c.) points out confirmatory *neither* exists in Northern Ireland; I omit the examples for space reasons.

Arguments against the response particle analysis 1. Thomas (2023) hypothesizes a $[\text{CONFIRM}]$ feature, the reverse of his $[\text{REFUTE}]$. Confirmatory *too* would then be a good candidate for realizing $[\text{CONFIRM}]$, except it would be typologically weird for the same lexical item to be able to realize either of two opposing features—including within the same speaker. That would be equivalent to the same particle being able to realize either $[+]$ or $[-]$ or either $[\text{AGREE}]$ or $[\text{REVERSE}]$, and I'm unaware of any such cases cross-linguistically.

2. Unlike other response particles, *too* can't be a standalone utterance, it always needs an overt prejacent. Thomas acknowledges this, but notes that the Romanian *ba* particle can't occur by itself either (Farkas & Bruce 2010). This note is misleading, however, because *ba* is always part of a particle cluster *ba nu* or *ba da*, which can, in fact, be standalone utterances without an overt prejacent (cf. also Russian *da net* ≈'but no').

3. Thomas adopts a response particle analysis for refutational *too* because "it exhibits what [he] take[s] to be the two key properties of polarity particles: anaphoric reference to a salient antecedent sentence (which is either equivalent to the particle's prejacent or the negation of it) and sensitivity to the polarity of that antecedent and/or its prejacent". But regular *too* is already sensitive to its prejacent's polarity, typically

requiring a positive prejacent and contrasting in this sense with *either*. Likewise, regular *too* is also anaphoric; e.g., from Kripke 2009: "*[t]oo* (...) should refer to parallel elements", which "must come from the active context or from other clauses in the assertion (...). [T]hat they are merely very well known is not sufficient."

Proposal I thus believe that the jump to a response particle analysis is unjustified, and we can account for both refutational and confirmatory *too* using the same core semantics as for regular *too*. Now, there are additional idiosyncrasies in these "discourse-level" uses of *too* (e.g., the apparent ban on indefinite subjects at least in refutational *too* cases; the constraints on the linear placement of *too*; the potentially more categorical nature of the sensitivity to the polarity of the prejacent; etc.)—and there does appear to be a certain level of idiomatization in both cases. But the response particle analysis doesn't fare much better in explaining most of these idiosyncrasies. That said, if one did want to maintain a response particle analysis of discourse-level *too* for some reason, they could view the story below as a hypothesis about the relevant diachronic pathway.

Core semantics of *too* Following Kripke 2009, I will assume that *too* requires that its "active context" must contain a "parallel element" to its prejacent. The exact nature of said "parallel element" might need to be refined further, but let's just say for concreteness and simplicity that it is an element from the set of focus alternatives to the prejacent, distinct from the prejacent itself.

Refutational *too* Thomas introduces the new [REFUTE] feature to account for the fact that, unlike other [REVERSE, +] particles like French *si* and German *doch*, refutational *too* requires that the addressee have expressed a strong bias for the negative version of the prejacent. Thomas argues that this bias doesn't always have to be as strong as a full commitment, but it has to be stronger than an "evidenced possibility" from Farkas & Roelofsen 2017. Thus, to define his [REFUTE] feature, he recruits the notion of "projected commitments" from Malamud & Stephenson 2015, which include both full commitments and "propositions which that interlocutor believes (and therefore expects to commit to in the future) but wishes to delay committing to". Thus, his [REFUTE] requires that $\neg[\![\text{prejacent}]\!] \in DC^*_{Ad}$, where DC^*_{Ad} are addressee's projected commitments.

I'll keep the idea that refutational *too* operates at the level of projected commitments, but I'll propose that utterances with refutational *too* evoke them as focus alternatives. Note that such utterances must have an accentable unreduced auxiliary even with non-elliptical prejacents (although *too* is the item that bears the "contradiction contour"—see Sailor 2014 for an explanation), which is unexplained under the response particle analysis, as, to my knowledge, other response particles cross-linguistically don't categorically require this. I thus propose that utterances with refutational *too* have a subcase or a sibling of *verum focus* that specifically evokes alternative projected commitments with respect to a polar issue $p?$ (rather than, e.g., just $+$ vs. $-$ polarity itself, as proposed for verum focus more broadly in Goodhue 2022). Then, in line with the core semantics of *too*, refutational *too* requires that there be an alternative projected commitment in the active context (by any interlocutor) with respect to the issue $p?$ to the one made by the prejacent. Combining this with (i) the general requirement that the prejacent of *too* have positive polarity (which could have been idiomatized to be categorical in "discourse-level" uses of *too*) and the fact that (ii) a polar issue $p?$ can only be resolved as p or $\neg p$, we get the requirement that there be a projected commitment to $\neg p$ in the active context.

Confirmatory *too* cases also appear to always have an accentable auxiliary. I propose that they have a subcase of *dictum focus*, as in (4) (note that in all these cases *indeed* would also be appropriate, just like in (3); note also that I classify cases like (4c) as dictum and not verum focus—cf. Goodhue 2022).

(4) a. A: How are we getting there? B: I don't know. How ARE we getting there? (Creswell 2000)
b. A: Who's to say? B: Who IS to say? A: Yeah. B: Yeah. 🔊 ('The Weekly Planet' podcast)
c. A: And he still caught her. B: He still <disfluency> DID catch her, yeah. A: Yeah. 🔊 (ibid.)

Creswell (2000) proposes that one way of treating dictum focus is that it evokes alternative "performances of the speech act with identical propositional content", varying with respect to the speaker and/or time of utterance. Similarly to refutational *too*, I propose that here we are dealing with a more narrow subcase of dictum focus specifically evoking alternative performances of a speech act making a projected commitment. Combining this with the core semantics of *too*, confirmatory *too* then requires that there be an alternative performance of a speech act in the active context making the same projected commitment as the prejacent.

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