

Volker Gast

Some distributional differences
between *also* and *too*

Evidence from corpora and elicitation

Questions and methods

- *Empirical question*: What is the difference between *also* and *too*?
- *Method*: Make hypotheses and test them on the basis of evidence from corpora and elicitation
- *Methodological issue*: What kind of justificational procedure is needed for what kind of question?
- Differentiation between facts about the *language system* and facts about the *use of language*

The data sources

- Fjelkestam-Nilsson (1984)
 - > *Brown University Corpus* (~1m, 1961)
 - London-Oslo-Bergen Corpus/LOB* (~1m, 1961)
 - London-Lund Corpus/LLC* (~0.5m, 60s-70s)
- Biber et al. (1999)
 - > *Longman Spoken and Written English Corpus*
(~ 40m, 90s)
- the *British National Corpus/BNC*
(~100m, 90s)
- online questionnaire: 16 sets of examples

Delimiting the object of inquiry

- study focuses on *also* in a medial position and *too* in a final position

- (1) (a) John has also been to London.
(b) John has been to London, too.
(c) John, too, has been to London.
(d) John has been to London also.
(e) Also, John has been to London.

Some terminology

- additive particles are used when a sentence contains both *repeated* and *added* material ('added constituent'/AC)
- added constituents may occur in either the topical or the focal part of a sentence

(2) - What did Mary do?
She_{TOP} laughed_{FOC}.
She_{TOP} also sneezed_{FOC}.
(added constituent is focus)

(3) -What did Mary do?
She_{TOP} laughed_{FOC}.
- And Bill?
He_{TOP} laughed_{FOC}, too.
(added constituent is topic)

Three hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 (diaphasic)

Also is used in written and formal language whereas *too* is used in spoken and informal language.

Hypothesis 2 (structural)

The distribution of *also* and *too* varies with structural properties of the added constituent (function and length).

Hypothesis 3 (information structural)

Also and *too* interact in different ways with information structure.

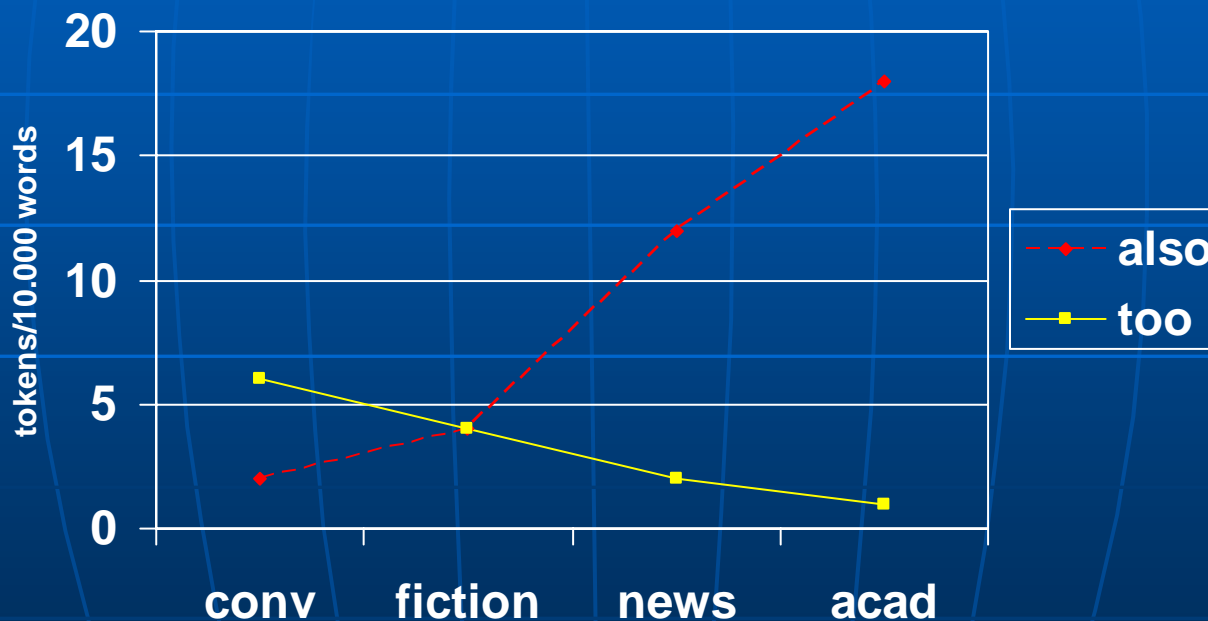
Hypothesis 1

Difference in register

In both expository registers [news and academic prose], the common additive adverbial *also* serves to mark information being added to previous information ... In fiction, the meaning of addition is spread more evenly over two adverbs, *also* and *too*, with *also* carrying a more formal tone: ... *Too* is used more informally, often in dialog or reports of dialog: ... Interestingly, this use of *too* is actually more common in fictional dialog than in conversation. (Biber et al. 1999: 800)

Also and *too* in different registers: Biber et al. (1999)

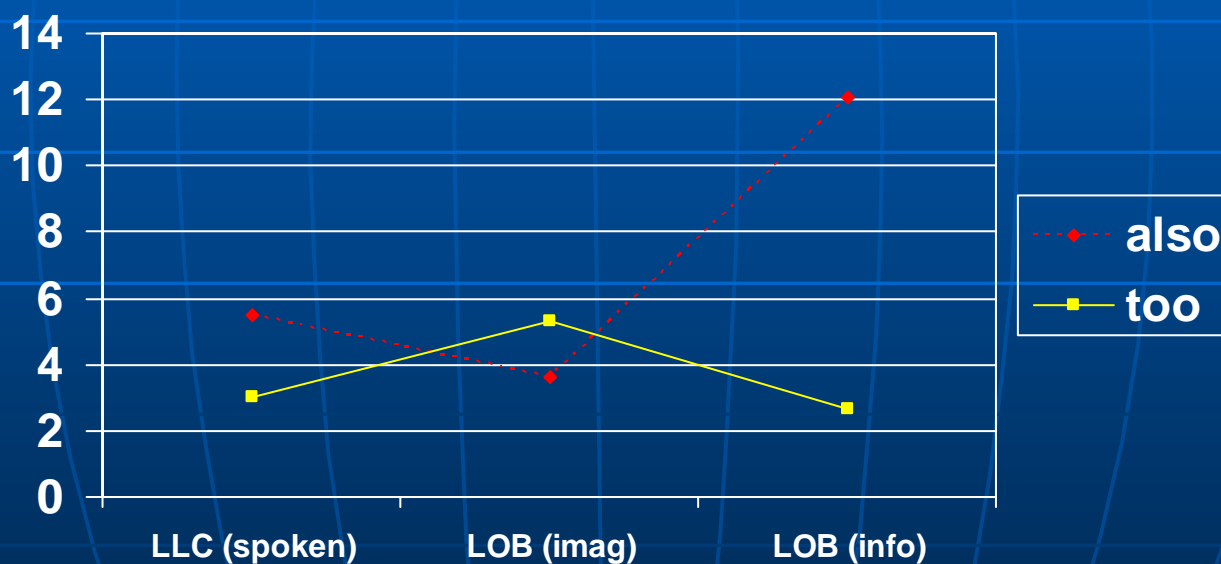
frequency in four registers



(based on Biber et al. 1999: 800)

Also and *too* in different registers: Fjelkestam-Nilsson (1984)

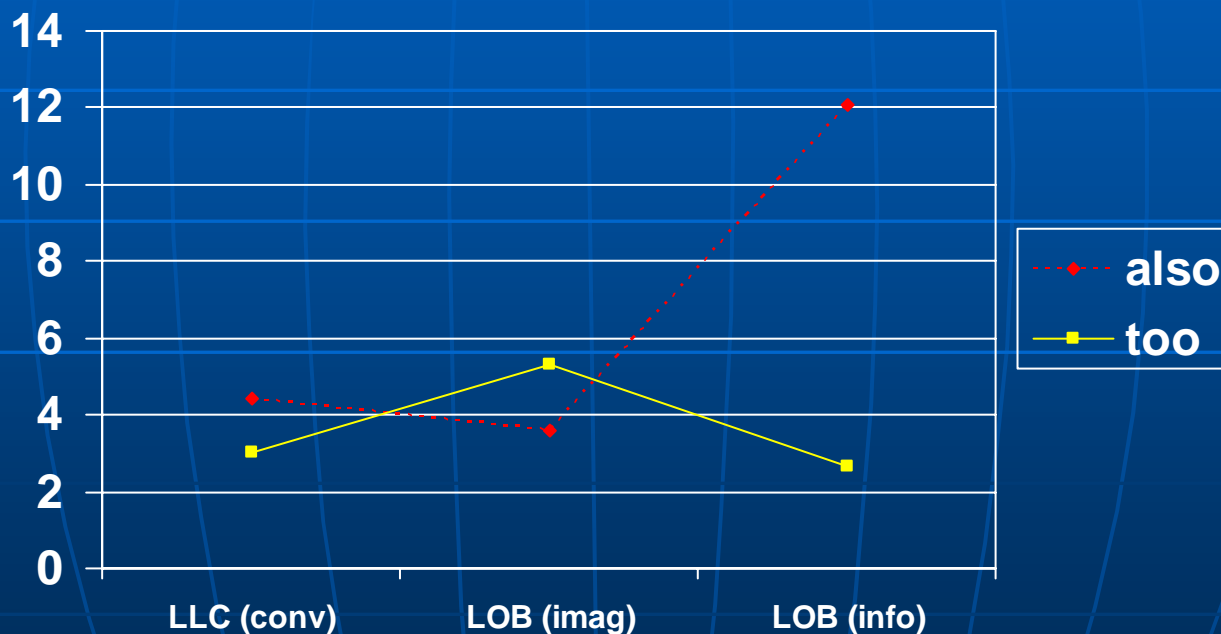
spoken language and written registers



(based on Fjelkestam-Nilsson 1984: 26)

Also and *too* in different registers: Fjelkestam-Nilsson (1984)

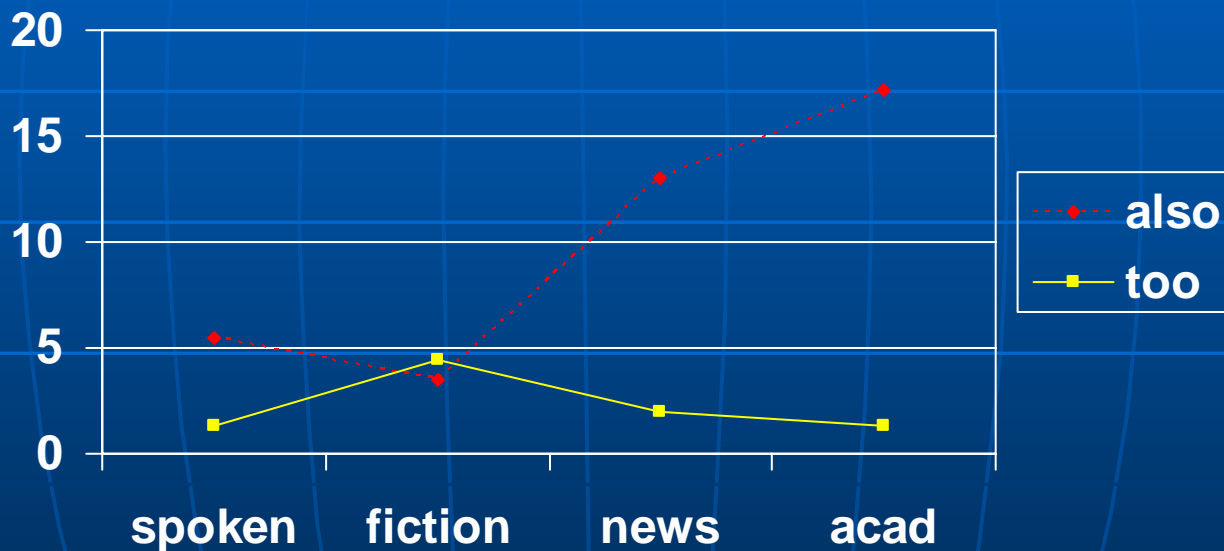
conversation and written registers



(based on Fjelkestam-Nilsson 1984: 26)

Also and *too* in different registers: evidence from the BNC

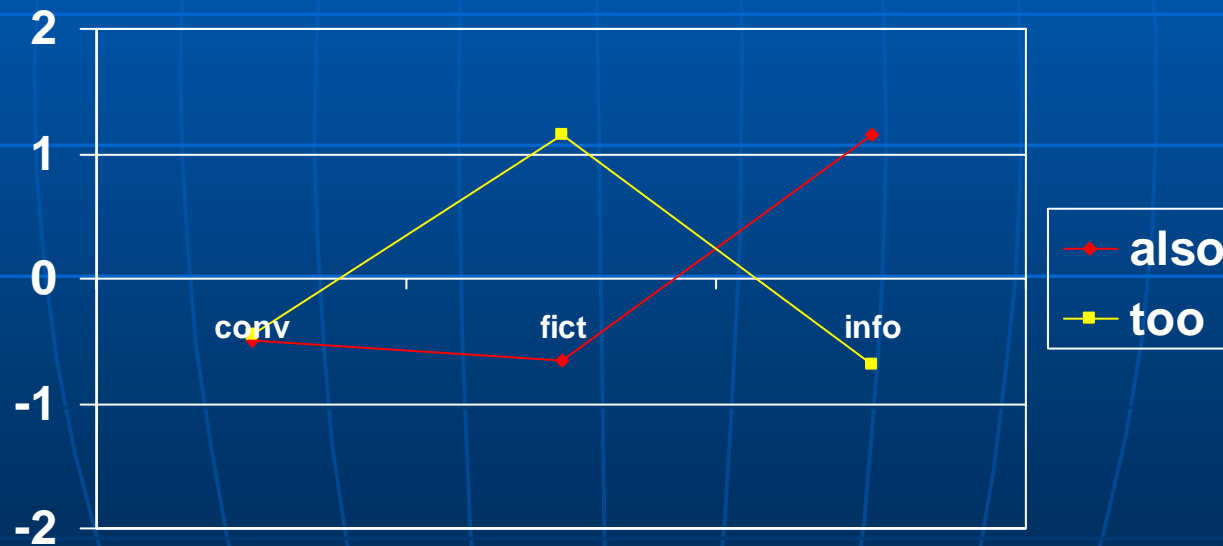
spoken language, fiction, news and
academic prose in the BNC



(based on all occurrences of *also* and *too* in the BNC; the proportion of additive *too* as opposed to the degree particle *too* has been determined on the basis of a sample of 200 tokens for each register)

Distribution of *also* and *too* over different registers

conversation and written registers
(z-standardized)



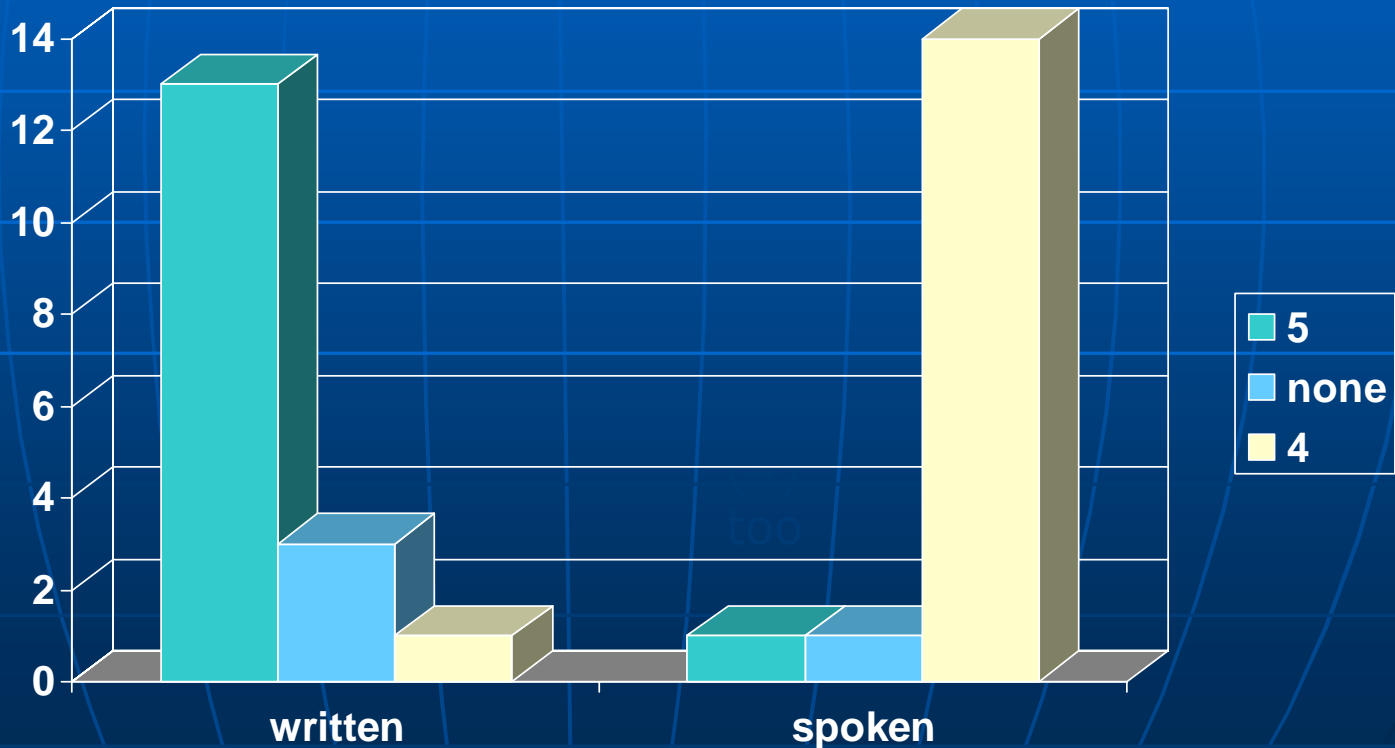
(based on Fjelkestam-Nilsson 1984: 26)

Preliminary conclusions re Hypothesis 1 (corpus evidence)

- Can *too* be said to be characteristic of spoken language?
-> NO
- Can *too* be said to be characteristic of conversation?
-> NO
- Neither is *too* more frequent than *also* in conversation, nor is conversation a register where *too* is particularly frequent, in comparison to other registers.
- But: *also* is clearly a feature of informative texts

Evidence from elicitation

- (4) The local population will appreciate the newcomers, too.
- (5) The local population will also appreciate the newcomers.



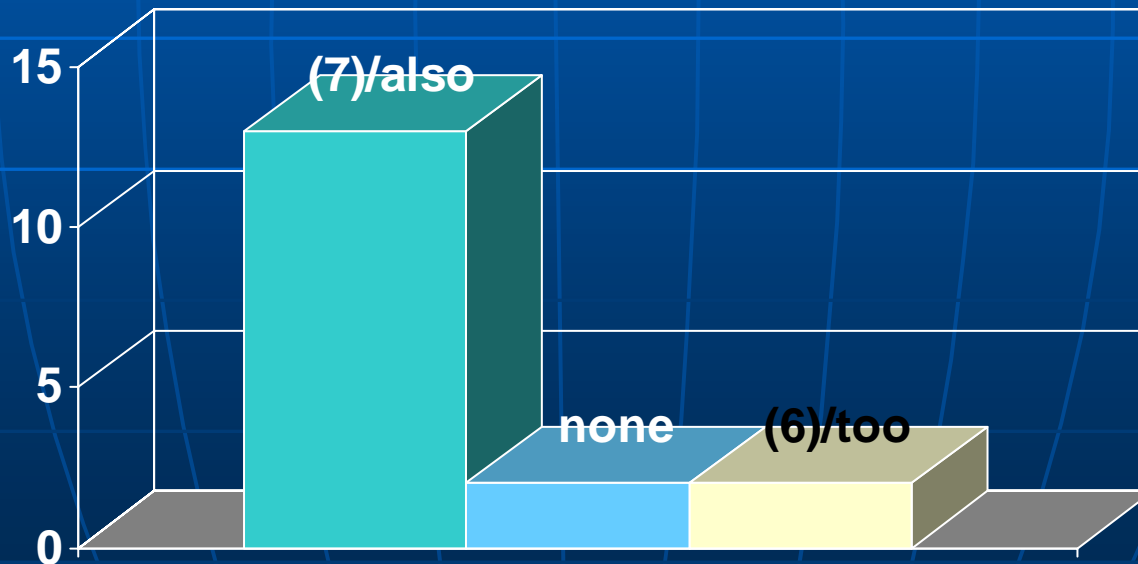
Additive particles and formal vs. informal registers

- Is *too* characteristic of an informal style?
- *Hermeneutic dilemma*
How can we decide on the degree of formality?
-> depends on the interpretation of the linguist (or corpus-builder) and cannot be read off the data itself; no strictly empirical approach possible.
- Is 'formality' a feature of texts/discourse passages or of utterances?
- methodological problem that challenges the application of corpus data to such questions

Evidence from elicitation

- (6) "This will be good for the Montenegrin economy, too."
- (7) "This will also be good for the Montenegrin economy."

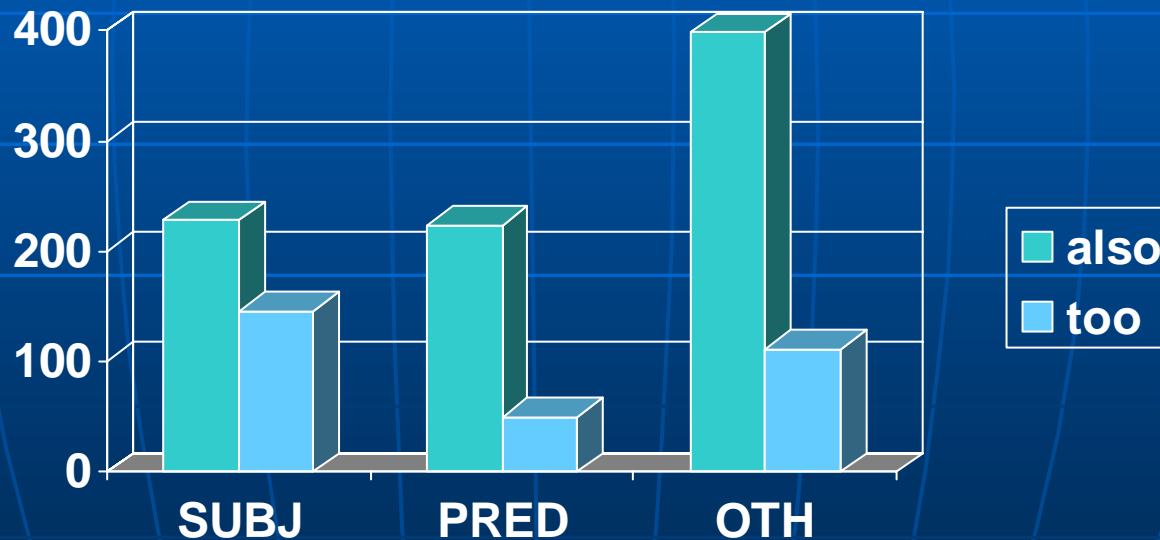
Which of the two sentences sounds more formal?



Hypothesis 2a

Grammatical function of AC

Frequency of additive particles with subject, predicate and other AC's

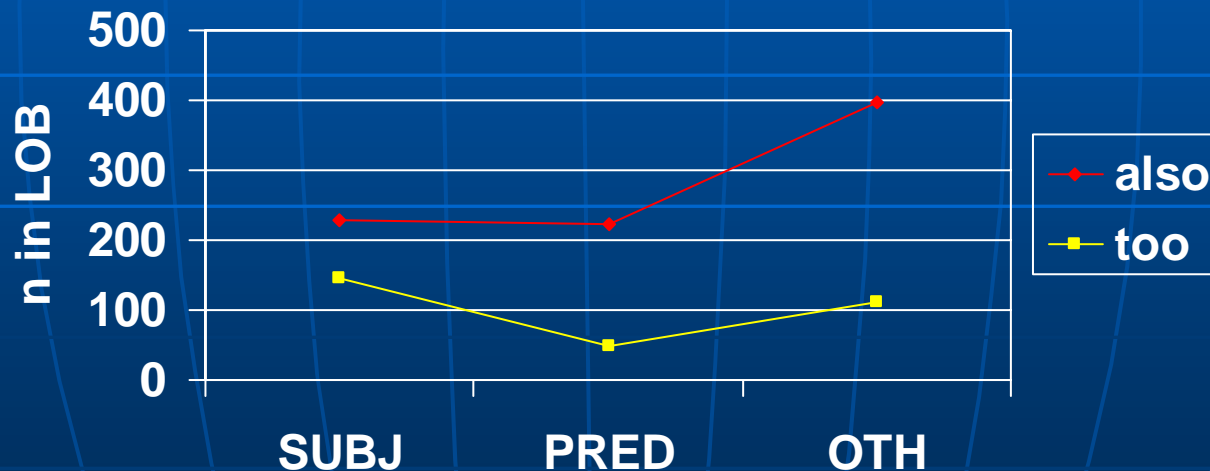


(based on Fjelkestam-Nilsson 1984: 55; only written language/LOB)

Hypothesis 2a

Grammatical function of AC

Frequency of additive particles with subject, predicate and other AC's (comparison)

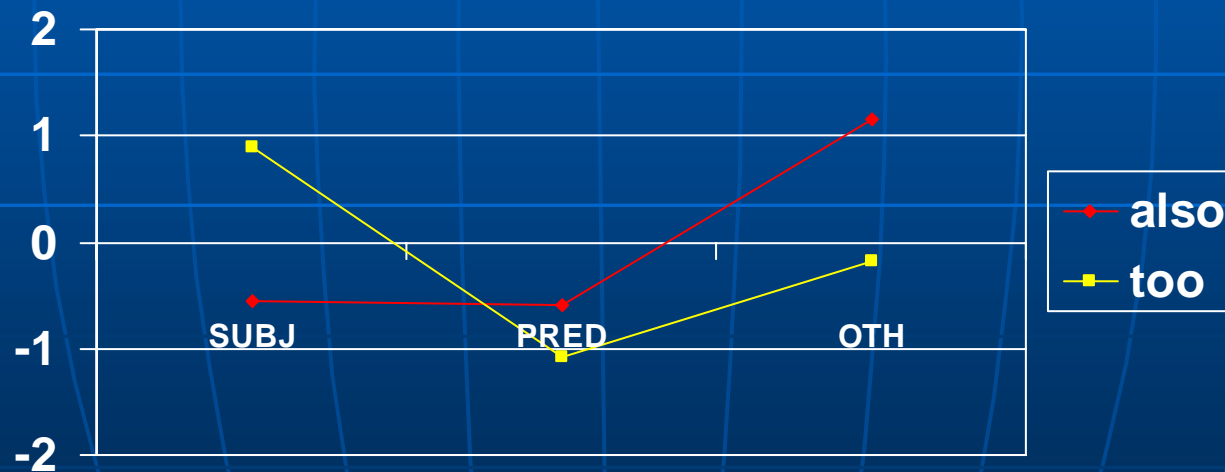


(based on Fjelkestam-Nilsson 1984: 55; only written language/LOB)

Hypothesis 2a

Grammatical function of AC

Frequency of additive particles with subject, predicate and other AC's (z-standardized)



(based on Fjelkestam-Nilsson 1984: 55; only written language/LOB)

Conclusions re Hypothesis 2a

- tendency: among the occurrences of *too* subject AC's are much more prevalent than among the occurrences of *also*
- among the occurrences of *also* other AC's are more prevalent than among the occurrences of *too*

Hypothesis 2b

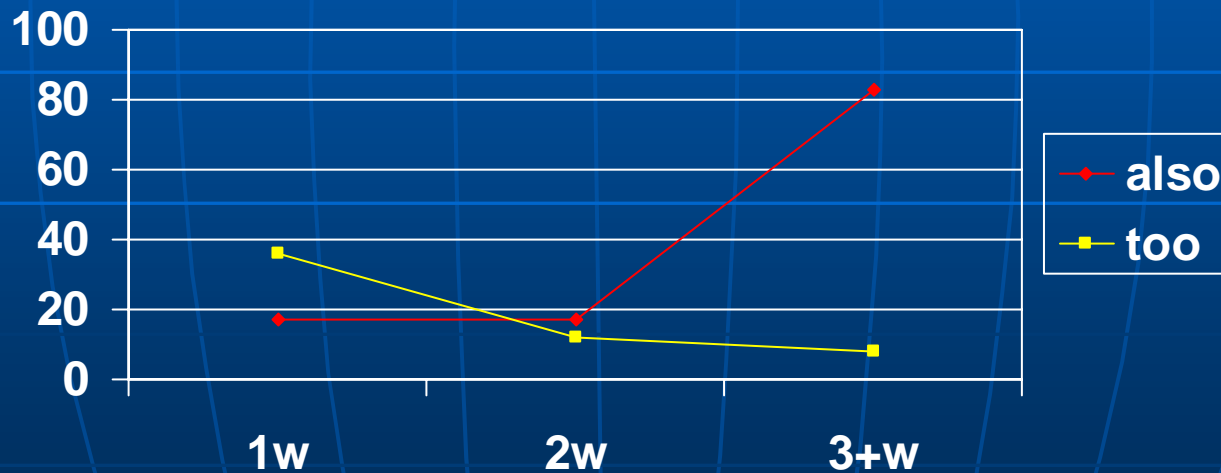
Also is preferred with heavy AC's

- (8) It is almost certain that targets will be set, including efforts to reduce by a third the number of smokers by the year 2000. There will {also} be targets aimed at reducing the incidence of strokes, heart disease and preventable cancers {too}.

Hypothesis 2b

Also is preferred with heavy AC's

Choice of additive particle relative
to length of added constituent
(subject-AC's)

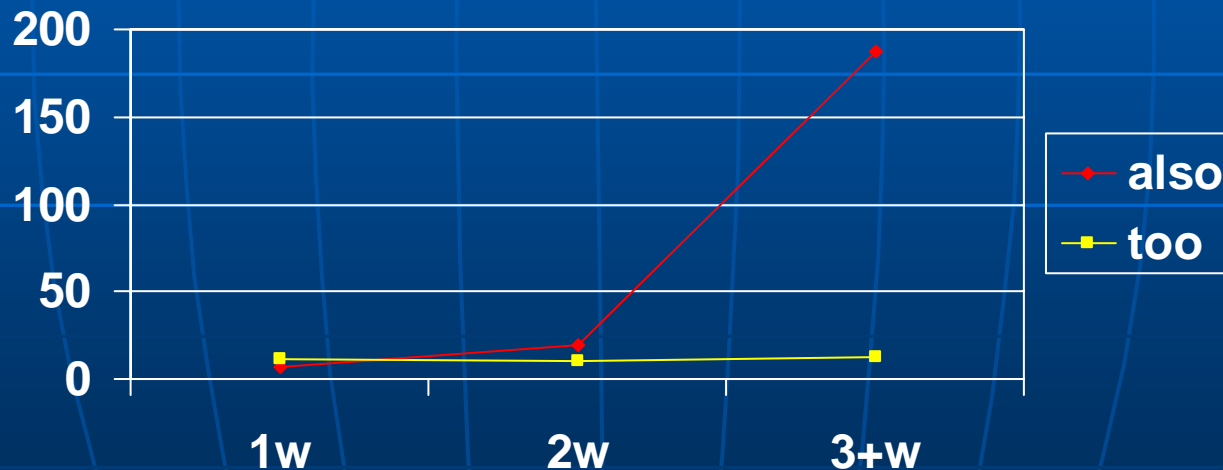


(based on Fjelkestam-Nilsson 1984: 70; only written language/LOB)

Hypothesis 2b

Also is preferred with heavy AC's

Choice of additive particle relative
to length of added constituent
(OTH-SC's)



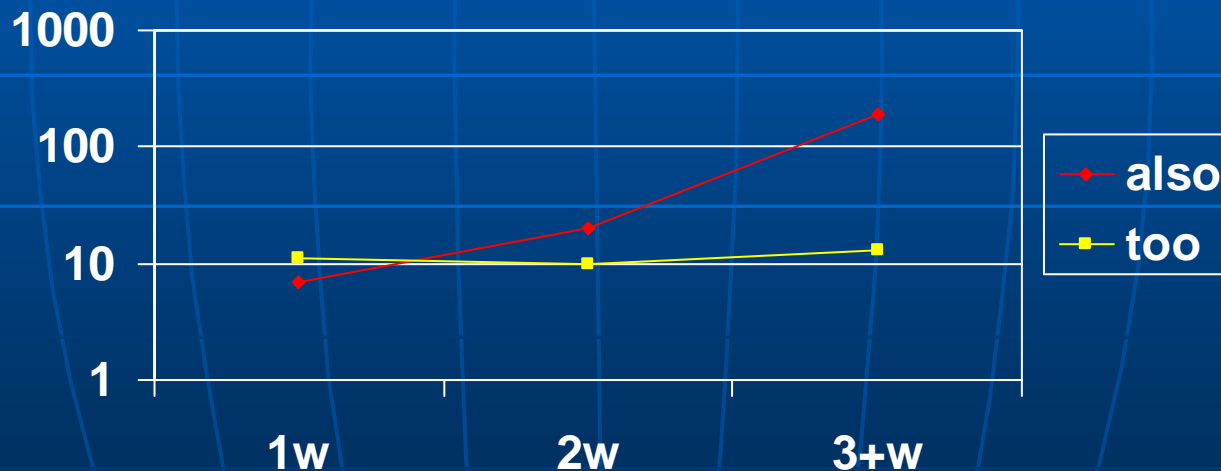
(based on Fjelkestam-Nilsson 1984: 70; only written language/LOB)

Hypothesis 2b

Also is preferred with heavy AC's

Choice of additive particle relative
to length of added constituent
(OTH-SC's)

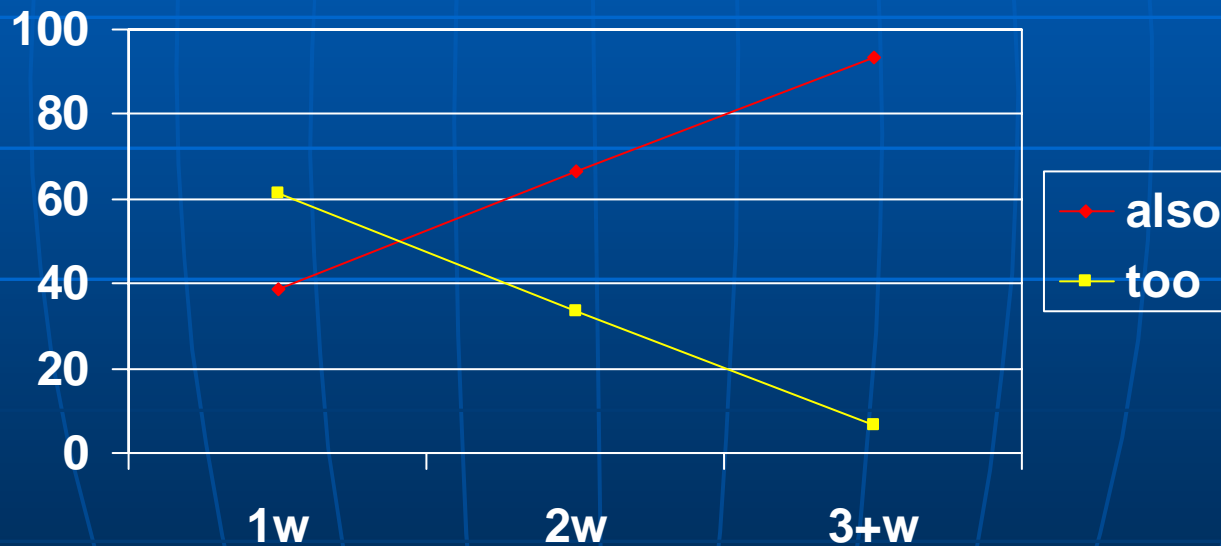
logarithmic



(based on Fjelkestam-Nilsson 1984: 70; only written language/LOB)

Hypothesis 2b

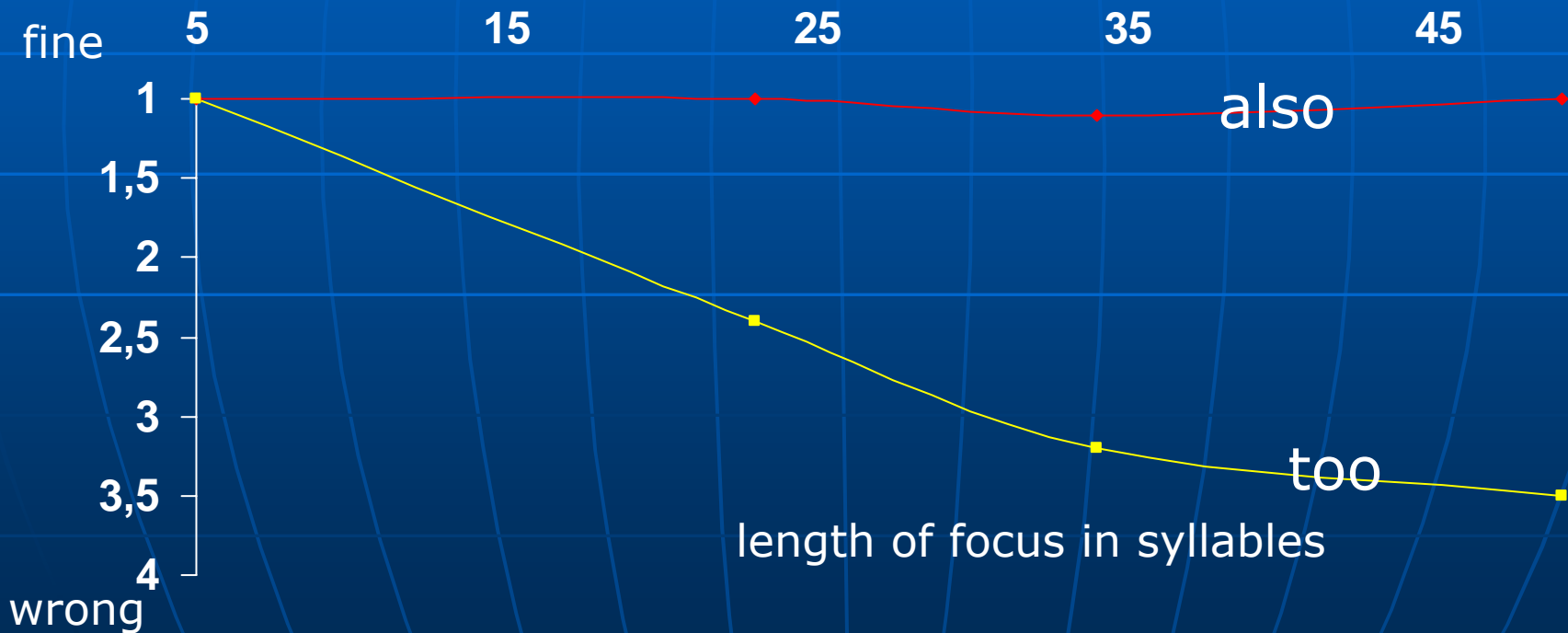
The proportion of 'also' and 'too' relative to length of (OTH-)AC's.



(based on Fjelkestam-Nilsson 1984: 70; only written language/LOB)

Hypothesis 2b: Elicitation

Acceptability judgements for object-AC's of differing length



Conclusions re Hypothesis 2b

- a correlation between the function and length of the AC and the type of particle used could clearly be established
- both methods basically lead to the same results

Hypothesis 3a

Only *too* in all-new sentences

(9) Why are you so unhappy?

(a) "My house has burnt down, and my wife has left me, too."

(b) ## "My house has burnt down, and my wife has also left me."

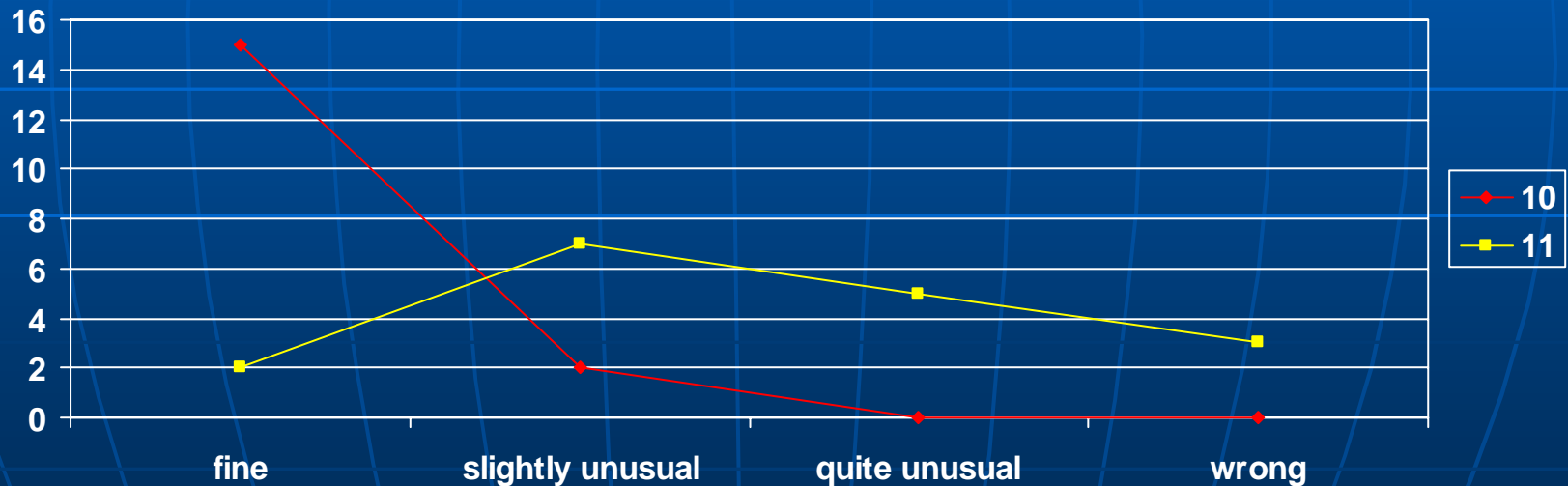
- very hard to test on the basis of corpus evidence (extremely rare, metaphorical reinterpretation)
- "Hermeneutic dilemma": data need to interpreted; uncontrollable side effects
- elicitation: 'frame of reference' can be established, e.g. by asking an explicit question

Hypothesis 3a

Only *too* in all-new sentences

- (10) My house has burnt down, and my wife has left me, too.
(11) My house has burnt down, and my wife has also left me.

acceptability judgements (absolute numbers)



(10): $\mu=2.52$; $\sigma=0.94$

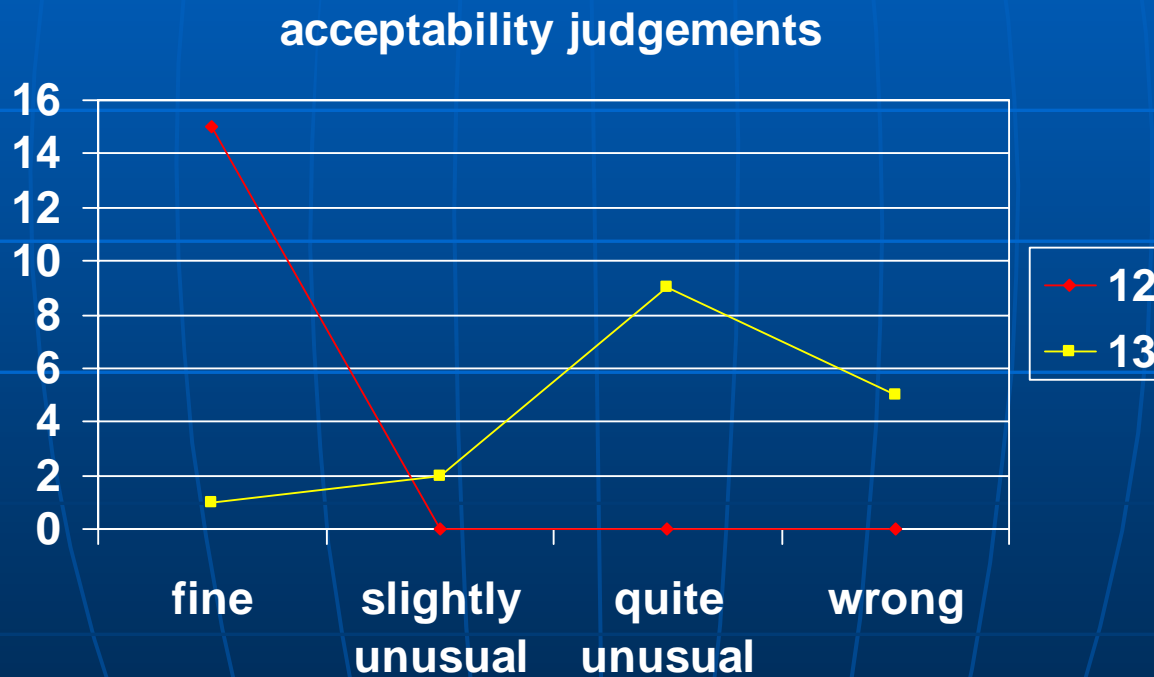
(11): $\mu=1,11$; $\sigma=0.33$

Hypothesis 3b

Contrastive topic constructions

(12) - I love you. - I love you, too.

(13) - I love you. - I also love you.



(12): $\mu=1.0$; $\sigma=0$

(13): $\mu=3.06$; $\sigma=0.83$

Additive particles and information structure

- all-new sentences (no topic)
(14) My house has burnt down, and my wife has left me, too.
- added constituent is focus
(15) John went to London, and he went to Cambridge, too.
- added constituent is topic
(16) John went to Oslo, and Bill went to Oslo, too.
- both topic and focus contain added material
(17) – I love you. – I love you, too.

Added constituents and topic-focus structure

	AC \subseteq FOC	AC $\not\subseteq$ FOC
no topic	<u>Jane</u> left me, TOO. * <u>Jane</u> also <u>left me</u> .	no additive particle
AC \subseteq TOP	<u>I</u> love <u>you</u> , TOO. * <u>I</u> also <u>love you</u> .	<u>John</u> snores, TOO. <u>John</u> ALSO snores.
AC $\not\subseteq$ TOP	He <u>snores</u> , TOO. He also <u>snores</u> .	no additive particle

An information structural rule concerning *also* and *too*

- Added constituents are either to the left or to the right of *also*, and always to the left of *too* ('unidirectionality')
- patterns for the use of *also* and *too*:

(18) _____ also _____ AC _____.



(19) ac ALSO _____.



(20) _____ ac _____ TOO.



Impossible patterns for the use of *also*

(21) * AC also _____ AC _____.



Impossible patterns for the use of *also*

(22) - I love you.
- I ALSO love you.
(and someone else loves you)

(23) - I love you.
- I also love YOU.
(and I love someone else)

Summary

	status	corpus	elicitation
Hypothesis 1 (diaphasic)	language use	some minor tendencies	more global tendencies
Hypothesis 2 (structural)	language use	clear confirmation	clear confirmation
Hypothesis 3 (information structural)	language system	not testable	confirmation

Conclusions

- a strictly empirical corpus-based approach seems to be most suitable for regulatory rules that relate to clearly definable structural parameters
- problems with 'functional aspects' (register, information structure etc.): evidence is not provided by the corpus itself but needs to be interpreted by the linguist ("hermeneutic dilemma")
- for questions concerning the language system corpora are of limited use
- elicitation probably covers a wider range of phenomena but requires a sophisticated methodology

Selected references

- Biber, D., S. Johansson, G. Leech, S. Conrad & E. Finegan. *The Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English*. London: Longman.
- Fjelkestam-Nilsson, B. (1984). *Also and too – a corpus-based study of their frequency and use in Modern English*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell.
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- König, E. (1991). *The Meaning of Focus Particles*. London: Routledge.
- Krifka, M. (1999). Additive particles under stress. Proceedings of *SALT 8*.
- Reis, M. & I. Rosengren (1997). A modular approach to the grammar of additive particles: the case of German *auch*. *Journal of Semantics* 14, 237-309.