POLYSEMY PATTERNS IN CONTRAST: THE CASE OF DUTCH TOCH AND GERMAN DOCH

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1. INTRODUCTION

Polysemy is a pervasive property of natural languages. Language users apply existing linguistic means to new communicative problems. If the new use gets established and if it differs sufficiently from the already existing use(s), a polysemous pattern is the result. Every meaningful linguistic form can undergo such a process of 'polysemanization': morphemes, content words, function words and syntactic constructions.

Despite the intensive research on polysemy in the past 25 years, it would be an illusion to think that linguistic theory has reached a full and final understanding of the processes that lead to polysemous patterns and that further research could thus only consist of an application of existing models to new data. Research can still contribute to more insight in constraining conditions under which polysemous extensions can take place and possible patterns that result from such extensions. And what the exact criteria should be for distinguishing separate senses in a polysemous item (instead of considering the item as monosemous) is still a matter of dispute too (cf. Croft & Cruse, 2004: ch. 5).

New methods of research can help throw light on such theoretical questions. In recent years, the traditional grammatical approach (explication of native speaker intuitions, supported by substitution and permutation operations on constructed examples) has been supplemented by analysis of electronic corpus data. More recently, we see a growing interest in typological research in which the semantic map approach is used for the analysis of 'polyfunctionality' (cf. Haspelmath, 2003). Finally, there is the detailed analysis of contrastive corpus data, cf. Aijmer and Simon-Vandenbergen (2003), who showed that the polysemous pattern of a much studied pragmatic marker like English well can be understood better by looking at the translation of such an item in a restricted number of other languages (Swedish and Dutch in their study).

The research presented here made use of contrastive data, supplemented, where necessary, with monolingual data. The focus is on Dutch toch, with German doch coming into the picture through the translation data. I hope that the polysemous patterns of toch and doch contribute insights that are relevant for polysemy in general. The translation data come from the translation of a novel by Maarten ‘t Hart, De kroonenliga (1983), which was rendered into German in 2001, under the title Die schwarzen Vögel. The Dutch version contained 270 occurrences of toch and the German version had 231 uses of doch. In 179 cases, there was a congruent translation: a Dutch toch was translated with doch; in 143 cases,
however, there was a non-congruence: 91 occurrences of *toch* were translated as zero or in an
other way, whereas 52 occurrences of *doch* did not correspond with a *toch* in the original
version. The examples below are all from the novel by Maarten 't Hart, unless otherwise stated.

2. **TOCH AND DOCH**

Dutch *toch* and German *doch* are cognates. The same item developed into *dock* in Swedish
(Stig Johansson, p.c.), and *though* in English. The particle resulted from a deictic pronoun
(‘that’), to which two ematic particles were added (cf. Hentschel, 1986: 43). For many
centuries, Dutch used *toch* and *doch* as variants, but in the last two centuries *toch* became the
unmarked form. The use of *doch* in Dutch is now restricted to the function of an adversative
conjunction in formal style.

Dutch *toch* and German *doch* belong to the particles with the highest frequency (cf.
Hentschel, 1986: 247). Their high frequency corresponds with their multifunctionality. They participate in different word classes (adverb, modal particle, conjunction, answering particle),
so that their polysemy is at the same time a case of heterosemy (Lichtenberg, 1991). Just as
with other pragmatic markers, it is not always clear when we should distinguish a separate use
of *toch* or *doch*. In the literature, differences in constructional context, accentuation,
substitution and paraphrase possibilities and systematic variation in translation are used as
criteria for assuming a separate use. In this paper, I will take a more functional approach in
distinguishing different uses. *Toch* and *doch* participate in a variety of functional subsystems
in the language, and it is this variety that will be the basis for distinguishing different uses of
these particles.

3. **THE PROBLEM OF ‘CORE MEANING’**

3.1 **Schematic meaning**

An analysis of the uses of a pragmatic marker typically takes the form of a polysemy pattern.
Family resemblances characterize the relation between the members of the pattern, and one of
the members may be prototypical, i.e. occupy a central place, but need not (cf. Hansen 1998:
87). Such an analysis does not require a second, abstract, level of analysis, on which one
assumes something that is variably called the abstract meaning, core meaning, basic meaning,
‘Grundbedeutung’, etc. This ‘menstrual’ view does not exclude the possibility that certain
semantic features remain constant across the members of the polysemy pattern.

What I found in the present study was indeed such a stable meaning that occurred in the
different uses of *toch* and *doch*. This ‘schematic meaning’ can be characterized as a scheme
with ‘three steps’. The utterance containing *toch*/*doch* is ‘affirmative’: The speaker believes
the proposition expressed in the utterance. But this belief is affirmed in reaction to a negation
(of that utterance). This negation may be explicitly present in the preceding utterance, or it
may be imaginary, in the mind of the speaker, by way of an internal, fictional dialogue. A
negation, in its turn, only makes sense against the background of the supposed relevance of an
affirmation (Givón 1979: 103 ff). Again, this affirmation may precede in the ongoing
discourse or have imaginary status. This results in a scheme of three (sequential) steps:
affirmation – negation – (re)affirmation.

For German *doch*, the three step analysis has already been explicitly proposed by the
Japanese Germanist Sekiguchi (1939/1977). His view has not been generally adopted in the
literature, but recently, Graefen (2000) made a similar proposal for German *doch*,
independently of Sekiguchi, which I take as an indication that the intuition that *toch* and *doch*
involve three steps has some plausibility. An additional supporting argument could be the
observation that there are other particles in natural languages that involve three sequential
steps. An example is German *immerhin*, which indicates that the assertion does not fulfil an
initial ‘high’ expectation, but is higher than the low expectation that replaced the initial high
expectation (Weydt, 1979). The sequence here is: high – low – middle. And such a three step
structure is not only relevant for particles: Couper-Kuhlen (2000) and Barth-Weingarten
(2003) assume that concessivity in dialogue always involves a minimum of three steps, which
they call the ‘Cardinal Concessive Schema’: a statement by a first speaker, followed by a
concession of a second speaker, followed by a ‘counterstatement’ by the same second
speaker.

As noted already, the presence of such a persistent schematic meaning does not force us
to assume that this meaning has psychological relevance on a level of analysis that is distinct
from the level on which the different family resemblance members are situated. Apparently,
it is possible for the schematic meaning to be such a strong part of the meaning of *toch*/*doch*
that it is reproduced every time this marker finds a new application. This is what I will assume
here, as it is the simplest assumption. This view does not forbid a language user or a linguist
to ‘abstract’ the schematic meaning out of the network of uses, but a language user can very
well be a perfect native speaker without making such an abstraction. Here, I am following the
view that Langacker has formulated many times: “I am suggesting that these context-
dependent variants may be more fundamental than the context-neutral schematization we tend
to regard as primary.” (Langacker, 2000: 125).

3.2 **Heteroglossia**

The 3-step schematic meaning of *toch*/*doch* makes it a perfect case for the concept of
and apply it to their analysis of well. The notion implies that language use always involves
different ‘positions’, different viewpoints, which can cause a tension in discourse, in
particular when the viewpoints are incompatible. When the incompatible viewpoints are taken
up by different participants in the discourse, a speaker has to handle the situation with care,
for example by acknowledging that he perceives the other position and respects it, but at the
same time indicating that he nevertheless maintains his own position.

The different positions do not have to be explicitly present in the discourse as positions
taken by different participants. The speaker can prevent tensions if he indicates that he is
aware that an alternative position could be taken. In my view, it is precisely the different
ways in which the alternative position is present in the discourse (explicitly formulated by a
different participant in the discourse, explicitly formulated as a possibility by the speaker
himself, or implicitly hinted at by the speaker) that provides a natural basis for distinguishing
different uses of the particle. These different possibilities correspond with the different functional subsystems in the language in which toch and doch participate.

In what follows, I will present different uses of toch and doch, give arguments why each of the proposed uses deserves being distinguished as a separate use and discuss the question which additional meaning, besides the constant three step schematic meaning, seems to be relevant for each of the uses. I will not try to present a full picture of all possible uses of toch and doch, as my primary aim is not descriptive exhaustiveness but possible theoretical relevance of the approach.

4. **TOCH AND DOCH IN THE SYSTEM OF DIALOGUE PARTICLES**

4.1 **German doch**

1. G. S: Ist das nicht erlaubt?
   
   H: Doch, natürlich ... (p. 151)

2. D. Mag dat niet?
   
   Natuurlijk wel ... (p. 103)

3. E. Isn’t that allowed?
   
   Of course it is.

2. G. Aber ich glaube niemals, dass er hier Pop gehört hat.

   Doch, ganz bestimmt, ... (p. 152)


   O, jawel hoor, ik weet het zeker ... (p. 104)

4. E. But I can never believe that he listened to pop music here.

   Oh, yes, he did, I am certain of it.

These examples show that in reaction to a negative question (1) or statement (2), German can use doch, whereas Dutch uses wel or jawel in this context. So, in the Dutch system of dialogue particles, wel seems to be the item that fills the position of ‘third step marker’. In the examples, only the negative second and the reaffirmative third step are present, but the positive first step is implicitly present in the preceding fragments of the text. One can easily construct dialogues in which the first step is explicitly present: That is a duck — No it isn’t — It is (German: doch; Dutch: jawel).

German doch thus participates in the functional field of ‘affirmation markers’, where we find, in the first place, yes and no and their counterparts in other languages. A language can restrict itself to these two elements, or add a third marker, which is used when an affirmation is a ‘reaffirmation’ after a negative counterposition. The three positions show themselves most clearly in a ‘yes-no-yes’-dialogue. In this use, the marker can take different forms in different languages: English uses emphasis *(I do like it)*; French uses the marker *si* (Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 2001); etc. In other syntactic positions, a different form can be used, for example the English conjunct *still*.

According to Hentschel (1986: 44) and Molnár (2002: 117), German doch established itself as a dialogue particle rather late, in the 18th century. The question why Dutch toch did not take on this use, can only be answered by diachronic research. Apparently, wel was around as a competitor. But German had a similar item, wohi, the counterpart of wel. Wohi is used emphatically when the reaffirmation takes the form of a full sentence: *It is a duck, Dutch: Het is wel een eend, German: Es ist wohl eine Ente*. This shows that the language specific distribution of the available forms looks rather unpredictable. Particular contextual aspects must be taken into consideration, aspects which do not directly pertain to the function of the marker as such and which are often of a rather superficial syntactic character. It would be too general to state contrastively that German doch is used as the dialogue reaffirmation particle and Dutch toch is not. In German, doch can be replaced by wohi if the context is a full sentence, and in Dutch one can add noch to wel, although this is an infrequent option.

4.2 **Flemish toch**

Dutch exists in different variants, one of them being the Dutch as it is spoken in the Flemish part of Belgium. In this variant, a particular use of toch has developed, which, like German doch, occurs primarily in dialogue, which is why it is analyzed in this section. A typical example is the following:

3. ‘Is er wat?’ vroeg hij.
   
   ‘Jij wou me spreken’, zei Eva.

   ‘O ja?’ zei hij.

   ‘Vanmorgen toch,’ zei Eva.

   ‘Nu niet meer,’ zei Vincent.


In this dialogue, Eva answers the initial question with a statement: ‘you wanted to talk to me’; then the hearer questions that answer, after which, in the third turn, Eva returns to her initial claim, but now in a weakened version ‘you wanted to talk to me this morning’. The speaker steps down, makes her claim more modest, and it is this discourse function that in Flemish can be marked by a sentence final toch. ‘At least’ is often an appropriate translation of this use in English; in Netherlandish Dutch, ‘tenminste’, or ‘althans’ would be used.

What we see here, is the schematic meaning, enriched with the feature ‘partial return’. This feature involves a concessive aspect: the hearer might be right that the initial answer was too strong, so the return is only partial. The hearer’s viewpoint is not only acknowledged as a possible viewpoint, it is given some real validity. This use seems a natural semantic development of the heteroglossic meaning of toch. A similar ‘weakened return’ to first position is present in German *inmehrhin* (see 3.1).

This use of toch does not only occur in real dialogue, where the positions are taken by different participants. A speaker can use it in a monologic discourse which, through the presence of this *toch*, gets a strong dialogic flavour, see the following examples:
4. D. Ik denk dat je dat gebouw nog wel herkent. Dat hoop ik toch. (CGN: Belgisch)
E. I think you recognize that building. At least I hope so (Corpus Spoken Dutch, Belgian part)

5. D. We laten even terzijde dat Amerikaanse persbureaut’s – en andere zijn er niet meer, toch geen internationale – de neiging hebben om Amerika gelijk te stellen met de wereld. (De Standaard 20/02/2001)
E. We disregard for the moment that American news agencies – and other agencies don’t exist anymore, at least no international ones – tend to consider America and the world as identical.

In (4), ‘think’ is weakened to ‘hope’, in (5), the parenthetic claim ‘there are no others’ is followed immediately by the weakened claim ‘at least no international ones’, to pre-empt a possible protest by the imagined hearer. Note, that toch is not final here, but from the context, it is clear that the intended use is the one we have been discussing in this section.

5. TOCH AND DOCH IN THE SYSTEM OF ADVERSATIVE CONNECTIVES

In this use, the function of toch/doch is primarily connective. Here, the second, negative, position in the three step scheme is an implication of the preceding sentence, in the same way as when a denial of expectation but is used. In small but brave, the first conjunct implicates not brave, and it is this implication that the second conjunct reacts against. It is no surprise that in English translations of the connective use of toch/doch we find but, nevertheless, (and) yet, even so or still.

Just as with dialogic doch, there are language specific syntactic conventionalizations of adversative toch/doch. In German, doch can easily be used in the position of a coordinating conjunction, cf. (6):

6. G. Doch von der Garderobe her rief er fröhlich: Jozef Lambert. (p. 63)
D. Maar bij de kapslot riep hij vrolijk: Jozef Lambert. (p. 43)
E. But at the hatstand he called joyfully: Jozef Lambert.

In contrast, Dutch toch normally does not occur in the conjunction position. Instead, the conjunct position or the first sentence position are used (see below, examples 8 and 9). But there is one context, where toch occurs as a conjunction, namely when two adjectival phrases are coordinated: met die diepe, toch beweeglijke stem, ‘with that deep but flexible voice’ (novel, 2004). It is a remarkable fact, that in this context toch can be substituted by doch: Een klein doch zeer belangrijk verschil, ‘a small but very important difference’ (magazine, 2004). This doch gives the text a formal flavour. More remarkable still, this formal style doch can, though very rarely, be found as a conjunction between two full sentences:

7. D. Tegenover de overeenkomsten tussen (1) en (2) staan evidenten verschillen, doch die behoeven niet op de tegenstelling tussen object en perifere bepalende te wijzen. (Linguistic manuscript, 2003)
E. Besides the similarities between (1) and (2), there are evident differences, but they do not necessarily point to the difference between object and peripheral adjunct.

The presence of the verb behoeven instead of hoeven ‘need’ also indicates that the author aims at a formal style here. Dutch toch/doch in conjunction position seems to be a rest of an older system (see section 2).

The ‘normal’ uses of adversative connective toch are not found in the conjunction position. In Dutch, there are two alternative syntactic positions available. On the one hand, there is the conjunct position, separated by a comma from the main clause, as in (8):

8. D. Ik maak nota’s. Waarvan je vertrougd is soms heilen niet hoort of ze geweekt hebben. Toch, voor mij moet wat ik doe met onderwijs te maken hebben. (Magazine, June 2003)
E. I produce reports. With much delay, or never, do you hear whether they had some effect. Still, what I do must, for me, have something to do with education.

The other possibility is provided by the first sentence position that precedes the V2 position in Dutch and German. The subject is the unmarked choice for this position, but most other constituents are eligible as well. In Dutch, toch is a possible choice, cf. (9) and (10):

9. D. Toch zou ik daarmee nog maar even wachten. (p. 94)
G. Dennoch würde ich damit noch etwas warten. (p. 139)
E. And yet, I would wait a bit before doing so.

10. D. Toch wilde ik de cruciale vraag nog stellen. (p. 93)
G. Und doch wollte ich die entscheidende Frage noch stellen. (p. 138)
E. Even so, I still wanted to ask the crucial question.

These examples and their translations show again language specific peculiarities. Example (10) shows that German doch can occur in the first sentence position, but the translator has decided to let a coordinating conjunction precede. And in (9) the translation of toch is dennoch. Apparently, German does not ‘like’ a bare doch in first sentence position. This might have to do with the fact that initial doch in German is a conjunction. If it could be, at the same time, a sentence adverb in first sentence position, then this would be a case of syntactic ambiguity at the beginning of the sentence, which is avoided by the system.

In this section, I proposed to assume a textual adversative function for toch and doch, which is realized in varying positions at the beginning of the sentence. Note that I have given the functional similarity more weight here than the syntactic differences. German and Dutch differ in their preferences where to put the marker syntactically: German easily puts doch in the coordinative conjunction position, Dutch prefers the conjunct and the first sentence position. In the conjunction position, Dutch has preserved doch as an option, with formal style connotation.
Up till now, the analysis suggested that there is no principled difference between the unmarked adversative conjunction but and adverative connective toch/doch in sentence-initial position. That would mean that, in this context, the schematic meaning of toch/doch has been reduced to the same two step scheme that is assumed for but (but $q = q$, and not $r$, which could be deducted from the foregoing), the first positive step of the original schematic meaning of toch/doch being cancelled. But a look at the broader textual context reveals that the distribution of these adverasive connectives is not random. Doherty (2001: 238) took a closer look at the distribution of the different adversative markers and found that “the examples with doch suggest that it returns to an earlier assumption in relation to the new or contrasted element.” Doherty proposes to call doch and dennoch ‘resumptive adverasive connectors’. This fits in, of course, very well with the three step schematic meaning I have proposed for all uses of doch and toch.

6. TOCH AND DOCH AS MODAL PARTICLES

When doch/toch occurs unstressed in the middle field of a sentence, they are to be considered as modal particles. The modal particle use of toch and doch is a very frequent one. Of the 270 occurrences of toch in ‘t Hart’s novel, 178 belonged to this category, most of which were translated as doch.

What is the function of modal particles, i.e. in which functional subsystem of language do they fit? Much theorizing has been devoted to this question, and no generally accepted answer seems to have resulted from it. It has been observed that the distribution of modal particles is strongly related to sentence type, which could be seen as an indication that their functioning is related to the speech act dimension of language use. This is the approach taken in Welteret (2001: 1414): “Their purpose is essentially to accommodate at minimal linguistic expense the preparatory conditions of the speech act they occur in.”

This approach seems fruitful for explicating the effect of adding the modal particle toch/doch to the various sentence types. This is not the place to do so in full detail, but to give an idea, let us briefly look at a few speech acts and sentence types in which toch/doch occur. A preparatory condition for a request is, that H does not know that S wants him to do X. A request with doch/toch indicates: you already know that I want you to do X. The schematic meaning of toch/doch leads back to the ground for this deviation from the normal preparatory condition: the request had been made before. However, non-compliance on the part of the hearer has led to a repetition of the request. The end-effect is a request with some urgency, often irritation, cf. (11):

11. Imperatives (18 cases)
   D. Aeh, hou toch op met dat gezwur. (p. 8)
   G. Aeh, hir doch endlich damit auf. (p. 11)
   E. Oh, stop nagging, for goodness’ sake!

A declarative sentence typically contains new information. The accompanying preparatory condition thus is: H does not know p. Toch/doch indicates that this condition does not hold,

i.e., it indicates that S assumed that H did know p and shared the same attitude to p. This leads to the special effect that the bringing up of p is understood as a ‘check’, cf. (12):

12. Declarative sentences (140 cases in the original Dutch version of the novel)
   D. Maar ik kan toch thuis koffie zetten. (p. 8)
   G. Aber ich kann doch zu Hause Kaffe machen. (p. 10)
   E. But I can make coffee at home, can’t I?

The ‘check’ function can be paraphrased as follows: the speaker wants to make sure that he and the hearer share the same attitude to the proposition expressed by the sentence. In this context the three steps are: We share positions – There is reason to be uncertain about your attitude – So, I, speaker, indicate that, on my part, the proposition still holds, and I would like to know how you see this. A slightly rising intonation at the end is part of this construction.

There is a distributional difference to be observed between Dutch and German. In Dutch, ‘checking’ toch has the additional possibility of occurring in sentence-final tag position. This ‘end shift’ is rather new, and seems especially popular in informal style, more in Netherlandish Dutch than in Flemish Dutch. From a functional perspective, there is no reason to assume a ‘different’ use of toch here, however. The distributional innovation seems a very natural, iconic one: The orientation of the sentence is ‘forward’, it invites a (confirming) reaction from the hearer. Placing the particle at the end of the utterance instead of the middle field, is a natural shift, and it has the extra benefit that it can function as a turn-taking marker. Here are some examples:

   E. What is consistency? It can develop in any directions, can’t it?

   E. My son always had a feeling for money. And when your bank is, on top of that, fully supportive, then things can’t go wrong, can they?

Besides the directive and declarative context, there is a third context in which toch and doch are frequently used as modal particles, namely exclamatives, cf. (15 and 16):

15. Exclamatives (9 cases)
   D. O, mevrouw, wat kent u de misdaad toch slecht. (p. 134)
   G. Oh, Mevrouw, wie schelcht kennen Sie sich doch im Verbrechen aus. (p. 194)
   E. Oh, madam, how unfamiliar you are with crime!

16. Exclamative if-sentence
   D. Aeh, als het zo toch eens gegaan kon zijn. (p. 145)
   G. Aeh, wenn es sich doch so abgespielt hätte. (p. 209)
   E. Oh, if only it could have happened that way!
As (15) and (16) illustrate, Dutch and German are parallel in this respect, but there is an extra distributional possibility in Dutch that German does not have. Dutch can realize an exclamation by only expressing the addressee's name: Jan! Usually, the name is preceded by maar or followed by toch, or both: (maar) Jan (toch)! This extended use of Dutch toch in exclamative contexts is, like in the case of the toch that can be shifted to the end of the declarative sentence, a peculiarity that is not part of the German pattern. Again, I see no reason to assume a separate use for this Name+toch-exclamative. Just as in full sentence exclamatives, the meaning is 'surprise', usually with a negative flavour. In the exclamative contexts, the schematic meaning of toch and doch applies in the subjective sphere of the speaker's belief. In the first stage there is the observation that p, then follows the disbelief, but in the end there is no escape: the speaker has to accept p, because the observed reality offers no escape. Indication of an up-down-up movement of the speaker's feeling or attitude is what exclamative toch/doch contributes.

There is one context of modal particle use of toch/doch, where Dutch and German are remarkably different, namely in wh-questions, cf. (17):

17. Wh-questions (11 cases)
   D. Wie heeft toch je pad gekruist, toen ik bij m'n moeder was? (p. 49)
   G. Wer ist dir nur über den Weg gelaufen, als ich bei meiner Mutter war. (p. 72)
   E. Who on earth crossed your path when I was visiting my mother?

None of the 11 occurrences of toch in the context of a wh-question was translated by doch. Instead, other particles were chosen, like nur in (17). The situation is, however, different again in case of an alternative German wh-question with the special function of 'memory search'. Then doch is a typical choice, whereas toch is not in Dutch. As this use did not occur in the corpus, the following example was constructed:

18. Memory search
   D. Wie heisst er doch?
   G. Hoe heette hij nog maar?
   E. What was his name again?

For this special function of memory search, Dutch has a variety of possible markers, typically consisting of a cluster of particles: nog maar, ook al weer, etc. Why is it that the modal particle uses in Dutch and German run parallel in the other sentence types and not in wh-questions? I am afraid, a synchronic, structural answer will be hard to find. A diachronic study might reveal certain contextual factors that led to this contrastive picture. Toch and doch are embedded in a different linguistic system and the diachronic processes of extension of other particles have undoubtedly played a role in the present outcome for toch and doch.

7. **TOCH AND DOCH IN GROUNDING CONTEXTS**

Dutch toch and German doch occur in contexts that are often characterized as 'causal' (for example Borst, 1985: 74 ff). The contexts are, however, not the same in the two languages. In Dutch, the context is a sentence in which an action or a proposal for a possibly controversial action X is formulated. In a sentence that can follow or precede, this action is justified. This justificatory sentence contains a toch in the middle field. The intonation contour of this sentence is special: strong accent on toch, reduction of accents in the rest of the sentence. The two sentences together can be paraphrased as follows: *now that what is stated in the toch-sentence is the case, action X can be carried out as well. In other circumstances, objections to doing X would be reasonable, but against the background of what is stated in the toch-sentence as an undeniable fact, objections make no sense*. If the undeniable fact in itself is evaluated as 'bad' the whole construction gets a touch of resignation: X might as well be done, it does not make any difference, facts are what they are. In the novel by Maarten 't Hart, 7 examples of this use of toch were found, see example (19):

19. **Toch** in declarative sentences, meaning 'anyway' (7 cases)
   D. Nu ik hier toch ben, zou ik graag eens wat rondkijken, kan dat? (p. 54)
   G. Nun, wo ich einmal hier bin, würde ich mich gern ein wenig umsehen, Gehst du? (p. 79)
   E. Now that I am here anyway, I would like to look around a bit, is that OK?

In the German translation of (19) a different particle (einmal) is chosen. This is already an indication that Dutch and German differ in the way they use toch and doch in a grounding context. German 'causal' doch is used in a slightly different context. The following example is again from the translation of 't Hart's novel. Note that there is no toch in the Dutch original:

20. **Geschichte beginnt; hatte ich doch schon so oft diese Rille gesehen.**
    D. Geschicht begint; ke in de grond vinden waar Cassio zijn verhaal begin, had die groef al zo vaak gezocht. (p. 32)
    E. I could find the groove almost without looking, since I had, after all, looked for that groove so often before.

As has been pointed out in the literature (see for example Braübe, 2001), this use of doch occurs in a construction with strict syntactic properties. The doch-sentence has to follow the one it relates to (in Dutch it can also precede) and starts with the finite verb (which is very marked for the declarative sentence type, cf. Ömerfor, 1997: 155ff), and doch is unstressed and situated in the middle field. The construction as a whole seems to have been grammaticalized much more strongly than is the case with the Dutch justificatory toch.

The paraphrase of (20) is as follows: Because the speaker had searched for the specific groove on the record so often before, he could easily find it again this time, almost without looking. The function of the doch-sentence is explanatory; the speaker explains why it was so easy for him to find the groove. With doch, the speaker indicates that the content of the sentence that serves as the explanation, is known to the hearer, so there was no urgent need to state it, but it is stated nevertheless, just in case the hearer might have forgotten. In this example, the reader does indeed know from the previous pages, that the main character had listened to this passage of Othello again and again.
In the grounding uses discussed here, the three steps of the schematic meaning pertain to different contextual dimensions in Dutch and German. In Dutch, the first step is the stated fact (which is explanatory for action X), the second one involves the idea that this fact might not be the case. In the third step this negative step is acknowledged as a relevant possibility, but not as reality. This results in marking the statement as an undeniable fact ("I am here, whether you like it or not..."). In the German case, the target of the particle is the knowledge state of the hearer. Step 1: you know X. Step 2: you might temporarily not be thinking of X. Step 3: that is why I am mentioning it here, because it is relevant in this context, it explains what was said in the previous sentence.

8. CONCLUSION

The above analysis of different uses of toch and doch is not meant to be exhaustive. There is, for example, the possibility of having toch/doch strongly stressed in the middle field as the main focus of the sentence, comparable with a stressed negative particle (He is not present). Emphatic negation can be used to counter an opposite claim or thought. With toch/doch it is thoughts or observed facts, not verbalized claims (then one uses wohl in German and wel in Dutch, see section 4), that the speaker returns to. The context is thus typically one where a speaker is 'reflecting' on his own thoughts and observations: Je bent er toch/Du bist doch da ("you are present!"), implying that I thought or saw before that you were present, then I thought that this was not so, but now I see that you are really present.

The Dutch-German contrastive analysis made clear, more than a monolingual study could have done, that the language specific uses of 'the same' item are indeed rather specific, but at the same time that in all these applications a single schematic meaning was preserved. Despite the varied uses that are made of the same item, the schematic meaning turned out to be robust. Each use is embedded in a particular subsystem of the language, that of dialogic particles, adversative connectives, modal particles and causal markers, and in each of these contexts, additional meaning can become part of the full meaning of the particle in that context. Theories which advocate sparsity in linguistic description would prefer to leave such extra meaning to the context (implicatures, generated by the interaction between the item and specific contexts), but the findings in this study rather support the assumption of richer conventionalized meanings for specific members of the polysemous pattern. This does not mean that there is no room for contextual implicatures: 'resignation' can occur as an implicature of Dutch 'justificatory toch' if it occurs in contexts where actions are justified by arguing that doing otherwise would not help change a negatively evaluated situation ('I am having another piece of cake, I am toch fat'), 'irritation' can be an implicature when the modal particle is used in a directive context where the hearer seems unwilling to follow the directive, etc. A proper linguistic description should find the right balance between the schematic meaning that holds for all members of the polysemous pattern, extra conventionalized meanings that hold for specific members, and, finally, possible implicatures that occur when specific members are used in certain interactional constellations. I hope to have shown that a contrastive approach can contribute to finding such a balance.

REFERENCES

ON THE UNIVERSALITY OF DISCOURSE MARKERS

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1. INTRODUCTION

In an earlier paper (Fraser, 1996) I proposed the functional class of Pragmatic Markers, linguistic forms that have meaning but do not contribute to the propositional content of the sentence of which they are a part. I suggested that there are four subclasses: (1) Basic Markers, such as please and promise, which signal aspects of the direct literal basic message intended by the speaker; (2) Commentary Markers, such as frankly and certainly, which signal a message commenting on the basic message; (3) Parallel Markers, such as Sir, damned, and hey, which signal a message accompanying the basic message; and (4) Discourse Markers, such as and, but, and so, which signal how the discourse segment, of which they are a part, is semantically related to the previous segment.

In this paper I am concerned with Contrastive Discourse Markers (CDMs), a sub-class of Discourse Markers, represented in bold type in the following examples,

1. a. He started late. But he arrived on time.
   b. David rarely goes out. Instead, he just stays home and drinks.
   c. Susan is 6 foot tall. In contrast, her sister is only 4 feet, 11 inches.
   d. I’m a nurse. However, my husband won’t permit me to work.
   e. Give up? On the contrary, I’ve only begun to fight.

where the second segment, S2, has a type of contrastive relationship with the prior segment, S1.

In particular, I am concerned with the Contrastive Discourse Marker but and whether it has an equivalent in other languages that functions as but does in English. I take the following as working hypotheses:

HYPOTHESIS 1: There is a single, primary Contrastive Discourse Markers in every language (in English, it is but).

HYPOTHESIS 2: The uses of these primary CDMs are the same across languages.

The first hypothesis is presumably true although to my knowledge it has not been explored. The second hypothesis is worthy of study as research on DMs goes beyond individual terms.