The different role of additive and negative particles in the development of finiteness in early adult L2 German and L2 Dutch.*

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1. Introduction

This paper investigates the role of additive and negative particles for the building-up of a native-like finite utterance structure in the acquisition of Germanic languages (German and Dutch) by beginning adult learners in an immersion setting. Previous evidence suggests that negation promotes finiteness, whereas additive particles delay the marking of finiteness in an utterance (Dietrich & Grommes, 1998; Dimroth, 2009; Schimke, Verhagen & Dimroth, 2008; Winkler 2009, in press). In the following, it is summarized why particles might play a role for the development of finiteness, and an explanation of the different behavior of negative and additive particles is presented (Dimroth, 2009). This summary reveals that some questions are left open by the existing studies. First, no study to date has systematically compared finiteness marking in negated utterances and utterances containing additive particles in the same corpus. Second, previous studies have not investigated syntactic finiteness (target-like verb placement) and morphological finiteness (target-like verbal morphology) separately from each other. The present study aims at filling this gap. To this end, separate syntactic and morphological analyses of negative utterances and utterances containing additive particles were performed in a corpus of film retellings by 49 Turkish learners of German and 46 Turkish and 56 Moroccan learners of Dutch. The results are only partially in line with previous findings: the negative utterances produced by the learners of German are, as expected, syntactically finite more often than utterances with additive particles, but
there is no such difference for the learners of Dutch. Moreover, contrary to previous findings, negative utterances are morphologically finite less often than additive utterances. This is in particular due to the fact that verbs following the negator are non-finite in almost all cases, whereas verbs following additive particles are finite relatively often. This finding challenges the idea that negation triggers syntactic finiteness, and suggests that it even hinders the realization of morphological finiteness in comparison to additive particles. The paper ends with a discussion of possible explanations of these results.

2. Particles and finiteness in acquisition: previous findings

It is well established that the acquisition of finiteness is a milestone in early second language (L2) learners’ development towards a native-like utterance structure. Compare the following two short sequences of utterances that were produced by two Turkish learners of German retelling a film (‘The Finite Story’, Dimroth, 2006). The learners describe a number of subsequent film scenes in which three protagonists of the film, who are named after the colors of their clothes, are sleeping and one of them then wakes up.

(1) (Herr Blau) schlafen ‘(Mr. Blue) sleep’
Herr Grün auch schlafen ‘Mr. Green also sleep’
Herr Rot schlafen ‘Mr. Red sleep’
In (1), verbs are not marked for finiteness and they appear in final position. The learner neither uses target-like verbal inflections nor target-like verb placement. In (2), in contrast, verbs are morphologically finite and appear in the target-like second position. There is a vivid discussion in the literature about how (first and) second language learners go from a non-finite utterance structure as in (1) to a finite utterance structure as exemplified in (2) (Jordens & Dimroth, 2006; Vainikka & Young-Scholten, 1996a, 1996b). Many have assumed that the absence of overt finiteness markers in structures such as in (1) indicates that the abstract functional categories which are assumed to underlie finiteness are not part of the learner’s grammar at an early stage of development (Vainikka & Young-Scholten, 1996a, 1996b). It has furthermore been assumed that particles such as auch (‘also’) and nicht (‘not’) play a precursor role in the building up of a native-like sentence structure in both first and second language Germanic (Dietrich & Grommes, 1998;
Jordens & Dimroth, 2006; Winkler, 2005, 2009, in press). More precisely, the idea is that particles typically appear in the position in utterances in (1) where finite verbs will appear once finiteness is acquired (see (2)). Particles might also be precursors of finiteness on a deeper level. They are the first elements in language acquisition that can be considered ‘grammatical’ rather than ‘lexical’: they do not have a clear descriptive content but instead, specify the relation between different elements in the sentence and/or between a sentence and its preceding context. On the basis of these characteristics, researchers from formal as well as functional research paradigms have argued that the function of particles in beginning language acquisition resembles the role fulfilled by finiteness for more advanced learners and native speakers.

From a formal perspective, it has been claimed that particles function as syntactic heads which stand in a hierarchical relation to other elements in the sentence over which they have scope (see Penner, Tracy & Weissenborn, 2000 and Winkler, 2005, 2009 for L1 German). Under this assumption, they are precursors of finiteness because they enable learners to build a first layer of sentence structure above VP. From a functional perspective, it has been argued that particles specify the relation between the predicate of a sentence and its topic. Finiteness is assumed to have a very similar function: it expresses that a certain state of affairs, which is expressed in the predicate part of an utterance, applies to a certain topic situation (Klein, 2006). In a sentence such as ‘The book is on the table’, for example, the copula expresses that ‘being on the table’ holds for the topic ‘the book’. Researchers
working in a functional research paradigm have pointed out that particles have a similar function in early learner utterances like ‘The book also/not on the table’. In such utterances, the particle specifies that a certain predicate does or does not hold for a certain topic (see Dimroth, Gretsch, Jordens, Perdue, and Starren, 2003 for L1 and L2 German and Dutch).

If particles are indeed precursors of finiteness, their presence could influence the form of learner utterances in different ways. Sentences might be finite earlier in development in comparison to sentences without particles, because particles would trigger the projection of a more complex syntactic structure than a simple VP. Alternatively, one could assume that precisely due to the fact that a precursor of finiteness is present, finiteness marking is not realized, because learners consider it ‘redundant’.

A look at the literature shows that both patterns have been observed, but with respect to different particles. Winkler (2005) and Dietrich and Grommes (1998) focused on negation and found that the presence of a negative particle in a sentence promoted the realization of finiteness in both L1 and L2 German. Penner et al. (2000) and Schimke, Verhagen & Dimroth (2008) looked at additive particles and found, however, that utterances with such particles were finite less often than utterances without particles during the same stage of development in L1 German and L2 German and Dutch, respectively. These outcomes suggest that overall, negation promotes and additive particles delay finiteness marking both in L1 and L2
acquisition. In the next section, we will come back to this difference and review an explanation of this difference proposed by Dimroth (2009).

The above-mentioned studies leave some questions unanswered. First, no study has looked at negation and additive particles comparatively in the same corpus, so one may wonder whether the same differences are found if the data from the same learners are analyzed for both types of particle. Second, the authors did most often not specify whether syntactic or morphological finiteness was analyzed. This might be due to the often-made assumption that syntactic and morphological finiteness develop in parallel, and that there is a strong contingency in learner language between both types of finiteness. This contingency is indeed well established for negated utterances: Poeppel and Wexler (1993) found that finite verb forms always appeared in a syntactically finite position to the left of the negator, and non-finite verb forms always to the right of the negator in L1 German. With some exceptions, a clear overall contingency between the form of the verb and its position with respect to the negator has also been observed in L2 data (e.g. Prévost & White, 2000, for an overview; see Verhagen & Schimke, 2009). These results with negated utterances leave open, however, whether syntactic and morphological finiteness also develop in parallel in sentences with additive particles. If not, the different effect of negation and additive particles on the development of finiteness could be restricted to syntactic (as opposed to morphological) finiteness. There are some indications in the literature that indeed, while additive particles seem to hinder syntactic finiteness, the verb can apparently take a morphologically finite form in such sentences. Penner
et al. (2000), for example, observe that verb raising can be absent in utterances containing *auch* in L1 German, presumably referring to finite verb forms: “Even after V2 has become productive, utterances with *auch* often drop the verb, the verb is non-finite, or it does not raise” (p. 138). For L2 German, Dimroth (2002) investigated utterances containing *auch* in learners at a transitory stage in the acquisition of finiteness. She found that in this learner group, structures in which *auch* was followed by a finite verb form was the most frequent utterance type (20 cases), more frequent then finite verbs preceding *auch* (12 cases) or non-finite verbs following *auch* (17 cases) (compare Dimroth, 2002, p. 914). Finally, Schimke et al. (2008) compared utterances without particles and utterances containing *auch* in elicited production data of L2 German and Dutch. The authors found that utterances containing *auch* were less often morphologically finite than utterances not containing *auch*. Crucially, an analysis of the syntactic position of finite and non-finite verbs with respect to the particle showed, however, that despite their overall low number, finite verbs following the additive particle were a relatively frequent pattern, again suggesting that syntactic and morphological finiteness need not go together for additive particles. Note, however, that in all three studies, no direct comparison was made to negative particles and their effect on finiteness.

In sum, the outcomes of earlier studies suggest that negation and additive particles play a different role in the development of finiteness in both L1 and L2 acquisition. However, these studies have either not differentiated between morphological and syntactic finiteness or focused on one type of particle rather than
considering both types in one learner group. In this study, a combined approach is taken with the aim to find out whether the differential effects of negation and additive particles on the development of finiteness hold within the same learners and moreover, whether they concern morphological as well as syntactic finiteness. The next section outlines an explanation proposed by Dimroth (2009) for the different behavior of negation and additive particles, based on which the research questions of the present study are formulated.


Dimroth (2009) presents a detailed review of the literature summarized above and concludes that negation accelerates and additive particles delay the acquisition of finiteness in L1 and L2 German. To explain this, she presents an account in terms of information structure. Specifically, Dimroth assumes that an important function of finiteness is to validate a certain predicate for a given topic situation (Klein, 1998; see also above). Additive particles have a similar function in learner language: they express that a previously made assertion holds in a similar way for a new topic situation. Consider the following sequence of utterances:

(3) Herr Blau will schlafen.

‘Mister Blue wants sleep’
In (3), the presence of a finite verb formally marks that it is true for a certain topic situation that Mr. Red is sleeping. In (4), the particle auch expresses that a similar assertion holds for Mr. Green. As we have seen above, Dimroth (2009) proposes that this functional similarity between finiteness and additive particles is one of the reasons why learners consider it ‘redundant’ to mark finiteness in a sentence with a particle and therefore produce non-finite sentences. A second reason is that placing the finite verb before the particle necessitates that the particle is separated from the element over which it has scope: the topic element (i.e. Herr Grün in (4)). This problem does not arise for negative particles, which typically have scope over the predicate of an utterance, as in (5):

(5) Herr hat Angst. Herr Grün nicht fallen.

‘Mister has fear. Mister Green not fall’

Here, the predicate is new and has not been asserted before. Negation thus does not point to a previous assertion, and has not typically scope over the topic but over the predicate. Both factors may explain why learners find it easier to mark finiteness in negated utterances than in utterances containing additive particles.
Dimroth does not specify whether her account pertains to morphological as well as syntactic finiteness marking. This is an important question, however, especially since the two proposed explanations seem to make different predictions in this respect: If learners consider finiteness redundant in sentences with additive particles, but not in sentences with negation, the prediction is that sentences with additive particles will be finite less often than negated sentences both on the level of morphology and syntax. If, in contrast, the different scope properties of the two types of particles mainly cause the difference, this might concern the position of the verb more than its morphology.

As we have seen in the previous section, there are some indications that the ‘delaying’ effect of additive particles may be a syntactic more than a morphological effect, as several studies mention that finite verbs can appear after additive particles, while this is never reported for negation particles. On the basis of this finding, we formulate the following research questions:

1) Do utterances with additive and negative particles differ with respect to syntactic finiteness, that is: Do additive particles appear pre-verbally more often than negation?

2) Do utterances with additive and negative particles differ with respect to morphological finiteness, that is: Is there a difference in the occurrence with finite verb forms for both types of particle?
As for the second question, we will investigate the number of finite verbs appearing with additive and negative particles for the two syntactic positions that verbs can take with respect to the particle (syntactically finite vs. syntactically non-finite). So, this automatically brings up the question if the potential relation between syntax and morphology is equally strong in sentences with additive and negative particles.

4. The current study

The data for the current study were obtained from Turkish learners of German as well as Dutch and Moroccan learners of Dutch. The presence of two different source languages (Turkish and Moroccan) for one target language (Dutch) makes it possible to check whether any pattern in the data holds for learners from different source languages, which in this case crucially differ in the placement of the verb: the verb appears in first or second position in Arabic, but in final position in Turkish. The presence of two target languages (German and Dutch) for learners with the same source language (Turkish) makes it possible to generalize the results to another language than German, which has been almost exclusively studied in the studies cited above. Note, however, that German and Dutch are very close to each other concerning the frequency and function of additive particles (Dimroth, Andorno, Benazzo & Verhagen, accepted), and no generalizations are attempted here that go beyond these two target languages.
4.1 Participants

A group of 95 Turkish and 56 Moroccan immigrants participated in the study: 49 Turkish learners learnt German and had been living in Germany for 9 years at the time of the experiment. The remaining 46 Turkish learners as well as the 56 Moroccan learners learnt Dutch and had been living in the Netherlands for 5 and 3.5 years respectively. All learners learnt the target language in an immersion setting and received no or only little explicit grammar instruction in the L2. They were poorly educated: the Turkish learners of L2 German had received 9 years of schooling on average, and the Turkish and Moroccan learners 8 and 9 years, respectively. Proficiency level varied across participants: some were at a ‘Basic Variety’ level of acquisition in that they mainly produced non-finite lexical verbs in a non-finite position. Others produced finite as well as non-finite lexical verbs, and also made use of modal and auxiliary verbs. These learners had clearly entered the Postbasic Variety I stage (Perdue, 1993; Klein & Perdue, 1997). None of the learners produced finiteness marking in a fully target-like way. The main biographic details of the learners in each group are summarized in Table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>L2 German</th>
<th>L2 Dutch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of participants</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Moroccans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mean length of instruction in the L2  |  6 months | 9.5 months | 11 months
---|---|---|---
Mean length of residence | 9 years | 3.5 years | 5 years
Mean length of schooling | 9 years | 9 years | 8 years

4.2 Method

A video clip ("The Finite Story", Dimroth, 2006) was used in order to elicit oral production data from the participants, in particular, scope particles. The film is about the story of three main characters: Mr. Green, Mr. Blue, and Mr. Red, who, at the beginning of the film, are sleeping. Then, their house catches fire and after a series of simple events, they are saved by the fire brigade. The video consists of 31 segments, which participants were asked to watch and retell immediately after watching each of them.

The film is designed such that, in the transition from one segment to the next, one unit of information is often maintained, while another unit of information is changed. This is illustrated in the following scene descriptions where the topic entity (Mr. Blue vs. Mr. Green) changes but the predicate (sleep) is maintained. The example utterances are taken from a native speaker of Dutch.

(6) Meneer Blauw slaapt.
‘Mr. Blue sleeps’

(7) Meneer Groen slaapt ook.

‘Mr. Green sleeps too’

In other scenes, negation was elicited by presenting subjects with scenes in which a given topic entity did not do something. In the scene described in (8), for instance, Mr. Blue did not jump out of the window even though there is fire in his room:

(8) Hij springt niet.

‘He jumps not’

For the analysis, all utterances containing a lexical verb and the additive particles auch and ook or the negation particles nicht and niet were extracted. Only utterances with a 3sg syntactic context were taken into account. Then, for each utterance, it was determined (i) whether the verb followed or preceded the particle and (ii) whether it was finite or non-finite. ‘Finite’ was defined as correct subject-verb agreement (-t in both languages), and ‘non-finite’ referred to all forms ending in –en and past participles. Forms ending in –0 were not considered since these forms are ambiguous between finite (1sg forms) and bare stems in Dutch. Also, it cannot be ruled out that such forms are actually intended as finite forms that are subject to t-deletion. Utterances that involved self-repetitions, imitations from the interviewer’s speech, or
false starts were removed from analysis. Utterances in which additive and negative particles co-occurred such as *Hij wil ook niet springen* ‘He wants also not jump’ were also excluded.

5. Results

5.1 Syntactic and morphological finiteness

Recall that the first research question concerned syntactic finiteness, more specifically, the question whether additive particles would precede the verb more often than negative particles. Table 2 and 3 show how often verbs were found in a position preceding or following a particle in L2 German and Dutch, respectively.

*Table 2: Verb placement in sentences containing particles for learners of German*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AUCH</th>
<th>NICHT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turkish learners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V + particle</td>
<td>9 (8 %)</td>
<td>17 (27 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>particle + V</td>
<td>104 (92 %)</td>
<td>46 (73 %)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3: Verb placement in sentences containing particles for learners of Dutch*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>OOK</th>
<th>NIET</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turkish learners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V + particle</td>
<td>9 (11 %)</td>
<td>5 (8 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>particle + V</td>
<td>72 (89 %)</td>
<td>60 (92 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroccan learners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V + particle</td>
<td>57 (59 %)</td>
<td>45 (58 %)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In L2 German, verbs occur in a syntactically finite position more often when a sentence contains the negative particle *nicht* than when it contains the additive particle *auch* ($\chi^2(1)=11.622$, $p=.001$). This finding is in line with earlier reports in the literature that *nicht* promotes finiteness. In L2 Dutch, no such difference is found for *niet* versus *ook* and there is even a slight tendency in the opposite direction for both language groups.

Let us now turn to the second research question and look at the verb forms that are used in the two syntactic positions, shown in Tables 4 and 5. As specified above, ‘finite’ here refers to verbs ending on –*t*, and ‘nonfinite’ refers to verbs ending on –*en* as well as past participles.

*Table 4: Verb placement and morphological marking in sentences containing particles for learners of German*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AUCH</th>
<th>NICHT</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Turkish learners</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vfin + particle</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vinf + particle</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>particle + Vfin</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>particle + Vinf</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall finiteness rate</td>
<td>50/113 (44 %)</td>
<td>20/63 (32 %)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5: Verb placement and morphological marking in sentences containing particles for learners of Dutch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>OOK</th>
<th>NIET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Turkish learners</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vfin + particle</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vinf + particle</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>particle + Vfin</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>particle + Vinf</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall finiteness rate</td>
<td>29/81 (36%)</td>
<td>7/65 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Moroccan learners</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vfin + particle</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vinf + particle</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>particle + Vfin</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>particle + Vinf</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall finiteness rate</td>
<td>69/96 (72%)</td>
<td>45/78 (58%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For both languages, there are clear contingencies between verb placement and verb form for negated utterances: verbs that precede the particle are mainly finite, whereas verbs that follow the particle are mainly nonfinite. This is quite different from what happens in sentences with additive particles, however, where verbs following the particle are often finite. In German, 43 out of all the 104 verbs following the particle *auch* are finite, but only 6 out of all the 46 verbs following *nicht* are. This difference is significant ($\chi^2(1)=11.615$, p<.001). For Dutch, the same pattern can be observed: the Turkish learners inflect 22 out of all the 72 verbs that follow an additive particles...
for finiteness, but only 5 out of all the 60 verbs that follow negation ($\chi^2(1)=9.933$, $p=.001$). For the Moroccan learners, these numbers are 17 out of 39 and 3 out of 33, respectively, and this difference is also highly significant ($\chi^2(1)=10.604$, $p=.001$). The examples in (9) and (10) illustrate the placement of finite verbs behind additive particles for a Turkish learner of German and a Turkish learner of Dutch:

(9) Grüne Mann auch springt.
    ‘Green man also jumps’

(10) De groene man ook slaapt.
    ‘The green man also sleeps’

A comparison of finiteness marking in sentences with additive and negative particles also shows that finiteness is more frequent overall in sentences with additive particles than in negated sentences. For German, 50 out of all the 113 verbs that co-occur with auch are finite, whereas only 20 out of all the 63 verbs that co-occur with nicht are. This difference is only marginally significant ($\chi^2(1)=2.639$, $p=.071$). The differences for Dutch are significant for both language groups, however: in the data from the Turks, 29 out of all the 81 verbs in sentences with additive particles are finite and 7 out of all the 65 verbs occurring with negation are ($\chi^2(1)=12.164$, $p<.001$). For the Moroccan learners, these numbers are 69 out of 96 and 45 out of 78, respectively ($\chi^2(1)=3.832$, $p=.036$).
Summarizing, the data presented in this section show that:

- verbs appear in a syntactically finite position more often in sentences with negation than additive particles (German) or about equally often in both types of sentence (Dutch);
- finite verbs follow additive particles significantly more often than negation for both target languages;
- morphological finiteness is more frequent overall in sentences with additive than negation particles in both languages and this difference is most prominent in Dutch.

The first two results confirm the above-described earlier findings in the literature. The last point, however, has not been noted before. In fact, the opposite pattern has been reported (Dietrich & Grommes, 1998; Winkler, 2005).

This observation is compatible, however, with Dimroth’s idea explained above that additive particles and negation have different scope properties and thereby have a different function in learner utterances. Additive particles typically have scope over the topic and thus appear adjacent to the topic. Taking this one step further, one might assume that the topic and the additive particle are perceived as a unit by learners: that is, the additive particle forms part of the topic component of an utterance in the learner’s mind. From this perspective, it is not surprising that even when learners have acquired finiteness marking, they still find it hard to separate the particle from the topic with a finite verb. This explains the relatively conservative
syntactic behavior of additive particles. But how can one explain that utterances with additive particles contain a morphologically finite verb more often than negative utterances, even when the verb follows the particle? At first sight this finding is hard to reconcile with the idea that additive particles are close precursors of finiteness because they imply a previous assertion and could thus be seen as ‘repeated assertions’, whereas negation does not add any assertion-related meaning to the utterance. On the other hand, however, negation in learner language shares a property with finiteness: it links the predicate of an utterance to its topic. In this sense, it might be considered a closer precursor of finiteness than additive particle. This idea is also alluded to by Dimroth (2009) when pointing out that negation functions as a link in beginning learners’ negated utterances, and that, in contrast, additive particles rather function as pointers to previous assertions, as ‘anaphoric assertion operators’. Additive particles need not link the predicate of an utterance to its topic, as the predicate is already (explicitly or implicitly) given in context (e.g., Mr Red sleep. Mr Green also sleep).

For negation, this suggests that there are different factors pulling in different directions. From a purely scope-based perspective, it seems that a syntactically finite position is easier to acquire with negation than with additive particles: when learners acquire to use finite verbs, they can place these verbs before the negator and still keep the particle adjacent to the verb, namely to the right rather than to the left of it. However, it might be that the fact that negation fulfills a similar (linking) function as finiteness makes it hard to realize a morphologically finite verb in the same utterance.
following negation: as long as negation is in second position, there already is a link between the topic and the predicate of an utterance, and this might make finiteness marking seem redundant. This would thus explain why on the surface, there is no salient difference between the two particles in terms of syntax, while there is a clear difference for morphology: in negated utterances, there is less need for finiteness marking than in utterances with additive particles, at least as long as learners leave verbs in non-raised position. Adopting this explanation for the moment, this leads to an interesting prediction that can be tested in the current data, namely that additive and negative particles should not only differ from each other with respect to finite lexical verbs, but also with respect to light verbs, such as modal verbs and auxiliaries. This point is taken up and investigated in the next section.

5.2 Light verbs

Earlier studies have shown that light verbs always occupy a finite position in negated sentences, consistently preceding negation (Becker, 2005; Verhagen, 2009). On a scope-based account such as Dimroth’s (2009), these consistent placement preferences in negative sentences are not surprising: Light verbs contribute little semantic information to the predicate of an utterance. As a consequence, the negative particle can precede its domain of application, the predicate, even if it is placed in a position following a light verb. Consider example (8) again, taken up as (11) here,
together with a version of the same negated utterance containing a light verb, willen (to want), in (12):

(11) Hij springt niet.
   ‘He jumps not’

(12) Hij wil niet springen.
   ‘He wants not jump’

In (11), the domain of application of the negative particle, the verb, precedes the negator due to target-like placement in second position. In (12), verb placement is target-like as well, but as the finite position is occupied by a light verb, the negator can still precede its domain of application, the lexical verb. Thus, learners should rarely place light verbs after negative particle. Not only would they create a less transparent order of negation and its domain of application, but there would also be a redundant link: the negator in second position already functions as a link, and should not be easily combinable with a finite element, such as a finite light verb. This is indeed what has been reported in the literature (Becker, 2005; Verhagen, 2009).

If these explanations are correct, we can predict that light verbs behave differently with respect to additive particles: unlike for negation, learners would have to break up the adjacent positioning of the topic and the additive particle when placing the light verb in a target-like position. To avoid this, they might place the
light verb after the particle. Also, since the particle does not function as a link, the placement of light verbs in a position following the additive particle does not lead to the same redundancy in the use of 'links' as in the case of negation. Indeed, there are suggestions in the literature that light verbs can appear after additive particles (see in particular Schimke et al., 2008). However, no systematic comparison with negated utterances has been made so far.

Table 6 and 7 show how often the L2 learners placed light verbs (copula, modal and auxiliary verbs) before and after additive and negation particles.

### Table 6: Placement of light verbs in sentences containing particles for learners of German

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AUCH</th>
<th>NICHT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Turkish learners</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light V + particle</td>
<td>17 (77%)</td>
<td>33 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>particle + Light V</td>
<td>5 (23%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 7: Placement of light verbs in sentences containing particles for learners of Dutch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>OOK</th>
<th>NIET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Turkish learners</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light V + particle</td>
<td>35 (69%)</td>
<td>65 (92%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>particle + Light V</td>
<td>16 (31%)</td>
<td>6 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Moroccan learners</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light V + particle</td>
<td>56 (62%)</td>
<td>171 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>particle + Light V</td>
<td>35 (38%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data confirm the prediction for all learner groups: light verbs appear after additive particles relatively often, and as such behave like finite lexical verbs. However, light verbs never appear behind negation in two out of the learner groups (Turkish learners of German and Moroccan learners of Dutch) or only rarely so (Turkish learners of Dutch). The example in (13) illustrates the placement of light verbs before the additive particle ook but after the negator niet for a Moroccan learner of Dutch in adjacent scene descriptions:

(13) Maar de meneer is bang. ‘But the man is scared’
    Wil niet op de tapijt daar gekomen. ‘Wants not on the carpet there come’
    Maar de meneer wil niet. ‘But the man wants not’
    De groene man hij ook is bang. ‘But the green man he also is scared’
    Maar de rode man wil niet. ‘But the red man wants not’

Illustrative in this respect are utterances in which a light verb follows an additive particle but precedes a negative particle, such as (14) and (15) that were produced by a Turkish learner of German and a Turkish learner of Dutch, respectively. Such utterances were not included in the counts in Table 6 and 7 but clearly demonstrate that additive particles behave differently with respect to light verbs.

(14) Rote auch möchte nicht springen. ‘Red also wants not jump’
Rode man ook wil niet springen.

‘Red man also wants not jump’

The Moroccan learners of Dutch, in particular, often produce utterances of this type; all 17 utterances that are found in which ook and niet co-occur are of the type in (15).

6. Discussion and conclusions

In this paper, two questions have been investigated in a sample of Turkish and Moroccan learners of Dutch and Turkish learners of German: Do additive and negative particles have a different effect on syntactic finiteness, and do they have a different effect on morphological finiteness?

Regarding the first question, it was found that there was no noticeable difference between the two particles in L2 Dutch, and that in L2 German, negative particles tend to occur in syntactically finite utterances more often than additive particles. We will return to the lack of an effect in the Dutch data below. For the moment, one can conclude that there is either no difference between the particles, or the difference goes into the expected direction. This behavior goes well together with the explanation by Dimroth (2009) that particles might be easier or harder to separate from the topic entity depending on their typical scope direction: the topic for additive particles and the predicate for negation particles. Additional evidence for this idea
comes from utterances in which additive particles precede the topic (as in 16) or appear in combination with a preposed topic that is then taken up by a resumptive pronoun (as in (17)).

(16) Ook rode man springt niet.
    ‘Also red man jumps not’

The second case is illustrated in example (17):

(17) Rote Mann auch er schlêft.
    ‘Red man also he sleeps’

Such utterances support the idea that additive particles are part of the topic component in early learner language, and thereby support the analysis by Dimroth (2009), according to which the typical scope domain of different particles strongly influences where particles are placed in the utterance. Indeed, a look at negative particles in the corpus shows that such particles never occur in a position preceding the topic.

In addition to scope properties, Dimroth (2009) takes the similarity in the function of particles and finiteness into account, and assumes that these also contribute to the different effect on finiteness. According to Dimroth, additive particles make the realization of finiteness in an utterance less likely, because learners
might perceive finiteness as redundant: there is already an element, the additive
particle, which anaphorically refers to a previous assertion. This could, at least in
part, explain why utterances containing additive particles are finite less often than
baseline utterances which do not contain any particle at all, as was found by Schimke
et al. (2008). However, the present data show that, contrary to what has been assumed
by Dimroth (2009), there is even a larger difference between particle and baseline
sentences for negative utterances: in the present corpus, negative utterances were
morphologically finite even less often than utterances with additive particles (that
have previously been shown to be less often finite than baseline utterances in the
same corpus, cf. Schimke et al., 2008). This effect is mainly carried by finite verbs
(both lexical verbs and light verbs) frequently following additive particles, but not
negation. So, there is a difference between negated sentences and sentences with
additive particles in the strength of the relation between syntactic and morphological
finiteness: in negated sentences, finite verbs mainly precede negation, whereas non-
finite verbs mainly follow negation. In sentences with additive particles, non-finite
verbs also mainly follow the additive particle, but finite verbs can both follow and
precede it. This pattern, which is quite strong and holds for all source and target
language combinations investigated, could only be detected because syntactic and
morphological finiteness were considered separately.

It has been argued above that the present results are compatible with the idea
that negation is a closer precursor of finiteness than additive particles, and therefore
has a stronger blocking function on the morphological realization of finiteness. It is
important to note that this idea of functional similarity is not independent of scope properties. That is, being part of the topic component, additive particles cannot fulfill at the same time a linking function (as does negation) in the utterance, connecting the topic component to the predicate. To sum up, then, we propose that the different results for morphological finiteness in sentences with negative and additive particles are due to the different scope properties of these particles and the resulting different functions of both particles in learner utterances, much in line with the ideas put forth by Dimroth (2009). However, it has to be noted that the present outcome for negative utterances stands in contradiction with previous studies that found that negative utterances are finite earlier in the acquisition process than other (non-negated) utterances. We will end the present paper with some observations relating to this difference between our results and those of previous studies. Future studies could take these differences into account, estimate their impact, and thereby maybe find out under which circumstances negative utterances are indeed more or less finite than other utterances.

The studies which reported negated utterances to be finite more often and earlier than non-negated utterances are Winkler (2005) on L1 German and Dietrich and Grommes (1998) on L2 German. Both studies differ from the present study in that the analysis did not involve only third person singular contexts but all kinds of contexts. This might be problematic because especially in first person singular contexts, there may be frequent combinations of verbs and the negator, such as *Ich weiss nicht* ‘I do not know’, that do not reflect productive use of verb placement.
Moreover, it does not seem implausible that negation occurs particularly often with certain light verbs in utterances such as *Ich will nicht* ‘I don’t want to’ or *Ich kann nicht* ‘I am not able to’. Whereas Winkler (2005) reports to have excluded such utterances from analysis, Dietrich and Grommes (1998) do not specify whether light verbs were included. Finally, both Winkler (2005) and Dietrich and Grommes (1998) looked at spontaneous production data rather than controlled or semi-controlled data. In this type of data, particles will particularly often appear in those configurations that can be considered ‘typical’ for the particle in question in natural discourse. For negated utterances, this means that in many of the instances that were investigated in these studies, negation probably had scope over the predicate. In contrast, the elicited production data used in the present study contained various contexts with a contrastive topic, as almost all of the displayed events in the film happened (or do not happened) for each of the three protagonists. So, for example, in one film scene Mr. Red does not jump out of the window, and then, in the next scene, Mr. Green does not jump out of the window either. One might argue that utterances in which the topic entity changes but the (negated) predicate is maintained represent ‘atypical’ information structures for negation: negation can be assumed to have scope over the contrastive topic in such an utterance, rather than over the predicate. This might have led to learners being reluctant to separate the topic from the negative particle, just as in similar cases for additive particles. It might thus often have been particularly hard for the learners in the present study to place the verb to the left of the negator, since often this meant separating the negative particle from the topic over which it had
scope. In a sense, the stimulus used in the present study thus elicits negated utterances that, in information structural terms, are unusually similar to utterances containing additive particles. It might be that in cases where negation has scope over the predicate more clearly, learners have less trouble placing the verb to the left of negation. Based on the clear observation in the present study that there is a stronger relation between morphology and syntax for negated utterances than for utterances containing additive particles, one would predict that all the utterances with the verb placed to the left of negation should be finite, and this would raise the proportion of the realization of finiteness in negated contexts. Future research should thus not only compare finiteness marking for different types of particles, but also take scope relations into account, thus looking at the effects of a particle on the realization of finiteness separately for different scope relations.

REFERENCES


The two first authors contributed equally to this paper. The authors wish to thank Christine Dimroth for helpful discussions and Sandra Benazzo for valuable comments on an earlier version of this paper.

Note that the result for additive particles is not in contradiction with the fact that *auch* is often considered as a trigger of finiteness in these studies (Penner et al., 2002). Indeed, this concept seems to indicate that *auch* takes a position in early learner utterances that is reserved for the finite verb at later stages. This idea is mentioned by Winkler (2009) when stating that the focus particle has an ‘ambiguous’ nature: although the presence of *auch* might help the learner to first build additional structural layers above the VP, its information structural properties, as analyzed by Dimroth (2009) (see below) might hinder the realization of finiteness in utterances containing *auch*.

Note that the present study uses in part the same data as analyzed in Schimke et al. (2008), but that these were extended in three ways: (i) the present analysis was based on all rather than some specific scenes (see description below and in Schimke et al., 2008), (ii) not only utterances containing additive, but also utterances containing negative particles were considered, and (iii) data from an additional learner group – Moroccan learners of Dutch – were taken into account.

Note that the opposite outcome (i.e., more morphological finiteness marking in negative utterances) would not have been incompatible with the explanation presented here neither: it is easily conceivable that negated utterances might be more often morphologically finite overall than other utterances because of the more frequent realization of syntactic finiteness, which, in these utterances, goes together with morphological finiteness.