

# **Scope particles and information structure:**

**perspective taking in  
advanced second language discourse**

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# RESEARCH TOPIC

- how advanced second language learners ensure discourse cohesion in narrative productions, in particular:
  - the acquisition of scope bearing elements
  - their interaction with the information structure of contextualized utterances

**WHY...**

....scope particles?

....very advanced learners?

...narrative discourse?

# BASIC LEARNER'S TASK

- very early emergence (Becker & Dietrich 1996, Dimroth 1998, Andorno 2000, Benazzo 2000, 2008; Watorek & Perdue 1999)
- the acquisition of their specific features:  
a complex task for the learner

a. **Anche** Mario ha abbracciato il poliziotto  
[*as did someone else*]

b. Mario ha **anche** abbracciato il poliziotto  
[*besides greeting him*]

c. Mario ha **anche** abbracciato il poliziotto  
[*as well as someone else*]

d. Mario ha abbracciato **anche** il poliziotto  
[*as well as someone else*]

# ADVANCED LEARNER'S TASK




sentence grammar... ...mainly ok

Scope marking given the information structure... ...in context?

Discourse cohesion achieved... ...is it target-like?

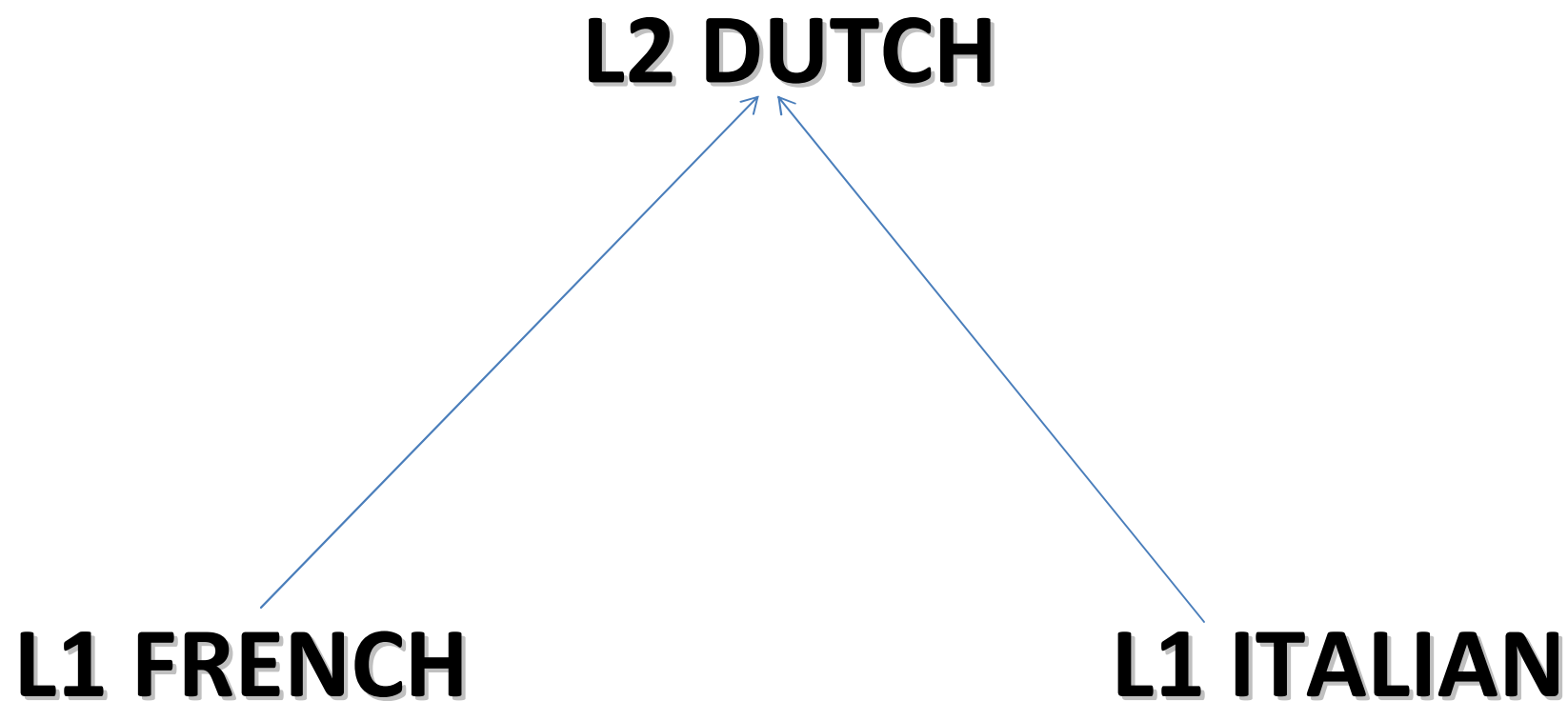
**typological constraints impact in advanced stages  
(the Heidelberg group work on time and aspect; Stutterheim & Lambert 2005, Carroll & Stutterheim 2003)**

# CROSSLINGUISTIC PREFERENCES

	topic	assertion	predicate
<b>GERMANIC</b> <b>Languages</b> (Dutch, German)		 assertion-related particle system	
<b>ROMANCE</b> <b>Languages</b> (French, Italian)	<b>topic</b> descriptive content	assertion	<b>predicate</b> descriptive content

Dimroth *et al.* 2009

# L2 ADVANCED LEARNERS



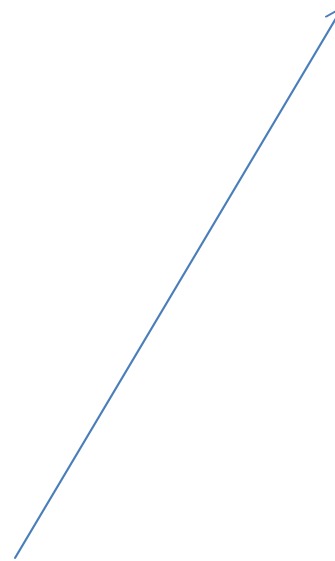
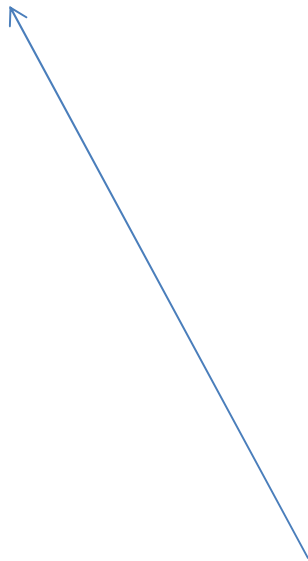


# L2 ADVANCED LEARNERS

L2 FRENCH

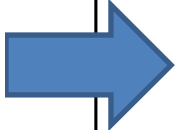
L2 ITALIAN

L1 DUTCH



# The Finite Story

Type	Descriptive content of antecedent (1) and subsequent utterance (2)	Information configuration of (2) in comparison to (1)				Example utterances with corresponding information structure marking
		Topic		POL	PRED	
		TT	TE			
I	1: Mr. Red going to bed 2: Mr. Blue going to bed	shift	≠	=	=	1: <i>Mr. Red goes to bed</i> 2: <i>Mr. Blue also goes to bed</i>
II	1: Mr. Green not jumping 2: Mr. Blue jumping		≠	≠		1: <i>Mr. Green doesn't jump</i> 2: <i>Mr. Blue on the other hand does jump</i>
III	1: Mr. Red not jumping 2: Mr. Red jumping	=	≠	1: <i>Mr. Red doesn't jump</i> 2: <i>Mr. Red eventually jumps</i>		
IV	1. Mr. Red sleeping 2. Mr. Red <i>still</i> sleeping	≠	=	=		1: <i>Mr. Red sleeps</i> 2: <i>Mr. Red is still sleeping</i>



**Experimental stimuli  
for elicitation of  
assertion-contrasts**

**a new elicited production task**

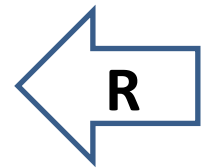
**GERMANIC & ROMANCE divergence:  
assertion-related vs descriptive content  
contrast marking**

**≠ TE / ≠ POL / = PRED**

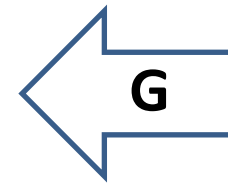
# ≠ TE / ≠ POL / = PRED

– relevant antecedent: *Mr. Green and Mr. Red do not jump out of the window*

a. *Mr Blue on the other hand jumps out of the window*



b. *Mr Blue DOES jump out of the window*



# comparing 2 task types

- “The Finite Story”: a semi-controlled elicitation production task
- a more controlled elicitation production task
- **elicitation of different or similar items of contrast marking?**

# **Advanced Learners**

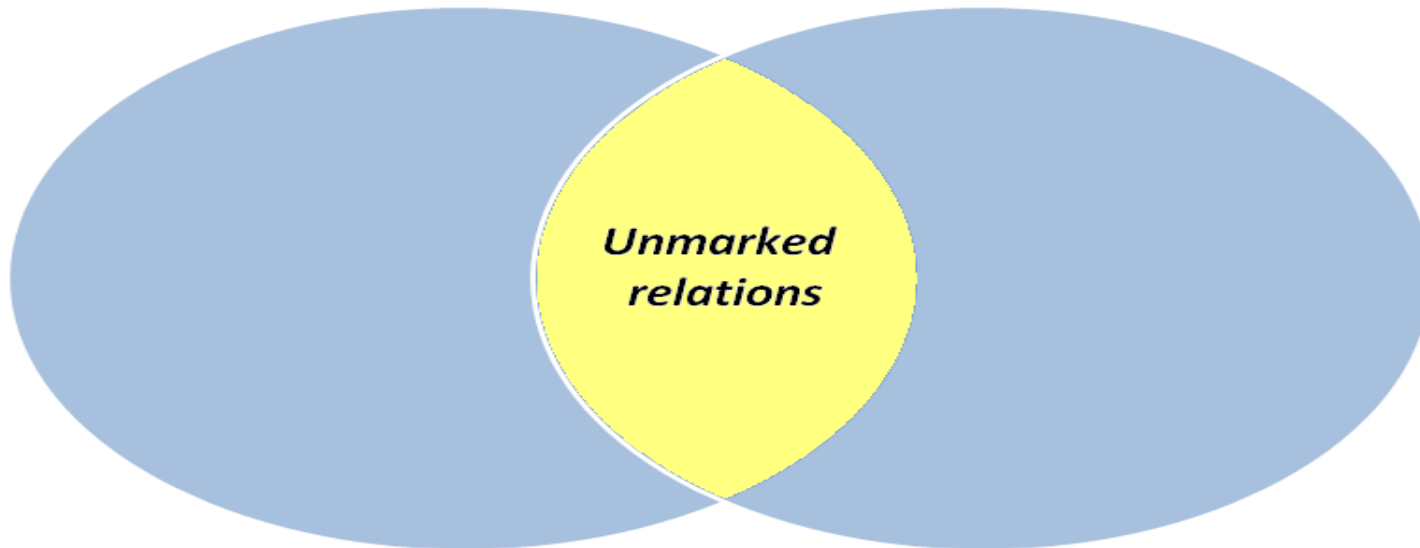
The Finite story

[ITL1/FR L1]

[DT L1]

**DT L2**

**FR L2/IT L2**



*meneer blauw komt bij het raam om te kijken, wat er aan de hand is*

*il signor Blu si è alzato*

*Bleu saute car il y a déjà le feu dans sa chambre*

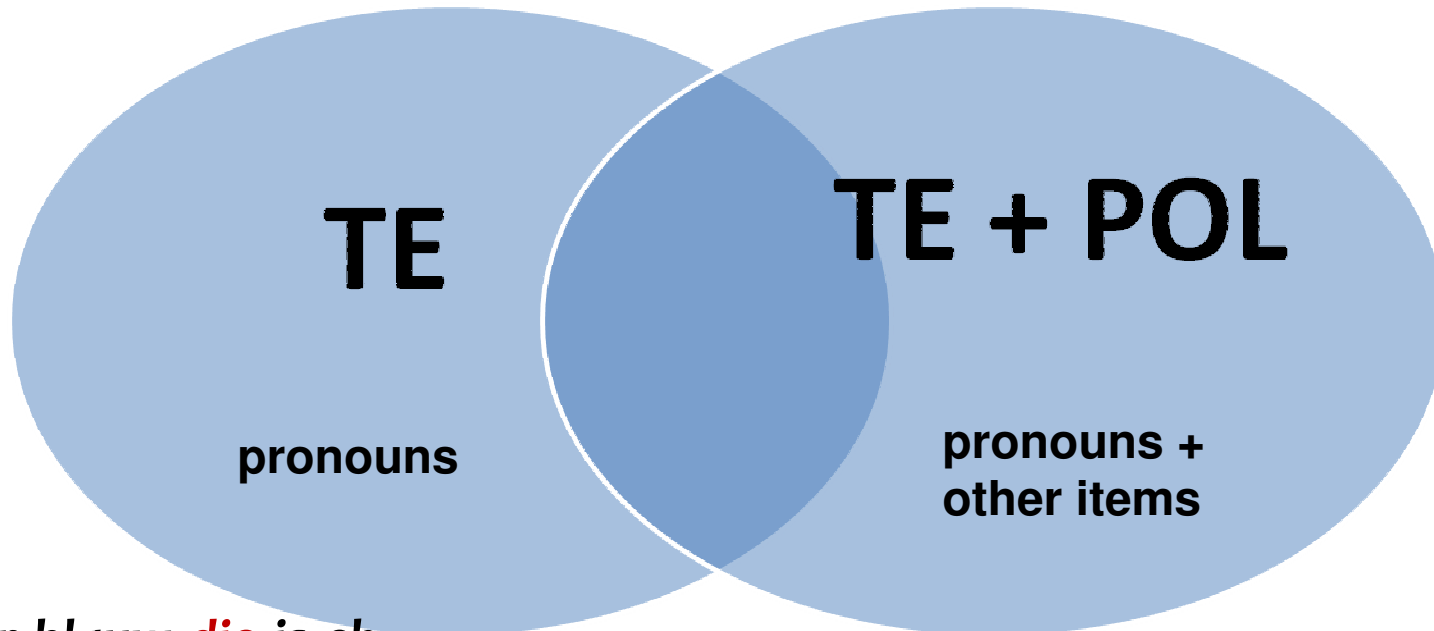


[FR L1]

[DT L1]

DT L2

FR L2



*meneer blauw **die** is eh wakker worden*

*peu ils sont au milieu en dessus de la fenêtre de MB je crois que **lui** même si la fenêtre est plus haut de les autres **lui quand même** il ose sauter*

[IT L1]

[DT L1]

**DT L2**

**IT L2**

**POL**

**TE + POL**

particles

pronouns +  
other items

...dus eh meneer  
blauw springt **wel** uit  
het raam en eh ehm  
het lukt eh het lukt  
hem **wel** om eh ehm  
eh veilig aan eh de  
grond te komen

*e adesso nella camera  
del signor Blu anche lì  
è acceso il fuoco e **lui**  
**sì** che si lascia cadere  
dalla finestra*

# **Experimental design & preliminaries**

# Semi-spontaneous production: The FS

## 1) intransitive verbs

⇒ *Blue SAUTE (car il y a le feu dans sa chambre)*

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## 2) unmarked relations

⇒ *meneer blauw komt bij het raam om te kijken, wat er aan de hand is*

# Semi-spontaneous production: The FS

## 1) intransitive verbs

⇒ *Blue SAUTE (car il y a le feu dans sa chambre)*

## 2) unmarked relations

⇒ *meneer blauw komt bij het raam om te kijken, wat er aan de hand is*

## 3) not simple utterances

⇒ *voilà il y a Monsieur Bleu: qui habite au: dernier étage <au> au plus haut dans la maison # qui: <euh> quand il voit les pompiers en bas de chez lui <euh> et les flammes bah il les voit pas mais on le voit bien que les flammes qui rentrent dans son dans son appartement bah il saute de la fenêtre et il est sauvé par les quatre pompiers sane et sauve sur le sol*

# **a more controlled elicitation task**

**1) ~~in~~transitive verbs**

**2) ~~un~~marked relations only**

**3) ~~not~~ simple utterances**

# a more controlled elicitation task

**≠ TE / ≠ POL / = PRED**

**3-step schema: assertion-negation-assertion process**

“incompatible viewpoints taken up by participants will cause ‘tension’ in a discourse” (Bakhtin, 1981; Foolen, 2006)

**“The Polarity-Switch-Dialogue”**

(Turco, 2008)



Baseline picture



contrast



Negation picture

In my pic the girl does **not** paint the flower

**A**

In my pic the girl **DOES** draw the flower

**B**

contrast

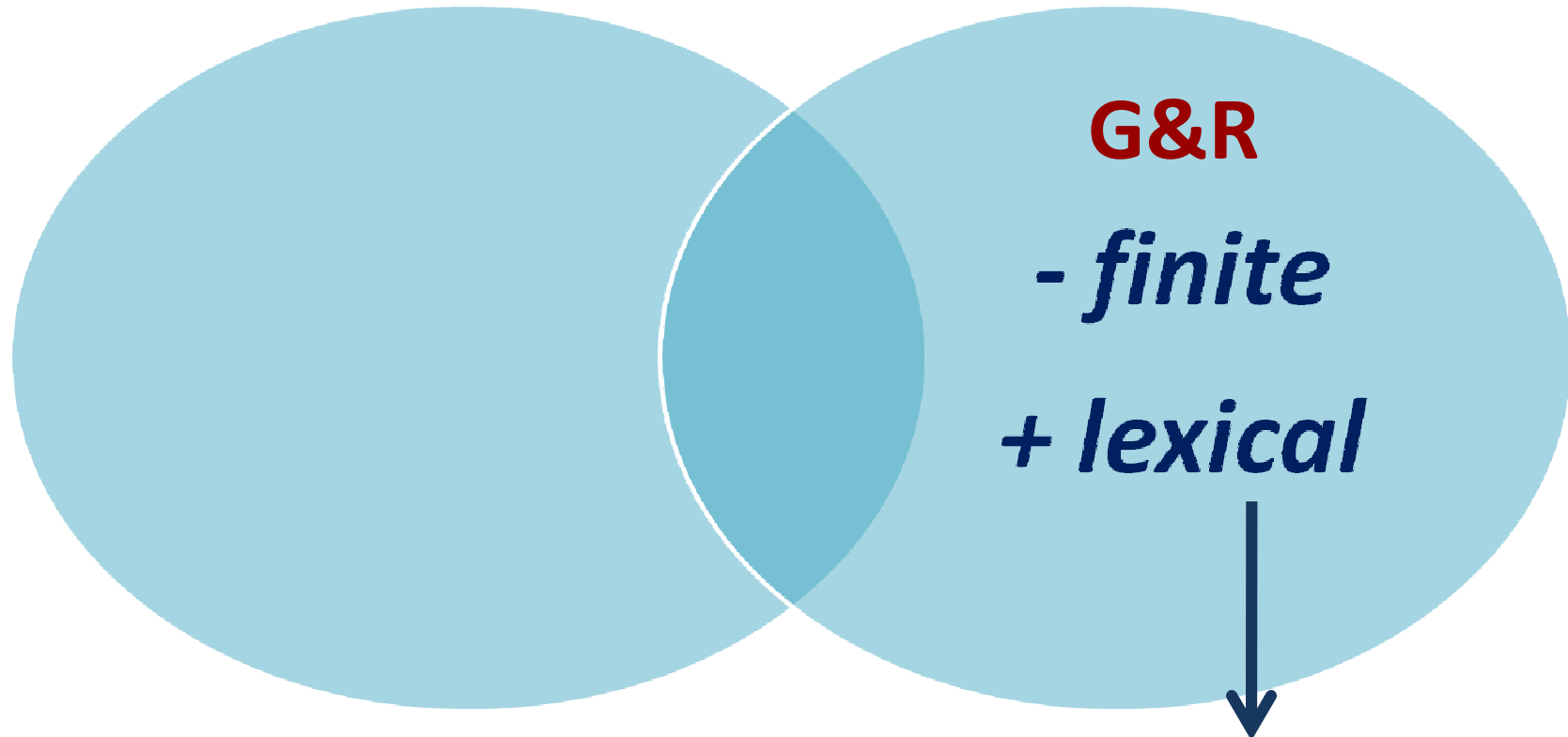


Assertion picture

# Research Questions

- Do Dutch native speakers use items of emphatic affirmation?
  - ***Wel/toch; Verum Focus (Höhle, 1992)***
- What would Italian and French native speakers do instead?
  - **Stressed VP or any other means (i.e. intensifiers, adverbs)**
- What advanced L2 speakers do?

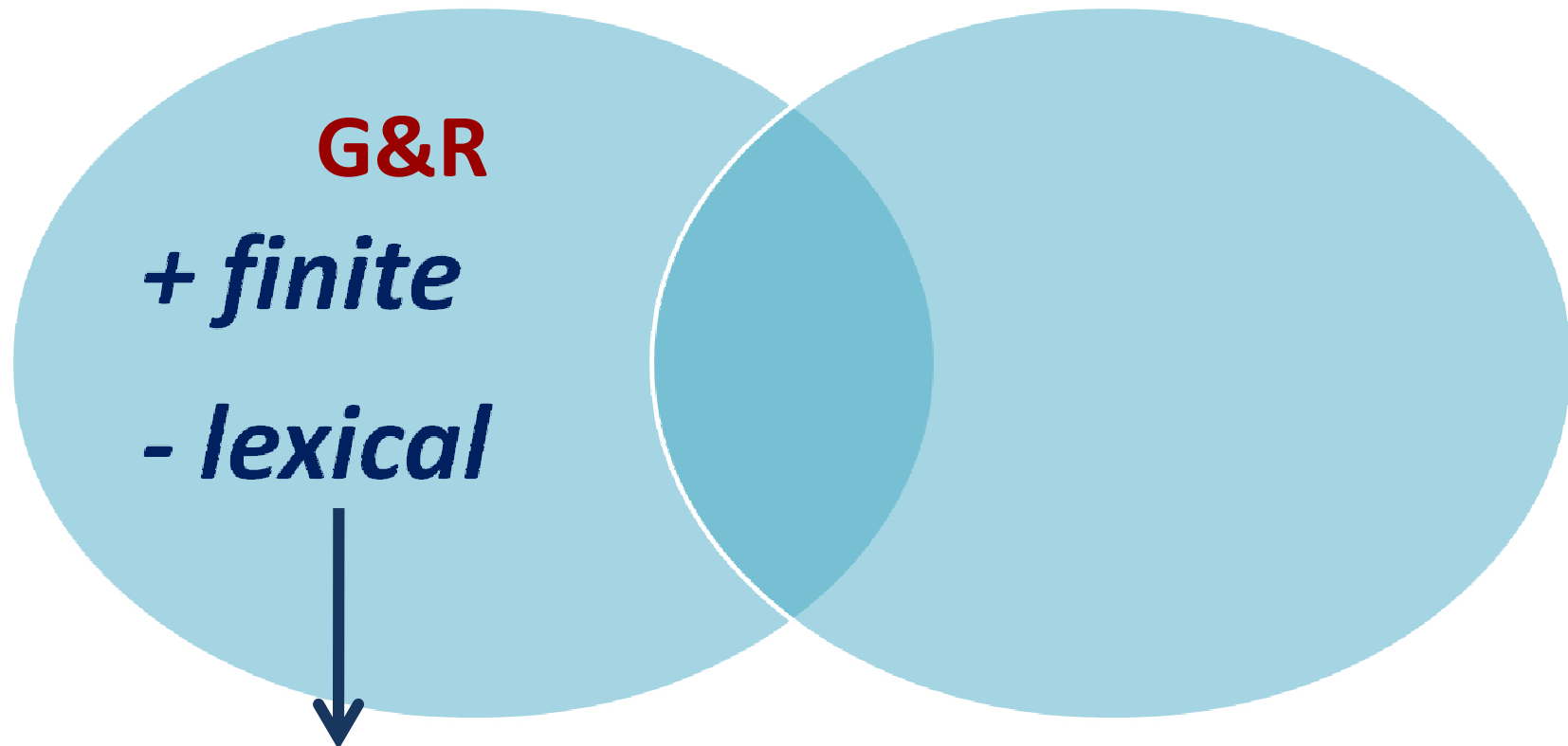
**Q1:** Has the boy **tuned** the piano?



*The boy has **PLAYED**  
the piano*

[Lexical-content contrast]

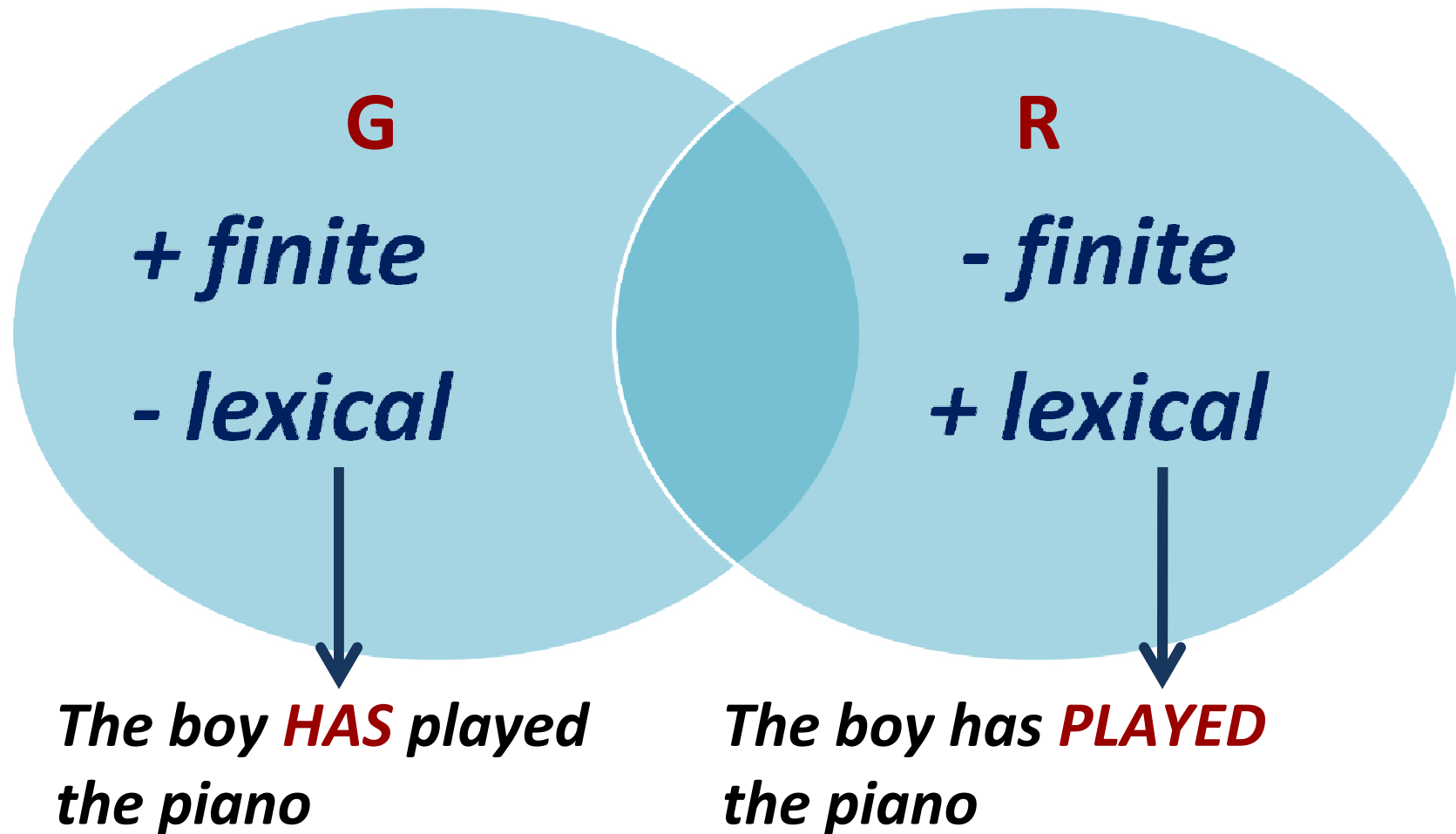
Q2: **Was** the boy playing the piano?



*The boy **is** playing the piano*

[Temporal contrast]

Q3: Has the boy **not** played the piano?



[Assertion contrast]

Baseline picture



contrast

In my pic the girl does **not** paint the flower

In my pic the girl **DOES** draw the flower

contrast

**A**?

**B**?

Negation picture



Assertion picture



# Participants

- Negation picture:  
Speaker A
- Assertion picture:  
Speaker B
- an assistant experimenter
- the participant

# Structured elicitations

5 each

SPEAKER A: source items

SPEAKER B: target items

→ pA S + Neg + VFin

→ pB S + Neg + Aux + VInf

→ pC S + Neg + Cop + PredP

← pA S + VFin

← pB S + Aux + VInf

← pC S + Cop + PredP

Fillers:

≠ TE / = POL / = PRED

= TE / = POL / ≠ PRED



# Task Prompt

- *Spot the difference between your picture and the picture on the wall....*
- *....Be clear!*

Baseline picture



contrast



Negation picture

In my pic the girl does **not** paint the flower

A

~~In my pic she **DOES** it~~

B

contrast



Assertion picture

# Learning Effects

- **Speaker A's  
(negation) Contrast**

Baseline picture



contrast



Negation picture

the blue girl  
★ does  
**NOT** paint the  
flower

A

the girl  
**DOES**  
draw the  
flower

B

contrast



Assertion picture

# Learning Effects

items within the  
utterance:  
alternatively  
marked

- **Speaker A's  
(negation) Contrast**

# Marked contrasts

1<sup>st</sup> series of item

- S + **NEG** + VFin
- S + Neg + **AUX** + VInf
- S + **NEG** + Cop + PredP
- S + **AUX** + VInf

2<sup>nd</sup> series of item

- S + Neg + **V-FIN**
- S + Neg + Aux + **V-INF**
- S + Neg + **COP** + PredP
- S + Aux + **V-INF**

randomizing

UNMARKED

Baseline picture



contrast



Negation picture

the girl does not paint the flower

A

the girl DOES draw the flower

B

contrast



Assertion picture

# Learning Effects

items within the  
utterance:  
alternatively  
marked

- **Speaker A's  
(negation) Contrast**

**Variable: Unmarked**



# Setting & Materials

- **Baseline pictures:**
  - on the wall
  - visibly accessible to both participants
- **Negation & Assertion Pictures:**
  - collected in a booklet
- **Further development:**
  - a more complex picture (poster)

# Further aims

1. items of emphatic affirmation
2. additive particles (*also, too, ...*)
3. temporal adverbial + emphatic particles (*toch, doch*) in  $\neq$  time points

**A first trial**

**Native speakers' judgments**

# Pilot data L1 DT

op mijn plaatje tekent ze wel een bloem 📢

Vfin

op mijn plaatje heeft hij wel een tarte opgegeten 📢

Aux

VInf

# Pilot data L1 DT natives' judgments

op mijn plaatje tekent ze **wel** een bloem

Vfin

op mijn plaatje heeft hij **wel** een tarte opgegeten

Aux

VInf

# Pilot data L1 FR > L2 DT

op mijn plaatje schrijft de man wel een brief 

Vfin

op mijn plaatje heeft de hond <eeh> de taart wel  
opgegeten 

Aux

VInf

# Pilot data L1 FR > L2 DT natives' judgments

op mijn plaatje schrijft de man **wel** een brief

*Vfin*

op mijn plaatje heeft de hond <eeh> de taart **wel**  
opgegeten

*Aux*

*VInf*

# Pilot data L1 FR

dans mon image la jeune fille ouvre une boîte 

Vfin

dans mon image le chien a mangé la tarte 

Aux VInf

dans mon image elle a *bien* pris un bain 

Aux VInf



# Pilot data L1 FR natives' judgments

dans mon **image** la jeune fille **ouvre** une boîte  
Vfin

dans mon image le **chien** a **mangé** la tarte  
Aux VInf

dans mon **image** elle a **bien** pris un bain  
Aux VInf

# Pilot data L1 DT > L2 FR

le contraire il a mangé la la tarte 🗣️

Aux VInf

il a volé l'argent 🗣️

Aux VInf

le plat est *effectivement* vide ici 🗣️

Cop

PredP

# Pilot data L1 DT > L2 FR natives' judgments

le contraire il **a** mangé la la tarte

Aux VInf

il **a** volé l'argent

Aux VInf

le plat est *effectivement* vide ici

Cop

PredP

# Pilot data L1 IT

nella mia immagine il cane mangia la torta 📢

Vfin

nella mia immagine la ragazza non disegna il fiore 📢

Neg VInf

nella mia immagine la donna ha comprato il gelato

Aux VInf



# Pilot data L1 IT natives' judgments

nella mia **immagine** il cane **mangia** la torta

Vfin

nella mia immagine la ragazza non **disegna** il fiore

Neg VInf

nella mia immagine la **donna** ha **comprato** il gelato

Aux VInf

# Pilot data L1 DT > L2 IT

nella mia *invece* *sì* apre la lattina 🗣️

Vfin

nella mia *invece* *sì*<ììììììì> la ragazza # ha preso il  
bagno 🗣️ Aux VInf

nella mia *invece*<ee> *sì* quel castoro ha salvato  
*infatti* il/ la barchetta 🗣️ Aux VInf

# Pilot data L1 DT > L2 IT

nella mia *invece* *sì* **apre** la lattina  
*Vfin*

nella mia *invece* *sì*<ìììììììì> la ragazza # ha **preso** il  
bagno *Aux VInf*

nella mia *invece*<ee> *sì* quel castoro ha **salvato**  
*infatti* il/ la barchetta *Aux VInf*

# Tentative observations

## **NATIVE SPEAKERS**

- DT: contrast marking via *wel* particle (on the assertion)
- FR&IT: contrast marking on VInf and on elements of the Topic domain...

## **ADVANCED LEARNERS**

- Ls make use of linguistic means not used in the FS (es. FRL1>DTL2: *wel*)



**THANK YOU!**