

The Relation between Finiteness Morphology and Verb-Second: An Empirical Study of Heritage Norwegian

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1. Introduction

All Germanic languages, including Norwegian, have verb-second word order (V2) in main clause declaratives. English is the exception to this, being the only Germanic language known to have lost V2 in declarative main clauses Harbert (2007: 404–405).¹ Eide (2009, 2016) suggests that this syntactic difference can be explained by relating V2 to the finiteness morphology of the verb. However, no theoretical necessity for the relationship between finiteness morphology and V2 is stated in Eide (2009, 2016), nor in Eide & Hjelde (2015).

This article is an empirical study which investigates this proposed link between a productive, morphologically marked finiteness distinction on verbs (M-finiteness) and V2 in main clause declaratives. I present data from nine heritage speakers of Norwegian. My data do not show a correlation between the presence or lack of M-finiteness and loss or retention of V2 (see sections 5 and 6). Consequently, I argue that the data presented in this article are inconsistent with the hypothesis about a causal link between M-finiteness and V2. In a broader perspective, these findings are consistent with syntactic change being driven by factors other than verbal morphology.

A premise for Eide's theory is that *finiteness* is a primitive, underived grammatical category, that can be explicitly marked on verbs. Accordingly, a verb form can be either non-finite [–FIN] or finite [+FIN]. This means that even though finiteness is often associated with tense and/or mood, it is not derived from these categories. Furthermore, this approach assumes one basic tense distinction in Germanic languages, namely between past [+PAST], and non-past [–PAST]. For Norwegian, this creates a system for main verbs like the one exemplified in Table 1.

Eide (2009: 364–366) argues that the loss of the explicitly marked finiteness distinction is the factor that causes the loss of V2 in declarative main clauses in English. It is only the productive class of weak verbs that serves as a diagnostic of productive morphological finiteness.² Moreover, irregular morphological verbal forms in English are held not to encode the [±FIN] distinction. For instance, the distinction between preterite *took* and participle *taken* is seen as a formal relic, with no finiteness content. English can therefore be said to have lost the productive morphological marking of finiteness, resulting in the system illustrated in Table 1.

Eide's proposal is not the only proposed explanation for loss of V2 in main clause declaratives. For instance, van Kemenade & Westergaard (2012) seek to relate V2 loss in English to information structure. In their approach discourse-pragmatics drives syntactic change, not verbal morphology. Both approaches have been applied to North American Heritage Norwegian (HNorw.). Eide & Hjelde (2015) explore Eide's theory linking M-finiteness and V2, whereas Westergaard & Lohndal (forthcoming) investigate

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¹ English does have V2 phenomena, for instance what Rizzi (1996) calls “residual V2”. However, English does not have V2 with main verbs in main clause declaratives.

² On this view, the 3rd person sg. ending *-s* of English main verbs, is solely an agreement marker and does not affect the tense system (Eide 2009: 366).

the correlation between V2 and discourse-pragmatics. Because there are competing proposals seeking to explain V2-syntax (or lack thereof) in English and HNorw., additional empirical studies are necessary to evaluate them. In a broader perspective, this study can additionally be seen as part of a debate on the possible causes for syntactic change: Is syntactic change caused by preceding morphological change or is it rather driven by other factors like pragmatics and/or semantics?

Table 1: The *a*-class in the Norwegian Bokmål written standard, *kaste* ‘throw’, and the present-day English tense inflection of weak verbs.

	The <i>a</i> -class in Norwegian Bokmål		Present-day English.
	+FIN	-FIN	
–PAST	Present: <i>kaster</i>	Infinitive: <i>kaste</i>	Present/Infinitive: <i>play</i>
+PAST	Preterite: <i>kasta</i>	Participle: <i>kasta</i>	Preterite/Participle: <i>played</i>

This article mainly explores M-finiteness and V2 in the grammar of HNorw. speakers. It is reasonable to expect change in V2 syntax (V-to-C movement) with heritage (as opposed to homeland) speakers of Norwegian as syntax of the C-domain is reportedly susceptible to change in heritage varieties (Benmamoun, Montrul & Polinsky 2013: 148–149).³ Additionally, the (dominant) English grammar of these HNorw. speakers differ from Norwegian with regards to both M-finiteness and V2. These factors make HNorw. an interesting variety for testing Eide’s (2009, 2016) theory.

Because of limitations of their data Eide & Hjelde (2015) only draw tentative conclusions. They comment, however, that a diachronic drift is observed towards a system without M-finiteness, and that they see a corresponding increase in V2-violations. My primary goal is to supplement and expand upon Eide & Hjelde (2015). In order to test the theory developed in Eide (2009, 2016), and the tentative claims in Eide & Hjelde (2015), I have examined the M-finiteness and V2 syntax of a group of HNorw speakers. The study discusses the following questions:

- a) Does the language of English-dominant Norwegian Heritage Speakers contain morphological marking of finiteness in the productive *a*-class (see Table 1)?⁴
- b) To what extent is the V2-rule upheld in the language of these same speakers?
- c) How do these data bear on the link between M-finiteness and V2 syntax, proposed by Eide (2009, 2016)?

For the theory about the M-finiteness–V2-correlation to give the right empirical predictions, the Norwegian speakers who have acquired a system without M-finiteness in the productive weak verb class, should also have lost V2. In my view, this hypothesis is necessary for the theory of Eide (2009, 2016) to have strong explanatory value. An alternative hypothesis could be that the loss of M-finiteness merely makes loss of V2 possible, but not a strict necessity. Such an alternative hypothesis is hard to falsify, and will not be pursued here. As an indication that the V2-rule has been lost, we should see either consistent non-V2 word order in non-subject initial clauses (i.e. English-like XSV instead of Norwegian-like XVS), or, at least, clear instability and variation in the production of word order in such contexts.

The remainder of this article is structured as follows: Section 2 provides information about the participants and the translation experiment which provides the empirical basis for this study. In section 3 I discuss M-finiteness in homeland Norwegian dialects. Section 4 presents the data from the translation experiment, and the observed tendencies in these data are discussed in sections 5 and 6. Section 7 is a conclusion.

³ Håkansson (1995), however, finds stable V2 with heritage speakers of Swedish.

⁴ I name the different classes by their preterite ending. *A*-class thus implies that the preterite ending is /a/, *te*-class that the ending is /te/. For the purposes of this paper, I refer to the *te*-class as a discrete class, even though the classes with preterites ending in /te/ and /de/ are often described as subtypes of one class (Faarlund, Lie & Vannebo 1997: 492–514).

2. Methodology: About the participants and the translation experiment

The data for the present empirical study come from a translation experiment performed in the fall of 2016. My analysis is built upon data from nine participants, who each produce between eight and eighteen morphological tokens, and between eight and sixteen syntax tokens. These nine participants were chosen primarily because they have transcribed, searchable recordings of their spontaneous speech in the Corpus of American Nordic Speech (CANS) (cf. Johannessen 2015b). Additionally, the participants come from three separate Norwegian speaking communities in the US, between which there is no indication of recent contact.

I use informant codes from the CANS to refer to the individual participants. The codes themselves provide information about the speakers. The code Fargo_ND_01gm, for instance, shows that the informant lived in Fargo, North Dakota (ND), at the time of recording. “01” is a unique number distinguishing him from other informants from the same locality, “g” indicates he is over 50 years old, and “m” indicates he is male. A final “k” indicates the speaker is female, as in Sunburg_MN_12gk. The participants come from three separate localities in the American Midwest. Westby, WI and Coon Valley, WI constitute a single Norwegian speaking area in Wisconsin (see Hjelde 2012), where all participants with the related codes come from. Similarly, Fargo_ND_01gm, Flom_MN_01gm and Flom_MN_02gm all share a connection to the area of Flom/Ulen, MN, and Sunburg_MN_03gm and Sunburg_MN_12gk to Sunburg, MN. In the Tables 3, 4, and 5 below, the participants are grouped by these geographical areas.

The choice of translation as a method of elicitation has to do with constraints that our particular Heritage Speaker demographic puts on methodology. The speakers are between 70–95 years of age, and are mostly retired farmers or blue-collar workers. They are expected to be uncomfortable with the use of computers and the kinds of school-like experimental tasks a college undergraduate student might be comfortable with. Furthermore, HNorw. speakers usually have little to no literacy in Norwegian. Any methodology should thus avoid reading in Norwegian, use of computers, and have clear, simple instructions. A translation is appropriate based on all of these criteria.

This translation task asked participants to translate a sequence of 71 sentences in a story, one at a time. An English-language prompt sentence was read aloud by a researcher, and the participant was asked to translate it, before being presented with a new prompt. The translation experiment was administered to 40 participants.⁵ One goal of the experiment was to elicit the finiteness morphology of the *a*-class, which comprises verbs with relatively low token frequency. Furthermore, I elicited V2 word order with topics of varying degrees of complexity, which may not occur in spontaneous speech.⁶ Eide & Hjelde (2015: 91–92) observe that “heavier fronted topics, such as clauses and complex phrases” provoke violations of V2, and a similar tendency is reported by Johannessen (2015a). Eide & Hjelde do not define what constitutes “heaviness”, but based on their wording and examples, I have interpreted “heaviness” as referring to syntactic complexity. In order to test the possible effects of syntactic complexity on V2 performance, I elicited sentences with topics of three degrees of complexity: (1) Minimal-phrase topics of one word, (2) Complex constituent topics consisting of a single phrase of two or three words, and (3) Topics consisting of a subordinate clause with a finite verb (cf. corresponding examples below). The example prompt sentences are English main clause declaratives with topicalization, with topics (underlined) of the three different degrees of complexity:

- (1) Suddenly, the kids hear a sound from the other side of the barn.
- (2) After a while, they don’t want to wait anymore.
- (3) When they come to the other side of the barn, they see a brown cow.

⁵ The experiment was designed in collaboration with Yvonne van Baal and Kari Kinn, who use my “fillers” to study phenomena in the nominal domain. Additionally, Janne Bondi Johannessen suggested the methodology, and assisted in performing the experiment during field work in the US.

⁶ Only non-subject initial V2 will be discussed here.

Table 2: The productive *a*-class in the Halling and Southern Gudbrandsdal dialects, *kaste* ‘throw’.

	Halling dialects		Southern Gudbrandsdal dialects
	+FIN	–FIN	
–PAST	Present: /kasta/ (sg.) /kastə/ (pl.)	Infinitive: /kastə/	Present/Infinitive: /kaste/
+PAST	Preterite: /kasta/	Participle: /kasta/	Preterite/Participle: /kasta/

3. Finiteness morphology in Homeland Norwegian

In their study of M-finiteness and V2 in HNorw., Eide & Hjelde (2015) use only the weak, productive *a*-class as the diagnostic of M-finiteness. A distinction either between infinitive/present or preterite/participle, is enough to claim that the system has M-finiteness (Eide & Hjelde 2015: 78–79). In order to replicate their study, I follow these assumptions.

There are potential problems with the notion of productivity employed by Eide & Hjelde (2015), but, importantly, these issues do not affect the conclusions of this study (cf. section 5). The *a*-class (cf. Table 1) is arguably not the only productive class of Norwegian verbs, even though it is the class that comprises the most members and attracts the most new verbs. An example of another productive principle in the Norwegian written standards and most dialects, is that all verbs with infinitives ending in /ere/, like *operere* ‘operate’, consistently get *te*-class inflection, e.g. *operere* (INF) – *opererer* (PRES) – *opererte* (PRET) – *operert* (PART) (Enger & Kristoffersen 2000: 90–91; Faarlund, Lie & Vannebo 1997: 495)

There is also dialectal variation in homeland Norwegian that is relevant to a study of tense/finiteness morphology of the *a*-class. In fact, none of the participants here, have a dialectal background which would lead us to expect finding a system like the one in Table 1. The dialects spoken by the nine participants, have their origin in either the Halling, Southern Gudbrandsdal or Tydal dialects of homeland Norwegian. The dialectal origins have been established by comparing the participants’ self-reported sociolinguistic background information, with dialect traits in their spontaneous speech in the CANS.⁷

The homeland dialects are used as the point of comparison in this study, and I opt not to use the term *baseline*. This is because the term *baseline* in heritage linguistics is defined as the language which provided the input for acquisition (Benmamoun, Montrul & Polinsky 2013: 134; Polinsky & Kagan 2007: 8), and we lack exact knowledge about this language.

There are dialects in Norway without M-finiteness. The Southern Gudbrandsdal dialect is such a dialect, cf. Table 2.⁸ Interestingly, there are no reports of homeland dialects losing V2 in main clause declaratives because of their lack of M-finiteness in the *a*-class. The existence of homeland dialects that lack M-finiteness, but retain V2-syntax, makes it less probable to find a causal link between M-finiteness and V2 in HNorw. Southern Gudbrandsdal is the relevant point of reference for the majority of the participants, namely Westby_WI_01gm, Westby_WI_02gm, Westby_WI_06gm, Coon_valley_WI_06gm, and lastly Sunburg_MN_12gk. The same lack of M-finiteness is found in the Tydal dialect, which is the relevant homeland variety for the speakers Flom_MN_01gm and Flom_MN_02gm.⁹

The *a*-class of Halling can be seen in Table 2.¹⁰ Halling has more syncretism in the *a*-class, but recall that the distinction between present and infinitive is sufficient to assume an M-finiteness distinction in

⁷ The traits that were systematically checked was the form of the 1.sg. and pl. pronouns, the negation, the form of the indefinite plural of nouns, and the *wh*-word *hva* ‘what’. For a Norwegian dialectological survey, see Skjekkland (1997).

⁸ My sources for the verbal morphology of Southern Gudbrandsdal and Tydal, is Jenshus (1986), Skjekkland (1997: 128–129, 272) and Papazian & Helleland (2005: 66), cf. Eide & Hjelde (2015: 79).

⁹ The Tydal dialect is a smaller dialect in terms of area and speakers than the Southern Gudbrandsdal dialect(s). Spoken in south-western Trøndelag, the Tydal dialect is both somewhat geographically and linguistically removed from the Southern Gudbrandsdal dialect(s), but with respect to the M-finiteness and V2-variables of the present study, these dialects are identical.

¹⁰ My source for the traditional Halling dialect is Venås (1977). The phonemic rendition here is my interpretation.

this class. Notably, traditional Halling is reported to have subject number agreement marking on the verb, in the present tense. As Eide (2009: 366) claims that the agreement morphology of English is irrelevant to the tense/finiteness system, I similarly disregard it for Halling. The Halling dialect is a relevant point of reference for two participants in this study, namely Sunburg_MN_03gm and Fargo_ND_01gm.

Table 3: Morphological [±FIN]-distinction in the translation experiment correlated with homeland dialect

Participant	[±FIN]-distinction	Correlation with homeland dialect	# of <i>a</i> -class tokens
Sunburg_MN_03gm	YES	YES	18
Sunburg_MN_12gk	NO	YES	13
Westby_WI_01gm	NO	YES	13
Westby_WI_02gm	NO	YES	11
Westby_WI_06gm	NO	YES	16
Coon_valley_WI_06gm	NO?	YES?	16
Fargo_ND_01gm	YES	YES	8
Flom_MN_01gm	NO	YES	16
Flom_MN_02gm	NO	YES	15

4. Experimental data from Heritage Norwegian

4.1. Finiteness morphology

Table 3 illustrates the status of the productive M-finiteness distinction in the *a*-class of the participants, and connects it with the relevant homeland Norwegian dialect. A majority of the participants lack M-finiteness, but I argue that these systems are inherited from homeland Norwegian, and not the result of change that has occurred after emigration to the US. Recall that the participants can be tied to the areas Hallingdal, Southern Gudbrandsdal and Tydal by other means than the verbal morphology itself (see section 3). When their tense/finiteness-marking in the *a*-class corresponds exactly to the dialect of the relevant area of origin, it indicates the retention of the original system. The maintenance of these homeland patterns is to be expected, because tense morphology is reportedly stable in heritage language contexts (Benmamoun, Montrul & Polinsky 2013: 141–144).

Table 4: V2-data from the translation experiment.

Participant	Non-V2 clauses	Total clauses
Sunburg_MN_03gm	– (0%)	16
Sunburg_MN_12gk	– (0%)	15
Westby_WI_01gm	1 (6%)	16
Westby_WI_02gm	1 (13%)	8
Westby_WI_06gm	3 (21%)	14
Coon_valley_WI_06gm	– (0%)	15
Fargo_ND_01gm	10 (67%)	15
Flom_MN_01gm	2 (13%)	15
Flom_MN_02gm	4 (33%)	12

One notable change in the verbal morphology is that the speakers with background from Hallingdal (Sunburg_MN_03gm and Fargo_ND_01gm) do not display any agreement marking on the verb in the present tense, as an account of traditional Halling dialect may lead us to expect (Venås 1977). Since the present plural form in traditional Halling is homophonous with the infinitive, the lack of agreement actually makes for a clearer formal distinction between the present [+FIN] and infinitive [–FIN] (see

Table 2). The present tense suffix of the *a*-class is uniformly attested as /a/ with the Halling speakers, which is distinct from the infinitive suffix in this class. This means that the [±FIN]-distinction is upheld.¹¹

4.2. V2-data

As illustrated in Table 4, most participants produce approximately 15 main clause declaratives with topicalization, e.g. this rendition of prompt (1) in section 2 by Sunburg_MN_03gm (with orthographic transcription):

- (4) *Da hør-er gutt-ene (pause) noe leven ifra andre sid-a av låv-en.*
 Then hear-PRES boy-PL.DEF (pause) some noise from other side-SG.DEF of barn-SG.DEF
 ‘Then the boys hear some noise from the other side of the barn.’

The participants show some variability in production of V2, but most have a clear majority of clauses with target-like V2-syntax. Three participants produce no non-target word order. A second, more tenuous grouping of five participants produce a majority of target-like syntax, but have non-V2 in 6%–33% of their clauses. The last participant, Fargo_ND_01gm, clearly differs from the other participants. He produces non-target word order in 10 out of 15 instances (67%).

5. The correlation between M-finiteness and V2

The translation experiment data for the nine participants analyzed here show no connection between M-finiteness and V2 word order, cf. Table 5. This is consistent with the retention of V2 in homeland Norwegian dialects without M-finiteness. Based on a comparison of data from the 1940s, 1990s and 2010s, Eide & Hjelde (2015) comment that the system without M-finiteness seems to become more common over time in HNorw. and that the number of V2-violations rises concurrently. However, considering the lack of correlation between M-finiteness and V2 demonstrated here, it seems unlikely that the rise in V2-violations observed by Eide & Hjelde is caused by the spread of a system without M-finiteness.

Table 5: Morphological finiteness-distinction correlated with % of V2-violations.

Participant	±FIN-distinction	% of V2-violations
Sunburg_MN_03gm	YES	0%
Sunburg_MN_12gk	NO	0%
Westby_WI_01gm	NO	6%
Westby_WI_02gm	NO	13%
Westby_WI_06gm	NO	21%
Coon_valley_WI_06gm	NO?	0%
Fargo_ND_01gm	YES	67%
Flom_MN_01gm	NO	13%
Flom_MN_02gm	NO	33%

In the following discussion, I will use the participants Sunburg_MN_03gm, Sunburg_MN_12gk and Fargo_ND_01gm as examples, because their data show the clearest tendencies, and are representative of the patterns among other participants.

¹¹ Fargo_ND_01gm is important to the discussion in the upcoming sections, but has a low number of *a*-class items, cf. table 3. If only the translation data are used, the positing of a [±FIN]-distinction in his *a*-class hinges upon a single present tense token. I thus find it necessary to add that in spontaneous speech data, from the CANS (cf. Johannessen 2015b), the attestation of the [±FIN]-distinction in Fargo_ND_01gm’s *a*-class is robust.

The most common tendency, shared by all participants except for Sunburg_MN_03gm and Fargo_ND_01gm, is exemplified by Sunburg_MN_12gk. She has a morphological system without M-finiteness, but no sign of non-V2 syntax. The other participants who lack M-finiteness do show some non-V2 syntax, but none of them has a higher percentage of V2-violations than 33%. A clear majority of their clauses are thus V2, in spite of their lack of M-finiteness. These participants show a tendency that is contrary to what we would expect if lack of M-finiteness caused loss of V2. I contend that any observed non-V2 syntax cannot be caused by their lack of M-finiteness, as we then would expect to observe a similar degree of non-V2 syntax in the homeland Norwegian dialects which lack M-finiteness. Fargo_ND_01gm shows another tendency which is contrary to the hypothesis of a link between M-finiteness and V2. He is the only participant who has productive M-finiteness, but a majority of non-V2 clauses. Lastly, Sunburg_MN_03gm has productive M-finiteness and produces no non-V2 syntax. He is, however, the only participant who shows a tendency which carries out the predictions of Eide's (2009, 2016) theory.

It could be argued that the lack of correlation comes from the notion of productivity employed by Eide & Hjelde (2015) (recall the discussion in section 3). However, even if we assume that other weak classes are relevant for positing the finiteness distinction, this would not change the conclusions of the present analysis. If the other weak classes are used as a diagnostic of M-finiteness, it entails that all participants have M-finiteness, but this would not explain the non-V2 syntax in these data. Fargo_ND_01gm's syntactic production is a particularly striking example, because he has M-finiteness by any measure, but still produces 67% non-V2 word order.

6. The syntax of Fargo_ND_01gm

The non-V2 syntax of Fargo_ND_01gm has not been found to correlate with other syntactic factors. In fact, it is likely that his non-V2 syntax, is the result of online cross-linguistic transfer. This is made probable by Fargo_ND_01gm only having non-V2 syntax in 6 out of 31 (19%) of the relevant clauses in his spontaneous speech from the CANS, according to Westergaard & Lohndal (forthcoming). Interestingly, Fargo_ND_01gm has one of the highest percentages of non-V2 syntax among the speakers in their study as well. Westergaard & Lohndal invoke cross-linguistic influence (CLI) on discourse-pragmatics to explain decreasing use of V2 in Heritage Norwegian. They show that speakers of HNorw. use fewer non-subject initial clauses than their homeland Norwegian counterparts, and that this correlates with an increase in non-V2 syntax.

Table 6: Fargo_ND_01gm's syntactic data correlated with topic complexity.

Topic complexity	Non-V2 items	V2 items	Total
One word	3	3	6
Complex phrase	4	–	4
Subordinate clause	3	2	5
Total	10	5	15

In the translation experiment, the non-subject initial structure is already provided to the participants in form of the English prompt (see the examples at the end of section 2). Because of this methodology, I cannot comment on discourse-pragmatic tendencies. In such a setting, however, it is probable that any influence the dominant language (English) has on the heritage language is strengthened, as the mental grammars of both languages need to be activated when performing a translation task. Considering experimental work that shows priming effects across languages in multilingual speakers (Hartsuiker et al. 2016), it is likely that the syntax Fargo_ND_01gm produces is influenced by the English-language prompt. The discrepancy between his translation data and spontaneous speech data is thus plausibly caused by the dominant language grammar (English) directly affecting the production of the weaker of the participant's two languages (Norwegian) in the speech situation. It remains unclear, however, why such online CLI affects Fargo_ND_01gm more than the other participants.

Earlier studies of V2 in HNorw. report a higher degree of V2 violations with more syntactically complex topics (Eide & Hjelde 2015; Johannessen 2015a: 63, 66–67). In the data of Fargo_ND_01gm, the only participant with a majority of non-V2 clauses, such a tendency is not clear. As shown in Table 6, he produces an equal number of V2 and non-V2 with one-word topics, consistent non-V2 with complex phrase topics of two or three words, but an almost even amount of V2 and non-V2 with the even more complex subordinate clause topics. In addition to the lack of a clear relationship with the complexity of the topic, no correlation has been observed for Fargo_ND_01gm between the type of subject (e.g. pronominal/nominal) or verb and the non-V2 syntax.¹²

7. Conclusion

In this article, I have argued that tendencies in experimental data from nine North American heritage speakers of Norwegian suggest that loss of V2 is not caused by a prior loss of M-finiteness, contrary to the proposition of Eide (2009, 2016). There are speakers without M-finiteness who have quite stable V2 (0–33% violations), as well as one speaker with M-finiteness and a high percentage of V2-violations (67%). The relatively stable V2 observed here, is consistent with Håkansson's (1995) study, which finds stable V2 with heritage speakers of Swedish.

I argue that the *a*-class verbal morphology displayed by these speakers, is inherited unchanged from homeland Norwegian. Based on other studies of heritage varieties, such stability is expected (Benmamoun, Montrul & Polinsky 2013: 141–144). What is more, the homeland Norwegian dialects that lack M-finiteness, have not lost V2 in main clause declaratives. The existence of such homeland Norwegian dialects makes it less probable that whatever instability we see in the V2-syntax of North American Heritage Norwegian should be caused by the lack of M-finiteness.

Concerning a broader debate about what causes syntactic change, the data in this study cannot be used to argue directly in favour of syntactic change being driven by e.g. semantics or pragmatic structure. It does seem clear, however, that the verbal morphology does not cause the observed non-V2 syntax. This implies, at least, that when it comes to loss of V2, the causing factor is not the inflectional morphology of the verb, and that the explanation needs to be found elsewhere.

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¹² These data do not speak to whether an object topic, as opposed to an adverbial topic, would cause different syntactic production, as all of the topics produced by Fargo_ND_01gm are adverbials.

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