Child and Adult Heritage Spanish in the Netherlands

the Development of Subject Position

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**Child and Adult Heritage Spanish in the Netherlands: The Development of Subject Position**

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**Heritage speakers**

Speakers of a minority language, acquired during childhood in a naturalistic setting in the home context.

**Subject position in Spanish**

Spanish has flexible word order:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject position in Spanish</th>
<th>Subject position in Dutch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Un chico llegó</td>
<td>Een jongen A boy S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>llegó</td>
<td>float whistled V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>un chico</td>
<td>een jongen A boy S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrived</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subject position with intransitives in Spanish is constrained by unaccusativity, focus, definiteness, animacy, verbal aspect, adverbial phrases, and subject heaviness.

- **Research Questions**
  1. Will Dutch HS of Spanish show less overgeneralization of preverbal subjects (but deviate from monolinguals)?
  2. (When) do bilingual children deviate from monolinguals?

**The present study**

**A) Adult Participants**

- 24 heritage speakers
  - Born in the Netherlands, or arrived before 5
  - Mixed families
  - No Caribbean dialects

**B) Child Participants**

- 30 heritage speakers
  - 9 and 13 years old
  - Born in the Netherlands, or arrived before 5
  - Mixed families
  - No Caribbean dialects

- 44 monolingual speakers of Spanish
  - 9 and 13 years old
  - Born and raised in Spain
  - No knowledge of other languages

**Research Questions**

**Monolinguals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>0.0</th>
<th>0.2</th>
<th>0.4</th>
<th>0.6</th>
<th>0.8</th>
<th>1.0</th>
<th>1.2</th>
<th>1.4</th>
<th>1.6</th>
<th>1.8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monolinguals</td>
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<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bilinguals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>0.0</th>
<th>0.2</th>
<th>0.4</th>
<th>0.6</th>
<th>0.8</th>
<th>1.0</th>
<th>1.2</th>
<th>1.4</th>
<th>1.6</th>
<th>1.8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Method**

- **Contextualized Scalar Acceptability Judgment Task:**
  - It’s my birthday and there are many guests in my house. Suddenly the doorbell rings, but since I’m just receiving a gift from my uncle, I cannot open the door. My wife goes and sees that it’s some cousins. When she gets back, I ask her: ‘Who arrived?’ My wife tells me:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From primary</th>
<th>Subject position</th>
<th>Subject position in Dutch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unos primos</td>
<td>Some cousins arrived.</td>
<td>Een jongen A boy S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>regresan</td>
<td>Reached some cousins.</td>
<td>float whistled V</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

1. Both monolingual and Dutch heritage speakers increase the preference of VS across the lifetime.
2. In Dutch bilinguals, this VS preference is more pronounced in all age groups.
3. This overgeneralization might be due to the influence of V2 in Dutch.

**References**


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**Simplification or Cross-Linguistic Influence?**

- No Caribbean dialects
- Born and raised in Spain
- No knowledge of Dutch
- Mixed families