Subject position in Spanish

Spanish has flexible word order:

- Un chico llegó
- A boy arrived

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

- Subject position in Dutch

Een jongen
- A boy
fluit en dacht
- float and whistled

but V2!

Buiten/en/dat
- Outside/There/that
Adv/Obj
- flute and whistled

een jongen
- a boy

MORE EVIDENCE FOR POSTVERBAL SUBJECTS

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 years old
- Mixed families
- No Caribbean dialects

18 monolingual speakers of Spanish
- Recently immigrated to the Netherlands.
- No knowledge of Dutch
- No Caribbean dialects

B) Child Participants
30 heritage speakers
- 9 and 13 years old
- Born in the Netherlands, or arrived before 5 years old
- 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

Morale evidence for postverbal subjects

Preferential acceptability of preverbals for adults and children

Conclusions

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