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Citation for published version (APA):

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Download date: 05 Jul 2018
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:
- Un chico llegó
- A boy
- but V2!
- Llegó un chico
- V
- A boy

Subject position in Dutch
But V2!
- Een jongen
- A boy
- float whistled
- V
- but V2!
- Buiten/er/dat
- Outside/There/that
- Adv/OBJ
- float whistled
- V
- een jongen
- a boy
- V

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
- 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
  - 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

Previous Research:
Children
- Monolingual
  - Have knowledge of verb type by age 2
  - de Prada Pérez, A., & Prada Pérez, P. (2012)
  - No previous research on other factors

Bilingual
- No previous research

Adults
- Monolingual
  - Verb type & focus influence word order
  - Many other factors, such as definiteness as well
    (Roggia, 2011)
- Bilingual
  - Do not have monolingual-like knowledge of all the factors determining word order
    (Capella et al., 2008)

Method
Contextualized Scalar Acceptability Judgment Task:

Adults

Children
Preferential Judgment Task:

References
- Pascual y Cabo, D., Lingewaard, A., & Rothman, J. Applying the Interface Hypothesis to Heritage Speaker Acquisition: Evidence from SPB.625.

Unaccusativity

Simplification or cross-linguistic influence?

El gato llegó

Llegó el gato

Results

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

La línea de refiere su tiempo pero como justo estoy recibiendo un regalo de mi tío, no puedo abrirlo. Va a mi esposa y ve que son unos primos. Cuando regresa, le pregunto: ‘¿Quién llegó?’ Mi esposa me dice:

‘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:

‘Unas primos llegaron.’

References
- Pascual y Cabo, D., Lingewaard, A., & Rothman, J. Applying the Interface Hypothesis to Heritage Speaker Acquisition: Evidence from SPB.625.