Child and Adult Heritage Spanish in the Netherlands

*the Development of Subject Position*

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Subject position in Dutch

Un chico llegó. (A boy arrived.)

Subject position in Spanish

Spanish has flexible word order:

- Een jongen float whistled (A boy)
- Llegó float whistled (Arrived)

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

Bilingual (Overgeneralize preverbal subjects. Do not have monolingual-like knowledge of word order. Many other factors, such as definiteness as well.

The present study

1. Will Dutch HS of Spanish show less overgeneralization of preverbal subjects (but deviate from monolinguals)?

2. (When) do bilingual children deviate from monolinguals?

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

Research Questions

1. Previous Research:

- Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project.

Results

- Monolinguals
- Bilinguals

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