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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>Un chico llegó</th>
<th>A boy V S llegó</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Llegó un chico</td>
<td>Arrived a boy S</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

**Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monolinguals</th>
<th>Bilinguals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adults</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SV</td>
<td>VS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9yo</td>
<td>13yo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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

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**References**