Child and Adult Heritage Spanish in the Netherlands
van Osch, B.A.; García González, Elisabet; Hulk, A.C.J.; Aalberse, S.P.; Sleeman, A.P.

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Subject position in Spanish

Spanish has flexible word order:

- Un chico llegó
- A boy arrived
- ¡Un chico llegó!
- Un chico Arrived a boy

This makes subject position a highly complex phenomenon, prone to vulnerability in (bilingual) acquisition.

Previous Research:

Children

Monolingual
- Have knowledge of verb type by age 2
- Have knowledge of definite markers by age 3
- 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 (Rogge, 2011)

Bilingual
- Do not have monolingual-like knowledge of all the factors determining word order (Díaz-Campos, 2005; Zapata et al., 2005)

Method

Contextualized Scalar Acceptability Judgment Task:

- "El gato llegó"
- Three dogs are playing at the beach and having a lot of fun. While they play, their friend the cat comes and sees them and he gets very sad because they had not asked him to join them."

Results

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

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