Child and Adult Heritage Spanish in the Netherlands

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Child and Adult Heritage Spanish in the Netherlands: The Development of Subject Position
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Subject position in Dutch

Subject position in Spanish

Spanish has flexible word order:

Subject position with intransitives in Spanish is constrained by unaccusativity, focus, definiteness, animacy, verbal aspect, adverbial phrases, and subject heaviness (Immonen, 2009; Lizano, 2006). Speakers of a Spanish has flexible word order:

• Zapata et al., 2005, De Prada-Pérez & Cortes, 2010

Constrained by Subject position with intransitives in Spanish is monolingual-like knowledge of

• Many other factors, such as definiteness as (Verb type & focus influence word order)

• Do not have monolingual-like knowledge of all the factors determining word order (Oglove, 2010; de Prada-Pérez & Pascual, 2012)

• Overgeneralize preverbal subjects (Montrul, 2007; Aalberse, 2005; Zapata et al., 2007)

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

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


Method

Contextualized Scalar Acceptability Judgment Task:

El gato llegó

Llegó el gato

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.

Adults

Preference Judgment Task:

More evidence for postverbal subjects

Subjects, sentential negation and imperatives in child Spanish and Catalan.

The development of subject position.

Simplification or cross-linguistic influence?

Previous Research:

Children

Monolingual

• Have knowledge of verb type by age 2

• No previous research on other factors

Bilingual

• No previous research

Adults

Monolingual

• Verb type & focus influence word order (Immonen, 2009; Lizano, 2006)

• Many other factors, such as definiteness as well (Roggero, 2011)

Bilingual

• Do not have monolingual-like knowledge of all the factors determining word order (Zapata et al., 2007; de Prada-Pérez & Pascual, 2012)

Simplification or cross-linguistic influence?