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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.

Subject position in Spanish
Spanish has flexible word order:

- Un chico llegó
- Un chico llegó
- Een jongen S
- Een jongen S

- Llegó un chico
- Llegó a boy V

- Múltiples factores, such as definiteness as well (Rogge, 2011)
- No dohave negligencia imprimido en el español

Heritage speakers
Speakers of a minority language, acquired during childhood in a naturalistic setting in the home.

Subject position in Dutch

Spanish has flexible word order:

- Een jongen A boy S
- But V2
- Outside/There/that
- Adv/Obj
- Een jongen V

- Buiten/er/dat
- Whistled V

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
(Rogge, 2011)
- No previous research on other factors

Bilingual
- No previous research

Adults
Monolingual
- Verb type & focus influence word order
(Hertel, 2003; Lozano, 2005)
- Many other factors, such as definiteness as well
(Rogge, 2011)

Bilingual
- Do not have monolingual-like knowledge of all the factors determining word order
(Zapata et al., 2008; De Prada-Pérez & Pascual y Cabo, 2012)

Overgeneralization of preverbal subjects
(Hinch & Hertel, 2011; Martí, 2005; Zapata et al., 2008)

IMPLICATION OR CROSS-LINGUISTIC INFLUENCE?

Subject position in Dutch

Spanish has flexible word order:

- Een jongen A boy S
- But V2
- Outside/There/that
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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

Methods
Children
Preferential Judgment Task:

- 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.

El gato llegó

Adults
Contextualized Scalar Acceptability Judgment Task:

- Es mi cumpleaños y hay mucha gente de visita en mi casa. De repente suena el timbre pero como justo estoy recibiendo un regalo de mi tía, no puedo abrir la puerta. ¿Yo me expreso y ve que

- Unos primos hicieron

- Unos primos hicieron

Preference Judgment Task:

- 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

References


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SIMPLIFICATION OR CROSS-LINGUISTIC INFLUENCE?