Child and Adult Heritage Spanish in the Netherlands
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Subject position in Spanish

Spanish has flexible word order:

- Un chico llegó. (A boy arrived.)
- Llegó un chico. (A boy arrived.)

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

During Spanish has flexible word order: Zapata et al., 2005, De Prada-Pérez & Cabo, 2012.

Subject position in Dutch

Een jongen float whistled but V2!

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

The Development of Subject Position

Contextualized Scalar Acceptability 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.

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. Ya mi esposa y yo que son unos primos. Cuando llega, le pregunto: ¿Quién llegó? Mi esposa me dice:

It's my birthday and there are many guests in my house. Suddenly the doorbell rings, but since I'm just receiving a gift from my aunt, I cannot open the door. My wife and I see that it's some cousins. When she gets back, I ask her: Who arrived? My wife tells me:

Uns primos llegaron.

Some cousins arrived.

User data: Llegó un gato.

Llegó el gato.

El gato llegó.

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

- Pascual y Cubo, D., Lingawi, A., & Rothman. Applying the Interface Hypothesis to Heritage Speaker Acquisition: Evidence from Bilingual Spanish.