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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:
- Un chico llegó arrived a boy
- Llegó un chico Arrived a boy

Subject position in Dutch
- Een jongen A boy float whistled V
- But V2!

Subject position in Dutch vs. Spanish
- This makes subject position a highly complex phenomenon, prone to vulnerability in (bilingual) acquisition

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

Method

Children
Preference 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.

Method

El gato llegó

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

Previous Research:

Children
Monolingual
- Have knowledge of verb type by age 2 (Biel, 2001).
- No previous research on other factors.

Bilingual
- No previous research.

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

Bilingual
- Do not have monolingual-like knowledge of all the factors determining word order (Cazals, 2005).

Simplification or Cross-Linguistic Influence?

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 mi esposo y ve que son unos primos. Cuando regresa, 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 uncle, I cannot open the door. My wife goes and sees that it’s some cousins. When she gets back, I ask her: “Who arrived?” My wife tells me:

- Usos primos llegó
- Some cousins arrived.
- 0 2 1 0 0
- [MPR: 100] Arrived some cousins.
- 0 2 1 0 0

Preferences

El gato llegó

References


Simplification or Cross-Linguistic Influence?

- Simplification or Cross-Linguistic Influence?
- SIMPLIFICATION OR CROSS-LINGUISTIC INFLUENCE?