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the Development of Subject Position
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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
- A boy arrived
- Llegó un chico
- Arrived a boy

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

- Makes this subject position a highly complex phenomenon, prone to vulnerability in (bilingual) acquisition

**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
  - Many other factors, such as definiteness as well

- Bilingual
  - Do not have monolingual-like knowledge of all the factors determining word order

**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

**B) Child Participants**
30 heritage speakers
- 9 and 13 years old
- Born in the Netherlands, or arrived before 5
- Mixed families
- No Caribbean dialects

**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:**

- Takes cues for truth value judgments of sentences in a specific context

**Preferences:**

- Osch, van, & Bergen (2002)
- Hoyos et al. (2010)
- Fuentes et al. (2013)

**Child Preference Judgment Task:**

- Takes cues for truth value judgments of sentences in a specific context

**Subjects:**

- 24 adults
- 30 children

**Simplification or Cross-Linguistic Influence?**

**SIMPILIFICATION OR CROSS-LINGUISTIC INFLUENCE?**

**Example sentences:**

- Osch, van, & Bergen (2002)
- Hoyos et al. (2010)
- Fuentes et al. (2013)

**References:**