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the Development of Subject Position
van Osch, B.A.; García González, Elisabet; Hulk, A.C.J.; Aalberse, S.P.; Sleeman, A.P.

Citation for published version (APA):

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

Brechje van Osch, Elisabet García González, Suzanne Aalberse, Aafke Hulk & Petra Sleeman
University of Amsterdam

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 arrived a boy

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

Spanish has flexible word order:

• Een jongen A boy
• float whistled V

• But V2!

• Buiten/er/dat Outside/There/that
• Adv/OBJ

• float whistled V

• een jongen a boy S

MORE EVIDENCE FOR POSTVERBAL SUBJECTS

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

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 hadn’t asked him to join them.

El gato llegó

Llegó el gato

Adul

Contextualized Scalar Acceptability Judgment Task:

Es mi cumpleaños y hay mucha gente de visita en mi casa. De repente suena el timbre pero como estoy recibiendo un regalo de mi tío, no puedo abrir la puerta. Ya mi esposa y yo 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 tells me that they’re some cousins. When she gets back, I ask her: “Who arrived?” My wife tells me:

Unos primos llegaron.

Some cousins arrived.

Simplification or cross-linguistic influence?

Simplification or cross-linguistic influence?

SIMPLIFICATION OR CROSS-LINGUISTIC INFLUENCE?