Subject Position in Spanish as a Heritage Language in the Netherlands: Interface Vulnerability and Cross-linguistic Influence

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Method

Contextualized Scalar Acceptability Judgment Task:

- **Verbs**
  - Broad
  - Narrow
  - Definite
  - Indefinite

- **Focus**
  - Narrow
  - Broad

- **Subject**
  - Definite
  - Indefinite

**Example:** Unaccusative → narrow → indefinite

- *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 hijo, no puedo abrir la puerta.*

  - My birthday and there are many guests in my house. Suddenly the doorbell rings, but since I’m just receiving a gift from my son, 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:

  - “Unos primos.”

  - “Some cousins.”

**Unacc. Unerg.**

**Broad Narrow**

**Def. Indef.**

**Results across conditions:**

- **Judgment task**
- **Production task**

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Pascual y Cabo, D. (2007). Dutch heritage speakers show knowledge of the factors verb type and focus, but not definiteness.

**Conclusions**

1. Dutch heritage speakers show knowledge of the factors verb type and focus, but not definiteness.

2. In judgment, Dutch heritage speakers of Spanish overgeneralize postverbal subjects, whereas American HS do not prefer either order.

3. In production, American heritage speakers of Spanish overgeneralize preverbal subjects.

**Support for cross-linguistic influence**

References


- Pascual y Cabo, D. (2007). Dutch heritage speakers show knowledge of the factors verb type and focus, but not definiteness.


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