Subject Position in Spanish as a heritage language in the Netherlands
van Osch, B.A.; Aalberse, S.P.; Hulk, A.C.J.; Sleeman, A.P.

Citation for published version (APA):
**Subject Position in Spanish as a Heritage Language in the Netherlands: Interface Vulnerability and Cross-linguistic Influence**

Brechje van Osch, 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.

**Previous Research: Heritage Spanish in the US**  
• Comparing verb type & focus: unclear findings:  
  - Verb type is robust (Montrul, 2005)  
  - Verb type and focus are vulnerable (Zapata et al., 2005)  
  - Verb type is more vulnerable than focus (de Prada-Pérez & Pascual y Cabo, 2012)  
  - Heritage speakers overgeneralize preverbal subjects (Hinch Nava, 2007; Montrul, 2005; Zapata et al., 2005)

**Method**  
Contextualized Scalar Acceptability Judgment Task:  
**Verb type**  
- Unaccusative  
- Unergative  
**Focus**  
- Broad  
- Narrow  
**Subject**  
- Definite  
- Indefinite

**Experiment 1: Heritage Spanish in the Netherlands**  
Participants  
24 heritage speakers  
- Born in the Netherlands, or arrived before 5  
- 1 Dutch speaking parent, 1 Spanish speaking parent  
- No Caribbean dialects  
- Recently immigrated to the Netherlands.  
- No knowledge of Dutch  
- No Caribbean dialects

**Hypotheses**  
1. Dutch HS of Spanish will show less overgeneralization of preverbal subjects  
2. Both focus and definiteness are more vulnerable than verb type

**Results per condition**  
- Monolinguals  
- Heritage speakers

**Results across conditions**  
- Judgment task  
- Production task

**Conclusions**  
1. Dutch heritage speakers show knowledge of the factors verb type, focus, and definiteness  
2. Partial support for the Interface Hypothesis

**References**  

---

**Experiment 2: Heritage Spanish in the US**  
22 heritage speakers in New Jersey  
- Born in the US, or arrived before 5  
- 2 Spanish speaking parents  
- No Caribbean dialects  
- Proficiency-matched to the Dutch HS

**Results across conditions**  
- Judgment task  
- Production task

**Conclusions**  
1. Dutch heritage speakers show knowledge of the factors verb type, focus, and 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**  

---

**The Interface Hypothesis**  
(DeSchouver & Sansom, 2010)

**External interface**  
(syntax-pragmatics / discourse)  
more vulnerable  
→ less vulnerable

**Internal interface**  
(syntax-semantics)  
more vulnerable  
→ less vulnerable