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

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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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject position with intransitives in Spanish is constrained by:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Verb type</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Focus</td>
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<td>3. Definiteness</td>
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</tbody>
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Un chico llegó a boy
Llegó un chico arrived a boy

The Interface Hypothesis
(Sorace & Serratrice, 2009)

Heritage speakers
Broad speakers of a minority language in a naturalistic setting in the Netherlands.

Subject position in Dutch

Main clauses: Een jongen floot
A boy whistled

But... V2:

Buten/er schreeuwde een jongen
Outside/There shouted a boy

Subject position with postverbal subjects

CROSS-LINGUISTIC INFLUENCE FROM ENGLISH OR SIMPLIFICATION?

Unaccusative
Un chico
Llegó
A boy    arrived
V
S

Unaccusative
Silbó
Whistled
S
V

Unaccusative
Llegó
Arrived
V
S

Definite
The boy
Arrived
V
S

Method
Contextualized Scalar Acceptability Judgment Task:

Verbal type
Unaccusative, Unergative

Focus
Broad, Narrow

Subject
Definite, Indefinite

Results per condition

Heritage speakers

Results across conditions:

Monolinguals
SV  VS

Heritage speakers

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