Subject Position in Spanish as a heritage language in the Netherlands

*Interface Vulnerability and Cross-linguistic Influence*

van Osch, B.A.; Aalberse, S.P.; Hulk, A.C.J.; Sleeman, A.P.

**Publication date**

2017

**Citation for published version (APA):**


**General rights**

It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

**Disclaimer/Complaints regulations**

If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.
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.

Subject position in Spanish
Spanish has flexible word order:
- Un chico llegó
- A boy arrived

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)

Subject speakers overgeneralize preverbal subjects
(Hinch Nava, 2007; Montrul, 2005; Zapata et al., 2005)

The Interface Hypothesis
Subject position in Spanish
- Flexible word order:
  - External interface (syntax- pragmatics/discourse)
  - Internal interface (syntax-semantics)

Vulnerability
- Verb type
- Focus
- Subject

Subject position in Dutch
Main clauses:
- Een jongen floot
  - A boy whistled

But... V2:
- Buiten/er schreeuwde een jongen
  - Outside/There shouted a boy

Method
Contextualized Scalar Acceptability Judgment Task:
- Verb type
- Focus
- Subject

Results across conditions:
- Judgment task
- Production task

Conclusions
1. Dutch heritage speakers show knowledge of the factors verb type, and focus, but not definiteness
   → Partial support for the Interface Hypothesis
2. In judgment, Dutch heritage speakers Spanish overgeneralize preverbal 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

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

Monolinguals
- Unacc. Unerg.
- Broad Narrow
- Def. Indef.

Results per condition

Results across conditions

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

The Interface Hypothesis

FOCUS & DEFINITENESS
- more vulnerable

VERB TYPE
- less vulnerable

External interface (syntax-pragmatics/discourse)
- more vulnerable

Internal interface (syntax-semantics)
- less vulnerable