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):

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: http://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

Llegó un chico
Arrived a boy

(Sorace & Serratrice, 2009)

Broad home

Spanish has flexible word order:

Definite

A boy         whistled     Arrived   a boy

Definite

(Sorace & Serratrice, 2009)

---

**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)

---

**Subject position in Dutch**

Main clauses:

Een jongen floot
A boy floated

But... V2:

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

---

**Method**
Contextualized Scalar Acceptability Judgment Task:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb type</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unaccusative</td>
<td>Broad</td>
<td>Definite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unergative</td>
<td>Narrow</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Results per condition**

Monolinguals

- **SV**
- **VS**

Heritage speakers

- **SV**
- **VS**

---

**Results across conditions**

Monolinguals

- **SV**
- **VS**

Heritage speakers

- **SV**
- **VS**

---

**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

18 monolingual speakers of Spanish

- Recently immigrated to the Netherlands.
- No knowledge of Dutch
- No Caribbean dialects

---

**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 of 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**


---

**The Interface Hypothesis**
(George & Sennrich, 2015)

External interface (syntactic-grammatical / discourse)
more vulnerable

Internal interface (syntax-semantical)
less vulnerable

FOCUS & DEFINITENESS
more vulnerable

VERB TYPE
less vulnerable

---

**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

- **SV**
- **VS**
- **other**
- **missing**

Production task

- **SV**
- **VS**

---

**Subject position across English or Simplification?**

Experiment 2:

Results across conditions:

- **SV**
- **VS**
- **other**
- **missing**

---

**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 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

---

**Conclusion**

Heritage speakers overgeneralize preverbal subjects, whereas American HS do not prefer either order.

- 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