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
  - Subject
- **Llegó un chico**
  - Preverbal

Subject position with intransitives in Spanish is constrained by:

1. **Verb type**
2. **Focus**
3. **Definiteness**

### 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
  - (Roggia, 2011)

- Subject position in Spanish is more vulnerable (syntax-pragmatics/discourse) than in monolingual Spanish, and less vulnerable (syntax-semantics) than in monolingual Dutch.

### Subject Position in Dutch

**Main clauses:**

- **Een jongen** floot
  - Narrow
- **Llegó un chico**
  - Preverbal

**But... V2:**

- **Buiten/er schreeuwde een jongen**
  - Definite
- **Silbó un chico**
  - Wide

### The Interface Hypothesis

**Options:**

- Internal interface (syntax-semantics)
- External interface (syntactic- pragmatics/discourse)

**Hypotheses:**

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

---

### References


---

### Method

Contextualized Scalar Acceptability Judgment Task:

**Verb type**

- Unaccusative
- Unergative

**Focus**

- Broad
- Narrow

**Subject**

- Definite
- Indefinite

**Example:**

Unacc. Unerg.

---

### Results per condition

**Monolinguals**

- SV
- VS

**Heritage speakers**

- Def
- Ind

---

### Results across conditions

**Experiment 1:**

- 24 heritage speakers
  - 22 heritage speakers in New Jersey
  - 2 Spanish speaking parents
  - No Caribbean dialects
  - Proficiency-matched to the Dutch HS

**Experiment 2:**

- 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

---

### 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 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