

Bilingual data informs recomplementation theory

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Heritage Spanish speakers have been shown to diverge from the monolingual Spanish norm in terms of comprehension and production of left periphery-related phenomena (e.g., Bruhn de Garavito, 2002; Cuza, 2013; Montrul, 2010). Despite claims of widespread use amongst the dialects of present-day Spanish (e.g., Demonte & Fernández-Soriano, 2009), no study to date has examined heritage Spanish speaker knowledge of multiple complementizer constructions (1):

- (1) Me dice que₁ por suerte, que₂ va a tener suficiente tiempo.
CL_{1sg} says that for luck that is going to have enough time
'S/he says that luckily s/he is going to have enough time.'

The linguistic phenomenon is known as recomplementation, where the dislocated argument or circumstantial adjunct sandwiched between two complementizers establishes a specifier-head relationship in TopicP with secondary *que* "that" (C2) (e.g., Villa-García, 2019). In the present study, data is elicited from advanced speakers of US heritage Spanish and a monolingual control group via a speeded aural acceptability judgment task (see test item 1), where 24 test items were scrambled with 48 distractors, and a forced choice preference task (see test item 2), where 16 items were scrambled with 24 distractors. Group status and proficiency level were determined by self-report via language history questionnaire and ratings across each of the four language skills, respectively.

Overall results support earlier findings of a divergence in performance between monolingual and bilingual groups in CP-related phenomena. Specifically, US heritage Spanish speakers accept and prefer the overt rather than the null secondary complementizer variety at a significantly higher rate when compared to a control group (see graphs 1 and 2, respectively). Given previous research arguing that native Spanish and native English speakers find the null variety more acceptable (Frank, 2016; Casasanto & Sag, 2008), divergent behaviors cannot be accounted for in terms of cross-linguistic influence effects. Importantly, analysis at the individual level paints a complex picture. Given high individual variation within the heritage speaker group, optional selection of null and overt C2 conditions does not accurately describe their behavior. Findings are discussed in terms of the multifunctional secondary *que* (Villa-García, 2019), where divergent behavior is not equal to persistent difficulty or insensitivity. On the contrary, US Heritage Spanish informs existing theoretical accounts.

Selected References

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Speeded Aural Acceptability Judgment Task

Participants were asked to determine whether the response was well formed using a scale from 1-“totally acceptable” to 7-“totally unacceptable”

Test Item 1:

Preliminary Sentence: Ese traje formal, voy a pedirlo.

“I am going to order that formal suite.”

Question: ¿Qué te dijo Susana?

“What did Susana tell you?”

Response: Me dijo que ese traje formal, que/Ø iba a pedirlo.

“She told me that she was going to order that formal suite.”

Forced Choice Preference Task

Participants were directed to read a short preamble and then select the preferred one of two available options.

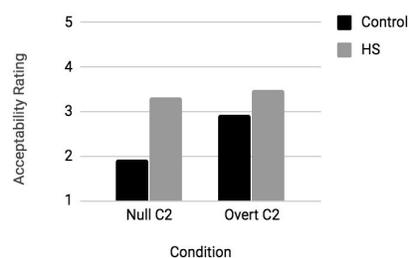
Test Item 2:

Preamble: Ayer, como la semana pasada, tuve que recordarle a Emilia de la bicicleta en nuestro garaje. “Yesterday, as last week, I had to remind Emily about the bicycle in our garage.”

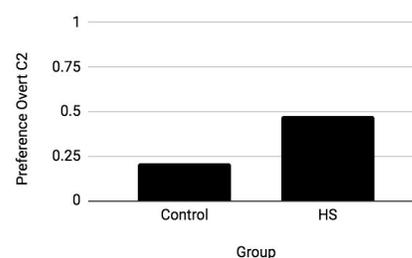
___ Yo le pregunté que esa bicicleta vieja, que cuándo iba a venderla.

___ Yo le pregunté que esa bicicleta vieja, cuándo iba a venderla.

“I asked her when she was going to sell that old bicycle.”



Graph 1. Mean acceptability rating across null/overt C2 conditions



Graph 2. Proportion overt C2 realized