
Focus in bilingual Spanish: A state of the science review

Bradley Hoot

DePaul University

bhoot@depaul.edu



How to cite: Hoot, Bradley. 2025. Focus in bilingual Spanish: A state of the science review. BHL4, eds Karina Fascinetto Zago, Antje Muntendam & María Carme Parafita Couto. Special Issue of *Isogloss. Open Journal of Romance Linguistics* 11(4)/3, 1-41.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/isogloss.509>

Abstract

Bilingual grammars differ systematically from those of monolinguals, but not all areas are affected equally. One linguistic feature that has been claimed to be especially vulnerable to divergence in bilinguals is information structure, which includes constructions in which speakers adapt sentences to the discourse context by manipulating syntax or prosody to mark certain constituents as prominent. A constituent expressing new information, called the *focus* of the sentence, may be realized in a prominent position like the right or left edge (e.g., *¿Quién tosió? Tosió [Juan]_F*. ‘Who coughed? [Juan]_F coughed.’). Research on focus expression in bilingual grammars has expanded substantially in the past three decades, with data from Spanish playing a key role. As the evidence accumulates, it may now be fruitful for the field to pause and take stock of our progress. The goal of this paper is to review the current state of research on focus realization in bilingual Spanish. I synthesize this growing body of scholarship, examining 41 quantitative or experimental studies of the realization of the information-structural category of focus. I conclude that (a) the bulk of the evidence suggests information focus in Spanish does not in fact present special difficulty for bilinguals, regardless of speaker background or methods; (b) the evidence is more mixed for contrastive focus, although many studies find it can be acquired; and (c) where differences are found, prosody may be the area most vulnerable to cross-linguistic influence. After examining the evidence, I make several recommendations for future research.

Keywords: focus, information structure, Spanish, bilingualism, syntax/discourse interface, second language acquisition, heritage language acquisition.

1. Introduction

The grammars acquired by bilingual speakers differ from those of monolingual speakers of the same language, which can be the result of cross-linguistic influence, exposure to different types or quantities of input, or many other factors related to language contact. Yet not all grammatical areas are affected equally; some linguistic features have been identified as being especially prone to such effects. One such feature is information structure, which includes constructions in which speakers adapt sentences to the discourse context by manipulating syntax or prosody to mark certain constituents as prominent, known as *focus*. Information-structural categories like focus have been found to be a locus of special vulnerability or difficulty for bilinguals of all types, including L2/LN learners, heritage speakers, bilingual children, attriters, and others (Hulk & Müller 2000; Laleko 2021; White 2011), which has led to the development of important hypotheses about bilingual language knowledge and acquisition (e.g., Sorace 2011), further stimulating interest in this topic. Within studies of focus, data from Spanish—with its relatively flexible word order that can be deployed to information-structural ends—has played a prominent role, and, given this interest among researchers, the literature on focus expression in bilingual Spanish has grown precipitously in the past three decades.

It is now valuable to pause and take stock. To that end, this state of the science article provides an overview of quantitative research on focus in bilingual Spanish. I start by describing the linguistic features of focus realization in Spanish in section 2 and the motivation for studying focus in bilinguals in section 3. I then summarize the research findings in section 4, examining the results of 41 experimental and quantitative studies with bilinguals of all types for trends and generalizations. Previewing my conclusions, I find that (a) the bulk of the evidence suggests information focus in Spanish does not in fact present special difficulty for bilinguals, regardless of speaker background or methods; (b) the evidence is more mixed for contrastive focus, although many studies find it can be acquired; and (c) where differences are found, prosody may be the area most vulnerable to cross-linguistic influence. Finally, in section 5 I offer some suggestions for where the field should go next.

2. Focus in Spanish

2.1. A brief introduction to focus

Meaning in language use goes beyond the sentence level; speakers share common ground and adapt their contributions to the conversation to reflect the discourse context. Speakers may alter their sentences to fit the context in many ways, manipulating syntax, prosody, and other features to mark certain constituents as more (or less) salient, which we can broadly describe under the label *information structure*. Within information structure, sentences can minimally be partitioned into more and less informative parts. The more informative part that presents new or non-presupposed information comprises the *focus* of the sentence (Krifka 2008), which can be identified in a question/answer pair.

In (1), the subject is new information targeted by the wh-question in the context, so focus is on the subject. A different context creates a different focus, as in (2), where the question targets the PP, or (3), where the focus is the whole VP.

- (1) English, subject focus¹
Context: Who found this platypus in the bathtub?
[Kalyani]_F found it.
- (2) English, PP focus
Context: Where did Kalyani find this platypus?
She found it [in the bathtub]_F.
- (3) English, VP focus
Context: What did Kalyani do today?
She [found a platypus in the bathtub]_F!

In addition to these narrow foci on constituents within the sentence, the whole sentence can be in focus, which is called broad focus, as in (4).

- (4) English, broad/sentence focus
Context: What happened?
[Kalyani found a platypus in the bathtub]_F!

As well as describing focus as narrow or broad, it is possible to identify different types according to their meaning or use. Several typologies of focus exist (see Büring 2009; Krifka 2008), but the key distinction to make for present purposes is between *information* focus, which merely expresses new or non-presupposed information, as in the previous examples, and *contrastive* focus, which can be used to express correction, contrast, or exhaustive identification (É. Kiss 1998), as in (5). This classification is a simplification of the full range of possible foci (see Cruschina 2021 for discussion), but the two-way distinction is relevant because these two types are the primary ones investigated in the experimental literature, and they are realized differently, employing different prosodic and syntactic structures.

- (5) English, contrastive focus
Context: So, Kalyani found an echidna in the bathtub?
No, she found [a platypus]_{CF} in the bathtub!

Focus of either type is generally marked with prominence in some way. Speakers use morphosyntactic and prosodic means to mark the focus as prominent, but the tools available to mark focus vary by language. In languages like English and Spanish, these can include stressing the focus (and deaccenting given information), as in (6), moving a focal constituent to a prominent position such as the left or right edge of the sentence, as in (7), or employing marked syntactic constructions like clefts and

¹ In all examples, brackets with the subscript 'F' indicate information focus; the subscript 'CF' indicates contrastive focus. When the purpose of the example is to show the role of stress, that stress is shown by SMALL CAPS. Stress is important for focus in the other examples as well but is not marked everywhere to avoid cluttering examples.

pseudoclefts, as in (8).² Other languages have these and other strategies, including morphological marking.

- (6) English, stress in situ
Context: What did Kalyani find in the bathtub?
She found [a PLATYPUS]_F in the bathtub!
- (7) English, movement to the left periphery
Context: Wait, which monotreme did Kalyani find in the bathtub?
[The platypus]_{CF} she found in the bathtub.
- (8) English, cleft
Context: So, Kalyani found an echidna in the bathtub?
No, it was [a platypus]_{CF} she found in the bathtub!

Focus is thus a linguistic phenomenon that resides at multiple interfaces, involving at least syntax, prosody, semantics, and pragmatics, and the realization of focus using syntactic and prosodic tools determined by the discourse context has been the site of very active research in linguistics since at least the 1970s (see early treatments, e.g., by Chomsky 1971, 1976; Jackendoff 1972). In this line of research, cross-linguistic variation in focus realization—including evidence from Spanish—has played an important role.

2.2. Information focus realization in Spanish

Like many languages, Spanish marks focus with both prosodic and syntactic mechanisms, but, because of its relatively flexible word order, the syntactic mechanisms have received the bulk of the attention.³ In this arena, the most prominent claim is that Spanish moves information focus to sentence-final position. The idea that Spanish postposes focal material has been discussed in the literature since at least Bolinger (1954), but its most well-known formulation comes from Zubizarreta (1998).

Zubizarreta's key empirical claim is that stress in situ is only available in Spanish for contrastive focus, whereas information focus requires movement. Zubizarreta proposed a rule called *p-movement*, for prosodically-motivated movement, which conceptualizes the movement as a conflict between two stress rules. The Focus-Prominence Rule requires that focal material be stressed, while the Nuclear Stress

² See Gussenhoven (2007) for a more complete description of focus types in English. These examples serve just to illustrate the range of strategies available to many languages, using English for expository convenience.

³ Another syntactic fact about Spanish that interacts with information structure is that Spanish is a pro-drop language: discourse-given or old-information subjects are generally elided, while subjects that express topic shift or focal information cannot be null (see Camacho-Taboada, Jiménez-Fernández & López-Rueda 2016 for examples). More so than focus realization through word order and prosody, the literature on null subjects, the factors that constrain them, and their acquisition by bilinguals is vast, and it lies outside the scope of my review. For some discussion, see Laleko (2021:sec. 27.5) on heritage speakers and White (2016) on L2 learners.

Rule⁴ requires that the most deeply embedded constituent be stressed, and p-movement moves non-focal material out of the way to ensure the two stress rules align by leaving the focus in rightmost position. For example, in a subject-focus context like (9), a non-final focus (9a) results in rule conflict, so p-movement shifts the VP leftward, producing (9b) with the focus in final position where both rules correspond. For Zubizarreta, shifting the stress to the focus in situ, which is the strategy used in English (cf. (6), above), is only available in Spanish for contrastive focus (10), not information focus (9).

(9) Spanish, p-movement

Context: ¿Quién encontró a este ornitorrinco en la bañera?

‘Who found this platypus in the bathtub?’

a. # [Kalyani]_F lo encontró.

K it.ACC found

b. Lo encontró [Kalyani]_F.

it.ACC found K

‘Kalyani found it.’

(10) Spanish, felicitous stress in situ for contrastive focus

Context: ¡He oído que Lori encontró a un ornitorrinco!

‘I heard Lori found a platypus!’

[KALYANI]_{CF} lo encontró (y no Lori).

K it.ACC found and not L

‘Kalyani found it (not Lori).’

Zubizarreta’s influential work inspired substantial research on Spanish focus in the 25 years since its debut (see, among others, Casielles-Suárez 2004; García García & Uth 2018; Gutiérrez-Bravo 2008; Heidinger 2022; Hoot & Leal 2020; Olarrea 2012; Ortega-Santos 2016 for overviews). That same period has seen an experimental turn in linguistics, with increased interest in using formal experimental or quantitative methods to test theoretical claims. Experiments on focus in Spanish have largely not supported the view that information focus must be final, however, instead finding widespread acceptance and production of focus in situ (among others, Gabriel 2010; Heidinger 2015; Hoot 2016; Hoot, Leal & Destruel 2020; Leal, Destruel & Hoot 2018; see also Fig. 1).

Experiments have used a range of methods, primarily judgment and production tasks. Most experiments identify information focus with question-answer pairs, asking participants to rate responses with different word orders, choose the preferred response according to the context, or produce full-sentence answers as a response to a wh-question. From the judgment and production studies, a few generalizations emerge.

First, canonical word orders rule. Canonical word orders are generally accepted and produced to realize multiple focus structures, as in (11), irrespective of experiment design or population. The availability of canonical word orders to realize information

⁴ Concretely, Zubizarreta argues that the Nuclear Stress Rule in Spanish is what she calls the C-NSR, which identifies the lowest constituent in the chain of asymmetric c-command as requiring nuclear stress. In practical terms, this is generally the rightmost constituent.

foci in many different contexts is one of the most robust findings in this area (see Hoot, Leal & Destruel 2020; Leal, Destruel & Hoot 2018 for discussion).

(11) Spanish, canonical orders are felicitous for multiple focus structures

a. Context: ¿Quién encontró al ornitorrinco en la bañera?

‘Who found the platypus in the bathtub?’

[Kalyani]_F encontró a-l ornitorrinco en la bañera.
K found ACC-the platypus in the bathtub

b. Context: ¿Qué encontró Kalyani en la bañera?

‘What did Kalyani find in the bathtub?’

Kalyani encontró [a-l ornitorrinco]_F en la bañera.
K found ACC-the platypus in the bathtub

c. Context: ¿Dónde encontró Kalyani al ornitorrinco?

‘Where did Kalyani find the platypus?’

Kalyani encontró a-l ornitorrinco [en la bañera]_F.
K found ACC-the platypus in the bathtub

‘Kalyani found the platypus in the bathtub.’

Nevertheless, some experiments have found preferences for focus-final, just not exclusively. For example, when canonical word orders were excluded in a forced-choice task comparing VSO to VOS orders for realizing subject focus, as in (12), Hoot and Leal (2020) observed preferences for VOS (12b) that were not observed when canonical SVO was included as a possibility in prior studies (e.g., Hoot 2016).

(12) Spanish, VSO vs. VOS

Context: ¿Quién encontró al ornitorrinco en la bañera?

‘Who found the platypus in the bathtub?’

a. Encontró [Kalyani]_F a-l ornitorrinco.

Found K ACC-the platypus

b. Encontró a-l ornitorrinco [Kalyani]_F.

found ACC-the platypus K

‘Kalyani found the platypus.’

Similar preferences for final focus have sometimes emerged when fewer constituents are present in the sentence, for example with some intransitive verbs (e.g., Roggia 2011), as in (13), and when some arguments were replaced with pronouns (e.g., Gabriel 2010), as in (9), above. Nevertheless, preferences for in situ information focus have been observed in such setups as well (e.g., Hertel 2003), so final orders cannot be said to be required.

(13) Spanish, intransitives

Context: ¿Qué apareció en la bañera?

‘What appeared in the bathtub?’

a. Apareció [un ornitorrinco]_F.

appeared a platypus

b. [Un ornitorrinco]_F apareció.

a platypus appeared

‘A platypus appeared.’

Less common methods have also supported the view that focus need not be final but can be associated with final position. Heidinger's (2022) corpus study revealed that focus was most commonly realized in final position, although examples of non-final realization abounded. Corpus studies have also shown that many non-canonical word orders are quite rare (Davidson 2016; Ocampo 2009). Sociolinguistic interview studies have likewise documented a range of focus realizations (Ocampo 1995, 2003, 2005). Studies of processing have shown easy processing of canonical word order in any context, while also finding evidence for association of information focus and final position (Hoot & Leal 2020; Hoot, Leal & Destruel 2020).

In summary, the experimental literature has shown that information focus can be realized by a range of constructions and is variable; discourse does not require specific orders. Information focus and final position are associated, and sometimes final focus is preferred, yet focus need not be final. Canonical word orders may be felicitous for any information structure.

In a recent review, Heidinger (2022) pointed out that whether a given scholar identifies Spanish information focus as needing to occur in final position depends largely on the methodological approach they take. Most work in the generative tradition using introspective judgments or small-scale, informal data collection from informants has argued that focus in Spanish must be final, whereas most quantitative work with formal experimental methods has found that in situ focus is available (and sometimes preferred). He visualized the distribution of claims in the literature by creating a table sorting each study according to the empirical claims made and the methods employed; the resulting table, reproduced in Figure 1, shows the stark difference by approach.

Figure 1. Empirical claims about information focus in Spanish by approach.

	Introspection	Experiment
Only final	Büring 2009; Büring and Gutiérrez-Bravo 2001; Cruschina 2021; Escandell-Vidal and Leonetti 2019; Fábregas 2016; Gutiérrez-Bravo 2002, 2008; Helfrich and Pöll 2011; Leonetti 2014; Martín Butragueño 2005; Revert Sanz 2001; Rodríguez Ramalle 2005; Zubizarreta 1998, 1999	Feldhausen and Vanrell 2015
Final and non-final	Olarrea 2012; RAE and ASALE 2009	Brunetti 2009; Calhoun et al. 2018; Domínguez and Arche 2014; Gabriel 2007, 2010; Gupton 2017; Heidinger 2013, 2014, 2018a, 2018b; Hertel 2003; Hoot 2012, 2016; Hoot and Leal 2020, Hoot et al. 2020; Jiménez-Fernández 2015a, 2015b; Leal et al. 2018; Muntendam 2013; Ortiz López 2009; Roggia 2018; Uth 2014; Vanrell and Fernández-Soriano 2013, 2018

Source: Heidinger (2022:76, tbl. 1), reproduced with permission under a [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) license

I concur with Heidinger's observation that there is a disconnect in the literature between experimental results and theoretical proposals, and it is noteworthy that the corpus results Heidinger presented in the same article straddled the line, showing a preference for final position but also plenty of examples of in situ focus. I will return to a discussion of the role of different types of evidence in getting a more complete picture of this phenomenon in §5.

2.3. Contrastive focus realization in Spanish

Like information focus, contrastive focus in Spanish can be realized variably. Both introspective descriptions and experimental results agree that contrastive focus can receive emphatic stress in situ or undergo several different movement operations.

First, contrastive focus can receive stress in situ, as shown in (14), repeated from (10). Although intonation is quite variable and there is no one-to-one correspondence between pitch accents and focus types, the stress produced on contrastive focus and information focus can differ, with different prosodic resources being deployed to mark contrastive focus with emphatic stress. (I return to prosody in §2.4.)

- (14) Spanish, contrastive focus stressed in situ
 Context: ¡He oído que Lori encontró a un ornitorrinco!
 'I heard Lori found a platypus!'
 [KALYANI]_{CF} lo encontró (y no Lori).
 K it.ACC found and not L
 'Kalyani found it (not Lori).'

In addition, contrastive focus can involve movement. The most well-known case is when the focus is fronted, as in (15). The focal constituent is moved to the left periphery, and the subject (if not the focus) obligatorily appears post-verbally. Contrastive focus can also be rightmost, however, especially in cases of explicit correction (Ortega-Santos 2016), as in (16).⁵ Special syntactic structures like clefts and pseudoclefts can also be used for contrastive focus (17).

- (15) Spanish, contrastive focus fronting
 Context: Espera, ¿qué monotrema encontró Kalyani en la bañera?
 'Wait, which monotreme did Kalyani find in the bathtub?'
 [El ornitorrinco]_{CF} encontró Kalyani en la bañera.
 the platypus found K in the bathtub
 'The platypus Kalyani found in the bathtub.'
- (16) Spanish, contrastive focus in rightmost position
 Context: ¡He oído que Lori encontró a un ornitorrinco!
 'I heard Lori found a platypus!'

⁵ In fact, Ortega-Santos (2016) distinguishes corrective focus from contrastive focus (and other types, like verum and mirative focus), but I consider them together, separating contrastive focus from information focus, which form the two main divisions in the experimental literature.

Lo encontró [Kalyani]_{CF} (y no Lori).
 it.ACC found K and not L
 ‘Kalyani found it (not Lori).’

(17) Spanish, cleft

Context: Entonces, ¿Kalyani encontró a un equidna en la bañera?
 ‘So, Kalyani found an echidna in the bathtub?’

No, ¡fue a [un ornitorrinco]_{CF} que encontró en la bañera!
 No it.was ACC a platypus that she.found in the bathtub
 ‘No, it was a platypus she found in the bathtub!’

Fewer experiments have investigate contrastive focus than information focus in Spanish, but all the evidence converges on the availability of a range of strategies. Studies employing judgments (e.g., Gupton 2017; Muntendam 2009), production (e.g., Feldhausen & Vanrell 2014, 2015), and naturalistic recordings (e.g., Ocampo 1995, 2005) have documented speakers’ recourse to several options. Some evidence suggests preferences may differ by constituent. For example, Gabriel (2010) found clefts were produced more by Argentinian speakers for contrastive focus on a subject, while contrastive focus on a direct object was mostly produced in situ. Similarly for Peninsular Spanish speakers, Sánchez-Alvarado (2020) found clefts were the most common production for subject focus, while Adli (2011) found contrastive object focus was most accepted in situ. However, other studies documented a preference for clefts (Feldhausen & Vanrell 2014, 2015 in Peninsular varieties) or in situ (Gabriel, Feldhausen & Pešková 2009 in Argentina; Vanrell & Fernández-Soriano 2013 in Spain) across constituents. These studies (and others) also found speakers employing both movement options. In sum, for contrastive focus in Spanish, canonical word order with the focus in situ is produced and accepted in experiments, but clefting is also a very widely attested strategy, especially for subjects, and both types of movement also appear in production data.

2.4. The prosody of focus in Spanish

Although much of the experimental literature is concerned especially with word order, prosody plays a crucial role in focus realization in Spanish, as it does in many languages. It is widely agreed that (a) focus of all types is prosodically prominent, (b) the phonetic correlates of prosodic prominence are variable and overlapping, and (c) contrastive focus can receive emphatic stress that differs from information focus.

In general, focal constituents receive sentence-level stress, which is marked phonetically with a pitch accent, increased volume, and longer nuclear vowel duration in the tonic syllable. Other intonation features can also be involved in marking focus, such as altering the intonational phrasing, introducing pauses or breaks, or increasing the pitch excursion. Pitch accent is “the most powerful cue for the perception of main stress” (Gussenhoven 2004:17). However, no single pitch accent corresponds to stress or focus in Spanish. Often, stressed words are produced with the F0 peak aligned to the stressed syllable in the word, such as in an L+H* pitch accent (Face 2003; Kim & Avelino 2003), yet a range of pitch accents are amply attested for both information and contrastive focus in Spanish (see, e.g., Martín Butragueño 2005; Martín Butragueño & Mendoza 2018; Mendoza Vázquez, Gutiérrez-Bravo & Martín

Butragueño 2020; Muntendam & Torreira 2016; Vanrell & Fernández-Soriano 2013, 2018). In fact, in their study of two varieties of Spanish, Muntendam and Torreira noted that “*all* contour types occur in *all* focus conditions” (Muntendam & Torreira 2016:84, emphasis in original).

Zubizarreta (1998, 1999), following Chomsky (1971) and Jackendoff (1972), distinguished between the nuclear stress information focus receives and the emphatic stress used for contrastive focus, a distinction widely agreed-upon in descriptions in the literature. Yet here, too, there is variation: emphatic intonation contours for contrastive focus that differ from those for information focus are well documented (e.g., Face 2002; Martín Butragueño 2005), yet many studies have also found overlap in the pitch contours used to mark information and contrastive focus (e.g., Vanrell & Fernández-Soriano 2013).

Thus, although there is general agreement that focus is prosodically prominent and that contrastive focus may (but need not) receive extra emphasis, there is no one-to-one correspondence between particular intonation patterns and focus type. Furthermore, prosodic resources employed for focus marking interact with other social and discursive factors (Mendoza Vázquez, Gutiérrez-Bravo & Martín Butragueño 2020), which can make isolating the suprasegmental properties specific to focus challenging.

2.5. Dialectal variation

Quantitative studies of focus in Spanish have been carried out with a range of dialects, predominantly the dialects of Spain, followed by Mexico and Argentina, with less work on Andean and Caribbean varieties, and with some areas (e.g., Central America, Colombia, Equatorial Guinea) un- or understudied. Several studies mixed speakers across dialects into a single ‘native speaker’ group, while some studies explicitly compared two or more varieties (e.g., Hoot & Leal 2020; Muntendam 2009, 2013; Muntendam & Torreira 2016; Sánchez & Zdrojewski 2019). Despite some attention to the question of dialectal differences, little work has focused on documenting dialect variation systematically, at least for morphosyntax. Work on intonation is more advanced in this arena, with descriptions of intonational differences across dialects, which can include the prosodic features associated with focus (see, e.g., the works collected in Prieto & Roseano 2010), as well as dialectal differences in intensity and duration (e.g., Face 2002; Kim & Avelino 2003).⁶

Dialect variation is one of several areas where focus in monolingual Spanish remains a fruitful topic for research, but the goal of the present work, is to characterize the literature on focus in the Spanish of bilingual speakers, so I turn now to a brief discussion of why this linguistic feature is of special interest with bilinguals.

⁶ I thank Antje Muntendam for this observation.

3. Bilingualism and the syntax/discourse interface⁷

Constructions at the syntax/discourse interface—which includes information structure—have long been identified as a locus of special vulnerability or difficulty for bilinguals of all types. They are acquired late for L2 learners (White 2011), they have all the hallmarks of constructions that pose problems for heritage language acquisition (e.g., the distance problem and the ambiguity problem of Polinsky & Scontras 2020), they produce cross-linguistic influence in bilingual children (Hulk & Müller 2000), and they are unstable under attrition (Sorace 2004). Although healthy debates continue regarding which constructions are properly attributed to the syntax/discourse interface and about what evidence is most apt for testing these claims, a substantial literature attests to special difficulties with linguistic structures that require integration with discourse for bilinguals of many different backgrounds, and several influential hypotheses have been developed to explain why this might be the case.

The most well-known hypothesis in this arena is likely the Interface Hypothesis (Sorace 2011). Originally proposed to account for persistent optionality in near-native L2 learners and challenges for bilingual children (Sorace & Filiaci 2006; Sorace & Serratrice 2009), the Interface Hypothesis presents a theoretically motivated account of why certain areas might be especially vulnerable, identifying the external interfaces between linguistic and non-linguistic components as the site of difficulty. Like Zubizarreta's work on focus, the Interface Hypothesis has been extremely successful in stimulating research, but the apparent permeability of discourse phenomena has drawn attention from scholars from several perspectives.

As an example, Silva-Corvalán (2008), coming from a sociolinguistic, language-contact perspective, proposed that contact-induced changes preferentially affect pragmatic uses or meanings, rather than narrow syntax, aiming to explain similar facts about variation in discourse to what the Interface Hypothesis is intended to explain. Another hypothesis, coming from the perspective of online processing, postulates that L2 learners have a reduced ability to generate expectations, which hinders their ability to make predictions based on the discourse context (the RAGE hypothesis; Grüter, Rohde & Schafer 2017).

These hypotheses have shaped debates around bilingual, heritage, and L2 acquisition of information structure and other discourse phenomena in recent years and, in this time, experimental evidence about focus realization in bilingual Spanish has been steadily accumulating. In this landscape, it may now be fruitful to pause and take stock of the findings.

⁷ This section discusses the hypotheses about bilingual acquisition of interface phenomena that largely shape the discussion in this literature, but there is another linguistic feature specific to bilinguals that has not been widely studied when it comes to information structure: code-switching. Bi- and multilinguals can use two or more languages in a single utterance, and switching languages can certainly be deployed to information-structural effect. Yet this has only recently begun to receive attention (see Muntendam & Parafita Couto 2024 for an overview), and only one quantitative study included in my review included code-switching (Olson & Ortega-Llebaria 2010). The interaction between code-switching and information structure strikes me as a promising topic for future research.

4. Quantitative evidence about focus realization in bilingual Spanish

I reviewed 52 experimental or quantitative studies that investigated focus in Spanish with bilingual populations, representing all the studies in this field containing a quantitative or experimental component I am aware of as of early 2025. It is likely that I have missed something somewhere, but I have done my level best to cover the entire literature. Of the 52 works I reviewed, I removed eleven (Adli 2011; Bustin, Muntendam & Sunderman 2024; Camacho-Taboada, Jiménez-Fernández & López-Rueda 2016; Domínguez 2007; Jiménez-Fernández 2023; Lozano 2009; Nava 2007; Ocampo & Klee 1995; Ortiz López 2009; Vanrell & Fernández-Soriano 2013, 2018) because they reported the data in a way that was not comparable to the other studies here, did not report sufficient methodological details, or fell outside the scope of this paper in some way, resulting in a corpus of 41 studies, listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Studies included in review.

Study	Task(s)	Bilingual population(s)
de Prada Pérez (2010)	AJT, interview	Catalan speakers in Minorca
de Prada Pérez & Pascual y Cabo (2012)	AJT	Heritage speakers in the USA
Domínguez & Arche (2008)	AJT	L2 learners in the UK
Domínguez & Arche (2014)	AJT	L2 learners in the UK
Domínguez (2013:chap. 4)	Interview ⁸	L2 learners in the UK
Domínguez (2013:chap. 5)	AJT, interview	Attriters in the USA and UK
Feldhausen & Vanrell (2024)	Elicited production	Heritage speakers in Germany
Gabriel & Grünke (2018)	AJT, elicited production	L3 learners (L1 Italian or European Portuguese, L2 German, L3 Spanish) in Germany
Gellon (2015)	AJT, elicited production, interview, written narrative	Heritage speakers in the USA
Gómez Soler & Pascual y Cabo (2016)	AJT	Heritage speakers in the USA
Gómez Soler & Pascual y Cabo (2018)	AJT	Heritage speakers in the USA
Gondra (2022)	AJT, elicited production	Heritage speakers in the USA
Gupton (2017)	AJT	L2 learners in the USA, Catalan and Galician speakers in Spain
Gupton & Sánchez Calderón (2023)	AJT	L2 learners in the USA
Hertel (2003)	Elicited production	L2 learners in the USA
Hoot (2012)	AJT	Heritage speakers in the USA
Hoot (2017)	AJT	Heritage speakers in the USA
Hoot & Leal (2023a)	AJT, SPR	Catalan speakers in Catalunya, Yucatec Maya speakers in Yucatán

⁸ This chapter also discusses the AJT data previously reported in Domínguez & Arche (2008, 2014); since I reviewed those studies separately, I considered only the new production data here. This production task consisted of an interview that included an open-ended picture description task, but the results of both tasks are reported together, so I consider them as one.

Hoot & Leal (2023b)	AJT, SPR	Heritage speakers in the USA
Kim (2016)	Elicited production, prosody perception	Heritage speakers and L2 learners in the USA
Kim (2019)	Elicited production	Heritage speakers and L2 learners in the USA
Leal Méndez & Slabakova (2011)	AJT	L2 learners in the USA
Leal, Destruel, & Hoot (2018)	Elicited production	Heritage speakers in the USA
Leal, Destruel, & Hoot (2019)	Elicited production	L2 learners in the USA
Leal & Hoot (2022)	AJT, SPR	L2 learners in the USA
Llompарт (2016)	Corpus analysis	Heritage speakers in the USA ⁹
López Otero (2022)	AJT, elicited production	Heritage speakers in the USA
Lozano (2006a)	AJT	L2 learners in Greece
Lozano (2006b)	AJT	L2 learners in the UK and in Greece
Muntendam (2009)	AJT, interview	Quechua speakers in Bolivia and Ecuador
Muntendam (2013)	AJT, interview	Quechua speakers in Bolivia and Ecuador
Muntendam & Torreira (2016)	Elicited production	Quechua speakers in Peru
Nishida, Riccelli, & Isabelli (2024)	AJT, written narrative	Heritage speakers in the USA
Olson & Ortega-Llebaria (2010)	Prosody perception	Heritage speakers and L2 learners in the USA
Pladevall Ballester (2010)	AJT	Child L2 learners in the UK
Sánchez-Alvarado (2018)	AJT	L2 learners in the USA
Sánchez-Alvarado & Armstrong (2022)	Prosody production (reading aloud)	L2 learners in the USA
Slabakova, Kempchinsky, & Rothman (2012)	AJT	L2 learners, L1 English (variety unspecified) via the Internet
van Osch (2019)	AJT, elicited production	Heritage speakers in the USA and the Netherlands
van Osch & Sleeman (2018)	AJT	Heritage speakers in the Netherlands
Zapata, Sánchez, & Toribio (2005)	AJT	Heritage speakers in the USA

Figure 2 shows the distribution of the populations studied in the papers I reviewed (which do not sum to 41 because some included multiple groups). The most common populations were heritage Spanish speakers and L2 learners, nearly all in the US or UK with English as the societal language and the speakers' dominant language. Only two studies reported on L2 learners with a non-English L1, viz. Greek (Lozano 2006a, 2006b), and only three reported heritage speakers with a dominant language other than English, either Dutch (van Osch 2019; van Osch & Sleeman 2018) or German (Feldhausen & Vanrell 2024). Of the studies that examined other populations,

⁹ Llompарт (2016) analyzes Spanish/English bilingual speakers in the *Corpus del Español en el Sur de Arizona* (CESA; Carvalho 2012). Not all are heritage speakers in the narrow sense; a few may be more fairly classified as baseline speakers (cf., Polinsky 2018). However, most of the participants in the corpus were born in the US, and most of those who were born in Mexico have very long periods of residence in the US, so the large majority of the corpus can be considered heritage speakers.

most were of cases of societal bilingualism, with Spanish in contact with Catalan (Gupton 2017; Hoot & Leal 2020; de Prada Pérez 2010), Galician (Gupton 2017), Quechua (Muntendam 2009, 2013; Muntendam & Torreira 2016), or Yucatec Maya (YM; Hoot & Leal 2020). One study each examined attrition (Domínguez 2013:chap. 5) and L3 acquisition (Gabriel & Grünke 2018).

Figure 2. Populations of studies included in review.

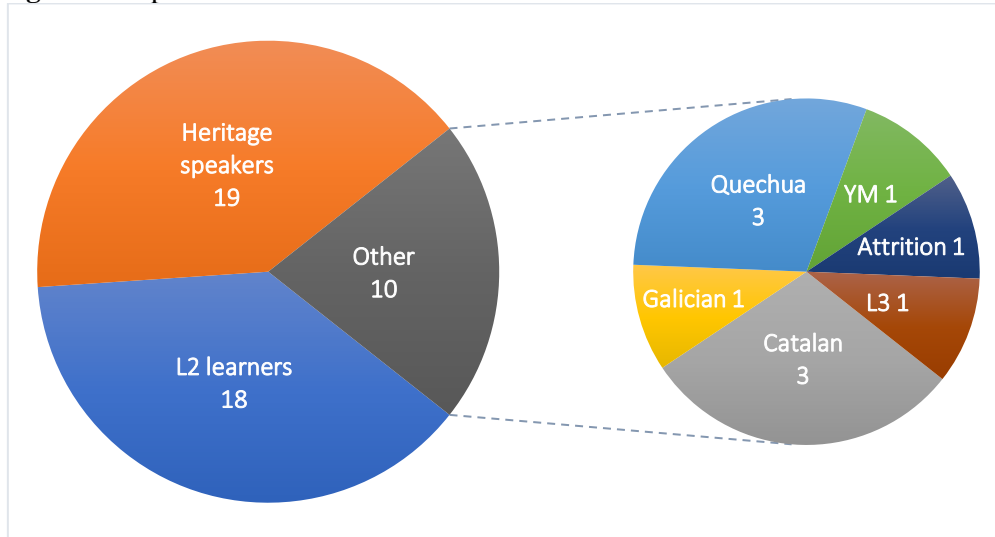
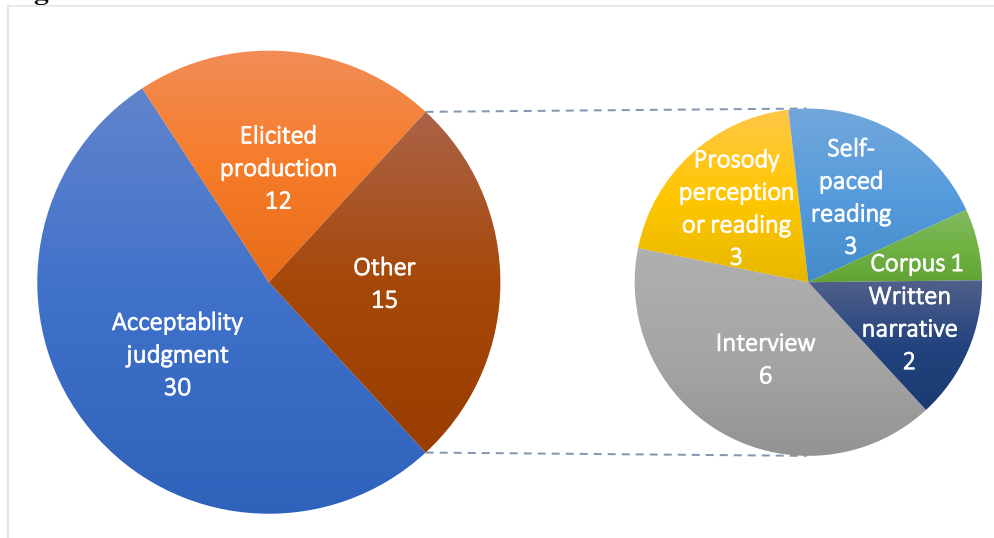


Figure 3 shows the distribution of the methods used in the papers I reviewed (which do not sum to 41 because some included multiple tasks). By far the most common task was some form of acceptability judgment task (AJT), which included rating tasks, forced-choice or preference tasks, and yes/no judgment tasks. The next most common task was some form of elicited production, which included written and oral production of sentences or parts of sentences in direct response to questions or contexts. Some of these studies examined both word order and prosody. Of the other methods employed, six used sociolinguistic interviews or oral narratives (Domínguez 2013:chap. 4 & chap. 5; Gellon 2015; Muntendam 2009, 2013; de Prada Pérez 2010); two used written narratives (Gellon 2015; Nishida, Riccelli & Isabelli 2024); three conducted tasks on prosodic perception or reading aloud for intonation without word order variation (Kim 2016; Olson & Ortega-Llebaria 2010; Sánchez-Alvarado & Armstrong 2022); three included self-paced reading (SPR) as a measure of online processing (Hoot & Leal 2020, 2023b; Leal & Hoot 2022); and one conducted a variationist analysis of existing corpora (Llompert 2016).

Figure 3. Methods used in studies included in review.

To review the state of the science presented by these studies and summarize trends across reports with different formats and goals, I followed Heidinger's tack of sorting papers according to the conclusions they reach, crossed with characteristics such as the population or method. Before turning to those results, I discuss in the next section some of the considerations involved in deciding how to classify each study.

4.1. Defining divergence and convergence

Given the predictions of several hypotheses that focus should be the site of special difficulty for bilinguals of all stripes, the central question when reviewing each study was whether it provides evidence for that conclusion or not. Of course, reducing any study to a yes/no dichotomy risks oversimplification, and I recognize that each study must be interpreted in its full context. Nevertheless, because the goal was to identify trends, some generalizations were necessary. To that end, I sorted the studies in my corpus according to whether—on the one hand—they broadly showed divergence from controls, delayed acquisition, insensitivity to context, or some other form of special difficulty or vulnerability, or—on the other hand—they showed overall convergence or successful acquisition, displaying similar patterns or distinctions to those made by control groups. Given this goal of sorting studies by conclusion, it is important to be explicit about what constituted evidence of divergence and convergence.

Cases in which bilinguals did not differ from controls or differ only minimally were clear examples of successful acquisition, that is, **convergence** on the (presumed) input. Many researchers regarded largely similar patterns of results between the groups as convergence, even when some quantitative differences remain. For example, Hoot (2017) used a judgment task to test subject focus in transitive sentences with heritage speakers, finding that all groups preferred stressing the focus in situ over focus-final VOS order. Nevertheless, differences by proficiency were observed: the advanced speakers presented the same pattern as monolingual controls, while the lower-proficiency speakers showed some differences, with higher ratings of one of the dispreferred structures. Because the overall preference was the same at all proficiency levels and the advanced speakers' judgments did not differ from the baseline's, Hoot

concluded that focus did not present special difficulty for bilinguals, despite some differences in the intermediate proficiency group. Leal et al. (2019) came to a similar conclusion about L2 learners in a production study. When asked to produce an answer to a subject focus question, both learners and native speakers overwhelmingly opted for canonical SVO word order, with few productions of movement to final position. Although there were small numeric differences (88% SVO for learners, 80% for natives), the authors concluded that this construction is fully acquired without special difficulty because the overall pattern was the same.

On the other hand, experimental findings of **divergence** from the baseline or target usually took the form of apparent insensitivity to discourse context, resulting in optional judgments or similar productions irrespective of context, or of delays in acquisition, in which focal distinctions were made but not until relatively advanced proficiency.

Some studies found that bilingual participants did not appear sensitive to the discourse context at all. For example, van Osch (2019) tested whether heritage speakers in the UK and the Netherlands were sensitive to the variation between SV and VS word orders following broad focus and narrow subject focus questions, using both a judgment task and a production task. In both cases, the heritage speaker group made no context-based distinctions, whereas the monolingual control group differed across contexts.

Rather than insensitivity, some studies found delays in acquisition. For example, Hertel's (2003) seminal written production study showed that focus can be acquired but is acquired late and with residual optionality. Hertel tested production of VS with intransitives in broad focus and subject focus contexts with L2 learners at four levels of proficiency. Beginner, low intermediate, and high intermediate learners produced less VS for subject focus than native speakers; the advanced L2ers mostly converged on the target rates, but they retained some infelicitous overextension of VS orders to broad focus even at the advanced level. These results suggest that the contextual restrictions on VS orders are acquired later than the syntax of inversion. Similar evidence from a judgment study (also of SV/VS with intransitives) was presented by Lozano (2006a). Greek learners of L2 Spanish at upper intermediate proficiency did not make contextual distinctions at all, and the most advanced speakers made relatively weak distinctions, leading Lozano to conclude that the realization of discourse features is problematic for L2 learners. No group made a native-like distinction, despite development toward distinguishing between the two structures. In both cases, the authors argued that the late acquisition of focal distinctions when compared to the syntactic properties of VS word order, along with some residual optionality, suggests that discourse properties like focus are delayed relative to syntactic properties.

Studies showing delays or weak distinctions are potentially open to reinterpretation. For instance, the advanced speakers in Lozano's judgment task were making the relevant contextual distinctions, just not as strongly as native speakers. These results could arguably be understood to show (eventual) successful acquisition, suggesting that focus is not an intractable problem. As in all areas of bilingualism research, questions can arise about how to interpret differences between groups or developmental paths that trend toward but do not reach target-like distinctions (cf. the comparative fallacy, Bley-Vroman 1983). In the same vein, however, as pointed out by an anonymous reviewer, some studies showing successful acquisition could be

reinterpreted as simply being inconclusive, especially when they show success with SVO word order, which is canonical in Spanish and the default in English (the dominant language of many bilinguals in these studies).

Opening every study I reviewed here to a thorough reinterpretation of its data would likely have biased the analysis, been confusing to readers familiar with them, and been impractical, so I chose to mostly defer to the conclusions of the authors of each study regarding how they interpreted their data. Nevertheless, the analysis I present here necessarily relies on my judgment, and there are two cases in which I disagree strongly enough with the conclusions that I have chosen to analyze the results differently than the authors (Gabriel & Grönke 2018; Zapata, Sánchez & Toribio 2005), as well as two cases in which the conclusions were somewhat mixed, for which my classification requires explicit discussion (Kim 2016; López Otero 2022). To be transparent about those decisions, I have marked those cases in the tables that follow and discuss them in the text when they arise.

In summary, I have classified the findings of the studies under review into two broad categories: convergence on the baseline/target input (similar patterns to or minimal difference from controls) or divergence from the baseline/target input (persistent optionality, evidence of transfer, or difference from controls). These categories were operationalized in terms of the patterns displayed by bilingual groups compared to control groups on a given task, largely deferring to the conclusions of the authors of the studies.

Operationalizing the categories in this way generally reflects the way the studies have been framed by their own authors (with a few exceptions) and the overall orientation of this literature, I believe. Yet it is not without pitfalls, and several important limitations to the available evidence need to be acknowledged.¹⁰

First, as in any process of generalization, we lose some detail by lumping studies together, and it is possible that some experiments are not comparable due to differences in dialect, speaker proficiency, choice of control group, or the social status of Spanish in a given context (e.g., as a minority versus majority language). This loss of granularity is a trade-off potentially balanced by the utility of the resulting generalizations, yet it is nevertheless a limitation of my review.

Second, there is a broader question about the value of framing bilingual acquisition by focusing on whether bilinguals converge on or diverge from a given baseline or target. The view implicitly adopted in some of the studies I reviewed is of bilingual varieties of Spanish as “varieties in construction,” which is potentially problematic for at least two reasons: (i) it views bilinguals “as monolinguals in the making, which they aren't;” and (ii) the input bilinguals (including L2 learners) receive is likely not monolingual input, so monolinguals may not be an appropriate presumed target of acquisition.¹¹ To some extent, this is a conceptual limitation that is present in the literature I am reviewing; many studies are indeed framed this way, although many also take pains to identify an appropriate control group for the population under study (e.g., one that reflects the input to which speakers were likely exposed). There may be other, more profitable ways to conceptualize bilingual acquisition, a point to which I return in §5.5.

¹⁰ I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for cogent observations on these limitations.

¹¹ Thank you to an anonymous reviewer for the two excellent turns of phrase quoted here.

Finally, as in the study of focus in monolingual Spanish described in §2, most of the attention in the literature on bilingual Spanish has been paid to word order rather than prosody. As we will see, prosody (especially with contrastive focus) may be the area where divergence is most likely, but the evidence is still limited. The overwhelming emphasis on word order in the literature may present an overly rosy picture, especially for Spanish/English bilinguals where the word order options in each language often overlap. I return to this point in §5.4.

Now that I have discussed what convergence and divergence look like in this literature and some interpretive issues we need to keep in mind as we generalize from the available evidence, we can turn to examining the corpus with an eye toward identifying trends by population and method.

4.2. Evidence by population

Beginning with information focus, Table 2 presents the results of each study organized by the population examined (divided into the main groupings presented in Figure 2) and the conclusion reached. For all types of bilinguals, most but not all the evidence suggests no special difficulty for information focus.

Table 2. Conclusions by population, information focus.

Population	Persistent optionality, transfer or divergence	Similar pattern or minimal difference
L2	(Hertel 2003; Lozano 2006a, 2006b; Pladevall Ballester 2010)	(Domínguez 2013:chap. 4; Domínguez & Arche 2008, 2014; Gupton 2017; Gupton & Sánchez Calderón 2023; Kim 2016: perception*; Leal Méndez & Slabakova 2011; Leal, Destruel & Hoot 2019; Leal & Hoot 2022; Sánchez-Alvarado 2018)
Heritage speakers	(Feldhausen & Vanrell 2024; Gellon 2015: production; Gondra 2022: production; van Osch 2019)	(Gellon 2015: three of four tasks; Gómez Soler & Pascual y Cabo 2018; Gondra 2022: AJT; Hoot 2012, 2017; Hoot & Leal 2023b; Kim 2016: perception; Leal, Destruel & Hoot 2018; Llompert 2016; López Otero 2022*; Nishida, Riccelli & Isabelli 2024; van Osch & Sleeman 2018; de Prada Pérez & Pascual y Cabo 2012; Zapata, Sánchez & Toribio 2005*)
Other	(Muntendam 2009, 2013)	(Domínguez 2013:chap. 5; Gabriel & Grünke 2018*; Gupton 2017; Hoot & Leal 2023a; de Prada Pérez 2010)

* See main text for additional explanation of this study's placement on the table.

For L2 Spanish, four studies found evidence for special difficulty for focus, while nine did not. Of those that found divergence, it is perhaps noteworthy that we have the only two studies that involved an L1 other than English (Lozano 2006b, 2006a), as well as the only study of children (Pladevall Ballester 2010). Overall, my interpretation is that the evidence suggests that L2 learners can acquire native-like patterns of focus realization without special difficulty.

One study with nuanced results for L2 learners is Kim (2016). This dissertation included two tasks. The perception task involved participants listening to sentences

with either SV or VS order and nuclear stress on either S or V (four conditions), and then choosing what context might have given rise to each sentence from a list of four possible questions. On this task, the author noted “although the L2s were slightly more sensitive in distinguishing the location of focus than the NSs and the HSs when the sentences are structured in a canonical word order (i.e., pre-verbal subject), overall the three groups had great difficulty distinguishing whether the focus was on the subject or on the verb” (Kim 2016:108). Additionally, she found a strong bias among all participants to choose a subject focus question (e.g., *¿Quién lo tiró?* ‘Who threw it?’) as the context in all conditions, ignoring word order and stress. She concluded “[t]hese findings imply that neither prominence nor word order plays a critical role in participants’ perception of focus in Spanish. Rather, in the case of the NSs and the HSs, a clear bias was found toward preceding contexts that elicit focus on the subject. The L2s, on the other hand, appeared to be slightly more sensitive to the location of focus, which may be due to their attention to prominence” (Kim 2016:108). There were some possible task effects here, and the L2ers paid a bit more attention to stress, but, overall, I do not think this is evidence for special difficulty with focus perception for the bilinguals, who largely resemble the control groups; I therefore classified it as successful acquisition for both groups.

For heritage speakers, two studies observed divergence (Feldhausen & Vanrell 2024; van Osch 2019), thirteen did not, and two came to different conclusions with different tasks (Gellon 2015; Gondra 2022). It is again perhaps noteworthy that both Feldhausen and Vanrell (2024) and van Osch (2019) included heritage speakers with majority languages other than English (German and Dutch, respectively), although van Osch and Sleeman (2018) found successful acquisition for Dutch-dominant heritage speakers as well.

Two studies of heritage speakers marked with asterisks in the table deserve some additional discussion. First, Zapata et al. (2005) is usually cited as evidence for special vulnerability due to heritage speakers’ “indeterminate ... discourse-semantic knowledge” of narrow subject focus realization with unergative verbs (Zapata, Sánchez & Toribio 2005:391). However, this study did not include a control group, comparing instead to descriptions in the literature. Considering what we now know about monolingual preferences and variability with focus, these heritage speakers performed just as I would expect baseline speakers to perform, so I’ve classified them as showing success, *contra* the conclusions in the paper. Second, López Otero (2022) noted that heritage speakers “leave the focused element in situ, consistently with studies examining discourse and information structure in several varieties of Spanish,” yet their “knowledge of the syntactic constraints ruling the distribution of SV and VS word orders in intransitive predicates shows fewer signs of variability than their knowledge of discourse-pragmatic knowledge, consistently with van Osch (2019) and Zapata et al. (2005)” (López Otero 2022:28). He went on to conclude that “subject placement in unergative and unaccusative predicates is impacted by both syntactic and discourse-pragmatic constraints in heritage Spanish” (López Otero 2022:29). In my view, the results of both his tasks show that heritage speakers resemble controls. I have interpreted his study as showing successful acquisition.

Studies of other populations have observed evidence for transfer of pragmatics in Quechua/Spanish bilinguals (Muntendam 2009, 2013) but not with bilinguals who spoke Catalan (Gupton 2017; Hoot & Leal 2023a; de Prada Pérez 2010), Galician (Gupton 2017), or Yucatec Maya (Hoot & Leal 2023a). Domínguez (Domínguez

2013:chap. 5) found focus was maintained under attrition. Gabriel and Grünke (2018) concluded for their L3 acquisition study that “acquiring focus-induced word order variation in a foreign language is a challenge for the learners” (Gabriel & Grünke 2018:374). However, in production “all groups use post-verbal subjects only marginally” (Gabriel & Grünke 2018:370), at rates similar to what Gabriel (2010) found with monolinguals, and their judgments likewise “largely correspond[ed] to the distribution found in native production data in earlier studies by Gabriel” (Gabriel & Grünke 2018:371). There were possibly some slight group differences; the German and Italian groups strongly resembled each other and monolingual data, while the European Portuguese group’s “behavior was fairly inconsistent” (Gabriel & Grünke 2018:374). Nevertheless, the Portuguese group’s preference for SVO was the same as the other groups’ and some of the variation in one condition was due to a single participant’s answers. This was, the authors recognized, a “pilot study” with only five participants per group, few items, and no statistical analysis, so this difference should be interpreted cautiously. Furthermore, the L2 group and the Italian L3 group undoubtedly converged on the target, in my view. I have chosen to classify this study as showing successful acquisition.

In sum, although the results are not as stark as Heidinger’s table of the monolingual studies, I nevertheless conclude that the majority of the studies examined found no special difficulty for information focus, and that this appears to be true for all types of bilinguals.

There are fewer studies of contrastive focus than of information focus. For contrastive focus, presented in Table 3, the evidence is split: roughly the same number of studies fall into each column.

Table 3. Conclusions by population, contrastive focus.

Population	Persistent optionality, transfer or divergence	Similar pattern or minimal difference
L2	(Kim 2016*, 2019; Leal Méndez & Slabakova 2011; Sánchez-Alvarado & Armstrong 2022)	(Gupton 2017; Gupton & Sánchez Calderón 2023; Kim 2016*; Olson & Ortega-Llebaria 2010; Slabakova, Kempchinsky & Rothman 2012)
Heritage speakers	(Feldhausen & Vanrell 2024; Kim 2016*, 2019)	(Gómez Soler & Pascual y Cabo 2016; Kim 2016*; Olson & Ortega-Llebaria 2010; Zapata, Sánchez & Toribio 2005*)
Other	(Muntendam 2009, 2013; Muntendam & Torreira 2016)	(Gabriel & Grünke 2018*; Gupton 2017)

* See main text for additional explanation of this study’s placement on the table.

For L2 learners, four studies found persistent difficulty with contrastive focus. Three of the four concerned prosody (Kim 2016, 2019; Sánchez-Alvarado & Armstrong 2022). Kim’s (2016) production task, carried out with heritage speakers and L2 learners, prompted participants to produce SV or VS orders under contrastive focus, and it produced mixed results. She observed no differences between the groups regarding word order, and all three groups frequently produced stress on the focal constituent, suggesting all participants acquired the phonological and syntactic representation of focus marking. However, she also found that the phonetic realization of that stress did differ across groups and that each group used different prosodic strategies to mark focus. In sum, the production task found that both heritage speakers and L2 learners had acquired the syntax and phonology of focus in Spanish, yet their

mapping of phonology to phonetics diverged from the control group. I will return to issues of prosody in §5.4. I did not want to lose sight of this finding, by which Kim simultaneously found convergence on the target and divergence from it, so I have classified this task in both categories.

Apart from prosody, Leal Méndez & Slabakova (2011) found that judging felicity for information focus posed “no problem for learners, even at the intermediate stage” (Leal Méndez & Slabakova 2011:72), yet they did find some differences for contrastive focus fronting. On the other hand, five studies found successful acquisition of contrastive focus (marked with fronting or in rightmost position) for L2 learners, suggesting it is not necessarily intractable.

For heritage speakers, the evidence was split, with three studies finding divergence from the baseline—all with prosody—and four finding successful acquisition—two with prosody (Kim 2016, partially, as discussed above; Olson & Ortega-Llebaria 2010) and two with contrastive focus-final word order (Gómez Soler & Pascual y Cabo 2016; Zapata, Sánchez & Toribio 2005).

Finally, for other bilinguals, we observe divergence for Quechua/Spanish bilinguals again for contrastive focus, including use of a range of fronting orders (Muntendam 2009, 2013) and a study focused mainly on prosody (Muntendam & Torreira 2016), whereas Spanish/Catalan and Spanish/Galician bilinguals (Gupton 2017) did not show significant cross-linguistic influence. L3 learners (Gabriel & Grünke 2018) appeared to successfully acquire knowledge of contrastive focus on subjects, although it is worth noting that they performed in a less target-like manner with contrastive focus than with information focus.

In summary, knowledge of Spanish contrastive focus appears less robust in bilinguals than knowledge of information focus, with more studies identifying areas of divergence or cross-linguistic influence, especially with prosody. Nevertheless, about half the evidence suggests knowledge of the discourse and syntactic properties of contrastive focus is acquired by all populations.

4.3. Evidence by method

Heidinger (2022) found that the main determinant of the conclusions drawn in studies of monolingual Spanish focus was the method employed. In the present work, however, I am only considering experimental or quantitative methods. Within this arena, for bilingual speakers, the methods do not appear to determine results, although there may nevertheless be some differences across methods. In Table 4, I present studies of information focus sorted by method.

Table 4. Conclusions by method, information focus.

Population	Persistent optionality, transfer or divergence	Similar pattern or minimal difference
Judgment	(Lozano 2006b, 2006a; Muntendam 2009, 2013; van Osch 2019; Pladevall Ballester 2010)	(Domínguez 2013:chap. 5; Domínguez & Arche 2008, 2014; Gabriel & Grünke 2018*; Gellon 2015; Gómez Soler & Pascual y Cabo 2018; Gondra 2022; Gupton 2017; Gupton & Sánchez Calderón 2023; Hoot 2012, 2017; Hoot & Leal 2023a, 2023b; Leal Méndez & Slabakova 2011; Leal & Hoot 2022; López Otero 2022*; Nishida, Riccelli & Isabelli 2024; van Osch & Sleeman 2018; de Prada Pérez 2010; de Prada Pérez & Pascual y Cabo 2012; Sánchez-Alvarado 2018; Zapata, Sánchez & Toribio 2005*)
Production	(Feldhausen & Vanrell 2024; Gellon 2015; Gondra 2022; Hertel 2003; van Osch 2019)	(Gabriel & Grünke 2018*; Leal, Destruel & Hoot 2018, 2019; López Otero 2022*)
Other	(Muntendam 2009, 2013)	(Domínguez 2013:chap. 4 & chap. 5; Gellon 2015: interview & narrative; Hoot & Leal 2023a, 2023b; Kim 2016: perception; Leal & Hoot 2022; Llompert 2016; Nishida, Riccelli & Isabelli 2024; de Prada Pérez 2010)

* See §4.2 for additional explanation of this study's placement on the table.

Judgment tasks overwhelmingly showed evidence of successful acquisition of information focus. Within the judgment tasks, I did not see any differences by type (i.e., forced-choice/preference versus numerical scale) or by other methodological choices (i.e., presenting sentences in pairs or alone).

On the other hand, elicited production was more likely to find divergence, with five studies using production finding some special difficulty, while four did not.

With the exception of Muntendam's (2009, 2013) interview task, other methods mostly found convergence on the target. This included interviews (Domínguez 2013:chap. 4 & chap. 5; Gellon 2015; de Prada Pérez 2010), written narratives (Gellon 2015; Nishida, Riccelli & Isabelli 2024), and a corpus analysis (Llompert 2016) on the production side, as well as self-paced reading (Hoot & Leal 2023a, 2023b; Leal & Hoot 2022) and prosodic perception (Kim 2016) on the receptive side.

Turning to contrastive focus, Table 5 presents results for this structure by method.

Table 5. Conclusions by method, contrastive focus.

Population	Persistent optionality, transfer or divergence	Similar pattern or minimal difference
Judgment	(Leal Méndez & Slabakova 2011; Muntendam 2009, 2013)	(Gabriel & Grünke 2018*; Gómez Soler & Pascual y Cabo 2016; Gupton 2017; Gupton & Sánchez Calderón 2023; Slabakova, Kempchinsky & Rothman 2012; Zapata, Sánchez & Toribio 2005*)
Production	(Feldhausen & Vanrell 2024; Kim 2016*, 2019; Muntendam & Torreira 2016)	(Gabriel & Grünke 2018*; Kim 2016*)
Other	(Muntendam 2009, 2013; Sánchez-Alvarado & Armstrong 2022)	(Olson & Ortega-Llebaria 2010)

* See §4.2 for additional explanation of this study's placement on the table.

As observed for information focus, judgment studies largely found convergence on the target/baseline, with no obvious differences according to the type of judgment task.

Production studies were again more likely to find divergence. In the case of contrastive focus, all the production tasks finding evidence of cross-linguistic influence were about prosody.

For other methods, Muntendam's (2009, 2013) interview data showed differences for contrastive focus as well; Sánchez-Alvarado and Armstrong (2022) carried out a read-aloud task and noted differences in prosodic realizations of focus by group; while Olson and Ortega-Llebaria (2010) did not find differences in perception of prosody to mark contrastive focus.

As before, the evidence for contrastive focus, of which we have less, is mixed, and we observe some differences by method. Directly elicited production seems more likely to find differences, especially regarding prosody, while judgments largely suggest all types of bilinguals acquire the relevant discourse knowledge.

4.4. Summary

Reviewing 41 quantitative or experimental studies conducted on focus in bilingual Spanish, the bulk of the evidence suggests information focus is not a special problem for bilinguals. This conclusion holds across all types of bilinguals and across methods, although elicited production tasks are more likely to observe divergence than other tasks. For contrastive focus, the evidence is more evenly split, with more examples of persistent difficulty across populations, especially when it comes to prosodic realization of contrastive focus. Nonetheless, many studies, especially judgment experiments, suggest this construction can be acquired. Prosody appears to be more vulnerable to cross-linguistic influence than syntactic or discourse knowledge.

5. Recommendations for future research

Thus far, I have taken stock of the state of the science, attempting to summarize the research on focus in bilingual Spanish over the past thirty years. In this section, I turn from the past to the future and discuss some implications of my review of the literature, making recommendations for future research.

5.1. Expand the populations under study

Some areas of research are relatively saturated. The largest group of studies is of subject focus with intransitives in L2 or heritage Spanish in the US or UK. Although direct replications might be welcome, I submit that further work is likely not needed on this topic. Future work in well-covered areas like Spanish/English L2 acquisition of intransitives using judgments or elicited production should consider expanding the population or adjusting the methods to take a different angle.

On the other hand, some populations are under-studied. I am aware of only one study of children (Pladevall Ballester 2010), one study of attrition (Domínguez 2013:chap. 5), and one pilot study of L3 learners (Gabriel & Grünke 2018). More language pairs are certainly needed; perhaps English and Spanish are simply too similar to detect cross-linguistic influence between them, but if nearly all the studies are of bilinguals with English, it is hard to say. Comparisons across language pairs with speakers of similar profiles would be especially welcome. This kind of work is the only way to disentangle transfer or cross-linguistic influence from other factors pertaining to bilingualism more generally. The article comparing heritage speakers with Dutch and English as dominant languages by van Osch (2019) is a good example of the kind of comparison we could use more of. Likewise, as noted in §2.5, dialect variation regarding syntactic realizations of information structure is not well documented and often confounds attempts at understanding bilingual variation, so including speakers from more dialects of Spanish would be valuable (and would also contribute to closing a gap in the monolingual Spanish literature).

5.2. Improve existing methods and employ triangulation

All methods have drawbacks and limitations, which experimentalists generally acknowledge, but some scholars have leveled criticisms at existing judgment and production tasks for focus that deserve to be addressed. For example, Uth (2014) has argued that the information-structural context intended in common experimental setups involving wh-questions may not be the interpretation that participants reach. For example, as Heidinger (2022:78) noted, in tasks with pictures for contexts, “[t]he pictures that the participants are asked about already contain the asked information and therefore participants might answer as if the imagined questioner already knows the answer (which is an unnatural situation for question-answer pairs).” Some tasks have taken steps to address this issue in their design, yet it is hard to know exactly how participants will interpret any given experiment setup, and creative solutions to this problem would be a welcome addition to the literature.

Another problem specific to experiments on focus is that the most natural answer to a wh-question is often a fragment: *Who found the platypus? Kalyani*. Yet to draw conclusions about word order or prosody, researchers need whole sentences, which reduces the naturalness of the answers. This problem is widely acknowledged by experimentalists who work on focus, and it is not necessarily a fatal flaw to the method. Many experimental syntax sentences are odd or somewhat unnatural, which does not impede drawing conclusions from properly designed experiments, especially when a factorial design is employed to isolate the relevant linguistic feature. Factorial logic controls for acceptability effects that are distributed across conditions (see Sprouse et al. 2016 for discussion), making it an especially important tool for

experimenters working on focus, in which all full-sentence answers may be slightly degraded. Future work should carefully address how the effect of focus is operationalized in the experiment and employ factorial design whenever possible.

Creative new tasks are also welcome. For example, Cruschina and Mayol (2022) developed a production task they call “Questions with a Delayed Answer” which they argued avoids this issue by interposing material between the question and the answer, as in (14), making non-fragment answers much more natural. This kind of innovation helps move the field forward.

- (14) Question with a Delayed Answer elicitation prompt (Cruschina & Mayol 2022:10)

You are watching a film with your roommate. Since she wakes up really early every day, she falls asleep and misses the ending. When you switch off the TV, she wakes up and asks you: “What did they find? I don’t think I’ll watch this movie again. I’m sure I would fall asleep again.” To reply you say:

One way to address these and other limitations inherent to certain methods is *triangulation*—employing multiple methods with the same population (Howe 2012; Mackey & Gass 2005). An impressive example of this approach is Gellon (2015). Gellon carried out a judgment task, an elicited production task, a free oral narrative and a written narrative with the same population of heritage speakers, which allowed her to provide a more nuanced and complete picture than most studies. The view that emerges is that these heritage speakers have acquired the relevant syntax/discourse constraints on focus in Spanish but still overproduce SV orders sometimes, especially on formal production tasks, while demonstrating skillful control of the variation in more naturalistic narratives, which is very close to the image that emerges when reviewing the literature in this area as a whole. (See Hoot, Leal & Destruel 2020 for some discussion of triangulation as applied to focus in Spanish.)

5.3. Add data from less-common methods

In the studies I examined, there were relatively few of naturalistic data, compared to judgment and production. Some studies (Domínguez 2013:chap. 4 & chap. 5; Gellon 2015; Muntendam 2009, 2013; Nishida, Riccelli & Isabelli 2024; de Prada Pérez 2010) used sociolinguistic interviews or written narratives, but only one analyzed an existing corpus (Llompert 2016). More data from corpora, interviews, or naturally occurring speech could be very valuable for understanding the full range of focus realization. Yet, beyond the normal challenges of corpus research, studying focus with a corpus has historically faced two challenges. One is that it can be quite difficult to identify information structure in a corpus or to tag it automatically, unlike, say, parts of speech. The other is that many non-canonical word orders in Spanish are quite rare (Davidson 2016; Heidinger 2022; Ocampo 2009). But with improved technology and ever-larger datasets, these challenges may soon be surmountable.

A second area that is ripe for increased study is online processing. We know that comprehenders process information structure early and make predictions about the form of sentences using the discourse structure in which they are embedded (Bornkessel, Schlesewsky & Friederici 2003). But we also know that L2 learners, for instance, operate under reduced working memory and other cognitive resources

(Dekydtpotter & Renaud 2014), so it remains an open question whether they can engage in prediction the same way L1 speakers do, even if they eventually acquire the relevant syntactic or discourse knowledge (Grüter, Rohde & Schafer 2017). Yet we have limited evidence of online processing of focus in Spanish, namely one self-paced reading task deployed with L2 learners (Leal & Hoot 2022), heritage speakers (Hoot & Leal 2023b), and 2L1 societal bilinguals (Catalan and Yucatec Maya; Hoot & Leal 2023a). Evidence from this task suggests that all these bilingual groups process focus in Spanish like monolinguals or Spanish-dominant controls, but it would be valuable to attempt to replicate this result or complement it with other online methods, like eye-tracking or ERPs.

5.4. Focus on prosody (especially its phonetic realization)

I observed in §4.3 that the area where the strongest evidence for divergence from the target/baseline has been found is in elicited production studies of contrastive focus (Table 5), and that all of those studies were about prosody (viz., Feldhausen & Vanrell 2024; Kim 2016, 2019; Muntendam & Torreira 2016). Sánchez-Alvarado and Armstrong (2022) also found prosodic differences in a read-aloud task with contrastive focus,¹² and Feldhausen and Vanrell (2024) found divergence with the prosody of information focus as well. No production studies concentrating primarily on prosody found overall convergence on the target. This finding suggests that prosody is the focus-related linguistic feature that may be most susceptible to cross-linguistic influence or other divergence.

In these studies, L2 learners sometimes transferred L1 prosodic strategies for marking focus, and heritage speakers and minority language (Quechua) speakers transferred some (but not all) strategies from the other language. Furthermore, as discussed in §4.2, Kim (2016) found that L2 speakers and heritage speakers had apparently acquired the knowledge that focus needed to be marked with prosodic prominence, but where they differed was in its phonetic realization. The L2 learners used phonetic correlates of emphatic stress in English to mark Spanish foci, while the heritage speakers used prosodic patterns that contained some elements of English and some of L1 Spanish. Similarly, Sánchez-Alvarado and Armstrong (2022:242) noted that “alignment patterns and duration values manifested development towards the target grammar” yet “[t]he implementation of certain prosodic parameters (i.e., duration, pitch scaling and relative F0 difference), which pertains to differences at the realization dimension, reveals different patterns.”

The apparent cross-linguistic influence in prosodic production does not extend to perception, according to the limited available data. The few studies examining perception (Kim 2016; Olson & Ortega-Llebaria 2010) mostly showed successful acquisition (although see §4.2 for more discussion), and some judgment studies (e.g., Hoot 2012, 2017) also manipulated prosody directly and found that bilinguals were sensitive to the need to stress the focal constituent.

The overall picture that emerges is that, in addition to acquiring knowledge of syntactic and discourse restrictions on focus realization, bilinguals have few difficulties perceiving prosodic prominence, know that prominence is involved in

¹² This was not classified with the elicited production studies because these participants did not choose the word order of responses; they read prepared dialogues.

signaling focus, accurately assign prominence to focal constituents in production, but may still transfer phonetic realizations of prominence between languages. This picture is complicated by the fact that even among monolinguals, prosodic realizations of prominence range widely, as discussed in §2.4. Nevertheless, prosody—especially the phonetic realization of prosodic prominence—may be one of the most fruitful areas of further investigation regarding information structure in bilingual Spanish.

5.5. Reframe the research questions

As discussed in §2-3, the study of focus in bilingual Spanish (at least for information focus) is often framed around two central axes: (i) Spanish uses word order to mark information focus finally, while another language (almost always English) does something different; and (ii) bilinguals are expected to have difficulty acquiring features of the syntax/discourse interface. However, the accumulated evidence calls both assumptions into question, and it may be time for researchers to reframe the questions they pose.

First, the monolingual Spanish picture for information focus in fact appears to be ‘optionality plus preferences,’ not ‘focus final.’ That is, there is a preference for realizing focus in final position, modulated by several other factors, but canonical word order can realize many foci (not only contrastive focus) and is sometimes preferred. Coupled with the already-recognized fact that contrastive focus has multiple possible realizations, it becomes clear that focus realization in Spanish is a many-to-many correspondence: more than one word order can realize each type of focus, and more than one type of focus can be realized by most word orders. This is a more complicated picture for acquisition than what is commonly assumed. The task for learners is thus not about acquiring a structure not in the L1 (or retaining a structure not in the dominant language, or avoiding cross-linguistic influence from overlapping structures), but rather about acquiring an optional/variable target structure and the flexible preferences around it. To understand this process, it may be useful to appeal to approaches to acquisition that privilege variation (e.g., Geeslin 2011a, 2011b; Shin & Miller 2022; Yang 2018).

Second, it is likely time to reframe the question of learning at the syntax/discourse interface in new terms. The Interface Hypothesis, which is perhaps the most prominent hypothesis in this arena, has been very successful in stimulating research, but evidence suggests that focus may not be any more problematic than other, non-discourse features. As early as 2011, this already-emerging trend in the data led Sorace (2011) to assign focus to the internal syntax/semantics interface, which, unlike the external syntax/discourse interface, was not predicted to pose special difficulty for bilinguals. Yet the mainstream take across this literature is that focus properly involves an external discourse interface (see Rothman & Slabakova 2011; Slabakova 2011; Tsoulas & Gil 2011). Nevertheless, there does appear to be an empirical dichotomy: certain structures, such as pro-drop and some topic constructions, indeed present more persistent difficulty, while focus largely does not. The Interface Hypothesis’s internal/external distinction is likely insufficiently fine-grained, which is also true of other hypotheses that identify discourse or pragmatics as the problematic component (e.g., Silva-Corvalán 2008). Although I do not present a new hypothesis here, one goal of my review is to facilitate generalizations about the data, which can lead to hypothesizing from patterns observed in the literature.

Third, we can reframe the issue from explaining vulnerability to explaining resilience. If you accept my view that focus is acquirable under L2 acquisition, resilient to input interruption under heritage language acquisition, and not especially vulnerable to cross-linguistic influence in societal bilingualism, then the question becomes not, “Why are they especially bad at this?” but rather, “Why are they so good at this?”

This question is of interest because focus realization in Spanish seems like it should be hard (which is why it’s received so much attention): it involves complex connections among syntax, prosody, and discourse; it is optional and misuse generally does not result in communication breakdown; and the non-canonical word orders involved are very rare. Yet L2ers seem to learn it anyway and heritage speakers tend to retain it despite other areas of divergence from the baseline. One possible explanation is that focus is relatively salient (Laleko 2021). By definition, focus is the marking of some constituent with prominence, and studies of online processing show that listeners use context to facilitate directing attentional resources to focus constructions (Bornkessel, Schlesewsky & Friederici 2003). Perhaps this is what makes it resilient. When speakers mark something with emphatic stress or movement to final position, it is salient to comprehenders, thus facilitating its acquisition or maintenance. (See Hoot & Leal 2023b for more argumentation along these lines.) On the other hand, if salience is the explanation for learner success with focus constructions, it is curious that the construction in which the evidence is most likely to show divergence is contrastive focus, which is arguably more perceptually and pragmatically prominent than information focus. Nevertheless, future work may benefit from asking what linguistic factors drive success in acquisition rather than seeking to explain differences.

Finally, as mentioned in previous sections, new research questions could emerge from limitations in the existing literature. For instance, perhaps a perspective less focused on acquisition of a target or baseline could more successfully avoid treating bilingual grammars as “varieties in construction” and thus provide new insights. Similarly, studies of the relationship between information structure and other bilingual language phenomena like code-switching (or related linguistic phenomena like pro-drop) stand to make valuable contributions. It is my hope that the review of the evidence I have provided helps identify limitations such as these that can lead to new and interesting questions.

6. Conclusions

I have reviewed 41 experimental or quantitative studies on focus in bilingual Spanish. I concluded that (a) the bulk of the evidence suggests information focus in Spanish does not in fact present special difficulty for bilinguals, regardless of speaker background or methods; (b) the evidence is more mixed for contrastive focus, although many studies find it can be acquired; and (c) where differences are found, prosody—especially the phonetic realization of prosodic prominence—may be the area most vulnerable to cross-linguistic influence. After examining the evidence, I made several recommendations in the hope that this systematic review of the state of the science can provide a useful foundation for future research.

Acknowledgments

This paper began life as a keynote address at the fourth international conference on *Bilingualism in the Hispanic and Lusophone World*, held in January 2024 in Puebla, Mexico. I am very grateful to the conference organizers—Karina Fascinetto Zago, Antje Muntendam, and María del Carmen Parafita Couto—for inviting me, as well as to everyone who contributed to making the conference a success. A similar, updated version was presented as the alumni keynote at the University of Illinois at Chicago's *In/Between* conference in April 2024; I am grateful for that invitation as well. Thank you to the audiences at both conferences for insightful discussion. Sincere thanks to the three anonymous reviewers and the editors, whose work undoubtedly improved the resulting paper. I am also especially grateful to Tania Leal for a longstanding collaboration that has strongly influenced my thinking about focus (and many other topics). Finally, thank you to Jennifer Cabrelli, Polly Mangerson, and Bryan Koronkiewicz for their support.

References

- Adli, Aria. 2011. A heuristic mathematical approach for modeling constraint cumulativity: Contrastive focus in Spanish and Catalan. *The Linguistic Review* 28(2). doi:10.1515/tlir.2011.004.
- Bley-Vroman, Robert. 1983. The comparative fallacy in interlanguage studies: The case of systematicity. *Language Learning* 33(1): 1–17. doi:10.1111/j.1467-1770.1983.tb00983.x.
- Bolinger, Dwight. 1954. Meaningful word order in Spanish. *Boletín de Filología* 8: 45–56.
- Bornkessel, Ina, Schlesewsky, Matthias, & Angela D. Friederici. 2003. Contextual information modulates initial processes of syntactic integration: The role of inter- versus intrasentential predictions. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition* 29(5): 871–882. doi:10.1037/0278-7393.29.5.871.
- Brunetti, Lisa. 2009. Discourse functions of fronted foci in Italian and Spanish. In A. Dufter, & D. Jacob (eds), *Focus and Background in Romance Languages*, 43–81. John Benjamins. doi:10.1075/slcs.112.04bru.
- Büring, Daniel. 2009. Towards a typology of focus realization. In M. Zimmermann, & C. Féry (eds), *Information Structure: Theoretical, Typological, and Experimental Perspectives*, 177–205. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Büring, Daniel, & Rodrigo Gutiérrez-Bravo. 2001. Focus-related constituent order variation without the NSR: A prosody-based crosslinguistic analysis. *Syntax at Santa Cruz* 3: 41–58.

Bustin, Amy, Muntendam, Antje, & Gretchen Sunderman. 2024. Subject pronouns in Spanish-English code-switching: A test of two models. *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism* 14(3): 310–339. doi:10.1075/lab.21058.bus.

Calhoun, Sasha, La Cruz, Erwin, & Ana Olssen. 2018. The interplay of information structure, semantics, prosody, and word ordering in Spanish intransitives. *Laboratory Phonology* 9(1). doi:10.5334/labphon.65.

Camacho-Taboada, Victoria, Jiménez-Fernández, Ángel L., & Susana López-Rueda. 2016. The acquisition of null/explicit subject pronouns in Spanish as L2 by English speakers. In B. Cetnarowska, M. Kuczok, & M. Zabawa (eds), *Various dimensions of contrastive studies*, 310–332. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.

Carvalho, Ana. 2012. Corpus del Español en el Sur de Arizona (CESA). University of Arizona. <https://cesa.arizona.edu>.

Casielles-Suárez, Eugenia. 2004. *The syntax-information structure interface: Evidence from Spanish and English*. New York: Routledge.

Chomsky, Noam. 1971. Deep structure, surface structure and semantic interpretation. In D. D. Steinberg, & L. A. Jakobovits (eds), *Semantics: An Interdisciplinary Reader in Philosophy, Linguistics and Psychology*, 183–216. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chomsky, Noam. 1976. Conditions on rules of grammar. *Linguistic Analysis* 2(4): 303–352.

Cruschina, Silvio. 2021. The greater the contrast, the greater the potential: On the effects of focus in syntax. *Glossa: a journal of general linguistics* 6(1). doi:10.5334/gjgl.1100.

Cruschina, Silvio, & Laia Mayol. 2022. The realization of information focus in Catalan. *Languages* 7(4): 310. doi:10.3390/languages7040310.

Davidson, Christopher Lee. 2016. Deriving VSO sentences in Spanish. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Dissertation. <http://www.proquest.com/docview/1868414790/abstract/E2F06A26272140F4PQ/1>.

Dekydspotter, Laurent, & Claire Renaud. 2014. On second language processing and grammatical development: The parser in second language acquisition. *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism* 4(2): 131–165. doi:10.1075/lab.4.2.01dek.

Domínguez, Laura. 2007. The L2 acquisition of Spanish focus: a case of incomplete and divergent grammars. In S. Baauw, J. van Kampen, & M. Pinto (eds), *The acquisition of Romance languages: Selected papers from The Romance Turn II*, 45–57. Utrecht: LOT.

-
- Domínguez, Laura. 2013. *Understanding Interfaces: Second language acquisition and first language attrition of Spanish subject realization and word order variation*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Domínguez, Laura, & María J. Arche. 2008. Optionality in L2 grammars: the acquisition of SV/VS contrast in Spanish. In H. Chan, H. Jacob, & E. Kapia (eds), *Proceedings of the 32nd Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development*, 96–107. Somerville, Mass.: Cascadilla Proceedings Project.
- Domínguez, Laura, & María J. Arche. 2014. Subject inversion in non-native Spanish. *Lingua* 145: 243–265. doi:10.1016/j.lingua.2014.04.004.
- É. Kiss, Katalin. 1998. Identificational focus versus information focus. *Language* 74(2): 245–273.
- Escandell Vidal, Victoria, & Manuel Leonetti. 2019. Una nota sobre el foco informativo en español. In R. Gonzáles Ruiz, I. Olza Moreno, & Ó. Loureda Lamas (eds), *Lengua, cultura, discurso: Estudios ofrecidos al profesor Manuel Casado Velarde*, 207–224. Pamplona: EUNSA.
- Fábregas, Antonio. 2016. Information structure and its syntactic manifestation in Spanish: facts and proposals. *Borealis – An International Journal of Hispanic Linguistics* 5(2): 1–109. doi:10.7557/1.5.2.3850.
- Face, Timothy. 2002. Local intonational marking of Spanish contrastive focus. *Probus* 14(1): 71–92.
- Face, Timothy. 2003. Un análisis fonológico del acento nuclear en el español de Madrid. In E. Herrera, & P. M. Butragueño (eds), *La tonía: Dimensiones fonéticas y fonológicas*, 221–243. México, DF: Colegio de México.
- Feldhausen, Ingo, & Maria del Mar Vanrell. 2014. Prosody, focus and word order in Catalan and Spanish: An Optimality Theoretic approach. In S. Fuchs, M. Grice, A. Hermes, L. Lancia, & D. Mücke (eds), *Proceedings of the 10th International Seminar on Speech Production (ISSP)*, 122–125. Cologne: Universität zu Köln.
- Feldhausen, Ingo, & Maria del Mar Vanrell. 2015. Oraciones hendidas y marcación del foco estrecho en español: una aproximación desde la Teoría de la Optimidad Estocástica. *Revista Internacional de Lingüística Iberoamericana* 13(2): 39–59.
- Feldhausen, Ingo, & Maria del Mar Vanrell. 2024. Focus realization in Heritage Spanish: The case of German-dominant speakers of Peninsular Spanish. In R. Rao (ed.), *The Phonetics and Phonology of Heritage Languages*, 166–189. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/9781108966986.009.
- Gabriel, Christoph. 2007. *Fokus im Spannungsfeld von Phonologie und Syntax. Eine Studie zum Spanischen*. Frankfurt: Vervuert.

Gabriel, Christoph. 2010. On focus, prosody, and word order in Argentinean Spanish: A Minimalist OT account. *Revista Virtual de Estudos da Linguagem* 4: 183–222.

Gabriel, Christoph, Feldhausen, Ingo, & Andrea Pešková. 2009. Contrastive and neutral focus in porteño Spanish. Paper. Paper presented at the DGfS 2009, Osnabrück.

Gabriel, Christoph, & Jonas Grünke. 2018. Focus, prosody, and subject positions in L3 Spanish: Analyzing data from German learners with Italian and European Portuguese as heritage languages. In M. García García, & M. Uth (eds), *Focus realization in Romance and beyond*, 357–386. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. doi:10.1075/slcs.201.12gab.

García García, Marco, & Melanie Uth (eds.). 2018. *Focus realization in Romance and beyond*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. doi:10.1075/slcs.201.01uth.

Geeslin, Kimberly. 2011a. The acquisition of variation in second language Spanish: How to identify and catch a moving target. In M. Díaz-Campos (ed.), *The Handbook of Hispanic Sociolinguistics*, 303–319. West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell. doi:10.1002/9781444393446.ch15.

Geeslin, Kimberly. 2011b. Variation in L2 Spanish: The state of the discipline. *Studies in Hispanic and Lusophone Linguistics* 4(2): 461–518. doi:10.1515/shll-2011-1110.

Gellon, Sofía. 2015. La adquisición del orden verbo sujeto en español por estudiantes de herencia de español. Houston, Tex.: University of Houston Dissertation. <https://uh-ir.tdl.org/handle/10657/1268>.

Gómez Soler, Inmaculada, & Diego Pascual y Cabo. 2016. Syntactic reflexes of information structure in heritage Spanish: Evidence from psych-predicate constructions. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching* 54(4): 291–317. doi:10.1515/iral-2015-0036.

Gómez Soler, Inmaculada, & Diego Pascual y Cabo. 2018. On focus and weight in Spanish as a heritage language. *Revista Española de Lingüística Aplicada/Spanish Journal of Applied Linguistics* 31(2): 437–466. doi:10.1075/resla.16021.gom.

Gondra, Ager. 2022. Testing the Interface Hypothesis: Heritage speakers' perception and production of Spanish subject position with unergative and unaccusative verbs. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 25(5): 1730–1764. doi:10.1080/13670050.2020.1799322.

Grüter, Theres, Rohde, Hannah, & Amy J. Schafer. 2017. Coreference and discourse coherence in L2: The roles of grammatical aspect and referential form. *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism* 7(2): 199–229. doi:10.1075/lab.15011.gru.

Gupton, Timothy. 2017. Early minority language acquirers of Spanish exhibit focus-related interface asymmetries: Word order alternation and optionality in Spanish-Catalan, Spanish-Galician, and Spanish-English bilinguals. In F. Lauchlan, & M. C.

Parafita Couto (eds.), *Bilingualism and Minority Languages in Europe*, 212–239. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Gupton, Timothy, & Silvia Sánchez Calderón. 2023. Focus at the syntax–discourse interface in L2 Spanish: Optionality and unaccusativity reconsidered. *Second Language Research* 39(1): 185–229. doi:10.1177/02676583211017604.

Gussenhoven, Carlos. 2004. *The phonology of tone and intonation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gussenhoven, Carlos. 2007. Types of focus in English. In C. Lee, M. Gordon, & D. Büring (eds), *Topic and focus: Cross-linguistic perspectives on meaning and intonation*, 83–100. (Studies in Linguistics and Philosophy 82). Dordrecht: Springer. doi:10.1007/978-1-4020-4796-1_5.

Gutiérrez-Bravo, Rodrigo. 2002. Focus, word order variation and intonation in Spanish and English: An OT account. In C. R. Wiltshire, & J. Camps (eds), *Romance Phonology and Variation: Selected papers from the 30th Linguistic Symposium on Romance Languages, Gainesville, Florida, February 2000*, 39–53. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. doi:10.1075/cilt.217.06gut.

Gutiérrez-Bravo, Rodrigo. 2008. La identificación de los tópicos y los focos. *Nueva revista de filología hispánica* 56(2): 363–401.

Heidinger, Steffen. 2013. Information focus, syntactic weight and postverbal constituent order in Spanish. *Borealis: An International Journal of Hispanic Linguistics* 2(2): 159–190.

Heidinger, Steffen. 2014. El foco informativo y la posición sintáctica de los depictivos orientados al sujeto en español. *Verba: Anuario Galego de Filoloxía* 41(0): 51–74.

Heidinger, Steffen. 2015. Optionality and preferences in Spanish postverbal constituent order: An OT account without basic constituent order. *Lingua* 162: 102–127. doi:10.1016/j.lingua.2015.05.003.

Heidinger, Steffen. 2018a. *Sekundäre Prädikation und Informationsstruktur: Fokus und Informationsstatus bei spanischen Depiktiven*. (Studia Romanica et Linguistica 54). Berlin: Peter Lang.

Heidinger, Steffen. 2018b. Acceptability and frequency in Spanish focus marking. In M. García García, & M. Uth (eds), *Focus Realization in Romance and Beyond*, 99–130. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. doi:10.1075/slcs.201.02van.

Heidinger, Steffen. 2022. Corpus data and the position of information focus in Spanish. *Studies in Hispanic and Lusophone Linguistics* 15(1): 67–109. doi:10.1515/shll-2022-2056.

-
- Helfrich, Uta, & Bernhard Pöll. 2012. Wortstellung und Informationsstruktur. In J. Born, R. Folger, C. F. Laferl, & B. Pöll (eds), *Handbuch Spanisch. Sprache, Literatur, Kultur, Geschichte in Spanien und Hispanoamerika. Für Studium, Lehre, Praxis*. Berlin: Schmidt.
- Hertel, Tammy Jandrey. 2003. Lexical and discourse factors in the second language acquisition of Spanish word order. *Second Language Research* 19(4): 273–304. doi:10.1191/0267658303sr224oa.
- Hoot, Bradley. 2012. Presentational focus in heritage and monolingual Spanish. Chicago: University of Illinois at Chicago Dissertation.
- Hoot, Bradley. 2016. Narrow presentational focus in Mexican Spanish: Experimental evidence. *Probus* 28(2): 335–365. doi:10.1515/probus-2014-0004.
- Hoot, Bradley. 2017. Narrow presentational focus in heritage Spanish and the syntax-discourse interface. *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism* 7(1): 63–95. doi:10.1075/lab.14021.hoo.
- Hoot, Bradley, & Tania Leal. 2020. Processing subject focus across two Spanish varieties. *Probus* 32(1): 93–127. doi:10.1515/probus-2019-0004.
- Hoot, Bradley, & Tania Leal. 2023a. Crosslinguistic influence from Catalan and Yucatec Maya on judgments and processing of Spanish focus. *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism* 13(4): 529–575. doi:10.1075/lab.21020.hoo.
- Hoot, Bradley, & Tania Leal. 2023b. Resilience and vulnerability of discourse-conditioned word order in heritage Spanish. *Applied Psycholinguistics* 44(5): 668–698. doi:10.1017/S0142716423000152.
- Hoot, Bradley, Leal, Tania, & Emilie Destruel. 2020. Object focus marking in Spanish: An investigation using three tasks. *Glossa: a journal of general linguistics* 5(1): 70. doi:10.5334/gjgl.1160.
- Howe, Kenneth R. 2012. Mixed methods, triangulation, and causal explanation. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 6(2): 89–96. doi:10.1177/1558689812437187.
- Hulk, Aafke, & Natascha Müller. 2000. Bilingual first language acquisition at the interface between syntax and pragmatics. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition* 3(3): 227–244.
- Jackendoff, Ray. 1972. *Semantic interpretation in generative grammar*. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press.
- Jiménez-Fernández, Ángel L. 2015a. When focus goes wild: An empirical study of two syntactic positions for information focus. *Linguistics Beyond And Within* 1: 119–133.

- Jiménez-Fernández, Ángel L. 2015b. Towards a typology of focus: Subject position and microvariation at the discourse–syntax interface. *Ampersand* 2: 49–60. doi:10.1016/j.amper.2015.03.001.
- Jiménez-Fernández, Ángel L. 2023. English/Spanish relatives and their relative information structure: A view from language contact in Puerto Rico. *Catalan Journal of Linguistics* 22: 29–70. doi:10.5565/rev/catjl.339.
- Kim, Ji Young. 2016. The perception and production of prominence in Spanish by heritage speakers and L2 learners. Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Dissertation.
- Kim, Ji-Young. 2019. Heritage speakers' use of prosodic strategies in focus marking in Spanish. *International Journal of Bilingualism* 23(5): 986–1004. doi:10.1177/1367006918763139.
- Kim, Sahyang, & Heriberto Avelino. 2003. An intonational study of focus and word order variation in Mexican Spanish. In E. Herrera, & P. M. Butragueño (eds), *La tonía: Dimensiones fonéticas y fonológicas*, 357–374. México, DF: Colegio de México.
- Krifka, Manfred. 2008. Basic notions of information structure. *Acta Linguistica Hungarica* 55(3–4): 243–276. doi:10.1556/aling.55.2008.3-4.2.
- Laleko, Oksana. 2021. Discourse and information structure in heritage languages. In M. Polinsky, & S. Montrul (eds), *The Cambridge Handbook of Heritage Languages and Linguistics*, 691–727. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/9781108766340.031.
- Leal Méndez, Tania, & Roumyana Slabakova. 2011. Pragmatic consequences of p-movement and focus fronting in L2 Spanish: Unraveling the syntax-discourse interface. In J. Herschensohn, & D. Tanner (eds), *Proceedings of the 11th Generative Approaches to Second Language Acquisition Conference (GASLA 2011)*, 63–75. Somerville, Mass.: Cascadia Proceedings Project.
- Leal, Tania, Destruel, Emilie, & Bradley Hoot. 2018. The realization of information focus in monolingual and bilingual native Spanish. *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism* 8(2): 217–251. doi:10.1075/lab.16009.lea.
- Leal, Tania, Destruel, Emilie, & Bradley Hoot. 2019. The acquisition of Focus in L2 Spanish. *Second Language Research* 35(4): 449–477. doi:10.1177/0267658318784343.
- Leal, Tania, & Bradley Hoot. 2022. L2 representation and processing of Spanish focus. *Language Acquisition* 29(4): 410–440. doi:10.1080/10489223.2022.2049599.
- Leonetti, Manuel. 2014. Gramática y pragmática en el orden de palabras. *Linred: Lingüística en la Red* 12: 1–25.

-
- Llompart, Miquel. 2016. Subject-verb order variation with unaccusative verbs of change of location in Mexico and Southern Arizona. *Studies in Hispanic and Lusophone Linguistics* 9(1): 143–173. doi:10.1515/shll-2016-0006.
- López Otero, Julio César. 2022. Lexical frequency effects on the acquisition of syntactic properties in heritage Spanish: A study on unaccusative and unergative predicates. *Heritage Language Journal* 19(1): 1–37. doi:10.1163/15507076-bja10011.
- Lozano, Cristóbal. 2006a. The development of the syntax-information structure interface: Greek learners of Spanish. In V. Torrens, & L. Escobar (eds), *The acquisition of syntax in Romance languages*, 371–399. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Lozano, Cristóbal. 2006b. Focus and split-intransitivity: The acquisition of word order alternations in non-native Spanish. *Second Language Research* 22(2): 1–43.
- Lozano, Cristóbal. 2009. Selective deficits at the syntax-discourse interface: evidence from the CEDEL2 corpus. In N. Snape, Y.-K. I. Leung, & M. Sharwood Smith (eds), *Representational Deficits in SLA: Studies in honor of Roger Hawkins*, 127–166. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. doi:10.1075/lald.47.09loz.
- Mackey, Alison, & Susan M. Gass. 2005. *Second Language Research: Methodology and Design*. New York: Routledge. doi:10.4324/9781410612564.
- Martín Butragueño, Pedro. 2005. La construcción prosódica de la estructura focal en español. In G. Knauer, & V. Bellosta von Colbe (eds), *Variación sintáctica en español: Un reto para las teorías de la sintaxis*, 117–144. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer.
- Martín Butragueño, Pedro, & Érika Mendoza. 2018. Prosodic nuclear patterns in narrow and broad focus utterances: Pragmatic and social factors in Central Mexican Spanish. In M. García García, & M. Uth (eds), *Focus realization in Romance and beyond*, 131–172. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. doi:10.1075/slcs.201.05mar.
- Mendoza Vázquez, Érika, Gutiérrez-Bravo, Rodrigo, & Pedro Martín Butragueño. 2020. The prosodic properties of narrow information focus in Central Mexican Spanish: Pitch accents, de-emphasis and phrasing. *Loquens* 7(1): e069. doi:10.3989/loquens.2020.069.
- Muntendam, Antje. 2009. Linguistic transfer in Andean Spanish: Syntax or pragmatics? Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Dissertation.
- Muntendam, Antje. 2013. On the nature of cross-linguistic transfer: A case study of Andean Spanish. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition* 16(01): 111–131. doi:10.1017/S1366728912000247.
- Muntendam, Antje, & M. Carmen Parafita Couto. 2024. Code-switching at the interfaces. *Languages* 9(8): 258. doi:10.3390/languages9080258.

Muntendam, Antje, & Francisco Torreira. 2016. Focus and prosody in Spanish and Quechua: Insights from an interactive task. In M. E. Armstrong, N. Henriksen, & M. del Mar Vanrell (eds), *Intonational grammar in Ibero-Romance: Approaches across linguistic subfields*, 69–89. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Nava, Emily. 2007. Word order in bilingual Spanish: Convergence and intonation strategy. In J. Holmquist, A. Lorenzino, & L. Sayahi (eds), *Selected Proceedings of the Third Workshop on Spanish Sociolinguistics*, 129–139. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project.
<https://www.lingref.com/cpp/wss/3/abstract1534.html>.

Nishida, Chiyo, Rodríguez Riccelli, Adrián, & Casilde A. Isabelli. 2024. Adult heritage speakers of Spanish in the US and subject placement in presentational unaccusative sentences: How are their grammars constrained? *Lingua* 302: 103630. doi:10.1016/j.lingua.2023.103630.

Ocampo, Francisco. 1995. The word order of constructions with a verb, a subject, and a direct object in spoken Spanish. In J. Amastae, G. Goodall, M. Montalbetti, & M. Phinney (eds), *Contemporary Research in Romance Linguistics: Papers from the XXII Linguistic Symposium on Romance Languages, El Paso/Juárez, February 22–24, 1992*, 291–305. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Ocampo, Francisco. 2003. On the notion of focus in spoken Spanish: An empirical approach. In P. Kempchinsky, & C.-E. Piñeros (eds), *Theory, practice, and acquisition: Papers from the 6th Hispanic Linguistics Symposium and the 5th Conference on the Acquisition of Spanish and Portuguese*, 207–226. Somerville, Mass.: Cascadilla Press.

Ocampo, Francisco. 2005. The word order of constructions with an intransitive verb, a subject, and an adverb in spoken Spanish. In D. Eddington (ed.), *Selected Proceedings of the 7th Hispanic Linguistics Symposium*, 142–157. Somerville, Mass.: Cascadilla Proceedings Project.

Ocampo, Francisco. 2009. El orden de palabras en el español hablado: La construcción sujeto verbo objeto directo. In M. Veyrat Rigat, & E. Serra Alegre (eds), *La lingüística como reto epistemológico y como acción social: Estudios dedicados al Profesor Ángel López García con ocasión de su sexagésimo aniversario*, 501–511. Madrid: Arco Libros.

Ocampo, Francisco, & Carol A. Klee. 1995. Spanish OV/VO word-order variation in Spanish-Quechua bilingual speakers. In C. Silva-Corvalán (ed.), *Spanish in four continents: Studies in language contact and bilingualism*, 71–82. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.

Olarrea, Antxon. 2012. Word order and information structure. In J. Ignacio Hualde, A. Olarrea, & E. O'Rourke (eds), *The handbook of Hispanic linguistics*, 603–628. West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.

Olson, Daniel, & Marta Ortega-Llebaria. 2010. The perceptual relevance of code-switching and intonation in creating narrow focus. In M. Ortega-Llebaria (ed.), *Selected proceedings of the 4th Conference on Laboratory Approaches to Spanish Phonology*, 57–68. Somerville, Mass.: Cascadilla Proceedings Project.

Ortega-Santos, Iván. 2016. *Focus-related operations at the right edge in Spanish: subjects and ellipsis*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Ortiz López, Luis A. 2009. El español del Caribe: orden de palabras a la luz de la interfaz léxico-sintáctica y sintáctico-pragmática. *Revista Internacional de Lingüística Iberoamericana* 7(2/14): 75–93.

Osch, Brechje van. 2019. Vulnerability and cross-linguistic influence in heritage Spanish: Comparing different majority languages. *Heritage Language Journal* 16(3): 340–366. doi:10.46538/hlj.16.3.4.

Osch, Brechje van, & Petra Sleeman. 2018. Subject position in Spanish as a heritage language in the Netherlands: External and internal interface factors. In A. Gavarró (ed.), *On the Acquisition of the Syntax of Romance*, 187–214. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. doi:10.1075/lald.62.09osc.

Pladevall Ballester, Elisabet. 2010. Child L2 development of syntactic and discourse properties of Spanish subjects. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition* 13(02): 185–216. doi:10.1017/S1366728909990447.

Polinsky, Maria. 2018. *Heritage languages and their speakers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/9781107252349.

Polinsky, Maria, & Gregory Scontras. 2020. Understanding heritage languages. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition* 23: 4–20. doi:10.1017/S1366728919000245.

Prada Pérez, Ana de. 2010. Subject position in Spanish in contact with Catalan: Language similarity vs. interface vulnerability. In M. Iverson, I. Ivanov, T. Judy, J. Rothman, R. Slabakova, & M. Tryzna (eds), *Proceedings of the 2009 Mind/Context Divide Workshop*, 104–115. Somerville, Mass.: Cascadilla Proceedings Project.

Prada Pérez, Ana de, & Diego Pascual y Cabo. 2012. Interface heritage speech across proficiencies: Unaccusativity, focus, and subject position in Spanish. In K. Geeslin, & M. Díaz-Campos (eds), *Selected Proceedings of the 14th Hispanic Linguistics Symposium*, 308–318. Somerville, Mass.: Cascadilla Proceedings Project.

Prieto, Pilar, & Paolo Roseano (eds). 2010. *Transcription of intonation of the Spanish language*. Munich: LINCOM Europa.

RAE (Real Academia Española) & ASALE (Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española). 2009. *Nueva gramática de la lengua española*. Madrid: Espasa Libros.

Revert Sanz, Vicente. 2001. *Entonación y variación geográfica en el español de América*. (Quaderns de filologia Anejo 45). València: Universitat de València.

Rodríguez Ramalle, Teresa María. 2005. *Manual de sintaxis del español*. Madrid: Castalia.

Roggia, Aaron. 2011. Unaccusativity and word order in Mexican Spanish: An examination of syntactic interfaces and the split intransitivity hypothesis. State College, Penn.: The Pennsylvania State University Dissertation.

Roggia, Aaron B. 2018. An investigation of unaccusativity and word order in Mexican Spanish. *Spanish in Context* 15(1): 77–102. doi:10.1075/sic.00004.rog.

Rothman, Jason, & Roumyana Slabakova. 2011. The Mind-Context Divide: On acquisition at the linguistic interfaces. *Lingua* 121(4): 568–576. doi:10.1016/j.lingua.2011.01.003.

Sánchez, Liliana, & Pablo Zdrojewski. 2019. Dialectal variation in VOS word order in Spanish. In M. Cabrera, & J. Camacho (eds), *Exploring Interfaces*, 268–299. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/9781108674195.012.

Sánchez-Alvarado, Covadonga. 2018. Subject position and information structure in L2 Spanish. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 40(4): 781–803. doi:10.1017/S0272263118000049.

Sánchez-Alvarado, Covadonga. 2020. Syntactic and prosodic marking of subject focus in American English and Peninsular Spanish. In A. Morales-Front, M. J. Ferreira, R. P. Leow, & C. Sanz (eds), *Hispanic Linguistics: Current issues and new directions*, 184–203. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. doi:10.1075/ihll.26.09san. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ihll.26.09san>.

Sánchez-Alvarado, Covadonga, & Meghan Armstrong. 2022. Prosodic marking of object focus in L2 Spanish. *Studies in Hispanic and Lusophone Linguistics* 15(1): 211–250. doi:10.1515/shll-2022-2060.

Shin, Naomi, & Karen Miller. 2022. Children's acquisition of morphosyntactic variation. *Language Learning and Development* 18(2): 125–150. doi:10.1080/15475441.2021.1941031.

Silva-Corvalán, Carmen. 2008. The limits of convergence in language contact. *Journal of Language Contact* 2(1): 213–224. doi:10.1163/000000008792525246.

Slabakova, Roumyana. 2011. Which features are at the syntax–pragmatics interface? *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism* 1(1): 89–93. doi:10.1075/lab.1.1.14sla.

Slabakova, Roumyana, Kempchinsky, Paula, & Jason Rothman. 2012. Clitic-doubled left dislocation and focus fronting in L2 Spanish: A case of successful acquisition at

the syntax–discourse interface. *Second Language Research* 28(3): 319–343. doi:10.1177/0267658312447612.

Sorace, Antonella. 2004. Native language attrition and developmental instability at the syntax-discourse interface: Data, interpretations and methods. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition* 7(2): 143–145. doi:10.1017/S1366728904001543.

Sorace, Antonella. 2011. Pinning down the concept of “interface” in bilingualism. *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism* 1(1): 1–33. doi:10.1075/lab.1.1.01sor.

Sorace, Antonella, & Francesca Filiaci. 2006. Anaphora resolution in near-native speakers of Italian. *Second Language Research* 22(3): 339–368. doi:10.1191/0267658306sr271oa.

Sorace, Antonella, & Ludovica Serratrice. 2009. Internal and external interfaces in bilingual language development: Beyond structural overlap. *International Journal of Bilingualism* 13(2): 195–210. doi:10.1177/1367006909339810.

Sprouse, Jon, Caponigro, Ivano, Greco, Ciro, & Carlo Cecchetto. 2016. Experimental syntax and the variation of island effects in English and Italian. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 34(1): 307–344. doi:10.1007/s11049-015-9286-8.

Tsoulas, George, & Kook-Hee Gil. 2011. Elucidating the notion of syntax–pragmatics Interface. *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism* 1(1): 104–107. doi:10.1075/lab.1.1.18tso.

Uth, Melanie. 2014. Spanish preverbal subjects in contexts of narrow information focus: Non-contrastive focalization or epistemic-evidential marking? *Grazer Linguistische Studien* 81: 87–104.

Vanrell, Maria del Mar, & Olga Fernández-Soriano. 2013. Variation at the interfaces in Ibero-Romance: Catalan and Spanish prosody and word order. *Catalan Journal of Linguistics* 12: 253–282.

Vanrell, Maria del Mar, & Olga Fernández-Soriano. 2018. Language variation at the prosody-syntax interface: Focus in European Spanish. In M. García García, & M. Uth (eds), *Focus Realization in Romance and Beyond*, 33–70. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. doi:10.1075/slcs.201.02van.

White, Lydia. 2011. Second language acquisition at the interfaces. *Lingua* 121(4): 577–590. doi:10.1016/j.lingua.2010.05.005.

White, Lydia. 2016. Pro-drop then and now: Changing perspectives on null subjects in second language acquisition. In A. Alba De La Fuente, E. Valenzuela, & C. Martínez Sanz (eds), *Language Acquisition Beyond Parameters: Studies in honour of Juana M. Liceras*, 17–35. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. doi:10.1075/sibil.51.02whi.

Yang, Charles. 2018. A formalist perspective on language acquisition. *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism* 8(6): 665–706. doi:10.1075/lab.18014.yan.

Zapata, Gabriela C., Sánchez, Liliana, & Almeida Jacqueline Toribio. 2005. Contact and contracting Spanish. *International Journal of Bilingualism* 9(3–4): 377–395. doi:10.1177/13670069050090030501.

Zubizarreta, Maria Luisa. 1998. *Prosody, focus, and word order*. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press.

Zubizarreta, Maria Luisa. 1999. Las funciones informativas: Tema y foco. In I. Bosque, & V. Demonte (eds), *Gramática descriptiva de la lengua española*, vol. 3: Entre la oración y el discurso, Morfología, 4215–4244. Madrid: Espasa Calpe.