

Aylin Coskun Kunduz (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, United States) & **Silvina Montrul** (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, United States): *The role of input in the acquisition of Differential Object Marking by Turkish heritage language children in the United States*

Heritage speakers are early bilinguals who acquire a minority language in a bilingual setting where the socio-politically majority language is spoken by the community (Montrul, 2015; Valdés, 1995). Since extensive exposure to the majority language takes place in childhood, heritage speakers are exposed to less input in their native language (the heritage language) than a typical monolingual child, leading to different outcomes in certain aspects of heritage grammar as compared to their monolingual counterparts (Montrul, 2002, 2004; Polinsky, 2011; Silva-Corvalán, 2018). They can also be exposed to qualitatively different input because they are growing up in a language contact situation. Many heritage speakers are monolingual or heritage language dominant before age 5 but language dominance shifts dramatically after that age, especially in the United States (Carreira & Kagan, 2011) where the majority of the heritage speakers are schooled exclusively in English.

By the time heritage speakers reach adulthood, variability in certain domains of grammar becomes more pronounced. Inflectional morphology is the area where adult heritage grammars have been found to be the most innovative (Montrul, 2016; Polinsky, 2018). Adult heritage speakers show such patterns of change as omission of required morphology in obligatory contexts, levelling of morphological paradigms, and overregularization of regular and default forms to irregular forms. If inflectional morphology is part of the lexicon, lexical acquisition is heavily dependent on language exposure and use. Therefore, the quantity and quality of input received from adult caregivers in the early years of heritage language development is critical for the language development (Daskalaki, Blom, Chondorgianni & Paradis, 2020; Jia & Paradis, 2015; Montrul, 2008; Montrul & Sánchez-Walker, 2013; Sorace, 2005). It is also possible that heritage speakers undergo changes in their heritage grammar in later childhood (Polinsky, 2011). Additionally, cross-linguistic influence from the majority language is yet another contributing force (Argyri & Sorace, 2007; Montrul, 2008; Kim, Montrul & Yoon, 2010).

If longitudinal studies are not possible, one way to understand the root of morphological variability in young adult heritage speakers amply reported in the literature is to examine children. Our recent study, on which this talk is based, contributes to this goal by investigating the acquisition of differential object marking (DOM) in child heritage speakers of Turkish (second-generation immigrants) and first-generation Turkish immigrants, who are in most cases their own parents. If child heritage speakers show significant variability in their knowledge of DOM as compared to their parents, our hypothesis is that the main cause of variability in heritage speakers' ultimate attainment is insufficient input. However, if child heritage speakers are monolingual-like, then variability at a later age could be due to potential changes in the knowledge of DOM in later years. Finally, if first-generation immigrants show different performance from adults in the homeland, then parental input quality can be assumed to contribute significantly to morphological variability in heritage speakers.

Twenty adult first-generation and 20 second-generation Turkish immigrants (aged 7-14), as well as 20 age-matched children, 20 adults and 20 younger Turkish-speaking children (aged 3-6) in Turkey completed a story retelling task and a picture selection task. Results showed that the adult immigrants patterned with the older children and the adult Turkish speakers in the homeland. However, the child heritage speakers showed variability in both tasks, patterning with the 3-6 year-

old Turkish children. These findings suggest that the variability in heritage DOM is more likely due to insufficient input in the early years of heritage language development than to changes in parental input. The innovations of this study lie in the comparison of child heritage speakers of Turkish to their input providers (their parents) who are first-generation immigrants and the use of comprehension and production measures.

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