

BACKGROUND

- SOV is canonical in Korean and all other logically possible orders are grammatical (e.g., Chung 2012) and the degree of freedom in word order largely depends on the style of speech (Kim 1997).
- Contact can result in changes to the canonical order in a language and constituent order systems have been shown to reduce in flexibility due to language contact (Heine 2008)
- How bilingual speakers use their knowledge of one language in their processing of another?

HOW DO KOREAN-ENGLISH BILINGUALS PROCESS
FLEXIBLE CONSTITUENT ORDER IN KOREAN?

METHODS & MATERIALS

- Acceptability Judgment Task with audio stimuli (on a 1-7 scale, in Praat)
- 30 native Korean speakers, 27 English dominant Korean speakers (heritage speakers) participated. English dominant participants were sub-categorized based on their Korean proficiency: 14 passive & 13 active bilinguals.
- 5 items from each of 6 logically possible orders of subject (S), object (O) and transitive verb (V) and both S and O are overtly marked for case
- Animacy was controlled: animate S, inanimate O
- 56 fillers of varying acceptability were added and the experimental stimuli were counterbalanced and distributed using Latin square.

STIMULI

ORDER	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
SOV (canonical)	sonyeo-ka nokcha-lul masi-ess-ta girl-NOM green tea-ACC drink-PST-DECL “The girl drank green tea.”
OSV	nokcha-lul sonyeo-ka masi-ess-ta green tea-ACC girl-NOM drink-PST-DECL
SVO	sonyeo-ka masi-ess-ta nokcha-lul girl-NOM drink-PST-DECL green tea-ACC
OVS	nokcha-lul masi-ess-ta sonyeo-ka green tea-ACC drink-PST-DECL girl-NOM
VSO	masi-ess-ta sonyeo-ka nokcha-lul drink-PST-DECL girl-NOM green tea-ACC
VOS	masi-ess-ta nokcha-lul sonyeo-ka drink-PST-DECL green tea-ACC girl-NOM

HYPOTHESES

HYPOTHESIS 1

English order affects Korean thus Korean SVO should be more acceptable for English dominant participants (heritage speakers)

PREDICTION

Higher acceptability for SVO (Transfer)
Lower acceptability for SVO (Hyper-correction)

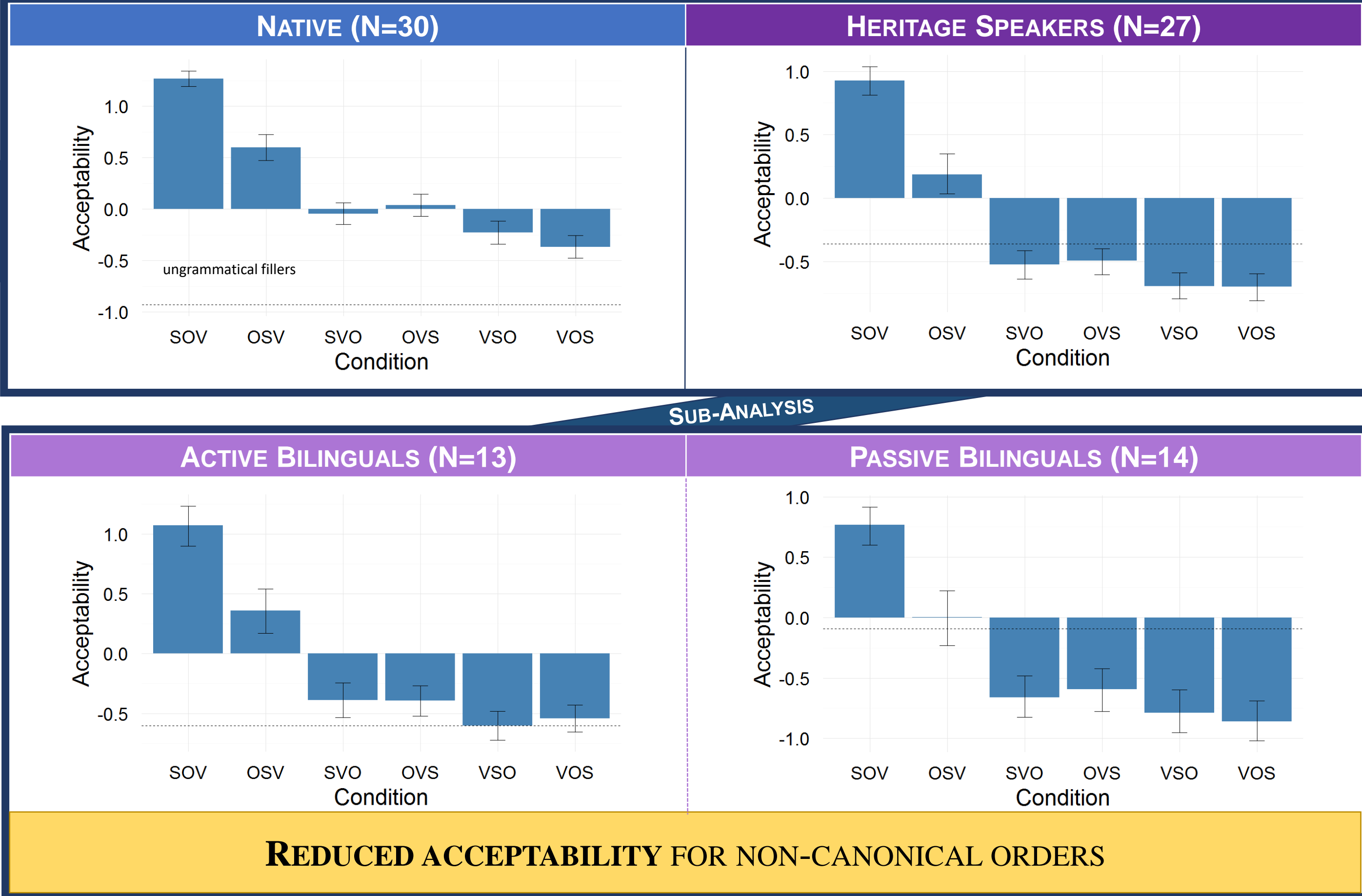
HYPOTHESIS 2

Because heritage speakers show lowered acceptability for difficult constructions (e.g., Scontras et al. 2015), all non-canonical orders will be less acceptable for English dominant participants

PREDICTION

Lowered acceptability
for all non-canonical word orders

RESULTS



DISCUSSION

- Experience with English is associated with decreased acceptability of non-canonical orders compared to the Korean-dominant group (Hypothesis 2 is confirmed). This can be interpreted that the English dominant bilinguals showed decreased flexibility in terms of processing different constituent orders in Korean.
- No evidence for special status of SVO order was found (Hypothesis 1 rejected).
- The results of the acceptability judgment experiment provide the relative acceptability of Korean constituent order as a whole and the results show 4-way distinction in acceptability: SOV canonical order was preferred among other orders followed by OSV and verb medial orders (SVO, OVS) were rated higher than the verb-initial orders (VSO, VOS).

SOV > OSV > {SVO, OVS} > {VSO, VOS}

- The same 4-way distinction is found as for the English dominant group
- Flexibility has been said to reduce with contact (e.g., Heine 2008) and the results of the current study is in line with such findings. Also the results align with the previous study investigating the processing of flexible constituent order of Malayalam in contact with English which is tested using the same methodology (Namboodiripad 2017).

REMAINING QUESTIONS

- Flexibility in constituent order when speaking: mismatches between productions and acceptability in constituent order that has been found (e.g., Backus et al. 2013), and it can be tested with Korean bilingual speakers. If the mismatch is found, what can be the cause of such mismatches, if not, what drives such differences between languages?
- What is the cause of the reduced acceptability for non-canonical orders? Is this because of the decreased experience with Korean or decreased experience with processing word order dependencies due to the increased experience with English, or both?
- Is this different type of hyper-correction?
- How does this relate to cases of contact-induced change?

REFERENCES

Backus, A., Gorter, D., Knapp, K., et al. (2013). Inclusive multilingualism: Concept, modes and implications. *European Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 1(2), 179–215. Chung, D. (2012). Pre- vs. post-verbal asymmetries and the syntax of Korean right dislocated construction. *Studies in Generative Grammar* 22.4: 703-721. Heine, B. (2008). Contact-induced word order change without word order change. *Language contact and contact languages*. Kim, Y. (1997). The acquisition of Korean. In D. Slobin (ed.), *The Crosslinguistic Study of Language Acquisition: The data* (Vol. 4.), Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. Namboodiripad, S. (2017). An Experimental Approach to Variation and Variability in Constituent Order (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). UC San Diego, San Diego, CA. Scontras, G., Fuchs, Z., & Polinsky, M. (2015). Heritage language and linguistic theory. *Frontiers in Psychology*.