

# Knowledge of *gustar*-like Verbs in Spanish Heritage Speakers

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## 1. Introduction

One of the attested outcomes of heritage speaker (HS) bilingualism involves the competence and/or use of linguistic properties in a way that differs from that of monolingual speakers of the heritage language (HL) dialect implicated. Because the source of such linguistic outcomes is neither straightforward nor well-understood (e.g. see the work of Montrul, Polinsky, or Rothman among others), theorizing about why this is so at the cognitive-linguistic level rests at the core of formal HL studies. This study contributes to this line of investigation by examining a somewhat understudied structure in Spanish HS grammars, that is, the argument structure and semantic mappings of *gustar*-like verbs, also known in the literature as reverse psychological predicates (Belletti & Rizzi 1988; Parodi Lewin 1991).

Psych-predicates denote mental/emotional states and subcategorize for two internal roles: an <experiencer> and a <theme>. Based on their characteristics, psych-predicates are generally categorized as belonging to one of the following three classes (Belletti & Rizzi 1988; Parodi Lewin 1991): Class I psych-predicates are generally treated as transitive verbs with a subject <experiencer> in nominative case and a <theme> in accusative (as seen in 1 below). Class II psych-predicates contain a <theme> with nominative case that controls verbal agreement and a postverbal accusative <experiencer> (as seen in 2 below). Interestingly, verbs that belong in this group (e.g. *asustar* 'to scare' or *molestar* 'to bother') allow for an agentive and a stative reading. If interpreted statively, class II psych-predicates overlap syntactically with class III verbs --also known in the literature as reverse psychological predicates-- due to the reverse mapping of the arguments to the syntactic positions. In class III psych-predicates, verbal agreement is controlled by a postverbal <theme> and the preverbal <experiencer> is preceded by the dative marker 'a'<sup>1</sup> and doubled by a clitic (as seen in 3 below). There are few verbs in Spanish that are true class III; however, these verbs like *gustar* (to like) or *encantar* (to love), are highly frequent. Unlike those verbs that belong in class II, class III psych-predicates can only be interpreted statively.

(1) *Teo*            *odia*            *las patatas*  
Teo.NOM   hate.3<sup>rd</sup> SG   the potatoes.ACC  
'Teo hates potatoes'

(2) *Teo*            *molesta*            *a Pau*  
Teo.NOM   bother.3<sup>rd</sup> SG   to Pau  
'Teo bothers Pau'

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<sup>1</sup> In Spanish, the dative marker 'a' is obligatory only if the <experiencer> is specified.

- (3) *A Pau le gustan las galletas.*  
 To Pau Him CLI like. 3<sup>rd</sup>PL the cookies.  
 ‘Pau likes cookies’

The abovementioned reverse argument structure becomes clear when comparing class III psych-predicates to other Spanish agentive verbs that follow canonical SVO word order. Consider, for example, the use of *leer* (to read) in (4a) in which the <agent> (*Laurie*) appears in sentence initial position and controls verbal agreement: hence, the ungrammaticality of the plural form *leen* (they read) in (4b). Conversely, in using a class III predicate in (4c), the now postverbal thematic subject (*los poemas de amor* ‘love poems’) controls verbal agreement: hence, the ungrammaticality of the singular form *gusta* in (4d).

- (4) a. *Laurie lee los poemas de amor*      b. \**Laurie leen los poemas de amor.*  
 Laurie read 3<sup>rd</sup> SG the poems of love      Laurie read. 3<sup>rd</sup> PL the poems of love  
 ‘Laurie reads love poems’                      ‘Laurie reads love poems’
- c. *A Laurie le gustan los poemas de amor.*      d. \**A Laurie le gusta los poemas de amor.*  
 To Laurie CLI 3<sup>rd</sup> PL the poems of love      To Laurie CLI like. 3<sup>rd</sup> SG the poems of love  
 ‘Laurie likes love poems’                      ‘Laurie likes love poems’

The linguistic notion of psych-predicates is universal; that is, depending on its semantic function, a verb is or is not a psychological verb<sup>2</sup>. As such, the equivalent English verbs are psych-predicates as well. The main difference between Spanish (the heritage language examined herein) and English (the societal language) in this respect is syntactic. In other words, in English, being an SVO language, the thematic (semantic) mappings are never (syntactically) reversed. That is, they are mapped onto canonical SVO word order, irrespective of the type of psych-predicate.

With the above in mind, examining HS competence with *gustar*-type verbs is therefore of special interest for HS studies as they embody a possible domain of vulnerability for at least two interrelated reasons. First, as has been described, they present an atypical mapping of the arguments to syntactic positions in light of the canonical predicate mapping of Spanish. Second, studies on monolingual children of Spanish have shown that these verbs are not used in an adult-like fashion until approximately the age of 6;0 (e.g., Torrens, Escobar & Wrexler 2006; but see Gómez Soler 2011), an age at which most HS have already shifted to English dominance. The few available studies that have examined class III psych-predicates in Spanish HSs have shown that the issues mentioned above create an ideal situation for reanalysis in HS acquisition (De Prada Pérez & Pascual y Cabo 2011; Dvorak & Kirschner 1982; Montrul & Bowles 2010; Toribio & Nye 2006). As a whole, the data obtained in these studies have revealed (i) indeterminacy with regards to the mapping of the arguments to syntactic positions, (ii) difficulties with dative ‘a’-marker, and (iii) a preference for the use of the third person singular verbal form (invariable *gusta*) regardless of actual subject-verb agreement.

In general, the HS linguistic outcomes observed in this domain indicate that Spanish HSs use strategies towards a more transparent mapping of arguments to syntactic positions. One possible explanation is that class III psych-predicates are undergoing a reanalysis of their argument structure. Based on previous research as well as on syntactic theory (e.g., Montrul 1995), I predict that one might observe cases of invariable *gusta* with apparent retention of the dative clitic (lack of <theme>-verb agreement). This could be accounted for by assuming that *gustar*-like verbs are being reanalyzed as class II psych-predicates, and that the apparent dative clitic is actually serving as preverbal agreement morphology that has nominal phi-features (what postverbal agreement morphology typically has in Spanish). This would be compatible with surface productions of the following types (5a-d):

- (5) a. (\*)*Yo me gusta la pizza*      b. *Me gusta la pizza*  
 I.NOM to me like.3<sup>rd</sup>.SG the pizza      to me like.3RD SG the pizza
- c. (\*)*Yo me gusta las pizzas*      d. (\*)*Me gusta las pizzas.*  
 I.NOM to me like.3<sup>rd</sup> SG the pizzas      to me like.3<sup>rd</sup> SG the pizzas

<sup>2</sup> I mean universal in the sense of the universality of semantics and conceptual structure.

All of these possible outputs roughly correspond to “I like pizza” and have been documented in previous research (e.g., De Prada Pérez & Pascual y Cabo 2011; Dvorak & Kirschner 1982; Toribio & Nye 2006). With the exception of (5b), all of these examples are ungrammatical in monolingual Spanish. Since Spanish is a null subject language and HSs have been shown to retain this property (e.g., Montrul 2008), example (5b) produces a surface form that cannot be appreciated as different from monolingual Spanish. That is, assuming that the new subject is dropped and because the <theme> (what should be the subject-controller of agreement) is singular, it renders opaque the surface structure. Cases (5a), (5c) and (5d) are clearer. Under this proposal, examples (5a & 5c) are possible since in Spanish subjects can be overt and the clitic *me* is reanalyzed as the agreement morphology bearing the same features as the overt subject. That the object ‘pizzas’ is plural in (5c) is of no consequence since with an agentive syntax the controller of verbal agreement is the overt nominative subject. Example (5d) is also possible for the same reasons as (5c) but has a null subject first person singular pronoun. I also predict that one might also expect HSs to be less sensitive to the ungrammaticality of a fully conjugated paradigm of class III psych-predicate with canonical Spanish agreement morphology mirroring most Spanish verbs (e.g., *yo gusto* ‘I like’, *tú gustas* ‘you like’, *él/ella gusta* ‘s/he likes’, etc.) since this is definitely a possibility for class II psych-predicates. Although this is less attested, some studies do provide some evidence of this very type of production in HS Spanish (e.g., Pascual y Cabo 2013; Silva-Corvalán 1994). Because I argue that class III psych-predicates shift to class II, the canonical reverse structure with *gustar/encantar* should still be available. That said, the above syntactic optionality for class III psych-predicates should emerge whereby sometimes they favor the prescribed form and sometimes the proposed innovation. This would be akin to what Spanish monolingual speakers do for verbs like *asustar* ‘to frighten’. Crucially, I do not expect HSs to accept uses of invariable *gusta* with omission of the once dative clitic since, under this account it has become (obligatory) preverbal agreement morphology. Without it, the EPP cannot be satisfied and the derivation should crash.

So far I have presented the motivation, the research question, and ensuing predictions that guide this study. What follows is a description of the methodology specifically designed to test the viability of the hypotheses proposed here.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Participants

A total of 80 informants participated in this study. In trying to control for any possible dialectal differences, all of them were exclusively Cuban or of Cuban-descent. All informants were included in one of the following three groups: (i) bilingual heritage speaker group, (ii) monolingual control group, and (iii) bilingual control group (i.e., immigrants). The monolingual control group consisted on 16 adult speakers (4 males and 12 females). All of them reported being born and raised in Cuba by Cuban parents and speaking only Spanish. The bilingual control group included a total of 15 individuals that were born and raised in Cuba as Spanish monolingual speakers, coming to the United States between the ages of 15 and 41 (average 22;8) and having resided in the U.S. for at least 10 years (average 24;1 years). Ranging in age from 18 to 24 years old (average 20;1), all HSs (n=49 participants) were U.S.-born or had arrived in the U.S. before age 2;0. The Spanish HS group was further divided into advanced (n=21), intermediate (n=24), and low<sup>3</sup> (n=4) proficiency groups according to the informants’ responses to a standardly used Spanish proficiency test.

### 2.2. Experimental Design

As discussed, the focus of this study is to explore HS Spanish knowledge of *gustar*-like verbs. Building on previous work, I hypothesized that class III psych-predicates is being reanalyzed as class II and that the dative clitic is actually serving as preverbal agreement morphology (what postverbal agreement morphology typically has in Spanish). A grammaticality judgment test (GJT)<sup>4</sup> was designed

<sup>3</sup> The results from the low HS group are not included herein due to the small number of informants (n=4).

<sup>4</sup> In addition to the GJT, all informants also completed a sociolinguistic questionnaire and a standardly used Spanish proficiency test (i.e., a revised version of the DELE).

specifically to test the predictions that fall out from the previous hypothesis. To ensure consistency across testing sessions as well as to avoid any possible literacy effects, tokens were presented in a video modality<sup>5</sup>. Informants were asked to provide a 1 (completely unnatural) to 4<sup>6</sup>(completely natural) grammaticality judgment as they heard the tokens from recorded videos of a 32 year old male speaker born and raised in Cuba.

This task itself included a total of 137 test items. The items (n=48) reported herein were equally divided into four critical conditions (12 items per condition), each one testing acceptance or rejection of the structural outcomes detailed above: (i) the canonical use of class III psych-predicates, (ii) the omission of the dative clitic, (iii) use of *gustar* with case agreement innovations that would mirror canonical Spanish agreement morphology (e.g., *yo gusto* 'I like', *tú gustas* 'you like', *él/ella gusta* 's/he likes', etc.), and (iv) use of *gustar* with verb agreement innovation whereby the clitic has been reanalyzed as agreement morphology and is followed by an invariable form of the verb (*yo me gusta* 'I like', *tú te gusta* 'you like', *él/ella le gusta* 's/he likes', etc). The remaining test items examined other uses of *gustar*-like verbs and verbal agreement across transitive, unergative, and unaccusative verbs (i.e., distracter items). Due to space restrictions, I limit my discussion to the conditions reported above (see Pascual y Cabo 2013 for a more detailed description of the task).

### 3. Results

To test for statistically significant differences, a repeated-measures ANOVA was run with the variables of *GROUP* (Monolingual control; Bilingual control; Advanced HSs; and Intermediate HSs), and *TYPE* (Canonical use of class III psych-predicates; Omission of dative clitic; Case agreement innovation; Verb agreement innovation). The results of this ANOVA showed a main effect for *TYPE* ( $F(3, 67) = 201.93, p < .001$ ), *GROUP* ( $F(3,70) = 5.139, p < .003$ ), as well as a high order interaction between *GROUP* and *TYPE* ( $F(9, 207) = 5.162, p < .001$ ). The overall results for each group under each condition are illustrated in figure 1 below.

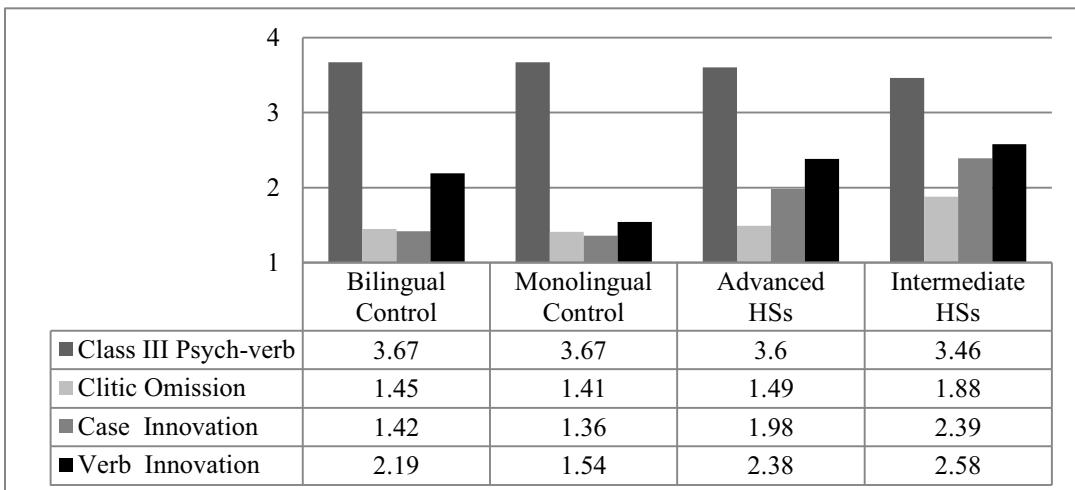


Figure 1: Group means by condition.

In light of the hypothesis put forth above, it was predicted that HSs should still be able to accept class III psych-predicates used in its canonical form. That is, because class II psych-predicates also have the option of surfacing as a true class III psych-predicate, there is -in principle- nothing in the HS grammars that would preclude them from accepting (and producing) the prescribed reverse structure. The first column from the left shows that all informant groups strongly accept the sentences included in this condition. *Post hoc* Pairwise comparisons with Bonferroni *post hoc* tests further corroborate the absence of any statistically significant differences between any of the four groups for this condition.

<sup>5</sup> The recording lasted 19 minutes and 7 seconds. The first 1.53 minutes were used as instructions and included a total of 4 practice items. Between one sentence and the next, there was a 5 second pause.

<sup>6</sup> Participants also had the option to choose a '0'.

Conversely, it was predicted that all informant groups would reject the condition that tested clitic omission though for different reasons depending on the group. On the one hand, the two control groups were predicted to reject the omission of the clitic since they know that the clitic is an obligatory element with class III psych-predicates. In the case of the experimental groups, they were not expected to accept an invariable form of *gusta*-like verbs with omission of the clitic since, under this proposal, it is the presence of the clitic itself reanalyzed as preverbal agreement morphology that licenses the invariable form (see Montrul (1995) for some suggestions in line with this). The second column from the left shows that both the monolingual and the bilingual control groups reveal judgments that are consistent with the descriptions found in the theoretical literature. That is, they strongly reject sentences that omit the obligatory dative clitic. Likewise, advanced HSs' judgments also reveal an almost categorical rejection of this sort of tokens. This generalized rejection corresponds to non-statistical significant differences across these three groups for this specific condition. That said, because the intermediate HS group's averages are slightly higher (1.88), we obtain a statistically significant difference between intermediate HSs and all other groups for this condition (HS-Intermediate vs. Bilingual controls,  $p < .001$ ; HS-Intermediate vs. Monolingual controls,  $p < .001$ ; HS-Intermediate vs. HS-Advanced,  $p < .001$ ). Although it is not possible to completely determine why these HSs have rejected the sentences in this condition, the point to be made here is that when we compare the intragroup results across the different conditions (especially, as we will see, against the two innovations predicted), one can observe that the monolinguals, and to a certain extent also the bilingual controls, do not have this as an option while the evidence seems to suggest that HSs do. But again, even if that is the case, it is not certain that this is exactly what the HSs are doing here. That said, what is certain is that the results included in this experiment are consistent with the predictions that fall out from my analysis. In other words, while HSs' grammars allow for the canonical use of class III psych-predicates in addition to these other proposed alternatives, Spanish monolingual speakers only find the canonical use acceptable. This seems to indicate that their grammar does not avail itself of the emerging option present in the HS grammars.

Interestingly, that Intermediate HSs tend to rate the sentences included in this condition slightly higher was perhaps an unexpected outcome since, under any circumstances, omission of the dative clitic is predicted to result in ungrammatical sentences. This finding inevitably makes us wonder about the nature of these ratings as well as about the differences between the advanced and intermediate HSs. To fully answer this question, it is first necessary to take a closer look at the data, individual by individual. Recall that this group included a total of 24 HSs. Informants were included in this group if their proficiency scores ranged from 30 to 39 points (out of 50 possible). Of the 24 informants, 6 clearly accepted this condition with average scores ranging from 3.54 to 2.91. Needless to say, these 6 individuals' scores significantly contributed to the overall higher averages of the whole group. In addition to this, by looking at the individual data, it was evident that HSs in general and intermediate HSs in particular, revealed a higher degree of variation than the monolinguals as well as the bilingual controls not only within their respective groups, but also within the same individual.

The third column from the left shows that both control groups largely reject the condition that includes class III psych-predicates with case agreement innovations. It is clear, however, that both HS groups are more accepting of the abovementioned *a priori* ungrammatical innovation. That the control groups categorically reject the items included in this condition is not surprising because no changes were predicted to obtain in their grammars. What was somewhat unexpected, however, were the relatively low averages reported by the two HS groups; especially the advanced one. These low ratings may seem to constitute counterevidence against the prediction advanced above, whereby class III psych-predicates —like class II— could surface with a fully inflected paradigm mirroring the behavior of other non-reverse predicates. Upon a closer look to the data, however, we can observe that both the intermediate HS group as well as the advanced HS group differ in their judgments from all other groups at a level of statistical significance ((HS-Intermediate vs. Monolingual control,  $p < .001$ , HS-Intermediate vs. Bilingual control,  $p = .003$ ) (HS-Advanced vs. Monolingual control,  $p = .004$ , HS-Advanced vs. Bilingual control,  $p = .005$ )). And crucially, these two HS groups do not differ from each other (HS-Intermediate vs. HS-Advanced,  $p = .096$ ). Though, the HSs' ratings are not as polarized as one might expect, they are consistent with the predictions put forth above, providing therefore further support for the abovementioned hypothesis. Additionally, the within group comparisons reveal that only the HS groups make a statistically significant difference between the previous condition, which tested the \*omission of the dative clitic, and the current one, which tests the abovementioned emerging

structure (HS-Intermediate,  $p=.03$ ; HS-Advanced,  $p=.001$ ). This difference is imperative because it shows that for the HS grammars tested herein, but crucially not for the control's, these two sentence-types are different, whereby one can be grammatical and the other one is undoubtedly ungrammatical.

Up until now, we have seen a trend whereby the intermediate HS group seems to consistently reveal judgments that are less categorical than those revealed by the other groups. That said, their ratings tend to be consistent with the descriptions found in the theoretical literature and/or with the predictions anticipated here. Admittedly, this was not the case in the previous condition in which the omission of the dative clitic was tested. As discussed, the intermediate HSs' results were not in line with what was expected since they revealed a surprisingly high average ( $n=1.88/4$ ) considering that the dative clitic is always obligatory with class III psych-predicates. To account for this unanticipated outcome, it was noted that a small subgroup of intermediate HSs was responsible for these higher than normal ratings. Since this was the case for the previous condition, it is reasonable, therefore, to assume that this imbalance may also be affecting the average results for the current condition. Upon further examination of the individual data, it was clear that there was some variation across these informants, yet not as pronounced as in the previous section. In other words, the intermediate HSs' judgments for this specific condition are more uniform, as indicated by the smaller standard deviation (0.72 vs. 0.54). Thus, I take this average to be somewhat representative of the group's individual grammars.

Taken together, these results show that the two HS groups are more accepting than the monolingual and bilingual controls when it comes to class III psych-predicates used with case agreement innovations. Since this observation was supported statistically across conditions and within the groups, it is reasonable to claim that this emerging structure is rooted in differences in representation between HSs and the two control groups, a point to which we will return in much greater detail. Left to be determined is whether HSs accept the use of an invariable 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular class III psych-predicate in the presence of a nominalized <experiencer>.

Lastly, recall that I anticipated that in class III psych-verb constructions, the sentence initial argument may be reanalyzed as nominative and may appear with an invariable form of *gusta* as long as the dative clitics are interpreted as preverbal agreement morphology. At first sight, by looking at the fourth column from the left, it appears that only the monolingual controls (1.54), are sensitive to the ungrammaticality that results from the invariable use of a 3<sup>rd</sup> person verbal form (Bilingual controls=2.19; HS-Advanced=2.38; HS-Intermediate=2.58). This is especially true for the intermediate HS group whose judgments are visibly higher than the rest (2.58). In fact, across the group comparisons reveal that monolinguals stand alone as the only group with target-like ratings, as they differ in their judgments with respect to the other three groups (Monolingual Control vs. HS-Intermediate,  $p < .001$ ; Monolingual Control vs. HS-Advanced,  $p = .003$ ; Monolingual Control vs. Bilingual Control,  $p = .003$ ). All other comparisons resulted in non-statistically significant differences. But to better observe the status of the innovation suggested in this condition, consider figure 2 below in which the data are further divided by group and by <theme> (singular, plural).

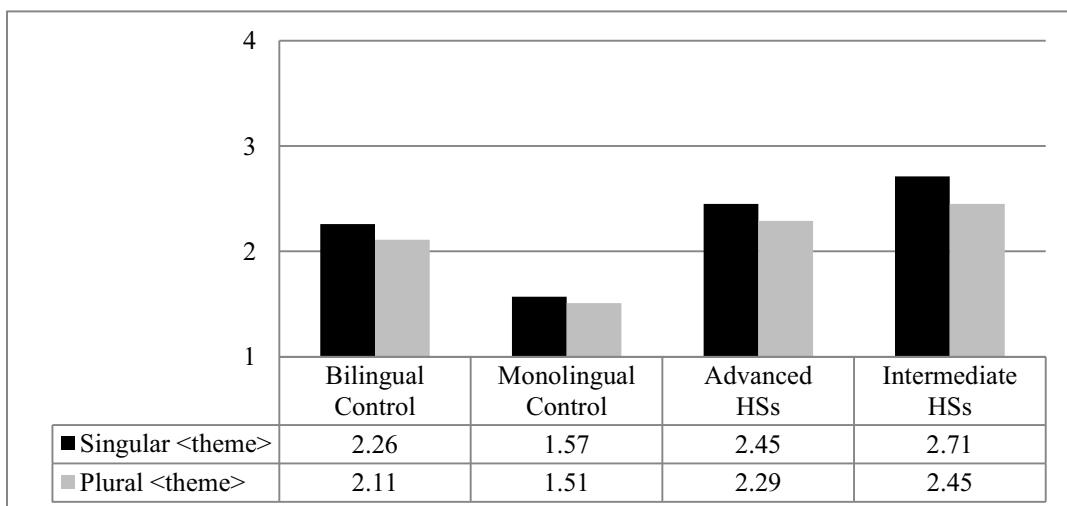


Figure 2. Group means of grammatical innovation.

Recall that this condition included 12 tokens, 6 of which appeared with a 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular <theme> and 6 with a 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural <theme>. In reexamining the new variables, a repeated measures ANOVA with TYPE (Singular theme, Plural theme) and GROUP (Monolingual Control, Bilingual Control, HS-Advanced, HS-Intermediate) as variables was run. The results from this ANOVA showed a main effect for TYPE ( $F(1,70)=10.712$ ;  $p=.002$ ) and GROUP ( $F(3,70)=7.661$ ;  $p<.001$ ), but not for a TYPE by GROUP interaction ( $F(3,70)=1.075$ ;  $p=.365$ ). In regards to the main effect for GROUP, Bonferroni *post hoc* tests attributed this significant effect to the comparison between the monolingual control group and the intermediate HS group ( $p<.001$ ), between the monolingual control group and the advanced HS group ( $p=.003$ ), as well as between the monolingual control group and the bilingual control group ( $p=.003$ ). As mentioned, all other comparisons resulted in non-statistically significant differences.

These results show two clear tendencies. On the one hand, we have the monolingual controls whose judgments are consistent with the descriptions found in the theoretical literature. Note, however, that their target-like judgments for this specific condition are not as categorical as they were for previous ones (e.g., case agreement innovation). On the other hand, we see that the other three groups have a higher tolerance to these *a priori* ungrammatical sentences. Particularly interesting is the case of the bilingual control group since they were not hypothesized to show differences with respect to the monolinguals. This outcome, however, is not completely unexpected as similar results were reported by de Prada Pérez and Pascual y Cabo (2011). In de Prada Pérez and Pascual y Cabo's (2011) study, the native control group highly rejected ungrammatical sentences due to verb-agreement when the target response was *gusta* (3<sup>rd</sup> person singular). Conversely, this was not the case when the target response was *gustan* (3<sup>rd</sup> person plural). In such cases, they favored the *a priori* ungrammatical *gusta* (3<sup>rd</sup> person singular) over the grammatical *gustan* (3<sup>rd</sup> person plural) (de Prada Pérez & Pascual y Cabo 2011:115). At the time, the argument was that the variability found in the native control data (which crucially was gathered from 1<sup>st</sup> generation immigrants and not monolinguals) was the locus of interlanguage influence (2011:118). I also maintain here that HS differences, at least for the individuals and properties examined herein, can be traced back to contact-induced changes in first generation immigrants. Additional evidence to support this claim includes the fact that no significant differences were found when comparing the ratings of the bilingual control group with those of either the advanced ( $p=1.0$ ) or the intermediate HSs ( $p=.254$ ). Conversely, the  $p$  value reaches a level of statistical significance when comparing the bilingual controls with the monolingual controls ( $p=.003$ ).

#### 4. Conclusion

The main goal of this study was to gain insight into the current status of class III psych-predicates in Spanish HS grammars while testing the predictions put forth above. Guided primarily by previous findings in this domain (e.g., De Prada Pérez & Pascual y Cabo 20011; Dvorak & Kirschner 1982; Toribio & Nye 2006) as well as by syntactic theory (e.g., Belletti & Rizzi 1988; Montrul 1995), it was hypothesized that one might observe cases of invariable *gusta* with apparent surface retention of the dative clitic. This was thought to be possible by assuming that *gustar*-like verbs are being reanalyzed as class II psych-predicates and that the apparent clitic is actually serving as preverbal agreement morphology (e.g. Montrul 1995).

As described, informants' knowledge of class III psych-predicates was examined via a grammaticality judgment task that included four critical conditions: (i) canonical use of class III psych-predicates, (ii) clitic omission, (iii) case agreement innovation, and (iv) verb agreement innovation. Each one of these conditions tested a piece of the puzzle that, when brought together, would support or cast some questions on the abovementioned hypothesis. The results obtained revealed that while all informant groups had access to the canonical structure of *gustar*-like verbs, only the control groups were sensitive to the *a priori* ungrammatical innovations that logically result from the hypothesis advanced; namely a case agreement innovation and a verbal agreement innovation. In regards to the first one, the data obtained are also consistent for the abovementioned hypothesis since the HS groups were more inclined to favor these case agreement innovations in comparison to other ungrammatical conditions (e.g., omission of the obligatory dative clitic). The two control groups examined, on the other hand, categorically rejected both conditions equally. Even more polarized ratings were observed in the case of the second innovation. While monolingual informants strongly rejected this use, both experimental groups seemed to favor the use of the invariable *gusta* more. Most importantly,

intragroup pairwise comparisons revealed that neither the monolingual control group nor the two HS groups differed in their judgments with respect to these two innovative constructions. In other words, while for the monolinguals these two innovations are equally and categorically ungrammatical, the two HS groups variably accept them, lending therefore support for the abovementioned hypothesis.

Before concluding, I would like to emphasize the fact that, in addition to having obtained results that are largely consistent with the predictions put forth above (i.e., innovations in HS Spanish), the heritage speakers examined herein seem to also have available the target representation of class III psych-predicates. That is, beyond having access to the target structure, these HS grammars seem to avail themselves of other options (likely from the dominant language influence) that are responsible for the differences observed in this domain. This finding is important as it raises questions regarding the precise nature of HS differences previously observed in this and other domains. Traditionally, it has been suggested that HS differences (as compared to what is expected from monolinguals) reflect a process of language loss (whether it be *attrition* (Polinsky 2011) or *incomplete acquisition* (Montrul 2008)), but insofar as the informants examined have access (even if minimal) to the target representation, it is not clear why the HS differential outcomes observed must be representative of a process of language loss.

In an attempt to advance the field and break away from the trend observed in most previous HS acquisitional studies, future research should continue investigating the alternative discussed above. Identifying the actual source of HS differential outcomes will undoubtedly increase our understanding of the nature of HS grammars, the acquisition and maintenance of multiple linguistic systems within the same individual over time and, consequently, what all of this can tell us about the general architecture of linguistic representation.

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