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The acquisition of *get*-passives by English-Spanish bilingual and English monolingual children

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to expand the literature on the acquisition of *get*-passives since this construction has not been as researched as the *be*-passive. Particularly, the longitudinal spontaneous data of a pair of two English-Spanish bilingual twins and two English monolingual siblings will be analyzed to verify if there are differences in terms of i) their age of acquisition, ii) the frequency and typology of the production of *get*-passives; and iii) the role that the adult input plays in the children's acquisition of this structure. Our results show that although the age of the first production differs in both groups of children, both bilingual and monolingual children start producing *get*-passives later than *be*-passives. Moreover, both groups produce more eventive than stative *get*-passives, although it is the monolinguals who produce *get*-passives more frequently. Besides, adult input seems to have an effect on the children's acquisition since the frequency of *get*-passives coincides with that of the children. These findings suggest that the acquisition of *get*- and *be*-passives follow a similar pattern.

Keywords: *get*-passives; *be*-passives; bilingual acquisition; English-Spanish bilingual children; English monolingual children; adult input

RESUMEN

El principal objetivo de este estudio es contribuir a la expansión de la literatura sobre las pasivas con 'get' ya que esta estructura no ha sido tan estudiada como la pasiva con 'be'. En concreto, se analizarán los datos espontáneos longitudinales de dos gemelos bilingües inglés-español y de dos hermanos ingleses monolingües para comprobar si hay diferencias en términos de i) la edad de adquisición, ii) la frecuencia y tipología en la producción; y iii) la función que el *input* de los adultos tiene en la adquisición de los niños de esta estructura. Nuestros resultados muestran que, aunque la edad en la que se produce la primera pasiva en ambos grupos de niños, tanto en el bilingüe como en el monolingüe, los niños comienzan a producir las pasivas con 'get' después de las pasivas con 'be'. Además, ambos grupos producen más pasivas eventivas que estativas, aunque son los monolingües los que producen las pasivas con 'get' más frecuentemente. Asimismo, el *input* de los adultos parece afectar la adquisición de los niños pues la frecuencia con la que usan las pasivas con 'get' concuerda con la de los niños. Estos resultados sugirieren que la adquisición de las pasivas con 'get' y 'be' siguen un patrón similar.

Palabras clave: pasivas con ‘get’; pasivas con ‘be’; adquisición bilingüe; niños bilingües inglés-español; niños monolingües ingleses monolingües; *input* de los adultos

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1. Introduction

The present dissertation deals with the acquisition process of *get*-passives. In particular, it examines and compares the spontaneous longitudinal data available in the CHILDES project (CHILDES, MacWhinney, 2000) of two English-Spanish bilingual children and two English monolingual ones. In particular, the present study analyzes the possible differences (age of acquisition, frequency of usage, and most frequent type) between the two groups of participants concerning the *get*-passive, as well as the relevant or superfluous role that adult input may play.

The results of our study will add to the acquisition literature about the *get*-passive, which has not been as profoundly studied as that about the *be*-passive. Indeed, to our knowledge, this is the first study that analyzes how English-Spanish bilinguals acquire this type of construction and compares this process to that of English monolinguals.

The present research is structured as follows. Section 2 reviews previous studies related to *be*- and *get*-passives in English (2.1 and 2.2) and their acquisition (3). Section 4 presents the research questions on the *get*-passives acquisition. Section 5 addresses the child participants involved, the data extraction and procedure (5.1), and the classification of the *get*-passives cases compiled (5.2). Section 6 deals with the results obtained from the production of *get*-passives in English-Spanish bilingual and English monolingual children and the discussion of these findings. Finally, section 7 presents the conclusions and suggestions for further research.

2. The passive voice in English: the *get*-passive versus the *be*-passive

The passive structure has been widely studied in the last 50 years by researchers such as Horgan (1976), Maratsos *et al.* (1985), Pinker *et al.* (1987), Fox and Grodzinsky (1998), Coelho (2009), Messenger *et al.* (2012), and Garraffa *et al.* (2021), among others. More specifically, this linguistic construction has been extensively analyzed in the language acquisition literature (from both production and comprehension perspectives) because, according to Gordon and Chafetz (1990), it arises later than other constructions such as active voice structures in the language. Nevertheless, it is not yet clear if this delay

is caused because of its complexity or due to its non-canonical form, which results in an interesting grammatical issue to research about.

In order to understand why its complex form could be difficult for children to acquire early, it is convenient to illustrate the form of different types of passives. Therefore, section 2.1 covers the *be*-passive and section 2.2 is concerned with the *get*-passive.

2.1 The *be*-passive

By *be*-passives, this dissertation refers to the auxiliary verb ‘be’ followed by the past participle form of a lexical verb and a *by*-phrase, which could be present or not. The structure of a passive sentence is similar to the one of an active sentence. However, the semantic (or theta) roles assigned to each DP present in the sentence significantly differ. Considering the examples taken from Pinker *et al.* (1987), in an active sentence like the one in (1a), the DP ‘Dr. Caron’ is the Agent and the DP ‘the patient’ is the Patient. Conversely, in (1b), its passive counterpart, the focus is concentrated on the Patient ‘the patient’ and that is the reason why it appears at the beginning of the sentence.

1a) Dr. Caron weighed the patient [SVO]

1b) The patient was weighed by Dr. Caron [SV(A)]

This means that by modifying its syntactic position, the Patient acquires informative preponderance. At the same time, the Agent of (1a) is placed at the end of the passive sentence taking the form of a PP and reducing its informative preponderance in the action expressed by the verb. Indeed, passive constructions occasionally allow the omission of the *by*-phrase as will be explained afterward.

Considering the other component of passives, i.e., the past participle of a lexical verb, *be*-passives can be of two different types (Israel *et al.*, 2006): adjectival/stative, if they express an ongoing state, as in (2); or verbal/eventive, when they express a dynamic event, as in (3).

2) The spinach is cooked

3) The spinach was cooked by Mommy

In (2), the past participle ‘cooked’ is adjectival/stative because it describes a state. It refers to the state in which the spinach is—it is cooked so it is ready to eat. In

consequence, the *by*-phrase is not necessary. In opposition to (2), the *be*-passive in (3) is verbal as it does not describe a state but an event. In this case, ‘cooked’ refers to the action of cooking the spinach and so the presence of the agent is necessary.

Be-passives are the passive structures that have received most of the attention of linguists in the last decades in comparison with *get*-passives, which have been researched by a fewer number of scholars (e.g., Stein, 1979; Haegeman, 1985; Alexiadou, 2012), but which are the focus of the present dissertation. In the following section, the main characteristics of the *get*-passives will be illustrated, taking into account at some points a comparison with the *be*-passives’ formal and semantic properties mentioned so far.

2.2 The *get*-passive

Get-passives are usually identified as a variant of *be*-passives in English because they have a similar structure, i.e., ‘get’ (as an auxiliary verb) + past participle (of a lexical verb) + a *by*-phrase which can be present or no. However, in the literature on this topic (Quirk *et al.*, 1985; Stein, 1979; Weiner & Labov, 1983; Haegeman, 1985; Butler & Tsoulas 2006; Mitkovska & Buzarovska, 2011; Pullum, 2014, Thompson *et al.*, 2018, among others), some scholars have offered different interpretations when addressing the study of the *get*-passives. While Quirk *et al.* (1985), Stein (1979), and Weiner and Labov (1983) consider both *get*- and *be*-passives to be identical, other authors such as Haegeman (1985) discard that *get*- and *be*-passives are identical as she contemplates that ‘get’ is not an auxiliary verb but a lexical one according to the following reasons illustrated by examples:

1. Auxiliary verbs such as ‘be’ allow negative contractions whereas ‘get’ does not.

4a) He wasn’t killed

4b) *He gotn’t killed

2. To solve the incapacity of ‘get’ of allowing negative contractions present in (4b), ‘get’ requires *do*-support as other lexical verbs but unlike auxiliary verbs, as in (5).

5) He didn’t get killed

3. A *be*-passive allows subject-verb inversion, as in (6a), while a *get*-passive, like (6b), does not, and so ‘get’ requires *do*-support, as in (6c).

6a) Was he killed?

6b) *Got he killed?

6c) Did he get killed?

4. VP-deletion is permitted with the verb ‘be’, as in (7a) but it is not with the verb ‘get’, as in (7b). Instead, ‘get’ requires *do*-support, as (7c) shows.

7a) John was killed in an accident and Bill was too

7b) *John got killed in an accident and Bill got too

7c) John got killed in an accident and Bill did too

Just like Haegeman (1985), other authors (e.g., Sasaki, 1997; Kirby, 2010; Thompson *et al.*, 2018) consider that *get*- and *be*-passives are not similar, but their argumentation differs from that of Haegeman’s. Whereas the former author relies on the fact that ‘get’ is not an auxiliary verb, the latter rely on the semantic roles of the DPs assigned in the passives. These scholars believe that *get*- and *be*-passives are different because the Patient acquires a distinct role depending on the type of passive. Sasaki (1997) considers that in *get*-passives, the Patient is somehow responsible for the action of the verb, as in (8a), where the Agent, *Mary*, wanted to shoot John; while in (8b), the Patient, John, made the event happen; he wanted to be shot by *Mary*.

8a) John was shot by *Mary* deliberately (>*Mary* acted deliberately)

8b) John got shot by *Mary* deliberately (>John acted deliberately)

Taniguchi’s (2014) classification is also focused on the semantic roles found in *get*-passives, reducing it to two types: ‘reflexive *get*-passives’, where the Patient and the Agent refer to the same participant (i.e., *Mary*, in 9); and ‘adversative *get*-passives’, as in (10), where both the Patient and the Agent refer to two different participants (i.e. *He* and *the car*, respectively). In the last type, the Patient normally suffers a negative consequence.

9) *Mary* got dressed up

10) He got hit by a car

Bani Bili (2016) later refined Taniguchi’s classification proposing three more types of *get*-passives, taking into consideration other more specific semantic factors such

as (un)favorable consequences of or benefits from the action and animate *versus* inanimate Patients. However, only verbal *get*-passives are considered as part of his classification, not taking into account adjectival passives.

Apart from the differences based on the semantic properties that the Patient acquires depending on the type of passive, there are other reasons that refuse the belief that *get*- and *be*-passives are identical. Considering the syntactic aspect, there are studies (Cameron, 1996; Carter & McCarthy, 1999; Collins, 1996; Medina, 2009; Taniguchi, 2014, among others) that assert that *by*-phrases are not frequent in passives with ‘*get*’. This is reinforced by Hatcher (1949) as he finds a connection between *by*-phrases and *be*-passives: the Agent of *get*-passives receives a subordinate role and hence, it is usually omitted. This implies that the opposite occurs in *be*-passives. Furthermore, according to Thompson *et al.* (2018: 2), the *get*-passive “places greater focus on the event or its outcome than the *be*-passive”, probably, because there are normally negative consequences for the Patient who is responsible for the event somehow (as seen in (8b) above). Therefore, they are more frequently used without a *by*-phrase than *be*-passives.

Moreover, one of the other components of *get*-passives, i.e., the past participle, deserves attention. The form of the participle in this type of passive is a matter of debate as some authors do not pay attention to it. Others such as Taranto (2004), as cited in Butler and Tsoulas (2006), consider all participles in *get*-passives to be adjectival based on the following features: as adjectival participles, they accept the prefix *un*- whereas verbal participles (in *be*-passives) do not and also, they may appear before a noun whereas verbal participles may not.

In fact, these are the reasons why, according to Taranto (2004), there are ungrammatical *get*-passives like (11) or (12) where verbal participles appear.

11) *Agent Mulder got followed by the Cigarette Smoking Man

12) *Mary got followed by a little lamb

However, Butler and Tsoulas (2006) point out that examples like (13) are possible even though the *get*-passive includes a verbal participle, and therefore, they conclude that *get*-passives can be formed with any type of participle.

13) If the film gets received well enough, I’m thinking of creating a “directors commentary”

Due to the semantic and syntactic differences of *get*-passives mentioned so far, some scholars (Sasaki, 1997; Taniguchi, 2014; Bani Bili, 2016, among others) classified the *get*-passives into different types. Their classifications are so controversial that there is not practically any agreement between the different categorizations that these authors have made about the *get*-passive. For instance, Sasaki's (1997) proposal offers a confusing typology as both syntactic and semantic criteria are mixed up (i.e., intransitive *vs.* transitive verbs, verbs expressing states *vs.* events; adjectival *vs.* verbal).

Consequently, it can be perceived that some grammarians agree on the existent difference between passives with 'be' and passives with 'get'. Nevertheless, as they do not fully agree with its classification, we have concluded that Israel *et al.*'s (2006) classification (i.e., adjectival/stative passives *vs.* verbal/eventive passives) proves to be convenient for the main purpose of the present dissertation as 1) it provides a concise typology of *get*-passives to potentially be found in the production of bilingual children; and 2) it is the classification followed by most of the acquisition studies where the analysis of passive structures produced by children is analyzed (Sasaki, 1997; Taranto, 2004; Alexiadou, 2012).

Once each type of passive has been described, it is relevant to consider how *get*-passives are acquired and which type (if any) is acquired earlier by children because as it has been stated at the beginning of this dissertation, passive constructions arise later in the language than other constructions such as their active counterparts. In order to find out if this is so in the production of English *get*-passives by English-Spanish bilingual and English monolingual children, we will take into account in the following sections the main findings of some previous literature on the acquisition of *be*-passives and, more specifically, of *get*-passives.

3. Empirical studies on the acquisition of passives

Section 3 is organized into two sections. Section 3.1 presents a brief overview of studies on passives acquisition by monolingual English-speaking children and English-Spanish bilingual children. These studies are focused on the comprehension and production of *be*-passives, and therefore, the existing hypothesis for their delay when acquiring these constructions. Section 3.2 reviews briefly previous studies in which the participants are monolingual English-speaking children who are observed to find out

when and how they acquire *get*-passives. The purpose of contrasting some previous acquisition studies on both types of passives under this section is due to the fact that most of them are related to the acquisition of *be*-passives, relegating the study of *get*-passives acquisition to a more secondary place. With this in mind, we will show whether there is a parallelism in some of the findings from both types of studies and also highlight that, to the best of our knowledge, no studies on the acquisition of *get*-passives in English-Spanish bilingual children have been carried out up to now.

3.1 Acquisition of *be*-passives by monolingual and bilingual children

The acquisition of *be*-passives has been mostly studied in comprehension and imitation experimental tasks (e.g., Bandura & Harris, 1966; Maratsos *et al.*, 1985; Maratsos & Abramovitch, 1975; Messenger *et al.*, 2012; Garraffa *et al.*, 2021). Nevertheless, some studies based on spontaneous data have been developed as well (e.g., Sánchez Calderón & Fernández Fuertes, 2017, 2022) showing that this type of structure is not frequent in child language, but indeed, it is not frequent in their input either. This fact together with the idea that passive constructions are not acquired as soon as the active ones have led many scholars to develop research to enlarge the awareness of how it is acquired, in which moment, and why (e.g., Horgan, 1976; Pinker *et al.*, 1987; Kirby, 2010; Messenger *et al.*, 2012; Garraffa *et al.*, 2021).

Some scholars analyzed the production of English parents to quantify the number of passive utterances addressed by adults to children (Brown, 1973; Crawford, 2012; Gordon & Chafetz, 1990, among others). They concluded that mostly, children's input does not contain passive constructions and when it does, these passive constructions are short passives. Besides not being very frequent in adult language, passive constructions are even less common in spontaneous conversations¹. Therefore, the low frequency of this construction in the input that children receive could delay its acquisition.

Some theoretical approaches have tried to give account of this delay and the Maturation Hypothesis seems to be at stake. This hypothesis was developed by Borer and Wexler (1987) and according to it, there are specific linguistic structures that arise later in children's production since these constructions are not directly accessible to them but once they mature. Nevertheless, other researchers such as Kirby (2010) do not support

¹ Additionally, the passive structure is typically found in a formal written style (Chafe, 1982; Roland *et al.* 2007, Biber, 1993). As a result, it could be expected to find a low number of passives in spontaneous conversations.

this hypothesis but the Semantic Bootstrapping Hypothesis. As claimed by Kirby (2010), the passive structure emerges in the language later than the active voice because children are used to associating certain syntactic positions with fixed thematic roles. For instance, according to Kirby's (2010) examples, in (14a), the DP 'the girl' functions as the subject of the sentence and has the Agent theta role, whereas the DP 'the boy' functions as the direct object of the sentence and has the Patient theta role. Given that the Semantic Bootstrapping Hypothesis contemplates that children identify syntactic positions with thematic roles, in (14b), the DP 'the boy' functions as the subject, but the child would allocate the Agent theta role to this DP instead of the Patient theta role which corresponds to it. A similar operation is applied with the DP 'the girl' preceded by the preposition 'by'. In this case, 'the girl' functions as an adjunct, but the child would provide this DP the Patient theta role rather than the Agent theta role which would be the correct one.

14a) The girl is kissing the boy

14b) The boy is kissed by the girl

As a result of the discussion about these two possible hypotheses to explain why there is a delay in the acquisition of passives, some experimental studies, but also studies based on spontaneous data, have focused on finding out at what age this structure is acquired and how it develops through children's first years of life.

As for the experimental studies, there seems to be an agreement considering the comprehension and production of the passive in the case of monolingual children. It is believed that whereas children under the age of 3 can produce passives, they do not seem to fully understand them. For example, Horgan (1976), who takes into account *be-* and *get-* passives, after testing 456 English-speaking participants ranging from 2;0 to 13;11-year-old children by asking them to describe pictures or tell stories about these pictures, concludes that children can produce syntactically correct full passives (those ending with a *by*-phrase). However, their understanding of full passives differs from adults' because children's passives seem to be semantically different from adult passives as they invert the semantic roles as described in examples (14a) and (14b).

On the other hand, Garraffa *et al.* (2021) develop a priming design study in which 33 monolingual English-speaking children are tested to verify their production of passive structures, concluding that 4- and 5-year-olds are able to produce passive sentences and

that, when trained with the use of *be*-passive sentences, they produce 3.6 more passives than those unstrained children.

In the case of English-Spanish bilingual children, the number of experimental studies focused on the acquisition of English *be*-passives is reduced. Particularly, to the best of our knowledge, the few studies dealing with passive constructions and English bilingual participants are concerned with cross-linguistic syntactic priming such as Vasilyeva *et al.* (2010) and Weber and Indefrey (2009). However, just the former is concerned with children, where the authors examine 65 English-Spanish bilinguals (mean age 5;11) who had to describe the same picture using Spanish and later an English *be*-passive (and *vice versa*). They conclude that children are more likely to use English passive constructions once they have listened to it in Spanish.

As for the studies on passive acquisition based on spontaneous data, to our awareness, there are no studies that analyze the acquisition of *be*-passives in the case of English monolingual children, but in the case of English bilingual children. Only Sánchez Calderón and Fernández Fuentes (2017, 2022) study the acquisition of passives by English-Spanish bilinguals, pointing out that although the acquisition process is similar between monolinguals and bilinguals, the latter have to receive input from two different languages (2L1). Hence, bilinguals receive less input from a language than monolinguals, which could extend in time the already expected delay in the acquisition of passives by monolinguals.

More specifically, Sánchez Calderón and Fernández Fuentes (2017) examine the production of both dative structures and *be*-passives in the spontaneous data produced by a set of two English-Spanish bilingual twins (the same this dissertation will analyze) concluding that dative structures emerge earlier than passives and that, focusing on *be*-passives, the frequency of adult input matters as the low frequency of passives in adult input matches the low frequency of passives in the twins' production. Later in 2022, Sánchez Calderón and Fernández Fuentes examine their production of active and *be*-passive constructions, concluding these bilingual children acquire earlier the active voice than the passive voice. This is the result of not only the low frequency of passives received as input from their parents (as pointed out in their earlier study) but also because of the DP-movement that passive constructions have to undergo (and so more processing effort may be implied).

Nevertheless, neither of the previously mentioned studies on experimental or spontaneous data focus on the comparison of the production of *get-* and *be-*passives, which is why there is still further investigation needed in this field.

3.2 Acquisition of *get-*passives by monolingual and bilingual children

As seen in section 3.1 above, a certain number of studies concerned with children's comprehension and production of passive constructions has been carried out, especially in experimental settings. However, except for the case of Horgan (1976), these studies tend to put *get-*passives aside because they consider that *get-* and *be-*passives are identical, and therefore, *get-*passives do not deserve special attention. However, as already discussed in section 2.2, some linguists such as Kirby (2010), Taniguchi (2014), and Gotowski (2017) have already pointed out that we are dealing with two different types of passives.

As the present dissertation is concerned with the acquisition of *get-*passive constructions, it is fundamental to be aware of when it is acquired by English-Spanish bilingual and English monolingual children. Considering the experimental studies in which English monolingual children are tested, Harris and Flora (1982) focus on their comprehension of *get-*passives and conclude that this construction is acquired before *be-*passives as the participants perform better at all ages (i.e., 4;6-8;5) with *get-*passives than with *be-*passives, and also, that a larger number of *get-*passives is produced spontaneously than passives with 'be'. Consequently, an ease could be associated with *get-*passives in experimental contexts at least.

Opposing Harris and Flora (1982), Gotowski (2017) conducts two experiments to verify if there is any real ease when acquiring the *get-*passive construction in comparison with the *be-*passives with the aim of expanding the previous literature about the age at which children comprehend *get-*passives. She tests 62 English monolingual children (3;0 – 6;10) and 15 adults who belong to the control group. The results show differences regarding the age since 3 years-old participants comprehend the *get-*passives of the test better than the older participants. However, by the age of 4, all of them achieve similar results in comprehension, not just in *get-*passives, but in any type of passive construction. Therefore, Gotowski (2017) rejects Harris and Flora's (1982) claim about *get-*passives being undemanding and consequently, acquired sooner than *be-*passives since children do not seem to acquire *get-*passives easier in an extended period of time, but just at the age of 3.

In addition, bearing in mind other components of the passive construction (i.e., the past participle and the optional *by*-phrase), Kirby (2010) associates stative participles with *be*-passives and eventive participles with *get*-passives. According to Kirby, English children would master *get*-passives before *be*-passives since they would find a verb that represents an action instead of a state, which is not expected. Furthermore, after testing English children and adolescents, Horgan (1976) agrees that *get*-passives are acquired earlier than passives with ‘be’ because this structure is likely to appear without a *by*-phrase (Cameron, 1996; Carter & McCarthy 1999; Collins, 1996; Medina 2009; Taniguchi, 2014) and children produce formerly more short passives (without a *by*-phrase) than long ones (with a *by*-phrase).

As for the studies on *get*-passive acquisition based on spontaneous data in the case of English monolingual children, the number of studies is even more reduced than studies focused on the *be*-passive. Taniguchi (2014) and Israel *et al.* (2006) focused on the acquisition of *get*-passives. However, only the former is entirely about *get*-passives since Israel and their colleagues considered *get*-, but also *be*-passives. Taniguchi (2014) extracts the data of a nonspecific number of American and British English children (aged 1-11) and adults from the CHILDES project with the aim of demonstrating how English children acquire *get*-passives. She concludes that there is in fact a relationship between children’s output and their parents’ input when acquiring *get*-passives: the peculiar, simplified style that adults use to communicate with children (i.e., the caretaker speech) facilitates the *get*-passive acquisition as it attracts their attention.

Considering the studies about English bilingual spontaneous data, no study dealing with English-Spanish bilingual children has been developed until the moment. For this reason, the present study will shed light on how passives with ‘get’ are acquired especially by English-Spanish bilingual and English monolingual children.

4. Research questions

Considering the idea of the existing delay in the acquisition of passive constructions, *be*-passives being normally the focus of the studies about the passive voice and the fact that there are scarce studies on the acquisition of *get*-passives by English monolingual children and none by English-Spanish bilingual children (see section 3.2 above), this study aims to compare the spontaneous production of this structure by

English-Spanish bilingual and English monolingual children to corroborate if there is any difference in the acquisition of *get*-passives, especially in terms of the age of acquisition and the passive typology.

In particular, this research will analyze the longitudinal production of the *get*-passive structures of a set of two English-Spanish bilingual twins (1;1-6;11) and compare them with the *get*-passives produced by two English monolingual children (0;7-8;0) to verify if there are significant differences or similarities (if any) between both types of data and if adult input intervenes in their acquisition. For this purpose, it is necessary to answer the following research questions (RQ):

RQ 1. Do English monolinguals and English-Spanish bilinguals acquire *get*-passives at the same age?

RQ 2. Are there differences in the amount of production of *get*-passives along their linguistic development?

RQ 3. Is the production of *get*-passives different in the two groups of children depending on the passive typology (i.e., stative *vs.* eventive types)?

RQ 4. Does adult input play an important role in the children's acquisition of the *get*-passive structure?

To our awareness, the first study that deals with the production of *get*-passives of English-Spanish bilingual children is presented. Therefore, the answers to these four questions will enlarge the current knowledge concerning the acquisition of the *get*-passive structure.

5. Methodology

In order to answer the research questions stated above, the longitudinal spontaneous data from two English-Spanish bilingual children and two monolingual English-speaking siblings' children has been extracted from two corpora (FerFuLice and McWhinney, respectively) in the CHILDES project (<https://www.childes.talkbank.org>). All the participants are boys, a pair living in Spain and the other pair in the USA. Their ages range from 0;7 to 8;0, and all the CHAT files within each age range were taken into consideration in our analysis, as Table 1 shows.

Table 1. *Data selected*

Corpora	Language(s)	Children	Age range	Social context
FerFuLice	American English and Peninsular Spanish	Leo and Simon	1;1-6;11	Spanish (Spain)
MacWhinney	American English	Ross and Mark	0;7-8;0	English (USA)

As we can also observe in Table 1, the data selected for the present research comes from two longitudinal corpora, so it is possible to observe how these children produce *get*-passives, almost from very early on (RQ 1), and how the use of these structures develops (RQ 1 and RQ 2).

Considering the bilingual participants, the FerFulice corpus (Fernández Fuertes & Licerias, 2009) involves the production of a set of English-Spanish bilingual identical twins (Leo and Simon) for a period of almost 6 years (1;1-6;11). These children were born and raised in Spain, particularly in Salamanca. Consequently, they have been raised in a region in which English is not used and only Spanish is spoken instead. Nevertheless, this asymmetry in terms of the input the children receive in each language (i.e., English and Spanish) is solved by the one-parent one-language strategy (Ronjat, 1913) carried out by their caretakers. In the case of Leo and Simon, their parents address them in their first languages (i.e., English in the case of Melanie, the mother, and Spanish in the case of Ivo, the father). Additionally, these children receive Spanish input when their parents interact with each other, and they receive English input when a monolingual English-speaking person is present and when they spend two months in the USA every summer.

Considering the transcriptions of the FerFuLice corpus, the content therein is spontaneous and was recorded in a natural context since the sessions were recorded in the children's home, where they appear playing with one of the parents or researchers.

Regarding the monolingual participants, the MacWhinney corpus (MacWhinney, 2000) involves a set of two English monolingual siblings (Ross and Mark). The data collected is naturalistic and was produced in a familiar environment for the children. In this corpus, Ross was recorded from 0;6 to 8;0 and Mark from 0;7 to 5;6 years old (a period of about 7 years in the case of Ross and of about 5 years in the case of Mark). However, there are recordings that have not been yet transcribed because one of the

children was very young such as files 1-10, or others with little speech due to the children's age.

With the aim of giving an account of the English input received by each child (RQ 4), the *get*-passives contained in the adult utterances from the two corpora present in Table 1 have also been compiled. As it is depicted in Table 2, in the FerFuLice corpus there is just one English-speaking adult from whom Simon and Leo can receive English input whereas, in the case of the MacWhinney corpus, there are two English-speaking adults from which Ross and Mark receive input.

Table 2. *English adult input*

Corpora	Language	Adults
FerFuLice	English (American)	Melanie (mother)
MacWhinney	English (American)	Brian (father) Mary (mother)

5.1 Data extraction procedure

Within all the spontaneous naturalistic data available in the FerFuLice and the MacWhinney corpora, this study includes the children's utterances, as well as the adult utterances in which *get*-passive constructions are present. That is, a passive construction with the verb 'get' followed by a past participle and a *by*-phrase (present or not).

Table 3. *Data analyzed*

Corpus	Speakers	Files	Hours	Utterances
FerFuLice	Simon	117	45:46:28	12,373
	Leo	117	45:46:28	13,449
	Melanie	117	45:46:28	39,021
MacWhinney	Ross	261	99:59:18	32,109
	Mark	191	74:37:19	18,924
	Brian	289	110:10:14	54,449
	Mary	254	97:53:58	6,746

The data from the FerFuLice corpus appears in three folders depending on the language used in the sessions. Since this study is just concerned with English *get*-passives, only the English and bilingual files are analyzed (i.e., a total of 117) which add up to 45:46:28 hours where the twins were present. Conversely, all the sessions recorded in the MacWhinney corpus (i.e., a total of 286 files) were developed in English so there is no need of selecting specific files. The recorded sessions add up to 111:24:18, from which

Mark was present at 74:37:19 and Ross at 99:59:18. It is significant to point out that in the case of the monolinguals, there are sessions in which they appear together and others in which just one of them is considered. However, in the case of the bilinguals, both appear in every session.

The structure under analysis in this research has been obtained by using *FREQ* (frequency counts), one of the programs that *CLAN* (Computerized Language ANalysis) offers, which extracts automatically the utterances containing passive structures with ‘get’. It has been possible to extract the data by using this program due to the fact that the two corpora under analysis contain a morphology-dependent tier (+t%) in the transcriptions of their data. Consequently, the following syntax line [freq +t%mor +s”aux| get&PAST” @] has been used to extract the *get*-passives present in both corpora. Since there is not any specification in this syntax line about whom has to produce it, by using it, it is possible to obtain the *get*-passives produced by both groups of speakers, children and adults.

KWAL (Key and Line), another program that *CLAN* offers, has been used to provide the context in which the structure appears. In order to obtain the full utterances in which *get*-passives appear in these corpora, the following syntax line has been used [kwal +t%mor +s”aux| get&PAST” @], which is useful to realize a manual search to classify the *get*-passives (see section 5.3 below).

While carrying out the manual search, some utterances which seem to contain a *get*-passive according to *FREQ* and *KWAL* have turned out not to be *get*-passives, as in the case of (15), (16), and (17), which do not include a past participle but just the verb ‘get’ in the past tense and therefore, these instances have been excluded from the analysis for the present study.

15) what got away [Melanie; FerFuLice]

16) see it kind of looks like a deer but it runs really really fast and it's got long horns so that [///] I think that's an antelope [Melanie; FerFuLice]

17) you got all look! [Simon; 5;05; FerFuLice]

Apart from these manually excluded cases, there were some structures that accomplish the ‘*get* + past participle’ pattern but which are not *get*-passives, so, the

structures containing ‘get used to’ or ‘have got’ were also discarded. In addition, misspellings like that in (18) were also left out of our analysis.

(18) because it's already got lost [= lots]of salt [Melanie; FerFuLice]

In opposition to the structures that are discarded in this research, those utterances produced by any of the children which include a *get*-passive construction in which the past participle is ungrammatical for an adult (e.g., *takened* instead of *taken* in (19) or *throwed* instead of *threw* in (20)) have been accepted since in their linguistic progress children do not usually distinguish between regular and irregular forms and tend to overgeneralize the past formation of all the verbs adding *-ed*. That is the reason why in the transcriptions, ‘takened’ appears marked with [*].

19) o no no no no it got takened [: taken] [*] (.) and I wanted another cake so I could get a &s so you know what this heart says [Mark; 4;02; MacWhinney]

20) &-um someone got throwed [*] (.) in [//] in the ocean [Mark; 4;02; MacWhinney]

Nevertheless, there are other three utterances (21-23) in which the past participle ‘throwed’ appears and it is not marked as ungrammatical in any of these transcriptions. Consequently, taking into account that the MacWhinney participants are American English speakers, ‘throwed’ has been searched in COCA. The results show that ‘throwed’ has been used 126 times, mostly in nonacademic contexts, such as the one in the MacWhinney corpus. Therefore examples (21-23) are considered to be part of the analysis in this study.

21) well (.) you know it too (.) the emperor got throwed down [Mark; 4;00; MacWhinney]

22) they got throwed in this (.) huh? [Mark; 4;00; MacWhinney]

23) o yeah (.) that's the part where he got throwed down (.) do you know the part about (.) Jabba (.) in the movie? [Brian; MacWhinney]

5.2 Data classification

Due to the corpora’s length and the longitudinal perspective adopted in this study (RQ 1 and RQ 2), it has been necessary to show the children’s linguistic development in different stages. Consequently, Table 4 has been created taking into account the bilingual and monolingual participants, their MLUm (mean length of utterance by morphemes), and the age or age range in which they reached a particular MLU. In order to compute the

MLU of the participants, the program MLU, which is provided by CLAN, has been used. Besides, since the MacWhinney corpus' length is wider than the FerFuLice's, the transcriptions available in MacWhinney have been considered until the moment in which Ross and Mark are 6;10 as it is the age of the last recorded English session from the FerFuLice corpus. Moreover, considering that Ross and Mark are siblings but not twins, there are files in which just Ross appears because Mark was not born yet, and files in which just Mark is considered in this study since his brother is older than 6;10.

Table 4. *MLU-age range correspondence of the English-Spanish bilingual children and the English monolingual children*

SIMON	MLU	2	3	4	>5
	AGE-RANGE	2;7-2;8	2;9-3;1	3;2-3;4	3;5
LEO	MLU	2	3	4	>5
	AGE-RANGE	2;7-2;11	3;0-3;1	3;2-3;6	3;8
ROSS	MLU	2	3	4	>5
	AGE-RANGE	2;5-2;7	2;8-2;11	3;0-3;2	3;3
MARK	MLU	2	3	4	>5
	AGE-RANGE	2;0-2;4	2;5-2;9	2;10-3;4	3;5

Table 4 shows four stages in the linguistic development of the children according to the value of the MLU (2, 3, 4, and >5). Due to the scarcity of *get*-passives expected to be found at very early ages, MLU 1 was not included as a stage. On the other hand, finding a standardized developmental progress according to their MLU was challenging as there is a significant number of dispersed values that complicated the separation of the children's progress into different stages. As a result, the age range of each MLU stage comprises from the age at which each child acquires that specific MLU value to the age at which there is a drastic change in his MLU and he does not regress to that MLU value.

Most of the participants show a similar developmental process although there are slight differences among them. These minor contrasts can be found within each pair of siblings. For instance, in the case of the bilinguals, both of them acquire MLU 2 and MLU 4 at the same time, but Leo acquires MLU >5 three months later than Simon. Considering the monolingual participants, the differences among them are wider, but in general, it can be said that Ross and Mark show higher MLUs than Simon and Leo. This small delay in the bilinguals' production could be caused by the fact of being bilinguals (see section 3.1) but also twins (Dale *et al.*, 1998). Nonetheless, it could be said that to a certain extent, the

MLU stages and the age range of the participants have an analogous development in the four participants.

Lastly, Table 5 presents how the *get*-passives produced by the children are classified following Israel *et al.*'s (2006) typology into stative ((22) & (25)) and eventive ((23) & (24)) passives (RQ 3). Being the scarce number of *get*-passives expected to be found, we consider that this typology is concise and clear enough to cover all the *get*-passives produced by the children of our study.

Table 5. *Sample of get-passives classification*

Participant	MLU stage	Corpus	Session	Example	Type of <i>get</i> -passive
Leo	MLU >5	FerFuLice	[051123]	(22) <i>look maybe I got confused</i>	stative
Ross	MLU 2	MacWhinney	[020514b]	(23) <i>Mary Poppins got killed</i>	eventive
Melanie	---	FerFuLice	[021105]	(24) <i>(be)cause I got dressed and had my breakfast fast</i>	eventive
Brian	---	MacWhinney	[050820a]	(25) <i>you guys got bored of it</i>	stative

Regarding the utterances analyzed to develop this investigation, despite having considered the same period of years in both types of participants, there are significant differences in the number of utterances produced by the bilinguals, the monolinguals and their parents. In the case of the English-Spanish bilinguals, we have analyzed 13,449 and 12,373 utterances which are less than half of Ross's utterances (32,109), although somehow more similar to Mark's (18,924). Similarly, the mother of the bilinguals produces 39,021 utterances whereas Brian, the main conversational partner of the monolinguals, produces 54,449 utterances and Mary, their mother, 6,746. Despite the meaningful differences in the number of utterances and how this could affect our results since the possibilities of producing more *get*-passives are higher if you produce more utterances, percentages have been calculated to obtain comparable results.

Once all the data compiled was classified (available at: https://uvaes-my.sharepoint.com/:x:/g/personal/nerea_serrano_estudiantes_uva_es/Edi7zZP5zuBKjiIlg0GwxomgBAAN98XQA00e88UWTnxYnpQ?e=YGMaZu), we proceeded with the analysis. Consequently, section 6 has been devoted to the analysis of the *get*-passive constructions produced by the English-Spanish bilinguals and the English monolinguals examined in the present study, as well as their parents' *get*-passive production. This

analysis will allow us to provide an answer to the research questions proposed in section 4.

6. Analysis and discussion of the results

This study is concerned with the age of acquisition in which the bilingual and monolingual participants produce *get*-passives (RQ 1) so that it is possible to realize whether bilinguals suffer a delay in comparison to monolinguals or the opposite. Furthermore, it is also focused on three concerns, specifically (i) the incidence with which the participants produce this structure throughout the linguistic development of English bilingual and English monolingual children (RQ 2); (ii) the incidence with which eventive and stative participles are used and developed by the two groups of participants (RQ 3); and (iii) the number of *get*-passives produced by the adults affects (or not) somehow the children's *get*-passives output (RQ 4).

We will present all the results concerning each of the RQs together with their interpretation and discussion.

(RQ 1) Do English-Spanish bilinguals and English monolinguals acquire *get*-passives at the same age? THERE IS NOT A FIXED PATTERN, BUT EXCEPT FOR ROSS (2;5), THE REST OF THE PARTICIPANTS ACQUIRE *GET*-PASSIVES LATER THAN *BE*-PASSIVES

As Figure 1 presents, until stage MLU 4, both bilinguals and monolinguals produce *get*-passives in parallel, but it is in that last stage when it seems that the production speed up in the case of the monolinguals (3;00 in Ross; 2;10 in Mark) but not in the case of the bilinguals as the frequency with which they use *get*-passives increases dramatically in the case of the former (especially in the case of Mark) and steadily in the case of latter.

Figure 1. *Evolution in the production of get-passives*

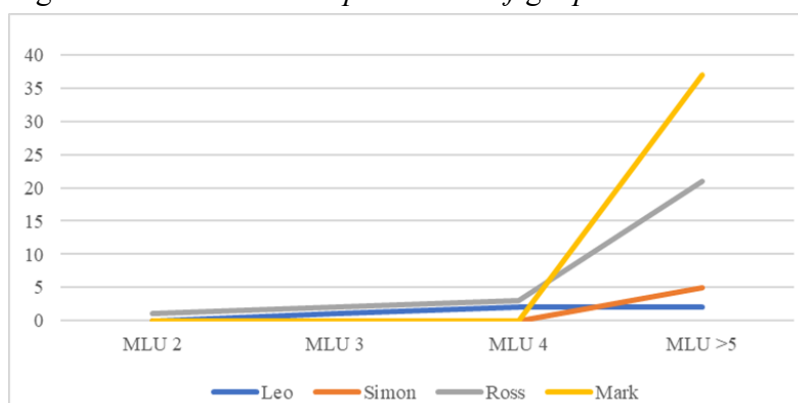


Table 6 displays the number and percentage of passives with ‘get’ produced by the bilingual and monolingual children under analysis in this study.

Table 6. *Production of get-passives by English-Spanish bilinguals and English monolinguals*

Speaker	MLU 2	MLU 3	MLU 4	MLU >5	Totals
Age of first production	---	---	---	5;4	5 (50%)
Simon	---	---	---	5 (100%)	
Leo	---	3;00	3;4	5;11	5 (50%)
	---	1 (20%)	2 (40%)	2 (40%)	
Ross	2;5	2;10	3;00	3;3	27 (42.2%)
	1 (3.7%)	2 (7.4%)	3 (11.1%)	21 (77.8%)	
Mark	---	---	---	3;9	37 (57.8%)
	---	---	---	37 (100%)	

As the results show, in the case of the monolinguals, Ross is the one that starts producing *get*-passives earlier (2;5). This parallels with what other authors, such as Horgan (1976), believe about the age at which *be*-passives begin to be produced since she states that English children are capable of producing *be*-passives under the age of 3. On the other hand, if the bilinguals are considered, the age of their first occurrence of a *get*-passive (3;00 in the case of Leo and 5;4 Simon’s case) differs from the age at which they produce their first *be*-passive earlier (mean age: 2;1) according to Sánchez Calderón and Fernández Fuertes (2022).

Additionally, it seems that there is not a clear pattern considering the age of acquisition of *get*-passives since there is a great diversity in their age of their first production, both among the monolinguals and the bilinguals. Whereas Ross produces his first *get*-passive at 2;5, Mark does not produce one until 3;9 and in the case of the bilinguals, Leo produces this structure for the first time at 3;00 and Simon does it when he is 5;4. Nonetheless, despite the lack of a consistent pattern, it seems clear that except for Ross, the other 3 children start producing *get*-passives later than *be*-passives.

Considering the frequency in the production of *get*-passives, there is a significant distinction between English-Spanish bilinguals (10 cases) and English monolinguals since this structure is used more frequently by the latter (64 cases), especially in the MLU >5 stage. Although it is in that stage when virtually the four participants produce most of their *get*-passives (in the case of Simon and Mark, all the cases they produce are concentrated along this stage) and considering that the monolinguals’ quantity of total

recorded hours and utterances doubles that of the bilinguals, the difference of total *get*-passives is still significant (p -values = 0).

The answer to RQ 2 considering whether there are differences in the amount of production of *get*-passives among the children under analysis will be presented.

(RQ 2) Are there differences in the amount of production of *get*-passives along their linguistic development? YES, ALTHOUGH THEIR FREQUENCY INCREASES UNIFORMLY UNTIL MLU 4, WHEN THE PARTICIPANTS ACHIEVE MLU >5, THE ENGLISH MONOLINGUALS USE *GET*-PASSIVES MORE

Table 6 above also shows that from the MLU 2 to MLU 4 stage, the frequency of *get*-passives increases gradually but very slowly only in the case of Leo and Ross, as in the case of Simon and Mark all the cases are produced in MLU 5 stage. Once all the children achieve this stage, the incidence with which they produce *get*-passives grows in all the cases.

Furthermore, related to the frequency in the production of *get*-passives, apart from not being very common in the children's speeches, the optional *by*-phrase discussed in section 2.2, seems to be rather scarce as Table 7 depicts. As the results show, the percentage that full *get*-passives represent is low in the case of the monolinguals (15% produced by Ross; and 5% produced by Mark) and non-existent in the bilinguals. Consequently, our results are supported by other studies (Carter & McCarthy, 1999; Collins, 1996; Medina, 2009; Taniguchi, 2014, among others) which do not find a correlation between *get*-passives and *by*-phrases, hence the low frequency of *by*-phrases in the structures analyzed in this study.

Table 7. *Number and percentage of get-passives with a by-phrase*

Speaker	Total number of <i>get</i> -passives with <i>by</i> -phrase	Total number of <i>get</i> -passives
Simon	---	5 (100%)
Leo	---	5 (100%)
Ross	4 (15%)	27 (100%)
Mark	2 (5%)	37 (100%)

Our results about the production of *get*-passives coincide with studies that have analyzed *be*-passives by English-Spanish bilingual children (Sánchez Calderón & Fernández Fuertes 2017, 2022) since both types of constructions are not frequent in child language. Indeed, the results match with both types of participants (i.e., bilinguals and monolinguals) because, although the English monolinguals' percentages of *get*-passives are higher than those of the English-Spanish bilinguals, their production represents less than 0,19% of their utterances, as Table 8 shows.

Table 8. *Percentages of get-passives according to the number of utterances*

Speaker	Number of <i>get</i> -passives	Utterances
Simon	5 (0.04%)	12,373
Leo	5 (0.03%)	13,449
Ross	27 (0.08%)	32,109
Mark	37 (0.19%)	18,924

Below, the answer to RQ 3 regarding the results derived from the types of *get*-passives produced by both groups of children will be presented.

(RQ 3) Is the production of *get*-passives different in the two groups of children depending on the passive typology (i.e., eventive vs. stative types)?
 YES, EVENTIVE (PARTICIPLE) PASSIVES ARE MORE COMMON IN THE PRODUCTION OF BOTH GROUPS

The results of the present study expose that among the *get*-passive constructions that both, the English-Spanish bilingual and English monolingual children produce, it is the eventive *get*-passive the one that is produced the most, except in the case of Leo, as Tables 9 and 10 present.

Table 9. *Number of get-passives per MLU stage produced by the bilingual children*

Speaker	MLU	2	3	4	>5	Totals of subtypes	Totals of <i>get</i> -passives
	<i>Get</i> -passive						
Ross	Stative	---	---	1 (12.5%)	7 (87.5%)	8 (29.6%)	27 (42.2%)
	Eventive	1 (5.3%)	2 (10.5%)	3 (15.8%)	13 (68.4%)	19 (70.4%)	

	MLU	2	3	4	>5	Totals of subtypes	Totals of <i>get</i> -passives
	<i>Get</i> -passive						
Mark	Stative	---	---	---	7 (18.9%)	7 (18.9%)	37 (57.8%)
	Eventive	---	---	---	30 (81.1%)	30 (81.1%)	

Table 10. Number of *get*-passives per MLU stage produced by the monolingual children

Speaker	MLU	2	3	4	>5	Totals of subtypes	Totals of <i>get</i> -passives
	<i>Get</i> -passive						
Simon	Stative	---	---	---	1 (20%)	1 (20%)	5 (50%)
	Eventive	---	---	---	4 (80%)	4 (80%)	
Leo	MLU	2	3	4	>5	Totals of subtypes	Totals of <i>get</i> -passives
	<i>Get</i> -passive						
	Stative	---	---	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	4 (80%)	5 (50%)
	Eventive	---	1 (100%)	---	---	1 (20%)	

As Tables 9 and 10 above present, in the case of the English-Spanish bilinguals, out of the 10 *get*-passives they produced, the total proportion is distributed equally in the production of both twins (50% in both children), although eventive *get*-passives represent 80% of Simon's production, whereas in the case of Leo, who is the child that produces significantly the least number of passives with 'get' containing an eventive participle, they represent 20% (p -value=0.02). Considering the English monolinguals, out of the 64 cases of *get*-passives produced, most of them are produced by Mark (57.8%) in contrast with his brother Ross' percentage of production (42.2%), being this difference significant (p -value =0.03). As for the typology of *get*-passives, eventive *get*-passives significantly represent the highest percentage (70% and 81% in Ross and Mark's production, respectively, $ps<0.05$), being then closer to Simon's behavior (80%) in this case. Hence, the higher production of eventive *get*-passives would in some way match with what Kirby (2010) states as she associates *get*-passives with eventive participles rather than with stative ones (see section 3.2)

Furthermore, as the results present, it is in the last stages when both types of *get*-passives are concentrated in child production (bilingual or monolingual). That is when their linguistic development becomes more mature. Consequently, the Maturational Hypothesis (see section 3.1) would be reinforced. Meanwhile, these results do not seem

to back up the Semantic Bootstrapping hypothesis as the stative *get*-passives seem closer in syntax to active counterparts, but these are not the most frequently produced by the children under analysis. Additionally, the data collected in Tables 9 and 10 show that children tend to use *get*-passives with dynamic verbs expressing an action such as in (26), rather than with those expressing a state like in (27).

26) the emperor that got thrown down [Mark; 5;11; MacWhinney]

27) I got scared [Ross; 3;07; MacWhinney]

As for the role of parents playing a more or less decisive role in the so far presented *get*-passives production by both groups of children will be the issue under discussion in the following section:

(RQ 4) Does adult input play an important role in the children’s acquisition of the *get*-passive structure? YES, PARTIALLY, ADULT INPUT PLAYS A DETERMINING ROLE IN THE CHILDREN’S ACQUISITION AS THEIR OUTPUT REFLECTS THE INPUT THEY RECEIVE

Table 11 shows the total number of *get*-passives produced by the adults in this study and their type depending on the participle to verify whether the frequency with which children receive *get*-passives from their parents’ input influences their acquisition of this construction.

Table 11. *Number of get-passives produced by adults*

Adults	Stative	Eventive	Totals of <i>get</i> -passives
FerFuLice corpus	9 (45%)	11 (55%)	20 (100%)
Melanie (mother)			
MacWhinney corpus	16 (44.4%)	20 (55.6%)	36 (100%)
Brian (father)			
Mary (mother)	2 (40%)	3 (60%)	5 (100%)

Considering the total number of *get*-passives shown in Table 11, it is observed that *get*-passives are not very frequent in the adults’ speech either (a total of 61 cases, 0.06%, out of 100,216 utterances produced by adults, see Table 3 in section 5.2). In the case of bilingual children’s parents, Melanie, their mother, produces 20 passives with ‘get’, whereas the parents of Ross and Mark, produce more than twice the amount of these passives (41 cases), although it is their father, Brian, the adult who produces most of them

(36 cases, 87,8%). Therefore, the difference in the frequency of usage of *get*-passives that the bilingual and monolingual children show could be a consequence of the input they receive, i.e., the fewer *get*-passives they receive, the less amount they will produce. Nonetheless, the difference in the number of adults providing input to the children (a parent in FerFulice and two parents in MacWhinney) is not considered a significant factor in the present study since in both corpora there is only one main conversational partner—Melanie in the case of the bilinguals, and Brian in the case of the monolinguals (the monolinguals' mother, Mary, hardly appears in the session as an interlocutor).

Regarding the type of *get*-passive, although it seems that eventive *get*-passives are a bit more frequent in the adults' speech, it is not in such a significantly differing proportion as to confirm that adults use this type of passive more (all p -values > 0). Indeed, in the three adults under analysis, stative *get*-passives represent around 45% and eventive *get*-passives around 55%. Despite this slight difference, the stative *get*-passive is more frequent in the adults' input than in the children's output. Hence the Semantic Bootstrapping Hypothesis is not backed up since although stative *get*-passives are more similar than eventive *get*-passives to active counterparts, children do not produce them in the same proportion.

Additionally, as well as being unusual in the children's speeches, the optional *by*-phrase discussed in section 2.2 seems to be rather scarce in the *get*-passive of the adults. Out of the three adults, only Melanie and Brian produce full *get*-passives (1 and 2 full *get*-passives, respectively). Hence, *get*-passives including a *by*-phrase symbolize just 5% of the total number of *get*-passives produced by the adults. Therefore, these results are consistent with studies about the *be*-passive which state that the few instances of passives that children receive are short passives (Brown, 1973; Crawford, 2012; Gordon & Chafetz, 1990).

The results of the present study mirror what has been stated about how adult input may affect the acquisition of *be*-passive constructions as Sánchez Calderón and Fernández Fuertes (2017) exhibit that the low frequency of *be*-passives in English-Spanish coincides with their parents' input. Additionally in 2022, these scholars show that when comparing English-Spanish bilinguals and English monolinguals, it is the bilinguals who produce fewer *be*-passives, which could be caused by the input they receive and the one-parent one-language strategy since passive structures are more

common in English than in Spanish. This latter reasoning could also be applied in the case of the production of *get*-passives.

7. Conclusion

The findings from the current study add to the condensed literature on *get*-passives. We have analyzed the English-Spanish bilingual and English monolingual acquisition of *get*-passive constructions with the aim of enlightening whether the two groups of participants present differences (or similarities) in their production and the possible relevance of adult input in the children's acquisition of *get*-passives. A comparison of our results has been made with those found in other studies about the *be*-passive to clarify if *get*- and *be*-passives are acquired differently.

Our results show that *get*-passives are not frequent at all throughout the linguistic development of all the children (especially in the bilingual context) as they represent a very low percentage over the totals of utterances produced by each child and adult. However, regarding the children, although their production is minimized, it is Ross who produces his first *get*-passive earlier (in MLU 2) at the age of 2;5, which coincides with the age at which some authors (Horgan, 1976) believe *be*-passives begin to be produced. However, there is not a clear pattern since Mark does not produce a *get*-passive until MLU >5 (3;9) and the same happens with the bilinguals, whereas Leo produces his first *get*-passive in MLU 3, Simon does not do it until MLU >5 (5;4). Consequently, despite the lack of an evident tendency, according to our results, it is the English monolingual children who start producing *get*-passives earlier.

At the same time, English monolinguals do also show a greater command or tendency to use *get*-passives since although in the first stages of the two groups of participants (bilinguals and monolinguals) the frequency of *get*-passives increases gradually, English monolinguals show a drastic increase in the production of these passives when they reach MLU >5. In consequence, our results reinforce the Maturational Hypothesis (Borer & Wexler, 1987) because it is not until certain linguistic structures have arisen in the production of children that they can access to them.

Additionally, the aforementioned results could also be caused due to the adult input these children receive. Therefore, we analyzed the number of utterances produced by the adults, specifically those containing *get*-passives. As a result, we conclude that

adult input is relevant since the lower frequency with which English-Spanish bilinguals produce *get*-passives in relation to English monolinguals coincides with the frequency with which their mother produces them. Consequently, our results suggest that adult input is meaningful in the acquisition of *get*-passives, the same way as that of *be*- passives as other studies about the latter type of construction have confirmed (Sánchez Calderón & Fernández Fuertes 2017, 2022). However, although Melanie and Brian produce the same percentage (5%) of full *get*-passives (i.e., with a *by*-phrase), the only rationale we have found to explain the reason why only the English monolingual children produce them is double: i) in terms of the Maturational Hypothesis (Borer & Wexler, 1987), it could be the case that *get*-passives are acquired later but, in the case of bilinguals this delay could be sharpened (see section 3.1); and ii) the fact that it is not so common to find *by*-phrases in *get*-passives (see section 2.2).

Nonetheless, despite the apparent significant role that adult input plays in children's acquisition of *get*-passives, this idea is not supported if we consider the frequency with which the children and their parents produce each type of *get*-passive (i.e., stative vs. eventive). Whereas children's production of eventive *get*-passives normally represents 80% of the *get*-passives they utter, adults' production of eventive and stative *get*-passives is much more similar. In consequence, we conclude that although adult input may interfere in children's acquisition, the Maturational Hypothesis (Borer & Wexler, 1987) is also present since although stative *get*-passives are more similar to their active counterparts and therefore, we could expect children to use them more frequently, children do not produce them as regularly.

Further research on the acquisition of *get*-passives by English-Spanish bilinguals could also consider Spanish passives to realize whether crosslinguistic influence affects negatively, positively, or has no effect in the acquisition of *get*-passives by English-Spanish bilinguals. Another factor to be taken into account would be to select a wider number of bilingual and monolingual participants to obtain broader results.

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