The Routledge Handbook of Spanish as a Heritage Language

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Spanish as a Minority/Heritage Language in Canada and The UK

Publication details
Martin Guardado
Published online on: 08 May 2018

How to cite: Martin Guardado. 08 May 2018, Spanish as a Minority/Heritage Language in Canada and The UK from: The Routledge Handbook of Spanish as a Heritage Language Routledge
Accessed on: 14 Sep 2023

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The Spanish-speaking population in the UK has grown significantly since the 1970s, with Colombian migrants playing a major role in this growth. Yet, at an official rate of approximately 0.2%, the proportion of Spanish-speakers in relation to the total population in the UK is significantly smaller compared to the US (17%) and even to Canada (1.24%). Within Europe, the UK and Spain have the largest concentrations of Latin Americans (Márquez Reiter & Martín Rojo, 2015). It has been argued that publications about migration and multiculturalism in the UK have ignored Spanish-speaking populations, and more specifically, those of Latin American origin (Block, 2008). As a whole, this community has been described by a number of scholars as a small, under-researched, and largely ignored minority group in the UK (e.g., Block, 2006, 2008; Kelsall, 2012, 2015), highlighting what they refer to as its invisibility to both society and sociolinguists.

Although a documented Latin American presence has been situated in the UK since the 1700s (McIlwaine, 2008), their existence in any significant number is a much more recent phenomenon. Due to a variety of push and pull factors, such as prevailing economic conditions inside Spain (e.g., surplus of labor, mechanization of agriculture) and favorably changing circumstances abroad (e.g., agricultural growth in Latin America, shift to manufacturing in Europe), Spaniards emigrated en masse to Latin America around the turn of the twentieth century and to other parts of Europe, including the UK (Bover & Velilla, 1999). This migration pattern continued into later decades, where Block (2008) asserts that over 30,000 people arrived between the 1950s and 1970s. The demographic characteristics of the Spaniard migrants to the UK during this period are different from those of more recent decades (e.g., unskilled vs. skilled), but it is safe to say that they marked the beginning of a modest Spanish-speaking presence.

There have been several recent waves of Latin American migration to the UK, which McIlwaine, Cock, and Linneker (2011) break down chronologically:
• In the 1960s and 1970s, exiles came from Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and Bolivia;
• In the 1970s, Colombians and other Latin Americans attained work permits to take entry
  level jobs;
• In the 1980s, family class and student visa migrants arrived;
• In the 1990s, Colombian refugees fled due to civil instability; and
• Since the 2000s, Latin American students and professionals as well as others, have emigrated
  via “secondary migration” through the rest of Europe, particularly Spain.

It is clear from various related bodies of literature and demographic sources that there is a great
deal of confusion—and certainly no consensus—around figures for Spanish-speaking populations
or Hispanics and Latin Americans in the UK, much of which is a result of the unclear
categories used in the census (see Block, 2008 for an analysis). As a result, estimates of the size
of the Spanish-speaking population today vary significantly (Kelsall, 2012). The official numbers
based on the Office of National Statistics (ONS) (2013) puts this number at 120,222 Spanish-
speakers, although this is believed to be seriously under-reported (e.g., James, 2005; McIlwaine
et al., 2011). Unofficial estimates are much higher. For instance, Block (2008) claims that in the
London area alone, the total of Spanish-speaking Latin Americans is approximately 300,000.

Some estimates for the UK, with the majority of speakers living in the London area, go as
high as between 700,000 and one million (Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2007). Given
the comprehensive and multiple source nature of Block’s (2008) calculations, his estimate of
300,000 for the London area is a realistic assessment.

Spanish-speaking communities in the UK

Spanish-speakers of Latin American origin constitute a fairly recent but rapidly emerging com-
munity in the UK (Block, 2008). Despite the significant lack of clarity about their actual num-
ers, it is reported that Spanish ranks tenth among languages other than English spoken in
England and Wales (Office of National Statistics, 2013): this may also be the case for the entire
UK. Of note is the fact that most of the few studies available in the UK decry the lack of
attention received by Spanish-speaking people in the UK. In particular, very little is known
about Spanish heritage language (SHL) in this context (Block, 2006, 2008; Guijarro-Fuentes
& Marinis, 2011; Potowski & Rothman, 2011; Tyrrell, Guijarro-Fuentes, & Blandon, 2014),
leading some to contend that Latin Americans in particular are unnoticed in both research and
society. This invisibility, some argue (e.g., Block, 2008; McIlwaine et al., 2011), is due to a
variety of factors including in many cases the lack of stable legal status, geographical distribu-
tion, diversity of social and cultural background, and their multiracialism (Block, 2008). In this
section, I first address work focusing on broader themes of the Spanish-speaking population,
primarily its social status and lack of an established community, which may in some ways explain
the limited attention that this group has received from researchers.

The social status of Spanish-speakers in the UK

As a growing ethnolinguistic group, Spanish-speakers are an under-researched minority, and, as
a result, information of any kind is hard to come by (Block, 2006). Furthermore, Block (2008)
explains that within the little amount of research that has been conducted with Spanish-speakers
in the UK, Latin Americans have taken a “back seat” to Spaniards; he portrays his work as an
of a qualitative study involving life story interviews with a group of eight Latin Americans of
various national origins. In his 2006 book, which tells the stories of individuals belonging to several minority populations (e.g., Japanese graduate students, French teachers), Block dedicates a chapter to Spanish-speaking Latinos (SSLs; his term). His work (2006) focuses on three particular discourses of *latinidad* (Latin-ness) that he found to be present in the stories of three of his participants. He defines his use of discourses as the “differentiated and perhaps even competing ways of describing, making sense of, analysing and evaluating the institutions and processes associated with being an SSL in London” (p. 137). These are the discourses of the *marginado*, the *asimilado*, and the educated expatriate.

The *marginado* exemplified the people who are the marginalized class of individuals living and working on the fringes of society. In the UK, these people live in precarious conditions because of their lower level of English proficiency, which often forces them into an underground economy of invisible SSLs. The *asimilados* illustrated the “classic assimilated immigrants” (p. 143) who avoid contact with other SSLs and claim to feel more comfortable interacting in English-speaking circles. These SSLs often have a university education and command of the English language at the time of immigration. The educated expatriate, in Block’s terms, described those SSLs who are somewhere between *marginado* and *asimilado*. They are able to function well in English in most—but not all domains. They feel more comfortable socializing in Spanish with other educated expatriates than with their fellow SSLs or English co-workers.

In a recent study, Márquez Reiter and Martín Rojo (2015) compared the social status of Latin Americans in London and Madrid by drawing on Bourdieu’s (1986) notion of capital. With a focus on how language and language varieties influence social mobility, they conducted interviews and nonparticipant observations with 17 SSL migrants in London. Their findings echoed many of the issues uncovered by Block’s work, including how the speakers of certain languages, particularly those not proficient in the dominant societal language, tend to populate a particular segment of the job market and the local economy. Not unlike Block’s study, they found that these migrants could only access menial, low-paid jobs and easily became victims of professional discrimination and marginalization.

The studies discussed here have mainly examined the Latin American experience in the UK in terms of their social status and to some extent have related this to issues of language and language varieties. A recent study by Kelsall (2015) investigated similar topics, such as *latinidad* and community, but also addressed topics closer to the focus of this chapter. Through ethnographic work in a Latin American heritage language school in London, she studied how adult members conceptualized language proficiency and choice, and how they related these elements to issues of identity in their families. Kelsall found resistance on the part of the children to use Spanish. Despite the school personnel’s advice and the parents’ efforts, an asymmetrical communication style was common between parents and children where the parents spoke to the children in Spanish and the children responded in English. Additionally, the mixing of languages was a common practice in the children and some of the parents, a practice initially condemned by the school personnel but later recognized as common and even natural. Finally, Kelsall concluded that Spanish was seen by the participants, and possibly by members of the wider SSL community, as an essential requirement for *latinidad* belonging, and the future of the ethnolinguistic vitality of this community.

### Critical issues, topics, and contributions of UK-based research

Even though the research on SHL issues in this context is significantly limited, there is a nascent body of work examining this topic from several methodological and disciplinary perspectives. These include Tyrrell et al.’s (2014) interview-based investigation of intergenerational language
attitudes and practices in and out of the home, and the roles of identity and belonging in these practices. Another area of work includes experimental research on the acquisition, knowledge, use, and attrition of particular linguistic features among children and adults (Cazzoli-Goeta & Young-Scholten, 2011; Guijarro-Fuentes & Marinis, 2011).

Sociocultural and familial studies on Spanish HL speakers

Tyrrell et al. (2014) conducted a small interview study in the southwest of England—and partially in London—with 6 children and 11 parents with links to Spain, Mexico, Costa Rica, Colombia, and Chile. They set out to investigate the HL attitudes and practices of children and parents at home and beyond, as well as the various ways these practices were rooted in the participants’ senses of identity and belonging. One of the unique characteristics of this investigation, the authors claimed, was that unlike other studies, they included interviews with children. They added that previous research is missing a key component when it excludes children from participating. This is not the case in the Canadian context, however, where several studies have included interviews and observations of children’s interactions (e.g., Guardado, 2008a, 2013a; Pérez-Leroux, Cuza, & Thomas, 2011). Tyrrell et al. (2014) found that for the families, Spanish was part of “making home” in Britain. The families expressed a need to turn the home into a Spanish-speaking setting, which was part of their need for feeling a sense of belonging in new and unfamiliar surroundings where they were seen as strangers. On the other hand, the participating children saw themselves in a very different light. They did not view the home as a Spanish-speaking space, or an exclusive Spanish-speaking one, but rather they subscribed to particular language practices that included translanguaging. This term is often used instead of code-switching in order to capture the creative ways in which multilingual speakers often blur the boundaries between languages and dialects in their communicative practices (e.g., Duff, 2015; García & Li, 2014). Thus, these practices of translanguaging indexed and helped constitute the emerging hybrid identities of Tyrrell et al.’s participants.

Additionally, within and outside the home, children engaged in corrective feedback practices with their parents whenever linguistic or grammatical errors in their English or other languages occurred (e.g., German). Thus, this practice had the effect of reversing, albeit at certain times, the power roles in the family and assigned the children to a status as “experts.” An interesting finding in their study called attention to the emotional aspect of SHL. Parents declared that for them, the use of Spanish at home was an essential practice because if they spoke English, they did not feel like they were their real self; they felt like a different person (see Guardado, 2008a for similar findings in Canada). In sum, Tyrrell et al.’s research emphasized the fact that HL practices in the home often influence, and are influenced by, situations and experiences beyond the home space.

Linguistic investigations on language attrition in Spanish-speaking children and adults

Addressing SHL from a whole different angle, Cazzoli-Goeta and Young-Scholten (2011) as well as Guijarro-Fuentes and Marinis (2011) have conducted experimental studies from within the domains of morphosyntax and morphology, respectively. Given that parents and other adults are important—and often the only—sources of HL input for children, understanding HL attrition processes in adults is essential. Spanish is a null-subject language with optional overt subject under certain conditions (e.g., discourse reference change, emphasis). For instance, the subject yo is optional in the sentence (Yo) voy a la playa (I go to the beach). Previous studies
Spanish in Canada and the UK

with SHL speakers have shown overuse of explicit subjects compared to monolinguals (e.g., Montrul, 2004; Silva-Corvalán, 1994). Through a small-scale cross-sectional study, Cazzoli-Goeta and Young-Scholten (2011) investigated Spanish attrition in adults who had emigrated from various Hispanic countries. The researchers looked at the informants’ knowledge and use of a particular linguistic feature of Spanish, namely sentence-initial non-nominative (SINNs) structures. These are structures that contain a dative (relating to an object rather than a subject) or locative (indicating location) verb, such as the dative verb *faltar* “to lack” in the sentence *a la mesa le falta una pata* (the table is missing a leg), as outlined by Cazzoli-Goeta and Young-Scholten (2011, p. 203).

The participants in Cazzoli-Goeta and Young-Scholten’s study were 24 Spanish-speaking immigrants living in the UK who were between 25 and 65 years of age. They had emigrated from Spain, Colombia, Venezuela, and Peru between the ages of 18 and 25 and had resided in the UK for a minimum of five years (range 5 to 25 years). The control group consisted of 10 monolingual speakers of Spanish living in Argentina between 15 and 70 years old and who had very little contact with English. The researchers hypothesized that level of contact with English and length of residence in the UK would be correlated with their knowledge and use of the linguistic constructions under investigation. The participants’ intensity of interaction with English versus Spanish-speakers was measured through a linguistic background questionnaire. The participants were classified into two groups according to their level of contact with these languages. Participants who worked as cleaners, babysitters, and spoke English at work fell into the “higher English contact group.” All the participants in this group had monolingual English spouses. Those who used Spanish daily, had jobs as university lecturers or teachers of Spanish were categorized as “lower English contact” participants.

Their results showed attrition of SINN constructions among the adult participants. There was a clear inclination for nominative versus non-nominative subjects (e.g., *yo gusto* instead of *me gusta* “I like”). Additionally, the research findings confirmed that for this group of participants, the longer they had lived in the UK, or the higher their contact with English in daily life, the greater their acceptance for and production of ungrammatical sentences of this nature. Thus, it is concluded that the research subjects were undergoing Spanish attrition. The data also showed that socioeconomic status was correlated with attrition. Participants at lower socioeconomic levels experienced the most attrition, which the researchers attributed to their lack of reading in Spanish.

In light of these findings, Cazzoli-Goeta and Young-Scholten made several arguments related to SHL in the UK compared to the US and Canada. For instance, they speculate that the many individual and social factors that are commonly believed to influence HL development do not apply to the UK context, presumably due to the unique characteristics of the Spanish-speaking population there. The key characteristic highlighted by the authors is the lack of an established community such as the ones in existence in major US cities. For example, in cities like Los Angeles, unique varieties of Spanish have been developed and transmitted to the new generations through socialization. However, the authors believe that such varieties will not emerge at the community level in the UK. Even though Spanish attrition seems to be occurring in the first generation, they posit that these divergent varieties may not be transmitted since the second generation is not expected to use the HL beyond childhood.

In a similar experimental tradition, but focusing on children, Guijarro-Fuentes and Marinis (2011) investigated the variables affecting the use of Spanish among bilingual children and attempted to identify possible predictors of their performance (e.g., background, linguistic environment, language choices). Their core participants were 44 bilingual children of school age living in the UK, and, for comparative purposes, a group of 10 similarly aged monolingual children.
living in Spain. The study investigated whether Spanish-English bilingual children in the UK were comparable to their monolingual peers in Spain regarding the use of the personal preposition *a* in Spanish (e.g., *vi a Daniel*, “I saw Daniel”), and what sociolinguistic factors predicted bilingual children’s performance. Guijarro-Fuentes and Marinis addressed the above questions by investigating the children’s knowledge and use of the personal preposition *a* in Spanish. The linguistic data were collected through the vocabulary and cloze sections of the *Diploma Español de Lengua Extranjera* (DELE) (a standardized Spanish proficiency test) and two linguistic tasks consisting of a picture description and an aural preference task. Data related to language contact at home, at social events, and at schools, as well as demographic and external factors were generated through a questionnaire.

The results of Guijarro-Fuentes and Marinis (2011) revealed that, in general, the performance of monolingual children was more accurate than that of the bilingual group, but surprisingly, both groups displayed similar patterns of language use across all experimental conditions. Additionally, even though the researchers hypothesized that the performance of the bilingual children would be correlated with factors such as the language environment and their choices of language, the data showed that linguistic performance was not influenced by the external variables used. More interestingly, the heritage bilinguals who had minimal exposure to Spanish at home performed the same as those in whose homes Spanish was the main language. Therefore, at least in relation to the acquisition of the personal preposition *a* with this cohort of SHL speakers, parental communication in English did not affect their performance.

All of the studies reviewed in this section have stated that the investigation of Spanish-English bilingualism has received very little attention in the UK. Tyrrell et al. (2014), for instance, pointed out that the relationship between SHL and identity across contexts in the UK has not received much consideration. This is also true for many other SHL research topics, such as those of a linguistic, social, familial, and ideological nature. The extant studies have begun to inform the Spanish as a heritage language area in the UK, particularly those conducted by Cazzoli-Goeta and Young-Scholten (2011), Guijarro-Fuentes and Marinis (2011), Kelsall (2015), Márquez Reiter and Martín Rojo (2015), and Tyrrell et al. (2014). These studies constitute part of a small, yet valuable, collection that will form the foundation for a body of knowledge on SHL in the UK as the numbers of this community increase over the upcoming decades.

**Hispanic immigration to Canada**

Canada is home to a rapidly growing population of Spanish-speakers who trace their roots to all Latin American countries, as well as to Spain. Their presence in this country is not a new phenomenon. According to Hoffman (2004), small numbers of Spaniards arrived in Canada after the end of the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939). In the 1960s and 1970s, the period that saw many Spanish nationals emigrate to other European nations and to the “New World,” many settled in Canada (Montero, 2004). The first major influx of Spanish-speakers, however, did not occur until the early 1970s, in the wake of the September 11, 1973 coup in Chile. A second major wave of Spanish-speaking immigrants began arriving in 1983 with the intensification of the political instability in Central America, most notably in El Salvador. This second wave was facilitated by the federal government’s introduction of a special refugee program for Salvadoreans (Griffin, 1993).

Canada’s Spanish-speaking population has grown steadily since the late 1990s, making Spanish the country’s fifth-largest non-official mother tongue (Statistics Canada, 2011), with the highest concentrations in Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver. Today, the Spanish-speaking population in Canada is estimated to be around 410,670, comprising 1.24% of the total Canadian
population, an increase from 0.83% in 2006. This growth is expected to continue, especially considering that between 2006 and 2011, 12.4% of all newcomers to Canada originated from Central America, South America, and the Caribbean (Statistics Canada, 2011).

Critical issues, topics, and contributions of Canada-based research

This section contains a review of a selection of studies with a focus on SHL. Although not as extensively researched as in the US, there is a relatively new but rapidly growing body of work on this topic in the Canadian context. The population growth described has resulted in a significant increase in research focusing on Spanish-speaking Canadians, initially addressing issues faced by refugees, mainly Salvadoran (e.g., Ajdukovic & Ajdukovic, 1993; Durst & Lange, 2002; Young & Evans, 1997), and later also investigating the educational experiences of immigrant Hispanic families more generally (Drever, 1996; Pacini-Ketchabaw, Bernhard, & Freire, 2001). For instance, Drever (1996) underscored the fact that the Hispanic population in Metro Toronto public schools confronted various academic challenges, including higher failure rates. Additionally, Pacini-Ketchabaw et al. (2001) examined a variety of issues related to Spanish-speaking families’ lived experiences while interacting with the school system in the greater Toronto area.

There is a growing awareness in Canadian scholarship in linguistics, applied linguistics, education, and related fields about the need to better understand topics around the development of HLs. As a result, there is interest in examining Spanish as a heritage language with a variety of foci, from different methodological perspectives and in different settings. Work in this area has been conducted in Ontario and Quebec (Barski, 2013; Cuza & Frank, 2015; Hoffman, 2004; Markle LaMontagne, 2016; Montero, 2004; Pacini-Ketchabaw et al., 2001; Pérez-Leroux et al., 2011), Manitoba (Loureiro-Rodríguez, 2013), Alberta (Becker, 2013, 2014; Campanaro, 2013; Guardado, 2013b; Guardado & Becker, 2013), and in British Columbia (Abdi, 2011; Guardado, 2002, 2006, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013a, 2014; Guardado & Becker, 2014). The above work, conducted in educational, home, and community settings, has ranged from experimental linguistic investigations to research using interpretivist paradigms.

Linguistic and sociolinguistic perspectives in Canada

There is an emerging body of research with a focus on linguistic aspects of the acquisition, use, or attrition of Spanish in Canada. Work in this area, sometimes conducted from a generative grammar perspective (Chomsky, 1981), includes studies focusing on different linguistic subdomains, such as phonology (Hoffman, 2004), morphosyntax (Barski, 2013), and discourse (e.g., code-switching) (Pérez-Leroux et al., 2011).

Hoffman (2004) conducted a quantitative sociolinguistic variationist study of the Spanish spoken by Salvadoran youth in the Toronto area. Hoffman (2004) sought to investigate questions related to the nature of phonological variation, specifically, final -s and final -n, in the speech of Salvadoran youth living in Toronto. She also examined the linguistic and social constraints on variation and whether such variation carried any socio-symbolic meaning. Among other findings, she was able to verify that the aspiration and deletion of final -s is associated with Salvadoran Spanish, particularly with speakers from rural and uneducated backgrounds. Thus, she suggests that this and other populations of Hispanic youth use language and phonological variables as a form of identity.

Taking a generativist approach, Barski (2013) conducted an experimental study on grammatical acquisition in Spanish and Polish heritage speakers to investigate the level of maintenance
of a particular linguistic feature found in null-subject languages—such as Spanish, Polish,
Italian, and Turkish—the Overt Pronoun Constraint (OPC), which is a property of Universal
Grammar (Chomsky, 1965). The study included two experimental tasks: a) a sentence selec-
tion task and b) a picture-matching task. Both of these were designed to test heritage speakers’
implicit knowledge and interpretation of null and overt pronouns in subordinate clauses and in
very restricted conditions (i.e., when a quantified or a WH-word antecedent is present). Two
experimental and two control groups (of 20 speakers each) took part in the study. The group-
ings were Spanish heritage (living in Ontario), Spanish monolingual (Spain), Polish heritage
(Ontario), and Polish monolingual (Poland). Given that OPC is not a facet of English—the
dominant language of the heritage participants—Barski (2013) set out to determine to what
extent exposure to English and reduced HL input impacted the participants’ comprehension
of this linguistic feature. The results indicated that although advanced Spanish heritage speakers
were able to differentiate between null and overt pronouns in one of the two tasks—namely the
picture-matching task—lower proficiency speakers were not successful. Furthermore, neither
group of Spanish heritage participants was consistently able to recognize the differences between
overt and null pronouns under the conditions investigated. Barski (2013) interpreted this as evi-
dence that English had impacted their ability to distinguish between the usage of the overt and
null pronoun. She suggested that the acquisition of the subtle features of the HL is dependent
upon the linguistic richness to which heritage speakers are exposed in their developmental years.

Also in Ontario, Pérez-Leroux et al. (2011) investigated parental and sociocultural factors
accounting for Spanish proficiency in SHL children. Data were collected through a series of
instruments that included a questionnaire, interviews with children, speech samples in Spanish
produced by the children, and elicited imitation tasks. These were designed to ascertain the
parents’ attitudes and home language practices, as well as the children’s actual and perceived
Spanish proficiency. The participants were 23 children, both simultaneous and sequential bilin-
guals, and parents from 17 families living in the Toronto area. Simultaneous bilinguals are those
who acquire “two languages consequently during the period of primary linguistic development
(birth to 3.0 [years])” (Pérez-Leroux et al., 2011, p. 150). Sequential bilinguals, in contrast, are
individuals who initiate the learning of a second language after age 3.0 years, and after having
learned the first considerably.

Pérez-Leroux et al.’s (2011) results show that although there was only moderate correlation
between parental attitudes and home language practices, familial attitudes about Spanish were
strongly associated to HL proficiency. The authors inferred that the attitudes and choices parents
make in relation to Spanish seem to generate the conditions that help foster HL development.
However, they clarified that they found no strong evidence that the attitudes of parents con-
stituted a determining factor, as these attitudes did not correspond to the children’s reported
preferences. Other findings of the study were related to the attitudes of both types of parents
(simultaneous and sequential bilinguals), metapragmatic strategies, and issues of code-switching.
The researchers identified only minor differences in terms of language attitudes or practices
between the parents of simultaneous and sequential bilinguals. In general, both types of parents
had an attitude of avoidance toward code-switching, although this was an area of difference.
The parents of sequential bilinguals reacted more strongly to code-switching compared to the
parents of simultaneous bilinguals, although no relationship between attitudes to code-switching
and HL proficiency was found. Relatedly, when children used English during a conversation
in Spanish, parents corrected them about 70% of the time. They would use expressions such as
habla español (“speak Spanish”) or contesta en el idioma en que se te habla (“reply in the language
in which you are addressed”). The researchers hypothesized that even though HL proficiency
and use was influenced by a variety of factors, both internal and external to the home, including
community conditions and parental attitudes, they concluded that the most influential factor was the home language practices.

**HL research in Canadian educational contexts**

Some research on SHL has also taken place in educational contexts and has examined: a) the features and advantages of mixing L2 Spanish learners and Spanish heritage speakers in the same class at the university level (Campanaro, 2013); b) using meaningful literacy activities with Spanish heritage speakers who are also mixed with L2 Spanish learners in a university level writing class (Loureiro-Rodríguez, 2013); and, c) the challenges posed by mixed classes at the high school level (Abdi, 2011). For instance, implementing a mixed-method approach that included questionnaires and interviews, Campanaro (2013) examined the perceptions of students and instructors regarding classes that mixed Spanish heritage speakers and L2 learners of Spanish. The study was conducted at a major university in Edmonton, Alberta, and included 55 student participants and 4 instructors of Spanish. Campanaro (2013) found that her student participants expressed positive attitudes regarding the mixed nature of their classes. There was mutual respect between the Spanish heritage speakers and L2 learners, who saw each other’s presence in the classroom as offering opportunities for collaboration and for learning from their strengths. Campanaro (2013) concluded that the successful realization of these advantages in fostering learning depends in large part on how instructors design and conduct their class activities.

Another university-based investigation, but following a case study approach, was that of Loureiro-Rodríguez (2013). She used Hanauer’s (2011) concept of meaningful literacy to document the language histories of three Spanish heritage speakers in an advanced writing course that she taught. The setting was a small Spanish-language program at a research university in Winnipeg, Manitoba. As with Campanaro’s (2013) study, both heritage and L2 learners were mixed in the same writing class for advanced speakers of Spanish. The data consisted of compositions and online discussions, which followed prompts on “writing topics [that] were socially and culturally contextualized” (Loureiro-Rodríguez, 2013, p. 47), which ensured that the writing was meaningful to students, encouraged them to reflect on their experiences, and motivated them to write. Loureiro-Rodríguez states that by designing her lessons and assessment activities around the personal experiences of the students themselves, she made them the center of the course. She argues that taking this approach had multifaceted benefits, including those unrelated to the academic goals of the class. For instance, she claims that students felt encouraged to increase their use of Spanish in their daily lives, also helping them gain a greater sense of belonging to the Spanish-speaking community. She concluded that through the implementation of meaningful writing activities following Hanauer’s idea of meaningful literacy, students were able to find common ground among each other and to bond as a group.

Abdi (2011) conducted an ethnographic case study in three Spanish L2 high school classes in a school in Vancouver, British Columbia, over a period of six months. She selected one of the classes (Spanish 11) for extended observation, interviews, and in-depth analysis with 21 students (out of 22 in the class) and the teacher as participants. Her analysis revolved around the teacher and four focal students who were the only Spanish heritage speakers in the class. The main objective of the study was to examine the challenges presented by mixed classes of SHL and Spanish as a foreign language students and to find ways of best addressing such complexity. Overall, Abdi found that the teacher integrated the four SHL students into her class and designed a moderately positive learning environment despite the many challenges present. For instance, friendships among students influenced the grouping configurations that
were possible for class activities, often affecting the quality of learning. Membership in some friendship groupings sometimes positioned certain students according to the group’s perceived features (e.g., disruptive).

One particular finding referred to displayed speaking ability as an index of language proficiency and heritage, which she found to impact the classroom dynamics. For instance, one of the Spanish heritage speakers who had strong Spanish literacy skills was reluctant to speak Spanish in class and, for this reason, was positioned by others as non-Hispanic. Abdi thus interpreted this as a sign that willingness to speak the HL can also sometimes be equated with the right to ethnic inheritance. One implication of this was that those who were willing to communicate in Spanish in class were positioned “as language experts, co-teachers and models” (Abdi, 2011, p. 185). Since literacy skills and grammar knowledge were not valued in the same way within this classroom, SHL students who possessed these were not recognized. Their ability to assist others during group work was seen as providing an unfair advantage to their group members, and their ability to complete their own work in a timely manner posed a challenge to the teacher who had to assign other tasks. Finally, Abdi problematized the labels typically used to refer to SHL students, arguing that none of the terms commonly adopted by teachers and researchers (e.g., “Hispanic,” “Spanish,” “Latin”) seemed to adequately capture the inherent complexity of SHL learners. Overall, Abdi’s study provides insights into the complex identities of multilingual youth and the multiple—and often conflicting—language ideologies contributing to their formation in and possibly out of school.

Research in Canadian community settings

Research on SHL in Canada has mostly addressed the role of family in home and community settings. In Ontario, Pacini-Ketchabaw et al. (2001) completed an exploratory study as part of a larger project with 45 families from several different Spanish-speaking countries. Using participant observation and action research, they examined the home language practices and experiences of Spanish-speaking parents, with a focus on their interactions with school staff and reactions to prevalent assimilative forces. The researchers reported that the participating families saw Spanish maintenance as a way to foster family unity, Latino identity, and for future professional advancement. The families reportedly felt that the Spanish language was devalued in society and in the school, whose personnel instructed parents to only use English with their children. They also explained that the attitude of the school officials was to blame the use of Spanish at home whenever they noticed a deficiency in the performance of the children.

Relatedly, my work has looked at HL socialization, ideologies, and practices both in homes and grassroots groups (e.g., a Spanish-language Scout troop) in Vancouver, British Columbia (e.g., Guardado, 2002, 2008a), and in Edmonton, Alberta, (2013b). In an exploratory interview study (Guardado, 2002, 2006) with four Hispanic families (two with bilingual children and two with children who were reportedly predominantly monolingual or had significant difficulties with Spanish), I focused on parental perspectives to better understand the causes of Spanish language loss among Spanish heritage children, some of the factors facilitating HL development, and parental attitudes about their children’s Spanish language abilities or difficulties. This study suggested that heritage cultural identity was crucial to HL development in the context of a dominant second language. The nature and tone of discourse used to persuade children to speak the HL (i.e., using positive and encouraging vs. authoritarian discourse) seemed to have a facilitating or a detrimental effect, respectively. Therefore, I concluded that parents committed to HL development might attain success from promoting a positive attitude toward the HL in their children and addressing their affective needs accordingly.
Building on the above study, I conducted a multisite, 18-month ethnography in homes and in self-formed groups within the Vancouver Spanish-speaking community (Guardado, 2008a), and based on the main data set, carried out further in-depth analyses of some of the key findings (Guardado, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013a, 2014; Guardado & Becker, 2013, 2014). Some of these expansions are summarized below. The broader study investigated the language socialization of families and their children, drawing particular attention to the language practices and ideologies in their daily lives in home and community. The participants were 34 families of 10 national origins, their 76 children, and 3 grassroots groups. Given that an early finding was that numerous families had organized themselves into support groups to provide their children with a meaningful context for SHL and cultural practice, I selected three focal families and their children for extensive in-depth study. Their homes and the groups in which they participated became ethnographic sites over a period of 18 months. During this time, I conducted sustained participant observation, multiple interviews, and various other forms of data collection. I found that in these groups, the families keenly exerted their agency by utilizing these spaces as sites of language learning, whereby they resisted assimilation while attempting to socialize their children into Hispanic cultural values and Spanish language ideologies. This work closely reflects Kelsall’s (2015) research in the UK, where she investigated a much larger heritage language school than the ones described in this section. As with the groups in my ethnography, Kelsall’s school had an explicit mission to transmit the language and culture to the children and conducted many related cultural activities as the vehicles for conveying the language and culture, such as drama, arts, and music.

Using conversation-analytic tools to examine naturalistic parent-child interactions, I uncovered several implicit and explicit directives, including commands, requests, clarification requests, and a form of recasts I termed cross-code recasts (Guardado, 2013a). This analysis illustrated the parental weariness, child insistence, and concomitant communication tensions reported through interviews in Kelsall’s (2015) UK study. In this line of inquiry, I found that although children sometimes resisted their parents’ socialization efforts, they frequently accommodated to the language and culture ideologies and practices to which they were exposed in their homes and in the community voluntary groups in which they participated. The adults—and sometimes also the children—used admonitions in the home and in the community groups to force the children to avoid the use of English in favor of Spanish. Despite implicit and—often severe—explicit efforts to socialize the children into language ideologies that privileged Spanish, at times their actual language practices seemed to reproduce the dominance of English (Guardado, 2009). This analysis indicated that certain processes of metapragmatic regimentation found in family communication produced undesired interactional effects as a result of the rhetorical force contained in their deployment. Specifically, certain heritage language-regulating practices such as explicit and implicit commands may unwittingly silence children.

Prompted by this research line, which in some ways reflected my early (2002, 2006) study summarized previously, I decided to delve deeper into the issue. In order to identify the frequency, distribution, relationships, and differences among metapragmatic strategies (i.e., commands, requests, clarification requests, and cross-code recasts), I completed a survey study of 110 Hispanic parents in Edmonton, Alberta, who had a child or children (between the ages of 2 and 18), had lived in Canada for a maximum of 10 years, and who were permanent residents or Canadian citizens (Guardado, 2013b). Using descriptive statistics, two questions were analyzed: a) what is the distribution of the linguistic tools parents use to foster HL development and b) what characteristics account for variation in strategy use? The findings show that the great majority of respondents (92%) used metapragmatic regimentation of HL use, higher than the 70% that corrected their children’s code-switching in Pérez-Leroux et al.’s (2011)
The most common strategy was explicit commands (57%) with cross-code recasts (35%) a distant second, although striking differences emerged when certain variables were further examined. In families with more than one child, commands were used overwhelmingly more frequently (76.30% vs. 40.50% of the one-child families). It is possible that multiple-child families are more experienced parents who have identified authoritative discourse as more effective. They may have more opportunities to observe their children interacting with each other in English, especially when older siblings bring this language home from school; and they may be busier and hence lack the energy and patience to use softer strategies, which take more time and effort.

Another analytical line I pursued based on the 2008a data set, through both discourse and thematic analysis, was the diversity of meanings found in the families’ discursive constructions of HL development. For instance, the interviews with parents contained discourses that embodied implicit and explicit ideologies about the HL. Some of these metalinguistic constructions included discourses that I categorized as utilitarian, affective, aesthetic, oppositional, and cosmopolitan (Guardado, 2014). For instance, the parents held high expectations for their children’s formation of adaptable identities as a result of their multilingualism. They constructed the HL as a passport to a cosmopolitan worldview, suggesting that developing and maintaining it might be an important catalyst for socializing younger generations into a broader outlook while negotiating new citizenship (Guardado, 2010, 2012).

Finally, familism was a pervasive theme related to HL development. Familism refers to core values that emphasize loyalty to the nuclear and extended family as a unit and reliance on its members for support (Sabogal et al., 1987; Steidel & Contreras, 2003). Most of the 34 families seemed to define themselves in relation to membership in large families. They longed for the extended family support they had been accustomed to prior to migration, viewed their families as resources for HL exposure and sources of support for language and cultural maintenance, and as one of the main motivations for striving to achieve these goals. Not having such a benefit was stressful and a source of sadness for some of the parents and their children, many of whom actively sought out proxy family relationships, relationships which I termed surrogate extended families (Guardado, 2011; Guardado & Becker, 2013).

Following a similar line as the work reviewed above, research has focused on how HL practices have been impacted by specific community contexts, such as a Castilian community (Montero, 2004) in Ontario and a Chilean exile community in Edmonton, Alberta (Becker, 2013). Montero’s (2004) was an oral history study consisting of in-depth, semi-structured, retrospective interviews with community members, SHL schoolteachers, and former students in the Waterloo region of Ontario. This study was unique in several ways, including the fact that it focused primarily on the pioneering language maintenance efforts undertaken by a group of Castilian women who emigrated from Spain in the 1960s and 1970s. The period of time that Montero (2004) investigated was between 1977 and 1987 and revolved around the Castilian women who had been involved in the creation and operation of an HL school—linked to a local school and funded by the Canadian and Spanish governments—and the students that studied there from grades one to eight, who were Montero’s own peers (Montero studied there as a child). Thirteen people participated in the study, which included three members of the school committee (50–70 years old at the time of the study), four teachers (50–70 years old), and six students (30–34 years old). The initial motivation for forming the school was reportedly to assist the children of the community “to maintain and develop the Castilian Spanish language and culture and to encourage intergenerational language transmission” (Montero, 2004, p. 185) mainly “for moral and economic reasons” (p. 117).
Montero investigated the connections between learning, teaching, and policy in relation to the formation of the organization (e.g., the Spanish Women’s Association) that became the catalyst for the school and the actual creation and operation of the school. This research was undertaken from various theoretical perspectives, including multiliteracies, global feminism, and the ecology of language, which enabled Montero to painstakingly document the women’s stories. Some of the highlights of the results include the prospects for fostering the HL in the third generation. Montero explains that the graduates of the school (the second generation) did not consider themselves proficient enough in the language to transmit it to their own children. Thus, they saw themselves as having a more supportive, rather than a central role in this endeavor and expected others, such as school and grandparents, to assume the main task of HL socialization. Additionally, whereas the first generation saw the maintenance of the HL as valuable for moral and identity reasons, the second generation saw it as advantageous for economic reasons alone. Overall, Montero’s (2004) was an engaging study with important contributions to the SHL area in Canada and to the study of grassroots initiatives in particular. In conducting the study, Montero was able to witness how:

[a] story of strength and perseverance emerged, a story of the way a group of immigrant women took hold of their role of motherhood and organized themselves to teach the Spanish language to the children of the Spanish heritage language community.

Research conducted in Edmonton, Alberta (Guardado & Becker, 2013), examined the experiences of two Chilean families in relation to the factors contributing to HL development among their children. The families lived in a housing co-operative built through the initiative of Chilean exiles in the 1970s. The participating residents saw this housing complex as a mini-version of Chile and derived from it a sense of place and belonging in diaspora. According to the participants, what they drew from the group went much further and had special meaning for residents of all generations. It provided adults with continuous opportunities for the open use of their language and for socializing the children into their cultural orientations. The housing co-operative helped the children feel part of a close-knit community that embraced them and cared for them as their own when their parents were unavailable due to work or other commitments. Given these community cultural practices, it is not surprising that the ties the children developed with their neighbors were stronger than the ones they had with their kin in Chile, since these community members became their “aunts and uncles.” During their life in the housing co-operative, the families reported being able to naturally and collectively engage in a sort of language socialization that for immigrant minorities was only possible within the home domain.

Becker (2013) conducted a follow up qualitative study with four descendants of Chilean exiles in Edmonton, Alberta, and investigated the role of political ideologies in the HL development of a group of second-generation adults, two of whom were members of a grassroots organization, Recordar para Actuar (REPARA). These participants were classified as the Activists and the other two as the Non-Activists. The group was reportedly formed by second- and third-generation activist Chileans whose families had arrived as exiles in the 1970s. The main goal for founding the group was to document the progressive political culture and activities of the first generation, which included the study participants’ own parents and grandparents. Becker’s (2013) study focused on the ways the participants described Chilean culture, their positioning in relation to these views, and the role played by their community involvement in their HL
attitudes and practices. Becker found that the culture with which these participants identified was more like that of Chile in the early 1970s, as opposed to the modern culture they found during their visits to Chile. This locally and chronologically situated cultural affiliation seemed to be part of their motivation for founding the group. Thus, the political work in which they engaged in this group served a deeper purpose that transcended documenting the solidarity movement work of their senior relatives. The group allowed them to access the members of the Chilean refugee culture and interact with them in a Spanish variety that existed in their diasporic community but was no longer spoken in Chile.

An important issue that emerged in this study was related to Spanish varieties. Becker reported that Victor, one of the Activists, spoke enthusiastically about his liberal ideas regarding local and global issues. However, when referring to different Spanish varieties such as the contemporary Chilean working class vernacular, he spoke in ways that contradicted his otherwise progressive worldview. Justifiably, Becker found it “surprising that Victor did not seem to be fully aware that to disparage a variety of a language is to disparage its speakers” (p. 59).

**Future directions in the UK and Canada**

The need to study heritage/minority language issues is multifaceted. As the world becomes more interconnected and the mobility of people intensifies globally, language contact increases, individuals add new languages to their repertoires, and more children are born and raised in multilingual communities. Societies with domestic and immigrant linguistic minorities such as the UK and Canada need to better understand how families, communities, and governments deal with minority languages and cultures. In this evolving living environment, it is not surprising that linguistic minority parents often wonder about best multilingual childrearing practices, what to do with the languages in their lives, and how these affect their parenting styles and outcomes. Likewise, policy-makers and educators need to know how to better cater to their increasingly multilingual classrooms in a culturally and multilingually sensitive manner that is pedagogically sound. These are only some examples of the many areas to which this type of research can make valuable contributions.

It is clear from the review in this chapter that more research on SHL is needed, particularly in the UK. Thus far, the majority of studies on SHL have been conducted in North America. The UK presents a number of historical, demographic, and other contextual features that are different from the North American context, including Canada. Some of these include the demographic makeup of the population (largely Colombian and Spaniard), the distance from the homeland, particularly for Latin American Spanish-speakers, the small size of the Spanish-speaking community, and their dispersal throughout London and the rest of the UK. One area that has already received some attention in Canada is the role of grassroots groups in supporting the HL development efforts of families, but this line of scholarship has not yet been taken up in the UK.

Additionally, it has been argued that minority languages enjoy a similar status to that of English in the UK (e.g., Guijarro-Fuentes & Marinis, 2011). However, there is no evidence to support this claim, and on the contrary, a different picture seems to be emerging as outlined in a recent report produced by the British Council (2014). This report states that the UK should do more to value the 300 languages spoken there and draw on those resources for cultural enrichment, economic opportunities, and eliminating international communication barriers. These issues will no doubt be impacted in as yet unanticipated ways by the Brexit events and processes. Therefore, there is arguably a need to conduct research that addresses the language ideologies and practices present in the UK context to better understand this reality. This work
would either further confirm the claims made by scholars regarding the status of Spanish in the UK or provide evidence for a different interpretation.

Furthermore, longitudinal studies on HL development are needed both in the Canadian and UK contexts. The field would be enriched by a better understanding of trajectories of linguistic development in children, particularly as they enter the school system. It would also add important layers of understanding to the field to design longitudinal studies that can track the evolution of attitudes and ideologies held by parents and children towards HL development. Much research has been conducted in the US on a variety of linguistic subdomains, such as morphology (e.g., the incomplete acquisition/attrition of tense, aspect, and mood; Cuza, 2008, 2010; Cuza & Miller, 2015; Montrul, 2009; Silva-Corvalán, 1991) and syntax (e.g., gender agreement; Montrul, Foote, & Perpiñán 2008). However, there is not much information about these issues in the UK and Canadian contexts nor about the extent to which HL speakers are similar or different to their monolingual counterparts. The SHL area of research would benefit greatly particularly from investigations in various linguistic subdomains that take a longitudinal approach. At a metapragmatic level, more research is needed in relation to how caregivers attempt to encourage their children to use the HL. This work could build on analyses I have conducted on HL regulation (2013a, 2013b) and examine multiple-child families’ preference for authoritative discourse when managing the use of Spanish, English, and other languages in their children in order to more concretely identify the reasons behind this interactional practice and to ascertain whether other variables are also at play.

Finally, a population that has been largely ignored in these two contexts, and more generally in the HL field, is families of mixed linguistic background (see Guardado, 2017 for an extended overview). Some studies have included families whose parents have different mother tongues and have addressed some of the characteristics and challenges they face (e.g., Guardado, 2008a, included ten such families). The increasing linguistic diversity in the UK and Canada calls for more targeted research, beyond treating it as a side issue, with this growing demographic that grapples with an amplified complexity of issues. A multiple phase mixed-method research with families where the mothers speak Japanese as their mother tongue was recently completed in Montréal, Quebec (Tsushima & Guardado, 2015, in press). Research of this nature involving interlingual families with one Spanish-speaking parent and spouses of various linguistic backgrounds would help begin to understand the features of their family communication dynamics and other internal and external factors.

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