

# **Linguistic Theory and the Analysis of Minority Languages: *Native, Immigrant and Heritage Spanish***

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In this paper we aim to contribute to the emerging field of *heritage* studies by investigating whether Spanish *heritage* speakers in Canada, namely the second or subsequent generation of Spanish speakers who grew up as English-Spanish bilinguals, differ from *native* Spanish speakers (those who have always lived in a Spanish-speaking country) and from *immigrant* Spanish speakers (those who immigrated to Canada as adults) with respect to their grammatical competence and to their processing strategies. Taking as a point of departure recent proposals from linguistic theory, we provide a description of Spanish restrictive relative clauses with so-called resumptive pronouns (*Es una mujer que nunca LA vimos llorar*) in order to determine whether and how our three groups of speakers differ in terms of the grammatical intuitions and processing resources they display when confronted with this type of constructions. We discuss to what extent language attrition, influence from English (in the case of both *immigrant* and *heritage* speakers), or incomplete acquisition (in the case of *heritage* speakers) may be behind the characteristics of the *immigrant* and the *heritage* speakers' linguistic behaviour. We argue that sophisticated experimental tasks provide a better tool than global proficiency tests to compare these three groups of speakers. The ultimate aim of this study is to provide a framework for analyzing the status of the minority languages spoken by immigrant communities.

Este artículo quiere contribuir al emergente campo de los estudios de la herencia (*heritage*), investigando si los hablantes de herencia de español en Canadá (los hablantes de español de segunda o posterior generación que crecieron como bilingües de inglés-español) se diferencian de los hablantes de español nativos (aquellos que han vivido siempre en un país de habla hispana) y de los inmigrantes

hablantes de español (los que inmigraron a Canadá como adultos), respecto a su capacidad gramatical y a sus estrategias de procedimiento. Tomando como punto de partida las propuestas más recientes de la teoría lingüística, presentamos una descripción de las cláusulas relativas restrictivas con pronombres de reasuntivos en español (*Es una mujer que nunca LA vimos llorar*) con el fin de determinar las diferencias entre los tres grupos de hablantes en términos de intuiciones gramaticales y de recursos de procesamiento que utilizan al enfrentarse a este tipo de construcciones. Se discute en qué medida la erosión de la lengua, por influencia del inglés (en el caso de los hablantes inmigrantes y de herencia), o una adquisición incompleta (en el caso de los hablantes de herencia) pueden estar detrás del comportamiento lingüístico. Se discute también si las pruebas experimentales sofisticadas son mejores herramientas, para comparar los tres grupos de hablantes, que los tests de dominio global. El objetivo final de este estudio es proporcionar un marco para el análisis del estatus de las lenguas minoritarias habladas por las comunidades de inmigrantes.

**Keywords:** *Heritage speakers - Immigrant speakers - Late contact bilinguals - Early contact bilinguals - Grammatical competence - Processing abilities - Ambiguity resolution - Resumptive pronouns - "Near native speaker" - Acceptability Judgments - Language attrition - Incomplete acquisition - Interlinguistic influence - Minority language.*

## 1. Introduction

There are at least two ways of conceptualizing the relationship between language and immigration. One, which seems to be of great interest in countries such as Spain where immigration is a somehow recent phenomenon, addresses the problems encountered by the immigrant when learning the official language of the country—his or her second (or third or fourth language)—. The other which, to the best of our knowledge, is rather secondary in Spain right now but object to a substantial amount of research in the United States (not so much in Canada), addresses the problems encountered by so-called *heritage* speakers.

What is probably a clear example of a *heritage* speaker is the offspring of immigrants. In other words, the speaker who has been exposed to a non-official language (therefore a minority language) in the house and/or the community where she grows up and, at the same time, learns the official language, either simultaneously or before the age of three or four, when she enters kindergarten. In this specific case, contact with the

minority language continues through the speaker's life span but not necessarily in the regular and consistent way that characterizes contact with an official or majority language. Therefore, issues of quantity and quality of input will play an important role when it comes to language acquisition by *heritage* speakers. In relation to this, attrition versus incomplete acquisition will have to be measured up against the fact that the input that we can refer to as standard may and probably will have been modified by the immigrant community. A variable that should also be taken into consideration when carrying out experimental work is literacy, since there may be *heritage* speakers who are never schooled in the minority language. This is very important when comparing second language learners with *heritage* speakers, since the former's only contact may be institutional and therefore, surrounded by a high level of literacy. In fact, as Pires and Rothman (2009) point out, "the sociolinguistic circumstances of heritage language acquisition, access to and level of formal education in the heritage language, and input quantity and quality available to HSs are some of the external variables that can conspire to make HS language acquisition and its ensuing competence outcomes different from both monolingual and balanced bilingual childhood acquisition" (Pires and Rothman 2009:3).

The relationship between language and immigration that we want to address here is that of the first language or mother tongue of the *immigrant* speaker and the second generation or third generation speaker, the *heritage* speaker. The specific contact that we investigate is that of Spanish immigrants who have been in contact with English, their second language, for more than ten years (we will refer to this group as Late Contact—with English—group or *immigrant* group) and that Spanish *heritage* speakers, in our case the off-springs of those immigrants, the Early Contact—with English—group whose first contact with English took place at birth or before age four or five. To the best of our knowledge, this comparison of *immigrant* and *heritage* speakers has not been addressed before, which adds one more innovative aspect to our contribution. It is not necessarily the case that *heritage* speakers are only exposed to the language of the immigrant population, since they may travel to Spanish-speaking countries or have contact with family members who live in Spanish-speaking countries (our *native* group). In this respect, if the immigrant speech differs from the native speech, it can be easily inferred that a substantial amount of the Spanish input *heritage* speakers have been exposed to is different, in some respects, from the native input they would be exposed to in the Spanish-speaking countries. However, it may not be input as such but the fact that it is a minority language and therefore it will only be "used and

heard in restrictive environments” (Rothman 2007: 360) what will account for the specific characteristics of the *heritage* language.

We have analyzed the linguistic behaviour of three groups of speakers and two varieties of Spanish: Castilian and Rioplatense, the reason being that the Rioplatense variety has some very well-known differences with respect to the use of non-tonic pronouns (or clitics). However, it is other aspects of clitics such as clitic doubling that would show differences. Therefore, in this article we will not be addressing the possible differences between the two varieties of Spanish.<sup>1</sup> The *native* group, or Spanish control group (SC), is formed by twenty adult Spanish speakers, ten from Spain and ten from Argentina who live in these countries and have not lived in a non-Spanish-speaking country or community. For these speakers Spanish is clearly the dominant language. We refrain from calling the members of this control group monolinguals because they are educated speakers who have been in contact with English and sometimes with other languages in their school years.

The Late Contact group (LC) comprises twelve immigrants who were born in Argentina or Spain and who have been in Canada for at least ten years. Their systematic contact with English, the majority and official language, begun late in their lives in that they were already 18 years old or older when they immigrated to Canada and did have none or little knowledge of English before their arrival. This group’s Spanish may have suffered from attrition or their Spanish may have changed with respect to the standard variety which is spoken by the inhabitants of Spain and Argentina. However, if this change has occurred it will not be because a Canadian-Spanish variety of the language has emerged, at least not in the case of our subjects, since their situation is very different from that of the Spanish-speaking communities in the United States of America. Our subjects are professionals who maintain a good rapport with other Spanish-speaking immigrants but do not have a tight network or rely on the Spanish-speaking community for their social or professional life.

In the Early Contact (EC) group we have placed twelve participants in total. Seven of these participants were born in Canada within a Spanish-speaking family and were in contact with both Spanish and English from birth. Three were born in Spain or Argentina but came to Canada during their first year of age. Finally, two participants came to Canada when they were four years old. Therefore, all the members of this group were exposed to both Spanish and English well before the so-called critical period of language acquisition (Penfield 1953; Penfield and Roberts 1959; Lenneberg 1967; Johnson and Newport 1991, among others). These are the type of speakers that are referred to as *heritage* in terms of their contact with Spanish.

We show that the two experimental groups (the *immigrant* and the *heritage* group) significantly differ from the control group in their global competence as measured by a proficiency test. We also show that, in a self-evaluation task, the *heritage* group shows a higher degree of insecurity with respect to their knowledge of Spanish than the *immigrant* group. This higher degree on insecurity correlates with this latter group’s reduced sensibility to the grammatical gender depicted by the resumptive pronouns and to the [-definite] [+distance] factors which improve the acceptability of these type of pronouns.

With respect to influence from English, we argue that it may account for the lower acceptance of resumptives by the *immigrant* group and the *heritage* group’s lesser sensitivity to the gender feature of the relativized phrases. As for whether attrition or incomplete acquisition would account for the grammatical and the processing differences displayed by the *heritage* group, we argue that it is necessary to differentiate not only between grammatical and processing capabilities but also between the core computational aspects involving relatives and clitic pronouns, on the one hand, and the fuzzy status of native speakers intuitions with respect to constraints on the use and acceptance of resumptive pronouns, on the other.

## 2. The grammar of *heritage* speakers

It has been shown (Silva-Corvalán 1994) that *heritage* speakers who had a high overall competence in their minority language (Spanish) also had a robust knowledge of the syntax of dative and accusative clitics in this language. However, this was not the case when their overall competence was reduced. In this latter case, they displayed a tendency to avoid clitic doubling with indirect objects and had incomplete knowledge of the semantics and pragmatics of both subjects and objects. In other words, in spite of the fact that these *heritage* speakers can speak the language fluently, have a native-like pronunciation and have mastered the language cultural norm, they have problems with some aspect of the syntax and the morphology of the minority language. This implies that, as it has been shown in the case of fossilization (Selinker 1972, Licerias 1986), incomplete acquisition or attrition also seems to be local and selective (Montrul 2008).

While *heritage* speakers have different levels of proficiency in the heritage language, many possess a rather good command of its phonology, a fact that has been attributed to their being exposed to the language at a very early age. In this respect, they are very different from adult second language learners who, in spite of the fact that they may achieve native-like competence in terms of the morpho-syntax

(Birdsong 1999, Lardiere 2007), seldom achieve native-like phonological competence. In terms of morphosyntax, some researchers claim that, unlike the case with the phonology, early contact with the *heritage* language does not produce similar benefits (Oh *et al.* 2003), while others (Montrul 2006) argue that *heritage* speakers outperform second language learners of similar age and proficiency with respect to some specific morphosyntactic aspects of the minority language.

Assuming that our *immigrant* or LC group is representative of the speakers who provide the relevant input that leads our *heritage* group to build the grammar of Spanish, the first issue that we would like to address is whether our LC group global and local linguistic behaviour differs from the SC group in such a way that one could speak of the existence of a different variety of Spanish. As we indicated in the introduction, the members of our EC group have not been immersed in a sociolinguistic Spanish-speaking community such as the Puerto Rican or the Mexican communities in the large cities of the United States. Those whose parents speak the Castilian variety have been mostly in contact with other Spanish-speaking families and the same can be said about the group whose parents speak the Rioplatense variety of Spanish. Thus, by analyzing the linguistic behaviour of both the LC and EC groups we will be able to determine whether, besides systematicity and quantity of input, quality of input can also account for the specific characteristics of *heritage* Spanish.

The second issue that we would like to address is literacy in Spanish and how it could be one of the contributing factors in determining the specific characteristics of *heritage* Spanish (Rothman 2007). In this respect, we believe that we have factored out literacy by investigating our subjects' intuitions and processing strategies with respect to resumptive pronouns, since these constructions as such are neither discussed in the native Spanish nor in the foreign Spanish classroom. In other words, as we will see, it seems to be sensitivity to the realization of the principles of the computational component of Spanish that leads native speakers to behave in the way described by grammarians, linguists and psycholinguistics when accepting and interpreting sentences with resumptive pronouns.

The third issue that we would like to discuss is to what extent the characteristics of *heritage* Spanish can be attributed to attrition or to incomplete acquisition. In fact, the LC Spanish may have also undergone attrition since, the many years of contact with the L2, English, may influence their L1. For instance, it has been suggested in the literature that even if there is not clear-cut evidence of transfer from the L2 into the L1, there may be a convergence in that L2 speakers may prefer constructions that both languages share versus those that are specific to one of the two languages (Sánchez 2003). In this respect, the Spanish

grammar of our LC group may be a somehow 'reduced' version of the SC group's grammar. Since this type of convergence has also been found in *heritage* speech (Montrul 2004), it may be the case that both our LC and our EC group show evidence of this type of attrition.

Finally, we would like to address the issue of whether it is attrition or incomplete acquisition that explains the characteristics of the *heritage* grammar. While there is no doubt that the acquisition of Spanish was led to completion in the case of all the members of our LC group, in the case of our EC group, as is the case with most *heritage* speakers, contact with the minority language may vary and be inconsistent. For instance, in some cases, one of the parents may be native speaker of the majority language. In other cases, children may attend kindergarten or even day care in the majority language at a very early age, so that their use of the minority language is extremely reduced, to the point that lack of enough exposure or usage amounts to incomplete acquisition. In the case of our EC group, if early exposure to the language (i.e. before the critical period for native-like bilingual acquisition which can be set at the age of 4)<sup>2</sup> leads to complete acquisition, we do not have the actual individual history for the ten speakers who were either born in Canada or arrived during the first year of age. However, there are two speakers who did not arrive in Canada until they were 4 years of age. In this case, if usage and processing of resumptive pronouns and relative clauses as late-learned rules, these speakers might not have mastered these constructions, thus their grammar would not differ from the grammar of the other ten *heritage* speakers.<sup>3</sup> However, if they are late-learned constructions, then these two speakers could behave differently in that their Spanish could have undergone attrition as described above, in which case, their grammar would look more like the one of the LC group. While due to space restrictions we will not be dealing with individual performance in this paper, it is important to keep in mind the relevance of variability in terms of individual input and of the nature of the linguistic structures when investigating not only the characteristics of monolingual speech but specially those of bilingual speech in general and *heritage* speech in particular.

### 3. Resumptive pronouns in native and non-native grammars

Relative clauses are instances of so-called long distance dependencies (LDD) because they contain phrases that have been 'displaced' (Chomsky 1995) from their canonical position. In (1), the object of *necesitamos* has been displaced from the position after the verb, as represented by the *t* which appears in the corresponding gap.

(1) Esa es la profesora que<sub>i</sub> necesitamos t<sub>i</sub><sup>4</sup>

That is the teacher that<sub>i</sub> we need t<sub>i</sub>

In (2), the resumptive pronoun (RP) version of (1), which is grammatical in languages such as Arabic, the gap is filled with a resumptive pronoun.

(2) \*Esa es la profesora que *la* necesitamos

\*That is the teacher that we need her

Thus, the first issue that we would like to point out is that in RP (or indirect) relatives, the gap is filled, which, depending on the analysis, may constitute an important issue in terms of the representational and processing cost of these constructions versus the conventional relatives in (1).

Natural languages exhibit at least two types of RPs, ‘true’ RPs as *la* in (2), which alternate with gaps (Kayne 1981; Sells 1984; McCloskey 1990; Asudeh 2007), and ‘intrusive’ RPs as *las* in (3) which have been analyzed as instances of a ‘last resort’ or ‘repair strategy’ mechanism which is put to use when a trace is separated from its antecedent by an island boundary (Shlonsky 1992), as in (3) versus (4).

(3) No puedo encontrar las gafas<sub>i</sub> que siempre dejo donde *las*<sub>i</sub> puedo ver

?I cannot find the glasses<sub>i</sub> that I always leave where I can see *them*<sub>i</sub>

(4) \*No puedo encontrar las gafas<sub>i</sub> que siempre dejo t<sub>i</sub> donde puedo ver t<sub>i</sub>

\*I cannot find the glasses <sub>i</sub> that I always leave t<sub>i</sub> where I can see t<sub>i</sub>

RPs such as *las/them* in (3) are considered obligatory, appear when there is no movement of a wh-operator and can surface as grammatical options in any natural language. Suñer (1998) offers an account of this free alternation. She proposes that RPs are spell-outs of relative pronouns which remain *in situ*. This *in situ* option is available in some languages and registers and is assumed to be optional and costly. But given the fact that RPs are instances of no movement, and no movement is considered by many to be a less marked option, what is the learnability assumption that we should make when comparing them to the gap equivalents which are instances of the supposedly more marked movement option? Asudeh (2004, 2007) argues that a processing theory of ‘intrusive’ resumptives accounts for why gaps—not resumptives—are the preferred mechanism for this type of dependencies. This implies that in processing terms, ‘true’ RPs are also more costly than their gaps counterparts in spite of the fact that the canonical position of the displaced element is phonetically realized. Therefore, if resumptives are optional, marked and costly, they may be subject to attrition in the case of *immigrant* or *heritage* grammars or qualify for fossilization both in the case of non-native (L2) grammars and in the case of *heritage* grammars.

If we look at evidence from first language (L1) acquisition, we see that RPs are abundant mainly in experimental data from languages such as English, French or Spanish where they are not sanctioned by the adult grammar (Flynn & Lust 1981; de Villiers *et al.* 1990; Labelle 1996; Pérez-Leroux 1993, 1995). The profuse acceptance of RPs by L1 children (when compared to adults) in grammaticality judgments led McKee & McDaniel (2001) to propose that they are a result of a processing deficit due to working memory limitations related to the recovery of features which are no longer available in memory. This account goes along the lines of the ‘repair’ value of RPs but implies that it is only for children, not adults, that the gap alternative is more costly.

In the case of L2 acquisition, it is difficult to compare the available results to those obtained in the case of L1 acquisition because most of the literature on RPs produced by L2 learners has only dealt with ‘true’ RPs and most studies have addressed the issue of transfer, and specifically the degree of markedness, of the various relativized positions (Eckman 1977; Gass 1979; Licerias 1986) as per the typological hierarchy of markedness proposed by Keenan & Comrie (1977). More recent work by Eckman (2004) investigates whether the presence of resumptive pronouns in non-native and near-native grammars constitutes a reflection of the speakers’ processing needs. In terms of the role of input, Scott (2005) found that L1 English speakers learning Irish had many problems incorporating ‘true’ RPs into their grammar. The use of RPs in L2 seems to be rather pervasive when it comes to transferability from the L1, and RPs do not seem to be easily incorporated into the L2 grammar when the L1 does not allow them. The fact that only ‘repair’ RPs are possible in both English and Spanish, and that standard Spanish optionally allows ‘true’ RPs under special circumstances, may make these constructions candidates for convergence, in other words, the degree of acceptance of these constructions by our LC and EC groups may differ from that of the SC group.

#### 4. Restrictive relative clauses with resumptive pronouns in native Spanish: syntactic and processing accounts

Even though the previous discussion has already pointed to the fact that when dealing with relative clauses syntactic and processing issues are very much interconnected, there are aspects of relativization that have been approached from the representational point of view and aspects that have been clearly left to the processing field. We will first discuss the competence accounts provided by linguistic theory which, in principle, are to be taken as proposals on how relative clauses in general and RP relative clauses in particular are represented in the mind of the

native speaker. Besides addressing the issue of the acceptance of ‘repair’ RP relatives as the one in (3) in many languages, including Spanish, we will pay attention to RP relatives such as (5) which are ungrammatical in Spanish, versus RP relatives with indefinite antecedents such as (6) which are considered grammatical in Spanish.

- (5) \*Es la mujer que nunca **la** hemos visto llorar  
It is the woman that never her we have seen cry
- (6) Es una mujer que nunca **la** hemos visto llorar  
It is a woman that never her we have seen cry

In the second part of this section we will discuss the preferences shown by native and non-native speakers of Spanish when processing ambiguous relative clauses such as (7).

- (7) Es el hijo de la periodista que vive en Mallorca  
It is the son of the journalist who lives in Mallorca

The ambiguity is based on the fact that either the first DP (*el hijo*), the head, or the second DP (*la periodista*), the complement of the DP *el hijo de la periodista* can be the antecedent of the relativized subject in the embedded clause. Thus, either *el hijo* or *la periodista* can live in Mallorca.

What we want to investigate is whether *native*, *immigrant* and *heritage* Spanish speakers have similar intuitions about ‘repair’ RP relatives and RP relatives with indefinite antecedents and resort to similar strategies for the resolution of this type of ambiguity.

#### 4.1. The syntax of restrictive relatives

As we saw in the previous section, relative clauses are instances of long distance dependencies because the relativized element is ‘displaced’ from its canonical position, so that, as shown in (8), the direct object position is empty.

- (8) Esa es una candidata<sub>i</sub> [<sub>CP</sub> a quien<sub>i</sub> deberíamos entrevistar \_\_\_\_]  
That is a candidate whom we should interview

Sentence (8) is an instance of a direct object gap relative which, following Suñer’s (1998) analysis, occurs when the complementizer is [+pronominal], as shown in (9).

- (9) [<sub>CP</sub> una [<sub>NP</sub> candidata<sub>i</sub>] [<sub>CP</sub> a quien<sub>i</sub> [<sub>C</sub>+pronominal] [<sub>IP</sub> deberíamos entrevistar ~~a quien<sub>i</sub>~~]]]]

A [+pronominal] complementizer can also attract a null relative pronoun to the CP position, as in (10).

- (10) Esa es una candidata que deberíamos entrevistar  
In this case, the relative pronoun moves to the CP position but does not undergo lexicalization, as shown in (11).

- (11) [<sub>DP</sub> [<sub>NP</sub> una candidata<sub>i</sub>] [<sub>CP</sub> ~~relpro<sub>i</sub>~~ [<sub>C</sub> que<sub>+pronominal</sub>] [<sub>IP</sub> deberíamos entrevistar ~~relpro<sub>i</sub>~~]]]]

Finally, when the complementizer is [-pronominal], Spanish direct object relatives are realized as RP relatives, as in (12).

- (12) Es una candidata que la deberíamos entrevistar  
The difference between (10) and (12) is the presence of the resumptive pronoun *la* in the latter. The representation of (12) is depicted in (13), where the relative pronoun, which does not display a phonetic matrix, appears *in situ*, coindexed with the null operator in the CP position.

- (13) [<sub>DP</sub> [<sub>NP</sub> una candidata<sub>i</sub>] [<sub>CP</sub> Op<sub>i</sub> [<sub>C</sub> que<sub>-pronominal</sub>] [<sub>IP</sub> la<sub>i</sub> debemos entrevistar ~~a quien<sub>i</sub>~~]]]]

According to Trujillo (1990) and also Suñer (1998) and Brucart (1999), when the antecedent is [-definite], the resumptive pronoun appears more frequently and is more accepted than in cases when it is [+definite], as in (14), where the definite nature of the resumptive makes its presence redundant.

- (14) \*Es la candidata que la deberíamos entrevistar  
It is the candidate that her we should interview

Brucart (1999) states that the distance between the antecedent and the coindexed trace may favor the presence of the clitic because the clitic contributes the gender and number features which allow for the establishment of the relationship between the two positions, as in (15).

- (15) Es **la mujer<sub>i</sub>** [<sub>CP</sub>[<sub>ESPEC</sub>Op<sub>i</sub>][<sub>C</sub> que<sub>i</sub>][<sub>SP</sub>no sé cuando fue la última vez que **la<sub>i</sub>** vimos ~~a quien<sub>i</sub>~~ llorar]]]

the woman that I not know when was the last time that her we saw cry

According to Brucart (1999), a sentence such as (16) is used more frequently and it is more acceptable than a sentence such as (17).

- (16) El atracador<sub>i</sub>, a quien<sub>i</sub> algunos testigos aseguran haberlo<sub>i</sub> visto [t<sub>i</sub>] por la zona anteriormente, entró en el banco a cara descubierta

The robber, whom some witnesses attest to having seen him around the area before,

entered the bank without covering his face

- (17) ?? El atracador<sub>i</sub>, a quien<sub>i</sub> lo<sub>i</sub> vieron [t<sub>i</sub>] por la zona anteriormente, entró en el banco a cara descubierta

The robber, whom they saw him around the area before, entered the bank without covering his face

In (17) the relative pronoun and the trace are closer, in fact they are in the same sentence, which makes the sentence less frequent and hardly acceptable.

Thus, in terms of the representation of RP relatives in the grammar of native Spanish speakers, traditional grammar (Esbozo, RAE 1973) restricts them to ‘vulgar’ or ‘colloquial’ speech even though it admits that they are also sanctioned by literary usage, while linguists such as Brucart (1999) and Suñer (1998), among others, argue that RP relatives are optionally used by native speakers when the antecedent is [-definite] or it is distant from the relativized position. The distance factor is also related to the universal tendency to use resumptive pronouns, in other words, to the so-called ‘repair’ RP relative strategy that we described in section 3. Therefore, it is a fact that while the Spanish grammar may reject resumptive pronouns, the parser may make use of them.

#### 4.2. Ambiguous restrictive relatives: the role of the resumptive pronoun in forcing high and low attachment

Besides taking into consideration the two factors (definiteness and distance) which make RP relatives acceptable in native Spanish, we are going to address a specific issue that has been discussed in the processing literature in order to determine whether *immigrant* and *heritage* Spanish speakers evidence similar or different sensibility from native speakers to the gender and number features of pronouns when processing ambiguous relative clauses. As we have mentioned in the previous section, languages display different choices when choosing an antecedent in the case of ambiguous sentences such as (7) above, and (18).

(18) [[Juan me presentó a [<sub>NP</sub> [<sub>DP1</sub> la hija j] de [<sub>DP2</sub> la modista k]] [que [e]<sub>j/k</sub> vive en París]]]

Juan me introduced the daughter of the dressmaker that lives in Paris

As the indexes show, the subject of the relative clause which is depicted as an empty category, can be attached (or coindexed) to DP1, *la hija* (the so-called high attachment strategy) or to DP2, *la modista* (the so-called low attachment strategy). In other words, there are two possible answers to the question *Who lives in Paris?*, one is *la hija* and the other one is *la modista*.

It has been argued that in languages such as Dutch, French, German, Russian or Spanish there is a clear preference for high attachment while in languages such as Arabic, Brazilian Portuguese, English, Norwegian, Romanian or Swedish, low attachment is preferred.<sup>5</sup> High attachment is related to the Predicate Proximity Principle (Gibson, Pearlmutter *et al.* 1996), according to which the relative is attached to the structure that is closest to the predicate, in other words, to the head DP, *la hija*, of the compound NP (*la hija de la modista*). This principle has been said to be the one favored by languages with a relatively free word order, such as

Spanish. Languages such as English are said to follow the Recency Principle (Gibson and Pearlmutter 1998), which leads the parser to choose the constituent which is closest to the relative, thus, these languages follow the low attachment strategy which favors the choice of DP2, *la modista*.

We have shown (Senn and Liceras 2007; Senn 2008) that in direct object relatives such as (19) which displays the type of ambiguity shown in (18), when the gender and/or number feature of the two DPs is different, the resumptive pronoun may resolve the ambiguity forcing low or high attachment, as shown in (20) and (21).

(19) Pintaron los techos de las casitas [que [cuando nos fuimos a vivir al campo] estaban remodelando].

(20) Pintaron los techos de las casitas [que [cuando nos fuimos a vivir al campo] las estaban remodelando].

(21) Pintaron los techos de las casitas [que [cuando nos fuimos a vivir al campo] los estaban remodelando].

In (20) the presence of the feminine gender feature of the resumptive forces low attachment while in (21) the masculine gender feature forces high attachment.

Thus, in spite of the fact that Spanish seems to favor the high attachment strategy, so that the preferred interpretation in (19) would be *los techos*, that is not possible in (20), while it is the only possible choice in (21). In fact, the presence of the resumptive is welcome due to the long distance that exists between the antecedent and the relativized position.

What we investigate here is whether possible attrition in the case of the *immigrant* group and either attrition or incomplete acquisition in the case of the *heritage* group leads to insensitivity to the gender and number features of the resumptive pronouns. This, together with the participants’ preferences with respect to the acceptance of resumptives with indefinite or long distance antecedents allows us to provide new data on the grammatical competence and processing strategies of this specific types of bilinguals.

## 5. The study<sup>6</sup>

As we indicated above, and in order to contribute directly to the emerging field of heritage studies and indirectly to the fields of bilingualism and contact linguistics, we have compared the status of resumptive pronouns in the Spanish grammar of a group of *heritage* speakers in Canada with that of a group of immigrants and a group of native speakers. In this section we first state the research questions guiding our study, then provide a description of the three groups of

participants and a summary of the language background and language assessment questionnaires that were given to all participants. We finally describe the two experimental tasks as well as the results.

### 5.1. Research questions

The first research question that we want to answer is whether the three groups of speakers have the same implicit knowledge of the grammar of Spanish RP restrictive relatives. Specifically we want to find out whether these groups differ in their rejection of ungrammatical RP restrictive relatives and their acceptance of RP restrictive relatives that are considered grammatical because they meet the indefinite or the long distance antecedent requirement.

The second research question is whether the three groups of speakers rely on the gender and number features of the resumptive when they are asked to choose low or high attachment in ambiguous restrictive relative clauses or whether they rely on one of the two strategies regardless of the fact that the resumptive may force the low attachment choice which, according to the processing literature, is favored by English but not by Spanish.

The specific hypotheses that we would like to test are as follows:

- (i) If no attrition has taken place, *immigrant* speakers and *heritage* speakers will not differ significantly from native speakers in their grammatical judgments or their processing strategies.
- (ii) If attrition has taken place, the *immigrant* group and *heritage* group will differ from native speakers in their grammatical judgments and their processing strategies.
- (iii) If *heritage* speakers significantly differ from both the native and the *immigrant* speakers, and *heritage* speakers also significantly differ from native speakers, we will have to conclude that *heritage* speakers may be exposed to an input that is different from the one native speakers in Spanish-speaking countries are exposed to.

### 5.2. Participants

#### • Heritage or Early Contact Group

This group consists of twelve English/Spanish speakers. Eight were born in Canada or arrived in Canada before they were one year old and two arrived in Canada at the age of 4 (the group average is shown in Table 1). Six were born to a Spanish-speaking family from Spain (the Spanish Early Contact or EEC group) and six to a Spanish-speaking family from Argentina (the Argentinian Early Contact or AEC group). In some cases only the father or the mother were immigrants from either Spain or Argentina.

#### • Immigrant or Late Contact Group

Out of the twelve participants in this group, six were born in Spain (the Spanish Late Contact or ELC group) and six in Argentina (the Argentinian Late Contact or ALC group). All of them immigrated to Canada as adults and have lived in Canada for at least ten years (the average time is shown in Table 1).

#### • Native or Spanish Control Group

There are twenty participants in this group. Ten were born and have always lived in Argentina (the Argentinian Spanish Control or ASC group) and ten were born and have always lived in Spain (the Castilian Spanish Control or ECG group).

Table 1. Summary of data from Language Background Questionnaire, SGEL and Self-evaluation Questionnaire

	Spanish Control	Argentinian Control	Spanish LC	Argentinian LC	Spanish EC	Argentinian EC
# of subjects	10	10	6	6	6	6
Female/Male	10/0	8/2	5/1	1/5	4/2	4/2
Age	21.2	41.5	51.5	51.8	21	21.3
Age of arrival in						
Canada	N/A	N/A	29.3	29.5	0.8	0.8
# years of contact						
with English	N/A	N/A	21.18	22.3	20.1	20.5
Preferred language	N/A	N/A	Spanish	2English 4Spanish	English	English
SGEL	95.7	94.7	84.6	91	80.3	81.6
%Usage Spanish	N/A	N/A	76.3	50.25	30.4	39.6
%Usage English			21.6	47.1	58.8	57.4
%Usage Other			1.6	2.6	4.0	3.0
Effort English (1 < 9)	N/A	N/A	3.3	2.0	1.01	1.03
Effort Spanish (1 < 9)			1.4	1.11	2.16	2.84

All participants completed a short biodata and language background questionnaire (see Appendix 1). Table 1 contains the average age for each of the groups and subgroups, as well as general information on the averages obtained by the different groups in the objective language



assessment questionnaire (SGEL) and the self-evaluation questionnaire that we describe in the next section.

### 5.3. Grammatical competence: objective and subjective assessment

All participants completed two tests intended to provide us with an objective measure of the participants overall competence in Spanish as well as their subjective self-assessment of the effort they had to put into performing oral and written comprehension and production activities in Spanish.

#### • Proficiency test

A slightly modified version of the *Examen clasificatorio: español para extranjeros* published by SGEL was completed by all participants. This is a widely used proficiency test which consists of 100 multiple choice items. Eighty five items out of the one hundred are administered in a written form and fifteen in an oral form and are intended to evaluate some of the most salient lexical, morphosyntactic and semantic aspects of standard Spanish. We modified the fifteen oral items to make sure that the test could be completed in a written form.<sup>7</sup> Details on the results of this proficiency test are depicted in Table 2.

Table 2. *Global proficiency (results of SGEL proficiency test)*

	Native Control Group (SC)	Immigrant Late Contact with English Group (LC)	Heritage Early Contact with English Group (EC)
Mean (%)	95.25	87.83	81.83
Standard Deviation	2.468	8.912	9.203

An *independent T-test groups for means* which compares the means of the three groups shows that the results obtained by the SC group are significantly different from the results obtained by the LC group ( $p = 0.001$ ) and the EC group ( $p = 0.0001$ ). No significant differences were found between the two experimental groups. In other words, both the *immigrant* group and the *heritage* group significantly differ from the native group but do not differ between themselves. This is interesting because it suggests that, as groups, and in terms of global competence, whether it is attrition or incomplete acquisition or, in the case of the *heritage* group, a low literacy level in Spanish (this test has been specifically designed for the actual L2 classroom) these Spanish speakers are closer to L2 intermediate and advanced learners of Spanish than to

our group of *native* speakers. This implies that, even though there are important individual differences, the experimental groups could be considered ‘near-native’ speakers of Spanish in relation to this test (Senn 2008).

#### • Bilingual and multilingual self-assessment questionnaire

The two experimental groups completed a self-evaluation assessment questionnaire intended to measure the degree of effort they felt they had to make when producing and understanding English or Spanish in everyday life situations. It also measured their daily contact with each of the two languages. The degree of effort is measured according to a 1<9 scale, 1 being minimum effort and 9 maximum. A sample of the questionnaire is provided in Appendix 2<sup>8</sup>.

A summary of the self-evaluation results for Spanish obtained from the experimental groups is provided in Figures 1 and 2. Figure 1 shows that the Late Contact group is very homogenous in assessing the effort involved in the four language skills (oral comprehension, oral production, written comprehension and written production) and it also shows that they consider using Spanish to be rather effortless.

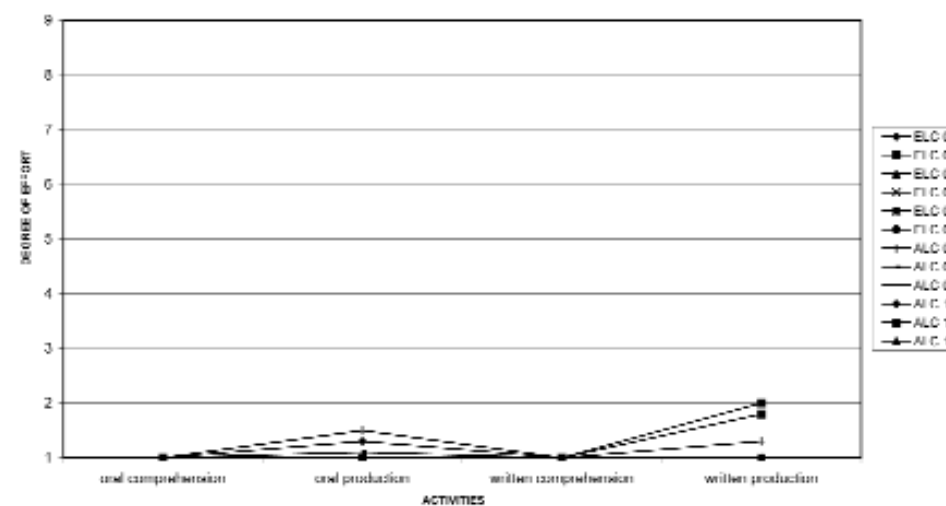


Figure 1. *Self-evaluation questionnaire. LC (Immigrant) group results.*

Figure 2 shows that the Early Contact group, the group of heritage speakers, is much less homogenous than the immigrant group and seems

to feel that a substantial amount of effort is involved mainly in relation to the written skills.

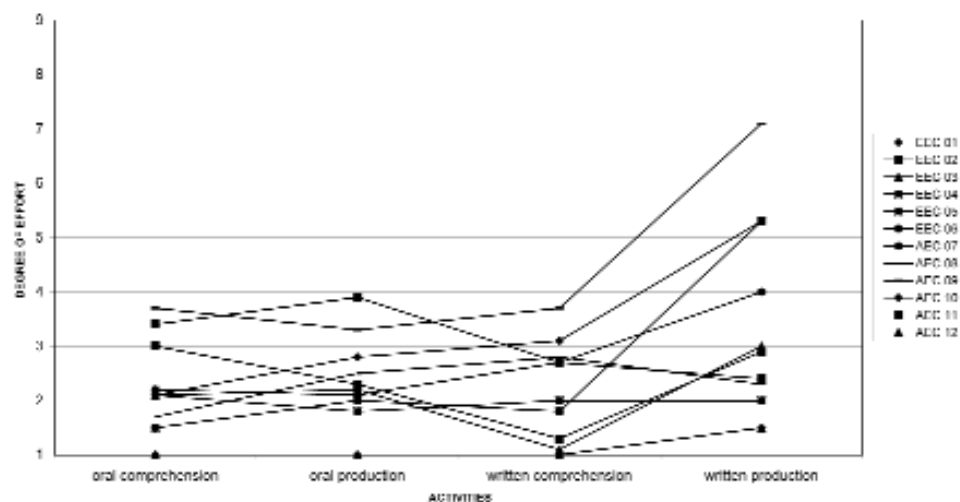


Figure 2. Self-evaluation questionnaire. EC (Heritage) group results.

Thus, when comparing the three groups global competence as measured by the SGEL test, we see that the *immigrant* and the *heritage* group are significantly different from the native group and not from each other. However, in the subjective task, the *heritage* group is rather different from the *immigrant* group both in terms of confidence and in terms of homogeneity.

#### 5.4. Experimental tasks

Two experimental tasks were administered to all participants. Before carrying out the tasks, the participants read the instructions and completed the training exercises. The sentences were displayed in a computer screen using the Microsoft Office PowerPoint program. Each sentence was shown for 15 seconds in the case of the Spanish Control group and for 20 seconds in the case of the two experimental groups. We felt that given the fact that the experimental groups had less contact with this language, they would be less used to reading in Spanish and would therefore need more time to read the sentences. Time was constrained in order to ensure that the participants did not have time to carry out a metalinguistic analysis of the sentences but rather processed them *on line*.

#### • Experimental Task #1: Acceptability of RP relatives

This task was intended to evaluate the degree of acceptability of the RP relatives in relation to two specific factors: (i) distance between the antecedent and the resumptive pronoun; (ii) definiteness of the antecedent. This task contained a total of 24 experimental sentences and 12 filler sentences<sup>9</sup>. The four conditions tested were:

(i) Four grammatical RP relative clauses: Distance.

(22) Quiso que le arreglara a Ana el vestido [que [no me acuerdo [dónde lo compré]]]

He/she wanted that her I would fix to Ana the dress [that [I do not remember [where it I bought]]]

(ii) Four grammatical RP relative clauses: SN [- definido].

(23) Marcelo tenía algunos problemas [que los había callado por mucho tiempo]]

Marcelo had some problems [that them he had kept silent about for a long time]]]

(iii) Eight ungrammatical RP relative clauses: No distance.

(24) \*Los perros odian al gato [que lo oímos maullar todo el tiempo] the dogs hate the cat [that him we hear meowing all the time]

(iv) Eight grammatical gap relative clauses

(25) Mario salió con una compañera del colegio que ganó una beca para estudiar en Checoslovaquia

Mario went out with a school mate who got a scholarship to study in Czechoslovakia

Once the participants read each sentence on the screen, they had to mark on a paper sheet the degree of acceptability according to a 1 to 5 scale<sup>10</sup>.

Table 3 shows the rate of acceptability of the four different conditions. The graphic depicts the means obtained by the three different groups for each condition. The 1 to 5 scale which appears on the ordinate axis refers to the acceptability value that participants could assign to each sentence.

An ANOVA performed on the data does not yield significant results among the groups with respect to the various RP conditions. However, it indicates that there are significant differences among the groups with respect to the the gap relatives ( $p = 0.026$ ). In fact, the EC group is significantly different from the SC group ( $p = 0.023$ ), but the LC group is neither significantly different from the SC group ( $p = 0.407$ ) nor from the EC group ( $p = 0.394$ ).

Therefore, what these results show is that the LC (*immigrant*) group and the EC (*heritage*) group have the same intuitions about the RP relatives as the SC (native) group. However, it is not the high acceptance of RP relative clauses that unifies them but its rejection. In other words, it seems to be the case that the three groups of Spanish speakers reject



### • Clitic-triggered high attachment

—Eight RP restrictive relatives with [+ definite] [+ distance] antecedent

- (26) Juan le pidió un autógrafa al domador de los leones que [ni bien llegamos al circo [lo fotografiamos]]  
 Juan asked for an autogrph to the trainer of the lions that [as soon as we arrived to the circus [him we took a picture of]]

¿A quién o a qué fotografiamos? Al domador / a los leones  
 Whom or what did we take a picture of? The trainer / the lions

—Eight RP restrictive relatives with [- definite] [+ distance] antecedent

- (27) Gloria quiere comprar una marca especial de vinos que [desde el año 2000 [la conocen en todo el mundo]]  
 Gloria wants to buy a special brand of wines that [since 2000 [it-fem. they know all over the world  
 ¿Qué conocen en todo el mundo? La marca / los vinos  
 What do they know all over the world? The brand / the wines

—Eight RP restrictive relatives with [+ definite] [- distance] antecedent

- (28) La vaca loca mordió a la hija del tambero que [la llevaron a ver al médico del pueblo]  
 The mad cow bit the daughter of the dairy-farmer that [her they took to see the village's doctor]  
 ¿A quién llevaron al médico? A la hija / al tambero  
 Whom did they take to see the doctor? The daughter / the dairy-farmer

—Eight RP restrictive relatives with [- definite] [- distance] antecedent

- (29) Les presentamos a las chicas a unos sobrinos de Enrique que [los llamaron para intervenir en un campeonato de fútbol]  
 We introduced to the girls some nephews of Enrique that [them they call to participate in a football championship]  
 ¿A quién llamaron para intervenir en el campeonato? A los sobrinos / a Enrique  
 Whom did they call to participate in the championship The nephews / Enrique

### • Clitic-triggered low attachment

—Eight RP restrictive relatives with [+ definite] [+ distance] antecedent

- (30) Tomamos un café con la madre de las niñas que [como competían en natación [las condecoraron varias veces]]  
 We had coffe with the mother of the girls that [as they were competing in swimming [them they condecorated several times]]  
 ¿A quién o quiénes condecoraron varias veces? A la madre / a las niñas  
 Whom they condecorated several times? The mother / the girls

—Eight RP restrictive relatives with [- definite] [+ distance] antecedent

- (31) María conoce a la cómplice de un ladrón que [algunos vecinos de mucha confianza [lo han visto por la zona anteriormente]]  
 María knows the accomplice[femenine] of a thief that [some neighbours well known [him they have seen around the area before]]  
 ¿A quién han visto por la zona? A la cómplice / al ladrón  
 Whom have they seen around the area? The accomplice / the thief

—Eight RP restrictive relatives with [+ definite] [- distance] antecedent

- (32) El granizo nos destruyó las ventanas de la habitación que [la habíamos dejado impecable antes de salir de viaje]  
 The hail us destroyed the windows of the room that [it we had left impecable before going on a trip  
 ¿Qué habíamos dejado impecable? Las ventanas / la habitación  
 What have we left impecable? The windows / the room

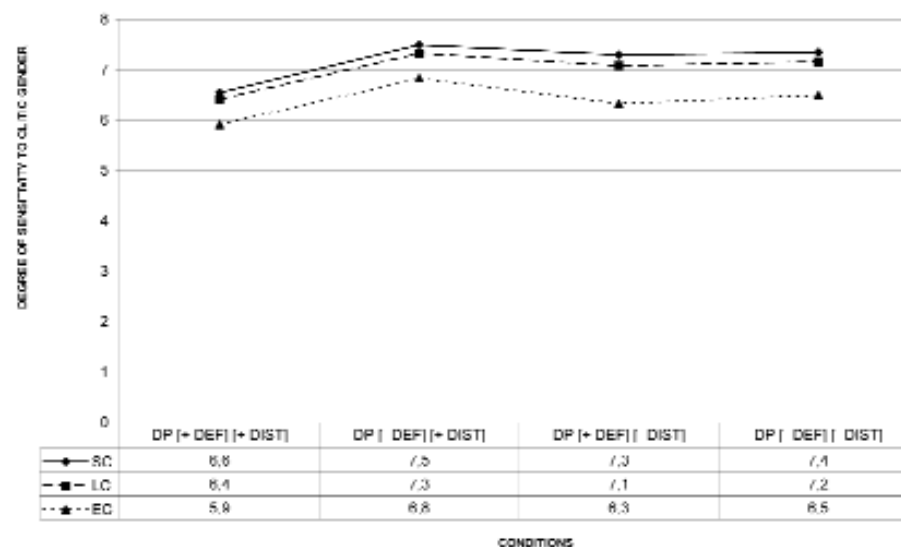
—Eight RP restrictive relatives with [- definite] [- distance] antecedent

- (33) Carmen trabaja con el cuñado de una vecina que [la encontramos a veces en la peluquería de la esquina]  
 Carmen works with the brother in law of a neighbour that [her we find sometimes at the hairdresser of the corner]  
 ¿A quién encontramos en la peluquería? Al cuñado / a la vecina  
 Whom did we find at the hairdresser? The brother in law / the neighbour

### 5.5. Results

The results for the High Attachment condition are summarized in Graphic 4. Even though it can be observed that the overall pattern is the same for all three groups in that all participants had the most problems with the [+definite] [+distance] condition, the statistical analysis indicates that the EC group differs significantly from the SC group ( $p < 0.0001$ ) and also from the LC group ( $p = 0.005$ ). There are no statistically significant differences between the SC and the LC group ( $p = 0.360$ ), which means that the immigrant group does not differ from the native group in terms of their sensitivity to the triggering effect of the resumptive pronouns.

Figure 4. *Clitic-triggered Choice of High Attachment*



The results for the Low Attachment condition are shown in Graphic 5. While the pattern is less homogenous than in the case of the High Attachment condition, the statistical analysis indicates that there are no

significant differences between the SC and the LC group ( $p = 0.109$ ), nor between the SC and the EC group ( $p = 0.430$ ).

Even though there were no statistically significant differences among the four factors, in the case of the SC group, the factor that got the largest number of errors was the [+definite] [-distance], which is expected because none of the two factors which may contribute to the acceptability of resumptive pronouns is present. This was also the case for the LC and the EC group but to a lower degree.

An ANOVA performed to compare the SC group and the two experimental groups in terms of the number of ‘correct’ (choice of antecedent that agrees with the resumptive pronoun) responses for the four factors shows that there is a significant difference between them ( $p = 0.004$ ). What is important is that [+definite] + [+distance] antecedents are less problematic in terms of producing errors than [+definite] + [-distance] antecedents. In fact, a *two sample t-test* shows that these two factors are significantly different in that less errors were made in the case of the former ( $p = 0.049$ ).

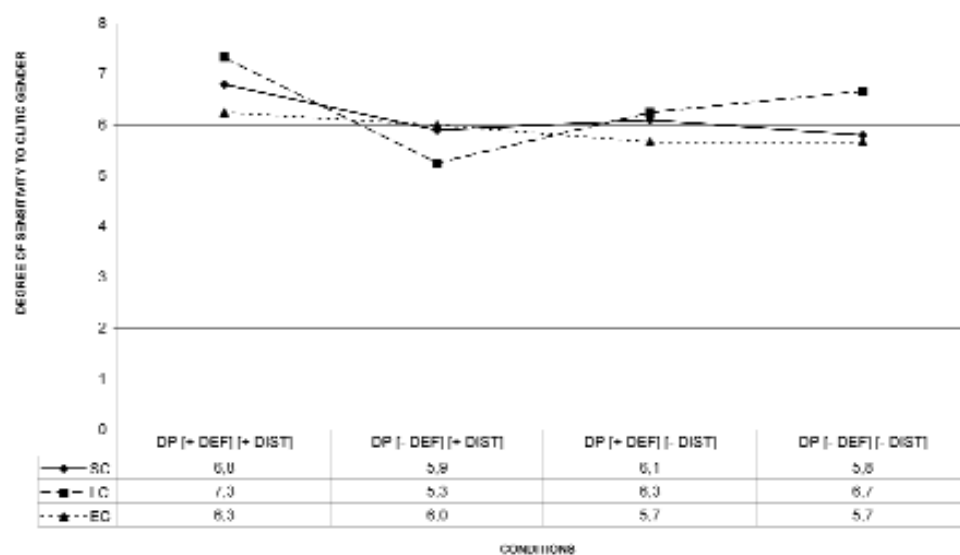


Figure 5. *Clitic-triggered Choice of Low Attachment*

It is also important to notice that the number of errors between the sentences where the clitic triggered high attachment and the sentences

where it triggered low attachment is not significant, which indicates that the resumptive can neutralize the possible preference for high or low attachment in the case of the three groups of subjects.

## 6. Discussion and conclusions

Based on the results obtained from the proficiency test we can infer that there is a difference between the *native* group on the one hand and the *immigrant* and the *heritage* group on the other. It is not clear whether this is so because the experimental groups contact with Spanish is reduced or because they have had less access to literary tests than native speakers who live in the Spanish-speaking countries (the test contains not only items intended to measure morphosyntactic and semantic knowledge but also lexical knowledge) or because of both. Therefore, we can conclude that the input the *heritage* group is exposed to is somehow eroded. The self-assessment questionnaire provides a different picture: the *immigrant* group is more homogenous and more confident than the *heritage* group when assessing its linguistic capability in Spanish. This could lead us to conclude that both the *immigrant* and the *heritage* speakers, but mainly the *heritage* speakers could be considered ‘near-native speakers’ (Senn 2008) even though they would belong to a different group than the one for which the term has been coined: L2 speakers whose first contact with the second language begun after adolescence. However, is it also the case that the *immigrant* group and the *heritage* group are significantly different from the *native* group with respect to their intuitions about the grammaticality and the disambiguating effects of resumptive pronouns in Spanish?

This leads us to address the two research questions and the three hypotheses that we set up to answer and test respectively.

With respect to the question of whether the three groups of speakers have the same implicit knowledge of the grammar of Spanish RP restrictive relatives, we have to answer that they do. However, based on the results of experiment #1, their knowledge differs from the one that grammarians and syntacticians predicate of Spanish in that our participants’ rejection of RP relatives does not differentiate in a significant way between RP relatives with indefinite and long distance antecedents from those with definite and short distance ones. Thus, we have to conclude that the fact that resumptive pronouns are costly, marked and optional leads to their rejection in the type of experimental task that we carried out. These results confirm that the RP relativization strategy is rather marginal in the grammar of Modern Spanish and

confirm the costly, marked and optional nature of resumptive pronouns and the fact that their main role is that of ‘repair’ or ‘last resort’ strategy.

As for our second research question of whether the gender and number features of the resumptive determine the choice of antecedent regardless of whether they force low or high attachment in ambiguous restrictive relative clauses, the answer is that all three groups are sensitive to the gender and number features of the resumptive, though the *heritage* group produces significantly more errors of agreement than the *immigrant* and the *native* group both in the High and the Low attachment condition and significantly more in the case of the former. This may be due to influence from English, their dominant language, since having to choose high attachment is at odds with the processing strategy favored by English (the low attachment strategy). The processing role of resumptive pronouns seems to show here more than in the representation task because the *native* group produces significantly less errors with the factor combination [+definite] / [+distance] than with the factor combination [+definite] / [-distance]. In other words, the *native* group has strong intuitions about the ungrammaticality of ‘true’ resumptives in Spanish.

With respect to our first hypothesis, which stated that if no attrition had taken place, *immigrant* speakers and *heritage* speakers would not differ significantly from *native* speakers in their grammatical judgments or their processing strategies, we have to say that it is confirmed in that resumptive pronouns are equally rejected by all groups and there is a preference for gap relatives. However, in terms of the processing strategies, the *heritage* group –be it due to attrition, incomplete acquisition, lack of literacy skills or reduced input (the *immigrant* group is significantly different from the *native* group when it comes to overall competence)—is significantly different from the *immigrant* and the *native* group.

The second hypothesis stated that if attrition had taken place, the *immigrant* group and the *heritage* group would differ from the *native* group in their grammatical judgments and their processing strategies. We have already stated that only the *heritage* group differs from the other two with respect to the processing strategies since their sensitivity to the triggering force of the gender and number features is not up to native standards. Since they do not differ from the *native* and *immigrant* group with respect to their rejection of resumptive pronouns, it looks as if we have isolated an area of competence which is vulnerable, mainly when linked to processing strategies. In other words, while these learners may not have problems with gender and number agreement in less challenging contexts (i.e.: adjective/noun agreement), they seem to lack

the sensibility displayed by both the *native* and the *immigrant* speakers when confronted to the desambiguating role of resumptives.

Our third hypotheses stated that if *heritage* speakers significantly differed from both the native and the *immigrant* speakers, and *heritage* speakers also significantly differed from native speakers, we would have to conclude that *heritage* speakers may be exposed to an input that is different from the one native speakers in Spanish-speaking countries are exposed to. This hypothesis is partially confirmed in that the *immigrant* group significantly differs from the *native* group in terms of the overall competence of the participants as measured by the SGEL test but it is not confirmed in terms of their local competence, since they do not differ from the *native* group in their preference for gap relatives and their sensitivity to the gender and number features which lead to choose the coindexed DP in the compound antecedents. However, they make more errors than the *native* group and they are less sensitive to the [+definite] / [-distance] combination, which seems to suggest that there is a subtle distance from the *native* speakers which in turn may translate in providing the *heritage* group with a reduced input.

While there are many questions that we have not answered, be it because of limitations to the number of issues that we can deal with here or because our data does not allow us to answer them, we hope to have contributed to the field of *heritage* studies by discussing theoretical and methodological issues that have not been addressed before or have not been addressed in this specific manner. Specifically, we have shown: (i) that we need to compare *heritage* speakers to *immigrant* speakers in order to determine what are the characteristics of *heritage* speech and whether *heritage* speakers are exposed to reduced input; (ii) that we need to differentiate overall competence as measured by proficiency tests from local competence as measured by intuitions related to ‘fuzzy’ areas of the grammar such as the usage and acceptability of resumptive pronouns; and (iii) that we also need to differentiate overall competence and grammatical intuitions from sensitivity to language specific features and processing strategies such as the gender and number features responsible for clitic-triggered low and high attachment strategies.

To conclude we would like to stress the need to investigate the status of minority languages in *immigrant* and *heritage* populations not only because, as basic research, this type of study enhances the fields of bilingualism and contact linguistics but also because it may provide information that can be applied to educational, sociological and even political endeavours.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> These data was collected to investigate not only the status of RP relatives but also the status of optional and obligatory clitic-doubling in native, immigrant and heritage grammars. The second syntactic property is the one that has a different status in the two varieties of Spanish, mainly because it is in the Rioplatense variety where direct object clitic doubling (*lo vi a Pedro*) is systematically used and accepted.

<sup>2</sup> According to the position taken, for instance, by Meisel (2008), who distinguishes language acquisition from birth from any form of acquisition that occurs after the age of 4, child L2A is different from bilingual first language acquisition and closer to adult second language acquisition. We take this as evidence that native acquisition is completed by age 4.

<sup>3</sup> Certain control phenomena have been described as late-learned rules, that is, grammatical phenomena for which adult native speaker ability is not attained by children until they are six or older (Goodluck & Birch, 1987). Cromer (1987) shows that constructions such as (*This paper<sub>i</sub> is tough [PRO<sub>i</sub> to finish t<sub>i</sub>]*) develop late in children. Goodluck and Behne (1992) show that young children do not understand constructions such as (*Daisy<sub>i</sub> chooses Pluto<sub>j</sub> [PRO<sub>i</sub> to read to t<sub>j</sub>]*), giving fairly random responses until a fairly late age. Tavakolian (1981) and Goodluck (1987), among others, show that young children interpret the infinitival clause as having a sentence-external referent in constructions such as (*[PRO<sub>i</sub> to kiss the duck] would make the lion<sub>i</sub> very happy*). Also, the development of the ability to produce and understand complex sentences by child learners has been considered to be one of the most interesting and important aspects of language acquisition, as a distinctive trait of human languages (Limber, 1973).

<sup>4</sup> These [+human] direct object restrictive relatives where the complementizer position is occupied by the complementizer *que* rather than by a relative pronoun (see analysis in section 4.1) are different from relatives which display a *que* without preposition, namely those relatives where the verbal preposition has been omitted as in *Ese es el profesor que te habló ayer*. This type of omission, as well as omission of the preposition with adverbial relatives as in *Era un río que se iba a buscar agua para tomar* or *Hubo un momento que ellos se fueron con el papá*, seems to be rather frequent in colloquial speech (Navarro 2006). According to this author, the rate of this type of omission is not affected by social factors such as age or gender, although there seems to be a higher frequency of omission among younger speakers, in general, and younger speakers from less educated families, in particular.

<sup>5</sup> See Cuetos and Mitchell (1988), Guillelmon and Grosjean (2001), Papadopoulou and Clahsen, (2003), Fernández (2003), Dussias (2004), Gibson, Pearlmutter and Torrens (1999), Hemforth, Konieczny and Scheepers (2000), Brysbaert and Mitchell (1996), Zagar, Pynte and Rativeau (1997), Ehrlich, Fernandez, Fodor, Stenshoel and Vinereanu (1999), Miyamoto (1998) or Abdelghany and Fodor (1999), among others).

<sup>6</sup> This study was conducted with the approval of the Research Ethics Board of the University of Ottawa (Ethics file # 05-06-11; approved June 12, 2006).

<sup>7</sup> Sánchez, Aquilino and Terencio Simón. 1980. *Examen clasificatorio: español para*

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<sup>8</sup> J. M. Licerás, A. Tremblay and R. Pérez-Tattam (2001), Language Acquisition Laboratory [<http://www.modernlanguages.uottawa.ca/lab.html>], University of Ottawa.

<sup>9</sup> The twelve filler sentences were included to ensure that having a fixed pattern of sentences would not influence the participants's responses. The fillers consisted of subordinate clauses and clauses with clitic-doubling of direct and indirect objects.

<sup>10</sup> The scale was presented as follows:

1	2	3	4	5
Suena muy mal	suena mal	suena raro	no suena mal	suena bien
Sounds very bad	sounds bad	sounds strange	doesn't sound bad	sounds o.k.

<sup>11</sup> Advanced English speaking learners of Spanish continue to produce and accept ungrammatical restrictive relatives such as *\*una candidata quien vive en París* instead of *una candidata que vive en París*, which seems to indicate that the impossibility to phonetically realize the relative pronoun in these constructions is not capture by these speakers.

<sup>12</sup> In fact, Montrul (2004, 2008) has found that heritage speakers have problems with the 'a' marking of the Spanish [+animate, +specific] direct objects.

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**Appendix #1. Language Background Questionnaire**

**Language Background Questionnaire**  
**University of Ottawa • Department of Modern Languages and Literature**  
**Language Acquisition Lab (LA-LAB) • Spanish Program**

- | <b>Course:</b>  | <b>Date:</b> |
|---|--------------|
| 1. Name:  |              |
| 2. Gender: F [ ] M [ ]  |              |
| 3. Age:   |              |
| 4. Place of birth:  |              |
| 5. Mother tongue:   |              |
| 6. Mother's dominant language:  |              |
| 7. Father's dominant language:  |              |
| 8. Language(s) spoken at home as a child:   |              |
| 9. Language(s) you spoke during the first five years of your life:  |              |
| 10. Language(s) studied in (please include Spanish):  |              |
| •Primary school:  |              |
| •Secondary (high) school:   |              |
| •University:  |              |
| •Other institutions:  |              |
| 11. Languages you use:  |              |
| •At home:   |              |
| •At school:   |              |
| •At work:   |              |
| •When you dream:  |              |
| 12. Other languages you can:  |              |
| •Read:  |              |
| •Speak:   |              |
| •Write:   |              |
| 13. What language do you feel most comfortable with at this time?   |              |
| 14. What program are you in at the university?  |              |
| 15. Year at the university:   |              |
| 16. Are you presently studying Spanish at the university level? If so, please give us university name and course number |              |
| 17. Why have you chosen to learn Spanish?   |              |
| 18. Contact with Spanish outside classroom:   |              |
| <u>Present contact:</u>   |              |
| • Approximate hours/week:   |              |
| • Context: (e.g. friends, family, clubs, etc.):   |              |
| <u>Previous contact:</u>  |              |
| • Have you ever visited a Spanish-speaking country? YES [ ] NO [ ]  |              |
| IF, YES   |              |
| •When?  |              |
| •For how long?  |              |

APPENDIX #2. FLUENCY ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BILINGUALS AND POLYGLOTS

**Fluency Assessment Questionnaire for Bilinguals and Polyglots**  
 University of Ottawa • Department of Modern Languages and Literature  
 Language Acquisition Lab (LA-LAB) • Spanish Program

**Section 1**  
**General information**

Please indicate :

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Your country of origin \_\_\_\_\_

When applicable, indicate at what age you started to :

	In English	In Spanish	In another language: specify
Speak			
Read			
Write			

Please indicate your language(s) of instruction through primary and secondary school by grades.

	KG	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
English														
Spanish														
Other: Specify														

**Section 2**

**Use of English, Spanish and other languages**

We now ask you to partition, in percentages, the time you spend using English, Spanish or other languages in various contexts. Please make sure the sum of the percentages you report add up to 100%. Specify the other languages you use.

When you talk with your mother

When you talk with your father

When you talk with your friends at the university

When you talk with your friends outside the university

When you talk with your colleagues at work (if applicable)

	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
English											
Spanish											
Other											

**Section 3**

**Effort required to carry out different activities in English or Spanish**

We now ask you to evaluate, on a 9-point scale, the level of difficulty you would experience if you were to carry out various activities in English or Spanish. On this scale, 1 means that the use of the specified language in the specified activity would be very easy for you. At the other end of the scale, 9 means that the use of the specified language in the specified activity would be very difficult for you. The values 2 through 8 indicate intermediate levels of difficulty. In the use of this scale the sum of the two values for English and Spanish for an activity can vary between 3 and 27.

Research on bilingualism shows that people seldom have the exact same level of fluency in their two or more languages. Usually, one language is dominant relative to the others. Moreover, the dominant language may sometimes differ for different activities. Please use the 9-point scale carefully so as to represent as accurately as you can the level of difficulty you would experience if you were to carry out the following activities in English or Spanish. Please indicate your assessment in the provided spaces

Very easy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Very difficult
-----------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------------

Activity	In English	In Spanish
Oral Comprehension		
1. Tell the difference between a question and a request		
2. Tell what the weather will be after listening to a weather forecast on the radio		

.....

Oral Production	In English	In Spanish
9. Count rapidly from 1 to 20		
10. Recite the alphabet quickly from A to Z		

.....

Reading Comprehension		
23. Understanding the menu in an ordinary restaurant		
24. Follow a recipe in the preparation of a dish		

.....

Writing		
31. Writing a postcard to a friend		
32. Writing a note for someone		

.....

## Políticas lingüísticas y de integración en materia de emigración en Europa como reflejo de la construcción de los estados-nación

Mercè Pujol Berché <sup>1</sup>

Este artículo pone de relieve que los movimientos migratorios son una constante en la historia de la humanidad. La emigración se presenta como politemporal, poliespacial, polivocal y polifónica. El artículo se divide en cuatro partes. En la primera, se presenta un panorama histórico de Europa, atendiendo al concepto de ciudadano. La segunda parte se dedica a la emigración europea que fue a América. La tercera se dedica a la importancia de la industrialización en Europa para la llegada de trabajadores procedentes de zonas rurales y de países limítrofes por motivos tanto demográficos, como económicos. Finalmente, se pone de manifiesto que el plurilingüismo es una característica fundamental del panorama internacional y se hacen algunas reflexiones sobre cómo desarrollarse dentro del respeto a la diversidad lingüística.

This article explains how the migratory movements are a constant in the humanity history. Migration appears like a poly-temporal, poly-spatial, poly-vocal and poly-phonic phenomenon. The article is divided in four parts. First of all, a historical panorama of Europe appears, taking care of the concept of citizen. The second part is dedicated to the European emigration to America. A third part is dedicated to the importance of industrialization in Europe for the arrival of workers coming from countryside and bordering countries, by demographic as well as economic reasons. Finally, it is shown that the multilingualism is a fundamental characteristic of the current international panorama and some reflections are made on the development of linguistic diversity.

**Palabras claves:** inmigración, política lingüística, integración, Europa, estado, nación

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