

OWEN WARD

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Education

Doctor of Philosophy – Hispanic Linguistics, University of Toronto (expected defence date: Summer 2025)

Thesis: *The role of vowel reduction in the perception and production of English lexical stress by Spanish and Portuguese speakers*

Supervisor: Dr. Anabela Rato

Master of Arts – Hispanic Studies, Western University (2017)

Bachelor of Arts – Honours Spanish – Spanish/English Translation Specialization – French Minor, University of Waterloo (2015)

Academic Awards

Doctoral Completion Award (2022) - \$8100

Faculty of Arts & Science Covid-19 Program Completion Award (2022) – \$4600

Doctoral Completion Award (2021) - \$4000

Ontario Graduate Scholarship (2021) - \$15,000

Research Development Award (2020) - \$300

University of Toronto Fellowship (2017-2022) - \$35,606

University of Toronto Tuition Fellowship (2017-2021) - \$32,681

Faculty of Arts and Science Program-Level Fellowship (2017-2021) - \$3808.53

WSRC Entrance Scholarship (2017) - \$8000

Laura López Kok Memorial Scholarship (2013) - \$300

Spanish Embassy Book Prize in Intermediate Level Spanish (2011-2012) – No monetary value

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Research

Research Assistant – University of Toronto (February 2022-present)

- Research Assistant for funded project: *"When our mouth carries two worlds": The case of heritage speakers of European Portuguese in Canada* (PI: A. Rato)
- Experiment design

Research Assistant – University of Toronto (September 2021-April 2022)

- Research Assistant for project: *A fast online language assessment tool for Spanish learners* (PI: A. Perez-Leroux)
- Designed and implemented vocabulary and auditory comprehension tasks
- Recruited participants enrolled in SPA courses
- Visited classes as part of recruitment
- Organized data spreadsheets

Research Assistant – University of Toronto (November 2020-April 2022)

- Research Assistant for funded project: *Assessing the robustness of L2 phonetic training: a meta-analysis of generalization and retention of learning* (PI: A. Rato)
- Bibliographic research

Research Assistant – University of Toronto (February 2018-May 2019)

- Research Assistant for funded project: *The role of cross-language phonetic similarity and articulatory difficulty in L2 Speech Learning* (PI: A. Rato)
- Scheduling data collection
- Perception and production data collection
- Organization and analysis of production data

Publications

- Machado, V. & **Ward, O.** (2024) “¿Soy de Ribera o Rivera?: Sociolinguistic [b]/[v] variation in Rivera Spanish. *Languages Journal Special Issue: Language Contact in Borderlands* 9(10): 308. <https://doi.org/10.3390/languages9100308>

Manuscripts Submitted and in Preparation

- Machado, V. & **Ward, O.** “Bilingual perception of voicing contrasts in English and Spanish pseudowords”.
- Pérez-Leroux, A. & **Ward, O.** “A fast online language assessment tool for Spanish learners” .

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- Rato, A. & **Ward, O.** “Assessing the robustness of L2 phonetic training: a meta-analysis of generalization and retention of learning”.
- Rato, A. & **Ward, O.** “The role of cross-language phonetic similarity and articulatory difficulty in L2 Speech Learning”.

Invited Talks

- Ward, O. “La adquisición del acento léxico y la reducción vocálica del inglés como L2 por colombianos y brasileños”, California State University – Channel Islands, California, United States, November 5, 2024 (Virtual)

Refereed Presentations

- **Ward, O.** “L1 Vowel Systems and Their Impact on English Vowel Reduction and Stress Acquisition in Colombian Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese Speakers”, *New Sounds 2025*, University of Toronto, Canada, April 23-25, 2025.
- Rato, A., Oliveira, D. & **Ward, O.** “Generalization and retention as measures of L2 speech learning robustness: A systematic review of perceptual training research”, *New Sounds 2022*, University of Barcelona, Spain, April 20-22, 2022.
- Machado, V. & **Ward, O.** “Bilingual perception of voicing contrasts in English and Spanish pseudowords”, *New Sounds 2022*, University of Barcelona, Spain, April 20-22, 2022.
- Machado, V. & **Ward, O.** “Bilingual perception of voicing contrasts in English and Spanish pseudowords”, *Montreal-Ottawa-Toronto Phonology/Phonetics Workshop 2022*, University of Ottawa, Canada, March 25-26, 2022.
- Rato, A. & **Ward, O.** “The predictive role of cross-language phonetic similarity in L2 consonant learning”, *New Sounds 2019*, Waseda University, Japan, August 30-September 1, 2019.
- **Ward, O.** “Perception of L2 Spanish Lexical Stress by L1 English Listeners”, *New Sounds 2019*, Waseda University, Japan, August 30-September 1, 2019.
- Rato, A. & **Ward, O.** “Predicting difficulty in the perception of non-native consonants: The role of crosslinguistic perceptual similarity”, *II Experimental Portuguese Linguistics Workshop*, University of Toronto, Canada, April 26, 2019.
- **Ward, O.** “Effects of perceptual training on the acquisition of Spanish lexical stress”, *Quebec Ontario Dialogues on the Acquisition of Spanish*, University of Toronto, Canada, April 24, 2018.
- **Ward, O.** “The production of English /z/ and /s/ by Mexican Spanish speakers in ambiguous orthographic conditions”, *Quebec Ontario Dialogues on the Acquisition of Spanish*, University of Western Ontario, Canada, April 7, 2017.
- **Ward, O.** “Las raíces y los orígenes de Cuba: Un estudio léxico de la cultura cubana”, *Quebec Ontario Dialogues on the Acquisition of Spanish*, University of Montreal, Canada, April 22, 2016.

Other Presentations:

- Machado, V. & **Ward, O.** “Bilingual perception of voicing contrasts in English and Spanish pseudowords”, *NLT L2 Phonology Research Forum 2023*, NOVA University Lisbon, Portugal; University of Toronto, Canada; University of Lancaster, United Kingdom, December 8, 2023.

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- **Ward, O.** “The role of vowel reduction in the perception and production of L2 English lexical stress by Colombian Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese speakers – Preliminary Results”, *Summer Phonetics Forum*, University of Toronto, Canada, July 5, 2023.
- Rato, A. & **Ward, O.** “Non-native perception of European Portuguese consonants by Canadian English speakers”, *NLT L2 Phonology Research Forum*, NOVA University Lisbon, Portugal; University of Toronto, Canada; University of Lancaster, United Kingdom – Virtual, May 26, 2023.
- **Ward, O.** “Preliminary results from thesis: *The role of vowel reduction in the perception and production of English lexical stress by Spanish and Portuguese speakers*”, University of Toronto Speech Group, November 25, 2022.
- **Ward, O.** “El empleo de las actividades culturales en la enseñanza del español”, *Canadian Spanish Teaching Assistant Dialogues*, University of Toronto, Canada, February 9, 2018.
- **Ward, O.** “CSL Cuba: El aprendizaje através de la experiencia”, *Canadian Spanish Teaching Assistant Dialogues*, University of Western Ontario, Canada, February 10, 2017.

Courses Taught

Course Instructor

SPA100: Intro to Spanish, University of Toronto (2023, 2024, 2025)

- Taught 1.5-to-2-hour lecture once or twice per week to a class of approximately 20-40 students
- Administered assessments in class
- Graded coursework

SPA320: Advanced Spanish, University of Toronto (2022)

- Taught 2-hour lecture twice per week to a class of approximately 15 students
- Administered assessments in class
- Graded coursework

SPA221: Spanish Pronunciation, University of Toronto (2023, 2021, 2021)

- Taught 2-hour lecture once per week to a class of approximately 25 students
- Administered assessments in class
- Graded coursework

SPA1030: Spanish for Beginners, Western University (2015)

- Taught 2-hour lecture twice per week to a class of approximately 15 students
- Administered assessments in class
- Graded coursework

Teaching Assistant

SPA220: Intermediate Spanish, University of Toronto (2023, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019)

- Taught 1-2 hour tutorial once-twice per week to classes of approximately 15-20 students

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- Administered assessments in class
- Graded coursework

SPA100: Intro to Spanish, University of Toronto (2023, 2021, 2020, 2018, 2017)

- Taught 1-2 hour tutorial once-twice per week to classes of approximately 15-20 students
- Administered assessments in class
- Graded coursework

SPA326: Latin American Spanish Varieties Through Media, University of Toronto (2021)

- Aided Prof. Colantoni in delivering the course in an online format, including showing videos in class and monitoring the Zoom chat

SPA101: Introduction to Spanish 1, University of Waterloo (2014)

- Gave a 1-hour tutorial twice per week in the language lab

Other Experience

Online Data Analyst (Core Satisfaction) – Telus International AI Solutions (2023-2024)

- Assess search results returned by AI models in response to users' queries according to assessment criteria and users' search intent
- Assess relevant AI-generated tags for news articles

SPA420: Advanced Spanish Grammar (Grader), University of Toronto (2022)

- Graded tests and assignments

North American Canadian English Academy (NACEA) – Course Designer (2020-2022)

- Designed courses in CELPIP and IELTS for NACEA
- Created lesson plans, PowerPoint presentations and testing materials
- Organized and led orientation meetings for NACEA instructors on how to use materials

Community Service Learning (CSL) Cuba Coordinator – Western University (2016-2017)

- Organized trip to Holguín, Cuba for second and third-year Spanish students in February 2017 (including booking flights, arranging accommodation, liaising with program director in Cuba and organizing meetings for students)
- Assessed assignments, recorded attendance and provided feedback to students in program
- Acted as a resource to assist students and answers questions

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Freelance Translator (2015-present)

- Translated documents from Spanish to English
- Transcribed recordings in Spanish and then translated to English

Organization of Conferences & Workshops

Local Organizing Committee of EXPORTLI 2021, April 23-24, 2021, University of Toronto, Canada

Local Organizing Committee of *2019 Intonation Workshop*, 15 February 2019, University of Toronto, Canada

Local Organizing Committee of EXPORTLI 2018, April 2018, University of Toronto, Canada

Professional Affiliations

Canadian Linguistics Association (CLA)

Languages Spoken

English – Native

Spanish – Near Native

French – Intermediate

Portuguese – Intermediate

Referees:

Anabela Rato (Doctoral Supervisor): anabela.rato@utoronto.ca

Philip Monahan (Committee Member): philip.monahan@utoronto.ca

Laura Colantoni (Committee Member): laura.colantoni@utoronto.ca