

SARA SAEZ FAJARDO

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign | Department of Spanish and Portuguese
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EDUCATION

Ph.D. Hispanic Linguistics

Expected May 2023

Concentration in Second Language Acquisition and Teacher Education (SLATE)

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Dissertation: *Validating an elicited imitation task as an equitable measure of proficiency for heritage and second language learners.*

Committee: Melissa A. Bowles (Chair), Silvina Montrul, Xun Yan, and Chilin Shih.

M.A. Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language

June 2017

University of Salamanca, Spain

M.A. Thesis: *Assessment and Feedback on Virtual Platforms for Learning and Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language* (“Evaluación y feedback en los entornos virtuales de enseñanza/aprendizaje de ELE”).

Advisor: María del Rosario Llorente Pinto

B.A. Hispanic Philology

June 2016

University of Salamanca, Spain

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Experience with Test Development and Assessment

Research Assistant

Fall 2022-present

Department of Linguistics, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Collaborates in a state-funded project on the development of a proficiency test for interpreters English and other languages (e.g., Spanish, Polish) that seek certification.

Research Assistant (English Placement Test)

Summer 2022

Department of Linguistics, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Created test items, rated essays, proctored exams, and transcribed and coded oral exam responses.

Item Creator – DELE Test (Spanish Language Diplomas)

2017-2019

International Courses, University of Salamanca, Salamanca (Spain)

Developed seven Reading and Listening Comprehension items from texts in different Spanish dialects as well as created original texts for listening comprehension items.

Rater – DELE Test

2017-present

International Courses, University of Salamanca, Salamanca (Spain)

Rated 949 Writing Expression and Interaction Items. CEFR Levels: B1, C1

Graduate Fellow/Item Creator – SIELE (‘International Assessment Service for the Spanish Language’)

2016-2017

University of Salamanca, Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports (Spain)

Developed two items for the SIELE computerized adaptive test (‘International Assessment Service for the Spanish Language’). Developed a reading comprehension item, which involved the adaptation of published

texts, and a listening comprehension item, which involved the creation of original texts.

Course Coordination and Mentoring

TA Coordinator for Basic Spanish Courses

August 2021-Present

Department of Spanish & Portuguese, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Coordinates and collaborates in the training of the teaching assistants of Introductory Language courses and collaborates in the organization of the courses. Designs and reviews exam items, assessments and course materials.

Assistant to the Director of Introductory Spanish Language Courses (Melanie Waters, Fall 2021-Spring 2022, Dr. Kara Yarrington, Fall 2022-Present)

Program Coordination

Summer 2022

Department of Spanish & Portuguese, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Only coordinator for the courses Intermediate Spanish (2 instructors, 45 students), Intro to Hispanic Linguistics (19 students), The Structure of Spanish (11 students), Bilingualism (10 students).

Management of proctoring services. Resolution of conflicts.

Undergraduate Research Mentoring

Spring 2022 – Summer 2022

Department of Spanish & Portuguese, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Developed a mentoring program (SPAN490) for three undergraduate students to learn about graduate-level research. Mentored students on transcribing, coding, and analyzing heritage language and second language speech data.

Project: “Equitable proficiency assessment for HS and L2 learners: An elicited imitation task to test HS and L2 learners of Spanish.”

Teaching Experience

Graduate Teaching Assistant

Fall 2018-Spring 2022

Department of Spanish & Portuguese, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Elementary Spanish (SPAN101-online): Summer 2021

Intensive Elementary Spanish (SPAN 122): Fall 2018

Intermediate Spanish (SPAN 130): Spring 2019, Summer 2019, Fall 2021

Introduction to Spanish Grammar (SPAN 141): Fall 2019

Spanish Composition (SPAN 228-online): Spring 2021

The Sounds of Spanish (SPAN 303-online): Fall 2020, Spring 2021

Bilingualism (SPAN307): Spring 2022

Visiting Teaching Associate

Fall 2017-Spring 2018

Department of Hispanic Studies – Brown University

Advanced Spanish I (HISP500): Spring 2018

Advanced Spanish II (HISP600): Fall 2017, Spring 2018

Writing Consultant at *La Pluma. Writing Center*: Fall 2017, Spring 2018

Other Research Experience

Research Assistant (Dr. Melissa A. Bowles)

August 2019 – August 2020

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Worked on the project *The Bilingual Advantage Starts at Home: Raising Awareness of Home Language Maintenance Among Illinois Teachers and Families.*

Developed and managed the project's website and social media presence.
Created educational materials on bilingualism and home language maintenance.
Reached out to K-5 educators and administrators at over 500 schools across Illinois, and organized and coordinated four webinars (Summer 2020)

PUBLICATIONS

- **Saez-Fajardo, S.** & Bowles, A. M. (2022). Validating an elicited imitation task as an equitable assessment for heritage and second language learners of Spanish. *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*. (Proposal accepted. Manuscript in preparation).
- **Saez-Fajardo, S.** (2022). The language learning strategies of multilinguals: the influence of age of acquisition in early bilingualism. (Under review).
- **Saez-Fajardo, S.** (2021). Gather Town Brings Mingle Activities to Online Language Teaching. *The FLTMAG (IAALT)*. Retrieved from <https://fltmag.com/gather-town-mingle/>.

PRESENTATIONS

Oral Presentations

Saez-Fajardo, S. & Bowles, M. A. (October 2022). *Elicited imitation tasks and measures of complexity, accuracy, and fluency: Their efficiency in bilingualism research*. UIC Bilingualism Forum 2022. University of Illinois, Chicago.

Saez-Fajardo, S. & Bowles, M. A. (September 2022). *Validating an equitable and efficient measure of proficiency for research in heritage language acquisition*. Language Assessment Research Conference 2022. University of Chicago.

Saez Fajardo, S. (July 2022). *Evaluating the global competence of heritage speakers and L2 learners with complexity, accuracy and fluency measures*. 104th AATSP Annual Conference. San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Saez Fajardo, S. (May 2022). *Simultaneous bilinguals are better language learners: the influence of age of acquisition in language learning strategies use*. 8th Annual Symposium on Language Research at the University of California, Davis. UC Davis.

Saez Fajardo, S. (February 2022). *Elicited imitation tasks as equitable proficiency tests: Their efficiency on HS and L2 learners*. 14th Meeting of the Illinois Language and Linguistics Society, Online.

Saez Fajardo, S. (May 2019). *Modality and Task Effects in Grammatical Gender Processing by Spanish Heritage Speakers and L2 Learners*. Reshaping Hispanic Cultures: Instituto Cervantes Symposium for New Research 2019. Observatory of the Spanish Language and Hispanic Cultures in the United States. Harvard University.

Saez Fajardo, S. (June 2018). *Assessment and feedback on virtual platforms for foreign language learning and teaching*. V Congreso Internacional del Español en Castilla y León. Salamanca, Spain.

Poster Presentations

Saez Fajardo, S. (April 2021). *The Influence of Language Typology in Multilinguals' Language Learning Strategies*. Linguistic Symposium on Romance Languages 51. Online.

Saez Fajardo, S. (July 2021). *An Elicited Imitation Task as an Equitable Measure of Competence for Heritage Speakers and L2 Learners of Spanish*. AATSP'S 103RD Annual Conference. Atlanta, GA.

Saez Fajardo, S. (September 2019). *Modality and Task Effects in Grammatical Gender Production by Spanish Heritage Speakers and L2 Learners*. Second Language Research Forum 2019. Michigan State University.

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Dissertation Completion Fellowship <i>Graduate College, University of Illinois</i>	Fall 2022-Spring 2023
Summer Research Fellowship <i>Department of Spanish and Portuguese, University of Illinois</i>	Summer 2022
Professional Development Scholarship <i>AATSP and Platino Educa (\$2,000)</i>	Fall 2021
Conference Travel Award <i>Graduate College, University of Illinois</i>	Spring 2021
Summer Research Fellowship <i>Department of Spanish and Portuguese, University of Illinois</i>	Summer 2020
Conference Travel Award <i>Department of Spanish and Portuguese Conference, University of Illinois</i>	Spring 2019

RECOGNITIONS

List of Teachers Ranked as Excellent at University of Illinois: Spring 2019*, Summer 2019*, Fall 2019, Fall 2020*, Spring 2021, Fall 2021, Spring 2022

* = 'Outstanding' mention (Top 10% of faculty)

SERVICE

Profession

- **Communications/Professional Development Coordinator of the Downstate Illinois Chapter** **2022-2024**
American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP)
Preparation and distribution of the Chapter's monthly newsletters.
- **Committee Member of ILLS 12 & 13** **August 2019-May 2021**
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Member of the planning committee for the 2020 & 2021 Illinois Language and Linguistics Society (ILLS) conferences.
Managed website and planned conference reception.
- **Abstract Reviewer for ILLS 14** **January 2022**
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

University

- **Committee Member of Conversation Group RSO** August 2021-Present
Mi Pueblo Spanish Conversation Group, University of Illinois
Discussion and events facilitator. Secretary (Spring 2022).
- **Graduate College Senator** May 2019 – May 2021
Urbana-Champaign Campus Senate | Illinois Student Government
University of Illinois
Represented graduate students at weekly meetings with fellow student senators, and at monthly meetings at the campus-wide senate, with faculty and administration.
- **Social Chair of the Spanish & Portuguese Department** Fall 2019-Spring 2021
Department of Spanish & Portuguese, University of Illinois
In charge of planning and coordinating social events for the students in the department.
- **Coordinator and Instructor in a teacher-training platform** Fall 2016-Spring 2017
PUNTAL: Project for Innovation in Teaching,
University of Salamanca. Salamanca, Spain
Instructed free Spanish courses for international students at the University. Co-ordinated the ~15 instructors during Spring 2017. Co-created a student placement test. Taught CEFR levels A2, B2.

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

English Placement Test Rater Certificate May 2022

Department of Linguistics. University of Illinois.

Graduate Teacher Certificate May 2022

Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning. University of Illinois.

Certificate in ‘Engaging learners in social justice in the World Language Classroom’. ACTFL 2021 Spring Learning Series. Summer 2021

American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL)

Graduate Level Certificate in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) Fall 2021

Department of Linguistics, University of Illinois. 300 hours.

Certificate in “3 modes Collab for 2020 Teaching”. Fall 2020

Illinois Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ICTFL).

Received training on the creation of language teaching virtual resources for interpersonal, interpretive and presentational modes of communication.

Created three virtual resources centered in each mode of communication.

Shared and exchanged ideas and resources with other instructors.

Certificate in “Contextualized Language Instruction”. Fall 2018

Center for Language Instruction and Coordination. University of Illinois.

DELE Examiner Certificate: Written Expression and Interaction. Spring 2017

*Cervantes Institute & University of Salamanca –
International Courses, Spain. 20 hours.*

Certificate in Introduction to the Methodology of Teaching Summer 2016

Spanish as a Foreign Language [“Iniciación a la metodología de ELE”].

*Cervantes Institute & Fundación Instituto Castellano y Leonés de la Lengua.
Palencia, Spain. 20 hours.*

Certificate in Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language. Summer 2015-Spring 2016

Tía Tula: School of Spanish, Salamanca, Spain. 70 hours.

Training in instruction of CEFR Levels A1-C2.

Training in creation of pedagogical materials.

Class observations and supervised instruction of a B1-level course.

**Certificate in “Specific Training on Pedagogical Innovation
in the Spanish (L1) Classroom (3rd edition)”** Summer 2014

[Formación Específica en Innovación Educativa en el aula de Lengua y
Literatura (3ªed.)].

Universidad de Salamanca. Salamanca, Spain. 20 hours.

LANGUAGES

Spanish	Native
Catalan	Native
English	Superior
French	Advanced
Italian	Reading knowledge

Foreign Language Certifications

International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test. 2017

British Council. Overall band score: 8/9 (CEFR: C1).

Diplôme d’Études en Langue Française (DELF) B2. 2017

CIEP and Ministère de l’Éducation Nationale.

Certificate of Advanced English (CAE). 2013

University of Cambridge. CEFR: C1.

Certificate of Advanced Valencian [Catalan]. 2013

Junta Qualificadora de Coneixements de Valencià. CEFR: C1.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

The Computer-Assisted Language Instruction Consortium (CALICO)	2021-Present
American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP)	2020- Present
The American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)	2020- Present
Asociación para la Enseñanza del Español como Lengua	2018-2019

Extranjera (ASELE) [Association for the Teaching of Spanish as a Foreign Language]

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Course management software: Blackboard, Moodle, Canvas

Quantitative data analysis: Excel, R, R studio & R markdown, Facets, Winsteps

Qualitative Data Analysis: CLAN, ELAN

Audio edition and acoustic phonetic analysis: Praat, Audacity

Experiment management: Qualtrics, Surveygizmo, Amazon Mechanical Turk, Gorilla