Wednesday, March 28, 12:00 pm
Zimmerman Library, Waters Room

Synonymic Borrowings in Bilingual Context: A Corpus Approach to New Mexico Spanish

Alicia Assini
University of Texas at Austin

Please join the Latin American and Iberian Institute (LAII) and University Libraries for a presentation with Richard E. Greenleaf Visiting Library Scholar Alicia Assini, a doctoral candidate in Hispanic Linguistics at the University of Texas at Austin. Assini's research focuses on computational linguistics, which she is currently studying at the University of Stuttgart in Germany as a (DAAD, or German Academic Student Exchange) doctoral research fellow.

In this presentation, Assini will discuss her efforts to draw upon the COBOS and NMCOSS library collections to augment her knowledge and understanding of the bilingual context in New Mexico. The NMCOSS, or New Mexico and Colorado Spanish Survey, collection at UNM Libraries and the subset of transcribed interview data of 34 NMCOSS consultants, allow Assini to take a computational approach to studying the occurrence and diffusion of synonymic English borrowings in New Mexico Spanish. This analysis will facilitate a better understanding of which synonymic English borrowings are incorporated into New Mexico Spanish and with what frequency speakers draw upon these words in their Spanish discourse.

Originally, the building of the NMCOSS corpus entailed the work of a team of about 18 collaborators, who, under the guidance and leadership of Professors Bills and Vigil, produced and compiled 357 interviews between 1991 and 1996. The NMCOSS corpus resulted in the publication of their linguistic atlas, *The Spanish Language of New Mexico and Southern Colorado*, as well as in a significant number of studies that have contributed not only to our understanding of Southwest Spanish but also to the implementation of Spanish heritage language programs in New Mexico and beyond.Such a large body of data has been also a crucial tool for training students of Hispanic Linguistics on usage-based approaches to linguistic theory.

Each year the LAII partners with University Libraries to offer Richard E. Greenleaf Visting Library Scholar awards to support scholars who work with UNM's nationally-acclaimed Latin American library holdings. The award honors Dr. Richard E. Greenleaf, distinguished scholar of colonial Latin American history, and his extensive career in teaching, research, and service.

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