



Illinois Wesleyan University
Digital Commons @ IWU

John Wesley Powell Student Research
Conference

2002, 13th Annual JWP Conference

Apr 21st, 2:15 PM - 3:45 PM

Ser and Estar. A Changing Copula in a Guadalajara, Mexico Speech Community

Alissa Hoffenberg, '03
Illinois Wesleyan University

Christina Isabelli, Faculty Advisor
Illinois Wesleyan University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/jwprc>

Hoffenberg, '03, Alissa and Isabelli, Faculty Advisor, Christina, "*Ser and Estar: A Changing Copula in a Guadalajara, Mexico Speech Community*" (2002). *John Wesley Powell Student Research Conference*. 3.

<https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/jwprc/2002/oralpres5/3>

This Event is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Commons @ IWU with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this material in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/ or on the work itself. This material has been accepted for inclusion by faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@iwu.edu.

©Copyright is owned by the author of this document.

Oral Presentation O5.2

**SER AND ESTAR: A CHANGING COPULA IN A GUADALAJARA,
MEXICO SPEECH COMMUNITY**

Alissa Hoffenberg and Christina Isabelli*

Department of Hispanic Studies, Illinois Wesleyan University

In this study I have examined the process of linguistic change in a monolingual Mexican speech community, specifically that of the increased use of the verb *estar* in place of *ser*, in the Spanish copula meaning 'to be,' in the context of 'copula + adjective.' This project is a replication of the study that was conducted in Morelia, Michoacan by Gutierrez (1997), who carried out his research "in order to explain the variation between these two forms (*ser* / innovative *estar*)." It is recognized that the choice and use of these two verbs has changed throughout the history of the language and is continuing to change. The question I have posed in this investigation concerns the reason underlying this transformation. My preliminary findings support recent speculation that the use of this copula is in fact transforming in the Spanish language. Furthermore, my initial conclusions concur with those of Gutierrez in that this change is attributed to the natural evolution of the language, and is independent of the influence of the English language. However, I argue that the change that is occurring is not the emerging of a new or "innovative" use of the verb *estar* as Gutierrez calls it, but rather, it is simply an increase in it's various prescriptive manifestations where the use of *ser* has historically been more prevalent.

Works Cited

Gutierrez, M. J and L. F. Reyes, " 'Ser' y 'estar' en el habla de Michoacan, México." Nueva revista de filología hispánica. 45, no. 1, (1997): 154 –158.