The Department of Languages and Applied Linguistics
is pleased to present

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Reclaiming Language and Place in the Borderlands

Thursday, February 24th
5:30 pm – 6:45 pm

https://ucsc.zoom.us/j/99326974233?pwd=WVR5NXl4U1BYTkhwWcDg3afpNOGFFU909
Meeting ID: 993 2697 4233 Passcode: 306828

This presentation will cover two ongoing research projects focused on linguistic reclamation efforts in the historically contested U.S.-Mexico borderlands. The first part of the presentation will focus on efforts to incorporate a sociolinguistic justice approach in the undergraduate language classroom at a southern Arizona university. This project will talk about ways to incorporate the cultural and linguistic richness of surrounding communities into the classroom in ways that allow students to approach their multilingual surroundings in critical ways. It will talk about the collective work of students and its potential to create new understandings and representations of their language communities in ways that challenge deficit-based narratives of their cultures. The second part of the presentation will focus on the ongoing linguistic recovery efforts of the binational Indigenous people collectively referred to as the Opatas, a group that has had a profound influence on the language, toponymy, culture, and identity of the Sonora-Arizona borderlands region. Currently, there are no known speakers of the Opata languages (Teguima, Eudeve, and Jova) but there are archival resources and linguistic work on the languages dating back to the end of the 17th century. There is also an active community of people who identify as Opata or Opata descendants from both sides of the border who have created an online community to share information and coordinate their cultural and linguistic recovery efforts. The presentation will discuss the interconnected goals of the group as they relate to language revitalization, their individual efforts and activities, their expectations of non-Opata scholars assisting in the recovery project, and the bilingual (Spanish and English) activities currently underway to make linguistic resources available and accessible to members of the group.