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2001 PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: ON THE OCCASION OF OUR 30TH: A RETROSPECTION

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**ABSTRACT.** In 1972, under the leadership of Winfred Lehmann, linguists in the southwestern United States founded The Linguistic Association of the Southwest (LASSO) to address a number of regional needs. Among these were the need to improve communication among regional linguists, the need to provide more opportunities for public presentation and publication of work on the languages of the Southwest, and the need to study linguistic problems specific to the region, such as those relating to language education. Over the next three decades the association grew from a small, regional group to an international organization with over 200 members, conferences featuring up to 100 presentations, and a high-quality scholarly journal. Despite this growth, the association still devotes proportionally more space to papers and articles on regional subjects than comparable organizations, remaining true to the vision of its founders.

2001 KEYNOTE ADDRESS: EDUCATIONAL MALPRACTICE AND THE SOCIOPOLITICAL CONCERNS OF LANGUAGE-MINORITY STUDENTS

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**ABSTRACT.** This paper grows out of linguistic controversies surrounding educational proposals for English Language Learners and African American students that proved to be highly controversial and racially divisive. Within the past five years, Ron Unz, a successful software developer from California's Silicon Valley, put forward Proposition 227, called 'English for the Children', which severely restricted educational choices for students who are not native English speakers. Mr. Unz has also exported his legislation, with mixed results, to Arizona, Colorado, New York, and other localities. Another educational controversy began in 1996, when the Oakland, California, School Board passed a controversial resolution claiming that Ebonics was the native language of all African American students within that school district. The school board eventually abandoned that effort, and they did so, unfortunately, before lending full clarity to the literacy and educational needs of African American students. After briefly reviewing these controversies and the underlying linguistic myths that gave rise to them, I draw analogies between medical malpractice and educational malpractice with respect to language minority populations. The vital role of linguistic expertise is explored, along with some of the sociopolitical influences that have constrained educational opportunities for the vast majority of minority students, particularly if

they lack Standard English proficiency. More significantly to members of LASSO, the vital role of linguistic research for effective educational policies and teaching practices is explored in relationship to racially-motivated linguistic discrimination as gate-keeping devices in schools and other social institutions that lack significant racial diversity. This discussion also calls for a reclassification of language minority students and assurance that their educational choices are allowed to expand.

**2001 KEYNOTE ADDRESS: HIERARCHICAL PRONOUNS IN DISCOURSE: THIRD-  
PERSON PRONOUNS IN SAN LUCAS QUIAVINÍ ZAPOTEC NARRATIVES**

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**ABSTRACT.** Languages of the Zapotec language family of southern Mexico have extremely complex third-person pronoun systems whose use in extended discourse may be sensitive to speaker attitude and point of view as well as to social hierarchy. In addition to second-person formality distinctions, the languages typically have three to six third persons, usually discriminated by the status (in broad terms) of the referent. In this paper, I outline some of the factors governing third-person usage in a large narrative corpus from San Lucas Quiaviní Zapotec, a language spoken in the Tlacolula District in the Valley of Oaxaca and by many immigrants to Los Angeles. Speakers of this language use the pronouns to indicate changes in their respect and affection for referents, as well as for several more grammaticized functions. The origins of the system are somewhat obscure.

**THE PURPOSE-MODIFICATION CONTINUUM: PURPOSIVE DA-RELATIVE CLAUSES IN  
MACEDONIAN**

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**ABSTRACT.** Da-relatives in Macedonian (functionally similar to English to-relatives) are semantic and syntactic hybrids of purpose and relative clauses. They are used in informal speech to express a complex blend of purposive and modification meanings that serve to ground a new referent in the spoken discourse. The unidentified referent is modified by a future, goal-oriented event formalized by a da-relative clause. Scalar grounding of the purpose event in discourse accounts for the existence of the purpose-modification continuum. Operating on this continuum the da-relatives link the functional domain of purpose with the functional domain of modification. Thus, the da-purposive relatives illustrate gradience in semantic coding resulting in syntactic expansion of da-constructions. Apart from pragmatic factors related to the discourse function of such purposive relatives, the use of da-relatives can be attributed to several semantic factors. The most important factors are (a) referential and temporal indeterminacy of the sentence containing a da-relative, (b) lexical semantics of the matrix verbs with a dual thematic role assignment and (c) the irrealis modality of the modifying event.

**THE CONTINUING DECLINE OF ISLEÑO SPANISH IN LOUISIANA**

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**ABSTRACT.** Isleño Spanish, the dialect of Canary Island descendants living in St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana, is in attrition after more than 100 years of isolation. The dialect is of interest in the study of the processes of language death because of the accessible information from earlier research and the availability of speakers at all proficiency levels. Interviews with enclave members suggest language variation beyond reports of investigations made less than a decade ago. Language characteristics previously exclusive to semi-speakers are now found in the speech of bilinguals. The effects of decreased dialect usage are evident in comparisons of the speech patterns of bilinguals, semi-speakers, and rememberers. The attitudes of the youngest Isleños reveal a lack

of identification with the Isleño enclave and an unawareness of Isleño terminology as an entity distinct from English. The desire of the oldest Isleños to preserve the culture has led to the use of English so as to include younger enclave members. This well-intentioned use of English has inadvertently resulted in further language attrition.

#### COLONIAL LAG, SOCIAL CHANGE, AND ETHNOLINGUISTIC IDENTITY IN SOUTH TEXAS, 1791-1910

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**ABSTRACT.** South Texas Spanish is one of the most archaic varieties spoken in the United States Southwest; however, the socio-historic motivation of this archaic flavor is elusive. While social isolation is an important factor in the maintenance of archaic forms in other regions of the Southwest such as Northern New Mexico and Southern Colorado, the same reasoning does not hold true in South Texas for two reasons: First, Spanish was brought to the region comparatively late (1749), and second, the region was a magnet for southern immigration beginning as early 1860. The present paper argues that the archaic flavor of South Texas Spanish is directly tied to abrupt and intense social change in the region incited by both Anglo immigration from the north and Mexican immigration from the south. I analyze the archaic conditional use of the -ra verb form and argue that it retained force in the dialect because it came to be a symbol of ethnolinguistic identity in a linguistically heterogeneous society.

#### CORONAL AND VELAR SOFTENING IN SPANISH: THEORETICAL, HISTORICAL AND EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE OF LEXICALIZATION

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**ABSTRACT.** Voicing assimilation, phonological deletion, lateral and nasal depalatalization, diphthongization and coronal and velar softening are still largely assumed to be productive morphophonological alternations in Spanish, the result of the application of phonological rules or the operation of constraints of different ranks. Nonetheless, a number of studies suggest that at least diphthongization and nasal and lateral depalatalization may be unproductive in Spanish. The current study argues on theoretical, historical and empirical grounds that coronal and velar softening alternations in Spanish are also lexicalized, and are not part of any rule or constraint based system.

#### ‘NI A POCHA VA A LLEGAR’: MINORITY LANGUAGE LOSS AND DUAL LANGUAGE SCHOOLING IN THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDERLANDS

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**ABSTRACT.** This article considers effects of dual language schooling on the vitality of Spanish in a Mexican-American barrio in Tucson, Arizona, where diminishing Spanish language resources are concentrated in bilingual elders and recent immigrants from Mexico. I examine interactions between Spanish speakers and a bilingual magnet school located in the neighborhood to ask how proximity of a vital Spanish-speaking community influences Spanish learning and instruction. Data include responses to language questions on the U.S. Census, interviews, and participant observation in classrooms and the community. The term **LINGUISTIC FUNDS OF KNOWLEDGE** is proposed as a theoretical and pedagogical tool for integrating school and community efforts to maintain minority languages.