THANK YOU

To all of our presenters and attendees; the faculty and staff of the Department of Linguistics and Asian/Middle Eastern Languages, especially our LSA Supervising faculty, Dr. Rob Malouf; our 2013-2014 officers—Amanda Austin (President), Alicia Stevers (Vice-President), Shombe Smith (Treasurer), Noelle Todd (Secretary), Laura Jamison (Undergraduate Liaison), and Wendy Holmes (Program Advocate); and our SDSU affiliated funders—Associated Students Finance Board, Instructionally Related Activities (IRA), and the College of Arts & Letters (CAL) Council.

SDSU Linguistics Student Association (LSA)
Website: lsa.sdsu.edu
Email: sdsula@gmail.com
[9:15am-9:45am] – A SOCIOCULTURAL ANALYSIS OF TEACHER-STUDENT INTERACTION IN A MEXICAN 6TH GRADE CLASSROOM
(VANESSA QUEZADA, SDSU, LINGUISTICS)
It has been documented that there is a dearth of literacy and classroom discourse research in the northern regions of Mexico. In response, this qualitative study examines the social organization and discursive interaction of a 6th grade classroom in a public elementary school located in the U.S.-Mexico border city of Mexicali. The interactions that occurred between the teacher and students were transcribed and then analyzed in light of the constructs of co-authorship, consensus construction, agency and exploratory talk. Results show that (1) the students usurped some of the teacher’s authoritative roles and in this sense became co-authors of certain normative genres; (2) the classroom members exhibited a sociocultural tendency toward reaching consensus; and (3) the students engaged in exploratory talk even though they had not received any explicit training in this type of discourse. Furthermore, it was found that the teacher played an important role in facilitating consensus reaching and in promoting exploratory talk by using certain participant structures that allowed spontaneous student talk. The findings are consistent with previous studies of Mexican classroom interaction and suggest it differs from interaction characteristic of the United States and other English speaking settings. This has potential implications for classrooms in the United States that receive Mexican immigrant children who bring with them discursive and interactional practices or expectations that could be misunderstood on account of their contrast with the social organization of the new classroom community.

[9:45am-10:15am] – PERCEPTIONS OF KOREAN DIALECTS BY GYEONGSANG RESIDENTS (YOOJIN KANG, SDSU, LINGUISTICS)
In order to better understand people’s views of language, Preston pioneered perceptual dialectology as a sub-branch of folk linguistics in the early 1980s. Perceptual dialectology focuses on non-linguists’ commonsense beliefs and subjective mental images about regional and social variation in language. Since Preston’s pioneering research on perceptual dialectology in American English variation, many researchers have contributed to the understanding of perceptions of language variation in the U.S. and outside of the U.S. Previous perceptual dialectology and language attitude studies conducted in Korea have shown that most respondents’ home dialect speech was overwhelmingly rated as “most pleasant”. This linguistic pride in the participants’ home dialects has also been reported in similar studies conducted in western countries. However, there has been one exception to this trend; the majority of the Gyeongjang dialect speakers do not consider their home dialect as “most pleasant”, but rather they viewed Seoul dialect positively. This result suggests that Gyeongjang speech speakers have a dialect inferiority complex, a feeling that their language is inferior. The purpose of this present study is to investigate perceptions that Gyeongjang dialect speakers have about the Korean spoken in Korea and their language attitudes toward Gyeongjang dialect and Seoul dialect. The specific research questions asked in the present study are the following: (1) Where do Gyeongjang speech speakers perceive differences in the Korean spoken in Korea?; (2) What characteristics do they associate with these differences?; and (3) How do Gyeongjang dialect speakers feel about their own dialect compared to the standard, Seoul dialect? A total of 488 informants participated in this study. Each of the informants were asked to draw a boundary around each part of Korea where they believe people speak differently and label those areas for that way of speaking on a blank map of Korea. After completing the map-labeling task, informants responded to a questionnaire concerning language attitudes specifically toward Gyeongjang dialect and Seoul dialect. The combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis reveals that in comparison to Seoul dialect, there is an interplay of dialect inferiority complex and regional pride assigned to Gyeongjang dialect. Findings from this study provide insight on language attitudes and perceptions of language variation in Korea.

[10:15am-10:25am] – Break

[2:50pm-3:50pm] - Keynote Speaker 
Dr. Gregory Ward

Gregory Ward received his BA in Comparative Literature and Linguistics (with honors) from the University of California-Berkeley (1978) and his PhD from the University of Pennsylvania (1985) under the supervision of Ellen F. Prince. He is currently Professor of Linguistics at Northwestern University, where he has taught since 1986 (and was Chair from 1999-2004). He is also an affiliated faculty member in the Department of Philosophy and an advisory board member in the Program of Gender & Sexuality Studies. Ward’s primary research area is discourse/pragmatics, with specific interests in pragmatic theory, information structure, and reference/anaphora. His publications include 4 books and over 75 papers, and he has given over 150 talks and presentations. Outside Northwestern, Ward has taught at the 1993, 1997, 2003, 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2013 Linguistic Society of America (LSA) Summer Linguistic Institutes. From 1986-1998, Ward was a consultant at AT&T Labs, working on intonational meaning. In 2004-05, he was a Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, and from 2004-2007 served as Secretary-Treasurer of the LSA. Ward was elected a Fellow of the LSA in 2009 and was the 2012 recipient of the E. LeRoy Hall Award for Excellence in Teaching in Northwestern’s Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences.

[3:50pm] Closing comments from LSA Officers
The English language has many expressive grammatical forms available for a speaker to choose from, to convey anything the speaker desires to communicate. There are even a number of different constructions available to use to refer back to something previously mentioned in a discourse. One specific grammatical construction used to refer to old information is one which will be referred to as said construction. The following is an example of said construction, in standard spoken English:

1) “This morning I got in my car to come to work. I then went and put gas in said car and realized I would much rather be doing something else with the 7 minutes it takes to fill up my tank.” [K Wolfe, 2008]

The research will explore said construction to better understand its history, usage, and distribution in English communication. We examine it across various media, in terms of information status, inferrable information, and type/subtype relationships.

Bilinguals co-activate words from both their languages, but may do so differently based on the degree of translation equivalency and conceptual overlap. In this study, subjects were asked to identify a target image named in English from a field of four. An eye tracker was used to quantify the proportion of the participant’s gaze to each of the pictures, revealing whether a word that “competes” with the target receives more looks than an unrelated (filler) word. A competition effect occurs when the auditory stimulus might represent multiple objects on the screen. Therefore, comprehension should only occur in bilingual Dutch-English participants (n=7), not monolingual English participants (n=10). The target words were divided into high and low semantic overlap categories, based on the degree of conceptual (or semantic) overlap between an English word and its Dutch translation equivalent. If the competition effect is stronger for one group of stimuli, this will indicate the contribution of semantics to the activation of words in each language. Pilot data indicates that when both high and low overlap conditions are combined, bilinguals looked significantly longer at competitor images than monolinguals. Additionally, bilinguals looked significantly more to the competitor in the low overlap condition, but no difference was observed in the high overlap condition. These preliminary data will be discussed with regard to current models of language representation in bilinguals.


Nanosemantics is a meaning-based, semi-formal lexical theory of written language. It should be of interest to linguists as an application of linguistic insights and methods to an outside subfield. Also, the focus on lexicon allows a return on the research investment, in the form of innovative implications for the lexicon of the spoken language. Nanosemantics hypothesizes an articulated set of icons, which are semantic determinatives, allowing readers to triangulate the meanings of whole words. These icons, the first consonant as “Key-letter,” graphically represent archetype word-meanings kinesthetically (not onomatoepoetically). The primary evidence for nanosemantics are sets (parallel “octopi”) of words with the same first consonant and related meanings. Dimensions of the icons to be discussed here include also: their universality shown by: lexical parallels across languages (statistically supported by a “D.O.E.” to be explained); and parallel graphic evolution in alphabets in various languages, related and unrelated. The oral dimension of the Key-letters is found primarily in their reconstructed origin, but also continues into various in various modern Indo-European and non-IE languages, i.e. even without benefit of genetic relationship. Their oral dimension is also supported by: the semantic explanation they offer for unexplained features of Grimm’s Law; application to overcoming various obstacles to reading, including dyslexia, aphasia, deafness, and a spectrum or disorders here nicknamed “glossophobia”: fear (or difficulty with) foreign languages (FLs). These applications are available through the “Global Alphabet,” which is a sort of “Periodic Table” of meanings in language. My current workshops, “Tune Up Your Brain with the Global Alphabet,” to expose the elderly and other “glossophobics” to a variety of foreign language experiences are obviously a benefit in themselves, but the research pay-off comes when the Global Alphabet also makes FL study materially more effective, offering external support for nanosemantics, as in these workshops and in language courses satisfying regular curricular goals, as at SDSU and UCSD.

11:15am-12:05pm] – WORD ORDER FREEDOM IN WEST GERMANIC–AND BEYOND (DR. THOMAS SHANNON, UC BERKELEY)

Burridge (1993) has posited a general typological drift (cf. Sapir 1921; Thompson 1978) in (West) Germanic from pragmatically determined word order—where the ordering of elements depends on factors like weight and information structure—to grammatically determined word order—where purely grammatical factors are determine order. Related evidence of such a drift comes the order of medial pronominal objects and nominal subjects (cf. Shannon 2005): whereas formerly light, topical object pronouns occurred before nominal subjects (Wackernagel’s Law), in the past 500 years there has been a shift in Dutch to the grammatically determined order nominal subject > object pronoun. Moreover, a comparison of modern Dutch and modern German shows that such pronoun object preposing is still predominant in German, but has all but disappeared in Dutch. Thus, while in German both the older, pragmatically driven order (1b) and the innovating, grammatically driven order are possible (1a), in modern Dutch largely only the grammatically determined order (2a) is admissible.

1. Da hatte a) der Lehrer es ihm / b) es ihm der Lehrer doch sehr deutlich gezeigt.
   there had the teacher it him.dat / it him.dat the teacher pr. very clearly shown
2. Tch had a) de leraar het hem / b) *het hem de leraar heel goed laten zien.
   yet had the teacher it him / it him the teacher very good let see

*Yet the teacher had shown it to him very clearly.*

The main catalyst here (cf. Sapir 1921, Hawkins 1986) appears to be the deterioration of case and verbal agreement marking; the resultant syntactic ambiguity has lead speakers to favor the unambiguous order of subject before object. The maintenance of pronoun object preposing in German as opposed to Dutch can be attributed to the former’s greater preservation of inflectional signals of subject vs. object. The present paper continues research in this area by filling in some gaps within West Germanic. Data will be presented on the historical development of object preposing in German, as well as its synchronic state in Yiddish. Has German maintained a fairly constant rate of object preposing over time? Furthermore, Yiddish follows German in better preserving inflectional cues for subject vs. object: does it consequently also maintain pronoun object preposing as well as German or not? This presentation provides additional data to address these questions on syntactic drift within the West Germanic languages. Moreover, data will be provided to demonstrate that at least one language outside of Indo-European also evinces pronoun object preposing. This in turn leads to a consideration of the historical and/or typological features that could lead to the preposing of object pronouns.
[12:05pm-1:30pm] – Lunch

[1:30pm-2:00pm] – TONE IN IXPANTEPEC NIEVES MIXTEC WORD PROSODY (LUCIEN CARROLL, LINGUISTICS, UCSD)

This work presents a phonological description and acoustic analysis of the tone system of Ixpantepec Nieves Mixtec, within the context of the word prosodic structure. The analysis of Nieves Mixtec word prosody is complicated by a close association between morphological structure and prosodic structure, and by the interactions between word prosody and phonation type, which has both contrastive and non-contrastive roles in the phonology. Building on analyses of other Mixtec tone systems, I show that the distribution of tone and the tone processes in Nieves Mixtec support an analysis in which morae may bear H, M or L tone, where M tone is underlyingly unspecified, and each morpheme may sponsor a final +H or +L floating tone. Bimoraic roots thus host up to two linked tones and one floating tone, while monomoraic clitics host just one linked tone and one floating tone, and tonal morphemes are limited to a single floating tone. In this paper, I present three studies describing the acoustic realization of tone and comparing the realization of tone in different prosodic types. The findings of these studies include a strong directional asymmetry in tonal coarticulation, increased duration at the word or phrase boundary, and glottalization spreading rightward while breathy phonation spreads leftward.

[2:00pm-2:30pm] – ARE YOU GONNA FINISH THAT? GRAMMATICAL ASPECT AND EVENT DESCRIPTION IN RUSSIAN-ENGLISH BILINGUALS (IRINA POTOPOVA, LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATIVE DISORDERS, SDSU/UCSD)

Recent studies suggest that cross-linguistic differences in grammar may impact performance on linguistic and non-linguistic tasks related to event perception. For example, English speakers remembered agents of accidental actions more accurately than Spanish speakers (Fausey & Boroditsky, 2011). This performance pattern aligns with cross-linguistic differences in that English speakers frequently use agentive constructions (“She broke the vase”) even for accidental actions, while Spanish speakers use non-agentive constructions (that could be translated as “The vase broke itself”). Such studies, in addition to work on spatial orientation, conceptualization of time, and color perception, have been taken as evidence of the potential for language to impact cognition. Extending this line of inquiry to bilingual speakers not only sheds light on the relationship between language and cognition, it may provide valuable insight on the impact of various bilingual profile characteristics, such as relative proficiency and age of acquisition.

In the present study, we investigate whether native language patterns in event description are present when Russian-English bilingual speakers are prompted in their second language. While aspect, or an event’s degree of completion, is obligatorily marked on the verb in Russian, it is only optionally marked in English (e.g., it is possible to say “Max drank the juice” if Max drank the entire glass or if he had one sip). Given this difference, it is possible that individuals with Russian language experience attend more closely to events’ degree of progress, which may be reflected in an event description task. Thirty-nine Russian-English bilinguals (mean age=32.69 years, SD=8.7) viewed images of complete and incomplete actions and were prompted to describe them. Responses were categorized as either providing aspectual information (e.g., “Max had eaten the bowl of cereal”) or not (e.g., “Max ate cereal”). Results indicate that sequential Russian-English bilinguals provided more responses with degree of completion information than monolingual English controls. Further, individuals that identified themselves as native Russian and non-native English speakers were significantly more likely to provide event progress information than individuals who identified as native speakers of both Russian and English. Overall, findings suggest that language experience is associated with event description patterns. Building on these preliminary findings, follow-up experiments employing non-linguistic performance are underway.
[1:50pm-2:20pm] – LINGUISTIC VARIATION TO INDEX ONE’S IDENTITY (NICOLE SIMINSKI, SDSU, APPLIED LINGUISTICS)

This research project observes the construction of an identity in various social situations through the utilization of available tools such as music, attire, and specifically, linguistic resources. Identity can be constructed linguistically using phonological features, specific word choices and discourse patterns. The subject of this study was a 33 year-old biracial male physical therapist who reflects the hip hop identity. The research observes the way the subject speaks in different social situations, his clinic v. his family. Data was collected from the subject as he interacted with different participants from various social groups and indexed varying degrees of his identity using language associated with hip hop culture, which was analyzed for linguistic variation. Many people use language associated with African American English (AAE) to construct a specific identity via hip hop culture (Alim, 2004). The research exposes the role that non standard varieties of English play in the construction of identity characterized by their involvement with hip hop communities and not by their socially imposed categories.

[2:20pm-2:50pm] – REVISTING GRIMM’S LAW (ARE HEBREW AND ENGLISH RELATED AFTER ALL?) (DR. ZEV BAR-LEV, SDSU, PROFESSOR EMERITUS)

Grimm’s Law set the foundation for modern linguistics (as much as de Saussure’s later axiom of “arbitrariness”). But there are unanswered questions about Grimm’s Law and Saussure’s axiom. Why did the sounds change as they did, e.g. P to B or F but not to T or K? Why does Grimm’s Law mainly address roots of CVC-, rather than other sequences CCC-? How many IE roots resemble each other beyond random probability, especially when sharing the first consonant, e.g. pel-/pl- “push, spread, flat, citadel,…? How was Grimm’s Law greeted by contemporary scholars? How does it fit into the history of the study of language? How did Saussure’s axiom fare in subsequent linguistics? This paper will explain Hebrew-English lexical coincidences by the Key-letter System developed and taught at SDSU & UCSD for several decades (and widely published in US and Israel on Hebrew and Arabic). Could the Key-letter system apply to English? With what changes? Does the result belong to linguistics? The set of H-E coincidences is not as saturated as that of Grimm’s Law; what does this imply, theoretically and practically?

[2:30-3:30 pm] – PROCESSING PREFERENCES IN FOCUS-SENSITIVE COORDINATION: LOCALITY AND PARALLELISM (DR. JESSE HARRIS, UCLA & KATY CARLSON, MOREHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY)

Focus-sensitive coordinators like ‘much less’ and ‘let alone’ establish a complex semantic contrast between its conjuncts (Fillmore, Kay, & O’Connor, 1988). For example, ’John can’t run a MILE, much less a MARATHON’ compares ‘a mile’ with ‘a marathon’ so that ‘a mile’ is ranked lower than ‘a marathon’ on some contextually salient scale. Expanding on arguments from Hulsey (2008) and Toosarvardani (2010), I propose that focus-sensitive coordination requires ellipsis, so that what seems like the second conjunct ‘a marathon’ is actually the remnant of VP/CP ellipsis, as in move and delete analyses (e.g., Frazier, Potter, & Yoshida, 2012; Sailor & Thom, 2013). I review results from corpus research and several experimental studies in collaboration with Katy Carlson that support this claim. In particular, processing focus-sensitive coordination is shown to be sensitive to constraints active in processing ellipsis, including (i) a bias for more local correlates and (ii) a preference for parallelism. In this talk, I explore the preference for parallelism in ‘Adjective sprouting’ in which the remnant (‘a RED one’) semantically contrasts with an element not present in the correlate (‘a hat’) from the preceding clause, as in ‘I don’t think I own a hat, much less a RED one.’ Implications for processing of ellipsis structures are discussed.

References
**[9:00-9:20] – A light breakfast will be served for morning attendees and presenters**

**Morning Schedule**

**[9:20am-9:50am] – FREQUENCY-BASED ASSESSMENT OF LEXICAL KNOWLEDGE IN EAP CONTEXT (PROF. MAGDOLNA LEHMANN, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF PECS)**

This talk reports on the development of a corpus-based vocabulary test designed to meet the special lexical needs of first-year students of English at a Hungarian university. Earlier studies found vocabulary size to be predictive of achievement in reading, writing, general language proficiency, and academic success. As words common in academic texts behave differently across disciplines, learners and testers need to focus on discipline-specific lexis in higher education. Therefore, the four validated vocabulary tests proposed here incorporate the most frequent words in the Corpus of Readings in English Studies (CORES), a specialized compilation of texts used in our English studies program. It is shown that besides a good knowledge of frequent and academic words, being familiar with specific lexis that are rare in general English texts but frequent in the discipline of English studies highly increases the potential of students in academic text comprehension.

**[9:50am-10:20am] – WITTGENSTEIN’S PRIVATE LANGUAGE (BRIAN THOMAS, SDSU, PHILOSOPHY)**

This work presents two theories of a private language constructed from the refutation of 3 of Wittgenstein’s assumptions concerning Language. There are 2 parts: Part (I) a refutation of 3 assumptions made by Wittgenstein regarding aspects of Language. The refutation and assumptions in the order as they are addressed: (A) How Wittgenstein fails to address all aspects of the function of Language, (B) How Wittgenstein’s approach to Language makes a presupposition about users of a given language, finally, (X) How language is used between individuals that is not consistent with the argument against private language. Part (II) constructs and presents 2 theories of a private language: (Δ) an argument for a weak private language, and (E) an argument for a strong private language. The argument for a weak private language is based, primarily, on qualia language. I argue qualia language is always used with reference to the subject using the term, thus there cannot be an objective standard for the meaning of the term. Under the strong private language theory, I argue one attaches qualia language to an image, or has a qualitative state evoked. In the instance of the strong private language, there are 2 obstacles: the perception, and the qualia language or description of the perceptive image. The completed research will result in two complete theories for a private language.

**[10:20am-10:50am] – INFERENTIAL RELATIONS IN SHORT FICTION (AMANDA AUSTIN, SDSU, GENERAL LINGUISTICS)**

This study takes a discourse analytic approach to examine and compare inferential relations in noncanonical syntactic structures in a contemporary corpus of Short Fiction. Is there any relation between length of text and frequency of inferential relations in this Short Fiction corpus? Is there any relation between inferential relations and literary motifs? The syntactic structures analyzed are argument-reversing constructions, i.e., preposings & inversions, and the English existential construction. The types of inferable relationships under investigation are bridging, elaborating, and identity inferences. This study also integrates literary theory and Narratology in a linguistic account of the Maxim of Manner in respect to brevity, ambiguity, and breaks in chronological narration. The results of this study provide an analysis of inferences in fictional narratives that are less than two thousand words in length, as well as a pragmatic account of the flouting of Maxims for literary effect.

**[3:30pm] Closing comments from LSA Officers**

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**Keynote Speaker:**

**Dr. Jesse Harris**

Jesse Harris received a joint BA/MA in Linguistics from the University of Chicago (2003), his Masters in Logic from the University of Amsterdam, Institute for Logic, Language and Computation (2007), and his PhD from UMass Amherst (2012). Before joining the Department of Linguistics at UCLA as an assistant professor in 2014, he was an assistant professor at Pomona College in the Department of Linguistics and Cognitive Science. Harris’ research uses experimental methods to investigate how language users develop a sufficiently rich linguistic meaning during online comprehension, concentrating in particular on three related areas: (a) the formal semantics of context-sensitive expressions, (b) the semantic processing of contextually dependent terms, and (c) the pragmatic and processing defaults engaged when generating a semantic or discourse representation for an utterance or phrase.
THANK YOU

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Linguistics Student Association Presents: “Language Across the Disciplines”
9:00am-4:00 pm
Aztec Student Union Theatre
San Diego State University