

UTSA hosted more than 250 linguists from around the world



Professor **Bridget Drinka**, UTSA Department of English, organized the 23rd International Conference on Historical Linguistics which took place last summer in San Antonio. It was one of the first official events commemorating San Antonio’s 300th anniversary. UTSA was one of the handful of American universities to host this conference since it began more than forty years ago.

“It was an immense honor for our institution as this conference is only hosted by Tier One universities and is the most important gathering of historical linguists in the world,” said Drinka. “The conference focused on historical linguistics and attempts to answer the essential questions of how and why languages change.”

“The conference gave UTSA students a unique opportunity to network with top researchers, from more than 40 countries, in the linguistics field. Attendees discovered San Antonio’s history by exploring our linguistic roots,” said Drinka.

Linguistics at UTSA is a growing discipline, with its new Interdisciplinary Graduate Certificate and its 16 linguists located across campus, in three colleges. Administered by the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, UTSA’s linguistics offerings provide a multi-disciplinary approach, and include the following specializations: historical linguistics; sociolinguistics; applied linguistics (Dept. of Bicultural-Bilingual Studies); and neurolinguistics (Dept. of Biology).

Drinka is the president of the International Society for Historical Linguistics. Her research focuses on Indo-European and historical linguistics. Her recently published book, *Language Contact in Europe: The periphrastic perfect through history*, makes a case for language contact as a major force in language change.

A \$20,000 grant from the National Science Foundation was awarded to organize the conference. Additional support was provided by Humanities Texas, Casa de España San Antonio, and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science and ORAU.

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One important component was a series of panels celebrating the rich cultural history of our city entitled, “Las lenguas de San Antonio a 300 años: Reconstructing the Linguistic Roots of a Multicultural City”. It included:



SPANISH SOCIO-HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS: ISOLATION AND CONTACT



AFRICAN AMERICAN VERNACULAR ENGLISH AND THE ECOLOGY OF LANGUAGE EVOLUTION



THE HISTORY OF TEXAS GERMAN



ENDANGERED LANGUAGES AND HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS