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Editorial

As president of three international associations – the International Society for Dialectology and Geolinguistics, the Atlas Linguarum Europae and the International Association of University Professors of English – I am deeply convinced of the international nature of scholarship. Therefore, I am very pleased that Lingua Americana adheres to this principle.

The position that the editor-in-chief of this journal kindly offered to me is an additional indication in this direction. I see this position as a challenge. Scholars in my part of the world should be made aware much more than heretofore of the important research going on in other parts of the world. Research on, for instance, indigenous languages in South America, well represented in this journal, is at present taken note of in Germany and beyond only in small closed circles. Yet it has broad implications in linguistics. We only have to think of such areas as language typology and language universals.

The contributions that have appeared so far in the six issues of Lingua Americana also struck me because quite a few deal with variation in languages. Theory is, of course, important here, however, most important to the authors of this journal and to me is data. Data can change the theory, but not viceversa. Yet we all know of attempts where data that did not support a particular theory were simply suppressed. Even worse, for some of our colleagues data seems to be the most obscene of the four-letter words, as Raven I. McDavid, Jr., put it many years ago. Unfortunately, this is still true today.

From what I said above, it follows that there are good reasons why the contents of the contributions of Lingua Americana should be better known outside the area where this journal is published.

I mentioned above the International Society for Dialectology and Geolinguistics, founded ten years ago. Among its aims are:

“The international promotion of dialectology and geolinguistics, open to all theoretical and methodological approaches; the collaboration with all institutions concerned with dialectology and geolinguistics; the exchange of knowledge in the domain of dialectology and geolinguistics, in particular with regard to new theories and methods; the collaboration with all disciplines that contribute to the advancement of dialectology; the scientific study of minority languages and dialects, also with a view to their safeguard, in conformity with the declaration of human rights”.

*The society’s journal, Dialectology and Geolinguistics, now in its ninth year of existence, publishes pertinent research. In view of the rich and varied activities in South America in both regional dialectology and social dialectology, I take this opportunity to invite contributors and readers of *Lingua Americana* to send me their work. This is yet another possibility to allow others to learn about ongoing research and to profit from insights gained by South American scholars.*

In sum, my plea is a simple one: Let us strengthen the ties of international research and cooperation.

Wolfgang Viereck
International Associate Editor

Lingüística General

