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Dilatations of pseudo-Anosov automorphisms.

I'll discuss previous work on dilatations of pseudo-Anosov automorphisms in subgroups of the mapping class group generated by two positive multi-twists and the appearance of Lehmer's number. In addition, I'll talk about the problem of determining minimal dilatations for other special subgroups and a recent solution (joint work with B. Farb and D. Margalit) for the case of the Torelli subgroup. (Received September 21, 2005)