

Welcoming remarks

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It is my great honor and distinct pleasure to welcome you to the Georgetown University Round Table on Language and Linguistics and to thank everyone who submitted abstracts either for single papers or for colloquia. Sincere thanks also to Ai-Hui Tan, Suzy Springer, and the large numbers of students and faculty who have volunteered their precious time to make this conference a success. And special thanks to Jim Alatis for his immediate and enthusiastic embrace of my proposal for the GURT 2000 theme.

Just a little over a year ago, I was talking with a group of graduate students in the lobby of the American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL) conference hotel in Stamford, Connecticut. As we were expressing our disappointment at the relative lack of conference sessions that year on the application of linguistics to professions other than education, we decided to try to organize a conference specifically devoted to a full range of applications. Upon my return to Georgetown University, I called Jim Alatis, thinking that a conference could take place in 2001 or 2002—sometime in the future. But with barely a second's pause, he said, "Yes, let's do it next year." A quick listing of plenary speakers and the nearly immediate agreement from all of them gave us the courage to forge ahead with a call for papers; we were off and running. When December's mail contained a large number of conference abstracts, we were gratified to see that so many people shared our interest in coming together for a meeting like this one.

In addition to our six plenary speeches, the conference consists of six concurrent sessions that highlight applications of linguistics to issues in education, journalism, law, medicine, technology and "other" (see Appendix A for a list of all conference presentations). On the final day of the conference, our plenary speakers will come together to discuss with you the current state of cross-disciplinary work and to explore where it is headed (see Closing Panel Discussion).

Whether you are a veteran of working across disciplines, just entering the field, or even just contemplating what such a life would be like, we welcome you most enthusiastically to the Georgetown University Round Table and hope that you will find the sessions to be useful and thought-provoking. Enjoy yourselves!

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