Winter Storm 2012, in Summary

Around 125 students and faculty members participated in Winter Storm 2012 – an intensive 2-week workshop organized by the University of Maryland's language science community in connection with its NSF-IGERT program on Biological and Computational Foundations of Language Diversity. The goal of this year's Winter Storm was to offer an opportunity for interdisciplinary networking between students and faculty, collaborative team-building, professional development and acquisition of new skills. The 2012 Winter Storm's program included:

- **Introductory lecture** by Dr. Colin Phillps, where he addressed the progress of the IGERT program to date and outlined the goals of the program for the near future.
- **Daily 2-hour Morning Sessions.** This course was meant as an introduction to both programming and statistics using free R software. The teachers – all graduate students from the Linguistics department (Wing Yee Chow, Shevaun Lewis, Annie Gagliardi, Ewan Dunbar) – demonstrated how to format, organize and analyze the data and introduced some tools for data visualization. Anyone interested was welcome, but the course was directed especially to students with no previous knowledge and to intermediate students who would like to improve their expertise with R.
- **Advanced R Sessions**. Led by Dr. Scott Jackson from CASL, this session targeted advanced users of R, and covered plotting techniques to help the researchers visualize their results in a more effective way for presentation and publication.
- **Lunch Talks.** We asked faculty members from various UMD departments to give talks on their research in order to help language science students learn more about the different types of language research that is being conducted on campus. The invited speakers included Dr. Peter Carruthers (Philosophy), Dr. Jeff McSwan (Education), Dr. Cathy Doughty (SLA/ CASL), Dr. Alexander Williams (Linguistics/Philosophy), Dr. Min Wang (Human Development), Dr. Elizabeth Redcay (Psychology), Dr. Yi Ting Huang (Hearing and Speech), Dr. Jonathan Beier (Psychology), Dr. Mike Maxwell (CASL). Besides the intellectual pleasure, the attendees were treated to free delicious lunches provided by lunch elves (graduate student volunteers), courtesy of UMIACS.
- **Professional Development Series**. This Winter Storm session provided the participants with an opportunity to prepare for life after graduation. The three sessions discussed 1) how to obtain a post-doc overseas and what to expect of it (led by Dr. Akira Omaki, Johns Hopkins University), 2) how to secure a job in academia and what it entails (led by Dr. Susanne Jaeggi, UMD) and 3) how to prepare for the job market (led by Dr. Howard Lasnik, UMD). These sessions had a very informal atmosphere where the session leaders shared their experience and advice and the participants had the opportunity to express concerns and ask questions.
- **Special Interest Groups (SIGs)**. Based on the successful outcome of these

sessions in previous years, this year's Winter Storm brought together new research groups with plenty of opportunities for the participants to establish interdisciplinary connections and work on collaborative projects. This year's SIGs were devoted to diverse topics, such as Eye-tracking (led by Susan Teubner-Rhodes), Language Production (led by Dr. Robert Slevc), Psych reality of grammars (led by Dr. Georges Rey), ACT-R computational model (led by Dan Parker), and Theory of Mind (led by Kate Harrigan).

- **Panel Session.** A new feature of this year's Winter Storm was the panel session on "Translation of Research to Practical Applications". The overall goal of the panel was to raise awareness of connections between basic science and practical applications of language science and to discuss best practices for improving these connections. The talks by the three panelists from a variety of fields - Dave Baggett (UMd graduate, technology entrepreneur, UMd Board of Trustees), Dr. Nan Ratner (Chair, Hearing & Speech Sciences) and Dr. Mike Long (Founder, SLA program) – were very warmly received and engaged the participants in a lively discussion.

The Winter Storm 2012 Organizing Committee— Anna Lukyanchenko (SLA), Susan Teubner-Rhodes (Psychology/NACS), Kate Harrigan (Linguistics), Sol Lago (Linguistics), Candise Lin (Human Development), Ilina Stojanovska (SLA) and Xuan Wang (Philosophy)— would like to thank the many people who participated in this event and helped to make it a success.

For details of the Winter Storm 2012 see the Winter Wiki at http://www.languagescience.umd.edu/wiki/WinterStorm