EVS-Eduling Virtual Seminars October-November 2023
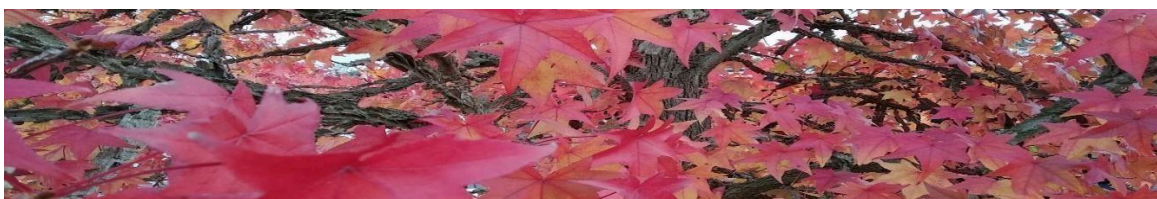
Date	Invited Speaker	Title
Friday, 27 October 2023	Maya Honda (MIT Massachusetts Institute of Technology)	(Provisional: Linguistics in the classroom)
Friday, 24 November 2023	Xavier Fontich (UAB)	Grammar in the classroom: activities to engage students in a challenging metalinguistic activity
TIME: 16:00-18.00 (CET / UTC+1)		

16:00-16:05	Seminar presentation
16:05-16:50	Conference
16:50-17:05	Questions
17:05-17:15	Coffee break at home (if needed)
17:15-18:00	Open discussion on the exposition focus*
* All the participants are invited to expand the exposition focus, presenting other perspectives or work on the same theme.	

REGISTRATION FORM link

Teams link

TEAMS link 🔗

Maya Honda

MIT Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Thinking linguistically about language

(ppt here)

Across three decades, I have worked with colleagues to introduce students to linguistics, the scientific study of language, with the goal of developing their understanding of scientific inquiry as well as their understanding of the nature of language. We have proceeded on the belief and on the evidence that the native language knowledge that each student brings to the classroom is a rich, accessible database, which can be used to familiarize students with the methods, concepts, and attitudes of scientific inquiry in a quite familiar domain.

We seek to engage students in 'thinking linguistically' about a central question of linguistics: What does someone know when they know a language? The work focuses on telling a connected story about knowledge of language, or 'mental grammar', constructed from problem sets that we have developed and from students' own work. We integrate cooperative teaching and learning with a problem-set-based approach to linguistic inquiry in order to foster an intellectual climate in the classroom in which all students can develop a scientific way of thinking about language. Problem sets about data from diverse languages motivate cross-linguistic inquiry, including the investigation of students' native language. Students work together in pairs or small groups to formulate hypotheses to account for patterns in data. Since multiple hypotheses are often proposed in a class, evaluating competing hypotheses enables students to develop scientific argumentation.

In this seminar, I will reflect on what we have learned from our work in diverse settings about fostering linguistic inquiry in the classroom. Key words: mental grammar; cross-linguistic inquiry; problem sets; scientific argumentation; cooperative teaching and learning

Suggested reading: Honda, Maya, & Wayne O'Neil. 2017. On thinking linguistically.

Revista Linguística, 13(1), 52-65. https://revistas.ufrj.br/index.php/rl/article/view/10420/7912

[TEAMS link]

Xavier Fontich

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Grammar in the classroom: activities to engage students in challenging metalinguistic activity

The role of teaching grammar in compulsory school is a subject of debate. Should it remain in the background, relying on the use of language as a means for implicit grammatical learning? Or should it adopt a direct instructional approach, aiming for near-automatic transfer of knowledge into practical use? In the following lines, we position ourselves to integrate both perspectives. We believe that grammatical knowledge can be developed by focusing on language use and by exploring the relationships within the grammatical system, even when temporarily disconnected from practical application. We advocate for the notion that true language proficiency entails not only knowing how to use a language but also understanding how to critically examine and analyze it. We argue that effective linguistic communication is only possible when accompanied by this reflective component. To this end, we present 17 strategies, or "pills," with a threefold purpose: to encourage reflection on linguistic communication, to study the language system itself, and to promote innovative classroom practices. The objective of these strategies is twofold: first, to emphasize the importance of metalinguistic activity as a catalyst for learning, and second, to acknowledge the challenge we all face in fostering meaningful engagement with this activity in the classroom. We provide an exploratory analysis of two dialogues in which secondary students attempt to solve a grammar problem. Through this analysis, we highlight the advantages of our approach, as well as its limitations and the challenges it presents.. Keywords: Grammar; Use; System; Classroom; Metalinguistic activity

Bosque, I. (2020). El nuevo Glosario de términos gramaticales. Bellaterra Journal of Teaching & Learning Language & Literature, 13(2), 1-15. https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/jtl3.869

Poggio, A. (2020). Review. Research and teaching at the intersection: Navigating the territory of grammar and writing in the context of metalinguistic activity, edited by Anna Camps and Xavier Fontich, 2020". Bellaterra Journal of Teaching & Learning Language & Literature, 13(3), e889. https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/jtl3.889