Bridging authoritative and internally persuasive voices – a Bakhtinian perspective on everyday engagement with science

Dr. Iris Tabak, School of Education, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

In this lecture, I will discuss tensions between science’s authoritative voice and individuals’ own sense making. Increasingly, educational efforts, including those in science education, focus on supporting learners in developing self-efficacy and agency with respect to disciplinary practices. This requires bridging between learners’ and professional scientific perspectives. As my research has extended out of the classroom to informal and online spaces, I have found, drawing on Bakhtin, that the dialectic between personal and authoritative voice configures differently in different contexts, challenging assumptions about the relative weight accorded to scientific authority. Based on this research, I will propose a conceptual framework for considering the tension between authoritative and internally persuasive discourse in the contexts of science learning and public engagement with science.