

The Institute for Mesoamerican Studies
is pleased to present:

Yucatec Maya Discourse Particles and the Structure of Speech Acts



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3:00pm
FA 126

While sometimes omitted written texts, discourse particles like English "um", "like", and "well" are ubiquitous in spoken language and serve to add social or epistemic nuances to a discourse. While such discourse particles are not easily translated and their meanings may seem somewhat ineffable, recent research in formal pragmatics has provided useful tools for precisely characterizing their conversational effects. In this talk, I present the result of several recent and ongoing studies of discourse particles in Yucatec Maya: *wale'* "maybe, watch out", *bakáan* "oh", and *bin* "they say". Finally, we show that beyond furthering our understanding of these discourse particles themselves, careful study of the interactions with different sentence types, such as imperatives, has consequences for our understanding of the characteristic effects of these sentence types as well.



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