

Researching learning for the sake of teaching

At the center of this talk lies the claim that decisions about how to teach should grow, first and foremost, from the teacher's knowledge of how people learn. After a brief introduction to the current research on learning, I will review some of the ways in which its findings can inform teaching. In particular, I will be talking about (1) the possible contribution of research-enabled insights into learning to teachers' language, and thus to their thinking, about their students and their practice; and (2) the role of the research in making the teacher aware of hidden mechanisms that promote or constrain learning and of factors that can undermine the effectiveness of her efforts. I will conclude with a brief discussion of how learning scientists and educators may collaborate, the project that requires overcoming institutional constraints and creating a discourse common to these two communities.