



Creative Corner News from the Language Lab

Instructor Luca Ambrogiani was spotted during an intense Italian 111 session. Mr. Ambrogiani hails from Italy, where he studied at the University of Urbino located in central Italy. He is a doctoral student at the Graduate Center's Ph.D. program in Comparative Literature and a Graduate Teaching Fellow in the Department of Languages & Literatures. The Language Lab uses a special language learning platform created by Robotel which is based in Montréal, Canada. Robotel is a global leader in the development of language learning and computer lab management digital systems. Language lab professors use a feature of Robotel called SmartClass+. This provides classroom management capabilities and facilitates the development of students' listening/speaking skills. With SmartClass+ professors can share their screens/audio/video, lock screens, message students, speak with an individual student, monitor student activities, listen as students perform recordings and more. All of this is done from one central teacher's computer. It makes class totally exciting and interactive...no wonder students are sitting on the edge of their seats!

Recently, Francisco Montaño, Lecturer in Languages & Literatures, proctored an OPIc exam as part of the requirements for the M.A. in Teaching Spanish 7-12. What is an OPIc exam? This means Oral Proficiency Interview by computer, the national standard issued by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) for evaluating how well a person speaks a language. But here's the catch: it's done by computer, not a person. The program uses an avatar to communicate with testers, while the test-taker's recorded speech samples are evaluated by trained ACTFL language specialists. Welcome to the age of Artificial Intelligence and conversational bots!

So, when you're around the corner in Carman Hall, come check us out and learn something interesting about new languages. The Language Lab facilities are coordinated by Sonia Rai, technology coordinator for Arts & Humanities, Division of ITR, who facilitates the Lab's use by students and faculty along with Lab technicians Badar Islam and Abraham Martínez.