

Micro-Paper 1: *Polylinguaging*

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Defining the Term

Polylinguaging is a form of code-switching used mostly by adolescent speakers of different native languages in a creative way to achieve their communicative aim. This term was first developed to study the development of linguistic practices and linguistic awareness among adolescents in Danish schools.

Polylinguaging uses the meanings of words in any language in superdiverse societies. We can say that if languaging is the human activity of using a communication tool to achieve social interaction, polylinguaging is the human activity of using more than one language to communicate something. It is irrelevant to master any language at a high level, because just having the knowledge of some necessary linguistic features is enough.

Polylinguaging creates the possibility of acquiring comprehension of words in other languages, and using them to communicate. But there is a rupture between the idea of language purism and the one of mixed languages. A central argument in polylinguaging is that proficiency in a language is no longer a prerequisite to use it because speakers tend to use features of languages rather than languages in full.

Connecting it to LSLP

We have used polylinguaging in our first two projects. Through the use of polylinguaging, we have been able to observe that Medellín is not a monolingual city. In our first study, we learned that there are quite a few advertisements or names of places in other languages in Medellín. Our argument through polylinguaging has been

that it is not about bringing bilingualism to the city but about realizing it was already there.

We will revisit this notion in the second phase of our project on urban literacies. We plan to integrate new urban spaces where English appears in order to reflect on how English is used as language and semiotic resource in our city. Our videogames research line will also use the idea of polylinguaging in our efforts to understand how English is a useful resource when it comes to winning a game.

Expanding Second Language Research

Polylinguaging has plenty of potential in the field of second language. As a concept, it can help understand how today's language users develop a cosmopolitan identity due to their ability to use words of any language in any kind of context.

Examples of research using polylinguaging may include deeper analyses of the mixtures of languages and cultures in the Caribbean (as has happened Creole or Papiamentu). Research combining polylinguaging and multimodality will also open spaces to study how communication based on more than two languages combined with several media may create different artifacts and media as tools for communication.

References

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