



Autoethnography: a decolonial approach to researching the intercultural

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This talk discusses the ways in which autoethnography and the concept of ‘linguistic encirclement’ (Ndhlovu & Odhiambo, 2024) provide an alternative lens for researching the intercultural that highlight the role of language in processes of decolonialisation. It argues that these tools provide a new arsenal with which to dismantle the rational, the objective, and the hierarchical and the extractionist approach that deprives the research subject from their agencies. Instead of treating colonial languages as separate from the fined-honed arsenal of coloniality (Stroud, 2024), autoethnography allow us to foreground and amplify the voices and languages of the subject, their experiences, and the ‘deviant’ and multilayered stories (Muncey, 2005) that connect personal reflection to the social and the cultural. Such an approach presents a novel and socially just way of accessing and constructing knowledge that challenges Western-centric and colonial approaches to languages and research, and hopes to provide a set of tools that contributes to decolonise knowledge and how we talk about our languages and the intercultural.

Dr. Cristina Ros i Solé is Senior Lecturer in Language, Culture and Learning, Department of Educational Studies, Goldsmiths and Chair of the International Association of Languages and Intercultural Communication. Her research investigates the lived experience of multilingualism in today's transnational world and the challenges it presents for world-making, belonging, and social justice. Her work draws on post-humanism and new materialism theory, and uses ethnographic and post-qualitative methodologies. She has published widely in the areas of identity, the lived experience of multilingualism, and the student experience of globalisation in Higher Education. Her latest book 'Material Interculturality: making sense with everyday objects' (Routledge, 2025) looks at world-making with ordinary cultural artefacts.

