

Explorations in Ethnography, Language and Communication Conference
'Language, inequality and the everyday (un)making of alliances'

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Title: Slow institutional change and the practice of resisting discomfort

Many universities are increasingly branding themselves as global, intercultural and even anti-racist, yet higher education policies and practices do not always reflect or adapt to the increasingly mobile international and multilingual student body. The paper reflects on a three year 'Reimagining Conversations' institutional research project exploring the creative and educational potential of multilingual international students. The paper draws on linguistic ethnography, ethnographic monitoring and the importance of 'slow science' (Van der Aa and Blommaert, 2016) as a relevant framework for researching institutional settings seeking change.

In applying this framework as both method and approach for linking tutor talk with educational processes, practices and inequalities, the first part of the talk presents an overview of project findings with specific focus on how some of the day-to-day challenges reported by tutors appear to have their origins in competing institutional imperatives (Internationalisation and Growth *versus* Equality, Diversity and Inclusion); and how institutionally endorsed priorities, practices and achievements may disadvantage multilingual international students of colour. The approach outlined has facilitated research which make connections between classrooms and HE sector policy and practices; and in doing so highlights consequential pedagogic practices that are overlooked or treated as trivial. Yet the types of alliances needed in order to effect and sustain change are not always perceived as comfortable. The second part of the talk offers a loose typology categorising institutional responses, as well as new and emerging alliances, in doing so highlighting the different forms institutionalised resistance can take.

Van der Aa, J., & Blommaert, J. (2016). Ethnographic monitoring and the study of complexity. In *Researching Multilingualism* (pp. 273-285). Routledge.

