Micro-Paper 11: *Polyangulation*

Raúl A. Mora

Assistant Professor, Education and Pedagogy Graduate Programs, Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Sede Central

Medellín | SRG-L2/LSLP Chair

Defining the term

Polyangulation has emerged as a very recent alternative to the traditional idea of "triangulation" that qualitative researchers have applied over the years. Just like its traditional counterpart, polyangulation deals with the analysis and interpretation process. However, the notion of polyangulation begins by recognizing the existence not only of multiple realities, but multiple layers and dimensions of analysis. When dealing with such multi-layered realities, then, one single level of "triangulation" is not enough.

Polyangulation recognizes that social research is, by nature, nuanced and not simple and, therefore, any attempts to analyze and understand it must begin from that perception in order to capture it properly. A polyangulated analysis would need to keep in mind the realities that the data sources portray. It must keep in mind the different social realities of the participants, the different milieus where the research takes place, and the nature of the researchers themselves, as a reading of the world where one has to constantly shift the focal point of interpretation.

Connecting it to LSLP

At LSLP, we have embraced polyangulation as the idea that guides our analysis. Our research team is, by design, very diverse, bringing together researchers from different ages, genders, and social backgrounds, along with different levels of education. This richness of views must be present at all moments of our research.

In addition, most of our projects have incorporated multidimensional frameworks to conceptualize our work. This overall complexity that characterizes our work invites us to expand the boundaries of our analysis. Polyangulation, which calls for plurality in the analysis and interpretation process, is then the most viable guide for our data analysis process.

Expanding Second Language Research

The idea of polyangulation is still emerging as an alternative in qualitative research. We believe that there is plenty of potential in research in the field of second languages to apply it. If we understand languages as something dynamic, not monolithic, and with different layers that surface as individuals appropriate the language, then our research frameworks cannot limit the possibilities to understand the richness and complexities of today's language ecologies. Polyangulation as an analytical tool in this field would remind us, then, to constantly revisit the multiple realities that language use provides every day.

References

Carrim, N. H. (2006). *Human rights and the construction of identities in South Africa.* PhD Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand.

Mertler, C. A. (2013). *Action Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Nkomo, M. O., McKinney, C., & Chisholm, L. (Eds.) (2004). *Reflections on school integration: Colloquium proceedings.* HSRC Press.