

**Interactional linguistics as diagnostic instrument for development: an example from
HIV/AIDS prevention in Nairobi (Kenya)**

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Taking the example of non-elicited talk amongst poor urban youth about sex, abstinence and HIV recorded during a HIV/AIDS-prevention event, I show that a linguistic analysis, which understands talk as social interaction, is able to reveal how prevention campaigns so far have been received, understood and interpreted by these actors. This approach takes into focus both linguistics and development and can be used as a powerful diagnostic instrument. The paper reflects on theoretical, methodological and empirical aspects of such an approach.