Global Linguistic Flows

Hip Hop Cultures, Youth Identities, and the Politics of Language

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TRACK 2

Language and the Three Spheres of Hip Hop

JANNIS ANDROUTSOPOULOS

Introduction

Looking at Hip Hop through the lenses of sociolinguistics and discourse analysis implies approaching Hip Hop as discourse; that is, as a "complex area of practice" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 185), in which social knowledge and social reality are produced, reproduced, and transformed through a variety of speech genres, mediated by a variety of communications technologies. To be sure, Hip Hop's traditional "four elements"—breaking, DJing, rapping, and writing—rely on performance modes that go well beyond language, such as visual representation, sound, movement, and technical manipulation of objects. But more than verbal art, language in Hip Hop is the medium in which artist performances and member identities are contextualized and negotiated.

This chapter aims at complementing the widespread conception of Hip Hop as a "universal language" or "global idiom" (Mitchell, 2001, pp. 12, 21) in a two-fold way: By an account of the interplay of Hip Hop's global spread and local appropriations, on the one hand, and of the diverse social and generic contexts in which Hip Hop discourse is articulated, on the other. The first point is hardly controversial: A growing body of research on Hip Hop outside the United States documents how its various local articulations depart from the "original" in significant ways—in rap music, for example, in terms of language choice, song topics, cultural references, and sampling practices (see papers in Androutsopoulos, 2003a; Kimminich, 2003; Mitchell, 2001). However, even though local Hip Hop acquires features and invites interpretations that no longer rely exclusively on its African American origins, it does not lose its global imprint, but rather evolves in a constant dialogue with its "mother culture," by drawing on U.S. Hip Hop as a source for new trends and as a frame for the interpretation of

local productions. This persistent dialogue between the global and the local is manifested in both discourse and in language style, as my discussion of English will highlight later on.

However, less attention has been paid to the second point. As the references I just quoted suggest, most language-centered studies on Hip Hop focus on rap lyrics. Although this focus has yielded many important results so far, it seems to overlook the emic distinction between Hip Hop as a cultural hyperonym and rap as one of its hyponyms, or put differently: Hip Hop as a set of social practices unfolding around its "four elements," one of them rap, itself being conceived as a "genre system" (Krims, 2000). A integrative view on language and Hip Hop would need to encompass a much wider range of discourse practices, such as talk at work among rappers, writers, and breakers; the discourse of Hip Hop magazines and broadcast shows; artist-fan communication during live events; and an array of everyday talk and computer-mediated discourse in what is often termed the *Hip Hop Nation* (Alim, 2002).

This chapter aims at contributing to such a wider approach by using the concept of "vertical intertextuality" (Fiske, 1987) to develop an understanding of Hip Hop as a system of three interrelated "spheres" of discourse: artist expression (corresponding to Fiske's "primary texts"), media discourse ("secondary texts"), and discourse among Hip Hop fans and activists ("tertiary texts"). I shall outline some discursive and sociolinguistic properties of each sphere, focusing on the interplay of Hip Hop's global and local characteristics. Most evidence comes from German and Greek; that is, the languages and Hip Hop discourses I am most familiar with. My discussion emphasizes how the language of rap lyrics is adapted to local contexts by retaining global features; how Hip Hop media use language to index Hip Hop affiliation, by attending to mass media conventions; and how resources from the primary and secondary sphere are used by fans and activists in their face-to-face and computer-mediated discourse. Against that backdrop, I examine nonnative English in Hip Hop discourse, focusing on German as an instance of the "expanding circle" of English (Crystal, 2004). As is well documented (e.g., Mitchell, 2001), rap outside the United States goes through a process of linguistic "emancipation," in which early attempts in English are soon followed by a shift to the rapper's native language(s). This does not forcibly lead to a monolingual local rap landscape, but it does establish the local/national language as default, against which other languages may gain symbolic meaning. Pennycook (2003) argues that Hip Hop provides a prime example for the relation between globalization and English as a lingua franca, challenging the "overly simple view that English is for intercultural communication and local languages for local identities" (Pennycook, 2003, p. 83). I extend this line here by examining uses of English across Hip Hop's three spheres, and by relating them to the notion of *glocalization*, a term coined by Robertson (1996) to refer to the process by which globally circulating cultural resources are recontextualized in local settings. I argue that English (including stylized African American English) is a main resource for constructing "glocal" Hip Hop identities, which gain their meaning as local performances of a global cultural paradigm (see also Higgins, this volume).

Vertical Intertextuality and Hip Hop Discourse

Intertextuality is a notion with diverse understandings in linguistics. Some disciplines, such as text linguistics, traditionally adopt a "narrow" view of intertextuality as a process in which textual elements are integrated in other texts, such as quotations or allusions (e.g., Klein & Fix, 1997). A "broader" understanding of intertextuality gained currency in sociolinguistics and discourse studies with the reception of Bakhtin (1981) who views any text as being fundamentally related to other texts, its meanings being shaped by that relationship. Intertextuality in such a wide sense includes the relationship between a text and its sources, or the functional cross-linking between different genres within a given cultural domain.

Both types of intertextuality are articulated in a framework by popular culture theorist John Fiske, an amended version of which I use in this chapter. In *Television Culture* (1987) and other writings (e.g., 1989, 1992), Fiske conceives of television texts as a "web of intertextual relations" (1987, p. 85), which he explores by distinguishing between "horizontal" and "vertical" intertextuality. The first is about explicit relations between individual texts, such as a video clip's allusions to a particular film, and thus corresponds to the "narrow" sense of intertextuality mentioned above. Vertical intertextuality refers to relations between texts with different functions in the circuit of popular culture. Fiske distinguishes here between primary, secondary, and tertiary texts. Primary texts, such as soap operas or video clips, are the centerpieces around which popular culture is formed. Operating "around" them are secondary texts such as reviews and commercials, whose main task is to promote "selected meanings" (Fiske, 1987, p. 117) of primary texts. Secondary texts may thus determine which of the multiple meanings implied in a primary text will be activated by viewers. Tertiary texts are located on the level of audiences. They are "the texts that the viewers make themselves out of their responses which circulate orally or in letters to the press, and which work to form a collective rather than an individual response" (Fiske, 1987, p. 124). Two types of tertiary texts are distinguished: Social interaction and fan productivity, which is in turn subdivided in expressive productivity (e.g., fans styling themselves after popular culture models), and textual productivity; that is, fans appropriating and transforming primary texts to produce their own cultural artifacts (cf. Winter, 1995).

Even though Fiske's framework was originally devised for television, it can be applied straightforwardly to Hip Hop. While horizontal intertextuality captures quotations, references and other processes of "textual sampling" that are ubiquitous in rap lyrics and songs (Mikos, 2003; see also Roth-Gordon, this

volume), vertical intertextuality models relationships across texts following the main subject positions within popular culture; that is, those of producers, mediators, and audiences. Consider the example of rap music in Germany: A record release constitutes a primary text, to the extent, of course, it is attended to by fans. It is reviewed or promoted in a variety of secondary texts such as Hip Hop magazines or on websites; and it is listened to, commented upon, or sampled by fans in a variety of speech events. The release itself, its treatments in media discourse, and its discursive appropriations by audiences constitute a chain of vertical intertextuality, the elements of which interact with each other. Secondary texts such as record reviews may no doubt have an impact on fans' interpretations of a record release, and, ultimately, on its reputation and sales; however, music fans may also access releases without the aid of professional mediators, as in the case of unadvertised underground productions.

My notion of "sphere" extrapolates from single texts to conceive vertical intertextuality as a relationship between "text collectives" or conglomerates of primary, secondary, and tertiary texts. In this sense, and still using rap as a case in point, Hip Hop's "primary sphere" encompasses all productions which originate (or are accessible) in a particular country, together with their corresponding video clips and other broadcast performances. All these are potential rather than actual primary texts, depending on the attention they are being given by audiences. The "secondary sphere" includes all media texts that are dedicated to describing, evaluating, and merchandising primary texts. The "tertiary sphere" would then encompass all speech events in which Hip Hop fandom is performed, such as enjoying a concert, discussing music, or making a Hip Hop homepage.

The application of vertical intertextuality to Hip Hop, however, is not without its conceptual problems. Three points seem particularly problematic. First, the far too rigorous separation of the spheres: Fiske conceives of television as a closed, highly professionalized arena of media production and distribution. However, Hip Hop's emphasis on local/street activities and its blurring of boundaries between producers and consumers (cf. Bennett, 1999; Mikos, 2003) challenge a neat separation of spheres. At the same time, the development of communications media in the last decades favors amateur media productions. As a consequence, we need to rethink the relation between the three spheres in terms of mixed and transitional forms. For instance, we might think of some Hip Hop artists as "primary," even in the absence of published productions, to the extent their local discourse has an impact on local communities.[1] Likewise, we might think of newcomer artists who publish their amateur productions on Internet platforms as located in a transitional space between the tertiary and primary sphere. Rather than being hermetically closed, Hip Hop's first sphere receives constant input and feedback from the third one, and digital media enhance this trend.

A second problem is the rich intermediality of contemporary popular culture. It seems that what characterizes Hip Hop's cultural reality is the merging of aspects of all three spheres within particular media contexts. Consider the case of freestyle radio shows (Berns & Schlobinski, 2003), in which callers improvise live on beats played by a DJ in the studio, while the show host comments on the performance. In Fiske's terms, this is a hybrid of secondary texts (presenter talk) and tertiary texts (fan performance), referencing primary texts (i.e., professional rap). On the Internet, commercial web portals such as Germany's www.rap.de and www.hiphop.de offer primary texts (songs, video clips) for downloading; they feature magazine-like content such as reviews or interviews; and they make available to their visitors message boards for computer-mediated social interaction. Likewise, private Hip Hop homepages are first and foremost tertiary texts (an outcome of fans' textual productivity), but they may also include secondary texts (e.g., reports on the local Hip Hop scene), and even primary texts (e.g., home productions).

A third issue is the relation of vertical intertextuality to the global spread and local appropriation of Hip Hop culture. The preceding discussion tacitly assumed that spheres will be constructed within a particular country; however, from a reception point of view, primary texts are an amalgam of global and local input, since most fans, in Germany and elsewhere, listen to both local and U.S.-American (and perhaps also other international) productions. Some U.S. secondary texts have a global reach, such as "Yo! Mtv Raps" in the 1980s or *The Source* magazine today, but as local Hip Hop infrastructures emerge, local secondary spheres assume more authority and independence over the U.S.-American one. And while tertiary texts are anchored locally by definition, this too is changing with the Internet, since fan productions, such as personal homepages, now have a potentially international reach, and fan conversations can now be carried out on the net across the globe.

In sum, while I suggest that Fiske's notion of vertical intertextuality is a useful starting point for an integrative examination of the language and discourse of Hip Hop, I also argue that it needs to be extended by rethinking interfaces and transitions among the three spheres. In the subsequent discussion, I will therefore pay particular attention to fuzzy boundaries and transition paths between Hip Hop's three spheres, and to closure mechanisms that eventually keep them apart.

In terms of methodology, understanding these blurred boundaries has essentially benefited from my ethnographic engagement with various facets of Hip Hop. What is meant is not a canonical (in-depth, long-term) ethnography of a Hip Hop community, but rather adopting an ethnographic perspective, and using elements of ethnographic method in various sites and research settings since 2000. First, these methods include research on Hip Hop on the German-speaking web, in which I systematically observed online Hip Hop activities and conducted interviews with web authors and editors (Androutsopoulos, 2006, 2007). Second, fieldwork on "splash!" a large Hip Hop festival in Germany, in which expert group discussions and interviews with journalists and event organizers were used to study the festival's marketing discourse (Androutsopoulos & Habscheid, 2007). Third, the organization of "academy" meets community-type

events which focused on local rap and Hip Hop in Germany and Greece (Androutsopoulos, 2003a). Taken together, these activities offered valuable insights into the complexity and multiperspectiveness of Hip Hop discourses. Ultimately, however, it is the combination of ethnographic knowledge with sociolinguistically informed discourse analysis that shapes this chapter.

Language in the Primary Sphere: Local Resources for Global Actions

Sorting out what might be specifically local in the contemporary worldwide instantiations of rap music requires a *tertium comparationis*, against which global generic patterns and their local reconfigurations may be established. Such a framework was developed by Androutsopoulos and Scholz (2002, 2003) for a study of French, German, Greek, Italian, and Spanish rap songs. These were compared against a "genre profile" consisting of four main categories: song topics, speech act patterns, rhetorical resources, and linguistic variation. Although this does not provide for some important dimensions of rap, notably rhyme and flow (Krims, 2000), it nonetheless captures a number of features that seem fairly typical of rap genres worldwide. I'd like to illustrate their local instantiation by focusing on the relationship between rhetorical resources, in particular metaphor and cultural referencing, and speech act patterns, in particular self-referential speech (talk about one's own verbal performance) and audience-directed speech (talk about the effects of rap on listeners, and inviting them to react).

We examined metaphorical language in rap lyrics with cognitive metaphor theory in the legacy of Lakoff and Johnson (1981), in which metaphor is defined as the conceptual mapping of two experiential domains. Well-established rap metaphors include RAP IS BATTLE, RAP IS KNOWLEDGE, and RAP IS A DRUG (cf. also Lüdtke, 2007). Consider the last one: It essentially constructs a rapper's verbal performance as a powerful substance that is intoxicating and addictive for the audience. Three of its instantiations are given in 1 to 3 below. While the first two are void of local referencing, the pattern exemplified by the Greek example localizes the metaphor by referring to a detoxification center (*Strofi*, lit. "turning point") known throughout the country.

(1) *I crystallize the rhyme so you can sniff it*
(Wu-Tang Clan, "It's yourz," in *Forever*, Lou/Sony, 2000)

(2) *mein stoff 100% pure dope ohne verschnitt*
"my stuff 100% pure dope uncut"
(Spax, "Ich komm," in *Privat*, Moto Music, 1998; Germany)

(3) *μια τζούρα από το ραπ μου είναι υπεραρκετή να σε στείλει στη Στροφή γι αποτοξίνωση*
"a hit of my rap is more than enough to send you to Strofi for detox"
(Ζωντανοί Νεκροί, "Το ραπ μου είναι πρόκληση," in *Ο πρώτος τόμος*, FM Records, 1998; Greece)

Cultural referencing is attested since the earliest rap productions and presumably goes back to the sounds and dozens of African American youth, from which rapping originally evolved (cf. Toop, 2000). In the ritual insults elicited by Labov (1972, pp. 277–353), names of popular artists, celebrities, cartoon figures, institutions, consumer products, and so on are embedded in comparative or copulative constructions to qualify the speaker's opponents or their relatives (e.g., *you look like Jimmy Durante's grandfather; your mother James Bond*). In contemporary rap discourses, rappers draw on cultural referencing for self-reference, boasting or dissing. Cutler's analysis (in this volume) offers excellent examples of referencing to mark race in U.S. battling. In European rap lyrics, the sources of referencing are of essentially the same kind in terms of their cultural domains, but hybrid in terms of national provenience (see also Scholz, 2001). Some examples:

(4) *du bist weich wie ein Kissen, ich bin hart wie Thyssen Stahl*
"You are soft like a cushion/I'm coming hard like Thyssen steel"
(Rödelheim Hartreim Projekt, "Reime," in *Direkt aus Rödelheim*, MCA, 1994; Germany)

(5) *tortellini sti loops che c'ho fini più di Fini*
"these loops like tortellini that I have finer than Fini"
(Neffa, "Gran Finesse," in *Chico Pisco*, Black Out/Universal, 1997; Italy)

(6) *όταν κάνω ραπ στέλνω κάθε άταχτο MC sto KAT σαν τον Ζαν Κλοντ Βαν Νταμ*
"When I'm rapping, I send any undisciplined MC to KAT/like Jean-Claude Van Damme"
(ZEN, "Ασταμάτητες ρίμες," in *Πάλι κουνάς το κεφάλι*, FM Records, 2003, Greece)

(7) *con più storie a raccontare dei fratelli Grimm/questo è il mio dream team/"The Boss" più di Springsteen* "with more stories to tell than the Grimm brothers/this is my dream team/'The Boss' more than Springsteen"
(Chief & Soci, "Soci," in *Il mondo che non c'è*. Best Sound/BGM, 1997, Italy)

Consider the mention of *Thyssen*, a German steel industry, in (4); *Fini*, an Italian vinegar brand, in (5); and *KAT*, an Athens hospital, in (6). Being locally anchored and therefore presumably as opaque to U.S. audiences as are Cutler's examples to European ones, cultural references of this sort construct a fragmented panorama of local knowledge that includes history and traditions, high art and mass culture, places and institutions. But as examples 6 and 7 illustrate, referencing in fact indexes a hybrid cultural horizon, in which global media culture, European cultural heritage, and specifically local traditions merge. In this respect, referencing works much like audio sampling (Mikos, 2003), though on a different semiotic plane (see Roth-Gordon, this volume).

Thus I suggest that the relationship between genre-typical verbal actions and rhetorical resources is a "hot spot" of discursive localization in the primary

sphere. Other "hot spots" no doubt exist, some of them located closer to more traditional sociolinguistic interests. In the framework by Scholz and myself, these are captured by the notion of *linguistic variation*, which entails asking to what extent rap's vernacular orientation is maintained in various local contexts, examining language variation in rap lyrics by region, gender, and market placement (cf. Morgan, 2001; Scholz, 2003), and reconstructing the linguistic repertoire of rap artists in each particular local context. As rap enters new speech communities, the original predominance of African American English is replaced by new, and often more complex, sociolinguistic conditions. Depending on speech community, rap lyrics are variably positioned in the space between standard and nonstandard varieties, national monolingualism and societal multilingualism. Wider language ideologies as well as individual market placement are crucial for the extent to, and the manner in which, societal heteroglossia surfaces in rap discourse, and for the chances of new "resistance vernaculars" (Potter, 1995) to emerge, be it regional dialects, minority languages, or mixed talk (cf. Auzanneau 2001; Sarkar, this volume).

Talking about "Greek rap" or "German rap" might be a useful shortcut for comparative purposes, but turns out to be a crude simplification as we focus on a particular local scene. German rappers and fans, for instance, make clear distinctions between rap styles from Berlin and Hamburg, just as their U.S. counterparts do between the West and East Coasts (cf. Berns & Schlobinski, 2003). Regardless of where it is carried out, Hip Hop is a process of symbolic competition within a community of peers, in which the construction of individual style is a powerful resource of locally achieved distinction. All players are referencing the same cultural models and discursive rules, but aim at outcomes as individual as possible. What this suggests is that "the local" may be expected to contain an almost infinite range of variation on the same theme, which still waits to be explored.

Language in the Secondary Sphere: "Stylistic Splits" in Media Discourse

I delimit the secondary sphere to what Thornton (1996) terms "niche media" (e.g., dedicated Hip Hop magazines, broadcast shows, commercial websites) and "micromedia" (e.g., nonprofit fanzines, Internet newsletters, flyers). In contrast to mainstream mass media, "niche" and "micro" media speak, at least to some extent, "from within." They are recognized by participants as constitutive of Hip Hop's public sphere, and are often part of local activism.[2] But even so, the secondary sphere imposes its own institutional conditions as an arena of public discourse, which involve the negotiation of the relationship of Hip Hop traditions to local "journalese" standards. While it seems safe to assume that the discourse of dedicated Hip Hop media will take a degree of background cultural knowledge and intimacy with in-group jargon for granted, it will also need to attend to expectations of correctness and professionalism. Hip Hop media must

negotiate the conflicting relationship between "street culture" and the exigencies of the media and advertising industries. A central aspect of language use in secondary texts is therefore the way in which language styles that are characteristic of professional journalism are articulated with those that index familiarity with, and membership to, the (local chapter of the) Hip Hop Nation.

In this process, Hip Hop's primary and tertiary sphere offer resources that media actors may draw on in varying degrees. For instance, broadcast hosts may converge to stylistic imperatives of rap discourse, such as the celebration of "resistance vernaculars" (Potter, 1995), the creative combination of language styles, and the aesthetic attention to linguistic form. They may also implement speech styles that are (perceived to be) common in the everyday speech of the Hip Hop Nation. Hip Hop media are no doubt subject to the wider process of conversationalization of public discourse (Fairclough, 1995), though they do so by targeting the specific conversational style of the Hip Hop scene. Adopting these resources will lead to an increase in hybridity and interdiscursivity, as the boundaries between editorial style, performance arts, and conversational style are blurred or even consciously subverted. But the extent to which this actually occurs will vary by particular media institutions, particular genres, and individual authors or presenters.

I use two German examples to illustrate the range of differences that might be expected in the discourse of the secondary sphere, and in particular its differential appropriation of indexes from the primary and the tertiary sphere. The first (example 8) is a promotional text from the program booklet of a large Hip Hop festival. The second (example 9) is an initial host sequence from "Wordcup," a now defunct weekly Hip Hop show on German music television channel Viva. For reasons of space, both examples are given in English translation only; *italics* indicate English lexical items in the German original, the wording of which is quoted in the discussion where needed (full original texts are provided in Androutsopoulos, 2003b, 2005).

(8) Excerpt from program booklet of "Hip Hop Open 2001"; English translation

1. Berlin *MC* Kool Savas who attracted attention mainly
2. through his cooperation with..., thinks
3. the label "scandal *rapper*" is an appropriate
4. description. "A pint of bananas for you monkeys" or "*Fame and Cash*"
5. stand for his rather direct manner of bringing things down
6. to the point.... Currently, Kool Savas works
7. absolutely motivated and painstakingly on his new album "*Battle*
8. *Kings*." More straight words can be expected. And
9. one thing is for certain in Savas' live performances:
10. *Fake MC* heads will roll. Rough shit! Word on that!!

(9) Host opening sequence of "Wordcup," February 7, 1999; English translation

1. hey y'all what's up
2. welcome to Wordcup
3. great you tuned in again.
4. like you probably know, Wordcup is produced here in Cologne,
5. and we thought
6. so that you at home and most of all we here get to see some of the culture
7. that we come here to the Cathedral.
8. world-famous, Cologne Cathedral,
9. we hang out here at the Cathedral terrace with all the *skaters*,
10. let's go see if Method Man is up there somewhere,
11. uhm, what else do we have for you in this show.
12. we prepared an interview with Outcast,
13. you get to see that,
14. and we were in Paris at the Rang Division, right,
15. and we brought back something from our time in Paris
16. where we show you what's going on graphics-wise in *hiphop* Paris.
17. anyway, stay tuned to Wordcup,
18. let's watch Method Man now, Judgment Day.
19. at Wordcup. *word*.

I read the first example as an instantiation of a secondary sphere model peppered up by lexical elements from the primary and tertiary sphere. As indicated by its complex syntax with relative clauses and passive constructions (cf. lines 1, 2, 8) and by collocations such as *höchst akribisch* (original wording of "painstakingly," line 7), this is a professional writing style, which at the same time indexes its target group by using appropriate terminology (*MC, Rapper*) and slang items such as *fake* and *derb* ("rough"; line 10). The most interesting part as far as the tension between Hip Hop's global and local dimension is concerned, are the two concluding phrases in line 10: In the first, *Derber Schiet*! ("rough shit!"), the context makes clear that the noun *Schiet* is used as a calque of Eng. *shit* in its Hip Hop usage (i.e. "stuff"). What is remarkable here is the choice of *Schiet*, a northern German regional form, instead of colloquial standard German *Scheiss*. As this selection is apparently not motivated by topic, it can be read as a means of increasing similarity (phonologic and orthographic) between the calque and its English model. The second phrase is a colloquial German assertion, *Wort drauf*! ("Word on that!"), which is strongly reminiscent of *word up*, the globally spread African American Hip Hop formula. Both phrases are emblematic of the discursive cultural localization of Hip Hop: As these texts address German-speaking audiences, they are with good reason linguistically "local" (and quite markedly so in the first case), yet they evoke bits and pieces of the global Hip Hop idiom.

The second example suggests that Hip Hop media talk can go further than that. This passage, lasting about 30 seconds, is more or less standard procedure in terms of generic activity: there is an introductory welcome (lines 1–3), a description of the local setting (4–10) which playfully references the U.S. artist of the first clip (line 10), a preview of this show's content (11–16), and the announcement of the first clip (17–19). The host, Afro-German ex-rapper Tyron Ricketts, holds a microphone, and gesticulates a lot. The opener, *hey leute was geht ab* (original wording of line 1) is fairly common in German Hip Hop talk. Ricketts consistently uses an inclusive "we," speaking on behalf of his production team. His vocabulary includes colloquialisms (*rumlümmeln* "hang out"; *was grafikmäßig abgeht* "what's going on graphics-wise"), and he switches to English for the closing formula, which is once again *word*. Compared to other music shows on the same channel, Ricketts' style is remarkably unplanned, as indicated by hesitation markers and meta-communicative expressions (lines 11, 13, 14), though it is impossible to tell whether the host is genuinely spontaneous here.

This is an example of extensive drawing on primary and tertiary sphere resources in constructing the show's cultural identity. "Wordcup" constructs its niche status in terms of content, multimodal style in the opening credits (featuring scratching sounds, a graffiti-style logo, and "Black" sounding English background voices), the host's use of a microphone, and, crucially, his speech style. Being an ex-rapper, the host himself blurs the boundary between the primary and secondary sphere. By approximating a mode of everyday talk in his delivery, he blurs the boundary to the tertiary sphere as well.

The examples suggest that authors and presenters, the main actors of the secondary sphere, perform "stylistic splits" between Hip Hop speech styles and commercial media conventions. By converging toward the speech style of the scene, they convert "street language" into symbolic capital in the realm of Hip Hop's niche media. At the same time, they draw on other resources, such as a fluent delivery or discourse-organizing devices, for their professional performance. We might have expected that mainstream conventions be subverted altogether in Hip Hop's secondary sphere, but so far as Germany's niche Hip Hop media are concerned, this is very limited the case indeed. While they cannot afford to ignore the need of a stylistic fit to their target audience, they cannot ignore journalistic conventions either.

The boundary between the secondary and the tertiary sphere is reinforced both in the outcome, that is, the actually published text or show, and by selection processes that precede it. For instance, interviews with the managers of leading German Hip Hop portals such as www.hiphop.de and www.rap.de suggest that they expect from their freelance authors a strong command of written German, and a "smooth and punchy tone," as one manager put it (cf. Androutsopoulos, 2003c, 2006). Active competence of Hip Hop slang is necessary, but not the only prerequisite for participation in the secondary sphere. In this respect, commercial Hip Hop websites differ from tertiary texts, such as the personal homepages discussed in the next section.

Language in the Tertiary Sphere: Crafting Member Identities

Research on Hip Hop's tertiary sphere is sparse (see also the Intro to this volume), and most of it is concerned with relations between tertiary sphere practices and primary sphere models. One way of looking at this is in terms of language variation, asking whether the vernacular speech so typical of rap lyrics reflects, or rather overshoots, variation in rappers' nonlyrical speech (cf. Alim, 2002). Another approach examines how primary texts are appropriated in the everyday discourse of their audiences, and inspire their textual productivity (cf. Dimitriadis, 2004). In research situated outside the United States, the blend of U.S. primary sphere resources with local linguistic practices takes center stage. In an early instance of such research from Germany, Schneider (1997) offers an ethnography of an amateur crew of second-generation migrants. This crew consumes both U.S.American and German rap productions and clearly distinguishes between the two markets. Although they are fully aware of the differences between Hip Hop's original context and their own situation, they nonetheless use the former to make sense of their migrant experience. They dissociate themselves from gangsta rap and orient to Public Enemy, whose work they read as a political message against racism and social injustice. Global and local resources merge in this crew's home productions, which explicitly represent their ethnic "roots" and at the same time make use of English chunks. Another example is an ethnography of a breakdance crew of ethnic Italians in the Southern German city of Mannheim (Bierbach & Birken-Silverman, 2002). Based on interactional sociolinguistics, this work affords detailed insights into the impact of Hip Hop discourse on the group's verbal interaction. Its members develop an "in-between space," in which mediated Hip Hop knowledge is articulated with elements of their ethnic origin. This process is epitomized in their renaming practices, such as turning the Mannheim inner-city district of *Weststadt* into *Westcoast*. Hip Hop discourse permeates the group's speech style, including breakdance terminology, references to U.S. as well as German artists, as well as boasting and dissing rituals, in which the group's multilingual repertoire of German, Italian, and Sicilian dialect, is employed.

A less explored area of the tertiary sphere is computer-mediated communication (CMC), which is used extensively across the globe as an additional "means of representing, critiquing and contradicting the images and issues of Hip Hop culture" (Richardson & Lewis, 2000, p. 251; see also Richardson, 2006). In Fiske's terms, Hip Hop engagement with CMC extends both types of tertiary texts: Participating in message boards and other platforms of online talk extends Hip Hop focused interaction, and making a homepage or weblog extends practices of fan productivity. In my research on German Hip Hop on the web (Androutsopoulos, 2003b, 2003c, 2006), I found that maintaining a personal homepage and engaging in online talk are clearly distinct participation formats. Homepages presume a clear notion of authorship: Their authors may not always reveal their real names, but they stage themselves as active members; for example, by narrating their local engagement and sharing home productions; they "represent" their town or region by drawing attention to its Hip Hop activities; and they invite exchange with their visitors by customarily offering a guest book. By contrast, Hip Hop message boards are characterized by anonymity and a reduced responsibility of authorship. Getting in touch on a board may well consolidate regional contacts and lead to new co-operations, but many board entries are limited to ritual communication, such as dissing artists or greeting fellow crews and friends (cf. example 13 below).

In view of this variety of media formats and communicative activities, Hip Hop language style on the web is obviously vastly heterogeneous. To be sure, there is a common stock of multimodal "style insignia" that cuts across all forms of Hip Hop engagement on the web. For instance, casting homepage logos in graffiti type, signifying Hip Hop's four elements by means of visual metonyms, drawing on specific word-formation patterns to craft crew names (such as *Beat Skill Crew* in example 11 below), and using a large set of English lexis and formulaic speech all unmistakeably contextualize Hip Hop affiliation. But beneath this web of surface markers, a striking range of variability with respect to generic models and language style remains. The framework developed in this chapter allows us to understand this variability in terms of which sphere the relevant models for tertiary communication on the web are derived from.

I illustrate this with the case of www.webbeatz.de, a website that offers web space to amateur artists to present their work on a personal homepage (Androutsopoulos, 2007). An analysis of spelling variation across three genres on this website, that is, record reviews, personal homepages, and discussion boards, suggests that the latter feature written representations of colloquial speech to a significantly greater extent than homepages, with reviews being closest to normative German orthography. In terms of the vertical intertextuality framework, this means a differential orientation of literacy practices: While review authors attend to orthographic conventions expected from public discourse, board conversationalists rather orient themselves to the informal speech of offline tertiary talk. Significantly, however, the language style of the homepage sample is much more internally diverse than in the other two genres. This is illustrated by the two examples below, in which italics again indicate English lexical items in the original and bold print (in example 11) highlights representations of colloquial and regional pronunciation.

(10) Homepage text from webbeatz.de
Einer der erfolgversprechendsten Gruppen der Flensburger HipHop-Szene ist die BeatSkill Crew. Durch Zusammenarbeit mir Künstlern von Flensburg bis Salzburg, diverse von ihnen geplante Events und vor allem durch ihre Auftritte haben sich M und D bereits einen Namen gemacht. Während M durch ihren einzigartigen, teils mit Gesangspassagen gemischten Reimstil Eindruck macht, sorgt D für die passenden, teils asiatisch und teils funk-inspirierten Beats.

One of the most promising bands from the Flensburg *hiphop* scene is *BeatSkill Crew*. M and D have made a name through cooperations with artists from Flensburg to Salzburg, through the planning of various *events*, and especially through their gigs. While M impresses through her unique rhyming style, which is partly interspersed with singing parts, D is in charge of the appropriate, partly Asian and partly *funk*-inspired *beats*.

(11) Homepage text from webbeatz.de
Straight Up Hip Hop—Straight aus München

A: Wir **wolln** halt, dass **ma** München **ned** ausschließlich mit Sound wie Blumentopf oder David P verbindet. Wo **is** der dreckige, abgefuckte Scheiß hier? Ich kann mir **nimmer** diesen, "Was geht ab digga" Sound anhören, so **isses ned.** Das Leben **is ned** nur aus Party und feiern und cool rappen, **oider!**

Straight up hip hop – straight from Munich

A: What we **want** is that people won't associate Munich only with the *sound* of Blumentopf or David P. **Where's** that dirty, fucked-up shit here? I can't hear this "What's up *digga*" *sound* **no more, that's not** how it is. Life **is not** just *party* and having fun and *cool rapping*, **mate!**

Even without detailed linguistic analysis, it is obvious that example (10) is modeled on genres from the secondary sphere, in particular promotional discourse, as indicated by its elaborated syntax, its use of standard orthography, and a content focus on the band's success potential and their current production activities. By contrast, the authors of (11) use direct speech, rather than third-person mode, to foreground issues of style in their local Hip Hop community, and they heavily mark that speech as vernacular by means of spelling and wording (this includes the use of *Scheiss* as a calque of "shit" in its Hip Hop usage, and *digga*, a German Hip Hop term of address). In terms of the quantitative analysis of spelling variation outlined above, example 10 is closer to reviews, 11 closer to discussion boards.

One might object that being authored by newcomer artists, these examples are not typical for the tertiary sphere. However, they in fact reflect one important aspect of Hip Hop's cultural circulation, namely, the fuzzy boundary between production and reception: Fans are seldom "just fans," but experiment with the boundaries to other arenas of Hip Hop engagement. In doing so, they may variably orient themselves to discourse conventions from Hip Hop's other spheres, and CMC offers them a space of vernacular literacy, in which they may draw on a variety of linguistic and multimodal resources to construct their *glocal* Hip Hop identities—a process that is nicely epitomized by the headline of example 11, *Straight Up Hip Hop—Straight aus München.*

English "From Below": A Cross-Sphere "Glocal" Identity Resource

As that headline illustrates, English is a hallmark of the interplay of the global and the local in Hip Hop discourses. In German Hip Hop—and, I would dare

to extrapolate, in the "expanding circle" generally—English is a set of linguistic resources, which are embedded in the respective national language by means of borrowing, code-switching, or code-mixing (cf. Androutsopoulos, 2004, 2007). Moreover, that headline also illustrates how English goes beyond lexical borrowings to encompass formulae, slogans, and other chunks, which are best viewed as instances of (emblematic, formulaic) code-switching. In written discourse, it also includes a set of spelling variants such as the determiner forms *tha*, *da* and the <z> plural marker, as in *beatz*. And not least, English is often the language of choice for naming, as illustrated by names for events, media features, rap crews, and websites across examples 8 through 14.

It is useful to think of English in Hip Hop discourses as *English from below*, a term coined by Preisler for "the informal—active or passive—use of English as an expression of subcultural identity and style" (Preisler, 1999, p. 241). In contrast to "English from above," which is promoted "by the hegemonic culture for purposes of international communication," English from below is motivated by "the desire to symbolize subcultural identity or affiliation, and peer group solidarity" (Preisler, 1999, pp. 241, 246). It is acquired via noninstitutional channels and is much more variable than officially promoted, institutionally transmitted English as a Foreign Language (Preisler, 1999, p. 260; Androutsopoulos, 2004). My own research suggests that from the participants' point of view, English is an essential part of their "Hip Hop slang" (Androutsopoulos, 2006, 2007). It gains its significance by originating from exclusive Hip Hop sources and is intertextually saturated, perhaps all the more so as we move from the lexicon to chunks.

While Hip Hop English "from below" is strongly present across spheres in my German data, its precise use depends on the different contextual constraints and exigencies of each sphere. Consider how some English resources are instantiated in rap lyrics (example 12) and guest book entries (example 13); again, italics in the glosses indicate English items in the original.

(12) Excerpt from Azad, "Faust des Nordwestens," in *Faust des Nordwestens*, 3p/Intergroove, 2004; Germany
Ich steh auf zum Weedrauchen/lass laut Musik laufen/werd taub wie Pete Townshend/lass Crowds zum Beat bouncen/wenn ich meine Stile kick/völlig natürlich, wie wenn ich auf der Wiese lieg/steh ich ständig unter Strom und geh MCs zerficken mit miesem Shit/ihr weaken Bitchez werdet gepoppt vom Chief im Biz/AAAU/how you like me now?
"I get up to smoke *weed*/let music play loud/get deaf like Pete Townshend/let *crowds bounce* to the *beat*/when I *kick* my styles/fully naturally, as if I'd lay on a meadow/I'm always full of adrenaline and fucking MCs with ugly *shit*/you *weak bitches* are being screwed by the *chief* in the *biz*/au/*how you like me now*?'

(13) Guest book entry
Hej hej…sehr fette Page…cool…keep this shit online :-) und checkt mal www.timeless-x.de

Hey hey…that's a phat *page…cool…keep this shit online* :-) and *check* out www.timeless-x.de

The lyrics by Frankfurt-based hardcore rapper Azad illustrate how English in German rap lyrics goes beyond referential demands to serve the organization of performative discourse and the refinement of poetic form (cf. Androutsopoulos & Scholz, 2002; Auzanneau, 2001; Pennycook, 2003; Higgins, this volume; Sarkar, this volume). Most English lexis in excerpt (12) belongs to Hip Hop's core international terminology and slang (*beat, crowds, bounce, kick styles, MCs, weak, bitch*) and is integrated in such a way as to facilitate rhyme: Note how German *rauchen* and *laufen* rhyme with English *Townshend* and *bouncen*, and German *lieg* with English *kick* and *shit*. Azad's code-switching in the last verse (*how you like me now?*) is also drawing on English for rhyme-making as well as, on the propositional level, to claim authority over his fictitious opponent. Short switches of this kind are fairly common in German rap, as are English discourse markers to signal turn taking, and African American voices sampled into a song's intro or chorus. As a result, German rap songs featuring both extrasentential switching and heavy lexical borrowing are quite common. Yet the dominant language of these songs is clearly German, and they seldom, if ever, reach international audiences.

By contrast, the secondary sphere relies more heavily on the referential dimension of English lexis, as witnessed in examples 8 and 9 above, though not without drawing on chunks and formulae (cf. *word* in example 9). On the Internet, the patterns of English that are circulating in rap lyrics and media discourse are tailored to new generic demands. Thus producers of personal homepages lift bits and pieces from their favorite U.S. rap artists to design navigation bars, browser page titles and headings, their body text being mainly in colloquial German.[3] On discussion boards and guest books, the prevalence of expressive interpersonal discourse boosts short English switches of the kind illustrated by example 13. A comparison across German Hip Hop media in fact reveals that chunks and formulae amount to almost one-fourth of English instances in web guest books, but less than 5% in magazines (Androutsopoulos, 2004).

Elsewhere (Androutsopoulos, 2004), I suggest that such short, formulaic switches into English—*word* in 9, *Straight up Hip Hop* in 11, *how you like me now* in 12, *keep this shit online* in 13—may be viewed as instances of *language crossing*, a term coined by Rampton (1995) for the purposeful use of (elements of) a language that does not "belong" to the speaker, but to another ethnic or social group. As the metaphor implies, crossing is a process by which speakers transgress a social boundary by language use, thereby engaging with aspects of the identity of the legitimate users of that language. Now, the English switches in question here are clearly doing some sort of identity work in terms of their propositional content and the speech acts they convey: They are used to affirm cultural engagement, to address and praise ("give props") other members, and to

appeal to common values—in short to carry out ritual activities in and through which participants perform being a Hip Hopper. Moreover, their contexts of use fit the notion of liminality in the language crossing framework; that is, situations in which the normal assumptions of social order are softened or suspended, as is the case with lyrical performance, media performance, or pseudonymous computer-mediated discourse.

To be sure, such crossing practices are not uncontested; appropriating superficial features of African American English to construct Hip Hop identities may be rejected as "fronting," in the U.S. context and elsewhere (cf. Richardson & Lewis, 2000). However, the crucial point seems to be their identity target: Does the use of Hip Hop English by German Hip Hoppers lay a claim to African American identities? My suggestion, at least in the German case, is that the point is less *stepping into* an alien ethnic territory ("Blackness") than *stepping out* of one's own national boundaries (in this case: "Germanness") and into a global Hip Hop terrain that is not necessarily imagined in primarily racial or ethnic terms. And this is consonant with the initial observation of this chapter: Although "original Hip Hop" is a permanent point of reference, its local appropriations no longer rely exclusively on its African American origins.

Conclusion

This chapter attempts to interrelate the different arenas of discourse in which Hip Hop culture is continuously constructed and transformed, and to examine how the tension between globalness and localness is negotiated within each of these arenas. In concluding, we saw that language use across the three spheres of Hip Hop is by necessity heterogeneous, because it attends to the purposes and constraints that are particular to each sphere. Rather than being hermetically delimited, the three spheres of Hip Hop have fuzzy boundaries with respect to their conditions of access and language style. As a result, Hip Hop discourses are characterized by interfaces, in which elements that are typical for one sphere are indexically incorporated in others. Thus rap lyrics converge towards "street language," though without being identical to it; media talk may draw on the performative style of rap lyrics as well as the style of casual conversation, though without fully adopting either; verbal rituals from the primary sphere, such as practices of boasting and dissing, are articulated with local experience in the everyday life of the Hip Hop nation; and on the Internet, patterns of rap and media talk are adapted to new purposes. These interfaces need to be understood as significant resources of Hip Hop discourse, and should be paid more attention to in future research. Equally needed is more comparative research across local contexts. With respect to computer-mediated communication, for example, preliminary observations suggest that Hip Hop boards across Europe (notably from Italy, Norway, and Greece) share a common stock of (African American) English. Frequency differences still need to be examined, but qualitatively, what

is characteristic for the German case seems, more generally, an instance of global Hip Hop English "from below." From a transnational perspective, then, Hip Hop English emerges as a "universal" strategy of Hip Hop identity marking. It establishes a symbolic connection between verbal art, media, and fan discourse, on the one hand, as well as between various localized Hip Hop discourses on the other.

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Notes

1. I am indebted to Samy Alim for emphasizing this point.
2. Hip Hop's secondary sphere will mostly consist of print media and websites; that is, the media types that may flourish at the fringe of the media and culture industry, whereas its extension to broadcast will be restricted to countries in which Hip Hop is commercially successful; in other words, the type of media involved in the secondary sphere index the degree of Hip Hop's popularity and commodification in a particular country.
3. One of my informants, 15-year-old "Aspa," decorated her website with headings such as *Welcome 2 tha World of AspA; MIX UP THA $#!T; Ein paar freshe Linkz von AspA* ("Some fresh links by Aspa"). In the interview we conducted, she credited her spelling practice to U.S. band Wu-Tang Clan, which she claimed to listen to "since I was eleven" (Androutsopoulos, 2003b, p. 129).

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TRACK 3

Conversational Sampling, Race Trafficking, and the Invocation of the *Gueto* in Brazilian Hip Hop

JENNIFER ROTH-GORDON

Introduction

When I arrived in Rio de Janeiro in 1997 to conduct ethnographic research on the slang of poor Black youth, politically conscious rap was getting a lot of play in Brazil's *favelas* (shantytowns) and impoverished suburbs, even experiencing a brief period of crossover success. The São Paulo based group Racionais MC's (The Rationals) was on the verge of going platinum with their album *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* (Surviving in Hell) and would take home awards for "Best Rap Group" and "Audience's Choice" at the 1998 MTV Brazilian Music Video Awards. Signs of Hip Hop culture were all over the *favela*: large murals and graffiti depicted album covers and song lyrics; U.S. sports teams and references to New York adorned the most coveted clothing items; and fans took on nicknames of popular rappers. Youth I met swapped, borrowed, and sometimes bought rap CDs to listen to on individual headphones and on boom boxes at nightly impromptu gatherings in the streets of their neighborhood. As I explore in this chapter, Hip Hop culture even influenced daily linguistic practice, as fans integrated particularly catchy refrains into conversations, singing rap songs together and quoting well-known lyrics.

Though most Brazilian rappers and rap fans have limited access to English, this infusion of Hip Hop culture relied heavily on ideas and images of the United States. Taking inspiration from groups such as Public Enemy and KRS-One, politically conscious Brazilian rap focuses on the daily realities of Brazil's social and geographic periphery, highlighting the transnational similarities between situations of social inequality, crime, drug use, police brutality, and racism. They perform the aggressive and confrontational style of conscious rap and attract