

TRACK 8

“Respect for Da Chopstick Hip Hop”

*The Politics, Poetics, and Pedagogy of Cantonese
Verbal Art in Hong Kong*

Angel Lin

My message is to ask people to reflect, to use their brains to think and their hearts to feel—MC Yan.

Introduction: The Arrival of Hip Hop onto the Music Scene in Hong Kong

The music scene in Hong Kong has been dominated by Cantopop (Cantonese pop songs) since the mid-1970s. The early prominent Cantopop lyricists and singers such as Sam Hui were legendary in laying the foundation of the genre and the tradition of the lyrical styles which appeal to the masses through the rise of local Cantonese cinema and television. With easy-listening melody and simple lyrics about ordinary working-class people's plight, Sam Hui's music and lyrical style marked the genesis of a new popular music form in Hong Kong, known as Cantopop (Erni, 2007). Cantopop has arisen as an indigenous music genre that the majority of Hong Kong people identify with. It has served as “a strategic cultural form to delineate a local identity, vis-à-vis the old British colonial and mainland Chinese identities” (McIntyre, Cheng, & Zhang, 2002, p. 217).

However, Cantopop since the 1990s has become increasingly monopolized by a few mega music companies in Hong Kong that focus on idol-making, mainly churning out songs about love affairs, and losing the early versatility that had existed in the themes of Cantopop lyrics (e.g., about working-class life, about friendship and family relationships, about life philosophy, etc.) (Chu, 2007).

It was against this background that Hip Hop as a music genre became visible in the mainstream music scene in Hong Kong in the mid-1990s, when the local underground band LMF (LazyMuthaFuckaz) suddenly emerged above ground and enjoyed a popular reception for some years with their angry lyrics about

the everyday reality of working-class youths in their debut song, “Uk-chyun-jai” (Housing Projects Boys) (Chan, 2003). However, LMF’s music style was actually a fusion of rock and Hip Hop genres. Researching on the historical development of LMF, the author interviewed Davy Chan, a former LMF member who composed and produced most of the music and songs for LMF in his studio—“a.room”. According to Davy, who was also a founding member of the local indie rock band, Anodize, in the early 1990s, LMF was originally an ad hoc band loosely formed by members from different rock bands to jam music for fun at the end of major underground music events. It was Prodig, a rock guitarist and graphic designer, who turned the loosely organized LMF into a formally organized band by gathering members from several indie rock bands (e.g., Anodize, NT) and by managing negotiations with major music labels and sponsors. LMF gave the audience the impression of Hip Hop mainly due to the presence of DJ Tommy and MC Yan. Davy invited DJ Tommy to join LMF in the late 1990s for “they wanted to try something new, perhaps Hip Hop.” MC Yan was a vocalist and rapper from the rock band, NT, in the early 1990s, and joined LMF with other NT members. Of the final 12 members of LMF in the early 2000s, only two members (MC Yan and DJ Tommy) had a Hip Hop music background.

LMF was disbanded in 2003. According to Davy, it was partly due to the loss of advertising sponsors along with increasingly negative coverage of LMF in the media, and partly because a managing executive of Warner-Brothers, who had signed LMF and had given them great creative autonomy, left the company. The constant touring, performance, and advertising jobs had also robbed them of the time and space for creating new songs. As artists who did not want to repeat themselves, they decided that it was time to disband.

The Hip Hop scene in Hong Kong has never been as animated since the disbanding of LMF. However, Fama, a two-emcee group was formed in 2000. In 2002 the two emcees came under the tutelage of DJ Tommy, and were signed by DJ Tommy’s music production company. Fama has strived to keep local Hip Hop music alive in Hong Kong. Although still marginal to Cantopop in the mainstream music scene, it is popular among college and high school students and it is the only local Hip Hop group since LMF to enjoy some degree of commercial success.

Fama, however, has its own style, which they seem to want to distinguish clearly from the LMF style. LMF rocked the local music and media scene by being the first local popular band to put Cantonese *chou-hau* (vulgar speech) into their lyrics in publicly released albums and live performances, and by taking a strongly resistant, defiant, media-critical stance (see studies by Ma, 2001, 2002a, 2002b). LMF’s lyrics were largely Cantonese, and when English was used, it was mainly English slang; for instance: “Do you know what the fuck I’m saying?! *Hahm-gaa-ling!*” (a Cantonese *chou-hau* expression literally meaning: “To hell with your whole family!”). LMF’s sociolinguistic positioning can be said to be mostly that of the Hong Kong Cantonese working-class youth—the speaking

style projects a powerful, defiant, angry, Cantonese, working-class, masculine image, with lots of “rage”—*fo* (fire) in Cantonese (more on this later).

Fama, however, from day one, seemed to want to rectify the popular notion in Hong Kong (largely due to LMF’s influence) that Hip Hop music is related to Cantonese vulgar speech or the angry young man image. Li (2006), in her unpublished MPhil study of Hip Hop music in Hong Kong, pointed out that Fama seemed to want to rectify Hong Kong people’s misconceptions about Hip Hop music. In a song by Fama called “F.A.M.A. Praise,” Fama rapped explicitly in their lyrics about these misconceptions. They seemed to want to draw a line between themselves and the image of MC Yan, in particular, as a politically outspoken figure.

Fama thus seems to aim at dissociating themselves from the politically conscious image projected by MC Yan, who aligns himself with the Muslim cause and writes conscious raps that criticize the Bush government (e.g., in his song, “War Crime”). Fama also never use Cantonese *chou-hau* in their lyrics. While LMF’s lyrics were chiefly Cantonese (except for some vulgar English words), Fama readily uses English and crafts out Cantonese-English bilingual lyrics which sound more like middle-class bilingual college boys than LMF’s Cantonese working-class men (Lin, 2007).

To date there has been only one published research project on alternative band culture in Hong Kong. Eric Ma’s ethnographic studies on alternative bands in Hong Kong represent the first academic attempt to bring under lenses of cultural studies the emotional energies and cultural practices of alternative bands (Ma, 2002a, 2002b). After months of intensive ethnographic field work (e.g., hanging around with LMF band members in their recording studios, concerts, their everyday/night activities, interviewing band artists and their fans, observing the behavior of the audiences in the concerts, etc.), Ma published a series of research papers and photography books on the alternative band, LMF. Summarizing his analysis in an article, Ma (2002a) wrote:

As illustrated in this case study, the emotional energies generated by Hong Kong alternative bands are polymorphous. They are partly fuelled by the rebellious spirit of independent music incorporated translocally...; they can be charged by personal frustrations in schools, families and the workplaces...; their production can be a tactic of differentiating a youth identity in contrast with the adult and the established world; they can be exploited by some privileged group members to serve as fashionable identity labels.... Emotional energies can also be political. In the particular juncture of the post-1997 Hong Kong, subcultural energies have [been] articulated and channeled into popular anti-establishment discourses. There are obvious thematic parallels between alternative music and public sentiments on the widespread dissatisfaction with the tabloid media, the education system and the conservative polity. (p. 198)

While Ma seemed to be deeply sympathetic with the sentiments of the alternative band, his ethnographic analysis yielded less than optimistic findings about the progressive potential of the subcultural practices of the band members. Ma wrote critically about the lack of political critique of the band members he studied (Ma, 2002a).

It is at this point that we find Ma's ethnographic analysis, albeit rich and cogent in many aspects, lacking a sociolinguistic perspective. As a cultural studies researcher without any sociolinguistic background, Ma has not conducted any detailed linguistic analysis of the lyrics and might have thus drawn his conclusion a bit too hastily based mainly on the interview comments of some LMF members. The dearth of serious attention paid to the Cantonese *chou-hau* verbal art of Hip Hop lyrics by independent Hong Kong MCs might also explain the lack of understanding of how youthful (defiant) voices and agency are mediated first and foremost in *language* in their raps. I will turn to my attempt at such an analysis in the next section.

Cantonese Youth Verbal Play in Hong Kong: Cantonese *Chou-Hau* as a Transgressive Act Defying Mainstream Middle-Class Norms

Despite Hong Kong's international cosmopolitan appearance, over 90% of its population is ethnic Chinese; Cantonese is the mother tongue of the majority. The British were a minority that until July 1, 1997 had constituted the privileged class of the society. That was the date when Hong Kong's sovereignty was returned to China and Hong Kong became a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China. The English-conversant bilingual Chinese middle classes have, however, remained the socioeconomically dominant group in Hong Kong, and English is still the most important language of social mobility even in the post-1997, post-British-rule era. English continues to be the medium of instruction in most universities and professional training programs in Hong Kong and English Medium Instruction (EMI) secondary schools are generally perceived by the public as "first class" while Chinese Medium Instruction (CMI) schools are generally perceived as "second rate."

As a local, taken-for-granted language, Cantonese is undervalued and invisible both in education and the "high" domains of society, yet it is a central, valuable medium in popular culture. However, for the majority of working-class children in Hong Kong, English remains something beyond their reach. Unlike their middle-class counterparts, they typically live in a lifeworld where few will (and can) speak or use English for any authentic communicative or sociocultural purposes. The English classroom often becomes a site for their local struggles and oppositional practices involving a great deal of creative work in the form of Cantonese verbal play. And this verbal play often capitalizes on the use of Cantonese *chou-hau* expressions to create a transgressive, subversive effect. For instance, in Lin's (2005) study of the Cantonese verbal play of Hong Kong working-class students in English lessons, a boy was seen to reply to

the teacher’s reading comprehension question using a euphemistic expression (“fell onto the street”) to hint at the Cantonese *chou-hau* expression, *puk-gaai*. Literally, *puk* means “fall (onto)” and *gaai* means “street,” but the illocutionary force of *puk-gaai* is similar to: “drop dead!” or “go to hell!”. His fellow students’ loud laughter upon hearing this seems to have arisen from this student’s clever, implicit, transgressive rendering of a taboo Cantonese *chou-hau* expression as an answer to the teacher’s formal question.

Cantonese *chou-hau* thus seems to be an unfailing linguistic marker of working classness in Hong Kong. The mere uttering of a Cantonese vulgar word or expression constitutes a highly marked, transgressive act, violating middle-class etiquette and sensibilities, often supposed to arouse unease and contempt from a mainstream middle-class audience. While swearing and cursing have constituted a legitimate research topic overseas and there has long existed a research literature on English slang and cursing (e.g., Hughes, 1991; Jay, 1992; Partridge, 1970), the research literature on Cantonese *chou-hau* is extremely limited. It must be pointed out that Cantonese *chou-hau* is much more socially taboo in Hong Kong than what the English word *slang*, suggests. While the word *slang* in English usually refers to colloquial expressions or jargon of specific social groups, Cantonese *chou-hau* is seen as highly “vulgar,” conjuring up explicit sexual images, and is highly taboo in mainstream society in Hong Kong. It is perhaps due to the taboo nature of this topic that only two academic publications by two Western scholars can be found: Bolton and Hutton (1995, 2005). In the 1995 research paper, Bolton and Hutton studied triad language (the “triad society” is a criminal syndicate in Hong Kong) and related it to antilanguages and taboo language. The taboo nature of Cantonese vulgar speech and its connection to bad language, triad society, censored language, and law enforcement is made even clearer in the foreword written by Ip Pau-Fuk (a retired chief inspector of the Hong Kong Police Force) for Bolton and Hutton’s *Dictionary of Cantonese Slang* (2005). In the foreword, Ip mentioned that the dictionary “will prove very useful to many people..., including legal personnel, social workers, teachers, and even law enforcement officers” (p. vii). Just as Bolton and Hutton (1995) pointed out, so far, serious official attention that has been paid to the study of Cantonese vulgar speech is mainly for social control and censorship purposes (e.g., legal enforcement, court witnesses). However, it seems that Bolton and Hutton themselves do not want to stereotype Cantonese vulgar speech; in their insightful words:

All societies have taboos.... What makes a society modern in this context is therefore not the absence of linguistic taboos, but debate about those taboos in the context of debates about free speech and censorship. (Bolton & Hutton, 2005, p. 10)

In a sense, Hong Kong society might be seen as not having reached a modern level if judged by the above criteria: local studies of Cantonese *chou-hau* do

not exist at all (i.e., none by local Chinese scholars). The only exception is a recent Chinese book by Pang Chi-Ming (a local cultural critic and newspaper columnist) musing about the origins and meanings of different Cantonese *chou-hau* expressions (Pang, 2007). It, however, has to use a euphemism as the title of the book to escape censorship: *Siu gau laahn chaat haaih* (literally meaning: the puppy is too lazy to shine shoes; tone pattern: 2-2-5-3-4), which is actually a phonological recoding of five common Cantonese *chou-hau* words: *diu*, *gau*, *lan*, *chaht*, *hai*—all related to sexual organs/acts (tone pattern: 2-1-2-6-1). This recoding is a prime example of clever Cantonese verbal play capitalizing on Cantonese tonal features: by changing one initial consonant (*diu* → *siu*), changing the tones of four of the taboo words, and lengthening two vowel sounds (*chaht* → *chaat*; *hai* → *haaih*), the recoded expression keeps almost all the rhymes of the original words intact (i.e., *iu*, *au*, *an*, *at*, *ai*), while changing the meaning to that of an innocuous, almost “cutie” expression. However, phonologically the euphemism is highly suggestive of the original taboo words. The sharp contrast between the cutie meaning of the euphemism and the taboo meaning of the original words creates a clever, playful, transgressive effect.

Similar to the observation made by Paul Willis of working-class youths in Britain, there seems to be “work...in their play” (Willis, 1990, p. 2). Cantonese verbal play thus seems to be a kind of folk symbolic creative work and implicit ideological critique through mocking laughter and transgressive play (Bakhtin, 1981) to subvert mainstream linguistic taboos and social norms. While the government and mainstream middle classes in Hong Kong have made the everyday speech of the working classes taboo in the public spheres (e.g., TV, radio, newspapers, books), clever cultural critics and artists will always find a playful, mocking way to transgress these social, linguistic norms.

In MC Yan’s words (more on him later), his use of Cantonese vulgar words is both deliberate and natural: “I want to test the boundary of free speech...these are the most lively expressions...this is the language of working-class people; this is the way we speak every day; we don’t want to pretend to be those gentlepeople; this is who we are; we just want to be ourselves!” Using Cantonese vulgar words in his playful lyrics, MC Yan seems to be deliberately trying to shout out with a working-class voice about everyday working-class reality.

It is the aim of this paper to bring to the fore samples of the kind of Cantonese creative work that some independent Hip Hop MCs are displaying when they engage in Hip Hop music practices in Hong Kong. These independent (indie) artists seem to have found in this translocal music genre and subculture the powerful symbolisms to express their defiant working-class voices to mainstream society. Through Cantonese-language rap, these artists express their sharp critique of society, of the education system, and of what they see as mainstream hypocritical practices and political injustice. Through using Cantonese vulgar speech in their artful and inventive rap lyrics, they construct alternative discursive spaces where their defiant voices and sharp social critiques can be heard when they perform their both poetic (aesthetic) and political raps.

In the next section, I shall draw on interviews conducted with a well-known first-generation Hip Hop artist in Hong Kong—MC Yan of the former Hong Kong alternative band LMF—and I shall analyze the Cantonese verbal art of his Hip Hop lyrics. In the concluding section, I shall connect the analysis to a discussion of the birth of Conscious Rap in Hong Kong.

Cantonese Slang Verbal Art in MC Yan’s Hip Hop Lyrics

Little attention has been paid to the Cantonese verbal art that is displayed in much of the lyrical work of Hong Kong MCs. A key element of Hip Hop is personal ownership of lyrics—you “rap your own shit”—the choice of language is very much part of an individual MC’s lyrical style. MC Yan was the main rap vocalist in LMF, writing the hooks for many of the songs, while other songs were based on the heavy metal and rock styles inherited from the former underground rock bands before they came to form the LMF. In what follows, I want to draw mainly on MC Yan’s works as he is by far the most respected and widely recognized first-generation Cantonese MC in indie Hip Hop circles in Hong Kong.

MC Yan has written and rapped many songs, and in his words, they were songs “with a message.” His works (lyrics and rapping) appeared in songs such as: “Respect for Da Chopstick Hip Hop,” “New Opium War,” “Big City Night Life” (collected in the album by DJ Tommy—*Respect for Da Chopstick Hip Hop*, which has the same title as the song), “War,” “Beautiful Skin,” “Hong Kong Place” (collected in the album by Edison Chan—*Please Steal This Album*). The album, *Respect for Da Chopstick Hip Hop*, is worth noting, as it is a transregional collaboration among Japanese, Korean, and Hong Kong artists. MC Yan told the author that the album was meant to foster an alliance of Hip Hop artists from East Asia, especially from Japan, Korea, and Hong Kong. In all these three places, chopsticks are used, so they called their album *Respect for Da Chopstick Hip Hop*.

The album has only a niche audience (i.e., it’s not part of the mainstream pop music scene). That is because independent or nonmainstream Hip Hop is still a marginal practice in Hong Kong and Asia; and although some mainstream commercial Cantopop songs have appropriated some Hip Hop rapping and musical styles, they are generally not regarded as “real” Hip Hop by independent or nonmainstream Hip Hop artists.

The latter album, *Please Steal This Album*, is often seen as part of the pop music scene mainly because Edison Chan is a Hong Kong Cantopop singer. The themes of the songs written by MC Yan usually convey some serious messages of social or political critique. Yan has written many songs on the theme of war. For instance, “War” conveys the theme of a war against the relentless tabloidization of mass media practices in Hong Kong. “Big City Night Life” offers a sharp observation and critique of the money-oriented lifestyles of many Hong Kong people. “New Opium War” offers a historical reminder of the British imperial invasion of China in the 19th century and reasserts a Chinese identity. The song,

“Respect for Da Chopstick Hip Hop,” expresses the message of respect for and solidarity of different cultures and music styles of East Asian Hip Hop artists. “Beautiful Skin” is a tribute to women: praising the contribution of wives and mothers to humanity, which is not a pervasive theme in Hip Hop songs whether Western or Eastern.

In this paper I shall focus on MC Yan’s indie Hip Hop song, “War Crime” (*Jin-Jan Jeuih-Hahng*), because it is a song regarded by Yan himself as most representative of the recurrent themes in his songs.

MC Yan made the song “War Crime” in his home studio with DJ Frankie. He started circulating songs like “War Crime” on the Internet after launching his own website in 2002 (www.chinamantaggin.org). In the beginning it just consisted of beats, and then demos and the full song were released in 2003 on the Internet. MC Yan also sent it to his Hip Hop artist friends in the United States who were doing a compilation of anti-Gulf War songs at that time. MC Yan’s anti-Gulf War song (“War Crime”) was the only song from Asia in this compilation. The beats of “War Crime” were made by DJ Frankie, and the lyrics were created by MC Yan. He did the lyrics first and then chose the beats from Frankie’s creations.

The idea of “War Crime” came from his anger about the Gulf War, as MC Yan described, “The song’s lyrics were inspired by the current affairs.” Both MC Yan and DJ Frankie thought that they should do something to voice their protest against the blatant injustice shown in the war. In Table 8.1, I first present my transcription of the Cantonese rap lyrics of “War Crime” using the Yale system (which is a well-established writing system for transcribing Cantonese in the linguistic literature), and then my English translation of the Cantonese rap lyrics.

“I started to bring in this style of writing lyrics since the 1990s,” said MC Yan in an interview with the author. The “style” that MC Yan refers to is the style of Zack de la Rocha, a rapper, musician, poet, and activist in the United States. Zack is best known as the former lead vocalist and *lyricist* of the rock band, Rage Against the Machine (RATM), one of the most politically charged bands ever to receive extensive airplay from radio and television. Zack became one of the most visible champions of left-wing causes around the world. MC Yan said from day one both he and members of his former rock band (NT) were influenced by Zack. Yan first came into contact with Zack’s music when he was studying visual art in France in the early 1990s. (Yan did not make it in the competitive Hong Kong education system. After high school, he worked for a while and then went to France to study visual art because tuition fees were cheap in France.) In a rock concert in France he witnessed the power of Zack’s music and was deeply impressed by his message. Since then, Yan has tried to infuse his lyrics with political messages by using word puns or words that signify political events.

Yan has also been under the influence of Western politically oriented, Conscious Rap artists such as Public Enemy. According to *All Music Guide* (www.allmusic.com, an authoritative source of information on music artists),



Table 8.1 “War Crime” (lyrics written and rapped by MC Yan¹)

Stanza 1

1. 依家終於知撚道
yih-gaa jung-yu ji-lan-dou
2. 乜野叫做道理唔通講陰功，公然當全世界無到
mat-yeh *giu-jouh* “doh-leih mh-tung gong yam-gung”, gung-yihn dong chyuhn sai-gai
mouh-dou
3. 乜撚野叫做渣住雙重標準 黎做
mat-lan-yeh giu-jouh jaa-jyuh seung-chuhng biu-jyun *laih jouh*
4. 乜野大恰細 乜撚野叫做 霸道
mat-yeh daaih-hap-sai, *mat-lan-yeh giu-jouh* baa-douh
5. 人類文明究竟去撚到邊撚度
yahn-leuih mahn-mihng gau-ging heui-lan-dou bin-lan-douh

(There are 16 lines in Stanza 1 and 12 lines in Stanza 2, but due to limited space only the first 5 lines of Stanza 1 and the lines in the Hook are shown here.)

Hook (x 2 times) (::: indicates lengthening of the final syllable):

1. 唔撚::: 知呢乜撚野叫做戰爭罪行
mh-lan:::-ji ne mat-yeh giu-jouh jin-jan jeui-hahng
2. 唔撚 想再相信新聞
mh-lan:::-seung joi seung-seuin san-mahn
3. 淨係覺得你條撚樣呢 就目中無人
jihng-haih gok-dak-neih tiuh lan-yeung ne, jauh muhk-jung-mouh-yahn
4. 淨係見撚到你嚮度恰死人
jihng-haih gin-lan-dou neih heung-douh *hap-gau-yahn*

English Translation of Cantonese Rap Lyrics:

Stanza 1:

1. Now, I finally fucking know
2. What it means to say, “When (your action) is unreasonable, just say (you’re) miserable.”
(The U.S is) publicly treating the (others in the) world as non-existent...
3. What it fucking means to have double standards in one’s actions.
4. What (it means to say) “Big boys bullying small ones”, (and) what “hegemony” means.
5. Human civilization is heading towards which fucking direction?

Hook (rapped 2 times) (::: indicates lengthening of the final syllable)

1. *don’t fucking::: know what is called War Crime.*
2. *don’t fucking::: want to believe in TV news any more.*
3. *only feel that in your fucking eyes there are no others.*
4. *only fucking see that you are bloodily bullying others.*

1. Yale transcription of original Cantonese rap lyrics (line numbers added for easy reference).

Public Enemy was the most influential and controversial rap group of the late 1980s, pioneering a variation of hardcore rap that was musically and politically revolutionary. With his powerful, authoritative baritone, lead rapper Chuck D rhymed about all kinds of social problems, particularly those plaguing the Black communities, often condoning revolutionary tactics and social activism. In the process, he directed Hip Hop toward an explicitly self-aware, pro-Black



consciousness that became Hip Hop culture's signature throughout the next decade (<http://www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=11:kifixq95ld6e~T1>).

Another influence on Yan was the urban Hip Hop poet, Saul Williams, who started the Slam Poetry Movement in the United States. Yan frequently referred to the political messages of Saul in his urban poetry about different issues of racism and social and global injustice. We can see in the lyrics of “War Crime” that the message of anti-U.S.-military invasion is directly expressed. Although no explicit reference to Iraq is made, “George Bush Airport” in Line 11 (Stanza 1) refers to the Baghdad Airport in Iraq, which was renamed “George Bush Airport” after the U.S. military action. In Line 11 (Stanza 1) the rapper asks which national flag is now erected in the George Bush Airport. According to Yan, this line invokes double layers of meanings and images. The first layer signifies the invasion act of the United States by invoking the image of U.S. forces “erecting” the American national flag in the Baghdad Airport and changing the airport name to “George Bush Airport”—a blatant act of invasion and colonization of the territory of another sovereign country. The second layer invokes sexual connotations of “erection” of the male sexual organ in the act of penetration—the “rape” metaphor/image is invoked to refer to the military invasion of Iraq by the U.S. troops. In Cantonese slang usage, the phrase *che-keih* (*erecting a flag*), is often used to refer to the sexual act of penis erection (connotating the male sexual act and male sexual power).

The Cantonese vulgar word *lan*, is used in almost every line of the “War Crime” lyrics to express an angry voice in protest at and condemnation of the U.S. initiation of war on Iraq. In Cantonese vulgar speech, there are five monosyllabic, sex-related words frequently used to express anger or to intensify emotions: *diu* (to fuck), *gau* (penis), *lan* (penis), *chaht* (penis), *hai* (vagina). Although four of these five words are nouns in their literal meaning, their word class status often changes in different contexts. In the context of the “War Crime” lyrics, the noun *lan* (literally meaning “penis”) is used not as a noun but as an emotion-intensifier in most instances. For instance, in Line 1 of Stanza 1, *ji-lan-dou* can be translated roughly as “fucking know.” *Ji-dou* means “know” and inserting *lan* into the word (*ji-dou* → *ji-lan-dou*) does not change the basic meaning of the word but only adds a layer of strong emotional meaning—anger, frustration, condemnation, and so on (its meaning very much depends on the context). Almost every line of the “War Crime” lyrics is emotionally intensified by the insertion of *lan* into key compound words in each sentence. Table 8.2 shows some more examples of the emotion-intensifying usage of the vulgar word *lan* in the “War Crime” lyrics.

MC Yan said that the use of Cantonese *chou-hau* adds to the *fo* (fire) or “force” of the song. He said the frequent use of English slang in Western Hip Hop had encouraged him and made him bold enough to use Cantonese *chou-hau* in his songs—to be more lively, to speak in the real voice of *siu-shih-mahn* (literally: “little-city-people”; the expression refers to the underprivileged and powerless people in society). The liberal use of Cantonese vulgar words thus adds to the



Table 8.2 Examples of the Use of the Cantonese Vulgar Word, “lan” (撚), as an emotion intensifier

Examples from Stanza 1:

- 知道 *ji-dou* (know) → 知撚道 *ji-lan-dou* (fucking know...) (Line 1)
 乜野 *mat-yeh* (what) → 乜撚野 *mat-lan-yeh* (what fucking...) (Lines 3 & 4)
 去到 *heui-dou* (go to) → 去撚到 *heui-lan-dou* (go fucking to) (Line 5)
 邊度 *bin-douh* (where) → 邊撚度 *bin-lan-douh* (where fucking) (Line 5)
 卑鄙 *bei-pei* (despicable) → 卑撚鄙 *bei-lan-pei* (fucking despicable) (Line 10)
 至大 *ji-daaiah* (the biggest) → 至撚大 *ji-lan-daaiah* (the fucking biggest) (Line 15)
 自大 *jih-daaiah* (self-important) → 自撚大 *jih-lan-daaiah* (self-fucking-important) (Line 16)

Examples from the Hook:

- 唔知 *mh-ji* (don't know) → 唔撚知 *mh-lan-ji* (don't fucking know) (Line 1)
 唔想 *mh-seung* (don't want) → 唔撚想 *mh-lan-seung* (don't fucking want) (Line 2)
 見到 *gin-dou* (can see) → 見撚到 *gin-lan-dou* (can fucking see) (Line 4)

defiant tone and mood of the song, expressing the voice of the working classes and the marginalized.

Apart from conveying the attitude of the rapper, the insertion of the Cantonese vulgar word, *lan*, into bisyllabic/bimorphemic compound words to form trisyllabic/trimorphemic compound words (e.g., *jih-lan-dou*, *mat-lan-yeh*, *heui-lan-dou*, *bin-lan-douh*) also serves poetic and musical functions. The resulting trisyllabic units synchronize well with the recurrent three-beat drum patterns of the music. This is a conscious poetic strategy employed by MC Yan to tightly integrate the rapping with the music. Yan deliberately makes use of the special features of the Cantonese morpheme: every morpheme is realized phonologically as one syllable with one of the six different tones (i.e., six different pitches, which can form a melody; tones are meaning-differentiating in the Cantonese language). Yan said he consciously makes the different words (with different tones) function like the music beats made by an instrument such as the piano or the drum. For instance, when he spits out the words *ji-lan-douh*, the three-syllable unit fits well with the three-beat drum rhythm of the music.

We can see that in the first five lines of stanza one, there is a high density of such three-syllable units (see underlined in Table 8.1): *jih-lan-dou*, *mat-lan-yeh* (twice), *heui-lan-dou*, *bin-lan-douh*. The Cantonese vulgar word *lan*, apart from serving as an emotion intensifier, also serves as a central rhyming pillar of the three-beat drum pattern; that is, X-lan-Y. This contributes to the overall assonance of the first five lines. This rhyme tactic is similar to that found in the lyrics of American rapper, Pharoahe Monch, as discussed by Alim (2003, p. 63); for example, “rhymes to spit,” “dimes to git.” Another example, in Yan’s lyrics, of this pattern can be found in the phrase, *Diu-gau-neih*, *hap-gau-ngo!* (Fuck you! [You’re] fucking bullying me!). The pattern is: X-gau-Y. Again, the vulgar word *gau* serves as a rhyming pillar in each of these three-beat units.

Adding “lan” in the hook also serves another musical function. The word *lan* in the first two lines of the hook are phonologically stressed and lengthened. This



fits with the rhythmic pattern of the music for the hook. If “lan” is not inserted, the first word *mh* (don’t), as a phonologically nonsalient syllabic nasal, cannot be stressed and lengthened. Inserting *lan* after *mh* to form *mh-lan:::* (“don’t fucking:::”) serves the need for a stressed/lengthened syllable in the second position of the line while also providing a repeated forceful phrase (“don’t fucking:::”) to start off the first two lines of the hook.

In this connection it is important to analyze the intertextuality between the “War Crime” lyrical text and other working-class media texts. For instance, the final line of the song, “Diu-gau-neih, hap-gau-ngo!” was actually a conversation sampling (Pennycook, 2007) from Anthony Wong, a popular Hong Kong movie star who plays a social underdog in a 1996 movie, *Yi-bo-laai Behng-Duhk* (The Ebola Syndrome, made by famous Hong Kong movie director, Herman Yau, in his early career). The dark movie was about an ex-prisoner and a social outcast, who perceived himself as being constantly bullied by others. In each instance of such perceived bullying, the male character responded by spitting defiantly the line: “Diu-gau-neih! Hap-gau-ngo!” MC Yan said this line is familiar to most working-class males in their 30s now in Hong Kong. In this short line of merely six monosyllabic words, two of the five powerful Cantonese vulgar words: *diu* (fuck) and *gau* (penis) appear three times. The emotional force of this utterance is very strong as its defiant tone is intensified by a high concentration of Cantonese vulgar words within a short utterance. By ending the “War Crime” song with the sampling of this utterance from Anthony Wong in the movie, it pushes the defiant *fo* (fire or force) of the song to the climax.

Apart from the use of Cantonese slang verbal art, lyrical euphony (i.e., harmony of sounds in the lyrics) in the song “War Crime” is achieved linguistically at several levels simultaneously: through phonetic, lexical, and syntactic units which are structurally parallel. In English-language Hip Hop a lot of rappers mobilize the strategies of homophony, metonymy, and both sentence internal and sentence final rhymes (Perry, 2004). For a comprehensive list, Geneva Smittherman’s eight features of signification in rap lyrics are often cited in rap lyrics research: indirection, circumlocution, metaphorical-imagistic, humorous-ironic, rhythmic fluence and sound, teachy but not preachy, directed at person or persons usually present in the situational context, punning/play on words, introduction of the semantically or logically unexpected (cited in Perry, 2004, p. 62). Alim’s (2003) fascinating analysis of the complex internal rhymes of Pharoahe Monch’s *Internal Affairs* lyrics uncovers the highly sophisticated rhyme tactics that U.S. Hip Hop rhymer have mastered (e.g., compound internal rhymes and chain rhymes, back-to-back chain rhymes and mosaic rhymes).

In MC Yan’s lyrics, we see another level of sound and word play that capitalizes on the special tonal and syllabic features of the Cantonese language. Cantonese is a monosyllabic, tonal language. Every character is pronounced as one syllable with a tone (i.e., each character has the following syllabic structure: (C) V (C) + pitch). Every character is usually also a morpheme that combines with other characters (morphemes) to form two-, three-, or four-syllable/character words.



These multisyllabic/morphemic words or phrases have their own tonal patterns; for instance, “mh-lan-seung” (“don’t fucking want”) (tonal pattern: 4-2-2), which is identical in its tone pattern to: “tiuh-lan-yeung” (“that fucking asshole”) (tonal pattern: 4-2-2) (both phrases appear closely together in the Hook lines, see Table 8.1). These two three-syllable phrasal units have the same tonal pattern (4-2-2), share the same central pillar (“lan”), and have the same rhymes in the last syllable (“eung”). MC Yan calls this “double rhyme” or “three-dimensional rhyme,” meaning that several levels of phonetic parallelism can be drawn upon to create a multilevel rhyming aesthetic; for example, rappers can use words with same vowels (rhyming), same consonants (alliteration), same sounds (homonyms), same number of syllables, and same or similar syllable-pitch (tone) patterns for multisyllabic words. The aesthetic appeal in the song “War Crime” is partly constructed through different ways of creating a large number of two- or three-syllable words or phrasal units that have similar phonetic features (e.g., same or similar verbs, rhymes, and tonal patterns). This kind of multilevel rhyming is similar to what Alim (2003) calls “a multirhyme matrix” in US Hip Hop and the “moraic assonance” patterns (i.e., rhyming of the “moras”—syllable-like units) in Japanese rock (Tsujimura, Okamura, & Davis, 2007, p. 223). For instance, Pharoache’s multirhyming tactic is shown in a string of quadruple rhymes throughout the verse in Alim’s analysis (2003, p. 62):



Feel	in	the	flow
Drill	in	the	hole
Kill	in	the	show
Grill	in	the	dough
Will	in	to	blow
Feelin	‘em on	the	low



Similar quadruple but partial rhymes can also be found in MC Yan’s “War Crime” lyrics, as shown in Table 8.3.

Apart from using different multisyllabic rhyming tactics, MC Yan also employs pairs of multisyllabic words which differ only in the tone value of one syllable and yet with totally different meanings to create a contrastive effect. For instance, look at lines 15 and 16 in stanza 1:

15. 全世界至撚大 應該係聯合國
cheuhn sai-gaai *ji-lan-daaih*, ying-goi haih lyuhn-hahp-gwok
16. 唔撚係你 自撚大 阿美利堅 合眾帝國
mh-lan-haih neih *jih-lan-daaih* aa-meih-leih-gin hahp-jung-dai-gwok

- [15. In the whole world, *the fucking biggest* (organization) should be the United Nations.
16. It’s not you who are self-fucking-important—the American Imperialist Empire.]



Table 8.3 Partially Rhyming Four-Character Clausal, Phrasal, and Lexical Units with Similar Tonal Patterns

4-character clausal units	Tone Pattern	English translation
順你者昌 seuihn neih je cheung	6-5-2-1	... those who obey you will live
逆你者死 yihk neih je sei	6-5-2-2	... those who disobey you will die
4-character lexical units		
堂堂大國 tohng tohng daih gwok	4-4-6-3	... a big country...
合眾帝國 hahp jung dai gwok	6-3-3-3	... the imperialist empire
人道主義 yahn douh jyu yih	4-6-2-6	... humanism
帝國主義 dai gwok jyu yih	3-3-2-6	... imperialism
干預主義 gon yyuh jyu yih	1-6-2-6	... interference-ism

The six tones in Cantonese are marked by numerals: 1 = HL (High Level), 2 = HR (High Rising), 3 = ML (Mid Level), 4 = LF (Low Falling), 5 = LR (Low Rising), 6 = LL (Low Level).

By putting two similar trisyllable units that differ only in the tone of the first syllable in parallel syntactic positions in the two sentences, the meaning of the two words are put in sharp contrast: *ji-lan-daaiah* (tones: 3-2-6; *the fucking biggest*) vs. *jih-lan-daaiah* (tones: 6-2-6; *self-fucking-important*). In fact, this kind of contrastive lexical play is a characteristic of MC Yan's lyrical style; for example, *dan ngoh wah-neih-ji* (tones: 5-6-2-1; *let me tell you*), *ngoh wah-ji-neih!* (tones: 5-6-1-2; *I couldn't care less about you!*).

Apart from the above-mentioned verbal play, MC Yan also mobilizes metaphors, metonyms, and word puns to connote different levels of political meanings. For instance, as discussed earlier, the Cantonese metaphor of rape (*che-keih*—erecting the flag) is used to refer to the U.S. occupation of Iraq's territory. And in line 10 of stanza 2, "Sitting inside the planes and cannons (trucks), you depend on the fucking TV (screen)," the word *screen* has double references. On the literal level, it refers to the control screen of the military gear (e.g., inside the planes or cannon trucks). On another level, as MC Yan pointed out to the author, the "screen" refers to the screens of people's television sets at home. The whole notion of war, in contemporary times, is shaped and constructed by mass media practices through the "screen," and here MC Yan mentioned to the researcher that the screen (the media) has shaped and determined people's consciousness about the Gulf War—people's idea of the war has largely been shaped by mainstream media discourse ("the screen"). These are the double meanings that MC Yan wants to express through the lyrics in line 10 of stanza 2.

Starting a Conscious Rap Group in Hong Kong: The Yellow Peril

While it seems that there is nothing new in saying that MC Yan has politically and socially conscious messages in his songs; this is, however, significant in the Hip Hop scene in Hong Kong for the mere fact that he is the only Hip Hop artist who has steadfastly done this all through his music career without any commercial support. Like the high school students who rejected progressive rap in the school

project that Newman (2007) studied, most Hip Hop artists in Hong Kong have aspirations for commercial success and do not particularly care about politically or socially conscious messages. However, from the outset, Yan and members of his band, NT, have been under the influence of political activists such as Che Guevara and the Dalai Lama: Yan and his band members read Che and the Dalai Lama's books and wrote lyrics inspired by them. Later in the mid-1990s, NT was combined with other less politically oriented rock bands in HK to form the LMF. MC Yan told the author that he had been an odd man out in LMF, given his politically and socially conscious style, but he respected the collective works done with LMF members, for as a member of LMF he could not just have his own way. From the beginning, Yan wanted to do Conscious Rap. He defines his work as part of the translocal Conscious Rap movement, having been influenced by politically conscious artists in the U.S. such as Zack de la Rocha, Public Enemy, Tupac Shakur, Saul Williams, and Blackalicious. By “keeping it real” in the Hong Kong context—drawing on Cantonese *chou-hau* as a confrontational, transgressive lyrical style and defiant voice of the underprivileged—MC Yan can be said to have appropriated the spirit of many Conscious Hip Hop artists worldwide (who also do not shy away from using slang to voice the plight and everyday reality of the marginalized), and sown the seeds of Conscious Hip Hop in Hong Kong. While Yan's lyrics in the LMF days mainly centered on voicing the feelings of the underprivileged working-class youth in Hong Kong, in the song “War Crime” Yan has, in his words to the author, “evolved from talking about just social injustice in Hong Kong to talking about social injustice in the world.” In a recent interview (conducted on October 10, 2007), MC Yan told the author that his lyrical style has evolved as he has read more books and learned more things about the world. “I want to self-educate and invite other Hong Kong people to self-educate, by learning about what's happening in the world, and we cannot just sit there and do nothing!”

MC Yan's “War Crime” will be included in a mixtape by a French street fashion webzeen called *Black Rainbow* (<http://www.bkrw.com/sommaire>). It seems that he is much better received in some European Hip Hop circles than in Hong Kong. Yan wants to start a Conscious Rap movement in HK with his disciples, the three young rappers, ADV, Chef, and Double T in Yellow Peril (see Figure 8.1)—a Conscious Rap group which has recently started and performed their three debut songs (“Choice,” “Yellow Peril,” and “Unbridled”) in recent gigs (e.g., on October 6, 2007, in Cizi—a live club; on October 26, 2007, in the Hong Kong Fringe Club). All of their songs are socially and politically conscious. Although MC Yan and Yellow Peril are rapping about global political issues (e.g., Bush's invasion of the Iraq), Yan's sentiments, I want to argue, are transposed from his previous LMF songs about the working-class youths in HK to the underclasses in the world. Yan himself said he is above class and his music should be right for all classes for it is about the moral issues of social and global justice.

The choice of the name “Yellow Peril” symbolized Yan and his group's

reflexivity in their ironic defiance of Western colonial discourse. “Yellow Peril,” with its colonial image (Pennycook, 1998), was precisely what Yan wants to remind his group not to forget: how yellow people have been positioned in Western colonial discourse. For instance, when asked why they chose the name “Yellow Peril,” Yan said that the word *Nigga* is historically a disparaging name that the Whites called the Blacks; however, his African American Hip Hop friends also call Yan *Nigga*, as an intimate term for “Brother.” As many sociolinguistic researchers have pointed out (Low, 2007; Alim, this volume), “Nigga” has undergone semantic inversion to become a name for solidarity among those who are discriminated against by an outside group. In a similar way, Yan wants to infuse *Yellow Peril* with positive meanings, as a solidarity term for Asian people who have historically been under the Western colonialist gaze. “Yellow Peril,” Yan said, “was a name given to us by Western colonialists, and we want to remind ourselves not to forget this...we want to be socially and politically conscious, to be self-reflective, so that we won’t really become a danger and threat to the world.... If the younger generations in China keep on copying the entertainment and consumption styles of the West, then Chinese people will really become a threat to the world...we want ourselves to realize this first...we must self-educate...not to become like the West...” The choice of “Yellow Peril” as the group’s name can thus be seen as a deliberate postcolonial, symbolic act to defy the colonial discourse in the West.

In MC Yan and Yellow Peril’s songs, we can witness the birth of Conscious Rap in Hong Kong. By doing their songs totally in colloquial Cantonese, without inserting any English (vs. Fama’s Cantonese-English bilingual lyrical style), and by boldly using Cantonese *chou-hau*, which is taboo in mainstream Hong Kong society, MC Yan and his followers seem to be “keeping it real,” and keeping it true to the translocal spirit of politically oriented Hip Hop artists such as Public Enemy, Tupac Shakur, and Saul Williams. In this connection, one has to remember that Cantonese *chou-hau* plays a symbolic role in asserting the voice of the working classes in Hong Kong. In defying the linguistic taboos of mainstream middle-class society, one can argue that MC Yan’s Cantonese *chou-hau* lyrics communicate his political message through transposing the Hong Kong working classes’ defiant sentiments to the translocal underclasses’ defiant sentiments.

While MC Yan is often seen as a “radical” even by other indie artists in Hong Kong, interestingly Yan told the author that his graffiti design has been invited to be part of a permanent collection in two museums in Britain, as part of their “China Design” collection. In a way, Yan has got some cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 3) internationally, but strangely, not in HK. However, his strategy, as he told the author, is: after he has made a name overseas, he can do this in Hong Kong, “as Hong Kong people worship things overseas, especially those from the Western world.” It is ironic that Yan’s success in some progressive Hip Hop circles overseas relies precisely on his use of local taboo language that is rejected by the Hong Kong middle classes and inaccessible to the rest of the world.

Yan readily defines himself as a public intellectual and he says he will keep doing what he thinks is the right thing to do, although at present he has only a small audience in Hong Kong. It is, perhaps, by winning the recognition and respect of progressive Hip Hop artists and cultural critics in the West that Yan will eventually gain the cultural capital recognized by local Hong Kong middle-class people. Such an indirect route indicates how progressive cultural movements overseas (such as Conscious Hip Hop) can sometimes lend cultural capital to local artists, ironically, and precisely, because of the colonialist mentality of the local people (“who worship things overseas”). Ironically, the author finds herself employing a strategy similar to Yan’s: by publishing in overseas progressive academic journals and books, the author’s own research on a taboo topic in Hong Kong—vulgar lyrics in indie Hip Hop songs—might stand a chance of winning respect and recognition from local scholars and researchers.

It seems that there is a possibility of drawing on translocal Hip Hop culture and its artistic and linguistic creative practices as resources for a critical public pedagogy (Carrington & Luke, 1997) that reaches out to youth and people beyond the classroom and the school. There remains a lot of work to be done in this area to chart out what exactly such a pedagogy might look like and what effects that might have. A recent breakthrough for MC Yan is his Postcard Project hosted by *Ming Pao*, a well-respected middle-class newspaper in Hong Kong. Every Sunday, Yan gets a whole page to write and draw his message, and to invite the readers to send him a postcard in response to his message. He has received some interesting responses, as he told the author in an interview on October 10, 2007. MC Yan and Hip Hop artists like him in Hong Kong, albeit few as they are, seem to be the first street fighters in Hong Kong to set up good examples for us on how to figure out local tactics (de Certeau, 1984) when drawing on translocal Hip Hop graffiti art and Conscious Rap culture as resources for a possible public education project.



Figure 8.1 MC Yan (in cap) rapping with Yellow Peril and other indie rappers in a gig at the Hong Kong Fringe Club, October 26, 2007

Acknowledgments

The author is indebted to MC Yan for sharing his lyrics and his time in numerous research interviews over the past two years. Special thanks go to Francis Lee, Jaeyoung Yang, and Eric Ma for exchanging ideas with the author on this research and for their constant collegial support. The author is also especially grateful to the editors for their critical and very useful comments on earlier drafts of the paper.

References

- Alim, H. S. (2003). On some serious next millennium rap ish: Pharoahe Monch, hip hop poetics, and the internal rhymes of internal affairs. *Journal of English Linguistics*, 31(1), 60–84.
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Bolton, K., & Hutton, C. (1995). Bad and banned language: Triad secret societies, the censorship of the Cantonese vernacular, and colonial language policy in Hong Kong. *Language in Society*, 24, 159–186.
- Bolton, K., & Hutton, C. (2005). *A dictionary of Cantonese slang*. Singapore: National University of Singapore Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste* (Trans. Richard Nice). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Carrington, V., & A. Luke (1997). Literacy and Bourdieu's sociological theory: A reframing. *Language and Education*, 11(2), 96–112.
- Chan, Ka Yan (2003, May 4–5). *Exploring youth subculture in Hong Kong: A case study on the local band LazyMuthaFucka (LMF)*, MPhil Thesis. (Chinese)
- Chu, Y. W. (2007). *Before and after the fall: Mapping Hong Kong Cantopop in the global era*. Paper presented at the International Conference on Inter-Asia Culture: Desire, Dialogue and Democracy, City University of Hong Kong.
- De Certeau, M. (1984). *The practice of everyday life*. (S. Rendall, Trans.) Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Erni, J. N. (2007). Gender and everyday evasions: Moving with Cantopop. *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, 8(1), 86–105.
- Hughes, G. (1991). *Swearing: A social history of foul language, oaths and profanity in English*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Jay, T. (1992). *Cursing in America: A psycholinguistic study of dirty language in the courts, in the movies, in the schoolyards and on the streets*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Li, W. C. (2006). *The emergence and development of Hong Kong Hip Hop and rap music since the 1980s*. Unpublished MPhil thesis, Department of Music, Chinese University of Hong Kong.
- Lin, A. M. Y. (2005). Doing verbal play: Creative work of Cantonese working class schoolboys in Hong Kong. In A. Abbas, & J. Erni (Eds.), *Internationalizing cultural studies: An anthology* (pp. 317–329). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Lin, A. M. Y. (2007, May 30–June 2). *Crafting out a bilingual identity with bilingual hip hop lyrics in Hong Kong*. Paper presented at the International Symposium of Bilingualism, University of Hamburg, Germany.
- Low, B. E. (2007). Hip hop, language, and difference: the N-word as a pedagogical limit-case. *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*, 6(2), 147–160.
- Ma, E. K. W. (2001). *Underground radicals*. Hong Kong: Ming Pao.
- Ma, E. K. W. (2002a). Emotional energies and subcultural politics in post-97 Hong Kong. *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, 3(2), 187–190.
- Ma, E. K. W. (2002b). Translocal spatiality. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 5(2), 131–151.
- McIntyre, B. T., Cheng, C. W. S., & Zhang, W. (2002). Cantopop: The voice of Hong Kong. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication*, 12(2), 217–243.
- Newman, M. (2007). “I don’t want my ends to just meet; I want my ends overlappin’”: Personal aspiration and the rejection of progressive rap. *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*, 6(2), 131–145.
- Pang, C. M. (2007). *The puppy is too lazy to shine shoes*. Hong Kong: Subculture Hall. (in Chinese)



- Partridge, E. (1970). *Slang: Today and yesterday*. London: Routledge.
- Pennycook, A. (1998). *English and the discourses of colonialism*. London: Routledge.
- Pennycook, A. (2007). Language, localization and the real: Hip hop and the global spread of authenticity. *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*, 6(2), 101–115.
- Perry, I. (2004). *Prophets of the hood: Politics and poetics in hip hop*. Durham, NC & London: Duke University Press.
- Tsujimura, N., Okamura, K., & Davis, S. (2007). Rock rhymes in Japanese hip hop rhymes. *Japanese/Korean Linguistics*, 15, 222–233.
- Willis, P. (1990). *Common culture: Symbolic work at play in the everyday cultures of the young*. Buckingham: Open University Press.



