

Performing rap ciphas in late-modern Cape Town: extreme locality and multilingual citizenship

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The study of hip-hop in Cape Town, and indeed South Africa, has traditionally focused on the narratives and poetics of resistance, race and counter-hegemonic agency in the context of apartheid and the early days of post-apartheid. Despite this attention, hip-hop cipa performances remain relatively under-researched. The aim of this paper is to suggest that cipa performances display linguistic and discursive features that not only are of particular interest to rap music and hip-hop on the Cape Flats of Cape Town specifically, but that also engage core issues around multilingualism, agency and voice more generally. It demonstrates how in the process of entextualization a sense of locality, extreme locality, emerges in cipa performances by means of verbal cueing, representing place, expressing disrespect (*dissing*), and the (deictic) reference to local coordinates that is achieved by transposing or recontextualizing transidiomatic phrases, and by incorporating local proxemics and audience reactions through commentary and response. It concludes by suggesting that competition around acceptable linguistic forms and framings (metalinguistic disputes) of extreme locality comprise the very micro-processes behind the formation of new registers. At the same time, these registers create the semiotic space for the exercise of agency and voice through multilingual practices, that is, multilingual citizenship.

Key words: multilingualism, hip-hop, rap, extreme locality, multilingual citizenship, Cape Town

Introducing Cipa Performances in Cape Town

The study of hip-hop in Cape Town, and indeed South Africa, has traditionally focused on the narratives and poetics of resistance, race and counter-hegemonic agency in the context of apartheid and the early days of post-apartheid. Despite this attention, hip-hop cipa performances remain relatively under-researched (see for instance, Haupt, 1996; Watkins, 2000, Warner, 2007). The aim of this paper is to suggest that cipa performances display linguistic and discursive features that not only are of particular interest to rap music and hip-hop on the Cape Flats¹ specifically, but that also engage core issues around

1 The Cape Flats refers to the geographical area outside of the city of Cape Town where the predominantly coloured and black population lives as a result of the apartheid South Africa's Groups Area Act of 1950. Hip-hop during the 80s in Cape Town has always had a large following among the coloured population, but today more

multilingualism, agency and voice more generally. In particular it will focus on the way in which cipa performances semiotically craft a space for the exercise of local agency and citizenship, and how this is accomplished through the local emergence of a specific linguistic register through competing forms of linguistic agency in the cipa event itself. Ciphās, also spelled as ciphers (or cyphers), and known as lyrical duels or freestyle battles, are according to Alim (2009: 1, citing Peterson, 2001)

...marvellous speech events. They are inviting and also very challenging. They have become a litmus test for modern day griots. Ciphās are the innovative formats for battles (the ritual of rhyming is informed by the physical arrangement of Hip-Hop).

Cipa performances have always attracted a huge audience and were an enormous success in showcasing rappers' linguistic and discursive abilities. The cipa event that will be at the centre of the present analysis was collected by the first author as part of a year long ethnographic study resulting in a considerable archive of ethnographic observations, interviews and more than 100 hours of video and audio recordings, conducted between 2008 and 2009². Much ciphing, in the South African context, uses two or more languages to convey information of place, identity, rap style and interaction with the audience. The languages used between the rappers and the audience, in this case, are English, Ebonics and Cape Afrikaans³. We argue here that for many young Cape Townian rappers, performing in multiple languages is not only a way to reflect their creative use of more than two languages but also to mediate their agency and citizenship, as the unique configurations of multilingual resources that these youths deploy are channelled into the service of appropriation and the establishment of new emerging practices of identity and voice from below. This is accomplished in the way multilingual practices are used to semiotically craft a space characterized by "extreme locality" — a space that binds participants together around a common understanding of the local bric a brac of events and reference points that they share, and the people they know⁴. It is a space that provides a backdrop for the display of authenticity, and that refigures global genres into local lyrics. Just as importantly, it is an effervescent space created through the multilingual dexterity of local linguistic agents. This in turn is giving rise to new conditions for the "mainte-

and more rappers from other race groups are emerging. Most notable have been the white rap group, *Die Antwoord*, and white rapper *Jack Parow*. In contrast, the phenomenon *Spaza rap* (a combination of isiXhosa/English and Afrikaans lyrics) has its roots in black townships. Here, the most prominent are the rap group *Driemanskap* and rapper *Rattex* (amongst others) from the township of Gugulethu and Khayelitsha respectively.

- 2 The study used a multi-sited ethnographic approach (cf. Appadurai, 1996; Burawoy et al, 2000; Marcus, 1998, Hannerz, 2003).
- 3 Cape Afrikaans is a variety of Afrikaans predominantly spoken on the Cape Flats of Cape Town. The description *Kaapse Afrikaans* will be used in this paper.
- 4 The notion of extreme locality, as conceived in this paper, has a slightly different emphasis to the way in which the term is used by Forman (2002). Forman uses the term *extreme local* in order to account for the genesis of hip-hop as a music genre.

nance and development of various kinds of multilingualism” (Heller, 2007: 539). In fact, we suggest by way of conclusion that the way the rappers use their language offers up a typical example of how youths on the Cape Flats use English and Cape Afrikaans to interact with each other, not only hip-hop spaces but in other spaces as well.

In the next section (2) of the paper, we provide an ethnographic framing for the hip-hop analysis by describing Club Stones and the hip-hop show, “Stepping Stones to Hip-Hop”, by the group Suburban Menace. Following this, in section (3), we introduce the core analytical notions of *entextualization* and *enregisterment* in conjunction with the analysis of the cipa performance between a young and a veteran rapper. In particular, we explore how a variety of references and pointers to local and transnational space, and transmodal phenomenon in the performances are semiotized or entextualized within the cipa event. We discuss this more generally in terms of how this process is accomplished simultaneously with enregisterment, where linguistic forms become indexically associated with specific social values. The paper concludes in section 4 with a discussion.

History and Ethnography of Cipa Performances

One current focus of much sociolinguistics of globalization research is on how global genres are performed locally for purposes of stylization and appropriation (Pennycook, 2010; Alim et al, 2009; Mitchell, 2001). Since the inception of hip-hop in New York (cf. Forman and Neal, 2004; Chang, 2006), rap (especially) has grown over the last 30 years into a global phenomenon. It is heard and seen on a global scale (through music television networks such as MTV and social networking websites such as YouTube, Facebook and Twitter), and has been appropriated in creative ways for different local contexts that have shaped its local expression (cf. Osumare, 2004). Pennycook (2007) draws attention to appropriation of global hip-hop in various local places, pointing out how for each of those localities, youths develop the discourse practice of rap and other elements of hip-hop to meld into local needs and concerns. These localities have also in turn changed what it means to talk locally and perform globally, or talk globally and perform locally. In her study on conversational sampling in Brazilian hip-hop, Roth-Gordon (2009) notes how the practice of hip-hop influences everyday language practices, and how the integration of certain hip-hop language registers in the daily language practices of fans gives spaces and places new meaning in interaction. In a similar vein, Higgins (2009) shows how Swahili (a local language) is mixed with African American English (AAE), and other varieties, in performing local indigenous as well as transnational identities, and Omonyi (2009) explores the complex discursive relationship between language, hip-hop and globalization in the construction of post-colonial identities in Africa. In particular, Omonyi underscores how hip-hop provides not only the space for developing various sorts of alternative, yet local, identities but also serves as a cultural reference system that offers youths access to global identities. The oscillation of these identities has been captured in Cutler’s (2009) appropriation of W.E.B Du Bois’ notion of “double consciousness” – a notion adapted by the author to explain how White American youth reflect on their own presence in hip-hop culture.

It is this semiotic framing of locality (through multiple languages) that serves as the anchor point for how rappers position themselves with respect to agency and voice manifesting what Stroud (2009) refers as *multilingual citizenship*.

The ethnography of Club Stones

Hip-hop in Cape Town started at the turn of the 1980s during the most violent period of apartheid (cf. Haupt, 1996; 2008, Nkonyeni, 2007, Warner, 2007, Watkins, 2000; 2004). It was first practiced in marginal spaces, such as public parks, malls, backyards, and street corners. By 1982 the beginnings of a hip-hop community was in the forming, visible in the practices of DJ-ing, Rapping, Graffiti writing and Break dancing, across the city of Cape Town and its townships. It began to develop in earnest in the predominantly coloured community of Mitchell's Plain, and at about this time, the practice of hip-hop began to move into clubs, such as T-zers in Cape Town CBD, *The Space Odyssey* in Salt River, *Galaxy* in Athlone, *Route 66* in Mitchell's Plain, and later in *The Base*. These were places of relative safety where DJs such as Ready D and others perfected their DJing skills. The Base club, for instance, is considered to be the first place where hip-hop music was heard, and a home for hip-hoppers, hosting matinees in the afternoon to cater to the youth who had difficulty with public transportation into and out of the Cape Flats. This historical momentum offers us a glimpse into the importance of clubs and club culture in Cape Town.

The venue for the performance of the cipa battle studied in this paper is Club Stones, located in the Northern Suburbs (Kuilsriver) of Cape Town. Like many other clubs, it is a safe haven for the practice of the culture, and on the other hand, a nexus of commercial exploitation. Regularly, on a Wednesday night between 20Hoo and 02Hoo, Stones plays host to a gathering of youths comprising rappers, DJs and hip-hop fans who are there to enjoy the hip-hop show, "Stepping Stones to Hip-Hop" (see Plate 3). In 2008, a group called Suburban Menace, approached Club Stones's management in Kuilsriver and negotiated the hosting of a hip-hop show. A young group at that time, their main purpose was to gain experience performing in front of an audience in a club. One of the main features of their rapping was the performance of cipa.



Plate 1: Club Stones, from the street



Plate 2: Pool tables

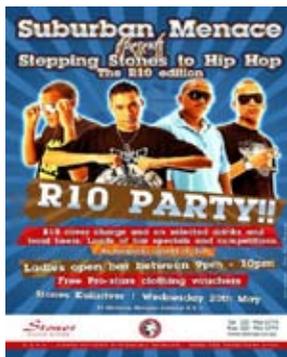


Plate 3: "Stepping Stones to Hip-Hop" poster



Plate 4: Main Bar with Staff

The staff employed by Club Stones is predominantly coloured and male (Plate 6). The audience and patrons who attend the hip-hop show are usually multilingual having at least Afrikaans and English. While most of the employees live in the historically coloured area cordoned off by the then Groups Area Act of apartheid, many of the audience members who frequently attend the hip-hop show on a Wednesday night are from areas beyond the community of Kuilsriver, travelling from as far afield as Mitchell's Plain, Bellville, central Cape Town, and even Johannesburg. Many visit Stones on a Wednesday night for cipa performances. As one young male hip-hop fan put it, "All I look for is good flow and punches, hate when rappers use the same shit in different battles. They should be disqualified and booed."



Plate 5: DJ Earl Scratch in DJ Booth



Plate 6: Bar Staff, club Stones

Conducting ethnographic research in Club Stones on rap and hip-hop presented few obstacles because the first author, Quentin, was both a fan of hip-hop and a coloured male who lived on the Cape Flats⁵. Every Wednesday night Quentin attended the Suburban

5 However, at a later stage, it was made clear to everyone that Quentin was from the university doing a PHD on language, space and hip-hop and because of this it was sometimes mentioned in cipa performances and he was frequently referred to in face to face conversations as "that PHD guy". Later, Quentin found out the he was referred to by members of Suburban Menace as "our PHD candidate". Interestingly, the reference to Quentin as

Menace hip-hop show, “Stepping Stones to Hip-Hip”, in Club Stones, and during that time, had the opportunity to talk to patrons, rappers, b-boys, b-girls, turntablists, graffiti writers, hip-hop fans, entertainment journalists and curious onlookers who came to the club for the first time. He conducted interviews with hip-hop fans, rappers, and the management of club Stones using an audio recorder to document the event. He also gathered promotional posters, mixtape cds, and photographs of the hip-hop show. His observations were initially recorded in a notepad, but subsequently all rap performances, dance-offs and drinking competitions and DJ (or turntablist) performances were captured on video. In the final phase of data collection, Quentin created an archive of transcribed interviews, the entire on-stage performances during the hip-hop show, audio conversations, audio cipa performances, and instances of natural talk in Club Stones and Suburban Menace’s *Menace Mansion* (local recording studio and headquarters). Transcriptions were compiled highlighting features such as relations between lines and groups of lines based on the lyrical and rhyme-poetic equivalences. This involved unpacking divisions of stress, tone, pitch, accent, mono-, bi- and multisyllable rendition, alliteration and other sorts of equivalence. The renditions of such performances were represented using the conventions of *ethnopoetics* (Hymes, 1996; 2004; Blommaert, 2010). Below we demonstrate how two rappers, together with cipa audience members in Club Stones during the performance of a cipa entextualize *extreme locality*.

Performing and Entextualizing and Enregistering Extreme Locality

Following Bauman and Briggs (1990: 73), performance is understood here as a contextually situated activity that is decontextualized and recontextualized discourse practice transformed into ‘text’. It is entextualization:

...the process of rendering discourse extracable, of making a stretch of linguistic production in a unit – a text – that can be lifted out of its interactional setting... rendered decontextualizable...which incorporate aspects of context, such that the resultant text carries elements of its history of use within it.

Cipa performance is comprised of genres and repertoires borne out of rappers combining freestyle lyrics, rhyming, linguistic ability and sampling of various rap music styles. We refer to this process as the ‘construction of the “extreme local”’. In our use of the term extreme locality, the emphasis is on how the performance of a cipa battle *constructs* the local as it is informed and *constituted* by the local. In the data we analyse here, a salient feature of the discourse is how aspects of space, both *local-spatial* coordinates as well as non-local spatial elements, are *entextualized* in the actual performance of a rap cipa between two MCs “on-stage” (Goffman, 1974). Another core feature in the construction of the ‘extreme local’ is how languages or varieties of language, together with aspects of audience presence and transmodal features at the site of the interaction (such as an ongoing TV programs) are var-

“our PHD candidate” also in a sense incorporated him into the extreme locality.

iously referenced multilingually and incorporated into the performance. This rich mosaic of entextualized features is essential to the successful construction of the extreme local.

A second key feature of cipa battles is *enregisterment*, “processes and practices whereby performable signs become recognized (and regrouped) as belonging to distinct, differentially valorized semiotic registers by a population” (Agha, 2007: 81). Agha (2007) characterises it as processes whereby linguistic forms come to indexically represent particular social values. Enregisterment is the outcome of the circulation and uptake of linguistic forms across various modalities and media. In the cipa performances studied here, the battle between protagonists are in fact nothing less than competitive bids whereby elements and forms from different languages and different entextualization(s) are offered up by protagonists as candidates indexical of the register of cipa.

Analyzing the first round of the cipa performance: entextualizing the discourse of verbal cueing, biting rhymes and representin’

On a typical Wednesday night, cipa performances start at 22Hoo and end around ooHoo. On the night of the cipa battle between rappers Keaton and Phoenix, Club Stones attracted a large audience of youths for the Suburban Menace hip-hop show. Members of the audience volunteer to take part in drinking competitions, and afterwards rap groups and solo rappers perform their latest rap music. The audience is mainly made up of males, dressed according to the poster requirements: baggy jeans, hoodies, and hip-hop caps (hip-hop attire). Before every cipa performance, rappers sign up to a clipboard but do not necessarily know who their opponent will be. Only at the start of the cipa performances will a cipa mediator (or time-keeper) call the cipa competitors on stage. Each performance lasts 60 seconds and within that time rappers have to outperform their opponent. In order to initiate the cipa performance, the mediator (or time-keeper) tosses a coin to decide which rapper will start first⁶.

Keaton and Phoenix are two rappers who had never met prior to their lyrical duel that night at Club Stones, and they never thought to ask each other from which township or part of Cape Town they hailed. However, as rappers they shared a great deal in terms of creativity, lyrical style and hip-hop musical tastes. Keaton, on the one hand, is in his early 20s and has practiced rap since his early school days, but only recently started to freestyle battle (cipha). He is fluent in Afrikaans and English, is able to rap in both languages, and understands the street language Sabela. Born and raised in the historically demarcated area for coloureds and blacks in Kuilsriver, Keaton is considered a young MC (Microphone Controller) in the hip-hop community of Kuilsriver. And since the start of the Suburban Menace hip-hop show, “Stepping Stones to Hip-Hop”, he has capitalized on the valuable opportunities offered to perform his rap music and attempt to cipa battle (which he would have shied away from earlier). Keaton is an unsigned artist and his record for

6 The cipa performances which formed part of the Suburban Menace ‘Stepping Stones to Hip-Hop’ show in club Stones were different from street ciphaz. In street, ciphaz the rules are much more relaxed in terms of who “falls off” the (imagined) stage and who “jumps in” the cipa circle (space). There is no mediator that imposes a rule as a divide. In street ciphaz it is the audience (see Lee, 2009a; 2009b for excellent examples).

winning cipa battles has been dismally poor; many attribute this to his inexperience in cipa performances.

Phoenix, on the other hand, is a veteran MC and has since the start of the Wednesday night hip-hop show attracted a small audience who support him and want him to win. He is in his early 20s and has been actively involved as a rapper and a battle MC for more than eight years in the hip-hop community of Kuilsriver. His first major performance was at ““Spoeg Jam” Afrikaans Hip-Hop” (Spitting Jam Afrikaans Hip-Hop). He lives in Kuilsriver and views himself as a rap artist and a student of life. His aspiration is to become the Afrikaans rapper in South Africa and a household name. Many hip-hop heads⁷ and fans know him as Phoenix but he also has another alias, Charlie Raplin. Thus far, the highlight of his career has been the achievement of being crowned with the “Heal the Hood” best artist award. A fluent speaker of Afrikaans and English, Phoenix (like Keaton) has been exposed to Sabela in the community of Kuilsriver. Hip-Hop music has had a huge influence in his life and he boasts of having “a sharp mind that took to rhyming”. He writes rap lyrics and records frequently. In club Stones he has established a reputation for the best comical style of rap and has recently signed up to Indie label CapCol⁸.

At the beginning of the first round of the cipa performance Mseeq (the cipa mediator) first called to the stage the inexperienced Keaton, followed by the veteran Phoenix. Mseeq asked for a coin from the audience, and asked Keaton, as the more junior lyricist, to choose heads or tails. Keaton chose heads but Phoenix won the toss, electing Keaton to begin the lyrical duel:

Round 1 of Cipa

Keaton:

- 1 Yoh, yoh...yoh, yoh/
- 2 Ek gat Engels spit, nuh/
I'm going to spit in English, nuh
- 3 Julle verstaan SMEngelS/
You understand SMEngelS
- 4 Hie' gat ek/
Here I go
- 5 [...]
- 6 My favourate colour is red/
- 7 Like a bloodshed/
- 8 With purple haze/
- 9 When I shoot the sucker dead/
- 10 I'm rolling in a/



Plate 7: Keaton (left) versus Phoenix (right)



Plate 8: Audience members

7 Hip-Hop heads are knowledgeable individuals in the hip-hop culture who are not only the core and long-term members (cf. Morgan, 2009) but practice, transmit the knowledge and preserve the aesthetic and artistic use of the elements (Djing, Rap, Break-Dancing, Graffiti Writing and Knowledge of the Self).

8 Indie Label: Independent Recording Company.

- 11 Shish kebab/
- 12 When I woke this morning I was a lost soul/
- 13 Cause I got [inaudible]/
- 14 And a sore throat/
- 15 A wardrobe with an army robe/
- 16 In a [inaudible] signing autographs/
- 17 I just remembered that I'm absent-minded [inaudible]/
- 18 That it crossed my mind/
- 19 I can't rhyme it/
- 20 I freestyle every verse I spit//

Keaton began his performance with a verbal cue used commonly as a turn-taking element in capha battles, “Yoh, yoh...yoh, yoh” [line 1]. The use of this particular verbal cue is more commonly found in the rap and language practices of African American English (AAE). Keaton’s use of it in this context suggests that he is tapping into transnational forms in, what one can presume, is an attempt to promote himself as a credible MC with a translocal identity, and somebody who is able to meaningfully perform ciphaz, rather than the inexperienced rapper he is in reality.

Another feature of Keaton’s capha is how he violates a basic rule requiring him to perform *battle* lyrics and rhymes (punch-lines), comprising a personal attack on his opponent (that is, disrespecting him), including viscous commentary on his opponent’s verbal or non-verbal comportment. Although clearly expected of a capha battle, Keaton does not do this. He rhymes about being a protagonist in a series of events, where: (1) he talks about his favourite colour, other colours and his ability to draw colour through violence from others (lines 6-9); (2) that he is driving around in a vehicle that is as attractive as a shish kebab dinner (lines 10-11); (3) that he is lost because of a ‘sore throat’ (4) that he has a wardrobe full of choices, even his coat of arms (lines 12-15); and (5) that even though he is able to think off the top of his head, he still performs freestyle lyrics (lines 16-20). Noticeable is the constant meta-reflection on his person rather than the expected entextualization of interpersonal and combative relationships.

The lyrical content is managed largely through the use of English, although it is evident that Keaton is attempting to engage and appeal to both English and Afrikaans speakers among the audience. In lines 2 to 4, he rhymes: “ek gat Engels spit [I’m going to perform in English], nuh, julle verstaan [You understand] SMEngels. Hie’ gat ek. [Here I go]”. The form SMS (short message service) is commonly associated with the linguistic practices of texting (the combination of acronyms, short phrases and icons usually used in social networking *Real Time Chats* (RTC)). Keaton builds his lyrical content around this form of semiosis, thus assuming that those in the audience who practice texting or frequently visit social networking sites such as Facebook will understand this. And this is what comes out in the example: “julle verstaan [You understand] SMEngels” [Line 3]. This is an important line as the MC recognises interaction with

audience members figure as an important part of cipa battles; audience members are the assessors of good cipa performances, as well as significant co-constructors of them.

A feature of Keaton's performance is that many of the lyrics that he performs are from rapper Eminem's song "Cum on Everybody" off the *Slim Shady LP* (1999). Rappers frown on this practice as it is seen as *biting rhymes* [plagiarism] (see definition in Smitherman, 2006). Lee (2009b: 316) states that an MC would be accused of not only plagiarism but inherit the dubious reputation of "spitting writtens". This audience, which through its censorship and monitoring, is intrinsically involved in the ongoing emergences of Keaton's cipa performance itself. Towards the end of his performance, many of the audience members started to *booh him off stage*. His attempt to be lauded as an MC was slowly slipping beyond his grasp. To make matters worse, Keaton's competitor Phoenix added insult to injury by turning his back on Keaton, whereupon Keaton was *boohed* even louder. And while the music faded into the background, Mseeq (Plate 11) had this to say to Phoenix:

Mseeq:

- 21 Ooh, dji draai jou rug.
Ooh, you turn your back
- 22 Lyk my dji wil in die hol geëet word.
It looks like you want to be fucked in the ass
- 23 Waar's 28?
Where's 28?
- 24 Is 28 in die building?
Is 28 in the building?
- 25 [Laugh]
- 26 Dai's 'n facebook joke.
That's a facebook joke
- 27 Ok, Phoenix is dji gereed?
Ok, Phoenix are you ready?
- 28 Is dji gereed Phoenix?
Are you ready Phoenix?
- 29 Ok, [name of DJ] sit die man se mic hard genoeg.
Ok, [name of DJ] increase the volume for the man's mic



Plate 9: Mseeq talking to Phoenix

Mseeq says *Ooh, you turned your back. It looks like you want to be fucked in the ass. Where's 28? Is 28 in the building?* [Laugh] [Lines 21 to 25]. With his words, he is entextualizing practices and knowledge associated with street ciphas and the homosexual normative encounters of the Numbers gangs in Cape Town⁹. He continues with the statement: "That's a facebook joke" [line 26], thereby recognizing the function of the social networking site

9 The Numbers gangs are a well known feature of South African prison life. There are three groupings: the 28s, 26s and 27s (cf. Steinberg, 2004)

to link locals and friends. In his interruption, Mseeq makes reference to a variety of features essential to the contribution of extreme locality, namely; (1) the identification with 28 (in the use of the number 28) and the use of *Sabela* (an admixture of isiXhosa, Kaaps Afrikaans, Zulu, non-verbal gang signs), and (2) the language and discursive practices used on Facebook. Thus in a single linguistic interchange – which preceded Phoenix’s first round cipa performance as a response to Keaton – Mseeq entextualized both linguistic and non-linguistic aspects for extreme local spatialization. This communicative action *rescaled* (Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck, 2005) Keaton’s entextualization of verbal cues and lyrical content in AAE, even though Keaton had attempted to align himself with transcultural hip-hop. Mseeq thus effectively “deglobalized” (Blommaert, 2010) and “relocalized” (Pennycook, 2010) Keaton’s performance by bringing in local identities and local discourses and community practices through the use of Kaapse Afrikaans.

With respect to each of the features highlighted in Mseeq’s interruption, Keaton is guilty of violating some of the fundamental principles of rap performance. Not only does he choose to rap in AAE instead of Kaapse Afrikaans, he *spits writtens*. This latter feature suggests how it is *improvisation*, rather than *intertextuality*, that contributes to the extreme locality. Improvisation of course is by its very nature a situated practice, dependent on the local context. And finally, by erasing all references to the immediate context – such as choosing not to refer abusively to his protagonist – Keaton once again fails to contribute to the construction of extreme locality. It is precisely his failure to anchor his performance in the local that earns Keaton the audience’s derision.

It was now Phoenix’s turn to respond to Keaton:

Phoenix:

- 30 Yoh, yoh, is ja/
Yoh yoh, yes
- 31 Kuila ruk die ding ja/
Kuila keeps it rocking yes
- 32 Kuila ruk die ding ja/
Kuila keeps it rocking yes
- 33 Kuila ruk die ding ja/
Kuila keeps it rocking yes
- 34 Jy! Jy!
Yes! Yes!
- 35 Ek kom met ‘n sword in/
I come with a sword
- 36 Ek druk hom binne ‘n bord in/
I’ll drive it through you like through a wooden board
- 37 Ek sal die bra hop-tail/
I will jump on this guy

- 38 Dan kap sy gevriet in by Jordon/
And slice his face like [Michael] Jordon
- 39 Ja, tjek 'it uit, ja/
Yes, check it out, yes
- 40 Kyk hoe lyk djy my broe'/
Look at you brother
- 41 Dji het nie eens geld nie/
You don't even have money
- 42 Vir jou sal ek wen soes Liverpool teen Chelsea/
I will win against you like Liverpool against Chelsea
- 43 Is ja/
Oh, yes
- 44 Dji's gefok ja/
You're fucked yes
- 45 My broe djy kan kans drobba/
My brother, you can't even drobba
- 46 My broe djy lyk met 'n fake hare amper soes Drogba//
My brother, you have fake hair like Drogba

Like Keaton, Phoenix initiates his performance through verbal cues (evident in line 30, 34, 39 and 43). However, what makes his performance different to Keaton's from the outset is a sampling of African American English verbal cueing code-mixed with a local form of verbal cueing in Afrikaans (see lines 30, 34 and 39). He commences the performance with "Yoh, yoh" and ends the verbal cue with "ja", thereby introducing Kaapse Afrikaans into a position in cipa battles that has not been experienced before. In other words, Phoenix (re)entextualized the previous use of African American English verbal cueing by Keaton in a more poetically and aesthetically pleasing format, with a clear, local anchoring. His lyrical content is neatly constructed and between lines 31 and 33 he rhymes the phrase, "Kuila ruk die ding ja"¹⁰, paralinguistically waving the audience members to participate in the *call and response* (Keyes, 2002) common to on-stage rap performances¹¹. Phoenix entextualized the phrase intentionally to enact, what is commonly referred to in the global hip-hop communities as, *representing your place* (see Smitherman, 2006). Morgan (2009: 72) states that

To represent in hip-hop is not simply to identify with a city, neighbourhood, school, and so on. It is also a discursive turn – it is the symbols, memory, participants, and objects and details that together produce art of the space and time. Representing rebuilds and reinvigorates the space by making it hip-hop. Representing accomplished through a fantastical and complex system of indexicality – literally

10 "Kuila" is the Kaapse Afrikaans reference to the community and location of Kuilsriver.

11 Smitherman states call and response is "spontaneous verbal and nonverbal interaction between speaker and listener in which all the speaker's statements ("call") are punctuated by expressions ("responses") from the listener" (1977: 104).

pointing to and shouts out place, people, and events when an interaction is framed around important referential symbols and contexts.

Because Phoenix is from Kuilsriver, he used the majority local audience from the community to rally behind his performance. These phrases are repeated in no more than two lines and preceded the verbal cue, “Jy! Jy!” (Line 34) performed with a slight rise in pitch, all provocatively directed at Keaton.

Phoenix continues his lyrics monologically in Kaapse Afrikaans. His use of the phrases such as “Ek kom met ‘n sword in” [I come with a sword] (line 35), “druk hom” [drive it through you] (line 36), and words such as “hop-tail” (line 37) and “smash” (line 38) are lyricised to exact the necessary violence commonly expressed in cipa battles through Kaapse Afrikaans. For example, he draws on the discourse of poverty to denigrate the rap identity of Keaton by comparing him to someone who has poor taste in clothes and no money (lines 40-41); always backing the losing team of a match (line 42). Buoyed by his lyrical creativity – and cheered on by members of the audience – Phoenix continued to assail his opponent who he lyricised as forlorn [Djy’s gefok ja] (see line 44) and unable to bounce back [‘...kan kans drobba] (line 45).

The lyric in line 42 had been formulated with direct reference to Keaton’s prior performance. Initially, Phoenix turned his back and looked up to the television set, watching the football game between Liverpool Football Club (FC) and Chelsea FC. The lyric in line 45 is inspired by the dribbling ability and running passes of footballer Didier Drogba – an aspect of the match that Phoenix quickly studied and rhymed into lyrics, thereby inserting it into the pace of the performance as a transmodal instance of extreme local space. This lyrical attack in Kaapse Afrikaans on Keaton, is insinuating that Keaton is unable to respond to his cipa battle rhymes because he “kan kans drobba” and identifies Keaton in line 45 as a fake MC whose lyrical performance (assumingly “writtens”) are comparable to the fake hair on football star Didier Drogba’s head.

As mentioned, most of Phoenix’s lyrical performance was managed in the Kaapse variety of Afrikaans. His use of verbal cues through the latter language is unique and currently an emerging performative discourse in the hip-hop community of Cape Town.

Analyzing the second round of cipa performance: entextualizing disrespect (dissing)

In the previous performance, Keaton and Phoenix performed very different ciphaz. For Keaton, the upscaled and global use of African American English (AAE) for verbal cueing was the language he thought to be more useful to infiltrate the space and placate the linguistic sensibilities of audience members. This was not well received and his opponent, Phoenix, used his failure to score a win. In the next performance — the second round — Keaton’s performance reveals two things: (1) his understanding that he must perform cipa battle rhymes, and not rap about himself; and (2) his realization that he must do cipa lyrics in a language, register and variety that would earn him a win. In the second round, the audience attempt to influence the rappers’ performance even more explicitly and loudly than before (see lines 38, 40 to 42). Their goal is to put pressure on

Keaton to cipa perform in what they consider to be the correct language. Because he started the first round Keaton also began the second round. He entextualized the discourse of disrespecting (*dissing*) with an excessive use of expletives in Kaapse Afrikaans (see phrases in bold):

Round 2 of Cipa

Keaton:

- 39 Is julle reg?/
Are you ready?
- 43 Vir hom ek sal sy **Masse Poes**/
For him I'm going to Muthafucking
- 44 se **fokking** bek ba's/
Fuck his mouth up
- 45 Ek sal sy **fokken** afkap/
I will fucking axe him up
- 46 en dan smetterig smeer/
And grease him good
- 47 Ek **fokking** rhyme/
I fucking rhyme
- 48 want ek prober/
Cause I try
- 49 Ek reppie/
I don't just rap
- 50 want ekke rep soe' **fokkien** wheck/
I rap so fucking whack
- 51 Wat?/
What?
- 52 hie' kom ek deur/
I'm coming through
- 53 ek kom deur met respek/
I'm coming through with respect
- 54 ek breek sy **fokking** nek/
I break his fucking neck

Audience Members:

- 38 Afrikaans man!
- 40 Ja!
- 41 Doen Siebela!
Do Sabela!
- 42 Djy jou naai!
You Mothafucka!

- 55 ek slat my skoen somme binne
I kick my shoe till
56 in sy bek/
In his mouth
57 Ek worry nie/
I don't worry
58 want ekke nie worry/
Cause I don't worry
59 en hy's **fokking** geworried/
Cause he's *fucking* worried
60 want hy is dik gesplif aan die Darry/
Cause he's high on the hash
61 ja/
yes
62 die **fokking**...//
The *fucking*...

In this round, Keaton appeared to have become aware of how freestyle battle rhyming in AAE was limiting his ability to get the audience members to engage with him, just as his use of *biting of rhymes* had not been well received by the audience and his opponent. His response is thus to introduce linguistic forms in Kaapse Afrikaans and use the register of intimidation through Sabela to disrespect Phoenix. He uses phrases such as *cunt* (Poes) and *breaking your fucking mouth* (*fokking bek ba's*) to violently attack his opponent, “Vir hom ek sal sy Masse Poes se *fokking bek ba's*/Ek sal sy fokken afkap en dan smetterig smeer/Ek *fokking rhyme* want ek probeer” (Translation: *For him I'm going to Muthafucking fuck his mouth up. I will fucking axe him up and grease him good. I fucking rhyme 'cause I try*). What is particularly salient about Keaton's lyrical content in the second round is that he employs forms of language with more masculine and underground connotations clearly indexical of the extreme locality of club Stones and the use of Kaapse Afrikaans. Keaton thus attempts to accommodate what he perceives to be his audience's wishes, thus hoping to negate the impact of his first round cipa performance. This appears to find some satisfaction among the audience, although Mseeq, began once again to police Keaton saying:

Mseeq:

- 63 Whoooo!
64 Keaton/
65 as dji Afrikaans rap/
If you're going to rap in Afrikaans
66 dan moet dji wiet wat dji sê jong/
Then you must know what you are going to say

- 67 Jou Masse frikken.../
Your Motha freaking...
68 dji is dan net net dit.../
You are this this and that...
69 kom Pheonix let's go//
Come Pheonix let's go

Mseeq admonishes Keaton when he points out that there are norms to rapping and rhyming in Kaapse Afrikaans, when he emphasizes, “Keaton, if you’re going to rap in Afrikaans then you must know what you going to say, brother. Your Motha freaking... you are this and that”, and is thus not directly commenting on Keaton’s use of Kaapse Afrikaans or the forms adapted in the rapper’s lyrical content.

Phoenix continued to skilfully close off the cipa between him and Keaton:

Phoenix:

- 70 Uh, tjek ‘it uit. Tjek ‘it uit/
Uh, check it out. Check it out
71 Kuila!/

73 Hosh, o’s represent/
Cool, we represent

75 Met die pen/
With the pen
76 met die slet/
With the slut

78 dji moet ken/
You must recognize
79 Uh/
80 dji’s ’n disaster/
You’re a disaster
81 ek is die Master/
I’m the Master
82 As ekke klaa’ is/
When I’m done
83 dan lien dji by iemand ’n plaster/
You’ll need a plaster
84 [...]
85 Hy is die flow/
He’s the flow

Audience Members:

- 72 Hosh!

74 Jy!

77 Tsais!

- 86 *djy moet onthou/*
You must remember
- 87 *vir jou gooi ek soes vleis op die braai/*
I'll throw you like meat on the braai
- 88 *want djy is rou/*
Because you're raw
- 90 [...]
- 91 *Djy bly my gryp/*
You grab me all the time
- 92 *djy is 'n meit/*
You're a hore
- 93 *lyk my ek moet hom weer hop-tail/*
It seems I'll have tohop-tail him again
- 94 *en vir hom die keer ryp//*
And rape him again

Phoenix's final performance above is bare of expletives. He started his second round cipa performance in an almost identical way to his first round, as can be seen from the way he uses verbal cueing (see line 70 and 79). With the exception of a few omissions in lines 84 and 90, the performance here shows both improvisation and a clever use of freestyle lyrics. In the first round, Phoenix performed 'representing'. In this round, he initially appears to be preparing a repeat of 'representing', (see line 71), but instead of producing intimidating rhymes and lyrics, he switches instead over to a lyrical meta-reflection on the creative process preceding a cipa performance.

Audience engagement and co-construction in Phoenix's performance comes out in the way they offer greetings in Kaapse Afrikaans and Sabela, the two most common varieties on the Cape Flats. "Hosh!" (line 72) is a socially acceptable way of greeting among multilingual youth on the Cape Flats, and used to exclaim a person's presence. On the other hand, it is also an invitation to engage in talk commonly associated with the prison language Sabela. The use of the lexical form "Tsais!" has multiple meanings but is here used by audience members to emphasise that Phoenix must push Keaton "off-stage" because he fails to construct good cipa rhymes. The manner in which "tsais" is used is further suggestive of the desire that audience members signaled earlier to have Kaapse Afrikaans as a central part of the evolving register. It subsequently becomes clear that Phoenix, by refraining from picking up on these words, choosing rather to remain comical in his rap style and refusing to succumb to consistent pressure from the audience, shows himself once again to be a better MC than Keaton.

The penultimate lyrical turns in Phoenix's final performance are innovative and improvised to further denigrate the young MC Keaton. In clearly organized turns of four stanzas, Phoenix reflects on Keaton's previous performances in the cipa (lines 80-83); that he is much too young to rhyme against him (Phoenix) (lines 85-88); and that he has been feminized (lines 91-94). Phoenix makes it clear that any young rapper who ciphases

against him will always be a disaster (“dij’s n disaster”, line 80) because he is the better MC (“n Master”, line 81). His performance is always threatening and hurtful (“As ekke klaa’ is/dan lien dij by iemand ’n plaster”, lines 82-83). He informs the audience that Keaton thinks he can rhyme (“hy is die flow”, line 85) but because Phoenix is the master, his lyrics are better and Keaton must remember that he is still a young rapper that will fail (“dij moet onthou/vir jou gooi ek soes vleis op die braai/want dij is rou”, lines 86-88).

In the last lines of his performance, Phoenix feminizes Keaton. He does this by making reference to how Keaton was pulling on his clothes in order to add ‘paralinguistic value’ to his use of expletives. What Phoenix points out is that Keaton in reality just wanted to hold him (“Dij bly my gryp”, line 91); that he is a woman (“dij is ’n meit, line 92); and because Keaton continued with the action Phoenix must win the second round (“lyk my ek moet hom weer hop-tail/en vir hom die keer ryp”, lines 93-94). In this way, Phoenix thus ended the cipa performance as the winner.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

This paper was about the ways in which the youth in club Stones entextualize the local while simultaneously enregistering the cipa genre. As a local place, Stones offered a local stage for the framing and enactment of local speech genres and language practices of youth who gathered there. Verbal cueing, representing place, and expressing disrespect are all core components of the genre and used by the two rappers in the development of the rap cipa performances. Ultimately, the goal is the construction of the extreme local through the cipa performance, which implies the entextualization of (deictic) reference to local coordinates, transposing or recontextualizing transidiomatic phrases, and incorporating local proxemics and audience reactions through commentary and response.

Thus, the extreme local is accomplished partly through the use of particular languages and their varieties and partly by indexical reference to spatial and non-spatial coordinates. In this process, the audience as co-constructer in the entextualization of extreme locality is a significant feature in the emergence of the cipa performance. Features such as situated improvisations, the adoption of one of the authors, Quentin, as “our PHD candidate”, reference to local discourses such as the Numbers Gangs, all figure in processes of entextualization¹². What came to be excluded and banned from the (joint) performance was the appropriation (by Keaton) of lyrics from global hip hop, the use of AAE (rather than Kaapse Afrikaans) – all generally features of an insufficient remixing of the flow (Pennycook, 2007: 117).

The analyses reveal that simultaneous to the entextualization of extreme locality in Club Stones there is an enregisterment of socially acceptable linguistic resources that circulates in the sociolinguistic landscape of the Cape Flats. We see clearly how the combatant cipa performers are each proffering new forms, juxtaposition of languages, encodings of the local and flagging them for audience uptake and appropriation. Signifi-

12 The name Suburban Menace is itself indicative of what is happening in performing extreme locality.

cantly, the enregisterment of the cipa performance with language varieties and registers further sedimented the extreme locality because, as Agha (2005: 56-7) states, “for many registers, competing models are common in social life; however, only some among them – or even just one – may come to count as the “official” model for a given group at a given time and thus become the mode to which more and more of the subsequent social history of the group is an intertextual response”. In the establishment of the extreme locality, this official model was built around Kaapse Afrikaans and Sabela. The enregisterment of cipa performance with Kaapse Afrikaans, the register Sabela and AAE revealed the micro-level process of register use circulating in the extreme locality. We have argued that Keaton’s encounter with the register Sabela – and the audience members’ insistence on it – led him to enregister his performance with Kaapse Afrikaans in an attempt to win over the audience, and possibly win the cipa. In contrast, Phoenix’ use of Kaapse Afrikaans and Sabela was aligned with audience insistence and contributed to the construction of the local.

However, importantly, what we find is that entextualization of the local and the concomitant enregisterment of the genre of cipa allowed the emergence of a semiotic space and gave legitimacy to multilingual practices that, in fact, created conditions favorable to the expression of marginalized identities and voices of the youth who gathered in the space. In this particular cipa performance, the marginalized identity in focus is that of non-standard and peripheral speakers of Afrikaans and English. We find a linguistic agency exercised, that is, the acceptable linguistic forms and framings of extreme locality, and metalinguistic disputes on how to create or construct the context of extreme locality. In general, the entextualization of extreme locality offers up a semiotically framed space where youths are often able to engage with a wider set of issues relating to their positions in society such as, sexuality, politics, and social transformation. What is of interest is that the youths are themselves actively “working” with an alternative sense of language, creating new norms and standards and revealing in stark clarity the micro-processes behind the formation of registers. Stroud (2001: 353) has referred to this type of process as multi/linguistic citizenship, namely, “...the situation where speakers themselves exercise control over their language, deciding *what* languages are, and what they may mean, and where language issues ... are discursively tied to a range of social issues”. What we see here is precisely how a grassroots and polycentric practice of multilingualism is simultaneously creating the conditions and contexts for multilingual citizenship.

From the cipa performance in Club Stones, we can only agree with Alastair Pennycook’s claim that “difference and diversity, multilingualism and hybridity are not rare and exotic conditions to be sought out and celebrated but the quotidian ordinariness of everyday life” (Pennycook, 2007: 95). These very conditions of diversity are the *preconditions* for the exercise of youth agency and voice, that is, multilingual citizenship.

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