INTRODUCTION

YOUTH LANGUAGE AT THE INTERSECTION:
FROM MIGRATION TO GLOBALIZATION

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Abstract

This special issue examines the linguistic production of youth identities under conditions of cultural mobility. Building on theories of migration, transnationalism, and globalization that have emerged in anthropology, cultural studies, and other fields, the contributions to the special issue investigate not simply the large-scale cultural and political processes that shape the lives of youth but equally how youth identities emerge through the fine-grained details of interactional work and local linguistic practice. The introduction lays out the major themes that run through the special issue: the importance of scholarly attentiveness to the diversity of youth identities; the recognition of youth as social agents moving across national boundaries both physically and symbolically; the role of local ethnographic practice in investigations of global and transnational phenomena and especially the centrality of interaction as the primary site of social life; and the significance of language as a key resource for the articulation and negotiation of social identities, relations, and processes.

Keywords: Ethnography; Globalization; Immigration; Interaction; Transnationalism; Youth.

1. Introduction

The dynamics produced by recent worldwide political, economic, and sociocultural developments have rendered problematic notions of identity as fixed in time and space and have changed the nature of the arena in which language, culture, and identity intersect and intertwine. In contemporary plural societies subject to the impact of migration and the global circulation of information, commodities, and visual images, the range of identities available to individuals has become more flexible and complex. What were previously thought of as large-scale, all-encompassing, or homogeneous collective identities, such as those of nationality, social class, race, ethnicity, and gender, undergo fragmentation and erosion in an increasingly compressed world (Hall 1997). Subjects and objects in motion, including people and their artifacts, images and texts, technologies and techniques, ideas and ideologies - in Appadurai's (1996: 33) terms, "ethnoscapes," "mediascapes," "technoscapes," and "ideoscapes" - rapidly navigate across national boundaries and shape the construction of self and others. Young people may be particularly inclined to embrace and revise such cultural flows, due to their distinctive generational experiences as well as youth culture's demands for innovation and originality. Youth identity practices therefore provide important insights into the

ways in which broader categories and categorizations become fluid and porous in an era of transnationalism and flexible citizenship (Ong 1999), globalization and technologies of virtual mobility (Castells 2000), migration and diaspora (Brettell 2003; Papastergiadis 2000), the "traveling" of theory and culture (Clifford 1997; Said 1983, 2000), "creole" cultures (Hannerz 1996), and "liquid" lives and times (Bauman 1992). While the large-scale processes of migration, transnationalism, and globalization and their varied forms of reception are by no means new, they have recently given rise to an abundant and rich body of theoretical and empirical work that has done a great deal to move the study of sociocultural phenomena away from an emphasis on community and continuity and toward a perspective that emphasizes contact and change (Pratt 1987).

A previous period of theorizing located these dynamics in the bodies of social actors as manifested in the heterogeneity of late-modern subjectivity - whether characterized as intersectional identities (Crenshaw [1991] 1995), new ethnicities (Hall 1988), transnational identities (Gupta 2003; Vertovec 2001), hybrid and hyphenated identities (Bhabha 1994), or mestiza consciousness (Anzaldúa 1987). The present theoretical era, by contrast, focuses not only on bodies but also on spaces; not just on people moving into new cultural locations and positions but also on new cultural resources flowing toward people. Likewise, the focus has been less on the tensions, contrasts, divisions, and dichotomies of an earlier theoretical moment and more on the messy and creative bricolage that these decentralized cultural flows enable. However, both theoretical accounts and empirical studies that train their focus on the "world system" or operate at similar levels of abstraction lack fine-grained analysis of the everyday experiences of individuals and groups living at the intersection of multiple and seemingly conflicting cultural ideologies, such as tradition and modernity, local and global connections, and relationships between the "homeland" and the "host land." Consequently, such work frequently emphasizes macroprocesses and leaves largely unexamined the microlevel of what social actors actually do with the scapes that shape their worlds. Although transnational and global cultural identifications unquestionably carry a certain ideological force, it is in local spaces and communities that identities are tried out, embodied, and adapted in order to be made coherent. Therefore, despite the much-touted disintegration of cultural, temporal, and spatial boundaries under globalization (Appadurai 1996; Castells 2000), locality retains both material and symbolic prominence in people's lives. It is necessary, then, to study global, transnational, and other mobile processes locally and ethnographically. And it is equally necessary to examine these dynamics through the lens of interactional and sociolinguistic analysis, for language, as a primary interactional resource for the construction of flexible and shifting identities, mediates both local and translocal social experience.

This special issue aims to redress the gap in theoretically driven perspectives on the current global moment by highlighting the interactional context in which cultural flows across national borders are negotiated and (re)signified, particularly among youth, who often constitute the vanguard of sociocultural innovation and adaptation. The articles included in this issue rest on the assumption that youth identity is forged in important part through language and inscribed within the agency/structure dyad (Giddens 1984), so that identity positions are neither entirely the result of intentional individual action nor fully predetermined by larger sociopolitical structures and ideologies. While broader discourses of nationality, gender, citizenship, and culture (among others) exercise important constraints on identity work, local practices of

agency, resistance, and style are interwoven in the process of individual workings and reworkings of identity. Moreover, the local, as both a geographic place and a cultural space, is embedded within a global semiotic and material milieu, yet it often remains bound to grand narratives of nation and cultural identification. As a result, young people increasingly move through a mosaic discourse space, participating in its reproduction and transformation.

2. Youth studies in global times

Youth identity has been the subject of an enormous amount of research over the last fifty years and more. Earlier approaches across the social sciences relied on broad and abstracted conceptualizations in describing youth, which implied that young people within a culture live a largely undiversified experience (e.g., Erikson 1968; Mead 1928), with divergences from a normative youth category generally framed as "deviance" (e.g., Cohen 1955). However, the situation of youth varies widely even within cultural groupings, and individuals as well as groups may confront specific historical and cultural processes in different ways, based on their subject positions. Recent studies of youth have expressed more sensitivity to the particularities of culture and locality and to the increasingly fluid and unstable nature of social relations (e.g., Bennett 2000; Bennett & Kahn-Harris 2004; Cole & Durham 2007; Helve & Holm 2005; Maira 2002; Muggleton 2000). These approaches acknowledge the ways in which material and semiotic commodities function as cultural resources whose meanings are generated at the level of everyday practices, and which young people employ in the interactional making and remaking of their public image and social identity (Frith 2004). This line of work is often coupled with a focus on lifestyle choices emerging around aesthetic preferences, hobbies, and commodities within the context of globalization, especially as the latter relate to popular culture and new technologies in the formation of these lifestyles (Epstein 1998; Fornäs & Bolin 1995; Potter 1995; Reimer 1995; Sefton-Green 1998). A common denominator of these new approaches is the assumption that youth identities cannot be understood outside their particular sociocultural context. While the global span of cultural commodities involves some degree of homogenization, scholars of youth cultures express a great concern with the ways in which globally available resources are actively and creatively appropriated by social actors in local contexts and how youth engage with, push back against, or otherwise negotiate externally generated social forces. One such arena where young people have dramatically taken the initiative in this process of "glocalization" (Robertson 1995) is the origination and global spread of hip hop (e.g., Mitchell 2001). More generally, the increasing circulation of mobile social actors and social resources has led to the disruption of fixed national, ethnoracial, cultural, and linguistic boundaries and to the construction of youth identities that creatively respond to these new circumstances.

      With the reorientation of the study of contemporary youth identities to its twin conditions, situatedness and flux, new and less deterministic frameworks have been developed that can capture the small-scale as well as the large-scale dimensions of these processes along with the ephemerality and flexibility of identity work in a world of constant motion. Yet less attention has been paid to the ways in which language stands at the intersection of multiple spaces, times, resources, and systems of meaning in the articulation of youth identity. The conditions of late modernity yield a rich array of

resources for youth identity work across traditional social and linguistic borders. Indeed, precisely because of young people's access to multiple linguistic and cultural resources via global media, marketing processes, migration and transnationalism, and transcultural contact in modern urban settings, youth have access to identities that are both global, with respect to transnational, nonterritorial youth culture, and local, by virtue of the particular meanings which the insertion of such forms takes on in local youth-centered linguistic and cultural practices. Through language, young people lay claim to multiple identity resources and thereby construct dynamic identities that challenge established notions of collectivities based on skin color, parental background, year or place of birth, and other static markers of identification. As recent linguistic research on youth identity has shown, young people as actors and subjects construct selves and others via multidimensional and interpenetrating discourses of ethnicity, language, gender, sexuality, nation, race, and culture (e.g., Alim 2004a, 2006; Androutsopoulos & Georgakopoulou 2003; Bucholtz 1999; Cutler 1999; Doran 2003; Giampapa 2001; Heller 1999; Lo 1999; Mendoza-Denton 2008; Pujolar 2001; Rampton 1995, 2006; Reyes 2007; Roth-Gordon 2007; Rumbaut 2002; Shenk 2007; Skapoulli 2004; Tetreault 2002; Warriner 2007).

The articles in this special issue address these processes by focusing on the ways in which local and translocal semiotic resources are variously taken up by and imposed upon youth for the construction of selves and others in a range of interactional and sociocultural settings. These studies aim to reveal how youth navigate a social terrain saturated by diverse ideologies and representations of identities as they make their way through a world of motion and modification. The authors examine youth language at the crossroads of these forces, drawing on an ethnographic perspective that privileges the locally situated discursive interactions of young people and the multiplicity of their identity practices without losing sight of the macrolevel intersectional phenomena, from migration to globalization, that shape the lives and language of youth today.

3. Approaching the intersection: Youth language and culture in context(s)

The articles in this special issue draw on and rework contemporary insights from studies of migration, globalization, and related sociopolitical processes to advance the linguistic study of youth as an undertaking that requires attention to the local as well as the global, to individual agency as well as far-reaching social forces. Collectively, the authors articulate a broadly shared methodological and theoretical vision of how to analyze the intersectionality of youth identities in transcultural, translinguistic, and transnational contexts. In these articles, intersectionality is not understood as a static site, a place for border-crossing youth to stand, but rather as the necessarily mobile positionality of youth identities in the complex sociocultural field of late modernity. Thus, although the papers in this issue focus on youth at the front lines of sweeping cultural changes - immigrants and the children of immigrants, cultural brokers and borrowers, early adopters and initiators of global innovations - the conditions they confront are an inherent part of youth experience everywhere today.

The articles are unified by their commitment to ways of looking and understanding that privilege the local, the immediate, and the everyday over the global, the historical, and the momentous. This is not to say that the latter sorts of processes do not touch the lives of youth, but rather that such issues can be examined meaningfully

only via approaches in which youth themselves are at the center of analysis. These articles empirically link linguistic phenomena to large-scale sociopolitical dynamics through careful attention to three levels of analysis: the interactional setting, the local community, and the wider macrosocial context.

All of the articles look closely at social interaction as the most immediate and richest site of youth identity work. Through fine-grained analysis of multiple linguistic phenomena - from the stylistic deployment of phonology and syntax (Chun) to lexis and labeling practices (Lee, Skapoulli) to discourse genres (Tetreault) to the constitution of a global and multilingual youth register (Alim) - each article demonstrates precisely how particular speakers position themselves and others in rapidly shifting social space. This interactional context is precisely where any linguistic investigation of identity must begin, for it is only through the painstaking work of close analysis that researchers can unearth the full range of linguistic resources that speakers and listeners bring to bear on the project of locating themselves and others socially and culturally.

The sorts of interactions considered in the articles are likewise as variable as the youth who participate in them, and the analyses bring into sharp focus the interactional material with which young people build their social worlds. Much of this work is done exclusively with peers, especially in the exploration of taboo topics, like sexuality, that hold such fascination for youth (Skapoulli). In such situations, teenagers and young adults make meaning for themselves and one another based on the ground rules they themselves have negotiated, which often run counter to the ideologies imposed by parents and teachers. Indeed, adults constantly hover at the margins of youth-centered interaction, but in a carnivalesque reversal (Bakhtin 1993) their usual authority is more often subverted than acknowledged: thus adult voices may be overtly cited via second-generation immigrant teenagers' mockery and mimicry of their first-generation parents (Chun), or adult figures may be summoned into youth discourse through an intricate form of teasing whereby the naming of a peer's parent is a social injury both to the named adult and to the targeted peer (Tetreault). Such situations suggest that although adult authority frequently penetrates young people's interactions, it does so mainly as a foil for youthful concerns.

By contrast, interviews between researchers and young people are a form of interaction in which adults often hold the power to direct the discourse and invest it with meaning and purpose. In some cases, the researcher may be so thoroughly a participant-observer in the youth culture under investigation that she or he gives up this structural authority to a great extent, yielding center stage to the study participants as the most cogent theorists of their cultural situation (Alim). In other instances, differences between the particularities of young people's experience on the one hand and the researcher's experience and expectations on the other may lead to interactions in which interviewee and interviewer work at cross-purposes - or in which research participants issue a quiet, off-record, yet unmistakable challenge to the researcher's goals and assumptions, or at least to what they take those goals and assumptions to be (Lee). In both cases, the interpretive agency of youth triggers a realignment of meaning-making authority within the interview setting. The unpredictable outcomes of even such highly structured, institutionally authorized, and asymmetrical interactional encounters suggest that researchers of youth would be wise not to ignore the considerable efficacy of young people's agency under all sorts of sociopolitical conditions (cf. Bucholtz 2002).

A second level of analytic attention in these authors' work is the ethnographic milieu. It is only at this level of local cultural practice that both analysts and cultural

members can interpret the meaning of interactional moves. This statement is most vividly illustrated when considering the sociocultural categories that emerge as salient in the articles. While ethnonational identities and categories figure importantly in all of the studies, they do so in strikingly different ways. Thus ethnicity and nationality serve variously as taken-for-granted bonds that permit American-born teenagers to connect linguistically with their immigrant friends (Chun), as resources for justifying social stigma by positioning immigrant young women as sexually promiscuous (Skapoulli), and as sites of tension, evasion, and confusion in a context of institutional hypersensitivity to ethnic difference, race, and racism (Lee). Such identities are further complicated by the multivalent cultural allegiances that youth may negotiate (Tetreault) as well as by the literally utopic possibility of transcending nationally bounded ethnic categories altogether in order to embrace a globally shared panethnic youth-cultural identity (Alim). It is clear from these examples that ethnicity and nationality do not have fixed meanings for young people in different places and positions.

This fact underscores the significance of location in ethnographic research. But again, as these articles illustrate, identifying and delimiting the spatial scope of a study is by no means straightforward. The most immediately relevant ethnographic locales in the papers are the research sites themselves, including schools (Chun, Lee, Skapoulli) and neighborhoods (Tetreault); and these sites in turn are embedded in and impinged upon by geopolitical spaces in Europe (Skapoulli, Tetreault) and the United States (Chun, Lee). But in all of the articles, the ethnographic context is not restricted to a neatly bounded cultural locus. In the studies by Chun and Lee, for example, the authors' respective research settings in Texas and California are intertwined with the national and supranational spaces to which post-immigrant youth in these places may lay claim (albeit sometimes ambivalently and partially), from Mexico to Korea to "everywhere." This diffuse transnational space is found in the bilingual, bicultural lives that teenagers easily navigate as they interact with immigrant friends and family members (Chun) as well as in the "ethnic abundance" that the early adolescents in Lee's study declare as the basis of their identities. And it is also seen in the various ways that young people spatiotemporally counterpose the traditions of the parental past, located "elsewhere" in places like Eastern Europe and North Africa, and the often beguiling but not entirely welcoming "modern" (read: Western) present (Skapoulli, Tetreault). Finally, the multisited - or perhaps siteless - approach to global hip hop taken by Alim goes even further in exploding the political boundaries that govern the logic of much ethnographic investigation. Hence the sometimes distant, sometimes imagined places that give meaning to local sites are equally part of the ethnographic context in the analysis of phenomena that supersede conventional spatial divisions.

The final level of analysis that these articles consider is the broader sociocultural matrix within which local communities operate, and particularly the processes of migration, transnationalism, and globalization. The authors wisely do not allow these larger structures, consequential as they are, to drive their analyses, for close interactional and ethnographic attention to the details of particular people in everyday situations is especially important in the study of such vast and free-floating concepts, which all too often are not carefully grounded in real people's ordinary lives.

These concepts are enlisted in different ways by each author. Those concerned with youth in the United States find migration and its relationship to postmigration to be the most pressing question for their investigations. Lee shows how the widespread Romantic ideology of ethnicity as a category in which language, race, and nation map

neatly onto one another falls short in characterizing the identities of second-generation immigrant teenagers, a category that is often imposed by analysts but may not have the same currency in youth interactions. Young people may creatively appropriate this Romantic ideology by appealing, at different moments, to each of its elements, or they may simply reject it out of hand. The intimate role of language in particular in configurations of ethnicity among post-immigrant youth is explored in depth in Chun's article, which delineates two structurally similar but semiotically opposed practices of simplified speech among second-generation immigrant high school students, one that accommodates nonnative speaker peers and parents and another that mocks them. Both papers reveal the fissures in a nationally bounded concept of ethnicity and a fixed notion of immigrant identity in ethnographic contexts in which youth identities straddle cultural, linguistic, and national territories.

Where Chun and Lee emphasize the construction and deconstruction of ethnicity as a social category among post-immigrant youth, other authors focus on the gendered and sexual dimensions of migration in young people's peer interactions. Tetreault's article examines the ways in which Algerian French youth playfully invert gendered norms of respect and modesty in a teasing routine that exploits the North African taboo against the use of personal names. Tetreault characterizes this process as "transcultural" rather than "transnational" because this form of teasing does not simply geographically relocate an existing cultural practice but creatively refashions it for new purposes in new circumstances. And Skapoulli considers how popular media representations of sexual activity, despite their ideological investments, facilitate discursive experiments with sexual knowledge among teenage girls of diverse ethnic and national backgrounds in Cyprus, in defiance of intensive family, school, and peer monitoring of girls' virginity and sexual innocence.

Skapoulli's article, with its characterization of the two-edged nature of global resources for immigrant youth, also underlines a key theoretical difference between migration and globalization: the former directs attention to the mobilization of bodies across porous borders, while the latter invites examination of the transnational flow of economic, cultural, and political resources. Naturally, this division is rather artificial, for as groups and individuals enter new cultural geographies, they bring numerous resources with them, and likewise the movement of material goods as well as more intangible sorts of commodities through global space frequently entails a human escort or conveyor as well. Despite this limitation, the distinction between mobile bodies and mobile resources provides a useful way of understanding the range of intersectionalities that youth negotiate. In this special issue, the affordances of globalized popular culture in the lives of youth are explored most extensively by Alim, who argues that the transnational/transcultural flows of hip hop provide flexible tools for the construction of youth identities that are both locally rooted and global in orientation (see also Alim, Ibrahim, & Pennycook 2008; Pennycook 2006).

The multiplexity of intersectional youth identities as documented in Alim's article is a theme that resonates throughout this special issue. All the papers demonstrate that matters of belonging are central to the experience of youth under current conditions of flux and movement. Such questions are inevitable given the reality of young people claiming spaces both "here" at "home" and "there" in ancestral and imagined elsewheres; living both in the temporal "now" of modernity and the "then" of tradition and history; moving both among "us" citizens and cultural insiders and among "them": foreigners, aliens, and Others. A great deal of previous work on migration in the context

of the nation-state has focused on the second term in each of these dualities - *there, then, them* - by calling attention to the ways in which ideologies of race, language, and citizenship marginalize immigrant and post-immigrant youth and adults alike and position them as what Patricia Hill Collins (1990), in another context, has termed "outsiders within" (e.g., Miller 2003; Santa Ana 2002; Tuan 1999). Such scholarship importantly exposes how boundaries between nations are recursively reinscribed within the nation itself as authorities and member-citizens draw lines of inclusion and exclusion to preserve their own power and privilege.

The articles presented here extend this work by giving equal time to the first element of the dualities enumerated above - *here, now, us* - and emphasizing the ways in which youth claim legitimate ownership of multiple cultural sources and spaces. In doing so, however, the authors never lose sight of how the individual agency driving such moves is constrained by hegemonic systems. Thus, the issue of belonging arises in Chun's article through the distinction that U.S.-born teenagers make between themselves and first-generation immigrants, a distinction that is embodied in the linguistic practice of simplified speech, whether accommodating or mocking. Similarly, Lee finds that the "American-first" identity espoused by youth who are ethnically marked according to the binary ethnic logic of their school and community deflects the mainstream ideology that casts them as foreign by virtue of their phenotype alone. While the faultline lies between immigrant generations in these two studies, in other articles the tension is between modernity and tradition. In Tetreault's article, French Algerian youth assert both their Frenchness and their Algerianness by appropriating and resignifying a cultural taboo in ways that simultaneously interrogate and uphold traditional notions of respect and gendered modesty. The role of gender in constituting the traditional and the modern is also central to Skapoulli's argument that the "virgin-whore" dichotomy of cultural tradition vies with the knowing sexual subjecthood that some immigrant girls seek to claim as part of a modern femininity. Finally, the hip hop artists who articulate a vernacular theory of globalization in Alim's article advance a notion of belonging that centers not on citizenship in a nation-state or membership in a particular class or ethnoracial category but on one's allegiance to the global "Hip Hop Nation."

It is apparent from the authors' analyses that these shifting subjectivities do not settle in any one place. As the articles show, the same person may lay claim to multiple aspects of the self at different moments or even at the same time and may resist being forced to choose among them; likewise, the same person may be positioned by others in ways that contrast with how she presents herself, and different individuals and groups may interpret her identity in accordance with their own varied ideological points of view. In this sense, youth identities - and indeed, all identities - are not only intersectional but also partial and perspectival (Bucholtz and Hall 2005).

4. Overview of the special issue

In locating the enactments and effects of migration, transnationalism, and globalization in the real-time details of interaction in local ethnographic settings, the contributors to this special issue bring fine-grained analysis more centrally into theoretical and empirical examinations of broad social processes. The first two articles call attention to

ethnicity as a highly salient concept in the lives of post-immigrant youth and as a category that is ideologically constituted and interactionally negotiated.

Elaine Chun's article explores the complexities of heteroglossia as enacted through U.S.-born Asian-descent teenagers' practices of linguistic simplification in relation to their peers and family members who are nonnative speakers of English. In her examination of Texas high school students' language crossing into two different speech styles ideologically associated with Asian immigrants, she finds that one style accommodates to such immigrants while the other ridicules them, yet both styles rely on similar linguistic stereotypes of Asians' speech to achieve these very different ideological and interactional goals. By tracing the fine semiotic line between accommodating foreigner talk and mocking stylization, Chun's analysis demonstrates the importance of recognizing the multiple valences of structurally identical linguistic forms. She suggests that accommodation can sometimes be successfully constructed as part of a speaker's authentic stylistic repertoire, yet she also explores how the distinction between accommodation and mocking may become ambiguous and argues that the potential for such an interpretation is due to the embedding of both practices within longstanding ideologies of race, nation, and language. Although these local speech styles are tied to larger issues of immigration and transcultural negotiation, their specific meaning can only be shown through careful ethnographic and interactional analysis, the cornerstone of her study.

Chun's work invites scholars of youth language to look beyond research on interethnic dynamics to consider interactions that cross not only languages and cultures but also immigrant generations. Studies of relations between U.S.-born and immigrant youth are rare, and those that exist tend to focus on conflict and separation between these groups (e.g., Lee 1996); by contrast, Chun's study documents taken-for-granted friendships between students of the same ethnic backgrounds but different immigrant generations. Little is known about interaction between such students and the cultural and linguistic terrain they navigate, and her research offers a valuable entrypoint to this inquiry. Chun also notes the effects of these friendships on speakers' linguistic habitus, suggesting that linguistic styles are rooted not only in desired personas but also in lived experience.

Jung-Eun Janie Lee's investigation of local ideologies of ethnic identity and classification in a multiethnic Southern California middle school also addresses the close relationship between immigration and ethnicity in young people's lives. Lee examines how speakers negotiate the complexities of their own and others' ethnic identities in a context in which binary ethnic categories ("Mexican" and "white") predominate. In working to classify peers who do not fit within this binary, the early adolescents in her study take the notion of "imagined community" (Anderson [1983] 1991) to its logical extreme, proposing categories such as "Hungarious" as a best-guess gloss for a classmate's unfamiliar ethnicity (as wonderfully captured in the title of the article). How students manage the issue of ethnic labeling depends both on their own and their peers' ethnic subject positions as well as the interactional setting: Mexican and Mexican American students are quick to invoke their ethnic identities in the classrooms where they are relegated due to their family backgrounds, while other students are reluctant to offer labels for themselves when prompted by an interviewer. As Lee makes clear, the problematic status of ethnicity among youth in the latter contexts cannot be read as the simple naïveté of the young, to which researchers can respond with a knowing and patronizing chuckle. Rather, youth themselves recognize the gap between

their own and researchers' understandings and reroute the assumptions of their adult questioners through a variety of responses, from bafflement to polite evasion. Lee's data show that it is these early adolescent interviewees, and not researchers, who really know what is going on in such interactions.

In addition to its theoretical contributions to the study of ethnicity as an emergent and intersubjectively negotiated category, Lee's article has significant methodological implications concerning the necessity of reflexively examining the role of the researcher in shaping the interaction. Her data and analysis provide a much-needed reminder to ethnographers that our sometimes less-than-elegant attempts to pursue our own theoretical and political agendas, however well intentioned, can yield painful but valuable lessons regarding the very different ethnographic realities on the ground.

The next two articles emphasize the intersectionality of ethnicity and gender in the lives of transnational youth. In Chantal Tetreault's study of French Algerian youth, issues of gender and immigrant generation merge as North African cultural practices of naming taboos are transformed into a ritual insult routine among the young people she studies. Here "name calling" means something very different than in Skapoulli's discussion of the stigmatizing label of *whore* (see below), or indeed in most research on insults in Western cultures, for in the North African context, simply using another's name, particularly that of a non-kin member, can be a grave offense. Youth exploit this cultural knowledge to gain the interactional upper hand by calling out the names of other teenagers' parents in discourse with peers. If this process of interpellation (Althusser 1971) confers subjecthood on those it names, it is also a process of misrecognition—of "linguistic injury," in Judith Butler's (1997: 2) words. Indeed, as Tetreault notes, it is precisely because parents ideally embody values of cultural propriety that they are rich resources in peer politics: young people may be taunted if their parents are caught out behaving improperly, and they may be threatened with having their sexual secrets revealed to parental authority and sanction. As with many such temporary and seemingly subversive reversals of structural power, then, parental name calling in some ways ends up reinforcing as much as undermining traditional kin-based authority. In the context of the secular French nation-state, where manifestations of Muslim cultural traditions are often viewed as a threat to the enlightened rationality of the state, parental name calling represents a balancing act between modernity and tradition.

Tetreault offers the metaphor of "reflection," in the sense of casting a mirror image, to characterize the ways in which parental name calling reverses rather than reproduces cultural expectations of respect. For Algerian French teenagers, this notion is interpreted in relation to an imagined traditional past that is ideologically embodied by their immigrant parents. Such young people's creative resignification of part of the semiotic landscape, Tetreault argues, is not a wholehearted repudiation of a straitlaced parental system of morality but a more ambivalent engagement with traditional notions of respect from the perspective of a gender-transgressive transcultural present.

Elena Skapoulli's argument, which also engages with the tension between tradition and modernity, starts from the important point that transnational experiences may not affect all young people in the same way. Her analysis of the circulation of sexual labels and sexual talk among youth in Cyprus indicates that immigrant girls may bear an especially heavy burden in negotiating a new cultural system of sexuality. Skapoulli's study of East European immigrant girls in Cyprus shows how girls' displays

of knowledge about heterosexuality and sexual practice, derived from global popular culture, earn them both cultural prestige and sexual stigma within the peer group. Building on feminist scholarship demonstrating the drastic effects of globalization on immigrant girls' gender identity formation, she highlights the role of linguistic practices in this process. Her ethnographic study of a multiethnic middle school in Cyprus examines how East European immigrant girls confront diverse gender ideologies as they encounter and adopt the dominant discourse of heterosexuality. In the school setting, institutionalized religious gender ideologies that promote sexual abstinence exist alongside discourses of femininity drawn from global popular culture, which celebrate sexuality. These multiple points of reference offer girls some latitude to identify with or depart from their immigrant origins as well as transnational youth culture. In particular, East European girls who assert an open attitude toward sexuality often become targets of peers' verbal assaults through labels such as 'whore' and 'slut'; paradoxically, however, the predominant heterosexual frame of the peer group also garners them cultural capital that allows them to enjoy tremendous prestige and conversational authority regarding sexual matters. Thus, the dialogic relationship between global youth culture and the local interactional context provides opportunities for the subversion of sexual stigmatization and the construction of transgressive gender identities.

Skapoulli's article reveals how global discourses interweave with local cultures and shape the context in which immigrant teenage girls construct a gendered and sexualized self at the European periphery. Her argument is one that emerges in different ways in all the papers in this special issue: that the intersectional cultural configurations that youth face impose significant constraints, especially concerning highly ideologized social categories such as gender and ethnicity, yet young people are not simply victims or cogs of these processes. Rather, they are social and cultural agents, who despite very real limitations manage to accomplish their most immediate goals - to align with their friends and deride their enemies, to position themselves as particular kinds of youth - and thereby to produce new cultural practices.

The final article in this special issue shifts the discussion from migration and the mobilization of youth and their families across national borders to the converse situation in which, as also explored in Skapoulli's paper, global resources travel to youth in their local communities, transforming both in the process. H. Samy Alim's investigation of hip hop as a transnational global cultural phenomenon points to the importance of considering not only the local but also the "translocal" in understanding the linguistic styles associated with youth cultures. Alim extends his own previous work on the language of hip hop culture in the United States (e.g., Alim 2004b, 2006) to develop a model of "Hip Hop Nation Language Varieties" that speaks to the simultaneous local and global acts of identification for youth participating in the global Hip Hop Nation. By looking closely at language use, and the transportability of particular language practices, ideologies, and styles, Alim moves the investigation of youth culture from the notion of the "local speech community" to "translocal style communities." Arguing that theories of globalization, in their focus on the macroeconomics of multinational corporations and disembodied technological and media flows, fail to account for the considerable personal energy and desire invested by individual agents traveling across national borders, he examines the microprocesses of cultural globalization seen in the back-and-forth motion and stylization of Hip Hop "heads" (fans).

Alim also makes an important theoretical and political move, displacing the usual monologic authority of the researcher in favor of a more collaboratively

constructed account of hip hop that defers to the theoretical perspectives articulated by its practitioners. By privileging the voices and views of members of the Hip Hop Nation as the theoretical grounding for his work, Alim demonstrates that global hip hop has become a form of grassroots "traveling theory" in its own right (cf. Said 1983). His analysis demonstrates the fruitfulness of taking youth cultures, ideologies, viewpoints, and practices as the starting point for the study and theorizing of globalization.

Finally, Jennifer Roth-Gordon and Terry Woronov's commentary reflects on how the articles individually and collectively lay the groundwork for new linguistic investigations of youth at the intersection of social, cultural, political, and economic forces, particularly within the ethnographic and interactional framework of linguistic anthropology.

5. Conclusion

Drawing on key theoretical insights from recent studies of youth identities, all the articles in this special issue show in quite different ways how the interactional details of talk connect up to larger sociopolitical structures and processes. Tying down such inexorable forces as ideology and the social reproduction of power is no easy task, but the finely honed analytic tools of interactional and ethnographic scholarship illustrated in these papers ensure that accounts of migration, globalization, and similar phenomena are empirically grounded in the everyday lives of those who experience them.

A focus on youth in such investigations is important given that it is they who are often the cultural and linguistic brokers and innovators as families and communities undergo radical change, whether they are carried along in the transnational flows of mass migration or whether the world comes to them in local communities transformed by global popular culture and attendant structures. The authors make plain that in order to carry out such investigations, researchers must look simultaneously at the linguistic, interactional, ethnographic, and wider sociocultural and sociopolitical contexts that shape young people's lives. Taken together, their work demonstrates that transnational and global processes provide local resources for the interactional and ideological workings and reworkings of the diverse youth identities of late modernity.

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