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Los Angeles

Writing Names, Reading Hip Hop:
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of StyleWriting

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Education

by

Gloria Beatriz Rodriguez

2016

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Writing Names, Reading Hip Hop:
Children (re)Mixing and (re)Making Language, Literacy, and Learning
Through the Hip Hop Cultural Naming Practices and Pedagogies
of StyleWriting

by

Gloria Beatriz Rodríguez

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of California, Los Angeles 2016

Professor Marjorie F. Orellana, Chair

Writing Names, Reading Hip Hop reports on the cultural naming practices and pedagogies of the Beats Club, an experimental Language and Literacy(ies) program for children in central Los Angeles (Orellana, 2016). Across three years of play and study in Beats - Stely, Caiyl, Feldspar, Kiboo, Fina, Curipaii and 70 others engaged in the *invention* and *writing* of their Club pseudonyms, following the Hip Hop cultural

practices known as StyleWriting¹ (Rossomando, 1996). In this dissertation I break down what our Beats Club Naming (BCN) activity is and means, unpacking the names-based Pedagogy(ies) employed and kids' dynamic Response(s). I ask and answer, how do these naming practices of StyleWriting shape and support children's pathways to and through Language, Literacy(ies), and Learning.

I take aim at the problem of *inequality*, and its perpetuation through standardized, Western schooling (Au, 2009; Hill, 1998; Woodson, 1969). I (Hip Hop) *intervene(s)* in the problem with a fresh pedagogical design and methods from those that dominate school structuring. I articulate an architecture for Hip Hop Pedagogy built from historical record and the knowledge of cultural practitioners. This socio-historical, socio-cultural knowledge is paired with children's multi-dimensional engagement in names practice, to develop fresh ideas about Language, Literacy, and Pedagogy that is *grounded* (Petchauer, 2009; Silverman, 2010; Suddaby, 2006) in the naming *social practice* of Beats. Driven by Hip Hop's "intimate tie[s] to educational practices and possibilities" (Alim & Pennycook, 2007), this work builds on the important research tradition of studying and theorizing children's and youths' social, language and literacies practice(s) (Alim, 2004; Bucholtz, 2002; Lee, 1997; Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992; Orellana, 2016; Orellana & Reynolds, 2008; Rymes, 1996; Willis, 1990; Zentella, 1997), including the vast body of Literacy(ies) research and discourse following the works of Heath (1983); Labov (2004); Street (1984); TheNewLondonGroup (1996). This work engages with Third Space (Gutierrez, 2008), play-based (Cole, 2006)

¹ Also known as Aerosol or spray can Art, Urban Hieroglyphics, Street Calligraphy

literatures. It enters into dialogue with a broad field of research on critical pedagogy(ies) (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008; Freire, 1970; Shor, 1992; Trafi-Prats, 2009) and focused on developing “asset-based” pedagogies (Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014). In this piece, these streams of works and theoretical sources are taken “to bold new levels” of Hip Hop education (Seidel, 2011). By engaging children in Hip Hop’s elemental practices and cultural principles, this work breaks new ground in the tradition of Hip Hop-based educational research (Alim, 2004, 2006, 2009; Alim, 2011; Dimitriadis, 2009; Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008; Hill, 2009; Pennycook, 2007; Petchauer, 2009, 2015; Seidel, 2011). As any good Hip Hop research should, I (re)Mix across this multi-stream conceptual framing to (re)Make fresh ideas of/for educational theory, research, and practice.

To conduct the study, I use and introduce *Hip Hop Methodology (HHM)*, an approach whose goals are to create original, authentic research. HHM represents new directions and potentials in research by and about POC. It is a participatory, Africological (Asante, 1990; Mazama, 2003) and Indigenous (Cajete, 1994; Grande, 2004), whole (Hilliard, 1986; Nobles, 2008) approach to research. In Beats, I engaged HipHopographic methods (Alim, 2006; Spady, 2013) to collect, organize, and triangulate information sources (Erickson, 2004), including: a) observational *fieldnotes* (Heath & Street, 2008), b) *photographs* and *video recordings*; c) *artifacts* (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007); and d) *Dialogues* (Ada & Beutel, 1993; Freire and Macedo, 1987) held with 14 participants at the end of three years. These methods aim to capture a prismic or multi-perspectival, aesthetic (Eagleton, 1988; Thompson, 1984), and whole (Asante, 1990; Hilliard, 1995; Nobles, 2008) view and interpretation of activity. I

reviewed and color-coded by hand a triangulated *Tome* of all sources. I employed fluid, blended domain-theme-taxonomic analyses (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010; Spradley, 1980), and visual mapping strategies, to (re)organize and make sense of data, uncovering the patterns of Beats Club Naming (BCN).

Here I organize a Phase-time (Rossomando, 1996) historical record of our Beatstory². This narrative of Beats naming provides an evidentiary reference and basis for explaining children's five-dimensional engagement in practice, and the True Hip Hop Pedagogy model animating it. StyleWriting is and offers a pedagogical approach in which kids practice and play with Language all-modally, developing Literacy(ies) multi-dimensionally. Kids *sample* from possible means and modes, and *invent* - or *Mix and Make*- their names. Over time they engage in sustained *re*-Mixing that results in kids' *re*-Making of their *selves*. Children *determine* their *selves* through names, a practice that builds self-esteem, self-worth, and self-love. The self-knowledge and love kids gain from deep personal introspection and fluid practice of names, builds *collective-community-cultural* engagement. Names becomes a lived practice of Writing and learning that children take and create across all of their lifeworlds, connecting all of their Literacies and Learning from across contexts. Through our name invention we navigate the (infinite) possibilities for shaping ourselves and our social worlds and futures, on our own terms, engaging in self-directed education, or *la autoeducación*. Through names children restore their agency in schools and society, "reclaiming authorship of their lives" (Freire & Macedo, 1987).

Also emerging from analyses of kids naming is an overstanding (KRS-One, 2009) of Beats' Pedagogy model, a Hip Hop educational scheme of dimensions and themes. And together these explanations of Beats names practice(s) and pedagogy(ies) answer the research question of how StyleWriting practice shapes and supports children's Language and Literacies.

Beats' Hip Hop model successfully flips the script on the dominant order (Miller, 2002) of schooling. StyleWriting and Hip Hop culture offer an alternative to traditional models, that humanizes and multi-dimensionally engages learners. The practice of names provides students with tools for getting through and getting over. This model engenders equality, and ignites student creativity(ies). This Hip Hop design stands to offer Education that is not only relevant, but also revelatory. It is capable of the great change to the unequal conditions of schools and society necessary for global sustainability.

The dissertation of Gloria Beatriz Rodriguez is approved.

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University of California, Los Angeles

2016

DEDICATION

For the children of the Beats Club. For Nina (the future). For Hip Hop Culture.

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References

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Chapter 1: Introduction, Problem, Question, Significance

Writing is...the song of my soul, the call of my spirit. And I'm on a mission here to let that be known. The art work has a power - a higher power than myself. And I have submitted to the call of putting that work out there. Unapologetically. And also, doing it with unconditional love for life, for humanity, for the most high, for that oneness in the universe. (RefaOne, 2009)

As Hiphoppas we operate in a spiritual reality when we handle and manipulate Hip Hop. The fact that we created ourselves points to our divinity. The fact that we spontaneously and randomly choose names and characters for ourselves that can be matched with a history and knowledge that we have not [yet] studied proves that we (as a community) are not just singing, rapping, and dancing...we are connected to something divine and timeless. (KRS-One, 2009, p. 78)

I begin in this foreground with the love and spirit call to be a Writer of Style and Hiphoppa. I do so because it is the cultural orientation with which I step into the Beats Club program at the center of this dissertation – an educational calling to the work of change through the enactment of community-cultural heritage practice (Paris, 2012). And yet, wrapped up in the light of culture is *so. much. rage.*

More than ever it seems, the times today feel heavy, so fast, *acelerado*, and so serious; everyone's yelling at each other, everyone's scared and furious. These states and cycles of trauma they do to us, do us tremendous harm, they injure us. In 2016, across the globe – “What's goin on” (Gaye, 1971)? How many viral views of video-recorded violence; how many harms and pressures? You could write a list miles long, trace a trail of tears back to centuries gone. Never stop saying their names, Oscar Grant, Tamir Rice, and young Trayvon.

For and to POC – we the people of color, of cultures of color - the question on my mind today is whether it is time and whether we are ready to take the action necessary to effect the shift of *change*. Continued courageous acts to confront systemic barriers to peace and justice will be required. Required will be a (re)calibrating of our selves, to

continue confronting and decolonizing from our “indoctrination to support the white supremacist, capitalist, patriarchy” (hooks, 2003). hooks’ words are highly political/izing terms, that meet tremendous backlash in public discourse about the state of the world. But the fact is, that those in power must relinquish the overextension and abuse of their power and be held accountable, so that there are reparations to all of earth, and restorations of rights and freedoms.

Required now is a whole other paradigm; the road forward is of reversals, reinventions, re-assertions of truth – a shift of (re)Awakenings. People in power must look beyond the exploitative, fraudulent systems crippling society today, to galvanize for/behind the needs and voices of the people; to hold up, listen to those who are raging for their dignity and freedom, who are kneeling, and praying for it, and including those of us writing, breaking, scratching and rhyming for it - we the People of Ciphya – getting through and getting over, Getting Free Constantly, through our cultural practice model for learning and living. We bear and shed the weight and suffering, through love, forging the path forward driven by our awareness and knowledge of our divinity; we are creative beings with expansive potential to be and live free from strife. In and through practice of cultural elements and principles, our cultural Hip Hop Pedagogy, is how we (Hip Hop) make(s) change. Hip Hop offers a whole educational model for excellence across learning and living. Hip Hop culture has shown broadly, everywhere it reaches, that it animates, sparks, electrifies sustainable change to the quality and conditions of life of its practitioners, their families and communities.

Statement of the Problem

This research focused on galvanizing *children* through a Hip Hop cultural approach, takes aim at the problem (Orellana & Guitierrez, 2006), of *societal inequality* and its *reproduction through standardized schooling* (Au, 2009; Hill, 1998; Woodson, 1969). I organize discussion of the problem considering the design, methods, and outcomes of schools.

A design problem: society and school controls. The brilliance of Hip Hop's youth "Writers" (Ahearn, 1982; Miller, 2002; Rossomando, 1996; Silver & Chalfant, 1984), spray-painting and signature-signing their name-declarations all across the City, is a phenomena now global in scale, that is surrounded by tensions, misunderstandings, and endless controversy. Rather than listening to young people or attempting to form an understanding of their aerosol practices, the dominant response to urban youth expressions of Style has been to stigmatize and criminalize them (Austin, 2001; Ferrell, 1993), by labeling the practice, "graffiti" (Rossomando, 1996). This Italian term for "scribbles or scratches," treats young people's Language and Literacy(ies) as frivolous, not serious, and without value:

When some thimble brained theoretician tells a kid from the Bronx or el barrio who's aspiring to indulge in the culture, that it's nothing, he's doing more than just attacking his choice. He's attacking his being. Every single aspect of it. To us this is a compound of us, a heritage, a tradition born and nurtured from our guts and souls... Comments like "it's nothing" are the equivalent of someone saying that you are nothing and all that you do is nothing. (Phase2, as cited in Rossomando, 1996, p. 95, 97)

The penalty attached to acts of illegal graffiti now carries the charge of *a felony*. This is a highly punitive, zero-tolerance response to youth street (public) expression.

The demonizing and criminalization of youth Language and Literacy in and from the streets (Mahiri, 2008a) is matched with rigid standardization aimed at controlling and confining such acts and their authors *in schools*. By beginning with how youth are viewed and treated, I locate the problem of schools initially in its *design*. In my years in schools I witnessed and came to understand the dominant ideological construction of urban children and youth as suspect in all their doings (Giroux, 2009; Kupchik & Ward, 2012; Noguera, 2008). Schools and society construct a view of non-white students as mischievous, plotting, threatening, and violent.

This schooling set-up is part of a broader societal design permitting violence against and enacting the criminalization of the Black and Brown being. The design is a pervasive, debilitating factor in the lives of “people of color” (POC), playing out in classrooms and communities everywhere - literally, practically everywhere on earth. This (for-profit) demonizing and dehumanizing of youth is evident in a system where judges profit from putting urban youth in jail, and in which an identifiable “pipeline” from schools sets-up the conditions of mass incarceration (Alexander, 2012).

Equally absurd, unacceptable, and pervasive in school design for “students of color,” is the *presumption of incompetence*, a deeply ingrained construction of POC as “incapable of intellectual aptitude,” (Diop, 1989), or valid contributions to knowledge³. For students of color who do make the grade, access to the education and resources

³ Diop (1989) notes the characterization of Africans as “incapable of intellectual aptitude” and “pre--logical” begins with the 15th century Portuguese incursions into North Africa (p.22, 24)

expected and necessary to survive and thrive in society is limited, mired by obstacles and contentiousness, and always tenuous.

Perhaps most unsettling about the design is the intentionality of these biases. The purposeful oppression, marginalization, and attempt to control are real and date back centuries (de Las Casas, 1972; Grande, 2004; wa Thiong'o, 2008).

In sum “urban” children and youth are cast by their schools as criminally incompetent. The problem begins here with this false, purposeful design of setting limitations on, containing, constricting, repressing human life and possibility. A proper Hip Hop cultural response to these characterizations is typified in Public Enemy’s landmark chant, the repeating mantra that goes- “Don’t Believe the Hype! Don’t Believe the Hype!” (ChuckD, Rubin, & Schocklee, 1988). The constructed character assassinations by the dominant order about us (POC) and our youth, and about Hip Hop, are constructed, false; it’s all a bunch of hype.

A methods problem. How youth (students) are viewed is the very foundation for any educational model. The aforementioned biased characterizations and ideological otherings of urban youth transfer and trickle down broadly and powerfully in the methods implemented in schooling structures. Thus in school’s today and since their beginnings, the bias becomes codified in punitive legal frameworks, rigid, Western standardization systems, and high-stakes testing regimens.

The traditional model of schooling is a Eurocentric construct that sets strict, inflexible boundaries around Language and Literacy by standardizing them. In systems of power, “standards” conform to an ideal that serves largely to perpetuate the power of those in possession of it. For urban students in schools, using dominant statistical

models and measures, the focus is almost never on their success and almost always on their failure. Gains are never enough, or never fast enough. And students of color often struggle to meet the required thresholds and earn their “proficiency” labels, perpetuating the negative characterizations of their capabilities mentioned initially. The reality is that the practices and tools, the acceptable methods being used in pursuit of “achievement” are not of the type that provide students the necessary supports to fluidly achieve expected proficiencies. Nor does it feed their souls, or offer them the life of critical, creative thought and reflection that learning or education ought to imply.

Furthermore, when we standardize schooling – whether treating Language as “bounded systems” (Jorgensen, Karrebaek, Madsen, & Moller, 2011), or children as “empty vessels” to be filled with Literacy, knowledge (Freire, 1970) -- we chart an inflexible frame for these dynamic phenomena of human learning. Language and Literacy in Western schooling constructions become abstractions from their uses, and reasons for learning in the first place, i.e. bearing little to no relation to their social purpose.

If we agree on the intentionality of the bias and the binding, we see the purpose of narrowing Language and Literacy as an intentional strategy of marginalization. These narrow constructions are the *limiting mechanism* of the school paradigm. Thus standardization as applied historically functions as the lever that ensures the unequal conditions. The design and its tailored methods set students up to fail, and it is by design (Au, 2009).

How should we view students? What constitutes Language and Literacy, what are the marks of “learning” - these principles, functions and methods of schools - are under

aim in this piece. The confining parameters set around these things are no longer useful and need replacing, from narrow possibilities to expansive infinities.

An outcomes problem. The dehumanizing design and methods are a constructed paradigm in which success for all students is almost never achievable. For schools this translates into an outcomes problem. Schools and society must contend with the impact on students of these negative characterizations and rigid, stress-filled school practices. Among these outcomes are disengagement and alienation from learning, precursors to stagnation and dropping out. Students get bored and turned off from learning. And then they get blamed for their lack of engagement and low or “basic” ability. Their alienation reverberates from schools into society.

Relating inequality to schooling ultimately means taking action on traditional, standardized models, to discredit and dismantle them. It requires building new and different models, and brave school leaders to take risks with these new models and modes. It means transforming schools and other places education takes place, into vital spaces for animating and channeling societal change toward equality.

Research Design, Question, and Significance

An end to inequality cannot be built with the tools and methods of the dominant design. A different approach, a different science for creating life free from the constraints of the dominant order is in order. Reversals, (re)awakenings, and (re)assertions of reality must take place that dissect and reject ideologies and strategies that have dug great “divides,” and built and widened “gaps”. The demands of the earth and all who inhabit it require such a change.

As a teacher witnessing the state of schools I would ask myself, how could the current model be reversed? How can I be responsible for that change, for an end to and reversal of the daily microaggressions (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000) and systemic macroaggressiveness?, that I experience, and yet harms me more when I see it happening to young people in classrooms. This work has been driven by two decades of design and experimental building of strategies aimed at effecting small micro-awakenings, and grand macro-awakenings, that might lead to the entrenchment of a paradigmatic shift in schools and society.

Through such inquiries into transformations of schooling and education across two decades and the K-16 spectrum, I came to Hip Hop cultural education. Hip Hop culture emerged organically from children's play. It was created by and for young people performing great acts of creative, cultural resistance, in response to unequal conditions, and the dehumanization and demonization of POC. Hip Hop's practice elements provide productive pathways away from and outside of the rage; they offer methods for releasing the weight of burdens placed on our shoulders and chests, so we can freely stand straight, so we can breathe. A Hip Hop cultural model offers vital tools and fresh pathways to/for change in schooling and society.

In this dissertation research, I introduced to 76 children of the Beats Club, the original cultural naming practices of StyleWriting (Rossomando, 1996), including, *name-choosing* and *invention*, *name-writing* and *signature-signing*, and *name-stylizing*. I ask how children's engagement in these Hip Hop cultural naming practices supports and shapes their pathways to and through Language and Literacy. Through meticulous, rigorous data collection and qualitative analyses I look deeply into the Language and

Literacy(ies) of our Beats Hip Hop *practice*, and my Beats *pedagogy*, answering the question through the Hip Hop *prism*⁴.

This *practice-based* model breaks new ground in the field of Hip Hop-based educational research (HHBER) and cultural theorizing, adding to the required syllabus of the Hip Hop Education curriculum. That Hip Hop represent or be used to do or talk about “relevant” education for “urban youth” is right on point. The state of Hip Hop-related discourse today is vast, flowing in all kinds of directions of potentials, all of which grows (whether explicitly and consciously, or not) from the original cultural model (KRS-One, 2009; TheBlackDot, 2006).

To begin, there is elemental education happening *all around the globe*, i.e. kids and youth being led to the Cipa and guided in writing and painting their names on walls with spray paint, writing and performing rhymes, and learning to speak the body talk of Breakin.⁵ Practically every Writer or B-girl/boy I have met is in some form teaching and sharing their craft. But almost none of this practice-based Hip Hop learning is being fully *explained* or *published about* to inform the field of Education. Moreover, these practice-based programs are often marginally understood, accepted, or undertaken in formal spaces such as schools and the academy, who see it as an add-on (frivolous)

⁴ Prism: a solid geometric figure whose two end faces are similar, equal, and parallel rectilinear figures, and whose sides are parallelograms. (following the three—dimensional shape structures of spray can masterpieces)

◦ a glass or other transparent object, that separates white light into a *spectrum of colors*.
◦ *used figuratively with reference to the clarification or perspectives afforded by a particular viewpoint.*

⁵ E.g. Bay Area-based AeroSoul movement/Refa, Kufu; Mighty-4/Paulskee; LA-based JUICE, Hip Hop School of the Arts, STP foundation; Keep it Flowing/East3 in Hawaii, to name a few I have linked with and learned from.

rather than vital Language and Literacy content and practice holding expansive possibilities.

Academic studies involving HHBER have surged and grown in the last decade, with all kinds of experimental building happening with youth that *is* being documented and studied. Alim (2004, 2006, 2009, 2011) leads the field in volume and rich content, naming multiple frames for advancing the study of Hip Hop Language and Linguistics. His work in *Roc the Mic Right: The Language of Hip Hop Culture* (2006), builds a foundational frame for dialogue on the *reading* of the “creativity and complexity of language use... in Hip Hop speech communities” (p. 6). He focuses on the linguistic structures of “Rappin,” the Emcee element of Hip Hop, tying this oral practice to its “linguistic forebears” in the field of Black Language studies, such as e.g. Labov (1972) discussed next chapter.

The current work draws, further, on Alim’s (2006) “Language anatomies” of Hip Hop, uncovering and articulating here the nature – kinds and qualities –of Beats Club Language and Literacies resulting from kids’ Hip Hop practice of StyleWriting. These fresh articulations of Hip Hop Language build on Alim’s (2006) recognition of its “innovative” and “original” qualities, and including his naming of cultural features such as call and response, sampling, signifying, narrative sequencing and flow. In taking up the banner of Hip Hop Language studies today, I also build from and advance Alim’s challenge to the notion of “linguistic supremacy,” in which he calls for the “eradication” of the practice of “mapping white norms onto the language of school and success structures”. Word. Fresh forward thinking requires we under and overstand that Hip Hop

cultural practices represent a model for “linguistic equanimity...a structural and social *equality* of language” (Alim, 2006, p. 13).

Like Alim (2006) I am interested in the confluences of Hip Hop practice Language *and* youth Language expressions, doing and building valid, rigorous research through a centering of both Hip Hop practitioners, and youth voices as cultural theorist of Style (Alim, 2004, 2009).

Other influential HHBER establishing the field includes the critical pedagogies and youth participatory action research of Duncan-Andrade and Morrell (2008). This work has been formative in bringing to a broad audience of Education and beyond, the legitimacy, viability, and efficacy of pedagogies that access Hip Hop culture to promote student achievement, critical reasoning, and collective action. These HHBER pioneers employ rigorous research models to hear and develop youth voices, using rap text to “sharpen critical and analytical skills” that allowed students to engage with required canonical texts of schools (Petchauer, 2009). This work carries the important goal of culturally relevant and sustaining pedagogies of, “build[ing] bridges into other forms of knowledge that will give students access to the codes that allow them to crack into, extract resources from, and change dominant institutions” (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008, p. 172).

Other important, influential contributors to HHBER include research and publications of Alim (2007); Alim and Pennycook (2007); Dimitriadis (2009); Duncan-Andrade and Morrell (2008); (Edmin, 2010); Hill (2009); Petchauer (2009); Spady, Alim, and Meghelli (2006), who have further begun and extended conceptual and practical tyings of “hip hop” and “education”.

This research follows Petchauer's (2009) call for Hip Hop-based educational research that "conceptualize[es] hip hop...as a set of aesthetic practices containing and producing situated ways of doing (and being)" (p. 961), one that looks "holistically" at Hip Hop (p. 965), and is focused on enacting Hip Hop "aesthetic forms" (Petchauer, 2009). This "aesthetic turn" is seen in the more recent work of Seidel (2011) who advances a practice-based model for Hip Hop education, involving youth doing the cultural practices of writing and producing rhymes. He notes that much of hip hop education involves "a classroom lesson focused on the texts of rap music" (p. 3). Such studies that focus on hip hop as merely "rap music product" (KRS-One, 2009), rather than looking holistically at the cultural elements, have "kept students in the position of consumers rather creators of cultural products" (Seidel, 2011). As a result, there is no framing emerging from HHBER for understanding or fully explaining Hip Hop culture as a wholistic, comprehensive educational model. Hip Hop is too often used as tool to some other end, such as an enticement to get kids to connect with required school curricula, as a bridge to make what is not or marginally relevant or accessible to urban students, moreso. Further, the emphasis on lyrical content, on the singular element of rap, is far too narrow moving forward, considering what we know and under and overstand of Hip Hop cultural wholism, i.e. linkages between the Emcee and other cultural linguistic practices of name-wall-writing, spinning and scratching records, and breakin to the funky beats.

For the field of Hip Hop or Hiphop or hip hop or hip-hop research, a practice-based approach, generating theory from the voices of practitioners and participants must be taken up as the critical lens for classroom practice, "utilizing Hip Hop's cultural

creators as primary point of departure” in our Language studies (Alim, 2006). This must also include *building up* young people’s practice of cultural elements, a shift from mere consumption. A continued consumption-based Hip Hop curriculum translates into confusions across Hip Hop theorizing. That there is wackness in academic study of Hip Hop needs to be noted and called out. I will give examples without calling out names - consumers of hip-hop culture write essays on e.g. the aesthetics of Breakin with no mention of James Brown, and of StyleWriting while making no mention of *names* as vital, central pillar of the aesthetics of this element. Such theorizing must connect in more deliberate ways to practice to be considered valid. Furthermore, many studies of Hip Hop and education lack rigor in methods of analysis, resulting in weak theorizing that binds Hip Hop, often through application of ill-fitting (many western) academic constructs.

In this research I swim more deeply into a practice-based orientation. I do not just study what practitioners experience, I experience it myself, engaging in the cultural practice and community of StyleWriting, which builds my overstanding of what it is and means. That’s right, me, Miss Triz (pronounced trees), I get to get free. And then as I make it my daily practice, as I rhyme, rhythm, and stylize my way across lifeworlds, living Hip Hop practices and principles, I share and engage a Club-full of children, more than 70 over three years, in the practice of Hip Hop naming and Style. This work animates, creates, spreads, grows, and plants seeds of Hip Hop culture. I engage with children in the element of StyleWriting, forging a new direction in Hip Hop education and research. Such a study of *children engaged in Hip Hop practice* as accomplished

here has not been done before. I invite you to please check out how I did it across Chapters 3 and 4.

In the end it comes back to the central contention of *social practice*, i.e. that the expansive, liberatory potential outcomes of Hip Hop culture grow most fully from engaged practice of the elements and principles. Period. I state this unapologetically as a practitioner of Hip Hop. Thus, here I “consider different, bolder levels of hip-hop education” (Seidel, 2011, p. 146). I contribute to the field by engaging with Hip Hop culture not merely as tool for amassing content knowledge of urban life and struggle, but practice method and mode for getting through it, and getting over. Because when we *do it*, when we scratch, write, break and rhyme, we engage method, mode, and pathway to find the peace of mind necessary to soar and climb. And we reach that feeling of Free and I’m fine, that feeling of Cloud Ridiculous (Appendix IV-Y) level sublime.

To be clear, some of the biggest consumers of Hip Hop cultural artifacts are practitioners themselves; this is not an either or, but a call to move beyond *mere* consumption, to build through daily practice(s) of learning, schooling, education, the society we, Hiphoppas want and know is possible as African and Indigenous people, as engaged intellectuals, and Creatives with the tools and practiced skills necessary to survive and thrive as individuals, families, and communities. This shift from mere consumption of Hip Hop in education to practicing and building it with young people represent an essential cultural “overstanding,” that knowledge is gained, learning takes place through explicit “engagement in the cultural practice” (KRS-One, 2009). Hip Hop, “is to be lived; not just read. It is to be done; not just watched. It is to be expressed; not just studied and taught to others” (KRS-One, 2009, p. 58). I therefore also follow KRS-

One (2009) in his assertion of Hip Hop's "goal as a learning institution...to produce real Hip Hop scholars capable of not only studying and teaching Hip Hop, but also producing it" (p. 38). This research represents such a shift in HHBER to "overstanding" Hip Hop culture as situated Language and Literacy practice. Yes, I take HHBER to another level, translating it and making it accessible, through methods wholly rigorous and defensible, and the resultant truths and findings you will see, are irrepressible.

Petchauer (2015) has recently called this "aesthetic turn" of HHBER "the *sine qua non* of an emerging second wave of hip-hop education research and practice derived primarily from aesthetic forms, rather than [merely] an amalgamation of culturally relevant and critical approaches" (p. 78). With this work is let loose a tidal-wave tsunami hurricane, a quiet storm, that's bout to kick start the next level of the Hip Hop Education movement.! Yall ain't ready.

Through my focus on *cultural practice as educational model*, the significance of this work extends from Hip Hop into the whole field of Education. It contributes specifically, freshly to research-based theories of the nature of learning, Literacy, and Language – what these things mean/constitute, how they happen or occur. Further discussion of these theoretical constructs and contributions follows, next chapters.

In sum, this work offers a sound evidentiary basis for the viability of this Hip Hop alternative, and provides a roadmap for how/where to begin. Language, Literacy, and Learning through the Beats Club Hip Hop prism, builds outside of dominant models, growing a Hip Hop approach for educational excellence, equality, and sustainability. We must move, keep pushing toward and for a whole different formula that will yield more equal results. Education as a field and society more broadly, must

make and invest in these dramatic shifts with urgency, and as an absolute moral imperative.

Organization of the dissertation

In Chapter II, I lay out the streams of theory that constitute the Conceptual Framework for this dissertation. I begin with a contextual, historical frame for understanding the cultural names model of StyleWriting and Hip Hop culture. I detail the Hip Hop Pedagogy implicated in this cultural model. I survey educational resources and theories of learning, Language and Literacy(ies), relevant to our Beats Club goals and set-up.

In Chapter III, I articulate a fresh *Hip Hop Methodology*, its goals and features, framed for and by the whole research process. I introduce the Beats Club after school play community and its many participants. I discuss the “information sources” (Erickson, 2004) gathered and their rationales. I detail the processes of conducting research, data collection, “tidying,” and “triangulation” (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010). I detail the coding schemes used, and analytic methods and tools used and invented for extracting and (re)organizing data, and (re)mapping it taxonomically and visually – all activity for rigorously “cooking” raw data (Erickson, 2004), considering and simmering each and all ingredients for an aesthetic, multi-perspectival, whole view that enhances the validity of results.

In Chapter IV, I begin with the Results of our Beats naming endeavors, organizing by Phase-time (Gleick, Rossomando), a historical record of our Beatstory. This narrative of Beats naming shows and builds the *5-dimensional engagement* findings framework that follows. Here, I examine deeply, organize, and explain the nature of kids’ names practice and play, and the kinds and qualities of their Language and Literacy(ies) deployed and

developed through names. I discuss the individual and collective-community benefits of this names engagement model. I turn back from kids' activity to my own pedagogical interventions and approach over time, making sense of the "Call" to which kids were responding, that helps amplify and explain further those responses. In this researcher self-study component of analysis I organize and discuss various dimensions and themes of this Beats Hip Hop scheme. By combining and connecting my study of children with study of self, I grow a whole explanation of *names* as a learning framework that facilitates answering the question. I articulate fresh theory of Hip Hop Language and Literacy(ies). In Chapter V, I make conclusions and suggestions about the potentials of this research for Education and beyond.

Definition of key terminology

Hip Hop "Flips the Script on the Dominant Order" (Miller, 2002, p. 35). A Hip Hop approach engages in "refinitions" (KRS-One, 2009, p.102), meaning, "redefine[ing] definitions". A Hip Hop model involves flips and shifts in our views of children and young people, and conceptual-ideological shifts in the bounds and nature of Language and Literacy, aligned with how they function in actual use (Street & Leung, 2010). It is a humanizing approach involving shifts in terms, away from any and all such terminology and frameworks that create unequal statuses; these must be abandoned and new ways and things named. Shifting power back to where it really lies in the person to determine their selves. Hip Hop practice guides the practitioners through the reinterpreting, redefining, and refining of our selves on our own terms. It is work that will cause reverberating change in how and why we undertake research and do the work of Education.

By setting our own frames on terminology, we cease defining ourselves in reference and relation to the constructed frames of dominance (Paris & Alim, 2014). To this end, I wrap up this introductory chapter with additional clarification and brief discussion of the terms StyleWriting, Hip Hop, and POC.

StyleWriting. As stated prior, “StyleWriting” (Aerosoul3, 2012; Rossomando, 1996) is the Hip Hop cultural term for what gets commonly referred to as, “graffiti”. What society condemns as illegible “scribbles and scratches,” as is the technical meaning of the term graffiti, is in real fact *Style* (Rossomando), handwritings rich with the essence of the Writer (Kohl, 1972; Miller, 2002; Rossomando, 1996). Using the term StyleWriting rather than the g-word, represents the cultural orientation and explicit instruction I received from true cultural innovators, master Stylists, who encouraged me to see and experience Writing beyond mere criminal act, into an artform and spiritual calling of self-awareness, knowledge, and collective-community liberation. This terminology orientation aligns with the problem statement, and the necessary ideological re-orientation to youth potential. It aims to the de-criminalization of urban youth and their Language and Literacy(ies), “flippin the script on the dominant order” (Miller, 2002). This is not a position without controversy, as “graffiti” is broadly used by insider practitioners of the aerosol letters artform. Many of these see their public writing without permission from a desire for its illegality, as a transgressive statement of resistance and defiance. And so for many, criminality is inextricably linked with the purpose for practice. While I remain firm on my use of StyleWriting for this educational endeavor, I recognize and uphold the right of participants and practitioners to choose their own Language to represent their intentions, engagement, and self-(re)(de)fining.

Further, while this work relates to “art” that takes place in the “streets,” it is not about something called “street art”, an umbrella term used socially today. In the first regard, “art” is entirely too limiting a category to describe the potentials of names and Style practice, as shall be discussed. The relevant cultural practices to this study involve the calligraphic aerosol practice of writing and painting *names*, *letters* and *Language*, discussed further in the following chapter 2; it does not include all art seen in the streets or all that is painted with aerosol. It does not include works involving or artists utilizing stencils, wheatpasting and those non-calligraphic modes most often associated with the label “street art”. I find if I do not mention these things, the question often arises.

Hip Hop.

Hiphop is the name of our creative force in the World. It is our lifestyle and collective consciousness.... Hip Hop is the name of our culture and artistic elements... hip-hop is rap music product and its mainstream activities. (KRS-One, 2009, p. 63)

If the global reach of Hip Hop is remarkable, so too is the equally global in scale and force resistance to this freeform organization of youth, largely through corporate media and music appropriation of cultural practice and productions. The commoditization of our Hip Hop styles to sell and make money is a global economic phenomenon. Profiteers of *hip-hop* (rap music and mainstream) continue shaping its public perception as heavily violent, misogynistic, and simplistic and meaningless. Corporatized hip-hop is a high fructose, pharmaceutical missile of mass destruction. It is an industry with a firm hand in the design, methods, and outcomes of the stated problem.

These societal programming often makes use of the words “Hip Hop” a source of confusion and immediate disregard of its potential in educational and community contexts.

I experience this regularly when school officials and parents stand straight up and say, “what do you mean hip hop? We don’t do that.” In the context of Beats, I was intentional and careful about using any kind of Language in particular to name our play. I endeavoured to *not* use the term at all, especially in the early phases of study, to keep the space and names practice open for kids’ interpretations. My instruction to children was most often asking them to “write your name, in your own style”. They and we just called our inventions our “Beats Names”. Nonetheless, Hip Hop cultural practices and principles, “our cultural and artistic elements” (KRS-One, 2009), underlie the whole study ideologically and practically. More on “Hip Hop” meaning is broken down in Chapter 2.

POC. In Hip Hop POC stands for People of Circle; we are People of the Cipa. We know who we are, and that which unites us – we are People of Culture(s), we come from Cultures of Color (COC), also Communities of Cipa. Our race and ethnicity and color of our skin is important to us, and is not all that defines us. Hip Hop is a culture where all people of all races have come together to create a society independent of the world’s systems (KRS-One, 2009). Similar to commentaries above on the term “graffiti,” this shift in Language continues a call to cease defining ourselves on the terms of and in relation to dominance, as mere checkable boxes of ethnic or racial beings. In Hip Hop we unite centrally around the important concept of *self*-determination – we are People and/in Communities Of Choice.!

Chapter 2. Conceptual Framework

This research enters into Dialogue (Ada & Beutel, 1993a; Freire & Macedo, 1987) with multiple streams of anterior theory and research, extending from cultural theories

of/and language, to the science of learning to the arts of living. In this chapter I organize these in a triad of theoretical source streams. First, I draw from the socio-cultural, socio-historical record, the content and context of Hip Hop culture's awakening. I build the conceptual framing from these sources that speak on cultural origins and meanings. This stream flows, in other words, through how Hip Hop came to be, and what pioneers and practitioners of StyleWriting say it is and means. I bring these sources together to then form and propose a culturally-informed overstanding (KRS-One, 2009) of Hip Hop Pedagogy, the teaching and learning approach, the educational model represented by and through Hip Hop culture (KRS-One, 2009).

The second conceptual source stream is as wide and nourished as the Nile, engaging with works from across the field of Education. I focus on the research, theory, and practice of Learning - how it happens, how it should and could be. I consider scholarship on the nature, meanings, and potentials of Language, Literacy(ies), and Pedagogy, each of these a vast tributary of the field as a whole, that flow into and across disciplines. This work with the children of Beats falls into flow with/descends from a tradition of educational research focused on empowering children and youth (Shor, 1992), valuing their assets, voices, and critical contributions to society (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008; Orellana, 2016; Paris & Alim, 2014), and building society together with them through the study and nurturing of their Language and Literacies practices (Alim, 2009; Heath, 1983; Labov, 2004; Lee, 1997; Mahiri, 2008b; Moll et al., 1992; Orellana & Reynolds, 2008; Zentella, 1997). This work picks up on the flow of research concerned with critical (Freire, 1970) and culturally relevant (Ladson-Billings, 1995) and sustaining (Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014) pedagogy(ies). It frames educational endeavor not as

(mere) preparation for work, but education for wholeness (Hilliard, 1986), education where our goal for students and ourselves is “freedom, and nothing else” RefaOne in (DaveyD, 2010, March 12).

The third theory source stream flows straight to and from the children as/in relation to the first two, viewing children’s practice in this study as descending from and contributing to these cultural, scholarly streams. In Beats, as in Hip Hop culture, children are positioned as experts and cultural architects, especially in reference to their own lives and beings. This stream recognizes that vital to Hip Hop cultural theory are the voices of the children. The analyses, findings, and conclusions must grow from Beats Club Naming (BCN) activity, reflecting a grounded approach (Silverman, 2010; Suddaby, 2006) to theorizing. This aspect of centering children’s voices and knowledge flows and picks up discussion more extensively into Chapter IV.

Together these three streams form the foundation of information necessary to answer with theoretical validity and methodological rigor the question of how the Hip Hop cultural naming practices of StyleWriting shape and support children’s Language and Literacy(ies).

Stream 1: Hip Hop Cultural Naming Practices: Cultural Evolutions of/and Pedagogical Possibility(ies)

The conceptual discussions of StyleWriting and Hip Hop culture throughout this piece rely on first hand knowledge of Writers and other hiphoppas, people who practice Hip Hop cultural elements. Many of these take the form of personal communications and interactions I have had with Writers of Style and other hiphoppas, including influences of REFA, SANO, POSE2, EAST3, CRE8, Paulskeee, and others. It comes from authorities

such as Phase 2, KRS-One, PopMaster Fable, and Public Enemy, various Hip Hop resources more broadly known and available. Theory builds from knowledge of these Hip Hop *Creatives*, those doing, making, and building the culture, at its highest innovative levels. Which means they are generally those who have been doing, *practicing* it the longest, and are the youth architects of Hip Hop culture. We must rely on the youth who created and continue to be and practice Hip Hop to form a proper under/overstanding of *cultural practice*.

What are the practices of StyleWriting? *Names* are the focal and jumping off point of the Pedagogy and of this study. Across all of place and human time, names have existed and held vital significance to virtually all peoples, revealing traditions, values and modes for living (Asante, 1990; Hilliard, 1986, 1995; Rymes, 1996). Names are powerful signifiers that carry “complex cultural meanings” (Kohl, 1972); their study helps us to build understandings of communities and cultures (Rymes, 1996; von Bruck & Bodenhorn, 2006). They are essential, universally accessed and deployed tools for exchange and communication, often accompanying (especially initial) greetings between people.

Most often, the choosing of names is done by adults and imposed upon children. As at birth and in various familial contexts and life transition ceremonies, people are *given* our names. In this work is a names study involving what can be learned through children’s engagement in *invention/choosing* and *writing* of their own *names* (Kohl, 1972; Miller, 2002; Rossomando, 1996), following the practices of StyleWriting.

StyleWriting is a wholly unique culture of names and naming play; there is no other names, youth, or arts movement comparable in scale, other than the broader Hip Hop

of which Writing is a cultural pillar. Miller (2002) confirms, “it appears to have no clear-cut precedents” (p. 33). Three important works document this movement and culture of Style, and focus on the centrality of *names* in the culture. Kohl (1972), Rossomando (1996), and Miller (2002) provide cultural analyses of StyleWriting that have framed all aspects of the current study since its genesis in 2010.

In the beginning.

‘Bolita’ is Spanish for little ball. Johnny explained to me that his mother gave him that nickname because he was so small and full of energy and mischief... Later, the discovery of Johnny’s two faces led to a change in our relationship. I told him about finding “Bolita as Johnny Cool” written on a wall and he blushed, yet began to talk about it and other nicknames. He told me that some kids had as many as four nicknames... As he thought more about it he talked of the joy of knowing that other people see one’s name and the sense of satisfaction he felt in seeing his own name next to those of his friends. (Kohl, 1972, p. 5,10, 12)

The writing and signing of names on walls with aerosol, by Writers of northeastern, urban *barrios* began coalescing in the 1960s (Rossomando, 1996). Just as Bolita was getting his start, so was a young man in Philadelphia who wrote “Cornbread”; his scrawlings are credited with giving birth to the Style Writing movement. It is widely recognized that while Writing was born in Philadelphia, it “grew up” (developed/evolved) in New York City.

It is no wonder the explosion of youth vitality given the cultural conditions of the time and generations prior. “Writers grew up within the kaleidoscope of cultures... and their familiarity with cultural diversity helped them transform their segregated society into a citywide community of hundreds,” of young creative writers who, “communicated their awareness of each other by painting signatures on the trains” (Miller, 2002, p. 29). These youth like the generations before them of New York City, “blended despite the

tensions...[and] with the music, cuisine, dialects, and manners of the Caribbean and the American south everywhere...virtually every kid became a kind of cultural hybrid” (Kelly, 2010, p. 23). The profusion and blending of African cultures and modes in “America” is the context for the awakening and blossoming of this *global youth Language and Literacy(ies) movement* of Hip Hop culture (Chang, 2005), born of African (re)connections of this New York context.

Hip hop is part of a century-old history of cultural parallels, adaptations and joint production between African Americans and Caribbean people...in New York City. This history is rooted in their interactions and shared experiences...since the early years of the twentieth century...[and is] intimately connected to dynamics that extend even farther back in time... This history of shared cultural expression...is related to common African sources and creolization processes... Hip hop is a pattern woven out of...these common threads. (Rivera, 2003, pp. 2, 6-8)

Kohl (1972) pens one of the earliest published works on name/wall writing of the early aerosol period (1960s, early 1970s). His “photo essays” are an ethnography of sorts. He documents through vignette his obsessive observations of the messages written on walls by youth in the urban neighborhood where he was a *teacher*. He tells the story of his private lessons teaching Bolita to read and write. Kohl is a critical pedagogue; he frames the Literacy lessons by building on words Bolita already knows how to spell. Johnny produced a long list that included the names of his friends, household items, cigarette and beer brands, “café bustelo... and chiclets”, baseball players, “Puerto Rico, San Juan, Cassius Clay, Muhammed Ali, United States,” curse words, “cop”, slang, “love, hate,...no smoking, spitting, parking, walking, talking, trespassing, power, soul, brother, sister, stop...” (Kohl, 1972, p. 15-16).

About this list, Kohl (1972) writes:

none of this knowledge did any good in school. Many of the words he could read were even prohibited in the classroom. I only managed to discover his reading vocabulary by talking with him about his life on the streets, by listening to records with him, ... And I helped him to read by using what he knew as the basis for my teaching (p. 17).

Kohl's (1972) vignettes document this names-based culture and artform in its infancy when every street kid was doing it, and their wall discourse of Style was only just emerging. He makes important observations: "I noticed, for example, that the middle-class enclaves in my neighborhood harbored little graffiti. On Johnny's block it was clear from the walls that there was a vibrant young culture. On my own block the young were invisible" (p. 17). His distinction between the walls in the barrio communities where he taught in contrast to the blank, colorless walls of his own middle class, white neighborhood, are important observations on ideology. Kohl suggests that the relationship between the "middle class" aesthetic of "clean" or sterile walls is tied to a view of youth as holding low value in society. The vibrancy of children's lives in Bolita's neighborhood is an opposed ideology held in these more multicultural and largely Afro-diasporic communities, where vibrancy is code for an aesthetic ideology of color(s), community-cultures of multi-colors. By placing the vignettes juxtaposed, he critiques the adult-centrism of the dominant, Western schooling paradigm that treats children as vessels to be filled with knowledge (Freire, 1970). He suggests in the infancy of names and Style practice the possibility of teaching and learning to and through names play, centering the student as possessing power and knowledge to direct and build their own learning.

Names and cultural development of Style. From the city's concrete walls, to funky letter bars⁶, blazed across steel train cars (Cooper & Chalfant, 1988) – Bolita and friends, and every generation thereafter, picked up those spray cans. As soon as they felt the empowering release of pressurized paint, (plus movement, flow, limitless possibility of form, angle, color, pattern, and grand scale), youth deeply *engaged*, and “names just became Style” explained Wicked Gary, leader of the first Writing crew (Aerosoul3, 2012).

Kohl's early observations are followed in time by Phase2's truths (Rossomando, 1996). Phase is one of the original creators/innovators and authorities of StyleWriting and Hip Hop culture. *StyleWriting from the Underground: (R)evolutions of Aerosol Linguistics* documents in the words of the Writers themselves, the evolutions of signatures and Style, and defines cultural terms. The detailed stories of these pioneers' engagement in practice provide a in-depth look into and analysis of the cultural naming practices of Style. This book provides important foundations for a proper cultural orientation to Language and Literacy, that I discuss later this chapter.

Phase follows up on his earlier discourse of Style through Miller's (2002) *Aerosol Kingdom*, a rich sequel to Rossomando (1996). Miller, an anthropologist, organizes discussion around cultural themes from his ethnography of early Style innovators including (again) Phase2, Kase2⁷, Vulcan, Lee, Duro, and others.

⁶ Fundamental letter shapes of Style culture are referred to as “bar letters”. A bar is something like a twisted or funky rectangle, a rectangle with flow.

⁷ The self-proclaimed “King of Style” (Silver and Chalfant, 1983).

Miller (2002) treats with great importance the centrality of *names* to the culture, pointing to the African and African-American heritages of name choosing and changing. He discusses cultural names as devices of endearment, as is in the case of Bolita. He relates aerosol naming writing to African traditions of praise naming and self-praising in the speaking (writing) of names. He claims StyleWriting as name practice that gives life force, a cultural tradition of invoking the power of the named. Hip Hop naming represents the reclamation and recreation of practices lost due to American slavery. Names-invention and taking on of pseudonyms were also important practices for concealing identity (Miller, 2002, pp. 50-70). In other words, multiple forms of name signification practices of people of African descent recreated, were adapted to life and living in a contemporary New York context.

In the cumulative of stories told and dimensions explored, Miller (2002) captures how the subway cars represented a canvas for expression and a means of communication to which youth had access. Young writers risked their lives in the train yards and subway stations of New York and wrote and watched the trains go by in order to retrieve and decode other writers' messages. It was not for no reason that writers painted their messages on trains; there was a *dialogue* going on – among and created by youth -giving color and dynamism and life to the concrete confines. All of these expressions, he says, were, “created from a need to express shared urban experiences. Building upon earlier conventions, participants seek to create a collective space where members call and respond with their own skillfully crafted testimony” (Miller, 2002, p. 5).

Children's play with names and creativity in the streets, Linguaging their selves into Writing/learning communities of practice, set powerful conditions of free expression; the Writings on the Walls were the spark igniting Hip Hop.

From names to Hip Hop. Organic street Cipa communities of young people, kids, masters of head-spins, flares, and can-controlling lyricisms, steady rockin, full of light and life, and full-color burning. DJ Disco Wiz confirms that the first of these Hip Hop artists, visionaries “were the cats with the blackbooks” (DaveyD, 2013). This was the early period, when “hip hop” was merely the lyrics of a party song (Cavero, 2006). Writing is the element of Hip Hop said to have “activated” the others, creating the visual-verbal conditions in which all Hip Hop's elements formed and coalesced as culture (Rossomando, 1996; TheBlackDot, 2006).

These Style masters, “they call(ed) themselves *Writers*” (Silver & Chalfant, 1983). *Style Wars* (1983) is a pivotal, poignant look into the phenomenon of the Spray Can Art culture that flourished on New York City subway trains. Urban Youths' explicit engagement in these naming practices sparked a movement from the walls and trains of New York City, to virtually everywhere else on earth, in a flash. And by the time of *Style Wars*, these Writing practices had coalesced as an element of “the street youth culture known as Hip Hop” (Silver & Chalfant, 1983). See Chang (2005), for an extensive historical account of this early cultural development. Hip Hop has become a global youth Language and Literacy movement that has “blanketed the earth” (East3, 2010) in less than fifty years' time. StyleWriting and Hip Hop culture continue to globally grow and thrive today.

From Hip Hop to learning: Overstandings in names and naming. What has made

Writing a global phenomenon? What are these practices, what do they mean? Giller

(2009) writes:

Graffiti's highly stylized depiction of the name, its central entity, disturbs the structures that comprise language itself. Graffiti is an art of letters. Letters are symbols of written language. Pieces work to reinvent, through distortion, the appearance of these letters. In reinventing the appearance of these symbols, graffiti reinvents written language itself. As writer Chaka Jenkins describes, graffiti "is the attitude that subdues average linear letters and twists, bends, and shapes them . . . [to create] visual slang. . . [and hence] a new kind of visual rhetoric" (Giller, 2009, ¶ 9).

Common public notions of name-writing as frivolous or criminal activity follows the problematic characterizations of the young people who pioneered the practice. That it is neither frivolous or criminal/suspect is so difficult for critics of the culture to grasp. Often people who criticize and condemn spray can culture are unaware that *names* are even involved, showing an ignorance of the most basic, fundamental cultural feature. What outsiders to the culture often do not realize about Writers of Style, is that we write *our names*. Composed of *letters* formed and connected into a name-composition, the name is the chosen word for self. Through names, Writers engage in *play* with *letters*, and their infinite potentials of form, pattern, and connections that build meaning. The letters are our *standards*. Claiming and stating one's name, and painting it on a wall with spray paint, is a transformative Language and Literacy(ies) practice and process, that produces a work of resonant power for the Writer and for those who read it. From name *signatures* or "tags", to quick and simple "throw-ups," and onto full-color "Wildstyle (master)pieces" (Kohl, 1972; Miller, 2002; Rossomando, 1996), all cultural forms of name-writing involve dynamic processes of Mixing and Making our *selves*. Every piece is a fun (re)design process, switching up, trying different styles and

compositions of bubble or straight letters, gothic styles, cholo styles, exploring calligraphic potentials of serifs and bars led by the touch of the hand. Further, our name-writing practice is a fully sensate, highly cognitively engaged mode of Writing and Living. It is a regular, daily practice requiring self-directed fluidities across thought, study, drawing and painting names, activity that grows and expands our *selves*. Each iteration is a *creative* act of formation and *innovation*, i.e. advancing, changing from the prior to get better all of the time. Each *iteration* of a signature, throwie, or piece is imprinted with our self and perceptive consciousness, carrying the weight of what we have come to know through experience and our practice of reading our worlds and writing these words, our names. Names carry the signs of where we have been physically and psychically, and the potential places, directions we will go. Each name-writing and all of them accumulated over time reflect the *essence* (Nobles, 2008) or *Style*⁸ (Rossamando, 1996), of the Writer – defined as the whole, infinite condition of the self – *el entero interno eterno*.

Through our engagement in inventing names and repetitively, creatively (re)Writing them, we practice the ancient, universal teaching and learning mantra, “Know thyself” (Asante, 1999; Hilliard, 1986, 1995). We simultaneously engage with the philosophical questioning and categorizing endeavor of “what is in a Name?” This work enters into territories beyond Western versions of reason and rationality, flipping terms, their meaning, expanding out possibility. Culture is a dynamic, on-going developmental process of engagement in practice. Through our practice we build our selves in the present, looking

⁸ Style is the Truth of Your Life Essence

back and standing atop shoulders of the past, to build our society's social futures. Writing and Hip Hop practice of all elements brings the practitioner enhanced perceptive consciousness and whole, spiritual awareness. (KRS-One, 2009; Pose2, 2011). In this lived practice of essential quest, we “evolve” (develop) not just our Style, but our souls and spirits as well.

Writers *write* these name-messages with Style on walls and trains, in streets and blackbooks –public and private spaces where other Writers pass and *read* what has been written. We write others' names, a cultural practice of praise, expanding from our own letters into all of them, exploring and developing infinite symbolic suggestion. We do names in a collective-community of Style practitioners and learners. We hold our own expansive ideas of what constitutes Language and Literacy, and how Learning happens, flipping and re(de)fining the dominant frame placed around our beings, reclaiming (through) our names. We do this practice vigorously, obsessively; we Live Style; and we “CAN'T (be) STOP(ped)!”.

Through Names and Style we explore our functions, powers, and potentials as humans, questing and coming to know and grow our Selves. This is not a simplistic, “scribbled” frame for learning. It is expansive, engaging, inventive, and more to be unpacked in this piece. Yes, there is much to be learned from these Hip Hop and Beats Club *Writers* and their *names*. While Phase notes that the complexities of Style are “too vast to attempt to lay down in a manual or in Map of reason,” (Rossomando, year, p. 81) I attempt such mappings of the reasons, and also the rhythms and rhymes.

What is the Pedagogy of Hip Hop culture? The script-flippings, refinements, and maps of reason necessary and central for this research begin now, with the building of a Hip Hop cultural Pedagogy. In this section I articulate from my engagement in study and practice of the culture a Hip Hop overstanding of Education, including how education it is done and framed, i.e. the culture's standards of practice(s) and principle(s). This fresh view on education and learning, requires a "reconfiguring [of] approaches to the literacy canon" (Morrell, 2008).

To begin, the term "Hip Hop" is a short-form code for the culture's approach to learning and how it happens. We get Hip (gain knowledge, awareness) as a result of our Hop (movement) (KRS-One, 2009). This can be flipped further to embody active-Hop consciousness(Hip), and "knowledge springing up" (Marl & KRS-One, 2007).

The elements or pillars. Hip Hop as a cultural architecture for learning and living consists of *practice* and *principles*-based *standards* culturally known as *pillars* or *elements*. The learning environment is built up around this foundational architecture, our Hip Hop design and methods for educational excellence. We refer to this all-elements paradigm as the *True School*. Real or True Hip Hop Education is founded in this original elements-and-principles organization. Our cultural Schooling must stay True to these foundations.

The foundational organizing practices of Hip Hop culture are often referred to as the "core four" elements – StyleWriting, DeeJayin, Breakin, and, Emceein (KRS-One, 2009; Miller, 2002; Rossomando, 1996; Silver & Chalfant, 1984). These elements of *practice* each reflect and represent the possibilities of human modes and means of Language in communicative endeavor. Writing involves the stylized calligraphies of letters and Names, written with markers and spray paint on a surface (blackbooks, walls,

trains). It is sometimes referred to as the “visual element” of Hip Hop. This is a bit of a misnomer because all of Hip Hop’s elements involve visual performance and interpreting of Language; all elements involve writing and reading expressions that can be *seen*.

DJing, or Turntablism, is the artform of sampling and mixing records on turntables; it is the use of turntables to mix and transform music. The turntable turns to instrument as the DJ combines and creates the beats, rhythms, and vibrational resonance through the needle on the record. The DJs practice creates the musical space for the b-boys and b-girls to get funky in the place, and *Break*. Breakin is the body talk of Hip Hop; it is an artform engaging kinesthetic, gestural, rhythmic (non-verbal or oral) potential; it is embodied Language encoded with essence/spirit. It is not mere tricks, but engaged, articulate “body language” practice. The dancer-speaker is known as the b-boy or b-girl (Miller, 2002, p.12-13).

The final element to form is the practice of the Emcee. It is the spoken or sung expression, sometimes called *rap*, generally known to accompany the DJ (Rivera, 2003, pp. 12-13); it is the lyrical, aural, oral, sometimes written textual, literary, rhyming practice of Hip Hop.

These core-four or Mighty Four⁹ function as “practices in connection with one another” (Petchauer, 2009). The shapes and painted color-rhythms of letters and names on walls (Writing), graphically pattern the danced bodily flows (Breakin), the deejay’s rhythmic scratches (DJin turntablism), and vocal stylings and stories (Emceeing) lived by

⁹ Name of the educational org of my Teacha Paulskeee, out of SF Bay Area, California

the *hiphoppa*, the practitioner of elements (KRS-One, 2009).

Our practices are the most essential of tools for creating and conveying codes, and the building of our selves-in-community. The elements represent human multi-modality (Jewitt, 2008). Reframed through the Hip Hop prism, cultural participants engage in creative, *all-modality*- expression and *Dialogue*, writing and reading together.

Knowledge is Hip Hop's 5th element, and Style, I argue here, is its 6th. These two additional elements organize the practice of Hip Hop, and give it purpose. The Knowledge pillar stands for Hip Hop's whole approach to Learning. The Style pillar sets our standard of excellence for cultural engagement toward Learning.

Knowledge as a pillar sets expansive parameters for the hiphoppa's quest across all of Learning. Knowledge is something we already possess and are always gaining as sequences of actual states of knowing accumulated over time. We gain and grow Knowledge through our practice of or *engagement* in the core-four and life's related study. Hip Hop mixes past knowing with present action to stimulate future growth. Knowledge here is the learning process of sampling and (re)Mixing to (re)Make always-new meaning and possibility. This is not a static view of Knowledge and learning; it is in motion, dynamic, changing, expanding.

We traverse and build paths to and through knowledge through the medium of *self*, exploring "knowledge of ourselves" (KRS-One, 2009, p. 60), and our own *unique* capacities and potentials. Growing self-knowledge through practice engages and develops or "evolves" (Rossomando, 1996) personal *Style*, the 6th element of Hip Hop culture.

While not generally recognized as an element of Hip Hop, *Style*, I argue is the essential elemental partner of the other five, setting a standard for excellence that cuts across all Hip Hop cultural activity. This cultural standard is referred to as *Style Supremacy* (Rossomando, 1996).

Style is the fundamental educational premise underlying, or at the core of all cultural practices and principles. Culturally Style is referred to as the *essence* (Hilliard, 1995; Nobles, 2008) of the Writer. Style can be seen in a Writers name-writings - signatures, throwies, pieces - and in the fluidities and angles, expressive patterning and personal touches, and overall resonant composition of a writers signature flow. One way essence is explained is as the human condition of *originality*, the authentic, unlike-any-other individuality of each person. Phase confirms:

For hard-core style fanatics to “have style” usually means to paint in a way that is almost patented and exclusive to a particular writer. The phrase “to have style” can be connected with skill, but when we speak of the “the style Factor”, it’s more often in relationship to letters and their *structural, innovative or original qualities* (Rossomando, 1996, p. 72)

When properly cultivated, the essence or originality is made apparent across the qualities and forms of one’s Language(ing), and abundantly evident in their Writings and creative expressions of all kinds.

This emphasis on each individual’s original pathways to and through Language, Literacy, and Learning, is a standards-based, non-standard-ized approach to teaching and learning. Each student is viewed as a universe of possibility; space is created for each child to flourish in their unique potentials across self-directed, community-collective engagement. As teachers this positions us to learn with and from the child

I have also heard *Style* described by Writers as “an attitude and inner spirit”, “the personal interpretation of our inspirations”, “getting lost in improvisation”, “the divine within one’s self, and our guiding force to get over, get through,” and a cultural “responsibility, like to a quilt” (Cre8, Mode2, Soon1, Docta, & Peps, 2012).

Alim (2009) describes *Style* as “central to Hip Hop Culture(s) as an overarching, ideologically mediated and motivated aesthetic system of distinction (p. 108); here *Style* is the “central rubric” (p. 109) for reading culture(s) and the “prism” (p. 106) for assessing it/them. Viewing kids’ activity through the Style prism has us looking from their and our perspectives, interpreting in multiple ways, from our seasoned experience and the voices of children.

The Style standard for excellence is a high standard of *rigor in practice* that translates to *lived practice*. A life of Style involves a commitment to learning and growing (developing) the Authentic Self in a global community of Writers.

Style is a concept missing from and misunderstood by much of Hip Hop education, that needs infusing back in all aspects and elements of cultural production.

Principle—standards of Hip Hop culture. The guiding principles of cultural engagement in Hip Hop practice are - Peace, Love, Unity, and Having Fun (KRS-One, 2009, p. 53). These baseline agreements or *acuerdos* must have a place and be explored in the classroom activity and in the teaching-research practices of every Teacha.

Peace. Everywhere I have explored names with children and youth, we have together noted the “peace” it promotes. Literally, complete quiet in a classroom of 42 7th graders when they are first introduced and engage in writing or piecing their names. The literal Peace and quiet stems from this practice aimed

at developing internal peace through “piecing”; the introspection of name invention and writing is a Peace practice, giving participantz the space and tools to reflect on their selves. Names thinking-pondering is an engaging regular practice that leads the thinker to inner stillness and silence, and awareness of feeling. The energy we generate in community of names thinking-feeling, builds collective catharsis, relaxation, and equilibrium. The goal of Hip Hop culture is to peacefully engage, resolve conflicts, and grow together, to bring about states of Peacetime, the opposite of our current condition of perpetual wartime.

Love. Volumes have been written about Love, and there is so much more work to be done. It is a central theme of arts, religion and community life universally. It is “the Universal Magnetic/ You must respect it” (Bey, 1999). KRS-One (2009) proclaims that Hip Hop “has no other creator, no other architect,” than Love (p.9), noting that is was “Dr. King’s love that spoke us into existence” (p. 35).

What else can be said about something we all know the feeling, but struggle to put into words. It is a concept that must be practiced by the Teacha and explicitly engaged with and explored in the Cipa. Love stems from the Teacha who creates a safe and loving space where kids are free to be themselves. The Teacha must come to class with free-flowing amounts of Love to give and share with children and students, sharing positive, luminous potential energy originating from her heart. Love is also a generative principle of this work, -love as a lived practice and in all its forms and possibilities explored consciously by the Teacha, Miss Triz.

As we continue to name and awaken to the purposeful design of our demise and degradation, the insidious manners and forms of violence, intimidation, and purposeful dehumanization and demoralizing of youth and communities in and by schools, we see education devoid of this Love. We can then address the problem in which urban youth *can't get no Love*. We can (re)Frame the “Problem” as “Lovelessness”, and address it with the Love.

Love is an important pedagogy and result of Names, where we develop self-love, self- knowledge that extends into Love for others. Knowing and saying what you love, is a kind of vernacular way of saying something your passionate about. The kids in Beats Club feel and give the Love. When we hug, they don't let go; they turn around and come back for another.

Unity. Hip Hop is a pedagogy of unity amongst people, traditions, cultures, and knowledge. Practitioners of Hip Hop culture have transcended the racialized objectified categories that bind POC (KRS-One, p. 69-71, 87), through unity amongst us. Practicing the principle of Unity is the opposite action to that of creating a divide; it is divide-filling work, resulting in the calibration of imbalances and inequalities. Practicing unity implies an equality model of collective engagement.

Having fun. Having fun as an educational principle confirms, marks Hip Hop as a *play*-based model. In this culture created by and for youth, *play* (Cole, 2012) is how we learn. It is how humans *first* learn, first begin making sense of their world and the words. When kids play, they put on display, conscious and fluid expressions of what they imagine and have to say about their ways and

sways. They show what they know, like, and love, through play and self-praise.

When we play we reach heights of free-flowing creativity. We are stimulated to those peaks by the engagement of our whole bodies in activity – and “the exhilaration of having fun, is the feeling of healing itself,” I wrote in my personal notes during Phase 3 study (p. 85). We engage in these play-practices because it’s Fun. Fun feels good, making it a sustainable model where we engage regularly and over the span of time.

In the tradition of Western schooling, and the standardization of learning, play is suppressed and viewed as unimportant. For example, the term “child’s play” refers to something simplistic, superfluous, and frivolous. The opposite of having fun is boredom, the most common complaint I have heard from students across two decades of work in schools.

The Cipa. We get in a circle because it is who we are, our infinite, unbreakable geometry of culture, community, collectivism. In Hip Hop we are POC, People of Cipa. We engage physically in the Cipa, in present moments. In the Cipa we find, “a fluid matrix of linguistic-cultural activity” (Spady et al., 2006), where the elements are deployed and placed in dialogue. They are “sites of learning,...construction, and sharing of knowledge,... where participants ‘build’ truth,...constructing a shared worldview, and themselves, in the process” (Spady et al., 2006, pp. 10-11).

The physical space and occurrences of the Cipa evolve into a psychic questing that we carry in de-Cipa; metaphysically we stay engaged, in a collective mind, as we live in the memories and thoughts of what we create and enact there. This is a circle psychology and ideology, a circle worldview and overstanding (not square, rigid boxes).

In Beats we “de-Cipha” from the large group circle into smaller “circles” or ensembles of group play. The circle arises again and again as the formation of collective activity, a whole circle and endless smaller ones. These circles are boundaries of infinites. Because it stretches strangely and in all forms and directions, does not break the circle; it merely reconfigures and constantly recalibrates.

Thus the *Cipha* is the *space* and *formation* through which Hip Hop Language and culture thrive.

Youth cultural production model. As a culture created by and for youth, this means that *they* are the fountains of knowledge exchanged and created, and classroom activity emerges from and revolves around their expressions and experiences (in contrast to teacher-centric or banking-type models (Freire, 1970; Shor, 1992). Hip Hop Pedagogy must proceed from the perspective that youth are “agentive interventions into ongoing sociocultural change” (Bucholtz, 2002, p. 535). A youth cultural production model must disrupt the adult-centric structures of schooling and society.

The practice-and principles-based standards are the ethical parameters for community engagement, exchange, and building. And Hip Hop Pedagogy, engages and explores the interconnected potentials that flow across “all-elements” education. This cultural framework of elemental practices and principles frames all aspects of study, and helps set parameters around discussion of the next theory stream discussed.

Stream 2: The Educational Nile

This study takes place in a centre for rigorous, play-based research where children’s Language(s/ing) and Literacy(ies) are creatively accessed and examined. This orientation follows and flows from a significant body of work in educational research

today focuses on “language in use” (Street & Leung, 2010) seeking greater understandings of children’s and youths’ languaging and literacies in and across the sociocultural contexts in which they occur. As researchers have taken up the study of communities’ and kids’ languaging and the cultural modes built through their expressions, doings, and beings, they honor the ways in which young people create and contribute to society. Moreover, by studying kids’ varied “ways with words” (Heath, 1983), many researchers also probe and illuminate the possibilities for schools to connect their methods and structures to kids’ home lives and other ‘street’ realities in ways that can disrupt bounded notions of Language, Literacy and learning, as well as adult-centered pedagogies.

Language-Based Theories of Learning. In his study of human development, (Vygotsky, 1978) focused on the individual and collective processes occurring across mediating cultural tools and social interaction. While tools refers to “different forms of numeration and counting, mnemotechnic techniques, algebraic symbolism, works of art, writing, schemes, diagrams, maps” (Vygotsky, 1997, p. 85), it is *language* that he called the “tool of tools” through which humans interact, and together, learn, build, and grow. Vygotsky (1978) explains that children, across their social interactions and tools, “develop and become familiar with the accumulated knowing and skills of their community” (Saljo, 2010, p. 500), including all form of symbolic ways of knowing and communicating. This occurs “between people...and inside the child,...all the higher functions originat[ing] as actual relationships between human individuals” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57). While Vygotsky’s (1978) focus was on the role of individual mental functioning vis-à-vis language, Halliday (1993) extends that analysis to emphasize the mediating character of language to culture more broadly, “in both instantiating [it] and in recreating and

modifying it” (Wells, 1994, p. 47). In sum, “mediation of action through culture in social interaction is the essential precondition for normal human development” (Cole, 1998, p. 292).

In particular and of great relevance to education and educational research, Vygotsky (1978) describes that in the process of becoming enculturated into their community habits of mind, children engage also in the co-construction of meaning, and they *innovate*, using tools and information in new ways, thereby constructing their own kind of language and knowledge as well. Thus, learning is something that is *built* through and across our languaging, our communicative expressions exchanged with each other. As Halliday (1993) explains:

When children learn language...they are learning the foundation of learning itself. The distinctive characteristic of human learning is that it is a process of making meaning—a semiotic process; and the prototypical form of human semiotic is language. Hence the ontogenesis of language is at the same time the ontogenesis of learning. (Halliday, 1993, p. 93)

Language-based theories of learning provide a foundational theoretical explanation for the names-based languaging activity of the Club in this study. Indeed, StyleWriting is a culture and artform of names, letters, and words, and hence *language*; put another way, it involves complex processes of visual, graphic, symbolic languaging and “visual slanguaging” (Chisolm, 2011), (i.e. it both records and transforms language), that reflect the culture’s “explicit engagement with language awareness” (Pennycook, 2007). In the Club space, the invention of one’s name is the initiating tool through which students engage in this visual languaging and slanguaging. The forms and manners in which kids write and perform their chosen names then furnishes me with “a tool through which the internal course of development can be understood... permit[ing]...delineat[ion] of the

child's immediate future and his [or her] dynamic developmental state" (Halliday, 1993, p. 87).

Literacy Studies. Literacy scholars have taken up the sociocultural approach to the study of language, learning, and language education, expanding our understanding of the "saying-(writing)-doing-being-valuing-believing-[imagining] combinations" (Gee, 2001, p. 526) that compose and coordinate our internal and expressive activity. This approach to literacy, "focus[es] not so much on acquisition of skills, as in dominant approaches, but rather on what it means to think of literacy as a social practice....[which] entails the recognition of multiple literacies" (Street, 2003, p. 1). From this view, we see a "shift away from dominant assumptions that language could be conceptualized and taught as though it were independent of social context" (Street & Leung, 2010, p. 291).

Works in this vein that take a social context approach challenge dominant views of literacy as a set of neutral and universal skills that includes merely the ability to read and write, and that defines reading and writing narrowly (Goody, 1968; Olson, 1988; Ong, 1982). For both educational research and practice, this represents a shift from traditional dictates of literacy to a position in which we must "suspend judgment as to what constitutes literacy among the people [we] are working with until [we] are able to understand what it means to the people themselves" (Street & Leung, 2010, p. 305). This is a critical orientation in language education research that "could provide a more theoretically sound and ethnographic understanding of the actual significance of literacy practices in people's lives" (Street, 2001, p. 433).

It reframes our literacies to include not merely the store of competencies that exists within ourselves, but also the various potentials of how we deploy that store outwardly in

all of our communicative expressions. This involves how we go about acquiring and accumulating language and information across time, space, and experience, and invent and build it across social group activity— in other words, all of the *social functions* of our *communicative competence* (Street & Leung, 2010).

Sociolinguists (Alim, 2004, 2009; Alim & Pennycook, 2007; Jorgensen et al., 2011) have also contributed significantly to these literacy and language theories, capturing ways to describe not just literacies, but also the more detailed patterning of our expressions, our linguistic repertoires (Blommaert & Backus, 2011), and their particular “features” or “units” (Jorgensen et al., 2011). These “points of contact between sociolinguistics and language teaching” are critical in revealing for us with particularity how our “linguistic resources...embody social meaning” (Street & Leung, 2010, p. 291). By studying the “fine-grained details of interactional work and local linguistic practice” (Bucholtz & Skapoulli, 2009, p. 1), we inform the specific ways and tools we employ to look at, understand, and build literacy instruction from kids’ activity.

I look for students “repertoires”, their “functionally distributed patchworks of competencies and skills” (Blommaert & Backus, 2011, p. 1). I look also at the particular “features” and “units” of their “repertoires” in order to see the continuous variability (or not) of their language use (Blommaert & Backus, 2011, p. 9), which in turn reveals much about their change over time, their learning. These repertoires involve linguistic, expressive patterns “rang[ing] from highly formal modes of patterned learning to highly informal and ephemeral encounters with language” (Blommaert & Backus, 2011, p. 4). Such patterns of languaging tend also to be nonlinear (Blommaert & Backus, 2011, p. 10) and polycentric (p. 15) forms that “lead to different forms of knowledge” (p. 4).

Furthermore, the “biographic dimensions” of Blommaert & Backus’s (2011) discussion of repertoires cannot be overstated in relation to this project focused largely on *names*. If we view language use as “biographically organiz[ed] complexes of resources [that] follow the rhythms of human lives” (p. 9), names and signatures become a powerful entry point for the writing of those biographies in symbolic and other expressive forms. Thus in search of a rich and nuanced understanding of Club activity, I look closely at the patterns and details of participants’ Language and Literacies, the qualities and kinds of all modal expression. These approaches also inform the taxonomic-style analyses I discuss and employ to analyze data (see methodology chapter).

Hull and Schultz (2001) have called for the study of youths’ and children’s multiple literacies, and for doing so, “in [their] social, cultural, historical, economic, and political contexts, both in school and out” (p. 586). And Heath and Street (2008) offer further that the purpose of our study of literacy should be to inform “a new approach to student writing and literacy in academic contexts that challenges the dominant ‘deficit’ models” (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 105).

Pioneering studies by Heath (1983) and Labov (2004) provide the field with a foundation for more fully understanding the literacies embedded in diverse youths’ social contexts, and have in common an emphasis on “the significance of language as a key resource for articulation and negotiation of [these] identities, relations, and processes” (Bucholtz & Skapoulli, 2009, p. 1).

Heath (1983) studied the home language practices of white and African-American working-class families in the Carolinas, and how their home practices prepared them in varying manners/degrees for acquiring competencies in schools. Her important findings

on the home oral practices of African-American children demonstrate how literacies are built around the sociocultural purposes and needs we have for communication and interaction, i.e. how learning is indeed a social process. Labov's (2004) early work similarly challenges notions of students' "cultural deprivation" in the home, locating the problem not in the students, but "in the relations between them and the school system" (p. 134). In looking at the detailed oral language patterns of African-American youth in Harlem in the 1970s, Labov (2004) investigated "the difference between the standard English of the classroom and the vernacular language used by members of the street culture" (p. 134), interpreting for us the richness of meaning and purpose of youths' Black English Vernacular (BEV). This work pairs with Heath's (1983) in showing black children's strengths, rather than viewing their oral languaging as deficient, which he claims "ha[s] no basis in social realities", and diverts "attention from real defects of our education system to imaginary defects of the child" (Labov, 2004, p. 135).

These studies set the stage for more than three decades of "bridge" and "assets-based" work to follow, including e.g. (Alim, 2004, 2009; Cowan, 2005; Fisher, 2006; Lee, 1997; Moje, Overby, Tysvaer, & Morris, 2008; Moll et al., 1992; Orellana & Reynolds, 2008).

These and other studies of youth literacies in and out of school have in common their "connect[ion] of micro-analysis of language and literacy use with macro-analyses of discourse and power," (Hull & Schulz, 2001, p. 586) enabling us to focus "on the ways in which the apparent neutrality of literacy practices disguises their significance for the distribution of power in society and for authority relations" (Street, 2001, p. 430). Freire

& Macedo (1987) identify the importance of literacy as it relates to power and the practice of schooling:

In our analysis, literacy becomes a meaningful construct to the degree that it is viewed as a set of practices that function to either empower or disempower people. In a larger sense, literacy is analyzed according to whether it serves to reproduce existing social formation or serves as a set of cultural practices that promotes democratic and emancipatory change. (Freire & Macedo, 1987)

Thus the implications of a social context approach for *schools* are clear – these approaches to literacy education *disrupt* conventional notions in favor of honoring young peoples’ contributions, valuing their competencies, and connecting them to their school lives and learnings.

Yet, the implications for children are far more imperative and should form our priorities. Morrell (2008) calls “literacy educators and scholars, [to] do something [proactive] as we engage in important intellectualizing and reflection of our critical literacy practice,” noting that, “the students and their families and communities deserve no less; and nothing less will work to confront the considerable challenges that we face in the process” (p. 82). These words echo those of Labov (2004) in his challenging of school-based approaches that denigrate students’ language modes -- “that educational psychology should be strongly influenced by a theory so false to the facts of language is unfortunate; but that children should be the victims of this ignorance is intolerable” (p.151).

The implications of bringing their dynamic, creative social languaging practices and other competencies and modes into the classroom is the expansion of their infinite potentials as developing human beings, and the “opening up [of] multiple possibilities for true learning to occur” (Alim, 2011). These collective works and voices go far in demonstrating that when we approach and engage young people through their

experience, abilities, and styles, treating knowledge as something we build together in solidarity and self awareness, we affirm kids' language potentials, supporting robustly their pathways to and through Language, Literacy, and learning. Taking the time to consider and analyze non-school models literacies will help to humanize people who may stand outside of mainstream culture. This humanizing of people is the essential goal of education.

Pedagogy. By centering Hip Hop practice as the source and tool for pedagogical engagement and study of Language and Literacy, I also enter in dialogue with the stream of research and theory on *critical* and *assets-based pedagogies*. .

Shor (1992) presents a critical view of traditional education:

Traditionalists...present standard canons of knowledge as universal, excellent, and neutral. They do not present them as historical choices of some groups whose usage and culture are privileged in society. Instead, the central bank is delivered to students as a common culture belonging to everyone, even though not everyone has had an equal right to add to it, take from it, critique it, or become part of it. This body of knowledge, according to its supporters, is society's essential facts, artifacts, words and ideas. But at root, the central bank underlying the standard curriculum is a deficit model for most students. It represents them as deficient, devoid of culture and language, needing to be filled with official knowledge. The transfer of this knowledge to students is thus a celebration of the status quo which down plays nontraditional student culture and the problem of social inequality. (p. 32)

The preponderance of authoritarian, Euro-centric, teacher-centered models of schooling alienates youth, entraps and bores them, teaches them that their cultural legacy is of little value, and sends them into the world without the proper tools for success; it creates a divide between themselves and the institutions charged with their education.

Freire (1997) proposes that greater attention be paid to the culture of students. A classroom must emphasize:

...a profound respect for the cultural identity of students—a cultural identity that implies respect for the language of the other, the color of the other, the gender of the other, the class of the other, the sexual orientation of the other, the intellectual capacity of the other; that implies the ability to stimulate the creativity of the other. (pp. 307-308)

Freire's notion that an educational community that prioritizes and understands the identity of its constituents can make education relevant and can stimulate the kind of critical thinking that will ensure success is confirmed by Shor (1992), who speaks to the power held by the teacher in rejecting traditional canons and empowering diverse students:

The empowering teacher who denies universal status to the dominant culture also denies emptiness in students. They are not deficits; they are complex, substantial human beings who arrive in class with diverse cultures; they have languages, interests, feelings, experiences, and perceptions. (p. 32)

These work draw a different conceptualization of how youth are treated and how their contributions, histories, languages, and abilities are valued. Their assets must be incorporated into the classroom in service of their learning and identity development and personal empowerment.

Youth cultures are often labeled “sub-cultures”, from a stance of opposition to authority; this frames the conversation from the deficit approach, focusing upon what youth lack, rather than the assets they possess and bring to the classroom. Ladson-Billing's (1995) theorizing of culturally relevant pedagogy entered boldly into this recognition and rejection of deficit schooling models, advocating approaches “that look at ways teachers might systematically include student culture in the classroom” (p. 483). Two decades of research applying and extending the concept, has seen the conversation transition to “cultural sustainability” (Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014). This “shift in terminology” is in response to half-baked, disingenuous, and too ethically lenient trials

in the name of relevance. Paris (2012) explains “the term *culturally sustaining* requires that our pedagogies be more than responsive and relevant to ...young people – it requires that they support young people in sustaining the cultural and linguistic competence of their communities while simultaneously offering access to dominant cultural competence” (p. 95).

Sustainability is a conceptual extension of relevance, requiring the pedagogue to identify her desired ends in/of classroom life. This direction to identify desired or expected outcomes, leads to important questioning of the entire teaching approach. Paris and Alim (2014) ask:

what would our pedagogies look like if the gaze weren't the dominant one?
what would liberating ourselves from this gaze and the educational
expectations it forwards mean for our abilities to envision new forms of
teaching and learning...What if the goal of teaching [were to]... explore,
honor, extend, and at times, problematize [youth's] heritage and community
practices?” (p. 86)

The added filtering of this sustainability approach means gimmicks do not count as cultural relevance. For me in this Hip Hop cultural practice research, these concepts of relevance and sustainability are more relevant than ever; they frame my pedagogical practice of Beats and also organically emerge in unexpected definitions and application that extend these generative threads of asset-based pedagogy discourse.

Stream 3: Studying Children's Language, Literacy(ies), and Learning

The Naming activity of 55 children participating in the Beats Club across three year is highlighted here, including Stely, Caiyl, Feldspar, Kiboo, Fina, Curipaii, Sabemi, Pinky, Waza, Steps, baby Corazon, and many others (See Appendix I-A). The Beatstory of their play to and through their self-selected names are the data foundation from which a Beats Names model is built and theorized; therefore building educational practice

grown and springing from children's engagement in the cultural practice of Style Writing. These foundations for theory and practice are detailed and discussed at length in Chapter IV's Results and Findings.

Chapter III: Methodology

The conceptual and theoretical inversions and re-writings framing this research call for a Methodology to match. In this work I make use of and develop *Hip Hop Methodology*, an original script for rigorous research built from the experimental approach deployed in the Beats Club. Such a *fresh, flipped* approach is vitally necessary for authentic and valid study of Hip Hop cultural-anything.

In the first section I discuss what Hip Hop Methodology is, and its goals and features. I discuss how such an approach gets over on many regular roadblocks of research, offering more fluid and adaptable, and therefore more practical, frames for all stages and phases of research. It is a model that addresses with a sense of resolution objectivity-versus- subjectivity in research, and the drama of researcher identity. It is a model for researchers to define ourselves *as* we research, placing and growing ourselves within the work, (re)naming and (re)claiming, iteratively and innovatively.

In this work Hip Hop Methodology is particular to Education, the teaching and learning endeavor; it is applicable everywhere education happens and wherever there is learning going on. This could be virtually any/everywhere. It is applicable for people who study culture, Language, peoples and their practices, and these things over time (i.e. any kind of study of growth/change or "historical" progression). It is especially suited to those of us studying highly hybrid contexts and contents, and those of us crossing,

playing with, and erasing constructed borders and boundaries around human learning and possibility. It is suited for researchers whose beings are the site where borders meet, merge, and disappear.

In the second section I discuss the “Beats Club” program where I conducted the study. I provide information about the population and sampling. In the third section of this chapter, I discuss the Hiphopographic methods of data collection. I detail the information sources collected and their rationales. In the fourth and fifth sections, I discuss the analytic methods and processes employed in constructing research findings. I address limitations of the study.

Hip Hop Methodology

A Hip Hop methodological approach is built from, undergirded by the practices-and-principles architecture of Hip Hop culture discussed in Chapter II. My own efforts to stay true to the elements and guiding principles of Hip Hop Pedagogy resulted in on-going inquiry into and experimentation with the framing necessary to animate, document, and make sense of Beats as a research site. I asked, how does/would a *hiphoppa* go about conducting research? A Hip Hop Methodology model must address this question of how cultural participants define our approach to “research,” to study. We must ask these questions as cultural participants, to inform how Hip Hop might be done in the academy.

From analysis of Beats Club data showing methodological patterns, I organize the following goals and features toward a *True (School) Hip Hop Methodology* (THHM).

Goals. The goals of Hip Hop Methodology are to create original, authentic, whole research.

Originality. Hip Hop Methodology applies the sample, mix and make approach of Hip Hop Pedagogy to the research process. Theory and methods from across disciplines and traditions are assembled and (re)Mixed in a new context, in new ways. Across gathering, organizing, and reviewing/analyzing information, the researcher aims to spin out new knowledge. This fresh, active (re)Making reflects and shapes the researcher's own perspectives and experience of/in community. Both the processing of material (sample, mix) and its performance/articulation in new combinations (make) should reflect original pathways that lead to original, essential productions. Originality as a core meaning of the term Style, is discussed in greater depth in Chapters IV, Findings. This cultural goal falls in step with guidelines of scholarly study within academia, i.e. the creation of new knowledge.

Authenticity. Another goal of Hip Hop research is authenticity. Hip Hop research should aim to create something real and true, in and stemming from *real life contexts*. This is not contrived or clinically grown research.

In my early fieldnoting of Beats Club, I found that attempting to be objective by staying apart from activity, merely observing (the conventional stance of a researcher), made the space and kids' activity incalculable or indefinable. For a teacher to be strictly objective in her classroom, to hold a stance of cold, unemotional distance and merely watch children is a laughable proposition if what you seek is real and authentic, not contrived, activity from children. Thus, establishing authority as a Hip Hop Methodologist comes not through research that aims to be purely *objective*.

Neither does this mean the work will be totally *subjective*. A True Hip Hop research *flow* recognizes that objectivity and subjectivity in real contexts function less like dichotomous principles and more like continua that dynamically present themselves as choices available in each moment of interaction. A Hip Hop Methodologist under/overstands that a balance between postures of objectivity and subjectivity are beneficial to kids meaning making and learning. Considering both can also strengthen the legitimacy and validity of the research. The goal is to consider both where appropriate.

In this project I hold roles as both researcher and teacher forming and animating the study. Once relationships with Club participants are seeded, I also step back, de-center myself, and observe and question what is going on. I ask multiple other people, participants of the space, what they think. I rely on the perceptive observations of other researchers, as well as the children, to make whole sense. I experiment new ways and ideas all of the time, looking, feeling for, and finding equilibriums. I then imbalance my assumptions and assertions, challenging my own thinking continuously. Hip Hop research involves balancing, harmonizing, and unifying objectivities and subjectivities, inquiry processes that build *authenticities* (Asante, 1990) .

Building authenticity of and across the research flow begins inside the researcher. Central to Hip Hop Methodology is the developing whole personhood of the researcher through conscious exploration of the self. A Hip Hop researcher will as a regular practice ask, who am I? What is my Style? She will also variably focus on questions such as, what do I want to accomplish through my research? What kind of research? How do *I* define myself, my research? How does the *academy* define me?

What is my relationship to the research setting? Who I am I in this space? How do I build this thing? A Hip Hop researcher will think deeply about and write down the answers to these questions. She/he will always renew these questions, extending and expanding the answers to hone in further.

Hiphoppas, those who engage in cultural practice, carry these inquiries into self across all contexts. All contexts could have relevance as the source of knowledge. We become students of self and life across all life worlds, weaving cultural engagement and lived experience into design and purpose of research. This centering of the researcher does not mean the researcher will hold the center space at all times, although her values, ideologies, and consciousness must. A Hip Hop Methodologist will ask across research, what are my values? My ideologies and beliefs? What consciousness do these form? As we form a developing sense of ourselves and/within research, we also position ourselves to align with appropriate theory, identifying the “problem” and developing research questions in fluid complementarity.

Authenticity built through a Hip Hop research approach flows from the researcher self into relationships of real exchange with participants. You have good data when there is trust and respect that are real to them. Further, knowing your true self is vitally necessary to animating and recognizing it in children.

This kind of self-studied researcher role-formation and inquiry is crucial to establishing authority in the space, marking the researcher’s social location, and explaining relationships to data, “that filter how you see data” (Butin, 2010)p.15). Self-study gives the researcher authority to speak clearly about evidence. Authenticity then, is the foundation of empirical rigor, foundational to the legitimacy and validity of

research. When we insert the self into our approach /process/flow, we build research that is empirically valid (Asante, 1990).

The art and science of the self. The creative mixing and making of the researcher self in context is an approach where pattern analysis is undertaken artfully, and learning becomes a mode for living of applied creativity.

As I delved deeply into review and analyses, consumed by the materials and their rich content, I began listening to/following my gut as much as any pre-existing, procedural methods of research. My flow through domain and taxonomic analyses was guided by intuition, cultural knowledges, and experience, and by my own questing and questioning across creative *play* with the evidence. Hip Hop Methodology research should be approached as a creative act, the practice and building of one's evolving craft, an artform.

Hip Hop Methodology is also a *science* method that endeavors to make sense and “overstand¹⁰” patterns. Hip Hop Methodology is applied to develop and offer formulae and pattern analyses of human experience, expression, and potentials; it is a framework for following the *flows* of these things. Merging research as art form and science method, rather than insisting that these exist or function separately, frees us to create fresh standards and frameworks that make best sense for analyzing actual contexts where “art” and “science” simultaneously and dynamically occur. When undertaking this sample, mix and make method, developing our authentic, creative viewpoints and bodies of works, we engage with inquiry as the art and science of Self. It is a quest that

¹⁰ meaning knowing by doing/practicing (KRS-One, 2009)

merges with, becomes our mode for living. Learning as the practice of life.

“This is about freedom. And nothing else”¹¹. This statement was made by Oakland Writer, REFA, in reference to StyleWriting and Hip Hop culture. Here freedom means one’s agency, choice, and self–determination; it means freedom of movement, freedom of mind, the right of free writing, free rhythms and free rhyme. Freedom here cannot and should not be interpreted in the pathetic American way of I can do whatever I want. It is free in unity, which means behavior such as disrespects of self and others, and of life are not tolerated, called out and put out of business. So Hip Hop freedom is a responsibility to the integrity of self and community; to honest, peaceful resolution of conflict in which all are treated with equal humanity; and where the group sets these conditions, the standards to which all are held. A life of Style is a commitment to the responsibility of personal excellence, as well as personal and collective freedom.

Ada and Beutel (1993) note:

Research is a search for knowledge as a path for bringing about emancipation. It is not just an outward process of transformation of our world, but also an inner journey of transformation. As the researcher engages with the participant in critical reflection, she becomes more reflective. As she discovers the strength of dialogue, her inner dialogue becomes more audible. As she learns to listen to the voices of the participants, she recognizes more and more voices within herself. As she names the world, she begins to lose the fear to look at the truth of her own self. As she promotes freedom, she becomes more free. (p. 4)

Features.

Participatory. “More and more. Educators and other professionals with a vocation for service are beginning to engage in participatory research as a way of

¹¹ From DaveyD (2010, March 12)

listening to voices previously unheard and as a way to amplify and disseminate the reflections of the people” (Ada & Beutel, 1993, p. 3).

Hip Hop Methodology is a participatory research model. All people involved in the context must take action and be part. In Beats we established a back-and-forth/dialogic, community-collective methodology where everyone was encouraged and expected to express and document their thoughts and feelings. All participants of the research have a voice in the community, help document activity, and must be heard in the results of research.

Hip Hop participation is interventionist. The most valid and rigorous research is achieved when the researcher is *engaged as part* of the community, not standing behind invisible barriers. The researcher takes her place in the Cipa-circle as a vital actor in the space. When and where necessary she animates the space, sets flexible bounds. The researcher then allows students to take center and push and pull the direction, causing the researcher to stand back, observe and assess for engagement, question her own modes and assumptions, then revise and reanimate. The center of the Cipa is always shifting and shared.

The main *mode* for *participation* in Hip Hop Methodology is *play* - with Pedagogy and methodological possibilities. Play here is synonymous with experimentation, invention, and innovation -- try thing, see what happens, invent things, try different and new things, take different analytic positions all of the time, get better all of the time. Play also presumes an intention to share the space.

The Hip Hop researcher must take play on as an element of research design through recursive review and analysis, *playing* around with ideas, strategies, analytic

possibilities and tools. Play is an especially relevant and effective participatory model for working with kids, because they are *experts* in play. Hip Hop culture proposes and shows that play never ceases to become relevant to learning. It is our lifelong mode for growing ourselves.

Finally, Hip Hop researchers and pedagogues must *participate* through practice of the elements. A Hip Hop Methodologist must practice, be, and live Hip Hop cultureways, in order to teach it and hold the overstanding necessary to assess, study others' practice.

Africaology, Indigeneity. Hip Hop Methodology is a non-Western approach. As discussed in Chapter II, the African origins and diasporic hybridities of Hip Hop's architects and participants is widely recognized and documented across disciplines of Hip Hop study (Chang, 2005; Miller, 2002; Rossomando, 1996). As such, this research, and all True Hip Hop research, is Africological (Asante, 1990, 2007; Hilliard, 1995) research. Africalogy refers to Africa as the original site of humanity, a universally shared origin of human life and civilization; it therefore also refers to (study and application of) *original* traditions, original *knowledges* of humanity (e.g. (Hilliard, 1986, 1989; Thompson, 1984). For example, in this research specifically, I am speaking of practices of wall and calligraphy writing that date back tens of thousands of years and exist across cultural traditions and time, such as Kemetic hieroglyphs, Chinese calligraphy, and Hindu sanscrit. In this way, Africological research includes and relates to many traditions called "indigenous", the original knowledge creators, wall writers, scribes, or "teachers" of a people, culture, or community. By honoring indigeneity, we honor the earth, all of life and beyond (Anzaldua, 1999; Cajete, 1994; Grande, 2004;

Sandoval, 2000); we engage a whole other worldview from which we gain our footing in the present. There is a rich future field of more fully relating ancient cultural knowledges and paradigms to educational spaces, to and through Hip Hop Methodological experimentation.

This framing of Hip Hop Methodology involves and prepares Researchers of Ciphya (ROC) to speak from our own voices and experiences on the inversions - reversals, reinterpretations, and reframings of Western methodologies necessary for our kinds of research. The available canon tends to break up and label humans and their behavior in rigid structures in order to contain, control, and establish power/dominance of that single view. Thus, the “problem” of research methodology is the available canon of “scientific research”. Building from a strong critical resistance within academic studies, e.g. Carspecken (1996); Street (2013), Hip Hop Methodology points out, exposes Eurocentrism, and the narrow, one-sidedness of its interpretations and analytic lens. Such Western tropes and methodologies are of little relevance to the liberatory educational goals of Hip Hop culture; those methods that serve to perpetuate the unequal design must be abandoned. Hip Hop Methodology is a space for new methods and designs to be cultivated.

Wholism. Wholism is a multi-dimensional term covering various aspects of research. We could begin with the symbol of wholism - the circle, or Ciphya – and continue de-Ciphya-ing from there.

Whole, means ‘comprehensive,’ including all possibilities in your approach to research from *beginning to end*. A whole research approach must be capable of

attending to various demands, issues, circumstances that will arise across the process, of how to organize and review, and analyze flexibly across all of research process.

Wholism refers to the whole person. By delving into the infinite universe of the self, we consider the whole experience of personhood, the body-vessel, mind and spirit; wholism requires looking not merely at thought, but also as important, feeling -the sensory experiences/modes of learning that together unify and are unified across a person's experience. Wholism extends from the person, connecting with all members of research community, building collective knowledge, abilities, and potentials.

In an educational research context, a Hip Hop Methodology approach aims to capture an all-modal interpretation of the child and their activity – for the purpose of experimenting with and building a *whole child* approach to education(al) /and research (Asante, 1990; Hilliard, 1995; Nobles, 2008).

These goals and features frame and fuel the design and/of methods. When focused on originality and authenticity through and of the whole self and collective, research becomes aligned with real life contexts and Language as it functions in use. Education is made relevant to each and all participants.

Assessment: Looking how? Looking for what? The Cipha, the circle, in its physical, visual, and psychic forms, is a flexible, fluid structure, so the means for assessment must have that. A Hip Hop cultural, interpretive prism requires looking at information sources in multiple, different kinds of ways, looking for different kinds of things, at different things differently. It requires staying open to the universe of possibility while following the logical and creative patterns that emerge and flow in the process of review.

Looking how: Prismic assessment. Prismic assessment is a form for viewing the research from all angles, looking at/for all possibilities; it requires the researcher to look at, interpret data from multiple angles of their own view, and join those with the perspectives of multiple people, sources, and factors acting in the space. The Hip Hop interpretive prism allows for seeing and unifying the multiple perspectives and dimensions that compose the *whole*. It is an interpretive method for knowing that is co-constructed in community, and valid by virtue of the diversity of views represented.

Looking how: Aesthetic assessment. Study of Hip Hop Language and Literacies requires an *aesthetics* approach to assessment. Aesthetics refers to “the relationship of things and thought, sensations and ideas,... the whole of our sensate lives” (Eagleton 1988, p. 328). Engagement of the researcher’s cognitive and whole perceptive awareness are necessary. We define our own knowledge/experience that shapes our Craft as including all of our accumulated *sensory* experience—the very definition of empiricism (Asante, 1990).

By combining all-perspectives and all-perceptions review (prismic and aesthetic), the Hip Hop researcher achieves rigorous, valid research.

Looking for What. The convention in analysis of information sources is to look for *disconfirming* evidence (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010). Hip Hop Methodology (rigor), pays attention to both *disconfirming and confirming*, because it is highly likely in a dynamic classroom over time that there will always be both; a student or teacher can be engaged one day, disengaged the next; they may follow the flow, show under/overstanding one day, and seem perplexed the next. As teachers we learn from both, about who kids are, who we are, informing creative practice. By looking at both

disconfirming and confirming, we develop our perceptive abilities to understand children.

The disconfirming evidence is vital because therein lie many answers to explaining system complexities. In other words, what appears to be disconfirming, helps to reframe, enrich understanding, and develop explanation. For example, “disengagement” in the Club activities appeared as marginal, but regularly present disconfirmation across multiple sources. The disengagement is telling and when looked into more deeply, virtually every incident of it occurred when the authenticity of the activity was in question, when there was no follow-up on a project or idea, causing kids to disengage. This was a critique we often gave ourselves in the process of doing the best we could. This kind of attention to disconfirming, enriches and ensures the validity of findings.

In sum, this Hip Hop methodological baseline is a call for scholars to break out of proscribed boxes, developing each their own fresh, personalized approach to their research. It is a whole model for the creative social scientist and a research framework of flexibility and expansive possibility. It aptly suits the endeavors of educational research in which we need tools for thinking expansively about possibility, and for capturing the so many variables of highly hybrid words and worlds we find in school-based inquiry settings. For these and many other kinds of border-busting research, Hip Hop Methodology is available.

Enter The Caph: Beats Club Site, Population, Sampling

Club background, structure & participants. Beats is a play-based Language and Literacy after-school program and research site located in a Los Angeles public

school. The Beats Community School is one of several at this large-scale, state-of-the-art schools complex that takes up an entire city block between Wilshire Boulevard and 8th street. The children living and learning in this context include 76 1st-5th graders who participated in the Club between 2010-2013. See Appendix III-A for introductory photos, visuals of the Club. Forty-one of these participants were involved in the final period of study, covering the last five months of three years of activity. Of these 55 participants, 39 are girls, and 16 are boys, labels kids often give to themselves as seen in Club surveys. All students are enrolled in their school's dual-immersion Spanish-English or Korean-English programs. Thus we have African-American first graders speaking and signing Korean, and Philipino and Bangladeshi 6-year olds speaking and singing in Spanish. The children and/or their parents are from Honduras, El Salvador, Mexico, the Philippines, Korea, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Malaysia, and also include U.S.-born Latinos and African-American children.

Leading the program and research from 2010-2013, was Principal Investigator Dr. Marjorie Faulstich Orellana, myself as Graduate Student Researcher, and Taylor Johnson as Site Coordinator. We were joined across three years by multiple other professors, graduate researchers, and undergraduate TAs¹² playing differing roles in the planning and implementation of the Club and companion undergraduate course. This work of team was vital to the success of the program, and this research project.

Additional vital participants of the Club are “UGs” (pronounced ugh), is how we

¹² Dr. Kathryn Anderson-Levitt, Dr. Andrea Rodriguez-Scheel, Dr. Michael Oshiro, Dr. Alma Flores, Dr. Shirin Vossoughi, Lilia Ramirez, Isaura Ramirez, Alvin Park (to name a few).

refer to the undergraduate students coming to the space every quarter as a site-based requirement for a course in Culture, Literacy and Human Development. The UGs are the children's primary playmates; between 10-25 each quarter visited the Club 2-3 days per week to engage and exchange with kids, and record this activity in fieldnotes. UG fieldnotes play a significant role in my analyses; their ideas and actions in the space are an important information source I consider throughout. All of these adult participants also *invent their Club names* for use in our collective space, just as we ask of the children.

The Club's play-based approach to the study of Language, Literacy, and learning, intends to *center children's voices* in the development of activity and building of the Club community. Each day of Beats involved different ensembles of about 10-20 children, 10-15 UGs, and 1-6 researchers.

For most of our three year, we met in the middle school cafeteria. At the entrance to the space was a smiling UG, seated behind the check-in table to take attendance and hand out kids' self-made name badges. The cafeteria walls span behind the check-in table and to the left in a 30 by 40-foot box, painted a standard, two-tones of white with light green accents; the walls were blank but for the emergency procedures notice and fire extinguisher. To the right in the entry, behind the check-in line are glass window-walls where sunlight would stream in throughout the year during this after school time. The floors were black-ish linoleum, and the foldable cafeteria-style tables dark grey. It was an open and adjustable space well-suited to our experimentations, a blank canvas for painting, writing our Beats-story(ies).

Once participants would pass through the door of the Club, we tune out to the

outside world and dive into Beats Club dimensionalities. The Cipa circle was set-up next to check-in, encouraging kids to flow directly there upon arrival. Set-up for the children was a circle formed with the adult-sized red plastic and silver metal chairs. UGs were usually seated here, waiting for kids to file in to the available chairs. We began meeting in the community circle, and calling it “the Cipa” in Phase 1, continuing the practice regularly across time. Once kids were seated I, “Miss Triz,” would move, circle around the inside, sometimes standing in the middle, or seated in the circle with the rest. I would carry a drum tucked under my arm, to get kids’ attention and initiate the Cipa flow for the day.

The kids also had instruments – maracas and shakers, a triangle, sandpaper blocks, *claves*, tambourines, and noisemakers. By Phase 3, many of the instruments used were made by the children as a Club activity of making things from recycled materials. The Cipa would begin with group improvisations on these instruments; I invited the children to “give me a beat!” or a rhythm, that the group would follow. In the Cipa we also engaged in singing songs, dancing demonstrations, physical group games, and/or just opening the space for conversation and talk that resulted in a popcorn-style dialogue.

The kids moved freely in this space, noted the UGs virtually every term. They took claim of the space, and asserted themselves in the Cipa. For example, one day on Phase 2, as I stood in the middle ready to ask what we might do that day, I was overtaken, decisively pushed aside by six-year-old Dolphin. With a wide grin stretched across her face (as was her usual posture) she began dancing the steps of a cumbia. AngryBirdStarWars2, one of only a handful of boys regularly attending the Club,

jumped up and joined her in the choreography. They danced as they and their peers explained that they were learning the dance in school. Four other children joined them, and the Cipa was all theirs.

We “de-Cipa” (as UGs note I did call kids to “de-Cipa”) from the group circle into smaller “circles” of group play. Some children would stick with the initial Cipa play activity and dialogue, and the remaining would break out. Interspersed around the Club space were always “stations” of activity. From the beginning of Beats in 2010, we set up board-game play, such as Connect Four, Uno, and Operation. Many stations overtime were dedicated to experimental arts and writing activities, such as a letter-writing mailbox system for communicating with others in the Club as well as an imaginary explorer called “X” (Orellana, 2016). The research team were always changing and evolving activities in the space, trying things and reinventing them in response to kids.

We also had an “outdoor” play station. Our cafeteria home-base faced Wilshire Boulevard, distanced from the traffic and transit by a 100-yard patch of gently sloping shortgrass. This outside space/field where we spent much of our time, was our own large patch of green for tag, zombies, hulahooping, wall ball, soccer, catching ladybugs, and multiple other kinds and combinations of outdoor running and play.

I participated in all of these stations and outdoor play, floating in and out of activity. I focused on my own “station” as well, bringing to Beats my experimental Names approach. In its earliest and simplest form, I was encouraging kids to “write their names, in their Style.” As I dialogued with children through names, I listened, and built ideas from kids’ suggestions. I modeled name invention, writing, and piecing through

experimental approaches, bringing and showing kids my own blackbook writings and pieces, and asking them their thoughts. I showed and introduced singing, marching, dancing, rhyming and performing Names, animating, observing and recording kids' responses.

The guiding principles of this group research endeavor in the Club was to animate the space with *play*, inventing and trying experimental activities, also asking kids what they want to do, and encouraging them to invent new activities, and flow with free play. The kids were highly curious about the play activities we brought to the space, and very engaged in the play. They invented so much of the play, building on/from/away from animating activities in their own unpredictable and improvisational ways, from which we also built. Our play was always leading us into new *inventions* and constant *innovations* of game play. This dialogic planning and play made the Club always relevant and exciting. Kids regularly and enthusiastically would tell us how “special” the Club is to them. A seal of approval is seen in handwritten notes, such as Cassie’s message on our community Scroll, “Beats Rocks! Thumbs up Ms. Triz.” They assert their love for the Club and its participants. They say “I love Beats, because I can be me!”, said Alvin aka DJ3D in a Phase 2 Cipa session. Kids also feel empowered to tell us when things are not working, when they feel bored or estranged from activity; we the Team did our best to listen and respond by changing things up.

In this space where new faces appear regularly, *names* get exchanged as a regular practice of (re)introduction that facilitates entry into play. As the videos and UG fieldnotes of each quarter show, negotiations of names amongst old and new participants occurred across Phases. Kids exchange their given or “real” names, followed by their

invented ones. “My Beats name?” asked Curipaii in response to UG Monsoon inviting her to play, followed by “Wait, what’s your name?” (Video of 4/2013).

These names are the main tool and strategy for building and studying Language and Literacy in this research project. I first planted the seed of names and Style in the spring of 2011, using an experimental intervention I refer to as the “NAMES” Task (Names Are Mathematics of the Essential Self; Names are Marvelous Essential Speech/Symbols). Detailed further in the Chapter IV Results, the Task is based on years of watching, dialoguing, and reflecting on youth name writings. I invented NAMES for Beats on the night before I would try it out in the Club for the first time, igniting Phase 1 of the study. I model play with letters, ideas relevant to the self through choosing my own name. I did this Task first in 2011 and repeated it in the following fall quarter to a mix of prior and new participants. I experimented with multiple other ways of sharing our naming pedagogies of the Task across the three years, adapting it to different contexts and needs of the Club. I invited children and returning UGs to teach new Club members how to invent their names. I performed variations of it over time in small group and one-on-ones with new participants. From names invention and writing I expanded into other experimental, cultural pedagogies of dance and song, following our name writing with name-riffing – flowing from name invention and writing, to name-stylizing. I created full-color pieces of Triz in my blackbook, transforming color rhythms into name-dances and gesture, name songs and rhymes, and varying, improvised names performances of self, Miss Triz (mysteries). More about my uses of names arises across the Chapter IV Results.

Conducting a Beats Club HipHopography

Existing frameworks for study of peoples and culture such as “ethnography” are problematic when applied to the study of Hip Hop practice, or any research conducted *by and about* POC. The term “ethnography” positions us to “other” our own selves and our research participants. Here we supplant the offending term with HipHop; we can call our study Hiphopology or Hiphopography. Or we can rename and assign refinements (KRS-One, 2009) built from the study itself. For example, we could call study in/of the Beats Club, a *Beatsography*. When focusing on Hip Hop names and naming, a study could be called Styleography, a writing of our stories of Style.

HipHopography is the study of people practicing (living) Hip Hop culture, its elemental practice pillars and principles. It involves documenting the lives and works of the cultural movement known as Hip Hop, building from historical method foundations in the works of Alim (2006); Spady et al. (2006); Yancy (2013). As Meghelli (2013) notes, it is a historical method that, “empowers researchers to systematically study Hip Hop's everyday dynamics and deep historical roots.”

At the same time as it creates a historical record of the Beats Club, in this research HipHopography also takes on rich anthropological function (Alim, 2006, pp. 11-12); it is a study that documents *culture in action*. Thus, the aim of this Hiphopography is “to discover and to describe in narrative reporting” how participants engage in practice (Anderson-Levitt, 2006, p. 43). In this study, I look at what children do in their everyday lives of the Beats Club. From there, the aim becomes discovering what their practices mean. Necessary for the task are multiple kinds of information sources (Erickson, 2004) capable of capturing the all-modality of children’s play. Sources must

consider all of the different ways of seeing, hearing, and feeling children's activity.

Sources must include the multiple voices or perspectives on cultural name practices of other participants to the Club. As discussed earlier, this is a multi-perspectival or prismic, and whole approach to sense-making.

HipHopography is a useful term for replacing and distinguishing itself from ethnography, because in addition to studying “other” people (children), we study ourselves in a Hip Hop cultural paradigm. As discussed previously in this chapter, the researcher does not stand far and apart from the community they “study”. A True Hip Hop researcher must co-construct the space; and this participation requires an awareness and study of one’s own role and impact. In this sense, a HipHopography is a collective-community approach to an individual’s research.

In the section following I discuss the information sources gathered toward these aims of narrative reporting and multi-perspectival interpretation. I discuss the rationales for each source. I explain how I organized sources in preparation for review and analysis, “tidying” and “triangulating” (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010) information.

Data collection: Information sources and rationale. Sources gathered to document Beats names and naming include:

- a) Three years of observational *fieldnotes* (Heath & Street, 2008), taken by myself and more than 200 undergraduate researchers;
- b) *Photographs and video recordings*, including over 2000 pictures and 50+ hours of recorded video footage of the Club, taken by myself, children, and UGs;
- c) Dozens of *Artifacts*, hand-made works by children, including looseleaf and composition book name pieces, and scroll writings; and

d) One-on-one and small group conversations, or *Dialogues*, with 14 Beats

Clubbers at the end of three years, using a questionnaire and captured on video.

Observations & writings: Notes from the field. All researchers in Beats observe children, interact with them through play-and-talk, and take notes detailing these interactions and the contexts in which they are situated.

For three years I observed and documented in writing, life in our Beats environment. My notes detail kids' activity, the things they say and do, and the kinds and forms of Language they use in expressing and communicating in all Club activity. I also document the various stimuli of environment all around. Notes were written as soon as possible after activity. Note-writing also occurs across time as memories, ideas, and narratives continue to grow and flow. The content captured in these notes includes regular "informal" dialogue with children across Club play. I also focus particularly on how/when/where kids pick up and deploy cultural *names* practices.

A HipHopographic method gathers this more objective reporting or "raw data," and also riffs from traditional fieldnote strategies to encourage personal communications, analyses, hand and voice-recordings. This more "subjective," personal, interpretive kind of -ography (writing) includes extensions of observer comments, early ideas and theorizing, and importantly, notations of the researcher's self-study. Written documentations of Club also include handwritings kept in my blackbooks across the period of study, and later typed and integrated with typed material.

Undergraduates' fieldnotes. As previously discussed, multi-perspectivity is critical to Hip Hop sense-making. Sources should include the fieldnotes and commentaries of other researchers and participants in the space. Included in this project

are the fieldnotes of 43 undergraduate student participants of the Club across the three years of study. Fieldnote-taking was structured into Beats as a regular practice of the UGs. A lot of time was spent by the Instruction (overlapping with the Research) Team on listening to UGs and dialoguing about their articulations of experience in Beats. I read UG fieldnotes for an early pilot study of Beats names. In these sources I found fresh perspectives from my own that also build on and with my assessments. These other perspectives on Club activity contain information about the many different ways distinct people make sense (generally and in/of Beats), and themes they collectively tend to touch upon. UG interpretations of Names and Beats include much interrogating of the *Pedagogy*, as *they* experience it. The UGs themselves feel something powerful in the Names process. Like the kids they enjoy and attach deep meanings to the names they invent for themselves. They draw conclusions as to why kids are into it and how it appears to them to be a tool for so many things. UGs also often present and propose the most regular occurrence of disconfirmation, since they are tasked in their coursework to interrogate the play-based and names methods of the Club.

These fieldnote *writings* are a vital record that document our Language and Literacy(ies) in Beats. They capture so many fine-grained details we would otherwise forget, if not by writing it down. When all combined recording what we have done and accomplished provides us with evidence for seeing our growth.

I reviewed and incorporate into analyses, UG notes from the first few weeks of each of six academic quarters, when names introductory talk/exchange occurs most. I also reviewed all 9 weeks of UG fieldnotes written during the Phase 3 dissertation period, a total of 70 entries.

Photography & video recording. The visual companions to fieldnotes are photographs and video recordings of Club activity. I collected, reviewed, and *annotated* more than 2,000 photos taken since early Phase 1. I “grabbed” over 50 hours of video, including almost 30 hours of Club play, and 20+ hours of small group Summer Dialogues. The photographers and videographers of Beats include myself, the children, and many adult participants.

At the beginning of the Cipa I would ask for volunteers to take pictures, picking the first hand I saw or the closest person to me. I would hand over the camera with the instruction to take many pictures and pass it along after awhile. Some children gravitated to these technologies; even creating a language for it. Video camera in hand, Curipaii in Phase 3 of study said to me, “Miss, I’m going to grab¹³ you”.

No study of Style could be undertaken without these kinds of visual documentations of names. Documenting via photography of one’s Name-Writing is a cultural overstanding and discipline of StyleWriting, where we record and document the performance of our practice. Our flics are a source for future self-learning and growth, and for exchange with our community. These sources fill-out in color, sound, and visual patterning the stories told in fieldnotes, including the fine linguistic details of our back and forth talk and play. They provide a whole field of detail not documented in the fieldnotes. This makes sense, for, how to describe the aural and oral sounds and qualities of our laughter and chatter, the gestural formations of our faces, hands, and bodies as we play. These visual sources are vital for aesthetic, whole assessment of all-modality in

¹³ From the Spanish “grabar” meaning “to record”.

action.

Regarding the videos, review of these materials showed the camera changing hands, sometimes frequently, sometimes left on the tripod, while activity swirled all around; sometimes nothing at all appeared on screen while the sounds of far off play could be heard. Together the photos and videos form part of our “Beatstorical” record. And with multiple directors it becomes a source that captures the multiple perspectives of participants.

Artifacts. Artifacts are “documentary constructions of reality,” that, “construct ‘facts’, ‘records’, ‘diagnoses’, ‘decisions’, and ‘rules’ that are crucially involved in social activities.” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Dozens of physical artifacts were created across three years of Beats. Those relevant to this study are kids’ multiple kinds of stylized name-writings over time, including their first NAMES/name self-selection task document, nametags, name-pieces and signatures on looseleafs and in composition books, and the writings of a community scroll. These kid constructions of their selves are a main source for analysis of the kinds of Literacy(ies) viewable in our names practices; many are referenced as Appendices across Chapter IV.

Dialogues. At the end of three school years of Beats Club I held one-on-one and small group Summer Dialogues with 14 children participants of Beats. Dialogue participants included Sabemi, Curipaii, Tarzan, baby Corazon, and Ms.Becky individually, and small groups with Stely and Fina, MagicalMusicMagenta and her sister Picok, and the dynamic-5 sisters, Gummi Gummi Bear, Violet, Pinky, Flower Girl, and little Roo. The Summer Dialogues took place across three weeks in July 2013. I met with participants at their (empty) school, in the teachers lounge. Three participants met me with their parents at

the local library in the children's section. Each Dialogue lasted 2-4 hours, and all were video recorded.

Dialogue is the method of exchange used in the Cipa. The core source and tool for Dialogue, often initiating it, are our names. It was not a word we used to describe ourselves or activity in Beats, but, "Dialogue" is the essence of what Play is and means – people talking to each other, listening, conscientiously responding with expectation of ongoing, critical, creative back-and-forth (Ada & Beutel, 1993b; Rodriguez, 2009).

My fieldnotes remind me that early on I was influenced by a classroom comment about the term "Dialogue" being charged. I stayed away from using the term in the beginnings of the Club, even though it was a method I used in my Master's thesis, "Dialogues with Writers of Style". In that early Phase 1 time of the study, I was feeling the need to free myself of labels, terms, and resources I had used in the past, to explore what else might be available, and possibly more appropriate. So I stopped trying to name Beats activity as anything in particular. I considered calling my talks with children "interviews" and "charlas" for example. When I began inviting kids to the idea of these sit downs in Phases 2 and 3, I called it "interview" and "conversation." "Interviews" because I knew I would sit down with a list of questions that would guide the conversation.

But a Dialogue method is distinguishable from an interview; it is not merely about asking questions and recording answers. Dialogue involves knowing how to ask questions. Beyond mere interviewing of participants, it also requires a more complex process of reacting conscientiously to the ideas and needs of the responder, listening carefully and thoughtfully reflecting on the responses, and continuously asking more. The researcher

engages in her own learning and development, becoming more skilled and comfortable with Dialogue through the application of the method. Learning through and across Dialogue is a theme that cuts across the Findings discussed later. This makes sense in line with the socio-cultural orientation discussed in the prior chapter; i.e. that the basis of Learning is Language, the basis of our collective Learning, of our community-cultural development is the *exchange* of Language – Dialogue.

Dialogue is also a method for gathering data that is *focused on children's perspectives*. Educational researchers often analyze kids' activity by engaging our seasoned teacher perspectives; this is absolutely valid and necessary. Researchers must also always listen to and ask children. What do they think about their own activity? What do they call it? What are their perceptions, perspectives, experiences? Of themselves and the collective Club, (community, or classroom)? Of their Learning? Their aims, goals, and dreams? Children are fountains of knowledge when their voices are held up and heard, guided and cared for, and free to express. Names dialogue allows us each Writer a view into the essence of the other. Pedagogically, it requires listening to kids say and pattern who they claim to be, and/then representing your own authentic-self in teacher, also known as a "Teacha," (KRS-One & D-Nice, 1990) the Hip Hop cultural archetype for a teacher discussed in Chapter 2.

I developed a questionnaire to guide these charlas. Intended to be flexible, adaptable to each child, the aim of this tool was to listen to and record kids' voices about the subject matters of the research question – Names, Language, Literacy, and learning – probing their thoughts on their own experience of these things and how they happen in Beats, in school, and elsewhere in their lives. I ask them about modes of "communication"

in an effort to discuss their deployment of multiple modes for talking, expressing. I spoke to each child specifically about names, asking them what they think they learn through names and in the Beats Club. I adjusted and reorganized the questions after each Dialogue, refining and tailoring to the next child; rather than a standard, same format for all, the questionnaire takes into account my relationship with child, what I know of them, and what I want to know. In the end, the whole of this tool was not as helpful as I had hoped; after some analysis I realized that only some of the questions, those asking kids about their names, were what I was interested in hearing from them. Other question I tried constructing around communication and multi-modality were, upon more reflection, too probey and abstract.

In addition to the questionnaire, I also prepared for the summer Dialogues by gathering photographs of each child. I organized albums of pictures in which they or their work appear, or pictures I thought they might have taken. I gather all of the artifacts I could find belonging to each child. I put them on display for each Dialogue, asking participants to reflect on their work product, photos, and Club participation. Rather than keeping the work to myself as the researcher, I shared these visual with kids, having them be part of the interpretive process. As part of each Dialogue, I also set a goal of making a “final” name piece.

Data organization: Tidying and triangulating. Upon completion of Summer Dialogues, I gathered all information sources, and transitioned from conducting research and data collection (engaging with, stimulating, documenting Beats activity), to stepping away from the space to organize it all (thinking about, tidying and triangulating Beats activity). The first step into organization had me questioning how I would review what

seemed massive, rather unruly amounts of information. From August through December 2013 I engaged in a process of “data cleaning, management, and cataloging,” of all collected sources, or what Lecompte and Schensul (1999) call “tidying” (p. 37). It is necessary to walk through some of this procedural work to seamlessly follow the discussion of analytic methods and steps that follow.

I began by creating a, “Methods Tracking Document,” including a Table to log the amounts of information and the status of review of each source. As I organized and took stock of materials to be reviewed, I also *began* review. “In qualitative research one must construct both data and their analyses together” (Erickson, 2004, p. 493).

My gut told me to start with the visuals – photos, video, artifacts. I organized photos by quarter and began (re)viewing them in slideshow format, taking a chronological stroll back to the beginning of Beats. I simultaneously began watching back the videos of our final 9 weeks of Club activity, also chronologically from the earliest of action. I began converting these *visuals* to *text*, annotating and transcribing what I saw-heard-felt in thick-rich-descriptive forms, transcribing in fine detail dialogic bits, and also summarizing content. I later merge these annotation-transcriptions, additional “raw data,” with my fieldnotes by date. In review of these visual materials, I also make researcher notes and analytic suggestions about activity. I mark new ideas, directions, and questions that arose. I include my hunches and thoughts and tentative understandings, and added all of those to my “analytic field-Notations,” by date. The first triangulations occur here merging written fieldnotes and the annotations-transcriptions of photo and video sources.

I gave artifacts a similar treatment of annotation-transcription, marking and

setting aside pieces for deeper analysis. I studied photos of the scroll, searching for patterns, counting things, playing with analytic possibilities.

*Creating a Tome*¹⁴. I decided to print out these more than 500 pages of triangulated sources, creating a physical Tome to review by hand. The reason for this was an important shift in strategy adapted to a particular life circumstance. The shooting pains running from my fingertips, through my palms, wrists, elbows, shoulders, and up into my neck, forced me to stop touching every contraption involving typing, swiping, or pushing buttons. The computer became a torture device. And by the end of three months of tidying through the pain, I lost the use of my hands and arms for even the simplest daily tasks. So while I may have originally gone with complicated tables or softwares for storing and combing through data, I adapted my methods by drawing the material from out of the computer, into and manipulable with my hands.

I printed out all material I had written from the three years, and arranged them chronologically from the beginning. I merge fieldnotes with annotation-transcription for a unified review and coding process of (re)Reading and color-(re)Coding.

By printing it out and holding the words on the paper in my hands, I also make possible new visual organizations, experimenting with diagrams, designs, and visual color flows on my wall, organizing and reorganizing. This hand review and coding process was still painful and slow-going, but much less so than on the computer. Across

¹⁴ tome n

1. a book, especially a large heavy book on a serious subject (formal or humorous)
2. a single volume of a book made up of several volumes

all phases of analysis and writing, I did as much of the work by hand as possible. This made it take longer I think, but it also makes the analysis, appropriately, hand-written, *escrito a mano*.

Coding framework. Handwritten on looseleafs I developed *codes* for what I was looking for. I looked back at other coding categories that had arisen across three years of experimentation in Beats; there were way too many possibilities. It felt unruly. I simplified by organizing Names (yellow) and Pedagogy (blue), along with Language and Literacies (green) in a domain-style (Spradley) coding pre-framework. I drew myself a color-coded Legend of these. See Appendix III-B.

I focus on the code of *Names* (yellow) tracking every place they were visible or heard, discussed or discarded. I look across information sources for students' name choices and the creative and dialogic processes by which they construct and convey those choices. I examine the ways each child writes and shapes their letters, listening for the sounds they make and *how* they say things. I pay attention to how they spell their ideas and the symbolic value they give to letters and names, how they incorporate different *idiomas*, and how they stylize their drawings. I look at their use of *color* patterning, space, and balance. I watch and listen for the relationships kids literally draw between their experience/knowledge/ideas/feelings/imagining, and the letters and names they choose to write. I watch kids flow from writing to rhythming their names –dancing, gesturing, drumming themselves, creatively, improvisationally exploring the potentials of Language modalities in this free, open space. I watch and assess how their names, ideas, and identities evolve over time, building meaning special to each child and to the collective cultural practices of Beats as a whole. I remain open to seeing other things.

Another code that came from the process of tidying and triangulating was *Pedagogy* (blue), the experimental, names-based approach to teaching and learning deployed in Beats. This new code first struck me at the end of Week 1 of the Phase 3 dissertation period, when I read the UG fieldnotes turned in for that first week. I realized how closely UGs were paying attention to *Me*, and what I was doing in the space; they were analyzing my actions these teachers in training, thinking about how the Club approaches made them feel, and considering its/my impact on the children. Thus the UGs illuminate something I had never looked at – *myself*. In my early analysis I found it difficult to accept that I would have to search for and find myself in the data, that I would have to study *Me* as a factor influencing what kids do with names. It occurred to me as I tidied and saw the presence of Pedagogy (blue) bits of data that answering the question of how names shape children would require looking into the pedagogical interventions shaping, forming, and intervening in the space. I made a slight but significant change to the research question – how do Hip Hop naming practices *and pedagogies* shape children’s Language and Literacies? This shift also represents what I was seeing of how children took up teaching of names to others over time.

(re)Centering in the question. When I finished the video and photo annotations, and gathered all prior fieldnotes into the Tome, I felt full of information, though superficially able to assert any answers. I asked and answered my research question anyway. What can I say at this point about how Names shape kids’ Language and Literacy(ies)? I jotted loose answers, repeating this exercise every so often across review. This exercise reminds me that I have built my case across time, review, and

reflection. Staying grounded in the question focused my path through large amounts of data.

Reviews-Analyses-Writings

Developing an Overstanding of and ability to explain the existential experience of the Beats Ciphya requires meticulous review of meticulously organized materials. Right on the edges of the above organization, blends and flows the process of review. Organization of sources is itself a kind of review, where we locate the points and crags for entering into analytic flows.

In this Section D I discuss the strategies used and flows followed for analyses - “cooking” the raw data (Erickson, 2004), and writing this piece. It involves a step by step process of building, in progressive sequences of inquiry and sense-making.

Review and analyses is a dynamic, folding process in which mind and body must be wholly engaged. Review and analyses engage the researcher’s senses and intuitive instincts; she should be driven by impulse, inclination, hunch stemming from e.g. relationships with participants, teaching experience, and cultural, aesthetic knowledges.

Iterative review and analyses also engages the researcher’s logics, a conscious awareness of thought using the measurement tools of Language, e.g. mental play with words/semantic relationships, and written, visual displays of patterns. In this approach deployed are knowledges and consciousness of the heart, gut, hips, brain, and all parts of the entire self flowing in a symphonic whole– wherever you are moved, wherever the work moves.

This search for patterns includes (re)coding, extracting, organizing, and mapping data out visually, then re-arranging until the patterns align and make sense.

Reviewing the tome, 5 passes. “Stable patterns and themes – assertions that make generalizations about actions and beliefs that were observed – must be searched for repeatedly within the total data corpus, in a process of progressive problem-solving” (Erickson, 2004, p. 486). It is:

a recursive process of questioning constantly; getting answers; asking more refined questions; getting more complete answers; and looking for instances that clarify, modify, or negate the original formulations, permit[ting] [HipHop]ographers to reorder their sense of what is happening. (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010, p.11)

Going into review, I had a loose repertoire of codes and my sources triangulated into one textual Tome for review. It was not until I actually began reviewing the Tome that I began to form *how* the material should be analyzed, especially the fluid, intuitive forms necessary. After what felt like a very linear process of gathering materials chronologically, I began a cycle of something more dynamic, setting off down a zillion pathways of information, looking for things, naming things, falling down each tendril, flowing into each branch of possibility in order to build the compositional knowledge of the things being studied - Names, Pedagogy, Language, Literacy, as they *be* in Beats.

I took 5 distinct passes at review of information sources. A summary discussion of these steps and strategies is necessary for meaningful discussion of outcomes.

Pass 1-3. The first three passes take place across three months. I focused first on material from the beginning couple of years until just before the dissertation was conducted (Phases 1 and 2), incorporating in review available UG fieldnotes of those periods. Here I focus first on making sense of Beats Names *up until* the point of the Dissertation period, looking backward to under and overstand where we were by Phase 3.

I felt a rush when I re-read my notes from the very beginning. I was drawn into the material, giving new names to things I hadn't remembered doing or writing. Focused on our early formation, I was immediately struck by the growth of the Club across three years.

The first three reviews involved coding of materials by identifying "bits" of data - chunks or whole pages – somehow representative of the broad domains (Spradley, 1980) under consideration – Names (yellow), Pedagogy (Blue), Language & Literacy (green).

I wrote codes directly on the Tome document in finetip colored-ink pens, as well as their corresponding hi-lighter color. These visual markers boosted the seeing of patterns. For example, I saw that most of my notes from Phase 1 and 2 were blue (Pedagogy), yellow (Names), and dark green (Methodology). And I began to see and view these in (color) relationships; yellow and blue, when mixed are green, a lighter shade of which I had assigned Language and Literacy codes. These color codes also made it easy to search through and find material.

In the second and third passes, I assigned multiple, more refined *descriptive (sub)codes* for each "bit"¹⁵, or text section/chunk. These (sub)codes identify the composite parts of each domain. For example, the blue coded bits of *Pedagogy*, were assigned descriptors such as "teacher experience", "building relationships", "listening to kids, taking ideas seriously". I kept lists of these descriptive Pedagogy (sub)codes as an addendum to the original codes legend; they were all written in light blue on loose-leaf notebook papers.

¹⁵ Bits are small sections that break off the end of letters in a piece, Rossomando

(See Appendix III-C).

Similarly, in caramel yellow pen, I listed descriptive codes for each “bit” of text coded Names. These included e.g., “first mention of name-writing” in the planning phase. Activity and dialogue in my notes recalls the challenges of “remembering names”, and the “multiple names” and “letter styles” kids use. I (sub)coded “name games” we played such as “name switching,” “secret names,” and “naming of others”.

I reviewed the Tome for these descriptors a couple of times, extending the list of possibilities for describing activity, keeping meticulous track in color-coded lists of the descriptive codes. In addition to Pedagogy and Names, I did this descriptive (sub)coding for Methodology, the third most common code marked in the Tome. There were 87 descriptive “Pedagogy” codes, 47 descriptive “Names” codes, and 37 Methodology codes.

From codes to mappings. With these coded data, I created various kinds of *visual* organization methods and maps to “diagram” out the results.

I thought first to write each descriptive code for Pedagogy and Names on individual blue and yellow post-its so I could stick them to the wall and move them all around. As I did this I got rid of redundancies, realizing different names for similar activity, and renaming things. I clustered the post-its on my office wall, by color, and stared at the blue and yellow clusters, searching for a reorganization scheme to become apparent. I focused in first on the cluster of blue pedagogy post-its, and saw that many codes were references to Strategies and/or Tools used in the Club (observation, relationships building, engaging multimodalities, Name tags, Instruments, Drum, scroll). The left over blue (sub)codes took the form of an *embodied* quality of Pedagogy held by

the teacher, broken down further into Ideologies, Consciousness, and Values. Thus along with the “Strategies” and “Tools,” is the “Craft” is what I called it. Every blue post-it descriptor fell into one or more of these *dimensions* of Pedagogy. I jotted this as a Domain Tree-style outline, and as the following simple outline/list:

A. TEACHER FLOW

1. Craft
2. Strategies
3. Tools

I converted this C.S.T organization from the post-its on the wall to a Word table with three columns for listing and rearranging codes. Codes that overlapped all columns were drawn upward into the overhanging cell, identifying these as cross-dimensional *themes*. I printed out the Pedagogy Domain Table with its C, S, T, framework and stuck it to the wall next to the blue post-its. Across several re-arrangings over time, I develop the Appendix IV-AG discussed in the Findings section, as a guide/companion to the explanations provided in the findings on pedagogy.

In organizing *Names* data bits, I began by asking a series of questions about the activity extracted in these data bits. What are kids doing? Are they responding to the NAMES task? What are the qualities of responses? What are the kinds? What are the purpose and reasons of kids’ naming? What are all of the ways names get picked up and used? I engaged in these playful mental taxonomies, using this list from LeCompte and Schensul (1999):

Strict inclusion, X is a kind of Y
Spatial, X is a part of Y
Cause–t effect, X is a result of Y
Rationale, X is a reason for doing Y
Location–4–action, X is a place for doing Y
Function, X is used for Y
Means–and, X is a way to do Y

Sequence, X is a step (stage) in Y
Attribution, X is a characteristic of Y (p. 74)

In my head I would go through these questions, playing with possibilities of relationships of the codes. For example, for the descriptive code, “switching names,” I might say, is a kind of *naming*, a kind of *play*, a kind of *pedagogy*; it is a way to do, a use or application of *naming practices*, and a result/response to *Names pedagogy*. I also switched these questions up, making “names” the X, i.e. “names” are a way to “play, a form for assessment, an action for self- building”. I organized Names and Pedagogy data separately and together, connecting the Call to the Response. E.g. “switching names” (yellow) is a kind of “name play” (yellow, subdomain); this name play is a response to “Names Pedagogy,” (blue). Then looking at the qualities of pedagogy, I might say, “switching names” (yellow), is in response to a Pedagogy that is “open, experimental, interventionist, playful.” (blue); or the *qualities* of “switching names” (yellow) are “open; experimental, interventionist, playful.” (yellow)

The post-its clusters, lists, and taxonomic play led to a series of visual mappings. I hand-diagramed out the information from the Table-lists on Pedagogy and Names, beginning with the points of overlap, creating Domain Tree (Spradley, 1980)-style diagrams. These are aimed at both expanding taxonomically the dimension of each domain and subdomain into their many branches and tendrils. It took me several different mappings to (re)envision the drawing and organize all data through their points of connection.

The researcher in me said to look at the post-its coded disconfirming. I organized all of the disconfirming post-its, delving into semantic questioning of these as well (e.g. when kids, UGs, or others are unengaged or “disengage” from naming).

Things were making sense, patterns emerging in the maps and in my mind. In the material coded Names and Pedagogy, the qualities of the pedagogy matched the qualities of the response. Kids were engaged with names, doing names, a lot and in many ways; they engaged with the pedagogy and liked the Task. They kept going on their own, doing it many different ways, teaching it to others. And names it seemed was defining for the community. These were things I knew in my gut, and now I had mapped out that story with these coded bits.

At the end of two full passes of the Tome and the drawings of these different maps, I felt I had a strong grasp of what was going on with names practices and pedagogies, the subject of my research question. I moved on to the “support and shape *Language* and *Literacies*” half of the question, transitioning into a third, pointed review of fieldnotes. This time, I went back to the Fieldnotes documents in the computer to extract and isolate (cut-and-paste) all of the coded bits for Pedagogy in a separate word document. I did the same for Names bits. Total there were about 340 bits of Pedagogy & Names data, about 40 pages of fieldnotes excerpts. Thus my third pass was not in the Tome, but in a condensed separate document where the data bits identified as important were extracted and reviewed anew.

In my third pass through the materials, I changed the semantic play, looking at each bit of Names and Pedagogy, asking, what is the nature of Language? What is the nature of Literacy? What are the kinds? What are the qualities/attributions, functions, and modes of Language and Literacy(ies)? Are their reasons? Are there steps or stages? In answering these, I created a whole new listing of descriptive (sub)codes in light green. Skipping the listing and post-its step of the previous passes, I quickly jumped into

diagramming Domain Tree-style taxonomic maps of Language and Literacy, and connecting it with the maps of Names and Pedagogy data. These visual hand-drawn mapping techniques tease out what seems tangled, identifying patterns that explain what is going on with kids' Literacies and Languages. I begin to see the whole picture of Beatstory, the thoughtful call, the unpredictable, dynamic patterns of response(s).

I stepped back from the blue and yellow post-its and green maps on the wall, and noticed that the organization were reminiscent of the Cloud Ridiculous Blackbook drawing I introduced on Week 1 of the Final, Phase 3 (See Appendix IV-Y). Thinking of these domains as clouds, rather than being defined by rigid boundaries seemed an easier frame for explanation. I began *drawing clouds* around the points where descriptive codes met across colors, as a symbolic representation of the flexibility, fluidity of these meeting points, and the multidimensional interpretive possibilities of the repeating codes across domains. I drew out multiple mappings of each domain, then re-arranging over and again so the information met and connected in a whole sketch of the system. I sketched out one final large Cloud Diagram that included all of the domains of Pedagogy, Names, Language, and Literacy in relation to one another; see Appendix III-D: Final Domain Cloud Mapping.

From these interactions of visual and taxonomic methods-play, I made a clear, whole sense of what had happened with names in Beats from its beginning up until Phase 3, facilitating my review of data from the Dissertation period in a later, Fourth Pass.

Rounding out the third pass through review, I also began *writing-spilling* ideas in a series of free-form-flows on loose-leaf paper (about 200 of them). These loose-leafs

are the seeds of each chapter, bits of explanations of data with a place in the schemata and moved toward an answering of the question.

By this point I had taken the study out of my computer, mapped it out on my wall, articulated some next level thoughts on findings, and made hundreds of pages of hand-written notations. And at the end of three months and three passes of review, I could no longer use my hands or arms for any research (or any other kind of) activity; no adaptation was sufficient for a painless process. I stopped doing *everything* with my hands except the most basic, daily functions. In this phase, I rested my body, and my mind. I had to think about the material, feel my way through it, make some sense of it, - time to think; and then I had to clear my mind of conscious thought through meditative practice (Fontana, 1992) – time to not think. I focused on nothing outside of my self and my own healing. It was not so clear at the time, but as I came to write the findings, I realize the vital nature of this Stillness period in my path to overstanding these materials, and what I would do with them, and say about them.

This is the sort of internal rumination of creativity necessary in scholarship; time to *not* think, to prepare for creative, fresh thinking; allowing the body to process without the constant interference of the mind. This idea of a Stillness period is outside the box of canonical methodologies, but possibly the most important aspect of good research. Well-cooked raw data should simmer. Anzaldua (1999) calls the “period of forced rest,” in which I found myself “a Coatlicue state”.

4th pass sequence: Undergraduate researchers. On the fourth pass, in July 2014, I went back to the beginning of the Tome, re-reading and reorienting myself to all the steps I had thus far taken. Along the way I drafted narrative summaries of Club

names activity by Phase-time. These narratives were used to draft the results of the Chapter that follows.

By the time I got to Phase 3 materials, I had a strong, solid idea of how names pedagogies and practices had shaped Beats Language and Literacies; I had organized complexities of my own animating and responsive pedagogy, and kids Names responses. By this time, I was also tired of reading, making sense with my own notes and ideas. Rather than continue on with review and analysis using my own notes, I turned to the 72 sets of UG fieldnotes produced in the last quarter of our three years. I turned to the UGs, outsiders to the Club being introduced for the first time to all that we had built in Beats across Phases 1 and 2. It was quickly apparent that a *whole new coding protocol* than I had used in the first passes, would be necessary. The final group of UGs brought in fresh eyes on the space we had worked so hard to build for three years.

5th pass: Review of kids' dialogues. What do kids say? This is a conscious inquiry we repeated throughout Beatstory. We asked kids regularly what they thought and felt about the Club and our activities; we did so informally in regular Club play, and formally in pre and post-surveys each year. The Summer Dialogues built on the tradition of asking and listening to kids. I reviewed the Summer Dialogue videos, and annotated-transcribed their contents, which I had also written down on the questionnaires used in each session. I coded these handwritten transcriptions similarly to the Tome. I weave these various kid commentaries across the Results and Findings.

Through this 5-tier review process, all dimensions of the Hip Hop interpretive prism get flexed, the assertions and findings reach toward new levels and layers of collective overstandings, ensuring rigor and expanding validity.

Limitations

Most often in this work I have been critiqued for being “too close” to the children, or that the Pedagogy is “too subjective” when I personalize it, such as in the Task, a common positivistic stance that seems to still be holding the reigns of research in academia.

I heard and felt these questionings of my position, and responded with careful approach to my work choices. For example, I began the study not using the term Hip Hop at all, wanting to see what sense children would make of names. What directions they would take it, what questions would they have. What would children name our Style practice. I was careful not to call this anything. By not foregrounding the term “Hip Hop,” I am interested in knowing how kids take these practices up in organic ways and how they connect to these youth practices; in my experience teaching Hip Hop (and especially given the mainstream marketing of the term), giving our activity a particular label can cause isolation or disinterest in students.

In later Phases of study I learned that some of the first graders attended a Hip Hop class at school where they are learning to beatbox and Break, and I know from informal conversations with kids that some of them have heard the phrase Hip Hop. In my experience it becomes easier to talk about Hip Hop after kids have taken up the practices. They also know a little about how I love and represent Hip Hop culture, though it is not something I emphasize to define the practices I introduce. In my experience working with young people across the K-16 spectrum, this is what makes sense.

In addition, I speak in the introduction about the power of the spray can, something we never actually used in Beats. There was no aerosol involved, which I think is ok because (most of) these kids were too young. However, I do see this as a limitation and an area for future focused study, i.e. how might adding the cultural practice of spray painting names, elevate the names findings of this stage and phase.

Chapter 4. Results and Findings

How do the naming practices and pedagogies of StyleWriting – including name choosing, name using, name writing, and name stylizing– shape and support children’s Language and Literacy(ies)? This core inquiry might otherwise be framed, *what is in a Hip Hop Name?* In this chapter I unpack and explain Beats Club *names and naming*.

In the first section Results, I construct from data a Phase-time chronology of our *Beats Club Naming* (BCN) activity spanning three school years. This BCN narrative summarizes details of the pedagogical/methodological *call* – the approaches, practices, and framings deployed to shape names in the Club space over time. Children’s dynamic naming *responses* are also highlighted and woven together, to be placed at the forefront of the discussions that follow. Thus, the Results provide the activity-based data-foundation, a reference source of emblematic examples, of/for the Findings discussion that follows.

In the Findings sections this chapter, I have applied to the data, the coding-domain-taxonomy-mapping strategies and 5-tier (re)review detailed in Chapter III, Section C. First, through iterative analyses and reorganizations of *Names* (yellow) data (i.e. information on what kids do with names), I form and explain a *Five-Dimensional*

Engagement Framework for how to *read* kids' name-writings. Second, from similar analyses and reorganizations of *Pedagogy* (blue) data (i.e. information on what I/we did with names), I form and explain a framework or guide for developing a *True Hip Hop Pedagogy (THHP)*. This section involves a *reading* of the teaching and research approaches of the Beats Club.

Finally, these two main domains of inquiry, kids names practice and Teacha names pedagogy, provide the analyses necessary to address and answer the question of how StyleWriting shapes and supports children's Language and Literacy(ies). I conclude the chapter with 'Summary Findings'. In this final discussion I offer a Hip Hop Theory of Language and Literacy built from kids' Club naming.

Results

Names are a foundational tool for growing any kind of community. Through names we over and again introduce ourselves, representing who we are in the initiation of dialogue. In these results I recount, (re)Construct our story (Ourstory, not his or hers) of names pedagogies and practices as they occurred in Beats. As 3rd grader Tarzan named and claimed our Club history at the opening Cipa of the final Phase 3 of study, it is our "Beatstory" (said like 'history').

Results are organized by *Phase-time* (Rossomando, 1996). This is a shout-out to, a staunch recognition of Style innovator Phase2, who explains that his name represents the idea of always progressing and taking one's Writing to "another level," as a foundational principle for engagement in practice (Rossomando, 1996). Thus, each numbered period of time – Phase 1, 2, and 3, represent progressions of our learning about and through names; each us the innovative, i.e. "next level" consequence of our

prior names practice; these progressions are cultivated through conscious retooling of the pedagogical approach in response to kids' responses. Thus each Phase represents a transition in the structure of the system (the Club), building from the successes and challenges of the prior phase. Each phase transition is shaped by other factors, changes in variables, such as new kids, UGs, and staff; evolving, adjusting research and teaching strategies; and changing classroom space and funding, for example. Phases do not necessarily follow calendar dates, and they also shorten as the changes, interventions, and learning quicken; Phase 1 spans one full year, Phase 2 around 20 weeks, and Phase 3 around 12. All Phases involved intentional, experimental names-based interventions in the Club, followed by observational documentation of kids' activity in response and over time.

The following 5 sections condense and summarize Beats names activity from when we first formed as a community and program at the Beats Community School in fall of 2010, through Summer Dialogues held in July 2013.

Planning pre-phase: Building Club identity and participation. Beats first came to be in the fall of 2010; it was a new Club at the recently opened Beats Community School in central LA. The research team took to creating this new program by building our Club *name* – not literally the name, which we had the kids choose eventually, but our presence, identity, and reputation in the school. Our first priority was to get kids to come. We experimented with different ways to entice students to our play-based program, which was not so easy considering we did not yet literally have a *name*. “What’s it called?” kids would ask. They asked, “What is it? What do we do there?” When my response was, “the idea is to play,” they would look at me (Alvin, Taylor)

quizzically sometimes, “Play? What about homework?” said more than a few students, parents, and teachers. These early steps toward building participation (attendance) pushed the Team to define ourselves and our Club concept pedagogically and methodologically; we anchored ourselves in Language, Literacy, and/through *Play* (Cole, 2006; Vygotsky, 1978), sure we could convince all of the learning values of the approach. As that first Beats Team formed and shaped the play-practices we would offer, we also focused on asking and listening to what kids wanted to do, helping us to co-build and lead the Club play.

I documented in my fieldnotes asking the children, “What would be fun to do? What do *you* want to do?” Naima shrugged her shoulders, saying, “I don’t know.” Even though I kept asking, I also brought and showed my own play ideas, of *writing names*. I began engaging with kids in exchange of our given names, a fairly standard practice to open a new relationship or group, almost always accompanying first or early meeting between people. Names and name-writing I leveraged as a recruitment strategy, visiting 6th grade classrooms with a slide show of dynamic, color-filled name (master)pieces painted on walls. I asked these young students what they saw and thought, stimulating dialogue, questions and answers, and more questions. The students seemed not to know that these wall writings were peoples’ *names*, as often occurs in such presentations. Raising awareness of this cultural foundation of writing, painting, rhythming *names* on walls, I then followed by asking students to, “write your name in your Style”. Many got stuck wondering what their Style is, which I coached them through using techniques that build from their most regular practices of handwriting, cursive script, and prior letter practice. Once begun, the class fell silent, as often happens

when kids get to writing names. They worked diligently on their name pieces, and slowly small group conversations started to raise up. When the bell rang many students would not stop working on their pieces; they would not get up from their desks, nor stop writing (also a regular response). I invited these students to continue in our afterschool Club. After only two of these in-school presentations, 14 students attended the Club, up from 2 the prior day.

Teacher education (TEP) students and UGs took the lead on developing activities and organizing the kids for play in this early planning phase. For example, they invented a practice of forming in a line outside of the classroom, everyone with hands on the shoulders of the person in front, and, blasting off like a spaceship into the room to begin Club play. Many kids/youth loved this small play practice, and some refused to participate.

In this early time period, Club activities included playing board games such as Battleship, Connect-4, and Uno. We did homework with students, drew pictures, and folded origami swans. In the outside courtyard and field spaces we played multiple forms of team and ball games, such as four square and flag football. We often began our Club play with circle games, icebreakers to get to know each other. For example, going around the circle and saying “my name is Beatriz, I like Bicycling” emphasizing our first initial of our name with a word also beginning with the same letter; on the first occasion of play of this simple name-language game I wrote in fieldnotes that, “kids did not want to stop” (Winter 2011 FNs, p. 11).

As a researcher in the space, I played along with the TEP students’ activities, and observed the whole of game play. By Winter, about 12 weeks into the planning phase, I

also began hosting a “station” of desks to do name-writing and drawing activities with kids. I gathered Giovanni (4th grade), Sammi (4th), and Carlos (6th), and showed them my “chisel tip” marker. I demonstrated how I *practice* my “broad-stroke” application of this tool by writing my name (Beatriz or Triz), other words (Love, Peace), and the whole alphabet, in calligraphic script. Without giving it any name, I began sharing these letter-form *practice* foundations of Hip Hop¹⁶ Style scripture. See Appendix IV-A, a handstyle alphabet given to me by my Teacha East3. Several students and many UGs engaged in practicing the chisel tip method; evidence of which I see in the moment and across later months in the collected artifacts matched with photographs where Carlos is pictured showing and doing the broad-stroke style with new UGs (Appendix IV-B).

We were having fun it seemed from kids’ attendance and engagement in offered activities. We asked a group of regulars to name the Club, and they voted on “Beats Club,” following the name of the school, Beats Community School. Next would be to have them choose their own *names*, which initially we framed and explained to them as choosing their *research pseudonyms*.

Phase 1: “It’s Just Begun” (Castor, 1972).

The NAMES¹⁷ task. Having exchanged and written our given names, I prepared to animate Beats name-invention. With 4 weeks left in the school year, Phase 1 is sparked with the introduction of an experimental “Task” I named “NAMES”. In this facilitated lesson I develop my own personalized name-invention process/method; it was

¹⁶ From the beginning I made a point of not saying the words “Hip Hop”. I wanted kids to just do it, make their own sense of the practices, ask questions, and name it for themselves.

¹⁷ *Names Are Marvelous, Essential Symbols/Speech*

created specifically for Beats on the night before I would first test it out. I asked Club members to gather in a circle, seated on the color-blocked play carpet in Mr. Nirihof's 6th grade classroom. There were a few undergraduates, myself, Mr. Tay, and 14 kids—Sammi, Giovanni, Cathrin, Anelin, Judson,¹⁸ and others.

The Task began with discussion and writing of my own multiple names. I told the group stories of each of them and their relationships to family and feelings, memories and humor, and many possible meanings for who I am. I shared, pronouncing dramatically, my “official” name (Gloria-Beatriz) with them, and they giggled and awed; “it’s so long Miss!”. I wrote, listed on the 3’x2’ handheld white board my many nicknames (Tiz, Be-Love, Q.B.). I tell them about being given a name – TRIZ – by the person who taught me the handstyles we had already been practicing in the Club, my teacher whose name is REFA¹⁹.

I explained how I went about approaching name-*invention*, asking myself, “what is the most important thing people should know about me?” I wrote on the white board, “Puerto Rican & Cuban,” explaining that this is my cultural background, where I come from, a foundation for who I am. I said how I instinctively replaced the “&” symbol with the Spanish translation “Y”, which I say is one of my favorite letters to do, as I drew for them a “Y” with a fluid and swirling motion. I continue referencing linguistic and cultural knowledges and associations, going with my gut to place an “A” to the right of the Y, in

¹⁸ These are researcher given pseudonyms replacing given names, see Appendix I-A.

¹⁹ Revolutionary Educator for Africa

place of the word “Cuban”. I tell them this stands for “*azúcar*”; many children know this means “sugar” in Spanish, and they say so. I exclaim it and explained that it is a common cultural expression of joy and attitude popularized by Celia Cruz, a favorite influence and artist of mine - “*Azúcar!*” With two letters chosen, “__YA”, I asked students which vowel, “A E I O or U”, I should use to represent Puerto Rico; they shout out possibilities – “IYA!”, “OYA!”. I said that I chose a second “A” for “AYA,” to represent Puerto Rico, to which I immediately assigned the word “*achiote*”, a fragrant spice plant common in Puerto Rican cuisine. I wrote it on the whiteboard for them, “Achiote Y Azucar = AYA”. As I wrote this equation, Sammi posed in dialogue, “so your name means spice and sugar?” I paused. I had not in my own mind translated it to English, this construction of my name, self as “sugar and spice”. Here Sammi in our exchange of name ideas, amplifies for me the potential meanings, richness of my name choice, bringing me greater awareness and possibility of my own fluid thoughts.

When I wrote a ‘P’ in front of ‘AYA’ - “PAYA” - to demonstrate play ways with letters, spellings, meanings, I asked the kids what this word sounded like. “Like Spanish,” offered Judson. “What does it mean in Spanish?” I asked. I was met with a chorus of “over there!”, with many gesturing, pointing their fingers across the room. “PAYA!” I exclaimed, pointing with them. Judson, seated just next to me, a foot away, followed the group chant asserting, “like a leader says to his troops!” I turned to look at him, and turned my outward pointed forefinger toward myself, pointing my thumb to my chest, responding, “Yes! *Her* troops.” He looked at me, smiled, and nodded; “got it,” he affirmed.

I invited the children to invent their own original names. We made available paper, pencils, and fruit-scented markers for each child to try it for themselves; to write their thoughts and construct their names; to name themselves. What would they do with this NAMES script, an un-standardize-d/able lesson? They could not completely copy me, because the Task is so specific to me. What would they pick up on? What tools would they use to construct their own names? What names would they come up with? I really did not know what would happen.

The first Beats names: Making & mixing Stely, Caiyl, and Feldspar. Cathrin, a tiny, slim 2nd grade smiley face with open-wide brown eyes was the first Club kid to show me her chosen name. As shown in Appendix IV-C, in red chisel-tip strawberry marker she begins writing her given first name “~~Cat~~”, crossing it out in favor of her middle name “Amieyah”; friends I noticed when calling on her use both of her two given names interchangeably. Below is a vertical top to bottom list in red, yellow and blue marker, “Hearts, Mom, Stars, Yellow”. Cathrin circles letters – the ‘e’ and ‘y’ in “Amieyah”, the ‘s’ in “hearts”, the ‘t’ in “stars”, and the ‘e’ and ‘l’ in “yellow”. At the bottom she selects five of the circled options, spelling them out boldly with slight spaces between– “S t e l y”. She brought me her task, showing her work. As I read and followed her mapped out code, I asked aloud, enthusiastically, “Stely?!” She nodded and smiled as I exclaimed, “I love it!” And we hugged.

Cathrin had made a list of things she loves or representing herself, and computes a fresh, fun names for herself. I did not know just how to interpret or explain why this was so significant, but it *felt* really important and shaped the remainder of the study.

CAIYL was the name chosen by 4th grader, Sammi, a special spirit of early Beats. The letters were taken from a short list of things that described things she liked—the “C” was for “cat” because she “loves cats”, and the L for “late” “because “I’m always late” she explained (Phase 1 FNs, p. 9). Caiyl was written with a green chisel tip in the broad stroke handstyle I had shown her on one of her first days in the program just a few weeks prior. See Appendix IV-D. Just as Stely had done, Caiyl makes a list of things she likes or that represent her to begin calculations of self; Sammi, however, she chooses the first letter of the word as representative, rather than circling random letters as Stely had done. Caiyl is in 4th grade and Stely is in 2nd, so conceptually Caiyl’s choices are perhaps more sophisticated and thought out and Stely’s choices more fluid and improvised; and yet both have a whimsy and unique spin interpretation of/approach to the process. The outcomes also vary, are distinct in form.

Next, I sat down at the station where Giovanni had been working. I looked over his shoulder at what he had written. “Feldspar?” I asked, which he had spelled out in pencil in the middle of a blank looseleaf. He replied, “Yes Miss. It’s a mineral, Miss...and it’s a Greek warrior in a story my brother told me” (Phase 1 FNs, p. 10).

Along with these three newly named Beats Clubbers were: *Magenta*, *Cassie*, *Bob*, *Borbi*, *Smarties*, *T-Sax*, and others.

I wrote in my notes of this period about being approached by UGs who had gravitated to my station, engaging in the handstyle practice, and asking all kinds of questions about me and my names approach – how do you do it? what does it means? I responded by continuing with the handstyles and names invention. And in the last weeks of the Club, a regular group of UGs and children, (Smarties, Caiyl, Feldspar) would sit

together focused on names practice, sometimes in silence and focused on the task, followed by intermittent dialogue and laughter.

Our first school year of Beats came to an end right as we began this name invention play. We celebrated our completion with certificates of participation, bearing kids' hand-written, stylized names. We took pictures for the first time, of each child as they stood up to receive their certificates being handed out by Taylor and Alvin, who had been developing much of the curriculum and interacting daily with children. Each recipient posed and smiled with certificate in hand (See Appendix IV-E). There was an enthusiasm and joy to the activities that day that I noted felt "unexpected". When you hold a stance of looking merely for disconfirming evidence, expecting kids to reject and forget the intervention or disengage, you might be startled when kids in fact *engage* and *show/grow love* in and for the program. Across time with this work, the dis-confirmation I looked for was kids' disengagement, un-engagement, or no engagement. As I was seeing here in this final circle, from one year of building play, and four weeks of NAMES, kids engaged in the Club, taking part with wide grins on their faces. The group showed praise of each student, cheering each other on as they stood up to receive their awards. On this fun-filled high of our first year of Beats we parted for summer.

Phase 1 continues into the new school year. I heard from the new group of UGs in attendance the first week back, that kids were naming the new UGs and new kids were naming themselves. One UG told me that he had been named "Pineapple," although he could not remember the name of the child bestowing it. My gut told me it was Sammi, aka Caiyl, with an 'L' "because I'm always late". On my first day back at the Club the following week, I saw and heard Sammi bestowing names upon adults and

kids through a special sort of divination process. She would take their hands in hers, close her eyes, stretch joint arms up in the air and wide in a “Y” body shape; she would open her eyes, look directly at the named and speak it – “Ginger” she called me when I asked if I could be named. I said “oooo, why Ginger?” She responded, “because when you talk it tastes like ginger, and my cat is named Ginger, and she’s feisty”; as she said the word “feisty” she made a cat-like clawing gesture (Fieldnotes, 11/15/11, p. 3). She might also glare at you while rubbing her chin a few times, followed by proclaiming enthusiastically a name – “Snickers” – she called UG Julia – while holding her finger in the air, pointing upward for emphasis.

In addition to Sammi, or perhaps because of Sammi, other children such as the T-sisters, whom I had not yet met were also choosing their names. I asked in my notes: “Who taught them to make up new names? Was it Taylor? Was it their friend Sammi, who brought them to the Club?” I never discovered the answer, which is not necessarily what matters. Rather, I continued forward in the flow of naming, (re)animating names play, as it also took a life of its own.

NAMES, take 2. Picking up on children’s improvised, spiritful naming, I reshaped and adapted the NAMES Task. This new school year we had many new participants, a much larger space in the middle school cafeteria, and a 100x50 yard plot of outdoor play space at our doorstep. We kicked off the Cipha, and first started calling it “the Cipha”, also writing the word on the board as “Cipha/Cypher”. Fourteen kids, 7 UGs, and several team members gathered around the rolling white board (from our 3x2’ handheld of the first Task facilitation, to a 5’x7’ proper classroom *pisarron*). See Appendix IV-F). We started with setting group Agreements or *Acuerdos*, we

interchangeably called them. I stood by the whiteboard, marker in hand poised to write down kids' suggestions. I asked the group, seated on the floor in front of me, in the circle of chairs, and standing up around the outside of the circle, "How do we want to treat each other? How do you want to be treated?" Little Talia, the youngest and smallest of all Club participants at 5 years old, raised her hand first, and confidently straight upwards. I pointed the marker toward her calling her name. "Talia. Can we all please listen to Talia?" The room fell silent, and I remember feeling so anxious to hear her speak wisdom. She spoke with a smile, nodding her head rhythmically along: "When you see someone, say 'Hi'". I wrote on the board – "Say Hi!". I note in my thoughts of that day, at this "brilliant suggestion". A powerful first Agreement for our community, even before the asserting of names, is the acknowledgement of one's presence.

Next followed the NAMES Task. I tweaked the storyline, shortening the explanation, and asked kids if they remembered the steps from the prior spring lesson. I invited them to help me teach it, checking for what kids remember and how they were (re)interpreting what I had done six months prior. I made changes to the Task that reflected progress of my own practice, telling the group that *my name* had *changed* since the last time, evolving (Rossomando, 1996) from "AYA" after I had practiced signing it for a period of time. I explained my revelation in one day choosing an "E" ("another favorite letter of mine" I said) after seeing a wall of painted names, each including a totally different style of "E". I asked them what "EYA" sounds like. "Her!" shouted the many who know this Spanish word-sound. I told them, "when I write I represent *her* "EYA" or *all hers(all girls)* - "EYAS".

Once again, I invited and instructed kids to work with the UGs in small groups and one-on-one to invent their Beats pseudonyms. As one UG interpreted the task, “our assignment was to create our own names, our own identity” (Serreno, 10/24, p. 2).

From Stely, Caiyl, and Feldspar to Cece, Majusta, and Maverick. Stely returned to the Club for this second naming session. Her name choice of the prior spring had, with a bit more time, become a lightbulb moment – “the Mathematics of Stely” I called her Task. I knew it was something, and important. Her name pathway continued to unfold.

Despite my enthusiasm for her name, Stely had reservations, and wanted a new name. I encouraged her to choose another, and suggested she could write the names together. In this new turn at naming, she adds ‘CeCe,’ to her name, and begins a practice over the following months of writing repetitively “Stely Cece” (See Appendix IV-G). In one example of this name change, Stely brought me her looseleaf artifact for a book of name pieces we would make just before the December break. She pointed to the squiggly-style larger letters positioned in the middle of the page (See Appendix IV-H). As I held the paper, she read the whole piece for me using her index finger as a guide; first she slid her finger underneath the two larger versions centered in the middle of the piece – Stely CeCe, Stely CeCe. She then pointed out the perimeter print-style writings of her name, from top right corner down, across to the left, and back around the rectangular paper perimeter. I noticed that by following the perimeter right to left she had written the letters *backwards* along the bottom of the page. I praised her reversal of the letter shapes as a creative innovation, and told her to go show it to other leaders who also praised her piece. Smiling she took her piece, and went off to continue play. She

shortly, unexpectedly returned to show me another new piece in which she had drawn the squiggly letters used in the first piece, large *and backwards* as well. She said “I can draw squiggly letters backward too!” By combining her squiggly-style and backwards writing, two things she already could accomplish, she innovates new combos that lead to more and more mixing, trying, experimenting with possibilities of Stely CeCe, to which this year she also adds, GiGi and Princess Bubblegum.

At this last session of Beats, I learned that Giovanni was writing three names – Feldspar, Gargoga, and now Maverick, as seen in his looseleaf piece, Appendix IV-I. He had not attended Beats very often in this new school year, but continued to practice his alphabets, and show them to me when we would chat in the hallways. He agreed to attend Beats on this last day of fall, where he made this latest piece showing his three names. We hosted a party that day, at the end of which we gifted the children mini-composition books, pencils, and other treats.

In our second school year, Stely²⁰ brought her friend Fatima to Beats. In Appendix IV-J is the artifact of Fatima’s fresh name calculation:

Fatima (given name) + Phillipines/Filipina = *Fina*

Fina only ever had one name in Beats. UGs and team members had mistaken it for her given name, asking me what her pseudonym was. Jumping forward in the chronology a moment - in our Summer Dialogue at the end of Phase 3, I asked her if Fina and Fatima are the same person. She was the only student who after considering the

²⁰ It has almost escaped my attention through this entire study that Stely is Style with the ‘e’ and ‘y’ swapped.

question, made a distinction, answering, “Yes. Fina has a lighter side with her Beats Club family. Fatima is more about school, studying, you know”.

Sammi aka Caiyl had this fall chosen the name *Chocolate*, and then a third new name after the Task re-facilitation, Majusta (pronounced Majesta). Her second time engaging in the Task assignment she approached differently from the first. She fills up an entire looseleaf with lists of words and names. Appendix IV-K shows how she creates a 4 column list of 30 different words, in pink, purple and orange highlighter marker. She explains that these are “things I like,” including e.g. cake, snakes, feathers, earrings, rainbows, raindrops, pairs, nicknames, UGs (circled), green hair, and hills. On the reverse side of her looseleaf artifact is written:

~~MAGUSTA,~~

MAJUSTA in blue highlighter.

Below is a vertical list of all her names, initials, nicknames:

Sammi
Siri
S.S.
K.P.
D.

Then to the left under these larger print writings in red sharpie cursive-style, Majustaic, then Majestic. To the left in blue highlighter is written “pepper-T”. When I ask her about these names, she explains that they are names her uncles and aunties call her, and then the new one she chooses, Majusta (pronounced Majesta). This referencing of names from other contexts is something I modeled in my facilitation of NAMES.

It also occurs regularly, frequently that kids reference names from other places and spaces alongside our invented Beats ones. Such as one time when Tamara wrote a list of her names: Maya, MyMy, Godzilla.

Triz: “Who calls you MyMy?”

Tam: “My Mom”

Triz: “And Godzilla?”

Tam: “The boys at church”

Sammi brought five friends to Beats in the fall, the dynamic 5 T-sisters - Tina, Tamara, Tracy, Tara, and Talia, in order from 4th through kindergarten aged. They quickly joined in the flows of names, with Sammi and Tina, the oldest of the dynamic 5, one day switching names insisting on being called the other. Tina had not heard the Task yet, but had chosen her Beats name already, Gummi Gummi Bear. A few weeks later, writing letters through our mail system, Tina aka GGB, signs them from, ‘S.S’. I ask what it means, and she tells me, “Secret Spy,” a new name. Later that week, I see in another letter she has written, that she signs it from “S.S, T.A.” When I asked about the ‘T.A,’ she replies “Twilight Arrow, because Secret Spy wasn’t mysterious enough” (FNs Phase 1, 2011, p. 4).

Tina’s four sisters also invented and grew lists of names across Phase 1. Tamara was *Flower Girl, Red Reader, and Artista*. Tracy was *Violet, Beautiful Star, Super Frezzer Girl, and Black Widow*. Tara was *Strawberry, Pinkie, then Cutie*. And Talia added to her first name *Roo, Lilo and Emma*. Other new names that came out of this Take 2 of the Task were *Kiboo, Heagles, Martist, Beasty Oso/Love Gears, Great Gandhi, Menta Rosa, Amic, G-force, I-force, SunPaula and Avid Sniper*.

These names, I listed them in my notes, and looked at the list; they were all original, unique names; they all had a story of how they were conceived. I had missed much of the fine details of this name telling and building, which I went looking for in UG fieldnotes. In this early phase, they recorded the details of children’s name-choosing. UG G. Wong wrote:

The boys joked around a little within their group. I asked if there were any nicknames they had or been given. Marcus or Heder said this one girl last year called Marcus “Mocos” (?Spanish word for boogers).” ...The UGs asked Heder what his interests were. He listed: playing guitar hero, electric guitar and when we asked what kind of music he likes, Marcus said “rock obviously” and Heder said: ‘Oh yeah cause of the hair (he has long hair). Then he said he likes The Eagles. We mentioned that his name could be something related to hair, electric, something like “Slash” or “Fender”.

We asked Travis what he likes and he said anime, video games, and violent video games too. Lloyd aka Gandara pointed out that since he likes anime, we could use the A from it and Vid from the other to make “Avid,” then he likes the letter X so we could put small and large x’s in front and behind his name. Lloyd mentioned that he could be called “Avid Sniper” since he likes shooting games. Then Travis noticed that Avid is pretty much his name, minus the T. The UGs asked about Marcus’s name and Heder said it could be “Martist” cause he likes to draw, I think that name hung on....Time came up fro the activity to end when the UGs asked Heder about his name. He then said that he would take his H and put it front of Eagles, “Heagles”. (OC: It seems as if Heder hesitated to start the project because it was the beginning and on the spot, but when we were about to finish, the ideas seem to rush to him. (G. Wong, Fieldnotes, October 24, 2011)

After describing the names interactions in small groups and one-on-ones, UGs also began performing their own analyses of these descriptive accounts of what kids do with their names and what it means. UG G.Wong continued in her notes offering an assessment of the Task as a tool to get students going and flowing. She does her own analyses on the play with letters and the dialogic supports – the creative back and forth - that help children *through* the play, toward the end goal of choosing a name:

Through this activity with ‘xX Avid Sniper Xx ‘ we were able to see the transformation of letters, learn some new words, and deconstruct words to find similarities in spelling with other words or find alternative spellings... I was able to ask students what their interests were and what the words and their names could be joined to create other names. I also was able to ask them if the words sounded like other words or if they could be spelled differently. These steps were able to give the students space to progress to transform their names or create pseudo names from the point where they did not know how to start or seemed stuck. (G. Wong, 10.24.11, p. 5)

D. Menchaca, a Spanish-speaking UG, sat with Quentin after the Task. I joined them helping this eager new student from El Salvador. He began with the sound of the Q – que-que-quentin he wrote on his Task. The three of us played around with what he had written on the paper thus far, Que Que Quentin – El Salvador. As we talked, through our dialogue, Quentin had a revelation, holding his finger up in an aha like gesture; he said “Quibu es mi nombre” which he said is the sound of a bird from his native Salvador; I suggested as an example that he could flip the spelling; for example, in English Quibu could be written Kiboo, an idea he liked, smiling and nodding approval. UG D. Menchaca wrote in her notes of that day her impressions on what I had done to facilitate the making of this name:

I realized how he started opening up more because she (Triz) started creating this environment and community for him. She created a space where he could feel connected. He started to speak more. There was an improvement in his willingness and comfortableness to speak and start vocalizing what he was thinking. ...I would have probably never gotten him to feel the level of comfort he felt towards the end of the activity. ... She did not take full control of the learning situation and neither did Quentin. Both took an equal role in developing the name (D. Menchaca, 10.24.11, p. 6).

The name exchanges documented in UGs’ fieldnotes like these examples inspired me to focus in later Phase 1 on looking for more of these one-on-one opportunities; I wanted to know more about these *processes* of name invention, than cannot be explained just by looking at the results/outcomes.

Giovanni’s minicomposition book writings. The UG-child name exchange mentioned just above and the many more just like it written by UGs Motown, Diane Menis, and Mole, inspired me to focus in later Phase 1 on having more one-on-one names interactions so I could know more from children about the process of name invention than just by looking at the results/outcomes. In the winter I looked and waited

for opportunities to talk about names with individual children. On one day in mid-winter I got my chance when Giovanni returned to the Club. I noticed him flipping through the mini-composition book we had just gifted the group. I asked if I could see what he had written. He handed the book over, and I opened to the first page, then the next, reviewing through the 6-page sequence he had completed. I asked him if I could take pictures of each page, and if he would tell me about them (See Appendix IV-L).

It begins on the first page as “Z Z Z Z Giovanni,” his given name. “Is this a Z? Why cursive Z?” I asked. “Because cursive Z is cool Miss.” On page two was scrawled in black fine tip sharpie marker about half an inch high the name “Maverick” or more precisely, “Maver- backwards c-a star in the place of the k, followed by “:D”, and decorated with a peace sign, a cloud all around the top half, and a flame-like design underneath; the letters and symbols were all stylized in Giovanni’s developing angular, robotic script. As mentioned, he had started going by Maverick, his most recent name change, in December. On that day, I exchanged with him as we practiced writing names and alphabet styles:

Miss Triz: Why Maverick?

Giovanni: Because I love birds.

Miss Triz: (Pause) Oh. Maverick is the name of a bird?

Giovanni: No Miss, it’s a jet. But jets are like robot-birds.

On page three another signature, “Gagoga” with simple wavy lines around, and “lol!” written down and to the right. We exchanged:

Miss Triz: Did it make you laugh to write that?

Giovanni: Oh yeah, ‘cause I wrote lol.

Miss Triz: Sometimes when I write my name in different ways, it makes me laugh too. (both laughing). I thought it was Gargoga with an ‘r’?

Giovanni grabbed the notebook, panicked, and then calmed and realized, “Oh, I forgot to put the line in there” (referring to the straight line down on the ‘r’), which he added (Fieldnotes, 2.9.12) to form Gargoga, his name choice just prior to Maverick.

On page four was what looked like “Fedlsper”. “Feldspar?” I asked for clarification. As he writes the name eight months later, he tells me that he has deliberately twisted up the letters; I see that he has changed the “a” to an “e”, connected and switched the position of the “d” and “l” from Feld to Fedl, and flipped backwards the ‘s’. This writing of his first Club name, just prior to Gargoga, is followed on page five by a drawing of a school bus, outfitted as a space ship with rocket boosters with flames coming out. Here he recalls the spaceship blasting off into the classroom, confirming this reference to early Club practice by writing to the side of his drawing, “We should blast off again like we did”. In this case, not only is he recalling a fun activity and community practice, but is also imagining new possibilities by rebuilding the Bruins Club spaceship with old school bus parts he found in his “dusty garage”.

Finally, on page six of the mini-comp book, Giovanni returns to his given name, completing a cycle of sorts, writing again at the top “    Giovanni” with a single line drawn underneath. Then again below slightly bigger, and with the “v” and second “i” more stylized than before, and a circle drawn through the middle of the “a”. The downward legs of the “n”s also mimic each other in being extended downward with a slight squiggle. The last signature is circled, with the message telling us of the cycle’s completion, that he is “done editing ”; his signature style is ready.

Giovanni began with his given name, then to his most recent invented one, going backwards chronologically, marking his name pathway back to the beginning of the

Club. Here a year later, he continues names and letter style practice, and he innovates on each signature by flipping letters around and adding symbols.

The scroll: Creating a communal signature space. In the following Winter I rolled out a large, sturdy paper roll, a communal wall space for writing names and documenting Club activity. We started calling it “the Scroll,” and setting it up as a station of play every Club session through the end of Phase 1.

I rolled the first 8 feet of the 30-foot scroll out across multiple lined-up cafeteria tables. I wrote in black chisel tip sharpie at one end, “Beats Club started,” and at the opposite end, “Today is February 6, 2012” (Appendix IV-M). I began gathering the children who were playing all around the cafeteria and outside. I whispered in the ear of little Roo, asking her to whisper-invite other students to join us around the timeline. She nodded her understanding and walked over to her sister Strawberry and whispered in her ear, repeating the form of communication. Via “whispering campaign,” as Dr. A named it, we gathered 15 children, and multiple UGs and Team members around the untouched scroll. I explained that we would document ourselves and our activities of each day on this paper roll. I asked them to sign their names on the timeline at the point where they joined, and to write what they had learned about in Beats.

Tina, aka Gummi Gummi Bear was the first to get up; she wrote “Cypha” and “the agreements”, signing her name, “Tina”. “I started nametags!” it also said right next to Tina along the edge of the timeline. “New room!” and “I chose my Beats name” were documented. Color-filled kids’ signatures, bubble and straight letter pieces, and other kinds of codes and messages appear all across the 30 foot Scroll we began mid-Phase 1. Kids wrote their given names, Beats Club names, and other nicknames. They drew

symbol-speech such as stars, flowers, hearts, ice cream cones, clouds, rainbows, butterflies, airplanes, animals, and invented characters. They combined text and symbol games, writing “look left” with an arrow pointing to the right. Tina draws her name six different times and styles in one frame. Stely repeats her name at least 12 times, drawing Stely CeCe pieces across beginning to end.

Kids wrote on the Scroll things going on in their lives (“it’s my birthday,” “I went to the beach!”). They wrote-claimed their work, as in “Art by Cassie,” or “Triz by Trina”. (See Appendix IV-N) They wrote many messages to each other, to UGs, and X. They write over and again their “Love” for Beats; Cassie wrote, “Beats club Rocks! Thumbs up Miss Triz”. And 1st grader Pinkie declared, “I love Beats club so much. I can’t stop Beats club anymore!” (Appendix IV-O)

Early analyses of names. Across Phase 1 Names were developing, changing, building regularly and rapidly all around. Our interventions had been both planned and improvisational, so kids’ activity followed suit; they and we flowed in the Beats moments, engaging richly in play with Names while inside the Club. I also began to see the kids take these names practices with them outside of school, as in Giovanni’s comp book. They *think about and act upon* names across physical borders of space and in their own time, of their own desire and volition. They are thinking about it, about their name inventions, expanding them out, flippin them around, exploring possibilities, choosing one, or a list of names to assign themselves, and drawing and doing it, naming themselves freely. And across all lifeworlds. This after one full year of Names play.

During the last month of Phase 1, I conducted an analysis of this early names activity of Phase I, reviewing and analyzing UG fieldnotes with my own. I focused on

notes that documented the name selection Task held in fall, together with my fieldnotes, to theorize kids' "Style-play," their multiple forms of experimental play with Language, letters, colors, rhythms, patterns, and meanings. This is where I first do a Domain analysis (Spradley) of data and a hand drawn tree-style visual mapping of it (See Appendix IV-P). I also attempt some early linguistics-style analysis of Giovanni's mini-composition book name sequence, which I pick up on in the Findings discussion of "Literacy" that follow in this chapter. Here at the end of our second school year of Beats is where I begin discussing from analysis of data, Style as the unifying theme across all constructs of Language and Literacy, across all of kids' activity, meaning "Originality" as a core, shared, universal educational principle. I wrote:

The unifying element of the Club space and of these dynamic name-stories is "STYLE" – each child, via a personal path of creative self expressions, engages, reveals, and grows their dynamic personalized innovation with Language, their aesthetic experience of the world, and their ability to improvise and experiment with these two... The most common and distinctive feature of these names is that they vary by child. This personal Language variation in Hip Hop culture is the seat, origin point of for participants' conscious and fluid (r)Evolution(s) of Style (Rossomando). Educators in search of tools that do not involve constant assessment of students through standardized ideas of learning, knowledge and instruction, will be interested to consider these findings and Pedagogy. And must be ready to accept and study rigorously the free and open paradigm it represents, and what it will change about our classroom spaces. (r)Evolution(s) of Style is about how our kids' evolutions across and through Language via names and Style practice effect collective change or Revolution in how education is done. (Phase 1 Analysis, abstract)

Phase 2: Breakin through. A transition to another level of Beats, to Phase 2, builds on the foundation of Phase 1 activity and analyses into a new, third school year. Phase 2 begins fall 2012, and covers about 20 weeks through winter. This period of research was typified by multi-modal experimentation. Strategically in this turn, I began considering how to build an *all-elemental* space, a "multi-modally"-engaged

environment for studying Language and Literacy(ies). Dr. Orellana and I took up the teacher roles of our past classroom experiences to *invent* and *lead/animate* Cipa play and dialogue. This shift was from necessity, because we were short UGs to be kids' one-on-one playmates. I began inventing and incorporating pedagogies of music, song, and movement, in addition and in relation to continuing development of visual pedagogies of names.

On my first day back this new year, I felt a tap-tap-tap on my back, around my waist; I turned to see Magenta, arm outstretched, holding an 4x6" envelope in my direction. "For you," she said and then ran off to pre-Cipa play as I took the envelope. (See Appendix IV-Q) On one side the white greeting card style envelope was folded, divided into 4 triangles, each containing writing. On the opening flap was written "To: Miss Triz. From: Anita." Surrounded by yellow stars. The side triangles were each decorated with a large pink heart in the middle, in the bottom quadrant/triangle were the words "Beats Club". I opened it. Inside were folded in fourths two looseleaf pages of writing. The first was a list of "My Beats Club names"; there were 26 of them. The second looseleaf listed in much larger print the, "Top three choices," with each choice—Magical, Music, and Buttercup- numbered, written, and decorated with symbols of relevance to the word; for example, "Magic" was adorned with a top hat and rabbit coming out. The "M" in music wears headphones and music notes float into the air from the "c" at the end. All three adorned with literal symbols and imaginative play stories of each new name. I started calling Anita, MagicalMusicMagenta, because I wanted to keep her first chosen name, Magenta, and liked the triple M possibilities for abbreviation, Mcubed, 3M, MMM. I stored the letter in my back pocket for later

viewing; I channeled the rush I felt reading Magenta's all-new names list, to jumpstart a new Cipha for a new Phase of names research.

Names pedagogy: Phase 2. In this new year I tried using an 'Activity Card' as a new mechanism to introduce names, relying on the paper handout to give instructions and for kids to work independently (See Appendix IV-R). These forms felt immediately unsuccessful because the instructions relied on the student having prior knowledge of our Club naming, and many students in attendance were new to Beats. At this transitional point many of the new names were made up amongst the children, with less guidance or parameters given from my end than as I had with the NAMES Task. New faces and names, all 1st to 3rd graders were *Alvin, AngryBirdsStarWars1 & 2, baby Corazon, CeCeSabemi, Chocolate Chip, Cupcake, Curipaii, Dolphin, Giamante, Junior, Lalaloopsy, Mermaid, Piggy, Princess Peach, Q.T., Rocky Road, Roki, Tarzan/Monkey,* and others.

Drum pedagogy. I began multi-modal experimentation picking up on kids' impromptu singing and discussions of music of the prior year. Kids had shown us their musical knowledge in Phase 1 - Cassie and her guitar, Menta Rosa and her drums. I invited the Research Team to bring instruments from home to kick off our first Cipha this year. These personal instrument items brought from home, included my maracas and claves, plus little cymbals, noisemakers, a tambourine, a triangle, sandpaper blocks, and a small wooden frog with ridges carved atop his back for rubbing with a stick. The goal with kids was to Improvise, to get them using these tools and going with their and the groups flows. Taylor brought a sturdy djembe drum, which I slung under my arm, and began playing a simple marching, organizing rhythm of three resonant beats.

The kids were so interested and engaged in the instruments on that first day; and the improvisational instrument jam became a regular practice for kicking off the Cipa. I would start by drumming a rhythm and asking the group to repeat in response. I would ask kids to take the lead in “giving me a rhythm” or “some beats” that the group would follow and continue; they took turns improvising and playing sequences with their instrument, and the group would follow, flowing in and out of harmonies and cacophonies. I began utilizing the drum as a regular, organizing tool to pick kids up from their home program – it was loud and booming and always got their attention. Kids were fascinated by the drum – I would sound out from across the blacktop, the three marching beats, and watch kids as they took notice and started looking around for the drum’s whereabouts. Spotting me, kids would drop their snacks and run my direction, hands out-stretched toward, wanting to touch and play the drum.

Dance/movement pedagogies. Accompanying the drum, the instrument improvisations were different improvisations with *movement* – we marched and skipped to the beat of the drum, hands clapping, arms swinging, heads bobbing. Kids had shown us their dance knowledge in Phase 1 by performing different choreographies learned in other after school programs, as well as dances made up at home, or learned from television. I built from this to test and grow kids’ awareness of the rhythmic qualities/potentials of Names. I boasted to a small group of Curipaii, Magenta, Lalaloopsy, Dolphin, Roki, and Q.T. that I could write my name with my body. I spelled each letter, sending a wave from right hand to left, then from my head to my toes – “T,” I said as I body-linguaged. Followed by a full body gestural interpretation of the R-I- and a funky to-the-floor Z. – Miss TRIZ. There were “ohs” in response’ Curipaii

jumped up and down clapping, “do it again Miss”. One more time I danced my name, and that was all it took for each of the group to pick it up and start building, experimenting and improvising, with gestural interpretations of their names. We did this together; I suggested to Q.T. that she form her body like a Q, with my hands in an O shape above my head and my left leg stuck outward like the bar crossing the circle of Q. She tried it, followed my instruction, forming the O above her head with her right leg kickstand outward, then flowing into a T, with arms outstretched straight to the side, and legs straight and held tightly together. Dolphin made a diving motion with her hands forward and then to the side like a “D” as she chanted, “Dooool-phin”.

Curipaii began with her arms in a U shape, tilted to the left in the form of a C; she swept her hands upward into a U; she flowed from one position to the next as she said CU or “cue”, the first syllable. Next she extended her arms straight to the side into a T shape for “ri”, the second syllable; I found this interesting because she had not written it with a ‘T’ but she gestures it as one - very similar the sounds of the Spanish “ri” and English t-sound “cue-ri or tee with a soft t. She ends with a teapot-spout wave of the right arm downward to her hip on the third, “pai” syllable. Just as we were getting the hang of our new inventions, the kids were being called to leave. Curipaii was flustered that she could not seem to remember the steps; she asked, “Miss can you write it down for me so I could practice at home?” I replied “Write what? The body movements?” And together we calculated, created, wrote on a flashcard, of stick figure symbols in the bodyshapes of each syllable of Cu-ri-pai (See Appendix IV-S).

I praised the group for their name play, encouraging this improvised experimentation with movements and meaning, talking with our bodies. I wrote in my

notes that week, “When I write my name, kids do the same; when I dance it too, they follow through.”

The dancing of names continued across Phase 2. On our first week of winter, Roky pulled me aside to show me a sequence of singing and dance movements in which she repeated the sounds, “Suuuh-knee” six times, forming a different body movement and twist for each time -hands in the air twisting and posing and walking with different attitudes. I asked, “What were you saying?” She pointed to the UG at her side, who flipped her nametag around to show her chosen Beats name in this new winter quarter, “Sunny”. This child danced and sounded *another’s* name, picking up and riffing on praise practices of names, combined with/through improvised gestural Language. (Phase 2 FNs, p. 14). Later that term, Roky also made up dances in response to a letter from X about Love; rather than write anything down for X, she told me, “I’m going to make up a dance for him; You show him Miss Triz”.

Song, aural pedagogies. I introduced two singing experimentations in Phase 2. In the first, I drew from what I know best, myself, typing the words to a song I thought some of them might also know, a Cuban folk song called “*Guantanamera*”. This is a fairly universal song amongst Spanish Language speakers, whose first lyrics, “Cultivo una rosa blanca,”²¹ (Ripoli, 1980), are a metaphor for the offering of peace and friendship. I led the students in making the sound of the *güiro*²² with our mouths and breath “chhh-ch-ch-chhh-ch-ch-chhh”, and I sang first. Some of the children present that

²¹ “I grow a white rose.”

²² a percussion instrument of Latin-American origin made of a serrated gourd and played by scraping a stick along its surface. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/güiro>

day already knew it and joined in softly. Some did not speak Spanish but tried following along using the paper lyrics, or just performing the guiro accompaniment. I only did this once as a group, in the Cipha, though across Phase 2 the chorus lyrics were repeated back to me on occasion; Dolphin and Curipaii both sang it to me as a greeting - “Miss, miss... Guan-ta-na-mera,” they sang and broke out giggling. Curipaii’s father overheard us one day singing it in the hallway, and commented in Spanish, “She was singing this at home, and I wondered where she had learned it. Because you see, I am a musician and singer”; he motioned his hands as though he were strumming a guitar as he said this last part.

A second experiment with aurality and group chanting was an invented “cheer” with lyrics adapted from the early Hip Hop song, “Planet Rock” (Bambaataa & SoulsonicForce, 1982). This time I did not write the lyrics anywhere, but rather just clapped and sang the 6 lines, modeling first for kids:

There is such a place,
that creates,
such a melody.
Beats Club (yeah!)
It’s our living dream (what?)
It’s our living dreeeeeeeeam.
(Pause)
Rock, rock planet rock, don’t stop.
Rock, rock planet rock, don’t stop.

The Cipha of about 20 UGS and kids picked it up fairly easily, singing along multiple times. On our first try, just as I was feeling the Cipha fizzling and kids losing attention from this song activity, Curipaii jumped in and suggested we do a hand clapping game next. In the circle she showed the group how to place our hands, palms up in the hands of those to our left and right, and we “pass the clap” around the circle; a

group on the far side of the Cipa picked up on the idea too, and organically the parted-in-half circle came back together tightly forming so we could all touch each others hands. Half of the group were seated in chairs, and half standing to bring in the circle close. The rhythm of the clapping was perfect accompaniment for our cheer, and as we passed the claps we began the chant again. After many successful iterations of all group chanting, as we poised to stop and de-Cipa, Curipaii spontaneously shouted out to the group, “wait, we should go, ‘Bruins Club is REAL!’”. I looked at her and said “yes, it’s *real*, it’s our *LIVING* dream”. I mentioned to the kids that Planet Rock was one of the first “Hip Hop” songs ever. This may have been one of the earliest and few times I said the words “Hip Hop”.

Visual, Writing pedagogies: Peacebooks & praise-names. Teaching from the self, from the earliest construction of names invention (the Task) had been a focal point from which experimentations have grown. Expecting children to engage and to be and show excellence of engagement requires that the teacher also be a student of cultural practice, studying and doing names. This necessitates a *mean* Blackbook Pedagogy, where the teacher, researcher, leader of dialogue, deeply delves into and shows self and Style, in writing. A Blackbook is also called a piecebook; it is the place where Style is developed before getting up on a wall. The cardboard covers are black on these notebooks of blank, white pages for rendering masterpieces; it is used for practicing letters and drawings, and for gathering signatures of other Writers.

I took my blackbook everywhere and kept all writing, drawing, notations made across lifeworlds. I tend to start in multiple places on the page scribbling into nooks and corners, then in columned patterns, or fluid circular and dynamic non-shapes of

reasoning mapped out. I review my blackbook to see where I have been, also drawing cloud boundaries around separate bits of information, drawing/emphasizing with arrows to identify the multiple directions of flow of argument, identifying sketches and scribbles that I want to turn into larger pieces. Many of these note-takings, are often illegible or meaningless to anyone but myself. I write my school notes and research ideas next to full-color pieces and signatures of Writers I have met along my way, making it, turning it into a Peacebook. By having a single place where all Writing takes place, the blackbook is a tool for names to cross all contexts; it is a tool for showing people who you are and how you write; a way of expressing the essence of self that may have no words, or just not that many. I do this using different writing mechanisms and modes to model for kids fidelity to the practices, principles, and potentials of StyleWriting.

As I began my second Blackbook from my years in Beats, I began constructing my color-filled name pieces for and with the children, asking kids for help with solving compositional problems of my artworks. In large block letters across the inside cover were T-R-I-Z, falling from the sky like an avalanche, with a mighty mouse character in the place of the I, holding back the avalanche. (See Appendix IV-T)

I made copies of the sketch to practice different fills. There was something not quite right about the color schemes; the piece was lacking the “wow factor” necessary to achieve a successful piece. I took my practice pages to Beats and asked Dolphin and Q.T. (1st graders) for help. They loved the sketch and told me it looked good so far. I asked Dolphin, “but what’s missing? What would you do now?” To which she responded with a straight face and without hesitation, “More rainbows, Miss Triz”. I

said “show me,” putting the papers in front of the two and letting them color it in. When they were done with it, I realized that Dolphin was totally right about the rainbows. When I brought the finished piece back to the Club and showed it to the pair, rainbows and all, Dolphins eyes widened to the max, her mouth open smiling, as she drew in closer to the book as if mesmerized by the swirls of color. QT's eyes opened equally wide, and her jaw dropped down “wow!” one said, “whoa!” said the other.

I continued showing this and my other pieces to the kids. I began constructing more pieces geared toward engaging with children and including their names (Appendix IV-U). I started writing *their* names in my book (Appendix IV-V), practicing and developing my own abilities for rendering shapes, and letters, then connecting and filling them with color flows and patterning.

When I used this tool, kids’ work from outside of the Club came streaming in. I began to see the kids practicing the same kinds of across-context writings of the Blackbook. They took the comp books we gave them regularly and filled them with drawings, writings. Stely had multiple lists of to-dos; Sweet-T started coming again and each time brought a few new name pieces. The T-sisters each filled their notebooks with drawings and writings, like Giovanni had. Stegs and Curipaii began making names pieces of their and my name and gifting them to me. (See Appendix IV-W) These writings out-of-school, were making their way in to the Club. It is precisely this self-directed practice outside of my classroom that began this course of study years before Beats. I asked myself, if kids are doing this letter and name play willingly, eagerly, what if it were the source for all teaching and learning? How it could it be so?

Curipaii's multimodal consciousness. “Curipaii” is how Andrea, a 1st grader just beginning to write, spelled her Beats name invented at the beginning of Phase 2. She was a stand-out new participant in Phase 2 based on her regular attendance and infectious enthusiasm for the Club. “Dimples” could have been her name, or as her family calls her “Cara Feliz,” because of the deep, long dimples traversing her constantly smiling, chatting cheeks.

Her exuberance and eagerness of participation, and her ease with emotional expressions (of happiness, excitement, and sadness/crying) reminded me of myself as a child. On the third day of the Club in Phase 2 I was greeted by her running toward me with her arms outstretched; she came barreling toward me and threw her arms around my hips shouting, “I missed you!” She was so loving and open, as though we had known and trusted each other for far longer than our few weeks together. I noticed her on numerous Club sessions, rotating through every task and station available that day, spinning out multiple artifacts in a day, and even attending and engaging when she did not feel well.

Andrea’s names play began with her first task, written on a new Activity Card. I was there to assist when she asked for help (See Appendix IV-X.) The instruction said to draw the first letter in many styles; she asked – “What’s that?”. I asked her to draw a C, and then I drew some more Cs, showing two additional styles; we talked about different ways to draw the “C”, encouraging her to play around with ideas, and to show me who she is. She kept going with the help of UG Boots. Toward the end of Club she returned to find me and to show her completed card; clutching the paper to her chest, she smiled widely and said, “You’re gonna be so proud, Miss.” “Let’s see it!” I replied. She turns

the paper over and explains how she had made a “tiger-style of my name,” by turning her name into a whole piece, surrounding it with orange and black stripes, so that the name formed the shape of a tiger; she followed that statement by making a cat clawing gesture with her free hand and making a noise like a roar.

Curipaii’s name innovations occurred immediately; in the next name drawing and multiple times across Phases 2 and 3, for example she changes spelling. She would sometimes take off an ‘I’ at the end, or add an extra ‘r’ in the middle. By the end of Phase 3, the C became a K – ‘Kuripai’ and she also asked to be called “Curi-Butterfly”.

She was very actively engaged in Cipa play, taking up instruments, raising her voice in song, and voicing questions and comments in the circle. She went with the flows of Beats, riffing from Cipa activity, and creating, surging her own flows that others, UGs especially, would follow. At the end of one Club day toward the end of the fall, as I was cleaning up materials, I found her at the middle of the Cipa hula-hooping while also playing the tambourine; as her white fedora hat fell over her eyes, she did not stop jammin. Ms. Nini, a second grade regular of Beats, picked up the drum to accompany Curipaii; in video footage is recorded this improvised duet performance/practice/trying things, where both showed no inhibition, each showed their going with the flow and trying things, expressing their selves with multiple available tools and together improvising in sync.

On another occasion in winter, the entire group had gone outside to play. I was inside arranging materials when Curipaii approached with me with drum under her arm, just as I would wear it in the Cipa; it was about half as big as her whole body.

Curipaii: “Miss, ask me a question.”

Miss Triz: “A question, what kind of question?”

Curipaii: “Anything, anything”.

I got the vibe for what she was trying to do; she was going to talk through the drum, requesting I play-improvise with her. I asked, “what do you want to do today?” She responded using both hands to drum out an improvised rhythm striking the drum 7 times. I followed “hmmm. Do you want to stay inside and draw?” She poised her face, scrunching her forehead and pursing her lips; she hit the drum twice as she shook her head no. I asked, “Do you want to go outside?” And her face lit up, she grinned, opening her eyes wide, striking the drum once as she double nodded her head, yes. I continued the conversation asking her about her drum communication, asking “what else can we say with that drum?” I turned on the video-recorder of my camera just as she hit the drum 3 times with her palm, rhythmized as 3 quarter notes. I asked, “what’s that?” She repeated the drum pattern, accompanied to explain, by syllabic chanting of her name— “Cu-ri-Pai”, in a doe-rae-mi upward progression. I asked her if she could say my name with the drum, to which she first hesitated but quickly said, “oh, I know!” then drummed 4 beats. I said again, “what’s that?” She repeated the drum and syllabic chant as she had done with her own name, “Miss Be-a-triz,”. Mine was a different name-rhythm, quarter, eighth, eighth, quarter, but mimicking the same doe-re-me upward scale of her own drum-name. She continued by showing me how she drum-spoke other words such as, “mariquitas,” and “caterpillars,” (things we were going to draw together), applying the same non-verbal, face-gestured, syllabic drum beat to the names of things as she had done with our names.

Curipaii flows from her drum-gestural name game and performance in Phase 2, to a more complex, choreographed name-exchange with graduate researcher Big Daddy.

I witnessed the two inventing some kind of hello or handshake greeting. Curipaii would start by dabbling her cheek with fore and middle finger, then jump in the air with her legs in a downward V, hi-5ing Big Daddy who was asked to do the same. She shows me this sequence in our Phase 3 Summer Dialogue, where I confirm that this was the newest coded, physical version of her name, Curipaii. These mixing of expressive modes, drum plus face gestured syllabic name-speak and cheek-dabble/hi-5 name combination, are emblematic of kids' modal combinations occurring all across the Club by the end of Phase 2. My sense, that I felt was shared by others, was that from all of these and many other kinds of names and related play, we had created a special space for kids, where they do interesting things with Language, and are learning and growing. How to document this, how to analyze and explain these emergent multi-modalities of names came to a head with Phase 3.

Phase 3: Breakin free. Phase 3 is the Dissertation Period beginning April 2013, including 9 weeks of Club play and 3 weeks of Summer Dialogues conducted with 13 children.

In our last 9 weeks of Club play for our third full school year, we would have a final, new group of UGs for the study. They would provide the freshest eyes on the Club at its maximum, end-of-Phase 2 stage of growth.

In preparing the space for another level transition, I focused on all aspects of quality, beginning with visiting the UGs university classroom space to introduce them to the Club and orient them to the project. I had not before done this so explicitly, even sharing with them this time the research question in a projected visual and written on

whiteboard presentation and dialogue about the research. I also *did the NAMES task with them*, using an Activity Card-like format.

Brombie a new UG writing her first fieldnotes, steps in with a new voice to break down our first days of Phase 3:

Miss Triz gained the attention of the group by using two languages in both Spanish and English and by banging her drum in a rhythmic, motivating, catchy way. The children as well as the adults began clapping. While Miss Triz was interacting with certain parts of the group, I overheard conversations between the UGs and the children. There were comments about how great Cutie Pie's hat was and smiling exchanges and glances as a result. The mood of the group was nervous, excited, and chaotic but somehow Miss Triz made sense of it and gained and kept a loose control of the group. The children knew the routine and settled in surprisingly quick. Miss Triz explained to Beats Club that she was working on a project and asked two children to use the video camera to document the events as well as use the camera. Cloud Ridiculous was where she intended to take them and proceeded to explain what it meant using a book that she had created. She did so by inviting all of the children to move in closer and help her open the book. She explained that Cloud Ridiculous was better than being on Cloud Nine and asked an UG to explain what that meant. It took a little while to get the UGs to say something, and Miss Triz gave hints to the rest of the group to help educate them on the meaning of the phrase Cloud Nine, being really happy. Miss Triz asked for ways in which they could get to Cloud Ridiculous and a child said that they could ride on a space ship. This spawned the idea that space ships would be created at a later week by all. Miss Triz then asked for help to open the tote that she had brought and placed in the middle of the circle. All of the children moved to the center of the circle again and opened the tote and shouted as they realized it was musical instruments. Miss Triz asked all of the children to pick an instrument and go back to their seat. Some of the instruments had been made out of materials from the kitchen, Miss Triz proclaimed proudly. Sounds were heard from every direction as some of the children banged on drums, shook maracas, and clicked sticks together while some of us UGs were left with our own hands to clap with. The UGs who had made quick friends with their smaller cohorts were able to procure instruments. Miss Triz obtained the attention of the Bruins Club by banging her own drum in a rhythmic fashion. The children followed by imitating her beats. Then she would call on a child to create another kind of rhythm with their own instruments and the rest of the group would imitate the rhythm. Smiles were everywhere. Not one child was unhappy. Even the adults couldn't help but smile and engage in the activity. After the music Miss Triz introduced the Planet Rock anthem that the children had created to the UGs. Each UG was shown the words that were posted and the entire group practiced the anthem together, only after Cutie Pie felt there should be some adjustments to the words. Miss Triz carefully considered and adopted

her suggestions. Introductions were then made, all of the children wrote their names on the poster board provided: given name alongside their pseudo names. Some had more than one pseudo name. This was encouraged by Miss Triz. Each child stood next to Miss Triz as she nurtured them into rising above their stage fright and encouraged them to say their given names and dance out their pseudo names if they felt so inclined. Miss Triz danced alongside them and gave them new dance moves. Each UG was asked to then write their given names down on the poster board and then announce it to the group. Miss Triz informed the children that the UGs would have new pseudo names next week. (Brombie, 4/10/13)

In my approach to this Dissertation Period I considered the innovation necessary to take Beats Club Naming to another level. I would mash up multiple of the modal activities used prior, and re-Make them, (re)animating with a fresh turn, as seen here in UG Brombie's notes describing the first day of Phase 3, where the drum, blackbook, planet rock, instrument jam, and name-signing occur all in one Cipa session. The approach was to maximize pedagogy and data collection potentials by all means possible and necessary (Parker, 1988).

Phase 3 mixing to make fresh pedagogies: Cloud Ridiculous. My efforts to create and extend the visual pedagogies of Phase 2 resulted in Cloud Ridiculous, a drawing in my blackbook shown in Appendix IV-Y. Brombie references this new tool, created for and introduced in this Phase 3. I drew, or doodled the phrase in black thin-tip sharpie on the evening after my proposal defense. I was so exhilarated from the experience, and told a friend I felt "on Cloud (pause) Ridiculous," to define my state as something beyond the usual Cloud 9 of good feeling. Cloud Ridiculous symbolizes the concept of maximum fun, feeling great, maximum freedom and fluidity, with only infinite possibilities. It is the place our Hip Hop practice takes us when we give it our all. This drawing is one of the fluidly created, transformed writing-drawings of my daily blackbook practice that turned into a pedagogical experimentation. Many blackbook

drawings such as Cloud Ridiuculous and the name praise pieces were a response to kids amped up modalities-play through Phase 2, in which I *play back* and raise the bar of possibility.

On that first day of Phase 3, after the activity described by Brombie, B-kids in attendance de-Cipha-ed, spinning off into activities. And I was drawn back into the Cipha space in a small group of Curipaii, visiting teacher Sarita Doe, and UG Simba. Curipaii suggested to me that we write a song; she flipped open my blackbook to the just-introduced Cloud Ridiculous. As we considered our approach to this song-writing task, I suggested “let’s write it in my book, on the back of the piece” (Appendix IV-Z). We switched fluidly from English to Spanish, “is it *los o las nubes*?” I asked. Curipaii affirms, saying and writing in my book, “Las Nubes,” the first words to the song. She pauses at the next word “Ridiculous,” and says “Wait, we cannot say ‘ridiculous’ in Spanish, because it means ugly”. She then turns the page to look at the drawing again, and continues with her thought, “No, it’s ok, because it has lots of colors, and *it is* ridiculous” (Phase 3 video transcriptions, p. 6). She continued with the song, writing:

Las nubes ridiculas.
Tienen muchos colores
Como rosadita, y Amarillo (See Appendix IV-Z)

Later that night I turned it into a song rhythm, and sang it to the group to begin the next Cipha.

Final names introductions. In this first week of Phase 3, we also re-initiated names and introductions for a final time. This time I asked participants to write/sign their names on two 3’x2’ sheets of flipchart paper taped to the wall. It was Andrea’s turn to write her name; she stood in the center of the Cipha, and I stood by her side. She said,

“my name is Curipaii, and my real name is Andrea. The first time I did it I did curi paii two “I”s, then with just one”.

Fina, Stely, Magenta, and Cassie, some of the Original students of Beats from Phase 1 and before were now the older girls in 4th and 5th grade. I had been feeling a sense that they might be losing interest in names, that was the disconfirming evidence I was looking for – disengagement – in the practice, loss of interest. They had not been coming to Beats very regularly toward the end of Phase 2, so I personally had invited them to please come on this first week to support my dissertation project. They did come at my request on the 2nd day of Week 1, filing in to the red Cipa chairs as I gave instructions on name signing. As Cipa activity of names took off, these older girls they sat and watched other, younger children do the task of name writing. And without being called to do it, without missing a beat stood up in the flow of the name signing activity and asked for a marker. Fina first, came toward me holding out her hand to take one of the several markers from mine; I encouraged it, watching many kids crowd all at once at the wall to write their names. Stely, Magenta, and Cassie had already been sitting by the name wall, and they also turned without comment and got their names up.

I used it as the opportunity to quiet the group, and say to everyone, “these are Beats Club founding mothers, I mean Sisters,” (mother came out, but I thought that might feel strange to them to be called mother, so I switched quickly to sisters). I followed saying, “They are Beats Club history. Well not his-story, it’s her-story, because they’re girls.” And I think the kids kind of laughed at the word herstory, and I said “but really it’s more like an ourstory (pronounced like history). We need another word for it”. Tarzan’s voice rang out immediately after mine, in sync with the conversation; he took a

step forward in the Cipa and said pumping his fist and forefinger in the air, as if pointing out his words, “This is Beatstory” (pronounced like history). I turned and looked at the camera girl Sabemi who was watching the Cipa through the camera viewfinder. I took Tarzan’s hand and led him to stand right in front of the camera; I asked him to repeat it one more time directly into the camera lens. Once again he repeated, and he and I said together “This is Beatstory”. It was a powerful, joyous, unified beginning after which I wrote in my personal notes about it being the most fluid and flowing, “best Beats ever”.

The kids’ name roll call for Phase 3 this Week 1 includes (as spelled by children):

The little Pony, baby Corazon, Mageta/Dimons/magical/music/Panda Bear, Prens Pechs; Stegusures; Fina, Candy, Bubbles, Kuri Pai, Hello Kitty, Dolfin, Princess Bubblegum/Stely-Cece/Dolphin, Becky, Monkey/Tarzan/Pedro, Apple – Pie/Matiu (pronounced Matthew)/Hop, Angry Birds star wers3, Angry Birds Star Wars2, Scooby Boo, Shorty, Dj3D, mini, and Flower (our smallest Club kid) at the very bottom right corner (See Appendix IV-AB).

This document we created of our Club names bearing the given and Beats Club names of every participant, is something we had never really done before, all signing our (given and Beats) names in one place and all at the same time.

(re)Making things. For as much as kids had shown great interest in playing instruments, I felt the next logical step of pedagogical response was to have them *make* them. The idea jibed with the cultural model of creating or producing, not merely consuming, cultural works. Inspired by many years of art projects with small children,

families, and teachers, I made some maraca-style noise-makers out of recycled cardboard tubes and rice grains. I added them to my *Magic Vessel*²³ of instruments in Phase 3, showing kids that I had made it (as Brombie notes). Mid-way through Phase 3, I introduced materials, recycled plastics and cardboard containers, decorative papers and tapes, and dry grains of rice and beans.

The first day we did this, baby Corazon, Sabemi, Curipaii, and others got busy (See Appendix IV-AC). Fina, by now the oldest of Beats participants, joined us in the middle of activity; she asked the group, “what is everybody doing? I replied, “making instruments out of this stuff.” A voice jumped in, “no, I’m making a sculpture”. And Curipaii chimed, “I made a drawing and these 1-2-3-4 different instruments,” pointing to her pipe cleaner art on paper of a Bumblebee, and various taped up, decorated shakers filled with beans she had made with the help of UG Agusta. Apple pie and UG Monsoon made a rocket ship maraca; CeceSabemi, helped by UG Yuri made a doll out of a cardboard tube, wearing a black top hat, and sporting a used sax reed as tongue that moved in and out and wiggled side to side. baby Corazon made a double cardboard paper tube maraca, assembling and decorating it in pink and silver tape, and a La Rosa square of a Mexican bingo game.

After hearing and seeing the many variations and answers to her question, Fina sighed as she made the conclusory remark, “yeah, everything can be made into art.” I asked her if she would write her comment down in my book, next to the Cloud Ridiculous drawing. She wrote “EVERYTHING can be made into ART” –FiNA

²³ A black plastic box with a looseleaf sign “Triz’s Magic Vessel”; used for introducing different projects.

(everything and art double-underlines, heart dot on “I”). She also got into the activity. Later when I asked what *she* was making, folding different pieces of blue and gold paper, connecting it with silver bits of decorative tape, she responded with the same sigh as prior, “oh, this,,, is a Beats Original”.

The kids were prolific in this activity, so we continued, and the Team brought more kinds of materials for every session. Sabemi took to the making instruments and things right away, proclaiming in the act of doing so, “Esto si es divertido!” (*this here is fun*). She made as many instruments as there were available materials, filling up containers with different material, taping them up, and testing to see how they sound. She said to me of her many different creations, “Escucha, Miss” holding her paper egg carton instrument up then tipping it vertically so the interior trickled downward, “Este tiene frijoles” (*Listen, this one has beans*). She picked up a second plastic container shaking it up in the air and saying “Este, arroz” (*This one, rice*). A third made object she shook sideways, telling me “Ves, este tiene de todo” (*See, this one has everything*).

Sabemi and I grew closer this final Phase. She began asking me about art, requesting I show her how to draw her name, how to be a writer, “Como tú lo haces,” (*Like you do*), pointing to my blackbook.

Summary notes on what I was feeling and saying about Beats by Phase 3. By Phase 3 I was being more explicit and interventionist about Names and Style culture and pedagogies, engaging in more one-one-one dialogues with individual students around their names and my project about names. As a result, in Phase 3 I saw-heard-felt a whole other level of activity, frenzy almost of kids interested in name piecing, and a steady stream of name drawings flowing into school completed in places and space outside. I

noticed and noted that the more explicit and less vague I was about *my* names practices and interests and what they mean culturally and to me, the more kids asked for it. When I went home and came back each Club day with new drawings, the kids started doing it too, in proliferations of Peace(ing).

As an example, Cassie and Stely sat at a station playing with stickers and writing new names, disinterested in the ipad technology offered as a play tool that day. An UG told me “they said they have one at home,” as though to say, they are not so impressed. I pulled out my blackbook that had so many fresh new sketches and drawing; I showed them, initiating a beautiful exchange. I explained the new outlines I had been given by my Writing teacher, and showed them my first sketches of these fresh, funky styles. I pointed out the letters to Cassie, moving my finger across their flow – T-R-I-Z, a reading technique which she then followed by doing the same, saying out loud in soft voice with her finger following the letter flow, “T-R-I-Z”. She did it again to show Stely. She exclaimed, “I wanna learn how to do *that!*” I told myself to jump gently on this special moment, a *request* to Learn. When I said I could teach her on Mondays and Thursday, the group now seated around began insisting I come other days to their home program, which I did. I went with these kids’ flows into other places, to continue our dialogue, even amending the IRB to reach these other places for the Summer Dialogues.

In Phase 3 the multi-modalities experimentation of Phase 2 had kids engaging, communicating, expressing, interacting using their bodies, hands, sounds, rhythms, instruments, eyes, words, voices, singing, playing and laughing - different combinations of all modes, consciously experimenting and improvising at every turn, with each utterance. There were songs learned elsewhere that were brought to Beats and the lyrics

written on the flip chart, following the now written version of the Planet Rock chant (Appendix IV-AD). Kids were catching ladybugs in the garden, jumping rope, hula hooping, dancing merengue, breaking open piñatas, having picnics, and inventing and video recording dialogue and play. There was tag, wall ball, and ball tag of multiple forms and constantly evolving rule structures.

My seasoned teaching expertise, that of Team members, and the views of many dozens of UGs, we were all saying similar things about Beats, even though each of us was experiencing it in different ensembles of rotating activity. We were stating that Beats is so much Fun, and that it Feels Good. We asked ourselves what this means as far as Language and learning. Amongst the whole we were answering that question with, “I’m not quite sure how to make sense of kids’ non-standard Language and their play as learning, but I can’t wait to come back because I left feeling so relaxed and full of peace. Something happened. This is a special place. These are amazing children. All children are amazing.”

Surveying kids’ feelings on Beats. Throughout the years of Beats we asked kids in regular, informal dialogue and in more formal pre and post-surveys, what they thought of Beats and what they learned. Across Phases and maximally by Phase 3 kids had a lot of positive things to say about Beats. On one of our last days together, I assembled a slideshow of all photos taken in Beats of all Phases. The Team set up to evaluate with a post-survey, and we asked questions in the opening Cipha as the slideshow ran on the wall behind.

When asked by Ms. Yesi, “what did you learn in Beats?” kids answered out loud, “we should meet new people, kindness, Cloud Ridiculous, be respectful, be helpful, be

safe, be Beats club, have fun, instruments!” Cassie a participant since before Phase 1, said, “to be yourself and people to accept you for who you are”.

On paper surveys we asked, “What do you like about Beats Club?” Sweet-T answered, “they let you have Freedom and they are so nice to everybody no matter how it is, and the UGs take care of you and they go with you everywhere.” Pinkie responded, “What I like best about Beats club is that everybody cares about me and I have a lot of friends. Stely’s answer was, “I can get out my energy, and feel less crazy and focus on my work.” We asked, “What did you learn in Beats about Writing?” Stely continued, “that when we write, we could write down how we feel... And that it's all about fun”.

Kids’ answers were compelling, and I built from these regular surveying by hosting Summer Dialogues. They were an opportunity to ask focused questions about names and learning. I used Club post-surveys to prepare for my Dialogues, developing a questionnaire, described in Chapter III, focused around these same kind of questions - the kinds of learning through our Beats play. I also compiled for each child, all of the photos of themselves and their artworks, or photos I thought they may have taken, into a slideshow, as I did when we surveyed in the Club. I noticed how much kids enjoyed looking back and seeing pictures of themselves they did not remember having seen or taken. Across three weeks in July, I held 8 one-on-one and small group meetings with 14 Beats Club participants, at the school grounds or the local library.

“Beats es como el Planeta de diversion!” I held my first Dialogue with Sabemi. She came wearing a summer dress, her long “pelo colochó,” was held back from her face with a pink ribbon headband. We met in the teachers conference room; the school complex was virtually empty for summer. The blossoming of our relationship in Phase

3 flowed into this first Summer Dialogue. She arrived anxious to begin, blurting out before I could begin the questioning or even sit down, “ooooh miss, me encaaaaanta el arte”. I thought maybe that was why she thought she was there, to do art like we had been doing; and that’s why she *wanted* to be there, to talk about and do “art”.

I asked her what Beats is like for her, “Como es el Club?” To which she responded without hesitation, “*Bueno, Beats es, como el planeta de diversion!*”

We talked about so many things, and managed to get all the way through the long questionnaire, and made a name piece together. That same day Curipaii, and her father met me at the library. We were friends, excited to see each other after a few weeks apart. We spread out on a corner table in the kid’s section of the library. She like Sabemi was a trooper, bearing with me while I asked a zillion questions.

I revised the questionnaire between dialogues, tailoring each protocol to the child, some who had been in the Club for a while but had never heard the NAMES Task (baby Corazon and Tarzan). I reframed the dialogue by what I wanted to know from each child based on our relationship, their works, and participations in the Club. This felt more appropriate. (See Appendix IV-AD).

In the following 2 weeks I met with Ms.Becky, Tarzan, and baby Corazon individually, and with Stely & Fina, Magenta and sister Picok, and the dynamic-5 T-sisters in small groups. I started each Dialogue with showing the compiled slideshow of photographs of each child. I followed each slideshow by asking, “What are you thinking? When you see these photos?”

GGBear replied first, “of a community” ... “where we’re all a family” little sister Pinkie completes her the sentence. New 2nd grader Picok replied “I felt at home,”

followed by her big sister MagicalMusicMagenta now Jelly Cakes who said, “felt free”. And Stely reflected on the photos, “wow, memories” followed by Fina, “it’s the evolution of us”.

Becky and Tarzan, and Lalaloopsy who had never done the NAMES Task, picked new names – Gian, Waza, and Picok, both created from lists made of things they like, words that describe them.

With Magenta, Stely CeCe, and Fina, students with me across multiple years, we focused on their perceptions of the practice of Writing with Style. I asked them all, “What do we learn by inventing our names, writing them over and over, and doing it with Style?” Stely said “we learn about defining our own Style”. Then Fina followed that we can communicate who we are, “our name is who you are, and there’s only one of you.”

On another day, meeting with MMMagenta and Picok, I asked the same. MMM responded as she worked on a piece of her new name Jelly Cakes, “Style is a good way of drawing art, learning art; we’re expressing ourselves. We’re proud of ourselves.” When I asked Magenta what she wanted to express about herself through Style and the listing of names she had handed me back in Phase 2, she said, “that I’m creative and curious.”

The many names stories told in these Results are special stories, and they are not outlying examples. They are not the whole of BCN, for there was far more names activity. Rather, the examples of this Beatstory are emblematic, drawn from the whole of data on Names to represent and provide a reference point for the Findings that now follow.

Findings

The evidence of the prior Results section helps shape and explain a *Five-Dimensional Engagement Framework* for how to *read* all of these kids' names-and-Style *writings*. Following the analysis of kids' naming is discussion of the pedagogical approach of Beats to which kids were responding; here the evidence of the prior Results helps shape and explain a guide for developing a *True Hip Hop Pedagogy (THHP)*. Together these analyses come together to answer the Research Question.

Five dimensions of names engagement: Beats Club patterns. From review of the 157 bits of Names data found across the Tome were generated 47 descriptive (sub)codes that clarified the nature of kids' names activity. (Sub)codes include variations of what kids did with names, e.g. practicing handstyles, switching names, naming adults. Many (sub)codes reflect the outcomes of these variations in practice such as building relationships, practicing names outside of Club, and teaching adults. Each of the descriptive codes was written on a yellow post-it, (re)arranged on my wall, then mapped out by hand on looseleafs using tree-style domain diagrams; iterative, (re)organizations of names data were simplified and finalized in table-lists, such as that of Appendix IV-AE, showing *Beats' Five Dimensions Engagement Framework*.

The five dimensions provide a parsed out and whole view of kids' engagement in names in Beats. Each dimension represents levels or kinds of ways of doing and/or being involved in naming in Beats. Each dimension provides one kind of interpretive prism for sense-making. Engagement may and does occur across these dimensions, simultaneously signaling different kinds of engagement at once, and/or occurring in varying overlapping combinations, relationships, or sequences. Through this

dimensional framing I see clearly and can interpret the kinds, qualities, and potentials of kids' engagement in names practice. I build the vital foundation necessary for overstanding (knowing by doing the analyses) how names shape and support children's Language and Literacy(ies).

The first dimension: Engagement in names practice and play. The most fundamental of engagement dimensions, the ground level entry into StyleWriting is to *do* the practice. Engagement in doing names is the basis for overstanding what they are and mean.

In the Club kids began their names engagement in the planning phase, with name exchange, simple name games, and their broad-stroke, handstyle *name-writing practice*. Soon thereafter, when the NAMES Task was first introduced, kids began engagement with cultural *name-invention* or *name self-selection practice*. Engagement during the facilitation of the Task is seen with kids gathering around, listening, asking questions, laughing, and making assertions, as I facilitated.

As modeled in the Task, participants arrive at their name invention through a *thoughtful, written* process or calculation of some invented form. Prior to the act of writing the chosen name itself are these other kinds of free writings in the form of lists, brainstormed word and letter clusters, and maps of words and ideas, such as the examples of Stely and Caiyl/Majusta. In this pre-name writing, kids followed the Task model by choosing words and letters to represent things they "like" and "love," as the kids often explained when showing how they chose their names. When kids later taught the names-invention to other kids and new UGs, they also directed them to write, "your

favorite” things e.g. colors, food, animal, places, etc. The endeavor of name invention here stimulates kids’ thinking about who they are/what they’re about.

Children thereafter engage in developing their own name, trying and taking up *name-invention or self-selection, plus name-writing*. Each child engages in their own interpretation of the Task through unique forms of invention that both mimic and veer from the Task explanation. Their name calculations include ideas and values they hold, important people in their lives, letters, sounds, and shapes they like, and *idiomas* they know, among other fluidly selected and improvised (i.e. unpredictable) criteria. Thus, the *names-invention* practice is a foundational *play* strategy that results in highly personal-ized practice of *names-play*.

Kids’ engagement in *names practice* and *play* occurs at the *letter level* of play. Kids explore bounds of the letters, playing with their shapes, sounds, spellings, and meanings/symbolic potentials. Through letter form/shape they try and develop styles, as in Giovanni’s robotic script, Stely’s squiggly backwards letters, and MentaRosa’s code on the scroll. Through talk and pronunciation they try out, play with the letter *sounds* such as when Majusta insists her U is pronounced like an E, as Majesta. Kids combine letters and sounds to play with the sound-spelling combinations of *idiomas*, as in Curipaii and Kiboo/Quibu who blend letters and sounds of Spanish and English. Kids consciously and sometimes fluidly choose then *change spellings, re-arranging letters* as in Feldspar to Fedlspr, Curipaii to Kuripai. Giovanni’s signature progressions over time become more encrypted as he turns them backwards, and exchanges letter shapes for other symbolics; his sequences followed by een more elaborate writings on the community scroll, provide an example of how kids twist and turn individual letters, re-

making them innovatively, every time changing, taking risks and trying, and then refining the stylization, as in his Giovanni's final composition book signature where he completes the signature sequence, writing for clarification next to his final given-name-signature, "✓ done editing".

Kids change *whole compositions*, in a regular, consistent pattern of *changing names* over time, e.g. Stely to CeCe to Princess Bubblegum; Violet to Super Freezer Girl to Black Widow; Tarzan to Monkey to Pedro to Waza. There was also a pattern, though less common, of kids keeping the first name chosen – such as Fina, Cupcake, and Ms Mimi.

Every one of our Beats names has its own special sequencing of *letter-meaning* combinations- the C in Caiyl signals a love of "cats"; the cursive Z replaces the G in Giovanni because "it's cool". This letter play with spellings, sounds, and combinations of letters, create fresh name-words with original, special meanings. Thus kids' engagement in names *practice and play* occurs also at the *word-meaning level*. Selected letters when put all together in the name, form a unified, multi-varied symbol of the child. Kids explore the communicative, symbolic, and creative potentials of each letter of their names and the possibilities of the compositional whole. UG Motown documents an awareness of this symbol-building through letter and word play, from the second Task facilitation of Phase 1:

G-force's description of why he chose his name as such was fascinating as each letter acted as a symbol for something greater that he felt represented him as a whole person, but when they came together it still made something that he felt represented him as well. The name was a reflection of him not only as an acronym representing something larger, but also of himself as a bunch of personality traits. (Motown, 10/24/11, p. 5)

Kids play with symbols, *semiotic* resources, placing letters side by side and merged with symbols, such as peace signs, lightning bolts, hearts, and clouds. For

example, in his composition book, Giovanni converts the “k” in Maverick to a star, and decorates around his name-writing with a peace sign and flames.

By Phase 2, kids extend their experimentation into *modal* expression. Curipaii’s nonverbal, face gestured, drum names-speak, and Roki’s dance sequence of UG Sunny’s name, provide examples of this *modal level* of names practice and play engagement – both children *writing* their names through gestural Language.

Kids play to arrive at their names, and then use their names to *engage and exchange with others* in Club play. Names are a common *mode* of community play in Beats, such as in Phase 1 when Sammi and Tina *switch* names and adopt *secret* names.

All of these practice and play combinations and tactics are kids engagement in *name-stylizing*. These practice and play motions of BCN are the vital *Mixings* preceding, stimulating, then co-occurring as kids *Make* their Beats names. The first Task presented by Stely is the first example of this. Stely writes her given names (as I did in the Task) followed by the list, “Hearts, Mom, Stars, Yellow,” things she likes, that are important to her. She circles in these words and writes at the bottom S-T-E-L-Y (perhaps her favorite letters? Maybe randomly chosen). The name has been calculated and constructed from bits of language representing items of conceptual, physical, and aesthetic relevance to the child. She *mixes* ideas and letter choice to *make* her name, Stely. She continues the process over time, inventing new forms for calculating new names, *re-mixing* and *re-making* herself, into Stely CeCe GiGi, aka Princess Bubblegum by Phase 3.

By *doing* name-invention and writing practice and play, kids become equipped to *lead and teach the play*. They show this through invention of unique dialogic name-writing and guessing games, as in UG Mole’s example of being taught how to invent her

name that was totally distinct from the structure of the Task. Kids also lead and teach in the space by naming others, mostly UGs and adults (e.g. Pineapple, Big Daddy, BigCorazon).

Nearly all children who came to Beats engaged in this first dimension of names; I could locate only two (short-term) participants of more than 80 since Phase 1 with no self-selected pseudonym attached. Kids engaged in much of these “topological transformations of [self]-shapes in phase space...like stretching and squeezing” (Gleick, 1987, p. 50) before Phase 1 came to a close. “I felt dizzy; they pick it up and run with it *instantly*,” I wrote in an early fieldnote (Phase 1 FNS, p. 11). As my mentor RefaOne has said, engagement in Style practice occurs, “express” (personal communication, 2011) -- from Names are “Magnificent Essential Self-Symbols” to “Multiviral (Cabra, Perez, & Jubran, 2013) Engagement Strategies”.

The second dimension: Language and literacies engagement. Kids’ names *practice* and *play* is (equals) and becomes (grows into) *engagement* in/with *Language* and *Literacy(ies)*, the second dimension and prism for viewing and analyzing BCN. In this step of analysis, I isolated and reviewed the 157 yellow-coded Names data bits, posing a series of taxonomic questions (Lacompte & Schensul) of each. Generally I wanted to know the *nature* of Language and Literacy(ies) in our names practice and play. I asked, what are the *kinds* of Language and Literacy(ies) demonstrated in these data coded for BCN activity? What are the *qualities* of names Language? I also considered the *functions of*, and/or *reasons for* Beats Club Naming. Accompanying the following discussion of Beats Language and Literacies is Appendix IV-AF, a table that

condenses the following discussion of these taxonomies of Language and Literacy into simple list-form for following along.

Names Language: Definitions and qualities.

Definitions. The taxonomic analyses of *kinds* set the parameters or definition for what constitutes Language in Beats.

Names are a Language tool kids in Beats use every day, in multiple kinds of ways, and across all form of their Club play. Kids *speak* and *say* their names when introducing their selves to regular new participants of the Club and Cipa circle. They exchange names with others in the Club by calling and inviting their mates into de-Cipa-ed play. Names are *spoken* language.

Kids *write* names, including dozens of name signatures and pieces written on looseleaves, the community Scroll, and personal notebooks. Created across all Phases of Beats time, these provide written, visual documentation of our Language practices of naming. Names are *written* language.

Kids invent *dances* for their names, variably improvising and also consciously, creatively choreographing their physical speech through body movement. These physical demonstrations are sometimes silent or nonverbal talk, and also may occur simultaneous to saying, chanting, and/or *singing* names aloud. Name physicality through song-and-dance is seen in the examples of Curipaii and our stick-figure body writings of her danced name, and in Roki's practice of choreographing name dance-chants in Phase 2 and 3 play. Names are *physical, gestural, body* language.

In Phases 2 and 3 kids responded to the introduction of multi-modal possibilities of communication. They engaged regularly with the presence of instruments in the Club

space, and began rhythming their names on the drum, and with various handmade maraca-like noise-makers, both inside and out of the Cipa circle. In these later phases kids were experimenting, expanding on their name writings and invention through their name dancing, singing, and musicality. Picking up on the blackbook pedagogies, they were studying and trying fluid and measured color patterns, and fresh letters shapes drawn in three-dimensions, such as e.g. Sabemi's block letter pieces of Phase 3. In these practices, names are *rhythmic, vibrational, sensate* Language, that which is heard and/or felt.

Over time kids' creative modal combinations of names-speak became increasingly complex, as in the example of Roki's name-praise song-and-dance sequence of UGSunni, and her dictation to me of a gestural love letter to X. Kids flow from conscious name invention to improvisational experimentations with expressive possibility; then they also combine these conscious and fluid methods. Curipaii for example flows from her improvised drum-gestural name game and performance in Phase 2, to the more conscious, choreographed name-exchange in Phase 3 in which she silently taps her right cheek with 2 fingers, blinking, then jumping in the air with legs downward in a V as she high-5s the recipient of the name communication. She shows me this sequence in our Phase 3 Summer Dialogue, where I confirm that this was the newest coded, physical version of her name, Curipaii. She is conscious of her inventions and also seems to be making it up on the spot, fluidly trying then perfecting different signals and gestures.

All of these examples refer to Language as *modes* and *modal combinations*. Kids go from play with writing and talking across names, to singing, dancing, drumming and acting them out; they create hand shakes and nonverbal speakcodes of gesture plus

rhythm. Kids in Beats thus display an *all-modal* Language method and definition of their BCN activity.

In their names all-modality, kids also deploy and explore multiple kinds of Language *systems*. Kids access all of the *idiomas* they know in their writing and speaking of names. In Beats these languages include (as identified by children in surveys) Spanish, English, Korean, Tagalog, Bangladeshi, and “erabic” wrote Dolphin in a list of Languages she knows. Kids draw from, improvisationally negotiating and combining systems they know. Simple mixings occur in the names of e.g. baby Corazon, who named herself this because “I am a baby heart” she explained in her Summer Dialogue. And there is Pinky who regularly signs her name in both English and Korean alphabets side-by-side.

In these linguistic mixings, moreover, kids *make* (create) all *new* Language through their names. ‘Curipaii’ for example, invents a new word/spelling with her name, combining her own Spanish phonetic spelling with an English-language word/term, “CutiePie” (her own kind of self-Spanglish). Quentin spells his name phonetically in Spanish and English versions of his new name, Quibu/Kiboo, a name-word that alphabetizes the sound made by a bird from his native Salvador (bird-Spanglish).

Along with their name alphabetizations, kids also access and combine a variety of *semiotic* Language and inventions – *signs*, *symbols*, and *color patterns*. These other kinds of symbolic Language *systems* are abundantly evident on our community scroll and multiple pieces written/drawn over time; by Phase 3 more and more pieces involved combinations of letters and semiotic representations together, such as Stegs (Stegasaurus) and his many name pieces with dinosaurs drawn together with his name, as well as gifts of name writing he made for me, writing my name “Tris” and adorning it with grass and

trees. Symbols occur alongside letters, following, preceding, and surrounding kids' names. These include common symbolics such as hearts, stars, rainbows, clouds, musical notes, and geometric shapes. They include simple and complex forms of natural elements such as trees, leaves, flowers, and earth. Kids draw self-portraits labeled with their names, next to animal drawings of cats, ladybugs, frogs, birds, monkeys, butterflies, and spiders. Kids build these picto-graphic codes *around* their signatures, referencing at once what they know and who they are. Kids *sample* (choose) and then merge, blend, or *mix* these Language resources, *re-mixing* them continuously in each name iteration. These mixings of semiotics and letters to form name are seen in Curipaii's Tiger-style Task and Magenta's Name choice letter to Miss Triz.

Such mergings of linguistic and semiotic resources are freeflowing associations and inventions that draw on all of the Language systems kids know and are learning from across contexts and lifeworlds; thus all knowledge and experience are relevant and applicable to practice.

By engaging with names in these free, creative manners, the kids themselves conceptually reframe Language expansively and inclusively, redefining and refining the term to mean/include *all modalities and all systems*, all of their communicative resources and repertoires. These parameters for the definition of Language are based on how it functions *in use*, in daily action, across lifeworlds, making names a relevant, human approach to defining what constitutes "Language."

Qualities. Following the questioning of kinds of Language, I asked of each bit of names data, what are the *qualities* of Language in BCN? The *italicized* terms in the

following paragraphs provide the answers to this question; this simple list of qualities terms is provided in Appendix IV-AF.

Many qualities of Beats Language have already been noted throughout this chapter. I have discussed the *playfulness* that pervades and sustains Beats, and the *engaged* and *experimental* qualities of activity. I have mentioned the *speed* of engagement in names - “express” (RefaOne, 2012) or “multiviral” (Cabra et al., 2013). I have described kids’ names Language/ing as *fluid* and *free*.

Kids engage instantly because our play with names is *fun* Language, and “having fun” feels good; it is pleasurable or enjoyable. Kids have fun when they get to do what they feel like doing, and are given choice and a voice to say who they are and what we should do together. Being able to define and state who I am and be myself is highly pleasurable. As Alvin aka DJ3D exclaimed in a Phase2 Cipa session, “I love Beats, because I can be ME!” “Doing different things” is what makes Beats fun, noted Curipaii in our Summer Dialogue. The exhilaration of having fun, the laughter, good vibes, and upliftment participants articulate experiencing, “is the feeling of healing itself,” I wrote in my personal notes of my own experience of Phase 3. Kids are fearless in pursuit of fun in Beats, a place Sabemi called, “el planeta de diversion!”

Practice and play with reading and writing names involves the interpreting (reading) and doing (writing) of Language. These are highly *sensate and intellectually-engaged* experiences and processes. Humans, kids make sense using all of their senses, *feeling* their way through rhythmic patterns and vibratory resonances of words, symbols, patterns, codes—and all forms of Languaging. They simultaneously engage their minds and bodies in

this *aesthetic* practice, feeling and thinking together, yielding Language that builds from both what we know how to do (*practiced*) and what we feel and try (*creative, improvised*).

Much of this play and change over time is *unconscious*. When I asked kids why they did or tried certain ideas, they sometimes had no answer other than shrugging their shoulders. “I don’t know. I just did it,” said Curipaii when I asked her about her changes in spelling from Curipaii to Kuripai. The unconscious *fluidity* in name-writing makes kids’ deployments of names often *unpredictable*.

On the flip side, at the same time, when kids engage in the fluid thinking-through of who they are and want to be across names, as they repeat names over and again, they are *consciously* engaged with Language. They develop increasing *awareness* of (limitless) possibilities of form, content, symbol, and meaning in a single word, a name. Much of their Language play is *deliberate*, and kids become *aware* of the possibility for change and *innovation* in name stylizing, building from one attempted form to the next encoded, expressive possibility, as Giovanni showed in his composition book sequence and scroll writings. Kids show their *growing* awareness; for example, despite not having an answer at first for why she changed her name spelling, she later made note of it out loud to the Cipa when introducing herself in Phase 3 - from Curipaii to Curipai with “one I”. Giovanni, another example, twists and changes his letters every single time he writes them, and shows his awareness of this quest by writing at the end of his composition book sequence, “✓ done editing,” also writing “my new signature how do you like it?”

As kids and participants experienced the good feelings that stem from names practice and play, including, a sense of *peace* and *self-worth/-esteem*, they engaged even more deeply, *regularly* and *variably inventing* new names and new Language. Kids

engaged these ways *without* much apparent *constraint*. Their Club naming is *repetitive*, *practiced*, and *on-going over time*, with almost all kids completing multiple kinds of name writing-stylizing across all three years of this study.

Beats names Language is *content-rich*. Kids in their talk and modal-combo expressions detail all kinds of their knowledge and experience, with discussion of multiple kinds of topics coming up through and across names. These include interests, experiences, and ideas kids have and are encouraged to share in Beats, such as music, cultures, languages, art, science, school and family life - as in UG G.Wong's description of name-invention with Heagles who likes the Eagles and rock music, Martist who is an artist, and xxAvid Sniperxx, an Avid fan of shooting games. This rich content often drives our *dialogic* back and forth talk and play, where kids *dynamically* make use of both *standard* language and varieties of *non-standard* and other formal/informal Languages kids' know and invent; in name dialogues here we see kids drawing from all means available.

Much of this names behavior, like e.g. Caiyl's impromptu name divinations of Phase 1, Magenta's name listing, and kids' regular name-changing is *agentive*, meaning it is based on what kids can and want to do with the intervention; they *choose* whether to engage and they take conscious action in choosing their names and writing them. Each child who has chosen a name, has their own unique way of writing, building, and practicing names; each has their own conscious reflections on how it feels and what their names mean, explained in their Tasks and in their talk. Kids love of the Club is precisely for this baseline "agency rule of thumb" on which we built Club activity from the beginning, planning phase. Conceptually, names are *inclusive* of participants and

possibility. We all have and use names in Beats and everywhere; they are *relevant* to everyone.

Kids' name Language is *rhythmic*. Names and letter styles reflect children's internal rhythmic knowledges and flows. They transform their name writings into speaking across instruments, as with Curipaii on the drum. Rhythmic qualities are evident in the dancing of names, the body language versions like Dolphin's name-dive gesture. Rhythmic patterns are coded in color such as in the namepiece gifted to me by Sabemi in Phase 3.

The *individual* nature of Names practice is balanced with *exchange* of names, making our Language of a *collective-community* quality. Our Names are often *co-constructed*, with the whole group and all participants each quarter engaging together in some form of name teaching, choosing, and writing (kids, UGs, research team). UG names, especially in late Phase 1 and Phase 2 when kids were asked to teach UGs, are often invented by or with the children, as with Big Daddy, Boots, and BigCorazon.

Names exchange in Beats is the Language of loving kindness. The *loving* qualities of Language pervade the data in content, form, and aesthetic resonance. Pedagogically we are intentional about Love in Beats; we used the word all of the time, documented across all sources including on video, fieldnotes, and written artifacts. We asked kids what it is, and what it smells and feels like. They responded in written letters, love “smells like home baked cookies” and “feels like my mother's hug”. Furthermore, when people really like something they say they “Love” it. And kids say it a lot, such as in the names task when they interpret it as listing things you like and *love*.

Kids *say* Love as well. They tell me how much they “love Beats,” love “art”, and how they do and talk about it outside the Club, becoming teachers to peers and family. Pinkie’s wrote me a letter that read, “Dear Miss Triz, I love your writing and drawing! And I love playing with you.” – Pinky. Then on the scroll she documents her love again, saying, “I Love Beats So Much. I Can’t Stop anymore”. We say “Love” out-loud to each other, as in the final Cipa in Phase 3, our last session together as a whole group. As we went around and said final words, Stely, Roo, Violet, and many others’ comments included, “I love you” or “I love everyone”. We *be* and *become* the word, behaving lovingly toward each other in our participation and exchange, resolving conflicts peacefully through dialogue, ending in hugs. The UGs routinely pick up on this, especially by Phase 3, they marveled at a space so open for kids to be and explore freely; they commented on how kids seem to “Love” the Club and their teachers. They comment how easily kids fall into play with newcomers with such showing of kindness and care. They document the “smiles everywhere”, the laughter, the hi-5s, the holding hands; they label the ethos and ambience of the Club as kids “trust” in one another and in the Club.

When kids in Beats engaged in this *self-directed* Language pathway of names, as in the evolution of StyleWriting culture itself, “names just became Style” (Wicked Gary, 2011)²⁴. Transformations, changes take place across the practice and play of choosing and writing names. Our Beats names function like a mantra (Fontana, 1992), a word or idea

²⁴ Wicked Gary, is the leader of the first “graffiti *crew*”, the “Ex-Vandals. “Ex” stands for “experienced”. Today the crew is composed of aerosol Writers from around the world.

repeated over and over as method for building greater knowledge of the term. When the mantra repeated over and over is one's *name*, the thoughtful-fluid method builds greater knowledge of *self*. Each writing is a transformation of the physical name and *transforms* the writer; she uncovers always new meanings, nuance, aptitude, and possibility for honing and knowing her "essence" (Rossomando). Thinking of names as a mantra aligns with Hip Hop cultural knowledge that this self-inquiry method and mode "of looking into your own self is a deeply spiritual practice" (Pose2, 2011). Agency or 'freedom to choose', when combined with this search for personal authenticity through names, becomes 'freedom to choose *self*', *i.e.* self-determination. BCN practice and play is *self-determinative* Language. This final statement articulates a self-evident truth.

This self-determining is seen in the constant name changing and adding occurring. Giovanni is an early participant who from his names sequence of Feldspar to Gargoga to Maverick, shows him building ideas of what and who he is. As he writes these names he constantly changes the structures of letters, encrypting, twisting, turning, coding his names, a constant innovative restructuring of forms. In Phase 2, Magenta does something similar with her thirty-something names list that gets boiled down to her Top 3. She identifies with so many things, but boils it down to MagicalMusicButtercup. Later, when she and I met for our Summer-Dialogue, she had abandoned all of the previous names of the years, now choosing to be "Jelly Cakes," for a total of 3 years of constant, free name invention and change. She is conscious of the freedom, commenting after viewing the compiled pictures from Beats in our Summer Dialogue that she "felt free". Even Curipaii's nonverbal naming is consonant with this quest of self-determination and expression. She starts by writing her name repeatedly over time, and also moves quickly into inventing a danced language

version of her name, then having me devise a written code of these physical forms, so she can remember and practice at home. She drums her name, explaining that the three drumbeats she is playing for me are the syllables of Cu-ri-paii. She taps her cheek with two fingers, and jumps in the air to high-5, and explains that the gestural sequence means, “my name, Curipaii”. In so doing, kids’ conscious, innovative name practice and play, combined with its fluidity, develops an ever more precise, *authentic* representation of the child.

By writing and recording our selves through names, Beats Language is *deliberately documented/ary*. Documenting ourselves through taking pictures and video recording of our pieces and our Club play was introduced as a practice of and for all participants, and not merely a task of the researcher. Children immediately engaged in picking up the handheld video recorders we placed around the room toward the end of Phase 1, and then overtime took up leadership roles in the photographing and video recording of Club activity, such as Sabemi who by Phase 3 was stationed regularly behind the tripod and video camera, with the help of lil Pony, DJ3D, and others.

Kids carry names with them, practicing them *outside of the Club*, across contexts, time, and space. Early in Phase 1, Tina gave an example of how kids carry with them thoughts and development of names; she changes her name from one Club jam session to the next, from Secret Spy to Twilight Arrow. She tells me Secret Spy “wasn’t mysterious enough,” acknowledging her traveling out of the Club with names play in her thoughts, taking up the practice of innovation outside of Club time and returning to the Club with fresh ideas.

Following Tina, many other kids take the practice with them, writing and drawing at home, showing their families, teaching siblings, and bringing back the stories and work

products of these outside explorations back to the Club. They create name pieces of their own names in their free time, such as in Phase 3's proliferations of pieces made by Sweet-T, Curipaii, Sabemi, and Stegs; these four kids and many others also made name pieces for others, their teachers, friends, and UGs, giving praise and thanks. By doing these writings outside, across contexts, they continue beyond the Club space and time, their multi-dimensional names engagement.

Across three years of the Club they continued the practice in *sustained* over time engagement. Sustained Language engagement is seen in the earliest practices of e.g. name changing, that continued through until the end by kids such as Magenta, an original Beats participants, who becomes Jelly Cakes. Three years later in our Summer Dialogue she was still choosing new names. Names were changing up through the end of Phase 3, such as with Picok, Waza, and Gian in the Summer Dialogues.

Finally, the most common and distinctive quality (pattern) of names Language, present across all data sources, is that is *variable* by and *unique* or *original* to the child, evidence of the emergence and development of personal "Style" (Rossomando). While all of the Language qualities in the above section pertain to a cultural definition or outcome of Style practice, 'originality' is the heart or core of the term as a pedagogical construct. As Phase2 remarks:

To "have style" usually means to paint in a way that is almost patented and exclusive to a particular writer. ...[it] can be connected with skill, but when we speak of the "the style Factor," it's more often in relationship to letters and their structural, innovative or original qualities. (Rossomando, 1996, p. 72)

This final overarching quality of names Language was apparent from the beginning as in Stely and Caiyls' NAMES Tasks; two completely different methods and work product were engaged by both girls; this occurring on both their first and second

Tasks of Phase 1. These findings around originality emerged in my Phase 1 early analysis of kids' Club naming, as well.

There are kinds of “disconfirming” evidence for these assertions around originality. Sometimes in their processes of developing originality through Names play, kids copy each other or somehow follow the lead of another child, as e.g. when Roo mimics her older sister G.G.Bear, writing the exact same sequence of words on the Scroll – Tina, Tina, Triz, or when Roo mimics *my* name writing; she wrote on the Scroll a sequence of “Tris” then “Trees”, then “3-s.” (See Appendix IV-M). She copies the writing because she is learning how to do it for herself at the earliest stages of trying; importantly here, Roo does not just repeat what Trina or I did, she also riffs with the sounds of her writing, floating from phonetic “trees” to “3s”[threes], a similar sound – perhaps what the Spanish roll of the R in “Beatriz” sounds like to her (and to Giovanni, who once told me my pieces should always include drawings of trees and number threes).

Kids also copy each other in other ways that would be considered culturally as “biting,” behavior not accepted (Rossomando). Smarties and Fina once briefly clashed around this. =They had both used the same overall composition and block letter style for their similar pieces in Phase 1 – each wrote their name in large, black block letters in the center of a looseleaf, with the backdrop including smaller hand-styled name-writings repeating over and again, from left to right in rows across the entire background. When I praised Fina that day, Smarties blurted out that she had copied him. When I looked at both drawings and pulled out my binder of samples, both pieces looked very much like an example I had done of my name, AYA.

In addition, some new Phase 2 participants (who had not participated in the NAMES Task) chose the same names; both Brian and Brenton wanted to be AngryBirdStarWars, and Q.T., Dolphin, and Picok all called themselves Lalaloopsy. With these moments I took the opportunity to talk about “biting,” insisting as is culturally acceptable that they at least put a number at the end to distinguish one from the other, i.e. ABSW 1 & 2, Lalaloopsy 1, 2 and 3. The kids happily complied with this and often had to remind me who was which number.

Many kids shared names in common, as in the use of CeCe, occurrences of which are clarified by a second name, as in StelyCeCe and CeCeSabemi. We had a “Rockie”, “Roki”, and “Rockyroad”, at least a few “Cupcakes” and “Hello Kitty”, and various names inspired by cats, such as Caiyl, KimmyKittie, Catoso.

As a principle evident across the whole of BCN, however, kids name writing-stylizing cannot be said to be copies of each other. Each child brings to the Cipa dialogue their distinct flavors and methods/approaches to their Beats Club Naming, and no two stories or overall styles of any children are ever the same. This extends from the letters and symbols they write, into the modal combination each chooses to use. For example, while Giovanni’s name practice is regularly written, with his name-signature signed across the Scroll and multiple artifacts, Sammi takes up names as an oral practice of exchange through bestowing names and spoken game-play such as switching names with Tina. There were no other expressions the same as Curipaii’s sequence from dancing to drumming to gesturing her name.

Furthermore not only is each child and her naming unique, but also each name *piece*, each writing-stylized-modal-combination of name expression, is unique in form.

Elements do repeat in kids' names, and they are simultaneously being transformed in use, like Curipaii who changes spelling each time between C and K, and writing with both one and two "ii"s at the end. In Giovanni's name sequence he uses the same letter style in his first and last pieces of his given name, but the content and symbolics are changed and expanded each time. This is to be expected; one's signature maintains a structure of flow that is regular in organic style, and that also cannot actually be recreated precisely the same twice, even by the Writer.

Thus, about our Beats Names, in simple summary rhyme I ascertain, that when you simplify the frame, the bottom line is, none of us is the same. My early findings of the unique Style-play forms of each child are upheld and strengthened with additional years of study and experimentation. No two children or their Language is the same; each child brings their own flavor and flow. This is the human condition of Language. Hip Hop's cultural expectation of the original individual means Style is our *standard for excellence* in Language.

The list of these *Qualities* noted in Appendix IV-AF could be re-named *Expected Language Outcomes* of names practice, answering how Hip Hop cultural names practice shaped kids' *Language* in Beats.

Name Literacy(ies): Definitions and kinds. The expansive view of Language shown through BCN activity above, is rich with evidence of children's multiple kinds of *competencies* or *Literacies* -- the different kinds of things they know, like, love, and can do. Beats names also signal *potentials* of kids' Literacies.

To build the analytic frame necessary to overstand how names shape Literacy(ies), I turned to the dozens of written name *artifacts* collected. In approaching

the creative taxonomic task of building “kinds of Literacy(ies)”, I looked at each and all of the name artifacts and posed this series of questions. How can these signatures, original name works be interpreted for their Literacies? What is apparent visually in the physical forms of name writings? What *kinds* of Literacies or competencies are evident?

The answers I figured could best be discerned by looking at each piece closely. I went back to Giovanni’s composition book sequence, and began there (Appendix IV-L). Looking at his first signature, his given name,  iovanni, then quickly across the other 5, most easily identifiable are his *alphabetic* literacies, his technical knowledges-and-ability-to-draw the letter forms, here of English language or “Roman” alphabet. I notice how he is playing around with the letters, changing, switching, reversing, leaving them out. I notice how he pairs his letters and name-texts with different symbolic design elements such as flames and a peace sign on Feldspar, showing his *semiotic* knowledge and experimentation. Through names, letters and symbols become joined, resulting in the letters taking on greater symbolism, with ever-more meaning packed into few letters of the name. Giovanni combines letters and symbols together, and through both kinds of tool, through a unified linguistics and semiotics approach, he amplifies meanings and possibilities of his self. In accordance with the all-systems definition for name Language noted above, together these alphabetics and semiotics are structural *Language* competencies I *see* in names.

Accompanying what is structurally visible in his written letters and drawn designs, are Giovanni’s *aesthetic* literacies. Letters and symbols paired with his sensory-intellectual experience across the writing of this 6 page sequence, carrying the reasoning behind his choices. He begins with his given name, Giovanni, then moves to his most

recent choice of Maverick, then chronologically backwards to Gargoga, his 2nd name, then Feldspar his first. His multiple name choices involve robots, birds, planes, minerals, warriors, all imaginative musings of his sensory realms, engaging internal “relationships between things and thoughts and ideas” (Eagleton). For example, in our exchange about his newest name Maverick, he says he chose it “because I like birds,” jumping somehow in his rationale from liking birds to calling himself Maverick, then saying it is a jet that is like a “robot-bird”. This Dialogue tells me he is both conscious of the rationale behind his name choice, i.e. he is thinking about it. And in his writings he is also flowing, making “mistakes” like leaving out letters, and improvising ideas, such as the schoolbus space ship drawing following Feldspar. As he works back to his first name, he returns psychically back to that time, recalling and documenting the associated fun activity of blasting off like a spaceship into the classroom. Here he also changes the concept of spaceship, building it from a school bus and dirty parts from his garage.

The alphabetic and semiotic forms of his names are full with personalized forms (robotic style), flows (sequence of thought from first to last page), and meanings (symbolic content/reasoning). When I talk to Giovanni about it, I confirm sensory relationships between his writings, thoughts, and flows. When he writes Gargoga, for example, he marks in the writing the sensate qualities of the act, writing next to his wiggly lined signature, “lol.” He confirms for me in dialogue that the wavy line style made him laugh out loud as he wrote it. Similarly, he expresses a personal feeling of satisfaction and closure to the names sequence, when at the end he returns from a journey across names and memories of the Club, to his given name, writing “✓ done editing” next to his final Giovanni signature.

Infused and encoded in all kids' name-writings is this knowledge of what they know how to write, combined with what they think and feel. Their names codify these sensate pathways in writing. Kids intentionally and unconsciously explore and manipulate shape, form, dimension, color, meaning, abstraction, spacing, and overall composition. In and through these factors, kids fluidly, assign personal, symbolic values to their letters and symbol use. Aesthetics involves all of the meanings attached to name writings and rationales. Aesthetic literacies involve kids' *choices* of linguistic and semiotic forms, e.g. why Giovanni chose the cursive Z for his G, because it is cool; why he chose Maverick, because he likes birds.

When kids think of and choose not just things or concepts, but *letters* they like and love to draw, they are developing Language knowledge and skill tied to sensate experience. In this way the writing of one's names stimulates development of a personalized relationship to Language, to the feeling and resonances of sound and word play and symbolic potential between the letters/words/Language that come out of our mouths, gestures, rhythms, and hand drawn flows, all sensate representations of ourselves. Thus our on-going dialogue of names encourages and develops their fluencies in *feeling* Language, opening a window into "the whole of [kids'] sensate lives" (Eagleton, 1988). Writing names involves channeling all sensory sources (feeling Language) and bringing them as evidence and tools for our reasoning and intellectual endeavor, practicing Language as it occurs inside the self.

The alphabetic-semiotic and aesthetic literacies of Giovanni's name writings merge to evidence his *calligraphic* literacies, his self-styled artistry of written script, or *handstyle(s)*. This involves the taking of a standard shape of letter and giving it the

personal touch, the feel and flow of the writer, as in Giovanni's repeated over time and evolving robotic style script. Through the hand is how and where names become Style. It is a process where the aesthetic experience, the lived life of the writer becomes structurally visible and interpretable in their written symbologies, flows, and maps of the self. Calligraphic competency is where structural literacies cross with and awaken one's self-knowledge of their uniqueness or originality, following the truth that no-two signatures are the same. This cultural approach to Language and Writing as artform or craft, stimulates kids' *creative* literacies. The sparking of kids' creativity through names-practice and play is suggested in artifacts and activity by their experimentations and inventions with names and their consequent originality in practice. In other words, originality as an outcome of names practice stems from the child's creative action.

Giovanni is experimenting, deviating from standard use when he replace the written G with a cursive "G". When he jumps from his given name on the first page to his *third* and *most recent* name on the second page, "Maverick," he is already comfortable enough to begin reversing the letters (backwards c), turning them into symbols (k into star), and adorning them with other designs. He does the same kind of experimentation, free play with his other names, encoding the letters of the fourth page writing of "Feldspar", for example, by reversing letter order, and inverting and changing letters. These are all personalized by Jeremiah's internal dialogue, which seems to constantly be pushing him to change form, meaning, and use of symbols showing his creativity of form and content.

Evident is a purposeful, conscious intent of each Writer to *create* something fresh, through thought/visually mapped-out, practiced, *and* improvised names play. Creativity engagement is seen in their names process as well as the manifestation of a result, a name

production. Names are a practice a method for engaging the human condition of creativity. In this Beats model, kids show and develop not just “New” Literacies, as if our expressive modalities of body Language and aurality were something just invented, but Human Literacies, the capacities and potentials possessed by all of us to create and communicate.

An expansive, inclusive re-(de)fining of Language and Literacy stand at the heart of Hip Hop’s educational paradigm shift. This re-de-fining provide the “standards” framework for Language and Literacies assessment of our Hip Hop names.

The third dimension: Engagement in self & Style. Other kinds of competencies are evident in BCN, requiring a third prism construct for assessment. The meanings and forms expressed in these Beats Names, are not static; they flow and fluctuate, always indicating a *biographic state* (Blommaert & Backus, 2011; KRS-One, 2009) of the child’s being, mind, and life.

Kids write with a pencil or marker at first, on looseleaf paper. By writing letters, they practice what they know, they see it in front of them, and gain awareness of their knowing. As they write and receive supports and encouragement, they begin to change, flip, try different ways and forms to develop and perfect the writings; they begin to “write-stylize”. They begin to re-visualize and re-write the letters conforming to standard shapes and also veering away from them, as is learned through cursive writing. No longer simple or standard letterforms, their *signatures* begin to form in the personal touches of shape, rhythm, and flow. This stylizing writing practice sparks kids’ conscious awareness of their *selves*, and their flow. Thus as kids Write (draw, dance, sing, gesture, rhythm) their names they show and grow multiple kinds of these *self-Literacies*. Self knowledges include e.g. emotional, social, cultural, linguistic, familial,

spiritual competencies grown from across life-worlds, deployed in names. They choose and change their names based on these emerging self-Literacies; e.g. Red Reader Artista, who changes her name from Flower Girl, to show and signify her interests in color, literacy, and art. In *writing* the names they choose children engage in a cultural tradition of *self-honoring* and *self-praise* (Miller 2002). They show and grow a love of self ; they start declaring, “My name is Stegs, and I am an artist”. They tell us in surveys, “My name is Magenta, I know art.” They tell us they are “good at names”. Their self-love and self-knowledge take form of self-esteem, self-worth, and confidence. Helpful here is Magenta’s declaration of our Summer Dialogue. I asked her as a participant who had been inventing and writing names for years, “What do we learn by inventing our names and writing them over and over in a stylized way?” She answered, “to be proud of ourselves.” Then when I asked her to describe *her* Style, she said, “I am creative and curious”; I thought this a spot-on self-assessment considering her lists of names and constant reformulations.

As kids *continue* to *write* their names, they gain fluidity and fluency in their selves. Styles of writing, talking, walking, playing, dressing – the information is everywhere swirling in the Club. Each child is unique, each forging their own path of engagement through these cultural practices, tapping into their essence and unique contributions and potentials. When kids focus on knowing themselves – what they love, how they be essentially – they turn on to learning, because it has been made/offered relevant. The child’s pathways to and through learning, becomes *self-directed*, with each child *setting their own standard/s* for who they are and how they engage with the practice. This is not a question of just amassing content knowledge or knowing a technical skill, as in other

notions of Language and Literacy, with pre-selected narrow standards for what makes a child or person “literate”. Here we go beyond just skills, to the powers of the whole self and the functional possibilities of Language to create, to bring possibilities into being. Hip Hop names offers an approach/method for self-motivated, self-directed learning, or *la autoeducación*. Style places learning on the terms and literally in the hands of the individual Writer.

The fourth dimension: community-culture. The self-knowledge and love kids gain from individual name practice and play, extends to their relationships with others, translating, traversing across *exchange* of Beats names with each other. We do names as a community-cultural practice, and we co-construct our Community and Culture.

This fourth dimension involves the taxonomies of *why* we do names. First we do names to know, announce and proclaim ourselves; then also to communicate, join, practice, and play with one another. We practice names to praise, love, and laugh with one another, building communities of respect and free expression. We write names to document ourselves and our community activity, like on the Scroll. Through names we aim to build, not mere ‘history’, but Ourstory, our Beatstory. These purposes implicate the development of *relational, dialogic, communicative* competencies. Through our dialogic play, our love for it, and for our friends, we raise a collective awareness of the special qualities of our community, and the names practice special to Beats. We develop a sense of collective awareness and social solidarity around our practice; we live the cultural principle of unity.

We also create a culture where everyone leads, in their own ways, with their own methods and styles. Expert roles rapidly shift in the Beats Cipa, as kids’ become

teachers of names to regularly occurring new entrants to the community. Each mode of teaching is distinct, with children using their own invented strategies and names game-play mechanisms. All become teachers of the practice, and learners of the practice- a Hip Hop community of teachers and learners. Kids called Beats “a family.” They say it “feels like home” and it “feels free”.

In Beats we built from each others’ flavors and flows, a harmonic aesthetics of our group naming, weaving together our patterned tapestries of fun and Style. We evolved as a collective-community of Style, and names overtime became more like a ritual (Asante, 1990), a universal practice “that restores and promotes balance.” (p. 93)

Engagement across contexts: the fifth dimension. Kids who engage with names in the Club often travel with names outside of the Club into other lifeworlds. The fifth dimension of engagement in names activity is that which occurs *across contexts* of children’s lives. This makes sense, as names are relevant everywhere, across lifeworlds, “in and out of school” (Hull & Schulz, 2001).

Name representations reflect these other places and kinds of symbolic meanings and possibilities, including the *content* of what kids do at home (family, food, play, television, video games) and the places and *contexts* they visit outside of school (church, the beach, library, grandmas house, travel). These so-called “out-of-school” *content-context* Language markers occur through names, *together with* school-based references to and knowledges of science, math, and language arts concepts.

By Phase 3 the proliferation of pieces making their way to me in the Club mimicked how I had gone home and made pieces for kids and in my book, returning to share and gift to kids. e.g. Curipaii, Steps, Sweet-T, and Sabemi (Appendixes IV-W).

These visual artifacts completed outside of the Club show that they *think about and act upon* names across physical borders of space and in their own time, of their own desire and volition. They are thinking about it, about their name inventions, expanding them out, flippin them around, exploring possibilities, choosing one, or a list of names to assign themselves. They are drawing and doing it, naming themselves freely, beyond the border of Beats.

When the kids do this activity of writing names elsewhere, they pull in stories and knowledges of those space, telling me about it in our dialogue. I, their teacher, have a means to see the child as a whole being, including who they are in and across all contexts. Through names I see who they are irrespective of context as well; names and related activities capture children's meanderings and wonderings into far off mind spaces of thought and flow, where context is the internal self. Names became a conduit for the merging of these things grown from across contexts and lifeworlds. Children take up names as a whole, lived practice of engaged learning and growth.

Pedagogy Findings. Throughout analyses, as I formed my sense of what kids were doing with names, I also began asking what environmental factors were supporting and shaping this Five-Dimensionality. I asked myself if/whether it were possible that such multi-dimensional, free play with names could be independent from the Club context or the people leading it. Put another way, if this is how kids engaged and behaved in Beats, to what extent did it relate to the approaches *I* took in formulating and introducing names possibility. Would kids be inventing names, playing around in these ways without such a stimulus? It is possible of course, and yet my impact, my role in Beats development had to be considered.

I reframed BCN activity as a “response to instruction” or “intervention,” and began applying the same style of pattern analyses techniques used in analyzing kids’ activity, to the data coded in blue as Pedagogy (meaning related to the approach to teaching and learning). In this fresh turn on analysis I makes sense of *myself* as the “animatrice”²⁵ of names, and my developing Hip Hop based approach in Beats; here I build the Methodological self-study via pattern analyses. Through a similar manner of analytic (re)reviewing, (re)coding, and (re)mapping of yellow Names data, I organize the blue Pedagogy bits. I construct from these analyses a *True Hip Hop Pedagogy* (THHP). True means following the cultural framework articulated in Chapter 2. This model includes discussion of the “Teacha” (KRS-One), and a Common Core of dimensions and themes of this Hip Hop scheme.

Through this analysis of my Pedagogy, I enrich my understanding of kids activity in response, enhancing the validity of the findings claims of the prior section. Such an analysis also supports a more rigorous and robust answer to the research question.

Main dimensions & themes of Beats’ educational scheme. I was reluctant about trying to match up my “Call” to the children’s responses, because it was unpredictable how they were going to respond. I was uneasy to place myself in the position of self-study. What if I did not like what I found? How to look deeply into and interpret one’s own actions, from the evidence, maintaining an objective prismview? Not to mention emotionally, psychically what it means to search for the truth of who your are. This is no minor *task*, and many would say there are no patented methods. But

²⁵ I was referred to this French term for teacher in the fieldnotes of Dr. Anderson-Levitt. “AnimaTriz.”

in Beats, glaring in analyses of kids' naming were many instances in which names-play was directly responsive to the pedagogical intervention, such as when kids began writing their names and dancing their names with me immediately after I had introducing these concepts, responding with instantaneous engagement. Many of their techniques in choosing names followed and riffed from the Task method; after the introduction of dancing names in early Phase 2, it became a common practice for not just Curipaii and Roki, but also, Lil pony, Dolphin, Q. T. Picok, and Magenta, that I witnessed. In Phase 2, and 3, kids brought me pieces on multiple occasions, and said "look, like your book!" There was also Cassie's response to my more explicit cultural instruction, using the term StyleWriting; she said, "I want to learn that!" And my favorite praise piece, Pinkie's Scroll writing, "I love Beats so much, I can't stop any more".

Further, many of them said, I love *you* Miss Triz. "I love your writing and drawing. And I love playing with you," wrote Pinky. Prncs Pech (Lichita's spelling for Princess Peach) wrote me a letter saying how much she loved Beats, "but most of all it's you, Miss Triz," that makes Beats so special, "so much fun" she said. Self-study must involve building one's self up and owning and living into potentials of greatness. I had not wanted to study myself, because I was uncomfortable about making myself seem great; but wait; a True Teacha of Hip Hop must build and stand up to their own greatness in order to model and nurture kids to do and be the same. I had to say and believe in (the) MissTriz/mysteries.

As discussed in Section C of Chapter III, I coded the 323 blue Pedagogy data bits identified across the Tome, and assigned 83 descriptive (sub)codes written on blue post-its and stuck to my blank beige wall. My awareness of any sort of organized framework

for my own approach began forming as I laid eyes on this blue cluster of *papelitos*. I zoomed my focus in on the words written on each, and quickly began reorganizing in my head and on the wall. The “Tools” of pedagogy immediately stood out – nametags and pieces, the Scroll, singing and dancing, the Drum and Blackbook. These “tools” overlapped into codes that reflected Club “Strategies”, such as praising and listening to children and documenting names. The strategies overlapped into some kind of embodied-in-the-teacher qualities of consciousness, values, and ideologies, plus personal touches and flares; these I grouped as the “Craft” of Pedagogy. I reorganized the post-its into this CST framing – Craft, Strategy, Tool - then into a columned Table format for these three *dimensions* of Pedagogy. As I continued refining the Table, codes that overlapped across the three dimensions were drawn up into the cell above, forming a Common Core of *themes* of Beats Club names Pedagogy.

The following discussion of themes and dimensions matches with the Pedagogy Table list of Appendix IV-AG, a final version after multiple edits over many months of analyses and reorganizations, re-explanations of Pedagogy data.

Teacha Flow.

*The Teacha comes to you in effect/
from a different style, a whole different sect/
I inject force and intellect.../
I come correct and practice what I preach./
I don't pimp or rule you, I teach! (KRS-One & D-Nice, 1990)*

The role of the teacher in a Hip Hop educational context is distinguishable from a traditional teacher model. Rather than holding a lecturing position, standing in front of the class to “rule” activity, the *Teacha* holds a moving tether-point of the dynamic Cipa circle. The main post of the Teacha is *environment creation and cultivation*. A Teacha

will teach, listen, observe, document, study, and respond/re-animate, modeling and cultivating *Flow*. This requires the Teacha to possess and take up multiples roles, adaptable to context. The following are the roles and responsibilities of which a Teacha must continually raise her own awareness, molding and merging pedagogy and practice. The goal/expected outcomes are to build relationships with students, and strive to enhance the authenticity of the context and therefore of the data.

Cultural participant. Becoming a Teacha comes first through cultural engagement in practice. A Teacha lives Hip Hop according to its practices and principles (Chapter II, Hip Hop Pedagogy), “building their craft”. A Teacha must do the artforms, must engage in inventing and writing names, as she asks of children. She must live Style, setting the example for children, and translating the freshness of her own works into “curriculum” and classroom activities. Engagement in practice develops the cultural skills, knowledge, and consciousness for assessing kids when they do it; it is what establishes the authority to teach. Descriptive codes in the data to this end include, e.g.:

- Embedding Cultural Concepts
- Names
- Planet Rock
- Cloud Ridiculous
- Improvisation
- Experimentation
- Color use
- Originality – no biting
- Connect to Earth (seen in blackbook drawing patterns of nature, lunar cycles, tides, local plant knowledge)

By engaging in practice, the Teacha engages the self-Mixing and Making described of kids’ activity, making or defining herself and the approach to teaching.

Teacher. Being a teacher is considered a cultural responsibility of all hiphoppas, signaled in the “each one teach one” mantra. A teacher role in Hip Hop culture is largely

one of mentorship in which the Teacha humbly considers themselves “Always a Student”²⁶. A Teacha should be highly conscious of the learning environment and her ability to shape it, as well as the many cultural tools for doing so. A Teacha should also be highly consciousness of their *views of students*, and how those get practiced. Kids should be viewed as agentive and full of knowledge and potential. In the descriptive coding this appears as Kids Know and they can Flow, and they will Show this when the teacher’s views them as capable of original innovative work. When kids show, they automatically grow.

There is no other way to study Hip Hop education, there must be explicit instruction going on, explicit engagement with kids in the space, through experimental and improvisational methods; Hip Hop schooling cannot be strictly scripted or rigidly standardized; rather the Teacha takes the Hip Hop Pedagogy framework as a foundation for exploring the possibilities for instruction.

Researcher. Hip Hop positions the teacher in the room to think of their self as a researcher, considering how one studies and makes sense of kids’ learning. A Teacha assesses kids’ activity this way in order to build from it. Often the researcher does the imbalancing, reminding us to look–hear–feel from multiple angles, possibilities, disrupting and perhaps making things uncomfortable. The model is of an observer-participant, watching and listening to children and animating activity in response.

In sum, bring to your teaching the lived experience of Style and Hip Hop

²⁶ The mantra, brand tag line drawn from pioneering Hip Hop cultural educator Paulskee and his Mighty4 Hip Hop Arts Foundation.

practice. Experiment from there with pedagogy, putting it into practice. Document the process so that you can analyze, build further instruction. These things take time, labor, patience, relationship building, self-care, listening-observing, reflecting, asking questions, and imbalancing the equilibrium to let it reestablish itself. These roles make use of multiple tools and strategies.

These Teacha identity categories overlap, exist simultaneously, and develop, merge and flow together in a Whole Lived Approach and Practice of teaching, learning, and inquiry, using all means available and necessary. This makes sense, because how can you study a child's response to you as a teacher, *if you form no awareness of what you are doing, and the underlying values, ideologies, influences, and frameworks for your practice*. The Teacha is always also a student, of self and society.

Under the traditional view in Western academe, a researcher's study of their self is presumed to bias the study. In a Hip Hop cultural Pedagogy and Methodology, the concept is flipped; self-study is an *absolute, generative requirement of rigor*.

Common, core themes. ext in the explanatory scheme of Pedagogy of Appendix IV-AG, are the Common Core Themes, the patterns of my Beats approach. As I organized the descriptive (sub)codes of Pedagogy data bits into the dimensions of craft, strategies, and tools, the following codes were common across these dimensions.

Play all day. A culture boasting a core principle of "having fun" poses a play-based approach to learning. In all-elements of practice is involved play with Language, letters, ideas, and communication. How to teach play but *through* play? From the beginning of their lives, children learn through play. It is the most fundamental of

human learning modes and something we tend to abandon as we age into adolescence and adulthood, and especially in school.

In Beats, we are intentional about this play orientation and are sure to keep asking ourselves how and what it means and how to do it. The Teacha scaffolds this play in her own practice. Cloud Ridiculous introduction to Phase 3 is an example of my efforts, setting the standard of play at the most fun possible.

Classroom learning through play represents a paradigm shift in education and schooling. Play implies a pedagogical orientation of improvisation, experimentation, and innovation. How will children innovate if they are not shown how, or what it means? If a teacher neglects to show up for this creative task, limiting practice to standard forms, how can kids be expected to innovative or take interest in learning, or reach for their heights and potentials? Only through play as pedagogical method do we truly discover new things, every moment an opportunity for choice - follow the rule, don't follow the rule, change the rule. Let that flow and tumble without fear of failure. Because someone will always help you up; you are never a failure, a frame that is irrelevant in this play educational paradigm. Found across three years of Beats Pedagogy and practice were on-going cycles of Call & Response *Play*.

It became so in-grained, the valuing of having fun and playing, that children defend their right to play. UG Harvati noted in Phase 3:

DJ3D is playing on the iPad by herself when Taylor asks for help putting away the name tags. DJ3D does not respond to Taylor's request and instead keeps playing as if she heard nothing. Taylor then repeats the question and says hello to which DJ3D responds (O.C. very matter of factly), "I'm playing." (Harvati, UG Field notes, 5.22.13)

We are stimulated in play by the engagement of our whole bodies in activity.

Whole bodies means all modes and means engagement - we use our voices and our silence, our body language and stillness, gesticulating, laughter, showing and whispering, running and talking, and tagging each other. In Beats and in Hip Hop culture, we engage our whole selves in communities of play-practice.

Names tool. A humanizing pedagogy starts by taking each person for who they are, giving them the space to tell you who they are, for you to listen, and build up together. As a mentor it means pushing kids' potentials for flow across fun, and playing with Language and ideas. Beats is a place where everyone is welcome, loved, revered for their unique selves, and treated as equally important to the fabric of our community.

Names are a principle relationship and community-building tool in Beats. Kids' engagement in names follows the teacher's scaffolding through the Task. And just as self-inquiry is no minor task, neither is the NAMES Task so minor. The Task was just an idea I invented to stimulate possibilities. I start with my own names, I grow and show my new name, teaching from my prismview of how I interpreted the task of name invention. I invent my name using all different ways, playing with swirly letters, foundational principles of myself, and just flowing through the thought, until a 3 letter calculation core was reached – AYA. In the second facilitation I show my own growth from regular practice; i.e. I do not just show up and do name in Beats, I do it everywhere, a daily lived practice.

Again, by not standardizing, and by personalizing the bounds of what kids are being asked to do, they respond by riffing from this model. And since they come to the Club with so much Knowledge and individual experience, their strategies are always different; their learning, their Language will always be different, from one another. So,

creating a space where we share our different methods for learning, for saying,-dancing-drumming-signing things, signing our Selves. By doing names we gain a rush of good feeling, of self –love and pride and fun, so we can’t stop. It is as though it invades our everywhere thinking and doing, it is infectious, multiviral. Then we look back at we have done and documented over time, and we can see in our Names progression, our learning.

Names act as an agent for building Club activity, foundationally across all other of our play. They provide a unit of measurement, a tool for assessment, for seeing where and who kids are, and how to support their selves and learning. These names help us recalibrate, and find our center so that it holds, cultivating a community of Writers of Style, all with funky crazy names with poignant backstories.

Dialogue. “Dialogue” is the most frequently occurring descriptive (sub)code in the entire Tome, across all domains, making it the main Craft, Strategy, and Tool of Beats. In the Names Call, I talk with my body, my blackbook, and the drum. I improvise and try things. The dialogic Response I cannot predict; this is the nature of Dialogue.

This mutual exchange – I share-you share – *builds relationships*, community, and Culture of the Club. This is seen in Pedagogy (sub)codes of respect, trust, love, and safety. Hip Hop Naming offers a method for the dialogic “divine dance of teaching and learning” (Nobles, 2008, p. 738).

All-modes, all-means necessary. As suggested in kids’ activity, discussed in the previous Section B Findings, our play with Names in Dialogue makes use of *all modes and means* possible and necessary. Kids engage five-dimensionally. In Beats Pedagogy all modes and means include, explicit language, vocabulary, drum speak, alphabets,

singing, clapping, gesture, dance, and combinations of these and other communicative pattern options. It includes the visuals of my blackbook, the color language, symbolics, written patterns and codes, and all Writing I do across lifeworlds.

Love. The kids In Beats express their love for the Club in response to a teacher stance of *Love*. Love is a major theme in the data. Kids love Beats because they feel validated, honored, and treated with kindness. They love Beats because they can “do whatever we want” and “have many friends.” The most important orientation of Beats and Hip Hop Love is to be *unapologetic about Love* as an essential, vital tool. This is important in these times when urban youth “get no Love”. Flipping the script involves not being timid about the power and potential of Love. Love is what we explore together. We ask what does it mean to each of us, feel like, smell and taste like. We share ideas of Love, we share and say the word “Love,” in community. Through names, we look inward with Love, learning to Love ourselves, so we can know how to love others.

Beats began with the Love, something I noted and spent extensive discussion on in the proposal stage. This study is as much a study of Love as it is names, as a lived practice; love in all its forms and possibilities explored consciously by the Teacha. Love as defined and expressed by myself to children, and them in return.

Whole-child approach. The prior five themes help build a Hip Hop, *whole-child approach* to teaching and learning. This means connecting kids’ whole culture and community history and traditions in the space, *and* connecting all of their aesthetic experience and knowledge, developing perceptive awareness. Looking at the child, who they are, their activity and behaviors wholistically.

A whole-child approach requires on-going *assessment*, change, and refining of the space, to build future instruction from kids play patterns. Required are listening, observing, reflecting, interpreting, adapting and adjusting to context, needs, and environment. It involves asking questions of children; creating space for kids to make statements and meanings. Assessment as discussed in Chapter III is achieved through multiple information sources (scroll, photos, name pieces, video recordings, fieldnotes, surveys), engaging multi-perspectives (researcher, UGs, children).

Miss Triz, Mysteries, MisStories. I approach my teaching as art, a creative task - the art of pedagogy. I like to keep the classroom full of surprises, variety; I keep it fresh all the time, every event, class, every blackbook session, meeting, and passing, is an event, to be prepared for with a balance of ideas, inventions, visuals, choices, and free space for exploring freeness. Kids say, every time is different, and each time we are getting better. We do different thing, like play, and draw, and play, said Curipaii in our Phase 3 Dialogue. I do this work of Names for and with them, together to build a community, to envision and bring to life possibilities of free imagination, inspiration, and invention with letters, words, ideas, meanings across dialogic game play. I tend towards using visuals, rhymes, performativity, storytelling, giving options, mixing things up, doing the arts together/collective activities, physical activities, singing, instruments, not too much talking, letting the visuals speak, and asking kids what they think. I know, develop ability for when to push and say I think you can do better. I praise kids for their efforts, engaging in continuous dialogue to set the bar higher and higher, guiding and letting kids guide.

My approach results in rich, sustained engagement in Language, Literacy, and

Learning. I animate kids' creativities, modeling the Style standard for excellence as ongoing practice and innovation that is fun and fluid. It is an approach that cultivates the unique qualities, interests, and potentials of each child as a whole person, in whole communities, flipping the script one final time - not a pedagogy of the oppressed, but a pedagogy of the free.

Summary Findings: Making and Mixing Language, Literacy, and Learning through Names

This study shows the expansive and dynamic Language and Literacy possibilities (outcomes) stemming from a community practice of Style (Aerosoul3, 2012; Rossomando, 1996). Having looked from the perspectives of all participants in the Club and having applied various kinds of creative analyses to the corpus of data, the Beats patterns of the playful Call and the emphatic Response, are revealed. And Curipaii's 5th-dimension wisdom is sealed, from that day she declared, "Beats is Real!"

The previous two sections' analyses of Beats Club Naming - kids' name practice and Teacha names pedagogy - support a robust answering of the research question.

When met by a True Hip Hop Pedagogy approach like that engaged in Beats, children engaged multi-dimensionally in Language, Literacy, *and Learning*.

Children follow the pedagogical approach of names-based dialogic play with all-modal Language, by responding in kind. They use all available, offered Language tools for inventing names, playing with letters and ideas. And they Riff into possibility; they invent newness in response to an approach that encourages it. When this names dialogue was sustained over time as a process of all-modal creative expression and consciousness-raising, each (and almost every) child put to work and developed richly

their competencies or Literacies, of Language, self, and Style. These competencies stimulated include kids' alphabetic and semiotic knowledge and learning, their aesthetic and calligraphic ways, and their unique creativities. Names are a self-inquiry method where kids tap into and channel their internal essence; they come to know and grow who they are, showing great individuality -fresh flavas, drawn from their unique experiences, knowledge, abilities, whole selves and lives. Children beam full of self-esteem, self-love, feeling full of power, and awareness. Names stimulate the human condition of Creativity and Originality, and the human rights of self-determination and freedom.

When we do this all together, we build a Beats *community* of self-determining learners, Stylist Writers, innovators, and *Creatives* engaged deeply with Language and Literacies through dialogic play. Our Names approach to Language engagement and Literacy development, they carry with them to everywhere contexts, approaching life as caring learners, and learning as something taking place in every of our settings, across lifeworlds. Beats approaches to Language and Literacy further shape and support children, by providing a *whole-child* framework for kids to develop a love for learning and themselves in community. This is the cultural essence of Style Writing and all Hip Hop elements – free language self-expression and growth in collective-learning-communities of Style.

This Beats kids' engagement with names practices and pedagogies provides an evidentiary bases for articulating a Hip Hop cultural overstanding of what constitutes Language and Literacy.

A Theory of Hip Hop Language and Literacy(ies) practice.

Hip Hop Language. Hip Hop Language in theory and practice is not narrow, rigid, or strictly bound, distinguishing it from the design of Western, schooling models. Hip Hop Language is conceptually and practically expansive, fluid, flexible, and free. Language is dynamic, constantly, unpredictably, and rhythmically in motion, changing form with practically every utterance. “The culture’s foundation is of language, and its function is immersed in it. The manipulation of the word even to the extreme has always been the strength of this [Style] movement” (Rossomando, 1996, p. 104).

Accessing an all-elements approach to education is equivalent to a Language model that is *all-modal*. The core-four practice pillars of Hip Hop – being a Writer, Deejay, Bboy/Bgirl, and/or Emcee - engage all possible human modes for communicative, creative expression. Hiphoppas do not merely consume cultural artifacts; they *practice* these elemental Language modes, doing and *performing* them, including e.g. written, drawn, and spray painted letter styles and flows, spoken lyrical bits and pieces of talk, song, scratch, and rhyme. All modes are available for accessing, together and in differing combinations at all times.

In StyleWriting culture any definition of Language includes color as communicative mode. Color is our life and culture-Language; not (just) the color of skin, but the resonant patterns of tropical rain forest, desert sunsets, urban geometries, and ancient Nile flows. We represent cultures who Language, communicate through color-coded patterning, our cross-cultural reflections/applications of Indigenous, African method.

All-modal Language is deployed using “all-means necessary” (Parker, 1988). All means includes all the symbols systems and linguistic resources and information we

possess (know) and can access. Means also includes the tools we use to accomplish Language communication—pencil, spray can, blackbook, walls. Tools includes hands, whole bodies, heart, and brain; and our unconscious flow as tool.

Our Language is combined with and filtered through smiling, laughter, jumping, running, posing, gesticulating, drum rhythms, hi-fiving, and fist pumping, in a back and forth *dialogic method off for play-based learning*. Meaning Language use is experimental, thought out, and improvisational at once. Playing with possibilities of letters and self through Hip Hop Naming gets us in our creativity state. To do and be Hip Hop is to live in that creative state, following the cultural standard of Style Supremacy, an originality concept and expectation exemplified in the name of my mentor Sano – Style’s Always Number One.

This is not a cookie cutter idea of Language, because no two people have the same handwriting. It is non-standardized, meaning not the same, manufactured form for all. The standard frame involved is *originality*; each cultural participant develops their personalized flavor for, with, and across Language. Here the “standard” is deviation from a standard form of letters - much like in cursive writing, where students learn a basic cursive form with the idea of adapting/adjusting to their own handwritten flow. Here we extend that personal touch to the level of an artform of calligraphy writing; it is a mode for teaching to and through essence (Hilliard, 1986; Rossomando, 1996). This part flows with the “biographic” nature of Language (Blommaert & Backus, 2011; KRS-One, 2009) a dimension that cannot be overstated in relation to this project focused largely on *names*. Hip Hop Language is personal, co-constructed, and variable by child. It goes beyond the self into all of us, it becomes a source of collective agreement and growth or development.

Another shift in the definition of Language overstood through analyses of this study, is that our names once written go beyond mere alphabetism, merging one's letter forms manipulation with rhythmic, symbolic, and resonant potentials, creating "visual slanguage" (Chisolm, 2011; Giller, 2009). Style Writing names practices merge alphabetic script with traditions of logo-, ideo-, and picto-graphs, hieroglyphs, and hand-crafted scripts such as Chinese and Sanskrit practice, the poetic flourishes of Arabic styles, Language Excellence coming before European interventions of historical accounts. Across all traditions of hand-writings and Wall writings, the hieroglyphs of Kemet, Mayan glyphs, symbologies such as the Hunab Ku, lines, cuts, angles of Language of/in stone. Each letter of a name becomes, takes on its symbol form, shaping and filling with possibility; then as a connection of individual symbols into a wholism of the word, the name – this larger, unified symbolic with auric resonances of meaning that goes beyond word (name) into far-reaching conceptual and structural possibility. Language pushed to its/one's maximum capacities. These combinations of alphabetic and semiotic possibility in the Name, grows the weight and strengths of Hip Hop Language; in this mixing of Letters and Glyphs, alphabet with symbolic possibility, StyleWriting extends beyond the confines of one kind or another of written Language, into all forms of it. All systems and potential for Language are up for consideration in expansive Language possibility, revealing Hip Hop's "linguistic equanimity" (Alim, 2006, p. 13). These are Aesthetics-Language Ideologies and Visual Pedagogies of/in the Street.

By practicing this all modes and means Language standard, by accessing and playing around with all available tools and possibilities for doing Language, we must

necessarily expand the idea of what it means to *Read*, and *Write*, consequently also “re(de)fining” KRS-One (2009) the term “Literacy” altogether.

Hip Hop reading. *Reading* in an all-modal, all-means frame for Language, involves sensing and interpreting that which is *seen*, as in “reading words” and texts, reading lips, colors, or body language. We see Language, in letters, in graphic color-form patterns with vibratory resonance, in body motions such as cheek dabbles and head tutts. Reading also involves seen visual combinations with sound patterns – the sound-text of music, song, aural and oral patterns, lyrical flows, and all that which is *heard*. Reading involves other things senseable - external expressive cues we gain from context and exchange with others, internal cues of the gut, the chest, or what we *feel* as we see, hear, and interpret. Hip Hop Language is fully sensory, following how Language happens in actual use (Street & Leung, 2010). This is what it means to think of Reading as the interpretation of words and *worlds* (Freire & Macedo, 1987).

Thus Reading redefined as one’s decoding, a sense-making of words and worlds, using all sensory available sources, is a Hip Hop refinition (KRS-One, 2009) from a traditional view. In this view a Reader is an interpreter of what they see-hear-feel together, which stimulates response, a thought, a hunch, that moves us to action, to respond, to *Write*.

Hip Hop writing. Hip Hop raises the bar on understanding, by seeking “overstanding” (KRS-One, 2009). Overstanding is to know by doing, the knowledge gained through practice or the act of Writing. Thus, as we *Read* (perceive, interpret Language), hiphoppas also respond- we *Write*. And when we write names, we create, produce *new* Language. In each name-writing, Language is both recorded and

transformed. When we write Language or attempt to communicate in writing, we show and grow abilities and fluencies. This act of doing names, making fresh Language, is the *act of Learning*, every single time. The first time I write the letter T for Triz, I learn that letter, the next time, I learn something more about its properties and potentials, and again infinitum. Thus Writing is the act of learning, of gaining and building experiential knowledge.

So Reading is Language perception and Writing transforms perceptions plus thought and knowledge, into Language action. This information is contained in the Name of our Culture -- the process of getting *Hip*, gaining knowledge across our readings and writing of the world-Cipha, is something arrived at through the *Hop*, when we take action to practice the elements. All participants of Hip Hop culture are highly literate Readers and Writers. Creative Reading and Writing, this is our movement.

The condition of Literacy. Our Literacies includes both what we sense and interpret or Read, and also the various potentials of how we respond, act, to deploy Language and competencies in communicative expressions - what we Write. With this change in approach from traditional models, Reading and Writing are something every human does and is capable of, usually across our lifespans. Literacy is grown uniquely in each of us, across spaces and time we traverse. Our Literacies are embodied within us, highly personal, unique to each of us, that exist from within us and developed in cultural exchange. Literacy is not static, it is dynamic, it moves and changes constantly. Literacy develops moment to moment, developing across experience, inventing and building it across social group activity-- in other words, encompassing “all of the social functions of our communicative competence” (Street & Leung, 2010).

Conceptually this names Hip Hop model of Language and Literacy support and shape individual development (learning) through exchange in community, a growth model for each and all students. Hip Hop Literacy is a community-cultural concept where participants hold a responsibility (Aerosoul3, 2012) to grow themselves amongst others, to bring/harness the maximum potentials of possibility. My highest level of engagement and creative potential are put to work for the good of myself and all of us. This goes beyond Language and Literacy as technical, compartmentalized skills, to Language as cultural and sacred life practice of growing self-in-community (Asante 1990; Hilliard, 1995; KRS-One, 2009; Nobles, 2008)

By engaging with names in these free, creative manners, the kids of Beats conceptually reframe *Language and Literacy*. Not a slim, shallow standard, but an expansive and inclusive definition. These parameters are based on how they function *in use* (Street & Leung, 2010), in action, offering a relevant, human approach to Language and Literacy learning.

Hip Hop Language, Literacy, and names. While Names are not the only tool for Learning in a Hip Hop ecology, they are a primary dialogic tool. Names are the principle tool for animating and shaping kids pathways to and through Language and Literacy(ies), for engaging in self-study and community growth; our invented names become a tether point amongst us all. I have referred to Names as the cornerstones of a Hip Hop architecture, a central point, and a vital source through which we enter into all of Language possibility. Names offer infinite potentials of Language, in a “contained”, more like (self-)*framed* mantra that is repeated over and over, continuously transforming and uncovering new meanings, nuance, and knowledge of self (Fontana, 1992). When I

write my name with style I go beyond the name itself into this inner dimensional world of the self, uncovering a whole essence for which the name is an infinitely manipulable symbol. In Names kids explore the infinite communicative potential of a single word, as a pathway to gaining knowledge, showing that a single word can be infinitely (re)designed and (re)defined and still maintain its freshness, validity and Unity. When that word becomes a writer's name, the equation follows, its iterative writing is a pathway to gaining knowledge of self. And tracked in our blackbooks and on walls is "the inner presence of life." (Fontana, 1992).

Names provide a formula for conceiving of Language and Literacy(ies), not merely as some defined set of technical, rote, regurgitated skills, but as the lived experience of personhood, affirming kids' humanity. Developing not "New" Literacies, as though they were things just discovered, but *human literacies*, the capacities and potential possessed by all people, all those who go by a name.

Every name writing is a (dynamic, growing, changing) self-declaration and -affirmation. When we do name writing as a foundational pedagogical practice we honor every child, every youth, and student in our classrooms. Every child is and represents a universe of possibility, with their own unique pathway to and through learning and life before they come to us. It is our role to understand that path and set it ablaze in new light and direction, supporting children by offering Hip Hop's elemental tools for lifelong learning, "for getting through and getting over" (Aerosoul3, 2012). This kind of expansive Language and Literacy model, prepares kids with tools to create, to innovate, and problem solve, supporting and shaping the type of free, expansive play, reasoning and action, needed for global sustainability of society.

Ideological features. There are three features, ideological threads to note from this study and Hip Hop model that bear further discussion, and further distinguish it from a traditional, Western schooling view of Language and Literacy.

First, as has been discussed in other sections, a Hip Hop cultural conception of Language and Literacy is a *whole approach* to these things. We practice using our whole bodies, using all possible means of expression, or our ‘modes’. In Beats we use our voices and our silence, our body language and stillness, gesticulating, laughter, showing and whispering, running and talking, tagging each other.

Wholism or wholeness of Language and Literacy are *in the person*; all of my knowledge and capacities for speech, communication, expression. In other words viewing kids’ repertoires of Language practice in unity. Wholism here refers also to all knowledge and possibility, *within and without the self*, as a composite whole, unifying the Writer and her environment; also unifying separate “disciplines” of study.

A wholism of terms is the Hip Hop standard, where words like Literacy maintain their integrity and also have multiple kinds of meanings. Wholism requires awareness and acceptance of this openness to possibilities. It is an approach synonymous with the African cultural concept of Unity – “unity of the person, unity of the tribe, unity with nature” (Nobles, 2008, p. 731).

Second, and also touched on prior, how we read, what we write and what we learn and know, is always linked to our sensory capacities, feeling our way to and through Language and Literacy. Seeing Language with our eyes is a rich sensory process of see-hear-feeling-hearing. And Reading and Writing are not just about a physical

recognition of the eye, but also a visceral one of the gut. This is an *aesthetic* shift in overstanding learning, one tied to an individual's sensory awareness.

Aesthetics here refers to kids' "discourse[s] of the body", the on-going interactions between "things and thoughts, sensations and ideas,...the whole of [their] sensate life" (Eagleton, 1988). The sensate experience accompanying our all-modal Language and expansive Literacies, is a critical aspect to uncovering their nature, meanings, and potentials.

Literacy is a fully aesthetic process. Our names raise our consciousness of this point. We become better at feeling, knowing our feelings, expressing them, personalizing our words and our personae in and participation across lifeworlds. Literacy is something lived, a lived experience of inner life and external exchange and experience; it involves an awareness of knowledge and language and the possibility within oneself for always-original expression. We begin with some kind(s) of literacy and across life it continues to grow in us, our knowledges, skills, competencies of all kinds.

An aesthetics approach is about building a personal sense of the connection between feelings and thoughts. It also reflects somewhat of a naturalist turn to taking the classroom outside school walls and holding it there, requiring students tap into their selves and our environments, developing an overstanding of our connectedness to life and the environment all around, including the concrete walls that surround. Hip Hop builds communities consciously connected to their natural environment, preserving and protecting it, beautifying it and seeing the self as part of the system and as caretakers for its sustainability. This aesthetics approach (Thompson, 1984) is a mode for living that

cuts across many forms of Indigenous (Cajete, 1994; Grande, 2004), African (Asante, 1990, 2007; Hilliard, 1995; Mazama, 2003) and many other non-Western traditions and modes for learning and education.

Finally, a *prismic* approach to Language and Literacy considers all perspectives as contribution to the cultural Dialogue. Where a lens merely magnifies, a prism shows light spectrums, also magnifying dimensions, revealing complexities, and infinite symmetries of light. The prism is a personal frame for viewing and perceiving aesthetically the matter at hand – whether a particular context or a moment in time or a single utterance. Living in the world, knowing how to read requires development of this prismic (personal) interpretive mode. By inquiring into self, each student develops this self-perception and perspective, and learns how to flex and see-hear-feel through another's experience, another's name. Looking through the Hip Hop prism, requires forming meaning from your own view, together with consideration and affirmation (and points of disaffirmation) the views of others, developing community-collective Language, Literacies, and Learning.

The Hip Hop prism allows for seeing the many dimensions that compose the whole. It is an interpretive prism for knowing that is co-constructed in community, and valid by the very virtue of the diversity of views represented. Accounting for all community participants, through this multi-perspectival frame, aims to *equality* of perspectives, as an absolute moral imperative.

In this Hip Hop concept of Literacy there is no such thing as *illiteracy*, as it refers to a person; no person is illiterate in a technical sense. The term maintains relevance only in its flipped script (Alim, 2011), i.e. where something “ill” is considered

righteous, not lacking. In a Hip Hop concept of Literacy, all people have unique actual and potentials for Literacy(ies) learning. A state of not knowing, lack of consciousness is called ignorance. This turns into everybody knows something, and they know what it is to be who they are, more than any person can claim.

This frame of everyone knows Language and lives Literacy(ies) restores the individual's power in her own development, breaking from constraints placed on people and the possibility for what they can do, and who and how they can be.

These Hip Hop refinements of Language and Literacy, move us away from always defining ourselves in relation to dominant, marginalizing forces of Western white male “tradition,” and toward a culturally sustaining pedagogical frame (Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014). Hip Hop is and requires a statement of our own overstandings, on our own terms, dropping narrow frames for ones more adaptable and workable for our active, lived, all-modal engagement with the world. Hip Hop Theory is (must be) built outside of such academic constructs of Language and Literacy divides; if we do not view and analyze these things expansively, we will always get stuck; we will always miss out on large amounts of kids' activity and learning. We the adults will continue to fail our children (Labov).

This Hip Hop research challenges and offers an alternative to canonical traditions and disciplinary terms and constructs of schooling that bind. It places wholly into question their continuing validity and/or relevance. This is a model that does no violence to children, that holds them up with Love. It dynamically ignites the creative innovation needed for global sustainability. Hip Hop Can't, It Won't, and it Don't stop.

This ideological and practical model engenders *equality*; there is real balance of power, of perspectives, of all participants. In Beats we set and uphold everyone's rights

to read and write. Our approach defines those thing expansively and inclusively, available to all to re-Mix and re-Make themselves in community. This Hip Hop model successfully flips the script on the dominant order (Miller, 2002) of schooling; Hip Hop overshadows overpowers, reveals the falsity and illegitimacy of the constructs placed around us People of the Cipa, circle by dominance— not criminal, but cultural, human activity; not incompetent, but highly sophisticated and capable, and creative. The only way to adjust the inequality is to concede these truths.

Chapter 5. Conclusions

What if every child in every classroom engaged in this Five-Dimensional names method, practice, and community? What if every teacher followed this True guide for developing their approach and practice? These are the conclusions I am most concerned with addressing in the field of possibilities that are stimulated across this project.

What is needed in Education to invert the inequality is a whole fresh paradigm for learning and schooling. We must re-frame the educational endeavor not as (mere) preparation for the world of work, but education for transformation of the world, to a world that works, for its inhabitants, with the goals of sustenance and building thriving communities. These goals for society where all people can live and thrive, rather than fraudulent systemic set-ups that stymie our potentials and keep most of us down while destroying the environment all around, are sorely needed and missing in educational spaces still dominated by narrow frames for Language, Literacy, and Learning.

Hip Hop is an educational model for wholeness and healing, where we set

our goal at “freedom, and nothing else” –RefaOne speaks at (DaveyD, 2010, March 12). Perhaps this is hyperbole to suggest a singular term solution, because there is tremendous, detailed work involved in (re)Orienting classrooms this way. But paradigm shifts (must) carry these major shifts in terminology –not a pedagogy of the “oppressed”, but a Pedagogy of the Free, is the Hip Hop way to be. Here we have stopped defining ourselves in relation to dominance; we have instead defined and refined ourselves across cultural practice, choosing ourselves and our paths, and therefore humanizing our learning - making it ours and on our terms. We do this while no longer centering the micro-aggressions and rage, but rather lay focus on the tools and quest for macro-Awakenings and love, that are possible through this Hip Hop metaLanguage of Multimodalities and Multiliteracies. Say Word (Hopkins, 2016)!

Such flippings on the purpose of education, and the parameters of Language and Literacy are what gets us over theoretically, loosening up the sticking and stress points. The Eurocentricism of much of academic discourse, the rigidities are stifling for POC. The academic tropes become trappings for everyone actually, where we are barred or discouraged the tools at our everywhere, everyone disposal. We cannot continue to box, contain, limit ourselves, POC. And this must be recognized and space made for us to be the voices articulating the changes, advancing and setting new agreements for a new future forward.

I wish to contend that this humanizing of learning, the self-directed nature of our vigorous engagement in Hip Hop practice, expands our idea of what makes a pedagogy both relevant and sustaining. Learning is relevant to everyone; this model make it accessible to each and every person as a learner, to choose, exercise agency.

This feeling of freedom, the fun and the peace, the growth across self-directed Language play and Literacies development lead to vigorous, sustained engagement. A mode and method from which all people stand to gain is the Hip Hop cultural model for engaged living. This is true of every participant of the cultural model, bolstered with and explained through the evidence of children's name play in Beats. And when we all stand to gain, we move toward equilibrium, away from, and filling the giant gaping gaps.

To put it another way, when we define education, no matter how progressively and openly, for the world of work as does much of the discussion of multi-/multiple literacies and modalities, we reify the system that we know is unjust. Again, going back to Paris's (2012) idea of needing to imagine our desired outcomes, and then remembering to set the bar at *freedom*, indeed a sustainable model.

With these future focused goals of/for sustainable pedagogies, young peoples' preparation for the present state of life and challenges will flow as a result. I see the incorporation of Hip Hop practice as core curricula functioning and flowing like e.g. ethnic studies research that shows that participation in such a individual-community empowerment programme supports both students's overall health, wellness, and learning, and also to ace their school assessments²⁷.

Through evidence of children's social practices of Hip Hop Naming in Beats, a cultural educational model for Language and Literacy(ies) is laid and offered for the consideration of Hiphoppas, teachers, and cultural theorists. Through this Names study, harnessing three years of rigorously analysed materials, I show and prove something

²⁷ <http://news.stanford.edu/2016/01/12/ethnic-studies-benefits-011216/>

different from current schooling design, methods of learning is possible, highly effective, and sustainable. I suggest for the field of Education the kinds and qualities of Language, Literacy, and Learning possible through Hip Hop's dynamic youth cultural production model (see Appendix IV-AG, Language and Literacy Outcomes Table). It is a comprehensive, foundational framework for engagement with young people and sound scientific analysis of their intellectual and sensate activity.

What is next involves the restructuring of classrooms and learning spaces to this orientation - more spaces with more Teachers prepared to ignite and enter the Cipa. This kind of teacher orientation and preparation would ignite a True "new golden age" (Pennycook, 2015) of Hip Hop educational research. The goals would be immersive practice for all, and everywhere infiltration. Thus the future of this work will involve in part Teacher Education and continued Hip Hop Pedagogy(ies) development. It will involve continued advocacy for a social practice approach to education (Hull, Mikulecky, St. Clair, & Kerka, 2003), as well as re-orientation of schools to relevant and sustainability models (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014), meaning pushing ideological shifts in our ideas of learning and how it (must!) work to benefit society.

I have delved into these possibilities of supporting Teacher Education through a course I developed called "Hip Hop Pedagogy & Arts Education". In this course for UCLA's School of the Arts and Architecture, I asked undergraduates and future teachers to engage in StyleWriting practice, showing them my approach with children. Students invented names, like the children, considering who they are and how they wish to represent themselves in names form. From writing to painting our names on

walls and reflecting on the practice (most for the first time), I also ask students to develop their own self-inquiry method of teaching in the spaces where they engage with young people. To do this with Teachers going into the school system, I feel from feedback of education students who took my course, could have significant value in (re)shaping teachers' ideas and approaches, and could better prepare them for urban life and urban students. This kind of teacher preparation and paradigmatic shift will require schools willing to take the risks of changing up completely how they think of students, how they function and what goes on or what gets taught. A difficult order in confined and regulated spaces such as schools.

I also think there is an unwillingness to let go of power over educational possibility, holding on to opposite of reality-rigidities. School structures must yield to the building tension, and make changes to their design and methods. Whether it can be done is no longer the question. There is a lack of political will to change the design or even listen to suggestions. There is a power elite and a systemic pattern of appropriating resources for greed and personal gain of a few, of one race dominating all others. The predatory economic models laid on top of society, from the U.S. to the global everywhere, are wreaking havoc on all of life. With the True school approach, we can look at these truths of "what's going on" with tools of cultural resistance for addressing the problems we face. Hip Hop culture, like American sprawl, reaches every places; it is a global movement for change on earth. All it takes is to engage in cultural practice and principles of action. This seed of a paradigm could be taken up in classrooms and educational spaces. This is certainly my work moving forward, continuing the names and Hip Hop-based educational interventions, which can and must take place

everywhere that is open to this model, in schools and all other places where children and youth live.

I hope that this research can and will be used as a tool for the coming shifts required to recalibrate the inequalities. I hope it supports a future of Hip Hop education in which we no longer need stand in defense of culture as powerful model for learning and living. I hope educators and cultural practitioners will utilize this work to stimulate the growth and flourishing of Hip Hop, taking up the possibilities laid by this work that stands to greatly benefit future society(ies).

Appendices

Chapter I

I-A: Beats Club Names Table

Chapter III

III-A: Introductory visuals of Beats Club

III-B: Coding Legend

III-C: Pedagogy Descriptive (sub) codes

III-D: Final Domain Cloud Mappings

Chapter IV

IV-A: Handstyle Alphabet: East 3

IV-B: Handstyle Artifacts, Carlos and UGs

IV-C: Stely Phase 1 NAMES Task

IV-D: Caiyl Names Task

IV-E: Certificate photos Feldspar, Stely

IV-F: Phase 1 Pisarron photograph

IV-G: Stely Phase 1-fall Task artifact

IV-H: Stely CeCe squiggle style

IV-I: Maverick looseleaf

IV-J: Fina Names Task

IV-K: Sammi, Majusta NAMES Task Phase 1

IV-L: Giovanni's composition book writings

IV-M: Scroll Begins

IV-N: Selected Scroll pictures

IV-O: Pinkie 'Can't Stop Beats' Scroll Writing

IV-P: Hand-drawn Tree Diagram, Pilot Study

IV-Q: Magenta letter to Triz of Names

IV-R: Names Activity cards

IV-S: Curipaii written body gestures code

IV-T: Triz Mighty Mouse sketch and piece

IV-U: Killa Triz blackbook piece

IV-V: Praise Names of Stley. Fina, Casi

IV-W: Praise Names by Kids

IV-X: Curipaii Name selection Task

IV-Y: Cloud Ridiculous

IV-Z: Cloud Ridiculous, Song

IV-AB: Phase 3 name signatures

IV-AC: Making things photos

IV-AD: Planet Rock chant

IV-AE: Dialogue photos

IV-AF: Five Dimensions Engagement Framework Table

IV-AG: Language and Literacies Qualities and Kinds

IV-AH: Final Pedagogy Table list

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