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Language and culture in minor media text types

A diachronic, intralinguistic analysis from fanzines to webzines

Viviana Gaballo
University of Macerata, Italy

The aim of this study is to focus on the relationship between the macro phenomenon "culture" and the micro analysis of text structures of a specific genre – fanzines – to provide empirical evidence of how the genre ascribed to a social group reflects specific, culturally shaped world views. The study also investigates the diachronic, intermedia dimensions of a specific genre – punkzines – providing evidence of anticipated forms of the language used in current text messaging and arguing whether the virtualization of the cultural and social spaces related to the evolution of fanzines into webzines has left their social function unchanged while affecting our understanding of "culture".

1. Introduction

Several scholars and experts have discussed fanzines as a genre and explored the specific relationship that they form with their readership; however, few have explored individual publications in depth and investigated how these take part in ascribing notions of genuine membership within music cultural scenes and using language to construct social identities, relationships, issues, and events.

This study addresses this gap by conducting a diachronic, intermedia, intralinguistic analysis of a print punkzine, *Sniffin' Glue* – the first UK punkzine, published in 1976, and considered a legend since (in Perry and Baker 2000) – and a web zine, *Scanner Zine* – one of the few still active online punkzines that take full advantage of the features of the new medium (see www.scannerzine.com) – while drawing on discussions of music cultural scenes from the fields of media and cultural studies.

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By exploring how the internal textual dynamics within the two publications constructs notions of authenticity, this study aims both at uncovering the role of language in constructing social identities and relationships, and at helping to unravel how particular discourses, rooted in particular socio-cultural contexts, construct reality, social identities and social relationships (Fairclough 1992: 64).

The methodology used includes interdiscursive analysis of texts, linguistic analysis and analysis of non-linguistic, semiotic modalities such as visual images. Interdiscursive analysis, a distinctive feature of CDA as interpreted by Fairclough (2003: 3), allows the investigator to incorporate elements of 'context' into the analysis of texts, to show innovation and change in texts, and it has a mediating role in facilitating the connection of detailed linguistic and semiotic features of texts with processes of social change on a broader scale. (Fairclough 2005: 290).

The approach used in this chapter is intended to implement the methods normally used in CDA, i.e. qualitative and quantitative techniques are combined, the quantitative component being limited to 'surface' indicators like coverage frequency and size as well as basic content analytic categories like the presence/absence of certain topics and value judgments, or the frequency of quotations (van Dijk 1988: 66).

Two research questions were developed to investigate the diachronic, intermedia perspective: one that sees the language used in fanzines as the forerunner of the language used in current text messaging; and the other that argues whether the evolution of the fanzines into webzines has kept their social function unchanged.

These at first apparently unrelated research questions are however strictly interdependent from the methodological point of view, at both levels of linguistic and sociolinguistic investigation, since the research develops on the same specific context (i.e. the punkzines analyzed), and the intralinguistic analysis provides useful data to read the diachronic evolution of punk language and culture, accounting for both the connection with current texting and the changed social function.

2. Theoretical framework

A cursory glance at the literature on the notion of culture suggests that there is little agreement as to its exact nature. Various branches of inquiry (e.g. anthropology, sociology, linguistics, psychology) continue to be divided in the way they conceptualize culture. Whether interpreted according to Tylor's mentalist approach (1891: 7) – which depicts culture as a mental map capable of making sense of the world around us – or Boas' behaviourist approach (1940: 629) – which sees culture as a preference for those patterns of communicative behaviour which are valued within a social group – or Geertz's semiotic approach (1973: 89) – which emphasizes

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how culture is not about explaining mental phenomena or social behaviour, but about understanding social practices in context – any definition of culture is necessarily reductionist.

A typical, more inclusive definition – which encompasses the totality implied in the culture concept, the organizing principle underlying the social structure, and the determined and determining aspects of culture pertaining to individual behaviour – is offered by Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952: 357):

> Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other as conditioning influences upon further action.

Kroeber and Kluckhohn compiled a list of 165 available definitions of culture organizing them according to descriptive, historical, normative, psychological, structural and genetic lines. Their all-inclusive definition is contrasted two decades later by anthropologist James Spradley's (1972: 6) epigrammatic definition of culture:

> Culture is the acquired knowledge people use to interpret experience and generate behavior.

Although most definitions of culture do not explicitly mention language as an organizing principle, the interrelationship between language and culture has long been debated during the past century, the two ends of the debate being the notions of 'cultural determinism' and 'cultural relativism'. From the so-called 'Sapir-Whorf hypothesis' (Whorf 1956: 27) which views language as providing the means for thought and perception, and world view, through to Lévi-Strauss's (1973: 68) argumentation that language is a condition of culture because it is through language that one's culture is learned and sustained, to the 'Newspeak' theorized by George Orwell in his *1984* (1954: 241–251), the limitations of such theoretical positions are apparent as they overrely on language neglecting the non-linguistic elements and other non-verbal aspects of communication. These, on the contrary, are given special focus in Hall's pioneering work (1959: 29), which underlines the elusive nature of the culture concept: "culture hides much more than it reveals, and strangely enough what it hides, it hides most effectively from its own participants".

Not only is language as a model being questioned but also language as the vehicle or medium of culture. The debate on the interrelationship between language and culture is enriched by the contributions of anthropologists such as Street (1993: 25), who claims that culture is a verb ("an active process of meaning

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making") – consequently, research should focus not on what culture *is*, but on what it *does* as regards people's ways of making sense of the world – and linguists such as Holliday (1999: 240), who shows that different approaches to culture will lead to important differences in the ways individuals conceptualize human interaction. Holliday argues that the dominion held by a mainstream large culture paradigm has generated often prescriptive ideas about how certain groups of people behave, how they use language, how they represent reality. For this reason, he advocates a small culture paradigm which looks at cultures as dynamic, complex and ever-changing processes.

Sociological explanations of the relationship between youth, style and musical taste rely heavily upon the subcultural theory developed by the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (BCCCS), which attempted to analyze (sub)cultural expressions in terms of power and class-based experience through semiotic 'readings' of particular youth lifestyles. While the essential tenets of this theory have been variously criticized and largely abandoned, the concept of 'subculture' (Hebdige 1979) survives in much sociological work on the relationship between youth, music and style. In an interview given ten years after the publication of his first book, Hebdige himself (Gatti 1990) suggested that the idea of a subculture contrasting with a dominant culture was no longer sustainable due to the rapid and continuous circulation of new trends and styles.

A series of concepts have been posited as alternatives to subculture, namely 'neo-tribe' (Bennett 1999), 'post-subculture' (Muggleton 2000), and 'scene' (Harris 2000), each portraying individuals as more reflexive in their appropriation and use of particular musical and stylistic resources.

Bennett (1999: 614) argued that the concept of 'subculture' is essentially flawed due to its attempt to impose a hermeneutic seal around the relationship between musical and stylistic preference. He suggested that the Maffesolian concept of neo-tribalism provides a much more adequate framework as it allows for the shifting nature of youth's musical and stylistic preferences and the essential fluidity of youth cultural groups. Bennett's central contention is that youth's musical tastes and stylistic preferences, rather than being tied to issues of social class, as subculture maintains, are in fact examples of the late modern lifestyles in which notions of identity are 'constructed' rather than 'given', and 'fluid' rather than 'fixed'.

The three-tier model of 'scenes' developed by Bennett and Peterson (2004: 6–12) – consisting of local, trans-local, and virtual scenes – offers new insights into the variety of practices through which individuals show and retain a commitment to music.

In their view, music scenes refer to "the contexts in which clusters of producers, musicians, and fans collectively share their common musical tastes and collectively distinguish themselves from others" (Bennett and Peterson 2004: 1). Music scenes

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usually focus on a specific genre of music, and are said to be *local scenes* when the clusters exhibit distinctive cultural signs and lifestyle elements associated with the locale in which the scene is embedded. *Trans-local scenes*, instead, involve "widely scattered local scenes that are drawn into regular communication around a distinctive form of music and lifestyle" (Bennett and Peterson 2004: 6), e.g. temporary communities of music festivals and traveling music caravans; while *virtual scenes* connect physically separated people to create a "sense of scene via fanzines and, increasingly, through the Internet" (Bennett and Peterson 2004: 7).

3. Fanzines as "access aesthetics"

Fanzines (a blend of the words *fanatic* and *magazines*) are a particular kind of self-produced magazines. A more articulate definition from the British Library website[1] defines *fanzines*, or simply *zines*, as a form of independent personal publishing that does not rely on any publisher or mainstream distributor, nor is motivated by profit or filtered through an editorial or regulatory board, and sees them as an ideal space for free, uninhibited expression.

The term *fanzine* was coined by Luis Russel "Russ" Chauvenet[2] in the October 1940 issue of his fanzine *Detours* to replace the terms fanzines were then called: *fanmags* or *fanags*. Yet, the first fanzine ever to be published was *The Comet*, created in May 1930 by the *Science Correspondence Club*. Several scholars contributed to the debate about the term and its definition: Atton (2002), Duncombe (1997), Haegele (2007), Jacovides (2003), Jenkins (1992), McLaughlin (1996), and Poletti (2008) among others. Cheryl Zobel (1999) aptly synthesized the concept in her three-part definition of fanzines: "self-edited, self-financed, and self-published", with its "mantric 'self' permeating all stages of the making of zine culture" (Atton 2002: 68).

US fanzine expert Mike Gunderloy, the founding editor of the zine review publication *Factsheet Five*, is often credited with popularizing the term. Gunderloy (1988: 8) categorized amateur press based upon zine content: *genzines* (*general interest zines*) were usually developed in collaboration, while *perzines* (*personal zines*) were created by individual authors. The former had a more professional style 'by their very nature': in many cases they were structured as real magazines, with a summary, editorials, articles, reviews, etc., and dealt with various topics,

1. http://www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/21cc/counterculture/doityourself/doityourself.html

2. "We hereby protest against the un-euphonious word 'fanag' and announce our intention to plug *fanzine* as the best short form of 'fan-magazine'." Chauvenet *in Detours* Oct. 6, 1940. From Science Fiction Citations: http://www.jessesword.com/sf/view/186 (accessed December 31, 2010)

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ranging from general contents such as science fiction, comics, music to more specific ones, as in the case of fanzines produced by fan club members. In his categorization Gunderloy also distinguished between *Pfanzines* and *Sfanzines*, grouping all music fanzines, particularly punk music fanzines, under the former category, and science fiction fanzines under the latter (Gunderloy, 1988: 10, 89–90).

Fanzines offered alternative insights and perspectives that were not likely to be represented in other media. They were valuable because they provided a forum for underrepresented voices. They embodied "the crack in the impenetrable wall of the system: a culture spawning the next wave of meaningful resistance" (Duncombe, 1997: 3). Their value did not lie in any individual issue, but in the network and community that they were capable of building and representing.

In the true spirit of the DIY (Do-It-Yourself) philosophy, fanzines were produced in the form of bricolage. Hand-lettered and badly reproduced, they were authentic expression of raw emotion; their cut-and-paste look was a graphic explosion free of all rules of design. The availability of photocopiers allowed anyone – with just some glue, a pair of scissors and a typewriter – to create their own zines. Anyone with a few pounds and a basic knowledge of the English language could produce their statement, and enjoy free access to the world of underground publications: a perfect example of *access aesthetics*. But the true aesthetics of zines relates to the issue of control, as Duncombe suggests (1997: 97): in a world in which zinesters feel there is too much control, zines offer their makers "a place where the creator has only his or her own restrictions to heed". In a way, the form zines are given by their creators becomes part of their message to their audience.

The dynamic relationships of the networks and community created by zines, and the embodiment of the access aesthetics as it materializes in the form zines are given both linguistically and visually are the main objects of investigation in this study.

Understanding zines as more than a static set of artefacts reflecting a static cultural group influences the methodological approach and outcomes. Zine cultures, in fact, present unique sites of research and practice: they are spaces where ideology and practice are intertwined and unidentifiable, where there is no clear distinction between producer and consumer, where the hierarchical division of labor is challenged and everyone is encouraged to create (Duncombe, 2002: 68). It is not just the content, but the way zines are produced, consumed, re-produced and used that make them a radical site of culture.

An example of the embodiment of the access aesthetics and the intertwining of ideology and practice suggested by Duncombe (2002: 68) came to being some forty years after the first fanzine was published, when fans of punk rock music – largely ignored by and critical of the mainstream music press – began printing fanzines about their music and cultural scenes. These fanzines, called punkzines,

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developed in the second half of the 70s as a spontaneous and amateurish form of music journalism based on the DIY ethic budding out of the success of the first English punk movement.

The desire to find new means of expression, different from the mainstream forms of publication and distribution, resulted in a type of press whose rules were swept away by the use of a new language, unusual fonts and font sizes, and unexpected page layouts and patterns – which made the underground publications stand out at first sight (See examples in Figure 1 taken from *Sniffin' Glue*: the first and most famous punkzine, published in 1976–77).

Through their innovative and provocative style these publications transcended the mere diffusion of news or contents, often ignored or distorted by other media, and overturned the traditional schemes of journalism.

Some of the strategies used by zine editors – who wished to express a dissenting, anti-mainstream point of view – to obscure their social and cultural legitimacy included using an old typewriter, writing by hand, leaving mistakes partially uncorrected. Such practices therefore "protected marginal rarity by making these publications unreadable by the uninitiated." (O'Neil, 2004: 6).

Unlike mainstream journalism, which is produced in order to attract and be easily comprehensible to a very large number of subscribers (and their audiences), representing different cultures, ideologies and interests, punkzines were basically directed to all those identifying themselves with or interested in punk culture. They were distributed primarily person-to-person via the mail, at punk rock gigs or conventions, and disseminated a free-spirited, independent counter-culture,

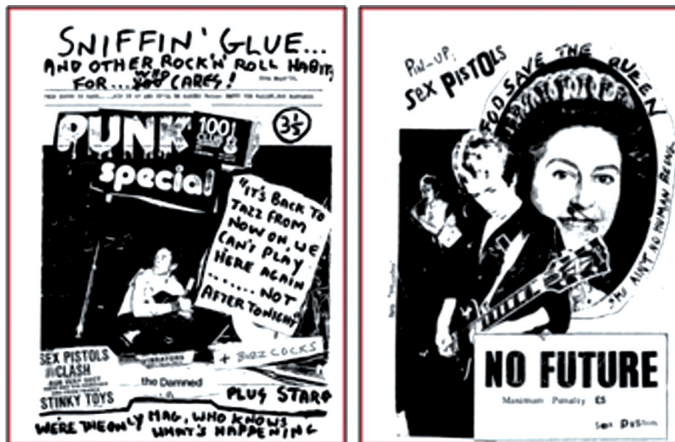

Figure 1. Examples of layout from *Sniffin' Glue*: (left) Issue # 3½ (1976), cover – (right) Issue # 8 (1977), page 14

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sometimes serving as a launch pad for aspiring journalists, yet always keeping faithful to the principle of self-production, based on a totally unconstrained expressive autonomy.

Zines were not expected to bring material reward: the very idea of making profit from a zine would sound awkward in punk culture. What zines were expected to provide was "an outlet for unfiltered expression and a connection to the larger underground world of publishers who did the same" (Duncombe, 1997: 14).

Zine writers were marginalized people (freaks, geeks, nerds) with little power over their status in a society that rewarded interests they didn't share and strengths they didn't have; yet, they were capable of redefining the value of being a loser, turning it into an asset, by creating a new identity (the 'Cool Loser')[3] and "wearing their loserdom like a badge of honor" (Duncombe, 1997: 18).

While the winners are celebrated with power, wealth and media representation, the losers are invisible. Zines make them visible. An example of this is provided in the first issue of *Sniffin' Glue* (Figure 2) where the writer scolds about the "dumb attitude" of the mainstream reviewers of the Ramones concert who "treat it like some kind of freak-show to be laughed at" while debunking their claims to

That's what it's all about,right!
This thing called'punk-rock!The weekly music
papers gave the Ramones a hard time,didn't
they,'cause they don't f'ing understand that's
why.They put down their songs,stances and
even their enjoyment.The reviews of the Ram-
ones gig just sums up the whole dumb atitude
of the'best-sellers'towards punk-rock.They
treat it like some kind of freak-show to
be laughed at,I don't know why their bo-
ther.One paper's gonna have an'A-Z Of Punk-
Rock'next week just to be hip-why don't
they stick tb Queen and all that trash
that drive around in expensive cars.The
weeklys are so far away from the kids that
they can't possibly say anything of any im-
portance to punk-rock fans.I can't spell,I
wouldn't win any awards for literature but
at least I don't write down to yer!

Figure 2. Extract from the last page of *Sniffin' Glue* – Issue # 1

3. *Cool Loser* is also the title of a punkzine.

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reporting on the new musical scene ("The weeklys [sic] are so far away from the kids that they can't possibly say anything of any importance to punk-rock fans."). The 'cool loser' stance materializes in the closure: "I can't spell, I wouldn't win any award for literature but at least I don't write down to yer!"

In a way, this stance was also acknowledged by observers, if even NME (New Musical Express 1999)[4] while reviewing Mark Perry's 'achievements' as a punk rocker would pitilessly call the editor of seminal fanzine *Sniffin' Glue* "A loser. A failure. A true punk rock superstar."

The negative coverage of punk by traditional magazines was spearheaded by mainstream misinterpretation of the social norms within the punk culture. The zine world then became a place where losers could have a voice, a home, and others to talk to. Together they gave the word 'loser' a new meaning, transforming personal failure into an indictment of the alienating aspects of society (Duncombe, 1997: 21).

With the explosion of the punk movement in 1976 *punkzines* started to play a central role as a channel for information in the decentralized, radically participatory, do-it-yourself underground culture.

With their expressive chaos, and uncompromising, non-mediated, libertarian creativity – Stephen Duncombe (1997: 1) described zines as "rantings of high weirdness and exploding with chaotic design" – punkzines subverted preexisting modes of artistic and political communication. Frequently irreverent in attitude, they used to deal with various punk rock bands who shared the common attribute of being ignored or overlooked by mainstream media. Punkzines were the place where all the radical thoughts that were condensed in song lyrics were explained in greater detail, and they showed that punk was much more than music: "It was a vernacular radicalism, an indigenous strain of utopian thought" (Duncombe 1997: 3).

Punkzines seemed to exemplify a daring writing alternative. Their linguistic form lay somewhere between a personal letter and a magazine, with functions of the conversational frame typical of more current genres (e.g. emails and forum messages). The "rant" editorials that opened each zine were the spontaneous, unfiltered replication of whatever the editors had on their minds, even self-reflective thoughts as in Mark Perry's editorial in Figure 3.

The summer of 1976 is taken as the official birth date of the punk movement. At the end of 1976 the Punk was still neglected by the press, and the mainstream media were impermeable to it; fanzine editors took advantage of this exclusion and used it to say whatever they wanted without any worries about censorship or other press limits: "The result was a new language. The most interesting fanzines

4. See "The image has cracked", NME Reviews, 1999. http://www.nme.com/reviews/artist-Keyname/536 (accessed December 31, 2010).

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A 20 YEAR-OLD MARK P.

Welcome to SG8.In this issue we go completely up the wall.

I'm really fed up with the punters on the"scene"at the moment.At the Clash gig in Harlesden there were lots of stupid kids who kept on acting childish by pogoing in front of the stage.They were going completely over the top by punching and kic-king each other.It was like being at a fuc-kin'football match.

Look,am I getting old(I'm 2o now)or something?There's the Clash on stage, trying to say something,and all the kids can do is beat each other up.We've gotta stick together.If you wanna lay into someone wait till it's a government official or a member of a supergroup.They're the cunts to attack, not other kids who are trying to listen to the same groups as you.

I'll admit,there's nothing wrong with jumpin'around to the bands(I've done it myself)but it's gotta be a bit less enthusiastic otherwise new-wave/punk will be banned forever.I may be talking like an old cunt but perhaps I think to much these days. So what,it's still me that's writing this mag and every word I put my fuckin'name to is honest.

Cause like,there's been a few kids having a go at me.So what,I wrote some things for National Rockstar and the Melody Maker.They printed what I wrote.It was still me,I don't change my style for them!

Enjoy this crummy but always honest mag.

Mark P.

Figure 3. Extract from the first page of *Sniffin' Glue* – Issue # 8 (1977)

were verbal and visual rants about whatever took their collator's fancy" (Savage, 1991: 279). However, by the end of 1977, the exponential growth of punk fanzines had produced a situation of saturation and approval of the phenomenon, similar to the one that was involving lots of music bands, absorbed by the major record companies. Over the years since its inauguration, the musical genre and the cul-ture had moved further apart. Even though the punk culture was meant to be an

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autonomous culture breaking the norms of mainstream society and owning the means of production, the culture industry still managed to subsume it. Punk lost its original rebellious, angry spirit, and eventually became institutionalized and commodified. The Punk ideology was "coerced" by the economy to eventually shift toward commercialization and to sameness.

There is a most strikingly 'deterministic' feature in punk culture, though, which is summarized in one shout: "You're a sell-out." To social scientists 'selling out' would appear as the expected evolution for a band that has gained some notoriety and attracted the attention of some major label. To fellow punks, it would sound like a betrayal of the values shared by the punk community, and that would justify withdrawing what TV theorist John Hartley calls the 'DIY [Do It Yourself] citizenship' (1999: 178).

The gate-keeping attitude of punk culture reached its highest peak when Dead Kennedys frontman Jello Biafra accused punk magazine *Maximum RocknRoll* of "punk fundamentalism" as they refused to advertise *Alternative Tentacles* records because they said the records "weren't punk". Issues of authenticity and identity come into play when the thin line is crossed between what is considered to be "true punk" and its commercial evolution. Commercially successful punk bands are the very antithesis of a punk business ethic centered on independent production and independent control of music because they do not follow the "anti-industry economic ethic" of DIY.

In one of his editorials (*Sniffin' Glue* # 5; 1976: 2), Mark Perry, *Sniffin' Glue*'s publisher, mocks the commodification of punk fanzines ("Writing about 'punk rock' is the thing to do at the moment.") and draws a line between genuine involvement and trend-following ("I hope the 'fashion' soon dies out, then you'll be able to find out who really believed in the bands!").

John Charles Goshert (2000: 85), one of the few academics to have addressed what punk has been since the late 1970s and early 1980s, suggested that it was precisely when punk became popular culture that it ceased to be punk: in other words, what is commercially successful cannot be punk. Some commentators – including Mark Perry– argue that punk died because of the selling-out of bands like The Clash (to CBS) or The Pistols (to EMI and Virgin), which opened the road for successive punk bands to sign with music label giants.

As Duncombe (1997: 155) argues, once the commercial industry recognizes that some form of underground punk media starts to become influential within the punk scene, they will attempt to incorporate them into the system through a cooption process. Ideally, gatekeepers should maintain independent status for their opinion to be considered as a trusted source. Some, however, might turn into the commercial counterpart to which they were created in opposition. The consequences of deviating from the 'punk culture' could include losing support from the punk community.

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In his Punk Manifesto, James Bradshaw (2007: 6) comments that punk as we know it died in 1978 when it became a tourist attraction, and adds in a quintessential sublimation of punk: "I have put together a manifesto in an attempt to define where punk is today but in reality the most punk thing that you can do is ignore the whole thing".

4. Synchronic and diachronic insights

Research into fanzines (BCCCS scholars) has tended to consider them as subcultural artifacts. Consequently, they have mostly been interpreted as acts of political resistance, and little or no attention was paid to their 'inherent content'. In contrast, by considering fanzines as a type of genre, we can think of the amateur writing they contain as not providing overt opposition but contributions to the critical discourse of popular culture.

This study includes data collected from all 14 issues of the first and most famous punkzine, *Sniffin' Glue* – published in the UK in 1976–7 – and materials (reviews, interviews, tour diaries, etc.) available on the web pages of *Scanner Zine* – the online version of an A5 print punkzine, originally published in the UK in 1998, later moved to New Zealand along with its author.

Sniffin' Glue has been chosen due to its particularity and complexity; in comparison to other punkzines in the UK punk scene, *Sniffin' Glue* is primarily concerned with issues of authentic identity, and is therefore a rich source for the exploration of authentic punk culture. The same concerns, although in a lower tone, are targeted by *Scanner Zine*, which has been chosen for its successful distribution as a web zine and its full exploitation of the new medium, in comparison to other zine publishers who use the web only to advertise print zines, or to fill in the gap between print issues.

One of the 'social' practices used by young punks to disgust and shock society, and express their anti-corporatist DIY credo was glue sniffing. Substance abuse was more than often a topic in punk music, and became synonymous with the genre. In fact, *Sniffin' Glue* punkzine owes its name to this practice, and specifically to the song "Now I Wanna Sniff Some Glue" by The Ramones.

Sniffin' Glue is an A4 format black and white photocopied fanzine, made with low quality paper. Its 14 issues represent an affront to the cultural norms and practices of the mainstream culture and language used by upper classes. The amateurish approach of the zine, with spelling and grammatical errors, emphasizes the rejection of traditional conventions. The main texts were written with an old typewriter, the titles and the limited graphics scrawled with a black felt tip pen, the rest being put together without any particular care.

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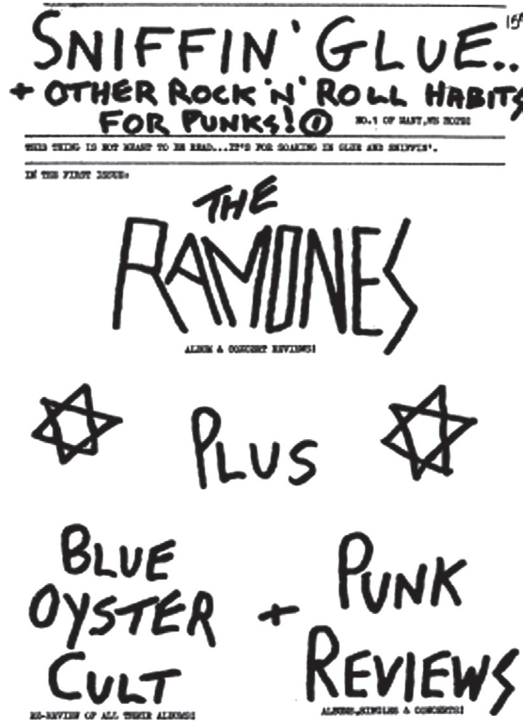

Figure 4. *Sniffin' Glue* – issue #1 (1976)

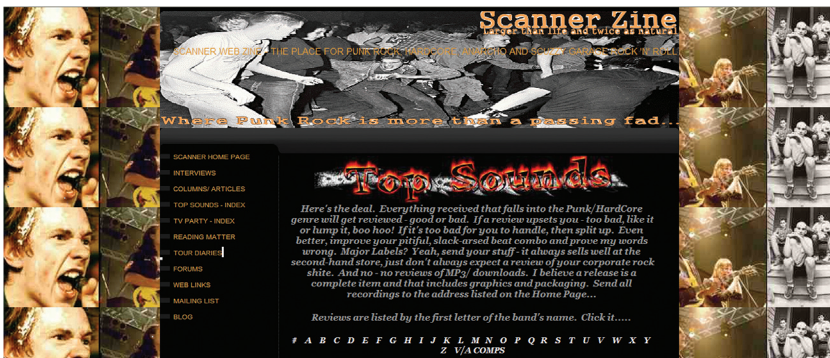

Figure 5. *Screenshot from a web page of Scanner Zine* (2011)

Sniffin' Glue was acclaimed by NME as *"The nastiest, healthiest and funniest piece of press in the history of rock'n'roll habits"*. What we know for sure is that it has been the pioneer of the DIY punk ethic and a contributor to the distinctive punk graphic design style in the UK.

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Following Piaget's (1959) and Vygotsky's (1978) theories on the social function of language, this can be considered a socially meaningful behavior, meaningful in the sense that there are identity implications for many aspects of language use. Through language a social bond is created between the community of users of that language and its associated culture: accent, dialect, linguistic style, all serve to indicate membership in social groups, an identification that can greatly influence the person-perception process.

This study also aims at bringing to the foreground those aspects of the language used in punkzines that prove how punks have succeeded in using language to socially demarcate themselves as a group.

To this purpose, the analysis that follows is meant to highlight a peculiar trait of *Sniffin' Glue*: changing subtitles. This apparently insignificant practice will disclose more on punks' metaphorical "territory marking" habit. Only the first two issues retain their original title, i.e. *Sniffin' Glue + other rock'n'roll habits, for punks*, while the final parts of the subtitles of the remaining issues appear to have been customized. For example, issue # 3 is titled *Sniffin' Glue ... and other rock'n'roll habits, for girls* (where the word 'punks' has been visibly crossed out, and replaced by the word 'girls'). The following table shows the full titles for all 14 issues, where the underlined elements, which constitute the variable parts of the titles/subtitles, provide some sort of preview of the contents of the specific issue.

Table 1. Titles and subtitles of the 14 issues of *Sniffin' Glue*

Issue #	Title + subtitle
1	*Sniffin' Glue + other rock'n'roll habits, for punks*
2	*Sniffin' Glue + other rock'n'roll habits, for punks*
3	*Sniffin' Glue... and other rock'n'roll habits, for girls*
3½	*Sniffin' Glue + other rock'n'roll habits, for who cares*
4	*Sniffin Glue... and other rock'n'roll habits, for the new-wave*
5	*Sniffin Glue... and other rock'n'roll habits, for a bunch of bleedin' idiots*
Xmas issue	*Sniffin Snow...and other seasonal habits for snowmen*
6	*Sniffin Glue...and other rock'n'roll habits for anybody who cares about*
7	*Sniffin Glue...and other rock'n'roll habits for pinheads and surfers*
8	*Sniffin Glue...and other rock'n'roll habits for people who think it's hip to read the 'in' mag*
9	*Sniffin Glue...and other rock'n'roll habits and anything to cause an uproar*
10	*Sniffin Glue...and other rock'n'roll habits for Deptford yobs*
11	*Sniffin Glue...and other self-defence habits...*
12	*Sniffin Glue...and other rock'n'roll habits for around Aug/Sept'77*

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With the only exception of the 3-page Christmas special, a close analysis of the evolution of *Sniffin' Glue* subtitles will uncover its entire story, as well as the entire story of the related punk community: from a statement of group identity ("for punks") and the opening up to female participation ("for girls") through a generic appeal to all supporters (*for who cares* and *for anybody who cares about*) and the associated call for action (*and anything to cause an uproar*), the central issues are devoted to establish relative otherness from those who were not enough punk or no punks at all (*for the new-wave*, *for a bunch of bleedin' idiots*, *for pinheads and surfers*) reflecting the never-changing need to prove "true punkness". In *Black-White – Interview with Don Letts*, Issue #7 p. 8 (Feb 1977), the reggae DJ equates reggae and punk saying that it's "just the black version and the white version". He continues: "The kids [punks] are singing about change, they wanna do away with the establishment. Same thing the niggers [rasta people] are talkin' about, 'Chant down Babylon', it's the same thing. Our Babylon is your establishment, same fuckin' thing. If we beat it, then you beat it and vice versa." Although Mark Perry decided to publish the interview in *Sniffin' Glue* because he reckoned Don's ideas on the punk scene "very very interesting", nothing more than a simple invitation to listen to Reggae music resulted from Don's call to arms and implicit call to unite.

Coming back to the subtitles in order to incorporate this into the descending line of punk rock, and of *Sniffin' Glue* in particular, we can notice how the subtitle in issue # 10 restores the focus on punks themselves, who after a surge in unemployment get back to the streets as *Deptford yobs*, while issue # 11 (it was July 1977, practically a year after the first issue had come out) focuses on *self-defense habits*, as processes of commodification had already started to affect punk culture ("O.K. stick safety pins in yer nose, I don't care if you stick them up your arse. What I do care about is EVERYONE OF YOU MOTHERFUCKERS SHOULD BE A POTENTIAL H-BOMB, NOT A FUCKING CLOTHES HANGER. You're the victim of yourself.", p. 5) and criticism of "inarticulate journalism" writing supposedly 'punk' articles (p. 2) was profuse. By the time *Sniffin' Glue* celebrated its first anniversary in issue # 12, *around Aug/Sept '77*, Mark Perry had decided to give up editing *Sniffin' Glue* and be totally involved in his punk rock band "Alternative TV". In this last issue, although this move is not apparent yet, signs of uneasiness multiply as the identity leit-motif resonates with bitter comments at the way punk was being swallowed up by mainstream culture and commodified (see Figure 2).

The very last lion's roar is reserved to *Ripped n Torn*[5] fanzine's accusation of acting out the working class type while on stage and to the "poncy NME letters

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5. From Tony Drayton's recollection of *Ripped & Torn* issues 5 and 6 Summer 1977. "Me moving to London. In R&T5 I mention that Mark P. has given up the editorship of Sniffin' Glue (it folds shortly after). From issue six I am using the same printer as Sniffin' Glue – out in Cambridge,

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"D'you know what a real 'punk' is?
A real punk today is the bloke with a
belt joining the legs of his trousers
together,or a girl in fishnet stockin's.
And they're the first people to shout
wanker at my band.Cos they're in their
little smug groups of fashion and they
look just like the Sunday People has told
them. They'll tell ya bands are selling
out to business too. Fuckin' snobs.

Figure 6. Extract from page 21 of *Sniffin' Glue* – Issue # 12 (1977)

about 'new elites'" addressing him as "an obvious case of socio-bollocko fuckism caused by a disillusioned shit": "them type of people are gonna kill punk", which together with the final remark "gut level rock reaction ... is gone" (SG #12) testifies to the irreversible involution of punk rock culture.

Besides subtitles, which alone nicely depict the rise and fall of *Sniffin' Glue* and, to some extent, punk in general, also decks (subheadlines) on *Sniffin' Glue* front cover pages provide extra information about the identity struggle that punks were constantly fighting. Some examples: "THE MAG[6] THAT DOESN'T LIKE GIVING YOU 'UP TO DATE' NEWS ON THE MUSIC SCENE" (SG #3); "If you actually like is rag you must be one of the idiots we write it for" (SG #5); "STEVE MICK'S GOT THE SACK AND WE GET BACK TO THE STREETS. THE GLUE: STILL DEPTFORD YOBS!" (SG #10); "STUFF YOUR CHEAP COMMENTS .... CAUSE WE KNOW WHAT WE FEEL ..." (SG #11). The picture we get from analyzing these decks confirms the attempt at construing punk identity in "negative" terms, i.e. with light and shade reversed: "we are what you are not", "we care for what you don't care", "we are proud of our otherness".

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and am typing up the words on the Sniffin' Glue typewriter in the Sniffin' Glue office on Oxford Street. Harry Murlowski has set this up. There's also the first appearance of Step Forward/Faulty Products adverts appearing. Looking at this now I see a big break slipping through my fingers, Miles Copeland – who financed all this office space – must've been looking R&T over as a successor to SG. But I was too snotty to know better." http://rippedandtorn.co.uk/background/the-black-white-years-speed-issues-5-9/

6. The use of the abbreviation "mag" for magazine instead of "zine" testifies to the fact that the latter term, although its use has been attested since 1965, most probably developed later, after circulation of fanzines grew exponentially.
mag. 1731, short for magazine. The original sense is almost obsolete; meaning "periodical journal" dates from the publication of the first one, "Gentleman's Magazine," in 1731. Dictionary.com. *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Douglas Harper, Historian. http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/mag (accessed: Dec 31, 2011).
zine. 1965, short for fanzine. Dictionary.com. *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Douglas Harper, Historian. http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/zine (accessed: Dec 31, 2011).

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A major aim of print 'zines' in general, and of punkzines in particular, is to culturally and socially distinguish those who produce and consume them. As *Sniffin' Glue* is targeted at a specific readership, the punkzine is characterized by marked unconventionality, at both a textual and visual level. Zinesters employ a variety of means to communicate their alternative discourse, which can be considered to be both inclusive and exclusive, since it serves to authenticate the emotions expressed, to establish a direct connection between the author and the reader, to signify distance from the mainstream, and to restrict the readership of those who are prepared to accept such messages.

As a rule, zines reject the bland 'objectivity' and 'neutrality' of mainstream media, and favor a more enthusiastic tone, and the use of slang. The language used in *Sniffin' Glue* can be defined as a *basic street level*, *non-intellectual* language based on *informal* and *colloquial* English. All texts are written in the first person and are directly addressed to the readers, in a conversational tone: e.g. utterances such as "*do you get what I mean*?", "*if ya see what I mean*" or "*you see*", which are typical of spoken interaction, are commonly found in *Sniffin' Glue* issues.

Other features of the typical transcribed (written-as-spoken) language of punkzines include contractions (e.g. *g*-clippings, as in *sniffin'*, *boppin'*, *yellin'*, *jeerin'*) and abbreviations (e.g. '*amp*' for amplifier, '*mag*' for magazine, '*fave*' for favorite).

However, there is one linguistic feature of punkzine language that defines it as the forerunner of current instant messaging: the use of spelling as a creative resource. Based on the accurate and thorough analysis conducted by Caroline Tagg (2012) on a corpus of 11,000 messages from adult British English speakers (approx. 200,000 words) aiming to determine how people text on a day-to-day basis, cases of respelling in *Sniffin' Glue* issues have been isolated and compared with the list of respelling found by Tagg in her texting corpus. Some of the mutual occurrences (in bold) are listed in Table 2.

An example of phonetic spelling is the variant form *bin* to replace *been* (been/biːn/> bin/bɪn/) – e.g., in the sentences "already bin said" or "we bin screwing it up" (issues no.10 and 12) – which also appear in Tagg's corpus. One particular variant form – the phonetic spelling *wiv* – shows an incoherent behavior as it relates to the headword WITH in Tagg's corpus, and to the group WE'VE (*we have*) in *Sniffin' Glue* issues.

A special case of respelling is the verb SUPPOSE which appears in three different variants in *Sniffin' Glue* issues: *'spose*, *s'pose*, and *'pose*, whereas it does not even appear in the top two hundred and fifty most frequent headwords in Tagg's corpus.

As Shortis (2007) argues, the apparently unconventional language of texting follows and extends traditional patterns of spelling variation found in fanzines (Androutsopoulos, 2000), and other forms of electronic communication.

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Table 2. Most frequent 10 headwords and related variants co-occurring in *Sniffin' Glue* issues and in Tagg's texting corpus

	Headword	Variant forms
1	YOU	*Yer, ya, yaself*
2	YOUR	*yer*
3	KNOW	*no* (see example below)
4	ABOUT	*'bout*
5	NO	na (*nah* in Tagg's corpus)
6	ITS	*it's, tis*
7	HELLO	*allo*
8	REALLY	*realy*
9	BECAUSE	*cas, 'cause*
10	THEM	*'em*

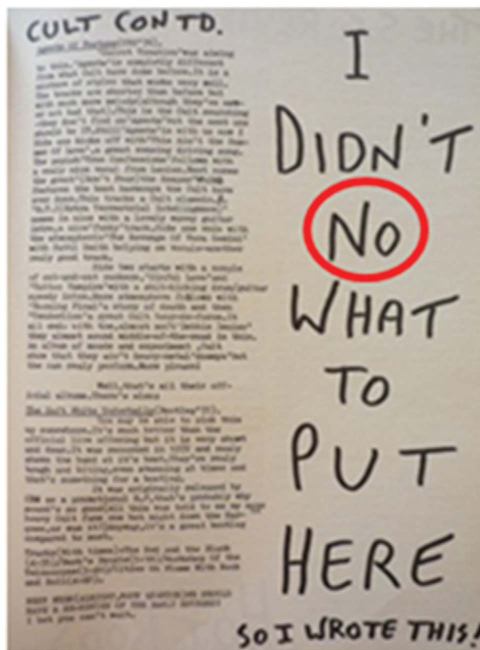

Figure 7. Example of respelling (know/nʊ~/>no/nʊ~ from *Sniffin' Glue*, Issue # 1, page 4 (1976)

Respelling plays a part in the *performance* of both texted and punk identity, as it is seen as conveying meaning, through communicating informality, defining group boundaries, and thus construing identity in culturally-determined ways shaped by the medium.

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Phonetic spelling not only affirms group identity but creates deviance by marking the punk cultural scene as distinct and opposed to mainstream culture. Similarly, texters adopting these forms of respellings affirm membership of texting networks by performing *deviance* from expected norms (Thurlow and Brown 2003, Tagg 2012).

One of the peculiarities of *Sniffin' Glue* consisted in printing – not regularly, though – some of the lyrics from the albums being reviewed. The 'educational' operation was particularly effective considering that song lyrics were not included in the punk rock albums sold at the time and could hardly be listened to thoroughly at gigs: printing the lyrics in the punkzine contributed to shed light on the message punk culture was delivering and to increase punk readers' self-consciousness and sense of belonging. The reviewer's comments to lyrics by *The Clash*, *Sex Pistols*, *Buzzcocks*, *Ramones* added contextualization (e.g. "These guys live up in Manchester, that's what makes their music so vital"; SG #7, p. 11) and replicated the omnipresent, uncompromising, "either IN or OUT" idea of punkzine affiliation: "This group is the new-wave. Buy it, if you don't you shouldn't be reading this mag" (SG #7, p. 11).

At times lyrics reached unexpected poetic heights, as this passage from *Breakdown* in *Buzzcocks'* album "Spiral Scratch" (1977) proves (see Figure 8).

Here the figurative use of language (*I wander loaded as a crowd*)[7], new word coinage (*nowherewolf*)[8] and disused or rarely used expressions (*my nevermind*)[9] create a poetic effect that is in no way inferior to the play on words by well-known poets.

Oh mum can I grow outta,
What's a little too big for me,
I'm gonna give up that ghost,
Before it gives up me,
I wander loaded as a crowd,
A nowherewolf of pain,
Living next to nothing,
But my nevermind remains,
I gotta breakdown yeah,I'm gonna breakdown,
You gimme breakdown yeah".

Figure 8. Extract from page 11 of *Sniffin' Glue* – Issue # 7 (1977)

7. Intertextual reference to William Wordsworth's poem "The Daffodils" (*I wandered lonely as a cloud*).

8. Punning on *werewolf*.

9. Also the name of an Oklahoma City band.

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BULLETS - IN.

Lets sort all this shit out:

1.'Sniffin' Glue's getting like a newspaper'(Stranglers-Sounds).If people want some cockney sparra chic scruffy ornament,thats true.We print what we can afford,what we like,and what we think.Not because,like this weeks T-shirt,it looks and sounds right. We dont go after any fashionable'look'.When you see an Eagles review,turn it in.

Figure 9. Extract from page 2 of *Sniffin' Glue* – Issue # 10 (1977)

Puns on words are also used in less poetic contexts, such as the one below (SG #10, p. 2), in which Danny Baker, one of the later editors of *Sniffin' Glue*, was called to pinpoint a number of issues in response to readers' questions and doubts, the first of which was the form and function of a punkzine.

The topic was discussed in various issues of *Sniffin' Glue*, as this was the interface between the individual and the punk community, but was dismissed in the last issue in Mark Perry's lucidly delirious invitation to burn all copies of *Sniffin' Glue*, and stop writing at all: "if you want to fight, really fight, don't bullshit yer way through print." Fearing absorption into the mainstream music press (*Sniffin' Glue* had gone from a print run of 50 to 15,000), Perry decided it was time to stop publishing, and continued to play music with his band. *Sniffin' Glue* had already become a myth in the UK punk scene.

5. The evolution/involution of a genre

Print fanzines provide a record of what everyday people were thinking and discussing before the Internet, and a key to understanding trends in fandom over the period from about 1970 to the mid-1990s when access to computers and the internet became available, and in some cases a given.

With their point-to-point (or rather, person-to-person) distribution, the fanzines of the 70s and 80s can be said to have created – to a certain degree – an Internet-like structure years before the 'electronic revolution'.

As in the case of websites, each fanzine is constructed separately, but is part of a collective group through its connections to other fanzines. For this reason zine communities can be said to have been mini-webs without an Internet, and zine writers can be considered ante-litteram bloggers. We will expand on this similitude further on in this section.

An important feature shared by fanzines and the web is that both are concerned with freedom of expression. Potentially, the Internet provides far more

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opportunities for those without power to express themselves, offering a far larger readership than any paper fanzine producer would ever be able to reach.

However, in spite of the potential extension of the e-zine phenomenon, what actually happened, as Wright (2001: 157) reports in his study of 512 e-zines and zine websites, is that only some e-zine publishers have drifted away from the zine publishing community, which on the contrary not only continues to exist but seems to be even better organized. Paradoxically, what seems to have changed in the 'e'-shift is the relationship with the reader, who – regardless of the interactive opportunities offered by the Internet – has become a passive surfer, the "phantom of an IP log" (Wright, 2001: 158), having little or nothing in common with the active/interactive reader of the print zine culture, which is a participatory culture. In the zine world, print connections have proved to be stronger than those formed through online publishing.

In the pre-Internet days of zinedom, it was much harder to come across zines, and one became introduced to zine culture usually through friends. With the Web, stumbling on zine culture seemed to be much easier since everything on the Web was just a mouse click away. As a result of the e-shift, some zine publishers found that not only had some of their audience remained the same as it was in print, but they had also attracted new readers from around the world that they didn't think they would have ever reached through print publishing. Some other e-zine publishers reported old friendships being rekindled through the Internet (Wright, 2001: 161). E-zine publishers can keep track of their international audience by using a mapping tool such as the one in the figure below, which provides a snapshot of the geographical distribution of the 'hits' corresponding to visitors of the zine web site.

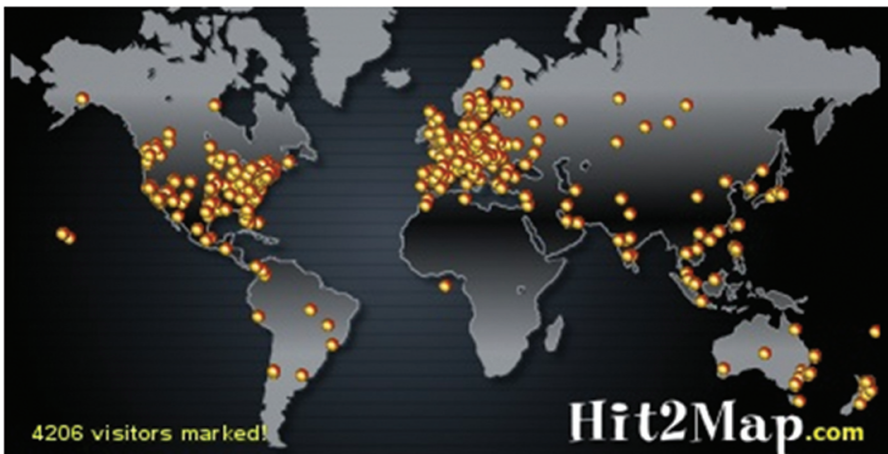

Figure 10. *Scanner Zine*: Geographical distribution of visitors and hits as at December 31, 2011 since October 2009

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The e-zine in the example – *Scanner Zine* – is the online evolution of an A5 print zine published by Steve Scanner in Suffolk, UK, since 1998 which attained a fair circulation. From a small 40-page publication with limited distribution the zine grew into a final print of over 1,000 with a distribution throughout the UK, various parts of Europe and America plus Australia and New Zealand with further readers in Japan and South Africa. The paper version of *Scanner Zine* stopped being printed in 2003 because of a 'life-changing move': the author moved to New Zealand, and considering the success of the print zine he decided to set up the website to continue where the zine left off.

Scanner Zine represents an example of the successful evolution of a print zine into a web zine. Its structure is very simple: its web pages are divided into two columns with the navigation menu on the left and the relevant contents in the main column (see Figure 5). At the top of the page there is the heading with the fixed image of pogoers on the background and the webzine title "*Scanner Zine: larger than life and twice as natural. The Place for Punk Rock, Hardcore, Anarcho and scuzzy Garage Rock 'n' Roll. Where punk rock is more than a passing fad.*"

What strikes most in the comparison with a print zine like *Sniffin' Glue* is its 'neatness'. The patchwork-styled, disordered, obscure (to non-adepts) and at times ambiguous *Sniffin' Glue* appears 'straightened up' in *Scanner Zine*. This neat way of making a web zine somewhat clashes with the chaotic layout of print punkzines. However, the punk style of *Scanner Zine* can still be recognized from the general untidy quality of its graphics consisting of a background image formed by a collage of pictures in the typical cut-and-paste punk style, which change in the different sections of the web site (*Home*, *Interviews*, *Columns/Articles*, *Top Sounds*, *TV Party*, *Reading Matter*, *Tour Diaries*, *Podcasts*, *Web Links*, *Blog*, *Mailing List*). Evidence of communicative constraints superimposed on the layout of the webzine by preset web site formats is quite clear. Although this may be limited to the reduced use of visual effects – e.g. no overlapped or edited pictures as in the case of the famous picture of the Queen with the safety-pin, no voluntarily corrected or crossed-out and replaced words, no texts scribbled in felt-tip pen (see Figure 1) – visual 'neatness' is also reflected in the language used in the web zine.

The highly idiosyncratic language used to communicate an alternative discourse in *Sniffin' Glue* – which served a varied range of purposes, e.g. to authenticate the emotions expressed, to establish a direct connection between the author and the reader, to signify distance from the mainstream and to restrict the readership of those who are prepared to accept such messages – seems to have been neutralized for a more honed, even polished, at times 'professional' expression which, if decontextualized, would invariably be ascribed to mainstream publications.

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An example is the lack of verbal violence, which on the contrary is overabundant in Mark Perry's print zine (against mainstream culture, against selling out, against poseur punks, etc.), while it is conspicuously missing in Steve Scanner's web zine, although the themes addressed are exactly the same. In addition, the latter confines foul language (with the only exception for the '4-letter word') mainly to the Interview section, in which the interviewees are quoted verbatim. The result is a 'purged' language – purged of almost all 'unorthodox' vocabulary – which still retains the contents and visuals that define punk identity and culture and that can be recognized and shared by the punk community. Considering the increasing popularity of *Scanner Zine* across the years (see Figure 10), the deliberate choice of its editor to opt for a more 'educated' language may account for a strategic move to enlarge readership, but it certainly proves that the modes and forms of punk culture no longer need to be expressed through the register of the basic street level language of the 70s.

Scanner's texts can reach unparalleled peaks of formalism (e.g. "I've abstained from writing anything prior to this because ...", "It just seemed to be more respectful to me than penning something hastily thrown together in the immediate wake of ...", "I've never made a secret that my opinion of ... is nothing short of contemptible") especially, yet unexpectedly, in the blog section – which is also used to host obituaries (Scanner's are unrivalled samples of this particular type of genre).

The age difference between zine editors Mark Perry (20 in 1977) [see Figure 3] and Steve Scanner (40 in 2009) [see extract below][10] would not account alone for the different registers used: historical, geographical and social contexts should be taken into account as well. But the main reason still lies in the intrinsic quality of their writing: goal-directed in the case of Mark Perry, and self-directed in the case of Steve Scanner. In *Sniffin' Glue* Mark Perry is constantly addressing to and involving his readers in a compulsorily 'asynchronous' dialogue with the aim of construing his own (punk) identity in contrast with the identity of (non-punk) others. Mark Perry is a 'speaker', and uses speech-like writing to support his arguments in synchronic perspective. In *Scanner Zine* Steve Scanner engages more in a monologue rather than a dialogue with his readers drawing them into his detailed outlook and mature interpretation of punk music and culture. Steve Scanner is a 'writer', and uses story-telling techniques to take a comprehensive snapshot of contemporary punk music scene and depict it in diachronic perspective.

10. from *All this and More* by Steve Scanner, *Suspect Device* #51, January 2010
(...) and many of those who had doubts about their own personal increasing age are still involved in this Punk thang having reached 40 (and beyond) with their CRASS and RAMONES records intact! That includes myself – I hit 40 in August 2009 and made the trip back to Ipswich from New Zealand to spend it with my Mum, friends and family.

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When discussing the language of chat groups, David Crystal (2006: 176) commented that they are "the nearest we are likely to get to seeing written dialogue in its spontaneous, unedited, naked state. (Blogging provides the analogous effect in written monologue)". If we were asked to write an equation relating chat groups and blogging to the mentioned print and web zines, we would say that *Sniffin' Glue* stands to Chatgroups as *Scanner Zine* stands to Blogging. The equation can be explained by further exploring the dialogic or monologic nature of print zines and web zines. Paradoxically, from a formal point of view, one would expect web zines to be ascribed a dialogic quality due to their opening to interactivity (e.g. comments to blogs); however, a thorough perusal of *Scanner Zine* web pages makes it quite clear that all of them, including the blog section, are far from involving the readers into exchanging their viewpoints: the more so, if we consider that even blogs have been almost totally deserted by readers (only seven comments to the editor's blogs were posted altogether since 2006).

The dialogic (speech-like)/monologic (story-telling) quality of the print/web zines under scrutiny can be confirmed by a fine-grained analysis of the lexico-grammatical structure of their language.

For example, studying the wordlist (in descending order of frequency) obtained from the *Scanner Zine* corpus[11], it can be noticed that only three out of the ten most frequent words in *Sniffin' Glue* (as reported in Table 3) actually match its web counterpart. This accounts for the presence of more formal texts in the web zine, in spite of the regular use of 1st and 2nd person pronouns ('you' and 'I')[12], which in other text types would alone mark the language as highly colloquial, or at least informal.

A quick look at the most frequent slang words in *Scanner Zine* corpus (see Table 4) will highlight an unusual fact (for a punkzine): the frequency of the "four-letter word" (f**k) is unexpectedly lower (188 occurrences) than that of the first most frequent slang term, "kinda" (232 occurrences), which again underlines the editor's deliberate choice to avoid overindulgence into foul language.

As John Sinclair (2003) used to say in his corpus linguistics workshops at the Tuscan Word Centre in Italy, "what is missing in a corpus is as important as what is found." As a matter of fact, a contrastive analysis of the zines under scrutiny can only be accomplished if missing items are also brought to light. First, when analyzing the language of *Sniffin' Glue*, we mentioned how important respelling was in the *performance* of punk identity, as it communicates informality and defines group boundaries, thus construing punk identity in a culturally-determined way. In *Scanner Zine*, apart from the items already mentioned, no other creative

11. *Scanner Zine* corpus contains 32114 words.

12. 'You' occurs 6829 times, followed by 'I' with 6498 occurrences. They are the first pronouns to appear in the word list of *Scanner Zine* corpus.

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Table 3. Co-occurrence of headwords and variants in *Sniffin' Glue* and *Scanner Zine* based on Table 2

	Headword	Variant forms in *Sniffin' Glue*	Variant forms in *Scanner Zine*
1	YOU	yer, ya, yaself	ya
2	YOUR	yer	yer
3	KNOW	no	–
4	ABOUT	'bout	–
5	NO	na	–
6	ITS	it's, tis	–*
7	HELLO	allo	–
8	REALLY	realy	–
9	BECAUSE	cos, 'cause	cos, –
10	THEM	'em	–

*One only exception has filtered through: "Add to that instruments as diverse as acoustic guitar, bagpipes (on the fist-throwing, exultant title track), mandolin, double bass and even a harpsichord and you are left with something that every third album should establish for the band in question: **it's** own sound and identity."

Table 4. Most frequent slang words/phrases in *Scanner Zine* corpus

	Headword	Variant form	Frequency
1	KIND OF	kinda	232
2	OUT OF	outta	173
3	YOU	ya, Ya	85
4	BECAUSE	cos	17

resources are used to convey meaning in an unconventional way. Even in the case of respelling which appeared in three different variants in *Sniffin' Glue* issues (the verb SUPPOSE: *'spose*, *s'pose*, and *'pose*), not even one instance of any of the variants appears in *Scanner Zine* corpus.

The most striking observation, though, concerns the total disappearance of the term "punkzine" from Steve Scanner's language: he never uses it to refer either to his own zine, or to any other zines, preferring the hypernym "fanzine". Linguistically the use of hypernyms is accepted practice, but conceptually the missing term arouses a number of questions as to whether and why Steve Scanner is consciously avoiding the use of the term, and if so, whether this decision is associated to the minimization of slang and foul language in the zine, with the consequent 'neutralization' of the register: much of what contributes to make punk identity through language is missing (no vernacular radicalism, no verbal and visual rants), yet the zine is not denied punk identity as long as the DIY punk ethic is preserved.

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Quantitative evidence thus confirms that there really is a case for regarding the web zine language as distinctive compared to the print zine investigated: although accepted by the punk community, its potential for social innovation has been deactivated.

Many commentators believe that the advent of the Internet marked the dissolution of constraints on freedom of expression and on the monopoly of publishing and distribution. Copyright is one of the biggest issues in this regard. Fanzines have always acted in part as an oppositional force to the mainstream record industry and media. As zine publishers moved their zines onto the web and accepted the challenges of the new multimedia environment by creating for instance Podcast sections or video sections, as in the case with *Scanner Zine*, the copyright issue began to impose restrictions that could not be approached as they were in the first issue of *Sniffin' Glue* (See Figure 10).

This migration in media has affected the zine community and the zine itself. Traditionally, one of the peculiar features of the social practice of zine publishing has been the activity of trading zines, in which zine publishers exchange their creations with one another. As such exchange is operated automatically in the e-zine world (through cookies, mailing lists, etc.), the online trading activity has been deprived of its most essential features: human contact.

One of the drawbacks of the Internet is the lack of a "soul" – any sort of personality or direct communication with zine writers, which is of course a considerable part of what constitutes "fanzine culture". Consequently, there's no longer the

All words are copyright Sticky Situations
Productions, except the naughty ones slipped
in here and there. If you want to reprint
you must be a fool!

Figure 11. *Sniffin' Glue* "Copyright": Last page of Issue 1

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same sense of commitment as with paper publishing. In addition, as zine publishers tend to dislike the mainstream in general, and want their publications to be quite distinctive and immediately recognizable, they find it less compelling to publish online because standing out from 40 million web sites would be an impossible challenge.

Furthermore, punk publishers' and readers' response to the materiality of print, i.e. their "embodied experience", may have kept them away from the online world. Many zine readers seem to find the experience of holding the zine in their hands and flipping the pages with their fingers a much more rewarding experience than browsing an e-zine (Wright 2001: 168).

A host of striking uses of both print and electronic publishing have been observed in time:

1. Publishers start publishing online and then as a result also start publishing in print.
2. Out-of-print publications are archived online.
3. Publications are published online and in print concurrently.
4. Publishers publish online in-between print editions.
5. Online publications function as "an advert for the tangible zine".
6. Electronic publishers collect best-of compilations in print.

Evidence suggests that the e-zine is not an equal replacement for its printed precursor. To confirm that, Wright (2001) reported to have found no sign that fewer print zines are being published. On the contrary, the reverse may be said to be true. As the Internet becomes an integral part of our lives, it may not matter much whether zines are published in print or online. Zine publishers have learnt to take the most out of the online medium without 'selling out'. Therefore, there is no reason why online publishing should be seen as 'the death of zinedom'.

6. Conclusions

This study described and analysed the language and culture of a minor media text type – fanzines – and its evolution into its electronic version – e-zines.

Zines stand out amongst other publications as an example of 'access aesthetics', as a medium for young people to freely express their opinions, thoughts, creativity and to demonstrate they clearly are not passive culture consumers, but active culture makers. Fanzine writers – based on a culture permeated by the mantric 'self' (self-editing, self-financing and self-publishing) (Zobel 1999; Atton 2002: 68) – show that everyone can do art and information on their own: this results in fanzines as varied visually and content-wise as their producers.

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In spite of commonplace assumptions about the function of fanzines, at the heart of zine culture is not the study of the 'other' (celebrity, cultural object or activity) but the study of self, of personal expression, sociality and the building of community. Monological in practice, yet dialogical in intent, the zine has proved to offer itself as a token for social relations. Zines actually function as virtual communities, bringing together fans geographically and socially distant from one another.

The validation of a marginalized cultural activity, the formation of community and publishing as political action are the main features that can most visibly be found in the punk fanzines of the 70s. This particular genre, the punkzine, – which developed as a spontaneous and amateurish form of music journalism based on the DIY (do-it-yourself) ethic of the first English punk movement – is the focus of analysis throughout the study.

The 1970s punkzines provided an early model of handmade appearance with cut-n-paste lettering, typewritten texts, photo collages and total absence of mainstream publishing conventions: typos, spelling mistakes, etc, were all part of the mix, and helped to express something akin to the immediacy of punk music. Like the music it promoted, the punk fanzine's prime interest was in "the destruction of existing codes and the formulation of new ones" (Hebdige 1979: 119).

While zine structure suggests other monological periodicals such as magazines and newspapers, it contains a powerful mechanism for enabling communication between individuals. Zine writing is construed as a kind of letter-writing, which prompts dialogue far better than any other type of periodicals. At the same time it presents an individual's declaration and construction of self-identity and invites others to engage in a dialogue about that identity. It is an identity constructed by social actors who find themselves marginalized, devalued and stigmatized by dominant forces in society and culture. These actors form communities as expressions of "the exclusion of the excluders by the excluded" (Castells 1997: 9), i.e. of their 'loserdom', which the 'cool loser' can "wear like a badge of honor" (Duncombe 1997: 18). Independently on the fact that webzines may be acted upon by a more subtle process of commodification than their predecessors, there appears to be a 'rift' between the inclusive e-zine culture and the exclusive nature of printed zine culture.

This chapter focused on the particular form of language – highly contaminated by slang and vernacular radicalism – used in punkzines, and investigated the sociolinguistic evolution of fanzines into webzines. An example of the former is the use of spelling as a creative resource, while testimonial to the latter is the almost total absence thereof.

Techniques of interdiscursive and text analysis were used to identify, describe and interpret the forms of communication that feature in the data collected, which included all 14 issues of the first and most well-known punkzine, *Sniffin'*

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Glue – type-written and xeroxed on A4 black-and-white low quality paper, and materials (interviews, articles, tour diaries) available on the web site of *Scanner webzine* – the online version of an A5 print zine that migrated, together with its author, from the UK to New Zealand.

The study concluded that there is evidence of a close relationship between the language used in the fanzines of the 70s and the language used in current instant messaging, which substantiates the idea of fanzines as linguistic precursors of text messaging, as anticipated by Shortis and Androutsopoulos (Tagg; 2012).

In this chapter we have also shown that the language used in webzines has restored the use of a standard register (with only limited exceptions), which – seen from the Hallidayan theory of language as social semiotics (Halliday 1978) – has contributed to the apparent loss of the social and cultural impact fanzines had on the young generation of the late 70s. Although the spirit that led to their production still continues, and zines still represent an undercurrent of free expression, considering the fanzine simply as a medium of communication within a (large or small) group of people with the same interests and passions, it is easy to find its modern successor in the webzine; yet, considering the sociocultural meaning that had characterized the fanzines in the 70s, we can go as far as to say that these no longer exist, as their modern versions do not seem to possess the same strong spirit and, most importantly, do not impact on society in the same way.

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