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Critical Discourse Studies

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rcds20

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To cite this article: Nancy Henaku (2023): Examining gendered discourses from an African locale: towards an intrasectional feminist critical discourse analysis, Critical Discourse Studies, DOI: 10.1080/17405904.2023.2230601

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2023.2230601

CRITICAL DISCOURSE STUDIES
https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2023.2230601

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Examining gendered discourses from an African locale: towards an intrasectional feminist critical discourse analysis

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ABSTRACT

Following calls for transnational and decolonial perspectives in [feminist]CDA, this paper considers what it means to do a critical analysis of gendered discourses from a Global Southern perspective. It highlights how discourses from an African locale, with its complex local-global intra-action, provide another instance of the complexity of discursive and identitarian power in late modernity, arguing that this requires an intrasectional (not intersectional) feminist critical discourse analysis. Gendered discourses in a music video from hip-life, a localized hip-hop genre in Ghana, are examined to illustrate this argument. The analysis shows how the specific context examined recalibrates not just the social categories that often underlie feminist intersectional analysis but also gives us a complex view of power that interrogates CDA's emphasis on top-down approaches to power, a binary conceptualization that does not account for the manifestations of the power-powerlessness dialectic within the same subject. The result is significant for both analysis and activism because a comprehensive global program for social transformation that includes non-Western contexts and their re-visioning of our analytical lenses must attend to their rhizomic discursive-material entanglements if they are to be effective.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received 22 June 2023
Accepted 24 June 2023

KEYWORDS
intrasectionality; intersectionality; transculturation; hip-life; Global South

1. Introduction

While Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Intersectionality have different disciplinary origins, both standpoints have a shared interest in social transformation and critical analysis (see Crenshaw, 1991; Fairclough, 2013). The introduction of Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) saw a merging of these standpoints in response to the specific challenges that gendered discourses pose (see Lazar, 2005, 2014). FCDA's emphasis on intersectionality promises to open CDA up for messier analyses that account for 'the complexity in the world, in people and in human experiences' (Collins & Bilge, 2016, p. 2). However, both CDA and intersectionality were developed within specific historico-cultural contexts that continue to shape the assumptions underlying their analysis of power and ideology including those related to gender. This observation has epistemic implications – considering recent calls for decolonizing and transnationalizing CDA and gender research (Milani & Lazar, 2017; Resende, 2021) – because it highlights the need to consider how

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our theoretical preoccupations might be reinvented once we begin to take other contexts seriously.

Here, I consider what it means to do a critical analysis of gendered discourses from the '*Other* – pun intended – side of the world' with reference to the complex context of sub-Saharan Africa (Henaku, 2020, p. 362; also Comaroff & Comaroff, 2012/2016). Specifically, I ask how a focus on discourses from an African locale might complicate and/or disrupt discursive analysis informed by both CDA and feminist intersectionality. Combining perspectives from new materialism (Barad, 2007), dialogic criticism (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984), de/postcolonial critique (e.g. Mbembe, 2001) and transnationalism (e.g. Appadurai, 1996), in addition to critical discourse lenses (e.g. Lazar, 2005), I propose an intrasectional feminist critical discourse analysis to account for how Africa's dynamic contexts, and their associated 'iterative (re)materialization' (Barad, 2007, p. 224) processes, continuously destabilize intersectional social variables and their entanglements in timespace. This view, I argue, is crucial for both analysis and activism because a comprehensive global program for social transformation that seriously considers non-Western contexts and their re-visioning of our analytical lenses must be attentive to their rhizomic discursive-material entanglements if they are to be effective.

I support my argument by examining data on gendered representations in the Ghanaian version of American hip-hop music – popularly referred to as hip-life – in order to highlight how the local-global intra-action and intersubjectivities complicate understandings of African gendered identities and how these are being refashioned in new ways in contemporary media, for example. Informed by this analysis, I show that calls for non-Western perspectives in Critical Discourse Analysis, and its intersectional feminist variants, must move beyond merely inviting analysis of discourses from elsewhere within the field – for this also amounts to a kind of 'epistemic injustice' (see Fricker, 2017) – but that analysts must critically consider the limits (not forgetting the affordances) of our current theoretical and analytical categories and the implications they have for examining non-Western discourses. I suggest that a serious re-engagement with issues of context and their implications for the analysis of identitarian issues within FCDA would allow us to complicate our discussions of how multiply-layered social variables come to impact gendered discourses *intrasectionally* in the ever-shifting semiotic landscapes of our globalized world. Ultimately, I seek to highlight the theoretical possibilities that African contexts offer to the larger field of CDA.

2. African contexts, CDA and intersectional analysis

Any analysis of African discourses must consider what happens when theories move from the contexts in which they were originally propounded and applied to new ones – whether in terms of geography, discipline, culture or temporality. Thus, the effort to engage the Global South is not merely about citing scholars or adding data from these contexts, however crucial. It is also especially about reinventing the lenses for reading texts by asking critical questions about these *new* contexts and what they reveal about the limits of our scholarship (see Henaku, 2020). We must consider what changes and what does not change in our methods and theories as they circulate elsewhere. As Chilton and Wodak (2005) observe, the expansion of CDA from its European context to other parts of the world (e.g. China, the Middle East, Africa, USA) necessitates that

'[s]cholars in different cultures will themselves establish their own agenda, one in which the nature, objectives and targets of CDA itself will in all likelihood be creatively transformed' (p. xii–xiii). Despite growing post/decolonial perspectives (Ahmed, 2021; Esposito, 2021; Henaku, 2020; Resende, 2021), CDA is still dominated by Eurocentric models (Ahmed, 2021, p. 140) and we are yet to fully harness the theoretical possibilities of global postcolonies especially for gender research.

For example, the discussions on mainstream CDA's conceptualizations of context (see van Dijk, 2006; Wodak, 2011) are yet to engage the kind of linguistic, discursive and material complexity that the postcolony presents although arguments have been made for global analysis (Chilton, 2011; Chilton & Wodak, 2005). We operate with one-size-fits-all notions of context in our analysis without *theorizing* – but narrating as Blommaert (2001) points out – the unique historicizations that underlie the many complex contexts we examine. Africa, for example, is characterized by complexities shaped by colonialism, multilingualism, globalization, diverse ethnicities etc. and their messy entanglements. Africa's variegated sociocultural histories and global positioning exhibit particular vernacular formations that are at once distinct and yet complexly linked to the West and elsewhere. Because of these influences, Africa 'speaks' from 'multiple elsewheres' (Mbembe & Nuttall, 2004, p. 348), a situation that requires a kind of 'deep historicization' (Henaku, 2020) if we are to examine African discourses, and their shifting intersectionalities, in a nuance manner.

While African scholars (e.g. Atanga, 2012; Rahmouni, 2022) have found Wodak's discourse-historical approach (DHA) useful, Henaku (2020, p. 90) argues that DHA's lack of 'explicit theorization' of 'historical' and its relegation of 'historical' to one level of context misses the historicity of the other three levels of contexts (see Wodak, 2011). This is complicated by the almost lack of engagement with the fact of coloniality (Ahmed, 2021; Esposito, 2021; Resende, 2021) with the implication that while mainstream CDA has long acknowledged the complexities that late modernity presents for discursive analysis (see Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Lazar, 2005), we have not considered that a global examination of late modernity must recognize that modernity looks different outside of the West or that modernity has multiple significations and configurations (see Comaroff & Comaroff, 2012/2016; Knauft, 2002). Embedded in our mainstream analytical enterprises then is an inadvertent assumption that power, ideology and discourse operate the same way everywhere, making invisible other crucial ideological work with implications for imagining cross-cultural critical projects that respond to global demands (see Zhang et al., 2011).

In the context of intersectionality, a staple in feminist CDA, Nash (2016, p. 11) critiques the 'language of "travel"' that is used to celebrate the term's circulatory success as well as the refusal to interrogate the institutional context that makes this circulatory success possible. This circulatory success is linked with the epistemic power imbalance of America's academic dominance and the era of the '"corporate university" that celebrates, values, and funds projects that mobilise … the language of diversity, interdisciplinarity, transnationalism, and globalisation' (p. 10). Thus, to deploy tools of both CDA and intersectionality in any analysis of discourses from non-EuroAmerican contexts is to be imbricated in the power structures that define knowledge production, with implications for the results of analysis. While intersectionality's multidimensional conceptions of power and identity foregrounds the essence of critical complexity, its circulatory success has

turned it into a 'catchall phrase' (Phoenix & Pattynama, 2006, p. 187) that is theoretically fuzzy (Carbin & Edenheim, 2013). Any uncritical deployment of intersectionality in postcolonial contexts, for example, without recourse to the political undertones of the concept's origins and its analytical limits, is also neocolonial. Because of its circulatory power, its use outside of Anglo-American contexts ignores the fact that the complexity it accounts for cannot always be mapped onto complexities elsewhere and its 'reliance on [mainly US] black women's experiences' (Nash, 2008, p. 8) overshadows crucial dimensions of other global Black subjectivities.

Both CDA and intersectional analyses assume that social/discursive critique is contingent on context but if context itself is not static and is always morphing, then analysts must be open to discussing how new contexts can expand our analytical lenses. For African gender scholarship, the discussion of context is complicated partly because of dominant (and erroneous) ideas about the continent as a space that is generally out of the reach of modernity or as a monolith, ignoring its many complex contexts. To foreground Africa in gender analysis, as Atanga et al. (2013, p. 5) indicate, requires that we ponder whether such an emphasis is 'a form of postcolonial marginalisation … or of essentialism'. And yet, foregrounding Africa provides 'other' views of discursive-material complexity in late modernity that CDA and intersectional analysts must engage with if we are to comprehensively account for the workings of contemporary gendered power.

Despite the influence of modernity in Africa, and elsewhere, there are aspects of African social life that do not align with some theorizations by Anthony Giddens (see Bitrus, 2017) whose concept of 'late modernity' shapes discussion in CDA (see Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Lazar, 2005). Indeed, some of what Giddens (1991, p. 13) considers 'new' (e.g. the changing nature of the stepfamily) already existed in African contexts through polygamy, for example. Others have also pointed out Giddens' (and others') marginal reference to Africa in their discussion on global '*convergence*' (Ferguson, 2006, pp. 26–27, emphasis from original). Referencing Giddens' notion of reflexivity, Lazar (2007) highlights the complexities of postfeminist articulations and their simultaneous appropriation and subversion of progressive discourses but African contexts have a way of destabilizing even such complex analysis for how does one account for the interpellations of postfeminism in such contexts when questions about the Africanicity of feminism are yet to be settled (Dosekun, 2007; also, Henaku, 2020) and despite global discursive efforts to establish new gendered regimes on the continent (and elsewhere), evident through, for example, the circulation of signs of empowerment on the continent, blatant sexism is said to characterize discourses from the continent? (Atanga et al., 2013, p. 7). Because of African contexts' complex time–space entanglements (see Henaku, 2020), '[t]raditional, "modern" and … progressive [and more] discourses on gender may in fact be rather specifically *competing* … (as elsewhere)' (Atanga et. al., p. 15, emphasis from original) but most importantly, these 'competing' discourses may be present in the same text, sometimes melding in ways that mask their differing influences or origins. Such complex contexts require that discursive analytical frameworks do not merely account for identitarian entanglements but are also attuned first to how these are linked with and produced by the complex intrasections, not intersections, of structures of power and discourses manifesting dynamically in ever-evolving spacetimes. I attempt such a framework in the next section.

3. Towards an intrasectional feminist critical discourse analysis

The intrasectional feminist critical discourse model proposed here is an 'integrationist' (van Leeuwen, 2005) framework that harnesses perspectives from CDA (Fairclough, 2013; Lazar, 2005), new materialism (Barad, 2007), dialogic criticism (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984), de/postcolonial criticism (Lugones, 2010; Mbembe, 2001) and transnationalism (Appadurai, 1996). I consider how these theories merge to provide analytical complexity beyond those presented by intersectionality and mainstream CDA. At its core, this model considers how a nuanced conception of context (re)configures analysis of the workings of identity and its discursive manifestations. Informed by (feminist) CDA, this model has social emancipatory goals and its combined stances overcome the often undue prominence of language in discourse projects, accounting for the dynamic entanglements of discourse and materiality (both socio-historical and corporeal) in their various forms. Data from African postcolonies inspire my thinking but the views presented here are applicable to discursive-material complexities elsewhere (in both North and South). However, I assume that the vision of complexity is clearer when we privilege the South, as my subsequent analysis does, because the geopolitical positioning of the Global South vis-à-vis the Global North implies that its layered influences are intensely evident (Henaku, 2020, p. 90).

The various perspectives share with mainstream CDA an interest in criticality; however, each provides other notions of criticality that are shaped by their specific analytical concerns. Despite differences, there are overlaps that allow me to bring them together. For example, post/decolonial theory's engagement with the fact of coloniality always already involves the transnational with its associations with hybrid subjectivities (e.g. Grosfoguel, 2008). Bakhtin's (1981) dialogic theorization has informed discussions in postcolonial theory's engagement with hybridity (see Young, 1995); it underlies intertextual analysis in critical discourse analysis (see Farrelly, 2020) and in recent times, a rediscovery of Bakhtinian 'chronotopes' has been useful for rethinking discourse and sociolinguistic analysis (Blommaert, 2015). Henaku's (2020) notion of 'chronotopic intra-actions' (p. 97), which refers to the 'agency and entanglement of context' (p. 16) hint at possible overlaps between new materialism and Bakhtinian theory. Combining these lenses provides a broader notion of criticality that is useful for exploring discourse-material complexity.

I borrow 'intrasectionality' from Irni (2010) who, considering the limits of intersectionality and informed by feminist new materialism, defines the term as '*intra-actions of forms of power that constitute each other*, rather than inherently separate axes of difference that intersect like crossroads' (p. 113; emphasis from original). As Barad (2007, p. 33) explains, '"intra-action" signifies the mutual constitution of entangled agencies' and 'recognizes that distinct agencies do not precede, but rather emerge through, their intra-action' while '"interaction" … assumes that there are separate individual agencies that precede their interaction' (p. 33). Lugones (2010), theorizing the persistence of 'coloniality of gender' even after formal decolonization argues that coloniality of gender 'lies at the intersection of gender/class/race as central constructs of the capitalist world system of power' (p. 746). Despite Lugones' privileging of gender and use of intersectional grammar, what is really at stake is the intra-action of these categories for while we recognize their varied influences, analytical separation is impossible. These categories are so

entangled, each necessarily recalls the other and their persistency results in further iterative space–time (re)circulations, creating in the postcolony for example '"fractally recursive" forms' (Reyes, 2021, p. 295) such that power is always transforming, always becoming and ever-evolving.

Through a Baradian reconception of context, I read 'material-social practices' like class, race, gender, sexuality etc. as constituting, in the words of Donna Harraway, 'bodies-in the-making and contingent spatiotemporalities' (as cited in Barad, p. 224). Consequently, social categories like gender cannot be fixed in their manifestations: they are not only dynamically entangled with other categories but each is attuned to multiply-layered materializations 'perpetually open to rearrangements, rearticulations, and other reworkings' (p. 170). This means our sense of context itself cannot be determinative; it must be open to interpretive (im)possibilities that account for connections, ruptures and, in the words of Barad 'discontinuous discontinuity' (p. 182). Crucially, Barad argues that terms such as 'contextuality' and 'intersectionality', often deployed in feminist analysis, 'rely on a container model of space and a Euclidean geometric imaginary' which presents 'space as a neutral backdrop against which events unfold' (p. 223–224). Similarly, 'time [is] divided into evenly spaced increments marking a progression of events' (p. 223). This linearity cannot explain the *intra-active 'enfoldings'* of pasts, presents and futures. Following Barad's call for theorizing space and time 'in terms of the dynamics of intra-activity' (p. 208), this model shifts from these prevailing Western views to present context as agentive in intrasectional identity materializations. I do so by reading Baradian 'spacetimematter' through Bakhtinian chronotope.

Mikhail Bakhtin (1981) defines the chronotope (i.e. 'time space') as 'the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature … ' (p. 84). Originally deployed in literary analysis, the concept's emphasis on space-time intra-action has been useful for examining practices beyond the literary including discussions on contexts and identity in sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology and discourse studies (see Blommaert et al., 2020; De Fina & Perrino, 2020). Bakhtin explains that:

> In the literary artistic chronotope, spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole. Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. (p. 84)

This explanation points to the materiality of space–time, which aligns with Barad's spacetimematter. Chronotope and spacetimematter highlight the entanglement of discourse and materiality but crucially, both also imply that timespace are not only relational but also embodied allowing us to account for social and corporeal materializations.

Chronotopes and spacetimematter are portals of history. Besides its emphasis on 'the connectedness of time/space and personae' and 'their ever changing nature … with each local instantiation' (De Fina & Perrino, 2020, p. 68), the chronotope is characterized by a 'historical poetics' (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 85) through which we come to understand the workings of ideology. As sociohistorical frames, chronotopes are imbued with 'identity scripts' and 'moral orientations' (Blommaert et al., 2020, p. 58) and notably, chronotopic shifts 'involve shifts of an entire range of features and generate specific effects' (Blommaert & De Finna, 2017, pp. 3–4). Intra-actions between different chronotopes account for

polyphony and heteroglossia which refers to the co-articulation of a multiplicity of voices and consciousness in discourse (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 6). Polyphony is then characterized by what Barad (2007) refers to as 'sedimented historialities' (p. 180) and in this sense, '[t]he past is never left behind, never finished once and for all, and the future is not what will come to be in an unfolding of the present moment' (p 234).

Characterizing this process is *intracontextuality* (not 'intercontextuality' as Henaku, 2020, p. 98 proposed), which is a blend of *intracontextuality* (space–time enfoldings) and *intratextuality* (textual/discursive enfoldings) and refers to the enfoldings of chronotopic multiplicities and their associated discourse-materialities in the continuous production of hegemonic identities. Because specific chronotopes are linked with 'existing frames of recognizable identity' (Blommaert & De Finna, 2017, p. 3), evident, for instance, in sartorial choices and linguistic behavior, they are saturated with established subject formations; however, their co-occurrence with other chronotopes creates possibilities for the production of new subjectivities. In accounting for both the *old* and *new* in identity work, chronotopic analysis shows that 'identity formation is a contingent and contested ongoing material process' (Barad, p. 240). Intrasectional identities then are chronotropic assemblages of multiplicitous forms working together (or in some cases, against each other) in a constant process of (re)materialization.

The assumptions of intrasectional feminist CDA are crucial for examining the transcultural practices of postcolonial (African) contexts and the contemporary globalized world at large. To examine discourses from an African locale is to account for how complex material-discursive interstices localize the world and world Africa. Africa constitutes 'multiple assemblages and disjunctive syntheses'; it has been described as 'a space of flows, of flux, of translocation, with multiple nexuses of entry and exit points … [it] exists only as a function of circulation and of circuits' (Mbembe & Nuttall, 2004, pp. 349–351). Contemporary globalism connects the world in complex and 'unpredictable ways' (Blommaert, 2010, p. 1). Recent advancement in technology makes travel in all of its forms relatively easier: texts, capital, aesthetics, technology etc. from one context are circulated and appropriated elsewhere through the dynamic processes of deterritorialization (dislocation) and reterritorialization (relocation) (Appadurai, 1996; Jacquemet, 2005). Popular culture (like hip-hop), and its circulation, serves as 'a vehicle for the worldwide dissemination of particular language forms … including new forms of literacy and message design … ' (Blommaert, 2010, p. 5). Accompanying these new literacies are complex narratives of gender (and other social categories) with transcultural dimensions. Thus, besides the complication of older forms of gendered subjectivities, new gendered forms are constantly being (re)articulated.

Underlying such circulations are also complex issues of power and ideology prompting the following questions: What thing, from which contexts, is easily circulated? What ideologies are circulated with such movements? And how do they become entangled with ideologies elsewhere. Identity work in these complex entanglements requires analysts to be open to multiple manifestations of social variables like gender, class, race, age, and continuously historicize them for specific discourses because these variables may not always have a stable meaning even in a single text or context and their intraactions with other categories may be shifting continuously. Additionally, to conceptualize identity work as intrasectional and chronotopic is to emphasize the recalibration of power in ways

that defy mainstream CDA and intersectional analysis where binary conceptions emphasize top-down approaches to power.

Because power is nebulous in late modernity, the top-down approach in both CDA and intersectional analysis is not a comprehensive view, a limitation that is manifested more clearly in postcolonial contexts where the subjects may occupy an ambiguous powerful/powerless positionality. An intrasectional discourse analysis of an African locale must account for this kind of ambiguity; otherwise, many aspects of the workings of discourse will remain invisible, making the call for [gendered] decoloniality an impossibility for feminist (CDA). Intrasectionality emphasizes the dynamism of power explaining how intrasectional hegemonic identities are (re)produced through a multiplicity of translocal, transdiscursive resources. The following sections demonstrate the significance of intrasectional analysis through an examination of a Ghanaian hip-life music video. First, I contextualize the analysis by discussing the transcultural dimensions of Ghanaian Hip-life and its implication for intrasectional analysis.

4. The intrasectional dynamics of hip-life's transculturation

Ghanaian hip-life music is characterized by 'transculturation' which describes complex discourse-material resignifications that accompany 'scenarios of cultural contact' (Singh, 2023). Merging African American hip-hop aesthetics with translocal Ghanaian sonic resources, hip-life illustrates the complexity of late modern culture. An example of the continuing links between Africa, African Diasporas, the West and elsewheres, hip-life spotlights the fluid identities of its producers and consumers. Hip-life is characterized by codeswitching between English, one or more indigenous Ghanaian languages or dialects and/or Ghanaian Pidgin English, a widely-used youth language. English in hip-life could be the indigenized Ghanaian English version, some Locally Acquired Foreign Accent (LAFA) (see Bruku, 2010; Shoba et al., 2013) or both. It also mixes Ghanaian folk sounds, Highlife music and indigenous rhetorics like the Anansesem storytelling tradition and proverbial discourse (Oduro-Frimpong, 2009; Shipley, 2009). These features weave a fascinating narrative about the implications of the 'homogenization' and 'heterogenization' (Appadurai, 1996) of signs for late modern discursive-material analysis.

Hip-life's transcultural dynamics reinforce the contradictory effects of 'today's "borderless" transnational capitalism' as it simultaneously gives young Ghanaians (mainly men) vocal agency while (re)inscribing neocolonial (gendered) scripts (Osumare, 2012, p. 2; also Shipley, 2013). In a context that privileges the voice of the elderly, hip-life became a 'symbolic realm through which youths on the margins reimagine themselves as socially authoritative, free-thinking public speakers' (Shipley, 2013, p. 4). However, this discursive power was gendered. Besides marginalizing women's voices, the genre's privileging of male perspectives implied that problematic discourses about women and their bodies were often (re)circulated for neoliberal capital. Underlying hip-life then are tensions between (gendered) agency and powerlessness that require complex analysis of power beyond binary explanations. In fact, the gendered dimensions of hip-life are a kind of 'double [or more] transculturation' (Singh, 2023) showing the intraaction of hip-hop transculturations in racialized North America and elsewhere (e.g. Ghana).

Hip-hop's hustler aesthetics enabled Black youths in the US to reinvent themselves in an oppressive context. Despite providing critical commentary on American socio-

political life, hustler aesthetics also became a vehicle through which problematic gendered ideologies were constructed, enabled by the American corporate machine that packages these signs for global consumption. Discussions show that hip-hop misogyny is a multiply-layered ideological process that involves the intraaction of, at least, the spacetime of the TransAtlantic Slavery and the spacetime of the current white controlled neoliberal corporate capitalism under which hip-hop is marketized (see Adams & Fuller, 2006; Collins, 2000; Quinn, 2000). For example, Gangsta rap's deployment of 'pimp' lexicons (Quinn, 2000) (re)circulates a 'hoochie' image – linked to the 'Jezebel' image of an earlier spacetime – to misrepresent and discipline black female sexuality in the service of hegemonic male heterosexual desire (Collins, 2000, pp. 81–84). Collins explains that 'by meshing smoothly with intersecting oppressions of race, class, gender, and sexuality', images such as 'hoochie' 'justify the social practices that characterize the matrix of domination in the United States' (p. 84).

Hip-life's recirculation of hip-hop's intrasectional tropes are explainable through Reyes' (2021) 'postcolonial semiotics' which identifies 'fake' (mimicking of metropolitan identity), mixedness (hybridity in terms of person and linguistics), and 'excess' (too much of something) as 'chronotopically anchored emblems of postcolonial elite types' (p. 301). Hip-life's resignifications of hip-hop signs of blackness complexify local intrasectional discourses including the hustler aesthetics of the Ananse storytelling tradition that Shipley (2009, p. 656) considers as a facet of hip-life's articulation of a 'hyper-masculine verbal mastery'. Like hip-hop, hip-life's hustler aesthetics were expressed multimodally through music lyrics and visuals as well as artistes' physical appearance. Hip-life artistes, referred to as 'Yo-yo boys', performed in Timberland boots, sagging baggy jeans and fake chains. Compared to genres like highlife which performs misogyny metaphorically and indirectly, (recent) hip-life excessively (blatantly) deploys (playful) misogyny in performing hip-hop authenticity. These processes circulate anew the coloniality of gender on which hip-hop thrives, intrasecting with discourse-materialities of Ghana's translocal chronotopes to form complex rhizomic entanglements that diffuse or sediment multiply-layered power.

Hip-life's transcultural dynamics highlights a constant process of rematerialization that calcifies hegemonic power. Hip-life's appropriation of hip-hop implies a(n) (in)direct engagement with North American racial imaginaries and their gendered/sexual/class intra-actions; however, as Shipley (2009, p. 646) explains, hip-life resignifies hip-hop aesthetics so that it 'marked a form of cosmopolitanism and elite status', rather than 'African American rebellion', in response to the artistes' desire to transcend the precarity of their immediate postcolonial conditions. This shift occurs in the context of the neoliberalization of Ghana's economy with its emphasis on individual self-making and private enterprise, resulting in the celebritization of the music industry and its complex intrasectional gendered manifestations (Collins, 2014, p. 567; Shipley, 2009). It is these intra[con]textualities that underlie the text examined subsequently. The complexity identified in this section highlights the need for a feminist CDA that can weave a more intricate narrative of late modern gendered discourse-materialities and their layered historico-ideological dimensions.

5. Intrasectional analysis of 'My Kinda Girl'

Because of space, I examine one text but the complexities identified are evident in many other (hip-life) discourses. I analyze 'My Kinda Girl', an award-winning song by D-Black and Sarkodie (see D-Black featuring Sarkodie, 2012), two of Ghana's successful artistes whose music are played on airwaves, on streets, in homes, and at social gatherings. D-Black has received several awards in Ghana and Africa and has been nominated for Best International Act: Africa (2011) at the BET Awards. He is the CEO of Black Avenue Music, the record label that produced the song. Sarkodie is an internationally recognized artiste, and recipient of BET awards for Best International Act: Africa (2012) and Best International Flow (2019). He also won the 'Artiste of the Decade' award in 2019 at the Vodafone Ghana Music Award, the biggest music award festival in the country. Consequently, these artistes significantly shape public culture and consciousness. 'My Kinda Girl' has been available on YouTube (and other digital platforms like Spotify) since February 2012, which means that they are accessed and recirculated internationally. It had received 48,070 views on YouTube as at the time of writing. In 2012, 'My Kinda Girl' was adjudged the tenth most popular song in Africa (Ghanacelebrities, 2012). It was remixed as 'My Kinda Girl (Afrobeat Remix)' with other African Stars. The following analysis highlights the intrasectional issues underlying the artistes' construction of ideal femininity.

Characterizing the opening of the music video is a transcultural semiosis that fuses at least scientific discourses with hip-hop hustler aesthetics in constructing a heteronormative reality as the artistes *cook* their 'kinda' girl. The visual, for example, is loaded with several chronotopes. A crucial one is a kind of Frankenstein chronotope rearticulated within the cyborgian politics of contemporary technoculture (evidenced by the centrality of the material-spatialities of the laboratory). Labeled 'a nutty scientist', an animated D-Black is wearing a laboratory coat and 'working on an experiment' with some apparatuses. Located somewhere behind D-Black is an animated Sarkodie who, unlike D-Black, is dressed in a typical 'yo-yo' style signified by his Timberland boots, black jeans and gold-colored chain. Sarkodie is located next to a power source in what appears to be a music studio (another chronotope) simultaneously juxtaposed and aligned with the laboratory space. An animated image of a male rabbit (labeled 'rabbito'), appears next to D-Black and hands him a tool which D-Black uses in the experiment. A speaking bubble saying 'I need more power' appears above D-Black's head. The artistes declare 'I like girls' and proceed to construct their ideal modern femininity that underscore shifting ideas about Ghanaian masculinities and transformations in postcolonial gendered relations. At the core of the representation is the intra-action between the symbolic (e.g. lyrics, visuals, bodily signs) and material (e.g. apparatus, gendered bodily constructions) but crucially, signs from different spacetimes (e.g. music studio, laboratory), with their unique social histories, intra-act to construct a discourse about women.

The problem is not that the persona(s) like girls; the problem is that they like girls because of what they provide physically, intellectually and materially. These 'girls' in a neoliberal context are empowered women with access to modernity. They include a '[brainy] teacher chick', a 'doctor girl' who treats him when he is 'sick', a 'lawyer lady' who provides legal support, a 'waitress girl' who cooks and cleans for him, a '[hot and studious] student chick' for hanging out, 'banker chick' who doubles his money, 'soldier lady' who 'looks outstanding from behind' and a '[non-committal] business girl' for having a

good time. The persona(s) is/are [a] philanderer(s): they have women at their disposal for varied purposes but sex is pivotal in these descriptions. For example, the medicine the 'doctor girl' gives to the [sick] persona is sexual and the idea that the business girl presents him with gifts from other girls implies that her transnational resources sponsor the persona's sexual adventures [visually represented as an airplane labeled 'Non-Virgin Islands'].

In the video, these girls are visually represented with animated images of the following Ghanaian celebrities: Yvonne Nelson (as teacher), Jeremie (doctor), Juliet Ibrahim (lawyer), Nadia Buari (waitress), Jackie Appiah (banker), Joycelyn Dumas (soldier) and Lydia Forson (Business girl). Other male celebrities represented in the video are Reggie Rockstone (a Hip-life artiste) and Majid Michel (a movie star). These bodies are chronotopic; they do not only point to specific spaces (Ghana, Africa, global) and times (postcolonial, modern) but are also signs of celebritization and its associated ideas about new forms of ideal femininities (and masculinities) in contemporary Ghana. Intra-acting with celebritization is postfeminism, reinforcing the emphasis on individual success as an ideal female subjectivity for neoliberal times. As an ideology, postfeminism appropriates Western liberal feminist discourse to declare women empowered and able achieve it all (Dosekun, 2020, p. 2). In describing the specific kinds of girls he prefers, D-Black lists the corporeal features ('bootie', beauty), apparatus (movies), attitude (guts) and ethics (sexual independence, cool) associated with an Afropostfeminist sensibility that are recognizable globally.

The lyrics present the girls one-dimensionally but the visuals complexify their characterization through the Frankenstein chronot(r)ope. The title 'nutty scientist' is chronotopic. It recalls (but also works against) the image of the 'mad scientist' and all of its associations. In the visual narrative, the scientist experiments on a woman in a glass tube. A computer screen indicates 'my kinda girl experiment 01' has a 90% success leaving room for a 10% margin of error. Brain, looks and skill are 20%, 90% and 85% complete respectively. The computer claims 'experiment looks very stable' 'but I am just a computer/what the heck do I really know … *smiley face*.' The experiment fails with the 'waitress girl', the domestic girl that cooks and cleans for the persona interrogating the articulation that 'the my kinda girl software simulates the personality …. of a real life perfect girl for you'. The waitress girl chases away the guys (presumably, the persona's friends) who come to taste her food (described as 'a taste test') and manages to capture one who she presumably kills recalling the implications of the 'hubristic quest to become God' in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (Mellor, 2017, p. 239). This ironic deployment of the Frankenstein trope is an example of the kind of reflexivity that, as Lazar (2005) argues, complicates late modern gendered discourses. The producers are aware that their discourse is problematic but they circulate it anyways. Significantly, the Frankenstein chronotope – and its gendered histories – intra-acts with a postmodern scientific chronotope with its intrasectional discourses of humanoids and body sculpting. It is through the chronotope that the artistes' somatic fixations are revealed and crucially, it does so by playing with the boundaries between the real and unreal, the serious and unserious.

If the sexist articulation seems subtle so far, it becomes much more explicit in the final rap lines by Sarkodie who provides a moral commentary on acceptable female performativity. As a philanderer, the persona's ethics is questionable but he interpellates the new moral sensibilities of contemporary global citizens. For example, the persona expresses his disinterest in sixteen year olds because they come with many issues. In this

reflexive discourse, the persona references current anti-rape and defilement discourses in Ghana, chronotopically recalling an earlier music titled '16 years' by the Ghanaian musician MzBel (see MzBel featuring Castro, 2007/2020) which explores these issues in detail. In the excerpt below, the persona declares he does not like women who often ask for money, 'Azonto' girls (glossed as 'hoe[s]' on urban dictionary), women who wear [more] blinks and are smelly.

Original	Translation
Me mpɛ ɔbaa	I don't like a woman
Ɛyaa ɔtai bisa me five Ghana	who often asks me for five Ghana [cedis]
Azonto kind of girl	Azonto kind of girl
Nea ne hu blinks kyin Jewel Santana	One with more blinks than Jewel Santana [Juelz Santana?]
Na n'ambotuem sɛ Nsawam cells	and her armpit [smells] like Nsawam [Prison] cells
[hummm]	[sonic disapproval of foul smell]

'Azonto' is a chronotopically-layered term with gender, race and class implications. The Azonto is not only constructed as promiscuous. She is seen as desperately mimicking metropolitan (including postfeminist) subjectivities and failing at it. Online discourse on azonto girls identifies the following characteristics: fake flamboyant clothings and accessories, make-up fails, body odor, bad breath and potbelly. Ironically, Sarkodie's animated image also mimicks metropolitan culture (symbolized by his blings for example). It is a case of an azonto boy criticizing an azonto girl for mimicking metropolitan culture and desiring the sexual freedom that he so enjoys. The persona prefers the 'Dada ba' (literally Daddy's children), that is a person (in this case, a girl) whose parents are wealthy. The term recalls a set of class-related signifiers that are the very opposite of the azonto. The 'Dada ba' is not 'kankpe' (physically hard; sign of poverty, manual work); she is chubby (sign of wealth), wears expensive clothing (not fake ones) and has a *foreign* accent. She is an afro-cosmopolitan with access to global (white) culture. She is not fake like the azonto. It is in the complex dance of (post)colonial temporalities and spatialities that we come to understand how this discourse is materialized.

These closing lyrics seem celebratory of African feminine subjectivity. However, its complex discursive-material entanglement shows a tension between celebration and repudiation.

> I love … my African girls
> You all look beautiful
> God bless you all
> D-Black, Ghana, West Africa

The artiste's proclamation of love for 'my African girls' and his description of these girls as beautiful intratextually recalls PanAfrican 'transtemporal' 'black is beautiful' rhetorics rooted in the nineteenth century ideology of Edward W. Blyden, later reappropriated by 1960s American black cultural movement (Henriksen, 1971, p. 150). This 'black is beautiful' rhetoric, which dialogues with seventeenth century colonial discourses about African peoples, is recontextualised as a dimension of the text's sexism. 'I love my African girls' has two possible interpretations: first, the artist may be referring to a specific group of girls (contrast with 'I love African girls'), perhaps those mentioned in the song and crucially, it is only at the end of the music that these girls are identified as African; second, the

use of 'my' casts these 'African girls' as the artiste's possession. Underlying this seemingly celebratory language is gendered objectification. The reference to the artiste's name, his country and subregion situates his discourse translocally. The intracontextualities here, and elsewhere, highlight the essence of an intrasectional feminist CDA for examining the vicissitudes of today's intrasectional gendered socio-economy.

6. Discussion and conclusion

This paper sought to explore the theoretical possibilities of engaging Africa in feminist CDA, highlighting how Africa's complex contexts recalibrate analytical categories like power and intersectionality. Through this lens, I make a case for the epistemic significance of Global Southern standpoints for complex theorizations of late modern culture. The analysis focused specifically on Ghanaian hip-life but its observation about the discourse-material complexities of African contexts is evident in different African discursive types including those related to party politics, emerging Afropostfeminist sensibilities, (anti-)queer rhetorics and empowerment discourse. Though it privileges African contexts, my argument applies to other contexts in today's globalized world, which interrogates a monological/monolinguistic politics that cannot explain how varied translocations create a dynamic network of power in ever-evolving processes of materialization.

Intrasectional analysis recognizes that coloniality and globalization play with power in significant ways. Besides the continuous transformation of power through a constant process of rematerialization, varied dialectics of power and powerlessness can co-exist even in one subject, a manifestation that is unaccounted for in mainstream CDA. As my analysis shows, the Ghanaian youths that produce hip-life are marginalized in the global economy of signs yet they deploy the privileges afforded them to produce lyrics that sustain the oppression of women.

Significantly, it is impossible to identify one source of power from the intrasectional assemblage that the analysis maps out. For example, underlying the hip-life misogyny of 'My Kinda Girl' are at least discourses of hip-hop masculinities and femininities, African postcolonial anxieties about the female body, the Frankenstein trope, neoliberalism, celebritization, postfeminism, seventeenth century racialized rhetorics about blackness and nineteenth and twentieth century radical black responses. Underlying each of these discourses are layered intrasectional dynamics, simultaneously intra-acting to form the text's seemingly unified ideology. The result is not a single but a 'thousand tiny' (Grosz, 1993) intrasections. Thus, it is simplistic to classify the artistes as the powerful agents in a top-down binary structure for power itself becomes rhizomic. The observation is crucial for both analysis and activism because a comprehensive global program for social transformation that includes non-Western contexts must attend to their rhizomic discursive-material entanglements if they are to be effective. It is only when we are able to account for such complex entanglements in varied contexts that we can begin to explain why global hip-hop culture for example thrives so much on misogyny.

The Ghanaian discursive-material layeredness requires deep historicizations of how these varied influences intra-act to complicate intrasectional manifestations, which I have not yet began with my analysis of 'My Kinda Girl.' For example, to explain 'My

Kinda Girl's' postfeminist manifestations, we must historicize how Western postfeminist sensibilities intra-act with Ghana's unique feminist histories and the implications of a neoliberal women's empowerment project beginning in the 1980s. Similarly, though I hardly mention it, 'My Kinda Girl' requires a discourse analysis that can also account for the intrasectional implications of the linking of human and non-human bodies (e.g. twerking female bodies, the rabbit), apparatus (e.g. laboratory equipment), space (e.g. the science laboratory), technology (e.g. computer, 'my kinda girl' software) and aesthetics (e.g. hip-hop fashion) etc. in constructing gendered ideologies. While these entanglements present analytical challenges, they point to the theoretical relevance of a Global Southern perspective in expanding our discipline's approach to discursive-material complexities.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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