

Symbolic capital and linguistic practice in street culture

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Article 1

“A magnet for curious adolescents”: The perceived dangers of an open drug scene’
International Journal of Drug Policy, 19 (6) 2008: 459-466 (With W. Pedersen).

Article 2

‘Black drug dealers in a white welfare state. Cannabis dealing and street capital in Norway’
British Journal of Criminology, 48(5) 2008: 604-619.

Article 3

‘Street capital. Ethnicity and violence on the streets of Oslo’
Theoretical Criminology, 12(2) 2008: 153-171.

Article 4

‘A narrative search for respect’
Deviant Behavior, 2009, forthcoming

Article 5

‘Codes of the Street. The ‘bilingual’ discursive practice of street drug dealers in Norway’
Revised version, *British Journal of Sociology*, 2009, forthcoming.

Abstract

This dissertation is based upon two ethnographic fieldwork projects that were conducted on the streets of Oslo, Norway. The most important data are qualitative interviews with city dwellers and street drug dealers. The first fieldwork was conducted at an ‘open drug scene’ setting and the second in a more dispersed street drug market. The most important research participants were young ethnic minority men. Themes discussed include recruitment to drug use and drug dealing, violence, processes of marginalization, and narrative presentations of self in street culture. One important argument is that marginalized people are in a continual ‘search for respect’, through both symbolic capital accumulation and creative linguistic practice.

Conceptualizing a street subculture has been important in studies of youth, delinquency, deviance and crime. The present dissertation contributes two new concepts to this tradition. The first is street capital, which is understood as knowledge, competence, skills, and objects given value in a street culture. This concept is used to capture the accumulation of symbolic capital in a violent street culture. It can be used when studying practical rationality, embodied dispositions or habitus, and the complex relationships between socio-economic constraints and human agency in street culture. The second concept introduced is gangster discourse. This concept is understood as a collection of personal narratives primarily describing the toughness, smartness and sexual attractiveness of its speakers. This concept is used to capture subcultural linguistic practice emerging from a violent and masculine street culture.

The two concepts are related, and the dissertation proposes a synthesis in which gangster discourse is the ‘linguistic capital’ and most important ‘linguistic practice’ of a violent street subculture where street capital is the dominant symbolic capital. Gangster discourse is both constitutive of and constituted by street culture. Street culture is not young male offenders’ only cultural influence however, and the dissertation will reveal a multitude of cultural influences by describing their creative, complex and ambivalent language use. Influences include mainstream society and concrete meetings with welfare organizations. This interdiscursivity challenges previous categorizations of offenders into ‘street’ or ‘decent’ and ‘conventionally’ or ‘unconventionally’ attached, and thus also a homogenous understanding subculture.

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Introduction

1. Setting, synthesis and objectives

The anguish of growing up poor in the richest city in the world is compounded by the cultural assault that El Barrio youths often face when they venture out of their neighborhood. This has spawned what I call ‘inner-city street culture’: a complex and conflictual web of beliefs, symbols, modes of interaction, values and ideologies that have emerged in opposition to exclusion from mainstream society. Street culture offers an alternative forum for personal dignity (Bourgois 2003: 8).

This description of street culture is from Philippe Bourgois’ celebrated study of Puerto Rican crack dealers in New York, ‘the richest city in the world’. Oslo is the capital in one of the world’s richest countries, and there are interesting parallels to its violent street subculture as well. Still, demographic, socio-economic and cultural differences, especially related to the Scandinavian welfare state, are an important part of the picture.

The focus of my dissertation is a collection of five articles based on two studies of street drug scenes and street drug markets in Oslo. The first study was conducted at *Plata*, an ‘open drug scene’, or area of ‘stationary gatherings of drug users in public where trafficking and drug use is visible’ (Alpheis 1996: 59). All kinds of illegal drugs are sold there, but heroin dominates, and customers and dealers are typically street drug addicts. The second study is from a street drug market known as *The River*. This market concentrates primarily on cannabis, but other illegal drugs are available on demand. Dealers there are a diverse group of young marginalized ethnic minority men, and customers are middle-class ethnic Norwegians without visible drug-related problems.

The two studies followed one another closely. Our original intent for the first study was to examine the interaction between youths and street drug addicts at *Plata*. Internationally, open drug scenes have been associated with drug injection in public places, littering, drug-related crime, violence within the drug scene and declining shop revenue. An additional concern in Oslo was the recruitment of ‘innocent’ youths. Backed by police

statistics, this concern dominated public debates in the months before our study, and it had many of the characteristics of a moral panic. As the first article demonstrates, young people dwelling in the city centre did not deal drugs at *Plata*, and they did not consider the open drug scene to be an attractive place to spend time. We therefore turned our eyes to *The River* one year later. At this street drug market, youths were in fact being introduced to illegal drugs and drug dealing.

The most important research participants in the two studies share many characteristics. They are 15–30-year-old ethnic minority men involved in what Bourgois describes as street culture. The articles also connect empirically by the process of data collection and the emphasis on youths, street culture and recruitment to drug use and dealing.

The five articles connect theoretically as well. The first article is about a police crackdown on the open drug scene, *Plata*. It reveals how young drug users have been portrayed as irrational victims in media debates, and examines how this influences public policy. The next four articles are a response to this shortcoming. I introduce the concepts *street capital* in the second and third article to discuss ethnicity and violence in street culture, and trajectories to street drug dealing. I introduce the concept *gangster discourse* in the fourth and fifth article. The fourth article discusses narrative strategies used to get ‘respect’, and the fifth article discusses how dealers balance discourse emerging from the welfare state apparatus with street culture discourse. Together the articles describe how street dwellers are actively and rationally engaged in augmentation of symbolic capital and in creative linguistic practice.

The street capital concept is inspired by the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (see, for example, Bourdieu 1977, 1984, 1990). Street capital is: knowledge, competence, skills, and objects given value in a street culture. The concept is used to capture the ‘cultural capital’ of a violent street culture. I hope to demonstrate the fruitfulness of this theoretical framework for street culture studies, for example, when studying practical rationality, the social and historical process of embodied dispositions, and the complex relationship between socio-economic constraints and human agency (Bourdieu 1990).

The gangster discourse concept is inspired by the historian, sociologist and philosopher Michel Foucault, and his influence on contemporary discourse analysis (see, for example, Foucault 1972a, 1972b, 1978). Gangster discourse is a collection of personal narratives primarily describing the toughness, smartness and sexual attractiveness of its speakers. The concept is used to capture the linguistic practice of a violent street culture. I

hope to demonstrate the fruitfulness of this theoretical framework for studies of neutralization, identity constructions and resistance in street culture.

The two concepts are based on quite different theoretical frameworks, and I use them in different articles. Bourdieu is important for the second and third articles, and Foucault and discourse analysis are important for the final two. The two concepts are still related however, and I propose a synthesis in this Introduction:

Gangster discourse is the 'linguistic capital' and most important 'linguistic practice' of a violent street subculture where street capital is the dominant symbolic capital.

This synthesis emphasizes that gangster discourse is both constitutive of and constituted by street culture. It also emphasizes that street capital has a crucial linguistic element.

Objectives

My research themes are recruitment to illegal drug use and drug dealing, marginalization processes and ethnic minorities, and street- and subcultures. My objective is to describe symbolic capital augmentation in street culture and linguistic practice emerging from people on the street. The latter includes not only gangster discourse, but also more conventional discourse. The dissertation is primarily concerned with street subcultures, and data, analysis and arguments based on fieldwork from the street. Social and institutional context and mainstream society is still important, because marginalization processes trigger an alternative search for symbolic capital (see articles 2 and 3). Social and institutional context is also present in the young men's discursive practice (see articles 4 and 5). Some of this social context will be introduced below, especially the socio-economic situation for ethnic minorities, but it is not the emphasis of my dissertation, and will thus be described only briefly.

In Chapter 2 of the Introduction, I will present the methods and social context and discuss ethical problems. The two concepts street capital and gangster discourse emerge from previous deviance and subculture studies, but also expand upon this tradition. Chapter 3 will relate street capital and gangster discourse to the existing literature on street culture. This includes influences from the Chicago and Birmingham Schools of subculture studies, studies of drug dealing and illegal drugs and Scandinavian studies of street culture. I use both Bourdieu and Foucault in this dissertation, and propose a synthesis of their theoretical frameworks for studies of street culture mainly motivated by the empirical studies reported

here. Chapter 4 will therefore discuss important theoretical difficulties raised by the marriage of these two frameworks. I will describe the role of language in Bourdieu's work and the notion of discourse in Foucault's writing and contemporary discourse analysis. Influences from Nietzsche and comments and compromises by Fairclough will also be discussed.

After this Introduction the five papers follow. Four are already published or accepted by relevant scientific journals in criminology or sociology and the last one is under review. Some of the discussions in the Introduction will make more sense after reading the five articles, so it may be helpful to return to it after reading them – or even read the articles first. When it comes to the fruitfulness of the approach and the two concepts for empirical research, the articles will speak for themselves.

2. Method, ethics and social context

The most important comments on methods are provided in the articles, especially in articles 4 and 5, which can also be seen as research on methodology for street culture studies. Here, I will thus only briefly describe access to the field, the two samples, and the ethical problems that came up during research. The social context for young ethnic minority men will also be described shortly.

Data

Data for this collection of articles come from ethnographic fieldwork and qualitative interviews. The first fieldwork site was the open drug scene *Plata*, which we visited in 2004, and the second was *The River*, a more dispersed street drug market, which we studied in 2005/2006. The emphasis was on drugs, violence and street culture in both studies. The data collected at the two sites were from interviews with:

- Fifteen 14–19-year-old boys recruited while loitering in the city centre in 2004. Most belonged to ethnic minority groups,¹ but this was not a criterion for inclusion in the study. Most also had a police record, experience using illegal drugs, and were in different ways devoted to street culture. This sample also includes interviews with 15 girls recruited while loitering in the city centre (mainly ethnic Norwegians), and interviews with 10 former drug addicts (mainly ethnic Norwegians) and several police officers and field social workers.
- Twenty 17–30-year-old street cannabis dealers, recruited in 2005/2006. Nineteen were male and belonged to ethnic minority groups (mainly African),² and the one girl was ethnic Norwegian. About half of them had refugee backgrounds, mainly from Somalia. The others had grown up in Norway. All made their living through dealing cannabis, and many also occasionally dealt amphetamines and cocaine. All had a police record, experience using illegal drugs, and were in different ways devoted to street culture.

The five articles draw on different parts of these data:

Article 1: 2004 fieldwork

Articles 2 & 5: 2005/2006 fieldwork

Articles 3 & 4: both

The first article uses all interviews from the first fieldwork, including girls, former drug addicts and social worker and police. In the next four articles, the girls and the former drug addicts are left out and I mainly focus on the 2005/2006 fieldwork and the young ethnic minority men from the 2004 fieldwork. Girls and former drug addicts are excluded because my objective gradually became to study the street culture of ethnic minority men. The young men from the 2004 fieldwork had many similarities with the ethnic minority drug dealers from the 2005/2006 fieldwork.

Both studies were done in cooperation with Professor Willy Pedersen. The first study was partly financed by the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police. For the second study, we received some economic support from the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police, and The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs. This dissertation and the five articles that follow are written in English for an international audience in order to participate in international debates in the field. The project has also produced academic publications in Norwegian for a Scandinavian audience. The most important publication is the book *Gatekapital* (Sandberg and Pedersen 2006), published by the Norwegian University Press. Other publications include Sandberg (2005, 2007, 2008), Sandberg and Pedersen (2005a, 2005b) and Sandberg, Viland and Pedersen (2007). We have also published nine chronicles in Norwegian newspapers.³

Access to the field and interviews

In the first sample, I conducted the fieldwork with fellow researcher Camilla Jordheim Larsen, who was collecting data for a related project also supervised by Pedersen (Pedersen 2005, Larsen and Pedersen 2005). We hung out in the city centre, often close to *Plata*. We were looking for youths who were spending a lot of time in the city centre, and, to find them, we had to spend a lot of time there as well. After observing behaviour for a while, we typically introduced ourselves to potential research participants and talked to them for a while. If we felt that they met our selection criteria (loosely defined as being teenagers, spending a lot of time in the city centre and being somehow vulnerable for recruitment to harder illegal drug use), we asked for a longer interview at a location nearby (e.g. a café). Larsen most often interviewed the girls and I the boys, but we both also interviewed

members of the opposite sex. I did all the interviews with the young men referred in article 3 and 4. Some of these interviews were done with Larsen, sometimes with two research participants, and sometimes with only one. In the first article, I use some interviews that Larsen did alone.

Access to *The River* was more complicated, even though I lived nearby. First, Willy Pedersen and I did some initial observational fieldwork to get to know the area. Later, I started working with a group of field social workers. I joined them as they walked in the area to develop contacts among the street dealers. I made some initial contacts this way, and based on these contacts, some interviews were arranged. The selection criterion was that the social workers said they were dealing drugs or that I watched them dealing myself. After a while, however, it seemed as if contact with the social workers was more problematic than helpful for data collection. My attention sometimes shifted from the dealers to the social workers, watching as they performed their challenging jobs. It was also hard to recruit research participants, and I began to worry that I might only be hearing particular stories fashioned for the welfare state apparatus.

After a while, I started working alone. My objective was to get to know the dealers and become a familiar face, so I walked around in the area and talked to them. Making contact was a lot easier this way, because the dealers would approach me to sell drugs. I looked like a regular customer - a white, middle-class student. This time being offered drugs was the selection criteria for recruiting research participants: If they asked me if I wanted to buy drugs (usually cannabis or cocaine), I would ask them if they wanted to participate in a research project. During this time, I made my most useful contacts. There were about 50-60 young ethnic minority men selling drugs at that time, and we interviewed 19 of them as well as one ethnic Norwegian female dealer. The milieu was fragmented and always in flux, but I was still able to interview three dealers two times and one three times. The latter dealer became a key informant, as I did several extensive interviews with him. We also hung out both before and after the interviews, and once he even bought me a beer.

Pedersen participated in some interviews, most often if an interview was planned in advance or if we interviewed two dealers simultaneously. I did on-the-spot interviews alone. During this period, I also hung around with dealers while they were selling drugs, and observed both transactions and the social interaction among them. My presence, however, was not good for business, and customers would often go to another dealer if I was present. The most important data, therefore, are based on the interviews. Here, we had the time and quietness to get details of the dealers' experiences and stories without

interrupting their business. Interviews were done at nearby locations, such as pubs and cafés, or sometimes in the dealers' apartments.

The data collection and interview constellations were not strictly organized in the two fieldworks. The principle was rather to collect data of interest, in any way available and appropriate. Most of the interviews were done in Norwegian. Some of the research participants had language problems which could create misunderstandings (see article 4). I did not always understand them, and sometimes had to ask them to repeat what they said. However, the research participants did not always understand me either, and sometimes made fun of me because I speak a dialect different to the common Oslo dialect. This sometimes served to reduce the difference between us, because we all spoke Norwegian 'badly'. The young men also knew the language of street culture in ways I did not. In this way, they were the experts and I the apprentice. In Oslo, gangster discourse is heavily influenced by the different ethnic minorities living on the east side of Oslo (this hybrid language is sometimes called 'kebab Norwegian'). My role as the outsider was further reinforced because I have a middle-class and ethnic Norwegian background, and was in their 'area'.

In the 2005/2006 fieldwork, some of the interviews were done in English because the research participants did not speak Norwegian. In one of them, I even used one of the other young men as a translator, as one of the research participants spoke neither Norwegian nor English. Of course, this variation in language skills influences the analysis in a study of linguistic practice. The youths who mastered Norwegian would have a greater discursive repertoire, and could more elegantly balance different narratives and discourses. Those who spoke Norwegian or English badly were mainly the refugees from the 2005/2006 fieldwork (see article 2), and some ethnic minority men who had come to Norway in their teens (from both fieldworks). However, this is not very important for the kind of discourse analysis that I apply. The language use of all groups, as for everybody else, was firmly embedded in pre-fixed narratives and discourses.

Having several researchers available was helpful for discussions and motivation. It proved helpful in interviews, as we noticed and were able to follow up on different aspects of the conversation. It also made it easier to interview two individuals at the same time, which some of the research participants preferred because it made the interview less intimidating. However, the unstructured life that many of the research participants lived made it necessary to do interviews on the spot, immediately after they agreed to do the interview, and fieldwork was most fruitful to do alone. Conducting interviews alone versus in pairs presented different challenges and advantages. On the one hand, some of the

personal relationships I developed with research participants would have been difficult to achieve had I not been alone. On the other hand, the light-hearted and ‘internal’ talk recorded in some interviews when two research participants were present would probably have been more difficult to get in one-on-one interviews. Surprisingly however, seen as a whole, correspondence in linguistic practice between interview constellations was more prominent than divergence. This did inspire the discourse analytical approach as opposed to a more interactionist approach (article 4 and 5).

As is commonly described in the literature on qualitative methods generally, and on fieldwork in particular, our methodological road was paved while walking on it. As Robert Park first emphasized in the Chicago School, first-hand knowledge, unprejudiced research and flexibility in data collection are crucial. The advantage of this flexibility was great, especially in the first study, which turned out to be quite different to what was planned. Flexibility was also crucial in data collection for the second study. In the publishing process however, this flexibility and the multitude of data forms have been a problem. Just as the Chicago School was criticized for ‘imprecision’ and ‘unsystematic inquiry’ (Lindner 1996: 100–101), several journals have expressed concern or rejected articles because of our lack of a more systematic approach. This is, of course, an unfortunate circumstance for qualitative methods in general. However, it is particularly problematic when studying illegal drug subcultures, especially when we have the opportunity to interview active (rather than jailed or institutionalized) criminals. Being flexible and using a multitude of approaches is even a necessity in some cases.

Ethics

Doing research on people actively engaged in crime raises several ethical problems. One is whether to offer research participants money, which can be problematic because the research participants may be more interested in the money than in the interview. Money may also make the interviewee more inclined to try to please the interviewer, but this is often the case whether or not money is involved (see also articles 4 and 5). Having money to offer probably made it easier to get research participants. One could argue, therefore, that the offer of money influenced the selection of participants, but getting many interviewees is, after all, better than getting few. Paying the participants was also a way to show respect for marginalized people’s time. Many had debt problems and were making money when we interrupted them. Thus, money was compensation for lost income. One interview failed because the young man was mainly interested in ending the interview to

get the money. In the other interviews payment did not appear to be a problem. Interviewees seemed to forget about the money as soon as they started talking about their lives, and sometimes we had to remind them towards the end of the interview that they should get paid.

I sometimes joined dealers while dealing, but was never directly engaged in it, nor did I help them. We offered research participants confidentiality, which we respected. We also tried to avoid talking about specific persons or future events, to prevent situations where we could get problematic information, such as details about previous serious crimes or future crimes. In one case, when one of the young men started to talk about what ‘really happened’ in a notorious gang-related murder, I changed the subject. This was both for my own security and to avoid getting into a dilemma about whether or not to tell the police. We never had any contact with the police. I did not find the ethical issues mentioned above particularly problematic. Three other dilemmas, however, are harder to resolve.

The first is how to avoid further stereotyping an already marginalized group. Most of the research participants were ethnic minorities, and many were Somalis, the most stereotyped group of ethnic minorities in Norway today. Studying their involvement in violence and street drug dealing further strengthens a negative public image. This is a dilemma that cannot be solved. Still, I hope that descriptions of the young men’s trajectories to street drug dealing (article 2) and descriptions of the practical rationality of street culture (article 3) can challenge dominant negative stereotypes. Describing the personal and socio-economic problems ethnic minorities face also challenges ‘cultural’ explanations of why ethnic minorities are over-represented in certain forms of violence. In Norway, ethnic minorities’ involvement in street culture has been explained by references to a traditional ‘honour culture’ (Lien 2001, 2002). The present dissertation demonstrates how these aspects of ‘honour’ should rather be traced back to a Western tradition of street culture (see articles 2 and 3, see also Moshuus 2005). Illustratively, most of the young men we interviewed had broken with their families, and they mainly referred to gangster movies and gangsta rap when justifying crimes. I hope this dissertation can contribute to an understanding of the more complex mechanisms involved when groups of ethnic minorities get involved in crime. I also hope to challenge demonizing of drug dealers more generally (see also Coomber 2006).

The interviews we conducted emphasized drug use, drug dealing, violence and socio-economic problems, and this is another ethical dilemma. Research participants may, for example, have felt like more of a ‘gangster’ after the interview than before, and thus the

interview situation may have increased destructive identity constructions. Because interviews highlight certain aspects of the interviewee's life, they also categorize research participants, but the participants did not always agree with this categorization. Sometimes the young men explicitly reminded us about other more positive aspects of their lives (see article 4). Including all aspects of research participants' lives is impossible, however, and in studies of drug dealing, we are mainly interested in certain aspects. Trying to avoid being one-sided 'negative' is nevertheless important ethically, and it may also help us avoid exaggerating differences between street culture and mainstream culture. As emphasized by the post subcultural approach, highlighting differences is a problematic characteristic of much research on subcultures.

The final ethical dilemma discussed here concerns researchers integrity, and what to accept from research participants. It was, for example, difficult not to make a moral judgement when research participants talked about brutal violence they had been involved in, and I sometimes did. This was probably not helpful for data collection. However, the interview situation is not an ethically isolated island in society, and there are individual limits to what one can listen to without objecting. In addition, when research participants talked about drug-related problems, I sometimes intervened towards the end of the interview to suggest that they reduce their drug intake or to give them telephone numbers to welfare organizations that could help them. The major aim of the research interviews, however, was to give marginalized people an opportunity to tell (or co-produce) their stories, not solve their drug problems or make moral judgements. These young men are, after all, well aware that society condemns them.

Social context

Each research participant was different, and had a special story to tell. The most important differences among the ethnic minority men were time spent in Norway and residence status. Until immigration increased from the 1970s, Norway was relatively ethnically homogeneous (see also article 3). Most non-Western immigrants came from Pakistan, and the majority of these settled in Oslo. Today, almost one in five persons living in Oslo has an immigrant background. Pakistan remains the biggest non-Western country of origin, followed by Vietnam, Iraq, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Somalia. Somalians are the newest group. Sixty-two per cent have lived in Norway less than five years, and almost half of them are under 20 years of age (SSB 2006). Some of the ethnic minority men discussed in this dissertation were second generation immigrants, some had arrived in their childhood or as youths, while many

of the refugees had been in Norway for only a couple of years. Some of the refugees had a residence permit and regular legal rights, while others were asylum seekers or non-returnable refugees without work permits or access to education. The situation for the non-returnable refugees is described in article 2. In short, their application for asylum has been rejected, but they can not be returned to their country of origin. They therefore do not have the legal rights of asylum seekers, and the government tries to make them return voluntarily.

The social context of the other ethnic minority men is occasionally mentioned in the articles that follow, but it is not the main focus of the study. Rather, this dissertation emphasizes symbolic capital accumulation in a street subculture, and the discursive practices of young criminal men. The larger societal context is still present as a point of reference when it is argued that street capital emerges from socio-economic marginalization, and gangster discourse from processes of stigmatization, or when some of the discursive practice is seen as 'conventional' as opposed to subcultural.

Socio-economic marginalization of ethnic minority groups arises from problems at schools, and problems in the labour and housing markets. In Norway, ethnic minorities have a higher rate of drop out from upper secondary education (Støren 2002). However, there are great differences between different groups of immigrants. Youths from Vietnam and India have the same chances as the majority of graduating, while groups from Pakistan, Turkey and Somalia have a much higher drop-out rate. Much of this difference can be traced back to their lower class position, but even when controlling for social class and time spent in Norway, some difference remains (Fekjær 2006). The remaining difference is the result of both language problems and more systematic discrimination. These can even be linked, for example, when ethnic minority students do not receive enough help to achieve the same level of adjustment to school as the majority. Ethnic minorities also face problems in the Norwegian school system, because it is the cultural capital of the Norwegian middle and upper classes that is learned.

The labour market also poses a challenge for ethnic minorities. The unemployment rate in Norway is generally low. At the time of the second fieldwork, 2005/2006, unemployment among the Norwegian ethnic majority was only 2.6%. For ethnic minorities however, the unemployment rate was 8.4% or more than three times as high (SSB 2008). There are great differences among different groups of immigrants here as well. Employment rates among immigrants from countries such as Pakistan, Turkey and Morocco have been decreasing. Particularly among African countries, Somalia scores very low. Of course, while there are several reasons for the relatively high unemployment rate,

including lack of formal competence, social networks and language skills, ethnic discrimination also plays a part. Many of the young men in the second fieldwork, for example, talked about not being called in for interviews, or being rejected when they showed up at the workplace.

Still, even among the most marginalized groups of immigrants, the unemployment rate was never more than 16.5% during the second fieldwork (SSB 2008). Thus, the street subculture described later does not emerge from a situation of total socio-economic exclusion. However, instances of humiliation in the education system and labour market, and experiences of racism and ethnic discrimination, increase a feeling of being outside mainstream society, and thus inspire alternative or oppositional identity constructions (see discussion in the next chapter). In the Scandinavian welfare state, socio-economic marginalization is of a different character than that seen in examples of the North American ghetto or even in the UK. Subcultural theories must thus emphasize the ‘pull’ effects of a street subculture, for example, fast rewards, dignity, excitement, social networks, sexual relationships and money (see also Lalander 2003; Jensen 2007) at the cost of subcultural theories emphasizing the ‘push’ effect of socio-economic marginalization. However, socio-economic marginalization must nevertheless be included, also in the Scandinavian context. This is particularly evident in the case of the non-returnable refugees, from the second fieldwork. Statistics also exclude particular groups of people and thus conceal important processes of marginalization. Most of the men in this study are not even a part of the drop-out or unemployment statistics described above, or other official statistics. These groups can sometimes only be accessed through ethnographic fieldwork.

The most important part of the social context, at least for the young men in the last four articles, was the omnipresence of welfare organizations in the city centre of Oslo and in the Scandinavian welfare state more generally. This was first and foremost seen in all the different public and charity organizations targeting The River, and the experiences they described with government agencies elsewhere. As opposed to the social contexts described in most of the international literature, the young offenders had long experience with both public and charity welfare organizations. I witnessed several times during my fieldwork with the social workers, how the young men had adjusted to talking to members of these organizations.

This dissertation has insufficient data to compare or describe different organizations, and describe the differences in language use they inspired. However, the organization I worked with, *Utseksjonen*, had emerged from the radical political left of the

1970s (Berntsen 1981), and was still under this ideological influence. We can guess that this inspired 'leftist' narratives and discourses also among the boys. Other organizations may have inspired more therapeutic frameworks inspired by psychology (see for example, Järvinen 2001). Many of the young men also met psychologists in other settings, for example in jail or in therapeutic institutions or orphanages, so the presence of these narratives was strong. The young men's 'oppression discourse' can thus be seen as a combination of leftist political rhetoric emphasizing socio-economic oppression (for example, the lack of jobs and ethnic discrimination) and more therapeutic rhetoric emphasizing childhood experiences and psychological problems. Combined, these 'hot cognitions' (Gamson 1992, 1995), 'victim narratives' (Davis 2005) and the ideological framework created resonance and sympathy (see article 5).

2. Street subcultures

Subcultures are groups of people that are in some way represented as non-normative and/or marginal through their particular interest and practices, through what they are, what they do and where they do it. They may represent *themselves* in this way, since subcultures are usually well aware of their differences, bemoaning them, relishing them, exploiting them, and so on. But they will also be represented like this by others, who in response, can bring an entire apparatus of social classification and regulation to bear upon them (Gelder 2005: 1).

Gelder's definition captures an interesting tension in the conceptualization of subcultures. Street culture, for example, can be seen as a response to external pressures, such as labelling processes and socio-economic constraints; but street culture is also the product of creative strategies and active choices. The concepts of street capital and gangster discourse bring these levels of analysis together. Street capital emerges from socio-economic marginalization and gangster discourse from stigmatization, but the processes described emphasize how individuals embrace and create a subculture for their own benefit.

Gelder's conceptualization of subculture evolved from a long tradition of research. The two most important traditions are the Chicago School of Sociology in the United States during the 1920s and 1930s, and the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Great Britain during the 1970s. Both schools are still important for contemporary studies of deviance and subculture.

The Chicago School of Sociology

The Chicago School's main interest was qualitative urban ethnography, especially among 'deviants' and 'marginal' populations, and it is here we find the first conceptualization of a street subculture (see Park 1925 et al.; Thrasher 1927; Wirth 1928; Shaw and McKay 1929; Whyte 1943; Cohen 1955; Cloward and Ohlin 1960; Becker 1963; Yablonsky 1966; Suttles 1968; Keiser 1969; Miller 1973, 1975; Moore 1978, 1991; Horowitz 1983; for an overview see Plummer 1997). Park and his colleagues at the University of Chicago used methods from anthropology, but they were also inspired by the urban reporting in big-city newspapers, which had been emerging in America since in the late 1800s. The Chicago

School approach differed markedly from the dominant tradition of library research, and they established the first school of ethnographic research in sociology. Fieldwork was often conducted in an informal and unsystematic way: ‘Students were encouraged to explore the city on foot, to talk with the people and to note down their observations in detail’ (Lindner 1996: 80–81). Tensions within the Chicago School were not about whether to do quantitative or qualitative empirical research but rather about whether the purpose of the research should be enlightenment or social engineering. This tension is still present in much social science research. In their empirical studies, the Chicago School was particularly concerned about the relationship between the physical environment and culture, often referred to as ‘human ecology’. The zones of transition in Chicago were particularly interesting, because they could be analysed as laboratories for studies of change. They were also problem areas, and studying them thus satisfied the sometimes conflicting ideals of *reporting* (enlightenment) and *reforming* (social engineering) in the school. These areas, and the groups that occupied them, were newsworthy because they were exotic, and at the same time it was obvious that they needed social engineering or reform.

Whyte’s (1943) classic *Street Corner Society* was based on research in a Boston slum district, but it was heavily influenced by the Chicago tradition. Whyte used an ethnographic approach to study marginalized Italian street dwellers and zones in transition, and his book highlights one of the basic insights of the Chicago School: as with other zones in transition and marginalized communities, the ‘street corner society’ is not chaotic or disorganized. The problem was not lack of organization, but the failure of the local social structure to fit in with the structure of surrounding society. The young men were thus marginalized both by the organization of their own society and by the organization of the outside world (ibid: 273). Such an insight is as important today as it was when the Chicago School emerged.

Whyte’s study anticipates Cohen’s (1955) critique of Merton’s (1938) individualistic strain theory, as well as the emphasis of the Birmingham School. Cohen argued that marginalized groups of youths create a deviant subculture with hedonistic, autonomous, malicious, and negativistic values as a social solution to social problems. Later, Cloward’s and Ohlin’s (1960) descriptions of subculture returned to Merton and emphasized the utilitarian nature of crime. They argued that ‘serious delinquents’ were looking for money to spend in the conspicuous consumption of ‘fast cars, fancy clothes,

and swell dames' (Vold et al. 2002: 143). If legitimate opportunities were blocked, marginalized youths turned to illegitimate enterprises, but if illegitimate opportunities were also blocked, the consequence was a non-utilitarian delinquent subculture.

Anderson (1999), Vigil (2002) and Bourgois (2003) have published influential contemporary studies of street culture that carry on the tradition of the Chicago School. In a study of gangs in Los Angeles, Vigil (2002, 2003) combined a deviant subculture approach and routine activities explanations (Felson 1987). Routine activities explanations are based on space/time analyses, where motivated offenders, suitable targets and an absence of capable guardians converge in certain times and places to increase the likelihood of crime (Vigil 2003; see also Kennedy and Baron 1993; Felson and Cohen 1980). The problem with the subculture approach, Vigil argues, is the lack of evidence regarding how norms are transmitted, leading to inferences about the subculture's values that are derived mainly from behaviour. The problem with routine activities explanations is the lack of ethnographic evidence (Vigil 2003: 229). Combining these two theories, then, he suggests a 'framework of multiple marginality'. The macrohistorical forces at work are racism, fragmented institutions, and social and cultural repression, while the macrostructural forces at work are enclave settlements, immigration and migration. Combined with socio-economic, sociocultural and social psychological forces, these historical and structural forces trigger socialization into street culture (Vigil 2002: 8; 2003: 231).⁴

Vigil's multiple marginality approach has many similarities with my description of street capital, and his structural, sociocultural and social psychological forces have their counterparts in the present study. But Vigil's approach also illustrates one of the criticisms directed at the Chicago School. It does not '...approach the casualness of the worlds' and suggests '...too much commitment, determinism, instrumentality, and stability in membership' (Irwin 1977: 18). More generally, marginalization approaches also often fail to account for positive experiences within the subculture, or the 'seductions of crime', to use Katz's (1988) famous phrase. This criticism of the Chicago School partly follows its emphasis on violent juvenile gangs, criminals and the homeless, but it is also a consequence of a subculture theoretical framework.

The Birmingham School

The Birmingham School had a quite different and somewhat broader approach to subcultures than the Chicago School. French semiotics and Gramscian Marxism influenced theory in the Birmingham School, and researchers began studying a more diverse group of subcultures and their representations in mass media (see Cohen 1972; Willis 1977; Hall and Jefferson 1976; Hebdige 1979; for an overview, see Turner 1990). According to Gelder, subculture studies are a response to the ‘recognition that ‘society’ is in fact host to an extensive range of social practices, some of which are ‘alternative’ or ‘unconventional’, others of which are transgressive or even oppositional’ (Gelder 2005: 9). The Birmingham School’s neo-Marxist framework led them to emphasize the oppositional element in subcultures. Such a perspective of resistance is important for my dissertation, even though it must be moderated.

Studies of moral panic illustrate the broad theoretical approach of the Birmingham School, and were the core of the School’s early work. It has inspired the first article in this dissertation. Starting with the work of Young (1971) and Cohen (1972), with theory development by Hall (1972, 1973; Hall et al. 1978), the basic idea is that societies:

appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic. A condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media.... Sometimes the object of the panic is quite novel and at other times it is something which has been in existence long enough, but suddenly appears in the limelight. Sometimes the panic passes over and is forgotten, except in folklore and collective memory; at other times it has more serious and long-lasting repercussions and might produce such changes as those in legal and social policy or even in the way society conceives itself (Cohen 1972: 1).

Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) have summarized the tradition of moral panic (and the processes involved) as concern, consensus, hostility, disproportionality and volatility. The first indicator of a moral panic is ‘...heightened concern over the behaviour of others and the consequences such conduct is believed to have on society’ (Welch et al. 2002: 7). The second indicator is a certain degree of consensus among members of society. In other words, a widespread belief that ‘...the problem at hand is real, it poses a threat to society, and something should be done to correct it’ (ibid: 10). The third indicator is intense hostility toward an identifiable group or category of people. This group often becomes

vilified as social outcasts by ‘...a dichotomization process whereby folk devils are distinguished from folk heroes in a morality play of good versus evil’ (ibid: 11). The fourth indicator is that the perceived danger is greater than the potential harm: ‘In essence, moral panic means that there is a consensus among many members of the society that a more sizable number of individuals are engaged in the behaviour in question than actually are’ (ibid: 15). Finally, a moral panic erupts suddenly and then subsides.

As will be demonstrated later, most of these indicators were present before the police crackdown on *Plata*, as discussed in the first article. All of the important institutional actors agreed that the recruitment of adolescents into drug use at the ‘open drug scene’ was a serious concern. Street drug addicts were easily identified as the folk devils, and the concerns erupted suddenly and highly disproportionately relative to the actual situation. The moral panic, however, did not subside, and as late as April 2008, the police in Oslo expressed new concerns about recruitment.⁵ It is not clear, however, how important it is to name such processes ‘moral panic’, or to determine ‘whether moral panic has taken place’ (see Welch et al. 2002). A moral panic approach also risks changing the emphasis from the processes involved to analytical concepts. It also exaggerates the difference between moral panic and processes of everyday moralization (Hier 2008), and risk to simply repeat an ideologically (neo-Marxist) analysis (Doran 2008). I do not use this concept explicitly later, but rather emphasize descriptions of the social processes involved. Most importantly, the situation before, during and after the police crackdown at *Plata* illustrates the strength and inertia of a widely shared public image of youths and drug users as passive and irrational. It thus also illustrates the importance of emphasizing agency and practical rationality when studying marginalized groups.

The Birmingham School’s most important contribution to my dissertation is the expansion of the subculture theoretical framework. Willis’ (1977) famous study of white UK working-class boys is very similar to work in the Chicago School tradition. Miller (1958), for example, argued that lower-class culture has certain focal values: getting into trouble with the police, showing toughness, manifesting street smarts (outsmarting and conning others), experiencing excitement, being lucky, and maintaining freedom from constraint by authority figures. Miller argued that juvenile gangs reflected these class values, and Willis extends the argument.

Willis examined why working-class boys take working-class jobs. His approach was ethnographic, and he hypothesized a ‘counter-school-culture’, which shared many

characteristics with the delinquent subcultures described by Whyte, Miller, Cohen and Cloward and Ohlin. For example, at the heart of Willis' 'counter-school-culture' are cultural articulations, smoking, drinking, being street smart, stealing, having sex and fighting. These experiences give the young men a fascinating feeling of difference. Or as one of Willis' research participants put it:

we've been through all life's pleasures and all its fucking displeasures, we've been fighting, we've known frustration, sex, fucking hatred, love and all this lark, yet he's known none of it. He's never been with a woman, he's never been in a pub (Joey in Willis 1977: 16).

The boys see themselves as having exciting, fascinating and rewarding lives, as opposed to the boring lives of youths devoted to school and middle-class society, and this is how the boys get self-respect and respect from others. Willis' basic argument is that the counter-school-culture creatively opposes school and middle-class values by imitating the male shop-floor culture of the factory. For the young men, manual labour is associated with the social superiority of masculinity, while mental labour is associated with the social inferiority of femininity (ibid: 148). Moreover, and more importantly, when the jobs in the factory come to represent freedom, autonomy and transcendence, the working-class boys culturally reproduce class society.

Transferring Willis' analysis to contemporary society highlights some interesting historical developments. In post-industrial society (Bell 1973), manual labour in the factory is on the decline, and the 'feminine' service sector jobs are on the rise. For the young men in this dissertation, for example, the alternative to the drug economy was not jobs in the factory but in shops such as 7-11. Service sector jobs do not affirm masculinity in the same way that manual labour does in working-class culture. For groups of marginalized youths, violent street culture may thus be the main symbolic resource, and point of imitation, for both opposition and resistance. In a brief section, Willis also discusses the relationship between language and the oppositional culture. He writes that the young boys' resistance is expressed as '...antagonism to the dominant bourgeois mode of signification—language' and continues that '...language is no less rich in the counter-school-culture than in the conformist one' (Willis 1977: 124–125). Willis thus anticipates an increasing interest in language use and linguistic practice in cultural studies. At the same time, such a simplistic model of the relationship between culture and language is open to Irwin's (1977) criticism

of the Chicago School for over-emphasizing commitment, determinism, instrumentality, and stability on one hand, and under-emphasizing the casualness of the world on the other.

Willis' model of language and culture is also vulnerable to some of the criticisms of the Birmingham School found in 'post-subcultural' studies. Bennett and Kahn-Harris, for example, criticize the Birmingham School for a failure to consider local variation in youth's responses to music and style (Bennett and Kahn-Harris 2004).⁶ They also argue that the increasing fragmentation of youth style causes a breakdown of the subcultural division. The post-subcultural approach favours other concepts over subculture, including 'scenes' (Irwin 1977), 'tribes' (Maffesoli 1996) or 'neo-tribes' (Bennett 1999), 'lifestyles' (Reimer 1995, Miles 2000), and 'temporary sub-stream networks' (Weinzierl 2000). The objective is to account for more cultural fragmentation, flux and fluidity, and to avoid homogeneous conceptualizations of cultures.

While sometimes being vague (Gelder 2005), the post-subcultural approach still highlights an important problem with all forms of subculture studies. A subculture theoretical framework has an inherent and almost necessary tendency to exaggerate the homological unity and consistency of the subculture, and, consequently, to also exaggerate its differences from 'conventional' or 'mainstream' society (see, for example, Jenkins 1983). The subcultural tradition has systematically neglected the fragmented character of contemporary, as well as previous, cultural styles.⁷ In the same way, the two concepts introduced here and the synthesizing idea that gangster discourse is the most important 'linguistic practice' of a violent street subculture, risk exaggerating homological unity and coherence of the target cultures.

Despite these criticisms, I follow the subcultural tradition, as well as both Bourdieu and Foucault, in emphasizing the structural level of culture in this dissertation. Bourdieu (1984), for example, convincingly demonstrates that culture is not a 'supermarket of style' (Polhemus 1994) but is strictly organized by a structure of class relation. Historical and social processes embodied in the individual habitus cause stability, inertia and social hierarchies in cultural taste and dispositions. Ethnicity and gender are similar limitations to culture. In the same way, but from another perspective, Foucaultian discourse analysis demonstrates how culture is organized in pre-structured narratives and discourses.

Tension between agency and structure, change and stability, and ambivalence and coherence are nevertheless present throughout my dissertation. Bourdieu (1990) explicitly confronts and tries to overcome this dilemma by using the concepts of habitus and capital.

After Foucault, discourse analysis has also included insights from the more agency-centred approaches of symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology and social psychology, and this has helped to balance structure and agency in the analysis of linguistic practice. Detailed studies of language use and interdiscursivity, for example, reveal some of the numerous forms of ‘interaction between subculture-related and other societal formations’ (Muggleton and Weinzierl 2003: 7; see articles 4 and 5).

Thornton—subcultural capital

Thornton (1995) has introduced the concept of ‘subcultural capital’ to the Chicago and Birmingham traditions to describe the ‘taste culture’ of the UK club scene. Thornton argues that the cultural hierarchies of the club scene are based on distinctions between the ‘authentic versus the phoney, the ‘hip’ versus ‘mainstream’, and the ‘underground’ versus media’ (ibid: 3–4). As with other subcultures, club culture members reinterpret the social world to elevate their social status relative to mainstream society. Inspired by Bourdieu’s (1984) descriptions of the connection between taste and the social structure, she describes ‘hipness’ as a form of cultural capital; it can be both embodied and objectified. Moreover, it is also based on the ‘second nature’ of knowledge and convertible into economic capital (Thornton 1995: 10–12). However, Thornton also questions Bourdieu’s approach. She lists different forms of capital described by Bourdieu (cultural, economic and social), as well as some subcategories (academic, intellectual and artistic), and argues that they are effective and active only among the economic and cultural elite (ibid: 11). By applying the concept of subcultural capital, she challenges Bourdieu’s hierarchical model of society and reveals pockets of resistance, alternative taste cultures, and alternative cultural hierarchies. Thus, she is open to the fluidity of cultural dispositions (see also Hall 1992).

Thornton’s contribution is important because it introduces Bourdieu to subcultural studies. Her study also inspired my conceptualization of street capital, which is a variant of subcultural capital. Unfortunately, however, she only describes the relationship between her approach and Bourdieu’s in a few passages, and the descriptions are somewhat problematic. First, the autonomy of fields Thornton calls for has already been described by Bourdieu (1993) in a study of the field of cultural production. Second, Thornton argues that subcultural capital clouds class relations, but she does not use the habitus concept. The concept of capital thus loses some of its essence and explanatory value. Cultural capital can be seen in three forms; institutionalised, objectified and embodied, and habitus describes

the embodied form of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1986). Third, when she simultaneously rejects the Birmingham School's emphases on both development of theory and socio-economic structures, she seems to accept the 'fantasy of classlessness' inherent in some subcultures (Jensen 2006: 265). This may not be a problem when describing clubbers, but it is highly problematic in studies of socio-economically and ethnically marginalized groups. For these groups, class, gender and ethnicity are crucial limitations to the available choices of 'taste culture' and 'lifestyles'.

Street capital

The theoretical framework for street capital has parallels in the contemporary literature on street culture. The two most important are Anderson's (1999, see also 1990) 'code of the street' and Bourgois' (2003) 'street culture'. Anderson describes the code of the street as:

...a set of informal rules governing interpersonal public behavior, particularly violence. The rules prescribe both proper comportment and the proper way to respond if challenged. They regulate the use of violence and so supply a rationale allowing those who are inclined to aggression to precipitate violent encounters in an approved way (Anderson 1999: 33).

Anderson continues by describing the code of the street as a '...cultural adaptation to the lack of faith in the police and the judicial system' (ibid: 34) and as emerging from the lack of jobs, limited public service, stigma of race, drug use, and the resulting '...alienation and absence of hope for the future' (ibid: 32). As opposed to this 'negative influence', whose '...norms are often consciously opposed to those of mainstream society', Anderson sees '...the decent family committed to middle class values' (ibid: 32–33). These people represent what he describes as the 'code of decency'. Anderson presents impressive empirical research, and his studies have been important in contemporary studies of street culture. His approach, however, is somewhat problematic.

The most important problem is that he does not give the 'code' concept an explicit theoretical framework. For example, it is unclear whether he uses code as it is used in traditional linguistics, as the product of an 'irreducible inner logic' (Hanks 2005: 75), as it is used in post-structuralism, as 'a perspective of quotations, a mirage of structures' (Barthes: 1972: 20–21), or, as Bourdieu uses it, merely as a synonym for culture (Bourdieu 1977: 23, 81). This uncertainty is reflected in questions about whether the code of the street is a logic of the street, a way to 'read' the ghetto, or even how it relates to other important

concepts such as street culture or the subculture of violence (Wolfgang and Ferracuti 1967).

The way Anderson describes the code of the street, it seems to be just another word for a quite simplistic understanding of culture, as expressed by rules. I propose to use the conceptual framework of *street capital* instead. Most importantly, street capital is a form of legitimate power, it is relational, and it has the capacity to generate profit. I use the concept to better describe the embodied character of skills and competence on the street, as well as the practical rationality of street culture. This will explain stable orientations without conceptualizing them as rules, and highlight the relationship between a particular culture and its historical and social conditions. Conceptualizing street capital is thus an attempt to describe the field-specific ‘cultural capital’ (Bourdieu 1984) of a violent street subculture.

I began with Bourgois’ understanding of street culture as ‘...a complex and conflictual web of beliefs, symbols, modes of interaction, values and ideologies that have emerged in opposition to exclusion from mainstream society’. Street culture is thus not ‘...a coherent, conscious universe of political opposition but, rather, a spontaneous set of rebellious practices that in the long term have emerged as oppositional style’ (Bourgois 2003: 8). Bourgois describes street culture as offering an alternative forum for personal dignity and resistance, and marginalized people as being ‘in search of respect’.⁸ Thus, he interprets the street subculture as active opposition and resistance in the same way as the Birmingham School interprets most subcultures. This form of resistance, however, destroys the participants as well as the community. Because drug dealing is the material base of street culture, that which makes it economically attractive, it becomes a lifestyle of violence, substance abuse, and internalized rage (ibid: 9).

Street capital is masculine in its essence, and Mullins (2006) similarly describes ‘street masculinity’ as a form of ‘gender capital’ (see also Jensen 2007).⁹ As with street capital, street masculinity values violence, retaliation, fashionable clothes, and female attachment, a common set of street culture values. The most essential however, is to avoid being labelled a ‘punk’. Mullins’ greatest contribution is his emphasis on the complex and contradictory nature of street masculinity, not unlike other forms of masculinity (Connell 1995). When wearing a mask during a robbery, for example, one could be seen as both a ‘punk’ and street smart. His work thus relates to the post-subcultural approach by revealing complexity and ambivalence in cultural interpretations.

Brotherthon (2008) criticizes both Vigil's multiple marginality approach and Bourgois' analysis of street culture for representing a paradigm of social reproduction that downplays change and agency. Brotherthon's critique is based on a review of resistance in gang and street culture studies. According to Brotherthon, resistance is present in social reproduction studies, but it is '...opposition without the possibility of any political or cultural transcendence, any meaningful link to larger movements of the marginalized or any indigenous self-renewal' (ibid: 61). Many of the research participants in Bourgois' study, for example, later became employed full time, which is surprising according to his theoretical approach.

My emphasis on concrete language use and interdiscursivity in this dissertation (as inspired by discourse analysis) answers some of the post-subcultural critiques of the Chicago and Birmingham schools, as well as Brotherthon's critique of the paradigm of social reproduction. It also relates to Mullins' (2006) emphasis on contradictions in masculinity constructions. The discourse analysis reveals ambivalence, lack of coherence, links to larger movements and thus the potential for change and agency (see articles 4 and 5). However, this does not reject the importance of class, gender, ethnicity, cultural inertia, or reproduction, as such (see articles 2 and 3).

Gangster discourse

Another problem with Anderson's (1999) description of the code of the street is that it seems to refer more to particular immoral individuals than a culture that can be used creatively. Anderson's framework does not allow ambivalence and lack of coherence in accounts, except for stating that code switching is possible. However, he describes code switching as something mainly 'decent' youths do to survive on the street. Moreover, most of Anderson's accounts of street people come from 'decent' people, and in this way the code of decency may very well reflect self-presentations in interviews rather than codes, culture or informal rules.

The concept of gangster discourse (and oppression discourse) is an attempt to respond to this shortcoming in Anderson, as well as to the lack of conceptualizations of language use in the literature on street culture more generally. Thus, I introduce the concept of gangster discourse to analyse the 'linguistic capital' (Bourdieu 1991: 64) or 'linguistic practice' (ibid: 45) of street culture. The moral of gangster discourse is that individuals in street culture have more exciting and rewarding lives than individuals in conventional

society. Gangster discourse creates fascination and fear by constructing disparity, and it is used to get self-respect and respect from others.

As with street capital, the gangster discourse concept has parallels in the literature. One of the most important influences is Wieder's (1974) ethnomethodological study of the convict code. On its face, the convict code may seem to have many similarities to Anderson's code of the street. However, Wieder does not use the convict code as a mechanical code or guide, but analyses it as a symbolic resource '...used to perform specific tasks' (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 73). Research participants' narratives are thus not used to explain the underlying 'rules' of street culture, as in Anderson's studies, but rather to study how these rules are used in practice. Wieder is not concerned with what the code is, but rather what is achieved by using it and what function it has in concrete interactions. In a contemporary study, Jimerson and Oware (2006) combine Anderson's code of the street with Wieder's convict code and describe the interpretative work their research participants do as 'telling the code of the street'.

Another contemporary contribution in this 'linguistic turn' in studies of street culture is Topalli's (2005) use of Anderson's code of the street with neutralization theory (evolving from the work of Sykes and Matza 1957). Neutralization theory describes how offenders and delinquents self-talk before committing criminal acts to mitigate their shame: they do not reject mainstream values, but neutralize them.¹⁰ Topalli shares Sykes and Matza's methodological point of departure, but he argues that actors involved in a street culture neutralize being good rather than being bad: hard-core offenders self-present as bad, because the code of the street is the set of values that dominate among hard-core offenders.

'Telling the code of the street' or 'neutralizing being good' are similar to 'using gangster discourse', which is the phrasing used in articles 4 and 5. The most important difference is the inspiration from Foucaultian discourse analysis in the latter concept, rather than from symbolic interaction, ethnomethodology and neutralization theory. In this way, the articles introduce a post-structural understanding of language into a line of reasoning that has so far been dominated by voluntarism and a local understanding of the construction of meaning.

Studies of drug dealing and drug markets

Drugs have emerged as an increasingly important aspect of both criminology and criminal justice systems in the latter part of the twentieth century – not only in the metropolitan centres of Europe and North America, but now ever more widely as the global economy of the drugs trade embraces many ‘Third World’ developing nations, as well as those of the post-communist societies of Eastern and Central Europe (Pearson 1999: 477).

My dissertation will not only write the two concepts of street capital and gangster discourse into the street culture tradition but also into research on drug dealing and drug markets (see articles 1 and 2). Many researchers have noted that drug markets are complex, non-hierarchical, and always in flux (see, for example, Dorn and South 1990; Dorn et al. 1992; Wright et al. 1993; Murji 1998; Paoli 2002; Pearson and Hobbs 2001, 2003, 2004; South 2004; Ritter 2006; Coomber 2006; Coomber and Turnbull 2007). This makes them difficult to study. Most studies in this line of research have had an empirical basis, as emphasized by the Chicago School. The ethnographic studies are often of low-level drug dealing and/or street drug markets (see, for example, Johnson et al. 1985; Williams 1989; Mieczkowski, 1990; Pearson 2001; Dunlap et al. 1994; Maher 1997; Jacobs 1999, 2000; Topalli et al. 2002; Bourgois 2003; Lalander 2003; Hoffer 2006; Mohamed and Fritsvold 2006; Bucierus 2007). An exception is Adler’s study of middle markets (Adler and Adler 1983; Adler 1985). Some researchers have used contact persons, such as ex-offenders or active offenders, to recruit research participants, but most have recruited interviewees themselves.

As already mentioned, Anderson’s (1999), Vigil’s (2002) and Bourgois’ (2003) work is firmly based within the Chicago School and street culture tradition. They all discuss drug dealing, but their work is mainly based upon samples of hard-core offenders. Parker and his colleagues (1998) have argued that illegal drug use (especially of cannabis) has been normalized in Great Britain. Still, most researchers emphasize more problematic drug use (but see, for example, South 1999; Pearson 2001).

Recreational drug use among less marginalized youths is an area that needs more research. One exemplary study is Wilson’s (2007) examination of the Northern Soul Scene. He works within a subculture framework: ‘The concept subculture is used in a loose way to describe a group brought into being by the collective adoption and elaboration of a particular style and behaviour’ (ibid: 8). Similarly to the post-subculture critique however, he accuses the Birmingham School of having an over-deterministic view of class that

obscures differences within subcultures and gives them a level of homogeneity and purpose they do not possess. He also criticizes the view that the actors were unable to make sense of their own social world, and emphasizes that participants in the music scene are well aware of both their class position and their opposition (ibid: 4–5). Wilson describes an amphetamine ethos distinct from the ‘hippie’ and opiate-using cultures. Most of the members of the Northern Soul Scene shared this ethos, but Wilson was able to distinguish between a rapid-using minority and the gradual users, a difference he traces back to earlier life experiences, especially family instability. He also described how the clubbers used subcultural neutralization techniques among themselves and ‘societal-accepted’ justification when arrested for drug offences (ibid: 86–88). This is in many ways similar to the discussion of shifts between gangster discourse and oppression discourse in article 5.

Scandinavian studies of street culture

The Chicago and Birmingham schools have inspired research in Scandinavia as well, though it is beyond the scope of this introduction to discuss Scandinavian research thoroughly. Scandinavian studies on subculture and street culture have been reviewed in Sandberg and Pedersen (2006), and Jensen (2007), and the most important empirical studies are mentioned in the articles that follow. Thus, I will only discuss here some points of interest for the general discussion that are not mentioned in the articles.

In a study of ethnic minority boys at a youth club on the Eastside of Oslo, Vestel (2004) describes cultural processes in a ‘multicultural situation’ (see also Andersson 2005). As opposed to most other similar studies, Vestel has done fieldwork following the same boys for more than a decade. This approach is advantageous when studying changes and heterogeneity in identity constructions. Inspired by Peircean semiotics, he describes the basic mechanisms of social life as *resonance* and *dissonance*, and studies how the young men construct a cultural community of hybridisation, balancing cultural signs and symbols from the ethnic Norwegian context, their parents’ cultural backgrounds, and Afro-American subcultures (for example hip-hop culture; see also Sernhede 2002). Vestel discusses how these different cultural influences are evoked simultaneously, in creative improvisation, but also how different cultural influences dominate different periods of the young men’s lives. Of particular interest for my study is Vestel’s description of how young men can capitalize on being ethnic minorities in street culture (see article 3). For example, one of his research participants was rejected by the ethnic Norwegian community he was

in, and he responded by enacting the ‘dangerous foreigner’ stereotype (ibid: 521). Similarly, Andersson (2005) found that ethnic minority city strollers more often referred to themselves as ‘foreigners’ than did ethnic minority students and athletes in Oslo.

Vestel further describes the multicultural situation as a ‘landscape of various clusters of signs and messages’ (ibid: 515). There are several parallels between the clusters Vestel describes and the concepts of discourse and narratives I use.¹¹ As with clusters, discourses and narratives represent orthodoxy, but they can also be combined in new ways and thus represent heterodoxy. Vestel’s description of ‘mixing metaphors’ (ibid: 526), for example, is quite similar to interdiscursivity. Vestel maintains that cultural expressions emerge from actual experiences, and he mentions Bourdieu’s habitus concept to describe this process. At the same time, he argues that cultural expressions are created autonomously ‘based on convention’ (ibid: 525). This dialectic is somewhat similar to gangster discourse being both constitutive of and constituted by street culture (see discussion later).

Moshuus (2005) describes a more hard-core street culture in another study of ethnic minorities in Oslo. As opposed to Vestel and Andersson, Moshuus uses an explicit subcultural framework (as do Smith-Solbakken and Tunland 1997). He portrays how ethnic minorities solve social problems by adapting to and creating innovative lifestyles, with gangsta rap and gangster movies as the most important cultural inspirations. Moshuus also describes how the ‘gangster’ gradually becomes the ‘hero’ among ethnic minority men involved in illegal drugs and crime. These marginalized men form new collectives that help them ‘...re-code their marginal positions in relation to the surrounding street worlds’ (ibid: 279). This is the previously mentioned social solution for social problems, as emphasized by both the Chicago and Birmingham schools. Moshuus demonstrates how this adaptation mainly involves identities that are already in place, for example the ‘gangster’ and street culture, and not an ‘immigrant honour culture’, as is often portrayed by the media (and sometimes supported by research, see for example, Lien 2001; 2002; Bucerius 2007; see also discussion in articles 2 and 3). Finally, Moshuus also describes more individualistic strategies for coping with stigmatization and ethnic discrimination, and thus avoids the determinism for which subcultural studies have been criticized.

Lalander, a Swedish researcher, also uses a subcultural framework, and he has published two studies relevant to this discussion. The first focused on a group of young heroin users in Norrköping (Lalander 2003). Lalander describes the drug subculture as a

game, one that takes time to learn, and its participants are the players. The subculture offers action, excitement, social networks and fast rewards, and for those who isolate themselves from the subculture, there is always a longing to go back (ibid: 169). Lalander thus highlights the positive aspects of a subculture that is often only described negatively (see also Wilson 2007), and in so doing he illuminates the initial phases of illegal drug use (see article 1). Lalander describes as well, however, how the game ultimately becomes unpleasant, and something other than the place of freedom the participants initially perceive it to be.

He also discusses the paradoxical relationship between the welfare state and the subculture. The game is seen by the state as threat and it 'therefore spends a lot of energy fighting it'. However the state is 'at the same time involved in defining and creating the playing field. If the game did not have autonomy it would not be a game' (ibid: 168). Similar paradoxical relationship between the state and the drug subculture is discussed in this dissertation as well (see article 5).

In the second study, Lalander (2005) examined young Swedish-Chilean men's devotion to street culture. He uses Bourgois' understanding of street culture. For Lalander, street culture emerges from stigmatization and socio-economic repression; the street is an arena where problems from home are resolved, a place of excitement, and something authentic and real. These characteristics speak to the fascination that street culture has, both for its participants and for outsiders, and they help to explain why street culture regularly appears in popular films and music. Lalander's emphasis on symbolic autonomy and authenticity echoes the 'positive' descriptions of street subculture in his previous study. In the study of Swedish-Chilean men, he describes how they define themselves as outsiders, which involves both collective actions and storytelling. By strongly demarcating between the street and other social worlds, they vent sorrow and disappointment and create dignity (ibid: 144; see also article 4).

All of the studies mentioned so far are in English, and I strongly recommend them to anyone interested in Scandinavian street culture. As in Lalander's studies, the participants in my research span a continuum from heroin users and hard-core criminals at one end to more mainstream identity-seeking youths at the other. Similarly, they are on a continuum from Willis' (1977) working-class boys to the more hard-core offenders described by Anderson (1999), Vigil (2002) and Bourgois (2003). The Scandinavian studies have other important links to my dissertation: Some use a street subculture

framework in a welfare state context (Lalander 2003, 2005; Moshuus 2005), and some also discuss the complexity and ambiguity of such a framework (Vestel 2004; Andersson 2005).

The final Scandinavian study to be discussed here has even more significant similarities. In a study of young ethnic minority boys in Denmark, Jensen (2002, 2006, 2007) relies on both subcultural theory and Bourdieu in a way quite similar to mine. For example, he uses the concept of subcultural capital (Thornton 1995), pointing out that the Bourdieuan field is different but can be an analytical tool for subculture, and not least he has a theoretical position where he combines criticising Thornton for neglecting socio-economic structures and Bourdieu for downplaying autonomy in the subculture (Jensen 2006, 2007). In an approach somewhat similar to that of Vestel (2004), Jensen (2002) describes an *expressive masculinity* that is a bricolage of cultural elements from the parent culture, icons of masculinity related to social position, and icons of masculinity adopted from the subgenres of rap and hip-hop.

Jensen further describes the complex way that ethnic minority men capitalize on their ‘otherness’, by embracing the stigma of being both ‘dangerous’ and sexually alluring (Jensen 2007). Although he recognizes that such role playing often emerges from socio-economic oppression, he points out that it can also be done just because it is an attractive possibility, thereby responding to some of the criticisms of the post-subcultural approach. He also argues that ‘dangerous’ is an integral part of ‘sexy’, and that playing the dangerous foreigner (or using gangster discourse as described later) is not only a strategy for relating to other boys in the street, but also for attracting girls: being perceived as dangerous can be seen as cool and therefore sexy (ibid: 324). Thus, Jensen argues that expressive masculinity can be a form of cultural capital for young people (ibid: 289) and implicitly downplays differences between the street subculture and mainstream society.

In this way, Jensen’s work challenges the ‘borders’ of street culture and gangster discourse as conceptualized in my dissertation, and also subcultural analysis more generally. Gangster discourse can be seen as an extreme version of more conventional discourses, emphasizing for example being street smart and ‘dangerous’. There is no doubt that playing a tough guy, or having technical and mythological knowledge of cannabis or other softer drugs, are fascinating characteristics to those outside hard-core street culture. It suggests ‘real life’, as Lalander (2005) points out. Other aspects of street capital, however, such as being able to avoid arrests, making good drug deals, or an exaggerated sensitivity to offences, are more subcultural in their essence. Still, the borders between the subculture

and mainstream are always in flux, as Jensen convincingly demonstrates. Categorizations such as subculture, forms of capital or discourses are always analytical constructions. They can make us see new things, or see old things more clearly, and are thus not problematic in and of themselves. What is problematic, however, is when we forget what is excluded (for example similarities between the subculture and mainstream society). Or when the analytical construction is seen as objective descriptions of reality or used in simple categorizations (for example, dividing people into groups of 'street' and 'decent').

Experiences or narratives?

Willis' (1977) study of working-class culture has been criticized for adopting the perspective of 'the lads' at the cost of the other boys and the girls, and thus taking '...evaluative descriptive constructions and treating them as factual versions of their social world' (Potter 1996: 99; see also Atkinson 1990; Marcus 1986). The social group's categories and individual self-presentations are thus taken as objective pictures of social relations and 'selves'. A similar criticism can be directed at Thornton (1995), most of the ethnographic literature on street subcultures, studies of illegal drugs, and some of the Scandinavian studies discussed above.¹²

It is a fundamental methodological problem in social science that most research is based on self-reported data or data otherwise narratively constructed. This is also the case in ethnographic studies of street culture. Even though fieldwork is important for general understanding, data actually presented and analysed in the finished report are usually narratives and stories told to the researcher. Järvinen (2000, 2001, 2003) argues that self-reported data must also be analysed as accounts. Using interviews with homeless people, alcoholics and ethnic minorities in Denmark, she states that interviews, as other social settings, are sites of knowledge production and that research participants fashion their stories according to interpretative frameworks (Järvinen 2000: 370).¹³ These interpretative frameworks, or narratives and discourses, are influenced by institutional contexts, such as treatment facilities or state welfare organizations (Järvinen 2001: 272; see also Järvinen and Mik-Meyer 2003, and article 5). The personal narratives cannot be freely chosen and they always reflect the past, or the *habitus* of the speaker. They also influence the future. To use Järvinen's metaphor: they act as a boomerang 'thrown from the present into the past and returns with a force bearing it into the future' (Järvinen 2000: 385).

Researchers in the discourse analysis tradition have argued that self-reported data should not be regarded as descriptive of practice or material reality. They argue that one should rather analyse such data as artful interpretative work in concrete interaction and/or indicative of larger societal discourses that 'speak through the subjects'. This far-reaching criticism is often called 'postmodern' and thus dismissed. The critique is nevertheless important, even though the discourse analytical solution is too radical. The social context of the interview situation must be emphasized, not only in the methods section, but also in the analysis. This dissertation will be a compromise (see also Järvinen 2003). I will analyse statements as being descriptive of experiences in articles 1, 2 and 3, while at the same time treating them as narratives embedded in a discursive environment and used as discursive tools in concrete interaction in articles 4 and 5. The two forms of analysis may even be linked: social contexts produce specific narratives and narratives shape social contexts.

4. Bourdieu, Foucault and language

In the articles later, I will use Bourdieu's theoretical framework to analyse practice, and Foucault's to analyse discourse and narratives. Using such different theoretical frameworks presents several challenges, including the issues of realism versus constructivism, practice versus discourse, and the constituting force of language. Full discussion of these issues is beyond the scope of this dissertation, and I will make no attempt to 'solve' the problems inherent in a combination of Bourdieu and Foucault. Rather, my aim is to discuss the tensions these issues create, and to demonstrate the utility of the two theoretical frameworks, both separately and in combination, for empirical research.

Bourdieu and Foucault themselves would likely be critical of a project that discusses the relationships between their frameworks. Inspired by Barthes' (1977) claims of the 'death of the author', first published in 1967, they both point to the often-exaggerated claim of consistency in authorship (Foucault 1977a, Bourdieu 1991). Moreover, even though Bourdieu and Foucault were friends and colleagues at Collège de France, they did not discuss each other in their writing. Foucault does not mention Bourdieu at all, and Bourdieu comments on Foucault only briefly. Most of these comments do not concern his studies, but rather his position in the academic field, and the kind of radical relativism Foucault inspired (Callewaert 2006).

Both Bourdieu and Foucault broke with neo-Marxism (which was important in their academic context), but in their own very distinct ways. Bourdieu introduced cultural capital as a new basis of hierarchies, independent of, but still linked to economic capital. Foucault left out anything 'real' as a point of reference. They were nevertheless highly influenced by neo-Marxism in their analysis of power, especially by Gramsci's (1992) theory of hegemony. Both also broke with and were inspired by French structuralism, the academic fashion in Paris during the 1960s and 1970s. Bourdieu broke with structuralism by emphasizing rationality in capital accumulation and practice, and the later post-structural Foucault emphasized the multitude of discourses involved in meaning-making processes (as opposed to structuralism's *one* underlying cognitive structure).

In the following pragmatic and instrumental reading of the two, I will only discuss relations between Bourdieu and Foucault as they pertain to the general claim of this Introduction: that gangster discourse can be seen as the linguistic practice or capital of

street culture. In this discussion, Bourdieu's essay *The Production and Reproduction of Legitimate Language in Language and Symbolic Power* (1991) and Foucault's *The Discourse on Language* (1972b), will be of particular importance.

Bourdieu – Capital, habitus and field

Many of Bourdieu's concepts take on different meanings depending on the object of study and whom he is addressing. I will nevertheless try to define some of his central concepts, and reveal their utility for studies of violent street cultures. First, Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital was developed from his studies in Algeria, but later used in studies of the modern French society:

'Symbolic capital' is to be understood as economic or political capital that is disavowed, misrecognized and thereby recognized, hence legitimate, a 'credit' which under certain conditions, and always in the long run, guarantees 'economic profit' (Bourdieu 1993: 75).

Bourdieu (1986) distinguishes among three forms of symbolic capital: economic, cultural and social. In short, economic capital is money, cultural capital is control over the dominant culture and social capital refers to valuable social networks. As conceptualized above, street capital is the 'cultural capital of street culture'. Cultural capital can have objectified, embodied and institutionalized forms. *Habitus* is embodied cultural capital, and it is key to understanding Bourdieu. It is:

[a] system of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operation necessary in order to attain them (Bourdieu 1990: 53).

Habitus is the practical sense, or "what is called in sport the 'feel for the game', that is, the art of *anticipating* the future of the game" (Bourdieu 1998: 25). This 'acquired system of preferences' is based upon a 'system of durable cognitive structures' (ibid), produced by historical and social conditions (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 16). *Street habitus* can thus be conceptualized as the relatively permanent and sometimes unconscious dispositions of individuals in a street culture. Street habitus is an embodied practical sense that centres on

hypersensitivity towards offences and displays of violent potential, and it is produced by historical and social conditions.¹⁴ Bourdieu's comments on intimidations, for example, are highly illustrative of the mechanisms of street culture: It '...can only be exerted on a person predisposed (in his habitus) to feel it, whereas others will ignore it' (Bourdieu 1991: 51).

Capital and habitus exist within a given field. The field is the 'social setting in which habitus operates' (Swartz 1997: 117), and habitus has no 'independent existence apart from the field' (Hanks 2005: 72). The field also defines the borderlines of legitimacy for different forms of capital. The field is defined as:

a network, or configuration, of objective relations between positions. These positions are objectively defined, in their existence and in the determination they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation (*situs*) in the structure of the distribution of species of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 97).

Bourdieu introduced the field as a concept late in his career, and it may best be described in the study of cultural production (Bourdieu 1993). This is also where the autonomy of the field is best described. Examples of fields are education, the academy, artistic production and organized religion. Even though street culture lacks formal institutions and is relatively unstable, this dissertation uses the field as an analytical tool to study street culture (see also Jensen 2006). Most importantly, both the field and street culture are arenas for constant struggles for power, status and respect, and thus the main site for the practice of what Nietzsche (1968) labelled the 'will to power'.¹⁵ In street culture, however, symbolic violence is not always symbolic, and struggles are not always a metaphor.

Structure/agency and economy/culture

I am using the concept of street capital and habitus to better describe the embodied character of skills and competence on the street, as well as to illustrate the practical rationality of street culture. However, in this dissertation I will not fully realize the potential of working within a framework inspired by Bourdieu, and this collection of articles is only a beginning and a proposal for further work. Most importantly, the conceptualization of street capital is an attempt to overcome the binary opposition between structure and agency in studies of street culture (see article 3). In a structure/agency

framework, street culture is the external structure, while street capital is the structure within the actor, enabling different individual strategies while being structurally limited (Bourdieu 1990). Thus, in the context of violent street culture, street capital is evident in the actor's mastery of criminal activity and violence; in a culture that prescribes particular values, and which has its own rewards, gains, profits and sanctions.

The concept of street capital is not only useful to capture some of the tension between structure and agency, it also helps us understand the opposition between economic and cultural explanations of poverty and crime. This opposition has, for example, organized the North American debate about the so-called inner-city urban underclass. In short, liberals have argued that cultural values emerged from specific social circumstances, and reflected class and racial position (Wilson 1987: 14), while conservatives have emphasized an autonomous 'culture of poverty' (Lewis 1968) or 'culture of dependence' (Murray 1984).

The concept of street capital, then, reflects a tension between economic and cultural analysis. As Bourdieu emphasizes, the absence of cultural capital is caused by class position (socio-economic structures). Street capital results from having little to lose in mainstream society, and is a form of power that the structurally oppressed can use. At the same time, while accumulating street capital they uphold and develop a violent street culture. This culture is embodied in their habitus. Thus, street habitus is shaped by socio-economic structures, while at the same time being a cultural product. As demonstrated later, it also structurally binds certain groups to street culture. However, crime and drug dealing are strategic choices. People can choose to behave differently, and most do, but the street is an arena where certain groups have realistic prospects of success. In this way, the concept of street habitus (and thereby street capital) also combines structural aspects with individual agency.

However, a theoretical framework of street capital and street culture also needs to conceptualize language use and acknowledge the ways in which discourse shapes dispositions. In the present approach, I focus on gangster discourse, emphasizing that it constitutes street capital, a claim that is somewhat problematic in Bourdieu's framework.

Bourdieu and language

We can read Bourdieu in at least two ways when it comes to language (Hanks 2005). The first way is to emphasize what he *says* about language. Two quotes illustrate this, each of

them directed at opposing theoretical schools. The following quote addresses conversation analysis, ethnomethodology and symbolic interaction:

The 'interactionist' approach, which fails to go beyond the actions and reactions apprehended in their directly visible immediacy, is unable to discover that the different agent's linguistic strategies are strictly dependent on their positions in the structure of the distribution of linguistic capital, which can in turn be shown to depend, via the structure of chances of access to the educational system, on the structure of class relations (Bourdieu 1991: 64).

Here, Bourdieu argues that the production of meaning cannot be understood locally, but only as the outcome of individual strategies or free acts of creation (ibid: 56). Meaning is embedded in economic and social conditions (ibid: 44). The object of study must thus be the '...relationship between the structured systems of sociologically pertinent linguistic differences and the equally structured systems of social differences' (ibid: 54). In this way, Bourdieu situates the role of language studies within his larger theoretical framework. In a rather neo-Marxist fashion, language is dependent upon the structure of social space, and especially upon the education system.

Chouliaraki and Fairclough (2000) and Hasan (1999) have criticized this 'ontological objectivism' and reductionism in the emphasis on class. This is probably why Bourdieu has not stimulated any significant studies of language or discourse practices (Myles 1999: 879). Even though he was highly influenced by the methods of French structuralism, Bourdieu tends to reduce language use to a structure of class relations. Many scholars also see habitus as being too deterministic to account for the ambivalence and lack of coherence in linguistic practice (King 2000).

A similar objectivist argument is important in Bourdieu's critique of structural approaches, such as those of Foucault and discourse analysis:

It can only be an unjustifiable abstraction...to seek the source of understanding of cultural productions in these productions themselves, taken in isolation, and divorced from the conditions of their production and utilization, as would be the wishes of *discourse analysis*, which situated on the border of sociology and linguistics, has nowadays relapsed into indefensible forms of internal analysis (Bourdieu 1988: xvi-xvii).

In this quotation, Bourdieu criticizes the idea that language can be understood in discourse itself, and he continues to ridicule Foucault for refusing to look outside the ‘field of the discourse’ (Bourdieu 1993: 33, 179–181). This is partly the infamous, and not very interesting, problem of self-reference, which has also been directed at Bourdieu (Hasan 1999: 77).¹⁶ More importantly, however, Bourdieu’s criticism highlights the inadequacy of language that is not recognized as acceptable (Bourdieu 1991: 55). In this respect, he is in line with ‘interactionist’ approaches. For Bourdieu, however, the crucial point of reference is not the local, situational and creative production of meaning, but the speaker’s *position in social space*.

Bourdieu also explicitly states that, ‘...the factors which are most influential in the formation of the habitus are transmitted without passing through language’ (Bourdieu 1991: 51). In this way, he both explicitly and implicitly downplays the constitutive force of language. He denies that linguistic practice or discourse is itself a part the struggle for, ‘...the constitution and classification of social relations’ (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 2000: 402). For example that gangster discourse is not only the linguistic capital in a violent street culture where street capital is the dominant symbolic capital, but it also constitutes this very same street capital.

This is, however, only what Bourdieu explicitly says about language. A quite different way to read him is to ‘bracket’ what he says about language, and emphasize instead what he says about other aspects of social life (Hanks 2005: 69). *The Berber House* (Bourdieu 1973) and *Masculine Domination* (Bourdieu 2001) are highly influenced by French structuralism. In the latter, for example, Bourdieu describes the oppositions between male and female, both in habitus and in culture, through their representations in language.¹⁷ Bourdieu’s description of the field is also influenced by French structuralism, which he sees as organized in relational opposites. The field has also been defined as ‘...a language game in which certain ends are pursued with certain discursive resources according to established guidelines’, and as ‘...a set of beliefs and assumptions that undergird the game’ (Hanks 2005: 73, Bourdieu 1985). In this understanding of the field, he is close to a theoretical position that most schools in discourse analysis would share.

In many respects, Bourdieu theoretically acknowledges the autonomous presence and creative force of language: ‘social science has to take account of the autonomy of language, its specific logic, and its particular rules of operation’ (Bourdieu 1991: 41).¹⁸ He nevertheless tends to end up with the same point of reference—objective fields and structures outside the discourse itself. Thus, in a Bourdieuan framework, conceptualizing a

linguistic practice as ‘gangster discourse’ is not theoretically problematic in itself, but it will probably be considered less important than studying the economic and social conditions that produced it.¹⁹ In this respect, Chouliaraki and Fairclough argue that Bourdieu’s approach fails when it comes to how ‘dispositions to practice come about in and through language’ (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 2000: 405). The conceptualization of gangster discourse is an attempt to include this aspect in a Bourdieu-inspired framework of street capital.

Another challenge in applying a theoretical framework inspired by Bourdieu is trying to account for the specificities of language use in street culture, especially ambivalence and lack of coherence in speech (Hanks 2005: 78, Hasan 1999). For example, the examination of language use presented in the two final articles reveals how street culture appears to be less an autonym ‘culture’, ‘code’ or ‘field’, and more a ‘cultural tool kit’, used strategically in interactions (Swidler 1986). Young men devoted to street culture balance gangster discourse with, for example, narratives embedded in ‘conventional discourse’ (see article 4) and ‘oppression discourse’ (see article 5). They actively evoke and relate to rationales, discourses and narratives from both street subculture and mainstream society to acquire symbolic capital, gain status and respect, and make sense of their lives. The conceptual frameworks of ‘culture’, ‘code’ and ‘field’ can thus easily overstate the homogeneity of life and language on the street.

These kinds of data are probably better grasped by a symbolic interactionist theoretical framework (e.g. Goffman; see article 4), and by more contemporary developments in discourse analysis (see article 5). Fairclough (1992, 1995a), for example, describes the lack of coherence as the *interdiscursivity* of written and spoken text. Derived from Bakhtin’s (1981) intertextuality, this concept describes the process when a speaker or a text draws on different discourses to create legitimacy and meaning. Written or spoken text that evokes different discourses increases the space of interpretation, and the reception will be more ambivalent and sometimes more effective. Thus, Bourdieu’s conceptualization of the field is sometimes better described as a set of discourses or an ‘order of discourse’, for example when analysing interpretative work.²⁰ It can even be argued that the order of discourse is ‘...the specifically discursal organizational logic of the structure of a field, and analysis of the former can be seen as part of the analysis of the latter’ (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 2000: 407).²¹ This *dialectical approach* will be discussed in detail later.

Discourse analysis

Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) classify discourse analysis into discourse theory, critical discourse analysis and discourse psychology. Discourse theory evolved in the social sciences and emphasizes discourse as structure, as is seen, for example, in the post-structural writings of Foucault (1972a, 1972b, 1978) and Laclau and Mouffe (1985). Critical discourse analysis evolved in linguistics and the social sciences. It carries much of the post-structural philosophy of Foucault, but opens up a larger space for individual agency. The most coherent description of this tradition is in Fairclough's work (1992, 1995b). Finally, discourse psychology evolved in social psychology. Unlike discourse theory and critical discourse analysis, it emphasizes the production of meaning from actors in concrete interaction (see Potter and Wetherell 1987; Potter 1996).²²

It is difficult to summarize a tradition that originates in very different sciences and, consequently, has a different development. Empirical discourse analysis has been important in such different fields as linguistics, the social sciences and psychology, inspired in each case by philosophical post-structuralism. We can trace the origins of contemporary discourse analysis back to influences as different as Chomsky's generative grammar, Austin's pragmatics, Sacks' conversation analysis and Saussure's semiology (see Potter and Wetherell 1987; Potter 1996; van Dijk 1997; Jaworski and Coupland 1999; Wood and Kroger 2000; Schiffrin, Tannen and Hamilton 2001; Jørgensen and Phillips 2002).

But we can even go further back. Many forget that Nietzsche was one of the first to emphasize the importance of language, and the crucial and constituting role it plays in society. Continuing a philosophical argument originating in Kant, he questioned the traditional reference view on language, stating instead that our differentiations and assignments are arbitrary, and that all naming is metaphors not corresponding to original entities (Nietzsche 1999: 81–83). This is an important assumption shared by Foucault and discourse analysis. Because we cannot 'think outside language', words are 'the horizon of our knowledge' (Nietzsche 1968: 283, 267). Re-evaluation can only be done by analogy, using familiar ideas and familiar words, but giving them a new meaning: 'In our thought the essential feature is fitting new material into old schemas, making equal what is new' (ibid: 273). The structure we use to write and talk controls the way we understand the world, and the way we understand the world becomes the taken-for-granted reality on which we base our action. Language thus becomes power, as Nietzsche (1969:26) famously states. These ideas were later developed by Gramsci (1992) in his theory of hegemony, and extended further from economic 'basis' by both Foucault and Laclau and Mouffe (1985).

Another idea that was important for Nietzsche, and which has become important in discourse analysis, is that thinking is organized in opposite values, or based on opposites or dichotomies (Nietzsche 1966, 1969). The idea became crucial for Levi-Strauss (1963; 1967), and French post-war structuralism (Kurzweil 1980). Unlike French structuralism, however, Nietzsche repeatedly emphasized the fluidity of meaning (1969: 80). He did not consider language to be ordered by a biological deep structure (Chomsky 1957, 1966) or the stable system of 'langue' (Saussure 1974). In this way, he was more in line with post-structuralism and discourse psychology.²³ Nietzsche's influence on Foucault is best seen in his move from archaeology to genealogy.²⁴ It is also crucial to his infamous view of individuality and subjectivity being historical constructs that are profoundly influenced by the structure of language (Mahon 1992: 2).

Foucault and discourse

Some have claimed that the differences between Bourdieu and Foucault are of little importance. North American scholars, in particular, have downplayed these differences (see for example, Briggs 2003). Duranti and Goodwin even propose that discourse has many similarities with habitus; it is '...mostly unthought but still learned ways of thinking, feeling and acting' (1992: 30). Bourdieu and Foucault also share a critique of various forms of symbolic interactionism, and their interests are usually at the macro level of analysis. Bourdieu, however, is mainly concerned with how language use reflects a structural level outside the discourse, a structure of class relations.²⁵ For Foucault, the macro level of analysis is the discourse itself: 'We shall not pass beyond discourse in order to rediscover the forms that it has created and left behind it; we shall remain, or try to remain, at the level of the discourse itself' (Foucault 1972a: 48). His conceptualization of the *discourse* has been important for the development of discourse analysis. He describes how discourses should no longer be treated as groups of signs referring to contents, but:

...as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak...what they [the discourses] do is more than use these signs to designate things. It is this more that renders them irreducible to the language (langue) and speech. It is this more that we must reveal and describe (Foucault 1972a: 49).²⁶

Foucault (1970) describes how language in the dominant scientific discourse (episteme) went from representing objects to becoming a system of its own, giving words meaning

only in relation to the system of words or the system of categorizations. And, whereas order had previously been created by reference to external characteristics, it now derived from inner characteristics not visible to view (Sheridan 1980).

In Foucault's view, conditions for the production of statements can be understood by the concepts positivity, historical a priori and the archive (Foucault 1972a: 126–131).²⁷ His concern was to examine the regularity of statements to uncover the regularity of a discursive practice. As with Bourdieu's (1991) criticism of Chomsky and the interactionist approaches, Foucault (1972a) argued that statements belong to a system, or discourse. Statements are not '...pure creation, as the marvelous disorder of the genius' (Foucault 1972a: 146).

Later, Foucault (1972b) further examines the structural constraints posed by discourse. First, we are not free to say whatever we want, because of the rule of prohibition; some themes are prohibited (e.g. sexuality). Another principle of exclusion is the opposition between reason and folly. If a man is considered insane, his speech will not be a part of the common discourse. The last and most important principle is the opposition between true and false. Foucault states that the two former principles have more or less been taken over by the 'will to truth' in contemporary society (Foucault 1972b: 216–219).²⁸

Many of Foucault's studies link production of knowledge with historical systems of knowledge and concrete social institutions. The 'will to truth' is thus held up by an institutional network centred around the educational system and its related production of scientific knowledge (Foucault 1972b). The institutional network is also among the constraints on discourse that Foucault labels external. These include the ritual, the 'fellowship of discourse' (limiting discourse to a closed community) and the educational system:

Every educational system is a political means of maintaining or of modifying the appropriation of discourse, with the knowledge and powers it carries with it... What is an educational system, after all, if not a ritualization of the word; if not a qualification of some fixing of roles for speakers; if not the constitution of a (diffuse) doctrinal group; if not a distribution and an appropriation of discourse, with all its learning and its powers (Foucault 1972b: 227).

Foucault's discussion of the external constraints on discourse, as well as his studies of actual institutions, makes Bourdieu's claim that he refuses to look outside the 'field of the discourse' unreasonable.

There are, however, two more serious problems with Foucault's framework, which Bourdieu seems to answer in a more coherent way. The first is the vagueness when describing the relationships among discourse, practice and materiality, and the other is the lack of agency.

Discourse, practice and agency

Bourdieu himself insists that he differs from Foucault primarily with respect to the concepts of habitus and field (Callewaert 2006: 94). This can also be seen as Bourdieu's emphasis on *practice* versus Foucault's emphasis on the *discourse* (ibid: 75). The disagreement is on the constituting force of discourse versus the already constituted 'reality'. The difference is that, while Foucault highlights the constitutive force of cultural representations and language, Bourdieu concentrates on practice and material reality.

Foucault clearly overstates the constitutive effects of discourse, thereby overestimating the contingency of the social, and he has a schematic view of the effects of discourse (Fairclough 1992). But Bourdieu's claim that Foucault refuses to look outside the 'field of the discourse' (Bourdieu 1993: 33, 179–181) is partly based upon a misunderstanding of Foucault's conceptualization of discourse. For Bourdieu, discourses are more closely connected to a linguistic understanding, which can be summarized as written and oral language use. For Foucault, however, discourse is an all-encompassing structure of behaviour, thinking, language and even material reality formed by history. In other words, Foucault's concept of discourse includes the social practice 'outside discourse', as understood by Bourdieu. For example, when he studies psychiatry (Foucault 1965), modern science (Foucault 1970), the prison (Foucault 1977c), or even sexuality (1978), these are all practices that he analyses as part of discourses.

Fairclough's dialectics (1992, 1995b), in which he sees discursive practice as interacting with a preconstituted reality, may be a compromise between Bourdieu and Foucault. Such a dialectics is also necessary to see gangster discourse as the 'linguistic capital' and most important 'linguistic practice' of a violent street subculture. Discourse is shaped by situations, institutions and social structures, but it also shapes them (Fairclough and Wodak 1997: 258). Moreover, a dialectics approach to discourse is easier to work with

empirically than Foucault's all-encompassing discourse, and it answers some of discourse psychology's criticisms of Foucault.²⁹

Another problem when combining Foucault and Bourdieu is the often-assumed lack of agency in Foucault's studies (see, for example, Fairclough 1992). This assumption stems from Foucault's claim that the subject was constructed in the 18th century (Foucault 1970), and from his descriptions of the structural constraints discourse places on the subject. Foucault states, for example, that, 'I shall abandon any attempt, therefore, to see discourse as a phenomenon of expression...instead I shall look for a field of regularity for various positions of subjectivity' (Foucault 1972a: 55). He also describes discourse as defining '...the possible positions of speaking subjects' (Foucault 1972a: 122), which later inspired the concept of subject position (Laclau and Mouffe 1986).

Fairclough (1992) argues that the lack of agency in Foucault's work is related to his reluctance to analyse specific texts. Without analysing specific texts, it is difficult to arrive at conclusions about discursive practice (as opposed to larger discourses, representations and narratives) and, consequently, more difficult to see the actors. A similar critique is at the heart of the discourse psychological approach: Foucault-inspired studies do not account for micro interactions, but emphasize the macro level of discourses (Potter 1996: 87). The criticism is also reflected in the discourse analytical definition of discourse: 'talk and texts as parts of social practice' (Potter 1996: 105).³⁰ This criticism illustrates an important difference in both emphasis and definition of discourse. When Foucault states that discourses do more than use signs to designate things, and that '...it is this more that renders them irreducible to the language (*langue*) and speech' (Foucault 1972a: 49), he emphasizes that important aspects of the discourse lie outside actual language in interaction. Analysis must reflect this, and emphasize the logic and systematic nature of the system that makes production of meaning possible.

It is not always clear, however, whether Foucault's supposed rejection of agency and the subject is due to his methodology, epistemology or ontology. He does, for example, emphasize that the actor is active, and not solely a reproduction of the archive (Foucault 1972a: 144–146), and concerning the role of the subject, he writes:

'if it [archaeology] wishes to avoid the necessary connexion through the speaking subject, it is not in order to guarantee the sovereign, sole independence of discourse; it is in order to discover the domain of existence and functioning of a discursive practice' (ibid: 164).

In other words, the actor is left out for methodological reasons, to be better able to concentrate on what he considers the uncovered field of human and social science: the internal characteristics and logic of discourses and the way they relate to one another. This does not imply that agency is impossible. One way of being creative is through interdiscursivity, to use discourses from one social domain and apply them to another one, or even create a new discourse. To make a new discourse, however, one will have to use already existing discourses. This is what Foucault emphasizes when he states that all statements bear a regularity from which they cannot be dissociated (ibid: 144).

Pragmatic concerns can help us determine the conceptual framework we should use. Thus, following Fairclough (1995b) and discourse psychology (Potter and Wetherell 1987, Potter 1996), discourses can also be seen as a discursive or interpretative *repertoire*, if agency and discursive practice in concrete interaction is the emphasis of the study.³¹ If the emphasis is on the structural constraints posed by discourse, however, discourse is a better concept to use.

Combining Bourdieu and Foucault

Several problems arise when we try to combine Bourdieu's and Foucault's theoretical frameworks, even for empirical and pragmatic purposes. The most obvious problems spring from the classic dilemma between radical constructivist (Foucault's relativist constructivism) and more realist (Bourdieu's structuralist constructivism) approaches to studies of social science. We may not be able to resolve the philosophical contradiction inherent in the problem of self-reference, nor ignore the fact that phenomena and perceptions are always mediated by language, but Fairclough's dialectics does offer us a compromise. To apply this dialectics, however, we must make some adjustments.

First, we must give language a more constitutive role than Bourdieu does. We must avoid his tendency to reduce language to a structure of class relations by adopting the method he sometimes uses in his more qualitative analyses, where language plays a more constituting role in constructing the social. Second, we must give the subject a different position in Foucaultian discourse analysis, making it apparent that the individual is not only a bearer of discourses, but also an active agent, with an embodied personal and social history. We must also acknowledge the objective socio-economic structures of the field. It is nonetheless important to note that material reality and social practice are constituted by, and get their meaning through, discourse. Perceptions are never unmediated and, as social researchers, we must recognize that objects of study are never outside discourse (to put a

spin on Bourdieu's criticism of Foucault). In the dialectic approach suggested in this dissertation, gangster discourse thus both constitutes and is constituted by street capital. It is embedded in violent street culture, but also upholds and constitutes the same culture.

The dilemma of realism versus constructivism is also evident methodologically in this dissertation. For example, while early and common experiences are decisive for the development of street capital, and decisive for explanations of the mechanisms of street culture, they are only accessible through self-reported narratives. Violence, drug dealing and drug use are not usually observed as practice, neither in this study nor in the literature generally, and even when they are observed, observations do not provide the meaning necessary to understand the processes involved. Moreover, even though researchers such as Willis (1977), Bourgois (2003) and Anderson (1999) have done extensive fieldwork, these data are almost exclusively what research participants say about their lives, and thus they are social constructions of reality (Atkinson and Coffey 2003: 114). Analysis of street capital must therefore include the discursive and narrative construction of meaning in street culture.

The concept of street capital is obviously inspired by Bourdieu. And though we can place gangster discourse within both Bourdieu's and Foucault's theoretical frameworks, it is most obviously linked to Foucault. His emphasis on how discursive practice forms the objects of which people speak is directly pertinent to gangster discourse, which actively creates and reproduces street culture and street capital. The way gangster discourse and other discourses define the possible positions of a speaking subject highlights boundaries to constructions of identity and the self. As Goffman (1963) points out, these boundaries are especially crucial for marginalized and stigmatized groups (see article 4). Thus, we cannot reduce gangster discourse to a system of class relations, because it has its own logic, and must be understood in its own right.

At the same time, Bourdieu's (1991) remark on the inadequacy of being able to produce statements if they are not listened to and recognized as acceptable, can serve as a reminder for discourse analysis. Unless the speaker of gangster discourse has symbolic credibility, through (for example) public displays of violence, gangster discourse becomes only comic. Gangster discourse is thus dependent upon embodied street capital to be effective. It is also important to recognize that street capital and gangster discourse emerge from an objectively given socio-economic position, from the bottom of what Bourdieu conceptualizes as social space.

Nevertheless, and despite their differences, Bourdieu and Foucault agree that the educational system and middle-class society are at the centre of discourse allocation and capital accumulation. Bourdieu, for example, states that ‘...the sociology of language is logically inseparable from a sociology of education’ (Bourdieu 1991: 62), and Foucault states that through education, individuals ‘...can gain access to any kind of discourse’ (Foucault 1972b: 227).³²

My dissertation, however, follows the Chicago School’s emphasis on empirical and ethnographic research on ‘marginal’ populations, and the concepts introduced here originate in data from society’s depths: Street capital analyses the capital augmentation of marginalized people and discourse analysis their interpretative work. A central argument I make is that important symbolic capital augmentation and autonomous linguistic practice take place far from the educational system. Moreover, and in line with the understandings of subcultures highlighted by the Birmingham School, linguistic and embodied street capital gets its symbolic value by being *opposed* to the educational system and mainstream society. As subcultural capital, it has long defined itself as extra-curricular, as knowledge that cannot be learned in school (Thornton 1995: 13). In this way, this dissertation challenges the hierarchical and authoritative approach explicit in Bourdieu’s social space and more implicit in Foucault’s episteme and discourse, and allows more room for resistance and opposition to emerge from the subculture.

As with the subculture, however, resistance is limited and field specific, and the solution is in many ways ‘magic’ or ‘imaginary’ (Cohen 2005). Street capital and gangster discourse are obviously not equal to legitimate symbolic capital and language. They are even counterproductive if the aim is to advance in mainstream society. However, this does not imply that such a symbolic universe is of little relevance. Moreover, refusing to analyse the autonomy, linguistic practice, agency and symbolic capital of people at society’s margins only adds to their marginalization.

Final remarks

In summary, this Introduction has raised several methodological and ethical issues. Some of these, such as paying research participants, anonymity, and what information to share with authorities, can be solved quite easily. Other dilemmas are more complicated, such as further stereotyping already marginalized groups, labelling during interviews, and researchers personal integrity. These cannot be ‘solved’ in the same way, but it still helps to recognize these problems and reflect on the challenges they present.

Most importantly the Introduction has presented the concepts of street capital and gangster discourse, and discussed their relation to the tradition of subculture studies, especially as represented by the Chicago and Birmingham schools. I have also discussed the relation between Bourdieu and Foucault, as their work pertains to this dissertation and suggested a theoretical synthesis for the five articles.

The articles follow this Introduction. The first demonstrates the inadequate conceptualizations of agency and rationality in public representations of adolescents using illegal drugs. This is often the case for government and charity organizations, the police, and the general public. Thus, the first article illustrates the importance of studies of symbolic capital accumulation and linguistic practice in street culture. To reveal this practice is the aim of the next four articles. The second article discusses the concept of street capital, both theoretically and in an empirical study of violence. The third article follows the same theoretical line, but studies recruitment to street dealing. The final two articles concentrate on the discursive and narrative aspects of life on the street.

Notes

¹ The sample includes boys with ethnic minority backgrounds from Pakistan, Morocco, Ghana, Kosovo, Turkey, Iraq, Philippines and Chile.

² Ten of the dealers had ethnic minority background from Somalia. The other had background from Kenya, Eritrea, Congo, Ghana, Gambia, Morocco and Pakistan.

³ “Hvor mange mindreårige ble kjørt hjem fra Plata?” (Sandberg and Pedersen, Aftenposten 21.2.2005), “Innvandreguttene mørke ry” (Sandberg, Aftenposten 26.10.2005), “Hvor farlige er tunge rusmisbrukere?” (Sandberg, Bergens Tidende 28.3.2006), “Syndens søtsaft” (Sandberg, Ny Tid 07.7.2007), “Gatekapital” (Sandberg, Bergens Tidende 09.7.2007), “Offer eller gangster?” (Sandberg, Klassekampen 18.1.2008), “Æreskultur eller gatekultur?” (Sandberg and Pedersen, Morgenbladet 13.4.2007), “Plantasjer på Østlandet” (Sandberg Viland and Pedersen, Morgenbladet 28.3.2008), “Hvor farlig er gangstarap?” (Sandberg, Klassekampen 14.4.2008).

⁴ This line of thinking is similar to that in other studies of marginalization and subculture. Anderson and Mott (1998), for example, have studied marginalization processes and subculture related to drug use. They conclude that there is a strong relationship between ego identity discomfort before drug use, loss of control over one’s identity, and drug subculture identification.

⁵ They also justified similar police strategies by referring to the problem of interaction between youths and street drug addicts (see *Nettavisen* 16.04). Similar concerns have been raised in Bergen.

⁶ Other critiques include a failure to provide accounts of girls in subcultures, equating youth consumerism with working-class resistance, having a structuralist theoretical bias, failure to recognize the role of media, and having a too-limited definition of youth-only as an age category (Bennett and Kahn-Harris 2004: 6–11; see also Muggleton and Weinzierl 2003).

⁷ One does not have to accept the postmodern idea that youth, style, and society have been increasingly fragmented to agree with this argument. Cultural styles have probably always been fragmented.

⁸ ‘In search of respect’ is the title of Bourgois’ book.

⁹ Unfortunately, Mullins does not expand on the relation to Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic capital.

¹⁰ Article 4 describes similar processes, but conceptualizes it in a discourse analytical framework as ‘oppression discourse’.

¹¹ This ‘variety of clusters’ is, however, probably not exclusive of the multicultural situation, but rather a shared feature of social life.

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- ¹² But Jensen (2007) prefers the concepts of ‘enactments’ and ‘impression management’ and thus implicitly questions that narratives, discourses and self-presentations can be interpreted as ‘identity’ or say something meaningful about the ‘self’.
- ¹³ This also applies to other, less formal meetings between researcher and research participant during fieldwork.
- ¹⁴ It resembles both Anderson’s (1999) and Bourgois’ (2003) claims that street culture is a response to socially marginalized positions.
- ¹⁵ In this way, Nietzsche influences Bourdieu somewhat. Still, what Bourdieu dislikes most in Foucault is his perspectivism, which he has taken from Nietzsche (see discussion later).
- ¹⁶ The problem of self-reference, in different disguises, haunts social constructivism, especially in its more radical versions. At the same time, realists must admit that perceptions are never unmediated by language.
- ¹⁷ Moreover, it has always been difficult to determine whether the representations Bourdieu discusses are inherent to the objects (for example male or female), or socially constructed and thus random.
- ¹⁸ His more specific comments on Saussure and linguistics, however, are monocular and sometimes misleading (Hasan 1999), but that is of less importance for the analysis here.
- ¹⁹ This argument is similar to Wacquant’s (2002) critique of Anderson’s (1999) ‘cultural’ approach (see article 3).
- ²⁰ The ‘order of discourse’ concept is taken from Foucault (1978), and refers to the ‘ordered set of discursive practices associated with a particular social domain or institution’ (Fairclough 1995b: 12; 1995a: 55–56).
- ²¹ For a more thorough discussion, see Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999: 114–116).
- ²² The articles presented later are quite explicit on the usage of Bourdieu, and more implicit on Foucault and discourse analysis. They will therefore get a more comprehensive introduction here.
- ²³ The emphasis on reflexivity in different versions of discourse analysis can also be traced back to Nietzsche. He not only emphasizes the role of language in knowledge production (1969: 18), but also refers to his own philosophy as nothing more (or nothing less) than ‘the new language’ (1966: 119).
- ²⁴ French structuralism heavily influenced the archaeological approach to analysing the epistemes that shape all knowledge production in a historic period. The genealogical approach reveals possible origins and the struggles between different discourses in a field. The best example of the archaeological Foucault is *The order of things* (1970), while the best example of the genealogical Foucault is *The history of sexuality* vol. 1 (1978). It is the latter, the post-structural approach, that has been most influential in discourse analysis. Nietzsche’s influence on Foucault is best described in an essay written by Foucault (1977b).
- ²⁵ We can see this difference, for example, in the use of the metaphor ‘violence’. Foucault considered discourse to be ‘violence we do to things’ (Foucault 1972b: 229), while for Bourdieu ‘symbolic violence’ is always a reflection of class society and the hierarchies of social space.
- ²⁶ Interestingly, not unlike Bourdieu (1991).
- ²⁷ The positivity of a discourse is its expression in texts. The historical a priori is that which makes such a positivity possible. The systems of statements produced by the different positivities, in accordance with historical a prioris, make up the archive (Sheridan 1980: 102–103).
- ²⁸ Note the play on words, from Nietzsche’s ‘will to power’.
- ²⁹ Potter, for example, states that Foucault’s ‘...notion of discourse to any particular instance of talk or writing is not always well specified’ and accuses him of not accounting for how it is produced (Potter 1996: 87).
- ³⁰ Interestingly, they also criticize Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis for the same flaw. It, ‘...emphasizes abstract discourse functions rather than concrete situated language use’, and is not specific enough on methods (Wood and Kroger 2000: 22). This is the same criticism that Fairclough (1992) raised against Foucault.
- ³¹ Fairclough states that the discursive order restricts and enables framing processes by being ‘the repertoire of interpretations’ (Fairclough 1995b: 10–11).
- ³² Bourdieu’s emphasis is on the elite, and he tends to focus on the educational system. When he writes about language, it is typically about ‘legitimate language’. Maybe Foucault also has a bias towards the educational system and academics because he only studies written texts. Even though his understanding of power is that it evolves from ‘everywhere’, the discourses he describes are produced by the elite.

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