

# Hip-hop: Street Dance Lexicon in Singapore

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## Abstract

This paper specifically sheds light on the hip-hop dance or street dance scene in Singapore in the heart of Southeast Asia – a relatively new area of scholarly observation among hip-hop historians, academics, and enthusiasts. Hip-hop, is a subculture turned global phenomenon originating among the African-American and Hispanic youth of America's inner cities in the 1970's, has been gradually embraced by the youth of Singapore since the 1980's. Most hip-hop dance terminology is attributed to the Original Gangsters (OGs), hip-hop founders in the United States. However, while hip-hop dancers in Singapore mainly stick to the fundamental lexicon, some new terms found in use suggest the development of a distinct local flavor not recognized outside local dancers' private spheres.

**Keywords:** *hip-hop, street dance, lexicon, Singapore, subculture*

## I. INTRO

The aim of this paper is to describe the local Singapore hip-hop: street dance terms and the lexicon that has been developed by dancers. The paper begins with an overview of hip-hop culture and some of the difficulties involved with researching the culture, including how dancers must understand the value of hip-hop foundation in order to create and recreate movements and terms. An overview of the different hip-hop dance styles concludes the section. This is followed by describing the local hip-hop culture (Hancal Town) and identifying the created street dance terms or lexicon and interpretation of particular body movements by individuals within the culture. The majority of this research was carried out through interviews with local OGs and dancers (who are named and described here) and through focus group discussions (with those in Hancal Town). Though there are limitations and the hip-hop culture is still young, local street dance lexicon exists. Hip-hop as a culture is in the era of creating curriculum and programs.

## II. HIP-HOP CULTURE AND FOUNDATION

"You know what is hip-hop? Hip hop she bop the bop ... The MC talking to the b-boy"<sup>[1]</sup> states Mr. Wiggles during the 2015 Summer Jam Dance Camp class in Singapore, where hip-hop dance is growing in popularity among Singaporean youth.

*Hip-hop came as a crowd pleaser; we never call the culture hip-hop. We call it going off, rockin', goin' down. It wasn't until 1981 somebody asked Afrika Bambaataa, what do you call this culture? The first thing that came out of his mouth was hip hop she bop the bop. The next day 1981, magazine printed the headline, Hip-hop culture. Afrika Bambaataa used the word Hip-hop which was really a rap to name the culture.*<sup>[1]</sup>

Mr. Wiggles is a street dance pioneer from the Bronx. He is one of the OGs – Original Gangsters - of hip-hop; he also starred in the hip-hop movie *Beat Street* (1984). The term OG at one time only referred to a real gangster doing unlawful activities but now OG can also serve as a title, and has changed to mean something more positive. OG, which is still an abbreviation of original gangster, now can also mean someone who is a pioneer of a certain street dance style. However in the street dance style "Locking" the term OG is an abbreviation of Original Generation. "This terminology is in direct connection with street respect terminology."<sup>[2]</sup>

"For those who do not know the wonderful world of hip-hop this eclectic mixture of ugly vandalism (graffiti), angular athletics (break-dancing), grating noises (DJ-ing) and angry lyrics (MC-ing), not to mention the swagger, conspicuous consumption and antisocial attitudes of its well-known performers, might appear a very unlikely candidate for a serious study of language, culture and globalization. Such simplifications of a complex subculture, however, overlook the ways in which hip-hop has a diversity of ways of being, and has taken up and localized in many diverse part of the world."<sup>[3]</sup>

Hip-hop is a globally recognized subculture; it originated with the African-American and Hispanic youth in the USA specifically in the inner cities during the 70's. Street dance started from social dancing in the streets and in discos, and was later popularized in the American television dance show *Soul Train*. Eventually hip-hop became known worldwide when MTV started and street dance inspired movies were made such as *Beat Street* and *Breakin'* (1984). "As the Japanese site 'Nip Hop' puts it, 'Hip-hop is a culture without a nation. Hip-hop culture is international. Each country has its own spin on hip-hop.'"<sup>[3]</sup>

Singapore youth began embracing hip-hop in the 80's and the culture has its own OG: the ones who pioneered the culture. Over the past decades, however, there have been only a

few academic studies of this culture. One is by Wong (2011) where she revealed that “Hip-hop as a cultural product has been imported from USA and marketed in Singapore for almost two decades, academic literature on Hip-hop or other street dance subcultures in Singapore remains very sparse.”<sup>[4]</sup>

Locally there is nothing written about the hip-hop dance lexicon. This study is the first documentation of local hip-hop dance terms created by the local OGs. There are a few new words that are created by local dancers mainly for personal reference. At times as the local OGs go to contest battle there are movements that are repeatedly done where the audience gives a name to the movement and the dancer will note the created name and use it too.

My main points of reference in this research are the people who are involved in this culture. Interviews and focus group discussion were the main means of understanding their views on the culture and gathering data. There are also restrictions on information sharing and terminology creation, as this culture is pretty big on respect.

“Hip-hop respect is an integral part of the culture. Respect involves recognizing and acknowledging someone’s worth authenticity, skill, or style. The greeting “respect” is a part of the Hip-hop system, as is giving props.”<sup>[5]</sup> Creating and recreating moves, steps or style is a controversial matter. The OGs from the USA are still around as well as the triple OGs, which refer to the first generation OG. To them, foundation is very important as shown by a statement from Poppin Pete (Poppin OG)

*There is a real big difference in creating a dance style from scratch with foundation, feel, groove, and which gives it its own style and feel. But some dancers get it twisted and think by adding a personal trick or move to a style that was already created, they have some how invented a new dance style.. nooooo, what makes something new or different is the fact it can't have the same foundation as the other dance style, so in reality its just a new move or trick within a already established style, cause if you really created your own then why it looks like the other style?.... GONE!!!*<sup>[6]</sup>

An understanding of dance is essential to those who would study the culture. Buddha Stretch, one of the locking OGs states that, “The culture become so cerebral. The people who talk the most about dance are the ones who can’t dance.”<sup>[7]</sup> This is the reason why it is best that writing would come from dancers. There are just certain things that only dancers can understand and put to words exactly how it feels. Doing the dance is different from watching the dance.

In an interview with Buddha Stretch, he stated, “If you can’t dance then you don’t know the vocabulary of hip-hop.”<sup>[7]</sup> So what is this vocabulary? There are a lot of people trying to give a definition of a certain move but unless you can dance that’s the only way the description will come out right. There are not many books that properly describe hip-hop dance vocabulary; most references that do exist can be found online. However, some things found online are not even legitimate, according to the dancers I spoke to. In the hip-hop community being able to dance matters.

#### A. The Elements and Pillars

“Hip-hop came from the Bronx,”<sup>[1]</sup> states Mr. Wiggles. This kind of dance was developed mostly by African American

and Latino youths during the 70’s and was a form of recreation where the youth could express themselves.

“The four-element concept [was developed] to unify the culture in the Bronx and spread it around the world. Afrika Bambaataa was a visionary. He knew this is gonna happen. He told us when we we’re little kids Hip-hop is gonna be big. At that time hip-hop was only in the Bronx y’all. It was a ghetto thing; we did it in the Bronx for fun.”<sup>[1]</sup> expressed Mr. Wiggles as he shared a brief Hip-hop history.

Peace, unity, love and having fun are the four pillars of hip-hop or the slogan, and because of the pillars the community has gotten stronger and has been able to reach out globally. Now there is a fifth element, which is knowledge. Not everyone can master at least one of the first four elements of hip-hop. As this culture grows and most of the things being shared are from words of mouth or YouTube and a lot of people are doing studies on hip-hop however there is still a lack of hip-hop knowledge. There are those who can dance, who can DJ, who can MC or do graffiti and yet have little knowledge of hip-hop history. Someone having this fifth element is important, as they are the ones who can mostly help educate the next generation.

During the camp I got to ask Mr. Wiggles a question with regards to creating unique movement or a local flavor and putting a name to it, referring to the local hip-hop dancers and dance teachers in Singapore. He replied:

*It’s always good to create and recreate but learn the foundation first.... Now we are at the era where we are creating curriculums for hip-hop.... Get in these training camps with these people [referring to US OGs] when they are in town, get their foundation and build on top of it.*<sup>[1]</sup>

Based on the statement above, hip-hop dancers and teachers can create their own movement and name it as long as they have a strong foundation. This is Mr. Wiggles’ opinion; every OG may have a different opinion on this matter because of the importance of respect in this culture.

There is not much written about the hip-hop dance in Singapore in comparison to other dance genres like contemporary dance that have been in the country longer than hip-hop, and which also reveal the importance of local identity. “For Singapore, intercultural production in contemporary dance has provided a means to simultaneously construct its local cultural identity vis a vis a pan-Asian cultural identity.”<sup>[8]</sup>

#### B. Breaking and All Styles

*Not every style is Hip-hop. Hip-hop is being used as an umbrella term but the true term for all street dance is street dance, street dance style. That’s the real umbrella that unites house, voguing, waacking, locking, popping but hip-hop dances really the first dance was breaking, party dance, electric boogie – it’s popping with a bounce. So those are the four main styles of hip-hop then we invited popping and locking and became the fifth and sixth style. We’re all united through street dance; we’re all street style dancers.*<sup>[1]</sup>

B-boying or Breaking is an original term of a style of street dance. Another term is “breakdance” which was popularized but is not favored by the actual dancers themselves. The dance itself is more appropriately called “breaking”. Most of the breaking founders and pros prefer the terms “b-boy”, “b-girl”,

and/or "breaker" when referring to the dancer. The term "breakdancer" may be used as a derogatory word for those who learn the style for personal achievement instead of commitment to the culture. This style has four basic foundational elements, first is "toprock", which is a string of movements incorporated together: hopping and feet shuffling in an upright body position. Second is "downrock", a floorwork movement with the hands on the floor supporting the dancers body. Third is "freeze", similar to a pose but with more acrobatic aesthetics, usually in an upside down position or horizontal with a hand balancing a pose. Fourth is the "power moves", which refer to the acrobatic moves that the b-boy does and which are similar to gymnastics or martial arts inspired movements. "They danced on the break in the music, expanding the idea of breakaway improvisations and into solo dance form." [9] Breaking requires a lot of personal flavor in the movements; if a breaker does a set of movements that belong to someone else it is described as "biting" or "bite" which means imitating another person's moves. Each b-boy (b-girl) has their own personal moves: some of them name them for reference while others don't.

*Popping* is a street dance style that came before the hip-hop culture. It is one of the original funk styles that emerged from the west coast in America during the 60's and 70's. The technique of this style is based on a series of movements that flex the muscles, with contraction and relaxation causing a sudden jerky motion like a pop. It is also an umbrella for other sub-styles such as "Boogaloo" where the movements are fluid and involve isolation of the arms, legs, hip, and ribcage. Later this evolved into "Electric Boogaloo" where popping is added to the fluid moves. In popping it is rare that a dancer will name a certain movement or step, as in this genre dancers are more inclined into creating a concept. An example is the different shapes, where dancers do the movement following the shape.

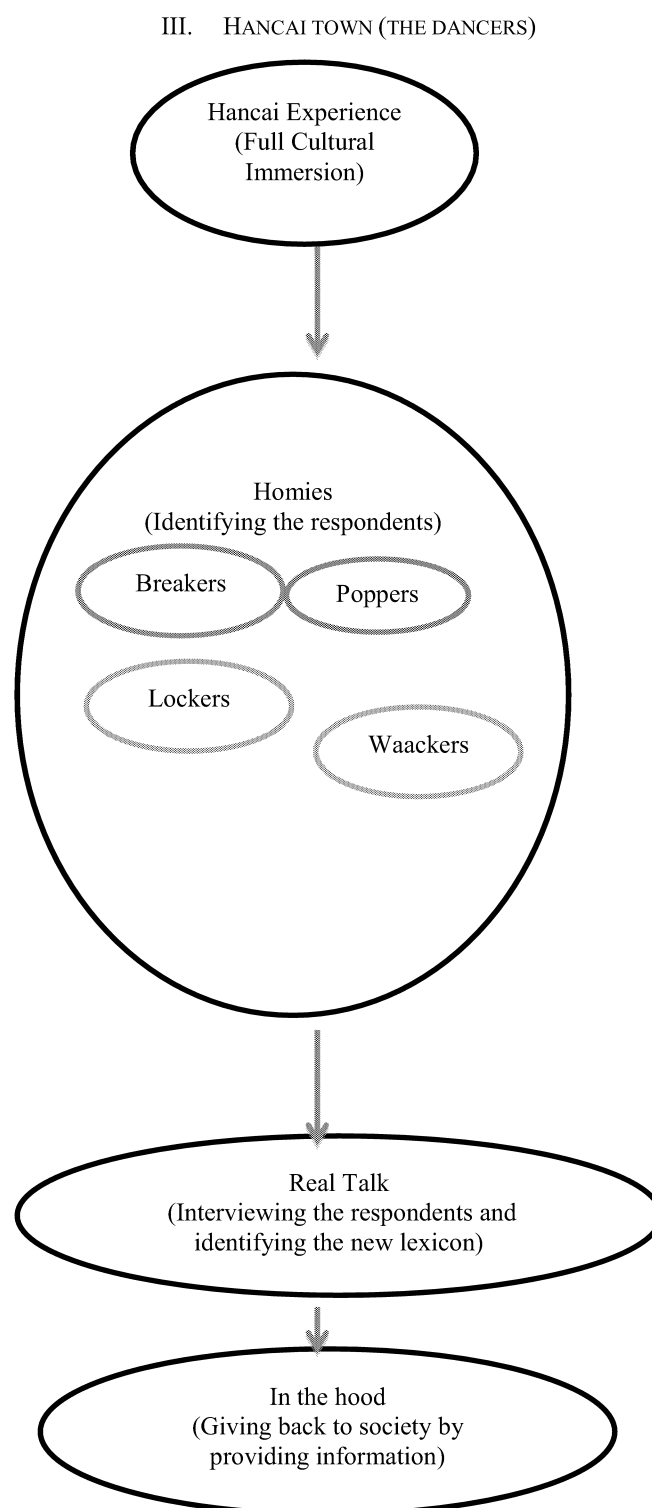
*Locking* is another funk style dance from the west coast in the late 60's. The style was created by accident, when Don Campbell a dancer and choreographer was performing and couldn't do a particular move, so he had to stop and locked in a pose while trying to remember the next step. This concept was carried on, a quick movement then locked in a pose, and then continuing on to the next movement with the same rhythm and then a lock. This series goes on and explores different levels and corners while moving together with the music.

*Waacking* is a style that started in the west coast clubs during the disco era in the 70's. The movement involves twirling the wrist near the shoulder then raising that same arm up and waacking it to the back near the shoulder blade, hence the name waacking. Apart from the signature arm movement, musicality plays an important part in this style as the movements heavily emphasize the rhythm and the additional accents in the music. Waacking, along with the dance scene has evolved with the ever-changing music genres. While the disco era started out as the standard music for waacking, waackers these days express their individuality through unique music choices.

*Hip-hop dance* is a style that is a combination of breaking, popping, locking, waacking, house, krumping; basically all styles. This style is more into the groove according to the hip-hop dancers. It is a much broader style as the dancer can incorporate all styles into a set of movements.

*Krumping* is a newly created style; it gives an aggressiveness presence in the dance floor. There is fluidity, there are also static actions, and it displays a highly dynamic movement. It is like there is a release of rage, strength and strong conviction. During the RF Jam in 2015 I was privileged to meet and speak to one of the creators, Ceasare "Tight Eyez" Willis. As there are a few people focusing on this genre, I have yet to meet a local OG. Tight Eyez expressed that there will be more people doing the style, but it is still new and thus no local terms or movements have been created.

Figure 1



Engaging in ethnographical research with the hip-hop culture in Singapore, my insights have mainly come from immersion with the culture. I am privileged to have friends who are street dancers, and some of them are local OGs. But I didn't really understand the culture until I attended a Jam, watched contest battles and even joined in social dancing. You cannot understand this culture only by reading about it; understanding comes from embracing the culture in order to understand the vibe. These OGs not only dance but also share their knowledge in dance through classes or during cyphers. Being a dancer myself I know at some point when you are teaching you will eventually create a movement and for easy reference you'll start naming the step or movement. However there is no public record of new lexicon emerging.

In some hip-hop events you will notice the word "hancai". It is a word only used here in Singapore. When and who originated it is a mystery. What does this word really mean? The first syllable is derived from the Malay word "hancur" meaning "destroy", in Bahasa Indonesia it means "broken"; the second syllable is derived from the word "berkecai" meaning shattered or broken. This word became more popular around 1998 and seems to be used in four areas:

1. It means having fun like drinking at a party and going crazy. (e.g. Everyone was so hancai last night.)
2. It can also be used as a feeling. (e.g. I am so hancai I don't want to do anything.)
3. It is also a word you can use referring to the dance style. (e.g. That move is so hancai.)
4. Lastly it is fashion clothing. (e.g. Wah, your clothes are so hancai.)

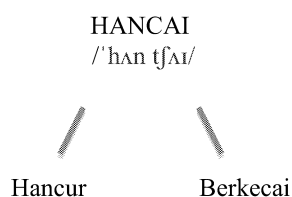


Figure 2

### Real Talk

As hip-hop in Singapore continues to grow, more and more dancers emerge and more and more people need lessons to learn the dance. I interviewed a few locals who actually teach dance. They not only teach but also go to battles. I managed to get hold of a few OGs in town.

#### A. Nass a.k.a. Klumzy

Bboy Nass started dancing since 2000 with basic hip-hop, and later developing the breaking style of threading and origami. He chose this element of dancing as he can do a lot of

variations and this is the strongest way of breaking. Nass started dancing because of his brother who is a popper and later introduced him to breaking; from then on he became a bboy and loves the culture. He is passionate about educating the masses on what hip-hop culture is all about. Since breaking is more about originality and being unique, according to him every bboy (or bgirl) should have their own move just to justify himself as an original bboy (or bgirl). If not you're just another bboy (or bgirl).<sup>[10]</sup> He wanted to be different in the breaking scene so he created his own moves, as originality is what every bboy should have.

#### Moves that he created and named

- *Finger slide* /'fɪŋgə slʌɪd/ – starts with one knee on the ground, the other leg is on the side in a ninety-degree angle with the foot on the ground. The hand on the same side of the knee that is on the ground touches and swipes the floor towards the foot that is on the ground while the other hand is resting on the other knee. The motion continuous, the hand that was resting moves to the floor while the other hand is lifted and coiled inside out to the hand that is now on the floor. While this is happening the leg with the foot on the ground slides towards the back in a straightened knee while the body twists together with the supporting leg (the one with the knee on the ground) with a 180-degree turn, like a protractor. *Duration: 2 seconds*
- *Coin-drop lotus* /kɔɪn drɒp 'ləʊtəs/ – begins in a standing position with the legs opened then the body bends down with one hand reaching the floor to support as the shoulder on the opposite side drops on the floor and both legs up in the air. Quickly aiming the back to the floor with both legs still up and the knees to the chest, it then shifts to the other side with the arm supporting the entire body going to a plank position with both hands on the floor the face facing the ground and both feet on the floor. Continues to a worm movement then with one leg straight and the other leg coiled to the straightened leg the body is facing the straightened leg with both hands still on the floor. The straightened leg quickly goes to the back and then folded and both hands give the body a push to get the momentum as the body twists and goes up to a kneeling position now facing the back. The butt then drops supported by one hand while both legs are still in the coiled position then the body twists facing front with both hands on the floor and both legs up to a baby freeze. *Duration: 4.5 seconds*
- *Leg origami* /lɛg ˌɒrɪ'ɡɑːmi/ – From a CC move (one foot and both hands, the other leg is up with a bent knee), tuck in the bended leg towards the back of the straightened leg to a sitting position then slide the once straightened leg to the back then to the front with the opposite hand supporting on the side back to a sitting position with both hands at the back for support. The leg that was slid lands in front with knee bent and foot on the floor. The other foot rests on the supporting leg (the one with the foot on the floor) while the arm on the same side of the supporting leg coils the opposite leg. Then the foot that was rested on the supporting leg slid to the ground it the supporting leg while the other leg swipes from side to front supported by one hand. *Duration: 2.5 seconds*

- *3-combo freeze* /θri: 'kɒmbəʊ fri:z/ – Is a combination of three different types of freezes done one after the other. (It is up to the bboy/bgrrl what freeze they opt to do) *Duration: 2.5 seconds*
- *Knee slide* /ni: slaid/ – From a standing position facing front the bboy reaches one hand to the floor for support as the knee on the same side of the supporting hand slides on the floor and the other stays off the ground. Then shift the body pivoting the knee to face back and the other foot lands in front to a one-bended knee position. *Duration: 1 second*

#### B. Ian Poh

Ian Poh, best known in the hip-hop scene as Chunky, started dancing in 2002 by just copying what was on MTV and K-pop. In 2005 he started to focus on Locking which is the earlier form of street dance. He chose the genre partly because of the music as it is more vibrant and the sound is very different. Locking is done with the 70's funk music and according to Chunky it uses traditional instruments instead of electronic and it has a natural spark to make you want to groove. <sup>[11]</sup> He is considered one of the pioneers in Locking therefore he gets to be called an OG. Back in 2005 when there was no YouTube he had to learn Locking through file sharing networks like Napster and P2PTV. Eventually he started creating his own moves and named them so they are easy to recognize. He also has moves that people exclusively name for him.

- *Chunky cheese* /'tʃʌŋki tʃi:z/ – One foot in front with the knee slightly bent then the hip goes side to side with the beat accent down. Continues into shifting of the weight from right to left together with the hip and the hands moves to the groove. Ends back to how the move started (hip goes side to side accent downward). A US OG named this move for him, as he always does this move during battle.
- *Duck face twirl* /dʌk feɪs twɔ:l/ – It is an upper body movement. A regular hand twirl above the shoulder then swipe the hand to the other side while making a duck face then bring it back to the shoulder to do another twirl, bring it down then the other hand goes up and points. Doing a twirl with a duck face thus the name.
- *Scissors cut* /'sɪzəz kʌt/ – It is a footwork derived from the original move Scooby walk and Charleston. One foot step to the front to do an initial Scooby walk then the balls of the feet stays on the ground and both heels are up facing out then the heels goes inward then repeat everything starting with the other leg then again on the initial leg and this time the heels goes out-in three times and ends sliding one foot towards the other. It is named after his favorite rice restaurant and also the moves look like a scissor cutting.
- *Dog-catch-tail* /dɒg kʌtʃ teɪl/ – Starts with the head looking to the side then the whole body follows to where the head is looking. Like a dog catching its tail so thus the name.

#### C. Amin Sir Waackalot

Amin started performing in theater production and at the age of five, he realized the importance of being able to move in a production performance, as you don't only sing but dance as well and that is the reason he started dancing. Waacking is his main style of dance but he also incorporates jazz and contemporary into his routines. He began to teach dance years later to kids, teen, and young adults. Amin states, "I create my own movement and steps because I believe in explorations. I don't believe in just doing things from a syllabus." <sup>[12]</sup> He teaches his newly created moves only to his advanced students. He creates small signature moves and names them but he doesn't expect it to be passed around as it is just for him and his advanced students reference.

- *Rainbow twirls* /'reɪnbəʊ twɔ:ls/ – Do the roll with both hands, start on one side then slowly bring it up then towards the other side while continuously twirling forming a rainbow thus the name. *Duration: 2 seconds*
- *Shaquam* /ʃe kwe'am/ – Starts with a hitch kick, then the supporting leg lands on the ground with the knee bent parallel to the floor then the working leg that kicked lands on the floor with the leg still straightened. Body drops down to the floor supported by the hand that is the on the same side of the working leg. The word quam has this nice sound that expresses a soft landing and not a harsh or hard hit on the floor. It is similar to death drop some people call it shabam but the difference is the soft landing like how a feather drops on the bed. *Duration: 1.2 seconds*
- *Waack-a-pop* /wak- ə-pɒp/ – An upper body movement of a single waack to a pop or a stop. Roll one arm by the elbow bring it up hand above the head then whack it to the back by the shoulder blade then bring the arm back to the front, roll it by the elbow to a pop, like a dime stop hit. This can be done repeatedly one arm after the other ending each waack with a different stop or pose. *Duration: 1 second*
- *Pirouette drills* /'piʊə't et drɪls/ – From the ballet term pirouette, which is a movement where you spin with one foot and the other foot is raised touching the supporting legs knee while you spin from a high level down to a low level landing softly on the floor. Spinning from up to down like drilling the floor. *Duration: 2.5 seconds*
- *Chinese fan* /tʃʌɪ'ni:z fan/ – Begins with both arms to the side, one arm draws a circle in front going down and up while the other draws a circle behind going up to down to a full circle back to both arms at the side. The arm that went behind now goes to the front from up to down and the other goes behind still going down to up and end with both arms on the side. It is called Chinese fan, as it resembles a movement in a classical Chinese dance technique fused with waacking groove. *Duration: 0.5 seconds*

#### D. Boogaloo Robin Teh

Robin began dancing at age 15, started learning choreography and got influenced by the movie called 'You got served', a hip-hop battle inspired movie. Back then when there was no YouTube, DVD's were the most precious thing for him

and this become a big part of the hip-hop vibe that a lot of Singaporeans lack. They attend lessons, they learn the moves, learned the history but not the vibe because they have not been part of the era where understanding of the hip-hop vibe is important. He conveyed that through dancing he teach values about life, teaching “lifestyle more that just the dance move or the dance skill itself.”<sup>[13]</sup> Popping is the genre he is focused on. In this street dance style specific moves are not created, but dancers focus more on the concept of the movement, adding their own flavor to the style. One concept he has visualized is:

- *3D* /θri:di/ – It is a concept of movement that gives more dimensions to the motion. Instead of just facing one corner the dancer will explore facing different corners and different levels while executing a series of movements. This allows the viewers to see the movements in different angles.

- *Example: Be more 3D.*

He also created a concept inspired from the classical elements:

- *Fire* /'faiə/ – This refers to exceptionally enthusiastic movements, big and dynamic motion. A high-strung manoeuvre that is often times a reaction to the music or the part of the song that is being played. It is the way the series of movements are executed.

- *Example: More fire in the movement.*

- *Earth* /ə:θ/ – The solidity of the foundation of the style. There is balance, changing the weight from one leg to another with one leg off the floor and making sure the body stays stable. There is control in the movement, the hands and legs do not go anywhere and hanging unmanaged. Even in the breathing, control is applied.

- *Example: I don't see earth in your set.*

- *Water* /'wɔ:tə/ – Like a fluid there is smoothness and flexibility. The movements flow with unbroken rhythm from one motion to another. Drifting from one angle to another with a wave in between.

- *Example: The set needs water.*

- *Wind* /wɪnd/ – The amount of time spent in training so that when the movement is done the dancer looks so light. The motion executed appears weightless like flowing with the wind.

- *Example: You look like the wind.*

- *Heart* /hɑ:t/ – Is the sensation, the vibe, and the groove as the movements are done. Inspired from one of his teachers Walid Boumhani, the feeling where you step onto the stage or the dance floor and at the moment not preoccupied on what step or move to do next or how impress the audience or judges but simply let the heart lead the movements that suits with the music played.

- *Example: He got heart.*

Dancing is like talking using movements and not words. Steps are put together to deliver a speech through motion. One concept that is very interesting is:

- *Punctuation* /ˌpʌŋk tʃu'eɪ fən/ – It is the brief pause, the sudden stop, the quick breath done in a conversation (the series of movements done in a set). Giving the audience, competitor or the judges a time to digest or

relate to the movement they saw. It is not throwing one step after another after another after another, as it doesn't give any room for the viewers to react or respond or absorb. It is similar to the punctuation done during speeches this one is just delivered through dance.

- *Example – The set has no punctuation.*

“Worth noting too are the ways in which the global language and culture of hip-hop are both inclusive and exclusive.”<sup>[3]</sup> It is noticeable that most of these words created are for their personal reference although there are a few names other people gave to them but that is very rare. Although English is the main language of the country, Singapore has three other official languages, namely Mandarin, Malay and Tamil, which are referred to as mother tongues. In this case local hip-hop expression are often times in mother tongue. Examples are:

- *Shuài* 帅 – is a mandarin word for handsome. It is used in the same context or refers to as cool.

- *Example: It's okay to lose a battle but you gotta be shuài.*

- *Ewah* /'ɛwə/ – is an expression in Malay that means ‘wow’ or ‘oh my’. This is not a legitimate hip-hop word however it is often heard in some of the clubs (social dancing) in Singapore, repeatedly chanting the word to make everyone hyped up.

- *Example – Ewah, you're so beautiful today.*

- *Gila* /gɪla/ – A Malay word that literally means crazy in English but in street dance it means spectacular or great.

- *Example: Gila ka pa! [You're awesome!]*

- *Baik ah* /baɪ ə/ – Baik is a Malay word, which means good and ‘ah’ is an interjection. Putting it together means awesome.

- *Example: Baik ah, you can do power moves like that.*

- *Siao Liao* – Siao is a word in Hokkien (a Chinese dialect), which means crazy. Liao meaning ‘already’ derived from the Mandarin, liǎo 了. When put together the word meaning changes in Singlish (Singapore English). It is used mainly as an expression synonymous to ‘oh shit’ or ‘I’m dead’.

- *Example: Siao Liao! She has so many power moves.*

Given the three mother tongues, there is no Tamil hip-hop expression that is known, as the OGs in Singapore are mostly Chinese and Malays.

#### IV. FUTURE DIRECTION

In order to create and recreate moves, steps or style foundation is essential in hip-hop street dance. Dancer must get the foundation from the forefathers and/or foremothers of hip-hop (OGs) and build on top of it. “That’s the only way we gonna get respect in the overall dance community.”<sup>[1]</sup> Being the most current dance genre, it is inevitable that new steps, movements and concepts will be created and named.

My research has described some new terms and lexicon, which has been created and used locally. The terms are shared during classes but only within the local OGs/dancers' private spheres. This is an expected limitation: the originator expects that the terms will not be passed around since they are usually just for their own reference or shared to their advanced students. This is also out of respect for their OGs from the USA, who have precedence in a movement that is globally recognized.

Ultimately these words the OGs/dancers have created may take on a life of their own and be known outside their private spheres. Hip-hop as culture is now in the era of creating curriculums and syllabus. <sup>[1]</sup> "My goal is to share the knowledge I've gained and help people become better practitioners/teachers of the craft." <sup>[14]</sup> Stated by Bboy Ynot (Rock Steady Crew) with his "breaking" biomechanics sketches. The future direction of hip-hop: street dance lexicon is very clear, "the popularity of the street dance shows no signs of waning and we can expect that there will dancing in the streets way into the twenty-first century." <sup>[15]</sup> "The bigger game is longevity" <sup>[16]</sup> In the long run there is a possibility that more local terms will be created, used and eventually universally recognized.

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