

**Multicultural London
English /
Multicultural Paris French
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project

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Les boug'zeers

ODL: boug'zeers !

CLO: les boug'zeers (.) les boug'zeers voilà . Les boug'zeers .

ODL: boug'zeers .

ENQ: c'est quoi ça ?

AIM: ça c'est genre (.) en fait c'est +/-.

ENQ: ah !

ODL: la plupart du temps .

AIM: c'est genre ceux avec les piercings et tout .

ODL: des casquettes (..) les sacoches montées .

AIM: les casquettes (.) genre les petites sacoches comme ça et tout .

ODL: qui sont (..) qui sont en groupe et tout .

AIM: énervés (..) toujours en bande et tout .

CLO: qui font du bruit dans le train (..) ouais c'est ça .

ENQ: ah ouais .

ODL: et qui rackettent [= rires] .

AIM: ouais (.) grave !

(Secova & Gardner-Chloros, 2012)

Les boug'zeers

The example in the box above is a recording made with young people in Paris. ODL, CLO and AIM are talking to the researcher (ENQ: enquêteur) about the names given to different groups of young people in their neighbourhood. The speech is informal and uses expressions commonly used by teenagers in Paris.

Exploring the text

- In pairs or a small group, read the text. What does it tell us about the **boug' zeers**? What do they wear? How do they look? How do they behave in public?
- Identify unfamiliar words. How much can you guess from the context in which they are used?

Carrying out your own research:

- Search online for unfamiliar words and expressions and their meaning. How much can you find out about the context in which they are used?
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- The importance of research and understanding slang: how else would you know, when visiting France and meeting young people your own age, whether you are being teased or insulted?

Cross-linguistic comparisons

- There are many different ways of translating a text. Translating informal language and slang is notoriously difficult as the words used can have very different connotations. For example a close equivalent to a commonly used word in one language, may be considered very rude in another.
- In the text above, **genre** is used as a discourse marker; **et tout** is an example of an extender. Can you think of English equivalents that you would use in this context?

Drama and writing

- In a group discuss some of the different ways in which young people are described in your neighbourhood. Choose a group.
- Devise and record a short drama/dialogue in French using informal language in which you are explaining to a visitor what these people look like and how they behave.
- Write an entry for an encyclopaedia of teenage slang in formal French, starting *les boug'zeers sont des.....*

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