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Social media and everyday language use among Copenhagen youth

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PhD dissertation

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In memory of Jens Normann Jørgensen

Status update: Just handed in my dissertation! Thanks to my supervisor Lian, all of my colleagues, family and friends for academic and non-academic support :)...and a special thanks to the participants in my study. Without your help this would never have been possible!

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1. Introduction

It's late January. I am meeting a group of adolescent boys from Amager at a Lebanese restaurant in Copenhagen together with my colleague Thomas. Isaam whose parents are from Lebanon has suggested the venue. Thomas and I are the first to arrive and chose a table in the back of an orient style room. At this point I have known the boys for almost 3 years. I have followed them regularly during their final years of grade school, in different everyday situations and on Facebook. This evening is one of the first times we meet since they finished grade school several months ago. Even though I haven't seen them for a long time it doesn't feel that way because I have observed their activities on Facebook on a daily basis and regularly corresponded with them online. This evening I note the boys' intense use of their iPhones. For example Thehan is able to order drinks and food while playing a new game on Bashaar's iPhone. During the evening the boys also frequently check their Facebook profiles, talk about their ongoing online correspondences, add new Facebook friends, "face-rape" each others' profiles, pry into each others' private correspondences (followed by loud discussions about how to behave), and post pictures and films while we are eating. At the same time the boys engage in joyful conversations about "old days", make fun behind the waiter's back, joke about the differences of being a Dane and a "perker" in Denmark, and discussing serious matters of world politics and religion. Despite the boys' omnipresence they appear remarkably present in the situation.

(Field report, Andreas, 19.01.12)

This description of an evening at a restaurant together with a group of Copenhagen boys illustrates the typical character of social encounters in late modern globalized societies. It shows how the boys manage to engage in interactions with us and at the same time be present in various digital communication environments. Today social interactions take place across different modes of communication and they often overlap. It is possible to be "present" in more ways than in the physical sense and in many different "places" at the same time. Due to the new technological developments such as the internet and social media, social encounters are added non-physical and highly mobile dimensions. The combination of smart phones, tablets etc. and the enhanced availability of the internet makes it possible for people to be online wherever and whenever they want to. Yet, the non-physical and mobile characteristics do not make such social encounters less

“real”. On the contrary, as illustrated in the field report, realities in online and offline contexts are often connected and the interplay between online and offline communication suggests that these different aspects of social life should not be investigated as distinct from other areas of everyday life.

This dissertation concerns the role of social media in young peoples’ everyday lives and it addresses how social media can be approached from a sociolinguistic and ethnographic perspective. My research is driven by an interest in how the complexity and mobility of linguistic and social resources across online and offline contexts make sense to the adolescents I study. Therefore, I approach my data with emphasis on a participant perspective. This means that I focus on how social and linguistic categories are made relevant through linguistic acts in the situated interaction among the adolescents. But I also relate my analysis to more macro discursive understandings of Danish society and the globalized Internet. A recurrent theme in the dissertation (and in language-focused studies of computer mediated communication (CMC) in general) is how to approach the study of social media. Methodologically and analytically I argue throughout the dissertation that it is fruitful to approach social media as connected to other aspects of peoples’ everyday lives. This approach entails a combination of online and offline methods for data collection. In this dissertation I carry out ethnography across both online and offline contexts. In this way I do not follow the beaten track of most language-focused CMC studies where such combinations of online and offline methods have had a fairly peripheral role (Androutsopoulos 2008:2).

The field of youth and CMC is only in the early stages of creating a more holistic understanding of what role social media plays in young peoples’ everyday lives (Ito et al. 2010:3). This dissertation is a contribution to piecing together such an understanding. Guided by my ethnographic fieldwork I pursue two thematic directions addressing different aspects of young peoples’ language use on social media: 1.) *Social media and sociolinguistic normativity* and 2.) *social media, semiotic resources and popular culture*. In the study of these thematic directions I ask the following research questions:

- How are norms of language use and user behavior expressed in adolescents’ everyday interactions on social media and how does this relate to wider processes of enregisterment?
- What is the role of social media in adolescents’ appropriation and production of popular cultural discourse?

The first thematic direction *social media and sociolinguistic normativity* deals with how normativity unfolds in different social media practices on Facebook. Furthermore, it considers how the adolescents orient towards different norms of language use through various metapragmatic activities (Agha 2007) such as crossing (Rampton 2005), self- and other-initiated corrections (Schegloff et al. 1977), stylizations (Rampton 2006) and metapragmatic commentary (Agha 2007). This aspect of my study links up with a broader sociolinguistic perspective concerning how social media and other digital communication technologies are becoming increasingly important for understanding current processes of language change and enregisterment (Agha 2007) (see section 2.1 and article 3 for a description of this theoretical term). Hence I approach linguistic normativity from both a theoretical, macro discursive and interactional point of view.

The sociolinguistic image of the Internet as a space for linguistically innovative interaction contrasts with a more conservative image of CMC as a threat towards the Standard language. The view of CMC as a threat to the Standard is voiced in unison by authors, politicians, so-called experts, “authorities” and linguists (see article 1). In the dissertation I aim to nuance such prevalent assumptions. I do so by both considering the adolescents’ metalinguistic comments on social media and language use as well as their interactional practices on Facebook. In this way I show that social network sites are not free spaces with respect to language use. Thus, social network sites also involve social and linguistic regulation and linguistic standard norms are not treated as irrelevant in these contexts. By studying the adolescents’ Facebook interactions I further identify orientation towards many different norms of language use associated with different types of authority (school, teachers, peers etc.). Thus, I consider interactional encounters in such social spaces as polycentrally organized (Blommaert 2010).

Normativity can be expressed in many ways and be governed by different normative centers. In this dissertation I consider how the adolescents orient towards different norm centers through different metapragmatic activities. I study how orientations towards norms of language use and linguistic competences are used in social positioning in peer groups. By carrying out interactional micro analysis of different correction practices I describe the social functions and outcomes of such normative behavior. The study of normativity on Facebook does not only inform us about the local interactional context of CMC it also provides information about offline relationships. For that

reason the interplay between the local situated interaction and the offline context needs to be addressed when we seek to understand such interactional encounters.

In addition I argue that written practices concurrently with peoples' increased use of social media and digital communication technologies have taken up a more important role in peoples' everyday discursive practices. So far it has not been customary to incorporate written practices (or online discourse) in studies of language change. Motivated by this I argue that *all* metapragmatic resources that contribute to making particular "ways of discourse" differentiable (Agha 2007:80) should be included in analysis of language change in contemporary societies. In this way both written and spoken language (seen as overlapping aspects of discourse) should be considered. In my study of the enregisterment of written and spoken discourse I focus on the young peoples' stylized performances of different ways of speaking associated with particular youth styles and ways of being Danish. This study illustrates how speakers relate to perceivable signs, how different features are associated with different ways of speaking/writing, how rights of language use emerge and take effect, and how different styles are associated with larger cultural models. All these aspects are central when describing processes of enregisterment as they unfold across online and offline interactional practices.

The second thematic direction *social media, semiotics and popular culture* involves the adolescents' engagement with different aspects of popular culture in relation their use of social media. Popular culture, in this empirical case, refers to the young peoples' engagement with rap music and a globally widespread conspiracy theory. The notion of popular culture is often used as a residual category of practices that fail to meet the standard of for example "high culture" and "sub culture" (Storey 2012:5). In this sense the notion is rather vague. Yet, I still use the term as it captures a quantitative dimension (*the popular*) which is characteristic of the cultural practices I describe in this dissertation. It is characteristic of popular culture that young people are often on top of the social and cultural agenda (Ito et al. 2010:9). Thereby, popular culture provides adolescents with a peer cultural space to negotiate different aspects of their life worlds such as social relations, identity formation and belonging. I study different aspects of social media practices involving both production and appropriation of popular cultural media products.

An example of the latter is my study of how transcultural flows (Pennycook 2007) (related to a conspiracy theory) are appropriated through the content sharing site YouTube. The appropriation

consists of the uptake and refashioning of semiotic resources, imagery and discourses about the world related to the ideological foundation of the conspiracy. I describe how the adolescents' engagement with such flows is not limited to social media practices. On the contrary the transcultural flows get adopted, embedded and appropriated in different everyday situations and the same flows gets reinterpreted in different local practices. In this way such flows are both local and global and the merger illustrates how culture can be both dynamic and hybrid. In the study of these appropriation practices I once again highlight the importance of approaching youth cultural practices in both online and offline settings. The way in which people align (and dis-align) with such flows in different situations does not only reveal how people position themselves in relation to each other, but also how they make meaning of the world at a particular point in their lives. In that respect I describe how new global cultural flows, beliefs and discourses about the world (accessed through new media practices) to a high degree also shape the young peoples' everyday life. In this way engagement with transcultural phenomena is a good example of how new layers of cultural diversity are circulated through the Internet and new media.

Rap music and engagement with this popular cultural form of expression play a central part in my study of social media and popular culture, because the key participants in my study identify themselves as rappers. In the collaborative study with Lian Malai Madsen we focus on how the young Copenhagen rappers express their popular cultural affiliation with rap music in YouTube videos. We further discuss their linguistic practice in rap songs in relation to their musical activities so our findings also inform the discussion of normativities and standardization in Denmark. Even though the adolescents frequently employed hybrid linguistic practices and linguistic vernacular styles in peer interactions around rap, we find that linguistic practices associated with streetwise behavior were reduced in these rappers' musical productions. The dominance of standard linguistic practices increased as the boys became involved in local rap-political initiatives. We study how the importance of linguistic correctness is connected to an ambition of being taken seriously and avoiding appearing uneducated, but also to achieving success as musicians in the Danish society. In this way the boys' rap practices are highly influenced by hegemonic language ideologies. The standard adaption described among the Copenhagen rappers indeed contrasts with global hip hop that is closely associated with the use of non-standard and hybrid linguistic practices (such as African American English). This illustrates how global popular cultural flows are about more than mere spread of cultural forms. Instead such forms are appropriated, changed and refashioned as the

rap practices are locally renegotiated and adapted to linguistic majority terms in the name of intelligence and pursuit of success. Sociolinguistic studies in tune with the current focus on globalization and the polycentric communicative conditions it entails (Blommaert 2010; Blommaert & Rampton 2011), increasingly attend to the internet and social media as a research site. The different aspects of the everyday lives of young Copenhageners addressed in the thematic direction *social media, semiotics and popular culture* is in line with much of this research. My studies of transcultural flows show that the appropriations of such flows in the case of conspiracy theories and rap culture are regulated by local norms and meaning making. In this way I aim to illustrate that there is a case to make for ethnography in relation to sociolinguistic studies of CMC.

Overall my study point towards social media as an important (and inseparable) part of young peoples' sociolinguistic everyday lives. This entails that social media needs to be incorporated into studies of language use in a contemporary sociolinguistics. Yet, it also entails that peoples' sociolinguistic everyday life needs to be taken into account when studying social and cultural practices on social media sites. In this way my dissertation does not only contribute to language-focused CMC studies, but also to sociolinguistic studies of spoken language practices. Thus, this dissertation is an attempt to bridge such sociolinguistic traditions and their approaches to language use and social encounters. In the remainder of this introduction and before we move on to the articles I will address the following issues. Firstly, I relate my dissertation to a contemporary tradition of sociolinguistics and language-focused CMC research. Secondly, I account for my data, participants and my fieldwork. In this section I also address my methodological approaches to the data and consider the ethics of the study of youth and social media.

2. Contemporary issues in sociolinguistics

This dissertation is situated within of the field of sociolinguistics and language-focused CMC studies. In this section I address three contemporary issues of sociolinguistics relevant to my research – *globalization, mobility* and *complexity*. I provide a sketch of the development of language-focused CMC studies and I discuss how to understand notions of language in contemporary societies and in relation to new digital communication technologies such as social media. Lastly, I address linguistic ethnography as a perspective on language and social interaction.

2.1 Globalization, mobility and complexity

Sociolinguistics is not the study of an abstract language. Sociolinguistics is “the study of language as a complex of resources, of their value, distribution, rights of ownership and effects (Blommaert 2010:38). Following this line of thought sociolinguistics is the study of how linguistic (and other semiotic) resources are used to construct, affect and organize peoples’ social worlds. During the last decades scholars within sociolinguistics have directed their attention to describing the relation between language and current societal aspects of *globalization*, *mobility* and *complexity* (see for example Rampton 2006; Coupland 2007; Pennycook 2007, 2010; Blackledge & Creese 2010; Blommaert 2010, 2013; Jørgensen 2010; Jaspers 2010, 2011; Heller 2011; Leppänen & Häkkinen 2012; Gardner & Martin-Jones 2012; Madsen et al. 2013; Arnaut & Spotti 2014). This reflects a growing awareness of the ways in which globalization has changed the nature of social, cultural and linguistic encounters in societies all over the world (Blommaert & Rampton 2011:1).

Globalization is characterized by facilitating a compression of time and space (Giddens 2006:51) in the sense that the pace of communication has quickened due to new technological developments such as the Internet and social media. The same developments have changed social life as it is possible to build and maintain transcultural relationships over great distances (Gardner & Martin-Jones 2012:7). In this way new patterns of global activity emerge. This entails a change in the global organization and the spreading of communities and cultures. The spread of communities and cultures is connected to an intensified worldwide flow of capital, people, goods and discourses (Blommaert 2010:13). In Europe, such movements have contributed to a development of the societies into more culturally and linguistically diverse over the past decades (Blommaert & Rampton 2011). This intensified socio-cultural diversity is coined “super-diversity” by Vertovec (2006). Lately this perspective on society has been taken up by various sociolinguists such as Blommaert & Rampton (2011), Blommaert (2013) and latest by Arnaut & Spotti (2014:2) who argue that “super-diversity can be taken as an emerging perspective on change and unpredictability in ever more intensively encroaching social and cultural worlds”. Forces of more complex forms of migration and more complex forms of communication has according to Blommaert (2013:5) generated a situation in which little can be presupposed about social categories, people etc. Such unpredictability is connected to the mobility of linguistic and social resources characteristic of late modern societies. On the basis of the societal changes Heller (2011:6) suggests that when engaging in the study of late modern globalized societies we need to turn our gaze away from stability to

mobility (see also Heller 2007; Blommaert 2010; Martin-Jones & Gardner 2012). This could include how social actors engage in shifting social practices and how they construct relations, similarity and difference in uneven and ever-shifting everyday contexts. Aspects of mobility also affect the nature of sociolinguistic systems which is defined as “any set of systematic – regular, recurrent, nonrandom – interaction between sociolinguistic objects at any level of social structure” (Blommaert 2013:10). Due to the constant interaction within and between sociolinguistic systems, elements of language such as linguistic and semiotic resources move across centers and scale levels (Blommaert 2010, 2013). Such elements are not stable entities, but instead they change when they are brought about in situated practice. For example language styles associated with “high status” or “street credibility” in one context can lose their value when moved to another sociolinguistic system or what Blommaert (2013:11) describes as a “field of force”. This entails that sociolinguistic systems are highly complex. The complexity of language means that languages are never completely describable as they are always dynamic, ever changing and never bounded to one “place”, group of people, practice etc. (Blommaert 2013:10).

It is a widespread idea in contemporary sociolinguistics that a language or a variety of a language should not be perceived as a whole bounded system “belonging” to a speech community (e.g. Heller 2007; Jørgensen 2010; Blommaert 2013). Instead, according to Blommaert (2013:10) a sociolinguistic system is characterized by mobility as it is in constant interaction with other systems as a result of migration and new communication technologies. For example in linguistically and culturally diverse environments (online and offline) speakers “may use whatever linguistic features at their disposal” (Jørgensen et al. 2011:32) and blend them in complex linguistic and semiotic forms which cannot be described by old and established terms such as “code-switching” and “multilingualism” (Blommaert 2013:8). Therefore more recent approaches to linguistic diversity such as poly-languaging (Jørgensen et al. 2011), metrolingualism (Pennycook 2010), translanguaging (Garcia 2009), etc. has moved away from the idea of languages as whole bounded units and towards a terminology of sociolinguistic resources and repertoires (Arnaut & Spotti 2014:5). Jørgensen (2010:13) further suggests that the idea of separate linguistic codes needs to be seen as socio-cultural and ideological constructions rather than viewed as an unquestioned linguistic fact. Furthermore, he argues that human communication is best described as the practice of *languaging* rather than the use of ‘languages’. Agha’s (2007) theory of *enregisterment* appeals to such an approach to language because it addresses how linguistic signs become associated with

wider cultural formations (over time) and how these formations interact with everyday linguistic practices. For example we label language use and relate such labels to certain ways of speaking, to social practices, identity categories of the speakers, etc. The theory of enregisterment focuses on “processes and practices whereby performable signs become recognized (and regrouped) as belonging to distinct, differentially valorized semiotic registers by a population” (Agha 2007:81). In this way enregisterment concerns how different ways of speaking become associated with different individuals, social activities and norms of language use. According to Agha (2007:126) linguistic normativity exists on different levels ranging from observable distributional tendencies to normative standards (see detailed accounts in article 1 and 2).

How norms are established and which norms are oriented to in current superdiverse communicative encounters are best approached by close ethnographic inspection of what happens in situated local communication (Blommaert & Rampton 2011; Blommaert 2013:8) and how it is tied to social organization (Heller 2011:10). As Heller (2011:10) puts it “the power of an ethnographic sociolinguistics is precisely its ability to follow social processes across time and space, and to see how agency and structure engage each other” (see section 3.2 for further introduction to an ethnographic approach to the study of language and social media). During the last decades sociolinguistic research has gradually recognized the importance of the Internet and social media as a new field of research because it has become an important site for socialization and identity work. In the following I address the development of the sociolinguistics of social media discourse and how linguistic and social practices have been researched throughout the relative short history of CMC.

2.2 A sociolinguistics of social media discourse

In the past decades CMC research has studied online language from a variety of perspectives. Androutsopoulos (2008, 2013) identifies different approaches to CMC moving from research interest in specific linguistic features to a wider interest in the social and discourse oriented aspects of CMC. This development in CMC research evolves gradually in constant interaction with the technological developments of the Internet (Androutsopoulos 2013:236). Androutsopoulos divides this evolutionary development into three eras: the pre-Web era, the early Web era and the participatory Web era. Until the early 1990s (in the pre-Web era) CMC was largely limited to interpersonal exchanges on e-mail, mailing lists, newsgroups, Internet Relay Chat etc. In the early

Web era from the mid 1990s to mid 2000s researchers focused on personal and corporate homepages, web discussion forums and blogs which emerged concurrently with the technological developments of the Internet. These early approaches to CMC (during the pre-Web and early Web eras) focused on linguistic features and strategies which were regarded as distinct to the media. Central to this strand of research was that communication technologies and their affordances were prioritized in favor of other contextual and social factors when studying online language use. Furthermore, CMC data were often randomly collected and analyzed as detached from their discursive and social contexts. From the mid 2000s and onwards (during the era of the participatory Web) research began to focus on blogs, social network sites, media sharing sites and wikis. The approaches to CMC during this (still emerging era) are informed by pragmatics, sociolinguistics and discourse studies (Androutsopoulos 2008:1). These more critical approaches do not only focus on analysis of the micro level features of online language, but instead emphasize situated language, linguistic diversity, how ways of communication are shaped by social ideologies, and how such ideologies are constructed in new media communication (Barton & Lee 2013:6). Sociolinguistic research of CMC includes a range of topics that has interested sociolinguists for decades. According to Androutsopoulos (2013:236) CMC studies now also focus on topics such as language variation and style, processes of innovation and change, language and social identities, multilingualism and code-switching as well as globalization. An important development from the early to the contemporary studies of CMC is the need to shift from a *medium-related* to a more ethnographically based *user-related* approach (Androutsopoulos 2006:421). A consequence of this shift of focus is that the search for features thought of as belonging to specific genres of CMC has been replaced by what Androutsopoulos (2006:421) calls contextual and particularistic analysis. Such analysis highlights the relation between the social contexts and online language use and how the social context is represented in the discourses in various types of CMC.

In recent approaches to CMC the benefits of direct contact with the internet users are highlighted. For example Androutsopoulos (2008) points to the importance of this contact through means of surveys, interviews and participant observation. However, he emphasizes that so far such combinations of online and offline methods have played a fairly peripheral role in language-focused CMC (Androutsopoulos 2008:2). Jones (2004:20) argues that language-focused studies of CMC often conveniently avoid addressing the surrounding environments or the context (online as well as offline) in which such communication takes place. This in spite of the importance ascribed to the

concept of context in sociolinguistics in recent years (Blommaert 2005, Rampton 2006). In similar ways Androutsopoulos (2013:240) notes that a limitation to screen-based data seems to be the norm in language-focused CMC studies. However, he accentuates that this is not self-evident or uncontested within the discipline. As Jones (2004:21) notes such research gives the impression that CMC takes place in a virtual vacuum with little connection to the surrounding world. In this way Jones (2004) advocates that the surrounding context must be taken into account because the context in which such communication takes place “can have important effects on how such interaction is conducted, and the conduct of computer mediated interaction can have important effects on how physical activities in the material world play out.” (Jones 2004:21). From this viewpoint CMC according to Androutsopoulos (2013:240) is shaped by a duality of the situational online and offline context.

Methods such as *online ethnography* (Androutsopoulos 2008) and *computer mediated discourse analysis* (Herring 2004) are useful methodological frameworks for studies of online language use, online discourse and specific media related phenomena. Yet, studies of peoples’ everyday language use of which CMC has become a central part calls for more holistic approaches allowing us to discover the connections between various linguistic and social aspects of peoples’ lives. My dissertation meets this call for a holistic approach by not examining social media as detached from other areas of life, and it argues that the contexts for communication (just as in other everyday situations) should be investigated rather than assumed. To do this I draw on a combination of ethnography and sequential microanalysis (Rampton et al. 2004). Furthermore, my data collection in Androutsopoulos’ (2013:241) terms can be characterized as *blended data* as I carry out ethnography across online and offline situations. Finally, the data collection is informed by sociolinguistic methodology involving various sound recordings (interviews, self-recordings etc.) and principles from ethnographic methodology such as (online and offline) participant observation. In the articles of this dissertation I deal with the challenges of involving the context of social media by considering a range of data types in addition to CMC data (such as recorded conversations and face-to-face participant observation). Thereby I can get at the interplay of different social media practices and other everyday offline activities. This provides my study with a fruitful basis for describing how social media is an integrated part of young peoples’ everyday life.

Given the methodological approach to social media and CMC this dissertation contributes to a still under-theorized, but significant emergent field of research approaching social media in everyday life (see for example Miller & Slater 2000; Slater 2002; Leander & McKim 2003; Jones 2004, 2011; Orgad 2005; Sanders 2005; Aarsand 2008; Stern 2008; Leppänen et al. 2009; Lee 2011; Peuronen 2011; Androutsopoulos 2008; Westinen 2013; Meredith & Stokoe (2013); Mortensen, forthcoming). The move from the early descriptive approaches to language-focused CMC to discourse oriented and sociolinguistic approaches to CMC has implications for the theory and methodology of a sociolinguistics of social media discourse (Androutsopoulos 2006:421). In the subsequent section I discuss the notions of language and context in relation to CMC.

2.3 Language and digital discourse

Writing is becoming increasingly important in contemporary life and written language is a crucial part of vernacular everyday activities (Barton & Lee 2013:16). Because of the domestication of digital communication technologies (Baron 2008) written language on for example social media is often an unmarked regular part of peoples' everyday encounters (Barton & Lee 2013:16). Thus, there is reason to believe that use of new communication technologies has resulted in an increase in written texts (Kress 2005). Barton & Lee (2013:16) argue that the basic notion of *text* can no longer be perceived as relatively fixed and stable because of the changing affordances of for example social media. Instead contemporary online written practices are becoming more fluid and increasingly multimodal and interactive.

Since the mid-to-late 1990s researchers within CMC have struggled to describe CMC as either written or spoken language or as a genre of its own (Herring 2011). In this dissertation I argue along the same lines as Tannen (2013) that CMC can be neither strictly characterized as spoken nor as written language. Instead of making a priori assumptions about the nature of online language use Tannen (2013:99) regard text and talk "not as two separate entities – text as written language and talk as spoken – but rather as 'overlapping aspects of a single entity': discourse". Androutsopoulos (2006:423) also takes discourse as a starting point. The advantage of this approach is that we avoid predetermining spoken and written language as fundamentally different phenomena. Instead we can think of text and talk as oral and literate strategies which interactants can draw upon when speaking and writing. In article 3 I discuss more thoroughly why spoken and written discourse should not be separated in accounts of enregisterment in contemporary societies.

Androutsopoulos' and Tannen's approach to online discourse is closely connected to the discussion of the relationship between *online* and *offline*. Seen historically, the internet – mythologized as “cyber space” – has been constructed as a “world apart” from offline settings (Leander & Mckim 2003:217). In this dissertation I suggest that we use the notions *online* and *offline* with caution when describing social interaction as they set up a false dichotomy because of their inherent contrast between something “real” and something “virtual”. Yet, as Barton & Lee (2013:7) argue the term *online* is often used as a convenient and a shorthand term for “all forms of communication carried out on networked devices”. In this dissertation when writing *online* and *offline* I refer to specific situational contexts for social interaction. Along the same lines as Barton & Lee (2013:7) I do not imply that peoples' lives are carried out online or offline, that online communication is replacing offline communication or that social encounters in offline contexts are more real than in online contexts. Rather I argue that there is interplay between social practices in online and offline contexts. In this way as Slater (2002:543) argues “virtuality should not be investigated as a property of new media (indeed, any media) but rather as a possible social accomplishment of people using these media”. Thereby he emphasizes that the notions of online and offline context should be seen from a practice perspective. This entails that the context of the media interaction should not be predetermined, but rather investigated. Such an approach to *context* is characteristic of a linguistic ethnographic approach to CMC. In the following section I will address this perspective on language and social interaction and account for how I approach the notion of context in the dissertation.

2.4 Linguistic ethnography

Methodologically I approach the study of language and social media from the perspective of *linguistic ethnography* (e.g. Rampton et al. 2004; Blackledge & Creese 2010). Linguistic ethnography is a (still ongoing) methodological and theoretical development that has strong ties to Hymes' ethnography of communication (Rampton et al. 2004:1). Also the tradition of interactional sociolinguistics (Gumperz 1999) has shaped linguistic ethnography. Interactional sociolinguistics focuses on how social and interactive forces merge (Gumperz 1999:454) and it considers how interactants use language to read-out and create social meaning in interactions (Blackledge & Creese 2010:62). Thus, linguistic ethnography is characterized by combining micro-analysis with considerations of locally prevalent ideologies and with larger scale social analysis. Linguistic ethnography views language and the social world as mutually shaping and highlights how analysis of situated local language use provides valuable insight into the mechanics of social and cultural

production in everyday life (Rampton et al. 2004:2). In this way linguistic ethnography is an approach in which analysis of small phenomena is set against analysis of big phenomena (Blommaert 2005:16). One of the main methodological points of linguistic ethnography is that ethnography can benefit from the analytical frameworks of linguistics (and sociolinguistics) and that linguistics can benefit from the reflexive sensitive nature of ethnography (Blackledge & Creese 2010:63). Rampton et al. (2004:4) describes the interplay between ethnography and linguistics as having the capacity of “tying ethnography down” by directing ethnography towards the analysis of clearly delimitable processes of local language use. On the other hand this combination also “opens linguistics up” by adapting the reflexivity of ethnography, making allowance for the concept of context and using the experiences in the field to establish interpretative validity (Maybin & Tusting 2011:517). The concept of context is not only a central aspect of linguistic ethnography, but a key aspect in the study of language in general (Blommaert 2005). Most scholars agree that context concerns the way linguistic and other semiotic forms relates to larger activities in the social world (Blommaert 2005:39) or as Blommaert (2005:251) defines it: “the totality of conditions in which discourse is being produced, circulated, and interpreted”. Furthermore, he argues that it is through the ways in which language fits into the context meaning is created (Blommaert 2005:20). Context is also a concern of language-focused CMC studies (Jones 2004:21). Jones argues that it can be difficult from an analyst’s perspective to pinpoint what aspect of the situation that ought to count as context. This is not only a problem for the study of CMC but a concern for studies of language use in general. Context includes various levels of social communication from the infinitely small to the infinitely big (Blommaert 2005:40) – that is, from how a sentence or utterance is related to previous sentences and utterances to how people relates to larger scale socio-cultural models.

In this dissertation I draw on Madsen’s (forthc.: Chapter 1) approach to the situatedness of language to address different levels of context. Madsen who is inspired in by Rampton’s (2006) approach to linguistic ethnography takes into account the levels of sequential context, situational context, relational context and socio-cultural context. *Sequential context* concerns how turns-at-talk relate to one another in a stretch of discourse. In my case I also operate with how turns-at-writing are related to one another. Yet, as Androutsopoulos (2013:246) reminds us, the relationship between linguistic units such as messages and posts (indispensable units in the analysis of CMC) and traditional conversation analytical categories such as sentences, utterances or turns is not straightforward as it depends on the composition of the conversational turns. On Facebook for example a turn can be

divided into several online posts. The composition of such sequences of discourse of course needs to be taken into consideration when conducting sequential analysis of Facebook interactions. The analytical focus at the level of the sequential context is to consider what the individual turn do, how it is reacted to and how it is composed in relations to style (or written representation of style), grammar, word choice etc. (Madsen, forthc.: Chapter 1). The *situational context* concerns the types of activities that are relevant to the interaction. That is, what are the participants engaged in? What type of interaction is it? And where does it take place? Often several activities can be equally relevant. Participants might be engaging in the activity of discussing something that happened the same day at school on Facebook while correcting and sanctioning each others' language use. In such incidents both the narrative and the correction practices can be equally relevant to get an understanding of what is going on. The *relational context* involves the social relationships between the participants such as who hangs out with whom in school and in the spare time and who writes frequently together on Facebook. Finally the *socio-cultural context* refers to moral or ideological codes, values and identities that are possibly made relevant in the situated interaction. For instance moral issues and ethics of a global conspiracy phenomenon, the values of a rap commune and the status of standard orthography might influence how young people interact with each other. Madsen (forthc.) underlines that these levels of context should not be understood as separated, but rather as perspectives which inform and affect each others. From describing my approach to the notion of context I turn to the very material context – the field – in which I have studied the adolescents' everyday language practices across online and offline situations.

3. Data, participants and fieldwork

In this section I account for my data and portray the field and my participants. I also address my field methods and describe how I carried out my fieldwork over a period of four years, but first I will provide an overview of the data collection. From 2009 to 2013 I have collected data and carried out fieldwork as part of a collaborative research project (Madsen et al. 2013). The project overall focuses on language use and linguistic and social norms in the everyday life of contemporary children and adolescents under the current superdiverse social conditions of Copenhagen. The point of departure of my fieldwork was a Copenhagen *folkeskole* (equivalent to *secondary school*) at Amager. Later the fieldwork was expanded to other everyday settings including the social network site Facebook. From February 2009 to May 2011 I carried out fieldwork at the school and in the participants' neighborhoods. The 4th of February 2010 I created a Facebook profile on behalf of the

research team and began to carry out online ethnography concurrently with my face-to-face observations of the adolescents. In May 2011 the adolescents graduated from school. However, I kept following the adolescents on Facebook and had regular meetings with some of them until late 2013. In figure 1 I provide a chronological overview of my fieldwork and the data collection.

Data:	February 2009 - December 2009	January 2010 - May 2011	June 2011 - December 2013
Online ethnography on Facebook	[Continuous bar across all periods]		
Ethnographic fieldwork (face-to-face)	[Continuous bar across all periods]		
Self-recordings	[Continuous bar across all periods]		
Interviews	[Bar in Feb-Dec 2009]	[Bar in Jan-May 2011]	
Group interviews	[Bar in Feb-Dec 2009]		
Interviews with teachers			[Bar in Jun-Dec 2011]
Written essays			[Bar in Jun-Dec 2011]
Casual meetings with key participants			[Continuous bar across Jun-Dec 2011]

Figure 1: Overview of the data collection. The Researchers involved in the fieldwork in 2009 were Jens Normann Jørgensen, Astrid Ag, Janus Spindler Møller, Lian Malai Madsen and Andreas Stæhr. Researchers arriving in the field in 2010 were Thomas Nørreby, Lamies Nassri, Line Knoop-Henriksen and Emine Kader Akkaya. Fieldworkers carrying out fieldwork in 2011-2013 were Thomas Nørreby and Andreas Stæhr.

My fieldwork will be addressed in detail in section 3.3. The number of participants in our study varied from year to year, but we have continuously carried out data collection both online and offline among 40 adolescents with various cultural and linguistic backgrounds (in section 3.1.1 I describe pupil population of the two classes). Some of my articles concern general matters related to language use, youth and social media (article 1-3). Here I draw on data from all of the participants. The articles 4 and 5 report on case studies of specific groups of adolescents who will be introduced in the articles. During my fieldwork I have collected various types of data together with the research team. The list in figure 1 represents the data which I draw on in my analysis. The data collected as a part of my online ethnography consist of Facebook interactions, YouTube videos and field notes. My ethnographic face-to-face fieldwork consists mainly of field notes and various sound recordings. We have collected self-recordings which are recordings carried out with radio microphones or mp3 recorders worn by the participants in different everyday situations. The type of data I refer to as casual meetings with adolescents are meetings typically recorded with a table microphone or in the same way as self-recordings. The interviews listed in figure 1 refer to semi structured interviews carried out with all of the participants and their teachers about various subjects informed mainly by our ethnographic observations (see appendix 1 for symbols used in the transcriptions of the sound recordings). The written essays are essays about the adolescents’

sociolinguistic everyday written by the participants. In the remainder of this section I give a description of the different field sites and I present my methodological considerations related to carrying out fieldwork in a multi-sited field.

3.1 A multi-sited field – the school, Facebook and other places

I have carried out fieldwork in different school, leisure and social media settings to capture the everyday life of the young Copenhageners. The local area in which our participants reside is a residential area situated in Amager West in Copenhagen. Amager West is the larger of two districts on Amager and constitutes 10% of the total population of the municipality of Copenhagen. Furthermore the demographic make-up of the area can be characterized as culturally and linguistically diverse. This is, also reflected in the student population.

3.1.1 The school, youth clubs and other settings

The area has 11 schools and many youth clubs and other leisure time offers for young people. *The school* that the participants of our study attend is characterized as a linguistically and cultural diverse urban school situated in a former working class area. The composition of the student population has changed dramatically over the last few years. In 2007 62 % of the students had an ethnic and linguistic minority background. In 2011 it had decreased to 30 % which corresponds to the average for schools in the area. This change has been the result of a strategic work (one among many) by the school principal who explicitly aims for an ethnic composition of the school that reflects the demography of the neighborhood (Madsen et al. 2013). However, there are still differences in the composition of the different classrooms. In the two grade school classes we followed from 2009-2011 85% and 75% of the students had a minority background. In the Danish statistics and official documents ethnic and linguistic minority students are labeled *bilinguals*. This is a label often employed in the public discourse and in the media etc. It is often used regardless of particular individuals' acquaintance with the heritage language that they are associated with (Karrebæk 2006; Madsen et al. 2013). The participants in the project have several different religious affiliations and different histories of migration. Furthermore, among the 40 participants we counted 18 self-reported mother tongues (Møller, forthc.).

Less than five minutes walk from the school you find *the youth club*. Here some of the adolescents spent time after school. The youth club welcomes young people from the age group 10 to 15 years.

It offers various leisure time activities including help with home work. There is no statistical data about the composition of the young people attending the club. However, my own observations document that the majority of the young people attending the club has a minority background and speaks Arabic, Berber and Urdu besides Danish. Most of the club workers have minority background as well and know many of the adolescents from their own neighborhoods. The youth club became an important site for my observations of the adolescents outside school. Later some of the adolescents in focus of my study attended another youth club in a suburban area of Copenhagen. I refer to this club as the *suburban youth club*. Their motivation for attending this club was a recording studio run by their friend and rap-mentor Ali Sufi (see article 5). Here they recorded rap music and hung out.

3.1.2 Social network sites and the infrastructural features of Facebook?

Another field site in this study is the social network site *Facebook*. Facebook is designed by the Harvard sophomore Mark Zuckerberg in 2004. Facebook was initially an American phenomenon and only available to specific colleges and universities. Since then Facebook have expanded worldwide and it is one of the fastest growing major sites on the internet only surpassed by MySpace (Baron 2008). Most of the participants in our study subscribed to Facebook during 2008 and 2009 and in that they followed a trend among Danish youth. In 2009 86% of the Danish 16-19 year olds had joined at least one social network site. 95% percent of this group had a Facebook profile (Statistics Denmark 2009). Like in the school, the youth club and many of the other everyday situations our participants engaged in during the day their social and linguistic encounters on Facebook are characterized by a high degree of cultural and linguistic diversity. One reason for this is that their Facebook network to a high degree reflects who they associate with in their lives outside Facebook. In fact most of the participants in my study report that they seldom accept friend requests from people whom they do not know (or know of) in advance.

To describe the *network* part of social network sites (the interconnections between users) Anderson (2012:162) uses the term *social graph* which is a term used by sociologist to map the social connections people have. The notion *graph* is a mathematical term for a *diagram* that shows nodes and the links between them. In the case of Facebook each person (represented as a node) creates a profile containing their personal data. Afterwards they create personal links to other profiles of people they may know. During the time I studied the adolescents Facebook use the *Facebook graph*

increasingly begun to include more than just the connections between people. Gradually connections between people and other information artifacts such as events, photographs, web sites, videos etc. became a possibility. In this way Facebook tracks every interaction a user has with other users or information artifacts (Anderson 2012:163). Many scholars have come up with definitions of social network sites. I choose to view social network sites in the same way as Ellison & boyd (2013) as they highlight that social network sites first and foremost are communication platforms. They define social network sites as:

“a networked communication platform in which participants 1) have uniquely identifiable profiles that consist of user-supplied content, content provided by other users, and/or system-provided data; 2) can publicly articulate connections that can be viewed and traversed by others; and 3) can consume, produce, and/or interact with streams of user-generated content provided by their connections on the site” (Ellison & boyd 2013:158)

Social network sites allow for multiple modes of communication. That is, users can either communicate one-to-many or one-to-one, in synchronous and asynchronous modes and through textual and media-based communication (Ellison & boyd 2013:159). Another affordance of Facebook is the possibilities for multimodal practices. Such communication involves a mix of text and other semiotic signs (e.g. emoticons), pictures, videos, GIFs etc. Essential for SNS are that the users are able to interact with their network of friends (Ellison & boyd 2013:159). There are many ways of forming such networks by *friending* other users who have to accept the *friend request*. The number of friends our participants had on Facebook varied from around 100 to as many as 1.800 friends. These numbers varied during the time I followed the participants as they kept adding and deleting friends. Yet, the adolescents had in common that they were all Facebook friends with each other.

The relevant infrastructural features of Facebook for my study are the profile page, the wall/timeline and the newsfeed. Users of Facebook create a *profile page* which offers a description of the user containing photos, contact information and list of personal information. The list of personal information includes information about work and education, home town and present residence, personal relationships and family. There is also a list of *basic information*. This includes

date of birth, sexual orientation, marital status, language(s), religion and political orientation. Some users chose to make comprehensive descriptions of themselves others keep their profiles descriptions minimal. The profile page also consists of a list of your Facebook friends, the places you've visited, what events you plan to attend and what Facebook groups you are a member of. Choices of favorite sports, movies, music, books etc can also be filled in. The Facebook *timeline* (known as *the wall* before 2012) is a space where all the content of Facebook users is shown. On the timeline all photos, videos, status updates and posts by any given user are categorized according to when they were uploaded or created. Status updates are (multimodal) messages uploaded by the users. Status updates were originally designed as self-reports. But the *comment* and *like functions* have made status updates more interactional and dialogical. The *newsfeed* is a central element of Facebook as it keeps the user updated on conversations between other users, profile changes, upcoming events, birthdays, suggestions to Facebook sites one may like etc. *Facebook groups* are another central feature of Facebook in my study. Facebook groups are created by users and can be open, closed or secret. In these spaces people can share content with each other and you need to be a member of the group to see this content.

During the period of time I carried out online ethnography on Facebook its design has evolved several times. One of the most dramatic changes happened on *the wall* when the new *timeline* design was introduced. The implications it had on my ethnographic fieldwork was that this new design made it easier to get a chronological overview of when posts and other content are created or uploaded. For the users it meant that it became possible to delete or add posts and comments. In this way, it allowed the adolescents to go beyond searching for old content as it was now possible to reconstruct one's self-narrative by posting old events. This made it possible to edit the way you appear in different situations. Users can choose to set timeline privacy settings and change who can see their entire profile. None of our participants altered the privacy settings. Ellison & boyd (2013:154) describe the general changes of new features and possibilities of the profiles on social network sites as a shift from a self-representational narrative created by the users to a portrait of the individual as "an expression of action, a node in a series of groups and a repository of self- and other- provided data". Carrying out fieldwork in different everyday situations across online and offline settings requires the use of different research methods. In the subsequent section I consider my methodological approach to the study of everyday language in contemporary globalized societies.

3.2 Field methods – approaching everyday language use across on- and offline settings

Methodologically I approach the study of language across online and offline situations from the perspective of *ethnography* (Duranti 1997; Blackledge & Creese 2010) and I draw on methodological insights from Androutsopoulos' (2008) *discourse centered online ethnography* (I refer to this as *online ethnography*). In this section I therefore consider how to study language use in face-to-face and social media interaction. Because of the fact that I have been studying the field together with other researchers I begin this section with a discussion of the advantages and challenges of team ethnography (Blackledge & Creese 2010).

3.2.1 A collaborative ethnography

Collaborative research in teams has increased within the qualitative social sciences, but the practice of team ethnography (Erickson & Stull 1998) has not been a major concern of literatures on ethnographic methodology (Creese et al. 2008). Yet, despite having played an important role in the methodological development of ethnography it is not a well described method in the literature (Erickson & Stull 1998:5). Team ethnography is in many ways in opposition to the romantic notion of the ethnographer as: “the romantic ‘lone ranger’ [...] or solitary ‘lone wolf’” (Creese et al. 2008:199). By contrast a collaborative ethnography is about gaining a common understanding and creating a collective description of the field. This is best done by exploiting the diversity of the team to achieve a more comprehensive or many-sided description of the field. This is possible because our background and interests (personal and professional) affects *how* and *what* we notice and find important in the field. Yet, this does not mean that team ethnography contributes to a more *complete* description of the field because our observations and interpretations are always incomplete and each ethnographer has his/her limitations. During the 3 year period we carried out team ethnography at the school we worked in different constellations of teams. The first 12 month we worked as a team of 6 researchers, but only 4 of us carried out regular observations in the classes. With a team consisting of two women and two men (at that time aged 26-58 years old) we represented a mixed team according to age and gender. After the first year 4 more researchers in their twenties joined the fieldwork in the two grade school classes. The differences regarding gender, age, style, personal interests etc. in the research team meant that we had different preconditions for engaging and creating relations to the adolescents we studied.

The challenges of team ethnography have been discussed (e.g. Mitteness & Barker 2004), but often the benefits of working in teams are emphasized. They include increased validity of the observational data (Adler & Adler 1994), increased insights and perspectives (Eisenhart 2001) and strengthening of the interpretive process (Wasser & Bresler 1996). The possible disadvantages of team ethnography is more rarely discussed such as for instance the risk of team ethnography leading to greater fragmentation and uncertainty (Gerstl-Pepin & Gunzenhauser 2002). Common to all of these discussions are that they revolve around the knowledge construction as well as the interpretation and representation of data. One of the latest contributions to the discussion of team ethnography is that of Creese et al. (2008) and Blackledge & Creese (2010). They particularly focus on the role of field notes in team ethnography and how the sharing of notes and debriefing sessions help to constitute a team and develop interpretational frameworks for ethnographic data. Since we rarely observed the young people more than one fieldworker at the time (during the first year of observations) debriefing sessions and sharing of field notes also became a crucial part of our work in the field to keep each other informed about our observations. These sessions were usually carried out weekly and supplemented by informal chats about observations, participant etc. Working as part of a research team in the same field studying the same young people contributed to my study in various ways. Apart from the advantages regarding the data collection it has been important for my study to be able to relate my research to the other researchers' studies of the same population of adolescent. Especially my work on enregisterment of youth styles across online and offline spaces has benefitted from this (see section 3.3 for further discussion of how my study benefitted from team ethnography). The methodological approaches to data within linguistic ethnography also affected my approach to the study of online language use.

3.2.2 Approaching online language use through ethnography

Online and digital research is an emerging area of focus within linguistic ethnography (Maybin & Tusting 2011). In this dissertation I draw on the insights from Androutsopoulos (2008) online ethnography which is inspired by Hine's (2000) internet ethnography and methodological principles of linguistic ethnography. Characteristic of Androutsopoulos' (2008:2) approach is that it combines systematic observations of online practices across various internet sites with interviews conducted with the users about their online practices. In this way online ethnography uses ethnographic insights in the selection, analysis and interpretation of data, for the purpose of describing the relations between texts (and other multimodal productions) as well as the production and reception

of online language use (Androutsopoulos 2008:2). Androutsopoulos' (2008) point of departure is that research based exclusively on online data is not ideal (see also Hine 2000; Jones 2004; Orgad 2005; Sanders 2005; Aarsand 2008; Androutsopoulos 2013). He suggests that the study of issues such as how people use particular linguistic resources online, how they ascribe meanings to linguistic features and how people evaluate linguistic diversity requires going beyond what is observable on the screen (Androutsopoulos 2008). Inspired by Hine (2000), he tries to bridge the gap between studies of the internet as culture (studies of how new technologies are integrated into peoples' everyday lives) and the internet as a cultural artifact (studies of how internet communities and culture are formed online). In this way online ethnography does not only provide new tools for conducting research in online environments, it also raises questions about formation of social groups, the nature and significance of context and approaches to participant observation (Maybin & Tusting 2011:523).

Androutsopoulos (2013:242) refers to any combination of screen data and data collection through direct contact to the participants as "blended data" and highlights that the collection of offline data will come to complement the interpretative frame of the analysis of screen data. Offline data can be elicited in various ways depending on the research question. Androutsopoulos (2013:243) describes how direct face-to-face contact or mediated contact to participants can be done by conducting interviews, group discussions or handing out questionnaires. Such methods seem to be the most frequent means of collecting offline data within language-focused CMC studies. Yet, some studies also use participant observation as a way of gaining insight into peoples' offline media related practices. Such participant observations often involve peoples' literacy practices in front of the computer or other technological artifacts (see for example Miller & Slater 2000; Jones 2004; Aarsand 2008; Meredith & Stokoe 2013). Participant observation of various everyday settings (where the focus is not necessarily directed to participant's computer use) is seen more rarely. Interview data and questionnaires are good ways of gaining information about peoples' reflexive meta-comments on language use and other social practices. However, if you want to investigate peoples' actual linguistic and social practices face-to-face participant observation is more fruitful. In the following I address the notion of participant observation in relation to online and face-to-face fieldwork.

3.2.3 Participant observation in online and face-to-face situations

Participant observation implies a tension between involved participation and distant observation (Spradley 1980; Duranti 1997). Duranti (1997:100) argues in favour for complete participation when it is practically and ethically possible. This mode of participation makes it somehow possible for researchers to experience the process they are trying to document. Yet, complete participation is not the same as being a part of the community on equal terms with the individuals you study. There is no doubt that involvement in the field is important to approach an open-minded understanding of the field you study. However, too intense involvement can entail that you lose the necessary distance to the field and the involved participants. This is described as the danger of “going native” (Bryman 2001). A degree of distance is crucial to the interpretation and analysis of the observed practices and therefore it is common that ethnographers in their methodological considerations aim for a mode in between passive and complete participation (Adler & Adler 1994). However, as Duranti (1997) argues, a successful ethnography is not when the fieldworker assumes one perspective, but rather when the researcher “establishes a dialogue between different viewpoints and voices, including those of the people studied, of the ethnographer, and of his disciplinary and theoretical preferences” (Duranti 1997:87). When carrying out ethnography in a team the researchers experience *a double encounter* as they need to relate to the participants and the other researchers (Erickson & Stull 1998:25). However, this relationship is only relevant once the fieldworkers read each others’ field reports or when they carry out fieldwork in groups.

Participant observation in online contexts also refers to being present in the field among the people you study. In online participant observation this means being present among social media users in a non-physical sense (Androutsopoulos 2013:241). Androutsopoulos (2008:5) emphasizes that ethnographic observation on the internet does not target “static” textual artifacts. Online ethnography rather involves observing digital communication within particular sites of discourse or across a set of such sites. Different strategies of online observation differ in terms of technology and in terms of researcher engagement in the social practices unfolding on the different sites of online communication. Like in face-to-face ethnographic fieldwork the researcher can aim for a role in between being an involved participant or distant observer. However, as Hine (2000:48) argues ethnographers on the internet can “lurk” in a way that cannot be achieved in face-to-face encounters as the researcher have the opportunity to merge invisibly with all the other lurkers online. Whether to “lurk” or actively participate (or do something in between) is debated in the literature

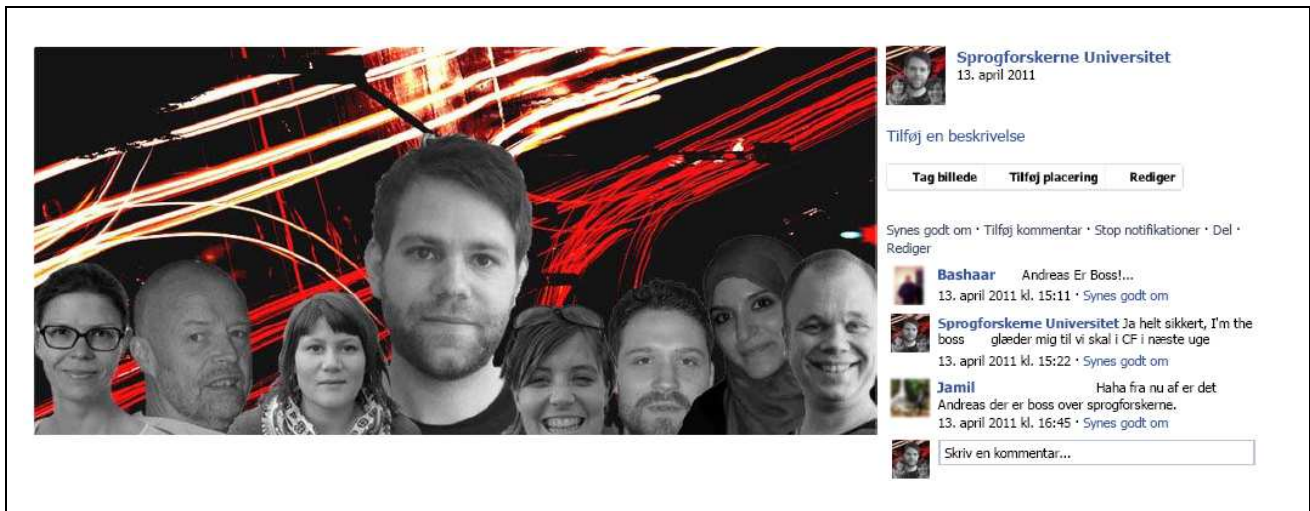
(Androutsopoulos 2013:242) both in relation to ethics of doing online ethnography and in relation to how different modes of participation affect the interpretative value of the ethnography (Hine 2000). Further Hine (2000:48) notes that entering the field as a “lurker” is to “relinquish claims to the kind of ethnographic authority that comes from exposing the emergent analysis to challenge through interaction”. In my fieldwork across online and offline settings I attempted to position myself in different ways and construct different field roles with varying degrees of participation in accordance with the situational context. Due to the fact that field roles are not static and that relations in the field are dynamically negotiated between the fieldworker and the participant it can be difficult to talk about typical field roles. Yet, in the following I attempt (in retrospect) to account for how I carried out my fieldwork in different online and offline situations.

3.3 Four years of fieldwork

During the past 4 years I have observed the adolescents in different situations, followed their use of different media platforms and focused on different aspects of their everyday lives. The first three years of fieldwork concerns the period of time when the adolescents attended 7th to 9th grade (equivalent to grade school). The last year of fieldwork concerns the adolescents’ life after grade school. The fieldwork was initiated in 2009 and at the first day at the school the research team and I presented ourselves and our project to the students. We asked them if they wanted to participate in the project and we handed out an information folder and a letter to their parents informing them about the project. The parents were further approached two times at parents’ meetings. In the beginning of our fieldwork we only observed the adolescent in school during classes and in the breaks. We all took turns observing in the two classes. Later we chose to focus on one of the classes for a period of time. Each researcher carried out fieldwork 2-3 times a week and in this way a researcher was present almost every day. In the beginning we focussed on getting to know the adolescents, the teachers and the school. Eventually the adolescents became more familiar with our presence. Later we began to systematize our observations regarding the adolescents’ choice of music, clothing, leisure time activities and we paid attention to who was hanging out with whom, where and when. In this way we started to establish an understanding of the different groups in the two classes. Later in this period we carried out interviews with individual students and in groups asking question about trends, groups and language use informed by our observations.

After one month of fieldwork we began to make recordings of classroom interaction and we asked the adolescents to record themselves. The so-called self recordings were made by handing out mp3-recorders and radio microphones. Gradually the adolescent lost interest in the recorders and got used to wearing them. After a couple of months I got access to other field sites outside the school. I observed the adolescents when they hung out on the street with their friends, attended the local youth club, went to concerts and recorded rap music in a recording studio. Particularly my access to the youth club opened up new possibilities for observing the adolescents in their spare time. Spending time with me in their spare time was barrier breaking for the adolescents in the beginning, but just as they got used to me being present in school they accepted my presence in the club. The youth club and the other leisure settings were in many ways more dynamic environments than the school. Outside school there were no schedules and the adolescents chose for themselves when to come and when to go. The new environments also meant new challenges regarding participant observation. In the club I did not take field notes in the same way as when participating in school lessons, therefore I became more of a participant than an observer when engaging in playing soccer, listening to music and watching videos on YouTube etc. However, this role was not unfamiliar to me because this was typically the way I engaged in activities during the breaks at school (see Stæhr 2010 for a more thorough description of my field roles).

Only some of the adolescents in our study had a Facebook profile and only a few corresponded through Facebook during our first year of fieldwork. In the beginning of 2010 almost all of the young people in our study had created a Facebook profile and they regularly engaged with each other through this social network site. I gained access to these social interactions by creating a Facebook profile on behalf of the project. I advertised our new profile among the adolescents and soon we began to receive friend requests on Facebook. We named the profile “Sprogforskerne Universitet” (‘The language researchers at University’) to be certain that everybody knew who we were. We made a profile picture representing all of the researchers that had been present at the school (at that time) (see figure 2):



Translation:

Bashaar: Andreas is the Boss!...

The language researchers

at University: Yes sure, I'm the boss :) looking forward to visit SU ((the suburban youth club)) next week

Jamil: Haha from now on Andreas is the boss of the language researchers

Figure 2: The profile picture of “Sprogforskerne Universitet” (“The language researchers at University”).

Because the whole research team had access to the profile it was important that this was reflected in the design of the profile picture. Yet, because of the fact that I was the most frequent user of the profile (as I carried out most of the online ethnography) this had to be reflected in the picture as well. In this way, due to the design and as suggested from the comments to the picture in figure 2, I was ascribed the role of the online “boss” of the researchers by the participants. Another important aspect of engaging with the adolescents online was that we never took initiative to befriend the adolescents and we made sure to have explicit consent from them that we could use the data provided that all names are anonymized. Because I had spent a lot of time with the adolescents prior to engaging in studying their Facebook use I knew a lot about them and they were familiar with having me around. Furthermore, I had extensive knowledge about the social relations in the classes and great knowledge about the adolescents’ use of linguistic resources in various contexts.

Getting access to the adolescents’ interactions on Facebook added a new (and important) dimension to my fieldwork and the study of the adolescents’ everyday lives. It was now possible to follow discussions initiated on Facebook in school and the other way around as many of the status updates made by the adolescents were related to topics and events I (or other members of the team) had

either witnessed or heard mentioned. Furthermore, the knowledge I gained from my field notes, interviews, and sound recordings from different everyday settings also provided me with crucial knowledge about the participants, their social relations etc. when browsing their profile pages. My “offline knowledge” also allowed me to get a better understanding of the social practices and friendship relations on Facebook and vice versa. I carried out my online ethnographic fieldwork by browsing the newsfeed and the timelines of the participants, making screen shots and PDF-documents to make my online data searchable. I also studied the adolescents’ practices in other internet contexts by following links to other internet sites and video links to YouTube (see article 4 and 5). In the beginning of my online ethnographic fieldwork I solely carried out observations and never interacted with the adolescents online. However, I made sure to switch on the chat function in order for them to know that I was online (this is marked by a green dot in the chat list). It was a deliberate choice not to engage with the adolescents from the beginning as I did not know how they would react to active participation in this context. In the beginning I only had access to the adolescents’ Facebook walls. After a while I was invited to join a closed Facebook group made for internal communication between adolescents from one of the classes we observed. I never got access to the adolescents’ private messages. While observing the adolescents’ Facebook activities I also took notes. I never asked the participant directly about my observations in the beginning, but I instead made sure to casually merge in the questions in my dialogues with the adolescent. This was a great help to understand their Facebook interactions. Later my observations on Facebook inspired the questions about social media we asked the participants in the interviews. Here we also showed the adolescents examples from their Facebook interactions and asked them to reflect on their language use. Late in 2010 I began to interact with the adolescents online. Often the writing was motivated by something that had happened during the day. I never wrote private messages during this period of time because I would rather approach the adolescents face-to-face.

In 2010 we also began to experiment with new observation techniques in our face-to-face fieldwork. Until this point we had seldom observed the adolescents in pairs. Therefore we began to experiment with being more researchers present at the same time both in school and in other situation. An example of how we collaborated in the field is reported on by Nassri (2011:96). From one of our experiments she concludes that being more researchers present in the same situation and comparing two or more field diaries enables us to get a panoramic view of the field. Furthermore, she emphasizes the importance of debriefing sessions and highlights that the researchers’ different

backgrounds (cultural and linguistic) eliminates or reduces the risk of misinterpretation and widens the lenses and understanding of the field at hand (Nassri 2011:96). Article 4 in the dissertation is another example of how team ethnography played a role in relation to my study. The fieldwork of this study of a conspiracy phenomenon was carried out in co-operation with my colleague Nørreby. During our joint fieldwork we shared field notes, observed the adolescents together and separately, and had casual meetings with the adolescents outside school. In this period of time both of us made observations on Facebook which we discussed. Article 5 which is co-written with Madsen is also an example of the outcome of team ethnography in this dissertation. Together we investigated the rap practices of a group of boys across online and offline settings.

In May 2011 the adolescents graduated grade school. This was not only a memorable event for the adolescent, but also for us researchers. From this point on I primarily followed the adolescents on Facebook. Yet, I kept having regular meetings with a group of adolescents which were often carried out in collaboration with my colleague Nørreby as well. I continued to stay in the role of the observer on Facebook, but gradually I began to interact more and more with the adolescents. The relations developed during the first 3 years of fieldwork made this unproblematic. In the beginning I wrote messages through the message system. Sometimes to ask about specific questions related to my research and other times just to hear how they were doing. I also regularly chatted with the adolescents through the Facebook chat. After my meetings with the adolescents I often wrote on their timelines. After a while I created a (secret) Facebook group called “All kinds of fun with Thomas and Andreas”. This became a private space for our communication. Yet, pictures taken by the adolescents from our meetings and messages such as “nice day with the language researchers” were still posted on the adolescents’ timelines. The Facebook group was primarily used to arrange meetings. After a while the adolescents initiated the contact and began to plan the meetings. Often they chose where to meet. Sometimes we met at a hookah café in the central section of the city and other times we met at restaurants or cafés on Amager or in other neighborhoods of the city. During the meetings we talked about the boys’ new lives, schools and friends. The adolescents were always keen on telling about their new lives. Often I also brought data for my articles that I wanted them to reflect on. Sometimes it was a success other times they did not want to talk research. In this way the meetings and retrospective data discussions became important to my research (see for example article 4). Here in 2014 I still occasionally meet up with the boys.

3.4 Ethical reflections

Research on the internet is comparable to other areas of social-scientific research and therefore not free of ethical constraints. The privacy of the participants is a basic ethical concern of social-scientific fieldwork. To ensure the privacy of my participants all names used in my analysis have been replaced by pseudonyms and I further have consent from the participants to use the data for research purposes. Androutsopoulos (2013:247) notes that there is no general consensus on how to maintain privacy in CMC research. Furthermore, ethic guidelines for researchers vary by academic institution and country. An ethical concern I had to address was how to deal with people whom I did not have a research agreement with when they commented on the participants' status updates, pictures etc. I chose to deal with this in the same way as I dealt with people whom we did not know appearing on our sound recordings. I decided to replace their names with pseudonyms and only ask for consent if they would become interesting as primary research subjects. This only happened in one case and the boy (a cousin of one of our participants) agreed to be included in my research. Another issue of the ethics of CMC research is the matter of covert vs. non-covert participant observation. This issue has been an ongoing topic in the debate since the mid-1990s and remains an unsolved matter (Sanders 2005:71). I dealt with this matter in the following way. Just as it was important for me to be introduced by the participants or introduce myself as a researcher when entering a new field site I also made sure to be "visible" as a researcher on Facebook (to the extent that it was possible) by choosing a representative profile picture, switching the chat function on and letting the adolescents befriend my profile.

4. Outline of the dissertation

In the introduction I have laid out the overall argument of my dissertation and I have accounted for my theoretical and methodological approach to the study of language and social media. The main part of my dissertation consists of five articles written for journals or as book chapters. Four of them I wrote myself and one of them is co-written. The articles 1-3 are thematically related and focus on *social media and sociolinguistic normativity*. Article 1 and 2 approach the theme of normativity in similar ways and consider some of the same arguments based on the same theory. Yet, article 1 discusses normativity in the light of a superdiversity perspective and considers both interviews and interaction data while article 2 discusses normativity in relation to self- and other-corrections on the basis of interaction data from Facebook. Article 4 and 5 concern the theme of *social media, semiotic*

resources and popular culture. In the following I briefly describe the main focus of the articles and the status of the publication of each article.

Article 1: Linguaging on the Facebook wall – Normativity on Facebook, forthcoming. in Arnaut, Karel, Massimiliano Spotti & Matha Sif Karrebæk (eds.): *Wasted language: super-diversity and the sociolinguistics of interstices*, Multilingual Matters.

In this article I consider metalinguistic reflections on language use as well as interactional practices on Facebook involving features and values corresponding to the enregistered speech styles of “street language” and “integrated language”. By studying these speech styles I investigate how adolescents orient towards different norms of language use on Facebook. The point of departure for my discussion is the public debate on digital communication technologies and spelling skills. In the debate social media is often claimed to be responsible for the younger generations’ alleged poor spelling skills and linguistic decay. In the analysis I find that the young people orient towards different norms of language use in their interactions on Facebook – that is, both peer group norms and standard orthography. Thereby, this article portrays young peoples’ linguistic practices in social media environments as polycentric. Yet, although these environments are certainly polycentric there are also normative restrictions to communications in these social spaces. Some of them are peer-governed, but standard norms still play a part.

Article 2: Normativity as a social resource in social media practices, forthcoming. in Madsen, Lian M., Martha S. Karrebæk & Janus S. Møller (eds.): *Everyday languaging*, De Gruyter Mouton.

In this article I comment on the fact that the Internet and social media are often depicted as orthographically unregulated spaces in public and political discourses on young peoples’ use of social media. I point out that adolescent Facebook users in fact do orient towards different norms of language use by means of self- and other-corrections. I argue that corrections of language use are about more than mere orientation toward linguistic correctness and I suggest that correction practices on Facebook provide information about social relations among the adolescents I study. By carrying out sequential analysis of Facebook interactions I demonstrate how the adolescents negotiate each other’s (linguistic) behavior and what norms are relevant in different situations.

Article 3: Metapragmatic activities on Facebook – Enregisterment across written and spoken language practices, published in *Working Papers in Urban language and literacies*, paper 124. London: Kings College London. And forthcoming in Leppänen, Sirpa, Janus Møller & Thomas

Nørreby (eds.): *Authenticity, Normativity and Social Media*, A special issue in *Discourse, Context and Media*.

In this article I argue that writing take up an important role in people's everyday discursive practices. Yet, I point out that this is not reflected in studies of language change, because it has not been customary to incorporate written practices in variationist sociolinguistics. I argue that both spoken and written practices must be considered in studies of language change, because as Agha (2007:80) argues, *all* metapragmatic processes that contribute to making a particular "way of discourse" differentiable must be considered. In the article I illustrate how the adolescents' use linguistic features indexical of speech styles on Facebook, how the use of these resources points towards different stereotypes, and what sense of rights and sanctions that are involved in the reactions to the use of these different speech styles.

Article 4: The appropriation of transcultural flows among Copenhagen youth - The case of Illuminati, published in Androutsopoulos, Jannis & Kasper Juffermans (eds.): *Superdiversity and digital language practices*, A special issue in *Discourse, Context and Media*.

This Article examines how transcultural flows related to the conspiracy theory of Illuminati are encountered and appropriated through YouTube by the adolescents. I find that the adolescents engagement with the Illuminati society is not limited to new media practices but on the contrary spread to other everyday practices as well. In examining how the adolescents relate to and use such transcultural flows I look at how they align and dis-align with Illuminati imagery and how they engage with the conspiracy theory in different everyday situations and on Facebook. In this way I discuss how Illuminati imagery is used as a resource in the young people's everyday social practices.

Article 5: Standard language in urban rap – Social media, linguistic practice and ethnographic context, published in *Tilburg Papers in Culture Studies*, Paper 94. And submitted to *Language and Communication*. Written together with Lian Malai Madsen.

This article focuses on a case that compared to previous studies of hip hop language, is surprising; a group of adolescents in Copenhagen increasingly use more monolingual, standard linguistic practices in their hip hop productions on YouTube. We argue that to fully understand this development, it is necessary to take into account the local, socio-cultural meanings given to particular linguistic resources, and that this cannot be fully captured without attention to the

ethnographic and sociolinguistic context. We find that the hip hop language and literacy practices in this context are related to both traditional educational norms and artistic aspirations.

In the last part of the dissertation I discuss the findings across the articles.

Article 1:

Languaging on the Facebook wall – Normativity on Facebook

1. Introduction

This article addresses the theme of language and normativity in social media communication. By examining young people's interactional practices on Facebook I study how they orient towards different norms of language use in such social spaces. Thereby I aim to nuance prevalent assumptions about 1) social media as an unregulated communicative space and 2) linguistic standard norms as irrelevant to social media communication. Characteristic of the adolescent's Facebook interactions are that they reflect an orientation towards different orders of normativity – that is, both standard orthography and peer generated norms. In the study of normativity I examine how the adolescents use two well described speech styles or registers in their written practices on Facebook and I further consider how these written representations of speech styles relate to standard orthography. Furthermore, I look into how these registers are represented in writing and how this contributes to our knowledge about the value ascriptions of these styles.

Social media and digital communication technologies are regarded as important aspects in studies of language and superdiversity (Vertovec 2006). For example, Blommaert & Rampton (2011:3) highlight how social and demographic changes are complicated by the emergence of new communication technologies and how the research of language in such social spaces reveals further uncharted dimensions to the perspective of superdiversity. In addition social media sites are good examples of superdiverse spaces as they seemingly offer endless possibilities for communication and self-expression across national and cultural boundaries (Varis & Wang 2011). Social media communication further reflects processes of superdiversity because language use and mediation of social and cultural practices in such social spaces are increasingly characterized by plurality, heterogeneity and polycentricity of semiotic and linguistic resources and normativities (Leppänen & Häkkinen 2012:18). In this sense the internet clearly opens up a complex space that largely escapes control of the authorities – authorities that have been enforcing the importance of standard normativity (Karrebæk et. al forthc.). This for example regards correct language use and preservation of standard orthography. However, it does not mean that the internet is a space without norms of social and linguistic behavior. On the contrary diversity is indeed cultivated in these spaces. Along these lines Varis & Wang (2011:71) argue that we need to nuance the image of the internet (presented by prevailing internet ideologies) as a social space “saturated with opportunities

and aspirations where one is able to indulge in infinite creativity in imagining and constructing both self and other”. Also there may be a tendency within research on superdiversity and online language use to focus on the unlimited linguistic creativity of contemporary social encounters rather than normative forces (Varis & Wang 2011). A similar picture of the internet as an unregulated space is also reflected in the public debate on social media and language use in Denmark. Here deviation from the Standard is treated as treachery against the standard language and standard orthography – and in the very end the nation state.

Chat, text messaging, and social network sites such as Facebook are often criticized for being responsible for the younger generations’ alleged poor spelling skills and linguistic decay. The allegations are widely presented by some policy-makers, experts and lay persons. For example a former minister of cultural affairs during a hearing in the Danish parliament declared:

“I actually think that the Danish language has proved itself still to be rich and flourishing [...] But we cannot take it as a given that it will remain so considering the challenges that the language faces. The Danish language is threatened by Anglicism, text message language, e-mail language, Facebook language, and all together this contributes to [...] the impoverishment and rendering helpless with regard to spelling, orthography etc. which is getting poorer and poorer” (Per Stig Møller 2010, my translation)

In this quote Møller voices a fear that the use of electronic media and the influence of English will lead to a decrease in Danish language users’ observance of standard orthography, and this is explicitly treated as related to a general threat against Danish as a ‘rich and flourishing language’. Electronic media are described as a leading oppositional force against this highly valued, (personified) vulnerable and fragile Danish language. Many similar statements are voiced in the debate. Furthermore, such statements are not unique to Danish society. Thurlow (2006) has studied similar examples of “moral panic” regarding the decline of the Standard language expressed in English-language news articles. Statements about deviations from the Standard (as the ones voiced by Møller) must be viewed in relation to the history of standardization. Standardization in Denmark is, compared to most other European countries, particularly powerful or advanced and it is evident in linguistic policies, education and public discourses. In a Danish context the high level of standardization can among other things be explained on the basis of the existence of a prevalent

standard ideology (Pedersen 2009:52) that has led to a history of linguistic uniformity of spoken language in Denmark. This has also been the case with respect to written language. Since 1888 there has been a standard norm of written Danish. This has been administered since 1955 by The Danish language board (an institution placed under the Ministry of Culture) which is obligated (by law) to determine Danish orthography and edit the official orthographic dictionary (Gregersen 2011). This history of standardization might be one of the reasons why the Standard has been and still is connected with strong feelings of national unity rooted in the national romantic idea about one nation, one people, and one language (Heller 2007) and it can further explain the motivation behind those who fight to preserve the Danish orthographic standard.

Even though the orthographic standard of written Danish has (several times) been doomed under pressure (as in the quote above) there is, in fact, no solid evidence that the Standard loses terrain because of peoples' increased use of social media – although its significance and meaning has certainly changed as it now co-occurs with other orders of normativity (Karrebæk et al. *forthc.*). To study how young people in contemporary superdiverse society relate to and navigate between different normative orders on social media I focus on the following questions. Firstly, how do the participants in our study negotiate norms of language use on Facebook? Secondly, to what extent do their negotiations correspond to public discourses about social media and language use? And thirdly, who are ascribed the rights to use different registers or styles of writing and why? I address these questions by, firstly, analyzing metalinguistic statements about norms of language use on Facebook in interviews conducted with Copenhagen adolescents and secondly, I analyze Facebook interactions among the same group of adolescents. In this way I am able to study the relations between the adolescents' more or less overt metapragmatic activities. On the basis of this I argue that young people orient towards many different norms of language use and that social media spaces are in fact highly regulated spaces regarding linguistic and social behavior.

2. Normativities

Normativity can be described as a form of organization and order (Blommaert 2010:37) and be perceived as a co-constructed interactional accomplishment that involves understandings of correctness, authority, appropriateness, competence etc. (Agha 2007). In this way norms of language use are socio-culturally and ideologically constructed (Jørgensen et al. 2011). Thus, correctness has “nothing to do with the linguistic characteristics of features – correctness is ascribed

to the features by (some) speakers” (Jørgensen et al. 2011:30). Furthermore, norms in general are not always (or only) concerned with evaluations of correctness and incorrectness – that is, evaluations linked to codified standards (Agha 2007:124). Agha (2007:126) argues that linguistic norms should be conceptualized as involving different levels of normativity. He distinguishes between three levels of normativity:

1. A norm of behavior
2. A normalized model of behavior
3. A normative standard

The first level deals with norms in the sense of externally observable correlations such as a statistical norm or frequency distribution in some order of behavior (Agha 2007:126). A statistical norm or pattern of this type could for example be: people of type X do or say Y. *The second level* of normativity is defined as “a reflexive model of behavior, recognized as ‘normal’ or ‘typical’ by (at least some) actors, i.e. is a *norm* for them”. On this level a reflexive model specifies a norm for a given group of people based on their behavior (peer generated norms fits this description). In this way Agha (2007) describes how some pattern of linguistic behavior is being normalized in the perception of the given group of people. However, the whole group of people acting in a specific way does not need to view the specific behavior as ‘normal’. Agha (2007:125) further speaks of reflexive models as having both a social range and a social domain. The social range covers the people recognized as displaying the behavior while the social domain covers a category of evaluators that recognizes the behavior. Furthermore, competing models of behavior co-exist in society. Thus, it is not necessary that every member of society agrees that a given norm is holding for a given social group. For example (some) young people can perceive one way of writing as normal within a specific domain while (some) adults perceive the same way of writing as a violation of a codified standard. Such differences may lead to further group differentiation and new reflexive normative models of behavior. *The third level* of normativity is the normative standard which is “a normative model, linked to standards whose breach results in sanctions” (Agha 2007:126). On this level patterns of behavior are not only reflexively normalized, but also standardized.

Agha's (2007) conceptualization of normativity suggests that contemporary sociolinguistic societies consist of multiple layers of normativity. This is the case because people are socialized into orienting towards different normative centers of language use that entail different patterns of linguistic behavior. Young people, for instance, may orient towards different norm centers such as school and teachers, peer groups and different kinds of popular and sub culture in different situations. Blommaert (2010) describes such an organization of normativity as *polycentric*. The concept of *polycentricity* draws on Silverstein's (1998) concept of *ritual centers of authority*. Such centers function to warrant and license language use in relation to "its cultural dimensionalities of locally understood autonomy" (Silverstein 1998:405). Furthermore, the centers of authority will determine how norms of behavior are informed by specific voices, genres and registers. In this way they supply information about what is good and bad behavior and language usage (Silverstein 1998:406). Common to such different levels of normativity is that it may have social consequences if they are not complied with. In this sense compliance with a standard (or *the Standard*) is often taken to be influential and highly important (Wilson and Stapleton 2010: 63). Furthermore, the compliance with a standard is indexical of a moral character in general and connected to images of national homogeneity, beauty and other types of social essence (Agha 2007:147). Moreover, language policy at different levels (both state and institutional levels) treats standardization as necessary preconditions for social cohesion.

Standard languages and standard orthography are also used to rank individuals and assign them a corresponding place in society (Jaspers 2006:135). In this way deviations from linguistic norms and institutionally established standards have the potential of creating social meaning (Sebba 2012). The creation of social meaning is, of course, according to Sebba (2012), dependent on to what extent texts are subjected to conform to the set of norms established for a language (assuming there is one). Therefore, Sebba (2012) suggests that texts can be placed on a continuum according to the extent that they are subject to regulation. Written practices such as Graffiti are placed in the least regulated end of the continuum because they are often produced in illegitimate spaces. Furthermore, such types of writing often deviate from the orthographic standard. At the other end of the continuum we find highly regulated texts such as newspapers, prose produced for publication by mainstream publishers and school texts. Other texts are placed between these extremes. Importantly, they are not fixed for all time but vary historically as well as from language to language (Sebba 2012). Interactions on social media such as Facebook are classified as

orthographically unregulated by Sebba (2012). This makes sense when viewed from a standard orthographic point of view corresponding to Agha's (2007) third level of normativity. However, when viewed from the perspective of Agha's (2007) second level of normativity (e.g. peer group normativity), this type of writing is in fact highly regulated. The aim of my analysis is to show how social media texts are being regulated by the users by looking how young people orient to deviations from different norms of language use. But first I will account for how I collected my data.

3. Data and method

The data I draw on in this article were collected among a group of adolescents in Copenhagen. The adolescents all attended an urban public school at Amager in Copenhagen where the student body was characterized by a high degree of ethnic diversity. As part of a collaborative study (Madsen et al. 2013) I have carried out ethnographic fieldwork in two grade school classes in Copenhagen for almost three years. The project was initiated in 2009 when the participants in our study attended 7th grade and ended when they left school in 2011 (a period of time equivalent to secondary school). Since then I continued to meet with some of the adolescents in focus in this paper. In 2010 most of the adolescents in our study had a Facebook profile and regularly engaged with each other through this social network site. Seeing that, I created a Facebook profile on behalf of the project. I advertised for our new profile among the adolescents and soon we began to receive friend requests on Facebook. Afterwards I followed the young people's new media practices alongside their school and leisure time activities. In this way I have both conducted online ethnography (Androutsopoulos 2008) and ethnography (Duranti 1997) in offline settings. This provided me with crucial knowledge about the participants' social life across online and offline situations. Following the young people both on Facebook and in other everyday situations made it possible for me to gain a wider understanding of the connections between the two contexts regarding social and linguistic practices and friendship relations. This study of norms of language use on Facebook builds on semi structured sociolinguistic interviews, essays on language use written by the participants, and Facebook interactions from 2009-2011. In section 4 I consider the interview data looking at the adolescents' metalinguistic reflections of different ways of writing while I in section 5 attend to the adolescents interactions on Facebook.

4. Participants' reflections on stylistic norms and writing

The first metalinguistic reflection is from an interview with a 14 year old girl called Kurima. She is an active user of Facebook and in the interview we talk about different ways of writing. I ask her to explain the different rules of language use on Facebook and in school:

Excerpt 1: "on Facebook it's more free"

Interview (2011) with Kurima (Kur)

Original:

Kur: en dansk stil det er noget seriøst arbejde, det er noget man får karakter for og ens lærere skal se det [...] så det er derfor man tager sig sammen når man skal skrive dansk stil, men på Facebook er det sådan mere frit fordi der er ikke nogen der siger at du ikke må skrive med stort bogstaver eller noget det må du sådan selv om

Translation:

Kur: a Danish essay that is something serious, you get marks and your teachers are supposed to see it [...] therefore you pull yourself together when you write a Danish essay, but on Facebook it's more free because nobody says you cannot write in capitals or something like that, you decide for yourself

Kurima describes two different norms of language use which she associates with the domains of school and Facebook respectively. Writing in school is described as something serious, associated with official rules of the teachers and evaluated in relation to grading scales. Writing on Facebook is not associated with any specific rules and is described as 'more free'. That is, free from the orthographic standard. In this way she reproduces the stereotypical understanding that Facebook is a space that escapes the control of authorities. Later in the interview Kurima states that 'some people write differently in school and in their spare time and such'. Thus, she voices an awareness of how different practices involve different norms of behavior. This corresponds to what we find regarding the adolescents' awareness of how they speak differently in different situations (Madsen 2013, Stæhr 2010). In the excerpt Kurima further points out teachers as evaluative authorities who determine what is considered as proper language use in school contexts. Yet, she does not point out similar evaluative authorities in her description of writing on Facebook. Thus, the understanding of the internet as a "more free" space is not only prevalent in the public and political discourse, but also among our informants. Despite that writing on Facebook is described as 'more free' the adolescents nonetheless report about use of peer generated norms such as 'street language' and 'integrated language' in this context. In the following I briefly address the meaning of these categories.

‘Street language’ and ‘integrated language’ are categories we also know from studies of spoken language among Copenhagen youth (Ag 2010, Madsen 2011, Møller & Jørgensen 2011). These categories are the speakers’ own and can be described as a result of an ongoing enregisterment (Agha 2007) among the young people. The notion *enregisterment* is described by Agha (2007) as the processes and communicative activities that typify semiotic resources and link these to norms, typical speaker personae and situations. Thus, enregisterment also involves how ways of speaking become associated with different norms, different individuals and social activities. In this way enregisterment happens both on the level of practice and metapragmatic commentary. The enregisterment of ‘integrated language’ and ‘street language’ also involves practices associated with writing, but this has only been examined to a certain extent (see article 3; Karrebæk et al. forthc.). The two registers represent different ways of speaking which are ascribed different values. Madsen (2013) finds that street language (also labeled ‘slang’ by some of the participants) is associated with specific stereotypic indexical values such as toughness, masculinity, youth, pan-ethnic minority street culture, and academic non-prestige. Furthermore, polylingual practices (Jørgensen et al. 2011) and linguistic creativity is also described as an element of street language. Regarding integrated language Madsen (2013) finds that it is associated with distinct pronunciation, abstract and academic vocabulary, and ritual politeness phrases. Moreover, this register is associated with up-scale culture, authority, academic skills, politeness, adults (teachers), and respect (see Madsen 2013 for a more elaborate description). It is clear that the integrated register and street language invoke different opposing values. According to Madsen (2011, 2013) values contrasts such as academic vs. street cultural, polite vs. tough, stereotypical notions of masculinity vs. femininity, and adult vs. youthful are clearly relevant here. Though we have gained insight into the participants’ metalinguistic descriptions of street language and integrated speech, we still need to look further into how these registers are used in online discourse.

When reading an essay about everyday language use by one of the adolescents I became aware of that both street language and integrated language are also associated with writing (for further description of the essays see Møller & Jørgensen 2011). He wrote: ‘You speak slang with your friends/lads, on the street, when you write (chat), and when you want to express yourself’ (my translation). I followed up on this report of written slang in a second round of interviews carried out with the adolescents. The following excerpts illustrate how some of them describe the use of integrated speech and street language on Facebook. Excerpt 2 is from the same interview with

Kurima. I ask her whether it is possible to use street language and integrated language in writing.

She answers:

Excerpt 2: "they can do that when the write as well"

Interview (2011) with Kurima (Kur)

Original:

Kur: ja det kan man godt øh (.) altså det der gadesprog det er der nogle drenge der bruger (.) og i gadesproget når de går sådan sammen kan de måske også blande altså hvis mange af dem er arabere eller sådan et eller andet will argue that in order to achieve a sådan (.) siger det der danske på en lidt anden måde og det kan de også når de skriver altså hvis nu at (.) de skal fortælle noget vigtigt så i steder for at skrive "hør her" eller sådan et eller andet så skriver de det med bogstaver det de siger når de skal kalde på hinanden det der eow

Translation:

Kur: yes you can eh (.) well some of the boys use this street language (.) and in street language when they hang out they may mix well if many of them are Arabs or something like that they use specific Arab words while they (.) pronounce the Danish words in another way and they can do that when the write as well that is if (.) they want to something important then instead of writing "listen up" or something like that they use letters to write what they say when they call for each other, eow it is

Kurima points at the 'mixing of languages', the use of specific Arab words, and a different pronunciation of Danish as characteristic features of street language. She emphasizes that these language practices are also possible when the adolescents correspond with each other in writing. Besides from describing street language as a polylingual practice the adolescents also describe street language as associated with coolness and slang expressions. The use of *eow* in this extract is an example of that. The expression *eow* is often associated with Kurdish by the adolescents and is commonly used as a call for attention (like 'hey'). Furthermore, street language is described as a practice reserved for the boys. This is not an uncommon statement among the female participants in our study, yet as shown elsewhere (Ag 2010, Madsen 2011, Ag & Jørgensen 2013) girls also engage in this practice.

The next excerpt describes the difference between written and spoken street language. It is from an interview with one of the participants called Isaam. The interviewer, Lamies, asks whether the term "slang" also is applicable for written practices. Surprisingly he answers that 'you cannot write slang'. Yet, he is not entirely unequivocal regarding this as he further continues:

Excerpt 3: "slang is more about the pronunciation"

Isaam (Isa) with interviewer (Lam)

Original:	Translation:
1 Isa: Men man kan lave sådan	1 Isa: But you can do like
2 nogle (.) agtige (.) hvis	2 (.) such (.) if
3 man skriver slang bliver man	3 you write slang you are
4 mere sprogspasser	4 more like a language fool
5 på en måde	5 in a way
6 Lam: okay hvordan	6 Lam: okay how
7 Isa: men man kan selvfølgelig	7 Isa: but you can of cause you can
8 godt skrive slang "lad os	8 write slang "let's
9 lige daffe ud" "lad os	9 go" "let's
10 flække den vandpibe"	10 smoke that hooka"
11 selvfølgelig men jeg synes	11 of couse but I think
12 mere slang det er mere	12 slang is more about
13 udtalelsen	13 the pronunciation
14 Lam: og den kan man ikke [skrive	14 Lam: and that you can't [write
15 Isa: [og den	15 Isa: [and that
16 kan man ikke skrive men	16 you can't write but
17 selvfølgelig der er nogle	17 sure specific
18 ord og sådan noget	18 words exist and such

According to Isaam slang is primarily associated with speech because slang 'is more about the pronunciation'. However, he notes that it is possible to write in slang by using 'specific words'. In line 7-10 he gives two examples of specific lexical features associated with slang – *daffe* (let's get out of here) and *flække* (in this case used as smoke). Still this is not "real" slang to Isaam as one cannot imitate the pronunciation in writing. Isaam further explains how he feels linguistically restricted when writing slang (line 3-4). However, in article 3 I find several examples of written representations of pronunciations associated with street language (and some of them are written by Isaam). In other interviews I find that street language is perceived as cool on Facebook and that it often contains use of abbreviations, missing words and letters and "mixed" language use. Furthermore, street language is often contrasted with integrated writing. A general tendency in the interviews is that you do not necessarily have to follow the orthographic standard on Facebook. Instead you write according to how you want to be perceived.

In many of the interviews I find reports of integrated writing being linked to writing novel like (and long) status updates on Facebook. Furthermore, integrated writing in general is associated with more literate or school oriented practices through which you show off your literacy skills (such as in essays and emails to the teachers). This correlates well with Madsen (2011:22) who describes that integrated speech is enregistered as a code, associated with a notion of conservative standardness,

and that street-language is partly enregistered in opposition to this. So, while written street language practices are associated with being cool integrated writing is associated with appearing clever. The latter is illustrated in the next excerpt:

Excerpt 4: "ha ha do you feel wise"

Kurima (Kur) with interviewer (And)

Original:

1 And: hvad med integreret kan
 2 man skrive integreret
 3 Kur: på Facebook
 4 And: ja eller
 5 Kur: ja altså
 6 And: har du skrevet integreret
 7 Kur: nej det tror jeg ikke jeg har
 8 (.) ikke på Facebook men (.)
 9 der er nogle altså hvis nu
 10 (.) altså der er en der
 11 prøver at være sådan lidt
 12 sjov eller sådan noget i en
 13 kommentar kan han godt skrive
 14 nogle lidt integrerede ord
 15 som der ikke er nogen der
 16 forstår og så skriver man "ha
 17 ha føler du dig klog" eller
 18 sådan et eller andet og sådan
 19 And: ja
 20 Kur: bare for at gøre det sjovt
 21 eller sådan jeg ved det ikke
 22 And: så man kan godt se når folk
 23 skriver integreret
 24 Kur: ja fordi det for man ved det
 25 er jo ikke er det sprog han
 26 bruger
 [...]
 27 Kur: det er noget lidt andet sprog
 28 end (.) når man skal skrive
 29 sammen og sådan noget

Translation:

1 And: how about integrated can
 2 you write integratedly
 3 Kur: on Facebook
 4 And: yes or
 5 Kur: yes well
 6 And: have you written integratedly
 7 Kur: no I don't think I have
 8 (.) not on Facebook but (.)
 9 some people if
 10 (.) well if one
 11 tries to be
 12 funny or something like that
 13 in a comment he can write
 14 such integrated words
 15 which people don't
 16 understand and then you write
 17 "ha ha do you feel wise" or
 18 something like that and such
 19 And: yes
 20 Kur: I don't know just to make it
 21 funny or something like that
 22 And: so it's possible to see when
 23 people write integratedly
 24 Kur: yes because you know that it
 25 isn't this language he
 26 uses
 [...]
 27 Kur: it is a different language
 28 than (.) when you write
 29 together and such

Kurima does not recall writing integratedly on Facebook herself, but she knows of people who have done so. The use of integrated words is described as hard to understand and it is a way to write if you want to appear clever. According to Kurima instances of integrated writing are also often met by statements like 'do you feel clever?'. For that reason she does not believe that people are perceived as serious when they choose to write integratedly on Facebook, rather they do it for fun. She also explains that it is easy to point out when people write integratedly as it appears different

from the language the adolescents normally use (line 24-26). In this way integrated writing is described as a marked register in the context of Facebook. So, integrated language is not a register reserved for written practices on Facebook unless it is used in a jocular way. Yet, Lamis, another participant in our study, tells me about a more serious use of integrated writing on Facebook:

Excerpt 5: "Don't act clever now"

Lamis(Lam) with interviewer (And)

Original:	Translation:
1 And: [...] hvis du kommer til at	1 And: [...] if it happens you
2 skrive integreret på Facebook	2 write integratedly on Facebook
3 Lam: ja	3 Lam: yes
4 And: og de siger ej lad nu være med	4 And: and they say don't do that
5 altså (.) har du så gjort det	5 (.) was it then
6 sådan med vilje	6 on purpose
7 Lam: nogle gange ja hvor det bare	7 Lam: sometimes yes then it is
8 er sådan hvor jeg skal vise at	8 just to show that
9 jeg er klog så skriver jeg på	9 I am smart that
10 den måde	10 why I write that way
11 And: ja	11 And: yes
12 Lam: og så siger de "lad være med	12 Lam: and then they say "don't
13 at spil klog nu"	13 act smart now"

According to Lamis she does not use integrated writing for fun; she uses integrated language to show how clever she is and to show off. Her use of the register is apparently also perceived this way by others as she reports that peers tell her not to ‘act smart’. This is a common description by the other participants as well. Judging from the adolescents’ metalinguistic statements in this section it is evident that they see themselves as orienting towards many different norms of language use. Their metalinguistic reflections further reveal that they possess knowledge about different norms, awareness of when and where the different norms are applicable, and finally who makes and enforces the “official” standard norm.

5. Norms of language use on Facebook

In the previous section I looked at the adolescents’ explicit metalinguistic reflections on norms of language use – that is, what they say about how they relate to different norms of language use. In this section I study the adolescents’ interactions on Facebook to get at how they in fact orient to different linguistic norms in their online interactions. More specifically I look at how the participants interactionally relate to and align with the orthographic standard and peer generated


norms and how they negotiate rights and ownership of language use. The first excerpt is a status update posted by Jamil on his Facebook wall:

Excerpt 6: “Have been in the computer”	
Original:	 <p>The screenshot shows a Facebook post by Jamil: "har været i computern 14 timer idag" (15. februar 2010 kl. 21:34). Comments include: Rasmus: "Hvordan kommer man ind i computeren?? ;)"; Fatima: "dt vil jj også vide"; Rasmus: "Haha Jamil, jeg synes det er grineren når du skriver/staver forkert!! Det bedste er når du spørger om du må gå I toiletet, HAHA"; and Abed: "hvornår kommer du så ud af den?".</p>
Translation:	<p>Jamil: Have been in the computer for 14 hours today</p> <p>Rasmus: How do you get inside the computer?? ;)</p> <p>Fatima: I would like to know that as well</p> <p>Rasmus: Haha Jamil, I find it funny when you miswrite/misspell!! The funniest is when you ask whether you can go INTO the toilet, HAHA</p> <p>Abed: when will you come out again?</p>
Facebook extract, Jamils wall, 15 th of February 2010	

Jamil’s post ‘have been in the computer for 14 hours today’ triggers a string of jocular comments. Rasmus, Fatima and Abed react to what, from a standard orthographic perspective, is a deviant use of the preposition *i* (‘in’). *På* (‘at’) would be the standard choice. In his comment Jamil’s classmate Rasmus indirectly brings up a situation from school where Jamil (allegedly) asked the teacher if he could go ‘into’ the toilet. Among the adolescents this story has been used to tease Jamil on various occasions. Thus, the Facebook interaction is part of a more general practice with a linguistic side to it – that is, teasing Jamil with his non-standard use of prepositions compared to the standard use. Yet, here, linguistic correctness per se is obviously less important than local positioning. The reactions to Jamil’s non-standard use of prepositions contrast strikingly with the absence of reactions to other instances of deviation from the orthographic standard. The abbreviations *dt* and *jj* in Fatima’s turn *dt vil jj også vide* (‘I would like to know that as well’) are orthographic non-


standard forms for *det* and *jeg*. Thereby we see both instances of deviations from standard orthography that are reacted to and instances which are not reacted to. We cannot be sure of the reasons for this difference between the reaction to Jamil and Fatima. Yet, shortened forms similar to those used by Fatima are often found on social network sites such as Facebook and they may even constitute a generally accepted way of writing in such social spaces. Thereby Fatima’s language use does not create the impression of transgression (intended or not), but instead she appears literate within this particular genre of computer mediated communication. It may also be the case, of course, that Rasmus – and the other participants – just have no motivation for teasing Fatima. Nonetheless the excerpt still illustrates how the young participants both orient to the orthographic standard and other norms within the same conversational sequence. Furthermore, it shows how different norms do not necessarily exclude each other but may function simultaneously. The excerpt also shows that Rasmus’ correction of Jamil must be viewed in the light of correctness as a social resource in the negotiation of social relations rather than it being about correct vs. incorrect language use. This means that correct language use is treated as a resource for local positioning – in this case friendly teasing.

The next excerpt also involves local social positioning as it deals with negotiations of rights of language use and co-participants reactions to transgressive linguistic acts such as crossing. *Crossing* occurs when speakers’ use features which are generally not perceived as a part of their repertoire and thereby crossing involves a sense of transgression of ethnic or social boundaries (Rampton 2005:270). Excerpt 7 a-c is an example of crossing. The excerpt is part of a longer Facebook thread. Lamis and another girl are discussing an incident which occurred earlier on the same day in the French class. Their classmate Mark comments on this even though he was not present. This annoys the girls, so Lamis asks him:

Excerpt 7a: “Where do you come from”	
Original:	
Translation:	Lamis: where do you come from.. you didn’t even

	<p>I come from 5 countries....:D SjuF I'm 100% "Perker"....:D</p> <p>Lamis: Yeah but you still not an Arab.. so don't say SjuF.. :D</p> <p>Wordlist:</p> <p>SjuF: Look</p> <p>Perker: equivalent to 'nigger' or 'paki'</p>
Facebook extract, Lamis' wall, 6 th of October 2009	


Mark explicitly associates his coming from five different countries, none of which is Denmark, with being a *perker*. *Perker* is a Danish equivalent to *Paki* or *Nigger*. This term is stereotypically used to refer to people from the Middle East or North Africa, and in general it is considered derogatory. However, it may also be used as a positive in-group marker. Mark's use of the word *sjuf* further demonstrates how this perker identity is associated with a particular language use. *SjuF* is associated with, both, Arabic and street language. Yet, according to Lamis, Mark's complex (and non-Danish) self-proclaimed understanding of belonging is not sufficient for him to be a 'Perker'. He is required to have some relation to the Arab world. Because this is not the case, Lamis claims that Mark does not have the right to use the word *sjuf*. In other words, Lamis reserves the feature *sjuf* to people who can use it authentically – that is, Arabs. However, Mark seemingly does not agree:

Excerpt 7c: "the same class as all Arabs"	
Original:	 <p>The screenshot shows two Facebook posts. The first post is from Mark, dated 6. oktober 2009 kl. 19:40, with the text: "Jeg siger sjuf når jeg vil.... Men det er det der sker når man går i samme klasse som alle araber.... Det er en goooood klasse... :D". The second post is from Lamis, dated 6. oktober 2009 kl. 19:46, with the text: "Det kun 8 ud af 23 der er araber.. Og selv er det en god klasse.. :D".</p>
Translation:	<p>Mark: I say sjuf whenever I want to.... But that's what happens when you go to the same class as all Arabs.... It's a goooood class... :D</p> <p>Lamis: Only 8 out of 23 are Arabs .. and ofc it's a good class :D</p>
Facebook extract, Lamis' wall, 6 th of October 2009	

To attend a class with 'all the Arabs' is according to Mark enough to obtain the right to use the word *sjuf*. Lamis challenges this view as she points out that there are only 8 Arabs out of 23 in the

class. The meaning of this statement is not unequivocal. It could either mean that Lamis finds the number of Arabs too low for him to use the feature *sjuf* or it could mean that she does not accept Mark's justification (that he obtains rights through his peer group). Either way Mark does seem to be aware of some obstacles with regard to his authenticity as a *perker* as he puts this word in quotation marks. The laughing in the end of his post also indicates that his interactional contributions are framed as insincere or 'for fun'. The humorous tone is agreed with by Lamis' use of smileys.

A similar example of negotiation of rights of language use is found on Bashaar's Facebook wall. This example illustrates how values are associated with different linguistic features and who are allowed to use them:

Excerpt 8: "Have shaved"	
Original:	 <p>The screenshot shows a Facebook post by Bashaar: "Har barberet mig" (I have shaved myself), dated 22. november 2009 kl. 18:48. It has several comments: Rasmus says "HAAAAAAAAAAAA... Så har du ikke mere shaaarkkk tilbage ;D"; Bashaar replies "hehehe"; Rasmus says "Så skal du lære Jamil det ;D"; Fatima says ";OO DET VAR DIIIS :P"; Lamis says "Hahahahaha lol flækker.. ;)"; Fatima says "Oh ham det rasmus Prover være Perker Hahaahhaha Flækker :D"; Rasmus says "Ja jeg er ornlig syg gangstar, host host ;D"; and Mohammed says "din hund draber dig rasmus".</p>
Translation:	<p>Bashaar: Have shaved</p> <p>Rasmus: HAAAAAAAAAAAA... then you don't have more Shaaarkkk left ;D</p> <p>Bashaar: hehehe</p> <p>Rasmus: you better teach it to Jamil ;D</p> <p>Fatima: ;OO THAT WAS A DIIIS :P</p>

	<p>Lamis: Hahahahahaha lol laughing.. ;)</p> <p>Fatima: Oh Rasmus tries to be a Perker Hahaahhhaha laughing :’D</p> <p>Rasmus: Yep I’m a proper sick gangstar, cough cough ;D</p> <p>Mohammed: you dog kill you Rasmus</p> <p>Wordlist:</p> <p>Shark: Hair</p> <p>Perker: equivalent to “nigger” or “paki”</p>
Facebook extract, Bashaar’s wall, 22nd of November 2009	


In this status update the minority boy, Bashaar, writes about how he has started shaving. Rasmus who is one of the majority students in our study is the first to reply. In my analysis of this excerpt I focus on Rasmus’ comment and how the others react to it. The comment can be characterized as an incident of crossing into street language because he laughingly writes ‘then you don’t have any more shaaarkkk left’ followed by a winking smiley. *Shark* is a linguistic feature associated with Arabic, meaning hair. However, it is also used as slang among the adolescents and perceived as associated with street language by the participants in our study. Rasmus’ performance of street language appears marked. This is essential to how and why the others react to his comment. His comment can be characterized as marked because it contains the following characteristics. Firstly, the additional *a*’s and *k*’s (in comparison to the standard spelling of the word) influences the way a corresponding “pronunciation” can be imagined. Secondly, the winking and laughing smiley in the end of the post frames the utterance as insincere which, thirdly, is supported by the fact that he in writing puts up an exaggerated laughter in the beginning of the comment. These characteristics may be the reason why the majority boy’s use of the feature *shark* attracts attention among the others.

Common to the responses is that the others seem to catch the insincerity in Rasmus’ use of the word. Bashaar is the first who comments. He posts an iconic representation of laughter in writing and thereby appears as if he appreciates the non-serious frame established by Rasmus. After some teasing comments on how Bashaar should teach Jamil (another boys from their class) to shave Fatima reacts to Rasmus’ utterance by writing: ‘Oh Rasmus tries to be a perker hahaahhhaha laughing :’D’. She ends her comment by writing *flækker* (slang for ‘laughing’) and with a smiley laughing so much it bursts into tears. By writing this comment she ascribes the use of *shark* to the

category *perker* (as in excerpt 7b) and furthermore accuses Rasmus of pretending to be one. Because of the winking and laughing smiley that burst into tears from laughter at the end of the post her categorization must be understood in line with the already established non-serious frame of play and teasing. Rasmus stays in the jocular frame of teasing in his next comment where he acknowledges that he is 'a proper sick gangster'. Being 'a proper sick gangster' is used in the stereotypical sense of a tough immigrant boy. In this way he plays on a stereotypical image of minority boys in Denmark as violent and criminal. The notion of being 'a proper sick gangster' became a nation known description of young minority boys as it was used in a advent calendar shown on television depicting contemporary culturally diverse urban environments from a humoristic and satirical point of view (Madsen 2008). The fact that he writes 'cough cough' further supports the frame of play characteristic of the interaction among the adolescents. So, by his performance of street language Rasmus plays with a tough masculine immigrant stereotype, and this stereotypical image seems to be reacted to by Mohammed in his post the day after where he playfully threatens to kill Rasmus. On the basis of Rasmus' performance it is obvious that he signals awareness of the locally negotiated understandings of who are allowed to use specific linguistic features. He also signals awareness of that he in this situation transgresses the social boundaries of the use of features associated with street language. Both Bashaar's and Fatima's reaction to his performance supports this.

Along the same lines as the two previous examples excerpt 9 illustrates how the choice of linguistic features by a participant becomes the focus of attention. This excerpt is a status update about a Football match between Iraq and the United Arab Emirates written by a girl called Fadwa:


Excerpt 9: “Has one become integrated”

Original:	 <p>Fadwa Irak vinder imorgen ik gør mig flov oke jeg stoler på jer...♥ 14. januar kl. 21:01 · Synes godt om · Tilføj kommentar</p> <p>Abed og 2 andre synes godt om dette.</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>Massima pigebarn kom over det, og lad os indse at de taber SLUT!.....SÅ ER DEN diskution færdig ;) 14. januar kl. 22:35 · Synes godt om · 1 person</p> <p>Fadwa ;) 15. januar kl. 22:41 · Synes godt om</p> <p>Abed Er det ikk idag Irak taber? 15. januar kl. 14:10 · Synes godt om · 2 personer</p> <p>Ibrahim Er man blevet interegeret? Rigtig DANSKER. 15. januar kl. 15:51 · Synes godt om</p>
Translation:	<p>Fadwa: Iraq wins tomorrow don't embarrass me I trust you...♥ [...]</p> <p>Massima: Girl get over it, and let us come to terms with that they loose THE END!.....END of discussion ;)</p> <p>Fadwa: ;)</p> <p>Abed: Isn't it today Iraq loses?</p> <p>Ibrahim: Has one become integrated? Real DANE.</p>
Facebook extract, Fadwa's wall, 14th of January 2011	

Iraq did not embarrass Fadwa as they won the match 1-0. It was Fadwa who brought my attention to this excerpt and we discussed it in an interview. Fadwa explains how Ibrahim's utterance should be seen as a reaction to Massima's use of integrated language and points specifically to the word *indse* ('come to terms with') as being associated with this way of writing. According to Fadwa, Ibrahim evaluates Massima's use of integrated language negatively. Thereby Massima's use of integrated is treated as marked in this context. There are other features in Massima's utterance that could be perceived as integrated language. For example *pigebarn* which is an old fashioned expression for girl. Yet, we cannot know for sure whether this word also triggered Ibrahim's response. Massima ends her comment with a winking smiley which frames the utterance as insincere or fun. However, this does not seem influence Ibrahim's evaluation of her language use as his comment is kept in a rather serious tone without emoticons or other contextualization cues. The matter of being integrated is obviously perceived as a serious matter for Ibrahim. Furthermore, being integrated is

also connected to being a ‘real DANE’, which is used here as a derogatory term by Ibrahim. As mentioned before we know that the term *integrated language* is not understood as unequivocal as it appears in this case.

The last excerpt illustrates the connection between integrated speech and the orthographic standard. Here Henrik writes a message on their class Facebook page, which the students have created to arrange after school activities such as trips to the movies, parties etc.:

Excerpt 10: “Under the given circumstances”	
Original:	 <p>The screenshot shows a Facebook post by Henrik asking how many are attending and requesting everyone to write if they can make it. It includes replies from Salima, Safa, Nadia, and Zinah, and a follow-up comment from Henrik.</p>
Translation:	<p>Henrik: If it happens how many are attending? :) could everybody please write whether they can make it or not and what they feel like doing</p> <p>Safa: Feel* Henrik, you need to integrate yourself in the Danish language like the rest of us (:</p> <p>Nadia: What are we doing and where and when? :)</p> <p>Zinah: I’m in. I don’t care what we do as long as we do it together</p> <p>Henrik: Under the given circumstances, I would like to ask whether any of you are able to attend or not satisfied Safa XD</p>
Facebook extract, Henrik’s wall, 30 th of March 2011	

Henrik’s post includes what is an orthographic error compared to standard orthography: *løst* instead of *lyst*. Safa ironically comments that Henrik (who is of majority Danish background) should get integrated in the Danish language ‘like the rest of us’. Thereby Safa clearly aligns with the standard

norm, but also brings in a public and political discourse that connects skilled linguistic competences with being integrated with respect to the Danish language or society as a whole. This adds a minority/majority dimension. Safa compares the wide-spread societal idea of integration (or ‘being integrated’) to being linguistically skilled in the standard language. By writing the comment she claims to belong to a group of people who is already integrated – that is, a group that can spell. She further compares Henrik to this group or as she writes: ‘the rest of us’. It is unclear who *us* refers to. It could be the other (minority background) students in their class who (allegedly) have integrated into the school system, or it could be the entire group of immigrants in Denmark, or just those whom Safa considers well-integrated. There is a certain trace of irony in Safa’s utterance. It is created by the fact that integration is not usually seen to involve majority boys – the smiley in Safa’s post frames her utterance as playful or insincere.

There is an additional layer to the integration issue in this excerpt. When Henrik replies ‘under the given circumstances I would like to hear if anybody will have the possibility of attending satisfied Safa XD’ he is clearly writing integratedly, using academic formulations and ritual politeness. He thereby draws in the dimension of the notion of integrated that is connected to the locally established integrated speech register. He also responds to the ironic undercurrent in Safa’s comment as he addresses Safa and asks whether she is satisfied with his style of writing. Again note the smiley – this is friendly teasing. This excerpt shows clear evidence that the young people are able to maneuver between different norms of language use. Furthermore, it demonstrates how groups may draw on highly localized language norms, how such local (and peer generated) norms function in interplay with more conservative standards, and how some societally prevalent norms (here that of integration being related to minority citizens) can be re-negotiated locally within a frame of play.

6. Conclusion

This article suggests that normativity plays a significant role in young people’s social media practices as I have illustrated how they orient towards different normative orders – that is, both the orthographic standard and different peer norms associated with different speech styles. In this way the adolescents’ linguistic practices in social media interaction can be described as polycentrally organized. The adolescents’ Facebook interactions and their metalinguistic reflections in the interviews hint at a well-developed awareness of what values are ascribed to different ways of writing. In addition their interactional practices on Facebook suggest that different genres

encompass different linguistic features and that not all people are ascribed the same rights of language use. We have seen how the adolescents' are reflexive in the way they orient towards different norms of language use on Facebook. In studies of the adolescents' spoken language practices (Madsen et al. 2010, Madsen 2013) and in their essays about language (Møller & Jørgensen 2011) we find similar reflexive language use referring to the same registers and norms of language use.

Orientation towards different normative orders on Facebook is the result of an ongoing negotiation among the youth which defines norms and rights of language use. The orientation towards standard orthography and peer generated norms are linked to processes of enregisterment among the Copenhagen youth regarding the street language and integrated speech/writing registers. Facebook is a communicative space characterized by a particular high level of reflexivity (Weber & Mitchell 2008). This makes Facebook data well suited to study processes of enregisterment, because they reflect how different features are associated with rights of language use and how different ways of writing are associated with larger discursive meanings and writers' reflections of social categories and stereotypes. In particular the analysis contributes to our knowledge about rights of language use regarding the street language and integrated speech/writing registers. For example, we saw how individuals tried out a different voice by crossing (Rampton 2005) into features (*sjuf* and *shark*) associated with recognizable categories (*perker* and *Arab*) which they were not conventionally considered to belong to. In this way the adolescents interactional practices illustrates the limitations to the identity one can choose. We have seen an example of how such identity work can be contested by the other participants. One strategy applied was to orient towards right of language use. Such a strategy can be considered as a part of the young peoples' situated social positioning. The same applies when the adolescents for example correct each others' use of prepositions in accordance with the orthographic standard, which also reflects social positioning (see also article 2).

Contrary to what is suggested in the public discourse about social media and language use the orthographic standard of written Danish plays a significant role in the young people's interactions on Facebook. In this way, there is no solid evidence in my data that the standard orthography loses terrain because of peoples' increased use of social media. However, I find that the significance and meaning of the orthographic standard has changed as it now co-occurs with other normative orders – that is, co-occurrence with local and peer generated norms. However, in the interviews I find that Facebook (in accordance with the public discourse) is depicted as a “more free” space of writing.

But what is the reason for such discrepancy between the adolescents' metalinguistic evaluations and their language use? One explanation could be the high status of the Standard in Danish society because, as Agha (2007:147) argues, the ideals linked to the Standard "tends to naturalize perceptions of the register as a baseline against which other registers appear as deviant, defective varieties of the language". In that sense the strong history of standardization in Denmark influences what people consider as normal behavior and "valid" norms. In this way the standardization discourse (as depicted in Møller's quote) seems to influence the adolescents metalinguistic reflections about norms of language use as they tend to evaluate school or standard norms as more serious than writing on Facebook. Also researchers, such as Sebba (2012:5), argue that "the internet and other digital technologies such as SMS have provided spaces where standard spelling norms are frequently disregarded, leading to an expansion of the "unregulated orthographic space"". Seen from an entirely standard orthographic point of view Sebba certainly has a point. Yet, if we categorize the different kinds of writing young people produce in social media interactions as unregulated there is a danger of oversimplification, because that social media writing (as shown in this article) is characterized by various forms of regulation and orientations towards many different and sometimes co-existing norms of language use. This means that interaction in such spaces is regulated both by top down and bottom up movements. Altogether this suggests that linguistic creativity in superdiverse spaces such as the Internet and social media is not unlimited, but shaped by normative forces.

Article 2:

Normativity as a social resource in social media practices

1. Introduction

Digital communication technologies and social media have become important resources in peoples' everyday communication (Baron 2008, Barton & Lee 2013). Therefore there is reason to believe that the increased use of new technologies has resulted in an increase of written texts (Kress 2005). The sociolinguistic image of the Internet as a space for linguistically exciting interaction contrasts with a more conservative image of computer mediated communication (CMC) as a threat towards the standard language. This view of CMC is voiced in unison by authors, politicians, so-called experts, 'authorities' and linguists (see article 1). The claims about the disappearance of the orthographic standard are regarded as a morally reprehensible (Blommaert & Velghe 2014:145) and as an expression of a "moral panic" (Cameron 1995) concerning the declining standards, as described by Thurlow (2006) in his study of the public debate about language and digital communication technologies in English-language news articles.

In this article I describe how adolescent Facebook users from Copenhagen orient towards different norms of language use through various correction practices. That is, self-corrections and other-corrections. The study of script and orthographies has largely been neglected from a social point of view and studies of language and social meaning have traditionally involved analysis of spoken language (Sebba 2012:1). In this article I suggest that the correction of language use give information about social relations among language users. In this way I study the link between *linguistic form* and *social relations* by showing how young people use the form correction to more than just informing about and pointing to norms of language use. The correction practices of the adolescent Facebook users I study include various types of linguistic orientation. When we speak about norms in relation to writing we do not always (or only) refer to standard orthography. Other levels of normativity (such as peer generated norms, norms of writing online etc.) are also valid (Agha 2007). Because normativity is a co-constructed interactional accomplishment (Agha 2007), and because no language use is inherently correct or incorrect (Jørgensen 2010), typos, spelling mistake and deviations must be seen in relation to what norms of language people orient towards in the interactional and situational context. That means, what appears as a spelling mistake from a standard orthographic point of view is not necessarily perceived as such according to other norms.

When correcting themselves and others, the adolescents I study sometimes correct all spelling mistakes, typos and orthographic variations in an utterance. In other cases they only single out certain deviations from a norm. Often they correct themselves and each other on the basis of different norms of language use dependent on the interactional context. Sometimes several different norms are applied simultaneously within one sequence of written interaction. This indicates that corrections of language use are about more than mere orientation toward linguistic correctness.

In this article I wish to nuance the uniform description of social media as orthographically unregulated spaces. I also wish to discuss the conception that young people's use of social media is to blame for their alleged lack of spelling proficiency. I do this by studying how a group of adolescents orient towards different norm centers in their Facebook interactions and what metalinguistic strategies they use when they correct themselves and others. By carrying out sequential analyses of Facebook interactions I will show how interlocutors accept or decline each other's behavior and how norms are treated as situationally relevant. To study this we need to look into both the participants' metapragmatic activities (their corrections) and the social meanings and implications of these corrections. I examine this from the perspective of the participants, an emic perspective. After an introduction to my understanding of writing, spelling and normativities in social media I provide a description of my empirical methods. In the subsequent sections I analyse the use of self- and other-corrections.

2. Writing and spelling in social media

Writing is today a frequent means of everyday communication in many parts of the world (Baron 2008) and written language is crucial in vernacular activities of everyday life (Barton & Lee 2013:16). Young people in particular are known as keen and skilled users of digital communication technologies, but such new communication forms are not limited to any specific age group (Barton & Lee 2013:10). Barton & Lee (2013:16) further argues that new technologies provide people with new and distinct writing spaces. What is particularly new is that texts can no longer be thought of relatively fixed and stable, but instead they are becoming more fluid with the changing affordances of the media (Barton & Lee 2013:16). Furthermore, they are characterized by being increasingly interactive and multimodal. Social media have also introduced a more complex relation between the notions of speech and writing and many more hybrid forms are identified on the web (Barton & Lee 2013; Tannen 2013; article 3). For example established notions such as "audience", "author" and

“authorship” are also becoming more complex (Barton & Lee 2013:16). The relation between what I refer to in terms of *new forms of writing* and *vernacular writing* is that the new forms of writing often (but not always) are vernacular rather than standard (see also Androutsopoulos 2011). Coupland and Kristiansen (2011:20) further suggest that people’s use of social media provide them with opportunities for the creativity and vernacularization of writing in ways similar to developments in spoken language.

Individual variation within written genres is not a new phenomenon, nor is the scholarly study of it new. Since the 17th century, and long before the onset of digital communication technologies, individual variation (not least in spelling) was often found in letters and other private documents (Pedersen 2009:53). Today on social network sites variation also seems to be wide-spread compared to newspapers and other print media produced for publication by mainstream publishers (Sebba 2012:5). This indicates that different types of writing are regulated differently with respect to the orthographic standard (Sebba 2012:5). According to Sebba, types of writing can be placed on a continuum in terms of the extent to which they are subjected to regulation. Some types of writing such as newspapers and books are highly regulated, while other types such as graffiti and texts on social network sites are not, or: at least not from the point of view of standard orthography. Sebba (2012:5) characterizes the new forms of written discourse (e.g. SMS and social network sites) as belonging to the “unregulated orthographic space” where standard spelling is frequently disregarded. If we accept Sebba’s premises, including his (standard orthographic) vantage point Sebba certainly has a point. Yet, in categorizing the different kinds of writing that the young people produce in social media environments as “unregulated”, there is a danger of oversimplification because that social media writing, as I will show below, is characterized by various, sometimes competing, forms of regulation. I will argue that in order to achieve a more nuanced understanding of (the complex regulation of) social media practices, it will be necessary to attend to the various linguistic resources writers have access to, and to the fact that globalization has only enhanced this access. In this way networked writing breaks with the sociolinguistic assumption that spelling is an invariant linguistic practice (Androutsopoulos 2011; Shortis 2009; Sebba 2009). Sebba (2009:36) further point to the fact, that even if there is a standard orthography for a language, variation may be present. Such variation can be legitimated or not. Along these lines Androutsopoulos (2011:151) argues that the grapheme structure of written online discourse is important as a level of linguistic variation. However, as Androutsopoulos (2011:156) reminds us, vernacular spelling conventions do

not replace standard orthography. Rather the orthographic standard is supplemented by other conventions. These may differ from the orthographic standard in many ways, and for instance they may just have a smaller range. That is, they may be recognized by fewer people.

In sum the Internet has not had a revolutionary impact on spelling in the sense that it has changed the possibilities of respelling since the production of new forms and new conventions of spelling happened long before the onset of digital communication technologies (Shortis 2009:240). Even so, the Internet has introduced: “a looser, more permeable sense of what counts as spelling. Spelling is becoming a deployment of choices from a range of options” (Shortis 2009:240). Hence, writing in social media is not a ‘free for all’, but depends on different levels of normativity. In this way social media interaction does not just follow a standard spelling norm, but also other norms that have to do with how young people relate to each other. This requires looking at “orthography as social action” (Sebba 2012; Jaffe et al. 2012) and understanding that normativity needs to be viewed as consisting of various levels.

3. Normativities

According to Agha (2007:126) linguistic normativity can be divided into three levels. The first level is *norms of behavior*, which is described as a statistical norm or frequency distribution in some order of behavior (Agha 2007:126). The second level is *a normalized model of behavior*. This level contains reflexive models of social behavior recognized as “normal” or typical by smaller or larger groups of people. What I will later refer to as *peer generated norms* fits this description. Finally, the third level of normativity is *the normative standard*, which is “a normative model, linked to standards whose breach results in sanctions” (Agha 2007: 126). I will refer to this level as *the Standard* or *standard orthography* in my analysis. Agha (2007:147) argues that the ideals linked to the Standard tend to “naturalize perceptions of the register as a baseline against which other registers appear as deviant, defective varieties of the language”. In this way standard registers in well-developed standard-language communities are hegemonic (Silverstein 2003:219). Norms are often hierarchically organized because the Standard functions ideologically as “the “neutral” top-and-center of all variability that is thus organized around-and-below it” (Silverstein 2003:219). In that sense standardization often influences what people consider as “normal” behavior and “valid” norms. In fact, as Shortis (2009:239) argues, standard orthography has been ubiquitous in the age of print and developed during the emergence of the nation state and print literacy. The standard

language further commonly becomes emblematic of speakers level of education, academic skills and status in society (Agha 2007:169) and as Garrett (2010:34) argues standard languages are given legitimacy and prestige over non-standard alternatives. Denmark is a highly standardized speech community (Kristiansen 2009:167). In a Danish context the high level of standardization can possibly be explained by the existence of a prevalent standard ideology (Pedersen 2009:52) that has led to a history of linguistic uniformity of spoken language in Denmark. This has also been the case regarding written language which has been administered by The Danish Language Board, an institution under the Ministry of Culture, since 1955. Due to the ideological position of standard orthography in well-developed standard language communities, such as the Danish, it is or can be socially stigmatizing (Goffman 1963) or have other negative social effects not to adhere to the orthographic standard. However, this does not entail that deviations from other norms may not also have social consequences as I show in my analysis.

It is important to recognize, however, that social normativity is a “polycentric” (Blommaert 2010) phenomenon. This means that people, on every occasion, may orient to, or feel accountable towards, various social and linguistic norms that are tied to different norm centers. Each norm center consists of one or more evaluative authorities. For instance young student adolescents could orient towards school and teachers, peer groups and different kinds of popular and sub culture such as music, films, skateboarding, sports etc. Also different people have different normative preferences, different normative centers are taken to be relevant in different situations and genres, and the same individual may draw on different centers for different social purposes. Almost every situation people engage in can be characterized as polycentrically organized because even though places, genres and modes of communication impose restrictions and norms for what are appropriate interaction more than one possible norm center can often be distinguished (Blommaert 2010:40). Yet, what counts as good or bad language varies from context to context because different settings, such as for example social network sites, are differently ordered spaces with different normative centers. Even within a single social network site we also find that young people orient towards different norm centers as I will show in my analysis. In this way young people’s linguistic repertoires are polycentrically organized (see also Karrebæk et al. *forthc.*).

Some norms are relevant while others are irrelevant in different settings. We motivate and show to other interlocutors what norms are relevant by the use of metasigns that point towards different

norm centers and through our linguistic behavior. Furthermore, we judge from the response we get from others to what extent they agree that a given norm is relevant. In that respect the metapragmatic activities of correcting each other are about establishing forms of footing (Goffman 1981) and alignment with each other. This methodological approach to the analysis of the social process illuminates people's perceptions of what counts as valid norms in a given situation.

4. Self- and other-corrections on Facebook

It is a common practice among the adolescents I study to correct each others' language use on Facebook. In the literature concerning the phenomenon of *correction* (or *repair*) a distinction is commonly drawn between self-corrections and other-corrections (Schegloff et al. 1977). I maintain this distinction in this article. Schegloff et al. (1977:362) finds that self- and other-correction are related organizationally and that self-correction is preferred over other-correction. Most studies of repair have focused on spoken interaction while there is only little research on repair mechanisms in online written interaction (Meredith & Stokoe 2013:2). For example Schönfeldt & Golato (2003) study repair in multi-party web chats and show how participants often adjust their repair practices in accordance with the particular conditions of the web chat. Collister (2011) studies repair in chat interaction in the online game 'Word of Warcraft'. More specifically she studies what she calls '*-repair' which her participants use to correct misspellings. The functions of '*-repair' will be explained in more detail below. More recently Meredith & Stokoe (2013) have examined self-repair in one-to-one quasi-synchronic Facebook chat. They show that self-initiated self-repair is frequently occurring in this online space and that repair in this setting occurs in similar and contrasting ways to repair in spoken conversation. Furthermore, they show that the preference for self-correction also holds in online interaction (Meredith & Stokoe 2013:22).

Self- and other-correction are turn taking formats with a range of social functions. Yet, each function depends on the situational and interactional context. The term *correction* often refers to the process of a perceived "error" being replaced with something perceived as "correct" (Schegloff et al. 1977:363). In line with Schegloff et al. (1977) I view self-corrections as a type of self-initiated repair of a stretch of discourse. I view the correction of others' spelling as dis-alignment. This can be dis-alignment with the original producer whose choice of linguistic form has been corrected, with somebody else, with a register of practice, situated context, etc. When carrying out self- and other-corrections the adolescents orient towards different norms of language use, and the normative

preferences are often connected with the interactional and situational context of the metalinguistic activity. The potential orientation towards different norms is a fundamental element in Facebook interaction because the conversations take place in a semi-public space (Ellison & boyd 2013) where different people with different normative preferences constantly engage with each other and are confronted with each other's writings and normative orientations. The corrections typically emerge from either what are treated as spelling mistakes or from uncertainties about how to spell words. Yet, remember that spelling mistakes here should not only be viewed from a standard orthographic point of view (Agha's third level of normativity).

I observed different interactional strategies of self- and other-corrections among the adolescents, which I will illustrate with the following examples. One strategy of self-correction was to explicitly display one's uncertainty about the orthographical conventions. The adolescents typically marked such uncertainty by writing (*staves*) ('to be spelled') in brackets after a word. Another metalinguistic strategy is self-correction of a misspelled word by adding an asterisk followed by the correct spelling. Collister (2011:921) refer to this as '*-repair' and argues that this innovative form only exist in writing as there is no pronounceable version of an * (other than saying the word asterisk). Furthermore, she finds that this form of repair can be deployed both for self- and other-repair. Uncertainty about spelling and corrections can also be signaled through explicit statements like 'I don't know how to spell this word', 'oops I wrote it with an "e"', 'I know it is [wrong] it is because I am writing on my phone', 'I know I misspelled it so don't correct it', etc. Such metalinguistic comments on correctness serve different social functions in the local interactions among the participants in my study. Common to self-corrections is that they are conducted to highlight the writers' mastery of language norms. Corrections of others' language may also be practiced in various ways. Sometimes they merely mark the correction with an asterisk (as described for self-corrections), but at other times corrections are articulated more explicitly, such as: 'it is spelled this way', 'you spelled it wrongly', 'learn how to spell', 'can't you spell', etc. Such statements differ in terms of what meta-message is communicated and statements such as 'can't you spell' are potentially more face threatening than utterances such as 'it is spelled this way'. Most of the corrections have in common that they are often followed by metapragmatic comments on the language use in focus of the correction. These metapragmatic evaluations often constitute a key to understanding the social function of the corrections as they often explain the motivation for the correction or contain labeling or categorizations.

Despite the fact that there are many corrections in my data, it is also obvious that the young people do not correct all deviations, misspelling and typos. Sometimes they only comment on one or two occurrences in an utterance and other times they might not even bother to correct each other. Furthermore, it differs whether they orient to standard orthography or to other norms. It even happens that they orient to different levels of normativity at the same time when correcting each other. This suggests that their corrections have other functions than just (aspects of) correctness. Before I turn to my analysis of self- and other-corrections I describe my data collection.

5. Data

In this article I present Facebook data which were produced by adolescents from two grade school classes at an urban public school in Copenhagen. The student body of the two classes was characterized by a high degree of ethnic diversity. As a part of the Amager project (Madsen et al. 2013) I carried out ethnographic fieldwork among the adolescents in school, in the breaks and during leisure time activities over a period of three years. At the same time I carried out extensive online ethnography (Androutsopoulos 2008, 2013) by following the adolescents' activities on Facebook. I did not carry out my fieldwork alone as the Amager project is a collaborative study (Blackledge & Creese 2010, Erickson & Stull 1998). The researchers involved all study different aspects of language use, linguistic and social norms in the everyday life of contemporary children and adolescents (see Madsen et al. 2013). The project was initiated in 2009 when the participants in our study attended 7th grade and ended when they left school in 2011 (a period of time equivalent to secondary school). Since then I have continued to meet with some of the adolescents and in addition I followed all of the adolescents on Facebook. Therefore I also draw on ethnographically obtained knowledge in my analysis of the Facebook interactions. In 2010 most of the young people in our study had a Facebook profile and they regularly engaged with each other through this social network site. I gained access to these social interactions in the following way. I created a Facebook profile on behalf of the project and advertised our new profile among the adolescents and soon we began to receive friend requests on Facebook. We never took initiative to befriend them and we have explicit consent from them that we can use the data provided that all names are anonymized. This enabled me to follow the young people's new media practices (for a detailed account of the data collection see Stæhr 2010). The adolescents in focus of this paper all lived in the same area of Copenhagen, but in terms of cultural and linguistic backgrounds they varied extensively. To the

extent this is of any importance for my analysis I will account for it during the analyses. The Danish text in the Facebook excerpts contains orthographically non-conventional forms. Some of them become the focus of the participants' attention, whereas some are never commented on. I attempt to reflect these variations from Danish orthography in the English translations if they are commented on in my analysis. I have divided my analysis in two parts. In section 6 I investigate the social functions of self-corrections in Facebook interaction while in section 7 I will focus on corrections of others' language use.

6. Self-corrections on Facebook

The first excerpt shows an example of self-correction. It exemplifies how the strategy of writing (*staves*) ('to be spelled') after a word is used and reacted to. The participants are Negasi and her friend Alima. Negasi is born in Denmark and her parents come from Eritrea. Alima does not attend any of the classes I followed, but from my online ethnographic fieldwork I know her to be a close friend of Negasi. This is reflected in the fact that Negasi has added Alima as her sister in the family relation sections on her Facebook page (despite them not being sisters in a traditional understanding of this concept). The excerpt is from Negasi's Facebook wall where she has posted a YouTube clip called "The Duck Song". Accompanying the video Negasi writes the following status update:

Excerpt 1: "Negro humor*" (October 2010)

Original:	
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Translation:	Negasi:	YOU NEED TO SEE THIS ONE! :D haha I died the first time I saw it!
	Alima:	Love it!
	Negasi:	Hahhah negrohumor? (to be spelled)
	Alima:	negro humor* Yeaaaaa!
	Negasi:	Hihihih :D

Negasi initiates her status update by strongly recommending the video she has uploaded. Note her use of capitals and the exclamation mark, by means of which she also urges people to watch the video. Subsequently she describes her personal experience with the video clip, as she writes that she ‘died’ the first time she saw it. This is slang for laughing a lot (‘dying with laughter’). Judging from Alima’s response she shares Negasi’s enthusiasm. In the following comment Negasi categorizes the content of the video as *neger humor* (‘negro humor’) followed by a question mark and the metalinguistic comment (*staves*) (‘to be spelled’). This comment signals insecurity about whether she has spelled the word correctly. Her spelling deviates from the standard rules for compound nouns as she separates the noun into two words (note that I have adjusted the spelling to the English orthographic standard in the translation to illustrate the case of misspelling). Although certainly worth closer sociolinguistic scrutiny the meaning of the expression ‘negro humor’ is not the main issue of my analysis. However, the girls seem to share an understanding of its meaning as Alima writes *Jaaaaaa!* (‘Yeaaaaa!’). The way Negasi orients towards the standard orthographic spelling of the word ‘negro humor’ and how this metalinguistic comment is reacted to is interesting. Alima responds as if it is an invitation to correct the word when she writes *negerhumor* (‘negro humor’) in the correct way (‘neger humor’) followed by an asterisk in the subsequent comment. The asterisk indicates that the utterance should be understood as an act of correction. In this instance Alima’s correction appears as a friendly gesture. This is a common way for the adolescents to react to such kind of self-correction. In the next excerpts I show how self-correction can also have other social functions.

Excerpt 2 and 3 illustrate the interactional strategy of self-correction involving the use of an asterisk as a metapragmatic comment on an incident of misspelling. Excerpt 2 is a part of a longer thread consisting of 85 comments and it is from the students’ shared Facebook page. The students use the page to arrange after school activities such as trips to the cinema, parties etc. The thread is initiated by a comment written by one of the boys called Bashaar. He writes that he cannot attend their next

event because he is ill. Shortly after Jamil writes that he cannot attend either for the same reason. Some of the others suggest that he is lying. This triggers an argument between Jamil and the others that results in various accusations and name calling. The exchange below should be read in the context of this. As a response to Bashaar and Jamil’s excuses Fatima writes:


Excerpt 2: “I have already corrected it!! :D” (October 2011)	
Original:	
Translation:	<p>Fatima: Nooo YOU HAVE TO COMING :-(Fatima: Comee* Safa: Haha, ofc I will not forget ;) and no Jamil I did not check facebook even though it saved me a couple of times ;) Fathi: Come* Fatima: I HAVE ALREADY CORRECTED IT !! :D</p>

In Fatima’s first comment she urges the boys to attend the class activity. However, in doing so she misspells the word *kommer* (‘coming’) which should be written in the infinitive form of *komme* (‘come’) according to the grammatical standard. Fatima immediately notices this – something which happens within less than a minute. Yet, she makes a typing error as she writes *kommee* (‘comee’) instead of *komme* (‘come’). It does not pass unnoticed. Jamil who is already in the business of provoking the others seizes this opportunity to correct Fatima and writes **komme* (‘*come’). Fatima responds within the same minute. This act seems to assume that she has already corrected the typing error. She uses capitals and exclamation marks to emphasize the message of

her comment. However, it seems that she mitigates what can be seen as an aggressive tone by adding a laughing smiley. It appears as if she does not notice the typo in her self-correction until later in the excerpt (in a part not showed here) where she writes *og hvaaa så Komme** ('so what come*') diminishing the importance of the typo. Yet, we can still conclude from her comment that the act of self-correction is an important practice. I suggest that her use of the '*-repair' demonstrates linguistic skills and an awareness of correctness in her Facebook writing. In addition, Fatima's response to Jamil's correction suggests that once you have made a self-correction you are protected against comments on your lack of spelling proficiencies and the like within the same sequence of interaction. Along these lines self-corrections are a way of doing *face-work* (Goffman 1955) which in this case is an interactional strategy to protect oneself from being categorized as illiterate, stupid, non-academic and other character traits associated with not mastering the Standard. In this way it appears as if Jamil's correction of a seemingly trivial typo is a way to call attention to Fatima's (alleged) poor spelling skills. In this way standard orthography is used as a resource associated with (academic) status and success – an association which is also often seen within larger public discourses of language and correctness.

Whereas standard norms of orthography and grammar were in focus in the two previous excerpts as linguistic strategies of managing peer-group relations, self-correction also follows other norms than the Standard and formal correctness. In the next excerpt the level of peer-group normativity becomes more prominent than in the previous excerpts. We shall see how self-corrections are carried out in relation to peer norms and how explicit statements about misspellings are employed as an interactional strategy of correcting language use. In this excerpt Fatima writes a status update on her wall about a visit to the dentist. However, according to her, it is written in a particular way associated with a particular way of being Danish, which I will elaborate on later in the analysis:

Excerpt 3: “Are you on bad terms with the dictionary ;D” (March 2010)

<p>Original:</p>	
<p>Translation:</p>	<p>Fatima: Dentist tomorrow :D last time Wuhuhuuuhhhuu over and done with :)D :D Well okay they [read ‘it’] has actually been fun :D</p> <p>Fatima: MAAAAHAHAHAH EASY NOW I JUST TRIED TO SOUND DANE RIGHT</p> <p>Tahir: hahahahahahHHAHHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA</p> <p>Tahir: It is normal to say all right just as my biology teacher</p> <p>Fatima: Taiir are you on bad terms with the dictionary ;D</p> <p>Fatima: His name is Taiir but some call him TA*H*IR</p> <p>Tahir: Hahahahhah hhh</p>

Fatima’s status update describes her last visit to the dentist but it turns out that there is much more information in the update than the propositional content. A few minutes later, she adds a metapragmatic comment which directs the attention to the linguistic style of the update as she writes: *rolig prøvede bare at lyde dansker iigåås* (‘easy now I just tried to sound Dane right’). By doing so she associates her way of writing with a specific understanding of Danish-ness. It is a very general characterization and we cannot know what specific features or models of behavior she associates with sounding Danish or for that matter what it means to her to be Danish. However, her metalinguistic comment suggests that the adolescents are not only aware of their spelling skills, but also of how spelling is associated with social and cultural models. As a consequence Fatima is able

to exploit her insight into spelling as a way to demonstrate her perception of how to “sound Danish”. Such awareness illustrates the reflexivity of social media interaction (see also article 3). That is, young people’s productions on social media (both with respect to outcome and process) force them to look at themselves, sometimes from a new perspective, which may result in subsequent modification of self-representation (Weber & Mitchell 2008:41). To underline the message of her metapragmatic comment on her linguistic or behavioral appearance Fatima ends her comment with the word *IIGÅÅS*. This is an alternative spelling of *ikke også* (‘right’) and it appears to be marked. Firstly, judging from Tahir’s reaction, this style of writing is not perceived as part of Fatima’s routine behavior. To begin with Tahir shows that he finds her utterance funny by laughing. Half an hour later he comments on it as he repeats the word *IGÅÅS* which he associates with their biology teacher (with majority background) for whom it allegedly is a normal way of speaking. The fact that he highlights the word *IGÅÅS* and associates it with a majority speaker of Danish indicates that he sees it as a central element of Fatima’s performance of sounding Danish. Even though Tahir’s spelling of the word *ikkås* differs from Fatima’s it still highlights the same pronunciation features. They both write “å” instead of “o” and they both contract the word which reflects casual speech. So, even though Danish is considered as a deep orthography (Seymour et al. 2003) due to its inconsistent relations between phonemes and graphemes pronunciation features are none the less represented in writing among the adolescents on Facebook. Secondly, Fatima’s use of multiple vowels and capital letters frames her utterance as marked in relation to her previous utterance. In this way the stylization functions as a metamessage (Tannen 2013) commenting on the construction of her persona and highlighting a performed and insincere (note the laughter) way of being Danish which is recognized by Tahir.

In general Tahir’s comments are interesting because of his spelling, which in several ways deviates from the orthographic standard. For example the word *normal* (‘normal’) usually would be spelled *normalt* and the word *biologi lære* (‘biology teacher’) is spelled *biologilærer* (‘biology teacher’) in standard spelling. Furthermore, the word *ikkås* (‘right’) according to the orthographic standard should be spelled *ikke også* (‘right’). Yet, it would be misleading to characterize this as a spelling mistake (in this context) as it illustrates a written representation of a specific (understanding of a) pronunciation of the word. These alternative spellings are indeed noted by Fatima as she asks Tahir if he is on bad terms with the dictionary. This should be understood within a frame of teasing judging from her use of emoticons and her iconic representation of laughter. But over and above

this teasing it is important to see that although Fatima orients towards the dictionary (a common practice among the adolescents) this must not be seen as an invitation to stick to standard orthography. It is remarkable in this specific instance that Fatima's own status update also contains typos and deviations from the orthography standard. The fact that she only orients to Tahir's misspellings (and not her own) suggests that her acts of correction does not solely reflect an interest in correctness and orthography. Her corrections of Tahir's language use and references to the Standard (dictionary) suggest that correcting each other serve to reproduce academic reputations among peers. Just after drawing attention to Tahir's relation with the dictionary she corrects or motivates her spelling of his name, by writing: 'His name is Taiir but some call him TA*H*IR'. The asterisks mark the letter "H" in focus of the correction. Thereby she shows awareness of the relation between pronunciation and the standard spelling of his name. In relation to the way asterisks were used in excerpt 1 and 2 it appears as if she does so to be ahead of others' potential corrections. Approximately an hour after Fatima's correction and self-correction Tahir replies with laughter. It does not seem to bother him to be depicted in this way. In fact, I know from my ethnographic fieldwork that he is often positioned as non-academic both by peers and teachers. Fatima thereby just confirms more widely circulating perceptions of Tahir's lack of academic ambitions.

The next excerpt illustrates a similar use of self-corrections, but in addition it highlights that the interactional context plays a crucial role in relation to what norms are applicable and who has the rights to write in certain ways in different situations. This excerpt involves a correction from learner Danish to standard orthography, and it is from a status update from Jamil's Facebook in which Jamil has explained that he is going to have a very long day. He writes:

Excerpt 4: “long time no seen, what you do” (October 2011)

<p>Original:</p>	
<p>Translation:</p>	<p>Jamil: Long day tomorrow, get off at 17,05! [...]</p> <p>Rasmus: I start 8:00 and get off at 17:30, and that’s the way it is every Monday</p> <p>Jamil: Yes, but then you are earlier off the rest of the days</p> <p>Rasmus: Not that early</p> <p>Jamil: Don’t lie nigga</p> <p>Rasmus: Well I don’t snowman</p> <p>Jamil: long time no seen, what you do</p> <p>Rasmus: I look at the soccer in the telly, and listen to the music from the youtube</p> <p>Rasmus: *I watch soccer at the telly and listen to music on youtube :D</p> <p>Jamil: the postman always rings twice [written in Japanese]</p>

Rasmus, one of Jamils classmates, is one of the first to comment. He writes that he is going to have an even longer day and hints at long working days being perfectly normal for him. This way he tries to outdo Jamil and trivialize the content of Jamil’s update. This also changes the activity into a (mock) competition which is continued in the subsequent comments. One more change happens,

and this time it concerns the moral character of the participants. This happens when Jamil writes: *don't lie nigga* whereby he implies that Rasmus is not sticking to the truth. Jamil performs this change of footing through a shift into what is similar to a Black English vernacular style of writing. Rasmus reacts by writing: *Det gør jeg da heller ikke snemand* ('Well I don't snowman'). These two utterances introduce an element of color and ethnicity to the conversation and it appears as if the two boys switch colors and ethnic affiliation.

The exchange of roles or identities is further underlined linguistically by Jamil who addresses Rasmus in a stylized learner variety of Danish associated with newly arrived immigrants. This is equivalent to what Rampton (2001:271) describes as 'foreigner talk' (see also Jaspers 2011). He writes: *lang tid siden, hvad du lave* ('long time no seen, what you do'). The non inversion is indexical of this style of speaking. According to the grammatical standard a correct sentence would be: *hvad laver du* ('what are you doing'). Rasmus replies by adopting the same style of writing as he writes: *Jeg ser den fodbold i den fjernsyn og høre den music på den youtube* ('I look at the soccer in the telly, and listen to the music from the youtube'). In this case the diverging and excessive use of the definite article makes his utterance characteristic of a style of learner Danish. Rasmus would not normally be seen as a ratified user of this style by the others (see article 1). But he accommodates to Jamil's style of writing and becomes a ratified user in this local interaction between the two boys. Strikingly shortly after he corrects the sentence into standard Danish marked by an asterisk. In this way he "translates" the utterance into a style of writing that is more recognizably as his. The fact that he adds a smiley in the end qualifies that either the translation or the previous utterance should not be taken entirely seriously. His translation draws on the *form* of self-corrections as he uses the asterisk to frame the act and thereby the utterance can be seen as face-repair.

We cannot say for sure what motivates Rasmus to rewrite the utterance, but it may have to do with the fact that their conversation takes place on Jamil's wall (and not in a private chat) and therefore can be viewed by all of their Facebook friends. We know that at least two other spectators are present because Lamis and Massima (two girls from their class) *synes godt om* ('like') some of the comments. So, even if Rasmus feels comfortable writing in the learner style of Danish in the presence of Jamil (note also that Jamil initiated the activity) he might not feel comfortable or entitled to use this style in public. For that reason Rasmus' face-work can be viewed as a way to

manage his public identity and an interactional strategy which protects him from being sanctioned and receiving comments on his language use. Consequently his motivation for correcting himself should not only be found in the local interaction, but can also be seen as a reflection of a shift into a public persona. Elsewhere I have observed how Rasmus is sanctioned when crossing (Rampton 2005) into styles or registers not perceived as belonging to him (see article 1 for a detailed description). Thus, this act of face-repair which uses self-correction is a way of managing how he positions himself in relation to others and other language styles. Yet, it is harder to explain the meaning of Jamil's subsequent comment where he posts a link written in Japanese script saying: 'the post man always rings twice' (citing the title of a novel by James M. Cain). The link leads to a Facebook page (with content from Wikipedia) written in Turkish about the movie "Tutko" which is the Turkish title of the Italian movie "Osessione" ('Obsession') which is based on James M. Cains novel 'The post man always rings twice'. The use of Japanese script can be seen as a comment on that Rasmus changed his spelling and wrote like a foreigner. So, here Jamil does the same. Yet, without losing sight of the actual content, he also proposes that Rasmus watches the film. This behavior could also be seen as an example of his frequent use of black humor which can be characterized as absurd and often hard to follow judging from the reactions of his peers. Yet, it fits the general frame of play in the excerpt where the two boys play with linguistic resources and social categories. Despite the frame of play locally established between the two boys it is still possible that Rasmus is aware of the possibility of being sanctioned because the conversation takes place in a semi-public space on Facebook. In sum, the example demonstrates how the adolescents use the self-correction format to do other things than correcting typos and orthography. Another central aspect of this excerpt is that it illustrates how the adolescents' linguistic repertoires are polycentrically organized, because they orient towards both Black English vernacular, learner Danish and standard orthography in their Facebook interaction.


In this section I have described different interactional strategies of self-correction and how the adolescent Facebook users draw on these forms of correction when performing other social acts (such as face-work and protecting one's personae). Self-corrections have in common that they are used to draw attention to the writer's spelling proficiencies or language usage in general. In this way different kinds of metalinguistic commentary (the '*-repair' and '(to be spelled)') highlight misspellings and point out the possibility that a word is not spelled correctly. Self-corrections function as face-work and aims at protecting the person against others' evaluations of one's spelling

and the possibility of being constructed as a bad speller and thereby non-academic, stupid etc. My analysis so far indicates that the act of self-correction (excerpt 1, 2 and 3) and correction of other's language use (excerpt 2 and 3) show more than the orientation towards standard orthography, peer generated norms and correctness. Furthermore, correction practices have been used by the adolescents for teasing each other (sometimes over one's skills at spelling), for conjuring up foreign speakers and for basic politeness (by insisting on writing correctly and helping out with spelling). Moreover, self-corrections also involve awareness of rights of language use as we saw in excerpt 3 and 4. In these cases I illustrated how the adolescents adapt to the local genre and to the nature of the medium of Facebook as a private and a public space at the same time. Thus, excerpt 3 and 4 showed that self-corrections do not only involve corrections on a lexical level but also reflection about the use of different ways of writing that are indexical of specific values and speakers. In the next section I will look further into how the adolescents negotiate social relationship in their Facebook interactions through the use of different other-correction practices. In the first part I focus on corrections involving standard orthography. Afterwards I look at corrections involving other levels of normativity and co-occurrence of different norms.

7. Correcting others' language use

The first example of other-correction (excerpt 5) illustrates how orientation to standard orthography is used as a resource in negotiation of local peer status and heterosexual relations among the adolescents. Fatima, one of the girls from the school, posts an update on her wall and accuses one of her friends called Saleem of abusing her. Saleem does not attend one of the two classes I have followed. He lives in the same street as Fatima and they correspond frequently on Facebook, often in a flirtatious way involving teasing and jocular verbal beating (see also article 3). Fatima initiates the update by writing:

Excerpt 5: “I don’t know WHO is that bad at spelling hahaha ;)” (February 2010)

<p>Original:</p>	 <p>Fatima BLIVER MISHANDLET AF Saleem :(17. februar 2010 kl. 20:22 · Synes godt om ·</p> <p>Safa Skal jeg tæske ham for dig ? ;) 17. februar 2010 kl. 20:29 · Synes godt om</p> <p>Fatima Ja taak :D 17. februar 2010 kl. 20:35 · Synes godt om</p> <p>Safa Haha :D 17. februar 2010 kl. 20:36 · Synes godt om</p> <p>Saleem muuuuhahahahaha jeg tæsker dig Safa :P 18. februar 2010 kl. 13:58 · Synes godt om</p> <p>Fatima Hallo Safa er rigtig Stærk :D 18. februar 2010 kl. 13:58 · Synes godt om</p> <p>Saleem du laver sjov :P 18. februar 2010 kl. 13:59 · Synes godt om</p> <p>Fatima Neej jg gøre ej ;) 18. februar 2010 kl. 14:01 · Synes godt om</p> <p>Saleem jo main!!!!!! 18. februar 2010 kl. 14:03 · Synes godt om</p> <p>Fatima neej og vil du være sød at stoppe :D 18. februar 2010 kl. 14:05 · Synes godt om</p> <p>Safa I din drømme saleem haha :P 18. februar 2010 kl. 14:32 · Synes godt om</p> <p>Saleem du skal ikke spille dum :P 18. februar 2010 kl. 16:33 · Synes godt om</p> <p>Safa Jeg spilder ikk, jeg spiller ;) 18. februar 2010 kl. 19:00 · Synes godt om</p> <p>Saleem fuck vem er det der er så dårlig til at stave!! 18. februar 2010 kl. 19:40 · Synes godt om</p> <p>Safa Ved ikk HVEM der er så dårlig til at stave hahaha ;P 18. februar 2010 kl. 20:10 · Synes godt om</p>
<p>Translation:</p>	<p>Fatima: I AM BEING ABUSED BY Saleem :(</p> <p>Safa: Du you want me to beat him up? ;)</p> <p>Fatima: Yes please :D</p> <p>Safa: Haha :D</p> <p>Saleem: Muuuuhahahahaha I beat you up Safa :p</p> <p>Fatima: Hey Safa is really strong :D</p> <p>Saleem: You are joking :P</p> <p>Fatima: Noo I don’t ;)</p> <p>Saleem: You are, man!!!!!!</p> <p>Fatima: Noo and would you please stop :D</p> <p>Safa: in your dreams Saleem haha :P</p> <p>Saleem: don’t blay stupid :P</p>

Safa:	I don't blay , I play :)
Saleem:	fuck ho is that bad at spelling!!
Safa:	I don't know WHO is that bad at spelling hahaha ;)

Fatima's use of capitals makes her utterance appear as if she seeks to draw others' attention to it. It is possible that both Saleem and Fatima are present while Fatima writes the update because Saleem does not write a comment until the next day. Also the fact that Fatima writes in the present tense can be interpreted as an indication of Saleem's presence during the writing of the update. Fatima's update can be characterized as flirtatious. The description of Fatima's physical experience with a boy is reminiscent of the often physical and flirtatious teasing among teenagers. Her 'cry for help' is heard only a few minutes later. Her classmate Safa offers her assistance to beat up Saleem. Fatima accepts the offer a few minutes later. The first part of their correspondence happens on the 17th of February in the evening. The next day the conversation continues as Saleem responds to Safa's offer. With an iconic written representation of an evil voice ('muuuuhahahahaha') he threatens to beat Safa instead. In the next few comments Fatima and Saleem argue about whether Saleem is stronger than Safa. Note that the conversation takes place within a play frame signaled by the adolescents' use of emoticons and the iconic representations of laughter. Half an hour later Safa re-enters the conversation by writing: 'in your dreams Saleem haha'. Saleem reacts to this confrontational (but still playful) comment by writing: *du skal ikke spilde dum* ('don't **blay** stupid'). However, while doing so he makes a common spelling mistake as he writes *spilde* ('spill') instead of *spille* ('play'). Safa does not hesitate to take advantage of this mistake as she draws attention to Jamil's spelling mistake in her reply: *Jeg spilder ikke, jeg spiller ;)* ('I don't **blay**, I play'). The winking smiley used could indicate her joy of Saleem making this mistake. In the next comment Saleem tries to deliver a snappy comeback, by writing: *fuck vem er det der er så dålig til at stave!!* ('fuck ho is that bad at spelling!!'). We cannot know whether he speaks about Safa's spelling proficiencies in general or about the typo in her previous comment where she writes: *I din drømme* (equivalent to 'in your dream') instead of *I dine drømme* ('in your dreams'). In any case he is not very successful as he makes one more spelling mistake or typo by writing *vem* (the equivalent mistake would be 'ho' in English) instead of *hvem* ('who'). Again Safa takes advantage of the situation and rephrases Saleem's comment into a question. Furthermore, she highlights the correct spelling of *hvem* ('who') by writing this word in capitals. This seems to silence Saleem. Thus, proficiency in spelling becomes a social resource as Safa (who I know is very school ambitious) uses it to position Saleem as a bad speller twice, and she (successfully) overrules his attempts to put

her down. In this way the interaction illustrates how spelling becomes a resource for teasing and navigating the risks and rewards of flirting in the same way as physical strength was treated as a resource earlier in the excerpt. Judging from the fact that Saleem leaves the conversation it appears as if academic skills and knowledge of standard orthography beat the physical strength this time. I have observed several similar incidents where academic skills such as spelling are used as a status resource. In this way spelling proficiencies becomes a resource for constructing identities associated with academic success.

The next excerpt focuses on how norms of language use can be put up for negotiation. It further deals with the orientation to peer norms and the mixing of different levels of normativity. I have divided the excerpt into two sections as it exemplifies two different aspects of correction of language use. The status update is written by Bashaar who writes:


Excerpt 6a: “fuck it, people know what I mean anyway >:)” (August 2010)

Original:	 <p>The screenshot shows a Facebook status update by Bashaar on August 7, 2010, with the text "Shuf hendes Got!". Below the status are several comments from Ceyda and Bashaar. Ceyda's comments include "Haha got**", "ok først denne her " også o priv", "o", "du skal ikke lave mellem rumm !!ø " =o", and "Haha Nej ø "o du skal trykke på "ogso lave et ot". Bashaar's comments include "Ved det, men jeg kan ikke finde ud af at lave det", "o", "o", "Kan ikke, finde ud af det.. Fuck også det, fol ved godt hvad jeg mener >:)", and "Jaa...". Each comment includes a timestamp and "Synes godt om".</p>
	[...]

Translation:	<p>Bashaar: Shuf ['look at' in Arabic] her gøt ['ass' in Turkish, however spelled with Danish 'ø' instead of 'ö']</p> <p>Ceyda: HAHA göt</p> <p>Bashaar: I know, but I don't know how to make it</p> <p>Ceyda: Okay first this one " and then o try</p> <p>Bashaar: "o</p> <p>Ceyda: You are not supposed to press space !!ö =o</p> <p>Bashaar: O`</p> <p>Ceyda: HAHA no ö "o you have to push "and then make an o!</p> <p>Bashaar: ^Cant do it.. fuck it, people know what I mean anyway >:)</p> <p>Ceyda: Okay it sounds the same anyway</p> <p>Bashaar: Yes..</p>
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In Bashaar's status update he encourages the reader to *Shuf hendes Gøt* ('look at her ass') without hinting at who's *gøt* he is writing about. This remains a mystery, as it never becomes a concern in the following interaction. Ceyda corrects his spelling of *gøt* ('ass') with accordance to the Turkish standard orthographic spelling of *göt* ('ass'). I do not know Ceyda, but judging from her name and her comments it appears as if she is a proficient writer in Turkish. During the first seven comments Ceyda tries to instruct Bashaar on how to make the sign "ö" on the keyboard. Despite her persistence she does not succeed. After many attempts Bashaar gives up and writes: '^cant do it..fuck it, people know what I mean anyway'. By doing so he initiates a shift of focus from *word form* to the *content* of the word and questions the relevance and reason of formal correctness as being important for the communicative aim of their conversation. It turns out that Ceyda agrees as she writes 'Okay it sounds the same anyway'. Thereby, a breach of standard orthography is locally accepted motivated by rules of pronunciation. In the second part of the excerpt Bashaar's language use once again gets sanctioned. Negasi, whom we have already met, initiates the correction by writing:

Excerpt 6b: “What a language huh?” (August 2010)

Original:	 <p>[...]</p>
Translation:	<p>Negasi: ?</p> <p>Bashaar: ??</p> <p>Negasi: What a language huh?</p> <p>Bashaar: Haha!..</p> <p>It is the only place where my mother can't see the way I express my self negatively . . . that's why Negasi</p> <p>Ceyda: HHAHA</p> <p>Negasi: hahahhahh same here!</p>

Negasi's correction consists of a comment containing a question mark. Judging from Bashaar's reaction he does not understand what she hints at by writing a question mark. Negasi further elaborates by more explicitly directing his attention towards the nature of his language use which she does not approve of. That Bashaar understands Negasi's comment as disapproving of his language use can be seen from how he reacts in the following post where he more or less apologizes for his writing. He does so by saying that Facebook is the only space where his mother cannot sanction what he says. Again Bashaar produces an adequate explanation that ratifies his language use as Negasi laughingly agrees in the comment below.

Excerpts 6 a+b teach us that sanctions of language use do not only concern corrections addressing deviations from the standard orthography. Corrections are also conducted to sanction unacceptable language use as shown in excerpt 6b. In this way correction practices are both carried out on the level of *form* (the correction of *gøt*) and on the level of *meaning* (the negotiation of what is appropriate and language use). Furthermore, the excerpt shows that when the young people orient to standard norms it might well be the Standard in other languages than Danish. Besides Turkish orthography I have also observed orientation to English orthography. And finally the excerpt illustrates that even breaches of standard orthography can be brought up for negotiation, and accepted, if the argumentation works.

8. Conclusion

In this article I have shown examples of self- and other-initiated corrections on Facebook. Adolescent Facebook users orient towards different norms of language use and use different metalinguistic strategies in doing so. Different types of corrections involve different kinds of social positioning. I illustrated how a Facebook user wrote (*staves*) ('to be spelled') in brackets after a word which caused another user to help out with the spelling. In this case the metalinguistic act called for cooperation regarding the spelling. I also illustrated how standard orthography was used as a social resource on a par with other social resources (e.g. physical appearance), and in these cases metalinguistic acts of correction functioned as interactional strategies for teasing others about lack of spelling skills and highlighting particular student's lack of academic ambitions. Furthermore, we have also seen how self-corrections involve awareness of rights of language use. Instances of other-corrections often entail negotiation of linguistic competences and it is not uncommon to see how they evolve into competitions of who is the most competent speller. Self-corrections regularly function as hedges against other-corrections and my data suggests that it is not regarded as a sign of netiquette to correct others once they have corrected themselves. Metalinguistic strategies of self- and other-correction indicate that mastery of the standard orthography is a resource associated with status and academic competences. Correction practices, therefore, reveal how linguistic competences are used as a social resource when the adolescents are flirting, teasing each other, helping each other out with spelling words correctly, constructing themselves as competent spellers, showing awareness of rights of language use, etc.

The adolescent Facebook users in my study are reflexive language users and their reflexive linguistic behavior do not confirm the uniform allegations that young peoples' spelling proficiencies worsen as a result of their everyday use of social media. In fact when the adolescents orient towards standard orthography by carrying out either self- or other-corrections this in itself is already an indication of the continuing relevance of standardization for these adolescents. Yet, my analyses show that the adolescents do not only orient towards standard norms, but also peer-group norms and they furthermore demonstrate capabilities to navigate in relation to these different centers of normativity. Thus, the adolescents correct some spellings while others are only questioned when it makes sense according to the interactional context. The interactional context and the semi-public space of Facebook also influence the adolescents' self- and other-corrections. In my analysis I argued that the "presence" of others could influence the choice of linguistic style in the local interaction. Thereby correction practices can contribute with knowledge about how Facebook users navigate in relation to the affordances and limitations of social media.

It is not a new insight that language users correct each other linguistically. Yet, my study contributes to an understanding of how such practices are brought into play in social media interaction in contemporary society. This is timely considering the large number of critical comments about young people, social media and orthographic competences. Correction practices on Facebook are important parts of adolescents' everyday languaging because such practices reveal the complex relation between linguistic form and social relations. The correction practices described in this paper further reflect the poly-centric organization of linguistic repertoires among adolescent Facebook users and the values associated with different centres of normativity. For example, while corrections of standard orthography involve values such as stupid, non-academic etc. orientations towards peer norms involve aspects of appropriateness, rights of language use etc. Furthermore, correction practices not only involve orientation towards linguistic correctness or regulation of linguistic behaviour, but also local status and power relations. On the basis of this we can conclude that social media (such as Facebook) are not unregulated orthographic spaces and that regulations of linguistic behavior have social functions ranging beyond the matters of correctness.

Metapragmatic activities on Facebook – Enregisterment across written and spoken language practices

1. Introduction

Due to the increasing popularity of social media and digital communication, writing now has a new status in people's everyday communication. Before the arrival of technologies such as the internet and mobile phones, written language in the public domain was to a great extent characterized by one way communication, so that there were few possibilities for instant (and repeated) written replay and immediate response (letters and telegrams being an exception). These new technologies have resulted in a shift in the history of writing, because today many more people use writing as a frequent everyday means of communication (Baron 2008). So written communication has become a common (and possible) choice for everyday interaction equivalent to verbal communication. Social network sites such as Facebook, for example, allow people to discuss more or less important day-to-day issues in writing (and other semiotic signs).

Seen historically, the internet – mythologized as 'cyber space' – has been constructed as a 'world apart' from offline settings (Leander & Mckim 2003:217). However, the new status of writing in everyday encounters and the way social media has been integrated into many people's everyday communication contributes to a breakdown of the artificial gap between online and offline contexts. So when it comes to explaining processes of language change, social media and digital communication technologies are becoming increasingly important for understanding current processes of language change and enregisterment (Agha 2007). Enregisterment, in Agha's (2007:190) sense, is described as a process through which languages, styles, registers, varieties etc. become differentiable as socially recognized registers of forms. Such processes of enregisterment involve an understanding of how performable signs (words, norms, semiotic resources etc.) are recognized as a cultural model by a given population. In this way enregisterment can be described as the relation between the organization of semiotic resources, norms and speakers. According to Agha (2007), normativity should be conceptualized as involving at least three different levels. *The first level* deals with norms in the sense of externally observable patterns such as a statistical distribution of some order of behavior (Agha 2007:126). *The second level* of normativity is defined as "a reflexive model of behavior, recognized as 'normal' or 'typical' by (at least some) actors, i.e.,

is a *norm for them*” (Agha 2007:126). On this level a reflexive model specifies a norm for a given group of people based on their behavior. *The third level* of normativity is the normative standard which is a norm codified as a standard. That is, “a normative model, linked to standards whose breach results in sanctions” (Agha 2007:126). By employing these three levels of normativity, Agha relates the study of language change (level one) (an interest of variationist sociolinguistics) to the study of enregisterment (level two and three). The data I study in this paper can be categorized metapragmatic discourse in the sense of Agha’s second level of normativity.

In this paper I argue that written practices have taken up a much more important role in people’s everyday discursive practices because of the arrival, widespread availability and impact of social media and digital communication in general. However, this is not reflected in studies of language change, as it has not been customary to incorporate written practices. In this way it appears as if only oral language is perceived as ‘real’ language. Yet concepts such as enregisterment argue in favor for incorporating written practices, since it encourages us to consider *all* metapragmatic processes that contribute to make a particular ‘way of discourse’ differentiable (Agha 2007:80). So both spoken and written language (perceived as overlapping aspects of discourse) should be considered. In this article I illustrate how important social media (and the written practices they bring along) are to larger processes of linguistic change by attending to data from Copenhagen adolescents. I do this by focusing on how young people from a linguistically and culturally diverse area of Copenhagen adopt and use linguistic features indexical of speech styles in their linguistic practices on Facebook. I study how the use of such linguistic resources points towards different stereotypes, and what sense of rights and sanctions are involved in the reactions to the use of these different types of marked language use. Furthermore, I describe how the adolescents relate to and use linguistic resources associated with different styles to discuss to what extent spoken language practices and practices associated with writing co-contribute to the same processes of enregisterment. With my ethnographic fieldwork as the point of departure I shed light on these matters by analyzing Facebook interactions and various conversational data.

2. Data and method

The data I draw on in this article were collected among a group of adolescents in Copenhagen. The adolescents all attended an urban public school in a Copenhagen area called Amager where the student body was characterized by a high degree of ethnic diversity. As a part of the Amager project (Madsen et al. 2013), I have carried out ethnographic fieldwork in two grade school classes in

Copenhagen for almost three years. The Amager project is a collaborative study (Blackledge & Creese 2010, Erickson & Stull 1998) of language use, linguistic and social norms in the everyday life of contemporary children and adolescents under the current superdiverse social conditions of Copenhagen (see Madsen et al. 2013). The project was initiated in 2009 when the participants in our study attended 7th grade and ended when they left school in 2011 (a period of time equivalent to secondary school). Since then, I have continued to meet with some of the adolescents in focus in this paper. In 2010 most of the young people in our study had a Facebook profile and regularly engaged with each other through this social network site. Seeing this, I created a Facebook profile on behalf of the project. I advertised our new profile among the adolescents and soon we began to receive friend requests on Facebook. Afterwards I followed the young people's new media practices alongside their school and leisure time activities. In this way I have both conducted extensive online ethnography (Androutsopoulos 2008, 2013) and ethnography in offline settings (Duranti 1997). This provided me with crucial knowledge about the participants in our study across the established divide between online and offline contexts (boyd 2008). Following the young people both on Facebook and in other everyday situations made it possible for me to gain a wider understanding of the connections between the two contexts regarding social and linguistic practices and friendship relations.

The young people all lived in the same area of Copenhagen. Furthermore, from our ethnographic observations and interviews we know that they have a variety of different cultural and linguistic heritages and competences. Bashaar was born in Iraq and immigrated to Denmark with his family when he was two years old. Jamil and Isaam were both born in Denmark and have family relations to Lebanon. Mark was born in Denmark as well and his parents are from Poland and Turkey. Khalid was born in Denmark and his parents emigrated from Pakistan. Fadwa was born in Iraq and came to Denmark with her parents late in life compared to her classmates. Nadia, Negasi and Fatima attend the same class and often hang out together and have family relations to Iraq, Eritrea and Lebanon respectively. Rasmus and Michael are among the few majority Danes in the class. Some of the adolescents appearing in my analysis do not attend one of the two classes I followed. They will be introduced to the extent I find it relevant for my analysis. Furthermore, my analysis builds on semi structured interviews, self recordings, classroom recordings, field notes and Facebook interactions (for a detailed account of the data collection see Madsen et al. 2013 and Stæhr 2010).

3. The relation between text and talk

We know from studies of language among youth in Copenhagen that they are highly aware of how they talk differently in different situations (Madsen et al. 2010, Madsen 2013 and Stæhr 2010). They also give names to the different ways of speaking such as “street language”, “normal”, “integrated”, and “old-fashioned”. In the same way as the adolescents are aware of how they speak in different situations, we also know that they are aware of how they write differently according to different situations or genres (article 1). Furthermore, they are also very conscious of when different norms of language use are applicable and who makes and enforces the norms. Such awareness of normativity is created through both the adolescents’ written and spoken language practices. The awareness is visible in speakers’ more or less explicit linguistic reflexivity. Messages that contain or refer to certain semiotic forms are also metamessages about typical users and contexts of use (Agha 2003). On the basis of our observations of the adolescents’ language practices and their metapragmatic statements, we have evidence of an ongoing enregisterment of different ways of speaking. It has not been common, however, to discuss written language as having an impact on language change, or to treat spoken and written language practices as largely similar in their contribution to processes of enregisterment. This is partly due to a tradition of computer mediated communication (CMC) as being treated as special or set-apart (Slater 2002, Leander & Mckim 2003), and partly because a restriction to screen-based data may seem the norm in CMC studies focused on language (Androutsopoulos 2013). Popular conceptions of the internet being distinct and set-apart have also been maintained by academic work (Androutsopoulos 2006). According to Androutsopoulos (2006:420), Crystal’s (2001) notion of ‘netspeak’ is a prominent example of this as he defines CMC as a type of language “displaying features that are unique to the internet [...] arising out of a medium with is electronic, global, and interactive” (Crystal 2001:18) Also more recent notions such as “supervenaculars”, defined as: “semiotic forms that circulate in networks driven, largely, by new technologies such as the Internet and mobile communication devices” (Blommaert 2011), contributes to constructing CMC as a special kind of language that is set-apart from other everyday contexts.

Since the mid-to-late 1990s researchers within CMC have struggled to describe CMC either as written or spoken language or as a genre of its own (Herring 2011). For some researchers it was regarded as controversial that text based CMC was ‘conversation’ since it was not produced orally or perceived as auditory like speech which is spoken and heard. However, according to Herring (2011) many had changed their view of this in the late 1990s. Since then a number of researchers

have explicitly compared CMC to speech and conversational genres. Some have come up with different definitions and labels such as “written speech” (Maynor 1994) and “visible conversation” (Colomb & Simutis 1996) to mention only a few. However, such *a priori* definitions are problematic. Instead we must explore empirically the conversational nature of each instance of CMC. I argue that neither the concept of written nor the concept of spoken language alone captures the multimodal nature of CMC in social media. Such digital platforms contain far more varied opportunities for people to express themselves than can be grasped by these labels. Instead, along the same lines as Tannen (2013:99), I regard text and talk:

“not as two separate entities – text as written language and talk as spoken – but rather as ‘overlapping aspects of a single entity’: discourse.”

Tannen argues that the employment of the notion of discourse (see also Androutsopoulos 2006:423) functions as a corrective to seeing spoken and written language as fundamentally separate and different entities. Instead she suggests that we think of text and talk as oral and literate strategies that can be drawn upon when speaking and writing. In this way she opens the possibility of an overlap of linguistic resources and strategies from one “genre” to another. The discussion of how to grasp phenomena such as CMC and linguistic practices in new media contexts reflects the historical gap between the enregisterment of written and spoken registers. For example written language has traditionally played a central role in the enregisterment of standard language propelled by educational institutions such as schools and the Danish Language Board (an institution placed under the Ministry of Culture) that have administered the standard norm of written Danish since 1955 (Gregersen 2011). Due to the fact that we can observe how oral and literate strategies are used concurrently in social media interaction, we need to attend to the relation between the enregisterment of writing and speech to bridge the gap between processes of spoken and written enregisterment. One way to study the enregisterment across speech and writing is to look at different kinds of metapragmatic activities.

4. Metapragmatic activities in social media interaction

Meaning is not solely communicated through words, but also through metapragmatic activities. According to Agha (2007:16), such reflexive activity involves “activities in which communicative signs are used to typify other perceivable signs”. In this way metapragmatic activities are semiotic and linguistic acts illustrating the attributes of language, its users, and the activities accomplished

through its use. Such acts can be more or less explicit and implicit depending on the function and situational context of the utterance. Explicit metapragmatic commentary involves accounts of ways of speaking. Metapragmatic activities such as style shifts, performances or ‘stylizations’ (Rampton 2009, Jaspers 2010a) of enregistered styles of speaking can be placed somewhere in between the explicit and implicit, depending on the context. Metapragmatic commentary is endemic in human communication, because it serves to contextualize what is said (Gumperz 1982). Users of social network sites such as Facebook employ a range of contextualization cues or semiotic resources in meaning making, and many of these resources are iconic by nature (Lange forthc.) – that is, they are semiotic resources which iconically mime or reproduce speech or facial expressions. For example the use of upper-case letters can be an iconic representation of a raised voice and excitement; emoticons can underline different emotional states; deviation from orthographic standard can function as written representations of different speech styles; punctuation can function as a reproduction of pauses etc. The study of such metalinguistic practices teaches us how speakers relate to perceivable signs, how different features are associated with different ways of speaking/writing, how rights of language use emerge and take effect, and how different styles are associated with larger discursive meanings and speakers’ reflections on social categories and stereotypes.

Different styles of speaking communicate more than just referential meaning. They also communicate *metamessages* which indicate speakers/writers intentions about what they say and what they are trying to do when using certain ways of speaking, words, intonation patterns, etc. in a certain context (Tannen 2013). Therefore when studying how speakers position themselves in relation to social categories, it can be fruitful to look at a special type of metapragmatic commentary – namely, the use of stylizations. This can be beneficial because, as Coupland (2007:154) argues, “stylized utterances also project personas, identities and genres other than those that are presumedly current in the speech event”. So like other speech acts, stylizations do not only give off information about the speaker but also about the addressee. In fact, according to Jaspers (2010a:14), stylized language use is a good basis for:

“investigating how utterances comment on the situation in which they are produced, how they are illustrative of participants’ perceptions, and how these perceptions can be reconciled with, or rather challenge, inflect and/or reconfigure ideologized representations of language and social behaviour, and with what results”

Stylizations do not only reflect the relation between language and context, but such metapragmatic activities also foreground speakers' perception of and relation to different socio cultural constructs of "languages", "varieties" etc. The stylized performance of personas and genres often derives from well-established and well-known identity repertoires even though they may not be represented in full. Therefore, the use of stylized language also, according to Rampton (2009:149) involves reflexivity:

"Stylization involves reflexive communicative action in which speakers produce specially marked and often exaggerated representations of languages, dialects, and styles that lie outside their own habitual repertoire (at least as this is perceived within the situation at hand)"

Reflexivity is central in relation to social media interaction, and contributes to the construction of identities. Weber & Mitchell (2008:41) suggest that young people's media production (both in terms of outcome and process) forces them to look at themselves, sometimes from a new perspective, and this provides feedback for subsequent modification of self-representation. Media productions also invite other people's feedback through built-in response mechanisms, such as the 'like' function on Facebook. Compared to spoken language, one can argue that written online practices allow for a higher degree of self-reflection. This can be the case in status updates on Facebook but also in retro perspective when browsing your own timeline. Browsing the timeline, the 2012 design made it easier to get a chronological overview and delete or add posts and comments. In this way, it allows users to go beyond searching for old content as it is now possible to re-construct one's self-narrative by posting "old" events you find important and want to share. This makes it possible to edit the way you appear in different situations. Furthermore, when engaging in asynchronous interaction (the opposite is also possible) on Facebook, you sometimes have more time to think over how to present yourself compared to other conversational genres. This however does not necessarily mean that social media users are constantly aware of their self representation, social positioning etc. According to the participants of our study this varies from situation to situation just as in spoken interaction. In this article I analyze different instances of metapragmatic activities that reflect different degrees of reflexivity. To understand the metapragmatic activities I report on in this paper it is essential to have knowledge of the different ways of speaking these adolescents produce and are aware of.

5. 'Ways of speaking' among young people on Amager

The processes of enregisterment I investigate in this article happen across interactions on Facebook and other everyday situations and involve linguistic features associated with registers referred to as “street language”, “integrated” and “old-fashioned” speech by the adolescents in our study. Street language is best described as a peer register. In the participants’ descriptions of ‘street language’ in interviews, we find that specific stereotypic indexical values are associated with the register such as toughness, masculinity, youth, pan-ethnic minority street culture, and academic non-prestige (Madsen 2013). Furthermore, polylingual practices (Jørgensen et al. 2011) and linguistic creativity are often described as an element of street language. In interviews, young people associate “integrated” speech with distinct pronunciation, abstract and academic vocabulary, and ritual politeness phrases. Moreover, this register is associated with up-scale culture, authority, academic skills, politeness, adults (teachers), and respect (see Madsen 2011 for a more elaborate description). It is clear that the integrated register and street language invoke different opposing values. According to Madsen (2011, 2013) values such as academic vs. street cultural, polite vs. tough, stereotypical notions of masculinity vs. femininity, and adult vs. youthful are clearly relevant here. We have not investigated the register referred to as “gammeldaws” (‘old-fashioned’) or “gammelt dansk” (‘old Danish’) as thoroughly as the street language and integrated registers. However, we know from the adolescents’ metalinguistic statements in classroom conversations carried out by two of the researchers from the team that the register is associated with being old, speaking integrated, and wealthy. In this way the register is associated with some of the same values as integrated speech, yet it has connotations to being old and not just an adult. Furthermore, several of the adolescents describe old-fashioned as an opposite to street language. One of our informants associates the term “gammeldaws” with “gammeldaws flæskesvær” (‘old fashioned pork cracklings’). Thus, he associates this way of speaking with stereotypical Danish snacks, pork cracklings, which can be seen as emblematic for some kind of traditional Danishness (similar associations to stereotypical Danishness will be discussed in section 8).

Though we have gained insight into the participants’ explicit metalinguistic descriptions of street language, integrated speech and old-fashioned in the interviews, we still need to identify where and when, in online and offline interaction, we can find the building blocks (or ‘acts of enregisterment’) for what these adolescents have come to see as different styles or registers. This will be the aim of the rest of the article. In the next sections I discuss how linguistic features associated with the

different registers mentioned above are used as a resource in metalinguistic activities such as stylization and crossing. First I will show how these registers are a part of an enregisterment at the face-to-face or speech-level, before showing how Facebook interactions are an indispensable contribution to this enregisterment process.

6. Street language across written and spoken discourse

This section describes how linguistic features associated with street language are used both in adolescents' face-to-face and Facebook interactions. The feature particular in focus in the following excerpts is a phonetic feature [tʃ] which can be characterized as an affricated and palatalized t-pronunciation which differs from the affricated and alveolar standard pronunciation of [t]. From now on I refer to this feature as a “tʃ-pronunciation” when occurring in speech and as a “tj-spelling” when occurring in writing. This feature is interesting to study across speech and writing as it (among some of the adolescents) is very frequent in speech but not in writing. Therefore, when occurring in writing the feature appears marked as the tj-spelling is perceived as being salient marker of a particular way of speaking. From our ethnographic observations and interviews we know that the tʃ-pronunciation is associated with street language by many of the participants in our study. Furthermore, it is often used in mock versions of street language in the media (Madsen *forthc. a*, Maegaard 2007). According to Madsen (2013:9) the affricated and palatalized tʃ-pronunciation is a feature which is both commonly used in routine speech as well as a feature explicitly flagged in verbal stylizations. In some cases it is used as indexical of stereotypical immigrant Danish (as it is spoken among Turkish immigrants) and in other cases as an indicator of street language. The tʃ-pronunciation is also described by Maegaard (2007) in her study of Copenhagen youth as a (at that time new) pronunciation feature associated with stylistic practices of “tough ethnically mixed boys” groups. However, studies done by Ag (2010) and Jørgensen & Ag (2013) document how features associated with street language are also used among girls. Furthermore, the tʃ-pronunciation is also documented in other studies of Copenhagen youth (Madsen 2008 a and Stæhr 2010). In the following excerpts I describe how the tʃ-pronunciation and tj-spelling is used in combination with other features associated with street language.

The first excerpt is from an interview I conducted with Isaam. We are talking about different ways of speaking in different situations and he has just told me about how he speaks integrated with his teachers at school. Then I ask him:

Excerpt 1: "I speak god damn street language man"


Isaam (Isa) with interviewer (And)

Original:	Translation:
1 And: hvad så i frikvartererne	1 And: what about in the breaks
2 taler du (.) taler du	2 do you speak (.) do you
3 også integreret	3 also speak integratedly
4 der	4 then
5 Isa: nej (.) der [tʃ]aler jeg	5 Isa: no (.) then I speak
6 sgu ((markeret	6 god damn ((markedly
7 stiliseret gade-	7 stylized street
8 sprog))gadesprog	8 language))street language
9 mayn	9 man
10 And: der [tʃ]aler ((markeret	10 And: then you speak ((markedly
11 stiliseret gadesprog))du	11 stylized street language))
12 gadesprog	12 street language
13 Isa: ha ha	13 Isa: ha ha
14 And: ha ha okay	14 And: ha ha

Isaam explains to me how he speaks during the breaks at school. He tells me that he speaks street language. His answer does not come as a surprise to us. However, what is noticeable is the way Isaam answers my question. His answer can be characterized as a stylized or exaggerated performance of street language which is markedly different from his utterances leading up to this excerpt. First, he pronounces the word "taler" ('speaks' in English) with the affricated and palatalized tʃ-pronunciation described above. Secondly, his pronunciation of the word "mand" ('man' in English) is pronounced "mayn". During a conversation with Isaam I asked him about the meaning of this particular pronunciation of "man" while discussing different kinds of slang associated with rap culture. Isaam told me that this particular pronunciation is associated with street language and that it originates from the Århus area (the second largest city in Denmark) where it is mostly used by a particular group of rappers. He further explained how this feature spread to other parts of Denmark. On the basis of this, Isaam's utterance can be characterized as a performance or a marked occurrence of street language. Furthermore, my reaction in line 10 where I recognize and reproduce his pronunciation of "taler" also indicates that his shift is perceived as a performance in the situation. With this instance of typification or metapragmatic commentary, Isaam informs us that he associates the use of the tʃ-pronunciation with swearing (cf. 'god damn street language'), with instances of relaxation and absence of authorities (cf. 'the break'), and as an opposite way of speaking to integrated speech. By telling about how he speaks integratedly to his teacher (shortly before this excerpt) he sketches an image of himself as obedient to authorities. When he shortly after uses a markedly different pronunciation associated with street language, he juxtaposes this

image with another, tougher image, as if to indicate that this obedient image is only for ‘special occasions’, when he is not ‘in the breaks’.

In Facebook interactions we find similar marked written representations of linguistic features that contain reflexive metessages. I will show some examples of such marked self-reflexive practices in the next few excerpts. The next two Facebook excerpts are birthday greetings. Birthday greetings on Facebook are interesting because they often call for artistic linguistic performances but within a highly ritualized genre. The aim seems to be who can congratulate the birthday boy/girl in the most creative way and who can generate most attention to his or her greeting. Furthermore, birthday greetings on Facebook are also a good place to look for identity, categorization and identification practices as I show in my analysis. The first is a greeting written by Bashaar on Isaam’s wall on his birthday. Bashaar writes:

Excerpt 2: “Tjellukka”	
Original:	
Facebook extract, Bashaar on Isaam’s wall, 9 th of October 2010	

Bashaar initiates his greeting by writing “Habiibi...!..” meaning ‘my dear’ or ‘my beloved’ in Arabic. However, this is also perceived as a linguistic feature associated with street language and used as a marker of affection. Therefore, the use of ‘habibi’ here can be viewed as an act of showing friendship and intimacy. It is an expression Bashaar uses a lot on Facebook. On the next line he writes is “Tjellukka :D” (‘congratulations’). However, the spelling of the word deviates from standard orthography (“tillykke”). Bashaar’s greeting can be viewed as a marked use of street language because it contains a parodic representation of a certain pronunciation associated with street language or stereotypical immigrant Danish. The relation between street language and immigrant Danish is that some elements characteristic of street language draw on learner features of Danish. The word “tjellukka” consists of a written representation of the same ʃ-pronunciation as described in excerpt 1. From my observations of the young peoples’ interactional practices I know that the use of tj-spelling in writing is not very frequent among the adolescents. Therefore I view the

use of the tj-spelling as a marked act in itself. Besides the tj-spelling, Bashaar's spelling of the word also deviates from the standard orthography as the letters 'i', 'y' and 'e' are changed to the letters 'e', 'u' and 'a'. This further changes the phonetic representation of the word. Together these features result in a written representation that reminds one of a stereotypical pronunciation associated with immigrant Danish, but it is also deployed with a certain ironic distance. For some reason Isaam does not comment on Bashaar's greeting although he is his best friend. This would not be considered a normal practice among the young people in general, but this greeting was posted during a period of time where Isaam was not a frequent writer on Facebook. He received many greetings on his birthday but only commented on a few of them at a quarter to nine in the evening. The greetings he received during the rest of the evening, including Bashaar's, he did not comment on. Yet, the wall post is still interesting even though Isaam's lack of response makes it difficult to analyze the metamessage. Judging from the knowledge I gained about the two friends from my ethnographic fieldwork, the metamessage of this post is very likely to be ambiguous. On the one hand Bashaar communicates his affection and friendship to Isaam by writing "habibi". By using "habibi" to do so he also establishes an understanding of the two as being part of a group of people who speaks street language. On the other hand Bashaar's post also indexes identities such as 'learner of Danish' and 'not so smart' by writing "tjelukka" (cf. some uses of Asian English in Rampton (2005) and of "illegal" in Jaspers (2011)). Deployed, however, with an ironic distance - hence the smiley. Such an insincere use of learner features is not uncommon for the two boys. Several times they have imitated how the local "pizza owner" or the owner of the greengrocer shop speaks followed by jokes about their own religion, culture or place of origin. This reflects an awareness of the existing stereotypes about minorities in Denmark and older generations of learners of Danish.

A similar written representation of a particular feature that is often seen as one of the characteristics of street language is found in the next excerpt. Tarif is one of Bashaar's and Isaam's good friends from the local youth club. He is one year older than the boys and has told me that he speaks Arabic besides Danish and English. Here he writes on Bashaar's wall on the occasion of his birthday:

Excerpt 3: “Tjak!”

Original:	 A screenshot of a Facebook wall post. The post is from a user named 'Tarif' with a profile picture of a young boy. The text of the post is 'TIILUUKAAA!!'. Below the post, there is a comment from a user named 'Bashaar' with a profile picture of a man. The comment text is 'Tjak! :P'. The date and time for both posts is '4. oktober 2010 kl. 21:26' and '4. oktober 2010 kl. 21:27' respectively. There are also some icons and text like 'Synes godt om' and 'Se venskab'.
Facebook extract, Tarif on Bashaars wall, 4 th of October 2010	

In this excerpt a similar use of resources associated with street language is employed by Tarif and Bashaar. Tarif congratulates Bashaar by writing “TIILUUKAAA!!” (‘congratulations’) on his wall and, as in the previous extract, the spelling also deviates from the standard orthography of “tillykke” (‘congratulations’) and the letters ‘y’ and ‘e’ are changed into ‘u’ and ‘a’. So Tarif draws on almost the same phonetic representation of immigrant Danish or street language as we saw Bashaar do. Furthermore, Tarif uses upper-case letters, multiple vowels and exclamation marks to underline the message. This marks some degree of enthusiasm. It appears as if Bashaar accommodates to the linguistic style of Tarif’s wall post in his comment as he writes “Tjak” (‘thanks’). His alternative spelling of “tak” varies from the standard orthographic norm as he represents the initial feature with “tj”. By doing so he ratifies the linguistic style introduced by Tarif. Bashaars comment can also be described as a marked use of street language. In addition to using the tj-spelling (which itself appears marked), the emoticon adds additional meaning to the comment. Because the smiley puts out its tongue, one can argue that the comment must be viewed in a silly frame which again adds sense of inauthentic voicing to the comment. The use of the feature “TIILUUKAAA” could be viewed as a part of what Goffman (1971) calls “access rituals”, which often evoke special linguistic materials with which people negotiate access to each others’ personal territory. Such linguistic material could for example be speaking politely, but also (certainly among friends) speaking impolitely. In this case ‘speaking like an immigrant’ can be viewed as a way of negotiating this access because it makes you ‘look like a fool’ which more or less explains why you intruded someone’s personal territory. Furthermore, the use of this kind of marked street language can be viewed as an in-group maker. It is certainly treated by Bashaar as such. In this way ‘speaking like an immigrant’ is locally enregistered as a practice which is a part of the street language register.


The next excerpt illustrates how street language can be used in parodic performances. It is a post made by Bashaar on Nadia's Facebook wall. Before the adolescents in our study left grade school most of them wrote on each others' walls how they would remember each other. Bashaar wrote about Nadia:

Excerpt 4: "Tjaaak :)"	
Original:	
Translation:	<p>Bashaar: You will be remembered as the one who always SCREAMS AND YELLS in class... But also the sweet The fun.. And a Bit Cool..</p> <p>Nadia: You too ;) .</p> <p>Bashaar: Thanks :)</p>
Facebook extract, Bashaar on Nadias wall, 9 th of February 2011	

This wall post contains a description of both the positive and negative aspects of Bashaar's perception of Nadia. She is portrayed as a very vociferous person, but also as sweet, funny and a little cool. Bashaar first describes her as one who "SCREAMS AND YELLS" which is an example of how written representations – here upper-case letters – can be used to underline a message corresponding, for instance, to high volume in speech. The upper-case letters also frame the message of the utterance. Nadia's response to Bashaar's description reflects the ambiguity in Bashaar's post as she writes "ilm" which is short for "i lige måde" ('you too'), followed by a winking smiley, which frames her answer as not to be taken too seriously. The interesting part of the excerpt is Bashaar's comment to Nadia's response where he writes "tjaaak", again a non-standard spelling of "tak" ('thanks') followed by a smiling emoticon. So here we see another deployment of the tj-spelling in writing. In addition he writes three "a's" and a smiley which adds

an aspect of markedness to the utterance. Thereby he replies in a fun way to her returning the “compliment”. As I have argued, the “tj” for standard “t” in writing can be considered marked because it demonstrates an awareness of and reference to a non-standard pronunciation. Furthermore, when looking at the context, “tjaaak” is the only feature associated with street language, which makes it stand out further. The use of emoticons by Bashaar and Nadia adds an element of flirtation to the interaction, and Bashaar’s use of street language should be seen in the light of this. So in this context street language functions as a way of showing affection and intimacy. This might suggest that street language indexes other values than stereotypical masculinity, toughness, street credibility etc.

In the next excerpt, the tj-spelling co-occurs with other lexical features associated with street language. The excerpt is a post from Bashaar’s wall in which one of his friends, Bilal, asks whether he has been qualified for high school:

Excerpt 5: “tjeløk”	
Original:	
Translation:	<p>Bilal: Gee are you qualified [for high school]</p> <p>Bashaar: I will be told on Friday Inshallah I will :) [be qualified for high school]</p> <p>Bilal: Inshallah :D write when you know anything :D</p> <p>Bashaar: I will Albi ♥ (no homo)</p> <p>Bilal: ahahha ♥</p>

	<p>((two days later))</p> <p>Bashaar: Yes, I am qualified now Gee :)</p> <p>Bilal: I know hahaha congrats :D</p> <p>Bashaar: Thanks Gee :) ♥</p> <p>Wordlist:</p> <p>Gee: Gangster (normally spelled “G”)</p> <p>Inshallah: If Allah (God) wishes</p> <p>Albi: my heart (used in affection as “my love”)</p>
Facebook extract, Bilal on Bashaar’s wall, 28 th of January 2011	

The focus of this conversation is Bashaars’ academic future. The correspondence is carried out in written style containing linguistic features associated with street language. This is worth noticing, as I have mentioned that street language is a practice stereotypically associated with peer culture and toughness and not academic prestige. In that respect they break with the stereotypical notion that activities related to education and academic success are often carried out in standard language (see also Madsen 2011 and Stæhr 2010). The boys employ a range of lexical and written representations of phonetic features associated with street language. Among the lexical features, we find the words “no homo” (expression known from contemporary American hip-hop), “albi” (Arabic, meaning ‘my love’) and “inshallah” (Arabic, meaning ‘if Allah (God) wishes’). The final features associated with street language are written representations of pronunciations of words. The first is the vocative “Gee” (meaning G, short for Gangster). I view it as a representation of a pronunciation as it is often spelled “G” by the boys. In addition we see “tillykke” (‘congratulations’) spelled “tjeløk” with the “tj” for “t” as we saw above. Again the tj-spelling is used in combination with other features associated with street language. For this reason it does not appear as marked as the tj-spelling in the other excerpts. On the basis of this, one can argue that the written representation of the tj-pronunciation can both be used in routine as well as in more marked and stylized utterances just as Madsen (2013:9) describes it in verbal interaction. An explanation of why the two boys use features associated with street language in this context could be that they seek to downplay the serious nature of a school related topic. This interpretation can further be supported by adolescents metalinguistic statements on how street language and street-wise behavior can co-occur with behavior associated with stereotypically opposite values like a positive orientation towards school.

The *tj*-pronunciation is not the only written representation of phonetic features associated with street language represented in writing on Facebook. During my online ethnographic field work I observed the use of another feature which I will refer to as the “kr-spelling” or “g \ddot{g} -pronunciation” when used in writing and speech respectively. Maegaard (2007:86) describes the g \ddot{g} -pronunciation feature as an aspirated unvoiced consonantal uvular r-sound. The opening of the stop with aspiration is in standard Danish extended to an r-sound which can be heard in the distinction between “*krat*” and “*grædt*” (Madsen et al. 2010:106). The feature is further known to us from our ethnographic observations as a feature used by the adolescents in everyday speech (see also Madsen et al. (2010) and Stæhr (2010)). Maegaard’s associates g \ddot{g} -pronunciation with style groups characterized as “foreigner boys” (2007:165). However, the feature is also reported as frequent among the style group of “foreign girls”, while it is not used at all by the boys ascribed the category “Danish”. Madsen (2008a) also finds the g \ddot{g} -pronunciation in her study of young people in a taekwondo club in Nørrebro in Copenhagen, which is an even more culturally and linguistically diverse area than Amager. She also reports that the feature is used among those of her participants who could be ascribed to the “foreigner” category and that the feature is used to construct identities such as “tough urban boys”. Just as in the case of *tj*-spelling, the *kr*-spelling is not that frequent in the adolescents Facebook practices which makes it appear marked when used. Excerpt 6 shows how the *kr*-spelling is used in parodies of others’ voices. The wall post is written by Saleem on Fatima’s wall. I have never met Saleem outside Facebook, but heard him mentioned by the girls as someone they hang out with sometimes. He writes:

Excerpt 6: “Krimme”	
Original:	
Translation:	<p>Saleem: Pppppssssttttt!!!! are you coming over soon at our place ugly? :D</p> <p>Fatima: Yeah wallah I miss you :(Ugly people ahahah my father is leaving on Saturday ;s</p>
Facebook extract, Saleem on Fatima’s wall, 21 th of September 2010	

This is an excerpt from a longer thread where the two adolescents discuss how to catch up. Saleem initiates his message with the onomatopoeic expression “Pppppsssstttt!!!” which is normally used to attract some one’s attention. What is interesting about his following request is that he writes “krimme” (‘ugly’) instead of the standard spelling “grimme”. Writing “kr” instead of “gr”, the word appears as a written representation of the aspirated unvoiced [ɣ]. Fatima apparently recognizes this written representation as she mirrors this in her answer. The use of the particular r-pronunciation is not the only feature in the post associated with street language in this excerpt. The lexical feature “wallah” (in an oath meaning ‘by allah’ in Arabic) is likewise associated with street language by our participants. In addition, note the use of emoticons during the correspondence both by Fatima and Saleem, which frames the conversation as playful. Furthermore, the laughter in Fatima’s post supports this observation. This instance of Saleem writing “krimme” to Fatima is not unique. I have found several incidents where he categorizes her as “krim” in a playful and flirtatious way. An explanation for why he writes “krim” and thereby signals the aspirated unvoiced uvular r-sound when she addresses Fatima, can be that she uses this pronunciation a lot when speaking (as I also often observed during the ethnography). Furthermore, the use of “krimme” is also visually different from “grimme” (‘ugly’), and therefore helps to contextualize the utterance as joking and flirtatious, rather than as a real, appropriate label for Fatima. So again, as we also saw in excerpt 4, street language functions as a way of showing affection and intimacy in the context of a flirtatious correspondence. In addition, I observed her write the following on her wall: What is the most frequent expression I use? One answered “wallah” while Bashaar answered “du er så grim” (‘you are so ugly’ in English). She confirmed both as correct. This indicates that Saleem’s use of the feature is not only an incident of street language in writing but also a parody of how Fatima speaks and sometimes writes. Furthermore, it points towards the enhanced linguistic self-reflexivity on Facebook as she explicitly requests her Facebook friends to comment on her linguistic behavior.

In the excerpts above, I have shown how marked writing closely related to common speech practices is used in the interactions among adolescents on Facebook. Firstly, we have seen that street language co-occurs with the use of uppercase-letters as representations of loudness and excitement, adding an element of performance to the utterance. Secondly, I have illustrated how emoticons were used to frame the posts and comments, and thirdly, I have described how written representations of different ways of speaking differed from their regular spelling practices. I argued that the use of both the tj- and the kr-spelling in writing on Facebook is a marked act in itself due to their rare occurrence. Therefore the use of these features must involve an enhanced reflexivity. This

also characterizes stylizations and marked language use in spoken interaction (Rampton 2009:149). In the next section I describe how such reflexivity is relevant to instances of language crossing (Rampton 2005) and in particular, to co-participants' reactions to such movement across social or ethnic boundaries.

7. Crossing as resource in negotiation of social relations

The notion of crossing is closely related to the concept of enregisterment because crossing and co-participants' reactions to such linguistic acts contribute to defining and establishing who the ratified users of a specific style or register are. This section describes how the participants in our study orient towards different norms of language use in interactional episodes involving crossing. I show instances both where the crossing is sanctioned and where it passes unnoticed. The notion of crossing is closely related to stylization. However, crossing involves a stronger sense of transgression of ethnic or social boundaries. Crossing occurs when speakers use features which are generally not perceived as a part of their repertoire. According to Rampton (2005:270) crossing:

“[...] focuses on code-alternation by people who aren't accepted members of the group associated with the second language they employ. It is concerned with switching into languages that aren't generally thought to belong to you”

The notion of crossing deals with speakers' “rights” or “access” to specific linguistic features. Speakers position themselves and each other in relation to languages depending on the social context. Therefore, rights of language use are not pre-given or static, but constructed, contested and negotiated between the speakers in the course of social interaction. According to Jørgensen et al. (2011), this implies that social categorizations of speakers draw on stereotypes about their relation to specific registers, repertoires or styles. In the next few excerpts I will look further into how the adolescents cross into street language on Facebook and how such transgressions are responded to by others. Excerpt 7 is from Bashaar's wall where he announces that he has shaved – an important event when you are fourteen years old:

Excerpt 7: “Have shaved”

<p>Original:</p>	
<p>Translation:</p>	<p>Bashaar: Have shaved</p> <p>Rasmus: HAAAAAAAAAAAA...then you don't have more shaaark left ;D</p> <p>Bashaar: hehehe</p> <p>Rasmus: You better learn it Jamil ;D</p> <p>Fatima: ;OO THAT WAS A DISS :P</p> <p>Lamis: Hahahahahaha lol laughing.. ;)</p> <p>Fatima: Oh Rasmus tries to be a Perker Hahaahhhaha laughing :D</p> <p>Rasmus: Yep I'm a proper sick gangstar, cough cough ;D</p> <p>Mohammed: Your dog kill you Rasmus</p> <p>Word list:</p> <p>Shark: Hair</p> <p>Perker: A derogatory term equivalent to “nigger” or “paki”</p>

Facebook extract, Rasmus, Fatima, Lamis and Mohammed on Bashaar's wall, 22nd of Nov 2009

The first to react to Bashaar's update is Rasmus who comments almost immediately. In my analysis of this excerpt, I focus on the majority boy Rasmus's comment and how the others react to it. The

comment can be characterized as a case of crossing into street language because he laughingly writes “then you don’t have any more shaaarkkk left” followed by a winking smiley. “Shark” is a linguistic feature associated with Arabic, meaning hair. However, it is also used as slang among the adolescents and perceived as associated with street language. Rasmus would not be perceived as a stereotypical user of street language because he has neither a minority background nor hangs out with speakers of street language in his spare time. His performance of street language appears marked and this is essential to how and why the others react to his comment. It is marked because of the following characteristics. Firstly, the additional “a’s” and “k’s” (in comparison to the standard spelling of the word) influences the way a corresponding “pronunciation” can be imagined. Secondly, the winking and laughing smiley in the end of the post frames the utterance as insincere which, thirdly, is supported by the fact that in writing he puts up an exaggerated laughter in the beginning of the comment. These characteristics may be the reason why this majority boy’s use of the feature “shark” attracts attention among the others. Furthermore, he draws attention to himself through his spelling and the smiley.

In all of the responses, the young people seem to catch the insincerity in Rasmus’s use of the word. Bashaar is the first who comments by posting an iconic representation of laughter in writing, suggesting that he appreciates the non-serious frame established by Rasmus. After Rasmus’ teasing comment about how Bashaar should teach Jamil, one of the other boys from their class, to shave, Fatima reacts to Rasmus’s utterance and his use of the word “shark” by writing: “Oh Rasmus tries to be a perker hahaahhhaha laughing :’D”. She ends by writing “flækker” (slang for ‘laughing’) and with a smiley laughing so much it bursts into tears. Here she ascribes the use of “shark” to the category “perker” and accuses Rasmus of pretending to be one. *Perker* is a Danish equivalent to *Paki* or *Nigger*, and it is commonly used to refer to people from the Middle East or North Africa in a derogatory way. However, it may also be used as a positive in-group marker. Because of the winking and laughing smiley that bursts into tears from laughter at the end of the post, her categorization must be understood in line with the already established non-serious frame of play and teasing. Rasmus stays in the jocular frame in his next comment when he acknowledges that he is “a proper sick gangster”. Being ‘a proper sick gangster’ is used in the stereotypical sense of a tough immigrant boy. In this way he plays on a stereotypical image of minority boys in Denmark as violent and criminal. The notion of “a proper sick gangster” became a nationally known description of young minority boys when it was used in a advent calendar shown on television depicting

contemporary culturally diverse urban environments from a humoristic and satirical point of view (Madsen 2008 b). The fact that he writes “cough cough” (understood as ‘I am not serious’) further supports the frame of play. So, by his performance of street language Rasmus plays with a tough masculine immigrant stereotype (within an insincere frame of play), and then Mohammed seems to react to this stereotypical image in his post the day after when he playfully threatens to kill Rasmus. By drawing attention to the linguistic form of his comment rather than the immediate message with ‘shark’ instead of ‘hair’, Rasmus’ single-word cross into street language can be viewed as an attempt to test the boundaries of entitlement regarding the street language register. In this way, he signals his awareness of the locally negotiated understanding of who is allowed to use specific linguistic features, and this is ratified in the reactions of both Bashaar and Fatima.

In the next extract we shall see that the outcome of crossing can be unpredictable. It is part of a longer string of comments on the annual class photo in 2009. Mark posted the photo on his wall with the text “The Greatest Class of the World...:D”. Shortly after people started to comment on the picture. When it reached over a hundred comments, a girl called Selma complained that her mailbox was full because of the emails she received each time someone posted a comment. Mark intervened and said that he received more emails than her because he was the one who posted the picture. Fadwa suddenly interrupts the conversation by saying that she also got all of the emails. Then Mark and Fadwa start discussing who has received the most since they signed up on Facebook. They cannot reach an agreement over what counts as email and what counts as a notification from Facebook. Mark seeks to end their discussion by writing:

Excerpt 8: “YALLAH SEE YOU!!!! :D”

Original:	 Mark NÅÅRRHH MEN TILLYKKE!! :D 13. november 2009 kl. 21:14 · Synes godt om
	 Fadwa men yallah ses.... 13. november 2009 kl. 21:15 · Synes godt om
	 Mark YALLAH VI SES!!!! :D 13. november 2009 kl. 21:17 · Synes godt om
	 Fadwa ham der han er blevet araber.....!!!! 13. november 2009 kl. 21:18 · Synes godt om
	 Mark JEG SIGER WALLAH VI SES ALLE SAMMEN PÅ MANDAG!!!! :D 13. november 2009 kl. 21:19 · Synes godt om
	 Fadwa HAHA 13. november 2009 kl. 21:20 · Synes godt om

Translation:	Mark:	WELL BUT CONGRATULATIONS!! :D
	Fadwa:	But yallah see you....
	Mark:	YALLAH SEE YOU!!!! :D
	Fadwa:	This guy he has become an Arab.....!!!!
	Mark:	I SAY WALLAH SEE YOU ALL ON MONDAY!!!! :D
	Fadwa:	HAHA
	Word list:	
	Yallah:	Come on
	Wallah:	(I promise) by God
	Facebook extract, comments to Mark's picture, 13 th of November 2009	

In the first line Mark congratulates Fadwa ironically about the many emails she has received. Fadwa responds to the insult by writing “but yallah see you....”. “Yallah” is Arabic meaning ‘come on’ and it is also frequently used in street language. In this way she asks Mark to get lost. Mark responds by repeating her sentence “YALLAH SEE YOU!!!! :D”. Instead of using lower-case letters like Fadwa, he uses uppercase followed by multiple exclamation marks and a laughing smiley. Mark’s usage appears as a marked parody of Fadwa’s utterance. Just as we saw Fatima associate the word “shark” with the category “perker” in excerpt 7, Fadwa here points to an association of “YALLAH” with the category “Arabs” when she says “this guy he has become an Arab.....!!!!”, suggesting that she does not perceive him as a ratified speaker of street language because he is not of Arab descent. However, Mark does not react in the same way as Rasmus. Instead he provokingly writes again in upper-case letters: “I SAY WALLAH SEE YOU ALL ON MONDAY!!!! :D”. In this way, he seems to deliberately use features associated with street language or Arabic to tease Fadwa. The frame of teasing is established by his use of emoticons, and Fadwa obviously gets the humor as she responds by laughing. In fact, there is more to this example of crossing than we can read from this Facebook extract. On several occasions during our ethnographic fieldwork in school, we have seen Mark, whose parents are from Poland and Turkey, trying to construct himself as a ‘perker’, but he usually fails to get recognition for this persona positioning. We have even overheard one girl say to Mark: “I just can’t see you as a perker”.

In the two previous excerpts I have shown how the adolescents in our study reacted to different instances of crossing. In both cases crossing triggered some kind of social sanctioning (within a

frame of play). In the next excerpt, what could appear as crossing is treated differently – that is, there is no reaction to it at all. This excerpt is taken from Negasi’s wall where she writes:

Excerpt 9: “Tjotjalt”	
Original:	
Translation:	<p>Negasi: Nice to see the class again, have missed “SOME” of you really much ♥♥ ;-*</p> <p>Michael: It’s totally me you have missed the most !!!</p> <p>Negasi: Yeah it is.. ;P</p>
Facebook extract, Michael on Negasi’s wall, 4 th of January 2010	

Michael is a majority boy, and here Negasi does not react to his double use of the tj-spelling in the word “tjotjalt”, which is “totalt” (‘totally’) in standard spelling. During my ethnographic field work, I showed this excerpt to Isaam, Jamil and Bashaar at a meeting at a hookacafé, and they immediately recognized Michael’s behavior from school. They further characterized Michael as an odd fellow with a personality of his own, and they said that his use of street language features had become accepted. On Facebook, I had observed many incidents of how majority students’ use of street language got sanctioned, so I asked the three boys what it would take to get sanctioned for using street language. They unanimously concluded that it would depend on the individual and the situation.

The excerpts in this section show how the internet, and social media in particular, give new opportunities for identity work. The participants in our study can try out a different voice with features like *shark*, *yallah* and *wallah* that are associated with particular categories of language and identity that they are not conventionally considered to belong to (perker, ‘proper sick gangster’ and Arab). Furthermore, crossing into street language is here strategically used to access the indexical values of this way of speaking, such as ‘street wise’, ‘tough’, ‘cool’ etc., which hold high prestige among some of the young people. The instances of crossing and the co-participants’ reactions show how norms of street language use are negotiated, defining who its ratified users are.

8. Metapragmatic commentary on stereotypical notions of Danishness

In the same way that specific Arab words are associated with specific stereotypical categories, the use of specific phrases, words, parodies, and proverbs can evoke stereotypic associations to Danishness among the adolescents. The following excerpts illustrate this (although our knowledge of the enregisterment of such ways of speaking is more limited). Excerpt 10 is from a self-recording made during project week in the 9th grade, and Bashaar and Isaam have chosen to write on the topic of “nydansker” (‘new Danes’) (during the week, Bashaar has been deeply occupied working with labels, categories and stereotypes describing minority Danes and different kinds of Danishness). “Nydansker” is a so-called politically correct label – one among many – introduced in the media and used as a reference to minority Danes mainly from the Middle East and North Africa. On the recording prior to this excerpt, Bashaar has just been singing a Pakistani song which he may have heard on YouTube. Massima, who has diaspora relations with Pakistan, laughs. Then, for some reason a boy from the class (who cannot be identified because of the poor sound of the recording) says:

Excerpt 10: “let’s have a cold Carlsberg after this eh”

Bashaar (Bas), Jamil (Jam) with interviewer (And)

Original:	Translation:
1 Boy: xxx er du lige blevet	1 Boy: xxx have you just become
2 dansker	2 Danish
3 Bas: for helvede ((L-kbh	3 Bas: Damn it ((Low Copenhagen
4 udtale))altså hvad sig	4 pronunciation)) well what say
5 [/] hvad hvad mener du når du	5 [/] what what do you mean by
6 siger dansker	6 saying Dane
7 Jam: han sagde nydansker	7 Jam: he said new Dane
8 Bas: nydansker ((stigende	8 Bas: new Dane ((rising
9 intonation)) der var den min	9 intonation))that’s it my
10 ven (.) sådan skal det	10 friend (.) that’s the way it
11 være Jamil vi tager en kold	11 is Jamil let’s have a cold
12 Carlsberg efter der her hvad	12 Carlsberg after this eh

The question initiating the exchange – “have you just become Danish” – reflects an understanding of Danish as something that you can “become” and not something that you “are” (see article 1) for similar non-essentialist statement about heritage and belonging). Bashaar answers with a stylized utterance, “for helvede” (‘damn it’), in which the fronting and prolongation of the vowels is characteristic of traditional low Copenhagen associated with working class. Furthermore, we know from our recordings and fieldwork that Bashaar only uses the words “for helvede” (‘damn it’) for fun or in stylized performances of stereotypical Danishness. In line 5 he asks the boy: “what do you mean by saying Dane”, which also suggests that “being a Dane” is not a fixed notion (at least not for Bashaar). In line 7, Jamil corrects Bashaar, saying that the boy said “nydansker” (‘new Dane’).

It seems that this was the answer Bashaar was waiting for, as with a rising intonation he says: “new Dane, that’s it my friend”, adding “that’s the way it is Jamil, let’s have a cold Carlsberg after this”. Judging from his insincere tone of voice, the sudden shift into a non-routine style, and the mentioning of beer (which he does not drink), the utterance is stylized. During fieldwork I have overheard Bashaar and his friend Isaam play with similar stereotypes several times, and one character made up by Isaam is called Claus. He is characterised as an elderly man who frequently visits the local pubs in Amager, and in Isaam’s impersonation, Claus says ‘for helvede’ (‘damn it’) in ways that resemble Bashaar’s pronunciation in excerpt 10. In fact, beer drinking and being a “new dane” are not normally seen as connected, and their association in Bashaar’s utterance may heighten the jocular frame.

Excerpt 11 is a status update from Negasi’s Facebook wall, and it is a part of a longer thread. Negasi has posted a video on her wall with a children’s song called “do you wanna be mine”, and the video is accompanied by an update where she asks the same question. One of her friends, Fatima, responds with “I am already yours”. Then the two girls begin to tease each other. The main subject of their jocular comments concerns their craving for cookies, and the last insult posted by Negasi reads: “if a person told you that you would get cookies if you travelled to Canada, you would do it”. Fatima replies:

Excerpt 11: “And you call me a Dane”	
Original:	<p>[...]</p> <p> Fatima løgn og latin, jeg ikke rigtig glad for de ting ;* heheeh 18. oktober 2010 kl. 19:03 · Synes godt om</p> <p> Negasi Og dueh siger at jeg er dansker -. løgn og latin? girl what the fuck? 18. oktober 2010 kl. 22:26 · Synes godt om</p> <p> Fatima hold kæft løgn og latin er ikke dansk hahahah 19. oktober 2010 kl. 12:09 · Synes godt om</p>
Translation:	<p>Fatima: it’s all guff, I’m really not into these things ;* heheeh</p> <p>Negasi: And you call me a Dane -. it’s all Guff? Girl what the fuck?</p> <p>Fatima: shut up it’s all guff is not Danish hahahah</p>
Facebook extract, Fatima on Negasi’s wall, 19 th of October 2010	

Fatima here denies the alleged craving for cookies, writing that she is not really into such things. But the winking and kissing smiley followed by laughter indicates a playful frame. Negasi then recycles Fatima’s use of the proverb “løgn og latin” (‘it’s all Guff’), which she associates with being Danish, when she says: “and you call me a Dane -.- it’s all Guff? Girl what the fuck”. In our fieldwork, we have often noticed these girls calling each other Danes, both in negative and positive ways. In this excerpt Negasi indirectly refers to Fatima as a Dane because she uses the proverb “løgn og Latin” (‘it’s all Guff’). In doing so, she identifies the proverb with a way of being Danish that Fatima does not align, as she answers with “‘it’s all Guff’ is not Danish”. The sense of irony, mediated by Fatima’s laughter, suggests that she actually shares Negasi’s interpretation of the proverb being associated with Danishness. In sum, Fatima is ascribed to a category on the basis of her use of a proverb, but she resists this categorization.

The final excerpt also shows the use of proverbs, although we can see how such phrases are re-worked and de-contextualized. In Excerpts 12(a) and 12(b), Jamil has posted a video with the title “Arab shooting gun test”. The video depicts a group of Middle Eastern looking men making a practical joke, and it involves a rifle being tuned to such an extent that the recoil knocks the shooter over. A slow motion sequence of the shooter’s surprised and scared reaction appears after each one has fired the weapon, and this is followed by a sequence of laughter which constructs the shooters as stupid. Jamil seems rather amused by the video as he writes:

Excerpt 12 (a): “IT IS WAY OUT IN THE SKY-BLUE”	
Original:	 <p>The screenshot shows a Facebook post by Jamil. The post title is "Arab Shooting Gun Test" with a link to a YouTube video. The post text says: "i'm sure alot of you seen the first guy shooting in this video before... this is a complete test footage of these guys basically breaking their shoulders with this insane gun". The post is dated "8. marts 2010 kl. 19:17" and has "Synes godt om" and "Del" buttons. There are four replies: Rasmus (8. marts 2010 kl. 19:59), Jamil (8. marts 2010 kl. 20:00), Rasmus (8. marts 2010 kl. 20:02), and Khalid (8. marts 2010 kl. 20:34).</p>
Translation:	<p>Jamil: hhahhah you have to see this</p>

Rasmus:	haha, it cracks me up!! None of them can control the gun :D
Jamil:	no they have tuned the gun
Rasmus:	I know :)
Khalid:	the future of Jamil

Facebook extract, Rasmus and Khalid on Jamil’s wall, 8th of March 2010

In 12(a), Rasmus’s reaction to Jamil’s post shows that he is also rather amused by the video. He also states the obvious – that none of them can control the gun. Jamil explains that this is because the gun has been tuned, which Rasmus is already aware of, judging from his following comment. Khalid then posts an insulting comment directed to Jamil, and this is open to several interpretations. In one interpretation, Khalid is suggesting that Jamil has a future as a stupid Arab of the kind depicted in the video, and it is possible that in this comparison, Khalid is also playing with the stereotype of minority boys being unsuccessful and without a proper future. Jamil reacts as follows:

Excerpt 12 (b): “IT IS WAY OUT IN THE SKY-BLUE”	
Original:	
Translation:	Jamil: COME ON PLAIN SAILING

Rasmus:	PLUMS FALL IN TO HIS MOUTH (the direct translation is ‘fried doves’)
Khalid:	IT IS WAY OUT IN THE SKY-BLUE
Jamil:	WAY OUT IN THE SKY-BLUE
Rasmus:	TUBORG
Khalid:	me I Jamil think alike
Khalid:	OUR BEER OUR FIGHT
Jamil:	Bloody me
Jamil:	our beer our everyday
Rasmus:	IT IS PLAIN SAILING!!
Jamil:	yes ofc
Khalid:	I will also have a go.. IT IS PLAIN SAILING!!!

Facebook extract, Rasmus and Khalid on Jamil’s wall, 8th of March 2010

Jamil reacts to Khalid with “hold da op” (‘come on’ in English), followed by a traditional Danish proverb “lige ud i landevejen” (equivalent to ‘plain sailing’). But he uses the preposition “i” (‘in’) instead of “af” (‘at’) which would be the correct preposition in standard grammar, and Rasmus points this out in his last comment. The use of the expressions “hold da op” and “plain sailing” are very atypical for Jamil, judging from my knowledge of how he usually writes on Facebook and his everyday ways of speaking. So I showed him the excerpt during an informal meeting at a restaurant in Copenhagen. He explained that they were inspired to use these expressions by their old German teacher in grade school – an elderly woman who according to Jamil was a frequent user of old-fashioned proverbs. So the language use in this excerpt can be interpreted as a stylized parody or performance of a specific way of speaking associated with their old teacher. This also explains the capital letters throughout the conversation in this excerpt, which they appear to use to mark another’s voice while the lower-case letters mark their own. In addition, the comments are written within a time span of 4 minutes, and many of them are overlapping. So the activity of writing old-fashioned proverbs seems to be competitive, initiated by Jamil’s answer to Khalid’s insult (I have found several other examples on Facebook of proverbs being used in jocular ways among the boys).

In response to Jamil’s “HOLD DA OP LIGE UD I LANDEVEJEN” (‘come on plain sailing’), Rasmus writes “STEGTE DUER” – a direct translation into English is ‘fried doves’ – which is part of the saying “der flyver ingen stegte duer ind i munden” (broadly equivalent to ‘he is waiting for plums to fall into his mouth’). This is sufficient for the others, and Khalid continues by writing “HELT UDE I DET HIMMELBLÅ” (‘way out in the sky-blue’ in direct translation), which again

involves some reshaping of the conventional proverbial form and seems to be a compilation of two traditional Danish proverbs: “helt ude i skoven” and “må jeg bede om mine himmelblå”, which mean ‘it is way out’ and ‘really now!’. Even so, ‘way out in the sky-blue’ seems to be an existing and valid expression among the boys, as Jamil and Khalid write exactly the same wording at the same time. Khalid further comments that they must think alike, which supports this interpretation. Then Rasmus brings in the theme of beer drinking by writing ‘Tuborg’ (the second largest brewery in Denmark owned by the Carlsberg group), and, as in Bashaar’s mentioning of Carlsberg in Excerpt 10, this seems to evoke the stereotype of traditional Danishness. Khalid follows up on the new theme with ‘our beer our fight’, an official Carlsberg slogan, which again refers to a stereotypical notion of Danish solidarity. Jamil responds with “kraft edeme da osse” (equivalent to ‘bloody hell’), which also resembles Bashaar’s “for helvede” (‘damn it’) in excerpt 10 in evoking the low Copenhagen traditionally associated with working class speech. Jamil then continues with the theme of beer and solidarity by writing ‘our beer our everyday’ – this draws on the 1990s ‘our beer’ Carlsberg slogan but adds ‘our everyday’, thereby inventing a slogan of his own, presenting beer drinking as a significant part of the culture. But even though the boys reformulate, combine and add new meaning to the different traditional Danish proverbs, it is not as if ‘anything goes’. So Rasmus, for example, corrects Jamil’s use of prepositions from “i” (‘in’) to “af” (‘of’) (see article 1 for similar corrections), and Jamil reacts with ‘yes ofc’, acting as if he already knew. Khalid’s last comment ‘I will also have a go’ points towards the reflexivity of this activity – it is something that they can sometimes ‘have a go’ at.

It is not obvious what triggers this activity, beyond it being the reaction to an insult. Maybe Jamil tries to divert their attention from Khalid’s remark about his poor future by redirecting it to another target, their former teacher. Alternatively, the proverbs might serve to counter the depiction of Jamil as a ‘stupid Arab’ (cf. ‘the future of Jamil’), emphasising his ‘non-Arabness’ or indeed his Danishness. At the same time, this is done in an jocular way, moving from ‘non-Dane’ to an exaggerated Danishness with old- and re-fashioned proverbs, evoking their German teacher, referring to beer (which he does not drink at all), and using traditional signs of working class speech like pronunciation and swearing.

9. Concluding remarks

This paper shows how linguistic resources associated with different speech styles are used in writing on Facebook. I have shown how marked written representations of speech styles are sometimes similar to stylization and crossing in verbal interaction. Sociolinguistic variation and development of this kind is not documented to the same extent in written genres in Denmark because written language has traditionally been more conservative than speech (Pedersen 2009, Gregersen 2011), and because language change has been reflected much more slowly in writing. But social media platforms and the enhanced opportunity they provide for everyday uses of language in writing result in a closer connection between spoken and written vernacular styles. As Tannen (2013) suggests, both oral and literate strategies are used concurrently in social media interaction.

In the paper, I have attended to the relationship between the enregisterment of writing and speech, and I have found a similar use of registers across social media communication and everyday face-to-face interaction among my adolescent participants. What is particularly striking is the high degree of reflexivity shown in their social media interactions. This is evident in metapragmatic activities such as stylization, crossing and corrections of language use. Metapragmatic commentary in digital media platforms is a fruitful site for studying processes of enregisterment, because it shows the ways different features are associated with different verbal and literate strategies in ‘vernacular’ writing, how rights of language use emerge and take effect, and how different ways of speaking are associated with larger discursive meanings and with speaker’s reflections on social categories and stereotypes.

The metapragmatic activities described in this paper contribute to our knowledge of the enregisterment of street language and of ways of speaking associated with traditional Danishness among Copenhagen youth. Spoken and written language practices seem to be part of similar processes of enregisterment. Everyday language use on Facebook reveals processes of enregisterment and orientations to language norms that correspond to those found in speech. For this reason, it is necessary for the study of language variation and language change in contemporary societies to include everyday digital media practices.

Article 4:

The appropriation of transcultural flows among Copenhagen youth – The case of Illuminati

1. Introduction

Conspiracy theories are all around us. We have all at some point in our lives heard stories about how this or that mystical force or secret society made a bid for world domination. I came across such stories circulating among a group of boys during my ethnographic field work in a classroom at a Copenhagen grade school. I heard the boys' talk about symbols and about how a secret society dating back to Enlightenment and the freemasons was to take over the world. They referred to this as "Illuminati". "Everyone is Illuminati" I overheard one boy say to another while watching a video at one of their computers. Soon Illuminati and the Illuminati society came to dominate the everyday life of the boys. Stories picked up from the Internet and YouTube videos about how politicians and celebrities were associated with Illuminati permeated the everyday life of the boys. They began to identify symbols of Illuminati everywhere (not only on the Internet), they started to throw up secret hand signs, and they made up their own initiation rituals into Illuminati. Simultaneously the boys wrote about it and posted videos about Illuminati on Facebook. Clearly, I had witnessed how a conspiracy theory took roots and got appropriated in a local community of practice propelled by the Internet and processes of globalization. How all this happened I describe in this paper.

Late modern globalization processes are characterized by facilitating a compression of time and space (Giddens 2006:51). Such processes result in new patterns of global activity and global organization and the spreading of communities and cultures, thereby globalization involves an intensified worldwide flow of capital, people, goods and discourses (Blommaert 2010). In this article I focus on a particular global flow of discourse and its local appropriations. More specifically, I engage with a globally widespread conspiracy phenomena dating back to the enlightenment era: Illuminati (see section 3), and I discuss how a group of young Copenhagen boys engaged with this, through different popular cultural media productions. Globalization has mainly been driven by the development and spread of information and communication technologies. Because of the Internet and particularly the popularity of social media it is possible to connect with other people over great and small distances. In this way the Internet has intensified the scope and speed of communication and exchange of global flows (Rymes 2012:226). Thus the widespread use of the Internet characteristic for most of the world is an important factor in the acceleration of

globalization that allow us to get in touch with all kinds of cultural phenomena. But can we – as sociolinguists – describe such globalization processes?

According to Pennycook (2007:25) globalization can be described as: “a series of global linkages that render events in one location of potential and immediate importance in other, quite distant locations”. Such linkages involve a flow or movement from one place to another. However, Pennycook (2007:24) argues that we need a flexible way of thinking of the relation between the global and the local than mere movement between two axes. Thus globalization does not only entails the uptake of global practices in the local (the so called McDonaldization or CocaColonization), but also the processes of appropriation of such flows. That is, how borrowed practices or elements are integrated in the creation of new local practices (Hepp 2008). Of course this happens according to different rules and norms depending on the specific local contexts (Blommaert 2010:23). According to Leppänen (2012:1) transnational flows have the capacity to mediate lifestyles and categories of identification to which people around the globe can subscribe. Identification with the Illuminati discourse is an example of this.

Online platforms such as YouTube and Facebook (just to mention a few relevant for this paper) are vehicles for such kind of self-expression, content sharing, and engagement in global cultural flows. They are driven by networked technologies that create multimodal and complex opportunities for engagement with people from all over the world and in our local communities of practice. In this respect the Internet is an important factor in the way people, business and discourses move about the globe. In Europe, such movements have contributed to a development of the societies into more culturally and linguistically diverse over the past decades (Blommaert & Rampton 2011). This intensified socio-cultural diversity is coined “super-diversity” by Vertovec (2006, 2010). The Internet works across national borders, languages, and some scholars argue that it is therefore a super-diverse space beyond comparison (Varis & Wang 2011). The Internet seems to offer an inexhaustible range of possibilities for self-expression and formation of social relations, and an endless number of opportunities of engagement in transnational and transcultural flows such as music and fashion (Blommaert & Varis 2012). In this respect the appropriation of the conspiracy culture of Illuminati imagery is an example of globalization. Furthermore, the appropriation of Illuminati discourse highlights the importance of new media in relation to superdiversity as it illustrates how new layers of cultural diversity are brought about by the Internet.

Several historical accounts have been written about Illuminati as a conspiracy theory both by experts (e.g. Aupers 2012, Locke 2009) and writers of popular science (e.g. Dice 2009). However, the appropriation of Illuminati discourse in young people's life worlds has not yet (to my knowledge) been approached within the sociolinguistic framework. Yet, other studies of the uptake of popular cultural discourse within sociolinguistics (Leppänen & Häkkinen 2012, Peuronen 2011), new literacy studies (Williams 2008) and cultural studies (ex. Ito et al. 2010) are largely emergent within these fields of study. The purpose of this paper is to present how adolescents in a linguistically and culturally diverse area of Copenhagen relate to global cultural flows associated with the phenomenon of *Illuminati* (henceforward I write 'Illuminati' in the plural form because I refer to the ideology and not the Latin meaning of the word) in their social interactions in different everyday contexts. The flows are appropriated through the adolescents' new media practices, in particular watching videos on YouTube. YouTube is a social network site and it is mainly used to view and share videos. However, YouTube also enables people to post comments to the videos, to establish a personal profile page (so-called "channel pages"), and to befriend other users. None of the adolescents in my study have a profile page on YouTube. Instead they share videos via Facebook or simply by showing them to each other on their computers or mobile phones when located physically in the same room. Most studies about YouTube deal with how users interact and engage with each other through videos and comments to the videos (e.g. Leppänen & Häkkinen 2012; Rymes 2012). However, in this study I deal with how transcultural flows are appropriated through YouTube, but also how they then spread to other everyday practices. In this way I do not study social interaction on YouTube, but rather how YouTube is used to share content. I focus on two key topics. Firstly, I look at how the adolescents align and dis-align with the globally widespread concept of Illuminati and how their engagement with this phenomenon unfolds in different everyday situations and on Facebook. Secondly, I study how Illuminati is used as a resource in the young people's social everyday practices. I do so in order to describe how this particular discourse about the world affects their everyday life. Methodologically I examine the appropriation of the global concept of Illuminati through interaction analysis of (1) statements from conversations with the young people and (2) the young people's interactions on Facebook and in other everyday situations.

2. Data and method

I have carried out ethnographic fieldwork as a part of the Amager project (Madsen et al. 2013) in two grade school classes in Copenhagen. As a team of researchers (Blackledge & Creese 2010; Erickson & Stull 1998) we study language use and linguistic and social norms in the everyday life of contemporary children and adolescents under the current superdiverse social conditions of Copenhagen (for a more thorough presentation of Copenhagen as a superdiverse metropolis see Jørgensen et al. 2011; Madsen et al. 2013). When we began our work in the Amager Project in 2009 (Madsen et al. 2013) the young people attended 7th grade (the equivalent to secondary school). Our fieldwork among the adolescents ended when the young people graduated in 2011. However, it only ended for some of the adolescents involved in the project. Subsequently I have been in regular contact with some of the participants on Facebook and occasionally met with the group of boys in focus in this paper. In 2010 I created a Facebook profile on behalf of the project. At that time I had already followed the young people for one year. Therefore my connection to their online community went through my everyday relation to adolescents. In this way I have both conducted extensive online ethnography (Androutsopoulos 2008) and ethnography in offline settings (Duranti 1997, Rampton et al. 2004). The knowledge I gained from interviews, sound recordings from different everyday settings and my offline ethnographic observations provided me with crucial knowledge about the participants. This allowed me to get a better understanding of the social practices and friendship relations on Facebook and vice versa. The boys I study in this paper all attended the same school and lived in the same area of Copenhagen. Furthermore, some had diasporic relations to other cultures and languages. Bashaar is born in Iraq, but immigrated to Denmark with his family when he was two years old. Jamil and Isaam are both born in Denmark, but have family relations to Lebanon. Thehan has diasporic relations to Sri Lanka. David and Michael are majority Danes born and raised in Copenhagen. Nadia and Negasi have family relations to Iraq and Eritrea respectively and are just as David and Michael not part of the “Illuminati group”. My study of the boys’ appropriation of transcultural flows in their everyday practices builds on semi structured interviews, self recordings, classroom recordings, field notes and Facebook interactions (for a detailed account of the data collection see Madsen et al. 2013; Stæhr 2010).

3. Illuminati and conspiracy culture

One of the driving forces behind conspiracy theories are “nothing is what it seems”. In conspiracy culture reality is always, according to Aupers (2012), a *staged* reality that covers up the fact that our lives in reality are controlled by evil forces. Such a view of a staged reality is a recurrent theme in

adolescents' stories about the Illuminati society. Conspiracy theories and conspiracy culture has evolved over the past decades from an exotic and deviant phenomenon to a more common narrative that has spread through the media (Byford 2011). Furthermore, conspiracy theories have become a commonplace feature of contemporary popular culture (Locke 2009). Historically, such theories have been a part of Western culture for a long time and can be traced back to the Christian crusaders in the Middle Ages and theories about Jews and secret societies of Templars, Illuminati and Freemasons (Aupers 2012). Today the Internet plays an important role in the proliferation of conspiracy theories. According to Aupers (2012) it has to do with an increased distrust in the mass media and traditional journalism which by some are perceived as being manipulative. Internet fora, websites and YouTube, as alternatives to traditional journalism, provide platforms for people to consume and produce alternative theories and deconstruct official versions of the "truth" (Aupers 2012:27). Fascination is an important aspect of peoples' engagement in conspiracy theories. The youth have for a long time been fascinated by conspiracy theories in their attempt to understand and make meaning of the world. Because of how conspiracy culture and conspiracy theories tend to move about the globe across cultural and national borders one can argue that they in fact are a part of globalization.

The origin of modern conspiracy culture can according to Byford (2011:40) often be traced back to the mythology of secret societies developed at the end of the eighteenth century. So can the long and intriguing history of the Illuminati society. Illuminati originally refers to a relatively obscure Bavarian secret society founded in 1776 in Ingolstadt by a law professor called Adam Weishaupt (Byford 2011:40) and can be categorized as a 'world elite' theory (Locke 2009). Like the Freemasons, Adam Weishaupt and the Illuminati society had a progressive social agenda by advocating for Enlightenment values of rationalism. Among their key issues were to put an end to torture and witchcraft trials and improvement of education. Ever since the foundation of the Illuminati society the concept has been related to different conspiracy theories as for example theories of the French revolution. Illuminati is today among other things believed to be behind the corruption of the world society, mass media communication systems and the American film and music industry (Byford 2011:101). In this way Adam Weishaupt's secret society and his Illuminati henchmen is said to be the masterminds behind a mass manipulation of society. Furthermore, Adam Weishaupt has been referred to by different authors as "satan", "a monster", and "the antichrist"

(Byford 2011:75). Such religious imagery is often used to capture and describe the iniquity of the conspirators.

In 2010 a group of boys from Copenhagen became very interested in the phenomenon of Illuminati. They described it to us as a “new world order” waiting to take over the world. I have traced their engagement with Illuminati in my data over a period of approximately 12 month. During this period of time I observed the rise of their fascination with Illuminati and how they aligned and dis-aligned with Illuminati in different situations. For example on Facebook, when watching videos on YouTube, at school, and during leisure time activities. Being for or against Illuminati is a central dimension of the boys engagement with Illuminati – one’s stance matters as I will show in my analysis. However, it is possible for them to change stance according to the context. When such shift of positions happens they are often accompanied with irony and humor. Altogether Illuminati was a frequent theme among the boys during this period of time. In this respect my data provide a basis for describing how trends such as engagement with Illuminati arise and permeate the everyday life of a group of boys. We first noticed the boys’ engagement with illuminati when they began to watch videos about it on YouTube and we know that they shared their fascination of Illuminati with their rap-mentor Ali Sufi (an underground rapper from Copenhagen who works with combining rap music and social integration projects). They often referred to Ali Sufi as an “expert” in Illuminati – the theme of Illuminati even appears in his rap lyrics.

On the basis of these observations one of my colleagues, Thomas, and I began to ask more into their new interest. This paper primarily focuses on how the boys engage with and interpret the phenomenon. Therefore I will describe what aspects of Illuminati the boys emphasized as important during our talks. One aspect that seems to attract the boys’ interest is the fact that Illuminati is a secret society. They know that Adam Weishaupt founded the Illuminati society. However, in their description of how the Illuminati society tries to take over the world they often mention “Satan” and “the all knowing eye” as the driving forces behind this project. Therefore satanic symbolism plays an important part in their Illuminati universe. Another aspect that appears to interest the boys is Illuminati’s influence on popular culture. That is, how the Illuminati society has infiltrated the Hollywood film industry and the popular music scene as a way to enforce a new world order. According to the boys, this dimension of Illuminati has to do with how to achieve fame and money in an easy way. A reason why this interests the boys is that they share a passion for rap music. In

fact some of the boys are rappers themselves. The boys are of course also interested in who are members of the Illuminati society. When asked they name various American and Danish music artists, such as Jay Z, Kanye West, Rihanna, Lady Gaga and the Danish Rapper U\$O. Politicians such as Barack Obama, various businessmen and Jews in general are also mentioned as disciples of Illuminati. Finally, the boys are interested in how Illuminati supposedly use symbols and subliminal messages in music and films and they often watch videos on YouTube pointing out hidden symbols. When asked the boys claim that Illuminati places subliminal sexual symbols in cartoons for kids to make them interested in sex from an early age. For example, the boys explain how the characters in the movie “The Little Mermaid” are drawn with inspiration from dildos and erect penises and how sexual symbolism and subliminal messages are also present in the movie “The Lion King”.

4. The semiotics and meditational means of Illuminati

The subliminal messages, the visual symbolism, the imagery and semiotics of Illuminati play an important role in the boys’ fascination and engagement with the secret society. The imagery of Illuminati is immense and it is described in different ways on different blogs, web sides, and web fora about the Illuminati society. Because of the variety of descriptions and interpretations of the Illuminati society across different web sides, blogs etc. it can be hard to give an exact account of what the semiotics of Illuminati mean. Therefore, I will only account for the symbols that are represented and made relevant in the data I draw on in this article. Furthermore, I nuance the situated meanings of the symbols in my analysis according to how the imagery is treated and understood by the participants in my study. What seems to be a central symbol of the Illuminati society in general – and in the data I present – is “the all seeing eye”. This symbol features a human eye incorporated into a triangle or some other shape. A common description on web pages related to Illuminati is that the eye is described to symbolize the eye of Lucifer, who is believed to be able to see everything happening in the world. The symbol can be found in many different places. For example on the back of the American one dollar bill or in the shape of hand signs such as it is depicted on pictures below (see also Illustration 2). Therefore triangles in general, at least among the boys I have studied, are perceived as a central symbol of Illuminati.

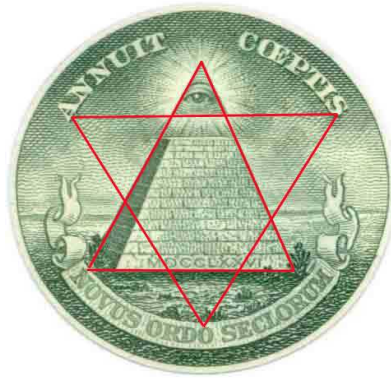


Illustration 1: Illuminati symbolism

Left: “The all seeing eye” and a star on the back of a one dollar bill. **Middle:** Lady Gaga posing the Illuminati 666 hand sign in the music video for the song “Poker Face” (Copyright 2009 Universal Music Group). **Right:** Nadia and Negasi shows hand signs on a picture from Bashaars Facebook wall

Another common hand sign associated with Illuminati is the Illuminati 666 hand sign also known as the “mark of the beast”. Parallel to the sign of the all knowing eye it is described on most Illuminati blogs as one of the most popular signs of the cult. Above on the picture in the middle the pop artist lady Gaga for example flashes the sign in a music video. On the right hand side picture the sign is appropriated by Negasi who poses with her friend Nadia at a picture they uploaded on Bashaars’ Facebook wall as a jocular comment to his obsession with Illuminati. The last prominent symbol of Illuminati I look at is the pentagram or “the five pointed star”. The star also circulates on web sites and in YouTube videos in different versions. See for example a six pointed star on the back of the one dollar bill above. This symbol is, furthermore, often described by the boys as a Star of David. These are only a few of the symbols associated with the Illuminati society that circulate on the Internet. The Internet plays an important part in how stories, myths, and symbols circulate among people. Especially YouTube and Facebook play an important role as ways of exploring and sharing illuminati related content among the participants in my project. The videos they watch are primarily music videos from various local and international artists, cartoons, or videos of political speeches with a commentary that explains how symbols and hidden messages are present in the videos. Furthermore, there is a vast number of self claimed official Illuminati websites (some of them with restricted member’s access) with different kinds of material related to Illuminati. Alongside with unofficial websites various blogs, twitter feeds, and international celebrity magazines also engage in writing about the topic. So, all these different mediational means facilitate flows of illuminati related content among people throughout the world.

5. Illuminati as a transcultural flow – appropriation and de contextualization

The boys' engagement with Illuminati reflects the superdiverse society they live in several ways as their engagement relates to the way cultural flows move about the globe and become appropriated in different local practices. The notion of "appropriation" is described by Hepp (2008:19) as:

“a process of local meaning construction, a process in which the discourses of the local are set in relation to the translocal discourses of the media – especially through locally situated everyday conversation”.

Along the same lines as Hepp, I understand appropriation as a process of how borrowed elements or practices are interactionally integrated and de- or recontextualised in the creation of new meaning and new local practices. According to Hepp (2008) these processes of communicative appropriation already begins in the viewing situation of the media content (e.g. Illuminati videos). In my analysis I show examples of how such media content is appropriated by the adolescents in our study and brought about in different everyday situations. To comprehend the processes of appropriation among the young people we need an understanding of how cultural forms are brought about, changed and reused. Therefore, when describing the boys' practices related to their engagement with Illuminati, I draw on Pennycook's (2007) notions of transcultural and transnational flows which is used to address:

“the ways in which cultural forms move, change and are reused to fashion new identities in diverse contexts. This is not, therefore, a question merely of cultural movement but of take-up, appropriation, change and refashioning” (Pennycook 2007:6)

According to Pennycook the concept of transcultural flows refer to more than the mere spread of cultural forms across national and cultural boundaries. Transcultural flows refer to the borrowing, blending and alternative cultural production (Pennycook 2007:6). In my analysis I show how the young boys' practices on and around YouTube play an important role in the distribution of such flows – that is, flows consisting of videos, text and imagery associated with Illuminati. In this respect global cultural or transnational practices such as the concept of Illuminati do not simply replace locale ones, but instead, as Pennycook (2007:44) argues, they are refashioned and given new meaning. This is why I adopt the notion “translocality” as an analytical concept. The concept

emphasizes that in the time of media globalization the local world does not cease to exist but rather changes. As Hepp (2008) argues, the prefix “trans” guides the focus from matters of locality to questions of connectivity. This means that “translocality” on the one hand addresses matters of locality but also on the other hand focuses on how locales in the age of globalization are connected physically and communicatively to a greater extent than before the Internet (Hepp 2008). Following this line of thinking, Pennycook (2007:44) argues that the notions of the “transcultural” and “translocal” provide us with a way of speaking of local relations and the mobile space of cultural relations. Along these lines, one can argue that YouTube becomes one of the channels of mobility for distribution and appropriation of global of cultural phenomena in the superdiverse society the boys live in. In this way late modern mediascapes and young peoples’ use of new media (such as YouTube) go beyond what can be described with the traditional notion of the relation between the global and the local. By way of introduction to my analysis I will begin by describing the boys’ engagement in Illuminati through their new media practices.

6. Identifying Illuminati symbolism – a practice on (and beyond) YouTube

One day I wrote with two of the boys in our study on Facebook. I asked them how they first heard about Illuminati. Though they attended the same class and saw each other every day they heard about it in different ways. Bashaar answered that he heard about it from a friend. How his friend first heard about it Bashaar did not know. His answer illustrates how such transcultural phenomena as Illuminati can circulate within a group of friends without knowledge of the original source of information being significant. Jamil answered that he first saw it on YouTube when browsing through different videos. Jamil’s answer shows another way that such transcultural phenomena are appropriated in local practices – namely via social media.

Watching videos on YouTube either on the computer or on smartphones is a frequent practice among the boys. They also often identify symbols associated with Illuminati when they watched music videos on YouTube. Such identification of symbols is further more a frequent theme in the videos the boys watch about Illuminati. An example of this is found in excerpt 1. Bashaar, Isaam and Michael are watching the music video of Rihanna’s song “Rude Boy”. However, it is not the official version of the video. It is an edited version in which a male speaker in a dramatic voice guides the viewer through the different symbols of Illuminati present in the video. Bashaar is sitting

in front of the computer and he has just found the clip on YouTube. He calls Isaam to show it to him:

Excerpt 1: "There are triangles all over"

Self recording 2011

Bashaar (Bas), Isaam (Isa) and Michael (Mic)

Original:

1 Bas: hey Isaam du ved ikke hvor
 2 meget Illuminati Rihanna har
 3 for helvede mand
 4 ((begejstret))
 5 Isa: i videoen kan du se den
 6 Bas: i Rude Boy kom og sjuf xxx
 7 (6.3) shukran hey (3.5)
 8 ((Musik fra videoen))
 9 der er hele tiden trekanter
 10 overalt sjuf og så lige
 11 pludselig kig den der
 12 jødestjerne og så kommer der
 13 noget sort over ((Musikken
 14 spiller)) og kig øh hvad
 15 hedder det en en en løve
 16 ikke
 (Trans:Shukran: Tak, sjuf: se)
 17 Isa: mm
 18 Bas: en løve det er ligesom
 19 Jamicas shaitân og der er
 20 hele tiden trekanter
 21 ((Musikken spiller))sjuf der
 22 jødestjerne ((peger mens han
 23 siger duk duk duk duk))
 (Trans:shaitân: Satan)
 24 Mic: hvad har jødestjerne med
 25 noget at gøre
 26 Bas: jøder de er fucking
 27 Illuminati mand
 28 Mic: hvorfor
 29 Bas: det er dem der styrer det
 30 hele mand
 ((Fortsætter med at
 identificere Illuminati
 symboler))

Translation:

1 Bas: hey Isaam holy shit you
 2 don't know how much
 3 Illuminati Rihanna's got
 4 ((ecstatic))
 5 Isa: in the video can I see it
 6 Bas: in Rude boy come on sjuf xxx
 7 (6.3) shukran hey (3.5)
 8 ((music from the video))
 9 there are triangles all over
 10 sjuf and then suddenly look
 11 at that Star of David and
 12 there is something black on
 13 the top ((music plays)) and
 14 look eh what's it called a a
 15 a lion right
 (Trans: Shukran: thanks, sjuf: look)
 16 Isa: mm
 17 Bash: it's a lion just like the
 18 Jamaican shaitân and all
 19 the time triangles ((music
 20 plays)) sjuf there a Star of
 21 David ((points while he says
 22 duk duk duk duk))
 (Trans:shaitân: Satan)
 23 Mic: what does the star of David
 24 has to do with anything
 25 Bas: Jews they are fucking
 26 Illuminati man
 27 Mic: why
 28 Bas: they are the ones who
 29 control it all man
 ((Continues identifying
 Illuminati objects))

It is evident that the aim of the video is to present Rihanna as a member of Illuminati, but it also aims to inform the viewer how to be aware of different symbols and signs associated with Illuminati. In this case the signs make associations to Judaism and worship of Satan. In that respect the video has an educational purpose. Furthermore, on the basis of Bashaars utterances in line 6-23, the presentation of the symbols in the video seems to fascinate the boys. Bashaar is clearly enthusiastic about showing his new finding on YouTube to Isaam. Their fascination of Illuminati both has to do with decoding the hidden symbolism and with identifying who is in and who is not.

In this case Rihanna is identified as a disciple of Illuminati. An important dimension to the video is that the narrator also appears to mediate an ideological message which has a persuasive effect on Bashaar. It appears this way as Bashaar in line 26-29 expresses the believe that the Jews are an influential factor in the Illuminati society. This becomes apparent in his answer to the question about what the Star of David has to do with Illuminati. Jews has historically been exposed in different conspiracy theories. As Bashaar points out in the excerpt Jews also play a central role in the Illuminati conspiracy. Not all of the boys in the class believe in Illuminati and the messages of the videos. Michael for one appears skeptical in line 24 when he asks what Judaism has to do with Illuminati. In excerpt 2 David is even more direct in his skepticism. He is watching Illuminati videos on YouTube together with Bashaar, Jamil and Isaam. After a while he states:

Excerpt 2: "Illuminati is just made up bullshit"

Self recording 2011

Bashaar (Bas), Isaam (Isa), Michael (Mic) and David (Dav)

Original:

1 Dav: det der Illuminati det
 2 findes ikke mand
 3 Bas: hold nu [din kæft mand
 4 Isa: [abow din dum
 5 nakke mand
 6 Dav: Illuminati det er noget
 7 opfundet pis
 8 Jam: det der er jo ikke
 9 Illuminati det der
 ((hentyder til en scene i
 videoen))
 10 Dav: det er jo bare for at gøre
 11 jer bange
 12 Bas: abow koran kom og sjuf den
 13 der
 ((et nyt Illuminati klip hvor
 Bashaar forklarer symbolikken))
 14 Dav: der er jo ikke nogen
 15 mening det der
 16 Bas: hallo det er
 17 underbevidstheden de leger
 18 med jer folk MAND
 ((endnu en video sekvens, Bashaar
 kommenterer))
 19 Dav: Bashaar alt for dig er
 20 Illuminati
 21 Bas: kig prøv at se ansigterne
 22 (1.0) på ballonerne mand
 ((endnu en videosekvens, Bashaar
 kommenterer))
 23 Bas: sjuf så jubler de jaa
 24 (1.2) hey koran lad være
 25 med at sige det sådan det
 26 Isa: lad være med at sige at

Translation:

1 Dav: Illuminati doesn't exist
 2 man
 3 Bas: shut [up man
 4 Isa: [abow you stupid
 5 dumbass man
 6 Dav: Illuminati is just made up
 7 bullshit
 8 Jam: well that's not Illuminati
 ((alludes to a scene in the video))
 9 Dav: it's just to scare you
 10 Bas: abow quran come and sjuf
 11 this one
 ((a new Illuminati clip, Isaam is
 explained the symbolism))
 12 Dav: that doesn't make any
 13 sense
 14 Bas: hallo that the
 15 subconscious they are
 16 playing with you people
 17 MAN
 ((another video sequence, Bashaar
 comments))
 18 Dav: everything is about
 19 Illuminati to you Bashaar
 20 Bas: look at the faces (1.0) on
 21 the balloons man
 ((another video sequence, Bashaar
 comments))
 22 Bas: sjuf the crowd goes wild
 23 yaeh (1.2) hey Quran don't
 24 say so
 25 Isa: don't say that's not
 26 Dav: it's not
 27 Mic: it's not

27	det der ikke er	28 Bas:	OH NO man ((in the sense
28 Dav:	det er det ikke	29	fuck you))
29 Mic:	det er det ikke	30 Mic:	oh no
30 Bas:	ÅHR JA MAND	31 Isa:	Illuminati everyone is
31 Mic:	åh mand	32	Illuminati ((leaves the
32 Isa:	Illuminati everyone is	33	room))
33	Illuminati ((forlader		
34	rummet))		

David is very explicit in expressing his disbelief in Illuminati. While he and the others are watching the first video he declares that Illuminati does not exist and that it is just made up bullshit to scare people (line 1-9). This upsets Bashaar and Isaam who both tell him to “shut up”. In line 8 Jamil argues against David’s disbelief as he says “well that’s not Illuminati” with reference to a specific scene in the video. This does not shut David up as he again argues that it is just made up to scare people. In line 10 Bashaar calls the others’ attention to another video he has found. Because the video is put on shortly after David’s critique it appears as an attempt of persuasion. However, judging from David’s response to the video, “that doesn’t make any sense”, it does not seem to work out as planned. Bashaar reacts by explaining that it is obvious that Illuminati plays with people through subconscious messages (line 14). He shows another video as evidence. This results in David accusing Bashaar to be obsessed with Illuminati. Bashaar responds to the accusation by drawing the other’s attention to the symbolism of the video as he says “look at the faces on the balloons man” (line 20). In line 22 Bashaar again comments on the same video followed by a comment directed at David: “hey Quran don’t say so”. Here the word quran is used as an intensifier. He is backed up by Isaam who says: “don’t say that’s not”. Thereby they both once again confront David’s skepticism and incite him to consider the Illuminati symbolism in the video. Both David and Michael (who is a known skeptic) unanimously express their disbelief in Illuminati in line 26 and 27. Their skepticism triggers another outburst of disagreement from Bashaar in line 28. Furthermore, Isaam also states his disagreement by saying “everyone is Illuminati” before leaving the room.

What is interesting in excerpt 1 and 2 is how YouTube plays an important role in how the boys access transcultural flows such as Illuminati. It is further interesting how watching videos becomes a social practice shared by the boys. However, it is evident that not all in the boys’ circle of friends agree with their fascination of Illuminati. The videos and the messages also become an issue for disagreement and a way to reflect on different aspects of the world such as ideological allegations against Jews. Judging from the discussions among the boys it is evident that they are interested in

Illuminati and seem to believe that it somehow exists. The disagreement of the existence of Illuminati is discussed at several different occasions. The seriousness of their discussions varies from situation to situation. In excerpt 3 a more jocular frame of discussion is established. The sequence in excerpt 3 takes place shortly after the two previous excerpts. The class is celebrating the end of a feature week in school and as a treat the teachers have ordered Sushi:

Excerpt 3: "Pizza that's Illuminati"

Self recording 2011

Bashaar (Bas), Isaam (Isa), Jamil (Jam) and David (Dav)

Original:	Translation:
1 Bas: HEY hvem har købt Sushi jeg	1 Bas: HEY who bought Sushi I
2 smadrer ham	2 wreck him
3 Dav: ne:j ne:j ne:j det er	3 Dav: no: no: no: it's
4 Illuminati ((imiterer	4 Illuminati ((imitation of
5 Bashaar))	5 Bashaar))
6 Boys: ha ha ha	6 Boys: ha ha ha
(1.5)	(1.5)
7 Isa: nej men du ved godt pizza	7 Isaa: no well but you know Pizza
8 det er Illuminati	8 that's Illuminati
9 Dav: ja ja	9 Dav: as if
10 Bas: trekanter	10 Bas: triangels
11 Isa: først er der Pizza og så er	11 Isa: first you got the Pizza and
12 der en hvad er det nu	12 then what is it
13 Bas: en pepperoni på	13 Bas: a pepperoni on the top
14 Boy: ne:j	14 Boy: no:
15 Dav: hvad så med ude i siden jo	15 Dav: yeah but what about the
16 Mar: nogle gange bestiller man	16 side
17 ikke pepperoni på jo	17 Mar: well sometimes you order
18 Bas: ha vi laver sjov med jer ha	18 without pepperoni
	19 Bas: ha we are joking ha

Here it is interesting how the search for symbols of Illuminati (as we saw it on YouTube) is adopted to other everyday settings as well. Firstly, we see how David in a sarcastic manner in line 3 imitates how Bashaar earlier (in excerpt 1 and 2) commented on Illuminati symbols on YouTube. It appears as if David's imitation is not completely off as the other boys burst into laughter. Isaam picks up on the jocular tone as he states that pizza is Illuminati. This is followed by an immediate critical response from David in line 9 directed against the alleged stupidity of Isaam's comment. Bashaar follows up on Isaam's argument as he explains the symbolism of the triangular shapes of pizza slices. Furthermore, the pepperoni on top is explained as a symbol of the "all knowing eye" – a central symbol in the Illuminati universe. David and Mark immediately come up with a counter argumentation against Bashaar and Isaam's explanation of the connections between pizza and Illuminati. In line 19 Bashaar laughingly explains that they are only joking which confirms the jocular frame of this excerpt. I have several similar examples in which Bashaar and Isaam identify

Illuminati symbols in different situations. Mainly it has to do with identifying satanic symbolism and triangular patterns in different situations such as for example on the curtains in the school library. However, their knowledge about the Illuminati society is also brought about in class as fun answers to academic questions. The boys' engagement with Illuminati does not only involve identifying symbols of Illuminati. It also involved displaying such signs themselves. During the time they were interested in the Illuminati society it was not uncommon to see them throw Illuminati hand signals to each other. The picture below is an example of that. It is taken from their annual unofficial school photo:



Illustration 2: Class photo.
The boys display triangular symbols associated with Illuminati on the unofficial class photo.

Throwing hand signs, such as the triangular shape depicted here, was a common practice. The signs quickly became part of the adolescents' already existing repertoire of handshakes such as handshakes associated with rap culture. By unanimously forming the triangular hand sign in a picture can be viewed as a display of solidarity among the boys. These hand signs also became a way for my colleague, Thomas, and me to engage in the boys' Illuminati practices during this period. Such engagement was parallel to when we established relationships to the adolescent by talking about music, football, etc. Often the hand signs were used to establish a frame of solidarity playing on awareness of the everlasting presence of Illuminati. The following extract from my field notes illustrates that. The incident happened during a presentation in class:

Now it is Zinah, Thehan, and Salima’s turn to talk about health and welfare. They hand out a leaflet with the food pyramid on the front page. Zain says “Illuminati” and laughs. I pose a discrete Illuminati-triangle-sign to him under the presentation. He holds his hands up to his face as a reaction of being scared. I can’t help laughing (Field notes, 08.02.11).

This incident shows how the boys allowed us in on their engagement with Illuminati by letting us participate in their Illuminati practices. However, most of the time we attempted a role of interested novices to learn more about the practices. This often resulted in discussions about the ideology of Illuminati and what the Illuminati world order was all about. In the next section I illustrate how such a discussion came to be about more than just triangles and other kinds of symbols.

7. Moral and ethical issues of engagement with Illuminati

There was more to the boys’ engagement with Illuminati than looking at YouTube clips and identifying hidden messages in music videos. In the following I present how the boys in our project reflect on the moral and ethical aspects of Illuminati in relation to their own sets of beliefs. In excerpt 3 Bashaar talks to my colleague, Thomas, in the computer room about Illuminati and tries to trick him into selling his soul:

Excerpt 4: “you just need to sell your soul”

Bashaar (Bas), Tho (Thomas) and Ana (Anas)

Self recording 2011

Original:

1 Bas: hvis Illuminati ik’ de siger
 2 for eksempel til dig (0.9)
 3 øh du bliver rig du får
 4 succes du får alt og sådan
 5 noget du skal bare sælge din
 6 sjæl til os (.) ville du så
 7 have gjort det
 8 Tho: om jeg ville have gjort det
 9 Bas: ja
 10 Ana: det tror jeg alle ville have
 11 gjort
 12 Bas: man sælger jo ikke sin sjæl
 13 rigtigt sådan de tager den
 14 fra dig de ejer dig bare

Translation:

1 Bas: if Illuminati for example
 2 promise you (0.9) that
 3 you’ll be rich and that you
 4 will be successful and all
 5 that stuff you just need to
 6 sell your soul (.) would you
 7 have done it
 8 Tho: if I would have done it
 9 Bas: yes
 10 Ana: I think everybody would
 11 Bas: well you don’t sell your
 12 soul for real like that one
 13 takes it from you they just
 14 own you

Bashaar appears to downplay the risk of joining Illuminati in a playful manner in his presentation to Thomas. The use of the word “just” in the sentence “they just own you” (line 13) points towards a downplaying strategy. It can be viewed as playful because he transforms something serious into a

banality. However, this is not enough to persuade Thomas as he instead continues to gather information:

15 Tho:	hvem er det der ejer den	15 Tho:	who is it who owns it
16 Bas:	det er de store kendte øh	16 Bas:	it's the big celebrities
17	altså f.eks. jøderne	17	like for example the Jews
18 Tho:	jøderne	18 Tho:	the Jews
19 Bas:	ja det er de store	19 Bas:	yes it's the big businessmen
20	businessmænd	20 Tho:	but what I don't understand
21 Tho:	men det jeg ikke forstår ved	21	about it wh[/] what's
22	det der hv[/] hvad er der	22	dangerous about it
23	farligt ved det	23 Bas:	what's dangerous about it
24 Bas:	det der er farligt ved det	24	it's not like there's
25	det er ikke sådan der er	25	nothing dangerous about it
26	ikke noget farligt ved	26	(.) they're just trying to
27	det (.) de prøver bare at	27	take over the world (.)
28	overtage verden (.) det er	28	that's it
29	det	29 Tho:	take over the world
30 Tho:	overtage verden	30 Bas:	yes
31 Bas:	ja		

Again Bashaar in a playful manner downplays the risk of joining Illuminati to make it more appealing for Thomas to sell his soul by adding “just” in the sentence: “they’re just trying to take over the world”. Illuminati’s influence on the world is again treated as a banality. However, this time Thomas for unknown reasons seemingly agrees to sell his soul, as he says:

32 Tho:	det ville jeg gerne det tror	31 Tho:	I would like that I think I
33	jeg godt jeg ville	32	would like to
34 Bas:	ja	33 Bas:	yes
35 Tho:	ville du ikke også	34 Tho:	wouldn't you
36 Bas:	nej	35 Bas:	no
37 Tho:	nej	36 Tho:	no

Here we see a clear shift in the way Bashaar relates to Illuminati in comparison to his strategy of selling the concept and downplaying the risk of joining. Now he disassociates himself from Illuminati. He claims not to want to sell his soul because it goes against his religious beliefs:

38 Bas:	nej det er fordi jeg har jeg	37 Bas:	no it's because I have I'm a
39	er muslim (0.6) og og hvad	38	Moslem (0.6) and and what's
40	hedder det og Illuminati	39	it called, and Illuminati
41	de har sådan noget med	40	they have like something to
42	satans værk at gøre (.)	41	do with the work of Satan
43	forstår du	42	(.) you understand
44 Tho:	ja	43 Tho:	yes
45 Bas:	så f.eks. du er jo ikke	44 Bas:	so for example you're not a
46	muslim (0.8) så altså det er	45	Moslem (0.8) so so it's not
47	jo ikke et problem for jer	46	a problem for you

48 Tho: [nej men nu er jeg jo ikke
49 så vild med satan

|| 47 Tho: no but well I'm not exactly
48 crazy about Satan

Two aspects of this excerpt are worth noticing. Firstly, there is the aspect of social relations between Thomas and Bashaar. Thomas is positioned as a novice by Bashaar who is the authority when it comes to knowledge about the Illuminati society. This seems to be the case as Thomas is the one asking the questions while Bashaar is the one with the answers. One can argue that Bashaar capitalizes on Thomas' position as a novice. He seems to use Thomas' lack of knowledge about Illuminati to set him up in a playful manner. This he does by downplaying the risk of involvement in line 11 and 23. After Thomas has agreed to sell his soul in favor of success and money Bashaar refuses to do the same. This surprises Thomas as he repeats Bashaar's answer to his question in line 36. On the basis of Thomas' presumably surprised reaction one can argue that Bashaar pulls a trick on Thomas by making him agree to sell his soul for money and success – a trait of character that does not meet the stereotypical image of an honest man. In this way their discussion becomes a matter of ethics and morality and measures of how to achieve success – the honest or dishonest way. So, secondly, there is the aspect of morale and ethics related to the question of whether one should sell ones soul in favor of success and money. Bashaar seems to test Thomas' moral and ethical beliefs by asking this question. Of course this needs to be seen in a jocular frame as the test relates to an abstract or imagined sequence of events – it's a hypothetical question. Along these lines it is interesting to see how Illuminati, which to the boys represent a new discourse about the world, becomes new ground for discussing moral and ethical issues which conflicts with the boys' own sets of beliefs and views of the world. This becomes the case when Bashaar in line 44 motivates his disassociation from Illuminati with his religious background as a Muslim. In the same breath he constructs Thomas as a votary of Satan because he is not a Muslim. Thomas of course denies this in the following turn. In this way the boys' understanding of Illuminati has to do with both moral and ethical aspects of society and religion. I will return to the importance of the establishment of imagined or fantasy scenarios in excerpt 5.

In excerpt 4 Illuminati is constructed as something forbidden and amoral because it revolves around a set of beliefs that offers an easy (and dishonest) way to success and represents a view of the world that goes against the boys' religion. Furthermore, such an easy way to success goes against the way the boys have been "raised" by their rap-mentor Ali Sufi (as we shall see in excerpt 6). Therefore it becomes clear that Bashaar to a certain extent is fascinated by Illuminati but disassociates himself


from its views of the world as we saw in excerpt 1 and 2. The fact that Illuminati is associated with something forbidden is a part of the boys' fascination. Excerpt 5 indicates that this is the case. The excerpt is a status update written by Jamil on his Facebook wall where he posts the following:

Excerpt 5: "New world order to save the earth!"	
Original:	 <p>The screenshot shows a Facebook post by Jamil with the text: "'New world order' to save the earth! 17. marts kl. 10:23 · Synes godt om · Musad, Khalid og 2 andre synes godt om dette." Below the post are four comments: Khalid says "YESS", Bashaar says "Illuminati Supporters!", Musad says "Yes we Can !!!!", and Jamil replies "Vi burde alle stå sammen og hjælpe med at få flere folk til illuminati. 18. marts kl. 16:20 · Synes godt om · 1 person".</p>
Translation:	Jamil: We should all stick together and help recruit more people to Illuminati
Facebook extract, Jamils wall, 17 th of March 2011	

Jamil's status update results in comments from three of his friends known by us as frequent participants in the discussions about Illuminati. They all align with Jamil's post in their comments. Khalid responds by writing "YESS" whereby he presents a positive attitude towards the Illuminati world order. Bashaar does the same by writing "Illuminati supporters!". In the context of the surrounding statements this line constructs a concept of solidarity among the boys. Musad writes "Yes we Can !!!!" whereby he positions himself in line with the others. Furthermore, his contribution is an intertextual reference to the American politician Barack Obama's slogan from his 2008 presidential campaign. The boys often talk about Barack Obama as one of the leading politicians involved in Illuminati. The president's affiliation with this new world order is also suggested in various blogs and Illuminati homepages on the Internet. Finally, Jamil seems to take Bashaar's sense of solidarity one step further as he encourages them all to recruit more people to the Illuminati society. So, contrary to what we saw in the previous excerpt the boys here align

themselves with the Illuminati world order. However, there is a hint of irony in the boys' alignment with Illuminati in this excerpt. The use of capital letters in Khalid's post and the use of exclamation marks by Jamil, Bashaar, and Musad add an exaggerated and insincere feeling to their posts. The excerpt also needs to be seen within a jocular frame as the boys here establish an imagined or a fantasy scenario in which they all construct themselves as disciples of the Illuminati society. By doing so they flirt with the forbidden because they affiliate themselves with an ideology that involves beliefs about the world that conflict with what they would normally answer for. I view these ironic statements as an important aspect of the boy's engagement with Illuminati. By engaging in such an activity they are able to try out different social positions and relations which they would not usually be able to act out. Furthermore, such fantasy scenarios play a crucial part in their sense of solidarity around the concept of Illuminati. Actually construction of imagined scenarios is a common practice among the boys. For instance on a recording with Isaam and Bashaar on a train ride home from a Copenhagen suburb they for some reason believed that they got on a wrong train bound for Hamburg in Germany instead of the central station. Thereby the train ride became the catalyst of a story about how they would cross the Danish-German border on their way down to visit Adam Weishaupt who was the great founder of the Illuminati society. Furthermore, I find similar imaginary scenarios in their rap lyrics where they present themselves as tough gangsters etc. Rap in general and the boys' engagement in a community of rappers called "KGB" (not the Russian Cold War intelligence service) is important to their interest in Illuminati. KGB is short for "Kaster Guld Bars" (Throw Gold Bars). Several times they have mentioned the founder of "KGB" community, their rap-mentor Ali Sufi, as the one who knows all about Illuminati. Excerpt 6 illustrates how Ali Sufi employs the theme of Illuminati in his rap-lyrics and how his lyrics are received by Bashaar. Here Bashaar posts a status update with Ali Sufi's video attached:

Excerpt 6: ”#Killuminati”

<p>Original:</p>	 <p>Bashaar Shiiiiieet..! Tjek Sufi's Nye Sang Ud "JegSåPå"..! Plus Videoen Er For Syyyyyyyyyyyyy..! Del Den, Tjek Den Og Spred Den..! #Killuminati</p> <p>Ali Sufi – JegSåPå [Musikvideo] sfmedier.dk Så er den her, Ali Sufi's nye video. Han har siden midten af juli lovet os en video til hans nye sang "JegSåPå", som samtidig er hans officielle indtræden i Ny Vest samarbejdet. Videoen er instrueret, filmet og redigeret af Özcan Ajrulovski, og som man kunne læse i pressemeddelelsen han udgav forled...</p> <p>Synes godt om · Tilføj kommentar · Del · 11. september 2011 kl. 18:05 · 6 personer synes godt om dette.</p> <p>Hussein · Illuminati 11. september 2011 kl. 19:52 · Synes godt om</p> <p>Bashaar Hussein: Det er En Anti - Illuminati Sang.. 11. september 2011 kl. 21:27 · Synes godt om</p> <p>Hussein jajaja det ved jeg godt :P 12. september 2011 kl. 08:35 · Synes godt om</p> <p>Skriv en kommentar...</p>
<p>Translation:</p>	<p>Bashaar: Shiiiiieet! Check Out Sufi's New Song "JegSåPå" ..! ['I'm game'] Including The Video It's Craaaaaazy..! Share It, Chek It Out And Spread It..! #Killuminati</p> <p>Hussein: Illuminati</p> <p>Bashaar: Hussein: It's an Anti – Illuminati Song..</p> <p>Hussein: YesYesYes I Know :)</p>
<p>Facebook extract, Bashaar's wall, 12th of September 2011</p>	

Bashaar recommends a new music video created by his rap-mentor Ali Sufi. The message of the video is that one needs to be a critical thinking individual and always be one step ahead of Illuminati and their attempt to brainwash people through meaningless entertainment. Bashaar ends his update with the statement “#Killuminati”, whereby he implies that he is against Illuminati. This can also be seen as an alignment with the message of the video and his mentor. Hussein’s comment “Illuminati” is corrected by Bashaar pointing at that the song is anti-Illuminati. In this case being for or against Illuminati seems to be a more serious question than in the previous examples. The three “yesses” in Hussein’s answer underlines this point. The video itself involves an aspect of socialization. It concerns how to become a good citizen and not to be manipulated. To judge from Bashaar’s status update it has an effect on his view of Illuminati. Finally, the video and the fact that

an established underground rapper takes up the Illuminati theme in his songs shows that the issue of Illuminati extends street level and teenage delusions – on the contrary Illuminati is a wide spread global phenomenon which is addressed by various Danish as well as international pop and rap artist.

An important point of the engagement with transcultural flows is that they can be de – or recontextualised or even changed when appropriated. My final excerpt shows how the boys refashion practices related to Illuminati in making them a part of their own situated everyday practices. In this field note, written by my colleague Thomas, Bashaar and Thehan are talking during the English lesson. Thomas has reported:

[...] Thehan puts his hand shaped as a circle in front of his eye just as if he was looking out of an eyeglass lens. First Bashaar says: “Hey negro man what are you doing?” When Thehan does not react he continues: “Hey, black dog what are you doing?” Thehan explains that you have to sit this way for an hour if you want to be initiated in the Illuminati clan. Inger (the teacher) sees it and asks what Thehan is doing. Thehan makes her believe that somebody has glued his hand to his face. (Fieldnotes, Thomas, 15.03.10)

The refashioning of Illuminati practices here consists of the way Thehan makes up an initiation rite of how to become a member of Illuminati. This involves shaping one’s hand in a circle in front of the eye. By doing so he draws on an already established symbol that often occur in different music videos. As noted the sign is frequently associated with Illuminati as it can be interpreted as a display of the sign for “666” or the “all knowing eye” as illustrated by the pop artist Lady Gaga (see illustration 1). The hand sign is often associated with being faithful to the dark side. Thehan here inserts the symbol in a new context where it becomes a symbol of an imagined local initiation in the Illuminati society. This is just one example of how the boys make up their own rules, myths or stories about the global phenomenon of Illuminati and implement them in their local everyday practices. Furthermore, this is another example of how the boys again create imagined scenarios that blend together with the everyday life – here in an English lesson at school.

8. Illuminati revisited – one year later

The previous excerpts show how the boys position themselves in relation to the transcultural conspiracy phenomenon of Illuminati in different ways. Furthermore, they illustrate how the concept of Illuminati apparently permeates different contexts of the boys’ everyday life during a year. As their fascination and interest in Illuminati was dying out they stopped posting Illuminati-

related updates on Facebook. They stopped talking about it when we occasionally met. However, almost a year after they lost interest in Illuminati the subject was suddenly brought up again during a meeting at a local restaurant. In the conversation preceding excerpt 7a Thomas and Bashaar have been talking about Felix Baumgartner who was the first man to break the speed of sound in free fall in 2012. This leads to a discussion about whether the moon landing was a scam or not. After a while I interrupt the conversation by saying:

Excerpt 7a: "I still believe in the existence of a new world order"

Self recording 2012

Bashaar (Bas), Isaam (Isa), Andreas (And) and Thomas (Tho)

Original:	Translation:
1 And: ja men det er jo sådan noget	1 And: well but that such
2 konspirationsteori noget	2 conspiracy stuff
3 Isa: Illuminati shit	3 Isa: Illuminati shit
4 Bas: kan I huske hvor meget I	4 Bas: do you remember how You used
5 snakkede om det før i tiden	5 talk about it all the time
6 And: det var meget meget	6 And: it was all the time
7 Bas: wallah jeg var ved at blive	7 Bas: wallah I was almost
8 en af dem man (.) Illuminati	8 becomming one of them (.)
9 plus Isaam mand	9 Illuminati Isaam too man
10 Isa: ha ha Illuminati de er seje	10 Isa: ha ha Illimunati they're
11 wallah jeg xxx	11 cool wallah I xxx
[...](Musad beretter om en Illuminati video han har set på YouTube))	[...](Musad tells about an Illuminati video he recently saw on YouTube))

The theme of Illuminati is brought up in the conversation by Isaam as he immediately connects "conspiracy theory" to Illuminati. Bashaar picks up on the theme with a retrospective comment in line 4. He recollects how much they had talked about Illuminati before. Shortly after he adds that he and Isaam were almost becoming two of them. Isaam confirms this in line 11. The way the boys talk about Illuminati in this excerpt confirms how the boys once were deeply fascinated by Illuminati as I have shown with the previous extracts. Bashaars comments in line 7 leads me to ask how serious they were about Illuminati back then:

Excerpt 7b: "I still believe in the existence of a new world order"

Self recording 2012

Bashaar (Bas), Isaam (Isa), Andreas (And) and Thomas (Tho)

Original:	Translation:
12 And: men seriøst den gang i	12 And: back then when you talked a
13 snakkede meget om det troede	13 lot about it did you
14 du på det virkeligt	14 seriously believe in it for
15 Bas: jeg tror stadig på at der at	15 real
16 der findes en en ny	16 Bas: I still believe in the
17 verdensorden	17 existence of a new world
18 And: ja	18 order
19 Bas: at der findes øh altså du	19 And: yes
20 ved at der er nogen der	20 Bas: the existence of a eh well

21 sidder og gerne vil
 22 lave de forenede stater hvor
 23 der kun er en stat (.)
 24 forstår du
 25 And: ja
 26 Bas: det tror jeg (.) men jeg
 27 tror
 28 Tho: det er lidt naziagtigt
 29 Bas: hvad
 30 Tho: det er lidt naziagtigt
 31 Bas: ja ja men du ved jeg tror
 32 ikke alt det der i
 33 musikvideoer og sådan noget
 34 der de laver lige den her
 35 ((trekanstegnet))
 36 And: ja
 37 Bas: det tror jeg ikke mere på
 38 And: nej
 39 Bas: fordi den gang du ved hvor
 40 jeg lige havde fået min
 41 debut i Illuminati
 42 forstår du der troede jeg på
 43 alt hvad der blev sagt
 44 Tho: der fortalte du også noget
 45 med at de lavede du fortalte
 46 mig engang at de havde
 47 baseret tegningerne i den
 49 lille havfrue på dildoer kan
 50 du huske
 51 Bas: har du ikke set det
 ((begejstret))
 52 And: ha ha
 53 Isa: hvad for noget
 54 Bas: når de tegner Homer Simpson
 55 de tegner gallawi først
 (Trans: Gallawi: penis)
 56 Isa: ja ja den er ægte nok
 57 Bas: det har jeg selv set
 58 Isa: det er sådan noget
 59 underbevidsthed (.) så for
 60 at børn bliver liderlige
 61 og knepper og sådan noget
 62 ((Alle griner))
 63 Isa: har du ikke også set Simba
 64 og sådan noget (.) Simba
 65 pludselig han får stiv
 66 gallew
 ((Alle griner og Bashaar og Isaam
 fortsætter med at berette om
 forskellige videoer))

21 you know that somebody is
 22 sitting planning to
 23 make the United States with
 24 the existence of only one
 25 state (.) you understand
 26 And: yes
 27 Bas: I believe in that (.) but I
 28 think
 29 Tho: it's a bit Nazi-like
 30 Bas: sorry
 31 Tho: It's a bit Nazi-like
 32 Bas: yeah yeah but you know all
 33 that stuff with music videos
 34 and such they make this one
 ((forms a triangle sign with his
 hands))
 35 And: yes
 36 Bas: I don't believe in that
 37 anymore
 38 And: no
 39 Bas: because back then when I had
 40 my debut in Illuminati do
 41 you understand then I
 42 believed in everything I was
 43 told
 44 Tho: do you remember back then '
 45 you also told me something
 46 about that the drawings in
 47 the little mermaid was based
 48 on dildos
 49 Bas: haven't you seen them
 50 ((estatic))
 51 And: ha ha
 52 Isa: what drawings
 53 Bas: when they draw Homer Simpson
 54 they draw gallawi first
 (Trans: Gallawi: penis)
 55 Isa: yes yes it's true
 56 Bas: I have seen it myself
 57 Isa: it is like the subconscious
 58 (.) to make kids horny and
 59 fuck and stuff like that
 60 ((Everybody laughs))
 61 Isa: haven't you seen Simba and
 62 stuff (.) Simba suddently he
 63 get a hard-on
 ((Everybody laughs and Bashaar and
 Isaam continue to tell about the
 videos))

In this excerpt the boys reflect on the time when they were interested in Illuminati. The excerpt also shows how they orient towards the phenomenon today. It is interesting to see how Bashaar and Isaam in retrospect reflect on their relation to Illuminati. However, their reflections show signs of ambiguity. On the one hand they express a distance to some aspects of Illuminati while

they on the other hand still appear fascinated by the very same aspects. For example, Bashaar explains how he does not believe in the Illuminati videos anymore (line 32-36). However, he still believes in the existence of a new world order planning a hegemonic world community. Shortly after (in line 51 and onwards) it appears as if Bashaar and Isaam still believe in the subconscious symbolism and messages in the videos. The ambiguity of their reflections makes it hard to establish whether the boys' fascination of Illuminati actually has died out (note how Bashaar is ecstatic when Thomas brings up the subject of the videos in line 49). This also makes it hard to establish whether they have put their naïve approach behind them as Bashaar states in line 39-43. So, was Illuminati just a passing transcultural fad – ephemeral and short lived. To some extent it can be characterized as a fad (at least for the boys). However this excerpt clearly suggests that Illuminati to a great extent permeated their everyday life (line 7) and they have not completely forgot about it (line 16).

9. Concluding remarks

The spread of conspiracy culture and conspiracy theories are a part of globalization. Conspiracy theories (such as Illuminati) have been around long before the Internet and social media. In that respect they are early examples of transcultural and transnational flows as they also before the Internet tended to move across cultural and national borders (Byford 2011:39). However, before the onset of globalization and the arrival of the Internet conspiracy thinking was not the widespread phenomena it is today (Byford 2011:38). Because of YouTube conspiracy theories, such as Illuminati, have reached a local group of boys at Amager in Copenhagen. From YouTube it spread into other everyday practices and permeated many of their social activities during a longer period. I have shown that the Illuminati society reaches beyond teenage delusions and fantasy scenarios. Since 2010 Illuminati has been increasingly represented in popular music both in Denmark and in USA. For example, in Denmark the underground rapper Ali Sufi brings up the theme of Illuminati in the music video Bashaar linked to in excerpt 6. Also more mainstream rappers in Denmark, such as L.O.C and U\$O, have dealt with Illuminati in their songs. Furthermore, I have shown how Lady Gaga used symbols associated with Illuminati in a music video and we have seen how Rihanna was accused to do the same in her music video. Such attention contributes to the wider introduction of Illuminati and conspiracy thinking to the global mainstream cultural sphere.

I have described the phenomenon of Illuminati as a transcultural and transnational flow. I have further shown how Illuminati got adopted, embedded and appropriated in different everyday

practices and how the same flows got reinterpreted in different local practices as well. YouTube plays a central role as a vehicle for the young peoples' access to Illuminati. From YouTube it spread to other social settings. Through engagement in practices related to Illuminati such as for example watching videos on YouTube, searching for and identifying symbols associated with Illuminati, and displaying Illuminati hand signs the boys constructed a concept of solidarity. This sense of community was generated on basis of a common interest and fascination of Illuminati. Their interest of Illuminati revolves around who is *in* and who is *out* and who is *for* and who is *against*. In this respect one's stance in relation to Illuminati matters. However, as I have shown in my analysis the boys have an ambiguous relation to Illuminati that varies from situation to situation and is concerned with both humor and irony. The ambiguity was apparent in excerpt 4 in which Bashaar on the one hand downplayed the risks of involvement with Illuminati while he on the other hand disassociated himself from Illuminati. In excerpt 5 the boys' with ironic comments positioned themselves as Illuminati supporters. Their ironic praise also pointed towards the ambiguity of their relation to Illuminati. In excerpt 7a+b Bashaar and Isaam revisited Illuminati, and their ambiguity also became apparent as they both distanced themselves from Illuminati, but still appeared fascinated. Their ambiguity did not change the fact that it was associated with coolness to know about Illuminati. It was connected to prestige to be able to see through this new world order and its influence of society as illustrated in excerpt 6 and 7a+b.

My study shows that the boys in their active pursuit of togetherness flirt with the forbidden aspects of Illuminati and propose imaginary or fantasy scenarios. In this respect the ambiguity of their engagement with Illuminati during this period can be seen as a part of their growing up and making meaning of the world. In that respect I have described how new global cultural flows, beliefs or discourses about the world accessed through new media practices formed the basis of moral discussions in the boys locally situated positioning in the social world. The concept of Illuminati offers a wide representation of imagery, music, celebrities and hidden symbolism which all can be accessed through the Internet. This forms the basis of the boys' fascination and engagement with Illuminati. However, the fascination and engagement with conspiracy theories is not a new phenomenon among adolescents. What is new is the way they spread among young people around the globe. In this process platforms such as YouTube and Facebook play an important role because such network sites make it possible for people worldwide to access and appropriate transcultural

flows such as Illuminati. In this way Illuminati is both local and global. Such a merger shows how culture can be both dynamic and hybrid.

When Vertovec (2006) describes the connection between superdiversity and new media patterns he focuses on how it has become easier for migrants to keep in touch with their diasporas. The study of young peoples' digital literacy practices, including my own, can contribute to an even wider understanding of what role of new media plays in relation to processes of superdiversity. My contribution to this understanding is that young peoples' media practices do not only maintain diaspora relations, but also facilitate cultural encounters from the rest of the world. As I have shown appropriation of transcultural global flows such as Illuminati to a high degree also shapes the young peoples' everyday life. In this way the young peoples' engagement with transcultural and transnational phenomena is good example of how new layers of cultural diversity are brought about by the Internet and social media.

Standard language in urban rap – Social media, linguistic practice and ethnographic context

1. Introduction

The linguistic and literacy practices of hip hop youth are by now well-studied in sociolinguistics (e.g. Androutsopoulos 2003; Pennycook 2007; Cutler 2007; Terkourafi 2010). According to the language focussed hip hop research vernacular, non-standard and hybrid linguistic practices are described as characteristic of this cultural genre (though see Stylianou 2010), and within educational studies the creative and counter-hegemonic language use is considered a significant part of the pedagogical and political potentials of hip hop (Hill 2009; Alim et al. 2009; Alim 2011; Pennycook 2007). Since online communication sites are by now common vehicles for self-expression, content sharing and engagement in both worldwide and local interest communities social media has, more recently, become an important field site for researching such popular cultural practices (Varis & Wang 2011; Androutsopoulos 2006a, 2007, 2009).

In this article we report from a study of a group of adolescents in Copenhagen identifying as rappers and engaging in various rap events and mentoring initiatives. The functions and affordances of social media are significant for the construction of their local rap community. In fact, the creation of rap identities and the existence of the rap community partly depend on these communicative platforms. However, compared to previous studies of hip hop language, the development of the adolescents' rap videos on YouTube reveals the somewhat surprising observation that the young rappers increasingly use more monolingual, standard linguistic practices in their rap productions (Madsen & Karrebæk in press; Madsen in press). We argue that to fully understand this development, it is necessary to take into account the local, socio-cultural meanings given to particular linguistic resources and its relation to wider cultural models, and that this cannot be fully captured without attention to the ethnographic context and the sociolinguistic economy in which they are situated. By including these aspects we demonstrate that the language use in the rap videos is partly related to the approach of the local rap mentors and the influence of hegemonic language ideological beliefs linking linguistic standard and correctness to intelligence. But the dominance of standard-linguistic practices in the rap productions is also related to audience considerations and ambitions of success as musician (see also Madsen in press).

Research on CMC and social networking sites is often motivated by a primary interest in the social media as such. As a consequence of this many studies typically focus on a particular type of social media and investigate, for instance, general user behavior (Miller 2008; Larsen 2009), the media's impact on social relationships (Livingstone 2008; Ellison et al. 2007), its impact on peoples' engagement in popular culture (Leppänen & Häkkinen 2012; Rymes 2012) or the development of new communicative and linguistic genres within social media such as status updates on Facebook (Lee 2011; Sørensen 2012), weblogs (Miller & Shephard 2004) or 'netnolect' (Li & Juffermans 2011). Yet, any study of the social and linguistic life of contemporary youth can hardly overlook that a significant part of young people's everyday communication involve or take place in social media, and this is our prime rationale for engaging with CMC. Studying CMC from this perspective entails, on the one hand, that social media is not examined as detached from other areas of everyday life and, on the other hand, that social media communication is included in our accounts of contemporary sociolinguistic processes in Copenhagen. In this way our work aims to contribute to current CMC research by carefully studying the contexts – also offline – for the local CMC activities, and it contributes to contemporary sociolinguistic research by including CMC as part of the sociolinguistic everyday life.

To achieve this we proceed with an introduction of our data, and we elaborate on how social media data can be approached from a linguistic ethnographic perspective. As a basis for discussing the language use in the rap productions in our case study in relation language in hip hop elsewhere, we continue with a brief review of the main findings of sociolinguistic and literacy pedagogical studies of hip hop. The wider sociolinguistic context of our field site is significant to understand the linguistic practices of the young rap musicians, and we describe this before we turn to the participants and the ethnographic context of the local rap community. These contextual accounts provide the foundation for our analysis of the adolescents' rap videos from YouTube, and we conclude with a discussion of the linguistic development we observe in the videos, in relation to our other ethnographic and linguistic data.

2. Data and approach

Our work is part of a collaborative project focused on adolescents and children from a culturally and linguistically diverse area of Copenhagen (Madsen et al. 2013). As part of our project we have carried out ethnographic field work in teams (Blackledge & Creese, 2010) in two secondary school

classes during their final three years where the participants were on an average 13-15 years old. Our fieldwork covered most of the adolescents' everyday lives. We observed and participated in activities at school (in classes and during the breaks), leisure time activities, and some of the team members visited the adolescents in their homes (Ag & Jørgensen 2013). Combined with this data collection we also carried out extensive online ethnography (Androutsopoulos 2008, 2013). We collected rap videos made and uploaded by the adolescents on YouTube, recorded their interactions while they were engaged in internet searching and other CMC activities, and we created a Facebook profile called 'The language researchers' on behalf of the project. After informing the participants about our presence on Facebook we began to receive friend requests. We never took initiative to befriend the adolescents online, and the participants have given us explicit consent to use the data provided that all names are anonymized. In this article we focus on three boys, Isaam, Bashaar and Mahmoud, who formed a rap group, and we discuss different types of data covering their rap activities. These include their YouTube videos, interview data, field diaries and recorded interactions in the youth clubs they attended.

International hip hop scholars and critics usually treat rap music as a distinctive element within the wider frame of hip hop culture. Hill (2009:33) describes how the youth he studies deploy the distinction between 'rap' and 'hip hop' as a distinction between 'real' (hip hop) and 'fake' (rap) representations of this popular culture. Yet, the participants in our study as well as their rap mentors exclusively use the term 'rap' to refer to their cultural practices. Therefore we use the term rap when we are concerned with the participants and the local rap environment, but when we relate to the international research we use the wider circulating term hip hop.

As a tool for daily communication, language and linguistic styles through repeated use come to be associated with particular people, places and purposes (Agha 2007; Coupland 2007). This makes language use a prime heuristic for tracing the experience and construction of personal and social identities, cultural interpretations, social differentiation and alignments. Communication is often indirect and linked to activities and background understanding, and for research perspectives that overwhelmingly look to explicit claims and propositions for its evidence (e.g. in interviews and surveys), this is hard to capture. We seek to meet this challenge by approaching our study of social media and rap practices from the perspective of *Linguistic Ethnography* (Rampton et al. 2004; Blommaert 2007), and a significant principle here is that the contexts for communication should be

investigated rather than assumed. This approach sees social categories and structures as dependent on their (re)production in everyday life. It therefore focuses on lived local realities, and consequently investigates how these provide insight into larger-scale socio-cultural processes. The combination of an ethnographic focus on insider-knowledge, rich contextualization and participant reflexivity and the analytical refinement of linguistics is a particular strength. This allows us to analyze the details of communicative activities and their relation and sensitivity to the social contexts in which they are produced. Furthermore, consideration of the local, socio-cultural meanings given to particular semiotic resources and their relation to wider cultural models can be accounted for through the notion of *indexicality* (Ochs 1992; Silverstein 2003). Indexicality refers to the associations between forms and (typical) usage, contexts of use and stereotypes of users that are (re-)created in communicative encounters through linguistic and other signs. Indexical associations are metapragmatic because they characterise signs' links to pragmatically usable systems of signs, and metapragmatic activities on various levels. These levels range from widely circulating stereotypes to local speaker practices and contribute to *enregisterment* (Agha 2003, 2007), that is the processes and practices whereby performable signs become recognized as belonging to distinct semiotic registers.

Social media communication, such as the sharing of rap videos, of course, involves metapragmatic activities. YouTube videos draw on already enregistered indexical associations through the use of linguistic and other signs, but in addition social media communication has the potential of contributing significantly to semiotic enregisterment because of its wide circulation. Hip hop culture is an example of globally widespread enregisterment of cultural forms – not the least linguistic, and in the section below we describe the language use associated with hip hop according to the international literature.

3. Hip hop and language

The language of hip hop has received scholarly interest from both a sociolinguistic (overview in Cutler, 2007) and a literacy pedagogical perspective (overview in Alim 2011). Sociolinguistic studies of hip hop have been particularly interested in 1) the relationship between hip hop language and African American English (Morgan 2002) and 2) the local appropriations of hip hop in various countries and regions outside the USA involving linguistic hybridity (Androutsopoulos & Scholz, 2003; Androutsopoulos 2007, 2009). The linguistic style associated with hip hop has been described

as closely related to AAE deploying, but also transforming, features of grammar and vocabulary rooted in AAE communicative practices (Cutler 2007:520). Furthermore sociolinguistic studies document how non-African Americans adopt linguistic practices associated with AAE as part of their hip hop involvement (Cutler 1999; Bucholtz 1999). Sociolinguistic studies of hip hop outside the USA characterizes the linguistic practices in localized versions of hip hop as establishing authenticity through the use of local linguistic resources combined with English hip hop terms (Alim et al. 2009; Pennycook 2007; Cutler 2007; Varis & Wang 2011) and thereby appropriating linguistic features from its African American ‘mother culture’ (Androutsopoulos 2009:43). In Europe it appears a general feature of hip hop to use the entire linguistic repertoire of the local environment including non-standard dialectal or sociolectal resources and, in contexts with large migrant communities, features of minority languages (Androutsopoulos & Scholz 2002). The preference among Cypriot rappers studied by Stylianos (2010) for Standard Modern Greek proves an exception to this tendency. In her review of the sociolinguistic literature on hip hop Cutler notes that: ‘*Local dialects by virtue of their marginalized, stigmatized status fill a role similar to that of AAE in the USA*’ (Cutler 2007:525). The preference for non-standard language use in hip hop is related to the concern with establishing authenticity, which involves the idea of being true to ones roots as well as being streetwise. As Cutler explains:

Authenticity in hip-hop is a complicated construct that depends on many variables, but one component involves socioeconomic, ethnic and cultural proximity to the urban African American community where hip-hop is created and disseminated, that is ‘the street’ (Cutler 2007:529).

The hip hop pedagogical studies (Alim 2011; Alim et al. 2009; Hill 2009; Pennycook 2007) pay particular attention to the critical language awareness involved in creating rap lyrics. Hip hop is considered a cultural form with great potential for expressing political ideas, identity affiliations and engaging in societal issues, and crucial parts of these expressions are of course linguistic. Furthermore, hip hop as cultural genre is viewed as a vehicle for expanding traditional views of language by allowing for creative linguistic practice, such as mixing, innovative slang etc. (Alim 2011; Alim et al. 2009). Alim refer to the language and educational ideology of hip hop as *ill*-literacy using a term that plays on public discourses’ evaluation of hip hop culture as ‘illiterate’, but

invert this notion by emphasising the meaning of ‘ill’ in hip hop culture, where it is used to positively evaluate skilled and counter-hegemonic practices. As Alim explains:

This Hip Hop-centered language and educational ideology is made explicit by Jubwa of Soul Plantation (a Hip Hop emcee and deejay from East Palo Alto, California), who refers to “standard English” as *limited* and Black Language as *limitless* (Alim 2011:121, emphasis in original).

The language pedagogical qualities of hip hop culture rests on the reframing of notions of correctness by linking them to hip hop cultural priorities rather than institutionally sanctioned norms of grammar rules etc., and it emphasizes the artistic creativity involved in the verbal productions indexing ‘*youth’s attempts to negotiate their ever-changing, unstable, and fluid realities*’ (Alim 2011:123). Popular culture in general is considered a space for youth to negotiate identity and belonging within a frame of peer culture (Ito et al. 2010:9).

Pedagogical and educational aspects of hip hop are certainly significant to the engagement with rap music among the adolescents in our study, but as we will show, the verbal productions of the young rappers contrast with the tendencies of non-standard and hybrid language use described in sociolinguistic studies of hip hop. Furthermore, the language ideologies of the local rap community in the context of our research differ strikingly from the *ill*-literacy perspective.

4. Sociolinguistic context

Before we turn to the specific ethnographic context and our data, however, some contextual information on the sociolinguistics of Danish as well as the sociolinguistic awareness of the participants should provide a useful entry point for our discussion of their language use in rap activities. Briefly described, the overall sociolinguistic development in Denmark is characterized by strong linguistic homogenization and a dominating standard ideology (Kristiansen & Jørgensen 2003; Pedersen 2009). Kristiansen (2009:168) suggests that Danish today is possibly more homogeneous than any other language with millions of speakers. Currently, there is very little grammatical variation within speech observed around the country. Local ‘accents’ are signified primarily by prosodic coloring, and the existing nationwide variation in segmental phonetics is strongly dominated by developments and spread from Copenhagen speech (Kristensen 2003;

Kristiansen 2009). However, as recent studies of online and offline interaction, language attitudes, and language ideologies show (article 3; Madsen 2013; Jørgensen 2010; Møller 2009; Maegaard 2007), this does not mean that young speakers in the Copenhagen area grow up without ideas about linguistic differences and their related social values. The dialectal and the traditional sociolectal differences might be close to extinct judging by the number of varying linguistic features, but only a few linguistic signs are necessary to bring out the wider social connotations of particular ways of speaking. Subtle features like prosodic coloring can still have the strong effects of signaling, for instance, a rural or an urban persona.

Our study of explicit metalinguistic accounts from our participants hints at a sociolinguistic transformation taking place among contemporary youth (Madsen et al. 2010; Madsen 2013; Møller & Jørgensen 2013). During interviews with the participants in our study in the first year of our collection period they introduced labels for two ways of speaking that differ from what they refer to as ‘normal’. One was ‘integreret’ (integrated) and the other was referred to with varying labels: predominantly ‘gadesprog’ (street language), but also ‘perkersprog’ (equivalent to paki language) or ‘slang’ (slang). ‘Perker’ is originally a derogatory term used about immigrants – equivalent to ‘paki’ or ‘nigger’. In in-group use, however, the term refers to a social category defined by ethnic minority status (in relation to the Danish majority society) across various ethnicities. Moreover, in local in-group use ‘perker’ also invokes values of toughness and street-credibility (Madsen 2013). In spite of the different naming practices, there was general agreement in the reports on characteristic features of this way of speaking. Characteristic features of ‘street language’, according to the participants, include slang, swearing, affricated and palatalised t-pronunciation, poly-lingual mixing practices, what they refer to as a ‘strange accent’ and linguistic creativity (linguistic innovations). This way of speaking is associated with the stereotypic indexical values of toughness, masculinity, youth, pan-ethnic minority street culture and academic non-prestige. In contrast, the participants characterise ‘integrated’ speech by features of distinct pronunciation, abstract and academic vocabulary, high pitch, quiet and calm attitude and ritual politeness phrases. This way of speaking is associated with up-scale culture, sophistication, authority, emotional control and aversion to rudeness, academic skills, politeness and respect. Thus, in the values and privileges it evokes, ‘integrated’ seems to be undergoing enregisterment as a conservative standard code, and ‘street-language’ is enregistered partly in opposition to this (see detailed analysis in Madsen, 2013). Yet, the label for the more conservative speech style of ‘integrated’ (in Danish public predominantly used about satisfactorily adapted immigrants) as well as its oppositional

relation to the contemporary urban vernacular speech (containing features indexing cultural and linguistic diversity) also bring about a dimension of minority/majority relations that has not previously been included in the stereotypical associations related to a conservative standard register. In addition, the socio-hierarchical dimension of contemporary youth speech has not until recently received attention in Danish sociolinguistics.

Of course, there can be significant differences between speakers' reports about language use and their actual linguistic practice. The accounts summarised here provide important insights into the speakers' ideas about linguistic stereotypes, but the study of how linguistic stereotypes are brought into use for situated pragmatic functions in particular communicative acts may add to and possibly alter the picture (Rampton 2006 and Jaspers 2011a are good examples of this). In our discussion of the rap-oriented activities we shall see how the situated linguistic practices of the adolescents relate to these sociolinguistic tendencies, and we shall open this discussion with a description of the participants' engagement in the local rap environment.

5. The participants' involvement in the local rap environment

Isaam, Bashaar and Mahmoud have been friends since they were very young. They grew up in the same neighborhood in Copenhagen and attended the same school (Mahmoud and Isaam in the same class and Bashaar in the parallel class). During our fieldwork they hung out together every day at school during the breaks, and several times during the week they attended the local youth club. Bashaar was born in Iraq and immigrated to Denmark with his family when he was two years old. Mahmoud and Isaam were born in Denmark, Mahmoud has Moroccan family background and Isaam has Palestinian and Lebanese background.

Isaam told us how they got inspired by watching a movie about a boy from the ghetto becoming a successful rap artist and therefore began to make their own rap music, and during our field work they were heavily engaged in a rap-band, here called *Mini G's*. They signalled affiliation with rap culture through the way they dressed, the music they listened to, the YouTube videos they watched, and through their composing of own music and lyrics, a topic they often discussed in school breaks and in the youth club. The boys listened to a broad spectrum of both Danish and international artist within different rap genres. Their rap activities were highly visible in the classroom when we began

our research. For instance, they wore T-shirts with their group name, and articles from local newspapers about their performances were hung on the wall of the classroom.



Figure 1: Left: The Mini G's perform at a rap-contest in the youth club. Right: Bashaar sitting in the car on his way to a concert wearing a T-shirt advertising the 'musical commune' KGB.

The *Mini G's* practiced their rap music predominantly in connection with activities in and around two youth clubs. One was the local club in the neighbourhood close to the school at Amager where we conducted our research (we refer to this as 'the local youth club'). The other was a youth club in a suburb to Copenhagen (we refer to this as 'the suburban youth club'). Through the local youth club the boys came into contact with a rap mentor who voluntarily taught and produced rap music with local adolescents. The boys refer to him as their 'manager' (see excerpt 3). He was a leading figure in the organisation *Ghetto Gourmet*, which had a so-called rap academy (workshops led by the rap mentors for youth interested in practicing rap music) as one of its activities. This organisation also offered workshops to Copenhagen schools, and the boys' two school classes participated with their Danish teachers in one of these as an alternative way of learning about poetry (in the 8th grade, October 2009, see Madsen & Karrebæk in press). Through the involvement in *Ghetto Gourmet* the boys participated in a concert where they met the rapper, Ali Sufi. He was later involved in teaching rap at the suburban youth club, and because Bashaar had a family contact who worked at the club, they also began to attend the club regularly and work with him there. Sufi initiated another rap association that Issam and Bashaar were members of, the KGB (meaning: '*Kaster Guld Barrer*', 'Throws Gold Bars'). This organisation was presented (in an introduction video on YouTube) as a '*musical commune*'. Both communities overlapped in participants and activities and they provided the main framework of activities for the boys rap interests. Through

these they participated in local concerts and national rap competitions as well as the regular meetings in the youth clubs.

It was characteristic of both rap associations that they drew heavily on the infrastructures provided by digital social media. Both Ghetto Gourmet and KGB, for instance, had Facebook pages and presentation videos on YouTube, and another initiative by Sufi was a dedicated digital rap channel, *RapMoves TV*, and a digital production company.



Figure 2: The KGB Facebook page

YouTube and Facebook also play an important role for how the boys connected with the communities and expressed themselves as rappers. On Facebook they engaged in various rap related activities from posting pictures from concerts to sharing and recommending each others' music videos. In line with the spread of smart phones and the increased popularity of Facebook the boys to a greater extent began to share their music with each other and brand themselves as rappers through online channels. So in this respect a significant part of practicing a rap identity depended on social media activities. Engaging in practices such as posting songs on YouTube, taking part in web-based communities, and interacting with fans through Facebook were central to identifying as rapper in this context, and we will now look further into the boys' rap productions.

6. Rap productions on YouTube

During our fieldwork we collected 8 rap videos that had at some point been shared on YouTube (with permissions from the participants). Table 1 provides an overview of the rap songs with

information about the year they were shared, the main content and general observations regarding the linguistic style of the lyrics.

Title and year (our translation)	Main topics of content	Linguistic style of lyrics	Group name and affiliation
'Where we come from' YouTube video, 2008	The local street gang Affiliation with violence and crime in the local neighbourhood Identifying as 'Pakis' – contrasted to nationalist right wing politics Opposition to police	Predominantly monolingual Danish with a few slang and swear words, English expressions and features of minority languages	Mini G's
'Wannabe' YouTube video, 2008	The local street gang Worthless wannabes - contrasted to real 'G's Multicultural youth - contrasted to nationalist right wing politics	More hybrid linguistic style with incorporation of English and vocabulary from minority languages - explicit meta-linguistic comments and demonstration of mixing	Mini G's
'Just a rapper' YouTube video, 2009	Meta-rap Competent rappers 'Anti-gangster'	Predominantly monolingual (standard) Danish with vocabulary indexing up-scale culture	Mini G's/ Ghetto Gourmet (Ali Sufi)
'Obama' YouTube video, 2009	Addressing US president about problems ranging from crime in local neighbourhood to poverty in Palestine, Guantanamo, and climate problems	Predominantly monolingual (standard) Danish with a few English and slang expressions	Mini G's /Ghetto Gourmet
'It's how we do it' YouTube video, 2009	Meta-rap about qualities of community of Ghetto Gourmet and their music	Predominantly monolingual (standard) Danish with a few English and slang expressions	Mini G's/ Ghetto Gourmet
'The problem solver' YouTube video, 2009	Love rap with 'anti-gangster' aspects: <i>'you're not my bitch you're my life saver'</i>	Predominantly monolingual (standard) Danish with a few English and	KGB/ RapMoves (Ali Sufi)

		slang expressions	
‘New side’ YouTube video, 2010	Meta-rap about qualities of community of KGB and their music	Predominantly monolingual (standard) Danish with a few English and slang expressions	KGB/ RapMoves (Ali Sufi)
‘Move steps’ YouTube video of live performance from release concert of Ghetto Gourmet, 2011	Meta-rap about being competent city rappers seeking to improve	Predominantly monolingual (standard) Danish with a few English and slang expressions	Mini G’s/ Ghetto Gourmet

Table 1: Overview of rap productions

The overview of the rap productions illustrates a noticeable change between the two rap songs from 2008 and the productions from 2009 when the boys became involved with Ghetto Gourmet. What is striking about the change of rap style in these productions is that it illustrates a shift from what the participants themselves describe as ‘gangster rappers’ to ‘serious rappers’ (Stæhr 2010; Madsen in press). This seems to involve a change in linguistic style as well, and we will treat this in more detail by comparing the two songs ‘Wannabe’ and ‘Just a rapper’. In the early songs the adolescents express affiliation with the local street gang, violence in the neighbourhood and opposition to the police. In the song ‘Wannabe’, wannabe G’s (G for ‘gangster’) are presented as worthless compared to the song protagonists. The boys ‘dis’ wannabes, claim authority and local street credibility. Furthermore, the song is framed as a gangster rap as the video is initiated with the sound of a shoot-out, and the boys index toughness through their bodily appearances on the shifting still pictures which their video consist of (see figure 3). Note for example how Bashaar in figure 3 ‘throw’ a West Coast hand sign to the camera and thereby signals affiliation with a particular strand of hip hop originating from the Western part of the USA. This signal of affiliation makes sense because Bashaar (as he reports in an interview) is a huge fan of the American West Coast rapper ‘2pac’ (Tupac Shakur).

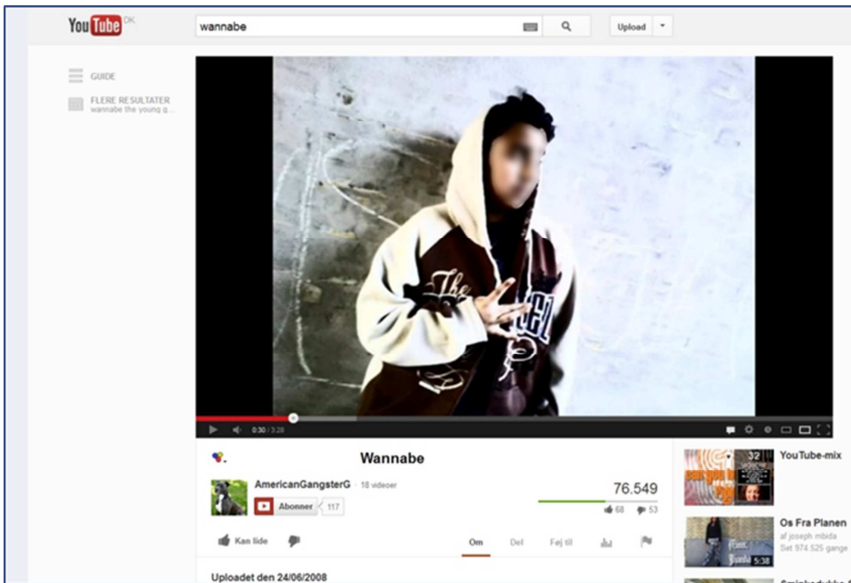


Figure 3: YouTube video ‘Wannabe’

Furthermore, many of the comments to the video draw on similar tough masculine associations as for example: ‘*your mother looks like a fagot I fuck you your little piece of shit*’. Their tough appearance in the song on the level on content correlates with their verbal, linguistic performance as it highlights the linguistic diversity associated with the street language:

Excerpt 1: Transcription of lyrics from ‘Wannabe’, 2008. Features associated with ‘street language’ originating from Arabic or Kurdish in **bold**, features associated with English in *italics*.

Original

Eow yeah wannabes
 de kan ikke blive som Mini G’s
 (Exkaran) han er alt for klam
eow I ’ nogle tabere
 I efteraber
 I kalder jer selv for en G
do you wannabe?
 I har intet værdi
do jeg er ikke Dansk Folkeparti
 så prøv at hør’
 det ’ os der før’
 for det ’ her på Amar’ vi taler vores sprog
acra para vur abow

Translation

Eow yeah wannabes
 you can’t be like the Mini G’s
 (Exkaran) he is way too gross
eow you’re loser
 you copy
 you call yourself a G
do you wannabe?
 you have no value
do I’m not ‘Danish People’s Party’
 so try to listen
 we are in front
 ‘cause it’s here in Amar’ we speak our language
acra para vur abow

The linguistic style of the song is equivalent to the everyday peer style of the adolescents and illustrates the poly-lingual character of their speech (Jørgensen 2008; Jørgensen et al. 2011) by

including features that can be associated with Danish, English, Kurdish and Arabic (see also Madsen & Karrebæk in press). For example, they use the word ‘*eow*’ which is often used among the adolescents to attract somebody’s attention, and they list the words ‘*acra*’ (‘police’), ‘*para*’ (‘money’), ‘*vur*’ (‘fist fight’) and ‘*abow*’ (a kind of exclamation) as belonging to their language on Amager. In this way the lyrics contain explicit meta-linguistic commentary, as the text addresses local hybrid speech practices and demonstrate what is referred to as ‘*our language*’. Finally, the rap text involves a political dimension through the positioning as ‘*not Danish People’s Party*’ – a right wing nationalist party, and it links the hybrid speech style to not affiliating with this nationalist party. Furthermore, the stereotypical tough masculine values associated with street language (Madsen 2013) here correlates with their confrontational appearance in the lyrics (the ‘dissing’ of wanabees) and the gangster rap frame of the video.

In what the adolescents call their more ‘serious’ rap the style is very different. Similarly to the ‘Wannabe’ video, the visual side of this production consist of shifting still pictures. The boys’ expressions on these pictures are, however, different. They appear in light colours and as we see in figure 4 and deploy hand postures associated with Buddhist greetings in contrast to the West Coast hand sign in figure 3.



Figure 4: Still picture from YouTube video ‘Just a rapper’

The message of this song is to be a competent rapper, to be yourself (also emphasized by the title) and not an aggressive gangster.

Excerpt 2: Transcription of rap lyrics from ‘Just a rapper’, 2009. Grammatical change in number underlined. Focal parts emphasized in **bold**.

Vi er her
vi er mini ghetto gourmeter
lad mig lige prøve at **argumentere**
jeg er bare en rapper du må **acceptere**
de ting jeg leverer
plus mine rim de eksploderer
jeg er bare en rapper der rapper om mit liv
gider ikke spille smart og være aggressiv
jeg er bare mig selv og ikke andet
mine rim de er ikke for fin
den er ikke for vandet
den er ren den er flot den er **venlig**
mine raptekster er helt **uimodståelige**

Omkvæd:

I ved jo godt hvem vi er
står på scenen og vi tør
poesi og harmoni
gangsterrap **lad mig være fri**

We are here
we are mini ghetto gourmets
just let me try to **argue**
I'm just a rapper you have to **accept**
the things I deliver
plus my rhymes they explode
I'm just a rapper who raps about his life
don't want to play smart and be aggressive
I'm just me and nothing else
my rhymes they're not to posh
it's not too vague
it's clean it's nice it's **friendly**
my rap lyrics are completely **irresistible**

Chorus:

Well you know who we are
on the stage and we dare
poetry and harmony
gangster rap **spare me**

The linguistic style of the lyrics is predominantly monolingual standard Danish (apart from a shift in grammatical number, underlined), and it includes a range of expressions associated with more upscale cultural norms, such as ‘*argumentere*’ (argue), ‘*acceptere*’ (accept). It can be characterized as a meta-rap and describes the rapper’s lyrics as ‘*venlig*’ (friendly) and ‘*uimodståelig*’ (irresistible). The chorus emphasizes poetry and harmony and explicitly dis-aligns with gangster rap. This message is supported by the rather old-fashioned and high style expression ‘*Lad mig være fri*’ (spare me). ‘Just a rapper’ was created during the boys’ participation in Ghetto Gourmet (and refers to this as well ‘*we are mini Ghetto Gourmets*’) and in their so called rap academy. This academy claimed in a web text to bring education ‘*from the ivory tower back to the streets*’ (see details in Madsen & Karrebæk, in press). However, it is safe to say that this rap production does not draw on stereotypical streetwise indexes.

The boys’ musical productions after 2009 (created during the involvement with the local rap mentors), continues to be concerned with positioning as competent rappers, but some also focus on societal problems and political issues. For instance, the ‘Obama’ song (made as a part of ‘rap politics’) addresses political problems on a local as well as a global scale and it includes the explicit statement ‘*I’m a political rapper, but I’m not a diva*’ (‘Obama’ 2009, our translation). Both in content and style there is less emphasis on ethnic minority identity aspects and the cultural diversity of the young rappers everyday life in the later songs. From identifying as ‘paki’ (perker) and

employing a local, linguistically hybrid vernacular speech style the productions made within the Ghetto Gourmet and KGB communities are characterised by being more standard and monolingual. It is important to add that the boys' pronunciation of the lyrics in their performance is not always standard Danish, but it is closer to a standard pronunciation in the rap performances than in their everyday speech. On the level of vocabulary their linguistic style in the later rap songs is indeed, as we have seen in excerpt 2, more standard, and at times with clear academic and up-scale cultural connotations. In the meta-linguistic reflections described in section 4, the participants specifically point to such vocabulary as a prime feature of the speech style they refer to as 'integrated' – a speech style associated with teachers and adults, respect, academic skills and up-scale culture (e.g. Madsen 2013; Møller & Jørgensen 2013). In this linguistic sense the young rappers seem to become more integrated in their linguistic style through their rap trajectories.

In sum, based on the development of the young rappers as it is reflected in their YouTube videos, we see that their involvement with the rap-political workshops and the mentors seems to result in:

- A disaffiliation with gangster-rap and its associated values
- A certain political engagement (with problems of inequality and crime) expressed in their lyrics
- Identity positioning as part of particularly competent urban rap communities and a central concern with meta-rap
- Less use of non-standard and mixed youth vernacular linguistic practices and more use of a standard, academic style (corresponding to their own descriptions of 'integrated' speech)

What is surprising, compared to the international sociolinguistic and pedagogical literature on hip hop, is that linguistic indexes of local youth culture (and the hybridity it involves) are hardly ever used in their rap music after their engagement with the mentors. Judging by their artistic expressions one could be tempted to say they are linguistically mainstreamed rather than emancipated, but to explain this it is necessary to attend to our ethnographic data and to the boys' everyday practices related to their rap-activities.

7. Rap, education and language

Andreas talked to the boys about the difference between the rap productions they have posted on YouTube in 2008 and 2009, and the young rappers present the understanding that their rap music involvement has had an impact on their attitude to school:

Excerpt 3: 'Rap saved us'

Group-interview with Andreas, May 2009. Participants: Mahmoud (Mah); Bashaar (Bas); Isaam (Isa); and researcher, Andreas (And), My translation. Focal parts emphasized in **bold**.

- 1 And: what's happened
2 Bas: **we've become more mature**
3 Isa: yes we've begun to **take it seriously the rap (music)**
4 before we were just some kids trouble makers but **now**
5 **we don't want to play smart and be aggressive**
6 Bas: and before I remember in the fourth grade that eh we
7 skipped classes all the time we ran away from
8 [name]'s classes and stuff
9 Isa: we were like real brats but now (.) after (.) the
10 rap (.) **rap saved us you can say**
11 Bas: have saved us also **school itself we've taken more**
12 **seriously**
13 Isa: mm so
14 And: really
15 Bas: yes
16 Mah: [before I didn't do] much homework before
17 Bas: [for example I I]
18 Isa: **we can thank our manager ((name)) for this**
19 Bas: listen **I've gone from zero to ten and twelve (1.3)**
20 just from fourth grade and here and and now

The most significant point to make from the participants' expressed understandings in the interview here is that the development towards maturity and seriousness in relation to rap music is presented as closely related to improvement of school performance (line 11 and 19). The boys claim that they have been 'saved by rap' and even express thanks to their manager. This act involves indexical association with the genre of a 'thank you speech' within the field of music and arts. So they are not only presenting themselves as good students, but also as rap artists. In this construction they draw on an understanding of the rap-activities and mentor-relationships as important for their educational development (see also Stæhr 2010; Madsen & Karrebæk in press; Madsen in press).

In excerpt 4, however, a different understanding of the relationship between rap music and school is expressed by a friend in the local youth club. The excerpt illustrates part of their rap-related

activities in club. Mahmoud and Bashaar are writing a climate rap, which is also homework for school, but the activity takes place in the leisure context in which they often worked on their music. This makes the setting for the activity somewhat hybrid and the linguistic practices they employ during this sequence relates to similar hybrid relationships between peer and school cultural resources. The boys jointly create the lyrics for the song, and Mahmoud writes them down. Before this sequence the writing has led Bashaar to make fun of and correct Mahmoud's spelling of the word 'temperature' (see Madsen 2011a; Stæhr 2010, chapter 6). So the school-oriented frame and a norm of correctness have indeed been made relevant. A third participant joins the conversation at the beginning of excerpt 2, Madiha, a girl, who is also a regular to the youth club.

Excerpt 4: 'Do your homework'

Recording from the youth club, October 2009. Participants: Bashaar (Bas); Mahmoud (Mah) and Madiha (Mad). Rap marked in *Italics*.

	Original	Translation
1	Mah: [den stiger] ((rapper))	[it rises] ((rapping))
2	Mad: [Koran xxx kom nu] lav	[Koran xxx come on] do your
3	jeres lektier få jer en	homework get yourself an
4	uddannelse (.)	education (.) ↓rap Koran do you
5	↓rap Koran tror I I får	think you'll get
6	penge [for det]	money [for it]
7	Bas: [HVOR MEGET] HVAD	[HOW MUCH] WHAT
8	HVAD TROR DU JEG FIK I	WHAT DO YOU THINK I GOT IN
9	FRANSK I DAG (.) <u>TI</u>	FRENCH TODAY (.) <u>TEN</u>
10	HISTORIE FIK JEG TOLV	HISTORY I GOT TWELVE
11	MATEMATIK FIK JEG <u>TI</u>	MATH I GOT <u>TEN</u>
12	LAD VÆRE MED AT SNAKKE	DON'T TALK
13	WALLAH	WALLAH
14	(2.0)	(2.0)
15	Mad: (ej hvor skulle jeg vide det	(well how would
16	fra)	I know)
17	Mah: [<i>temperaturen</i> (.) <i>den stiger</i>]	[<i>the temperature</i> (.) <i>it's rising</i>]
18	((rapper))	((rapping))
19	[øh JA I FORHOLD TIL ANDRE]	[eh YES COMPARED TO OTHERS]
20	Mad: HVAD FIK DU MOUD	WHAT DID YOU GET MOUD
21	Mahmoud fik sgu også ti	Mahmoud also got bloody ten
22	Bas: <u>TI</u> I FYSIK OG	TEN IN PHYSICS AND
23	Mah: KE↑MI (0.3) <u>TOLV</u> I	CEMIS↑TRY (0.3) TWELVE IN
24	BIOLO↑GI	BIOLO↑GY

((wallah, Arabic origin = I swear))

Madiha interrupts Mahmoud's rap with the suggestion that the boys do homework instead of rap music in order to get an education (lines 1-6). Thereby she seems to articulate an assumption that rap does not lead to income (as education does) or she, perhaps, implies that the boys' rap music is not at a level that will lead to economic success. So Madiha constructs a contradiction between the youth cultural practices such a rap music and general measures of societal success, at least in relation to Mahmoud and Bashaar. However, to do so, she employs non-standard linguistic features characteristic of the 'street-language'. The linguistic features include a particular prosodic pattern and the slang expression *Koran* used as intensifier (line 2 and 5) and index peer culture and streetwise values rather than educational skills (e.g. Madsen 2013). Bashaar does not argue against the expressed assumption, nor does he claim that they are in fact engaged in doing homework. Instead he defensively and loudly asks Madiha a rhetorical question about his marks and continues by listing a range of the high marks he has recently received in school as an answer (line 7-13). This seems to function as a demonstration of his academic capabilities, and a way of positioning himself as school-skilled (in line with his earlier spelling corrections). Still, similar to Madiha, he deploys linguistic features associated with the vernacular speech style. These are both prosodic and lexical (e.g. the expression *wallah*, line 12). Finally, Mahmoud, too, lists high marks in several subjects using the same intonation (lines 23-25). Excerpt 2 thereby illustrates how the boys defend their school competence as a reaction to the articulation of an assumption of an opposition or at least lack of connection between rap-culture and school success. The example shows that the close relation between school competence and hip hop activities expressed by the boys is not uncontested – in this case it has to be defended. But like above the boys manage a simultaneous positioning as both good students and rap artists, and this example is typical of how these boys in many ways successfully, blend dominating educational norms and positive school orientation with peer and popular cultural norms and semiotic activities such as linguistic vernacular forms and rap (Madsen 2011a; Madsen & Karrebæk in press; article 3). The example shows that in their peer-interactions around rap non-standard vernacular speech practices are used, even when the interaction involves a strong orientation to school achievements.

In the next excerpt we shall see an example from a recording in the studio in the suburban youth club with their rap mentor. It illustrates the recording work, interaction around the recording and the mentor's effort to film the recording (to use it for online productions). Just before this excerpt Isaam has had a failed attempt at performing his part of their song:

Excerpt 5: 'Inspiration'

Self-recording by Bashaar in suburban youth club, March 2011. Participants Bashaar (Bas); Isaam (Isa); another rap group member, Salim (Sal); rap mentor (Men). Rap in *italics*.

	Original	Translation
	Bas : åh du laver ↑sjov det er ↑ikke	ah you're ↑fooling around it's
1	sjovt jeg vil gerne INSPIRERES	↑not funny I want to be INSPIRED
2	af dig	by you
3	Isa : så kom ↑tættere på (.) xxx jeg	then come ↑closer (.) xxx I must
4	skal stå xxx	stand xxx
5	Bas : så kom RAP ↑DER så skru ned mand	then come RAP ↑THEN turn it down
6	(.) ↓kom	man (.) ↓come
7	Isa : <i>inspiration kald det hustle</i>	<i>inspiration call it hustle</i>
8	<i>eller flow</i>	<i>or flow</i>
9	<i>se vi ender ikke i fængsel for</i>	<i>look we're not ending in jail</i>
10	<i>vi hustler vores</i>	<i>because we hustle our flow you</i>
11	<i>flow forstår du</i>	<i>see</i>
12	<i>velkommen til dyreparken</i>	<i>welcome to the animal park 2300</i>
13	<i>2300 hvor vi shh</i>	<i>where we shh</i>
14	((hiver efter vejret))	((breathe in heavily))
15	> jeg kan ikke få luft	> I can't breathe
16	sig 2300 for mig <	say 2300 for me <
17	Bas : ok [kom]	ok [come]
18	Men: [må] jeg ikke lige filme det	[can] I just film this
19	nej mand	no man
20	Isa: jo	yes
21	Men: nej	no
22	Isa: jo:	ye:s
23	Men: [hvor]	[where]
24	Bas : [ikke] <u>nu</u> Koran jeg sveder som	[not] <u>now</u> Koran I sweat like an
25	Isa : et dyr	animal

At this occasion in the studio, Bashaar has several times expressed annoyance with having to spend time on the other's re-recordings. Here he reacts to Isaam's failed attempt by criticising him for '*fooling around*' and urging him to get it done. Isaam raps (line 7-13) until he is out of breath and has to stop again. The lyrics he performs in this sequence includes the English expressions '*hustle*' and '*flow*', but are apart from that standard Danish and contain the message of not going to prison

as well as a reference to the postal code of the boys' local neighbourhood (2300). Bashaar's utterances are all pronounced with an intonation characteristic of the 'street language'. In line 15 the rap mentor asks if he can film the activity (to document their work on Facebook). Yet, Isaam resist this with the explanation that he sweats '*like an animal*'. This utterance directed at the mentor is like Bashaar's contributions spoken with 'street-language' intonation and it includes the expression '*Koran*' used as an intensifier – also a feature indexical of the urban speech style. Apart from illustrating how concerns about online presentations were closely interwoven with the offline rap activities, the excerpt also shows how the urban speech style is used in the everyday interaction around rap-music making with the mentor.

Excerpt 4 and 5 are just short examples, but they illustrate a typical linguistic behaviour of the boys. Our interactional data overall documents that features of the 'street-language' style was widely used by the adolescents in interactions with peers, during rap-activities, with their rap mentors and also when doing homework or bragging about school results (as we saw in excerpt 4). Hence, even though we have established that formal educational progress was an important part of the young rappers everyday life, and that they understood their rap-activities as closely linked to education, there is nothing about their everyday interactions suggesting that the adolescents oriented strongly to an ideology equating educational progress with standard language. So is the explanation for the preference for standard linguistic practices in the rap music related to normative orientations of the mentors?

The excerpt 7 from Andreas' notes from a field trip to the suburban youth club suggests that Sufi to some extent displays distance to the everyday speech practices of the participants:

Excerpt 7: 'That stuff about paki language'

[...] *after a while he [Sufi] asks what I do. I explain briefly about language. He interrupts and says 'that stuff about paki language ethnolect' and "have you heard the language they speak at Amager'. I don't get change to answer, because Bashaar says 'yes he knows all the words, we can't hide anything from him anymore' and laughs* (Field diary, Andreas, 23rd of March 2011, our translation).

The field diary describes how the mentor ascribes certain linguistic practices to the participants (and not to himself) and labels these '*paki language ethnolect*'. The reaction of Bashaar treats the researcher's access to the speech style as requiring explanation, and the local construction of the style documented here involves associations with ethnicity, a particular urban area and

unintelligibility. This suggests that the boys' vernacular speech practices are treated as somewhat peculiar.

In 2014 Isaam has become a rap teacher himself, and in a retrospective interview Lian asked him about whether they were taught about choice of linguistic style in their rap music by their mentors, and how he approaches language in his own teaching. He explains that he advises his own rap pupils to only occasionally use what he refers to as '*perkerdansk*' ('paki Danish') and otherwise stick to '*ethnic Danish*' (in the meaning 'the Danish spoken by ethnic majority Danes'). The reason for this is a concern with the recipients of the music, as he continues to explain: '*yes you should try to get to people to listen [to] your music (.) so you so (.) but let's say for example (.) ah but it's some paki kids making that music we don't want to listen to that (.) but if you can get to the ethnic Danes themselves and [they] think it's cool then you have success*' (Isaam, retrospective interview with Lian, February 2014, our translation). According to Isaam the considerations about linguistic style are related to ambitions of success as rappers, and that involves reaching a wider audience and not being rejected as a 'paki kid'. Isaam further explains that in particular their teachers in *Ghetto Gourmet* often corrected their grammar and sought to teach them linguistic correctness. When Lian asked why, he answered: '*because one shouldn't sound like a stupid (.) like an uneducated person you know (.) because then your text or your message becomes unserious (.) and it's important to get your message out*' (Isaam, retrospective interview with Lian, February 2014, our translation). So in addition to aiming at a wider outreach and at artistic success there is a concern with coming across intelligent to be taken seriously. Isaam explains that he is trying to create a new rap association independent of the youth clubs and with its own facilities, and that his main aim with this is to create an environment for the local youth with interest in rap to become skilled and successful as rappers. So whereas it can be alluring to explain the dominance of linguistic standard practices in the rap productions as linked to the ideologies of education, Isaam's accounts point to rap cultural ambitions as an important part of the explanation.

8. Conclusion

In this article we have focused on how a group of young rappers in Copenhagen express their popular cultural affiliation with rap music in YouTube videos, and we have discussed their linguistic practices in rap songs in relation to the ethnographic and sociolinguistic context of their musical activities. We have shown that the adolescents employed indexical signs stereotypically associated with different cultural models (e.g. formal school marks and linguistic vernacular style)

in peer interactions around rap. However, we observed that vernacular and hybrid linguistic practices that were widely enregistered as streetwise were reduced in the musical productions they shared on social media as the boys became involved in local rap-political initiatives. Educational aspects were clearly central to the activities in this local rap community. The mentors provided advice and guidance in relation to rap-related skills such as composing, producing and performing, but both on the levels of ideology and practice there were also links to more official schooling. The participants expressed an understanding of their rap activities being closely related to progress in formal education. In addition, one of the mentors' own rap texts, for instance, appeal to knowledge as a significant capital, and Isaam in the retrospective interview describes this mentor as strongly involved in the boys' educational development (helping with homework and urging them to get an education). Furthermore, the activity of teaching poetry workshops through the medium of rap in schools exemplified a very direct engagement with formal education.

This focus on education and Isaam's accounts of the importance of linguistic correctness to be taken seriously and avoid appearing uneducated suggest that the preference for standard linguistic practices in the rap productions relate partly to the influence of hegemonic language ideologies of standard and correctness signaling intelligence. But the dominance of standard-linguistic practices in the rap productions was also, according to Isaam, related to adaption to the Danish majority population to achieve success as musicians. The standard adaption we find in our rap data indeed contrasts with global hip hop that is closely associated with African American English and with the general tendencies to use non-standard, hybrid and '*limitless*' (Alim 2011) linguistic practices in hip hop documented in the sociolinguistic studies of hip hop (Androutsopoulos & Scholz 2003; Pennycook 2007) and the work within the critical hip hop pedagogies (Hill 2009; Alim et al. 2009). Linguistically the local rap community is not counter-hegemonic, and rather than bringing linguistic indexes of minority status and youth culture to the front stage, the young rappers assimilate to linguistic majority terms, in the name of success and intelligence.

Sociolinguistic studies in tune with the current focus on globalization and the polycentric communicative conditions it entails (Blommaert & Rampton 2011; Blommaert 2010), increasingly attend to CMC as a research site. Our study shows in line with much of this research as Varis & Wang (2011:75) phrase it: that '*Global cultures, codes and flows [...] are not swallowed without chewing*' (see also Pennycook 2007; article 4). Appropriation of global cultural flows are regulated by local norms and meaning making. This is certainly the case in the context we study, where hip

hop culture is understood within the local frame of rap-political and educational activities. We hope to have shown that there is a case to make for ethnography in relation to sociolinguistic studies of CMC. To understand why standard linguistic practices with cultural up-scale indexicality make sense in a rap tune on YouTube, and how one can be a streetwise rapper in Copenhagen, but make use of speech practices enregistered as 'integrated', we need the knowledge of how the hip-hop culture is 'chewed' in this specific context.

5. Perspectives

I set out to examine what role social media play in young peoples' everyday lives. I did so by pursuing the topics of *social media and sociolinguistic normativity* and *social media, semiotic resources and popular culture*. I investigated these thematic directions by addressing questions such as how norms of language use and user behavior are expressed in adolescents' everyday social media interactions, how such interactions are related to wider processes of enregisterment and what role social media play in adolescents' appropriation and production of popular cultural discourse. In this final section of the dissertation I bring together the discussions from the 5 articles and I address some of the broader perspectives of my study. Before reaching these wider conclusions I summarize the main results of my analysis. I present two sets of arguments. Firstly, I present the empirical points of my dissertation (section 5.1 and 5.2) and secondly I discuss the methodological contributions of this dissertation in relation to the field of sociolinguistics and language focused social media studies (section 5.3).

5.1 Social media and sociolinguistic normativity

Normativity is a central aspect of the adolescent Facebook users' social media interactions. In this dissertation I have described how they orient towards different normative orders through metapragmatic activities such as crossing, self- and other-corrections, stylizations and explicit metalinguistic commentary. In the dissertation I further linked the adolescents' orientations towards different linguistic and social norms up with a broader sociolinguistic perspective considering that social media are important for understanding current processes of language change and enregisterment in contemporary societies. I have investigated normativity as a social practice and I divide my main findings related to this topic into three points:

1. Social network sites are not free or unregulated orthographic spaces as depicted in public discourses on youth and social media.
2. Linguistic and social normativity is polycentrally organized.
3. Spoken and written discourse should not be separated in accounts of enregisterment in contemporary societies.

Regarding the first point I argue that social media communication is indeed regulated and that (like in face to face encounters) linguistic and social norms must be complied with in these social spaces. Such findings contrast with more conservative perceptions of CMC as a threat towards the Standard

language which is often voiced by authors, politicians, so-called experts, “authorities” and linguists as described in article 1 and 2. I have considered both the adolescents’ metalinguistic comments on online language use and their interactional practices on Facebook. I conclude that both their metalinguistic statements and their interactional practices suggest that social encounters on Facebook include social and linguistic regulation. For example as shown in article 2 the adolescents orient towards standard orthography by carrying out either self- or other-corrections. I argued that this in itself was already an indication of the continuing relevance of standardization for these adolescents. In this way my dissertation contributes to nuance prevalent assumptions about the nature of social media interaction and the demise of the Standard among the youth. Yet, I found that the adolescents did not solely orient towards standard orthography, but also oriented towards other levels of normativity. In article 1 and 2 I suggested that peer group normativity played an equally important role in the participants’ social media interactions. Thus, I consider interactional encounters in such social spaces as polycentrically organized. This leads me to the second point.

The polycentric organization of social and linguistic norms entails that people may orient to, or feel accountable towards, various social and linguistic norms tied to different norm centers.

Furthermore, such organization also involves that several norm centers can be relevant to a communicative act. The participants in my study orient to norms of language use that are associated with different types of authority. Standard language ideologies associated with school, teachers, dictionaries, etc. were influential when the participants used predominantly monolingual standard practices in their rap lyrics and oriented to standard orthography in their self- and other-corrections. In this way the adolescents’ reproduced and validated a Danish standard hegemony through their language practices and metalinguistic comments. Peer group ideologies were also treated as an authority among the adolescents. This was the case when they oriented towards language norms associated with *street language*, *integrated language* and language use associated with *stereotypical Danishness*. Peer group norms for the use and the value associations of street language involved a contrasting relationship to the Standard. Yet, not all peer group norms contrasted with the Standard. For example, norms associated with integrated language use contained elements of standard orientation as this way of writing/speaking was associated with teachers, school and polite language in general. In the dissertation I argued that the study of language norms among the adolescents required looking at “orthography as social action” (Sebba 2012; Jaffe et al. 2012). In this way I argued that orientation towards linguistic normativity and correction practices had social functions

such as social positioning, identity work and negation of social relations ranging beyond matters of correctness. But what actual social functions were at play? For example in article 1 we saw how individuals tried out a different voice by crossing (Rampton 2005) into features associated with recognizable categories. Yet, I concluded that there were limitations to the identity one could assume and that signaling belonging to categories associated with ethnicity, “perker”, street credibility etc. could be objected to and contested on the basis of perceptions of norms and rights of language use. In article 2, I concluded that correction practices were used as a social resource on a par with other social resources. Correction functioned as interactional strategies for teasing others about lack of spelling skills, highlighting particular students lack of academic ambitions, for conjuring up foreign speakers and for basic politeness (e.g. by helping out with spelling). In article 3, I showed that stylizations of particular speech styles in writing for example were used to communicate affection and friendship, to ascribe identities associated with being Danish and to play with traditional Danish proverbs and immigrant stereotypes. Overall the use of linguistic and social norms observed among the adolescents pointed towards linguistic reflexivity.

In the dissertation I conclude that reflexivity is central to social media communication and I argue that one possible explanation for this is that the affordances of the media (e.g. the persistence and searchability of written discourse and user generated content). Thus, the adolescent Facebook users are forced to look at themselves (sometimes from a new perspective) through their written, semiotic and multimodal practices. Such linguistic reflexivity is, furthermore, essential to accounts of enregisterment. This leads me to the third point. In this dissertation I have argued that spoken and written discourse should not be separated in accounts of enregisterment in contemporary societies. The basis of this argumentation is that social media interaction (and similar forms of communication mediated through online discourse on digital devices) has become an important part of peoples’ everyday communication. This seems to suggest that the production of texts has increased (Kress 2005) and that writing takes up a major part of our everyday lives. I attended to the paradox that so far it has not been customary to incorporate written practices (and online discourse) in studies of language change despite the fact that sociolinguistic research gradually during the last decades has recognized the importance of the Internet and social media as a new field of research. In this dissertation I have shown that linguistic resources associated with different speech styles were also used in writing on Facebook. On the basis of this I suggested that there is a relationship between the enregisterment of writing and speech. More specifically I found that written stylizations and crossing were sometimes similar to those in verbal interaction and brought about

similar links between linguistic forms and associated values. Together with the enhanced opportunity social media provide for everyday uses of language in writing this pointed towards a closer connection between spoken and written vernacular styles. On the basis of this I concluded that metapragmatic commentary on digital media platforms was a fruitful site for studying processes of enregisterment, because it showed the ways different features are associated with different verbal and literacy strategies in ‘vernacular’ writing, how rights of language use emerged and took effect, and how different ways of speaking were associated with larger discursive meanings and with speakers’ reflections on social categories and stereotypes.

Overall my findings regarding sociolinguistic normativity and use of vernacular writing associated with particular ways of speaking contribute to our knowledge of the enregisterment processes of language styles among Copenhagen youth. Thus, an important point of this dissertation is that social media interaction should be included in accounts of enregisterment in contemporary societies. In this way social media provide a site for investigating social and linguistic practices among the youth in a context where the adolescents feel ownership over the social and cultural agenda (Ito et al. 2010:9). Young peoples’ engagement in popular cultural practices represents a similar socio-cultural platform.

5.2 Social media, semiotic resources and popular culture

Despite the widespread assumption that social media are closely related to current youth culture (in its broadest sense) there is still relatively little research within this emerging area investigating how young people appropriate cultural practices across online and offline situations (Ito et al. 2010:2). This dissertation contributes with insights into how young people engage with popular culture in different everyday situations from a practice perspective. I divide my main findings related to this topic into two major points:

1. Popular cultural flows are a part of globalization and adolescents’ appropriations of such flows through social media are not limited to social media practices.
2. The examination of popular culture provides a window onto investigating broader social and linguistic practices and offers a basis for studying new layers of cultural diversity in so-called superdiverse societies.

The first point refers to my suggestion that popular cultural flows are closely connected to globalization. In the dissertation I recognize that this is not new because both conspiracy

phenomena and rap music has been shared across national and cultural borders long before the Internet and social media. However, what is new is the *way* cultural discourse are shared and mediated through the Internet. I have argued that the evolution of the Internet during the past decades has increased the speed of circulation and enhanced the availability and access of popular cultural flows. For example conspiracy thinking was not the widespread phenomenon it is today before the Internet. This was exemplified in article 4 where I showed how the conspiracy theory of Illuminati reached a local group of boys at Amager in Copenhagen through their use of social media. Yet, I concluded that transcultural flows were not limited to social media practices because, as illustrated, the semiotics of Illuminati got adopted, embedded, appropriated and reinterpreted in different everyday practices. This points towards the understanding that young peoples' engagement with popular culture on social media cannot be fully understood unless we also follow the trajectories of the flows in other everyday practices as well (I will return to this point in section 5.3). This leads to my second point.

When looking more closely at the appropriation of popular cultural flows in everyday discourse we can gain a more comprehensive account of broader social and linguistic everyday practices. We can discover how, for instance, adolescents use language talking about and making rap lyrics and how they relate to each other and broader discourses about the world through engagement with popular culture. Also the investigation of the adolescents appropriation of imagery, music, celebrities and hidden symbolism associated with Illuminati provided knowledge about how the adolescents constructed a concept of solidarity and how Illuminati discourse became central in their pursuit of togetherness. In addition, I showed how such new global cultural flows, beliefs or discourses about the world formed the basis for moral and ethical discussions among the boys in their locally situated positioning in the social world. Through the boys' engagement and fascination with the Illuminati society we gained a unique insight into the boys' coming of age and personal developments in a globalized world over time. On a broader level the boys' engagement with transcultural phenomena such as Illuminati also provided information about how new layers of cultural diversity were brought about by the Internet and new media that reached beyond accounts of diversity provided by studies of migration and the new demographics of western European societies.

The investigation of the boys' making of rap music in article 5 also illustrated how the study of popular culture led to specific insights into the young peoples' everyday language practices. In our collaborative study Madsen and I discussed the boys' linguistic practices in rap songs on YouTube

in relation to the ethnographic and sociolinguistic context of their musical activities. We concluded that the boys employed indexical signs stereotypically associated with different cultural models (e.g. formal school marks and linguistic vernacular style) in peer interactions around rap. Yet, we found that vernacular and hybrid linguistic practices that were widely enregistered as streetwise were reduced in the musical productions they shared on social media. This we explained by our ethnographic knowledge about how educational aspects played a central role to the activities in the local rap community the boys were engaged in. We learned that the mentors in the rap commune were giving advice and guidance in relation to rap-related skills such as composing, producing and performing, but both on the levels of ideology and practice they also linked rap activities to more official schooling. This also became apparent from the interviews with the participants where they expressed an understanding of their rap activities being closely related to progress in formal education. Overall we concluded that the local rap community was not linguistically counter-hegemonic, an insight that contrasted with accounts of global hip hop being closely associated with African American English and with the general tendencies of orienting towards non-standard and hybrid linguistic practices (e.g. Cutler 2007). So, rather than bringing linguistic indexes of minority status and youth culture to the front stage, we argued that the young rappers assimilated to linguistic majority terms and linguistic standard hegemony, in the name of success and intelligence. This is interesting because *the popular* is often thought of as providing accounts of social practices *diverging* from or *opposing* the Standard. Yet, in our collaborative study the investigation of the popular (through the study of rap music) we provided an account of how the “normal” or the Standard was merged into a context where it would not stereotypically be expected. We were only able to arrive at such conclusions about the adolescents’ linguistic everyday life in social media because of the broader sociolinguistic and ethnographic knowledge we gained from our ethnographic face-to-face field work. This leads to the discussion of the methodological contributions of my study.

5.3 Approaching everyday language across online and offline situations

A recurrent theme in this dissertation has been how to approach the study of language and social media. My investigation of the adolescents’ social media practices involved analysis of ethnographic and linguistic data from various online and offline everyday situations. In this way I aimed at gaining a holistic understanding of what role social media play in young peoples’ everyday lives. The main methodological contribution of this dissertation can be summarized in the following way:

- The study of social and linguistic practice in social media environments must be investigated as connected to other aspects of peoples' everyday lives and as an inseparable part of young people's sociolinguistic reality.

Along these lines I have argued that ethnographic investigation of the online and offline situated contexts for social interaction is crucial to understanding what is going on in social media communication. Furthermore, I argue that online social encounters are regulated by local norms and meaning making and should be understood within the local frame of the adolescents everyday activities. This was certainly the case for the adolescents' normative orientations (article 1), the social functions of online correction practices (article 2), the enregisterment of vernacular styles of writing (article 3), the boys' coming of age seen through the lens of their engagement with Illuminati discourse (article 4) and the boys' linguistic practices in a rap commune (article 5).

The dynamic relation between online and offline situations have become particular visible in the era of web 2.0 (or the participatory web era) where peoples' social practices on social media platforms to a greater extent are enacted in an interplay with social practices away from the key board. Given this we need to question well established distinctions between writing and speech, text and talk, online and offline, etc. Instead of approaching these as static entities I have argued in favor of a more dynamic approach to language and context highlighting that such conceptions should be seen from a practice perspective. In this way as Slater (2002:543) argues such notions should be seen as "possibly social accomplishments" and investigated as such rather than being predetermined. By this approach to the study of language and social media I have attempted to bridge the field of language-focused social media studies and the field of speech-focused sociolinguistics. In this way the dissertation offers methodological contributions to both fields of study. On the one hand I hope to have demonstrated that there is a case to make for face-to-face ethnography in relation to sociolinguistic studies of social media arguing that social media interaction can be (and often is) related somehow to offline contexts. On the other hand I hope to have shown that there is a case to make for including the study of CMC in the investigation of everyday language use, language change and enregisterment of speech styles arguing that social media practices are becoming an increasingly important part of everyday communication in contemporary societies.

The empirical and methodological results of this dissertation contribute with knowledge about the complexity and mobility of social interaction in superdiverse contemporary societies and with knowledge about how social and linguistic practices can be studied across online and offline

contexts by combining methodology of linguistic ethnography, sociolinguistics and the field of language focused CMC. But what wider perspectives can be derived from such a study of everyday language use and social media?

5.4 The fall of Facebook?

Social media facilitate people to connect and allow them to stay connected at all times. With the demolishing of the online/offline dichotomy (a recurrent theme in this dissertation) our lives co-exist in both spaces simultaneously and they are mutually shaping. For example offline social relations, language practices etc. are reflected in our social life on social network sites such as Facebook. This makes social encounters easier and more complex at the same time. The complexity of contemporary communication is, for instance, reflected in the ways people can engage in several social encounters at the same time across time and space which I illustrated in the introductory field description. Furthermore, the thin line between what is considered private and public in the era of the participatory web, raises a new set of challenges/opportunities for social behavior and social interaction. Some of these challenges and opportunities have been described in this dissertation. Social media is constantly changing and developing. The evolution of social media entails that “old” media change or even die out and new media arrive at the scene and introduce new practices, possibilities and challenges of social interaction. Therefore research within the sociolinguistics of social media, like any other field of research, is ongoing and dynamic (Barton & Lee 2013:183). Lately rumors have circulated that Facebook is dying and that teenagers find fresh fields. Such rumors cannot be left uncommented in a dissertation like this handed in at the 10 year anniversary of Facebook. The 24th of November 2013 Daniel Miller wrote a blog post titled “what can we learn from the fall of Facebook”. Immediately after the blog post was published the message of “the death of Facebook” prevailed news papers articles, magazines, blogs etc. world wide. Based on his study among 16-18 year olds from the Glades in the UK he concludes:

“For this group Facebook is not just falling, it is basically dead, finished, kaput, over. It is about the least cool thing you could be associated with on the planet” (Miller 2013 a)

He further argues that Facebook has been replaced by a combination of four media: Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and WhatsApp. Yet, he states (which was partly overlooked in many of the news articles) that we should not expect Facebook to disappear altogether because it still functions as a mode of family interaction, because as he explains in a follow-up article at the web site theconversation.com:

“Where once parents worried about their children joining Facebook, the children now say it is their family that insists they stay there to post about their lives. Parents have worked out how to use the site and see it as a way for the family to remain connected. In response, the young are moving on to cooler things” (Miller 2013 b)

So, on the one hand young people leave Facebook because of a desire for the new and the cool (every new age grade needs to find their things) while they on other hand have a hard time being young and free while their mothers are watching them. In this way Miller argues that Facebook gradually turns in to something else which does not necessarily attract new generations of social media users. In a Danish context Facebook is still the largest social network site (Statistics Denmark 2009, 2012). Furthermore, a national survey about media use among 13 year olds published by the children’s council in April 2014 reports that Facebook is the most frequently used social network site (Børneindblik 2014:2) closely followed by Snapchat, YouTube and Instagram. I will not engage in any predictions about the destiny of Facebook. Yet, the message of Miller’s blog post raises an important point – the field of social media is developing rapidly and social media communication has come to stay, and it will very likely not look the same ten years from now.

A major point of this dissertation has been to empirically document the interplay between online and offline social encounters and see 1) how it affects social life of a group of teenagers and 2) how it affects the study of language and social media. Following Miller’s predictions about the developments of young peoples’ media use, future research will to a greater extend need to focus not only on the interplay between online/offline social interactions, but also the interplay of social activities across different social media sites. Madianou & Miller (2012) propose the term *polymedia* to capture such a pattern of media use, which entails a shift from “a focus on the qualities of each particular medium as a discrete technology, to an understanding of new media as an environment of affordances” (Madianou & Miller 2012:170). They further argue that this approach to social media is relevant as no media exist in isolation. This approach is very much along the same lines as Androutsopoulos (2008), who also emphasizes the importance of following participant’s social media practices across different web pages.

Facebook may well become increasingly unpopular and the future conditions for social media communication are yet unknown. Still, this dissertation has investigated Facebook communication during the peak of its popularity, and with this work I have raised points of general relevance to sociolinguistics as well as digital media research. Finally, the dissertation offers relevant insights

into how to investigate the interplay between online and offline practices in the first place and how to carry out interactional micro analysis of digital discourse that extends the Facebook context.

Summary

Title: Social media and everyday language use among Copenhagen youth

This study concerns the role of social media in young peoples' everyday lives and it addresses how social media can be approached from a sociolinguistic and ethnographic perspective. My research is driven by an interest in how the complexity and mobility of linguistic and social resources across online and offline contexts make sense to the adolescents I study. Therefore, I approach my data with emphasis on a participant perspective. This means that I focus on how social and linguistic categories are made relevant through linguistic acts in the situated interaction among the adolescents. But I also relate my analysis to more macro discursive understandings of Danish society and the globalized Internet. A recurrent theme in the dissertation is how to approach the study of social media in contemporary society. Methodologically and analytically I argue throughout the dissertation that it is fruitful to approach social media as connected to other aspects of peoples' everyday lives. This approach entails a combination of online and offline methods for data collection.

As a part of a collaborative project I have carried out ethnographic fieldwork among a group of adolescents at a Copenhagen grade school and during their leisure time activities over a period of three years. At the same time I carried out online ethnography by following the adolescents' activities on Facebook. My project was initiated in 2009 when the participants in our study attended 7th grade and ended when they left school in 2011 (a period of time equivalent to secondary school). Since then I continued to meet with some of the adolescents and in addition I followed all of the adolescents on Facebook. In 2010 most of the young people in our study had a Facebook profile and they regularly engaged with each other through this social network site. Seeing that I created a Facebook profile on behalf of the project and advertised our new profile among the adolescents and soon we began to receive friend requests on Facebook.

The dissertation consists of 5 articles. The articles are framed by an introduction and a final section containing the perspectives of my study. In the dissertation I examine what role social media play in young peoples' everyday lives by pursuing the topics of *social media and sociolinguistic normativity* and *social media, semiotic resources and popular culture*. Regarding the first thematic direction I find that social network sites are not free or unregulated orthographic spaces as depicted in public discourses on youth and social media, that linguistic and social normativity is polycentrally organized and that spoken and written discourse should not be separated in accounts of enregisterment in contemporary societies. Regarding the topic of social media, semiotic resources and popular culture I conclude that popular cultural flows (such as rap music and conspiracy phenomena) are a part of globalization and that adolescents' appropriation of such flows through social media are not limited to social media practices. This points towards the understanding that young peoples' engagement with popular culture on social media cannot be fully understood unless we also follow the trajectories of the flows in other everyday practices as well. I also conclude that the examination of popular culture further provides a window onto investigating broader social and linguistic practices and offers a basis for studying new layers of cultural diversity in so-called superdiverse societies. The overall methodological contribution of the dissertation is that the study of social and linguistic practice in social media environments must be investigated as connected to other aspects of peoples' everyday lives and as an inseparable part of young people's sociolinguistic reality.

Key words: Youth, social media, linguistic and social normativity, popular culture, linguistic diversity, social positioning, multicultural urban settings.

Resumé

Titel: Social media and everyday language use among Copenhagen youth

Denne undersøgelse omhandler, hvilken rolle sociale medier spiller i unges hverdagsliv, og den belyser, hvordan studiet af sociale medier kan undersøges fra et sociolingvistisk og etnografisk perspektiv. Min forskning er drevet af en interesse for sproglig og social kompleksitet på tværs af online og offline kontekster, og hvordan dette giver mening, for de unge jeg undersøger. Derfor undersøger jeg mine data ud fra et deltagerperspektiv, hvilket betyder, at jeg fokuserer på, hvordan sociale og sproglige praksisser bliver gjort relevante i den situerede interaktion mellem mine deltagere. Desuden relaterer jeg også mine analyser til makrodiskursive processer i det danske samfund og det globaliserede internet. Et tilbagevendende tema i afhandlingen er, hvordan man skal undersøge sociale medier i senmoderne samfund. Metodologisk og analytisk argumenterer jeg i afhandlingen for, at sociale medier bør undersøges som en del af folks øvrige hverdagsliv. Denne tilgang medfører en kombination af online og offline dataindsamlingsmetoder.

Som en del af et større forskningsprojekt, har jeg udført etnografisk feltarbejde blandt københavnske unge på en folkeskole og i deres fritid. Sideløbende med dette udførte jeg ligeledes online etnografi blandt den samme gruppe unge på Facebook. Jeg påbegyndte projektet i 2009, da deltagerne gik i 9.kl og projektet sluttede i 2011, hvor eleverne gik ud af folkeskolen. Siden da fortsatte jeg med at mødes med nogle af de unge samtidig med, at jeg blev ved med at følge alle de unge på Facebook. I 2010 havde de fleste af deltagerne i mit projekt en Facebook profil, og de kommunikerede regelmæssigt med hinanden gennem denne sociale netværksside. Derfor oprettede jeg en Facebook profil på vegne af projektet, og efter et stykke tid begyndte de unge at sende os venneanmodninger. Således fik jeg adgang til de unges Facebook aktiviteter.

Afhandlingen består af 5 artikler, som er indrammet af en introduktion og en perspektivering. I afhandlingen belyser jeg, hvilken rolle sociale medier spiller i unges hverdagsliv gennem en undersøgelse af emnerne *sociale medier og sociolingvistisk normativitet* samt *sociale medier, semiotiske ressourcer og populærkultur*. Med hensyn til det første tematiske spor finder jeg, at sociale netværkssider ikke er uregulerede ortografiske rum, som de ofte fremstilles i offentlige diskurser om sociale medier og sprog, at sproglig og social normativitet er polycentrisk organiseret og endelig, at talt og skreven diskurs ikke bør separeres i beskrivelser af registergørelsesprocesser i senmoderne samfund. Hvad angår det andet tematiske spor i afhandlingen, konkluderer jeg, at populærkulturelle strømninger (såsom rapmusik og konspirationsteorier) er en del af globaliseringen samt at tilegnelsen af sådanne strømninger ikke er begrænset til de unges sociale medie praksisser. Dette involverer en forståelse af, at unges tilegnelse af populærkultur på sociale medier ikke kan forstås fuldt ud med mindre vi også ser på, hvordan de unge beskæftiger sig med disse populærkulturelle strømninger i andre hverdagssituationer. Yderligere konkluderer jeg, at undersøgelser af populær kultur giver mulighed for indsigt i bredere sociale og sproglige praksisser blandt de unge, og at sådanne undersøgelser kan bidrage til studiet af nye lag af kulturel diversitet i såkaldte superdiverse samfund. Min afhandlings overordnede metodologiske bidrag er, at studiet af sociale og sproglige praksisser i sociale medie sammenhænge bør undersøges som en del af unges hverdagsliv og som en uadskillelig del af de unges sociolingvistiske virkelighed.

Nøgleord: Unge, sociale medier, sproglig og social normativitet, populærkultur, sproglig diversitet, social positionering, flerkulturelle urbane miljøer.

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Appendix 1:

Transcription symbols used

[overlap]	overlapping speech
LOUD	louder volume than surrounding utterances
xxx	unintelligible speech
(questionable)	parts uncertain about
((comment))	transcriber's comments
:	prolongation of preceding sound
↑↓	local pitch raise and fall
(.)	short pause
(0.6)	timed pause
<u>Stress</u>	stress
hhh	laughter breathe
(Trans:)	translation