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Stylizations, stratification and social prestige

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Stylizations, stratification and social prestige

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Abstract

This paper investigates two examples of stylized uses of linguistic and prosodic features associated with the well described street language register (see e.g. Madsen 2013, Stæhr 2015) and their indexical meanings at two (very) different schools in contemporary Copenhagen. It shows how the social reputation and indexical meanings of what has been described as prevalent features of this register are (still) objects of ongoing, conflictual typification practices. Unlike prevalent understandings of street language as being an established way of speaking, the data presented indicate that the historical link to “learner Danish” from which it emancipated in the first place, is still alive and kicking in the minds and social repertoires of contemporary youth. The performances also reveal awareness in the two environments of the unequal dimensions of stratification in the sociolinguistic order of speech styles in contemporary Denmark. The paper argues that the performers exploit these structures of inequality for social positioning on scales of in vs. out, competent vs. incompetent and high social status vs. low social status and reproduce ideological notions of social status differences of wider societal currency as a way of dealing with the social, linguistic and cultural diversity that has become an integral part of their everyday life. It thereby supports the call for a (re)focus on institutional inequality in studies of urban youth’s practical activities and language use if we wish to advance our understanding of social inequalities in contemporary societies (e.g. Rampton 2010, 2011; Jaspers 2011, Madsen 2013, Collins 2015).

Introduction

The emergence of the contemporary urban vernacular (Rampton 2011) in Copenhagen, also referred to by users as *street language*, has been part of a significant change in the sociolinguistic environment of Denmark. As described by Madsen (2013, 2015) the construction, maintenance and development of this particular register (Agha 2005, 2007), which involves both urban speakers and popular culture discourse, has meant that linguistic signs and prosodic patterns that used to be associated with “learner Danish” i.e. the Danish of immigrants and thus with ethnic minority/majority relations, have now become indexical tools for constructing for instance cool and tough youth identities and for social positioning on a scale of societal high and low on which the use of street language is placed at the bottom by invoking associations to street culture, violent/criminal behavior and academic non-prestige. Furthermore, the meta-pragmatic image of this register as constituting *the language* of (a certain part of) ethnic minority Danes is being replaced by a general understanding in large parts of the Danish society of the register as a stylistic resource that is merely *part of* (a certain type of) young Copenhagener’s linguistic repertoires, and that is thereby also used by speakers who have access to more academic and sophisticated ways of speaking (Madsen 2015: 133). In this study I

look into two examples of situated uses of linguistic features that have been described as prevalent features of the register and their indexical meanings in two different school environments in contemporary Copenhagen. More specifically, I analyze two instances of linguistic performance in which a positively school-oriented girl from a public school and a boy from an upper-class elite private school respectively engage in creative language play that incorporates linguistic and prosodic features with their associated indexical values and stereotypical personas. Although the performances are carried out in these two very different sociolinguistic environments (more on this below), I show how they in similar ways involve different aspects of ambiguity through which the participants highlight their access and thereby also their right to use features of the register, but at the same time dis-associate themselves from its indexical values and stereotypical image of its users through what could be characterized as *vari-directional double voicing* (Bakhtin 1984: 194). The performances furthermore mirror how the contemporary urban vernacular “status” of street language is not at all a done deal by illustrating how the social reputation and indexical meanings of what has been described as prevalent features of this register, such as affricated and palatalized t-pronunciation, a strange accent, swearing, and poly-lingual languaging (see e.g. Madsen 2013, 2015, Stæhr 2014) are (still) objects of ongoing, conflictual typification practices. Unlike prevalent understandings of street language as being an established way of speaking, my data indicate that the historical link to learner Danish from which it emancipated in the first place, is still alive and kicking in the minds and social repertoires of contemporary youth. Apart from thereby constituting important snapshots of the ongoing enregisterment (Agha 2005, 2007) of widely recognized and frequently used linguistic features among contemporary (urban) youth, I argue that the two pupils in focus through their performances highlight and thereby show awareness of the unequal dimensions of stratification in the sociolinguistic order of speech styles in contemporary Denmark. I illustrate how they exploit these structures for social positioning on scales of in vs. out, competent vs. incompetent and high social status vs. low social status and thereby reproduce ideological notions of social status differences of wider societal currency as a way of dealing with the social, linguistic and cultural diversity that is an integral part of their everyday life. Thereby this study aligns with Rampton’s (2006: 223) assertion that “systematic inequalities [...] do not disappear just because people stop talking about them in the ways that they used to” and supports the call for a (re)focus on institutional inequality in contemporary studies of urban youth’s practical activities and language use if we wish to advance our understanding of social inequalities in contemporary societies (Rampton 2010, 2011; Jaspers 2011, Madsen 2013, Collins 2015a).

The street language register

The emergence and development of the contemporary urban vernacular (Rampton 2011) in Copenhagen also known and referred to as *street language*, is well described (see e.g. Møller & Jørgensen 2012, Madsen 2013, Stæhr 2014, Hyttel-Sørensen 2016). The data presented in this study involve features associated with the register. However, as we shall see, the interactional sequences in focus do not constitute examples of

straightforward use of street language, instead they point to the indexical *valence* (Ochs 1996: 417-419, see also Rampton 2006: 303-305) of prevalent features of the register i.e. the features' capacity for hinting at different indexical meanings by linking the use to negative identity features such as being laughable and incompetent. These indexical meanings stand in contrast with the meanings foregrounded in previously studied uses through which street language is linked to being cool and tough (see e.g. Madsen 2013, Stæhr 2014) and they furthermore show how the earlier and more negative identification of this way of speaking as "learner Danish", and its related association to foreignness and linguistic incompetence still lingers as part of the interpretive frame in the heads of contemporary Copenhagen youth. Before outlining in detail the linguistic features in focus and their prevalent and thus conflictual indexical meanings, I first provide the reader with a brief account of the historical relation between street language and learner Danish.

Among the first to report on the emergence of an urban youth register in Denmark were Quist (2000) and Christensen (2003) who investigated the speech styles of urban, multiethnic youth in the two biggest cities of Denmark, Copenhagen and Aarhus respectively. The studies were informed by Kotsina's (1988) groundbreaking work in Stockholm, Sweden on "Rinkebysvenska". In many ways this work, which according to Jaspers (2016) constitutes a typical and not entirely unproblematic sociolinguistic move, transformed the lens through which the Swedish spoken in multiethnic and multicultural urban communities was viewed and understood by describing it as a *speech style* rather than a deficient version of "standard Swedish" which up until then had been the predominant perception of this way of speaking (Swedish). As shown by Quist (2000, 2005) and later Maegaard (2007), a similar sociolinguistic development to what had been observed in Stockholm was taking place in the urban areas of Copenhagen with various non-standard Danish prosodic, lexical and syntactical features and also pronunciations gaining prominence among Copenhagen adolescents. Through their ethnographic and variationist approaches to these linguistic changes Quist (2005) and Maegaard (2007) showed how the use of these "new" linguistic features correlated with speakers' affiliation to various social group identities related to, in particular, gender and ethnicity and argued that this correlation proved significant to Copenhagen's ongoing sociolinguistic development.

More recently the Copenhagen contemporary urban vernacular (Rampton 2011) has been described as an integral part of the linguistic repertoire of (most members of) a pupil group of adolescents at another public school in Copenhagen (compared to where Maegaard and Quist conducted their studies). This was done as part of a collaborative research project that set out to follow two parallel classes from their 7th grade school year and up until their graduation with the aim of studying their everyday language use and social relations in- and outside the school (for more see Madsen et. al. 2016). As part of the ethnographic effort the pupils were interviewed and it was during these interviews that the label street language first came up as the name for a certain way of speaking that was described by the pupils as a part of their everyday linguistic repertoires and which drew clear parallels to the previously described language change in Copenhagen by

involving many of the same linguistic features. The register was also described in essays that Møller & Jørgensen (2012) had the pupils write about their everyday language use in- and outside the school and in these essays the pupils described street language as “[...] the unmarked choice [of language] among friends” (Møller & Jørgensen 2012: 8). The pupils also outlined how this way of speaking was characterized by for instance the use of swear- and slang words and expressions, a non-standard prosody (referred to as “a strange accent”) as well as the mixing of linguistic features associated with different languages i.e. what Jørgensen (2008) and Møller (2009) had previously described as *poly-languaging* practices. In both the essays and in the interviews the pupils furthermore revealed and elaborated on a locally constructed meta-pragmatic system in which street language that was reserved for peer interaction stood in contrast to another register termed “integrated” which was then described as the means for interaction with teachers and other adult authoritative figures and also older family members as a sign of common courtesy and respect. In conclusion Møller & Jørgensen (2012: 10) describe these ways of speaking as registers that “[...] function as the extremes in a stylistic continuum covered by the students, and [...]” that “[...] the students [...] use these extremes to position themselves somewhere in between”. As revealed by the adolescents the street language register was not perceived to be a general way of speaking, but merely a stylistic means for constructing particular popular identities associated with being tough, cool and “street smart”. In many ways this observation was remarkable in the sense that it showed how these Copenhagen adolescents were actively re-analyzing (Agha 2007) communicative resources that had traditionally been associated with “learner Danish” i.e. the language or the Danish of non-Danish immigrants and which Quist (2000, 2005) and Maegaard (2007) had described as variations of Danish linked to ethnic and gendered identities, to make them part of a *language style* of contemporary urban youth. Madsen (2013) delivers an even more detailed description of this sociolinguistic change by looking into the concrete linguistic features/performable signs and stereotypical indexical values of the street language register (and also “integrated”) as well as the meta-pragmatic framework as it is presented by the Copenhagen adolescents in their essays and also in the ethnographic interviews. Whereas Quist (2005) and Maegaard (2007) primarily studied how the use of certain features correlated with various social group belongings, Madsen (2013) investigates meta-pragmatic data that reveal insights into how the register is understood among a group of Copenhagen adolescents. Her study is informed by Agha’s (2005, 2007) concept of enregisterment and Silverstein’s (1985) framework of indexical order which means that she frames the use of features of the register not as *reflecting* general affiliation with ethnic and gendered identities but as an interactional means for situational positionings and alignments “[...] mediated by the fact of cultural ideology” (Silverstein 1985: 222). So in contrast to the work presented by Quist (2005) and Maegaard (2007), Madsen (2013) points out how these features are actively used to do social work that goes beyond flagging a gendered or ethnic identity. Below is Madsen’s (2013: 133) list of emblematic performable signs of the street language register as well as its prevalent stereotypical indexical values as they were presented by the adolescents:

Performable signs

- Slang features
 - Swearing
 - An affricated and palatalized t-pronunciation
 - Polylingual practices
- A strange accent (referring to the use of a non-standard Danish prosodic pattern)
- Linguistic creativity

Indexical values

- Toughness
- Masculinity
- Youth
- Pan-ethnic minority “street” culture
- Academic non-prestige

When looking at the linguistic features of the list, there are signs that point to the historical link between the street language register and “learner Danish”. For instance the use of non-standard prosodic patterns, a non-standard Danish /t/ pronunciation that resembles a standard Turkish /t/ pronunciation and which is described by one of the participants as a pronunciation that one pupil uses because “she is from Turkey”, and also the interactional use of non-Danish words and expressions. These are all features that potentially could invoke an auditory image of the Danish of a so-called “non-native speaker” in the process of acquiring Danish. However to these Copenhagen adolescents the prevalent indexical meanings associated with the use of these features seem to be more related to being tough, cool, street smart and creative than being foreign or linguistically non-fluent or incompetent. The study furthermore underlines what Møller & Jørgensen (2012) also argued, namely that the register is perceived and used by the adolescents as a stylistic resource that is merely one *part* of their overall linguistic repertoires of speech styles and which they can turn up and down or on and off depending on the social situation at hand as well as the interlocutors involved. On the basis of her observations, Madsen (2013: 135) points to an ongoing sociolinguistic development (or “transformation” as she terms it) in Denmark in which “[...] linguistic signs that used to be seen as related to migration, on an insider/outsider dimension of comparison, are now related to status on a high/low dimension as well”. Bearing in mind the theoretical framework of Madsen’s (2013) study, it goes without saying that this development is intrinsically ongoing i.e. the “new” indexical meanings do not erase the old ones and as my data suggest, the traditional link to migration is still quite salient. Subsequently the use of street language features has also been found on social media in Facebook interactions of young Copenhageners in which they draw on the register’s lexical features and also come up with various creative orthographic representations of certain pronunciations indexical of the register (for more see Stæhr 2014). Also there has been a form of institutionalizing movement within popular culture related to both Danish hip hop (Stæhr & Madsen 2017) and satirical television (Hyttel-Sørensen 2016) that has contributed to putting street language (or ghetto language as it is also frequently named) on the agenda in the public sphere and thus widened the meta-pragmatic lens of the common Dane by extending the knowledge of this urban speech style.

So from when the first studies of this emerging urban register were conducted up until now, the sociolinguistic image of Denmark has indeed changed. The street language register has developed from being an urban phenomenon observed in different communities of adolescents in different parts of Copenhagen and Aarhus to being a well-established style of speech that most Danes will be familiar with. However, despite the above mentioned studies that show how local understandings of the register's meta-pragmatic framework seem to be primarily related to binary values on a scale of societal high and low such as street culture vs. academic prestige, there is still a tendency within public discourse, which for instance is reflected in the above mentioned satirical television show, to depict the stereotypical user of the register as an immigrant with violent and criminal tendencies and thereby also to invoke discourses of integration and an ethnic minority/majority dichotomy into the meta-pragmatic image of the register. Such examples from public discourse go to show how the linguistic features at issue here have conflicting reputations and as mentioned above the scope of this indexical *valence* plays an important part in the interactional examples presented in this study. The examples first and foremost confirm these features' potential for functioning as important meta-pragmatic resources among contemporary youth for positioning oneself (and others) on a scale of high vs. low social status and Danish vs. non-Danish. Secondly they reaffirm the features' historical relation to "learner Danish" by illustrating how this link remains available as an interpretive resource and finally the examples point to the spread of the register by involving an example of its use in an environment in which it has not previously been investigated before. The fact that we are dealing with stylizations furthermore opens up for using an analytical lens that not only views the linguistic performances as micro-level situated language acts but also as secondary representations of the register revealing insights into the meta-pragmatic reflections of the respective speakers who engage in the performances and to some extent also their audiences'. In the next paragraph I elaborate more on how I intend to do so.

Stylization practices

When engaging in staged comedy performance, a common and also effective tool to make use of is the indexical link between certain ways of speaking and certain stereotypical images of their common user i.e. parodying the speech indexical of certain social stereotypes. Within the framework of interactional sociolinguistics this meta-pragmatic practice of using *an artistic image of another person's voice* (Bakhtin 1981: 362) is termed *stylization*. The reason why stylization practices constitute effective performance tools is that they allow for the performer to make implicit social commentary that draws on recognizable elements from the broader society on more than one level. Apart from having immediate social effect as situated practices, stylizations also work on a meta-level as pieces of secondary representations that thereby encourage the audience to "use their broader understanding of society to figure out exactly what 'image of another's language' the performance is actually supposed to be" (Rampton 2006: 225). In this way stylizations can be said to (at least in order to be successful) build on a shared understanding of linguistic signs, pronunciation patterns and indexical values between the speaker and the recipients in moments of

heightened sociolinguistic reflexivity. Thus if a stylization is successful i.e. if it is well received and not in need of any (further) explanations in order to make sense to the recipients, it means that the indexical links that are being foregrounded can be assumed to be rather well-known and well-established in the environment in which the stylization takes place. It follows from this that both the practice itself and its reception among the audience can say a lot about speech styles and their ongoing enregisterment (Agha 2005, 2007) among groups of speakers as well as local ideological perceptions of what is routine and artificial or what is acceptable and strange (Jaspers 2010: 194). So by studying stylization practices we can learn more about how different speech styles become associated with certain values and ways of being, how these links can be used for situational purposes, and perhaps most importantly how these practices mirror broader aspects of society.

On the basis of this theoretical framework I will include in my analyses a focus on three levels of linguistic production (see also Rampton 2006):

- Firstly the concrete micro-level linguistic production. Here I will look for linguistic and prosodic features that indicate that this is to be understood as stylized street language or stylized “learner Danish”. Then I will attempt to describe the purposes and social outcomes of the productions.
- Secondly I will look at the secondary representations of linguistic styles that are being pointed to through the stylizations. Here I will look at what alignments and dis-alignments the speakers (and if possible also the recipients) display towards the linguistic resources/the speech styles that are being highlighted as well as their related indexical values as they are invoked through the performances.
- Thirdly and finally I will discuss how these observations of language use, activities and value ascriptions relate to broader representations of street language and “learner Danish” in the wider public sphere and also to ideologies of social status differences and sociolinguistic stratification in the wider society.

Before moving on to the analyses, though, I first provide the reader with a more detailed description of the study’s ethnography.

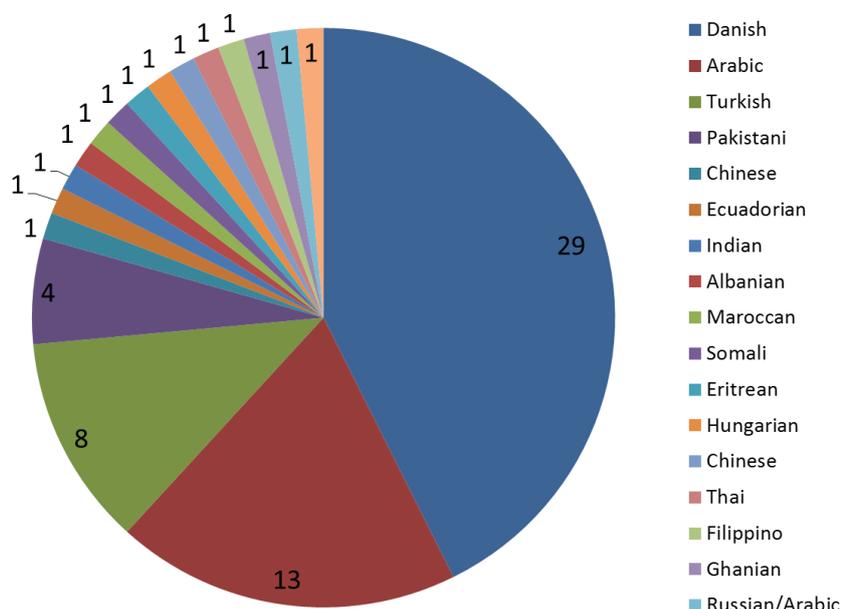
The public school

The data presented stem from two different periods of ethnographic field work carried out at two different elementary schools in Copenhagen. The one school can be described as an average Copenhagen public

school. It is located in an area that used to be a rather homogeneous working class area, but which has now developed, in accordance with the rest of the Copenhagen, into an area characterized by a pronounced demographic diversity (see also Madsen et. al. 2016). Although the area zip code of 2300 Copenhagen South covers the entire district which is in fact a small island in itself, the area can be (and is often) un-officially divided into two parts, namely Amager West and Amager East. Amager West is the young, vibrant and modern part with a socio-economic status and profile that trumps the one of average Copenhagen. There are practically no cheap spots in this area when it comes to house prices so all real estate in Amager West is rather expensive as compared to other more common parts of Copenhagen. Seeing how the area is also fairly new, it is furthermore filled with buildings that have been built within the last 10-15 years and the area is therefore also generally associated with modern (Nordic) architecture. As a result the inhabitants of this part of Copenhagen South are mostly people with high incomes i.e. people who belong to Copenhagen's "upper class".

In contrast Amager East is the historically more common part which separates itself from the Western part by being more in line with the general image of Copenhagen both in regards to its ethno-cultural composition of people and its general socio-economic profile (although the Copenhagen of today holds quite a few expensive and posh neighbourhoods). Most of Amager East consists of buildings that were built 50 or more years ago and therefore it is generally also cheaper to live here compared to living at Amager West. Furthermore there are several areas at Amager East that are based on low-cost housing. The public school in which one of the stylization performances is carried out, is located at Amager East. Both the school's demography and its socio-economic profile fit the general image of this part of Amager and actually a lot of the pupils that are present in the excerpt that is analysed, including the girl that engages in the stylization performance, live in the low-cost housing buildings mentioned above. The parents of the pupils generally have "lower middle class jobs" like school- and kindergarten teachers, taxi drivers, nurses, carpenters, police officers etc. The ethno-cultural profile of the school is likewise very representative for both Amager in general and the city of Copenhagen. In the three classes that are present during the stylization performance, the pupils come from a wide range of ethnic and linguistic backgrounds as illustrated in the table below:

National backgrounds of the pupils (The public school)



Being a public school means that the official language of the school is Danish. It also means that the teaching and the school curriculum is highly influenced by the predominant language ideology which positions standard Danish as the overriding means for achieving educational and professional success (e.g. Karrebæk 2013, Stæhr & Madsen 2014, Møller 2015). The only national language register apart from Danish that is ever welcomed into the classroom at the third grade level is English and this is only when the class schedule reads “English”. This means that 36 linguistic backgrounds are being left out of all school activities and thereby being preserved for either peer-to-peer interaction in the breaks or for family interaction in the pupils’ respective homes (Ag & Jørgensen 2013). Since most of the pupils have at least one Danish speaking parent and most of them were born and raised in Denmark (and maybe the dominant language ideological aspect of the school also plays a part here as well as of course the pupils’ own desire to invest in Danish themselves) Danish is the language that the pupils use the most. The pupils have also been observed engaging in linguistic practices in which they draw on both the performable signs and indexical values of the street language register. However, in line with the previously studied adolescents at the same school (Madsen et. al. 2016), these practices seem reserved for peer interaction in situations with no adults (or other authoritative figures) present and in which the social framework of school related activities is abandoned (Nørreby forthcoming). As we shall see, though, if one is sufficiently creative there are ways of bringing street language into the class room.

At the public school I have conducted ethnographic field work in three parallel classes. The data for this study stem from 2014 when the pupils attended the 3rd grade (9-10 years old). I engaged in this ethnographic

effort partly as an independent field worker gathering data for the project that this study is a part of and partly as a member of a larger team of researchers (for more see Madsen et. al. 2016).

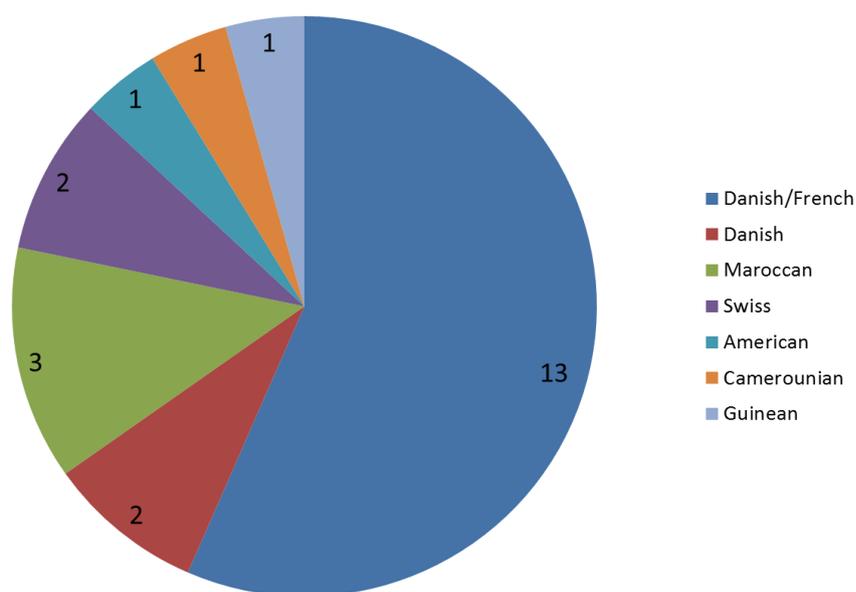
The private school

In a number of ways the private school that constitutes the other ethnographic site in this study differs significantly from the public school. The school is a French/Danish private school and it is located in the city of Frederiksberg on one of Denmark's most expensive addresses. Frederiksberg is officially a municipality located in the center of Copenhagen but to most people living in the city, Frederiksberg is considered part of Copenhagen. The area around the school, which according to Copenhagen's official tourist guide is labeled by the Copenhageners as "The Paris of Copenhagen" (www.visitcopenhagen.dk), is primarily known for its expensive addresses and its vibrant, cool and "French" atmosphere. Right across from the school is one of the most popular wine bars in Copenhagen and its two neighbors are a French café and a luxurious chocolate store. These modern, fancy and (to some extent at least) French surroundings fit well with the school demography. Apart from having the obvious French touch there are also a lot of pupils at the school who come from wealthy, upper class homes with parents who work as pilots, scientists, directors, bankers, engineers, politicians, photographers, chefs at high end restaurants etc. Being at the school you cannot help but notice the pupils' socio-economic background of privilege like for instance when some of the boys from the class go out to buy lunch in their lunch breaks (a practice that is common for some of the pupils) and come back with a baguette from the popular nearby store "Le Gourmand" with stuffed duck breast and foie gras or when one pupil spontaneously will buy three bags of chips or a huge bag of candy (which happened several times during our period of field work) to share with the rest of the class. The pupils' socioeconomic background of privilege also became evident in relation to a certain homework assignment in English where the pupils were asked to draw a sketch of their home from which we learned that Sebastian for instance lives in a mansion at Rungsted which is one of the wealthiest areas in the entire country. So even though some of the pupils do not live at Frederiksberg, their socioeconomic background still resembles the profile of the area in which the school is located.

The official language of the school is French which means that all lessons that are not language lessons of English, Spanish, Danish, etc. are taught in French. The school is driven partly within the framework of the Danish Ministry of Education and partly within the framework of the Agency for French Education Abroad which provides the pupils with the possibility of taking a Danish-French "Baccalauréat" (DFB) that is recognized in both countries and which, as the school proudly states on its website, "qualifies the pupils for advanced education in France, Denmark, other European countries, and everywhere in the world". So whereas the public school is very much anchored in Danish relations when it comes to language ideologies and preparing the pupils for life after elementary school, the private school has a much more international profile. I have conducted field work at this school together with a colleague and as we quickly learned when first setting foot in the school, the international profile is not just a branding perspective or something that is

merely evident in the curriculum; it is also physically constituted through different types of pupil-made artifacts that grace the hallways and classrooms all over the school. The international touch is furthermore supported by the linguistic environment with both French and Danish being used among the pupils whenever they are not in class. By not being subjected to the same political thrust as what is the case for Danish public schools in general, the school is more free when it comes to the construction and implementation of its language policy, although it is of course still obliged to let Danish language feature as a significant part of the curriculum in accordance with the school's legal status. As a result the predominant standard Danish language ideology that very much shapes what goes on in terms of curricular activities in the public school, is not to be found at the private school, however this does not mean that the school has a more liberal approach to the pupil's language use. In general the language environment at this school is characterized by explicit linguistic norm enforcement both with respect to literacy activities and spoken language which demands that the pupils at all times stick to the target language during teaching lessons. Furthermore there is a general expectation at the school that the pupils speak sufficiently formal and they are explicitly taught about different style levels in both the French and English classes. As an interesting twist to the these prevalent ideologies of linguistic purity that governs most practices in the language classrooms, a more liberal approach to what kind of language use is acceptable in schoolwork is found in the Danish lessons where for instance the use of English idiomatic expressions such as "oh my God" is accepted in concrete school assignments (for more see Nørreby & Madsen forthcoming). In the class that we observed all the pupils have at least one Danish speaking parent which is quite rare for a class at the private school although the pupils come from many different family backgrounds as you can see below.

National backgrounds of the pupils (The private school)



As we have learned, the fact that all of the pupils have at least one Danish speaking parent means that almost all of them consider Danish to be the language they use the most, which corresponds well with our ethnographic observations and which thereby also marks a parallel between the informal linguistic practices of this pupil group and the one at the public school. Instances of innovative or frequent poly-langaging at the private school however, are rare compared to what we have witnessed at the public school. Furthermore the instances that we have observed seem to underline how these types of “creative” linguistic practices are used mostly for fun and thus not with the sincere investment that we have seen among pupils at the public school (an ethnographic observation which is supported by the performance in focus in this study). The field work that my colleague and I conducted at this school started in the spring of 2015 in a CM2 class which is the last class in “L’ cole” (primary school) with the pupils being at the age of 10 and 11. This class was then split into two different classes after the summer when the pupils were enrolled into 6i me which is the first class of “Le Coll ge” (secondary school). We then continued our fieldwork in one of the 6i me classes which included nine of the pupils who were also part of the CM2 class. The data from this school that are presented in this study all stem from the 6i me class with the pupils being at the age of 11 and 12.

So whereas the public school represents a sociolinguistic environment in which the street language register has been shown to be an integral part of the linguistic repertoire of its pupils (M ller & J rgensen 2012, Madsen 2013, St ehr 2014) and whose socioeconomic profile fits the register’s indexical link to lower social strata, the private elite school represents an environment with a socio-economic status with which street language is not traditionally associated and also an ethnographic site in which the street language is not observed to be a frequently used resource among its international pupils. These sociolinguistic circumstances of the two schools are in many ways important to this study. First of all because of the crucial role that institutional responses to linguistic diversity play in constructing links between linguistic repertoires, social hierarchies and prestige and secondly because as shown by Jaspers (2014) and Collins (2015b) the symbolic organization of different language use in and around educational practices to a large extent reproduces wider patterns of social stratification. The stylization performances in focus in this study furthermore illustrate how these dynamics of sociolinguistic stratification in contemporary Denmark have an impact on the ways in which these Copenhagen school children operationalize their linguistic repertoires to engage with and position themselves both in the immediate local social world and also in relation to the unequal larger societal structures that are surrounding them. In the next section I turn to the analyses starting with Selda’s performance at the public school.

Selda the magician

The following linguistic performance occurred in March 2014 on a day of celebration at the public school where the three parallel classes came together for a “show” that was organized by the teachers as part of a common initiative across the three classes. On this particular day some of the pupils from one of the three

classes who had voluntarily signed up for it, were set to perform different “acts” in front of their class mates as well as the two other third grade classes. The initiative demanded that the pupils who wished to perform had to come up with an idea for an act, write the act and perform the act themselves. As a result it was not everyone who did perform and the types of acts, their themes (and also the quality) varied greatly. On this day there were a total of five acts. Three girls had prepared a small theatre sketch where one girl was arguing with her parents about homework while two other girls sang a song they had written about being best friends. One boy had prepared a riddle for the audience to solve while another boy had written a fable. The fifth performer whose act we shall focus on here, was Selda who had prepared a magic trick.

Selda was born in Denmark by parents who were both born in Turkey. In March 2014 she was 10 years old and attending the 3rd grade at the public school at Amager and she also attended private (Turkish) mother tongue classes after school hours. From my ethnographic experience I know Selda to be one of the more ambitious and well-behaved pupils in her class. She always participated in the class room discussions and during my time of field work I never witnessed her not having done her homework, which was not exactly the norm among her class mates. It was not particularly rare for Selda to draw on her Turkish family background in teaching situations whenever she found it relevant, such as when she explained to the teacher that she knows what “curlers” are because she had seen it in a show on Turkish television (field note, Thomas, 17.09.14). Although such an example shows how Selda was not reluctant to use her Turkish family background as a resource in her social everyday life, I never witnessed Selda using Turkish language in school situations (according to Selda herself she only attended the mother tongue classes because her parents said that she had to). So there seemed to be some ambiguity in relation to which areas of her Turkish background she considered to be valuable resources and which she deemed were not, and as we shall see her performance as a magician from Turkey only added to this image of ambiguity.

Because of the show the tables of the classroom had been moved to form a horse shoe shape with the stage being the floor in the middle. The pupils who were the audience were then allowed to sit on the tables during the performances. This created a casual and also very theatre-like atmosphere by having all the pupils face the stage as well as surrounding it. During all five acts the audience was very focused on what was going on and they were also very generous with their applause. There is no question though that Selda stole the show with her performance as a magician from Turkey. And as we shall see this was not because of her magic trick.

01 Rune:	Den næste er selda der skal	Rune:	the next one is selda who
02	vise os en tryllekunst		will show us a magic trick
03 Audience:	((klapper))	Audience:	((applause))

<p>04 Selda: ui jeg kom fra <u>Tjyrkiet</u>†</p> <p>05 ((sætter sig ned på stolen))</p> <p>06 de:t må jeg lige sige <u>tje</u> jer†</p> <p>07 ((tager sin rygsæk ned))</p> <p>08 og nu skal jeg vise jer</p> <p>09 en <u>tjryllekunst</u></p> <p>10 ((begynder at tage ting ud</p> <p>11 af rygsækken))</p> <p>12 nej det er ik <u>den</u></p> <p>13 ((tager flere ting ud))</p> <p>14 <u>slet</u> ik <u>den</u> [pron: dan]</p> <p>15 ((endnu flere ting))</p> <p>16 <u>sLet</u> [pron: slad] ik</p> <p>17 natt<u>jøj</u> (!)</p> <p>18 Aud: ((griner))</p> <p>19 Selda: mine bøger</p> <p>20 ((stiller rygsækken ned))</p> <p>21 det er godt (.)</p> <p>22 nu skal vi lige lægge dem her</p> <p>23 herhen ej jeg gider ik</p> <p>24 rydde op</p> <p>25 ((smider tingene ind</p> <p>26 under bordet))</p> <p>27 sådan der (1.0)</p>	<p>Selda: ui I came from Turkey†</p> <p> ((sits down on the chair))</p> <p>th:at I have to tjell you†</p> <p> ((puts down her backpack))</p> <p>and now I will show you</p> <p>a magic trick</p> <p> ((starts taking stuff out</p> <p>of the back pack))</p> <p>no that's not it</p> <p> ((takes out more stuff))</p> <p>not at all that</p> <p> ((even more stuff))</p> <p>not at all</p> <p>sleepwear (!)</p> <p>Aud: ((laughs))</p> <p>Selda: my books</p> <p> ((puts down the backpack))</p> <p>that's good</p> <p>now we'll just put them over</p> <p>here no I don't want to</p> <p>clean up</p> <p> ((throws the stuff under</p> <p>the table))</p> <p>there we go (1.0)</p>
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As Rune indicates when he introduces Selda, the act is supposed to be “Selda doing a magic trick” (lines 1-2). During rehearsals a couple of hours earlier which I witnessed, this was also what Selda did. However for some reason (which might be the rather underwhelming reception she got from the audience during rehearsals) Selda at some point between rehearsals and the actual show had decided to add a spin to her performance by creating a persona from Turkey and then do the magic trick *as* this person. Interestingly Selda had not decided to change anything in regards to her physical appearance so apart from letting the audience know explicitly (lines 4-6) that she was a magician from Turkey, her role was primarily anchored in the voice she used i.e. her linguistic style. The style is best described as a stylization of “Danish with a Turkish accent” mixed with street language and right from the start of her performance we see some examples of the micro-level linguistic features that she uses in order to indexically invoke this way of

speaking and thereby to construct herself as a magician with a Turkish (linguistic) background. The first noticeable feature is her /t/ pronunciation in the word “Tyrkiet” (eng: Turkey) (line 4). According to standard Danish norms (and also according to how Selda routinely speaks) you would expect in this word a dental pronunciation that very much resembles the way of pronouncing a /t/ in standard English, but Selda instead uses an affricated and palatalized pronunciation which makes it sound like /tj/. Selda’s pronunciation actually resembles a standard Turkish pronunciation of the letter /t/ and so it fits very well with her magician persona whom she has just stated “comes from Turkey” (line 4). Selda uses this /t/ pronunciation throughout her entire performance which means that it comes to stand out as one of the most prominent features in her stylization. What is furthermore interesting about this /t/ pronunciation is that it also has indexical links to the street language register and although these links do not seem to be activated in this particular sequence, the use of the /t/ pronunciation still opens up for a potential flirt with a stereotypical image of being a young, urban and cool Copenhagener which obviously completely contrasts with the image of the dumb, older and highly uncool magician. In her pronunciation of “Tyrkiet” she furthermore pronounces the final /t/ which also deviates from Danish standard norms where the final /t/ would become a “soft” /d/ sound. Apart from the /t/’s in “Tyrkiet” she also uses non-standard pronunciations of “slet” in “slet ikke” (eng: not at all) in which she pronounces the /l/ as an English “light /l/” and changes the character of the /e/ so that it becomes almost an /æ/. Both the /l/ and the /e/ pronunciations differ remarkably from standard Danish and they clearly indicate that Selda is here using a stylized voice rather than her own. Finally there are also some prosodic features that stand out in this excerpt as part of Selda’s stylization like the exaggerated and deviant prosody with remarkably strong final raise in some of her utterances (lines 4 and 6). Based on these notable features Selda quickly establishes her role as a magician from Turkey by using a stylized voice that incorporates speaking Danish with a Turkish accent using prevalent features of “learner Danish” and street language – although it has been argued that the /tj/ pronunciation is losing its prominence as a street language feature (Stæhr & Madsen 2017). She also incorporates an aspect of what could be described as classical slap stick humour to her show by performing a series of more or less goofy acts like pulling out all sorts of irrelevant (to the magic trick) props from her backpack which signal to the audience that this magician from Turkey is quite incompetent and laughable. There might also be a play here on a wider circulating discourse with Selda’s accented Danish working as another layer of incompetence. Perceiving Danish with an accent as a marker of linguistic incompetence is not uncommon among the Danish population, although it has been showed that the accent usually has to be accompanied with a slow and hesitant speech tempo (Kirilova 2006). So in this way both Selda’s non-linguistic and linguistic actions go together to form an image of an incompetent magician from Turkey.

After having made it clear to the audience that she is indeed performing a role, Selda now plunges into her magic trick.

28	skal jeg vise jer noget↑	do you want to see something↑
29	((fletter bøgerne sammen))	((weaves the books together))
30	det går lidt lang <u>tjid</u> ↑ (1.0)	it takes some time↑ (1.0)
31	men I dør ik af at vente	but waiting won't kill you
32 Aud:	((griner))	Aud: ((laughs))
33 Selda:	((fletter bøgerne sammen))	Selda: ((weaves the books together))
34	nu skal jeg have en <u>tje</u>	now I need someone tje
35	at få den her ud↑ (1.0)	get this out↑ (1.0)
36	ik jer ((siger det til	not you ((says this to her
37	U'erne)) (3.0)	classmates)) (3.0)
38	dig der me:d <u>Mickey</u> Mouse	you there with Mickey Mouse
39	((Kate fra parallel-	((Kate from the parallel
40	klassen kommer op til Selda))	class comes up to Selda))
41	<u>vent vent</u> [pron: vant] (.)	wait wait (.)
42	du må kun s- hive den en gang	you can only s- pull once
43	du må ik ryste den↑	you can't shake it↑
44	ellers så dræber jeg dig	or else I will kill you
45 Aud:	((griner))	Aud: ((laughs))
46 Selda:	ik sådan	Selda: not like that
47 Aud:	((griner))	Aud: ((laughs))
48 Selda:	sådan der så har du	Selda: like that then you have
49 Kate:	ha det er fordi det xxx	Kate: ha it's because it xxx
50	((får bøgerne skilt ad))	((disassembles the books))
51 Selda:	nej vent lige hun har gjort	Selda: no wait a minute she has done
52	noget gå jeg prøver lige	something go away I will do
53	en gang <u>tje</u>	it one more tjime
54	((fletter bøgerne sammen))	((weaves the books together))
55 Aud:	((klapper))	Aud: ((applauds Selda))
56 Selda:	jeg var nød <u>tje</u> at prøve en	Selda: I had to tjry one more
57	gang <u>tje</u> fordi hun var	tjime because she was
58	lidt <u>dum</u> ↑	kind of stupid↑
59 Aud:	((griner))	Aud: ((laughs))
60 Selda:	så:dan der (.)	Selda: the:re we go (.)
61	jeg <u>tjager</u> ik no:gen	I won't tjake anyone

62	med Mickey Mouse		with Mickey Mouse
63 Aud:	((griner))		Aud: ((laughs))
64 Pupil X:	xxx det er Minnie Mouse		xxx it's Minnie Mouse
65	((snakken og mumlen))		((talk and mumbling))

The fact that Kate is able to separate the books without any difficulty (line 50) speaks to the rather poor quality of Selda's magic act itself and maybe also emphasizes how the main purpose of the show is to make the audience laugh and not to amaze them with tricks. That this sits well with the audience is illustrated by the several occasions of audience laughter (lines 32, 45, 47, 59 & 63) that underline how the overall entertainment value of her performance is clearly not suffering from the failure to make the magic trick work. In fact one could argue that it works in Selda's favor by underlining the aspect of the magician that the audience seems to enjoy the most, namely her flagged incompetence. Linguistically Selda still makes heavy use of the significant /t/ pronunciation in her stylized voice and she also incorporates a non-standard pronunciation of "vent" (Eng: wait) with a remarkable lack of *stød* (a unique "Danish" pronunciation feature referred to in English as "glottal stop") which you would otherwise expect in standard Danish and she once again changes the vowel sound so that it almost becomes an /a/ like we saw her do in her pronunciation of "slet" in the previous excerpt. She also pronounces the medial /ck/ in "Mickey" as a /k/ where you according to Danish standard norms would expect an un-aspirated /g/ sound. And that this /k/ pronunciation is part of her stylized voice, is illustrated when she uses the standard pronunciation in line 62.

In this excerpt Selda also adds a nuance to her persona when she says to the audience "waiting won't kill you" (line 31) and then later threatens to kill Kate if she does not refrain from shaking the books (line 44) and finally when she in a quite impertinent manner declares Kate to be stupid in front of the entire audience (lines 57-58). As we can tell by the audience's reactions, the aggressive and uncivilized behavior that is constituted by these outbreaks is not taken seriously. Instead it adds to the depiction of the magician as lacking manners and professionalism and the overall amateur quality of the magician's performance which most probably is in line with Selda's intention. With these threats Selda incorporates into her performance prevalent indexical values of the street language register such as toughness and aggressive behavior adding new layers to the image of the Turkish magician, and as the reaction from the audience clearly signals, there is a shared understanding of linguistic signs, pronunciation patterns and indexical values between Selda and her class mates and teachers that thereby illustrate how the indexical links that are being drawn on and hence foregrounded through Selda's stylization are rather well-known and well-established in this particular local environment. What might furthermore spur on the audience's laughter is that Selda through her performance manages to bring into the classroom a voice i.e. a speech style that usually does not have any room or prominence in school (or any other academic) activities. And she is able to do so because she uses a stylized voice that involves an element of strategic inauthenticity (Coupland 2007) and which thereby

indicates clearly to the audience that this is not *her own* voice. So it is also likely that there is an element to the entertainment value that has to do with Selda bringing into the classroom linguistic and prosodic features and indexical values that in many ways signal the exact opposite of what the institutional structures that she finds herself in are built upon and which then just adds to the amusing image of her magician as a sort of a bull in a china shop. Furthermore the voice that Selda uses and the persona that this invokes are so unlike Selda's "normal" behaviour which certainly also plays a part in the audience's enjoyment. Finally the audience might also find that there is an entertainment value to her somewhat confusing mix of Danish with a Turkish accent and street language that seem to overlap throughout her performance and these registers' rather contrasting indexical values of being incompetent and laughable vs. being tough and cool.

After the failed session with Kate Selda asks for another pupil to come up and try to separate the books.

<p>66 Selda: ø:h jeg vil gerne have 67 dig med bonushår (2.0) 68 <u>undskyld</u> 69 ((Adam fra parallel- 70 klassen kommer op)) 71 jeg kan ik finde ud af <u>dansk</u> 72 så: jeg <u>tjaler</u> 73 lidt mærkeligt (1.0) du må 74 kun prøve det <u>en gang</u> (.) 75 ellers så dræber jeg dig 76 ligesom hende der 77 Aud: ((griner)) 78 Selda: <u>han der tj</u>a den <u>tj</u>a den 79 <u>tj</u>a den med <u>tj</u>o hænder 80 Aud: xxx 81 ((griner)) 82 Pupil X: og så hiv i den 83 Selda: sådan der så har du prøvet 84 så har du prøvet 85 Aud: ((klapper)) 86 Selda: nej <u>vent vent vent vent</u></p>	<p>Selda: e:h I would like you with the bonus hair (2.0) sorry ((Adam from the parallel class comes up)) I don't know Danish so: I tjalk a bit weird (1.0) you can only try once (.) or else I will kill you like with her over there Aud: ((laughs)) Selda: he there tjake it tjake it tjake it with two hands Aud: xxx ((laughs)) Pupil X: and then pull it Selda: like that now you have tried now you have tried Aud: ((applauds)) Selda: no wait wait wait</p>
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87	vi skal lige vente (1.0)	we must wait (1.0)
88	så sætter vi den lige her	then we just put it here
89	og så venter vi	and then we wait
90	((sætter bøgerne ned))	((puts down the books))

I am not sure what Selda means by “bonus hair” (line 67) as this is not an expression I have ever encountered before. In a way it also seems to catch Selda herself by surprise as evidenced by her next turn in which she explains this rather unconventional use of words with the fact that she talks “a bit weird” because she “does not know Danish” (line 71-73). By saying so Selda explicitly invokes an image of this being the voice of a language learner from Turkey and at the same time she confirms that her magician is supposed to be laughed at not only for the poor magic act itself and the incorporated slapstick comedy elements but also for the way she speaks. After this remark Selda presents her volunteer with yet another threat when she says that she will kill him if he tries more than once to separate the books and once again it is well received among the audience (lines 75-77). So once again she seems to add to the nuances of her voice by invoking an indexical connection to the street language register and its indexical values of toughness and unregulated emotional behaviour (Madsen 2013).

In regards to the linguistic features Selda uses in this excerpt the /tj/ pronunciation heavily and on several occasions she leaves out the glottal stop in words where you would expect it like for instance in “undskyld” (line 68), “dansk” (line 71) and “en gang” (line 74). This lack of glottal stop stands in contrast to her standard near pronunciation of “der” in “hende der” (eng: her over there) (line 76) in which the glottal stop is present. She then adds a syntactical feature to her stylized voice by saying “han der” (eng: he there) instead of “ham der” (him there) (line 76) which has also been described as a prevalent feature of the emerging Copenhagen youth register (see Quist 2000).

After the magic trick is over the magician calls her sister.

91 Selda:	jeg <u>ringer</u> [pron: rinGer]	Selda:	let me just call
92	lige <u>tje</u> min søster (1.0)		my sister (1.0)
93 Aud:	((griner))	Aud:	((laughs))
94 Selda:	hvorfor har du <u>tjaget</u>	Selda:	why did you tjake
95	<u>min</u> ø:h <u>legetjøj</u> med (1.0)		my e:h tjoy with you (1.0)
96	okay farvel har du		okay bye is it your
97	fødselsdag i dag†		birthday today†
98 Aud:	((griner))	Aud:	((laughs))

99 Selda:	okay jeg sender ba:re	Selda:	okay I'll just send you
100	en: gulerod tje dig farvel		a carrot bye
101 Aud:	((griner)) (1.0)	Aud:	((laughs)) (1.0)
102 Selda:	så:dan der (3.0)	Selda:	the:re we go (3.0)
103	så tjager jeg den her		then I tjake this
104	jeg tager den ud ik hende		I'll take it out that girl
105	der som dig der (1.0)		there like you who (1.0)
106	nej det mig der selv der skal		no it's me who has to
107	gøre det ik jer (1.0)		do it not you (1.0)
108	sådan der så gør vi		there we go then we go like
109	sådan her så får vi den		this then we are able to
110	lige ud		pull it out
111	((skiller bøgerne ad))		((disassembles the books))
112 Aud:	((klapper))	Aud:	((applauds))

This last part of the show, which (like in the case of her accent) was not originally a part of Selda's performance either, seemed to me to be something Selda initiated on the spot – probably as a response to her feeling momentum from all the laughs during her performance. To judge from her utterance in line 91 where she lets the audience know that she will ring her sister, Selda is in fact taking her performance in regards to her stylized voice to the extreme. The pronunciation of “ringer” (eng: call) is so exaggerated that it clearly signals Selda's intention of getting more laughs out of the audience. She pronounces the /r/ as an alveolar trill which is a far cry from the voiced, un-aspirated version that is usually associated with standard Danish. She also pronounces the /g/ separately in the middle of the word which is something you would never hear in standard Danish. Her pronunciation draws clear parallels not to the street language register but to speaking Danish with a thick “foreign” accent. It seems to be used here by Selda to highlight the ridiculousness and incompetence of her character which she then furthermore underlines by saying to her sister that she will send her a carrot for her birthday. So in her performance Selda is primarily typifying the linguistic features in focus as *foreign* or *deficient Danish* in contrast to the same features' typification as urban, cool and young that has been observed among other young Copenhageners. By doing so, Selda invokes through her performance a more traditional indexical image of these features being related to migration in a frame of out vs. in, but at the same time she also invokes an image of low social status by depicting the magician as someone who is uncivilized and ill-behaved.

Next I turn to a different example also involving stylization of predominantly street language features that takes place at the private school before summing up what these performances tell us about the contemporary

sociolinguistic environment in Denmark and how I think the situated actions link up with wider processes of social and sociolinguistic stratification in the Danish society.

Samuel the street smart young Copenhagener

The example from the private school is from April 2016 and it involves a boy from the 6^{ème} class named Samuel, his class mate Yousef, as well as two of his peers from one of the two other 6^{ème} classes at the school named Pascal and Alex. The situation plays out during a break where Samuel is sitting in the hallway with Guillaume from his class. At one point Samuel accidentally steps on Guillaume's foot to which Samuel reacts by very loudly declaring himself to be stupid and incorporating in his declaration prevalent features of the street language register in a remarkably exaggerated way. Apart from seemingly frightening Guillaume with his in many ways excessive (in terms of volume) and significant (in terms of speech style) reaction, Samuel's utterance also reaches two boys from another 6^{ème} class who seem to interpret his outburst as an invitation to engage in ritual insults and more stylistic play on the street language register. The three boys then plunge into a loud and (to them) entertaining stylization play on the street language register and its indexicalities, with Yousef from Samuel's class also taking part in support of Samuel. During my time of field work at the private school I rarely had first-hand experiences with any of the pupils using the linguistic practices that are in play in this excerpt. It did occur at different times both in- and outside the class room, however these examples were both generally swift and done with faint voices due to potential sanctions from the teacher(s). Characteristically the recording from which the interaction stems was done as a self-recording and thus without the presence of an adult. Knowing how the general classroom culture and strict discipline usually dictate what goes on both in- and outside the classrooms at the private school, the fact that there are no potential authoritative figures present is more or less a prerequisite for what is going on seeing how it goes on for several minutes and also how there are no faint voices involved.

Samuel was born in Denmark but has a Moroccan family background. At the time of the recording he was 10 years old living in Copenhagen together with his mother who was born and raised in Morocco and his younger brother (he does not live with his father and he does not know where his father grew up). Their apartment was located in Copenhagen South West which is an area that is generally associated with a lower socio-economic status than the area in which the school lies. Furthermore Samuel grew up in Ishøj which is a suburb to Copenhagen that is generally associated with even lower social strata compared to Copenhagen South West. So in regards to his socio-economic and cultural family background, Samuel's profile did not straightforwardly resemble the general pupil profile of the private school. When in class Samuel was (much like all his class mates) focused on doing well. He was ambitious and generally focused on showing this to his teachers whenever he got an opportunity to do so. Outside the class room Samuel spent a lot of time together with three of his class mates with whom he also played football in the local football club. In one of our ethnographic interviews Samuel was described by some of his classmates as being part of a group of

“bad boys” who apart from being associated with being fond of playing football were described as “bad” because of their ability and inclination to “diss” and “get into trouble” as well as their reluctance to hang out with girls (which we know from our ethnographic experience was not entirely true). Despite the both vague and (very) short description of why these boys were “bad”, the foregrounding of their inclination to “diss” i.e. to engage in ritual insults (Labov 1972: 297) and to get into trouble, this makes them appear in their local context quite similar to those who have been observed using street language register elsewhere (although the term “street language” was never mentioned). The fact that we rarely heard Samuel use street language features or get into any kind of trouble during our 18 months of field work does not make it less interesting. However as the following excerpt proves, Samuel does in fact know the features and values of this particular register. The excerpt starts right after Samuel has stepped on Guillaume.

01 Samuel:	tråde jeg på dig↑	Samuel:	did I stepped on you↑
02 Guil:	øh ja (.) lidt	Guil:	eh yes (.) a little bit
03 Samuel:	for helvede jeg er dum (!)	Samuel:	god damn it I am stupid
04	JEG <u>SVÆRGER</u> [stemt /s/] (!)		(!)I swear [voiced /s/]
05	det ikke var med vilje		(!)it was not on purpose
06 Guil:	nej nej	Guil:	no no
07 Pascal:	lad vær med at tro det	Pascal:	don't believe it
08	okay↑		okay↑
09	xxx		Xxx
10 Alex:	fuck hvor er jeg træt af ham	Alex:	fuck I am so sick of him
11 Samuel:	skrid hjem <u>mand</u> [% stød]	Samuel:	go home man [% glottal stop]
12 Pascal:	XXX din mor er	Pascal:	XXX your mom is
13	usympatisk		unpleasant
14 Samuel:	lær at sige [stemt /s/]	Samuel:	learn to say [voiced /s/]
15	bandeord		swear words
16 Pascal:	og din mor (.) din mor	Pascal:	and your mom (.) your mom
17 Yousef:	se her hvad han siger	Yousef:	look here at what he says
18	xxx ((råben))		xxx ((shouting))
19 Samuel:	jeg kommer efter dig din	Samuel:	I am coming for you you
20	lille lort mand		little shit, man
21	[+ stød]		[+ glottal stop]
22 Yousef:	xxx det (er) mig↑	Yousef:	xxx it's me↑

23 xxx ((mere råben))

24 Pascal: ja din mor

25 Samuel: er du døv eller hvad

26 Pascal: kom kom

27 Samuel: kom (.) kom hvad

28 Pascal: ham der han spiller smart

29 ((griner))

30 Samuel: **eow** jeg sværger [stemt /s/]

Kurd-DK: hey

31 gå væk

32 Pascal: jeg ruller jer én efter én

33 alle sammen

34 Yousef: han tror han er araber

35 ((råben))

36 han tror at han er araber

37 Samuel: ja mand gå hjem

38 Yousef: <ja mand gå hjem og sov

39 mand tror du du er araber

40 fucking hvad> <PAS: hvem er

41 det (.) hvad taler du om

42 dig>

43 ((råben))

44 Pascal: **supris** mand (!)

FRA-dk: Slettet

45 Samuel: xxx vennerne

46 Pascal: hold din kæft

47 Yousef: hvad

48 Samuel: gå hjem mand

49 Pascal: hold din kæft

50 Samuel: gå hjem

51 Pascal: hold din kæft

52 Samuel: gå hjem

xxx ((more shouting))

Pascal: yeah your mom

Samuel: are you deaf or what

Pascal: come come

Samuel: come (.) come what

Pascal: that guy he is acting up

((laughs))

Samuel: **eow** I swear [voiced /s/]

Kurd-eng: hey

go away

Pascal: I'll mess you up one by one

all of you

Yousef: he thinks he is an Arab

((shouting))

he thinks that he is an Arab

Samuel: yeah man go home

Yousef: <yeah man go home and sleep

man do you think you are an

Arab fucking what> <PAS: who

is it (.) what are you

talking about you>

((shouting))

Pascal: **supris** man (!)

FRA-eng: Erased

Samuel: xxx the guys

Pascal: shut up

what†

go home man

shut up

go home

shut up

go home

53 Pascal:	hold din kæft	shut up
54 Samuel:	gå hjem	go home
55 Pascal:	hold din kæft	shut up
56 Samuel:	gå hjem	go home
57 Pascal:	hold din kæft	shut up
58 Samuel:	gå hjem (.) gå hjem	go home (.) go home
59	((YOU og PAS stiliserer en	((YOU and PAS use a stylized
60	aggressiv arabisk accent))	aggressive Arabic accent))
61 Samuel:	eow jeg sværger [stemt /s/]	eow I swear [voiced /s(]
62	gå hjem	go home
63 Pascal:	hold din kæft dig	shut up you
64 Samuel:	vi har ikke engang gjort	we haven't even done
65	dig noget mand (!)	anything to you man (!)
66 Pascal:	hold din kæft dig	shut up you
67 Samuel:	<u>eow</u>	Eow
68 Pascal:	ho:ld din kæft (!)	shu:t up (!)
69 Samuel:	((griner))	((laughs))
70 Pascal:	hold din kæft ho:ld din kæft	shut up shu:t up
71 Samuel:	((griner))	((laughs))

To judge from both Samuel's and Guillaume's reactions (lines 3-6) there is little doubt that Samuel did not step on Guillaume's toes on purpose. Also the loudness and self-targeted insult that constitutes Samuel's reaction, suggests that his intention, with his declaration that it was indeed an accident, is not as much to apologize to Guillaume as it is to catch the attention of a broader audience. The change of volume compared to his previous utterances is remarkable and also the change in prosody is striking. Samuel incorporates in his outburst features of the street language register such as the idiomatic expression "I swear" and the voiced /s/ which could easily be characterized as one of the most prevalent features of this speech style (see e.g. Pharao et. al. 2014, Stæhr 2014). Apart from standing out compared to how Samuel routinely talks, these linguistic features together with the high volume and change in prosody make his utterance sound like part of a stylistic performance rather than a sincere statement. Whereas Guillaume seems to misinterpret the outburst as Samuel putting way too much into his mistake which is illustrated by his disarming "no no" (line 6), two boys from another of the 6ième classes seem to recognize Samuel's outburst as a performance and therefore take it as an invitation to engage in an interactional play on street language features and ritual insults (Labov 1972). At first Pascal tries to convince Guillaume that Samuel is lying about his innocence

(lines 7-8) after which Alex exclaims “fuck I am so sick of him” in reference to Samuel (line 10). As explained by Madsen (2013: 133) swear words (like fuck) are associated with the street language register by the Copenhagen adolescents and so, when also weighing in the fact that “fuck” is generally very rare to hear at the private school (seeing how using it in the presence of a teacher most definitely would get you sent to the principal’s office), there are signals in Alex’s utterance that he also sees the situation as a stylization exercise on the street language register. Samuel reacts to Alex’s utterance by telling him to go home which then makes Pascal attempt a formulaic ‘your mother’-insult (lines 12-13). From the choice of “unpleasant” as the derogatory term it is quite clear though, that indulging in street language stylizations is not a habitual practice among these boys. By using the term “unpleasant”, Pascal fails to stay within the frame of stylizing street language and as a result his attempt to sound cool and tough here comes off as inauthentic and unconvincing. Samuel quickly recognizes this mismatch between Pascal’s choice of words and his attempt to sound tough and he wisely uses the mismatch to position Pascal as the novice and himself as the (street language) expert by urging Pascal to learn how to swear (lines 14-15). Unfortunately for Pascal he does not seem to be able to replace the “unpleasant” with a more indexically appropriate lexical feature so he just repeats “your mother” hesitantly (line 16). Samuel then seizes the opportunity to cement his upper hand in the play on insults by calling Pascal “a little shit” and threatening to come after him (line 19-21). Then Pascal finally gains back some ground through the idiomatic expression “that guy he is acting up” (line 28).

Up to this point there is not much in the interaction to suggest that this is not a serious altercation (although Samuel’s initial apology of course would fall under the category of unserious) between on the one side Samuel and Yousef and on the other Alex and Pascal that potentially could develop into more than just a war on words. However the contextualization cue that is Pascal’s laughter following his utterance in line 26 tells a different story. With this cue Pascal clearly signals that their interaction is not part of a serious conflict but merely a jocular play on stylizations and indexically related stereotypical behavior. That his laughter causes no reaction from the others, supports that this is not just Pascal’s interpretation of the situation but a common understanding among the boys. Fittingly after this interactional signal from Pascal that this is merely “linguistic fun” Samuel then *turns it up a notch* by raising his voice yet again and using both a characteristic lexical feature of the street language register (eow) and an emblematic pronunciation in his “sværger” (Eng: swear) with a clearly exaggerated voiced /s/ (line 30). Pascal then uses another slang feature “ruller jer” (Eng: mess you up”) in a threat towards Samuel and Yousef. Interestingly this utterance is interpreted by Yousef as an attempt by Pascal to inhabit the role of an “araber” (Eng: Arab) (lines 34-36). Yousef’s use of Araber here draws parallels to the use among a group of Copenhagen school children who also link the use of swear words with the inhabiting of an Araber identity (Karrebæk 2016, Nørreby forthcoming). There are (at least) two possible explanations to Yousef’s use of Araber here. Apart from apparently being indexically linked to the use of swear words, it is obviously hard to say what exactly constitutes an Araber to Yousef; however judging from Samuel’s next turn in which he invokes discourses

of racism by telling Pascal to “go home” (line 37), it seems that he interprets Yousef’s Araber remark as him pointing to the indexical valence of the features in play i.e. their potential for flagging both street language and inhabiting a non-Danish identity. At this point Pascal then brings into play a French slang feature (supris) which he combines with the Danish “mand” (Eng: man) (line 44). In what follows which is best described as a linguistic rambling or idleness the boys seem to have reached the limit of their stylization repertoires and so instead of coming up with more features the two boys just repeat the same turns (“shut up” and “go home man”) six times (lines 46-58). Then they start shouting incomprehensible gibberish at each other with the only recognizable feature being what sounds like an Arabic accent judging from their intonation patterns and exaggerated pronunciations of /t/ and /r/ (lines 59-60). Soon thereafter the interaction (not surprisingly) falls apart as the boys break into laughter. The laughter once again illustrates quite clearly how the whole altercation was nothing serious but mainly about experimenting and having fun with a certain way of speaking and its related indexical values and social stereotypes, and of course the interaction also feeds into their peer relations by constituting a means for creating rapprochement and building (male) sociability.

Summing up the performances

Although the two performances take place in different environments and under different circumstances, they share a lot of similarities by both incorporating many of the same linguistic features and indexical plays on the features’ most common or stereotypic users. If we compare Selma’s performance to Madsen’s (2013: 133) list, one might be tempted to jump to the conclusion that Selma stylizes street language when she uses an affricated and palatalized /t/-pronunciation which, as a result of its high frequency, stands out as an important feature in her linguistic performance, together with a strange accent i.e. a non-standard prosodic pattern. However, such a conclusion would indeed be premature seeing how Selda’s stylized performance involves a lot more complexity and actually comes off as drawing more on the features’ indexical links to “learner Danish” than their link to street language. By doing so she is successfully evoking the image of a foreign magician that is socially inept and therefore funny. She clearly incorporates in her performance some of the values associated with the use of the street language register like for instance the toughness that she signals through her several verbal threats towards the audience. She also points explicitly to academic non-prestige which is another prevalent indexical value associated with the street language register when she claims that she “talks strangely” and “does not know Danish”. However she incorporates these indexical meanings alongside the play on “learner-Danish” and the stereotypical association between the use of these features and (linguistic) incompetence. In this way it is actually at times in her performance hard to tell what register she is stylizing because she uses features that occur in both socially typified ways. Apart from her explicit meta-comments about her deficient way of speaking (Danish) she also makes use of exaggerated non-standard pronunciations on several occasions to support her construction of this magician being from Turkey such as in her pronunciation of “ringer” (eng: rings) and “slet ikke” (eng: not at all) which clearly

are supposed to invoke associations to speaking “learner Danish” (and not street language). Despite such instances of clarity in terms of indexical invocations, there is still a general ambiguity to her performance both in relation to the performable signs and to some of the indexical values that she highlights. Apart from illustrating the complex relation between prevalent street language features and other ways of speaking by pointing to the features’ indexical valence and thereby at the same time illustrating the dynamic and rhizomatic nature of enregisterment processes (Agha 2005, 2007), the ambiguity, whether or not it is intentional, seems to work in Selda’s favor in terms of entertainment value and it resides in the fact that the features she stylizes carry the potential for evoking relatively contrasting social identities like a goofy, stupid and incompetent foreigner vs. a cool, urban youngster. This indexical valence of the features consolidates the image of her magician persona as a bull in a china shop i.e. as someone whose actions – both linguistic and non-linguistic – are characterized by a confusion which makes her performance funny and which is at the same time recognizable to the audience seeing how it draws on indexicalities of wider societal currency. In this way Selda also invokes an element of social status in her depiction of the magician by positioning this persona through her social and linguistic actions in relation to the stratified sociolinguistic economy of contemporary Denmark. Her comments about “speaking in a strange way” and “not knowing Danish” constitute important parts of this effort seeing how they draw on the widespread hegemonic discourse on linguistic uniformity that has been shown to be an integral of the institutional structures of the Danish public schools and which links standard Danish to achieving or signaling educational and professional success and thus links all other ways of speaking (such as Danish with a Turkish accent and street language) to a lower social status (Stæhr & Madsen 2014; Karrebæk 2013; Madsen 2016). In this way Selda exploits the institutional and macro-societal structures surrounding her to position her magician as associated with a lower social status allowing herself and the audience to view themselves as occupying a higher status position within the frame of sociolinguistic and ethnic stratification that her performance invokes.

Samuel’s performance does not include quite the same ambiguity although there is some goofiness to his initial apology to Guillaume. His and his peers’ stylized performances quite clearly concern the street language register on both the level of practice and on the level of indexicality. In their stylizations they make use of swear words such as *fuck*, *fuckin*g, *little shit* and *shut up*, a voiced /s/ pronunciation, words associated with different national “languages” such as *eow* (Kurdish), *wollah* (Arabic) and *supris* (French) as well as non-standard prosodic patterns and these features stand out as the most prevalent ones in their performances. Apart from standing out in this situation because of their quite rare use among the boys in focus (at least at the school) in general, the features are furthermore presented by the boys in a way that clearly illustrates how they are not engaging in a battle on authenticity but rather a battle on knowledge and fun as part of their ongoing construction and maintenance of peer relations. As mentioned above this is furthermore underlined through their common laughter which underlines that the boys are not in any way sincerely invested in

neither the practice nor the indexical meanings that are highlighted. The meanings that come into play very much correspond with the broader circulating indexicalities associated with the use of street language such as toughness and masculinity which of course fits well with the overall framing of the interaction as an altercation between on the one side Samuel and Yousef and on the other Pascal and Alex. Their investment in the altercation resembles their investment in the street language register which means that their threats are not to be taken seriously. So in contrast to what was the case in Selda's performance, the entertainment value in this interaction is not primarily related to incompetence or slap stick comedy. Instead it seems related to playing tough by drawing in an exaggerated way on practices and indexical values associated with the contemporary urban vernacular and perhaps also doing so in an environment that in many ways signal the exact opposite through its elite school status and socioeconomic profile of privilege. And in this way Samuel's and his peers' stylization performance could also be seen as a way of exploiting the institutional and macro-societal structures they find themselves in making fun of the use of street language and the indexical invocations associated with the use by presenting it as something to make fun of rather than to be sincerely invested in.

The cases together support the image that the contemporary urban vernacular in Copenhagen has become a widespread phenomenon by illustrating how prevalent features associated with the register are not just part of the linguistic repertoire of children from the urban, public schools but also of children attending socioeconomically privileged private elite schools. Furthermore it shows how the pupils in both environments seem very familiar with these features' indexical valence i.e. their potentially conflicting indexical meanings. Both Selda and Samuel exploit these links for situational purposes, in each case as a source for having fun and being linguistically and socially creative, as a means for creating rapprochement and for positioning themselves in relation to the indexicalities of the features by dis-associating themselves through their stylizations from the voices that they take on as well as from the indexical meanings that they invoke such as being dumb, socially inept, (linguistically) incompetent, violent, tough, loud and transgressive. This positioning is of course not straightforward seeing how both Selda and Samuel through their performances also show their access to – and thereby right to – use these exact features which of course should also be noted. However by doing so through stylizations and thereby through a type of practice that inherently includes a dis-association with the voice one is using (Coupland 2007), Selda and Samuel in the situations clearly construct a distance between themselves and features of street language and “learner Danish” as well as the indexical values the use invokes. Both Selda and Samuel disassociate from voices that are situationally presented as out/foreign and that index a low social status.

The stratified sociolinguistic economy of contemporary Denmark

Apart from involving such situated positioning on scales of in vs. out and high vs. low through a dis-association with the ways of speaking that are being highlighted, both performances illustrate a remarkable

tact for the sociolinguistic economy of contemporary Denmark among these Copenhagen children. Samuel and Selda's performances evoke social hierarchies that mirror the stratified aspect of this economy by incorporating indexical links between the stylistic features that they use and different elements of social and linguistic incompetence and thus bringing ideological aspects of social status differences into their micro-level acts of stylization. The fact that these ideological stances are in no way contested by the audience, furthermore implies that we are dealing with ideologies of wider societal currency. Selda and her audience show sensibility towards these hierarchies when Danish with an accent is linked to speaking in a weird way and not knowing Danish, and to be the voice of a generally incompetent and even laughable (magician) persona. Through her performance Selda furthermore links features that carry the potential for being associated with both speaking Danish with a Turkish accent and with the street language register to values such as being badly mannered, socially awkward and to being potentially violent which thereby quite effectively link the use of such features to having a low social status. Selda's performance can thus also be seen as reproducing the prevalent macro-discursive image of standard Danish as the overarching symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1986) in the institutional world i.e. as the (only) proper and legitimate way of speaking (Danish). And actually this is supported by Selda's teacher who after the show evaluates Selda's performance with the words: "It was great that you spoke in such a clear voice – even though you were supposed to be someone who spoke bad Danish" (field note, Thomas, 20.03.14). Samuel and his peers show the same kind of sensibility towards the Danish sociolinguistic economy when portraying and treating street language as a source for fun and jocular play and thus not as something to be sincerely invested in. Along the same lines as Selda, Samuel links features associated with the street language register to being non-serious and jocular and thereby at the same time projects this speech style as something that only has value as a sort of comedy prop i.e. as a way of speaking that stands in contrast to more "serious" and prestigious ways of speaking. This attitude towards the use of street language features is furthermore mirrored in the ethnographic group interview that we did with Samuel, Yousef and two other boys from the class, in which Samuel (and the others) generally dis-associate themselves from this speech style as well as the "gangster attitude" and "ill-mannered" persona that they perceive it to index. The dis-association furthermore fits well with Samuel's general investment in a school positive and academically ambitious identity and it shows how Samuel is aware of the discourse that places street language at the bottom of the linguistic hierarchy associated with non-academic values and a low social status. In this way both performances illustrate that there remains a continuing conflict over the social reputation of particular features and that this makes these features usable and perhaps particularly valuable for local interactional work.

This is not to say that we should understand the two cases as parodies constituting political and moral criticism of the sociolinguistic stratified reality of contemporary Denmark. However, we should understand them as plays on funny voices that illustrate awareness of these stratified aspects of the Danish society by reproducing them and thereby we should also understand Selda's and Samuel's acts as ways for them to find positional ground within these unequal sociolinguistic and institutional structures. Their stylizations thereby

make difference relevant on a hierarchical scale of institutional and educational value and place stylistic features associated with street language and “learner Danish” at the bottom and thus as features associated with low social status by depicting them as resources that mainly have prominence as props in comedic performances which should not be taken seriously and in this way also indexing them as stripped of academic value and prestige. However, it is not just the resources that get depicted, treated and recognized by the audience as enregistered emblems of institutional and societal low status, it is also the identities that get indexically linked to these ways of speaking. In this way the performances also invoke an element of social inequality by depicting identity features such as having a Turkish ethnic background or an Arabic ethnic background with not having any serious value within the institutional structures that frame Selda’s and Samuel’s stylization performances.

Language ideologies produce challenges for official institutions faced with increasing linguistic diversity - a linguistic diversity that requires speakers to navigate between different sociolinguistic restrictions and possibilities, and as this study has shown this navigation involves speakers using stylized voices to position themselves in accordance with the prevalent ideological linguistic hierarchy. Selda and Samuel show sensitivity towards these structures when they exploit them for social (status) positioning by operationalizing their linguistic repertoires to make sense of the social, linguistic and cultural diversity that is an integral part of their everyday life. Their situated and stylized uses of features of “learner Danish” and street language confirm what Madsen (2013) argues, namely that speech styles that have traditionally been seen as primarily related to ethnicity in a minority/majority frame today incorporate indexical meanings that seem to map on to opposing binaries involving low/high on a status and social class dimension as well. And we can use such second-order indexicality (Silverstein 2003) to point to the continued sociolinguistic significance of class relations in Danish society and thereby also to problematize the widespread assumptions that social class is irrelevant and vague in relation to rapidly changing contemporary societies (Abercrombie and Warde et al. 2000: 148; Halldén et al. 2008: 1; Block 2014: 8), that class relations are losing significance as a vector for linguistic variation (Coggle 1993; Maegaard 2007) and also that there is a decline in class awareness in particular among young people (Bradley 1996: 77). The data presented confirm Rampton’s (2006: 223) assertion that “systematic inequalities [...] do not disappear just because people stop talking about them in the ways that they used to” and that situated practical activity and language use among youth in urban settings invoke social status positioning and institutional inequality. In this way the study supports the call for a (re)focus on institutional inequality in contemporary studies of urban youth’s practical activities and language use if we wish to advance our understanding of social inequalities in contemporary societies (Rampton 2010, 2011; Jaspers 2011, Madsen 2013, Collins 2015a).

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