

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Speaking like a ‘good student’: Norms and deviations in contemporary upper secondary education in Denmark

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Abstract

Based on a linguistic ethnographic study of student–teacher classroom interactions, this article sheds light on language norms in a contemporary Danish STX school (upper secondary education, also known as gymnasiums). The analysis reveals that neither classrooms with the explicit teaching of an ‘academic register’ nor classrooms where teachers orient towards a youth norm constitute spaces where students have equal access to perform as good students. Even when students can decode and reproduce the language preferred by the teachers, they do not experience an equal opportunity to conform to this. It is argued that performing linguistically as good and competent students is more complex than just adapting to a specific school norm, as the students have to navigate different teacher’s norms as well as peer norms emphasising authenticity.

Keywords: Danish gymnasiums; linguistic ethnography; norms; polycentricity; authenticity; student identities

1. Introduction

Participating in teacher–student dialogue is an important activity in the Danish gymnasiums (upper secondary education). As described by Bourdieu, ‘A person speaks not only to be understood but also to be believed, obeyed, respected, distinguished’ (Bourdieu 1977:648). In line with this, classroom interaction can be described as an activity in which students not only participate to learn but also to distinguish or position themselves as specific kinds of people and, in particular, specific kinds of students. Ethnographic studies have shown how successfully positioning as a good and competent student relies on more than cognitive abilities and specific knowledge, but also the ability or willingness to participate in classroom interactions in a way deemed appropriate by teachers and students in a given setting (Wortham 2005, Korp 2011, Grenfell et al. 2013, Snell & Lefstein 2018, Lefstein & Snell 2019).

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Sociolinguistics has long been concerned with the inequality related to participating in the way considered appropriate in schools. In her seminal work on literacy in different North American communities, Heath (1982), as an example, argued that different communities have different styles of narrative discourse and that schools should take account of these differences. In line with this, scholars following Bernstein's (1964) code theory have argued that children are socialised into class-specific norms or codes, which can collide with the school code (see e.g. Finn 2009). In the Danish context, a highly influential interview study has recently argued that the linguistic code of the school used by teachers in gymnasiums resembles a foreign language for many students with non-academic family backgrounds (Ebbensgaard 2009, Ulriksen et al. 2009:91). Within newer sociolinguistics, many scholars have also focused on the language ideological work of teachers, for example how teachers, despite a focus on the positive valorisation of students' linguistic diversity, reproduce problematic linguistic ideologies in which students' home or everyday language is deemed inappropriate in classroom interactions (see Love-Nichols 2018 as an example). Such studies focusing on teacher practices, however, risk overestimating the power of the teachers and reducing the complexities of the social and linguistic norms of classrooms (see Jaspers 2022 for a fuller discussion of this). Moreover, as has also been pointed out by scholars within the field of New Literacy (Lea & Street 1998, Clemensen & Holm 2017), there is not necessarily a very homogeneous set of linguistic norms in educational institutions.

Building on Agha's (2007) understanding of norms as based on socially constructed registers and Blommaert's (2010) concepts of norm centres and polycentricity, I seek to contribute to a nuanced understanding of the language norms in Danish STX schools, which can inform further discussions of inequality related to language in contemporary Danish education. The study is based on a linguistic ethnographic investigation of how students and teachers orient towards different language norms for student–teacher interactions. In the first section, I study recorded and reported metapragmatic acts of the teachers, which show that teachers, to varying degrees, orient towards different linguistic norm centres. They employ, and encourage the students to use, linguistic features associated with an academic register as well as a register associated with youth and peer culture. I illustrate how the students voice a need to accommodate to the teachers. Then, I investigate the metapragmatic practices of the students directed at peers' and their own linguistic practices, and show that authenticity plays a crucial role in the students' rights to conform to the local norms for proper participation in teacher–student interactions. Based on this, I argue that students, in order to perform as good students, not only have to be able to reproduce an academic code, but have to navigate sometimes contradictory norms, and do not experience an equal opportunity to do so.

2. Context

This empirical study is based on observations, interviews, and recordings collected during six months of fieldwork at a Danish STX school, which I call Graaboelle

High. STX schools are a specific kind of gymnasium with a general academic focus, and their official purpose is to prepare students for tertiary education.

Graabølle High is located in a smaller Danish province and the students come from different socioeconomic backgrounds. The school was placed at neither the top nor the bottom of the school hierarchy based on grade point averages. In the teachers' and students' descriptions of the school, it was evident that they experienced the placement in an area associated with lower classes as important, and the participants often described the school as engaged in helping disadvantaged students. It should be noted that the area is not associated with dialect or a specific sociolect and that the majority of the students had monolingual ('standard') Danish backgrounds (among the 46 students, one had Polish as her first language and six had parents with other L1 languages than Danish,¹ but reported to be primarily Danish speakers themselves). The linguistic environment was therefore relatively homogeneous.

I followed two school classes through the students' third and final year at the school. The two classes were quite different. Class A was often described as a class with troubling social dynamics, and students who were often involved in fights with each other. Class B was often described by students and teachers as social and talkative. As I will describe in the analysis, these different social dynamics seem to affect the consequences of deviating from the linguistic norms. Parallel to Kammacher's (2015) description of the high social status of being a competent student in her study of students in a Northern Zealandic STX school, I found that being a good student was predominantly positively valorised in both classrooms. Students were not ridiculed for being competent and students moreover risked being called out or ridiculed behind their backs if they showed disrespect for the teacher's authority.

3. Data and methodology

My approach to data collection and analysis derives from the field of linguistic ethnography. This approach is characterised by pursuing a participant perspective (while applying an analytical distance) through a combination of participant observations, interviews, and microanalysis of recorded interactions (Maybin 2009, Copland & Creese 2015, Snell et al. 2015, Pérez-Milans 2016).

During my fieldwork, I provided the students with small recorders with lapel microphones and made field notes of my observations and information gathered through informal interviews with teachers and students. After I had followed the students for two months, I conducted formal individual interviews with two focal teachers and with 44 of the 46 students and, additionally, I conducted focus group interviews with the students in class B. The interviews with students were semi-structured and themed around family background, student identities, social life at school, and importantly language practices at school (see guiding questions in endnotes).² The themes about language were discussed in group interviews in class B, while I chose to do only individual interviews in class A because of the social dynamics. At the time of the interviews, I knew the students and the teachers. The participants could therefore describe situation- or person-specific practices in detail.

For this particular study, I transcribed all metalinguistic comments in the interviews and 32 hours of classroom recordings in the following subjects: Danish, physics, classical studies, religion, and history (all in both A and B). In my analysis of the situated language use, I take account of the sequential, situational, relational, and sociocultural context (see Madsen 2015). In the transcripts, all names are pseudonyms.

4. Norms, registers and polycentricity

In my analysis, I draw on Agha's (2007) theoretical framework in which linguistic codes (registers) are understood as social constructs with local meanings and potentials, and thereby not fixed entities. Agha defines registers as 'a repertoire of performable signs linked to stereotypic pragmatic effects by a sociohistorical process of enregisterment' (Agha 2007:80). Enregisterment refers to 'the reflexive process through which register formations are differentiated from each other and emerge as apparently bounded sociohistorical formations for their users' (Agha & Frog 2015:15). Thus, registers consist of different semiotic signs, connected through social practices, and are continuously reproduced and challenged (Agha & Frog 2015:17).

Linguistic registers are indexically linked to particular social practices and certain roles and categories of persons in a community. Registers are in this way also associated with different settings and can consciously or subconsciously be seen as more or less appropriate in different settings; they are part of local norms. Agha distinguishes between three levels of norms: (a) an 'externally observable pattern of behavior', which participants are not necessarily aware of, (b) 'a reflexive model of behavior', which is norms perceived as 'typical' and normalised by some actors, and (c) 'a normative standard', where deviations are not just observed but sanctioned (Agha 2007:124–127). The most apparent example of the latter is the standard norms for spelling, often institutionalised through dictionaries and education. Transgressions of these norms cause sanctions in, as well as outside, the school system (see Stæhr 2016). As will be shown in the analysis, deviations from non-institutionalised language norms are, however, also often sanctioned. Moreover, several norm centres can be present simultaneously in an interaction, as described by Blommaert (2010:39–41). According to Blommaert, actors in everyday interactions 'project the presence of an evaluating authority through our interactions with immediate addressees' (Blommaert 2010:39) and in this way orient towards super-addressees, which he labels centres. In the present study, it is important that students and teachers can orient towards an abstract academic norm centre as well as an abstract concept of 'youth culture'.

The connection between linguistic registers, specific situations, and personas can be used strategically by speakers in the constructions and negotiations of social identities, but it may also be the root of conflict and cause self-censorship. Møller (2015), as an example, illustrates how students, even if capable of reproducing a register, are not always willing to do so because of the risk of being ascribed identities (in his case, problematic bilingual identities in class) that they do not find desirable. In a similar vein, Bourdieu argued that speakers develop a practical expectation of the profit of applying certain language in specific situations for

specific types of persons, and that this practical expectation (not always consciously) governs their language use (Bourdieu 1977:655). With reference to Bourdieu's concept of legitimate discourse, Heller (1996), in a study of language in a francophone Canadian school, argues that some language practices are only treated as legitimate for some people under specific circumstances. As I will show in the analysis, I likewise find that students in the studied classrooms can be at risk of social repercussions if they use linguistic features that are considered inauthentic for them. I argue that this can affect their linguistic practices and student identities. The concept of authenticity is brought up by Agha, who describes how the lack of congruence between different signs might result in an understanding that people are not authentic. He describes how a person can be understood as a social climber due to just a small 'misstep' in an otherwise perfect mastery of a specific code (Agha 2007:24–25). Eckert (2003:392–393) similarly describes that who is considered an authentic speaker is related to the belief that some people are more natural speakers of a register than others, and that perceptions of people as having left 'their natural habitat' are connected to the judgement of inauthenticity. Inspired by Coupland (2001, 2003), I find that linguistic authenticity is more specifically linked to ownership (whether or not a person is seen as completely responsible for an utterance), historicity (if a participant is seen as someone who has been speaking like this always or at least for a very long time), and consistency (whether or not a participant is understood as producing a consistent language) (for elaboration see Larsen 2022).

4.1 Identifying norms and deviations

To study the normalised norms for student–teacher interactions and the consequences of deviations, I have transcribed and analysed explicit metalinguistic comments in interviews and interactions from the classrooms. Metalinguistic acts can be more or less explicit. The more implicit a metalinguistic utterance is, the more context is needed to establish what it means in a specific situation (Agha 2007:31). The ethnographic fieldwork, therefore, provides crucial background information for the analysis of both interviews and classroom interactions.

The normalised norms are revealed in the practical use of registers and in explicit reflexive acts such as direct comments on (in)appropriate language use, reactions to language use, such as repetition of others' statements and laughing, but also less directly in acts of stylisations. Stylisations are marked and reflexive use of linguistic features linked to a specific register. They are often emphasised by features such as distinct articulation and/or shift in volume, pitch, or speed. They can involve direct parody or more abstract performance of genres or personas in line with, or in contrast to, a speaker's own voice (Coupland 2007, Rampton 2009, Jaspers 2011, Madsen 2014). Stylisations can be interpreted as playful comments on specific norms. They can also work as contextualisation cues (Gumperz 1982) and serve situation-specific social functions; for example, being a protective shield in sensitive situations (Rampton 2009).

Finally, norms, both understood as normalised norms and less conscious patterns of behaviour, are revealed in practices that are treated as normal and hence not reacted to. In the analysis of classroom interactions, I have therefore also studied

how some linguistic features do not cause reactions from students and teachers. In this analysis, I have focused on two registers described as focal by the students: language orienting towards an abstract idea of school and academia, which I here label 'the academic register', and language associated with youth, which I therefore label 'the youth register'. In the section below, I will briefly introduce these registers before I return to the analysis of classroom interactions as a polycentric linguistic space.

5. Academic and youth registers

The label 'academic language', which is mentioned by both teachers and students in the study, has roots in a long enregisterment process where it has been institutionalised and widespread in normative literature, while it has also been the object of disputes and different understandings of what it entails (Lea & Street 1998, Clemensen & Holm 2017, Neugebauer & Heineke 2020). In the literature on academic language, the register is often described as characterised by a *lexical*, a *syntactic*, and a *structural level*, which secures precision and cohesion (Meier et al. 2020:225), while practitioners often associate it mainly with vocabulary (Neugebauer & Heineke 2020). The students orient toward this register in their description of language at school, which they label 'academic', 'formal', 'posh', and 'professional' language. Equivalent to Neugebauer and Heineke's finding, they mainly describe it as characterised by the use of academic terminology taught in class, 'nuanced words' and 'fancy words' often associated with Greek, Latin, or archaic or literary language (e.g. *Patos* 'pathos', *kontribueret* 'contributed', *benytte*, derivative meaning 'employ'). On a structural level, students, especially in class B, mention that contributions in class should be elaborate, while students in A are more inclined to mention that it should be concise. Both groups, however, connect academic language with being precise and avoiding rambling. The syntactic level is not mentioned in the discussions of spoken language, but importantly, some pragmatic features are also linked to the register, especially engaging in polite conversation with teachers and peers, using hedges and other downplaying strategies, positive politeness such as showing interest and engagement in the subject matter, respecting the teachers' authority, and avoiding 'back talk'.

When asked to elaborate what 'academic', 'posh', 'professional', and 'formal' language entails, the students often define it negatively as the absence of language use which is associated with youth and peer interactions. This register is, according to the students, lexically characterised by frequent use of profanities, nicknames/pet names, and what the students refer to as 'slang' words and phrases (e.g. *hvad sker der* 'what's up', *nederen* 'downer'), and short loanwords from English, Arabic, and Serbian (e.g. *bro* 'brother', *wallah* 'I swear by Allah', *brate* 'brother'). It was also connected to structural features which in Bernstein's (1964) terms could be described as restricted and associated with a mutual understanding, such as references to shared experiences and insider jokes. Finally, it was associated with pragmatic features such as joking and mock impoliteness (shouting, 'being sassy', and talking back). In this article, I have chosen to label this the 'youth register' as the students describe it as 'youthful' and connect it to youth culture in general. A very

high frequency of features associated with this register is, however, also connected to sub-registers associated with social groupings such as youth with an immigrant background, working-class youth, gamers and boys with a stereotypical masculine or 'macho' attitude. See also Madsen (2013) for a discussion of the linkage between such social categorisation among contemporary Danish youth.

This language use was also labelled by some students as 'youth slang' or just 'slang'. The labelling of some registers as 'posh' and 'formal' and others as 'slang' reveals a certain valorisation. According to Agha (2015), the term 'slang' is generally used to denote a register as deviant from a presumed standard and it is always found at a value-boundary, where it is highly valued by some metapragmatic evaluators and negatively evaluated by others. Negative evaluations of slang are often institutionalised in the educational system, where students also learn to apply the outsider's gaze on registers as deviant and negatively valorised (Agha 2015:307–312). In the present case, the use of the label 'slang' indicates that the youth register consists of features that the adolescents find useful to signal in-group membership (mainly among their peers), but during their educational upbringing have come to see as deviant and of low value in educational settings. However, as I will show in the analysis, both lexical and pragmatic features associated with the youth register are treated as relevant in class by some teachers. After this introduction, I will now turn to how these abstract ideas of registers relate to enacted norms in different classrooms.

6. Language norms of teacher–student interactions

At Graaboelle High, the norms for appropriate language use in student–teacher interactions varied widely from classroom to classroom. Some of the teachers prioritised subject-specific terminology, while others explicitly stated that this was not important. Some demanded ritual politeness and avoidance of slang and swear words, while others allowed or preferred a youth language style. In the following section, I provide analyses of classroom recordings of three teachers' linguistic and metapragmatic practices, to illustrate some of the variation. Thereafter, I turn to analyses of the students' description of the need to accommodate their language to different teachers' preferred styles to position as good students.

6.1 Susanne

Susanne, the Danish teacher in class A, had a very clear language policy in which an academic register, in line with the register described above, was treated as a normative standard for Danish class. This came through in very explicit metalanguage; she often introduced new words and often encouraged the students to use subject-specific terminology and vocabulary more broadly associated with literary, archaic, and written language such as nominalisations and words with Greek and Latin origin (see also Larsen 2022).

The excerpt shown in Figure 1,³ where she asks the students to summarise what they did in their last lesson, illustrates how such explicit metalinguistic practices were embedded in the classroom discussions.

Original		Translation		
01	Susanne	så skal vi lige samle	Susanne	then we just have to
02		lidt op (0.6) fordi vi		summarise (0.6) because
03		har jo: haft sådan en		we have had a
04		digression et sidespring		digression a detour
05		ikke med hensyn til hvad		right in regard to what
06		var det vi snakkede om		was it we talked about
07		sidst (0.6) kan I huske		the last time (0.6) can
08		det (0.7) det var det		you remember (0.7) that
09		var det jeg kalder		was what I call a
10		digression et sidespring		digression a detour
11		(0.7) ja Julie (.)		(0.7) yes Julie (.)
12	Julie	det var de der sms'er	Julie	it was those texts
13	Susanne	ja det var de der sms'er	Susanne	yes it was those texts
14		(0.6) øh kan du huske øh		(0.6) uh can you
15		kan I huske fagudtrykket		remember uh can you
16		vi brugte i forbindelse		remember the technical
17		med at man brugte flere		term we used in
18		forskellige måder at		connection with
19		kommunikere på		applying different ways
20		(1.2)		to communicate (1.2)
21	Lucas	øh	Lucas	uh
22	Susanne	hvad var det nu det hed	Susanne	what was it
23	Lucas	var det der med emojis	Lucas	was it that thing with
24				emojis
25	Susanne	når jeg siger	Susanne	when I say different
26		forskellige måder (0.9)		ways (0.9) different
27		forskellige måder så		ways then I have
28		har jeg oversat ordet		translated the word
29		(1.1) kan I huske hvad		(1.1) can you remember
30		det hed		what it was called
31	Martin	um mum mum nej	Martin	um mum mum no
32	Lucas	((laughs))	Lucas	((laughs))
33	Susanne	ja Martin du er - det er	Susanne	yes Martin you are - it
34		noget med m		is something with m
35		[det er rigtigt		[that is correct
36	Martin	[mo-bi-li-æhh (.)	Martin	[mo-bi-li-uh (.)
37	Susanne	multi	Susanne	multi
38	Martin	multi-bi	Martin	multi-bi
39	Susanne	mo	Susanne	mo
40	Martin	multimodo: -modalitet	Martin	multimodo: -modality
41	Susanne	YES der var den (.)	Susanne	YES there it was
42	Lucas	årh	Lucas	oh
43	Susanne	GODT jamen det var jo	Susanne	GREAT well it was of
44		multimodalitet det var		course multimodality
45		det der var digressionen		that was the digression
46		(...)		(...)

Figure 1. Classroom discussion.

In line 4, Susanne introduces a non-subject-specific term, *digression*, a word with a Latin origin, which is uncommon in Danish and mainly associated with written or literary language (*Dictionary of the Danish Language*, ODS). She follows up by explaining what it means, with repeated translation to the more common *sidespring* 'detour' (l. 4, l. 9–10) and by twice illustrating how it is used in context (l. 4–7 and l. 43–45). The excerpt also exemplifies how she spends much time encouraging the students to recall and employ more subject-specific terminology, here 'multimodality', and how she praises a student when he recalls the term (l. 43–45). The focus on explaining and repeating the word 'digression', as well as the focus on making the students recall the technical term 'multimodality', are practices that

stress the importance of such vocabulary for the local classroom interactions. Moreover, they also contribute to the enregisterment of such vocabulary as academic.

Susanne was often also described by the students as a teacher who had a strict language policy in class and, for instance, corrected them if they used swear words. I did not observe such an encounter during my fieldwork, which might be because the students were aware that they needed to avoid swearing around Susanne. During an interview with Susanne, she repeatedly stated that a certain language was required in Danish class, where the students should not speak as they did outside class. She also treated it as common sense that it was unacceptable to use swear words, as seen in excerpt (1).⁴

(1) Interview with teacher

Susanne: Then I react of course also when they swear and stuff like that//well it is common manners right//I I I//they should not do that when//no it is a swearing-free zone ((laughs)) so so they know//and they learn that from the first year when I have them in Danish and that//they shall not swear in my classroom//they can swear outside as much as they like//but not in the classroom right//because there we teach language and literature right

6.2 Michael

At the other end of the scale, the students from class A were met by the history teacher, Michael, who often used short English loans, swear words and other features associated with the youth register. An example of this is seen in Figure 2a where he describes a synopsis assignment to the students.

Here Michael uses a swear word when talking about very subject-specific matters. None of the students reacts to this as a transgression of a norm during class, implying a local norm deviating from the academic register. At the same time, he also employs the term *reelt set* 'practically', associated with literary speech and written language (ODS), which could be interpreted as an orientation towards an academic norm centre. Although he occasionally employed language associated with the academic register, he rarely directly encouraged the students to use specific terminology or engaged in other language-directive activities.

The excerpt given in Figure 2b is from later in the same lesson, when the students are working on their synopsis, while Michael circulates and comments on their work. In the excerpt, Michael has just read Emma, Sarah, and Josephine's research questions, and in his response, he ambivalently addresses their terminology while his language gradually changes from a language associated with the academic register to a mock-impolite language use where he employs swear words.

Michael implies that he, as a history teacher, prefers the term 'analyse' but accepts other terminology by stating that it is okay that they use the word 'investigate' instead because they are 'socia's' (referring to the fact that they have social science as a major). However, as a reaction to Sarah's statement that it is easier to use the same terminology as in social science (l.18), he elaborates that he thinks it sounds *fesent* (informal word meaning 'bland' or 'blah' (*The Danish Dictionary*, DDO)).

Original		Translation	
01	Michael	det er det der i	Michael that is the actual
02		virkeligheden er øvelsen	assignment here right
03		her ikke (.) hvis I nu	(.) if you ask a
04		stiller et spørgsmål og	question and there is
05		der og der reelt set kun	practically only one
06		er en af teksterne der	of the texts that is
07		{er relevant} så er det	{relevant} then it is
08		lort ikke	crap right

Figure 2a. Classroom discussion.

Original		Translation	
01	Michael	ehm og så betyder	Michael uhm then it also
02		det jo også et eller	entails to some extent
03		andet sted at så er	that you are compelled
04		I jo nødsagede til	to change a <u>bit</u> in the
05		at ændre <u>lidt</u> i:	<u>investigation</u> or the
06		(0.7) <u>undersøgelsen</u>	analysis (0.4) {°I
07		eller analysen (0.4)	just think the
08		{°jeg synes bare	analysis°} you should
09		analysen°} men det	be free to that since
10		skal være jer frit	you are socia's (0.5)
11		for i er jo samf'ere	ehm
12		(0.5) ehm (1.0)	(1.0)
13	Sarah	det er bare fordi	Sarah it is just because it
14		det hedder	is called
15		undersøgelse i	investigation in
16		samfundsfag så er	social science and
17		det nemmere at	then it is easier to
18		[kalde det det samme	[call it the same
19	Michael	[ja jeg synes bare	Michael [yeah I just think it
20		det lyder så fesent	sounds so blah I want
21		jeg vil gerne	to investigate ((nasal
22		undersøge ((nasal	voice))
23		stemme)) (.)	(.)
24		gu fuck vil du ej	the fuck you won't
25		((eleverne griner))	((the students laugh))
26		du analyserer (1.0)	you analyse(1.0)
27	Josephine	ja	Josephine yeah
28		(1.5)	(1.5)
29	Michael	I er jo så er I jo	Michael then you are of course
30		nødsaget til at	compelled to adjust it
31		rette den til	

Figure 2b. Classroom discussion.

Thereafter he performs a pretend interaction between a non-specific student saying 'I want to investigate' and himself answering 'the fuck you won't you analyse'. The language use and stylisation emphasise his aversion towards the terminology they use in another subject, while at the same time working as contextualisation cues, hinting that it is a funny exaggeration. The mock impolite and tough corrections in combination with the informal words can be understood as an orientation towards a youth culture and a strategy to overcome the sensitive situation and create a funny atmosphere, while still informing about different terminology. The students react to his performance with laughter and thereby treat it as funny.

Whether the students take note of the preferred terminology is not clear from the example, but the excerpt illustrates how the students must navigate in the teachers'

preferences for different academic terms and at times ambivalent enforcement of them, as well as different styles. Whereas the use of swear words is not allowed at all in one classroom, swear words and mock impoliteness can be used, not just in class, but by the teacher when talking about very subject-specific matters in another.

6.3 Rikke

The teacher Rikke, who taught religion in both class A and class B and history in B, had a teaching style that in some ways resembled Michael's and was characterised by a very friendly tone; she often spoke about non-school matters and used features associated with youth language such as vocabulary considered slang and mock impoliteness. In my analysis of the data, I have observed that she had, on the other hand, a profound focus on teaching terminology and thereby oriented towards the academic register.

Some of these norms come through in Figure 3, an excerpt from the religion class in class B, where Rikke has asked for a description of a model they have worked with in an earlier lesson.

As Rikke describes the model she is asking for, the student Christina loudly asks, 'where the hell are you at' (l. 6–7) employing the swear word *fanden* 'hell'. As was common in Rikke's classes, neither students nor the teacher react to this language use as deviant or disrespectful. Another student follows up by asking if she is looking for a description of different kinds of Muslims. When this student continues by suggesting that it is something to do with 'leisure time Muslims' (l. 13–14) (a term which other students later react to by laughing and treat as a funny mistake related to the term Cultural Christian), Rikke answers with a loud, prolonged 'no' using a high-pitched voice indicating stylisation. In this way, she funnily corrects the student's use of terminology. Throughout the classes, I observed that Rikke in this way often used a stylised voice when she engaged in authoritarian behaviour like enforcing specific terminology, asking students who had not raised their hand to give contributions in class, and correcting behaviour or answers. In these stylisations, she often also employed language associated with youth language, as illustrated in the excerpt in Figure 4.

The excerpt is from a religion lesson in class A, on a day when two students have their birthday. In Denmark it is the tradition to bring cake to friends on your birthday, and Rikke asks if the students have brought cake to the class.

Rikke first asks Josephine if she had brought cake, and when she answers that she did not, Rikke emphasises the desire for cake by saying, 'what's up with that', indicating indignation, follows up with an 'oh man' and after a while sums up 'no cake', signalling disappointment. I interpret the demand for cake as part of creating the friendly atmosphere the teacher set forward as the local norm. Sarah's comment at l. 9 also underlines that by the students it is interpreted as a comment on them having bad manners when they do not engage in the social norms of providing cake. However, the teacher uses a high-pitched voice, indicating a stylisation, when she says, 'what's up with that' (l. 4). The phrase 'what's up' (*hvad sker der*) is moreover mentioned by the students in the interviews as an example of slang associated with youth. As mentioned above, the stylisation seems to have the function of creating a humorous atmosphere, while correcting behaviour. Emma (l. 7) and Sarah's (l. 10)

	Original		Translation	
01	Rikke	der er <u>fire</u> kasser	Rikke	there are <u>four</u> boxes
02		(0.9) de har noget med		(0.9) they have
03		troen at gøre (1.1)		something to do with
04		hvor troende vi er		faith (1.1) how
05		(1.5)		religious we are (1.5)
06	Christina	altså hvor fanden er	Christina	well where the hell
07		du henne (.)		are you at(.)
08	Kristine	altså er det hvilken	Kristine	do you mean what kind
09		slags muslim man er		of Muslim you are or
10		eller hvad		what
11	Rikke	ja ((high pitched	Rikke	yes ((high pitched
12		voice))		voice))
13	Kristine	sådan en øh	Kristine	like an uh leisure
14		fritidsmuslim eller en		time Muslim or a
15		øh		uh
16	Rikke	NE:J ((high pitched	Rikke	NO:((high pitched
		voice))		voice))

Figure 3. Classroom discussion.

	Original		Translation	
01	Rikke	har du kage med	Rikke	have you brought cake
02		(.)		(.)
03	Josephine	nej desværre ikke	Josephine	no unfortunately not
04	Rikke	HVAD SKER DER FOR DET	Rikke	WHAT'S UP WITH THAT
05		((high pitched voice))		((high pitched voice))
06		((eleverne griner))		((the students laugh))
07	Emma	hvad sker [der helt	Emma	what's [up honestly
08		ærligt		
09	Rikke	[ej <u>mand</u>	Rikke	[oh <u>man</u>
10	Sarah	dårlig opdragelse	Sarah	bad manners
11		((eleverne griner))		((the students laugh))
12	Rikke	<u>ingen</u> kage	Rikke	<u>no</u> cake

Figure 4. Classroom discussion.

comments illustrate how the students adapt to the teacher by engaging in the mock reprimand of Josephine and, accompanied by the students' laughter, it signals that the practice is perceived as funny.

In this way, Rikke orients both towards an academic norm centre in her focus on specific vocabulary, and youth culture by joking and employing features associated with 'slang', but often in stylisations. These stylisations create a distance from authoritarian behaviour and contribute to the construction of a friendly atmosphere. At the same time, they can also be interpreted as drawing on the contrast between youth language and academic language in a way that contributes to the distance between them.

In this section, I have shown how different teachers create local norms for language use at school, resulting in a polycentric normative linguistic environment. While some teachers treat an academic register as a normative standard, a range of lexical and pragmatic features associated with the youth register is part of the normalised model of behaviour for student–teacher interactions with other teachers. At the same time, these teachers also orient towards an academic norm in ways that still contribute to upholding the status of a formal academic register, but they do this

in very different ways and with different focus and valorisation of subject-specific as well as non-subject-specific terminology. Due to space issues, I have provided examples from three teachers, teaching Danish, religion, and history. It is, however, important to note that the differences cannot be solely linked to subject-specific norms. For example, the Danish teacher in class B did not share the language ideologies of the Danish teacher in class A, while the physics teacher in class B, on the other hand, had a language policy which in some aspects resembled that of the Danish teacher in class A.

As has been argued by Codó (2022), Daugaard (2022), and Jaspers and Rosiers (2022) in their studies of multilingual classrooms, teachers can have many different reasons for different language policies and investments in such, related to circulating ideologies and the complex and often contradictory demands for pedagogics and learning outcomes. In this linguistically more homogeneous environment, the orientation towards different norms could likewise be related to the navigation of different demands or aims, but importantly it affects the demands the students experience for participating as competent students in interactions with the teachers, as I will show in the following section.

7. Accommodation to teachers' language

In the interviews, the students describe the importance of following the teachers' language norms. As an example, Liv explains how not following specific politeness rituals in physics class could result in very explicit exclusion from interaction with the teacher.

(2) Group interview

Liv: I really enjoy giving people pet names right//then once I said//if you say something else than than Wisti//then he'll be then he'll just ignore you//just well okay//will you just come over//or like that//then he'll also not//will you please come and help me//then he will come//and you are like//you can hear me//you are standing right there [...] he sits there and tries to improve our manners like he raises his kids

In the excerpt, Liv describes how the teacher ignores them if they do not use ritual politeness such as saying *vil du være sød*, equivalent to 'please', when asking for help and calling him by his last name. She describes this as a strategy to improve their manners, and some indignation is indicated when she compares his actions in class with how he raises his kids. More important here is that she voices an experience of exclusion from the interaction if she does not follow his language policy. While the students did not describe such direct policing in all classrooms, they did voice a need to accommodate both to teachers treating the academic register as a normative standard and teachers orienting towards a youth culture as a norm centre, as shown in (3).

(3) Individual interview

Mikkel: ehm well//I would say Michael he speaks a lot like us boys do//eh where//you can say//Susanne of course doesn't//she speaks more like generally eh//where you can say everyone understands it//where Michael he//where well he says whatever suits him practically//ehm//and then you of course also speak differently to him or what you can say//in his manner//or however you speak with//where Susanne there you would probably never talk like that//because she also just talks in her way//then you would just like to try to be on equal terms and say like the same as her or in the same way

In this excerpt, Mikkel describes it as evident that students, when meeting teachers speaking in different styles, change their language accordingly. The notion that it is to be on 'equal terms' hints that it is part of showing respect for the teachers or a politeness strategy. Mikkel moreover describes the teacher Michael's language use as resembling the 'boys' language use, and while he evaluates the deviations from the academic register positively, he also suggests that this language is not comprehensible for all students. Some students also experience such linguistic practices as excluding, as I will elaborate in the final section. The need to shift language with different teachers also comes through in the following group discussion (4) among Kristine, Christina, and Luna, when asked what is the good way to speak with the teachers.

(4) Group interview

Luna: you sell yourself pretty well if you speak more formal
 Christina: yes yes you of course do and if you try to use
 Luna: words we have learned during class for that matter
 Kristine: not always//sometimes they like when you do it really human and you are are just like//*arh can't you see that is completely crap*//well like as for instance//or Rikke at least does//Rikke likes if you are like ri- ri- ridicule well like ridicule//almost ridicule the things we are just talking about and
 Christina: well//really talk it all the way down to the floor
 Kristine: *oh but can't you hear how stupid it is that someone pays for not going to the fucking purgatory*//well like that//it is like that she likes that you do it quite human and think
 Christina: but I also think it is because she knows it is the way we remember it//well that we remember it when it comes down to our level

In this account, the students argue that you will be rewarded by some teachers for speaking formally and applying terminology taught in class, while speaking 'human' language exemplified with phrases that contain the swear words *lort* 'crap' and *fucking*, is preferred by others. Christina's description, that the latter is because the use of this language helps them remember the important subject matter, illustrates how the use of features associated with the youth register is also often described by the students as having strategic purposes for learning outcomes. Important for the argument here is that the employment of youth language, as well as academic language, by students can be understood as part of showing competence. It is also

interesting to note how Christina repeatedly talks about this language use as 'down' on their level and 'down to the floor', revealing that the teacher's use and preference for another register does not change the understanding of the academic register as of higher status; see also Madsen (2013) and Love-Nichols (2018) for discussion of 'high' and 'low' registers.

In this way, the students describe that they need to accommodate to the teachers to show politeness, perform competence, and even to avoid being directly excluded from conversations with teachers. Thereby they report the experience that it is important to adapt to their teachers to engage in conversations and be understood as good and competent students. However, adapting to a teacher's preferred language style is not equally accessible and acceptable to all students. In addition to the teachers' language norms, students have to navigate peer norms (Blommaert 2010, Rymes and Leone-Pizzighella 2020). As I will show in the following, peer norms in the studied classes place a strong significance on authenticity.

8. Authenticity and peer policing

Among many of the students in these two classes, it was deemed important to be genuine and to be yourself in order to be perceived as a good student. In interviews and recordings of everyday interactions, I found several examples of students who were the object of ridicule because they were 'not being themselves', 'shifting' language 'too much' when there was a teacher present, 'trying too hard', or were using words they had just learned or their peers believed that they did not completely understand. Such statements indicate ideologies of authenticity in which people are only deemed legitimate speakers of a register if the words they use are considered their own, their speech is considered consistent, and if it is believed that they have been speaking like this always or at least for a very long time.

Some of these elements are seen in excerpt (5), from a group interview with three students from class B.

(5) Group interview

- Kristine: I would say a funny thing actually//I have noticed//and I have talked a bit with with Maria about this as well//lots and lots and lots of people in our class have a thing with using words that they might not even understand themselves just because it sounds smart
- Christina: oh yeah Christian
- Kristine: it is genuinely the funniest thing
- Christina: Christian does that so often
- Kristine: because the words often don't even have relevance//they just say them because
- Christina: it sounds nice
- Kristine: it sounds bloody nice that way//the teacher falls for them//falls for it
- Christina: yeah like//*how would you think that*//and starts//*how would you explain that word*//and then they will look it up at Gyldendal's ((a dictionary))//*oh tha:ts*

- Kristine: I think they think//*well that was a fine word he mastered there*//right but not//I often think then xx//then you are like//you don't know what that word means ((smiling voice))//but you just say it because it is funny
- Christina: well I often catch Christian looking up a word on Gyldendal's dictionary//and then finding a definition//and find a somewhat smarter word than that//and then using it//and then Morten//*well how would you//how can you see that//and//what does that mean//and//bla blah bla*//right//where Christian he is just like//arh//he just greases it right

The students here treat it as both problematic and laughable when students use vocabulary they do not fully understand or that they have just learned from a dictionary. The descriptions that teachers 'fall for it' and of the student Christian as one who 'greases it' moreover indicate that it is considered to be actions with which the students pretend to be something that they are not. I interpret this as an expression of an ideologically invested norm, where students who use words they do not have full ownership of and do not have a history with are considered inauthentic and illegitimate users of these words. That students, in this way, are at risk of being ridiculed behind their backs if they use language they are not understood as authentic users of is also seen in the following discussion (6) of language use at school among Mads and René from class B.

(6) Group interview

- Mads: you can at least hear the contrast between when students speak with each other and if they speak with teachers clearly as well//in tone of voice but also in the choice of words I would say and especially with William//*holy shit man*
- René: yes//and he tries to formulate his thoughts so formally//he just sounds a bit retarded sometimes//he tries a bit too hard

The participants here describe it as typical that students change language when there is a teacher present, but then exemplify that William does this in a highly noticeable manner, underlined with the interjection 'holy shit man'. William was a student who often contributed with long arguments in class, using vocabulary associated with the academic register. René's elaboration that William is 'trying' to sound formal indicates that he is considered to change language too far from the language he is generally associated with and is therefore considered ridiculously inauthentic. Moreover, René also ascribes William an identity in opposition to being competent because of his 'formal' or 'academic' style in class. He does this by describing William as trying, and thereby implying that he does not succeed and labelling his language use with the derogatory term 'retarded'.

The students did not merely risk being the object of ridicule outside the classroom. Especially in class A, where there was a higher tendency to tease each other and seek conflict among the students. They also risked being pointed out in class. This is, for instance, the case in the excerpt in Figure 5, in which Mikkel is ridiculed in Danish class for using terminology that they had just learned in German class.⁵

In the excerpt the class is engaged in discussion about what happened to the individual during the urbanisation process in the late nineteenth century.

	Original		Translation
01	Susanne ja	Susanne	yes
02	(.)		(.)
03	Mikkel kan man ikke føle	Mikkel	can't you feel lonely
04	sig ensom		
05	Susanne JO	Susanne	YEAH
06	Mikkel altså jeg ved ikke	Mikkel	well I don't know
07	einsam gemeinsam jeg		einsam gemeinsam
08	ved ikke		((lonely together)) I
09	(.)		don't know (.)
10	Susanne det er <u>fuldstændig</u>	Susanne	it is <u>completely</u>
11	[rigtigt]		[right]
12	Martin [ÅRH JA] TYSK DER	Martin	[OH YEAH] GERMAN
13			THERE
14	Unknown ÅRH JA	Unknown	OH YEAH
15	Martin [TYSK PÅ A MAND]	Martin	[GERMAN A MAN]
16	Unknown [ÅRHH]	Unknown	[OHH]
17	Unknown [HOLD KÆFT MAND]	Unknown	[SHUT UP MAN]
18	Unknown [ÅH]	Unknown	[WOW]
19	Lucas hvad sagde han ((to	Lucas	what did he say ((to
20	Martin))		Martin))
21	((uro i klassen))		((bustle in the
22			classroom))
23	(.)		(.)
24	Martin einsam gemeinsam det	Martin	einsam gemeinsam it
25	er det vi lige har		is the thing we just
26	haft i tysk ((to		had in German class
27	Lucas))		((to Lucas))
28	(.)		(.)
29	Unknown du skal da have tysk	Unknown	you should have
30	A sammen med os		German A with us
31	Mikkel nej skal jeg ikke	Mikkel	no I should not
32	Lucas ((griner)) xxx	Lucas	((laughs)) xxx
33	Susanne vi tager den lige	Susanne	we will just take
34	her (...)		this here (...)

Figure 5. Classroom discussion.

Mikkel contributes to the discussion by saying that people could feel lonely, and hesitantly adds the phrase *einsam gemeinsam*. The teacher's acknowledgement of this as 'completely right' (l. 10–11) indicates that it is understood as a proper application of terminology. The answer, however, leads to a bustle in the class led by Martin who shouts, 'Oh yeah German there' (l. 12). More of the boys in the classroom join the ridicule of Mikkel's answer with different responses. That Mikkel experiences it as an unpleasant mockery is indicated by his response, 'no I shouldn't' (l. 31), to the suggestion that he should have 'German A' (advanced German class). In line 19, Lucas, who sits next to Martin, turns to Martin and asks 'what did he say'. Martin answers, '*einsam gemeinsam* it is the thing we just had in German class'. This response shows that Martin knows the reference and indicates that the mocking of Mikkel is related to the fact that this phrase is something they have just learned in another course and is therefore considered inauthentic. Mikkel was not generally associated with being good at school, and the mocking might also be related to an understanding of him transgressing norms by applying language he is not a consistent and confident user of. Such ridicule directly obstructs the students' ability

to perform as good students, as it positions them as inauthentic in front of teachers and classmates. Such overt and covert ridiculing practices also contribute to the enregisterment process, in which specific persons are linked to specific language use in specific situations.

9. Self-directed metapragmatic acts

Following Bourdieu, the students' experiences with ridicule of themselves and classmates that link certain people to certain registers could, moreover, result in self-censorship based on more or less conscious calculation of the chances of being rewarded or ridiculed. Such experiences could then be expected to affect their willingness to use language appreciated by the different teachers.

None of the students directly stated that they avoided using features associated with one or the other register because of the risk of public or covert ridicule. The need for authenticity, however, came through in the ambivalent application of linguistic features associated with the academic register. It could also be seen in students' reluctance to engage in informal interactions with teachers with use of practices associated with the youth register. In class, students sometimes oriented towards the academic norm centre by showing that they knew subject-specific terminology but still distanced themselves from it, as is the case in Figure 6, an excerpt with Christina. The excerpt is from a Danish lesson in class B, where they are analysing a commercial from an NGO.

Christina here states that the commercial uses 'pathos' and gives a long, elaborated account of what she means by this statement. She distances herself from the use of the word 'pathos' by using the first person plural pronoun 'we' instead of the singular 'I' and stating that it is annoying to use such terminology (l. 1–2). At the same time, she also underlines that this is something she is certain of by applying the adverb 'jo' ('of course'), signalling that it is evidently 'pathos' (l. 3–4). Thereby she positions herself as someone who knows the terminology and how to apply it in Danish class. It is important to note that Christina was categorised as one of the good students by herself and others and in general did not hesitate to talk about her high grade point average or her extra A-level subjects. That she makes an effort to show that she understands this term and has it as a natural part of her repertoire, while still marking that it is applied academic language and not her everyday language use, could therefore be interpreted as a strategy to overcome the risk of being seen as an inauthentic user of the academic register. Thereby these practices could be understood as part of positioning as a genuinely good student.

On a side note, it is interesting that the teacher reacts by explaining that it is okay to use 'your own words' instead of 'pathos'. While this is probably meant to encourage students who have not mastered such terminology to give contributions in class, it also illustrates how teachers can contribute to the understanding of terminology as inauthentic language use.

	Original	Translation		
01	Christina	jamen altså hvis vi skal være rigtig irriterende så er det jo patos som de også spiller på rigtig meget altså sådan noget me:d at det er seerens følelser der ligesom bliver: sat i stand om man så mener at det er (.) helt forfærdeligt eller om man synes de:t er hjerteskrørende eller det eller man synes man bliver <u>irriteret</u> over at man hele tiden skal få sådan noget der i hovedet som man ikke selv vælger om man vil se på om morgenen eller (.)	Christina	so well if we should be really annoying then it is of course pathos that they sort of play on a lot you know stuff like tha:t it is the emotions of the viewer that are: set up if you then think it is (.) completely devastating or you think i:t is heart-breaking or it is or you think you are <u>annoyed</u> that you should get that stuff thrown in your face all the time which you don't choose yourself if you want to see in the morning or (.)
24	Morten	ja	Morten	yes
25	Christina	hvornår man xxx ikke (0.5) så der bliver i hvert fald: skabt en eller anden form fo:r (.) øh ja reaktion hos seeren	Christina	when you xxx right (0.5) then there is nevertheless: created some sort o:f (.) eh yeah reaction for the viewer
31	Morten	yes godt nok patos xxx og man kan jo så også bare forklare det med sine egne ord ikke (...)	Morten	yes well pathos xxx and you can of course also just explain it with your own words right (...)

Figure 6. Classroom discussion.

Some students also described it as difficult to adapt to the youth culture-oriented norms. Cecilia, for instance, describes 'the boys' as better at speaking the appropriate way with the teachers that orients towards youth culture as a norm centre, and that she just 'can't' (see excerpt (7)).

(7) Group interview

Cecilia: it is in the group of boys//you know (xxx) and all those right there then//they have a very relaxed relationship with the teachers//they are like you know//they just say whatever//they don't care being late xx and they uhm might have a closer relationship//well I can't have that close a relationship with my teachers as they can//you know I can't speak with Rikke as they do//well just like you know speak//like joke a bit//I can't do that// they can do that and stuff (...)

Cecilia was in general a very conscientious student who never missed class and came prepared. She was also quiet in class and did not engage in personal conversations with the teachers in or outside class. In the excerpt, Cecilia here several times repeats that she 'can't' speak with Rikke in the way expected, 'can't' joke with her and can't

'just speak'. She does not go into detail about why she cannot, but it could be interpreted as an inner experience of inauthenticity, where participating in such activities would be inconsistent for her. The important point here is that according to her account, she knows which practices are preferred by the teacher and observes other students acting accordingly, but experiences being constrained by norms that she does not find it natural to deviate from.

In this way, students are reluctant to employ linguistic features that they expect to be preferred by the teachers in a way that appears to be related to the requirement of authenticity.

10. Conclusion

Through the perspectives of enregisterment and polycentricity, I have investigated language norms among students and teachers at a Danish STX school. I have shown that some teachers treated an academic register as a normative standard. This register was characterised by frequent use of subject-specific terminology and lexis associated with literary language, ritual politeness, and avoidance of language associated with slang or swearing. Other teachers treated deviations from this register as relevant in class and employed features associated with a youth register, such as mock-impoliteness, teasing, swearing, and 'slang' words and phrases. While this did not entail that the youth register was ascribed the same value as the academic, it meant that speaking like a good student entailed more than just awareness of a general school norm. It was equally important to know when to deviate from it.

Moreover, the teacher's practices did not solely dictate the norms of the classrooms. The students also had to navigate peer-led norms. The study suggests that the students did not experience equal rights to accommodate to the teachers. The students risked being positioned as inauthentic and ridiculed publicly or behind their backs if they deviated too much from the language they were generally associated with or if they used vocabulary that the other students knew they had just learned in another course or from a dictionary. This was especially an issue regarding accommodation to the academic register. As shown in excerpt (7) with Cecilia, students could, however, also experience the orientation towards a youth norm in the classroom as an excluding practice. In classrooms such as A, where students often tease each other publicly, peer policing directly affects the students' abilities to position themselves as good students. Such covert and direct ridicule for language use considered inauthentic by peers might furthermore affect the students' participation in classroom interactions and adaptation to linguistic norms appreciated by the teachers.

This causes different issues concerning inequality connected to language at school. While knowledge of features associated with an academic register still plays a significant role in the construction of identities as good students, neither explicit teaching of this register nor teaching where it is treated as a norm to deviate from it, creates equal access to performing as good students. As the students also police each other, they cannot freely adapt to the expectations of the teachers, even if they have learned 'the code' or to decode what is expected of them. The demand for

authenticity entails that the students who are associated with a specific register and those who can adapt confidently and unnoticeably to different settings have an advantage in successfully performing as good students. While the different norms might have the effect that more students can identify with at least one teacher and be engaged to participate in some classroom interactions, the different norms for interactions with different teachers, moreover, demand high reflexivity and flexibility from the students. Hence, the important question for studies in linguistic inequality in school settings like Graabølle High is not just if the students have learned a code – such as argued by the early Bernstein (1964), Heath (1982), Finn (2009), and Ulriksen et al. (2009) – but if they have learned to decode different norms and are willing and allowed to adapt.

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Notes

1 Parents' first languages:

- Student A: Father, Serbian; mother, Serbian
- Student B: Father, Serbian; mother, Swedish-Serbian
- Student C: Father, Danish; mother, Serbian
- Student D: Father, Danish; mother, Polish
- Student E: Father, Danish; mother, German
- Student F: Father, Arabic; mother, Spanish

2 Guiding questions regarding language practices:

- Which different ways to speak can you hear at this school? Is there a difference between teachers and students? Is there a difference between the students?
- Do you speak differently in different situations? How do you speak at school? How do you speak with friends? How do you speak with teachers? How do you speak at home?
- What is good language at school? Is there a proper way to talk to the teachers? Does it affect your grades? Who is good at speaking the appropriate way at school? Who is not good at speaking the appropriate way?

3 In the interactional data from classrooms presented in figures, I adhered to the following guidelines:

Symbol	Meaning
<u>Abc</u>	Emphatic stress
:	Prolongation of sound
(.)	Micropause (less than 0.3 seconds)
(0.5)	Pause measured in seconds
[Overlap begins
]	Overlap ends
–	Interruption of word or sentence
°Abc°	Speech with low volume
°°Abc°°	Speech with very low volume/whisper
ABC	Speech with high volume
<i>Abc</i>	Reported speech and stylisation

Xxx	Inaudible speech
{Abc}	Speech hard to determine, author's guess
((comments))	The author's comments on the transcript

4 Excerpts from interviews are roughly transcribed without notation of stress, prolongation, pauses, overlaps, minimal response and volume. // are inserted at possible line breaks, to ease the understanding for readers. The transcripts are also only presented in translations. Originals can be found in the appendix. Where quotes of specific language use are important, the Danish original is commented on in the text. All translations are my own.

5 This excerpt also occurs in Larsen (2022).

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Appendix: Danish originals for excerpts (1)–(7)

Excerpt (1)

Susanne: Så reagerer jeg og selvfølgelig også når de bander og sådan noget//altså//men det er da almindelig opdragelse ikke//je- je- je- det skal de ikke når//nej det er et bandefrit område ((griner)) så så det ved det godt øh//og det lærer de fra 1.g når jeg har dem i dansk og det//de skal ikke bande i mit lokale//de må godt bande udenfor//de må bande lige så meget de vil//men ikke inde i lokalet vel//for der underviser vi i sprog og litteratur og sådan noget//ikke

Excerpt (2)

Liv: jeg kan rigtig godt lide at give folk kælenavne ikke også// så engang så siger jeg// hvis man siger et eller andet andet end Wisti så bliver han// så ignorerer han en bare// ja okay vil du lige komme eller sådan// så siger han heller ikke/// vil du være sød at komme og hjælpe// så kommer han// og man er sådan //du kan godt høre mig du står lige der [. . .] han sidder og prøver at opdrage på os ligesom han opdrager på sine børn derhjemme

Excerpt (3)

Mikkel: øhm altså jeg vil sige Michael han taler meget ligesom os drenge gør// øh hvor kan man sige det gør Susanne jo ikke// hun taler mere sådan generelt øh //hvor man kan sige alle kan forstå det// hvor Michael han hvor at altså han siger lige hvad det passer ham stort set //øhm og så taler man jo selvfølgelig også anderledes til ham eller hvad kan man sige// på hans måde eller som man nu bare taler med// hvor med Susanne der vil man nok aldrig tale sådan fordi at hun også taler øh på sin måde// så vil man ligesom prøve at komme på samme fod og så sige det samme som hende eller på samme måde

Excerpt (4)

Luna: man sælger vel sig slev ret godt hvis man snakker mere formelt
Christina: ja ja det gør man da og hvis man prøver at bruge
Luna: ord vi har lært i undervisningen for den sags skyld
Kristine: ikke altid// nogen gange kan de godt lide når man gør det virkelig humant og man bare sådan der// arh kan du ikke se at det er noget værre lort// altså sådan for eksempel// eller det kan Rikke lide i hvert fald// Rikke kan godt lide hvis du er sådan der la la latterlig altså sådan latterlig nærmest latterliggør det vi lige står og siger altså det vi lige har hørt om og
Christina: altså virkelig taler det helt ned på gulvet
Kristine: ej men kan du ikke høre hvor dumt det er at der er nogen der betaler sig for ikke at komme i fucking skærsilden// altså sådan// det er sådan der kan hun godt lide at man gør det sådan rimelig humant og tænker
Christina: men det tror jeg også er fordi hun ved det er den måde vi husker det på altså at vi husker det når det kommer ned på vores eget niveau

Excerpt (5)

- Kristine: jeg vil sige// en sjov ting jeg faktisk har opdaget og jeg har også snakket lidt med med Maria om det// rigtig rigtig rigtig mange i klassen har en ting med at bruge ord som de måske ikke engang forstår bare fordi det lyder klogt
- Christina: ja årh Christian
- Kristine: og det er oprigtigt det sjoveste
- Christina: Christian gør det så tit
- Kristine: fordi ordene har tit ikke engang relevans// de siger dem bare fordi at
- Christina: det lyder godt
- Kristine: det lyder sgu da godt sådan der// læreren hopper på dem// hopper på det
- Christina: ja sådan// hvordan vil du mene det// og begynder// hvordan vil du forklare det ord og så slår de op på Gyldendals// nå de:
- Kristine: jeg tror de tænker// nå det var da et fint ord han kunne der// men ikke jeg synes tit så xx// så er man sådan// du ved ikke hvad det ord betyder ((smilende stemme)) men du siger det bare fordi det er sjovt
- Christina: altså jeg fanger tit Christian i at sådan slå sådan et ord op på Gyldendals ordbog og så finde en definition og så finde et lidt klogere ord end det og så bruge det// og så sådan Morten// nå hvordan vil du hvordan kan du se det// og// hvad betyder det// og //bla bla bla// ikke // hvor at Christian han er bare sådan arhh han smører bare på ikke

Excerpt (6)

- Mads: man kan tydeligt høre kontrasten mellem når man når eleverne snakker med hinanden og hvis de snakker til lærerne i hvert fald // både i tonefald men også i ordvalg vil jeg sige og især med William// holy shit man
- René: ja og han prøver at formulere sig virkelig formelt han lyder bare sådan lidt spasser engang imellem han prøver lidt for hårdt

Excerpt (7)

- Cecilia: det er i drengegruppen// altså (xxx) og alle de der lige altså// de har et meget afslappet forhold til lærerne// de er sådan du ved// de siger bare et eller andet// de er ligeglade med at komme for sent xx og de øhm de har måske også en tættere forhold// altså jeg kan ikke have så tæt forhold med mine lærere som de kan/ altså jeg kan ikke snakke med Rikke som de gør //altså bare sådan du ved snakke// sådan joke lidt// det kan jeg ikke// det kan de og sådan noget (...)