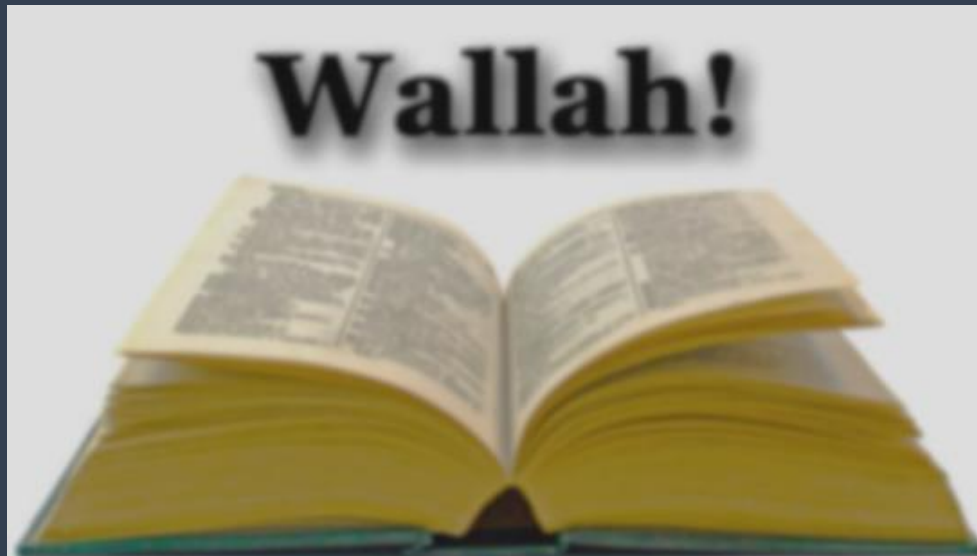


“You shouldn’t sound like an uneducated person”: Linguistic diversity and standard ideology in Denmark



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Danish sociolinguists about Denmark:

“more [advanced standardisation] than in any other European speech community” (Pedersen 2009: 51)

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Danish more homogeneous than any other language with millions of speakers (Kristiansen 2009: 168)

- Conservative standard language ideology in public discourse and education
- Results in orientations towards linguistic uniformity (Kristiansen & Jørgensen 2003; Pedersen 2009)

Beyond Denmark

- Changing social conditions across Europe relativize sociolinguistic values (Coupland 2009: 45)
 - Disturbs the ideology of 'one best language'

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- Changing social conditions across Europe relativize sociolinguistic values (Coupland 2009: 45)
 - Disturbs the ideology of ‘one best language’
- Potentially “de-standardisation”: “a type of value levelling that washes out status meanings formerly linked to ‘standard’ and ‘non-standard’ varieties”
(Coupland 2009:44, cf. Coupland and Kristiansen 2011)

Reasons to add contemporary urban vernaculars to discussions of standardization:

- 1) The social changes (of globalisation or late modernity) comprises increased cultural and linguistic diversity in European cities and this is bound to impact on language change and language ideology;

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- 1) The social changes (of globalisation or late modernity) comprises increased cultural and linguistic diversity in European cities and this is bound to impact on language change and language ideology;
- 2) The linguistic hybridity brought about by this diversity (which defies traditional language categories) seems to be in stark contrast to the coherent idea of distinct languages that standard ideologies inevitably rest on and reinforce

Focus of talk

- How is urban category-defying language use placed in the Danish (ideological) sociolinguistic order?

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- How is urban category-defying language use placed in the Danish (ideological) sociolinguistic order?
- Does this type of language use
 - contribute to the development of “less determinate and more complex” (Coupland 2009: 43) sociolinguistic value associations?
 - question the position of standard language ideology and the bounded code-model of language it implies?

Outline of talk

- Brief review of existing research on the contemporary urban vernacular in Copenhagen

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- Discussion of ethnographic sociolinguistic data involving hybrid urban language use (overt metalinguistic accounts, situated use and mass mediated and popular cultural productions)

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- Brief review of existing research on the contemporary urban vernacular in Copenhagen
 - Discussion of ethnographic sociolinguistic data involving hybrid urban language use (overt metalinguistic accounts, situated use and mass mediated and popular cultural productions)
- Although the contemporary urban linguistic practices in situational use undermine bounded code-model of language,
 - does not pose significant challenge to standard language ideology, but rather contribute to its reproduction

Contemporary urban vernaculars

- Rampton's (2011) term for heteroglossic speech styles across European cities
- Reconceptualized notion of 'vernacular' based on Agha's (2007) concept of register

Linguistic features of CPH vernacular

- Incorporation of words and expressions associated with minority languages
- Tendency to a VSO word order different from standard Danish use of SVO order (in main clause following a subordinate clause), to a non-standard use of common gender where standard Danish would have the neuter and a tendency to leave out or use prepositions differently from the use in standard Danish
- Tendency to omit the Danish 'stød' (a form of laryngealisation or creaky voice)
- Prosodic patterns that differ from the majority pronunciation of Copenhagen youth (involving the contrast between short and long vowels)
- Particular pronunciations of prevocalic 't' (with affrication and palatalization), initial uvular 'r' pronounced voiceless, backing of vowels, distinctive trilled r-sound, particular post alveolar s-sound

Enregisterment

- Processes through which we display and enact social functions of language by talking about and employing linguistic resources in particular ways
- Through terms and labels for language use or use of linguistic forms - relate certain ways of speaking to social relations, social practice, and identity categories
 - Ways of speaking come to point to, or index, ways of being and acting by repeated use in certain types of situations by certain types of speakers etc. (Agha 2007)

Data

- Collaborative study conducted from 2009-2011
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- Most participants had a linguistic minority background and lived in a highly diverse area of the Danish capital

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- 48 grade-school pupils in a Copenhagen public school
- Most participants had a linguistic minority background and lived in a highly diverse area of the Danish capital
- Team-ethnographic fieldwork, collected data in a number of different settings (in school, during leisure activities and in the local neighborhood)
 - field diaries, largely unstructured qualitative interviews with participants in groups and individually (as well as with teachers, parents, and club workers)
 - recordings of different kinds of conversations
 - written data (such as protocols, student essays and Facebook interactions)

Metalinguistic accounts: Interview

	Original	Translation
1	Israh:	Israh:
2	uden for skolen der	outside school then
3	gør vi også vi	we do also we just
4	taler bare slang	talk slang 'perker'
5	perkersprog taler	language talk
6	normalt altså sådan	normally like
7	arabisk dansk	Arabic Danish
8	bruger alle mulige	use all sorts of
9	mærkelige ord i	strange word in
10	(0.3)	(0.3)
11	Astrid:	Astrid:
12	[jo]	[yes]
13	Israh:	Israh:
14	[og]så kommer vi	[and] then we
15	hver gang med nye	every time come up with
16	ord	new words
17	Astrid:	Astrid:
18	hvordan det	how so
19	Israh:	Israh:
20	altså et eller	like something
21	andet vi finder på	we make up something
22	noget nyt der	new that's a bit
23	ligner lidt arabisk	similar to Arabic
24	og så laver vi lidt	then we make it
25	omvendt på det	opposite a bit

Metalinguistic accounts: Essays

But slang and integrated are also important, because there are some people who cannot tolerate listening to slang, then you have to be able to talk to them so that they are comfortable. But slang and integrated are not just in one language, but they are in English, Danish, Arabic, and all languages there exist. :D (Lamis, written essay 1.)

Integrated can be used by everyone, by and large, but if one speaks integrated language one is considered polite, rich, well-integrated person because people who speak integrated are like that. (Isaam, 15, written essay 2.)

Situated use

1	Andreas:	nå hyg jer vi kommer lidt senere	well have a good time we'll come later
2			
3	Isaam:	<u>øh det er min</u> ↑ dig mand læg den	<u>eh it's mine</u> ↑ you man put it
4		<u>t'ilbage med dig</u> hhh	<u>back with you</u> hhh
5	Shahid:	hhh hhh	hhh hhh
6	Isaam:	[<u>walla de t'ager min drink og sådan noget</u>]	[<u>walla they're taking my drink and stuff</u>]
7			
8	Shahid:	[xxx kom her med tyggegummi kom her over] med dig mand	[xxx come here with chewing gum come over here] man
9			
10	Isaam:	<u>jeg har ikke stjålet noget</u>	<u>I haven't stolen any</u>
11		<u>t'yggegummi</u>	<u>chewing gum</u>
12	Shahid:	hhh hhh	hhh hhh
13	Isaam:	jalla shuf de er daffet	jalla shuf they've split
14	Bashaar:	(ja det en dejlig xxx xxx)	(yes it's a lovely xxx xxx)
15	Isaam:	hhh hhh ha t'ag t'y:gggegummi	hhh hhh ha take the che:wing gum
16		fre:mm mand hey hallo	ou:t man hey hallo
17		bratha vi bliver opt'aget vi	bratha we're being recorded we're
18		er busted	busted
19	Anas:	xxx det samme	xxx the same
20	Isaam:	ja jeg har stjålet en	yes I've stolen a chewing gum
21		t'yggegummi ja fuck det	yes fuck that

Mediated representations of the urban vernacular

- Danish Broadcast media (mass media comedy)
- Digital language practices on social media
- Popular music (hip hop)

The urban vernacular in mass media comedy

- Stereotypical constructions of the style is found in:
 - youth and childrens' literature
 - in the comedy genre in radio and television shows
- Characteristics of the style: slang expressions + certain pronunciation features
- Stereotypical images invoked:
 - streetwise gangsters of ethnic minority descent
 - contrasted to standard academic speech ('integrated' speech)





Bashaar

Har barberet mig

22. november 2009 kl. 18:48 · Synes godt om ·



Rasmus HAHAHAAAAAAAA... Så har du ikke mere shaaarkkk tilbage ;D

22. november 2009 kl. 18:50 · Synes godt om



Bashaar hehehe

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Rasmus Så skal du lære Jamil det ;D

22. november 2009 kl. 18:51 · Synes godt om



Fatima ;OO DET VAR DIIIIIS :P

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Lamis Hahahahahaha lol flækker.. ;)

22. november 2009 kl. 18:55 · Synes godt om



Fatima Oh ham det rasmus Prøver være Perker Hahaahhhaha Flækker :D

22. november 2009 kl. 18:57 · Synes godt om



Rasmus Ja jeg er onlig syg gangstar, host host ;D

22. november 2009 kl. 20:15 · Synes godt om



Mohammed din hund draber dig rasmus

23. november 2009 kl. 16:46 · Synes godt om

shark: hår (arabisk)

onlig syg gangstar: Alis standardreplik i julekalenderen Yallahrup Færgeby fra 2007

...in social media

The use of “proper sick gangster”:

Show how mass media stereotypes and their indexical values are reproduced in online interaction



Translation:

Bashaar: Have shaved

Rasmus: HAHAHAAAAAAAA...then you don't have more shaaark left ;D

Bashaar: hehehe

Rasmus: You better learn it Jamil ;D

Fatima: ;OO THAT WAS A DISS :P

Lamis: Hahahahahaha lol laughing.. ;)

Fatima: Oh Rasmus tries to be a Perker Hahaahhhaha laughing :D

Rasmus: Yep I'm a proper sick gangstar, cough cough ;D

Mohammed: Your dog kill you Rasmus



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Enregisterment:

1: Illustrate the connection between:

- linguistic features,
- users
- indexical values

2. Show how norms of street language are negotiated and how appropriate users are ratified

Translation:

Bashaar: Have shaved

Rasmus: **HAHAHAHAHAHA...then you don't have more shaaark left ;D**

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Everyday writing: Some general points

- EW contrast to the orthographic standard
- Urban vernacular as a common feature of everyday writing (among these urban adolescents)
- Dialect features are used in similar ways among rural youth (Maegaard et al. 2020)
 - Dialect as strategically deployable features in writing:
 - Fulfil communicative goals
 - Carry indexical meaning: Intimacy, stereotypical masculinity and local affiliation to place
- Everyday writing is not only governed by peer normativity


The status and functions of the orthographic standard


 **Fatima**
BLIVER MISHANDLET AF Saleem :(
17. februar 2010 kl. 20:22 · Synes godt om ·


 Safa Skal jeg tæske ham for dig ? ;)
17. februar 2010 kl. 20:29 · Synes godt om


 Fatima Ja taak :D
17. februar 2010 kl. 20:35 · Synes godt om


 Safa Haha :D
17. februar 2010 kl. 20:36 · Synes godt om


 Saleem muuuuhahahahaha jeg tæsker dig :P
18. februar 2010 kl. 13:58 · Synes godt om


 Fatima Hallo Safa er rigtig Stæærk :D
18. februar 2010 kl. 13:58 · Synes godt om


 Saleem du laver sjov :P
18. februar 2010 kl. 13:59 · Synes godt om

 Fatima Neej jj gøre ej ;)
18. februar 2010 kl. 14:01 · Synes godt om


 Saleem jo main!!!!!!
18. februar 2010 kl. 14:03 · Synes godt om


 Fatima neej og vil du være sød at stoppe :D
18. februar 2010 kl. 14:05 · Synes godt om

 Safa I din drømme saleem haha :P
18. februar 2010 kl. 14:32 · Synes godt om

 Saleem du skal ikke spilde dum :P
18. februar 2010 kl. 16:33 · Synes godt om

 Safa Jeg spilder ikk, jeg spiller ;)
18. februar 2010 kl. 19:00 · Synes godt om

 Saleem fuck vem er det der er så dårlig til at stave!!
18. februar 2010 kl. 19:40 · Synes godt om

 Safa Ved ikk HVEM der er så dårlig til at stave hahaha ;P
18. februar 2010 kl. 20:10 · Synes godt om

Fatima:	I AM BEING ABUSED BY Saleem :(
Safa:	Do you want me to beat him up? ;)
Fatima:	Yes please :D
Safa:	Haha :D
Saleem:	Muuuhahahahaha I beat you up Safa :p
Fatima:	Hey Safa is really strong :D
Saleem:	You are joking :P
Fatima:	Noo I don't ;)
Saleem:	You are, man!!!!!!
Fatima:	Noo and would you please stop :D
Safa:	in your dreams Saleem haha :P
Saleem:	don't blay stupid :P
Safa:	I don't blay , I play ;)
Saleem:	fuck ho is that bad at spelling!!
Safa:	I don't know WHO is that bad at spelling hahaha ;)

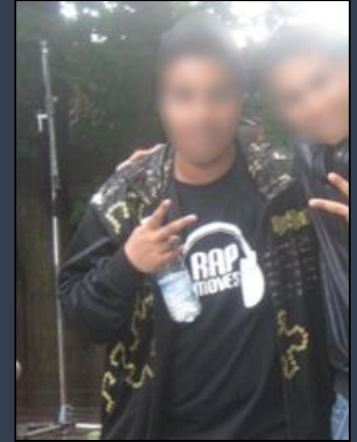
New incentives to invest in standard orthography

- Correct spelling becomes a social resource for negotiation of status and power relations
 - Corrections of language use have social functions ranging beyond matters of correctness.
- Investment in the Standard is not only to make good grades in school
 - social media affords new incentives to invest in standard orthography

Urban vernacular in hip hop

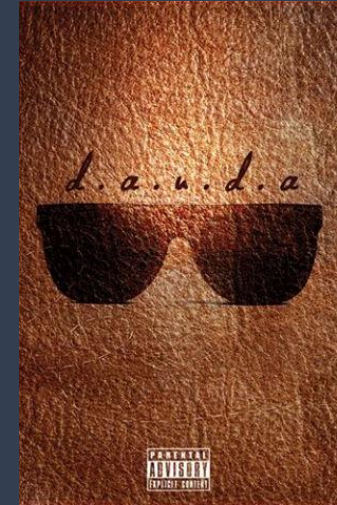
- The urban vernacular was reduced in the participants rap-productions on YouTube
- We argued: hip hop language and literacy practices in the rap-productions were related to both traditional educational norms and artistic aspirations
- Isaam in a retrospective interview:

“one shouldn’t sound like a stupid (.) like an uneducated person you know (.) because then then your text or your message becomes unserious (.) and it’s important to get your message out in the right way” (Stæhr and Madsen 2015; Madsen 2016)



Isaam

Urban vernacular in mainstream hip hop



The rapper Sivas:

- acquired a mainstream audience and successfully made the linguistic style he refers to as 'ghetto language' an important part of his brand.
- designed a language app translating the vocabulary from his lyrics to standard Danish

The street dictionary

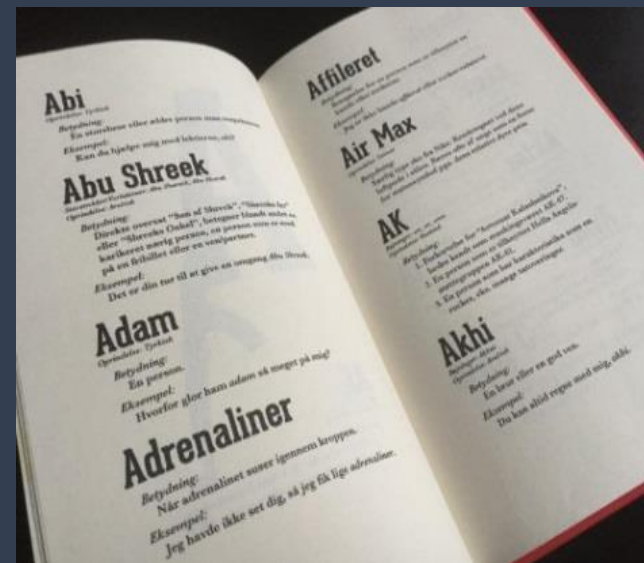


Translation:
"Word on the Street"

STREET/DANISH
DICTIONARY

- A HANDBOOK IN GHETTO DANISH

The aim: "to document and legitimize the language use of a youth culture"



Conclusions: Sociolinguistic position

- We set out to discuss:
 - How urban category-defying language use is placed in the Danish sociolinguistic order.
 - Whether this type of language use seems to contribute to a relativisation of sociolinguistic value associations to a point where it questions the position of standard language ideology and the bounded code-model of language it implies.
- Hybrid linguistic practices become indexical of a particular register
 - Recognizable and available as resources for:
 - situated use and social work,
 - parodies in media,
 - means of artistic branding
 - (not least) an object of sociolinguists' interest and investigation

Conclusions: Disturbing standard language ideology?

Slang:

“an ideological framework for reasoning about language that defines a class of deviant registers of language”

“strengthened when a given speech variety comes increasingly to acquire the status of a baseline register, a standard in relation to which others are normatively evaluated as deviant or substandard” (Agha 2015: 306)

- The enregisterment of contemporary urban linguistic resources as a slang register inevitably involves the presumption of (at least one) standard language (Agha 2015: 316) to deviate from
 - So rather than questioning or disturbing standard language ideology, these practices and the way they are used and evaluated on both small and large social scales actually seem to reinforce it.

Thank you

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