

## 8 Virtually Norwegian: Negotiating language and identity on YouTube

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*Unn Røynealand*

### **Introduction**

Early January 2017 the city of Oslo suffered heavily from pollution due to a combination of extensive traffic and cold weather. To resolve this problem, the city commissioner for environment and transport, Lan Marie Nguyen Berg, issued a ban on driving diesel cars certain days. The same day a right-wing politician, who was very upset by the ban, posted a message on her Facebook wall where she attacked Nguyen Berg in extremely offensive language. She called Nguyen Berg a Vietnamese bitch, and told her to go back to Vietnam or North-Korea where communists like her belong (Dagsavisen January 17, 2017). The message was quickly picked up by the media, where it provoked resentment and launched a massive debate. The right-wing politician defended herself by saying that this was a private message posted on her Facebook wall, and also that this kind of language use is quite common in her dialect. Both of these excuses were heavily criticized and dismissed in the following debate. As a politician, you are a public figure and hence cannot expect that a post on your Facebook wall will not be spread and taken up by the media. The idea that this kind of language use has anything to do with dialect was also rejected; it is simply degrading and racist language. Still it is interesting that the politician – in the attempt to defend herself – used both these arguments. It illustrates how people tend to think about Facebook as a private site – although they have hundreds of “friends” – and also that the use of dialect is quite common in private writing in Norway. In a comment on the attack from the right-wing politician, Nguyen Berg, said that what she found most offensive and difficult to deal with, was the attack on her national identity. Her father came from Vietnam as a refugee to Norway back in the 1960s, but she herself is born and raised in Norway and has no other nationality.

Sadly, this kind of trolling and bullying of people with immigrant backgrounds, and also challenging of their identity as Norwegian, are not at all a rarity; in fact, it is often found in the YouTube commentaries posted in response to the rap videos of several of the Hip Hop artist of mixed backgrounds that I have been following over the last decade. In this article, I will discuss identity negotiation, metalinguistic commentary, and language policing online, looking at a rap video and YouTube commentary where language, place and belonging are thematised. Drawing

on Bucholtz and Hall's (2004; 2005) work on identity negotiation and Michael Bakhtin's (1981) concept of heteroglossia, I argue that hybrid identities are particularly difficult to negotiate, and are often rejected and policed along with the mixed linguistic practices with which they tend to be associated. Essentialist ideas of identity and belonging as well as purist language ideologies seem to be quite widespread among young people online. Mixed language use gets policed, and language correctness is often used as an argument for who is or is not considered to be Norwegian.

## **Background**

Over the last decades, Norwegian society, like many others in Europe, has changed substantially as a result of increased globalisation, mobility, and labour- and refugee-driven immigration. Today, approximately 17 percent of the national population of 5.2 million has either migrated to Norway or is born in Norway to foreign-born parents (Statistics Norway 2017). Until the 1960s Norway was a relatively homogenous society with little immigration. Migration patterns were characterised by emigration rather than immigration, but this changed in the mid 1960s partly as a consequence of the country's economic upturn (Vassenden 2012: 7). Today, as many as one third of the population in the capital, Oslo, have an immigrant background. The largest immigrant groups come from other European countries, particularly Poland, Lithuania and Sweden, but immigration to Norway has its origin from a large number of countries. The first group who came as labour immigrants in the 1960s originates from Pakistan, and hence the largest group of Norwegian-born with foreign born parents, has Pakistani background. The largest refugee groups originate from the Balkans, Somalia, Iraq, Syria, Vietnam, and Eritrea.

### *Linguistic diversity in Norway*

Although immigration to Norway is relatively recent, Norway has always been linguistically diverse, as there are several national minority languages, two written standards of Norwegian (*Bokmål* and *Nynorsk*)<sup>1</sup> and substantial dialect diversity. In 1993, Norway ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages for four languages: *Sami* and *Kven* as 'regional or minority languages' and *Norwegian Romani* and *Romanes* as 'non-territorial languages' (Lane 2011; Wiedner 2016). In addition, Norwegian sign language is acknowledged as a fully-fledged language with fundamental values. Dialects in Norway differ considerably (at all linguistic levels) between

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<sup>1</sup> Bokmål is historically a Norwegianized variety of Danish, whereas Nynorsk, was created on the basis of Norwegian dialects during the mid-nineteenth century (Haugen 1966; Jahr 2014; Røynealand 2016). Since a parliamentary resolution in 1885, the two standards have coexisted as legally equal written representations of Norwegian. Nynorsk has had a minority status since the very beginning in terms of number of users (approx. 13 percent), power and prestige (Røynealand 2016).

regions; unlike most other European countries, dialects are used within all social domains, formal as well as informal, and diglossia is rare (Nesse 2015; Røyneland 2009; Sandøy 2011). Norwegians are, on the contrary, expected to keep their dialect – even after many years living away from their place of origin. With increasing inter- and intra-regional migration, this means that communication between Norwegians very often is “polylectal” (Røyneland 2017).<sup>2</sup> In addition, it has become increasingly normal to use dialect in writing on social media, particularly on Facebook and YouTube, and in text messaging (e.g. Rotevatn 2014).

Until a few decades ago, over 95 percent of Norway’s population spoke Norwegian as their first language (Engen & Kulbrandstad 2004). With increasing globalization and migration, however, this has changed dramatically. The linguistic situation in Norway is marked by increasing complexity with a large number of immigrant languages adding to the already existing diversity, and English becoming a second-language to most young Norwegians (Rindal 2015). There is no public registration of exactly how many different languages are spoken in Norway, but numbers from *The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training* (UDIR) suggests that between 150 and 200 languages are spoken among pupils in Norwegian schools (Wilhelmsen et al. 2013).

In recent years, new linguistic practices or styles have emerged in multilingual and multiethnic urban environments across Europe, also in Norway, particularly in the capital Oslo, where a high proportion of the inhabitants have immigrant background (e.g. Opsahl 2009; Svendsen & Røyneland 2008). These heteroglossic linguistic practices are characterized by the inclusion of linguistic features from many different varieties, used by people with several ethnic backgrounds, either to express their minority status or as a reaction to that status, aiming to upgrade it, or both (e.g. Clyne 2000; Eckert 2008b; Quist 2008; Svendsen & Røyneland 2008). The gradual enregisterment (Agha 2005) of this speech style is still an ongoing process, in which the media, artists, the primary users, and we as researchers, all participate. In the media, it is commonly referred to as ‘Kebab-Norwegian’ and often framed in negative terms; as a threat to the Norwegian language, a hindrance to entering the job market, or an obstacle for social advancement more generally (Ims 2014; Svendsen & Marzo 2015). On the other hand, several artists, particularly rappers, strongly oppose the idea that this linguistic practice is something negative or problematic, and use it in their artistic work. In fact, recent work on language and identity among urban youth suggests that Hip Hop plays a decisive role not only in the formation and propagation of the new linguistic practices, but also in the ideological struggle for acceptance

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<sup>2</sup> In 1878, the Norwegian Parliament decided that no particular spoken standard should be taught in elementary and secondary schools. This principle is still valid today and has no doubt been essential for the continued use of local dialects in Norway and for the contentious position of the oral standards (e.g. Jahr & Mæhlum 2009).

and legitimization of the style (e.g. Brunstad, Røynealand & Opsahl 2010; Cutler & Røynealand 2015; Opsahl & Røynealand 2016). In several of the most recent secondary school textbooks – published between 2013 and 2016 – linguistic and functional descriptions of the speech style is covered in their chapters on language variation and dialects, and lyrics from these performers have been included (Opsahl & Røynealand 2016: 48). These pedagogical works discuss the linguistic practices of current rap music in an engaging, non-dismissive manner, and juxtapose the emerging speech style with dialects and sociolects. Including discussions of these practices in their textbooks and handling them as part of the Norwegian dialect landscape, serve to normalize and legitimize them, and hence contributes significantly to the ongoing process of enregisterment.

### *Linguistic characteristics of multiethnolectal Norwegian*

The multiethnolectal speech style is characterized by a wide range of co-occurring linguistic features including an association of these features with certain social practices. Most of these features may be conceived of as contact phenomena; some of them are typical L2 features, others may be the result of language or dialect contact, while yet others may be the part of more general changes in progress. A typical feature of the speech style is an extensive and also extended use of loanwords from immigrant languages. Many are swearwords or expressions that index cultural taboos or proscriptions, while others come to play the role of discourse markers with specific discourse functions (e.g. ‘wallah’ = *I swear by Allah* (Arabic)) (Opsahl 2009). Other common features of the speech style are violations of the syntactic verb second constraint, rendering a XSV word order, where ‘X’ is a topicalised element, ‘S’ the subject and ‘V’ the finite verb (e.g. \*‘Egentlig vi er norske’ XSV *Really we are Norwegian* instead of standard V2 ‘Egentlig er vi norske’ XVS *Really are we Norwegian*), as well as some morphological developments (e.g. grammatical gender simplification like the use of masculine gender with neuter nouns) (Opsahl & Røynealand 2016: 46). A prevalent prosodic feature, which probably is the most salient feature of the speech style, is a specific “staccato” sounding intonation, which is most likely due to vowel length equalization combined with syllable timed pronunciation (in contrast to the traditional Norwegian stress timed pronunciation) (Svendsen & Røynealand 2008). Several of these features are found in urban multiethnolectal speech styles across Scandinavia and also in other parts of Europe (see articles in Nortier & Svendsen 2015; Quist & Svendsen 2010).

### **Data and methodology**

In this article, the main focus is on online data – more specifically a rap video by the Norwegian-Peruvian-Chilean rapper *Pumba* where issues of belonging and identities are thematised, and the comments following this video. The video has been uploaded three times on YouTube (September 2009, December 2009, and August 2012). The first upload, which is the one that will be used here, has by far most views and comments: 438 410 views and 661 comments (by January 2017). The other uploads only have a few thousand views and a handful of comments. Most of the comments are from the first years after the video was uploaded, but comments continue to be added – either as direct response to the video or as response to previous comments.<sup>3</sup> In the analysis, both comments directed to the video and comments to previous comments will be discussed. In order to download and process the comments in a systematic way, I used the scraping tool *YouTube Scrape*.<sup>4</sup> The results include the comment text, username, date and other information that was downloaded to an Excel file for further processing and analysis (the last download was done January 2017). Although there is no way to determine the exact age, gender, ethnicity or background (social, national, regional) of the people engaging in the thread, it may be possible to get some information from a close reading of their usernames, writing styles, use of dialectal and/or multiethnolectal features, mixing of languages, and through an analysis of the content of their comments (provided that these data are not produced by someone putting on a ‘fake’ identity).

My interest in CMC data, and more specifically in rap videos by rappers of immigrant background, has its origin in long-standing research on the linguistic practices of adolescents in multilingual environments in Oslo through the UPUS/Oslo-project.<sup>5</sup> This research began with ethnographic fieldwork and sociolinguistic interviews and conversations which provide in-depth, personal narratives and accounts of participants’ identity formation and also their involvement in hip-hop culture (e.g. Cutler & Røyneland 2015; Svendsen & Røyneland 2008). These ethnographic data provided the basis for identification and analysis of these communities of practice and their associated language styles and ideologies. Thus, I turned to CMC as a way to supplement the foundational sociolinguistic data and to gain an understanding of the changing ways in which today’s youth connect with one another and negotiate their multiple identities and belongings online.

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<sup>3</sup> 2009–2010: 42 comments, 2011: 138, 2012: 185 comments, 2013: 130 comments, 2014: 40 comments, 2015: 42 comments, 2016–2017 56 comments.

<sup>4</sup> <http://ytcomments.klostermann.ca>

<sup>5</sup> The Upus/Oslo-project was a Norwegian Research Foundation funded project that ran from 2005–2009. The aim of the project was to study linguistic practices among adolescents in multilingual parts of Oslo. Five researchers were part of the project; Toril Opsahl, Bente Ailin Svendsen, Finn Aarsæther, Invild Nistov and Unn Røyneland.

### *YouTube*

As pointed out by Androutsopoulos and Tereick (2016), YouTube has received less scholarly attention than other media platforms such as Facebook or Twitter. However, YouTube is becoming one of the most important social media platform globally – including in Norway. Since its foundation and launch in the USA in 2005, YouTube has become the leading video-sharing website worldwide, and it is currently the third most popular website globally (cf. Androutsopoulos & Tereick 2016). YouTube is now available in 76 languages and exists in localized versions in 90 countries – primarily in the global North.<sup>6</sup> The Norwegian version of YouTube was launched in February 2013. According to Statistic Norway, YouTube is by far the most popular media platform for viewing videos.<sup>7</sup> Since 2008, the majority of online videos are viewed on YouTube (60 percent) as compared with other online streaming video services, and the most active viewers are children and adolescents (Statistics Norway 2015: 106). On the whole, the relative proportion of people who watch film, TV or video online has increased steadily and significantly in the same period (from 13 percent in 2007 to 43 percent in 2015).

A recent study of media trends in Norway show that 44 percent young people under the age of 30 watch YouTube videos every day (Strømmen 2017). The second most popular genre after humour snippets, are music videos. Facebook is by far the most used social network and, interestingly, also the most important media channel for those under 30. As many as 89 percent use Facebook every day and 43 percent report Facebook to be their most important news source. Facebook and YouTube are the two most important media channels in young Norwegians' everyday life (92 percent and 85 percent respectively), and hence outperform The Norwegian public broadcaster NRK, commercial TV channels and radio stations, and online newspapers. This stands in sharp contrast to the media habits of those over 50 for whom traditional print or broadcast media still are the most important media channels and news sources. Only 5 percent of people over the age of 60, and 21 percent of those between 45 and 60, use YouTube on a daily basis. Against this background, there are good reasons to believe that most of the people who engage in the comments thread in my study are relatively young. As we have seen, it is mostly young people who watch videos on YouTube, and it is also mainly young people who are interested in the musical genre in question.

### *Ethical considerations*

The online nicknames used by the participants in the thread following Pumba's video are quite interesting as they reveal a good deal about their background and stances regarding issues

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<sup>6</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/YouTube#Localization>

<sup>7</sup> [www.ssb.no/forside/\\_attachment/269027?\\_ts=15533e71088](http://www.ssb.no/forside/_attachment/269027?_ts=15533e71088)

pertaining to immigration. However, in order to protect the user's privacy, I have chosen to substitute their nicknames with similar pseudonyms. This does not entail, of course, that their anonymity is secured. YouTube is a 'public' space and anyone can enter the videos and find the comments in question. Furthermore, the user's online identity may in many cases be reconstructed simply by entering a string of the comment in a search engine. Still, obscuring the nicknames, or monikers, makes access less immediate and provides a first barrier. YouTube videos and comments are publicly available and may be conceived of as similar to an online newspaper thread. The video and the comments analysed here do not contain highly sensitive personal data.

On a more general note, one of the challenges in working with CMC data is that we often lack information about users' ages. This raises ethical considerations particularly regarding the use of data from potentially underage users who may not be aware of the consequences of posting comments online. Their awareness of which pages are 'public', and hence open for anyone to access, and which are 'private' may not be well developed. As well, public pages may at times contain discussions of topics of a rather private nature. As pointed out by Bolander and Locher (2014: 17), the division between the public and the private is becoming increasingly blurred and should be conceived of as gradable rather than absolute. This poses considerable challenges to online data collection – and to our conceptualizations of what is private and public for whom.

### **Theoretical orientation**

#### *Identity, belonging and category memberships*

Membership of a category is ascribed (and rejected), avowed (and disavowed), displayed (and ignored) in local places and at certain times, and it does these things as part of the interactional work that constitutes people's lives. [... It is] not that people passively or latently have this or that identity which then causes feelings and actions, but that they work up and work to this or that identity, for themselves and others, there and then, either as an end in itself or towards some other end. (Antaki & Widdicombe 1998: 2).

The view of identity as something that is continuously co-constructed and contextually bound, put forward by Antaki and Widdicombe (1998), is shared by many scholars within contemporary sociolinguistics and also one I adhere to. Bucholtz and Hall (2005) discuss five principles of identity construction: the *emergence* principle, the *positionality* principle, the *indexicality* principle, the *relationality* principle, and the *partialness* principle. The two first principles are concerned with the ontological status of identity: that identity is an emergent rather than a pre-existing product, and that identities encompass both macro- and micro-level categories, and more temporary and

interactionally specific stances and participant roles. The third principle is concerned with the mechanism whereby identity is constituted and negotiated, whereas the fourth principle emphasizes identity as a relational phenomenon. The fifth, and last principle, focuses on the partialness of any given identity. Identities are always co-constructed, and always relational and contextually bound. Identities may in part be an outcome of others' perceptions and representations, and in part an effect of larger social and material structures and ideological processes. In the following discussion and analysis of my data, principle 3 and 4 will be of particular interest:

(3) *The indexicality principle*: Identity relations emerge in interaction through several related indexical processes, including: (a) overt mention of identity categories and labels; (b) implicatures and presuppositions regarding one's own or others' identity position; (c) displayed evaluative and epistemic orientations to ongoing talk, as well as interactional footings and participant roles; and (d) the use of linguistic structures and systems that are ideologically associated with specific personas and groups (Bucholtz & Hall 2005: 594).

(4) *The relationality principle*: Identities are intersubjectively constructed through several, often overlapping, complementary relations, including similarity/difference, genuineness/artifice, and authority/delegitimacy (Bucholtz & Hall 2005: 598).

Following Bucholtz and Hall (2005) and also the works of Sacks (1992), Schegloff (2007), and Stokoe (2012) on membership categorization analysis (MCA), I will look at how identities are negotiated online through evoking common categories, activities and attributes. This includes for instance explicit mentioning of membership categories or labels like 'Norwegian', 'Pakistani', 'foreigner', and mentioning of attributes and practices associated with certain categories like for instance that Norwegians eat potatoes and drink alcohol, Norwegians speak Norwegian, and not "broken" Norwegian or other languages, and that Norwegians are white. Different practices or attributes may also invoke a category without it being explicitly mentioned: for instance, including someone skiing in a rap video without explicitly stating that this a Norwegian practice, may still invoke a stereotypical Norwegian.

The identity negotiations in Pumba's video and in the thread of comments revolve around questions of similarity and difference, (in)authenticity, (il)legitimacy, genuineness and artificiality. Who has the right to claim certain identities, how are mixed or hybrid identities perceived, and on what grounds are different identities accepted or rejected, are questions that are raised in the video and negotiated in the various threads.



### *Heteroglossic language use and metalinguistic and metapragmatic commentary*

The multiple varieties in which these online discussions are performed point to analytical tools such as Bakhtinian heteroglossia and voicing. Some of the comments are performed in standard written language, but many use a combination of features from different styles, registers, and varieties. According to Bakhtin (1981: 291), all languages are heteroglot in the sense that they may be used differently to represent different socioideological groups or points of view, different epochs and generations. Heteroglossia can thus be defined as “the coexistence, combination, alternation, and juxtaposition of ways of using the communicative and expressive resources language/s offer us” (Leppänen et al. 2009: 1082). However, as pointed out by Vigouroux (2015: 244), heteroglossia does not simply refer to “the simultaneous use of different chunks of ‘named languages’ or registers”, but more significantly, it often entails tensions and conflicts between different types of varieties or features, based on the historical associations they carry with them. In this way, heteroglossia inscribes both speakers and addressees “within a history of language use, of social stratification and ideological relationship” (Vigouroux *ibid.*).

Language use itself is often the topic of discussion, and may involve overt or covert evaluative language use such as metalinguistic or metapragmatic commentary, crossing and stylization (Coupland 2007; Rampton 2011; Silverstein 1993). Metalinguistic and metapragmatic commentary is often related to evaluations of correctness, legitimacy, and authenticity. In the analysis, I am particularly interested in explicit and implicit metalinguistic and metapragmatic comments, that is, language about language, where evaluations of correctness and purity, language policing, legitimacy and authenticity, and expressions of connections between language use and identity, are explicitly or implicitly made. Language policing is here understood as: “the production of “order” – normatively organised and policed conduct – which is infinitely detailed and regulated by a variety of actors” (Blommaert et al. 2009: 203). In the CMC data, we see both instances of hegemonic and anti-hegemonic language policing. In some discussions, it is connected to correctness, and who, by implication, has demonstrated the competence required to be acknowledged as an authentic Norwegian. In other instances, the use of certain features may be policed since they are seen as connected to nationalism and racism.

### **Analysis: negotiations of language and identity**

#### *Negotiations of national identity and belonging*

In his rap *Hvor jeg kommer ifra* (“Where I come from”), the Norwegian-Chilean-Peruvian rapper, *Pumba*, problematizes his mixed background and multiple belonging. Pumba displays his multifaceted memberships and affiliations – a common fact of life for many young people with immigrant background – as he opposes the very idea of belonging as something simple or

singular. Yet, a claim to a multiple identity and several affiliations is, in his experience, not easily accepted. In the lyrics from the song shown in extract (1), Pumba shows how he and other youth of mixed backgrounds both feel at home and alienated no matter where they go. Both in Norway and in the countries of his parents' origin he feels charged with lack of authenticity as people he meets want to know where he "really" comes from, hence what his "real" identity is. This urge to place people in unambiguously defined national, ethnic or social categories expresses quite an essentialist view of what identity is – or ideally should be.

Excerpt (1)

**“Hvor jeg kommer ifra”**

*Stanza 1*

Hva skjer 'a? Jeg må bare forklare asså  
Når vi drar til hjemlandet, vi er nordmenn,  
skikkelig å  
Og når jeg er her så er jeg chilener, peruaner, svarting  
du veit

Hvor faen er jeg fra?

[...]

Tenker på det ene språket, snakker med det andre

*Chorus*

Folk som jeg møter spør meg ofte hvor jeg kommer fra  
Jeg veit da faen, men alt jeg veit er at jeg er her i dag  
Mine foreldre jobba hardt for å få meg inn hit  
Bodd her nesten hele mitt liv, er noen ganger i tvil

**“Where I come from”**

*Stanza 1*

What's up? I just have to explain  
When we go to our home country we are Norwegians,  
real ones

And when I'm here, I'm Chilean, Peruvian, blacky, you  
know

Where the fuck am I from?

[...]

Thinking in one language, speaking with the other

*Chorus*

People that I meet often ask me where I come from  
I don't know, damn, but all I know is that I'm here  
today

My parents worked hard to get me here

Lived here almost all my life, sometimes I doubt

As we can see in this excerpt, *Pumba*, both highlights his mixed background and questions simple category ascriptions. His delivery, like that of many other rappers of immigrant background, is characterized by a clear non-traditional staccato intonational pattern that is typical of the urban multiethnolectal speech style. He also has instances of so-called lack of inversion, or violations of the syntactic verb second constraint (“X, \*vi er nordmenn” ‘X, *we are Norwegians*’ XSV instead of standard verb second “X, er vi nordmenn” XVS ‘X, *are we Norwegians*’), a feature which also has been described as characteristic of multiethnolectal Norwegian. In addition to these features, he also has typical eastern-Oslo, working class phonological features such as diphthongs instead of monophthongs (“veit” instead of “vet” ‘*kenon*’), and eastern-Oslo morphological features like the past tense inflectional form *-a* instead of the upper middle class, western-Oslo variant *-et* (“jobba” instead of “jobbet” ‘*worked*’).

Pumba is frustrated by not being accepted by his new homeland, and also by being ‘othered’ in his parents’ homeland. There he is seen as a real, authentic Norwegian, whereas in Norway, he is seen as a ‘*blacky*’ a skin colour traditionally not associated with Norwegians, and hence an attribute that works exclusionary. The racial label ‘svarting’, which can be translated to

'blacky' or 'nigger', is generally understood as derogatory, but may take on different valences depending on context and interlocutors. Here it is clearly pointing to the fact that the colour of his skin prevents him from being accepted as an authentic Norwegian, and to his position as someone 'in-between'. The first stanza ends with a question directed as a challenge to himself and to the audience: *So, if I'm not from there and not from here, where the f\* am I from?*

As pointed out by Bucholz and Hall (2005: 602), mixed or 'hybrid' identities seem to be particularly susceptible to denaturalisation and illegitimisation. Whenever an identity violates ideological expectations, like an unexpected combination of language, skin colour, and claims of identity, it may be rejected and accused of being false and inauthentic. This process, which Bauman has labelled *traditionalisation*, may be compared to the "act of authentication akin to the art or antique dealer's authentication of an object by tracing its provenance" (Bauman 1992: 137, here after Bucholz & Hall 2005: 602). This feeling of being seen as inauthentic or impure is shared by many of Pumba's followers. Throughout the video, however, this is exactly the kind of exclusionary and essentialist discourse Pumba advocates against.

In the video, a multicultural, mixed Norway is put on display, including a number of unexpected combinations of attributes and activities. In the beginning of the video, we see Pumba positioned as the classic thug, dressed in baggy pants and a hoodie and seated in a golden chair (see [www.youtube.com/watch?v=bt\\_ds7S3LO0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bt_ds7S3LO0)). Although playing on the stereotype of the tough, criminal immigrant, both verbally and visually, it is obviously ironic and throughout the video he takes a clear stance against the assigned identity as the dangerous immigrant: "Media labels everyone / I don't understand why / calls us criminals / but we have built up Oslo".<sup>8</sup>

A bit later we see Pumba with a group of boys, one with the text 'Zoo York' on his hoodie, pointing to the increasingly mixed population of Oslo like New York, and a black boy waiving the Norwegian flag. Throughout the video, we see flags from many nations: Philippines, Morocco, Albania, and Norway and people wearing clothes in the colours of different national flags (for instance 'Vince', a guest rapper with Ghanaian background, wearing the colours of the Ghanaian flag). We see people of different skin colours dressed in traditional costumes from different countries around the world, but also combinations of stereotypically Norwegian attributes and activities and foreign attributes. So for instance we are presented for a woman wearing a Norwegian police uniform and a hijab, a dark skinned ski-instructor called 'Abdoul', a black man wearing 'bunad' (a traditional Norwegian national costume) and eating 'kvikk lunsj', which is an iconically Norwegian chocolate that 'all' Norwegians would bring with them and enjoy on their ski-outings.

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<sup>8</sup> "media stempler alle / jeg skjønner ikke hvorfor / kaller oss kriminelle / men vi har bygd opp Oslo"

Here we see a mixing of category bound attributes and activities that is clearly humorous, but also carries a very serious intent. Pumba's basic message here is that wherever you originally came from, you still belong in this country. He makes the point that immigrants are not criminals, but have contributed to building the country and are part of its basic fabric; there are immigrants in all layers of society and in many different occupations. They have a legitimate right to be here:

“hvis du er afrikaner eller du er en same/så er konklusjonen at vi alle er en del av landet”

*If you are African or Sami / the conclusion is that we are all a part of this country*

#### *Contesting and endorsing comments*

In the thread of comments following Pumba's video there are broadly speaking two major groups: one that aligns with him and another that totally disaligns and rejects his claim to Norwegianness. Some comments are aimed directly at the video whereas others form part of longer sub-threads between commentators where issues of immigration, integration and racism are debated. A few comments directed to the content of the video may serve as illustrative examples of quite commonly expressed protectionist/nationalist or plain racist attitudes:

- (1) *RushQ*: GTFO, du er ikke norsk (2011)  
*GTFO, you're not Norwegian*
- (2) *Wolf*: Norge er du ihvertfall ikke fra! (2016)  
*You're not from Norway, anyway!*
- (3) *KaiTN*: Jævla tulling du er Pakis for faen (2017)  
*Fucking moron you're a god damn Paki*
- (4) *SB4*: Nordmann? Du er neger, hvordan kan du være en nordmann :S? (2013)  
*Norwegian? You're a negro, how can you be Norwegian :S?*
- (5) *Honest*: Jeg blir provosert av det her. Man blir ikke norsk selvom et stykke papir sier det, så ryk og reis hjem til Afrika!! (2015)  
*I'm provoked by this. You don't become Norwegian even is a piece of paper says so, so just get yourself back to Africa!!*
- (6) *MrNo*: Jævla svartsvilde jævla, hut dåkker te hælrika, fette kræftfræmkallanes musikk :) (2016)  
*Fucking black-burned fuckers, get yourselves the hell out of here, cunt cancer causing music :)*

The two first comments simply reject Pumba's claim to be “part of this country”. The first comment from *RushQ*, opens with GTFO (an acronym for ‘get the fuck out’), an English loan commonly used also by young Norwegians, whereas the next comment is written solely in

Norwegian (standard Bokmål). The three next comments also deny Pumba's Norwegian identity and make overt mention of identity categories, labels and attributes. Pumba is ascribed an identity as 'Paki' (derogatory for Pakistani), he is called a 'negro' and told to go back to 'Africa'. Since the Pakistanis were the first immigrants to come to Norway in the 1960s, they are often seen at the prototypical immigrant and 'Paki' is often used as a common label for anyone with an immigrant background. Also, as will be discussed in detail below, 'black' and 'negro' are attributes often ascribed to all immigrants, regardless of their actual skin colour. The last comment (from *MrNo*) is a plain racist utterance where Pumba, and presumably all the dark-skinned people ('black-burned') that appear in the video and immigrants in general, are told to leave the country, and the music is described in an extremely derogatory manner. The comment contains several distinctive Northern Norwegian dialect features (underlined in the Norwegian original), such as the use of the second personal plural pronoun 'dåkker' (*you*) ('dere' in standard Bokmål), the use of non-standard phonology *-e-* instead of *-i-* ('fette') and *-a-* instead of *-e-* ('hælsika' (*the hell*) 'kræftfræmkallanes')<sup>9</sup>, and the dialectal inflectional form *-anes* instead of standard *-ende*. The use of dialect here may index pure and real Norwegian. Due to our colonial history, rural dialects became a particularly powerful symbol of Norwegianness (Mæhlum & Røyneland 2012; Røyneland 2017), and are by many still seen as more authentic and national than urban dialects, which were mixed with Danish, or the written standard Bokmål, which is based on Danish. However, participants who align with Pumba also use dialect in their comment. Hence, the use of dialect, although indexing Norwegianness, is not connected to one specific socio-ideological group. It may be used to voice quite distinct, even opposing, attitudes and convictions. The social meaning of dialect is contextually bound and may also be negotiated in discourse. Both *Edward* and *AnnieG* take explicit anti-racist stances, while mixing English, dialect and Bokmål:

(7) *Edward*: -fra en ekte nordmann, I love all my foreign friends! å æ hate alle rasistiske nordmenn, vi har oss sjøl å takk for dem kriminelle vi har, norsk eller ikke. Så ha testikla/eggstokka å face up to that shit! Pumba e kos <3 (2013)

*-from a real Norwegian, I love all my foreign friends! And I hate all racist Norwegians, we have ourselves to thank for the criminals we have, Norwegians or not. So have testicles/ovaries to face up to that shit! Pumba is nice <3*

(8) *AnnieG*: jævla rasistår! eg e største kviding du finne! har mer svarte vennår en andre <3 eg e albanår bitch! uten oss utlendinger har dokk ingenting bitch ass !!! (2013)

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<sup>9</sup> This phenomenon, often referred to as, *lowering* is quite common in many Norwegian dialects, but is particularly widespread in Northern Norwegian dialects, where it may also function as a shibboleth (Mæhlum & Røyneland 2012).

*fucking racists! I'm the biggest whitey you can find! have more black friends than others <3 I'm Albanian bitch! without us foreigners you have nothing bitch !!!*

*Edward* positions himself as a ‘real Norwegian’ who embraces multiculturalism and hates racism. Like *RushQ* above, he also uses several distinct dialect features in his comment, such as the first person pronoun ‘æ’ (*I*) (‘jeg’ standard Bokmål), loss of the unstressed vowel *-e* (apocope) ‘å takk’ (*to thank*) (‘å takke’ in standard Bokmål), and the indefinite plural form *-a* instead of *-er* ‘testikla’/‘eggstokka’ (testicles/ovaries), all features typical of Mid- and some Northern Norwegian dialects. While *Edward* distances himself from racist utterances, and aligns with *Pumba*, he still positions himself as a ‘real Norwegian’, hence indicating that some Norwegians are more ‘real’ than others. At the same time, *Edward’s* self labelling is clearly a challenge to the idea that ‘real’ Norwegian entails insularity and nationalism. This is underscored by the mixing of different codes; standard Norwegian, local dialect and English – notably, he switches to English when orienting toward his “foreign friends”.

*AnnieG* also takes a clear stance against racism when she calls herself the ‘biggest whitey’ and states that she is Albanian. She uses southern Norwegian dialect features in combination with features from Bokmål, Nynorsk and English: *bitch* has become a quite common English loan word, first personal singular pronoun ‘eg’ (*I*) is both a feature of Nynorsk and western/southern Norwegian dialects, second person plural pronoun ‘dokk’ (*you*) is used in southern and northern dialects, whereas the indefinite plural form *-år* is a very characteristic feature of southern Norwegian dialects: ‘vennår’ (*friends*) ‘albanår’, but she also uses the Bokmål form *-er* ‘utlendinger’ a combination of Bokmål and dialect inflection. This mixed and heteroglossic language use may be read as a linguistic signal of her embracing of variation and diversity. The use of dialect features, may, as in the case of *RushQ* also be understood as an affirmation of their Norwegianness. They are ‘real’ Norwegians, but not racists. Hence the use of dialect does not have to be understood as a nationalist and exclusionary move, but rather as an index of authenticity.

Many of the participants in the thread support and align with *Pumba* in wanting to claim a legitimate place for themselves, and tell similar stories about being alienated and ‘othered’ both in the country of origin and in Norway. They voice the same frustration and confusion in *Pumba’s* lyric – “where do I ‘really’ belong?”. This indicates a conception of belonging and identity as something singular, something you ought to have only one of, whereas what they experience is a sense of multiple belonging and mixed identities. They also voice their frustration at being told to go home to their own country, when Norway *is* their home. A rather long comment by *MariaM* may serve as an example:

(9) *Maria M.*: Denne sangen oppsummerte alt det jeg alltid har følt. Selv er jeg halvt marokkaner, så jeg vetta f\* n hvor jeg kommer fra, men det jeg vet er at jeg føler en tilhørighet til Norge. Jeg er født her, og har vokst opp her, og snakker Norsk, men siden jeg er “svart” blir jeg behandlet som det, og innvandrere har mer lyst til å bli kjent med meg enn nordmenn xD Er sikker på at de fleste andre “svartingene” som er født og oppvokst her føler akkurat det samme, og er dritlei å bli fortalt at jeg skal “dra tilbake til hjemlandet dit!”, for DETTE er hjemmet mitt ;) (2016)

*This song summed up all that I have always felt. I'm half Moroccan, so I donno where the f\* I come from, but what I know is that I feel a belonging to Norway. I'm born here, and have grown up here, and speak Norwegian, but since I'm “black” I get treated like that, and immigrants are more eager to get to know me than Norwegians xD I'm sure that most other “blacks” who are born and raised here feel exactly the same, and are sick of being told that I should “go back to your home country!”, because THIS is my home ;)*

Her comment has received 33 likes and six comments, mostly in support of her view but also comments like: “Ut ur norge, svartingahelvete.” “*Get out of norway, black hell!*”. Interestingly this comment has Swedish features (for instance the use of the Swedish preposition “ur” which would be “av” in Norwegian). *MariaM*'s comment is basically written in standard Bokmål with the occasional slang word. Referring to herself “black”, using quotation marks, *MariaM* is invoking the voice of the majority, white Norwegian. She says that she gets treated as “black”, meaning that she gets ‘othered’. She is clearly rejecting the label, highlighting its socially constructed meaning in the context of Norway. Neither Pumba nor *MariaM*, who says she is half Moroccan, are particularly dark skinned. As pointed out by Bucholz and Hall (2005: 599), in order for groups or individuals to be positioned as alike, they need not have exactly the same attributes, but must merely be understood as sufficiently similar for current interactional purposes. In the Norwegian context, it is quite common among adolescents to refer to anyone that anyone who looks darker than an ethnic northern European, as black. Even kids with eastern European or middle-Eastern background may be referred to – and refer to themselves – as black. Hence, black does not necessarily index African descent, but merely non-white and by implication non-Norwegian. As we may see, *Blue4* and *AdeleZ*, both with eastern European background, express similar experience and frustration, although people from this area normally would be considered “whiteys”:

(10) *Blue4*: det er sant asz når jeg er i kosovo er jeg potet når jeg er i norge er jeg Albaner (2011)

*It's true like when I'm in Kosovo I'm potato when I'm in norway I'm Albanian*

(11) *AdeleZ*: Hvor jeg kommer ifra? Født i norge Men Fra Albania/kosovo!!! kaller ikke meg selv norsk az, riktig riktig i hjemlandet blir man kalt norsk, er du her du blir kalt utenlandsk! :S confusing (2010)

*Where do I come from? Born in Norway But From Albania/ Kosovo!!! don't call myself Norwegian like, correct correct in the home country one is called Norwegian, are you here you are called foreigner! :S confusing*

*Blue 4* says that he is seen a “potato” in Kosovo, but Albanian in Norway. “Potato” is a slang word for Norwegian – the label index whiteness and Norwegianness, as eating loads of potatoes is a stereotypical activity associated with Norwegians. *AdeleZ* says she doesn’t call herself Norwegian, although she is born in Norway, since she is seen as a foreigner. There seems to be a general feeling among many of the commentators engaging in the thread that their identities are dismissed, censored, or simply ignored.

This feeling of not being accepted is shared by many adolescents of immigrant background to Norway. A longitudinal study of more than 4000 adolescents from Oslo conducted over a four-year period (2006–2010) shows that more than half of the adolescents with immigrant background (N=575–581) do not feel Norwegian, largely because they don’t feel that they are allowed to “be Norwegian” due to the colour of their skin (Frøyland & Gjerustad 2012: 48). Approximately 80 percent of Norwegian-born kids with immigrant background and adolescents who immigrated before the age of 7 report that they identify as both Norwegian and foreign, whereas 93 percent of the adolescents who came after the age of 7 identify as foreign. The numbers are particularly high among adolescents with a non-western background and one of the reasons they cite is colour. They don’t look Norwegian and hence will never be accepted as Norwegian since ‘whiteness’ is seen as an essential part of what it means to be Norwegian.

Issues of identity and belonging are also frequently discussed by the adolescents in the UPUS corpus, and skin colour is by some referred to as an important gatekeeper; it is what prevents them from identifying as Norwegian and excludes them from being accepted as Norwegian. Responding to the question “what would you have answered if somebody asked where you are from?”, most of the adolescents with immigrant background answer the country of their parent’s origin. Many report that they don’t feel that they are entitled to say Norwegian, that they will never be accepted as Norwegian because they don’t look Norwegian. Like *Pumba*, many oppose simple category ascription and refuse to self-identify as either the one or the other; they feel they are both or mixed. Lukas, a young boy born and raised in Norway with Nigerian parental background, may serve as an example:

(12) Lukas: ja (.) på hudfargen føler jeg meg som nigerianer men på språket (.)

føler jeg meg som norsk

*yes (.) with skin color I feel Nigerian but with language (.) I feel like Norwegian*



His skin color places him in Nigeria and his language in Norway, although he reports speaking and mixing features from a number of languages on a daily basis, including Yoruba, English, and multiethnolectal Norwegian.

*Metalinguistic and metapragmatic commentary*

In this rap, Pumba connects his confusion and sense of multiple identities and belonging to his experiences of being multilingual (see excerpt 1): “*Thinking in one language, speaking with the other*”. This theme is picked up and starts different threads between several participants in the comments: *TimTale* shares Pumba’s bilingual experience whereas others, like *KimN* and *eme333*, either adhere to a one-ethnicity-one-language-ideology or criticize Pumba’s Norwegian, connecting it to second-language immigrant talk or multiethnolectal speech.

(13) *TimTale*: tenker med det ene språket og snakker med det andre, haha skjenner meg igjen (2015)

*thinking with one language and speaking with the other, haha I recognize this*

(14) *KimN*: Han er fra Latin Amerika og Morsmålet hans er Spansk... Just sayin’ (2016)

*He is from Latin America and his Mother tongue is Spanish... Just sayin’*

(15) *eme333*: Fra Chile, bodd 19år i norge, men snakker som en paki? WTF??? (2014)

*From Chile, lived 19 years in norway, but speaks like a Paki? WTF???*

To speak ‘like a Paki’ is clearly not what you would be expected to do if you have lived in Norway since childhood, according to *eme333*. Pumba’s speech style, which contains a number of multiethnolectal features, seems to be connected only to being foreign. It is not perceived to be a new way of speaking Norwegian that adds to the Norwegian dialect landscape as is now common in most recent high school textbooks’ discussions of multiethnolectal Norwegian.

In the following exchange, we shall see that using correct orthography becomes a stand-in for authenticity and Norwegianness. Even minute errors in spelling and grammar may lead to challenges to one’s claim to be Norwegian. In a lengthy discussion between *Wolf* and *OceanA* about who is and who is not Norwegian, *Wolf* finally rejects *OceanA*’s claim to be 100 percent Norwegian and having both Norwegian mother and father by attacking his language. As we can see, both language and the type of discourse associated with a certain group is used to delegitimize and de-authenticate *OceanA*:

(16) *Wolf*: ”+*OceanA*”: har du ikke, snakker som en jævla pakkis og høres ut som en!” (2017)

*You don’t have, talk like a fucking Paki and sounds like one*

However, *Kiss*, another participant, supports *OceanA*, and challenges *Wolf* as being ignorant. The counter-claim here is not simply that people of immigrant background should count as Norwegians. Rather, it is likely that *Kiss* is invoking the fact that ethnic Norwegians also speak multiethnolectal Norwegian (cf. Opsahl 2009).

(17) *Kiss*: Wolf har ikke du hørt om norske som snakker kebab norsk? (2017)

*Wolf haven't you heard about Norwegians who speak Kebab Norwegian?*

In a rather lengthy discussion between *AppS5* and several other participants, but particularly *Roger9* and *Martin4*, a quite interesting shift of language style occurs in conjunction with a shift towards a metalinguistic discussion where the question of who is the most legitimate speaker is at stake. After several racist comments by *AppS5*, written in a combination of standard Bokmål orthography, abbreviations typical of CMC writing, English loan words, and with many northern Norwegian dialect features (underlined), *Martin4* responds in a similar style of writing:

(18) *Martin4*: Du og rasisten i dæ kan sug kuken min :) det kan forsåvidt landet ditt også :) Internet thug fitte...du e norlending? avtale møte bitch? (2014)

*You and the racist inside you can suck my dick :) the same goes for your country :) Internet thug cunt... you're a northerner? schedule a meeting bitch?*

*Martin4* challenges *AppS5*'s racist views while, like *AppS5*, using several northern Norwegian dialects features such as second person singular pronoun 'dæ' (standard 'deg' *you*), and the apocopated form 'sug' (standard 'suge' *suck*). *AppS5* answers in a very aggressive way using a large number of Northern Norwegian dialect features (underlined in the Norwegian original).

(19) *AppS5*: Æ e internet thug ja, det ekke æ som sett å true med juling over internett. Ha litt selvinnsikt, eller blir det for komplisert for ei apa? Og nei, æ hold mæ unna utlendinga, eneste dokker duge til e å lage junkfood og voldta 14 åringa. Æ e dessverre verken sulten eller 14. (2014)

*I'm an internet thug, yes, it's not me who threatens beatings over the internet. Have some self knowledge, or is that too complicated for an ape? And no, I keep away from foreigners, the only thing you're good at is to make junk food and rape 14 year olds. Unfortunately I'm neither hungry nor 14.*

At this point *Roger9* enters the stage and takes a very clear stance against *AppS5*'s utterances. He does so in standard Bokmål, which, however, contains a few misspellings (underlined) and abbreviations.

(20) *Roger9*: hhahahahaha d er kansje noe av det mest tilbakestående jeg har lest i hele mitt liv, du hadde kansje blitt tatt litt mere serriøst om du faktisk ga mening i det du sa, kjenner en pakkis som har bod i norge i 4 år som gir mer mening en hva du akkurat skrev. jævla norske fjell ape. (2014)

*hhahahabba this is maybe some of the most retarded stuff I have read in my whole life, you would maybe have been taken a bit more seriously if you actually gave meaning to what you're saying, know a Paki who has lived in norway 4 years who makes more sense than what you just wrote. bloody Norwegian mountain ape.*

The topic “who knows Norwegian the best” is introduced here, and is at the very heart of the rest of a rather long discussion. *AppS5*'s Norwegian skills and ability to make sense are compared to the skills of an immigrant who has been in the country only a few years. Finally, he is labeled a Norwegian mountain ape – that is, an ignorant person living in the periphery – a characterization that invokes the use of dialect features placing *AppS5* in the northern periphery. *AppS5* hits back, accusing *Roger5* of lacking the ability to express himself in a comprehensible way. Instead of entering into a discussion about the matter at hand, it becomes a metalinguistic and metapragmatic discussion. The aim is clearly to dismiss the other person's arguments on the grounds of lacking linguistic competence. Interestingly, *AppS5* abruptly changes to a writing style quite uncommon for informal CMC interactions. He stops using dialect features completely and sticks to standard Bokmål, with standard punctuation, no abbreviations or emoticons. Hence, he refrains from using what *Roger9* has labelled a marginal voice from the periphery (i.e. ‘*bloody Norwegian mountain ape*’), and assumes a geographically unmarked, authoritative voice using an authoritative supra-regional, standard language. *Roger9*, on the other hand, though writing in a slightly more ‘polished’ language, continues to produce typos or misspellings (underlined), and persists in using slangwords, non-standard abbreviations, emoticons and phrases in English:

(21) *Roger9*: om du virkelig ikke skjønnte hva jeg skrev så er d 2 alternativer 1: du kan ikke norsk 2: du er helt retardert – whatever makes u happy :) en normann som klager over utlendinger men kan ikke skrive sitt eget språk engang var hele “meningen” i kommentaren, jeeze folk må ha allt med t-skje. (2014)

*If you really didn't understand what I wrote then there are 2 alternatives 1: you don't know Norwegian 2: you're totally retarded – whatever makes u happy :) a Norwegian who complains about foreigners but who*

*cannot even write his own language was the entire “message” of the comment, jeeze people must have everything with a t-spoon.*

*AppS5*'s reaction to this is first to correct *Roger9*'s misspellings and question his Norwegian identity. Hence, lack of linguistic competence is used as a justification to discredit *Roger9*'s arguments as well as to cast doubt on his authenticity and legitimate right to present an opinion.

(22) *AppS5*: Skjønnte\* retarded\* nordmann\* alt\* teskei\* Hvilken nordmann er det som ikke kan skrive sitt eget språk her? Den eneste med språkvansker her er deg. [...] Jeg kan norsk, men det kan tydeligvis ikke du. (2014)

*Understood\* retarded\* Norwegian\* everything\* teaspoon\* What kind of Norwegian doesn't know how to write his own language? The only one with language difficulties is you. [...] I know Norwegian, but you obviously don't.*

It is interesting to note that two of the corrections are slightly off track since one is correcting a Norwegianized form of the English loan 'retardert' to the correct English spelling 'retarded', and the correction of 't-skje' to 'teskei' is only partly warranted since both 'skje' and 'skei' are correct spellings – the only deviation is the use of 't-' instead of 'te', which is a pretty normal abbreviation, not least in informal writing. *Roger9*'s response is to insist on his Norwegianness and even refer to his grades at school:

(23) *Roger9*: jeg kan norsk jeg, tar jeg ikke helt feil gikk jeg ut fra skolen med en 5'er også .. [...] (2014)  
*I know Norwegian I, if I'm not mistaken I graduated with an A minus too ..*

After yet another provocation from *AppS5*, where he indicates that his message is too complicated to understand for an unskilled person like *Roger9*, *Roger9* responds by insisting on his language competence and ends his comment with crying out (upper case) a swear phrase in Croatian:

(24) *Roger9*: hør her din mammaknuller, <jeg kan ikke norsk ? wow du er virkelig stakk dum...hvordan i helvete kan jeg ikke norsk når jeg er født i norge og har bod her i 23 år snakker norsk hjemme og blandt vennner så ikke snakk piss jævla fjell ape. [...] IDI U PICKU MATRINU ! (2014)

*Listen up you motherfucker, <I don't know Norwegian? Wow you're really thick as a brick... how the hell do I not know Norwegian when I was born in Norway and have lived here for 23 years speak Norwegian at home and among friends so don't talk shit fucking mountain ape GO FUCK YOURSELF !*

*AppS5*'s reaction to this is simply to continue policing *Roger9*'s language, while insisting on language correctness – with what can be interpreted as a condescending smile:

- (25) *AppS5*: Beklager, norsk RETTSKRIVNING da. Ser ikke ut som det er en av dine sterke sider :)  
(2014)  
*Sorry, Norwegian ORTHOGRAPHY. Does not seem to be one of your strong sides :)*

Here we see an example of how linguistic purity and prescriptive correctness is used as a proxy for national belonging in an anti-immigration discourse. However, the strategy of linguistic policing is challenged by anti-racists, who undercut its rhetorical force by inverting the argument. This is what happens when *TheMan* responds to *OldNorse*'s comment “styg utlending sang” (with only one *g* in *styg*) “*Ugly foreigner song*” as follows:

- (26) *TheMan*: Jeg må nesten le av deg, du burde kanskje lære deg å skrive Norsk. Det skrives stygg din idiot, burde få flere innvandrere hit, så kan vi sende ut rasister som deg ut av landet (2016)  
*I almost have to laugh, you should probably learn how to write Norwegian. It is written ugly you idiot, we should get more immigrants here so that we can send racists like you out of the country.*

## Conclusion

As we have seen in the different examples from commentaries posted in response to Pumba's video, and also in the video itself, features from different languages and dialects, including multiethnolectal features, and typical CMC features like emoticons, abbreviations and non-standard spelling are used by young people engaging on YouTube. This illustrates how CMC offers people the ability to interact using features from dialects, styles and registers that have no written standard, opening up new possible meanings and domains of use for hitherto marginalized codes and features. We have seen that the use of non-standard features gets policed in cases where correct orthography is used as a measure of how legitimate your claim to national identity and belonging is. At the same time, dialect features may be invoked in order to marginalize voices, as they are taken to index insularity and lack of authority. Hence, the use of different chunks of ‘named languages’ or ‘registers’, enters into a heteroglossic struggle. The tensions and conflicts between different varieties, styles or features are to a large extent based on the historical associations they carry with them – like the use of dialectal and multiethnolectal features versus standard features. However, their meaning is also interactionally negotiated and constructed. From an historical perspective, dialectal features may be seen as indexing national

authenticity, but used while uttering racist opinions they may be understood as a signal of excessive nationalism. The social meanings of dialectal features are actively contested, and used for different, often opposing purposes. This is also the case when it comes to multiethnolectal features and more generally to multilingual practices. Mixing languages or using multiethnolectal features may be taken to show a lack of linguistic competence, as in one of the comments to Pumba's performance: "*19 years in Norway and speaking like a Paki, WTF?*" (example 13), or as an expression of young people with minority background's mixed identity and multiple affiliations: "*thinking with one language and speaking with the other, haba I recognize this*" (example 15). 'Pure', non-mixed Norwegian is sometimes taken as an absolute requirement for 'Norwegians'. The point for Pumba and many other young people with mixed background, however, is precisely not to claim *one pure identity*, but to assert the validity of identities that are multiple and mixed.