Speakers may use, and even claim ownership of, certain registers (Agha 2007) in order to perform recognizable social roles in particular types of situations. Sometimes people may also refuse to use certain registers – not because they lack knowledge of the register but because the values attached to the register situationally may result in ascriptions of identities that they do not want. In this presentation, I will analyze a case where such a refusal explicitly appears during a school lesson. During the so-called ’project week’ in an 8th grade in a Copenhagen school, a group of three girls prepared a poem in Arabic, Somali and Danish for their presentation in the class. They recorded the poem in advance but when they were about to play it, they couldn’t find the recording. The teachers insisted that they performed the poem on the spot instead, but as it turned out it was more than difficult to convince the girls who were responsible for the Somali and the Arabic part to do it. From a perspective of languaging (Jørgensen 2010) and enregisterment (Agha 2007) I will discuss why the girls preferred to record the poem in advance, why the two girls with a minority background refused to translate and perform the poem on the spot, and why and with what arguments the teachers insisted on the performance. Through micro analysis and ethnographic observations I will study the enregisterment of linguistic features associated with Arabic and Somali as it unfolds in the classroom. Finally, I will discuss how this local instance of enregisterment relates to more long-term enregisterment of minority languages in society at large, and, drawing on the languaging perspective, discuss what other possibilities the teachers might have had in the situation.

Keywords: languaging, minority language, enregisterment.