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ATTITUDE AND GRADUATION AS RESOURCES OF MASCULINITY CONSTRUCTION IN YOUTUBE VLOGS

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Abstract

The present study examines stance-taking resources engaged in the performance of branded masculine YouTube identities. It aims at determining the role of Attitude and Graduation, two aspects of Martin and White's (2005) Appraisal framework, in the construction of branded masculinity on popular American YouTube vlog channels. The paper also presents adjustments to Appraisal system, which enable its applicability to gender identity analysis in terms of Anderson's Inclusive masculinity theory (2009), namely a developed Affect:Dis/inclination subcategory and a new category of Ironic heterosexual recuperation, which prove to be of considerable importance for determining the resources for the construction of blended masculinities in YouTube vlogs. The quantitative and qualitative analyses of the Appraisal resources employed in the speech of male vloggers has shown that branded masculine identities predominantly rely on the hybridization of orthodox and inclusive masculinities construed by means of evaluative stances targeted at a range of activities, people, objects, concepts indirectly indexing the either of the two types of masculinities.

Key words

Gender identity, branded identity, hegemonic masculinity, inclusive masculinity, Appraisal analysis, YouTube vlogs

1. Introduction

Vlogging is a multimodal hybridized genre of new media highly characteristic of YouTube's user-created content (Burgess and Green 2009). The genre is characterized by asynchronous computer-mediated quasi-interaction (Dynel 2014; Chovanec 2010) between content creators and their audience, which presupposes a spatial and temporal gap between the online video content addressed to a body of the channel followers and their response to it. The vlog is considered to be a video subgenre of blog, which is defined as "a shared online journal where people can post diary entries about their personal experiences" (Puschmann 2013: 83; Sprague 2007; Armstrong et al. 2004; Frobenius 2011).

Due to a complex nature of new media discourse and "a greater fluidity and pragmatic openness" of Internet genres (Giltrow and Stein 2009: 9), YouTube vlogs can be conceptualized in terms of hybridity, the phenomenon defined by

Duff (2000) as the combination of several genres or their elements to form a new genre. In this respect, vlogs encompass a number of features typical of a variety of genres ranging from some television genres (such as reality show “diary room talk”, lifestyle programmes, interviews and advertisements) to informal spontaneous face-to-face conversations or even home movies. In terms of its similarity to television, YouTube vlogs and the abovementioned television genres share such characteristics as multimodality, public character and asynchronicity. However, due to the flexible time framing, loose organisation, the dominance of informal style of discourse resembling spontaneous face-to-face interaction and the sense of intimacy that some vlogs create (Werner 2012), they are associated with informal conversation. Overall, YouTube vlogs exhibit predominantly monologic or dialogic speech oriented or directly addressed to either an imagined potential audience or people captured in the video and aim at entertaining the viewers by means of showing the vlogger’s daily life.

The YouTube vlog is unique not only in terms of the novelty of its genre, but also in terms of how it functions as a platform for identity construction. Due to the prolific ‘vernacular creativity’ and potentially unlimited access to the products of this creativity, which can ‘go viral’ rendering content creators popular with a specific group of people, social media has brought to life the phenomenon of micro-celebrities. Microcelebrity is associated with a number of practices employed by social media users aimed at gaining, sustaining and expanding an audience through social media in order to reach the status of social media influencers (Khamis et al. 2017: 196).

Watching online videos has been estimated the most popular online content activity in 2019 and vlogging today is thriving business. For instance, some of the most popular and highest-paid YouTube micro-celebrities such as Jake Paul, PewDiePie and Logan Paul earned \$21.5, \$15.5 and \$14.5 million respectively in 2018 (Robehmed and Berg2018). YouTube, as a 40 billion dollar worth company, is highly interested in marketable and profitable content and offers advertising revenues to popular and prolific content creators who monetize their videos (Burgess 2013; Burgess and Green 2009; Garcia-Rapp and Roc-Cuberes 2017). Thus, popular vloggers aim at creating a recognizable brand in order to reach maximum visibility, achieve more popularity and gain more profit (Marwick 2015; Garcia-Rapp and Roc-Cuberes 2017; Raun 2018), which makes YouTube vlogs a fertile ground for branded identity construction, which is inevitably interrelated to the performance of other identities, such as gender identity.

This paper discusses the strategies of constructing masculine identities by YouTube micro-celebrity vloggers in terms of Affect and Graduation, two aspects of Martin and White’s (2005) Appraisal Theory. The topic of YouTube micro-celebrity identity construction has recently become the focus of many researchers’ attention (Garcia-Rapp and Roc-Cuberes 2017; Bhatia 2017; Riboni 2017a, 2017b; Wotanis and McMillan 2014; Szostak 2013; Jeffries 2011) and is largely either focused on femininity (‘beauty guru’ identities) or is grounded in feminist perspective. Thus, masculinity on social media and especially in YouTube vlogs is still a relatively under-researched area (Maloney, Roberts and Caruso 2017; Morris and Anderson 2015; Light 2013). Therefore, the paper aims at contributing to

the emerging body of research into the performance of branded masculinity in YouTube vlogs.

The objective of the study presented in the paper is to identify salient patterns of Appraisal resources, Attitude and Graduation, employed by young American YouTube micro-celebrities to construct masculinities in their vlogs. The paper establishes theoretical background behind the concepts of masculine identity and Appraisal Theory, introduces the study design with a focus on the adjustments made to Appraisal system to fit the purposes of the investigation: a developed Dis/inclination category enabling the coding of sexual and affectionate desire as well as a new category of Ironic heterosexual recuperation. Then the methodological procedure involving both qualitative and quantitative analyses of the corpus is described, and the analysis results are presented and interpreted in terms of Inclusive masculinity theory.

2. Hegemonic and Inclusive Masculinity Theories

Masculine studies are rooted in two fundamental theories of masculinity: Connell's Hegemonic masculinity theory based on the idea of patriarchal power privileged men impose over women and subordinate masculinities, on the one hand, and Anderson's Inclusive masculinity theory developed due to contemporary social changes resulting in the growing inconsistency of Hegemonic masculinity theory, on the other.

The concept of hegemonic, or orthodox masculinity, which underlies today's masculinity research, was coined and developed by Raewyn Connell (1995) in her social theory of gender, which posited the plurality of masculinities and the power relationships between them. It is grounded in the idea that the relationships between genders should be discussed in terms of oppression and subordination, which can be accounted for by the concept of hegemonic masculinity, the cornerstone of the theory, representing an ideal image of superordinate masculinity exercising dominance over women and men inconsistent with the patriarchal model. Thus, hegemonic masculinity is seen as constructed in opposition to femininity and homosexuality, and is based on heterosexuality, misogyny, emotional restraint, aggressive behaviour as well as homophobia and homophobia (the fear of being perceived as gay by others) (McCormack and Anderson 2010).

Inclusive masculinity theory was proposed by Anderson (2009) in order to address the changing gender behaviour patterns within North American and Western European cultures, where misogyny and homophobia have been decreasing. Inclusive masculinity theory distinguishes between two macro masculine identities: orthodox masculinity (as described in Hegemonic masculinity theory) and inclusive masculinity – a softer and attenuated form of masculine identity (Anderson 2009; Maloney, Roberts and Caruso 2018), which becomes equally dominant and peacefully coexists with orthodox masculinity in the context of a low level of homophobia (the fear of being perceived as gay), which is trending now specifically among young males within North American and Western European cultures (Anderson 2009; McCormack and Anderson 2010; Maloney, Roberts and

Caruso 2018). It embraces the features of homosocial relationships that are otherwise stigmatized when orthodox masculinity is hegemonic (McCormack and Anderson 2014):

- 1) increased emotional intimacy;
- 2) increased physical tactility (hugging and soft touch as a token of friendship);
- 3) erosion of the rule prohibiting engaging in any same-gender behaviour that could be perceived as sexual (kissing on the cheek or lips);
- 4) eschewing violence and aggressive behaviour in domestic and public domains as well as excessive risk taking.

Another curious feature of inclusive masculinity is ironic heterosexual recuperation among young heterosexual males (McCormack and Anderson, 2010). It is a method of reaffirming heterosexual identity by means of ironic demonstration of homosexual desire without resorting to homophobia. Ironic heterosexual recuperation is seen as opposed to conquestual recuperation which involves showing off and boasting about one's heterosexual desires. Both strategies are used when one's sexual orientation is seen as being questioned, however, ironic heterosexual recuperation allows young men to "enact otherwise transgressive behaviours without threat to their socially perceived heterosexual identities" (p. 847). As a result, the border between heterosexuality and homosexuality as well as femininity and masculinity is rendered less rigid and even blurred without transgressing a heteromale identity (Ibson 2002; Anderson 2009; McCormack and Anderson 2010; McCormack and Anderson 2014).

Anderson's research into the theory of inclusive masculinity shows that in modern communities of boys and young men the dominance of just one kind of masculinity tends to diminish and a few kinds of masculinities (orthodox and inclusive, in particular) naturally coexist without any traces of hierarchy, social struggle or stigmatization.

As mentioned above, research into the performance of masculine identities in digital realms is relatively scarce (Maloney, Roberts and Caruso 2018); however, according to the findings of recent studies into inclusive masculinities on YouTube, the dominant masculine identities constructed in the context of popular American and British gaming and personal vlogs are rather hybrid (Maloney et al. 2018, Morris and Anderson, 2015): in addition to stereotypical hegemonic heteromale identity (constructed by means of emotionally detached joviality and marginalizing homosexuality), young popular male vloggers exhibit a tendency to employ emergent patterns of inclusive masculinity such as affectionate homosociality, satirizing hypermasculine aggression and ironic heterosexual recuperation, which reflects a transformation of normative masculinity in Anglo-American cultures in the context of Generation i (Anderson 2009; McCormack and Anderson 2010; Morris and Anderson 2015).

This paper seeks to contribute to the emerging body of research on masculinities on YouTube by means of identifying how the patterns of the construction and hybridization of branded orthodox and inclusive masculine identities rely on Appraisal resources.

3. Appraisal Theory

The investigation of masculine identities in YouTube vlogs is conducted in terms of Martin and White's Appraisal Theory (2005), which provides a systematic and consistent methodological strategy of analyzing stance-taking practices in terms of their discursive realisations. In terms of Martin and White's (2005) framework, Appraisal is seen as taking a stance and is conceptualized as a three-fold mechanism consisting of **Attitude**, **Graduation** and **Engagement** (see Figure 1). **Attitude** is concerned with emotional evaluations and judgments as a tool of construing interpersonal meaning and taking a stance. **Engagement** is related to the way stances rely on the voices engaged in discourse and the construal of (dis)alignment with the message and imagined audience in terms of accepting or rejecting possible reactions to the message. **Graduation** refers to the strategies of adjusting the level of magnitude of Attitude or Engagement.

In this study, branded masculine identities are analyzed only with regard to Attitude and Graduation. *Engagement* encompasses resources essentially different from those of *Attitude* and presents an entirely different domain of stance-taking tools. Since producing a "show" in order to attract attention, gain popularity and construe and promote a branded identity are the most salient characteristics of vlogs produced by young male micro-celebrities, *Attitude* and *Graduation* constitute the core focus of this study due to their inherent orientation to emotional evaluations and their gradability. Engagement, despite the potential interest it presents for this area of research, will not be taken into account. Nevertheless, the analysis of construing (dis)alignment between the vloggers and their audience via expanding or contracting dialogicality by means of *Engagement* appears an interesting object of further research on the construction of branded gender identity in YouTube vlogs.

3.1 Attitude

The domain of *Attitude* provides a systematic framework for the analysis of the role of emotional reactions and subjective evaluations in taking stances indexical of gender. *Attitude* is described as a discourse semantic system comprised of three subcategories: *Affect* (emotion), *Judgment* (ethics) and *Appreciation* (aesthetics). The role of *Attitude* resources in the construction of branded masculinities presents the core interest of the study and the annotation of the corpus has been conducted in line with Martin and White's conceptualization of this domain. Its subcategories are discussed in depth below and are exemplified with excerpts from the corpus of American vlogs collected for this study.

APPRAISAL

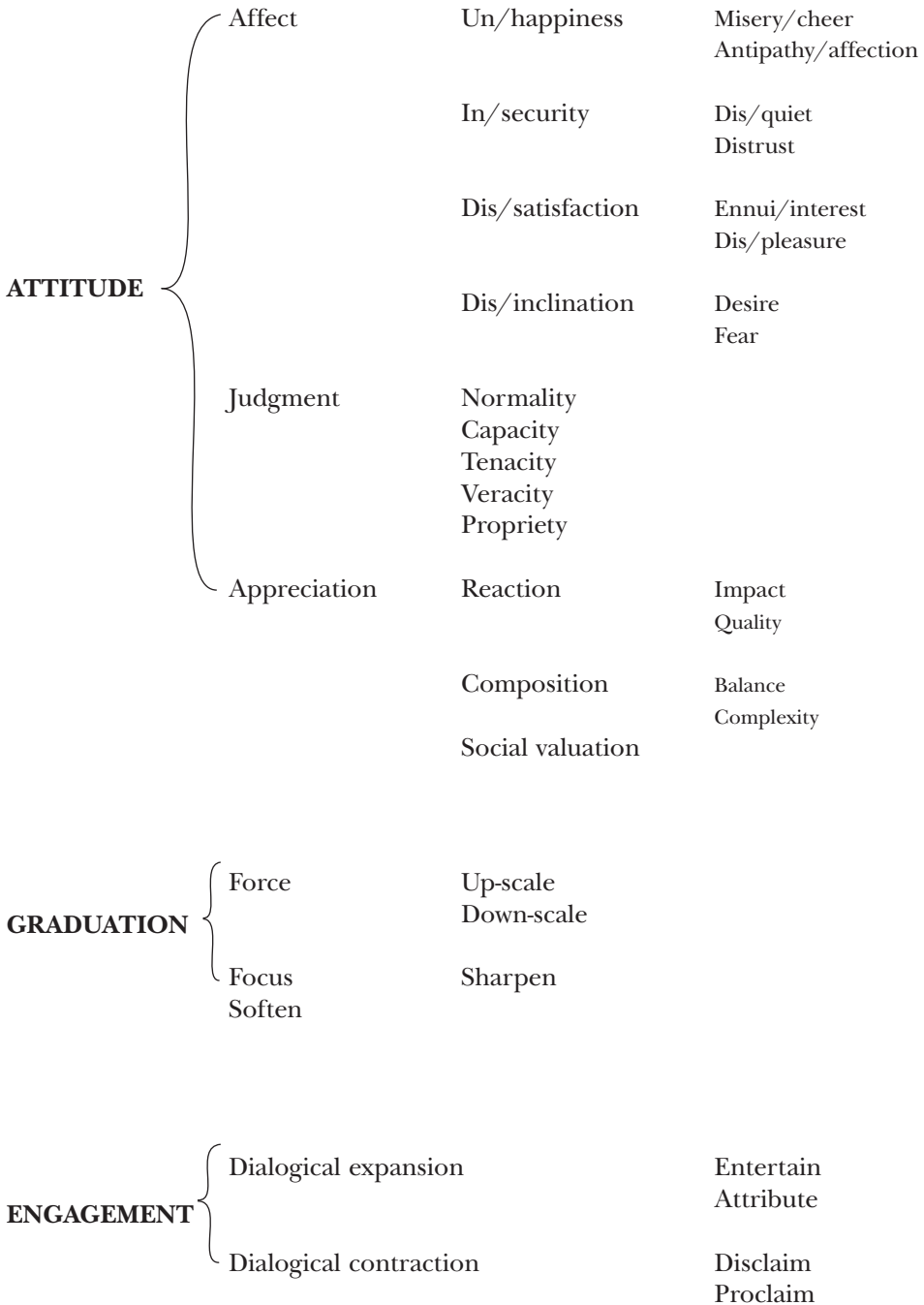


Figure 1. An overview of Appraisal resources

3.1 Attitude

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Attitude: Affect

Affect stands for emotional reactions, which are categorized into four groups:

- (un)happiness - the feelings of misery/cheer and antipathy/affection;
- (in)security - the feelings of (dis)quiet or (dis)trust;
- (dis)satisfaction - the feelings of ennui/interest and (dis)pleasure, especially in relation to achieving something;
- (dis)inclination - the feelings of desire or fear.

Martin and White highlight the possibility of a diverse range of potential realizations of *Affect*, which can be conceptualized as quality (*I'm kinda **scared** for that*), process (*My heart's **racing***) and comment (***Unfortunately** they're not doing too well*). In terms of grammar, *Affect* can be realized by means of a variety of word categories and forms. In addition, *Affect* can be realized as a single word or a clause.

Attitude: Judgment

Judgment refers to assessment of behaviour in terms of social esteem and social sanction. Social esteem is subdivided into three subcategories:

- normality (usuality, how special something is): We never break anything;
- capacity (ability, how capable someone is): I can drive a Tesla with both eyes closed.
- tenacity (inclination, how determined or dependable someone is): I'm going to continue to do stupid things.

Social sanction consists of two subcategories:

- veracity (probability, how probable or truthful something is): If this isn't true love, I don't know what is.
- propriety (obligation, how ethical and beyond reproach something is): This is illegal.

Similar to *Affect*, *Judgment* can be realized by a number of language means: adjectives, nouns, verbs, adverbs. *Judgment* can be realized as a single word, a phrase or a clause.

Attitude: Appreciation

Appreciation is responsible for the construal of value of inanimate objects, humans, phenomena, states of affairs and performances. *Appreciation* comprises three aspects:

- Reaction (impact on the reader/listener/viewer (e.g. captivating, boring) and quality (e.g. splendid, repulsive);
- Composition in terms of balance (e.g. harmonious, flawed) and complexity (precise, simplistic);
- Social valuation ('was it worthwhile?' - e.g. exceptional, common)

Appreciation is also characterised by multiple realizations (adjectives, nouns, verbs, adverbs, interjections). It can be realized as a single word, phrase or a clause.

3.2. Graduation

Graduation is the second category of Appraisal resources essential for the present study. It is concerned with adjusting the degree of evaluation. Since *Attitude* as a domain of attitudinal meanings is inherently gradable (Martin and White 2005), the two categories will be analysed in tandem.

There can be distinguished two types of *Graduation* depending on the gradability of attitudinal meanings: force and focus. **Force** is the type of *Graduation* applied to gradable Appraisal resources (such as *Attitude*) in order to adjust (up-scale (*This thing is so cool*) or down-scale (*I'm a bit of a mess.*)) the degree of evaluation. **Focus** is the type of *Graduation* present in non-gradable *Engagement* resources and is not utilized in this study as it does not focus on *Engagement*.

Graduation can be realized by means of a range of language resources, such as intensifiers, hedges, comparative and superlative morphology, intensified language, repetition etc.

4. Data

The corpus under analysis is comprised of transcripts of 35 YouTube vlogs produced by 7 popular young American vloggers on their YouTube channels (see Figure 2).

Channel name	Vlogger's Bio	YouTube statistics*
Logan Paul	YouTuber, internet personality and actor, 1995	20.1 million subscribers 4,761,079,137 views
Jake Paul	YouTuber, internet personality, actor and musician, 1997	19.7 million subscribers 6,272,088,802 views
David Dobrik	YouTuber, internet personality and actor, 1996	14.4 million subscribers 6,138,156,921 views
Tanner Fox	YouTube vlogger, 1999	9.36 million subscribers 1,859,287,914 views
Brennen Taylor	YouTuber and actor, 1995	2.17 million subscribers 279,798,228 views
Mark Dohner	YouTuber, social media personality, 1993	2.17 million subscribers 279,798,228 views
Sam Golbach	YouTuber, social media celebrity, 1996	1.83 million subscribers 198,697,983 views

Figure 2. Popular American YouTube channels selected for the corpus (Data taken 15.11.19)

The selection of the channels for the corpus was based on three main criteria:

1. vlogging activity (only YouTube channels containing vlogs were taken into account);
2. age and gender of the vlogger (young heterosexual males born between 1990 and 1999);
3. popularity of the channel (more than 1 million subscribers on YouTube).

The vlogs were selected randomly within the time period of 2015-2018, 5 from each channel. The overall length of the 35 vlogs is 6 hours 47 minutes (for more information on each vlog, see Appendix). Then the selected video material was manually transcribed (or in some cases transcriptions available on YouTube were downloaded) and prepared for Appraisal annotation and analysis.

4. Methodology

Since the present study is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, a combination of approaches developed by Fuoli (2015) and Macken-Horarik and Isaac (2014) has been employed to achieve the most suitable methodological design.

Fuoli (2015) stresses the importance of making the annotation strategy as transparent as possible to consolidate the reliability and replicability of the research. He proposes a stepwise method which postulates the necessity of developing a context-specific annotation manual and refining it by means of iteratively assessing the reliability and editing the manual before moving on to the annotation of the whole corpus. In addition, this perspective calls for excluding any covert instances of appraisal and only considering explicit ‘inscribed’ appraisal (Fuoli and Hommerberg 2015). Put simply, Fuoli emphasizes the priority of systematicity and transparency, while admitting that “[t]his does not imply that perfect reliability can actually be reached, nor that this should be our ultimate goal” (15). He develops a step-by-step guide to conducting such an analysis, which consists in seven steps: to define the scope of the study, to select an annotation tool, to draft a context-specific annotation manual, to refine the annotation manual, to annotate the whole corpus taking into account the amendments to the annotation manual, and to analyze the results.

Macken-Horarik and Isaac, conversely, propose an approach “embracing the fuzziness of the appraisal model” (Fuoli 2015: 21) and focus primarily on the implicitness of invoked attitudes and the sociocultural meanings interrelated with them. They acknowledge that the area of semantics poses challenges for discourse analysis since meanings, especially connotative ones, are not easy to map, especially when socio-cultural context comes into play. Unlike Fuoli, Macken-Horarik and Isaac posit that the blurred borders between the categories engaged in the analysis should not be seen as an obstacle that needs to be reduced, and propose “to put indeterminacy at the centre of the task and to make this a feature of the account rather than something to be pushed to the margins (as an embarrassment in the analysis)” (Macken-Horarik and Isaac 2014: 78).

Macken-Horarik and Isaac propose the following procedure for Appraisal analysis. The researcher should identify text elements loaded with evaluation, analyze and describe the cumulative effect of these evaluative elements and compare their distribution in different parts of the text noting any cultural references. Then one should code the identified text elements in terms of Appraisal system and compare Appraisal resources employed by various voices first in a single text and then across the whole corpus. The final step should include interpretation of the results in terms of genre-specific patterns. This methodology (which is well structured and looks promising in terms of enhancing the systematicity of working with a vague and fluid category of invoked appraisal) is attractive for this study for two reasons: 1) its focus on implicitness in relation to cultural references, and 2) its attention to genre. The former is relevant for the gender-relater perspective and the latter is in line with the aim of this paper, which is to examine a gendered style of the YouTube vlog genre.

5.1 A combined Fuoli and Macken-Horarik and Isaac approach

Despite the significant differences in their approaches to analysing invoked appraisal, it appears possible to attempt to combine Fuoli's and Macken-Horarik and Isaac's methodological suggestions and adjust them to the needs of this study. Fuoli's emphasis on rendering the analysis transparent and reliable does not contradict Macken-Horarik and Isaac's focus on implicitness and cultural context. Moreover, the step-wise methodologies they propose represent different scales: the former prescribes the general, superordinate procedure of conducting Appraisal analysis starting with defining the scope of the project and finishing with analyzing the results, whereas the latter suggests specific steps to be taken at the stages of annotation and analysis.

5.2 The UAM Corpus Tool

According to Fuoli's (2015) recommendations, in order to facilitate the process of manual coding and quantitative analysis as well as enhance a more systematic approach, special annotation software was employed. One of the best computer programmes capable of fulfilling the task is UAM Corpus Tool (O'Donnell 2008, 2012; Fuoli 2015). It is text annotation software developed by O'Donnell, an Australian linguist specializing in computational, corpus and functional systemic linguistics, specifically for Appraisal analysis. UAM Corpus Tool is a free and user-friendly programme allowing to create a corpus of texts and code a variety of text segments by means of assigning to them selected categories from an annotation scheme.

Besides being user-friendly, the software demonstrates a number of useful features that can contribute to a more reliable quantitative analysis, such as, for instance, the function of automatic calculation of the number, proportion and frequency of annotated categories as well as graphic representation of quantified data. Another significant advantage of this software is the possibility to edit the

existing annotation schemes as well as create new ones as separate layers of analysis built upon one and the same corpus, which makes it instrumental in adjusting the Appraisal system to the unique requirements of the study.

5.3 Adjustments to Appraisal system

In the course of methodology development, a test analysis was carried out. It consisted in the annotation of one vlog and was aimed to test the annotation tool and establish other aspects important to analyze, which do not fit into Appraisal system. Indeed, the test analysis showed that the existing Appraisal system should be modified in order to be adequately used for masculine identity analysis in the context of YouTube vlogs: namely, it required an extended Affect paradigm as well as a new dimension enabling the coding of irony.

Firstly, Affect paradigm was extended by adding three categories to Dis/Inclination type: ‘sexual’, ‘affectionate’ and ‘other’ (see Figure 3). This adjustment seems important in view of the essential features of orthodox and inclusive masculinities, namely explicating heterosexual and homosexual desire and emotional intimacy respectively, which requires higher granularity of Dis/Inclination category, which is not elaborated on by Martin and White.

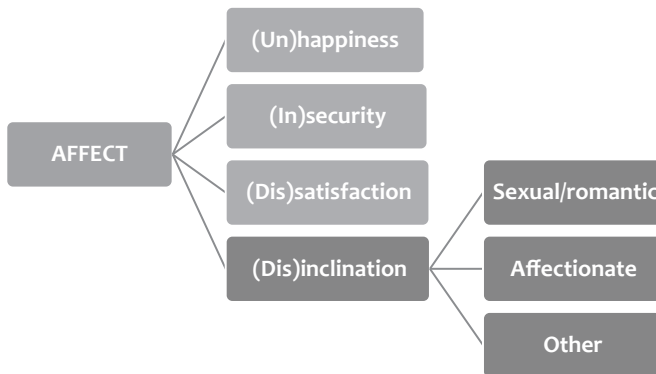


Figure 3. An adjusted Affect system

Secondly, one of the pervasive features of masculine vlogging style proved to be its comic effect, which significantly impacts the perception of appraisal in some cases and, as a result, the interpretation of a constructed masculine identity. Since Appraisal system does not offer a possibility of coding irony, a new dimension taking into account the creation of a comic effect was needed. Nevertheless, the introduction of the concept of irony appeared to be problematic. On the one hand, further extension of this new dimension seemed to pose the risk of making the system too convoluted and the analysis too complicated. On the other hand, and more importantly, in this particular genre, where the utterers’ main aim is to entertain the viewers, and the comic effect is pervasive, there arises a question of relevance: in some cases the use of irony had a much more significant impact

on the construction of a masculine identity than in others (for example, the use of irony in the instances of positive appraisal targeted at other males). Compare:

I just wanna sit right here bro, we can share the same meal and everything.

Due to expressing **Affect:inclination** targeted at another man, the male utterer indexes the desire of homosocial intimacy which construes the identity of inclusive masculinity.

...all my friends have now left to their hometowns so I have no friends left, ahhh this is fucking cool.

Appreciation:quality ‘cool’ referring to the utterer’s loneliness is ironic, but it does not contribute to the construction of his masculine identity because it does not engender any relevant indexicality.

This indicated the necessity of resorting to a different approach to irony, which would be more nuanced and context specific than the classical Gricean one.

As a result, it was decided to incorporate McCormack and Anderson’s notion of ironic heterosexual recuperation, which is defined as “the satirical proclamation of same-sex desire, or a gay identity, to maintain a heterosexual identity” and is in line with Benwell’s claim that irony is a strategical tool utilized by males to construe a masculine identity which is not explicitly aligned with traditional masculinity (Benwell 2004). The concept of ironic heterosexual recuperation is rooted in Inclusive Masculinity theory, which underpins the analysis presented in this paper, and is widely used in masculinity research, which makes it a relevant addition to the Appraisal system for the present study. Thus, an additional element was added – ‘recuperation’ with two options: ‘conquestial’ (McCormack and Anderson’s term for traditional way of heterosexual affirmation) and ‘ironic’.

5.4 Corpus analysis

The analytical stage of the study was comprised of three stages: corpus annotation, quantitative analysis and interpretation of the data. The annotation process was conducted by means of the UAM Corpus Tool. First, TXT files containing the vlogs transcripts were uploaded into the application to compile a corpus. Then, each vlog was re-watched iteratively with the purpose of identifying instances of emotional evaluations targeted at people, inanimate objects, activities and concepts, which was followed by assigning certain values to respective text segments in the application. The categories engaged in corpus annotation are as follows:

- 1) **Attitude** (as described in sections 3.1 and 5.3);
- 2) **Graduation** (as described in section 3.2);
- 3) **Polarity** (a positive, negative or ambiguous valency of the evaluation);
- 4) **Recuperation** (ironic, conquestial or none, as described in section 5.3)
- 5) **Appraiser** (the utterers – vloggers mentioned in section 4 or other males);
- 6) **Appraised** (the stance targets – evaluated people, objects, activities and con-

cepts, which were then grouped into categories based on their ideational meanings, such as ‘sports’, ‘females’, ‘vehicles’ etc.; this category is discussed in detail in section 6.2).

When the annotation of the whole corpus was completed, descriptive statistical tests were run on the UAM Corpus Tool in order to determine the quantity and proportion of the annotated Appraisal resources and related categories in the given corpus. Finally, the obtained results were interpreted qualitatively in terms of Inclusive masculinity theory.

6. Results

6.1 Overall statistics for Attitude and Graduation

This section will report the results of statistical tests run in UAM Corpus Tool. The tests were aimed at measuring the count and percentage of Attitude categories (Affect, Judgment and Appreciation) as well as identifying the main patterns of their use in terms of stance targets, Polarity and Graduation. The descriptive statistical test showed the total count of Attitude instances (2397) as well as the number and proportion of each category (see Figure 5).

6.2 Stance targets

The overall number of Appraised categories created during the annotation stage is 247, each representing a stance target such as a person (vlogger, male, female), an instance of behaviour (homosocial intimacy, hypermasculine aggression), a situation or an event (airsoft guns shooting, boxing) and objects (a car, a private jet). They were then grouped into 11 larger categories based on their ideational meaning (see Figure 4).

APPRAISED CATEGORIES	PROPORTION
Foolish/dangerous behaviour and fighting	27%
Sports and entertainment	19%
Homosociality and homosexuality	9%
Males	7%
Vlogging	6%
Vehicles and technology	4%
Property	4%
Heterosexuality	4%
Self	2%
Females	1%
Miscellaneous	17%

Figure 4. Stance targets

The category “Miscellaneous” comprises unique categories which neither showed a consistent pattern, nor proved to be statistically significant and are thus not relevant for the analysis. Most of the categories are far from being homogeneous and consist of a variety of similar behaviours.

‘Foolish/Dangerous Behaviour and Fighting’, represents more than a quarter of the Appraised set. It is composed of a range of potentially dangerous behaviours such as reckless driving, pranking or exhibiting hypermasculine aggression (fighting or pretending to fight). Its largest subcategory “foolish/dangerous behaviour”, which makes up 20.19% of all stance targets, requires additional explanation: it was used as a label for a variety of activities ranging from ‘fooling around’ (for instance, pouring 5 litres of detergent into the washing machine to see what happens, damaging a camera with an airsoft gun or doing the Taser challenge) to downright dangerous (for example, jumping off a high roof or throwing a medicated sleeper into a pool). Most of these were a combination of the two (and almost impossible to distinguish) involving different degrees of risk, which justifies the adoption of the umbrella term “foolish/dangerous behaviour”.

The prominence of the two categories (“Foolish/Dangerous Behaviour and Fighting” and “Sports/Entertainment”) is in line with the typical contents of daily vlogs produced by male micro-celebrities: popular YouTube vloggers try to include an amusing or attention-grabbing activity in each video for the sake of boosting the entertaining quality of the vlogs, which helps them keep their subscribers interested and active as well as attract new viewers, more views and likes. The nature of the activities largely depends on the popularity and financial capacity of the vlogger: Jake Paul and Tanner Fox, some of the most famous (and wealthy) YouTubers, can afford to invite celebrated motocross racers and showcase expensive cars and private jets, whereas less popular vloggers, such as Brennen Taylor or Sam Golbach are limited to less lucrative entertainment such as visiting new restaurants, engaging in socially awkward situations and pranking their roommates.

The next most numerous category “Sports and Entertainment”, which comprises a fifth of the whole stance target data set, consists of a wide range of appraised sports (sand surfing, riding a bike, snowboarding), related skills (bike riding skills, parkour skills) and situations (pain or injury) as well as entertaining or adventurous activities such as playing video games, visiting restaurants, walking in caves, or flying a helicopter.

The appraised objects grouped in “Vehicles and technology” and “Property” all belong to either transportation means (expensive cars, private jets) and electronic/digital devices or luxurious immovable property (vlogger’s new mansions).

“Homosociality and Homosexuality” unites appraised behaviours and concepts indexical of homosocial or homosexual relationships (meeting a friend, shaking hands as opposed to kissing, or bromance jealousy). The category could not be subdivided into two separate ones due to a number of instances in which the border between homosocial and homosexual is vague or continuously negotiated in the context. For instance, in a number of Mark Dohner’s vlogs, he expresses positive ironic appreciation towards his male friend taking a shirt off (“Wow!”, “Johannes!”, “I didn’t even ask you this time! Ooh!”), which constructs the behaviour acceptable in homosocial relationships as attention-grabbing and desirable, thus

blurring the line between the perception of the situation as homosocial or homosexual. In David Dobrik's vlogs males repeatedly express interest in each other's genitals (which in itself might be seen as threatening the heterosexual status of the participants) and two out of five vlogs revolve around convincing a number of vlogger's friends to show their penises and then reacting to what they see. The situations are often construed as based on a mixture of cool solidarity and ironic heterosexual recuperation: the former is indexed by means of address terms ("Dude", "bro") and offensive lexis ("This is big dick over here.", "Holy shit."), and the latter is achieved by taking and negotiating stances indexical of homosexuality ("It's giving me a boner." or "Will you show us your penis? Just give me yes or no right now. Because I'm going to be holding onto it for the rest of tonight unless you say now. / [screaming] You're gonna be holding on to it? / [screaming] What? / [screaming] That's not what I mean.). These examples show that some of the appraised behaviours do not clearly fall into either category, and practices indexical of homosociality and homosexuality sometimes appear to be constructed as overlapping.

"Heterosexuality" on the other hand covers any appraised concepts or behaviours indexical of relationships with women, since all the appraisers position themselves as heterosexual males. It is interesting to note that this category is 2.4 times as small as "Homosociality and Homosexuality". The implications of these rather curious proportions will be discussed below.

Categories "Males", "Females" and "Self" embrace appraised people of respective genders or instances of taking a stance towards oneself.

"Vlogging" comprises appraised activities, objects and people engaged in the vlogger's professional self-positioning: their YouTube channel, the merchandize they promote, their fans etc.

6.3 Attitude: general features

According to the statistical test run on UAM Corpus Tool, Appreciation is the most used Appraisal resource and accounts for 52% of all the Attitude annotations, followed by almost equally distributed Affect (24%) and Judgment (23%) (see Figure 5).

CATEGORY	NUMBER	%
AFFECT	585	24.41%
un/happiness	170	7.09%
dis/satisfaction	121	5.05%
in/security	132	5.51%
dis/inclination	162	6.76%
UN/HAPPINESS	170	7.09%
misery/cheer	85	3.55%
antipathy/affection	85	3.55%
DIS/SATISFACTION	121	5.05%
ennui/interest	4	0.17%
dis/pleasure	117	4.88%
IN/SECURITY	132	5.51%

CATEGORY	NUMBER	%
dis/quiet	87	3.63%
dis/trust	45	1.88%
DIS/INCLINATION	162	6.76%
romantic/sexual	36	1.50%
emotional	14	0.58%
other	112	4.67%
JUDGEMENT	562	23.45%
normality	88	3.67%
capacity	84	3.50%
tenacity	174	7.26%
propriety	201	8.39%
veracity	15	0.63%
unclear	0	0.00%
APPRECIATION	1250	52.15%
reaction	1125	46.93%
composition	13	0.54%
social valuation	112	4.67%
REACTION	1125	46.93%
impact	600	25.03%
quality	525	21.90%
COMPOSITION	13	0.54%
balance	1	0.04%
complexity	12	0.50%

Figure 5. Statistical test results: attitude resources

Overall, the **polarity** of the corpus is predominantly positive (71%) with 28% of negative appraisal and only 1% of ambiguous instances, which were difficult to assess as purely positive or negative (for example “*I don’t know if there’s a liability, bro, you know. Did you sign the waiver?*” uttered by a vlogger who typically expresses a positive stance towards extreme sports and instances of dangerous behaviour) (see Figure 6).

CATEGORY	NUMBER	%
POLARITY	2397	100.00%
positive	1711	71.38%
affect	281	11.72%
judgment	329	13.72%
appreciation	1101	45.93%
negative	663	27.66%
affect	299	12.47%
judgment	222	9.26%
appreciation	124	5.17%
ambiguous	23	0.96%

Figure 6. Statistical test results: polarity

Graduation is present in the majority of the stances (1415 instances and 59% of all Attitude recourses), 94% of which are up-scaled. By far the most Graduation-loaded Attitude category is **Appreciation** (72% of all Appreciation annotations and 38% of all Graduation annotations), especially **Reaction** due to the abundance of interjections employed to express **Impact** and **Quality** stances (see Figure 7).

CATEGORY	NUMBER	%
GRADUATION	2397	100.00%
graduation (up-scale and down-scale)	1415	59.03%
affect	316	13.18%
judgment	199	8.10%
appreciation	900	37.54%
no graduation	982	40.97%
GRADUATION-TYPE	1414	58.99%
up-scale	1333	55.61%
down-scale	81	3.38%

Figure 7. Statistical test results: graduation

Recuperation resources appear to be non-productive at first: only 7% and 1% of stances are marked as ironic or conquential recuperation, respectively. However, it proves to be of high significance, especially in terms of certain stances towards Males and Homosocial & Homosexual relationships, which will be discussed and accounted for below (see Figure 8).

CATEGORY	NUMBER	%
RECUPERATION	2397	100.00%
conquential	30	1.25%
affect	9	0.38%
judgment	12	0.50%
appreciation	9	0.38%
ironic	165	6.88%
affect	97	4.05%
judgment	27	1.13%
appreciation	41	1.71%
no recuperation	2202	91.86%

Figure 8. Statistical test results: recuperation

6.4 Appraiser

As for the Appraiser category, 65.6% of all the annotated Appraisal instances are uttered by the vloggers and 34% by other males present in the videos (including the police, whose contribution amounts to 0.1%) (see Figure 9). The most prolific stance taker is Logan Paul (13% of all instances), who is also the most popular

YouTuber, judging by the number of the subscribers on his channel. The least prolific stance taker is David Dobrik (3%) (although he is the third most popular vlogger in the corpus), which is due to a different format of his vlogs: they are mostly focused on his friends rather than himself, unlike those of the rest of the vloggers who appear to be the centre of attention in their videos. Overall, the number of Appraisal instances has no correlation with the popularity of the vloggers.

CATEGORY	NUMBER	%
APPRAISER	2397	100.00%
Other Male	822	34.29%
Logan Paul	312	13.02%
Mark Dohner	252	10.51%
Brennen Taylor	250	10.43%
Tanner Fox	242	10.10%
Jake Paul	239	9.97%
Sam Golbach	201	8.39%
David Dobrik	76	3.17%
Police	3	0.13%

Figure 9. Statistical test results: appraiser

7. Discussion

The statistical test results showing the proportion of the analyzed categories reveal an interesting picture of what constitutes a branded YouTube vlog masculinity produced by the most popular and culturally exalted Internet micro-celebrities.

The vloggers’ gendered performance in the vlogs under analysis heavily relies on all the three Appraisal categories, especially Appreciation:Reaction, Affect:Happiness and Affect:Disinclination as well as Judgment:Tenacity and Judgment:Propriety. The way these resources are employed construes a branded masculine identity comprised of a blend of orthodox and inclusive masculinity elements.

7.1 Orthodox Masculinity

7.1.1 Adventurousness, Boldness and Competition

Positive Appreciation:Reaction

Orthodox masculinity is performed by means of indexing and actively evaluating activities, which, on the one hand, have a function of boosting the entertaining quality of the vlogs, but on the other, are linked to values stereotypically seen as indexical of young masculinity, such as competitiveness, boldness, adventurousness and being overly energetic. For instance, in terms of Appreciation, positive

Reaction was predominantly oriented to Sports and Entertainment (26%) and Foolish/Dangerous Behaviours (22%) – 538 instances, which amounts to almost half of all Reaction stances and almost a quarter of all annotated Attitude stances.

Example 1 illustrates a positive graduated Appreciation:Reaction stance taken by Tanner Fox towards a motor-cross racer's stunts, who was invited for the vlog. Example 2 is an instance of the same Appraisal resource employed by David Dobrik to construe an exaggerated reaction to his friends touching another male with an electro shocker. While the situations are rather different, both speakers' stances are indexical of their inclination towards risky and reckless behaviour, which can be interpreted as being adventurous and overly energetic.

- (1) "Ah! Oh my god! You're a legend. / Whooh! / He sent it. Bro. / That was so cool." (Tanner Fox, Webisode 9 He Will Never Be A Father After This..)
- (2) "[screaming] Oh my god, wait. He's bionic man? He doesn't move! / He's a fucking monster!" (David Dobrik, Do Not Do This!! Super bad idea!!)

Positive Judgment:Tenacity and Affect:Dis/inclination

The desire to engage in potentially dangerous or socially unacceptable activities is supported by positive Judgment:Tenacity and Affect:Inclination stances. Overall, Judgment resources proved to be heavily dominated by "Foolish/dangerous behaviour" and "Sports & Entertainment". The two categories are most frequently appraised in terms of positive Tenacity.

For instance, positive Judgment:Tenacity stances illustrated in Examples 3-4 construe the young males' readiness and determination to engage in adventurous activities or those involving potential risk of various degrees. While in Example 3 Jake Paul uses positive Judgment:Tenacity to express his intention to perform socially awkward, but harmless pranks in a crowded shop, the entertainment activity appraised in the next excerpt is more reckless. In Example 4 Mark Dohner repeatedly states a strong determination to do a backflip from an eight-meter-high balcony, despite his friends' protests.

- (3) "We're gonna go in the store and just get rowdy. We're getting rowdy." (Jake Paul, Huge Black Friday Giveaway + Shopping Chaos)
- (4) "I'm gonna jump off this balcony, do a backflip into the pool." (Mark Dohner, My Friends Told Me Not to Do It! 25 ft jump into 6ft pool!)

Positive Affect:Inclination stances targeted at "Foolish/dangerous behaviour" comprise 30% of Affect:Inclination overall. Example 5 exemplifies an instance of a young heterosexual YouTuber expressing a desire for a rather silly form of entertainment, such as revving an engine to annoy neighbours.

- (5) "Do you want to rev and, and make the neighbors even more mad? / Yes!" (Tanner Fox, 700hp Gtr Vs Tesla P100d Street Race!)

Positive Judgment:Normality and Capacity

Another Appraisal resource predominantly focused on Foolish/dangerous behaviour is positive Normality (37%). Normality stances are employed by the vloggers to construct this type of behaviour as habitual, happening on a daily basis in order to solidify self-positioning as energetic, bold and adventurous. For instance, In Example 6 Jake Paul explicitly positions himself as an adventurous person fond of reckless activities by utilizing a positive Judgment:Normality, which is also graduated (“a lot of dangerous situations”).

- (6) “I put myself in a lot of dangerous situations.” (Jake Paul, My New Assistants First Day.)

Finally, Capacity is also largely construed around Sports & Entertainment and Foolish/Dangerous behaviour – the stances targeted to the two categories comprise 49% of Capacity in total. Positive Capacity most frequently functions as a means of explicating the young men’s positioning of self and others as skillful in terms of sports and is also often indexical of competitiveness, which is traditionally associated with hegemonic masculinity. Example 7 is an instance of a vlogger inviting his heterosexual male friends to join a friendly competition, thus indexing his willingness to compete and implying his capacity to win: Logan Paul uses Judgment:Capacity to implicitly position himself as having superior go-karting skills.

- (7) “You think you can beat me?” (Logan Paul, The World Wasn’t Made For Him...)

The last excerpt to discuss is Example 8, in which Tanner Fox utilizes implicit positive Judgment:Capacity by positioning himself as an orchestrator of a massive outburst of hypermasculine aggression in a group of males. This positioning is indexical of an alpha-male behaviour, which contributes to the construction of orthodox masculinity, which relies on leadership and physical capacity.

- (8) “I just caused all of that.” (Tanner Fox, 700hp Gtr Vs Tesla P100d Street Race!)

7.1.2. Hypermasculine Aggression

Hypermasculine aggression, a behaviour indexical of hegemonic masculinity, is worth special attention. It is included in the category of Foolish/Dangerous behaviour and appears to be a consistent Judgment stance target in all vloggers’ videos. It is most often construed, in terms of intention (positive Tenacity) (example 9) and as socially unacceptable (negative Propriety) (examples 10, 11). In Example 9 Jake Paul positions himself as willing to physically attack his interlocutor, thus continuing his orthodox masculinity by indexing hypermasculine aggression. The positive Judgment:Tenacity is intensified by means of offensive language (“*bitch*”).

- (9) “You wanna fight bitch?” (Jake Paul, Best Friend Surprises Me With New Truck!! wtf)

In Examples 10 and 11, on the other hand, vloggers employ negative Judgment:Propriety stances in order to distance themselves from other males’ aggressive behaviour. In Example 10 Mark Dohner expresses disapproval after his friend’s unexpected outburst of aggression, while in Example 11 Logan Paul takes a negative stance towards his flatmate fighting another male.

- (10) “Dude you can’t come at me like that.” (Mark Dohner, Our New House Tour! Exclusive Look)
- (11) “Evan. Evan, stop that. / Evan, stop killing people. / Yeah, you can’t just kill people bro”. (Logan Paul, We Got A New Roommate In The Maverick House).

It is worth mentioning that hypermasculine aggressions featured in the vlogs under analysis is often portrayed as exaggerated and comical, which suggests that the constructed hypermasculinity is satirized rather than seriously intended. One of the illustrative examples of “playing” with hegemonic masculinity by satirizing hypermasculine aggression is Logan Paul’s vlog “We Got A New Roommate In The Maverick House”, where the main aggressor is usually Evan (sometimes called Dwarf Mamba), a man with dwarfism. He exhibits occasional outbursts of violence towards other males in the vlog (Logan and Brendan): on a number of occasions, he suddenly starts pretending to kick and strangle either of the two men while uttering expletives.

According to Connell’s hegemonic masculinity theory, due to his medical condition, Evan represents a masculinity subordinate to that of healthy white males. The incongruity of Evan’s aggressive hypermasculine behaviour with his ‘subordinate’ masculine status coupled with Logan and Brendan’s ironic negative assessment of his behaviour creates a two-fold comic effect. On the one hand, the young men play with the socially accepted stereotypical masculine behavioral features positioning Evan (a man with dwarfism) as physically more superior than Logan and Brendan (young, tall, healthy and rather muscular white men), and thus more ‘masculine’ in its traditional sense. On the other hand, they pretend to disapprove of his aggression (using negative Judgment:Propriety), but the matter-of-factness of their verbal reaction (“*You can’t just kill people, bro*”) adds an ironic touch, which is perceived as satirizing hypermasculine aggression.

7.1.3. Traditionally Masculine Areas of Expertise and Power

Another set of stance target categories significantly contributing to the construction of orthodox masculinity are Vehicles & Technology, and Property, which represent two fields associated with conventional masculinity – the former indexing traditionally masculine area of interest and expertise, and the latter alluding to

wealth and status and, as a result, power. They comprise a noticeable proportion of positive Appreciation (13% in total).

Examples 12 and 13 illustrate positive graduated Appreciation:Quality and Appreciation:Reaction appraisals of the capacity and appearance of lucrative cars. In Example 12 Tanner Fox takes an Appreciation:Quality stance to brag about his new Tesla and its power (“*you’re gonna like freak out at the instant power. Like, you’re literally gonna freak out*”) and then shifts to Appreciation:Reaction to express great delight in his recent purchase (“*Oh my god! (laughing) What was that! Holy Frick!*”). In Example 13 Logan Paul utilizes an Appreciation:Reaction stance to react to a vehicle in a video game. These Appreciation appraisals index the vloggers’ intense interest in cars (especially, expensive ones), which contributes to the construction of their orthodox masculine identities as traditional masculinity is stereotypically linked to interest and expertise in vehicles.

(12) “Dude, you’re gonna like freak out at the instant power. Like, you’re literally gonna freak out. / Oh my god! (laughing) What was that! Holy Frick!” (Tanner Fox, 700hp Gtr Vs Tesla P100d Street Race!)

(13) “Oh my gosh look at the Lambo bro! Oh my... oh! Lamborghini Avendor, yes!” (Logan Paul, The World Wasn’t Made For Him...)

Example 14 also illustrates an Appreciation:Quality stance but in relation to lucrative real estate properties. Tanner fox proudly presents his own new mansion by taking a positive graduated Appreciation:Quality stance towards its size (“*Palace*”, “*This door is actually bigger than... Jake’s apartment*”).

(14) “Welcome to our palace. This door is actually bigger than... Jake’s apartment”. (Tanner Fox, Our New \$15,000,000 Mansion!! Exclusive tour)

The significance of these two categories and their role in construing power also show a relation to Judgment:Capacity, which they were frequently coupled with. Positive Capacity often occurs in the context of bragging about the speaker’s driving skills (usually in relation to expensive cars) or a newly purchased mansion and indicates vloggers’ positioning of themselves as wealthy, prosperous and powerful.

For instance, in Example 15 Tanner Fox positions himself as a skillful driver right after bragging about the power of his new car (see Example 12).

(15) “I can drive a Tesla with both eyes closed.” (Tanner Fox, 700hp Gtr Vs Tesla P100d Street Race!)

Example 16 illustrates Logan Paul’s self-positioning as wealthy and powerful as he indirectly takes a positive Judgment:Capacity stance by appraising the size of his new mansion (“My house has another house, a guest house”) and indicating his capacity to make such an expensive purchase on a whim (“because I said, ‘Why get one house when you can get two?’”).

- (16) “My house has another house, a guest house because I said, [loud, then screaming] ‘Why get one house when you can get two?’” (Logan Paul, We Got A New Roommate In The Maverick House)

7.1.4. Emotional Restraint and Displeasure

The last component of hegemonic masculinity that proved to be salient in the masculine vlogs is negative Affect resources. Affect is an Appraisal category responsible for emotive stances and the patterns of Affect stances provide a curious insight into the vlogger’s employment of emotionality.

To begin with, conventional masculinity is stereotypically associated with emotional restriction: hegemonic masculinity opposes itself to emotionality, which is traditionally linked to femininity. Nevertheless, a certain spectrum of negative emotions is perceived as acceptable in terms of hegemonic masculinity, since they are adjacent to aggression and linked to the concept of status and power.

Emotive stances proved to be the most numerous in terms of Affect resources: Displeasure comprises a third of all Affect stances and is primarily focused on males (50%). For instance, in Example 17 Logan Paul expresses a negative graduated Affect:Displeasure towards another youtuber who was going to be his boxing opponent. The up-scale graduation is realised by means of offensive lexis (“asshole”), which is proved to be a characteristic feature of American heterosexual youtubers’ style. This expletive intensifies the negative emotive stance and renders it more similar to aggression.

- (17) “KSI you’re an asshole.” (Logan Paul, Ksi Received His Maverick Merch And He’s In The Logang!)

However, similarly to hypermasculine aggression, negative Affect:Displeasure appraisals appear to be used for the sake of humorous effect rather frequently. For instance, in Example 18 Logan Paul expresses an up-scale graduated negative Affect: Displeasure stance towards Mark Dohner in a situation with no obvious conflict, which creates a humorous effect.

- (18) “Fuck your jokes! Fuck your vlog, Mark!” (Mark Dohner, Magic with Dwarf Mamba and Logan!)

All in all, both explicit and ironic appraisals indexical of hypermasculine aggression appear to contribute to the construction and negotiation of masculine identities as they allow the youtubers to shift between orthodox and inclusive masculinities by including elements associated with traditional masculinity in both intentional and humorous ways.

7.2. Inclusive Masculinity

The Appraisal resources engaged in construing Inclusive masculinity differ considerably from those discussed above. The Appraisal elements explicitly serving as markers of Inclusive masculinity are positive stances towards Homosociality/Homosexuality and Males.

7.2.1. Homosociality/Homosexuality and Males

Affect

One of the strongest Appraisal components of Inclusive masculinity in the vlogs is positive Affect:Happiness-Affection, whose most dominant stance target category is Males (60%). 94% of all the Affection stances addressed to Males are positive. Example 19 illustrates a typical instance of a positive Affect:Happiness-Affection expressed towards a vlogger's male friend. Unlike forms of address such as "dude" and "bro" which are indexical of cool solidarity, "brother" and "best friend" are indicative of a more affectionate relationship. As a result, such Affection appraisals contribute to construing Inclusive masculine identities as emotional openness (especially towards men) is a feature of Inclusive masculinity.

(19) "I got you brother, I got you brother. This is my best friend" (Jake Paul, Best Friend Surprises Me With New Truck!! wtf)

More than half of the Affect:Happiness-Affection stances (59%) are marked by Ironic recuperation, which is another essential element of Inclusive masculinity. Explicit declarations of love and affection made by the heterosexual vloggers to their male friends (Example 20) is typical of Affect:Happiness-Affection stances. All such appraisals bare no trace of homophobia (which positions the youtubers outside of the traditional masculinity model) and in most cases verbal emotional intimacy is employed in order to create a humorous effect. For instance, in Example 20 the affectionate exchange is set in an ironic context, with Logan Paul holding Evan in his arms and pretending to cry with happiness. These ironic Affect:Happiness-Affection stances allow the vloggers to construe their heterosexuality in terms of Inclusive masculinity.

(20) Logan: (laughs) Welcome to the new... Ah (laughs), I missed you Evan.
Evan: I missed you too.
Logan: There's no better dwarf than dwarf Mamba, bro.
Evan: There's no better Logan, than Logan Paul.
(Logan Paul, We Got A New Roommate In The Maverick House)

Another element of Affect:Happiness, which contributed to the construction of Inclusive masculinity, is Affect:Happiness-Cheer. The most prominent stance tar-

get categories for Cheer are Homosociality (which comprises 15% of all Cheer stances and consists of 3 specific categories (New neighbours (9%), Friend coming (4.5%) and Friendship (1%)) as well as Males (7%). Both categories are indexical of emotional openness towards other males resulting in affectionate homosociality, which is not typical of Hegemonic masculinity. Such appraisals are usually clustered with physical tactility, which adds a hint of Ironic Heterosexual Recuperation by engaging elements indexical of romantic or sexual attraction.

For instance, in Example 21 Brennen Taylor takes a positive up-scale graduated Affect:Happiness-Cheer stance towards his male friend who kept his promise to meet up. The verbal appraisal is accompanied by an affectionate handshake and then the young men keep touching each other's hands. Set in the context of a friendship between heterosexual males, these elements can be interpreted as construing Inclusive masculinities. It is important to mention that homosocial affection and tactility is characteristic of Brennen Taylor vlogs, and bromance constitutes an important part of his vlogging style.

- (21) "He kept his word, he's only gonna see me for an hour though but I'm so happy you kept your word! Yes, yes, yes!" (Brennen Taylor, I Grabbed His...)

However, similar patterns are frequent in other youtubers' vlogs too. To illustrate, Example 22 is an instance of a positive Affect:Happiness-Cheer appraisal of homosocial tactility indicative of homosexuality in one of Mark Dohner's vlogs. Mark touches his heterosexual friend's buttocks and explicitly states that he likes it, which George responds to by suggesting turning off the camera. The young man implies that this kind of content should not be shared on the vlog but does not protest against the intimate tactility.

- (22) Mark Dohner: [screaming] Why you in my bed, Georgie?
 George Janko: Why you grabbin' my ass?
 Mark Dohner: Yuh, 'cause I like it.
 George Janko: Well, could turn off the camera. (laughs)
 (Mark Dohner, Our New House Tour! Exclusive Look)

Finally, Affect:Dis/inclination plays an important role in construing Inclusive masculinity too. 31% of (Dis)inclination stances are comprised of Romantic/sexual (72%) and Emotional (28%) (dis)inclination targeted at Homosociality/Homosexuality (42%) and Males (38%) amounting to 50 instances in total. This category is predominantly positive (84%) and ironic (70%), which makes it highly productive in constructing Inclusive masculine identities.

For instance, in Example 23 Mark Dohner employs sexually suggestive Affect:Dis/inclination when touching another man's hands during a card trick performance. It bears no trace of homohysteria and serve to assert the youtubers' heterosexuality and provide a humorous effect.

- (23) "I've never touched a man's hands like this before. I'm getting excited!"
 (Mark Dohner, Magic with Dwarf Mamba and Logan!)

Appreciation

Positive Appreciation stances (both Reaction and Quality) prove to be of significance as Inclusive masculinity resources too. 95 instances of Appreciation stances are targeted at Homosociality/Homosexuality category (8%), 92% of which are Evaluation:Reaction. Almost a half of the Reactions towards Homosociality/Homosexuality are addressed to males' appearance, the rest – to homosocial intimacy and homosexual connotations.

Males' appearance is appraised positively in the majority of Reaction stances, 39% of which are coupled with Ironic recuperation. In example 24, for instance, Mark Dohner utilizes a positive up-scale graduated Appreciation:Reaction stance to position his heterosexual male friend as sexually attractive, which indirectly indexes homosexuality. Brennen Taylor in Example 25 does the same by taking a positive Appreciation:Reaction stance towards his friend's appearance, who he refers to as "my date", which again indicates bromance, thus, construing inclusive masculinity.

(24) "What, you gotta turn around! Whoa! You're all lathered up with coconut oil, I see, looking real swexy and stuff in the sun. [Johannes posing] Nice and glistening. (Mark Dohner, My Friends Told Me Not To Do It! 25 Ft Jump Into 6ft Pool!)

(25) "Damn, I don't know what's prettier, my food or my date". (Brennen Taylor, I Grabbed His...)

Most of the Appreciation stances addressed to males' appearance are neutral in terms of recuperation, but are nevertheless instrumental to construing emotional openness and absence of homophobia, indexical of Inclusive masculinity. Example 26 illustrates such an Appreciation appraisal employed by Brennen Taylor to explicitly position other male as attractive.

(26) "Aww. Dude you're so tan... You smell so good". (Brennen Taylor, I Grabbed His...)

Evaluation stances towards Homosocial intimacy and Homosexual connotations are largely positive (82% and 83% respectively) and have a high index of Ironic heterosexual recuperation (82% and 83% respectively), which indexes eschewing homophobia and homophobia and thus supports the construction of Inclusive masculinities. One instance of an Evaluation:Reaction appraisal of homosocial tactility is illustrated in Example 27, where the stance taken by Jake Paul is targeted at another male slapping his buttocks. The vlogger openly eschews homophobia by both accepting the intimate tactility and appraising it positively.

(27) "I kind of liked it". (Jake Paul, My New Assistants First Day)

Judgment

Finally, Judgment also adds to the resources of Inclusive masculinity construction, albeit it is not as prominent as Affect and Evaluation. In terms of Judgment, whereas stances towards Males are extremely scarce (2.5%), Homosociality/Homosexuality was appraised in 9% of all Judgment stances, which amounts to 51 instances and is worth examining. The highest scoring positive Judgment stances towards Homosociality/Homosexuality are Normality (11%) and Tenacity (8%) and they are always coupled with Ironic recuperation.

Positive Judgment:Normality towards Homosociality/Homosexuality was employed in order to evoke the impression of homosexuality via construing physical (and often sexually suggestive) contact between males as usual or typical. It was detected only in Brennen Taylor's vlogs, in which Bromance is exploited more often than in other YouTubers' videos. For instance, in Example 28 Brennen Taylor explicitly appraises intimate physical contact between him and his heterosexual male friend as regular and in Example 29 he uses a mnemonic technique which implies repeated homosexual experience. Using Positive Judgment:Normality construing homosexuality as normal indexes eschewing homophobia and contributes to the construction of Inclusive masculinity.

(28) "We like to make out sometimes". (Brennen Taylor, Our big secret revealed... Don't hate us...)

(29) "Remember this dude, we're 5C, okay? / Okay, that's easy to remember, that's the first time I ever had sex was 5 cocks". (Brennen Taylor, Goodbye For Now...)

Positive Judgment:Tenacity also consistently appears in a number of vlogs. Excerpt 30 is a typical example of such appraisals, where Brennen Taylor states an intention to kiss his male friend. Such positive Judgment:Tenacity stances are always marked by Ironic recuperation and function as construing the readiness and determination to engage in an intimate activity associated with homosexuality (mostly, kissing) in order to enact Inclusive masculinity.

(30) Colby: Dude, I missed you so much, man.
Brennen: I missed you too. Imma cut mine because we're gonna kiss real quick.
(Brennen Taylor, I Grabbed His...)

7.2.2. *Males vs Females as Stance Targets*

Albeit the overall proportion of the categories of Homosociality/Homosexuality and Males as Attitude stance targets is relatively not high (9% and 7% respectively), they still should be seen as important Masculinity construction resources. The reason is their prominence in comparison with taking stances to the categories of Heterosexuality and Females, which in total comprise only 4% and 1% respectively.

Affect:Happiness-Affection addressed to Females amounts to only 4 instances, which is 13 times as little as positive ironic Affection stances targeted at Males. Affect:Dis/inclination stances addressed to Females and Heterosexuality make up 4% and 1% respectively, whereas those targeted at Males and Homosociality/Homosexuality – 12% and 22%, which is 3 and 17 times as much. Finally, the proportion of Appreciation of Heterosexuality is twice as little as Homosociality/Homosexuality (4% and 8% respectively).

This disparity between the prominence of the two groups of categories is motivated by the proportion of males and females in the vlogs, which are mostly comprised by young men. At the same time, it also indicates that such aspects of Inclusive masculinity as eschewing homophobia/homophobia are seen by the vloggers as more marketable than sexual objectivation of females typical of Hegemonic masculinity.

7.3 Orthodox and Inclusive Masculinities Co-constructed

The examples provided above show how Attitude resources are employed to contribute to either Hegemonic or Inclusive masculinity construction. However, they are not always constructed in a consistent way: the two types of masculinities are frequently simultaneously co-constructed, actively negotiated and even blended.

7.3.1. Orthodox and Inclusive Blend

The blending occurs when overt stances such as positive Affect:Happiness-Affection indexical of inclusive masculinity, characterized by emotional openness, included forms of address indexical of cool solidarity, such as “dude”, “bro”, “man” etc. or even obscene lexis.

In Example 31 Brennen Taylor expresses affection to his male friend (“*I missed you so much*”) and immediately refers to him as “dude” and “man”, thus intertwining emotional openness and cool solidarity. Example 32 exhibits a similar pattern: Mark Dohner clusters a positive up-scale Affect:Happiness-Affection towards another male with an expletive “damn” and an offensive “motherfucker”.

(31) “Dude, I missed you so much, man”. (Brennen Taylor, I Grabbed His...)

(32) “Damn, you’re the cutest motherfucker I’ve ever seen!” (Mark Dohner, Magic with Dwarf Mamba and Logan!)

In some instances, the blending appears over a number of turns, outside the boundaries of one utterance. In the excerpt below (Example 33) Brennen expresses a rather strong positive Affect towards his male friend Colby, but in the next turn refers to Colby’s programme as “shitty” and takes an up-scale graduated (“*never*”) Disinclination stance towards the idea of joining his project:

- (33) Brennen: Honestly bro, like, I didn't wanna tell you that you are my inspiration to be a better person in life, bro.
 Colby: Is that cause you joined the live project, bro? Or are you just saying that?
 Brennen: No, I',... I'd never join that shitty program.
 (Brennen Taylor, I Grabbed His...)

7.3.2. Negotiation and Satirizing Cluster

In addition to blending, Masculine identities are often negotiated and satirized, the two processes occurring in a cluster. Expletives, cool solidarity terms, laughter, grimacing and multimodal elements (music and sounds), which are often present in the context of construing positive Affection, Inclination or Evaluation, are all indexical of satirizing and are meant to create a comic effect. For instance, in Example 34, Colby sits down next to Brennen and expresses a positive Inclination towards a homosocial activity (*“sit next to you”*), which Brennen reacts to with a strong Disinclination using the address term “bro” and obscene lexis (*“go sit the fuck over there”*, *“What the fuck?”*), thus indexing homophobia/homophobia, which construes Hegemonic Masculinity. Nevertheless, then the established gender identity is negotiated as Brennen Evaluates the suggested homosocial activity of sitting together and sharing a meal as “so cute” and then even expresses a positive Inclination towards a more intimate interaction (*“can I feed you and you feed me?”*). The positive Evaluation and Affect stances are, however, coupled with laughter, expletive (*“Fuck it”*) and obscene lexis (*“I’m fucking down”*), which clearly indicates that the negotiated Inclusive masculinity is satirized.

- (34) Colby: I wanna sit next to you.
 Brennen: No, bro, go sit the fuck over there.
 Colby: Why?
 Brennen: What the fuck?
 Colby: No, I just wanna sit right here bro, we can share the same meal and everything.
 Brennen: Why don't [laughs]. Fuck it, that'd be so cute, can I feed you and you feed me?
 Colby: Of course.
 Brennen: Oh I'm fucking down.
 (Brennen Taylor, Goodbye For Now...)

Example 35 is another instance of negotiation and satirizing of masculinities. First, the vlog features the footage of Logan and Evan pretending to approach each other in order to kiss, with embedded romantic music, which can be interpreted as a non-verbal and multimodal construction of positive Tenacity towards intimate homosocial/homosexual behaviour. Then, as the young men's faces get too close, Logan screams and seems to push Evan away, which is followed by a very strong proclamation of Logan's negative Disinclination towards kissing Evan (*“I am not kissing you on the mouth”* and *“Ewe!”* repeated twice) coupled

with grimacing and screaming. However, Logan immediately corrects himself implying a down-scale positive Tenacity towards kissing (“*Not in public anyway*” and “*Maybe at home*”). This scene shows a pendulum-like shift from construing Inclusive masculinity (non-verbal positive Tenacity towards kissing) to Hegemonic masculinity (up-scale negative Disinclination) and back to tentative Inclusive masculinity (down-scale Tenacity), thus exemplifying the cluster of negotiation and satirizing of the construed masculinities.

(35) [Logan and Evan pretend to be about to kiss]

Logan: [grimacing] I am not kissing you on the mouth. [screaming]
I barely even know you Evan! Ewe! Ewe! I’m not kissing you on the mouth!
Not in public anyway.

Evan: So there’s still a chance?

Logan: I don’t know, maybe at home.

(Logan Paul, KSI RECEIVED HIS MAVERICK MERCH AND HE’S IN THE LOGANG!)

6. Conclusion

The paper focuses on the Appraisal resources constituting branded masculinities in young popular male YouTubers’ vlogs. According to Anderson’s Inclusive masculinity theory, orthodox and inclusive masculinities are two forms of gender identity, characterized by their attitude to power, homosexuality and women as well as social stereotypes about gender. Orthodox masculinity is traditional masculinity valuing power, strength, competitiveness, homophobia and misogyny, which opposes itself to homosexuality and femininity. Inclusive masculinity, on the other hand, is a relatively modern form of masculine identity eschewing traditional masculine values and embracing values and features of gender identities lying beyond conventional masculinity. Young Anglo-American males tend to perform Inclusive masculinity considerably more often than their predecessors and this attenuated type of masculine identity is trending on social media.

The study presented in the paper is based on the analysis of the stances taken by males in 35 YouTube vlogs produced by 7 highly popular American Internet micro-celebrities in terms of Martin and White’s Appraisal theory, with a focus on Attitude and Graduation resources. The paper introduces adjustments to the system in order to render it applicable for masculinity research: the development of Attitude:Inclination category and the addition of a new category allowing for the coding of Ironic heterosexual recuperation. Both categories proved to be of major importance in the analysis of hybrid masculinities in the context of YouTube vlogs. The annotation and statistical analyses were performed by means of a computer application UAM Corpus Tool and interpreted in terms of Inclusive masculinity theory in order to determine salient patterns of branded YouTube vlog masculinity.

It has been observed that the Appraisal resources engaged in the construction of YouTube vlog masculinities are in line with self-branding discursive practices. To elaborate, young male micro-celebrities tend to exhibit patterns of hybridized

orthodox/inclusive masculine identities rendered salient and entertaining in order to attract viewers as well as maintain and boost their visibility and popularity. The identified patterns of branded masculinity construction prove to be based not only on active co-construction, but also on blending and satirizing the two types of masculine identity: orthodox and inclusive masculinity.

In summary, the construction of orthodox masculinity in the analyzed YouTube vlogs employ all the three Attitude areas. Firstly, Positive Appreciation, which is the most productive Appraisal resource, is used to evaluate activities associated with conventional masculine values such as boldness and competitiveness as well as objects and phenomena indexical of traditionally masculine areas of interest and expertise (vehicles, technologies) or wealth and status (property, expensive cars). Secondly, Judgment stances (Tenacity, Capacity and Normality) support the positive Appraisal of the abovementioned categories, thus contributing to the construction of fearlessness and exuberant energy alongside expertise and skillfulness in traditionally masculine areas. Finally, negative Affect stances (Displeasure) addressed towards other males index emotional restraint, which is a feature of traditional masculinity.

Inclusive masculinity is also based on all the three categories of Attitude resources but is largely restricted to two stance targets: Males and Homosociality/Homosexuality. In terms of Affect, emotional openness and affection to other males is constructed by means of such positive Happiness stances as Affection and Cheer. In addition, the adjusted Dis/Inclination category in combination with a high Ironic heterosexual recuperation index proved to be highly productive in constructing homosexual desire, which is in line with Inclusive Masculinity practices. Positive Evaluation of males' appearance and homosexual connotations consistently emerging in the vlogs as well as positive Normality and Tenacity stances targeted at Homosocial interaction also support the increased emotionality and ironic heterosexual recuperation constituting the core of Inclusive masculinity. Finally, ironic heterosexual recuperation & satirizing hypermasculine aggression coupled with the consistent negotiation and blending of the two forms of masculine identity are prominent aspects of branded YouTube vlog masculinity.

The adjustments to Appraisal system – the development of Dis/inclination category with regard to sexual and affectionate desire as well as the introduction of a new category of Ironic heterosexual recuperation – proved to be of major importance for Appraisal analysis of hybrid masculinities in YouTube vlogs. It has been revealed that both categories are highly functional in constructing inclusive masculinity and contribute considerably to the construction of branded hybrid masculine identities by male micro-celebrities.

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Appendix

CHANNEL NAME	VLOG TITLE	DURATION
Logan Paul	WE GOT A NEW ROOMMATE IN THE MAVERICK HOUSE! (Published on 23 Oct 2017)	14:48
	MEET MY NEW SEXY NEIGHBORS (Published on 8 June 2018)	16:19
	FALLING IN LOVE WITH MY ROOMMATE... (Published on 20 Mar 2018)	09:54
	THE WORLD WASN'T MADE FOR HIM... (Published on 5 Sep 2017)	16:22
	KSI RECEIVED HIS MAVERICK MERCH AND HE'S IN THE LOGANG! (Published on 21 Mar 2018)	06:31
	Jake Paul	BEST FRIEND SURPRISES ME WITH NEW TRUCK!! **wtf** (Published on 3 November 2018)
WE GOT MATCHING TATTOOS!! (MY PARENTS FREAKED) (Published on 10 May 2018)		11:58
MY NEW ASSISTANTS FIRST DAY.. {NOT GOOD} (Published on 3 January 2018)		13:36
THIS DIDN'T END WELL... (Published on 6 July 2017)		09:10
HUGE BLACK FRIDAY GIVEAWAY + SHOPPING CHAOS (Published on 26 November 2016)		10:39

David Dobrik	THE BIGGEST SURPRISE WE HAVE EVER SEEN!! (Published on 17 July 2018)	04:20
	THEY SHOULD NOT HAVE DONE THIS!! BAD IDEA!! (Published on 4 January 2018)	04:20
	DO NOT DO THIS!! SUPER BAD IDEA!! (Published on 17 August 2016)	04:20
	THIS SHOULD NOT BE ON YOUTUBE!! (Published on 7 September 2016)	04:20
	FLYING OFF A \$1600 SKATEBOARD FAIL!! (Published on 21 October 2016)	04:20
Tanner Fox	700HP GTR VS TESLA P100D STREET RACE! (Published on 13 Aug 2017)	12:39
	Webisode 9: He will NEVER be a FATHER after this... (OMG) (Published on 13 Aug 2017)	15:16
	OUR NEW \$15,000,000 MANSION!! *EXCLUSIVE TOUR* (Published on 13 Jul 2018)	15:44
	this RUINED the tour... (Published on 10 Jan 2018)	11:02
	DON'T PLAY WITH GUNS! (Published on 21 Feb 2017)	17:24
	Brennen Taylor	WHO DID THIS TO MY CAR?!?! WTF! (Published on 22 Nov 2016)
WE SHOULD NOT HAVE DONE THIS!! (Published on 27 Nov 2016)		15:46
Our big secret revealed... Don't hate us... :((Published on 4 Dec 2016)		11:55
GOODBYE FOR NOW... (Published on 21 Dec 2016)		10:27
I GRABBED HIS...??? (Published on 11 Jan 2017)		15:08

Mark Dohner	Magic with Dwarf Mamba and Logan! (Published on 10 Sep 2017)	10:30
	REAL LIFE FRUIT NINJA vs EMOJI FRUITS! *Dangerous Mess* (Published on 12 Dec 2017)	19:10
	MY FRIENDS TOLD ME NOT TO DO IT! 25 ft JUMP into 6ft POOL! (Published on 22 May 2017)	11:36
	Our NEW HOUSE Tour! *EXCLUSIVE LOOK* (Published on 5 Jun 2018)	17:12
	Meet Our NEW ROOMMATE! You'll NEVER GUESS Who! (Published on 7 Jun 2018)	14:07
	Sam Golbach	LIVING IN MY NEW HOUSE IS HORRIFYING (Published on 3 Mar 2017)
	LOST IN A DESERT (Published on 30 Mar 2017)	11:14
	WAKING ROOMMATE UP IN A POOL PRANK WARS (Published on 12 Apr 2017)	10:38
	EXPLORING FLOODED CAVES IN NEW ZEALAND (Published on 17 Mar 2017)	08:58
	"CASH ME OUTSIDE" OFFICIAL DANCE VIDEO!! (Published on 10 Feb 2017)	10:17

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