STUDIA PAEDAGOGICA

ACADEMIC SECOND-CHANCE EDUCATION: CORRECTION OR CONSOLIDATION OF EARLY SELECTION?

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ABSTRACT

This article develops a theoretical approach by arguing that success in academic second-chance education leading to the eligibility to study is (besides academic achievement) influenced by normative orientations relevant to success acquired during compulsory secondary education. More precisely, we argue that in the highly stratified German school system at secondary level I (years 5 to 10), school-type specific socialization contexts lead to the development of school-type specific normative orientations relevant to success. This contributes to creating unequal starting points for academic second-chance education. Based on this assumption, we develop a theoretical grid using the contrastive analysis of ten interviews with students in their first semester of second-chance education. The results show that existing normative orientations are only partially related to the school type that was previously attended. This raises questions concerning the extent to which there is a normative school socialization effect. However, this study is a first step in using a classic approach of the sociology of education to empirically explore the effects of stratification, which has not been done before.

KEYWORDS

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Introduction

Germany has one of the most stratified school systems in the world (Bol & van de Werfhorst, 2013). After four years of primary school, students move on to an academic or a non-academic secondary school type. As a result of this early transition point, social and ethnic inequalities are particularly evident in the student population at academic school types such as *Gymnasium*, which leads directly to the eligibility to study. The opportunity to take alternative pathways to the eligibility to study is therefore a necessity in order to correct disadvantageous decisions at primary school and to do justice to later individual developments unforeseen at the first transition point. This article focuses on one of these options – academic second-chance education (academic SCE). In the German context, we focus on the *Zweiten Bildungsweg* [second-chance education] (Harney, 2018, see Figure 1) which offers adults the opportunity to catch up on the eligibility to study. High drop-out rates of around 50% show that a large proportion of students fail to meet the requirements of academic SCE, among them many students who previously attended a non-academic type of school with low requirements (Schuchart & Schimke, 2021). In this article we explore the role that previous school type affiliations might play in success in later educational stages.

The problem of an early stratifying education school system is not only the creation of inequalities in the student participation at academic school types but also the creation of school-type specific learning and socialization contexts. This can be seen in a school-type specific cognitive development, which has been quite well documented empirically (Becker et al., 2022; Pfost et al., 2010). A school-type- specific development of normative orientations toward academic performance, which can then influence success in school can also be assumed, but this has only been empirically documented in a rudimentary form and especially with regard to how such orientations are established (Grecu, 2019; König et al., 2011; Maschke & Stecher, 2006, 2010). It can be assumed that early stratification can contribute to creating unequal starting points for later educational stages by shaping normative orientations.

This leads to the question that is the focus of this article: Is there a relationship between normative orientations of SCE students and their previous school-type affiliation? There has not yet been empirical research on this question so far. In this contribution, we attempt to close this research gap in order to develop a theoretical grid of school-type-specific normative orientations using a qualitative case study. In the following, academic SCE in Germany is described in more detail (1.1). This is followed by the development of a theoretical approach to describe school-type specific socialization contexts (1.2). We look for evidence that supports our theoretical considerations using data that we present in (2), analyze in (3) and discuss in (4).

Figure 1
Pathways to the eligibility to study
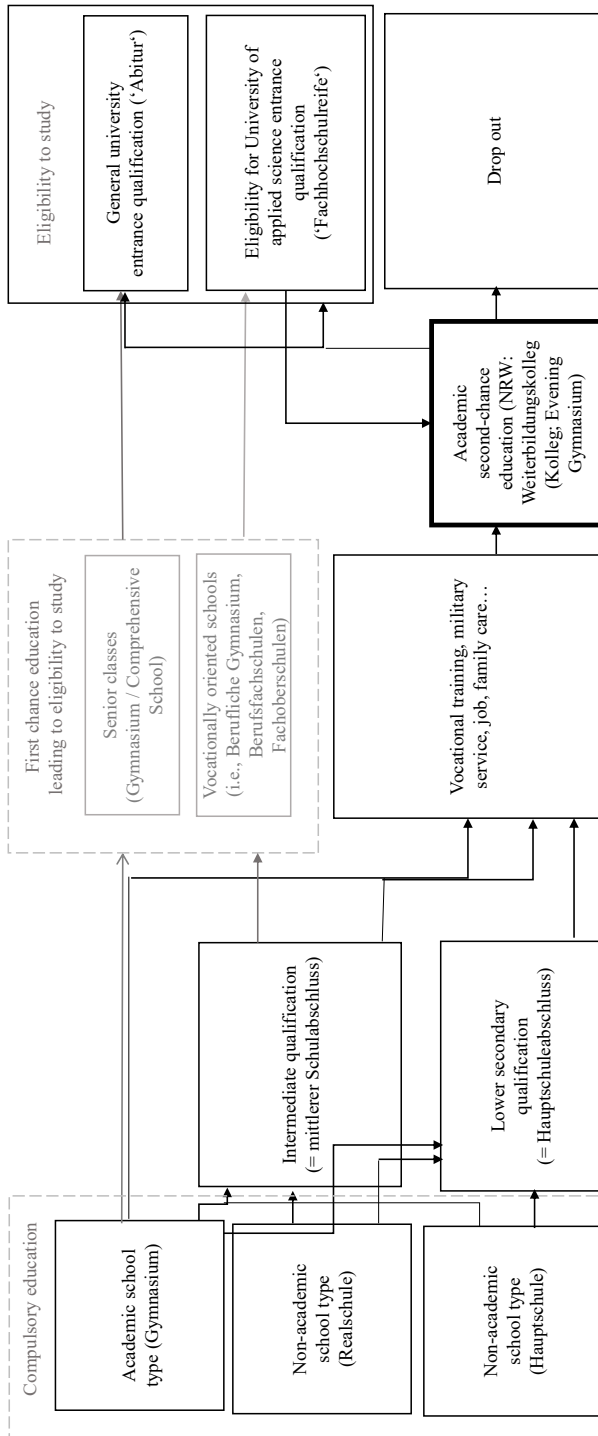
Note: For the sake of understandability, this is a simplified presentation, and some federal states may deviate from this. Not all possible pathways are depicted here. The bold bordered box (Academic second-chance education) refers to the part of the educational system where the study took place.

1 Theoretical and empirical background

1.1 Academic SCE

In Germany, in lower secondary education (years 5 through 10), early selection takes place based on achievement into distinct secondary school types that lead directly to the eligibility to study, such as the Gymnasium and the comprehensive school, and school types that do not, such as the lower secondary school (*Hauptschule*) and the intermediate secondary school (*Realschule*, see Figure 1). For pupils who drop out of school or obtain a non-academic qualification in lower or intermediate secondary education, there are various options to obtain the eligibility to study. For instance, they can move on to vocationally oriented schools in upper secondary education (Orr & Hovdhaugen, 2014, see Figure 1). Adults who did not make use of these "first chances" to obtain the eligibility to study have the opportunity to upgrade their school qualification via institutions of academic SCE (Harney, 2018; Harney et al., 2007).

In the 2020/21 school year, 22,671 learners in Germany participated in second-chance education leading to the eligibility to study; 1.9% of all eligibilities to study in general education (as opposed to vocationally oriented education, see Figure 1)[1] were obtained via second-chance education (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2021). This article focuses on academic SCE in North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), the federal state with the highest proportion of students in SCE nationwide (Statistisches Bundesamt 2018). Adults who are at least 18 years old and can document at least two years of occupational activity, family care, or unemployment or who have completed vocational training can catch up on the entrance qualification for a university of applied sciences (*Fachhochschulreife*, four semesters) or the general university entrance qualification (*Abitur*, six semesters) at evening school (*Abendgymnasium*) or by attending daytime courses at a *Kolleg*. These students may have done their compulsory schooling at a non-academic school type (e.g., Hauptschule or Realschule) or may have dropped out of upper secondary education at an academic school type (e.g., Gymnasium, see Figure 1).

The organization of academic SCE is the same as in academic tracks at upper secondary education level in compulsory education such as the Gymnasium, and learners are taught the same curriculum and have to take the same standardized exams. As in upper secondary education of Gymnasiums, students are not taught in fixed classes but instead attend courses at appropriate levels. There is no class-teacher principle but instead a subject-

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[1]   In Germany, academic second-chance education, like Gymnasiums and comprehensive schools, is part of general education.

teacher principle. However, there are considerable differences regarding the learner body. The selection of students for the Gymnasium is based on ability and learning behavior at primary school, whereas access to second-chance education depends neither on a certain grade average nor on the acquisition of a certain school-leaving qualification.

As a result of the increasing social pressure to achieve the eligibility to study that has accompanied educational expansion, academic SCE faces the problem of a student body with disadvantaged prerequisites. Koch (2018) referred to a change in the group of potential students in academic SCE from "gifted but disadvantaged adults" to "adults with deficits." This implies a relationship of conflict between the institution and its students: The students, who are often particularly dependent on help and support due to their educational biographies, are confronted with a highly demanding educational program that is organized in a similar way to the academic school type (Gymnasium) which limits structurally the extent to which students are provided with help and support.

1.2 Theoretical background

1.2.1 Effects of school and differences in school structure

Schools have cognitive and normative effects. Cognitive effects are achievements that are related to purely subject-specific knowledge. In addition, schools generate normative orientations. This socialization by schools was, for a long time, even emphasized as their most important social function in the sociological tradition of dealing with educational institutions (e.g., Dreeben, 1968; Parsons, 1959). Sociologists argued that the school – unlike the family – generates normative dispositions in students through its structure, which prepare them adequately for the demands of society. Normative effects are the focus of this article. We aim to justify the assumption that these effects are school-type specific. For the purposes of this article, we start with the theoretical framework developed by Dreeben (1968). Building on Parsons (1959), Dreeben (1968) described the following so called "universalistic-specific" normative orientations that are acquired in school: independence, individual performance orientation, universalism, and specificity. These four orientations mean that students learn to "(1) act by themselves (unless collaborative effort is called for) and take personal responsibility for one's conduct and accountability for its consequences; (2) perform tasks actively and master the environment according to certain quality standards; (3) recognize the right of others to treat them as members of categories, on the basis of (4) a few discrete characteristics, rather than on the full constellation of them that represent the whole person" (Dreeben, 1968, p. 63). Orientations with respect to the whole person and their ascriptive (not independently acquired) characteristics, which apply in community contexts such as families or groups of friends, would be undesirable and

problematic in the school context. Due to the structural characteristics of schools (homogeneous age groups, one teacher for 30 students, grading according to performance), the norms described are required and thus generated as an individual disposition.

In our study, this theoretical approach is removed from its structural-functionalist context and used as a dimensional heuristic to conceptualize (variable) normative orientations of school types and their relevance in academic SCE. It is then not so much their significance for later participation in society that is of interest here, but rather their significance for success in educational institutions: the normative expectations of the students and the extent to which these correspond to the normative expectations and practices of their teachers. This can be linked to theoretical and empirical studies of contemporary educational research. For example, Wernet (2003) and Helsper (2004) found, on the basis of qualitative studies, that despite the superordinate validity of universalistic-specific norms in pedagogical situations, diffuse expectations oriented toward the whole person and that person's ascriptive characteristics are emphasized by students; we refer to these as "particularistic." Pedagogical action is thus repeatedly exposed to demands that are described as "contradictory" (Helsper, 2010) and which therefore cannot be solved, only dealt with. According to Helsper (2012), among students a high level of need for acceptance as a person is related to a low level of ability to engage in a universalist-specific relationship with their teachers. Helsper identified such needs predominantly among students from lower social strata, who are particularly likely to attend the school type with the lowest achievement requirements (= Hauptschule). Teachers can choose to take into account the particularistic-diffuse aspects of their relationship with a student by perceiving the individual student, at least to some extent, as a whole person – and not primarily as a student – by addressing family problems, for example. There is a "match" when a teacher's actions meet a pupil's need for acceptance as a person. Quantitative evidence can be found in studies showing that Hauptschule students, in contrast to Gymnasium students, are more likely to report receiving help from teachers and having better emotional relationships with them (Baumert et al., 2004; König et al., 2011; Kunter et al., 2005). Following this line of argument, the shift away from the universalistic norms of school would be primarily due to the needs of a rather problematic student body (see also Willis, 2011; Grecu, 2019; Solga & Wagner, 2016).

However, there are also clear indications that school-type-specific normative demands are not only linked to students and their needs, but that they too are generated by the school type's self-image. The (institutionally generated) sorting of students into secondary school types is based not only on their subject-related performance but also on their degree of independence,

achievement motivation, and willingness to make an effort (Anders et al., 2010; Stubbe et al., 2017) or, in other words, on their ability to participate in an academic institution oriented toward independence, performance, orientation, universalism, and specificity. The logic of these primary school selection criteria is in accordance with school-type-specific socialization contexts, which are not only committed to adaptation to a specific student body (selected for them) but also reflect historical traditions of a school type's self-image, the professional profiles of teachers, and social functions (Kunter et al., 2005). The results of research, according to which teaching at a Hauptschule, in contrast to teaching at a Gymnasium, is characterized by an orientation towards teamwork, the needs of the students, an individualized reference norm regarding feedback, and by teachers taking responsibility for their students' learning processes (Baumert et al., 2004) must also be understood as leading to school-type-specific socialization of the students. There are even indications that independence is negatively valued under these conditions: Straehler-Pohl and Pais (2014) showed that for a Hauptschule in Berlin that the correct completion of multiplication tasks was not evaluated as an accomplishment but as rebellious behavior if it was done with too high a degree of independence. Breidenstein and Zaborowski (2013) identified a school-type-specific grading practice: report grades were largely justified by teachers at a non-academic secondary school on the basis of non-subject criteria. Their conclusion was that unlike in the Gymnasium, grading has taken the character of social disciplining. Therefore, when students at a Hauptschule claimed in a survey that they wanted a good relationship with their teachers in order to "get through school well" (unlike Gymnasium students, who tended to focus on good exam preparation and their own performance (Maschke & Stecher, 2006, 2010), they were presumably also reacting to a knowledge of what was tolerated, desired, and rewarded by their teachers.

1.2.2 Summary and research question

What do these observations mean for success in academic SCE? In the following, we convert the findings of the previous section into assumptions that can guide our research: Academic SCE has a clear academic profile in terms of cognitive performance requirements and normative orientations. While the cognitive requirements must be oriented toward the qualification to be awarded – the eligibility to study – and the central examination requirements, the normative expectations might also correspond to the degree of independence, universalism, etc. required by an academic institution such as the Gymnasium. Therefore, the normative orientations acquired in non-academic school types might not fully correspond to the normative expectations of academic SCE, and this might influence the success in SCE.

The school-type-specific cognitive and normative endowment of students in SCE can – among others – be seen in their grading. Grading is to be seen as a "social practice" in which a number of factors, including student behavior, normative orientations, and classroom procedures are evaluated (Filer, 2000; Lintorf, 2012). For second-chance education, it can be shown that – controlling for indicators of achievement[2] – previous school-type affiliation strongly influences grades in main subjects at the end of the first semester of academic SCE, and, indirectly, grade development in the following years (Schuchart & Schimke, 2021). Former Gymnasium students have an advantage over students from other school types. This supports the assumptions that a) high normative expectations of independence, universalism, etc. also exist in academic SCE (Schuchart & Bühler-Niederberger, 2020), and b) the students' ability to respond to these expectations is influenced by their previous school type affiliation. Against this background, we therefore ask: Can school-type-specific normative orientations be identified among students in academic SCE? Can they be described using the theoretical approach presented here or does this need modification? Our aim here is to develop a dimensional grid of school-type-specific normative orientations.

2 Data and methods

2.1 Data collection

In the first half of the 2017/18 school year, interviews were conducted with 43 students in their first semester at an academic SCE school in NRW who had volunteered. Interviews included questions about their past and present schools and teaching experiences, their school problems, behavior, and coping strategies, their motives for attending SCE, their social background, and any related commitments. The interviews lasted about 45 minutes (the duration of one school lesson) and the interviewees received 10 euros as compensation.

2.2 Procedure

Ten interviews were selected. These were all with students in their first semester. Three were female; the mean age was 23 years. Regarding the highest school-leaving qualification of the parents of these students: three of the parents had an eligibility to study, three had an intermediate certificate (Realschulabschluss), and two parents had a lower secondary certificate

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2   Grades achieved in standardized final examinations and qualifications at the end of compulsory schooling.

(Hauptschulabschluss); two students did not answer this question. We selected students who had completed their compulsory schooling at a Gymnasium (6 students) or a Hauptschule (4 students). We chose students from these two school types because, according to studies on academic achievement as well as on teaching and school culture, these are the school types with the greatest differences regarding achievement, classroom practices and teacher attitudes (e.g., Baumert et al., 2004; Kunter et al., 2005; PISA, 2018). Our study is thus an in-depth contrastive analysis that aims to investigate and define more precisely dimensions according to which former Hauptschule students can be distinguished from former Gymnasium students. Extending the analysis to the middle category of intermediate school (= Realschule) students is not reasonable because qualitative analysis is not suitable for mapping gradual differences between types.

Methodologically, the analysis largely follows the approach of Barton and Lazarsfeld (1955) on the evaluation of qualitative data. This approach emphasizes typification and typologies, in terms of systematic classifications, as relevant strategies for qualitative data analysis. For the elaboration of theoretical concepts – as dimensions of classification – the principles of pragmatic sociology are used: the interplay between deductive and inductive procedures in the elaboration of such concepts, starting from sensitizing theoretical templates (Strauss & Corbin, 1996). For the final in-depth examination of deviations from the hypostasized contexts, the ideas of analytical induction are used (Bühler-Niederberger, 1985; 2012). In the qualitative coding process, quality is not checked via the determination of an interrater reliability but via a theory-oriented interpretation agreed jointly by the members of the research team; this process can be called discursive validation (Corbin & Strauss, 1990).

Essentially, three steps of the evaluation can be distinguished:
Step 1 – Theoretically guided typification: First – on the basis of striking statements found in the material – somewhat sweeping "types" were sought. Thus, in contrast to the usual practice in qualitative methodology, we did not attempt in this first step to organize the empirical material according to thematic areas, but rather sought a very pictorial and holistic characterization of the individual interviewees, contouring "the former Gymnasium student" in contrast to "the former Hauptschule student." We chose a former Gymnasium student, Kenneth, who made clear statements in regard to his orientation toward performance, and compared him with the former Hauptschule student Bethina, who seemed particularly vague in regard to any responsibility for performance and to her goals, in order to achieve a first typification. It should then become possible to assign the other members of the respective group to these types, and the next steps would systematically

examine the extent to which this might be possible. Theoretically, our search for these types was guided by the basic content of Dreeben's (1968) four dimensions (see also Parsons, 1959), i.e., the normative demand for universalism and performance-orientation that must apply to all interactions in the classroom. The types to be identified should express an orientation toward these dimensions or their rejection or disregard.

Step 2 – Systematic classification: In step 1, the types were formed unsystematically: They were not based on a fixed set of precisely defined dimensions. Such a set was only found and defined in the second step. For this purpose, the information for all ten selected interviewees was first arranged according to thematic areas. The selection of interview statements on the areas and the interpretation of the statements was again theoretically sensitized by Dreeben's categories: Anything that was related to these categories or significantly contradicted them was considered relevant material. Using this selection of statements, the researchers defined their own theoretical categories, which had to meet the criteria of (a) summarizing the broadest possible range of interviewees' statements into abstract concepts (hence, not "wasting" interesting material), (b) distinguishing the different expressions of these concepts as clearly as possible, and (c) being clearly relatable to the theory developed by Dreeben and Parsons. The typification that had preceded this step was helpful in that it drew attention to suitable more precise definitions of the concepts, connecting empirical material and theoretical guiding concepts. For example, on the basis of the typification, it had already proved useful to define Dreeben's dimension "independence" as "agency" for our target group, i.e., not only as working independently in the classroom but as taking complete responsibility for the own learning success. This new definition proved to be more open and appropriate to our age group. In accordance with the already long and often broken educational biographies of our target group, "agency" also included self-critically coming to terms with the own failures.

Step 3 – Dealing with the exceptions: Apart from the two students presented as ideal-typical, namely Kenneth and Bethina, the students all showed slight to stronger deviations from an orientation right at the universalistic end or at the opposite end. The two more strongly deviant students, the former Gymnasium student Anu and the former Hauptschule student Cem, were therefore subjected to a more detailed analysis in search of characteristics that could provide an explanation for their deviation. This explanation was then re-examined for the whole group, the main result of this being that the limitations of the model became apparent.

3 Results

3.1 Two types of students – prototypes and deviations

The self-critical lone fighter: Kenneth failed at the Gymnasium after the tenth grade. In the interview, he said about that time at the Gymnasium: "As far as lessons and such were concerned, I was really only active in the subjects that I also enjoyed." He had, as he said, "massively high absenteeism". As far as his current school attendance is concerned, he believes that he has to be "really interested" to do well in a subject. "However, I now try to get involved in everything and to continue my education everywhere (...) simply out of my own interest. And to participate" – that's how he outlined his recipe for succeeding this time. And to emphasize that he alone bears the responsibility, he refuses to let friends who are good at his problem subjects help him with his work for school; he would only do so "in the worst case of emergency". If things don't work out now, he doesn't blame the teachers, they "do their duty". He said of the teacher of his worst subject that he is "neutral" towards her; she "doesn't do anything wrong", she "explains clearly" and "has nice diagrams." Inability is "my fault," he said, because he doesn't always fulfil the high demands he makes on himself: "It's meeting these demands where I fail." He was then and is now the legislator and judge of his behavior. He was anything but a model student in his earlier school career and is still not a model student today, but he takes sole responsibility for his success and failure. He is a lone fighter who struggles not least with himself. His grades are good, he keeps an eye on them, they are between 1 and 2 but have gone down somewhat recently because he has not always been present. He sees himself in the banking profession later on and says that he could benefit from the numerous training courses that banks offer their employees; the prerequisite, however, is a general university entrance qualification eligibility to study.

It's "the others" that count: Bethina attended tenth grade at a Hauptschule, but "that was this puberty phase and I had already changed schools so many times (...), and it was all a bit too much for me. (...) And I come from a very big family; there are seven of us at home." She left without a qualification. She caught up on her lower secondary and then her intermediate school certificate (Hauptschulabschluss and mittlerer Schulabschluss) at a vocationally oriented school and an evening school. Like Kenneth, she was frequently absent back then: "Because (.) my friends wanted it that way too." She is currently absent a lot too, which is "a bit" related to her private life – the big family. She spoke of being overtaxed by the expectations of independence. Of the teacher in her worst subject, she said: "Maybe he thinks 'they have to sit down and learn by themselves' and then I actually do sit down and then I find it very difficult." The teacher could "maybe be friendlier, or smile." In order to improve, she wants to be in a tutoring group "with a teacher

who teaches us a bit (...) who is friendlier." When asked about her interests, she said: "Well, I'm one of those people – I seem to have gotten to know myself or realized much too late just what I want to do." She wants to earn the general university entrance qualification because of her family: "That's also a little bit because of my family, (...) the idea was put into my head even when I was little that I absolutely have to get my Abitur [qualification at the end of secondary school." Afterward, she says she would like to go "into the social sector," but she does not know what she really wants to do there or even whether she needs a general eligibility to study. In the interview, she spoke about poor grades once but immediately changed the subject, referring to moods and fluctuations – "you have days like that" – but on the whole, she believes she can succeed, and then for the only time in the interview she actually referred to herself as an agent, albeit not very rationally: "because my body tells me so."

Kenneth and Bethina represent the two types – the former Gymnasium student focused on his own interests and performance, including working on himself and his learning behavior, and the former Hauptschule student oriented toward a need for personal attention and influenced by others. If one derives the type "former Gymnasium student" and "former Hauptschule student" from the orientations in the interviewees, one must admit, however, that there are students in both groups who represent these types only to a certain extent. For example, the former Gymnasium student Anu, who spoke vaguely of being interested in some subjects but did not really refer to plans for the future except that she wanted to be able to "get better grades this time and thus be more successful with applications." She saw the reason for her earlier failure in the fact that she was always an outsider at her Gymnasium. Now however, she stated, she works hard in school. She puts "a lot of pressure on myself (...) Because I think to myself, I want to make it and if I want to make it, I want to make it well." However, she still cannot quite take responsibility for her performance: "In terms of willpower definitely, but in terms of nerves, I don't know," she said. She gets emotional and intellectual support from frequent meetings with fellow students, and as far as learning for school is concerned, she said, "I like to stick with others." She does not, however, expect any personal support from teachers.

Among the former Hauptschule students, Cem clearly differed from Bethina who served as a model for the typification. Cem said that he did not have to go to Hauptschule because of his grades, that it had been his parents' decision and "maybe due to ignorance, maybe due to laziness." Like Anu, he did not see any reasons in his own actions for his previous rather broken school biography, but now he sees his current performance as his own fault. Although he described himself as somewhat "lazy (...) or rather moody," he said that now he tries to counteract this and, for example, to do homework

immediately after school before he goes to his room, to give laziness no chance. His grades are good now and he keeps an eye on them. He does not mention an interest in particular subjects, but he has a clear goal: he wants to become a forester and describes how he imagines that. When asked to state his expectations of teachers, he shows the respect for elders that he must also show his father by saying that he should not expect older people to change to please him. On the other hand, he thinks it is right "that they (the teachers) sometimes (...) talk to us about personal matters (.). that they have a personal relationship with the students." Unfortunately, this would not be the case for all teachers.

3.2 The systematic classification

Based on the insights from the typification, the statements of the ten interviewees were first arranged into six thematic areas: (a) dealing with demands in previously attended schools, (b) dealing with current demands as well as strategies to achieve good performance, (c) dealing with quality standards and feedback, (d) expectations of teachers, (e) academic interests, and (f) biographical horizon (see also Table A1).[3] In this re-run through the entire material, four theoretical categories were identified that clearly relate to Dreeben's categories, but that also match our material and maximally distinguish students with different school biographical experiences; this last requirement – as was already apparent in the formation of the types – could only partially be achieved.

The first category is *agency*, and it refers to the perception of learning success as a result of individual achievement and also to dealing with this perception. This comes close to what Dreeben called "independence" – the expectation that students solve their tasks independently. But of course, in keeping with the age of the students, it refers to a much broader kind of independence, namely taking responsibility for one's own academic success or failure. Dreeben's notion of performance orientation as adhering to academic standards and trying to achieve the best grades possible is also reflected in this. The accounts given by Kenneth, Bethina, Anu, and Cem when talking about and interpreting their student behavior illustrated manifestations of such agency. For example, we classify the distinctly self-critical interpretations of failure as a consequence of a lack of interest (Kenneth, former Gymnasium student; mentioned above) or of opposition – "(...) I did pretty much everything you shouldn't do, just like that and on principle. I know I was just seeing

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[3]   Assignments of the material to thematic areas and concepts can be found (each with sample items) in the Appendix A.
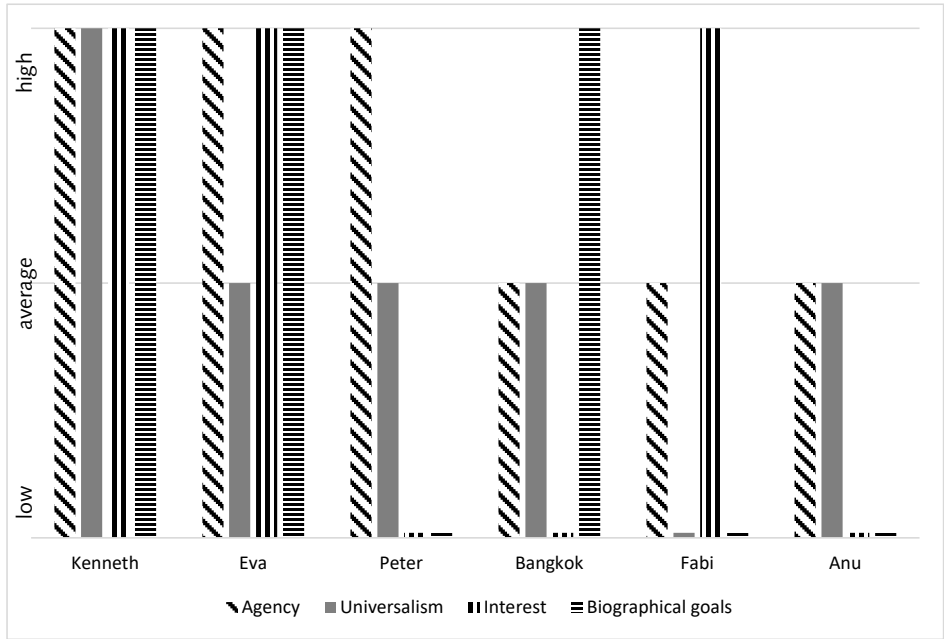
Figure 2a
Individual degrees of normative orientations of former Gymnasium students
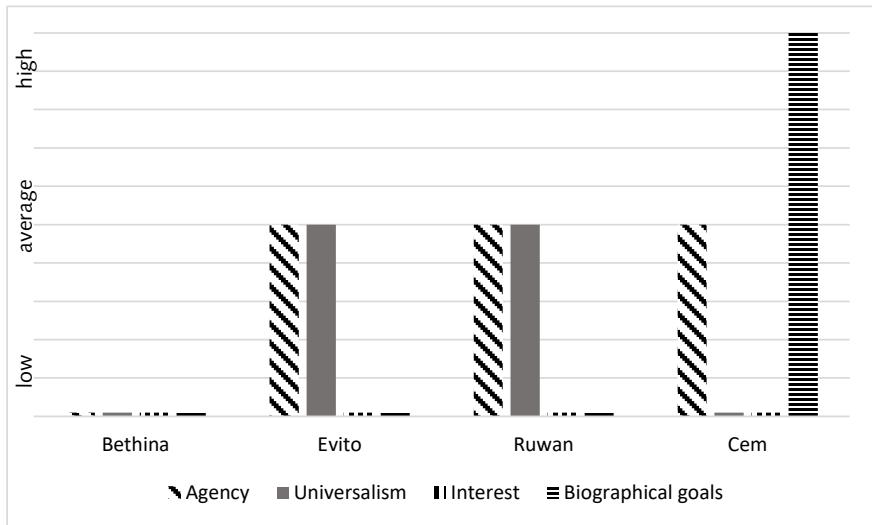
Figure 2b
Individual degrees of normative orientations of former Hauptschule students

how far I could go." (Peter, former Gymnasium student) – as showing a high degree of agency (cf. Figure 2a). In contrast, we assign the interpretation of failure as something that is due to puberty or a big family, as former Hauptschule student Bethina (cf. Figure 2b) did, to the opposite pole, since causes were named that could not have been changed even with the strongest will in the world. Similarly, student strategies such as "showing interest in everything" in order to learn really well (Kenneth, former Gymnasium student) or "started reading science journals and (....) noticed that I am actually really good at these subjects" (Eva, former Gymnasium student) are interpreted as an expression of such independent agency. We concluded that this type of agency was at a medium level of expression when, for example, it was rejected as an interpretation of the previous school biography, but adopted for the learning process at the time of the interview, or when a student stated that they were never absent, always concentrated, and usually got good grades, but when they did not manage to do so, they simply "cheated" (Bangkok, former Gymnasium student). It was – as these remarks have already indicated – mainly the interview passages in thematic areas a-c (Table A1) that contained statements about agency.

We refer to the second category as *universalism/specificity,* and it combines the two categories mentioned separately by Dreeben since the two dimensions were mostly addressed together in the students' statements. This means that students accepted being judged by teachers based on their academic performance and, in principle, only according to that performance, each student being one among many who were all treated equally. This seems to be one of the most difficult demands that schools place on their students. Only Kenneth (former Gymnasium student) fully accepted it. Eva, who otherwise also stood out among the former Gymnasium students with her universalistic orientation, already made certain concessions here. She did not expect any special treatment, but she did complain about a teacher who predicted her grade would be a 5 (F) if she continued to perform poorly. Such an orientation was classified as a medium expression of the category. We classified the expression of universalism/specificity as low if an interviewee stated that they "conveyed a certain image of myself" in order to improve their grades or sometimes asked a teacher if they "dislike me" (Fabi, former Gymnasium student) or even expected a "personal bond" with teachers (Cem, former Hauptschule student).

The third category is *interest* and refers to academic interest; the category here is thus congruent with the thematic area and does not require any special explanation. We add it to Dreeben's categories (or to be precise: the categories that are still recognizably inspired by Dreeben) because students also mentioned interests, for example, as a basis for agency and as a source of motivation that made them independent of whatever else happens.

We have already pointed out the relevance of "interest" for Kenneth and Eva (the former Gymnasium students). In contrast, some interviewees did not address interest at all and indicated that they were motivated in other ways. The former Gymnasium student Peter displayed a high level of agency at the time of the interview, but he complained that he found it difficult: "The day sometimes just has no flavor. You know, it's just so dull, you just come here and sit in class because you just have this long-term goal (...) other days, you have fun like just that, then it's like when you were in school like before, you know, like a place you go to for social contact...."

Finally, the fourth category is *biographical horizon*, which aligns with the thematic area and has a similar status in the theoretical structure to interest. We assume that this orientation also ultimately has a motivational content. The biographical horizon can be a very clear one, as for Eva, the former Gymnasium student who made calculations with her grades in order to determine whether they were good enough to study medicine. Alternately, it can be barely visible, as for Bethina (former Hauptschule student), who spoke only vaguely of the "social sector" without knowing what she would like to do there or even whether she needed a general university entrance qualification at all.

3.3 Dealing with exceptions

The classification shows a clear trend (Figure 2a/b): Overall, the former Gymnasium students were clearly more universalistically oriented, they also mentioned interests more frequently and their biographical horizon was clearer. None of the former Hauptschule students scored highly in the agency category. Considering the small number of cases – which were, however, subjected to an elaborate analysis – it is hardly possible to draw any clear conclusions. However, the classification does provide a theoretical framework that could be useful for further analyses. The clearest exceptions to the characteristics assumed for a group are again found in Anu (former Gymnasium student) and Cem (former Hauptschule student). Anu said she never felt comfortable at the Gymnasium; Cem, on the other hand, claimed that he only attended the Hauptschule because of his parents' ignorance or laziness. It is possible to say that each of them was misplaced at their former schools. This raises the question of whether and to what extent the identified characteristics are school-type-specific socialization effects or alternatively – if one wants to see the students less deterministically and more as actors – a school-type-specific choice of strategies of "doing the job of a student" (Perrenoud, 2010). Or is it rather a matter of individual characteristics that then lead to a decision for a certain school type (matching or complementary to the characteristics) – the right student for the right school? This is discussed in more detail below.

4 Discussion

In our study, we wanted to develop a grid of students' normative orientations based on a theoretical approach to explain the influence of stratification in secondary education I (years 5 through 10) on success in academic SCE, and we assumed normative school-type effects as being central to this influence. We assumed that academic SCE has its own normative structure, which connects to the learners' orientations acquired in their previous school biography. A first result of our study is that the normative orientations described by Dreeben could be identified – in a manner appropriate to the age and circumstances of our students, and therefore somewhat modified – when these students spoke about their orientation toward school. They were supplemented by the categories interest and biographical horizon. Former Hauptschule students reported less agency, universalism, and interest in school subjects and had biographical goals that were less clear than those of former Gymnasium students. Following our theoretical approach, this should affect their prospects for success in academic SCE. Since our qualitative study focused on first-year students, we were not able to link their subsequent success or failure to their normative orientations.

However, a comparison of the groups with the greatest differences – former Gymnasium and former Hauptschule students – showed only a partial relationship between previous school type and the categories. In particular, a more detailed analysis of the exceptions raised the question whether it is really a school socialization effect that accounts for the pattern. The two students who deviated significantly from the pattern described themselves as misplaced at the secondary school they had chosen, in one case a Gymnasium, in the other a Hauptschule. This raises the question whether the "typical orientation" of former Gymnasium students and of Hauptschule students in the other cases is based on the socialization effect of their school or whether it is more likely that the students attending this type of school have already brought an individual orientation with them in the sense of a match between the orientation of the student and that of the institution as a result of selection by both sides. Finally, a third conjecture is that the socialization effect of the institution takes place only when there is a certain degree of correspondence with individual preconditions. These are questions that cannot be answered here because material relevant to these issues was not collected, but they can at least be seen as a critical limitation of the thesis that there is a normative school socialization effect here. The development of the set of categories presented here can serve as a starting point for future investigations into the question of the existence, development, and possibly the connectivity of school-type-specific normative orientations. Furthermore, this theoretical grid should be used in quantitative studies, which would

make it possible to include intermediate school types and to analyze gradual differences in normative orientations of students with different school biographies.

The normative orientations that we found reflect, among other things, the interpretation of and attitudes toward performance in individual school subjects. The more independent a student is, the more they accept that teachers treat them as a student and thus their learning progress and achievements are the focus of interest, and the more they take an interest in subjects and their own life planning, the more successful they should also be in academic SCE. The extent to which normative orientations influence a student's performance and a teacher's assessment is not something that can be determined on the basis of our research. A further question concerns the extent to which normative orientations influence life chances beyond school, such as placement in the labor market. A study by Heckmann et al. (2006) showed that normative orientations related to the duration of school experience played a significant role in labor market opportunities even where there were no differences in the performance and cognitive prerequisites (see also Protsch & Solga, 2015). If the assumptions and preliminary findings on school-type-specific socialization effects sketched here are confirmed in further studies, this would be evidence of multiple disadvantages for students in less demanding educational pathways of a school system with early stratification. Not only would they be disadvantaged with regard to the opportunities for upgrading their school-leaving qualifications and profiting from them in the labor market, but in addition their acquired attitudes could make it difficult for them to succeed in finding jobs and could limit their job mobility.

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Appendix A

Examples of the extent of the normative orientations

Theoretical concept (level of expression)	Statements from the thematic area:	Examples of allocated statements:
Agency (1) Level of expression: – high – average – low (the "average" level is the result of a combination of statements that were classified as "high" and "low"; for a person, for an area, or for two areas)	a) dealing with expectations of the previous school (retrospective evaluation)	*high*: "And then I was just lazy. And over time, my grades became worse. And if I had studied, I would have made it. But then you don't pay attention in class and don't have enough knowledge and then you mess up (…) the exam…" *low*: "Well, that was this phase in puberty (…) and I'm from a very big family."
	b) current dealing with expectations/ strategies, to achieve better performance	*high*: "…began to read economy magazines and (…) realized that I'm actually quite good at these subjects." *low*: comments on her absence from over 50% of the lessons: "Well, it's not good if you miss class, I realized". On being asked how school could help deal with this: "Well, they made it mandatory for me to bring a doctors certificate, that definitely helps."
	c) coping with expectations and feedback via grades	*high*: Talking about grades and grade point average: "I just have to invest more time. The only thing that bothers me is that should I choose medicine, maths could really destroy my grade point average. I need to pay a bit of attention to that." *low*: Answering about bad grades: "I'm just never really sure, but I have a good feeling (…) because my body tells me that."

Universality and Specificity (2) Level of expression: – high – average – low (the level "average" is the result of a combination of statements that were classified as "high" and "low"; for a person, for an area or for two areas)	a) Current dealing with expectations/ strategies, to achieve better performance	*high*: "The inability is my fault (…) It's meeting these demands where I fail." *low*: "If you're not that good in school but are on good terms with the teacher, sit up straight and just give a certain impression, you can get a better grade."
	b) coping with expectations and feedback via grades	*high*: "I participated well in lessons. But then I thought I could do the same in the exam and prepared for it (…) and then I messed it up." *low*: "I just really can't paint very well and painted a portrait at home, for five or six hours. I really put a lot of effort into it (…) he still gave me a C. I have to admit I was pretty down after that because he didn't see the effort I put into it and that I actually can't paint at all. He just didn't see us as individuals."
	c) expectations of teachers	*high*: "Oh, no (..) how could they even help me? I mean they do help us by giving lessons." *low*: "It's important that they talk to us about personal matters. To establish a personal relationship with the students."
Interests (3)		*existent:* "I especially like mathematics. I'm a huge fan of natural science; it's the same with English. I like languages, but only the practical part of it, the talking part. What I neither can do nor like: analyses." *nonexistent:* does not answer questions about aims nor about interests and adds: "I'm just that type of person. Apparently I found myself or what I wanted to do in life pretty late."
Biographical Horizon (4)		*existent:* "And it only confirmed my wish to study chemistry even more. Or physics, just some natural science. If my grades are good enough, it could even be medicine. As long as I can do research somewhere." *nonexistent:* On inquiry, no career aspirations were indicated or it was explicitly stated that the student was still undecided."

* These example statements show how the material was used, but the classification is overall based on a synopsis of the interviewee's statements. With a qualitative approach, it is permissible to assign a text section to multiple categories since one text can address multiple thematic areas; the chart therefore includes examples that were assigned to more categories than the category that they illustrate here.

The following punctuation in brackets is used: (.) short pause; (..) longer pause; (…) part omitted.