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The Leaky Pipeline Revisited : Using Sociocultural Fit and Intersectionality to Analytically and Empirically Tackle Unequal Educational Transitions on the Example of Gender and the Subject Selection of French

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FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN

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Queer-Feministische Perspektiven auf Wissen(schaft)

Rostocker Interdisziplinäre Gender und Queer Studien | Band 1



Rostocker Interdisziplinäre Gender und Queer Studien

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Schriftenreihe

Rostocker Interdisziplinäre Gender und Queer Studien

Die Schriftenreihe *Rostocker Interdisziplinäre Gender und Queer Studien* ist eine von Christoph Behrens (Romanische, insbesondere Französische und Italienische Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaft) und Andrea Zittlau (Nordamerikanische Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaft) betreute Folge von Sammelwerken und Monografien, die sich in einen interdisziplinären Diskurs der Gender und Queer Studien einschreibt.

Ziel der Reihe ist eine verstärkte Implementierung von Gender und Queer Studien in die verschiedenen Forschungs- und Lehrcanones und eine breite und innovative Thematisierung von Geschlechter- und Sexualitätsfragen sowie von Problemstellungen, die diese intersektional durchkreuzen und interdependent reagieren.

Einerseits möchte die Reihe interdisziplinäre Theoriearbeit encouragieren und Perspektiven einräumen, die die Infragestellung einer (hetero-) normativen gesellschaftlichen Ordnung in den Fokus rücken und durch sie gestützte Machtverhältnisse, d.h. die strukturierende Bedeutung der Kategorien Gender und *sexuality* systematisch mit der Wirkung anderer sozialer Differenzsemantiken wie *age, ability, class, ethnicity* und *race* reflektieren. Andererseits strebt die Reihe an, Wissenschaft und künstlerische, ästhetische und soziokulturelle Praxis stärker zusammenführen, um so über innovative Ausdrucksformen auch zu neuen Theorieansätzen und Methoden zu finden.

Arbeitsgruppe

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Die *Gender / Queer AG* ist eine von Student*innen, dem AStA der Universität Rostock, wissenschaftlichen Mitarbeiter*innen verschiedener Fachdisziplinen und Verwaltungsangestellte*n initiierte Arbeitsgruppe (AG). Seit 2013 widmet sich die AG den interdisziplinären Gender und Queer Studien nicht nur in der Forschung, sondern auch in verschiedenen (Lehr-)Veranstaltungsformaten, in künstlerischer Praxis und Ausstellungen sowie in hochschul- und regionalpolitischen Kontexten.

Grundlage der Arbeit der AG ist die Fragestellung, wie Geschlecht, Geschlechts- und sexuelle Identitäten (LGBTI*Q) im Zusammenhang mit vielen anderen sozialen Einflussgrößen konstruiert werden. Unser Gebrauch des Wortes *queer* folgt ganz Adrien Riches Motto:

> When those who have the power to name and socially construct reality choose not to see or hear you, whether you are dark-skinned, old, disabled, female, or speak with a different accent or dialect than theirs, when someone with the authority of a teacher, say, describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as you looked into a mirror and saw nothing.[1]

Queer ist als ein hinterfragendes, herrschaftskritisches und engagiertes Konzept zu verstehen, mit dessen Hilfe ausgrenzende Normen, Hierarchiebildungen und Systeme reflektiert werden können; ein Schlüssel zu verstehen, woher „a moment of psychic disequilibrium“ rührt. *Queer* ist daher nicht nur als Synonym für schwul-lesbische Identitäten zu sehen, sondern umfasst sowohl Trans*-, Inter*- und Bisexualität als auch andere (nicht-)heteronormative Geschlechtsidentitäten und Sexualitäten. Darüber hinaus soll für die AG die Verwobenheit von queeren Identitäten mit gesellschaftlichen Verhältnissen im Fokus stehen.

Die Forschungs-, Veranstaltungs- und politische Arbeit der AG umfasst aus diesem Grund unter anderem Themen wie alternative (Zusammen-) Lebensformen und Elternschaft; Hierarchieverhältnisse, welche aus rassistischen oder klassistischen Zuschreibungen und Denkmustern resultieren; *Dis/ability Studies*; Medizinethik und -geschichte; (feministische) Kapitalismuskritik sowie das diskriminierungsfreie Hochschulleben.

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[1] Frances A. Maher /Mary Kay Thompson Tetreault: The Feminist Classroom. New York 1994, 201.

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The Leaky Pipeline Revisited

Using Sociocultural Fit and Intersectionality to Analytically and Empirically Tackle Unequal Educational Transitions on the Example of Gender and the Subject Selection of French

Abstract

The leaky pipeline metaphor is used to describe the dropout rate of certain populations from certain careers like women from academia or people of color from teaching jobs. While the phenomena are acknowledged, the term leaky pipeline has been criticized for lacking systematicity in describing social inequalities and for its inherent functionalism. Based on this criticism, this paper discusses ways to systematically account for a) the social context, via sociocultural fit; b) the leaking populations and their interwoven social belongings, via intersectionality; and c) the theoretical integration and empirical application of these concepts, via a sociology of knowledge approach. I demonstrate these procedures on an example from the field of institutional language learning, the de/selection decision concerning French, to be made at the transition to high school.

Keywords

Intersectionality, Sociocultural Fit, French, Leaky Pipeline, Habitus, Educational Trajectories

There are fewer women than men in leading positions and the proportion of female university professors is equally askew. There are fewer teachers of color in schools than people of color in society. These phenomena are described using the metaphor of the leaky pipeline. Public debates include several explanations that range from social determination to individual choice, natural dispositions and openly misogynistic or racist commentaries. The latter two hint at the interdependence of social categories – and of dimensions of discrimination – like gender and race but also others, complicating the notion of the pipeline out of which certain populations leak.

The aim of this article is thus to revisit and theoretically re-frame the catchy but limited metaphor of the leaky pipeline and to sketch theoretical

and methodological paths towards an analysis of the re-framed phenomenon. To this purpose I will introduce a relational understanding of social inequalities in educational transitions through the concepts of sociocultural fit and intersectionality and their empirical realization via the Documentary Method (DM).

After describing the inherent flaws of the metaphor, I propose the combination of two heuristics to refine the understanding of the pipeline as well as that of the leak. The first heuristic is the idea of a fit between a person and her/his social context, which I employ in Bourdieu's sense of the relationship between habitus and field. This concept helps to address both the pipeline and the "leak". The second heuristic is intersectionality, originally developed to account for the experience of multiple and interwoven dimensions of discrimination that e.g. women of color face, and soon picked up by feminist scholars. Rather than essentialist views, both are relational heuristics that understand social phenomenona to be in relation with others. The two are compatible but refer to different axes of multidimensional relations.

This approach will be exemplified through empirical research originating in French language learning and a gendered pattern of deselection in school. Accordingly, my own background is in applied linguistics and language learning research with regard to gender. However, as the problem at hand presents itself as more social than linguistic I draw on sociological (rather than linguistic) theories and methods.

The focus of the article is not to answer a question through the analysis of empirical data, but rather to posit a critique of the metaphor leaky pipeline and to propose a procedure to conceptualize educational inequalities, especially at points of institutional transitions. Nonetheless, the empirical results reaffirm the focus on theoretical coordination of different heuristics.

1 The Leaky Pipeline, a First Glance: Women and Academic Trajectories

Following the lecture series this volume is based on, a starting point for the discussion is women's careers in academia:

In the year 2015, 23% of professors in German universities were female[1], and even this low number is an increase compared to 2005, when they made

[1] Statistisches Bundesamt, Frauenanteil in Professorenschaft 2015 auf 23 % gestiegen.

up only 14% of professors. At first sight, this confirms the idea of a leaky pipeline in academic careers, meaning that although many women start and finish higher education they reach the highest academic positions to a considerably lower degree. The data is in line with other research on gender in education and professional life and highlights the paradox that although girls and women are often more successful in institutional education than men they still receive lower salaries and do not have equal access to leading positions in their jobs.[2] While this is not necessarily the result of intentional misogynistic actions there is undoubtedly systematic discrimination against women in the processes of academic advancement.

Yet this is not the whole story: Firstly, we can see an important difference between academic disciplines,[3] with 36% female professors in humanities and only 10% in engineering, while the other disciplines range between these two.[4] This calls for a closer look based on the disciplines and the differences between the respective career paths. Secondly, in findings from a western German study, professors in these two disciplines, i.e., humanities and STEM, (Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) are significantly more often of lower socioeconomic origin than those in law and medicine.[5] However, across all disciplines female professors come from higher socioeconomic backgrounds than male professors. This points to a social reality that is more complex than the male-female binary – while neglecting altogether the third big category of social inequality, race/ethnicity/nationality.[6]

Therefore the need arises to move beyond the simple binary notion of women leaking out of the academic career pipeline.[7] Indeed the pipeline metaphor is employed in many different contexts: e.g. academic careers and socioeconomic inequality,[8] STEM careers in general, women and STEM,[9]

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[2] S.a. Kupfer, "The interrelation of twenty-first century education and work from a gender perspective", s.a. Budde, Bildungs(miss)erfolge von Jungen, 37pp.

[3] I use 'discipline' for academic studies of e.g. "French" or "civil engineering" but 'subject' for the thematic-organizational units in school.

[4] Statistisches Bundesamt, "Frauenanteil in Professorenschaft 2012 auf über 20 % gestiegen."

[5] Möller, "Wie offen ist die Universititätsprofessur", 353.

[6] Blome et al.., Handbuch zur Gleichstellungspolitik an Hochschulen, 131 ; s.a. Smooth, Intersectionality and women's advancement.

[7] Generally, the intenable status of the female-male binary can be unterstood to be common knowledge in the field of Gender Studies, cf. e.g. Butler, Gender Trouble.

[8] S.a. Möller, "Wie offen ist die Universititätsprofessur."

[9] S.a. Brush, "Women in Science and Engineering."

teachers of color.[10] Obviously, not only the (micro)contexts but also the leaking populations need to be analyzed more precisely. As Ryan et al. put it, "[t]he leaky pipeline metaphor goes only so far in accounting for the low number of educators of color. It is useful, but only to a point."[11] This limitation can be transferred to other populations as well.

The following desiderata emerge:

1. the metaphor itself and its implicit connotations have to be scrutinized;
2. the (academic) contexts of the pipeline need to be specified;
3. the leaking populations need to be specified (e.g. in terms of overlapping categories);
4. the relationship between the contexts and the populations needs to be specified; and
5. this relationship needs to be grounded in a social action theory that offers e.g. an account of selection decisions, an aspect that too often is left implicit.[12] Approaching these phenomena is especially salient with respect to empirical research.

In the next section I turn to the first mentioned desideratum, the metaphoric terms themselves.

2 The Metaphor of the Leaky Pipeline Deconstructed

This chapter serves to analyze the metaphor, to uncover its essentialist and functionalist underpinnings and to reframe the question at hand.

> [T]he pipeline metaphor has informed [US] national policy prescriptions for well over two decades [...] Yet, despite the hundreds of millions of dollars invested in efforts to increase the number of individuals choosing science or engineering careers, especially women and ethnic minorities, interventions have thus far yielded a subpar return on investment.[13]

As substantial as the problems described by the leaky pipeline are, they seem to resist compensatory measures based on this description by Cannady et al.

[10] S.a. Ryan et al.., Teacher Diversity in Canada.
[11] Idem., 605.
[12] S.a. Grein, Die (ökonomische) Nützlichkeit von Fremdsprachen?
[13] Cannady et al., Problematizing the STEM Pipeline Metaphor, 444.

They state that

> [a]ccordingly, the pipeline metaphor has ill-served policy makers who seek to improve the capacity and number of STEM professionals. First, it suggests a simplistic and inadequate policy fix: patch the leaks. Second, it encourages an understanding of the STEM career pathway as a neatly linear march through set academic gatekeepers, leaving little room for scrutiny of the gatekeepers themselves. In short, it reifies the modal path as the sole path and elevates gatekeepers to necessary conditions, thereby narrowing the range of acceptable policy responses.[14]

This passage in fact suggests three points for further consideration: first, the existence of leaks that can be patched; second, the possible understanding of a career as a linear pathway: and third, the existence of gatekeepers. All of these points can be discussed within the conceptual framework of a pipeline metaphor – but it remains insufficient.

Cannady et al. discuss data concerning interest in STEM careers and calculus grades to propose the alternative metaphor of multiple pathways that are less linear and leave more room for individual enjoyment[15] and agency.[16] While this point looks like an individualistic theoretical grounding, the question of agency is brought up more critically in part because

> [f]urthermore, the metaphor ignores a fact highly salient in much of the career choice literature: Career decisions are made in early adulthood within the context of other life course events (e.g., having children, getting married) [...] Again, this analytic blind spot is far from gender neutral. [...] It is of limited utility to ground efforts at a greater gender balance in STEM in a model that fails to consider (and problematize) gender norms and assumes that all have the luxury of a single-minded pursuit of a career.[17]

Thus, the pathway metaphor as proposed by Cannady et al. looks like a mix of individualist and more socially grounded (here: norm-oriented) understandings of social action. Their approach intends to improve policy making and to smoothen the pathways to STEM careers.

However, the problems could be located beyond the ineffective policies based on the leaky pipeline metaphor: “The pipeline metaphor in itself is a clue to the problem: It suggests a factory-management attitude that treats

[14] Ibid., 444pp.
[15] Idem., 456.
[16] Idem., 458.
[17] Idem., 448.

people as raw material to be made into products."[18] Ryan et al.[19] elaborate on this point by exposing the metaphor's social functionalist understanding of the educational system. This understanding has the implicit normative, ideological core that the reproduction of the system itself is its central function – that in contrast any kind of (emancipatory) political concern should be denounced as ideological. The pathways proposed by Cannady et al. appear more varied than the classic pipeline but equally socially functionalist.

Therefore,

> [t]hose who employ this metaphor assume that the pipeline plays a key role to ensure the continuity of not just the education system, but also society itself. Communities need teachers, engineers, dentists, and others to make sure that they are able to carry on.[20]

If one assumes that society is about more than being "able to carry on", the pipeline and also the "pathways" metaphors are insufficient. In addition, the gatekeepers can be understood to be more than Cannday et al.'s individualized "interest" and high school grades rather to be linked to complex social inequalities (see chapter 1).[21] Furthermore, according to the metaphor the system itself is working fine so just some minor repairs, "patching the leaks," need to be done – which does not at all account for the systematic nature of the discriminatory social mechanisms in place that need to be uncovered and dealt with through diversity politics.

Ryan et al. explore alternative metaphors, none of which are able to overcome these criticisms:[22] The bottleneck only slows down inevitable progress and does not include systematic inequalities. The filter is systematic but still a functionalist metaphor. The glass ceiling may be the most popular and systematic alternative but it homogenizes the populations in question: "Among other things, the glass ceiling metaphor is not equipped to capture the complexities associated with the uneven performance of different

[18] Brush, "Women in Science and Engineering", 416.
[19] Ryan et al., "Teacher Diversity in Canada.", 600pp.
[20] Idem., 601.
[21] Cannady et al., "Problematizing the STEM Pipeline Metaphor", 449. For a criticism of "interest" in educational decision-making, cf. Grein, "Die (ökonomische) Nützlichkeit von Fremdsprachen?"; Grades as indicators of proficiency received criticisms as too muddied; the alternative approach via "competencies" is in turn heavily criticized for turning a blind eye to social inequalities – and is instead discussed as a result of a sociocultural fit. S.a. Kramer et al., Selektion und Schulkarriere.
[22] Ryan et al. 2009, Teacher Diversity in Canada, 601pp.

groups of racialized students."[23] In addition, it does not account for complex inequalities and the overlapping of social categories – where intersectionality comes into focus.

To summarize the criticism of the metaphoric term leaky pipeline itself: On a first level, despite its intense use in research and even as a base for policies, the pipeline metaphor implies too much linearity and only one way to advance. It also portrays the leaking as an unsystematic and random process that does not account for gatekeepers. On the second level, it is an industrial metaphor based on an inherent functionalism that does not consider the systematic discrimination of certain populations. These criticisms lead to the proposed combination of sociocultural fit and intersectionality to advance the discussion of unequal trajectories in educational institutions.

In the following chapter I discuss relevant socio-institutional aspects to clarify the context in which my example is located.

3 Educational Transitions and Subfields in the German Educational System

3.1 Educational Transitions and Subfields: General Considerations

In this chapter, I describe which contexts qualify as leaky pipeline moments. In the field of education I focus on two converging situations which may present such contexts, subfields like academic disciplines or school subjects and transitions in the educational system.

In the study discussed above, Möller explicitly regroups academic disciplines to improve the accuracy of her analysis but she is still stuck with four very broad groupings[24] that might be considered to be "inadequate to illuminate differences across STEM subfields."[25] This is also true in other disciplines – at least in the German context – where the differences are understood to be too big to ignore the respective cultural logics within each field.[26] The fields, subjects, or disciplines that are especially interesting are – as seen above – those with one-sided, skewed demographics that tend to be understood as pipeline phenomena.[27]

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[23] Idem., 608.
[24] Möller, "Wie offen ist die Universitätsprofessur", 347.
[25] Cannady et al., "Problematizing the STEM Pipeline Metaphor", 447.
[26] Friebertshäuser, "Statuspassage Erwachsenwerden", 301pp, 308.
[27] Dausien, "'Bildungsentscheidungen' im Kontext biografischer Erfahrungen und Erwartungen", 44.

The need for differentiation holds equally true for school subjects as Willems[28] demonstrates for German and physics, but even such seemingly close subjects as Spanish and French are clearly distinct in stakeholders' points of view, institutional traditions and cultural representations.[29] This is remarkable insofar as school subjects consist of considerably smaller units than university disciplines: they occupy only two to six hours of classroom activities instead of whole educational institutions like secondary schools or university disciplines.

While the further differentiation of university disciplines is necessary to improve the analysis of sociocultural fit and thus the leak and the pipeline there are earlier chokepoints for the reproduction of inequalities in academic trajectories that need to be considered. In the German educational system, transitions that limit or enhance opportunities in life are intensely researched. In particular, the transition from primary to secondary schools has been described as a strong factor in the reproduction of social inequality due to the huge systematic differences between the different types of secondary schools in Germany.[30] Another highly important and intensely researched[31] transition for the academic trajectories of diverse populations is the one from high school (*Oberstufe*/ *Sekundarstufe* II) to university. Although the attention drawn to these transitions is justified by their huge importance for educational trajectories, other significant transitions have been overlooked as a result.

This is especially the case with the transition from Secondary I (ages approx. 10-15) to Secondary II (ages approx. 16-18), which leads to university qualifications in the form of the *Abitur* diploma. In the academic-streaming *Gymnasium* schools the *Abitur* is increasingly understood as the normal degree and students often stay within the same building as they advance so this transition might not stand out as much as others do. Yet, it is agreed that the subject selections taking place at this stage are crucial for ensuing educational decisions – e.g. an emphasis on physics and mathematics in Secondary II is important to study physics in university.[32]

At this point, the questions of transitions and subject selections converge

[28] S.a. Willems, Schulische Fachkulturen und Geschlecht.
[29] S.a. Caspari /Rössler, "Französisch gegen Spanisch?", Grein, "Geschlechterforschung und Fachdidaktik Französisch."
[30] S.a. Kramer et al., Selektion und Schulkarriere.
[31] S.a. Lojewski, "Geschlecht und Studienfachwahl."
[32] Cf. Ibid. S.a. Klomfaß et al., "Der Übergang von der Sekundarstufe I."

in educational institutions and the corresponding trajectories – and the discussions equally converge at the point that not only the transitions to the secondary schools (as differing fields) and to university and its disciplinary fields are relevant, but also the transitions and fields within secondary school.

3.2 Example: The Transition to Secondary II and Subject Selection of French

French is a subject (and also an academic discipline) that can be understood as an example of a leaky pipeline phenomenon:[33] in Germany boys deselect French significantly more often than girls as they move on to high school.[34] This is the especially the case in the intensive classes (*Profiloberstufe* and *Leistungskurs*), where one can find on average only 20% boys. The same percentage of males has been found in French language teacher training at least since the 1970s, so we are looking at a pervasive and enduring phenomenon.[35] Yet, there has been no systematic research so far on the topic in Germany and thus there is simply not enough information available to offer any possible explanations. Nonetheless, on the one hand scholars as well as the major German weekly news magazine *Der Spiegel* informally quote (undefined) others who called French a girls' subject ("*Mädchenfach*") or "gays' language" ("*Schwulensprache*")[36] or simply "gay."[37] On the other hand, French is often ascribed positive aesthetic attributes like beauty or softness, especially concerning the sound or pronunciation – making it appear feminine or even effeminate to some, presumably boys.[38] This discussion of the research obviously still follows the binary discussion of the original papers.

In Anglo-Saxon countries, this feminine reputation has been found to

[33] While the parallels to the leaking pipeline of girls and women in STEM (s.a. Makarova et al., "Why is the pipeline leaking?") are obvious, there are factors which turn the picture into that of a distorting mirror (Herzog et al. Koedukation im Physikunterricht.): discrimination in the professional field (cf. Makarova, "Why is the pipeline leaking?") and a pay gap (s.a. Kupfer, "The interrelation of twenty-first century education and work from a gender perspective"). But from a normative standpoint it is equally desirable that each student has the possibility to attend language classes.

[34] S.a. Roeder /Gruehn, "Geschlecht und Kurswahlen." S.a. Bittner, "Der Teilnehmerschwund im Französischunterricht."

[35] S.a. Grein, "Geschlechterforschung und Fachdidaktik Französisch."

[36] Leupold, Französischunterricht als Lernort, 15.

[37] Friedmann, "Shakira schlägt Jacques Brel", 51.

[38] Bonin, "Jungenförderung im Französischunterricht?", 19.

impact boys' deselection of French.[39] Along the same lines as the research discussed earlier, Carr & Pauwels[40] found that for language de/selection the "crucial point is the post-compulsory moment." French even holds the "monopoly of femininity" amongst foreign languages in the Australian context.[41] But several authors break up the binary: Carr and Pauwels[42] point out that social class and intercultural experiences are important factors influencing attitudes towards foreign language learning in general. Norton and Pavlenko go even further insofar

> that gender, as one of many important facets of social identity, interacts with race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, (dis)ability, age, and social status in framing students' language learning experiences, trajectories, and outcomes.[43]

In turn, experiences and practices of language learning and use influence other aspects of life. There is no easy transfer of Anglo-Saxon studies to German settings; educational structures and historic representations differ. Yet, traces of similarities can be found, e.g. concerning the general post-compulsory de/selection of French, not just by boys.[44]

The questions thus arise: How to systematically describe the selection and inherent/ ensuing complex social inequalities obvious in the subject de/selection of French at the transition to Secondary II? How can this example of a pipeline phenomenon be tackled? While the selection pattern is statistically obvious, the connection to individual trajectories is not clear, nor is the influence of other elements of social inequality. The aim is thus to gain a deeper understanding of students' meaning-making concerning French, gender and intersecting categories for subject selection.

A first approach to elaborating on the systematic and context-bound nature of unequal educational trajectories is the idea of a fit between an academic discipline and a person.

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[39] S.a. Williams et al. "'French Is the Language of Love and Stuff'", Carr /Pauwels, Boys and Foreign Language Learning, Coffey, "Stories of Frenchness", Kissau /Turnbull, "Boys and French as a second language."

[40] Carr /Pauwels, Boys and Foreign Language Learning, 20.

[41] ibid., 74.

[42] ibid., 20.

[43] Norton /Pavlenko, "Addressing gender in the ESL/EFL classroom", 504.

[44] S.a. Reinfried, "Der Französischunterricht und seine quantitative Entwicklung." Neoliberal trends in the economization of education (s.a. Höhne, Ökonomisierung und Bildung) are rarely discussed in German applied linguistics cf. DGFF, "Kompetenzorientierung, Bildungsstandards und fremdsprachliches Lernen."

4 A First Heuristic – Fitting[45] to the Discipline?

"[R]esearch practice mirrors the complexity of social life, calling up unique methodological demands."[46] In answer to these complexities, an alternative to the leaky pipeline has to be introduced – sociocultural fit. Möller's work on the systematically worse positions of women among the German professorship indicated that there are also huge differences between the academic disciplines in this regard. The initial question discussing the idea of fit is therefore: what fits to what? How can we theoretically understand the relation between the school subject or academic discipline and the person?[47]

4.1 Fit, Methodological Questions

Taconis and Kessels[48] approach these questions concerning Dutch and German pupils' choices of a post-compulsory science profile or alternative profiles. They use the psychological self-to-prototype matching theory to research the fit between students and what these students perceive to be science culture (via the prototypical science-loving peer or science teacher). They ground their approach in individualization theory, according to which

> identity formation has become an individual's personal 'project' requiring deliberate effort and individualistic choices. These choices are related to various objects, life styles, and beliefs, and also to school and classroom matters. Similarly, learning activities and choices are also part of a person's identity development.[49]

Thus, subject choice is seen as the direct consequence of a fit, an affiliation with prototypical (or rather stereotypical) representatives of what the pupils think of as (not context-specific) science culture. This understanding of individual free choice as being a characteristic of contemporary western societies has met with criticism for denying the societal impact of decision-

[45] The German term *Passungsverhältnis* might (tautologically) better express the relational conception in question; it could be roughly translated as: relationship of fitting(s).
[46] McCall 2005, "The complexity of intersectionality", 1772.
[47] Generally, in the German context the question of fit is better explored for students in higher education, s.a. Burger et al., "Organisierte Karrieren." Cf. Friebertshäuser, "Statuspassage Erwachsenwerden."
[48] S.a. Kessels /Taconis, "Alien or alike?"
[49] Kessels/ Taconis, Alien or alike?, 1067.

making.[50] As Miller[51] remarks in her discussion of agency and neoliberalism in language learning research:

> The striking affinity between how the agentive language learner and the neoliberal self are conceptualized – as self-regulating, self-determining, and free to make choices (among other shared characteristics) – should not be surprising given that individual agency figures strongly in neoliberal ideologies.

In this article, freedom of choice is understood less as an accomplishment of "late modern societies"[52] but rather as the effect of a neoliberal ideology that denies and erases the effects of structural social, especially socioeconomic inequalities. Accordingly, this neoliberal ideology instead moralizes negative social conditions as the result of "bad choices."[53]

Miller further warns of the necessity to heed the "constructed, rather than essential, character of the neoliberal self in describing it as activat*ed*, responsibiliz*ed*, individualiz*ed*, moraliz*ed*, and/or fre*ed*."[54] Agency and consequently the "freedom" of (subject) choice is understood to be relational. While Miller discusses the relation between a person and his/her broader socio-historical context to deflate euphoric – and neoliberal – proclamations of individual agency, an alternative,[55] more context-bound approach is described in the following chapter.

4.2 Habitus-Field Relation as Fit

Following Bourdieu, fit is understood as the complex relationship between a person's habitus and the social context (field) s/he is in.[56] As persons (theoretically: carriers of habitus) move in their trajectories through social fields they encounter different historic products – in the different fields' own cultural logics as well as the different persons and their respective forms of

[50] Cf. Grein, "Die (ökonomische) Nützlichkeit von Fremdsprachen?" S.a. Miller, "The ideology of learner agency and the neoliberal self."
[51] Miller, "The ideology of learner agency and the neoliberal self", 350.
[52] Kessels /Taconis, "Alien or alike?", 1067.
[53] Miller, "The ideology of learner agency and the neoliberal self", 350. S.a. Dausien, "'Bildungsentscheidungen' im Kontext biografischer Erfahrungen und Erwartungen", 57pp.
[54] Miller, The ideology of learner agency and the neoliberal self, 3, original emphasis.
[55] Regarding gender as a relational category, Butler's approach could be interpreted as another understanding of fit (s.a. Butler, Gender Trouble, 13pp.).
[56] S.a. Burger et al., "Organisierte Karrieren." S.a. Friebertshäuser, "Statuspassage Erwachsenwerden." S.a. Kramer et al., Selektion und Schulkarriere.

habitus.[57] This understanding of the social world proposes the reproduction of social inequalities to be rather stable but not determinist.[58]

Following Bourdieu's famous wording, it is understood that

> [t]he conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them.[59]

The "structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures" refer to the habitus as a product of historically developed social structures and at the same time as the (co)producer of new social structures. This leads to non-identical reproduction of social structures beyond intentions or determination,[60] yet linked to structural as well as nonstructural inequalities.

An implicit – habitualized – affinity to certain contexts is the result, a fit to the (sub)fields that correspond to the conditions of the generation of a certain habitus and might as well lead to a mis-fit to other (sub)fields. Thus, a certain process of decision-making and educational choices is "trained" and becomes increasingly habitualized.[61] The decisions do not take place in isolation but must be understood to happen in implicit coordination with the whole habitus.

The second part of the fit,[62] social fields are societal arenas with their own cultural logics – but the logics and implicit rules of each field are contested among the participants. In an educational context such as French language classes, theoretically possible cultural influences could include, e.g. a) the

[57] The latin plural of habitus would be *habitūs*, I use *forms of habitus* instead for increased comprehensibility.

[58] Kramsch, "A Theory of the Practice", 463. S.a. Rieger-Ladich, "Weder Determinismus, noch Fatalismus."

[59] Bourdieu, The Logic of Practice, 278.

[60] S.a. Rieger-Ladich, "Weder Determinismus, noch Fatalismus." As the statistical data concerning the male-female selection of French show a very stable picture across the last 40 years and hint at an even longer continuity, a theory focussed on reproduction seems to be even preferable.

[61] Bourdieu, Practical Reason, 24. S.a. Cannady et al., "Problematizing the STEM Pipeline Metaphor", 448.

[62] A third part of Bourdieu's theory is the capitals theory, positing that (social, economic, or cultural) capitals acquired in one field (where they have a certain symbolic value) are habitualized but not automatically as valuable in a second or third field, thus refining the relationship between habitus and field.

current neoliberal macro-climate of proficiency testing and applicability, b) an orientation towards classical French language norms such as purity of form, or c) an orientation towards a local school culture – in the example given in the empirical section the school is simultaneously celebrating its highly diverse student population and wrestling with that diversity.

Fit is thus taken to be the result of the relation between two historic products: the person and her/ his social history (habitus) and the historic making of the respective social context (field) – developed in relation to other forms of habitus and fields.[63] In regard to the systematic underrepresentation that certain populations face in educational institutions the concept of trajectory is especially interesting: it picks up the interplays of the (implicit) habitus and the consecutive institutional settings and their respective cultural logics,[64] thus advancing an alternative term to the more individualistic career.

4.3 From Fit to Choice?

Subject selection in the understanding presented here does not follow the clear path from fit to choice that Taconis and Kessels propose. It is rather an interplay that needs to be reconstructed, the interplay of a fit with institutionally offered options.

Kramer et al.[65] discuss several fits, but do not generalize regarding the relationship of fit and choice. Indeed, the description of the relationship between fit and selection has to be a goal of context-bound research rather than a given result of a seemingly clear-cut fit or non-fit. It cannot be known beforehand if different decisions at transition points are equally strong related to questions of fit.

Leaky pipeline trajectories are not clear-cut transitions, but they also depend on earlier (biographical) decisions and fitting experiences. The transitions are important points in the reproduction of inequalities, yet an educational pipeline doesn't necessarily "leak" at these very specific moments. Instead the departure from a certain educational institution or subject takes place gradually, even if the decision to leave or deselect might be taken at a random yet specific moment. Thus, decisions are not understood as one-and-done rational choices but rather as in works in progress.[66]

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[63] Jurt, "Die Habitus-Theorie von Pierre Bourdieu", 15.
[64] S.a. Burger et al., "Organisierte Karrieren."
[65] S.a. Kramer et al., Selektion und Schulkarriere.
[66] Dausien, "'Bildungsentscheidungen' im Kontext biografischer Erfahrungen und

To summarize, fit is understood as the relationship between a person and their (here institutional) context and it impacts social action. Instead of an individualistic notion of identity I borrow from Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and field that are better suited to explain the reproduction of inequalities as seen in the statistical data on the (lack of) diversity of university professors and the gender-specific selection patterns for French.

Fit and non-fit are not binary opposites but rather an attempt to summarize a complex and at times contradictory relationship: fit can be considered at different levels of knowledge (e.g. explicit – implicit; norm – habitus) and at different institutional sub-levels: of the subject (such as mathematics, French, sports in its partially context-specific and partially context independent shape),[67] of the school or of the class a student is part of. Thus, decision-making is understood to be neither predetermined nor totally free and practice theory offers a third alternative between these two. There are several basic methodological options to approach the question of fit: departing from the cultural logic of the context (field)[68] or via the persons in the context (habitus)[69] – even the recommended combination of both perspectives calls for a certain starting point in the empirical procedure and maybe even more so for a theoretical grounding of the analysis of the sociocultural fit.[70] In the case I will analyze in chapter 7, I focus only on the interviewed student's habitus, thus not moving beyond a subjective fit here. Which decision or rather which kind of decision-making follows from what kind of fit is part of the question itself.

While fit helps to describe the relationship between persons and their context, the role of the persons or rather populations in their diverse overlapping belongings are still not clarified. Thus, to move beyond binaries in categorization and to attain a more systematic grasp of inequality in educational transitions, the major points of "leakage",[71] I introduce the concept of intersectionality.

Erwartungen", 54.

[67] S.a. Friebertshäuser, "Statuspassage Erwachsenwerden." Cf. Willems, Schulische Fachkulturen und Geschlecht.

[68] ibid.

[69] S.a. Kramer et al., Selektion und Schulkarriere.

[70] Hoffmann, Szene und soziale Ungleichheit, 304pp.

[71] Dausien, "'Bildungsentscheidungen' im Kontext biografischer Erfahrungen und Erwartungen", 43pp.

5 The second Heuristic: Intersectionality

5.1 Foundations

In complex (post)modern societies accordingly complex theories are needed, and intersectionality helps to understand overlapping social belongings seen earlier in the discussion of women's trajectories in academia. The concept originates in the emancipatory struggles of women of color and focuses on the context-dependent interplay of discrimination and privilege linked to different social belongings.[72] I start this chapter with two quotations describing intersectionality:

> At a very broad level, and put simply, intersectionality posits that social divisions interrelate in terms of the production of social relations and in terms of people's lives. For example, gender is seen as inflected by other social divisions such as 'race' and class, and they are seen as mutually constitutive.[73]

The importance of intersectionality for educational transitions of different populations should be obvious as it offers a way to understand and analyze these complex "social divisions" in their relationship to each other and to clarify the question of fit and non-fit.

Furthermore,

> [s]ince the 1990s, gender, queer and postcolonial studies have taken an interest in the interaction of dimensions of inequality – such as gender, class, race or sexuality. For this endeavour the term 'intersectionality' was coined: instead of merely summarizing the effects of one, two or three oppressive categories, adherents to the concept of intersectionality stress the interwoven nature of these categories and how they can mutually strengthen or weaken each other.[74]

Obviously rooted in constructivist epistemology, intersectionality helps to empirically decenter each single category because of and through its inflection by other categories – e.g. gender cannot be understood as binary if other categories intersect. It also "forces scholars to engage complexity by recognizing the differences that exist *within* groups – a recognition that

[72] Smooth, "Intersectionality and women's advancement."
[73] Antias, "Intersectional What?", 4.
[74] Winker /Degele, "Intersectionality as multi-level-analysis", 51.

moves beyond simply the differences *between* groups."[75]

This can be demonstrated on the example of the stereotypical educational losers in Germany where one can see that both the 1960s rural Catholic working class girl as well as the contemporary figure of the metropolitan boy of migration background[76] elude binary essentialization. In these stereotypes the idea of intersecting categories is apparent even to a broader public although cultural representations usually tend to reduce complexities.

But categories cannot be simply added, nor are they all equivalent – so the specific relationships of belongings and contexts need to be taken into account.

> Depending upon the context, those who are marginalized and those who have power differ. Therefore, we cannot evaluate oppression and marginalization without a sense of history and without a sense of the social, political, and economic opportunities available to various groups at any given time or place.[77]

Overall, intersectionality is a powerful heuristic and has been highly praised: "One could even say that intersectionality is the most important theoretical contribution that women's studies, in conjunction with related fields, has made so far."[78] While this quotation emphasizes the importance of intersectionality it simultaneously raises a disputed subject: The attribution of intersectionality to "women's studies" has provoked objections as it threatens to erase a) the central contributions of women of color or even the silencing of non-white voices[79] in German academia and even in intersectionality[80] and b) the activist struggles against the multiple oppressions it originates in. Both the term itself (coined by Crenshaw) and a huge part of the activism have been achieved by women of color.[81] Antias hence exhorts scholars using intersectionality to "retain its early concerns found in anti-racist feminism (e.g. Combahee River Collective, 1977/1982; hooks, 1981), which challenged dominant and exclusionary academic and political frameworks

[75] Smooth, "Intersectionality and women's advancement", 513. Italics in the original text.
[76] S.a. Geissler, "Die Metamorphose der Arbeitertochter zum Migrantensohn." The German terms are "Bildungsverlierer_in", "katholisches Arbeitermädchen vom Lande" and "Großstadtjunge mit Migrationshintergrund".
[77] Smooth, "Intersectionality and women's advancement", 517.
[78] McCall, "The complexity of intersectionality", 1771.
[79] S.a. Dhawan, "Can the Subaltern Speak German?"
[80] S.a. Alexander-Floyd, "Disappearing Acts."
[81] ibid.

and knowledge production."[82]

Thus, although in the German context of the early 20th century

> Luxemburg and Zetkin pointed out that internationalism, anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism could not be separated from European class struggles and women's activism against gender-specific discrimination[83] [...] it was only in the late 1990s and early 2000s that mainstream feminism in Germany – at that stage, a largely white and middle-class dominated phenomenon – (re-)discovered interdependent thinking.[84]

The demand is therefore that intersectional thinking considers these origins. To that aim the reflection on one's own position is relevant throughout the whole research process, but probably most visible in the empirical part.[85] The emancipatory activist struggles and the research heuristics are inseparable – this is not just a moral imperative, but necessary because of our everyday involvement in complex and intersecting power relations. The reflection on these relations and therefore the link between these two aspects are at the core of intersectional thought.

To approach the methodological challenges to research there is not one single version of intersectionality but rather several varieties.[86] Cho et al. call intersectionality an "analytic sensibility"[87] that is more than just a method as it incorporates political thinking concerned with normativity and inequality. Intersectionality thus expands the discussion about inequality from just one category to a consideration of several interdependent categories. But it does not imply a method nor predict which categories will be relevant.

5.2 Consequences for Research: Relevant Categories and Theoretical Lenses

A starting point for empirical research is the need to determine which

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[82] Antias, "Intersectional What?", 6.
[83] Kron /zur Nieden, "Thinking Beyond the Categories", Paragraph 24.
[84] Idem., Paragraph 25.
[85] Already the production and publication of an academic article is in itself an opportunity for academic advancement that could be linked to my male majority-German whiteness and belonging to the middle-class which are tacitly put as the German norm. These norms usually do not need to be mentioned – only deviance from the tacit norms has to be mentioned. Cf. Baquero Torres, "Kultur und Geschlecht in der interkulturellen Pädagogik", 113pp.
[86] Antias, "Intersectional What?", 4.
[87] Cho et al., "Towards a Field of Intersectional Studies", 795.

categories to focus on – and thus emphasize as relevant. The question is specifically: which categories are important for language use and learning, and which are interdependent with subject selection?

The classic triad of categories consists of class, race, and gender but intersectionality has expanded this list to include other categories like dis/ability, sexuality, or belief system, even to a possibly endless list[88] – even left open by what Butler called the "embarrassed etc."[89] Categories are themselves constructed by labeling, by applying them, thus categorization is an ongoing process in the act of describing and creating social differences.[90] I use categories but am aware of my part in the categorization process. According to McCall, "[t]he point is not to deny the importance – both material and discursive – of categories but to focus on the process by which they are produced, experienced, reproduced, and resisted in everyday life."[91] Several authors approach this problem by a bottom-up reconstructive take on participants' use of categories and the interrelations between these categories:

> This means that social categorizations are not equally positioned or salient at all times. One or other of the divisions does not always matter in particular contexts or some may matter more than others; [...] In other words, it is important to be sensitive to the relationships between social categories, rather than presuppose them.[92]

In the case of gender, French and subject selection, the questions thus arise: is gender really as relevant as thought for de/selection? Does it work in isolation or is it dependent on students' multilingualism or socio-economic background?

Another question concerns the necessary degree of explicitly naming categories: The categories the participants use, are often explicit and pick up popularized social scientific vocabulary which might lead research participants to overlook phenomena for which no words can be found. Concerning this problem Nohl differentiates[93] between cultural representations (explicit) and

[88] Linked to this discussion is the question of whether some of the categories are omnipresent or can be irrelevant in certain situations, leading to undoing gender. Cf. Kubisch, Habituelle Konstruktion sozialer Differenz, 34pp. Cf. Smooth, "Intersectionality and women's advancement", 517.
[89] Butler, Gender Trouble, 196.
[90] AG Feministisch Sprachhandeln, Sprachhandeln – aber wie?, 10pp.
[91] McCall, "The complexity of intersectionality", 1783.
[92] Antias, "Intersectional What?", 14.
[93] Cf. Nohl, Konzepte interkultureller Pädagogik, 138pp. Cf. Antias, "Intersectional What?", 7pp.

collective belongings because collective experiences and belongings are not always easy to express explicitly (implicit, practice).[94] This focus on implicit collective knowledge picks up habitus theory and is thus in line with the the analytical approach to sociocultural fit. The implicit collective belongings themselves can intersect[95] as well – and intersectionality working on the level of implicit knowledge can be analyzed in conformance with habitus theory.[96]

Summarizing my discussion of intersectionality: Intersectionality is a heuristic concept – and because of its strong political and emancipatory grounding more than just heuristic – that helps explore which populations' trajectories lead out of educational institutions or subjects. It does so by drawing attention to the interdependence of categorization of these populations as not only male or female but also, e.g. atheist, majority German, or middle-class. Thanks in particular to the experiences and struggles of women of color the concept found its way into academia where it has been picked up – sometimes without much regard to its origins – as a way to analyze complex social inequalities and power relations beyond ascriptions of individualistic agency. So far it has hardly been employed in German applied linguistics.

Intersectionality can be applied to several methods; the challenge at hand is to consider the foundations of both sides, the method and intersectionality and to coordinate them with each other. I follow recommendations to work bottom-up in order to capture the intersecting experiences that matter to the participants, especially their implicit knowledge.

6 Theoretical Integration and Methodology: Documentary Method and Practice Theory

In the previous chapters I drew on Bourdieu's practice theory of habitus and field that emphasizes implicit knowledge to explain the workings of sociocultural *fit* and intersecting experiences. In the following chapters I prepare for and then present an empirical analysis that is based on the same social action theory, thus ensuring a match of theory and empirical study.

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[94] In German "konjunktiver Erfahrungsraum" (Nohl, "Narrative Interview and Documentary Method", 202) which is similar to collective experiences. Cf. Nohl, Konzepte interkultureller Pädagogik, 140pp.

[95] Nohl, Konzepte interkultureller Pädagogik, 138,150, 157.

[96] Whether theoretically the appropriate understanding would be "intersecting collective belongings" or "collective belonging in itself at intersection", an intersection of belongings or intersection within the belongings themselves cannot be answered here.

6.1 Multidimensional Gearwheels and Relationality: Categories, Levels and Social Theory

"[D]ifferent methodologies produce different kinds of substantive knowledge and [...] a wider range of methodologies is needed to fully engage with the set of issues and topics falling broadly under the rubric of intersectionality."[97] Because it is impossible to cover all facets discussed within the range of sociocultural fit and intersectionality, I focus on their combination and application with the Documentary Method to analyze inequalities in trajectories in educational institutions.

As indicated earlier, the construction of gender and other categories is linked to the level of analysis. While the sociocultural fit of habitus and field is based mainly on Bourdieu's theories, intersectional thinking has developed independently but is compatible to that approach. This holds true not only with regard to the focus on social inequalities but also for the theoretical and methodological grounding, because "at the societal level intersectionality seeks to make visible the systems of oppression that maintain power hierarchies that organize society while also providing a means to theorize experience at the individual level."[98] The societal level is discussed in Bourdieu's terms as a network of fields.

Particularly the common denominator in practice theory, with its focus on implicit knowledge and embodiment, allows for an integration in which practice is understood as the "smallest unit"[99] for an analysis of complex inequalities, overlapping experiences in which tacit knowledge – habitus – is created and transmitted.[100]

To clarify the relationship between these different theoretical gearwheels I draw on Bohnsack's[101] three types of multidimensional analysis, based on Mannheim's sociology of knowledge, which fits well to Bourdieu's approach. These three types are each relational in themselves and also interdependent:

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[97] McCall, "The Complexities of Intersectionality", 1774.
[98] Smooth, "Intersectionality and women's advancement", 513. Emphasis added.
[99] Reckwitz, "Toward a Theory of Social Practices", 245.
[100] Bohnsack, "Habitus, Norm, Identität", 52f. Winker/ Degele, "Intersectionality as multi-level-analysis," 52. Nohl, Konzepte interkultureller Pädagogik, 150pp. S.a. Fowler, "Reading Pierre Bourdieu's Masculine Domination."
[101] S.a. Bohnsack, "Habitus, Norm, Identität."

a) different aggregates of social life can be understood as vertical levels, such as society, groups, persons, institutions & organizations – the relations between them are described as sociocultural fit;
b) different collective belongings produce different experiences and experiences are produced in the overlap and interaction of gender, class, race and other categories – these horizontal relations discussed as intersectionality;
c) the third but analytically primordial type concerns the theoretical lens or scope of analysis that is grounded in a social theory. Bohnsack's approach emphasizes implicit collective knowledge, which is very much in line with Bourdieu's theory advanced earlier. Other dimensions that can and must be considered here in coordination with habitus include norms and identities. This multidimensional analysis is equally central for the kind of abstraction aimed at, i.e. the level of typology construction.

To conceptualize the relation between these three types of multidimensional analysis: Habitus is posited as the analytical, anthropological central unit of the social[102] and the other levels conceptually derive from this positioning. However, empirically, habitus is understood to be developed in the experiences of socialization and is in an open and questionable fitting situation with each field. The three kinds of multidimensional analysis[103] are thus relationally dependent on each other, which allows for a larger scope of analysis as well as deeper theoretical grounding and inhibits impulses to fall back onto essentialist thinking.[104]

In this understanding of social action, students that have to decide if they want to continue learning French in the post-compulsory years of school will make their choice based on implicit and habitualized knowledge. The development of this knowledge takes place in the multiple categorizable experiences of socialization and the way the habitus works concerning the decision is dependent on the kinds of practical, implicit knowledge the students encounter at school – their fit.

In summary, to integrate the two heuristics of sociocultural fit and intersectionality, practice theory, in particular habitus theory, is used as the methodological hinge. The ensuing question is how to research habitus.

[102] S.a. Reckwitz, "Toward a Theory of Social Practices."
[103] Ibid.
[104] S.a. Van Loon /Unsöld, "Was ist eine Assoziation?"

6.2 Habitus Reconstruction with the Documentary Method

Researching habitus entails a focus on implicit knowledge, so neither a blind belief in participants' statements nor the assumption that they are cultural dopes is adequate. As habitus is only partially observable and because questions concerning the selection or de-selection of French necessitate verbal data as produced e.g. in interviews, a suitable method is needed. The Documentary Method (DM) can be used to reconstruct the participants' forms of habitus, thus creating second-order constructions in Schütz's understanding.[105]

This enables researchers to reconstruct the structure of practice, the daily practical ways of dealing with the ordinary that are formed by socialization – which takes place in the aforementioned collectives we belong to. These collective belongings and their practices do not necessarily conform with norms or researcher knowledge nor are they a priori determinable in the sense sketched above, e.g. "no woman will reach a professor position" or "no boy will choose French." The Documentary Method's focus is on habitus reconstruction, including intersecting experiences. This means that norms and identities are interesting and potentially helpful but subordinated to the reconstruction of the primary analytical unit, habitus.[106]

Thus, the analysis of intersecting collective belongings is not limited to participants' explicit claims or identity positionings because the method offers the possibility to reconstruct everyday habitualized relevant categories. The categories that the participants emphasize might be important to them, but do not necessarily reflect their daily practice, which is the focus of the interview.[107] Again, the task is not to know more than the research participants, but to uncover their implicit knowledge.

The strengths of the DM for the issue at hand thus comprise its match to habitus theory and its ability to include intersectional thinking[108] theorized as overlapping collective experiences, both approached strictly from a bottom-up perspective.

[105] Bohnsack, "Documentary Method and Group Discussions", 102.
[106] Bohnsack, "Habitus, Norm, Identität", 34pp.
[107] Nohl, Konzepte interkultureller Pädagogik, 141, 146pp.
[108] For the kind of abstraction favored in DM research, typology construction, intersecting typologies are even deemed to be necessary. S.a. Bohnsack, "Habitus, Norm, Identität."

6.3 Analytical Procedures of the Documentary Method

I present these procedures briefly and with the aim of rendering the summary of the analysis in the following chapter more transparent, although I will not delve deeply into the single steps involved.[109]

Inspired by Conversation Analysis, DM's analysis breaks up the discursive surface of the interview. To that goal the analysis moves from what is said to how it is said.[110] Selected passages are analyzed sequentially in order to reconstruct the habitus, the modus operandi of the case. Useful tools for the interpretation of narrative interviews include the differentiation of interview text genres[111] and the reconstruction of recurrent bottom-up indexicality to get to the structuring principles of each case.

Concerning the topic of school subject selection, the questions are: How do the students de/select French, and how do they narrate their decision processes? Can a modus operandi be reconstructed? A first step is the comparison of passages within one case to affirm or modify the result of the first reconstructions. The DM is a (case) comparative method and further steps of comparison would be between the cases, but here I will stick to a single case and simply frame it contextually.[112] As in intersectional thinking, self-reflection is an inherent part of the analysis, but as well part of a methodological – not only political – imperative. Not only do interviewer utterances always influence the way an interview takes place but also his/her (assumed) social position can be relevant – as will be discussed in the empirical example.

With this in mind I will aim at a reconstruction of a single student's presentation of her school, class and French language learning, focusing on the way she sees these as influenced by her intersecting collective belongings. How do intersectionality and fit help understand the subject selection by the student Marta?

[109] S.a. Bohnsack, "Documentary Method and Group Discussions." Cf. Nohl, "Narrative Interview and Documentary Method."
[110] Bohnsack, "Documentary Method and Group Discussions", 102.
[111] Nohl, "Narrative Interview and Documentary Method", 206.
[112] The comparison is also relevant for the abstraction – which is not an aim of this paper, but serves as an example to discuss traceable trajectories instead of a leaky pipeline.

7 Empirical Example

7.1 Interview Background

The data come from an empirical study that was conducted in the German city-state of Hamburg.[113] The specific *Gymnasium* school Marta attends ranks low on Hamburg's socioeconomic index of schools[114] and the number of students with a migration background attending this school is higher than average. In Hamburg, students are obliged to take only one foreign language in Secondary II, this usually being English. The students pick clusters of subjects in Secondary II, offered and composed by each school. These clusters are called profiles.

I will discuss the application of the two presented heuristics to the empirical case of a student renamed Marta.[115] Why choose the case of a girl when it is boys that seem to be leaking, or, rather, whose trajectories mainly lead away from French classes? First, the de-selection of French is a phenomenon deplored beyond gendered selection patterns.[116] Secondly, this article is an attempt to move beyond binaries through the analysis of fit and intersectionality. As mentioned before, the focus is less on the empirical analysis per se but rather on the demonstration of the procedure developed.

Marta is 17 years old and comes from an Afghan family but insists on her German nationality. Her father is self-employed and her mother a bank employee on maternity leave. She declares herself to be a "muslima without a headscarf." Marta is in the 10th grade, the last year before transition to high school and of her compulsory classes in the second foreign language, French. She changed schools three months before the interview to avoid a very long way to school. None of these demographics, including the change of school, are unusual in her class or for this *Gymnasium*'s student population.

This seemingly basic information already includes several interpretations and might appear contradictory to the emphasis on bottom-up research concerning categories. This is due to the mode of presentation and the demonstration purpose of the single empirical case – for a larger analysis

[113] The data collection was officially approved by the Hamburg Behörde für Schule und Berufsbildung on 25.02.2012.
[114] Bürgerschaft der Freien und Hansestadt Hamburg, Schriftliche Kleine Anfrage.
[115] S.a. Grein, Migrationshintergrund, "Gender und Mehrsprachigkeit", for a first discussion of Marta.
[116] S.a. Reinfried, "Der Französischunterricht und seine quantitative Entwicklung."

these basic interviewer assumptions have to be refined via analysis and case comparison.

The interview was conducted in the antechamber of the classroom and took place parallel to the French class, the door between the two rooms being closed.

7.2 The Interview

I will present and discuss three passages from the interview in their chronological order to respect their sequential order for the analysis. The analysis was conducted on the German original text that can be found in the footnotes.

The first passage is from the early part of the interview. I, the interviewer, had noted that Marta had changed her secondary school twice already, first in 6th grade and then shortly before the interview, and asked her to elaborate on that. She tells me about being unhappy with her first school and changing to a better school, which was very far from her home and that she changed for the second time because of the long way to and from school. Directly before the following passage she states emphatically that she regrets the second change and calls it a "mistake."[117] She then switches the subject to talk about the new school where the interview is taking place.

> **Marta**: well the school isn't like (.) bad (.) but °a lot is different than at the oth- old school.° like for example the bathrooms (.) and how the school looks (.) from the outside- well ok! That isn't important but (.) as well (.) there are a lot of @ foreigners@. I am maybe mysel- hm (.) I've got a migration background myself, I'm not against it, but (1) I don't know? (.) it's all different (sighs) (3)
> **Interviewer**: erm (.) what's so different? Can you tell me 'cause (.) I don't know the other school and this one only a little (.)
> **Marta:** @that's difficult@ (.) @that's difficult@ (.) I don't know. Well it- it's like (.) I'm just saying: different cultures, different countries, different cultures and customs and (.) there everything was pretty uncomplicated. Suppose if someone had an argument or something you just clarified that directly, hhh and here it's (.) somehow (.) don't know [...] (1) here everything is like (1) don't know well like kid's level I'd say. (.) just not evolved, don't know somehow just not grown up but, instead people approach problems (.) just differently! They avoid it and everything gets worse (.) and (1) how people talk to each other, too, that is (.) totally different, I'm not used to that at all. (1)[118]

[117] For transcription conventions see the end of article.
[118] **Marta**: also die Schule is jetz nich (.) schlimm (.) aber (.) °vieles is halt anders als (.) auf

Obviously, Marta is voicing her discontent with the new school, but she does so in a specific manner: She distances herself and tries to explain the difference, framed and structured by "different" ("anders"). "Anders" is translated here as "different" but has connotative links to "the other", conveying a sense of alienation. Marta makes several attempts to get the "anders" across: the building itself, "foreigners" vs. migration background, countries, cultures, customs, maturity, ways of talking to each other. This list can in itself be understood as a catalog of categories that overlap insofar as they are all negative. Marta tells this with a lot of self-interruptions and false starts that can be interpreted as policing herself against possibly making socially undesirable statements against "foreigners," but also from appearing too plaintive or negative.

The difference she describes is compared to her old school, which is constructed as a backdrop of normality where "uncomplicated" behavior is claimed to be the standard. In this passage, Marta wrestles with intersecting norms of appropriateness which appear to conform to an idea of idealized middle-class majority German norms – and she explicitly criticizes what can be understood to be the school's diversity. Here the interviewer potentially comes into play – as this normative horizon coincides with my positioning, her statements could be understood as strongly socially desirable or finally having found a fitting confessor that will understand her complaints, or both. Complementary to the norms invoked, her way of talking can be understood as a search for the right words and categories to describe the new school. In this reading, Marta is entangled in a new social context and has trouble expressing her implicit feeling of non-belonging and specifically of non-fit. This way of complaining about the school continues and later she even interrupts herself until I explain my strategies of anonymization before she

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der and- alten Schule.° wie zum Beispiel die Toiletten (.) und wie die Schule jetz (.) von außen aussieht- also ok! das is jetz nich so wichtig, aber (.) auch (.) es sind ziemlich viel @Ausländer@. ich bin zwar selbs- hrm (.) ich hab selbs n Migrationshintergrund, ich hab nichts dagegen, aber (1) ich weiß nicht? (.) alles anders (seufzt) (3)

Interviewer: ähm (.) was is so anders? kanns mir das erzählen weil (.) ich kenn ja auch die andre Schule nich und die hier nur n bisschen (.)

Marta: @das is schwer@ (.) ich weiß nich. also is- ding is (.) ich sag nur: andere Kulturen, andere Länder, andere Kulturen und Sitten und (.) da: war alles ziemlich unkompliziert. Angenomm wenn man jetz Streitereien hatte oder so hat man das sofort geklärt, hh und hier isses (.) irgenwie (.) weiß ich nich [...] (1) hier is das irgenwie alles so (1) weiß nich, also Kinderniveau würde ich sagen. (.) nich weiter entwickelt, keine Ahnung irgendwie alles überhaupt nich erwachsen sondern man geht mit Problem: (.) eben: anders um! außem Weg und es wird immer schlimmer (.) und (1) auch wie man miteinander redet, das is (.) total anders. so kenn ich das gar nich. (1)

goes on. In other passages Marta continues to complain about the lack of proficiency of her new peers across all subjects, including French, their "antisocial" behavior, and an "Islamist" group wearing headscarves.

Summarizing the analysis of the first passage, we can see how a broad diversity of categories of social inequality is evoked, even as Marta seems to refer to norms. Habitus, the analytically central axis, points rather to the lack of relevance of each single category and of the concrete way they intersect. This appears to be a question of non-fit in the new school that is based on habitualized practice and thus a) apparently omnipresent and b) hard to verbalize precisely. Norms and habitus interact with intersectionality and fit. As this presentation is a first reading and relatively schematic, it has to be compared with other parts of the interview.

Before the second passage, in the middle of the interview, Marta said she found French to sound "beautiful" and "romantic", but not if spoken by herself and her peers. Asked to elaborate she goes on:

> **Marta**: °I don't know.° when I listen to some here (.) French (.) erm, that doesn't sound great. That sounds sort of as (.) if someone is speaking Chinese (.) @hehe yeah really@. Yes (1)
> **Interviewer**: and (.) the French sound different?
> **Marta**: yes, it sounds different. They speak more fluently and (.) we falter in between (.) and then all these breaks come up (.) and that just doesn't sound that great. (2)
> **Interviewer**: that's why you chose it back then?
> **Marta**: ye:::s because I listened to the French- well to one French (.) who were more than a year with us. They spoke French quite well. That sounded so nice and ye:s! that's why I chose French, °because of the language, because it sounded so (.) nice.° and Spanish, ok, back then everybody wanted to choose Spanish, but I did not find Spanish so special, it was just this trilled R and that's it. (**I**: hm) and in French there was so much more! Somehow (.) °yes I said that before° yes, roma:ntic, and sonorous (.) and somehow elegant as well, I think.[119]

[119] **Marta** °weiß ich nich.° wenn ich hier so einige (.) Französisch höre (.) ähm, klingt das nicht so toll. das klingt irgendwie so (.) als würde einer Chinesisch sprechen (.) @hehe is doch so@. ja (1)
Interviewer und bei (.) den Franzosen klingts anders?
Marta ja, es klingt anders, die sprechen viel fließender und (.) wir stocken dann dazwischen (.) und dann kommen dann immer solche Pausen (.) und das klingt einfach nich so toll. (2)
Interviewer deswegen hast du das damals gewählt?
Marta ja ::: weil ich mir die Franzosen- also einen Franzosen angehört habe (.) die ein Jahr über uns warn. die ham eigentlich ziemlich gut Französisch gesprochen. das klang so schön und ja:! deswegen hab ich Französisch gewählt, °wegen der Sprache, weil die einfach so (.) schön klang.° und Spanisch, ok, damals wollte jeder Spanisch wähln, aber ich fand Spanisch jetz nich so besonders. es war einfach nur dieses rollende R und fertig. (I: hm) und

In this passage, concerning her perspective on French, we find a pattern comparable to that from the first passage as Marta constructs a norm that is especially visible against several negative backdrops: She constructs a norm of French pronunciation that is "sonorous", "fluid", "beautiful", and "elegant," picking up a known stereotype mentioned above. The two negative backdrops concerning the pronunciation are the comparison with Chinese and the broken ("*stockend*") speech she ascribes to herself and her peers. A third backdrop is Spanish, that "everybody wanted to choose" but that she calls "nothing special." Obviously, in contrast, French is special, thus serving her as a means of distinction because she was and is not like everybody.

While a comparison with Spanish is unsurprising as an alternative institutionally proposed choice, Chinese seems to be taken more out of thin air and can perhaps be taken to be a symbol of something far away and exotic – from the majority German point of view she adopts. This is especially interesting because in other moments she emphasizes her proficiency in several languages spoken in Afghanistan, which could be taken to be equally exotic from that normative point of view. Thus, in my reading, in this passage she not only affirms her own normality, but based on that emphasizes her distinction from her peers – in this case even her peers at her former school.

Again, the positive norm is related to homogenizing ideas of western European nations. And again she first includes herself in a group that does not conform to the norm created but then opens up the second normative horizon where she distances herself from the majority of peers that selected Spanish. While the norms differ, the pattern is the same and it seems to be focused on a negative assessment of her peers – and thus creates a sense of distinction from them.

The idea of distinction is highly compatible with habitus theory and links well to the non-fit reconstructed in the first passage. Yet, this interpretation has to be confirmed in the third passage.

Picking up the question of distinction from her peers, she points out their poor proficiency in French and reports that she watches French movies in French with subtitles – two aspects she refers to in the last passage. This passage is from the last 10 minutes of the interview and the question opens up a new topic but does not interrupt her previous statement.

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in Französisch da war viel mehr! irgendwie (.) °ja hab ich schon gesagt° ja, roma:ntisch, und is klangvoll (.) und auch irgendwie elegant. finde ich.

Interviewer: erm how is it going to go on with you and French?
Marta: I think I want to (.) hrm (.) I think I am going to deselect it. (1) because (.) it's just no use anymore. (.) well ok, I would deselect it here at the school but I would continue to speak French and then still watch French movies to avoid forgetting the language. But I think now in school (.) it's not much use. (1) @ye:s I said that before @ (1) just so (.) because the class, there are a lot of questions and so on (I: ok) everything around it. And I think in high school its gonna be quite tough. (2) (I: °ok°) (1)
Interviewer: Do you already know which profile you're gonna take?
Marta: umum! Well I thought the first or- no the thir- the second or third profile. The first- erm the second is Biology and Geography (.) personally I don't like Geography much, Biology is quite good. And the third profile is physics an philosophy (.) and erm well a lot told me I'm crazy and were like "PHYSICS, sure, enjoy" but I don't think it's bad well I am not ba:d in Physics. Well I know it's gonna be tougher in high school. […] But I'm taking it as well because there aren't that many girls in the group. (.) YES I do think boys are quite uncomplicated, with girls @ you always have to @ pay attention (.) what to say or not to dress alike or (.) well (.) a lot is just different."[120]

Prompted by the interviewer, Marta talks about the de/selection of French and subject profiles. First, she announces her decision to deselect French and gives several reasons that appear partially contradictory: Continuing to learn French at school "is just no use" for her because of the low level of

[120] **Interviewer** ähm wie gehts denn weiter bei dir mit Französisch?
Marta ich glaub ich will (.) hrm (.) ich glaube ich wird das abwähln. (1) weil (.) das bringt einfach nichts mehr. (.) also ok, ich würd das hier an der Schule abwähln, aber ich würd weiterhin Französisch sprechen: und mir dann immernoch französische Filme anschaun, um die Sprache nich zu verlern. Aber ich glaub jetz in der Schule (.) wird das nich viel bring:. (1) @ja: das hab ich ja grad scho gesagt@ (1) einfach so (.) weil die Klasse, es komm viele Fragen auf un so: (I: ok) alles drumherum. un ich glaub in der Oberstufe wirds auch ziemlich schwer. (2) (I:°ok°) (.) (1)
Interviewer weißt du schon, was du für ein Profil machen willst?
Marta umum! naja ich dachte an das erste oder- ne an das dritt- an das zweite oder dritte Profil. das erste- äh das zweite is mit Biologie un Geographie (.) Geographie mag ich persönlich nich so gerne, Biologie is ganz gut. und das dritte Profil is Physik un Philosophie (.) und ähm ja viele haben ja am Anfang mirn Vogel gezeigt und meinten so "ja PHYSIK ja viel Spaß" aber ich find das jetz gar nich so schlimm also in Physik bin ich (.) nich schle:cht. also mir is klar dass das in der Oberstufe schwerer sein wird. [...] und alles. Aber ich nehm das auch, weil nich so viele Mädchen in der Gruppe sind. (.) JA: ich finde (.) Jungs sind irgendwie ziemlich unkompliziert, bei Mädchen @ da muss man immer @ aufpassen (.) was man sagt, oder dass man nich das Gleiche anzieht oder (.) ja (.) es is einfach vieles anders. Ich hab meine Freunde, außerhalb der Schule, auch innerhalb der Schule, ein, zwei, aber mit den: ich auch richtig gut befreundet bin un das reicht mir auch vollkommen aus, (.) un dann das dritte Profil nehm ich einfach weil da wahrscheinlich mehr Jungs sind als Mädchen (.) und die dann (.) die dann nich auf Kleinigkeiten immer achten. Wer jetz was anhat oder (.) wer was macht oder wer was gelästert hat. (1) ja. (1)

proficiency of her peers. She affirms her intent to continue watching French movies, which might be partly a move to save face while giving what could be a socially dispreferred answer in an interview about learning French. It could as well be understood as another move towards distinction from her peers.

A totally different point is the one she finishes her turn with, the reason that French is supposed to be hard in Secondary II – while it contradicts her claims about the overall low level of her peers' proficiency, it is another argument in favor of de-selection. In general, it confirms a pattern seen above, a mixture of admitting her own weaknesses – as reconstructed from her perspective – like her migration background and not pronouncing French well, and her desire to be distinct from her peers. This pattern can serve several purposes: working towards distinction while avoiding looking arrogant, and explaining her de-selection of French to me in a manner saving her own face.

Asked about her choice of profile, she first describes the other two profiles, and even emphasizes her proficiency in the subjects of the second profile before elaborating on her implied choice of the third profile. First, she constructs it as a choice based on proficiency considerations – good in the second profile but not deterred by the toughness of the third profile, thus evoking again the norm of the strong, ambitious student. While distinction is found in the reported speech of others, portraying them as shocked by her choice, in the following part she emphasizes distinction very explicitly. Very unambiguously she speaks about her preference for being around boys in high school because they are "uncomplicated" in comparison to girls. Her illustrations of complicated girls are the necessity of being cautious regarding what one says and how one dresses, examples that can be understood as picking up a stereotypical description of superficial teenage girls. She finishes that turn with "a lot is simply different," a recurrence from the first passage in which she searched for the ideal category to express her non-fit.

Before, Marta used a plethora of categories and the reconstruction pointed to a more generally felt non-fit of her habitus at the new school. Now, she argues that the reasons for her profile choice are mainly her peers and their supposedly gender-typical choices. Two readings are possible: a) her emphasis points to a final confession of a special dislike of her female peers that is especially strong in its emphasis and maybe even the result of reflection on the interview itself; b) it is another category amongst many but maybe expressed especially strongly because "the girls" at the new school are so different from her female peers at the idealized old school.

My interpretation tends towards the second reading because of the overall pattern of analysis which is underpinned by her final affirmation of difference, reconnecting with the idea of the broader non-fit. While any single analysis is disputable the overarching, repeatedly reaffirmed reconstruction prevails: Academic distinction is omnipresent and most important for Marta across passages and topics – in contrast, the importance of French is strongly diminished. Within the implicit logic of Marta's habitus the de-selection of French – as a result of the most distinctive move, the selection of the physics profile and as a consequence of the lower every day practical value of French – is ascribed to the situation of non-fit in her new school.

To summarize the analysis: After changing schools Marta encounters a non-fit of her habitus and the new field. In this context, distinction is the strongest imperative for her and while French is evaluated positively it is finally de-selected and physics is favored as it is even more useful in her efforts at distinction. Thus, French itself is evaluated as nice but simply not important for her. The decision to de-select has been made before the actual moment of transition, of choosing between the profiles, but it has been made concerning and anticipating that moment of choice.

This analysis drew more strongly on habitus theory and Marta's (subjective) fit than on intersectionality, which might be case-specific and has to be further analyzed in comparison with other cases. The overwhelming impression of non-belonging and non-fit Marta conveys have resulted in her efforts at distinction across all categories, devaluating the possible differentiation through intersectional analysis. Yet what emerged as her positive backdrop was the racialized and classed norm of middle-class German ideals, making a reference to intersectionality's concern with such normalities a central axis of the analysis. This was even more important as the interviewer and researcher himself conforms to that (virtual) normality.

8 Discussion

Asking about a leaky pipeline would have led to something very different than this analysis of Marta's prospective trajectory concerning French. The chosen approach instead revealed that her central concerns are the non-fit at her new school and that everything else seems to be subordinate to her efforts at distinction – including French. The de-selection of French is not the goal, but the means for Marta – as her focus in life is clearly different from the somewhat French-centered discussion concerning its feminine image and the

gender-specific de-selection. Thus, the bottom-up analysis has shown a result surprising to the top-down functionalist thinking that is implied by the leaky pipeline metaphor.

The local social context in its fit with habitus overrides the presupposed focus on French. While the interviewed student evoked well-known normative horizons conforming to the national homogeneity of German students and the pronunciation of French, the underlying question of implicit knowledge showed a different picture, that of non-belonging in the new school. In this context, and this single case, the relationship between fit and choice is dependent on Marta's strong drive for distinction.

The gearwheels of a) analytical unit (habitus, norm), b) vertical multidimensionality (fit) and c) horizontal multidimensionality (intersectionality) interrelate, in this single case even to limit the impact of the intersectional analysis. While we are facing a complex intersection leading to de-selection, it is impossible to distinguish categories in Marta's account as she rejects all groups she explicitly mentions, referring to the level of norms in her effort to make the implicit transparent. Thus, concerning the categories, none is important – or all are important, as they conjointly contribute to her overall sense of not belonging in the new school. Hence, the academic advantages she ascribes herself are turned into disadvantages in this new context. As predicted, this example has served only to demonstrate the discussed methodological gearwheels and further case comparison is necessary.

Limits:

1. The first limit is thus implied: The DM is a case-comparative method applied only to one case. To reach a non-individualistic understanding of trajectories that can be linked – after the full analysis – to overlapping collective belongings, more cases need to be analyzed.
2. The non-fit must be specified, noteably to what extent it is related to the school, to a specific class or even to a specific subject, here French.
3. To achieve this specification, strictly speaking two further steps will be necessary: first, the reconstruction of the sociogenetic origins of the habitualized meaning-making that lead to fit or non-fit; and second, a reconstruction of the cultural logics of the contexts in

> question, i.e., the school, the classes, the subject French. This will allow for a more precise description of the institutional side of fit and non-fit.[121]

The analytical procedure discussed and employed here might seem complex but is more suitable to provide depth and theoretical coherence concerning the complexity of phenomena that are too often described with the simplifying metaphor of the leaky pipeline. In this way the criticisms of the metaphorical leaky pipeline can be productively transformed into an analytic rendition of an institutional context and social action within this context.

9 Conclusion

In the article, I discussed the leaky pipeline metaphor and its consequences, amongst others the criticism of its simple binaries and functionalism. I discussed this concerning an early and often overseen moment of a population-specifically skewed trajectory, that of subject selection at the transition to secondary II schooling. It is thus a double specific context, that of the subject in question, French, and that of one school. The aim of the article is therefore no strong claim to generalization but rather the demonstration of the workings – and pitfalls – of intersectional analysis and sociocultural fit in an educational context. They complement each other insofar as both are helpful in analyzing complex situations – and must thus be adapted to each research design. The proposed procedure and analytical interplay need to be employed in different contexts. Especially intersectionality is a critical heuristic to elaborate one's perspective on social situations and thus to fight one's own blind spots – as discussed above, I identify as white, male and middle-class and must thus be aware of the (habitualized) norms behind the assumptions of normality this position entails in the German academic context.

This paper adds to existing studies discussing the leaky pipeline, revisiting the concept with the aid of intersectionality and sociocultural fit and reflecting on their integration via the DM, exemplified on the underresearched transition to high school. I tackled the leaky pipeline as a starting point to outline a complex but empirically sound procedure to account for unequal trajectories in education.

[121] Hoffmann, Szene und soziale Ungleichheit, 304pp.

"[I]ntersectionality is concerned with individual-level experience as well as transforming the systems that produce marginalization."[122] What does this mean for the unequal educational trajectories of certain populations, e.g. the starting point of this article, women pursuing an academic career? On the one hand, the women discussed need to be specified in their intersecting collective belongings. On the other hand, the cultural logics of the academic fields in question need to be specified and checked for fit with the respective populations.

While efforts towards equal opportunities can be made from central positions in the universities or at least faculties, a habitus-sensitivity[123] among members of the concrete fields, the single institutions, seems to be necessary, at least if they want to introduce new populations, to create a fit for students and researchers that might not conform to the implicit rules. These new members can advance the scientific main business of a research institution – even if that may in the long term entail a change of the institution's cultural logics.

Transcription conventions[124]
@: laughter
(1): one second break
(.): break shorter than a second
(word): hard to understand
word: emphasis
°word°: spoken in low voice
wor-: interruption
WORD: louder than other utterances

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[122] Smooth, "Intersectionality and women's advancement", 514.
[123] S.a. Sander, Habitus-Sensibilität.
[124] Cf. Bohnsack et al., Qualitative Analysis, 365.

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Jutta Hartmann

Perspektiven queerer Bildungsarbeit

Abstract

This article departs from the outing of professional football player Thomas Hitzlesperger in 2014 – an event that was widely embraced by the media that attempted to celebrate diversity when in fact it reassured heteronormativity. I argue for a queer understanding of life and living and the necessity to deconstruct the current scheme of unquestioned normativity (that works in the dichotomy of self and other). While I see education as the key tool in that process, I also recognize that little material is available to educators to sensitively approach queer issues. Here I share my "pedagogy of diverse ways of living" (Pädagogik vielfältiger Lebensweisen), *some of the material I use and the guidelines I developed. I argue for a productive deconstruction of current naturalized and essentialized identities in a continuous awareness of the traps that any form of deconstruction employs.*

Keywords

Butler, Deconstruction, Education, Foucault, Gender and Queer Theory, Pedagogy of Diverse Ways of Living (Pädagogik vielfältiger Lebensweisen)

Vielfältige geschlechtliche und sexuelle Lebensweisen sind gesellschaftliche Realität – z. B. wenn wir uns die Herkunftsfamilie oder das Geschlecht von Kindern, das Begehren von Jugendlichen oder die sexuellen und geschlechtlichen Lebensweisen von Pädagog_innen ansehen:

Manche Kinder wachsen in Regenbogenfamilien auf, in Familien also, die aus zwei Müttern oder aus zwei Vätern bestehen; oder aus zwei Müttern und einem Vater oder einem Frauen- und einem Männerpaar oder aus Eltern, bei denen sich z.B. der Vater entschieden hat, als Frau zu leben. Kinder, die miteinander befreundet sind, gemeinsam in die Kita oder Schule gehen, können so mit vielfältigen Familienformen in Kontakt kommen.

Manche Kinder und Jugendliche verstehen sich als Mädchen, manche als Jungen, manche haben das Gefühl, ein anderes Geschlecht zu sein als das, das ihnen bei ihrer Geburt zugesprochen wurde; wieder andere verstehen sich mal mehr als das eine, mal mehr als das andere Geschlecht und wiederum andere mögen sich gar nicht in diesem Raster verorten.