

# Internationalisation, Stratification and Elite Formation in the German Education System

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## INTRODUCTION

Internationalisation processes are increasingly influencing conceptions and provision of education today. Internationalisation can be understood ‘as the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of (...) education’ (Knight 2004: 11). In the German education system, there is evidence of these processes at work (Zymek 2009, 2016). All universities have an international office; all *Gymnasiums* (upper secondary schools) have at least one partner school in another country or run student exchange programmes. Increasingly, students can spend a period of time abroad as part of their education. Multilingual curricula are being offered in kindergartens, primary schools and Gymnasiums. Some universities now offer English-speaking graduate and postgraduate programmes of study. Thus, Germany’s educational institutions are actively engaging with processes of internationalisation in a variety of ways.

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Simultaneously, the German education system is experiencing stratificatory changes, as government policy, parental demands and marketisation enforce processes of hierarchisation. The research group ‘Mechanisms of elite formation in the German educational system’ (FOR 1612) funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) is studying this closely, seeking to understand changes across the education system—from early years to higher education (see chapters of this volume; see also Bloch et al. 2014; Deppe and Kastner 2014; Helsper and Krüger 2015).

In this chapter, we aim to explore, as the German education system is increasingly becoming more stratified, and as processes of internationalisation gather pace, how these processes are affecting the provision of and access to education. To support us in our work, we draw on Max Weber’s understanding of positively and negatively privileged status and the interdependency between these two positions (Weber 1978: 305). Just as Kotzyba et al. (this volume) apply this framework for examining internationalisation within German Gymnasiums, we extend such an investigation to look at the effects within the German education system as a whole. Weber (1978) ‘defined status as the effective claim to social honour or esteem in terms of a set of positive or negative privileges. Status, furthermore, is usually founded on a set of criteria including a specific style of life, a formal education, or the prestige derived from occupational or hereditary positions within a society’ (Holton and Turner 1989: 94). ‘For all practical purposes, stratification by status goes hand in hand with a monopolization of ideal and material goods or opportunities (...) This monopolization occurs positively when the status group is exclusively entitled to own and to manage them; and negatively when, in order to maintain its specific way of life, the status group must *not* own and manage them’ (Weber 1978: 935). In relation to the question of how internationalisation in education could affect the social order, a special kind of formal education such as international education and programmes could be, according to Weber’s theory, used as a distinctive marker of consumption and at the same time as the foundation of status itself ‘reinforced by the reproduction of a specific form of life-style within the group’ (Holton and Turner 1989: 95). If international education and programmes can be used ‘both for the defence and the expansion’ (Holton and Turner 1989: 95) of particular forms of entitlement associated with status groups, it will consequently affect non-privileged or negatively privileged status groups by extending the stratification of the social order. This would mean that international education and pro-

grammes are a particular good which has become an object for monopolisation by status groups (Weber 1978: 935). We apply this concept to education to consider how internationalisation may form part of a strategy that results in different forms of stratification within a whole national system of education.

Following an overview of the current literature on internationalisation at the different levels of education in Germany (early years education, primary school, secondary school and university), we identify three characteristics of internationalisation that can be used to compare developments across the different sectors of the education system: its growth in terms of numbers, the extent of regional expansion and an examination of the kinds of foreign languages being offered. Based on an analysis of internationalising trends, we then consider the relation between internationalisation and stratification.

### INTERNATIONALISATION TRENDS IN THE GERMAN EDUCATION SYSTEM—CROSS-PHASE PERSPECTIVES

Just as in published work from other parts of the world, the study of internationalisation and education in Germany is disproportionately focused on the higher education sector, with a little research also having been done within the secondary school phase. There is, however, a paucity of work undertaken on early years and primary schooling.

International comparative studies in the field of early years education are the only source of information on such processes in other European and non-European countries. See Döbert et al.'s (2001) analysis of early years education policies or Naumann's (2014) work examining discourses shaping policies and social investment in early childhood education and care. However, these studies do not investigate how pressures and attempts to internationalise are unfolding in Germany or elsewhere. Internationalisation and its effect in the primary schooling sector is also underexplored, both generally and more specifically in Germany (Ball and Nikita 2014; FMKS 2014b; Ullrich and Strunck 2012; Unger 2015).

On the other hand, internationalisation processes occurring within secondary schools are currently being examined and addressed, particularly in the context of international comparative studies (Amos 2012; Brauckmann 2012; Hornberg 2010, 2012; Krüger et al. 2015; Parreira

do Amaral 2012; Resnik 2012; Zymek 2009). Despite the growing popularity of, and public interest in, international schools in Germany and elsewhere, research on this type of school model in the German-speaking world remains limited (Hallwirth 2013; Hornberg 2010; Krüger et al. 2015). In contrast, research on the topic of internationalisation in higher education has received sustained attention. Perhaps this is not surprising, given the well-documented and increasingly apparent internationalisation of universities across many parts of the world (Alesi et al. 2012; Bloch et al. 2014; DAAD 2010, 2014, 2015; Hahn and Teichler 2012; Kehm 2012; Kehm and Teichler 2012).

Processes of internationalisation in education institutions can be observed mainly in parts of the world which have benefitted from sustained periods of relative peace and security making student exchanges and mobility possible (Zymek 2016). Internationalisation of education is also inextricably bound up with growing international employee mobility. The other facet of mobility—that was prompted by economic migration and fleeing from conflict-stricken and less-peaceful regions (Ball and Nikita 2014)—also necessitates an engagement with internationalisation of education, but does so in quite different ways, according to research published to date—the need for additional academic and social support to facilitate their integration, and an increasing division between schools with a more homogeneous student population and those, often in large urban areas, with a large multicultural student body.

To identify internationalisation processes and collect data on international education institutions across the German education system as a whole, we undertook an exercise of identifying what literature and data already existed around internationalisation and internationality (using Knight's definition as our starting point). Based on what we gathered and analysed, we identified various dimensions of internationalisation that could be considered relevant for all education phases. Drawing on this framework, we suggest that processes of internationalisation of education can be examined for the following criteria: the nature of the educational programmes on offer and the extent to which they are shaped by an interest in 'the international' via 'foreign' language provision, a bilingual programme and so forth; whether the institution offers a curriculum that results in an internationally recognised certificate (such as the International Baccalaureate (IB)); and the geographical location of the institution in terms of its proximity to large cities and companies that operate globally. Drawing on available statistical data in Germany, we have undertaken a

national, cross-phase analysis, using the following three measures to ascertain the extent of ‘internationalisation’ within the education system:

1. Numerical distribution of educational institutions that are arguably ‘international’, where institutions offer international curricula and leaving certificates and/or run bilingual or multilingual programmes;
2. Mapping where these institutions are geographically located; and
3. Number of bilingual and multilingual institutions and programmes being offered across educational institutions.

The limited data available has constrained us to some extent in our examination of the issue, but the focus of our analysis was to engage with data that allowed us to compare across phases of the German education system—something not done to date across any national education systems when examining for manifestations of ‘internationalisation’.

### *Numerical Distribution of Internationalised Educational Institutions—An Increasing Trend*

Recent years have seen a vast increase in educational institutions which could be labelled ‘internationalised’. The number of bilingual kindergartens in the early years sector, for example, has tripled in the last ten years (FMKS 2014a). In 2004, the Association for Early Multilingualism in Kindergartens and Schools (FMKS) identified 340 bilingual institutions. Four years later, 532 kindergartens were offering bilingual education. By 2014, this figure had increased to 1025. The FMKS adopts the following criteria to define a bilingual kindergarten: the new language is the *lingua franca*, the educational staff talk in just one of the official languages of the kindergarten, the staff have native-speaker competencies and language contact occurs during at least half of the times the kindergarten is open (see Table 19.1).

**Table 19.1** Bilingual kindergartens in Germany over time

	<i>Kindergartens</i>	<i>Bilingual kindergartens</i>	<i>Percentage of bilingual kindergartens (%)</i>
2004	48,000	340	0.7
2008	50,000	532	Approx. 1
2014	52,000	1035	Approx. 2

Source: FMKS (2014a, February 2014)

**Table 19.2** Bilingual primary schools in Germany over time

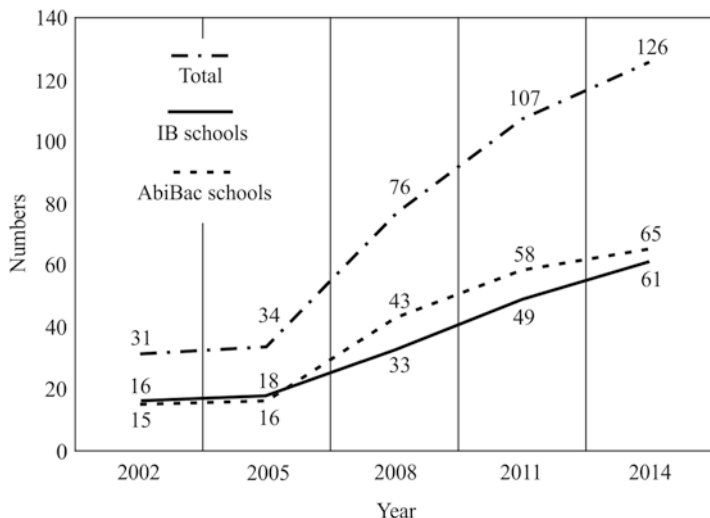
	<i>Primary schools</i>	<i>Bilingual primary schools</i>	<i>Percentage of bilingual primary schools (%)</i>
2004	16,962	80	0.5
2008	16,500	150	0.9
2014	15,749	287	1.8

Source: FMKS (2014b, February 2014) and Statistisches Bundesamt (2015)

In 2004, the FMKS identified approximately 80 bilingual primary schools. The number had more than tripled by 2014 to a total of 287 primary schools (FMKS 2014b). This table includes all primary schools offering classes in at least one foreign language (see Table 19.2).

To date, however, there is little data available on the growth in bilingual provision in secondary education at Gymnasiums (which are the only type of secondary school that can award students an end-of-school leaving certificate that is required to apply for university in Germany). Due to this lack of information, we included in our analysis a focus on international schools where a foreign language is used as the medium of instruction, and/or where the IB diploma or (more rarely) the Cambridge Certificate is awarded (Hallwirth 2013; Hornberg 2010; Krüger et al. 2015; Ullrich 2014). The latter schools tend to adopt English as the medium of instruction, adhere to an English language curriculum and offer an internationally recognised school-leaving certificate. School certification by the IBO, the awarding organisation for the IB, is a costly undertaking, with private schools more likely to be certified than state schools. On the basis of data from IBO reports, we have therefore been able to assess the growth in schools certified to award the IB diploma in Germany, in comparison with the overall growth of such provision globally. Figure 19.1 below illustrates that in the secondary sector, IB Gymnasiums have tripled in number in Germany since 2005. This growth is fairly similar to the global trend.

Another major variant of international schools in Germany are those who offer the ‘AbiBac’—which is a school-leaving diploma, that has existed since 1994, for students studying in a Gymnasium for those living in Germany and France, and facilitates access to German and French universities. The ‘AbiBac’ in Germany requires that students take at least one subject in French (usually geography, history and politics) from the fifth grade to school-leaving age (Ullrich 2014: 186).



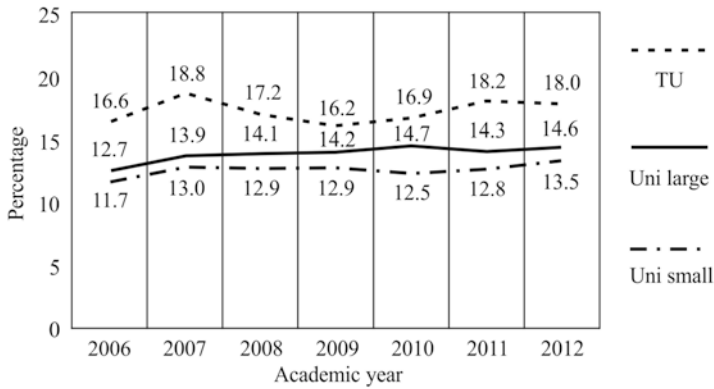
**Fig. 19.1** Number of IB programmes in schools and AbiBac schools by year  
Source: Own calculation based on data from the International Baccalaureate Organization (October 2015) and Institut français Deutschland (March 2016)

**Table 19.3** UNESCO and European schools in Germany over time

	<i>UNESCO schools</i>	<i>European schools</i>
2008 <sup>a</sup>	188	346
2016	200 <sup>b</sup>	541 <sup>c</sup>

Source: <sup>a</sup>Hornberg (2010), own calculation based on data from the <sup>b</sup>Deutsche UNESCO-Kommission e.V. (November 2016) and <sup>c</sup>Bundes-Netzwerk EuropaSchule e.V. (November 2016)

European Schools and UNESCO project schools (see Table 19.3) are also regarded as international schools, since their clientele include a high share of pupils with migrant backgrounds or foreign citizenship and their school programmes adhere to an international curriculum. In contrast to the aforementioned variants—IB and AbiBac schools—any secondary or vocational school in Germany can acquire the title European or UNESCO school as long as they meet the requirements of the European and UNESCO curricula. Most of these schools do not charge fees.



**Fig. 19.2** Share of doctorate degrees earned by foreign students between 2006 and 2012 by university type and size (percentage). Source: DAAD (2014: 19)

Universities tend to view themselves as ‘internationalised’ (Hahn and Teichler 2012). The number of foreign students studying for a doctorate degree in German universities has become an important measure in the national debate on ways to enhance the global attractiveness of German universities and their ambition to ‘bring-in’ intellectual resources from abroad. In 2012, the national share of foreigners with a doctorate degree was 15%, with Technical Universities leading at an average 18%, followed by large universities (with more than 20,000 students) at 16.6% and smaller universities (who have a student body of up to 20,000) at 13.5%. During this time, the overall average proportion of foreign students doing their PhDs at German universities increased by 2% and, despite occasional fluctuations, appears to be fairly stable and is in fact rising (see Fig. 19.2).

This quantitative analysis testifies to the substantial increase in internationalised institutions in recent years across the German education system. In the early years and primary school sectors, identification of the influence of internationalisation as indicated by the presence of bilingual programmes produces fairly clear results. However, while the ‘international’ is increasing present, it is still an approach that individual institutions engage with, not a norm pursued by the whole sector. Meanwhile, the evidence suggests that across the secondary and tertiary sectors of education, internationalisation is now a more common and almost expected feature, particularly when we look at the provision of instruction in other languages beyond German, and the extent of student and staff mobility (DAAD 2010).



Interestingly, a closer look at figures across the early years and primary school sectors highlights a pronounced drop between provision with an international orientation from early years setting and the primary education phase. Whilst there is a total of 1053 bilingual kindergartens, there are only 287 primary schools offering bilingual provision in Germany. The FMKS explains this contrast by stressing that bureaucratic constraints are more pronounced in the primary school sector and that bilingualism makes some parents worry about their children getting worse grades that could have an adverse effect on school careers, notably the transition to the appropriate secondary school provision (such as the *Gymnasium*—which is an academically selective form of provision). Furthermore, kindergarten institutions and primary schools are the responsibility of two different state departments, which pursue slightly different aims through their provision. Reservations about bilingualism in kindergartens are of little consequence since it is merely perceived as a ‘fun feature’, whereas at the primary school level, the performance dimension of their children’s education becomes more salient for parents (FMKS 2014b: 9).

### *Geographical Locations of Internationalised Institutions—A Very Urban Phenomenon*

Cross-sectional analysis shows that educational institutions more oriented to the international tend to be clustered in cities and city-states. Indeed, almost half of all bilingual kindergartens in Germany are distributed across ten cities led by the city of Saarbrücken (FMKS 2014a) (see Table 19.4).

A similar picture can be seen in the primary school sector. Over half of all bilingual primary schools are found in cities and city-states. In 2014, Berlin topped the list with a total of 39 bilingual primary schools (FMKS 2014b; Graßhoff et al. 2013; Suter 2013).

Over 75% of all international schools in Germany are found in large cities, with the remaining 25% located on the margins of urban centres (Hornberg 2012). We were able to verify this trend in relation to IB schools. Around 80% of these schools are located in cities with over 100,000 inhabitants, while only 19% are found in regions and localities with less than 100,000 inhabitants. The latter tend to be exclusive boarding schools beyond the environs of large cities. The number of European Schools and UNESCO project schools is likewise higher in cities than in other regions (Hallwirth 2013; Hornberg 2010). In comparison, AbiBac

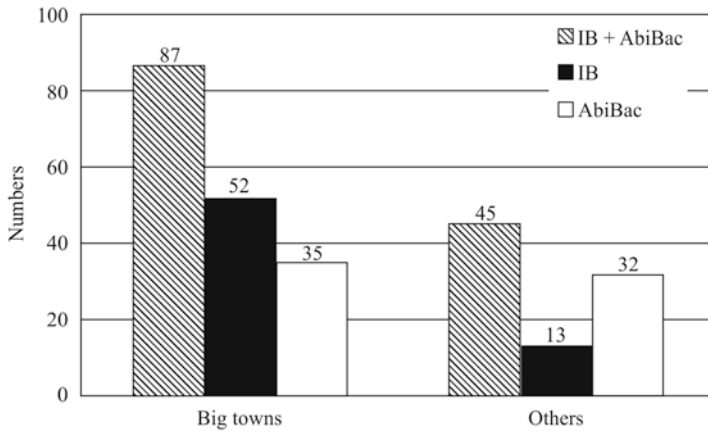
**Table 19.4** Bilingual kindergartens in selected cities

<i>City</i>	<i>Inhabitants</i>	<i>Number in 2008</i>	<i>Number in 2014</i>
Saarbrücken	176,996	20	36
Wolfsburg	121,758	4	8
Frankfurt	687,775	20	42
Berlin	3,375,222	74	173
Hamburg	1,734,272	34	80
Kiel	239,866	5	11
München	1,388,308	22	53
Bonn	309,869	10	11
Köln	1,024,373	11	22
Hannover	514,137	3	10
Bremen	546,451	5	10
Düsseldorf	593,682	6	10
Stuttgart	597,939	2	10
Dortmund	572,087	2	8
Essen	566,862	1	5

Source: FMKS (2014a, February 2014)

schools are divided evenly across cities and less-inhabited areas. This may be explained by both the ongoing political support for fostering and maintaining German-French international relations and by the absence of accreditation fees for such schools (see Fig. 19.3).

Universities in Germany more generally tend to be distributed within urban regions. It has been observed, however, that universities offering specific international degree courses tend to be large institutions serving medium to high numbers of students (DAAD 2014). Another measure we might use to consider internationalisation of a university is the distribution of Alexander von Humboldt grant holders and awards winners. Each year, research grants and awards by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation give approximately 2,000 highly qualified academics from abroad the opportunity to conduct research in, and contribute to, the academic communities of German universities. In the period 2009–2013, only 10% of these grants were given to academics based in universities in towns of less than 100,000 inhabitants (ratio of award holders is 20 to 100 in these locations; source: Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung 2015). In contrast, almost a third of these grant holders spent their time in German universities in the few cities with over a million inhabitants.



**Fig. 19.3** Number of IB programmes in schools and AbiBac schools by location  
Source: Own calculation based on data from International Baccalaureate Organization (October 2015) and Institut français Deutschland (March 2016)

### *Bilingual and Multilingual Institutions and Programmes—The Predominance of English*

English is the language with the highest relevance for current internationalisation efforts. The languages spoken in Germany's neighbouring countries are also important. Bilingual kindergartens in Germany offer programmes that cover 21 languages. At 41%, English is the most popular, followed by French at 30% and Danish at 5%. The frequency of French and Danish language provision is due to the proximity of these countries to Germany (FMKS 2014a). A similar situation is apparent in the primary school sector. English is the most common foreign language with 44%, followed by French and Danish, each with 13% (FMKS 2014b).

Our analysis reveals that in 90% of schools offering an IB diploma, English is the sole medium of instruction. Only 5% teach in both English and German, 3% in English and Spanish and one school teaches in German only. An exception to the many different school diplomas largely instructed and assessed in English is the AbiBac, which is based on a German-French model of language provision. The prominent role of the English language in the internationalisation of education in Germany is also evidenced in the Weltweiser Report (2015), which documents the most popular host countries for student school exchanges of at least three months or more,

and demonstrates that English is the main language spoken in the top six host countries.

The statistical data on higher education in relation to host countries for international exchanges for German students allows for a number of conclusions to be drawn. In 2012, 23.2% of all foreign students studied in Austria, a German-speaking country (Statistisches Bundesamt 2014b). The Netherlands was the second most popular destination with 18.1%, while Switzerland was third with 10.4%. These findings may seem odd at first since there is no direct link to the English language. However, universities there tend to instruct in English—in the sciences in particular—and numerous events at these universities take place in English, with academic books also being frequently published in English, so as to reach a wider audience, and so although German students tend to study abroad in neighbouring countries, their access to the English language will nevertheless be relatively high.

Meanwhile, the importance of English at German universities is particularly noticeable when reviewing international degree courses, as their provision is currently increasing. For the winter semester 2013–2014, 7.4% of the 17,345 degree programmes registered in the HRK (German Rectors' Conference) University Compass were marked 'international' (DAAD 2014: vi). The medium of instruction for 25% of these international courses at German universities is English (DAAD 2014: 49), although lectures in a foreign language represent only a part of what is offered. For the most part, international degree programmes target students from abroad who do not master German sufficiently to follow the main university programmes offered.

Internationalisation requires a common language, which, as our above analysis suggests—is in the main English. In the German early years primary and secondary school sectors, English as a foreign and teaching language is ranked the highest. In the academic world, it is taken as the *lingua franca*, since it now serves as the standard language of communication and one reason for this is the need for publications to reach a worldwide audience. It seems reasonable to assume that English skills are improving at the various educational levels and fast becoming an expectation. The early years sector focuses on laying the foundations for a command of the language and integrates it through play into everyday life. Subsequently, learning English is commonplace in primary schools at least from third grade onwards and this becomes more pronounced in secondary schools. Having a *lingua franca* in international schools (Zymek 2016) is associated with the global mobility of 'corporate movers' or 'global nomads' (Favell

2008; Hayden 2012). English protects the children of mobile parents from experiencing too many language barriers due to the inevitable school changes caused by continual job mobility. The command of the English language is also believed to be critical in access to an upwardly mobile lifestyle, to English-speaking elite universities and to a global labour market characterised by senior management positions (Hayden 2012).

### ELITE FORMATION AND STRATIFICATION IN INTERNATIONALISATION IN THE GERMAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

How do these processes indicate increasing levels of internationalisation within the German education system intertwined with elite education and formation? The general trend towards internationalisation in Germany rather complicates the identification of elite education and its consequences for and emergence via processes of stratification within the German system. While figures showing an increase in bilingual kindergartens and schools, and in international student exchanges indicate a more general internationalisation of education in Germany, this does not offer us the necessary tools for understanding whether and how mechanisms of segregation and exclusion might be drawing on these changes.

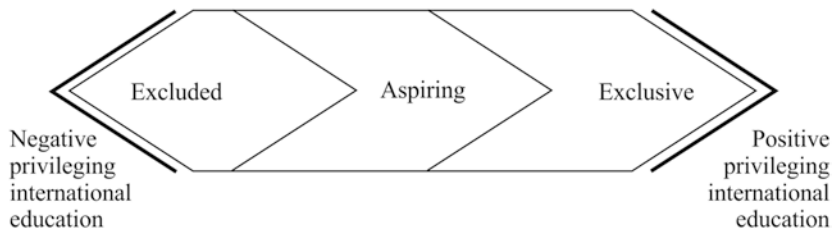
A glance at figures from the German Federal Statistical Office on the socio-economic and migrant status of pupils attending private or state schools, including Gymnasiums, reveals a 'watershed' in the education system, marked by privileged and non-privileged forms of internationalisation in education (Zymek 2009; Hayden 2012). The number of pupils with a migrant background is far higher in lower secondary schools than in Gymnasiums (a more academic, arguably elite form of education at the upper secondary level). Very few children with foreign citizenship attend the latter (Statistisches Bundesamt 2014a). This trend is also found in the higher education sector. For instance, only a small number of scholarship holders are migrant students, which directly influences their ability to finance the exchanges or internships abroad required at some universities in general for those scholarship holders. All other exchange students must rely on their families to raise the substantial amount of money needed to participate in such initiatives (Zymek 2009). Furthermore, a large proportion of migrants in Germany have little or no opportunity to participate in and potentially benefit from these exchange programmes, since social selection in the secondary school system prevents many from studying at

university in the first place as they are less well represented at the Gymnasium level (Deppe et al. 2015: 91).

In a world oriented to the global, language learning becomes a key dimension of internationalisation. This is evident in the burgeoning of bilingual education in the fields of early years and primary school education in Germany. As identified by the analysis above in relation to secondary and higher education, internationalisation and outward mobility have been established as a standard premised on acquiring a good command of a second language. All of this, however, obscures the fact that a great deal of political and symbolic weight is attributed to languages and, indeed, to some languages in particular. Interestingly, the bilingualism of children with a migrant background, who migrated to Germany for reasons of economic hardship or are fleeing violence, is not given the same recognition in the education system as the ability to speak English or the language of other leading countries in the political and economic sphere.

The three measures that we have been able to analyse across the education sectors for evidence of internationalisation reveal some of the ways in which positive and negative privileging underscore and operate through internationalised education. Positive privileging, for instance, comes with an implicit hierarchy of diplomas and curricula in addition to particular forms of knowledge, and such provision is located in specific geographic areas. In what follows we suggest a distinction between the forms of internationalisation by drawing on Max Weber's (1978: 305) terms of positive and negative privileging status through formal education (Kotzyba et al., in this volume). We consider international education in the German system as a status-reproducing continuum, where both positive and negative forms of internationalisation exist, augmenting stratification (Zymek 2009; Hayden 2012) (see Fig. 19.4).

*Exclusive* international education is the first form of *positive privileging international education* found and is provided by institutional and corporate 'global players'—national and international 'leaders' in terms of standards, reputation and exclusiveness—as identified and discussed for higher education by Knight (2004) and for secondary education by Kenway and colleagues (Kenway et al. 2013). In the school context, this comprises of international schools operating under a supranational umbrella organisation (Deppe and Kastner 2014; Hallwirth 2013; Helsper et al. 2015; Krüger et al. 2015; Ullrich 2014). These kinds of schools with their internationally recognised diplomas cater to a so-called global middle class



**Fig. 19.4** Status differences in the course of internationalisation in the German education system

who are continuously mobile (Ball and Nikita 2014; Hayden 2012; Kenway et al. 2013) or ‘corporate movers’ (Favell 2008).

Alongside these *exclusive* forms of *positive privileging international education*, we find a group of parents and students who are *aspiring*. Through attending schools with bilingual programmes (many of them state funded), and later on making use of university exchanges and internships abroad schemes, the members of this group are keen to enhance their positioning within the German rather than the global labour market (Brooks and Waters 2011). Among them are the ‘social spiralists’, who risk moving outwards territorially to increase their opportunity of moving upwards socially, and the ‘Euro families’, who are professionally more flexible as a result of lower mobility costs, allowing them to maintain their social networks across national borders within Europe (Favell 2008).

Finally, there is a large group of students experiencing *negatively privileged international education*, who could arguably be seen as *excluded*. Mobility has been forced on them by war or economic conditions. In the receiving country—that is Germany—the members of this group are more likely to experience ‘being international’ as at best an appreciation of their culture of origin and at worst as a stigma and an obstacle. Often parents suffer a misrecognition of origins, cultural knowledge and educational credentials (Gogolin and Salem 2014). In this context, non-Anglophone or non-European multilingualism and intercultural backgrounds lead to stigmatisation rather than advantages. These groups of students are overrepresented in German lower secondary and comprehensive schools, who demonstrate far further engagements with ‘the international’ (Zymek 2009), thereby further increasing these students’ marginal status.

## CONCLUSION

In summary, internationalisation of the German education system is a common feature that can fuel both *positive* and *negative privileging forms of international education*. We find the economically highly resourced social groups at one end of the continuum and those in more difficult circumstances (culturally, socially and economically) at the other. Both extremes include high rates of mobility (Ball and Nikita 2014; Kenway et al. 2013). In between we find social groups with high economic and appropriate forms of cultural capital, whose members are less mobile but able to exploit these resources to facilitate access to language qualifications and experiences of studying abroad (see Keßler and Krüger; Kotzyba et al., in this volume; Keßler 2016). In this middling space, we also find those who are less affluent but financially ‘comfortable’, but are not actively or strategically pursuing internationalisation as a means of social reproduction and mobility.

Just as we are proposing to categorise different social groups and families, we might also apply these terms to different types of educational institutions. *Aspiring* early years, primary, secondary and even higher education institutions have shown significant growth in all areas of the German education system in recent years. Engagements by *aspiring* institutions include the growth of bilingual provision in kindergartens and primary schools, and an increase in educational foundations that organise exchanges at both secondary and university level.

At the same time, the general trend in intensification of internationalisation efforts complicates the identification of elite forms of education and institutions. The traditional lines of distinction between elite and non-elite are becoming more blurred due to the significant growth of internationalisation initiatives and orientations across all provision. One way to further consider the relationships between internationalisation and elite education are the differences in understandings offered around ‘internationalisation’ by different actors. Thus, *exclusive* forms of internationalisation are targeted at globally mobile families and do not rely on the experience of, or skills development that come from involvement in organised programmes abroad (Brooks and Waters 2011: 82). Meanwhile, *aspiring* forms of internationalisation tend to be developed within government-led initiatives and be secured within a national system (Martens and Wolf 2006). That is to say, these efforts first and foremost serve to support the enhancement of national education standards, in



order to facilitate Germany competing with other countries in educational league tables, for graduate employment prospects and so forth.

Overall, we argue that internationalisation contributes to the stratification of the German education system and vice versa. Just as an international offer—IB, bilingual provision and student mobility—offer opportunities for distinction for individual institutions and families, so too the German education system as a whole is seeking to distinguish itself in the field of education globally, through making itself more international in outlook and in encouraging outsiders to join. Knight's (2004) definition of internationalisation, which was developed for the higher education sector, was not found to appropriately capture the various ways internationalisation is manifesting itself in the early years or primary education phases. Beyond this lack of fit between Knight's work and internationalisation across the education phases, we have also highlighted that such an understanding does not adequately concern itself with the inequalities which emerge through processes of internationalisation. We have therefore drawn on Weber's (1978) work as a means for opening up within our analysis such a focus. By engaging with his notion of status we developed an understanding of positively and negatively privileging forms of internationalisation, which helped us account for particular manifestations of 'international' and 'internationalisation' as adding value (while others do not) and therefore increasing stratification within education.

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