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Hauptschülers' Conceptions of Work – An Exclusion from the Subjective Dissolution of Boundaries?

Hauptschüler und ihre Vorstellung von Arbeit – eine Ausgrenzung von der subjektivierten Entgrenzung?

Gegenstand des Beitrages sind die erfahrungsbasierten Vorstellungen von Hauptschüler zu Arbeit, welche von der Autorin mittels leitfadengestützter, problemzentrierter Einzelinterviews eruiert wurden. An empirischen Fällen wird dargestellt, dass sich die Erfahrungen, die Hauptschüler mit Arbeit sammeln, einseitig auf atypische, unsichere Beschäftigungsverhältnisse mit hohem Prekaritätsrisiko konzentrieren sowie auf Normalarbeitsverhältnisse, beschränkt auf Berufe mit niedrigem Status, schlechter Bezahlung und hohen Gesundheitsrisiken. Privilegierte Tätigkeiten mit hohem Subjektivierungsgrad bleiben ihnen meist vorenthalten. Diese institutionell und sozial erzeugte eher einseitige Erfahrungskonzentration verursacht daher im Prozess der emotionalen Konditionierung einen eher engen Arbeitsbegriff. Gleichzeitig stellt Subjektivierung zusammen mit ihren Entgrenzungphänomenen zunehmend eine „generelle Anforderungsstruktur an alle Beschäftigten“ (Lohr, Nickel 2005, 217) dar. Um sich auf „Arbeitsanforderungen mit höherem Gehalt an subjektiven Flexibilitäts- und Selbstgestaltungspotenzialen einzustellen“ (ebd., 221), – so meine These – bedarf es allerdings vorab einer differenzierteren Vorstellung von Arbeit, insbesondere ein Bewusstsein für die Subjektivierung von Erwerbsarbeit mit ihren Entgrenzungphänomenen. Doch treten die befragten Hauptschüler mit einer eher einseitigen, negativen und vorwiegend fordistisch geprägten Perspektive auf Arbeit in den Lernprozess und später wahrscheinlich auch in den Arbeitsmarkt ein, wenn es Schule und Unterricht nicht gelingt, diese Vorstellungen zu erweitern und zu differenzieren. Insofern kann von einer Ausgrenzung von subjektiver Entgrenzung aufgrund eines unzureichenden Arbeitsbegriffes und einer mit aktuellen Anforderungen wenig kompatiblen Arbeitseinstellung gesprochen werden.

Hauptschülers' conceptions of work – an exclusion from the subjective dissolution of boundaries?

The focus of this paper is on the experience-based conceptions of *Hauptschüler* regarding work. These were identified by means of guideline- and problem-based interviews in a research project of the author. Some empirical cases will show that *Hauptschüler* often experience atypical forms of employment with high job insecurities, vast workloads and a high risk of financial insecurity. On the other hand, standard employment relationships are limited to occupations with low status, low pay and high health risks. Privileged occupations with a high potential of subjectivization are withheld from them. This one-sided institutionally and socially generated work experience causes a rather narrow concept of work in the process of emotional conditioning. At the same time, the subjectivization of work together with the dissolution of boundaries¹ (between private life and work) is a growing general requirement structure for all employees (cf. Lohr, Nickel 2005, 217). In order to deal with job requirements with higher subjective flexibility demands and self-organisation potentials (cf. *ibid.*, 221) – this is my thesis – a different conception of work is needed, in particular an awareness of subjectivization with the dissolution of boundaries. Instead, *Hauptschüler* will enter the labour market with a rather one-dimensional, negative, and fordistic-based view on work if school education fails to extend and to differentiate these conceptions. However, their conception of work and their work habits which are inconsistent with actual requirements, might exclude *Hauptschüler* from jobs with higher subjective flexibility demands and self-organisation potentials (“exclusion from subjective dissolution of boundaries”).

Keywords

Hauptschüler, employment, work, workforce, atypical forms of employment, standard employment relationship, nine-to-five job, conception, experience, emotional conditioning, emotion, subjective dissolution of boundaries, work-relevant skills, requirements

1. The “Gap” between Changing Requirements and *Hauptschülers'* Conceptions of Work

This paper focuses on pupils who attend a Hauptschule (*Hauptschüler*), a social group which is often regarded as culturally and socially disadvantaged. In the following, I will discuss these disadvantages in terms of the change in the living and working environment and the new demands resulting from it.

Hauptschüler often experience atypical forms of employment² with high job insecurities, vast workloads

1 Subjectivization of work is linked to two dissolution processes: The erosion of institutional and formal boundaries takes place in the dimensions working hours, job location, social organisation, technique, work content, form of organisation. This results in a second dissolution process, the process of “subjective dissolution of boundaries” (subjectivization of work). That means eroding boundaries between the person itself and its role as a worker because labour organisations increasingly make use of the subjects, their creativity and self-learning (cf. Gottschall, Voß 2003, 17 ff).

2 Atypical forms of employment are different employment relationships such as contract work, temporary employment, limited engagement, dependent self-employment, mini-jobs, part-time-jobs (cf. Dörre 2009, 188).



and a high risk of financial insecurity³ from their parents and other caregivers who, in Bourdieu's words, compose a kind of social and economic capital.⁴

Their parents' jobs are usually characterized by poor content and repetitive tasks barely allow action and decision and provide less potential for subjectivization. Further characteristics are an intensive, other-directed operating tempo (piecework and assembly-line work) and a strict controlling (cf. Hradil 2008, 309). *Hauptschüler* gain insight into standard employment relationships⁵ by school internships, too. But these insights are limited to occupations with low status, low pay (e.g. hairdresser), and high health risks (e.g. bricklayer) because of stressful work environments, stressful labour relations and stressful work content (cf. *ibid*, 306 f). This has to do with the fact that *Hauptschüler* join the training and the labour market with a school-leaving qualification (*Hauptschulabschluss*) that generally inhibits the access to professions with higher status. This school-leaving qualification, being an institutional cultural capital⁶, has a signal effect. As a stigma-symbol it signals employers a lower ability and efficiency today and in the future (cf. Solga 2004, 39, 41, 44). These mechanisms of discrediting and stigmatisation lead to "education-categorical boundaries" in the labour market. In turn, the consequence is that low-skilled workers have deprived social networks (such as recruitment- and offerer-networks) and deprived contexts of experience (= mechanism of pauperisation) which exclude them from labour markets even more (cf. *ibid*, 42 f).

Thus, *Hauptschüler* have a parochial range of career possibilities. Therefore, vocational preparation in school focuses on those professions in which the pupils are likely to find work. Privileged and subjective work, i.e. occupations with higher status, is something *Hauptschüler* learn on rare occasions. At the same time, there is the projection that the "trend of intellectualisation" (cf. Dörre 2009, 199) and subjectivization of work will be a general requirement structure for all employees (cf. Lohr, Nickel 2005, 217). One can already see such a development; for example, contract workers have to deal with the subjective re-

quirements of work as well (cf. Dörre 2009, 199) but lesser in a privileged than in a precarious way.

But the possibility of access to the subjectivity of the employee and the employee resources play a marginalised role in *Hauptschülers'* work conceptions. Instead, the one-sided focus on atypical forms of employment with high job insecurities, vast workloads and a high risk of financial insecurity on the one hand, and standard employment relationships limited to occupations with low status, low pay and high health risks on the other, results in a mainly fordistic-orientated, rather one-sided and negative conception of work. Thus, *Hauptschüler* enter the learning process, and later probably also the labour market, with this institutionally and socially generated, rather one-dimensional, negative, and fordistic-based view on work, if school education fails to extend and to differentiate these conceptions.

In addition to lower objective options due to their school-leaving qualification and lack of social networks, their contexts of experiences lead to an inadequate work concept which restricts their subjective options as well. If one accounts the awareness of and the adaptation to subjectivization as an additional but necessary qualifier, *Hauptschüler* can be seen as lowly-qualified even more. They are disadvantaged both in open and in closed employment relationships (cf. Solga 2004, 40) and limited to low-skill jobs without subjectivization which are increasingly cancelled (cf. Hradil 2001, 199).

This paper interrelates structural change and changing requirements with pupils' conceptions of work and shows the gap between them on some empirical cases. Furthermore, I will discuss in what way this "gap" is a challenge for social science education and might exclude *Hauptschüler* from jobs with higher subjective flexibility demands and self-organisation potentials.

2. Structural Change and Changing Requirements

In view of the change of the living and working environment and the new demands resulting from it, work-relevant habits and skills should be encouraged, so that the pupils are able to analyse, evaluate and shape life situations relevant for work in general (cf. KCAL 2006, 1). The structural change of economy, ac-

3 Indeed atypical is not identical to precarious work, but every atypical form of employment has a precarious potential (cf. Dörre 2009, 189). Thus, Lohr and Nickel talk about precarious forms of employment with a high degree of danger which seldom lead into standard employment relationships (cf. Lohr, Nickel 2005, 208). Employment is precarious if income, industrial safety, social integration are under the standard (cf. Dörre 2009, 181).

4 Bourdieu distinguished three kinds of capital: economic, social and cultural capital. Capital means a force of things which makes sure that everything is possible and impossible equally (cf. Bourdieu 1983, 183).

5 The standard employment relationship is still the criterion for good work which structures the expectations and claims of the

most part of the employees (cf. Dörre 2009, 182). It is a full time engagement which takes place outside the own household, has no occupation limit, but standard weekly hours (cf. *ibid*). Normal working conditions are characterized by the following characteristics: permanent, full-time dependent conditions, which provides a minimum income; standardized work (cf. Dombois 1999: 13 f); integration in social security systems (cf. Keller, Seifert 2009: 40); statutory protection against dismissal, full vacation and pension rights (cf. Famulla 2003).

6 Bourdieu distinguished three conditions of cultural capital: objective, institutional cultural and incorporate cultural capital (cf. Bourdieu 1983, 185 f).



accompanied by tertiarisation of the labour market, globalization and changed claims of employment have caused the decline of the labour force participation rate and the increase of atypical forms of employment with high social risks up to social exclusion (cf. Famulla 2003), along with the increasing dissolution of boundaries between work and life (eroding work-life-balance). These changes constitute new challenges for pupils. While the standard employment relationship is declining, atypical forms of employment are increasing; in 2007, 37 percent of all employees were employed in an atypical way (cf. Keller, Seifert 2009, 42). Despite its relative loss of importance, there is still a stable core of men in a standard employment relationship (cf. Lohr, Nickel 2005, 220). But the ongoing structural change of the working environment leads to a persistent change in managing workforce (cf. Kleemann, Voß 2010, 416, 433). Even fundamental changes in labour organisation and the development of new kinds of employment go along with this change which increases formal and informal qualification requirements (cf. Schober 2001, 18 f). In the context of new types of employment and new work control strategies the subject has to become more involved (cf. Kratzer 2003, 1). For one thing, the subject has to contribute more subjective qualities such as emotiveness, cooperativeness and the ability to deal with conflicts (cf. *ibid.*). In addition, changes in work control ask for extended skills in self-management. Employees are more organised and more responsible for their own workforce. This is why Voß and Pongratz spoke of an "Arbeitskraftunternehmer" already over 20 years ago. Their thesis of the "Arbeitskraftunternehmer" means that the fictional good manpower is changing to the effect that a blue-collar employee becomes an entrepreneur of his own workforce as a result of current business strategies of labour organisation. In comparison to the *tayloristic* and *fordistic period*⁷, the *transformation problem*⁸ is tackled today by using indirect kinds of control (for example, by target agreements) (cf. Kleemann, Voß 2010, 433). These business strategies to restructure

employment by economization and subjectivization (cf. Lohr, Nickel 2005, 219) increase the responsibility of the employees and lead to a fundamental change in the social condition of workforce (cf. Voß, Pongratz 1989, 132). Thus, there is talk of subjectivization as a transfer of an external control to a self-control, self-organisation and self-economization and as a new logic of economization which taps the full subjective potentials of its employees (cf. Lohr, Nickel 2005, 209, Kleemann, Voß 2010, 435). This subjectivization in employment is expressed in pluralisation, flexibilisation and dissolution of boundaries. In professional and subjective respects, it demands much from the employees and means dissolution of boundaries in aspects such as working hours, workplace, work content et cetera (cf. Lohr, Nickel, 2005, 216 ff, Dörre 2009, 198 f). Everything is going to be more flexible.

It was already taken into account that, contrary to the assumption that subjectivization of employment predominantly affects higher qualified labour and privileged tasks, there is also a "trend of intellectualisation" among factory work (cf. Dörre 2009, 199). While subjectivization in work was a privilege of exposed employees in the fordistic period, it has become a general requirement structure for all employees (cf. Lohr, Nickel 2005, 217). Thus, current business strategies of using employability require a high level of reflection in terms of self-control, self-organisation, self-socialization, self-economisation and self-responsibility (cf. Voß, Pongartz 1989, 131, Gottschall, Voß 2003, 15). However, *Hauptschüler* seemingly are neither aware of such requirements, nor do they assume these requirements to be applicable to them. To meet the requirements – this is my thesis – an adequate conception of work, especially an awareness of the subjectivization of employment with its dissolution of boundaries, is essential. Otherwise, adaptive difficulties, mental overload and insecurity can occur if pupils are not prepared for and attuned to the employment relationship they could be confronted with when entering the labour market. Thus, *Hauptschüler* can even more be seen as lowly-qualified and in danger of becoming ousted by better qualified persons who are prepared for subjectivized work.

Lohr and Nickel count *qualification* among two other differentiating factors, which decide about (in)equality relevant chances and risks in the subjectivization debate (cf. Lohr, Nickel 2005, 223). They realize that the fixing on efficient persons with high

7 The fordistic-tayloristic model is named after F. W. Taylor's (1856-1915) and H. Ford's (1863-1947) labour organization principles. A typical characteristic of Taylorism is the "scientific management" for the optimal utilisation of workforce. Rise in output is possible by using a central, hierarchically structured piecework. Specific for Fordism is mass production in assembly-line work with an extreme split of labour. (cf. http://www.anthro.unibe.ch/unibe/philhist/anthro/content/e297/e1386/e3847/e3849/linkliste3932/arbeit-9_ger.pdf (page-view 07.09.10)). The fordistic-tayloristic standard employment is a specific constitution of work and a historical business strategy of work economization (cf. Kratzer, Sauer 2003, 94). Outstanding characteristics other than those mentioned are: standardization of employment relationships, nine-to-five-job, fixed job location, standardized qualification and operations, split of labour, distinct boundary between work and life (cf. *ibid.*).

8 Companies are confronted with the problem to transform the workforce of their employees into a manifest output (cf. Kleemann, Voß 2010, 433). Up to now this so-called "transformation problem" has been solved by a direct control and standardization in any patch (cf. Kratzer, Sauer 2003, 95). Today employees are responsible for the transformation of their workforce themselves in many companies. So their self-responsibility heightens and direct control decreases (cf. Kleemann, Voß 2010, 433).



readiness to assimilate excludes all those, who are not equipped with individual resources such as relevant qualifications and skills to adapt to job requirements with a higher flexibility and subjectivization (cf. Lohr, Nickel 2005, 221).

The result is the exclusion of lowly qualified persons from subjective dissolution of boundaries.

3. Pupils' Conceptions – Some Kind of Cultural Capital

The mentioned requirements resulting from the outlined structural change of the economy also address *Hauptschüler*. They have to analyse the change of the living and working environment as well and they have to make decisions about education, employment, career by taking own interests, job requirements and the structural change of the economy into account (cf. KCAL 2006, 6).

The work-relevant skills pupils should acquire to cope with these requirements are accompanied by pupils' conceptions of work. In the following, the most important theoretical aspects of learners' concepts, resp. subjective theories, are outlined.

The conceptions and theories pupils develop of different political and socio-economical phenomena are worldview cognitions, i.e. thought structures and contents which refer to the self, others and to all things of the world (cf. Scheele, Groeben 1998, 15). This most complex mode of knowledge organisation (cf. Dann 1989, 248) is subjective: On the one hand, subjectivity grows out of individual traits, resources and dispositions. On the other hand, the social context influences the subjectivity (cf. Kleemann, Voß 2010, 416). Thus, a learner can be seen as a subject in two different ways. In a structural way, the subject is an expression of social conditions and comes across as a bearer of socially given traits which it has to deal with (cf. *ibid*, 415). In this case, the subject is dominated and influenced by society (cf. *ibid*). But in a subjective orientated way, the learner is seen as an autonomic individual who has complex traits and deals with society in an active and reflective manner (cf. *ibid*). Thus, the subject becomes a producer of social conditions (cf. *ibid*). Finally, both perceptions are an issue: The subject may not escape from social conditions and their influence but is able to reflect on them.

In consequence of this subjectivity, the main challenge is that pupils' conceptions are socially structured, partly taken over from caregivers, based on experiences (cf. Hüther 2006, 2009) and are embodied (cf. Gropengießer 2007, 112). According to Gropengießer, concepts develop from peoples' interaction with the physical and social environment – which means experiences (cf. *ibid*, 111). Thus, Giesecke calls them a product of socialization (cf. Giesecke 1992, 323) and Gläser remarks that they are socially structured (cf. Gläser 2002, 258). She points out that children's sub-

jective theories are enhanced by parents' and neighbours' narrations, by media and by communication with peers (cf. *ibid*). In the tradition of Vygotsky's social-cultural theory, the following may be accepted: The social world, parents, relatives, peers, teachers et cetera constitute categories and concepts by concentrating children's attention on information they might understand and by helping them interpret their experiences (cf. Siegler et al. 2008, 357). The social world exerts a dominating influence on concept development (cf. *ibid*, 358). That is why Hüther calls the brain "Sozialorgan", because children gain the most and important experiences from human relations (cf. Hüther 2006, 12). One can go one step further and say that learners' conceptions are some kind of incorporate cultural capital which has been passed on to the children by their parents (= social heritage) and means lasting dispositions such as skills, knowledge, culture (cf. Bourdieu 1983, 185).

Although parents' employment and labour conditions belong to the children's so-called "Exosystem" (Bronfenbrenner), their caregivers' working experiences become an influential part of the children's world (cf. Siegler et al. 2008, 493). Even these indirectly gained work experiences will be fixed firmly in the children's emotional experience-memory if they slowly, continually and repetitively take effect on them. This leads to an emotional conditioning, i.e. a close synaptic connection of a neuronal experience representation and a certain emotion (cf. Roth 2007, 145 f). The brain indicates different consequences and experiences with help of emotional labelling, which can be recall them quickly (cf. *ibid*, 142). That means that experiences decide what children and teenagers associate with the concept "work" and what emotions are caused if this concept comes to their minds.

For example, if a pupil re-experiences that work is (physically) stressful, labourious, exhausting and no fun, and if furthermore caregivers (parents, brothers and sisters, friends) convey the same impression about work, a so-called "Erfahrungintegral" (cf. Hüther 2009) arises in this process of emotional conditioning (cf. Roth 2007, 2009). By changing the neuronal connections in the brain (cf. Gropengießer 2007, 111), experiences create the model that work is a (physically) stressful activity which is no fun but which has to be done. This is saved in children's minds. Brain scientists hold the limbic system, which is the central appraisal system of humans, responsible for this emotional conditioning (cf. *ibid* 2006, 52). Repeatedly gained experiences and borrowed opinions act as empirical evidence of this "Erfahrungintegral". Finally, a belief and an inner attitude about work arise from these experience-based, emotional and cognitive grounded linkage phenomena (cf. Hüther 2009, 12). Thus, working experiences are conceptualized emotionally. If children experience the consequences



of precarious work firsthand, they will be registered by the brain and will be saved as a conception in the emotional experience-memory (cf. Roth 2007, 142). The more intensive the emotions and consequences of the experiences are the faster this embedding is accomplished (cf. *ibid.*, 143).

Conceptions of work developed hereby help to explain and to predict things, fulfil technical functions and are comparable with objective theories (cf. Finkbeiner 1998, 182). The subjective theories organise pupils' knowledge, influence all processes of thinking and understanding because they allow to establish causalities between two elements of a system and thereby explain why the world is the way it is (cf. Siegler 2001, 281, 291 f, Finkbeiner 1998, 182, Dann 1989, 248). As a result, learners' conceptions manage and regulate their actions (cf. Dann 1989, 249).

The concepts tell the learners how to react to new experiences, help them to simplify the world and help them to act effectively by interpreting new situations with former experiences (cf. Siegler et al. 2008, 356). In addition, conceptions fulfil different functions for the learners such as structuring, protective, safety, relief and orientation functions (cf. Reinhardt 2005, 52 f, Nonnenmacher 1982, 201). Because of these functions, the learners' conceptions are strong, hardy and learning-resistant (cf. Sander 2008, 158). They are cognitively and emotionally grounded, deep-seated in mind, important to deal with life situations, make sense and are subjectively important for the pupils (cf. Hüther 2006, 2009, Reinfried 2008, 8). This is why they are not called into question (cf. Mietzel 2007, 292, Seel 2003, 253).

Whether a working experience exists or not is checked by scanning and browsing trust memory, episodic memory and emotional memory. If some experience-based knowledge exists, there will be a feeling resp. an inner attitude. This means that due to accumulated experiences, emotions appear as soon as you are reminded of an event or if a positive or negative charged word is said. The limbic system always checks if a situation is familiar/is similar to a former situation and it also checks what experiences we made in that situation or with that thing (cf. Roth 2006, 52). Although emotions are targeted at an object, the emotion-releasing issue or record does not need to exist in reality (cf. Meyer et al. 2001, 30). Being satisfied that they exist or that they are possible and meaningful, the perspective of these records and their interpretation, the retrospections, associations with and thoughts of these events are needed to provoke an emotional reaction (cf. *ibid.*: 31). Thereby the episodic memory primarily delivers the details of the experiences (cf. Roth 2006, 52, Roth 2009, 92 ff). Thus, an inner conflict is sufficient to cause emotions.

That means that skills and knowledge (about work) mentioned above always develop in the context of pu-

pils' experience background, their attitudes and emotion reactions. This can be problematic. If a pupil has experienced subjectivization of work and dissolution of boundaries only in a marginalised and a precarious way, he will not develop a conception of work that is extended by higher subjective flexibility demands and self-organisation potentials. Instead, he will probably make decisions about education, employment, and career by taking own interests, job requirements and the structural change of the economy into account (cf. KCAL 2006, 6) with the help of his rather one-dimensional, negative and mainly fordistic-orientated view on work. Against this background pupils' decisions and judgements are probably undifferentiated, emotional and one-dimensional. But a person is regarded as social science educated if he is able to break away from his background and to pass his differentiated, rational verdict on political and socio-economical phenomena. Thus, social science education has the ambition to broaden and differentiate pupils' conceptions about social, political and economical subjects by means of academic theories and categories and to make sure that pupils' opinions about these subjects become more rational and more complex. Aside from the question whether rational judgement and behaviour are even possible (cf. Roth 2009), the realisation of this ambition is not easy because conceptions, as a result of their special functions, are strong, hardy and learning-resistant. For this reason, the brisance of their working experiences increases. *Hauptschüler* are likely to recall their institutionally and socially generated, rather one-dimensional, negative and mainly fordistic-orientated concept of work to cope with actual job requirements (subjectivization, flexibility, dissolution of boundaries et cetera) when entering the labour market. Work concepts without an awareness of the subjectivization of employment with its dissolution of boundaries do not fit to meet these new subjective requirements even *Hauptschüler* will have to deal with if they do not want to be ousted by better qualified persons who are prepared for these requirements.

In order to validate the assumption that *Hauptschüler* have a rather one-dimensional, negative and mainly fordistic-orientated conception of work four empirical cases will be shown below.

4. The View on Work

In order to obtain an in-depth insight into *Hauptschülers'* conceptions and experiences regarding work and unemployment, 24 *Hauptschüler* were interviewed in the context of the author's qualitative study about the Perspectives of *Hauptschüler* regarding Work and Unemployment.

A first sample was drawn by taking account of the criteria "approachability" and "quality of informants". It consisted of 62 *Hauptschüler* of three 8th grades (47 pupils) and one 9th grade (15 pupils); 31 were girls.



These 62 *Hauptschüler* filled out a questionnaire to draw a second sample from their answers. Aside from open questions regarding their understanding of work and unemployment the pupils were asked about the work of their family members and if their caregivers have ever been unemployed. They were also asked if they are affected by unemployment. Additionally, they had to provide demographic and social data (sex, age, migration background).

Again taking account of the criterion "quality of informants", especially their abilities to reflect and articulate visible by the answers in the questionnaire, a second sample of 24 pupils was drawn out of the first sample (= interlaced sampling (cf. Flick 2004, 91)). That means that the structure of the second sample was defined before the data collection started. Thus, the sample drawn out of the first sample was made by established criteria. Every fixed dimension of the sample structure was equally filled with cases (cf. Flick 2007, 156). This is why the second sample consists of 12 girls and 12 boys. Six boys and six girls have a migration background. The 24 pupils were questioned about their experiences and conceptions of work and unemployment in a guideline- and problem-based interview.

The empirical evidence shown below comes from short case descriptions of the second sample pupils. Such short descriptions of cases before the actual interpretation is a standard method of the "thematic coding" (cf. Flick 2007, 403). It has to be taken into account that a detailed analysis of the interviews remains to be done and that the parts of the short case descriptions below merely illustrate empirical tendencies. But these first tendencies confirm the assumption that *Hauptschüler* have a rather one-sided and rather negative conception of work because their working experiences are predominantly comprised of precarious forms of employment and standard employment relationships limited to occupations with low status, low pay and high health risks. Thus, a negative conditioning of work is possible. Furthermore, a characteristic for their narrow concepts of work is that neither subjective dissolution processes nor the erosion of institutional and formal boundaries in the dimensions working hours, job location, social organisation, technique, work content, form of organisation are parts of their conceptions about work. Most of the interviewed pupils have the desire for a standard employment relationship because they do not experience subjective and privilege work. As a result, some of the pupils' conceptions of work are even based on the fordistic-tayloristic model.

The following tendencies concerning conceptions and experiences of four 8th-graders regarding work, they all attend the same *Hauptschule* and the same class, have arisen out of the short case descriptions. As the word "description" implies, the presentation

of these tendencies is in a narrative-descriptive writing style. There is also a methodological problem: The quotes are originally in German but were translated into English here.

Meleke, a fourteen-year-old pupil who attends the 8th grade of a *Hauptschule*, was born in Germany but her parents are Turkish-born. She lives with both parents and her brothers and sisters. Her mother is unemployed; her father works as a packer in a factory. Meleke chooses school (education) over work because she experienced work almost exclusively as (physically) stressful, laborious and exhausting: "[...] *School is really more pleasant than work because at work you always have to stand and do something, you have to be intensive. But sometimes it is good to give free rein to ideas. And this certainly is exhausting, doing the same thing every day – maybe for years. And yeah, you have to bustle and care for everything [...]*". ("[...] *Aber ne-Schule ist echt angenehmer als Arbeit, denn wenn n Arbeit- du musst immer stehen, immer was tun, du musst intensiv sein. Aber manchmal ist es auch gut, den Ideen freien Lauf zu geben. Und das ist natürlich anstrengend, den ganzen Tag das Gleiche zu machen und das vielleicht jahrelang. Und ja, du musst immer hin und herlaufen, dich um alles kümmern. [...]*".) Assembly-line work seems to be is an integral component of her conception.

André is fourteen years old, too, but without a migration background. He lives with his mother who is unemployed. André's conceptions of work are influenced by practical experiences in construction and office work and as a motorcar mechanic which he could check out in *Craftsman Centre of Education*. In addition, his conception of work is influenced by information he has gathered about his dream *job bus and train driver*. This leads him to the conviction that work is (physically) stressful and that "trying procedure" ("*ein harter Ablauf*"), which means fixed working hours, is normal. His mental picture of his later life in job is "at least not too quiet" ("*auf jeden Fall nicht zu ruhig*"), otherwise something would be wrong in the firm. Furthermore, a nine-to-five job is of importance to him because he thinks: "*Factories with a standard operating feature save jobs longer*" ("*[...] in Betrieben mit geregelttem Ablauf werden die Arbeitsplätze auch länger erhalten werden*"). He explains his conviction that standard operating procedures and fixed working hours are better in an economical way: "*Yeah because the people don't have a break when they like to have one, and therefore more of the company's products can be produced*" ("*Ja, weil die Leute halt nicht dann Pause machen, wann sie wollen, dann halt auch mehr produziert werden kann*"). Thus, in his view flexible working hours are damaging for the production. Therefore, he is glad that his dream job is characterized by a standard operating procedure and fixed working hours.



Fourteen-year-old **Kevin** assumes a standard employment relationship, too. Kevin does not have a migration background and stays with a foster mother who is a child care worker. Kevin's perception of a work day implies the theory that there is always a separation of work and private life: "Um, well that I go there and stay there every day, eight, nine hours every day and earn money. And then come home in the evening" ("Äh dass ich da dann auch äh dann auch hingeheso, also auch jeden Tag dann so acht, neun Stunden, so jeden Tag, also auch Geld verdiene mit. Und dann auch abends dann nach Hause komme"). But shift work crosses his mind, too: "Yeah, that he works a full shift, that he err isn't at home most of the day, but rather in the evening. And if he has a partial shift he err works four hours, five hours and then he is home again. And the next day he works at night or so" ("Ja, dass er dann ähm auch wenn er jetzt ähm Vollschicht hat, dass er dann ähm den mei- den meisten Zeit des Tages nicht zuhause ist, sondern nur abends zuhause ist. Und wenn er Teilschicht hat, ist er dann halt so vier Stunden, fünf Stunden ähm arbeiten und dann ist er wieder zuhause, und dann arbeitet er am andern Tag dann nachts oder so").

For these pupils, the main function of employment is to earn money and to hedge against poverty.

Further motifs for working mentioned by some pupils are: not being bored, doing something and giving meaning to life. For most pupils, another important function of work is that the day is structured. One can follow this from Meleke's and Anna's conceptions of work:

According to Meleke, work means pastime, amusement, meeting people. Therefore, being without work and "sitting at home" ("zuhause rumsitzen") is out of question for her. "Giving functions to the body" ("Dem Körper Funktion geben") is something you have to do because you are not born for doing nothing. Thus, for Meleke work is a meaningful good: "[...] That work is a meaning of life [...]" ("[...] Dass Arbeit schon- dass es auch Sinn des Lebens is [...]"). At the same time, she associates it with physical stress and physical work load. This negative emotional conditioning is a result of evaluating and interpreting experiences she made directly via internships and indirectly via her father's narrations, as we will see below.

Anna, a fifteen-year-old girl, lives with her parents and a sister. Her father works in a box-factory. To Anna work means deflection, amusement and not being bored: "I wouldn't like it, if I err only sit at home and clean the house. That would eventually be boring, and this is why I would like to work" ("Mir würds auch nicht gefallen, wenn ich ähm den ganzen Tag nur zuhause sitzen würde und halt das Haus sauber machen würde und das wär auch irgendwann langweilig, und deswegen würd ich dann auch gern arbeiten"). Concerning her later life, Anna assumes to have a nine-to-five job. She seemingly does not know telework. According to her,

work takes place somewhere outside the house, in a factory or somewhere else: "Yeah, I work ordinarily. Everything is stressful. If you come home from work, you are tired, want to eat something. Then I try to spend as much time as possible with my family. Um, well after that you go to bed and after that you must work again" ("Ja halt, ich arbeite ganz normal. Ist stressig alles, wenn man von der Arbeit nach Hause kommt, ist man müde, will was essen. Dann versuch ich auch so viel Zeit wie möglichst noch mit der Familie zu bringen äh zu verbringen. Äh danach irgendwann wieder schlafen gehen und danach muss man ja wieder zur Arbeit").

The view of a function of work as a structured daily routine, results from the fact that most of them come from a poor background and broken homes where a daily routine is missing (cf. Wippermann/ Calmbach 2007: 211). Thus an exterior job structuring is important for the formation of an attitude to fixed work hours.

It is self-evident for Hauptschüler that employees are bound to instructions the employer gives. One can see this in Anna's view on work which focuses only on the employees' side: "[...] that you have to do the things the employer tells you to do just in time" ("[...] Halt dass man seine Sachen, die man bekommt vom Arbeitgeber, halt alle auch macht und äh dass man auch rechtzeitig fertig is. [...]"). But Anna's perspective on work shows an awareness of subjectivization as well: "You must know what you have to do. There is nobody who runs around and tells you what you have to do" ("Also man muss wissen, was man machen muss. Also und es wird nicht daher gerannt und gesagt, das wir das und das machen sollen [...]").

Most of the questioned Hauptschüler, especially those with a migration background, associate work exclusively in this way: *grafting; labour; having to do many and hard things; exhausting; being fragged out; much stress; less leisure time; getting up early; working long hours*. Such a negative association is typical for Meleke as well. Her father's work experiences imprint Meleke's conception of work. Her father always came home late and overstrained when she was young and told her about his hard and stressful working day. This is why she did not want to work when she was younger and had the conception: "that you have to do a lot of work which is no fun" ("dass man viel arbeiten muss, das kein Spaß macht"). She deduces her conception of work from specific jobs, primarily pharmacist, restaurateur, hairdresser. Beyond that Meleke gained working experiences in the *Craftsman Centre of Education*. As a result of trial lessons in hairdressing and plastering she knows: "that work is very exhausting", "that you have to keep an eye on it", "that you must have much patience and that you have to bother" ("dass [Arbeit] sehr anstrengend ist", "dass man genau gucken muss", "dass [...] man richtig viel Geduld haben muss und sich Mühe geben muss"). Additionally, it was necessary



to be polite, to smile and to get along well with colleagues. Furthermore, she experienced unpleasant things like working long hours, tidying up, waiting and standing for long hours. All these experiences influence Meleke's mental picture of work.

Every once in a while the conceptions of work are ambivalent: Own desires produced by the media and school lessons, e.g. work is fun (subjectivization of work), are contrasted by reality in form of gained experiences through parents, brothers and sisters, friends, as well as school and own internships. These experiences are stronger and more sustainable than the wishes. This is why verbalisations like "work is fun" are very seldom. Instead, the gap between desire and reality is expressed by the modal verbs "should" and "could": "work should be fun"; "work could be fun (but does not have to be)".

5. Résumé

Structural change on the business level demand subjectivization achievements of all employees (cf. Dörre 2009, 1999, Lohr, Nickel 2005, 217). The motive "earning money" and the conception of a "nine-to-five-job" are not sufficient for a subjectivized employment because it asks employees to contribute their subjective potentials and resources which lead to dissolution of boundaries. Instead, an adequate conception of work, especially an awareness of subjectivization of employment with its dissolution of boundaries, is essential for meeting these requirements. But the dominant conception of employment the interviewed *Hauptschüler* have is that work is (physically) stressful, laborious, exhausting. For these pupils, the main function of employment is to earn enough money. Prestige and work content are not essential. Both, subjective dissolution processes and the erosion of institutional and formal boundaries are not part of pupils' conceptions about work. The contrary is the case: Concerning their later life, *Hauptschüler* assume to have a nine-to-five job. Work takes place somewhere outside the house, in a factory or somewhere else, is temporally structured and work content does not have anything to do with the person who carries it out. It is self-evident for them that, as employees, they are bound to instructions the employer gives (cf.

Keller, Seifert 2009, 41). If anything, *Hauptschüler* appreciate privileged dissolution between work and life in the dimension of social organisation because teamwork in school is often justified by teamwork on the job. This dominant conception of employment results from experiences these pupils made and still make: The pupils primarily experience standard and precarious employment relationships through parents, brothers and sisters, friends, as well as school and own internships. Thus, their social environment causes conceptions which are indifferent and narrow.

Because the interviewed *Hauptschüler* do not experience subjectivization of work and dissolution of boundaries, they have not yet developed a conception of work that includes higher subjective flexibility demands and self-organisation potentials. If school education fails to extend and to differentiate these conceptions – which is not easy because of their subjective functions and emotional components – *Hauptschüler* will enter the labour market with a mainly fordistic-orientated, rather one-dimensional, negative, institutionally and socially generated view on work. In that case *Hauptschüler* are likely to recall their inadequate concepts of work to cope with actual job requirements (subjectivization, flexibility, dissolution of boundaries et cetera). In this respect there can be talk of an exclusion from subjective dissolution of boundaries because *Hauptschülers'* work concepts and habits, which manage and regulate their action in work-relevant situations, are not in line with job requirements with a higher flexibility and subjectivization. By accounting the awareness of and the adaption to subjectivization as an additional but necessary qualifier, *Hauptschüler* are even more lowly-qualified – a disadvantage which leads to displacement.

At least there arises the question: How can social science education, especially vocational preparation and counselling close the gap between *Hauptschülers'* conceptions of work and their expectations, on the one hand, and general requirements on the other? This question is strongly connected to another one: what effect does social science education actually have in consideration of the mechanism of social reproduction in schools?

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