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Klarissa Lueg

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perceived intercultural
differences: a non-essentialist
approach to how and why in
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Abstract

The co-education of domestic and international students, in the classroom setting, is occasionally being described as challenging, both in academia and on the political stage. Explanations for encounters, perceived as problematic, have often turned out to be essentialist and othering: the – almost deficit by default – culture of “the” international students was to blame, regardless of diverse individual backgrounds. This paper explores features of domestic and international students in an international study program in Denmark and offers, from a Bourdieusian perspective, non-essentialist explanations for differences and concurrences in study strategies. Statistical analysis shows, among other findings, that international students originating from high social strata apply highly ambitious study strategies and can rely on advanced English proficiency. It is suggested, here, to perceive international students not as culturally deficit strangers, but as a culturally empowered group contributing to the host country.

Keywords

Internationalization, Culture, Higher Education, Student Diversity, Bourdieu, Study Strategies, International Students, English as a Medium of Instruction

Klarissa Lueg

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Introduction

The internationalization of higher education (HE) has led to an increase in English medium of instruction (EMI) programs all over Europe (Wächter & Maiworm, 2008). Denmark, the site of this study, is progressive in offering EMI education; currently, 420 B.A. and M.A. programs (The Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation, 2015) are offered by the eight Danish universities (Denmark, 2015). However, little is known about the motivation, attitudes, career orientations, ambitions and social backgrounds of students who opt for such EMI programs; neither of domestic students who opt for internationalized study programs in their home country nor incoming international students who enroll in these programs from abroad. To increase such knowledge becomes vital in the discipline of intercultural communication and the sociology of culture and education since EMI programs become the meeting point for domestic and international students (INS). Indeed, EMI programs and university internationalization, in Denmark, is on a watch by politics and media, especially. Observations and public statements are, however, often fed by assumptions.

Case in point is the claim that INS, particularly Eastern European students, may arrive as education and welfare tourists who utilize the financial support system for students (Brandtoft, 2014). The Danish right wing party, Dansk Folkeparti, has proposed, as a defense mechanism, to shut down all EMI programs (Jørgensen, 2015). This proposal reflects the notion of incoming students being dependent on the Danish (welfare and education) system and originating from poorer environments. This belief is embedded in a strong immigration-skeptical debate in Denmark and is often indicated by the referral to Rumanian or Bulgarian students

(Leit, 2013) or by the notion that Denmark pays for “all Europe’s youth“ (Jørgensen, 2015). This problem-centered perspective can be identified in academia as well: Kastberg and Tange (2014) observe that international students are often perceived as the “the problematic Other” and are “discursively constructed as being in a sort of a priori knowledge deficit”. Publications and working papers focus on difficulties, “challenges” and “tensions” (Lauridsen, 2014; Lauridsen & Madsen, 2013). INS have been said to move to Denmark in order to learn English (Caudery, Petersen, & Shaw, 2007) rather than the domestic language; in addition, complaints by lecturers regarding accents, pronunciation and the level of English proficiency of INS are ubiquitous (as documented by Kastberg & Tange, 2014: 49). Another, seemingly logical, assumption is that INS, unable to follow a program in the domestic language, self-select into EMI programs. Conversely, the valuable initiatives centering “internationalization at home” (Nilsson, 2003) have suggested that mainly such domestic students who cannot or do not want to be internationally mobile opt for EMI. Finally, recent publications (Lueg, 2015; Lueg & Lueg, 2015) have reported a perception of prestige (thus, symbolic capital) (Bourdieu, 1997), connected to the EMI programs among domestic students. In sum, current assumptions may create the idea that domestic students actively choose EMI, whereas IS select EMI programs because of lack of choices. This is a problematic, because somewhat hierarchic and socially dividing, dichotomy for any internationalization process. This working paper, in order to investigate the similarities and differences between domestic and foreign students, covers the following sections in its analysis of a standardized student survey: family backgrounds, career aspirations and mobility, social ambition, English as symbolic capital, and English capabilities. The research site is Aarhus University (AU), Denmark.

Analysis shows that international and domestic students are more similar than suggested. Both domestic students and IS originate from high social strata. English language proficiency is assessed, both by nationals and IS, as equally proficient. They are an internationally minded group: all of them intend to work “abroad” with internationals in Denmark and the Danes, particularly those with a migration background, elsewhere in the world. There are differences, however. For instance, internationals attach higher symbolic value to EMI than the Danish group does. Findings like these, interpreted against the background of Bourdieusian theory, and of research into the internationalization of higher education in Europe, are contrasted with the assumptions outlined earlier.

Student practices in the field of higher education: a Bourdieusian perspective

Starting from Bourdieu's theory of "constructivist structuralism" (Bourdieu, 1989), several concepts are well suited to describe the (internationalizing) field of HE, student backgrounds and practices and the value attached to English and EMI. First, there is the key Bourdieusian concept to address here is the concept of "field". It is defined as an arena of struggle in which "the agents occupy positions [...], these position-takings being aimed either at conserving or trans-forming the structure of relations of forces that is constitutive of the field" (Bourdieu, 2005a: 30). The field here examined is internationalized higher education. Across intercultural communication (Kastberg & Tange, 2014) to critical management studies (Vaara & Faÿ, 2011, 2012), Bourdieusian perspectives on HE are not uncommon; Bourdieu himself described universities and education as a field (Bourdieu, 1988). The habitus of agents meets the structures of the field; practices related to social background are mediated through the field's given order. Fields are "fields of struggle" (Bourdieu, 2005a: 30), occupied by agents fighting for positions, legitimacy and capital. Capital is the second key concept to be addressed. Bourdieu identifies four types (Bourdieu, 1997). Economic capital consists of physical assets that can be converted into cash. Social capital includes disposing of a durable network or a social group membership. Cultural capital comes in three types. The embodied form, competences and knowledge, unconsciously bequeathed within the family; the objectified form relates to books or instruments; the institutionalized form rests on credentials from authorized institutions (Bourdieu, 1997: 47). A fourth type of capital is symbolic capital. It consists of other types of capital that are recognized as legitimate and granting credibility and distinction (Bourdieu, 2005: 195). One form of cultural capital is linguistic capital (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977: 74). Consequently, in this paper, EMI education is viewed as both cultural and symbolic capitals – also because it can be connected to a notion of cosmopolitanism and education (Prieur & Savage, 2011; Wilkens, 2007 (Lueg & Lueg, 2015)).

Also, Bourdieusian theory is vital for a perspective on INS practices as strategies. Claiming absence of strategic agency, in Bourdieu's work, is misconceiving the theoretical constructs. Occasionally, Bourdieu's theory is perceived as being biased toward the structuralism which undoubtedly is part of his work. However, agents do act strategically (Bourdieu, 1972). In Bourdieu's theory of practice, strategies cannot be equated to rational choice or planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985; Becker, 1978). Strategies are simply practice and formed by an agent's behavior; outcome of capital, habitus and field (Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). The main strategies are summarized by Swartz (1997):

“Conservation strategies tend to be pursued by those who hold dominant positions and enjoy seniority in the field. Strategies of succession are attempts to gain access to dominant positions in a field and are generally pursued by the new entrants. Finally, strategies of subversion are pursued by those who expect to gain little from the dominant groups. These strategies take the form of a more or less radical rupture with the dominant group by challenging its legitimacy to define the standards of the field” (Swartz, 1997: 125).

Agent strategy (Bourdieu, 1990b: 15) depends on habitus-field correspondence, that is, the extent to which an agent feels comfortable with a field’s rules and values. This strategy of response to the field and its nomos, the “principle of vision and division” (Bourdieu, 1998: 53), is called doxa (Bourdieu, 1998: 103). Depending on this correspondence, a “sense of the game” or a “sense of positioning” (Bourdieu, 1990a: 113) helps agents to develop response strategies (Bourdieu, 1975), to detect power structures and successful positions, and to anticipate and encounter changes (Bourdieu, 1990b: 66). Bourdieu’s notions of field, capital, and doxa will be taken up, again, in the interpretation of this study’s results.

Overview of hypotheses

EMI is predominantly selected by higher strata students (Lueg & Lueg, 2015). Students from lower strata are discouraged by the - perceived - barriers posed by EMI programs. EMI success being international, it can be assumed that self-selection of INS follows this general pattern. Although increasingly democratized in Europe, the HE field remains challenging to navigate for offspring from the lower strata in national contexts (Geißler, 2006; Isserstedt, Middendorff, Kandulla, Borchert, & Leszczensky, 2010; Triventi, 2011). It can be assumed that the international HE field is even less transparent. Codes and meanings of any field are primarily recognizable for agents with matching predispositions and capital; this is a “doxical” correspondence (Bourdieu, 1998: 81). Absolving the full program abroad requires far more planning, persistence, knowledge, and self-confidence than does an exchange semester arranged by the home university. Studies in a Scandinavian context show that it is primarily upper class students who move abroad (Munk, 2009), and, a fortiori, the same can be assumed for more stratified societies. Therefore, I propose the following:

Hypothesis 1: Both international and domestic students in EMI programs originate from higher strata.

This does not imply that stable social origin excludes aspirations for social upscaling. Student mobility, particularly enrolment in an entire program abroad, indicates a strong career orientation. It has been shown that career advantage and perceived labor market opportunities do matter to study abroad students (Bomi & Carol, 2014; Petzold & Peter, 2015). Most studies solely consider exchange semesters. Studies on motivations and backgrounds of students in full degree programs abroad are scarce. Still “a strong positive career impact when pursuing an international career” has been stated (Mohajeri Norris & Gillespie, 2009). Career-related motivation is likely to be more pronounced in full program students as barriers are much higher (awareness of costs, awareness of continuous language challenges, and a high level of self-organization). International full program students are willing to take a higher risk, in realizing their life script, than domestic students do. , But these students more or less originate from similar strata. Therefore, in this project, a higher level of ambition for social upscaling and career is assumed to exist. Thus, I suggest the following:

Hypothesis 2a: Internationals feel more pressure for social upscaling than domestic students do.

Hypothesis 2b: Internationals are more ambitious than Danish students.

English, as symbolic capital, is highly valued by Danes. An international mindset has been proposed as a new form of cultural capital (Prieur & Savage, 2011). Wilkens (2007) quote a student as stating it a “bit prestigious to be enrolled in an international study program with English as the medium of instruction in Denmark” [“lidt blæret at være tilknyttet et international, engelsksproget studiemiljø i Danmark”]. However, because internationals have decided to move abroad for a full English study program, it can be maintained that they have at least an equally high estimation of English as capital. Also, the mobile international group may have been regularly confronted with the need for English. Therefore, I assume that both groups consider English symbolic capital and suggest the following:

Hypothesis 3: Danes and internationals, equally, value English highly as symbolic capital.

Usually, Danes do rank high in English and general foreign language proficiency surveys (EF_EPI, 2014), particularly so in self-assessment surveys (Commission, 2006). Self-assessment and high school grades often correlate (Panadero, Brown, & Courtney, 2014; Patrice M. Weiss, Craig A. Koller, L. Wayne Hess, & Wasser, 2005). Whether a high self-assessment is rooted in above-average English grades and whether a linear connection be-

tween English high school grades and self-assessment can be generally assumed must be tested. Thus, I suggest the following:

Hypothesis 4a: Domestic students assess their English proficiency higher than international students do.

Hypothesis 4b: Domestic students received better high school grades in English than international students did.

Hypothesis 4c: The higher an individual's high school grades, the higher their self-assessment of English language proficiency is.

It has been argued, on the political stage, that internationals only come to study and then leave the country again; thus, not contributing to the job market and to tax returns (Jespersen, 2013; Kildall Rysgaard, 2013). Yet, it has been shown that the majority of INS intend to seek jobs in Denmark, after graduation (DAMVAD, 2013: 38). The intention of students, particularly students at business schools, to craft a lifelong career in the guest country is vital for an understanding of these students' dedication to, and perspective on, the guest country. A recent study in Germany shows that despite a generally high willingness to remain for a first post-graduate job, the majority of former INS leave the host country after a short time (Stifterverband_Deutsche_Wissenschaft, 2015). It can be assumed that students would choose an education in Danish as a medium of instruction if they intended to fully settle in Denmark. Accordingly, considering the Danish students in the EMI program, the concept of "internationalization at home" provides reason to believe that this group belongs to the "vast majority of higher education students who would never leave their home country" (Wächter, 2003). These students may utilize domestic international offers to gain internationalized education and experience, but they want to focus on a career in their home country.

Hypothesis 5a: International students have no intention of pursuing a lifelong career in the host country.

Hypothesis 5b: Domestic students in a domestic EMI program intend to pursue a lifelong career in their home country.

Since it has been conjectured that both student groups, Danes and internationals, will pursue their lifelong careers in different countries, it is concluded that their career aspirations will differ as well. This assumption is based on the notion that both student groups, aiming for different careers, use the EMI program but attach different meanings to it. In accordance with this logic, domestic students may have advantageous positions on the job market of their home country and, in comparison, may be more knowledgeable players in the educational and

economic field. They may be able to follow a “strategy of succession” (Bourdieu, 1975: 30) and may have developed tangible aspirations regarding their jobs, positions, and fields. In contrast, the INS who have been mobile since their first semester may have more flexible expectations regarding the field in which they may work. Thus, I propose the following:

Hypothesis 6: The career aspirations of Danes and internationals differ.

Method and data collection

This project’s target population was first-semester students enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Economics and Business Administration Program, with English as a medium of instruction, at AU, during the 2011 fall term. All students were required to document outstanding English proficiency upon their registration, corresponding to grade B in secondary school English. The sample consisted of 127 students, including 94 Danes and 33 INS, with diverse backgrounds. The group of Danish students was subdivided into Danes without a migration background (74) and Danes with a migration background (20), in order to explore possible differences. Constructs for the questionnaire were intended to represent possible reasons for choosing EMI. ENGLISH is a self-assessment of proficiency in reading, writing, and speaking. This self-assessment is considered in addition to HIGH SCHOOL GRADE.

AMBITION captures the professional ambition of the student. SOCIAL CAPITAL measures the family’s attitude toward educational achievement; it and facilitates assessment of student’s desire for social upscaling. SYMBOLIC CAPITAL measures student’s view of English as a source of prestige and distinction. **Table 1** lists all of the questionnaire items as well as their descriptive statistics. **Table 2** lists the correlations among all variables.

INSERT TABLE 1 HERE

INSERT TABLE 2 HERE

Another factor to be considered was BACKGROUND of a student based on the parents’ social standing, understood as a combination of the parents’ academic degrees and subsequent professional careers (Orr, Gwos, & Netz, 2011). The highest-level combination (father’s or mother’s) was set to determine the student’s social background (**s. table 3**). In accordance with Isserstedt et al. (2010), students were grouped into the strata lower middle (1), middle (2), upper middle (3) and high (4). Questionnaire items were high school English grades, nationalities and backgrounds of migration/minority belonging and whether the students expect a lifelong career in Denmark (place of work). . Finally, an open question addressed the students’ job aspirations.

Results

Based on Table 3, it can be concluded that both groups, internationals and Danish students, do originate from similar social strata. This implies accepting **H1**, “Both international and domestic students, in EMI programs, stem from higher strata”. Most frequently, INS originate from the highest tier of stratification structure here adopted (48.5%). Danish students show a similar background: 45.7% originate from the highest tier. A sub-grouping of the Danish group into Danes without and Danes with a migration/minority belonging background was undertaken. This differentiation does not show any significant differences (not displayed in Table 3).

INSERT TABLE 3 HERE

H2a “Internationals have more pressure for social upscaling”, is proven correct as well. The construct SOCIAL CAPITAL earns higher agreement from the internationals ($M=5.927$; $SD=1,508$) than from the Danes ($M=5.253$; $SD=1,14$) (**s. table 4**), $t(125) = 2.677$, $p = 0.008$. Also, group statistics show INS as having significantly stronger ambitions than Danish students. Results indicate a significantly higher acceptance of the construct AMBITION among the INS ($M = 5,902$; $SD = 1,234$) than among the Danish students ($M = 5.431$; $SD=1,108$), $t(125)=-2.038$, $p=0.044$. Consequently, **H2b can be accepted**: “Internationals are more ambitious than Danish students”.

Next, the project explores the question whether usage of English is valued equally high by Danes and INS (SYMBOLIC CAPITAL). Analysis shows that INS ($M= 5,333$; $SD= 1,105$) demonstrate a significantly stronger understanding of English, as a form of symbolic capital, than do Danish students ($M= 4,617$; $SD= 1,178$), $t(125) = 3.052$, $p = 0.003$. In view of this result, **H3**, “Danes and internationals value English as symbolic capital equally highly”, cannot be verified.

As to English language capability, group statistics show close similarity of Danes’ ($M=5,435$; $SD=,892$) and INS’s ($M= 5,229$; $SD= 1,173$) self-assessment of that capability, $t(125)=-1.044$, $p=0.299$. This leads to rejecting **H4a**, “Danes assess their English proficiency higher than do INS”. Rejection of **H4b**: “Danes have better English high school grades than do international students” is in place as well. Results show the opposite to hold true. On the Danish scale from -3 to 12 (equivalent to the international “A+”), internationals, on average, self report $M=11.364$ ($SD=1.168$). On average, Danes self report $M=9.968$ ($SD=1.823$), $t(125)=4.100$, $p=0.000$. On this basis and because SYMBOLIC CAPITAL and English grading show a low, insignificant correlation (table 3), the assumption must be rejected that there

is a direct analogy between high school grade and self-assessment in language proficiency (**H4c**). Regarding the expectation to work their entire life in Denmark, Danes with a migration background are the most determined to work part of their career outside of Denmark ($M = 1.900$; $SD=1.071$) (the sub-analysis is not displayed in Table 4). IS ($M = 3.09$; $SD=1.702$) have a significantly higher tendency to expect a career in Denmark, $t(48.612)=-3.126$, $p=0.003$. Danes without a migration background ($M=2.554$; $SD=1.721$) do not show a significant difference compared to IS, $t(50.89)=-1.495$, $p=0.138$. Overall, Table 4 shows domestic students ($M=2.415$, $SD=1.622$) being significantly ($t(125)=2.003$, $p=0.044$) less interested in working in Denmark than INS are ($M=3.091$, $SD=1.702$). Thus, both hypotheses **H5a**, “International students have no intention to pursue a lifelong career in the host country”, and **H5b**, “Domestic students in a domestic EMI program intend to pursue a lifelong career in their home country” cannot be maintained either.

INSERT TABLE 4 HERE

Finally, there is H6 “The career aspirations between Danes and internationals differ”. Tests addressing this hypothesis were conducted using hybrid qualitative-quantitative data analysis of free text fields, for students to fill in, as to their favored industry and function to work in. Naming more than one was possible. Answers were assigned to categories, first, and then analyzed regarding frequency. To name one example, Danes with a migration background tend to favor the marketing and sales sector (35%); they also hold most concrete notion of their later careers. Danes without migration background frequently report having “no idea” (49%) of what industry they will work in. Danes with migration background appear to be slightly more (40% “no idea”) and INS much more focused (36% “no idea”) on one field. Consequently, **H6** is accepted.

Discussion

Limitations

This survey on an internationalized study program, at a Danish university, is limited to Bachelor of Science students in economics and business administration. Different outcomes may be expected in other subjects and disciplines. The high level of English proficiency in the general Danish population may have affected results as well; intentions to remain in the host country may be lower in countries where, in educational and professional environments, a lesser degree of English is spoken. Future research may use survey results here presented to gain a deeper understanding of the conduct of domestic students and INS – possibly via the for-

mation of qualitative focus groups and/or semi-structured interviews. This would allow for follow-up studies on specific strategies, and on more individualized expectations and motivations of both student groups.

Contributions and conclusions

This paper has listed and compared a number of features, self-assessments and attitudes of international and domestic students in an internationalized study program in Denmark, conducted in EMI. Regarding social origins of the students under survey, it can be posited that the EMI economics and business administration program predominantly attracts high strata students. English holds a high symbolic value for both groups (higher for the internationals). It must be noted, therefore, that EMI in management and business education may contribute to a social strata bias in the HE field that is not limited to national contexts. Job market requirements regarding EMI degrees and/or high English proficiency may primarily benefit students enrolled in these programs, causing a split between domestic students studying in Danish, on the one hand, and in English, on the other hand. An even deeper split may be produced between mobile INS and those who, presumably for socioeconomic reasons, cannot migrate (in countries with a less internationalized HE system). The social background of the incoming students is not their only distinctive feature; they are dedicated to career aspirations and commitment to the host country. Many intend to remain after graduation to pursue a lifelong career in Denmark. This insight is of value for political discussion regarding INS being a weight on Danish taxpayers' shoulders because it contradicts the belief that students exclusively arrive to exploit the educational system and then repatriate to their home country immediately after graduation.

Further, this paper has shown that INS express higher ambition and higher pressure for social upscaling than do domestic students. This may be an avenue for providing explanations for diverging practices having been perceived as problematic by domestic students and lecturers. Danes have a rather high school-inspired understanding of HE and thus a different perception of the field's nomos. For way of example, a particularly Danish practice is the formation of "læsegrupper", that is, groups of students that are either assigned to join, or encouraged to do so, by the lecturer. These study groups are built on the notion that learning should be social and comfortable for students and should prevent self-consciousness in the classroom. Furthermore, Danish students often engage in leisure activities related to and organized by the university. As Wilken (2007) avers, Danes and internationals do not interact much; the intercultural læsegrupper "often did not work", and it was "challenging to involve the [inter-

national, K.L.] students in the milieu around the study program” (Wilkens, 2007: 137). In contrast to popular essentialist explanations based on national culture (e.g., Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005), the strong ambition in this study’s INS sample could suggest that these students simply strategically decide to not invest their time in such non-mandatory learning events. What may be perceived as a different (national) culture of learning style or social behavior may be the culturally random common strategy of a habitually highly efficient student group. Understood as a strategy of an ambitious, globally mobile, and culturally diverse student group, the (not systematically tested) practice of avoiding social gatherings and dialogical learning styles may be interpreted as well-functioning advantageous practices and as a strategy of succession for the internationalized HE market. The high value attached by INS to EMI is an interesting observation considering the “no-choice” assertion, stating that INS, when choosing EMI programs, choose negatively – in assuming DMI programs to be an unsurmountable barrier. The fact that INS value English more highly than anglophone Danes do suggests that English is chosen actively, over Danish, as a strategy for the future job market. These results of the present study are supported by the excellent grades of INS in English ($M=11.36$), which exceed Danish students’ grades ($M=9.96$). However, both groups assess their English capabilities similarly well. This finding contradicts the common notion that the quality of EMI learning is impaired by different levels of English, for which, subtly and openly, internationals (both students and teachers) are often blamed (Jensby, 2010; Johannesen, 2008; Mainz, 2013). Instead, the factual English level of INS provides reason to believe that generalized complaints regarding their English level are ill-perceived or feed on stereotyped perceptions of foreigners. Also, it is well documented by researchers in the field of world Englishes and English as a lingua franca that heavy accents or differences in pronunciation can be responsible for the faulty perception of poor English by an ethnic majority accustomed to a more homogenous accent (Jenkins, 2009; Lueg, 2015)). In total, this study does show that all groups, Danes with and without a migration background and international students, are mobility-oriented groups: none of them holds high expectations of pursuing life-long careers in their home country. This implies a strong dedication to the host country, Denmark, on behalf of international students (s. earlier). Also, there are implications for the “internationalization at home” perspective. It appears that it can no longer be assumed that internationalized EMI programs replace physical mobility in the long term. Instead, domestic students appear to use EMI education, in their own country, in preparing for a career abroad. It has been demonstrated, in this study, that Danes with a migration background are the most

determined to pursue a career elsewhere, although their response pattern was, otherwise, very similar to that of Danes without a migration background. This insight should be explored further by future research. Possible reasons may include a feeling of discomfort or not belonging, in Denmark, or barriers to migrating and expatriating may be perceived as low because of first or second generation migration experience. To sum up: this study questions, on the basis of an empirical investigation in the relevant field, essentialist explanations of differences in student conduct and strategies. It offers a Bourdieusian perspective on ambitious, determined practices, as a coping and career strategy, by a diverse incoming student body.

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Appendix: tables

Table 1: Overview of all constructs

Factors (and items)		Factor loading	Min	Max	Mean	SD
SOCIAL CAPITAL: ambition of student's family (n=127)		n/a	1.00	7.00	5.428	1.275
<i>Cronbach's alpha = 0.813; total variance explained = 59.5%; Eigenvalue = 2.973</i>						
<i>SocCap1</i>	My family says that obtaining a good education is important.	0.823	1	7	6.150	1.322
<i>SocCap2</i>	My family says that hard work gives good money.	0.792	1	7	5.417	1.743
<i>SocCap3</i>	My family says that I must always use my full potential.	0.769	1	7	5.921	1.343
<i>SocCap4</i>	My family says that I should not settle for second best.	0.767	1	7	5.236	1.720
<i>SocCap5</i>	My family says that I should have it better than my (grand)parents.	0.700	1	7	4.417	2.155
AMBITION: ambition of student (n=127)		n/a	1.00	7.00	5.553	1.156
<i>Cronbach's alpha = 0.822; total variance explained = 69.0%; Eigenvalue = 2.760</i>						
<i>Ambition1</i>	I have high aspirations for status.	0.900	1	7	5.370	1.344
<i>Ambition2</i>	I have a strong drive for success.	0.898	1	7	5.819	1.306
<i>Ambition3</i>	I have high aspirations for future achievements.	0.822	1	7	5.929	1.142
<i>Ambition4</i>	I have the desire to earn more money than my friends.	0.684	1	7	5.094	1.841
SYMBOLIC CAPITAL: English as a source of prestige (n=127)		n/a	1.75	7.00	4.803	1.198
<i>Cronbach's alpha = 0.661; total variance explained = 50.0%; Eigenvalue = 2.000</i>						
<i>SymCap</i>	Studying in English carries a positive connotation in society.	0.781	1	7	4.992	1.734
<i>SymCap</i>	The more intelligent students study in English.	0.689	1	7	4.866	1.720
<i>SymCap</i>	It's impressive to have studied in English.	0.687	1	7	3.780	1.976
<i>SymCap</i>	Studying English leads to higher social standing.	0.665	1	7	5.575	1.306
ENGLISH PROFICIENCY: self-assessment of english skills (n=127)		n/a	1.00	7.00	5.381	0.972
<i>Cronbach's alpha = 0.831; total variance explained = 57.9%; Eigenvalue = 4.053</i>						
<i>EngProf1</i>	I speak English fluently.	0.850	1	7	5.669	1.254
<i>EngProf2</i>	I speak English better than the average student at AU.	0.831	1	7	4.937	1.361
<i>EngProf3</i>	I understand English without any problems.	0.828	1	7	6.236	0.988
<i>EngProf4</i>	I write English fluently.	0.827	1	7	5.528	1.252
<i>EngProf5</i>	I speak English better than the average Dane.	0.795	1	7	5.756	1.355
<i>EngProf6</i>	I speak English better than the average non-English-native student around the world (Europe, Asia . . .).	0.739	1	7	5.433	1.232
<i>EngProf7</i>	I read international (on-line) newspapers.	0.304	1	7	4.110	1.997

Table 2: Correlation among all variables (n=127)

Correlation among all variables (n=127)									
	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Social background	3.165	0.982	1.000						
2 SOCIAL CAPITAL	5.428	1.275	0.192 *	1.000					
3 AMBITION	5.553	1.156	0.088	0.462 ***	1.000				
4 SYMBOLIC CAPITAL	4.803	1.198	0.036	0.285 **	0.299 **	1.000			
5 ENGLISH PROFICIENCY	5.381	0.972	0.015	0.156	0.303 **	0.012	1.000		
6 English Grade	10.331	1.782	0.068	0.244 **	0.164	0.146	0.090	1.000	
7 Place of work (DK)	2.591	1.664	-0.148	0.001	-0.026	-0.109	-0.001	0.059	1.000

*p ≤ .05** p ≤ .01; *** p ≤ .001. Significance tests are two-tailed.

Table 3: The social background of domestic and international students (n=127)

Social background	Domestic students		International students		All students	
	<i>n</i> =94	<i>Relative frequency</i>	<i>n</i> =33	<i>Relative frequency</i>	<i>n</i> =127	<i>Relative frequency</i>
1 lower middle	11	11.7%	3	9.1%	14	11.0%
2 middle	8	8.5%	2	6.1%	10	7.9%
3 upper middle	32	34.0%	12	36.4%	44	34.6%
4 high	43	45.7%	16	48.5%	59	46.5%

Table 4: T-tests of all variables

ID	Result	Variable name	Possible range	Domestic students (n=94)					International students (n=33)					T-Test			Significance level
				Min	Max	Mean	S.D.	S.E. (mean)	Min	Max	Mean	S.D.	S.E. (mean)	Difference in mean	t-value	p-value	
H1	accepted	Social background	1 to 4	1.00	4.00	3.138	1.001	0.103	1.00	4.00	3.242	0.936	0.163	0.104	0.522	0.602	n.s.
H2a	accepted	SOCIAL CAPITAL	1 to 7	2.20	7.00	5.253	1.140	0.118	1.00	7.00	5.927	1.508	0.263	0.674	2.677	0.008	**
H2b	accepted	AMBITION	1 to 7	2.25	7.00	5.431	1.108	0.114	1.00	7.00	5.902	1.234	0.215	0.471	2.038	0.044	*
H3	rejected	SYMBOLIC CAPITAL	1 to 7	1.75	7.00	4.617	1.178	0.122	3.00	7.00	5.333	1.105	0.192	0.716	3.052	0.003	**
H4a	rejected	ENGLISH PROFICIENCY	1 to 7	3.43	7.00	5.435	0.892	0.092	1.00	7.00	5.229	1.173	0.204	-0.205	-1.044	0.299	n.s.
H4b	rejected	English grade	-3 to 12	7.00	12.00	9.968	1.823	0.188	7.00	12.00	11.364	1.168	0.203	1.396	4.107	0.000	***
H5a	rejected	Place of work	1 to 7	1.00	7.00	2.415	1.622	0.167	1.00	7.00	3.091	1.702	0.296	0.676	2.033	0.044	*

*p ≤ .05** p ≤ .01; *** p ≤ .001. Significance tests are two-tailed.