



# Channels of reproduction

## Parents' transmission of cultural capital and children's conversion of cultural capital into high educational performance

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### Background: Educational (dis)advantages are transmitted across generations

- Prominent explanation for this observation is Bourdieu's cultural reproduction theory (Bourdieu 1983)
- Prior research consistently shows an association between parent's cultural capital and children's educational outcomes (Aschaffenburg and Maas, 1997; de Graaf, 1988; de Graaf et al., 2000)
- Prior research rarely examines parent's and child's cultural capital simultaneously (Aschaffenburg and Maas, 1997; Jæger 2009; Jæger & Breen 2016)

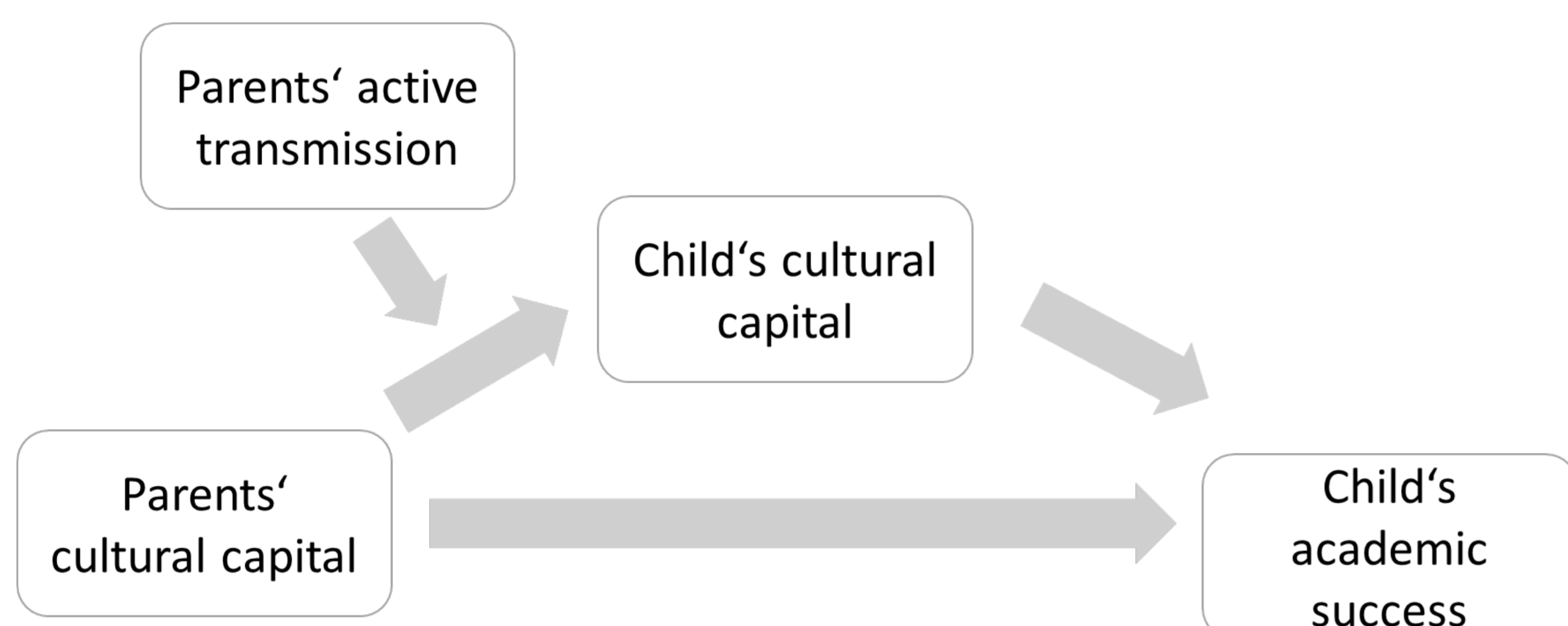
### Motivation: Conditions of successful cultural capital transmission are not well understood

- Jæger (2009) argues that three conditions need to be fulfilled for cultural capital to promote educational success:
  - parents must possess cultural capital,
  - they must transfer their cultural capital to children,
  - and children must absorb cultural capital and convert it into educational success.
- Prior research has not yet systematically examined if these three conditions are necessary conditions that must be fulfilled concurrently

### Research questions:

- Under which conditions is the transmission of cultural capital from parents to children successful?
- Do children convert their own cultural capital into educational success?

### Theoretical model:



### Hypotheses:

**H1** Only if parents possess cultural capital and at the same time actively invest in transmitting cultural capital, children accumulate cultural capital themselves.

**H2** Children's own cultural capital is positively associated with academic performance.

### Data and Operationalization:

- German National Educational Panel Study (NEPS)
- Staring cohort 3 "Fifth-graders", ~10-11 year old children
- Wave 1 (2010)
- 2370 parents and their children who attend a regular secondary school

Theoretical construct	Indicator	Mean
Parental cult. participation:	Cultural participation in opera/ballet/classical concert, theater, museum/art exhibition (sum score, 0/1 std.)	.27
Beaux art possessions:	Art work, poetry books (sum score, 0/1 std.)	.66
Active transmission:	Discussions about books, political/social issues, artwork (sum score, 0/1 std.)	.28
Child's cultural capital:	Cultural participation in opera/ballet/classical concert, theater, museum/art exhibition (sum score, 0/1 std.)	.27
Child's academic performance:	Child's reading test score (WLE)	.22

### Results: H1 X

#### Active transmission efforts are no necessary condition

Table 1. Results from multivariate regression analysis on child's cultural capital

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	$\beta$	c.i.	$\beta$	c.i.	$\beta$	c.i.
<i>Parents' CC stock:</i>						
Beaux art pos.	0.05***	[0.03,0.07]	0.04*	[0.01,0.07]	0.05***	[0.03,0.07]
Cul. particip. (p)	0.20***	[0.15,0.24]	0.20***	[0.15,0.24]	0.18***	[0.13,0.24]
<i>Activ transm:</i>						
Cultural talk	0.26***	[0.22,0.30]	0.21***	[0.12,0.30]	0.25***	[0.19,0.31]
<i>Interaction:</i>						
Beaux art pos. X Cult. talk			0.06	[-0.05,0.17]		
Cul. particip. (p) X Cult. talk					0.04	[-0.12,0.20]
<i>Fam. education:</i>						
CASMINy Fam.	0.00	[-0.00,0.01]	0.00	[-0.00,0.01]	0.00	[-0.00,0.01]
<i>Controls</i>						
	Yes		Yes		Yes	
N	2370		2370		2370	
R <sup>2</sup>	0.20		0.20		0.20	

Source: NEPS SC3 - Version 5.0.0, Code: cor\_06multivar\_20160325 Notes. \* p<.05, \*\* p<.01, \*\*\* p<.001  
Controls: ISEI, single parenthood, child's gender, child's migr. background

### Results: H2 X

#### Children's cultural capital is not related to performance

Table 2. Results from multivariate regression analysis on child's reading performance

	Model 1		Model 2	
	$\beta$	c.i.	$\beta$	c.i.
<i>Child's CC:</i>				
Cul. particip. (c)	-0.18	[-0.41,0.06]	-0.22	[-0.48,0.04]
<i>Parents' CC stock:</i>				
Beaux art pos.			0.17*	[0.03,0.30]
Cul. particip. (p)			0.60***	[0.34,0.86]
<i>Activ transm:</i>				
Cultural talk			-0.34**	[-0.55,-0.12]
<i>Fam. education:</i>				
CASMINy Fam.	0.15***	[0.12,0.17]	0.13***	[0.10,0.15]
<i>Controls</i>				
	Yes		Yes	
N	2370		2370	
R <sup>2</sup>	0.13		0.14	

Source: NEPS SC3 - Version 5.0.0, Notes. \* p<.05, \*\* p<.01, \*\*\* p<.001  
Controls: ISEI, single parenthood, child's gender, child's migr. background

### First conclusion:

- Parents' active transmission efforts and parents' stock of cultural capital independently contribute to children's cultural capital accumulation.
- Children's own cultural capital is not significantly associated to their reading performance, however parents' stock of cultural capital is positively associated with children's reading performance.
- Results suggest that the possession of cultural capital by parents is the only necessary condition for promoting academic success. Further examination is needed to understand the underlying mechanisms of this association.

