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### ***International and Global Issues for Research***

*The elephant in the room: a critical examination of the International  
Baccalaureate Diploma Programme's policy discourse.*

Kevin House

Singapore

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## **Abstract**

This paper sets out to provide a methodological lens through which we can see the International Baccalaureate (IB) using policy to produce governmentality within its network of 'World Schools.' To do this I will use a system of triangulation to show the multiple influences at work in its discursive development. Firstly, I will explain how its policy heritage grew from a background of policy borrowing, which has filtered down into its work with schools. Secondly, I will summarise shifts in our global relationship to knowledge and show how this has influenced the IB's own values and direction. Thirdly, I focus on how the organisation may view itself in current times given its rapid expansion in the last ten years. Finally, I close by arguing that such governmentality impacts upon the learning communities of its schools and places it at a fork in the road with regard to its future development.

When analysing the policy of the International Baccalaureate's (IB) Diploma Programme one is immediately struck by the centralized way in which it generates a global discourse, which must adapt to a wide range of localized educational contexts. Such a relationship raises intriguing questions, for example in its programme do we discover a meaningful lived understanding of its original mid-twentieth century values or rather profligate simulacra with neoliberalism at the core? Does IB policy bring the children of disparate cultures closer together by creating a harmonious global community that celebrates the rich diversity of individual peoples, or does its World School concept merely feed the needs of an a rapidly expanding knowledge economy? Do Diploma Programme schools and their teachers represent a progressive educational movement or are they simply providing the necessary credentials for a twenty-first century transnational elite? Many have argued (Mattern 1988; Hill 2002) that most international or internationally-minded schools would clearly see themselves as living up to the emancipatory values espoused in the IB mission statement. In this paper, however, my aim is to argue that by dictating particular policies and policy-writing values within schools, the IB ensures certain institutional discourses evolve. These in turn retain and attach specific attitudes to knowledge and the knower that are perhaps indicative of a wider and less subtle shift in our relationship to knowledge as a whole society.

Thus my elephant in the room is a large and complex creature and who is as yet, publicly at least, unacknowledged by the IB. Firstly, he contains (and he is an unavoidably masculine heuristic) all the cultural assumptions of the IB's values system as enunciated in their centralised policy documents of which there are numerous examples. Secondly, he carries certain discourses that consequently form within the cultures in the schools, often altering over time the ways in which they go about their practices. Finally, and perhaps more fundamentally, IB policy through such practices, creates or alters principles amongst educators and students. Later in this paper, and to better identify and examine this process, I shall rely on what Michel Foucault has referred to as 'governmentality.' By doing this I hope to explain just how institutional policy affects everyday practices, adjusts behaviours and potentially limits states of being.

Carrying out such an assessment of the role of the IB's educational policy in perpetuating such governmentality has required me to create a triangulated methodological approach so as to pull together the complicated strands in this

discursive web. Firstly, I will suggest the IB has grown out of an educational era in which Anglo Saxon policy borrowing has been very much the norm. Secondly, an examination of the current shift in our relationship to knowledge at the societal level reveals how the IB is objectified as a credential within the ‘marketplace.’ Finally, a consideration of the multiple identities available to the IB itself helps us see the impacts that self-image may have upon its current policy development. Thus, triangulation becomes the critical lens through which our elephant in the room comes into view as a creature that seems to comfortably balance the neoliberal discourse of knowledge economics on its broad values-based back.

## **POLICY BORROWING**

To begin, let us consider the history of the IB so we might see it as a product of an episteme (Foucault 1972), and understand that given its genealogy and the prevalence of certain discourses, it is unsurprising it has gone on to developed in the way it has. The background of its inception and its policy development suggest that its heritage points to a particular epistemological trajectory that marks it out from other international curriculum and assessment providers. In addition to this a later summary of the educational marketplace will show how it has evolved over the last forty years because this too has played its part in the direction its policy has moved. These are all key elements of the ‘elephant’ argument because a growing number of those working directly with the IB see Cambridge’s irony when he suggests the IB ‘*describes itself* [my italics] as a not-for-profit educational foundation’ (2010, 200), because its policy has all the hallmarks of neoliberal capitalism. Arguably, for a values-based curriculum and assessment provider whose reputation is rooted in the progressive educationalist tradition, this might pose a significant challenge for the future.

The concept of policy borrowing is an interesting one because we can immediately see why it would be attractive to such a small organisation in its earliest stages when it had limited financial resources, widely differing cultural backgrounds but broadly similar educational and social ones. Currently, the International Baccalaureate is the only one from a growing number of educational curricula providers in a developing global market that mandates certain policy requirements before a school can offer one of its programmes. In a sense, therefore, the IB is the only international curriculum provider that has a built-in form of policy borrowing in its processes of school development. For example, each school intending to become an IB Diploma

school must embed the programme standards and practices into the school's policy structure, this includes such things as the learner profile and certain core policy areas, which the IB believes are essential to the values of its mission (International Baccalaureate, 2010). In the course of this section I suggest that the general trend towards policy borrowing has influenced the IB itself and hence played its part in the way the IB mandates policy to its schools in a centralized fashion.

In his recent chapter summarizing the history of policy tourism and the subsequent borrowing it has led to, particularly between the UK and US, Geoff Whitty raised some points of transference when it comes to considering the impact on schools in localized contexts adopting a globally established set of policy dictates. He asks why governments look elsewhere in the first place, a question of interest here because it is similar to asking why independent schools in local situations might be attracted to the IB. Whitty's initial work focused on trying to make sense of the US – UK relationship in the 1990s and found that political personality, a desire for 'quick fixes' and a sense of common cultural understandings appeared to oil the wheels. However, by the twenty-first-century he finds it harder to fathom the still close relationship because by then both countries were performing 'embarrassingly badly' (Whitty 2011, 360) in PISA yet they continue to share many of one another's key educational policy initiatives. He concludes that similar social contexts and a shared language give perhaps a false belief in the transferability of such policies.

These are all valid points to bear in mind when it come to the IB's own policy development but in addition I am also inclined to make more of Ball's assertion that policy borrowing also serves a discursive knowledge-power function by reinforcing 'shared assumptive worlds' (2011, 361). In other words, policy initiating, as part of the political process of change, largely begins as a semantic game played out within discourses between opposing political parties, each repackaging nuanced versions of older policy, usually borrowed from one being enacted in the other country currently or in its recent history, with the promise of improving education. The overall effect is to underwrite the assumed competencies of the knowledge base shared by these two countries, suggesting the answers to their educational dilemmas lay within their borders and implicitly developing or continuing a sense of exclusivity both politically and culturally. Within the context of the IB itself I think there is a strong sense of this in its policy heritage, as sense that it can find answers to its own policy dilemmas from within

its own 'assumptive world,' which once we scrutinise it a little more closely reveals epistemological limitations.

Whitty focuses on the policy decision to push towards charter schools in the US and grant maintained schools in the UK and suggests much of the policy rhetoric is focused on 'what works' (Whitty 2011, 354). Moreover, problems arise when the politicians or the research being used to promote a particular policy has an agenda of its own. Often such vicissitudes do not transpose successfully and Whitty sees Andy Hargreaves' notion of policy principle borrowing as offering more promise, at least in terms of being 'transposable among communities of *political* [sic] practice (Whitty 2011, 366). The suggestion being it is impossible to ensure any real transposable understanding for communities at the localized educational level, which is a point I too agree with in the context of the IB's own efforts to influence policy making in such contexts.

Whitty concludes by inviting the use of a new heuristic in place of policy borrowing, one that might discourage the 'what works' mentality with its urge for quick fixes and persistent change, amongst the English speaking policy-maker community at least. Instead, he suggests 'policy inoculation' (Whitty 2011, 367) as something no policy tourist should leave home without. In other words, regard policy analysis as a reflective process in which the priority becomes seeing what does not work in educational systems and assess why, rather than continuing to jettison programmes on a political whim. However, within the organisational hierarchy of the IB one detects an internationalist zeitgeist in its policy discourse, which upon further scrutiny carries a global narrative of neoliberal knowledge economics and thus making inoculation highly unlikely. Given this milieu and the IB's policy prerequisites I see its efforts at governmentality as being more far reaching than those envisaged for policy by Whitty, rather it becomes something more akin to the epistemological realm.

In other words, if we assume that the IB's own internal development of policy has the policy borrowing heritage I have suggested above, it is likely this would determine how it influences schools that run its programmes. In Foucauldian terms, by exploring the IB's formative years we would see how it became its own knowledge object for and within its own knowledge discourse. This is important not only because it reveals the process of policy development but also because it represents a movement beyond what Foucault calls the 'threshold of positivity' to the 'threshold of epistemologization' (Foucault 1972, 186). In other words, the early disparate

‘conversations’ amongst the International Schools Association and other international educators (Hill 2002, 194) formed into a discursive practice that began to assert a level of autonomy, which had its own ‘system for the formation of statements’ (Foucault 1972, 186). Consequently, this became the discursive space wherein statements, knowledge claims and norms of practice were verified and accepted amongst the fledgling yet growing IB community. Thus, subsequent knowledge truth claims were reinforced, particularly in policy, and supported by the IB’s own discourse, which has historically tended to remain consistent. For example, when the IB makes policy statements about its learner profile or lifelong learning, it relies on a whole range of concepts that carry the cultural capital of the organisations knowledge systems as developed via its discursive heritage. This means new policy enters its discourse largely unquestioned within its community of schools because all share a common epistemology.

Raising the question, does such ‘governmentality’ mean we find certain ideological perspectives embedded in the IB’s educational practices, which impact upon its learning communities’ self-management? To be more precise, do certain prioritisations in the IB standard and practices suggest the Foucauldian concept of ‘technologies of the self’ in that they determine the range of subjectivities available to both the educator and the child in the school? Overall, what seems to have changed is not just the IB as an organisation but elements of external but interrelated discourses, which have perhaps ‘marketised’ and politicised aspects of the IB’s own traditional policy objectives, such as promoting internationalist experiential pedagogy and values-based lifelong learning, and it is worth briefly tracing these policy shifts elsewhere in a wider arena to see how they may have affected the IB.

It has been well-documented in a wide variety of contexts that educational choice has been on the policy agenda in many countries, both within the public and the private sectors for quite a while now (Cambridge and Thompson 2004; Whitty and Edwards 1998; Phillips and Ochs 2003; Brown and Lauder 2009; Tooley 2009). More and more we have been seeing countries at quite different stages of development moving ‘away from large-scale social engineering through bureaucratically administered “one best system”’ (Whitty and Edwards 1998, 215). Indeed, much of the argument in this paper is built on the assumption that the New Right has shifted public expectations in the US and the UK away from a one-size-fits-all mentality to a more bespoke attitude when it comes to schooling. This is interesting in the context of the IB

Diploma because the largest growth market for the programme is the US public school system, at around 55% of its total schools. Just over ten years ago the private overseas international school, educating predominantly expatriate children made up over 75% of IB Diploma schools now it is just under 12%. (Flory 2011). Therefore, one way of interpreting the current era for the IB, in terms of its policy development, is to regard this as a significant political shift towards a more economic model of education. One in which market forces dictate not just the policy initiatives but also the tools for assessing their success, thus we see a growth in standardisation within student assessment, pedagogical practice and management techniques. This too is evident in the IB's latest edition of its core policy document *Programme Standard and Practices* (2010), which is a checklist of benchmarks by which each school is evaluated prior to authorisation and subsequently at five-yearly intervals. In essence, the document is a codified set of globally standardised practices for the school, which are externally assessed, once the school has provided evidence to support its self-assessment and identified areas to 'develop or improve' (International Baccalaureate 2010).

However, before moving to the next part of my triangulation it is important to have a clearer grasp of how policy borrowing becomes part of an organisational culture. David Phillips and Kimberly Ochs (2003) suggest at the transnational level we see a distinct four-step process take place whenever policy borrowing happens. I regard their model is useful when considering the IB's policy generation both internally, in terms of its own understanding of policy as discourse, and externally, in terms of policy as a process whereby a school is acculturated within the IB's community.

The four stages by which a policy becomes part of the policy-culture are attraction, 'decision, implementation, internalisation (or "indigenisation" as it has been termed)' (Phillips and Ochs 2005, 451). In the context of their paper attraction requires two criteria to be fulfilled; 'impulses' and 'externalising potential.' The former can come in a variety of guises; 'internal dissatisfaction' amongst educators or parents or 'systemic collapse' (Phillips and Ochs 2005, 252-3), or poor results. Ian Hill offers a list of significant 'challenges' facing the international community in the 1950s, which he summarises as 'university access,' 'educational,' 'ideological,' 'cultural,' and 'economic' (2002, 192). These five diverse areas of 'dissatisfaction' ('internal' in the sense of educational discourse) eventually led to them being the policy cornerstones that the IB Diploma addressed when it was created in 1968 and indeed which still are arguably the prevalent themes in its policy model today. The externalising potential for



the IB in terms of its policy generation came via such organisations and meetings as the United Nations, UNESCO, Conference of Internationally-Minded Schools and the International Schools Association throughout the 1940s and 50s. Then, for schools themselves, the IB's own standards and practices document has served this externalising function by maintaining a policy focal point and benchmark for all its schools.

Next, in Phillips and Ochs model, comes the 'implementation' or 'decision' stage by which the government, or in my case institution, decides to bring about the process of policy change. At first glance these appear more problematic when applied to the IB's own policy borrowing because they are 'theoretical,' 'phoney,' 'realistic/practical' and 'quick fix.' (Phillips and Ochs 2005, 553-5). However, the theoretical in terms of the IB may be certain of those policy statements borrowed from the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights. And, as I later show, elements of the 'phoney,' according to Cambridge at least, might be seen in its dogged willingness to promote a notion of international-mindedness. Its more 'realistic,' or pragmatic areas of policy perhaps have evolved around its adaptation of the UK's assessment model whereas I would suggest its 'quick fixes' are to be seen in areas such as its approach to learning needs. Within schools such criteria can obviously evolve in multifarious ways but I think it is relatively simple to see how an institutional discourse will develop around these four criteria, based upon the policy expectations laid out for schools by the IB via its standards and practices. Within the institutional hierarchy there will be varying levels of theoretical acceptance, a certain amount of cynicism to what are regarded as phoney ideas, large amounts of institutional pragmatism and the inevitable quick fixes.

The third stage, 'implementation,' is the process of change, which can be rapid or long term. In Phillips and Ochs' language this is largely dependent upon 'significant actors' in the process. For the IB this was the early Director General Alec Peterson and various key members of government agencies and certain universities who solidified the policies of the Diploma Programme in terms of all the themes highlighted above (Hill 2002, 199-200). In this third stage within the context of a local school implementing the IB, the actors would most likely be the academic management team along with the Board of Governors or Parent Committee. In their paper, Phillips and Ochs are keen to emphasise that at the national level of policy borrowing it is not uncommon for there to be failures at this point through indecision or resistance. Indeed,

the IB itself almost disappeared completely in 1975 due to a lack of schools and funding (Hill 2002, 201), then more recently the IB was finding too many schools failing to meet its policy requirements for authorisation and so a consultancy system was put in place.

Finally, in the fourth stage of Phillips and Ochs process an organisation internalises the policy to the point at which it becomes its own. This part of their model draws on a number of influences but most intriguing is Stephen Ball's four "essential circuits" within the education system, of "message systems" of education to use as a framework: curriculum, assessment, pedagogy and organisation' (Phillips and Ochs 2005, 456). Interestingly, these, along with 'philosophy,' form the standards headings of the IB's standards and practices policy document, which is the template for a school's self-reflection and subsequent cycle of assessment by the IB. Therefore, it is the most important tool by which a school internalises the policies of the IB and as such remains the strongest evidence of its governmentality, which exercises forms of ideological and ontological control. The earlier steps in Phillips and Ochs' policy borrowing model come back into play at the internalisation stage: the ability to compare the now-incorporated policy to other foreign policies, the imperative to synthesise it with those already in use, and the need to reflect upon the efficacy of this, all form part of the borrowing process. In a localized context, I suggest one can see how this model may work for a school adopting IB policies for the first time but is this an accurate way of envisaging the IB's own policy journey?

What has been traced historically by Hill and others (Sylvester 2005; Mattern 1988; Resnik 2008) with regard to the early development of international education, shows clearly that the first three stages of the Phillips and Ochs' model can be utilised to understand how the IB came to create policy for its IB Diploma but what is much less clear is where its policy discourse will go now. Its own organisational system appears to involve, once policies are at the stage of implementation, a cyclical process beginning with self-reflection, evidence-based internal evaluation, goal setting, evidence-based external evaluation, feedback, adjusted goal setting and policy review. What is not clear, however, is how the IB intends to generate external input to feed its own policy development, brought about by current organisational changes due to exponential growth. If, as is currently the case, Diploma school growth continues to be amongst national system public schools with those for whom the IB's original policy themes were established becoming an ever-shrinking minority, there must soon come a

time when these themes need re-evaluation. Unless, that is, the themes are now aligned with a far more powerful discourse than those encapsulated in the values of a few disparate international private schools and progressive education.

A last point worth making before moving on is that Phillips and Ochs are very careful to place emphasis on the importance of *context* on their policy development model (2005, 457). In terms of the IB Diploma I would see this in terms of an elitist heritage, both in terms of its educational stakeholders and its governance model (Hill 2002) and suggest that this has directly affected the evolution of its policy discourse. As will be seen when summarising Cambridge's analysis of the IB Diploma using Bernstein's theory of 'pedagogic identities' we can see the extent to context can also feed off perception when it comes to the policy cycle sketched out here. Before, moving on to examine such pedagogic identities, however, I wish to consider our second critical lens in my model of triangulation, namely the knowledge economy. This will allow us to grasp the IB's global positioning within the phenomenon of educational internationalism, within which it currently carries its elitist tag. I would argue that with the IB Diploma's shift toward more internationally-minded national public schools, we see the organisation objectified in ways that have led to it seeing itself differently and this is beginning to alter its relationship to its own policy development, making it more governmental in its approach and perhaps more ideological.

## **KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY**

With the growth in globalised economic development in the latter part of the twentieth-century there came a growing need for curriculum that could travel with the families of these global workers and hence the development of the IB amongst the various forms of qualification. Due to its mission being largely constructed around an understanding of the nature of internationalism and its efforts to gain acceptance across a range of national university systems it came to be the most highly regarded non-government pre-tertiary qualification (Resnik 2008). Towards the end of that century, however, there was a suggestion (Brown 2000) that with the growth in the globalisation of the workforce we witnessed a raised awareness at a national level that an international credential at the pre-tertiary level may make one's child a more attractive prospect than those provided for via the regular system, whether private or public (Resnik 2008). The upshot being by the turn of the century there was 'some evidence of an internationalization of higher education and the prospects of social elites opting

to study for an International Baccalaureate rather than for the “national” certificates’ (Brown 2000, 634).

Brown goes on to use a broadly Marxist ‘Positional Conflict Theory’ to counter Liberal sociologies that suggest such things as politics, economics and the power discourses within disciplines remain neutral within the dynamic relationships between actors in what has become referred to as the knowledge economy. Drawing on the neo-Weberian tradition, he blends Bourdieu’s ‘forms of capital’ with Bernstein’s ‘modes of the symbolic control’ (Brown 2000, 638) and creates a theoretical model reminiscent of Foucault’s suggestion of the discursive nature of society and the power functions of its discourse upon the individual. Brown adapts Bourdieu’s notion of ‘capital’ to establish three sets of rules (membership, meritocratic and market) that define his ‘conceptual framework’ (Brown 2000, 639), and from Bernstein ‘control’ represents the rules of the global knowledge economy, rules used to govern knowledge in much the same way as powerful economies maintain control over global finance. In Foucauldian terms methodological parallels are evident, on the surface at least, between ‘control’ and governmentality and ‘capital’ and technologies of the self. Furthermore, in my analysis the suggestion is that governmentality allows us to consider epistemological implications, while technologies of the self are suggestive of the ontological. This said, Brown’s method is still very interesting in terms of grasping a purely sociological view of the development of a knowledge economy.

As discussed, by the beginning of this century the IB had found growing interest amongst certain national governments wanting to provide choice in their pre-tertiary credentials. Brown suggests ‘the ideology of meritocracy has been superseded by the meritocracy of parentocracy... Here the equation “ability + effort = merit” has been reformulated into “resources + preference = choice” (Brown 1998, 44). In particular this was the case in the US and the UK but one might also add that this proliferation of choice is also reflected in the private sector globally with the growth in the numbers of English-language international schools becoming authorised IB World Schools. But of course the IB’s largest growth has come in the national school systems for example over 55% of IB Diploma schools are US public schools alone. Therefore, it is worth considering briefly what makes the IB so attractive to internationally-minded private independent and state-funded public schools alike. Are they both highly conscious of the values of the IB Diploma programme or is it rather that both see it as offering an internationally valued credential in an ever more global knowledge economy?

Furthermore, do we discover it reinforces discursive elements within its policy that make it a particularly powerful tool in the current *Davos* discourse, wherein the worker appears as a compliant lifelong learner, willing to remain mobile and up-skill on a regular basis for an elite who are largely stateless (Resnik 2008; Lauder 2011).

Unlike the IB's mission statement, it has been suggested that international education potentially leads to greater social inequality not less (Brown 2000, 646), which is a problem I return to because of the policy development issues created by its own recent phenomenal pattern of growth. If an organisation begins with a vision to use education for equality and mutual respect only to later find itself primarily used as a tool to perpetuate an ideology that does the opposite, how does it re-evaluate its policies to address this conflict of interests? Indeed, can a centralised global curriculum provider dictate policy at a local level without falling prey to some form of governmentality, which may often conflict with the ethical intentions of its mission?

As Brown suggests, the danger of creating global elites is an ethical one because they are 'unencumbered by the demands of the societies in which they live' (Brown 2000, 646). They form a transient upper middle-class and what Christopher Lasch has called 'the cosmopolitanism of the favoured few, because it is uninformed by the practice of citizenship' (cited in Brown 2000, 648). Of course, as a subject experiencing the performativities of contemporary political discourse one might just as well ask what is citizenship in a local context? However, the point is a valid one. If, via a knowledge economy we are given to placing more and more emphasis upon the global, where does one place one's sense of responsibility to society in a pragmatic day-to-day sense? The current knowledge economics of neo-liberal capitalism, perhaps, suggests self-betterment as being our grandest social project, and one that is generally lived in that most portable of our social groupings, namely the family.

Within a decade of his earlier work Brown is describing what he sees as a 'transnational class' (Brown and Lauder 2009). Following on from Resnik (2008) and with Lauder he argues how the IB Diploma and subsequently tailored international higher education credentials have not simply defined global education but also provided a range of softer skills in knowledge economics: 'the production of character (including the question of language), and that of credentials' (Brown and Lauder 2009, 132). During this time we see the term 'third-culture kid' (TCK) enter the knowledge discourse to describe the 'global nomad' or expatriate child's experience (Brown and Lauder 2009, 133). Interestingly, a large number of commentators suggest human

resource managers when hiring graduates seek out TCKs, not only for their academic credentials but also for their ‘softer skills’ such as intercultural awareness and empathy (Resnik 2008, 2012; Brown and Lauder 2009; Lauder 2011; Cambridge 2012).

Moreover, Brown and Lauder argue that human resource managers of transnational companies look out for the same set of soft skills even though the localized context may be different (Brown and Lauder 2009, 133-4). One might reasonably assume, therefore, that these soft skills function as capital, in ways similar to one of Bourdieu’s ‘meritocratic’ sense mentioned earlier. In a traditional sense, soft skills act as skills normally beyond the formal scope of the curriculum perhaps but still often required for entry and advancement and so forming governing discursive ‘codes’ within the organisation itself. If the prior knowledge system through which the TCK has passed has been constructed in a way that help him or her acquire both the credentials and the soft skills, as the IB Diploma has, the advantages are potentially enormous (Resnik 2008).

To wrap up this brief overview of the literature on the growing globalisation of the knowledge economy it is worth mentioning that Brown and Lauder trace its beginnings back to the Reagan and Thatcher administrations of the 1980s (Brown and Lauder 2009, 138). As Hill shows (2002), this period was also a time when the IB itself began to enjoy rapid growth, which may in turn may have played a part in its strategic decision to move more in the direction of national public schools and perhaps altering subsequent policy. Whitty also points to this period as a particularly fertile time in the UK – US policy borrowing relationship and one can argue that the IB itself shared this assumptive world, as English was its dominant working language and its assessment and curriculum policy development emanated from the UK. Such a trajectory, I suggest, has affected the IB’s current position, which is some way distant from its origins established in the 1960s. If policy borrowing has been a tool in this movement, it seems an irresistible journey perhaps given its discursive heritage and positioning within the knowledge economy. Now what remains is to consider how IB might regard itself and evaluate the forms of discourse this might generate, thus providing the final element in my methodological triangulation.

## **SELF IDENTITY**

In James Cambridge’s examination of pedagogic identities in the IB Diploma he argues that Basil Bernstein’s model of the contrasting nature of educational

discourses can be used as a critical framework for further sociological examination of the international education. His paper is interesting not only for its heuristic but also in that we share one common theme in our conclusions, even if the other elements are very different. First, however, let us consider Cambridge's adaptation of Bernstein's 'codes' and 'devices' before I later link his definitions to include my interpretation of Foucault's governmentality within institutional policy discourse. In *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity* (2000) Bernstein provides a mature development of his sociological theory of educational discourse and its production of the knowledge. Cambridge believes 'codes' and 'devices' are the IB's principle focal points in the Diploma curriculum's development since its inception. Codes, as mentioned earlier, refer to established discursive boundaries and here mean those parameters placed around the subject areas within a curriculum. 'The "collection code" demonstrates strong classification and strong framing, whereas the "integrated code" demonstrates weak classification and weak framing' (Cambridge 2010, 210).

Devices, on the other hand, are the systems of rules governing 'distribution, recontextualisation and evaluation' (Cambridge 2010, 210). In the context of a school there would be three elements: first, there are such things as benchmarking or entrance testing or streaming; second, we find the process by which the universities, as producers of knowledge, dictate to examination boards the curricula contents of pre-tertiary syllabi; third, there is the official validation of such syllabi via assessment models, which again have to meet the requirements of universities and, when necessary, governments (Cambridge 2010, 201). In a national context, Cambridge suggests, we have seen in recent years a growing centralisation of the control of 'devices,' which now means that international credential providers find it much harder 'to gain official recognition for international programmes of study' (2010, 211). This raises the question, to what extent are national agencies placing pressure on the IB to allow them more direct influence upon specific elements of the curriculum and its assessment? For example, is it conceivable that IB Diploma curriculum or assessment policy could be dictated to by government or even market interests?

After having sketched out these aspects of Bernstein's thinking Cambridge quickly moves on to consider how the IB Diploma itself can be 'projected onto' a variety of what Bernstein calls 'pedagogic identities.' This is a 'fourfold typology comprising of retrospective, prospective, decentred (market), and decentred (therapeutic), pedagogic identities' (2010, 211). Again, as with earlier parallels

between Bernstein and Foucault I would suggest we can see how their respective theories intersect in terms of typology and governmentality. However, whereas Cambridge uses Bernstein's theory to postulate the sociological repercussions for international education more generally, I use his typologies to add depth to my adaptation of Foucault's governmentality before later considering certain ontological questions when we assume policy practices as 'technologies of the self.'

Cambridge identifies influences in the IB Diploma's early history very similar to those we saw uncovered by Hill, but here they are categorized within the four projected identities, which exist in discursive tension. In terms of policy within the IB I believe Cambridge's analysis accurately identifies four identities defining the discursive tensions within its policy matrices. The first is the retrospective view that the IB Diploma represents 'a form of educational nostalgia' (Cambridge 2010, 205). The second refers to the prospective identity wherein coupled with the above is the view that it is valued as a 'currency for university entrance' (205). Third, we have the decentred (therapeutic) identity, which is largely embodied in its progressive educational philosophy. Cambridge focuses largely on Hahn but one would see from a closer scrutiny of the IB's documentation that it cherry-picks from a wide range of constructivist educationalists to enhance its progressive stance. Cambridge highlights Bernstein's criticism that this particular identity often suffers due to its relative costliness but suggests that this may not be the case within the context of the IB Diploma, where elements such as the CAS programme and the Learner Profile represent efforts to educate for 'character' (2010, 207). This reminds us of earlier comments about the programme's soft skills attractiveness amongst universities and international human resources managers.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly identity is the decentred (market) one because this most closely aligns itself with what we have seen already in our examination of the rapid globalisation of the knowledge economy. In his earlier work with Jeff Thompson, Cambridge had already made a distinction between the IB's international values and global aspirations (Cambridge and Thompson, 2004). They argue that its values are primarily driven by principles governed by policies set out by the United Nations and other such agencies, whilst its aspirations represent the organisation's business growth strategy, which is driven by a capitalist market model. The outcome is an educational model for a global neo-liberal elite more along the lines discussed earlier in this paper rather than any kind of serious attempt to embrace and



develop some of the more ethically principled values encapsulated in its earliest policy statements.

Cambridge returns to this argument by calling on Bernstein to make an even more emphatic case for the IB now having a more openly market-driven pedagogic identity. In citing the current IB Director General he suggests it is clear the organisation's intention is to educate a globally mobile class (2010, 208) and by in citing Resnik's analysis of the Learner Profile it is clear he regards it as 'a template for the production of the ideal global citizen,' (208). Furthermore, he too makes the point that international schools may be a growing source of social inequality, which undermines perhaps the altruism of their therapeutic identity. Overall, I would tend to agree with Cambridge's conclusion that the IB's current self-identity represents an 'explicit coupling of participation in IB programmes to preparation for employment in the global knowledge economy represents a pragmatic, and possibly opportunistic, move away from projecting a therapeutic identity towards a market driven identity' (Cambridge 2010, 210). However, I would go further in this paper by suggesting a present self-identity crisis within the organisation caused by a conflict between the projected therapeutic and market identities, which is being played out in the governmentality of its current policy. As a way of grasping a better understanding of the internal mechanics of this particular form of governmentality I would now like to retreat a little to focus using my triangulation as the critical lens on the discursive function of such governmentality. To see how the actors, be they IB administrators, school educators, students or other stakeholders, use these codes, these devices, to objectify or be objectified with these identities and consequently generate or be defined by its discourse. Thus, in adapting Foucault's theory of governmentality I hope to demonstrate how the IB's policy borrowing practices have played a part in its move to the critical juncture pinpointed by Cambridge.

## **GOVERNMENTALITY**

Michel Foucault's development of the term governmentality has become a useful critical tool in the field of educational policy research, especially for those interested in analysing the machinations of power from hermeneutic, semiotic or epistemological perspectives (Ball 1993; Gillies 2008). He draws his initial thoughts on the term by comparing Machiavelli's *The Prince* and certain other texts emerging in the later sixteenth-century, such as Le Perrière's *Miroir Politique* (Foucault 1994, 205)

because this example of ‘anti-Machiavellian literature’ makes a the critical distinction between sovereignty and governance. For Foucault, the former is an external form of power that has as its sole purpose its own perpetuation, but the latter is something that rapidly forms into a complex internalised network of discourses with the aim of bettering the state, or society. ‘Thus we find at once a plurality of forms of government and their immanence to the state: the multiplicity and immanence of these activities distinguish them radically from the transcendent singularity of Machiavelli’s prince’ (Foucault 1994, 206). Almost immediately we begin to see a wider discursive understanding of government come into play. Foucault argues that European societies witnesses a rapid process of becoming ‘governmentalized’ irrelevant of whether or not a sovereign state remains, because what is more important is the rationalization of knowledge as power. Firstly, via an ‘ensemble of institutions, procedures, analyses, and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power, which has as its target population, as its principal form of knowledge political economics.’ Secondly, our contemporary understanding that ‘government’ represents not only ‘a whole series of governmental apparatuses’ but also ‘a whole complex of knowledges’ (Foucault 1994, 219-20). At this stage, and in the broadest sense, I think it is clear how this definition applies to our understanding of the discursive networks and potential knowledge objects within policy.

In his use of governmentality to examine education policy, Gillies focuses on the ways governments provide ‘political spectacle’ by using ‘spin’ to re-invigorate political identities in ways in ways reminiscent of Whitty’s ‘quick fixes’ (Gillies 2008, 417-9). Within the process of governmentality Gillies goes on to discuss his interpretations of Foucault’s use of the term ‘conduire’ (Gillies 2008, 416), or conduct, which are those discourses of control acted upon ourselves by ourselves within a state of self-government. According to Gillies the current politico-narrative of citizens as the consumers of education is one of a number of such discourses we simultaneously adhere to in an era when the accumulation of knowledge has begun to be regarded more widely as an economic rather than emancipatory imperative. ‘Conduct is concerned with tracking consumer views and aiming to hone the product – government – to those preferences. On this reading, the main goal of conduct, governmentuity, is about establishing political brand loyalty and seeing off market rivals’ (Gillies 2008, 421). In this light the main goal of educational policy becomes largely dictated to by neoliberal marketization, with only a suggested level of openness in terms of policy governance

and dialogue at local levels. This critique is something one might level at the IB with its centralized policy imposing a form of governmentality placed alongside local school governance contexts, both of which are market-driven without openly acknowledging the fact.

Finally, what of the IB's policies themselves? How exactly do they represent examples of governmentality? And, to what extent do they affect the communities within their schools? It is perhaps no accident that Foucault establishes his origin for a modern understanding of governmentality at that time in which he places the epistemological shift from which evolved almost all of our current institutional discourses. Education was one institutional discourse that he had yet to examine in any great detail although his later work on ethics hinted at a need for a shift in this direction, because of its instrumental influence on the formation of subjectivities. In this paper I have used a particular methodological approach to uncover a role policy plays in such ontological development. By triangulating the potential discursive influences of theoretical concepts such as policy borrowing, knowledge economy and organisational self-identity, I have provided a lens through which we can see the IB as an organisation whose policy functions as a form of governmentality. We have seen how its early policy vision may have provided a more prominent therapeutic identity for itself but, in following on from Cambridge, it no longer adequately explains the internal and external effects of its governmentality at the current juncture. Its self-identity and the exercise of its power over authorized schools are not clearly understood yet nor are the repercussions of its governmentality on those pedagogies produced in its World Schools concept, which in their turn impact upon the learning community as a whole.

As mentioned above, when authorizing a school the IB employs its standards and practices (S&Ps), which are broken down in the seven standards and over fifty practices. These benchmarks form the touchstone for all essential documentation and structures the school must have in place to become an IB World School and run one of its educational programmes. In addition to this, the IB provides numerous other theoretical texts to frame its educational philosophy and a wide range of face-to-face and online training programmes and conferences, journals and websites. The result is a comprehensive network of international educators who are purported to share a common mission and set of values but, as has been noted, without any serious critiques from within its community (Resnik 2008, 150). It is worth also bearing in mind that it is the only international curriculum provider, from amongst a growing number, to offer

such a policy led, ideological underpinning to what is first and foremost a curriculum and assessment model. For example, the IB is the only provider publishing a comprehensive document regulating the policies and practices expected in its schools.

I would suggest that its S&P document and those that support it represent the ways in which the IB uses policy as a form of governmentality because it represents a power network of ‘strategic games’, ‘government,’ and ‘domination’ (Lemke 2010, 53). The S&Ps become the field of action for a school, which as Lemke highlights, is not to say this is a negative insight. The ‘strategic games’ may have positive effects upon an institution; it simply recognises that this is one of the criteria of such power. Then, there is of course the more traditional exercise of ‘government.’ In this sense, the IB as authorising body conducts five-yearly reviews of its schools. Finally, the factor of ‘domination’ within a school context may be the sense in which a school becomes entrenched with the IB mind-set, fooling itself pedagogically that it is driven by what Cambridge identified as its therapeutic identity, whereas it is the market identity that really matters to community. In fact Lemke suggests such forms of governmentality in a more general context promote ‘the process of individualisation endangering collective bonds, and the imperatives of flexibility, mobility, and risktaking that threaten family values and personal affiliations: neoliberalism is “antihumanism”’ (Lemke 2010, 54).

Interestingly, Lemke also discusses the way in which Nature has been semantically re-invented so that it is no longer the Romantic pastoral relationship with the rural but rather a more economic one and we see words such as ‘environment’ and ‘ecosystem’ replace the use of Nature within contemporary discourse. This I feel is reminiscent, of the way the IB frequently replaces ‘child’ or ‘student’ in its discourse with ‘learner’ or ‘knower,’ causing a semantic chain reaction that arrives at the narratives of lifelong learning and the knowledge economy. And, it is at this ontological level that I believe we see the real effects of policy:

The analysis of governmentality reminds us that political economy relies on a political anatomy of the body. We can decipher a neoliberal governmentality in which not only the individual body but also the collective bodies and institutions (public administrations, universities etc.), corporations, and states have to be “lean,” “fit,” “flexible,” and “autonomous.” The governmentality approach also focuses on the integral link between micro-macropolitical levels (e.g., globalisation or competition for “attractive” sites for companies or personal imperatives as regards beauty or a regimented diet)’ (Lemke 2010, 60)

And, by providing a policy driven curriculum and assessment model, is the IB Diploma now driven to meet the needs of a globalizing knowledge economy by creating a World School movement filled with lifelong learners eager to continually up-skill and remain mobile for throughout their careers? With its standards and practices the IB provides a form of governmentality by which schools develop homogeneous yet localised technologies of the self. This paper of course, is a mere preliminary sketch suggesting one methodological approach and a far deeper analysis of international education's discourse is required. Arguably, what is required next is a genealogical examination of policy, curriculum, assessment and financial development in international education and its influence on the growing movement of internationally-minded public schools (Resnik 2012).

However, the aim here has been to argue that IB policy represents a form of 'governmentality' that perpetuates a discourse of neoliberal capitalism, in turn practicing 'technologies of the self,' which habituate learners in ways that are ontologically limiting. Perhaps not what the programme creators intended forty years ago. Lastly, the IB's policy heritage and development have also brought it to a place where finding itself adequate external analytical tools with which to identify all the elephants in the room may prove difficult.

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