UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



International Baccalaureate Teacher Training in Japanese Higher Education

AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF INTERNATIONALIST & GLOBALIST AGENDAS

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ABSTRACT

In 2013 the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) and Japanese Ministry of Education, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) jointly established a consortium to promote International Baccalaureate (IB) education in Japan. The collaboration reflects the IBO's ambition to expand and integrate its internationalist programmes into national education systems, while, for the Japanese Government, it marks yet another project seeking to cultivate a nationalist 'global' workforce. This thesis explores a range of resulting internationalist and globalist narratives emerging through the prisms of ideology, pedagogy, and language. The rollout of a majority Japanese-mediated Dual-Language Diploma Programme, seeking to increase linguistic accessibility while boosting students' English proficiency, has contributed to the significant expansion of IB World Schools (i.e., IBO-licensed schools) in Japan, from 16 in 2013 to 106 in April 2023. A resulting lack of teachers familiar with MEXT's article-1 education guidelines who can also deliver IB counterparts in Japanese, has contributed to the introduction of IB Educator Certificate (IBEC) teacher training programmes across several Japanese universities. This research, conducted digitally during COVID-19, is an ethnography of one such IBEC programme. It also includes comparative ethnographic work with the IBO's IBEC representatives across the Asia-Pacific region, and other Japanese universities. Gathered through a year of participant observation alongside 46 extensive semi-structured interviews and 93 survey respondents, actors articulate multiple, and often contradictory agendas in the name of the international and global. A diverse range of agents – from transnational organizations, national governments, and universities to individual officials, facilitators, and students – amplify and contest these discourses while inventing new alternatives. I find these processes of advocacy, acceptance, and resistance to be ways of negotiating with more prevalent top-down notions of international and global education.

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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

AA: Associate Award.

CP: Career-related Programme.

DP: Diploma Programme.

HL: Higher Level.

IB: International Baccalaureate.

IBCTL: IB Certificate in Teaching and Learning.

IBEC: IB Educator Certificate.

IBAEC: IB Advanced Educator Certificate.

IBEN: IB Educator Network.

IBO: International Baccalaureate Organization.

IBTTP: IB Teacher Training Programme.

IM: International-Mindedness.

IR: Interim Review.

JIE: Japanese Institute of Education.

JIEIS: Japanese Institute of Education International School.

KIE: Korean Institute of Education.

LP: Learner Profile.

MU: Murasaki University.

MYP: Middle Years Programme.

PA: Practitioner Award.

P&P: From Principles into Practice.

PD: Professional Development.

PRC: Programme Resource Center.

PYP: Primary Years Programme.

RV: Recognition Visit.

SL: Standard Level.

TAS: Teacher Award Scheme.

TOK: Theory of Knowledge.

GLOSSARY OF REOCCURING JAPANESE TERMS

Akutiibu rāningu: 'Active Learning.'

Dejima: 'Exit Island.' Also known as Tsukushima ('Built Island'), it was the name of an artificially constructed island off the city of Nagasaki built in the early 17th Century. For over two centuries it essentially acted as the exclusive port for 'foreign' (e.g., Portuguese and Dutch) trade and exchange, while simultaneously fulfilling the Tokugawa shogunate's isolationist policies that all but forbid 'outsiders' from entering Japan, and most Japanese from leaving it (Cullen 2020). Today, the word *dejima* – as I deploy it in this thesis – is used by several social scientists to evoke a similar approach to the organization of 'international students' at Japanese universities and schools.

Dejimanization: A term I deploy to describe the process of creating a *dejima*, as described above.

Chōsen suru hito: 'A person who challenges.' It is the official translation for 'risk-taker' in IB education's Learner Profile.

Gairaigo: 'borrowed / loan words.'

Gakuryoku: 'Scholastic competencies.'

Gakushū shidō yōryō: The Japanese Government's 'national education guidelines.'

Gurōbaruka: 'Globalization.'

Gurōbaru Jinzai: 'Global human resource' or 'global HR.'

Kaigai: 'Abroad' / 'Overseas.'

Kaigaishijo: 'Japanese child / adolescent living outside of Japan.'

Kanji: One of the Japanese language's main syllabaries. It functions on a logographic system originally derived from Chinese script, with over 2,100 characters presently considered 'in regular use' across Japanese societies.

Katakana: One of the Japanese language's two main phonetic syllabaries. It is deployed for a wide variety of roles, including to express emphasis, render pronunciation, transcribe onomatopoeia,

and describe formal scientific / technical terms. It is also used for words considered to be of foreign origin by its majoritized population, including names.

Kejime: 'Distinction-making.' It has been defined by educational anthropologists as "correctly reading the context for what is and acting accordingly" (Tobin 1995, 246).

Kikokushijo: 'Japanese returnee.' A minoritized population in Japan, defined by their leaving Japan as a child / adolescent for a period of time before returning to live in the country.

Kobetsu Saitekika: 'Individual optimization.'

Kōhai: 'Junior.' The opposite of a *senpai* or 'senior.'

Kokusai Bakarorea: 'International Baccalaureate' or 'IB.'

Kokusaika: 'Internationalization.'

Kōseishugi: 'Constructivism' / 'socio-constructivism.'

Nihonjinron: 'Theories of the Japanese people.' A form of cultural nationalism in Japan expressed through a diverse array of local literature and popular media collectively aiming to demonstrate the uniqueness / superiority of Japanese culture, society, and people.

Sabetsu: 'Discrimination.'

Sabetsuka: The International Baccalaureate Organization's current official translation for 'differentiated learning.'

Saika shita shidō: 'Differentiated teaching.'

Senpai: 'Senior.' The opposite of a *kōhai* or 'junior.'

Tankyū: 'Inquiry.'

Yutori kyōiku: 'Relaxed Education.'

GLOSSARY OF MISCELLANEOUS TERMS

Kool-Aid: A transnationally popular flavored drinks brand invented in Hastings, Nebraska (US) in 1927. The phrase 'drinking the Kool-aid' originates from the aftermath of the 1978 Jonestown Massacre in Guyana, suggesting a mindless adoption of a given leader, faction and / or dogma without an appropriate grasp of its implications or ramifications. It infers sentiments of organizational elitism and isolationism in the context used in this thesis.

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I imagine most researchers would agree work of this scale never manages to sufficiently thank or name all indebted to making it possible, and mine is no exception. Nevertheless, I will make a clumsy attempt at expressing my heartfelt gratitude to a selection of the most instrumental peoples and institutions for who made this research possible.

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PREFACE

All but one of the major certificates had now been awarded. The titles, ranging from 'student with best grade in subject x,' to 'student with most hours in community and service,' were as predictable as their deserved winners. However, the same could not be said for the final award handed at this high school graduation ceremony. Firstly, there was the title: the 2011 *Award for International Understanding.* This alone raised two questions others did not: What does that mean? How is one selected to achieve it? Secondly, the winner, to the surprise of most my classmates and myself, was me. With private amusement, I waltz up to a makeshift podium in a crammed assembly hall, the walls adorned with some 45 national flags representing all registered pupils at this International School in London (UK). Like all before me I receive a hearty smile and robust handshake from my head of school before posing our heads for the obligatory photograph. I receive several congratulations from other teachers with surprising enthusiasm before returning to my seat. Peering down at the certificate, it was indeed what the programme guide said it was, signed by a Jean K. Vahey, the then CEO Executive Director of the European Council of International Schools, or ECIS. Also included in prose was its supposed criteria for achievement, defined through the following passage:

"Awarded to a student who is (1) a good representative of their own country, with a positive attitude toward the life and culture of others, (2) able to converse in at least two languages, (3) a contributing force in the life of school, with the ability to bring differing people together into a sense of community, thus (4) furthering the cause of international understanding."

(My numbers)

It irritated me. As a 19-year-old at the time the source of frustration was exclusively directed at (1). The notion that *somehow* one (co-)owns no more or less than one 'country' – wherever that is – and by extension, that one *somehow* (co-)owns seemingly no more or less than one 'culture' – whatever that is – with select 'others' – whoever those are. Ironically, unlike dual-plus nationals the idea of

being native to single nation fit me like a tailored suit. After all, my one passport said I was from the United Kingdom, the territory I was born in and had lived most of my life within. This was and remains my brutally simple political reality, one without a hope of capturing my far more nuanced socio-genetic or socio-cultural traits, no doubt along with countless others. In my case these could be predominately be described as Guyanese, Indian, Japanese, Canadian, and British. I suppose such a broad description could be laced with the concept of 'third culture kids' or 'TCKs' (Pollock et al. 2017; Tanu 2019). I had passively encountered the term as a teenager through others embracing its idea, but never personally identified myself with one as doing so, in my mind, reinforced an illusion of normality for others. Nevertheless, the notion assisted with my struggles over 'country' and 'culture' as mistakenly monolithic phenomena. Despite some of my family's best efforts as a child I never felt a sense of ownership over either entity. In fact, privately, I had personally sought to reject what I saw as a self-imposed primacy of nation. I did, however, possess a strong sense of cultural inheritance, although defining this demanded what felt an infinite nexus of labels. Yet, there I sat with a certificate – supposably purposed to fill its receiver with pride – rejecting and mocking my very identity.

Just under one decade later as a masters student at University College London (UCL), I rediscovered the award while searching through a file of qualifications at home. Re-reading the passage I surrendered a wry smile, recalling my past dismay. However, as someone now training to be an anthropologist, the passage unlocked new, perplexing avenues in my head. For instance, regarding (3), was it not obvious that people are different? If so, exactly which 'differing people' was I bringing 'together into a sense of community?' More pertinently, what defined this difference? 'Race?' 'Gender?' 'Personality?' Or was it as simple as I feared: 'country' and 'culture?' The answers, it seemed, resided in working out the mystery of (4), my apparent contribution to 'furthering *the cause* of international understanding.' What cause? Whose cause? When and where did it supposably emerge? In what context, and by whose agencies and concessions? Exactly what were the social engineers of an 'international education' seeking for me to become?

By 'international education,' I immediately thought of the *International Baccalaureate* (IB). This was the predictable result of my schooling, having spent all but every year of it exclusively in its system. IB saw me experience a continuum of frameworks / curriculums anchored around an equally puzzling concept of 'international-mindedness.' I wondered, to what extent was this term complementing that of the ECIS's 'international understanding?' What other alternatives out there

might be doing the same or different? Reflecting on my short time working as a teaching assistant and counselor in an IB school after my bachelor's degree only further shrouded, rather than demystify these enigmas.

This train of thought led me to wonder whether such questions were worthy of a potential doctoral project, one seeking to understand the socio-cultural logics behind a rising promotion of internationalist and globalist agendas. The final impetus to embark on this journey emerged when arriving at Oxford in 2019. Choosing between three highly divergent research topics – including the politics of green energy in Japanese motorsport – I soon discovered a coincidental expansion of IB in Japan. Keenly aware how the country practiced alternative projects of internationalization / globalization to those generally found in Western Europe and North America, my curiosity over the nature of IB's permeation in its education sector fully piqued.

INTRODUCTION

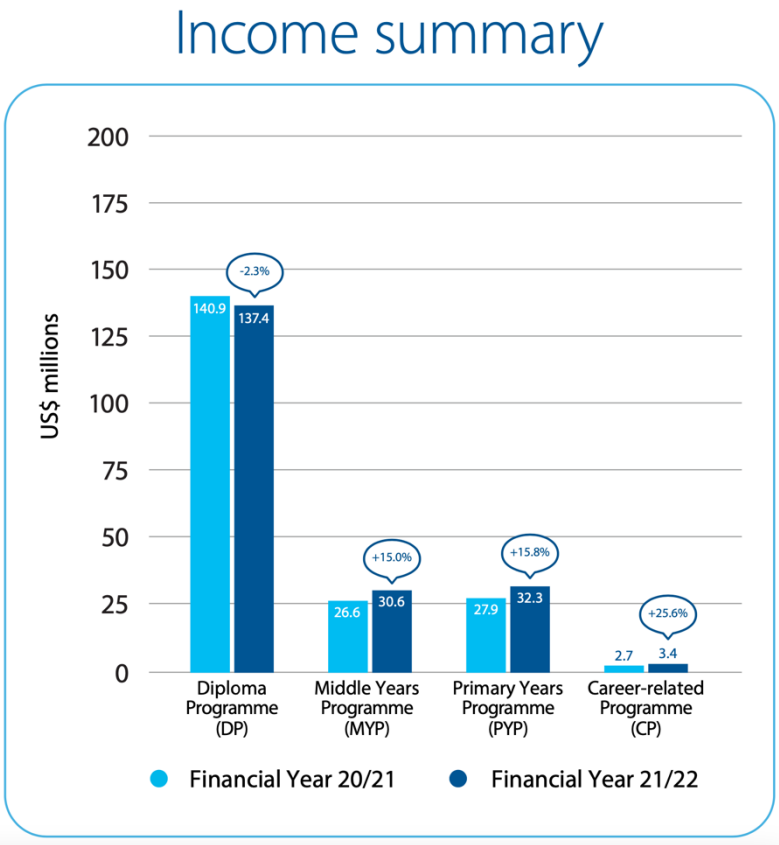
The *International* and the *Global*. Through the prism of education, these respective terms act as the conceptual heart of this thesis. Yet, their rapidly increasing application across a myriad of sectors furthers the futility in attempts at fixedly define them. What does it mean to administer or undertake an international or global education? Those believing themselves literally minded might quote officialized definitions to solve this enigma. For instance, take the regularly relied on Oxford English Dictionary, defining 'international' as "designating or relating to relations between two or more nations or organizations made up of nations; agreed, recognized, carried on between, or constituted by nations or national governments" (OED 2023a). Surely, then, an education considering itself international is one satisfying something of the above? Seemingly dispatched with identical efficiency, legitimized mantra considers the literal global as – for instance – "of, relating to, or involving the whole world, worldwide; (also in later use) of or relating to the world considered in a planetary context" (OED 2023b). Everyday life, however, has other ideas, its interference swiftly eradicating any prospect of a uniform consensus. It is for this reason that several influential educationalists define 'international education' as little more than a "floating signifier, a phrase without a circumscribed meaning which is invoked by a variety of users who feel that it gives a valuable impression to their projects" (Pearce et al. 2013, xii). Such sentiments of multivocality will prove key while journeying through the context this thesis is concerned with.

Enter the *International Baccalaureate* (IB), a name predominately referring to two phenomena. First is the International Baccalaureate Organization. Originally acronymized as the IBO,[1] it is the name of an educational Non-Governmental Organization founded at Geneva (Switzerland) in 1968. Second are the suite of schooling programmes the IBO is responsible for administrating. Namely, these are the Primary Years Programme (PYP), Middle Years Programme (MYP), Career-related Programme (CP), and its oldest and most famed Diploma Programme (DP). As of April 3rd 2023, the organization reports a total of over 7,800 programmes in operation across

[1] Both the IBO and IB education are core entities in this thesis. To avoid any potential conflations, I continue to adopt the acronym of 'IBO' – despite its more recent rebranding to 'IB' – when specifically referring to the central organization / administration.

5,600 schools in 159 territories, experiencing a growth of 34.2% in programmes between 2018 and 2022 (IBO 2023a). As of the end of 2022, programme total works out to 330 CP, 1,647 MYP, 2,209 PYP, and 3,603 DP. The DP is the IBO's moneymaker,[2] dwarfing the income of its partners with a rough total of 139 million USD per financial year (see figure 0.1). As a curriculum neither owned nor otherwise directly influenced by a national government yet recognized by a breadth of territories for entry into higher education, the DP's credentials remain unrivaled.

Figure 0.1: Financial Overview of IBO Income from IB Programmes (2021-2022)[3]



(Directly borrowed from IBO 2023b)

[2] Strictly speaking, the IBO always was and remains a non-profit administration. Recent decades, however, have seen it place greater weight on achieving healthier financial surplus to facilitate its leadership's desire for market growth (see Chapter 3).

[3] All figures in this thesis are primary data unless otherwise stated, as is the case here.

After a noteworthy change of leadership in 2006 the organization experienced a major shift in strategy from the late-2000s to date, one intensely directed at expansion. Accomplishing this meant attempting to move beyond a longstanding perception – and often reality – of the DP as "a course for a small, elite group of university-bound global nomads in expensive, private international schools" (Hill 2012, 344). This called on an approach to diffuse its programmes across more mainstream national systems across the world while maintaining ties with a still growing private international schooling sector. Up until this point, it was a mission they had struggled realizing outside the one notable outlier of the United States[4] (Bunnell 2012), but the IBO has since found better success in several more national systems.

The most significant of these education systems currently is also that which this thesis is centrally concerned with: Japan. That said, it is not alone, even within the context of East Asia. Unlike Hong Kong and mainland China, where IB education continues to all but exclusively serve a socio-economic elite in private / private international schooling sectors (e.g., Wright and Lee 2019), this familiar narrative is no longer sufficient to describe recent developments in South Korea (Zen 2018). As others have noted, superintendents of two Korean provincial Offices of Education, Jeju and Daegu, announced intentions to introduce IB programmes – particularly the DP – in a select number of public schools under their jurisdiction (Park and Hong 2022, 116). With several public schools since becoming IB World Schools – the IBO's language for an officially licensed IB school by their administration – it has since been receiving more attention in national media while garnering further interest from other local educational authorities (Park and Hong 2022, 116-117). It has also experienced a general increase in IB-related conferences, seminars, and workshops, including those facilitated by the IBO. As I visit later in this thesis, this has been augmented by a sizeable provincial investment of IB teacher training in Korean higher education. How far IB expansion in Korean public education will develop remains to be seen. Nonetheless, it is apparent that some of this early momentum mimics earlier developments in Japan on a smaller scale.

[4] This is not to suggest that the diffusion of IB education in the US has been without obstacles, as others have written extensively on (Bunnell 2012).

So, how does Japan compare? 2013 marks the symbolic beginnings of the IBO's significant inroads in the country, jointly establishing a consortium with the Japanese Ministry of Education, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). Direct collaboration with the national government of currently the third largest economy in the world – along with the second largest higher education system in terms of financial investment[5] (Breaden and Goodman 2020, 5) – was a groundbreaking event for an organization seeking to diffuse its internationalist[6] offerings into more mainstream education. At the heart of this project lay a goal spearheaded by the Japanese Government of realizing 200 IB World Schools by 2018, from what was at the time 16 (Nagayama 2013, 332). If achieved, it would – on the surface – eclipse the number of schools in the government's own globalist[7] educational initiatives. This more recently includes MEXT's Super Global High School (2014-2021) project, which at its peak held a total of 123. In a bid to bolster adoption in mainstream article-1[8] schools the Japanese Government paid 57,700,000 yen (at the time of writing, roughly 440,000 USD or 350,000 GBP) toward the development of a Japanese Dual-Language Diploma Programme (DLDP). Unofficially coined by MEXT, its formal name is a poor representation of its function, better described as an almost entirely Japanese-mediated and assessed DP with a small supplement of English-mediation. The investment was a large victory for the IBO, and a bargain for the government given the relative costs of its other initiatives. The DLDP's rollout essentially[9] marked the first time a language other than the IBO's officialized three of English, French, Spanish could be externally assessed across a significant range of subjects by the organization's

[5] This fact is particularly relevant for the DP, as a key reason for the qualification's attractiveness lies in its potential bargaining power for entry into undergraduate degree programmes.

[6] What characterizes IBO internationalism is critically examined and problematized in Chapters 2 and 3 respectively.

[7] What underscores globalist sentiments of education within Japanese governmental policy is analyzed in Chapter 4.

[8] An 'article-1' school here refers to all schooling institutions formally recognized by the Japanese Government (i.e., the overwhelming majority in the country), and are therefore legally obliged to follow nationally mandated schooling guidelines.

[9] A few other 'non-official' languages received attention from the IBO before Japanese, including for instance, German and Mandarin. However, neither of these examples replicate the formalized scale of integration made for Japanese by central administration.

administration.

On March 28th 2023 – five years past the original target – the MEXT-IBO Consortium announced the achievement of reaching the goal of 200 *kō* (schools) on its website (MEXT-IBO Consortium 2023a). The following week, on April 3rd 2023, a news article appeared on the IBO website proudly titled "Japan reaches the goal of 200 IB Programmes implemented in schools country-wide" (IBO 2023c). So, which is it, 200 *schools* or 200 *programmes?* The issue originally stems from the fact that the Japanese Government soon realized 200 IB World Schools by 2018 would not manifest. In a clumsy effort to save face it pushed the deadline from 2018 to 2020, before doing so once more to 2022. At some stage it also quietly stuck an endnote onto its consortium page revealing it to now count *kō* (schools) as IB programmes (e.g., a school running the MYP and DP becomes 'two schools'), boosting its chances at reaching 200 as a result. Nevertheless, the IBO currently register Japan with 106 IB World Schools (IBO 2023d), a solid increase of 90 from one decade ago with further growth expected based on an existing pool of present Candidate Schools. The present total includes around 60 article-1 schools across a diverse spread of prefectures, 34 of which operate the DLDP, and with many others mediating the PYP and MYP – which, unlike the DP, are not prescribed curriculums but frameworks[10] – in Japanese. Subsequently reported by select national news media outlets (e.g., Nihon Keizai Shinbun 2023), the goal of '200' has been a cause of celebration for many within the consortium, MEXT, and the IBO.

As I cover in subsequent chapters, reactions to IB's spread in the country are far more tempered between educationalists in Japan, with especial critique directed at its role in exacerbating social inequality of the Japanese education system. Such intellectual debates provide critical context and pathways for engagement in this thesis, but they are not its focus. Instead, through the experiences of everyday life, I explore the negotiation of various and often conflicting narratives underpinning agendas of 'international' and 'global education,' including those politically officialized between the IBO and Japanese Government. The former's aspiration of

[10] The distinction between framework and curriculum is pronounced in IB education. Unlike curriculums, frameworks do not prescribe its own course content, and no examinations associated with them are externally assessed by the IBO.

international-mindedness – originally a post-World War 1 sentiment of 'White'[11] Euro-American humanism – contrasts sharply with the latter's post-2010 iteration of an economic nationalism centered on the cultivation of *gurōbaru jinzai'* ('global human resource' or 'global HR'). Both ideologies, along with a host of rhetoric mutually enhancing both remain prevalent within the promotion of IB to a range of social stakeholders, including regional Boards of Education, schooling administration, parents, and students.

Of course, another group exposed to these ideologies are the educators themselves, and it is they who lie at the ethnographic core of this thesis. An upturn in Japanese-mediated IB has given rise to an abrupt demand for local educators capable of executing its pedagogical approach, curricular content, and assessment practices. Policymakers, ranging from the national government to the IBO themselves, generally believe MEXT's recent rollout of its latest *gakushū shidō yōryō* or 'national education guidelines' – which all article-1 schools are obliged to follow – to greatly complement IB equivalents. A closing of theoretical alignment over several aspects appears clearcut. Yet, on the other hand, reports of hardship from several article-1 IB World School educators, such as through reports of additional / sometimes simply outrageous workloads, or the precarious juggling act of being instructed to clinically cordon off 'IB' modes of teaching from 'normal Japanese' counterparts in the same school, paint a far nuanced picture over the affective co-existence of national and IBO guidelines.

Again, the above context is important. However, rather than focusing on educators in schools, I attend to the phenomenon of IB teacher training in Japan's higher education sector.[12] Currently dubbed as the IB Educator Certificate (IBEC) in the IBO, the initiative was originally developed as a framework at the turn of the 2000s by staff in its old Cardiff (UK)-based Teacher Education Services division. Through it, universities propose a curriculum aligned to their own institutional needs. Once recognized, the IBO permits them to conduct IB-associated modules as part of either an undergraduate, or, more commonly, postgraduate degree. Students passing these modules become eligible for an IBEC qualification conferred by the IBO, of which a range of teacher and leadership variants exist. Japan has found this a hopeful avenue of helping meet a

[11] See Chapter 2 for a clarification over my use of the racialized and otherwise culturalized concept of 'White' in this thesis.

[12] The decision for this focus is expanded on in Chapter 1.

recent surge in demand for IB educator resource. As of January 2022, Japan holds the second largest number of IBEC-licensed universities in the world at eight, behind only the US at 11. Annually, these programmes operate for as few as five or as many as 90 students across a mix of national and private Japanese universities, and for a roughly even split of postgraduate and undergraduate cohorts. The overwhelming majority are taught exclusively in Japanese, with, at present, only one officially registered as exclusively English-mediated.

In this world of IB teacher training I worked as a Collaborative Researcher for a year at an IBEC university in Japan I pseudonymously refer to as the Japanese Institute of Education (JIE), where I both participated in, and occasionally (co)facilitated parts of its postgraduate IB Teacher Training Programme. I spent further time at other universities in the country for comparative insights, from those catering to undergraduates and – like JIE – exclusively Japanese nationals, to those mediated in English and designed for a mix of non-Japanese and Japanese nationals. I also spent dedicated time with representatives of the IBO in charge of recognizing universities seeking to implement their IBEC framework across the Asia-Pacific, joining them as a guest representative for university Recognition Visits in several territories.

Under more ordinary circumstances such globetrotting might appear methodologically unrealistic for someone claiming to have also carried out a years-worth of participant observation at one Japanese university. It just so happens, however, that my fieldwork occurred during an exceptional, arguably unprecedented phase of recorded human history: *COVID-19.* I begin with the methodological tale of adapting to the global pandemic. Chapter 1 centers on an abrupt switch from a scheduled analog ethnography to an exclusively digital counterpart, one conducted nocturnally from a university dormitory in Oxford (UK). I ask what conducting fieldwork during the heart of the pandemic says about the affective limits of ethnography as an improvisational practice. Engaging with recent doubts over the effectiveness or even legitimacy of realizing social intimacy in digital environments due to the pandemic, I argue these discussions to echo those originally made by digital anthropologists before COVID-19. I emphasize it critical to (re)affirm digital mediation's legitimacy by appreciating its present advantages and limitations versus analog ethnography across vastly divergent contexts.

Chapters 2 introduces the phenomenon of IB. I trace the genesis of the IBO and its subsequent administrative expansions while introducing the core ideological principles underlying an IB education today. I pay special attention to its strapline aspiration of

'international-mindedness' while situating its internationalist agenda within a broader spectrum of discourses evoking 'international education,' ranging from humanisms to nationalisms. I then proceed to Chapter 3, one dedicated to the administration's IBEC framework. Documenting the initiatives origins through the voices of its founders and current representatives in the Asia-Pacific, I also overview its general status as of the early 2020s. I then transition into a micro-ethnography of its Recognition Visit processes, which decide if a university be permitted to run their framework. Participating as a Guest Member on four such meetings in South Korea, Japan, and China with IBO team members based in Australia, Singapore, Vietnam, and China, I explore examples of contested frictions vying to shape what it means to operate and administer IBEC. I analyze IBEC as a fundamentally diplomatic initiative, one both originally partly designed for and now converging further towards a means for the IBO to build and consolidate relationships with the higher education sector.[13] The result is a product that further neoliberalizes[14] what it means to be licensed as an 'IB,' and by extension an 'international educator,' achieving the administration's desire for market growth.

In Chapter 4 I turn to Japan. Reviewing the introduction of IB in the country from 1979, I situate its journey to date within the larger context of the Japanese education system. I start by reviewing Japan's post-World War 2 era of 'egalitarian education,' an essential backdrop to appreciate how the few mainstream educationalists in Japan initially intrigued by IB were the same opposing popular sentiments of egalitarianism. Some saw aspects of the IBO's DP curricula – particularly its natural science subjects – as comparatively advanced to national counterparts, seeking to siphon relevant content to further the 'international competitiveness' of the national system. Meanwhile, other comparative educationalists also saw it a potential benefit for better integrating the minoritized population of *'kikokushijo,'* or 'Japanese returnees' with so-called *'ippan Nihonjin'* ('general Japanese') others. Later, through an analysis of Japanese Governmental policy

[13] These relationships are critical to the IBO's current growth strategy, not least because they aid its efforts at convincing more higher education institutions of the quality of its DP, thereby increasing the uptake of DP graduates into higher education.

[14] I define my use of the concept 'neoliberalism' in this thesis – including through associated adjectives (i.e., 'neoliberal') and verbs (i.e., 'neoliberalize') – as a revived form liberalism promoting a chiefly Euro-American sentiment of individualist free market capitalism.

and existing literature, I piece together the eventual emergence of a new iteration of economic nationalism emerging from the 2010s. Epitomized through the concept of *'gurōbaru jinzai'* or 'global HR,' I highlight how the Japanese Government's ongoing partnership with the IBO from 2013 principally resides in an aim to cultivate global HR in the country via IB. I finally review ongoing discussions among educationalists in Japan sparked by the recent diffusion of IB to article-1 Japanese schools, especially regarding its role of furthering educational inequality.

Chapter 5 draws on my year as a Collaborative Researcher at the Japanese Institute of Education, or JIE. Situating its IBEC within the overall institution, I explain the core demographics of students and facilitators that made up its main IB teacher training community. After this, I zoom in on a key aspect of current IB educational pedagogy: socio-constructivism (Larochelle and Bednarz 1998). This approach to learning emphasizes a greater sense of relational horizontality between students and teachers while encouraging active knowledge production through discussion-based activities. I primarily consider how this internationalist pedagogy faced significant disruption due to its inability to acclimatize to mainstream Japanese practices of relational identity, such as through its more nuanced variety of vertical social coordinates. Through this I demonstrate how socio-constructivist practice can struggle to function in cultural environments formed independently from the predominately 'White' Euro-American contexts[15] it was originally theorized by and for. It is an outcome begging the question, exactly how 'international' and socio-culturally inclusive should such pedagogy be conceived in its current guise?

Chapter 6 explores several cases of politics surrounding linguistic identity. The first examines dissonances of translation and indigenization between two tracks – an MYP and DP specialized group – of IB teacher training students at JIE. At the core of the former line of discourse are officially Japanese translated texts published by the IBO, resources facilitators used to guide the structure of its programme. The resulting approach to translation taken by the organization generated much discussion between students and facilitators over language use. Several provoked positive debate while others induced sentiments of dissatisfaction over artificial grammar and of

[15] Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934), a Russian national, played a central role in originally theorizing the idea of socio-constructivism (see Chapter 5). As such, in this instance I count Russia within this broader geography of 'Euro-America.'

a select range of more problematic translator decisions. The latter group meanwhile took a remarkably contrasting approach, informing most of the course via an independently published textbook in original Japanese edited by its own facilitators. The book reframes IB education within a rich Japanese context while uncritically framing the goal of expansion with the Japanese Government's agenda of global HR cultivation. Collectively, differences in resource approach received contesting responses between students, demonstrating discordances over both Anglo-American approaches to universalist translation, and politically concerning yet socio-culturally amiable Japanese indigenization.

The remainder of Chapter 6 explores operational challenges with language mediation in IBEC administrative processes, and conflict in IBEC classrooms. The former theme is grounded in my experience co-representing JIE as part of a team of five for its compulsory Interim Review process with IBO representatives. The scenario, complemented with earlier insights observed on Recognition Visits, highlights the IBO's reliance on all but exclusive English mediation for administering IBEC. With most of JIE's team members comprised of monolingual Japanese speakers IBEC's lack of operational inclusivity over language is exposed, a particularly concerning outcome given that, as of 2022, Japanese remains – by some margin – the second most common IBEC programme language after English. Finally, the latter is contextualized through time spent with students undertaking an officially English-mediated IBEC at a university in Japan I pseudonymously call Murasaki University (MU). Here I examine a conflict surfacing between its Japanese and non-Japanese nationals over the idea of English as 'global language.' I conclude that this narrative, in this case unwittingly imposed by select 'White' Anglo-American nationals, fails to register the Japanese language's relative socio-cultural autonomy and economic containment to most others in the post-colonial era.

The above journey covered in these chapters examines a wide, and often discordant range of projects pursued in the name of the international and global. They range from regionalisms (e.g., regional Boards of Education) to humanisms (e.g., IB programme content), from translingualism (e.g. select IBEC students) to English (e.g., select IBEC facilitators), from neoliberalism (e.g., national governments) to evangelism (select IBEC universities), and more. I build on this pattern in Chapter 7 to emphasize how the scalar imaginaries of 'international' and 'global' hold, and regularly exercise their potentials to amplify a seemingly limitless range of agendas. I additionally find individuals to be capable of magnifying contradictory positions at the same time, praising

'educational innovation' while bemoaning 'European sloppiness.' I argue that recent educationalist discourses attempting to de-ideologize and control the semantics of 'international' and 'global' are futile. Instead, I call for privileging everyday knowledge in processes of theorization. I also consider more established educational anthropological theories – namely that of glocalization – along with more contextualized understandings in Japan, finding them to complement much of the diverse internationalist and globalist narratives uncovered yet mutually unable to capture some of their extremities. As a result, drawing on other theoretical considerations that might, I propose that the 'international' and 'global' act as amplifiers for diverse political and educational agendas.

I end this thesis with concluding thoughts, arguing that both the IBO and Japanese Government face significant obstacles to surmount (e.g., a glaring lack of human diversity in deciding top-down strategies and policies) if they are to offer socio-culturally and economically inclusive education in the names of the international and global.

CHAPTER 1: DIGITAL ETHNOGRAPHY IN COVID-19: IMPROVISATION & INTIMACY

Improvisation. It can be defined as "the action of responding to circumstances," doing so "spontaneously, without preparation, or on the spur of the moment" (OED 2023c). Conducting fieldwork during, or otherwise on the verge of the original COVID-19 outbreak served as a stinging reminder of both its inherent role and limitation in constructing ethnography. This is because ethnography necessitates, as described by other anthropologists over life itself, "an uncertainty that is lived, experienced, felt – at times debilitating, at other times liberating" (Calkins 2016, 46). In addition, as an act of methodological "survivance" – the ability to continue (Vizenor 2008a, 19) – improvising to the pandemic encouraged many researchers to abruptly adopt digital modes of ethnographic research. I was one of them, and the content of this thesis is a direct product of this result. These decisions have generated new waves of reflections over the relative effectiveness of digital experience in realizing appropriate levels of social intimacy, however argued. Nevertheless, despite the novel temporalities realized by the pandemic, the considerations and debates they invite are anything but new.

Strictly speaking of course, *ethnography* – a "theory of description" (Nader 2011, 211) textually rendering "social worlds" (Abu-Lughod 2000, 261) of and between humans, or, documenting psychological and subjective experiences that "both shape, and is shaped by social and cultural processes" (Hollan 2001, 48) – is not a method, but the final product of several. In addition to participant observation, it is commonly supplemented via a range of other qualitative and quantitative methodologies, as comprehensively outlined by others (e.g., Bernard 2018). For instance, supplementary methodology for this thesis included 93 structured surveys – much of which has been drawn on – as well as data sets analyzable via cultural domain analysis, a common cognitive anthropological approach (Bernard 2018, 362-415). Cognitive datasets were essentially unused in this thesis, but its potential application stands testament to the sheer diversity of methodologies capable of rendering ethnography. This in mind, I dedicate this chapter to reflecting on those predominantly relied on for this thesis' primary data: participant observation (i.e., ethnography's core) and – a total of 46 – semi-structured interviews.

When to Improvise?

Demonstrated through older epistemological conflicts between ethnography as a scientific versus artistic or technical practice (Malkki 1997), improvisation has been long identified as a key cornerstone of its craft. Such analysis can be traced back to at least the 1930s in anthropology (e.g., Firth 1936), where it was stressed as central in permitting a creative aspect to data construction, while simultaneously balancing it with some form of evidence (e.g., what, or how someone did, said, embodied). This train of thought flew in the face of popular positivist approaches to social scientific research, as well as the very ideas of 'evidence' and 'science' (Whitehead 1967). As previously described by others, the issue with empiricism in anthropological approaches to ethnography is that its standpoint is "a working principle" (Firth 1936, 18). This, in essence, provoked the notion that ethnography is a fictitious product, yet *not* one of fiction.

Later established as a simultaneous empiricist and improvisational method, some considered the latter as one of three fundamental co-existing ethnographic practices, alongside critical theory, and everyday ethics (Malkki 2007, 164). This is because mastery of a single or multiple methods are indispensable, yet ultimately insufficient to producing ethnography. Rather, they are only techniques, or tools of the art itself, the 'art' being their improvised synthesis through a thorough appreciation of the context/s in question. This idea is not to be confused with that of a static agreement on how improvisation 'should' be accomplished, and neither is it to infer it being conducted in the absence of any rules whatsoever. Instead, it is that 'improvisation *is* the tradition' (Malkki 2007, 180, my emphasis).

COVID-19 has forcibly reminded many ethnographers of this tradition's significance. However, it simultaneously explores its pragmatic limitations, shedding light into recent, yet pre-COVID-19 (hereon 'pre-COVID') discussions on what it means to fail in the field (Mattes and Dinkelaker 2019). Both proved true for me. On one hand, it is what enabled me to successfully readjust my approach to the pandemic. Yet, on the other, multiple instances of failure along the journey – 'the journey' including both pre-fieldwork and the following year in the field – forced me to question when and where improvisation reaches its limit.

Original fieldwork arrangements appeared settled around November 2019. A work visa agreed, I was to be stationed as a Teaching Assistant at a private article-1 IB World School in Saitama Prefecture (Japan), one having recently introduced a predominantly Japanese-mediated version of the IB's Diploma Programme (see Introduction). An ethnography of the programme's

everyday life for students, parents, and facilitating faculty in the school's community was to act as the heart of my doctoral research. The arrangement felt ideally suited. A formal position would permit a highly participatory approach to participant observation,[16] easy access to an otherwise slippery visa, and direct financial support via a subsidized salary covering most of my fieldwork costs. Despite having never hired an employee outside of Japan before, the school demonstrated generous support by working through an exhaustive list of steps outlined by the Japanese Government's Immigration Bureau on recruiting processes.

The visa procedure formally initiated in February 2020, but would soon stagnate once mainstream news and popular media across the world lit up with fear over a highly contagious, deadly, and fast-diffusing disease. True to the fears of virologists, it would later realize one of the most perilous global pandemics in recorded human history. Unsurprisingly, ethnographers conducting fieldwork around this time described intense feelings of fear and "despair" (Hidalgo and Khan 2020, 190). Given such extraordinary and unsettling circumstances, it was mutually agreed that travel to Japan was no longer in the interest of safety for either those in the school community or myself. This, in hindsight, was to be my last time interacting with the school for the remainder of my doctoral degree, all but eradicating months of preparation and early rapport.

It was at this stage, living in a student dormitory at St. Antony's College in Oxford (UK) during the March 2020 national lockdown, that I emphatically failed to improvise. There were two predominant reasons for this failure. First was the inability to establish access to a viable field-site, with a blanket closure of schools enforced across Japan. Even when reopened several months later, all potential schools remained understandably hesitant to permit my travel, even during intermittent windows when relevant laws and the political climate still effectively allowed it. Of course, should that barrier have been somehow surmounted, there remained the moral dilemma of proximity (Strong et al. 2021). Could I live with being potentially responsible for my own body (i.e., the predominant research tool of any ethnographer) causing the serious illness, or worse, death of another in the name of research? Such a nightmare scenario had paralyzed me.

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[16] I partially highlight this to acknowledge approaches to participant observation deemphasizing participation (e.g., Jeffrey and Troman 2004, 545), as part of increasingly hyphenated practices of ethnography across the social sciences (Scott-Jones and Watt 2010) influenced by a dynamically shifting knowledge economy (Mills and Ratcliffe 2012).

This neatly leads into to the second reason: my own state of mind. Feeling disappointed was difficult when failing to locate alternative field-sites. COVID-19 was spreading at a particularly alarming rate in the UK at the time. Streets were eerily silent, and soon accompanied by horrific statistical data on infection and mortality rates through a host of mainstream news networks, social media, and key informative bodies, including the UK's National Health Service (NHS) and World Health Organization (WHO). Regular access to distressing accounts from one family member working on the frontlines in the NHS only added to the anguish. The college I resided in was now largely deserted. With over 80% of the student body comprised of non-UK nationals, many promptly departed on flights home fearing incoming lockdowns and travel restrictions, in a number of cases leaving most their personal belongings behind. This ironically left a safer environment for those who remained, though it did little to improve the general atmosphere of shock. For a time, my research no longer mattered. Neither did my degree.

Such practical, psychological, and moral limits had been met by countless other researchers, including within my primary cohort at Oxford University's School of Anthropology & Museum Ethnography (SAME). Several paused research pursuits immediately, some for almost two years. At certain departments in the world these intermissions were institutionally forced, with, for instance, ethics boards shutting down altogether. Those who continued at SAME were generally limited to a few planning fieldwork in rare, unaffected areas of the world where COVID-19 had – at the time – dissipated, or those managing to retune their methodological approach. For the latter, some adapted in creative ways by synthesizing elements of digital methodology, although content would often remain scarce, unable to be exclusively relied on. At this point I was none of the above, for I had failed to improvise at all.

This bitter reality invited a thought: what does it mean to fail in fieldwork? It had recently been the subject of much discussion among anthropologists and ethnographers before COVID-19 (e.g., Takaragawa and Howe 2017). Of course, many of the difficulties facing ethnographers are well established. Gaining necessary ethical clearance from relevant bodies can be problematic. Even when successful, other ethical considerations, such as what constitutes a fair or reciprocal relationship between ethnographer and participant, may linger in a disquieting shroud. Arranging access to an appropriate field-site or community can be fraught with obstacles (Ortner 2010). The risks of accumulating too much data to constructively manage can be *as* dangerous as gathering too little, a notion my doctoral supervisors were often keen to stress. Delving into and interpreting

one's forest of data can feel overwhelming, aimless, or theoretically unrewarding. Capturing the lucidity of life experiences through ethnographic description may prove elusive (Hovland 2007, 1). Methodologies may prove challenging to execute, or fail to realize appropriate results (O'Brien 2010, 5-9). It is, however, considerations over the various affective demands that fieldwork exerts on the ethnographer, that particularly resonated with my journey (Stodulka et al. 2018).

Improvisation from physical to digital ethnography ultimately proved successful. That said, this success was punctuated by multiple moments of failure. This is because the ability to adapt to the field is a dialectically dependent process. To be realized, *both* ethnographer and their environment/s of focus must sufficiently attune to permit it. A myriad of ramifications wrought by COVID-19 pertinently exemplifies the role of the latter, as they are mostly immune to a researcher's influence, no matter how experienced or skilled. Meanwhile, discussing the former's role means not only being prepared, but actively encouraged to acknowledge where one reaches their limits as beings. After all – borrowing the words of others – "if any anthropological fieldwork went *strictly* to plan, it would actually have to be considered a failure" (Mattes and Dinkelaker 2019, 229, my emphasis).[17] Some degree of failure is therefore not only necessary for success, but often responsible for molding it.[18] I discovered new contexts to approach my research questions because of a period of psychological disillusionment with COVID-19, *because* original plans proved fruitless.

On a hunch, I shifted ethnographic focus from IB at schools to IB teacher training programmes at universities in Japan. I also steered away from exploring the relationship between universities and national government, and instead on the former's ties with the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). These decisions were little more than gambles, hedging my bets that should the temporal climate continue to hinder any chance at in-person ethnography in Japan, that universities and international organizations stood a better chance of surviving digitally. It

[17] I emphasize 'strictly' here to acknowledge that ethnographic fieldwork is naturally capable of following very closely to plan. I simply argue it impossible for all contingent aspects (e.g., how a field-site changes over time, how a participant's behavior alters over time, how the ethnographer feels over time), to be impeccably forecasted.

[18] It is also worth highlighting that 'failure' sometimes *equates* to success. An interview that went poorly, for example, can itself prove highly instructive (e.g., understanding why it went poorly could reveal profound insight for a given socio-cultural context).

paid off, with these respective parties making unprecedented choices to operate in either fully digital or, less commonly, hybrid formats. Schools, on the other hand, did neither for any extensive period when reopened. As a bonus, my futile attempts at securing a relevant visa, and the moral dilemma of exposing myself and others to COVID-19 in the name of research conveniently evaporated. The result was achieving a one-year digital ethnography while based at a university dormitory in Oxford between September 2020 and 2021. The field successfully attuned to the ethnographer.

However, this methodological *survivance* – to borrow a concept examined at length by other anthropologists (Vizenor 2008b) – was accompanied with significant sacrifice. As defined by others regarding Native Americans, survivance stories are commonly renunciations of "detractions," "obstruction," and "tragedy," while conversely being celebrations of "continuance" (Vizenor 2008a, 1, 19). In this context, however, survivance acknowledges *both* adversity and perseverance. When personally reflecting on the former, for example, transitioning to digital fieldwork resulted in a crushing loss of funding from a foundation focused on Japan-related research. Provisionally awarded in June 2020 under the assumption my body would be physically in Japan, a year later (i.e., towards the end of my fieldwork period) the committee decided they could not finance "purchases not associated with fieldwork directly in Japan." This left me in a financially vulnerable position both during and after fieldwork.

Another demanding hurdle lay in acclimatizing to nocturnal life. As someone who had never experienced a nocturnal body clock before, doing so for a year while in strict isolation amid a volatile COVID-19 climate was utterly exhausting. Even when a nocturnal rhythm was somewhat realized, maintaining it proved equally dicey for the duration that followed. This was further complicated by over six months of continuous arrangements for a physical arrival in Japan, keeping me alert for a sudden switch to physical fieldwork that never arrived. This inability to switch was caused by a combination of factors, ranging from a blanket ban on foreign nationals between late-December 2020 and February 2021, several State of Emergency declarations by the Japanese Government, and the mass outbreak of the Delta Variant in the UK. Most critical, however, were the eventual decisions made by relevant universities and organizations to retain digital operations.

My journey – alongside those of countless other ethnographers – emphasized not only the ecological limits of improvisation, but also the affective limits of individuals. Keeping track of

one's emotions had never felt more important. More anthropologists have recently been doing so, sometimes compartmentalizing them into separate journals (Stodulka et al. 2018, 525-527). I accomplished this through short audio recordings, finding it easier to reflect on personal feelings verbally. This exercise helped to keep my subjectivities in check with ethnographic data, while informing me of how well I was affectively coping with the field. At times, the truth was that I was not. Despite an essentially seamless integration to digital life across the Asia-pacific, prolonged physical isolation in Oxford was taking its toll on my well-being. On some nights this translated to feelings of discombobulation, handicapping my social awareness. Digging deep into mental fortitude miraculously saw me through such periods, but for a number of months post-fieldwork the side effects of this push became clearer. A vaccine finally in hand, I accomplished little more than basic human functions as I slowly returned to life with the sun.

Acknowledging and empathizing with loss from COVID-19 is important. That said, there are several positive outcomes the pandemic has inadvertently achieved. To emphasize but one of these here, it has exposed many of our often-concealed human vulnerabilities, underscoring a need to better reflect on, and describe the successes *and* failures that go into maintaining ourselves in the field. My experience confronted me with an uncomfortable, and hopefully stimulating enigma. Did I succeed because I persevered through an arduous year of fieldwork? Or did I fail because I sometimes willingly chose to neglect my own self-care to realize this 'success'? Perhaps COVID-19 can act as a timely debate for researchers to consider the potential risks of championing the former, and potential benefits of critiquing the latter lines of thought.

Taking Digital Intimacy Seriously

Rays of sunlight glazed the curtains as I rolled out of bed. It was the end of December 2020, and my first time rising with the morning since initiating fieldwork in September. Term ending for the new year holidays in Japan offered a brief respite from nocturnal life. I was soon to attend a *nomikai* (or 'social pub') event of around 15 students affiliated with the Japanese Institute of Education,[19] or JIE (see Chapter 5). Organized for the late evening in Japan, it was a rare instance when

[19] This is a pseudonym.

participant observation would take place during my morning in the UK.

Following arrangements via a group chat on Japan's mainstream messaging app, LINE, I grabbed a bottle of ginger ale from the fridge before settling down at my desk to initiate Zoom. As a general non-drinker I was somewhat relieved. It would have been risky at best, and anti-social or disrespectful at worst, to avoid consuming at least some form of alcoholic beverage had the event taken place at an *izakaya* ('Japanese-style bar'). Thanks to the event occurring digitally, however, all of us were tucked away in family houses, flats, or dormitories. Some would swig through as many as six cans of beer during the four-hour session that followed, while others made do with a glass of wine or water. A few decided to smoke, another blessing in this format. At present, few, if anyone, can escape becoming a second-hand smoker when socializing at an *izakaya*, or most other types of dining establishments in Japan. For a non-smoker often experiencing unpleasant physiological effects through inhalation, it was refreshing to be in control of my air. The usual pressures of integrating into the socio-cultural norms of a single environment dissolved. Instead, all were sharing separate environments catered towards their preferences with everyone else, creating a new (Ahlin and Li 2019), and more inclusive environment.

After exchanging greetings in the main room, the central organizer suggested splitting people into breakout groups between three and four, alternating participants every 30 minutes. We all agreed, repeating the process between three to six times, with some leaving Zoom earlier than others. Utilizing breakout sessions in this way also revealed its benefits to a physical setting. Filtering one's hearing or straining one's voice over the ambient noise of an establishment was non-existent. In addition, the group enjoyed chances to socialize with all its members, where ecological limitations often constrain individuals to only converse with a select number. Conversations spanned a wide array of topics, ranging from IB, teaching careers, and educational policy to family life, popular entertainment, and desires in life. My engagements produced multiple moments of humor and contingency. Some jested with their pets after abrupt entrances. Others kept an observant eye on their toddlers off-camera while maintaining a veneer of calm. A couple, after drinking a generous amount, turned deeply philosophical, disclosing personal insecurities with life through introspective yet often amusing tales.

These *nomikai* were arranged by students in exclusively online spaces due to overarching fears and anxieties with COVID-19. They also acted as a gesture of respect for those unable to reside in the same city because of regionalized lockdowns. It was a time when physical isolation

was fervently encouraged, and when 'the home' transformed into the most consistent place of everyday socialization with the world. Yet, despite this improvised environment, such gatherings deepened bonds in ways impossible in-person. Experiencing these sometimes-profound moments of social intimacy triggered me to reflect on the connection between digital domains and human relationships. After all, if the quality of a given ethnography is largely, if not entirely dependent on how socially intimate an ethnographer is with their community/ies of interest – as other anthropologists suggest (Funk and Thajib 2019) – then how might this be influenced by its mediation? By 'mediation,' I refer to two specific domains in which realities are constructed: the *digital* and the *analog*.

I choose 'analog' purposefully. 'Physical' remains more commonly elected to fulfill this role, although examples of the former term continue to emerge between digital theorists (e.g., Elwell 2014) and anthropologists (e.g., Gadsby 2016). According to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), analog can be defined as that which is "typically contrasted with digital," while also designating "the original or traditional form of something that has a digital or computer-mediated counterpart" (OED 2023d). The same is essentially true of physical, and remains an entirely appropriate alternative. However, *unlike* physical, analog infers a more colloquial sense of *a way things used to be* (OED 2023d). The idea then, is that its use might further stimulate social scientists to challenge the paradigmatic treatment of its relationship with the digital.

As is now well-established knowledge, much of humanity continues to grapple with a mistaken conceptual compartmentalization "between the virtual and the real" in the growing wake of The Fourth Industrial Revolution (Elwell 2014, 234). This persists despite the fact that digital reality and experience, as discussed at length by other digital anthropologists, is equally capable of being as "real" or "unreal" as its analog equivalent (Boellstorff 2016a). Simply put, digital life should be no more or less ontologically legitimate to its analog counterpart. Treating both domains as such is becoming increasingly obvious in anthropology and broader social science, although, as pointed out by others, even experienced researchers of digital domains struggled to grapple with this reality from as recent as the mid-2010s (Boellstorff 2016b, 387-388). Imposed change via COVID-19 has since re-energized discussion about the role of digitality among social scientists. Early examples of post-COVID-19 (hereon 'post-COVID') literature paints a mixed picture over how ethnographers have since treated digital life, with some persisting to analyze it as a phenomenon somehow less legitimate to a seeming analog standard.

The deployment of 'remote' helps aptly demonstrate this trend. A casual glance at its associations in the OED are immediately concerning: "far away," "indirect," "opposed to immediate or proximate," "divergent," or even "unfamiliar as if through distance; foreign, alien" (OED 2023e). Such ideas evidentially polarize it as something incapable of realizing close, direct, intimate, or familiar human connection. Yet, it is precisely terms like 'remote fieldwork' or 'remote ethnography' that remain at risk of being synonymized with the digital and online. For example, one ethnographer more recently carried out a mix of analog and digital ethnography in Nepal, concluding that while "*remote* ethnography" translated new forms of intimacies (e.g., text-based intimacies via social chat apps), it was ultimately inadequate to recover what offline fieldwork lost (Jaehn 2021). They were cautious with their use of remote as a descriptor, evoking it to describe experiences after switching to digital-mediated research. In their own words, they found "online spaces as rather limiting and inappropriate in sustaining the intimate relationships that had been possible offline" (Jaehn 2021). In this scenario, online spaces had failed to realize little more than *remote* experiences.

Like the example above, much post-COVID ethnography existing at the time of writing is generally comprised of those conducted both at some stage before *and* after the outbreak. This fact alone is significant, as they stand in sharp contrast to a rich range of digital ethnographies conducted pre-pandemic purposed for, if not wholly reliant on digital-mediated experiences to produce. This is easily appreciated through several volumes on digital ethnography (e.g., Boellstorff et al. 2012; Pink et al. 2016; Hjorth et al. 2017), and the established subdiscipline of digital anthropology (Horst and Miller 2012). They collectively demonstrate a growing range of contexts where analog mediation instead becomes the compromised alternative. For instance, various anthropologies and ethnographies of metaverses, such as Massively Multiplayer Online (MMO) environments, showcase scenarios where everyday social dynamics can only be coherently appreciated within digital spaces (e.g., Boellstorff 2009; Nardi 2010). The same is true of similar ethnographies blending digital and analog aspects (e.g., Malaby 2009; Gadsby 2016; Bluteau 2021). More recent post-COVID digital research, on the other hand, has often been dramatically improvised. As the experience of others highlights (e.g., Jaehn 2021), the sheer scale and abruptness of improvisation can be prone to failure, if 'failure' is defined as an insufficiency of social intimacy with participants. That said, others conducting fieldwork around this juncture conversely enjoyed success in this respect, exemplified well by one ethnographer's account of their

sudden departure from their physical field-site:

"But social life did not wholly disappear with the arrival of Covid-19. Rather, it began to adapt and to take a new shape, even while also falling back into some of the rhythms that we were already accustomed to. The bonds and life I'd built in Máncora did not disappear either, instead they shifted into new configurations that allowed me to glimpse at things I hadn't and couldn't have seen before."

(Hidalgo and Khan 2020, 190)

Others have since provided a more detailed reflection over the various pros and cons that may accompany digital fieldwork for social scientists (Howett 2022). Howett's experience with digital interviews during their extensive research in Ukraine strongly resonated with my own. For example, an interesting tendency for participants to better express their personal selves when situated in more familiar environments (Sullivan 2012, 55-57; O'Connor and Madge 2017), or the adverse effects that a lack of internet speed and other material affordances (Nardi 2015, 18-19; Kaptelin and Nardi 2012) can exert on everyday digital experience. They also emphasize a greater need to treat the field as something not "limited to a geographic space with people and places 'on' it," but rather "as a continuum of spatio-temporal events and relations between people in diverse sociopolitical contexts" (Howett 2022, 396). This conceptual step is imperative if digital ethnography is to be treated equally with its analog other. Incidentally, it was precisely this older definition of 'the field' that appeared responsible for the aforementioned loss of my grant, while it was the latter that permitted my transcendence of analog geography. Despite an ethnographic focus on JIE, I teleported across several additional universities, gaining comparative insights otherwise impossible to attain owing to their physical proximities. I could furthermore ignore national borders entirely while at the IBO, conducting a participant observation of its relevant administration that spanned the Asia-Pacific and beyond.

Once more, however, remoteness is evoked, this time through the notion of "remote embeddedness" (Howett 2022, 394). The idea itself is a valuable one, describing a successful social integration into the lives of participants via digital mediation. Yet, precisely because of this success,

the semantics existent in remote are conceptually juxtaposed to the concept of embeddedness, misconstruing how digital distance is experienced both relationally and geographically. As such, *digital embeddedness* may better describe this notion. In addition, a conceptually problematic distinction is made between what is referred to as the "mediated" versus the "in-person" (Howett 2022, 387), inadvertently inferring the latter as somehow unmediated. Naturally, all human reality and experience, analog or digital, *must* be mediated. Analog mediation is also susceptible to interferences in quality. For instance, humans diverge considerably in their sensory abilities (e.g., one's sight and hearing), impacting the type or quality of data gathered and described by a given ethnographer. That said, digital mediation is certainly more complicated. If the analog is defined as that which is solely mediated through our bodies, then the digital is this plus the various material affordances required to generate it. Aside from internet accessibility, reliability, or speed, some of the most immediately obvious and often cited examples include ICT skills, as well as hardware and software familiarity (e.g., Deakin and Wakefield 2014; Lobe et al. 2020). Falling short on any of these aspects and more, digital experience quickly turns unpleasant and inorganic. Assuming the ethnographer's senses are fully functioning, social interactions deteriorate to levels incomparable to most analog interaction.

Such limitations were rare during my fieldwork, but often disruptive when surfacing. Community coherence differed greatly based on how competent and comfortable people were with adapting to digital platforms. A handful of interviews, typically averaging around two hours in length, were reduced to as little as 20 minutes due to poor internet connectivity, turning casual discussions into vexing ventures. A lack of technological affordance or performance could lead to wide-ranging issues, such as where a participant's voice is only partially captured, or worse, when my own response is received 10 seconds after expression. These instances of intermittence and lag disturbed an expected fluidity for organic human interaction, encouraging those involved to abandon conversation relatively promptly.

Then there were more substantive limitations. Video conferencing apps like Zoom, for now at least, can overly systematize groupwork and activities. By essentially restricting people to clinical, turn-based monologs, it obstructs natural junctures of interruption often taken for granted with analog equivalents. Another barrier related to a broadly inescapable lack of geographical mobility. Especially where fixed webcams or laptops are concerned, we remain widely constricted by what is experienced in a prescribed static environment. A total reliance on digital mediation

rendered me unable to observe discourse before, between, and after classes on the analog campus between students and staff, as well as the broader environment of JIE itself. I could not capture analog activities beyond the rare instances when a student might briefly guide me via a smartphone. That being said, as it transpired in my case, COVID-19 dramatically limited these moments, as students who attended hybrid classes physically were encouraged to leave campus promptly once lessons ended.

Owing to the above and more, it is tempting to conclude ethnographic data quality as contingent on the standard of material affordances generating it. This assumption, however, leads to what was the most peculiar methodological finding during fieldwork. A select series of events when a lack of such affordances and accessibility paradoxically *enabled* a deepening of social connection. The principal example of this involved early classes at JIE. Having made the decision to run its entire programme in a mostly digital and otherwise hybrid capacity, the institution sometimes struggled to execute classes as desired due to unstable internet connectivity, later upgrading its hardware infrastructure to help address the issue. The result proved unexpectedly valuable for participant observation during hybrid classes.

Picture the scenario. The facilitator's laptop acted as the host for the Zoom room, its camera positioned to ensure visibility of the physical classroom. Those participating in-person simultaneously connected their devices – principally laptops – to the Zoom session, integrating with their digital-only peers. For this format to be successful, the institution's internet supporting the facilitator's laptop and student devices inside the physical building, *as well* as those of each individuals' residences participating online were necessary. Problematic then, that JIE's internet could occasionally be severed entirely. This would naturally cause all devices reliant on its network to lose connectivity. To people such as myself, JIE had disappeared. However, *only* JIE disappeared. In other words, those relying on internet networks independent of JIE's lingered on Zoom, abruptly reconfiguring a new social environment. Marooned in cyberspace, this fresh setting caused all to laugh, an ethnographer's blessing. Having barely initiated fieldwork, it immediately broke ice with multiple students. The moment granted opportunities to re-introduce each other informally, speak frankly about initial impressions of the course, and establish a level of familiarity not attained with others until many months later. Eventually, after about 20 minutes, connection was re-established with JIE, teleporting us back into the classroom and forcing us to immediately retune ourselves to more formal etiquette. This example demonstrated one of a few

bizarre occasions where poor material affordance *enhanced* social intimacy and embeddedness with participants.

In hindsight, my field-sites of interest were best accessed digitally, to the extent that a solely analog ethnography would have failed to yield sufficient data for this thesis. This is because the various communities of ethnographic interest were themselves digitally constructed, with only a handful of participants ever meeting in-person. A combination of COVID-19 variables dramatically impeding physical interaction, along with a focus on students (i.e., customers), classroom facilitators and organizational representatives (i.e., employees), allowed both the resources and impetus for participants to embed themselves into digital lives. This was complemented further by a general rise in ICT competencies – especially among younger generations – allowing many to express themselves in an equal, if not sometimes better manner to how they would in analog life (e.g., De Seta 2020). A key reason for my contrasting experiences to several other post-COVID examples lies with the fact that, while tantalizingly close, my fieldwork was unable to initiate when the outbreak occurred. I was forced, yet granted the opportunity to reconsider much, including my field-sites of interest. I could replan, or, at the very least, wager accordingly with knowledge of the pandemic.

In the end, digital mediation turned out to be the *normal approach,* with analog mediation instead the more compromised alternative, a paradigm shift which should no longer be considered new (Bluteau 2019). As a final example to illustrate why, others described a phenomenon termed the 'always-on' webcam in relatively low resource localities well before the pandemic (Miller and Sinanan 2014, 54), writing the following in primary reference to Trinidadian society:

"As the technology has become more reliable, it is also possible to simply leave webcams on in the background, while going about one's general household activities such a cleaning, cooking or studying, without directly paying attention to the other person, remaining aware of where they are and what they are doing."

(Miller and Sinanan 2014, 55)

Forced to acclimatize to digital modes of learning, teaching, work, and everyday socializing in

ways otherwise challenging or impossible due to the COVID-19 landscape, similar on-for-a-while moments emerged on many occasions. Aside from *nomikai* events, interviews conducted with several participants lasted for an average of five hours camera-on time. This was not because we had five hours-worth of formal content to discuss, but rather that we chose to converse in between taking breaks, preparing drinks, relaxing quietly with some reading, or conversing on topics of ordinary interest to them. Similar events also transpired through casual chats with select participants.

Since completing fieldwork, participating universities and the IBO – including their various global conferences held exclusively online at the time – have since broadly moved back to analog life. This has, in most cases, led to a return of community dynamics where the everyday is predominantly experienced in the analog realm. Digital attempts at understanding the same institutions at present would have failed to realize coherent levels of social intimacy, a striking reminder of ethnography as a fundamentally situated experience. Nevertheless, certain constraints notwithstanding, natural improvisation in attuning to the temporal climate caused, for a time, digital ethnography to be *the* approach in achieving the deepest possible level of social embeddedness with relevant communities and individuals. This is regardless of whether the environment was centered on a classroom, staff meeting, authorization process, conference, texting app, or a laid-back chat over drinks.

To Summarize

As COVID-19 has served to reinforce, ethnography *requires* uncertainty.[20] Precisely because of this, improvisation is integral to its practice. Equally, however, the pandemics extraordinary scale of disruption exposes this tradition's limits, while granting opportunities to appreciate the intrinsic role failure plays in realizing successful ethnography. That said, the affective demands thrust onto the ethnographer, influencing the extent one does or does not cope under exceptional circumstances, raises uneasy ethical queries. It calls for a methodological understanding of survivance, one that balances a researcher's mental and physical health with perseverance.

[20] Or, if this feels overly definitive, ethnography *entails* uncertainty.

COVID-19 has also underscored difficulties in realizing consistent levels of everyday social intimacy within highly improvised digital spaces. These obstacles are multi-faceted, ranging from material affordances to censorship, from ICT literacy to suitability. Regardless, as my tale of digital ethnography during the pandemic exemplifies, the analog-digital distinction to human intimacy is fast shrinking, inching ever closer to towards transmediated experience. Accordingly, an ethnographer's ability to adapt between these spaces has never been more pressing.

CHAPTER 2 – FOSTERING THE 'INTERNATIONAL MIND': INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION & THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

This chapter reviews the core phenomenon at the heart of this thesis: *International Baccalaureate* (IB). Doing so is also to grasp the origins and more recent evolution of the administration behind its suite of schooling programmes, the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). However, before doing so, it is paramount to contextualize what 'IB' is within the broader notion of 'international education,' and so I begin with an overview of this general concept. This is followed by a tracing of the IBO's historical origins from the 1920s to its establishment in 1968 and its subsequent administrative expansions between the 1970s and 2000s. Finally, I critically consider the organization's core ideological components defining an IB education today: its mission statement, its character model known as the 'IB Learner Profile,' and, in particular, its strapline concept of 'international-mindedness.'

'International Education'

Give up. From as early as the 1990s this essentially summarizes the viewpoint of many educationalists concerning the defining of the 'international school,' especially after an influential review on the matter (Hayden and Thompson 1995). 'International education,' while easier to locate, remains similarly fraught with the dangers of semantic fixation because it is a multivocal (Turner 1969) and thickly described (Geertz 1973) concept.[21] In other words, it represents (1) a range of simultaneous understandings that are (2) being continuously and dynamically (re)interpreted to construct multiple webs of meaning. Another way to envision 'international education's' semantic fluidity is by treating the idea as disembedded (Giddens 1990, 21). Defined through the words of other anthropologists, the process of disembedding describes "a gradual movement from the concrete and tangible to the abstract and virtual" (Eriksen 2014, 21). Money, for instance, can be analyzed as "disembedded value," or writing as "disembedded language"

[21] See Chapter 7 for further elaboration over both multivocality and thick description.

(Eriksen 2014, 19). Internationalization and globalization can be similarly determined disembedded phenomena. One outcome of these notions, along with that of 'international education,' is a rich array of disembedded ideology. Indeed, as I suggest at the end of this thesis, the 'international' and 'global' should ultimately be conceived as little more than *amplified agendas* (see Chapter 7). Established semantic networks are numerous and therefore impossible to comprehensively outline in this space. As such, I focus here on a small selection of the most prevalent discussed by others.

Attention concerning the 'international school' will be brief, for there is sound reason most have stopped trying to define it. An idea capturing relatively prolonged attention in helping distinguish such a school was presented in the late 1980s (Matthews 1988). Matthews posited two types of international schools; the 'ideology-driven' and the 'market-driven.' Or, in their words, that they are either "founded for the express purpose of furthering international understanding and cooperation" or arose from the desires of certain expatriate communities, such as those founded "by individuals, community groups, delegates of multinational companies or government agencies" (Matthews 1988, 9). It is a famously over-simplistic yet valuable dichotomy. Over-simplistic, because almost all international schools must consider "operating with *both* an educational and fiscal bottom line" (e.g., MacDonald 2006, 192, my emphasis) if not more, including those environmental (MacDonald 2009). Valuable, because a scale connecting these often-polarizing goals exists, albeit only when discounting free public institutions.

In practice schools purport an increasing range of buzzwords to justify 'international' titles. For instance, an IB World School – the IBO's language for an officially licensed IB school – might wish to directly promote IB's core sentiment of 'international-mindedness,' the definition for which I consider later. Many more project the notion of "global citizenship" (Schattle 2008) or, through the influence of economic educationalist narratives of "twenty-first century skills" (Binkley et al. 2011), '21st Century learners.' Some advertise themselves to expatriate populations, including those who might be categorized as 'global nomads' (McCaig 1996), or the now popularized idea of 'third culture kids' (Pollock et al. 2017; Tanu 2019). In sharp contrast, others – especially in more recent decades – instead focus on more mainstream populations of diverse socio-economic spectrums. If, however, one is impelled to construct a model of international school categories representative of the early 21st Century, one of the most succinct can be outlined as follows:

"'Type A' 'traditional' international schools: established principally to cater for globally mobile expatriate families for whom the local education system is not considered appropriate."

"'Type B' 'ideological' international schools: established principally on an ideological basis, bringing together young people from different part of the world to be educated together with a view to promoting global peace and understanding."

"'Type C' 'non-traditional' international schools: established principally to cater for 'host country nationals' – the socio-economically advantaged elite of the host country who seek for their children a form of education different from, and perceived to be of higher quality than, that available in the national education system."

(Hayden and Thompson 2013, 5)

As I exemplify later, this model acts as a useful lens for appreciating the origins of IB education. It is worth emphasizing nonetheless that all above 'types' are prone to overlapping and / or conflating with others, and as such I draw a line on exploring any further definitions here. A more intriguing and fruitful question to explore is, what is 'international education?' Aside from 'international-mindedness,' there are at least two key ideological networks this research's context touches on. The first concerns 'global citizenship education.' This is better semantically described as a form of cosmopolitanism (Beck 2007, 287-288), or what I prefer to call the education of 'global engagement.' It is an intensely pragmatic movement driven by a desire to solve crises threatening human existence for which requires a transnational humanist identity. Other educationalists have summarized this approach with especial spirit, writing the following to exemplify such challenges of scale:

"Pollution does not respect visa regulations. Wind cannot be forbidden to go from one country to another. Underground water cannot be completely controlled. No border guards can stop acid rain from entering or leaving a country. Nuclear radiation — if that day comes — will travel across

borders freely."

(Fasheh 1985, 122)

Ironically, fieldwork for this thesis was undertaken during a crisis of such scale in the form of COVID-19 (see Chapter 1). Munir Fasheh therefore poses that "international education should be mainly concerned with the development of a sense of responsibility toward ourselves, toward others, and toward future generations" (Fasheh 1985, 123). This approach, concerned with the borderless well-being of humans and Earth, was later coined as 'global citizenship education' (Schattle 2008). The concept is far from new in so far that it relates to the recognition of world governances. However, especially in more recent decades, it also increasingly cements a "sense of kinship with all humankind" along with "a growing acknowledgment (and sense of urgency) that many of today's socio-economic, cultural, political, and environmental issues transcend formal national boundaries" (Evans et al. 2008, 274). Such is the extent of adoption to global citizenship education in recent decades that educationalist research has generally moved from identifying what the phenomenon is toward how it is practiced (e.g., Cambridge 2014). This network of thought increasingly resonates with the institutional principles of the IBO, as can be appreciated through recent provisional discussions concerning the potential replacement of its 1968-adopted concept of 'international-mindedness' with 'common humanity.'

The second key ideological network can be described as '(inter)nationalist education' – what other theorists refer to as methodological nationalism (Beck 2007, 286-287) – an ideology centered around the agendas of a nation-state. It can be interpreted as an antithesis to global citizenship education, emphasizing competition *over* collaboration. This most often revolves around notions of economic competitiveness, but also regularly includes other socio-cultural aspects. The words of S. Fredrick Starr – an American national specializing in international relations – exemplifies this network aptly. Speaking from the positionality of the United States (US), Starr stated that "our economic well-being has come to depend in large measure upon nations whose languages and cultures are very different to our own, [and that the] U.S. can only benefit from the practical training that international High Schools provide" (Starr 1979, 744). Starr quoted Dorothy Goodman – Founder of the Washington International School and an early influencer of IB – while stating the acquisition of such 'foreign languages' and 'international

studies' added "one more arrow to the quiver of one's career options" (Starr 1979, 744). These words demonstrate reactions to internationalization as (re)interpreted and utilized by politicians, economists, educationalists, and others to strengthen their respective nation-states. As other sociological educationalists note, narratives of globalization can equally decrease and increase "the importance of the nation-state" (Bekhuis et al. 2014, 488-490), with global citizenship education exemplifying the former and (inter)nationalist education the latter. At present the latter remains far easier to implement at scale owing to supporting schools primarily existing within national government affiliated and influenced public sectors. Incidentally, it is a train of thought closely describing the Japanese Government's historical and present approach to 'global education' (see Chapter 4).

A broader array of ideological networks defining 'international education' naturally exist. For instance, Robert Leach proposed the idea of a unilateral, bilateral, and multilateral internationalism (Leach 1969, 6-14). It is an old but useful model that, depending on the example, can be positioned within and around those already overviewed. Another intriguing example lies with David L. McConnell's work on the Japanese Government's Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme (JET). McConnell forwarded the idea of what I term 'selective internationalism,' in this case by selecting nationals from English-speaking nations of overwhelmingly 'White' ethnicities to strategically aid diplomatic relations with the imagined West (McConnell 2000). Selective internationalism also shares similarities to other aforementioned discourses, seeking to manage international relations between nation-states (i.e., acts as yet another form of methodological nationalism).

Given the existence of several popular networks vying to define an 'international education' then, it is not unusual to locate schools attempting to cover multiple projects simultaneously, even when the respectful ideologies underpinning them are contested. Take, for instance, Hanoi International School. At the time of writing, its officialized values include the following three goals:

1. "To develop an understanding and appreciation for our host country and its culture."
2. "To develop internationally-minded people who strive to demonstrate the IB Learner Profile attributes."

3. "To make the world a better place through education and taking action."

(HIS 2023, my numbers)

(1) exemplifies (inter)nationalist education, (2) international-mindedness education, and (3) global citizenship education. In other words, the school pursues multiple internationalist agendas, much of which are theoretically irreconcilable. Certain educationalists write in support of such conflations as positive, appreciated through the statement, "we need to rethink the phenomenon of *balancing* national education policy with global human resources, global citizenship, and nation-building" (Arfani and Nakaya 2019, 323, my emphasis).

On paper, IB is a quintessential example of international education at its most ideological. This is worth highlighting as other educationalists warn against considering the relationship between ideology and international education as inextricable (Stier 2004). Attempting to explain why, some categorize 'international education' as orientated by two sets of semantics: "(1) the literal/instrumental and (2) the aspirational/normative" (Tarc 2016). In Tarc's definition the former "refers to educational activities that cross political borders" (Tarc 2016). If strictly considering national borders, any educational activity turns 'international' the instant it involves two or more nation-states. This 'involvement' can manifest through a plethora of mediums, including the transnational movement of people (e.g., students or teachers), ideas (e.g., curricula or pedagogies), and material goods (e.g., certificate qualifications or assessment stations). Most international educational projects in the world presently fall within this supposed 'literal' paradigm, which I argue is simply another ideology underscored by sentiments of instrumentality. It is an approach easily discerned through highly popularized post-schooling initiatives, such as exchange student arrangements in higher education.

Another useful example concerns *Cambridge Assessment International Education* (hereon 'Cambridge'), part of the University of Cambridge. Operating a similar suite of qualifications from middle school onwards they most notably offer I-GCSE (i.e., 'international' GCSE), I-AS, and I-A level qualifications based off the UK Government's equivalents. From the perspective of transnationally prevalent educational programmes it can currently be argued *the* substantiative competitor to IB. As of April 2022, around 6,900 schools in the world are registered to offer its

programmes and qualifications with a further 5,900 eligible to make entries.[22] This trumps the around 5,600 IB World Schools in April 2023, although, as a body that authorizes programmes based off a national government's curricula, the IBO's autonomous counterparts can still be claimed – in the words of others – "essentially unchallenged" (Phillips and Schweisfurth 2014, 57). Like Cambridge, IB can be considered yet another form of 'literal' international education. However, unlike Cambridge, it *also* exemplifies an explicitly aspirational one, seeking to instill a set of prescribed principles and traits. Many of the original actors responsible for IB's emergence can in fact be claimed among the 'modern' founders of this latter approach, championing a liberal-humanist ideology of 'White' Euro-American origins later coined *international-mindedness*.

Before I move on, a word over my treatment of 'White' – and by extension 'Whiteness' – in this thesis. Certain anthropologists summarize Whiteness as "a term which refers to the cultural web of assumptions of normality and invisibility that maintains social privileges, power, and hierarchies typically associated with White skin" (Ramos-Zayes 2001, 342-343). This cultural web often dons the mask of – ignorant (Mueller 2020) and otherwise – objective rationalism (Hughey and Byrd 2013, 978), frequently rendering its elements elusive of coherent categorization (Lewis 2004). Yet, such subtle socio-cultural practices of Whiteness have been observed by ethnographers to continuously reconstruct its privilege over others in everyday life (e.g., Housel 2009). An aged yet still influential description of Whiteness views it a "public and psychological wage" (Du Bois 1935), and can be more recently understood as a "pervasive, taken-for-granted interpretive schema that invites a stance of presumptive ownership toward the 'darker world' – its people, land, and resources" (Myers 2019, 8). Further influential works double down on this notion of Whiteness as property, legally legitimizing "expectations of power and control that enshrine the status quo as a neutral baseline, while masking the maintenance of white privilege and domination" (Harris 1993, 1715).

All the above literature and more offers valuable perspectives toward a currently fast-growing field of Whiteness studies. That said, as others astutely point out, one of the outstanding issues for scholarship on Whiteness remains its struggle to chart the dynamism of its own reconfiguration and "make visible a category that is by its very nature is unmarked – everywhere *and* nowhere" (Nelson 2008, 42). In other words, a greater need to critically consider how

[22] Raw data received by *Cambridge Assessment International Education*.

Whiteness is inextricably linked to the process of racialization and therefore the construction and constant (re)configuration of racialized others.[23] I believe one of the longstanding limitations for doing so lies in existing literature's grave geopolitical bias toward predominantly, if not often exclusively, the United States and to a lesser extent Western Europe / the Anglosphere, as all the above citations demonstrate. This disproportional human geography naturally risks a copy and paste universalization of its present theory across a far more culturally nuanced world. 'Modern' imperialism, for instance, cannot be considered synonymous with a movement of domineering Whiteness from 'the West,' as the obvious case of the Japanese Colonial Empire (Myers and Peattie 1984) illustrates.

Whiteness is both socio-culturally and socio-genetically dynamic. It is therefore critical to interrogate the process of whitening, along with how those judged to qualify as 'White' or 'non-White' within and across multiple societal contexts are distinguished, as others showcase with Brazil (Osuji 2013) and broader Latin America (Ramos-Zayes 2020). For example, being judged as, or otherwise bartering to become 'White' in Brazil by no means guarantees their inclusion with those generally ascribed as 'White' in North American and European contexts. To therefore recognize a greater human diversity of those donning the 'White' label in the present world, I continue to deploy the concept of 'White' – as both a racialized and culturalized notion – with air quotes throughout the remainder of this thesis. This said, my deployment of 'White' from this point on purposefully evokes its popularized Euro-American semantics. This is due to this specific cultural web's still inextricable relationship with IB education, as I now embark on demonstrating.

The Origins of the International Baccalaureate Organization

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or NATO. It might strike one as fantastical to begin a historical tracing of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) here, yet one fateful meeting at a NATO conference in 1957 proved decisive for its later existence. To appreciate its birth is also to know that of the United World Colleges (UWC), and at this conference two of the core figures founding both initiatives met for the first time.

[23] See Shah (Forthcoming) for a demonstration of this process through the context of Japaneseness.

One was Kurt Hahn (1886-1974). As cited by Charles III (1948-) – the second International President of the United World Colleges – Hahn was one the earliest figures who "believed deeply in international education" (Charles III, King of the United Kingdom, vii). Hahn was widely considered by his peers to possess a 'Platonian spirit,' possessing both the power to think *and* act. He would later be pedestalled as *the* central pillar of inspiration for several educational initiatives, including both the UWC and the IBO (Sutcliffe 2013). In fact, so inspirational was his own moral compass to these causes, that the word 'Hahnanian' has at times been used to underline the original philosophies behind both these projects. As others have written in detail, Hahn's life involved several stories of adversity and achievement, and was a moral influencer to many of his friends and colleagues (Röhrs 1970, Sutcliffe 2013). To hastily capture Hahn's character, I outline what is perhaps his most famous tale. As the headmaster of Schule Schloss Salem – a school he co-founded around the 1920s in Salem, Baden-Württemberg (Germany) – he purposefully brought together children of the then enemy nation-states of Germany and the United Kingdom. In 1932, when Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) publicly revealed his true motives during the events of the German election, Hahn wrote a bold and dangerous letter to all the school's former pupils, warning them that "if they were members of the SA or the SS they must break with Hitler or break with Salem" (Röhrs 1970, 145). This act had Hahn imprisoned before miraculously escaping to the UK an exile, thanks to the help of then Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald (1866-1937). Hahn was later involved in several educationalist endeavors, exerting direct influence on the IB's original Diploma Programme (DP) curriculum through pioneering the 'outward bound,' his school of character education (Freeman 2011). Namely, it inspired the inclusion of the DP's compulsory Community & Service component, today termed Community, Action, and Service or CAS.

The second figure, particularly instrumental for establishing the IBO, was Alec D. C. Peterson (1908-1988). Like Hahn, Peterson was the headmaster of his own school – Dover College (UK) – where he encouraged similar attitudes of developing international consciousness and interdependence. Later, by 1962, he took up position as Director at the Department of Educational Studies – today the Department of Education – at the University of Oxford (hereon 'Oxford'). Along with Hahn and Peterson, several more influential figures in this NATO group, ranging from educators and politicians, to entrepreneurs and royalty, were concerned with the development of better international understanding in the wake of World War 2. This desire was later embodied through the creation of Atlantic College in 1962, the first United World College (UWC). With

international bodies (e.g., UNESCO) and other national educational boards across Europe and North America financially unsupportive at the time, private backers were responsible for financing the project. The core donor appeared in the form of Tony Besse (Sutcliffe 2013, 156-173) – son of entrepreneur Antonin Besse (1877-1951) – who paid for an entire castle and surrounding land in Wales to construct the school (Peterson 1987, 6). Incidentally, Atlantic College arguably exemplifies the first 'type B' (i.e., ideological) international school, precisely because it was purposed for "bringing together young people from different parts of the world to be educated together [while] promoting global peace and understanding" (Hayden and Thompson 2013, 5).

Atlantic College would later prove key for the initial development of IB education in the 1970s. However, the real tale of the IBO began several decades prior at a separate school in Geneva. Officially the l'Ecole Internationale de Genève, or International School of Geneva – and popularly referred to as Ecolint – it lays reasonable claim to being the first 'modern' International School. Founded in 1924, its existence in Geneva was intrinsically linked with the Geneva-headquartered League of Nations, and is one of the only international schools to have survived post-World War 2. Ecolint is the original example for the 'type A' (i.e., traditional) international school, as is the later-established United Nations International School (UNIS) in New York (US). This is because they were primarily established to "cater for globally mobile expatriate families for whom the local education system is not considered appropriate" (Hayden and Thompson 2013, 5).

A year after Ecolint's founding, the first plea for an internationally recognized school-leaving certificate surfaced. Adolphe Ferrière (1879-1960), a sitting member of the school's board "wrote to seventeen European leaders in educational reform," seeking reaction to a potential "*maturité*[24] *internationale*" (Hill 2012, 343). The test was an emphatic failure, with no interest expressed by any national government. However, the immediate wake of World War 2 overturned this bleak landscape. In 1946, figures such as André Philip (1902-1970) – a Minister in France at the time – added to a growing rally to introduce such a qualification. Philip found it nothing short of a "necessity" for high school education to "align itself with international schools" while granting them the ability to confer an "international diploma authorized by UNESCO" (Collège Cévénol 1946; Hill 2012, 343). This qualification would theoretically permit a status akin to any corresponding national programme in the world, at the time an unprecedented notion. Individuals

[24] *Maturité* here refers to a "secondary leaving certificate" in Switzerland (Hill 2012, 3).

similar in status to those flatly refusing the 1925 proposal now ironically urged Ecolint to continue its efforts. Fatigued by war, this abrupt reversal of indifference was a direct result of unprecedented shifts to more cohesive hearts and attitudes fostered between politicians across many national governments.

Nevertheless, the original founding of the IBO does *not* owe its existence any international bodies and national governments. It was instead realized by dedicated group of passionate and persistent educators, many affiliated with Ecolint. That said, this is not to infer their efforts were not occasionally bolstered by such bodies. After the frequent pleas of Ecolint teachers, for instance, UNESCO was one of a handful providing minor financial support, in this case 2,500 USD, although this backing appeared to realize little more than a decade-long sequence of stalemate conferences around the 1950s. Then there was the issue of organizational stability. A group of teachers absent of any clear leadership, with some more willing to sacrifice their time than others, could only carry this ambitious project so far. This was seemingly addressed with the 1961 appointment of Desmond Cole-Baker as Director of Ecolint's English-mediated division, who is said to have taken more radical action to help "translate the idea into a reality" (Peterson 1987, 17). One year later the first explicit mention of an 'International Baccalaureate' appeared at a conference organized by Ecolint's social studies department, chaired by historian Robert Leach (see Leach 1969).

Despite these renewed efforts, however, finance continued to hamper the project. The 1951 Geneva-established International Schools Association (ISA), while apparently supportive of the project (Hill 2012, 343), had neither the finance nor will to develop such an independent curriculum. The result meant that, should these educators wish to develop this 'IB certificate,' they would require their own organization. Principally comprised of Ecolint teachers alongside several notable supporters to their cause,[25] this organization would be named the International Schools Examination Syndicate, the original name of the IBO. More substantive donations were attracted to help initial investigations, including a 75,000 USD donation in 1964 by a senior journalist, Georges-Henri Martin (1916-1992),[26] but ISES' overall lack of finance continued to stagnate its

[25] John Goormaghtigh (1919-1998) was perhaps the most notable among these supporters, an international lawyer, and later the first President of the IBO council.

[26] Georges-Henri Martin was the chief editor of the *Tribune de Genève*, a Geneva-based newspaper.

progress (Peterson 1987, 20).

To compound matters further, faith in Ecolint started to wane as the school increasingly suffered from internal political divisions between its French-mediated and English-mediated departments. A 'takeover' or 'rescue operation' – it has been referred to as both – was in order. As ongoing negotiations with the Ford Foundation for a substantive grant took a turn for the worse, Oxford "moved reluctantly but firmly to take over the project" (Mayer 1968, 225). This institutional backing bolstered Peterson's ability to gain critical support from Cole-Baker, as well as Harlan Harpo, the then Director of the US College Entrance Examinations Board's Advanced Placement Programme (APP). The Ford Foundation's interest was piqued through their investment in the United Nations International School (UNIS) – a direct institutional copy of Ecolint – but were only willing to commit once "a more solid commitment from Oxford and of the College Board" was made (Peterson 1987, 23). The foundation eventually 'gambled' with a donation of around 300,000 USD. These events played an instrumental role in the eventual expansion of IB administration across North America, as I explore further in Chapter 3.

The development and testing process for this IB curriculum was arduous and persistently hampered financially. Succeed, however, it did. The project was essentially granted credibility at a major 1967 conference, containing delegates from 11 countries alongside officials from the Council of Europe and UNESCO. It most significantly involved the unprecedented presence of directors from "three important examination boards," the French Baccalauréat, the UK's General Certificate of Education (GCE), and the US's APP (Sutcliffe 2013, 37). That same year ISES was formally renamed the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO), with Peterson announced as its first Director-General. Finally, in 1968, its Diploma Programme (DP) was rolled out at Ecolint.

Attention quickly shifted to the DP curriculum's initial results. Despite Ecolint's significance, the school considered primarily responsible for its early development was Atlantic College. This was due several factors, including the IBO's later administrative expansion to the UK and the presence of its first dedicated Research Unit at Oxford (see Chapter 3). Another key reason lay in the school's willingly experimental temperament, having students undertake UK A Levels or US Scholastic Aptitude and Achievement Tests alongside trial DP equivalents. By 1972 Atlantic College had "the largest single group of IB examination candidates" and later became known as the first "in the world to abandon for all its pupils a national in favour of an international curriculum and examination" (Sutcliffe 2013, 38). This position granted the school great influence

over subsequent curriculum innovations, such as what is today known as the Extended Essay (EE) component of the DP.

The IBO persisted through financially precarious circumstances well into the 1970s and beyond, almost collapsing altogether in 1976. Ongoing financial instability also played a decisive role in sweeping changes to leadership around the mid-2000s (see Chapter 3). However, a mix of emergency saves, administrative expansions, and a steadily rising student population has since seen its influence slowly expand across many territories across the world. The mission, it seemed, had been accomplished. A *pragmatic* curriculum, granting higher educational access beyond national borders. A *competitive* curriculum, recognized for its comparative robustness with key national rivals, innovating more child-centered, process-focused, holistic educational approaches. A *moral* curriculum, one to foster an 'international mind' preventing past nationalistic agendas while cultivating deeper relationships across nation-state boundaries. A programme that could help contribute to a peace preventing the horrors of global warfare from repeating. Such is the context that the IBO's notion of international-mindedness was originally derived.

The Administrative Expansions of the IBO

I move next to outline the IBO's evolution as an administration, a history synonymous with the transnational expansion of its general and regional administrative offices from the 1970s (see Hill 2010, 127-146; Peterson 1987). I begin with its original expansion from Geneva to the UK, followed by its journey into Europe, the Asia-Pacific, and the Americas.

The Cardiff Office (IBCA)

Sustaining financial viability remained a desperate challenge for the organization moving into the 1970s. Its headquarters in Geneva, a particularly expensive city, did not help. Moreover, with schools adopting the DP growing so too needed the personnel responsible for its examination infrastructure. Existing space in the Geneva office was no longer sufficient and expanding it was a financially precarious proposition. This is the backdrop sparking an eventual yet sweeping administrative power shift from Switzerland to the UK. The IBO's first Director-General Alec

Peterson (1908-1988) argued passionately for a decentralization of its examination administration, believing the UK to be *the* ideal destination. At the time French and English were the organization's only two official languages, meaning all subjects the DP offered were capable of being externally assessed in either of the two. However, "despite all its commitment to two and later three languages," in reality, "90%" of existing IB schools operated in English (Peterson 1987, 187). English-speaking Swiss nationals were both scarce and expensive while non-Swiss counterparts were both financially and politically unattainable, with the Swiss Government seemingly unwilling at the time to issue work visas for such employees. In Peterson's words this compelled organizations such as the IBO "to seek administrative staff among the wives of UN or other officials, whose right to reside and work in Geneva [depended] on their husbands' positions" (Peterson 1987, 187). As it transpired, this strategy also proved insufficient.

The University of Southampton (hereon 'Southampton') was critical in initiating the organization's decentralization into the UK. Tom Carter, a former Head of Languages at Atlantic College, took post as the Director of the university's Language Centre. Carter was an avid supporter of IB education, unsurprising given the UWC's parallel genesis and continued collaboration alongside the IBO. The Language Centre's research focus on language teaching and assessment was opportunistic, allowing it to facilitate battery tests in multiple languages for the IBO before the administration agreed a formal contract with Southampton in 1974. It provided the first piece of additional space the organization desperately sought, with DP language assessment initiating there from 1975. All remaining assessment continued in Geneva with Ruth Bonner until retirement in 1980, signifying the decision to move all remaining examination-related administration to the UK. Peterson's relationship with the Institute of Education (IOE) – today a department of University College London (UCL) – made it an ideal candidate, with all non-language assessment beginning onsite from 1981. Southampton continued until 1983 as its associated staff gradually transitioned to the IOE.

These expansions quickly grew insufficient as candidate schools continued to grow. Greater space was required, reaching an agreement in 1984 to move its entire examination administration to the University of Bath (hereon 'Bath'), where it occupied the entire top floor of its Department of Education. Bath was – and remains – an especially important associate institution for the IBO. Its influence helped the organization create its first Assessment Research and Development Advisory Committee, although this dissolved in 1990. It was then the site of the

IBO's second finance department, coordinating with an existing one in Geneva. However, as I elaborate further on later (see Chapter 3), it is Bath's involvement with the IBO's research and development efforts that has cemented a longstanding relationship which continues today (Hayden and Thompson 2017).

Again, space soon proved insufficient. Incremental growth of schools required further administrative infrastructure, prompting the entire office at Bath to relocate to St. Mellons Technology Park near Cardiff in 1989. According to Colin Jenkins, appointed Director of Examinations in 1987, conversion from a "cavernous warehouse" into an "elegant office" was swift, completed in "the spaces of ten weeks" (IBO 1989, 5). It was later coined the IB Examinations (IBEX) office, the first phase of a more permanent administrative presence in Cardiff. Two further buildings – affectionately termed the 'Green' and 'Red Building' – were rented across the road in 1993, but these only served to delay an inevitable need for material expansion. In 1996 the IBO purchased a much larger two-storey building in St. Mellons, "the first piece of real estate owned by the IB Organization" (Hill 2010, 129). The building was officially opened by Princess Sarvath El Hassan (1947-) of Jordan, who named it Peterson House in memory the organization's first Director-General.

Even Peterson House soon proved inadequate. Yet more buildings were rented near its premise in 1999 before Peterson House became the name of a new building in Cardiff Bay from 2001, this time opened by the then Assistant Director General of Education at UNESCO, Sir John Daniel. In 2006 the IBO leased further premises near Cardiff to store DP examination scripts. Parallel to this expansion Cardiff was rebranded the Curriculum and Assessment Office or 'IBCA' in 1994, better reflecting its ongoing contributions to curriculum development. Its new naming was made more appropriate during the 1990s rollout of the Middle Years Programme (MYP) and Primary Years Programme (PYP), as – unlike the DP – neither are externally assessed.

At least until the mid-2000s, the Cardiff Office was the key administrative power of the organization, with most of its key departments (e.g., external assessment, academic services, resource publications etc.,) located in and around the city. As is overviewed later this status would become increasingly disputed under the IBO's sixth Director-General Jeffrey Beard onward, where today the Washington D.C. based IB Americas (IBA) office robustly contests this status.

The Africa, Europe, Middle East Office (IBAEM)

Not long after the IBO's establishment, several senior educators across the French Government's Ministry of Education and associated institutions played major roles in the DP's original development. One private body in particular, the *Mission Laïque Française* – a 1902-established organization seeking the proliferation of 'French culture' and language across the world through educational pedagogy – was the IBO's key representative in France from 1978. This relationship quickly faded in 1981 as the Socialist Party led by President François Mitterrand (1916-1996) judged IB education as bourgeoise, only accessible to internationally mobile, socio-economically privileged families within costly international and private sectors (Hill 2010, 140). This image generally hampered IB's growth across Western Europe.

Initial schools in Europe were administrated from the London-based IOE in 1984, acting as the IBO's first Europe Regional Office before moving to Geneva in 1986. That same year the IOE took charge of Africa and the Middle East with its first regional advisors in Kenya and Jordan working part-time. After the passing of Robert Blackburn – the head of the London office – in 1990, the IOE office was permanently closed, and Africa and the Middle East was temporarily transferred to Geneva. In 1991 Africa and the Middle East briefly transferred to Cardiff before re-cementing itself in Geneva from 1994, where it was relabeled the Africa, Europe, Middle East Office (IBAEM). This transfer allowed Cardiff to focus on the organization's examination and more general administration.

As of 2023, IBAEM has since relocated to newer premises in The Hague (Netherlands). It is the IBO's second most populated school region after the Americas, however these numbers are heavily biased toward a fluctuating Europe – as exemplified in the UK (Bunnell 2015) – and growing Middle East, while having long struggled to permeate African territories (Bunnell 2016).

The Asia-Pacific Office (IBAP)

The Asia-Pacific Office (IBAP) was the last to emerge of the IBO's Regional Offices. Involvement initially began in 1978 through two part-time representatives. One was Professor Kevin Marjoribanks, who was to represent Australasia-based projects. Marjoribanks was the final Director of the IBO's Research Unit at the Oxford (see Chapter 3), but had now moved to the

University of Adelaide (Australia) as a Professor of Education. This ended in 1982, signaling an almost decade-long absence of any form of Australian administrative representation. Eventually, a Sydney-based educator, Chris Brangwin, became the first full-time representative, focusing on Australia from 1994. Second was Eileen Davey, an educator of an international school in the Philippines who represented the organization's East Asia interests. Peter Caleb of the same institution took over until 1980 before the IBO appointed John Goodban of the UWC in Singapore as an official part-time representative for South-East Asia. Goodban continued part-time for the renamed Asia region before becoming the full-time representative of the rebranded Asia-Pacific region from 1991 until their retirement in 2002.

With Singapore now the site of the region's headquarters, Goodban realized a sub-regional representation system across key territories. An India representative appeared from 1988 and a South-East Asian counterpart from 1994. Despite little growth at the time (see Chapter 4), Kyoko Bernard at Yokohama International School (YIS) – an international school essentially as old as Ecolint – and later Tamagawa University in Tokyo, was formally appointed as Japan's representative in 1996. Later growth in mainland China and Hong Kong saw the appointment of a Beijing-based representative in 2000. Its expansion later influenced the introduction of Chinese-Mandarin as an Official Language for its MYP framework in 1997, with a few "native speakers of Chinese" hired into the organization to help facilitate the process (Hill 2010, 143). Reception of Chinese linguistic resources, however, appeared unsatisfyingly received by many local Chinese educators (see Chapter 6), and – as with the rest of the Asia-Pacific at this time – English remained the overwhelmingly dominant language.

Given IB education's 'White' Euro-American origins it is unsurprising Australia was the site of most the region's initial growth. Even then its future on the continent has come under increasing pressure due to competition with Australia's national curriculum in recent decades, and – like several territories across the world – is struggling to realize accessibility outside populations of high socio-economic status (Dickson et al 2017). Areas such as Singapore and Hong Kong have meanwhile grown into core markets. As of 2023, despite increasing uncertainties over IB's sustainability in China, re-energized uptake in select public South Korean schools (Park and Hong 2022) and particularly article-1 Japanese schools (see Chapter 4) has seen the IBAP become a major growth region for the organization, including for its foray into public education.

The Americas Office (IBA)

Ecolint and Atlantic College played pioneering roles in the initial implementation and curriculum development of the DP. Another important school was the New York-based United Nations International School (UNIS), which succeeded the role Ecolint played to during the era of the UN's predecessor, the League of Nations (1920-1946). Namely a school catered for expatriate populations. UNIS was a trial school for DP examinations in 1967, helping generate early interest in IB education across the US and Canada. With a steady rise of IB schools in North America from the early 1970s it was immediately apparent that a dedicated office for the region was necessary. In 1975 the former head of UNIS, Desmond Cole, became Chair of an IB North American committee, a title which would eventually be altogether replaced by 'President' by the 1990s. Harlan Hanson – the committee's first Secretary – explained their involvement, believing IB to hold the potential to fix a longstanding issue of university access for international students (Hill 2010, 136). The committee's primary objectives were:

1. To provide information on IB education across North America.
2. To consult and liaison between schools and universities over its curriculum.
3. To hire teachers within the US education system to act as IB examiners and contribute to curriculum development.

(IBO 1973)

The North American Office (IBNA) was significant as a regional office because, for a time, it was the *only* one to hold a dedicated Board independent of its Geneva-based counterpart. This was a result of the IBO's inability to fund their New York office due to organization's fiscal struggles throughout the 1970s. It instead relied on support of local foundations interested in furthering "American education" as opposed to the IBO itself (Hill 2010, 137). This proved successful, exemplified through a 330,000 USD donation from the Andrew W Mellon Foundation, 100,000 USD from the Exxon Education Foundation, and 85,000 USD from the Geraldine Dodge

Foundation, alongside smaller contributions from bodies like the New York Times and Western Electric. Canada also provided smaller contributions of around 10,000 USD from Imperial Oil and Gulf Canada (Peterson 1987, 149). The IBNA also benefitted from most of its schools being registered in the public sector, finding its academic rigour and mobility potential attractive among several other reasons. This was despite ongoing dissatisfaction with costly administrative processes and communication difficulties with Geneva (Fox 1985, 64).

For an extensive period the IBNA co-existed with a Buenos Aires (Argentina) founded Latin America Office (IBLA) in 1982. Like Goodban's system in the Asia-Pacific the IBLA's Regional Representative, Peter Stoyle – who had been previously supervised by Alec Peterson at Oxford – attempted to build a small sub-regional network. A Caribbean representative was appointed in Kingston (Jamaica) in 1983 before the region was absorbed by the IBNA office from 1994. Another was hired in Mexico City as Mexico representative as well as for its Buenos Aires Office in 1984, a role that was not replaced after their retirement in 2001.

IB schools gradually proliferated across much of Spanish-speaking South America, aided through the coordination of various school associations in several territories. This eventuated with a number of Latin American territories – together with Spain – in realizing a considerable rise of Spanish-mediated IB education, with Spanish joining English and French as the IBO's third Official Language in 1984 (Resnik 2012, 261). These territories have since formed a transnational Spanish-speaking IB educator network that continues to persevere (Resnik 2016, 301). Originally, the IBLA was also administratively significant for being the only other office aside from the IBNA to organize an independent Board from the rest of the IBO. However, various economic crises – most notably in Argentina – contributed to worsening financial prospects. The board was later abolished, its office absorbed by the IBNA under the leadership of the IBO's sixth Director-General Jeffrey Beard before being rebranded the IB Americas (IBA). This office also relocated from New York to Bethesda, Washington D.C.

As of 2023 the Americas Office is the most financially wealthy of the organization due predominately to its US and, to a lesser extent, Canadian markets. This is despite a noteworthy growth of resistance among parents and conservative bodies across parts of the US who view IB – and by extension international / global education – as alien and distinctly 'un-American.' (Bunnell 2012). Despite the Cardiff Office maintaining authority over the organization's prized examination administration, the Americas Office is widely considered by several senior sources inside the IBO

to have replaced it as the unofficial administrative headquarters. Several significant departments have relocated from Cardiff to its location, including its Professional Development division and the IB Educator Certificate (IBEC), the initiative I am centrally focused with from Chapter 3 onward.

International-Mindedness and the Learner Profile

"The International Baccalaureate® aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right."

(IBO 2023e)

So follows the IBO Mission Statement, which, despite the organization's aspirational leanings, did not surface until around 1998. Nevertheless, it reflects much of what its key postwar founders desired to be instilled in children. Knowledgeable people, actively inquiring across their lifespan. People with compassion, desiring to build and maintain international peace through respectful intercultural understanding. People recognizing that different positionalities on life all too often generate alternative, yet equally valid points of view. All this while successfully undertaking challenging academic programmes, recognized for its comparatively rigorous standards of assessment.

The shorthand the organization uses to describe the above is 'international-mindedness,' or 'IM.' A casual glance at all four of its present educational programmes emphasizes how prominent the term remains in its philosophy. The first of these is the IBO's oldest and most prized, the Diploma Programme (DP), introduced in 1968 to cater for those aged between 16-19 (figure

2.1). Second is the Middle Years Programme (MYP). As mentioned before, unlike the DP, the MYP is a *framework*, and therefore does not prescribe any curricular content. It was introduced many decades later in 1994 for those aged between 11-16 (figure 2.2). Third is the Primary Years Programme (PYP), another framework rolled out from 1997 for those aged between 3-12 (figure 2.3). Finally, fourth is the Career-related Programme (CP), a formalized fusion of a 2006-established Career-related Certificate with the DP curriculum launched in 2014 (figure 2.4).

Figure 2.1: Programme Overview of the Diploma Programme



Figure 2.2: Programme Overview of the Middle Years Programme

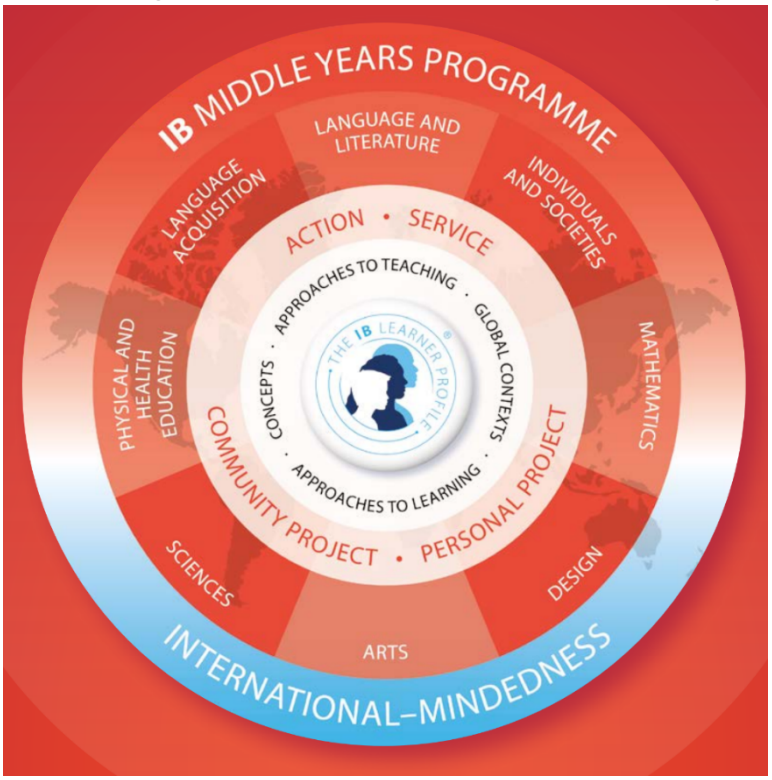


Figure 2.3: Programme Overview of the Primary Years Programme



Figure 2.4: Programme Overview of the Career-related Programme



(Figures 2.1-2.4 are directly borrowed from the IBO)

The above overviews draw a swift conclusion: undertaking any programme is foremost to achieve "International-Mindedness," as labelled prominently at the bottom of all their outer rings. What, then, does that mean? The concept itself traces back to at least 1917, evoked by the philosopher and diplomat Nicholas M. Butler (1862-1947). Speaking from the positionality of the US Butler stressed an urgent need among the American population to develop "the international mind," defining it through the following language:

"The international mind is nothing else than that habit of thinking of foreign relations and business, and that habit of dealing with them, which regards the several nations of the civilized world as free and co-operating equals in aiding the progress of civilization, in developing commerce and industry, and in spreading enlightenment and culture throughout the world."

(Butler 1917, 209)

A glance of this passage is enough to ascertain that 'the international mind' represented a post-imperialist yet neocolonialist mindset toward international relations, one seeking to spread 'White' Euro-American 'enlightenment' and 'culture' across a world without warring nations. This was the very rhetoric that later realized the 1920-established League of Nations in Geneva, and by extension Ecolint. The term later appeared again in 1929 through the work of the philosopher and social scientist, George H. Mead (Mead 1929). Considering the League of Nations to be "the most serious undertaking to end war which international society has ever made" at the time, Mead saw these developments as a step toward a broader demand for "international-mindedness" in the world (Mead 1929, 389, 403). Critically, however, Mead believed that achieving this meant first and foremost for each nation to achieve "national-mindedness," the lack of which was attributed to political instability and war (Mead 1929, 405). Clearly inspired by such thought Alec Peterson – the IBO's first Director-General – approached international-mindedness through a similarly slippery balance of 'national' and 'international' socialization (i.e., championed a methodological nationalist approach to internationalization). Achieving international-mindedness through education – in Peterson's words – was "not to produce generations of rootless 'world citizens' but one of Americans, English, French, Germans, Mexicans, Russians, and others, who understood each other better, sought to co-operate with each other, and had friends across frontiers" (Peterson 1987, 5).

Educationalists later analyzed this approach to international education "as an instrument for the preparation of young people to cope with life an increasingly interdependent world" (Hayden and Thompson 1995, 328). More specifically, that it was "founded upon international relations, with aspirations for the promotion of peace and understanding between nations," valuing the "moral development of the individual," and concerned with "the development of a sense of responsible citizenship" (Cambridge and Thompson 2004, 173). As such, international-mindedness *is* – or at least *was* – an aspirational venture. An intrinsically diplomatic philosophy stressing the respect and understanding of other's points of view. It assumes the binaries of nation-state identity along with a sense of distinctive ownership of – and therefore distinctive dis-ownership of 'other' – national and / or socio-cultural identities.

It has since been argued that international-mindedness has experienced substantial ideological shifts invited by newer pressures over skill-based (e.g., communicative, cognitive,

emotional) aptitudes, as encouraged by world business and capitalism (Resnik 2009; Bunnell 2010). As a result, where the notion previously stressed "international understanding" – that between *nations* – it now increasingly "centers on desired attitudes between *individuals*," ultimately transforming it from "a liberal humanist framework toward a neoliberal one" (Resnik 2012, 265, my emphasis). Some have argued by extension that this new manifestation actively erodes the authority of nation-states, denationalizing itself to overcome increasingly irreconcilable interests (Hughes 2009; Resnik 2012). This is an intriguing discourse when considering present attitudes between both the IBO and the Japanese Government collectively demonstrate a counterargument to these analyses (see Chapter 4).

The above literature additionally omits a critical question: how – if at all – is international-mindedness *actually* realized and assessed in schools? Vague attempts at capturing this have been made, such as through the words of the IBO's fifth Director-General, George Walker (Walker 2006), as well as through dedicated typographic analyses (Haywood 2007). There even exists a standalone professional development handbook on the subject for international school educators (Ellwood and Davis 2009). Nevertheless, the answer to this question remains thickly shrouded. Existing definitions underpinning the notion have been critically assessed as terminologically ambiguous and even at times contradictory (Savva and Stanfield 2018). Some go as far as to analyze international-mindedness to be lacking any clear educational definition and therefore is impossible to be developed, let alone solve its various contradictions (Cause 2011).

Debate on how to process and / or solve its semantic uncertainty has led to at least two opposed schools of thought. First is the idea that, precisely because a myriad of interpretations has been identified in practice all attempts at constructing a definition should be abandoned (e.g., Murphy 2000). The second dismisses the first on the grounds that agreeing on commonalities within this existing diversity permits a necessary level of substance and coherency for practical use in everyday learning (e.g., Swain 2007). Concerned with the situation the IBO commissioned independent research teams to explore the issue (e.g., Barratt-Hacking et al. 2016). Of these, Michael Singh and Jing Qi's research (Singh and Qi 2013) is an especially thorough analysis, since acting as a compass for subsequent educationalists researching the matter (e.g., Metli and Lane 2020). After a thorough investigation into IBO resource documents Singh and Qi discerned three principal aspects that defines the organization's more recent stance on international-mindedness:

Multilingualism

Intercultural Understanding

Global Engagement

(Singh and Qi 2013, viii)

Of the three Global Engagement is the simplest to understand, a concept more accurately describing the notion of global citizenship education explored earlier in this chapter. Certain educationalists describe it in the following way:

"Global engagement represents a commitment to addressing humanity's greatest challenges in the classroom and beyond. Students and teachers are encouraged to explore global and local issues, including developmentally appropriate aspects of the environment, development, conflicts, rights and cooperation and governance. Globally engaged people critically consider power and privilege, and recognize that they hold the earth and its resources in trust for future generations."

(Castro et al. 2013)

Meanwhile, the IBO has rather oddly defined Multilingualism as "a reconfiguration of how we think about languages that takes into account the complex linguistic realities of millions of people in diverse sociocultural contexts" (IBO 2012). More pragmatically, based on the fact that all existing IB educational programmes require the learner to undertake study in both a 'first' and 'second language' (i.e., often a 'native' and an 'acquired'), multilingualism is defined as the ability to communicate in two or more languages. Critical for its later ethnographic significance in Chapter 6, there is no official suggestion on *which* two (or more) languages these should be, but certain educationalist research commissioned by the IBO state that "English as a lingua franca medium of instruction is encouraged and recognized as important for success in the 21st century" (Castro et al. 2015). Not only does such a statement hint at the IBO's 'multilingualism' being one biasing itself

toward English, but, by extension, its increasing implicitness in broader neoliberalist pressures. The IBO's increasing neoliberalist leanings is a core theme of interest in Chapter 3, while linguistic inequalities caused through English's social status as 'global language' receives dedicated analysis in Chapter 6.

Intercultural understanding is another notion ambiguously defined. Some educationalists – again, commissioned by the IBO – define it as involving the "recognizing and reflecting on one's own perspective, as well as on the perspectives of others," and that someone possessing it "explores human commonality, diversity and interconnection (Castro et al. 2013). Such a definition problematically avoids the concept of culture in its consideration, another unclear concept for the IBO. On one hand several IBO resources treat culture as "dynamic and organic" (IBO 2014, 57), yet also strongly emphasize "developing knowledge of other cultural groups" (Castro et al. 2015, 191). In other words, despite acknowledging culture as thickly described (Geertz 1973, 5-6) it also appears to treat it as a fixed concept that is somehow *owned* as opposed to *inherited* through (re)construction. This appears to be a lingering artefact from the organization's post-World War 2 diplomatic mission of nation-state reconciliation. Others analyze the issue to reside with terms currently embedded, or otherwise echoed its mission statement. Namely the "intercultural" and "multicultural," terms imbued with ambiguous and contradictory definitions (Savva and Stanfield 2018, 184-185). The latter in particular has been intensely scrutinized by anthropologists. For example, some suggest interculturalism *instead* of multiculturalism to better emphasize human connectedness and relatedness, as the latter – theoretically – creates a conceptual distinction of cultural borders (Asgarally 2005). However, even the IBO's current preference on 'intercultural' – alongside other notions such as 'superdiversity' (Vertovec 2007) or 'cultural hybridity' (Bhabha 1994) – is recognized to hold its own conceptual limitations and a growing multiplicity of socio-political variations. This has led anthropologists to discuss if the wisest choice is to replace all the above with 'diversity' "since it does not a priori assume that the social world consists primarily of named cultural groups," while avoiding fixation and permitting categorical open-endedness (Eriksen 2015, 32; see Bauman 1996).

Finally, there is the peculiar case of The IB Learner Profile – acronymized to the 'LP' – located at the center of all its curriculum diagrams (see figures 2.1 to 2.4). Its visual positioning suggests achieving international-mindedness is to first and foremost embody the 10 attributes that comprise it. So, what exactly is the LP and where did it come from? The latter question appears to

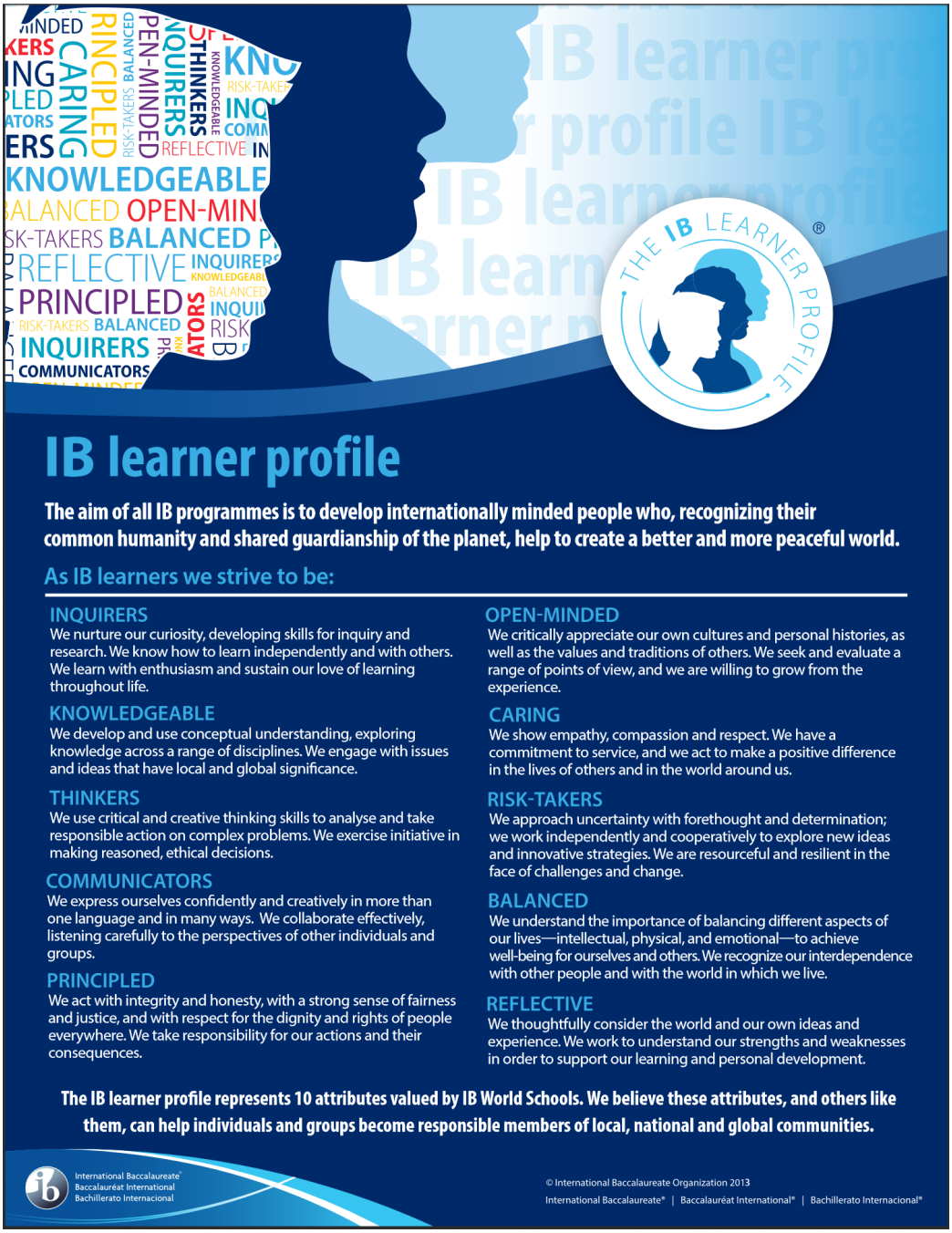
curiously remain without a definitive answer. It is known to have emerged in 2006 as the framework-specific Primary Years Programme (PYP) Student Profile (Wells 2011). As I review further in Chapter 3 this was a significant year for the organization, marking the start of Jeffrey Beard's tenure as its sixth Director-General, who initiated a paradigmatic shift in organizational strategy. Now intensely focused on corporatization, one result of this change appears the birth of the learner profile, analyzed as part of larger efforts to standardize practices at IB schools (Bunnell 2010, 355). Its introduction coincided with a general (re)branding of the administration that included – for instance – "the development of a new corporate logo" (Sunyol and Codó 2019, 143). It is also known that "there was comprehensive consultation among leaders of the three programmes and other stakeholders in the IB prior" to implementing it (Wells 2011, 177). However, there is seemingly no available information justifying *why* any of the 10 attributes – *Inquirers, Knowledgeable, Thinkers, Communicators, Principled, Open-Minded, Caring, Risk-Takers, Balanced,* and *Reflective* – were chosen (Wells 2011). These are presented in figure 2.5.

Bold yet ambiguous in scope, they have since been critiqued for "assuming an absoluteness that seems to ignore the complexity of human nature" (Savva and Stanfield 2018, 186). A given student may, for instance, be curious (i.e., 'inquiring') or critical (i.e., 'open-minded') about the historical complexity of events that feel conceptually distant to their national identity/identities – assuming they have one. However, they may feel precisely the opposite (i.e., 'passive' or 'close-minded') to equivalents that feel closer to such identities, or indeed vice versa. In addition, while the IBO permits teachers' discretion to apply these values independently, it simultaneously sacrifices any form of systematic monitoring. Other researchers resultingly ask why it possesses no such agreed mechanism given "the importance it attaches to these attributes?" (Wells 2011, 177).

There is also a broader issue, one concerning the adoption of an essentialist model of character education. The learner profile exemplifies a conceptually *fixed* format of character, formally termed by others as "simple character education" (Davis 2003, 36). The approach carries potentially serious moral hazards, as the development or even mastery of such attributes do not necessarily make one a good or moral character in the eyes of another (Davis 2003, 33). As I explore later in Chapters 5 and 6, there are also issues of both socio-cultural context and translation. For instance, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) in Japan considers these attributes as "abilities" sought for in a "global age" (Haraguchi 2016, 110; see Chapter 4). 'Risk-takers' has meanwhile been translated to *'chōsen suru hito,'* or 'challengers,'

exemplifying a significant re-interpretation of the type of character the learner profile is purposed to realize.

Figure 2.5: IB Learner Profile Outline



(IBO 2013)

Beyond international-mindedness and the learner profile naturally exists an exhaustive list of other general and programme-specific elements that help define an IB education. This includes several pedagogical practices such as its approach to formative assessment, defined as an "ongoing assessment aimed at providing information to guide teaching and improve student performance" (IBO 2014, 112; see Black et al. 2004). Other examples include the notion of concept-based instruction, an approach to education placing additional emphases on metacognitive knowledge alongside content and skill-based learning (Erickson et al. 2017). One further major practice – and one of later interest in this thesis – is a discussion-based approach to knowledge (co)production in the classroom, otherwise labelled as socio-constructivism (Larochelle and Benarz 1998; see Chapter 5).

To Summarize

This chapter reviewed the general notion of international education, the origins of the IBO, and the two core ideological aspects of international-mindedness and the learner profile underlying an IB education today. Now equipped with a surface appreciation of what constitutes IB ideologically, I proceed inside the IBO administration today, exploring the principal initiative at the core of this thesis: the *IB Educator Certificate*.

CHAPTER 3 – NEOLIBERALIZING THE 'INTERNATIONAL TEACHER': THE IB EDUCATOR CERTIFICATE INITIATIVE

Manifesting on a large projected screen, the Chair of the International Baccalaureate Organization's (IBO's) team representatives, Edward,[27] announced the outcome of the visit:

"As a team, we can only say that this is one of the highest quality programmes that we've had the pleasure of reviewing."

"We want to congratulate you on that, and applaud you for the enormous work that has gone into this."

"Our recommendation to the IB[O] will be that both courses of study be *recognized*."

Back in China a round of applause erupted. It was finally over. Over one years-worth of meticulous planning and labor finally bore fruit; they had been *recognized*. Pride and relief flushed through no fewer than 17 university representatives circled around a brightly lit, generously equipped conference room. Colleagues quietly beamed at one another as if to congratulate themselves on a job well done. With the good news confirmed the Director of the university's International Exchange Student Division entered the room, a lengthy speech prepared for the occasion. It was comprehensible, but it revealed that English was far from his first language. Nevertheless, the director persevered, stuttering through a speech just shy of 10 minutes, expressing his gratitude to IBO representatives while affirming the department's commitment and enthusiasm for IB education. Pride for their programme's recognition was made explicit during this monolog through one sentence in particular:

[27] Edward is a pseudonym, as are all names in this thesis that are introduced with either a first or last name only.

"The IB *definitely* represents some kind of international standard."

Sitting with the IBO team in our digital space, all members appeared to receive these words with polite satisfaction. Meanwhile, a storm of questions erupted in my head. Exactly what kind of international standard would that be? What aspects would define it? Ideology? Pedagogy? Assessment? Language? How did the IBO achieve it? It's philosophical leanings toward international-mindedness, or other such concepts originally rooted in 'White' Euro-American humanisms? Its pedagogical practices originally developed by theorists of similar ethnic and socio-cultural backgrounds? Or, was it the imaginary of the IBO – an organization with at least one registered school in 159 territories across the globe – that *somehow* represented the world's humanity?

The *IB Educator Certificate*, or IBEC. It is the initiative of central ethnographic focus in this thesis, and in this chapter I direct attention to those representing its interests across the Asia-Pacific region on behalf of the IBO. Before doing so of course, what IBEC *is* must first be addressed. Due to the absence of any written records, I explore this through an oral history of its millennial invention as narrated through the initiative's key founding figures while situating its trajectory within the organization's more recent administrative developments. I then overview IBEC's present state in the world before reviewing the IBO's Recognition Process candidate universities must undertake to legitimately operate an IBEC programme. As a Guest Member of the IBO's representative team, I follow this with a micro ethnography of Recognition Visit (RV) experiences, a key phase of the overall Recognition Process. I analyze IBEC as a diplomatic initiative, one ideologically neoliberalist, empowering universities with generous freedoms to channel a range of localized internationalist and globalist agendas. I therefore summarize IBEC's purpose to lie in growing and consolidating the IBO's relationship with the higher education sector, a task taking preference over alignment of its own supposed ideological principles.

Building the Bridge to Higher Education

As appreciated in Chapter 2, the origins story of the IBO as both an administrative and educational movement is well documented (e.g., Peterson 1972; Peterson 1987; Hill 2010). The same cannot be stated for its Professional Development (PD) division, and especially the IB Educator Certificate (IBEC) initiative. The history of IBEC's origins is only presently available through accounts of select individuals responsible for creating and / or currently operating it. I primarily draw on the reflections of three such people.

First is William. Recognized as the initiative's original founder, William is an English monolingual of British nationality and 'White' ethnicity. Based at the IBO's Cardiff office he was the Head of its Teacher Education Services between 2002-2010. Holding both extensive experience as a teacher and a doctorate in Education, William has since mostly dedicated his career to his own educational consultancy services, while maintaining ties with the IBO as an IBEC Consultant for the organization's Africa, Europe, and Middle East region. Second is Chloe. Considered the founder of the initiative's current guise, Chloe is an English and French bilingual of Australian nationality and 'White' ethnicity, holding a similar abundance of experience in the education sector, including as a Deputy Principal of multiple schools. She has held several roles within the IBO, including as Global Manager of Teacher Education Services between 2010-2013 at the organization's Americas Office. She currently works as a Lecturer at an Australia-based university alongside personal consultancy work, while additionally undertaking a part-time doctoral degree in Education. Third is Edward. An English monolingual of Australian nationality and 'White' ethnicity, Edward was the Chair of IBEC for the IBO's Asia-Pacific region at the time of fieldwork. He also holds considerable experience as both an educational practitioner – including as both teacher and school principal – and researcher. He carries a doctoral degree in Education and specializes in assessment practice. Aside from additional consultancy roles independent of the IBO, he continues work at both Australian and UK-based universities.

The story of IBEC begins with the IBO's efforts in establishing its own research division. This history is in fact older than the IBO's own name. Originally directed by Dr Bill Halls, an initial Research Unit existed between 1967 to 1974 at what is presently the Department of Education at the University of Oxford. Dr Kevin Marjoribanks, an Australian national, took over this position

in 1972 before the unit closed. It fulfilled several functions critical to the early years of the organization, including comparative examination analysis with national curricula and the development of the DP's approaches to assessment. A 12-year void followed, with the IBO absent of any dedicated alternative. However, its brief administrative presence at the University of Bath proved opportunistic. Just before relocation the Director of its Examinations Office, Derek Goulden, hired the then Subject Officer for Mathematics and Science, Mary Hayden, as Research and Development Officer in 1986. She held this post until 1991 when the role transferred to Cardiff.

Alongside Hayden, another significant figure emerged in the form of Jeff Thompson. As I touch on in Chapter 4, Thompson was the Chief Examiner in Chemistry and Physical Science between 1984 and 1989, during which first contact with educators in Japan was made in the form of the chemist Tokumaru Katsumi.[28] Before this Thompson was a chemistry teacher at Watford Grammar School in the 1960s, and a researcher at University College London. He collaborated with Halls at Oxford in 1968, conducting a project on chemistry teaching for the Council of Europe. This news reached Alec Peterson, phoning Thompson for chemistry trial exam papers. Thompson later moved to Oxford through an opportunity Peterson informed him of, training chemistry teachers in its education department. Hired by Keble College, Thompson later became a lecturer in physical organic chemistry while continuing his work with Peterson, later becoming the Director of Postgraduate Education, and for a time Acting Director of the department.

Thompson moved to the Department of Education at Bath in 1979, taking position as Chair of Education. Much was accomplished during subsequent decades, such as founding and directing the Centre for the Study of Education in an International Context (CEIC) in 1991, which Hayden later took over in 2000. Through collaboration with the IBO, Thompson became the founding editor of the *Journal of Research in International Education,* with its first issue released in 2002. This role also later transferred to Hayden in 2006 as Editor-in-Chief. Thompson was additionally Chair of an IB Research Committee from 1998, and – with his now extensive background in research – was formally employed by the IBO to run its new Research Unit at Bath from 2000 before formally retiring in 2005. Thompson has since continued on as Professor Emeritus at Bath, including through regular publications which are often in collaboration with Hayden (e.g.,

[28] All names of Japanese nationals in this thesis are written last-name first, first-name second, unless otherwise stated.

Hayden and Thompson 1995; Hayden and Thompson 2001; Hayden and Thompson 2007; Hayden and Thompson 2013; Hayden and Thompson 2018). As of 2023, Hayden is now Head of Bath's Department of Education, while both Hayden and Thompson continue to supervise doctoral students engaged in a diverse range of themes concerning international, and specifically IB education. Such is their influence that two participants involved in a micro ethnography of IBEC Recognition Visits later in this chapter had either completed, or were currently undertaking doctoral degrees in Education at Bath under their joint supervision.

Thompson, as it transpires, was also an influential figure in the original genesis of today's IBEC initiative. During the leadership of George Walker (1942-2022) – the IBO's fifth Director-General – discussions within the Cardiff administration were taking place over granting its Teacher Education Services departmental autonomy from its general Academic Services. Other conversations alongside this were attempting to address the organization's continued lack of collaboration with the higher education sector. This was a tall order, not least because – in the words of Chloe – "the powers that be at the time said over my dead body will the IB ever work with universities." Despite this bleak outlook, William succeeded in sparking initial considerations on the matter. A masters student in the late-1990s at Bath, active talks continued into the 2000s with Thompson. At the heart of these discussions – narrated through William – lied a key question: "how can the IB work more closely with universities around the world?" Or, more specifically, how could they "capture the expertise and experience [of the] academic community to support [the] professional development of IB teachers?" William expanded further on this during interview:

William: "I think there was a very definite view that, if professional development is going to be transformational, then we need to find ways of deepening the experience for teachers."

William: "So therefore getting the involvement of universities within IB professional development, might help in deepening that experience."

At this stage Professional Development (PD) services at the IBO were still limited to two or three-day workshops. Moreover, they dramatically differed to those known today, as they were predominately outsourced and absent of any consistent architecture. The result were workshops where 'IB content' was treated as little more than a floating signifier, or in the words of Chloe:

Chloe: "Workshop leaders were just tapped on the shoulder and you develop a workshop and deliver it. I used to deliver them whatever I wanted, and it was considered an IB workshop."

A widespread feeling among those involved believed that PD services needed to be expanded. Not necessarily by creating something more rigorous, but by realizing further opportunities for IB and prospective IB educators while providing spaces for deeper critical-thinking and reflection. It also sought to partially address a pervasive issue continuing to afflict the IBO. Namely, reversing the IB Educator Network's (IBEN) reputation of being "a bit of a closed shop." William elaborated further on this point:

William: "We were getting a lot of feedback from teachers who were simply not able to get jobs in IB schools on the ground that they didn't, you know, they weren't actually, able to get to the point of interview because they didn't have any IB experience."

Several prospective IB educators provided worrying accounts at job fairs – such as those run by the European Council of International Schools or ECIS – pointing to a systemic bias in treatment toward those with no prior IB ties. Many lined up in "cattle marketing" style queues within hotel conference spaces, signing their interest only to be immediately rejected due to an absence of 'IB education-related' experience. This issue would only be addressed by ensuring opportunities existed where educators outside its fort could demonstrate relevant pedagogical and philosophical competencies. Questions emerged on whether PD could play a role in helping reverse this internationalist elitism. How could prospective IB educators build a sufficient "level of

understanding which may or may not have been commensurate with actually having some experience within an IB school?" How could this be demonstrated on a CV? Along with Bath, formal meetings were additionally held with the University of Melbourne (Australia), University of Montreal (Canada), and University of Leiden (Netherlands) to discuss how universities could support such educator development.

This discourse proved a kernel to the eventual creation of the *Teacher Award Scheme* (TAS). Its coining was not a simple process. Extensive time had been spent pondering over the correct language to apply. The term 'certification' caused especial pushback by both teaching and managerial faculty across the IB educator network. There was a fear that PD's efforts at increasing accessibility outside its nexus could trigger "the exact opposite" effect. Would present IB educators – experienced or otherwise – be suddenly required to compete with newcomers better credentialized for its education? Might they also require the same certificate/s to compensate? PD was keen to ensure that such scenarios not occur. Instead, 'award' was elected to help avoid these connotations. It felt particularly pertinent for PD given that the initiative was purposed as a collaborative venture with higher education. Critically, it did *not* prescribe any form of curriculum, but was instead a framework that – in William's words – "essentially was going to draw upon the expertise of universities." In other words, it was up to each university to propose their own content and course structure aligning with its framework, an approach which remains unchanged to date.

TAS was originally envisioned to comprise of three variations but was later finalized as two: the Practitioner Award (PA) and Associate Award (AA). PA equates to today's IB Educator Certificate (IBEC), such as that presently operating at the Japanese Institute of Education[29] (see Chapter 5). It was – and still is – primarily purposed to build educators' knowledge of "IB principles and practice." The AA meanwhile targeted experienced IB educators desiring a more "formal acknowledgement of their commitment to professional learning," in this case by deepening their theoretical understandings of IB educational principles and pedagogy through investigative work. This loosely equates to today's relatively unpopular IB Advanced Educator Certificate (IBAEC), a more research-intensive counterpart to the standard IBEC. The third variation which never surfaced, arose from a consideration to recognize individual people who "had given an enormous amount of service [and] commitment" to IB. This was scrapped due to

[29] This is a pseudonym.

the potential political ramifications it might have generated across the IB network, ultimately dismissed as a "layer of bureaucracy too far." However, with an awareness that PA and AA would generate the desire for other experienced IB educators to seek a similar award, a so-termed "portfolio" pathway also existed for a time. With the IBO itself lacking the administrative capacity to assess, a collaborative arrangement was made with the ECIS and *Cambridge Assessment International Education* at the University of Cambridge. This arrangement eventually dissolved around the mid-2010s, with the ECIS deciding to develop their own form of PD certification under new leadership.

Any description concerning the evolution of TAS into its current guise as IBEC is inseparable from the IBO's broader political history. Of central importance was the replacement of George Walker with Jeffrey R. Beard as the organization's sixth Director-General in 2006, and the organizational powershift from the UK to the US triggered in its wake. In at least one critical aspect, Beard's professional background differed profoundly from both all previous and future Director-Generals to date: a general absence of prior experience within the education sector. Born and educated in the US, Beard was a businessman who specialized in organizational management, developing "cross-functional management" strategies across "several multinational corporations" (IBO 2023f). For Beard, the move to the IBO was considered an "opportunity to 'give something back'; to leave the business world and apply his management knowledge and experience to international education" (IBO 2023f). For the IBO, a departure from educationalist leadership to one business-orientated was a reaction to prolonged financial instability beleaguering the organization. In the words of Chloe "profitability everywhere except the US was a problem." They were in desperate need for a new managerial approach, one that could implement a more viable, sustainable business model. The abolition of the three independent boards of North America, South America, and the remaining world with one "global" equivalent was a key aspect of sweeping reforms, allowing Beard to direct North America's financial "surplus" to bail out other regions from fiscal crisis. Organizational governance consequently turned more "corporatized" as new layers of global and regional "stakeholder committees" emerged.

This new-found centralization of power saw regional autonomy disintegrate. This included the IB World School Recognition Process itself, with regionally constructed and governed requirements – such as those within the organization's Africa, Europe, and Middle East Office and Asia-Pacific Office – replaced by a globally standardized counterpart. A general desire for

standardization also contributed to the 2006 emergence of its Learner Profile (see Chapter 2), its 2007 visual corporate rebranding and more, all for a renewed purpose of "capturing and consolidating its presence as a global product" (Bunnell 2014, 145-146). Another major "cultural shift" emerged that year, transforming the organization's popular perception of an "elitist program serving private international schools" to one more accessible for public education sectors. This can be appreciated through one of Beard's first speeches as Director-General made at an IBO regional convention in Hanoi:

"Planned growth is about maximizing the impact of our limited resources, to broaden access to our programs for students worldwide, not just the wealthy; and to build a scalable infrastructure to ensure a high-quality school support system."

(Beard 2006)

The US became *the* principal market of focus, with the organization having already begun to receive federal governmental funding from 2003. Alongside the Anglospheric territories of Canada, England, and Australia, as well as the intriguing case of Ecuador, 2006 also marked the year the US Government supported the spread of IB in its state / national education sector. England also saw a noticeable rise in IB around this time as policymakers were re-assessing the notion of 'community cohesion,' analyzed as a side-effect from the 2005 terrorist attack on London Transport (Bunnell 2014, 145). However, it was and remains the US market that – by some margin – commands the IBO's permeation into public education. The organization's administrative core started shifting away from the UK as a result, with its Cardiff-based Teacher Education Services disbanding to make way for a global PD directorate based in Bethesda near Washington D.C. This geo-political relocation alongside a global recentralizing of administrative power played a key role over various services that PD was to provide moving forward. William relinquished his position to remain in the UK, with Chloe taking over as the newly titled Global Manager of Teacher Education Services between 2010 and 2013. Together with Kylie – the IBO's Global Professional Development Coordinator between 2010 and 2015, as well as former IBEC Senior Manager – a new three level workshop architecture was implemented to better centralize its services. Today these

remain divided into and described as the following:

- **"Category 1** focuses on IB philosophy and implementation."
- **"Category 2** covers delivery of the four IB programmes of education."
- **"Category 3** builds on and enhances professional development portfolios."

(IBO 2023g)

TAS underwent similarly dramatic change, with the organization's newly founded Bethesda branch no longer finding the name appropriate. Or, in Chloe's words:

Chloe: "So obviously when Teacher Award came to the states, everyone burst out laughing like, 'what the hell is that? The award for the best teacher?' So it didn't get a lot of uptake."

Speaking on a broader Americanization of the organization's language, William reflected on how 'award' was now seen to imply "money," that completing it might infer that one would receive "cash from the IB." "Scheme," meanwhile, was a pejorative term that could be "seen as being connected to the devil." Then there was the issue of scarcity, with around only seven universities worldwide operating the initiative at the time. This would not do for the organization's reinvigorated desire for growth. TAS had to be repurposed to better reflect Beard's broader productization strategy, a task led by Chloe. She reflected on her strategy during interview:

Chloe: "So [Kylie] and I started at the same time, and we turned it into, we basically turned it into a credential, over certain peoples dead bodies as well." (laughs)

Akira: (Laughs)

Chloe: " 'You know you're just credentializing and marketizing the whole IB, da da da da da.' But we still did it in spite of that."

Despite being considered "controversial" by many – often IB teachers on the ground – the aim to credentialize TAS into a new "brand" and "identity" by central administration eventually resulted in its renaming as the *IB Educator Certificate,* and acronymization to 'IBEC' in 2011. The next hurdle lay with the corrosive task of equivalating its framework to PD's workshop services. As alluded to by William previously, this was a murky and sensitive theme for the IB network even before PD's rehousing in Bethesda. This latest attempt at doing so only stoked these insecurities. As Chloe recounted, it became obvious that "at some stage, the idea of equivalency didn't fly."

All certificates conferrable through the IBEC framework today permit its recipients a waiver to an otherwise compulsory Category-1 workshop for new teachers employed by IB World Schools. This was implemented to help (1) incentivise schools to better consider teachers holding an IBEC while avoiding the financial burden of paying for a workshop,[30] and (2) encourage students who undertake an IBEC to later apply for jobs at IB World Schools. Nonetheless, IBEC representatives are explicitly careful to *not* use the term 'equivalency' in describing the relationship between IBEC and Category-1 workshops. This could be interpreted a diplomatic decision, as appreciated through the following passage in the current IBEC Handbook:

"Exemption does not imply any sense of equivalency between an IB professional development workshop and an IB-recognized program of study. They are not considered comparable

[30] Workshop pricing is highly differentiated in the organization, taking into account criteria such as region, modes of delivery, and more. As a rough ballpark in April 2023, the Asia-Pacific administrative headquarters in Singapore charges 450 SGD (roughly 340 USD) for 'face-to-face' participation at workshops hosted by IB-associated schools, and 400 SGD (roughly 300 USD) for a 'virtual' equivalent.

experiences in terms of the depth of study, academic engagement or level of commitment."

(IBO 2020, 12)

However, the reality appears more nuanced, as Edward elaborated:

Edward: "I think from our perspective, we certainly guard against the workshop mentality, because I want them to be open to critiquing the IB, and not just drinking from the Kool-Aid[31] of the IB."

Edward often used this phrase of "drinking from the Kool-Aid of the IB" during my time spent on IBEC Recognition Visits. It was deployed as a timely reminder for the IBO that IBEC is not a workshop, which promotes a more compliance-based mentality to teacher training, but instead – in their words – "an academic programme, [that] should be a scholarship." Chloe nuanced the difference between the two further:

Chloe: "With IBEC, the idea is you are a bit more of an outsider, and you can have the luxury of experimentation, and actually bringing something from the university to the IB, so that it helps the IB grow."

The latest significant twist of IBEC concerns its separation from the IBO's PD division under direction of Dr Siva Kumari. The organization's seventh Director-General between 2014 and 2021,

[31] Kool-Aid is a transnationally popular flavored drinks brand invented in Hastings, Nebraska (US) in 1927. The phrase 'drinking the Kool-Aid' originates from the aftermath of the 1978 Jonestown Massacre in Guyana, suggesting a mindless adoption of a given leader, faction and / or dogma without an appropriate grasp of its implications or ramifications.

Kumari is a symbolically significant figure for the organization. As it is itself keen to highlight, Kumari is the "first women to hold the post" (IBO 2023h). Intriguingly, however, the administration elected to not additionally note Kumari as the first Director-General of a visible ethnic background other than 'White,' only furthering her significance.[32] As of late-2020 IBEC is now housed in its Outreach and Conferences (hereon 'Outreach') division. Narrated by Chloe, this is because Kumari "always had it in her vision that IBEC would sit with University Recognition," a section within Outreach dedicated to increasing the recognition of its DP for undergraduate degree applications.

Edward considered some of the potential positive implications of this change, reflecting on how there were some potential synergies "between those universities that recognize DP graduates, and universities that run an IBEC programme." Nevertheless, the move has concerned several IBEC representatives due to the results of larger structural changes that occurred across the organization during Kumari's tenure. From certain perspectives her strategy can be read as an extension of Beard's. Geo-political power has been further consolidated in the US while autonomy and variation between its regional headquarters have been further squashed. This is aptly represented by the organization's decision to rebrand its 'Regional Offices' into 'Global Centers,' as uniformity of services is incrementally emphasized over their localization. An expansion of its US administration has seemingly led to increasing dependence on local US residents, identified by others as often American nationals of overwhelmingly 'White' backgrounds, further suggesting the organization's persistent lack of more localized human resource. Another potential example of this is explored later in this thesis through the IBO's essentialist approach to resources translations (see Chapter 6).

From other angles, however, Kumari's strategy can be read as a radical departure. The

[32] As of January 2023, an International School Anti-Discrimination Taskforce has been jointly initiated by the Association of International Educators and Leaders of Color (AIELOC), the IBO, and Ecolint. Part of the impetus to create one was caused by a viral YouTube discussion involving Nunana Nyomi, the former Associate Director of Higher Education Services for the Council of International Schools (CIS). In the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement, Nyomi publicly spoke on experiencing systemic racial colorblindness across the international education sector, holding an unprecedentedly open and frank talk with Jane Larsson, the Executive Director of CIS. The IBO's involvement in the taskforce stems from recent talks with external specialists over the administration's role in exacerbating race-related and other inequities within its own governance and authorized schools.

movement of IBEC to Outreach is only one of various departmental and geo-political repositionings within the organization, while Kumari placed an especially futuristic focus on the greater use of 'artificial intelligence' in classrooms. Overall, the pace, scale, and nature of these trajectories was not popularly received, with a seemingly top-down authoritative approach to leadership often viewed with anxiety, and occasionally animosity by others within the organization. The alleged existence of a formal petition to the IBO's Board of Governors seeking general changes in leadership further evidences these tensions.

Under the eighth and current Director-General Olli-Pekka Heinonen – a Finnish national with comprehensive executive experience on internationalization strategy within the Finnish education system – initial signs point to a consolidation of IBEC's current trajectory. Several members of its Outreach division have either since retired or otherwise departed, replaced with, for instance, a new overarching IBEC manager in the US that certain representatives comment to be grounded in corporate management instead of education. Other senior hirings within broader divisions of the IBO appear to be complementing this trend of organizational "managerialization." The result is a spiralling implicitness in a now well-established pattern of reordered "governmentality based on a financial calculus" that – among further repercussions – is witnessing an "increasing separation between an empowered managerial elite and a deprofessionalized workforce" (Shore and Wright 2015, 430). IBEC's global growth strategy is set to continue in force alongside an expanding suite of smaller professional development qualifications, underpinned by an increasingly aggressive push for in-house free market credentialism.

IBEC in 2022

IBEC has grown considerably since its US office rebranding. As of January 2022, there are 58 universities operating IBEC across 16 registered territories in the world (figure 3.1). There are presently two types of IBEC certification a university may award. The first are Certificates in Teaching and Learning (IBCTL). As observed in figure 3.1, these remain to a considerable extent the most common type encountered. Four versions of IBCTL can be awarded corresponding to its four school programmes (i.e., DP, MYP, PYP, and CP). There also exists a final, advanced version of the IBCTL, termed the Advanced Certificate in Teaching and Learning Research. Unlike the standard IBCTL it holds no variations, and is geared toward experienced IB educators who wish

to pursue research intensive projects concerning IB. It remains relatively unpopular to the IBCTL, with – for instance – only five of 19 universities in the Asia-pacific region, including two in Japan, currently offering them. The second type concerns certificates in educator leadership. Today these are offered in the two forms of the Certificate in Leadership Practice, and the Advanced Certificate in Leadership Research. Currently only 11 of 58 universities in the world operate any variation of these leadership certificates, including only one across the Asia-Pacific region.

All universities formally declare modes of instruction between 'face-to-face,' 'online,' and 'blended' (see figure 3.1). For a time, however, the original COVID-19 outbreak and its socio-political ramifications frequently altered the diversity of modes offered. For instance, several Japan-based universities originally purposed to operate exclusively 'face-to-face' were instead conducted through 'online' and 'blended' formats between 2020 and 2021.

As has remained unchanged since the initiative's genesis, IBEC is a *framework*, a fact often initially misunderstood by enquiring universities. It does not prescribe any form of curriculum or content, instead working "with each higher education institution to align their program(s) of study with the aims and learning outcomes associated with the [IBEC] the university wishes to offer" (IBO 2020a, 6). Every IBEC curriculum is therefore an original, formed through various shapes of integration. Most today operate at the postgraduate level where they are often integrated within master's degrees, but several others are housed within undergraduate programmes. They exist in universities national, regional, and private, from those secular to those orthodox, from those balancing corporatized neoliberal interests to those governmental or institutional. Some operate as an independent, compartmentalized branch of its degree programme while others interlace its content within broader subjects. Depending on the integration some may be completed in under a year, while others could take as long as five. Some are orientated around educator practice, while others on educationalist research, with a diverse range of assessment rubrics and course structures to reflect these realities. These represent only some of the parameters in how they currently differ.

Figure 3.1: Overview of IBEC Universities in January 2022

UNIVERSITY	IB certificate in teaching and learning			IB advanced certificate in teaching and learning research	IB certificate in leadership practice	IB advanced certificate in leadership research	MODE			DEGREE		
	PYP	MYP	DP				face-to-face	online	blended	undergraduate	postgraduate	masters
Abat Oliba University	●							●			●	
Aga Khan Academy Hyderabad	●	●	●				●					
Aga Khan Academy Mombasa	●	●	●				●					
University of Alberta				●		●		●	●			●
University of Bath	●	●	●	●			●	●	●		●	●
Bethel University	●	●	●					●			●	●
Bilkent University			●				●					●
University of British Columbia	●	●	●	●			●			●		●
Universidad Camilo José Cela	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
CHRIST (Deemed to be University)			●				●	●	●	●	●	
Curtin University	●	●						●		●		
Daegu National University of Education	●						●					●
Deakin University	●						●	●		●	●	●
DePaul University	●	●	●		●			●	●	●	●	●
University of Dundee	●			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Durham University	●	●	●				●				●	
East China Normal University		●	●	●			●				●	
University College Fairview	●	●	●	●			●	●	●		●	●
Flinders University		●		●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
George Mason University	●	●	●	●				●	●		●	●
Hasan Kalyoncu University	●						●	●	●		●	
Handong Global University			●						●			●
The Education University of Hong Kong	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
The University of Hong Kong	●		●	●			●				●	●
Inha University			●						●			●
International Christian University		●	●	●			●			●		●
Kent State University	●						●			●		●
Kwansei Gakuin University			●				●			●		
University College London (UCL)						●		●			●	●
Loyola University Chicago	●	●	●				●	●		●		●

UNIVERSITY	IB certificate in teaching and learning			IB advanced certificate in teaching and learning research	IB certificate in leadership practice	IB advanced certificate in leadership research	MODE			DEGREE		
	PYP	MYP	DP				face-to-face	online	blended	undergraduate	postgraduate	masters
Maltepe University						●			●			●
The University of Melbourne	●	●	●	●				●			●	●
University of Michigan		●	●						●	●		●
University of Missouri					●			●			●	
Moscow City University	●	●							●			●
Murdoch University	●	●	●	●			●	●	●		●	●
Namseoul University		●	●					●	●		●	●
National Taiwan Normal University		●	●				●				●	●
University of Navarra	●		●						●			●
University of Nevada Las Vegas	●	●	●	●			●	●	●	●	●	
University of New Brunswick	●	●	●				●			●		
University of North Georgia	●	●	●	●			●	●	●			●
University of Notre Dame Australia	●		●	●			●		●	●	●	●
Okayama University of Science			●				●		●	●		
Perm State Humanitarian Pedagogical University			●						●			●
Royal Roads University				●		●			●			●
Seirei Christopher University	●						●			●		
Southeastern Louisiana University	●		●					●		●	●	●
Tamagawa University	●	●	●	●			●	●	●		●	●
Tokyo Gakugei University		●	●				●					●
University of Toronto			●					●			●	
Tsuru University	●	●	●				●			●		
University of Tsukuba	●	●	●	●			●	●			●	●
Vytautus Magnus University	●						●			●		
Western University	●	●	●		●			●		●	●	
University of Windsor	●	●	●					●			●	
Yeditepe University			●					●			●	

(Directly borrowed from IBO 2022c, 5-6)[33]

[33] 'CHRIST (Deemed to be University)' is the formal name of the higher education institution. A 'postgraduate degree' here is considered any form of postgraduate qualification that ranks below that of a 'master's degree' (e.g., a type of professional teaching certificate).

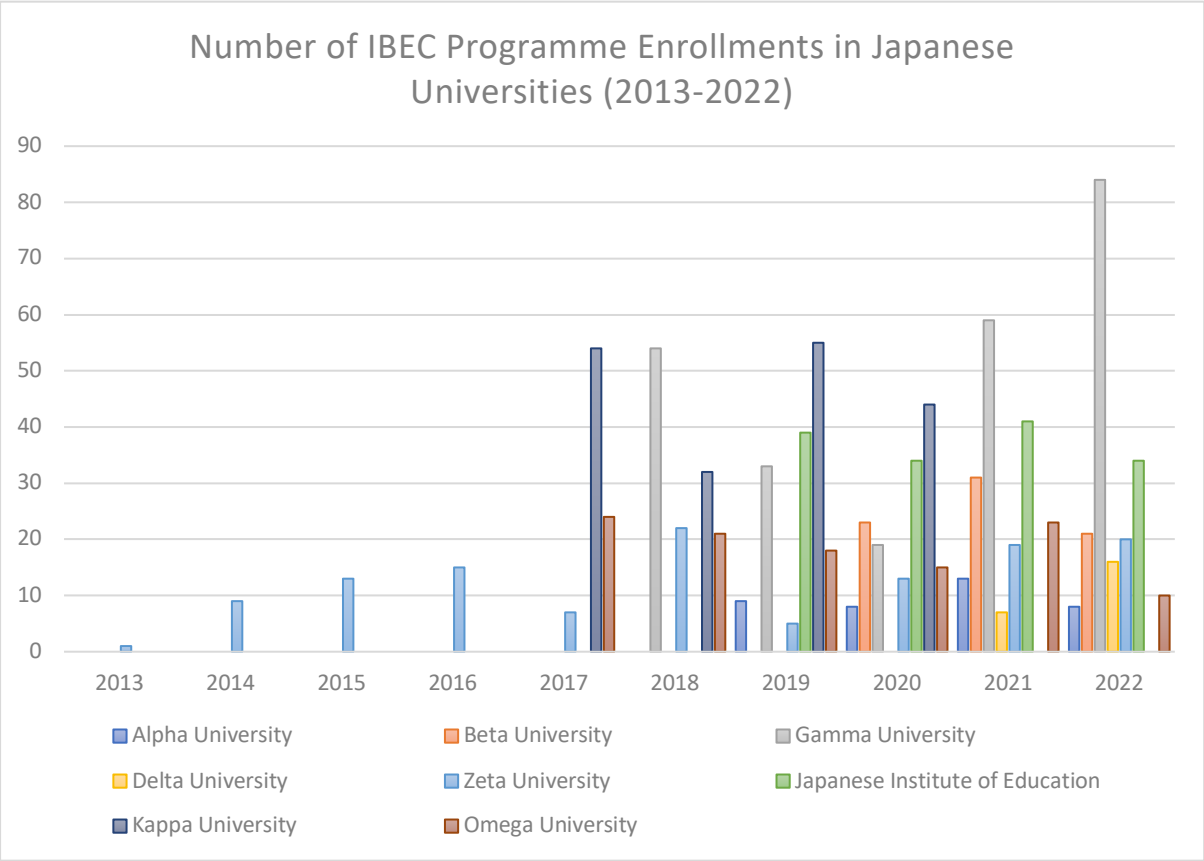
Institutional diversity is warmly welcomed by present IBEC representatives, as – in Edward's words – it "means people have a choice." That said, there is at least one parameter of friction, one intrinsically linked to the faculty hired by universities to operate their IBECs. Specifically, whether it is primarily developed and facilitated by (1) outsourced expertise (e.g., through an experienced educator within the IB educator network) or (2) internal faculty. The former top-down approach often results in curriculum templates that lean more toward educational theory. They also – as described by Edward – often "look like an IB workshop" which, as previously mentioned, is a scenario IBEC representatives try to avoid. The latter grassroots approach, in sharp contrast, often results in more creative IBEC curriculums that generally gear toward educator practice.[34]

Another diverse parameter concerns student enrollment, as exemplified through the considerable scale to which numbers differ within Japan (figure 3.2).[35] Since records began in 2013, the highest enrollment number for any single year is currently held by Gamma University (2018-) at 84 students, followed by Kappa University (2017-) at 55. These two, along with Delta University (2021-) are also the only IBECs predominately undertaken at the undergraduate level in the country, therefore often sporting the largest student cohorts. Meanwhile, universities such as Alpha University (2019-) currently intake a rough average of 10 students a year. At the postgraduate level, the Japanese Institute of Education or JIE (2019-) – the university of principal ethnographic interest in this thesis (see Chapter 5) – consistently holds the highest annual enrollment total, with 39 in 2019, 34 in 2020, 41 in 2021, and 34 in 2022.

[34] A reason for this tendency can be attributed to the relative inexperience in IB education of internal faculty operating it, often causing them to place comparative focus on exploring educator practice. Outsourced faculty – generally highly experienced IB educators – conversely place relative focus on theory due to their familiarity with facilitating / participating in professional development workshops, which can often facilitate more theoretical learning.

[35] The IBO has requested that all universities for this dataset be appropriately anonymized due to competition-related interests.

Figure 3.2[36]



(Raw Data Received by the IBO)

Based on the IBO's raw data, enrollment rates generally match certificate eligibility (i.e., most students undertaking an IBEC programme pass), but, interestingly, certificate eligibility sometimes does *not* match with registered certificate holders. For example, despite a total enrollment of 54 in 2017 and 32 in 2018, only 30 in 2017 and 10 in 2018 were registered to have received their IBCTLs at Kappa University (KU). This compares to 37 of 39 in 2019 and 23 of 34 in 2020 for JIE. Part of this discrepancy can be explained through the programme structure at each university. Taking JIE as an example, IBCTL registration is only permissible when the student has satisfied all other conditions for their degree, which can take between one and two years

[36] COVID-19 generally resulted in fewer student enrollments for at least the 2020 academic year.

depending on the track. KU's situation is more complex as its IBEC is integrated into a four-year bachelor's degree. However, it is also clear that several students in Japan elect to not register for their certificate even when satisfying all requirements. This is most likely explained by the fact students pay a stand-alone fee to the IBO of 265 USD for them to be processed and conferred, a price which some judge unnecessary based on future career prospects.

There are generally two clear motivators for why one might wish to formally receive a certificate. The first is whether they are seriously considering, or are otherwise scheduled to work at an IB World School. As overviewed already, this not only provides the employer with greater confidence of their 'IB competencies,' but also saves them time and finance in hiring. The second motivator is promotional. An IBO-conferred certificate can be used to credentialize and market one's 'international' knowledge to their employer – both within and outside the education sector – potentially gaining more favorable job opportunities. As was uncovered at JIE, the second motivator was likely the overwhelming reason for why students paid for their certificates (see Chapter 5), and possibly why comparatively more at Kappa University did not.

The IBEC Recognition Process

Before delving into a micro ethnographic account of IBEC Recognition Visits (RVs), it is worth situating its role within the overall Recognition Process. To design and operate an IBEC programme all candidate universities must undergo a four-stage "recognition process [that] allows the [IBO] to ascertain whether a program of study develops the requisite knowledge and understanding" expected of them (IBO 2020a, 6). Namely, these are (1) an expression of formal interest, (2) an application, (3) a Recognition Visit, (4) formal recognition. A successful process can take as few as six months, or as long as five years. This is dependent on the university's internal circumstances, such as its approach to planning, relative experience of its candidate representatives, and the nature of its collaboration with IBEC Consultants. The IBO formally considers two key, yet generously open-ended points in recognizing a university. First are the extent that the proposed programme's intended learning outcomes align with the academic requirements of each certificate. Second is the capacity it holds in addressing the learning needs of its students, however identified. In addition, there exist five compulsory conditions to meet. This is explained in the IBEC handbook through the following language:

"The institution must have:

1. achieved current recognition / accreditation from the national educational authorities and / or independent accrediting agencies as a legitimate provider of graduate and undergraduate programs in the areas of teacher and / or leader education.
2. required the program to undergo a rigorous internal validation process prior to seeking IB[O] recognition.
3. developed a strategy for ensuring that the elements of the program that are "IB content heavy" are facilitated by faculty who have a deep knowledge and understanding of the current IB context.
4. established a strategy for offering the required period of practicum in the case of pre-service programs linked to the IBCTL.
5. established all the necessary third-party legal agreements if the program is to be offered in partnership with another organization."

(IBO 2020a, 6, my numbers)

Universities are also expected to foster relationships with their local IB school community and provide opportunities for prospective students to engage with IB teaching or leadership practice. They are reminded to consider financial feasibility by, for instance, developing a suitable marketing strategy while considering the costs for both university and students. This amounts to 265 USD for the latter, and includes application, recognition process, and annual license fees for the former (figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3: Institutional Fees for IBEC Application, Recognition, & Licensing

Description	Explanation	Fee
Application fee	This is a one-time fee. Included on the *Recognition meeting* invoice.	100 GBP
Recognition fee	This is a one-time fee to cover the costs of the recognition process. Included on the *Recognition meeting* invoice. The institution will be charged an additional 500 GBP when seeking recognition for: i. more than one program of study for one IB certificate (for example, where dedicated courses have been developed for each IB programme) ii. a program of study that meets the requirements for two IB certificates (for example, both the IBCTL and the IBACTLR). These fees only relate to the first year of operation. In subsequent years they will be replaced by a fixed license fee irrespective of the number of programs of study offered.	2500 GBP +500 GBP per additional program of study +500 GBP
Recognition meeting costs	The institution will pay for the travel and accommodation costs of the recognition meeting team. Included on the *Recognition meeting* invoice.	Variable
License fee	This is due annually. This fee covers the use of the IB's intellectual property, faculty and candidate access to the programme resource centre and other support provided by the IB. The payment is due at the beginning of the IB's fiscal year each July upon receipt of the *License fee* invoice.	2500 GBP annually

(IBO 2020a, 13)

The IBO's license fee is an intriguing aspect, especially in combination with politics over intellectual property. During a private discussion with the IBEC Team on one of their RVs, concern over the use of the IBO's Programme Resource Center, or PRC, had emerged. The PRC – providing a frequently updated repository of IBO-publications in all available languages – is exclusive to IB associates and accessible only to those holding a 'My IB' account. This in-turn is only typically obtainable via employment at an IBO-affiliated institution, such as an IB World School, or, in this case, an IBEC-operating university. At least, that is the official truth. These protective measures remain in place because – in Edward's words – the organization "always valued it's intellectual property and been very guarded about it."

An internal debate took place between Chloe, Edward, and Jatin during an RV in South Korea. Jatin is the current Singapore-based head of the IBO's strategic initiatives, added onto the IBEC Team due to his role as overseer for the administration's projects with select regional Offices of Education in the country, currently Jeju and Daegu (Park and Hong 2022). He expressed concern with an IBEC university potentially downloading and distributing PRC material to non-IB-affiliated institutions, noting that its local educator network often shares materials across schools. Keen to protect the IBO's intellectual property, Jatin explored how to "diplomatically" avoid this

scenario occurring. Part of this motivation stemmed from a recent experience where he cautioned an Office of Education against translating and distributing resources to schools interested in, yet not necessarily invested in IB. Chloe, however, stepped in, dismissing this train of thought by affirming that "our mission is, the more people that know the IB the better." She also believed measures aimed at guarding materials to be pointless, explaining how essentially anything from the PRC can be found online if people know where to look. Chloe expanded on this position during interview:

Chloe: "Personally my opinion is that [the PRC] is so hard to monitor, and there are actually very few legal structures to [protect it], so, everybody that's involved in IB [at the] school level are constantly – or consultants – publishing bits and pieces about IB. So it's kind of all out there, anyway. I think [Jatin's] concern is that they'll just copy it holus bolus and they won't need us."

Akira: "Yes, right."

Chloe: "I think we need to offer something more than just the written content. And those days are gone where your collateral behind the paywall is what your business is about."

Edward echoed this viewpoint, reinforcing how "reading the materials [alone] will not enable you to run an IB programme," or even "a facsimile of an IB programme" because it is "just too complex." These tensions over intellectual property join with broader existential uncertainties over the IBO as an organization, with the idea it must evolve past an exclusively resource-based organization to survive. Regardless, the positionality taken by both IBEC representatives is indicative of IBEC's diplomatic motivations as an initiative, as its re-housing from PD to Outreach – as mentioned previously – aptly symbolizes.

There two key phases of the recognition process that ultimately determine a university's eligibility: the application and the RV. The former determines whether the latter proceeds, as it

remains exceedingly rare for IBEC Consultants to fail a university outright once an RV is scheduled. The application is comprehensive, requiring several pieces of supporting documentation, including course outlines, representations of programme structure / progression, guidance material for students, faculty CVs, and an internal validation report. The IBO outlines the purpose of the RV through five points, including reviewing the institution's quality assurance / enhancement procedures, discussing programme sustainability along with collaborative opportunities, and providing general advice on the proposed programme. However, most important – at least for the purposes of this chapter – is its aim in discussing "the *alignment* of the program's learning outcomes with the academic requirements of the relevant certificate" (IBO 2020a, 8, my emphasis).

Before the original COVID-19 outbreak RVs were an exclusively in-person event, where teams of three or four representative members were dispatched. This remains the case for in-person RVs today, but exclusively digital equivalents had increased exponentially during the first few years of the pandemic (e.g., all four RVs I experienced in 2021 were digital), and have since continued as a secondary option. Incidentally, as is observable in figure 3.3, universities need not finance travel and two-day accommodation fees if the meetings are digital, a key reason why my participation on them was both financially and geographically viable (see Chapter 1).

The IBEC Team is led by one or two Consultants, a role that is technically – and bizarrely – treated as external to the IBO despite their authority in operating its framework. This is generally supplemented with one or two additional 'internal' experts positioned within its IB Educator Network (IBEN). One of the consultants assumes the role as Chair and tries to match additional IBEN support on a case-by-case basis. They might, for instance, ask an experienced educator at an IB World School in the local territory for socio-cultural and / or linguistic support, or other appropriate advisors with specialist knowledge in specific school programmes the IBEC is designed around. Due to the organization's regionally unbalanced pool of administrative support, certain areas (e.g., Australia) possess local expertise in abundance, whereas others (e.g., South Korea) are considerably lacking. I explore some of the effects this reality exerted on operational language in Chapter 6.

My time with the IBEC Team saw me participate as a Guest Member on four RVs conducted across the Asia-Pacific region. Two universities were located in South Korea, one in China, and one in Japan. Edward and Chloe – the two IBEC Consultants and key representatives

for all these IBEC Teams – were based in eastern Australia. There was a total of five senior IBENs called on to support one of these four RVs, including three who either already held – or in one case was pursuing part-time – a doctoral degree in Education. Two members of ethnographic relevance in the remainder of this chapter are Kaden, who joined the team in China, and Rachel, who joined one of the two South Korean RVs. Kaden was the IBO's former Head of IB World Schools, and current curriculum director at an international school conglomerate based across mainland China, South Korea, and Singapore, the final of which he was physically based. Rachel is presently a member of teaching faculty at an IB World School in Vietnam, added onto the team due to her specialist practitioner expertise with the DP.

Neoliberalizing the 'IB Educator'

Two questions burned in my mind before my digital arrival at the IBO with its IBEC representatives. First, what does it mean to be an IB educator? Second, by extension, what was required to be IB educator-licensed? On paper the ideological answer was obvious: *International-mindedness* (IM). What criteria, then, made one's mind international? As I learned before initiating fieldwork, multiple interpretations of IM existed (see Chapter 2). There was a World War 1 IM, a 'White' Euro-American / neo-imperialist notion seeking to consolidate the primacy of nation-states, spreading 'enlightenment' and 'culture' to 'civilize' the world and prevent war. There was a World War 2 IM, a 'White' Euro-American approach to nation-state diplomacy seeking for 'people' (i.e., 'national subjects') to deepen ties between nations, thereby preventing tragedies of war from repeating. There was a post-millennium IM, a predominately 'White' Euro-American response to neoliberal economics, treating 'people' as individuals *instead* of nations to facilitate global capitalisms. Of course, there was also IM as discerned by IBO-commissioned researchers, concluding it a vague mix of "multilingualism," "intercultural understanding," and "global engagement" (Singh and Qi 2013, viii). I therefore sought to identify what combination of the above or more was used to inform these representatives' judgments. Instead, my experience of the IBEC licensing process left me asking a different question altogether: *was there any combination?*

RVs lasted for a total of five to six hours digitally, as opposed to a typical two days in-person. These hours were split between two days, the first longer than the second. After an internal meeting, Day One generally followed the below pattern:

1. The IBEC Recognition Team (hereon 'team') introduce themselves, reviews the recognition process, establishes expectations of the RV, and summarizes potential outcomes.

2. University representatives introduce themselves and their institution. They outline the nature of their IBEC programme while emphasizing how their proposal aligns with the principles of the IBO.

3. Programme leaders breakdown all components of its IBEC programme to the team. This includes its structure within its degree programme, modules, and assessment procedures.

4. Any representatives from collaborating institutions (e.g., an affiliate IB World School) outline how they will collaborate with the university on aspects of its programme (e.g., providing access for school practicums).

5. The Chair of the team summarizes the day and outlines expectations for the following day.

Day Two also began with an internal meeting, this time identifying any potential concerns to be addressed. The team would then speak with programme facilitators – both in-groups and individually – over any outstanding issues. Finally, Edward, the Chair, offers concluding comments alongside the provisional outcome of the RV. The finalized decision is usually confirmed within a week once accepted by the IBO's Global Head of Recognition. There are three possible outcomes:

1. The programme is recognized with no further requirements.

2. The programme is recognized with further requirements to be addressed within an indicated timeframe.

3. The programme is not recognized due to certain conditions.

If glancing at their final reports, all four RVs I experienced proceeded without concern. One achieved outcome 1 while three achieved outcome 2. In other words, all satisfied the team's requirements. These results also reflect a successful alignment in values with the IBO. This was especially true for the university achieving outcome 1, an exceedingly rare result that Edward had only issued on one separate occasion in almost a decade. Lurking in the shadows of all this success, however, was a critical question: *has outcome 3 ever been issued?* In Edward and Chloe's collective experience spanning around eight years, the answer is only two. Moreover, the reasons for non-recognition in these scenarios had less to do with universities themselves, and more with either the internal politics of the IBO's Board, or legislative bureaucracy of specific territories. Exclude such scenarios from the equation, then, and it appears *no* university fails. It is worth re-emphasizing that IBEC representatives never schedule an RV unless they are confident in a university's application. Nevertheless, this seeming leniency is also hinted at through the organization's own language. It is, after all, a *recognition* process, not an *authorization* process, the latter term of which is instead deployed for its schooling programmes. The IBO formally licenses institutions incorporating IB educational aspects via their framework, but it does not control their motivations. Why? *Because IBEC is diplomacy*. It was a stance made explicitly clear to all four universities during Edward's opening speeches, consistently delivering the almost-identical statement: "This is not an inspectoral process."

This stance, I later discovered, was the cause of occasional friction between 'external' and 'internal' IBEC team members. Disagreement over intellectual property, as previously mentioned, was an apt example of this, but it was not the only scenario observed. Another instance occurred during an RV in China. Edward cautioned Kaden on expecting too much of the university despite agreeing on its immature grasp of certain educationalist concepts, namely student agency and self-efficacy (see Bandura 1982; Bandura 2001). The reason? For Edward and Chloe, the university demonstrated an active willingness to engage with such ideas. They warned Kaden against the relatively instructionist IBO 'workshop mentality,' explaining how IBEC seeks to lower expectations in order to grant institutions the chance to critically experiment with these types of pedagogies.

These scenarios begged the question: exactly how stringent is an IBEC programme's need for alignment with the IBO? From certain perspectives, considerably. Take practicum requirements. All programmes granting students eligibility for an IB Certificate in Teaching and Learning

(IBCTL) must provide them with opportunities to experience an IB World School in everyday operation, including via regular interaction with IB-affiliated practitioners. This can be accomplished in various ways, such as through hands-on facilitator training, observational exercises, and Q&A discussion sessions with IB educators collaborating with, or otherwise affiliated to the university. The RV in Japan was thrown into immediate doubt at one stage when it was discovered that its affiliated school, which the university planned to have fulfill this criterion, would have yet to be licensed as an IB World School by the time their IBEC was due to start. This proved an especial headache to solve owing to a relative lack of other eligible schools in its immediate vicinity. None of the university's proposed interim alternatives on Day One satisfied this requirement, yet, impressively, fervent action between the RVs two days saw the university pull off a last-minute arrangement. It appeared clearcut, however, that their IBEC would *not* have been recognized had they failed to do so. Further expectations, including those assessment-related, also demonstrated periods of relative stringency in determining recognition.

Conversely, no other would demonstrate its leniency more aptly than its *ideological alignment* with the organization's values and mission. It is ironically the first aspect covered within the official IBEC handbook, posing the question, "does the institution, its leadership and faculty demonstrate a commitment to promoting international-mindedness and intercultural understanding" (IBO 2020, 18). I have covered IM as a concept more comprehensively elsewhere (see Chapter 2), but it is worth highlighting how its present ambiguities leave it in a problematic position for assessment, with the few known instruments available unable to "address in any comprehensive way the existing array of IM related concepts" (Singh and Qi 2013, 80-81). Yet, because of its prominence in the IBEC handbook and other relevant IBO documentation, all universities *somehow* attempted to address their alignment with IM. As it quickly transpired, there appeared no substantive consensus within the team as to what values or principles underscored this alignment, let alone any such attempts to define it within the handbook. The result was remarkable. Seemingly *any* mindset or agenda could be defined as 'internationally-minded.'

One university alluded to IM through its own language of 'internationalization' without mentioning the former term once. They demonstrated this in two ways. First was through exchange student agreements with a range of globally reputed universities, particularly those positioned within the Anglosphere (e.g., Oxford, Cambridge, MIT, Berkeley). Second was its emphasis on participation in internationally governed academic competitions, a direct result of

the institution's focus on quantitative science. A second university similarly evidenced IM through exchange student promotion. This time, however, partner universities included more socio-culturally and socio-economically diverse territories, such as Mongolia, Vietnam, and Indonesia, alongside others in the Anglosphere. The institution additionally incorporated a dedicated module for IM, titled "International Mindedness and Collaboration in the IB Philosophy." This module was described in their application as a study over the importance for communities to possess an "international mind," evoking undefined concepts of "multimodality" and "microcultural identities."

If the above examples hint at how institutions take advantage of IM's ambiguities to forward their own projects, it was another that revealed the extremities of this manipulation: a university in South Korea falling under the umbrella term of 'missionary universities.' It was one of two institutions to be categorizable as such, with the second in Japan. They collectively represent two variations of Christian Protestantism, with the Japanese institution Presbyterianist and the South Korean counterpart Evangelist. For the former, this resulted in proposing an IBEC programme ideologically centered around the notion of "Love Thy Neighbor." Its intention to directly infuse this teaching inside IB philosophical principles was made evident in parts of its application, as demonstrated through the following passage for a module overview:

"The academic and moral attributes described in the IB learner profile combined with [our institution's] Christian values (Love Thy Neighbor) will be used to support this inquiry to reinforce the dispositions needed for becoming an international educator and a lifelong learner."

This 'Love Thy Neighbor' approach was received without any concerns in IM-alignment, a telling if unsurprising result. After all, the team are explicit in their intention to not interfere with a university's autonomy, especially its own ideological values and mission. This tolerance results in IBEC programmes indiscriminate of any definition for cultivating 'IM' and 'international educators.' The conclusion, then, appears straightforward. In practice, the IBO are all but completely uninterested in the alignment of their supposed mission with a university's equivalent. Instead, they are concerned with most *measurable* (i.e., non-ideological) aspects of an application.

If, however, the above is the case, what might occur if a given internationalist agenda may be deemed at risk of affecting these latter aspects as well? Surely, then, the team would then have no choice but to intervene, even if reluctantly?

In comparison to the Japanese institution, the South Korean counterpart's commitment to Protestantism was markedly intense, evidently discernable through its promotional video presented to the team. This introduction vividly portrayed several extensive segments of its commitment to instilling a "Christian" and "biblical worldview," showcasing multiple instances of collective worship among its students. It further validated its 'Christian-ness' via an advocational interview with an established South Korea-based 'White' missionary from the US. As I have now highlighted, none of the above should be considered problematic to the team, as any potential divergences in alignment appear merely ideological. Critically, however, this scenario – unlike the Japanese institution – flagged potentially pragmatic, *measurable* issues in alignment, manifesting through the medium in which it licenses its educators.

Another non-negotiable requirement for IBEC is a need for prospective students to be either (1) licensed as educators by a credible body (e.g., a national government) prior to enrollment, or (2) licensed by a credible body before completion of their degree programme. This was met for the other three institutions through accepting and / or licensing students with qualifications recognized by their respective national education systems. Here, however, things were different, exclusively licensing students through the US-founded and based Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). The ACSI holds claim as the largest evangelical Christian school association in the world, defining its mission as follows:

"To strengthen Christian schools and equip Christian educators worldwide as they prepare students academically and inspire them to become devoted followers of Jesus Christ."

(ACSI 2023)

This mission is directly channeled through the Graduate School of Education's own mission statement, presented as follows during the RV:

"To train competent Christian teachers who can provide holistic education with a Christian worldview."

The ACSI desires its educators to teach with curricula "biblically sound" (ACSI 2023). This is also required of the institution's Master of Education (M.Ed.) degree which the IBEC framework was to be integrated. In its presentation to the team, the university broke down their modules into the four branches of 'basic,' 'curriculum,' 'instruction,' and 'research.' Those in 'basic' are compulsory for all students, comprised of the following titles:

- Introduction to the Bible and Theology.
- Understanding Christian Worldview.
- Calling and Teaching Profession.
- Philosophy of Christian Education.
- Biblical Studies.
- (Bible and Christian Apologetics or Creation Science Forum).

Its inclusion of Creation Science emerged as a particular topic of concern during an internal meeting at the end of Day One. The reason lied in the institution's plan run an IBEC programme specialized in the DP, which is its own curricula. In other words, the IBO not only decides the pedagogical approach – as they solely do for the PYP and MYP – but additionally prescribes the content to be studied and examined. DP subjects consequently undergo infamous external assessment procedures (Bunnell 2011), making it – in the words of Edward – a "high-risk" programme for educators to facilitate. Because of this, one of, if not *the* most valued skillset for employers of DP educators is grading in one's specialist subject/s with consistency. As elaborated by Chloe during interview, this risk is also considered for IBEC:

Chloe: "Doing the DP always makes it a little bit…dodgy in the sense that there are so many subjects, you know there's only six subject groups, but there are so many subjects and that, is kind of a risk we always look at for the IB, how well are [the universities] going to be able to support [students] in each of those DP subjects."

The team must feel sufficiently assured that prospective students can receive specialist DP subject support where necessary. It is expected for IBEC students specializing in the DP to (1) already possess, or (2) aim to acquire disciplinary specialization for a specific subject (e.g., mathematics, visual art, psychology, chemistry etc.) by the end of their degree. What, then, of the elephant in the room? What happens if a student's subject specialism (e.g., biology, geography, history etc.) clashes with creationist content? It was a question Edward pondered out loud during the internal meeting:

Edward: "I'm wondering how the teaching of creation science would align with the IB's view of science [laughs]."

Momentary silence followed. Eager to learn more, I asked what might occur if a student's specialty was in a subject like biology. Edward chuckled. Rachel – a DP specialist – then responded with the following:

Rachel: "I don't know if that's something we should bring up with them."

Rachel: "I don't think that, like, accurate and up to date science instruction is like mutually exclusive, with a Christian School you know what I mean?"

Rachel explained how her views are derived from her own experience attending a Christian high school in South-Eastern US, referring to the region as the "bible belt." She delivered a story of her former science teacher at school, who carefully instructed the class on how to study leading scientific theory. Cautioning pupils over how their churches may not agree with classroom content, they emphasized how, for themselves, there was no contradiction in knowing both. I jumped in at the end of this reflection with another question, producing the following exchange:

Akira: "I guess my question is, do they [i.e., the university] do that?"

Rachel: "Yeah, I'm curious about that!"

Edward: "Well, I mean, the role of the university here is to prepare students for going into the workplace, and so we would hope that they have those discussions about, these are the values we are being taught at this university, but you need to be aware that you are going to be exposed to a continuum of values and ideas, even in an IB school."

The team met for a further hour the next day, confirming how they ought to articulate any outstanding queries. Questions over assessment unsurprisingly took the fore. Intriguingly, however, questions on curriculum alignment with Creation Science was only briefly, and indirectly touched on through the below question posed by Chloe to a university representative:

Chloe: "Is there any back and forth or liaison between the courses that are in the Masters that IBEC students do, so that they can make the links across what they are learning in other classes and apply it to school?"

The question carefully skirted the matter, inquiring more broadly about how the institution

integrates IB-related elements into its M.Ed. degree. The response was equally vague, the lead representative responding that they were still working as an organization on the matter, but assured that all modules, including Christian Worldview and its application to IB, would be linked. Such was the leniency, that Chloe ended this line of questioning by reassuring representatives how faith-based schools have no issues linking this up in Australia. Nothing further on this matter was raised for the remainder of the RV.

Despite hedging – if not arguably in danger of breaching – the extremities of alignment, the institution passed without a need to address any direct questions on the matter. Later, during a focus group session with Edward and Chloe, I asked if a concern would emerge if it transpired that efforts to compartmentalize Creation Science from relevant IB subjects were not being made. Edward answered:

Edward: "It would be, it would be a concern, yes."

Edward: "Now, we didn't perceive at the time any tension between the type of science being taught… but… but, it could be a problem, because if they go into an IB World School, then the curriculum would determine what they would have to teach, but we…we tend not to get down into that level. I haven't been [down to that level] in any of the [RVs] that I've been involved in."

As these words allude to, IBEC's un-investigative nature even extends to scenarios where there is *determined* to be a potential concern over alignment. It is an apt reflection of the IBO's broader outreach strategy, using IBEC to foster and consolidate diplomatic ties with universities. In other words, in its current guise, IBEC has become an emphatically neoliberalist instrument for the organization's aggressive growth strategy. Or, in Edward's words, the IBEC initiative let's "the market decide" what is acceptable.

To Summarize

This chapter introduced the IBEC initiative, including its genesis within the IBO and status at the time of writing. Through a micro ethnography of Recognition Visits, I analyze IBEC as a diplomatic project for the IBO's relationship with higher education, resultingly empowering a range of localized internationalist and globalist agendas even when they risk not aligning with its own. The consequences of this strategy are clearcut. IBEC is further neoliberalizing the ideological underpinnings of the 'international educator,' and by extension 'international-mindedness.' It permits universities an ability to amplify a diverse and discordant range of internationalist / globalist aspirations with little tangible limitation. Moreover, it is even willing to bestow the benefit of doubt over less ambiguous, measurable issues in alignment. This sheds important insights as to relative weight the IBO places on its own ideological compass versus its desire for growth, a critical axis to consider for the remainder of this thesis. Nevertheless, while intriguing, the results are predictable. To (re)quote another, IBEC seamlessly supports the analysis that international-mindedness has long since transformed from "a liberal humanist framework toward a neoliberal one" (Resnik 2012, 265). The IBO's ideological mission today, in more succinct words, appears exclusively determined by *those who can.*

Having now identified what IBEC is from the positionality of the IBO, remaining ethnographic data in this thesis is directed at its localization in Japan. Before exploring these aspects in subsequent chapters, however, it is critical to first contextualize IB within the broader history of Japan's education system to date. This is the job of Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4 – CULTIVATING 'SUPER GLOBAL' HUMAN RESOURCE: SITUATING IB IN JAPAN

1979. This year marked the authorization of the first IB World School (i.e., licensed IB school) in Japan, and formal recognition of the IBO's Diploma Programme (DP) by the nation-state's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). It is an impressive date on the surface, around one decade after the curriculum's original rollout at Ecolint in Switzerland and Atlantic College in the UK (see Chapter 2). Yet a swift glance at the numbers and nature of schools established before the millennium is enough to conclude IB's permeation into Japan's education system as anything but profound.

Figure 4.1: Authorized IB World Schools in Japan (1979 – 1999)

Name	Year	Type	Prefecture	Language	Gender
St. Mary's International School	1979	Private International	Tokyo	English	Boys
Canadian Academy	1980	Private International	Hyogo	English	Coeducational
Saint Maur International School	1984	Private International	Kanagawa	English	Coeducational
Yokohama International School	1984	Private International	Kanagawa	English	Coeducational
Seisen International School	1986	Private International	Tokyo	English	Girls
Osaka International School of Kwansei Gakuin	1990	Private International	Osaka	English	Coeducational

(Raw data primarily received from the IBO)

Only six schools were authorized in Japan before 2000, including none between 1991 and 1999 (see figure 4.1). In addition, all are prestigious private international schools operating independently of the Japanese national curriculum, and exclusively mediated in English. The result was an IB education accessible to only a niche, socially mobile population of predominately high socio-economic status. In fact, with the notable exception of Yokohama International School,[37] all are influenced by some denomination of Christian ideology. They are generally founded by a mix of Methodist and Catholic missionaries, with most remaining explicitly faith-orientated to date, adding a further restrictive dimension for mainstream Japanese populations. Put bluntly, IB was all but an alien, anonymous phenomenon in the country's schooling sector.

As educationalists wrote in Japan at the time, this outcome was no surprise (Miyakoshi et al. 1994). The IBO were attempting to permeate an education system comparable to Germany and France, two other territories the organization has historically struggled with and generally continues to. Like these examples, Japan's education system managed – and generally still manages – a strictly country-specific qualification system for entry into both high school and higher education. Such systems emphasizing "uniformity" would naturally find IB an undesirable influence (Miyakoshi et al. 1994, 252). The IBO furthermore failed to surmount at least two additional dilemmas. First, integrating a "foreign" curriculum in a "structurally flexible" manner into its national education system, and second, aiding localized demands for skillsets considered critical to one's preparation in Japan's fiercely competitive university entrance examinations (Miyakoshi et al. 1994, 253). Even within the context of a small 'international education' sector in Japan, IB was rendered all but statistically non-existent in its early decades. Intriguing then, that Japanese literature on IB can be traced back to at least the 1980s (e.g., Tokumaru 1984), including through an edited volume on the subject (Nishimura 1989).

The story of IB's emergence in Japan is naturally inseparable from the broader context of its education system, one engrossed with notions of *gakuryoku* ('scholastic competencies'), *kokusaika* ('internationalization'), and, in more recent decades, *gurōbaruka* ('globalization'). It is also linked to Japan's post-World War 2 (hereon 'postwar') era of 'egalitarian education,' the first period I review before introducing some of the principal actors responsible for generating early

[37] Yokohama International School is claimed to be the second oldest 'modern' international school in the world, weeks younger than the 1924-established International School of Geneva (i.e., Ecolint).

intrigue on IB through the 1980s and early 90s. I briefly divert attention to reactions concerning a set of unpopular educational reforms known as *yutori kyōiku* ('relaxed education') due to its inadvertent role in encouraging the Japanese Government's more recent globalist educational policies, aptly embodied through a suite of 'super global' initiatives. I trace these policies to the currently popularized trope of *gurōbaru jinzai* ('global human resource'), one at the heart of MEXT's later decision to establish formal collaborative ties with the IBO from the early 2010s. I finally review the considerable growth of IB – and by extension IBEC (see Chapter 3) – in Japan from the early 2010s to date, along with renewed debates its expansion has since sparked in the country, particularly concerning its contributions to exacerbating educational inequality. I argue IB to now be teetering on becoming, if not already part of the Japanese education sector's *own* globalist aims, an outcome unthinkable during its early decades in the country.

Reviewing the Era of 'Egalitarian Education'

On a quest to realize a sentiment of educational equality, the formation of Japan's modern education system to its present state can be viewed as a story of turbulent twists and turns. A complicated 'modernization' process during its Meiji (1868-1912) and Taishō (1912-1926) eras saw the birth of a well-documented age of educational "credentialism" (Amano 1982, 205). Despite its formal intentions, however, this *gakureki shakai* ('credential society') did not realize a pure educational meritocracy. Distinctions of its social elites were robustly maintained throughout its high school system, and by far most stringently across the higher education sector. These major asterisks aside, statistical data narrates the story of massification well, with enrollment rates for high school growing from 2.9% in 1900, to 15.9% in 1910, to 25% in 1920, and to 32.3% in 1925 (MEXT 1971). By the end of the Taishō era Japan found itself leaps ahead of almost all who comprised the popularly imagined 'West,' with, for instance, Germany's equivalent rate at 8.8%, and France's at 6.9% in 1930 (Ringer 1979). The relentless pace of educational accessibility – *substantial limitations* (e.g., the total exclusion of women in high school and higher education) notwithstanding – set the stage for a significant set of postwar reforms commonly referred to as 'egalitarian education.'

As others have summarized, where the credentialist age was concerned with a more "hierarchal aspect of social relations," and the years leading to World War 2 characterized by

"nationalistic" discourse, postwar marked a promotion of greater "humanistic and egalitarian themes" (Cummings 1980, 104). For the education sector this most prominently led to a newly enacted "Fundamental Law of Education," one accentuating "equal opportunity" as its primary goal, and included the immense decision to end "educational discrimination against women" (Kariya 2018, 5). Through this enactment, this new education system also established a *Kyōiku iinkai* (Board of Education) within every prefecture of the nation-state, decisively purposed to decentralize national governmental influence. These prefectural Boards of Education were structurally embedded with Layman Control Systems to further squash centralized authority and better empower the collective voices of Japanese citizens (Hayashi 2017, 4).

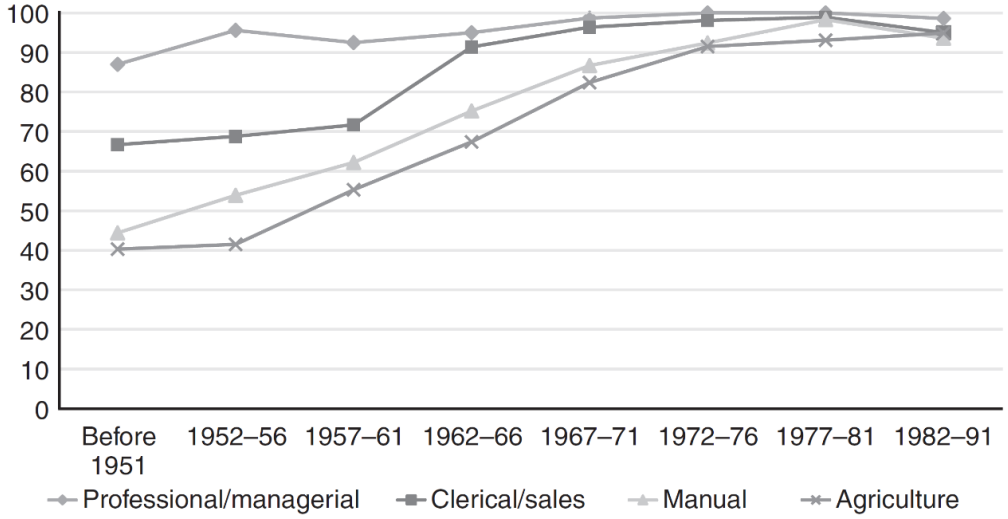
Ideas underpinning this 'egalitarian' system generally bloomed up until middle school, the newly mandated end of compulsory education between the 1960s and early 1980s. A major contributor to realizing this lay with the strategy of "spatial equality," an approach to education system finance (Kariya and Rappleye 2020, 12) that "seeks to equalize resources allocated among different geographical administrative units such as prefectures, cities, school districts and schools" (Kariya 2013a, 169; Kariya 2009, 147-206). It is a strategy that contrasts with "individual equality" (Kariya and Rappleye 2020, 12), which instead "seeks to equalize resources among individuals as units," as is more generally practiced across Euro-American schooling systems (Kariya 2013a, 169). Individual equality theoretically denotes principal consideration toward individual difference, whether in the form of socio-economic status or academic competencies. This results in employment strategies catered to the individual, ultimately equalizing opportunities for achievement within a group. Basing equality spatially, meanwhile, produces uniformity of "educational conditions based on collective units," thereby concealing "individual differences in ability and attributes" (Kariya 2013a, 170). In simpler terms, spatial equality *dulls* individual difference whereas individual equality *enhances* it. This is an essential axis to consider when analyzing the first wave of educationalists to take interest in IB, as I explore in the following section.

Japan's spatial equality system was aided by consistent and eventually soaring economic growth, creating wealthier families, greater accessibility for high school education, and a consequent increase in social mobility on a mass scale. Others have traced how the expansion of middle school education occurred at a simultaneous period with Japan's rapid postwar industrialization. This created a large-scale influx of more secure high-income jobs, raising the impetus for families to send children to high school as average income equalized during the 1960s

and 1970s (Kagawa et al. 2014, 15). Figure 4.2 showcases this closing of socio-economic division, highlighted by a remarkable increase of high school children from manual and agricultural labor backgrounds. Around 40% of high school diploma holders from these backgrounds existed pre-1951 before eventually rising to around 90% by the 1972-76 window. By the 1970s, postwar educational reforms had seen a drastic shrinking of the divide between children from a small social elite and those from more mainstream socio-economic upbringings.

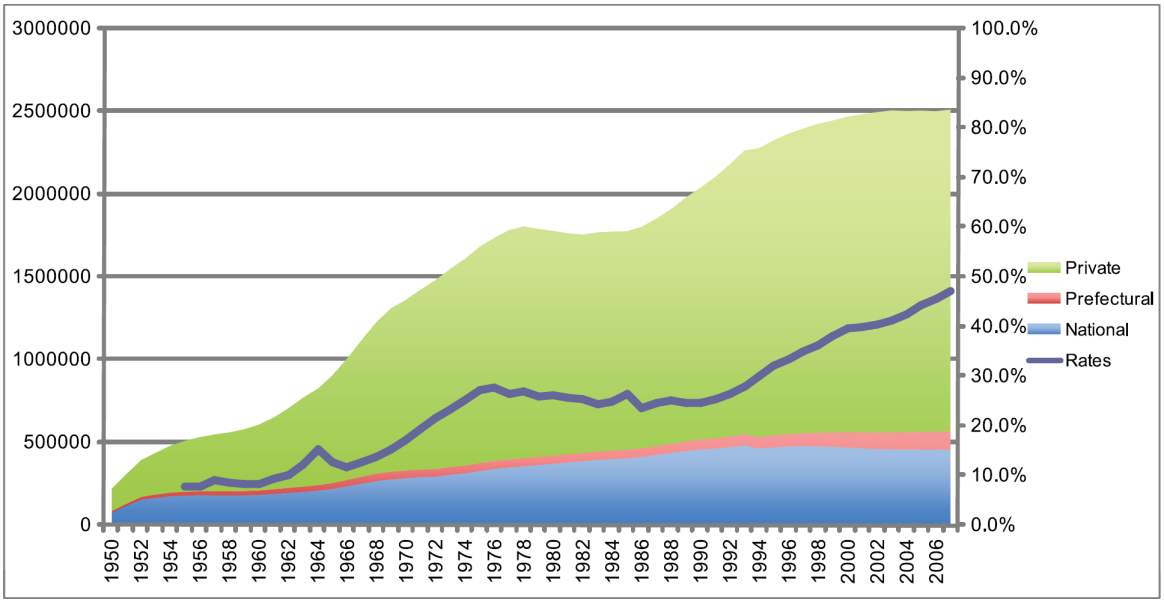
With Japan transforming into a "*taishū kyōiku shakai*" or 'mass education society' (Kariya 1995), higher education would also undergo significant change. The rise of overall enrollment was almost single-handedly realized by universities in the private sector, with most elite institutions (i.e., generally those in the national and public sectors) remaining essentially static (figure 4.3). Overall enrollment figures "increased from 2,043,000 in 1990 to 2,514,000 in 2007" along with a marked increase of 18-year-old students, rising from 24.4% to 47.2% (Kariya 2011, 72).

Figure 4.2: "Change in the Ratio of Holders of a High School Diploma or Above Disaggregated by Father's Occupation and High School Entry Cohort (Year of Entry into High School)"



(Directly borrowed from Kariya 2013b, 36)

Figure 4.3: University Enrollment Rate in Japan (1950 – 2006)



(Directly borrowed from Kariya 2011, 72)[38]

Nonetheless, it would be a mistake to label these postwar decades as educationally egalitarian. For instance, despite persistent – and at times near-hostile – attempts at altering the status quo (Kariya 2010, 59-60), a firm re-centralization of power eventually saw the national government steer educational policy at the expense of prefectural and other local governing counterparts (Nakajima 2006; Kariya 2010). This power is fittingly symbolized by the Japanese Government's sovereignty over a standardized and still predominately content-based national curriculum. It is additionally illustrated through "nationally inspected school textbooks, a nationally controlled teacher training and certification system, and nationally regulated physical school conditions and environment" (Kariya 2010, 59).

In addition, the aforementioned Layman Control System integrated into prefectural Boards of Education has since been criticized as little more than symbolically effective by educationalists. Argued to hold inherent structural flaws, the voices of everyday citizens – generally working part time – have often been overwhelmingly out-numbered and out-organized by those of professional educationalists and teaching faculty, crippling the ideal of

[38] See Amano (1997, 127) for another model complementing this data.

decentralization (Hayashi 2017, 4-5). Others dismiss 'egalitarian education' as a "functionalist paradigm" overlooking child dehumanization, permitting a proliferation and maintenance of *ijime* (group-bullying) and *tōkōkyohi* (school-phobia) while legitimatizing various forms of physical and symbolic punishments, including coercing cultures of silence (Yoneyama 1999, 18). Occasionally ghastly and even fatal, such norms against objectivized *'mondaiji'* (literally put, 'problem children') persist today, especially normalized within "physical education and athletic club activities" (Yoneyama 1999, 91-117, 157, 186; Miller 2010; McDonald and Kawai 2017). Many tense debates surrounding these issues have raged on, represented by volumes titled *Ijime · Futōkō,* or *Group-bullying and School Non-attendance*[39] (Ito 2007).

A student's socio-economic status persisted in determining their level of accessibility into higher education, remaining immensely exclusivist in nature. Moreover, with a growing disparity of family income levels continuing into the early 1990s, combined with a "steep rise" in university tuition fees, increasing numbers of high school students were unable to advance (Furuta 2006, 209). Far from just one's familial assets, other factors, such as a father's occupation, parent's respective levels of "educational background," and more, have affected one's likelihood of entering higher education, a trend enduring into the early 1990s (Kondo and Furuta 2009, 694-695) and beyond. A number of case studies emerged around this time concerned with the relationship between higher education credentials and the formation / maintenance of various forms of social elites (e.g., Aso 1969; Mannari 1965; Takane 1976). The result remained – and remains – that "credentials from elite [higher educational] institutions generally enhance an individual's bargaining power in the labour market in Japan" (Ishida 1993, 159).

In summary, a push for a sentiment of educational equality contributed to comprehensive public investment in education, the permeation of an "egalitarian moral sentiment" and greater "equalization of social opportunity" by the 1980s (Cummings 1980, 264; Kagawa et al. 2014). Educational inequality was largely concealed through the financial strategy of spatial equality, and an overarching faith by the mainstream Japanese population that its educational meritocracy worked. This includes systems of discrimination among both mainstream schooling, and, although not covered here, of several minoritized populations (Kariya 1995, 144-150). Nevertheless,

[39] The phrase *futōkō* literally translates to 'school non-attendance' but generally evokes a negative connotation akin to the English concept of 'truancy.'

this attitude of egalitarianism permeated Japan's education sector throughout the 1970s and 80s, precisely the period when first contact with the phenomenon of the 'IB' was made.

Siphoning IB for 'International Competencies' & 'Japanese Returnees'

Tokumaru Katsumi. Perhaps *the* central figure for sparking preliminary interest on IB in Japan from the 1980s, Tokumaru was otherwise famous as a researcher in the fields of industrial and material chemistry. Based at the University of Tsukuba (hereon 'Tsukuba'), he was fixated at improving the comparative (i.e., 'international') competitiveness of Japan's national *'risūka-kei'* ('hard science')[40] curricula. For Tokumaru, this required remedying 'egalitarian education' and its apparent backwater system of spatial equality. Disillusioned with broader egalitarian sentiment, he firmly believed in the alternative notion of individual equality, desiring a national system dedicated to the scouting and cultivating of talent. He sought a system that developed specialist teacher resource and provided scholarships for talented individuals, all to enable 'Japan' (i.e., Japanese nationals) to compete with a so-perceived higher level of scientific excellence across 'Western' nations (Tokumaru 1991, 256-257).

Around 1980 Tokumaru received word of a new, innovative set of international curricula called the '*kokusai bakarorea'* ('international baccalaureate'). Departing Tsukuba to investigate, he flew to Geneva (Switzerland), visiting the formal headquarters of the *Kokusai Bakarorea Kikō*, or the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). Here Tokumaru met fellow chemist Jeff Thompson (see Chapter 3), at the time the Head of the organization's science division. Through this exchange he journeyed across Western Europe, observing IB schools in Switzerland, France, and the United Kingdom. Before returning to Tsukuba, Tokumaru gained further insight over the IBO's chemistry curriculum through Ronald Ragsdale, then a committee member of its chemistry division.

Combining this experience with knowledge of Japanese national curricula, Tokumaru

[40] Within this context 'hard science' principally refers to chemistry, physics, biology, and to a lesser extent mathematics.

arrived at the conclusion that among "the syllabuses of IB science subjects" at higher level, or HL,[41] chemistry was "especially different" from its Japanese counterpart, while the difference was "smaller in physics, and almost the same in biology" (Tokumaru 1984, 77). He analyzed that while the IB Standard Level (SL)[42] chemistry curriculum possessed content similar to the national system, its HL counterparts contained topics advanced enough to be experienced by a second-year university undergraduate (Tokumaru 1988, 14-15). This claim was later reinforced by physics-minded educationalists (Kishi and Shimojo 1996, 312). Tokumaru noted another key contrast to reside in the IBO's methodological emphasis on experiments and learning-by-practice, describing it as "unparalleled" compared to the national system (Tokumaru 1988, 16). Seizing the initiative to spark broader interdisciplinary debate across 'hard science' education, in 1982, Tokumaru – in collaboration with figures such as Jeff Thompson – ran the first IB education-orientated International Conference for Fundamental Sciences at Tsukuba. This conference continued into the early 1990s, and despite its focus on chemistry, facilitated an initial spread of general knowledge over the IBO's DP content and pedagogy (e.g., Anraku 1988, 88-89; Nakamaru 1988, 5).

At the core of these discussions nested a principal question: how can we (i.e., 'the Japanese') improve the comparative (i.e., 'international') competitiveness of 'hard science' curricula in the national system by borrowing on the DP's counterpart? Evidenced by an all but total absence of IB schools in the country at the time, this initial wave of intellectual interest was uninterested in introducing IB itself to Japan. Rather, it was grounded on nationalistic gain. One key phrase emerging 24 times in Tokumaru's four-page article was that of *"waga kuni"* ('our country' / 'Japan') (Tokumaru 1988, 13-16). Tokumaru believed his various insights on the DP held the key to unlocking essential competencies otherwise ignored by the present 'egalitarian' system. Students who could better "express" and "debate" complex concepts, and through it, gain a competitive *individual* edge – for Japan – in the world (Tokumaru 1991, 257). Another scientist based at the Tokyo Institute of Technology, Akahori Kanji, expressed similar thoughts. He advocated for a "cross-curriculum" – a buzzword at the time – that helped combine "traditional" and "experiential learning" in the national system through utilizing the DP's Theory of Knowledge

[41] As remains the case with the DP, three subjects are undertaken at Standard Level (SL) while three are adopted at Higher Level (HL), with the latter containing more content and classroom hours.

[42] Refer to the previous footnote.

(TOK)[43] component (Akahori 1995, S37-S38).

Tokumaru's early influence saw a raft of trial DP exams ensue. Using a combination of fresh university undergraduates and high school students as samples, results were analyzed and compared between the fields of biology (e.g., Nagasu 1984; Nagasu 1985), physics (e.g., Nakamaru 1988), and chemistry (e.g., Hori 1986). Drawing on Nakamaru Nobuyuki's trial as an example, he discovered a trend where Japanese high school graduates flourished at questions requiring the application of numerical calculations using mathematical formulae. However, on the other hand, they struggled to produce the "semantic knowledge of [such] fundamental concepts" being calculated, an aspect stressed in the DP's HL physics assessment rubric (Nakamaru 1988, 8). This view was shared by Takakura Sho, who conducted one of the more comprehensive and interdisciplinary-focused equivalents by combining the above three curriculums with mathematics and English (Takakura 1987). Primarily sponsored by Tsukuba, other participating institutions consisted of one high school, one technical college, and the five universities of Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Tokyo Institute of Technology, Joetsu University of Education, Kobe University, and Hiroshima University. The core goal of the study was to make explicitly "clear the difference in educational processes between [the national system] and IB" (Takakura 1987, 53). Takakura concluded several reasons for why students performed relatively poorly. For instance, the lowest scores often related to topics not typically part of Japan's university entrance exams. There were also issues in applying abstract concepts to everyday scenarios, a relative inability "to understand the practicality of mathematical formulae," and difficulties in adjusting to practical (e.g., experimental) work (Takakura 1987, 53). Such studies led to an early consensus that *gakuryoku* (i.e., scholastic competencies) in Japan generally consisted of knowledge influenced by the content of university examinations, a reality critiqued by this 'Tokumaru-movement.'

Despite initial enthusiasm, however, interest in IB by this movement of scientists stagnated, marked by a dramatic reduction of literature throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. One reason why was described in 2002 by Shimojo Takashi, a science educationalist based at Tokyo Gakugei University at the time. Shimojo continued the push for establishing a 'cross-curriculum'

[43] Theory of Knowledge (TOK) – alongside Community, Action, Service (CAS) and the Extended Essay (EE) – is a compulsory component of the DP, taking the form of an original subject grounded in philosophy.

that inspired more experiential approaches, lamenting the systemization of 'theory-only' science in national curricula. He had previously written on the matter in the 1980s, including as co-author for a comprehensive guide to understanding IB science assessment and its comparison to corresponding national curricula (Shimojo et al. 1993; Kishi and Shimojo 1996). However, in 2002, Shimojo dismissed IB education as something that can, and should probably remain utilized by only a handful of "excellent pupils," while future national 'cross-curriculum' strategies should be developed "independently" of any 'foreign' programmes (Shimojo 2002, 20-21). The 2002 launch of the Super Science High School (SSH) initiative by the Japan Science and Technology Agency helped divert attention away from IB, as I consider later in this chapter.

Nevertheless, this 'Tokumaru-movement' was not alone. Arriving relatively late to the scene, a broader revitalizing of "comparative educational research" in Japan (Okihara and Ozawa 1991, 161) saw general educationalist attention turn to IB at the end of the 1980s. Unlike the group of scientists focused on curricula *content*, these educationalists were comparatively drawn to its *pedagogy*. The signature work initiating this spike was published in 1989. Likely the first-ever volume on IB in Japanese, it was edited by Nishimura Shunichi, an educationalist then based at Tokyo Gakugei University's *'kaigaishijo'* ('Japanese Children Oversees') Center[44] (Nishimura 1989). Titled *Kokusaiteki Gakuryoku no Tankyū: Kokusai Bakarorea no Rinen to Kadai* – translating to *Inquiring into International Scholastic Competencies: On the Principles and Themes of the International Baccalaureate*[45] – the volume was inspired by broader discourses over 'scholastic competencies' and *kokusaika* ('internationalization'). That said, as others reviewed at the time, the volume's focus was not directed at defining the "criteria or content [of] scholastic competencies," but instead on the context and nuance of IB qualification recognition within nation-state education systems, particularly Japan (Sakamoto 1990, 184). It also regularly teased the notion of 'international scholastic competencies' as *process*. Specifically, learning environments encouraging *inquiry,* and not simply the regurgitating of prescribed content as encouraged by its national curricula. Such

[44] This center has since been rebranded as the *'Kokusai Kyōiku Sentā'* or 'International Education Center.'

[45] An official English title is included at the back of the volume: *Towards Internationalization of Education: A Critical Study of International Baccalaureate*. It does not semantically translate to its Japanese counterpart.

thought appeared to inspire the later publication of a comprehensive *chishiki no riron,* or 'TOK' guide in Japanese by Japan's National Institute for Educational Policy Research (Sawada et al. 1992). As its authors wrote, the guide hoped to act as a fruitful "reference" for introducing future pedagogical approaches in the country (Sawada et al. 1992, iii).

Brief considerations over direct IB implementation in mainstream Japanese schools also surfaced around this time, demonstrated by Nakanishi Akira's proposal to introduce the DP in schools obliged to follow MEXT's national guidelines, otherwise legally termed article-1 schools (Nakanishi 1989). Nakanishi referred to a seemingly bleak 1986 public opinion poll conducted by the Japanese Government's Cabinet Office on Japanese nationals' sense of "international consciousness" (Nakanishi 1989, 229). It indicated a strong disinterest / animosity toward the ideas of living in *'kaigai'* ('abroad') for any extensive period, as well as making friends with 'foreigners.' Nakanishi therefore argued it imperative for the education sector to play a decisive role in reversing such trends. He proposed a curious solution backed by Japan's National Council on Educational Reform: exposing so termed *"ippan Nihonjin"* ('general Japanese') to *"kikokushijo"* ('Japanese returnees') and *"kaigaishijo"* ('Japanese overseas') in schools (Nakanishi 1989, 230, 233-234).

Also more recently referred to as *'kikokusei'* ('Japanese returnee students') in the education sector, 'Japanese returnees' (hereon 'returnees') held – and continue to hold – a significant relationship with IB education in Japan. They were a specific population of focus in Nishimura's volume (Ehara 1989), and a broader subject of intrigue by an increasing number of social scientists, both in relation to and independent of the education sector (e.g., Goodman 1990; Nukaga and Tsuneyoshi 2011; Sueda 2014). For instance, they have been the source of considerable conceptual reflection concerning the relationship between majoritized and minoritized peoples (e.g., Goodman 2005; Goodman 2008). I am included in this (Shah 2019), having analyzed their categorical invention – alongside that of *'hāfu'* ('biracial Japanese') – as part of a broader process of minoritizing identities (Shah, Forthcoming). The original coining of 'returnees' has been traced to individuals in MEXT around the 1960s (Goodman 1990, 10), yet defining who they are remains a puzzling task. Kobayashi Tetsuya, perhaps the most significant author to write on 'them' during 'their' original emergence, defined 'them' in the following way:

"Those who have had the experience of (1) being born in Japan and (2) brought up in the mainstream of Japanese culture. When they reached a *certain age*, they (3) went overseas with their parents. While they were being brought up overseas, they (4) received some influence from the local culture. After *a few years*, they (5) returned [to Japan] and were brought up in the mainstream Japanese culture once again."

(Kobayashi 1983, i, my numbers and emphases)

Based on the above sociological compass, 'general Japanese' must have achieved – *and achieved no more than* – stages (1) and (2). However, reach stage (3) and *especially* (4), and one ceases to be 'general Japanese' by mainstream Japanese society. They are instead re-categorized as 'Japanese overseas,' a typically irreversible process. Finally, advancing to stage (5) causes 'Japanese overseas' to be re-ascribed as 'Japanese returnees.' Also note my respective emphases on the phrases *'certain age'* and *'a few years'* in Kobayashi's definition. These remain the most socially inconsistent and negotiable aspects on defining a 'Japanese overseas' and 'returnee.' For the former, while regularly constrained to those aged between zero and 18 (as I treat the term in Chapters 5 & 6), examples exist where those leaving for bachelor level, and even occasionally postgraduate level higher education, are branded 'returnees' on their return. The latter is even more murky. Some note being systemically bracketed as 'returnee' within education systems after one month outside the territory, while others may not experience so until accumulating over one year (as I distinguish in Chapters 5 & 6), or three years-worth of experience 'overseas.'[46]

Fully otherized from the 'general Japanese,' Nakanishi's rationale for exposing 'ordinary' populations to 'returnees' related to the popular slogan of *tabunka kyōsei*, or 'multicultural coexistence' education. This notion received enthusiastic support by many educationalists at the

[46] There is also a population of Japanese nationals locally identifiable as 'Japanese overseas' that never resided in Japan until, for instance, enrolling in an undergraduate or postgraduate degree in the country. Such individuals are generally categorized as *neither* 'returnee' or *'ryūgakusei'* ('foreign' / 'overseas' / 'exchange student') within the formal education system, but rather as 'general Japanese' students. Nonetheless, these same individuals can still experience otherization in everyday social life, including through being branded as a 'returnee' despite the conceptual inaccuracy.

time, while countered with disdain by select others. Some, for instance, saw IB and its internationalist sentiments as inherently wrong under the believe that its educational pedagogy preferences 'minorities' over 'majorities.' Some wrote in acknowledgment of such groups who believed minoritized populations "unable to adapt to society ought to feel ashamed of their intransigence," unjustly forcing the majoritized to be overly accommodating to their supposed difference (Fukuta 1995, 137-138).

Aside from the interest in returnees, the 'Nishimura-movement' further diverged from the Tokumaru counterpart over its attitudes toward educational equality, seeking to uphold the benefits of the spatial equality system. Some feared that the comparatively high standards of the DP curriculum, when coupled with its exclusive introduction into the international private sector, risked widening the gap between those who can and cannot access its quality. Writing in regard to higher education, some feared DP graduates to be disproportionately favored by academic faculty, potentially leading to a culture that incentivized staff to act passively in assisting undergraduates with their studies (Shimozawa 1992, 441). The educationalist Kaneko Motohisa wrote warily of such concerns as part of an analysis of higher education's growing marketization (Kaneko 2000). Kaneko noted how the "IB system" was being increasingly recommended by other nation-states – particularly the US – to boost broader "cross-national arrangements," better integrating Japanese nationals into labor markets outside of Japan (Kaneko 2000, 47).

Eventually however, in similar fashion to the 'Tokumaru-movement,' interest over IB all but dissolved by the year 2000. This was due to at least two factors, the first relating to the danger it posed in promoting individual equality models. The second was how they considered IB to primarily appeal to minoritized populations such as returnees and *not* the majoritized population. Despite its waning, this first wave of interest in IB would prove indicative of how future one's would engage with it through subsequent decades. By this stage, the DP was distinguished as a stimulating, comparatively advanced yet foreign curriculum, one inspired by 'Western' influence. It was to be compared with national counterparts for its innovations (e.g., Karaki 1993, 341-342), but *never* to be identified as something that could itself be Japanese.

In the Wake of 'Relaxed Education'

It has been generally noted that "Japan did not experiment seriously with neoliberalism" in the

1990s, rare in comparison to most other resource affluent territories at the time (Kariya and Rappleye 2020, 10). This proved little more than a delay in hindsight, with a growing 'global education' sector tightly embracing the individual equality approach to financial strategy. Recovering from metaphorical oblivion, IB in 2023 finds itself in a dramatically different position to the 1980s and 90s, now a key instrument for the Japanese Government's 'global education' agendas. Its reversal in fortunes can be traced back to a period of considerable turbulence and rhetoric over notions of scholastic competencies. This originally manifested through a series of influential educational reforms rolled out from the late-1980s to date, two of which I focus on due their unwitting connection with IB. First are those encapsulated by the term *'yutori kyōiku'* generally translated as 'Relaxed Education' or 'room to grow,' and second – explored in the subsequent section – those by *'ningenryoku'* or 'human competencies.'

Relaxed Education was the source of great scholarly attention throughout the 2000s, observed through sizeable volumes on the subject (e.g., Yamanōchi and Hara 2006). Its roots originate in the late-1980s slogan of "*atarashii gakuryoku-kan,*" literally translating to "a new concept of scholastic competency" (Nakayama 1993). Commonly adopted into schools from the early 1990s, it popularized pedagogical approaches strikingly similar to several purported by IB educationalists, including those of 'child-centered education' (Dewey 1897, 103) and 'teacher distancing' (Bruner 1966). MEXT's agenda behind these reforms centered on tapping into a child's "innate desire to study" while instilling newly desired 'scholastic competencies' in children, including "self-thinking," "decision making," and "expressing with confidence" (Nakayama 1993, 12).

Relaxed Education was a bold attempt to steer emphasis away from its long-established 'meritocratic' system, one responsible for generating terms such as *'juken jigoku'* ('examination hell') for its exhaustive high school and university examination processes (e.g., Kariya and Rosenbaum 1987). This also, by consequence, lessened the influence of the prevalent *gakushū juku* industry. Commonly translated to 'cram schools' or "after school tutoring establishments," they are designed to cram teach topics benefitting one's competitiveness within the regurgitation-based 'hell exam' system (Rohlen 1980, 209; Dierkes 2013; Tsuneyoshi 2013). Relaxed Education accomplished this by advocating for an educational pedagogy emphasizing more humanist approaches, along with the notion of *"shirabe gakushū"* or 'investigative learning' (Goodman 2011, 59). Its aim was to soften the pressures of a competition-based system all but exclusively reliant on

one's ability to reproduce prescribed content as decided by the national curriculum, instead encouraging greater modes of inquiry-based learning. Somewhat ironically, this was essentially the same paradigm shift to pedagogy advocated by educators behind the original genesis of IB (see Chapter 2).

In practice, Relaxed Education's core adjustment concerned a new subject titled *sōgōteki na gakushū,* or 'integrated studies.' Its purpose was to act "as a vehicle for encouraging the investigation of provocative issues that children face in their daily lives" (Bjork 2009, 24). It is often noted for introducing two distinct features to classroom learning. First, it "focused exclusively on inquiry and problem solving skills," theoretically encouraging student agency as similarly desired by IB (Iino et al. 2019, 5). Second, it sought to enhance "teacher autonomy," leaving it to educators to form and implement locally agreed upon strategies to realize these environments, thereby encouraging "strong leadership from administrators" (Bjork 2009, 27, 33). Others have noted how teaching faculty found many students warming to the subject, seemingly appreciating a "more open-minded and less demanding" environment to other subjects (Bjork 2009, 27-31).

Adequately trained personnel could have potentially seen Relaxed Education a resounding success. Opinions instead reversed emphatically when reforms were fully realized by the early 2000s, since experiencing sweeping criticism. Not only were financial investments for nurturing these educational conditions woefully lacking, but teaching faculty were also "offered insufficient training opportunities" to acquire necessary skills for practicing these new pedagogical approaches (Kariya 2015, 109). Combined with further structural challenges, including omitting Saturday schooling and drastically reducing textbook content, inadequate facilitator training ironically resulted in *more* work for educators. Having generally failed to implement Relaxed Education as desired, these educators were subsequently blamed for a decline of 'scholastic competency' across Japan, rather than focusing on the glaring discrepancy between idealized policies and a fundamental lack of resources required to realize them (Kariya and Shimizu 2004, 237-238; Kariya 2015, 110).

Such is the attention to this 'decline' that certain authors fashionably termed it the '*Gakuryoku Kiki*' or the *'Crisis in Scholastic Competency'* (Ichikawa and Wada 1999). It was passionately criticized for exacerbating a social disparity principally caused by the bursting of Japan's famed 'bubble economy.' Hasty preparations, premature rollouts, and more were dragged into the spotlight. The result was a comprehensive disparagement of Relaxed Education, a set of

reforms inadvertently permitting a family's socio-economic status to play a greater role in deciding their child's quality of educational content (Nishimura 2003, 87-88; Nishimura 2001).
Placing emphasis on skills such as critical thinking without the necessary educator training to facilitate it, created a trend where students able to better think more independently often held higher levels of socio-economic status (Tobishima 2016). This was partly contributed by the 'bright flight movement,' a trend where many middle-income parents moved their 'bright' (i.e., high-grade achieving) children to a private sector better able to resource what was required to foster relaxed educational approaches (Kariya and Rosenbaum 1999, 210). It was a migratory pattern that emerged before Relaxed Education reforms, but the trend was exacerbated as general faith in public education declined. This cumulative growth of socio-economic disparity across both more urbanized and regionalized districts created a widespread surge of "distrust" in Japan's education system (Kataoka 2009, 42).

These disparities were also observable in higher education. The sector steadily boomed from the 2000s, with overall enrollment of high school students moving past 50% of the population. Nevertheless, with Japan joining a general world trend within so-termed "developed nation-states" where increasing premiums are placed on university graduates, socio-economic divisions continue to rise (Yano 2015, 137). It is a reality enshrined through the popular slogan, *gakureki shutoku kyōsō* ('the fight for high academic credentials'). Some even analyze the growing prevalence and reproduction of lifelong social inequalities to be "mostly determined based on what type of school one came from," even more so than – for instance – one's assigned gender or economic status (Kondo 2007, 98).

How the Japanese Government processed Relaxed Education's reception provides critical context for its later 'global education' agendas that IB has since been intrinsically laced to. For the ministry, of principal, if not exclusive concern was the widely reported drop in nationwide scholastic competencies. They were concerned with a *national* decline in international-comparative statistics. Treating the nation as a monolithic entity, they failed to focus on glaring regional and local disparities within Japan. Attention was principally centered on its outcome in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) rankings, where it was 'revealed' Japanese nationals were below average in total hours studying outside of school and in their 'motivation' to study (Park and Lee 2013). The government all but ignored significant statistical realities that demonstrated how Japanese nationals with disadvantaged backgrounds "suffered more severely

than their peers from more advantaged families" (Park and Lee 2013, 143). The government's issue – feeling the *gaiatsu* ('external / foreign pressure') of 'international' bodies such as PISA – was instead wired to the nation's 'international standing' by objectivized assessment rankings. This encouraged the government to institute a series of aggressive reforms centered on making "Japan a globalized society," of which IB has since become one of its latest devices (Iino et al. 2019, 5-6).

The Birth of 'Global HR'

'Global education' is far from a new trope. However, as demonstrated in Chapter 2 and 3, its semantic interpretations can be as diverse as its deployment. Popular interpretations currently range from the interdependence of "global systems," "social issues of poverty, inequality and conflict," to advocations of peace as mediated through the comparative education of "arts, cuisine and fashion of various peoples around the world" (Doerr 2020, 15). However, it is the development of "Anglo-centered norms" (Doerr 2020, 15) like 'communication' and 'English,' that echoes most pronouncedly with the Japanese Government's post-2000s approach to 'global education.' A rich nexus of terms in Japanese help capture the essence of such notions, one being *"kokusaijin"* (Uchiyama et al. 1984), literally put, 'an international person' (Goodman 2007, 72). Conceptually paired with the aforementioned term of *kokusaika* ('internationalization'), it does not translate to 'international' in any 'instrumental' sense. Instead of commonly evoking imaginaries of the multi-national and cultural, others write on how the Japanese term instead means "going towards a single direction and is often interpreted as becoming westernized" (Sueda 2014, 54).

I go further. 'Western' as a contemporary concept remains often poorly – if at all – defined by an increasing plethora of researchers. This is a concerning trend as many of the assumptions once associated with it are now shrouded in increasing ambiguity, as other anthropologists have also argued (White 2019). Take 'western culture' and 'ethnicity.' How 'western' is a 'British Pakistani'? How socio-culturally 'western' would the communities they might engage with be considered, or their everyday embodied practices be analyzed? The same can be said for an increasing plethora of identities and societies unable to be framed within aged, conceptually narrow confines of terms like 'Western,' 'Eastern,' 'Southern,' and other similar geographical imaginaries. 'German Turkish.' 'Canadian Guyanese.' 'Australian Japanese.' 'Latin American.' The list is both exhaustive and expanding. It is therefore critical to grasp what 'becoming westernized'

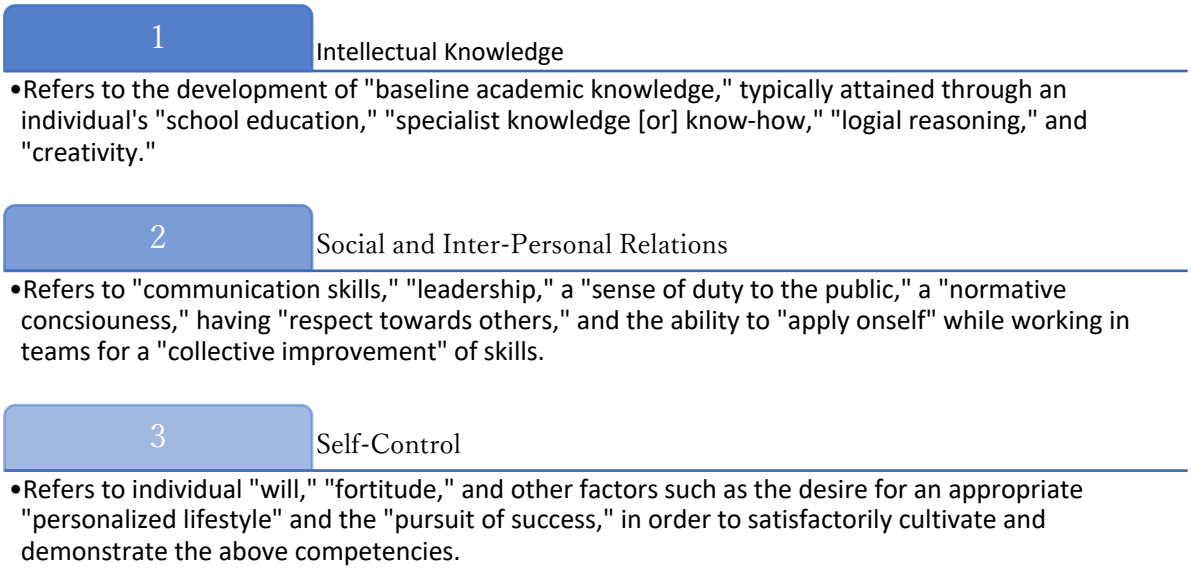
specifically entails within this Japanese context, several of which will be explored here. One not analyzed in detail here, but nonetheless noteworthy concerns the combined roles of localized (e.g., Wagatsuma 1967; Ashikari 2005) and globalized (e.g., Creighton 1995; Kelsky 2008) modes of eroticized 'paleness' and 'whiteness.' This is illustrated well with the minoritized population of 'biracial Japanese,' through the still culturally appropriate yet numbing word of *mottainai* ('wasted effort / product'), used to describe those visibly absent of 'White' socio-genetic traits (Shah, Forthcoming).

Kokusaika and the *kokusaijin* are important concepts I return to later. Another pair of terms intrinsically related to the former two are *gurōbaruka* ('globalization') and *gurōbaru jinzai* ('global human resource' or simply 'global HR'). These notions are of especial importance to the IBO's involvement in the Japanese Government's 'global education' agendas. *Gurōbaruka* shares similar semantics to those of *kokusaika* but is noticeably biased toward economic-related sentiments. This is directly observable through the corresponding trope of *gurōbaru jinzai*, a concept presently encountered across education and labor sectors in volume. It can be considered an evolution from localized sentiments of *kokusai kijun* ('international standards') and 'scholastic competencies' influencing Japan's schooling and higher education sectors from the 1980s (Yonezawa and Shimmi 2018, 46-48; Shibuya 2019a), precisely around the time of IB's first contact in Japan.

However, it would not be until the early 2000s when the economic term of *jinzai* ('human resource' or 'HR') entered the equation. It can be traced to an influential research report published by the Japanese Government's Cabinet Office in 2003. Titled the *Strategic Research Team for Human Competencies*, it was composed by a variety of authoritative figures from education and, *critically*, business sectors. At the paper's core lied one key concept: *"ningenryoku"* or 'human competencies,' of which it emphasized a need to cultivate in earnest (Japanese Cabinet Office 2003, 1). The relative influence exerted by business administration emphasized cultivating citizenry who could improve a precarious economic climate. The task was seemingly straightforward. Identify relevant human competencies that, if nurtured, would lead to a development of HR who contribute to the "*keizai no kasseika*" or "economic revitalization" of Japan (Japanese Cabinet Office 2003, 9). 'Human competencies' was defined in the report as a "capacity covering a wide variety of aspects, whereby people maintain society's operation as constituent members, while also demonstrating a strong faculty to lead a life as independent individuals" (Japanese Cabinet Office 2003, 10). Three types of 'competencies' – 'intellectual knowledge,' 'social and inter-personal relations,' and 'self-

regulation' – were listed and defined to fulfill this vague objective, as represented in figure 4.4. It was believed that a collective improvement of these aspects across one's "professional," "civic," and "cultural life" would result in fostering one's overall 'human competencies' (Japanese Cabinet Office 2003, 10).

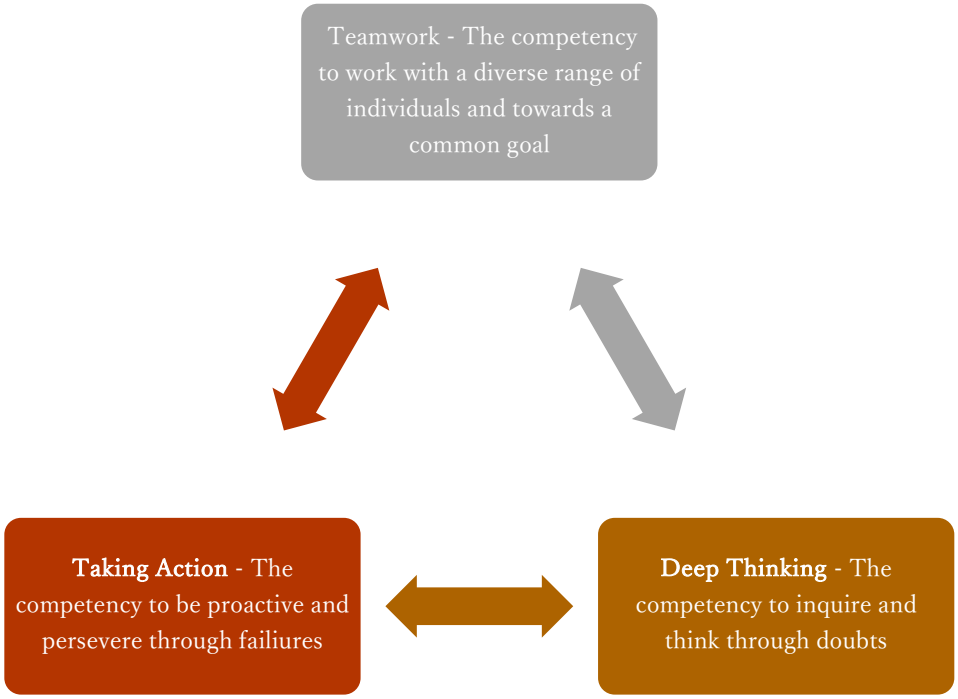
Figure 4.4: 'Human Competencies' According to the Japanese Cabinet Office



(Originally published by the Japanese Cabinet Office 2003, 10)

From this model emerged two more during the 2000s. The first was published by Japan's *Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry* (METI) in 2006 (figure 4.5), and the second by MEXT in 2008 (figure 4.6). In a report titled the *Research Team on the Fundamental Competencies of Working People*, METI's model proposed three 'fundamental competencies': *"mae ni fumidasu chikara,"* loosely translating to "taking action," *"kangaenuku chikara,"* or "deep thinking," *and "chiimu de hataraku chikara,"* or "teamwork."

Figure 4.5: A Model of Fundamental Competencies for Working People by METI



(Original model published by METI 2006, 13)

Figure 4.6: A Model of Bachelor Competencies by MEXT

Knowledge and Understanding	•Knowledge and understanding concerning the multi, and cross-cultural •Knowledge and understanding concerning human cultures, societies, and environments
Generic Skills	•Communication, ICT, quantitative, reasoning, and problem solving skills
Personal Attitudes/Orientations	•Self-management, teamwork, and leadership skills •Possessing a moral compass and social responsibility as a Japanese citizen •Being a life-long learner
Comprehensive Learning Experience and Creative Thinking	•Comprehensively applying competencies obtained to solve subsequent assignments

(Original model published by MEXT 2008, 12-13)

This was followed up by the 'bachelor competencies' model by MEXT, containing four types of 'competencies' that could ideally be "cultivated through [any] major field of study" (MEXT 2008, 12). These were identified as "knowledge and comprehension," "generic skills," and "personal attitudes / orientations," along with the capacity to independently weave these into one's working assignments (MEXT 2008 12-13). All three models played major roles in inspiring the now popular slogan of 'global HR,' although the term was ultimately developed by the *Joint Business-Academia Committee for the promotion of Global Jinzai [global HR] Development*, or simply the *Global Jinzai Committee*. Their definition of global HR can be visualized in figure 4.7, and has been translated by other researchers as follows:

"People who, in today's competitive and cooperative world, can—while maintaining their sense of Japanese identity—possess a broad worldview based on both general and specialized education, have communicative and cooperative abilities to build relationships which go beyond values, cultures and different languages, and that have the ability to create new values and the desire to contribute to society now and in future generations."

(Chapple 2014, 215)

Figure 4.7: Underlying Sentiments for "Global HR" by Governmental & Business Elites



(Based on the *Global Jinzai Committee* definition. Picture use and interpretations are my own.)

Global HR has since transformed into a buzzword across business and education sectors, promoted by troves of institutions to promote localized agendas. This is resulting in increasingly diverse (re)interpretations as to what constitutes a 'global HR.' That said, one currently discernable pattern of the phrase is its economic and nationalist sentiments (Poole et al. 2020, 44). This includes the 2013 establishment of a MEXT-IBO promotional consortium (Nagayama 2013), as I explore later. Another of the most prominent such initiatives in education is the *Sūpā Gurōbaru Daigaku,* literally *Super* (or *Top)*[47] *Global University*. SGU is one of the latest in a line of 'international' / 'global' reforms in higher education alongside the "300,000 international students plan" (2008-2020), "Global 30" (2009-2013), "Go Global Japan" (2012-2016), and the "Inter-University Exchange Project" (2011-present), with 'Go Global Japan' the first slated to foster global HR (Poole et al. 2020, 36-37).

SGU currently operates within a total of 37 universities, 13 of which belong to 'type A' or the *'Toppu-gata'* ('top track'), with the remaining 24 to 'type B,' the *'Gurōbaru-ka Kennin-gata'* ('Global-Pioneering Track'). Revealing from the outset is that 'type A' institutions – with the notable exceptions of Keio and Waseda – are national universities, including all the former imperial universities of Japan. Meanwhile, 'type B' equivalents comprise of 12 private, two prefectural, and 10 national universities. As others have analyzed, 'type A' institutions contain four with the term 'technical' in their titles, whereas only one with 'language,' suggesting that "traditionally higher ranking elitist universities, the former national 'imperial' universities, are not the ones embracing so-called globalization reforms the quickest" (Tsuneyoshi 2018, 20). It conversely suggests that the private sector is in fact pioneering 'globalization' strategies in higher education,[48] with 'type A' universities instead assigned a more explicit and expensive aim to enter

[47] Super Global University (SGU) was later officially re-translated to Top Global University (TGU) in English. However, I principally use the former as (1) it better translates its current Japanese name, and (2) it keeps uniformity with other initiatives such as Super Global High School (SGH) which have not been re-translated as such.

[48] Part of the reason for these pioneering 'globalization' strategies across private institutions has been analyzed as a "means to prevail in the domestic competition between Japanese universities" (Poole et al. 2019). It can therefore be considered a form of "inside-out" (Breaden 2013, 2), inward globalization.

or maintain their place in the top 100 ranked universities in the world. 'Type B' universities tellingly receive only half the amount of government investment, indicating a more peripheral role for global-orientated initiatives. Regardless, both tracks are collectively slated to stimulate global HR and – as could be discovered on MEXT's SGU website – "Top Global [Japanese] people" or *"kokusaijin"* (SGU 2020).

An effective analysis in appreciating the social expectations of the *'kokusaijin'* or 'international person' can be found with the minoritized category of 'returnees,' as the product of a 'successful returnee' is often identically narrated. For instance, through person-centered ethnographies (Hollan 2001) I analyzed that "if a 'successful returnee' is determined through a perfect filtration of their experiences in their 'host' society and those on returning to Japan, then purposefully, accidentally, or otherwise helplessly emit one's 'foreign' traits, and they risk stigmatization" as a failed other (Shah, Forthcoming). The social construction of *kokusaijin* follows at least two remarkably similar assumptions. First is a still prevalent belief among mainstream Japanese that Japan possesses an inherently unique culture, a myth further reinforced by popular discourses exoticizing 'Japanese culture' across much of the world. It is a discourse long since dismissed anthropologically (Ryang 2004, 8) but still maintained by a deeply embedded cultural nationalism (Yoshino 1992; Befu 1993). This nationalism is readily encountered through an increasingly diverse array of local literature and media collectively termed *Nihonjinron.*[49] As explored by others, *Nihonjinron's* collective aim is to "demonstrate unique qualities of Japanese culture, Japanese society, and the Japanese people" (Befu 2001, 4; Goodman 2005; Funabiki 2018). The second assumption lies with the general misconception that returnees – unlike, for instance, 'biracial Japanese' due to their socio-genetic appearance – "possess agency in determining 'how Japanese' and 'how foreign' they are judged by the majoritized" (Shah, Forthcoming). Identical to returnees, the 'international' or indeed 'top global person' (figure 4.8) describes an individual who 'successfully' synthesizes required 'Japanese' traits with desired 'foreign' counterparts. If achieved, they will apparently help accomplish the mysterious goal of 'economic revitalization' while maintaining nationalistic sentiments of 'Japaneseness.' In more succinct words, they become the *"gurōbaru Japaniizu"* or 'global Japanese' (Poole 2016a).

[49] *'Nihonjinron'* loosely translates to 'theories of the Japanese people.'

Figure 4.8: Promotional Issue on Former SGU 'Study Abroad Students' on SGU Website



(Borrowed directly from SGU 2020)

Translation:

Main Title: *Aspiring to be 'Kokusaijin' at Selected Universities*

Subtitle: *Special Issue (Top Global People)*

Bottom Text: *Study-abroad students at selected Sūpā [Super] Global Universities speak of their study-abroad studies and life at their institutional destinations.*

'Global Japanese' as global HR are the principal, but not sole product the government aims on producing. Whether conceptualized as *"kōdo gaikokujinzai,"* translated to "higher-skilled foreign talent" (Tsuneyoshi 2018, 21), or 'international students,' Japanized others play a role in the overall narrative of this nationalist globalization. However, 'their' contributions within the country appear relatively peripheralized (Poole et al. 2020, 44, 47). This can be explained in higher education as a

'*dejima* [50] model' where the globalist project is caught in pleasing government quotas of international student enrollment. This approach has failed to attract more permanent 'higher-skilled foreign talent' as hoped, in-part due to excessive economic demand for temporary 'lower-skilled foreigners' owing to manual labor shortages. The result is a widespread failure to embrace such quotas "as central to the core university mission or reform of institutional practice" (Poole et al. 2020, 53).

Despite SGU's relative prominence, other 'super' initiatives aimed at cultivating these 'international' / 'global Japanese' appeared in the country's schooling sector long before it. The first 'super' projects took the form of the *Sūpā Ingurisshu Rangēji Haisukūru* or Super English Language High School (SELHI), and the *Sūpā Saiensu Haisukūru* or Super Science High School (SSH) initiatives, both of which rolled out in 2002. SELHI operated between 2002 and 2009, and at its peak ran in a total of 40 schools, broken down to 25 public and 15 private. As its name implies, it aimed to improve English language proficiency in children, demonstrating – alongside larger initiatives like the longstanding Japan Exchange and Teaching, or JET Programme (McConnell 2000) – an overarching complicity with neocolonial Anglospheric pressures of 'global English' (an aspect I examine deeper in Chapter 6).

It is SSH, however, that continues to enjoy the bulk of success for the government. Granting a long-desired opportunity for successful applicants to innovate their own forms of 'cross-curriculums,' 77 schools leapt at the first opportunity to be certified as an SSH by MEXT, with 26 successful in its inaugural year. Since then SSH's investment has comprehensively surpassed those of other associates, including the MEXT-IBO Consortium. This is because SSH is directly supported and predominately overseen by the resources of the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST). 99 SSH schools existed in 2009 before more than doubling in 2014 to 204, with the available budget growing from just over 1.4 billion yen (currently about 13 million USD)

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[50] Dejima (literally, 'exit island'), also known as Tsukushima ('built island'), was the name of an artificially constructed island off the city of Nagasaki built in the early 17th Century. For over two centuries it essentially acted as the exclusive port for 'foreign' (e.g., Portuguese and Dutch) trade and exchange, while simultaneously fulfilling the Tokugawa shogunate's isolationist policies that all but forbid 'outsiders' from entering Japan, and most Japanese from leaving it (Cullen 2020). Today, the word *'dejima'* – as deployed here – is used to evoke a similar approach to the organization of 'international students' at Japanese universities.

in 2007 to just over 2.4 billion (currently around 22 million USD) in 2011. School growth has since steadied with 233 in 2021, overwhelmingly comprised of public institutions. It remains by some margin the longest standing and most healthily invested in of all the Japanese Government's 'super' agendas in the schooling sector. As JST explicitly states on their website, SSH is also purported to 'internationalize' students:

"Together with further advancing science and mathematical education at the high-school level, we endeavor to accelerate collaborative research between high-school and university sectors and further nurture internationalization. In addition, the initiative hopes to aid goals such as the development of both better teacher resource and teaching methodologies designed to raise students' levels of creativity and innovation."

(JST 2023)

Incidentally, SSH's success likely helps explain the collapse of interest in IB by 'hard science' educationalists in the 1990s and early 2000s. The initiative satisfied the 'Tokumaru-movement's' desire to focus efforts on developing 'excellent' (i.e., 'internationally competitive') students and freely innovate 'cross-curriculums,' while championing individual *over* spatial equality financial models. Rare exceptions notwithstanding (Fukuizumi 2005), SSH all but replaced interest in science-orientated IB curricula until the late-2000s.

Finally, in 2014, a third 'super' initiative emerged through the *Sūpa Gurōbaru Haisukūru* or Super Global High School (SGH) project. SGH operated at a peak total of 123 schools in 2016, experiencing an initial surge on rollout, with MEXT formally licensing 54 schools in its first year, a further 54 in 2015, and 18 more in 2016. Over half of these schools were positioned in the public sector while incorporating a considerably higher number of private schools compared to SSH. SGU forged a longer continuum for those to ideally progress to participating universities. As a consequence, SGH stressed almost identical tropes including 'global HR cultivation,' in this case through the language of 'global leadership.' Schools applied to become an SGH by defining an "ideal global leader profile," with those deemed successful certified by MEXT and provided a budget to carry out their so-stated goals for a fixed period of five years (Ninomiya et al. 2015, 40).

Roughly four expectations accompanied the SGH license: conducting multidisciplinary studies, collaborating with local and 'international' universities or other bodies promoting 'globalization,' encouraging students to conduct research outside Japan, and to define a vision for an *'ideal global leader.'* (Ninomiya et al. 2015, 40). Concerning this final aspect, school interpretations for a 'global leader' were unsurprisingly diverse and contradictory. To demonstrate, others had analyzed existing definitions to generally fall in the six umbrella categories:

1. International understanding (e.g., 'global knowledge,' 'international coexistence').
2. Logical / critical thinking (e.g., 'logical thinking in English,' 'analytical thinking').
3. Communication skills (e.g., 'communication skills,' 'expression in English').
4. Attitudes and Behavior (e.g., 'sense of mission,' 'public mind').
5. Creativity (e.g., 'entrepreneurial mind,' 'confront the risk society').
6. Nationalist interests (e.g., Japanese 'toughness and resilience').

(Based on Ninomiya et al. 2015, 42-45)

Whether through the language of 'English,' 'science,' or 'global' itself, the 'global HR' slogan underpinning them has unsurprisingly been the source of academic critique. Some, for instance, analyze that the four principal actors of industry, government, higher education, and popular media are undermining the original vision of global HR development through localized sector-specific projects (Yoshida 2017). Others point to how the obsession with global HR discourse is engulfing discussions over tolerance of difference and diversity in the country through its nationalist-economic revolution promising a 'globally competent' 'workforce (Chapple 2014). Or, as others have framed it, the "simultaneous production of the 'Japanized other' on the one hand, and the '*Gurōbaru Japaniizu'* ('global Japanese') on the other" (Poole et al. 2020, 34). Ironically, it is precisely this rhetoric, anchored firmly in economic nationalism, that has since dramatically reversed the IBO's fortunes in the country through governmental support (Tsuneyoshi 2018, 29).

IB as 'Global HR Production'

As was true of the 1990s, the 2000s was shaping into a bleak decade for the IBO, with the organization only managing a further eight schools in Japan between 2000 and 2008 (see figure 4.9). This brought the grand total to a lowly 12. A small set of modest milestones were achieved during this window, most significant of which was the authorization of the first article-1 school in 2000. It also achieved a more diverse prefectural spread in the country through the inclusion of schools based in Kyoto, Shizuoka, and Hiroshima. In addition, it appeared that the administration's 1997-founded Primary Years Programme (PYP) was being received with enthusiasm, with all seeking authorization for a this – or in one case, the 1994-founded Middle Years Programme (MYP) – over its core Diploma Programme (DP) curriculum.

Figure 4.9: Authorized IB World Schools in Japan (2000 – 2008)

Name	Year	Type	Prefecture	Language	First IB Programme
Katoh Gakuen Gyoshu Junior and Senior High School	2000	Private National (Article-1)	Shizuoka	English	MYP
K. International School Tokyo	2002	Private International	Tokyo	English	PYP
Hiroshima International School	2005	Private International	Hiroshima	English	PYP
Tokyo International School	2005	Private International	Tokyo	English	PYP
Deutsche Schule Kobe International	2006	Private International	Hyogo	English	PYP
Kyoto International School	2006	Private International	Kyoto	English	PYP

(Raw Data Primarily Received from the IBO)

Even so, the 2000s were proving a decade to forget. At least, that was until momentum shifted into the late-2000s and early-2010s. This began with IB World Schools doubling from 12 to 24 between 2007 and 2012, eight of which were article-1 schools (see figure 4.10). Prefectural diversity continued to expand, now establishing schools in Ibaraki, Gunma, Fukuoka, and Okinawa. However, all this was overshadowed by the inclusion of one specific school: the 2010-authorized Tokyo Gakugei University International Secondary School, or TGUISS (Nishimura 2008; Hakahashi et al. 2009; Samejima 2016). TGUISS marked two significant landmarks for IB in Japan. First, it was the first to officially mediate an IB programme in Japanese, and second, it was the first national article-1 IB school in Japan. IB, it seemed, was on the rise. A reinvigorated push to produce more 'gifted' individuals for 'global' competition saw a resurfacing of science-focused IB literature (e.g., Ogura 2008; Kambara 2011; Sekiuchi 2016; Hattori et al. 2016; Sato 2017), including those exploring its collaborative potential with SSH (Samejima 2016). 2013 soon arrived, proving the most substantial year for its hopes at growth to date, as extensive discussions with the Japanese Government finally bore fruit. A joint MEXT-IBO promotional consortium was born.

Figure 4.10: Authorized IB World School in Japan (2007-2012)

Name	**Year**	**Type**	**Prefecture**	**Language**	**First IB Programme**
Fukuoka International School	2007	Private National (Article-1)	Fukuoka	English	DP
Nagoya International School	2008	Private National (Article-1)	Aichi	English	DP
AICJ Junior and Senior High School	2009	Private National (Article-1)	Hiroshima	English	DP
Canadian International School Tokyo	2009	Private International	Tokyo	English	PYP
Ritsumeikan Uji Junior and Senior High School	2009	Private National (Article-1)	Kyoto	English	DP

Tamagawa Academy K-12 and University	2009	Private National (Article-1)	Tokyo	English	MYP
Tokyo Gakugei University International Secondary School	2010	Public National (Article-1)	Tokyo	Japanese	MYP
Gunma Kokusai Academy	2011	Private National (Article-1)[51]	Gunma	English	DP
Okinawa International School	2011	Private International	Okinawa	English	PYP
Tsukuba International School	2011	Private International	Ibaraki	English	PYP
Doshisha International School, Kyoto	2012	Private National (Article-1)[52]	Kyoto	English	DP
Osaka YMCA International School (OYIS)	2012	Private International	Osaka	English	PYP

(Raw Data Primarily Received from the IBO)

A joint venture between MEXT and the IBO, the consortium itself is principally purposed to promote IB to more mainstream Japanese stakeholders, including potential candidate schools and parents. The nature of this newfound governmental support for IB was made explicit in a 2013 article by Nagayama Yoshihisa, at the time the Deputy Assistant Minister for International Affairs, Ministers Secretariat at MEXT, and later part of MEXT's 2014 IB education advisory committee (Nagayama 2013). Within it, Nagayama announced the principal reason for the government's

[51] Local sources have since informed me that Gunma Kokusai Academy is a *kōsetsu min'ei* (publicly funded-privately operated) school that receives supplementary private funding.

[52] A former Head of Doshisha International Academy (DIA) has since informed me that Doshisha International School, Kyoto (DISK) is itself not an article-1 school. The IBO possibly made this error due to the school sharing the same campus with DIA, an associate article-1 primary school that was authorized as an IB World School in 2019.

support of expanding IB across Japan: *global HR cultivation* (Ishimori 2015; Ri 2018). More accurately, he saw an "urgency" to produce global HR who "actively participate in the world," pointing to a now well-established downturn in the number of Japanese nationals willing to study outside of the country (Nagayama 2013, 331). Essentially echoing the values embedded in global HR's formalized definition (figure 4.7), Nagayama believed utilizing IB's various ideological and pragmatic advantages would help Japanese nationals better integrate with 'foreigners,' and socio-culturally acclimatize to a world beyond its shores. He also believed an increase of Japanese national DP graduates and article-1 IB World Schools would lead to greater international "accessibility" for university entrance. Specifically, that it would increase both outbound mobility of global HR (i.e., 'global Japanese'), and inbound mobility of 'foreigners,' creating environments where Japanese nationals are educated "with foreign children" (Nagayama 2013, 331-332). Also briefly mentioned was the advantage in obtaining 'bright' students from 'abroad' capable of making critical contributions to Japan's labor market (i.e., the 'Japanized other').

Several articles were published by other educationalists in attendance at this science-orientated forum Nagayama presented at (Matsubara 2013). All essentially welcomed the consortiums formation, highlighting the benefits IB yielded in subjects such as chemistry (O'Donnell 2013), article-1 schooling generally (Samejima 2013), and higher education (Yamamoto 2013). Others meanwhile rallied behind its promotion of the buzzword '21st Century Skills' (ATC21s 2012), with some essentially replacing global HR with this project instead (e.g., Asanuma 2012; Takada 2015; Matsunaga 2016). Nationalists have been more critical. For instance, certain economic educationalists write in in broad support of global HR production through IB, yet believe the definition of global HR cannot presently be considered a Japanese one, urging the government to better foster those "who display Japanese virtues and characteristics" (Sato 2014, 35). Others lament the potential erosion of "Japanese science education" through a seeming overhaul of globalized criteria IB is seen to represent (Ohtaka 2018, 55, 62). These authors seek to maintain a sense of Japanese independence in science education while also actively "developing and enriching" world science education (Ohtaka 2018, 62-63).

Others have identified a continued disparity between majoritized Japanese and their returnee counterparts for university entrance. In 2016, 49.7% of DP transcripts (i.e., 1152 transcripts) sent to Japanese universities were classified as those made by returnees receiving their diplomas *outside* of Japan, while only 31.6 % accounted for 'general' Japanese nationals (Sanders

and Ishikura 2018, 22-23). This is partly explained by a now long-established *"tokubetsu waku"* or 'special track' for returnees (Goodman 1990, 43), whereas majoritized Japanese nationals have been historically obliged to follow the standardized examination system. This latter pathway is infamous for valuing knowledge primarily based on passive regurgitation, one at odds with IB pedagogy, although incoming alternations to better accommodate for inquiry-based education are being made (Fukuta 2015, 20-22). Projects such as SGU had recently moved to help deconstruct this categorical divide, creating more inclusive "pathways for DP students" (Sanders and Ishikura 2018, 21) otherwise tasked with (re)learning for, and undertaking standardized yet unfamiliar university entrance exams. Regardless, as is demonstrated by the MEXT-IBO Consortium's advertising of bodies explicitly dedicated to the tuition of *kaigaishijo* ('Japanese overseas') by returnees (EDUBAL 2023), and conducting promotional sessions often aimed at parents of returnees, disparities persist. These have long since moved beyond those socio-economic, with an increasing amount of majoritized Japanese nationals undertaking IB in article-1 schools having to balance between its process-based educational approach, versus a content-based university admission system (Shibuya 2019b, 5).

Despite the consortium's symbolic significance for the IBO, MEXT's collaboration can be viewed as one primarily made for fiscal advantages as it gradually withdraws financing its own 'global education' initiatives. That is not to say it is the only reason. Another potentially eye-catching motivator can be found with recent research published in Japan (e.g., Fujino 2021), suggesting the government is benefitting from considerations over how to implement aspects of IB practice – such as approaches to assessment – into its own national guidelines. This is incidentally a general fear for many within the IBO's current management, precariously attempting to balance protection of its intellectual property for its long-term survivability, with content accessibility for national bodies to promote growth (see Chapter 3).

This noted, MEXT's gains can be argued to be chiefly financial. For example, the comparatively expensive and exclusively governmental SGH initiative, which formally ended in 2021, has had its logo prominently emblazed on the MEXT-IBO consortium's website (MEXT-IBO Consortium 2023c), as if purposed to help promote its considerably cheaper IB project. This is evident through the relative bargain investment MEXT spent of 57,700,000 yen (currently around 440,000 USD or 350,000 GBP) in developing the 'Dual-Language Diploma Programme' (DLDP). This majority-Japanese mediated DP curriculum is capable of being examined and externally

assessed in Japanese. Intriguingly, the party responsible for deciding it a 'dual-language' DP – where one of six subjects are mediated in English – as opposed to a fully Japanese DP, is formally unknown to members at the consortium. There is, however, a widespread agreement among the group that it was likely insisted on by MEXT. This appears salient given the IBO never used such terminology prior, and, most glaringly, that the Japanese Government has continued to relentlessly forward *English* as part of its internationalization and globalization agendas for decades.

Figure 4.11: A Decades Growth of IB World Schools in Japan (2012-2022)

Year	Total No. of New IB World Schools	Article-1 Schools	Non-Article-1 Schools	Public Schools
2012	2	1	1	0
2013	3	1	2	0
2014	1	1	0	0
2015	8	6	2	1
2016	4	3	1	0
2017	12	7	5	2
2018	10	9	1	0
2019	12	9	3	3
2020	11	9	2	5
2021	10	10	0	4[53]
2022	12	11	1	2

(Raw Data Primarily Received from the IBO)

[53] One of these is a state-subsidized private school.

The DLDP's introduction has played a critical role in increasing the amount of article-1 IB World Schools in the country, since experiencing a minor boom over the past decade (see figure 4.11). 2013 was also the year MEXT laid out a goal to achieve 200 IB World Schools by 2018, which if accomplished, would rival the size of the SSH initiative. However, despite the DLDP's success at increasing much needed linguistic accessibility, Nagayama admitted at the time that major barriers remained in realizing that goal, including a thorough lack of appropriate teacher resource (Nagayama 2013, 332). This remains true as of 2023 despite the introduction of IBEC teacher training programmes at currently eight universities in the country (see Chapter 3). This caused MEXT to reassess the scope of its ambitions on multiple occasions. It first extended the deadline from 2018 to 2020, before eventually relenting when they realized 200 schools no longer appeared realistic. Instead of altering the goal of 200 itself, however, it instead quietly redefined '200' from IB *schools*, to IB *programmes*. On the 28th of March 2023, this led to the consortium's declaration of achieving '200 *kō*' or '200 schools' (MEXT-IBO Consortium 2023a), gaining favorable attention of locally influential press (e.g., Nihon Keizai Shinbun 2023). The milestone also generated greater global awareness through the IBO, who more cautiously – and accurately – celebrated '200 programmes' (IBO 2023c). As of April 2023, the IBO registers Japan with 106 IB World Schools, a total that now competes with what SGH held at its peak.

The above acknowledged, there exist significant caveats for IB's relative governmental success. Firstly, as of March 14th 2023, of all 67 DPs operating in the country only 34 are DLDPs. In other words, essentially half are still linguistically inaccessible to most of the mainstream Japanese population. Secondly, only 73 of all 207 IB programmes currently operate in article-1 schools, with around two thirds operating in private international schools isolated from Japan's education system. This trend is indicative of the government's shift away from national / public sectors to a greater reliance on private and non-article-1 'international school' alternatives. This has predictably led to a student's socio-economic and geographical capital playing an ever-increasing role in determining one's accessibility to 'global education' in general, the precise result feared by educationalists in Japan well before its recent expansion (e.g., Watanabe 2014; Shibuya 2015; Shibuya 2016). Some used the term *"kiretsu"* ('fissure') to describe fears of an ideological divide between Japanese nationals who receive an IB education versus those who will not, particularly as IB programmes currently run alongside non-IB equivalents in most article-1 schools (Watanabe

2014, 183). Others described it as a *"nikyokuka"* ('bipolarization'), finding early evidence of substantial socio-economic division even within article-1 IB schools (Shibuya 2016, 425). These worries persist at a student, faculty, school, and board level (Ida 2021).

Regionalist competition is also on the rise. A number of prefectural Boards of Education are seeking to expand IB across their areas of jurisdiction, partly as a measure to deal with rising disparities in prefectural budgets and a shrinking student population (Hayashi 2014, 213, 218). Hiroshima Prefecture's Board of Education, for example, has recently undergone major educational reform, introducing policies that describe a 'Hiroshima vision' for cultivating 'Hiroshima Human Resource' (Terada 2017). It combines global HR's general aims of producing "ambitious" 'life-long learners' capable of networking with 'foreigners' across the world, with locally desired traits. In this case, the latter traits correspond to an individual who "feels proud for what one has learnt in Hiroshima, and speaks of Hiroshima and Japan with prideful confidence" (Terada 2017, 87). To this end the polices seek to produce so-termed *"gurōbaru riidā"* ('global leaders'), investing generously in a prefectural (i.e., public) article-1 IB World School with the aim of raising the area's "internationality," vaguely defined through accentuating the role of English-mediated classroom environments (Terada 2017, 92-93). The name of the school itself – in English, the Hiroshima Global Academy – demonstrates an ambition to appeal to both a 'global' and majoritized Japanese audience, with terms evoking the 'global' and 'international' entirely absent in its Japanese name.[54] Others consider this form of project as one aiming to produce "local human resource" (Shibuya 2016, 431), speaking to a broader trend where regionalist educational strategy seeks to effect "the 'local' by invoking the 'global'" (Poole and Takahashi 2015, 85).

A more niche example of regionalist strategy in Osaka demonstrates how neoliberalist modes of education are evolving in Japan. Specifically, the opening of a *kōsetsu-min'ei* (publicly funded-privately operated) school in 2019, one aiming to run the DP and DLDP from 2023. The school is noted for launching an ambitious marketing strategy, one attempting to combine idealisms of world peace and international collaboration with neoliberalist economic agendas (Shibuya 2019a). In the words of the presently dominant political force in Osaka, the *Ōsaka Ishin no Kai* (Osaka Restoration Association, or One Osaka), it seeks to cultivate "human resource who

[54] The full Japanese name of the school is *Hiroshima-Kenritsu Hiroshima Eichi Gakuen Chūgakkō · Kōtōgakkō.*

can sufficiently adapt to global society [under] intensifying international competition" (Shibuya 2019a, 60, 63). With its curriculum essentially left to private individuals to construct using public funds, ideas such as 'English immersion,' and subjects such as 'Global Studies' have been introduced. Other researchers find the respective aims and content of these extensions puzzling. Shibuya Maki identifies sentiments ranging from those regionalist and nationalist, to those internationalist and globalist, begging the question of what the school aims on producing: a "global-citizen, a Japanese-citizen, or a Osaka-citizen?" (Shibuya 2019a, 62-63). This ideologically superficial catch-all approach using generous public resources is a seeming attempt to appease several agendas for multiple stakeholders. As a consequence, Shibuya concludes this model to "only endorse a social class divide," one that if expanded, would permit the relatively privileged to adapt in a future where understanding today's global knowledge economy is increasingly the key to prosperity, and even survival (Shibuya 2019a, 64).

Another contentious issue relates to the general (re)centralization of power of the Japanese Government in educational affairs. In almost identical fashion to reactions over Relaxed Education, there is concern that central government is once more placing tremendous burden on teaching faculty, in this case at article-1 IB World Schools (Iino et al. 2019). Identical to Relaxed Education there appears a general lack of time and resources for educators to receive necessary training to conduct IB education as pedagogically desired by the IBO (Iino et al. 2019, 9). This partly helps explain the subsequent expansion of IBEC programmes in the country, although – as is suggested in Chapter 5 – these alone are proving inadequate.

Unlike Relaxed Education, however, IB has conjured a new issue: balancing article-1 requirements with those of the IBO. With all article-1 schools required to follow the Japanese Government's national guidelines, ranging from curricular content to assessment approaches, article-1 IB World School educators remain forced to juggle these with IB equivalents. Interestingly, from as early as the consortium's 2013 formation, educationalists have written in support of their theoretical alignment (e.g., Samejima 2013; Ishimori 2015; Matsunaga 2016). Science-orientated educationalist Samejima Tomomi, for instance, posited that MYP and government guideline assessment criteria hold more in common than their disparities, enough to allow for easy implementation in article-1 schools. She presented MEXT's 2011 "zest for life" government guidelines as one essentially mirrored by IB, aligning global HR's stress on "communication" and "intercultural awareness" with IB programmes like the MYP (Samejima 2013, 334). Others have

posited the precise opposite, claiming that more hinders IB assessment criteria in article-1 schools than what aids it (Iino et al. 2019, 9). Art-orientated educationalist Koike Kenji wrote at length on the subject within the respective contexts of the PYP (Koike 2014), DP (Koike 2017; Koike 2019a), and especially MYP (Koike 2009; Koike 2011; Koike 2015; Koike 2016; Koike 2019b). Examining the same relationship between the MYP and government guidelines, Koike analyzed disparities in art-orientated subjects – particularly visual art – believing that underlining differences force educators to evaluate children on both sets of criteria separately, overburdening them in the process. In Koike's view this reality stands as a principal factor for hindering the MYP's relative attractiveness to other IB programmes (Koike 2016, 227-228), of which remains statistically true (MEXT-IBO Consortium 2023b).

Post-fieldwork I discovered three of my own participants – all Japanese nationals with IBEC qualifications currently working as Japanese-mediated teachers in article-1 IB World Schools – to report challenges in juggling similar disparities. One example of this can be appreciated through Segawa, presently a DLDP teacher in chemistry and Japanese curriculum teacher in biology at a competitive science-focused high school in western Japan. During a casual conversation, she frankly admitted to her exhaustion over the additional burdens of dancing between often disparate approaches of teaching and assessment. Her issues with the latter essentially mirror that of Koike's, exhausted with the extra time required to evaluate a given assignment under two distinct sets of criteria, in what is already a profession where she experiences frequent overtime.[55] Then there was the former issue: *teaching approach*. Segawa spoke on being forced to follow a school philosophy that clinically distinguishes and cordons off IB approaches to classroom learning from mainstream Japanese counterparts. To name but one consequence of this *dejimanization*[56] (Ota and Horiuchi 2018; Poole et al. 2020) of IB, she is instructed to actively hustle between more teacher-led and student-led approaches to pedagogy.

[55] It should be highlighted that teaching faculty in Japanese schooling generally continue to experience awful amounts of "concealed overtime," despite a long-standing recognition of the issue by Boards of Education across Japan (Senō 2021). The term *"gakkō no burakku-ka"* ('exploitation of schooling') has been coined by other educationalists to describe the ongoing severity of the issue (Senō 2021).

[56] See glossary of reoccurring Japanese terms.

This is to appease both a national education system still biased toward the absorption / regurgitation of prescribed knowledge, and a relatively process-orientated IB equivalent. Incidentally, it is this latter pedagogical approach championed by the IBO that I place at the center of attention in the following chapter.

Further noteworthy developments over government guidelines have since occurred. Large-scale revisions were introduced in 2017 centered around the buzz term of *'akutiibu rāningu'* or 'active learning.' As of Spring 2022, these have rolled out across the entire article-1 schooling sector. Boiling down to *'shutaiteki na manabi'* or 'independent learning,' this newfound emphasis has been received with much enthusiasm by article-1 IB educationalists, despite MEXT retaining its content-led approach. Several have expressed optimism for a theoretical closing of alignment with inquiry and concept-based pedagogies (Sato 2020; Matsushita 2021), ones that permits learning content *around* skill acquisition and metacognitive thinking (Erickson et al. 2020; Okumura and Nishioka 2020). Nevertheless, even with expectations for these developments to further reduce the burden of balancing governmental and IBO requirements, the divide between policy and practice, as Segawa's experience exemplifies, remains a humanly problematic one on the ground.

As I move next to analyze in Chapter 5, resource investment for educator training by Boards of Education, such as through IBEC programmes (Handa 2020; Akahane et al. 2020), is working to expose other deeply rooted, yet silent frictions in IB pedagogy.

To Summarize

I started this chapter by overviewing the postwar era of 'egalitarian education,' a critical juncture in the history of Japan's education system for pursuing a financial strategy based on spatial equality. Dissatisfaction with this strategy can be considered the original trigger for initial educationalist interest over IB in Japan. Led by a movement of science-orientated educationalists at the turn of the 1980s, the IBO's science curricula was fervently studied to improve Japan's national equivalents, quietly undermining the spatial equality finance model. This push to raise the apparent competitiveness of the country's education system by producing more 'talented individuals' (i.e., realizing a system based on individual equality), was a movement inherently grounded in nationalism. IB was – at this stage at least – a set of 'Western' curricula meeting a

'international standard': a tool to borrow for improving Japan's national education, and a potential means for 'reintegrating' a minoritized returnee population. It was *not* considered a programme to directly implement in Japan, nor was it identified as something that could itself be Japanese.

Overviewing the social crisis of Relaxed Education reforms during the 2000s, I demonstrated how reactions to its failure served as a partial prelude to the Japanese Government's aims in realizing 'global education.' Greatly influenced by business administration, the government eventually coined the concept of 'global HR': Japanese nationals holding desirable 'global' traits, able to help 'revitalize' the country's economy through international competition while maintaining a 'Japanese identity.' IB was now (re)considered as an opportunistic, and financially convenient instrument to produce global HR. Forming a collaborative partnership with the IBO, the government has since forwarded an increasingly neoliberalist approach to global HR production, relying evermore on the socio-economic status of families despite investing in more linguistically accessible (i.e., majority Japanese-mediated) programmes. In addition to socio-economic limitations, other challenges include balancing article-1 and IBO requirements, issues which persist in-practice despite recent theoretical closings in alignment between IB and national guidelines. Finally, there are the obstacles associated with a lack of resource and time, failing to secure sufficient numbers of article-1 educators equipped with the pedagogical training desired by IB education. It is a trend IBEC's expansion hopes to help address, although these alone are currently proving inadequate.

As I dedicate focus to in the next chapter, resource limitations are not the only challenges which persist. As I discovered at one university in Japan, complex socio-cultural dissonances exist even when satisfactory resources for professional development are met.

CHAPTER 5 - WHEN 'INTERNATIONAL PEDAGOGY' FALTERS: IB TEACHER TRAINING AT THE JAPANESE INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

Trees bristled gently in the wind. It was the early hours of night at my university dormitory in Oxford (UK), and the morning in Japan. Waking up with a 'morning' tea I was soon interrupted by the ping of a LINE[57] notification. Sato, a student on the International Baccalaureate Teacher Training Programme (IBTTP) at the Japanese Institute of Education (JIE), has asked for an abrupt meeting to discuss confusion over an assignment. Opening the IBTTP group chat, I find three to have confirmed availability. I do the same before Sato sends through a Teams link. An hour later, with another beverage in hand, I flick on my monitor to enter the digital space. Sato soon appears accompanied by Yamakawa, Ishibashi, and Miyazaki. Thanking all for joining on short notice, he dives straight into the topic at hand: collaborative unit planning. In particular, how to design classes of diverse subjects around a collectively agreed upon concept. As any current IB educator is vividly aware, it is an exercise of central importance to the IB Organization's (IBO's) school programmes, and part of an advanced pedagogical approach termed 'concept-based' education (Erickson et al. 2017). Testing the extremities of this practice, Sato raised the subjects of mathematics, visual art, history, and chemistry, before asking:

"How in the world do we agree on a universal concept for these subjects?"

Inviting the thoughts of others, a wry smile etched on Ishibashi's face. "This is a tricky issue" he conceded, keen to engage with the challenge at hand. Yamakawa and Miyazaki, in sharp contrast, remained politely reticent. Screensharing an empty word document to jot notes, the group began voicing out potential ideas. Only, this 'group,' I soon realized, appeared exclusively comprised of Ishibashi, Sato, and occasionally me. Another oddity resided in the contributions themselves. All appeared predominately drawn from Ishibashi's and Sato's experience as school educators.

[57] As I illustrate later in this chapter, LINE remains *the* common social chat application in Japan.

Sentences began with openers such as "when I discussed this with a colleague…" or "in my classroom…" Yamakawa and Miyazaki could not do the same. After all, they had yet to start their professional teaching careers, undertaking their master's degree immediately after their bachelor's. Not only was this known to the others, but it was *branded*. As was customary institutional practice, Yamakawa and Miyazaki were labeled *gakusotsu* ('straight-masters'), while Ishibashi and Sato were instead *genshoku* ('in-practice') students. Digital life exacerbated its prominence, with every student adding these respective ascriptions next to their names on Zoom and Teams. However, even without these labels the difference was plain. Sato and Ishibashi were visibly older than Yamakawa and Miyazaki, with the former two approaching their 40s compared to early 20s. As a result, despite their registration on the same degree and IBTTP, Ishibashi and Sato were considered more than simply classmates to the latter two: they were *senpai* ('seniors').

Eventually noticing the younger pair's pattern of reservation, Sato renewed efforts at drawing them into the conversation. He knew it imperative to do so. As constantly emphasized by their course facilitators, IB education necessitates a pedagogical practice of *kōseishugi*, or *constructivism*: a student-centered, collaborative approach to knowledge (re)production between both students and facilitators. Attempting to fashion this environment, Sato employed a series of tactical lures to encourage the two into providing contributions. Some were direct: "I am really interested to hear what you guys also think." Others were cleverly veiled: "as a practicing teacher I sometimes think overly pragmatically. I need to better understand the theory." Later, Sato privately divulged this latter effort as one seeking to empower Yamakawa and Miyazaki. To hint that their absence of practical educator experience did not prevent them from producing meaningful thoughts or insights. In this instance, however, such bold pursuits had failed. Yamakawa pitched in only once throughout the remainder of the 30-minute discussion, with Miyazaki remaining all but exclusively mute.

Why? What was responsible for such behavior? Respecting an age or experience gap? Acknowledging institutionalized categories? Did they consider their potential contributions to be inherently inferior? Did they believe the practical knowledge of their *senpai* to overshadow anything they might offer? Or were they avoiding embarrassment? Did they have nothing to say? Maybe they simply did not care. Whatever the reason(s), Sato was left in quiet discontent while, curiously, Ishibashi appeared satisfied with the dynamic.

This scenario unfolded on several occasions during my year on JIE's IBEC programme,

demonstrating regular failures to practice a key pedagogical cornerstone defining today's IB education. As I discovered throughout my year at the institution, however, summarizing the reason as incompetence was neither convincing nor correct. Indeed, the university remains popularly reputed as one of the most prestigious for aspiring and experienced educators in a country with a population of around 125 million, and an undergraduate admissions rate of over 50% of its high school students (Yano 2015, 137). No, something else was at play, grounded not only within the workings of a specific organizational culture, but additionally by those of a mainstream Japanese society permeating it. Whatever it was, it was rendering aspects of IB pedagogy – chiefly theorized by 'White' Euro-American thinkers for 'White' Euro-American cultural environments – dysfunctional in this Japanese space.

When does 'international pedagogy' fail at being humanly inclusive? It is the big question lurking at the heart of this chapter. The backdrop is an IB Educator Certificate (IBEC) programme at a university I refer to as the Japanese Institute of Education, or JIE. JIE's IBEC experience is interlaced with the overall institution, with all students simultaneously enrolled at its Graduate School of Professional Teacher Education.[58] Only one degree is offered at the graduate school: a Professional Masters in Transformative Educator Practice.[59] Here, IBEC acts as one of, if not its most demanding pair of electable modules. Due to this integration, I begin by introducing JIE itself before situating its IBEC programme within this graduate school. I follow this by overviewing the core demographics of the 34 students enrolled on its IB Teacher Training Programme (IBTTP) and its three facilitators, the principal community of ethnographic interest. Split into two themes, I first consider the digital ways in which this community operated under the fluctuating dangers, fears, and uncertainties of COVID-19, resulting in sharply dissonant levels of community coherence between those on the IBTTP's Middle Years Programme (MYP) track, and its Diploma Programme (DP) equivalent. Next, I turn to examine socio-cultural dissonances over practices in IB pedagogy. Specifically, one

[58] This is a pseudonym to the faculty's official Japanese name.

[59] This is a pseudonym to the original degree title in Japanese.

termed *socio-constructivism*, arguably the oldest approach to teaching championed in IB education. I consider how training educators on this pedagogy *through* this pedagogy is prone to regular instances of interruption and failure. I ultimately analyze the reasons for these outcomes to reside in an inherent discrepancy between (1) the 'White' Euro-American[60] contexts which its approach was originally theorized for, and (2) a nuanced combination of organizational and broader socio-cultural forces influencing practices of relational identity.

The Japanese Institute of Education

With a history tracing back to at least the 1870s, JIE was formally chartered a *'daigaku'* – what is best translated as a 'higher education institution' – by 1950. This was accomplished through the merging of four *shihan gakkō*, or 'teacher-training institutions'/ 'normal schools,' founded by two conglomerate governmental bodies originating from the Meiji era (1868-1912). Despite early, if predominantly symbolic associations with the Liberal Arts College (LAC) system proliferating across the United States (US) during the 20th Century, JIE's reputation is, and always has been built around one specialist discipline: *education*. Such was the extent of this disciplinary attachment, that through the 1960s it competed – and temporarily succeeded – against other prominent universities for the title of 'education' in its institutional name and faculty, with the latter remaining the Faculty of Education to date. During the same period it established its first corresponding Graduate School for Master degrees. Decades later, in the late-1990s, it partnered with three universities to pioneer a joint Graduate School that would offer some of the first ever doctoral degrees in education available by national universities in Japan. Finally, its most recent Graduate School of Professional Teacher Education (hereon the 'graduate school'), opened in 2019 after over a decade of planning.

JIE possesses one of the largest numbers of *fuzoku* or 'attached' schools for any public university in the country at 11, alongside a further two nurseries / kindergartens (i.e., *yōchien*). These consist of what can be loosely classified as four primary schools, four middle schools, two high schools, and one specialized support school. One of these joint middle and high schools is significant here due to its intimate relationship with JIE's IBEC programme, one of the pioneering

[60] My use of 'Euro-American' here includes Russia due to the work of Lev Vygotsky, as I elaborate on later in this chapter.

public article-1 schools to be recognized as an IB World School in Japan. JIE actively uses these attached institutions as laboratory schools to further develop teaching practice both within and outside its umbrella, with the latter facilitated through coinciding memberships with external research associations, societies, and prefectural Boards of Education. All schools share a number of variously themed Attached School Research Groups, meeting between five to 10 times a year while also playing host to annual or biannual conferences and public seminars. Research themes include those directed at translating newly introduced policy into the language of educational practitioners. These have been explored through guidelines over 'moral education' following significant policy reform by the Japanese Government in 2015 (Bamkin 2018; Bamkin 2019). Another popular example concerns debates in realizing the recently introduced strapline concept of *akutiibu rāningu,* or 'active learning,' part of the 2017 overhaul of the *gakushū shidō yōryo* ('national government guidelines'). Rolled out in all article-1 schools across Japan from Spring 2022, this concept is of especial relevance for the Japanese Government's collaboration with the IBO (see Chapter 4). Now also referred to as *shutaiteki na manabi,* or 'independent learning,' these policies encourage a pedagogical approach to education closely aligning with those of IB, placing greater emphasis on the learning process *over* its content. In addition to policy reform, other recent themes include those concerned with education more generally, as can be discerned from reinvigorated debates over the role of ICTs in classrooms in the wake of COVID-19 (Sato 2021; Murakami 2021).

Most research groups provide periodic newsletters, email bulletins, and sometimes extensive research reports summarizing overarching aims and interpretations of the topics in question. A useful example of the potential depth and breadth of information such groups grapple with can be appreciated at JIE's affiliate IB World School, which I refer to as the Japanese Institute of Education International School (JIEIS). In November 2020 they hosted their seventh, and incidentally first ever digital, research conference titled *Inquiry-based Learning for Generating Integrated Knowledge: Educational Practices Utilizing the IB Education System*. The principal aim was to discuss how to realize more collaborative approaches to curriculum management across disciplinary borders, a stance now strongly encouraged by the new government guidelines and – for decades now – by IB pedagogy. After a four-hour long conference, a 252-page research report was published, detailing how its many contributors apply core pedagogical principles

underpinning IB into everyday practice at article-1 schools in Japan.[61]

JIEIS plays a leading role for JIE-related research, particularly concerning links between internationalist educational projects and government guidelines. It is, however, only one of several research streams for the university. Ongoing collaborations between JIE and the Japanese Government's *Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology* (MEXT) – often through the support of intermediaries holding affiliations with both JIE and MEXT – further demonstrate its reputation as a key contributor to shaping governmental policy into practice. Concerning IB, JIE was one of the earliest institutions in Japan to research its original principles and pedagogy within the context of Japanese society. Evidence of this continued engagement can be more recently found through a growing library of research. One example includes those drawing on IB approaches to 'formative assessment' (Black et al. 2004) and understandings over 'student agency' (Bandura 1982; Bandura 2001) to propose solutions for the national government's active learning agenda.

The Graduate School of Professional Teacher Education

The 2019-established Graduate School of Professional Teacher Education (hereon 'graduate school') housing JIE's IBEC programme is the site of a significant departmental culture. Despite its theoretical contributions to educationalist research, JIE is popularly imagined a specialist institution for educational practice. The graduate school's mission statement reflects this better than any of its other departments:

"The aim of our graduate school is centered on the development of teaching (and managerial) staff as school leaders equipped with concrete educational theory and unparalleled in-practice skills. They also possess an ability to work together with fellow educators, guardians, the local community, and various specialists to act as problem solvers, enabling them to navigate today's

[61] All universities, their affiliate institutions, and any personnel involved in ethnographic research have wished for their contributions to be anonymized. I therefore refrain from referencing any materials which would otherwise directly expose the identities of one or more of the above.

educational challenges."

Official figures on student attendance had fluctuated considerably due to COVID-19, although it is generally attended by an average of 350 students a year and facilitated by around 50 members of full-time faculty. On admission to the school, students are sifted into two categories based on pre-determined criteria within the school's admission policy. These are described by the institution as follows:

Category A (For Applicants Without or With Little Teaching Experience): "That you are either a soon-to-be graduate, or working adult who holds specialist knowledge in a subject discipline, possesses baseline practical skills as well as a spirit for improvement, and aims to become a school leader equipped with advanced practical leadership skills."

Category B (For Applicants Currently Occupying a Full-time Teaching Position): "That you are an in-practice teacher who holds specialist knowledge and practical skills acquired from an abundance[62] of experience in schools, desires to implement robust solutions to today's educational challenges, and aims to become a school leader equipped with advanced practical leadership skills."

Those fulfilling Category A are termed *'gakusotsu-insei.'* This literally translates to 'graduated-postgraduate students,' but better semantically converts to what JIE call 'straight-masters students' (i.e., students immediately pursuing a master's degree on completion of a bachelor's). The purpose of this category is to distinguish between those possessing none or relatively little working experience, from those deemed to have around five years or more full-time experience as school

[62] 'Abundance' here is considered to be close to five or more years of full-time working experience.

faculty.[63] Outliers notwithstanding,[64] those achieving this latter criterion are instead labelled *'genshoku-insei,'* literally 'in-practice postgraduate students' (hereon 'in-practice students'). For educators posted within national / public sectors, this typically refers to those employed through their respective Boards of Education. The category can also include staff working in management-focused and administrative positions, although these cases remain uncommon. For either the private or – on exceedingly rare occasions – non-article-1 sectors, it instead refers to those already posted or otherwise scheduled to be employed[65] by such schools.

The repercussions of this practice to categorization are nuanced. As I consider later, the most intriguing are those socio-cultural in nature. Also interesting are its systematic effects. For instance, in-practice students regularly elect to complete their degree within one academic year instead of the compulsory two for their straight-master counterparts.[66] Of a total of 63 in-practice students during the 2020/21 academic year, only 11 were registered to be on the second year of their degree, demonstrating this pathways popularity. Meanwhile, of the 34 students in the 2020/21 IB Teacher Training Programme, 3 of 14 in-practice students – if defining 'in-practice' as those requiring over four years of full-time working experience – contributed to this overall group of 11. Reasons for the relative few committing to the two-year option can range considerably. For instance, they might have been instructed to do so by their Board of Education, or otherwise asked permission from them to fulfil personal targets, such as making use of extra study and research time. Odd cases have also occurred where individuals are not informed of the one-year track's existence, inadvertently forcing them onto the two-year equivalent on arrival, as was revealed in an interview with one student in the 2020/21 IB Teacher Training cohort.

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[63] This aspect is negotiable. For instance, a student with four and a half years of full-time teaching experience could still be positioned in Category B under the discretion of the graduate school.

[64] Exceptions are made to permit a student who blurs certain boundaries between Category A and B to enter the latter. For instance, a student who is deemed to have well over 5 years of full-time teaching experience but is not currently practicing on entry would likely be placed in Category B.

[65] This is a possible scenario for those bracketed as 'in-practice' by JIE. Refer to previous footnote for an example.

[66] This often occurs for at least two reasons. The first and most obvious is so the educator can return to full-time work a year earlier. The second is that the educator's Board of Education – assuming they work in the public sector – often decides for them to take the one-year option when dispatched.

Another clear consequence of these two labels boils down to the choice of electable programme tracks. The 294 straight-masters students in the 2020/21 academic year could pursue one of four potential tracks: 'General Educational Practice (GEP),' 'Subject Specialization (SS),' 'Advanced Special Support Education,' and 'Educational Initiatives.' Meanwhile, in-practice students are additionally presented with a fifth exclusive option of 'School & Organizational Management (SOM).' In-practice students principally undertake either SOM[67] or GEP, while in straight-masters students are relatively dispersed across various programmes and (where applicable) sub-programmes, if with high concentrations of SS and GEP.

Figure 5.1: Graduate School of Professional Teacher Education Programme Tracks and Student Population (2020/21)[68]

2020/21 Academic Year Programme and Sub-Programme Tracks		Student No. at the Graduate School		
Programme	Sub-Programme (Where Applicable)	Straight-Masters	In-Practice	Total
School & Organizational Management	N/A	N/A	16	16
General Educational Practice	N/A	49	16	65
Subject Specialization	Japanese Literature Education	28	5	33
	Social Science Education	38	3	41
	Mathematics Education	16	3	19
	Natural Science Education	25	2	27
	Music Education	15	1	16
	Visual & Applied Arts Education	22	1	23
	Caligraphy Education	4	0	4
	Health & Physical Education	18	3	21
	Design-Technology Education	5	0	5
	Home Economics Education	10	0	10
	English Education	15	5	20
	Information-Technology Education	5	0	5
	Early-Childhood Education	2	0	2
	School Nursing Education	7	0	7
Advanced Special Support Education	N/A	15	3	18
Educational Initiatives	Contemporary Topics in School Education	11	5	16
	International Understanding & Multicultural Coexistence Education	4	0	4
	Environmental Education	5	0	5
Overall Student No.		294	63	357

[67] Designed exclusively for experienced educators – and therefore containing content considered too advanced for 'straight-masters' students – SOM is viewed as an opportunistic programme track by many in the 'in-practice' bracket.

[68] This dataset together with figure 5.2 and 5.3 were created with raw data received by the institution.

These numbers are significant for the department's IBEC programme. Notice the division of straight-masters and in-practice students for GEP (figure 5.1). This holds the highest total ratio of any programme, revealing as most undertaking IBEC modules in 2020/21 were affiliated with GEP. This resulted in IBEC being one of the only sets of modules where a substantive amount of *both* straight-masters and in-practice students were present. By extension, this realized an otherwise rare scenario at JIE where students across the categorical divide regularly engaged with each other, producing classroom environments with an especially diverse age and experience range.

IBEC at JIE

As covered in Chapter 3, IBEC itself is no more than a framework. Each prospective university designs and proposes a personalized programme aligning with both its own institutional principles and those of the IBO. Debuting in 2019, JIE's IBEC is split into two core modules: *IB Kyōiku Nyūmon,* or the 'Fundamentals of IB Education' (hereon, 'IB Fundamentals'), and the intensive *IB Kyōin Yōsei Tokubetsu Puroguramu*, or 'IB Teacher Training Programme' (hereon the 'IBTTP'). IB Fundamentals is available to all students at the graduate school, running once a week through a total of around 22 classroom hours between April and August. Initially facilitated by two members of faculty in 2019, it has since grown to three as of 2020. 85 students were registered on the module in 2020 (figure 5.2) with an almost identical figure in 2021. The module is relatively popular with in-practice students, with 25 of 63 at the graduate school registered in 2020/21 compared with 60 of 294 straight-masters students. This is unsurprising when considering that IBEC modules are seen as comparatively advanced to other electable alternatives.

After substantial re-structuring of the original Spring 2019 model following COVID-19, both the general structure and content of IB Fundamentals has remained consistent between Spring 2020 and 2021 terms. With the 2020 course suspended for over a month, it was eventually transformed into a digital experience via a "poly-mediation" (Madinau and Miller 2012a; Madinau and Miller 2012b) of hardware and software. For the former, this generally included laptops, tablets, and smartphones, and the latter, Zoom, Teams, LINE, What's App, Messenger, and iMessage. Its 2020 iteration remains one of JIE's only exclusively digital modules in its history, while the 2021 version took shape through a predominately digital and occasionally hybrid format. In fact, all IBEC-related classes were hybrid when not exclusively digital even where digital-only

participants had been the minority. The relative speed to which this shift to digital learning was actualized is noteworthy when compared with academic faculty in broader Japanese higher education, with some taking many more months to adapt to these modes of delivery due to – among other aspects – inadequate ICT competencies (Murakami 2021, 1-7).

Figure 5.2: 'Fundamentals of IB Education' Student Population Breakdown (2020/21)

2020/21 Academic Year Programme and Sub-Programme Tracks		Student No. For 'Fundamentals of IB Education'		
Programme	Sub-Programme (Where Applicable)	Straight-Masters	In-Practice	Total
School & Organizational Management	N/A	N/A	7	7
General Educational Practice	N/A	15	9	24
Subject Specialization	Japanese Literature Education	7	1	8
	Social Science Education	10	1	11
	Mathematics Education	1	1	2
	Natural Science Education	4	0	4
	Music Education	3	1	4
	Visual & Applied Arts Education	4	1	5
	Caligraphy Education	0	0	0
	Health & Physical Education	1	0	1
	Design-Technology Education	0	0	0
	Home Economics Education	1	0	1
	English Education	4	3	7
	Information-Technology Education	0	0	0
	Early-Childhood Education	1	0	1
	School Nursing Education	0	0	0
Advanced Special Support Education	N/A	1	0	1
Educational Initiatives	Contemporary Topics in School Education	4	1	5
	International Understanding & Multicultural Coexistence Education	1	0	1
	Environmental Education	3	0	3
Overall Student No.		60	25	85

Based on the 2021 iteration of IB Fundamentals, the first six of 15 classes were covered exclusively online, with course content comprising of introductory themes such as the IBO's mission statement, its key concept of international-mindedness and its learner profile (see Chapter 2). The final four classes focused on reflection and assessment sessions along with two guest lectures from article-1 IB World School educators and JIE alumni. Sandwiched between these were nine classes acting as the module's core. Students were split into three evenly numbered groups, and, through a group rotation system, spent three classes with each of the course's three facilitators, each focusing on one core aspect of IB pedagogy. These were listed as the following in the course outline:

1. Teaching based on IB education's Approaches to Learning, and socio-constructivist

(*'kōseishugiteki')* approaches.

2. Teaching based on IB education's concept of 'inquiry' (*'tankyū').*
3. Teaching based on IB education's approach to formative *('keiseiteki')* and summative assessment *('sōkatsuteki hyōka').*

This selection was somewhat predictable as they arguably remain IB's most impressionable components to the article-1 education sector. They also appeared well catered for JIE's students. Data derived from structured surveys conducted by JIE in 2020 helps reveal some of the overarching motivations for those undertaking IB Fundamentals. Out of 49 respondents, 35 expressed their interest in understanding "IB educational principles and methodology" while 27 wished to further develop new "qualities and skills desired by educators." These aspects understandably appeal to a cohort of mainly current and future article-1 educators, the majority grappling with the challenge of implementing MEXT's active learning guidelines. Interestingly, placing only third overall with 27 respondents were those wishing to receive an IB Certificate in Teaching and Learning (IBCTL). This suggests around half the IB Fundamentals' students were more concerned with applying IB educational philosophy and principles to the article-1 education system *rather* than attaining a qualification conferred by the IBO. Further evidence of this can be observed through only 17 expressing any desire to work in an IB World School in the future. In fact, 24 undertook the module out of sheer curiosity having never previously heard of IB.

These survey results, however, are not reflective of the final community of 34 enrolled on the IBTTP, the second, and by far most substantial module of JIE's IBEC. It includes more than double the classroom hours at around 45, making it possibly the single most intensive module at the graduate school. Alongside completion of the course itself, further requirements include completing 30-plus hours of school observation visits which typically include training assignments. Only by fulfilling these criteria – along with completion of the master's degree itself – are students eligible to apply for an IBCTL (for a fee of 265 USD). Due to the sizeable amount of course content covered, students spend additional time in activities outside formal classroom hours, including via study groups and discussion sessions, most of which is self-organized. The course's relative intensity means its facilitators generally discourage students from electing any other similarly

time-intensive modules, such as an optional research dissertation. Another stark difference between IB Fundamentals and the IBTTP is the latter's limit of between 30-35 students[69] per academic year. As a result, not only is the IBTTP one of the most competitive modules the graduate school offers, but its admissions process relative to other IBEC programmes in Japan makes it one of the strictest in general, as for many others entry is guaranteed on enrolment to the degree programme. The selection process is predominately decided through the total sum of four separate assessment tasks embedded in IB Fundamentals,[70] that range from essays to comprehension exercises. That said, further factors also work to influence ultimate selection. Course conveners are explicit that (1) certain students are encouraged to apply over others, and that (2) certain candidates may hold pre-determined preferential treatment. Concerning (1), they strongly encourage students to apply for admission onto the IBTTP if they are seriously considering a job placement at an IB World School, while discouraging those pursuing other optional pathways within the graduate school. For (2), there is currently one type of student who hold preferential consideration[71] in being accepted by IBEC facilitators. Those framed within the 'in-practice' category (i.e., experienced educators) who have been formally dispatched by their respective Boards of Education or schools to specifically receive an IBCTL. Of the 34 in the 2020/21 IBTTP, five fulfilled this criterion.

Candidates must also specify which track they wish to undertake[72] and why in their application. There currently exist two, one dedicated to the IBO's Middle Years Programme (MYP) and one to the Diploma Programme (DP), with the decision determining which version of the

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[69] A former target of around 35 has since been replaced by 30 from the Autumn 2021/22 term onward, reducing the maximum number in a bid to improve quality assurance.

[70] In sharp contrast to the IBTTP, IB Fundamentals is an open access module for all students at the graduate school.

[71] There is technically a second group that was given special consideration during the 2020/21 intake. Those who had completed certain prescribed teacher training programmes during their undergraduate degrees at JIE. No students fulfilled this criterion in 2020/21 and the 2021/22 iteration was the last opportunity for such consideration.

[72] One straight-masters student arrived at the graduate school already conferred with a DP version of the IBCTL from their bachelor's degree at a separate institution. Because of this, they could only choose the MYP version at JIE.

IBCTL a student is eligible to receive. The graduate school strives to a achieve a balance of students across these tracks, although numbers are often somewhat skewed by student preference. In Autumn 2020, 18 were part of the MYP-track in comparison to 16 on the DP equivalent. In general, high school specialists choose the DP while middle and / or primary school[73] experts choose the MYP. It is impossible to undertake both tracks and receive two IBCTLs within a single year. Moreover, due to IBEC's popularity within the graduate school it is rare for students to be re-admitted onto the IBTTP for the second year of their degrees. That said, it has occurred. Two students within the 2020/21 IBTTP cohort accomplished this, both funded by a prefectural Board of Education.

The 2020/21 IB Teacher Training Cohort

At the core of my interests at JIE were the 34 students and three facilitators comprising its IBTTP community. Kihara leaded the IBTTP's MYP-track with assistance from Suga while Mishima ran the DP-track equivalent. Both Kihara and Mishima moved directly from JIE-affiliated schools to their current positions as university faculty, respectively granted the titles of Associate Professor and Professor, while Suga is currently a Professor at a separate IBEC-university, where she leads its MYP operations. Suga's simultaneous post at JIE is influenced by her past affiliation with JIE-affiliated schools. She is also actively involved with the MEXT-IBO Consortium while additionally holding a post at the IBO. A close friendship between Kihara and Suga has seen the two institutions collaborate often at various IBEC and other IB-related environments, including conferences and shared classrooms. All three facilitators hold extensive experience as school educators, including at JIE's affiliated IB World School, JIEIS. None hold doctoral qualifications – the general norm for IBEC facilitators in universities – but all conduct and publish differing quantities of academic research alongside IBEC-specific roles. Research assignments can range from those requested by JIE's own board to those in collaboration with MEXT.

A total of 35 students were registered for 2020/21 (figure 5.3). However, due to sensitive extenuating circumstances for one, a mutual decision was made to exclude their representation in

[73] A Primary Years Programme (PYP) version of the IBCTL is not currently offered by JIE, explaining why primary school specialists generally elected for the MYP.

this thesis. JIE possesses both one of the largest cohorts of any IBEC programme in Japan, and one with a relatively diverse age and experience range. 18 fit within the 20-25 age bracket – all categorized as straight-masters students – while the remaining 16 cover a wide age differential, with one fitting between 51-55 (figure 5.4). As I explore later, diversity in both age and experience proved instrumental in influencing how classroom environments were negotiated in the community.

Figure 5.3: IBTTP Student Population Breakdown (2020/21)

2020/21 Academic Year Programme and Sub-Programme Tracks		Student No. For 'IB Teacher Training Program'				
		Middle Years Programme		Diploma Programme		Total
Programme	Sub-Programme (Where Applicable)	Straight-Masters	In-Practice	Straight-Masters	In-Practice	
School & Organizational Management	N/A	N/A	1	N/A	0	1
General Educational Practice	N/A	6	2	1	6	15
Subject Specialization	Japanese Literature Education	0	0	1	1	2
	Social Science Education	3	0	3	1	7
	Mathematics Education	0	0	0	0	0
	Natural Science Education	0	0	0	1	
	Music Education	0	0	0	0	0
	Visual & Applied Arts Education	1	0	2	0	3
	Caligraphy Education	0	0	0	0	0
	Health & Physical Education	0	0	0	0	0
	Design-Technology Education	0	0	0	0	0
	Home Economics Education	0	0	0	0	0
	English Education	1	2	1	0	
	Information-Technology Education	0	0	0	0	0
	Early-Childhood Education	0	0	0	0	0
	School Nursing Education	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced Special Support Education	N/A	1	0	0	0	1
Educational Initiatives	Contemporary Topics in School Education	1	0	0	0	1
	International Understanding & Multicultural Coexistence Education	0	0	0	0	0
	Environmental Education	0	0	0	0	0
Overall Student No.		13	5	8	9	35

Figure 5.4

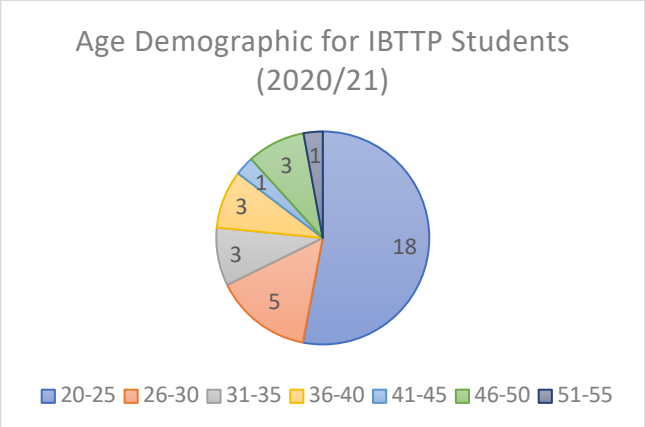
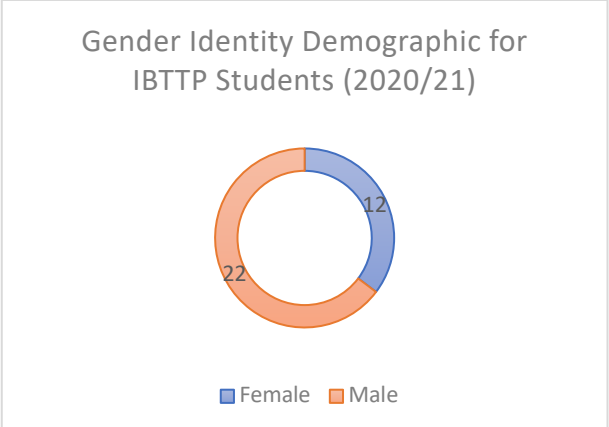


Figure 5.5



All 34 students' first language is Japanese, with several noting additional levels of proficiency in a second language, unsurprisingly dominated by English (figure 5.6). The majority listing English considered their proficiency level as 'elementary,' followed by 'intermediate,' two 'pre-advanced,' and two 'advanced.' Others chose not to list a second language yet could also align with speaking English at an 'elementary' level. 100% were Japanese nationals, with no other nationality or nationalities [74] noted. Many students' birth and upbringing are located within the Tokyo prefectural and metropolitan area – the latter of which includes Chiba, Kanagawa, and Saitama Prefectures – with the remaining half born and raised across an impressively diverse pool of prefectures in Japan (figure 5.7).

Figure 5.6: Second-Language Proficiency of IBTTP Students (2020/21)

Second Language	Elementary	Intermediate[75]	Pre-Advanced[76]	Advanced
English	15	10	2	2
Korean		1		
Spanish	2			
German	2			
Mandarin	2			
French	1			

[74] Formally speaking, holding more than one registered nationality remains illegal beyond the age of 20 in Japan at the time of writing. However, due to a generally weak – if fluctuating – enforcement of this law, many dual-plus nationals continue to hold onto multiple nationalities beyond this age.

[75] Those listing 'Elementary-intermediate' (one student) or 'conversational' (two students) in surveys have been categorized as 'intermediate.'

[76] Any student listing 'intermediate-advanced' (1 student) or quoted the EIKEN English proficiency exam descriptor of 'pre-1,' has been categorized as 'pre-advanced.'

Figure 5.7: IBTTP Students' Prefecture of Birth (2020/21)

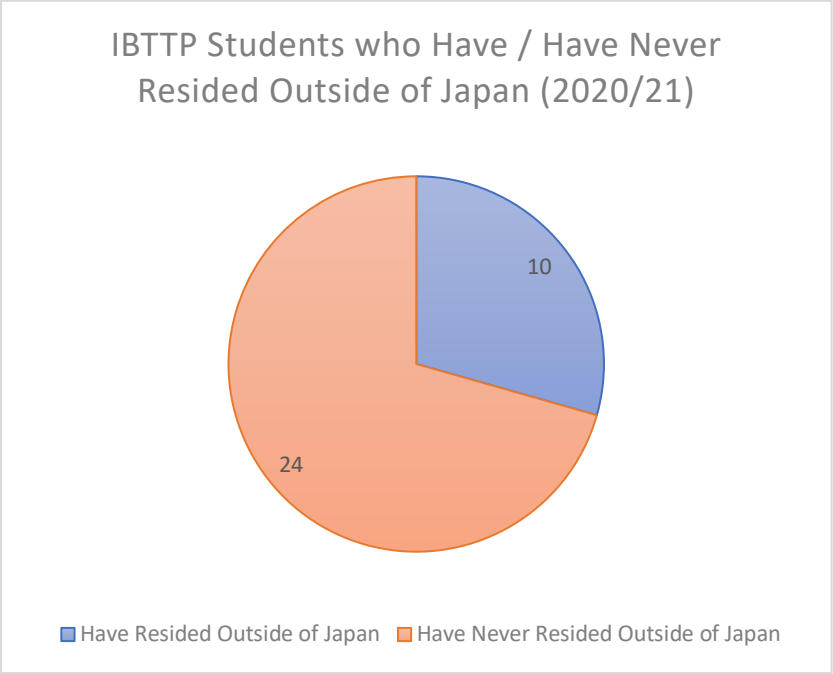
Prefecture	No. of Students
Tokyo	13
Ibaraki	3
Hiroshima	2
Kanagawa	2
Akita	1
Chiba	1
Fukushima	1
Gunma	1
Hokkaido	1
Kagawa	1
Kagoshima	1
Kochi	1
Miyagi	1
Nagasaki	1
Shizuoka	1
Tochigi	1

Prefectural diversity is noteworthy, but unsurprising when considering JIE's ambitious efforts over the past decade in establishing greater partnerships with several Boards of Education across the country. Beginning from 2014 – long before IBEC's existence at JIE – its affiliate IB World School hosted in-service training positions for teachers residing across a small range of prefectures outside of Tokyo, particularly across geographically distant and relatively resource poor areas

such as Kochi Prefecture. These collaborations have since directly extended into JIE's IBEC programme, as can be observed with this pool of in-practice and straight-masters students.

IB's history in Japan since the 1980s has been historically tied to the minoritized population of 'Japanese returnees' (see Chapter 4). As returnees remain an especially targeted population by bodies including the MEXT-IBO Consortium, it is worth asking how many might exist within its pool of IB educators. Based on results at JIE, it appears not many. With the phenomenon of 'returnees' notoriously challenging to define (see Chapter 4), I concluded this via more indirect questions via surveys and interviews. The first asked if they had ever resided outside of Japan, with 10 answering yes (figure 5.8). These 10 were then asked where and for how long they resided outside of Japan, along with a brief explanation as to why.

Figure 5.8



If a period of 'extensive residence' is defined to be around one year or more – a criteria satisfying most definitions of a returnee – 10 shrinks to five. Of these five, a further one can be argued to fall outside of common returnee definitions as their experience took place after what would generally

be considered their 'formative years,' in this case at the age of 21 (see Ishibashi in figure 5.9). This leaves four who would be frequently identified as returnee by a majoritized Japanese population, including two with experience living in multiple territories (figure 5.9). Conversely, this outcome indicates an overwhelming majority of IBTTP students to be predominately socialized in Japan. Solely extrapolating from this sample size, this suggests returnees to be relatively rare among article-1 IB educators.

Figure 5.9: IBTTP Students Residing Outside of Japan for One Year or More (2020/21)

IBTTP Student	Total Time	Country 1	Country 2	Reason/s
Sasahara	7 years	China (7 years)		Father's Work
Yagi	4 years	USA (1 year)	UK (3 years)	Father's Study / Work
Ogawa	3 years	UK (3 years)		Parent's Work
Nagada	3 years	UK (2 years)	Italy (1 year)	Father's Work
Ishibashi	1 year	Netherlands (1 year)		University Exchange Student

Almost all IBTTP students intended on becoming or continuing a career as a school educator upon completion of their degrees, with 10 since graduating in March 2021, and most of the remainder[77] in 2022. Of the 2021 graduates, eight went on to work as school educators, including three in public article-1 IB World Schools. Another is currently positioned as a school coordinator for a Board of Education in Tokyo.

Most are deeply passionate of their chosen career paths. One interesting pattern revealed through interviews concerned stories centered on teachers as inspirational role models during childhood. Recalled by no less than nine, many involved memories from as early as their primary

[77] A few students took one-year sabbaticals while another has spent further time as an exchange student across multiple Scandinavian territories.

school years. Several spoke of teachers as critical figures, those helping them realize their potentials, or even those turning difficult lives around at major life junctures where they might have felt unaccomplished, laid-back, depressed, and more. For instance, Ogawa recalled idolizing a teacher before starting middle school, viewing them as a moral compass on which to establish his own life principles. Then there were cases such as Sato and Ishibashi, both of whose parents – and for one, even grandparents – were school educators themselves, highlighting just how early some had been stimulated to envisage teaching as a career path. For several others teaching was instead an unexpected, more recent career change. For Segawa it marked a shift from becoming a researcher in cellular science, discovering a newfound passion in communicating complex knowledge to others, and believing she could positively impact more lives through teaching. Sakaguchi transitioned into the profession after a lengthy career as a corporate employee, or *sarariiman*. He felt disillusioned with the hierarchal rigidity of corporate life, feeling his contributions often unvalued and unable to contribute positively to society through his work. For Mochizuki – one of the most experienced educators of the cohort – her original reasoning for pursuing teaching resided less in the appeal of the profession itself, and more as a career option that would better mitigate gender discrimination. She spoke of it being one of the few professions during the 1990s where women could securely achieve better financial independence.

Regardless of the motivation in question, the overwhelming majority of IBTTP students held onto strong senses of purpose for why they were either pursuing, or continuing careers in education. Considering JIE's position as a locally prestigious university for education-related academia, this is arguably an obvious result. Conversely, these motivations help explain why the majority had no plans to undertake IBEC on arrival to the graduate school. Most were in fact unaware of its existence until initiating their degrees, many discovering it through guidebooks distributed at the start of the academic year. Only a handful of students completing bachelor's degrees at JIE were made aware of IBEC before applying to the department. Discovery of IBEC was therefore an *unforeseen* and *fortuitous* opportunity to acquire an advanced set of philosophical and pedagogical knowledge they may not have encountered otherwise. It was a chance to learn of an 'international standard' capable of developing sensibilities fit for '21st century' teaching and learning. It was a window into understanding pedagogical thinking promoted by globally influential bodies, many aspects of which are perceived lacking in the present Japanese education system (see Chapter 4). Of course, it was also a formal qualification to raise one's competitiveness

in the Japanese teacher market. *Rarely*, however, did this mean entering an IB World School. This was only the case for the small, but significant group of five students, dispatched by their respective Boards of Education for the specific purposes of attaining an IBCTL.

What, then, was *the* most prevalent motivation for students undertaking the IBTTP? The answer appears to be to (re)enter the mainstream Japanese education system better equipped to implement MEXT's latest roster of guidelines. As I have already mentioned, at the heart of these guidelines are a focus on 'active' and 'independent learning,' notions which theoretically complement IB pedagogy. However, as I explore in the remainder of this chapter, a combination of organizational practices in student categorization, diverse age demographics, and broader socio-cultural influences forced me to ask a troubling question. To what extent can pedagogies almost exclusively constructed by 'White' Euro-American thinkers for socio-culturally 'White' Euro-American classrooms be copy and pasted into Japanese alternatives? I consider this while recounting my integration into JIE's digital IBTTP community, all while locked inside a university dormitory in Oxford during a crippling phase of COVID-19.

Digital (In)Coherence

My smartphone buzzed, waking me from a desperate nap. It was 10 at night during a frosty Oxford winter. Still struggling to embody this as my new 'morning' for the next year (see Chapter 1), I begrudgingly slid out of bed and into the shower in the frail hope of tricking my body to life. The following gimmick was getting fully dressed – including below my waist – as if preparing to commute to university and engage with others in-person. This too failed to produce the desired state. Despite the climate, I occasionally floated the idea of strolling outside the dormitory complex with the night sky. It was fortunately located on a premise with private greenery, as ideal as an 'ideal' environment could be during some of the worst days of COVID-19 in the UK. At this stage of the winter popular news networks were headlined by figures of 500 deaths a day, numbers which would soon grow to as high as around 1,250 during the course of January 2021 (Financial Times 2022). Vaccines remained little else but an optimistic future, while mask wearing and social distancing by the immediate population was inconsistent at best. Weary of the climate, my walks were occasional, generally shacking up for the months ahead. Instead, the savior of my slumber was 'breakfast.' To be effective the meal needed to be substantial to animate me to life. It was also

critical for endurance, as a night of fieldwork typically ended sometime after greeting the dawning sun. Fortunately, cooking was one of my more competent skillsets.

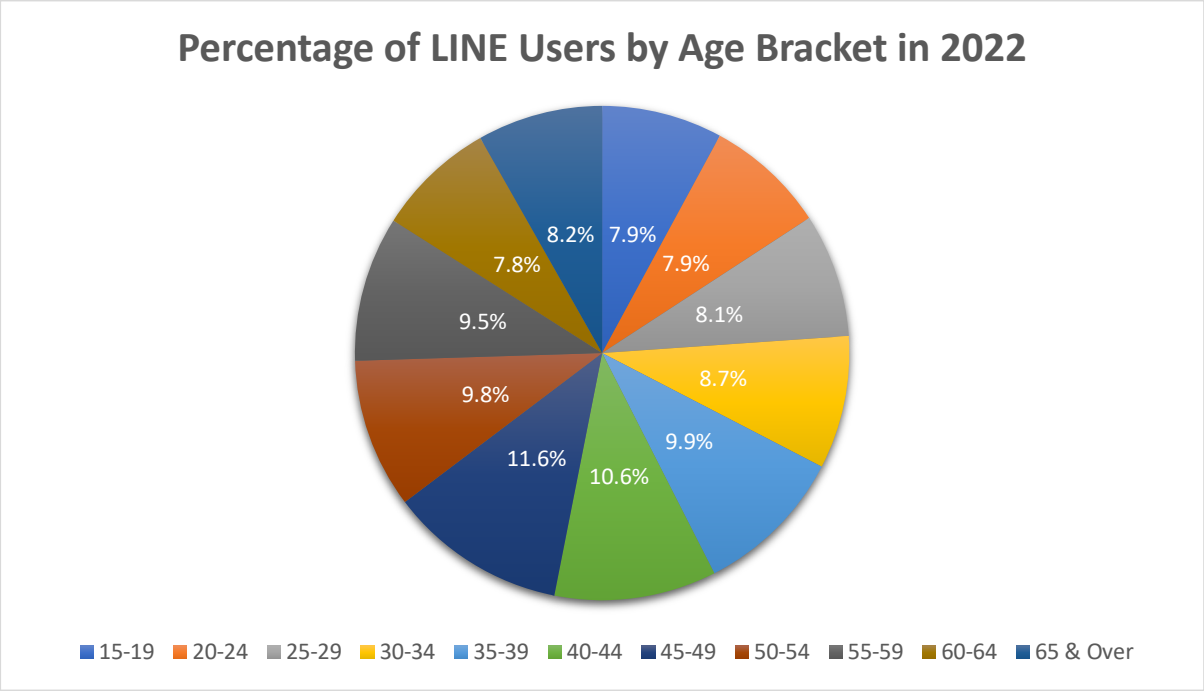
Next was to overview the agenda for the night, reading through previous fieldnotes and glancing over prescribed literature for class. This would usually get disrupted by around 23:00 through increasingly frequent vibrations from my smartphone. Japan had arisen. Notifications began streaming through several apps. For Kihara – the lead facilitator of the MYP-Track – encouraging participation on Teams was a top priority. She had taken great pains to create chat columns dedicated for each individual student, in addition to general equivalents structured around the course itself. During staff meetings she regularly expressed responsibility to realize a level of student participation originally envisioned in-person. In the end these individual chat columns were rarely used, although most participated regularly on the platform via other means. Many created and / or commented on other's posts, while others uploaded content (e.g., course-related literature or conference adverts), or self-organized Teams meetings with fellow students to collectively work on assignments. Some even setup meetings for casual chats. Students would also upload personal reflections concerning their observational training visits at IB World Schools, partly so those unable to do so – due to geographical positioning during the pandemic – could receive insights into these experiences.

Outside the facilitator's jurisdiction, however, a critical app was at work building the more informal home of this digital community: LINE. By rapidly increasing margins at present, it remains *the* mainstream chat app in Japan. At the time of writing, around 70% of Japan's total population – if calculated at 125,410,000 people – can be considered 'active users'[78] of the app, (LINE 2022, 9). Moreover, this 70% spans a remarkably balanced age demographic, with those between 15-19 and 60-64 holding the lowest shares at 7.9% and 7.8% respectively, and 45-49 the highest at 11.6% (see figure 5.10). Corporate employees alone account for 51.5% of regular usage, while students currently stand at 10.8% (LINE 2022, 11). Its comparative use over other apps is also noteworthy. Of total active users, 83.4% have been calculated to primarily use LINE versus 38.3% on Twitter, and 20.4% on Facebook, while 41.6% use LINE exclusively in comparison to 2.5% on Twitter and 0.4% on Facebook (LINE 2022, 15). In other words, LINE was likely to play a significant role in everyday socializing even before COVID-19, the pandemic only exacerbating its

[78] 'Active users' are defined by LINE as those using the app routinely for at least a month or more.

importance.

Figure 5.10



(Reproduced from LINE 2022, 11)

Not long after the IBTTP initiated, its community consisted of two overarching groups self-organized by students on LINE, one for the MYP-track and DP-track. This social organization, combined with simultaneous classroom hours for both tracks – only a handful of which were experienced jointly – resulted in MYP and DP communities all but socially exclusive to each other. Meanwhile, any physical interactions both on, and especially outside of JIE's campus occurred only occasionally, typically when students shared modules with others elsewhere in their degrees.

Concluding various 'early-morning' correspondences on LINE, preparation for the

Zoom[79] classroom began from 00:00. This would generally be the time when any pre-lesson staff meetings were held, the events of which essentially defined faculty community at the time. Kihara and Mishima generally conducted classes while physically based on JIE's campus, yet these meetings were also carried out digitally. The main reason why was Suga. Primarily stationed at a different university, participation was only possible by running all elements of IBEC online. She was also the most vocal in favor of remaining online at the time due to COVID-19, a viewpoint rooted in safety which others supported. Staff meeting content varied from course reflections to student-related politics, from debating improvisations to venting personal tales related to the pandemic. Once concluded, Kihara and Mishima would permit students into their respective digital spaces – one for the MYP-track, the other for the DP-track – while noting attendance. Based on my time with the MYP-track, a given class would be experienced through the following routine:

1. Student is welcomed to the Zoom room / and physical room[80] before being split into breakout rooms / a mix of breakout rooms and physical groups to reflect on previous content. This typically lasts 10 minutes.

2. Student is welcomed back to the main room / instructed that reflection time is over. The facilitator/s take over, introducing today's topic of focus with the assistance of PowerPoint slides and occasionally other visual media.

3. Student participates or observes some form of classroom activity / set of activities. This ranges from conducting / observing mock lessons to engaging in extensive group discussions over aspects of IB educational pedagogy and theory with their peers.

4. Student reconvenes with the rest of class. They take part in discussion-based Q&As / receive

[79] As this suggests, both tracks used a combination of Zoom and Teams. The former was used for all formal videoconferencing activities (e.g., conducting classes), while the latter was relied on for almost all other digital functionalities, such as accessing prescribed literature and media for class, submitting reflections for school observations, and organizing private meetings between students.

[80] Most classes on the 2020/21 IBTTP were run exclusively online for both tracks, but a healthy amount was also conducted in a hybrid format, hence the use of a physical room for these occasions.

facilitator feedback. Facilitators then briefly review the days content.

5. Student may be sent for final breakout sessions / a mix of breakout sessions and physical groups to work on any outstanding activities, from which they will eventually disconnect / leave the classroom.

The above template highlights one significant pattern: students spent most their classroom hours engaged with each other *as opposed* to with facilitators. This provided frequent opportunities to deepen relationships during activities and assignments, especially in digital spaces. This was because breakout rooms, unlike groupwork conducted in-person, often created environments devoid of a facilitator. This resulted in more spare time after completion of a task, inviting casual discussion over several topics that ranged from the formal to the more informal.

If, however, this MYP community can be described as one possessing a high degree of *digital coherence* (see Chapter 1), then the DP community was quite the opposite. For starters, Mishima – the DP-track's sole facilitator – setup its Teams to act as little more than a tool to access facilitator-uploaded content, such as pre-lesson literature and related media. One key example involves pre-recorded introductory lectures exclusive to the DP group. Lasting anywhere between 10 to 50 minutes in length, students were requested to review them before participating in theory-focused classes. Teams remained the location to access general notifications by IBEC facilitators, but unlike the MYP-track, the platform did *not* encourage constructing community, resulting in multiple columns all but entirely absent of student contribution. Intriguingly, the same contrast was true of LINE, with its group chat comparatively barren. The DP group never held any form of informal group events online, rarely socializing outside hours obligated by the course. In sharp contrast the MYP group held several (e.g., see Chapter 1), even including an additional social one year after completing IBEC to celebrate the graduation of their overall degrees in Spring 2022.[81]

[81] There has since been more recent correspondence on this same MYP group on LINE, the latest at the time of writing being August 2023. All having either since graduated or – in a few rare instances – are now close to graduating. Despite this, several members have been keeping the rest informed of their life progress, while a few more have reported meeting others in-person. An informal in-person gettogether is currently being proposed for late-2023 or early 2024.

This discrepancy in community coherence can be explained by several factors, such as the indirect effect exerted by Kihara's and Mishima's contrasting approaches to digital platforms, and the instability of digital sociality under COVID-19 in general. Another potential factor was the MYP group being relatively comprised of younger students who knew each other prior to the module, while also accompanied by comparatively younger in-practice counterparts. This not only realized a smaller age and experience gap, but also allowed more effortless socialization online, with younger generations often finding it easier to express their identities digitally (De Seta 2020). This resulted in more private events such as 'social pubs' (see Chapter 1), as well as those arranged in collaboration with IBEC students at other universities via Facebook groups. All this was absent in the DP group, where socialization outside of classes instead took place through independent micro-communities, many of which included select individuals from the MYP group.

Community coherence was largely contingent on a relative willingness and competence to engage with digital platforms during a bizarre period when physical isolation was the norm. It exemplifies the sometimes-dramatic scale of diversity of improvisation to digital life under the various undulations brought by the pandemic. However, COVID-19 and digitality aside, something else was at work. Something more pervasive, influencing the manner everyday classroom discourse was negotiated between students of unusually disparate ages and experience.

Disrupting 'International Pedagogy'

I vividly remember my first night on the IB Teacher Training Programme. Class began at 01:00 sharp (09:00 in Japan) after an extensive staff meeting. In an opening speech, IBEC facilitators formally announced me as a *kyōdō kenkyūsha,* or 'Collaborative Researcher,' an official position granted by JIE. So far so good, but they continued. To my shock, they introduced me as a doctoral student in Anthropology at *okkusufōdo daigaku* (University of Oxford) researching IBEC in Japan. My fears as an ethnographer ignited, worried that my association with Oxford – which remains one of the most recognized and impressionable universities across mainstream Japanese society – might immediately compromise perceptions of approachability.[82] A PowerPoint slide comprised

[82] Other researchers have written warily on such issues (McLaughlin 2010, 5).

solely of the university's homepage and logo only fueled my anxieties.

Thankfully, with great relief, they also chose to share my status as an IB alumni, graduating through its full continuum of school programmes (i.e., the PYP, MYP, and DP), and as a former Teaching Assistant and counselor at an IB World School in London (see Preface). These latter associations handed me a timely lifeline right before performing a *jikoshōkai* (a customary semi-structured self-introduction). Expanding on my research purposes, I emphasized an excitement to learn *with* everyone as someone interested in IB. As a part-naturalized Japanese speaker with a part-Japanese upbringing, I embodied all the general Japanese sensibilities and mannerisms I possessed to help ease the community into a sense of familiarity and ease, another clumsy attempt at horizontalizing my position. I feared, however, that the damage had already been dealt despite these efforts: I might be irreparably classified as a *kyōin* ('member of staff').

My insecurities relate to the classic ethnographic dilemma of balancing ethical transparency with ensuring social integration into the communities and peoples of study (e.g., Levinson 2010), a topic of more recent theoretical interest among educational ethnographers (Busher and Fox 2019). The principal challenge – at least for anthropological approaches to ethnography – lies in *somehow* negotiating oneself into that often elusive 'in-group' as much as is pragmatically possible. Stating the obvious, the socio-cultural contexts all communities and peoples are embedded in typically complicates this goal, and Japanese societies are no exception.

Outside of class, I communicated regularly with several students via private chats on LINE and iMessage, but the nature of these relationships greatly diverged, not least because of the age and experience range in the group. I felt swiftly positioned within the generally unspoken concept of *nakama,* meaning, as far as the English language was concerned, I was in the 'in-group.' Significantly, however, by no means does *nakama* equate to someone trustworthy enough (e.g., a close friend) to confide and discuss honest experiences or feelings with, as might be problematically inferred through its common English translation. Throughout the following weeks I made a concerted effort to chip away at closing social distance. One core strategy I employed was diffusing any impressions that I was a member of staff with 'the answers.' During groupwork, I tried deflecting questions clearly imbued with these expectations, flipping them into inquiries for discussion. I often delved into my past with IB, drawing on my various experiences as a student and member of staff where relevant or when directly asked. These habits, it appears, positioned me as a form of IB *senpai,* a concept loosely translating to 'senior,' although this does a

poor job at grasping the socio-cultural complexities its inextricably linked to.

The mainstream Japanese identity remains one where the self is generally positioned within a dynamic, but disciplined scale of formality and intimacy with others. Placement on this scale impacts the extent to which personal thoughts and feelings are openly expressed. In the Japanese language this can be demonstrated through several pairs of polarized concepts. Examples include *soto* (outside; out-group) versus *uchi* (inside; in-group), *omote* (in front; what is shown on the surface) versus *ura* (back; what is concealed from the surface), *ninjō* (personal emotions and feelings) versus *giri* (social expectations and obligations), and *honne* (one's true colours) versus *tatemae* (publicly appropriate principles and mannerisms) (Lebra 1976, 112-113; Doi 1976, 37; Hamabata 1983, 22). As other anthropologists have argued, these tensions demonstrate that, far from being "mere taxonomic categories," these terms express some of the "basic organizational coordinates of language and social life" which remain commonplace in Japanese societies (Bachnik 1992, 153).

Kejime is an intriguing concept exploring such behavior. Others have defined it as "correctly reading the context for what is and acting accordingly" (Tobin 1995, 246), going as far as to describe "the key to socialization in Japan [as learning] *kejime*" (Tobin 2000, 1157). This is because acquiring the ability to match one's verbal and bodily registers to a range of relational, spatial, and temporal situations (e.g., informal versus formal, insiders versus outsiders, elders versus toddlers, specific locations and / or time), is frequently practiced and embodied from as early as preschool (Hayashi and Tobin 2015, 83-84). That said, despite its long-identified role in Japanese modes of childhood socialization, *kejime* is rarely, if ever explicitly used to describe such social coordinates in everyday life. Instead, regularly deployed terms such as *kūki wo yomu* – literally translating to 'reading the air,' and better interpreted to 'behaving appropriately within a given social environment and temporality' – do a better job at demonstrating such awareness in the everyday.

Senpai – and its antonym of *kōhai* (or 'junior') – are another popular pair of concepts exemplifying *kejime*, imbuing a nuanced sense of social verticality. They are by no means unique to Japan. For instance, mainstream Chinese and Korean societies also share similar vertical coordinates (Qie et al. 2019). They do, however, remain particularly prevalent in Japan, especially so during middle and high school life (Ono and Shoji 2015), where it can be expressed to the extent that a *kōhai* may use *senpai* as a titular suffix, or, more casually, by replacing one's surname

altogether. In schools the difference is systematic. *Senpai* are immediately distinguishable by their year groups relative to *kōhai*. Furthermore, the relational hierarchies these terms generate are reinforced by broader socio-cultural approaches to learning in Japanese society. This includes the strictly sequential nature of 'classical' Japanese pedagogy: that study itself is achieved through unalterable stages. It is an approach previously identified by other educationalists as a key characteristic inherent to broader, historically "traditional" Japanese approaches to learning (DeCoker 1998, 69). Such vertical coordinates continue to permeate life in higher education and numerous more career paths, although their influence often turns more implicit and complex. Age gaps become less of a predictor post-schooling, as 'experience' is itself organized more diversely. For instance, one individual may be recognized by another as a *senpai* at a corporation owing to their senior position or experience, while *simultaneously* recognizing them as one too, because they are considerably older, or are a parent with larger social responsibilities (i.e., *'jinsei no senpai,'* or a '*senpai* in life').

In my case, being an 'IB *senpai'* was rarely expressed explicitly. Rather, it was implicitly suggested by the nature of my social standing within the community, positioned in a privileged social space between students and facilitators. It allowed me to negotiate my assistance of the course with my participation in it. Most crucially, it granted opportunities to socialize with students in manners that would otherwise have been judged socially inappropriate – as if I were instead a *sensei* ('teacher') – while permitting the same affordances with programme facilitators. Bearing sometimes sensitive social responsibilities further evidenced this, with both facilitating staff and students occasionally divulging information deemed inappropriate for the 'other side' to hear. For example, certain members of faculty may privately discuss political tensions occurring within the university, or personal struggles with fulfilling research quotas. Likewise, certain students may inquire on certain aspects of programme structure or confess personal insecurities. Negotiating this liminal space[83] proved challenging, but critically, it bestowed access to more private (i.e., more than simply their publicly appropriate) selves across the divide.

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[83] Originating in the work of ethnographer Arnold van Gennep (1909), the concept of liminality – derived from the Latin term *limen* ('threshold') – was developed on substantially by anthropologist Victor Turner (1969; 1974; 1979), who described it as "the midpoint of transition in a status-sequence between two positions" (Turner 1974). In this context, these two polar positions could be modelled as *sensei* ('teacher') versus *insei* ('postgraduate student'), with the liminal midpoint being 'IB *senpai.'*

Of course, the student cohort were similarly negotiating practices of *kejime* among themselves, not least due to the unusually diverse age and experience gaps between them (see figure 5.4). This was in and of itself unsurprising. *Something else,* however, was afoot. Something accentuating these practices with further depth: organizational culture. Namely, the social stratification of 'straight-masters' and 'in-practice' students. So embedded is this custom that many of its electable programme overviews include separate expectations per category. Based on accounts of several in-practice students, this can range from additional criteria to sensibilities (e.g., being more proactive during class). These systems also infiltrate the IBEC experience, easily discernible through course outlines for both IB Foundations and the IBTTP that contain category-purposed attainment targets. To demonstrate, below is the in-practice version of the outline for the MYP-track of the IBTTP:

"Attainment Goals (In-Practice Students):

To be able to acquire theoretical knowledge through literature and adapt it to one's own conceptions of education and educational practice, while appreciating IB educational values, thoughts, and general international educational principles pertaining to school education in Japan, (1) *as well as possess a compass for the future of Japanese education.*

To be able to exercise practice-based knowledge, learn through training visits at cooperating IB schools, propose a curriculum making active use of MYP / DP knowledge and approaches while highlighting the challenges in doing so, (2) *as well as propose remedial strategies for these challenges.*

To be able to attain a IB Certificate in Teaching and Learning (in MYP or DP).

To be able to reflect on one's lesson planning, implementation, evaluation, and improvement strategies, and aim to raise one's abilities as an educator through coordination and collaboration within a broader learning community involving a diverse range of people, including IB educational practitioners."

(My numbers and emphasis)

An almost identical paragraph catered for straight-masters students was printed above this passage, differing at only two junctures. Specifically, this was the inclusion of (1), possessing "a compass for the future of Japanese education," and (2), an ability to additionally "propose remedial strategies for" challenges emerging when forming a MYP / DP influenced curriculum. It is a revealing demonstration of JIE's active effort to reinforce the straight-masters / in-practice distinction within IBEC, yet conversely exposes how substantively little differentiates them. As it transpires, the divide's emphasis within the department was unwittingly bolstered by external influences. At the end of JIE's Recognition Visit (RV) with the IBO (see Chapter 3) in 2018, one of the IBEC Team's nine recommendations included in its final report stated the following:

"That the Graduate School further considers the role of the in-service teacher / student to both draw on their experience and knowledge to maximise the learning of the straight masters students as well as ensure that the learning needs of the in-service teacher / students are also met."

Based on my experience with the IBEC Recognition Process (see Chapter 3), I presumed the IBO's representative team likely encouraged JIE to maintain this divide out of respect for the department's, and by extension, university's autonomy. Post-fieldwork, in an informal conversation with the Chair for this RV, Edward (see Chapter 3), I discovered such diplomatic motivations to only explain part of the rationale behind its inclusion. As he explained, the team were somewhat concerned that the programme proposed during the RV would be too basic for experienced educators, and so wished to quietly recommend JIE to further consider how to enhance the in-practice student experience. Ironically, JIE appears to have treated this recommendation as an *instruction*. This is hinted at by their response to it as part of their Interim Review – a process covered in Chapter 6 – through the following words in their English-written report:

"Different objectives are set for in-service teachers and straight master's students. The in-service teachers are required to consider the improvement and [provide] solution[s] of the present school

curriculum, teaching and learning and collaborative teachers training. In the group work, the in-service teachers [i.e., in-practice students] play a role in giving the practical advice and deepening the students' understanding based on their knowledge and experiences, while students [i.e., straight masters students] give their new ideas from the various perspectives [sic]."

JIE's response incidentally hints at another role for in-practice students not mentioned within module overviews: their comparatively *vertical* positioning in guiding classroom content. However, despite all these emphases of distinction, little was explicitly expressed to this effect by facilitators during classroom hours. The only notable exceptions included a couple of occasions when certain in-practice students – such as one who had already completed one track of the IBTTP the year prior – were approached to semi-facilitate a given class. In general, the only obvious difference appeared to be the *awareness* of the distinction itself. This awareness and the symbolic consequences carried by it complicated the social dynamic between many. All students were aware of exactly who was and was not of a given category, exacerbated by digital environments that saw these emblazoned next to their names. This was nuanced further by the diverse age range of in-practice students, some only a couple of years older, or as many as three decades older than the average straight-masters student. In a few cases this resulted in producing relationships between in-practice students *as* complex as those crossing 'the divide.' At its most symbolic extreme, straight-masters students would address certain in-practice individuals by suffixing *'sensei'* to their surnames instead of the horizontal '*san*' ('Ms' / 'Mr' / 'Mx' etc.), the same way all addressed Kihara, Suga, and Mishima. The behavior of these IBEC facilitators only boosted this pattern, sometimes addressing certain in-practice students as *sensei* to inadvertently legitimize this relational disparity.

The result? Not only did these practices affect the nature of relationships in the community, but by extension, it affected at least one key aspect of IB pedagogical practice. A trend emerged throughout the year where in-practice students more frequently expressed thoughts and opinions over straight-masters equivalents, who instead behaved comparatively reserved. At rare intervals, certain in-practice students even seized the initiative on guiding course content in the absence of facilitators during breakout sessions, something which never occurred with their counterparts. As is discerned through the general pattern of classroom discourse overviewed in

the previous section's template, students were firmly encouraged to participate *through discussion* because of its deep-seated role in IB pedagogy. In other words, *'kōseishugi,'* the current Japanese term for 'constructivism' and 'socio-constructivism.'

Put simply, constructivism considers all reality subjective, and all knowledge a process of construction. It has been interpreted a "radical" approach to epistemology (von Glasersfeld 1998, 23), an anti-thesis to empirical realism that challenges "age-old beliefs which maintain that facts speak for themselves, that knowledge is the reflection of ontological reality, and that language objectively refers to this reality" (Larochelle and Bednarz 1998, 4). It is a school of thought that – at the very least – traces back to John Dewey's notion of "constructive thinking" (Dewey 1910, 236), although the theory's genesis is most popularly attributed to Jean Piaget (Piaget 1972) alongside other influential developmental psychologists (e.g., Bruner 1990). As a pedagogy, constructivism seeks to move past "a world of facts and materialities to a world of symbols and models [that balances] cognitive and deliberative experiences of doers and creators [with] the social relationships [encompassing] experiences of either kind" (Larochelle and Bednarz 1998, 7). In other words, "instead of claiming that knowledge is capable of representing a world *outside* of our experience" it acts as "a tool *within* the realm of experience" (von Glasersfeld 1998, 24, my emphases).

Since Piaget's notion of constructivism, or more specifically *cognitive constructivism*, another variant subsequently emerged, made famous by the work of Lev Vygotsky: *socio-constructivism* (Vygotsky 1978, 19-30). It can also be traced back to the early 20th Century, in this case through interactions between Dewey and George Mead (Garrison 1998). Unlike the former concept, it underscores the role of active social participation between a group of learners – including 'teachers' – in the (re)constructing of knowledge. When viewed through this lens, teaching "is a transactional, artistically transformative, and creative activity. Meaning is made, it is not a matter of downloading information into our students' central processors" (Garrison 1998, 60). If successful, "each individual is free to become the author of [their] own life," stimulated by acquiring new perspectives "through dialogue with those who tell different stories in a different vocabulary from ourselves" (Garrison 1998, 60). In fact, such is the scale to which the IBO embraces this approach, that the word 'teacher' is informally considered by several experienced educators in its network as archaic: competent IB educators are not teachers (i.e., instructors of knowledge), but *facilitators* (i.e., guiders of knowledge).

There is, however, at least one outstanding issue these constructivisms problematically assume. That relationships across these groups of learners (i.e., the students) are *horizontal*. This is unsurprising given the theory's genesis. After all, it originally emerged through 'White' Euro-American[84] contexts that inevitably discount countless other complex socio-cultural systems of human relationality, such as that which Japanese societies represent. Based on my observations of various IBEC programmes in Japan, the theory appears implemented with an utter lack of consideration by some, with certain non-Japanese nationals absent of general cultural and / or linguistic knowledge of Japanese societies. Equally, as evidenced at JIE, the issue appears unknowingly ignored by Japanese nationals. Facilitators instead expect class to practice this pedagogy while failing to address clear frictions over its very premise in these mainstream Japanese teacher environments.

Observing the results of this unidentified or otherwise unspoken disconnect was effortless during Zoom breakout sessions on both the MYP and DP-tracks. Throughout groupwork, a pattern unravelled where straight-masters students either felt a positive responsibility to, or the personally undesired but socio-cultural pressure to, allow in-practice students to play more participatory roles in discussion-based exercises. In-practice counterparts indicated similar frictions during interview, feeling either a positive or unwanted expectation to contribute more to classroom discourse because of their categorization. Sato – an experienced in-practice primary school educator – was particularly vocal on this topic during interview. Asked for their general reflections of the IBEC experience, he expressed disappointment for a disparity in participatory learning between the categories. Later, towards the end of the same interview, I asked whether anything about their IBEC experience could be improved. Sato answered:

Sato: "The thing that strikes me the most, is that you know you can end up going a bit directionless *[bonyari shichau]* because you are giving constructivist-like thoughts."

[84] Russia is included here due to Lev Vygotsky's theoretical contributions.

Akira: "Yes! Yes, that's definitely a thing." (laughs)

Sato: "It's a thing isn't it."

Akira: "Yeah."

Sato: "So you see, I'm thinking that there is probably something there… a bit more… because there are those without [teaching] experience, I wonder if things just get too directionless *[bonyari shisugite]* and [the discussion] just ends unless [the facilitators] to an extent, sort of suggest a number of paths to accomplishing it."

Sato was referring to several groupwork experiences punctuating the IBTTP, where extensive periods of awkward silence could be experienced. He felt additional guidance, including discussion-encouraging cues from facilitators, might have better remedied the situation. I also experienced several moments of these silent intervals intermittently throughout the year. For example, breakout sessions could begin with all participants waiting extensively for someone other than themselves to initiate conversation, resulting in sometimes-prolonged periods of sheer non-engagement. A couple were experienced with Sato, one of which was described in the opening vignette of this chapter. Despite suggestions for facilitator improvement, however, Sato believed a general lack of willingness to participate for some in their cohort was centrally to blame. Asked if they felt this to be partly influenced by straight-masters students looking up to experienced educators, they were initially inclined to agree before reversing the sentiment with the following:

Sato: "Akira, I've been thinking about this recently and, there are times when the straight-masters lot act in that way, thinking they want to listen to my various perspectives out of respect, but I also think there are guys who are just not thinking at all." (laughs)

Sato: "This, because it's between us right (laughs). I'm speaking honestly."

Akira: "That's fine!"

Sato: "But yeah that's what I think. Probably, well, my mentality hasn't probably changed much since around my 20s or even my teens… I feel it's important to properly convey what you are thinking. There's something that emerges from that… look, i'm not really fighting here –"

Akira: "Yeah."

Sato: "Yeah, if you say what you're thinking honestly, there is nothing embarrassing about not knowing things you don't know. I just, I just wonder if it wouldn't be better to be more forthcoming to say what you don't know in different situations…"

Other in-practice students did not criticize the behavior of certain straight-masters students quite as explicitly as Sato. Additionally, although rare, examples of in-practice students behaving reservedly also existed, while contrarily, select straight-masters students like Segawa were some of *the* most participatory of the entire group. Nevertheless, Sato's views represented a general consensus among the in-practice cohort that they were more active during classroom activities. Others in this bracket such as Matsushima, Okabe, Mochizuki, and Okazaki, were more empathetic to straight-masters students, while some attempted to abolish the social divide altogether. During one social pub event, not only did Matsushima make an assertive request in having everyone replace her titular suffix of *sensei* with *san*, but went further, asking to be addressed by her first name, all strategies seeking to realize relational horizontality. This latter request was particularly significant given that first names remain generally referred to only in the

most familiar and intimate of relationships in Japan (e.g., one's partner, family, childhood friend). Matsushima is moreover one of the eldest and most experienced educators in the group, only adding to the significance of her efforts. Mochizuki, meanwhile, made consistent attempts during groupwork to restrain her levels of contribution to encourage those of others, while Okabe and Okazaki made purposeful, inviting pauses to ask those yet to comment for thoughts. Chatting casually on the topic with Okazaki – one of the younger in-practice students – he thought it likely that, understandably, many straight-masters students expected to learn more from the in-practice group during other modules on their degree. However, he believed it important that IBEC be treated differently, as when it came to IB "all are newcomers."

Some of the above discourse may be partially explained by a more collaborative mindset instilled in primary education between teachers, students, and guardians, of which Sato and Matsushima represent. I refer here to the over one century and a half-old practice of *kyōiku kenkyū* (lesson study), also commonly known as *kōnai kenshū* (in-school teacher training), long acknowledged as a major pedagogical characteristic in the Japanese primary school system (Sarkar Arani et al. 2010). The practice can be summarized as "a collaborative process of preparing lesson plans, conducting and observing lessons, checking and evaluating teaching, reflecting on practice, and replanning" between educators, guardians, and pupils (Sarkar Arani et al. 2010, 172). The result encourages more professionally horizontal relationships among not only educators, but also of guardians and even pupils, fostering learning environments regularly influenced by all three parties. This sharply contrasts with more vertical middle and especially high school systems, possibly explaining part of Sato's and Matsushima's especially proactive strategies in realizing better horizontal dynamics in the community.

Regardless, despite efforts at realizing the contrary, a friction among many straight-masters and in-practice students during groupwork appeared the product of a disconnect between Japanese socio-cultural practices of relationality and those of a pedagogy failing to accommodate them. Disparities in participation occurred whether these relational practices were privately supported or not. A number of individuals across both categories favored maintaining these Japanese modes of socialization, both familiar and comfortable with how mutual respect and responsibility are channelled through them. Others preferred discarding such relations altogether, if at least for the purposes of practicing IB education due to its pedagogical principles. Critically, however, whether student or facilitator, *none* of these ideas were publicly voiced. Potential

strategies at reconciling these tensions had been unwittingly silenced. No one, it seemed, was prepared to ask how to solve this obvious social dissonance. Of course, no one would ask how this internationalist pedagogy, constructed in ignorance of its own 'White' Euro-American histories, can be localized for common Japanese practices to human relationships. In other words, how to *glocalize* (Anderson-Levitt 2003) socio-constructivism so that it may accommodate the role relationality plays in the construction of group identity in Japanese educational settings.

To Summarize

I began this chapter by overviewing the Japanese Institute of Education, one of eight universities in 2022 to operate an IBEC programme in Japan. Situating its programme within the institution and department it is housed, I broke down its structure, content, and application procedure. I introduced some of the key demographics characterizing the 34 students comprising the IB Teacher Training Program, the core module of its IBEC. Drawing on my experience as a Collaborative Researcher participating and assisting in the programme's everyday, I explored how a transition to digital learning and life induced by COVID-19 realized highly contrasting levels of community cohesion between the respective tracks of the IBTTP. I finally shifted focus to how a combination of one departmental culture to categorization, and broader Japanese society challenged an aspect of IB pedagogy. Placing especial attention to a custom of clustering people into the two boxes of 'straight-masters' and 'in-practice students,' I discovered the subsequent divide to disrupt socio-constructivist modes of learning, interrupted further by mainstream practices of Japanese relationality.

This final finding generates critical lines of inquiry, at its heart questioning how aspects of IB pedagogy – designed for use in more relationally horizontal spaces – can better attune itself to local identities. More pressingly, it suggests those responsible for administering and facilitating the learning of IB require greater encouragement to *discuss* how to do so. This is especially key if IB wishes to deliver more humanly inclusive pedagogies, overcoming its 'White' Euro-American shackles that constitute it's so-called *'international'* pedagogy. Instead, as the next chapter demonstrates, pedagogy is but one victim of these shackles. Another permeating countless more societies in the world concerns language. Specifically, the phenomenon of *English*.

CHAPTER 6 – GLOBAL ENGLISH'S JAPANESE THORN: THE POLITICS OF LANGUAGE IN IB TEACHER TRAINING

Another Recognition Visit (RV), another university in South Korea (see Chapter 3). On this occasion it was the Korean Institute of Education[85] (KIE), my fourth RV as a Guest Member on the International Baccalaureate Organization's (IBO) IB Educator Certificate (IBEC) Recognition Team. Today was Day Two of the online visit, which comprised of six Zoom boxes. Four – including mine based in Oxford (UK) – belonged to the IBEC Team (hereon 'team'), with two based in Australia and one in Singapore. Another belonged to a representative for KIE, tuning in from a school staff room in South Korea. Finally, the last box was located in KIE itself, shared by no fewer than 11 representatives, all neatly lined across one elongated table over a raised platform. Only a few months into the post-vaccine phase of COVID-19, transparent plastic partitions surgically punctuated its participants, yet no efforts were spared on the room's presentation. Hung from the ceiling was a dedicated color-printed poster that read "IBEC Recognition Meeting," while the institution's logo could be seen emblazoned on its back wall. A richly adorned tray of what resembled a mix of white roses and daisies decorated the center platform. This was a well-invested, organized, and serious affair for the institution.

First on the agenda was a presentation. KIE representatives rotated, pitching content outlines for one of their nine proposed IBEC modules. Most supplemented talks with PowerPoint slides, others through printed text. All appeared well-rehearsed and richly detailed, proceeding without surprise. The team seemed satisfied with the overall quality. Dare I say, the RV was smooth enough to bore. Lurking deep in the abyss, however, a subtle, yet profound set of peculiarities had unfolded. The most obvious emerged through the presentation of Kevin, one of the nine module facilitators. *Like* the other presenters it was presented in English, the exclusive language of mediation for all RVs. *Unlike* the others, Kevin's first utterance made it clear that English was very possibly their first language, delivered with a thick American accent. Kevin later confirmed themselves a fluent English and Korean bilingual, revealing an extensive formative upbringing in California (US) as part of what was easily the longest presentation of the group.

[85] This is a pseudonym.

Before ending, the purpose behind the relative length of his talk was made explicit. With a bright smile, Kevin openly disclosed that colleagues at KIE had specifically asked him to "talk a lot."

We speak English. Kevin's admission acted as one of several scenarios insisting this statement. Of the 11 representatives, 10 could be described as ethnically 'Korean,' with the final member as 'White.' This latter member, Jessie, was outsourced by KIE for one specific role: interpretation. A first-language English and advanced Korean speaker, Jessie was an educator at a South Korean-based IB World School collaborating with KIE. Her Korean proficiency was evident, occasionally mediating statements between certain KIE representatives and the team. Yet, these events were also peppered with curious moments of seeming ineptitude, with Jessie later self-admitting to an inability to sometimes translate elements of Korean expressions. These moments surrendered yet another opportunity to demonstrate the institution's internal English capacity. Yi, KIE's lead representative, filled these voids of with grammatically *flawless* English. This was the same Yi who, on the first day of the visit, asked the team to excuse her "poor English" before delivering a slick opening speech in the language. So unexpectedly fluent was Yi's delivery, that the team felt compelled to publicly express gratitude for her English aptitude.

A raft of questions hovered uneasily in the air. Did KIE require a dedicated interpreter? The pragmatic answer appeared a decisive no. Did KIE purposefully outsource one despite an awareness of its more than sufficient internal capacity? Possibly. If so, what might the reason(s) be for such a decision? Additional support from a collaborating school? Unlikely, given the presence of another member seemingly explaining that role, and the comparatively large number of internal representatives. Honoring arrangements with external bodies (e.g., collaborating IB World Schools)? Perhaps. Or was a larger, invisible, yet pervasive force at work? Was KIE – knowingly or otherwise – kneeling to a pressure to *look* global? To *sound* global? To *embody* the global? If so, what was the principal motivator to achieve these globalist sentiments? Was it in fact, the very one defined by enduring neocolonialist legacies, pressures that have since positioned English as 'apex'? Whatever the answer(s), KIE's efforts were tragically ironic. Indeed, for all its pursuit of English validity during the visit, the teacher training programme they sought recognition for was to be predominately experienced in Korean.

At the core of this chapter is the politics of one key trope: '*global language*.' This is explored through the two prisms of translation and mediation. The former is contextualized through my time at the Japanese Institute of Education (JIE), the same institution of previous focus in Chapter 5, and one that exclusively mediates an IBEC programme in Japanese. I specifically explore student receptions toward a major dissonance in classroom content, between those on the Middle Years Programme (MYP) track of its IB Teacher Training Program, and those on its Diploma Programme (DP) counterpart. Meanwhile, the latter prism is covered across two scenarios. First is through my experience co-representing JIE for the Interim Review of its IBEC with the IBO, a process mediated solely in English. Second is based on time spent with a separate university in Japan that – on paper – exclusively mediates its IBEC in English. I refer to this institution as Murasaki University (MU), where I explore politics of linguistic identity between students and faculty. Combined, these contexts explore tensions over philosophies of translation, English's ongoing privileged status as 'apex language,' as well as its increasingly desperate, and, as I argue, still futile tussle with Japanese for the title of 'global language' in Japan.

Translate or Indigenize?

On the surface, it was all the same. The same IB Teacher Training Program (IBTTP), the same department, the same university. Even the two qualifications they conferred were of the same equivalency. Both were mediated in Japanese and facilitated by mainstream[86] Japanese nationals *for* mainstream Japanese nationals of similar demographics and numbers (see Chapter 5). Only one aspect theoretically differentiated them: programme specialization. One was dedicated to the MYP, while the other to the DP. *Underneath*, however, difference was in abundance. Different numbers of facilitators, different approaches to classroom teaching and learning, different improvisations to digital and hybrid environments under the chaotic undulations of COVID-19.

[86] I recognize the concept of 'mainstream' to be a slippery, dynamically shifting notion (see Shah, Forthcoming). In this chapter I define 'mainstream' in Japan to mean nothing more than individuals who were born and predominately raised in Japan, possesses Japanese nationality (only), and speaks Japanese as their first and essentially only language outside elementary proficiencies in others (unless, as is the case with a couple of students at JIE, their subject specialism as an educator is in language acquisition, for example as an English language teacher).

Most striking, however, was the extent to which content differed. It was straightforward on paper: one biased content towards characteristics unique or otherwise emphasized by either the MYP and DP. Revealing then, that this difference proved but the tip of a more profound iceberg.

Structurally, the MYP and DP-tracks were similar. Classes ran twice a week across the same morning hours and days. Both organized content into theory-heavy Mondays and practice-heavy Thursdays, with guest lectures attended collectively by both tracks. *Content*, however, differed dramatically. The principal culprit for this divergence was resource. The MYP-track was primarily informed by a general IBO resource titled *MYP: Gensoku kara Jissen e* (IBO 2016), an official Japanese translation to *MYP: From Principles into Practice* (IBO 2014a). The result was a course mostly structured around titles and themes directly borrowed from this guide: 'conceptual understanding,' 'teaching and learning in context,' 'approaches to learning,' 'service and action,' language and identity,' and 'learning diversity and inclusion.' (IBO 2014a, 9-28; IBO 2016, 11-36). Given this approach, it would only be natural for the DP-track to follow suit, referring to the official Japanese translation (IBO 2014b) of the DP's identically titled equivalent (IBO 2009). Yet, my surprise on discovering this not to be the case lay in the scale of difference. Not only did these not act as primary reference for classroom content, but *no* IBO resource did. Instead, the role was fulfilled by an independently published Japanese IB teacher training guide edited by JIE faculty. Contributions included a mix of JIE, JIE-related, and other select authors prominently associated with IB in Japan's mainstream education sector. The contrast was remarkable. One track dedicated itself to IB in its most abstract, universalized form through translated text, while the other did so through a deeply nationalized alternative in original Japanese. I explore these discourses separately, beginning with the former.

The Hazards of Translational Essentialism

It was Thursday, also known as 'practice-day' for those on the MYP track. Now only two weeks into the training programme, these initial classes were simply structured. One prescribed section of the *From Principles into Practice* (hereon 'P&P') resource was selected and presented on by two or three students, before moving into discussion-based groupwork activities. They were proving expectedly challenging for many in this group of 18. Most were still unfamiliar with IB's philosophical and pedagogical aspects (e.g., as demonstrated with socio-constructivism in Chapter

5). However, on this day, evidence of a different challenge altogether began to emerge.

Breakout sessions over, those on Zoom teleported back into the main space. Introducing class to the formal start of this week's topic, Kihara – the lead facilitator for the MYP-track – proceeded to outline today's theme. As was distinctly written on our course overviews, today's topic was titled *'gakushū kankyō no seibi,'* the official Japanese translation to the what the IBO writes in English as 'creating learning environments,' but what better semantically translates to 'preparing learning environments.' It was to cover three specific aspects: the "role of the teacher," "using good classroom practice," and "education outside the classroom" (IBO 2016, 87-88). None of this was received with surprise, with all expected to have read relevant pages of the P&P in advance. However, Kihara then moved to emphasize one final theme: the practice of *saika shita shidō*, or *differentiated teaching*. It was a phrase that – unlike the previous headings – appeared oddly absent from the P&P, yet acted as the lead concept for class through a key question: to what extent can we prepare differentiated learning environments? Kihara laced the term with several related Japanese notions in a seemingly eager attempt to demystify its meaning. She then situated IB's approach to it within the six attributes of its Approaches to Teaching framework, delivering the following as part of a larger speech:

"The fifth one raised on employing *sabetsuka* teaching in order to meet all learner's needs – well it is translated here using this phrase anyways – is referring to what we call 'differentiation,' where people's individual needs are taken into consideration… *'sabetsuka,' 'sa-i-ka'* [stressing each character in the latter compound]. Well, there are also words like *'kobetsu saitekika'* which are becoming very popular, but based on their fundamental notions, they point to an inclusive education based on a more wholistic perspective, such as through respecting the diversity of humans etc."

This monolog revealed several conscious actions taken by the facilitator. First, instead of referring to the current official translation for 'differentiation' – '*sabetsuka'* – in the Japanese P&P, they instead deployed the term *'saika.'* Second, they return to *'sabetsuka'* when directly referring to the P&P, momentarily acknowledging it as the resource's formal translation, before re-asserting their

preferred phrase as *'saika.'* This is done while making deliberate effort to clearly enunciate each individual character of the latter concept's compound, in a bid to guarantee its reception. Finally, they mention *'kobetsu saitekika,'* yet another term attempting to describe the IBO's use of *'sabetsuka.'* These three actions hint at Kihara's (1) belief that the formal translation was somehow insufficient, and (2) enthusiasm to propose multiple alternative terms for the class to adopt, particularly that of *saika*.

The following week, during an all-digital class, sentiment against the use of *sabetsuka* was further evidenced, this time between students. It began during a group reflection with three. After a moments silence, Imamura seized the initiative, provocatively asking if *saika* should be synonymized with *kobetsuka* ('individualization'). This latter term was a simplified alternative to *kobetsu saitekika* ('individual optimization'), the same concept mentioned by Kihara the week previous. When asked for my thoughts, I suggested the idea likely challenging to appreciate when considering the group had recently covered the theme of academic integrity, which conversely emphasizes the importance of impartial treatment. It was at this moment, during my short contribution, that something unexpected occurred. Imamura appeared to be quietly shaking his head as I continued to deploy the term *sabetsuka* when talking about differentiation. Eager to respond, he waited patiently for me to end before revealing an uneasiness, wrestling to understand why Kihara originally introduced the concept as *saika* despite its absence in the P&P. They went as far as to question – in good humor – if she had introduced a different term on purpose, or if she was simply "toying" with us. Imamura reported visiting several dictionary definitions for both *sabetsuka* and *saika* respectively, indicating the extent to which he had tried to reconcile himself. Based on these definitions, Imamura found *sabetsuka* to emphasize a form of distinction where one side is treated superiorly over another, whereas *saika* infers distinction in an entirely neutral sense, or – in his own words – that "people are simply different."

Shortly afterwards, Kihara entered our breakout room for a general check-in, providing a timely opportunity for Imamura to inquire on their reasoning. She explained how *sabetsuka* failed to "hit home" with Japanese speakers as it "doesn't share much similarity" with the original English term. She recalled the first time personally setting eyes on it, immediately sensing "something didn't feel right." Finally, Kihara explained how a broader agreement with other Japanese-speaking IB educators in Japan was made to use *saika*, better reflecting "a way of thinking that pays attention to an individual's needs" while avoiding *"sabetsukan,"* or, "a sense of

discrimination." Enthusiastic nods followed. These were not to be confused with *aizuchi,* a common cultural practice in Japan whereby social cues – most commonly consisting of regular intervals of subtle nodding – are made as a sign of respectful receptiveness as a listener. No, they were rather those of agreement with Kihara's explanation.

The IBO's translation to 'differentiation' in this resource was *not* wrong. On the contrary, a simple search for the term online reveals its use across several domains, particularly within general service, industry, and consulting sectors. It did, however, *feel* wrong to most, if not all present, as it would for countless more Japanese speakers. This is because *sabetsu* – from which terms such as *sabetsuka* are derived from – is a concept inherently imbued with negative connotations. A glance at essentially any popular *kokugo* ('Japanese') dictionary helps reinforce this point. Daijisen, for instance, currently defines the concept in two ways, including the following:

"To distinguish in treatment. In particular, to unduly treat [someone / something] as lower. (To not … due to gender) (…due to race)."

(Daijisen 2022)

It was little surprise Kihara referenced "racial discrimination" as the first phrase to personally associate with *sabetsu.* It is frequently used to describe a host of social inequalities and inequities including 'gender discrimination' (e.g., *danjo sabetsu)* and 'age discrimination' (e.g., *nenrei sabetsu).* Also unsurprising were the reactions of several students during interviews, including those of Soma, Nishimoto and Motegi. Curt comments including "yeah, not good," or "like, seriously?" were not uncommon. A slightly lengthier comment from Kuroda succinctly summarizes general sentiment toward its use:

Kuroda: "You shouldn't really be going there [painful laughing]. I think that is absolutely an issue, yeah."

The use of *sabetsuka* was easily the most problematic instance of IBO resource translation encountered throughout the year. That said, it was not the only one to stimulate – often positive – discussion with students. Other examples include *chōsen suru hito* – literally, 'a person who challenges' – as the translation for the IB Learner Profile's concept of 'risk-taker,' or *'hōshi,'* loosely translating to 'service' in a volunteering sense, for the IBO's Euro-American notion of 'service.' Another causing lively discussion with certain students related to the respective notions *chiiki* and *chihō.* Both terms were noted as sometimes interchangeable in the Japanese translation of the P&P for the DP-track (IBO 2014b). Indeed, later analyzing this resource, the former term is principally used to evoke the idea of 'local' in English, which students found appropriate. It, however, simultaneously appears as 'regional,' 'provincial,' 'area,' and 'community.' Meanwhile, *'chihō'* is used twice, once as 'local,' and once as 'provincial' (IBO 2009, 21, 24; IBO 2014b, 26, 29). Use of the latter term was considered particularly problematic for some, with certain students – typically those socialized outside of the Tokyo Metropolitan Area – keen to speak on the matter during casual conversation. This was because, although typically translated to 'regional' or 'provincial' in English, Okabe, for example, felt the concept infused with geo-political bias. As he suggested, the further the distance said area is imagined to be in relation to central governing bodies and cities (i.e., the Tokyo Metropolitan Area), the more 'regional,' or – especially if deployed for more discriminatory purposes – 'remote' it might be perceived.

Nevertheless, any discussion concerning specific concepts or phrases was generally overshadowed by an overarching dissatisfaction over how such resources *felt* to read. Some, like Yagi, went as far to describe its sentence structure and punctuation as unnatural "in every sense." Several were similarly forthcoming, if often more indirect. Soma and Yoshida identically expressed thinking "huh, wait a minute" in their minds while reading through certain sentences, requiring regular pauses to process what was being conveyed. Others, like Mochizuki, found it easier to wait until P&P content was presented by others, or practically demonstrated, finding it otherwise "difficult to comprehend." Of course, as a few pointed out during reflections, such viewpoints are partly explained by the fact many found IB educational philosophy and pedagogy challenging in and of itself. This acknowledged, it seemed the methodological approach selected for these translations played a considerable role in exacerbating these difficulties. The underlying issue can be appreciated through the words of Nagada. He felt the translator/s in question had been asked word-by-word to "directly translate the English, rather than focusing on tidy Japanese," the results

of which – in the words of Miyazaki – rendered the language unnatural, "overly forcing Japanese out of English."

Dissatisfaction with the IBO's translational approach falls within aged debates between empiricism and interpretivism in the field of translation studies. Put simply, those framed between the divide of essentialism versus non-essentialism. The former, classical school asserts "that meanings are objective and stable, that the translator's job is to find and transfer these and hence to remain as invisible as possible" (Chesterman and Arrojo 2017, 17). In other words, the IBO's present approach to Japanese resource translations can be described as *essentialist*.[87] The latter school meanwhile affirms "that meanings (including the meaning of the concept of 'translation') are inherently non-stable, that they have to be interpreted in each individual instance, and hence that the translator is visible" (Chesterman and Arrojo 2017, 17). This, in-turn, is the mindset many students would have preferred. Why? Because, if "all questions of identity are questions of translation" – as other linguistic anthropologists claim – then "the constitutive role of translation in the shaping, morphing and refashioning of identities cannot be sufficiently underscored" (Kothari 2016, 44). Yet, this is precisely what classical empiricist translation realizes, sacrificing the taxonomical knowledge of, and, more broadly, linguistic identity of the reader.

One student found the language perplexing enough to discuss with IBEC facilitators outside classroom hours. Segawa provided a brief account of this event during interview, demonstrating how facilitators also empathized with present readability of certain Japanese translations:

Segawa: "The Japanese translation is bizarre in certain places here and there."

Akira: "Yes."

[87] Of course, in actuality, such essentialism can be analyzed to *exaggerate* the visibility of the translator due to illusions of instrumentality. It therefore cannot be considered objective.

Segawa: "So I asked why that is to [Mishima, the DP-track facilitator], and he said it is not translated by someone who knows IB well, but rather by a general translator. So they are not translating it based on a grounding of IB ways of thinking, and so the more you know about IB the more you carry feelings of discomfort towards its oddities."

The IBO holds a quality assurance framework for all its translated texts. According to a Quality Manager at the organization, every translated curriculum guide – including the P&P – "is seen by at least three different people." These are (1) an IBO-affiliated translator, (2) an IBO-affiliated reviser, and (3) a "subject matter expert," a role typically fulfilled by a member of the IB Educator Network[88] or 'IBEN.' Yet, despite such procedures, concerns over translation appear systemic and ongoing within the organization, transcending well beyond Japanese versions. Evidence of this surfaced during a focus group discussion with two senior IBEC Consultants. On mentioning the frustration several students were experiencing at JIE, Chloe, a French and English bilingual, quickly interjected, generating the following exchange:

Chloe: "That's in every language. They've managed to alienate everyone."

Edward & Akira: (Laughs)

Chloe: "Whether it's in English, French,"

Akira: "Really?"

[88] IBEN members chiefly refer to all teaching faculty at any given IB World School. Members also include IBO-associated Consultants and facilitators of IBEC programmes in higher education.

Chloe: “The French don't like it.”

Akira: “Really?”

Chloe: “The Spanish don't like it.”

Chloe: “And that happened in China because they didn't actually realize, because back in the day, Hong Kong weren't so keen on making sure all their children knew Mandarin. It was more [about] learning English. So, [the IBO] translated it all into [simplified] Mandarin…Yeah, and the Hong Kongese don't use simplified.”

Akira: “Yes. Yes.”

Chloe: “So they had no, no sense of where the market was or, any sensitivity around that.”

Chloe’s account of the IBO’s past translational approach in China concerns confusion over the Mandarin and Cantonese languages, the latter still dominant across several societies, including Hong Kong and Macau, while remaining the primary *lingua franca* of Guangdong province in mainland China. Logographically, the languages are still overwhelming written in what is commonly categorized as ‘traditional’ *hanzi* – or ‘Chinese characters’ – in Hong Kong and Macau, as opposed to ‘simplified’ for Cantonese in Guangdong province and for general Mandarin. These were facts the organization were allegedly oblivious to at the time, accidentally creating ‘simplified’ Mandarin resources for a Hong Kong population used to ‘traditional’ Cantonese.

Japanese resources, then, were not alone. However, what of the IBO’s other two official

languages of French and Spanish? Surely, given their status, their resources would *not* be translations, but rather original texts? No. In fact, they *also* appear be translations of English, the sole original. More surprising, however, was the revelation that even these translated resources had been met with similar feelings of dissatisfaction by those engaging with them. Two experienced language acquisition educators at an IB World School in London (UK) spoke on the matter during a separate focus group interview. The first – Pedro – is currently the overall Subject Leader for Language Acquisition at the school, as well as a Teacher of Spanish language acquisition for its MYP and DP. The second – Luna – is similarly a Teacher of French language acquisition for its MYP and DP. Each have between 17-20 years of teaching experience, including around 15 as IB educators, and both occasionally refer to Spanish and French IBO resources, especially when concerning language acquisition guides. Neither expressed feelings of discontent quite to the extent Chloe alluded. Both, however, recalled several instances of oddities concerning certain phrases and sentences, many by memory. Brief examples include elements of the IB Learner Profile, specifically the notions of 'knowledgeable' and 'risk-taker.' The former term currently corresponds to *'informés'* in French and *'informados e instruidos'* in Spanish. Pedro stated the following in regard to these Spanish alternatives:

Pedro: "So they have actually used two terms. *'informado'* which is 'educated,' *'instruido'* which is yeah like 'educated' or 'trained'… so I find it funny that you go from one term which is 'knowledgeable'… You know, it's uh, *fine*, you know, but we go from 'knowledgeable' to 'informed' and 'educated.' So I would question whether you need [both] *'informado'* and *'instruido.'*"

Another learner profile phrase, 'risk-taker,' currently corresponds to *'audaces'* in Spanish and *'audacieux'* in French. Both Pedro and Luna raised these terms through an exchange between the two:

Pedro: "Ah, that's another one that I was thinking of, *'audace'*. It's almost like so archaic, you know, *'audace'* is almost, you know like brave, or valiant, or,"

Luna: "'Audacious…'"(pondering)

Pedro: "Yeah… it sounds a little bit odd to me as well, *'audace.'* Yeah…"

Luna: "It's true that it's a historical-like word."

Pedro: "Is it the same in French?"

Luna: "Yeah, its *'audacieux,'* and it's uh, 'audacious' in English, you can think about [it like] that… And it brings you back to knight [or 'medieval'] times when there were battles… it brings you back to the past, as it were."

Pedro produced more substantive examples through certain sentences of Spanish within assessment guides. This included some of the descriptive language used for elements of its rubrics, findings certain segments difficult to process. Such examples are both significant and revealing, but *not* because they necessarily point to a widespread feeling among Spanish and French-speaking IB educators, that parts of these resources are somehow insufficient. Indeed, research beyond the scope of this thesis would be required confirm any such pattern. Rather, it is because they hint at how – despite their long-standing organizational status as 'Official Languages' – Spanish and French IBO resources are *not* originals.

Given the IBO's essentialist approach to translation, one might have expected all JIE's students to hold issue with resource experience. Interesting, then, that some forwarded a counterargument over a need to improve translation, particularly some of the more experienced educators. Considering IB pedagogical emphases on socio-constructivist learning – which encourages discussion-based teaching and learning to dynamically (re)construct knowledge (see

Chapter 5) – some believed its difficulties to *aid* educators in practicing this aspect. It was a relatively smaller school of thought led by Ishibashi, a very experienced educator currently stationed at a public article-1 IB World School in Japan. He spoke extensively on the theme during interview, containing the following monolog:

Ishibashi: "It's okay in and of itself to have a strange translation. First off, it would be a higher bar to ask for people who only speak Japanese to read the English version, so even by just grasping the general outline, I think you can utilize it as you would a new book…introductory textbook or case studies… and so I think we can agree it does deliver that level of value. Yeah. It gives a sort of rough idea of what sense to operate things. And from there you will generate various thoughts. When this occurs, when you examine it, regardless of whether it is in Japanese or English… it primes you for a phase where you ask about the translation's demerits after grasping the meaning, after having asked multiple times about what the meaning of the concept is. I don't think there is a problem so long as such procedures are placed in the curriculum."

Ishibashi: "I think the guide is a great resource. Who cares about the translation, to be frank."

Ishibashi believed that, when conducted correctly, the present state of resources permits opportunities to discuss given sentences or concepts more critically, encouraging key aspects of IB pedagogy in the process. In other words, if one considers the goal of a given class to be generating opportunities to discuss IB-related theory and pedagogy, and through it, (re)construct knowledge collectively (i.e., socio-constructivist learning), then these resources should be argued a successful tool. Ishibashi was not alone in this train of thought. In fact, at one stage, a group of four students were so convinced of these seeming benefits, they had seriously contemplated the possibility the IBO may have formulated the Japanese translation to *purposefully* provoke such practices. They even held a dedicated private Teams meeting to consider this, concluding that, while unlikely, the strategy could not be ruled out entirely because of how effective it was at stimulating classroom discussion. One of the students involved in this meeting was Sato, another experienced educator

keen to highlight the resource's use as a stimulator. When asked how they found reading the P&P during the course, he answered:

Sato: "Well, at the start, as I expected, there were a lot of times when I didn't understand things… but you know…after all its…well it's a 'bible' isn't it." [laughs]

Akira: "Yes, sure." [laughing]

Sato: "So when I think of a bible, I think of something that you have to read again and again. After all, its the same with the government regs, but as it's something that you have to read multiple times, I feel that educational approaches end up becoming stagnant when you try to make it easy to understand, like 'I simply need to do it this way.' So I think that by writing it in an abstract manner, I guess it gives you a high degree of freedom, and I guess that's what they are aiming for."

Later, I asked more explicitly if they were satisfied with the present translational state of resources because it encouraged socio-constructivist practice. Sato answered:

Sato: "Probably, but… I guess it's that, I'm already working [as a teacher], so by trying to work it out, and then discuss whether it makes sense or not with everyone else, rather than being shackled… well, I feel that its important to first attempt to work it out for yourself."

Akira: "That's a very practical way to look at it."

Sato: "Yes yes yes. It's like cooking isn't it!" [chuckling]

Sato's final comment, comparing learning from the P&P to the notion of trial and error in cooking, is indicative of how they conceptualize the function that these resources should play. Namely that they are indeed *resources*, or *tools* with which to stimulate group thinking. It is this function, which theoretically removes the risk of turning the reader into a passive receptor, that is emphasized over translational method. Imamura, alongside similar comments from Kanbara and Kaneda, went as far as to describe its role as avoiding "being brainwashed" by a prescribed way education 'should be,' allowing all to critically consider what "IB is." This school of thought essentially considers translational improvement as potentially costly, sacrificing its often-successful function at encouraging IB pedagogical practices in teacher education environments.

Sharply contrasting views on how to treat or view core Japanese IBO resources at JIE generates intriguing questions. At the fore of these, it asks whether they should be considered (1) at times problematic translations that, at their worst, linguistically alienate the reader, or (2) an ingenious set of tools that, at their best, help fulfill a critical function in stimulating IB pedagogical practice? To the students of this particular cohort, it appears there is some truth to both lines of thought. Nonetheless, it was the former that dominated overall discourse, and probably for sound reason. Imagine for a moment that (2) held true. This would ironically infer that original English resources are the *least* effective in promoting the organization's own pedagogies for English-speaking environments. Stating the obvious, encouraging these practices in a classroom environment should not require stimulus from structurally – as opposed to ideologically – puzzling writing. More pertinently, these resources were never designed for critical teacher training environments that IBEC programmes represent, but rather for more compliance-based workshop-style training and in-house professional development. As such, (2) is more accurately analyzed as an inadvertent and unintentional byproduct of (1).

The IBO's present commitment to universalized essentialism in its translational strategy stands in stark contrast to its own emphases over contextualized learning in its programme frameworks and curricula. It simultaneously appears to complement the organization's more recent standardizing of its 'global' administrative services and processes, having since worked to dismantle the independence of its past Regional Offices, all since symbolically rebranded into Global Centers (see Chapter 3). Through the words of other anthropologists, the very issue, it seems, is that the IBO predictably treats translation as a "definite and defined location of formal,

institutionalized and professionalized" concept (Kothari 2014, 96). The result is an approach that preferences organizational ownership over any authority such texts represent to the linguistic identities of those using them. Unless – at the very least in the case of the IBO – the language in question is *Anglo-American English.*

Now, what might occur if an institution decides to take matters into its own hands? What happens if it chooses to generate and localize its own resources? This is the story of the DP-track at JIE.

The Benefits & Consequences of Japanization

Can IB ever be considered Japanese? Theoretically, of course, it should be. It is after all named the *International* Baccalaureate. Yet, its predominately 'White' Euro-American origins (see Chapter 2), more recent lack of diverse administrative representation (see Chapter 3), and history in Japan (see Chapter 4) have generally demonstrated otherwise. In Japan IB had always been treated as a foreign phenomenon, one with innovative or otherwise intriguing components, potentially adoptable for improving its national education system. As of the early 2020s, however, attitudes appear to be changing. Now one of the Japanese Government's key players for its current globalist educational agendas, the introduction of a majority Japanese-mediated, Dual-Language Diploma Programme (DLDP) – one capable of being externally assessed in Japanese – is shifting perceptions. Along with its rollout in mainstream article-1 schools, possibly the greatest evidence of the systems willingness to localize IB as its own can be observed through a general kanji-nization (see following paragraph) of IB educational concepts into Japanese. This can be observed through a steadily growing library of IB-related Japanese literature (see Chapter 4).

Rudimentary, but essential linguistic knowledge of the Japanese language is required to appreciate what I mean by kanji-nization. Today, Japanese is comprised of the four syllabaries[89] of *hiragana, katakana, kanji,* and, to a limited extent, Latin script. Kanji forms a major component of the present writing system. It functions on a logographic structure originally derived from Chinese script, with over 2,100 characters presently considered 'in regular use' across Japanese societies. In

[89] 'Kanji' and 'Latin script' are technically not syllabaries, but I treat them as such here for ease of processing.

other words, kanji is Sino-Japanese. However, *critically,* words expressed through it – obscure instances aside – are perceived as 'native Japanese' to today's common Japanese population. Hiragana, in-turn, functions phonetically. It is used for a wide variety of purposes, such as writing suffixes (i.e., *okurigana*) and performing grammatical functions. It is also deployed for a range of 'indigenous' words where no corresponding kanji exists, or where such a kanji is, for instance, considered either too formal or obscure. Finally, katakana, although identical to hiragana in its construction as a phonetic system consisting of the same phonemes, performs a diverse and contrasting range of functions. It is occasionally comparable to the role of *italics* in the present English language, but such an explanation is a disservice to its complexity. Others define its main role today as transliterating "foreign words, to express emphasis, render a pronunciation, transcribe onomatopoeia, names, and technical terms" (Guarné 2015, 170). The only role of concern here is the first: *'foreign words.'* The weight of this continued function is aptly demonstrated through the existence of the popular term *'gairaigo'* ('borrowed' or 'loan words').

Do *gairaigo* innately mark 'foreignness?' Such a claim has been long dismissed by other linguistic anthropologists. One influential view has been to treat katakana-nized vocabulary as a "marker of blendings, not boundaries" (Stanlaw 2004, 98). After all, countless such terms exist across Japanese societies today, but rarely do those routinely deployed reflect the *same* semantics of those they were originally derived from. Language, of course, is a prime example of the fluidity of culture itself, of thick description (Geertz 1973). Others nevertheless warn against underestimating *gairaigo's* function of – in addition to conceptual blending – marking "boundaries" between the 'native' and 'foreign,' or, more accurately, the localized imaginary of foreignness (Guarné 2015, 177).

Based on experiences with aspiring and experienced educators at JIE, I would highlight one further dimension: *semantic accuracy*. Put simply, inventing a *gairaigo* with katakana results in a blank canvas, a concept initially devoid of any localized assumptions or meaning. Through this process of 'blending,' Japanese invites new semantics into its vocabulary without, sometimes problematically, infusing it with already highly contextualized 'Japanese' and 'Sino-Japanese' terms. This was a small school of thought championed by Yagi, an MYP-track student specialized in English as an acquired language. They mentioned the IB Learner Profile's 'risk-taker' as one of a list to demonstrate the benefits of creating such terminology. Risk taker is currently translated using kanji and hiragana, becoming *'chōsen suru hito'* ('a person who challenges') in Japanese. It

creates a distinctly different character to that the English IB Learner Profile theorizes. This can be interpreted a clever solution, as *chōsen* ('challenge') carries positive connotations, whereas the katakana-nized notion of *risuku* ('risk') is more obscure. Nonetheless, Yagi believed fully katakana-nizing the term to *risuku tēkā* ('risk-taker') – in other words into a *gairaigo* – is preferable, as its present Japanization does not reflect the original semantics of the IBO's English concept. Yagi's reason for this was *not* to create a boundary between a perception of 'foreign' and 'native,' and neither was it to blend meanings, although such would also be the case if adopted. Rather, it was to be *conceptually accurate*.

There seems to be a consensus that *gairaigo* represented by katakana acts as a "unique symbolization of vocabulary from Western languages by marking them in a script which is not applied to Japanese or Sino-Japanese words, except in special conditions" (Loveday 1996, 49). I generally agree with this analysis, but as I have written elsewhere in this thesis (see Chapter 2), 'Western' can be a tempting, yet increasingly inaccurate and unwise descriptor in general (White 2019), as this example also demonstrates. Indeed, for but one example of *many* more, words derived from Nepalese, Hindi, or Persian – emphatically 'non-Western' languages yet neither 'Japanese' nor 'Sino-Japanese' – experience katakana-nization in the same manners. In the case of the latter language, a glance at essentially any menu in an *Indo* ('Indian') restaurant in Japan demonstrates this. Naan, originally derived from the Persian word *nân*, is a form of leavened tawa-fried or oven-baked flatbread originating from Mesopotamia, ancient Egypt, and South Asia. Today, a rich range of naan variation can be observed from Iran to India, from Indonesia to Myanmar, and more.[90] In Japan, *nan*, as expressed in katakana, is associated with 'Indian' and 'Nepalese' food by its general population, mainly due to the popularity of these cuisines in the country. Yet, as can be found in local journalism, mainstream Indians would not consider naan, as since reconceptualized[91] and served in Japan, as that which is commonly encountered in Indian societies (Tajima 2019). *Nan*, in other words, while a *gairaigo*, and by extension a word distinguished as 'foreign' – but *not* 'Western' – in Japan's common imaginaries and schemas, has

[90] Another example can be found in mainland China where a variation is attributed to Uyghur cuisine, termed *náng*.

[91] Certain journalists analyze naan's localization in Japan to emanate through a fusing of 'Indian' and 'Nepalese' cuisines, or what they term *Inepa* ('Indipanese'/Nepalindian') diners (Tajima 2019, 1).

also been thoroughly localized. It would therefore not be a stretch to argue that *all* gairaigo are fully integrated into the Japanese lexicon, *all* localized with indigenous meanings that may or may not currently relate semantically to their respectful etymologies.

Given IB's historical distinction as a foreign phenomenon in Japan (see Chapter 4), symbolized well by its current Japanese name of the *Kokusai Bakarorea* – *'bakarorea'* the katakana-nized pronunciation for 'baccalaureate' – it would be natural to expect many of its components to be similarly katakana-nized, as pushed for by students like Yagi. Fascinating, then, that the opposite is true. A concerted effort has been made by members in the IBO, alongside established Japanese IB educators, to localize concepts via kanji-nization (i.e., to indigenize concepts into 'native Japanese' as locally imagined by Japan's common population). One glance at present translated resources is enough to appreciate the list to be exhaustive. Some of the adverse effects of this was explored in the previous section, as most of the phrases MYP-track students wrestled with (e.g., 'differentiation' translated to '*sabetsuka'*) are examples of such kanji-nization. Another example was reflected on during an interview with the MEXT-IBO Consortium's former head of the Japanese Dual-Language Diploma Programme (DLDP), Jones Mizuki.[92] A past advisor for IB translations, she recalled struggling with terms such as 'critical thinking' because the kanji-nizing of 'critical' into *'hihanteki'* – of which it officially remains – ignores the latter term's broadly negative connotations.

However, when locally negotiated by mainstream Japanese educators – as opposed to translated from English through the essentialist philosophies of an organization – kanji-nization conversely attaches pre-existing semantics to a concept, potentially allowing for easier processing (e.g., Kihara's use of *'saika'* instead of *'sabetsuka'* in Chapter 5). For another relatively radical example, take the notion of translanguaging. Its origins traced to Wales (Lewis et al. 2012), translanguaging is a fairly new approach advocated by IB primary school educators, but far from new across the education sector (García 2009; García and Wei 2014). It seeks to deconstruct older paradigms of multilingual education that actively discouraged children from mixing aspects of different languages to express themselves. Translingualism advocates the opposite: *encouraging* children to express their identities through languages socialized with without fear of 'contaminating' one or the other. Instead of transforming this concept into a *gairaigo* written in

[92] This full name is a pseudonym.

katakana, as would have been generally expected in a society where monolingual education is the overwhelming norm, IB educators in Japan continue to experiment with kanji-nized solutions. One term which has since emerged from these efforts is *gengo ōdan*, with *'gengo'* meaning 'language' and *'ōdan'* meaning 'trans.'

On the DP-track at JIE, linguistic localization of IB was taken one step further. Instead of relying solely on locally Japanizing translation, it used an independently published IB teacher training guide written in *original Japanese* (i.e., non-translated Japanese) by mainstream Japanese nationals, for a mainstream Japanese audience. This JIE-edited and majority authored guidebook replaced the role the P&P played for the MYP-track, acting as the primary resource informing course structure. Chapters of the guidebook were typically presented weekly in groups of two and three before group activities proceeded to discuss content further. The key consequence of this divergence in resource was *content*.

In my second class with the DP-track, two students presented on a chapter outlining five established models of IB integration in schools, all but exclusively informed by the Japanese education system. Later placed into groups of around five, we considered examples of schools fitting into one of these five models. In English these equate to 'IB-only schools,' 'dual-pathway schools,' 'modified dual-pathway schools,' 'add-on schools,' and 'integrated curriculum schools.' Our group converged almost exclusively on article-1 and non-article-1 school examples from within Japan, the only exception emerging when one asked which type of IB school I had graduated from in the UK. The following week, the chapter in question focused on the potential for collaborative arrangements between non-article-1 international schools and article-1 counterparts. This was examined through a specific case study involving a long-standing relationship between Osaka International School (a non-article 1, 'full IB' international school) and Senri International School (a private article-1 school) in Japan (Nakajima and Ohsako 2006).

These examples showcase how classroom hours were often devoted to highly contextualized themes in Japan, all direct products of JIE's guidebook. Most of the remaining 10 chapters were similarly engaged with throughout the course, with the first of three sections dedicated to reviewing challenges of IB implementation in Japan. The guidebook even frames its own institutional link to IB under the backdrop of the Japanese Government's promotional efforts in the country. It uncritically regurgitates aspects of broader cultural nationalism (Yoshino 1992) through popularized governmental mantras, including those of cultivating people with "a

Japanese identity and a deep understanding of Japanese culture" while developing 'global' proficiencies such as "communication skills," "independence," and the ability to comprehend "other cultures." It also predictably mentions IB's contributions to realizing "active learning" – the core slogan of the Japanese Government's latest national guidelines – as well as its potential in producing "*gurōbaru jinzai*" or 'global HR.' In other words, it frames IB within a nationalist governmental strategy as reviewed in Chapter 4.

Based on extensive interviews, this localization was warmly received by some on the DP-track. Sakaguchi – one of the most experienced educators of the group – considered JIE's guidebook to be both more relatable and useful in understanding "how to implement IB education practically in Japan," a welcome contrast to a P&P that is instead "written for the world." Ozawa noted its general readability, acting as helpful reference for processing more complex content in IBO resources. These are predictable responses. Unlike the IBO's translated counterparts, the guidebook is written in natural Japanese. Also substantial is its engagement with topics selected by over 15 experienced IB-related school and university educators, predominately, if not entirely socialized in Japan, who are all deeply informed on the Japanese education system. Its advantages over abstract IBO resources appear clearcut from this angle.

Striking, then, that several on the DP-track *disliked* the resource. Some such as Hoshi believed that content within JIE's guidebook should not be confused with those of 'legitimate' IB content. Motegi, another experienced educator, was one of the most critical, identifying what he saw as a consistent lack of content over IB 'itself.' Others were meanwhile concerned with the relative absence of pedagogical aspects. Kurihara spoke on this theme through reflecting on a separate class of her degree:

Kurihara: "In another class I was taking with our educational philosophy teacher…[93] around the final month we had a task where we summarized in groups McTighe's book on backward design theory."

[93] As I will later elaborate on, this class is not part of any IBEC modules, but instead part of the broader graduate school (see Chapter 5).

Kurihara: "[Compared to JIE's guidebook] that was much more illuminating." (laughs)

Further context is required to appreciate Kurihara's point. Aside from IBO resources and JIE's guidebook, three additional texts were regularly encouraged for further reading throughout the teacher training programme. Arguably the most frequently discussed among these was the Japanese translation of a one titled *Concept-Based Curriculum and Instruction for the Thinking Classroom* (Erickson et al. 2017; Erickson et al. 2020). The second was a Japanese translation of one titled *Understanding by Design* (Wiggins and McTighe 2005; Wiggins and McTighe 2012). Finally, the third was an original Japanese beginners' guidebook aiming to both theoretically simplify and consider applications for *Understanding by Design's* key theory of backward design,[94] or, as since coined in Japanese, *gyakumuki sekkei* (Okumura and Nishioka 2020). In current IB pedagogy, backward design theory is commonly applied to its unit planning process. Put simply, it encourages educators to plan classroom content *around* what they aim pupils to acquire, such as universal and subject-specific concepts or skills. This contrasts with the more classical strategy of centering such aims *around* content while emphasizing regurgitation skills. Merely grasping the theory is insufficient, as applying this process to everyday teaching requires much training to master. It necessitates regular attempts at creating unit planners, including those in collaboration with other educators, before delivering their agendas in classrooms and critically reflecting on their results. Other experienced educators in Japan have considered the challenges of adapting to this format given current national guideline equivalents (Kubota 2020).

Kurihara's ability to practice backward design theory in a lesson set outside of IBEC modules, exemplified her dissatisfaction over the relative lack of opportunities to do so in the IBTTP itself. It is worth noting unit planner design practice was scheduled to occur before being abruptly cancelled due to COVID-19. Nevertheless, it indeed spoke to a broader trend where

[94] Kurihara possibly refers to *Understanding by Design* by the name of 'backward design theory' as the translation's subtitle – absent on the original English version – reads "theory and methodology of 'backward design.'"

content was relatively instructed *instead* of practiced, the combined product of a context-focused textbook with a comparatively prescribed approach.

Mishima's decision to primarily structure DP-track content with his own institutional guidebook was reflected on both positively and negatively by the student community. On one hand, it provided a socio-culturally familiar, linguistically accessible, more localized experience, grounded on IB themes relating to mainstream Japanese society and its education system. On the other, it relatively sacrificed socio-constructivist modes of learning along with other IB pedagogical practices by overly fixing content, including through its uncritical nationalist leanings. It is an outcome contrasted vividly with the MYP-track, where practice-based approaches occurred more frequently while rarely contextualizing IB within Japan-specific themes. The theoretical implications of these polarized reactions to attempts at localization are intriguing. JIE's guidebook demonstrates an effort to further blend and reduce the boundaries of IB's imagined foreignness through socio-cultural and linguistic accessibility, yet in so doing, overly prescribes and contextualizes what IB 'is' and 'means' for 'Japan' (i.e., the nation-state). This is therefore an issue extending beyond processes of translation, additionally entangled with national governmental agendas.

There is at least one major question this discourse generates: must Japanization, or indeed, localization of any kind be a process of prescription? From one angle, this guidebook appears a step forward from battling with translated English texts based on organizational universalism. Yet, from another, its relative prescription of knowledge has left many similarly discontent. This is because, paradoxically, by improving cultural and linguistic accessibility it has inadvertently stagnated the *negotiation* of localization, and by extension practicing that which underscores much of an IB education today: socio-constructivism. The next step required to please such educators, it seems, is to combine the positive reactions observed on both tracks while stamping out the undesired. That is, to abandon the need to negotiate with prescribed terminology from globalized English translations *and* abandon the need to prescribe what IB education means by a handful of specialists for educators in Japan. In other words, to move away from a top-down prescribed-Japanization, and toward a bottom-up negotiated-Japanization.

As I move to explore next, the problematic role of top-down prescription, as examined through the translational essentialism of IBO resources on the MYP-track and prescribed nationalist content in a Japanese IB guidebook on the DP-track, extended beyond the classroom at

JIE. It also exposed itself through JIE's engagement with broader IBEC administrative processes. Specifically, via the phenomenon of English.

Operationalizing 'Global English'

I remained for a scheduled staff meeting with Kihara and Suga as students on Zoom steadily popped off screen. With the coast clear Kihara informs me of its purpose: JIE's upcoming Interim Review (IR). Part of post-recognition requirements, all licensed IBEC universities undergo an IR three years after formal recognition. The process is considered "formative and developmental" for the IBO, and – exceptional circumstances aside – "will not change the existing recognition" of a university (IBO 2020, 62). It is viewed as a collaborative process, reflecting on the past three years with universities to identify further aspects to develop or improve. Both parties agree on new areas of focus for the following three years, after which the institution must undergo a more formal Recognition Renewal process should it wish to continue operating its IBEC. Unless a university plans on implementing 'major changes' to its programme – such as "fundamental alterations to the structure and mode of delivery [or] changes in relationships with partner organizations" – the IR is a straightforward, two-part process (IBO 2020, 62). The university first submits an Interim Review Form detailing the programme's last three years. The IBO requires this information to include the following:

(1) "Review the recommendations made during the recognition meeting."

(2) "Elicit and consider student feedback."

(3) "Consider the challenges for the future."

(4) "Identify how the IB[O] can improve the quality of support it offers."

(IBO 2020, 62, my numbers)

Next, a video or telephone conference is arranged, attended by IBEC Consultants and university staff. University representation can vary, although it is commonly led by programme facilitators. Supplemental institutional support can include broader committee members and sometimes even presidents or chancellors. Meeting content is generally determined through the Interim Review Form but might also include other outstanding issues. Once completed, the university receives a formal correspondence detailing outcomes, including any issues or improvements identified and agreed on.

Unlike the RV process (see Chapter 3), IRs have never typically been an in-person event, pre-COVID included. This reality alone demonstrates that the process is a relatively *informal* venture for the IBO. Ironically, however, for the four in charge of representing JIE, it was considered anything but. Kihara – assigned as team lead – was frequently nervous speaking on the topic, acutely aware of a responsibility to ensure JIE's success. The pressure was palpable. Occasionally, she even mulled over worst-case scenarios, including the nightmare of having the institution's IBEC somehow revoked. Such behavior was not unusual for Kihara, often privately forthcoming over personal insecurities. Throughout my year at JIE she steadily expanded on a range of anxieties during one-to-one chats, such as struggles in meeting publication-related quotas by senior faculty, or – by extension – whether she, a school educator without an advanced research-orientated degree, could achieve what was sometimes expected of her.

In this meeting with Suga, however, Kihara's worries were directed at one specific aspect: *English*. It was for good reason. This event essentially marked the sole point in my experience where English was used at JIE – both orally and in writing – with the IR Form and meeting mediated exclusively in the language. Their IR form was later judged by IBEC Consultants to be especially thorough relative to those of most universities. Nevertheless, one of my immediate assignments was to review its English before formal submission to Edward (see Chapter 3), the IBEC Consultant in charge of JIE's IR. I, the sole 'native' English speaker of the group – and almost the entire university – had been chosen to check its English readability. This ironically proved a trivial task precisely because the form's English was perfectly readable. This was an unsurprising outcome, with Kihara an educator specialized in English language acquisition. The same is true of Suga, who – possessing an even greater command of English – helped consult on the form's details. Why, then, was I required? Embers of guilt began rippling throughout my body.

In a private conversation with Edward, I discovered that IBEC Consultants typically

expect no more than a couple of university representatives for a given IR. At JIE, however, its representative team was to be comprised of four. This did not include Suga, with her position at JIE secondary to that of another university in Japan. Instead, JIE's other main facilitator, Mishima, joined with Hayashi and Sakamoto, the latter two key members of its IBEC committee. Sakamoto's inclusion for the IR was emblematic of the seriousness in which the university considered the meeting, the Vice President of the institution at the time. Hayashi's presence, meanwhile, should have sufficiently assured JIE of its overall pool of English proficiency for the meeting. By Hayashi's own admission, his proficiency paled in comparison to Kihara's, but was sufficient to provide her with supplementary support should she somehow required it. Any questions remaining members wished to make, or instead might be asked to answer by Edward could all be mediated through Kihara.

Everything appeared to be in order. Yet Kihara's reaction to what was intended as a light-hearted joke startled me. As someone who knew Edward through my fieldwork, I playfully suggested how my inclusion on the team could help bolster their chances.[95] I was fully aware of the potential ethical complications such a scenario might pose as a researcher, and, more pertinently, knew Kihara's leadership to be more than capable of confidently passing the process. Imagine my surprise then, when Kihara leaned forward into the screen on receiving my words, her eyes seemingly beaming. "I wonder if you could participate? That would really help us out!" An appropriate reply momentarily eluded me. Suga rightfully flagged her concern over potential conflicts of interest my presence might generate. Of course, even if I were to ignore this, it felt doubtful the IBO would permit it. *I was wrong*. Provisionally agreeing to support the IR, I later asked Edward separately for permission of which was generously granted. They welcomed my participation, deciding it eligible since I held a formal post, so long as JIE were content with my research interests as an ethnographer. Kihara smiled with joy on receiving the news, informing me that the institution's board priorly signaled the green light for my role should it be granted. I was now, to my bewilderment, designated the teams fifth representative, positioned as an interpreter while providing supplementary support.

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[95] Several members of this group at JIE had experienced correspondence with Edward, including – in a few cases – through meeting him in-person during JIE's 2018 IBEC Recognition Visit. However, none had spent time with him as frequently as I had.

40 minutes before Edward's arrival, ample time was given for our team to discuss any concerns and approaches by opening the Zoom session early. This was my first time speaking to the institution's Vice President, a privilege further fueling to a sense of weight: no longer was I merely an ethnographer, I was an institutional representative. Balancing these roles was a delicate operation. Gaining insights in how JIE interacts with the IBO was an invaluable prospect for 'me' ('the researcher'), yet 'I' ('a representative of JIE') also felt it imperative to help ensure the IR's success. Several anxieties were voiced before Edward's arrival, most notably by Kihara. "We will be fine! *[kitto daijōbu desuyo]"* I stated in a clumsy, last-ditch attempt to alleviate nerves. Edward entered, and all discourse in Japanese ended.

Kihara (re)introduced herself and the group. Edward was familiar with some, having spent time with certain individuals in-person during JIE's 2018 Recognition Visit. Another sliver of embarrassment ran through my body while the following dialog played out between Kihara and Edward:

Edward: "You've even borrowed Akira for this special occasion." [laughs]

Kihara: "Yes! [laughs]. It's a great help. And I'm very sorry [if] I might not be able to explain well in English, so I hope that Akira will be helpful."

Edward: "I'm sure he will."

The defense of a self-perceived lack of English proficiency had already begun, although it appeared clear Edward was not concerned. Brief exchanges were made between Edward and the remaining members. For some – namely Mishima and Sakamoto – it would essentially be their last for the rest of the over one-hour meeting.

Thanking JIE for the overall quality of their IR report, Edward felt the need to emphasize one *considerable* asterisk to an otherwise glowing assessment: his inability to assess any Japanese

appendices attached to the report. This included several items, ranging from JIE's introductory IBEC guidebook to assessment rubrics. The remaining meeting was broken down into four themes: practicum evaluation, differentiated learning environments, selection processes for facilitating faculty, and ICT use in everyday learning post-COVID-19. Only in one of these areas did anyone other than Kihara or myself input any contribution. This instance occurred when Edward asked for any outstanding questions before moving on, Kihara translating the request to the team. Hayashi sought further insight into how practicum evaluation is carried out in education systems outside of Japan, particularly intrigued with Edward's wealth of experience in the Australian education system. Despite Hayashi's English proficiency, however, he felt most comfortable asking me to translate this request. This scenario was the *sole* exception to a meeting otherwise exclusively represented by Kihara, and to a lesser extent me.

Kihara handled most questions with ease, only struggling briefly with the theme of differentiated learning. Ironically, Edward likely raised the topic due to an inability to read the written account on the matter in appendices submitted in Japanese. Asked on the extent JIE managed to realize such a classroom environment, Kihara answered with great humility, admitting a need to work harder on this aspect. Providing awkward support, I highlighted how these environments remain challenging to construct due to the Japanese education systems historically embedded concerns over 'equality' (see Chapter 4). The remainder of the meeting progressed smoothly, leading Edward to make a final call for questions before reiterating his praise of JIE's IBEC. Exiting the Zoom room, relief and celebration erupted. Hayashi smirked, delivering a proud "*otsukaresama deshita!*" ('great job!') to Kihara. At long last Kihara released her nerves, slumped deep into her chair, and quietly reflected on whether she had articulated what she had hoped. Sakamoto meanwhile let out hearty laugh of satisfaction before seeking confirmation of the result. Or, in his words:

Sakamoto: "All I got was that it was looking good at the end, but are we fine? There are no especial problems right?"

Hayashi and Mishima moved to reassure Sakamoto, although they too sought confirmation from

Kihara on their views. I expressed gratitude for my inclusion before leaving the debrief. Kihara thanked me, feeling "saved" by my apparent "frank *[zubazuba]"* approach. I was less convinced. Kihara may not have thought highly of her role, but in the eyes of everyone else, she had skillfully navigated a high-pressure meeting without any complication. What about me though? My contributions were little more than occasional language support and supplementary information that – at best – complemented already substantive contributions made by Kihara. I was not needed. Yet my privileged ability to communicate in 'native' English appeared to raise me onto a symbolic pedestal, one potent enough to overturn this pragmatic reality.

As of January 2022, 28 of 58 IBEC universities (i.e., essentially half) are geographically located within the Anglosphere, including 10 in the USA, six in Australia, and five in the UK. Unsurprisingly, all mediate IBEC exclusively in English. Only one exception within the Anglosphere exists. The University of New Brunswick, located in the Canadian province of New Brunswick, holds two official languages of English and French, defining their mediation as "English and French for some courses in second language instruction" (IBO 2022, 30). They are also the only university of seven in Canada to include any form of French-mediation. The remaining 30 outside the Anglosphere are located within the respective IBO-registered territories of Japan, South Korea, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, India, Russia, Turkey, Spain, Lithuania, and Kenya (figure 6.1).

As figure 6.1 highlights in purple, Japan is a significant outlier to these territories as half of its eight universities exclusively mediate in its locally dominant language (i.e., Japanese). Daegu National University of Education (South Korea) and the University of Navarra (Spain) are the only other examples to do the same (i.e., Korean and Spanish respectively). Meanwhile, as highlighted in green, a further 11 universities outside the Anglosphere exclusively mediate in English, bringing the final total to 38 of 58. Finally, as highlighted in orange, 13 universities outside the Anglosphere, alongside the one outlier in Canada, total 14 that mediate in more than one language. This is accomplished in various ways. Some offer different IBEC programmes in separate languages, while others run classes via a multi – or indeed *trans* – lingual approach. Significantly however, in all 14 cases English is involved. In other words, only in six of 58 cases is any form of English-mediation formally absent, with Japan alone accounting for four. Even then of course, English is often all but guaranteed to be encountered in some format (e.g., through IBO resources). Incidentally, Japan's four compares with only two cases for Spanish-mediation, and the one case

in Canada for French-mediation, the IBO's other two Official Languages. Naturally, this data does not reflect the everyday reality of language within many of these universities. For example, some may formally declare their mediation as English despite everyday classroom discourse containing varying degrees of one or more others, and vice versa.

Figure 6.1: Mediated-Language(s) of Non-Anglosphere IBEC Universities in 2022

Higher Education Institution	IBO-Registered Territory	Registered Mediated-Language(s)
Kwansei Gakuin University	Japan	Japanese
Okayama University of Science	Japan	Japanese
Seirei Christopher University	Japan	Japanese
Tokyo Gakugei University	Japan	Japanese
International Christian University	Japan	English or Japanese (depending on the instructor)
Tamagawa University	Japan	English & Japanese (programme dependent)
Tsuru University	Japan	Japanese & English
University of Tsukuba	Japan	English
Daegu National University of Education	South Korea	Korean
Inha University	South Korea	Korean & English (with Korean support)
Handong Global University	South Korea	English & Korean
Namseoul University	South Korea	English
East China Normal University	China	English or Chinese (on needed basis)
The Education University of Hong Kong	Hong Kong	English & Chinese (programme dependent)
The University of Hong Kong	Hong Kong	English & Chinese (programme dependent)
National Taiwan Normal University	Taiwan	English
University College Fairview	Malaysia	English
Aga Khan Academy Hyderabad	India	English
CHRIST (Deemed to be University)	India	English
Moscow City University	Russia	Bilingual (English + Russian)
Perm State Humanitarian Pedagogical University	Russia	English
Hasan Kalyoncu University	Turkey	Turkish & English
Maltepe University	Turkey	Bilingual (English + Turkish)
Bilkent University	Turkey	English
Yeditepe University	Turkey	English
University of Navarra	Spain	Spanish
Universidad Camilo José Cela	Spain	Bilingual or English & Spanish (programme dependent)
Abat Oliba CEU University	Spain	English
Vytautas Magnus University	Lithuania	English & Lithuanian
Aga Khan Academy Mombasa	Kenya	English

(Original Data from IBO 2022)

Regardless, this data convincingly illustrates that (1) an overwhelming global reliance on / desire for some form of English-mediation exists, and (2) that Japanese is currently the most dominant IBEC language outside of English. Despite this status, however, Japan is no exception in being required to adapt to an IBO mediating all its administrative functions for IBEC – and, broadly speaking, the rest of its central administration – in English. Yet, at JIE, despite possessing a pool of representatives more than capable of linguistically adapting, it wanted more. By some force, JIE felt compelled to use me. The reason for doing so appeared to lie in my linguistic capital: a privileged 'native' speaker of Anglo-American English.[96] I had observed similar events transpire during my time as a Guest Member on IBEC Recognition Visits with Edward and other IBO representatives (see Chapter 3). This chapter's introductory vignette in South Korea was one example, again demonstrating a seeming need to sell English capital by including 'native' speakers of the language as representatives, despite operating a predominantly Korean-mediated IBEC.

A few months later, as part of a focus group interview with Edward and Chloe – the latter also an IBEC Consultant (see Chapter 3) – conversation turned to JIE's IR. Edward spoke of a long-standing concern over his personal limitations with language while working across the Asia-Pacific. In his words, language "shouldn't be an impediment to recognition." However, there remains no systematic approach for the IBO to provide support when it perceives language mediation to be potentially problematic. It has instead continued to rely on more informal and inconsistent arrangements through "supportive friends," often educators connected to the IB Educator Network (IBEN). The result was a lack of linguistic support on two of the four Recognition Visits I experienced during fieldwork. Moreover, the reliability of this support varied considerably, with one an unconfident acquired Japanese speaker, and the other a Chinese national and native Mandarin speaker. The onus, then, to resolve any linguistic limitations arising from the IBO's exclusive English mediation for IBEC processes, was generally tasked onto the university. The IR at JIE was no exception, with the resulting experience proving especially

[96] English is my first language, acquired during my formative years while raised in London (UK) and Toronto (Canada). My natural accent has often been labelled by 'native' speakers of English in the UK and Canada as 'transatlantic,' seemingly difficult to cleanly position within either national border. If so, my accent – due to imperialist legacies, as I consider later in this chapter – remains a combination of two globally privileged forms of Anglo-American English, and is therefore still often recognized as 'native' across non-Anglospheric territories.

awkward as two of its five representatives were left all but clueless over the review's progress during the exchange. Edward found the scenario unsurprisingly impossible to ignore, reflecting on this discovery through the following words during interview:

Edward: "It was obvious on the call, as you say, despite the number of them being there that they weren't able to follow what was going on. So, that does have implications for us as we go forward. The burden shouldn't be all theirs if we are trying to be inclusive, so, I think raising our awareness is something that we need to be conscious of because they won't ask for that support. You know, culturally, they wouldn't come out and do that anyway, but they would expect that the IB should do that. But I think it behooves us to do so."

Edward identifies the IBO's current obstacles in providing such support to reside in a general lack of cultural and linguistic diversity inside the administration (see Chapter 3). As such, he believes building "capacity in-country" through local relationships would allow the organization to produce consistent support. If successful, it would prove key to reducing disproportional disparities caused through IBEC's central reliance on English. By Edward's own admission, universities with highly competent English-speaking faculty continue to hold an exceptional advantage in seeking recognition for an IBEC. This is because – in his words – "those who are a bit more confident with language" are able to "move more quickly [administratively], and have had teams of people who have English speaking skills [even] if they're not teaching the course in English." This reality inadvertently generates pressures for universities to, in the case of non-English mediated IBECs, *needlessly* showcase a native veneer of English competency.

Interestingly, deciding on how to conceptualize and implement linguistic inclusion emerged as a point of contention between Gerard and Chloe. Chloe's stance surfaced when questioning why English mediation, which, she was keen to highlight is "one of the organization's three official languages," should be an issue. Evoking a starkly different interpretation of 'inclusion,' she recalled a scenario experienced around 15 years prior, a period when IB World Schools were experiencing growth in China:

Chloe: "They [the IBO] translated all of their documents into [Mandarin] Chinese."

Akira: "Right."

Chloe: "and the Chinese didn't want that, because what they want is the English."

Akira: "Right, right, yes."

Chloe: "So they actually didn't want that kind of colonial, as they probably perceived it, a neocolonial, idea that we're going to make these accommodations for you. And if we think of it now, 15 years later there's more English language instruction in China than in any other country. And I guess maybe Japan is kind of at that stage, 'oh they want to.' And I know that [in] academic research they need to publish in English to be in that, you know, in the Ivy League kind of realm of…academic contribution. So it's kind of pushing them to operate bilingually, I suppose, or be able to."

Chloe considered certain attempts at organizational inclusivity to *itself* be a neocolonialist action. This is intriguing for several reasons. It is an account that inadvertently provides further evidence of the IBO as an organization failing to be identified by localities outside the Anglosphere and Western Europe as their own. In the case of mainland China, it illustrates how the IBO is instead viewed as a foreign 'Western' entity comprised of foreign 'Western' HR, one not to be trusted with the translation of its own languages. This also appears the case with Hong Kong as touched on earlier in this chapter. These outcomes seem unremarkable when considering that human diversity within its administration has been declining under the tenure of its sixth, seventh, and now seemingly eighth Director-General. Chloe's position, by extension, fortifies the idea that the IBO is unwittingly facilitating globally dominant modes of neocoloniality across not only the

international schooling sector – as other ethnographers have analyzed (Sunyol and Codó 2019) – but also those of global research publication practices (Bell and Mills 2020). It additionally raises concerning and inaccurate conflations with the Japanese education system, including a failure to appreciate the relative socio-cultural independence and robustness of the Japanese language over most other local languages in the Asia-Pacific (Tsuneyoshi and Kitamura 2018).

Is it all too late for other languages? Is the agenda of 'global English' too deep-seated to be realistically subverted? Is the genuine proliferation of English around the world now too mighty to be meaningfully dismantled? Based on time spent with one particular IBEC community, the answer in Japan continues to be an emphatic *no*.

Advancing & Deconstructing 'Global English'

Murasaki University's (MU) IBEC programme differs from most in Japan, choosing to mediate all but exclusively in English. As I outlined in the previous section, Japan is the only territory of 15 in 2022 where English is not the dominant mode of mediation. In fact, only three of its eight IBEC universities incorporate any form of English instruction, with the remaining doing so solely in Japanese. Fascinating then, that despite MU's emphasis on English, I soon discovered its everyday realities to prove far more intricate. This was in itself an unexpected finding, but it was what these complexities provoked that produced the real source of intrigue. Participating on one of its intensive IBEC modules, little time had elapsed before I encountered profound friction within its community. Explaining why is to first grasp this group's comparatively nuanced demographics.

MU's IBEC is essentially operated by three facilitators, two of who are Japanese nationals of 'Japanese' ethnicity, and whose first languages is Japanese. One of these two possesses a similar command of English, with the other – at the very least – categorizable as an 'advanced speaker.' The third is a non-Japanese national of 'White' ethnicity whose first language is English, while their command of Japanese is generally considered to be at either a "conversational" or "intermediate" level by IBEC students engaged with. This group of eight students, meanwhile, contained those from far greater diversities to those at JIE. MU's cohort – while considerably

smaller[97] – included three non-Japanese nationals. These comprised of two American nationals and one from South Asia.[98] On the other hand, similar to JIE, its five Japanese nationals were raised across a diverse spread of prefectures (figure 6.2). Also similar was a broad age and experience range. This was especially true of its Japanese nationals, although MU does not systematically organize students into distinct categories based on relative experience like JIE (see Chapter 5). Nevertheless, to momentarily borrow on such distinctions, three of MU's Japanese nationals can be classified as 'in-practice students,' possessing vast experience as school educators.

Figure 6.2: Prefecture of Origin for Japanese Nationals (MU)

Prefecture	No. of Students
Gunma	1
Hyogo	1
Kanagawa	1
Mie	1
Tokyo	1

Given the course's English mediation, the relative English proficiency of these Japanese nationals was predictably greater (figure 6.3). All had additionally resided outside Japan for a portion of their lives (figure 6.4) compared to just 10 of 34 at JIE (see Chapter 5, figure 5.8). Finally, three of these five easily fall into the minoritized population of 'returnees' (see Chapter 4), compared to just four at JIE. This is noteworthy because those positioned in this category have typically spent extensive periods of their formative years raised outside of Japan.

[97] This group was unusually small for MU's average intake, a direct consequence of COVID-19.

[98] The nationality of this participant has been anonymized in accordance with their wishes.

Figure 6.3: Second-Language Proficiencies of Japanese Nationals (MU)

Second Language	Elementary	Intermediate[99]	Advanced
English	1	2	2
French		1	
Korean	1		

Figure 6.4: Japanese National Students' Residence Outside of Japan (MU)

MU Student	Total Time	Territory/ies	Age on Arrival	Reason/s
Nishimiya	1 month	USA	18	Language Training
Iwasaki	5 years	Hong Kong[100]	30	Work
Marumo	2 years	USA (2 years)	3 or 5	Parent's Work
Ishida	6 years	USA (5 years) & France (1 year)	Teens and 40	Schooling & Family Work
Yanagihara	17 months	Australia (10 months) & Finland (7 months)	Teens	Exchange Student

One eye-catching peculiarity surfaced through survey results: Japanese nationals who considered their English proficiency to be 'intermediate,' or, incredibly, 'elementary.' This was odd even in comparison to other IBEC programmes in Japan incorporating lesser levels of English mediation. For instance, of a total of four Japanese nationals at an online-purposed, all English IBEC module, all commanded a level of English safely describable as 'advanced' if not higher. At another such

[99] A student who described their proficiency level as 'conversational' (one student) has been categorized as 'intermediate.'

[100] Iwasaki was residing in Hong Kong at the time of fieldwork.

institution I refer to as Alpha University (AU), all three of its Japanese nationals labelled their English proficiencies as either 'like-native' or 'advanced' (figure 6.5).

Figure 6.5: Second-Language Proficiencies of Japanese Nationals (AU)

Second Language	Elementary	Advanced	'Like-Native'
English		1	2
Korean	1		

It was precisely this disparity in English language proficiency among MU's Japanese nationals, that proved a core catalyst in revealing tense political rifts over language. Several instances on the module made it immediately clear that a few of these Japanese nationals (hereon the 'Japanese students') were comparatively struggling to keep pace with classroom content. This was first evidenced during a breaktime period in the module's second class. Returning from the kitchen with extra sustenance, I arrived back to my setup early, reviewing notes before the online session recommenced. The Zoom room consisted of several blank boxes inscribed with names, all cameras and microphones disabled. Soon though, the boxes of three students abruptly sprang to life, attempting to gain the attention of the main facilitator, Christine. A lengthy discussion followed, with Christine deciding it best to speak with two of these students in private, leaving the main Zoom room for around the next 10 minutes.

This marked a rare phase on the module: the first time where the main room was all but entirely comprised of Japanese students. The only exception was one American student possessing a "conversational" level of Japanese. Iwasaki seized the opportunity. In this reconfigured space he chose to converse in Japanese. Speaking to another Japanese student, he admitted – with pained laughter – to having "no idea what's going on" for an upcoming task, one originally explained in English by Christine. Another Japanese student stepped in to help, regurgitating an outline provided by Christine in Japanese. One more expressed empathy for Iwasaki, offering cheerful words of encouragement, and politely adding how the activity may be more compelling knowing less before engaging with it. Conversation then promptly shifted to sharing humorous tales of

COVID-19. These exchanges in Japanese ended abruptly on the others' return to the main room, Christine's presence enough to snap language mediation back to English.

Later, Christine initiated the activity in question by splitting us into two breakout groups of four or five. Mine was comprised of three Japanese students, including Iwasaki. Once more severed from Christine's presence along with other non-Japanese students, discussion proceeded exclusively in Japanese. One student, Ishida, screenshared Christine's English-written PowerPoint slides before a moment of contemplative silence took over. Before continuing, Yanagihara asked if my Japanese was "totally fine *[zenzen daijōbu]"* as, up until that point, the cohort had barely heard me speak. My confirmation appeared to generate visible smiles. The activity itself was simple. From a choice of famous figures – ranging from philosophers and psychologists, to famous human rights and political activists – match a list of prescribed replies to the question, 'why did the chicken cross the road,' with those likely to have provided that answer. Linguistically, the task was unproblematic for Ishida and Yanagihara, both possessing an 'advanced' level of English competency. The same could not be said for Iwasaki, who's proficiency could instead be described as 'intermediate,' although he often expressed enthusiasm at practicing his English. Nonetheless, the remainder of this session was carried out in Japanese, phasing into English *only* when directly reading from Christine's slides.

This experience proved one of several to emerge throughout the module, where Japanese students – when spatially severed from non-Japanese speaking students and Christine – would almost exclusively converse in Japanese. This subversion of the programme's official English-mediation, however, went further. During extensive interviews with its student cohort, language mediation emerged as a subject of tense and sometimes corrosive debate. Evidence of this first manifested through reactions over a speech delivered by Christine at the start of the module. Speaking on the topic of English as *the* lingua franca of the world – which it currently remains (de Swaan 2001) – Christine emphasized what she viewed as a pragmatic necessity to accept its status while carefully acknowledging "imperialist" legacies responsible for constructing this reality. At the end of this speech, Zansi - a student from South Asia of 'South Asian' ethnicity, and whose second language is English – asked "why they [Anglo-imperialists] should get away with this," in reference to ongoing pressures across the postcolonial world over maintaining English as 'global language.' After a moments silence in careful contemplation, Christine pithily replied: "don't [let them]." They again treaded with caution, emphasizing English's status be accepted in the interests

of pragmatics and *not* due to such legacies. Despite the substantiveness of the debate itself, Christine's speech seemed to have a more targeted goal. Namely, the discouraging of Japanese during classroom hours. Later reflecting on this event during interview, Ishida bluntly expressed her disappointment over Christine's viewpoint:

Ishida: "Who cares?" (laughs)

Ishida noted deep feelings of unease over the speech's inferences. She struggled, however, to locate why. Attempting to search for this, she instead chose to reflect on a separate experience revolving around discourse of a certain "joint-seminar" series. This later transpired into a topic of major interest for all but one of the interviewees in the group, with several more raising the matter spontaneously. A required component for the groups eventual master's thesis, students are tasked with presenting on research themes in front of their peers, its four degree facilitators, and most other researchers associated with the department. Several students defined the exercise as a form of academic viva training, akin to what may be experienced when presenting at an academic conference. The series is significant for the degree, acting as the sole stage where all its related faculty and students are simultaneously present.

Virulent disagreements emerged between students over the discourse of this series. To appreciate why is also to understand the series' complication with language instruction. Despite the degree's IBEC component being officially listed as English-mediated, MU permits students to compose theses in either English or Japanese. By extension, the joint-seminar theoretically allows students to present in the language of their research. Based on student accounts, this was seemingly an unproblematized experience for the previous years cohort, the only caveat being an additional requirement for those presenting in Japanese to create a handout of their research themes in English and *not* the other way around.

Theoretically, the approach was sound. If presented in English, Christine, alongside the fully Japanese / English bilinguals of Matsumoto and Yamaguchi, would act as primary sources of feedback. If in Japanese, Egami, a Japanese national most familiar with Japanese-mediated academia, would instead take the lead, aided again by Matsumoto and Yamaguchi. *In practice*,

however, the approach was not. Ishida was the first to speak on the matter during interview, raising the topic through the following exchange:

Ishida: "We had a discussion about language policy."

Akira: "Oh, did you?"

Ishida: "In our joint-seminar… ah I'm really interested in your opinion."

Akira: "Oh, sure, sure. What happened?"

Ishida: "So this year, well [Bridget][101] announced, okay, in the joint-seminar, that English is strongly recommended [for] a presentation."

Akira: "Oh."

Ishida: "Yeah, and then you see… people like myself and [Yanagihara] right, in Japanese, you know we write the thesis [for the degree] in Japanese."

Akira: "Right right right."

[101] Bridget, as I later elaborate, is a fellow student of Ishida's cohort.

Ishida: "If I do it in English, its soo shallow."

Ishida was deeply annoyed by what she saw as an effort to turn their "graduate school" experience into an "English language school." Her frustrations were not solely directed at Christine either: they were also pointed at a fellow student, Bridget. Bridget is an American national of 'White' ethnicity, and an experienced English acquisition teacher who has worked in Japan for over a decade. Like Christine, Bridget also forwarded the notion of English as the international language of the world, with the aim of encouraging English-mediated presentations for the joint-seminar. Another line delivered by both Christine and Bridget at different periods of the course was the fact that English-mediated publications allow for greater global accessibility. Ishida was not impressed by these active attempts at discouraging Japanese, repeating these respective lines with sarcasm during interview before exclaiming:

Ishida: "Of course I understand that! Sorry, my English proficiency is not, high enough to do the research, as I do in Japanese. So, I choose Japanese of course."

Ishida spoke on objecting to these efforts robustly during discussions, adamant that students should still have "a choice!" To be clear, this was not to infer that Japanese students did not hold agency in choosing to present in Japanese. Indeed, several ultimately did so as is permitted by its existing agreements. Rather, there existed a feeling that the decision to present in Japanese, instead of being respectfully accepted, was being scrutinized as *narrowminded*. That it ignored the alleged global authority of English, while being criticized as an exclusivist action toward non-Japanese speaking students.

Bridget was keen to explain her stance during interview, boiling down to a desire to foster a deeper sense of community within the cohort. She felt choices in language mediation created a needless rift between Japanese and non-Japanese students, and that the former group should better embrace the opportunity to engage with a wider, "global," English-speaking community.

She believed a key motivator for Japanese students presenting in Japanese lay with receiving feedback from Egami, who otherwise would be unable to provide substantive input. Bridget felt this easily rectified by booking separate appointments with him or joining one of his seminars separately as a guest. Their seeming refusal to do so deeply irritated Bridget, speaking at length as to what she thought of Japanese students' choice to present in Japanese, and what she interpreted that decision to mean. This is conveyed through the below reflection:

Bridget: "There are several of us that cannot speak Japanese. And it's a waste of our hour right (laughs), to read your [English-written] handout, and then sit through your Japanese presentation, and understand maybe 10 percent, whereas if you did it in English we would understand at least 50 percent, like it becomes like a numbers game to me, right?"

Bridget: "Of course that's your right [to present in Japanese]. Like, we are a multilingual community. That's fine. I understand that, and I really appreciate that you create English translations for your slides. But, when you are purposefully deciding not to speak English, you're saying to [Christine] and to other people who don't speak Japanese, I don't care about your opinion…and that's really cutting yourself off in terms of the international English community. You know, it's cutting yourself off from having that global conversation."

Zansi expressed similar disappointment over the emergence of Japanese presentations. Critically, however, they were more nuanced. She spoke of how during the year of application the entire programme was advertised as exclusively English mediated, a key factor in her decision to take up the degree. Zansi was left feeling highly conflicted on discovering this not to be the case, as the following passage illustrates:

Zansi: "I know that [for the joint-seminar] you have to submit an English abstract and a Japanese one and you have to keep your slides in Japanese and English, both so that the English speakers

can understand. And obviously, obviously, a Japanese person will not like that, but I feel that when people are being accepted into the program - and it's an English program – then, I feel that they should not be allowed to participate in Japanese at all. They should be able to present in English and they should be doing the research in English, however broken that is whatever…I am also participating in this program! And if I can't understand the presentations in the program, what's the point? What am I learning from my class fellows?"

Zansi: "At the same time I feel bad for the Japanese people. I mean, because they have to write two times."

Akira: "For the handouts and stuff right?"

Zansi: "Yeah for the handouts, and they have to translate their… I mean, if they're not good, they have to rely completely on Google Translate, and then, you know, mistakes are there, and then some people might pick out those mistakes and then it can be embarrassing but they *don't know* English that well, it's not their fault. They have to do everything twice."

The inclusion of Japanese-mediation in the programme caused Zansi to feel somewhat deceived. She made an informed decision to undertake a degree in Japan which appeared to be fully English-mediated, only to discover that parts of certain modules (e.g., the joint-seminar) were sometimes linguistically inaccessible to them. Nevertheless, in comparison to Bridget, she expressed noticeably greater empathy for the disproportionate compliances Japanese students were facing. The most empathetic viewpoints toward Japanese students' position, however, were raised by the final of these three non-Japanese students, Lola. An American national of 'Mexican' ethnicity, Lola is a Spanish and English bilingual with 'elementary' proficiency in Japanese. During interview she made it clear how her own upbringing with non-English speaking parents in California (US) fostered "a lot of sympathy and empathy towards people who can't speak English" in general.

Reflecting on her own experiences of linguistic intolerance toward herself and her parents in the US, Lola placed especial emphasis on the linguistic "privilege" of the English language, and how it can consequently work to devalue others. As Lola saw it, she "signed up for a Japanese education [by undertaking] a Japanese university programme with a lot of Japanese cohort members that do speak Japanese." As such, despite MU's IBEC being an English-mediated programme officially, Lola stressed it imperative to support those who struggle with English by permitting them to express in Japanese. In other words, she felt it her responsibility to accommodate them *rather* than the other way around.

What then, of the remaining Japanese students? As interviews progressed it became clear no one touching on the subject shared Bridget's and Christine's stances, with Ishida far from alone in expressing sentiments of unwanted pressure to communicate in English. Reasons why can be boiled down to two interlinked themes, both already touched on by Zansi and Lola. The first related to academic quality, as summarized by the words of Iwasaki:

Iwasaki: "Among the Japanese people… for us postgrads, there is the opinion that even if we present in English, we will only end up with half-baked content, and because our true intentions don't get across, we would rather convey what we want in Japanese, and to receive responses from those who understand that."

The second concerned linguistic identity. Yanagihara spoke on this most passionately, considering the pressure to present in English intolerant and suppressive. Self-repeating the notion of Japanese research being less impactful compared to English – as heard from Christine and Bridget – she responded with the following words during interview:

Yanagihara: "But, while I of course think there is some truth to that, naturally, can't you also say there is great *[monosugoi]* meaning to doing research in your own mother-tongue? Naturally when it comes to research, you have to really look into all the fine print, but if you do it in your second language, you won't be able to look at the details in the same way no matter what. So, for those

who want to use their mother-tongue, who I think there are many, well, the joint-seminar is not an environment that really tolerates that."

This small IBEC community at MU revealed a critical pair of antagonistic discourses. First were those championing agendas of Englishization, reinforcing English as 'global language' while simultaneously degrading Japanese as narrow-minded 'local language.' Incidentally, JIE's impetus to include me on its IR (see previous section) partly complements this narrative. Second were those seeking to deconstruct this project in the name of a linguistic inclusivism, refuting English's present status as the world's *lingua franca.*

Is the seeming irreconcilable, in fact reconcilable? Other linguists writing on the theme of *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism in English Teaching* have previously written that a 'third way' is in fact "demanded," an approach avoiding "the traditional extremes of rejecting English outright for its linguistic imperialism or accepting it wholesale for benefits" (Canagarajah 1999, 174). Indeed, cautioning against earlier strategies to abandon English in a purposeful act of – to tease the books title – *Decolonizing the Mind* (wa Thiong'o 1986), Canagarajah outlines the following to consider part of why such an extreme position might be ill conceived in the postcolonial world:

1. "Treating English as incapable of representing any other ideology or discourse other than that associated with center communities is an overdetermined perspective."

2. "A 'separatist' response could in fact ghettoize minority communities, preventing them from mutually enriching interaction with other societies."

3. "Marginalized communities do have a lot to gain by learning other languages and discourses and their underlying knowledge systems. The competence they acquire in multiple discourses empowers them to interact confidently in different contexts of communication and culture."

4. "Such communities are also throwing away the means of networking with other colonized communities in the post-colonial world. A lingua franca such as English can enable periphery communities to interact with each other and learn from each other – if it be, for the subversive end of resisting English."

5. "Refusing to engage with English may not defeat its hegemony; this response might only let its power go unchallenged. Therefore this is not a solution to the ideological challenges, but an escape from it."

(Canagarajah 1999, 177, my omissions)

Of course, as is made clear through these five points, the societies of concern here are of the Anglo-postcolonial world. Nonetheless, they make for fruitful comparison and contrast with a Japanese context, with points (1) and (5) remaining universally salient. As the privilege of English over the IBO's other two official, and postimperial languages of French and Spanish aptly attests to, English's continued global status as the apex of Earth's linguistic hierarchy (de Swaan 2001) is undisputed, such has been the historical influence of 'White' Anglo-American imperialist legacies (Phillipson 1992; Phillipson 2009). It is, however, points (2) – (4) that are of especial interest, for all assume first and foremost, that the societies in question experienced a paradigmatic proliferation of English due to Anglo-imperialism. Such was never the case with Japan, its own history as the only 'non-White' and 'Eastern' 'modern' empire (Myers and Peattie 1984; Oguma 1998; Fujitani 1998; Nish 2008; Dower 2008) playing an ironic yet instrumental role in maintaining the relative strength of the Japanese language today. Moreover, as is commonly agreed among researchers of Japanese societies, Japan's continued resource, socio-cultural, and linguistic containment is globally significant, still very possibly *the* most resistant and subversive across the non-Anglo Asia-Pacific region to the otherwise mighty pressures of 'global English' (Tsuneyoshi and Kitamura 2018, 9-10). The result remains that for the average Japanese national, English acquisition, or life 'abroad,' is not the dream ticket to socio-economic prosperity it often continues to be for many lower resource territories of the postcolonial world.[102]

Yet, on the other hand, as demonstrated in this chapter, Japan is *politically* no exception to 'global English's' intrusions. As I previously reviewed in Chapter 4, this is potently reflected by longstanding motivations within the Japanese Government and corporate sectors to promote English in the name of its post-1980s *kokusaika* ('internationalization') and post-2000s *gurōbaruka*

[102] This is irrespective of the potential 'elite' socio-economic status of 'returnees' (see Chapter 4).

('globalization') agendas (Kubota 1998; McConnell 2000; Yamagami and Tollefson 2011; Galloway et al. 2020).[103] Interlinked with these movements are the Japanese Government's goal to cultivate English-speaking *gurōbaru jinzai,* or 'global HR' (Chapple 2014; Yonezawa and Shimmi 2018; Poole et al. 2020), that the nationalist promotion of IB remains chiefly linked to (Nagayama 2013; Kadomatsu 2018).

The MEXT-IBO Consortium is also directly implicit in this, as was made clear during an interview with its former head of the Dual-Language Diploma Programme (DLDP), Jones Mizuki. Reflecting on her experience as part of the consortium's formative advisory committee, she recalled having received input by a dedicated "enterprise" representative – in this case a senior member of "McDonalds" – to provide insights on what broader industry "outside of education" desires in their employees. They emphasized how "companies are looking for people who are able to do [both] business" and "state opinions in English," obvious given the central role of elite business administration in coining the original definition of 'global HR' in the first place (see Chapter 4). Jones reflected further on this through the following monolog:

"I think it's wrong to say international minded people can speak English. You know, that's not, that's not true at all. I disagree. However, having English skills is a huge benefit for students. You know, when you're actually going into a global setting, you know, you have to be working with people outside of Japan, obviously. And then like if you look at people in Singapore, Korea, you know, even though it's not their first language, most people [can] discuss, can talk in English, which is true, you know, whether you like it or not. The most common language among people is English. So having English skills, actually [it's] a benefit for students."

Jones' standpoint is an interesting, yet, once again, unsurprising one. An experienced IB educator,

[103] Of course, it can also be argued that the influence of English began long before this time. It is known, for example, that the first Minister of Education for the Meiji era's (1868-1912) Japanese Government, Mori Arinori (1847-1889), suggested "adopting English as the future language" of the Japanese education system (Griolet 2013, 2). The role that the seven-year post-World War 2 US Occupation played in elevating the politics of English across Japan in the 1950s is also noteworthy.

she is prudent to distinguish the difference between the IB's central notion of international mindedness – one philosophically grounded in sentiments of multilingualism (see Chapter 2) – and English. She nonetheless advocates for IB's role in improving English proficiency across Japan through a lens of global pragmatics. The key words embedded in Jones' reflection are "when you're *actually* going into a global setting" (my emphasis). Based on data gathered from time spent with IBEC students at JIE, MU, and several others, for the overwhelming majority of Japanese nationals undertaking IBEC programmes, the final number who will proceed to work outside the territory, let alone work at an IB World School in Japan, is exceedingly low.

Tensions at MU serve as a concise microcosm for exploring disparities between the realities and narratives of 'global English' in Japan. The pressurization to practice English speaks to both local political agendas, and an encroachment of English permeating global society – including higher education (Müller 2021; Shahjahan and Edwards 2022; Marginson 2022a) – in MU's case through the "privileged voluntary migration" (Bamkin 2022, 339) of faculty and students embodying this capital. On the other hand, despite efforts forwarding the 'global English' agenda, the sheer reality of Japanese societies' relative linguistic autonomy continues to deflect its advances with ease. Put simply, the relative strength, containment, and resilience of the Japanese language remains a sharp thorn for global English's linguistic coup.

To Summarize

Anchored in the realities and narratives of English as 'global language,' this chapter explored the politics of translation and operational language for students enrolled in IB teacher training and their faculties. I first explored this through a structural reliance on Japanese IB resources translated through a philosophy of universalist essentialism by the IBO. At their worst, they resulted in linguistically alienating its readership, while, at their *inadvertent* best, stimulated practices of socio-constructivism. I then considered an alternative approach made by a different class at the same university, one foregoing reliance on such resources by implementing locally published alternatives edited by its own faculty. This approach generated precisely the opposite effect, one linguistically natural to process while grounded in more socio-culturally relatable themes, yet uncritically prescriptive of IB's 'purpose' in the country through a primarily nationalist economic lens. I consider the publication of more localized resources to be a step forward for human

inclusivity. However, if it is to surmount sacrificing the practice of key pedagogical processes encouraging the active (re)production of knowledge, considerable movement away from a relatively instructed, top-down nationalized localization, and toward a negotiated bottom-up counterpart is necessary.

Proceeding to the politics of operational language at the IBO, I illustrated how its exclusive administrative reliance on English for its IBEC initiative exerts disproportional pressures for universities exclusively operating in Japanese. These disparities appear somewhat understood by those representing the organization, with increasing efforts being made to improve the landscape. Nonetheless, it also appears to remain ideologically passive while implicitly pushing for Japan's greater Englishization due to its current relationship with national governmental agendas.

Through a final case study of one officially English-mediated IBEC programme at a separate university in Japan, I examined the sometimes-corrosive reactions to pressures stemming from the 'global English' narrative, and its rather robust efforts at sabotaging it. I assess these persistent calls for Englishization by national government and business administration to reside in the passive advancement of economic neoliberalism, and a resulting inability – and / or refusal – to differentiate between narrative and reality of English's *affective* benefit to today's mainstream Japanese person in Japan.

CHAPTER 7 – TOWARDS A THEORY OF INTERNATIONALISM & GLOBALISM AS AMPLIFIED AGENDAS

April 2021. The dawn of a new academic year at the Japanese Institute of Education (JIE) and its IB Educator Certificate (IBEC) programme (see Chapter 5). Today kicked off the IB Fundamentals module, orientating over 100 students via Zoom as COVID-19 continued its rage. The sheer numbers of faces in rectangles was mind numbing. Until this day, I had participated in classes attended by no more than 40, and those were anomalies. Nevertheless, as conference apps like Zoom typically make us realize, such feelings swiftly dissolved once facilitators displayed their obligatory PowerPoint slides. A session spanning just under two hours proceeded without drama. All three facilitators were now used to administering classes online, having been forced to abruptly learn the previous year. The content was simple, informing students on details of the programme, including the competitive selection process for entry onto its autumn-term IB Teacher Training Program (IBTTP), the core module of JIE's IBEC. Copious slides later, a Q&A followed before the session terminated. Before exiting, however, Mishima – one of the programme's three main facilitators – announced some homework: view a pre-recorded orientation video by the end of the day. Over 30 minutes in length, the first 20 concerned a (re)introduction aimed at students considering the course. It cautiously warned them of its relative workload to other electable modules in their degree, before advertising IBEC's national relevance by uncritically lacing it with the Japanese Government's desire to cultivate *gurōbaru jinzai,* or 'global HR' (see Chapter 4). This was a noteworthy development at the time, but it soon paled in comparison to what the final 10 minutes held in store.

Mishima switched focus to a visual tour of a building in Hong Kong, one simultaneously housing an *intanashonaru sukūru* ('international school') on its ground floor, and a *nihonjin gakkō* (literally, a 'school for Japanese people,' otherwise commonly translated to a 'Japanese school') on its upper levels, both catered for primary education. The purpose for doing so centered on architecture. It all began with a hallway. The picture on the left (figure 7.1) was that of the Japanese school. "This is precisely *[masashiku]* like a Japanese *[nihon teki]* school right," Mishima states, one he believed most Japanese people would agree complies with general regulations and expectations in Japan. He had then moved downstairs, snapping a shot of the international school's equivalent,

presenting the result on the right (figure 7.1).

Figure 7.1: The 'Japanese' Versus 'International Hallway'



(Directly borrowed from Mishima's recording)

The difference was indeed striking. The right hallway littered with a rich spectrum of furniture and toys while the left was all but barren. As Mishima explained with enthusiasm, all that is required to realize this dramatic contrast in aesthetic is one change in conceiving the function of a hallway. The left clinically separates it from the classroom, as a means to – according to Mishima – avoid placing objects in areas capable of causing accidental injury or harm. Conversely, the right injects the role of the classroom into the hallway, effectively revising where the boundary of the classroom ends. The latter approach believes the hallway a viable space to implement activities difficult to execute within the confines of a classically square classroom space, expanding environments of teaching and learning as a result. Most interesting, however, was less the difference itself, and more how it was *ascribed*. In Mishima's words:

"This international school *[intanashonaru skūru teki]* way of thinking about objects is also possible."

Just like that, two grammatical hallways were born. First was the 'Japanese hallway,' second the 'international hallway.' It did not end there. Mishima continued, zooming further into the latter to examine none other than a table. As they teased, this was no ordinary table. To understand why is to appreciate the story behind its function. Imagine a typical primary school classroom. More specifically, consider the child sitting inside it for between 45 minutes to an hour. Will they, at all times, sit patiently, earnestly absorbing content and participating actively in activities? *No.* They will almost certainly fidget, rummage, flail, pace, and so much more. In Japanese schools – as Mishima purposefully points out – the onus is typically on the teacher to control the situation. Gentle words of guidance (e.g., "why don't we return to your seat okay?"), gesticulations, along with a range of other strategies (e.g., borrowing the principal's office) are employed to refocus the pupil back into a mindset for learning. In other words, the *teacher* regulates the child's behavior. However, in "international schools," the aspiration is for the *child* to learn to self-regulate. Enter the table of interest (figure 7.2).

Figure 7.2: The 'International Table'



(Directly borrowed from Mishima's recording)

Placed just outside the classroom, whenever a given child feels to have reached their limit, they may – with permission – temporarily exit the room to sit at this table. They may continue to self-study if desired, but that is not the table's true function. Instead, it is designed for stress relief. Tall enough for a child to comfortably rest their arms on its surface, they position their legs on the attached rotating bar before cycling their way to relief. When satisfied, they hop off, returning to the classroom refreshed. The child has successfully self-regulated without a teacher's intervention. An amusing tale. Again, however, the real intrigue lay in how the table was labelled. In Akiyama's words:

"Inside an IB school, or an international school not an IB school, such tables are purposefully placed."

This was no ordinary table from a 'Japanese school.' This was an 'IB,' or, at the very least, 'international school table.' Once more, the table, like the hallway preceding it, has been both *IB-ized* and *internationalized*. The fact that the 'international school' has long been considered an undefinable entity by educational theorists (see Chapter 2) did not deter Mishima from fabricating components for one. The fact that projects in the name of *kokusaika* ('internationalization') in Japanese societies are often considered linear efforts toward sentiments of 'Westernization' (see Chapter 4), did not prevent Mishima from associating it with a school generally operated by 'non-Western' faculty in Hong Kong. Subverting such patterns, Mishima (re)engineered the international into a different entity altogether: *innovation.*[104]

It was yet another instance of projects carried out as 'international' and 'global' in this thesis. There were internationalist ideologies committed to Euro-American constructions of 'international-mindedness' (see Chapter 2), as well as others embedded in governmental regionalism, neo-missionary evangelism (see Chapter 3), or administrative economic nationalism

[104] Other anthropologists have identified this same rhetoric of internationalization as innovation in Japanese higher education (Poole 2016b, 67).

(see Chapter 4). There were internationalist pedagogies based on Euro-American[105] theoreticians in the academy struggling to integrate with socio-cultural systems they had failed to consider (see Chapter 5). There were internationalist clashes over language, from those purposed – inadvertently or otherwise – to further consolidate English's global dominance, to those seeking a thorough disassociation of its connection to 'international language' altogether, and even champion sentiments of translingualism (see Chapter 6).

As other influential researchers over the notion of 'international education' have long agreed, despite identifiable schools of thought in its name, the phrase itself is nothing more than "floating signifier, a phrase without a circumscribed meaning which is invoked by a variety of users who feel that it gives a valuable impression to their projects" (Pearce et al. 2013, xii). This final chapter essentially supports the above analysis, but with one small caveat. That is, based on my encounters with diverse forms of internationalisms and globalisms, I suggest there to be one shared characteristic: *amplification of agendas*. That is to say, 'the international' and 'global' not only channel a 'valuable impression' to projects – or promote a desired advert or image – but are additionally tools with which to advocate for and drive these multivocal strategies. These respective scalar dimensions (i.e., the international and global) are therefore not only passive geographical signifiers, but also *agentic powers*.

I consider this theory's relevance from two perspectives. First is through engagement with more recent efforts in educational studies to rescue the semantics of 'internationalization' and 'globalization,' a project that, I argue, unwittingly ignores how the international and global are being negotiated on the ground. Second is through comparison with the theory of glocalization as employed by educational anthropologists, as well as through more contextually informed understandings of internationalizations and globalizations in Japan. I consider how they both complement and limit understandings for how the international and global are evoked by actors in this thesis. I suggest conceiving of them as amplifiers of agendas is, overall, a more faithful theorization of what emerged in everyday discourse.

[105] Russia is included in this due to the work of Lev Vygotsky (see Chapter 5).

(Re-)Privileging the Everyday

It was the final day of the IB Teacher Training Program with Mishima. It began like any other, covering the prescribed topic at hand. In truth this group was playing catch up, having experienced severe disruption due to the political climate of COVID-19 (see Chapter 1). Consequently, the class acted as a hasty recovery exercise over IB unit planner design, an activity normally occurring across a span of several weeks. Split into breakout groups of three on Zoom, students spent 30 minutes considering the potential treasures and pitfalls of varying approaches to these modes of planning. No surprises. At least, not until what transpired immediately afterward. Returning to the main room, representatives for each group took turns to summarize their discussions. The final of these was Arai, an experienced high school educator specialized in mathematics. Delivering his summary, Arai took advantage of the occasion to vent personal frustration over an aspect of one of the IBO's Japanese-translated *From Principles into Practice* (hereon 'P&P') resources (see IBO 2014a). Namely, the definition for *"kankeisei"* (IBO 2016, 68-69), the IBO's official translation for "relationships" (IBO 2014a, 57). The first sentence is written as follows in English:

> *"Relationships* are the *connections* and *associations* between properties, objects, people and ideas—including the human community's *connections* with the world in which we live."
>
> (IBO 2014a, 57, my emphases)

There are three words of concern in this sentence: relationships, connections, and associations. In Japanese, 'connections' – which appears twice – is consistently translated to *'musubitsuki.'* No issues. It was the translation for 'associations,' however, that was the root of Arai's frustration: *'kanrensei.'* In English, the respective semantic meanings of 'relationships,' 'associations,' and 'connections' can be tricky to differentiate without context. For example, the Oxford English Dictionary defines 'relationship' as "the state or fact of being related; the way in which two things are *connected*; a *connection*, an *association*" (OED 2023f, my emphases). The potential conflations between *'kankeisei'* and *'kanrensei'* are, if anything, even more pronounced. Arai briefly expressed

irritation at the decision to define the former through using the latter, finding it difficult to process their meanings. It was but another example of how terminology in IBO resources stimulated active discussion during the programme (see Chapter 6). However, it was neither these words, nor Arai's reactions toward them that is of interest here. Instead, all the intrigue lay in Mishima's response to it, taking the opportunity to divulge an extraordinary opinion. It began through the following monolog:

"You know, when class began, there was something I felt I wanted to say to everyone. So, from a Japanese perspective *[Nihonjin-teki ni]*, Japanese people are fundamentally *[konponteki ni]* very serious, so we read materials handed in a deep, deep, deep *[fukaku, fukaku, fukaku]* way… I sense we can't help but experience this phase *[shunkan]* where we look at things in several ways, while thinking how we must properly *[tadashiku]* understand it all."

Nihonjinron. As mentioned before (see Chapter 4), it is a form of cultural nationalism (Yoshino 1992) aiming to demonstrate the "unique qualities of Japanese culture, Japanese society, and the Japanese people" (Befu 2001, 4). It continues to accomplish this through an enormous array of mediums – from academic literature to popular media – and commonly includes fabricating conflictive comparisons between monolithic imaginaries of 'the Japanese' versus *'kaigai'* (those others 'overseas'). As has been more recently analyzed by anthropologists, some of its most discriminatory efforts remain observable through persistently hostile *kenkan* (anti-Korean) and *kenchū* (anti-Chinese) discourses, key strategies for perpetuating sentiments of *Nihon raisan*, or Japanese pride (Funabiki 2018, 201-202). It is also responsible for maintaining illusions of homogeneity and a host of other cultural distinctions, minoritizing those failing to meet its fictions (Shah, Forthcoming). Another long-standing tactic to affirm this pride lies in its conflictive comparisons between monolithic imaginaries of 'the Japanese' with the fabricated traits of 'others.' Possibly *the* major example of this remains its contrast with a phenomenon known as 'the West,' as others have analyzed (Goodman 2005). Still deeply rooted in Japan despite its thorough deconstruction by historical and social scientists, *Nihonjinron* continues to be encountered with ease in everyday life, especially in its milder forms. Nonetheless, despite this general knowledge,

I was unprepared for Mishima's speech, one that continued as follows:

"People overseas *[kaigai],* especially Europeans don't think too deeply about things, they kind of say 'let's just think of it like this' *[kon'na kanji de]* – oh, i'm sorry, I possibly shouldn't be saying these kinds of things in Shah-san's presence (laughs) – they kind of individualistically go… rather than say they don't deeply feel for things *[fukaku mono wo sagurezu]*, I get the sense there are many occasions *[ōi ni shite aru]* where they sort of accept things by thinking 'well, it is basically understood as this right' *['daitai kō iu rikai nan janai no']."*

Mishima ended by suggesting two ways to deal with the example Arai raised. First, visiting the original IB source (i.e., English) to see whether it clarifies things. Two, as a means of progression, adopt Mishima's "bad habit" by accepting things – as the 'overseas' / especially 'Europeans' do – through concluding 'well, it's fine to basically think of it like this.' Mishima, the very same individual who linked 'IB' with 'innovation' – as introduced earlier in this chapter – inferred 'IB' as conceptually *mediocre* due to the relative cultural sloppiness of 'overseas' / especially 'European people.' Throughout most of the chapters in this thesis, I have demonstrated a diversity of ways in which 'IB' and 'international' / 'global education' manifest more broadly. However, this was more than simply another example of an amplified agenda. In addition to showcasing another project in the name of 'the international,' it illustrates how even one single individual can practice multiple, altogether contradictory narratives. It is also a fitting demonstration of the semantically turbulent realities of this term – along with 'the global' – seemingly lacking any semblance of coherent meaning.

I highlight this final point with especial purpose. There appears to be an increasing disconnect between theoretical discussions over the concepts of internationalization / globalization in educationalist discourse versus what is occurring in ordinary life. Appreciating this disparity means reviewing the timeline of a set of popularly recognized debates on their notions in the academy. For a school of high-profile educationalists around the 1980s, alongside broader national governmental interests, a battle was brewing over *fear.* Fear that the meaning of internationalization itself was fast losing meaning. As the findings in this thesis alone attest to,

they were well founded. It was quickly becoming more pertinent to ask what *isn't* internationalization? As a result, a battle to rescue the term from semantic oblivion surfaced from as early as the 1980s, originating with prominence through commissioned research by the Canadian Bureau for International Education (Knight 1994). Within it, one learns that a host of educational bodies in Canada were wrestling to define the very projects of internationalization they were so keen on executing. This proved the beginnings of a larger movement led by educationalist Jane Knight, one precariously attempting to ensure that internationalization's meaning maintained some structure of appropriateness for a "broad range of contexts and countries of the world" without developing a "universal definition" (Knight 2003, 2). A movement trying to tame a growing multitude of concepts surrounding such a notion of education, including the 'comparative,' 'global,' 'multicultural,' 'transnational,' and 'borderless.'

Institutionally prominent, yet perplexing proposals included one loosely framing internationalization under the sentiments of "international, intercultural and global dimensions," while simultaneously seeking to differentiate internationalization from globalization (Knight 2003, 2-3). A particularly famous paper emerging in 2004 – since informing policy for a wide range of authoritative bodies such as the OECD, UNESCO, and many national governments – began with the self-quotation that "internationalization is changing the world of higher education, and globalization is changing the world of internationalization" (Knight 2004, 5). The idea was that these two notions were distinctly different, but interlinked phenomena. Internationalization, continuing to emphasize sentiments of international, intercultural, and global dimensions, was re-defined to act as a *controllable* process applicable for educationalist policies. 'International' was chosen to realize "a sense of relationships between and among nations, cultures, or countries," 'intercultural' to relate "to the diversity of cultures that exists within countries, communities, and institutions," and 'global' to "provide the sense of worldwide scope" (Knight 2004, 11). Unwise conceptual conflations over 'culture' notwithstanding, the real challenge begins with Knight's inclusion of 'global' in explaining internationalization. In these very same works she considers globalization as a distinctly different phenomenon presenting "new opportunities, challenges and risks" (Knight 2003, 2). An environmentally *passive* – as opposed to *agentic* – force defined through the "flow of technology, economy, knowledge, people, values [and] ideas" across borders, all impacting internationalization (Knight 2004, 8). It was globalization, as an economically neoliberalist or capitalist force enveloping the world, that required policing via strategies and

policies of internationalization. Internationalization, then, was globalization's corrective other (Knight 1999, 14-15; see Altbach and Knight 2007; see Khoo 2011).

Such treatment of internationalization and globalization continues to be supported by many Euro-American policymakers across the education sector. This is despite increasing critique by educationalists on the matter (e.g., Cantwell and Maldonado-Maldonado 2009; Vavrus and Pekol 2015; George Mwangi et al. 2018), with some dubbing the issue the "internationalization imperative" (Buckner and Stein 2020). Considering three flaws, Simon Marginson argues these definitions incapable of realizing a softly universalized concept to unify educational practice the way it was intended (Marginson 2022b). First, they often constrained analysis of education to nation-state comparisons, ignoring a comparative focus inside and / or beyond nations. In other words, these definitions were products of methodological nationalism (Beck 2007). Second, the ambition to realize this soft universalized concept of 'internationalization' ended up empowering a discordant range of agendas, from those commercial (e.g., student exchange arrangements) to those aspirational (e.g., raising 'global citizens'). Third, these definitions are argued culturally self-centered, ignoring a human bias generated by the very Euro-American contexts from which they unknowingly emerged (Canagarajah 2013; Stein 2021; Shahjahan and Edwards 2022). The irony was that educational bodies themselves were implementing policies in the name of an internationalization complicit in the very neoliberalist globalization they critiqued. Indeed, the evolution of IBEC and more general administrative developments at the IBO further evidence these latter two trends (see Chapters 2 & 3).

As other anthropologists have noted, Marginson's work has proven central to shaping the now rapidly growing subfield of 'global higher education' research, with his over 300 peer-reviewed publications containing a third with 'global higher education' in the title (Mills, Working Paper). One of his key advocations first emerged through what he called – together with Gary Rhoades – a "glonacal agency heuristic" (Marginson and Rhoades 2002, 281). Influenced by other major works on the globalization concept (e.g., Appadurai 1996), they sought to escape from methodological nationalist frameworks over its unwitting ignorance of global academic capitalism. They instead proposed a glonacal heuristic, one capable of revealing how different levels of scale collectively influence each other: the "three intersecting" dimensions of the "global, national, and local" (Marginson and Rhoades 2002, 282-283). Incidentally, clearly inspired by such heuristics, it was shortly after this time that identical language became incorporated into IB programmes (e.g.,

IBO 2014a, 9). Marginson's efforts can be analyzed as part of a larger call for a new pluralistic ontology, one seeking to combine conventionally divided theories and practices to reveal the irreducibly complex nature of *global* higher education. This "glonacal agency heuristic" was revisited two decades later to update several aspects, adding the additional dimension of "regional" (Marginson 2022a, 1367). Re-asserting his critique against the "fixed scalar primacy" of "methodological nationalism," he additionally warns against the counter extreme of "methodological globalism" (Marginson 2022a, 1385-1386). These updates bolster his emphasis on realizing a "fuller geography of higher education" by promoting an interlinked, multi-scalar glonacal paradigm (Marginson 2022a, 1390).

Is, however, this complex heuristic able to sufficiently grapple with the power geometries it itself has emerged from? Or, does this paradigm unknowingly craft this 'fuller geography' through promoting certain peoples knowledge (e.g., the academy) over others (e.g., the everyday human)? This is critical line of inquiry, one hinting at newly emerging epistemological hierarchies interacting with existing 'White' Euro-American influences (Mills, Working Paper). Nevertheless, it is not one I seek direct engagement with here. Instead, I am more narrowly concerned with one specific repercussion of the glonacal paradigm: *instrumentality*.

Lamenting internationalization's and globalization's diminishing semantic coherency, the glonacal solution acts as yet another rescue operation. Unlike Knight's attempt, however, Marginson seeks to redefine them into a set of pluralistic items, believing it possible to strip off ideologies forged through the agencies of those in 'the West' (Marginson 2022b). As I have been keen to highlight on multiple occasions in this thesis already (see Chapters 4 & 6) – and as other anthropologists also emphasize (White 2019) – 'the West,' and its related items, holds increasingly ambiguous semantic accuracy. In this case, working with such ambiguities to develop new working definitions risks inadvertently excluding the agencies of, for instance, human identities progressively subverting these imagined divides. In addition, such analyses dismiss the existence of influential internationalisms fabricated by 'non-Western' societies like Japan.

There is, however, a greater issue at work: the idea that internationalisms can be stripped off 'the international,' and globalisms peeled off 'the global.' First and foremost, these are impossible projects precisely because these 'literal' / 'instrumental definitions' are ideological notions themselves. Nonetheless, imagine for a moment that they were somehow objective entities. Even then, as many of the everyday examples covered in this thesis have illustrated,

internationalist and globalist agendas continue to amplify projects far beyond the 'literal.' Moreover, agenda variations exist beyond national / regional governments, transnational bodies, institutions, and even specific classrooms. Mishima's example attests to how they also include multiple, and contradictory agendas by individuals.

The international and global are well past the threshold of sanitizing. More pertinently, nor do I believe we as social scientists should seek to do so. In the event the academy manages to develop a softly universalized and agreeable definition – which is in itself unlikely – the everyday use of countless alternatives on the ground will not abide by it. The existing networks of semantics drawing on the international and global – including those opposing each other outright – will only continue expanding into the foreseeable future. If the academy therefore seeks to faithfully understand their meanings, surely it must first embrace this chaotic reality. To relinquish semantic control and instead focus on documenting how these concepts are evolving on the ground. Failure to do so will likely result once more in naively capitalizing on global higher education's epistemic privilege.

Other educationalists were on the right track when they proposed a theoretical need to "leave the old concepts of internationalization and globalization and move on to a fresh unbiased paradigm" (Brandenburg and de Wit 2011). Despite this stimulation over one decade ago, further efforts dedicated to exploring what this could look like remain rare. One interesting working example, provisionally titled 'starting from the middle,' emphasizes unlearning epistemic privilege in the academy while engaging with – but not being trapped within – scalar models (e.g., the glonacal agency heuristic). It also stresses privileging grounded knowledge in processes of theorization (Mills, Working Paper). I follow these precise suggestions while moving to the final section of this chapter.

Internationalism & Globalism as Amplified Agendas

A compulsory survey was carried out by JIE facilitators for postgraduate students registered on its IB Fundamentals module (see Chapter 5). Included in this was a question collaboratively floated between programme facilitators and me: what does it mean to be someone possessing *'kokusaiteki na shiya'* ('an international view')? This phrase was the official Japanese translation for 'international-mindedness' (hereon 'IM'), the concept acting as the core strapline for the IBO's

internationalist project (see Chapter 2), and one since vaguely defined by IBO commissioned research (Singh and Qi 2013). Noting it an intriguing question to ask these students – all of whom were either aspiring or experienced teachers – facilitators duly distributed the survey, tasking participants to list five items along with a general justification explaining their thinking. Filled by 90 respondents, 450 items were generated with 90 explanations. The data set itself is worthy of a dedicated analysis beyond the scope of this thesis, especially in dialog with others independently conducted using the Japanese Government's counterpart slogan of *gurōbaru jinzai,* or 'global HR' (see Chapter 4). For my purposes here, however, all that is required is a glance at the broad, easily discernable patterns it revealed. One of the most prominent concerned skill-specific items, such as those encountered in the popularized 21st Century Skills framework (ATC21s 2012), those directly referring to elements of IB (e.g., its Learner Profile), and those referring to the Japanese Government's active learning guidelines (see Chapter 4). In other words, many were direct or indirect regurgitations of officialized frameworks and policies. The other major trend manifested in conflicts between humanist / globalist sentiments versus nationalist / Japanese counterparts, exemplified in figure 7.3. Given that students on JIE's IBEC are exposed to both IBO-centric and Japan-centric discourses (see Chapter 6), this is not an unexpected outcome. Fascinating, however, were the items exceedingly difficult – if not sometimes impossible – to categorize into pre-informed frameworks. These unpredictable diversities, as represented by those in figure 7.3 (see miscellaneous), further illustrate how spontaneous and limitless internationalist / globalist sentiments can be.

The generation of such antagonistic or otherwise divergent aspirations, is partly the result of IB's accelerated diffusion across an education system historically independent from the movement of 'White' Euro-American humanisms responsible for IM's original conception. Likely the closest existing theory explaining this phenomenon among educational anthropologists remains that of *glocalization.* That said, this idea is insufficient if seeking to fully encapsulate what is occurring on the ground. Appreciating why is to grasp the original context from which the theory emanated.

Figure 7.3: Item Analysis for JIE Survey Question: "Who is a Person with International-Mindedness *[kokusaiteki na shiya]?"*

Humanist / Globalist Sentiments	Nationalist / Japanese Sentiments
Someone who cherishes the Earth and seeks peace.	Someone who loves their motherland.
Someone who constantly holds a consciousness of 'we' not 'they.'	Someone who identifies as a Japanese person.
Someone who can think beyond national borders.	Someone who understands about Japan.
Someone who is not centered on their country, who is able to grasp events equally in the world.	Someone who is confident in their country's culture, traditions etc., and can transmit these to others.
Someone who takes action as a Global Citizen *[chikyū shimin].*	To have both enough knowledge and experience with the local country, and culture one lives in.

Miscellaneous
Someone who can greet anyone with a smile.
Someone who can forecast the future.
Someone dissatisfied with present society.
Someone who has experienced an instance when they find something beautiful.
Someone who can think how their own happiness connects with those of others.
Someone who does not mistake one's own language or culture as absolute.

Glocalization in anthropology is a counterargument to a long-standing theory in sociology coined World Culture Theory (WCT). At WCT's core was a claim of a "contemporary world system" affecting all nation-states "simultaneously" (Meyer et al. 1977, 255) that explained the "global expansion of mass schooling" (Carney et al. 2012, 368). In other words, the notion that there exists a master culture primarily responsible for realizing the characteristics of formalized education systems across the planet. Other reviewers summarize it as conceptualizing "education as constructed for an *imagined* world society," revolving "around the internalization of shared cultural 'myths' or taken-for-granted ideas about what society is and how it works" (Carney et al. 2012, 368-369). The implication for this sweeping assertion boiled down to the idea that universalized socio-cultural, economic, and political forces – and *not* localized counterparts – were chiefly responsible for guiding how schooling was conceived in the world. This conclusion caused much interdisciplinary critique. Postcolonial literature, for instance, finds its assumption of an essentially seamless injection of socio-economic development, child socialization, nation-state influence, and more to be the result of Euro-American centric "epistemic ignorance" and "metropolitan provincialism" (Takayama 2015, 36).

Glocalization was a more diplomatic response, one seeking to reconcile what some anthropologists saw as a necessity to recognize schooling as both a global institutional phenomenon, and a generator of localized differentiation (see Anderson-Levitt 2003a). Through the words of Kathryn Anderson-Levitt – the original leader for this school of thought – WCT "cannot afford to ignore what happens on the ground in particular ministries of education, provincial centers, and local classrooms," while anthropologists must recognize WCT's insight that "modern schools around the world [share] a striking set of [common] isomorphisms" (Anderson-Levitt 2003b, 17-18). Despite this call for balance, others later reviewed glocalization to ultimately emphasize the significance of "diverging local understandings of, and variations in, teaching and learning" over WCT's preference of examining "converging global institutional forms" (Goodman 2015, 146-147). This is demonstrated by several case studies in sizeable volumes on the matter (e.g., Anderson-Levitt 2003a; Levinson and Pollock 2011; Anderson-Levitt 2012), demonstrating how discourses of the global should be viewed as that in dynamic negotiation across different localized contexts of scale.

The glocalization school has made problematically sweeping observations over how "schools in the rest of the world were introduced by Europe or North America through colonial

processes" (Anderson-Levitt 2003b, 2). This, for instance, is not an applicable statement for Japan. However, what it does share, as others have explored with territories such as Thailand, is its willingness to utilize global narratives to support "local communities [or] revitalize their own cultural and economic resources" (Jungck and Kajornsin 2003, 46). From this perspective, glocalization is evident throughout much of this thesis' findings. This has been documented at the individual, institutional, regional / national governmental, and international organizational level. However, what shackles glocalization from further relevance with these examples is its uneasy relationship with WCT. It is forced to recognize some form of universalist framework from where localized counterparts emerge. This leaves it unable to explain the multitude of agendas evoked in the name of international and global this work has explored, let alone address their contradictions. Neither for that matter – as explored in the previous section – can the glonacal agency heuristic, or similar forms of fixed multi-scalar scaffolding.

What then of more contextualized considerations of internationalization and globalization in Japan? Strictly speaking of course, it has long been recognized that "there is no single notion of internationalization in Japan" (McConnell 2000, 269). Nonetheless, noteworthy conceptual patterns have been long identified. Narratives underlining projects of *kokusaika* ('internationalization') and *gurōbaruka* ('globalization') has – at the central governmental and generally compliant institutional policy level – been broadly analyzed as a form of Japanese nationalism adapting to globally dominant Anglospheric and European forces (see Chapter 4). They attempt to appease these encroaching neocolonial pressures while ensuring a stalwart defense of its arbitrarily fashioned cultural identity, to the extent it remains willing to expulse those failing to maintain its illusions of homogeneity and cultural uniqueness (Shah, Forthcoming). That said, the defense naturally extends beyond these aspects of *Nihonjinron* fiction. It is also a reaction to genuine fears potentially threatening various practices of Japanese identities, including relationality (see Chapter 5) and language (see Chapter 6). Other anthropologists previously noted a palpable transition from a passive submission toward such pressures, to an increasing confidence in voicing discontent when its demands feel unreasonable (McConnell 2000, 271-274), observations my findings reinforce.

Given these broad analyses of *kokusaika* and *gurōbaruka*, the prominence of nationalist / Japanese sentiments evoked by some of these educationalists at JIE is predictable. On the other hand, when considering the prevalence of these sentiments in general, revealing was the relative

dominance of humanist items in this survey. These results may possibly hint at how Japanese internationalisms and globalisms are evolving in the education sector, although any such analysis should be prudently tempered due to IB's niche status in Japan. Even then, additional doubts persist over how persuasive these more humanist-leaning Japanese educators might be in forwarding their respective positions within larger schooling communities. As mentioned before, one reason for this doubt can be glimpsed through how several article-1 IB World Schools employing Japanese-mediated IB offerings, appear to be purposefully isolating them from 'general Japanese' others (see Segawa's experience in Chapter 4). A seeming willingness by these schools to keep its 'normal Japanese' curricula sanitized from 'foreign' counterparts, is all the more insightful when accounting for how these tactics are implemented despite Japanese-mediated IB being generally hosted, attended, and administered by majoritized Japanese nationals. Regardless, an increase of Japanese educators expressing more humanist ideals, especially when combined with a rich range of miscellaneous alternatives, remain noteworthy.

Only theories capable of staying faithful to the organic negotiation of everyday life can make sense of these patterns. Theories able to accommodate the myriad of agendas that international and global imaginaries amplify with their incremental use. Only through such a lens is it possible to conceive how an 'internationally minded person,' a 'global HR,' and a legion of other counterparts are projects seeking to 'greet people with smiles,' or a marker of 'experiencing finding something beautiful,' and much, much more. Only then, can all the other more substantive examples covered in this thesis, from the nationalisms to the evangelisms be theoretically reconciled. Finally, only then can the plurality and contradictions of those who deploy them be theoretically tolerated.

Several aged yet still robust theories in anthropology do a good job at making sense of this reality. Take, for instance, *multivocality*. Theorizing the "properties of ritual symbols," Victor Turner considered how "a single symbol, in fact, represents many things at the same time: it is multivocal" (Turner 1969, 52). By multivocal symbol, Turner meant that which holds "many designations" or "meanings" (Turner 1969, 58, 129). If therefore treated as symbols, the international and global can both be considered multivocal concepts possessing a range of complementary and / or discordant semantics. From where, then, do these various items emerge? How do they multiply, and how are they negotiated? Enter *thick description*. Originating in the work of Gilbert Ryle before being developed on and made famous by Clifford Geertz, thick

description – to re-appropriate Geertz's line – finds humans to be "animals suspended in webs of significance [they themselves have] spun," and that culture is taken "to be those webs" (Geertz 1973, 5). The essence of this interpretivist treatment of culture is dynamism. It is in constant flow. Certain byproducts of culture are naturally more prone to developing larger webs than others. Two prime examples of those holding enormous webs, of course, are internationalization and globalization, for their progressive diffusion into countless socio-cultural contexts leaves them extremely vulnerable to thick description's effects. Semantic meaning propagates with rapid frequency, as do those contradicting each other outright.

Together then, multivocality and thick description allow for open-ended, dynamic, and grounded (re)interpretations of a given concept. I do not seek to reinvent the wheel here. Rather, if anything, it is about reaffirming their potencies given the backdrop of recent efforts made by several social scientists attempting – inadvertently - to conquer knowledge developed on the ground. Understanding the international and global as amplified agendas, as I suggest, additionally emphasizes the often active – as opposed to passive – nature of these concepts. In other words, highlighting their role in realizing *agentic power*. I should clarify what I mean by agentic power in this context, especially as 'agency' has been viewed as a semantic "black box" by other sociologists (Emirbayer and Mische 1998, 966). Analyzing Max Weber's work (Weber 1930) in particular, others have distinguished two types of agency: the *power of agency* versus *agentic power* (Campbell 2009). The former can be considered to refer "to the agency of actors to act," while the latter "refers to the character and effect of their actions" (Campbell 2009, 409-410). Or, more broadly, that the power of agency "refers to an actor's ability to initiate and maintain a program of action," while agentic power "refers to an actor's ability to act independently of the constraining power of social structure" (Campbell 2009, 407, 40). My use of agentic power, as injected in this grounded theory of amplified agendas, is an alternative combination of these two forms. This is because I infer a user's 'ability to initiate and [to some extent at least] maintain a program of action,' while emphasizing their 'ability to act independently' of constraining and / or contested power structures.

As the various examples covered across this thesis attest to, users (e.g., national governments, international organizations, consortium groups, universities, postgraduate students, consultants, teachers etc.,) often *know* what they are forwarding. They often know what project/s they wish to amplify from these terms, and in doing so, remold the formal semantics 'literally'

embedded in them. Internationalism and globalism are therefore evidenced in this thesis as multivocal, thickly described notions that amplify agendas. Critically, however, these amplifications generate far more than mere noise: they can also produce substantive social impact. I covered several examples in this thesis, from the ramifications of IBO neoliberalism (Chapter 3) and socio-constructivist pedagogy (Chapter 5), to the authority – inadvertently and otherwise – of Anglo-American 'international educators' in emphasizing, and Japanese counterparts in unwittingly promoting 'global English' (Chapter 6). The consequences of the IBO's corporatized commitment to growth under recent leaderships has profoundly impacted the purpose of its IBEC initiative, one example of a growing range in the administration. It is squashing its own ideologies and principles anchored on 'international-mindedness' which the organization was originally established to forward (Chapter 2), replaced with an alternative permitting anyone with sufficient resource – from individuals to institutions – to decide what it means (e.g., neoliberalism, neo-missionary evangelism etc.) in exchange for financial surplus. Likewise, its long-standing tendency to define its educational approach through pedagogy exclusively informed by Euro-American theoreticians – and Russian in the case of constructivism – continues to ignorantly and / or intentionally influence what constitutes 'international pedagogy' for all other socio-cultural contexts in the world. This was exposed in Japanese teacher training contexts I explored, resulting in a disruption of socio-constructivist philosophies due to an unspoken failure to tolerate more vertical Japanese practices of relational identity.

Meanwhile, the larger, stubbornly encroaching force of global English provided the greatest instance of substantive conflict in my findings. Its amplification – in this case by select 'White' Anglo-American educators – is realizing genuine scenarios of unconscious submission, and more often resistance to broader neocolonial pressures generated by these agendas. It is yet another example demonstrating Japan's robust defiance to these forces, as observed through top-down (inter)nationalist schemes by its national government (Chapter 4). The territory's still potent repelling of the English project can be understood through its relative cultural autonomy in the postcolonial world. This sovereignty is largely made possible due to the maintenance of independent resources originally accrued via an ironic historical legacy as the only 'non-White' and 'Eastern' colonial empire during the era of 'modernity.' Nonetheless, global English's neocolonial tenacity – often manifesting through the guise of pragmatics – combined with its dogged promotion by central government, will continue to trigger nationwide contention moving

into the foreseeable future.

Amplification, then, not only generates a cacophony of internationalist and globalist agendas, but also synthesizes ones that will proceed to realize substantial turbulence and consequences for those exposed, forcing people into everyday engagement with its legion of narratives.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Globalization and Japanese "Exceptionalism" in Education. It is the title of a volume edited by sociologist Tsuneyoshi Ryoko, and simultaneously a fitting strapline for my concluding thoughts. In the book's first chapter, Tsuneyoshi acknowledges that what appears to be transpiring in Japan is much the same occurring around the world, from neoliberal economics and deregulation, to privatization and reforms in the name of the global. However, stripping away this veneer, she teases that "as a non-English speaking Asian society with a strong national language and a high level of self-containment, the Japanese reaction to globalization often seems to have an unusual twist." (Tsuneyoshi 2018, 19). My findings deeply resonate with this analysis, one careful to balance shared challenges of transnationally potent neoliberal forces, with a cautious sentiment of national exceptionalism.

The Japanese Government's arrangement with the IBO is yet another example of broader efforts to actualize a sentiment of "globalization from above," as Tsuneyoshi and other educational sociologists more recently noted (Tsuneyoshi 2018, 29; Kariya and Rappleye 2020, 207). This *gurōbaruka* ('globalization') acts as the latest iteration of a nationalist economic globalism forwarded by central authorities, currently epitomized by key tropes like *gurōbaru jinzai* ('global HR') production. Or, more succinctly, the production of 'global Japanese people.' It is a notion that flies in the face of the IBO's supposed ongoing mission to cultivate 'international-mindedness,' one originally contextualized as a post-World War 'White' Euro-American humanism. This seeming dichotomy appears to be resolved by the latter concept's rapid transition into an open-market buzzword free to be (re)defined by *those who can*. What would therefore appear the story of a globally prevalent, non-Japanese internationalism permeating the country's education sector, is instead one of an impressionable symbol wielded by government to channel its own top-down globalist agendas.

The story on the ground is far more complex, amplifying these officialized projects along with a host of contested alternatives inspired by aspirational IB, broader Euro-American 'international education,' localized Japanese, and even spontaneous discourse. Some have infiltrated everyday life more compellingly than others, but there are at least two discernable trends arising through their clashes. First, Japan, despite maintaining a relative socio-cultural,

linguistic, and economic autonomy, is no exception to facing neocolonialist and neoliberalist pressures born of 'White' Euro-American legacies. As explored in this thesis, this manifests in diverse ways within the education sector alone, including those ideological, pedagogical, and linguistic.

However, and secondly, in all these cases – complemented by many more both in education and beyond – mainstream Japanese society continues to demonstrate an almost indomitable resistance to these pressures in ways few, if any, arguably can. It accomplishes this when most postcolonial societies cannot by maintaining a linguistic, cultural, and material independence inherited by its legacy as a former 'modern' colonial empire. Taking the example of language alone, there is a reason the IBO made the unprecedented decision to rollout a majority Japanese-mediated Diploma Programme (DP). There is a reason the IBO consented to this in Japan before any other territories where English, French, or Spanish (i.e., the IBO's three 'Official Languages') are not their native language/s.[106] After many years of failure in permeating one of the largest education systems in the world, the organization realized that Japanese was too robust a language to haggle with, as was its socio-cultural containment. Combined with a comparative lack of economically privileged expatriate populations to siphon off – as it continues to across many other territories – the IBO knew that achieving its more recent obsession with market growth was to make inroads catering to the country's linguistic and cultural landscape. Without these efforts and fortuitous collaboration with the Japanese Government, the increase of article-1 schools it has licensed to date would have been unthinkable. By extension, no other reason can convincingly explain why, as of January 2022, the second most globally common language mediation for its IBEC initiative after English remains Japanese in higher education.

Even so, the growth that both the IBO and national government sought to achieve with all this effort continues to elude their initially bold forecasts. As of April 2023, only roughly half of

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[106] I am not counting smaller arrangements, such as how Chinese – presumably Mandarin – became an official language solely for its Middle Years Programme in 1997. Mandarin was floated as the organization's fourth Official Language in the early 2000s but was ultimately rejected. The more recent introduction of a majority Korean-taught DP in South Korea along with Korean-mediated IBEC programmes is also noteworthy, one building off the momentum of Japanese counterparts. At the time of writing, it remains to be seen how far Korean-mediated IB education will develop, but initial signs point to reasonable expansion for several years to come.

its 106 IB licensed schools are article-1, and only around half of those operate this majority-Japanese mediated DP. Furthermore, only a few handfuls of these are in the national / public sector. As a consequence, there is also a looming question mark over long-term sustainability. Even should IB survive with roughly its present level of diffusion in Japan, it does so as a smaller scale, more elitist replacement to the government's previous globalist education initiatives. This is naturally contributing to greater disparity between an ever shrinking those who have versus those who do not, the extent of which will be largely determined by the scale and nature of IB's expansion moving forward. By nature, I also tease *integration*. With reports of IB programmes experiencing compartmentalization – or *dejimanization*[107] – as a 'foreign' option from 'Japanese' equivalents in article-1 schools by administrators, IB's popular reception will hinge on whether it can realize ground-up support. If successful, it will likely be because IB is adopted as a Japanese phenomenon. Ironically, such is the extent required to accomplish this, that its hypothetical eventuality would render IB's original internationalist sentiments unrecognizable, likely replaced as a device to channel nationalist projects of *kokusaika* ('internationalization') and *gurōbaruka* ('globalization').

This perhaps invites *the* inevitable question. Is the Japanese education system, and by extension Japan, better off without IB? My answer to this is a question, one predicated on seeking the *betterment* – that is to say, socio-cultural and economic inclusivity – of education for those who depend on and operate it. Can the IBO (re)configure its personnel with a level of human representation worthy of its own name, *the international baccalaureate*, while transforming into an NGO that has learnt hard lessons from *both* its passively ongoing neocolonialist sentiments, and free market corporatization?

Make no mistake. Japan's relative autonomy and containment in the postcolonial world remains no utopia. Its still relentless cultural nationalism, *Nihonjinron,*[108] remains systemically guilty of failing to realize human inclusivity on copious levels, including those socio-genetic, cultural, and geo-political, as I have written elsewhere (Shah, Forthcoming). Socio-economic disparity is on the rise. In education, this can be located through its own wish to escape the

[107] See glossary of reoccurring Japanese terms.

[108] See glossary of reoccurring Japanese terms.

inequalities produced of its 'egalitarian' education system that historically worked to suppress individual freedoms. Attempting to break from this past and celebrate individual talent, IB functions as the government's first major attempt at financially outsourcing its own globalist neoliberal reforms in the education sector. A big question hangs over whether Japan will continue to be dragged into this top-down movement of globalist meritocracy. As others have identified, only when the contradictions riddled in the idealism of realizing *both* individual freedoms and equality are recognized, can the discussion over what comes after neoliberalism be ventured (Kariya and Rappleye 2020, 209-210). By the same token, only when (1) the neocolonial baggage IB currently invites from the Anglosphere / Europe, along with (2) IB's top-down utilization by government to advance nationalist interests is recognized, can a third option be seriously undertaken.

Is Japan better off doing what it did in the 1980s, and what it quietly pursues now, siphoning what is good in IB to bolster its national system? This would naturally allow its benefits to spread to countless more people. It is not a stretch to suggest that the government's direct involvement in IB's current promotion is partly directed at accomplishing this aim. If so, will IB be cast aside once desired aspects are installed in the national system? This is arguably the greatest existential threat facing the IBO's current corporate mandate, one already materializing in other sectors of the world. What might occur if this does fully materialize? A hopeful outcome would see the administration impelled to re-invent its purpose to serve wider publics. To borrow Edward's words (see Chapter 3), it may force them out of their current bubble of in-house "Kool-Aid"[109] and stagnant innovation, driving them to collaborate more substantively with the broader educational world (i.e., including those beyond the Anglosphere and Europe). It might even act as the dearly required trigger to snap it out of corporate universalism. Can these transformations actualize without the administration needing to feel its back against the wall? Is the IBO able to (re)consider beforehand how its privileged symbolic power comes with great social responsibility? As of the time of writing, I am saddened at its current failure to do so, but this need not be an inevitable future.

Likewise, the Japanese Government urgently needs to recognize a ground-up, localized approach to negotiating what it means to undergo a *kokusaiteki* ('international') and *gurōbaruteki*

[109] See glossary of miscellaneous terms.

('global') education, including asking whether such education in their names is even desirable. This is a pressing matter given some of the arguably exceptional realities behind the country's combination of linguistic, cultural, and economic strength, meaning it cannot simply copy and paste (e.g., mediate in English) notions of such education like many other territories in the world can / are often coerced to. Broader frictions over its centralized role in educational affairs are only working against realizing this paradigm shift, and success would entail overcoming monumental challenges that make the IBO's seem like child's play in comparison. This is not only because it asks national government to (re)empower prefectural and local communities, but because it also requires its own ministries to deconstruct a prolonged socio-cultural elitism systemically failing to represent the diversity of Japanese experiences on the ground.

A truly inclusive educational system wishing to experiment with internationalist and globalist sentiments in Japan today, cannot be contemplated until these daunting, yet imperative tasks facing national government and the IBO are somehow surmounted.

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[110] Regarding all references in Japanese: I preference official English titles where made available by the author/s unless I judge them (1) too grammatically compromised for mainstream Anglo-American English readership, or (2) too semantically obscure when compared with their Japanese titles. If (1), I edit a grammatically correct alternative based on the English titles provided. If (2), or if no official English title exists, all Japanese translations are my own.

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