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## **Globalising policy sociology in education: working with Bourdieu**

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### **Abstract**

The paper uses Bourdieu to develop theorising about policy processes in education and to extend the policy cycle approach in a time of globalisation. Use is made of Bourdieu's concept of social field and the argument is sustained that in the context of globalisation, the field of educational policy has reduced autonomy, with enhanced cross-field effects in educational policy production, particularly from the fields of the economy and journalism. Given the social rather than geographical character of Bourdieu's concept of social fields, it is also argued that the concept can be, and indeed has to be, stretched beyond the nation to take account of the emergent global policy field in education. Utilising Bourdieu's late work on the globalisation of the economy through neo-liberal politics, we argue that a non-reified account of the emergent global educational policy field can be provided.

**Keywords:** Bourdieu; Educational Policy; Global Field; Cross-field effects

## **Globalising policy sociology in education: using Bourdieu**

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... to truly construct the fitting object of a scientific analysis of the phenomenon...; namely, the world field which is in the process of being constituted in the various areas of practice, or, to put it another way, the process of constitution of specific world fields (the economic field, the literary field, the legal field etc) into which the national fields have been drawn, while retaining a greater or lesser autonomy. (Bourdieu 1995: xi)

### **Introduction**

This paper begins from the assumption that Bourdieu's theorising and his central concepts of field, habitus, capitals, strategy and so on can be productively utilised in policy sociology in education. The paper argues that Bourdieu can help to develop theorizing and research in the field, particularly in relation to taking account of the effects of globalisation on policy processes in education. Specifically, Bourdieu's work can help us understand the emergent world or global field of educational policy.

Our primary engagement with Bourdieu's work in this paper is in relation to his notion of social field, which he defines in the following way:

A field is a structured social space, a field of forces, a force field. It contains people who dominate and people who are dominated. Constant, permanent relationships of inequality operate inside this space, which at the same time becomes a space in which the various actors struggle for the transformation or preservation of the field. All the individuals in this universe bring to the competition all the (relative) power at their disposal. It is this power that defines their position in the field and, as a result, their strategies. (Bourdieu 1998b: 40-41)

Bourdieu sees any social formation as consisting of a hierarchy of multiple, relatively autonomous fields with their own logics or laws of practice, hierarchies and power relations between agents and their positions within the field, with the sum of the parts being greater than the whole. The extent of field autonomy is reflected in the strength of its capacity to refract interference from other fields, particularly the economic and political fields. Collectively all fields are overlaid by a field of power and one of gender relations. Agents within the field compete for control of the interests specific to the field and utilise their capitals (economic, cultural, social and symbolic) in this competition. The habitus of agents – their 'durable, transposable dispositions' – affects the extent of their 'feel for the game' in different social fields. In terms of habitus and field relations, Bourdieu (1996b: 213) notes, 'Social reality exists, so to

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<sup>1</sup> Our names are listed in alphabetical order, not in order of contribution to this paper. The paper has been a truly collective production through dialogue.

speak, twice, in things and in minds, in fields and habitus, outside and inside of agents’.

While Bourdieu did not write specifically about educational policy, it is still surprising that so little theorising about educational policy and educational policy processes has been undertaken utilising the concept of social field. Ladwig (1994) is one exception here, where he sustained an argument that, in the USA at least, the field of educational policy is discrete from that of education and that the rewards in this field have very little to do with educational practices and the concerns of educators. In effect, Ladwig argued that, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, it was because of fundamental differences in the structure and rewards of the Federal US field of educational policy and fields of school education that few practical effects of educational policies were evidenced in schools. Ladwig suggested that this account offered one plausible explanation of the gap between policy texts and policy implementation in education.

It is the contention of our argument, however, that such an ‘internalist’ account of the field of educational policy no longer holds sway. Against an internalist account, we argue two sets of challenges, related to fundamental changes in the structure, scope and function of educational policy that are primarily derived from an emergent global policy space. The first challenge we raise is that the concept of an educational policy field should be recognised to have more than just a national character. In effect, the concept of educational policy as a field has multiple levels, one of which includes a global character under the increasing influence of international agencies such as the World Bank, OECD and UNESCO. We argue here that the structure, scope and function of educational policy have changed with the attention paid to the role of education in economic growth and innovation by these agencies. Here we use the word ‘global’ to designate a level of policy connection above the national. Policy debates at this level should be recognised to constitute a separate level within a global policy field in education.

The educational policy field today is multilayered stretching from the local to the global. Mann (2000), for example, speaks of five socio-spatial networks, namely local, national, international (relations between nations), transnational (pass through national boundaries), and global which cover the globe as a whole. Theorisation about and empirical investigation of educational policy fields today must recognise the growing global character of relations between national policy fields and international fields, reemphasising Bourdieu’s conceptualisation of fields as social rather than geographical spaces. Such an account needs to see the various networks, referred to by Mann as sitting within what, after Bourdieu, we call a global educational policy field.

The second challenge that we raise here is that within national fields of power, the educational policy field has moved towards the more heteronomous end of field relations (Maton 2005), being subsumed in many instances as part of the field of economic policy, which seeks to mediate nationally the global economic field. That is, we are arguing that under conditions of globalisation, the autonomy of the educational policy field has been somewhat reduced. Further, given these two challenges, we suggest that the utilisation of Bourdieu requires an extended consideration of cross-field effects, both between different levels of educational policy in the global field,

and between different kinds of allied fields, taking account of the cross-field effects of economic policy, knowledge economy policies and the effects of journalistic logics, including media spin (Rawolle 2005). In particular, the logics of practice of the field of journalism, have affected policy text production in education in quite profound ways (Lingard and Rawolle 2004), especially in the UK (Gewirtz, Dickson and Power 2004), distancing it perhaps even further from the interests of educators and enhancing cynicism amongst them about policy.

In terms of theorising policy in education as both text and processes, the literature has not really moved on beyond the policy as discourse account proffered by Ball (1990, 1994) and the policy cycle argument proffered by Bowe et al. (1992) and then developed further by Ball (1994). This very useful heuristic rejects a linear policy text production/policy implementation conceptualisation of policy processes and instead argues for a cyclical, non-linear set of relationships consisting of three contexts of influence, text production and practice, with multi-directional effects between each context. While all models are disjunctive to a greater or lesser degree with reality, this model begins to approximate the messiness of actual policy making in education. In subsequent work, Ball (1998) demonstrated the effects of globalisation on educational policy, arguing that paradigm convergence in educational policy has resulted under the effects of ICTs and other fast communications, paralleling to some extent the globalisation of the economy. The policy cycle thus needs to be globalised to recognise an emergent global policy field in education; policy text production often now reflects the diaspora of policy ideas (and cosmopolitan habitus of policy makers), which flow rapidly around the globe; policy practices are also being affected by the impacts of globalisation on individual (student and teacher) habitus (Lingard 2000).

One of the criticisms of the policy cycle approach has been that it misrecognises the continuing power of the state in policy processes in education (Gewirtz 2002). The argument here is that the state is no less significant today in policy processes, but through its reconstitution works in different ways. As Held and McGrew (2002: 123) put it, 'The locus of effective political power can no longer be assumed to be simply national governments – effective power is shared and bartered by diverse forces and agencies at national, regional and international levels'. The reconstitution of the state and political power is also a consequence of the emergence of a global economic field dominated by neo-liberalism.

This paper then works with Bourdieu to develop policy sociology in education in the context of globalisation, moving beyond an internalist, nationally framed account of educational policy as an autonomous field. This would seem to be in line with Bourdieu's later more polemical and political essays, *Acts of Resistance* (1998a) and *Firing Back* (2003), where he documents vividly and critically the negative effects across fields of the political constitution of the field of a global economy synonymous with neo-liberalism. Documenting these negative effects was also the focus of *The Weight of the World*, where Bourdieu and his colleagues (1999) demonstrated, through the voices of the disadvantaged, the negative effects of neo-liberal economic policies upon their social suffering and how this affected state workers such as teachers. In *Science of Science and Reflexivity*, Bourdieu (2004) shows other cross-field policy effects of neo-liberal economics, demonstrating how they have disfigured the autonomy of science as a field, reconstituting its research agendas away from science

driven agendas and common good concerns to economic agendas and private profit concerns.

### **Using Bourdieu to globalise the policy cycle in education**

The elucidation by some theorists of sets of trans and supra-national processes labelled as globalisation has challenged contemporary social theory in both substantive and methodological ways. This challenge has also been evident in theorising and researching the field of educational policy (Ball, 1998, Burbules and Torres, 2000, Lingard, 2000, Edwards and Usher, 2000). Urry (2000, 2002), for example, has argued the need for sociology to change focus from the social as society to the social as mobilities, indicating the weakened connectivity between society and nation-state and the stretching of networks across the globe (also see Gane 2004). Mann (2000), as already noted, speaks of the related layering of networks of various kinds across the globe under conditions of globalisation. Many writers have demonstrated the implicit national space of much social theory and a related 'methodological nationalism' in terms of disposition to both theory and research methodology (eg Beck 2000). Bourdieu (1999), in writing about the international circulation of ideas, has noted how 'Intellectual life, like all other social spaces, is a home to nationalism and imperialism' (p.220) and that 'a truly scientific internationalism' requires a concerted political project.

It will be argued here that Bourdieu's theoretical stance and methodological disposition together allow a way beyond such spatial and national constraints, a necessary position for analysing and understanding global effects in contemporary educational policy and the emergence of a global policy field in education (Ball 1998, Spring 1998, Henry, Lingard, Rizvi and Taylor 2001, Stromquist 2002). As Robertson (1992) and Waters (1995) have shown, globalisation has resulted in the compression, if not annihilation of time and space (Harvey 1989, Appadurai 1996, Giddens 1994, Castells 2000, Hoogvelt 2002), which has had the phenomenological effect of enhanced awareness amongst peoples across the globe of the world as one place, evidenced in, for example, talk of the 'world economy', 'global warming', 'world heritage sites', 'world policy' and so on. These concepts are also used rhetorically to legitimate government policy.

Related, Appadurai (1996) and Castells (2000) speak of the flows across the globe, which render national boundaries more porous. Appadurai (1996), focussing on the cultural flows associated with globalisation, speaks of ethnoscaples, mediascaples, technoscaples, financescaples and ideoscaples (p.33ff) to refer to such flows. Castells (2000) similarly argues that society is now organised around flows, namely, 'flows of capital, flows of information, flows of technology, flows of organisational interaction, flows of images, sounds and symbols' (p.442), with technology facilitating these flows with hubs and nodes located across the globe that are dominated by elites of various kinds. Policy makers in education are today more and more participants in an emergent global policy community, working through relations locally, nationally, regionally, internationally, transnationally and globally; in Appadurai's conceptual frame, they are another element of the ethnoscaples and ideoscaples, the diaspora of policy people and policy ideas, which flow across the globe, a part of Castells' flows and cosmopolitan elite. We would insert the rider here, however, that the accounts of Appadurai and Castells probably overstate the 'porousness' of national boundaries,

particularly since September 11, where such boundaries have become somewhat less porous in the so-called 'war on terror' (Rizvi 2004, Gregory 2004).

Bourdieu's theoretical stance, derived from a particular philosophy of science, of 'relationalism' as opposed to a 'substantialist' approach, offers a way beyond an implicit nationalism, particularly when combined with his theory of practice and stance on the theory/empiricism relationship. In respect of Bourdieu's relational approach: this accords primacy to individual and group relations within the social space of various fields with their inherent logics of practice (Bourdieu 1998c: vii) and structure of relations between capitals (Bourdieu 1986). Bourdieu rejects theoreticism and always interrogates the theoretical via the empirical. Furthermore, his empiricism is not naively positivist, and makes explicit the significance of researchers' position within fields to research findings and representations of their work. The craft-like method that he builds on such an empiricist approach emphasises researchers' disposition to openness, provisionality, radical doubt and reworking. In a methodological note to *The Weight of the World*, Bourdieu (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 608) clearly articulates his position here:

The positivist dream of an epistemological state of perfect innocence papers over the fact that the crucial difference is not between a science that effects a construction and one that does not, but between a science that does this without knowing it and one that, being aware of work of construction, strives to discover and master as completely as possible the nature of its inevitable acts of construction and the equally inevitable effects those acts produce.

Bourdieu's (1998c: vii) theory or philosophy of practice is a 'dispositional' one, emphasising the ways in which structure is embodied and evident in practice – the 'habitus' as Bourdieu calls it, the sedimentation of history, structure and culture in individual disposition to practice. Within any social sphere or field a specific empirical investigation is required to locate and understand the habitus and its play within the objective relations of the field. Again this is the empiricist, yet contingent and specific nature of practice. Thus, Bourdieu (1998c: 2) notes:

My entire scientific enterprise is indeed based on the belief that the deepest logic of the social world can be grasped only if one plunges into the particularity of an empirical reality, historically located and dated, but with the objective of constructing it as a 'special case of what is possible', as Bachelard puts it, that is, an exemplary case in a finite world of possible configurations.

Thus Bourdieu's theory and research disposition require close attention to objective relations between agents within the social space of particular fields – in our case the emergent global policy field in education. Practice is, in turn, contingent upon habitus and thus largely 'unconscious' rather than strategic. However, strategic action is possible through 'socioanalysis' (Bourdieu 1990: 116), that is, individuals becoming reflexively aware of the structural determinants of their practice (see Bourdieu 2004), a disposition necessary to an effective research habitus as well (Brubacker 1993). In emphasising the need for empirical research of the specificities of any given field – in our case the globalised field of educational policy production – yet at the same time stressing the (provisional) application of a relational theory of social relations within that social space, we have the possibility of linking and understanding the relations between the empirical and the theoretical in any specific case.

The relational approach and that of fields as a social space rather than a specific material, grounded space, also allows for the stretching of the concept of field in an elastic way across the social space of the globe, taking us beyond empirical investigation of only the local and the national to the nested regional, international, transnational and global spaces of educational policy production. It has been argued that we are witnessing the emergence of a yet, inchoate global educational policy community (Henry, Lingard, Rizvi and Taylor 2001), a global educational policy field. The educational policy field now demands an empirical and theoretical stretching beyond the nation. The argument here is that Bourdieu's approach enables us to do this in both theoretical and methodological senses. The model that we advance, of adapting Bourdieu's notion of field to examine the relations between global, international and national educational policy fields, offers a different way to locate the practices and products of policy. We argue here that this encompasses the contexts of which Ball writes, and offers some analytic gains in locating the effects of particular policies. That is, it caters for these matters and also offers a particular way of utilising Bourdieu's concept of field to discuss issues around the impact of different fields on one another within national fields of power, and of different levels of fields also affecting one another. All three contexts of the policy cycle, the context of policy text production, the context of influence and the context of practice are affected in different ways by globalisation, through both its policy mediation and more direct effects.

Much writing about globalisation, as Rizvi (forthcoming) argues, has reified the concept, failing to historicise it and to recognise its hegemonic role, while neglecting the asymmetries of power between nations which see differential national effects of neo-liberal globalisation. It is our argument that Bourdieu's work potentially offers a way beyond such reification of globalisation and allows for an empirically grounded account of the constitution of a global policy field in education.

In his late, more politically oriented writings, Bourdieu (1998a, 2000, 2003) is concerned with the politics of globalisation, read mainly as the dominance of a neo-liberal approach to the economy and economic policy. Interestingly, this work appears to argue against his more theoretical and empirical work conducted earlier on the various fields of social and cultural production which suggested a relative autonomy of the logics of practice of each field. Instead, he seems to be suggesting ways in which neo-liberal politics across the globe have dented somewhat the relative autonomy of the logics of practice of many social fields, including we would argue that of the educational policy field.

In his specific work on globalisation as a global economic field, Bourdieu also provides more grist for a move beyond 'methodological nationalism'. Interestingly in this writing (eg Bourdieu 2003), Bourdieu gives emphasis to globalisation as mainly an economic phenomenon, while at the same time pointing out that globalisation is a 'pseudo-concept', at once descriptive and prescriptive. Bourdieu notes that the constitution of the field which is/has been the 'national economy' was an overt, historical and political project. He then argues analogously that globalisation can be used to 'refer to the unification of the global economic field or to the expansion of that field to the entire world' (Bourdieu 2003: 84). In emphasising the 'performative' sense of globalisation as a term or concept with particular economic and political connotations, Bourdieu notes how economic globalisation is the effect of a particular

politics articulated by powerful agents of neo-liberalism. Indeed, the blended 'descriptive' and 'prescriptive' use of globalisation does its own political and performative work – discourse creating that of which it speaks. Bourdieu (2003: 84-85) sums up his stance here in the following way:

In other words, the 'global market' is a *political creation*, just as the national market had been, the product of a more or less consciously concerted policy. And, as was the case with the policy that led to the emergence of national markets, this policy has an effect (and perhaps also has an end, at least amongst the most lucid and the most cynical of the advocates of neoliberalism) the creation of the conditions for domination by brutally confronting agents and firms hitherto confined within national boundaries with competition from more efficient and more powerful forces and modes of production. (Bourdieu 2003: 84-85)

In an homologous fashion, the global field of educational policy is also a political project and yet another manifestation of the emergent politics in the age of flows and diasporas of people and ideas across the (more or less) porous boundaries of nation states in both embodied and cyber forms. Different nations now located in a post Cold War world with one super power seemingly committed to unilateralism are, of course, positioned differently in terms of power within these global fields of economic, governance and educational policy. Drawing on Bourdieu (2003: 91), we might argue that the amount of 'national capital' possessed by a given nation within these global fields is a determining factor in the spaces of resistance and degree of autonomy for policy development within the nation. The sovereignty of the different nation states is affected in different ways; as Jayasuriya (2001: 444) suggests, 'the focus should not be on the content or degree of sovereignty that the state possesses but the form that it assumes in a global economy'. In research on the OECD, for example, it was shown how OECD policy work had more salience in the policy culture of the more peripheral Australia and the Scandinavian countries than in Britain (Henry et al., 2000). In work on the emergence of a European educational policy space, it was shown how a form of structural adjustment saw convergence effects in the educational policies of net benefactor countries within the EU, that is, in the least powerful and least developed countries of the Mediterranean rim such as Portugal and Greece (Lawn and Lingard 2001). In the developing countries of the world the effects of World Bank demands upon educational policy are palpable, though not necessarily taken up unconditionally, while not recognised or felt in Europe or North America. Forms of world politics can also resist the global dominance of neo-liberalism as suggested by Bourdieu (2002) in his article on 'The politics of globalization' published on *Le Monde* on the day of his death, where he argued that 'the construction of a Social Europe' would be a good bulwark for resistance against 'the dominant forces of our time'. The state is not powerless in the face of globalisation, but different states have varying capacities to manage 'national interests'.

Bourdieu (1999) also offers some insights into the effects of policies produced by agencies above the nation (eg OECD, World Bank) within different nations possessing varying amounts of national capital, when he observes that such policy texts 'circulate without their context' (p.221). This is a useful addition to our understanding of policy reception in the context of practice, here across the international/national divide. Bourdieu elaborates:



The fact that texts circulate without their context, that – to use my terms – they don't bring with them the field of production of which they are a product, and the fact that recipients, who are themselves in a different field of production, re-interpret the texts in accordance with the structure of the field of reception, are facts that generate some formidable misunderstandings and that can have good or bad consequences. (Bourdieu 1999: 221)

When combined with the argument about competing logics of practice, this offers another way of thinking about policy/implementation relationships across the contexts of policy text production and that of practice across and within national borders.

### **Social fields and extending the scope of educational policy sociology**

This section of the paper discusses some of the theoretical and methodological issues involved in using Bourdieu's frame of social fields to describe and analyse educational policy processes, both nationally, and in the context of globalisation. There are two particular issues raised here: the analytic gains that a Bourdieuan frame involving social fields offers, and the potential for a broader reading of educational policy to encompass issues involving cross-field effects, such as the mediatisation of educational policy text production (Fairclough 2000), and those related to the global flows of policy ideas and regulatory frames (Drahos and Braithwaite 2000).

The need to discuss the use of Bourdieu's concepts touches on empirical questions related to changes in the 'modes of domination' common to modern nation-states. For Bourdieu social fields were the distinctive mode of domination of industrialised nations, and the current arrangement of power that set these nations apart from others (Bourdieu 1998c, 2004). It is now clear that the national character expressed in this mode of domination is not the only form of domination. Indeed, the national point of reference is arguably being challenged as the main form of domination in many parts of the world, in the wake of the globalisation of economic regulation, expressed in international agreements on the forms 'free trade' should take (including education), the dominance of neo-liberal ideas in the post Cold War era, the imbrication of media corporations with politics and the consolidation of world systems of domination.

The imbrication of media corporations with politics holds some particular problems for Bourdieu's models, in that the market research driven construction of public language substitutes a generic product that speaks across fields for the specialised language products of the political field. Language takes on a more potent political message in detailing expectations of citizens under the guise of new articulations of social determinism (for example, 'New Times', 'era of innovation', 'globalisation' etc.).

The focus here then is on the incompleteness of Bourdieu's general theory of fields in relation to these cross-field effects and internationalisation of ideas, as opposed to the coherence of his models of specific fields (for example, on the fields of art and literature see Bourdieu 1993; on the fields of journalism and television see Bourdieu 1998b; on the field of science see Bourdieu 2004). One of the broad and recurring themes is that an incomplete general theory of fields leaves open questions concerning

the relations between fields, and in particular their hierarchy. How do the internal logics of practice within fields connect with those in other fields? How do social fields affect other social fields? In the specific case of policy fields, how are these connected with bureaucratic fields, with the field of politics and with the fields that these are oriented towards? How does the emergence of a global educational policy field affect the nature and effects of national educational policies?

Our discussion about the incompleteness of a general theory of fields in the ways detailed above leads us to suggest widening of Bourdieu's key concepts to include the category 'cross-field effects'. The introduction of cross-field effects is specifically useful to educational policy studies, where the effects of policy processes in bureaucracies - in the form of texts, statistics and practices - are intended to have impacts beyond the educational policy field, in the various fields of journalism and the fields of education (see Lingard and Rawolle 2004: 368ff for a beginning theorisation of cross-field effects). Furthermore, the logics of other fields also have cross-field effects in educational policy production, such as the development and implementation of knowledge economy policies (Rawolle 2005). These points are sketched in this section, intended as an invitation for future scholarship in the area. We will take here Ball's context of policy text production as a case to illustrate the utility of social fields and cross-field effects for policy analysis in education. We suggest the use of social fields and cross-field effects as one way of extending the policy cycle model (Ball 1990, 1994, Bowe, Ball and Gold 1992) in theorising educational policy processes. As noted above, we also suggest that the notion of different levels of educational policy fields can assist in expanding Ball's model.

From a Bourdieuan perspective, many of the public textual products associated with the processes of the bureaucratic fields may be represented as having effects in other fields. Indeed, the production of particular policies by the educational policy field and their distribution in schools is increasingly synchronous with media releases that ventriloquise for the official policy document. Policy release has become synonymous with media release. Some evidence suggests that the processes of policy text production are such that much of the mediation and mediatisation of policies (Fairclough 2000) takes place prior to any written or documented text being produced, with journalists and media advisors being called in during the actual writing phase of official policy texts (Lingard and Rawolle 2004, Gewirtz, Dickson and Power 2004). This process probably has its strongest characterisation in contemporary policy processes in England with much talk about policy spin (Gewirtz et al. 2004). In such cases, the policy text received by teachers has been mediatised in the production process, which means that it has been affected by the logics of practice of the media field. As a result of such mediatisation, these policy texts have a political intent apart from affecting teacher professional practices, related to a concern to keep 'on message' with broad political themes (Rawolle 2005). This suggests, then, that analysis that focuses on material policy text products can miss some of the dynamics of the context of policy text production, particularly if it neglects the cross-field effects of mediatisation.

Bourdieu's concept of social fields draws attention to the social conditions of policy text production, picturing the effects of the process in multiples. This multiplicity can be a useful way of grouping the different effects of the same policy processes, by

focusing on the different social fields in which effects are produced, be they national, international or global in character. We are suggesting that the context of policy production involves an educational policy field, consisting of a site of contest between bureaucrats, policy advisors, politicians and 'spin doctors' and now stretched to varying extents beyond the nation, but the process also implies the involvement of other social fields in which to communicate the implications or message of these policies to principals/heads, teachers, parents and the broader public. This process is, of course, often contested by teacher unions, parent groups and so on. There are structural links both to the fields of education, and the fields of journalism.

This simplified model of the social fields in which educational policy has effects is a powerful grouping tool for both locating the effects of policies and explaining the struggle that inevitably takes place between the practices involved in the production of the text and the practices that accompany its implementation. Differences between the logics of practice in each field, which intersect in the production of policy texts and those of teacher practice, offer another useful understanding of policy text/policy practice relationships. This understanding goes beyond implementation deficit, professional mediation and refraction accounts of problems in the implementation process (Rein 1983, McLaughlin 1987, Elmore and McLaughlin 1988, Taylor et al. 1997). The concepts of social field and cross-field effects offer us an understanding of unintended policy effects based on fundamental differences in forms of life on which contests in each field occur: that different norms of engagement about what is important in social practices necessarily translate into different readings of policies by agents in different fields, and by agents in different positions within the same field.

What we are suggesting again is the need to go beyond a straightforward internalist account of educational policy text production as located within a separate and relatively autonomous field, as argued by Ladwig (1994). Ladwig's argument about the disconnection between the field of national/federal policy production in education in the USA and educational systems, schools and classrooms administered at state and/or local levels is probably apposite in the US situation of minimal leverage for the federal government over schools apart from various forms of funding/compliance trade-off. There is also some resonance with how federal educational policy operates within the Australian political context as well. Herein probably lies some part of an explanation for the nature of the focus of such policies, and indeed for the focus of centrally derived policies within the state bureaucracies, a focus on funding arrangements, structures and accountabilities, rather than on pedagogies. Where there is a focus on the pedagogies, either implicitly through testing or explicitly, such a focus often results in technisation and detailed specifications reducing the professional autonomy of teachers (Hartley 2003, Alexander 2004). In this context, it is interesting that curriculum is usually managed by statutory authorities other than the centralised bureaucratic state and that the field of curriculum studies is constituted as separate from that of policy studies in education. Educational policy as a field of academic research is thus most often taken as all of the central interventions in schools other than curriculum.

The project of a general theory of fields thus expanded to include global fields and cross-field effects also holds some potential for broadening the scope of educational policy studies. The importance of such a general theory of fields became clearer in Bourdieu's later writings, particularly when attempting to explain the role of the

various fields of journalism and their effects on politicians (Bourdieu 1998b). If educational policy is to be viewed within the Bourdieuan conceptual frame, then there appears to be a need for an explanation of pedagogic actions that occur outside the specific fields of education, and in particular those that occur in the fields of journalism. It is clear, for example, that the role of inculcation is both something that gains a special prominence in explaining the operations of educational systems, yet is equally important in explaining how inculcation occurs in all other fields. Bourdieu's own analytic shorthand adopted in *Reproduction* (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977) - along with numerous other explicit references to the same effect - suggests that pedagogic action is quite fundamental to all forms of power relations, and hence in all fields. His position here is somewhat akin to that of Foucault in his conceptualisation of the power/knowledge couplet. Given this basic postulate, what, then, is specific about pedagogic action that takes place within the educational field, rather than in any other field? What are some links in common between the pedagogic action in schooling, and those that occur through the mediatisation of policy? Where do the limits of the educational field lie?

We have discussed some issues related to the national character of the educational policy field, while also recognising the emergence and growing effects of a global level of such a field on national developments. As suggested above, the education field is also located in relation to other fields, two of the most important of which are the state and the bureaucratic field. Both of these fields have also been affected by the neo-liberal reading of globalisation. It is to such issues that we now turn.

### **The state and the bureaucratic field in the context of globalisation**

It is in the realm of symbolic production that the grip of the state is felt most powerfully. State bureaucracies and their representatives are great producers of 'social problems' that social science does little more than ratify when ever it takes them over as 'sociological' problems. (To demonstrate this, it would suffice to plot the amount of research, varying across countries and periods, devoted to problems of the state, such as poverty, immigration, educational failure, more or less rephrased in scientific language.) (Bourdieu 1998c: 38)

Bourdieu's work provides us with insights into how the state and bureaucracies 'work' in relation to educational policy making – and highlights the importance of education to the state, particularly in respect of symbolic production as the quote above suggests. What are the implications for these fields in the context of globalisation and an emergent world educational policy field?

Bourdieu (1991; 2004) discusses the historical development of the state – both as an entity and an idea. He argues that as societies became more complex they became more differentiated and institutions to secure order became separated from the ordinary social world. Western European societies became differentiated into distinct fields of practice, 'each involving specific forms and combinations of capital and value as well as specific institutions and institutional mechanisms' (Thompson 1991: 25). These processes of differentiation through to the development of modern societies with market economies and spheres of production and exchange are traced by Bourdieu; with centralised

administration and legal systems differentiated from religious institutions; and with separate educational and cultural institutions. For Bourdieu, the state is not synonymous with the government as an institution. Rather, it is a more complex entity resulting from these historical processes of differentiation. Hence, Bourdieu (1998c: 41) defines the state as:

*...the culmination of a process of concentration of different species of capital: capital of physical force or instruments of coercion (army, police), economic capital, cultural or (better) informational capital, and symbolic capital. (original italics.)*

The concentration of different kinds of capital is associated with the construction of corresponding fields and leads to the emergence of statist capital. This ‘enables the state to exercise power over the different fields and over the different particular species of capital, and especially over the rates of conversion between them ...’ (Bourdieu 1998c: 41). The state, then, ‘is the site par excellence of the concentration and exercise of symbolic power’ (Bourdieu 1998c: 47). With the development of the state, there was a shift away from the diffuse forms of power and control found in simple societies, to more codified ‘bureaucratized’ (Bourdieu 1998c: 51) forms of symbolic capital found in complex societies.

Bourdieu (1998c) refers to the concentration of power associated with the development of the state as a ‘field of power’, defined as ‘the space of play’ within which the holders of different kinds of capital struggle for power over the state. The field of power, then, is a configuration of capital, including: ‘government and bureaucracy, economic and financial institutions, schools and universities, the professions, the armed services, the media; in other words, all the fields that over-determine other fields’ (Webb et al. 2002: 86). The government becomes the marker of the field of power because this is the site from which power *apparently* emerges. It is ‘perhaps most dominant of the dominant, the field whose institutions, discourses, practices, technologies and general organisation provide it with the means to impose particular beliefs and understandings on the whole social field’ (p. 87). There are implications here for understanding the field of power. ‘This means we can understand power as a meta-field, or a macro-concept, to describe ways in which individuals and institutions in dominant fields relate to one another and the whole social field’ (Webb et al. 2002: 86).

In relation to the interplay between the dominant fields, the relationships will change depending on the historical, social and political context. For example, since the 1980s and the increasing impact of globalisation, the education field has been strongly influenced by the economic field, and we have seen more overt forms of politicisation of education policy production (Lingard and Christie 2003). In addition, and as argued in the previous section, we have also seen the mediatisation of politics and government and policy production in recent years with direct effects on policy production.

As mentioned earlier, Bourdieu had much to say in his later work about the influence of globalisation and the associated neoliberal policy directions which were dominant across many industrialised countries in the 1980s and 1990s. Bourdieu argued that neoliberalism aims to destroy the left hand of the state – ‘the social state’ which ‘safeguards the interests of the dominated, the culturally and economically dispossessed, women, stigmatised ethnic groups etc.’ (2003: 35). A translator’s note

explains that the left hand of the state ‘is the set of agents of the so-called spending ministries which are the trace, within the state, of the social struggles of the past, as represented by the ministries of labour and social rights, education, public housing, and health. They are opposed to the right hand of the state, represented by the ministries of finance and budget as well as the repressive arm of the state (police, courts, prison, military)’ (2003: 35). In the context of neoliberal globalisation, the right hand of the state has the upper hand; this situation also often means a weakening of the capacity for ‘national capital’ to mediate the effects of neoliberal globalisation as the policy field stretches beyond the nation. However, Bourdieu (1999) emphasised that the state is still active in shaping education and the labour market. He argued that it is nation states that have initiated the policies of deregulation associated with neoliberalism, and that nation states still play an important role in endorsing the policies which (perhaps paradoxically) sideline them and their effects. Such an account of the politics of neo-liberalism within nations works against reified accounts of globalisation and against the performative effect of globalisation read as neo-liberalism.

Bourdieu emphasised that neoliberal policies have been accompanied by the destruction of the idea of public service. In his view, politics was moving away from ordinary citizens – moving away from local and national to international and global arenas, from concrete to abstract, from visible to invisible in ways which were disempowering (Bourdieu 2003). There are clear resonances here with Castells’s (2000) argument about power now being located within flows rather than being grounded within a specific place, for example, within the policy making apparatus of a nation state. Castells (2000: 459) observes tellingly that: ‘The dominant tendency is toward a horizon of networked, ahistorical space of flows, aiming at imposing its logic over scattered, segmented places’. Our argument here is that this is the global network element of the emergent global policy field in education.

Returning to the national education policy arena, the bureaucracy is the largest and most powerful institution of the state. The bureaucracy ‘acts as an intermediary between the state and the community, implementing the state’s policies, and providing the public with a voice in government’ (Webb et al 2002: 98). In relation to education policy processes, the bureaucracy is an important site for education policy making. In theory, the bureaucracy as an institution provides for a separation of powers: it provides for the everyday management of society ‘for the common good’ by bureaucrats rather than politicians, and as such, has been seen to be objective and disinterested, as well as legitimate and attempting to apply more ‘universalist’ principles. At the same time, while it is influenced by the fields of politics and economics, the bureaucracy is a powerful field in its own right – it is not a mere tool of government. It does not merely develop and implement government policies in a straightforward way – it sometimes initiates, interprets and modifies them.

However, in relation to the struggles over symbolic control which take place within the field of power, bureaucratic institutions do provide a means whereby the state is able to impose a particular view of the world through policy making. The following ‘extract’ (Thompson 1991: 26) referring to Bourdieu’s views about the political sphere, could also be describing the bureaucratic field and policy making:

For the political field is among other things, the site *par excellence* in which agents seek to form and transform their visions of the world and thereby the world itself: it is the site *par excellence* in which words are actions and the symbolic character of power is at stake. Through the production of slogans, programmes and commentaries of various kinds, agents in the political field are continuously engaged in a labour of representation by which they seek to construct and impose a particular vision of the social world, while at the same time seeking to mobilise the support of those upon whom their power ultimately depends.

This description is particularly apt given the increasingly evident politicisation of state policy making mentioned above in the context of globalisation.

In Bourdieu's view, bureaucracies are highly structured and resistant to change. As a powerful relatively autonomous field the bureaucratic institution inculcates a specific habitus and logic of practice within its agents. As a result, bureaucrats may eventually come to act on behalf of 'the system' rather than 'for the public good'; they may move from an original commitment to the public interest to their own self interest. This has implications for policy development and implementation issues. For example, Bourdieu (1996) argued that 'technocrats' invoke 'the universal' in order to exercise power and preserve their position. Even though they may base decisions on their personal interests, they behave 'as agents of the state more than as business men, and ...base their decisions on the "neutrality" of "expertise" and the ethics of "public service"' (p.383). Further implications for education policy-making arise following the increase in contractualism (Yeatman 1996) where work previously done by the public sector has been privatised.

Bourdieu was increasingly trenchant in his criticisms of the new bureaucrats, calling them the 'new mandarins': '...they claim to manage the public services like a private enterprise. ... and these are also the people who vaunt the merits of work flexibility, if they haven't already invoked productivity in order to bring about gradual reduction in the workforce' (1999: 183). He argued in *The Weight of the World* (Bourdieu et al. 1999) that it was understandable if minor civil servants - and police, social workers, teachers - should feel abandoned in their efforts to deal with material and moral suffering which is the result of this 'economically legitimated Realpolitik'. 'They experience the contradictions of a state whose right hand no longer knows, or worse, no longer wants [to know] what the left hand is doing ...' (p. 183). Further, he argued that the glorification of profit, productivity and competitiveness undermine the professional disinterest which is often found in people who enter the public service - especially the street level bureaucracies. A tension is evident in the contrast between the cosmopolitan and mobile habitus of the policy elite in education and teachers who are immobile and located in real places.

As a result of the retreat of the state from the public sector and public sector values under conditions of globalisation, Bourdieu argued that bureaucracies had become state charities providing direct aid - rather than the provision of services - to the deserving and 'disadvantaged' poor. And he claimed that schools were producing an underclass of young people: a 'sub proletariat' who experienced failure - first in school and then in labour markets. This was particularly the case for North African immigrant young people in France. He (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 188) wrote:

It is clear that the abdication or the retreat of the State has brought about unexpected effects, or at least ones that were never sought, which will eventually threaten the proper functioning of democratic institutions – unless they are countered by an urgent, resolute policy from a State determined to provide the means to make good on the intentions that it proclaims.

Additionally, it is important to note that ‘the relative autonomy that symbolic power must of necessity enjoy to fulfil its legitimising function always entails the possibility of its diversion in the service of aims other than reproduction’ (Wacquant 1996: xix). Bourdieu (1996a) points out that struggles in the field of power may lead to subversive alliances which may threaten the social order. Though, as mentioned earlier, his later work through the 1990s focussed on building a global social movement to counter capitalist globalisation and the effects of the constitution of a global economic field framed simply by neoliberalism. In this way he sees, for example, social Europe as a progressive use of what we might call ‘supranational capital’ to mediate the negative effects of neoliberal globalisation.

### **Conclusion: theorising and researching the global policy field in education**

This paper has suggested Bourdieu’s concept of social field is a useful one for extending the policy cycle in education today in the context of globalisation. However, some theoretical development is required because of the enhancement of cross-field effects and reduced autonomy for educational policy in this context, for example, the incorporation of meta-policy in education within economic policy and the effects of the logics of the field of journalism on policy text production in education. Some literature in educational policy has argued the emergence of an as yet inchoate global policy community in education. Accepting the veracity of such an observation, the paper has argued that Bourdieu’s concept of field is able to take account of these global relations, because of its social rather than geographical character. Utilising the latter more political and polemical work of Bourdieu, we have argued that there is an emergent global field of educational policy which is in process of being constituted. The theoretical and methodological approaches of Bourdieu allow for empirical documentation of these processes of constitution and their differing effects on the state and bureaucratic fields within the nation, thus rejecting a reified account of globalisation in educational policy. Additionally, Mann’s (2000) five socio-spatial networks of politics in the age of globalisation offer some purchase on how the global policy field in education might work in the nested relations between and across these networks. At the global level, the influence of OECD educational indicators, but particularly the TIMSS and PISA studies and results can be seen to constitute a new global space in educational policy, but practices of educational policy also remain national and very localised, with the habitus of actors situated in various positions within the field, also reflecting and affecting differing local, national and global dispositions. We have argued that a critical engagement with the work of Bourdieu provides a useful agenda for moving forward the study of educational policy and processes in the context of globalisation and making a significant contribution to policy sociology in education.

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