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Chapter Five: Development and Discourse.

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5.1 Introduction

5.1.1. This chapter will review various approaches used by universities to create collaborative links which seek to be in some way developmental. This is just one of many possible forms of international activity within higher education, and for many institutions probably has been given lower prominence than increasing recruitment of students, participation in transnational programmes, and engaging in collaborative research. That said, Fielden (2007) reports that Canadian universities have given high priority to developmental activities since the 1980s, and Stephens (2009) presents case-studies of UK university collaborations under the British Council's Higher Education Links Programme covering a similar period.

5.1.2. In more recent years funding for international partnerships for UK universities has been supplied by a range of projects including: PMI2 Connect; BRIDGE, British degrees in Russia; UKIERI, UK-India education and research initiative; England-African partnerships; DeLPHE, Development partnerships in Higher Education programme; and INSPIRE, International Strategic Partnerships in Research and Education (British Council 2010).

5.1.3. The first part of this chapter will examine how the discourse of development has constantly been contested, taking discourse in the way it is used in critical language studies to mean more than the texts: 'language as social practice determined by social structures' (Fairclough 1989, p17). The term 'development' has undergone transformations of definition, and hence at different times has normalised different activities as being developmental, for example contrasting technology transfer and large infrastructure building projects with basic needs approaches at the level of villages and communities.

5.1.4. This discussion will of necessity be rather cursory, but it is hoped that this will suffice to show that changing conceptualisations within the discourse of development prompt different roles to be taken by institutions and individuals, for example defining them as donors, recipients, experts, or partners. This account will describe shifts and swings amongst various models of development taking place at specific times; however the reality is in fact rather messy, as new

approaches never truly replaced former approaches and hence there was often a melding of different models.

5.1.5. The second part of the chapter will illustrate this flux as it relates to higher education, using examples from published accounts concerning university collaborations which were planned and implemented within these different understandings of development.

5.2. The discourse of development

5.2.1. Within critical language studies the ability to analyse discourse, or language-in-use, is seen to lead to a critical awareness of the world (Fairclough 1992). Language is not seen as a neutral system of description but as a contributor to the creation of our social worlds, as language both shapes and is itself shaped by power relations and ideology. Texts both record these power relations and also, by their repeated social uses, reproduce them repeatedly.

5.2.2. Simpson (1993) explains how the discourses of everyday life are permeated with assumptions which remain unanalysed as they have achieved the status of common-sense concerning 'the way things are and the way things should be' (p6). The concept of development over recent decades has not been stable, and at any one time there are debates about what are the issues which need to be addressed, how these issues should be addressed, and who should be addressing them.

5.2.3. The concepts associated with the competing ideologies concerning development can become naturalised as common-sense within more general discourse (taking as examples such phrases as '*closing the gap*', '*basic needs*', '*trickle down*', and '*sustainable development*'). These terms reflected the ideologies which currently held sway; hence to use a term of Fairclough (1989) such phrases in any text are 'traces' of the ideology of their production.

5.2.4. The first method of linguistic analysis therefore will be to notice such traces, and in the following account those concepts which originated within development studies but which entered more general usage will be italicised and put in parentheses, for example: '*sustainable development*'.

5.2.5. A second method of linguistic analysis refers to collocation, that is identifying which words are often found together in a text, which gives an idea of which particular inflexion of meaning is intended, and this can be used to identify how intended meanings may change over time or due to situation.

5.2.6. A third analytical method relates to what might be thought of as positioning, which is to say the way that ideologies allocate roles to participants,

in this case whether linked institutions are considered to be donors, recipients, experts, or partners.

5.2.7. Another aspect of discourse in critical language studies relates to how ideas are organised in text structures, and indeed how certain established text structures and genres compel certain arrangements of ideas. As an example, Pain (2009) points out that project reports such as those relating to the British Council's Higher Education Links programme are 'designed to portray success' (p105), hence a critical reading is essential to distinguish project results which are empirically observable from those claimed impacts which are not substantiated, nor indeed able to be substantiated.

5.2.8. Yet by becoming aware that the writers of official narratives are likely to manipulate events when seeking to impose cohesion and order on the facts reported, readers are enabled to identify ante-narratives (Boje 2001): 'rather than reified plots, there are fragments of stories, bits and pieces told here and there, to varying audiences, so that no one knows a whole story and there are no whole stories anyway (p5).'

5.2.9. Any account of development theories, such as that supplied by Rapley (2007), can at one level be seen as a description of the emergence of understanding concerning development based on experience and empiricism, a grand narrative in the modernist tradition leading to what Rapley suggests might be a 'new consensus' (p220). Simultaneously, however, any account of development theories can be seen as a historical record of struggles between competing ideologies to take control of the discourse of development.

5.2.10. To take a pragmatic turn, and to underline the real-world importance of this topic, it should be recalled that a special edition of The State of the World's Children (UNICEF 2009) reports that: 'The annual number of global under-five deaths has dropped from 12.5 million in 1990 to less than 9 million in 2008'; that 9 million under-fives are dying in a year is reported as a success indicates the importance of the topic.

5.2.11. Rapley (2007) identifies both the practical steps advocated by development theorists since the creation of the Bretton Woods institutions at the end of the Second World War, and also the ideological commitments from which these theories of development emerged.

5.2.12. A key figure in the creation of those institutions, which included the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), was John Maynard Keynes whose general theory gave a key role for governments to intervene in the economy via fiscal policies, for example organising government-funded

Strategic Implications of International Collaborations in Higher Education

programmes in times of economic downturn in order to create employment (Keynes was greatly influenced by the great depression). This interventionist or statist model was therefore available at the time of the Bretton Woods conference for the post-war reconstruction of Europe, and then also for the newly emerging study of development which was linked to the post-war political process of replacing empires with independent states.

5.2.13. Empires, it was believed by early development theorists, had created a structure in the world economy wherein colonies were assigned the role of producing primary resources, whilst manufacturing and value-adding took place in the empires' metropolises. The beginning point was, Rapley (2007) records, a widely-shared assumption that development was 'largely synonymous with industrialisation' (p1) and getting richer, hence the early models of development assumed two things.

5.2.14. Firstly, development required structural changes; changes both in the overall structure of the world economy, and also changes within the structure of individual economies of the former colonies involving a shift from being producers of primary resources to the creation of an industrial base.

5.2.15. Secondly, the state should play a large role in bringing about and managing this change. In popular understanding this ambition was achievable, and was referred to as '*closing the gap*'. In general discourse '*development*' was used synonymously with '*growth*', '*modernisation*', and '*industrialisation*', and there was wide acceptance that this should come about via government intervention and a managed economy, often laid out in a '*five-year plan*'.

5.2.16. In terms of ideology, this highly statist conceptualisation differed from classical models of free markets; a contrast of the political left and right which was to be an enduring contest throughout the period being considered here. Rapley (2007) reports that statist and structuralist approaches dominated for a quarter of a century after the Second World War (incorporating many variants during this time), but then in the late 1970s the neoclassical free-market approaches became most influential, due to various reasons to be discussed below. However, although divided by prescribing different roles for state intervention and free markets, both the left and the right had shared the understanding of development as being largely about economic growth and transformation.

5.2.17. One early model of the right which equated development with economic growth, first published in 1960 (Rostow 1990), assumed that all countries would follow a similar linear path – consisting of five stages – to development. By sub-

titling his book 'a non-communist manifesto' Rostow was offering a right wing mirror to Marxist historical determinism.

5.2.18. The central stage in this model was '*take-off*' (a term which also entered general discourse relating to development) which could be achieved by investment and modernisation in certain sectors, and this took the historical experiences of European industrialisation as being the norm for others to follow.

5.2.19. A related theory promised that the benefits accruing to those involved in the development of hot sectors would '*trickle down*' to other parts of the economy.

5.2.20. Apart from industrialisation, another feature of the modernisation discourse involved transformation of the agricultural sector via, for example, the '*green revolution*' (Rapley 2007) and intensification of cash cropping for export. These changes, however, required expensive inputs in order to participate, and seemed often to accentuate differences between the advantaged and the disadvantaged living in rural areas, with little evidence of trickle down from the rich to the poor.

5.2.21. Within the understanding of development as being equivalent to economic growth and modernisation, the stages before take-off can be typified by a series of lacks: a lack of skills and technology, a lack of investment, a lack of infrastructure. This therefore implied that a role for those in already developed countries, including universities, would be to help supply these lacks by transfer of knowledge, technology and capital.

5.2.22. Take-off would then result in '*sustainable development*', but note that this use of '*sustainable*' to refer to a cycle where returns from investments lead to new investments is very different from the use of '*sustainable development*' in later models which would incorporate environmental concern with development. This chapter will also record uses of sustainable in other collocations, '*sustainable livelihoods*' and '*sustainable projects*', and although the root meaning in each of these is the same (relating to an ability to last and endure) the ideological invocations differ.

5.2.23. A similar contest over language concerns a distinction between the ideological implications of the terms '*undeveloped*' and '*underdeveloped*'. Rostow's stages imply an early time when, through lack of knowledge and lack of technology, traditional societies had not yet exploited available resources, i.e. they were not yet developed, so they were still undeveloped. In contrast one of the theories of the left known as dependency theory suggested that it was the very contact of the colonies with the first world which had brought about their

Strategic Implications of International Collaborations in Higher Education

underdevelopment, so what existed was not a situation of lack of exploitation of opportunities but instead was a situation which resulted from an undermining of existing structures, perhaps most clearly expressed in the title of Walter Rodney's book: ***How Europe underdeveloped Africa*** (1973).

5.2.24. In contrast to the single path to development assumption of the modernisation narrative, dependency theory suggested that alternative pathways were possible, with different starting points and different destinations. Although attempts to put this into practice, such as the Ujaama village scheme in Tanzania, were not largely successful, one positive result has been a recognition that local situations should be assessed and local voices must take control, which will be explored later in connection with the sustainable livelihoods approach.

5.2.25. In popular discourse, however, it is likely that '*undeveloped*' and '*underdeveloped*' are used synonymously without critical reflection on what each term implies.

5.2.26. A challenge during the 1970s to the common-sense assumption that development was equivalent to economic growth had been the emergence of what were labelled basic needs approaches, and '*basic needs*' became another entry to more general understandings of development.

5.2.27. In 1978 the World Bank launched a programme to study the implications for the work of the Bank of accepting basic needs approaches (World Bank 1980) which had resulted in a concentration on funding grassroots programmes. This overview clearly states that economic growth was not being abandoned, but there was a recognition that the very poorest were unlikely to benefit from growth without specific provision: 'Although the content of the bundle of goods and services that satisfy basic needs varies from one country to another, there is a common core that includes nutrition, education, health, water and sanitation, and shelter' (World Bank 1980, p6).

5.2.28. The report shows that World Bank spending on infrastructure projects fell from 58.3% of total spending in 1970 to 37.2% in 1980, whilst the spending on basic needs and 'productivity of the poor' rose from 7.8% to 30.5%. The shifts of focus include support for '*bottom up*' projects at community level rather than '*top down*' infrastructure; '*social development*' as well as economic growth; provision of '*basic primary education*' rather than higher education; '*primary health care*' development rather than curative health-care provision; and targeting of excluded groups, in particular women and children.

5.2.29. The role of women in the development process became a central feature of the wider ideological emergence of second wave feminism at that time, and Wiener (2009) discusses how theoretical frameworks and related theories concerning gender, education, and development have changed in the intervening decades, leading to different forms of intervention.

5.2.30. Related to basic needs approaches, attempts to measure development began to use indicators of the '*quality of life*' such as child mortality, access to clean water, and literacy rates, rather than gross domestic product per head (GDP), for example the World Bank report makes much of Sri Lanka's high rating in quality of life indicators at the time despite its comparatively low GDP.

5.2.31. Soon after this, however, there followed a shift from these pro-poor policies to policies which, in the short-term at least, were much less friendly. The fundamental belief of neo-classical theorists is that the free market, if allowed to operate without governmental interference, will ultimately result in the best of all situations for all concerned.

5.2.32. The revival of this belief in opposition to Keynesian economics is often associated with the work of Milton Friedman who advocated that the government's role should be limited to controlling the money supply, and economists of the time often became partisans of one theory or the other, Keynesian or monetarist.

5.2.33. In the early 1980s Thatcherism in the UK and Reaganomics in the USA led to a world-wide retreat from statist intervention and planning, and Rapley (2007) demonstrates how this affected the policies of key development agencies, including the World Bank.

5.2.34. Apart from this ideological shift in the policies of world powers there were various other contributing factors to the shift from state intervention to free markets within developing countries. One was a growing belief that state sponsored attempts to bring about development, for example by fostering import substituting industries, had failed to deliver growth.

5.2.35. Also the attempts to bring about modernisation by large projects and the creation of infrastructure had caused governments to accumulate debts until, in the early 1980s, interest rates world-wide rose sharply, meaning several countries were unable to keep up payments. The ensuing crisis meant that governments needed to seek support from the World Bank and the IMF, which were then able to link this support to demands for changes in development policies, in what became known as '*structural adjustment*'.

Strategic Implications of International Collaborations in Higher Education

5.2.36. If '*basic needs*' approaches had been fundamentally aimed at alleviation of poverty for the poorest members of society, the new structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) came to be seen as greatly worsening the lives of the weakest.

5.2.37. The earlier use of 'structure' referred to a perceived need to shift world trade away from the colonial pattern of satellite colonies being sources of primary goods whilst value adding industry took place elsewhere: and this had prompted the large-scale state intervention in developing countries either to protect local industry or to set up nationalised industries.

5.2.38. This, along with spending to develop the infrastructure of transport and power, and spending on projects such as attempting to ensure universal primary education, had meant that at the time of the debt crisis in the early 1980s the financial resources of many countries were unable to match the demands on them. Once again, therefore, it was diagnosed that the economic structures of developing countries needed to change, and so a structural adjustment package had to be accepted in order to qualify for aid.

5.2.39. Although specific relief packages were individually negotiated, the common components included: reduced government spending; privatisation of state-run industries; opening up of trade; devaluation; and removal of state subsidies.

5.2.40. Rapley (2007) records how this resulted in deteriorating living standards, rising unemployment, cutbacks in education, and worsening nutrition. A later section of this chapter will review the implications of structural adjustment on higher education institutions in poor countries.

5.2.41. Another rapid change in understandings of development in this period concerns the perceived relationship between development and the environment. This can be illustrated by examining two reports which both became influential outside of the academic study of development, hence influencing popular discourse and common-sense understandings.

5.2.42. The Brandt Report (The Brandt Commission 1983) largely focused on economic issues, and the relationship between the north and the south. In passing, it is interesting to note how the development discourse uses a large number of terms to suggest a polarity of contrasting pairs of countries: 'developed versus developing'; 'first world versus third world'; 'north versus south', and that each of these terms brings with it ideological assumptions which, however, normally remain unanalysed. The Brandt report made much of '*mutual interest*' in that the rich should see that they would gain as much as the poor by

bringing about fundamental changes to the world economy, and it called for a transfer of resources and power rather than a flow of aid.

5.2.43. In many ways the report highlighted the same issues that had been raised in earlier basic needs approaches such as health, education, and the status of women in society. Although the report does make some mention of the environment, and the strain placed on it by economic growth and increasing populations, the report does not specifically address environmental issues.

5.2.44. In contrast, just a few years later The Brundtland Report (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987) focused specifically on '*sustainable development*'. The earlier rush for growth, whether via free markets or planned economies, had consumed resources and produced waste in a way which could not continue. This report introduced what is probably the most often frequently quoted definition from the field of development which has entered general usage, sustainable development is: '*development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*'.

5.2.45. This, of course, is very different from the concept of sustainability in Rostow's take-off theory discussed earlier. Although it would not be true to say that before this all developers were intent on cutting down trees in order to create infrastructure whilst environmentalists were all tree-huggers, it is surprising to notice how rarely environmental concerns had featured in development discourse prior to this.

5.2.46. An interesting university case study relating to this (Rieley 2009) will be introduced in the next section. From these two reports phrases implying commonality of interests entered general discourse: '*one world*', and '*spaceship earth*'.

5.2.47. The final part of this account of development theories leads up to the millennium development goals (MDGs) which were adopted in 2000 by the United Nations with an intention to achieve them by 2015. The creation of the MDGs was strongly influenced by another book which has been read widely outside of development studies, ***Development as Freedom*** by Amartya Sen (1999).

5.2.48. There had been precursors of the MDGs throughout the 1990s, in particular the National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs) which emerged from the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, and the International Development Targets which were established in the mid 1990s.

Strategic Implications of International Collaborations in Higher Education

5.2.49. Much of the development work which was undertaken by UK based organisations at this time was informed by the Department for International Development (DfID) strategy of ensuring '*sustainable livelihoods*' (DfID 1999). Although similar to the concept of sustainable development in the Brundtland report, which can be thought of as referring to macro issues of relationships between humanity and the planet, here the focus is on community poverty alleviation.

5.2.50. This would also become the focus of the MDGs, and the sustainable livelihoods approach included recognition that people strategically use all the different forms of capital available to them (human, natural, financial, social and physical) to create their livelihood. Within this approach any intervention would need to be designed in consultation with the people involved, who would need to take ownership of it, and it would need to go across boundaries, for example spanning rural and urban, community level and national level.

5.2.51. The subsequent MDGs took a similar approach, and what is perhaps most surprising – given the flux of the debate concerning development so far outlined – is the extent that these development goals have been so widely accepted, seeming to produce a consensus for a while at least.

5.2.52. The eight MDG goals can be briefly summarised as: eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; achieve universal primary education; promote gender equality and empower women; reduce child mortality; improve maternal health; combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensure environmental sustainability; and develop a global partnership for development (UNDP, n.d.).

5.2.53. This agenda obviously draws on previous approaches relating to assuring basic needs, enhancing the role of women, and ensuring environmental sustainability, and has a focus on social and human development rather than specifically on economic growth, yet the ideological position of Sen also has a distinctive stance. The first sentence of *Development as Freedom* is: 'Development can be seen, it is argued here, as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy' (Sen 1999, p4).

5.2.54. For Sen, 'freedoms' are empirical and countable, rather than abstract and uncountable as the word freedom is most often used, and the process of development demands an integration of social, political and economic factors. In this thesis the process requires the removal of 'unfreedoms' (a term which seems not to have entered popular discourse). 'Development requires the removal of major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public

facilities as well as intolerance or overactivity of repressive states' (Sen 1999, p4).

5.2.55. Significantly, as with the sustainable livelihoods approach, the people in Sen's process of development are considered to be agentive, that is to say intent on constructing their own independence rather than being passive recipients of aid.

5.3. University collaborations

5.3.1. Development is a multi-aspectual topic. Not every university collaboration can include every dimension, but it is possible to look at any specific scheme to see which common-sense assumptions inform it. Is it, for example, intended to enable a process of modernisation; does it intend to assist provision of basic needs; does it address issues of environmental sustainability, or of gender roles; does it intend to promote the millennium development goals; and how is power allocated amongst the various partners?

5.3.2. Christopher Colclough, in the foreword to Stephens (2009), describes distinct phases of aid relating to higher education over the last three decades which broadly match those presented in the previous section. His first time period is 'the immediate post-colonial years' where the activities he describes could be thought of as '*gap-filling*' due to the skills deficit in universities experienced at the time of independence.

5.3.3. An acute example of this is supplied by Rapley (2007) who attributes to Basil Davidson a claim that: 'when the Belgians abandoned Congo ... they left behind fewer than twenty Africans with postsecondary education' (p164).

5.3.4. King (2009) points out that this early period saw the closest symmetry, in universities in developing countries, between local staff and the expatriate staff who came to fill the gaps, as they shared similar conditions of work and accommodation. Later forms of collaboration often involved visiting experts who had less time to become part of the system.

5.3.5. The author of this chapter, having himself experience in the 1960s and 1970s of working as a volunteer and so remaining longer than expert visitors, has noticed over the intervening years that many of the champions of internationalisation of higher education, and linking partnerships in particular, were themselves once volunteers who found their experiences life transforming.

5.3.6. The next time period can be thought of as '*closing the gap*' initiatives, Colclough dates this as the 1960s and 1970s, which included support for building university infrastructure such as libraries and laboratories using overseas aid,

Strategic Implications of International Collaborations in Higher Education

and scholarships for scholars from developing countries to study abroad to enable development of human capital. Often, however, this hope was frustrated by what became known as the '*brain drain*'.

5.3.7. Following this, in the 1980s, Colclough's account seems to conflate the growing emphasis on basic needs, including primary education, with the ideological resurgence of free-market thinking, which both resulted in reduced state and aid-agency financing of tertiary education. It should be noted that in the previous section these were presented separately; the basic needs approach was presented as positively and deliberately intended, whereas the reduction in state financing of universities was presented as an imposed negative consequence of structural adjustment programmes.

5.3.8. King (2009) describes how structural adjustment led to a crisis in the university sector in sub-Saharan Africa, which can be seen both as a prompt for increased university links whilst simultaneously reducing the chances of such links being successful as the universities had been so weakened. Features of this sectorial crisis were: increased pressure on academics in Africa to take on consultancy work (or indeed any other kind of outside work) to eke out meagre salaries; inability to retain staff; reduced research funding; and scarcity of resources including books and internet connectivity.

5.3.9. The last of Colclough's time periods, the 1990s until the present, describes a situation of balancing what at first sight seem to be conflicting agendas. On the one hand within development theories there has been an increasing prioritisation of primary education, '*basic education*', as this is the level where needs and likely beneficial impacts are seen to be greatest, on the other hand throughout this period - and despite the policy statements concerning the importance of basic education - there has been a continued supply of funding for links at the tertiary level.

5.3.10. Stephens (2009) describes how objectives set by DfID became more clearly defined and the focus became more distinct, leading to four priority areas:

- Promotion of sustainable livelihoods;
- Better education, health and opportunities for people;
- Protection and better management of the natural and physical environment;
- Managing globalisation in the interest of the poor; creating faster progress towards International Development Targets (pp20-21).

5.3.11. The case study supplied by Rieley (2009) in the collection edited by David Stephens covers several decades and is a very frankly written personal narrative. Narratives often follow a format of distinct stages, a kind of pro-forma

structure which influences how we present our individual biographies (Cortazzi, 2002).

5.3.12. Rieley's account can be thought of as using a quest narrative structure, where initial harmony is disrupted, hence sending the main character on a journey where a series of dangers are encountered. The hero then finds aid in unexpected sources, leading to a turning point after which the dangers can be overcome, eventually ending with a resolution.

5.3.13. The case illustrates how changes in the collaborations Rieley initiated over this period were responses to external constraints, and then also came to reflect his changing understandings of what development entails. His account starts in 1987 when research funding in the UK became harder to obtain and he embarked on a study leave to South-East Asia to look for research opportunities related to ecosystems.

5.3.14. Rieley's initial motivation was to conduct scientific research not, in comparison with the former volunteers mentioned above, a desire to be active in the development process. Interestingly, however, this was exactly the time when, as described earlier, the Brundtland report (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987) popularised the concept of '*sustainable development*', hence in one dimension this case study is an account of how over more than 20 years Rieley came to incorporate pragmatic issues of development, including different ideological discourses of development, into his first agenda of pure scientific research.

5.3.15. His first plan of studying peatland in Malaysia in 1987 was frustrated as: 'there was little interest or scope for research into tropical peatland in that country where much had already been converted to rice padi, oil palm, pineapple and rubber plantations' (pp116-117). The situation which Rieley was deploring on environmental grounds would no doubt have been praised by those who at the time defined development as modernisation, including the establishment of extensive cash-cropping.

5.3.16. Rieley's second intended area of study related to a project concerning urban greening in Malaya, which was funded by the Council for International Collaboration in Higher Education (CICHE) and lasted from 1989 to 1991. The project involved surveying green spaces in Kuala Lumpur, with a view to influencing the governmental planning process and promoting better use of existing green spaces and conservation of wildlife. Rieley reports the outcome from this as a scientific success, which serves as an example of the rhetorical need mentioned earlier by Pain (2009) to structure reports as success narratives (which surely all project managers will identify with). However:

Strategic Implications of International Collaborations in Higher Education

we achieved all of the objectives, apart from convincing the Mayor and City Council of Kuala Lumpur that they should take on board our recommendations. The issue turned out to be politically sensitive and was regarded as a possible constraint to the rapid development of the Federal Territory that was taking place (p118).

5.3.17. This can clearly be seen as a clash of two discourses – on the one hand conservation, and on the other development understood as economic growth – which in this situation were not as yet reconciled.

5.3.18. The third collaboration, also funded by CICHE, involved researching peatland in Perak in Malaysia, and the fourth related to peatland in Indonesia, and it is at this stage of the account that the advantages that can accrue to long-term collaborations begin to become apparent: the same characters re-emerge at different times; former students become project leaders; and early attempts at research capacity building bore fruit resulting in world-class research publications.

5.3.19. Importantly, Rieley was able to articulate different projects and demonstrate that these were '*sustainable projects*', a use of sustainable which is best illustrated with the analogy of '*pump-priming*' often used by funding agencies to force applicants to consider how activities will be financed after the initial funding ends. The characters in this narrative, and the institutions and settings, are extremely international, and for a series of distinct yet interrelated collaborations Rieley obtained support from national and provincial governments, from universities in several countries, from international volunteers as well as Indonesian students, and from various funding agencies. The university collaborations produced staff exchanges, training in researching, and overseas study opportunities for Indonesian staff.

5.3.20. At this stage of the account, 1994, Rieley begins to incorporate development discourse into his account:

this HE link addressed important ODA and DfID development objectives including sound governance policies and pro-poor economic growth, the prevention and resolution of conflicts, sustainable management of physical and natural resources, and the protection of the global environment (p121).

5.3.21. The subsequent projects, too many to summarise here, had many ups and downs, yet produced high quality research findings until there was another clash of ideologies in the form of a government plan to introduce a Mega Rice Project on a million hectares of peatland, a modernisation scheme in direct conflict with concepts of conservation.

5.3.22. The environmental degradation resulting from this scheme, in particular the large-scale burning which accompanied it, produced images which were seen on televisions around the world, and it was at this stage that – in Rieley’s words – the various collaborations had ‘come of age’, and this is the narrative’s turning point. The previous collaborations had enabled the collection of scientific data concerning tropical peatland; the environmental degradation resulting from the Mega Rice project provided a need for such findings; the combining of environmental and developmental issues provided a discourse which recommendations could be framed in; and the concept of ‘*sustainable livelihoods*’ provided an approach.

5.3.23. Rieley’s account continues beyond this, and several much larger sources of funding were secured and further research and further capacity building ensued. The account demonstrates how the scientific accumulation of data allowed the targeting of policy-makers and hence has brought about political change.

5.3.24. Even at the end of the account Rieley clearly would be more comfortable with strictly scientific research, but he explains how funding proposals were written to include developmental targets. Rieley’s own taking on of new discourses is demonstrated in the following extract:

We have been at our strongest in terms of environmental issues and have produced several major documents that explain and promote the ‘Wise use of Tropical Peatland’ that combines the need for environmental sustainability with the necessity of providing sustainable livelihoods of people who live near to peatlands and derive some of their income from this ecosystem. If people are struggling to survive they are not interested in protecting their environment for future generations (p131).

This extract, it should be noted, incorporates many of the ideological positions which have accumulated around the topic of development during the period being considered in this chapter.

5.3.25. Turning to the role of university collaborations with the MDGs, the UK government report ***Our Common Interest*** (Commission for Africa 2005), appealed for all parties to work towards helping to meet the MDGs. In addition many of the recent funding opportunities for collaborations specifically require applicants to identify how they will help achieve these, including DelpHE and UK Africa Partnerships.

5.3.26. However there is, as King (2009) points out, ‘a lengthy debate about the ways in which higher education can legitimately be said to contribute to the MDGs’ (p44). A report by the Canadian University Partnerships in Cooperation and Development (Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada 2004)

Strategic Implications of International Collaborations in Higher Education

begins with the challenge: 'Imagine trying to achieve the Millennium Development Goals without higher education' (p1).

5.3.27. It is rather surprising, therefore, that in ***Development as Freedom*** Sen (1999) makes barely any mention of a role for higher education in his conceptualisation of development. In the only overt discussion of higher education in this book, Sen negatively contrasts India's low investment in basic education and its 'elitist concentration on higher education' (p42) with China's widespread literacy due to extensive basic education, resulting in China's better preparedness for market growth. Throughout the book education is repeatedly referred to, but always in collocations such as '*basic education*', '*education and health care*', '*female education*'.

5.3.28. For higher education institutions, the search for ways to operationalise the MDGs seems to have found three possible roles, (although there may be others). The first role is to link with partner institutions in order to improve training functions directly related to achieving the goals: skills development in teaching and managing basic education; in health education; or in agricultural extension as examples. The Canadian UPCD report quoted above gives cases of collaborations related to each of these, but as stated at the beginning of this chapter Pain (2009) suggests that such claims of impacts need to be read with a critical eye.

5.3.29. This area of activity can be thought of as creating links related to institutional '*capacity building*'; and Thomas and Peng (2009) provide a discussion of different conceptualisations of this term. Interestingly, '*link*' is often used in two ways: to refer to a joining of two parties, for example a link between two cities or two universities; yet simultaneously '*link*' also invokes the concept of a chain. This first role of university links in capacity building encapsulates both usages. As an example of this, the link concerning a health care training programme between McMaster University and the University of Natal, summarised in the UPCD report, has resulted in chains of training extending from the University of Natal to traditional birth attendants, healers, and community leaders throughout Kwazulu-Natal.

5.3.30. The second role relates to research. Slavin's (2009) case study focuses on British Council link programmes in health and social well-being, and gives several examples of links relating to improving training functions (the first role described above) with examples in community health services in Brazil, and educators in breast feeding counselling in Indonesia, yet Slavin also describes links relating to scientific research. Examples of these are joint programmes linking UK universities to universities in India which have resulted in new drugs for treatments of HIV, hepatitis B, and malaria.

5.3.31. Returning to Sen's comparison of Chinese and Indian educational priorities mentioned earlier; although it is true that China has invested heavily in primary schooling and this has created an educated workforce, China has also built up leading universities capable of world-class research. Hence, in the Times 2010 list of the top 200 universities in the world, there are six from China, another four from Hong Kong, but none from India. It seems it is not simply a case of choosing either basic education or higher education.

5.3.32. The third role is more nebulous, yet is really at the core of this chapter. Each of the approaches to development which have been introduced, and each of the activities advocated, arises from a critical analysis of the world; that is not accepting that things should always be the way that they currently are.

5.3.33. To exemplify this, Pain (1999) describes collaborations in the area of economic development and sustainable livelihoods, and describes 'the long thread of rural development' (p97) which includes many of the approaches discussed in this chapter, which he describes as 'key development narratives' (p100). The collaborations he analyses are pragmatic activities, they are what he labels the 'doing' of development (p108), but he also points out a gap: that within this portfolio of HE links in rural development there is a 'relative absence of projects concerned with understanding and analysing poverty and rural and social change' (p109).

5.3.34. The earlier two roles of training and researching can be thought of as instrumental to achieving development goals, but the third role, that of understanding in a wider general sense, can be conceived of as the essential university role. Universities should occupy the space which is implicit in Sen's thesis: 'the need for critical scrutiny of standard preconceptions and political-economic attitudes has never been stronger' (Sen 1999, p112).

5.3.35. This third role is therefore one of critical analysis: an example of this form of engagement with development is the recent creation of a 'Centre for Sustainable International Development' at the University of Aberdeen.

5.4. Conclusions

The following bullet points develop the main items identified in this chapter as a series of hints which any staff members who intend to initiate a collaboration or link related to development might follow.

- **Ch 5.1.** It is advisable to check regularly for possibilities for external funding for projects, for example project funding from the British Council.

Strategic Implications of International Collaborations in Higher Education

- **Ch 5.2.** It is necessary to establish clearly the conceptualisation of 'development' on which you are basing your intended collaboration; for example modernisation, or technology transfer, or application of Millennium Development Goals.
- **Ch 5.3.** It is necessary to recognise that your conceptualisation of 'development' will change over time.
- **Ch 5.4.** It is necessary to establish clearly the conceptualisation of 'development' which is informing your partners' thinking.
- **Ch 5.5.** It is necessary to establish clearly the conceptualisation of 'development' which is informing the policies of any agencies you are approaching for funding.
- **Ch 5.6.** It is necessary to be cautious when using terms relating to development such as '*basic needs*', '*closing the gap*', or '*sustainable development*', (for example when writing proposals, or funding bids, or publicity) as these terms often are linked to different and specific ideologies.
- **Ch 5.7.** It is essential to identify the relationship which will exist between the partners, for example a relationship of mutuality, and then to ensure that this is consistently applied in all organisational structures and collaboration documentation.
- **Ch 5.8.** It is important to recognise that there will be ante-narratives, that is to say other stakeholders associated with the institutions operating with different models of development and coming to different interpretations of your collaboration.
- **Ch 5.9.** Development is a multi-aspectual topic, hence it may be possible for one collaboration to tackle, or indeed to need to tackle, several different agendas.
- **Ch 5.10.** It is essential to recognise early on the amount of time the intended collaboration will require staff in all partner institutions to dedicate to it; to assess if this is feasible particularly if funders are not willing to pay for staff time.
- **Ch 5.11.** It is important to recognise that successful collaborations require long-term partnerships, even if established with short-term funding, hence ways of articulating different projects into one partnership are desirable. See the example in 5.3.11 – 5.3.24.
- **Ch 5.12.** It is important to recognise that the ethos of partnership may change, the longer the relationship the more this is likely to occur. This changing ethos may be recognised in writing funding bids. See the example in 5.3.11 – 5.3.24.

- **Ch 5.13.** It is important to study calls for bids carefully, to identify the conceptualisations of development and partnership which inform them, and to ensure that those conceptualisations are fore-fronted in your bids.
- **Ch 5.14.** It is essential to avoid vague aspirational claims, hence to identify specifically how the collaboration will achieve its targets, for example how it will advance specific Millennium Development Goals, and how this will be evaluated (see 5.3.28 – 5.3.35)

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