

Developing Development (Education) in Russia

Jennifer Murphy, Department of Anthropology, National University of Ireland Maynooth and Trócaire

Patty A. Gray, Department of Anthropology, National University of Ireland Maynooth

Paper for presentation in the roundtable "New donors in education: Russia's contribution to Post-2015 Development" organized by Anastasia Maximova for the UK Forum for International Education and Training (UKFIET) International Conference on Education and Development, 12 September 2013 in Oxford, UK.

ABSTRACT. Russia, like other (re)emerging donors, has a long history of development intervention, including in education. The period of "transition" following the dissolution of the Soviet Union opened up a space for Russia itself to be "developed", with the ultimate stage being the development of Russia's own capacity as a development donor. Given the intensity with which Russia has been recruited to a DAC-style model of development donorship, it is interesting to note the absence of the field of development studies in Russia. Although part of the effort to develop Russia's donor capacity has included developing curriculum materials for postgraduate programmes in the field of aid and international development, the Russian government has not yet formalized a development studies curriculum. Yet this begs the question: What is the relationship, in general, between the field of development studies and development itself? In the absence of the professionalization of development work in Russia, how were Russians prepared to do development work, and how will those in the future be prepared? Does the professionalization of development move it out of the government sphere, creating a separation between the strategic/diplomatic side of development policy and the practical/vocational side of development work? By refusing to support a professional development studies curriculum, is the Russian government resisting the possibility that non-governmental personnel have a role to play in international development?

Developing Development (Education) in Russia

Jennifer Murphy

Department of Anthropology
National University of Ireland Maynooth
and
Trócaire

Dr. Patty A. Gray

Department of Anthropology
National University of Ireland Maynooth



INTRODUCTION

Our presentation steps back a bit from the immediate issue of delivering development assistance in education, and looks more broadly at how Russians are positioned to do development. Our questions also concern education, but we shift the focus to consider first **how education is done for development** before thinking about how development is done for education.

We are going to focus on development studies and bring it more into focus and think about it in the Russian context. What is the relationship between the educational field of development studies and development itself?

OUR ARGUMENT

We are intrigued by the problem of how Russian development professionals are being and will be constituted. We note that the processes by which development practitioners are produced in other countries – such as Ireland or the U.S. – do not exist in Russia. We have no intention to suggest that those other systems ought to be reproduced in Russia; but we draw some comparisons to them just in order to highlight that fact that Russia has no system at all.

METHODOLOGY

Our presentation is based on Patty's ongoing research on Russia's "re-emergence" as a donor (e.g., Gray 2011), and on Jen's recently completed MA thesis "Creating a world after its own image: Development Studies Education and Russia as a case study".

Learning about Development



- What is Development Education?
- What is Development Studies?



NUI MAYNOOTH
Ollscoil na hÉireann Má Nuad

WHAT IS DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION?

For example, the Irish government officially defines Development Education as:

“An educational process aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of the rapidly changing, interdependent and unequal world in which we live. It seeks to engage people in analysis, reflection and action for local and global citizenship and participation. It is about supporting people in understanding, and in acting to transform the social, cultural, political and economic structures which affect their lives and others at personal, community, national and international levels.”

- Explanation of photo, “Keep your coins, I want change”- good illustration of the goal of development education. It aims to motivate people beyond ‘passive’ responses to human development issues such as dropping a coin in a cup as an act of charity without questioning why homelessness exists as a social problem; how this impacts on human development; how can we respond appropriately as active local and global citizens, etc.

WHAT IS DEVELOPMENT STUDIES?

- While development education is focused on school children or the general public, development studies tends to be a subject taught at university level that focuses on learning how to do international development assistance as a career.
- It was pioneered by UK universities in the 1960s.
- Understanding of what Development Studies is or should be, is as widely contested as the concept of ‘development’ itself (Kothari 2005).
- What is the link then between development studies and development education? Development studies can lead to/influence/drive a conceptualisation of development education for the public. Students pursuing a development studies degree often do so because they were influenced by development education while in school to desire a career in which they can do good in the world.

The screenshot shows the World Bank website with a search bar containing 'Russian Federation'. The main article is titled 'Russia Cares: the First Session of World Bank - DFID Program Advisory Council "Russia as a Donor Initiative (RDI)"'. The article includes the dates 'Begins: May 15, 2009 15:00' and 'Ends: May 15, 2009 18:00'. It states that the initiative will strengthen capacity of Russian Ministries and agencies in the area of international aid, with a commitment of up to \$1.2 million over three years. The article mentions that on May 14, 2009, the World Bank Moscow office hosted the first session of the Advisory Council for World Bank - DFID Program "Russia as a Donor Initiative (RDI)". It also includes a photo of Klaus Rohland and Andrei Bokarev, and a 'Related Content' section with presentations by Klaus Rohland.

Russia as a Recruited / Re-educated Donor



RUSSIA AS A RECRUITED / RE-EDUCATED DONOR

- Russia is clearly not a 'new' donor, in spite of the way its Soviet-era experience can be dismissed (cf. Takala & Piatoeva 2012).
- Although non-DAC donors are challenging the status quo, Russian development actors seem more than willing to conform to DAC norms.
- Russian government ministries have welcomed the tutoring role of the World Bank, with its multiple training seminars and consultations on how to do development 'the right way' and be a member of the 'donor's club'.
- In that sense, Russia can be seen as a **recruited** donor, and also a **re-educated** donor. Russian actors **are re-learning how to do development**.
- We have detected very little consideration, either inside or outside of Russia, of what innovations Russians can bring to the table out of their own historical and cultural context, their own experience. There is very little critical self-reflection about the learning process, the ways they are learning to do development.

Why learn to *do* development?

Job Announcement

Institute for Development Studies & Practices IDSP-Pakistan National Institute requires project manager Female for one of its women health project based in Karachi. The Applicant must have a recognized degree in Maternal / Public Health Sciences & have experience of at least 2 to 4 years in managing such projects. Age 25 to 45 years, salary negotiable. Applications are invited at the following address by date 18th May 2010. Send your Cvs to 7-A Al Mashriq Street Arbab Karam Khan Road Quetta or House No43 ST.26 D.H.A. Phase 5 Karachi, Contact No 0300-8381640 - 0333-7801886 0334-2421691. IDSP Off Ph: 2471776 E-mail: jobs@idsp.org.pk. Only Short Listed Candidates will be called for Interview.

- Forms of Motivation:
 - Moral?
 - Pragmatic/Technocratic?
- What will characterise Russian motivation?



WHY LEARN TO DO DEVELOPMENT?

We suggest two possible (not conclusive!) forms of motivation: moral and pragmatic/technocratic.

MORAL MOTIVATION

- Moral motivation is related to social justice. In Ireland, this is influenced by Catholic Social Teaching (CST) where core values include: human dignity, solidarity, common good and participation, all of which you would hear regularly in Irish development discourse.
- For example, in explaining to a colleague that her research is fundamentally concerned with how people learn to do development, Jennifer was advised that “you can’t learn to *do* development”. She realised that she had offended the moral and social justice sensibilities of her colleague by phrasing development in such a practical and mechanical way.

PRAGMATIC/TECHNOCRATIC MOTIVATION

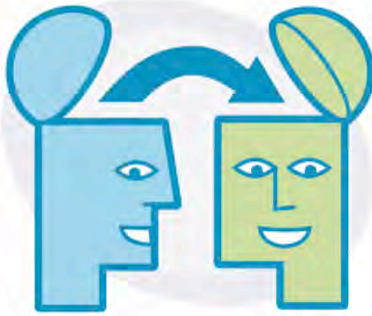
- On the pragmatic/technocratic side, development can be merely a professional career choice that doesn’t require a moral component.
- In this sense, a development studies qualification is a ticket to being employable – it implies that you understand professionally how to *do* development.

WHAT TENDENCY WILL CHARACTERISE RUSSIAN MOTIVATION?

- May depend on **demographic**. Civil servants/think-tank academics/business entrepreneurs may tend to be more pragmatic/technocratic.
- **But** there is a charitable/NGO sector in Russia in which the concept of being a ‘**global citizen**’ is well-developed. This sector has for the most part been **left out** up until now in the debates and actions around Russia’s return to development donor status.

□

How to learn to do development



- 'Banking Education'
- Gift theory and development
- 'Knowledge Transfer':
 - a wounding gift?



We've talked about the *why*; now to explore *how* people learn to do development...

BANKING EDUCATION

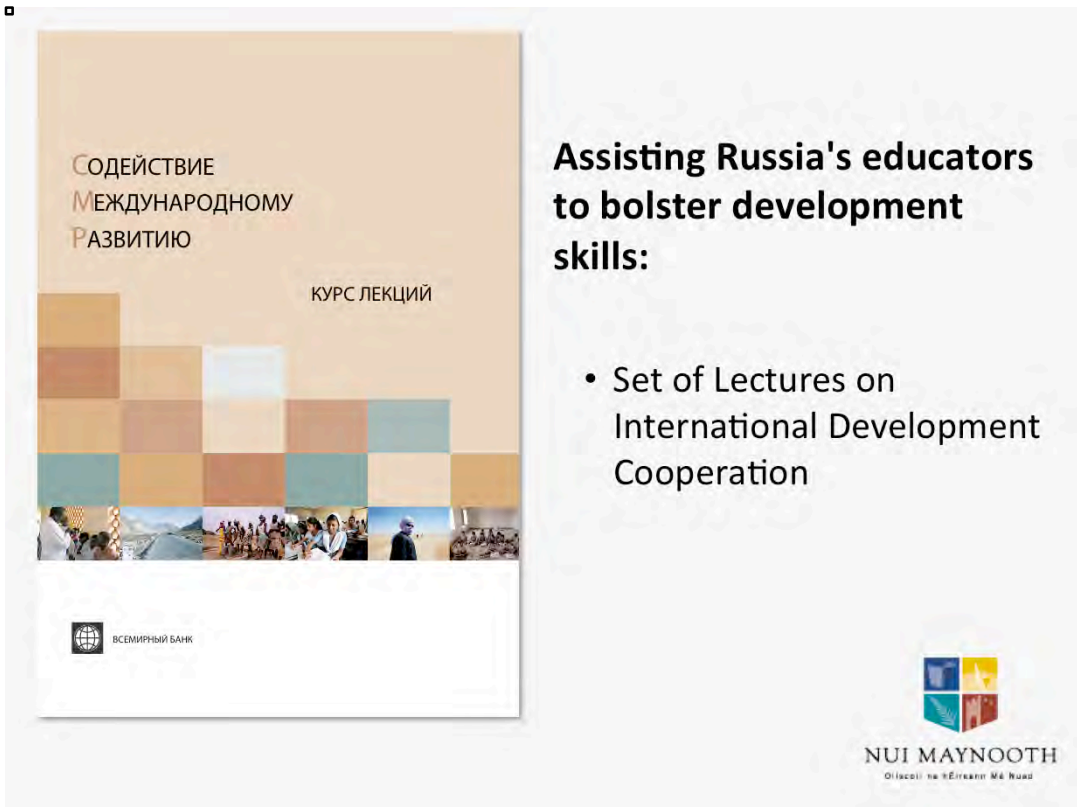
- Here, we think that there is a risk of falling into what Freire (2000) calls the "banking concept" in education whereby students are positioned as empty "receptacles" or "containers" to be filled by perspectives on the world held by their teacher.
- Banking education pacifies knowledge as it negates the process of inquiry; of critical reflection.
- Thus, we ask: are development studies students educated to *educate* others on how to 'develop' in this manner of banking education?

GIFT THEORY AND DEVELOPMENT / EDUCATION AS A 'GIFT'

- French Anthropologist Marcel Mauss explored the nature of gift exchange in a wide range of human societies, and found that gifts are a form of dominance unless a relationship of reciprocity is allowed to develop. In thinking about French society, he observed, "Charity is wounding for the one who has accepted it, and all the effort of our morality tends toward abolishing the thoughtless and insulting patronage of the rich 'almsgiver'" (Mauss 2002:83).

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AS 'WOUNDING'

- We would argue that knowledge transfer as a form of international development assistance, from a Freirean perspective, is banking education and is 'wounding' as it serves mainly one purpose, to dominate. To paraphrase Freire, the more the learners mimic their teacher, the more stable the position of the teacher becomes (Freire 200:153).
- Is this happening in the education (*meta-education*) of Russians in development? Since Russians do not have their own home-grown development education or development studies, are they receiving a World Bank/DAC-influenced 'knowledge transplant'?



Assisting Russia's educators to bolster development skills:

- Set of Lectures on International Development Cooperation

ASSISTING RUSSIA'S EDUCATORS TO BOLSTER DEVELOPMENT SKILLS

- 'Assisting Russia's educators to bolster development skills' is part of the *Russia as a Donor* initiative that was funded by the World Bank and DFID, 2009-2011.
- One component of this was a "collaboration" between the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Sussex, a leading provider of development studies education, and several Russian higher education institutions. Twelve academics were headhunted by the World Bank from Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO), Higher School of Economics (HSE), Moscow State University and Financial University.
- This project was designed to "bolster" or build the capacity of Russian academics to develop and teach training courses related to development-aid issues by providing "knowledge transfer" from the IDS.

SET OF LECTURES ON INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

- This resulted in the *Set of Lectures on International Development Assistance* written by Russian academics.
- It is structured as a modular programme such that any of the 15 lectures could be incorporated into existing curricula at university and used as standalone modules for government officials.

HOW IS THE SET OF LECTURES BEING USED?

- The *Set of Lectures* was launched in December 2012, but to date use has been low, aside from its incorporation into some existing courses.
- The main obstacle to implementation is that the Russian government has not formalised its international development assistance programme; lack of clarity on the government's approach to development assistance means lack of clarity for Russian academics on their approach to development studies.
- As one academic interviewed posed, "What should be the mainstream of development assistance courses? How should we teach it?... Nobody knows how to teach students in a proper way." Full integration of development studies education into Russian curricula will depend on "the demand of the market" and will either come from a government order, or a business order.
- There is an irony here in that Russia has prioritised education as a key field through which it will do development assistance and yet there is no formalised option for Russians to learn about development.

Does Russia need Development Studies?

- Development studies as a prerequisite to working in development?



- Demand as a prerequisite for development studies?



NUI MAYNOOTH
Oiliacail na hÉireann Mhá Nuad

DEVELOPMENT STUDIES AS A PREREQUISITE TO WORKING IN DEVELOPMENT?

- Does someone need a degree in development studies in order to do development? No, of course not. People working in development may have a PG degree in a different field or only a general UG degree, or no higher degree at all.
- Although degree programmes in Development Studies are common in the UK, it did not even exist in US until recently (people came into development work from area studies, global studies, development economics, anthropology)
- 'Development Studies' is now beginning to show up in American universities, and ironically, might be influenced by **globalization/neoliberalization in higher education** – in order to compete internationally in higher education related to global development careers, American universities need to offer degrees that are recognizably 'development studies'.

[GOVERNMENT] DEMAND AS A PREREQUISITE FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES?

- Yet in Russia, the fact that the Russian government is creating no demand for specialists with a development studies degree is seen as road block – the Minister of Education and Science, Livanov talks about **investing in human capital**, about **training cadres** of Russians for particular fields or even particular jobs, but there are no jobs for development specialists, and no perceived need for such jobs.
- At the same time as we recognize that a professional 'development studies' qualification is not a pre-requisite for doing development, we wonder a little bit about the assumption in Russia that government demand for development professionals (and places for them) must exist before development studies education can happen – in other words, we wonder about the assumption that the only driver of overseas development is the government. Is the Russian government resisting the possibility that non-governmental personnel have a role to play in international development?

THANK YOU!

Большое спасибо!



Jennifer Murphy
jen.r.murphy@gmail.com

Patty A. Gray
patty.gray@nuim.ie



NUI MAYNOOTH
Ollscoil na hÉireann Mhá Nuad

CONCLUSION

So who does development in Russia? How do they learn how to do it – how do they understand its purpose? And why do they do it – what drives them, what is their motivation?

We don't have the answers to these questions, but we think these are the kinds of questions that any development practitioner needs to think about before taking the step to intervene in other people's lives.

References

Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York, London: Continuum.

Freire, P. (1998). *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civic Courage*. Lanham, PA: Rowman & Littlefield.

Gray, P. (2011). Looking 'The Gift' in the mouth: Russia as donor. *Anthropology Today*, 27(2):5-8.

Kothari, U. (ed.), (2005). *A Radical History of Development Studies: Individuals, institutions and ideologies*. South Africa: David Philip.

Mauss, M. 2002[1923]. *The Gift: The form and reason for exchange in archaic societies*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge.

Takala, T. and Piattoeva, N. 2012. 'Changing conceptions of development assistance to education in the international discourse on post-Soviet countries', *International Journal of Education Development*, 32: 3-10.