

**How Critical is Talk?**

**Discourses of Development Education among Facilitators in Ireland**

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## List of Abbreviations

ACDC	Advisory Council on Development Cooperation
APSO	Agency for Personal Service Overseas
BIABH	‘Bringing It All Back Home’ project
CDVEC CDU	City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee Curriculum Development Unit
CGE	Centre for Global Education, Belfast
CONGOOD	Council of Non-Governmental Organisations on Development
CSPE	Civic Social and Political Education
DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the OECD
DCI	Development Cooperation Ireland
DE	DE
DEAG	DE Action Group within Dóchas
DECs	DE Centres
DEEEP	Developing Europeans’ Engagement for the Eradication of Global Poverty project
DES	Department of Education and Skills
DESC	DE Support Centre
DEU	DE Unit within Irish Aid
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs – previous name for current Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DICE	Development and Intercultural Education
EC	European Commission
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
GE	Global Education
GENE	Global Education Network Europe
GCE	Global Citizenship Education
ICJP	Irish Commission for Justice and Peace
IDEA	Irish DE Association
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
Kimmage DSC	Kimmage Development Studies Centre
NCDE	National Committee for DE
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NDEGC	National DE Grants Committee
NGO or NGDO	Non-governmental Organisation or Non-governmental Development Organisation
NODE	Network Outreach for DE
NYCI	National Youth Council of Ireland
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
UCD	University College Dublin



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## **Abstract**

In this thesis I explore discourses of development education (DE) in Ireland with specific reference to DE facilitators' talk about DE and the meanings they ascribe to it. Building on existing research on discourses 'in' and 'of' DE, as well as debates about the politics of DE, I address the need for research which focuses on how DE is understood by those who support and promote it, and on the implications of their understandings for practice.

Drawing on questionnaires, interviews and workshops with 21 facilitators who support and promote DE across a range of sectors, as well as interviews with nine key informants, I develop a framework for understanding different discourses of DE that they draw upon. In this framework, the DE dimensions of knowledge and understanding, skills, learning processes and action are identified as important, as are the aims, values and politics of DE. Drawing on the work of Vanessa Andreotti (2014), the framework identifies different discursive positions when it comes to DE - technical, liberal, North-South, critical and post-critical discourses.

The thesis highlights that though DE facilitators largely draw on a critical discourse of DE, they also draw on each of the other discourses. While no particular discourse of DE appears hegemonic, findings suggest that there is a hegemonic style in talk about DE in Ireland, where facilitators talk about DE in idealised, abstract and apolitical terms. In opening up different positions and their implications and in highlighting the prevalent discursive style, this thesis questions any apparent consensus about what DE means and the criticality of its politics. How discourses of DE are shaped is also a focus of this thesis which offers insight into the politics of DE in Ireland. Findings highlight the hegemonic position of Irish Aid as funder and DE as a site of discursive struggle. They suggest that a discursive culture of restraint is prevalent in the DE sector in Ireland. This is characterised by discursive contradictions, consensual relations of non-confrontation and policies and practices which constrain criticality. Thus, though DE facilitators often talk in critical terms about DE, this thesis argues that such talk does not fully capture the contradictions or the constraints involved.

In focusing on DE discourses and their implications, as well as on power relations in the DE sector in Ireland, this research aims to inform debates about the politics of DE in Ireland. It calls on DE organisations and facilitators to 'turn the gaze back on ourselves' and to 'constructively deconstruct' DE in an effort to reimagine a post-critical politics of DE. While specifically relevant for the Irish DE sector, the broader relevance of this thesis to research in DE lies in its focus on the experiences and meanings attached to DE among DE facilitators, in its advancing of understanding of different discourses of DE and in its focus on the institutional and relational factors which shape them. Beyond DE, this research highlights the value for critical pedagogy of not taking critical talk for granted. Understanding talk and delving beneath it to explore meanings and their implications, as well as the institutional factors which shape discourses, offers deep insight into the complex challenges facing

educators who strive to be critical and relevant in an increasingly unequal world.

## Chapter One: Introduction

This research explores development education (DE) in Ireland with specific reference to understandings of it among DE facilitators. There are many ‘definitions’ of DE, e.g., for the Irish Development Education Association (IDEA) it is “good education with a global perspective” (IDEA, 2013a). A commonly cited understanding of it in Ireland comes from the Irish Aid (DCI at the time) Strategic Plan for DE 2003 – 2005:

“DE is 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” (2003: 12).

Though a bit ‘wordy’, this definition gives an insight into the great expectations associated with DE as an approach to education – basically to develop participants’ understanding so that they can challenge inequality as active citizens in order to transform the world at local and global levels. High ideals indeed! While I have often subscribed to these ideals myself, increasingly I am also sceptical of any idealised statements about what can be achieved through DE. I wonder whether it is all just ‘talk’ and what the effect of this kind of talk is on what we do as DE facilitators and how we do it.

While I have had a general interest in questioning taken-for-granted assumptions with regard to international development in Ireland over many years, my specific interest in this particular topic emerged out of a conversation I had with a colleague at an IDEA conference a number of years ago. We were talking about DE and I suddenly tuned out. All the words were familiar ones, DE ones, but I had the feeling that we were just using those words because that’s what we do, not because we knew what we were saying. I was reminded of Cornwall’s point about the prevalence of “buzzwords and fuzzwords” in ‘development speak’ (2010) and began to think about how we talk in DE and what it means and what the effect of that talk is. I had a sense that there was quite a lot of talk about critical, great things – values of justice, equality, solidarity; education for a more just world; action for change – but I also had a sense that though we use the same words and phrases, we don’t necessarily mean the same things by them. This started me thinking about whether the DE that I promote and practice, or that is promoted or practiced in Ireland, is as ‘critical’ as it claims to be and what is shaping my approach (and the approach of other facilitators) to DE in the Irish context? What assumptions do we have? How are these influenced by prevailing discourses of DE and global development and by the DE sector in Ireland?

At a deeper level, I have also questioned the certainty and assuredness associated with this kind of DE

speak and have had the feeling that it might close off questioning – how can you legitimately question anything which aspires to transform the world and bring about equality? I have also wondered whether DE is as relevant or as critical as it claims to be, and if so, on what basis? A recent conversation with an activist friend prompted me to wonder, again, why I chose to research DE for this thesis. She talked of the urgency of the situation in Europe with the biggest number of migrants being forced to move from their homes since WWII, and the lack of urgency on the part of the Irish government to provide the support it has promised to unaccompanied minors. This talk of urgency sparked questions for me again about the relevance of DE to addressing global challenges and the assumptions which underpin our understanding of its role and politics. Questions about the assumptions which underlie our different understandings and talk of DE, and what has influenced them, are at the root of this research.

The importance of DE has been cited repeatedly in Irish government policy in recent years, e.g., in the White Paper on Irish Aid (Irish Aid, 2006), Ireland's Policy for International Development (Irish Aid, 2013), and most recently in a newly published third strategy for DE (Irish Aid, 2016). Though funded by the Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) budget – €3.4 million in 2015 – activity centres around formal education as well as in non-formal youth, community and adult education settings. This is organised by various groups including international development NGOs and DE organisations. Despite the fact that it was considered as rather fragmented and ad hoc up to the 2000s (Kenny and O'Malley, 2002), there is a recognised 'DE sector' among those working in DE in Ireland. This is variously understood as a sub-sector of the Development Cooperation 'sector', as involving development and education institutions and organisations as well as encompassing state and civil society actors.

Though not a common term, I use the term 'DE facilitator' (hereafter called 'facilitator' in this thesis) to refer to those who promote and support DE among others in educational institutions as well as in civil society in Ireland, as part or all of their work. I do not use the term 'DE practitioner' because of its association with direct DE practice. Since its establishment in 2004, most of those involved in the research are members of the IDEA – either representing their organisation or as individual members. Work-wise, they are involved in DE in a variety of different contexts, e.g., in initial teacher education, through development NGOs, in community and adult education, in youth work, supporting teachers and schools, etc. Many of the facilitators who are the focus of this research do engage in DE practice directly with groups but they are also active in policy development and DE project/programme design and implementation. This positions them uniquely in DE in Ireland as catalysts for the promotion of DE among teachers, youth workers and community educators while being advocates for DE with, and sometimes within, state institutions such as the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). Though it is difficult to get a precise understanding of the numbers of facilitators involved in DE in Ireland, a good estimate is 50-100 with the former representing the membership of

the three task groups brought together by IDEA to prepare for the Global Education Network Europe (GENE) Review of Global Education in Ireland in 2015 – 51 in total – and the latter representing the approximate current number of IDEA members.

Through this research, I explore the understandings and experiences of DE among 21 facilitators, as articulated individually in interviews, questionnaires and collectively through workshops. As such, this research attempts to understand and analyse different discourses of DE, understood here as frameworks of meaning which are reflected in facilitator talk (e.g., terms, concepts, themes and tropes), and which reflect assumptions, understandings and perspectives regarding DE. Focusing on how facilitators ‘talk’ about DE, what it means, what it involves and why they do it, I explore the assumptions which underpin DE. I also explore facilitator understandings of the institutional, policy and discursive factors which shape these discourses. In that regard, I focus, in particular, on the DE sector in Ireland. I also draw on nine interviews with key informants who have different and insightful experiences of this context. They differ from facilitators in that many are not currently directly involved in DE promotion or they are ‘at one remove’, working in membership networks or in Irish Aid. In short, the research tries to explore discourses of DE among facilitators in Ireland and the factors which shape them.

## **1. Why this Research?**

The need for more research on DE in Ireland has been identified in many research reports over the years (Kenny and O’Malley, 2002; The Synthesis Paper, 2011; Bryan and Bracken, 2011; GENE 2015; Irish Aid, 2016a). The Synthesis Paper (2011), an influential document produced by Irish Aid, which represents a synthesis of reviews of DE in a number of sectors, prioritises research which informs ‘good practice’ in DE. GENE identifies that “support for purposeful further research concerning DE should be considered, including for example, networking of researchers, mapping existing research, comparative analysis and explorative studies” (2015: 55). This very general recommendation acknowledges the wide needs in the area. The GENE Review echoes task group submissions to the Review which argued that:

“in terms of research there are several challenges. There has been no Irish Aid funding for research in the recent past, an element of reflecting on practice which has been badly missed in recent years. For this research we lack sufficient depth and breadth of research in Ireland, for example, research which would generate educational theories which in turn could influence practice, research to facilitate the sharing of DE failures as well as highlighting DE successes, etc” (GENE Review Appendix II, 2015: 5).

Thus, the need for research on DE has become clear and it has been reiterated in the Irish Aid DE strategy which highlights the intention to “introduce support for strategic research to inform the

delivery, quality and impact of DE in Ireland and to enhance good practice. Research funded by Irish Aid should inform DE practice at a national level and may subsequently be disseminated at local, national and European levels” (2016a: 26/27).

### **1.1. Research on Discourses 'Of' and 'Within' DE**

In the context of the need for research on DE, this research is designed to contribute to the significant research on discourses ‘of’ and ‘within’ DE in recent years. Research on discourses ‘of’ DE has served to open debate beyond a singular notion of what DE is and to highlight different interpretations and approaches to it. Andreotti’s influential work on ‘soft’ vs ‘critical’ Global Citizenship Education (GCE) (2006) has been particularly important in drawing attention, internationally and in Ireland, to different “trends in educational initiatives” or “orientations” (Andreotti, 2014: 13) in relation to GCE or DE. In more recent writing, she has developed this work to involve “tracing individual or institutional narratives to collective ‘root’ narratives” (2014: 22), and she identifies at least four of these. My research draws significantly on her insights and broad approach to mapping ‘root narratives’ for an exploration of discourses of DE among facilitators in Ireland. This is discussed in Chapter Four.

Bourn’s work on discourses of DE, where he argues for a constructive approach which reflects “on the different interpretations of what DE is, to encourage the need for a closer relationship between theory and practice” (2011: 12) is based on research in relation to DE practice in a number of secondary schools and in further education in England. Acknowledging that there are different interpretations of DE, he argues that “what is needed is to debate what they are, which approach is most appropriate within a given educational arena and on what basis the pedagogy is introduced. DE should not be seen as some form of monolithic approach to education but as a pedagogy that opens minds to question, consider, reflect and above all challenge viewpoints about the wider world and to identify different ways to critique them” (2011: 26). Khoo and McCloskey (2015) reflect on debates between Bourn’s constructive approach, which identifies various interpretations and perspectives on DE, and that of Selby and Kagawa (2011), which they see as exemplifying a contrasting ‘transformative approach’. Understanding of these debates is central to any exploration of different discourses of DE because it takes into account tensions between DE’s historical legacy of critical, transformative approaches on the one hand and considerations of learners’ needs, contexts and the value of different pedagogies on the other.

While there is little broad research on discourses ‘of’ DE in an Irish context there is some exploration of different approaches to DE in recent literature. Liddy (2013: 28), for example, reflects on Downs’ (1993) five types of education “about, for and as development”. The question has been debated, as outlined above, particularly in Ireland in *Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review*, on



whether DE is critical or radical or transformative enough (Bryan, 2011; McCloskey, 2011). Bryan, for example, suggests that “the question of whether DE has been ‘de-clawed’ or stripped of its original radical underpinnings, based on the ideas of such radical thinkers as Paulo Freire, is an uncomfortable one for those of us who identify ourselves as development educators, with our claimed commitment to ambitious goals like social transformation, global justice, and poverty eradication”. She goes on to say that “the question is ‘thorny’, not least because it requires us to cast the gaze on ourselves, forcing us to ask – as well as respond to – difficult questions about the possible disjuncture between the professed rhetoric, values, and organising principles of DE, and the policies and practices we enact, endorse or contest through our work” (2011: 2). In their reflection on 10 years of the journal, Khoo and McCloskey question whether DE can “live up to its radical promise of transformation for social justice, given a context where professional practice may be swimming upstream against powerful mainstream currents of neoliberal globalisation which are powerfully pushing the economics, culture and politics of polarisation” (2015: 7).

Debates about whether DE is radical or critical enough or whether it is reflective of a wide range of approaches or not, or both, are important ones guiding this research. While the constructivist and the transformative are presented as contrasting approaches by Khoo and McCloskey (2015), this is not necessarily the case with many theorists, especially those influenced by critical pedagogy and post-structuralist or post-colonial analyses, attempting to straddle both, e.g., Kincheloe (2008a), Andreotti (2014). Though there has been some research and reflection on these issues in an Irish context, there has been no research to date which overtly explores different discourses of DE among facilitators in Ireland.

Another point worth noting from Bourn’s work is that he usefully provides a contextualised and historically-located interpretation of various discourses of DE and global education (GE) over time (2014). While his main focus is on DE in a UK context, he is mindful of historical junctures in other contexts, especially in Europe. I am also influenced by the fact that while he offers interesting insights about how consensus has been approached in the area of DE over time, his inclination, like mine, is towards exploring different interpretations rather than producing a linear or reductionist account. Bourn highlights, for example, different policy trends in relation to shifting understandings of DE (2014: 39), arguing that “an understanding of how DE has evolved and how its various interpretations, through global learning and the global dimension, have been implemented, is important in identifying the priorities now, in terms of moving forward to a more integrated approach”.

While Bourn’s research at times mentions the history of DE in the Irish context, there is an overall dearth of historical research on DE in Ireland. The most significant research in that regard is that of Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken (2011), who review the history of Irish state involvement in DE. Their treatment is significant and they identify key themes or ‘tensions’, many of which influence DE

practice in Ireland today, e.g., between DE as public information or DE as an education process involving critical engagement of aid and development; questions about the roles and responsibilities of various government departments, e.g., DFAT and the Department of Education and Skills (DES) in relation to DE, or as they put it, “the positioning of DE within the context of the ODA programme and overall paradigm of international development” (2011: 6); and tensions related to “bringing DE programmes and interventions closer to the mainstream” (ibid). The limitation of their treatment, as they point out themselves, is that it focuses on state involvement and, as such, does not fully take account of civil society participation in DE. Some short ‘histories’ have also been written in that regard, e.g., Dillon’s work on Trócaire’s engagement in DE (2009) is useful, as are the histories of Comhlámh (Hanan, 1996) and Dóchas (2004). Aside from historical coverage of Ireland’s foreign policy (e.g., O’Neill, (years up to) 2012; O’Sullivan, 2012), there is little systematically written on the history of ODA or, more specifically, of DE in an Irish context. Though a comprehensive history of DE in Ireland is outside the scope of this research, I attempt to situate discourses of DE within a historical context that focuses on discourses, policy, institutions and actors involved in DE in Ireland, especially since the 1970s.

As outlined above there is limited research on discourses ‘of’ DE in Ireland. In terms of research on discourses ‘within’ DE, one piece of research (Bryan and Bracken, 2011) has influenced the field significantly. Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken (2011: 58) refer to Bryan and Bracken’s (2011) comprehensive, engaging and challenging analysis of teaching and learning about global citizenship and international development in post-primary schools in Ireland. Bryan and Bracken’s research is an important base for my research in an Irish context. Its exploration of teacher attitudes and understanding as well as development representations offers significant insight into DE in the Irish context. Though it is not focused on facilitators per se, and its range is more extensive than this research, its overall approach to analysis of perspectives, understandings and representations is one which I value, particularly as it is focused on discourses of development which underpin DE practice. With reference to the latter, they conclude that “the discourse of development within state-sanctioned curriculum materials is not completely uniform, coherent, or consistent, either within or across texts” (2011: 14). They highlight that “modernisation theory is the most popular and pervasive perspective on development in Irish post-primary schools ... development activism in schools is generally underpinned by a development-as-charity framework, and dominated by a ‘three Fs’ approach, comprising Fundraising, Fasting and Having Fun in aid of specific development causes” (2011: 15). Overall, their analysis of textbooks provides for depressing reading as they show the pervasive nature of modernisation, charity and humanitarian development discourses in post-primary education in Ireland. Furthermore, with reference to the types of activism promoted through Civic Social and Political Education (CSPE) – a subject to junior certificate level – they conclude that

“calls to action overwhelmingly encourage ‘obedient activism’, whereby students are

channelled into apolitical, uncritical actions such as signing in-school petitions, designing posters or buying Fairtrade products. This framing of development as a set of problems or issues to be resolved through clear-cut and specific forms of obedient action closes off possibilities for dialogue about the limitations of these kinds of development interventions. It further presents activism as having some kind of definitive end goal rather than as an ongoing commitment to social justice” (2011: 16).

Arising from their research they offer multiple recommendations relating to the training of teachers, the position, form and content of CSPE, initial and in-career teacher education programmes, schools, Irish Aid and further research. One of the strengths I see in Bryan and Bracken’s (2011) research is that it is development educators’ experiences and perspectives which shine through, offering a critical insight into the challenges facing DE in post-primary education in Ireland today. Andreotti’s comments in the foreword are worth repeating. For her, the research “highlights that if the connections between power relations, knowledge production and inequalities are overlooked, the result is often educational practices that are ethnocentric (projecting one view as universal), ahistorical (forgetting historical/colonial relations), depoliticised (foreclosing their own ideological location), paternalistic (seeking affirmation of superiority through the provision of help to other people), and hegemonic (using and benefiting from unequal relations of power)”. Bryan and Bracken call for further research, particularly ethnographic research, in relation to DE and activism, young people and schools. In ‘Mapping the Past, Charting the Future’, with Fiedler, they repeat these calls but expand suggestions to include research “on the scale and nature of DE provision in the adult and community education sector” (2011: 75) as well as on ““everyday’ representations of development issues in the mainstream media” and “on the theoretical, conceptual or philosophical dimensions of DE” (2011: 76). Murphy’s (2014) research on ‘Finding Frames’ goes some way to exploring representations of development issues in NGO communications. This research speaks to the latter call for exploration of concepts, discourses and different philosophical perspectives when it comes to DE in Ireland.

## **1.2. The Need for Research regarding DE Facilitators' Experiences**

Bryan and Bracken’s research shows the dearth of research of its type in Ireland and the potential for similar explorations with other groups involved in DE, e.g., community educators, youth workers or those involved in higher education, and perhaps especially those who support, and often train, these educators, DE facilitators. It remains the case that research conducted, or reports written, on DE in Ireland often draw on the experience of facilitators, (e.g., Kenny and O’Malley, 2002; Bailey, 2009; Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken, 2011; IDEA, 2015; and GENE, 2015). Despite this, no research has been carried out in Ireland which focuses directly on their experience of DE, and there is limited such research elsewhere (Skinner et al, 2014). Skinner and Baillie Smith’s (2015) research is a notable exception. They open their “not an academic paper”, which focuses on how “DE practitioners and organisations (re)define what they do in response to the changing world around them” and the

implications this has “for how we conceptualise and understand GE?” (2015: 2) by arguing that “the voices and experiences of those ‘doing the doing’ have often been absent, or been addressed in the service of understanding the content, or commenting on the policies and institutional contexts of GE. There has been limited engagement with the ways the practice of GE is embodied in the people who practice it in its myriad ways” (2015: 1). Identifying them as ‘practitioners’, and focusing on GE (to encompass the range of approaches including DE), they argue that “whilst the practices of these individuals are critically important to the present and future of GE, we know little about what their professional lives are like beyond the sharing of anecdotes and ‘common knowledges’ that circulate through GE networks, conferences and collaborations” (2015: 1). For this reason, they argue, their research focuses on “what it is like to do global education, how practitioners translate theory into practice in response to the changing world around them, and how this affects them and their practice” (ibid).

Though the focus of my research is different to Skinner and Baillie Smith’s in that it focuses less on DE practitioners and more on how they talk – understanding discourses rather than practice, Skinner and Baillie Smith’s research provides interesting insight into DE practitioners’ experience. They highlight practitioners’ “drive to foster change through the means of education” (2015: 12) and the burden of responsibility they feel “of holding a safe space for transformative learning. Such spaces involve enabling learners to share and challenge deeply-rooted perspectives” (2015: 12). They explain the precariousness of the work situation for the DE practitioners involved in the research in the light of a changing financial landscape. They highlight “a mismatch between the emotional and embodied nature of GE work and its growing professionalisation and formalisation” (2015: 12). Highlighting the risks involved and “the need to negotiate emotionally intense global debates and transformations [which] make GE work intrinsically contingent and unsettling”, Skinner and Baillie Smith argue that “we need to avoid over-privileging the agency of donors and develop our understanding of the improvisation, subversion and reworking by practitioners, as central to GE” (2015: 12). They go on to explain the high levels of commitment and values DE practitioners have, which lead to long hours of working, where they have difficulty “drawing a line between work and private life ... Many practitioners do not only consider themselves to be educators, but also activists” (2015: 13).

They caution against regarding GE “in terms of policy prescription” and remind the reader that “GE is produced through practitioners’ negotiation of ambiguities about their role, shaped but not determined by donor demands, as well as the wider institutional and geopolitical contexts within which GE is practiced and the changes these are bringing to GE” (2015: 14). Identifying contrasting understandings of what GE involves as a central consideration among GE practitioners, Skinner and Baillie Smith highlight questions raised about whether its purpose “is to open space for discussion and debate to mobilise new knowledge or whether it should be working to more pre-determined change outcomes” (2015: 15). This relates to different discourses of DE among practitioners, their politics and debates

about whether a ‘one size fits all’ understanding of GE is possible or desirable or not. They value the ‘ambiguity’ and ‘in betweenness’ associated with fluid and varying conceptualisations of GE and guard against standardised definitions: “there is a risk that real differences can sometimes be smoothed over in order to create a sense of coherence” (2015: 17).

In terms of the significance of the recession and austerity on GE, Skinner and Baillie Smith argue that it has been “serving to ‘bring GE home’ as well as more easily make connections to other parts of the world, through experiences of austerity, debt, poverty and inequality”. It is also “leading to a greater focus and connection to what is going on locally” (2015: 19) and, as such, it is seen to present both an opportunity and challenge for practitioners. While presenting considerable challenges, “several practitioners raised the question that perhaps austerity is actually an opportunity to break away from institutionalised funding and dependency on state support” (2015: 20). The last section of the report addresses what GE practitioners do to ensure their resilience, e.g., building and feeling part of a community; moving from idealism to “a sense of realist idealism” which grows over time as they struggle with dilemmas about professional identity and of working “in between different political positions” (2015: 23); and acknowledging their experience as a “learning journey” (2015: 24).

Many of the insights which emerge from Skinner and Baillie Smith’s research are relevant for the research with facilitators in Ireland. Though theirs is useful in exploring experiences internationally, given the dearth of research on DE in Ireland, this research focuses more specifically on the experience of facilitators in the Irish context. I have also chosen not to limit that experience to those who work in civil society or directly as practitioners as I am interested in exploring understandings and experiences of those who act as catalysts for DE among practitioners more broadly. Focusing on how facilitators talk about their understandings and experiences, my research specifically addresses discourses of DE, contrasting understandings or what Skinner and Baillie Smith call “the real differences” between them (2015: 17). Despite the differences in focus, I am mindful of their closing comments, which also apply to DE: “GE is an embodied practice, which reflects and is shaped by the dynamically evolving knowledges, emotions, creativities and coping strategies of the GE practitioners themselves. If we want to ensure that broader understandings of GE reflect realities on the ground, we must make sure that practitioner voices are brought to the forefront within GE policy making processes and future research” (2015: 26). This research hopes to do just that.

### **1.3. Own Position in Relation to the Research**

While this research is driven significantly by the need for research in DE in Ireland, it also reflects my position and interest both in relation to DE and more broadly. Over many years, I have participated in and observed DE practice and talk in Ireland in a variety of contexts. The lens I have brought to this

participation and observation is intimately related to my experience as an educator over many years, my encounters with ‘development’, and questions which these have prompted. I introduce them here to give some insight into my specific interest in discourses of DE and what shapes them.

For nearly 30 years I have been actively engaged in education and ‘global development’ both personally and professionally. I have described myself and been described, over the years, variously as a development educator, activist, lecturer and critic. Like many people growing up in Ireland in the 1970s and 1980s, I was significantly influenced by encounters with returning Irish missionary sisters who showed slides and told stories of people and poverty in countries like the Philippines. When I learned, in my early teens, that two of my teachers, who were not religious sisters, had worked as teachers in Nigeria, I thought that that would be something that I could do too. The countries of Africa and Asia seemed like exotic places full of potential and I embraced the assumption that I could make a difference. A sense that I could not only make a difference to the lives of ‘the poor’ and ‘most marginalised’, but that I had a responsibility to do so, was confirmed for me in secondary school and in college when I was introduced to liberation theology and revolutionary, mass resistance to injustice in Latin America and South Africa. I learned about Rosa Parks, Oscar Romero, Nelson Mandela and Steve Biko, and I was concerned about inequality and discrimination in Ireland and in the countries of the ‘Global South’. This interest in global justice became crystallised through my college years and I began to connect it to my identity in my early 20s, when I moved to Cork to work as a teacher in a secondary school, which offered opportunities to facilitate DE and engage in short-term work in various countries in Southern Africa and Central America.

When I became exposed to post-development (Escobar, 1984/5; Escobar, 1995; Sachs, 1993; Ferguson, 1994; Marchand and Parpart, 1995; Rist, 1997) and post-colonial critique (Said 1978; Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 1995) for the first time in the mid-1990s, I began to see prevailing understandings of global development, and of development itself, as problematic. Over the years, my position on development – what it means, whether or not it is a good thing, and my understanding of its implications – has changed, and my understanding of development has been turned upside down and inside out. In many ways, it has been a journey of questioning the ‘taken-for-grantedness’ of my own assumptions about development and the kinds of practices and relationships which have been constructed in its name. Throughout this time, influenced by post-development and post-colonial critique, I found in discourse analysis (e.g., Fairclough, 1992; Van Dijk, 2007) and its application to development discourses (e.g., Apthorpe and Gasper, 1996; Keeley and Scoones, 2003; Eade and Cornwall, 2010) as well as in the work of Stuart Hall (1997) a broad framework for understanding development organisational representations of global development in Ireland, e.g., in advertising and policy. In the light of my experience, questioning representations, discourses and taken-for-granted assumptions of global development became an area of considerable interest for me, with concerns about the kinds of ideas about global development being promoted in Ireland and how these often

limited and damaging ideas affect our understanding of ourselves and others, and how people relate to each other.

A core analysis which has developed for me over the years and which has underpinned these questions is that we live in an era of globalised capitalism, characterised by a discourse of neoliberalism with its associated institutions and practices of over-consumption, individualism and inequality (Harcourt, 2003; Rapley, 2004). This tends to value the interests of the present and the few over the future and the many, and it is supported by powerful, taken-for-granted assumptions about the good life and about who matters and why. Such assumptions, which are not universal or unchallenged, have considerable effect on how reality and relationships are constructed. Many of these assumptions are based on ethnocentric, scientific, technical, economistic, patriarchal, superiorist, heteronormative, state- and market-centric constructions of reality often promoted and legitimised within contemporary manifestations of modernity and representations of global development. These assumptions tend to normalise inequality and legitimise global capitalist development as being the best or only way possible. Mainstream development cooperation, rather than challenging these assumptions, often repeats and reinforces them. On the other hand, they are being challenged in a myriad of ways at local and global levels and are open to change (Esteva, 2012). Thus, for me, a key aspect of education has been to question taken-for-granted assumptions, especially when they are about that which is assumed to be virtuous – development or, in this case, DE.

Frustrated by what I regarded (and still regard) as the dominance of Eurocentric, modernist and patronising discourses of global development in Ireland, which perpetuate inequality and de-politicise development activism, I spent many years researching the construction of different discourses of global development work or ‘overseas volunteering’ within an Irish context. For me, a focus on discourse is important because discourses shape thinking and behaviour. They shape attitudes and actions, policies and practices. Understanding discourses, how they are shaped and how they become dominant or subordinate, helps us to understand the taken-for-granted assumptions which underpin much of what we do and the power relations associated with them. For me, discourses are very powerful and they operate at a number of different levels – overarching or framing discourses, discursive formations, e.g., approaches to development, and instances of discourse, e.g., policy documents, talk etc – which are constructed by actors in different discursive and institutional contexts. They have effect on how realities are understood and experienced and on how lives are lived. In the context of global development discourses, development relationships are relationships of power with discourses helping to shape identities, a sense of the self and the other; practices, different development interventions; and priorities, what is valued and what is not. But discourses are contingent on the context within which they are produced and operate, e.g., the socio-economic, political, cultural and institutional context, and they are contested and constructed by actors within and external to that context, in this case the DE sector in Ireland. In this way, though powerful,

development discourses are not static, with contestation and contradictions common. This contestation is complex: organisations search for legitimacy of particular framings of global development and development education (Eade and Cornwall, 2010) at the same time as generally taken-for-granted assumptions act as ‘claims to truth’ (Chouliaraki, 2008).

Over the years, I have often questioned my role as ‘educator’, ‘activist’, ‘lecturer’ or ‘critic’, and the role of DE and development studies in the construction of many of the taken-for-granted assumptions which underpin global development discourses, practices and relationships. As an educator, especially working in the context of the DE and development studies fields, I have been considerably influenced by DE, and its potential to challenge and transform our understandings of our own realities and questions about how it can act to address inequality in different ways. I have been influenced by Freirean-inspired participatory processes of critical reflection on experience and practice (Hope and Timmel, 1984) and, inspired by my own encounters with post-development education processes I have been engaged in, I have tried to address powerful and taken-for-granted assumptions about development thinking, practices and relationships.

Much of this work has been located within a ‘mainstream’ higher education context, with claims ‘to be different’. Valuing participatory, critical engagement with development, Kimmage DSC, where I work, has, over time, also overtly promoted development. A key dilemma for me in that context has been how to square a critical, post-structuralist position regarding development with this promotion of development. Somehow, I have assumed, broadly following critical discourse approaches, that once I, as an educator, can facilitate understanding of how development is constructed and the power relations associated with it, it will open the doors for alternative, more equal, more just ways of organising our lives. I have assumed that the deconstruction of discourses of ‘development realities’, with the development practitioners with whom I work, can open the space to allow alternatives ‘to be’ or ‘to emerge’. While I still think this is an important role for DE, it is extremely challenging. I have often wondered if I am fooling myself. Do the education processes I facilitate realise the critical potential they set out to achieve? Does it matter whether or not they are guided by participatory methodologies or that they start by questioning assumptions? Are they too focused on the negative and to what extent do they facilitate participants to critically reflect on the possible? To what extent am I aware of how my own constructions of global development are shaped by my taken-for-granted assumptions and the power relations which affect my work? Do I, like many others, replicate the stereotypes and problematic assumptions I seek to challenge and do I give enough focus to reframing understandings of global relationships beyond development?

This experience of and questions in relation to DE have prompted me, at least in part, to focus on this research. I carry them with me ‘in the background’ as this research does not set out to address all of these questions. On the other hand, my positioning as a facilitator, drawing on these critical and post-



structuralist influences, undoubtedly has guided the approach I have adopted in this research.

## **2. Research Aims and Questions Guiding the Research**

As outlined above, it is clear that there is a need for more research on DE in Ireland. Though the needs are great, of necessity this research addresses just one aspect of what might be possible. This research is situated in the context of the great aspirations for DE evident in definitions, government strategic plans and the sustainable development goals (SDGs), and debates about how critical or radical DE is. As such, it aims to explore understandings of DE and its politics among facilitators in Ireland. It is also situated within the context of limited research which focuses on facilitators as the subjects of the research. Given their influential role as catalysts for the promotion and support of DE in Ireland and their particular experience and understandings of DE, I have chosen to explore discourses of DE among facilitators and the factors which shape these discourses in the Irish context.

Questions guiding this research are:

- How do DE facilitators in Ireland talk about DE in relation to its role and politics, the values which underpin it and the education processes associated with it? How do they make sense of what they are doing through DE and what are the assumptions they have about it? In short, what discourses of DE do they draw upon?
  
- What policy, institutional and organisational factors do DE facilitators see as shaping DE discourses within the DE sector in Ireland?
  
- What are the implications of this research for understanding DE?

## **3. Outline of Chapters**

The thesis is divided into nine chapters including this introductory one. In Chapter Two, I set the scene for the research by offering a historical introduction to DE in the Irish context. In so doing, the significance of policy, institutional and relational influences in the DE sector become clear. Highlighting some key tensions and debates, the intertwined but changing roles of the state and civil society in DE in Ireland emerge as significant as do various discursive influences on the establishment and consolidation of DE in Ireland. The funding dependency on the state is a key issue, especially in a post-recession context, which contributes to the establishment of a ‘two-tier’ DE sector in Ireland.

Where Chapter Two sets the institutional, policy and discursive context for DE, In Chapters Three and Four I provide the theoretical context. More specifically, in Chapter Three I explore notions of discourse and power, focusing in particular on Foucauldian influences and debates related to hegemony and governmentality. Drawing on post-development and analysis of discourse in the development literature, I go on to explore different discourses of global development as well as discourses of related notions which shape DE thinking, e.g., aid effectiveness, accountability and measurement, and the role of the state and civil society in development cooperation. Chapter Four develops an analytical framework for understanding discourses of DE. In so doing, it draws on debates related to understandings of DE and critical pedagogy, in particular with reference to the work of Vanessa Andreotti (2014) on ‘root narratives’.

In Chapter Five, I set out the methodology for the research. I begin by highlighting my epistemological influences in critical, feminist and post-structuralist research approaches which explore how meaning is constructed and how power relations shape taken-for-granted assumptions. Regarding research as political and my own positioning in relation to the research as significant, I set out the theoretical basis for the research undertaken and explain the key processes involved and decisions made. Thus, I explore the challenges and negotiations involved in undertaking research with my peers and argue the importance of using research such as this as an opportunity for critical, shared learning in that context. Chapters Six and Seven present findings from 21 interviews with facilitators as well as nine ‘key informants’. Findings are divided into two chapters to reflect the two strands of this research: discourses of DE among facilitators on the one hand, which I explore in Chapter Six; and the factors shaping them, which are explored in Chapter Seven.

Drawing from the literature, findings indicate that there are five different discourses of DE – technical, liberal, North-South, critical and post-critical discourses. I explore these in the light of facilitator talk with reference to the key dimensions of DE identified, i.e., knowledge and understanding, skills, learning processes and action, as well as the aims, values and politics of DE. Though complex, this multi-dimensional framework provides insight into different understandings of DE and assumptions relating to it among facilitators. In general, facilitators tend to draw on a critical discourse of DE when talking of DE though this is not unambiguously the case as there are considerable references to liberal and North-South discourses and some references to a post-critical one. Despite the rhetoric of criticality, it becomes clear that there are considerable constraints in the Irish DE sector which limit criticality and the potential of DE. These issues are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Eight, where I focus in particular on the discursive style and culture of DE in Ireland. Chapter Nine concludes the research, highlighting the need for a reimagined politics of DE based on post-criticality.

## **Chapter Two: The History of DE in Ireland – Discourses and Institutions**

### **Introduction**

In order to understand the context within which facilitators are working, as well as the institutional factors shaping discourses of DE in Ireland, it is necessary to understand the key policies, actors and institutions in the DE sector as well as how the sector is structured and organised. Because discourses do not emerge in a vacuum, in this chapter I take a historical approach to how DE became established in Ireland and why it has taken the shape that it has. Given the limitations of the chapter and of history itself, I am purposefully choosing what I see as relevant from a near-infinite range of potential material. Sometimes I think I know this history because I lived it. From memory I can trace significant events. But this exploration of how DE became established in Ireland over the past 50 years, cannot be based on my experience alone, as it offers but one insight into how it came to take shape. Because of this, here I also draw on a variety of reports, research, policy documents and analysis of DE in Ireland.

The story they tell is of the early and on-going influence of missionary organisations and non-governmental development organisations (NGDOs) in Ireland on the organisation of DE, and the growing influence of the state. Rather than conceiving of this in linear, evolutionary terms, it is more appropriate to regard it in terms of waves, with shifting fashions of development and educational policy over time, e.g., interculturalism on the rise and on the wane; human rights as fashionable in one decade with sustainability in another. At the same time, when reviewing “the history of the present”, to use Foucault’s (1979) phrase, what becomes clear is that DE in Ireland has become formalised, institutionalised and professionalised, especially since the 1980s. It moved from a relatively informal activity among NGDOs and in religious-run schools to one which became more ‘mainstreamed’ and influential in national curricula and in initial teacher education. Institutionally, it has become increasingly embedded in state policy and practices, especially through Irish Aid and in its relationships with key actors such as the Irish Development Education Association (IDEA), NGDOs and educational institutions. Like similar activities, it has become increasingly professionalised, largely through the implementation of funding conditions which require the implementation of new managerial and business practices.

In tandem with – influencing and influenced by – these organisational changes, there have been shifts in policy discourses of DE in terms of its pedagogy. Overall, we can see a shift from a development framing of DE to one which is also characterised by ‘the global’ and the growing influence of the language of rights, interculturalism, sustainability and global citizenship education. What started as DE for solidarity and activism has become the ‘action dimension’ understood to be part of the DE process. While there has been a growing differentiation between DE and campaigning and advocacy

on the one hand, these, along with public information about aid and development cooperation have also become increasingly subsumed under the term ‘public engagement’. Furthermore, in line with the implementation of new managerial and business practices, the language of accountability, measurement, outcomes, results and ‘best practice’ have become commonplace.

In this chapter, I explore changes in how DE has been organised in Ireland over time, highlighting key policy and contextual influences. I address shifting discourses and various issues and tensions which characterise relations in the DE sector in Ireland today. In doing so, I question the extent to which organisational and discursive changes have signaled an opening up of the critical potential of DE or its closing down, or both. I structure the chapter chronologically and thematically, focusing on the organisation of DE and DE policy discourses through three periods: the 1970s and 1980s; the 1990s and early 2000s; and from 2008 to the present, as well as more broadly on DE funding in Section Three.

Table 2.1. outlines some significant institutions, policies and discourses over the three periods outlined. In the sections to follow, I discuss each of these in turn.

**Table 2.1. Institutions, Policies and Discourses of DE in Ireland: 1970s – Present**

Establishment of Institution or Agency	Policy or Report Published	Discourses of DE Characteristic of the Period
<b>1970s - 1980s</b>		
1968 - Concern Worldwide established		1. Value-based DE based on global justice and equality – influences from Paulo Freire, structuralist analysis of global North-South inequalities and liberation theology
1973 - Trócaire founded		
1974 - APSO established and Ireland's Bilateral Aid Programme followed Voluntary Agencies Liaison Committee (VALC) established (predecessor of Dóchas)		
1975 - Comhlámh set up as the organisation of returned volunteers in Ireland Higher Education for Development Cooperation (HEDCO) set up		
1977 - CONGOOD replaced VALC		
1985 - Establishment of DE Support Centres (DESC) centres - Dublin and Limerick		
<b>1990s - Mid-2000s</b>		
1990 - Establishment of National DE Grants Committee (NDEGC)	1999 - OECD DAC Peer Review of Development Cooperation in Ireland	The Rise of 'Adjectival Educations' – Education for Sustainable Development, Human Rights Education, Intercultural Education and Global Citizenship Education
1993 - Establishment of the National DE Committee (NCDE) Dóchas established	2001/2 - Report of the Ireland Aid Review Committee	
1997 - Introduction of CSPE into Second-Level Curriculum	2002 - Kenny and O'Malley Report on DE in Ireland	
2002 - DE Unit of Ireland Aid established (DEU) and disbanding of NCDE; a DE Advisory Committee Established (DEAC)	2003 – 2005 - First DE Strategy Plan (Development Cooperation Ireland)	
2003 - Establishment of DICE	2006 – White Paper on Irish Aid	
2004 - IDEA established	2007 – 2011 – Second DE Strategy Plan	
2006 - Establishment of Ubuntu		
<b>Mid-2000s - Present</b>		
2008 - Establishment of IA Volunteering Centre for Public Information	2009 – OECD, DAC Peer Review of Ireland	1. Development Engagement
	2011 – Synthesis Report on DE	2. From Development Education to Global Citizenship Education and Education for Sustainable Development
	2014 - DES Strategy on ESD	
	2015 - GENE Peer Review of Global Education in Ireland	
	2016 - DE Strategy 2017 – 2027 Published	3. 'Best Practice' and 'Accountability'

## 1. Informal Beginnings

### 1.1. 1970s and 1980s – Organisation of DE

The history of DE in Ireland is a history of how a set of practices, institutions, policies and discourses have come to be embedded under a discursive framing of ‘Development Education’ since the 1970s. Though the term itself is often contested, there is consciousness of a ‘DE sector’ among those involved, as well as a number of organisations who promote, support and engage in DE and regular government funding associated with it. In addition, there are government policies and strategies; funding and training opportunities and hundreds of workshops and events which are organised on an annual basis under the rubric of ‘DE’. By 2002, Kenny and O’Malley concluded that “DE has emerged as an integral part of the development cooperation programme to maintain public awareness, education and support the commitment to Ireland’s contribution to the development of less well-off countries. Over the years, DE has matured, diversified and expanded to become a force of social justice and a foundation for the development of civic society” (2002: 40).

Bourn’s broader history of DE suggests that

“DE emerged in the late 1960s and 1970s in Europe and North America in response to the de-colonisation process and the emergence of development as a specific feature of governmental and Non-Governmental Organisations’ (NGOs) policies/ programmes. Funding was given to programmes and projects that encouraged learning and support for development and aid. At first this approach was based on an information delivery model of learning (Hammond, 2002) but, particularly through the work of organisations like Oxfam, it did begin to ‘open up hearts and minds, as well as purses’ (Harrison, 2008), to the problem of poverty in countries overseas. As more NGOs became involved and local DE Centres became established, DE and international volunteering became more popular” (2014: 9/10).

Though there are overlaps with Bourn’s account, including the connection between DE and development cooperation, its origins in Ireland are associated with returning missionaries as far back as the 1950s (Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken, 2011) as well as with volunteers through Comhlámh<sup>1</sup> and with Trócaire’s<sup>2</sup> establishment in 1973. Trócaire made a clear commitment to DE through its ‘dual mandate’ – “abroad to help those in greatest need in developing countries, and at home to raise awareness and campaign for structural change on the causes of poverty” (Trócaire, 2012a: 21). Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken explain that “while the earliest approaches to DE were very much set by missionaries, returned development workers, activists, educators and campaigners, the Irish state increased its involvement and investment in the sector from the mid-1970s onwards” (2011: 5). It was during this period, they argue, that both Trócaire and the Irish Commission for Justice and Peace (ICJP) as well as Comhlámh played significant roles in establishing DE as a core dimension of

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1 For many years the association of returned development workers in Ireland, Comhlámh is a member organisation for global development in Ireland. Further information is available from: [www.comhlamh.org](http://www.comhlamh.org)

2 Trócaire was established as the Catholic development organisation in Ireland in 1973. Further information is available from [www.trocaire.org](http://www.trocaire.org)

development cooperation in Ireland.

Along with the establishment of NGDOs such as Trócaire and Concern Worldwide<sup>3</sup> (hereafter 'Concern'), Ireland's membership of the EEC in 1973 was particularly influential as it "meant that it would have an obligation to contribute to the community's development cooperation activities" (Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken, 2011: 19). An interesting feature of the way in which the state's development cooperation institution was founded related to its initial focus on overseas development work through the establishment of the Agency for Personal Service Overseas (APSO)<sup>4</sup>. It was after its foundation in 1974 that a Bilateral Aid Programme was set up. Starting, therefore, with a focus on the personal, on the individual and on what Irish people could do through a form of lay missionary activity overseas helped the construction of an individualised and personal approach to addressing global development issues in Ireland. The significance of this type of activity and approach to development has remained strong in discourses of development in Ireland since the 1950s and 1960s. This is evident in national surveys of attitudes to development cooperation since the 1980s where "sending skilled volunteers overseas" is regularly considered among the top three contributions that Irish people think can be made to addressing poverty in so-called 'developing countries' (ACDC, 1985 and 1990; Weafer, 2002; Amárach, 2013; Dillon, 2015). On the other hand, through the work of organisations like Comhlámh, this individualised approach to development was transformed, at least among some, into debate and collective activism on return (Hanan, 1996).

One of the first priorities identified by VALC, the Voluntary Agencies Liaison Committee, which was set up in 1974, "was to promote DE within the NGOs themselves and among the public at large" (Dóchas, 2004: 7). At the same time, Dóchas<sup>5</sup> highlights that "DE was treated with a measure of scepticism by some of the NGOs. Even among the organisations themselves, development was often still a poorly defined concept and some felt that debate on development through DE activities could represent a challenge to the NGOs' established programmes. Nevertheless, there was widespread recognition of the need to inform the public of the seriousness and complexity of development issues, which in turn necessitated a coordinated and organised front" (2004: 7). Overall, those involved in the research conducted by Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken suggest that during the 1970s and early 1980s, DE was rather informal. For them, the 1970s brought an "opening up of the agenda" and in 1978 "the government – in response to both internal and external pressures and recommendations – introduced a dedicated budget line for funding for DE initiatives. This official endorsement of DE as part of the Government's overall aid programme represented something of a watershed moment for the state's involvement in DE" (2011: 23). In his rather long speech highlighting his vision for what's involved in Ireland's foreign affairs, Minister Kennedy, Minister for Foreign Affairs at the time, emphasised the

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<sup>3</sup> Established in 1968, Concern Worldwide describes itself as "an international charity working with the world's poorest to transform their lives". Further information is available from [www.concern.net](http://www.concern.net)

<sup>4</sup> APSO was an organisation established by the Department of Foreign Affairs for the promotion of overseas development work in Ireland. It was disbanded in 2001.

<sup>5</sup> Dóchas is the Irish association of NGDOs. Further information is available from: [www.dochas.ie](http://www.dochas.ie)

mutually beneficial nature of development cooperation, the role of APSO and the importance of sharing skills and expertise. He outlined his intention to implement a programme of DE “with the voluntary agencies, which are already active in this area, and with other government departments”, which would “increase Irish consciousness of our responsibilities and will help bring about a situation where this country can take an even more active part in encouraging new and just relationships between developed and developing countries” (Kennedy, 1978: 376). This came at a time of considerable growing commitment to ODA more broadly on the part of governments in Ireland, and the Advisory Committee on Development Cooperation (ACDC) was established in 1979 to advise the Minister on the Irish Aid programme. In 1981 the first Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs with special responsibility for development cooperation was appointed, followed in 1985 by Ireland’s membership of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD, an extremely influential body in relation to Development Cooperation (Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken, 2011).

In the 1980s there was considerable activity in the area of DE in Ireland. Kirby (1992) highlights the influence of liberation theology and returning missionaries from Latin America on the establishment of solidarity groups in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Comhlámh ran its debates (Hanan, 1996), mostly in Dublin but also in Cork, Kilkenny, Galway, Derry, Limerick and Waterford. These were attended by hundreds of people on a regular basis and Comhlámh established a branch in Cork in 1979. Trócaire appointed its first DE officer in 1983 and a resource centre was opened in Dublin. It also started its many partnerships with educational institutions and organisations which were to become the bases for bigger state-funded projects in later years, e.g., in 1985 it started a partnership with Mary Immaculate College in Limerick on a primary education project; in 1988 the Trócaire Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) DE project was established and its partnership with the City of Dublin VEC Curriculum Development Unit (CDVEC CDU) began (Dillon, 2009). Throughout this period, also, the focus of DE on formal education was firmly established with Trócaire’s work on the development of resources and support for teachers and Concern’s focus on its Concern Debates. Both of these activities continue to today. CONGOOD’s (now Dóchas) DE Commission – one of its three working groups from the outset – was also involved in the development of publications including the first ‘75:25 Ireland in an Unequal World’ in 1984 (Dóchas 2004) – its 7<sup>th</sup> edition (now ‘80:20’) was published in 2016 by 80:20. The first of two surveys of attitudes to development cooperation in Ireland in the 1980s was undertaken in 1982 and its recommendations included the establishment of “a council or committee comprised of educationalists and people with expertise in DE” (in Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken, 2011: 26). Interestingly, subsequent reports of national surveys (ACDC, 1990; Weafer, 2002; Amárach, 2013) have consistently found that while Irish people have a strong level of support for development cooperation and aid, their understanding of the complexities involved is disappointingly superficial. Thus these surveys have often been used to provide evidence to justify funding for DE by both state and civil society organisations.



Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken highlight that despite work going on in the 1970s and up to the mid-1980s, some commentators involved in their research point to DE still being a “fringe activity”. There were signs of differences between a justice focus on the one hand and a charity one on the other. It became clear, for example, that there were NGOs who were very active in DE in schools, e.g., Concern and Trócaire and in integrating DE in curricula, especially Trócaire. On the other hand, there was the active involvement by what Dóchas (2004: 19) calls “ordinary people” in DE activities including through, e.g., Comhlámh. This, Dóchas argues, “resulted in a growth of DE activities in the 1980s and the setting up of solidarity groups linking developing countries such as Tanzania, Mozambique and Nicaragua with Ireland”. Throughout this period also, the Waterford Kitui partnership, for example, was engaged with “raising funds and building solidarity with the Kitui district in Kenya ... Kitui Week was held annually in local schools, which led to an interest in DE generally. As the Kitui Partnership achieved its goals and was wound down in the 1990s, the World Development Centre was constituted as a DE centre” (Waterford One World Centre, 2015, no page). Similarly, the Centre for Global Education in Belfast was founded in 1986 “by eight development agencies to provide education services that will enhance awareness of international development issues” (CGE, 2017, no page). Thus, DE became the framing for education and awareness raising which involved public debate on development issues, campaigns, solidarity, workshops, courses and curriculum development. While these were often linked via a DE framing and through the involvement of organisations like Comhlámh, differences in approach were also evident.

## **1. 2. 1970s and 1980s – Discourses of DE**

Organisationally and discursively, the 1970s set the tone for the DE which would follow in Ireland. Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken (2011: 16) argue that “the lasting influence of social and political movements, as well as the role of the community and voluntary sector is an important aspect of the story of DE in Ireland – an influence that can still be seen today” (2011: 16). Because of the role of missionaries in the beginnings of DE in Ireland, they show that this brought with it two different discursive traditions – that of the influence of Paulo Freire and liberation theology on the one hand and the charity perspective which was based on ‘the black babies’ on the other (2011). A key feature of this early work was the link between missionaries, Trócaire, Concern and religious run schools in Ireland, which became a fertile ground for raising awareness among thousands of teachers and students about what was happening in the countries where they worked. Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken also highlight the early origins of another ongoing debate between different perspectives on DE, i.e., the “tension [which] existed between awareness raising approaches that are framed conceptually by a notion of development as charity as opposed to justice, and an associated conflict between providing information to members of the public to generate funds and resources for overseas development work and deeper educative attempts to engage people at home with global issues” (2011:16).

As indicated above, it would appear that there were three broad discursive strands associated with the DE work of NGOs and other civil society organisations. The first is a value-based DE, which is based on global justice and equality and influenced by liberation theology, structuralist analysis of global North-South inequalities and the transformative education work of Paulo Freire (1970). Arguably, influenced largely by politics and Catholic Church engagement with grassroots communities in the face of political oppression in Latin America in the 1980s, this approach was advanced initially by Trócaire and the Irish Commission for Justice and Peace. Trócaire, for example, in its 1984 publication for teachers, 'Dialogue for Development' identified the various arguments for DE. In addition to economic, political, world security and education arguments identified, it talks about "the moral reasons for engaging in DE from a Christian perspective focused on the duty to be concerned with the plight of others and as a small nation to be a 'voice for the voiceless'" (in Dillon, 2009: 10). As such, Trócaire seemed to combine an emphasis on partnership, understanding politics and the root causes of inequality and education for justice (Dillon, 2009). Invoking UN resolutions on the need for DE, through publications like 'Dialogue for Development', Trócaire helped to define understandings of DE in the Irish context, e.g., it highlights various attitudes, knowledge and skills involved and outlines different components of DE including action (Trócaire, 1984). Trócaire also advanced its DE approach significantly through work with parishes and later with other organisations. Trócaire's involvement in Latin America, e.g., through the publicity surrounding Bishop Eamon Casey's attendance at the funeral of Archbishop Oscar Romero in El Salvador in 1980, and protests over President Ronald Regan's visit to Ireland in 1984, also brought a 'solidarity' hue to some DE activity in Ireland.

This 'solidarity' discursive strand was exemplified in solidarity movements as well as in the DE approach of Comhlámh, through its membership groups, debates and campaigns. Hanan highlights that its name, "Comhlámh (hands together), [which] has been variously translated as 'handshake' and 'cooperation' over the years, is now generally taken to mean 'solidarity'" (1996: 14). Established to enable returned development workers to "bear their own particular experience in order to further international development cooperation", one of the objectives of Comhlámh at its outset was to promote "awareness and knowledge among Irish Government and people and public education" (Hanan, 1996: 14/15). Kirby argues that "the role of solidarity groups in the 1980s, in deepening the concern of the Irish public at events in Central America and channelling it in effective ways through lobbying and protest, was very important" (1992: 155). For solidarity groups like Comhlámh, the emphasis was on the creation of public debate about aid and broader development and human rights issues of the time, such as Apartheid in South Africa, Trade and Conflict, as well as on issue- and country-specific campaigns and activism, e.g., through the Comhlámh women's group and Campaign Aid (Hanan, 1996), as well as through the El Salvador Support Committee and the Irish Nicaragua Support Group.

A third discursive strand was also in evidence in the 1970s and '80s, which Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken (2011: 23) call a “development-as-charity perspective”. Focused on humanitarian concerns and economic development (largely understood in modernisation terms) or ‘underdevelopment’ in the countries of the global South, and drawing its influence from Irish missionary and NGDO development work in Africa and Asia, this ‘development-as-charity’ perspective involved promoting awareness and understanding for fundraising purposes. Focused largely on schools, in the 1970s and 1980s, this was combined with more organised and specific value-based DE work such as Concern’s schools debating competition and the development of education packs for religion and geography class on development issues, e.g., on water, sanitation, hunger and famine.

At the time there were also the beginnings of a state discourse on DE, i.e., the framing of DE within development cooperation with emphasis on individual action through overseas development work established at the outset of the BAP; working in partnership with voluntary agencies; and a focus on DE about “the responsibilities that fall on us because of our relatively privileged position in the world” (Kennedy, 1978: 376). According to Kennedy, the Irish state would be significantly influenced in its development cooperation by its membership of the EEC while making “a distinctively Irish contribution to the economic efforts of a number of developing countries” (1978: 373).

## **2. The Formalisation and Institutionalisation of DE**

### **2.1. 1990s to mid-2000s - Organisation**

Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken regard the period from 1987 – 2000, as involving a “move towards institutionalising DE within the formal education curriculum” (2011: 27). During this time two DE Support Centres (DESC) were set up (in Dublin and Limerick) by the Department of Foreign Affairs with the aim of supporting professionals working in DE. In addition, Trócaire continued its work in forging partnerships and projects with organisations such as the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) with its DE for Youth project and in relation to citizenship education (with the CDVEC CDU) and Civic Social and Political Education (CSPE) was introduced to the junior cycle curriculum in 1997 (Dillon, 2009). The introduction of CSPE brought with it a lot of hope for the inclusion of DE perspectives and content into the formal second-level curriculum, especially as there was a clear action element to assessment. On the other hand, there were significant challenges in its implementation (see Doorley, 2015; Bryan and Bracken, 2011; Jeffers, 2008). Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken also highlight the growing place for DE in higher education with the establishment of a development resource centre at the library in UCD, the ongoing work by Kimmage Development Studies Centre and other higher level institutions in development studies and the link between DESC and St. Patrick’s College of

Teacher Education in Drumcondra, where DESC was located. This led to the introduction of a module on DE as part of the curriculum for teacher training there, and later to the establishment of the Development and Intercultural Education (DICE) project.

In terms of civil society more broadly, Hanan (1996) refers to two Comhlámh projects, 'Bringing it All Back Home' (BIABH) (1987 – 1990), which tried to harness the interest of returning volunteers in DE in Ireland, and 'Network Outreach for DE' (NODE) (1991 – 1998). These formalised the DE work of Comhlámh and other DE groups in Ireland. According to Hanan, the NODE project "did not target returned development workers as much as the BIABH project, but put its effort into providing training, support and networking opportunities for grassroots development educators generally" (1996: 89). As such, its role was to act as a support network and its membership was made up largely of those involved in regional One World Centres or DE groups around the country. These projects were funded by the European Commission with matching funding from Irish Aid. By the time that Kenny and O'Malley were undertaking their research on DE in Ireland in 2002, there were 12 regional groups involved in DE as well as numerous national networks and groups. A few years later, Harris (n.d.) identifies that at her time of writing there were only three left in the Republic of Ireland.

Institutionally, in the 1990s, DE became consolidated within the Irish development cooperation sector more broadly. The National DE Grants Committee was established by the government in 1990 followed by the National Committee for DE (NCDE) in 1993. State funding for DE also grew throughout the 1990s albeit with a percentage reduction in funding by comparison to overall ODA by the end of the 1990s. Throughout this period there were a number of influential reviews. The OECD, DAC Peer Review in 1999 influenced a time of broader re-structuring within state development cooperation, and by extension DE, in Ireland. This re-structuring was based on the assumption, as outlined in the Peer Review, that there were changes necessary to the organisation and management of Irish Aid in order to support the growth of ODA.

Another review of significance was the Review of Ireland Aid (2001). Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken explain that it "was initiated following a 'watershed in the history of official development policy' when the Government made the commitment that Ireland would reach the UN aid target of 0.7% by 2007, with an interim target of .45% to be achieved at the end of 2002" (2011: 37). This was a review of the structures, organisation and funding of Ireland Aid and its activities. It built on the DAC Peer Review (OECD, 1999) and in the case of DE, on a review of NCDE which was undertaken around the same time. The disbandment of the NCDE, recommended by the Report of the Ireland Aid Review Committee centralised DE provision at the time. This was part of a general centralising of state development cooperation with the almost simultaneous disbandment of APSO. Up to this time, civil society actors had been represented on the NCDE through 15 members appointed to the committee by the Minister. Hoeck and Wegimont (2003: 46) explain that "there was a high level of civil society

involvement – including youth, trade union and women’s sector. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was represented, as was the Ministry for Education and Science, both directly and through the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)”. Having a role in promoting DE, administering grants, formulating policy and encouraging good practice, this gave members a sense of ownership over DE in Ireland, albeit in limited and sometimes frustrating ways (Derxx and Hannon, 1997, in Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken, 2011).

Around this time research was commissioned by Dóchas into DE in Ireland (Kenny and O’Malley, 2002). The report highlights that respondents identified the biggest achievement of DE as “their impact on target groups through contact and resource materials. The greatest challenge is the lack of a national strategic plan that will consolidate the DE sector, prioritise targeting and secure resources” (2002: 7). Highlighting the role that Dóchas has to play in supporting the development of the DE sector in Ireland, Kenny and O’Malley argue that there is “urgent work to be done. The definition of DE is still unclear and is being interpreted diversely. There is a lack of clarity of whether DE is a content or a process ... there is a need for a structure to support DE activists, paid and unpaid, on an on-going basis” (2002: 8). Recommending the need for a strategic plan for DE in Ireland and that the DE sector should play a leading role in its development, they highlight the need for “national and transnational inclusive dialogue on the nature and context of DE” and for “instituting a model of ‘best practice’ that promotes the highest standards in all aspects of DE work” (2002: 8).

In the discussion of findings, Kenny and O’Malley (2002) make a number of interesting observations and influential recommendations which throw some light on the DE sector and DE practice at the time. Firstly, the report identifies 116 groups and organisations involved in DE. Currently membership of IDEA is made up of 70 organisations and groups and 41 individual members (IDEA, 2017a). However, some of those groups involved in the research in 2002 have since been disbanded. A second point worth noting is the recommendation from Kenny and O’Malley (2002: 38) that funding for DE should not come from “Ireland Aid but from the Department responsible for integrated [sic] education, the Department of Education and Science. This shift requires a political and administrative adjustment based on a focused policy input. Otherwise those involved in DE will remain tinkering at the edges of ‘real’ education” (2002: 38). This has been something of a contentious issue over the years, one which re-emerged during the GENE Review in 2015. Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken identify this tension between DE for supporting ODA and DE for critical global citizenship, with the former associated with DE located in development cooperation and the latter in the DES, as a key one which has characterised different approaches to and emphases within DE in the Irish context over many years (2011). McCloskey (2014) highlights that this is related to the “role of DE vis-a-vis public engagement [which] has been a contested one, however, with some statutory agencies regarding it as a means to strengthen support for aid delivery rather than engage in political advocacy” (2014: 9). He argues that this has presented DE practitioners with challenges in “trying to integrate development issues into

national curricula and seek[ing] statutory support and recognition for their work” (ibid). Thirdly, Kenny and O’Malley note the challenge with mainstreaming DE into the formal sector particularly for those who emphasise a process orientation in DE. They show the diversity within the sector and argue “that there is a lack of focus in all this activity” (2002: 39). Highlighting the stress and relative isolation of those involved in DE, they show that most of those involved “targeted the formal and non-formal sector primarily” and they raise “concerns about the capacity of people delivering DE ... because of the spread of groups, target groups and functions, there is a very significant need for capacity building of staff, volunteers, boards and committees to improve DE effectiveness” (2002: 39). These and earlier cited comments provided the justification for the first Irish Aid strategic plan for DE in 2003 and the establishment of IDEA in 2004.

The early 2000s was a time of increased government resources to ODA in general and to DE more specifically (see Table 2.2.). Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken argue that “moving the remit of DE into the Department of Foreign Affairs was a major shift in terms of the State’s involvement in DE. With this step, DCI [Irish Aid’s name at the time] recognised DE as an essential part of their ODA programme” (2011: 41). They argue that the 2000s can be “characterised, at least from an [sic] DCI perspective, as a decade in which the work of the DEU was underpinned by two subsequent strategic plans” (2011: 41). They also note as significant, Irish aid’s “involvement in setting up and developing the Global Education Network Europe (GENE) network” in 2001, which is “the European network of ministries, agencies and other national bodies responsible for support, funding and policy-making in the field of Global Education” (2011: 45/46).

Following the establishment of the DEU within the Department of Foreign Affairs, the first strategic plan for DE was developed in 2003. Developed by DCI in consultation with others, including DE grants recipients, it referred to the important role of DE in Development Cooperation, as highlighted in the Review of Ireland Aid, and to the White Paper on Education: Charting Our Education Future (1995) which “emphasises the need to cultivate an awareness of global issues” (DCI, 2003: 10). Its mission is that “every person in Ireland will have access to educational opportunities to be aware of and understand their rights and responsibilities as global citizens and their potential to effect change for a more just and equal world” (2003: 11). Highlighting “the mainstreaming of DE within education in Ireland” as a key aim, its objectives included the integration of “a DE perspective in relevant education policies ... [and] in selected areas in the formal and non-formal education sectors” (2003: 12). It also focused on supporting capacity building within “civil society organisations in Ireland to increase public understanding of development issues; to promote the effective use of communications to increase public understanding of development issues; and to identify and maximise educational opportunities for public engagement with the DCI programme” (DCI, 2003: 12). Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken highlight that in their research there were mixed feelings about the significance of the strategic plan with some identifying it as an important step and others suggesting that “CSOs were

already doing these things before the strategic plan was published. Even though some were critical of the plan, almost all participants agreed that DCI had consulted extensively in the lead-up to both strategic plans” (2011: 45).

As indicated by the vision, aim and objectives of the strategy, and with additional funding in place for DE in the early 2000s (up to 2008), there was increased activity in DE in Ireland at the time. Furthermore, institutions were put in place to facilitate the mainstreaming of DE, e.g., new strategic partnerships with DICE and NYCI, “investing in multi-annual funding arrangements to ensure consistency of delivery, and providing additional funding through one-year grants” (Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken, 2011: 46). McCloskey argues that with the publication of the White Paper on Irish Aid (Irish Aid, 2006) as well as the two strategic plans, increased funding and the “formation of a European Union DE network, DEEEP, [which] strengthened co-ordination, advocacy and networking within the EU ... the DE sector was therefore becoming integrated into official development policy having previously languished in the 1970s and 1980s on the margins of education policy and practice” (McCloskey, 2014: 10). This increased support on the part of Irish Aid contributed to increasing dependence by organisations within the sector on Irish Aid as funder. McCloskey argues that “the more interventionist approach of the government regrettably resulted in reduced support for DE from within the non-governmental development sector which prioritised other areas of activity such as campaigns, fundraising and overseas aid ... this left the sector more dependent on government resources and vulnerable to changes in policy” (2014: 11).

Despite increased dependence on Irish Aid, NGOs and other actors within the DE sector strengthened their DE work through their membership of the DE Action Committee (later the development education group (DEG) of Dóchas (DEAC) and, from 2004, through the growing significance of IDEA as a network to support the development of DE in the Irish context. According to IDEA, it “grew out of calls from the DE sector for an umbrella association to represent them nationally. Since its inception, IDEA has been a member-led organisation, with members actively engaged in the management and direction of the association” (IDEA, 2017). At the time, Irish Aid encouraged DE sector representatives to come together and to form a network which would fulfill the required roles in capacity development, representation of the sector and advocacy that were outlined as weaknesses in the Kenny and O’Malley report (2002). As outlined in its 2014 description of its strategic aims, these are “to strengthen the capacity and professional development of the sector; to raise awareness of, and make the case for, DE; to create a more enabling policy environment for DE; and to strengthen IDEA’s capacity to work effectively” (IDEA, 2017). Corcoran (2005) shows that by 2005, IDEA already had 40 organisational members.

## **2.2. 1990s – mid-2000s – Discourses of DE**

### **2.2.1. The Rise of 'Adjectival Educations'**

A significant feature of policy discourses of DE in the 1990s and 2000s was the rise of 'adjectival educations'. Discursively, they represent the coming together of influences from international policy as well as domestic politics. From the Rio Conference in 1992 with its emphasis on sustainable development to the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995 and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN Declaration on Human Rights in 1998, these 'adjectival educations' were identified as related to DE and fundable by Irish Aid under its DE scheme, once they involved a global dimension. These included education for sustainable development (ESD), human rights education (HRE), intercultural education (ICE) and global citizenship education (GCE).

When it comes to ESD, according to McKeown, "from the time sustainable development was first endorsed at the UN General Assembly in 1987, the parallel concept of education to support sustainable development has also been explored ... thoughts concerning ESD were captured in Chapter 36 of Agenda 21, "promoting education, public awareness, and training" (2006: 12). At the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in South Africa in 2002, commitments to ESD were developed and in 2005, the United Nations Decade for Education for Sustainable Development was launched, to run from 2005 to 2014. In 2007 a discussion paper was prepared and consultation was held in Ireland in an effort to develop a national strategy on ESD. In the end, it wasn't until 2014 that this strategy was developed. In its 2007 discussion paper, ESD is identified as "broader than environmental education and encompasses many other aspects of education such as development education, human rights education, citizenship education, intercultural educations and peace education" (ECO-UNESCO, 2007: 23). The paper acknowledges that in other countries such a strategy usually builds on an existing environmental education strategy, whereas in the Irish case, though there is no specific environmental strategy to build on, "Irish Aid have a well-developed Development Education Unit and a Development Education Strategy that will run from 2007 to 2011 with explicit reference to Education for Sustainable Development" (ECO-UNESCO, 2007: 23/24). Clearly here, apart from any personal or organisational interests involved, there are international imperatives for the introduction of ESD into education in Ireland and, given its strategic significance and overlapping realms of interest, its natural companion is considered to be DE.

As HRE Officer for Amnesty International in Ireland in the late 1990s, it seemed to me that Trócaire and Amnesty International were particularly influential in the advancement of HRE in Ireland. I became very aware of Amnesty's use of international human rights frameworks to promote HRE support within the Irish government. This was most particularly the case in relation to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (ratified by Ireland in 1992). The CRC stipulates that "education of



the child shall be directed to ... the development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the UN” (1990, Article 29, 1b), and a UN Decade for HRE was declared in 1995. Trócaire’s framing of its DE work, at the time, was in human rights terms (Kilcullen, 1998) and many projects and resources were developed in this context, including its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary conference which focused on human rights challenges. Furthermore, at the time, Trócaire supported influential curriculum development work through the CDVEC with projects on human rights and citizenship education (IHRC, 2013). Human Rights also framed Banúlacht’s<sup>6</sup> feminist development education work with community women’s groups at the time with its focus on the Beijing Platform for Action. Despite this human rights framing, and though the Review of Ireland Aid (2002) as well as the White Paper on Irish Aid (2006) identify human rights as central to Ireland’s development cooperation, it is interesting to note that there are no references to HRE in either, with education framed in DE terms throughout.

Where ESD and HRE had their origins in international development and human rights policy, ICE and GCE became important as an education strategy for promoting integration and anti-racism in the face of a changing Ireland. At the same time, the articulation of ICE in strategic terms resulted from “a Government commitment at the World Conference against Racism in Durban (2001) to develop and implement a National Action Plan Against Racism (NPAR) (GoI, 2010, no page)”. In introducing the government strategy and identifying its context, the first line sets out that “Ireland has undergone significant social, cultural, demographic and economic change since the mid- 1990s ... The 2006 census showed that 10% of residents on the census date were non- Irish nationals, representing some 200 countries” (GoI, 2010: 1). Making reference to international human rights commitments, it interestingly does not make any connections to global development or development education. In the guidelines developed for teachers in primary schools there are significant connections made between intercultural education and citizenship education, including global citizenship education. Growing references to GCE reflected the emphasis on citizenship education at second level with the introduction of CSPE as well as growing concerns about the need for citizenship education in East and Central Europe following the fall of the Berlin Wall and the expansion of the EU in the 1990s and early 2000s. Duggan (2015) also links citizenship education in Ireland to the work of a taskforce on active citizenship, published in 2006.

By the time the first Strategy on DE was published in 2003, the link was already made by government between DE and these adjectival educations: “Development education brings a justice and global dimension to education initiatives and can contribute to the challenge of cultural pluralism and racism in our society. It shares similarities in approach, core values and common objectives, with a range of other related educations such as Intercultural Education (ICE), Anti-Racism Education (ARE), Multicultural Education and Human Rights Education. We will encourage the integration of a global

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<sup>6</sup> Banúlacht was a feminist development education organistaion which was established from the 'Women's Group' in Comhlámh in the 1980s and which disbanded in 2012.

and justice perspective in these programmes and policies” (DCI, 2003: 13). In addition, the understanding of DE presented is towards “action for global citizenship and participation” (2003: 11). While there is no specific reference to education for sustainable development in the 2003 strategy, this is addressed in the 2007 strategy where one of the priorities identified is to “explore opportunities to support Education for Sustainable Development within the broader context of development education” (Irish Aid 2007: 9). It is interesting to note that there is no specific mention of HRE in that document and references to ICE are to the DICE project. The same applies to the 2016 strategy where HRE and ICE seem to have been overtaken in popularity by ESD (seven references) and GCE, which made a new entry into strategic plans with 15 references (Irish Aid, 2016a). Significantly, in an Irish context, while these different educations were emerging, they were also framed as companions to, complimentary to or subsumed under DE. This brought an eclecticism to the language and practices of DE not previously identifiable and it also showed the growing influence of the formal sector and international policy concerns, on discourses of DE in Ireland.

The next section briefly addresses DE funding before I return to the organisation of DE and DE discourses from the mid-2000s.

### **3. Funding of DE**

Funding for DE began with the NGDOs in the 1970s. While two of the big NGDOs, Concern Worldwide and Trócaire, still provide funding to other organisations to engage in DE and their budgets for DE are relatively high, increasingly DE has been funded by the Irish State and the EU. Within the Irish State, responsibility for funding DE lies with Irish Aid under the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). In 2002 when Kenny and O’Malley undertook their research, they explain that “taken as a total figure NGOs and other programmes are contributing a greater level of funding to DE in Ireland than the government through the NCDE” (2002: 7). There are currently no calculations of the costs of teacher training in DE; of teacher time spent on DE-related activities in schools; of the overall costs of running DE programmes at higher education level or of voluntary time which goes into DE activities in all of the above contexts as well as in non-formal education settings. Though little research exists on DE funding from the 1970s, this gap has recently been addressed, to some extent, with research commissioned by Dóchas in 2017 on state funding for DE (Barry, 2017). Barry highlights the challenges, identified here, of calculating Irish Aid DE funding, as some is not differentiated from public engagement (information or awareness). Despite this it is possible to glean some patterns in DE funding from its allocations within the Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) budget as well as funding from NGDOs.

Given its location within ODA, spending on DE by the state has been subject to the vagaries of overall

ODA budgets since the 1970s. Over the past 40 years, there has been a considerable expansion in the development cooperation field in Ireland, with periods of expansion and contraction therein. This has been significantly driven by Ireland’s international commitments to funding for ‘official development assistance’ (ODA), by the changing fortunes of the Irish economy and by the growth of NGDO engagement during this time (Pratt et al, 2006). It has also been influenced by changing governments with coalitions more likely to support increased ODA. Figures for ODA, including for DE and public information, are available in Table 2.2.

**Table 2.2. Select Years of Government Expenditure on ODA allocations including DE 1985 – 2014**

Year	ODA	Total Budget	DE	DE as a % of Total Budget	Public Information	% of Total Budget	Public Info as a % of DE Budget
1985	39m punts	290,000 punts		0.74%	N/A	N/A	N/A
1990	N/A	370,000 punts		1.075	N/A	N/A	N/A
1992	N/A	460,000 punts		1.14%	N/A	N/A	N/A
1994	75.2m punts	675,000 punts		0.90%	N/A	N/A	N/A
1995	88.9m punts	1.1m punts (budgeted)		1.24%	N/A	N/A	N/A
1996	105.8m punts	1.15m punts (budgeted)		1.09%	N/A	N/A	N/A
1998	€177.2m	€1.4m		.79%	€.13m	0.071	9.2%
1999	€230.2m	€1.2m		.55%	€.13m	0.056	10.8%
2000	€255.6m	€1.6m		.64%	€.13m	0.049	8.1%
2001	€320.1m	€2.3m		.72%	€.17m	0.053	7.3%
2002	€422m	€2.1m		.50%	€.25m	0.059	11.9%
2003	€454m	€2.5m		.55%	€.76m	0.167	30.4%
2007	€870.87m	€5.416m		.62%	€1.791m	0.20	33.06%
2008	€920.66m	€5.718m		.62%	€2.281m	0.247	39.89%
2009	€772.20m	€4.955m		.64%	€1.790m	0.231	36.12%
2010	€675.84m	€4.658m		.68%	€1.045m	0.154	22.43%
2011	€657.04m	€3.236m		.49%	€.962m	0.14	29.72%
2012	€628.90m	€3.207m		.50%	€1.052m	0.16	32.80%
2013	€627.10m	€2.992m		.47%	€1.215m	0.19	40.60%
2014	€602.7m	€2.9m		.48%	€2.619 m (all dev awareness excluding DE)	0.434 (not comparable)	

[Sources: 1985 – 1996 taken from Smillie (1996: 114); 1998 – 2003 taken from Hoeck and Wegimont (2003: 25) and 2007 – 2014 taken from GENE (2015). Figures for Public Information obtained from Hoeck and Wegimont (2003) and Irish Aid Annual Reports 2008 – 2015.]<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup>It is interesting to note Barry’s (2017) more up-to-date figures than those presented in Table 2.2. above suggest a higher proportion of ‘investment’ by Irish Aid in DE as she includes programme grant allocations which include funding of public engagement initiatives.

As evident in Table 2.2., in terms of ODA spending on DE, the highest proportion allocation of spending was from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s culminating in a spend of 1.24 per cent of the ODA budget in 1995. Overall, the proportion of ODA spending on DE has declined – from a high of 1.24 per cent in 1995 to .48 per cent in 2014. As the overall spend on ODA grew considerably in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the proportion spent on DE declined remarkably. Hoeck and Wegimont argue that “somewhat ironically, a DE campaign, which in 2000/2001 encouraged the Irish government to increase ODA to 0.7 per cent of GNP by 2007, while successful, has meant that the percentage of ODA to DE has been declining as ODA itself increases. Following sustained lobbying in 2000 by the National Committee for DE (whose original remit included the task of lobbying government for adequate funding for DE) and by NGOs, significant increases were achieved for 2001” (2003: 48).

O’Neill (2012) explores ODA funding to civil society more generally and argues that it was on a downward trend since 2008. Peaking at €134 million in 2008, it was down to €90.4 million in 2012. “In the case of expenditure under the civil society programme fund ... Irish Aid has insisted that the 18 NGDOs that receive funding from it devolve part of their programme of work to strategic engagement with the Irish public” (O’Neill, 2012: 387). In 2016 the requirements for DE to be part of this funding scheme were changed, with insistence that organisations engage in public engagement or information, with DE optional (Irish Aid, 2016b).

Despite the proportionate cuts relative to ODA, in the early 2000s, spending on DE increased considerably with 2008 marking the year of highest Irish Aid funding to DE. GENE highlights that “as the difficult economic situation hit home in Ireland from 2009, funding for DE declined annually, going below €3 million by 2013” (2015: 37). These cuts were significant both in terms of overall ODA, with a cut of 21 per cent between 2009 and 2014, and in DE, with a cut of 41 per cent between 2009 and 2014, considerably more in proportionate terms.

In addition to budget allocations to DE, Table 2.2. above shows the government allocations to ‘public information’ or ‘development awareness’ from 1998 to 2014. As can be seen from this table, though allocations are relatively small, the proportion of funding to public information as a percentage of funding to DE has maintained the growth achieved in 2003. While percentage allocations to DE and to public information have fallen since 2010, proportionately, spending on public information has fallen less dramatically, and this despite the move of the Irish Aid Volunteer Centre from O’Connell Street to Clonmel Street in 2014<sup>8</sup>. The GENE Review also provides some interesting figures in terms of the allocation of DE funding from 2007 to 2015. Indicating the proportion of the DE budget spent on the Annual DE grant as well as on strategic partnerships, it is clear that there has been a significant decline in allocation of funding through the annual grants over this period, i.e., from 75 per cent of the DE

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<sup>8</sup> In 2008 Irish Aid established a public information centre in Dublin City Centre as a means of providing information on Ireland’s ODA programme.

budget in 2007 to 28 per cent estimated in 2015. In tandem with this, the proportion of the DE budget allocated to strategic partnerships has grown from 19 per cent in 2007 to 52 per cent in 2015. With reference to the budget for 2015, in response to a query to Irish Aid about the precise total figure spent on DE by Irish Aid, including that of programme partners, I was informed that “the figure of €3.4m ... is the budget for the Development Education Unit. The figure of €4.67m ... also includes expenditure by programme partners on both DE and public engagement as well as expenditure by our Communications Unit on public outreach” (Anon.<sup>9</sup>). Unfortunately, this did not provide the detailed information requested as Irish Aid has not differentiated between DE and public engagement or awareness funding to date. Barry highlights that funding for DE via its programme grant has been ambiguous in that it has included “funding for public engagement initiatives” (2017, p.10). She estimates the funding to be approximately €800,000 to five NGOs in 2017<sup>10</sup>.

As indicated above, there have been calls both for more government spending on ODA by Irish governments and for more of the ODA budget to be allocated to DE throughout this period. In terms of calls for increased spending on DE, Smillie (1996: 113) highlights that “Dóchas, the NGO umbrella organisation, has called for DE spending to be increased to 5 per cent of bilateral spending by 1997. (The 1995 estimate represents about 2.8 per cent of bilateral spending.)” This call was part of an overall campaign in Ireland in 1987 which was initiated “following the government’s decision to cut the aid programme by 26% ... in 1988 ... In addition to this campaign, the DEC (DE Commission of CONGOOD) ran a separate campaign calling for 5% of bilateral aid to be spent on DE activities” (Dóchas, 2004: 12). Hanan (1996) gives a good insight into ‘Campaign Aid’ in the 1980s and 1990s, which campaigned for Ireland to reach its UN commitment of 0.7 per cent of GNP to ODA.

In more recent years, IDEA has argued that one of the significant challenges for DE in Ireland is “underinvestment” and they describe it as a “significant barrier to achieving the aim of integrating DE into lifelong learning in Ireland .... overall levels of investment are not sufficient and the lack of overall strategic framework results in inconsistencies, uncertainties and a drain of expertise from the sector” (2015: 2). Their recent call for a specific increase of 3% of ODA (IDEA, 2017), signals a return to earlier strategies to call for specific allocations of ODA to be spent on DE. Dóchas has also been reluctant in recent years to specify allocations of ODA to DE. In its submission to Irish Aid on DE in 2015, it recognises the importance of DE, highlights “Ireland’s role as a European leader in DE” (2015: 3) and identifies the lack of availability of resources and “devastating cuts” in ODA and DE funding as significant barriers. It acknowledges that the “DE sector feels increasingly under pressure for reasons of: financing, value for money and impact measurement; a shift towards greater emphasis on public information and fundraising; as well as the understanding of their work, coupled with

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<sup>9</sup> This Irish Aid official cannot be named for confidentiality reasons.

<sup>10</sup> Programme Grant partners who are funded for DE under the programme grant II funding from 2017 are: Children in Crossfire, Concern Worldwide, Plan Ireland, Gorta Self Help Africa and Trócaire. This represents a reduced number of organisations from the previous group of 12 organisations who were in receipt of development awareness funding under the first programme grant scheme. Barry explains the intention on the part of Irish Aid to disaggregate DE from public engagement initiatives in the future (2017).

expectations of it and the value placed on it” (2015: 5/6). At the same time, while it calls for a review of funding modalities, the ongoing recognition of DE as “a key driver of public engagement” and “investment in research and knowledge to be made central to the next Strategic Plan” (2015: 1), it does not call for additional funding to be allocated to DE.

As outlined earlier, Irish Aid is the biggest funder of DE in Ireland (Murphy and IDEA, 2015) but the precise spending on DE is hard to calculate. Trócaire and Concern are also considerable funders of DE in Ireland, though again, their published figures are difficult to interpret (see Table 2.3.), with Concern’s funding for DE included in a budget for DE and advocacy and Trócaire’s in communications and DE. In response to a query sent to Concern, a DE official clarified that Concern spend approx. €750,000 each year on DE, of which approx. €300,000 is Irish Aid funding, none of which is used for strategic funding of partners. Information from a similar query to Trócaire highlights that over the past five years its spending has moved from nearly €600,000 in 2013/14 to approx. €430,000 in 2017/18 with also approx. €300,000 of that coming from Irish Aid. An additional EC grant of €280,000 over three years is used for a DEAR funded Global Schools project. On the basis of this information, approx. 40 per cent of Concern’s DE funding and between 50 per cent and 70 per cent of Trócaire’s comes from Irish Aid.

**Table 2.3. Concern Worldwide and Trócaire DE Funding**

Year	Concern DE (up to 2003 and DE and Advocacy after that) Totals	Grant Funding to Partners	Total Concern Expenditure	DE and Advocacy as % of total expenditure	Trócaire expenditure on communications and ed programmes	Grant Funding to Partners	Total Trócaire Expenditure	DE as % of total expenditure
2003	€1.6m	€99,000	€95.4m	1.6%	€3.06m	€233,000	€47.476m	6.4%
2004	€1.869m	N/A	€89m	2.08%	€3.49m	N/A	€44.703m	7.8%
2005	€3.429m	N/A	€109.7m	3.4%	€2.93m	N/A	€52.413m	5.5%
2006	€4.348m	N/A	€128.2m	3.4%	€2.93m	N/A	€65.112m	4.5%
2007	€4.555m	N/A	€125.8m	3.64%	€4.56m	N/A	€64.212m	7.1%
2008	€4.301m	N/A	€136.8m	3.14%	€4.18m	N/A	€59.894m	6.9%
2009	€3,084m	€38,000	€124.6m	2.47%	€4.31m	N/A	€66.509m	6.4%
2010	€3.227m	€10,000	€150.8m	2.13%	€3.41m	N/A	€54.643m	6.2%
2011	€3.393m	€30,000	€160.3m	2.12%	€2.77m	N/A	€51.939m	5.3%
2012	€3.393m	€157,000	€147.3m	2.3%	€3.02m	N/A	€61.391m	4.9%
2013	€3.862m	€159,000	€129m	2.99%	€3.37m	N/A	€64.700m	5.2%
2014	€3.601m	€159,000	€138m	2.6%	€4.14m	N/A	€66.500m	6.2%
2015	€3.689m	€159,000	€177m	2.08%	€2.50m	N/A	€63.185m	3.9%

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[Sources: Concern Annual Reports 2003 – 2014; Trócaire Annual Reports 2003 – 2016]

As outlined in the figures in Table 2.3. with regard to spending on DE by Concern, figures are only available online from 2003. Up until 2003, figures represent spending on DE alone with a change since 2004 to reporting on spending on DE and advocacy. It is clear from Table 2.3. that there has been a general decline in percentage spending on DE and advocacy by comparison to overall expenditure since 2005 with a slight rise since 2012. In general, though amounts are relatively high, they represent a small percentage of Concern Worldwide’s overall spending with the highest percentage spending in 2007 at 3.64 per cent. In terms of NGDO spending and funding to the DE sector, both Concern Worldwide and Trócaire provide grant funding to other DE organisations and groups to engage in DE and advocacy in Ireland. Figures for Concern grants to other organisations are not available in Annual Reports between 2004 and 2008 but reporting on these return in 2009. From 2012 there was a marked increase in the proportion of DE to other organisations, rising from €30,000 to €157,000 between 2011 and 2012 and stabilising around that figure up to 2014.

There are no reports of Trócaire’s grant scheme in annual reports and accounts since 2003. As outlined above, the percentage of overall funding to DE is hard to identify as it is reported on with communication. For many years, DE has been said to occupy a unique position within the history of Trócaire with the Irish bishops committing to 20 per cent of funding to DE from the outset. This history is charted in Dillon (2009) where key events, resources, strategic partnerships, etc. are discussed in depth. Unfortunately, there is no account of the funding allocation to DE in that historical account, though Dillon does remind us that from its establishment in 1973, Trócaire spent its funds as follows “70% on long term development, 10% on emergency relief (outside of special appeals) and 20% on DE” (2009: 7). By the time McEvoy and Mathven carried out an evaluation of the Irish Aid (Development Cooperation Ireland at the time) Multi-Annual Programme Scheme partnership with Trócaire in 2005, this commitment of 20 per cent of funding to DE had changed from a general 20 per cent to “20% of its unrestricted income donated by the Irish public” (2005: 6). From 2012, its funding in this area became part of its broader ‘Mobilising for Justice’ approach, discussed below.

In summary, therefore, in terms of DE funding, it is notable that Irish Aid is the biggest funder of DE in Ireland and that funding has reduced considerably in the wake of the financial crash in 2008. Significantly, reductions in funding to DE have been disproportionate when compared with reductions in spending for other development activities and spending on public information as a proportion of the DE budget has grown significantly. Overall, government spending on DE is substantially below recommendations from Dóchas and the DE Commission of CONGOOD in 1988 – 5 per cent of the Bilateral Aid Programme and of the UNDP in 2005 – 3 per cent of ODA. At .48 per cent, it represents,

according to Helmut Hartmeyer<sup>11</sup>, an average proportionate spend across the EU<sup>12</sup>. From an NGDO perspective, both Concern Worldwide and Trócaire also reduced funding when faced with the economic crisis and spending on this area has not returned, in either case, to the highs recorded for 2007.

#### **4. From 2008: Fall-Out from the Financial Crisis and the New Professionalisation of DE**

##### **4.1. From 2008 - Organisation**

###### **4.1.1. Increased Role of Government, the Recession and 'The Synthesis Paper'**

There is little doubt that the period following 2008 has been characterised by the fall-out from the global financial crisis and the subsequent recession and austerity in Ireland. As a result, there were immediate and significant cuts to ODA overall, and disproportionately to DE, as discussed above. In advance of the recession, Irish Aid's second strategic plan (2007 – 2011) was developed, which makes a commitment to promote DE through the provision of “high-quality programmes to teachers and others involved in DE and by working with the education sector, NGOs and civil society partners” (Irish Aid, 2007: 8). Khoo (2011: 1) argues that “the policy environment for DE became more strongly linked with official aid policy after the UK and Irish governments issued White Papers on International Development. Substantial government funding and broad support for DE followed, resulting in development awareness and education activities becoming more programmatic ... an ambitious agenda began to emerge around the mainstreaming, formalisation and professionalisation of DE”. In the light of this, she highlights, following Bourn, questions over whether “governmental influence and professionalisation have meant de-radicalisation and the accommodation of dominant social and political ideas (Bourn, 2011)” (2011: 1).

Khoo (2011: 2) argues that as a result of the recession, DE has moved “from an expansionary to a contractionary or survivalist mode” and she refers to Stephen O'Brien's remarks regarding policy shifts in the UK, that “a ‘double duty’ must now be fulfilled: showing the benefit to the intended beneficiaries – the poor in developing countries – while delivering ‘results’ – transparency, accountability and value for money to the UK tax payers”. The Synthesis Paper (Irish Aid, 2011: 2), which is a compilation of reviews undertaken of DE in 2011, provides a unique insight into DE provision in Ireland in the late 2000s and into suggestions for ‘surviving the recession’. In particular, it addresses the “integration of DE into the formal and non-formal education sectors”. According to the Synthesis Paper, by the late 2000s, the main strategic priorities for Irish Aid in relation to DE were “maximising current and prospective curriculum and policy opportunities to integrate DE in the formal

<sup>11</sup> In answer to a question raised by me at the launch of the GENE Review Report, November 2015.

<sup>12</sup> There are no figures of EU funding currently available.



and non-formal sectors; building the capacity of educators to teach DE; promoting models of effective practice for delivery of DE and ensuring the provision of good quality educational resources” (2011: 3).

The Synthesis Paper (2011) highlights the extent and range of DE activity in Ireland at the time and some of the actors involved, indicating strengths, e.g., in relation to DE in initial primary teacher education (ITE) through the DICE project; the number of further education accredited courses provided; DE with development volunteers; the Irish Aid partnership with the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI); modules in higher education and extra-curricular activities as well as school networks and school linking projects at second level. Despite this level of activity, it acknowledges that the aims of the White Paper, i.e., that everyone would have the opportunity to avail of DE, were not being met. The report argues that there is a need for new “tools and processes to measure the impact and reach of DE ... both at a national and at a project level”. Without these, the report argues, it is “very difficult to chart progress being made in integrating DE” and Irish Aid needs to “find a way of tracking more closely the formal and non-formal learning organisations that are receiving support, to ensure that separate interventions and projects are not all targeting the same pool of learners. It will also be important to gain insight into the depth or levels of learning being provided” (2011: 8). Thus, the Synthesis Paper links the imperative of integration of DE with the need to develop mechanisms for measuring success so that it can provide evidence of what DE is achieving. This report coincided with the integration of new management and governance structures in Irish Aid more broadly in the light of broader public-sector reform, following restructuring imposed by the Troika. Hardiman and MacCarthaigh (2013), for example, reflect on the centralised control and rationalisation associated with the politics of reducing the state in the wake of the recession. The need for the state to respond to its debt crisis served, in this case, to further justify the application of performance management frameworks to the DE wing of development cooperation.

The Synthesis Paper (2011) concludes by identifying a number of recommendations from the five reports consulted. It explains that given the challenging economic climate, “it remains the case that there is no ‘new money’ for DE, and therefore emerging priorities can only be supported by refocusing existing resources. In this context, sustainability of initiatives is critical and it will be necessary for Irish Aid to give high priority to initiatives that can continue when Irish Aid support ends” (2011: 26). That said, it goes on to suggest the following priority areas: to maximise policy and curriculum opportunities; build the capacity of educators; support the sharing and promotion of good practice; support the development and accessibility of education resources and provide strategic leadership of DE. In this regard, it suggests that the priorities include

“working with other government departments and strategic partnership to create a more coherent sense of shared leadership of the DE agenda, including outlining clearer expectations of a minimum offer for learners in DE in each sector and what good practice looks like. Agree

aspirational targets by sector, clearly communicate these, and identify appropriate indicators by which these can be measured. Create a voluntary self-evaluation tool ... consider moving towards a more mixed and balanced funding model” (2011: 29).

The influence of the ‘Synthesis Paper’ is easily identifiable when it comes to strategic priorities adopted by Irish Aid and IDEA since 2011, e.g., there has been a growing emphasis by Irish Aid on working with private contractors, in the organisation of Africa Day and the One World Our World Awards, and in strategic partnerships with civil society and education institutions; new measurement tools have been introduced into the sector, i.e., the Performance Management Framework (PMF); Irish Aid has continued to support the sharing of practice and resources through [developmenteducation.ie](http://developmenteducation.ie) and for initial teacher training through DICE and Ubuntu<sup>13</sup>; and the remit of Worldwide Global Schools was changed from largely supporting ‘immersion experiences’ to supporting DE among teachers and in schools more broadly. In addition, the proportion of funding towards grants and for smaller organisations working on individual projects has reduced, as outlined earlier, with a corresponding increase in funding to DE work undertaken through strategic partnerships (GENE, 2015).

In summary, we can see the growing significance of Irish Aid in DE in Ireland. Fielder, Bryan and Bracken highlight the changing role of the state and civil society in relation to DE. They identify a “clear shift in the State’s involvement in DE [which] occurred with DCI removing itself from a hands-on approach and from direct cooperation with civil society groups working in DE (as was the case in the NCDE) by setting up a DE Unit within the department. With this clear positioning as a donor of DE, the DE Unit within the DCI/Irish Aid also became more strategic in terms of its support of the DE sector in Ireland” (2011: 47/48). They go on to identify three ongoing debates between state actors and civil society organisations (CSOs) in DE:

“firstly, the struggle to find clear demarcation lines (and possibly, points of convergence) between the need for public information about the State’s ODA programme and DE as a broader educational process ... secondly, the role of DE within the wider context of development cooperation is an ongoing site of ideological dispute. The ‘positioning’ of DE within the context of the ODA programme has been a constant source of debate throughout the years amongst both civil society and state actors. In short, the issue of what is meant by ‘public ownership’ of the aid programme needs further analysis. Thirdly, with the State becoming increasingly involved in DE, there is a clear tendency to bring DE programmes and interventions closer to the mainstream” (2011: 48).

#### **4.1.2. Relations in the DE Field in Ireland**

##### ***The Dominance of Irish Aid***

As outlined in the discussion of DE in Ireland up to 2008, it is clear that there are many actors involved in DE in Ireland – state and civil society – as well as many overlaps between them. State

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<sup>13</sup> Ubuntu is a network which promotes integration of DE into initial teacher education (ITE). Further information is available from: [www.ubuntu.ie](http://www.ubuntu.ie)

actors include: the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and its dedicated division for development cooperation, Irish Aid; the Department of Education and Skills (DES); and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), as well as higher education institutions, schools, youth and community groups and networks. The 2000s brought further dominance of Irish Aid in terms of funding DE (McCloskey, 2014), as well as many new partnerships between the state and other actors. This led to the construction of a ‘two-tier’ DE sector with the bigger, better funded, more organised partnerships and NGOs on the one side and smaller, more financially vulnerable and less ‘mainstreamed’ organisations and groups on the other.

Irish Aid dominance became particularly acute in relation to the smaller DE organisations in the period following the recession, i.e. since 2008. This can be partly explained by what Khoo calls the fragmented but state-centric nature of civil society, which is highly dependent on the state (no date). For her, “being too coordinated with the state also results in a civil society that does not raise the necessary critical, alternative and counterbalancing views” (n.d.: 6). She goes on to suggest that “the development community as a whole needs more lively and accessible debate about the principles and practice of development cooperation” (Khoo, n.d.: 6). In terms of funding to civil society, the growing dependency of many DE organisations on government funding is widely reported in research and other reports throughout the late 2000s. It is also evident, for example, in IDEA’s response to the 2014 Irish Aid Annual Grants, where it highlights the pressure DE organisations are under and argues that “the financial crisis and cuts to available funding have been identified as a risk for the strength and diversity of the sector ... While there is an emphasis from donors on diversifying funding sources, there is not a corresponding diversity of funding sources, and in particular of available grants, especially for organisations in which DE is the principal or sole focus of their work” (2014: 1).

While many smaller DE organisations became more dependent on Irish Aid, arguably during this period many educational institutions and organisations carved out their own niche for DE, suggesting the beginnings of independent engagement in DE on their part. Though often funded by Irish Aid, there are now institutional arrangements in place for the promotion of DE especially in initial teacher education in the various universities providing it, as well as through the promotion of ESD by the Department of Education and Skills. There are also other higher-level courses with DE dimensions, though many of these are still funded either directly or indirectly by Irish Aid, e.g., at Maynooth University, Dublin City University, Kimmage DSC and Mary Immaculate College. The NCCA’s introduction of Politics and Society in 2016 has been significantly influenced by those lobbying for the inclusion of DE aspects to the curriculum, as have other curriculum changes at primary and secondary level, but once these are introduced, they can potentially be provided independently of NGO or Irish Aid involvement. Though on the one hand spaces for DE appear to be opening up in curriculum terms, there are also significant debates in the Irish context about the growing influence of neoliberal, market-driven policies on Irish education. The changing name of the Department of Education from

the Department of Education and Science to the Department of Education and Skills (Gaynor, 2016) alone signals a move in the direction of individualised, commercially-driven policies and new managerialism (Lynch et al, 2012) at higher education level, and, increasingly, second level (see Chapter Four). Despite these caveats, GENE (2015) argues that “recent and ongoing reforms provide strong opportunities for DE integration”.

### ***Irish Aid and IDEA***

It is clear that state-civil society relationships have been changing in recent years with a growing strategy on the part of the state of dealing with networks or representative bodies rather than individual groups and organisations. This is also the case with DE. Krause (2010: 54) argues that, in Ireland, “there is a strong partnership between state and civil society on DE; Good dialogue and DE support mechanisms between government and NGDOs exist”. Central to these relations has been the increasingly significant role played by IDEA in relation to DE in Ireland. IDEA’s role in consolidating the DE sector in Ireland over recent years has been widely acknowledged, e.g., it is regarded as one of the four key institutions involved in DE in Ireland by GENE (2015: 27) and is seen to have “played a particularly important role over recent years in helping to strengthen the coordination of those engaged in DE, in strengthening their capacity, and in providing a vision for its membership”.

In recent years, IDEA has steered a course between support for Irish Aid support for DE on the one hand and calling on Irish Aid for greater support to DE on the other. Since the publication of the Synthesis Paper in 2011, for example, IDEA has facilitated consultations on a performance assessment tool, the GENE Review of GE in Ireland, and the planning and development of a third Irish Aid Strategic Plan for DE. Though sometimes critical of Irish Aid (see discussion of public engagement below), IDEA tend to adopt a ‘working with’ rather than a ‘working against’ approach and doing so quietly. It is usually on technical issues that any criticism or calls for different policies are aired publicly, e.g., on funding cuts. Otherwise, there appears to be a very close and positive working relationship between Irish Aid and IDEA. In the Irish Aid DE Strategic Plan 2017 – 2023, there are 21 references to IDEA and most of them to Irish Aid working in partnership with IDEA on various aspects of the strategy. Quoting from the GENE Review, the Strategic Plan 2017 – 2023 identifies that “the work of IDEA is commendable and a welcome initiative to help strengthen coherence among stakeholders in the field. It is an important response to the needs of practitioners, such as the need for capacity building” (Irish Aid, 2016a: 26).

### ***Funding and NGDOs***

As indicated here, there are some commentators who argue that the bigger NGDOs are less interested in DE now than in the past. Regan (2016, no page) argues that “there has been the significant

withdrawal of (too) many NGOs from effective and sustained DE ... the NGO movement (as a whole) needs to rediscover its ‘mojo’ in this regard. At present the dominant ‘site’ of energy around DE is that of the Irish Aid agenda and its modalities ... it will lead to scenarios witnessed in other countries where government effectively controls the agenda, its priority foci and its politics ... effectively handing Irish Aid the ‘whip hand’ in DE is folly”. As outlined in Table 2.3 above, spending is relatively high, with Concern’s budget for DE and advocacy at €3.68m and Trócaire’s budget for DE and communications at €2.5m in 2015. While this is the case, as outlined earlier, proportionate funding for DE and advocacy has declined from a high for Concern in 2007 of 3.64 per cent to 2.08 per cent in 2015 and, in relation to DE and communications in Trócaire, from a high in 2004 of 7.8 per cent to a low of 3.9 per cent in 2015.

Despite reductions and fluctuations, it is clear also that Concern and Trócaire still play a relatively significant role in DE in allocating grants to smaller organisations to engage in DE. Concern figures in this regard between 2013 – 2015 were in the region of €158,000 per annum. Trócaire still employs a team of DE specialists who work in a variety of education sectors from early childhood education to primary and second-level as well as with youth. Given the role that Concern and Trócaire continue to play in DE, it seems unfair to level ‘a withdrawal’ criticism at them. On the other hand, proportionately, it is arguable that they could be doing more.

### ***Strategic Partnerships***

NGDOs and education institutions play a significant role in strategic partnerships with Irish Aid. GENE (2015) highlights the significance of Irish Aid working with strategic partners for the promotion of DE in recent years and it argues that they “have led to the successful and widespread integration of DE in some cases” (2015: 54). The strategic partnerships to date have been IDEA; WorldWide Global Schools (WWGS) – supporting DE in post-primary schools; the Development and Intercultural Education Project (DICE) – supporting the integration of DE in initial teacher education at primary level; SUAS – a global citizenship programme in non-formal contexts; and developmenteducation.ie – a website that maintains resources and acts as a contact point for development educators. In three of these five cases, the management of the strategic partnership represents a consortium of actors in the DE sector, including in two of these cases Concern Worldwide and Gorta-Self Help Africa. Though there has been little research undertaken on them, they are increasingly acknowledged as a way forward, for example the Irish Aid Development Education Strategy 2017 – 2023 puts significant emphasis on working in partnership (Irish Aid, 2016a).

A key implication of funding cuts over the past number of years has been the increased isolation of smaller DE organisations within the sector. In the light of its arguments for moving away from annual grants, IDEA (2014: 2) argues that regional DE and One World Centres have been “severely affected

by grant decisions which reduce their programme and operational budgets. Certain organisations are facing decisions about whether it is viable to continue their work”. This issue dovetails with increased requirements in terms of governance and accountability. A further challenge for these groups and organisations, according to IDEA, is the lack of funding “for governance, administration and organisational development ... focusing on project funding can create difficulties for organisations in relation to covering the costs of their governance and organisation (ibid)”. In its response to IDEA on this issue, Irish Aid suggests that of the DE grants awarded there has been “a strong focus in the non-formal sector, particularly the youth and adult community sectors, which received 63 per cent of this year’s overall funding for the Scheme” (Kennedy, 2014: 1). Kennedy explains that, for Irish Aid, there are limitations in terms of the budget – it is over-subscribed – and it encourages diversification of funding. Proposals are assessed “under four headings; governance and financial oversight, organisation strategy and evidence of change, delivery of results and DE approach” (2014: 2). Irish Aid explains that there was limited improvement in the area of ‘delivery of results’ in the previous year. They go on to acknowledge the challenges for One World Centres but highlight that “grants are awarded strictly on merit based on the quality and effectiveness of proposals ... The difficulty with funding pressures for organisations in meeting both project commitments and organisational requirements is also noted ... Irish Aid has to be satisfied that organisations in receipt of funding have governance and financial structures in place which can adequately manage and account for public funding awarded under the Grant Scheme” (Kennedy, 2014: 3). This series of communications highlights some of the challenges for smaller DE organisations, especially in the light of restricted funding and new commitments in terms of performance management, results-based frameworks, governance and accountability.

#### **4.1.3. Aid Effectiveness, Good Governance, Results and Measurement**

During the 2000s, there was considerable focus within Irish Aid on good governance (O’Neill, 2006) and on aid effectiveness (Stern, 2008) and this was reflected in both of the DE strategic plans as well as in the governance and funding mechanisms which were instigated at the time. Mechanisms for measuring results as well as good governance procedures were implemented with greater intensity following the recession. In 2008 a Management Review of Irish Aid was undertaken (FGS Consulting) based on the White Paper (2006) “to examine the governance, management and capacity requirements necessary to ensure quality and accountability in the programme that has grown exponentially in the last three years and which is scheduled to expand further over the period to 2012” (2008: i). The report opens by invoking the main agreements of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005). In effect, the accountability and measurement mechanisms put in place represented a way of showing ‘value for money’, initially at a time of projected growth (up to 2008) and subsequently at a time when budgets were restricted and there was increased criticism of spending on aid in the media (Delaney, 2010;

Mukandi, 2010; Delaney 2012). Through them Irish Aid was able to exert more direct control over what DE organisations and activities were funded.

The DAC Peer Review of Ireland (OECD, 2009: 50/51) compliments the emphasis within Irish Aid on results. It highlights that “the process of placing results at the centre of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation begins with Irish Aid’s Operational Plan 2008 – 2012 ... The plan builds clear links between the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and translates the vision contained in the White Paper into actions and impacts which can be monitored, measured and evaluated within a specified timeframe”. O’Neill (2012: 386) explains that by 2012 “the work of all NGDOs funded by Irish Aid under its various schemes is now required to be results-focused – again in line with Irish Aid’s own strategic approach”. She goes on to argue that “surely the same conditions should apply as far as possible to funding received by both the formal and informal actors for their DE work”.

From a DE point of view, this growing emphasis on accountability and good governance as well as on results-based management is evident in changes in emphasis in Irish Aid DE strategic plans and the current strategic plan’s priorities are framed in what it calls its ‘logic model’. For Irish Aid, its performance management framework (PMF) is now central to tracking changes and measuring outcomes. As it explains:

“For Irish Aid, DE results are about establishing a deep and sustained understanding among the Irish public of global poverty and inequality. The achievement of real and lasting results will be central in the way that we plan, make decisions, implement, monitor, evaluate and account for our support for DE. We recognise that long-term change can take time and that measuring change is complex. We will work with our DE partners to develop efficient and user-friendly ways of collecting and collating both quantitative and qualitative data to demonstrate results” (2016: 38).

It goes on to highlight the centrality of the PMF: “The Performance Management Framework (PMF) will guide our priorities, inform our future investment decisions and track long-term impact over the lifetime of the strategy ... the PMF will capture what the change will look like when achieved, with appropriate and meaningful indicators ... the PMF will be reviewed on an ongoing basis” (ibid). The PMF was published in September 2017.

#### **4.2. Discourses – Beyond DE**

In the light of all this organisational and relational context, discourses of DE have begun to move beyond DE, embracing a range of influences, including ‘development engagement’, a focus on the global and on citizenship, and notions of ‘best practice’ and accountability.

#### 4.2.1. 'Development Engagement'

As indicated earlier, Fielder, Bryan and Bracken (2011) highlight that one of the key themes and tensions which has pervaded DE in the Irish context is the relationship between public information or awareness of aid, and DE. This manifests itself in the phrase 'using a DE methodology', which Irish Aid applies to its public information work and which Comhlámh, and other signatories to the Code of Practice for Volunteer Sending Organisations, use to refer to the methodology applied in training. Increasingly, public information and communications, as well as advocacy and campaigning have found a home along with DE under the terms 'development engagement' or 'public engagement'. From the public information and communications side, in 1999, the DAC Peer Review of Irish Aid recommended closer ties between public information on aid and DE. It argued that the distinction between the NCDE's DE activities and promotion of the Irish Aid programme had become blurred and that it wasn't necessary into the future (OECD, 2009).

An on-going theme in relation to public information and DE relates to surveys of attitudes to Development Cooperation, from the 1980s to the latest survey in 2013, and what they indicate about people's understanding of development issues and knowledge of aid. This is raised by the DAC Peer Review in 1999 and again in 2009. In its introduction to comments on public awareness, which frames its discussion of DE, it argues that "findings suggest that Irish Aid could strengthen its efforts to communicate its role in Ireland's development cooperation and illustrate the impacts of using different aid modalities" (OECD, 2009: 28). The DAC Peer Review 2009 compliments the Irish government for its strategic approach to DE while recommending a greater emphasis on communication:

"good practice and progress in mainstreaming should be documented through reporting systems and key indicators could be developed to measure impact. Irish Aid should continue to ensure that development cooperation results are communicated to government, parliament and the Irish public to sustain the level of support for overseas development. Strengthening efforts to communicate the benefits of using different aid modalities as well as the aims and principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action will also be important" (2009: 30).

IDEA, in its consultation document around the review of the White Paper on Irish Aid, agrees that there is a need for deep public engagement on development but argues that public communication and information exercises are not sufficient. Where these are prioritised "support will remain 'a mile wide and an inch deep'. To create lasting support and engagement for global justice, both NGOs and governments should aim to strengthen intrinsic and positive values ... successful DE forms multipliers that reach out in society and can enable the large and deep public support which is crucial for any global justice movement to succeed" (2012: 11). Here we can see IDEA embracing the links between



development information, communication and DE under its framing of public engagement but encouraging Irish Aid to move beyond a superficial understanding of it. They go on to suggest that “if NGOs and public institutions aim for a broad and deep democratic debate on development issues, to make global justice a central concern for all citizens ... they need to adopt far more ambitious policies for public engagement. Public engagement in Ireland is crucial – not only to support aid – but to eradicate structural global inequalities ... the public often see their only role as ‘funders of aid’, in a charitable approach to a ‘lack of development’” (ibid).

In 2016, a debate emerged between IDEA and Irish Aid over the requirement by Irish Aid that all programmes under the Programme Grant II funding (2017 – 2021) include public engagement, with DE an optional part of their programme applications. Irish Aid, in its Annex II document, differentiates between public engagement and DE arguing that

“public engagement is a process directed at the wider public or specific subsections of the public which increases people’s understanding of global development issues and their awareness of the role of development assistance in making a difference in the lives of people and communities living in poverty. Public engagement is a channel for ensuring accountability, contributes to transparency and promotes strengthened ownership of Ireland’s development cooperation programme. Effective public engagement can facilitate action and change at an individual level” (2016b: 3).

DE, on the other hand, is regarded as being directed to specific groups and it is designed “to empower people in Ireland to analyse and challenge the root causes and consequences of global hunger, poverty, injustice and climate change and to inspire and enable them to become active global citizens in the creation of a fairer and more sustainable future for all” (Irish Aid, 2016b: 4). Where it acknowledges overlaps, for Irish Aid, public engagement “targets and supports the wider public to understand the complex causes of poverty, to strengthen public ownership of development cooperation policy and to advance the objectives therein” (2016b: 2). Its goal is a “more informed general public supportive of government development policy” (ibid).

IDEA, in its response paper challenges the limited, formal understanding of DE presented and fears that the compulsory nature of public engagement and optional DE undermines the strategic importance of DE (IDEA, 2016d: 2). It argues that “the distinction and the interpretation of DE in the guidelines are unclear and have given rise to confusion”, arguing that DE also “raises public understanding and public engagement ... facilitating a deeper, longer-term engagement with issues of global justice and development” (ibid). In not addressing the fact that Irish Aid sees public engagement as promoting ‘support for’, but focusing instead on its role in supporting ‘understanding of’ and ‘engagement with’ development cooperation, IDEA is not fully addressing the blurring of lines which is evident in Irish Aid’s discourse of public engagement. Even though they argue that public engagement is not about fundraising, public relations or advocacy against the Irish government, Irish Aid does see it as

encouraging support for development assistance. Neither is it averse to the promotion of organisational publicity as a by-product of development engagement. Thus, there are mixed messages coming from both IDEA and Irish Aid with regard to their documents on public engagement, and the blurring of lines between it and DE continues.

In recent years, Concern and Trócaire have also begun to move away from use of the term 'DE' in their strategic plans. Both continue to see it as part of their work, which is articulated in their mission statement, but Concern moved towards use of the term 'public engagement' in its Strategy Plan 2011 – 2015, which was repeated in its most recent one (2016), whereas Trócaire has only started to use the term in this context in its most recent Strategic Plan (Trócaire, 2016). Concern, for example, argues that “public education, advocacy and campaigning are all essential components in equipping people to take informed action for change, deepening their commitment to international development and to eliminating extreme poverty” (2016a: 13) and it highlights the importance of “attracting and engaging young people in support of Concern’s mission”. In that regard, it “will ensure we have effective channels of engagement that meet the interests and aspirations of young people who wish to campaign, learn more about development issues or engage more deeply in our work” (ibid). Trócaire’s 2012 strategic framework was framed in terms of “mobilising for justice”. With reference to DE in its third phase of work – since 2007 – it describes it as remaining “a flagship programme” for Trócaire and it explains that Trócaire has continued to “build our campaigning and advocacy work” and “external communications profile” (Trócaire, 2012a: 22). This is summarised in the description of Trócaire’s mobilising for justice work in Ireland which “draws extensively on our five thematic programmes to engage key Irish stakeholders, including government, business, Church, youth and community groups and schools, in mobilising for justice through high-level advocacy, innovative campaigns and DE” (2012a: 46). Trócaire has moved away from this framing of its work and has more recently embraced the term 'public engagement'. In its latest strategic plan, it talks about the opportunities for Trócaire to “increase the levels of public engagement in our work for a more just and sustainable world” (2016a: 21) and suggests that it will be achieved through its outreach, DE programmes, advocacy and campaigning. As such it “will expand our public engagement approach to advocacy, ensuring an integrated approach between our programmes, campaigns, communications, policy and advocacy, and fundraising” (ibid). Thus, adopting broader framings like 'mobilising for justice' or 'public engagement' has allowed these NGOs to integrate DE with communications and public information as well as campaigns and advocacy.

These shifts have been influenced significantly by changing priorities and understandings of DE in the international development context, for example, both Irish Aid and IDEA refer to the OECD DAC’s work in this area. Another shift 'beyond DE' has come from the move from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as discussed below.

#### 4.2.2. From DE to GCE and ESD

The Millennium Declaration in 2000 signalled a significant shift at an international level towards identifying goals, the MDGs, for poverty reduction across a range of areas. Over the past five years or so, with reports of successes (UN, 2015) accompanied by reports of failures to reach the goals, due, in part, to inadequate reporting mechanisms, insufficient resources, and “insufficient attention to the marginalised” (UNESCO, 2015: 4), there was growing concern about what would replace the MDGs. In the end, a “new sustainable development agenda [emerged, which] has made two significant shifts. First, the broad-based consultation process has generated goals that have much greater ownership by a global community ... second, the SDGs are global goals, not just to be attained by so-called ‘developing’ or partner countries, but by all countries around the world” (UNESCO, 2015: 1).

The significance of the SDGs for DE has been widely acknowledged in Ireland in recent years, especially given Ireland’s central role in facilitating agreement on the goals (with Kenya) in 2015, and they feature prominently in the Irish Aid DE Strategy 2017 – 2023. The strategy highlights the “important role for global citizenship education including DE” in the SDGs (2016: 10) and specifies goal 4.7 which “calls on countries to ‘ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development’” (2016: 10). Their significance to DE has also been identified by IDEA in its Annual Report (2016b) as well as by DE organisations through their work, e.g., the DE organisation Development Perspectives has been running a widely publicised educational campaign ‘The SDG Challenge’ in 2016 and 2017. The SDGs indicate a shift internationally from focusing on poverty and inequality in ‘the Global South’ to addressing these issues globally, and there is greater focus on sustainability and environmental challenges and responses. At the same time, as they are still framed broadly within a goals, targets, and measurement approach, they are potentially prone to some of the same challenges and inadequacies of the MDGs. In addition, IDEA argues that “the SDGs require active citizen participation and broad partnerships in order to achieve the transformative change which they promise” (2016b: 3) and it reiterates the role that DE can play in that: “DE builds the shared understanding needed for citizen participation and partnership as well as dismantling the barriers that prevent the formation of partnerships and the engagement of citizens” (ibid).

In tandem with a shift in emphasis in the development goals, the language of DE policy has also shifted in recent years to reflect the ‘global’ and the ‘sustainable’. Bourn argues that “at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century there was a shift by educationalists towards the term ‘global’ and, in some cases, away from ‘development’. This led to an increasing use of terms such as ‘global learning’, ‘global

citizenship education’, and ‘the global dimension’, and a move away from terms such as ‘DE’ (2014: 10). While this is acknowledged to have happened in Ireland too (Doorley, 2015), and GENE (2015) refers to DE as the more ‘traditional’ term, many reports and articles identify that in Ireland the term DE continues to be consistently used (GENE 2015), albeit increasingly in tandem with these and other terms such as ‘education for sustainable development’ (Bryan 2014, Irish Aid 2016a). This is the case with the new Irish Aid DE strategy which talks of the relationship between global citizenship education and DE, arguing that GCE includes both DE and ESD (2016a). This is a significant new departure for Irish Aid in the framing of DE under GCE. As evident in the new strategy on DE, ESD has risen in significance in Ireland alongside GCE in recent years. The publication of the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development 2014 - 2020 (hereafter the ESD Strategy) (2014) was particularly important in this regard. In it, ESC, DE and ESD are not regarded as the same thing but greater links between them are encouraged.

Debates about terms and understandings of DE in Ireland, which have featured over the years in various reports (Kenny and O’Malley 2002), have been dealt with through an opening up of what constitutes DE and its relationships with other similar educations. Bryan argues that they are “deeply entangled terms that more or less represent one and the same thing” (2014: 2). Overall, for IDEA, there is a working assumption that the term ‘DE’ is used in the Irish context and that it encompasses ESD, human rights education, intercultural education and education for global citizenship (2016c). Doorley argues that “it is important that the definition of our work does not become ... an obstacle to our work” (2015: 116). There is a reluctance in the Irish context to embrace the notion, that GENE tends to promote, that GE is the overarching term and that others are subsumed under it (2015) and an even greater reluctance, which emerged during the GENE Review process, to let debates about DE over-shadow the work. For Bryan (2014: 3), “whether we refer to the pedagogical process as DE or global citizenship education is probably of less significance than the underlying vision and political and ideological interests which shape how educational programmes are designed and enacted”. At the same time, it is notable that different terms have entered DE policy discourse and the value of ‘development’ as a framing device is no longer taken for granted.

#### **4.2.3. 'Best Practice' and 'Accountability'**

Another feature of discourses of DE in recent years has been the role played by IDEA in defining what DE means and in the articulation of DE ‘best practice’. In its Annual Report (2011/12: 3) IDEA outlines that “while the 2008 – 2011 strategic plan focused primarily on embedding the organisation in the DE sector, IDEA is now working with its members to strengthen the sector by improving standards of practice, encouraging greater co-ordination, and doing more to prove the impact DE can have”. It has developed good practice guidelines for schools (2011), guidelines for producing DE resources,

with Dóchas and [developmenteducation.ie](http://developmenteducation.ie) (Coyle et al, 2014), and for DE in adult and community settings (IDEA, 2014). Other sets of ‘good practice guidelines’ developed include those for DE in volunteering (Comhlámh, 2013) and in primary schools (DICE, 2014).

In addition to articulations of ‘best practice’ in relation to DE in various sectors, IDEA also highlights the importance of accountability and good governance in the context of the “huge challenges and a potential crisis of trust” that the “civil society, development and charities sector have faced” (2014: 5). In its annual report, IDEA explains that it “has responded to these calls for accountability and governance. Our governance programme gathers IDEA members to learn from one another to strengthen transparency and complete the journey to adopt the Governance Code. DE has been acknowledged as an essential example of best practice in this context” (ibid). Going on to explain its understanding of what this involves, it argues that “accountability requires knowledge and understanding. DE fosters literacy in global justice and global issues. It is essential for accountability. Despite these circumstances and the prevailing economic restrictions, the DE sector in Ireland continues to educate, inspire and activate” (2014: 5).

Similar emphasis on accountability, governance and measurement are also evident in policy discourses of NGOs, strategic partners, recipients of annual grants and other civil society actors, e.g., for Trócaire and Concern Worldwide accountability features in their values (Trócaire 2012a, 2016a) and strategic goals (Concern Worldwide 2011b, 2016). For Concern Worldwide, “throughout we will continue to apply the highest principles of global governance and accountability and will ensure that our work is guided by our membership, the voices of those we serve and our staff” (2016a: 14). In the case of Trócaire, though understood in terms of financial responsibility to supporters in its values, elsewhere, accountability is talked about with reference to “downward accountability”(2012a: 17), in “helping civil society become involved in holding governments, institutions and the private sector to account” (2012a: 31) as well as in relation to “building alternative forms of partnership with civil society” where there is “increased equality, collaborative decision-making, trust and mutual transparency and accountability” (ibid). Thus, though the language of accountability has become pervasive, it is not understood in uniform terms throughout.

#### **4.2.4. Emerging Alternatives?**

While there is significant evidence of policy discourses moving beyond DE with greater connections being made with other similar educations as well as with different strategies under ‘development engagement’, there are also those who appear to be shifting the boundaries of what DE might involve. Influenced in part by new social and political movements as well as by austerity in Ireland, for example, there have been renewed efforts to link DE with community, adult, and youth education,

through various organisations<sup>14</sup>, as well as with community-based political activism on rights and justice issues in Ireland<sup>15</sup>. DE facilitators' understandings of what critical DE might involve emerges in this research, though as evident in later chapters, such criticality is not without its constraints. In addition, it is clear that some DE facilitators are critical of themselves and others when it comes to 'making connections', to addressing power relations and in terms of the complicity of DE existing power relations (see Chapter Six). Some DE facilitators make reference to the website [developmenteducation.ie](http://developmenteducation.ie) where 'stories of change' are charted and where DE facilitators can share ideas and link to various groups working on articulating what 'best practice' involves in DE through IDEA (IDEA, 2013a). Though outside the specific scope of this research, it is clear that a lot more research on emerging alternatives in DE is merited.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have tried to set the scene for this research. Highlighting the shifting institutional and policy context over time, I have identified antecedent discourses of DE in an Irish context. Drawing on existing literature and policy, three phases of significance emerge. The first of these, the 1970s and 1980s, is characterised, I argue, by three discourses of DE: a value-based DE based on global justice and equality; a solidarity discourse and a "development as charity" (Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken, 2011) discourse. In the second phase, from the 1990s to the mid-2000s, the rise of 'adjectival' educations becomes clear. These help to lay the ground for a move 'beyond DE' associated with more talk of public engagement, something of a shift from the language of development to that of the global and of the sustainable; and through the promotion of 'best practice' and 'accountability' frameworks. Throughout, the role of Irish Aid emerges as significant as do relations in the DE sector and the recession of 2008. Many of the issues and perspectives introduced in this chapter re-emerge in discussion of DE talk in Chapter Six and Seven.

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<sup>14</sup> Some of these include SUAS, NYCI; 80:20; Changemakers; and LYCS. [Information is available on all of these groups on their websites.]

<sup>15</sup> In this case Debt and Development Coalition Ireland is highlighted among DE facilitators.

## Chapter Three: Discourses, Power and Development

### Introduction

This thesis applies a bricolage approach in its discussion of theory, drawing on a range of complementary literatures. It does so because DE is itself a compound concept which requires exploration of both its education and development components. I draw here, in particular, on critical pedagogy and on post-development literature in that regard. Given the focus in this research on discourses of DE and on the factors which shape these discourses in the DE sector in Ireland, it is appropriate to draw on literature which explores discourse and power as well as structure-agency debates in relation to the organisation of development and DE. Given the multi-disciplinary nature of that literature, the debates are varied and theoretical influences are necessarily eclectic. In the next chapter, I apply a similarly broad approach drawing on a wide, but complementary, range of literature focusing on understanding DE and its various dimensions, as well as on critical pedagogy literature.

There are many ways in which different ‘approaches’ to something like DE can be understood. A focus on discourse is relevant because the concept of ‘discourse’ tries to capture how language and the meanings and assumptions which are associated with it shape thinking and behaviour, attitudes and actions, policies and practices. The quote below on discourses of development gives an insight into my early understanding of it. In reading this for the first time, not only did it give me an insight into how discourse might be understood but also why it is important to understand discourses of development and, in this case, DE. Escobar writes:

“Foucault’s insights into the control and the production of discourse and the workings of power and knowledge enable us to conduct a radical reinterpretation of development theory and practice. The overall contention of such reinterpretation can be stated as follows: that without examining development as discourse, we cannot understand the systematic ways in which the Western developed countries have been able to manage and control, and in many ways, even to create the Third World politically, economically, sociologically and culturally; that although underdevelopment is a very real historical formation, it has given rise to a series of practices (promoted by the discourses of the West) which constitute one of the most powerful mechanisms for ensuring the domination over the Third World today” (1984/85: 384).

Reading this now, I understand its limited totalising character but I include it here as it speaks to an analysis of discourse as reflecting taken-for-granted assumptions which have power to shape practices and relationships, even ones which are done ‘in the name of the good’. As such, understanding discourses helps us to understand the language associated with DE, assumptions which underpin what is said and the policies and practices associated with it.

In this chapter, I present a multi-layered understanding of discourse. I argue that a focus on discourse

offers useful insights for an analysis of DE in the Irish context. I explore the value of applying a 'critical analysis of discourses' approach to understanding discourses of DE. In so doing, I explore relevant conceptual and analytical tools for understanding talk and different discursive formations of DE as well as discourse, agency and power relations, for example in relation to the role of the state and NGOs. I present an understanding which is not deterministic but regards discourses as constructed, negotiated and shifted in the context of agency-discourse dynamics in institutional contexts.

## **1. Exploring Discourse**

There are many understandings of discourse. The one I apply, building on post-development (Escobar, 1985/85, 1995; Esteva, 1993), is largely influenced by Foucault as well as by CDA (Fairclough, 1992; Van Dijk, 2006, 2007). The question of what gives certain ideas or taken-for-granted assumptions about reality their power within any context is addressed by Foucault through his understanding of discourse as 'epistemes', which structure action and different discursive formations and which represent discursive continuities in a given institutional context. These are Foucault's "general domain of all statements" (in Mills, 1997: 7), a little like 'world views', or in the case of Sachs, the 'Occidental worldview'. An episteme creates the parameters within which objects are spoken about, understood, negotiated or resisted, e.g., what it means to be developed or not, who is active in realising development, where development should happen, etc. I have found Foucault's understanding of discourse particularly useful in that he does not see discourse as just 'language use' but as frameworks of thinking, and the institutional and professional practices associated with them which control (Foucault, 1972). Post-development theorists, in particular Escobar (1995) and Sachs (1993), drew on Foucault's concept of episteme and used it to develop a scathing critique of development. Despite the radical nature of their work at the time, their appropriation of this concept to cover anything which passes for 'development' appeared overly-deterministic and homogenised (Brigg, 2002), offering little space for identifying multiple discourses within an overall discursive framework, some of which are 'more powerful than others', or for identifying the space for challenging 'taken-for-granted' assumptions and constructing alternatives (Pieterse, 1996, 2001). Furthermore, while it acknowledged resistance, it seemed to deny, or at least under-emphasise, the role of agency (Long, 1992; Keeley and Scoones, 2003). It appeared as if people are passive 'recipients' of discourse rather than negotiators and creators of it.

### **1.1. A Multi-Layered Understanding of Discourse**

In order to deal with some of the problems associated with an overly deterministic or all-embracing



application of the term ‘discourse’, it is useful to identify different levels and layers of discourse, drawing from Foucault and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Fairclough, 1992). This allows for an exploration of different discourses at work within DE policy and practice and opens up the possibility of integrating a discourse perspective with one which takes account of agency. Not everyone takes this approach, e.g., Ryan differentiates between “sites, discourses and themes” (2011: 3), making the important point that not everything can be characterised as a discourse. On the other hand, I find it useful to specify different uses of the term ‘discourse’, or ‘discourses of discourse’. I think Ryan’s understanding of discourse, however, is particularly clear and it can be seen to operate in each of the layers identified below:

“Discourses ... are "socially organised frameworks of meaning that define categories and specify domains of what can be said and done" (Burman, 1994: 2). They form regimes of truth ... A discourse approach facilitates exploration in a systematic way of ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions about human and social relations, from the intimate to the international. If we talk about sex, human rights, work, childcare, economics, or global warming, to name just a few themes, we activate and draw on discourses, in order to make sense of what is going on and to guide our actions. The meaning-resources and sense-making repertoires constitute the discourses” (2011: 3).

Chouliaraki also uses a similar understanding of discourse. She argues that

“the Foucauldian concept of discourse sets up a constitutive relationship between meaning and power in social practice. Every move to meaning-making comes from a position of power – power both structuring and structured by the social positions available within the practice. And every move to meaning-making makes a claim to truth precisely from that power position that enunciates it; this is not the truth but always a truth effect, a truth that seeks to re-constitute and re-establish power through meaning” (2008: 1/2).

Thus, for me, discourses are broadly coherent sets of assumptions or patterns of making sense of the world. They are powerful in that they are shaped by and shape thinking and practice. The understanding of discourse that I apply here relates to the meanings or assumptions which underpin language or representations – in this case, talk – and to the power relations and practices which are associated with them. It is a multi-layered understanding. The first of the layers of discourse I term ‘framing discourses’, which relate to particular historical moments like Foucault’s ‘epistemes’ (Foucault 1972). Framing discourses structure action and different discursive formations in a given context, e.g., the discourse of madness (Foucault, 1967). A discourse, or an ‘order of discourse’ in this sense, can be regarded as similar to Kuhn’s (1970) idea of paradigm in that it corresponds to a general way of viewing reality and talking about it or representing it. This understanding of ‘framing discourses’ helps to explain the overarching discursive framework or ‘discursive climate’ (Ryan, 2011), within which much global development and DE policy and practice is situated – the unquestioned value of ‘development’ as a notion in itself based on the progressive, modernist and economic assumptions of the superiority of Global-Northern or Western-style development.

The second layer of discourse, or ‘discursive formations’, are those that are most commonly referred

to in this thesis. They are like lower level discourses, following Foucault's 'orders of truth' (1972) which can reflect dominant framing discourses (as is often the case) or challenge them. Within a development discursive context, these 'discursive formations' are reflected in different theoretical positions or practices of global development and DE. They represent strands of thinking and action and they are identifiable through fairly consistent assumptions associated with different theories, formations or approaches. This understanding of 'discursive formations' helps to differentiate between different policies and practices of DE, for example, and to explain the dominance of certain assumptions with regard to global development 'intervention' in Ireland, for example, the relatively unquestioned value of aid and 'overseas development work' (ACDC, 1985; ACDC, 1990; Weafer, 2002; Amárach, 2013; Dillon, 2015). At the same time, it also helps to acknowledge other principles, values or politics surrounding this intervention based on 'partnership', 'rights-based approaches', 'gender mainstreaming' or 'sustainability', which may or may not be situated within the dominant discursive framework. What I call 'discursive formations' seems to approximate to Pashby and Andreotti's understanding of discursive configurations, which they see "as vocabularies, or ways of speaking, generated within the onto-epistemic grammatical matrix of the dominant modern-colonial global imaginary" (2016: 776). Within the context of different discursive fields, they use the term 'discursive configuration' to refer to different groups of discourses mobilised within and across fields. Dominant discourses are "those that in the social relations of power at a given moment come to assume authority and confer status – reflect the material relations that render them dominant (Goldberg 1993, 1994)" (Pashby and Andreotti, 2016: 776). This level of discourse is not explored in depth by Escobar (1995), for example, though he acknowledges that there are different discursive formations in the context of dominant regimes of representation. Escobar argues that shifting discursive formations, associated with different fashions and fads of development, are subject to the 'rules of the game' of various orders of discourse (1995). It would seem to me that discursive continuity and change is not simply determined by the rules of an order of discourse and that discursive formations cannot be understood outside of, as anterior to, or simply resulting from the framing discourse of which they are a part. They are constructed in institutional contexts (Fairclough, 1992). Foucault's concept of 'dispositif' addresses this (Garland, 2014) (see the discussion below).

Understanding discursive formations or configurations is central to this research because it highlights the politics associated with different discourses of DE. Discursive formations, e.g., in relation to DE, reflect framing discourses or what Andreotti calls 'root narratives' (2014) (discussed in Chapter Four), but they are shaped within particular contexts by people negotiating different experiences and positions within discursive and institutional space. Therefore, understanding discursive formations in this way does not negate agency or the possibilities for action outside of discourse.

A third important understanding of discourse is that of 'instances of discourse' – e.g., policy discourses, advertising, images, etc – which act as constructed representations of reality, which

include and exclude (Hall, 1997), and which are also constructed by actors in given discursive and institutional contexts. Smith argues that “phenomena of mind and discourse – ideology, beliefs, concepts, theory, ideas and so on – are recognised as themselves the doings of actual people situated in particular local sites at particular times. They are no longer treated as if they were essentially inside people’s heads. They become observable insofar as they are produced in language as talk and/or text” (2005: 25). As they give concrete expression to different discursive formations and the assumptions underpinning both these and framing discourses (whether taken-for-granted or not), an understanding of instances of discourse allows for an exploration of discursive assumptions and discursive shifts and continuities in particular discursive formations. They relate to constructed representations of DE, for example, by organisations and facilitators through the language they use to describe various dimensions of DE and through representations of, for example, local-global interconnectivity, activism or politics. The term discourse, in this context, therefore, relates to textual, image, verbal, etc., constructions of the real, of the imaginary, and of identities and relationships.

This layered understanding of discourse provides some useful conceptual tools for understanding DE among facilitators in Ireland. Though I refer to the framing discourses or root narratives at work in various discursive formations of DE, it is these discursive formations which are of primary interest in this work. I draw on analysis of various instances of discourse as reflected in facilitator talk in order to identify different discourses of DE in Ireland, with their concepts, tropes, assumptions and the meanings which can be associated with them. As becomes evident, I argue that discourses of DE are contingent on the context within which they are produced and operate, e.g., the socio-economic, political, cultural and institutional context, and they are contested and constructed by actors within and external to the DE sector. In this way, though powerful, discourses of DE are not static, with contestation and contradictions common. This contestation is complex with organisations searching for legitimacy of particular framings of DE (Hillhorst, 2003; Eade and Cornwall, 2010) at the same time as generally taken-for-granted assumptions acting as ‘claims to truth’ (Chouliaraki, 2008).

## **1.2. Discourse, Power and Hegemony**

Though an understanding of ‘discourse’ helps to understand different discursive formations of DE with their related assumptions, as well as practices and representations within the DE field, it does not fully explain why some ideas are more ‘powerful’ (in the sense of dominant) or more accepted than others. Gramsci’s notion of hegemony has often been used to overcome the limitations of materialist and ‘totalising’ understandings of ideology. It has also been used by many discourse theorists to try to explain why some discourses are more ‘dominant’ than others and how other (or counter-hegemonic) discourses emerge, as well as the relationship between discourse and agency. Gramsci sees hegemony as the direction which “the dominant group exercises throughout society” through “the spontaneous

consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group”, and he contrasts this with “the apparatus of state coercive power which ‘legally’ enforces discipline on those groups who do not ‘consent’ either actively or passively” (Gramsci, in Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 20). Forgacs argues that in the Prison Notebooks, Gramsci’s hegemony “comes to mean ‘cultural, moral and ideological’ leadership over allied and subordinate groups” and it is identified with consent (2000: 423). Stoddart explains (2007: 201): “hegemony appears as the ‘common sense’ that guides our everyday, mundane understanding of the world ... Hegemonic networks of power are the result of contestation between ruling elites and ‘subaltern’ groups. Because contestation is basic to the process of constituting hegemony, there is never a unified, totalising system of ideological domination. Hegemony and counter-hegemony exist in a state of tension; each gives shape to the other” (Stoddart, 2007: 201). Thus, for Gramsci, hegemony captures the notion of ideological struggle, and Hall (1996: 17) argues that Gramsci’s notion of ideological struggle goes beyond a fixed notion of class-based struggle to understanding “terrains of struggle”. He goes on to show that, for Gramsci, “‘common sense’ became one of the stakes over which ideological struggle is conducted” (1996: 20).

Hall’s introduction to Gramsci’s relevance for the study of race and ethnicity (1986) offers useful insight into the analytical tools available from Gramsci’s theory for understanding hegemony when it comes to discourses of DE. Arguing that his concept of hegemony was developed to counteract economic determinism or reductionism as well as Marx’s tendencies towards positivism, empiricism, scientism and objectivism, Hall sees Gramsci’s understanding of hegemony as central to understanding “the relations of force which constitute the actual terrain of political and social struggle and development” (1986: 14). He goes on to highlight that the critical question is the “relations of forces favourable or unfavourable to this or that tendency” (ibid). In short, for Hall, hegemony involves the incorporation by elites of other interests through intellectual and moral consent as well as economic and political unity, but, following Gramsci, this hegemony is never fixed or total. Hegemony has “to be actively constructed and positively maintained” (1986: 15). Consent is won by a ‘historic bloc’, within which there “will be strata of the subaltern and dominated classes, who have been won over by specific concessions and compromises and who form part of the social constellation but in a subordinate role” (1986: 15). Winning over these sections involves cultural and ideological struggle, forging alliances which “cement the historic bloc under a particular leadership. Each hegemonic formation will thus have its own, specific social composition and configuration” (ibid). Hall highlights that, for Gramsci, leadership is different to coercion whereby leadership is won by “consent, the taking into account of subordinate interests, the attempt to make itself popular” (1986: 16). He goes on to say that

“Gramsci explicitly acknowledges the necessary complexity and inter-discursive character of the ideological field. There is never any one, single, unified and coherent ‘dominant ideology’ which pervades everything ... The object of analysis is therefore not the single stream of ‘dominant ideas’ into which everything and everyone has been absorbed, but rather the

analysis of ideology as a differentiated terrain, of the different discursive currents, their points of juncture and break and the relations of power between them: in short, an ideological complex, ensemble or discursive formation” (1986: 22).

An understanding of hegemony, therefore, when applied to discourse and taken-for-granted assumptions, removes any notion that discourses are stable or fixed. It allows for the acknowledgment that some discourses are more dominant (not necessarily dominating) or taken-for-granted than others, but presents this dominance as a negotiated or contested dominance among different actors (with different elite or ‘subaltern’ positionings) within any particular context. These ‘terrains of struggle’ (Hall, 1996) can be understood in discursive terms as ‘sites of discursive struggle’. The understanding of hegemony compliments Foucault’s understanding of the power of discourse, where power is never fixed but it puts more emphasis on its contestation among actors in different contexts. Chouliarkari believes that this understanding is implicit in a Foucauldian approach. She argues that

far from considering discourse as a deterministic structure that eliminates agency and brings about the death of the subject, Foucault thinks of discourse as a productive technology of social practice, which subjects people to forms of power while, at the same time, providing them with spaces of agency and possibilities for action. I take this Foucauldian definition of discourse, where power and meaning always appear in a creative tension between agency and constraint” (2008: 2).

Fairclough argues that “the Gramscian conceptualisation of power in terms of hegemony is superior to Foucault’s conception of power... In this approach, hegemony is conceived as an unstable equilibrium built upon alliances and the generation of consent from subordinate classes and groups, whose instabilities are the constant focus of struggles” (Fairclough, 1992: 58). Whether complimentary or superior, if we apply the concept of hegemony to understanding the power of discourses and taken-for-granted assumptions, we can see that it is useful to explore whether some discourses have hegemonic status or not and why, or how discursive hegemony works in relation to a particular field, for example, in relation to DE. Given its non-deterministic and non-fixed feel, the concept of hegemonic power is helpful in relation to understanding discursive power as constructed and, at least in part, reflective of processes of struggle for legitimacy, credibility, power and influence in different contexts. When discourses of DE appear as, or are presented as, unitary or totalising, that is not the case. Discourses are constructed in context and they could be said to represent ‘battlegrounds of knowledge’ (Long, 1992) and of legitimacy. People are not just passive recipients of discourse but actors in its negotiation and articulation. This does not imply that people are not subjects of discourse, as Foucault (1982) argues, but it does suggest that this subjectivity is not always a passive one.

Thus, I am suggesting here that combining an analysis of discourse which is influenced by Foucault, with an analysis of hegemony provides insights into different discursive formations of DE as well as power relations surrounding them. A range of approaches to discourse analysis have been applied in the development sphere which are of significance here, and I discuss these below.

## **2. The Application of Discourse Analysis to Development**

### **2.1. Post-Development**

The value of an analysis of development ‘as’ discourse and of discourse ‘in’ development was highlighted first through critiques of development under the banner of ‘post-development’, e.g., Sachs (1993); Escobar (1984/85 and 1995); Crush (1995); Marchand and Parpart (1995); Rahnema and Bawtree (1997); Paritt (2002); and Ziai (2004, 2007 and 2015). Addressing the myriad of authors associated with post-development, Ziai argues that there was a “certain heterogeneity” in the field (2007: 5). Early arguments within post-development were that they are not trying to articulate alternatives, but to expose the Eurocentric assumptions in development discourse, to show the “disciplinary and normalising mechanisms” of development (Escobar 1984/85: 377) and to show how alternative conceptions of development have been co-opted within ‘the dominant discourse’ or ‘mainstream development’. On the other hand, more recent post-development critique has increasingly paid attention to alternatives (Escobar 2000, 2009; Esteva 1998, 2010, 2014). Post-development theorists suggest that a focus on development as discourse is a powerful tool of critique, sometimes focused on the concepts associated with development (Sachs 1993), and on the texts and language of development (Crush, 1995). They argue that discourse critique opens the space for other ways of knowing and resisting hegemonic socio-cultural, economic and political forces encapsulated in development.

Escobar’s discussion (1984/85) was significant in this movement to address development as discourse, highlighting the influence of ‘discourse’ on ‘practice’ and the relevance of an analysis of discourse for development policy and practice. For him, the dominance of modernist assumptions in development theory and practice is obvious and colonising. The epistemological emphasis is not on addressing the causes of ‘underdevelopment’ as in neo-Marxist discourse (Frank, 1967; Munck, 1999; Peet with Hartwick, 2009), rather it is to identify how development has dominated and excluded other ways of doing development. The notion of ‘underdevelopment’ is contested and deconstructed, as are notions of ‘traditional’, ‘modern’, ‘evolutionary change’ and ‘economic growth’ (Esteva, 1993). Representations of the peoples of the ‘Third World’ are challenged as homogenising and Eurocentric (Rathgeber, 1995) and the privileging of scientific knowledge and technological advancement is problematised (Esteva, 1993).

A related strand of work within post-development, and which also borrows from Foucault, is that associated with James Ferguson (1994). For Ferguson, development is conceptualised following Foucault as ‘dispositif’, a highly sophisticated anti-politics machine to which all development actors

are subjected, and which shapes development ideologies. A “dispositif is both a ‘thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble’ of discursive and material elements – for example, ‘discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions’, and so on – and the ‘system of relations ... established between these elements’” (Foucault, 1980: 194 in Brigg, 2002: 427). Brigg (2002: 426) argues that this concept of ‘dispositif’, combined with his application of the concept of ‘normalisation’ offers greater possibilities for applying Foucault’s analytics of power to understanding development than the “anachronistic sovereign conceptualisation of power” he associates with much post-development thinking. It is a conceptualisation of power that highlights “the relevance of Foucault’s relational conceptualisation of power and recognition that development is synthetically bound with biopower, which operates by bringing forth and promoting, rather than repressing, the forces and energies of human subjects” (Brigg, 2002: 422). Thus, he suggests, following Foucault, that as power is everywhere, and is productive as well as destructive, the complexities of discursive power should provide the basis for analysis rather than a limited focus on the negative effects of certain discourses.

There have been many critiques of post-development over the years and Kiely’s was a useful contribution to the debate. He argues that an almost exclusive focus on discourse leads to ambiguities in its account of the agents of development. For him, post-development essentialises development, portraying it as a “monolithic hegemony” (1999: 38) and it “is implicitly attempting to impose a new binary divide between First and Third Worlds” (1999: 38). Storey (2000) agrees, arguing that “despite its anti-totalising claims, (it) propounds an over-generalised and in some ways exaggerated conception of development” (2000: 42). Politically, Kiely is critical in relation to “questions of technology, relativism, the celebration of the local, and a silence on social movements” (1999: 40). He points out that the discursive turn in development studies “should not be at the expense of a materialist analysis” and concludes that “we are left with either a position where everything is reduced to discourse and therefore total relativism, or an empiricism which does not stand up to close empirical scrutiny” (1999: 43).

In response to these criticisms, Escobar defends his perspective against what he calls the ‘anti-postdevelopment’ school, and includes Kiely (1999), Storey (2000), Crewe and Harrison (1998) and Arce and Long (2000) in this. He points out that arguments made “in the name of the real”... arise(s) out of their unwillingness to accept the post-structuralist insight about the importance of language and meaning in the creation of reality” (2000: 2). He acknowledges the homogenising tendency of much of post-development literature, but suggests that those who focus on the “contestation of development on the ground” (2000: 2) need to acknowledge that this was made possible in part by the deconstruction of development discourse. He highlights that post-structuralist development critique was not trying to represent ‘the real’ but to ‘debunk’ the monster of developmentalism.

Della Faille (2011) offers a reflection on contemporary work which integrates analysis of discourse and power in the international development field. He feels, unlike Ziai (2015) who disagrees with him, that discourse analysis has had little influence on the mainstream of international development studies. He also argues that those involved in discourse analysis in the international development field – and he focuses on Mohanty and Scott (in Della Faille, 2011), Escobar (1995), Ferguson (1994) and Rist (1997) – have “a limited grasp of the general literature on discourse analysis” (2011: 233). Drawing mostly on an interpretation of Foucault’s work, he argues that their application of discourse analysis is “outdated” and that they are more “polemists than researchers whose ideas come from strongly empirically-grounded methodology. The value of some of their work lies more in the strength and novelty of their ideas or the incisiveness of their criticism than in their empirical demonstrations” (ibid).

Where Escobar’s work was instrumental in applying a Foucauldian analysis of discourse to the development sphere, Apthorpe and Gasper (1996) as well as Keeley and Scoones (2003) apply insights from other branches of discourse analysis to development. Apthorpe and Gasper pre-empt Della Faille in arguing for systematic attention to “both text and context, based on serious methods and theories” (1996: 1). They present a number of methods for analysing policy discourse, such as the examination of concepts, tropes, framing, naming and numbering. They are critical of discourse analysis which is “without procedures for examining texts, or only with apparently fixed formulae and pre-set conclusions” (Apthorpe and Gasper, 1996: 5) as they see evident in Escobar’s work, for example. Keeley and Scoones (2003) apply analysis of policy processes to understanding the intricate ways in which environmental policy narratives are constructed.

## **2.2. Critical Discourse Analysis**

For the purposes of this research, insights from critical discourse analysis (CDA) are also relevant for understanding discourses of DE. Though there are many forms of critical discourse analysis (e.g., Fairclough, 1992 and Wodok’s (2000) discourse-historical approach) and many critiques of it (e.g., Widdowson in Sarangi and Coultard, 2000), I agree with Phillips (2002: 27) that critical discourse analysis is “helpful in revealing the way in which discursive activities help to construct institutions in which power is embedded through the way in which taken-for-granted understandings serve to privilege some actors and disadvantage others”. Sarangi and Coultard suggest that “critical discourse analysts, especially Fairclough, draw our attention to the ways in which textual analysis can be integrated with social analysis” (2000: xxii). Of particular relevance to this research are the CDA concepts of social practice and genre (see Chapter Eight). In analysing discourse, Fairclough points out that

“any discursive ‘event’ (i.e. any instance of discourse) is seen as being simultaneously a piece



of text, an instance of discursive practice and an instance of social practice. The 'text' dimension attends to language analysis of texts. The 'discursive practice' dimension... specifies the nature of the processes of text production and interpretation... The 'social practice' dimension attends to issues of concern in social analysis such as the institutional and organisational circumstances of the discursive event and how that shapes the nature of the discursive practice, and the constitutive/constructive effects of discourse" (Fairclough, 1992: 4).

Fairclough (2003: 15) explains that a "genre is a way of acting and interacting linguistically – for example, interview, lecture and news report are all genres. Genres structure texts in specific ways". The term 'genre' has come to mean "the use of language associated with a particular socially ratified activity type" (ibid), for example, 'policy speak' or 'development speak'. These concepts suggest the need for a discourse analysis which goes beyond content to one which opens up questions related to the style and culture surrounding discourses of DE. These issues are discussed in Chapter Eight.

### **2.3. Development 'Buzzwords' and 'Fuzzwords'**

In more recent years, Cornwall's work (2007) in relation to development 'buzzwords and fuzzwords' has done this very well, along with her post-development co-writers in the Cornwall and Eade edited book of the same name (2010). Building on the exploration of concepts related to development in the Development Dictionary (Sachs, 1993), Cornwall argues that "words make worlds" (2007: 471). She highlights that the taken-for-granted quality of development "leaves much of what is actually *done* in its name unquestioned" (ibid). Going on to argue that words are important in that they frame meaning and practice, they include and exclude, she shows how the concepts addressed in the Development Dictionary have morphed into other, often more technical terms. Showing that buzzwords have become fuzzwords, she suggests that "buzzwords provide concepts that can float free of concrete referents to be filled with meaning by their users" (2007: 474). Her aim is to "leave the reader, feeling less than equivocal about taking for granted the words that frame the world-making projects of the development enterprise" (2010: 1). She argues for a 'constructive deconstruction' approach, which, reveals ideological differences and "opens up the possibility of reviving the debates that once accompanied the use of bland, catch-all terms like *civil society* and *social capital*. And if this is accompanied, as in the genealogical accounts in this and Sachs's collections, with tracing their more radical meanings, it can also help to wrest back more radical usages of even some of the most corrupted terms in the current development lexicon, such as *empowerment*" (2010: 14). Cornwall's work represents a 'development of post-development' and an important consideration of the concepts and language associated with contemporary development discourses and practices.

## 2.4. The Strengths of Post-Development

Despite criticisms, I agree with Ziai who argues that “the fierce criticism voiced in opposition to post-development has obscured the fact that two of the most significant hypotheses of this school of thought are usually implicitly accepted by its critics ... [that] the traditional concept of development is Eurocentric ... [and that] the traditional concept of development has authoritarian and technocratic implications” (2007: 8). With Pieterse, Storey argues that “post-development articulates meaningful sensibilities” (2000: 44). In his more recent work, Ziai (2015: 8) addresses criticisms of post-development and argues that it has provided “crucial insights for development studies” with reference to a range of features of ‘traditional’ or “orthodox development discourse”, e.g., naturalisation, othering, legitimisation and depoliticisation. In doing so, Ziai (2015) highlights techniques which continue to be pervasive in discourses of development and which serve to reinforce its ‘legitimation’ rather than question it. He highlights “the shifting of signifiers. It builds on the polysemy of the term ‘development’” (2015: 10). In simple terms, this means that the term can be used to mean different things, e.g., capitalist, economic development on the one hand and improvement in living standards on the other. In the context where it can be used to mean both, he argues that it loses the contradictions involved whereby one application can prohibit the realisation of the other. He goes on to show how assuming positivity also displaces attention from problems with the notion of development itself and puts them onto problems with the technical realisation of it. Arguing that it puts development beyond criticism, new approaches to development emerge without challenging the ontological problems associated with it, for example, Eurocentrism or notions of progress.

Ziai highlights other useful critiques of development discourse of relevance to this research. He criticises the fact that “knowledge about ‘development’ presents itself as technical and neutral” and the ‘hierarchisation’ of knowledge associated with the assumption that “the problems of ‘underdevelopment’ are located in the South, while the North possesses the knowledge to solve these problems” (2015: 12). He argues that development depoliticises in that there is an assumption that it benefits everyone. Based on ‘helping the poor’ without “hurting the rich”, he argues that “it has to do so in order to gain support and legitimacy, but in doing so neglects an analysis of the structural causes of poverty and depoliticizes the conflicts and divisions in society” (2015: 13). He argues, following Gasper (1996) that the “discourse works through the ‘concealment of divisive issues’” (2015: 14). As a result, the concept of development is slippery, it is positive and it focuses on values and ideals without addressing politics. In focusing, finally in this article, on how development discourse has appropriated and hybridised other critical concepts, he argues, following Cornwall, that if it can do that, then through a ‘constructive deconstruction’ it offers “the possibility of re-signifying the term ‘development’” (2015: 16).

In addressing the critics of post-development and re-signifying it, Ziai’s work offers a synthesis of

many of the contributions of post-development for analysis of development discourses and practices. Though he tends to focus once again on development discourse in the singular, he offers some useful conceptual and analytical insights which help to throw light on discourses of DE in this research. While I largely agree with Ziai, Escobar's early work is insightful in highlighting the contribution from Foucault of a genealogical approach to "undertake a diagnosis of a current situation by concentrating on the political technologies constituted by the interrelationship of contemporary forms of power and knowledge. The objective of his study are those practices of modern culture embodied in specific technologies, their localisation in different discourses, institutions and disciplines, and the processes by which they arise and develop" (1984-85: 379). In general, for me, post-development and other applications of discourse analysis are significant in applying this kind of post-structuralist critique and deconstruction to the development field. In highlighting relations of power and the effects of discourses on thinking and practice, and in questioning what are often 'taken-for-granted' goods, post-development and other discourse analysts in the development field contribute significantly to deep critical reflection and reflexivity on what happens in the name of development, such as DE, and on its effects. Another important focus among some post-development theorists is analysis of power relations in the development field and understandings of how discourses are shaped and shape policies and practices in that context. This issue is discussed below.

I begin, below, with a discussion of discourses of global development and of aid effectiveness before moving on to analysis of discourse, agency and power relations in Section 3.

## **2.5. Discourses of Global Development**

Applying an analysis of discourses to the development field in a way which is not unitary or deterministic is complex. For the purposes of this research and owing to limitations of space, I am suggesting that it is useful to focus, briefly, on discourses of global development. These, I argue, throw light on different ontological, identity and relational assumptions about global development, many of which underpin DE discourses discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four. Drawing from a range of development literature, I understand that, broadly, there are four discourses of global development, which are associated with different theoretical perspectives and assumptions underpinning development representations and practices. These are a modernist discourse, a patronising discourse, a critical and post-critical discourse and an 'other' discourse (Andreotti, 2014).

A modernist discourse of global development assumes that development is about modernisation; it addresses causes of poverty which are seen to be located internally; the model of development is based on Western modernity's 'shine' (Andreotti, 2013); and technical assistance is valued as one form of development agency in the light of this. A modernist discourse places value on development as

progress (Esteva, 1993), through, for example, education, healthcare and good governance. It involves a depoliticised analysis of poverty (lack of consideration of the broader power structures which affect global poverty) and promotes technical responses to same, e.g., through new public management and results-based frameworks. Where such approaches take account of globalisation, it is often to view global interconnectedness as an opportunity for trade and investment (see the IMF Annual Report, 2015). Famously, Joseph Stiglitz wrote in 2006 about “making globalisation work” where he calls for greater state management and regulation of the economy. Modernist discourses are sometimes critical of neoliberal globalisation and where they are, such criticisms can generally be understood to be about prioritising reformist improvements rather than systemic change, poverty reduction rather than tackling the root causes of poverty, and promoting foreign direct investment and entrepreneurship, which gives primacy to the economic over the political or social (Collier and Dollar, 2002; Sachs, 2005). In this context, we can see valuing of the MDGs which attempted to reform development cooperation and global development relationships. Understandings of the global in this construct are very much based on understandings of divisions between the global North/global South or ‘Least Developed Countries’, ‘Developing Countries’ and ‘Developed Countries’ (UN, 2017). Here, the state is seen to play a key role in regulating the institutionalisation of development for market or self-interested purposes (OECD, 2010). As such, development cooperation is regarded as playing an important role in economic advancement of the donor country as well as the aid recipient country, through trade, contracts etc. NGDOs act as service-providers and contractors for state alongside other private business companies.

A patronising discourse of global development (acting ‘as a patron of’ others, associated with paternalism and with connotations of condescension) approximates to Andreotti’s liberal humanist root narrative of social engineering (2014). Here, the notion of global development is underpinned by assumptions related to trusteeship. Trusteeship involves a sense of responsibility for the well-being of the ‘other’ through aid and ‘helping’ as well as the sharing of technical skills, which Cowen and Shenton, (1996: 43 in Behan, 2009: 39) argue are “exercised by the knowing and the moral on behalf of the ignorant and corrupt”. It focuses on development as ‘help’, ‘concern’, ‘care’ and ‘charity’ and is often based on humanitarian or moral “grounds for acting” (Andreotti, 2006: 47), e.g., using language like ‘working with the poorest of the poor’, ‘meeting basic needs’ and ‘ensuring human dignity’. Many of the actions and assumptions associated with trusteeship can have very positive associations, e.g., they are often linked to community or locally-based responses to poverty and inequality, but there is a tendency here for service-based approaches at this level rather than advocacy-based, critical ones. Patronising discourses are also linked to ethnocentrism, viewing global realities through one’s own lens, ‘othering’ the people and situations of the global South, and coloniality (Mignolo, in Andreotti, 2013). This involves the justification for global development relationships based on positions of superiority-inferiority and therefore is often closely linked with modernist discourses. This approach is linked in many ways to the charity or development service-delivery role of NGDOs (Choudry and

Kapoor, 2013) where a North-South construction of global poverty is maintained to the detriment of global thinking and analysis. It is also linked to 'best practice' and aid effectiveness (Eyben, 2010; 2013) which prioritises value for money (Shutt, 2011) when it comes to aid and accountability to state donors, who are seen as largely responsible for development in the countries of the South. Policy influencers in this area include the human development index and human development reports of the UNDP which call for reform of development to meet basic needs and rights in the context of the SDGs (UN 2015).

At the same time, there is a lot of critique of these dominant 'modernist' and 'patronising' discourses. Arguably, in this context, a third 'critical' (Andreotti, 2014) discourse of global development is also evident in the literature. Drawing from neo-Marxist critique and critical, participatory development approaches (Frank, 1967; Freire, 1970; Rahman, 1993; Chambers, 1997) this discourse suggests the centrality of critical engagement with local and global power relationships. It draws on critiques of globalisation and the inequalities of neoliberalism (Rapley, 2004) as well as addressing the responsibilities of elites for their role in exploitation, e.g., through unfair trade, illegitimate debt, and the marginalisation of different groups in society. It is associated with gender and development as well as feminist theories of development (Harcourt, 2016; Rai, 2002; Rai and Waylen, 2008). In this case, critical development is about working with communities to overcome exploitation. Though sometimes articulated as the global North exploiting the global South, these days there is more often talk of inequality and power in terms of local-global intersections. When it comes to discourses of aid effectiveness, this critical approach is reflective of CSO concerns relating to the power and influence of civil society as well as the importance of quality development processes. The role of NGOs is highlighted here though working with the state is not precluded. In this case, NGOs are seen more as watchdogs of the state and playing an advocacy role rather than the service-delivery role of the patronising and modernist discourses (Shivji, 2004; Civicus, 2015).

Broadly approximating to influences from post-development and post-colonial theory, increasingly an 'other' or fourth discourse of global development can be located in the context of an understanding of "asymmetrical globalisation, unequal power relations, Northern and Southern elites imposing their own assumptions as universal" (Andreotti, 2006: 47). This discourse, which may reflect the 'post-critical' or 'other' narratives that Andreotti (2014) identifies, places value on horizontal relationships, through 'solidarity', 'commoning' (Esteva, 1998; McDermott, 2014), and 'dialogue', for example. While the emphasis is on critique, reflexivity and analysis of representations, stereotypes and power relations shaping the development field, it is also about imaging and creating 'otherwise'. In terms of development actors, the emphasis here is on grassroots organising, transnational advocacy networks and indigenous social movements (Escobar, 2009).

## 2.6. Neoliberalism and Discourses of Aid Effectiveness

This brief discussion of different discourses of global development sheds some light on different assumptions relating to development in terms of what it might involve, the challenges identified in its realisation, how local-global relations are understood and understandings of key agents and institutions of development or social change. A key set of discourses also of relevance to this research are those related to aid effectiveness, which include good governance, accountability and measurement for results, as reflected in The Paris Declaration (2005). As discussed in Chapter Two, this discourse has had an increasingly influential role in relation to development cooperation and DE in Ireland and discussion of debates in relation to it in the literature are important for providing theoretical insight in relation to them.

Arguably, the discourse of aid effectiveness was founded on earlier emphases within the UN and the World Bank (WB) on good governance, a discourse which became popular in development cooperation in the 1990s (Dillon, 2003/4). Abrahamsen tells us, with reference to a WB (1989) report 'Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth', that "by proclaiming that a 'crisis of governance' underlies the 'litany of Africa's development problems', the report placed the concept of governance at the heart of the donor agenda for Africa" (2000: 30). A central concept in the good governance canon is that of accountability (UNDP, 1998). There are many understandings of accountability and critiques of it in development literature going back to the 1990s (Najam, 1996; Wallace, 1997; Edwards, 2000; and Mawdsley, Porter and Townsend, 2001). Some are critical of practices of accountability which are confined to 'upward accountability to donors' rather than embracing 'downward accountability' (Najam, 1996). Najam argues that "once the dust of rhetoric has settled, NGOs – like most other institutional entities – tend to focus principally on their responsibilities to their patrons, very often at the cost of their responsibilities to their clients and to their own goals and visions" (1996: 351). Others are critical of its association with new managerialism, whose language operates "along common lines all around the world" (Mawdsley, Porter and Townsend, 2001: 1), where development is guided by the desire to make programmes effective and accountable (Wallace, 1997), and where "a rationalist approach to development planning has become the norm" (Dillon, 2003/2004: 107). Wallace argues that "there are clearly tensions between the growing professionalisation of development, the NGO adoption of new public management practices and approaches and the increased focus on upward accountability and communication on the one hand, and the commitments within these organisations to participation, downward accountability, local empowerment and gender equity on the other" (1997: 36).

Linking aid effectiveness, accountability and results-based management, Vahamaki et al argue that there are different pressures which have led to their prioritisation: "during the past decade, against a backdrop of growing financial constraints and a tough global debate on the efficacy of aid, there has

been considerable external pressure for development cooperation agencies to reorient their management systems towards effectiveness and results” (2011: 4). They go on to argue that supported by “the High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF – 4) in Busan, South Korea, held in November-December 2011, the results agenda has received even more emphasis and is currently a top political priority. Renewed scrutiny has intensified calls for accountability to tax-payers both in donor and recipient countries, and the need for results information to improve planning and analysis of what works” (ibid). For them, it is associated with “effective provision of value for money, there is a risk of undermining the credibility of development cooperation, and that otherwise willing financiers might stay away” (ibid).

Eyben (2013) draws on Foucault’s notion of techniques of control and suggests a discursive shift in emphasis from results and value for money in the 1990s to performance and payment by results in the 2000s. She argues that with their link to new public management and the emphasis on evidence and measurement, different results and evidence artefacts, e.g., log frame analysis or performance management tools, have been introduced over the years which shape practitioners’ lives: “language can be ignored, but artefacts influence every day of work in the development sector. They are ‘technologies of power’, implemented and enforced by authority, but often also internalised so that no obvious external control is required. With internalisation, artefacts take on a life of their own, independent of the authority that had initially required their use” (2013: 8). Drawing on Foucault’s notions of discipline and surveillance (1980), she argues that “auto-surveillance creates a disciplined practitioner. When in positions of authority, such practitioners demand that subordinates follow rules and procedures according to how these have been internalised and interpreted ... on the other hand, the disciplinary power of artefacts is far from totalising” (2013: 9). She goes on to describe the role of the ‘squeezed middle’ development staff who try to negotiate these results and evidence artefacts of control. Highlighting possibilities for space for manoeuvre, though she shows how these artefacts can become embedded in practice over time, she argues that they also change: “the log frame has become a rigid tool, demanding ever more precise and pre-determined ‘results’ with SMART indicators. As a consequence, a new artefact, the Theory of Change, has been introduced to open things up by again asking questions about assumptions and conditions” (2013: 9).

A key question for Eyben is why these discourses of results and evidence have become so powerful. She suggests that it may be because of a changing aid landscape with reduced donor interest in rights and social transformation. Though they have not become as widespread as results-based approaches, Eyben argues, echoing Ferguson’s anti-politics machine (1994), that evidence approaches are related to the need for donors to build, what she calls, “an anti-politics firewall” (2013: 19). She suggests that with evidence-based approaches, “development assistance becomes a ‘technical’ best-practice intervention based on rigorous objective evidence, delivering best value for money to domestic taxpayers and recipient country citizens, without interfering in that country’s politics” (Eyben, 2013:

19).

With regard to the need to be seen to be in control, she quotes Duffield who sees the results-and-evidence agenda as “a performance of the will to govern to a domestic audience” (in Eyben 2013: 22). Though she says the “desire for control, symptomatic of a refusal to engage with complexity in a dynamic and uncertain world, has created both elaborate performance measurement systems and an emphasis on quick deliverables”, as it is a performance, she argues that “many mainstream development managers – and evaluators – are well aware this is a performance and thus in practice are more flexible than the public face of their agency might indicate” (2013: 22). These processes in turn “give rise to the demand for certain types of information that privileges certain tools and methods – and the kinds of development programmes donors are prepared to fund” (2013: 23). In terms of the sector’s internal dynamics, Eyben highlights competition for reduced development budgets in the UK among departments, NGOs and private companies. “In all instances, the competition makes organisations willing not only to comply with funders’ management and monitoring requirements but sometimes through internalisation of power to support their funders’ agendas wholeheartedly” (2013: 26).

Though official perspectives on development effectiveness have prioritised a focus on the technical and instrumental, and on measurement, efficiency and value for money (Shutt, 2011), in Ireland, CSO perspectives have been more inclined to focus on ‘quality’ (Dóchas, 2010), on ‘downward accountability’ and on civil society activism. The challenge is that once CSOs engage with states who have signed up to their aid effectiveness commitments, they too are likely to have to take these on, and become engaged in auto-surveillance, in Eyben’s (2013) terms. The issue of how discourses of aid effectiveness affect DE is addressed in Chapter Seven.

### **3. Discourse, Agency and Power Relations**

Another important focus among some post-development theorists is analysis of power relations in development and understandings of how discourses are shaped and shape policies and practices in that context. This issue is discussed below. In this section, I address power and State-NGDO relations because, as argued earlier, discourses of DE cannot be understood as separate from the institutional context within which they are constructed. Within what contexts are they shaped and how does this affect them?



### 3.1. From Discourse as Discipline to Governmentality

As indicated above, early post-development theory, especially as conceptualised by Escobar, drew heavily on Foucault's analysis of discourse and disciplinary power. Escobar (1984/85 and 1995) and Ferguson (1994) identify the institutional and professional practices which have led to the establishment of the hegemony of Eurocentric, technocentric and growth-oriented development discourse, in the case of Escobar, and in establishing the power of World Bank (WB) discourses in development planning in Lesotho, in the case of Ferguson. In introducing the precursors and antecedents of development discourse, he argues, following Foucault, that "to understand development as a discourse, one must look not at the elements themselves but at the system of relations established through them" (1995: 40 – 41). Despite his deterministic and unitary understanding of development and of discourse – Foucault sees it as one ensemble with a system of relations – his focus on the system of power relations associated with discourse is important as it regards discourse as central to policy, practice and people's lived lives (Smith, 2005). Escobar's focus on the history of development is also significant. He does not see this in the conventional terms "of the evolution of theories and ideas, or as a series of more or less effective interventions" but in terms of changes and transformations of "discursive practices tied to political economies, knowledge traditions and institutions of ruling" (1995: 154). This approach is taken up by Rist (1997) who provides a critical discursive history of development discourse and its relationship with policy and development strategies.

In recent years, many theorists have looked to Foucault's work on governmentality to get beyond the totalising, deterministic and unitary notions of discourse evident in early post-development work. In so doing, they draw on Foucault's later work to explain how technologies of power have worked to establish the hegemony of neoliberalism. Lemke explains that the term 'governmentality' "pin-points a specific form of representation; government defines a discursive field in which exercising power is 'rationalized'. This occurs, among other things, by the delineation of concepts, the specification of objects and borders, the provision of arguments and justifications, etc. In this manner, government enables a problem to be addressed and offers certain strategies for solving/handling the problem. In this way, it also structures specific forms of intervention" (2001: 1/2). With governmentality,

"the state in the neoliberal model not only retains its traditional functions, but also takes on new tasks and functions. The neoliberal forms of government feature not only direct intervention by means of empowered and specialised state apparatuses, but also characteristically develop indirect techniques for leading and controlling individuals without at the same time being responsible for them. The strategy of rendering individual subjects 'responsible' ... entails shifting the responsibility for social risks such as illness, unemployment, poverty, etc, and for life in society into the domain for which the individual is responsible ... the key feature of the neoliberal rationality is the congruence it endeavours to achieve between a responsible and moral individual and an economic-rational individual" (Lemke, 2001: 12).

Thus, Lemke explains, “by means of the notion of governmentality the neoliberal agenda for the ‘withdrawal of the state’ can be deciphered as a technique for government” (2001: 12). Lemke goes on to suggest that this work on governmentality expanded and nuanced Foucault’s earlier work on processes of discipline, where Foucault later acknowledged that it is important to take into account “techniques of domination and techniques of the self” (Lemke, 2001: 14).

Fraser argues that an understanding of governmentality is useful for identifying “the characteristic ordering mechanisms and political rationality of the emerging new mode of regulation. The result would be a quasi-Foucauldian account of a new form of globalising governmentality” (2003: 167). For her, governmentality is a useful concept for understanding post-Fordist modes of regulation which tends to

“‘govern-at-a-distance’ through flexible, fluctuating networks that transcend structured institutional sites. No longer nation-state centred, today’s social ordering works through the powers and wills of a dispersed collection of entities, including states, supranational organisations, transnational firms, NGOs, professional associations, and individuals. At the country level, for example, QUANGOs assume regulatory functions previously held by the state; with the privatisation of prisons, utilities, and schools, electoral accountability is supplanted by negotiations among ‘partners’ on ‘community’ boards ... the result is a ruling apparatus whose composition is ... complex and shifting” (2003: 168).

Though work on governmentality has become very popular in recent years as a means of applying Foucault’s analysis to contemporary neoliberal societies, Collier suggests that rather than focusing on his concept of governmentality, it is more fruitful to take a ‘topological analysis’. For him, analyses of governmentality, including Lemke’s, one of the most well-known, are “prone to reification, as though it were a coherent regime that dominated an epoch. It is not a helpful tool for analysing a topological field comprised of heterogeneous techniques, procedures and institutional arrangements that cannot be made ineligible through reference to common conditions of possibility” (2009: 98). For Collier, “the result is not an infinite multiplication of contingent forms. Instead, a topological analysis focuses on the broad configurational principles through which new formations of government are assembled, implying that they arise from some inner necessity of coherence” (2009: 80).

Foucault has had a significant influence on post-development thinking but explorations of his more nuanced treatment of the technologies of power at work through processes of governmentality are also important here for understanding what Fraser calls the “small-scale techniques of coordination [which] organised relations on the ‘capillary’ level: in factories and hospitals, in prisons and schools ... the ‘micro-political’ ... practices of ‘governmentality’ [which] ... embodied a particular ‘political rationality’” (2003: 162). This is what she calls the ‘regulatory grammar’, and she argues the importance of theorising different modes of governmentality along with its political rationality “including its characteristic objects of intervention, modes of subjectification, and mix of repression and self-regulation” (2003: 167). Her application of Foucault’s work reminds us of the importance of

not treating the power of discourse in an essentialist way and of understanding power-agency relations.

### **3.2. Discourses of Power and State-NGDO Relationships**

The institutional contexts which shape the development cooperation and education fields in Ireland, where DE discourses operate, are complex. Chiefly, they are characterised by state-civil society relations within a wider context of EU and OECD influence as well as economic and political policy and actors of various kinds, for example, various government departments, education institutions and NGDOs. What is the relationship between these institutional contexts and discourses and where does power come into it? These are important bigger questions for discourse analysis. Here, I am focusing merely on debates relating to the role of the state and NGDO relations when it comes to power and discourse, and more specifically in relation to the development field.

Discourses of the state in relation to its role in development have been explored in development theory (Preston, 1999) as have the discourses of multi-state actors (Rist, 1997), international institutions (Ferguson, 1994) and NGDOs (Crewe and Harrison, 1998). As a central agent in development, depending on one's analysis of the state, the state is seen to derive its sovereignty and legitimacy from democratic institutions, bureaucratic organisational structures (political and economic) and the construction of national identities. When discussing the Irish State, Tovey and Share outline that "the State as an institution or set of institutions has three characteristics: It claims sovereignty over a specific territory. It holds the sole right to organised use of violence within that territory. It possesses legitimacy – the consent of the citizens to be governed by it" (2000: 78). Fuat Keyman (1997) argues against the tendency to essentialise the State as agent. This work is reflective of broader theorisations of the state in the context of neoliberalism, globalisation and governmentality, as outlined earlier, where state power is regarded as diffuse.

Though not synonymous with civil society, there is some overlap between discourses of the role of civil society and NGDOs in development, with the latter often regarded as a sub-set of the former. Most of the early literature focuses more on NGDOs and on classifications of them, (Smillie 1995) than on civil society, as well as on their origins and associations with voluntarism. It is clear that a variety of traditions continue in the work of NGDOs, including the charity focus of many early incarnations. Black points out that "the symbol of its involvement in both disasters and development was the starving child of Africa, an innocent whose haunting eyes and skeletal limbs made a startling impression on the British conscience" (1992: 9). Such images reflected colonial representations of 'self' and 'other' (Mudimbe 1988; Pieterse and Parekh 1995; and Griesshaber 1999) and are still evident in NGDO representations of development in Ireland today (Murphy 2014). Such charitable notions assume that with the assistance of NGDOs in the global North, people in the global South

could be rescued from their 'plight', often described in terms of 'destitution' and 'poverty', with relief and rehabilitation and subsequently long-term development strategies.

From the 1980s many Northern NGOs became more 'professionalised' with increased talk of management, employment in the sector and applying business strategies. NGOs began to refer to statistics produced by the World Bank and the UN to defend their aid efforts; many of their senior personnel were trained in one of the newly established development training institutions, and they employed full-time personnel to act on their behalf in 'developing countries'. Smith outlines the often-contradictory activities of NGOs. While involved in partnerships with government in relief, they are also engaged in policy advocacy work that challenges the governments that often support them. He suggests that they can do this through the maintenance of 'trade offs', and argues that in most instances, even the most radical NGOs "channel the energies of middle-class dissidents into reformist activities not radically challenging established political and economic structures, at least in the short term" (1990: 23). Thus, though often founded on altruistic notions of 'saving the world', in the 1980s NGOs became regarded as cheap, efficient outlets for state-managed development cooperation efforts in the face of reduced budgets.

More recent literature focuses more directly on civil society and the role of NGOs in civil society and relationships with the state (Crewe and Harrison 1998, Van Rooy 1998, Howell and Pearce 2001; Lewis, 2002; Bebbington, Hickey and Mitlin, 2014; Lewis, 2014; and Banks, Hulme and Edwards, 2015). Analyses and critiques of the roles and relationships of the state and NGOs in development (Hulme and Edwards, 1997) have a long history in development studies and they cover a vast range of power-related debates. Issues such as the constraints placed on NGO radicalism by their relationship with the state and the question of 'who controls the development agenda?' are highlighted. In the context of neoliberalism, it could be argued that NGOs act as 'pawns of the state' in that they often fill the gaps left by the state, or act as the 'private' in development's 'public-private partnerships'. They are sometimes regarded as the ideological tools of donors and there are questions about their accountability (Najam, 1996), for example, in the context of different debates on the role of the state in the context of globalisation (Dale, 2000; Chang, 2003). It has been argued that development relationships between the state and NGOs can reflect social contract relationships (Choudry and Kapoor, 2013), where donor states promote their own agenda through financing of NGO activity and curtail this support where NGO activities are too challenging (Smith, 1990). Gaynor's work on social partnership in Ireland highlights the challenges for civic associations (or NGOs) in their relationships with state. She argues that when NGOs enter into policy negotiations with state, they can "both internalise and promote its narrow communicative norms". In that context, she highlights, "the public sphere is increasingly impoverished and space for scrutiny, critique and the articulation of alternatives all but shut down" (2011: 16).

There are many attempts to understand the hierarchical nature of relationships in development cooperation as well as the power of discourses and institutions to shape and direct the lives of people through the development ‘apparatus’ or ‘artefacts’ (Eyben, 2013). There are different approaches to this topic within the development literature, including post-development treatment of the power of discourse and mechanisms of governmentality (Escobar, 1995; Ferguson, 1994), post-colonial critique and decoloniality (Said, 1978; Spivak, 1988; and Andreotti, 2014), actor-oriented approaches which build on the work of Long (2002), and work in relation to the Power cube (Gaventa, 2006). Ribeiro’s (2002) work on the development field as a field of power, following Bourdieu, allows him to focus on how different agents are positioned differently in the field and how the field is characterised by power struggles and development dramas, as well as bureaucracies, with their own power, ideologies and utopias.

In studying NGDOs, Hillhorst argues that “an interest in the politics of NGO-ing takes one invariably to study language and discourse” (2003: 8). She argues that

“everything happening in and around NGOs has a bearing on the politics of power within the organisations, the politics of organisational legitimation and, finally, the politics of (local/global) development. Much of what NGO people do is inspired by and affects the power politics of the internal and external control and allocation of NGO resources, ideas and activities. This can be called the everyday politics of NGOs (see Kerkvliet 1991:11). At the same time, NGO actions are geared towards legitimation, which means that, in order to find clients and supportive stakeholders, NGOs have to convince others of their appropriateness and trustworthiness (see Baily 1971). Finally, NGOs are not just the product of interrelating international and national developments and politics, they also play a role in such politics” (2003: 4).

Hillhorst tries to steer a delicate course between acknowledging the hegemonic power of certain development discourses and NGDO and other actors’ ‘room for manoeuvre’. She suggests that “people find room for manoeuvre within the multiplicity of discourses they have available” (2003: 9/10). She goes on to say that “this line of analysis gives a more dynamic interpretation of discourse, acknowledging the multiple realities of development and of the agency of people in bending discourse to their own needs and realities” (2003: 10).

Hillhorst suggests that a good way of approaching discourse is not to assume that a discourse is powerful but to “ask *when* and *how* particular discourses become more powerful than others (Watts 1993: 265). In the words of Bakhtin (1981/1935: 259-423), we should ask ourselves how and through what centripetal or centrifugal processes do certain discourses become dominant, or, alternatively, lose their central position. Second, when a discourse becomes powerful, we have to ask how it affects NGO practice in the interplay with alternative and everyday discourses” (2003: 11). She goes on to explain the value of “an actor orientation [which] recognises that people operate within the limitations of structural constraints, but emphasises that such constraints operate through people. Constraints only

become effective through the mediation of interpreting actors. People in turn are social actors, whose agency is shaped by their life worlds, experience and social networks, among other factors. This theoretical notion about the mutuality of actors and structures has important methodological ramifications for studying NGOs” (2003: 5).

Given the focus in this research on discourses of DE and the factors which shape them in institutional contexts, debates relating to state-NGDO relations are particularly important. This is particularly the case as they nuance any treatment of discourse which regards discourse as separate from context or as deterministic, as evident in early post-development theory. As discussed above, exploration of the constraints related to roles played by NGDOs in the context of new managerialism and funding dependency and how NGDOs navigate their relationships with state actors are key to understanding the limitations on them and their room for manoeuvre. While there is often an assumption that NGDOs and states have different interests and/or discourses, research shows that this is not always the case and that NGDOs internalise and often reinforce state perspectives.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter I have introduced the importance of understanding discourse in terms of how it is constructed and negotiated and how it shapes thinking and practice. In so doing, I have presented a multi-layered analysis of discourse, drawing on Foucault’s work, in order to set the scene for an analysis of different discursive formations of DE. Moving beyond the descriptive, in an attempt to understand where discourses come from, what they mean and what their effects might be, I have introduced the importance of an analysis of discourse which takes account of power relations in specific contexts. Drawing on post-development and critiques of it, I show that while early post-development was criticised for its totalising and deterministic understanding of discourse, later work shows more nuance in its treatment of discourse as well as in methodological tools. This is reflective, at least in part, of influences drawn from different phases and concepts in Foucault’s work. Arguing for a focus on discursive power which is not deterministic, I apply Gramsci’s analysis of hegemony to discursive power. In addition, I suggest that work which has been inspired by Foucault’s treatment of governmentality and by actor-oriented approaches give an insight into power relations and dynamics which affect state-NGDO relations and discursive power and influence in that context. The discussion of multi-layered discourses, governmentality, discourses of global development and aid effectiveness, and of actor-discourse dynamics in institutional contexts discussed here provides useful analytical tools for understanding how discourses of DE are shaped within the DE sector in Ireland. This is discussed in Chapter Eight.

## **Chapter Four: Understanding Discourses of DE**

### **Introduction**

In an Irish context, if one wants to understand what DE is, there are lots of places to go and people to talk to; websites, organisations, policy definitions, books and reports. Despite this, as it is a ‘compound concept’, of ‘development’ and ‘education’, both of which are contested terms, it is not surprising that ‘DE’ is the subject of some confusion, lack of clarity and disagreement. As such, many commentators have tried to conceptualise what it is about. They have tried to explore its many definitions (Kenny and O’Malley, 2002; Bailey, 2009; McCloskey, 2014), to explain it in terms of where there are levels of agreement (Bourn, 2011b; Pike 2015 (in Reynolds et al)), overlaps with other similar educations (Regan, 2006; Frike and Gathercole, 2015), or different perspectives on it (Andreotti, 2006, 2011; and Bourn 2011b, 2012). The emphasis in the literature tends to be on the search for shared meaning or consensus, and there have been conferences attempting to agree understandings of it (DARE, 2004 (in McCloskey, 2014); EU Commission Consensus, 2007) and attempts in Ireland to explain what it is so that there would be greater public understanding of it (IDEA, 2014). At the same time, there seems to be some acknowledgement in recent times of the value of dissensus (GENE, 2015) and of different approaches, perspectives on or discourses of DE (Andreotti, 2006).

In this chapter, I argue that it is necessary to explore meanings and assumptions related to different discourses of DE in order to try to break through the confusion, to open up shared and different understandings as well as the contradictions attached to understandings of DE in Ireland. Building on discussions of development, discourse and power in Chapter Three, I identify an analytical framework for understanding discourses of DE in Ireland. In order to do this, I identify core dimensions of DE which are drawn from definitions of DE in policy and the theoretical literature over time, i.e., knowledge and understanding, skills, learning processes and action. I explore critical pedagogy, with its Freirean and post-structuralist influences, to argue the importance of considering the aims, values and politics of DE. I draw on both of these discussions to present a framework for understanding discourses of DE with reference to Andreotti’s (2014) ‘root narrative’ approach.

### **1. Development Education**

#### **1.1. DE – A Concept with Many Dimensions**

For many years I have tried to explain the concept of a concept to participants on the MA in

Development Studies programme that I co-ordinate at Kimmage DSC. Drawing from my experience I would explain to them the importance, I saw, in questioning everything, taking nothing for granted and not searching for definitions. For me, as I have often said in class, ‘definitions close down meaning. They limit understanding’. So I have encouraged participants to open up meaning, to explore a concept and to understand its various dimensions or components. What, then, is a ‘dimension’ of a concept? This is something I have tried to explain using examples, e.g., the concept of empowerment, as it is usually understood, involves a number of different dimensions – power, decision-making, engagement, participation, enablement, confidence, competence, individual and group processes of change, etc – each of which also include a number of different dimensions which help to describe them. People include different elements in their understanding depending on where they are coming from – their epistemological or ontological position, their theoretical or philosophical perspective, their experience, etc. Arguably, what I have been encouraging through this work is the need to explore or ‘describe’ rather than to ‘define’ a concept. It is the difference, perhaps, between answering the question: ‘what is something about?’ and ‘what is it?’

While being aware that I engage in this discussion and exploration with course participants each year as they try to develop their Masters level research, it was not until I came across Deleuze and Guattari’s (1991) discussion of a concept, in the last few years, that what I had been doing began to make more sense to me. They argue that “concepts are not waiting for us ready-made, like heavenly bodies. There is no heaven for concepts. They must be invented, fabricated, or rather created and would be nothing without their creator’s signature” (1991: 5). Focusing there on the meaning that a ‘creator’ imputes to a concept is important as it opens up understandings of the contingency and diversity of meaning in different understandings of a particular concept. Deleuze and Guattari go on to say that “there are no simple concepts. Every concept has components and is defined by them. It therefore has a combination [*chiffre*]. It is a multiplicity, although not every multiplicity is conceptual. There is no concept with only one component ... Every concept is at least double or triple, etc. Neither is there a concept possessing every component, since this would be chaos pure and simple ... Every concept has an irregular contour defined by the sum of its components” (1991: 15). While our intentions may have been different in reflecting on the multiple dimensions or ‘components’ of any concept, we seem to have arrived at a similar place – that it is impossible to ‘capture’ meaning, to assume a singular meaning or to ‘summarise’ a concept into a short sentence which answers the simple question ‘what is it?’ Doing so leads to a reductionist and essentialist approach to meaning. Exploring concepts in terms of how different people construct their meaning in different contexts and in relation to their multiple dimensions or components is more likely, it would seem, to open up meaning, and to allow for an examination of the diversity of understanding any concept. This challenges the tendency to look mainly for the ‘lowest common denominator’. This latter type of thinking, which emphasises similarities rather than differences, has been challenged by Andreotti in relation to DE with her focus on ‘soft’ vs ‘critical’ global citizenship education (2006). Her approach, which presents ‘typologies’ or



'mappings' (Andreotti, 2014) of different conceptual understandings or discourses, is an attempt to pluralise conceptual understanding rather than to reduce concepts to a unified or essentialist form. It is this approach that I apply in this research to understandings of DE in talk.

## **1.2. Understanding DE 'Talk'**

Given that meaning changes and meanings change – they are constructed, deconstructed, shifted and reframed from time to time – and people often adopt multiple meanings for the same concept, it is not possible to capture meaning in any fixed or final way. All efforts to understand meaning are just that, efforts. Is it possible, therefore, to understand what people mean when they talk of DE? Mannion et al talk of education for global citizenship as a “floating signifier that different discourses attempt to cover with meaning” (2011: 443). One way of trying to explore meaning is to explore the discourses people draw upon (Ryan, 2011) – the words they use, their talk and how they make sense of DE. While even those who engage in it are often confused as to what it is, as evidenced in research undertaken by Kenny and O'Malley (2002), Bailey (2009) and Bryan and Bracken (2011) in the Irish context, even this 'confusion' is interesting as it points to different understandings and perspectives. Furthermore, like all similar 'educations' there appear to be people 'in the know', the 'legitimate' voices who interpret its meaning to others. As such, it is the subject of 'insider speak', rhetoric or jargon. As with development more broadly, DE policy discourse and 'talk' is replete with a language of its own, words understood by insiders. These concepts, talk and language become the buzzwords and fuzzwords (Cornwall, 2010) of DE which serve to include and exclude and to leave development language and practice unquestioned (Cornwall, 2007). These include terms such as 'critical thinking', conscientisation, critical literacy, education for transformation, education for justice, participatory tools, experiential learning. But how do facilitators and policy makers understand these terms? What do they mean to them? By being 'fuzzy', they allow for multiple interpretations. This has the advantage of not fixing meaning in any limited sense but it has the disadvantage of lack of clarity. Fuzzwords can be useful in that they allow us to take account of ambiguity and multiplicity of meaning on the one hand but they assist obfuscation on the other. In addition, there is a challenge in trying to clarify meaning while resisting the drive for certainty and the limitations of definition.

A characteristic of DE definitions, and from my experience in relation to talk, is what might be called 'wishful thinking' words. These are concepts or ideas which are presented as 'fact' but which are aspirational (Bourn, 2011b). An example might be when someone says that 'DE is transformative. It is based on the values of social justice'. In such a statement, the assumption is that there is something 'transformative' about DE and that it is based on 'social justice'. Neither of these two terms are explained but we are to assume what is meant by both. In addition, they are cited as 'fact' yet they reflect the motivations, visions or desires of the person saying them as well as other influences. They

may also reflect a mantra of words which have been taken on and which are spoken unthinkingly, like ‘nothing words’. Of course this doesn’t mean that they have no power or effect as many of them are ‘strong words’, like ‘transformation’ or ‘justice’ which can inspire or motivate. Cornwall talks about the ‘warmly persuasive’ words that Raymond Williams described for community in his 1976 book ‘keywords’. “Among them can be found words that admit no negatives, words that evoke Good Things that no-one could possibly disagree with” (Cornwall, 2007: 472). Cornwall also talks about “words that encode seemingly universal values” and “code-words that are barely intelligible to those beyond its borders” (2007: 472). And there are ‘weak words’ which have limited effect, and ‘noisy words’ which seem to drown out others and which dominate, e.g., results, measurement, outcomes. Swanson (2010: 140) draws on Bernstein’s discussion of the “‘strong voice’ of Science as a ‘vertical discourse’” and she compares this to the “‘weak voice’ of the more ‘horizontal discourses’ of education that are an integrated bricolage of a number of disciplines and fields”.

When it comes to DE, while it is impossible to capture different meanings in any fixed or final way, understanding ‘DE speak’ goes some way towards providing an insight into different understandings of and assumptions about DE among facilitators in Ireland and the politics of naming, framing and imagining DE.

### **1.3. 'Definitions' of DE**

As a contested term with different interpretations (Bourn, 2011), DE is one of those nebulous, slippery concepts and processes that means different things to different people, and which requires ‘constructive deconstruction’ (Cornwall, 2010), as discussed in Chapter Three. A further complication in understanding DE is the divergence between understandings of what DE is [or is not] and what it should [or should not] be, as well as between the ‘ideals’, articulated in policy and academia, and its varying practice. There is also a growth in the use of some of the following terms: ‘global citizenship education’, ‘education for sustainable development’, ‘human rights education’ or ‘intercultural education’, which are often used interchangeably with ‘DE’.

While being cautious of ‘definitions’ of DE because of their tendency towards simplification, reductionism and fixity of meaning, I am exploring such definitions here, as many do, to ‘start the ball rolling’ in trying to understand what people mean when they talk about DE. As a discursive genre in Van Dijk’s (2007) sense of the term, it serves a particular function and is constructed using a common style. I explore definitions as textual and policy constructions of DE which have discursive meaning (Van Dijk, 2007) in the sense that they reflect understandings of DE at a particular time as articulated in a particular context. They also have discursive effect in that they help to shape policy, funding and practice.

An oft-cited early definition of DE is that from the UN in 1975 which describes DE as being “concerned with issues of human rights, dignity, self-reliance and social justice in both developed and developing countries. It is concerned with the causes of underdevelopment and the promotion of an understanding of what is involved in development, of how countries go about undertaking development, and of the reasons for and ways of achieving a new economic and social order” (in Kenny and O’Malley, 2002: 10). The focus in this definition of DE is on development, though this is linked with issues of human rights, dignity, self-reliance and social justice. It gives some sense of what the ‘content’ of DE might involve but there is little clarity on what is meant in this case by ‘dignity’, ‘self-reliance’ or ‘social justice’. As in many definitions of DE, these kinds of values or concepts are taken for granted. Accepting the notion that there are ‘developed’ and ‘developing countries’ the definition does not assume that DE only focuses on either one of these but it does focus on the ‘causes of underdevelopment’ and on how to bring about development for ‘a new economic and social order’. This is regarded by McCloskey as a radical call for change but, he argues, “it is scant on methodology and how it is to be achieved” (2014: 4).

By 1992, the understanding of DE had shifted, according to Kenny and O’Malley, to “a learning process which proceeds from knowledge to action. It has evolved from being education about developing countries to a broader concept of education for global citizenship” (UNICEF’s 1992 definition cited in Kenny and O’Malley, 2002: 11). Here we can see the framing of DE in North-South terms. There is a tendency to define DE in aspirational terms – what it is and what it does – as well as early links between knowledge and action. In Ireland, in 1998, the NCDE, the Irish Government organisation for promoting DE at the time, defined DE as “increasing people’s awareness and understanding of global issues and of the interdependence of different countries and parts of the world in relation to those issues. In particular, it’s about what sustains underdevelopment and what is needed to reach and sustain more equal development. It is an education based on reflection, analysis and action at local and global level” (in Kenny and O’Malley, 2002: 11). Here we see a move to associating development with ‘global issues’ though the concern with understanding ‘underdevelopment’ and with achieving ‘more equal development’ remains. Kenny and O’Malley also note the mention of the type of pedagogy involved in DE as indicated by this definition – an “education process of reflection, analysis and action” (2002: 11).

McCloskey (2014: 4) tells us that the DARE forum, “which comprises representatives from national DE platforms across Europe” agreed the following definition in 2004. “DE is an active learning process founded on values of solidarity, equality, inclusion and co-operation. It enables people to move from basic awareness of international development priorities and sustainable human development, through understanding of the causes and effects of global issues to personal involvement and informed action”.

In an Irish context, Irish Aid has argued that “DE aims to deepen understanding of global poverty and encourage people towards action for a more just and equal world” (2007: 6). Regan (2006: 6), expanding on what this might involve, suggests that DE

“is an educational response to issues of development, human rights, justice and world citizenship; [it] presents an international development and human rights perspective within education...; [it] promotes the voices and viewpoints of those who are excluded from an equal share in the benefits of human development internationally; [it] is an opportunity to link and compare development issues and challenges in Ireland with those elsewhere throughout the world; [it] provides a chance for Irish people to reflect on our international roles and responsibilities with regard to issues of equality and justice in human development; [and it] is an opportunity to be active in writing a new story for human development.”

Whereas the DARE (2004) and Irish Aid definitions prioritise understanding of poverty and action for a more just and equal world, DARE (2004) and Regan’s (2006) definitions suggest that DE involves educational processes, which link local and global issues and which are directed towards action for global equality and justice. For all three, therefore, DE is much more than just education ‘about’ development issues or so-called ‘developing countries’, though the context is marked out in terms of global relations, underdevelopment, poverty, equality or justice. It is about content, but it has a clear value basis and action dimension. This is also reflected in the Irish DE Association (IDEA) definition. For IDEA, DE is

“an educational process aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of the rapidly changing, interdependent and unequal world in which we live ... for IDEA, DE has an explicit focus on social justice, globalisation and development; a focus on multiple perspectives on the story of development; roots in, and strong links to, civil society at home, promoting empowerment of the grassroots; a focus on awareness-building and action for positive change; a focus on active Global Citizenship ... it is about supporting people in understanding and acting to transform the social, cultural, political and economic structures which affect their lives and others at personal, community, relational and international levels” (IDEA, 2013b: no page).

A somewhat different understanding of DE is evident in the Dóchas DE Group ‘Submission to Irish Aid on DE, June 2015’. Here the focus is on development in a narrower and more ‘traditional’ sense to that of IDEA (2015). For Dóchas,

“DE is an active learning process based on inclusion and co-operation, enabling people to move from basic awareness of global issues to personal action and reflection. DE is seen as a means to raise public understanding of the complex causes of poverty, whilst increasing understanding of the interconnections between lives here and the lives of those in developing countries. It is helping Irish people work towards global literacy: an awareness and understanding of global issues, how these issues affect society as a whole, and how individuals’ attitudes, decisions and actions can fit into this web of world affairs. This includes building awareness of the structures, rules and institutions that impact on poor communities, and of the differing cultures and norms around the world. DE also sets out to counter stereotypical assumptions, based around dependency and helplessness, which people in the

West might draw upon to construct their relationship with the global South” (Dóchas, 2015: 2).

This understanding highlights the critical role of DE in identifying the ‘causes’ of global inequalities as well as the ‘solutions’ and does not assume it is about ‘developing countries’ but about global relations and inequalities. At the same time there is an acceptance of the existence of ‘here’ and ‘developing countries’ which serves as a less than challenging construction of mainstream development.

#### **1.4. The Dimensions of DE**

Each of the definitions of DE (introduced above) suggest some key dimensions of what DE might involve. Many of these are captured by IDEA (2013) and by Regan who suggests the following four key components (in italics (added) in the quotation below):

*“knowledge, ideas and understanding* – factual information about the shape of our world, ideas about why it is shaped the way it is, about connections between wealth and poverty, progress and inequality, about relationships internationally; *attitudes and values* – about oneself and others, about social responsibilities, about learning, behaviour, beliefs, subject knowledge and about society here in Ireland and internationally; *skills and capabilities* – skills that help us understand and engage with our world – analytical and communication skills, interpersonal and social skills, the ability to link knowledge and understanding with action etc; *behaviour, experiences and action* – social relationships, personal behaviour, opportunities to participate meaningfully, competence at carrying out tasks, fulfilling potential, linking ideas, action and behaviour” (Regan, 2006: 9).

In a paper about discourses and practice around DE, Bourn (2011b: 13) begins by suggesting that there are “some common underlying principles that reflect how many academics and policy makers would summarise what is perceived to be ‘good DE’.” According to Bourn, these are: “understanding the globalised world including links between our own lives and those of people throughout the world; ethical foundations and goals including social justice, human rights and respect for others; participatory and transformative learning processes with the emphasis on dialogue and experience; developing competencies of critical self-reflection; supportive active engagement; active global citizenship” (ibid). Bourn draws these from ‘The European Consensus on Development: The Contribution of DE and Awareness Raising, 2007’ (EU) which was drawn up by staff and representatives from organisations across Europe including the CONCORD DE Forum and Irish Aid. Bourn argues that these principles “mask some wider divisions as to how DE is interpreted and can also be seen as little more than aspirations” (2011b: 14). In another paper on the topic, he outlines the difficulty with constructing typologies of DE but tries to identify common themes and practices. These, he argues, do not necessarily represent a consensus but “the underlying themes are suggested

here as the basis for a pedagogy of DE” (2011a: 18). These are: “recognition of the promotion of the interdependent and interconnected nature of our lives” (2011a: 18); “ensuring the voices and perspectives of the peoples of the Global South are promoted, understood and reflected upon along with perspectives from the Global North; ... encouragement of a more values based approach to learning with an emphasis on social justice, human rights, fairness and a desire for a more equal world; ... [and] incorporating linkages between learning, moral outrage and concern about global poverty and a desire to take action to secure change” (2011a: 19).

Reflection on these few understandings of the dimensions of DE shows the complexity of different interpretations of DE, highlighted by Bourn (2008; 2011a; 2015) and the need to explore different discursive constructions of it, albeit carefully and tentatively. Bourn concludes that “there are many interpretations of DE and what is needed is to debate what they are, which approach is most appropriate within a given educational arena and on what basis the pedagogy is introduced” (Bourn 2011b: 26). Here, I suggest analysis of four key dimensions of DE arising from definitions: knowledge and understanding; skills; learning processes; and action.

#### **1.4.1. Knowledge and Understanding**

Power and knowledge are important areas of focus in relation to DE. As outlined in discussions in Chapter Three, post-development and post-colonial theorists, among others, critique Eurocentric and modernist assumptions at the heart of development as well as their effects in privileging some kinds of knowledge and silencing and marginalising many others. Critical pedagogy highlights growing emphasis on the valuing of positivism with its focus on the technical, evidential, rational and instrumental. Where does DE fit into such a context? As with other dimensions, there are different conceptualisations of what’s involved when it comes to DE ‘knowledge’ and ‘understanding’. These relate to the specific ‘issues’ or ‘content’ of DE and how DE relates to other ‘adjectival educations’. The question of the content of DE has long been a contested one with an emphasis placed more often on process rather than knowledge as content. For example, Andreotti and de Souza (2008) argue that “we need to move from fixed content and skills that conform to a predetermined idea of society towards concepts and strategies that address complexity, difference and uncertainty” (in Bourn, 2011b: 25). On the other hand, it is interesting to address the question of different ontological positions when it comes to understanding knowledge in DE. Drawing on Andreotti (2014), I identify four here: a content-based; institutionalist; critical; and post-critical approach.

A content-based approach to knowledge would imply knowledge acquisition and the valuing of the objective – approximating to what Kincheloe (2008b) associates with ‘crypto-positivism’. This is knowledge that is gatherable, knowable, consumable, measurable and provable. In DE terms, it is the

knowledge of acquiring facts and it is often shaped by the latest policy requirements, e.g., the sustainable development goals (SDGs) or migration policy. The aim, from this point of view, is to enhance learning for understanding of global development issues in order to improve development. It involves, as McCloskey points out a “basic awareness of international development priorities and sustainable human development” (2014: 4).

Beyond knowledge as fact there is an ontology of ‘understanding’ at personal and collective levels. This approximates to what Andreotti (2014) (discussed below) associates with a technical institutionalist approach. If we were to borrow, again for a moment, from Andreotti’s root narrative schema (see Section 4.1. below), from a liberal humanist point of view, the focus of understanding would be on personal experience and knowledge with knowledge for the individual’s self-advancement valued. Issues which affect the individual, family or community are central to what people need to know through DE in order to understand the world better and be able to respond to it. Such a focus is often driven by the experience of participants and/or based on experiences of development in ‘developing countries’ or the countries of the Global South. Andreotti’s discussion of processes and levels of reflection offer useful insights here. With regard to reflection, she argues that ‘self-awareness’ is the most surface level of reflection. “‘Cartesian’ understanding of subjects states that we can say what we think and describe accurately and objectively what we do (Andreotti, 2006) ... our capacity to describe what we do is limited by what we can notice and by what we want to present to others. From this perspective, self-awareness involves a recognition of the limits of language in describing ourselves and the world” (2015: 79). For her, individual experiences are explored in ‘self-reflection’. “This level recognises that what we say, think and do is based on our individual journeys in various contexts. These journeys are rooted in our ordinary, inspiring or traumatic learning experiences and concepts, and dependent on what we have been exposed to” (ibid).

Drawing on the above, Andreotti offers insights into ‘critical’ approach to understanding or self-reflection where knowledge is based on reflection on experience. Seeing the personal as rooted in the community and at a global level, in this case, DE is about ‘the global’, or local-global interactions, e.g., topics such as trade, aid, the environment, debt, colonialism, transnational institutions, international human rights frameworks, conflict, and gender and development. This type of focus is driven by the need to critically explore the ‘causes’ of underdevelopment as well as the structures which influence development at local and global levels, moving from understanding to “personal involvement and informed action” (DEEEP in McCloskey, 2016: 113).

The third level of reflection Andreotti describes is not reflection but it gives an insight into what DE knowledge and/or understanding might look like if it were influenced by post-critical approaches to education, as she understands them.

“We make a strategic distinction between reflection and reflexivity ... reflection aims at thinking about individual choices and journeys at the centre of the global imaginary. Self-reflexivity aims at understanding the limits of the frames of reference that condition and restrict our choices (of being and knowing) within the dominant global imaginary. Self-reflexivity traces individual expectations and assumptions to collective socially, culturally and historically situated ‘stories’ with explicit ontological and epistemological assumptions that define what is real, ideal and knowable” (2015: 78).

She goes on to argue that “self-reflexivity offers a way to understand the complex constitution of subjectivities, the interdependence of knowledge and power, and of what is sub- or un-conscious in our relationships with the world” (2015: 80). For Andreotti, a key skill in critical education is to ‘unsettle’. She argues that “when the self is not unsettled, the modern desires of mastery and control, and the desires underlying racial, gendered, and class hierarchies both historically and contemporarily are left unquestioned (Wang, 2009)” (Andreotti 2015: 81). In this case, there is no fixed content for DE. Rather it is about complexities, pluralities, hybridities and “open co-created futures” (Andreotti, 2014: 19).

#### **1.4.2. Skills**

Though overlapping with knowledge and understanding, as indicated above, in relation to skills and DE, there is a variety of different approaches depending on the epistemological and pedagogical approaches adopted. Bourn argues that DE should be regarded not as based on content but as a “pedagogy of making connections between the individual and the personal, from the local to the global, and which by its very nature, is transformative. It needs to be seen as an approach to education that challenges dominant orthodoxy on education and perceptions about the world and enables the learner to look at issues and the world from a different place” (2008: 15 – 16). Increasingly, the focus on DE skills dovetails with the focus on measuring the impact and outcomes of DE (McCloskey, 2014), and understanding of these ‘skills’ overlaps considerably with understandings of values and actions.

Mayo (2009) argues that competence-based learning, with its focus on learning outcomes has become hegemonic. Contrasting market-oriented competencies to those in education for citizenship, he argues that critical literacy is “conspicuous by its absence” (2009: 9) in EU documentation on lifelong learning. He argues that “the challenge [here] is to read not only the word and the world but also the construction of the world” (2009: 13).

The question remains: what kinds of skills are being developed through DE learning processes? From McCloskey and McCann’s point of view, DE engenders the skills of “tolerance, respect, [and] cultural awareness” in learners (2009: 239). For Regan, as introduced earlier, DE develops skills and



capabilities “that help us understand and engage with our world – analytical and communication skills, interpersonal and social skills, the ability to link knowledge and understanding with action, etc (2006: 9). For IDEA (2013b: 5) these are: “reasoning, social communication, critical thinking, etc”. For Bourn (2015) there are important skills in the area of self-reflection and critique. These dovetail with those identified by Andreotti (2014), above, where Andreotti’s distinction between reflexivity and reflection helps to differentiate between different levels and types of analysis, critical thinking and skills in making connections involved in different discourses of DE.

### **1.4.3. Learning Processes**

Questions remain over the processes involved in DE and its connection with participatory, transformative pedagogies, influenced by Freire (1970) and Chambers (1997) (see Khoo 2006 and McCloskey, 2014). Bourn (2011b: 20) argues that “the issue is not about encouraging DE activities in the classroom, but rather about debating what it means and the extent to which the practices are questioning and challenging dominant educational thinking. This would mean including learning activities that moved beyond a traditional view of seeing the global South as ‘just about poor people’ who are helpless and needed aid and charity”. The DEEEP definition of DE captures the importance of the kinds of educational processes associated with DE. For DEEEP (n.d.),

“DE is an active learning process, founded on values of solidarity, equality, inclusion and co-operation. It enables people to move from basic awareness of international development priorities and sustainable human development, through understanding of the causes and effects of global issues to personal involvement and informed actions. DE fosters the full participation of all citizens in world-wide poverty eradication, and the fight against exclusion. It seeks to influence more just and sustainable economic, social, environmental, human rights-based national and international policies.”

The active learning process, highlighted by DEEEP, is an important dimension of DE for many including Fiedler (2008: 8). The latter argues that “this would entail the conceptualisation of knowledge as a process or as an activity, rather than seeing it as a product that can be accumulated by learning. An education system that takes this on board would focus more on learning and less on teaching. Such a new framework would also allow us to do justice to multiple forms of intelligence”.

DE processes, therefore, are usually associated with participatory, experiential learning processes, and these are contrasted to the more didactic, ‘banking’ type processes associated with pedagogies which value ‘expert’ knowledge. At its most basic level, DE engages participants in active learning tools such as games, group work, dramas, role plays, case studies, and scenarios. At a deeper level, it also involves critical reflection on participants’ experiences using images, statistics, film, text, and stories. As indicated above, Andreotti argues for use of the term ‘self-reflexivity’. Drawing on processes of

critical literacy, she chooses

“scenarios that make evident dominant (taken-for-granted) perspectives about the benevolence of progress, charity and schooling in international engagements ... I use the idea of ‘critical literacy’ to start to open up questions related to complicity in harm at a very basic level, such as who decides what problems and solutions are (in the poster, historically and in ‘our’ context), what assumptions inform these decisions, how are unequal relationships between donors and recipients reproduced through these significations, what other conceptualisations of problems and solutions could be designed by communities that have been historically subjugated in these relationships, and so on” (2014: 15).

Active learning processes, in this way, also involve analysis of how power works in society in the light of local-national and global relationships. This is where DE draws on the kinds of analysis evident in critical pedagogy and in post-structuralist critical analysis of discursive power (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2005). When seen as the introduction of participatory, active learning tools into education processes only, DE can become associated with superficial ‘game playing’ education experiences which remove these more critical reflection, analysis and action dimensions.

#### **1.4.4. Action and Activism**

Definitions of DE introduced above all mention action as central to DE. Questions about what this action involves, whether it is the end point of a long process or central to learning itself; whether it can be prescribed or not; and the extent to which such action should be a designed or ‘natural’ outcome of DE learning processes, have been the stuff of much debate. Debates in this regard refer to notions of engagement and what they involve as well as conceptualisations of politics and citizenship associated with DE and GCE. McCloskey (2016) calls on development educators to reflect more critically on the action outcome of DE and on how it can facilitate them to become agents of change. In doing so, he draws on Trewby’s (2014) analysis of lines of engagement. He argues, following Oliveira and Skinner that “‘engagement’ is a term frequently used within DEAR (DE and Awareness Raising) but there has been little exploration of its meaning. Little research has been done into how DEAR practitioners conceptualise ‘citizen engagement’ and how DEAR relates to the broader context within which it is being carried out (2014: 9)” (McCloskey, 2016: 125).

In their reflection on debates in Policy and Practice over many years, Khoo and McCloskey (2015: 3) suggest that “while there is apparent agreement across society on the need for awareness raising and public action on development issues, a recurring question for the sector is to what extent should this learning and action focus on transformative agendas seeking alternatives to the neoliberal model of economic growth that has created current levels of extreme inequality” (2015: 3). They refer to Selby and Kagawa’s (2011) article in the same journal which argues that there is insufficient “‘explicit attention to issues of economic growth, neoliberal globalisation and consumerism’ were ‘barely

mentioned, let alone problematicised' (2011: 19), to which Bourn responded that "a constructivist approach to DE ... tailors its social and educational interventions to the particular pedagogical perspectives being addressed" (2015: 4).

Khoo (2006) differentiates between different understandings of citizenship as the basis for different forms of engagement encouraged through DE. She distinguishes between the "liberal and civic republican" traditions of citizenship arguing that "the liberal idea of the citizen is that of autonomous, private, independent individuals whose participation in the public sphere is fairly 'thin', aside from voting" (2006: 29). There, she says, there is an emphasis on "negative liberties or 'freedoms from'. By protecting the private sphere from undue interference, a 'good society' is achieved by maximising individuals' private choices" (ibid). On the other hand, the civic republican tradition, she argues, "involves more positive conceptions of 'freedoms to' and civic responsibility. Civic republicanism is a 'thicker' version of democracy which obliges citizens to participate actively, engage with public matters and use the public sphere to further the public good" (ibid). In Andreotti's 'root narrative' approach (discussed below) these approximate to a technical instrumentalist and a liberal humanist approach to social engineering (2014). Gaynor, for example, contrasts an "individualised, apolitical approach to activism with an emphasis on volunteering (a charity model) and consumerism as a way out of poverty" associated with fair trade, with a more critical approach to global citizenship, which, she argues, "entails critically interrogating the dominant narrative – always asking why" (2015: 10).

Khoo goes on to explain that since the 1990s "more diverse and multi-layered concepts of citizenship have emerged". In this context, Khoo argues, "global citizenship involves active engagement and self-identification as a global citizen" (2006: 30). For Khoo, in DE, "since the early twentieth century, progressive educationists have argued for teaching and learning practice to become more experiential, democratic, and critically reflexive. Yet the global restructuring of education since the 1980s has arguably led to the 'wide scale detheorisation of education', replacing critical 'why' questions with technical 'how to' questions, and resulting in the quietest and most conservative set of 'standards' being perpetuated in both teachers and students" (Khoo, 2006: 30/31). Gaynor, in her focus on higher education, argues that "the dominant concept of DE or global citizenship education as promoted within the development sector ... is also limited, as, equating global citizenship and activism with consumerism, it depoliticises and individualises acts of engagement, thereby eroding the potential for collective transformative action" (2015: 2).

A key point being made by Khoo (2006) and Gaynor (2015) is that depending on how citizenship or active citizenship is conceptualised there will be a different understanding of the kinds of engagement, action and activism promoted through DE. While McCloskey (2016) calls for a greater focus on this issue among development educators, a central debate remains about the link between campaigning and DE. Whereas Andreotti (2014) and Bourn (2015) emphasise open-ended process as central to DE, the

link between campaigning and DE has long been an issue of contention, especially among activists. Ní Chasaide (2009), for example, refers to Irish Aid's reluctance to fund campaigning activities as part of DE. While there is an acknowledgment of the importance of encouraging action on the one hand, on the other there is a sense that DE is not about offering just one possible action (or campaign) as the focus of this action. Bourn (2015: 29) argues that "today, there is a greater recognition in strategies and programmes, whether led by policymakers or practitioners of ... the central role of learning and recognition that it cannot be predetermined".

From a different perspective, Gyoh argues that "while the focus of debates in the global poverty and public engagement discourse has been around the methodologies adopted in DE, and for NGO campaigning, the fundamental distinction between the two endeavours can be argued to reside in the principles that underline the approaches deployed in communicating the values they propagate. These principles can broadly be described as participatory and transformative learning in DE, and actionable and pertinent knowledge in campaigning (Gyoh, 2015)" (2016: 83). Referring to Ní Chasaide's work, he argues that "while it is uncertain how the programmes and methodologies adopted in DE are strengthening action against global poverty, it is even more difficult to discern how the type of actions they propose can accomplish change (Ní Chasaide, 2009). It is also unclear how detached individual actions contribute to challenging the root causes of global inequality" (Gyoh 2016: 84). This is the central argument made by Gaynor who suggests that much of what passes for the actions resulting from DE are individualised, consumer-led actions which do little to challenge structural causes of poverty and inequality (2015). Gyoh argues that it would be useful to adopt "a hybrid approach that integrates education and advocacy [which] can introduce young people to activism at local community level in ways that make a link with global dimensions" (2016: 88).

## **2. Understanding the Aims, Values and the Politics of Education**

In the discussion above, I highlight four key dimensions of DE which, I argue, are worthy of exploration when it comes to trying to understand discourses of DE. Given DE's focus, according to definitions, on achieving "a new social and economic order" (UN, 1975); "on more equal development" (UNICEF, 1992); on "action for a more just and equal world" (Irish Aid, 2007); and on "transforming the social, cultural, political and economic structures which affect their lives and others" (IDEA, 2013b), I argue that it is also important to understand the aims, values and politics of DE. In this section, I explore these issues before bringing the main points together in Sections 2 and 3 in a framework for analysis in Section 4.

In exploring the aims, values and politics of education, because of the range of material in this area, I focus, in particular, on the body of education theory known as critical pedagogy. I do so because, as

Kincheloe states, it combines influences from critical theory and the work of people like Paulo Freire (1970), as well as critical feminism, with those of post-structuralism and post-colonialism. Thus, it brings a breadth of vision to these questions while it is “grounded on a social and educational vision of justice and equality” (Kincheloe 2008a: 6). I am suggesting here that it represents important perspectives on what constitutes criticality in education – what critical and post-critical (influenced by post-structuralism) education might be about, including that it is “constructed on the belief that education is inherently political” (Kincheloe, 2008a: 8); it takes account of complexity, context and diversity; it is “interested in the margins of society” (2008a: 23); is “searching for new voices” (2008a: 24); and is “dedicated to resisting the harmful effects of dominant power” (2008a: 34). Discussion of critical pedagogy opens up insights for exploring different discourses of DE with reference to its criticality and in particular with reference to the aims, values and politics of DE.

## **2.1. Critical Aims of Education**

Critical pedagogies are approaches to teaching and learning that are based on an understanding that education plays a key role in shaping society and that it should be harnessed for the creation of a just society. “At the very least”, Giroux argues, “critical pedagogy proposes that education is a form of political intervention in the world that is capable of creating the possibilities for social transformation” (2004: 34). The assumption is that as it is currently structured and organised, education is not fully realising its potential to play a transformative role in relation to global inequality, injustice, development, sustainability, human rights, etc (Lynch, 2012).

In addition to overt exploration of systems and structures of power in education, one of the key roles of education, according to critical pedagogy and which I subscribe to, is its role in supporting, developing and acting as a space for critique of these power structures. This relates as much to critiques of systems of thinking and discourses as it does to institutions and practices of neoliberalism, for example. Thus, a critical form of education is one which engages deeply with questions about its own role in the world as well as about the systems of power-knowledge which construct it.

In terms of understanding the power relations shaping approaches to education, Kincheloe (2008b) argues that the big stumbling block to education realising its transformative potential is ‘crypto-positivism’ – the dominance of positivistic thinking in education. Because it doesn’t in any way challenge the status quo, he argues, it limits, controls and sets the parameters on thinking. In doing so, it causes hurt and violence in many different ways. For Kincheloe, critical pedagogy “identifies the normalising voices that ‘naturalise’ dominant perspectives and invalidate the views of the ‘other’, the marginalised” (2008b: 16). For Giroux, the main challenge is neoliberalism and its accompanying lack of democracy. He argues (2004: 35) that “any viable notion of pedagogy and resistance should

illustrate how knowledge, values, desire, and social relations are always implicated in relations of power, and how such an understanding can be used pedagogically and politically by students to further expand and deepen the imperatives of economic and political democracy”. In his discussion of what this involves, Giroux strives to steer away from any idealised sense “that genuine democratic public space once existed in some ideal form” (ibid). He wants a critical pedagogy that “takes a position against the scourge of neoliberalism but does not stand still, that points to the possibility of a politics of democratic struggle, without underwriting a politics with guarantees” (2004: 36).

A central argument in critical pedagogy is that education does not meet the current global challenges and that there is a need for, for example, “a critical theory of education for democratising and reconstructing education to meet the challenges of a global and technological society” (Kellner, 2003: 1). As such, it is argued that the political potential of education is enormous and that it needs to be harnessed for the good of society. How the latter is understood differs, with some advocating emancipatory education (Freire) with its associated focus on re-imagining and re-structuring education processes from the experience of the most marginalised in society (e.g., Illich’s *Tools of Conviviality* (1973), and critical pedagogy (Kellner, 2003; Kincheloe and McLaren, 2005; Kincheloe, 2008). Giroux (2004) argues for a “critical pedagogy capable of appropriating from a variety of radical theories” (2004: 32) including feminism, postmodernism and neo-Marxism. This is similar to the way Kincheloe and McLaren (2005) use the concept of ‘bricolage’. For Kincheloe, “educators need to avoid the modern/postmodern divide that suggests that we can do either culture or economics but that we cannot do both” (2004: 32). He goes on to point out that

“this suggests, on the one hand, resurrecting the living, though blemished, traditions of Enlightenment thought that affirmed issues of freedom, equality, liberty, self-determination, and civic agency. On the other hand, critical theory’s engagement with Enlightenment thought must be expanded through those postmodern discourses that problematise modernity’s universal project of citizenship, its narrow understanding of domination, its obsession with order, and its refusal to expand both the meaning of the political and the sites in which political struggles and possibilities might occur” (2004: 32).

There is considerable rhetoric within critical pedagogical writing on the potential for education to ‘make the world a better place’. Kincheloe (2008b: 16) is particularly aspirational but he does encapsulate what critical pedagogy is about when he suggests that “as critical pedagogues we must gain the ability to look at the world anew and ask completely different questions about it – questions that expose what’s going on at diverse levels of reality and the way these events influence the lived world”. For him, “as we accept the inevitability of uncertainty and ambiguity in light of epistemological, ontological, and cosmological complexity, we can also begin to explore with the help of the critical bricolage vis-a-vis diversity an alternative view of the nature of the cosmos and our role in it” (2008b: 15). For him, this alternative is “grounded on a critical theoretical commitment to social justice, anti-oppressive ways of being, and new forms of connectedness and radical love” (ibid).

Understanding debates related to the role of education in responding to current global challenges and in imagining and creating alternatives is important for exploring understandings of DE and constructions around its aims.

## **2.2. Critical Politics of Education**

Questions regarding the politics of education are central to criticality and to critical pedagogy more specifically. Even within the narrow confines of the latter, the literature on the politics of education is eclectic, with a variety of perspectives articulated. For some, including Kincheloe (2008a), the emphasis is on exploring power relations and on structure/agency or discourse/subject relationships in education processes. Others are more concerned about how education controls. Significant within critical pedagogy is work which focuses on how education has become a significant battleground for the spread of neoliberalism (Olsen and Peters, 2005; Peters, 2011), a context which many argue makes critical education even more important and challenging (Giroux, 2002).

While the challenge to neoliberalism's influence remains a key driver of many critical pedagogy approaches, discussed below, when influenced by post-structuralist considerations, the politics of critical pedagogy is nuanced and pluralised. Kellner argues that

“poststructuralist theories emphasise the importance of difference, marginality, heterogeneity, and multiculturalism, calling attention to dimensions of experiences, groups and voices that have been suppressed in the modern tradition ... A critical poststructuralism also radicalises the reflexive turn found in some critical modern thinkers, requiring individuals involved in education and politics to reflect upon their own subject position and biases, privileges, and limitations, forcing theorists to constantly criticise and rethink their own assumptions, positions, subject-positions, and practices, in a constant process of reflection and self-criticism” (Kellner, 2003: 6/7).

Thus, though power relations and the politics of education remain central concerns, a key debate for those influenced by poststructuralism and who are clearly interested in the potential of education for transformation is how to explore discourses, power relations and the effects of governmentality (after Foucault, 1978) in education and how to articulate a vision of education which does not essentialise, universalise, over-materialise or over-simplify power relations and inequalities. Kincheloe's (2008b) insights in this regard are particularly useful. He argues the need on the one hand to challenge oppression while on the other suggesting that “there is no universal formula for such interaction ... we must study each situation as a unique occurrence with diverse players, divergent contexts and processes, and distinct outcomes” (2008b: 9). He draws on post-structuralist considerations to identify the need to focus, in this way, on the politics of knowledge. “Unless we understand the ways that power not only validates but rank orders the knowledges produced by individuals with differing amounts of academic and cultural capital, an epistemological hegemony legitimising a political

economic hegemony will only grow more acute” (2008b: 12).

For Giroux, pedagogy is also significantly about politics and power. For him, “questions of civic education and critical pedagogy (learning how to become a skilled citizen) are central to the struggle over political agency and democracy. In this instance, critical pedagogy emphasises critical reflexivity, bridging the gap between learning and everyday life, understanding the connection between power and knowledge, and extending democratic rights and identities by using the resources of history” (2008b: 10). While questions of power are approached differently depending on one’s perspective, Kincheloe suggests that “the politics of knowledge become even more important in an era where privatisation and corporatisation of education becomes a key dimension of the public conversation about schooling and more and more of an actual reality” (ibid).

This reflection on critical pedagogy and the politics of education suggests that in order to understand discourses of DE in an Irish context, it is important to explore understandings of politics as well as understandings of neoliberalism within different discursive formations. At the same time, it highlights the need to explore the context within which DE is talked about and practiced, including for example, the institutional context and relationships within it (as discussed in Chapter Three) and the effects of neoliberalism on education in that context.

### **2.2.1. The Effects of Neoliberalism on Critical Education in Ireland**

The influence of neoliberalism on education, and the extent to which it poses a threat to critical education has become a key area of concern for many critical theorists. They examine and critique its effects on education in terms of its structuring and organisation, on access, on curricula and on its transformative potential. The main point here is that as education systems have been encroached by or have embraced neoliberal ideology and practices, they seem to be moving further away from critical and transformative pedagogical approaches, such as DE.

For Olssen and Peters, the central presuppositions of neoliberalism, which for them constitutes the hegemonic discourse of Western nation states, are: “the self-interested individual ... free market economics ... a commitment to laissez-faire (because the free market is a self-regulating order it regulates itself better than the government or any other outside force) ... a commitment to free trade” (2005: 314/315). Contrary to what is often thought, for Olssen and Peters, neoliberalism does not do away with the role of the state but creates for the state a new role in enabling the marketplace. As such, they argue, it represents a powerful discourse which, following Foucault, constitutes “a form of disciplinary power containing forms and systems of expertise and technology utilisable for the purposes of political control” (2005: 315).



Henry Giroux is a leading critic of the influence of neoliberalism on education, especially in the USA. He outlines a number of effects of neoliberalism, including that “citizens lose their public voice” (2002: 427) and there is an absence of questioning. Corporate culture “becomes both the model for the good life and the paradigmatic sphere for defining individual success and fulfillment ... Within the language and images of corporate culture, citizenship is portrayed as an utterly privatised affair whose aim is to produce competitive self-interested individuals vying for their own material and ideological gain” (2002: 429).

In the Irish context, Lynch (2012) argues strongly against the influence of neoliberalism and new managerialism in higher education. She argues that “within education, new managerialism also redefined what counts as knowledge, who are the bearers of such knowledge and who is empowered to act – all within a legitimating framework of public choice and market accountability ... the rhetoric of choice concealed the fact that in a market-led system, only those with resources (money) can buy education and health services that are privatised” (Lynch, 2012: 90/91). Lynch goes on to argue that “the move to make education into a marketable commodity has implications for learning in terms of what is taught (and not taught), who is taught and what types of subjectivities are developed in schools and colleges” (2012: 96). She argues that in the neoliberal context, “neoliberalism embeds not only a unique concept of the learner in education, it also maps on a new set of goals to education that do not sit easily with education’s purpose as a key institution in protecting people’s human rights” (2012: 96/97).

With regard to neoliberalism in the Irish context and the failure of current approaches to education to challenge its limitations, Lynch argues that “the advancement of neoliberalism in Ireland was greatly enabled by the long-standing history of anti-intellectualism of Irish political and cultural life ... There also appears to have been a silencing of dissent, a closing down of concepts and intellectual frameworks that would allow people to analyse the political and economic import of the path being taken” (2012: 92). Lynch argues that “Irish people still are poorly educated in social and political analysis ... the social processes of public life are not subjected to critical intellectual scrutiny except by a tiny minority in the higher education sector, and even within this sector there is often a deep consensualism and conservatism (Lynch, 1987)” (2012: 92).

Gaynor questions the level and type of criticality in the forms of education being offered in higher education “with its role now almost universally seen to lie in equipping students with the skills to work in and promote the global economy ... for us as teachers, mentors and sociologists, how well are we equipping our students to critically engage with, mediate and, if necessary, challenge the global system in which they live and work?” (2015: 2). Her central argument is “that students and graduates are increasingly ill-equipped to comprehend and critically engage with the multi-faceted challenges

posed by our contemporary, networked society” (ibid). She attributes this to the “persistent reliance on an outmoded, apolitical ‘us’ and ‘them’ dichotomy within our universities which relegates so-called ‘development’ or ‘third world’ issues to the margins of our teaching curricula as we concentrate on issues which affect ‘us’ and retain a stubborn myopia in relation to their complex, intertwined relationship with ‘them’” (2015: 2).

While the effects of and processes of neoliberalism have been explored significantly in relation to higher education (Giroux, 2002; Olssen and Peters, 2005; Lynch, 2012), its reach is increasingly being charted in other education contexts. In Ireland, Fitzsimons (2015), for example, argues that neoliberalism compromises equality-based agendas in community education. Power et al (2013: 14) identify Ireland as a pioneer of neoliberalism where, they argue, the education system acts to advantage the advantaged. Focusing on privatisation in second-level schools and in higher education, their argument is that neoliberalism has “resulted in a downgrading of services, attacks on the idea of public education as a right ... all of which serve to legitimise and promote a rigid instrumental understanding of what education is for” (2013: 1). For them Irish education policy “has not significantly concerned itself with eliminating the inequalities of wealth, power and status that produce education inequalities in the first instance” (2013: 14). In her analysis of education policy discourses from 2000 – 2012, Simmie (2012) argues that “the Pied Piper of Neo Liberalism Calls the Tune in the Republic of Ireland”. Focusing on the increased control imposed by Teaching Council regulations on teachers, she argues that teachers are increasingly regarded as functionaries of the system. “In a climate of harsh cutbacks to the education system it carries a strong message of fear and insecurity for teachers’ future employment” (2012: 504). Thus, she shows that the introduction of codes of professional conduct as well as unannounced inspections, introduced after the Troika agreement in November 2010, represent the rationale of the DES, which, according to the Chief Inspector of the DES in 2012, is “involved in a drive for ‘value for money’ and playing its part in a national bid to attract ‘high-end’ and ‘knowledge-based’ global investment and to provide more ‘customer-focused services’” (2012: 505).

In the context of this research, the question is the extent to which neoliberal influences or critiques are reflected in facilitators’ talk as well as how the neoliberal education context affects discourses of DE. Given the emphasis within DE policy on mainstreaming DE into increasingly neoliberal and unequal formal education contexts and the emphasis on aid effectiveness with its focus on measurement (discussed in Chapter Three), to what extent do facilitators reflect on neoliberalism and its challenges in relation to DE in their talk?

### 2.3. Values and Criticality

In addition to debates about the aims of education and politics, another key area of consideration among education theorists relates to values in and of education. For Swanson (2010), it's not about the need for more 'values-education' as all education is 'value-laden'. It is about making "explicit the values-laden nature of pedagogy and practice" (2010: 137) and using 'values-education' as "a discussion place ... It is not a set of advocated values in itself more than a place to grapple critically with crucial ideas about motives, purpose, ideas and what may be of worth to/in educational practice 'globally', and why" (2010: 138).

One approach among those who theorise values-education is to advance possible values which should underpin such education processes, for example, social justice as a central value in DE (McCloskey, 2014; Bourn, 2015). Swanson talks about "advancing forms of education focused on core human issues of contentment, peace and wellbeing; on the core ideological issues of democracy, freedom and egalitarianism; and on the principles of global justice" (2010: 146). For her, the philosophy of Ubuntu sums up what this might involve (2010; 2015). In a similar vein, the work of Martha Nussbaum has been very significant in terms of articulating alternatives for transforming education. She argues for education for human development based on her analysis of capabilities (2008). She suggests that there are three values "crucial to decent global citizenship" (2008: 15). "The first is the capacity for Socratic self-criticism and critical thought about one's own tradition" (ibid). "The second is the ability to see oneself as a member of a heterogeneous nation, and world" (2008: 18) and the third is "narrative imagination. This means the ability to think what it might be like to be in the shoes of a person different from oneself, to be an intelligent reader of that person's story, and to understand the emotions and wishes and desires that someone so placed might have. The cultivation of sympathy has been a key part of the best modern ideas of progressive education, in both Western and non-Western nations" (2008: 19). Her early work in this area became popular because of its focus on cosmopolitanism as a core principle of citizenship education. She argues that "if one begins life as a child who loves and trusts its parents, it is tempting to want to reconstruct citizenship along the same lines, finding in an idealised image of a nation a surrogate parent who will do one's thinking for one. Cosmopolitanism offers no such refuge; it offers only reason and the love of humanity, which may seem at times less colorful than other sources of belonging" (1994: 6).

While Nussbaum's sense of cosmopolitanism underpins some discourses of educations which aim to transform the world such as human rights education, citizenship education and DE, there is growing criticism of the universal application of modernist values in education processes (Todd, 2009; Swanson, 2010; Andreotti, 2014). Swanson refers to Biesta's (2006) work where he "warns us of humanistic ideals adopted in education in ways that deflect the plurality of other options and provide a singularly socialising effect on individuals and groups such that they would lose the critical capacity to

critique, question and contest in favour of a given common good into which they are enculturated” (2010: 147). For her, “an open and critical values education would need to address this even as it advocates for a greater explicit focus on what values we participate in within the educational field” (ibid). Todd (2009) also raises questions about different forms of education (like DE) which are based on universal values and suggests that they mask the complexities in global existence and experience. In focusing on cosmopolitanism, she argues that “the cosmopolitan project also seeks to educate for global awareness and unquestionably positions a ‘shared humanity’ as a condition of world citizenship beyond the narrow borders of national identities” (2009: 7). She argues that most of these forms of education (including DE, global citizenship education, etc) draw on “appeals to humanity based on universal ideals – dignity, reason, respect and freedom ... there is an unsightly side to the apparent idea of ‘goodness’ that is contained in the term humanity itself ... the present human condition is in crisis” (2009: 8). She questions “how do we imagine an education that seeks not to cultivate humanity ... but instead seeks to face it – head-on, so to speak, without sentimentalism, idealism, or false hope” (2009: 9). In drawing on Hannah Arendt’s criticisms of the political use of education, Todd argues that “education risks posing a danger to itself if it takes on the task of ‘constructing’ a new world for children, instead of embracing the very ambiguity that lies at the core of education; the task of teaching for a ‘world that is or is becoming out of joint’ (1956: 192)” (2009: 14). She agrees, with Arendt, that education should be concerned with the “complexities of the human condition, in all its pluralities” (Todd, 2009: 16).

Thus, reflection on values in education can be about trying to advance ethical education practice or exploring and critiquing the values which lie at the heart of it, or both. This is part of the task of those engaged in critical pedagogy who, while they often advance, for example, social justice education, also question the universality, modernism, patriarchy or coloniality of the values which underpin it. Pashby and Andreotti (2016), among others, explore ethical internationalisation in higher education as part of a decolonising knowledge project and Abdi, Shultz and Pillay (2015) explore what is involved in ‘Decolonising Global Citizenship Education’. Todd explains that her purpose in rethinking the terms of cosmopolitanism “is to promote a critical awareness of the ways in which our ‘talk’ about humanity, rights, citizenship and belonging can mask the complexity of human pluralism ... the point is to expose those ambivalences, paradoxes, and tensions that mark our continual immersion in a divided modernity – so that in echoing Kristeva, we can better come to terms with our own ghosts” (2009: 49). Such a critical approach problematises “our naive acceptance of human rights in education” (2009: 53). She argues that human rights education makes claims about humanity that are “historically and politically situated, and thereby incomplete. To my mind, its only options are to choose to ignore the claims it is basing its pedagogy upon or to interrogate its own practices and beliefs ... reflecting on the incomplete nature of rights actually allows us to explore the extent to which an ethical and political concern for others can inform the way we teach ... rights are by their nature incomplete because they cannot foresee the particularities of human life in the future” (Todd, 2009:

55).

### **3. The Aims, Values and Politics of DE**

In light of discussions above, I am suggesting that the aims, values and politics of DE are worthy of exploration in order to understand discourses of DE. Each of these issues is discussed below.

#### **3.1. Aims**

A key area of inquiry in terms of understanding DE is the question: ‘what is it for?’ If DE is ‘for’ development, this involves different understandings of development (local-global interactions; development in economic, social, political or human terms; development as constructed power relations of domination, etc). In Chapter Three I introduce discourses of global development and Sumner and Tribe, for example, differentiate between three overall approaches to development: “development as a long-term process of structural societal transformation; development as a short-term outcome of desirable targets; and development as a dominant ‘discourse’ of Western modernity” (2008: 11). In the case of the definitions introduced (in Section 1.3. above), this question is answered as follows: The Irish Aid definition suggests that DE aims to achieve ‘a more just and equal world’ (2007), a view shared by GENE who sees DE as education ‘to bring about a world of greater justice, equity and human rights for all’ (2013). Regan’s (2006) understanding is DE for ‘human development’ and IDEA (2013) suggests that DE is for the creation of ‘a more just and sustainable future for everyone’. These are just some of the possible goals of DE which have been articulated over the years by DE practitioners and academics.

Bailey (2009: 27) introduces three different general purposes of DE: “DE as a process for ensuring public moral support of a government’s or organisation’s programme of giving to, usually Southern or ‘Third World’ countries for growth or modernisation ... DE as a process for raising people’s awareness about global issues and to promote campaigns ... DE as a process for understanding how people and countries are interdependent, the global nature of inequality and the development of the skills necessary to enact change to address global social injustices”. While Bailey argues that these approaches are not mutually exclusive, it is interesting that Kenny and O’Malley (2002) assume that while the rhetoric might relate to the latter point, they see DE as valued by government for its promotional potential: “as a means of maintaining support of the general public for the expenditure of Irish taxpayers’ money through the Development Co-operation budget to countries in the developing or 3<sup>rd</sup> World ... In reality, it is difficult to determine what was, and is, DE as separate from promotion, campaigning, advocacy and public relations” (Kenny and O’Malley, 2002: 10). IDEA, in its most

recent submission to Irish Aid, encourages a strategic plan based on the notion that “Irish Aid will prioritise DE as an essential activity for maintaining public engagement with Ireland’s aid programme”. McCloskey argues that “the role of DE vis-a-vis public engagement has been a contested one, however, with some statutory agencies regarding it as a means to strengthen support for aid delivery rather than engage in political advocacy. This situation has been partly borne out of most governments supporting DE from overseas aid budgets rather than from domestic education budgets” (2014: 9).

In the ‘DE Watch’ Report (Krause 2010), the following are described as non-recognised and recognised approaches to DE. They argue that “these categories and proposed types of DE concepts are neither clear cut nor complete nor exhaustive. They are ideal types – in reality, mostly mixed forms occur” (2010: 7). Krause argues that “DE as Public Relations” is not recognised as a DE approach because it has “predefined outcomes in terms of public support for development co-operation efforts” (ibid). He goes on to highlight three other types: DE as awareness raising, DE as global education (GE) and DE as Life Skills. For him, DE as awareness raising

“focuses on cognitive information disseminated in a ‘top down’ approach. DE as GE ... focuses on local-global interdependence; involves participation by the target audience; stimulates critical understanding of development, environmental, human rights, intercultural, peace issues, and one’s own responsibility within a globally interdependent world; aims at changing attitudes and behaviours and promoting engagement and advocacy for global social justice and sustainability. DE as enhancement of Life Skills (LS) ... relates personal and local ... life to global issues; focuses on the learning process, supports critical thinking, self-reflection and independent choices of the learner; aims at the development of competencies needed to lead a fulfilling life in the complex and dynamic world society; equips individuals with skills needed to participate in change process from local community to global levels” (Krause, 2010: 7).

Downes argues that DE is education ‘about, for and as’ development (in Liddy, 2013). Liddy explains that “education about development is learning about the developing world; essentially facts and data on global inequalities, addressing issues such as poverty and hunger, gender and maternal health” (2013: 30). This is the approach traditionally associated with development studies in HE contexts. For her, “education for development centres on enhancing skills and capacity for societies and economies to develop” (2013: 31) and “education as development focuses on the potential social and personal development of the learner through engagement with global issues ... This type of DE centres on empowerment, participation and expansion of human capacities, sharing some outcome characteristics with active citizenship” (2013: 33). Developing an understanding of different types of DE based on Downs’s (1993) “five types of education about, for and as development” (2013: 28), she argues that “education about development creates nothing more than understanding, and does not call for any action. As argued by Wade and Hicks, awareness and knowledge alone does not engender change” (Liddy 2013: 41). According to her, education for development can create “informed and aware citizens” but their actions can remain at the fundraising level or be “centred on the local and national

arena rather than the global” (ibid).

The question here is what kind of development is DE ‘for development’ promoting and what is its role in addressing global development challenges? Education ‘as development’, according to Liddy, “advocates for personal and lifestyle innovation and agency” (2013: 41). While this appears to be a more critical approach, it is useful to question whether education ‘as development’ leads to individualistic ‘lifestyle’ changes or whether it leads to political analysis and action at more collective levels. With reference to her reflection on ‘change-oriented agency’ arising from DE, Liddy argues that “more critical and engaged types of DE which impact most on the learner and create the most significant long-term attitudinal change and work to transform social, cultural, political and economic structures require the inclusion of local development issues as central to innovation and agency” (2013: 42).

This more critical approach to DE regards it as playing a key role in “paradigm change” (Troll and Skinner, 2013: 93), especially in development itself. Troll and Skinner argue, for example, “the need for a justice rather than aid paradigm, for notions of one world development” (2013: 93). For IDEA, “DE enables people to understand the world around them and to act to transform it. DE works to tackle the root causes of injustice and inequality, globally and locally. The world we live in is unequal, rapidly changing and unjust. Our everyday lives are affected by global forces. DE is about understanding those forces and how to change them to create a more just and sustainable future for everyone” (IDEA, n.d.).

### **3.2. Values**

As outlined in the discussion above, DE has been linked to critical education and to the values of social justice, human rights, empowerment and diversity by numerous writers. McCloskey (2014: 1) argues that DE “is distinguished from orthodox educational policy and practice by suggesting that education is political, ideological and demands an ethical position”. As such, it is similar to critical pedagogy discussed above, especially where Freirean approaches to education are drawn upon, as in the case of McCloskey. He goes on to argue that the values of “social justice, inclusion and equality” (2014: 5) are at the heart of most definitions of DE. But, as indicated above, understandings of these values are, at the very least, relatively unexplored in much of the literature on DE. McCloskey goes some way towards identifying what a DE based on social justice might look like. He refers to a growing movement within the DE literature which has, in recent times, “questioned why the DE sector endorses, tacitly or otherwise, the very ideologies and political-economic arrangements that are responsible for producing or exacerbating conditions of poverty and injustice” (2014: 11). Doorley explains that Khoo (2011), McCloskey (2011) and Storey (2011) build on Andreotti’s work (2006) in

arguing for a move away from the ‘soft’ versions of DE “defined as the so-called five ‘Fs’ of food, fashion, festivals, flags and fundraising by adopting a more political role in society ... and by starting a debate about ‘what DE means’ by examining the extent to which its practices and questioning are challenging dominant education thinking (Khoo, 2011)” (Doorley, 2015: 116). Bourn, who has written extensively on DE for many years, outlines his “framework for DE based on four discrete elements: a global outlook; recognition of power and inequality; belief in social justice; commitment to dialogue, reflection and personal and social transformation” (2015: 30). Some of these issues are clarified in his most recent book but there is a need for more focus on what is meant by these various values in many situations.

As discussed earlier, while many DE theorists aim to articulate the values-base for DE, for others, for example Andreotti (2014) and Todd (2009), these values need to be questioned and critiqued. For my purposes here, it is important to consider what values are facilitators drawing upon and why, and to what extent these values are being questioned.

### **3.3. Politics**

Understanding the politics of DE overlaps with discussions of action and activism, the critical potential of DE as well as with different understandings of active citizenship, all previously discussed. In addition, it builds on debates about the politics of DE, discussed in Chapter One. At the heart of debates about the politics of DE are understandings of power and empowerment. In Chapter Three, I introduce Foucauldian understandings of power and knowledge as well as a Gramscian theorisation of hegemony. Where Foucault’s understanding is of power operating both positively and negatively everywhere, and often through disciplinary apparatuses of biopower, Gramsci concentrates on hegemonic power where elites win the consent of the subaltern classes through ideology and their internalisation of elite interests. Highlighting dominance but keeping open notions of resistance, both theorists grapple with questions about control and resistance within society. As identified earlier, these are important considerations, along with structure-agency debates when it comes to understanding power relations shaping and being shaped by DE.

From the point of view of understanding discourses of power and politics in DE, it is also useful to consider theories of different ‘types’ of power. Lukes’s (1974) analysis of same served for many years as the model from which others built (Haugaard, 1997; 2002). In recent years, in development studies literature, there has been an emphasis on critical understandings of the concept of empowerment (Rowlands, 1997) and Gaventa’s (2006) work on the Powercube has become influential for identifying different types of power ‘over’, ‘to’, ‘within’ and ‘with’, and how these different types of power can be identified in development practice as well as in different theoretical positions.



Gaventa explores different forms of power (visible, hidden and invisible) with different spaces (closed, invited and claimed/created) and different levels (global, national and local). His Powercube represents an attempt to develop a framework to “examine the interrelationships of the forms of power which we were encountering in different political spaces and settings” (2006: 25). For him, ‘spaces’ are “opportunities, moments and channels where citizens can act to potentially affect policies, discourses, decisions and relationships that affect their lives and interests” (2006: 26). He goes on to suggest that “one dynamic we must explore in examining the spaces for participation is to ask how they were created, and with whose interests and what terms of engagement” (2006: 27). In focusing on the levels at which power operates, Gaventa explains that a lot of talk in development is of the local, national and global levels, though he acknowledges the focus on the personal and intimate levels in some quarters, e.g., in feminist activism. In focusing on these various levels, he argues that “the interrelationships of these levels of power with one another suggest that the challenge for action is not only how to build participatory action at differing levels, but how to promote the democratic and accountable vertical links across actors at different levels” (2006: 28). “Focusing on visible power – observable decision making ... hidden power – setting the political agenda [and]... invisible power – shaping meaning and what is acceptable” (2006: 29), he argues that as power puts boundaries on participation and excludes as much as it includes, it is just as important to explore hidden and invisible forms of power as it is those that are visible and overt. In summary, he suggests that using the Powercube, “reflections on power, and reflections by change agents on how their work affects power relationships in all of its dimensions, is perhaps the first step in making more visible, power’s most hidden and invisible forms” (2006: 31).

In his review of Gaventa's (2006) work, Pantazidou argues that through the Powercube “practitioners have come up with more nuanced answers to questions such as: ‘how and by whom is power exercised and experienced in different levels and spaces? What kind of power is it and how is it exercised? Who has interest in what kind of change? How are actors enabled or constrained by power?’” (2012: 9). For him, the Powercube is not just helpful in analysing who has power but in raising questions “about the ways in which spaces (as much as actors) are shaped and conditioned by less visible forms of power – through rules of access, norms of engagement and socio-cultural boundaries, which delineate who can do what or have a voice within those spaces” (2012: 10). Insights from Gaventa’s analysis of power are useful for identifying the kinds of politics identified by DE facilitators when it comes to DE. Is power understood as something possessed by elites or is it something which is regarded as collective and for everyone? Is the political in DE understood as about challenging structural power or is it focused on understanding how power works, even in DE itself? Though understandings of politics and power are complex, Gaventa’s insights provide some analytical tools for understanding discourses of power when it comes to DE, as explored in Chapter Six and Seven.

## 4. Towards a Framework for Understanding Discourses of DE

### 4.1. Mapping DE Discourses

Much debate in relation to different approaches to DE in Ireland over the past 10 years has been sparked by Andreotti's conceptualisation of 'soft' and 'critical' approaches to global citizenship education (GCE) or DE (2006). In comparing 'soft' and 'critical' approaches to GCE, she identifies the following areas for consideration: "nature of the problem; justification for positions of privilege (in the North and in the South); basis for caring; grounds for acting; understanding of interdependence; what needs to change; what for; role of 'ordinary' individuals; what individuals can do; how does change happen; basic principle for change; goal of GCE; strategies for GCE; potential benefits of GCE; potential problems" (2006: 46 – 46). While some of these overlap with the dimensions of DE, as discussed above, the range of areas for consideration is wider and it focuses more on identifying different politics of DE or GCE. Clearly, the value is in opening up diverse meanings and approaches to DE or GCE rather than assuming that they are all the same.

In her recent work Andreotti is keen to move beyond what has become a simplified or taken-for-granted model for exploring the complexities involved in different perspectives and approaches to DE. She explains that in 2006 she argued that there were "at least two common trends in educational initiatives that promoted concern for others (especially distant others)" (2014: 13). The 'critical approach' to global citizenship and DE "was based on the idea of justice and complicity in harm", she argued, whereas the soft approaches, based

"on a modernist understanding of linear time, progress and development, although productive in certain contexts, tended to close down the possibility of more critical approaches, particularly of approaches that offered alternative ways to conceptualise development, knowledge and solutions from the perspective of historically subjugated peoples ... I asserted that 'critical literacy' as an educational practice that critically examines origins and implications of assumptions as well as other possibilities for signification could be a viable way to address this problem" (2014: 13).

One of the aims of this research is to develop a framework for understanding or a 'mapping' (to use Andreotti's term, 2014) of discourses of DE in an Irish context. For an approach to mapping discursive formations of DE in this research, I apply Andreotti's fairly recent work. She draws on a critical literacy approach to trace "individual or institutional narratives to collective 'root' narratives or meta-narratives" (2014: 22). As an intellectual exercise, she argues that "mapping discourses helps people clarify their own positions by making evident the ambivalence of signification (the fact that words mean different things in different contexts), and by promoting the productive identification of inherent assumptions, patterns, trends, differences, similarities, paradoxes, and contradictions between and

within different worldviews” (ibid). In arguing the value of mapping, “as long as they are not taken to be the territory that they represent and are used critically as a starting point of discussion” (ibid), she proceeds to present a mapping exercise which “establishes distinctions between a) technicist instrumentalist, b) liberal humanist, c) critical and postcritical, and d) ‘Other’ narratives of society, education, development and diversity” (ibid). In doing so, Andreotti not only highlights the value of conceptual mapping but illustrates some of the contours of the map that are useful for considering different discourses of DE among facilitators in Ireland in later chapters.

Andreotti argues that the technicist approach is “social engineering as economic rationalisation decided by experts; education for employment”. The humanist is “social engineering as human progress decided by representatives; education for national citizenship”. The critical humanist is “social engineering as fair distribution decided by ordinary people; education for radical democracy” and ‘Other’ indicated “possibilities that are not Cartesian, teleological, universalist and/or anthropocentric” (2013: 1). She goes on to explain that “the common theme of social change as social engineering in the three configurations [apart from the ‘Other’] is also not a coincidence. The technicist, humanist and critical humanist perspectives in our heuristic conceptual tool have common roots in modernity (i.e. in their ties to the Renaissance, the Industrial Revolution, the Reformation, European colonialism and resistance to colonialism, and particularly, the European Enlightenment)” (2013: p.o) For her, they “share specific ideals of being, thinking and relating: the Cartesian subject (self-conscious of himself and splitting minds from bodies), universal reasoning (based on the idea of only one possible rationality), teleological thinking (focusing on a foreseeable end goal), dialectical modes of engagement (based on hierarchical binaries and the elimination of difference), and anthropocentrism (privileging human beings)” (ibid). She argues that “these basic tenets should not be seen as all good or all bad, but as historically situated, and potentially restrictive if universalised through social, political or educational projects” (ibid).

Andreotti, therefore, suggests that a mapping of discourses involves an identification of the assumptions associated with root narratives, different ontologies and understandings about the way the world is and should be. When it comes to her analysis of different ‘root narratives’, in linking these approaches to their relationship with modernity, Andreotti opens an avenue for critical reflexivity and the construction of alternatives. A significant critique implicit in Andreotti’s work is that even many of the most ‘critical’ of DE approaches are associated with social engineering. This implies that they have fixed understandings of ‘proper action’, of the goal of DE, and fixed visions of the future. This presents a significant challenge to many who promote DE based on specific values, actions and visions of the future. At the same time, she does not shy away from articulating her own values and the political bases for more critical and transformative education, as she sees it. She argues that “postcolonial theory subtly implies a set of ethical practices that render it impossible to turn our back to difficult issues, such as our complicity in systemic harm, the persistence of relations of dominance,

complexities and paradoxes of crossing borders, the gap between what we say and what we do, or our own sanctioned ignorances” (2014: 20). In the light of these considerations, she has developed what she calls a HEADSUP checklist for exploring the potentially damaging dimensions of development or other educations. These, she argues, are different

“patterns of engagement, flows and representation that are: hegemonic (justifying superiority and supporting domination); ethnocentric (projecting one view, one ‘forward’, as universal); ahistorical (forgetting historical legacies and complications); depoliticised (disregarding power inequalities and ideological roots of analyses and proposals); salvationist (framing help as the burden of the fittest); uncomplicated (offering easy solutions that do not require systemic change); paternalistic (seeking affirmation of superiority through the provision of help) (Andreotti, 2012a: 2)” (in Andreotti, 2014: 21).

In focusing here on patterns of engagement, flows or representations, Andreotti leaves open the possibility for interpreting these various patterns in DE with facilitators in terms of the concepts used, their talk and assumptions with reference to each of the dimensions of DE identified above.

#### **4.2. A Framework for Understanding Discourses of DE**

In discussing each of the dimensions of DE, as well as the aims, values and politics of DE, as discussed above, I draw on Andreotti’s ‘root narrative’ approach to explore different discursive trends and assumptions related to each. Building on my discussion of development (Chapter Three) and of critical education, I outline the first tentative formations I can establish from the literature reviewed. This mapping was developed halfway through the research process and was used to aid data collection and analysis, which is discussed in Chapters Five – Eight. In so doing, I initially used the conceptual titles offered by Andreotti and I applied different concepts, debates and themes from the literature review to each of the dimensions and areas I chose under each of the root narrative headings. I constructed this mapping based on answers to questions like: What might a liberal humanist discourse of knowledge and understanding look like? What kinds of ontological and epistemological assumptions underpin various approaches to knowledge and understanding, skills, values etc in DE? What different understandings of action and citizen activism are highlighted in the literature? To what extent do they correspond to Andreotti’s ‘root narratives’? What might an ‘other’ approach to knowledge, values, skills and politics involve? Initial answers to these questions are summarised below and, in each case, I drew on the literature I had reviewed at the time to construct this draft framework. I was interested, then, in exploring how or whether these discursive formations were reflected by facilitators in their interviews and what, if any, alternatives might emerge. I hoped that this broad mapping of discourses would help to throw light on DE discourses in Ireland and not to be too stymied by this box-like formation.

**Table 4.1. Framework for Understanding Discourses of DE**

<b>Discursive Component</b>	<b>Technicist instrumentalist</b>	<b>Liberal humanist</b>	<b>Critical and post-critical</b>	<b>'Other'</b>
Knowledge and understanding	Content, policy and issue driven; acquiring knowledge and awareness	Reflection on experience of individuals, awareness raising and understanding	Critical exploration and understanding of structures, discourses and interconnectivities at local and global levels	From certainty to comfort with contingencies, hybridities (Andreotti) and facing complex realities (Todd, 2009)
Skills	Practical self-awareness and technical know-how (Khoo, 2011)	Personal – individual and self-reflection (Andreotti, 2014)	Think for self and choose responsibly (Andreotti, 2014); critical thinking and collaboration	Dealing with complexity
Education Processes	Didactic, simplification	Experiential – sharing	Experiential, democratic, collaborative, critical and creative	Open-ended, negotiated, horizontal alternative, non-arborist (Deleuze and Guattari 1991)
Power and Politics	Power in 'crypto-positivism' (Kincheloe, 2008b) which naturalises dominant perspectives; new managerialism (Lynch et al, 2012) and neoliberalism (Giroux, 2002)  Power 'over' (Gaventa, 2006)	Power and politics based on the neoliberal, self-interested individual or free market economics; agency in the giver – charity which does not challenge status quo; trusteeship (Cowen and Shenton 1995)  Power 'to' and 'within' (Gaventa, 2006)	Challenging structures of domination – discourses, economic and political systems etc; identifying and understanding technologies of power and governmentality (Foucault 1978)  Power 'to', 'within' and 'with' and challenging power 'over' (Gaventa, 2006)	Politics addressing own power, values and ethical considerations – debated in terms of "the ways in which it opens up and closes down democratic relations, values and identities" (Giroux, 2004: 36); no guarantees  Challenging all power, focus in particular on invisible power (Gaventa, 2006)
Aims of Education	Ed 'about' dev and developing countries; improve ed in Ireland	Ed 'as' dev – for lifestyle change and agency, mobilise activism for 'the poor'	Ed 'for' development – informed and aware citizens, change mindsets, mobilise activism with 'the marginalised'	No clear set of normative values or ethical principle – "suspicion of the benevolence of benevolence" (Andreotti, 2014: 19).
Values	Efficiency, effectiveness, mutual benefit	Care, compassion	Solidarity, equality, inclusion, co-operation (DARE, in McCloskey 2014); dignity, reason, respect, freedom (Todd, 2009)	"To take pluralism and its attendant conflicts seriously" (Todd, 2009: 5)
Action and Activism	Liberal idea of the citizen (Khoo, 2006)	Civic republican notion of citizenship – individualistic, apolitical, volunteering, consumerism (Gaynor, 2015); privatised affair (Giroux, 2002)	Critical approach drawing on Mouffe – see Gaynor (2015); critically interrogating dominant narratives, asking why	Focus on politics of knowledge and engagement; Critical global citizenship, which "entails critically interrogating the dominant narrative – always asking why" (Gaynor, 2015: 10)

The framework presented in Table 4.1. forms the analytical framework for understanding DE discourses among DE facilitators which emerge from the research. Though presented in table format,

it is not designed to assume fixed boundaries between each of the dimensions or categories but rather to set the scene for an exploration of facilitator talk about various aspects of DE and for an analysis of discourses, i.e. the concepts and phrases they use and the assumptions and meanings they draw upon.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have presented a framework for understanding discourses of DE. Drawing on different definitions of DE, I have identified four dimensions of DE which, I argue, are worthy of exploration: knowledge and understanding, skills, action and activism, and learning processes. In addition, in the light of a discussion of the literature on the criticality of education, and by extension of DE, I identify the aims, values and politics of DE as central to understanding discourses of DE. Thus, the framework presented addresses these seven core aspects of DE. It does so in the light of different discursive positions, drawn from Vanessa Andreotti's identification of 'root narratives' at the heart of DE. Table 4.1. offers a summary of the different aspects of this analytical framework with reference to the literature discussed. In subsequent chapters, I explore how this framework has been used to guide interviews and questionnaires and how findings from DE facilitator talk have served to expand and modify this framework (see Table 8.1.).

## **Chapter Five: Methodology**

### **Introduction**

The approach to social research employed in this study is drawn largely from a critical post-structuralist epistemology which highlights the importance of moving beyond positivist approaches to scientific enquiry to understanding social meanings (Ryan, 2011). In focusing on discourses of DE among facilitators. It reflects my own interests and work in DE and development studies, which tries to combine a critical pedagogical approach to education and research with post-structuralist discourse critique and the identification of critical alternatives to dominant development thinking and practice. Many of the experiences, concerns and interests which have informed my intellectual position are reflected in my epistemological commitments explored here. The research approach I apply is based on ontological assumptions which regard knowledge as constructed and constructing, as imbued by and influencing power relations, as contingent and partial, as open to interpretation and experience, and as shifting and changing.

My epistemological commitments are to research in the critical tradition which views research as political and which places value on research which overtly aims to create social justice (Denzin and Giardina 2009). I also bear in mind feminist critiques of positivism and insights into the politics of research, e.g., Stanley and Wise (1993), Laura Nader's (1974) critical ethnographic call for 'studying up', and Smith's (2005) institutional ethnographic approach which identifies the importance of studying within our own societies and institutions. Influenced by post-structuralism, and in particular the work of Foucault, I regard power and knowledge as central areas of concern, especially in relation to discourses and their construction, negotiation, contestation and effects. Epistemologically, I adopt a post-positivist stance which challenges notions of objectivity, verifiability, measurement and individuality in research, at least when presented as the only valid way to do research. I value actors' (in this case facilitators') accounts (discourses, understandings, assumptions, experiences and perspectives in relation to DE) as well as the exploration of structure/actor dynamics (in this case facilitators' understandings of factors shaping discourses of DE). The emphasis here, therefore, is on exploring discourses, on power and positionalities within the research process (of the researcher and research participants), on validity and rigour (through self-reflexivity, a multi-layered, iterative process of research and analysis and the congruence of the process for those involved), and on the exploration of meanings and interconnections. Thus, this research aspires to being a critical learning and reflexive process for those involved. These epistemological considerations are discussed in greater detail in the sections below.

Drawing on what Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) call the 'reflexive character of social research' and

Andreotti's call for 'self-reflexivity' (2006), from a methodological point of view, I am acknowledging the importance here of not trying to eliminate the effects of me as a researcher. Instead, I try to understand them in the context of the importance of exploring power in research relationships, researcher and research participant positionings, the need for dialogue in research processes between the researcher and participants and the value of creating participatory processes which engage research participants in critically reflecting on their own realities, understandings and discourses (Andreotti, 2006, 2014). Silverman (2000) points to the centrality of the link between analytical perspectives and methodological issues. With this in mind, the research designed here uses a 'bricolage' approach (Denzin and Lincoln in Kincheloe and McLaren, 2005) which draws on a range of critical and post-structuralist influences and research tools. The research process is designed as a cyclical one which involves various stages of engagement with research participants using a 'mixed methods' approach (Mertens and Hesse-Biber, 2013) including interviews, questionnaires and workshops with research participants as well as documentary analysis. These methodological issues are discussed in a later part of this chapter.

This chapter begins with an exploration of epistemological considerations underlying the research and moves on to a discussion of research design and processes.

## **1. Exploration of Epistemological Considerations**

In this section I discuss my critical post-structuralist epistemology and the related considerations which underpin the research design. These are: research as political; post-positivist research; studying-up and exploring power in institutional settings; and post-structuralism – power, knowledge and discourse.

### **1.1. Research as Political**

As indicated above, I am committed to adopting a critical theory perspective (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2005) and subscribe to Kincheloe and McLaren's view that "inquiry that aspires to the name 'critical' must be connected to an attempt to confront the injustice of a particular society or a public sphere within that society. Research thus becomes a transformative endeavour unembarrassed by the label 'political'" (2005: 305). My sense of the importance of research for social change is a response to my understanding of the global social, political and economic context. This articulation of context is central to understanding the importance of research for social justice, where neoliberalism plays a central role in creating global inequality (Rapley, 2004). Along with the assumptions constructed to protect it, in today's world of growing global interconnectivity yet exclusion, increased wealth and



poverty, and environmental and other challenges (Sparke, 2013), it is not enough to find out what is happening in the world, we are compelled to try to change it. This analysis of the current global context underpins my concern for a political approach to research with facilitators who attempt to use education processes to challenge the structures of injustice which underpin these realities. Kincheloe and McLaren argue that

“whereas traditional researchers cling to the guardrail of neutrality, critical researchers frequently announce their partisanship in the struggle for a better world ...Whereas traditional researchers see their task as the description, interpretation, or reanimation of a slice of reality, critical researchers often regard their work as a first step toward forms of political action that can redress the injustices found in the field site or constructed in the very act of research itself” (2005: 305).

The question is: what does it mean for research to be political? For me, it involves recognition of injustices and inequalities but a questioning approach rather than easy prescriptions. Given the complexities of the contexts shaping education processes, I agree with Andreotti that political research involves moving “beyond certainties, fixed identities/communities, and predictable and consensual futures towards being comfortable with contingent and provisional certainties, complex and hybrid identities/communities and open, co-created futures” (2014: 19). Though not in any way undermining of the political nature of research, she rejects prescribed political ends and argues that “it is theoretically contradictory to expect a clear set of normative values or ethical principles from a postcolonial critique where the benevolence of every attempt to ‘make things better’ is suspect of reproducing unexamined colonial practices. However, it is precisely this suspicion of ‘the benevolence of benevolence’ (see Jeffress, 2008) that can create the possibility of self-reflexivity, humility and openness that ground ethical forms of solidarity” (2014: 19/20).

While acknowledging the importance and validity of political research, I echo Andreotti’s (2014) concerns about prescribed political ends. Cannella and Lincoln argue that a critical perspective on research involves “any research that recognises power – that seeks in its analysis to plumb the archaeology of taken-for-granted perspectives to understand how unjust and oppressive social conditions came to be reified as historical ‘givens’” (2009: 54). They argue that the foundational questions in critical work are: “who/what is helped/privileged/legitimated? Who/what is harmed/oppresed/disqualified?” (2009: 54). While acknowledging that much critical research seeks, like a detective, to ‘uncover’, ‘expose’ or ‘illuminate the hidden’, I prefer a more nuanced analysis of what it is we know, which is based on the understanding that even our ‘taken-for-granted’ assumptions are not always completely ‘unknown’ to us and even when they are known, this knowledge is an interpreted construction and reflective of different positionings. As such, I advance a view of research as a means of exploring power relations which helps to clarify, make known in a different way or make explicit some of the power relations shaping social life and experience. This is more akin to Ryan’s (2011) conceptualisation of research as a learning process rather than one which exposes the

‘unknown truth’ of power relations.

## 1.2. Post-Positivist, Critical Research

Epistemologically, I am also committed to post-positivist inquiry (Lather, 1991; Ryan, 2011) which challenges the understanding, within positivism, of the need for objectivity in research and the sense that research involves testing, measurement, dispassionate observation and the search for the truth (Ryan, 2011). Denzin and Giardina (2009) situate their post-positivist stance in the context of “human oppression and injustice” (2009, p12), and as a response to what they call ‘Scientific Research in Education’ (SBR). They argue that “SBR is a well-orchestrated attempt to return to modern ways of thinking about ‘knowledge, knowing and research methods’ (Hatch, 2006: 404). In the language of the paradigm wars, this is a return to positivism, experimental designs, randomised samples, statistical tests, a new gold standard” (2009: 27). Ryan argues that a post-positivist researcher “assumes a learning role rather than a testing one. One of the opportunities and challenges posed by this approach is that the researcher recognises the common humanity that connects researchers and the people who participate in research. We regard ourselves as people who conduct research *among* other people, learning *with* them, rather than conducting research *on* them” (2011: 18). Such an approach challenges the assumption that researchers need to stand ‘above’, ‘apart from’ or ‘as observers’ of ‘Others’, the researched, who are often the objects of research. It calls for an exploration of researcher – researched relations on the assumption that there is a value to working ‘together with’ people in developing understandings of the ‘reality’ being explored.

Among the critical epistemologies that have challenged positivism from different perspectives, I have been particularly influenced by participatory research approaches which aim to challenge dominant power relations in the production and construction of knowledge, through dialogical processes and non-hierarchical, horizontal research relationships. Within ‘alternative development approaches’ (Pieterse, 2001) there is a long history, largely following Freire, of various approaches to participatory action research, for example Chambers (1997). These approaches question the assumption that ‘expertise’ lies in the hands of a researcher or academic, and some question the notion of ‘expertise’ in itself, and they attempt to place value on ‘indigenous’ or ‘marginalised knowledges’ (Chambers, 1997). Of course, such participatory approaches have not gone unquestioned, with some arguing that participation has itself become ‘a tyranny’ (Cooke and Kothari, 2001). Despite these criticisms, participatory research offers important considerations on engagement with research participants. Valuing voice, decision making and the role of participants in working with the researcher to shape this research, I draw from participatory research principles. Though I aspire to research processes being ‘as participatory as possible’, in this case this is limited to participation in feedback workshops on initial findings (see Section 5.3. below for a discussion of research processes involved).

Within critical research, feminist epistemologies have influenced my approach to this research because of their considerations of the politics of research relationships. Engaging in debate about researcher positioning and power relations, feminist epistemologies have advanced thinking on the value of knowledge based on women's standpoints, identities and experiences. In addition to valuing women's experiences, feminist epistemologies have been particularly important, in my view, for challenging the gendered power relations implicit in the so-called 'neutral' and 'objectivist' assumptions of positivism (Ramazanoglu, 1989; Skeggs, 1997; Smith, 1999; Byrne and Lentin, 2000; Ryan, 2001; Fraser, 2013). Along with other critical research approaches such as participatory and post-colonial epistemologies (Spivak, 1988), they have opened up the space for valuing knowledge and advancing research 'from the margins' and for challenging male-dominated, heteronormative, white, 'Northern' and middle-class epistemologies. A central contribution here has been poststructuralist feminists' challenging of essentialism in and around women's experience (Butler, 1990; Kincheloe and McLaren, 2005) and considerations of power relations in knowledge production (Doucet and Mauthner, 2006).

### **1.3. 'Studying Up' and Exploring Power in Institutional Settings**

The critical pedagogy, participatory and feminist emphasis on working with those who are the subjects of the research throughout the research process is central to my concerns here. At the same time, the emphasis in many of their approaches is on working with 'the marginalised'. While this is an important approach, it is also important to question notions of powerlessness often attached to categories such as 'the marginalised' on the one hand and, on the other, to undertake critical research with those in positions of power and influence who make decisions about and try to shape how our world should be. In that sense, in working with facilitators in this research, I am mindful of Laura Nadar's (1974) call to 'study up', where she attempts to direct our attention to 'our own societies', our own institutions and practices, and to "get behind the facelessness of a bureaucratic society, to get at the mechanisms whereby faraway corporations and large-scale industries are directing the everyday aspects of our lives" (1974: 288). Hers is a powerful call for the value of research on one's own society and social context. In undertaking research with facilitators in Ireland, I am conducting research 'in my own society'. Given that facilitators are my peers and owing to my involvement in the DE sector for over 20 years, I am focusing this research on a context that I know well and working directly with those who are influencers and decision-makers in that context.

Critical research is particularly challenging when working with people and investigating institutions that are generally regarded as representing a 'good' in society, e.g., facilitators, Irish Aid and NGOs. It can also be challenging when it comes to working with those who are known to the researcher, as is the case with many of the facilitators involved in this research. Smith's (2005) institutional

ethnography offers some useful insights for conducting research in that context. She argues that the starting point for ethnography is “people’s actual experience ... it explores with people their experience of what is happening to them and their doings and how those are hooked up with what is beyond their experience” (2005: 41). For Smith, “experience emerges as essentially a dialogue between a speaker who voices her or his experience and the listener or listeners who collaborate in the production of that experience in how they attend to the speaker, how she or he is heard, and the questions they may ask ... experience is a resource to be probed, expanded, opened up and taken wherever an informant can take it” (2005: 142). This construction of research as starting ‘with’ people leads Smith to research which goes beyond the local “to discover the social organisation that governs the local setting. In an institutional context, this is to discover the institutional order and its organisation in those respects relevant to what has been and is happening to people” (2005: 41). She argues that

“ethnography may start by exploring the experience of those directly involved in the institutional setting, but they are not the objects of investigation. It is the aspect of the institutions relevant to the people’s experience, not the people themselves that constitute the object of inquiry ... it is the people’s experience which sets the problematic of the study, the first step in an inquiry that travels sequentially deeper into the institutional relations in which people’s everyday lives are embedded” (2005: 38).

Three aspects of Smith’s work are particularly significant for this research: 1. her insistence on starting with people’s accounts of their experience. Following her approach, this research forefronts participants’ accounts, their talk, words, meanings and understandings of DE. 2. Smith’s concern with the link between people’s ‘everyday experience’ and how these experiences are coordinated in institutional settings – “institutional ethnography as a project proposes to realise an alternative form of knowledge of the social in which people’s own knowledge of the world of their everyday practices is systematically extended to the social relations and institutional orders in which we participate” (2005: 43); 3. her focus on ‘ruling relations’. Smith, for example, explains that “exploration into the ruling relations, into institutional complexes, from the standpoint of experience in lived actuality, opens into a world that is organised in language and is based in texts of various technological orders ... This is the region into which inquiry ventures as it moves from the experiences of people into the ruling relations” (2005: 69). How, for example, is DE talked about and how are discourses shaped in institutional contexts? Smith’s attempt to address the relationship between ‘people’s everyday/evernight experiences’ (Smith 1999), institutions, power and text is very useful, especially when it comes to exploring the influence of institutional texts and discourses on people’s understanding of the work they do. Smith outlines that she does not “mean to reduce institutional processes to texts ... The aim, rather, is to make visible the ethnographic significance of texts as coordinators of people’s work” (2005: 200). In the case of this research, an example of this would involve exploring how funding applications, evaluations, reports and performance management frameworks are perceived to affect people’s understandings of and experiences of DE or how discourses are shaped by policy. In the case of this research, the discourses of DE drawn upon by facilitators and how they are shaped are central

areas of exploration.

#### **1.4. Post-Structuralism – Power, Knowledge and Discourse Analysis**

As outlined above, the epistemological approach I adopt views power, knowledge and people's constructions of their world, discourses and assumptions as of central importance. In this emphasis, I have been influenced by the considerations of critical participatory, feminist and critical ethnographic epistemologies. I have also found Foucault's focus on power and knowledge as central areas of concern as particularly significant, especially in relation to discourses, their construction and effects. For Foucault, power is everywhere. In Foucault's considerable work, he uses a number of concepts related to power to "create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects" (1982: 777). In a global development context, this relates to the subjectification of people as poor, needy, developed, underdeveloped, helpers, educators, etc. Foucault is largely concerned with the exercise of power in different contexts. He argues that "power relations are rooted deep in the social nexus, not reconstituted 'above' society as a supplementary structure whose radical effacement one could perhaps dream of ... a society without power relations can only be an abstraction" (1982: 791).

For Foucault, therefore, as power is everywhere, an analysis of discourse, institutions and practices (such as those related to DE) should come from this perspective of power relations. According to Kincheloe and McLaren, "Foucault invites researchers to explore the ways in which discourses are implicated in relationships of power and how power and knowledge serve as dialectically reinitiating practices that regulate what is considered reasonable and true" (2005: 305). There are many forms of discourse analysis. An important line of differentiation in relation to discourse analysis and discourse studies relates to basic understandings of discourse – analysis of text primarily or of text in the context of social and political power relations. In my work to date, I have been significantly influenced by Foucauldian-inspired discourse analysis of broader discursive frames in post-development thinking (Ferguson, 1994, Esteva, 1993, 1998, and Escobar 1995) as well as a critical discourse analysis perspective which draws "our attention to the ways in which textual analysis can be integrated with social analysis" (Sarangi and Coulter, 2000, xxiii). Mills outlines how discourse has been usefully applied to analysis of colonial and post-colonial discourse, especially in the work of Said and Spivak (Mills 1997).

Here discourse analysis helps to identify exclusionary practices as well as representational practices in relation to DE talk and the assumptions which underpin it; what is said or not, and how it gives insight into how people make sense of their world and their meaning repertoires (Ryan, 2011). Hall (1997: 261), for example, in his work on the "Spectacle of the 'Other'" explores different representations and

power. He argues, following Foucault, Said and Bhabha that “the circularity of power is especially important in the context of representation. The argument is that everyone – the powerful and the powerless – is caught up, though not on equal terms, in power’s circulation. No one – neither its apparent victims nor its agents – can stand wholly outside its field of operation” (1997: 261).

With Fairclough (1992), I am arguing for a discourse analysis of facilitators’ talk and the texts that are produced in the research process, which addresses language used, concepts and the assumptions about DE. The emphasis is on exploring assumptions related to the various dimensions of DE discourses including the aims, values and politics associated with them. The discourse analysis applied here also focuses on power relations and influences on their approaches to DE in the context of the DE sector in Ireland, e.g., policy, institutional and organisational relationship influences.

Ryan offers some useful suggestions for the ‘discourse analyst’ or ‘discourse activist’ and for the ‘reflective practitioner’, which are relevant here. She argues that

“it is necessary in any discourse analysis to try to pin down what their premises are and how they take effect. One cannot decide if a discourse is enabling, or if it needs to be challenged or changed, if one cannot describe it adequately ... the task of the discourse analyst is to expose the premises that go unstated, so that we can judge for ourselves whether they are good enough or acceptable for the kind of society we want to create and live in” (2011: 4).

She goes on to suggest that “examining discourses and understanding the discursive climate is an essential part of challenging oppressive ways of making sense of people or of the world. The reflective practitioner can investigate how certain discourses can be challenged or ousted by discourses more adequate for the project of human and planetary wellbeing” (2011: 9). In offering this analysis of the politics of discursive analysis and activism, Ryan opens up the space for identifying, in a critical way, the discourses that actors (in this case facilitators) draw upon. On the other hand, and bearing in mind earlier considerations about participatory research processes and critical self-reflexivity in research processes, it is important not to see the ‘discourse analyst’ as somehow ‘outside’ of, ‘above’ or ‘expert’ in this process of understanding ‘discourses’ and ‘the discursive climate’.

#### **1.4.1. Applying a Discourse Analysis**

In this research, a key aspect of the discourse analysis to be undertaken with facilitators is to explore with them their assumptions (taken-for-granted or otherwise) about DE in relation to what it is, what it is trying to achieve and how it is shaped. As it also draws on participatory, feminist and critical ethnographic concerns about working ‘with’ people and not carrying out research ‘on’ what they say, the focus is on exploring these discourses and related assumptions in a critical learning process. At the same time, it seeks to go beyond an exploration of assumptions into what Smith (2005) calls ‘the

ruling relations' or what can be understood in discourse analytical terms as discourses and power relations in an institutional field. Here, rather than adopting a specific CDA approach or methodology, I am mindful of its considerations of the inter-relationship between text, textual practice and social practice (Fairclough, 1992) (see Chapter Three). The approach to discourse analysis that I employ here does not just study discourses as 'oppressive'. Rather it views actors as shaped by and shaping discourses and as negotiating, legitimating and contesting discourses within a broader institutional and discursive context. Secondly, the focus in this research is primarily on talk and text. Talk is understood here as participant contributions to discussions, interviews and workshops which form part of the research process. In the research process, talk becomes 'text' in the recording of interviews and workshop discussions (see the section on methodology below). Texts produced in the context of the research, including records of interviews and workshop discussions as well as questionnaires, and policy texts which influence facilitator discourses are analysed as relevant.

## **2. Research Design**

As suggested in the discussion of epistemology above, the research design I adopt here draws influence from post-positivistic, critical and participatory research as well as from post-structuralist discourse analysis. As political research, this involves a critical learning process for me, as a researcher, and research participants, through exploration of discourses of DE among facilitators and the policy, institutional and organisational influences which shape them in the DE sector. Acknowledging power relations in research processes, it aims to take account of different positionings among those involved in the research, engaging participants in individual critical reflection and a group process involving workshops and discussion. Four aspects of the research design are discussed here: research ethics; research validity and positionality; insider research and research participants; and tools for primary research.

### **2.1. Research Ethics**

With regard to critical post-structuralist research, questions about ethics, politics, practices and relationships are intimately linked. Considerations of these issues and their effects on research are central to critical pedagogy, and, as outlined above, feminist research has many important insights to bring to bear on ethical questions (Doucet and Mauthner, 2006). Ackerly and True (2010: 22/23) explain that a "feminist ethic is a commitment to inquiry about how we inquire". Among the issues addressed by Ackerly and True are attentiveness to epistemology, subjectivity, boundaries, e.g., between disciplines, the researcher and the researched, and attentiveness to relationships and relationships of power. The latter involves considering the relationships between the researcher and

research participants as well as issues of identity and the “situatedness of the researcher” and “a self-reflexive commitment to revisiting epistemological choices, boundaries, and relationships throughout the research process” (2010: 37).

While it is important to locate research ethics in the politics and epistemological approach to the research, at a very practical level ethical dilemmas arise and decisions are taken which affect the quality of the research in terms of its validity and in relation to participants’ (and the researcher’s) experiences of it. In the light of the epistemological and methodological considerations advanced here, in undertaking this research, I was conscious of the many ethical issues which needed to be addressed throughout all phases of the research process. There are different types of literature on research ethics including codes of good practice, e.g., the Maynooth University Policy on Research Ethics (2015) or the Ethical Guidelines from the Sociological Association of Ireland (SAI) (n.d.) as well as commentaries on ethics in the literature on qualitative research. This literature is useful in outlining some of the basic principles and practices related to respectful research which need to be considered. The ethical guidelines from the SAI, for example, highlight professional competence, integrity, respect for human rights, diversity and equality, and social responsibility (SAI, n.d.). Bearing these in mind and in addition to the importance of positionality and self-reflexivity in relation to the research (discussed below), an important ethical principle guiding this research is ‘do no harm’.

The principle of ‘do no harm’, reflective of the Hippocratic oath, is a very basic notion for attempting to respect research participants and their concerns, knowledge and contributions to the research. It also refers to the importance of the effects of undertaking the research on the broader community or sector, whether intellectual or, in this case, educational, activist and development. When applied to the role and position of research participants in the research, this principle relates to issues surrounding consent and the importance of ‘informed consent’, as well as confidentiality and anonymity. The Maynooth University Ethics Policy Document provides specific guidelines on undertaking social research which are of importance here (MU, 2015). Principles prioritised are: respect for human dignity, minimising risk, the right of confidentiality, informed consent and ethics in research dissemination. As part of the process of conducting research through Maynooth University, I applied for, and was granted, ethical approval in February 2016. As outlined in the application form, some research practices were adopted in order to turn the principle of ‘do no harm’ into practical respect for research participants.

With regard to respecting confidentiality, records and personally identifiable information were stored carefully and separately. In addition, as outlined in Appendix One (Information and Consent Form for DE Facilitators), participants were informed of the limits to confidentiality as outlined in Section 3.3. of the Maynooth University Ethics policy. As many of the participants were involved in research workshops with others, it was not possible to ensure full anonymity in terms of their involvement in



this research project. Despite that, every effort has been made to ensure that participants are not recognisable in published reports, i.e., names of participants have been changed to pseudonyms.

Participants were invited to sign a consent form at different stages of the research. This informed them about the research project and publication plans, and offered them an opportunity to cease participation in the research or to complain to the Maynooth University Ethics Committee in the event of their dissatisfaction with any aspect of the research process. In addition, transcripts of interviews and notes of workshops were shared with participants, and any suggestions, comments or changes adopted. Consent was also sought in relation to digital audio recording of interviews and my taking hand written notes in interviews. A similar process was undertaken with regard to recording and written notes of workshops. As stipulated in the Maynooth University guidelines, recordings of interviews are kept in a secure location and will be destroyed within 10 years of completion of the research.

Another aspect of trying to respect participants and to ensure that the research would ‘do no harm’ involved trying to minimise risks on the part of participants. An important concern in this regard relates to participants’ positions within the DE sector and their freedom to express their views in interviews and workshops. In terms of the latter, this was particularly relevant in this research. As a result, in the workshops every effort was made to support respectful debate and discussion. At the planning stage, I thought that one way of doing this would be to try to ensure that workshops only involved facilitators and not those involved in decision making around DE funding in Ireland. This was one of the reasons why I did not include Irish Aid personnel in the facilitator category but included them in the key informant category of research participant instead. I did this because I wanted facilitators to feel more free to discuss issues openly in any workshop context and I was afraid that if Irish Aid officials were present they might not feel free to do that. While I was careful to ensure that Irish Aid officials were not part of the facilitators interviewed, I did not succeed in doing that with regard to other DE funders in Ireland. In the end, some NGDO funders participated in the research as facilitators and also participated in workshops. Despite weaknesses on my part in this regard, the workshops seemed to work very well and to offer spaces where facilitators seemed free to speak in an open and respectful way while disagreement was acknowledged and verbalised (see discussion of workshops below).

In this section I have highlighted some key concerns with regard to research ethics in the context of the critical post-structuralist epistemology advanced here. Below, other ethical issues and decisions emerge with regard to the discussion of validity and positionality as well as ‘insider research’ and choosing research participants.

## 2.2. Considerations of Research Validity and Positionality

When many people think of what makes research valid, they think in terms of numbers, proof and generalisability. Influenced by critical post-structuralist epistemology which challenges these tendencies, the focus here is on validity rather than verification, people rather than numbers, and reflection rather than proof or generalisability. I regard validity as being established through rigour, congruence and appropriateness in terms of the research focus and the methods used for carrying out the research, through self-reflexivity on my part, and through transparency regarding research processes and decisions taken. Given my epistemological position, I regard this thesis as representing one possible, though valid, account of the research undertaken, albeit one which is partial and open to interpretation. Self-reflexivity here is understood to involve

“self-conscious criticism – self-conscious in the sense that researchers try to become aware of the ideological imperatives and epistemological presuppositions that inform their research as well as their own subjective, intersubjective, and normative reference claims. Thus, critical researchers enter into an investigation with their assumptions on the table, so that no one is confused concerning the epistemological and political baggage they bring with them to the research site” (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2005: 305 – 306).

In this context, self-reflexivity has been very important throughout the research. I focus here on positionality rather than ‘bias’ because of my post-positivist epistemological belief that who I am matters in many ways to this research and affects decisions made, processes undertaken and relationships established through the research in ways that are not even imaginable to me. In short, I was aware that because I was known and active in the DE sector in Ireland, I would have easy access to some people that others might not have. On the other hand, I was sensitive to the additional burden of confidentiality that this places on me and the importance of maintaining the strictest confidence for research participants. I was also aware of the fact that within a small sector any mistake or inappropriate action in relation to the research with one person could jeopardise my potential relationship with others. While I participated in activities in the sector throughout the research, I was conscious that some people viewed me more as a researcher and others more as a facilitator or a lecturer at Kimmage DSC. I tried to be sensitive to different positions I occupied at different times and their effects on the research. I address issues of positionality and self-reflexivity in the discussions of the research processes which follow.

Another aspect of validity relates to questions about breadth and depth in research design and the relative values of a focus on people’s reflection on their experiences or on generalisability. In designing this research, I thought that it would be much more interesting and potentially fruitful to hear more deeply from a small number of facilitators rather than more generally from a large number. As such, contributions to the research were not designed to statistically represent the DE sector but to give voice to the experiences, perspectives and understandings of those who participated. This was

designed to explore with facilitators their assumptions about DE and to develop a tentative mapping of discourses of DE in an Irish context rather than a definitive one. This tentativeness is regarded here as a strength as it provides various accounts of people's lived experience rather than assuming that these can be reduced, statistically, to common-denominator accounts. It also sets up mappings of discourses as tools for reflection and engagement rather than as definitive analytical accounts.

Methodologically, validity is established here through transparency about decisions made in relation to the research process rather than these decisions being set up as 'best practice'. On the other hand, I was very conscious of the importance of rigour in the process and established this through sampling a range of participants, using a variety of methodological tools and engaging in an iterative, multi-dimensional process of analysis. As with all accounts of research, whether these processes are considered valid is, in the end, up to the reader. My attempt has been to choose research methods and tools which would reflect my sense of what might work in the specific context with the group of participants involved. I based these choices on experience of the DE sector as well as of social research, including considerations of time limitations, my strengths as a researcher and what might be congruent in terms of the overall research. In light of these considerations, I adopted a mixed-methods approach which would allow for critical reflection with facilitators on discourses, understandings, assumptions and experiences of DE and on their understanding of the factors shaping DE in Ireland. I wanted research tools to give voice to research participants' interpretations and perspectives. Designed as a cyclical, staged research process (Mertens and Hesse-Biber, 2013 and Andreotti and Warwick, 2007), it started with individual interviews and questionnaires moving towards analysis with participants in workshops.

### **2.3. 'Insider Research' and Choosing Research Participants**

The main participants in this research are facilitators who self-identify as such and who are involved in the promotion of and support of DE in Ireland. Given that I designed this research process, one of my responsibilities was to invite people to participate. This involved making a choice as to how I would do that. Rather than inviting people to self-select following a wide call for participation, I decided to choose those I would like to participate. I did this partly for practical purposes – so that I would be able to handle the numbers of participants involved – and partly because I wanted to ensure that people with different types of experience participated. While choosing research participants, commonly known as 'sampling', can seem a very straightforward process, in many cases it is imbued with the politics of choice and has significance on whose voices are heard or who is given a chance to speak through research. I was acutely aware of this issue when considering who I would invite to participate in this research. In light of the non-representative nature of the research, the approach adopted here was based on non-probability, purposive sampling, with participants invited to participate

in the research based on my knowledge of the DE sector in Ireland and of the various roles people play therein.

As an ‘insider researcher’, I was particularly aware of some of the sensitivities surrounding the various roles that people play and the politics in the sector, e.g., state and civil society considerations; issues about differences between DE in formal and non-formal settings; and hierarchies within organisations, relationships between those in management and DE ‘officers’. I was somewhat concerned about how participants’ perceptions of me, my work and my position within DE might affect their participation in the research or not. I work very closely with some of those whom I invited to participate and know others only at a distance. Some were not known to me personally at all apart from their names and their positions within particular organisations. On the other hand, I was acutely aware that even though contact was made through a student email account, most of those receiving my email inviting them to participate in the research would know something about me – my name, my place of work – and perhaps have heard me speak on DE or have participated in courses facilitated by me over the years. Though I could not know whether the invitation would be welcomed or not, I felt that their recognition of me would, at the very least, provide me with likely responses. I did not think that it was either desirable or possible to avoid people I know well but rather decided to approach people based on my knowledge of them or of their position in DE in Ireland. Despite some concerns, I felt that the important thing was to start somewhere. I began by contacting the Co-ordinator of IDEA, informing him of the outline plans for the research. His supportive response gave me the confidence to continue.

Given the range of types of organisations and institutions involved, I decided to invite people from across the spectrum to participate in this research. Initially, I hoped that 12 – 15 facilitators would participate but such was the interest in the research that, in the end, 21 participated in interviews (see Table 5.1. below for an outline of research participants).

**Table 5.1. Numbers of Research Participants**

<b>Dev Ed Facilitators Contacted</b>	<b>Dev Ed Facilitators who Completed Survey Questionnaires</b>	<b>Dev Ed Facilitators who participated in Semi-Structured Interviews</b>	<b>Key Informants Contacted</b>	<b>Key Informant Semi-Structured Interviews</b>
Formal – Initial Teacher Education (ITE) (4)	4	4 (all women)	Co-ordinators , ex-co-ordinators or staff of development, DE or activist networks (9)	7 (4 women and 3 men)
Formal – not ITE (7)	6	6 (4 women, 2 men)	Irish Aid and other policy makers (4)	2 (2 women)
Dev NGO (3)	3	3 (3 men)	Academics planned (2)	0
Adult, Community and Youth Ed (4)	2	2 (1 man, 1 woman)		
Dev Ed Organisation (6)	6 [including 1 KI and 1 facilitator not involved in interviews]	6 (2 women, 4 men) [2 of whom did not complete questionnaires]		
<b>Total Contacted: 24</b>	<b>Total Questionnaires: 21</b>	<b>Total Interviews: 21</b>	<b>Total Contacted or Planned: 15</b>	<b>Total Participated: 9</b>

In keeping with the critical post-structuralist epistemology outlined here, the approach to choosing participants was designed to enable a process of exploration with those participating and to support a detailed, qualitative exploration of their experiences, understandings, assumptions and perspectives rather than a statistically representative one. Criteria for selection included that they were involved in promoting DE in their work context in formal and non-formal education and in civil society, and that they act as catalysts for DE, e.g., through training others, in initial teacher education, in programme design and development and in policy development work. Many of the 21 facilitators who participated in the research are well-known and influential in DE in Ireland as they occupy central positions in a variety of institutions and organisations. A few people expressed interest in participating but were unable to do so due to work commitments, and one other completed a questionnaire but did not participate in an interview. Though I wished to involve participants working in different contexts, and knew that they did not actually ‘represent’ the sectors involved, I still tried to fill ‘gaps’ in sectoral ‘representation’ to ensure as much depth and breadth of experience was represented in the research as possible. In the end, due to time restrictions, I was unable to address some of these issues and there are some imbalances, e.g., no one who works full-time in the youth sector participated in an interview. In addition, the purposive nature of the sampling and the order in which people were invited to participate meant that there were more participants from formal education than from community, adult and youth education sectors. In terms of selection criteria, I did not invite participation based on age or gender though I tried to ensure that there was a range of levels of experience reflected among participants. Given my own age, those I knew best were over 40 and many of these who have been involved in the sector for a long time are men. As the process of selection went on, I made a specific effort to invite women under 40 to participate. The age, gender and experience profile of participants

is outlined in Table 5.2. below. This profile information is taken from questionnaires and therefore includes information given by 19 of those interviewed. The information of the other 2 people who participated in questionnaires is also included.

**Table 5.2. Profile of DE Facilitators Who Participated in Interviews and Who Completed Questionnaires**

Category	Formal ITE (4)	Formal not ITE (6)	NGDO(3)	Adult and Com. Ed (2)	DE Organisation [4 interviewed]	Others – (2) 1 youth and 1 network	Totals [21]
<b>Age</b>							
31 - 40	(3)	(1)	(1)	(0)	(1)	(0)	(6)
41 - 50	(1)	(3)	(0)	(0)	(1)	(2)	(7)
51 - 60	(0)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(0)	(4)
60+	(0)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(0)	(4)
<b>Gender</b>							
Female	(4)	(4)	(0)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(11)
Male	(0)	(2)	(3)	(1)	(3)	(1)	(10)
<b>Years Working in DE</b>							
6 - 10	(1)	(0)	(1)	(0)	(1)	(1)	(4)
11 - 15	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)	(1)	(0)	(7)
16 - 20	(0)	(2)	(0)	(1)	(0)	(1)	(4)
20+	(0)	(2)	(1)	(1)	(2)	(0)	(6)
<b>Highest level of Formal Ed Qualification</b>							
Undergraduate	(0)	(1)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(1)
Postgraduate	(4)	(5)	(3)	(2)	(4)	(2)	(20)
<b>Terms Used Most Often</b>							
DE	(4)	(4)	(2)	(1)	(3)	(2)	(16)
CE	(0)	(0)	(1)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(1)
GCE	(0)	(1)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(1)
Other	(0)	Depends (1)	(0)	Community Ed (1)	(0)	(1) Depends	(3)

[Source: Information from Questions 3-6 Survey Monkey Questionnaires]

As evident from Table 5.1. above, in addition to the facilitators, nine others who have experience of engagement with DE in the Irish context participated in interviews. Though not strictly speaking facilitators themselves in the sense that this term is applied in this research, many of them have either been facilitators in the past or have worked within the DE context for state and civil society organisations or networks. I restricted my use of the term ‘facilitator’ to those working in education institutions or in civil society organisations. This is not to suggest that there are no facilitators in Irish

Aid but I wished to involve them as ‘key informants’ given their specific role as funder. In this research I am calling them ‘key informants’ not because I see them merely as informants or because they are any more ‘key’ than other participants but because there is no other short-hand term which better collectively describes them and their role in the research. They include Irish Aid officials and people who are or were involved in civil society networks. Though I initially also hoped to involve academics in this group of research participants, in the end, time restrictions prohibited formal interviews with any of them.

I used a purposeful sampling and snowball sampling approach to invite participation by key informants. As such, they were chosen because of their positions of influence or decision-making roles in relation to DE in Ireland and based on my knowledge of them or recommendations from others. With facilitators, I was conscious of the limitations of purposive sampling in terms of limiting participation to those I know or who are like me. I therefore made efforts to ensure some breadth of types of identity and experience in this group in relation to age, gender and ethnicity, though again, any choices in this regard does not suggest that they ‘represent’ facilitators in the DE sector in Ireland. Their role in the research has been to contribute their analysis of DE and their understanding of the factors shaping DE within the Irish context. Unfortunately, as evident from Table 5.1. above, in the end only two Irish Aid officials were made available by Irish Aid to participate in the research, though I sought the participation of others. In addition, two people who played important roles in networks engaged in DE in Ireland in the past were not able to participate in the end. The profile of key informants is introduced in Table 5.3. below. As they were not asked to complete questionnaires, I do not have precise enough information about their age, years working in DE or education qualifications to include that information here.

**Table 5.3. Profile of Key Informants Involved in this Research**

Person (pseudonym)	Network (of individuals, groups and/or organisations) or Irish Aid	Female	Male	Manager or Staff
Niall	Network		Male	Manager
Hannah	Network	Female		Manager
Damien	Network		Male	Manager
Izzy	Network	Female		Staff
Freja	Network	Female		Former Staff
Kathleen	Network	Female		Former Manager
Oscar	Network		Male	Former Manager
Kate	Irish Aid	Female		Manager
Mandy	Irish Aid	Female		Staff

## **2.4. Tools for Primary Research – Questionnaires, Interviews and Workshops**

As outlined earlier, when approaching this research, I was conscious of a number of epistemological issues, some of which seemed congruent with each other and the research and others which seemed rather challenging in relation to the overall focus of the research. A key consideration when designing primary research tools was identifying appropriate ways of engaging facilitators in reflecting on their experiences and understandings of DE. I decided to do this on a one-to-one basis – to set up a context where I could invite participants to reflect on key questions in relation to the topic – as well as collectively. I assessed that collective reflection alone might be challenging considering people's busy work schedules, with time for workshops or focus group discussions very limited. Furthermore, I felt that individual interviews would allow me to explore with each person their particular DE work contexts and any relevance this might have for their understandings of DE. In light of this, I focused mainly on individual processes of engagement through questionnaires and interviews, followed by additional collective engagement, through workshops, for those who wished to participate. In that context, workshops were designed to facilitate collective learning and engagement by participants in analysis of emerging findings.

As suggested here, a key consideration for me was choice about levels and depths of participation for facilitators contacted. I knew that I would be asking participants for a lot of time and I did not want the research to represent too much of an additional burden. With this in mind, I developed an initial questionnaire as well as a semi-structured interview topic guide and invited facilitators to participate in either or both. A Survey Monkey questionnaire format was chosen as all participants would have easy access to the Internet and this would allow them the flexibility to complete the questionnaire in their own time. The initial questionnaire was judged by participants in the pilot phase of the research to be far too long so it was shortened to reduce the time demands on participants (see Appendix Two for a copy of the questionnaire). The questionnaires adopted a range of question formats allowing for ease of completion and analysis but also leaving space for comment and reflection. In terms of interviews, a semi-structured interview format was chosen given that it balances focus and some consistency in terms of areas addressed with an open and flexible format (see Appendix Three for the semi-structured interview topic guide).

In terms of topics or themes addressed in questionnaires and interviews, overall, I wanted to explore the various understandings of DE among facilitators. I identified specific dimensions of the topic in the analytical framework (see Chapter Four). In the light of this, I developed specific questions for questionnaires and interviews. In addition to exploring aspects of DE discourses, I also developed questions based on the discussion, in Chapter Four, of the policy, institutional, relational and organisational and funding context shaping DE (see Appendix Two for a copy of the Survey Monkey questionnaire and Appendix Three for a copy of the Interview Topic Guide). This could have been



done many ways but I chose to do questionnaires and semi-structured interviews which focused on the following themes: 1. understanding of terminology used to describe DE and similar educations, 2. the characteristics associated with DE (knowledge and understanding, skills, processes, the aims, values and politics associated with it, and its role), 3. how interviewees see it being shaped, e.g., by the policy, funding and organisational context in Ireland, and 4. their thoughts on its future. The questionnaires were designed to get a brief insight into who the facilitators were and their use of language in relation to different aspects of DE whereas the interviews would go deeper into the four areas above. Interviews with key informants were focused more specifically on areas of relevance to their work contexts but bearing in mind the four areas identified above. Appendix Four shows the various topics explored with key informants.

As discussed above, drawing on critical pedagogy, participatory research and what many regard as DE principles of participatory learning and critical reflection, I wanted the research to engage with research participants rather than to be research on them. This is very difficult to do in any meaningful way given the constraints on the research in terms of time and resources and given its individualised conception by me. On the other hand, I felt that the research could go some way towards a participatory approach by involving DE practitioners in a workshop to discuss and reflect on initial findings and to include their feedback on these findings as part of the analysis. When I suggested this to participants they were very open to the idea and two separate workshops were organised in February 2017 (see Appendix Five – Workshop outline and Appendix Six – Notes from Workshops). I used the notion of a workshop rather than a focus-group discussion to frame these engagements because I wanted them to involve participatory tools of discussion and reflection. Workshops are increasingly common in qualitative research as they allow people the opportunity to reflect with others on their experience and, in this case, on their assumptions about DE and findings from interviews. The intention here was that the workshops would help to contribute to the research acting as a critical learning experience for participants.

### **3. Research Processes – Strengths and Limitations**

The research conducted involved a number of stages, from design, preparation and ethical approval to analysis and write-up. In this section, I briefly explore these processes in a way which attempts to highlight some of the strengths and limitations involved.

#### **3.1. Stage 1 – Research Planning**

This research was developed over a three-year period throughout the course of the DHAE programme

at Maynooth University, with initial exploration of epistemological and ontological positioning developed in 2014 and research ethics in 2015. Throughout the first stage of the research process, I grappled with focusing the research topic and with relevant literature. I started to tentatively set out conceptual frameworks from my reading and developed the research tools.

Having broadly planned the research tools to be used, I decided to pilot the questionnaire and interview. I felt that undertaking a pilot with people who would be invited to participate in the research anyway, and people I knew very well, would give me insight, from people I trusted, into what they thought worked well or didn't. The feedback on the questionnaire was that it was too long so I shortened it to reflect key topics and questions.

Following the pilot, I also reviewed communication letters and information which I was sending to participants, deciding that a general, open-style email would be appropriate – less formal in an Irish context and with people who know me – than a more formal letter (see Appendix One for background information and consent forms).

### **3.2. Stage 2 – Primary Research**

I began the primary research phase with facilitators in June 2016 when I had received ethical approval and when the research preparation and pilot phases were completed. The big consideration at this stage was who to invite to participate in the research and how to do this. I had had a meeting with the chief executive of IDEA the previous year but, even though he was open to helping me to contact potential participants, I decided not to contact people via IDEA in order for the research to be independent.

Initially, I contacted (via email) those I've been aware of as working in a range of different sub-sectors within the overall DE sector for many years, e.g., DE in community education, in local centres, within big NGOs and smaller DE organisations, in initial teacher education and with teachers. The initial invitation to engage in research involved 13 people and this was followed by invitations to 11 more. Invitations included an initial email followed by a more detailed email with an attachment of formal information and a consent form and a request for a meeting time, either face to face or by Skype. In the end, only one interview was conducted via Skype with all the rest either taking place in offices, cafés or people's homes. Only three of those contacted did not participate in an interview.

As outlined earlier, I had some concerns about the sample to ensure that it was fairly 'balanced' and that it was not overly representative of any one sector over another, or of those I knew well as opposed to others I did not. I reflected on these issues a lot throughout this stage of the process and tried on a number of occasions, to contact people who hoped to be involved but who had not yet participated. In

January 2017, having spent eight months either contacting or meeting facilitators and key informants, I decided that I would have to say ‘enough’ and work with what I had.

Communicating with participants, arranging and undertaking interviews as well as recording and transcribing them took many months during the Summer of 2016. All of this work was done on an interview by interview basis with careful consideration of the need to ask participants to complete the questionnaire as well as to spend at least an hour with me discussing their understandings of, and experiences of, DE in Ireland. Overwhelmingly, the response from participants was positive and they described how valuable they found participating in the interview and how they looked forward to the proposed workshop. Even though they had each been sent information about the process by email and had already signed a consent form, I started each interview by reiterating my thanks for their participation. I gave them a brief explanation of the purpose of the research and the role of the interview in it as well as the process we would be undertaking. I again requested use of a digital recorder and to take written notes, reassured participants of the confidentiality and consent processes in place, i.e., that they would be sent a transcript of the interview that they could change and that they could remove it or pull out of the research at any time. I explained that information related to them would be stored safely and that, to the best of my ability, nothing would be cited in the thesis which could in any way identify them. Following this explanation, they signed the consent form, if they hadn’t already done so, and the interview proceeded.

I found the interviews to be extremely stimulating and rewarding, with many people exhibiting a very critically reflective approach to their work and to DE overall. Given that I knew some people very well and others not so well, I tried to keep the process relatively formal. This allowed me to ask questions in a way which was probing, even with those I know well, and I sought this tone rather than one which might be considered interrogatory. One thing that I found interesting and challenging in relation to my position in DE and its effect on the interviews was that some people assumed I knew things that I didn’t know. There was a tendency for people to assume that just because they had a particular experience or insight into something in relation to DE, that I had it too. This meant that I had to be extra vigilant to probe topics that emerged that I didn’t fully understand and to remind participants that while I had some insights into DE in Ireland from my own experience, they had too, and these were not necessarily the same.

I found that the strategy of writing a research journal was very helpful for my reflection on interviews and the research process in general as I went along. Asking myself what went well, what didn’t, what I understood better or not after most of the interviews allowed me to start to reflect critically on the processes involved and the themes emerging. Furthermore, it allowed me to be flexible with the interview process as I went along, sometimes developing new themes or questions to ask about and sometimes identifying what might be called ‘seminal questions’, those questions I wanted to ask of

everyone.

Sometimes I felt uncomfortable about my own position in interviews and I had to grapple with my own assumptions about the role of the researcher in the research in this context. Where I didn't know people well, I sometimes found myself saying something about myself and my experience of DE. I think this was to reassure them of my legitimacy. In early interviews, a few participants that I knew made reference to the fact that, given my experience in the area, they would like to ask me what I thought or how I would answer the questions. In these interviews I found myself very reluctant to say what I thought as I didn't want to influence what the interviewee would say. On a couple of occasions, I made some comments when the interview was over. In effect, I was, despite myself, still acting out of a position of not wanting 'to contaminate' the research process with my interference or intervention. When I started to reflect on this, I began to question my own epistemological commitments and the contradictions between what I thought and how I was behaving. As a result, I began to consider how much richer it might be if I were to respond, if asked, or if it appeared to naturally arise that I might have a comment to make. I tried this on a few occasions and I found that when I made a brief (the time available was short) comment on my own experience or on what had been said, interviewees responded very positively. It was as if we were more in a conversation and a mutually learning environment than a more formal (albeit semi-structured) interview setting might allow. In hindsight, I think that a series of conversations rather than interviews might have been more valuable for the research. One of the research participants with whom I have had many conversations about this and related issues throughout the course of the research suggests that "we make the road by talking". Identifying the importance of 're-framing' situations 'when we're stuck', he suggests the value of seeing things with new eyes and being supported to do so through conversation. This has been a significant learning for me in terms of undertaking future research in the area.

When it came to note taking, I took written notes as well as using a digital recorder throughout the interview process. I then had to decide on a method of transcription. I tried 'Dragon software' in place of transcription but found it cumbersome. As a result, I decided to transcribe the interviews myself, a time-consuming but useful process. I used a very straightforward transcription style where I would: transcribe all the interview including questions; immediately remove the name of the person from the transcript; allocate them a pseudonym; remove unnecessary repetition from the transcript, such as am, um, etc. I also removed references to a person's organisation – calling it X [organisation] but I left in other identifying comments on the premise that they would be removed later. Having transcribed and checked each interview transcript I contacted participants again and asked them to review it, and to change or remove any aspects of it they wished. It was important to me that they felt free to include or not what they had said. All interviewees returned to me with regard to the transcripts of their interviews with a few suggesting changes, omissions or amendments.

The same processes of interview communication, organisation, recording, transcription and seeking feedback on transcripts were applied with the nine key informant interviews in September and October 2016.

### **3.3. Stage 3 – Analysis of Interviews and Questionnaires**

Having conducted and transcribed most of the interviews planned with facilitators in August 2016, I felt ready to undertake the initial analysis of the data. This involved deciding on an approach to analysis. I wanted to start by using an inductive coding system, identifying codes in the interview transcripts. I had planned to use MAXQDA as a software package that had been introduced to me through the Doctorate in Higher and Adult Education Programme (DHAE) and which was readily available. It seemed a convenient way to record codes and to be able to draw on text which is identified by the research in relation to each of the codes developed. I began to trial the MAXQDA package with two interviews to start and began developing a code tree, which I adapted for other interviews.

Having developed a code tree (see Appendix Seven), I reviewed it in light of the conceptual framework identified in the initial phases of the literature review process. On the basis of this process, I began to identify four main strands of information which were expected, based on the questions asked in interviews. Of these, two became significant for the research: discourses of DE among facilitators; and policy, organisational and funding influences on how discourses are shaped. Unfortunately, due to limitations of space, I have not been able to address either the issue of terminology or the future of DE in this thesis.

Coming to terms with coding proved challenging. I found myself coding the same text under different codes and emerging with hundreds of pages of text from all the interviews coded. I then had to go through each code and the segments associated with it to identify key themes and issues emerging. I found that while doing this was very useful, I also had to identify more specific trends in the use of phrases or understandings of a particular concept, e.g., the types of values identified as important in DE. For this, I returned on an on-going basis to the conceptual mapping developed out of the literature reviewed. I also found that there were codes emerging that were somewhat different or additional to points highlighted in the first review of literature. This helped me to refine the conceptual framework but also to develop it on the basis of experiences from facilitators (see the discussion of this issue in Chapter Eight).

Having undertaken initial analysis of interviews, I wrote a draft chapter of findings on the first section of the data collection but I did so in quite a general way without providing any numerical indications

of the frequency of concepts mentioned or themes discussed. On the advice of my supervisor, I changed what was initially quite a general approach to identifying codes to one which focused more on the frequency of citation. This led me to doing a further detailed lexical search of key themes and concepts in each of the transcripts (see Appendix Seven for the code tree and Appendix Eight for the framework developed from coding of individual transcripts). I found the analysis to be complex and time-consuming but also that following rigorous, careful processes of analysis provided a clear insight into different perspectives on key research themes. This also meant that the style of writing changed as it focused more on tables and statistics rather than on quotes from transcripts alone. Reflecting on this process, I was surprised that I would find the process so rewarding. I felt that returning to the interview transcripts again and again allowed key themes and issues to emerge in a way which I hadn't expected. As outlined earlier, I was always conscious that any 'reading' of interviews was just one reading, but repeated, careful consideration of transcripts gave me a sense of clarity and validity over mine and the confidence to present it to those whose words they were, the facilitators.

Having re-drafted initial findings, I felt ready to organise workshops with facilitators in order to explore the findings with them. As outlined earlier, key considerations in organising the workshops were time constraints on the part of participants but also the desire to engage meaningfully with participants in a participatory process of critical reflection and analysis. To this end, I decided that rather than trying to explore all aspects of the findings in workshops, I would choose key issues and concentrate the workshop deliberations on these. Workshops were therefore three hours long and focused on draft findings with regard to two aspects of the research: facilitator understandings of the 'characteristics of DE' and a draft mapping of DE discourses. Two of the same workshops were organised in February 2017 and nine of the facilitators who had participated in interviews participated (see Appendix Six for notes compiled from workshops). I found the workshops to be extremely insightful and encouraging, insightful in that participants offered deep reflections on what was presented to them, including what surprised them, what they found they agreed with and what they would like to emphasise more. They also explored alternative mappings for what I was presenting but confirmed the usefulness of the mapping of DE discourses, albeit with some criticisms and caveats. All were helpful in coming to the analysis presented in Chapter Eight, where feedback arising from workshops is also introduced. As with other stages of the process, I sent workshop notes to participants and there were a few follow-up phonecalls and emails about the process.

Did the workshops represent a critical learning process and my desire for participatory research? I would say to some very small extent and definitely not as many as I would have liked. The process was limited from the outset as, contrary to much of my epistemological sensibilities, I choose to adopt an individualistic approach to the design of the research. I felt pressurised by the time available to me to organise the research so I 'went ahead' and organised it myself. On the other hand, I didn't want it to represent meaningless participation like a 'tick-box' participatory process. I was concerned that this

had been the case with the short workshop process I organised and facilitated until I received emails from participants thanking me for the process and expressing the need for more research like it. I believe that the research process could have been more congruent with my epistemological position if I had spent more time considering alternative approaches earlier on. Though as I write it is too late to change this, it is not too late to ensure follow-up workshops which critically review the research findings with participants and others.

### **3.4. Stage 4 - Writing**

I am including writing as a separate stage of this research process even though it is not separate and I have been writing simultaneously with, and in the light of, the processes introduced above. Throughout, I have found writing, reading, interviews, workshops and re-writing an iterative process involving stages of clarification, confusion, illumination and pragmatic decision making. A significant challenge for me in terms of writing has been brevity. I talk in a voluminous way and find my writing mirrors this expansive, explanatory style. But here I merely, and briefly (I hope) apologise for the length of this thesis.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter I have set out my epistemological perspectives and the associated considerations I brought to bear on the design and processes involved in this research. In highlighting my approach to discourse analysis drawn from a critical post-structuralist epistemology, the chapter places emphasis on facilitators' experiences and understandings of DE as reflected in interviews. While ethical issues and limitations are highlighted, this is done with reference to the approach to research adopted here. As outlined in this chapter, two central areas of enquiry became particularly significant in analysis of interviews – different discourses of DE and factors shaping them. I turn my attention to findings in relation to each of these, in turn, in the next two chapters.

## **Chapter Six: Discourses of DE in Ireland**

### **Introduction**

For many researchers, some of the most challenging, enriching and interesting aspects of research are interviews. For this research, I organised and carried out 30 interviews with 21 DE facilitators and nine others who are, or have been, involved in DE in Ireland through networks and in Irish Aid. Though generally guided by a semi-structured interview topic guide, because of the flexibility required, the different conversations initiated and people's different experiences and perspectives, the interviews went in different directions. The talk which emerged in these interviews has become especially significant in this research as it has become the 'data' which I organised, illustrated and synthesised in order to present my version of how facilitators talk about DE in interviews. Though limited in that it is my construction of facilitators' talk, I attempted to address this limitation through workshops, which are discussed in Chapter Eight.

Thus, in this chapter, I explore how facilitators and key informants (KIs) talk about DE. Drawing from interview transcripts as well as questionnaires, in places, I reflect on discourses of DE with regard to the dimensions of DE discussed in Chapter Four – knowledge and understanding, skills, learning processes and action as well as the aims, values and politics of DE. Exploring these various dimensions and aspects of DE with reference to the analytical framework presented at the end of Chapter Four, it becomes clear that facilitators draw on at least five different discourses of DE in their talk – technical, liberal, North-South, critical and post-critical discourses. On the other hand, there is a tendency among those involved in this research to draw on a critical discourse of DE and to talk in aspirational terms. This is particularly evident when it comes to talk about what DE can or should achieve and the values which underpin it. This talk of criticality sits in tension with, in many cases, an individualised apoliticism associated with a liberal discourse of DE, especially in relation to the action and politics associated with DE, and among those working in formal contexts. Thus, though many of the same terms are used by all or most facilitators there are different meanings attached to them. While there are different emphases in relation to knowledge and understanding, skills and learning processes between different cohorts of facilitator, differences are slight and difficult to generalise.

Discussions in Section Two show that when it comes to politics and DE, many facilitators draw on a liberal discourse. This appears to be especially the case among those working in the formal sector. There are a mix of discursive assumptions about DE aims, where facilitators focus on DE as a means of realising social change and justice as well as improved education and development cooperation. There are few differences between facilitators working in different sectors, though those in community education and DE organisations are more likely to draw on critical and post-critical discourses in this



regard than those working in formal education or NGOs. Values are constructed overwhelmingly in relation to a critical discourse, e.g., facilitators talk of DE being based on the values of justice, equality, democracy, sustainability and solidarity.

Findings are presented in this chapter with reference to themes drawn from responses to questions asked in interviews (see Appendix Three) and in relation to the DE contexts facilitators work in. The 21 facilitator interviewees have been categorised as working primarily in the following organisations or educational contexts: four formal – initial teacher education (ITE); six formal (non-ITE); three non-governmental development organisation (NGDO); two community education sector; six DE organization, and the key informants as working in or having worked in two types of organisation: seven in networks and two in Irish Aid (see Chapter Five for profiles of participants). Questionnaire data represents responses from 21 facilitators, one of whom works in the youth sector but was unable to participate in an interview.

Each sub-section begins with a summary table outlining key findings from facilitator interviews with regard to the dimension being discussed and with reference to different discourses of DE. These tables also include numbers of facilitators who use a particular phrase, concept or assumption and whose talk predominantly reflects a particular discourse with reference to this dimension or aspect of DE. This is followed, in each case, by detailed discussion of various themes addressed in interviews and questionnaires, and proceeds to findings from KI interviews, where relevant. The discussion in each sub-section is designed to provide insight into participant perspectives and understandings as well as providing the evidence base for the key findings introduced at the start of each section. I did not, in all cases, ask the same questions of all interviewees and therefore, though some may not have made reference to some points their lack of reference cannot be assumed to mean that they do not hold these particular views or perspectives. Thus, any tendencies or generalisations are tentative, at best, given the overlap in terms of the experiences and backgrounds of those involved, and the open style of interviewing applied. Tables are presented, in places, of lexical searches carried out and quotations from interviews are used to illustrate patterns or divergences. Thus, the presentation of findings is designed to reflect the mixed-methods bricolage approach to the research adopted and to be congruent with the critical post-structuralist epistemology discussed, in Chapter Five, which gives voice to facilitators' perspectives and experiences of DE.

The various characteristics or dimensions of DE are discussed below. I discuss talk, assumptions, concepts and phrases which are mentioned in interviews and questionnaires to expand and develop the discourses of DE introduced in Chapter Four. This helps to make sense of how DE is talked about. It also clarifies how the conceptual points identified in the literature are reflected, or not, in discursive practice. This is designed to provide the basis for analysis, in Chapter Eight, of the various discourses of DE drawn upon by facilitators in this research.

## 1. Dimensions of DE Discourses

### 1.1. Knowledge and Understanding

#### 1.1.1. Key Findings on Knowledge and Understanding

Among the facilitators interviewed for this research, knowledge and understanding emerges as an important aspect of DE, with all apart from one interviewee making specific reference to the importance of either knowledge or understanding. Table 6.1. shows the kinds of talk, concepts and assumptions which arose in interviews with reference to knowledge and understanding. These are categorised under a version of the root narratives identified in Table 4.1., which I developed based on the findings in this research – that framework for understanding DE discourses is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Eight. Numbers reflect the numbers of those interviewed who make specific reference to each point. This is the same for all similar tables outlining discourses of DE with reference to different dimensions or aspects of DE in this chapter.

**Table 6.1. Discourses of DE ‘Knowledge and Understanding’ as reflected in DE Facilitators’ Talk**

Summary of Findings	Technical DE Discourse	Liberal DE Discourse	North-South DE Discourse	Critical DE Discourse	Post-critical DE Discourse
<b>Knowledge, understanding: Process from knowledge acquisition to awareness raising, understanding and action</b>	Acquiring knowledge, content – policy and issue driven (7) Emphasis on content or ‘dev’ issues (4)	Awareness raising of development issues for the individual (9)	Awareness and understanding of specific North/South or global development issues and content – understanding for action (3)	Understanding of global issues, structural causes of inequality, poverty, etc at L-G levels Knowledge and understanding as process (18)	Critical deconstruction of taken-for-granted assumptions, narratives and truths; challenging stereotypes; Multiple knowledges valued; Understanding complexity (10)

From the interviews, talk of ‘knowledge and understanding’ reflects a wide range of understandings and assumptions, though all facilitators identify DE as involving a process that features some or all of the following aspects: knowledge acquisition through awareness raising, understanding and on to action, with six making specific reference to DE as a journey. Critical and post-critical discourses of DE are largely drawn upon in relation to knowledge and understanding with few seeing knowledge predominantly as either technical or individual. For three facilitators the focus is on developing awareness and understanding in Ireland for engagement in justice issues in the global South, thus reflecting a North-South discourse, but the most common focus is on understanding local-global

connections, critical engagement in DE as a learning process and deconstructing taken-for-granted understandings or valuing diversity. There are no significant differences in terms of the discourses drawn upon by facilitators in different categories in relation to knowledge and understanding. Among facilitators, the emphasis appears to be on DE as a process of learning rather than on seeing it as about knowledge acquisition, awareness raising or understanding as stand-alone processes. These issues are discussed in detail below.

### **1.1.2. Knowledge – Processes Involved**

All facilitators see DE as a process and most specify that knowledge and understanding are important aspects of this process. DE ‘knowledge’, as understood by 16 of those interviewed, is contingent on the context within which they work and only one interviewee expresses any sense that there is an essence or uniqueness to the knowledge. Deirdre highlights that *“it is very much that active learning process ... You know it’s about trying to help people to understand some of those root causes of global poverty, injustice. It’s about a sense of solidarity”*. For Brian, *“there’s the three pillars, there’s the learning, there’s the reflection and there’s the action. And they kind of interplay with each other, but certainly the focus is very much on development issues and challenges. It’s kind of a praxis between kind of reflection and action, and so for us then, there’s an experiential part”*. Tom emphasises critical thinking, action and local-global connections: *“it’s enhancing understanding, knowledge about global issues, about the factors that underpin poverty and injustice and inequality locally and internationally. It’s about providing the learner with the skills, values, knowledge and attitudes necessary to take action on these issues ... So, there is very much, I think, a local-global axis in DE”*.

Catherine and Robert also emphasise mobilisation and action and speak passionately about DE for activism. Catherine suggests that,

*“DE for me is a vehicle for an active response to issues of injustice. It’s a really effective way of stopping you feeling paralysed. So, this is happening in the world. What does it mean? Why is it happening and what can I do about it? And then, the response to that is ok, so DE brings you through a process of trying to understand more, trying to analyse more, trying to critique more and a process where you are encouraged to take on board other viewpoints, other ways of seeing the world, challenging your own beliefs, assumptions, behaviour and ultimately bringing you to a place where something shifts, a change happens, be that in yourself or in your community or broader”*.

Paul says that *“it’s not just knowledge gathering which is at a very basic level of what some call education, but another aspect, which is enabling. Enabling you to actually critically reflect on that knowledge and reflect on your own situation in the light of that process of reflection. So that’s at the root. For me it’s at the core of what good education should be”*. Understandings of knowledge processes, therefore, in general, range from notions of ‘acquiring knowledge’ through ‘awareness

raising' to 'understanding'.

Facilitators talk of participants understanding global issues as well as their own experience and their role as citizens in the world. Maeve speaks of, *"the ultimate goal of having a student that's well-rounded and having a good understanding of what they need to do as global citizens"*. In Anne's case, *"DE helps people understand global issues. Why situations exist. Why people live in poverty. Why children are not going to school. How they are not going to school. Am, and it also gets people to look at 'well, ok I might have little, but they have even less'. So, it encourages people to support aid and encourages them, then again, to take action"*.

Though most, 17, make some reference to knowledge acquisition and content, associated with a technical discourse, only four of these interviewees make specific reference to the importance of DE content. One of these is Catherine who says *"I, as a learner, want to have a combination. I want to be inspired. I want to be engaged in a process but I also want to get some input"*. On the other hand, Maeve argues that *"if we're only delivering knowledge and not giving people an experience I think, I don't think learning really takes place"*.

There are 31 references among nine interviewees to awareness raising. Some talk of it in terms of raising awareness of development issues or concerns. In Paul's case, awareness is discussed with reference to development issues: *"making people aware of poverty and making people aware of gender issues and making people aware of injustice"*. For Patrick, *"it's trying to achieve an awareness of the world that we live in, basically, in the widest sense. It's trying to open people's eyes to a world of injustice, open people's eyes to, you know, human rights abuses and mainly, for me, open people's eyes to how they impact on the rest of the world either knowingly or unknowingly ... so it's making people aware of that world of inequality, of injustice, of poverty, of gender imbalance and inequality, all of those issues"*.

A lexical search of interview transcripts was carried out with reference to the terms 'critical thinking', 'analysis', 'reflection', 'critical reflection' and 'reflexivity', most of which are terms associated with a critical or post-critical discourse of DE. In interviews, there are just 25 references to either 'reflection' or 'critical reflection' among 11 of the participants. This contrasts to more common usage of terms associated with critical analysis such as 'critical thinking' and 'analysis' – 43 references in total among 15 of the facilitators. Despite this, many of the types of understanding identified by facilitators in the research relate to different processes of critical thinking and reflection, and the kinds of deconstruction and reflexivity associated with a post-critical discourse. Reference is made to challenging existing understandings (what might be called criticality) – of their own experience, of stereotypes and of aid and development. According to Tom, *"its role is to challenge these mis-perceptions and the untruths and a lot of the negativity that still attaches itself to a lot of, particularly media coverage of global*

issues and the Global South but also how our young people learn about these issues in schools through text books”. Fiona also highlights understanding based on reflection on one’s own experience and role:

*“it’s working from where people are at and valuing their lived experience of the world. And it’s encouraging people to put that lived experience up for questioning, to ask, why is it like this? Why here and not somewhere else? What are the patterns? Who benefits, you know? Where’s the power? And ultimately, it’s an education for social change so that it’s not education for the sake of it. It might be, and there are often individual outcomes in terms of what people get from that process but I suppose in my mind it is aimed at things like, it’s aimed ultimately at personal and collective transformation. Making a contribution to that”.*

### **1.1.3. Understanding and Reflection**

In questionnaires, facilitators were asked to identify, from a range of terms, the one that “best describes the kinds of reflective or analytical processes involved in DE” (Q.21). In response, the term ‘praxis’ is the most frequently chosen with ‘reflection’ and ‘exploration’ following at significantly lower rates. This is interesting in light of its fairly limited use in interviews.

### **1.1.4. DE 'Issues' or 'Content'**

In facilitator talk about knowledge, content or understanding DE, issues identified range from justice and equality (21 interviewees mentioned this) to ‘global development issues’ to the global economy and power relations, power relations, participants’ roles as engaged citizens, poverty and injustice and their causes and stereotypes. Development and development cooperation is considered an important issue for nine participants with two of these specifying that DE should take a critical approach to aid, two others highlighting that DE should be a ‘critical friend’ which supports aid, and one other emphasising DE’s role in building support for aid. Other issues identified include overseas poverty, fair trade and neoliberalism. For Niamh, there are many issues but the lines are blurred between DE ‘issues’ and, for example, human rights education issues: *“So I think that a lot of development issues would be, let’s say development topics would be things around trade, aid, debt, you know poverty, hunger but I think in DE because you’re incorporating that local aspect as well to give the links to learners, you’re looking at stuff I suppose maybe in a broader way and you’re also looking at issues to do with diversity, maybe social justice and human rights”.*

For all facilitators, DE is shaped, at least in part (see section on values below) by the values of justice. Among these, for 11 facilitators the specific issues associated with DE are understood in terms of their relationship to equality and justice. For Deirdre, who previously worked for an international NGDO,

her understanding of what constitutes DE ‘knowledge’ or ‘content’ is challenged because it would appear that there is less of a focus on what she considers ‘development’ issues in her current, formal education, work context. Her sense that development issues are those related to development cooperation, underdevelopment and poverty is shared by eight other facilitators. For Patrick, *“it is, I suppose I’m coming from where I work with, with X [organisation] it is about development and underdevelopment. It’s about notions of third world and first world and all of that. So, it is about that. It’s about sort of differences, you know, across economic development and all that goes with that, you know”*. These understandings reflect a North-South discourse. Áine, on the other hand, draws on a critical and post-critical discourse. When reflecting on development issues, she identifies them as

*“well injustice, discrimination, inequality at a global level, the kind of economic, the disparities in the world in terms of poverty and wealth and how that works. And, you know, how, I suppose another issue is ... a lot of us have been brought up with the charity mode of, you know, ‘we’re very charitable people. We’re great at giving and so you know, we can’t be blamed for the poverty in the world because we’re so generous’. But actually, that is an issue in itself, the narrative of charity, so bursting that open a bit and talking that through and understanding how that works, as well, to salve our own consciences and the fact that we benefit from this inequality”*.

There is no consensus on what constitutes DE ‘knowledge’ among the facilitators who participated in this research and, in that regard, that North-South, critical and post-critical discourses are drawn upon. On the other hand, it is clear that facilitators regard knowledge and understanding as important and a core part of the learning involved in DE. There are those who focus on issues related to the global economy, with poverty highlighted, and contemporary issues feature highly, e.g., with mention of climate change, migration or refugees and homelessness. Though these issues include the economy and finance, there are very few overt references to understandings of neoliberalism.

In summary, despite the emphasis on content, information and knowledge acquisition among facilitators, there are complexities to facilitators discursive positions in this area. At the same time, it appears that much talk is reflective of a critical DE discourse as facilitators talk about DE as a process. They assume that there are levels and grades of knowledge and understanding, i.e., moving from acquiring knowledge through awareness raising and reflection to understanding and action. They talk more about understanding than about knowledge acquisition, content etc., and a lot more about critical thinking, analysis and reflection than about awareness raising. There is also evidence of post-critical discourses among some, especially when it comes to questioning one’s own experience and addressing stereotypes. This suggests that the focus among some facilitators is more on facilitating an understanding of what they see as happening and why, and among others on a critical analysis of assumptions about what’s happening. While development cooperation issues are important for some (nine), language has moved for many more towards the global (nine), global-local connections (12) or a justice and equality framing for DE (21).

## 1.2. Skills

### 1.2.1. Key Findings on Skills

Skills are regarded as an important aspect of DE by most of the facilitators involved in this research. Most talk reflects a critical discourse, with some emphasis on liberal and post-critical discourses. Drawing from facilitator interview data, DE skills identified can be understood, broadly speaking, as skills in making local-global connections, critical thinking and analytical skills, and collaboration skills. It is clear from interviews that global ‘talk’ can be reflective of a range of discourses. Findings show that there are degrees of criticality, reflected in facilitator talk, from technical know-how and analysis as an objective exercise to critical thinking and individual reflection, to critical analysis and self-reflexivity. In general, when it comes to talk of critical thinking, though facilitators use terms associated with a critical discourse, such as ‘critical analysis’ and ‘critical reflection’, they most commonly talk of ‘challenge’ (see the discussion below). Though collaborative skills are not mentioned as frequently as the other areas of skills identified, findings show the relative significance of these skills for those working in formal education settings. Their focus on skills such as democratic engagement, participatory learning and dialogue may signal a response to increasing individualism in these contexts. Table 6.2. shows the numbers of those who make specific reference to different aspects of skills, where figures are available.

**Table 6.2. Discourses of DE ‘Skills’ as reflected in DE Facilitators’ Talk**

Summary of Findings	Technical DE Discourse	Liberal DE Discourse	North-South DE Discourse	Critical DE Discourse	Post-critical DE Discourse
<b>Skills: Critical Thinking and Analytical Skills; Skills in making connections, e.g., local-global; and collaboration skills</b>	Technical know how Analysis (10)	Skills for individual engagement Reflection (10) Local-Global as entry point for understanding (7)	Critical reflection on North/South dev issues and understanding effects of life in North on South or rich on poor Local-Global to emphasise effects N-S (7)	Critical thinking (9), Critique (7) and Critical Analysis (2) leading to reflection and action for change. Making connections between structures, practices, discourses, relationships and agency at local and global levels. Local-global as issues L-G (11) Local issues important (9) Democratic engagement, participatory learning and dialogue	Critical reflection (2) and creative processes of collaboration – open-ended Praxis (1) L-G to shift problematic N-S constructions and issues L-G (2)

### 1.2.2. DE Skills Identified by DE Facilitators

Facilitators were not asked specifically about the skills associated with DE. Findings in relation to this dimension of DE emerged from questions about interviewees' understandings of DE and what's involved. It is clear, though, that different skills are important to many of those involved in this research. Among those interviewed, 14 specifically identify skills as important in relation to DE. Of those, eight are involved in formal education.

Siobhán explains that *“it’s a kind of a skills thing for me ... I would see a lot of overlap between what they [NCCA] talk about as key skills and what we talk about as the skills that you need for, you know, in terms of DE or citizenship education”*. Bríd explains that, for her, *“we probably agree with the skills, you know that critical thinking, I think, is crucial. The capacity to listen to others’ views even when you are vehemently opposed or pro an issue then to listen to others’ views, you try to find the argument in there that makes sense, that you’re open and willing to consider changing your view, that you’re informed, that you’re basing your decisions not on your gut instinct but on evidence or practice, so those skills I think are probably similar across the board”*.

#### ***Making local-global Connections***

A key area of skills highlighted by facilitators is making connections, with an emphasis on ‘local-global’ connections, identified by 15 of those interviewed. Why it is considered important is understood differently. Most frequent reference is to local-global connections because development issues are seen as having local-global dimensions. This is followed by an understanding of local issues as important in themselves. Both of these positions are understood here as reflecting a critical discourse as they are focused on interconnectivity and they challenge North-South thinking.

Talk of local-global connectivity can’t be assumed to reflect a critical discursive position and seven facilitators draw, at least partly, on a North-South discourse. Regarding ‘the local’ as an ‘entry point’ for issues or action at a global level is mentioned 19 times among seven interviewees. Robert, for example, suggests that the links between the local and the global are important and, for him, they are framed within the context of using local examples from Ireland and around the world to throw light on the experience of people in the global South:

*“because you’re mobilising the Irish public to support our work overseas and you cannot do that if there’s a disconnect ... If we’re to have any, you know, meaningful change over the long term, then we need to properly educate, not just our young people, but everybody clearly on the issues and if we’re going to explore rights and responsibilities around these different social justice issues then it must be grounded in what’s recognisable to them which is the Irish experience first of all then it’s overseas after that”*.



Patrick typifies talk about the global South evident in a similar way to two others:

*“I mean the scale like in terms of human suffering, the scale in sub-Saharan Africa is so much worse. The poverty, the sickness, the quality of life, the child mortality. All of that is so much worse at that level and it would be wrong, I think, for us to forget that and we can’t solve that simply by dealing with issues at home all the time. At some stage we do have to say, ‘this is important because it’s actually happening now’. We have to deal with it now and try and improve it now”.*

A key skill in making local-global connections, for seven of the facilitators interviewed, is understanding the effects of how people live in the global North on the global South. For Dónal,

*“the problem is the rich of the world. We all know this. This is not rocket science. So, DE is about investing in all our futures. It’s about getting people who have the most culpability about the state of the world to recognise their role, their culpability, their measure of appropriate response and recognising the kinds of obligations and duties that being a European or being Irish or white or being male or being an academic woman who’s in university places on us in the top 5 per cent of the world’s population”.*

Niamh applies two understandings of local-global connections. On the one hand she suggests that the local acts as a way in to understanding the global whereas on the other she argues that local-global connections make much more sense in the context of shifting global realities and that they offer a much more complex set of analytical skills in relation to them:

*“in an increasingly globalised world it makes sense not to look at issues in isolation, so for example, if you were looking at issues around land ownership or poverty that you’d also look at homelessness in an Irish context or looking at migration you’d also look at asylum as an issue and direct provision in Ireland or human rights issues or gender issues that you’d also look at stuff in an Irish context. ‘Cause I think that that helps challenge a sort of an ethnocentric approach that people have ... and ‘if we can just get them to a point where they’re like us, then everything will be alright’, whereas if they actually interrogate their own position or stuff that’s happening in our own context ... it will start the process where they may be able to kind of start to develop a little bit of empathy”.*

Only two facilitators indicate the need to focus on local-global interconnections because of the need to shift problematic North-South development relationships. As this would challenge existing discourses and power relationships, this position, albeit a very marginal one articulated by those interviewed, is suggestive of a ‘post-critical’ discourse.

Despite the prevalence of talk of connections between the local and the global, four interviewees are critical of the types of local-global connections made or not through DE with two in the formal sector critical of a local-only focus, one working for an international NGO who is critical of ‘localism’ and a lack of a global focus in some DE, and one facilitator critical of the superficiality of local connections. Understandings of the global are similarly complex, though for most people (15) issues of justice,

poverty and inequality are global and understood in the context of a 'global world' or globalisation, rather than simply in North-South terms. In general, references to 'the global' are prevalent in all sectors, even though such references are confined among those in the community education sector to references to globalisation, the 'global South' and global solidarity or community. Among the sectors represented in interviews, references to 'the global South' are most prevalent among those working in DE organisations by comparison to the formal sector and international NGOs. The term 'Third World', also suggestive of a 'North-South' discourse, is popular among four of those interviewed, most of whom talk about debating the use of the term in DE contexts. Depending on how this is understood, therefore, it could reflect both a North-South and/or a post-critical discursive formation.

In general, though there are different understandings of local-global connections, the lines seem to be drawn between those who regard the global as referring to 'the global South' with an emphasis on the local as an 'entry point' for this 'wider' focus, and those who are more focused on 'the global', 'global-local connections' or the 'globalness' of local issues in Ireland in the context of globalisation. As evident here, while some understandings of local-global connections challenge constructions of North-South understandings based on paternalistic development relationships, this is not always the case, with some of the language of local-global based on North-South assumptions.

### ***Critical Thinking Skills***

As critical thinking is discussed above with reference to knowledge processes, this section focuses briefly on the use of terms associated with critical thinking, reflection and analysis skills.

Facilitators tend towards the language of challenge rather than criticality in relation to critical thinking and analytical skills. The term 'challenge', though rather vague, cannot be associated with a specific discourse. When it is used in terms of individual mindset change, it may reflect a liberal discourse and when it is used in relation to structures of injustice it may reflect a critical discourse. Of the terms associated with a critical discursive formation, 'critique' and 'critical thinking' are mentioned most often, with very few specific references to other 'critical' or post-critical terms such as 'critical analysis', 'critical reflection' or 'praxis'. There are no striking differences in terms of the numbers of references to critical thinking and analytical skills' terms used among those working in formal or other DE contexts. For Catherine, critical thinking and collaboration skills go hand in hand: *"the key skills for me and probably it sounds really from a schools' perspective, critical thinking, analysis and cooperative learning and I think that last one is often neglected"*.

### ***Collaboration Skills***

Collaboration skills are talked about to some extent (14) within the context of discussions about skills and DE, with the greater emphasis, across all collaboration skills mentioned, among those working in formal education. Many of the collaborative skills mentioned reflect the types of learning processes associated with participatory, experiential and action-based learning. Facilitators talk about democratic engagement, dialogue, participation and confidence-building. Paul talks about these skills in terms of the *“process of how one acquires knowledge and thought processes that go on, you know, has to be done in a way that enables true dialogue, participation of a kind with other learners, and I suppose an ability to reflect upon what we’re learning in all those bases”*. For Fiona, *“what I hope they get from it is understanding, analysis, knowledge but also an experience of the possibility of dialogue, the possibility of collaboration, the benefits of collaboration. That, I think, can be quite transformative and a sense of agency within themselves, a sense of actually ‘I can do something, we can do something’*. *Where that goes after that, you know, who knows? I don’t prescribe, you know”*. Overall, though important for some, there are still relatively few references to collaboration skills among the facilitators interviewed for this research, with very few references to terms such as empowerment, compromise or listening skills.

## **1.3. Action as Central to DE**

### **1.3.1. Summary of Key Findings on DE and Action**

Nearly all the facilitators involved in this research regard action as an important aspect of the DE process (20). Findings show a general emphasis on a liberal DE discourse in relation to this dimension of DE, with considerable talk of individual action or action in one’s own context, and less focus on collective and political activism. At the same time, there are echoes of a critical discourse where many see action as an integral part of the praxis cycle of learning they associate with DE and where they talk about the politics of DE action. This ‘critical’ construction of action sits side by side, among many, with a vague and individualised construction of action and an emphasis on non-prescription when it comes to any actions involved in DE. Facilitators talk freely about the importance of ‘engagement’ and ‘getting involved’ but less so about other forms of action and activism (see the discussion of types of action below). This, along with abstract talk of an ‘action component’ (among 16) serves to highlight an ‘anything goes’ style of thinking in this regard, which reinforces an apoliticised construction of action associated with a liberal discourse. It also raises questions about the tensions which arise for facilitators who want to be non-prescriptive on the one hand and integrative of action or activism on the other.

Anne’s discussion of action shows some of the complexities involved. While she uses the term ‘action

component' and talks about 'individual action', she also talks about this individual action as a response to structures of injustice. Thus, while on the one hand she draws on a liberal discourse, she is also drawing on a critical one. She talks about action in relation to DE as follows:

*"always in my head there's an action component to DE. I don't necessarily mean that 'okay, so, as part of the DE programme, there has to be an action component where it's structured and organised and people go round and take action'. It can be those little actions you take as a result of your learning or as a result of your exploration. You know, whether it's, I stopped shopping in T. because I don't like their policies, I don't like their practices, I don't like their employment conditions, so I stopped shopping in T. That's an action as a result of the learning. It's not a big one. It's an individual one. It's not a collective one, but it's an action. So, there's an action component to it".*

Dónal differentiates between the language of 'the action component' and 'activism': *"the action component is a fundamental, sorry, the activist, the activism agenda is a fundamental component of this discussion ... It's about people recognising that all of us, every day, in every way, in everything we do, are activists"*.

As with the other dimensions of DE discussed so far, few facilitators reflect a technical DE discourse when it comes to action. Mobilisation in Ireland, or the link between DE and campaigning for justice in the countries of the South, reflective of a North-South discourse, is evident among some facilitators, though the point is made by a few that action associated with DE should not necessarily amount to campaigning or advocacy. A key insight is offered by Kathleen, one of the KIs associated with a network. She suggests the importance of viewing DE through the lens of activism rather than seeing action as a 'component' which is related to, but separate from, and presented as the zenith of the DE process. Though not mentioned by most, this integrated approach to activism is captured by some of the facilitators in talk of integrating the action component into DE from the start, e.g., Brian and Liz. As articulated by Kathleen, a more radical approach to activism is suggested which is reflective of a 'post-critical' discourse of DE, as it involves interrogation not only of types of action and activism and of the relationship between DE and activism but also of understandings of DE. There is a tension between this type of post-critical construction of activism and non-prescriptive alternatives, which open up diversity and plurality of understandings and forms of action.

**Table 6.3. Discourses of DE ‘Action and Activism’ as reflected in DE Facilitators’ Talk**

Summary of Findings	Technical DE Discourse	Liberal DE Discourse	North-South DE Discourse	Critical DE Discourse	Post-critical DE Discourse
<b>Action and Activism: Individual action in one’s own context; collective action; Political Action</b>	Action component not emphasised. If there, likely to be surface-level or technical (0)	Individual action (14) – consumer, lifestyle driven – clicktivism, charity, fundraising  An ‘action component’ (16)  Type of action doesn’t matter (8)	Mobilisation in Ireland for action for justice in the countries of the global South	Action (an action component or activism) (16) as part of the praxis cycle – analysis, reflection, action, reflection, etc.  Collective action (11) Political action (9)  Non-prescription	Little separation between DE and activism – all part of the same process  Many actions – about living not lifestyle  Questioning action ‘component’

### 1.3.2. Many Types of Action

Many facilitators differentiate between types of actions in DE, especially between individual and collective action. Among those interviewed for this research, 14 make reference to individual actions, associated with a liberal discourse, and 11 to collective action, associated more broadly with North-South, critical or post-critical discourses. Siobhán suggests that “*action for one kid might be just opening a book, you know, that it doesn’t have to be this amazing, splashed-all-over-the-newspapers action*”. For Mary, “*we could do even small actions, individual actions like fairtrade or recycle, reuse or whatever, or they could be more collective actions like campaigning or advocacy, engaging with service or working with organisations, volunteer organisations, like there’s a whole range and we would like*”. For some facilitators (9), political action is very important. They talk about DE mobilising the public or building civil society. Robert gives an example of a school lobbying politicians on a particular global justice issue. In doing so, while he highlights the power of political activism, he is cautious not to suggest that it is a more important type of action than others or separate from them. For some, the action is not necessarily political and the type of action is not important to eight of them. Two interviewees wish to counteract the assumption that action related to DE is, of necessity, political.

Tom makes the point that many of the actions associated with DE are not very “*rich and meaningful*”. He explains that the Irish government is very supportive of the action component of DE. He thinks

*“it’s unusual for a government to be exhorting citizens to take action because normally governments would be quite nervous of that happening but, in the case of DE, I think there’s an assumption that we’re all playing on the same team, NGOs, governments and learners alike and whatever action that we agree to take will be something in the broader, will be for the broader good of everyone. And I think that’s why they feel that they can support action and*

*encourage action. Even in their own definition of DE, which I've used many times, the action component is very firmly there".*

The implication here is that many of the actions are not necessarily very critical or challenging or at least not in a way that might upset the government. On the other hand, Dan makes the point that small actions should also be valued and can be very political in the sense of giving people a sense of their own power:

*"this woman, she wrote to the Corporation. She'd never done this in her life. But all of this is operative. It was a political act on her part to write to the Corporation. She got a reply from them but she began to see the world as something she could act on, you know. So, I think those things get under-rated, yeah, they get under-rated. It's like they're not good enough, you know, big enough or significant enough. But those things kind of grow. So, in a way I don't care, like, where people start".*

### **Examples of Actions and Activisms**

When it comes to specific actions implied in facilitator discussion of individual, collective or political action, talk about engagement and getting involved is very common. Like the term 'challenge', is quite vague and difficult to categorise discursively. Facilitators also talk about some specific examples of actions. Campaigning and fundraising, for example, which are associated with North-South or critical discourses are mentioned by 10 and nine facilitators respectively, though usually by way of critiquing them as the 'default' actions associated with DE. Other possible actions associated with either of these two discursive frameworks – fair trade, consumer patterns and mobilising people for action – are all mentioned but, in each case, by relatively few interviewees.

Some facilitators attempt to describe what they mean by action in DE. Dónal argues that *"consumption makes us all activists. Nationality makes us all activists ... there are 643 things you can do in a day to make the world a better place without necessarily joining Amnesty International ... one should be active in our personal lives, our public lives, our professional lives"*. Brian talks about the programmes he engages in with learners and where action comes in: *"what we try to do is during the programme, is to give space for people to develop the actions that they feel are suitable for their context"*.

### **1.3.3. Challenges with Action**

Though many challenges to the action dimension are highlighted by facilitators, most particularly with reference to political action (including the challenge of trying to do DE actions with schools), there is a strong sense, with regard to identifying challenges, that actions should be meaningful. This emerges in general challenges identified as well as in criticisms among three facilitators of the response to the

debt crisis and recession among facilitators and organisations in Ireland.

When it comes to the importance of moving beyond superficial actions. Tom, for example, suggests that

*“for us, today, that action component is, is troublesome, it’s difficult. Sometimes, it’s something that’s sort of tagged on to the end of the practice we deliver or sometimes it’s not there at all. Sometimes it’s missing. I think, ideally, what you should be doing is thinking about it and discussing it with the learner right from the outset ... so that by the end you have something that should be a rich and meaningful form of action. And that’s something that’s quite nebulous. It’s short-term and very often money-oriented and based on providing aid or Fair Trade, some kind of financially-based solution to the development question”.*

Siobhán reflects on the challenge of supporting certain types of actions in schools. With reference to an example of a school group marching to an embassy, she thinks

*“you can’t get them interested in stuff and expect them to not want to do something as well. Like you have to harness the energy of it and it’s difficult in schools to harness the energy in a way that fits with the school culture or that fits with the time that you have, particularly in post-primary. And then it kind of dissipates and you wonder about the impact of that as well because you’re all motivated and fired up and if you don’t do anything, then does that have a worse impact than if you had never raised it in the first place?”*

How inadequately DE has dealt with or responded to the recession and debt crisis in Ireland is raised by three facilitators as an example of how some political actions seem beyond the scope of DE in Ireland. Liz explains that, for her, *“you can have a critique of debt injustice as long as it’s far away but in taking action locally that’s just not, you know, that’s just, it’s quite forbidden actually”*. Niamh doesn’t feel that *“activism has been, it’s not as well-rounded as it would be in other countries you know and how we deal with stuff and you know, like, let’s say everything in relation to austerity and the recession, like that was crying out for a DE frame and nobody quite got us there and nobody quite articulated even stuff around debt, like”*.

Thus, action is seen as central to DE but there are different understandings of it among facilitators, with some focused on the political and collective and others more at the individual or personal level. Overall, the action dimension is regarded as a challenge by many.

## **1.4. Learning Processes Involved in DE**

### **1.4.1. Key Findings on DE Learning Processes**

Learning processes are regarded by all facilitators as a significant dimension of DE. In interviews,

facilitators talk about active learning, and informal, experiential and creative methodologies, among others. As with other dimensions, talk about learning processes and participatory methodologies are reflective of different discourses. Some talk of these in terms of a liberal discourse where methodologies are designed to enhance the learning experience of the individual learner. This is most common among those working in a formal education context. Most facilitators talk about creating safe spaces for critical reflection and dialogue where the process of learning is at least as important as the outcome. With resonances of critical and post-critical discourses, the emphasis is on dialogue, and on participatory and experiential learning as best practice in education for achieving change, and for others, the focus is on critical reflection on the learning processes involved. Though some see DE as a form of transformative education, with many making reference to the influence of Paulo Freire on their work, very few talk of DE in terms of radical or critical education. At the same time, for 11, the group they are working with shapes the learning process, and among 14, there is a critique of prescriptive processes, answers or actions associated with DE. Many of these points overlap with discussions of action and activism above.

Overall, those in formal education and NGOs draw far more on technical and liberal discourses in relation to learning processes than other cohorts, with talk of participatory learning as an improved education experience and for improved individual learning experiences. Both by comparison with those from other sectors and by comparison with other areas of focus, the two facilitators who work in the community and adult education sectors draw strongly on critical and post-critical discourses in this area of learning processes. Whereas, for example, they make virtually no reference to action or activism associated with DE, unlike most others, apart from a critique of the prescribed actions one sees associated with DE, between the two of them there are references to a critique of prescriptive answers, to learners' experiences being valued and to multiple perspectives or valuing diversity. Dan sums up his perspective: *"for me, community is security, solidarity, significance within and across systems ... what I'm interested in doing is framing things in ways that value what people are doing rather than framing them as right or wrong"*.



**Table 6. 4. Discourses of DE ‘Learning Processes’ as reflected in DE Facilitators’ Talk**

Summary of Findings	Technical DE Discourse	Liberal DE Discourse	North-South DE Discourse	Critical DE Discourse	Post-critical DE Discourse
<b>Learning Processes: Safe Spaces which value Diversity; Active and Participatory Learning Processes; Experiential learning - learner-centred</b>	Didactic, predictive and technical (0)  Creative and participatory processes for ‘better’ education (2)	Learner-centred experience tailored to individual participant needs or to enhance individual learning experience (7)	Participatory learning to develop active engagement (9)  Learner-centred = harness participants’ experience for understanding and mobilisation (6)	Safe spaces (10) for critical reflection and dialogue, methodologies for critical analysis and active engagement (with N-S - 9)  Criticisms of DE based on right or wrong answers (11)  Learner-centred about being age- or group-appropriate (11); learning experiences targeted at the marginalised (3)	‘Free range’ spaces (1)  Participatory Learning for alternatives (6)  Valuing Diversity (7)  Learner-centred involves putting own experience up for question and challenging learners’ understandings (3)

#### 1.4.2. DE Pedagogical Principles and Learning Processes

In questionnaires (Q. 20), facilitators were asked to rank various pedagogical principles “in terms of their importance to DE with one being the most important and 8 being the least”. Of the seven principles proposed to participants, participation ranks highest, followed by criticality, experience and diversity, with creativity, imagination and problem-solving following in that order. This does not suggest that the latter three principles are not deemed important, just that in relation to questions posed they did not score as highly as participation, criticality and experience.

In the interviews, though not directly asked about this topic, all facilitators focus on at least one pedagogical or methodological process associated with DE. Facilitators talk of the creation of safe spaces where multiple perspectives are valued and respected, active and participatory methodologies and the need for experiential learning which is learner-centred. Áine, for example, says that “*in our institution it’s tied in a lot, or has been historically tied in, to the idea of active methodology ... underpinning all of that is the belief in it as a form of democratic education*”. Tom draws on a Freirean understanding of the philosophical basis for the processes of learning associated with DE: “*he helped to formulate this idea of DE in his work ... And it was very much about action-based learning, that it wasn’t just about depositing knowledge in the head of the learner, it was about*

*enabling the learner to use that knowledge to take some kind of action”.*

### ***Safe Spaces Which Value Multiple Perspectives***

Among the 11 interviewees who make specific reference to the kind of space that DE constructs, most (10) talk of a ‘critical’ space or creating a ‘safe space’. This involves creating a space where people can reflect upon and share their experiences, perspectives, passions, etc. Facilitators are keen that these learning environments are open spaces which are characterised by debate, discussion and conversation. Dan shares an example from his early experience in DE to illustrate the importance of endogenous learning processes and what he calls a ‘free range space’. For him, *“it’s an emergent space. It’s where people think”*. Explaining that his experience of DE began in Pakistan where the focus was on the participants, he contrasts this to the experience of *“a lot of people in Ireland, their introduction to DE is about something else, somewhere else in the world. So, it’s not as immediate. So, DE is abroad, you know, but if your abroad is at home, so it changes your mind. So, it’s like, it’s not another group of people you’re working for, it’s this group. I think that has influenced me in the sense that whatever group I’m working with, there’s a developmental educative bit with that group”*.

A key point for many facilitators involved in this research is that there would be a sharing of and reflection upon multiple perspectives rather than the presentation of understanding in any simple or singular terms. Among those interviewed, 7 make specific reference to the importance of valuing diversity, with 10 highlighting the importance of multiple perspectives and 14 making some reference to criticisms of DE which is based on prescriptive or ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers. Central to this idea is that people’s views should be respected. Patrick explains that he has always tried *“to probe and I suppose get people to think for themselves and not offer too many solutions at all, you know”*. For Áine, it is about *“creating opportunities for people to share their passions and their ideas ... It’s about developing conversations”*. For Dan the process is more important than the outcome: *“I value people making up their own mind more than I value what they come up with. You know, it’s like the process by which they do it, if it’s congruent with them, if it works for them and all of that. So, I’m trying to hold on to that”*.

In many cases, facilitators draw on a critical discourse. While they talk about these processes being open they also acknowledge the political nature of this type of education. Fiona explains that because she is

*“an educator, you know. I mean I’m also a political activist, but for me the important thing is talking about people, people engaging. The important thing is to ask questions and to act upon the answers ... DE for me is not about shoving a particular view of the world down people’s throats but it is informed and it’s not neutral, and I think people make that mistake and that’s why the Freirean reference point is very useful ... it depends on who is using the language of multiple perspectives and sometimes what is meant by that is ‘don’t be giving only*

*one particular view of the world' and I think it may be increasingly meant to say 'we want to promote the Irish Aid programme', 'we want a business perspective' ... your responsibility is to offer other views, I think, or to at least provide the space for people to contemplate other views. The corporate perspective is everywhere".*

Paul, like seven others, also draws on Freire to describe his approach in this context: *"it's definitely political but I'm very wary of using any kind of claim that if you do this course you will, you know, like the cliché, 'you will move from the personal to the political', you know, and all that kind of thing ... I just feel that the role of the educator, one should be aware of one's boundaries there ... So, I'm just careful, I think about that"*.

Dan feels that some DE is not so 'open'. Dan cautions against a type of DE that he associates with *"strategic planning light"*. Critical of a sense that there is a 'right' process involved in DE and contrary to the types of facilitation processes presented above, he says *"you've gotta get your aims, your objectives, you know all this kind of stuff ... it's like raising awareness towards action. You know but it's like you gotta get, if they don't get to certain forms of action, it's not DE. So, it's, to me, it strikes me as a form of advocacy. Advocacy is fine but own up to that as a form of education that's essentially advocating, you know"*. Dan says: *"I don't think moral absolutes are a great place to start a conversation, you know, whatever about ending up there. So, I think if you go back to the DE thing, maybe there are too many moral absolutes, you know, the conversations are over before they start ... So, it's, there are answers, you know. So maybe I'm less inclined to provide answers. I'm offering ways of looking at the world but even they're tentative too and you're free to change that"*. As such, Dan's analysis highlights what might constitute a post-critical discourse where the processes themselves are held up to scrutiny with emphasis on tentativeness and emergence rather than any sense of DE right or wrong.

### ***Learner-Centred Processes and Tools***

For facilitators, learning experiences and contexts are central. When it comes to 'the facilitated space', facilitators talk about using different tools or methodologies in order to encourage understanding and reflection on their own experience, on connections with others and in relation to action. In general, it is clear that many facilitators see themselves as engaged in experiential learning (10 interviewees) which employs participatory and creative tools for learning (11). Brian, for example, talks about using case studies, problem-based learning approaches and games. Áine focuses a lot on the use of film and other creative methodologies. She gives an example of one creative methodology she has used with student teachers: *"They got to engage with each other. They had fun. A revolutionary idea in teacher education. And they're happy, engaging with physical material"*.

Most of the facilitators involved in this research (16) see DE as learner-centred, though understandings

here differ from a focus on individual needs at the liberal end to challenging perspectives and valuing diversity at the critical and post-critical end of the discursive spectrum. Paul describes this in the following terms:

*“I think what it looks like is people, maybe in some cases for the first time in their lives, feeling a sense of confidence that they have a right to speak, that they have a voice, that they belong in this room with these others ... That’s what empowerment is and I suppose I wanted people to feel what I felt. They’ve a right to be in the room. They’ve a right to share their, to even test out their ideas, even if they sound a bit whacky and not a right to be feeling that they’re right all the time, they can be contradicted”.*

The question of who the learners are is an important one for some people. In some cases (11), facilitators argue that the group they are working with should affect the kinds of learning processes entered into. This can be characteristic of a North-South or critical discourse. Tom, drawing on his Freirean analysis, suggests that *“DE is not neutral. It takes the position that it supports the poor and the oppressed and the marginalised. They are our constituents. They are the people that we should be working with, so our task then is to, how can we help those who are most vulnerable to inequality ... to enable these people to achieve a better standard of living, better housing and so on”*. Though most of the facilitators I spoke to do not articulate their understanding of development in those terms, and only a few (three) make specific reference to the importance of working with vulnerable or marginalised communities in Ireland, Dan is critical of an approach which he sees as lingering in DE thinking and practice and which is not sufficiently focused on the learners involved, but which is *“always about someone else. You know what I mean, it’s like they’re the focus of it. It’s not about my own development or my own education as part of a larger group or something”*.

Three facilitators, from a post-critical perspective, highlight tensions between respecting diversity, ‘anything goes’ and challenging people on their stereotypical views. Liz says that

*“I would really like people to be really thinking about the world perhaps from an angle that they haven’t looked at before you know, so there is an element of not paradigm shift but paradigm disturbance ... that we would try to focus on the givens and the assumptions of the world that we live in and that we occupy and move in every day that are framed around neoliberal assumptions, that are framed around the impossibility of an alternative and that it’s recognised as kind of urgent ... so not to prescribe, actually I would be really loathe to prescribe particular actions on ‘now join this campaign’, but just try to find ways of just ‘how can we imagine alternatives to this?’”*

Áine describes the tension as she sees it as ‘calling people out’ on problematic views when they are raised. So, for her, being learner-centred can involve challenging learners on their preconceived understandings.

As indicated above, there are both different understandings of what being learner-centred implies, according to facilitators, and its importance in terms of DE learning processes. One area of agreement

seems to be that the learning processes should, at the very least, be appropriate for the group involved.

## **2. Key Informant Perspectives on the Dimensions of DE**

### **2.1. The Dimensions of DE**

In key informant (KI) interviews, I used a different set of questions for each person, depending on the role I knew they played in relation to DE and the direction the interview took. As I wished to find out more about their analysis of what's happening in relation to DE rather than their own understanding of it, owing to time restrictions, I did not ask the questions 'what do you see as the dimensions of DE?' or 'tell me about knowledge, skills, processes, etc. associated with DE'. As a result, findings in relation to their views on the dimensions of DE are patchy. In aspects of DE, all nine KIs make reference to action or activism, eight make reference to knowledge and/or understanding with only four making reference to skills and two to education processes.

Though all of the dimensions discussed by facilitators are raised by KIs, a few points made are worth highlighting here to throw light on facilitator findings. Niall, who works in a network, argues that though there are differences in the sector, there are more commonalities than differences. Niall highlights the importance of process and participation to DE, a point reinforced in workshops (discussed in Chapter Eight). He views many of the dimensions as being underpinned by the principle of solidarity, which he sees as *"something [which is] at the heart of DE thinking, you know, and I think it manifests itself in different ways in different places so, you know, some people might focus on local to global interconnectedness. Others might focus on, from say an environmental perspective, interdependency ... I think the universality principle is closely related to that"*. With reference to different dimensions of DE, Niall argues that *"we talk about the knowledge and the action components or the knowledge and the learning and action components. I think we also need to be talking about the participation component ... it's a really important aspect of what development educators do and the impact on participants"*.

Kathleen offers an insight into how she thinks facilitators view action as part of the learning process and how this contrasts with what she calls 'popular education'. In so doing, she raises questions about different discourses of activism in relation to DE. Questioning the notion of an 'action component', she sees activism as the driver of DE rather than a component or dimension of it. She suggests that popular education is *"part of a much broader long-term way of working rather than you're bringing people on a training course to skill them up in certain areas and that they'll do some activity at the end of it"*. From her point of view,

*“the structure of DE has often been that you put on events and workshops and things like that so people come to learn. So, it’s a whole different dynamic because they’re not coming because they want to organise. They’re coming because they want to educate themselves and maybe take action and maybe not so that’s why the action dimension is always just a suggestion or proposal at the end of a workshop or a course or something because that’s the structure of DE training as it’s carried out among the NGOs, including the ones I’ve worked with. And there’s definitely a value in that but it’s so open-ended that the action will probably be quite minor that will emerge from something like that unless it’s a much more, building a much more longer-term relationship with people who decide that they have a really serious stake in this issue”.*

### **3. The Aims, Values and Politics of DE**

Thus far, I have introduced facilitator perspectives with respect to the various understandings of the dimensions of DE. In this section I focus on interviews with facilitators and KIs and what they think DE is trying to achieve as well as on understandings of the values and politics associated with it.

#### **3.1. What DE Facilitators are Trying to Achieve**

##### **3.1.1. Key Findings on the Aims of DE**

The aims of DE are clearly identified in many of the ‘definitions’ or ‘descriptions’ of DE. Findings show that there are four key aims or visions among facilitators interviewed. These are: their vision for the world – making the world a fairer, better place – mentioned by nearly all facilitators (20); their vision for education – creating better, more relevant education (19); their vision for development – moving from a charity approach to solidarity (10); and their vision for learners – changing mindsets, developing understanding (8). The last point overlaps with much more widespread discussions of the role of DE in fostering understanding and changing mindsets (introduced above) and the points raised which explain facilitators’ vision for a better world dovetail with the discussion of values (below), i.e., they mention the importance of justice and equality (21); environmental sustainability; human rights; addressing poverty; and addressing hunger.

In general, among those interviewed, aims reflect a range of discursive assumptions. Most commonly, facilitators draw on a critical discourse. This is most obviously the case with reference to facilitators’ vision for the world and for development. On the other hand, when it comes to their vision for education and learners, findings are more mixed with a focus on the liberal, especially among those working in formal education and in NGOs.

**Table 6.5. Discourses of DE ‘Aims’ as reflected in DE Facilitators’ Talk**

Summary of Findings	Technical DE Discourse	Liberal DE Discourse	North-South DE Discourse	Critical DE Discourse	Post-critical DE Discourse
<b>Aims of DE: Vision for world; for education; for development; and for learners</b>	Mainstreaming into formal ed – DE to ensure relevance of ed system; ‘filling a gap’ (2)  Public engagement or promotion of aid (1)	To improve the educational experience of the individual so that they can contribute (4)  About learning and lifestyle change – changing mindsets (8) and individual behaviour (5)	Education for student North-South engagement (1)  About understanding roles as global citizens (9)	Education and action for global justice and equality (21)  Challenges traditional education practices (19) Dev co-operation = from charity to solidarity (10)  Not about aid and fundraising but roles as global citizens (10)  About understanding roles as global citizens (with N-S 9)	Alternative educations (12)  Turning learning upside down (1) Critical of development constructions and ‘othering’ (2)  Critical of exclusivity and Eurocentrism in DE (1)

In questionnaires (Q. 22), participants were asked to identify what they “hope DE can encourage among participants”. Knowledge and understanding was ranked number one (based on the lowest weighted average) followed by questioning, engagement, respect for diversity, activism, care and responsible consumerism. In this case, the significant position of questioning is interesting. Because of the general nature of the terms, again this question is designed to give an overview of what participants rank as most important rather than the detail which is discussed more thoroughly with reference to interview findings below.

### 3.1.2. Vision for a Better World

When we look at concepts that facilitators associate with a better world, justice and equality, human rights, environmental sustainability and addressing poverty rank very highly on participants’ agendas, with most facilitators interviewed making reference to the importance of one or all of these issues. Brian talks about the importance of equality of opportunity and for Tom, DE is about enabling people to create a better world for themselves. Both of these points are suggestive of a liberal discourse, with their emphasis on the individual, whereas Anne talks about the importance of breaking down ‘us and them’ barriers, more reflective of a post-critical one, with its deconstructive emphasis. Dónal explains his work as follows: *“I’ve been trying to achieve a fairer, better and more just world. Sorry, I know that sounds terribly clichéd but the whole purpose of the work is to generate public interest in, public support for, public engagement with and public judgment on world development issues with specific*

reference to the plight of the poorest, the most marginalised and the most excluded”. Further detail on different discourses in relation to this area is discussed in relation to the value of justice (below).

### **3.1.3. Vision for Education**

As with talk of other aims of DE, talk in relation to the vision for education differs among facilitators. Two facilitators talk specifically about DE ‘filling a gap’ in the education system and there is some talk of ‘improving methodologies’ in order to improve the experience of the learner, and especially among those in formal education. One of the facilitators emphasises student ‘leadership’ and ‘ownership’ and does so largely in the context of a North-South discourse. Nineteen DE practitioners see the processes they are engaged in as challenging existing learning systems and, in 12 cases, providing different alternatives in the context of what some see as a conservative formal education context. Among those who talk of alternatives, Siobhán reflects on the effects of DE in the context of the wider education system:

*“we tend to, in education systems, focus on this idea of preparing them for life after school but we should be preparing them for life now as well. You know, they live in the world now. They’re not going to start living in it later on and that can be really amazing in terms of what they can achieve as people. I think they have a very powerful voice. I think DE and those types of educations maybe give them opportunities to exercise their voice in a way that they don’t have elsewhere, in other subject areas”.*

There are two clear articulations of a ‘post-critical’ discourse in relation to the vision for alternative education practice, which emphasises deconstruction of taken-for-granted norms, ‘self-reflexivity’ and promotion of diverse alternatives. The first is Áine’s point about turning power relations in formal education ‘upside down’ and the second is Niamh’s critique of teacher education and DE as exclusive, Eurocentric in structure, organisation and membership, and the importance of challenging ‘white privilege’:

*“if we were critical about our work we would be doing stuff maybe to open up teacher education, to open up primary teaching as a profession, to open up the department, to make a greater effort to have, like, to embed multiple perspectives, to have a diversity of voices coming through in the teaching as well ... not be very Eurocentric in, even the theories that we use, the choice of thinkers we use, the choice of philosophies we use, the type of picture books we use, the type of poetry we use, whatever it might be. Like we’re trying but I think there’s got to be, there could be so much more”.*

### **3.1.4. Challenging Traditional Approaches to Development Cooperation**

With reference to their vision for development, 10 facilitators draw on a critical discourse to



specifically mention moving from a charity approach to development to a solidarity one and about DE moving development beyond fundraising. In addition, Maeve talks about ‘*unpacking charity vs solidarity*’ and ‘*images and messages*’ and Siobhán talks about a shift in thinking from development being ‘*about those poor people over there, to looking at solidarity and care and empathy*’, both of which are more suggestive of a ‘post-critical’ discourse. Though 16 of the facilitators interviewed talk about encouraging engagement through DE, their references to this, as in discussions of engagement with reference to action and activism above, are quite obtuse. There is talk of engagement ‘with issues’, ‘in action’, ‘in activities’, ‘in DE’ itself and ‘in change’ but this is still rather vague, and therefore, it is hard to interpret the discursive assumptions related to this talk. When it comes to talk of fundraising, it is described (by six) as being in tension with DE. Patrick, who works for one of the NGOs, acknowledges the difficulties in terms of the tension between NGO fundraising and DE in schools and, in relation to this, he feels that DE is not radical enough.

### **3.1.5. Vision for Learners**

Ten facilitators talk specifically about their vision for learners – their aim (along with many others who don’t specifically talk about it in this way) is to develop people’s understanding of the globalised world in which we live and to encourage active and just responses to same. This is reflected in references to learning, which are common among nearly all the facilitators (19) and overlaps with those (10 interviewees) who specifically talk about their vision for learners. In that case, eight interviewees mention their aim with DE in developing or ‘changing mindsets’ or ‘opening people’s minds’; nine interviewees talk about the role that DE plays in supporting people to understand their role as global citizens and five people talk about ‘changing participants’ behaviour’. As with the DE skills dimension, in some cases mindset change, global citizenship and changing behaviour are conceptualised individually, reflective of a liberal discourse, whereas in others, it reflects a critical discourse and is about global citizenship as collective action. Deirdre, for example, explains that

*“for me like just this idea of being a global citizen ... I feel that’s very important that people have an understanding of the impact of their own actions as well on people in their own community as well as that kind of global community. Yeah and I think education is really, really important in terms of opening up people’s perspectives, views, understanding of all of those different dynamics and that can help in a myriad of ways ... I suppose, that people are more, yeah, aware and tolerant and respectful and ultimately that you’re collectively trying to work towards a better society”.*

### **3.1.6. Key Informant Perspectives on the Aims of DE**

Among KIs interviewed, most of those who talk about their vision for DE do so with reference to their

vision for learners rather than for the world. There is some talk of supporting people ‘to question’, to ‘change mindsets’ or to ‘engage deeply’, with just one person referring to DE as being about social transformation and two talking about an ‘activist agenda’. In general, the two Irish Aid staff interviewed make little reference to the vision of DE but Kate outlines that the role of DE has not changed. For her, it is still about people *“understanding poverty”, “what their role is”* and *“going deeper”* than *“photographs of starving children”*. The difference between public awareness and DE is highlighted by four of the KIs interviewed.

With regard to the aims of DE, none of the KIs make any reference to their vision for the world apart from one who talks about social transformation. By comparison to facilitator findings, there is also very little focus on improving education or on the role of DE in relation to development more broadly. Despite this, Hannah emphasises its role in building civil society and Kathleen and Oscar connect DE to an activist agenda.

The main focus among KIs is on their vision for learners. In this regard, of the KIs, five focus on understanding. Oscar talks about changing *“the mindsets of people”*. Izzy argues that *“when it’s really good then it should be questioning structural norms. It should be questioning the causes of inequality and looking at possible solutions”*. Niall describes DE as *“a way in. It’s a door. It’s not a box, you know, it’s kind of, to be a continuum of engagement is what we should be aiming for rather than putting everything into a box and saying ‘that’s DE’ and forget about it. You know it’s more about inviting people and encouraging people to engage and engage more deeply”*.

Kathleen feels that popular education is more critical of development than DE, which, for her, has become quite conservative. Hannah argues that among NGDOs, *“it’s about understanding what our role is and we’re not businesses. We’re not social enterprises. We’re not going, you know, there’s a problem, let’s go and fix it. It’s about understanding that change is far more complex than that and it’s about changing kind of individuals’ kind of attitudes and kind of broader culture rather than fixing it ... this isn’t about apps ... it’s so not about an app”*.

There are four references among KIs to the role of DE in relation to development cooperation more broadly. Izzy argues that, *“without it, then we are just, we are just plodding along the same road that we’ve been on for at least the last 40 years. We’re not trying to challenge ourselves or the people that we’re working with ... without DE then organisations can get very rooted in fundraising or very rooted in their own social media or keeping themselves alive, our own need to be paid at the end of the month rather than challenging ourselves and questioning ourselves and reflecting on do we actually need to be here? Is our organisation out-dated now?”*. She also makes a distinction between DE and public awareness or information which is undertaken by Irish Aid and argues that *“it is linked but different to DE”*.

### 3.2. Values and DE

#### 3.2.1. Key Findings on DE Values

All the facilitators involved in this research talk freely about the relationship between values and DE. Most commonly they talk about the values of equality, justice, empathy and solidarity, with justice as an overarching concept for many understandings of values, e.g., justice as inclusion, economic justice, justice and good relations, and justice as shared humanity and solidarity. Talk of values in relation to DE largely reflects a critical discourse where values are viewed as based on good relationships at a global level and on congruence between values espoused and practiced. There is some, but little focus among three facilitators on the individualism associated with a liberal discourse. This is mostly the case among those working in formal education settings and it reflects their interest in values such as care, compassion and empathy which is understood in personal, charitable terms. Eight facilitators focus on critiques of any taken-for-grantedness when it comes to the values which underpin DE, which reflects a post-critical discourse.

**Table 6.6. Discourses of DE ‘Values’ as reflected in DE Facilitators’ Talk**

Summary of Findings	Technical DE Discourse	Liberal DE Discourse	North-South DE Discourse	Critical DE Discourse	Post-critical DE Discourse
<b>Values – Equality and Justice – Justice: Economic Justice; Justice and Good Relations; Justice as Inclusion; Justice, Shared Humanity and Solidarity</b>	Efficiency, results, mutual benefit – ‘right values and attitudes’ (0)	Individual freedom, rights, justice, respect – equality of opportunity (1)  Care, compassion, empathy from a charity perspective (2)	Care, compassion, empathy – focus on the global South  Justice and equality in terms of North-South relations (1)	Values based on good global relationships – many associated with justice, equality, solidarity (12) kindness (13)  Addressing ‘root causes’ of poverty (7)  Or ... Not prescribed values or answers but need for congruence (12)	Many different value systems including those of justice, equality, solidarity, etc.  Valuing inclusion and diversity (8)  Challenging values based on superiority (2)  Critique and questioning of values and of certainty (2)

#### 3.2.2. Values as Central to DE

The subject of values was addressed in questionnaires (Q. 19) where facilitators were asked to rank the “value or ethical basis for DE”. In responses, social justice ranks as most important, and significantly

more so than most of the other ethical bases, followed by solidarity, human rights, equality, empowerment, care and charity. Though ‘injustice’ does not feature as the most significant challenge in the questionnaire, it is identified as the most important ethical basis, perhaps for addressing any of the challenges identified and though human rights does not feature so highly in interviews, it does re-emerge in workshops where participants re-iterate its significance (see Chapter Eight).

In response to a direct question about same in interviews, all the facilitators consulted talk about values as being central to DE. For Mary, values affect all aspects of DE. She suggests that

*“I think it plays out in what you focus on, the content of what you do ... it’s about being critical and presenting a range of perspectives and information but not saying ‘this is right or this is wrong or this is what you should do or you shouldn’t do’ but trying to ask the questions which have an impact in the learning process ... So, if we’re talking a lot about valuing diversity and equality you know the way we set up a room, the way we interact with other people in the room, the people we involve in the conversation, people we, inclusion, like, and you know and I think, like, a mix of learning styles as well – so back to diversity”.*

As in questionnaires, justice emerges as a central value in interviews (mentioned by all). Nineteen interviewees make reference to equality and 16 to addressing inequality. The relationship between justice, equality and other values is understood differently by facilitators, with some making reference to justice and equality (7) and sustainability (2); social justice and human rights (2); justice, peace, truth and mercy (1); justice and dignity (1) or social justice, inclusion and empowerment (1). Brian acknowledges that there are different understandings of what justice means. For Maeve, drawing on a North-South discourse, a central role for DE is addressing inequality and injustice: *“our values, like, ultimately, we have to see, you know, we have to look at making sure people recognise inequalities and injustice but starting with our, our own society ... I suppose my starting point for DE was the, you know, looking at the impact on what we do here on the global South”.*

### **3.2.3. Understandings of Justice**

Justice and the values associated with DE among facilitators involved in this research can be understood broadly in four ways, which reflect different discourses. These are: Economic Justice; Justice and Good Relations; Justice as Shared Humanity and Solidarity and Justice as Inclusion.

All facilitators make some reference to economic justice and addressing poverty as a central value in DE. Among these, there are seven references to addressing the root causes of poverty and injustice, and there are a few (4) who talk about criticisms of neoliberalism as a core value. Both of these are associated with a critical discourse. For Tom

*“it would mean to me things like social justice and greater equality, more equitable distribution of wealth, more respect for everybody but particularly for those who are on the margins of society and who have felt the cold hand of oppression more than most. So, I think those are the sort of values that should inform our work. Basically, trying to create a more just and equal society and moving away from the disparities in the allocation or distribution of wealth that we’ve seen in Ireland particularly during the Celtic Tiger period. I think Ireland has really been the antithesis of a lot of the values in DE which has been a big worry for us. And I suppose, again, there was a reluctance within the sector to face up to that at the time but I think there’s, recently, we’ve been more willing to challenge that kind of thing”.*

Many value justice and good global relations (13), which include references to related values such as respect for others (13), empathy (8), kindness and care. Dan, for example, highlights the importance of justice but his sense is that justice cannot stand alone. He draws on John Paul Lederach’s work on peacework where he suggests the interrelationship of justice, peace, truth and mercy. Maeve, using the language of a North-South discourse, talks about solidarity and empathy: *“that people think not in the sense of ‘us’ and ‘them’, that they, that they feel that they’re running alongside people, particularly people in the global South ... I think empathy and solidarity are about, like, you know, the way us working together or running alongside each other, if I was to visualise it”.*

Many of the values espoused are about people’s understandings of what underpins good relationships or ‘heart’ values such as kindness, care and helping. In two cases this is conceptualised in terms of charity. For others, though focused on the personal, there is not an individualised construction of these values as they are linked with collaboration, solidarity and/or valuing diversity. For Catherine, for example, values are central and empathy is essential: *“I think without them, it’s a very, it’s sort of superficial or it loses heart. There’s no heart to it. You know, ultimately we’re all, that sense of empathy has to underpin what we’re doing or to me it doesn’t hold water”.*

For seven of the facilitators, justice is about a sense of shared humanity, which relates to solidarity. Mary suggests that *“there’s respect, valuing others, having fun together, working together, doing something great together”.* For Bríd, this shared humanity is also important and linked to helping others and a basic notion of ‘goodness’ which is not all about personal gain. Eight facilitators view justice and equality as related to inclusion, valuing diversity and anti-discrimination. Empathy is also linked with care and kindness in the discourses of the facilitators interviewed. Patrick links empathy with a valuing of diversity *“to avoid people falling into radical, absolutist positions, you know, saying ‘no immigration’ and all the rest of it. And counterbalancing the growing threat of reactionary movements against the problems we’ve been talking about”.* Áine, for example, values *“listening, I think, you know, actually being attentive, attending to what’s actually going on, so trying to create spaces for students to connect with each other. So maybe one of the values is around collaboration and connectedness and communication”.* Dan explains that

*“solidarity is big for me, that somehow or other, solidarity, empathy, actually one of the things*

*I, kindness ... I go back to it all the time ... I think I'm trying to hold up that end, the end of solidarity or what is it? I remember one of the first images that kind of inspired me was, it was in some magazine and it was a headless corpse from Nicaragua. And somebody had put a candle where the head was and I thought what a beautiful gesture. They can't replace the head but it was like they took the time to put that there to honour the person, you know".*

For Paul, equality, inclusion and empowerment are central: *"If people are included they feel there's equality, they feel empowered ... So, I'd hope that would be the key value behind what I try to do".* Anne, drawing on critical and post-critical discourses explains that, for her,

*"social justice, to me, and equality are very much linked. You can't really separate them. Social justice, for me, is that everyone has the same rights and entitlements. Everyone should be afforded the same protections. They should be able to access the same services, treatments ... So social justice, for me, is about challenging the whole 'us and them', is about challenging inequalities, whether that means you know, whether that's talking about different class structures here in Ireland or whether you're talking about how you see a migrant and a refugee and what's the difference and what they should or shouldn't be entitled to in terms of protection and safety and refugee and stuff like that".*

Mary, reflecting the deconstruction associated with a post-critical discourse, argues that we act out of assumptions about people and that we need to challenge these by valuing equality: *"I guess that it's, I think often times we set the limits quite low because we're working from this assumption of inequality or superiority, so I think really core to the work and really core to any kind of change is getting people to accept and value that we're all equal ... I think we are so ingrained in our culture and ways of being, I think that we can be racist even with the most, I think it can slip out, even with the most awareness we can be".*

### **3.2.4. The Need to Question Values and for Congruence**

There is a sense among 11 facilitators that values cannot be taken for granted and that they need to be questioned. Nine see this questioning as critical and part of DE practice, e.g., Siobhán doesn't think that *"we're interrogating human rights enough ... I don't think we give it enough air time in terms of debating it as a framework"*. Fiona expresses some of the tensions associated with a critical discourse of values, arguing on the one hand against a *"moralistic strain in development that is about telling people how they should be"*, and on the other wanting to highlight the significance of neoliberalism and its values:

*"we're living in a neoliberal era ... the values that underpin neoliberalism are very explicit in lots of ways around individualism, individual responsibility, lots of stuff and entrepreneurship, public is bad, inequality is the driver. All this stuff that tends to break down notions of collective, solidarity and responsibility for each other and care for each other and care for the planet and stuff you know. It's really quite ugly I think ... there is a need to push back against the spread of neoliberal ideology but I just don't think a moralistic approach is the way to do*

it”.

A key point made by 12 facilitators in relation to values is the importance of not just ‘talking’ about values but that their actions, relationships and learning processes are reflective and supportive of, or congruent with, the values that they see as underpinning DE. Áine explains: *“they’re at the heart of it, the values you espouse, you know, if mine, the one I keep coming back to is democratic practices and modelling what you expect of your students, that you would do it yourself, you know ... the value of ‘do as I do not just do as I say’”*. Fiona agrees: *“you don’t put up a list of values and say ‘now’, you know, it’s a process. And it’s difficult. It’s always difficult because it implies certain things about your practice, like being open. Being open to criticism. Being able to accept perspectives that you sometimes don’t like”*. Interviewees talk about congruence in terms of modelling practices (2); ensuring that the values espoused are reflected in practice, including methods (5), that facilitators should be transparent about their values (2) and that values and politics need to go hand in hand (1).

Others question assumptions that facilitators have about values. Dermot criticises the general lack of critique among facilitators: *“in a sense I get that impression but I don’t know how many of them are driven by any anxiety themselves, intellectual anxieties ... I seem to be encountering people who have certainty and I don’t have certainty in the same way as they have”*. Liz argues that values need to be put under scrutiny and that there needs to be a critical questioning of DE values and how they relate to the systems that people are engaged with, including DE: *“having a view of inequality that has no perpetrators in it so we don’t have to ask ourselves uncomfortable questions about where we are in that system. If we’re not looking at systems we don’t have to locate ourselves within it and I think then the values really become quite limited in terms of their meaning, because if they’re not rooted in the actual worlds of life and death then they’re just aspirations. They’re just ways of feeling good about ourselves, potentially”*.

Dermot uses the image of a building on stilts to suggest that without critical focus on values, whatever they are deemed to be, the building is on very shaky ground: *“that’s the point of looking at, trying to establish solid foundations to something. It’s like we accept something and then we build stilts on it and I get this horrible feeling that people’s knowledge of social justice, it’s, you can’t say no to social justice, therefore there’s no criticism on it. So therefore, that’s the foundation”*. He questions

*“people’s understanding of social justice, what does that mean? I regard it as on somewhat shaky foundations and then other things that are built on that are on other shaky foundations ... But I’m saying that to understand that there is a wobbliness here around some of this stuff you know and the whole thing is wobbly anyway. At a fundamental level there is an indeterminacy here. It’s not, it all collapses into a more fluid world when we get down to, when we try and grasp it, you know ... when we see a rainbow it looks all very solid, you know, at a distance and it’s all beautiful and the closer we get to it, it fades away until we put our hands out, it doesn’t exist ... I like the whole idea of that. The idea of things like that, by the time you get down to meaning at certain levels it all fades away but that doesn’t mean it*

*doesn't exist*".

### 3.2.5. Key Informant Perspectives on Values

Only those four KIs I asked about values make any specific reference to their importance. Freja argues that all education has values at its heart. For her, DE practitioners *"tend to be quite good about being aware of our values, but that's not saying that other people aren't"*. She goes on to say that

*"in terms of valuing people's different experiences and perspectives, you know, all of those ... I think we do a really good job ... now where we have failed a bit in terms of values, is ok, maybe minority voices, it's still a white middle-class endeavour ... at a practitioner level we've been really good about values but at a slightly higher-up level, are there any Travellers involved in DE in Ireland? Are there any, you know, minority ethnic communities? Are there people who don't have a third-level education?"*

Seven of the KIs refer to questioning different aspects of DE. These include comments by Niall in relation to needing to question DE practice, capacity and funding. Hannah refers to the need for NGOs to critique what they're doing and to understand change; and the role of DE in encouraging questioning and critique of aid and development (Damien) as well as in addressing economic justice questions (Kathleen). Both of the interviewees from Irish Aid talk about questions which have been raised over time about the validity of DE as an aspect of Development Cooperation (Kate) in the light of the need to prove effectiveness and value-for-money considerations (Mandy). Though many of the facilitators make reference to questioning values, of the KIs interviewed, only one makes any reference to questioning how values or analyses are prescribed through DE. Izzy suggests that sometimes DE is 'pushing' people 'too hard'. She thinks that *"we tend to think that we're right, that our intellectual interior journey is somehow more superior to these people who somehow haven't quite caught up with us"*.

Both of those interviewed who work in Irish Aid, though no one else, mention that Irish Government values in the area of Development Cooperation are set out in policy documents: *One World One Future* and *A Global Island*. Mandy suggests that if people are looking to Irish Aid for funding, they *"need to look at our strategy and say 'do they believe in it?' Do they believe? Is it coherent with their values and what they're trying to achieve in One World One Future? If they do then they can row with our agenda and then what they need to do is to be able to show how they contribute"*. For Kate, the significance of these documents is that they have cemented the role of DE in Development Cooperation more broadly: *"but that just didn't happen by the way. That's like an awful lot of work that's been going on behind the scenes"*.



### 3.3. Politics and DE

#### 3.3.1. Key Findings on Politics and DE

When it comes to Politics and DE, most facilitators regard DE as political (17). Within their understandings of politics and DE, three main areas are addressed: understandings of power and politics more generally; the political role of DE, and constraints on DE being as political as desired. When it comes to discourses drawn upon with regard to understandings of power and politics, there is a tendency among some (9) within formal education to see power in technical or liberal terms. This is characterised, on the one hand, by a sense of agency as being about individuals appealing to elite decision-makers to enact legislation which is favourable for justice or equality and, on the other, by talk of individuals realising change in their own lives at the personal rather than the structural level. This dovetails with individualised constructions of action. On the other hand, the most common talk of power among facilitators reflects a critical DE discourse (11), with references to the need to challenge unjust structures and power relations and to the role of DE in doing so. There are also some references, particularly among those in community and adult education and in DE organisations, to a post-critical discourse where they highlight the importance of interrogating power within DE. Twelve facilitators, especially those within formal contexts, see the politics of DE as significantly constrained by the conservatism of schools.

**Table 6.7. Discourses of DE ‘Politics’ as reflected in DE Facilitators’ Talk**

Summary of Findings	Technical DE Discourse	Liberal DE Discourse	North-South DE Discourse	Critical DE Discourse	Post-critical DE Discourse
<b>Power and Politics – DE as Political: DE about power to effect change; DE about power to give voice; DE about understanding power relations</b>	Formal power of decision makers (4) Formal politics or big ‘P’ engagement	Power of individual to realise change at personal rather than structural level (5) Power to give voice to individual (6)	Politics as a tool for realising change in the global South (1) Understanding dominant relations and structures especially with reference to North-South relations	Power everywhere; Power and politics central – need to facilitate understandings of how power works and challenge unjust power structures at L-G levels (9) Power to effect change (16) Power to give voice for global citizenship and activism (2)	Power everywhere – need to interrogate own power (4) and explore possibilities of alternatives with radical social movements (3)

### 3.3.2. Understandings of Power and Politics

Among the facilitators involved in this research, politics represents many things. Brian captures a tension relating to the term ‘politics’ between the ‘formal’ and the ‘informal’ or what Siobhán calls ‘P big’ and ‘p small’. For Brian, *“it doesn’t have to be formal politics of course, in terms of, like, you know, two houses of an Oireachtas and x number of TDs and Senators and all of that, but it’s also about, like, the politics of community development, like the power structures, like, who do you go to? What about the parish priest? What about the undertaker? What about the, like, you know, I think power and politics are at the core of DE”*. Facilitators identify different understandings of power. Sixteen facilitators make reference to power being everywhere, that everyone has the power to realise change. For Dermot, this applies in relationships: *“it automatically has a political dimension because anything that has to do with us living together is, in fact, political ... what’s the basis on which we live together, the decisions we decide upon as a group and then how do we group together and what are the kind of power groups that come into being because of it? Who exercises power?”* Tom sees the politics of DE as linked to achieving justice and equality. Anne, for example, speaks about the power to effect change as integral to DE. She explains: *“a big role of DE, is to build that civil society. And especially with young people, with youth and stuff. I think it’s fantastic because it’s making them see that they do actually have power, you know, whether that’s power within a small group or power within their communities or within society at a larger scale, they do actually have power. And it encourages them to look at why things are as they are and to change them, to not accept them”*.

Fifteen facilitators talk about power very much in formal and objective terms, where power is seen to lie with elites, decision makers, and about the power of DE participants to influence decision makers to act. For four of these, the focus is individual. One talks in terms of North-South relations and nine talk in terms of global justice issues. The facilitators interviewed often express more than one of these understandings of power, but overall, nine seem to draw largely on either a technical or liberal understanding of power, with one predominantly focused on North-South power relations, 11 on global power dynamics characteristic of a critical discourse and six focused on interrogating power relations at many levels including one’s own power or creating alternatives.

When it comes to the role of DE in politics, a majority of the facilitators interviewed talk about their sense that DE is not neutral and that, as such, it plays a political role (17). For Shane, *“we can’t be neutral on values. Values are political by their very generation ... for me, part of the strength of talking about politics with DE is not denying that it’s political. When you talk about global solidarity, when you talk about solidarity on key issues, all that stuff isn’t neutral. It can’t be. It’s about justice”*. Thirteen mention the role that DE plays in empowerment and effecting change, and for eight interviewees, DE is about power and giving voice to people’s experiences. Six of these speak of voice in individual terms – giving voice to the experience of participants – with two others drawing on a

critical discourse in terms of their understanding of what that means. For Anne, for example, the politics of DE involves understanding how ‘the system’ works to favour elites and *“the connection with DE is that you challenge”*.

### 3.3.3. Constraints on the Political

Twelve of those interviewed regard various elements of the institutional and organisational arrangements for DE as constraining in terms of the type of politics involved. Niamh thinks that *“it would have been nice to get it a little bit more political but you’re so constrained”*. She suggests that the political was at the heart of the origins of DE but that things have changed with the mainstreaming of DE in formal contexts:

*“I think that obviously, like, you know yourself, the roots of DE, I would say, were a lot more political than what DE is now ... they really viewed it, education, as something emancipatory, or something that had power to change things or to change society or to change people’s perspectives or to raise consciousness or whatever you want to say ... I don’t know that it’s as political as it is now. But you, in some ways, you could argue that it’s a good thing because it means that it has come in from the margins and it is more mainstream ... but with that mainstreaming and with the embeddedness, I suppose, you do compromise maybe a little bit of the radical part of it and the political element that was there before”*.

Brian is also conscious that the ideals are not necessarily matched by practice and he attributes this to its long-term critical nature and the resultant lack of funding allocated to it: *“because I think DE deals with power, I think an awful lot of funders won’t touch it with a barge pole because it would really mean changing things rather than a short-term plaster”*.

Patrick welcomes the new Politics and Society subject which has been introduced into senior-cycle education in the formal system, but he is wary of the link between DE and politics, especially in a schools’ context. He says that *“I would be uneasy about myself, trying to sway and trying to bring people to a certain viewpoint because I think you have to be really careful with that. That it’s not about what I think needs to be done. So, it’s not about my politics. It’s not about my beliefs. It’s about what people themselves in their life can do about it, you know”*. Áine talks from the point of view of initial teacher education about the reluctance of

*“particularly the newly qualified teachers and student teachers to rock the boat or to even show that they have political motivations. Am, but politics is central to all of this but at the same time you go into a school and you’re the last in and you are looking for a job, you don’t necessarily want to ... be too radical and that’s the, that’s, I think, the structural impediment to really doing something major, addressing the kind of inequalities. I think schools contribute to it ... they’re very conservative spaces. So many schools in Ireland are managed by a Catholic ethos ... so you’re walking into an institution, you can’t be too critical, you know, as an individual, it’s really difficult, so that’s what I mean by tricky. But at the same time, here we*

*are introducing a new subject into schools called 'Politics and Society', am, so if it's just about talking about, you know, how we're great then, and how democratic we are, and how even everything is in society, in Ireland, then it's all wrong. I mean it has to be critical".*

### **3.3.4. Key Informant Perspectives on the Politics of DE**

Five KIs were asked directly about whether they think DE is political or not. Two answered that it is “*political with a small 'p'*”, one that DE practitioners need to be careful in relation to the politics of DE and two others that while it is ‘political’ it is not either ‘political enough’ or ‘critical enough’. Mandy, who works with Irish Aid and who sees DE as “*political with a small p*”, says that “*you know, if you start doing, caring for the environment with children, you'll ultimately come to issues which might be called political. I think we are committed to the action component. It's in our definition, active global citizenship. It's also aligned with broad government policy on active global citizenship. We mightn't like what the local population say but you'll defend and support their right to say it*”. She goes on to say that “*we are a government department not an NGO. There are certain things which we cannot support. We cannot support them. We cannot put our logo on activities which are against government policy in certain areas. That makes sense ... campaigning becomes a problem if it's challenging government policy here at home. We cannot support that for logical reasons, you know, we are a government department*”. In this case Mandy's vision of what a small ‘p’ means is that it can include campaigning on issues but not on government policy. For Freja, “*we're all fighting the battle in education generally. I think we're quite good in terms of, like, taking a stand on issues, on getting involved, realising that maybe we can effect change, so that type of politics ... so I think politics is quite soft ... schools generally, I think schools are not radical places*”.

For Kathleen, DE is

*“deeply political and the question is how is it done? So whatever way it's done it's political and it's just a question of whether those delivering it are explicit about the politics of this area and how loaded and biased a lot of the material can be, that they're deeply contested issues that are being brought into learning spaces ... you would really try and encourage people to think deeply about where they stand on this stuff and hopefully it would lead somewhere, but the first part of the exploration was definitely the most important part because any serious activist believes in political education and thinking through the issues and questioning”.*

From quite a different perspective and starting point with the DE that she is engaged in, Izzy is cautious about the political in DE: “*it's not a political manifesto, do you know what I mean? It's not your right to tell that ... student, 'this is the way that you have to live now. You have to be politically active. You have to stay engaged. You have to get involved in climate issues'. That mightn't be their journey*”.

With regard to the role of DE in relation to addressing power, four KIs make specific reference to DE playing an empowering role. Freja talks about DE in a school context, *“starting with people in a school group and empowering them to do something else”*. Hannah sees DE as playing a key role in empowering individuals to play an active role in civil society. For Oscar, empowerment is associated with those involved in development. He talks about the importance of understanding power relations in development and DE practices and relationships and the need for DE to become a much more inclusive and diverse sector, especially regarding the experiences of people from the Global South in Ireland. Reflecting on the sector, Oscar argues that *“it hasn’t changed because before we had a few people in DE and now we have no one ... more people from the South need to be employed in DE ... we need to get more people from the South to actually inform our materials ... I don’t see, maybe it’s happening, but I don’t see any resources developed in Ethiopia in Irish schools”*.

For Kathleen, one of the most powerful kinds of DE is when it brings *“people in Ireland who are directly affected, or directly organising against X in Ireland and widening out their analysis and you know linking up with global South activists”*. In her view, education processes *“can be really depoliticising and empty out the analysis that needs to be part of education work”*. She argues for a popular education approach which is

*“about linking the local and the global and the local crisis that we’re living through and the global crisis that people further away have been living through for much longer. So, there was, instantly, a different dynamic because the people we were working with were really, really angry from the outset and were coming to meetings with a view to organising so they wanted education as a root to changing things. It was like a very different starting point. They were much more ready and they had much more at stake because they were groups working with communities and individuals that were losing out so much as a result of austerity here ... So, the education work became much more dynamic, much more urgent, in terms of people’s participation and engagement”*.

The power of DE to ‘give voice’ is mentioned by six KIs who understand it as a broader voice rather than as a vehicle for the voices of participants, as reflected in six facilitator interviews. Kathleen talks about DE being a more critical voice and Freja is critical of the lack of minority voices within DE. This understanding of voice is echoed by Oscar who calls for more *“Southern voices”* in DE but also for IDEA to better represent the voices of the smaller and more vulnerable organisations within the DE sector. Niall is very conscious of the role that IDEA plays as ‘a’ voice, *“a representative voice for DE rather than ‘the’ voice”*. Mandy sees that when the aid budget grew, it *“provided us with huge opportunities to have a voice on the international stage”*. Now she argues that there is no need to make the case for DE anymore because *“it’s part of globalisation and social media and public voice and citizens active, being active and it’s partly because it’s good practice that’s happening internationally for aid programmes to also have a strong public engagement focus with their own citizens”*.

### ***Constraints on the Political in DE – KIs***

Four of the KIs make reference to the challenge of realising the potential of DE. Niall focuses on the capacity and resource restrictions which affect DE:

*“there’s always a kind of a dynamic or even a tension between potential, you know, aims, aspirations and current and actual abilities ... in order to achieve that there needs to be x, y, z additional factors taken into account. So, whether that’s political support or financial support or more trained practitioners or ... more external things ... greater capacity within practitioners to have that flexibility and responsiveness or, you know, institutional buy-in from the likes of ETBs or formal education or otherwise”.*

For Hannah, NGOs are not realising their critical potential in relation to DE because their focus has become less critical and more business-like in trying to secure funding. She feels

*“that concept of civil society being a critical voice against duty bearers, that, in my view, personal view, has completely faded out of NGO mandates because I see there’s that real fragmentation ... that very traditional service-delivery model which has meant that the space for critical thinking and, dare I say, DE in a more citizenship innovative way, has become more and more restricted, partly as the funding has got more and more restricted ... most agencies DE is ... it’s more on the, PR’s too strong a word, it’s more of the profile, it’s more around the public profiling than a genuinely critical voice”.*

In terms of the political potential of DE, Oscar feels *“there’s always good intentions but our intentions are not realised”*. He says that there’s a tension between development educators’ own interests to protect their jobs, and their willingness to question existing messages related to development cooperation. For Izzy, the mismatch between potential and reality is less about competing interests in the sector and more about the vagaries associated with trying to fit human practice, which can be varied and flawed, into neat boxes:

*“I think people’s understanding of it [DE] is one thing, the realities are quite different ... you’re dealing with people so you’re dealing with ups and downs, you’re dealing with good days and bad days and sometimes what we’re claiming we’re doing, we’re not, or we’re doing something different. It doesn’t fit neatly. That’s the thing about it, it really doesn’t fit. So, you might have 12 sessions. Eleven of them might be fantastic. One might be absolute rubbish where you really wish you hadn’t done it and it was a disaster. But somehow, we’re not allowed to really unpack our failures. We’re not allowed to question ourselves as organisations or facilitators”.*

Further considering the limitations of DE contexts and that things don’t fit neatly into timeframes, in this case, Izzy makes the point that it’s *“insane to expect a shift in attitudes in 90 minutes or a day or two days ... ‘by the end of this session participants will have changed their attitudes to global inequality in development in general’ – impossible. Impossible, and also that timeframe, not just the physical timeframe, but that it’s going to happen between nine o’clock, hopefully not at lunchtime, but before five, you know”*.

For Kathleen, it is not necessarily that there is a disjoint between the potential and the realisation of that potential but that the contexts where DE is promoted are not that critical in the first place. Describing schools and teaching as ‘deeply conservative’, she outlines the inability on the part of teachers, those upon whom a lot of the DE burden is placed, to address complex issues. Describing the work she did with teachers as ‘intense’ and not ‘one-off’, she explains that *“I found it very difficult to shift teachers’ perspectives from quite a charitable approach, even though they were engaging in recognising the deficiencies of that approach but yet, when they came to propose a project with their students or an action, it remained, it often remained very uncritical, and looking back I am a bit at a loss as to how that can be changed”*. She acknowledges that it’s partly a structural problem where teachers are so busy, *“but there just doesn’t seem to be an environment among teachers where they are political and then NGOs come in and top that up and nurture it and facilitate whereas what you’re doing is kind of starting from the beginning and I just wonder do NGOs have the capacity to pull that off”*.

### **Conclusion – Talk of DE in Ireland**

As outlined throughout this chapter, in their interviews facilitators reflect upon the various dimensions of DE identified in the literature, as well as the aims, values and politics of DE. I have introduced findings in relation to each of these in turn, in particular on DE and on KI interviews. I use the framework of discourses of DE discussed in the literature review to help categorise the discourses that facilitators draw upon in their talk. In turn, I use DE interview talk to illustrate and expand the framework for understanding discourses of DE drawn from the literature.

In summary, it can be seen that interviewees use a range of concepts to talk about the knowledge and understanding they associate with DE. They talk about acquiring knowledge, about content and about awareness raising. Mostly they talk of understanding, including of ‘root causes’ or of development issues more broadly. There is also talk of challenging narratives, assumptions and stereotypes. From the point of view of skills, there are references to critical thinking and analytical skills, skills in making connections, e.g., local-global connections, and collaboration skills. Facilitators talk of individual engagement, of reflection, critical reflection and various types of critical thinking and analytical processes. Collaboration skills relate to dialogue, co-operative learning, confidence-building, empowerment and democratic engagement. Focus on action and activism is seen as central to the DE process with many people focusing more on the ‘action component’ and some talking more about ‘activism’. There are references to individual actions that people can take, changing lifestyles, mindsets or collective actions including campaigning and advocacy. While most are concerned not to be prescriptive about actions and many see action as part of a praxis cycle, some highlight the

superficiality associated with actions which are constrained by learning contexts or linear notions of DE as education towards action. In relation to learning processes, key issues highlighted are the importance of safe spaces which value diversity, active and participatory learning processes and experiential learning which is learner-centred. Again, a key feature of talk in this regard is non-prescriptive, process-oriented learning contexts as part of DE. Though some talk about these in quite an individualised way – DE as a good learning experience for the learner – many focus on it in terms of spaces for critical reflection, where multiple perspectives are respected and alternatives explored. Again, the issue of process comes to the fore for some when they talk about DE as a learning process with more focus ‘on the process than the outcome’.

Talk of the aims of DE are categorised based on facilitators’ references to their visions for the world, for education, for development and for the learner. Different assumptions are evident in how facilitators talk about these various visions with some focusing more on the individual and others more on the aim of DE to mobilise learners for action on equality issues in the global South, for example. Linked with values, many see DE as playing a role in enabling learners to engage in action for justice or in questioning their own assumptions about development and global relationships. Facilitators see values as central to DE, though not without challenges. While there is a lot of talk of different values at the heart of DE, e.g., justice, equality, human rights, sustainability, empathy, and solidarity, I have categorised these under a framing of justice as this appears to be the one central value for all. In that case, there are different emphases in how facilitators talk about justice, e.g., on the economic, on inclusion, and on good relationships, with different underlying assumptions about the role of facilitators and learners in the world and in the construction of change or transformation. There is a general emphasis on non-prescription and, for some, on questioning the value bases which underpin DE. Facilitators talk about the politics of DE and refer to different understandings of power and the role that DE plays in power and politics. Many are hesitant to prescribe but see that DE is not neutral and that it has a role to play as a tool for realising change, in terms of facilitating analysis of how power works at local and global levels and in terms of interrogating the power of those involved in DE. Despite this, interviewees highlight various constraints on realising the political potential of DE.

In the next chapter, I explore the factors which facilitators and KIs see as shaping these various discourses of DE in Ireland before returning to an analysis of discourses in Chapter Eight. Overall, as discussed in detail in Chapter Eight, it becomes clear that the most common discourse drawn upon is that of the critical, though there is evidence particularly of a liberal, North-South and post-critical discourse in relation to some aspects of DE and among some groups.



## Chapter Seven: Factors Shaping Discourses of DE in Ireland

### Introduction

Building on findings in relation to discourses of DE in Ireland, in this chapter I address the factors shaping these discourses. Though this is an extremely broad area, questions asked related to policy and practice, the organisational and funding context and a specific question about who, if anyone, facilitators think is ‘driving’ or ‘setting’ the DE ‘agenda’ in Ireland. Facilitators highlight influences on discourses including the international and national policy context; the drive towards accountability, governance and measuring results, associated, for some, with new managerialism and neoliberal ‘efficiency’; the recession and resource tensions arising from it; the roles of key actors and institutions such as Irish Aid, the Irish Development Education Association (IDEA), Dóchas and the NGDOs; and relations within the sector. While some of these factors are regarded as constraints, e.g., dependence on Irish Aid funding for DE, others are seen as enablers, e.g., the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Findings show that facilitators regard Irish Aid as playing a key role in influencing DE policy and practice in Ireland through their funding position and mechanisms, through accountability, measurement and governance procedures and through working relationships in a small DE sector, especially with IDEA, NGDOs and strategic partnerships. Relations within the sector are regarded as serving the interests of some more than others, with smaller, more financially vulnerable organisations less likely to be able to compete in a governance, accountability and results-focused DE environment. Though the precise influence of these factors on DE discourses is hard to identify, facilitators are clear that they shape the DE context of policy and practice and relations within which discourses of DE are constructed and where understandings of it are negotiated. These issues are discussed in detail throughout this chapter.

### 1. 'Who is Driving the DE Agenda?'

In answer to who they think is ‘shaping’ or ‘driving’ the development agenda or agendas in Ireland, if anyone, 10 facilitators make reference to Irish Aid, with one specific reference to the Departments of Public Sector Reform and Finance. There is also a strong sense that the DE sector in general, or specific organisations within the sector play a role, with 6 interviewees mentioning the sector in general, 6 referring to IDEA, 3 to Dóchas and 2 to the ‘big NGDOs’, understood in DE as organisations such as Trócaire, Concern Worldwide and Gorta- Self Help Africa<sup>16</sup>. In a few cases,

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<sup>16</sup> Information on these organisations can be found on their websites: [www.trocaire.org](http://www.trocaire.org); [www.concern.net](http://www.concern.net); and [www.selfhelpafrica.org](http://www.selfhelpafrica.org)

international and national policy frameworks are mentioned as ‘driving the DE agenda’, with 2 people referring to the SDGs. One person also highlights what she calls ‘the market driven agenda’ and the poor position of DE within Irish Aid as having an influence. Fiona suggests that *“one of the forces shaping it is the department of public sector reform and the department of finance”*. She goes on to say that *“the other is, I think, the DE unit and a commitment to DE. I think they have to fight for it within that wider department”*.

### **1.1. Key Informant Perspectives on Who is Driving the DE Agenda in Ireland**

When asked who they regard as the drivers of or as shaping DE in the Irish context (all KIs were asked this question), 4 see Irish Aid as playing an influential role through policy and funding. For Kathleen they play a *“disproportionately influential”* role in the Irish sector. Mandy, who works with Irish Aid, initially says that Irish Aid does not set the agenda, arguing that groups in receipt of Irish Aid funding can dictate what issues they address in their DE work. On the other hand, she says that IA does play a significant role through funding of projects: *“well it’s true to say that over the last 5 years or so, Irish Aid, which often drives the agenda for many of the NGOs because we are the funding source, has focused really primarily on the formal education sector”*. The focus on Irish Aid as setting the agenda is also highlighted by Hannah, Kathleen and Oscar. Kathleen refers directly to their role in funding organisations within the Irish DE sector: *“so many of the DE organisations are primarily dependent on Irish Aid. They follow what Irish Aid want, unwillingly in some cases... Sometimes what Irish Aid wants and what the NGOs want are the same thing but definitely there’s high caution among organisations that are Irish Aid funded because Irish Aid became so much more engaged in monitoring the activism of DE NGOs, so that was huge”*.

Five KIs and 2 Irish Aid officials suggest that ‘the sector’ plays a key role in driving or shaping DE in Ireland. For Hannah, NGOs play a role alongside other institutional drivers. She differentiates between what she calls *“institutional”* drivers such as funding, the results-based management agenda and the service-delivery model, from *“internal organisational drivers”*. She critically reflects on the changes to NGOs in their approach in recent years:

*“they’re obviously big drivers. I think the other big driver to me, and I don’t have any proof of this whatsoever, is the whole results agenda... for me I see in the NGO world there’s been this real drive towards a service-delivery model which doesn’t give the space or you know, I would have always said that you know the likes of Trócaire have this really strong mandate around a rights-based approach and that rights-based approach has DE right at the core because it’s around the empowerment of individuals into the collective and to influence but to me, that mandate was being chipped away because of the pressures of funding and it was natural then, as you got more business people in, I mean look, look at the sector in terms of the white knights in shining armour, they’re all from the business sector... it comes back to looking at the culture of organisations and NGOs and how that’s dramatically changed”*.

From an Irish Aid point of view, Kate says that

*“the civil society has a huge role... and the reason it has is because civil society is so close to government in Ireland. I don't care what anybody says ... the linkages and the meetings, formal, informal, the phone calls etc. We all rely on each other. If we didn't, we didn't have to rely on education institutions or am NGOs to do DE then why would we be on the phone so much to them? Why are they around the table with us when we need something... so I think that DE policy is informed by the various actors. It's more informed now by other government departments than it used to be before... DE, it is so much informed by that network of people that includes the NGOs, the education sector, Europe a little bit as well but not as much as you might think”.*

Niall also thinks that there are many drivers of DE in Ireland. These include the lack of capacity within organisations to engage in DE, relations within the sector and the international policy agenda, particularly the SDGs: *“If you're on a day and a half a week and you've got to deliver a programme of activity, you're not going to have the ability to have conversations like this even, you know. So, I think that's a big shaping”.*

In summary, it is clear that for both facilitators and KIs, key drivers of DE are Irish Aid and relations within the sector as well as international and national policy. These issues are discussed in detail in the sections below. While they influence what passes as DE in policy, they also create the boundaries around understandings of what constitutes DE practice through funding.

## **2. DE Policy and the Policy Context**

### **2.1. Key Findings on Policy**

Among the factors shaping discourses of DE is the influence of the policy landscape, both internationally and in Ireland. The agreement of the SDGs is regarded by many of the facilitators as providing an enabling environment for DE in Ireland. They believe that as goal 4.7 specifically places value on global citizenship education, it has a knock-on effect in support for it by government in Ireland. Its focus on universalism or on globalisation and connectivity rather than 'North-South' development is also valued by most of those who mention the SDGs.

### **2.2. The International Policy Landscape**

Though only two facilitators make direct reference to policy as setting the agenda in relation to DE in Ireland, on closer inspection, many facilitators regard the international policy landscape as influential.

The sustainable development goals (SDGs) agreed in 2016 are referred to by 14 interviewees, with 10 making reference to EU DE organisational or policy structures or funding arrangements. A small number mention other international policy frameworks which they regard as important in DE, e.g., UNESCO's Global Citizenship Education Initiative (2). There is only one reference to international education policy agendas such as 'education for all' (EFA) or the Bologna agreement, i.e., reference to the OECD PISA (programme for international student assessment)<sup>17</sup>.

Among those who comment on the SDGs, the majority (13) see them as providing an enabling environment for DE in Ireland, with the promotion of global citizenship education and its growing importance in the light of an understanding of problems and responsibilities for them as being 'global'. This is linked to goal 4.7 of the SDGs (Robert) and the associated importance given to global citizenship education. Deirdre sees global citizenship education as *"gaining more prominence now between UNESCO and some of the other initiatives like the Global Education First initiative and this then kind of filters down to more of the national level ... there is more of an understanding and recognition that people need to be able to work with people from different backgrounds and the values that underpin DE are very strongly aligned to that"*.

The SDGs are also regarded as significant by facilitators as they associate them with a change in understanding of global development, associating the SDGs with "universalism" (Martin), and, according to Brian, the requirement *"to look at things in a more or an interconnected way"*. Catherine sees this in terms of a *"shift ... responsibility is for all. It is not for industrialised nations or wealthier nations to say 'well poorer countries need to do this'. There is that formal recognition that root causes actually might exist in over-consumption or the lifestyles of those living in wealthy countries. That is a shift in mindset and DE is there primarily to create that, so it has a huge role"*.

Despite these positive comments about the influence and potential of the SDGs to help frame DE in terms of local-global interconnectivity, Maeve acknowledges that *"they are not perfect"* and Fiona and Liz are very critical of them, Fiona from the point of view of their promotion of *"the growth model"* and Liz is concerned that they might represent an *"empty incantation"* (following reference to Samir Amin's work) if they become a *"tick box exercise"*.

As outlined here, most of the references to the international policy context are to the SDGs. It is surprising how few references there are to accountability (eight references among six interviewees), with none of these referring directly to the Paris accords or subsequent accountability and good governance agreements in international development. Indeed, COP21, which was a major climate change conference held in 2015, is only mentioned by two interviewees, and references to governance (among four interviewees only) do not refer to international governance mechanisms or policies.

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<sup>17</sup> Information available from: [www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org)

### 2.3. The National Policy Landscape

Unsurprisingly, with regard to the national policy landscape, there is a lot of reference to the Irish Aid DE strategy, published in December 2016, which was in development when interviews were being conducted. Seventeen of those interviewed make reference to it and among those who see it as having an important influence on DE in the sector (10), the Irish Aid strategy is regarded as significant because it helps to frame the work of those organisations funded by it (Fiona) – in this case nearly all of those involved in the research (20/21). While Catherine regards the strategy as very important in terms of funding for DE, she suggests that DE will only have limited impact as long as it is funded through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). She argues for closer involvement by the Department of Education and Skills (DES). Bríd also feels some tension in relation to the role of Irish Aid in the development of the strategy: *“I just feel it, a little bit of a lack of leadership from Irish Aid on this”*.

Four interviewees argue for the need for a sector-wide strategic plan or vision for DE which is different to that of Irish Aid. In the absence of such a strategy, Patrick feels that Irish Aid has too much power to shape DE thinking and practice: *“We’re being dictated by Irish Aid, its Worldwide Global Schools funding the sort of activities that Irish Aid would like to see funded so I don’t actually see, I think we don’t have a clear policy that we don’t have a policy or strategy ... it’s coming from Irish Aid”*. Patrick feels that civil society is playing a role in allowing Irish Aid to control the agenda of DE policy and he feels the need for a sector-wide policy.

Aside from the DE strategy, many facilitators talk about the policy landscape as having changed in recent years. Facilitators point to multiple policy influences on the DE landscape in Ireland. For Niamh, the policy landscape is

*“fractured, for starters, incoherent, inappropriate and changing ... So, it’s coming from the teaching council, coming from the Department of Education and that’s just the education. But then the actual sort of specific DE strategy or policy context are all basically coming from the Department of Foreign Affairs ... so off the top of my head there is five or six different policy documents, all of which are coming from different perspectives, all of which are being done by different education providers and all of which have different relevance in a practice context”*.

Ten make reference to government policy and broadly to DFAT policies on international development cooperation. The strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) features very highly (50 references) for about half of those interviewed (10 interviewees), and most particularly those working in formal education and among DE organisations. There are also references to cross-departmental policies by six and curriculum policy by five interviewees. Overall, apart from the Irish Aid DE

strategy, those involved in international NGOs and the community education sector do not seem to focus too much on specific national level policies or strategies.

#### **2.4. Key Informant Perspectives on the Policy Landscape**

Of the nine KIs, I asked six of them directly about the policy context for DE in Ireland. Only one of them makes specific reference to the SDGs and its related Agenda 2030 when asked about the drivers of DE. On the other hand, in interviews overall beyond that specific question, five KIs make reference to the SDGs and/or Agenda 2030. At a national level, in each case five KIs make reference to the DE strategy and the GENE review processes, with five also making reference to DFAT or government policies. Both IA staff members make reference to specific government policies or strategies beyond that of DE, *One World One Future* (Irish Aid, 2013) and *The Global Island* (DFAT, 2015). For five KIs, curriculum change and policy is important and four KIs make reference to the strategy on ESD. In all, it is clear that policy emerges more strongly with five of the KIs rather than the others, including Kate and Mandy, who both work in Irish Aid.

Most issues identified by KIs confirm points made about policy by facilitators. Freja, for example, talks about curriculum policy opportunities. She explains that *“the DE community’s relationship with the NCCA has been just so important and a lot of that is due to key people ... who had a foot in both camps, you know, but there are just, there’s just like opportunity after opportunity, subjects come up for consultation for dev ed to make a statement and to influence policy and we’ve been so successful at that. And then in broader things like nationally the ESD strategy and things, like, so it’s been really successful and I think it’s put dev ed on the map educationally”*.

In relation to national policy, two points stand out as different to the points made by DEFs in interviews. The first is a point about policy coherence. For Kate, this involves a *“whole-of-government approach”*. She talks about it with reference to the importance of policy development for advancing DE in Ireland: *“it starts off very small but really you don’t want anything huge. What you want is reference points, and once you have reference points in policy documents or the likes of SDGs ... that’s the indication that you’re winning the battle, that it would get to a stage and I don’t think it’s far away where in actual fact DE is just a given”*. For Hannah, coherence is important in terms of promoting the coherence between DE and the *“SDG universal agenda. It shouldn’t be about domestic and international”*. Kathleen also values coherence in terms of breaking down a local-global or ‘domestic’ and ‘international’ divide: *“The DE sector has come, unfortunately, to reflect the conservative shift on development questions that’s happened in government especially on policy coherence questions where it affects, where it’s about Ireland’s policies at home and how they’re affecting people further away ... so in a way what would be much more healthy for the future is if there*

*wasn't this local-global divide in DE organisations and they became much more invested in, you know, in justice at home as well as abroad".*

### **3. The Influence of Irish Aid**

While policy is considered influential on DE discourses, even more so is the role and position of Irish Aid. This section focuses on its influence. As indicated below, much of this influence is seen to be derived from its position as funder and official driver of policy on DE in Ireland. Relative to its actual funding of DE, it appears to exert a disproportionate influence in the imagination of facilitators, especially when compared to other funders, i.e., NGOs or the EU. These issues are discussed in detail below.

#### **3.1. Key Findings on the Influence of Irish Aid**

The influence of Irish Aid within the sector is identified by 18 of the 21 facilitators interviewed. Overall, Irish Aid is seen to exert its dominance overtly through its funding allocations and conditions but it also makes direct efforts to set boundaries on the activities of those it funds – phonecalls, meetings and through the denial of funding. Its influence is seen by some as being hegemonic, e.g., they are described in terms of ‘a colossus’, whereby even those who do not approve of the conditions attached to funding are dependent on them. While some view the hegemony of Irish Aid as dominating, few if any facilitators view them as deterministic with a sense that IDEA and the NGOs, at the very least, also exert some influence on Irish Aid within the sector. At the same time, as indicated below, some facilitators are concerned about the ‘cosy’ relationship between Irish Aid and IDEA on the one hand and between Irish Aid and NGOs on the other.

Concerns arise among facilitators re: Irish Aid dominance with reference to the extent to which DE is supported; and the kind of DE supported or not by Irish Aid. In terms of the position of DE in Irish Aid, official policy ‘speak’ claims a central role for DE within development cooperation. At the same time, facilitators are cautious of this and questions are raised about inadequate and fluid staffing within Irish Aid for DE; and the extent of cuts to DE since the recession, even by comparison with other aspects of Development Cooperation. These concerns are countered by those KIs who work for Irish Aid, both of whom argue that while the position of DE used to be weak, it has become much more secure in recent years. This is a result, according to Kate, of long-term lobbying on the part of those within Irish Aid with other departments as well as the more supportive policy environment.

### **3.2. Irish Aid's Position as Funder**

All facilitators interviewed make some reference to Irish Aid, with a total of 360 references among all 21 interviewees, with one person mentioning Irish Aid only once. A key point which emerges, among 17, is its role as funder, which gives Irish Aid positional power in the sector. According to Tom, *“it’s because they’ve got all the money. So, if they’ve got all the resources and they determine the basis on which you apply for that funding, so for example, if they devise the criteria and they set the goals and the objectives upon which you apply for funds then I think it’s almost inevitable that they will set the agenda within DE. I think the only traction we would have with them would be if we were able to influence the formulation of those values and objectives and goals within their plan”*. Dónal describes what he sees as this dominance as follows: *“Irish Aid is the major site of energy around DE. If Irish Aid get a cold, we all get flu. If Irish Aid decide we’re not funding this, we’re not funding that, we all panic and everybody starts running around like headless chickens looking for money. And that shows the lack of maturity, the lack of common sense, the lack of belief”*. He explains how he sees this power operating in practice: *“They’re micro-managing what goes on. Irish Aid have tried over the years to somehow, I won’t use the word interfere, but strongly influence”*.

Mary argues that *“because a lot of people are depending on the funding so they’re listening to what Irish Aid say so, you know, they follow suit with what they’re doing”*. Mary also feels that the government is driving the DE policy agenda in Ireland, along with those who subscribe to this agenda and who can adapt to the results-based management ‘climate’. Though Irish Aid, as the most significant funder, is regarded as particularly influential, other funders are also seen as important, e.g., the EU (Siobhán), as are other government departments, e.g., the Department of Education and Skills (Deirdre).

#### **3.2.1. Key Informant Perspectives on Irish Aid's Position as Funder**

References to the power or influence of Irish Aid as a funder and its effects on the DE practice of organisations within the sector are widespread among the KIs, with only one of them regarding Irish Aid as not particularly influential (Izzy). Three talk of organisations in the sector being dependent on Irish Aid for funding and one mentions that IA drives the agenda for those organisations it funds, using the term ‘oppressive influence’ in this regard.

In terms of overt attempts to influence organisations it funds, Damien, for example, talks about the influence that government in general and Irish Aid more specifically has exerted on organisations’ funding of projects. He illustrates this with reference to an example of a controversy over the funding of a particular activity and *“the terrible kerfuffle that was caused with the Taoiseach’s office getting*



*onto finance and finance getting on to foreign affairs and foreign affairs getting on to Irish Aid and Irish Aid screaming at everybody in the sector ‘who funded that fucking thing?’*” He describes the control that Irish Aid tried to exert over the organisation’s activities through its attempt to control budgets and spending within the organisation, even for non-Irish Aid funded activities. For him, this attempt at control by Irish Aid is summed up in a comment from a member of Irish Aid staff who, when there was disagreement over an issue, said to him that *“you wouldn’t exist if we didn’t fund you”*.

Kathleen talks about the relative lack of criticism in the DE sector when DE funding was cut, following the recession, from 2008 onwards. This relates to more internalised influence of Irish Aid in terms of organisations’

*“belief that, you know, if you bite the hand that feeds you’ll suffer more, which in many ways can be true, and then people fearing for how it would affect future funding decisions in relation to their organization ... So, I think people ran for cover and just tried to survive and tried to work hard to win the funding and to adjust their work to whatever the funding criteria were and got really, really, really busy fundraising, which took over the time of so many people and people then did just way more overtime you know ... so the pressure was enormous to just pull off, you know, staying open”*.

Though Freja argues that the sector has never had as much influence with Irish Aid as it does now and that Irish Aid *“doesn’t have the capacity to drive anything”*, she does comment that it has a type of supreme power associated with being able to cancel funding of DE in Ireland altogether: *“they could jettison it and no one in Irish Aid would object apart from a few people who are specialised”*.

### **3.3. Funding of DE among Research Participants**

Figure 7.1. draws on questionnaires where participants were asked to estimate the proportion of their DE budget coming from different sources. It highlights that in terms of the percentage of DE funded, the most significant source of funding for DE among those involved in the research is Irish Aid. This is especially the case for five organisations or groups which are said to be more than 60 per cent dependent on Irish Aid funding. At the same time, 10 facilitators identify grants from the European Commission – three of whom receive 21–40 per cent of funding from this source. Recipients of this funding come from formal, ITE, NGDO and DE organisation categories, with none from adult and community education. Grants from Trócaire and Concern generally represent up to 20 per cent of funding for the DE work in the organisations of nine participants. When these figures are examined, it becomes clear that four of these nine work with DE organisations, though both Concern and Trócaire also distribute grants for DE in the formal, ITE, youth and other NGDO categories. Estimates for the proportion of ‘own fundraising’ going to DE are highest among those in NGDOs or in community and DE organisations, with one of the NGDOs estimating up to 20 per cent, another 21–40 per cent of own

funding on DE and a third using 41–60 per cent. Despite its relative significance, overall, Figure 7.1. shows more diverse sources of funding than the focus on Irish Aid in talk among facilitators might suggest.

**Figure 7.1. Sources of DE Funding Among Those Who Completed Questionnaires**

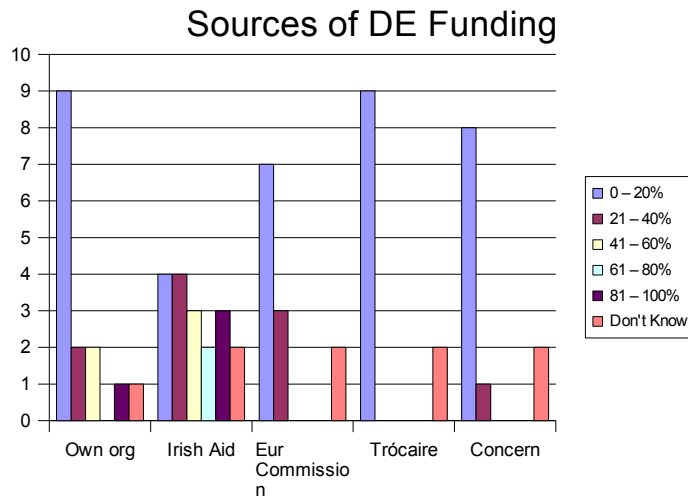
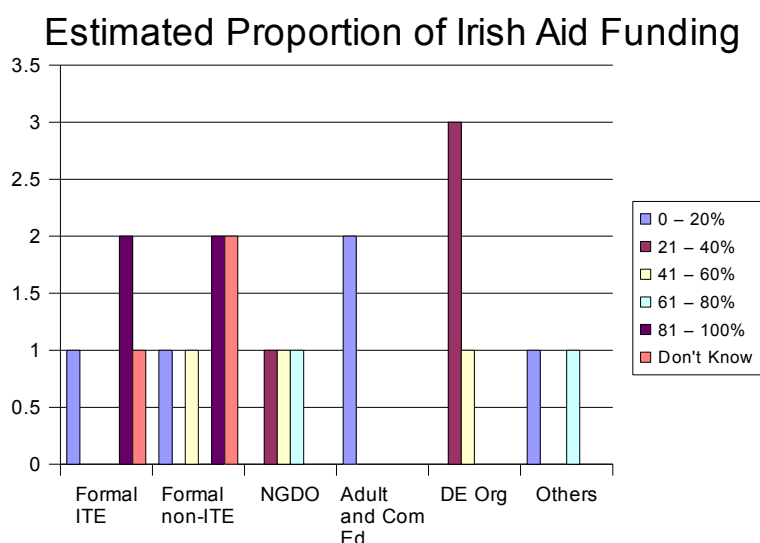


Figure 7.2. breaks down Irish Aid funding only with reference to each sector. There, it is apparent that those within the formal sector tend to receive a higher proportion of their funding from Irish Aid than others. The relatively lower proportions of funding from other categories does not mean that they are not as reliant on this funding, just that they don't receive proportionately as much, e.g., of the four in DE organisations, three estimate that they receive 21–40 per cent of funding from Irish Aid and the other between 41–60 per cent. It is interesting to note that a relatively small proportion of Irish Aid funding is going to participants in the adult and community education sector, though a significant proportion of funding for DE in the youth context represented in the questionnaire comes from Irish Aid, i.e., 61–80 per cent.

**Figure 2: Estimated Proportion of Irish Aid Funding for DE**



In interviews facilitators also identify additional issues re: funding tensions and positions in the field. There are points related to Irish Aid and its organisation of funding, known as ‘funding modalities’, as well as to funding in relation to Dóchas and IDEA; the fall-out from funding cuts arising from reductions in the Irish Aid budget; and how funding relations are organised and structured.

Though many facilitators are positive that Irish Aid funds DE, there is criticism of funding modalities, and some express concern about the conditions attached to funding and their effects on DE practice in Ireland. The challenge of funding dependency is mentioned by nine and insufficient funding is an issue for eight of the facilitators interviewed. For most of them, this is framed more in terms of accessing existing funding rather than a direct criticism of the level of government funding available. Tom feels that “*DE was targeted by previous governments during the worst of the cuts. It was basically ‘there’s no votes in Africa so we’ll cut aid and DE’, which was, as I say, very, very cynical*”. He thinks that it’s “*because it’s so critical and because it’s uncomfortable for governments to support work which is critical of them, which it regularly is and of course it should be. So, I think that’s one of the reasons, traditionally, why it has been so poorly funded ... We’re more dependent on Irish Aid today than we’ve ever been and I don’t know what the answer to that one is. It’s tough*”.

Fiona also focuses on the cuts to funding in the sector in the light of the financial crisis:

*the whole crisis has been a real learning for people. And maybe a reminder to people, people knew it years back, that you get tied up in state structures, tied up, and you get sort of co-opted and you don’t even realise and I, and this is very informed by my experience in the community sector but I think you don’t even realise how your edges are blunted or what direction that you end up taking, you know, that you become, despite your best efforts, often, you become funding led. It’s a dynamic process and it’s hard to resist”.*

Most DE facilitators are aware of the many different funding arrangements or what they often call ‘modalities’ in the sector. In most cases, when describing different structures for funding people refer to Irish Aid funding, but there are also references to NGO and EU funding. Very few people (2) make any reference to philanthropic or business funding arrangements. As suggested in Table 7.8. (above), common among DE facilitators is a criticism of how Irish Aid funding is organised and structured. Criticism is most acute of Irish Aid’s practice, since 2011, of distributing a significant amount of funding to smaller DE organisations within the sector through annual grants, with most facilitators in favour of multi-annual funding in its place.

### 3.3.1. Strategic Partnerships

In recent years there has been a move on the part of Irish Aid to finance DE activity through what are called ‘strategic partnerships’.<sup>18</sup> While five facilitators see the move towards strategic partnerships and working in consortiums as a more effective way to organise and fund DE activities in Ireland, three of them are wary of them in terms of the greater potential influence they give Irish Aid and organisations funded in this way on DE in Ireland. For example, while Deirdre highlights the advantages of working through strategic partnerships, she also identifies the weaknesses: *“I think strategic partnerships are positive in that regard in terms of providing more continuity of programming but I think they also do imply that Irish Aid likes to have greater input on the programme and maybe more influence around the programme, so that has tensions there as well, you know, in terms of maybe the autonomy of the organisation”*.

The benefits of ‘multi-annual funding’ for those in strategic partnerships with Irish Aid is highlighted by four facilitators. Niamh says that even in that case there’s no guarantee of funding from year to year:

*“You still have to do your reporting requirements. And we’re like ‘of course, we know that’. So, like you were never fully secure anyway. I think it’s probably a better model. I think that it shows that they have a little bit of trust in you as a practitioner. For a lot of stuff, we’re left on our own. We’re left to our own devices. We are trusted. But it’s just when kind of planning stuff comes up or queries come up or it reveals that we’re coming really from different perspectives”*.

Deirdre feels *“very lucky ... to benefit from multi-annual funding. However even those have significant limitations because invariably sometimes arrangements aren’t put in place in sufficient time to support the programme continuing seamlessly and the funding is not sufficient to actually cover the needs or requirements of the project”*.

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<sup>18</sup> There are currently five such partnerships in place between Irish Aid and other organisations for the delivery of DE: DICE, SUAS, IDEA, Worldwise Global Schools an [developmenteducation.ie](http://developmenteducation.ie), three of which are comprised of consortiums.

### 3.3.2. Civil Society Funding and DE

In addition, there are criticisms (among six facilitators) of a policy decision on the part of Irish Aid in 2016 to change the terms under which programme partners such as the NGDOs would be in receipt of DE funding through the civil society programme grants. The new requirement on NGO partners to do ‘public engagement’ – promotion of the work of Irish Aid or of Irish Aid-funded NGO work – is seen, by them, to signal a shift away from an emphasis on DE towards that of awareness raising or promotion. Patrick is in favour of these changes because he feels that it “*says to the larger NGOs, you’re either in or out. You’re either going to do this well or you’re not going to do this at all, and I think that’s good, you know*”. Mary feels that the latest arrangements with the programme funding partners has led to a separation between public engagement and DE:

*“they’ve made the distinction between public engagement and DE and then public relations and fundraising which they don’t fund but with public engagement what’s coming across to me is, so it’s about reach, it’s about a particular viewpoint in that way that something that’s in line with campaigns, I think, but it’s also about support for the development cooperation programme, which I think is a shift away, maybe, for DE. They’re saying it’s not DE but this is something that’s important to us, it’s public engagement and that’s getting a bit more, getting a bit more important, actually. So, all the programme funding applications are to invest in public engagement and it’s optional to invest in DE”.*

### 3.3.3. Effects of Funding Arrangements on Time Availability and Working Conditions

A key issue which has arisen, among ten, is the administrative burden that facilitators feel in relation to funding applications and reporting. Niamh explains:

*“for example, around October, November the exclusive work I do for X [organisation] is the application for Irish Aid. And then when it comes to April and May the exclusive work I do for X is on the report. So, it doesn’t make sense for four months out of an already contracted academic year, if you take out the Summer, of the time that I spend in the organisation doing the bureaucracy element of it ... There’s a lot of turnover in staff but there’s also a high percentage of time wasted on bureaucracy and on form filling-in and the monitoring and evaluation requirements that they need for our little project, you know, is just, it’s disgraceful”.*

Siobhán explains that

*“it’s a massive problem at the moment, workload. A lot of organisations have lost staff and people that are already there are double jobbing or their hours have been cut or they’ve still expected to do. It’s so much of a problem that I think, there’s an expectation, I don’t know if it’s an expectation from funders or if it’s an expectation that people making applications have of funders’ expectations, if you know what I mean, but this idea that you have to reinvent yourself, particularly for annual funding and that it isn’t ok to just do what you did last year with a different group of people”.*

Catherine also explains that the nature of funding leaves facilitators in a precarious position in terms of their contracts of employment: *“all of us who work in here, we’re on a contract for the next year. We don’t know after that, you know, you may not have a job anymore ... We’re not sure ... That can be quite damaging or it can be de-motivating”*. This is evident to a lot of people in terms of how staff move from one organisation to another: *“to give an example, if you go to a conference. Somebody you knew was in IDEA, now they’re in SUAS. Somebody you knew was in SUAS, now they’re in, like, Worldwise. And that is constantly happening, that people are moving around because you know something has come up in Dóchas and their funding finished and even though they think it might be coming through in two months, they don’t know for definite so they take something else. That is just classic DE sector”*. It is also evident in the amount of part-time working in DE. Tom says that *“I was talking to a colleague recently and she was saying ‘there’s so many people in our sector now working part-time’ and had their hours cut. You know they just don’t have the same capacity that they used to have because of reduced support. I know colleagues who have lost their jobs as a result of what’s happened so I think it’s difficult to be very optimistic regarding the future”*. Mary also makes the point that because funding is largely for activities, there is little time for collaboration.

In a context where funding cuts have caused additional administrative burdens and where public engagement and strategic partnerships are being promoted and supported, the issue of what kinds of discourses of DE are considered legitimate becomes a struggle between Irish Aid and NGOs, as well as funding recipients, with the latter unlikely to challenge the type of DE promoted by Irish Aid. These issues are discussed in detail in Chapter Eight.

#### **3.3.4. Key Informant Perspectives on IA Funding**

As in other sectors which survive on state funding and where there have been severe cuts in funding, funding dependence or insufficient resources, it is common to talk about funding in DE circles. All KIs talk about funding in way or another. Five KIs make some reference to annual grants with four people critical of them, and five KIs reflect on changes to DE requirements in civil society programme grants. Kate refers to the annual grants as ‘silly’. Oscar is critical of annual grants from Irish Aid and the lack of sufficient funding for DE staff within smaller organisations: *“the reason why I left was because there was no money. Money came in but it was not enough to pay me. The Irish Aid budget is more activities than actually salaries, and money coming from Trócaire is the matching funding for Irish Aid. So, there is money for activities but there is no money for salaries. So that’s a problem”*. Niall is very concerned about the low levels of funding to DE and its resultant effects on the capacity of organisations within the sector to *“not deliver on the promise of”* the Irish Aid strategy: *“there are current and ongoing issues around capacity in terms of people operating on a shoestring, people operating on minimal staff, those staff who are there who have the expertise and maybe on reduced*

*hours and just people getting fed up, you know”.*

Though he doesn't like the term 'funding dependency', Niall feels that the fact that Irish Aid *“are the single largest donor for the sector and that there isn't anybody else that's close within the Irish context as a funder ... that has a particular effect on the whole relationship between Irish Aid and the sector”*. On Irish Aid's annual grants, Freja thinks *“they'd prefer to get rid of, they'd prefer to have annual grants reduced to an innovation round where you apply for one-off funding ... they would like to process less grants because, yes, I mean it doesn't make sense”*.

Kathleen is very critical of Irish Aid's handling of DE funding and thinks that the DE sector hasn't acted like a movement or shown sufficient consolidation to address the weaknesses in Irish Aid's approach: *“To me it should have been actually something brought up at the Public Accounts Committee at the Oireachtas, saying, like, ‘why are the recipients of public funding getting funding and then eight months or nine months in you're writing a new proposal for funding again?’ It's the most ineffective approach to funding, you know, hard-pressed organisations”*. She goes on to criticise how decisions are made around the annual grants: *“So I think there's an internal battle in government where there's the parochialism that it's very handy for the Minister to be handing out little bits of money to many different organisations, ideally geographically scattered or, you know, close to where he or she is from”*.

A key point that comes up in the interviews with Izzy, Kate and Mandy is the new service-delivery arrangements that Irish Aid has in terms of funding DE. Izzy makes reference to Irish Aid who *“channel their DE work through Worldwide Global Schools”* because *“they were the experts”*. She also talks about the One World Awards, which are primary schools' awards that are managed by Irish Aid: *“they're a PR company, essentially, and they've been awarded with the contract. They tender for it every two or three years and they've won it and they do it ... Africa Day would be run by ... another public relations company and they would do everything for Africa Day and that would be managed by somebody else in Irish Aid”*. In relation to organising contracts or partnerships for DE delivery, Kate suggests that *“it's the exact same as setting up a business. Who's going to actually, going to oversee this? If we're giving money, we don't want to have to oversee this. We want to be happy that they understand their responsibilities and also that they have those relationships and what they're doing is they're building on existing relationships, you know”*. Mandy explains that *“we are working on a grant-partnership basis with some of these, for example, and we could be moving to grant-partnerships with others”*. Kate outlines how Irish Aid changed its approach post

*“the synthesis paper [2011] then was, then we actually adjusted our approach, centralised all of the schools' programme because that was taking up too much of our time and then tried to focus in on priority areas like adult ed, teacher training, making sure it was really happening, what we thought was happening would happen. Let the schools, recognise the schools as a*

*huge, important sector, but said 'right, we're not best placed to do this anymore, it's taking too much of our resources. The NGOs are more about schools and then try to focus in on the third level and see what we could do on third level and things like resources.' You know what the priorities are in the synthesis report. So really, what can we do this year? What can we do next year? What can we do the year after? Very practical, I thought, at the time".*

Freja feels that Irish Aid contracting Worldwide Global Schools to manage the DE it funds in secondary schools has been a good idea: *"I think it's been a positive thing for NGOs because instead of them having to come up with results-based work that fits with Irish Aid's results, they can come up with a really interesting idea and just sell it to Worldwide Global Schools, which I think encourages creativity. You know, for a small grant, you don't have to pretend it's going to change Irish Aid's programme, clearly you can just do good dev ed".*

### **3.4. Irish Aid Influence on Practice**

#### **3.4.1. Direct Influence on Practice**

Eighteen of the 21 facilitators interviewed either make reference to Irish Aid's influence over organisational approaches to DE, or to their policy or practice. Seventeen interviewees associate the influence of Irish Aid with their power as a funder. Dermot talks about *"the tyranny of the funder"* and argues that *"once there is a power relationship it has an impact"*. Brid also acknowledges that her organisation is *"driven by what Irish Aid deems appropriate and relevant"*. Nine interviewees talk specifically of Irish Aid's power in terms of funding dependence, and the direct influence that Irish Aid exerts on what organisations can and cannot do with their funded programmes (seven people give an example of this). Niamh gives an example of where she was told *"not to do stuff on racism. We were phoned up one time and asked why we'd so much stuff around Travellers in our conference programme ... they don't see racism as their remit because there's another department that deals with racism ... as a result, people are very funding-led and they have to be, like, I mean, my job exists because Irish Aid fund me"*. She goes on to recall the *"numerous occasions I've been told 'all we want to see ye doing is poverty, hunger and Aids'. That's what I was told"*. Brian also describes incidents where Irish Aid have *"interfered at times into NGOs' work in terms of telling them, maybe, what should or shouldn't appear within their practice and I think that begins then to be, like, 'how independent are you as an NGO?'"*

Patrick has a sense that *"if Irish Aid don't like what you're doing, they'll cut off your funding"*. He gives an example of Irish Aid's funding influence with reference to campaigning. He explains that

*"if you're really true to what DE is about and you're trying to, you know, inform people and give them, you know, spaces to act and empower them to act in whatever way they want, you*



*can't do that if you're under threat from your funder who says 'well you can't actually do that. We don't want you to campaign against government policy on poverty, on gender, on climate change, on fossil fuels, on where we're getting our energy. We can't have that, you know'. So, in a way there's a sort of a Big Brother thing sitting within DE that's keeping it, that's deradicalising it. It's keeping it from being really radical".*

Anne talks more generally about Irish Aid trying to “control what people do”. On the other hand, she is not sure that “it affects it as much as they might think it does, ha, ha. I think that organisations are very creative and ingenious ... And it's not necessarily to mis-use it but to use it where they know it should be used best and how it should be used best”.

### **3.4.2. The Position of DE within Irish Aid**

Despite the significance of Irish Aid's role in terms of funding organisations and the work of facilitators in the sector, five facilitators question the relative importance placed on DE by comparison with overseas programmes within Irish Aid, and the low allocation of funding to DE by comparison to the overall ODA budget. Deirdre, for example, explains: “Obviously Irish Aid seem to be still very engaged, you know they seem to have a commitment to DE, however, you know, I think it's, it's still low down the pecking order in terms of, probably, internal politics within the organisation, in terms of its prioritisation of where resources are allocated”. She explains that often the rhetoric from Irish Aid would suggest otherwise: “In terms of prioritisation of resources, the DE budget was, you know, cut very significantly in recent years and that, that does speak volumes, really, as well”. This low relative funding of DE within development cooperation is a point raised by Brian who also sees it as evidence of its relatively low standing.

Apart from limited and inadequate funding, there's a sense of precarity over DE among a few. This relates to the position they see DE occupying within Irish Aid work overall and to staffing within the DE unit of Irish Aid. Maeve feels that traditionally, “the DE sector” has “always been fighting our corner”. Niamh feels that the main difficulty is that DE straddles two policy remits and positions “within the state apparatus”. Shane also feels that DE occupies a relatively weak position within Irish Aid and Development Cooperation more generally. This leads to a limited understanding of what it involves and its potential, he argues. Some of those interviewed exhibit a lack of confidence in Irish Aid staffing and expertise in the area. Six criticise the turnover of staff and this despite acknowledgement of the specific expertise among some staff, especially those who are seconded from formal education contexts to the DE unit. Niamh explains the effects of staff turnover in the DE unit in Irish Aid: There “is an institutional lack of understanding, I think, about what DE is. Because the chronic problem with Irish Aid ... they're waiting for the next posting in a different country ... since 2011 and I've probably, not joking now ... through X [organisation], I've probably had about seven or eight different points of contact in Irish Aid. In terms of personnel. It is a very, very quick turnover ...

*But it's a real gap in an institution that people have to get up to scratch with stuff, you know, so regularly".*

Catherine feels that Irish Aid management of the projects they fund depends on the personnel involved:

*"The budget is theirs and depending on who is in charge in Irish Aid, that can be a very hands-on management arrangement or hands-off. So, we've been through three different people over three years, to report into, three and a half years, and that's been really challenging".* She goes on to suggest that *"it was microcosm thinking, where Irish Aid were going 'actually this paragraph here reflects badly on Irish Aid' ... I think it's that lack of big picture you know ... high up within the department with the technical expertise in DE. It doesn't exist ... somebody who has a wealth of DE experience and expertise isn't really there or isn't there with sufficient power to make decisions. It's generally someone very junior who's seconded for a few years into the Department of Ed and then out and I think that's really problematic".*

Like facilitator interviews, there are some concerns expressed by KIs about the position of DE in Irish Aid. Comments from those associated with networks suggest that DE does not occupy the kind of strength of position that it should have (4) and there are some concerns about staffing in Irish Aid (4). Despite this, both Irish Aid KIs argue that DE has never occupied such a strong position within Irish Aid as it does now and one of them feels that there are no issues in relation to staffing. The other suggests that there are proportionately more staff working in DE than in other sections in Irish Aid but she also talks about the limitations of what Irish Aid can do in DE owing to staff allocations. A third issue which emerges with reference to the position of DE in Irish Aid is the relationship between public information or public engagement (the promotion of Irish Aid and development cooperation) and DE within Irish Aid. Though now under the same unit within Irish Aid, which is called the Civil Society and DE Unit, there is a sense among some that there is growing emphasis and blurring of lines between public information and public engagement.

One KI who has worked closely with Irish Aid says a distinction is made between public information and DE officially in Irish Aid, but she also thinks the lines between them are blurred. For her, the public information work of Irish Aid is PR which uses DE methodologies, *"aid is good, Irish Aid is brilliant"*. On the other hand, it is

*"part of the civil society and DE department so you would think that it fell into DE. It was certainly in that department and yeah, I mean the way the activities are promoted is 'come here, this is dev ed for your CSPE class' ... [in] third level colleges, it was part of the DICE programme so it was in the dev ed world. The pedagogical understanding was that it was dev ed but the actual content was information and knowledge and facts and figures ... certainly no question Irish Aid. They were to come out of it thinking the Irish Aid programme was exceptionally good value".*

She goes on to critique some of the Irish Aid public engagement projects: *"they look at the symptoms*

*of poverty rather than looking at inequality. They look at, you know, aid being a sort of a magic bullet and aren't we doing really well and it seems to be more of a cover – 'we're spending your taxes wisely' – rather than trying to get to the bottom of it or trying to make any long-term changes". Mandy explains that public engagement has been part of Irish Aid's strategy since 2008 but that it is now "continuing and being mainstreamed". She explains that "DE is much more centred on the learner ... With public awareness and public engagement and we are still struggling with the definition of it, in a way. To me, it's quite clear that you have an agenda and it's quite clear you are going to raise awareness about a particular topic and that topic is clearly related to your engagement through some form of development cooperation or programme".*

As outlined in this section, Irish Aid's position as funder has a strong influence on what those in receipt of funding feel they can do in DE. Through overt influence and funding conditions, as well as the blurring of lines between DE and public information and engagement, others in the sector are less inclined to criticise Irish Aid or to engage in DE which is not sanctioned. That Irish Aid's discourse of DE is at least partly technical, therefore, appears to have a strong, albeit not determining, influence on discourses of DE. This issue is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Eight.

#### **4. Accountability, Measurement and Good Governance**

##### **4.1. Key Findings on Accountability, Measurement and Good Governance**

The influence of the 'results-based agenda' and accountability discourse on DE, the emphasis on which is a relatively new focus within Irish Aid (from approx. 2011), is addressed by many facilitators. They also talk about the bureaucracy and administration associated with funding applications.

Overwhelmingly references in this area among facilitators in interviews relate to measuring the impact of DE (76 references among 13 interviewees), measurement (50 references among 12 interviewees), results-based management (33 references among 10), and evidence-based measurement or reporting (18 references among seven interviewees). Targets for DE are mentioned 15 times by seven interviewees and governance procedures or systems are mentioned six times by three. There is also considerable mention of the bureaucracy and administration associated with funding applications – administration, bureaucracy and 'form filling' (31 references among 10 interviewees), funding applications (32 references among 10) and monitoring and/or evaluation (eight references among six interviewees). Thus, it would appear that measurement is of great significance in DE accountability.

In questionnaires, facilitators were asked (Q.17) to rank a range of accountability practices in terms of their importance to DE. Monitoring and evaluation are ranked as most important with 'gathering

evidence of results' regarded as third most important.

## 4.2. Measuring Results

In interviews, among those who make some reference to measurement of DE outcomes or impact, 10 of the interviewees talk about the 'results-based management agenda' or results-based framework implemented by Irish Aid with reference to funding applications since 2011. Though monitoring and evaluation and logical frameworks have been common place in the application of funding for projects within the sector for many years, there is a clear sense that there has been a shift within Irish Aid towards measurement and rationalisation as part of a good governance agenda. Eight interviewees are critical of this relatively new focus on measurement, four of them on the basis that it is difficult to measure qualitative education outcomes or that the approach to measurement applied comes from the international development programme context (Niamh). Niamh goes on to explain that she is not averse to measurement but that there needs to be an approach to it that is educationally-appropriate. Martin is concerned that it is a limited way of viewing educational achievement and Shane argues that it cuts off the ability of facilitators to be flexible. Deirdre feels that a lot of IDEA's resources have been spent, or "sucked", in recent years, in helping organisations to access funding, including building their capacity to adopt "*the results-based management approach.*" Despite these criticisms, Robert argues that this approach has been very good for improving monitoring and evaluation capacity among facilitators.

Only four facilitators talk about the origins or impetus behind this results-based approach. Mary feels that it is related to government sensitivity to Irish people's general concerns about government spending. Siobhán thinks that some of the accountability and measurement emphasis is coming from the 'scandals' and she explains that organisations are becoming more formalised as a result: "*they're afraid of their lives that they'll give money to some organisations that'll do something that they shouldn't be doing. I mean all the charity scandal thing is driving it as well*". Tom links it to NGOs becoming more like businesses and Fiona says that it

*"is driven by, to me, by a neoliberal, managerialist kind of approach and an instrumentalist approach. Get 20 people and do 20 inputs and have, you know, inputs, and these are your prescribed outcomes like, you can't measure ... that whole market-driven agenda that education is about producing people for a modern workforce or whatever, that seems to me to be one of the things shaping the DE agenda. And it's very strong because of the crisis and so on. The only surprise is ... that it's still in process, if you like, that it hasn't happened even faster than it has, it seems to me, because that's the whole agenda pervading government"*.

She explains that

*“the crisis was the trigger for sure. And then the opportunity that represented for the state to reorganise its relationship with civil society. That’s really clear in the community sector, so things that they were attempting to do from sort of 2002, whatever, you know, so-called cohesion process and stuff, they were enabled by the crisis. They had an excuse and a disproportionate attack on civil society is really clear there. So, all of those things have had an influence. Another element of that, of course, is how that was resisted and the role of the DE community and I think that on the whole, the resistance was not strong enough and was not organised enough, but that doesn’t just go for DE”.*

#### **4.3. Measurement, Evidence and Research**

Despite criticisms of measurement, six facilitators value the move towards trying to provide evidence, through research, of the effectiveness of DE, especially in terms of the credibility of DE. Deirdre, for example, feels that without the evidence they are in a weaker position in terms of accessing funding for DE. One organisation is trying to implement ways of measuring the depth of engagement with DE in order to move away from a focus on ‘the numbers’. Robert explains: *“so instead of just this amount of schools and this amount of people, it’s this amount of schools but with this amount of schools we did a level five engagement, which might be we spoke at an assembly, whereas with this amount of schools, we did thematic workshops. With this amount of schools, we did a cluster event ... We’re trying to show the depth”.*

The need for good research is highlighted by Robert, who talks about the role of research in shaping the DE work undertaken by the organisation he works for. Áine believes that there should be more research but that there should be more emphasis on qualitative approaches. Tom also talks about the need for research in order to build the credibility of the sector in Irish Aid. He thinks that *“it’s definitely a big gap. I think there’s a credibility issue for dev ed at third level because we don’t have enough doctoral theses. We don’t have enough journals and third-level publications. We don’t have enough dev ed people basically going through this system at third level and it’s a frustration ... you really need research to be an ongoing process within our sector for us to have any kind of credibility whatsoever at third level”.*

#### **4.4. Key Informant Perspectives on Accountability, Governance and Measuring Results**

The drive towards accountability, governance and measuring results is a common theme among KIs, mostly focused on the link between measuring results and accountability or governance practices. Of the KIs interviewed, five make some reference to accountability, with three references to Busan and one to Paris, both of which were the locations of important meetings on aid effectiveness, where accountability and governance systems were prioritised. With regard to explaining the need for accountability and good governance, Hannah argues that there is a need to *“build public trust so that*

*there is a space and civil society is seen as, you know, viable and influential. In the space around holding to account we need to have a kind of strong civil society that is the critical voice and an influential voice to ensure that our policies are appropriate”.*

Among KIs, there are five references to results among those associated with networks but no reference to results-based management specifically from that group. Both of those working with Irish Aid make reference to results with one of them mentioning results-based frameworks. Nearly all (7) of the KIs interviewed make some reference to funding applications with three linking them to administration associated with good governance procedures. The issue of time emerges in seven interviews, with the focus being on how busy people are (3), how time-consuming funding applications and administration are (2), and how important it is to use time wisely (1). No one makes a link between the recent NGO scandals in Ireland and good governance procedures with only two KIs associating them directly with neoliberalism. Two KIs working in networks link the recession to a lack of time, capacity or short working hours while one person working in Irish Aid describes the recession as giving them a “reason” to be “cuter with money” and to “cut programmes”.

Kate explains the introduction of results-based management into Irish Aid as a practical response to a lack of information, planning or vision: *“we did an internal review [2011] and we found we couldn’t say what we’d achieved. We’d no evidence. We’d no starting point. We’d no targets. We’d no allocation models for resources or anything like that. We had no vision, in a particular sector, of what we’d hope to achieve”.* She goes on to explain her understanding of it: *“we were spending so much money on international development and yet we could not say, it wasn’t that we weren’t achieving stuff but we could not say what we were achieving. And that, like, is gone. That day is gone. That’s not just in government ... So, you, as an NGO, being funded by Irish Aid have to show me how you’re going to contribute to that outcome”.*

Linking results-based management to measurement and accountability, Mandy explains that *“it also was part of the Paris Declaration that we would be accountable and being accountable means you have to measure”.* She explains that they didn’t know if aid was working or not: *“So no matter how crude or how blunt an instrument was used, it was considered to be vital to start measuring, to start getting base lines, and I think, and that happened way back. It happened as part of the commitments under the Paris and then the Accra agenda for action ... are we doing what are we are setting out to do? Is our money being used wisely? And most importantly, are we reducing poverty? These are the questions that somehow people fell short of asking”.* She explains: *“We haven’t got the resources to go out and measure so we have to require others to measure”.*

When focusing on the ‘pros and cons’ of results-based frameworks, one KI is critical of them and two are critical of how they were introduced. This level of criticism is much lower than among the

facilitators. Hannah talks about the introduction of the results-based framework into the sector around 2011 and that *“the way it was introduced, we were like rabbits in the headlights ... we absolutely bought the line that we have to quantify every single thing we do, as far as I was concerned, which is always going to be bad news for DE and advocacy”*. Freja agrees: *“yeah, the pros and cons of it, the ideas of results in DE was just, it was presented to the DE community so poorly, in other ways Irish Aid as a sort of fait accomplis, this is now how you’re going to report to us. So, it’s based on management that was learned, so I think there was so much hostility because they handled it so badly”*. Izzy describes them as

*“lovely theoretical tools but when you’re bound to them they, they just cause more ... challenges and difficulties than they actually help you. You promise something two years earlier and you have to keep to this promise ... I think a lot of people find it very difficult to work in two-year cycles, as well if there are two-year fundings, that they can spend a quarter of a year trying to work out the next two years when a lot of the programmes might not be that neat and if there are lots of balls juggling and something that might have worked two years ago just simply isn’t working now ... that’s a huge part of our accountability”*.

Though Hannah argues that it is positive for the sector overall she argues against trying to quantify everything: *“the logical framework was just a framework to allow us to do that but always the problem with it is that it became about filling out boxes rather than using it as an analytical tool ... to me, the results framework is just an adaptation of the logical framework to try to stop us filling in boxes but the problem was it brought more boxes, ha, ha, and we’re still in the stage of filling out even more boxes without saying it’s about change”*. From within that Irish Aid context, Mandy is positive about measurement: *“I do think in some ways it is good to have this measurement approach. It brings a certain rigor and call it ‘business-like’ approach to dev ed. There was a tendency and a danger in dev ed, if I can stereotype it, to say, to leave well enough alone. To be very broad and non-specific in what you’re doing and therefore by default being unaccountable about things. I think it does bring a certain rigor”*.

For Freja, the results-based agenda has played a necessary role in protecting the position of DE within Irish Aid: *“I feel like, in some ways, this sounds insane but it’s a thing to save dev ed within DFA because I think DFA was, really there was very strong results-based thinking across all the programmes and they were like ‘everybody’s reporting like this, why is the dev ed unit giving us these huge clunky narrative reports and nothing else?’”*

The administrative burdens associated with good governance procedures are also linked to funding cuts in the wake of the recession (since 2008) and the resultant lack of time available for staff by four KIs. Izzy describes the challenges for people working in the DE sector these days:

*“everyone is terribly, terribly busy and they’re probably quite efficient so they’re probably really, really busy. They’re working three-day weeks but they’re doing probably full-time jobs,*

*they're double jobbing, they're the fundraiser and the volunteer manager or whatever. Yeah, that's really typical in the sector ... the burn-out is quite high, I think, and maybe before burn-out, frustration. People get frustrated, they get annoyed, they get angry, but yeah, there's no sitting back and looking at the horizon again and making a real plan. Everyone's sort of flapping around".*

Hannah is concerned about the waste of time in meetings and is concerned about “*where we were spending more time on monitoring and evaluation and baselines than we were working with partners*”. Damien says that in his organisation they spend “*three or four months every year discussing the grant for the coming year*”.

Kate links the recession to an opportunity to put in place more efficient procedures re: funding DE:

*“I would firmly believe that we did not cut any good programmes or excellent ones. I think we cut borderline ones which was because of the recession and I think it gave us a reason for actually cutting ones that were just awful and didn't have the capacity to absorb the funding, and didn't have a programmatic approach either ... I know some of them went by the board but you know what, if they did, it was because they couldn't survive as small as they were in a much tighter environment financially and where you had much stricter governance”.*

In summary, though the precise influence of the introduction of new accountability and measurement tools on discourses of DE is hard to gauge, it is clear that the language of aid effectiveness has become pervasive within the DE sector with mechanisms for accountability and measurement among the administrative burdens that facilitators experience. Their implications are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Eight.

## **5. The Influence of Organisations within the DE 'Sector' on DE**

### **5.1. Key Findings on the Influence of Organisations within the DE 'Sector'**

In addition to its role as funder and the introduction of aid effectiveness mechanisms, relations with the sector also have an influence on discourses of DE. Relationships and roles within the DE sector is a theme addressed in most of the interviews. Within that context a few talk specifically about a coherence within the sector in terms of values, though fragmentation is also acknowledged. The sector is regarded as both a realm of influence of DE as well as an institutional field with structures, discourses, actors, roles and relationships and Irish Aid and IDEA are seen as most influential followed by Dóchas and the big NGOs. Its significance emerges in relation to the discourse of DE promoted and supported by different organisations. Among the influences highlighted are Irish Aid's increased promotion of public engagement and the blurring of lines between it and DE; IDEA's role in building consent within the sector with Irish Aid funding requirements and best practice; and NGO conservatism. They are thought to be obsessed with aid; that there are tensions between their



fundraising and DE work; and that IDEA and the big NGDOs compete with smaller organisations for funding. Most of the KIs interviewed regard the NGDOs as playing a uniquely influential role with Irish Aid in terms of the promotion of DE but there are criticisms of the service-delivery model adopted by them and the point is made that they, too, are dependent on Irish Aid for funding and therefore unlikely to be too critical of them. This dovetails with other comments from facilitators that they are either not doing enough or not doing it critically enough.

## **5.2. Understanding the DE 'Sector'**

The term 'sector' is the most commonly used term among facilitators to describe the environment within which they work (151 references among 17 interviewees). The DE sector is seen as different to (and sometimes a sub-sector of) the international development or NGDO sector (20 references among eight interviewees). On the other hand, many talk of the formal (18 references among six interviewees) and the adult and community education sectors (20 references among nine interviewees) as areas of focus for DE. In this research, only two people make specific reference to a 'youth' sector though many others (14) make reference to work with youth. The short-hand 'formal' and 'non-formal' sectors to describe these various areas of work is commonly used by Irish Aid and by interviewees. Some facilitators describe those engaged in DE as a 'movement' whereas others talk about 'the DE community'.

### **5.2.1. Different Approaches within the DE Sector**

Almost all facilitators, when asked, identify differences within the sector in general (20/21). These relate to different discourses and actors, different value-bases for DE, organisational and work approaches and contexts within which they work, as well as different methodologies, styles and backgrounds. Facilitators from the 'smaller' organisations or community and adult education sectors have a tendency to see themselves as somewhat different to those working in the big NGDOs or, more directly in formal education, though they work closely with them. In addition, those in formal education see community, adult and youth education as more flexible than their own work context. Dan, for example, says that he has more of a community education focus than what he sees as an advocacy focus associated with more 'mainstream' DE organisations. Bríd sees a distinction between the formal sector and what she calls NGOs, and like others, she describes the formal sector as conservative: *"So I suppose maybe within formal education we are more constrained. We are more what's the word, conservative, not in a political sense, but a little bit more conservative in what we do. Yeah, I can see the distinction and I can see the NGOs kind of going 'no, the world is wrong and we are going to put it right. And this is how we're going to do it and we'll march on and nothing will stop*

us'. *We're just that bit more laid back, not laid back but kind of more cautious and tip-toey in formal ed*".

There is a sense among nine facilitators that Irish Aid has a different understanding of DE than they have. They feel that for the government, the chief imperative is to gain support within Ireland for its work on development cooperation and aid. Anne sees it as a *"PR exercise"* and that it's *"not supposed to be political ... they don't want you to be too political or too radical or too left-wing or anything like that"*. Another criticism is that it sees DE as discrete from other similar educations and that Irish Aid organises DE using a limited sectorisation approach, e.g., into formal and non-formal sectors with the former being prioritised (Patrick). From the point of view of seeing Irish Aid's approach as a promotional one, Deirdre explains that *"this is an argument that Irish Aid would always use that people need to understand and appreciate, I suppose, why Ireland would even fund, for example, or provide funding, to support development programming overseas in terms of, you know, what is Ireland's role in the more global world? ... DE, I suppose, and awareness raising can support people to appreciate why that is"*. Mary sees this in the guidelines for the recent programme funding application (2016) which is the application form that the main 'partner' NGOs complete in order to receive programme funding from Irish Aid.

A few (3) of the facilitators I interviewed describe the DE sector as increasingly consolidated around a common set of values which have been articulated through IDEA, which offers a space for engagement and sharing among those involved in DE in Ireland. Catherine feels that while there is coherence on values, this is not the case politically and she argues that *"in more recent years, there's been huge funding cuts, people in DE are very stretched. They're tired. They're burnt out. It would be so much easier if we were just in a very clearly articulated ideological movement where just, you know, the decision is made for you. You sign up for it, whereas it's more fluid than that"*. On the other hand, she argues that *"there's also a lot of fragmentation"*. She talks about this with reference to her concerns for funding of smaller NGOs, many of which are vulnerable to funding cuts and to the current ways in which funding is organised in the sector.

The sector is seen to influence DE through key relations and roles as well as discourses of development and DE prevalent in the sector. Key relations and roles in the sector are identified as the role of Irish Aid as 'dominant' funder (discussed above), the establishment and role of IDEA as a representative body, the role of NGDOs in influencing DE practice and state-civil society relations more broadly. These issues are discussed below.

### 5.2.2. Key Informant Perspectives on Understanding the DE Sector

Use of the term ‘DE sector’ is common among KIs, with three KIs specifically referring to the term and two others talking about ‘the sector’ in that sense. The use of the term ‘sector’ is complex but Damien feels that it would be reductionist to see the DE sector as a sub-sector of the international development sector, given the range of groups and actors involved in DE from different institutional and organisational backgrounds. Three KIs make reference to a ‘community’ (1) or DE ‘community’ (2), with Niall saying that “*we need to find a way of saying that there is a community. I used the word cohort earlier, I don’t like that word either, or a group of people, organisations who are active in this area and sector is the kind of the current shorthand*”. For Kathleen,

*“the dominant feeling around DE discussions is that it’s [‘the sector’] a collection of NGOs, that’s, that would be my impression and then there’s some NGOs that are more critical than others and are making, taking on different approaches, and making links in ways that are very deliberate which is with a view towards movement-building or doing that but in order to do that I always felt you really had to reach outside the DE sector, because if we were a movement why would we not be more successful in reversing some of the vicious funding cuts that were directed at the sector, you know? We were not a movement when that happened. There wasn’t, there was certainly a sense of solidarity among groups, but people put their heads down and worked, worked their asses off to protect their funding, not for themselves personally but to keep the organisations alive ... that the DE unit or the renamed one in Irish Aid didn’t feel more pressure around that shows that it’s a sector, it’s not a movement I don’t think”.*

All of those KIs involved in networks talk about different approaches to DE in the sector or about diversity within the sector. For Niall, one of the benefits of the process of developing the Irish Aid Strategy is that it has “*taken on that myth that it’s [the sector is] too diverse to manage ... that it’s happening in too many different places ... I think by coming together showing both diversity and coherence that it’s a really strong example*”. He goes on to say that he sees IDEA as trying “*to reflect and celebrate the diversity, the specificity, because I think that’s really important. It’s not a one-size-fits-all practice ... it’s a characteristic of DE ... the emphasis, say, on being learner-led or participant-led doesn’t enable the one-size-fits-all, it goes against a kind of a one-size-fits-all approach. So, to preserve that diversity and celebrate that diversity while also giving people something to latch onto*”. Freja is also cautious of a one-size-fits-all approach. She says, “*just let it happen. Let a thousand flowers bloom and set funding so that can happen ... you are never going to get a one size fits all*”.

Niall feels that DE can be critical even in sectors which, in recent years, haven’t been funded as much as formal education, e.g., the “*youth sector, adult and community*”. He thinks that “*there’s really interesting and radical and critical thinking going on in the way that DE works in those sectors ... but I do think we have to actually look and see how that manifests itself and not just to say one kind of activity is radical and another kind is not*”. Oscar contrasts his approach to DE, which he links to campaigning and advocacy, to that of Irish Aid which doesn’t fund this type of work. In addition, he is

critical of the sector because he thinks “*we always say the bottom up but I think it’s still a top-down approach in DE*”.

### **5.3. The Role of IDEA**

As indicated earlier, in answer to a direct question about who is setting the DE agenda in Ireland, six identify IDEA. As with Irish Aid, I asked most interviewees what they thought of the role of IDEA in DE in Ireland<sup>19</sup>. Most people (17) make some reference to IDEA and many are particularly complimentary of IDEA in their role of consolidating the sector, in representing its members and in capacity development. There are some criticisms of IDEA, especially in its relationship with Irish Aid. These issues are relevant for this research to the extent that IDEA is regarded as playing a role, with Irish Aid and others, in shaping DE practice and understandings of DE in Ireland. This is discussed below.

#### **5.3.1. IDEA's Role in the Consolidation of DE and Cohesion within the Sector**

Tom is one of nine of those interviewed who see IDEA playing a consolidating role within ‘the sector’. He describes the changes to the sector since the establishment of IDEA: “*it’s much better organised. When I came into this sector it was the mid-90s. We didn’t have a national network for development educators. There were very few opportunities for professional development. There were very few opportunities to gather together as educators and share our practice and now, I think, we see regularly events being organised ... for us to be able to do that and to grow as practitioners. There’s a lot of support provided from our national network, IDEA*”.

More than half of those who discuss IDEA’s role, compliment their work in terms of cohesion and representing the sector in relation to policy processes (in both cases nine of 17). Siobhán feels that “*they do a good job of bringing people together. Now where they go with that is, you know, but they do. They are kind of a focal point for bringing people together*”. Maeve describes IDEA as ‘a hub’ and Dermot feels they capture debate going on in the sector. Patrick attributes a lot of change in the sector in the last 15 years to the establishment of IDEA and its work: “*We now have a forum where people meet. We now have a forum where people sort of agree on approaches. And there’s a lot more openness. Things like, for example, people are now aware of who’s getting funding and what funding*”.

On the other hand, an area of concern that emerges in interviews comes from Shane, who feels that IDEA could be playing a more significant role in building a movement for DE in Ireland: “*I think the*

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<sup>19</sup> Most of those interviewed for this research have been or are currently members of IDEA, or working for organisations that are. Many of them are on the board or have been (including myself), or are members of working groups. Given that most people have been active to greater and lesser degrees in IDEA, I am not differentiating between people in terms of their connection with IDEA in citing their views here.

*potential for IDEA is much more, particularly with movement-building ... Not just be good at telling us 'there's a policy submission that's needed and come on lads, lets row in behind it'. That's important ... I think the potential for it is there ... The question may come down to funding and whether Irish Aid wants IDEA to do that".*

### **5.3.2. IDEA's Role in Influencing Policy and its Relationship with Irish Aid**

From a policy point of view, there are those (9) who value IDEA's contribution to enabling policy discussion and contributions by members to policy development within Irish Aid and the Department of Education and Skills, for example. In relation to policy, Shane feels that IDEA engage people on issues related to *"strategy, policy, cooperative approaches, collective bargaining and positions. I'm not sure they are bargaining but collective positions, anyway, on things. I think they're getting better. The reliance on Irish Aid funding means that they can't do some of the stuff that Comhlámh can do and does with its solidarity groups"*. Bríd refers to the influence that members of IDEA have had on changes in policy and curriculum, especially with reference to the strategy on ESD: *"the Department of Education and Skills is seeing this as an important thing. Now that is all due to the lobbying we're all doing in terms of subject specs and in terms of making sure that sustainability, equality and social justice and words like it are appearing in consultation with the NCCA. The NCCA has very much bought into this as well"*. Many facilitators talk about IDEA and Irish Aid having a close and positive working relationship. Niamh, for example, explains that *"when IDEA took on the strategic partnership a lot of people were worried about being so wedded to Irish Aid but I think that that gave them security, you know, of funding, certainly, like they weren't applying every year. It gave them a three- year kind of cushion"*.

While many are positive about the contribution of IDEA to DE in Ireland, there are criticisms (among 10 participants). These are related to IDEA's close relationship with Irish Aid (which is related to comments about some weaknesses with regard to policy), its lack of a strategic plan for the sector separate from that of Irish Aid and its need to play a stronger role in movement-building. In three cases IDEA is identified as either a "vehicle for Irish Aid" or "what Irish Aid wants it to be". Brian is also critical of IDEA's role in the area of policy representation and he attributes its weakness to the desire on behalf of IDEA to protect its relationship with Irish Aid. He feels it has a negative effect on how critical of Irish Aid IDEA can be. He sums up this criticism of IDEA by arguing that IDEA needs to *"be much more vociferous around representing the bodies that they're there to represent ... IDEA has become what Irish Aid wants it to become. And I think that's a really kind of dangerous thing in the longer run"*.

### 5.3.3. IDEA's Capacity and its Role in Capacity Building

Siobhán feels that IDEA plays an important role in supporting members who are trying to access funding for their work. She acknowledges the limitations that they have but feels that more could be done: *“they’re too small-staffed. They need more staff. I think that they’ve been, for me anyway, too much focused on Irish Aid. I would like IDEA to take some kind of role on in terms of helping organisations diversify their funding mix”*. Deirdre also acknowledges the work that IDEA has done in relation to supporting organisations to access funding but she feels that *“it’s probably sucked up a huge amount of resources that you’d like to see better utilised”*. Two interviewees, Siobhán and Shane, feel that involvement in the GENE Review process took attention away from the necessary articulation of a strategic plan for IDEA.

### 5.3.4. Key Informant Perspectives on IDEA

As with facilitator interviews, key issues which emerge from KI interviews are IDEA’s roles in relation to consolidating (3) and representing (2) the sector and capacity development of members (2). Again, as with facilitator interviews, criticisms of IDEA among KIs relate to IDEA’s close relationship with Irish Aid (1) and whether it has become too distant from members, in this case *“too professionalised”* (1), though there are proportionately fewer criticisms among KIs of IDEA than there are among facilitators.

Freja talks about the various roles that IDEA plays. She feels that, in terms of relations between Irish Aid and the DE sector, *“IDEA has done a very good job in trying to negotiate that space because with the strategic plan for Irish Aid they were trusted by Irish Aid and didn’t have to worry about the ground of IDEA”*. Kate comments on the role that IDEA plays in bringing NGOs together: *“one of the things IDEA has been doing, certainly back in 2012, was trying to actually get the NGOs into a room and start talking to them and say ‘right, you know if we’re doing dev ed, you need to be doing good dev ed as well ... in fairness to IDEA they were slowly but surely trying to get them round to their way of thinking”*. Kathleen is also

*“really impressed with how they kind of up-scaled it. There seems to be a lot of membership activity in IDEA ... they did useful things for us in terms of, like, support on funding proposal writing and they have working groups in relation to relevant areas where people want to, you know, share good methodologies and practice or whatever, and they also jointly hosted learning days with us which was a great way of kind of broadening out ... But on the other hand, I’ve been really disappointed by the lack of punch behind it on the funding stuff and on getting Irish Aid to number one finish their strategy, and number two commit to multi-annual funding for organisations, because they haven’t given multi-annual funding ... in years”*.

Oscar also feels that IDEA could be stronger in addressing funding cuts organisations have

experienced with Irish Aid.

In summary, though few facilitators or KIs talk specifically about IDEA's influence on discourses of DE, it is clear that IDEA is regarded as influential in the sector, in creating a space for sharing knowledge and information, in supporting members in funding applications and in policy negotiation with Irish Aid. While many are positive about its role, others feel that its relationship with Irish Aid is too close. The question remains what influence this has on discourses of DE. I return to this issue in Chapter Eight.

#### **5.4. The Role of Non-Governmental Development Organisations (NGDOs)**

In interviews, most facilitators (19) make some reference to NGDOs. Views are mixed. When asked who is setting the agenda in DE in Ireland, four identify Dóchas and two the 'big NGDOs'. As with Irish Aid, NGDOs (understood here as those involved in DE, e.g., Trócaire, Concern Worldwide and Gorta-Self Help Africa) are seen to play an influential role in relation to their position as DE donors, and, like IDEA, in influencing policy and curricula. Five interviewees see them as playing an important role and that their funding for DE in the sector is significant. Others are critical of them, arguing that they do not place sufficient emphasis on DE within their work (11), that their funding allocation to DE within the sector is insufficient (5) and that their DE is not critical enough (2). This point links to the tensions within bigger NGDOs regarding fundraising and DE, a point raised by three interviewees. On the other hand, one interviewee who works in an NGDO suggests that there is no confusion between the remits of fundraising and DE staff in his organisation. The point is also made by Robert that the bigger NGDOs have been able to respond to the governance requirements put in place by Irish Aid and this could serve to further marginalise smaller organisations with insufficient resources or will to implement Irish Aid governance requirements. Thus, there is near equal praise as criticism for the role of international NGDOs in DE in Ireland among the facilitators involved in this research.

##### **5.4.1. Role of the 'Big' NGDOs and Dóchas in DE**

While five facilitators talk about the importance of the role NGDOs play in funding DE in Ireland, five are also critical of it. Shane thinks that *“something that has happened in more recent years, which is a great sea change and we need more of it, is Concern and Trócaire taking up the mantle for providing alternative sites of energy for funding and ideas that don't follow the Irish Aid model in a straight sense but allow it to flourish in a different kind of way. So, I think, some of the agenda flourishes through Concern's DE grants scheme and the justice grants scheme that Trócaire run”*. Áine feels that

there are different agendas and is very complimentary of the role that NGDOs play: *“The NGO sector are deeply involved in promoting DE and doing so, I think, in a very good way and a creative and they’re, you know, quite radical”*. Patrick describes the funding by big NGDOs of DE as *“pitiful, ha, ha. It varies. I think Concern put in quite an amount ... Trócaire, I think, is a beast of its own. I think they have so much money they have independence, I think”*. Patrick feels that the level of DE activity on the part of the bigger NGDOs hasn’t changed much in recent years: *“I mean we have just, we haven’t grown but we haven’t reduced. We’ve just kept going like whatever we have, actually”*. Others, who work with NGDOs are aware of the criticisms but point to their level of DE activity and the grant schemes they operate as a defence against them.

Tom expresses his concerns about the role that ‘the bigger’ NGDOs and Dóchas are playing: *“I think there’s just a reluctance in general to engage with, with, what could be perceived as being controversial issues”*. He gives an example of an aid flotilla to Gaza which was intercepted and towed into an Israeli port and which included passengers who were human rights activists. When he contacted Dóchas at the time for a comment, they declined:

*“I thought they would be outraged because they’re always banging on about aid so here you have an aid ship going to, to Gaza which was, which is an impoverished region under siege and intercepted in international waters, illegally, by an Israeli naval ship, and no. ‘No, now we’re not going to put anything out about that.’ So, there are clear boundaries about, in terms of what they will comment on, I think, and I don’t know, I think there’s just, there’s a fairly deep conservatism that encircles, I think, particularly the senior leadership circles within the big development NGOs”*.

Fiona also sees the bigger NGDOs as more ‘conservative’. Tom, like others, feels that he takes *“a more critical approach. I’ve been, over the years, deeply frustrated at times with the conservative, maybe small-c-conservative approach taken by a lot of my colleagues in regard to some of the issues that I’ve just mentioned, like trade, debt, conflict, globalisation, that kind of thing ... I still have frustrations around, with colleagues, particularly in the international development sector, not so much colleagues in DE, in terms of how they approach development and that stems a lot from their conservatism”*.

For Tom, there’s a big problem in development and DE in Ireland and

*“it manifests itself, for me, in this complete obsession we have in our sector with aid. I continually hear Dóchas, in particular, banging on about aid, 0.7 per cent by 2015. We have to achieve this target. We have to get the government back on track. Aid is, I think, perceived among the public and this message is sold to them I think by the development agencies, as the solution to all of the problems confronted by countries in the Global South ... the fixation we have with aid, I think, enables these NGOs to evade wider questions around poverty in Ireland and the connection that that has with poverty in the Global South. And the fact that we very rarely, in the development sector, join up the causes of poverty here with the causes of poverty globally”*.



Tom goes on to criticise the NGOs for not taking a stronger position in relation to the role of the IMF in Ireland, especially in light of their experience of working on debt and structural adjustment issues in the countries of the Global South in the past.

Eleven facilitators feel that NGDOs should focus more of their work and funding on DE. Maeve feels that *“within the international development NGO sector, as well, there’s a need for a better understanding within the organisations about what DE is but also on its importance. But I think organisations are getting there but I think it’s still the poor sister within those organisations”*. Brian believes that a lot of people involved in development more broadly don’t want to look at *“power and politics”*. They are reluctant to get too involved in DE that might be critical of what they are doing. In addition, he feels that they ought to support DE more: *“within Dóchas I think that, like, there needs to be much, much more lobbying for higher expenditure by NGOs on DE”*. Brian thinks that *“DE should be much more at the core of all development agencies’ work”*. He argues *“that 5 per cent of all NGOs’ expenditure should be spent on DE ... I know that when it was brought up in Dóchas, I know there was, like, almost war. Like and this was within the DE grouping ... I really do think that unless the percentages are really radically changed, then DE can only do so much”*. Tom also thinks that NGOs have not invested as much as they should in DE. He explains:

*“the sector itself walked away from DE ... the bigger NGOs ... they slowly but surely began to be taken over by private sector people appointed into senior management. And these organisations started to run themselves more like businesses rather than development charities and I suppose there were good reasons for that because they were in competition with other charities for public funds but it changed, I think it definitely changed the mentality of these organisations towards DE and that’s when you started to see a withdrawal of support for DE from within the development sector itself”*.

This point is refuted by those facilitators working in the bigger NGDOs in Ireland who point to the funding of other organisations engaged in DE as well as their own development education programmes as a counter argument. At the same time, Fiona thinks of the NGDOs that *“they are less likely to challenge. I think the voluntarist and the moralist sort of stream runs through those organisations ... despite people’s efforts and some people’s commitment, it’s quite difficult for DE to be equal with the notion of helping people who are in crisis situations. And at some level I understand that, but I also think that’s very short sighted”*.

With regard to the role of ‘big NGOs’ in IDEA and Dóchas, Brian is critical of the fact that both Dóchas and IDEA, as he sees it, *“compete with their members for funding”*. He goes on to say that, during the recession,

*“both became much more professional. I think both did a really brilliant job of becoming well regarded by Irish Aid. I think both did a really brilliant job of attracting financial support but I don’t think that came with a huge amount of benefit for its members. I think that possibly, I think if anything, in Dóchas’s case it advantaged the larger members and I think in the case of IDEA, I think, possibly it advantaged those who were within the formal working structures in terms of the formal education sector ... kind of a damning indictment, I kind, of think of civil society within this space”.*

Dónal feels that Dóchas has not played a strong enough role in DE: *“On the NGO front, I think the NGOs backed off, which is a great shame, because NGO perspectives are hugely important in DE ... for a long time it was like ‘well we got Irish Aid to take it seriously and that’s our job done and now it’s over to the government’ ... You look at Dóchas. Dóchas absolutely sold out on DE. Useless and ... the DE group in Dóchas is not a player”.* He also suggests that the bigger organisations are limited in the influence they can have over Irish Aid but that they need to do more to try to influence government: *“Look at the volume of their finances that come from Irish Aid, if you’re in the director’s chair ... he cannot challenge Irish Aid to the Nth degree, wouldn’t necessarily be in his interest to do so. I understand that. We’re over-dominated by Irish Aid. Second thing is the NGO sector is weak and really over-focused on scale and projects and not enough on advocacy and DE and public engagement”.*

A similar point in relation to the limits of the funding relationship with Irish Aid is made by Tom:

*“well, IDEA gets most of its money from Irish Aid, so, which is a weakness, and, unfortunately, that’s going to influence what IDEA does to a large extent, I think. It’s not IDEA’s fault. It’s because Irish Aid is the only show in town, really. So, there is going to be a little bit of, you know, compliance there with what Irish Aid want. It’s almost inevitable. Dóchas also get funded to the hilt by Irish Aid, so, and I talked earlier about you know, my deep frustration with the big member organisations of Dóchas, so I don’t think they’re ever going to rock the boat in any significant way, unfortunately”.*

In summary, when it comes to how NGDOs are perceived, their funding for DE is regarded as positive by some (5), but insufficient by others (5). These are among the 11 facilitators who are critical of the relative lack of attention given to DE by NGDOs. Thus, while some see them as powerful in the DE sector, others highlight their relative conservatism and unwillingness to ‘rock the boat’ and their own funding dependence on Irish Aid.

#### **5.4.2. Key Informant Perspectives on the Role of NGDOs**

Though six of the KIs refer to the role of the ‘big’ NGDOs, by comparison to the facilitators, they don’t say too much about them, especially in relation to funding. There is a sense among (5) KIs, including one from Irish Aid, that the ‘big’ NGDOs occupy a unique and influential position in relation to Irish Aid in Ireland and, as such, they have a potentially influential role to play in the promotion and

support of DE. Niall talks about the important role that NGDOs play in supporting DE in Ireland:

*“the voice of the bigger NGOs is incredibly important because... the bigger NGOs have really big standing in Irish society and then equally within Irish Aid, so the likes of the Concerns or Trócaires are really listened to within Irish Aid. So, if they are saying that DE is important, that’s a really important protection, I think, for the, not just for the smaller organisations, but for the DE programme in Irish Aid as a whole ... we should be trying to get DE prioritised more at the leadership level, the senior management level in those bigger NGOs”.*

Despite the potentially influential role that NGDOs play or have played in relation to DE, four KIs do not think they are critical enough. As outlined earlier, Hannah is critical of NGOs and their drive towards service-delivery and a business model and she sees DE as central in her call for a much stronger and more critical civil society. Kathleen feels that *“Dóchas has just been weak on activism”*. She argues that since the Make Poverty History Campaign, it has not led *“and I think that it’s because the most powerful members in Dóchas don’t want Dóchas to do that. And there’s a huge amount of competition among a lot of the Dóchas members in relation to branding and media space and fundraising”*. Oscar is both complimentary and critical of the bigger NGOs: *“I think the big NGOs ... played a part, like for example Trócaire and Concern give funding ... so in that sense they are doing great but I just think that like, ah, in terms of equality or a level playing field in terms of development education, it’s not coming from them”*. He goes on to say that *“I think the NGOs can do better but I think they are also playing a game in terms of DE and they are not actually putting in a lot of money in terms of DE”*.

Thus, KIs raise the important point of the influence NGDOs and Dóchas have with Irish Aid, but there is some criticism of unrealised potential in terms of promoting DE.

## **5.5. The Influence of Relationships within the DE Sector**

### **5.5.1. Key Findings on the Influence of Relationships within the DE Sector**

In addition to the specific roles of key organisations, relations in the sector are regarded by ten facilitators as significant in relation to how they affect DE. Overall, a picture emerges of a close-knit but two-tier DE sector in Ireland with complex intertwined relationships.

In exploring relationships within the sector, it is clear that there is some diversity in terms of approaches to DE and there are concerns about the growth of a ‘two-tier’ DE sector in Ireland with the bigger NGDOs becoming increasingly secure and the smaller organisations becoming more vulnerable. Relations are commented upon by many facilitators with some referring to the relatively new working relationships of consortiums, to strategic partnerships and others arguing that more

collaboration is needed. The fact that thus far all of these strategic partnerships are about promoting DE in the formal sector and the acknowledged increased influence by Irish Aid in these arrangements raises questions about the discourses of DE supported through them. While the value of working together is referred to by some facilitators – most notably in their compliments about IDEA’s work in this area – Brian suggests that there is insufficient collaboration among organisations. This may be the case among some but clearly there has been a growth in significance of funding through consortiums in recent years, e.g., the Worldwide Global Schools programme, [developmenteducation.ie](http://developmenteducation.ie), DICE and Ubuntu.

The value of personal relationships is emphasised by Oscar who highlights what a lot of people take for granted, the importance of personal friendships and collegial working relationships. This also raises questions about insiders and outsiders, as Oscar suggests that some are more likely to be consulted informally by Irish Aid than others. Furthermore, there are concerns for smaller organisations and references to organisations that no longer exist. In general, the growth of influence among some and the reduced position among others within the sector is attributed to the administrative and governance systems attached to Irish Aid funding, which favour the larger organisations and disadvantage the smaller, more vulnerable ones.

### **5.5.2. Close Working Relations**

Despite their differences, there are efforts within the sector to work more closely together. Patrick, for example, comments on the strengths of consortiums as a relatively new way of organising DE, e.g., Worldwide Global Schools:

*“So I actually like the consortium idea. I think if that could be extended more we might sort of begin to see more innovative and inventive and challenging DE coming, you know, out of the country. I think that would be really good. That’s not going to happen when Irish Aid are the big key funder and they hold the strings for most of it, I think, for various reasons, you know. They don’t have the education agenda. They have an aid, development agenda. So, yeah, consortium, yeah, I think that’s a good way to go forward. Pooling resources, pooling money, yeah, really good”.*

With the consolidation of some can come the extinction of others. A related significant issue for many of the DE organisations or groups working in the youth, community and adult education sectors is the effect of the strong position of Irish Aid, IDEA and the big NGDOs in the sector on the vulnerability of smaller organisations and groups. The seven interviewees who make specific reference to this concern attribute this threat to the requirements of Irish Aid funding and governance systems. This is significant in terms of the survival of smaller DE organisations with the issue often being linked to discussions about the number of smaller DE organisations which have been significantly weakened or

which no longer exist – Banúlacht, Schools Across Borders, the Africa Centre and DEFY<sup>20</sup> are mentioned. In addition, Patrick, for example, feels that the One World Centres “are just dying out”. One of the interviewees who works in a One World Centre explains:

*“We were always struggling in trying to kind of like pull the sheet up and then your feet are cold you know, it’s just trying to stretch. As far as I can remember, like from the very beginning, people were always, you know, saying ‘they’re trying to manoeuvre us out, they’re trying to get rid of the small groups’, so those fears have been there all the time and somehow 20 years on it doesn’t look that different actually. I think the screws have been tightened enormously but it doesn’t look that different. Having said that, a lot of groups have gone. I think it’s important to acknowledge that when I started there was the Sligo One World Group, there was the Waterford, ah, one in Portlaoise, Kerry, which is essentially gone ... there was Limerick”.*

Apart from threats to their continued existence in the face of a changing context, the vulnerability of smaller organisations to the vagaries of funding cuts and their dependence on Irish Aid funding is seen by them as significant in that they feel they offer a more critical approach to DE than the mainstream. In general, their vulnerability is highlighted by facilitators across all sectors. Siobhán, for example, explains that the way funding is “structured gives advantage to larger organisations with good governance in place ... Because of the way the application process is. I think that that’s problematic for some of the really good, very small organisations that maybe don’t have boards or don’t have, haven’t signed up to the Dóchas code, or what about an individual applying for funding?” She elaborates:

*“I was thinking about the smaller organisations that are really good that aren’t really far enough along and the governance stuff is all coming from the scandals thing anyway. And I understand Irish Aid, they’re government. They have to have transparency. They need accountability. They don’t want people going off doing stuff they can’t stand over... it was all coming from fear and it’s not to say I don’t understand it but I just think that if you’re driven by all of that stuff the ones that are going to benefit are larger NGOs and universities in terms of DE because they have all of those structures. They’re there already”.*

Liz is also critically aware of the influence of Irish Aid funding arrangements on the vulnerability of smaller DE organisations. She says “I’m talking about really minimal stuff like you can’t operate without insurance, right. You need a phone. You need whatever and those very, very basic costs aren’t allowed. They’re disallowed from your application. Then really you’re saying ‘we fund big organisations that have a DE desk’. That’s their model so, you know, definitely the smaller organisations just don’t fit within that model”. She goes on to say “I’m pretty sure we’re being manoeuvred out, it’s a conscious thing ... So, who is doing that? Am, government it sounds really like”. Patrick also links the vulnerability of smaller organisations to the good governance and accountability agenda linked to funding: “I fear for the sort of smaller organisations falling off the edge ... I think Irish Aid’s insistence on sort of a results-based framework agenda hasn’t helped smaller organisations

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<sup>20</sup> DEFY was a development education project funded by Irish Aid and run under the National Youth Council of Ireland for the promotion of DE in the youth sector.

*who simply can't deal with it or cope with it or who don't want to work within the strictures of it, monitoring, evaluation and measuring, the way Irish Aid want you to measure things”.*

With reference to DE in the community and adult education sector, Fiona feels that, despite the pressures of the good governance agenda, Irish Aid have taken on some of the points made about the need to support the informal sector and the need for diversity across the sector: *“I can see that they've taken on board what we're saying about the sector's diversity and its, and the value of preserving that diversity ... The problem is that it's all an illusion if the funding doesn't increase and the problems created by the log frame and the opening of the door to market mechanisms, because all of that is going on. So, it's problematic but our influence is there and I think we need to continue to make that influence felt”.*

### **5.5.3. Key Informant Perspectives on Relationships in the Sector**

Good relationships in the sector are considered important by seven of the KIs interviewed. Such relationships pertain to working as well as personal relationships. Niall describes relationships between ‘the sector’ and Irish Aid as particularly good in light of the GENE Review and the development of the Irish Aid Strategy on DE: *“to be able to directly influence the thinking of Irish Aid is important and positive”.* Mandy feels that there should be greater collaboration between Irish Aid and the DE sector. There is little call on the part of other KIs for greater collaboration though three KIs acknowledge the role that IDEA play in bringing people in the DE sector together. Izzy suggests that within Irish Aid there is a *“culture of fear, you know, civil servant dread of members of the public or what will happen if this is published in somebody's doctoral thesis and somebody reads it and it's wrong?”* She goes on to say that Irish Aid is *“quite closed and quite reluctant to engage with the public even in the public engagement department”.*

A key point that's made by Oscar is the importance of personal relationships in the DE sector. He refers to individual relationships across organisations and the idea of people in the sector *“knowing everybody”.* He describes the sector as small, and talks about the importance of being known in terms of having some influence securing good working relationships. He goes on to talk about people he works closely with in the bigger NGOs. He describes one person as his ‘buddy’ and gives an example of his friendships with others, which started through attendance at meetings. The small size and intimacy of the sector has an influence, he feels, on the relationship between the big NGOs and Irish Aid, where relationships are considered important in terms of securing meetings and being known by funders as well as in terms of influencing others. An extension of the point about personal relationships relates to the kind of responses that people can receive from staff in different organisations based on their relationships with them or on their personalities. From this point of view,

Izzy says that in dealing with Irish Aid *“there’s a lot of personality involved, which is a shame, so if your liaison officer is really helpful and you can have a mature discussion, you can go back and forth quite often and you can say ‘can you help me?’ That’s fantastic. You might not get that person next year. You might get somebody that doesn’t have the same knowledge of the sector or knowledge of you”*.

With regard to relationships affecting DE in Ireland, Kathleen suggests that while good working relationships can be constructive, there also needs to be a critical distance in some of them. She has *“some concerns about the relationship between IDEA and Irish Aid being too co-operative because it is in Irish Aid’s interest to have a capacity building body and if IDEA go too far down that road then they won’t be a challenge to Irish Aid on DE policy. And I think, at least a few years ago, the relationship seemed to be more collaborative than challenging”*. Freja also has concerns about the relationship between them: *“I think IDEA started out very much as a grassroots organisation supporting individual practitioners and since IDEA has become more secure, a strategic partner of Irish Aid, they have more time to deal with things like policy issues and there’s been that freedom that you have when you’re not worried, so that’s been big and then there’s the downside to it because have we lost our grassroots feeling? Is it dev ed people in suits now?”* Niall sees IDEA more as a *“conduit or space for engagement between”* Irish Aid and the sector. He believes that IDEA have been critical of Irish Aid especially in relation to *“annual grants or whether it’s the programme, the recent ... programme-funded grants where there’s this distinction between public engagement and DE”* and that what IDEA has done is *“enabling that critical exchange both directly between IDEA in the narrow sense and Irish Aid but also between members and Irish Aid”*.

As outlined in facilitator interviews, a key issue in relationships in the sector pertains to the consolidation of DE work, on the one hand, through consortiums and strategic partnerships, and the vulnerability of smaller organisations, on the other. While the focus on partnerships and contracts is considered more strategic by Irish Aid, there are some concerns for smaller organisations (among four) whose funding has been cut, but these concerns only come from those involved in networks. Kathleen, for example, cites five examples of organisations that have been involved in DE that either no longer exist or are much reduced in terms of scale of work and staffing. She says these are *“small, small issues that shouldn’t close an organisation but because we’re all so vulnerable they do, they can and they do”*. Kathleen regards the closure of the organisation she mentions as a response to the imposition by Irish Aid of additional administrative and governance measures despite funding cuts in the wake of the recession, and Kate sees the closure of weaker organisations as fairly inevitable in that context, but not necessarily a loss. Oscar feels that *“because of the recession and the way funding is coming it actually makes DE to actually compete with each other not to collaborate. There’s no collaboration in DE. It used to be, maybe in 2007, 2008 ... people go to meetings, there’s money here, there’s no struggle, but nowadays I know even myself in the X [organization], you have a problem with Irish Aid,*

*you don't have funding, people sympathise with you but it doesn't go anywhere".*

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has addressed some of the factors shaping discourses of DE in Ireland with a specific focus on the institutional context within which DE facilitators work. This includes the international and national policy environment; the position of Irish Aid as a significant funder and its effects on relationships and practices in the field, especially in a post-recession context; and the role of other actors in the DE sector such as IDEA and the big NGDOs. The picture which emerges is one of Irish Aid hegemony where DE facilitators talk about being both enabled and constrained by funding and accountability mechanisms, while they struggle to realise the critical DE they espouse. At the same time, the DE sector can be seen to be divided with some DE facilitators, groups and organisations embracing and benefiting from new funding requirements whereas others are increasingly marginalised. The implications of the issues highlighted by DE facilitators, as presented in this chapter, are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Eight, which follows.



## **Chapter Eight: DE Discourses – Implications, Style and Culture**

### **Introduction**

In this chapter, I synthesise findings from interviews with DE facilitators and KIs as well as questionnaires, which are discussed in Chapters Six and Seven. One of the temptations for any researcher when faced with trying to make sense of interview material is to simplify. Reduce what people say to common themes or readily identifiable categories and remove the complexities, nuances, ambiguities and ‘out-liers’. While such an approach can offer rewards in terms of easy answers, in turning complex patterns of thought and talk into monochromatic lines, it loses the depths and multi-coloured richness of diversity, pluralities and contradictions. Such pluralities and contradictions abound when it comes to facilitator perspectives on DE while, at the same time, there are patterns of thought and talk. Both are addressed in this chapter with reference to discourses of DE and the factors shaping them in the Irish context.

In the first section of this chapter, I explore the framework developed for understanding discourses of DE with reference to workshop analysis and I address some patterns and contradictions emerging in DE facilitator talk. I highlight the significance of different DE discursive positions. I argue that though talk of criticality is most common, it obscures an idealised, abstract and apolitical discursive style, understood here as ‘the way people talk’. This is a style which allows ‘the elephant(s) in the room’ to go unquestioned.

In the second section of this chapter, in the light of facilitator contributions and reflections on theory and other research, I try to understand why such a style is hegemonic. I suggest, in that context, that DE is a site of discursive struggle largely framed around a struggle for legitimacy. Because of DE’s marginal position within Irish Aid, NGDOs and in formal education, and paradoxically, because of Irish Aid’s hegemonic position as funder in the field, a culture of restraint has emerged. This is characterised by discursive contradictions, consensual relationships of non-confrontation and by policies and practices which constrain criticality. It is within this cultural and institutional context that what is considered legitimate DE is largely shaped, where ‘best practice’ is defined and where some debate is promoted and others stifled. Overall, what emerges is a picture of constrained criticality.

In Section 3, I explore issues emerging in the light of international literature. These include questions of criticality and understandings of transformative education.

## **1. Discourses of DE among DE Facilitators in Ireland**

In this section I discuss the framework for understanding discourses of DE developed in this research. I explore the various positions identified among facilitators involved as well as feedback on these positions among workshop participants. I go on to address each of these positions in turn, discussing their assumptions and ontologies as well as their strengths and weaknesses. I conclude this section with a reflection on the hegemonic discursive style which characterises DE talk.

### **1.1. A Framework of Discourses of DE**

One of the contributions of this research is its elaboration of a framework for understanding discourses of DE. Building, in particular, on the work of Andreotti (2006; 2011; 2014), but also of Bourn (2011 and 2015), the framework below (Table 8.1.) presents a compilation table of discourses of DE which facilitators involved in this research draw upon.

This framework for understanding discourses of DE (Table 8.1.) reinforces Andreotti's work on identifying multiple positions from which facilitators speak and act (2006; 2014). As such, it moves away from a definitional approach to understanding DE and is designed to be expansive and inclusive rather than reductionist. In it, I have chosen to focus on four dimensions of DE commonly identified in the literature: knowledge and understanding; skills; action and learning processes; as well as on the aims, values and politics of DE, because I wanted to look at how facilitators attribute meaning to what they are doing in DE. I am not suggesting this as a definitive framework, but rather as a useful one. I could have organised these differently, e.g., based on Bourn's (2015) analysis of common principles, themes or practices. Though two of his points are included here, the values and action associated with DE, the two others emerge in interviews rather than being included here as organising categories, i.e., interconnectedness; and "ensuring that the voices and perspectives of the people of the Global South are promoted, understood and reflected upon" (2015: 46). Though this framework is presented here in a box format, it is not designed to be rigid. Facilitators exhibit various perspectives and understandings of DE, some of which may appear, by the standards of this framework, to be contradictory, but they sit in tension with one another within the same person. In addition, though a facilitator can largely regard themselves as subscribing to a 'critical' or a 'North-South' discourse (an issue which was discussed at workshops), there is a need to allow for fluidity and movement between and within discursive formations. Thus, this research has found that contrary to any simplification, the discourses that facilitators draw upon are complex and nuanced. At the same time, patterns do emerge and these are discussed below.

**Table 8.1. Discourses of DE among DE Facilitators in Ireland<sup>21</sup>**

Discourses/ Dimensions	Technical DE Discourse	Liberal DE Discourse	North-South DE Discourse	Critical DE Discourse	Post-critical DE Discourse
<b>Knowledge, understanding; Process from knowledge acquisition to awareness raising, understanding and action</b>	Acquiring knowledge, content – policy or issue driven (7)  Emphasis on content or ‘dev’ issues (4)	Awareness raising of development issues for the individual (9)	Awareness and understanding of specific North/South or global development issues and content – understanding for action (3)	Understanding of global issues, structural causes of inequality, poverty etc at L-G levels Knowledge and understanding as process (18)	Critical deconstruction of taken-for-granted assumptions, narratives and truths; challenging stereotypes Multiple knowledges valued; Understanding complexity (10)
<b>Skills: Critical Thinking and Analytical Skills; Skills in making connections, e.g., local-global; and collaboration skills</b>	Technical know-how (0)  Analysis (10)	Skills for individual engagement  Reflection (10)  Local-Global as entry point for understanding (7)	Local-Global as entry point for understanding (with Lib discourse – 7)  Critical reflection on North/South dev issues and understanding effects of life in North on South or rich on poor  Local-Global to emphasise effects N-S (7)	Critical thinking (9), Critique (7) and Critical Analysis (2) leading to reflection and action for change.  Making connections at local and global levels as issues L-G (11) Local issues important (9)  Democratic engagement, participatory learning and dialogue	Critical reflection (2), reflexivity and creative processes of collaboration – open-ended  Praxis (1)  L-G to shift problematic N-S constructions and issues L-G (2)
<b>Action and Activism: Individual action in one’s own context; collective action; Political Action</b>	Action component not emphasised. If there, likely to be surface-level or technical (0)	Individual action (14) – consumer, lifestyle driven – clicktivism, charity, fundraising  An ‘action component’ (16)  Type of action doesn’t matter (8)	Mobilisation in Ireland for action for justice in the countries of the global South	Action (an action component or activism) (16) as part of the praxis cycle – analysis, reflection, action, reflection, etc.  Collective action (11) Political action (9)  Non-prescription	Little separation between DE and activism – all part of the same process  Many actions – about living not lifestyle  Questioning action ‘component’
<b>Learning Processes: Safe Spaces which value Diversity; Active and Participatory Learning Processes; Experiential learning - learner-centred</b>	Didactic, predictive and technical (0)  Creative and participatory processes for ‘better’ education (2)	Learner-centred experience tailored to individual participant needs or to enhance individual learning experience (7)	Participatory learning to develop active engagement (9)  Learner-centred = harness participants’ experience for understanding and mobilisation (6)	Safe spaces (10) for critical reflection and dialogue, methodologies for critical analysis and active engagement (with N-S - 9)  Criticisms of DE based on right or wrong answers (11)  Learner-centred about being age or group appropriate (11); learning experiences targeted at the marginalised (3)	‘Free range’ spaces (1)  Participatory Learning for alternatives (6)  Valuing Diversity (7)  Learner-centred involves putting own experience up for question and challenging learners’ understandings (3)
<b>Aims of DE: Vision for world; for education; for development; and for learners</b>	Mainstreaming into formal ed – DE to ensure relevance of ed system; ‘filling a gap’ (2)  Public engagement or promotion of aid (1)	To improve the educational experience of the individual so that they can contribute (4)  About learning and lifestyle change – changing mindsets (8) and individual behaviour (5)	Education for student North-South engagement (1)  About understanding roles as global citizens (9)	Education and action for global justice and equality (21)  Challenges traditional education (19) and Dev co-operation = from charity to solidarity (10)  Not about aid and fundraising but roles as global citizens (10)	Alternative educations (12)  Turning learning upside down (1) Critical of development constructions and ‘othering’ (2)  Critical of exclusivity, complicity and Eurocentrism in DE (1)
<b>Values – Equality and Justice - Justice: Economic Justice; Justice and Good Relations; Justice as Inclusion; Justice, Shared Humanity and Solidarity</b>	Efficiency, results, mutual benefit – ‘right values and attitudes’ (0)	Individual freedom, rights, justice, respect – equality of opportunity (1)  Care, compassion, empathy from a charity perspective (2)	Care, compassion, empathy – focus on the global South  Justice and equality in terms of North-South relations (1)	Values based on good global relationships – many associated with justice, equality, Solidarity (12) Kindness (13)  Addressing ‘root causes’ of poverty (7)  Or ... Not prescribed values or answers but need for congruence (12)	Many different value systems including those of justice, equality, solidarity, etc.  Valuing inclusion and diversity (8)  Challenging universalism and values based on superiority (2)  Critique and questioning of values and of certainty (2)
<b>Power and Politics – DE as Political: DE about power to effect</b>	Formal power of decision makers (4)	Power of individual to realise change at personal rather than	Politics as a tool for realising change in the global South (1)	Power and politics central – understanding how power works and challenge unjust	Power everywhere - need to interrogate own power (4) and explore possibilities of

<sup>21</sup> Numbers cited here refer to the number of DE facilitators who make reference to each point in interviews. As each person may have made reference to more than one point or to none, these do not add up to the overall number of DE facilitators involved (n = 21). As not each point is mentioned, there are no totals offered. The frequency of reference to each of these discourses is addressed in Tables 8.2. and 8.3.

change; DE about power to give voice; DE about understanding power relations	Formal politics or big 'P' engagement	structural level (5) Power to give voice to individual (6)	Understanding dominant relations and structures especially with reference to North-South relations	power structures at L-G levels (9) Power to effect change (16) and to give voice for global citizenship and activism (2)	alternatives with radical social movements (3)
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## 1.2. Discursive Positions among DE Facilitators

Chapter Six shows that, when taken together, most of the references among facilitators are to elements of the critical discourse, especially in the areas of knowledge and understanding, critical thinking and local-global connections and the values of justice, equality and solidarity. At the same time, there are significant references to the liberal discourse, especially in relation to education processes where experience-based learning is identified in an individualised way and in the areas of action and politics, where individual action and lifestyle changes are emphasised. There are some references to post-critical discursive assumptions, especially among those in community and adult education and those working with DE organisations. Though much of the language has moved towards that of the global, some draw on a North-South discourse, especially those working in NGOs and in DE organisations. Overall, as introduced in Chapter Six, there are only minor differences between the discourses drawn upon by different cohorts of facilitator with those working in formal education more likely than others to talk in terms of skills and those in community and adult education less likely to focus on action or on citizenship. This is likely because of the relative fluidity of employment between those working in different sectors, e.g., between formal education, NGOs, networks and Irish Aid, e.g., of the 21 facilitators who completed the questionnaire (see Q. 8), nine worked either in a voluntary or professional capacity in one of the other sectors prior to their current work with the most common previous experiences being in teaching (5) and in a community or youth work context (4).

Figures 8.1. - 8.7. show statistics regarding those who predominantly draw on a particular discourse with reference to the various aspects of DE addressed. This is based on an assessment of their overall interview talk in a particular area rather than on specific references to terms or assumptions. As can be seen there are differences between the numbers involved as all facilitators draw on a number of discourses and many make reference to particular concepts within one discursive framework even though they may be framing their overall point within the context of a different discourse. An example of this is that seven facilitators talk about acquiring knowledge or content, with four placing specific emphasis on the importance of content. Eighteen talk about understanding, as well as knowledge, and understanding as a process, many of whom also make reference to acquiring knowledge or content.

**Figure 8.1. presents an overall picture of the discourses predominantly drawn upon with reference to each of the dimensions and aspects of DE discussed whereas Figures 8.2. - 8.7. which follow break down those overall figures with reference to individual aspects of DE.**

Figure 8.1. Discourses among Facilitators

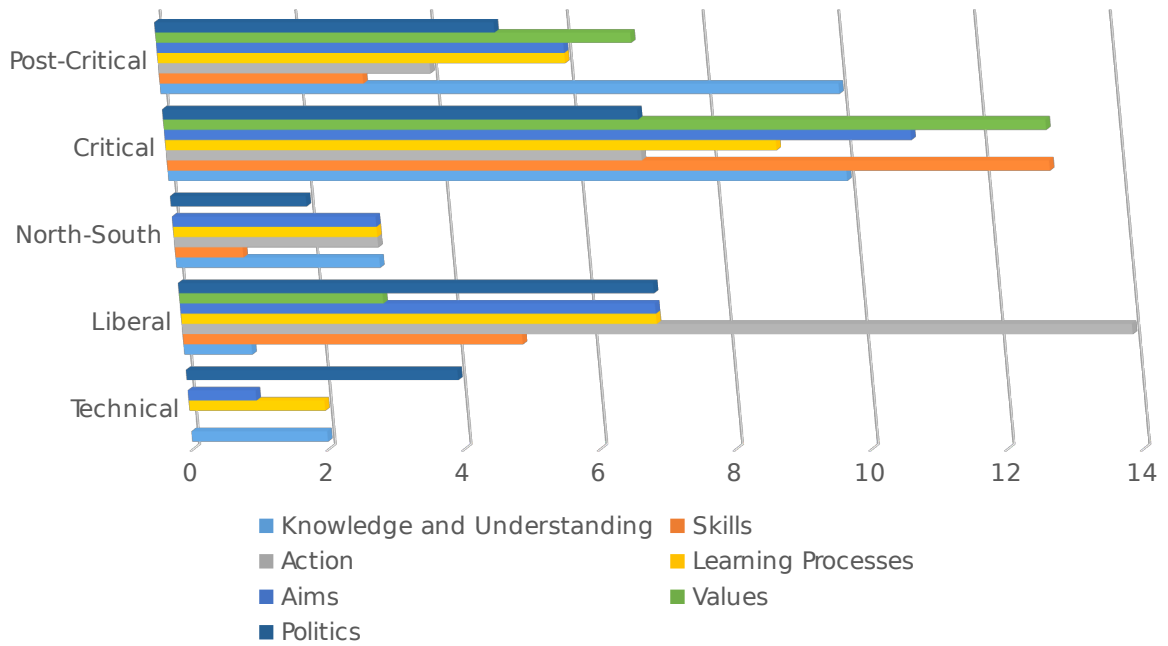


Figure 8.2. Knowledge and Understanding

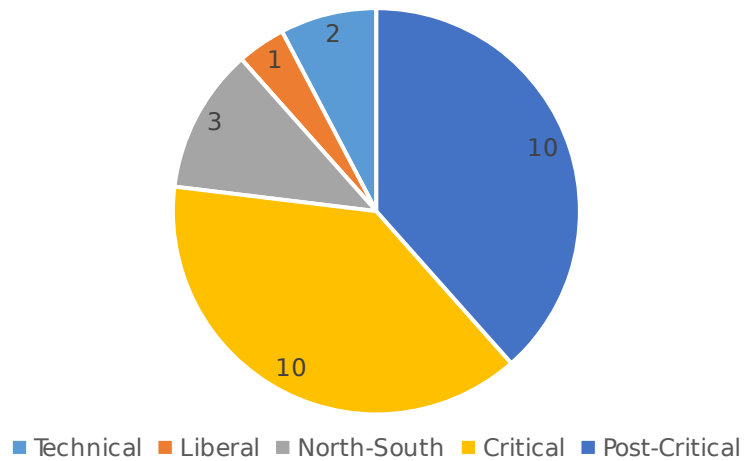


Figure 8.3. Skills

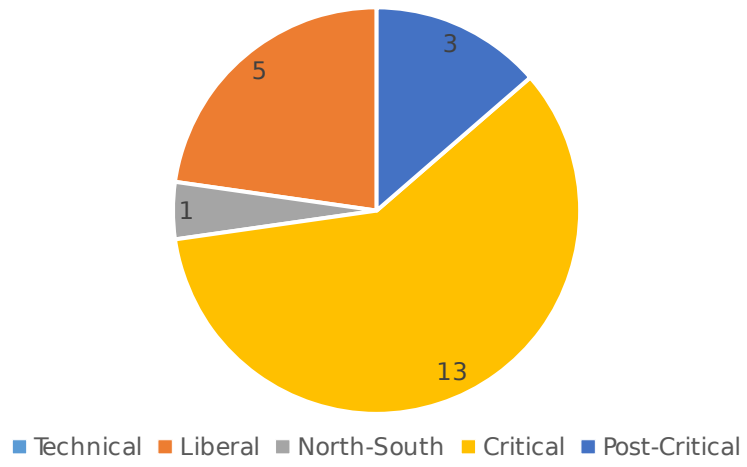


Figure 8.4. Action

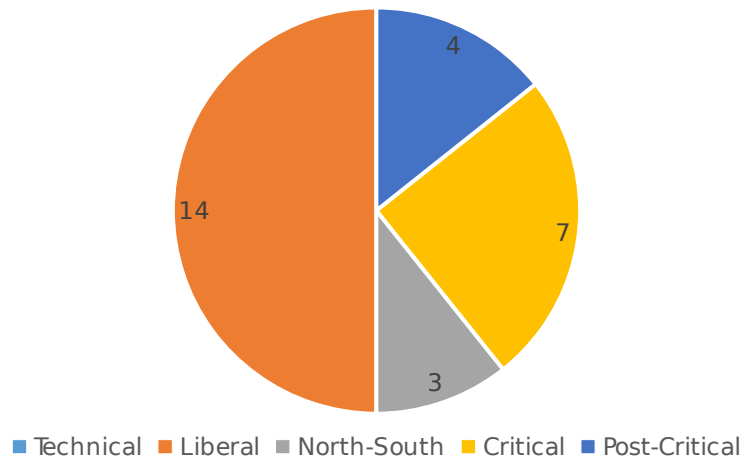


Figure 8.5. Learning Processes

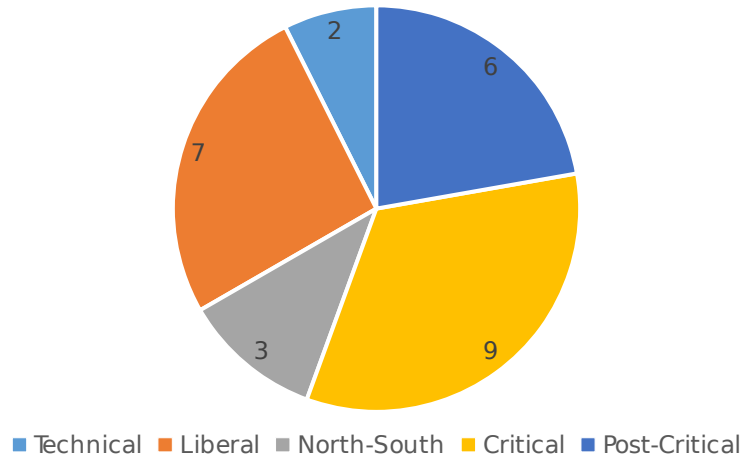


Figure 8.6. Aims

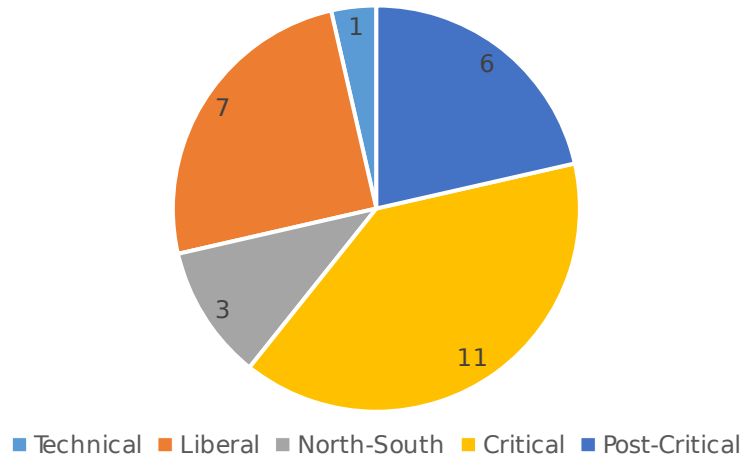


Figure 8.7. Values

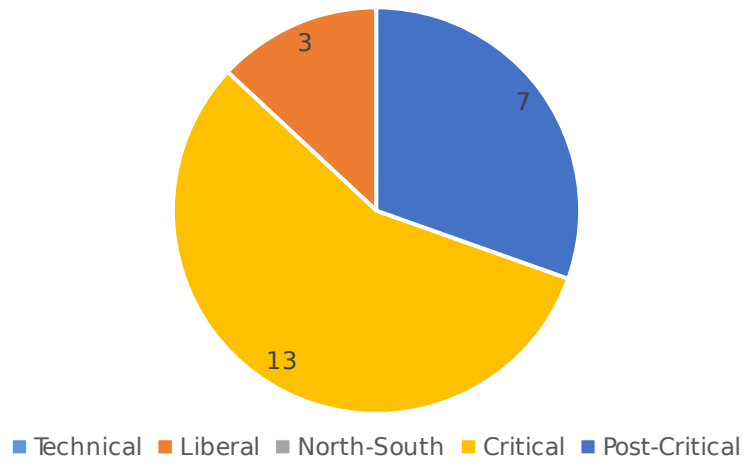
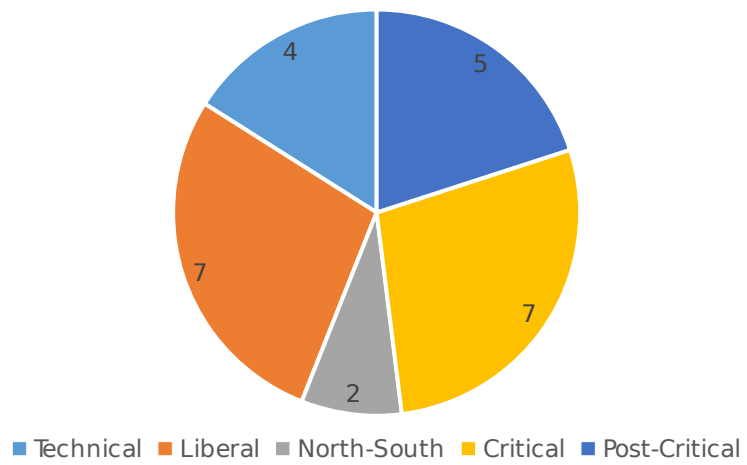


Table 8.8. Politics





### 1.3. Workshop Reflections on the Framework of Discourses

The framework of discourses reflected in Table 8.1. (above) was developed by me in the light of analysis of interview transcripts and workshop reflections. I found it very helpful to discuss the draft framework of discourses with participants. They confirmed many of the points I introduced and discussion at the workshops invited me to reflect more deeply about the way I was presenting and thinking about these discourses. Due to limitations of space, I mention just a few points which emerged here.

The first of these is that workshop facilitators viewed the framework as useful in offering an overall analysis of different discursive positions within an Irish context. In Workshop One, when asked if this mapping or ‘continuum’ as I called it, is useful or not, the written response from small Group 1 to this representation of discourses was *“clarifying possibilities – intellectual visualisation, academic value”*. Group 2 responded as follows: *“allows us to challenge ourselves. Useful reference point to check our (potentially unconscious) parameters/assumptions. Does ‘continuum’ indicate that one moves from 0 – 5? Misleading term? Does it need an arrow? But it does demonstrate a deepening of knowledge and understanding. And it also highlights alternatives/different ways of doing things. Represents totality of DE in Ireland. ‘Continuum’ less helpful a term than ‘categories’ – use the framework to dip in/review/reflect – not necessarily move through”*. In workshop two, there were various responses including that *“it enables us to question assumptions. It is complex stuff. Useful for a framework, stimulates further discussion”*. Another response in workshop two was that *“the various discourses strongly display clear values and key focus or objectives for me, and so in my mind I can ‘fit’ certain organisations into particular discourses (while acknowledging not in neat boxes)”*. One group wrote that it was very comprehensive and another questioned whether it was accurate or a reasonable interpretation of discourses. They felt that approaches were more fluid.

Overall, therefore, participants at workshops found it helpful in giving a broad understanding of different discursive formations in DE in Ireland. On the other hand, they questioned the box format and style of the visual representation as that of a continuum, which suggests that one graduates from one discourse to another, i.e., from the technical to the critical and post-critical. Rather than suggesting that there is a ‘right’ way to think, e.g., they said that it appeared as if the ‘critical’ or ‘post-critical’ were the ideals. They went on to argue in discussions that there is merit in all of them.

Participants’ discussion of the continuum notion or image helped me to reflect more deeply on the discursive style and culture involved in DE. While on the one hand it helped me to think more about the tensions and contradictions involved in DE talk, it also helped to clarify the implications of the various discursive positions. Facilitators’ reluctance, in workshops, to see these discourses as a graduation in terms of politics and criticality could be interpreted as an ‘anything goes’ critique, which

sees them as different tools in a box of possible discourses to draw upon in different circumstances. While this is a popular approach, and one advanced by some of the facilitators who participated in workshops, they are also conscious of the negative implications of the imposition of any one over the others as having ‘all the answers’. In a follow-up phone conversation with one of the workshop participants, I asked him why he felt that there was merit in each of the discursive formations. He went on to highlight that it depends on what skills, understanding and knowledge is required and how a particular issue is approached. For him, it is *“like a continuum. The technical model defines it, you have professionals defining problems and solutions and funding ... at the other end you have people trying to find out what’s going on and how to deal with it and ultimately, you’re going to deal with it. The danger is where you imagine that the simple can respond to the complex ... ‘We’ll build the road as we walk it’ ... difficulty when the technical is in the assent. It can’t understand emergence and risk, constantly trying to reduce it”*. As evidenced here, though he identified different values in the different discourses mentioned, he was also more inclined to see it in terms of a continuum of criticality.

In terms of the visual representation of the discourses, participants did not want it to be rigid or restrictive. I found myself agreeing with them and, from participating in the workshop, thinking that a ‘boxed’ representation of discourses was not adequately representing its complexity or fluidity either. I found their suggestions of the wheel, compass and village interesting. For the purposes of this research, I have kept the original type of representation shared with workshop participants, albeit with up-dated content, and I introduce the wheel and a more fluid representation in Appendix Nine. In that case, while it captures the various dimensions related to each of the discursive positions, it does so in a way which suggests overlaps and inter-relationships.

A further point was raised in the workshops with reference to a second exercise involving the discursive mapping. In both workshops, I asked each participant to try, if they could, to identify an organisation that they are familiar with that they think reflects any of the discursive positions outlined. I also asked them to use a post-it to indicate which one they felt most closely reflected their own understanding of DE. In so doing, there was some slippage in terms of understanding between ‘discourse’ and ‘approach’ with less focus specifically on talk and more on the practices associated with each discursive formation. In that exercise, in both workshops, participants (6 of 9) associated Irish Aid with the technical discourse and felt that their drive towards results-based frameworks, administration, measurement and governance systems represents this discursive position. In terms of where they situated themselves, in Workshop One, five of the participants associated their understanding of DE with a ‘critical’ discourse and one participant also identified theirs with a ‘post-critical’ discourse. In Workshop Two, three identified with a ‘critical’ discourse, one of whom also identified with the ‘post-critical’ and one identified only with the ‘post-critical’. In the discussion which followed, the point was made that it was not possible to ‘identify’ fully with any one discourse and that there were certain phrases or words in the descriptions of some of them which would put

participants off them.

Thus, as indicated above, workshop participants' reflections on the initial discursive framework presented to them from interviews, helped me to re-examine how I represented the framework. Their questioning of the continuum and desire for inclusivity in understanding DE also inspired me to think not only in terms of participant talk but also in terms of the style and culture of talk. It reminded me of the importance of not reducing facilitator talk to try to fit it in to any particular discursive framework but to acknowledge contradictions, points being held in tension and fluidity as well as the implications of various positions and contradictions on the criticality of DE. These issues are discussed below.

#### **1.4. Implications of Different Discursive Positions**

This mapping, or framework of discourses, is the first of its kind which has been developed based on research undertaken with facilitators in an Irish context. Feedback from workshop participants suggests that it is useful as a broad analytical or reflective tool, and that it offers a complex picture of discourses of DE among facilitators in Ireland. It builds on existing research in DE which views DE not in monolithic terms but in relation to different ideal types (Krause, 2010); types and degrees of criticality (Andreotti, 2006); or discourses (Bourn, 2011). In developing this discursive framework from facilitator talk, it also builds on Skinner and Bailie Smith's research (2015) which puts DE practitioner voices and experiences as central to understanding DE discourses and practices. Though there is some discussion in the literature on different 'adjectival' educations, with differentiation between them based largely on how the content of the education is framed, e.g., in human rights, sustainable development or intercultural terms, this does not emerge as significant in this research. As the framework focuses on the dimensions or characteristics of DE (Regan, 2006; Bourn, 2011 and 2015; Krause, 2010; and Liddy, 2013), content emerges as one aspect of the wider dimension of knowledge and understanding.

In general, there is little mention of any significant difference between DE, ESD, CE or ICE, apart from emphasis. Because of the discursive focus of this research, the framework provides some analytical clarity when it comes to different assumptions which underpin talk of DE in relation to each of the characteristics identified here. At the same time, as discussed above, facilitators draw on multiple discourses, which are evident in DE policy and practice over time (see Chapter Two) and there are clear overlaps between some of the discursive positions. Furthermore, many facilitators use the same words, e.g., action, local-global connections, experiential learning, engagement or justice, albeit ascribing different meanings to them. This "ambivalence of significance" (Andreotti, 2014), makes the task of trying to understand the significance of different discourses and discursive positions all the more important. I address each of them in turn below.

#### **1.4.1. A Technical Discourse of DE**

The technical discourse is not very evident in facilitator ‘talk’ apart from references to the importance of ‘content’, and concerns about DE being ‘political’ or politics in formal terms. Generally, this discourse draws on instrumentalist thinking (Andreotti, 2014) and it is more likely to be associated with a ‘traditional’ form of development studies or information sharing, which is based on some form of didactic, instructional type learning, sharing knowledge about issues or public awareness raising, than with DE with its emphasis on process, values and action. For Krause (2010: 7) DE as awareness raising is “cognitive information disseminated in a top-down approach”. As such, though often linked with DE, it is also not universally regarded as sufficiently focused on process to constitute DE (Fiedler, 2008).

Despite this, and Irish Aid’s central role in funding a variety of types of DE in Ireland, most workshop participants (8/9) associate Irish Aid with a technical discourse, especially in relation to their emphasis on results-based management, evidence-based practice and measurement, and their focus on the promotion of development. As this ‘promotion of development’, ‘public information’ or ‘public engagement’ is based on knowledge about and ‘learning for support’, rather than critique of development or aid or development cooperation, it is associated with a technical discourse of DE here. As outlined by Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken (2011) and Bourn (2015), and evident in contributions to this research, there has been a long-standing tension between those who see DE primarily as serving the function of promoting development or aid and those who view it as a means of social transformation. The two Irish Aid officials interviewed for this research are supportive of Irish Aid’s increased focus on what they call ‘public engagement’, which they see as the promotion of engagement with Ireland’s development cooperation programme. As discussed in Chapter Two, this has been linked in policy to DE in Irish Aid especially since 2008 (Irish Aid, 2007) and has more recently been promoted through Irish Aid programme partnership funding (Irish Aid, 2016b; IDEA, 2016d), as outlined by many of those interviewed here. Some facilitators and KIs are critical of Irish Aid’s blurring of the lines between DE and public engagement, especially Izzy, who argues that its less than critical stand on development bears little resemblance to the types of DE practiced by others. In general, as evident in findings, though few facilitators and KIs involved in this research identify the role of DE as being about supporting aid, they acknowledge that, for government, a significant justification for DE is its role in promoting support for its aid programme.

This research suggests that Irish Aid is not the only organisation thought to emphasise the promotion of aid and development or to encourage compliance with results-based frameworks, accountability to donors and evidence based on measurement. Findings show some criticism of the big NGOs and

IDEA in both of those areas. As with Irish Aid, there are reflections of the critical, the North-South and the technical discursive formations in NGDO facilitator articulations (see Chapter Six). A growing business orientation among NGDOs (in terms of staffing and approach to work, as highlighted by Hannah), is an approach which is valued in this research by Mandy and Kate who work with Irish Aid. It stands in stark contrast to the critical and post-critical inflections of some of the facilitators who work for smaller DE organisations. As such, there are contradictions within the sector and between the approach of Irish Aid and that of some of the smaller organisations. The divergence between Irish Aid, IDEA and the bigger NGDOs appears much less significant, yet this is not always the case, e.g., interviews with three DE facilitators working with NGDOs do not suggest any greater adherence to a technical discourse among two of them than other facilitators. On the other hand, organisationally, the big NGDOs appear to embody internal contradictions, a point made by a few interviewees, with management focused on results and promoting the work of the organisation through their communications and fundraising work while at the same time supporting DE which may reflect a more critical discourse. The mismatch between their reflection of a technical discourse on the one hand and a critical one on the other, and the difference between NGDO and DE organisations in this regard, may go some way to explaining the discursive tensions and contradictions within the DE sector in Ireland (discussed below).

Even though many of the facilitators and KIs involved in this research do not draw directly on a technical discourse of DE, the growing emphasis on public engagement and its link with DE by Irish Aid and NGDOs in an Irish context justifies the inclusion of a technical discourse in the framework of discourses here. It also raises questions about the extent to which reference to this discourse may grow or not among facilitators or practitioners in Ireland in the future.

#### **1.4.2. A Liberal Discourse**

With its talk of the individual, of formal politics, awareness raising, and mindset or lifestyle change, a liberal discourse is based on assumptions which might be called ‘separatist’ or reflective of ‘island thinking’. In viewing the personal as separate from, and more important than, the political (Ryan 2001), the individual is prioritised over the collective or relationships, and agency is regarded as separate from, and more important than, the structural. As such, talk of learning processes is about the value of participatory and experiential learning to enhance the individual learning experience; knowledge is about awareness raising for the individual; reflection is limited to individual experiences (Andreotti, 2014); and politics is about giving voice to the individual or realising change at a personal rather than a structural level.

Concerns about increasing individualisation are becoming more acute in the context of neoliberalism

and the growing commodification of education. As outlined in Chapter Four, Giroux (2002; 2004), much quoted there, and Lynch et al (2012) focus, in particular, on the effect of neoliberalism on higher education. Numerous other studies have addressed neoliberalism in formal education in Ireland, including Power et al (2013), and on the erosion of community education funding and support (Harvey, 2012; Fitzsimons, 2015). Neoliberal considerations underpin both the technical and the liberal discourses here. The technical discourse, with its focus on instrumentalist skills, the technical, the measurable and the attainable, is ideologically aligned to the focus on the technical across mainstream education. With its emphasis on objective content or skills, it reflects a type of crypto-positivism that Kincheloe (2008b) is critical of. While the liberal is complementary to this technical discourse, its focus on the individual makes it more about consuming a range of possible education experiences rather than necessarily valuing the technical over others. On the other hand, because the valuing of the individual is at the heart of how the technical is understood in the context of neoliberalism, they are often overlapping.

The focus on the individual, as evident in a liberal discourse of DE, especially in relation to learning experiences, also speaks to debates about, and understandings of, experiential and participatory learning (Ryan, 2001). Most critical theorists try to walk a line between learning which is based on, and which values, individual or personal experience, and understanding individual or personal experience in the context of personal, social, economic, cultural and political relationships. Thus, experiential learning is not here associated with any particular discourse. It depends on how it is understood and constructed. The over-emphasis on the individual to the detriment of understanding the person in context and in relationship has been addressed by many critical educationalists (Ryan, 2001). Where DE is conceived as being about ‘mindset change’ or ‘individual acts of kindness’, as associated here with a liberal discourse, though arguably not problematic in itself, it becomes so when viewed in the context of other, more critical, ways of talking about or conceiving of such change and action, e.g., changed understandings or kindness with solidarity. As such, when experiential or participatory learning is constructed as being about individuals consuming the type of learning that they need, it can close off more critical or radical possibilities.

There are also references to the liberal discourse among facilitators, especially with regard to the action ‘component’ of DE (see Tables 8.2. and 8.3.), and in particular among those involved in formal education. The implications of this construction of action, as indicated by Khoo (2006) and Gaynor (2016), is that it can lead to the type of superficial, individualised and apolitical action that many facilitators themselves are critical of. Given that the focus, from a liberal discursive point of view, is on the individual learner, where there is an emphasis on liberal forms of action, there is a danger of reinforcing rather than challenging the association between fundraising and DE. This point has been made in relation to other research e.g., Bryan and Bracken’s (2011) reference to DE promoting the three Fs of ‘fundraising, fasting and having fun’ and, especially as it is connected to vague talk about

engagement among facilitators interviewed for this research, it remains a concern in relation to action associated with DE in the Irish context. This is reinforced by the suggestion, on the part of some participants in this research, that DE starts with knowledge acquisition or mindset change and moves from there to action for change. Many are at pains to suggest that actions can be now or in the future, tiny and individual or big and collective, and that they are not necessarily associated with advocacy and campaigning. In making these points, there is an inherent assumption that there is some kind of progressive graduation from the individual to the collective and from the personal to the political. This kind of compartmentalised, evolutionary thinking that many associate with DE is worth critiquing, especially with its modernist connotations and teleological assumptions (Andreotti, 2014). In addition, as with other types of DE talk, it is difficult to question.

Thus, a liberal discourse is characterised by individualised, non-structural assumptions of learning needs, power, agency and change. This brings us back to tensions regarding the politics of education where, for some, education is at its most political when it is being non-prescriptive and, for others, it is when it is driven by a particular vision of society. This issue dovetails with debates over the emphasis on universalism in value-based or ‘adjectival’ educations (Nussbaum, 2008) and criticisms of universal values at the heart of DE (Todd, 2009; Andreotti, 2014). The point is made by one of the contributors to this research, that moral absolutes is not a good place to begin a discussion. This view echoes theoretical concerns to hold on to values and politics on the one hand while not allowing them to become ends in themselves (or absolutes) which can turn out to be obstacles to meaningful politics on the other.

### **1.4.3. A North-South Discourse**

There are relatively few who draw predominantly on a North-South discourse among the facilitators involved in this research, with most of the talk of local-global rather than North-South. Despite this, there is some talk of understanding the effects of North-South relations (among seven – see Table 8.1.), the focus on mobilisation for justice in the global South by one person and the use of the term ‘Third World’ by four others (see Chapter Six). Most of those who do talk in North-South terms work with NGOs and DE organisations, with four identified here as predominantly doing so.

In reviewing facilitator talk in this area, there are arguably two strands within a North-South discourse. On the one hand there is talk which is similar to the liberal discourse in that it focuses on the individual learning experience, in this case for understanding of, or engagement in, North-South development issues. This individualised strand emphasises development based on development cooperation, aid or charity, where North-South development relationships go fairly unquestioned and trusteeship is valued. Bryan and Bracken (2011) argue that this modernisation, charity and

humanitarianism in DE is pervasive in post-primary schools in Ireland. Though not so prevalent among facilitators working in DE in formal education in this research, those from NGOs and DE organisations who draw on a North-South discourse also work in formal education contexts.

A more ‘critical’ North-South discursive strand is strong in its focus on injustice and inequality North-South. This point is made by four facilitators who wish to ensure that the ‘realities’ of life in the global South are not neglected in favour of a focus on the global or on citizenship. In this sense, a North-South discourse captures what might be called ‘traditional’ DE talk or definitions, with their focus on development and on North-South justice, equality, human rights and poverty issues (see, for example, the definition of DE from the UN in 1975 and the more recent Dóchas definition (2015) – Chapter Four). In many ways, a critical North-South discourse reflects the understanding of DE which is understood as one thematic focus within a wider understanding of GE (GENE, 2015). Thus, in drawing from analyses of development cooperation, its emphasis is on the developmental and it can combine a charity and humanitarian focus on development as well as a structuralist, critical one.

With its North-South emphasis, ontologically a North-South discourse reflects the kind of arborist thinking (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994) associated with hierarchies (Escobar, 2009), models which are based on vertical axes and binary notions of marginalisation, poverty and underdevelopment on the one hand and wealth, progress and development on the other. As such, talk is about understanding the ‘root’ causes of poverty, understanding the effects of life in the North on the South, as well as care, compassion and empathy with people in ‘the Global South’. The strength of this discursive formation is that it keeps alive a sense of injustice and inequality in North-South terms. This is a value put forward, in particular, by one of the facilitators in this research. The difficulty is that it has a tendency to reflect some of the assumptions associated with a patronising discourse of global development, critiqued by post-development and post-colonialism, in its emphasis on, e.g., mobilising people in Ireland ‘on behalf of’ people in the countries of the global South or notions of DE encouraging action in Ireland for justice in the global South. While such actions may be laudable in themselves, because these notions maintain the superiorist ‘othering’ and Eurocentrism associated with North-South developmental relations, this is DE which maintains rather than challenges the ontological status quo associated with modernisation and trusteeship notions of global development (see Chapter Three).

#### **1.4.4. A Critical Discourse**

As highlighted above, the most common discourse that facilitators involved in this research draw upon is that of the critical. As discussed in Chapter Four, and illustrated through findings in Chapter Six, a critical discourse assumes that relationships are more complex than North-South. They are understood in local-global terms and in terms of interconnectivity, and they are framed in the context of processes



of globalisation. As such, this discourse can be seen to be based on a relational ontology (Benjamin, 2015) which is influenced by network thinking (Castells, 2005). In a context where everything is seen in terms of connections, this discourse is based on the assumption that the personal and the political cannot be separated and that power relations are complex. Here, similar to critical pedagogy, DE is seen to play a significant role in facilitating understandings of how power works and in challenging unjust power structures. As such, it can include arborist thinking (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994), with an emphasis in terms of DE knowledge on knowledge as process; critical thinking and understanding of 'root causes'; critique of power relations and effects at local and global levels; and personal and political reflection on agency and structure.

Reflecting Krause's (2010) DE as Global Education, the emphasis in a critical discourse is on interconnectivity at all levels, including in relation to DE learning processes. In this case, DE learning is talked about as an integrated process, leading to critical action and activism, similar to Freire's understanding of praxis. This interrelationship between understanding and action has been central to definitions and understandings of DE from its inception (see, for example, the DARE forum consensus (2004) quoted in McCloskey, 2014 and Regan, 2006). Within a critical discursive formation, the problems are assumed to be deep and structural and to demand action and activism associated with a critical active global citizenship. The assumption is that a critical form of DE can facilitate the understanding, skills and active global citizenship necessary to address global justice, inequality and poverty. As outlined earlier (Khoo, 2006; Gaynor, 2015), talk of active global citizenship can often end up involving liberal types of political engagement and activism rather than more critical and collective ones. This point is made by a number of participants in this research and it is also raised by Khoo and McCloskey (2011), who question whether DE lives up to its radical potential.

Questions over the criticality and politics of DE are also raised in this research by facilitators (12) and KIs who espouse the ideals of a critical discourse but identify constraints on its criticality. Though facilitators talk of DE as education and action for global justice and equality and challenging traditional education and development thinking and practice, they also acknowledge the need for congruence between values and actions and the limits on criticality imposed by the contexts within which they work.

Facilitators highlight the role of DE in effecting change. As such, it is regarded as a value-based education with a focus on justice, equality, solidarity, human rights, sustainability, kindness and democracy. These values are emphasised by Bourn (2015) and McCloskey (2014), with the latter highlighting the ethical basis evident in many definitions of DE. Questions regarding the universality, certainty and taken-for-grantedness of the values at the heart of adjectival educations such as DE are raised in debates in educational philosophy (see, for example, Nussbaum, 2008 and Todd, 2009). These issues are also highlighted in this research where those who draw on a critical discourse tend to

espouse the values of justice, equality, solidarity, democracy and human rights, though they are more likely to question whether they are reflected in practice rather than the values themselves. This is not the case for some facilitators, who, drawing on a more deconstructive post-critical discourse, question the merits and universalism of these values in the first place.

#### **1.4.5. A Post-Critical Discourse**

A post-critical discourse of DE, as reflected in facilitator talk, highlights the value of questioning, including any taken-for-granted good associated with development and DE. In applying a “constructive deconstruction” (Cornwall, 2010) to the language, concepts and assumptions associated with DE, here facilitators talk about questioning stereotypes, putting the values which are regarded as underpinning DE under scrutiny and questioning their own experience. Such talk is similar to Andreotti’s notion of self-reflexivity (2015) and Kellner’s critique of “subject positions, biases, privileges and limitations” (2003: 6/7), with an emphasis on questioning certainties and valuing diversity and complexity. Kincheloe argues that education has to come to terms with the “inevitability of uncertainty and ambiguity” in the face of “complexity” (2008b: 15) and Giroux suggests that we need to move beyond idealised notions of critical pedagogy. In that context, DE can be viewed as a “politics of democratic struggle, without a politics with guarantees” (Giroux, 2004: 36).

The post-critical discourse tries to capture the complexities of global relationships, discourses and development processes as well as opening up questions about these relationships, discourses and processes in themselves. Here, the focus is not on ‘out there’ or the ‘other’. It is on developing skills to hold complex, diverse and sometimes contradictory realities in tension (Todd, 2009). When facilitators talk of understanding complexity, interrogating their own power, privilege or Eurocentrism, and questioning development constructions of ‘othering’, they are drawing on a discourse which assumes that power is everywhere and implicated in how DE is imagined, talked about and practiced and in the relationships and assumptions about the world it constructs. The centrality of understanding power is highlighted by Giroux, who argues that critical reflexivity bridges the gap between learning and everyday life, “understanding the connection between power and knowledge” (2004: 33/34).

Of those involved in this research, a few, who draw on a post-critical discourse, also raise questions about the potential of DE to realise the ‘great expectations’ for it associated with a critical discourse. Todd’s work (2009) reminds us of the need to “imagine an education that seeks not to cultivate humanity ... but instead [which] seeks to face it – head-on, so to speak, without sentimentalism, idealism, or false hope” (2009: 9). In that context, any assumptions associated with clear, unambiguous answers to questions about where power lies, what the ‘root causes’ of poverty are or what values are needed are unlikely to be able to address the level of uncertainty and complexity

involved in global development challenges today.

Critically deconstructing DE itself and its aims, assumptions and narratives of change, a post-critical discourse involves questioning whether DE, as it is critically or otherwise constructed, offers the range of perspectives and alternatives required for the diverse and multi-faceted or complex realities of today's world. On the other hand, a post-critical discourse can imply such a diverse, fluid and challenging understanding of DE that it becomes associated with questions with no answers or deconstruction without alternatives. Some concerns are raised by a few research participants about what they see as a growing tendency in DE to be 'politically correct'. In their attempts, for example, to reclaim the term 'Third World', they seek a clarity of politics associated with a North-South discursive framework. In so doing, they challenge the more complex, fluid and diverse politics associated with a post-critical discourse. Captured in understandings based on rhizomatic thinking (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994), this type of politics tries to hold in tension centres of power, agency, structures and institutions which dominate, as well as alternatives and unpredictability. This understanding of power is associated with a non-hierarchical or horizontal type of politics and is advocated widely among new social movements (Esteva 2014). As such, it goes beyond a critical discourse with its notion of politics which conceives of participation, democracy and active citizenship more justly or inclusively, towards one which engages with imagining and creating alternatives (McDermott, 2014). In that context, facilitator talk of DE creating 'free range' spaces and turning education 'upside down', and DE as integral to and framed within the context of activism goes some way to imagining the kinds of alternatives associated with a post-critical discourse of DE.

While post-critical DE talk is creative and radical at the same time, it is relatively marginal among those involved in this research, many of whom hold on to the types of certainties and hierarchies associated with critical and North-South discourses. Despite this, there are many indications of where this kind of thinking has influenced facilitators or KIs, especially those who work in community and adult education settings and on local issues of direct relevance to those involved in DE processes. It is particularly the case in relation to concerns expressed about challenging stereotypes, traditional notions of development and in questioning facilitators' complicity in perpetuating inequality and racism through DE.

### **1.5. The Construction of an Idealised, Abstract and Apolitical Discursive Style**

As outlined above, each of the DE discourses identified here have ontological bases and assumptions (some similar and different) about the skills, processes, aims, values and politics associated with DE. Most commonly, facilitators subscribe to a critical discourse though the prevalence of liberal notions of action and politics and lingering North-South assumptions taper the overall criticality espoused. The

relative lack of critical reflexivity in DE and its tendencies towards certainties and great expectations limit it further. Though findings do not suggest one over-arching or dominant discourse when it comes to DE, there would appear to be a hegemonic discursive style which is prevalent, though not ubiquitous, across the sector, at least among those interviewed for this research. This, I am characterising as an idealised, abstract and apolitical style.

I am using the term ‘discursive style’ following Van Dijk’s idea that expression of discourse is conditioned by aspects of context. He argues that we “adapt the style of our discourse to the current communicative context: we may be more or less formal, more or less polite and may choose one word rather than another as a function of where, when and with whom we speak and with what intentions” (2000: 28). This approximates to Fairclough’s (2003) use of the term ‘genre’. Understanding the genres and discourses in a text represents the interdiscursive element of his analytical approach. For Fairclough, understanding genres helps to throw light on the underlying conventions and norms surrounding talk in different contexts, e.g., policy genres or reporting genres. In this case, I prefer to use the term ‘style’ as it is more fluid than genre and it reflects a more general orientation than fixed conventions or norms might suggest. Despite this caveat, it becomes clear from this research that there are some commonalities in the discursive style applied by many involved.

The DE discursive style evident through this research tends to be characterised by idealised speech. This involves the use of a number of different discursive strategies: talk is aspirational but it is stated in definitive terms – DE ‘does’, ‘brings’, ‘changes’, ‘transforms’, ‘enhances’, ‘empowers’, etc., and it implies constant progression reflective of arborist and teleological thinking, i.e., from the individual to the collective and societal, from awareness raising to understanding and on to action and from the personal to the political. Notions of what can be achieved are grandiose and generally unrealisable, at least within the confines of the DE being talked about, and incontestable – how can you question the notion that DE contributes to the realisation of sustainable development, active citizenship, human rights and social transformation? This is sometimes replaced by, but often accompanied by, modest talk, which attempts to ground expectations in the realities of the contexts within which people work. This is characterised by talk such as: ‘if we do even small actions, individual actions’; ‘schools are very conservative places and it’s quite challenging’; or ‘that’s one way that people can engage ... just as valid an action to it is somebody creating art’.

As evidenced here, the DE discursive style also tends to be characterised by abstract and apolitical speech which is vague and inclusive and where values are given primacy over politics. As values are nameless and faceless they can tend to distract from real life active politics which involves resistance and negotiation, disagreement or protest. Vague and ‘inclusive’ terms, like those associated with these grand values, allow for multiple understandings to co-exist and for a sense of agreement to exist where there is little. Thus, it facilitates a rather vague, abstract and apolitical sense that facilitators share the

same values and politics because everyone is using the same language.

While aspirations for transforming education, development and the world guided by justice, equality, solidarity, democracy and human rights are important to acknowledge, and it is difficult to question the importance of understanding root causes of poverty, this kind of talk, and the assumptions associated with it, do need to be questioned. For Andreotti (2014), the question seems to be ‘what does it foreclose and what does it enable?’ For Cornwall (2010), it is ‘what does it obscure?’ and for Escobar (1995) it might be ‘how does it control?’ Inspired by all of these, for me, it is ‘what is included and excluded and what kinds of policies, practices and relationships are established through them?’ For example, does DE sanitise or radicalise? Does it inspire and encourage activism? Does it simplify and reduce or allow for complexity and holding multiples in tension? Does it reinforce problematic stereotypes and narratives or challenge them? Liz, for example, talks about the “*elephants in the room*” when it comes to issues which remain undiscussed among facilitators. She highlights the differences in the sector and suggests that “*there’s also times when those differences surprise us, I think, that there’s, when we don’t quite realise how divergent we can be from each other in our approach to things*”. When it comes to the “elephants” she identifies, she mentions debt cancellation and Ireland, racism, and “*the local-global thing that this slogan, when I came to this kind of work initially that was like a bumper sticker, obviously, because we were saying it, everyone, it was just being paraded out everywhere, ‘we link local and global issues’, and how facile the local links really are in practice most of the time!*”. She goes on to make a similar point about action: “*I think one of the other elephants is how neutered those actions need to be in order to be palatable. How they should really never disturb government policy in any serious way. Never embarrass government*”. These “elephants”, which are both silences and “fuzzwords” which obscure, as Cornwall (2010) points out, depoliticise DE because they emphasise understanding or agreement on the surface level of talk rather than on the deeper level of meaning and its implications in practice. This obfuscates criticality and lack of criticality, allowing for a culture to emerge where people are restrained in how they question each other and where they all seem to be talking the same talk anyway. This issue of discursive culture is discussed in greater detail below.

## **2. The Factors Shaping DE Discourses in Ireland**

This section explores the factors shaping DE Discourses in Ireland with a focus on power relations within the DE sector. Why do facilitators talk about DE in the ways that they do and within what contexts is this talk shaped? This section begins with a reflection on workshop feedback which addresses the factors shaping DE discourses in Ireland before addressing DE as a site of discursive struggle over legitimacy and the hegemony of a discursive culture of restraint.

## 2.1. Workshop Feedback on the Factors Shaping DE Discourses in Ireland

In the workshops, having presented the draft findings and framework of discourses of DE to participants, I asked participants to reflect on the factors shaping discourses of DE. Their responses helped the analysis here in that they highlighted not only why they think a critical discourse is popular among facilitators but also what factors they see as shaping DE discourses in Ireland. Overall, I found their responses to questions asked to be very open and reflective. On the other hand, when it comes to the factors shaping DE discourses, though they appear to be very aware of the institutional or 'external' challenges and constraints, there is little talk in workshops of any internalised ones or of their own agency in that regard.

In general, points from the workshops helped to confirm and augment interview data rather than challenge it. Given that workshops were designed to explore emerging findings, among the questions I asked was: 'why do you think that most people seem to subscribe to a critical discourse as the ideal?' In the general discussion which addressed this question, participants from Workshop One highlighted the influence of Catholicism and Catholic Social Teaching as well as the Irish history of famine and colonialism. For one person, "*DE is a space that people have migrated to from the church and politics – it was non-institutionalised in the '60s and '70s ... not ideologically tainted and people felt at home*". In general, the discussion focused on the fact that facilitators like and need the types of values and moral purpose that DE seems to offer. As one participant put it: "*issues change but the values remain the same*". For participants of Workshop Two, some regard the ideal of DE as critical because of an appreciation for it as "*a radical pedagogy*", because it is "*in the business of challenging and cultivating dispositions on core issues, taking positions, alternatives, with overt values*" and because "*people have imbibed the pedagogy and radical traditions*". For one of those participants, this pedagogy brings with it a "*feel good factor*" associated with "*when you challenge things that are not quite right. It's very liberating*". It is also described as "*a mitigation against the helplessness you feel when looking at the world*" and bringing hope. Along with these very personal and aspirational reasons for valuing a critical approach to DE, participants in Workshop Two also suggest that a critical approach has become "*institutionalised in the sector*" where there is "*a lot of common ground, consensus*" in relation to DE despite the need for some issues which remain to be tackled, "*reproductive rights, water rights, around family relationships and waste practices*".

Another question I asked in workshops was: 'Given that most people seem to subscribe to the critical or the post-critical discourse as ideal, what are the constraints on us realising the ideal?' In general, as indicated in the workshop notes (see Appendix Six) participants identified constraints at the level of the immediate context within which they work; the sectoral level; and more broadly. One person described it as "*different constraints operating at different levels on different practices, e.g., formal*

*sector curriculum constraints whereas not as evident in non-formal sectors; funding constraints different in different sectors, etc*". With regard to the immediate context within which they work, in Workshop One, one group highlighted *"context as a variable – individual vs organisation; formal/non-formal; leadership, personality, value"*. A more common focus among workshop participants was a critique of results-based management at the sectoral level, e.g., Group 1 in Workshop One highlighted the *"dominance of project in human endeavour ... artefacts ... Lead into this ... (beginning, middle, end)"*. In the general discussion that followed, the point was made that *"Accountability/Results-Based Management"* are constraints along with the *"fundamental dishonesty of the results based management (RBF)/log frame"*. Funding constraints were also highlighted with one group in Workshop One saying that DE is *"funding-led ... relationship and partnership are being edited out"*, and in Workshop Two one group highlighted *"funding restraints, institutionalised, environmental implications/restraints – context"* and that groups are *"directly competing with and undermining"* each other for funding. The low funding for DE and evidence that it is not valued (because of the limited budget allocated to it) was also a point made in Workshop One. The point about DE being a *"marginal activity"* was raised by both groups working on this in Workshop One, with one group suggesting that DE is *"under-utilised as a process – general awareness of DE is low – communication is key"*. The other group argued that *"it's a niche activity, which is a constraint. We haven't made enough impact in arguing that DE is fundamental to mainstream ed"*. Points about power were also raised, with reference to unequal distribution of power, with one group in Workshop One questioning who controls the narrative. They suggest that people *"can tire of operating on the fringes"*. In the same workshop, the point was made that there has been a lack *"of renewal of energy (for the sector as a whole)"*.

While most of the constraints identified appear to be regarded as external, two people made reference to what might be considered 'internalised' constraints. When it comes to discourses, in Workshop Two one person said that *"some of the discourses undermine each other [and] there are counter-discourses to dev ed within and without the sector"*. In the same workshop, it was highlighted that *"there's an element of self-policing going on, not tyrannical – language management for the funder doesn't mean that we don't do the work"*. Many of these constraints are discussed with reference to the discursive culture in DE below.

## **2.2. Understanding Discursive Hegemony and DE as a Site of Discursive Struggle**

As indicated by workshop feedback above, addressing the factors which shape discourses of DE in Ireland is significant in that it sheds light not only on the establishment of these discourses but also on their power within the DE sector. This is important because discourses influence particular ways of

thinking which include and exclude, which shape policy and practice and ways of being and relating in the world. In this context, the notion of DE as a site of discursive struggle is significant, for example, for consent, for funding, for legitimacy, and for influence. It brings together Gramscian concerns about ideology and elite consent-building with concerns to incorporate actor-oriented reflections into post-development (Hillhorst, 2003). As such, DE can be regarded as a site of discursive struggle. This highlights the need to analyse processes related to the establishment of discursive hegemony (influence and taken-for-grantedness) but it does not assume discursive determination. It identifies strategies of control and consent-building but also of resistance and manoeuvre and it examines actor relations and institutional contexts and their influence on discursive power.

Drawing on Foucault and Gramsci, it is important to understand normalising practices and processes of discursive struggle where consent or compliance is gained through economic and ideological practices, including the building of alliances between groups of actors. Foucault's work on governmentality is useful for analysing the strategies and rationalities associated with the establishment of the hegemony of neoliberalism (e.g., Lemke, 2001 and Fraser, 2003), what Fraser calls the "regulatory grammar" for understanding the micro-politics of governmentality (2003: 167). She highlights that governmentality is not simply state-centred: "today's social ordering works through the powers and wills of a dispersed collection of entities" (2003: 168), including states, businesses and NGOs. The emphasis on negotiation of discourses by different actors, including NGOs, is central to an actor-oriented approach, e.g., in Hillhorst (2003). In arguing for a more actor-oriented analysis of discourse than many influenced by Foucault, she emphasises agency and actors' room for manoeuvre in the context of the establishment of discursive power. In so doing, she suggests that "this line of analysis gives a more dynamic interpretation of discourse, acknowledging the multiple realities of development of the agency of people in bending discourse to their own needs and realities" (2003: 10).

Findings from this research show that no one discourse can be regarded as dominant among facilitators within the Irish context but that there is a dominant discursive style. While much talk is of criticality, facilitators talk in idealised, abstract and apolitical terms. In the context of understanding DE as a site of discursive struggle, I am suggesting here that they do so because of struggles for legitimacy of discourse and practice in the Irish DE field. Given the vulnerability of DE to funding cuts, the dependence of NGOs and DE organisations on Irish Aid funding and the marginal position of DE in the work of Irish Aid, NGOs and educational institutions, facilitators struggle to maintain and build the legitimacy and credibility of DE in each of these contexts, and they do so from a position of precarity. This precarity is reinforced by power relations within the DE field, where Irish Aid occupies a hegemonic position; where consent is gained with IDEA, NGOs and strategic partners through funding, work in strategic partnerships and their support for policy articulation and promotion; and where a culture of restraint is pervasive. This is characterised by discursive contradictions, consensual relations of non-confrontation and policies and practices which constrain criticality. These



issues are discussed in detail below.

### **2.3. The Construction of a DE Discursive Culture of Restraint**

As evident in the discussion of discourses above, it is clear that facilitators draw on a range of discourses when they talk about DE. The style of talk displays contradictions on the one hand and an ability to hold things in tension on the other, e.g., though facilitators are critical of the role of fundraising in schools, some place value on individual acts of kindness. Where they talk about trying to understand root causes of poverty, they also talk about the aim of DE as individual mindset change. Though much of the talk is of local-global relations, this is often understood in North-South terms and though action is regarded as central to DE by many, this is often talked about in vague terms of ‘engagement’. It is difficult to understand these discursive processes without understanding the struggles for legitimacy among different actors within the Irish DE sector and the relations of power which affect them. For the purposes of this analysis, I address each of these issues in the context of an analysis of a discursive culture of restraint which underpins DE in Ireland.

I am using the notion of a discursive culture to approximate to Fairclough’s understanding of discourse as “social practice” (1992). Also, similar to Ryan’s (2011) understanding of a “discursive climate”, the concept of “discursive culture” identifies the context within which discourses are produced and enacted but tries to focus directly on the kinds of practices, techniques and strategies as well as different ways of relating which underlie and support a particular use of discourse or discursive style. In the context of this research it addresses questions like ‘why is the talk about DE idealised, abstract and apolitical?’ ‘Why are there ‘elephant(s) in the room’?’ I am suggesting here that the discursive DE culture in Ireland can be categorised as restrained because it is based on contradictory discourses, consensual relationships, and on policies and practices which constrain criticality. These were cemented by the early influence of NGDOs on shaping DE discourses and practices and by Irish Aid’s hegemony within the DE context. This results in contradictions at the heart of DE which make the realisation of criticality more challenging.

#### **2.3.1. The Influence of the Discursive History on DE Discourses in Ireland**

In Chapter Two, I discuss the various discursive strands evident in DE policy over time. These have influenced the DE discourses that facilitators draw upon, but not in simple terms. When understanding discursive legacies, Foucault (1972: 53) argues that it is important to go beyond analysis of “lexical contents” or what is said, which “defines either the elements of meaning at the disposal of speaking subjects in a given period, or the semantic structure that appears on the surface of a discourse that has

already been spoken” to understanding “discursive practice as a place in which a tangled plurality – at once superimposed and incomplete – of objects is formed and deformed, appears and disappears” (1972: 131). This discursive practice is, for Foucault, “a body of anonymous, historical rules, always determined in the time and space that have defined a given period, and for a given social, economic, geographical, or linguistic area, the conditions of operation of the enunciative function” (ibid). Thus, as discourse is, for Foucault, “a fragment of history, a unity and discontinuity in history itself” (ibid), it is important to approach discourses in the present with a nod to the past, not in any unitary sense of looking for origins but acknowledging that “every statement involves a field of antecedent elements in relation to which it is situated” (1972: 140), an “*historical a priori*” (1972: 143).

### ***The Role of NGOs***

For Foucault, it is necessary to identify “the general archive system to which it belongs” (1972: 148), the set of practices, previous statements, institutions, concepts which have created the “general horizon to which the description of discursive formations, the analysis of positivities, the mapping of the enunciative field belong” (ibid). In Chapter Two, I highlight the significance of missionary organisations and NGOs to the establishment of DE in the Irish context, identifying three different broad strands in their approaches to DE which, I suggest, still influence present-day discourses. The first of these is an ‘education for justice’ strand influenced by liberation theology and the education theory and practice of Paulo Freire, and in Ireland by Trócaire and some missionary organisations. The second strand is more closely associated with solidarity, public debate and activism. This is linked, historically, to smaller, more membership-based organisations in Ireland such as Comhlámh and other solidarity groups and networks such as the Debt and Development Coalition Ireland (DDCI), Afri, and the Latin American Solidarity Centre. A third discursive strand identified relates to social and economic development and is influenced by humanitarian concerns and the work of organisations such as Concern Worldwide. Linked, in the early years, with promoting awareness of development issues and fundraising, in the 1980s and 1990s it became more formalised and, in the work of some organisations, more focused on understanding the causes and implications of these development issues rather than directly with fundraising.

From their early involvement in DE in the 1970s and 1980s, the big NGOs, including in more recent years Selfhelp Africa (now Gorta-Self Help Africa), promoted DE based on these discourses through their work in schools, and in the case of Trócaire through its significant work on curriculum development and in partnerships with the national membership organisations such as the National Youth Council of Ireland and the Irish Congress of Trades Unions (ICTU). Throughout the history of DE, their influence has been significant, through individual members of staff as well as in the working practices and relationships adopted, e.g., working in networks or consortiums. Currently, suggested in Chapter Two and identified by facilitators in this research, both Trócaire and Concern Worldwide have

moved ‘beyond DE’ to understanding DE as part of a wider focus on ‘public engagement’ while offering support for smaller DE networks and organisations through funding as well as in participation on boards and mentoring. As such, NGOs are seen to have a significant influence on DE through IDEA and Dóchas and in their partnership relationships with Irish Aid.

### ***International Policy and Institutional Context***

As introduced in Chapter Seven, the international policy and institutional context has also played a significant role in influencing DE in an Irish context. As outlined in Chapter Two, many have highlighted the influence of the UN, EU and the DAC on DE policy discourses, organisation and practice over the years (Bryan and Bracken, 2011; McCann and McCloskey, 2009). Among the factors highlighted by facilitators in this research is the agreement of the SDGs, which they regard as providing an enabling environment for DE in Ireland. They believe that as goal 4.7 specifically places value on global citizenship education, it has a knock-on effect on support for it by the government in Ireland. Its focus on universalism or on globalisation and connectivity rather than ‘North-South’ development is also valued by most of those who mention the SDGs, and interestingly, apart from Liz, there is little criticism of them.

As evident in Chapter Two, the international policy context has had a significant influence on the introduction into Ireland of various ‘adjectival educations’. This is also the case with the SDGs and the introduction of the government's strategy on ESD (2014). This is mentioned as significant by many of the participants in this research. Though they are sceptical of the lack of resources connected with the strategy, they see it as a way of holding the Irish government to account on its ESD or DE commitments. In general, the international policy framework has served to open up discourses of DE in Ireland, ensuring the prevalence of talk among facilitators of human rights, citizenship, sustainability and anti-racism as well as accountability, results and governance.

### **2.3.2. Irish Aid's Role and Position as Funder**

Findings from interviews in Chapter Seven confirm the important role and position that Irish Aid has increasingly occupied in relation to DE, introduced in Chapter Two. They suggest that for facilitators and KIs, not only is Irish Aid regarded as playing an influential role in ‘setting the DE agenda’, it is also regarded as significant as a funder, and in its working relationships with DE organisations. Through practices in relation to each of these areas of influence, Irish Aid has carved out a leadership role for itself in framing DE discursive boundaries and in gaining the consent and co-operation of other actors in the DE sector.

As outlined in detail in Chapter Seven, facilitators talk about Irish Aid as the major funder of DE in Ireland, and about Irish Aid's power to cut funding, to set criteria for funding and to ensure compliance with its funding conditions. Facilitators are extremely exercised by Irish Aid and by funding, and the influence of Irish Aid looms large on the horizon of facilitators' talk of their practice and in terms of how they conceptualise funding possibilities. Even the language of funding rather than payment is interesting as it suggests a benevolence in the relationship on the part of the donor and an expectation on the part of those in receipt of it. Such a focus on 'funding' rather than on 'payment' for services echoes the kinds of funding relationships prevalent in Development Co-operation and gives some indication of inequalities within these relationships. Overall, the estimates of those involved in this research, albeit a small sample, suggest that there is significant dependence on Irish Aid for DE funding in the Irish context (see Chapter Seven). Because of this and, to some extent, despite it, facilitators involved in this research focus to a considerable degree on the funding power that Irish Aid holds.

The effects of funding cuts since 2008 (discussed in Chapter Two) are also highlighted by facilitators and KIs with talk of the excessive administrative burdens associated with annual funding, job losses, reduced working hours and precarious working conditions for many, associated with funding cuts. Oscar explains that there is often enough for activities but not enough for salaries. Though facilitators are reluctant to have personal information about their work circumstances reflected in this document, a few told me stories, confidentially, of their precarious working conditions arising from insufficient funding or strict limitations on what can be funded by Irish Aid.

In the light of their influence on DE funding in Ireland, the question remains how Irish Aid influences DE discourses or, at the very least, the discursive culture. The impact of funding or unequal financial power on relationships in development has been the subject of much attention over many years (Fowler, 2000; Banks, Hulme and Edwards, 2015). Few question the constraining influence of donor, funding or contractual relationships on recipients' willingness to enter into public debate or to question. Concerns about the non-confrontational nature of the discursive culture in DE in Ireland, i.e., the lack of critique and open debate within the DE sector, are exemplified here by those who argue that DE should be more like a movement than a sector, that NGOs are not critical enough and by those who feel that IDEA is too close to and insufficiently critical of Irish Aid. On the other hand, increasingly the point is made that recipients of funding, using their agency, have some manoeuvrability when it comes to decisions or choices that they make. While this is the case, many of these choices are constructed within the context of consensual relationships and the need to build the legitimacy of DE within the development cooperation and education fields in the context of its vulnerability, as discussed below.

### **2.3.3. Building Legitimacy-Forming Consensual Relationships**

In terms of understanding power relations within the DE sector, while there is evidence of Irish Aid occupying a dominant or hegemonic position, like all hegemonies, theirs is not a fixed or deterministic one, and organisations and institutions within the DE sector engage actively with Irish Aid in policy development as well as in contract, service-provision or project implementation roles. The influence of Irish Aid in terms of its position as funder is buttressed, therefore, by its building of consent around DE through partnerships within the Irish DE sector. This involves establishing close working and policy-making relationships. Through these relationships with IDEA and the big NGDOs, as well as ‘strategic partners’ in DE, Irish Aid has also managed to exert its influence over DE in Ireland, despite weaknesses in their own position, as identified by DE participants. From an IDEA, NGDO and DE organisational point of view, the impetus to engage in these consensual working relations comes from their relative dependency on Irish Aid as funder as well as their struggle for the legitimacy of DE in the context of its precarity.

#### ***IDEA***

Findings in Chapter Seven show that IDEA is valued by facilitators and KIs for its role in consolidating and building the capacity with the DE sector in Ireland. IDEA, established in response to member interest and at the behest of Irish Aid in 2004, has, since then, had a close working relationship with Irish Aid. In policy terms, it is clear that IDEA has, over the years, supported Irish Aid policy priorities in terms of the development of good practice guidelines on DE in a range of areas as well as supporting its members in applying for Irish Aid (and EU) funding through hosting webinars and other training sessions on funding requirements. It has participated in research funded by Irish Aid and has been in a strategic partnership funding relationship with Irish Aid since 2013. It has also played a significant role in supporting consultation within its membership (and with Irish Aid) on, among other things, the DE funding cuts since 2008, the GENE Review process (2015), the implementation of Irish Aid’s ‘logic model’, the Irish Aid strategic plan for DE (2016) and its performance management framework (2017). As such, it could be argued that there is something of a symbiotic relationship between IDEA and Irish Aid when it comes to the articulation of DE policy priorities in Ireland with IDEA members and leadership contributing regular policy briefings, reports and submissions as well as Irish Aid engaging IDEA to co-ordinate strategic consultations on its behalf. Though it has been outside the remit of this research to trace the influence of IDEA policy priorities on Irish Aid policy more broadly, many facilitators and KIs comment on the closeness of the relationship between civil society and Irish Aid and on the influence of IDEA on Irish Aid and DES policy. This growing closeness is exemplified in the fact that there are 21 references to IDEA in the Irish Aid Strategic Plan (2016) as opposed to three in 2007.

In its role in promoting DE, IDEA has had to steer a delicate course between its members and Irish Aid and between consultation and critique. This is partly because while on the one hand its closeness with Irish Aid supports a good working relationship with them, on the other, there is criticism of it, especially among facilitators, who suggest that because of its funding, it has little choice but to be very careful and compliant in its relationship with Irish Aid.

On the other hand, IDEA does comment on Irish Aid's policy, especially when it comes to funding allocations. A notable exception to this technical criticism has come in relation to Irish Aid's policy on public engagement (discussed in Chapter Two) (IDEA, 2016d). Thus, while IDEA has some influence over DE policy, its hands are also tied when it comes to its relationship with Irish Aid. While many facilitators acknowledge these tensions, such tensions also raise questions about how critical and challenging IDEA can be, or is willing to be, when it comes to the increased promotion of a technical discourse of DE by Irish Aid.

### ***NGDOs***

The closeness between Irish Aid and the big NGDOs is also identified by some facilitators and KIs as having a significant influence on the non-confrontational and consensual discursive culture at work in the DE sector. For Banks, Hulme and Edwards, "NGOs have been incentivised to pursue their service delivery functions at the expense of their civil society functions. Given their dependence on donor funds increasingly demanding measurable 'results', NGOs must prioritise their functional accountability to donors (in terms of targets and outputs) over their broader goals of empowerment for poor or marginalised groups. We see, therefore, that the aid system continues to overlook the systems, processes and institutions that reproduce poverty and inequality, and has effectively depoliticised and professionalised development" (2015: 710).

Because of their service-provision or contractual relationships with Irish Aid, in the case of DE in Ireland, where there is debate or criticism of Irish Aid it is often at a technical level, e.g., IDEA's criticisms of Irish Aid funding reductions and modalities (IDEA 2014, 2016a). Irish Aid and NGDOs share similar interests and organisational cultures, while at the same time being reliant on each other for funding, on the one hand, and service-provision, on the other. An example of NGDO's support for Irish Aid policies and approaches is the recent Dóchas campaign #Irishaidworks which is a tool for raising support for ODA in Ireland as well as within government spending. Rather than promoting debate or critique of whether aid works or in what contexts, this apparent statement of fact is referred to in its recent pre-budget submission (2017), where it argues that "Aid Works", that a return to the commitment of .7 per cent of ODA by 2025 "will achieve the best possible chance of achieving the SDGs by 2030", and where Dóchas reiterates its support for Irish Aid in its work. This is the kind of scenario which is supported by relationships based on negotiation and engagement rather than public

criticism or confrontation. At the same time, some organisations are more vulnerable and fearful. These divisions are further cemented by ‘strategic partnerships’ within the sector.

### ***‘Strategic Partnerships’***

New organisational arrangements such as ‘strategic partnerships’ are regarded as significant by facilitators and KIs in terms of a shift in how DE is structured and paid for in Ireland. These are organisational arrangements whereby Irish Aid ‘works with’ or ‘contracts’ ‘strategic partners’ to manage DE delivery in a particular area, e.g., Worldwide Global Schools (WWGS) and its management of DE grants in relation to DE at second level. IDEA (2016: 45) highlights that of the €2.7 million of Irish Aid grants in 2015, €935,000 funded 28 organisations through annual grants and €1,775,625 “was provided to five organisations for multi-annual programmes under the Strategic Partnerships Programme”. While some facilitators see these organisational arrangements as effective, there are questions about their establishment, why there is no strategic partnership in relation to the community and youth sectors<sup>22</sup>, and the point is made by Deirdre that these arrangements increase the influence of Irish Aid over the management of DE in Ireland. A further point is that this kind of working relationship makes the fate of those organisations involved more secure – such partnerships are based on multi-annual funding. In diverting a significant amount of DE funding towards these partnerships, and away from annual funding (GENE, 2015 – see Chapter Two), it means there is less in the general ‘pot’ for those who have been reliant up to now on annual grants. Thus, it leads to a centralisation of service-provision within the sector; it firms up the relationship of those involved in strategic partnerships with Irish Aid – they are no longer on the outside looking in but are now inside, with Irish Aid, negotiating over programmes; it establishes a new kind of service-provision relationship between DE organisations and NGOs and Irish Aid; and it helps to cement a two-tier sector in DE in Ireland between ‘strategic partners’ and those in receipt of annual funding.

### ***Effects of Consensual Relationships on Criticality***

As with relations between Irish Aid and NGOs more broadly, these strategic partnerships build credibility on the one hand but concern on the other not to put that trust in jeopardy. Hence, when there are cuts to Irish Aid funding, efforts are made to support Irish Aid staff in gently calling for a restoration of funding. Rather than basing criticism on open debate and resistance or refusing to carry out some activities because of reduced or inadequate funding, organisations quietly carry on. This ‘heads down’ approach contributes to a general lack of self-reflexivity within the DE sector. This lack of critical reflection on DE and on its role and values, which is suggestive of a post-critical discourse of DE, leads to an assumed consensus on DE discourses which is not evident on closer analysis. This is buttressed by lack of funding for critical research on DE in Ireland, a point highlighted in

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22 In August 2017, Irish Aid sought interest in establishing such a strategic partnership as outlined in their DE Strategy (2016a).

negotiations with the GENE Review team (GENE, 2015). Such an assumed consensus stifles critique of potentially damaging practices which limit criticality and which can turn DE into the promotion of aid, for example, or the measurement of learning ‘outcomes’.

Some facilitators, and the organisations they work for, would appear to be caught between a rock and a hard place. They either engage with organisations who play a significant role in the promotion of DE in Ireland, such as Irish Aid, IDEA, Dóchas and the big NGDOs, or they stay ‘on the outside, looking in’. Most seem happy to engage, apply for funding and navigate the terrain between the constraints and possibilities for criticality. The question is raised by some facilitators whether they are navigating that terrain in a way that sufficiently allows for the criticality they talk about or critical alternatives to emerge and to thrive in the Irish context. Some pull out – for example, Banúlacht – or have reduced funding over many years, e.g., One World Centres. Some emphasise the tools at their disposal for influencing government policy and education practice, e.g., curriculum policy and change or working through strategic partnerships. The question remains how possible it is to turn critical talk into practice with growing emphasis on the promotion of a measurement and technical type of accountability, as discussed below.

#### **2.3.4. Building Compliance through 'Best Practice' Policy Influences**

Notions of ‘best practice’ change, but it seems that the idea of ‘best practice’ persists, and that policy is used to chart what it might be and how organisations need to comply with it. In the struggle over discourses of DE in Ireland, notions of what constitutes ‘best practice’ are significant in creating the space for some talk and practice to be considered legitimate and others not. In addition to its role in funding DE, Irish Aid also plays an influential role when it comes to promoting ‘best practice’ in DE through its development of various policies. It achieves this in the light of international policy influences, in its implementation of national policy in conjunction with other state departments and with IDEA and Dóchas as membership networks. Significant for research participants, in this regard, is the articulation by the DES of a strategy on ESD (2014) and its concomitant reflection of closer working relationships between DFAT (or Irish Aid) and the DES. Though many participants question the level of commitment to DE within Irish Aid, others feel that the position of DE has never been stronger. The support for DE within the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) is also mentioned, as well as curriculum opportunities for its advancement within the formal curriculum, and the integration of DE into initial teacher education (ITE) and other higher-level educational programmes.

From a policy-influence point of view, two emphases have, in particular, helped to shape the restrained DE culture of constraint and compliance evident in Ireland. These are the emphasis on mainstreaming



of DE in the formal sector and on accountability, results and good governance. Both have been represented as ‘best practice’ in policy terms, a framing which makes their constraining effects sometimes difficult to identify or challenge.

### *‘Mainstreaming’*

Promotion and support of DE in the formal sector has been significant since the beginning of DE in Ireland (see Dillon, 2009; Fielder, Bryan and Bracken, 2011). This is the case not only among Irish Aid but also in the big NGOs with their work in schools, which was strengthened following the Kenny and O’Malley Report (2002), and with the establishment of the first Irish Aid Strategic Plan for DE in 2003 with its emphasis on ‘mainstreaming’. In more recent years, it has developed through the establishment of a strategic partnership between higher education institutions involved in ITE and Irish Aid at primary level (DICE); through Irish Aid support for second-level ITE through Ubuntu and through the establishment of the strategic partnership with Worldwide Global Schools, which supports DE at second level. Other indications of the emphasis in the Irish DE sector on mainstreaming DE in the formal sector in recent years – a point acknowledged by Irish Aid in consultations around the GENE Review (2015) and the Strategic Plan for DE (2016) – are Trócaire’s work with early childhood education; the Irish Aid’s awards programme for primary schools; Concern Worldwide’s introduction of its debates into the primary sector; and Irish Aid’s strategic partnership with SUAS for extra-curricular DE activities in higher education institutions, its support for [developmenteducation.ie](http://developmenteducation.ie) as a resource hub for development educators, and its lack of a strategic partnership in recent years with any organisation or group in relation to youth or community education.

Many see the schools’ work and ITE as being success stories of DE in Ireland (GENE, 2015) and facilitators talk about the potential in curriculum reform and new subjects at second level such as Politics and Society. It is also important to acknowledge the critical potential of DE, which is mentioned by many facilitators, for democratising and re-imagining education in formal settings. At the same time, facilitators involved in this research also acknowledge the limitations of the formal context for critical DE. Among them are those who describe schools, the education system and teachers as conservative. Though this research has not focused specifically on DE provision in the formal sector, previous research highlights challenges related to its criticality (Bryan and Bracken, 2011 and Gaynor, 2016) and this is confirmed at the very least by contributions from facilitators and KIs involved in this research. While some talk about the formal sector as ‘conservative’, others highlight a lack of criticality with reference to interculturalism, exclusivity in terms of how formal education and the DE sector represents diversity in Irish society, and the over-emphasis on formulating activism associated with fundraising and campaigning.

This lack of criticality in relation to DE in formal settings is specifically evident in understandings of

action and activism associated with DE and the politics of DE among those facilitators involved in formal education. This may be attributable to the significance of context in shaping facilitators' discourses, a point raised a few times by workshop participants. This raises questions about the extent to which the criticality of talk translates into action when it comes to formal sector DE. This is an issue raised by many facilitators in this research. It also suggests questions about the extent of the emphasis on the formal sector in promoting DE in Ireland, about the need for critical reflection on the constraints and alternatives possible in these contexts, and on the need for further research on the effects of DE in initial teacher education, for example.

### ***Accountability, Results-Based Management and Good Governance***

The importance of accountability and good governance has been recognised in development cooperation for many years, as discussed in Chapter Four. In that context, there are different interpretations of each of them (Najam, 1996), with accountability for promoting egalitarian development relationships, for example, framed in terms of 'downward accountability', and accountability to donors understood as 'upward accountability'. Despite these differences, in light of the Paris Agreement on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and the Accra Accords (2008), in recent years there has also been a growing emphasis on technical discourses of accountability and good governance and their link with results-based management (Eyben 2010; 2013). It is associated with funding requirements when it comes to reporting, evaluation, monitoring of outcomes, measurement for results (Duffield, 2001) and value for money (Shutt, 2011), and as part of a wider public-sector reform agenda in Ireland (Hardiman and MacCarthaigh, 2013; Harvey, 2012). Irish Aid has been particularly strong in its emphasis on this version of 'best practice' since 2011. One of the values underpinning the new Irish Aid DE Strategy 2017–2023 is "accountability – being accountable to Irish citizens and to our DE partners and being transparent in all that we do" (2016: 2). One way or another, if one wants to receive Irish Aid funding or comply with charity regulation<sup>23</sup>, accountability cannot be avoided. As such, associated with accountability, best practice and value for money are practices such as results-based frameworks, performance management frameworks, application forms, reports, and evaluations, which become tools for control and power which are used by the state and their supporters to manage who practices and what gets done in the name of DE in Ireland. Through them, as Dan argues, Irish Aid are "*defining the territory*".

Though few would dispute the need for accountability when it comes to education, more broadly, or DE, how it is understood and the practices associated with it can have very different implications. The literature firmly situates the aid effectiveness, accountability and measurement agenda within new managerialism associated with neoliberalism (Weiss, 2000; Mawdsley, Porter and Townsend, 2001), but there is little focus on these connections among most facilitators and KIs involved in this research.

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23 "The Charities Regulator is Ireland's national statutory regulator for charitable organisations. The Charities Regulator is an independent authority and was established on 16 October 2014 under the Charities Act 2009" (Charities Regulatory Authority, 2017).

They do reflect on why the results-based agenda has become significant, with references to recent NGDO scandals and good governance by facilitators but not by KIs. Only two KIs – those who work in Irish Aid - link measurement, accountability and good governance to neoliberalism. In general, KIs are not as critical of the results-based agenda as facilitators with three of those working in networks arguing that they are “*good for us*”.

While the precise effect of accountability, results-based management and governance procedures on discourses of DE is difficult to ascertain, and it would be inaccurate to over-emphasise its significance in facilitator talk, it is clear that it is part of a suite of influences which, at the very least, divert attention away from critical analysis of approaches to DE and towards addressing DE issues and problems as technical ones. It also serves as a mechanism for encouraging further compliance with Irish Aid’s DE criteria. As indicated in Chapter Two, currently the Performance Measurement Framework (PMF) is based on measurement and designed to “track changes envisioned in the Irish Aid DE Strategy 2017–2023. The PMF will generate a comprehensive dataset on which to evaluate the strategy’s effectiveness, contribute to future decision-making and provide a strong evidence base for the sector and other stakeholders” (2017: 2). The PMF asks for those in receipt of Irish Aid funding to track ‘numbers of learners’ and, for example, the “percentage (of total number of learners) and number of learners who can give an example of how participating in a DE event/learning activity has changed their attitude or behaviour” (2017: 4) and this “disaggregated by gender, age and sector”. In doing so, it appears to assume that DE takes place in a single-sex school context where it is relatively easier to estimate the gender, age and sector than, for example, in a community education context. The new Irish Aid PMF tool had not been developed when interviews for this research were undertaken. Despite this, some participants are strongly critical of the limitations being imposed on DE practice by results-based management tools, as outlined above. As Eyben argues: “language can be ignored, but artefacts influence every day of work in the development sector. They are ‘technologies of power’, implemented and enforced by authority, but often also internalised so that no obvious external control is required. With internalisation, artefacts take on a life of their own, independent of the authority that had initially required their use” (2013: 8). In this case, the artefacts of results-based frameworks; performance management frameworks, applications, reports and evaluations are seen to be particularly restrictive by some of those involved in this research, while others value their associations with ‘best practice’.

Thus, it can be seen that within DE, as within development cooperation more broadly, the discourse of accountability, governance, aid effectiveness, practical responses, evidence, measurement, results and ‘best practice’ is pervasive. These buzzwords (Cornwall, 2010) provide discursive legitimacy despite their associations with new managerialism, neoliberalism (Duffield, 2001), substantialism (Eyben, 2013) and crypto-positivism (Kincheloe, 2008a). These are also prevalent in ‘good practice guidelines’ published by IDEA, e.g., references to measuring impact, monitoring and evaluation in its good

practice guidelines for DE in the Community and Adult Education sectors (IDEA Community Sector Working Group, 2014) and in its framing of core principles in relation to indicators and evidence in its draft 'Code of Good Practice for DE in Ireland' (in process, 2017c). Though the merits of measurement, evidence, etc., are taken for granted by many, they are also criticised in this research. While potentially positive in enhancing 'best practice', e.g., ensuring value for money and that funding goes where it is designed to go, an emphasis on this approach to 'best practice' within Irish Aid has become, at least to some extent, about 'ticking boxes', measuring and control rather than ensuring 'downward accountability'. According to facilitators, in the Irish context, it has had the effect of adding to administrative burdens, making work practices more precarious, and removing time from DE practice; it has meant the strengthening of the bigger NGOs who can more easily comply with technical, administrative and governance requirements; and it has turned the gaze onto the technical rather than onto the relational or the critical. As such, it has helped to turn some DE educators into administrators.

### **3. Issues Emerging in the Light of International Literature**

Findings in this research contribute to existing and emerging international literature on critical pedagogy, Development Education (DE) and Global Citizenship Education (GCE) and on discourses of development more broadly. As it focuses specifically on the Irish context, it complements recently published work on GCE in Europe (Ross and Davies, 2018) and in North America (Peck and Pashby, 2018), as well as with practitioners in Portugal, Cyprus and Greece (Skinner et. Al, 2014), in the UK and Spain (Brown, 2014), in the UK and Australia (Biccum, 2015), and in Europe more broadly (Skinner and Baillie Smith, 2015). Key issues emerging from this research relate to understandings of criticality and contemporary debates about what transformative education might mean in relation to DE or GCE (Skinner, Baillie Smith, Brown and Troll, 2016), for example with regard to politics, values, the kinds of education spaces involved and engagement with the neoliberalisation of development and education contexts (Biccum, 2015; Todd, 2015; Bamber, Lewin and White, 2017; Biesta, 2017 and Pais and Costa, 2017).

When it comes to understandings of criticality, Chapter 4 shows that there has been a move, among some theorists, away from structure-agency constructions of power relations in education towards the embracing of post-structuralist and post-colonial influences (Kincheloe, 2008). From a Freirean and Marxist inspired structural analysis of the 1960s and 1970s there has been growing emphasis on facing complex realities (Todd, 2009) as well as on decolonizing knowledge (Andreotti, 2011), on critical self-reflexivity (Andreotti, 2014) and on moving beyond individualised notions of global citizenship (Khoo, 2006; Gaynor, 2015). In the frameworks discussed here, this is conceptualised in terms of 'post-criticality', which tries to capture the tensions involved in regarding education as political while at the same time questioning its politics. Such post-criticality also tries to hold in tension the

transformative value placed on DE or GCE while highlighting the importance of critical deconstruction (Cornwall, 2010) of this value, the relationships it constructs (Andreotti, 2011) and any questions of certainty (Todd, 2009) or reductionism which might be promoted. Andreotti (2014) sums up the kinds of critical questions involved in her HEADSUP checklist.

In contemporary international debates, Todd (2015) argues that though some continue to draw on a liberal political agenda “where debating questions of the common good, dialogue and recognition take centre stage” (2015: 54), it is important to start from a different place. She questions: “could we not start to rethink what it means to live well together without a blue print of what counts as the ‘common good’, for example, produced prior to our actual encounters with others with whom we share the world” (2015: 54)? She seeks this alternative starting point in response to those, in contemporary international literature on DE, GCE and other similar educations who, like herself, share an interest in how to make DE etc more transformative, justice-oriented (Bourn, 2014) or political (McCloskey, 2016).

Considerations of what does, does not or might make DE or GCE transformative are evident in recent discussions in international literature. Brown (2014) for example, draws on the work of Mezirow (2000), Brookfield (2000) and Paul (1990) to explicate her understanding of criticality. For her, ‘fair minded critical thinking’ implies “a two-pronged approach for DE of standing by an agenda of justice and equality and at the same time facilitating tools for learners to become critical of all agendas for themselves. For this, they need to be able to ask questions, challenge assumptions, and consider appropriate solutions, as well as propose their own ideas” (2014, p.23). Based on research with DE practitioners in Britain and Spain, she shows that their conceptions of pedagogical approaches to DE, with regard to the areas of dialogue and critical thinking that she studied, coincide with her conceptualisation of transformative learning. Brown is more optimistic about the criticality involved in practitioner understandings of DE than my research would suggest. Where findings here show the prevalence of critical and post-critical assumptions in relation to some aspects of DE, it is clear that this is not always the case and critical talk is generally underpinned by an idealised, abstract and apolitical style. For Brown (2014), the constraints in realising transformative learning lie in the demanding work environment and the need for training among facilitators. In this research, findings suggest that the constraints on criticality are related to a discursive culture of restraint, which has historic and hegemonic influences which go much deeper than anything changes to the work environment or training alone might address.

A key issue which emerges in this research, and which is echoed in contemporary international research, is the constraining nature of idealised notions of transformative learning or criticality. Todd, for example, argues that finding an “education responsive to the injustices experienced within pluralistic societies” should be done “not by defining what it is we should be building toward in the

future, but by outlining a commitment to confronting what is in the present. For me, this means disbanding our idealising tendencies in education” (2015: 54). She goes on to question: “to what extent is there space left for attending to the complexities of the present instead of defining education primarily against the background of an illusory future” (2015: 55)?

Others, too, highlight the problems associated with idealism whether it is in relation to the divergence between ideals and practice (Pais and Costa, 2017; Bamber, Lewin and White, 2017) or the contradictions between optimistic and pessimistic notions of DE/GE (Biccum, 2015). With reference to the latter, Biccum argues that “optimistically, then, GE/DE provides a social function for education in a globalising world that is centred on cosmopolitan values and global social justice, including democratisation and poverty reduction. Pessimistically, it is an attempt to socially engineer civic engagement in a climate in which political mobilisation is fragmenting along national, sectarian, religious and revolutionary lines” (2015: 325). For Biccum, the ideals which are ascribed to GE/DE on the one hand have led to its mainstreaming in Australia and the UK, the two cases she discusses, while on the other, this mainstreaming has “been accompanied by its centralisation under government funding, circumscribing the autonomy of practitioners in its delivery and becoming a vehicle for the promotion of state development policy. Its content has been depoliticised, oriented towards problem solving and promoting each state’s foreign aid” (2015: 325). In drawing on a Gramscian analysis, she shows how the UK government, for example, “attempts to create leadership both among schools and young people on a version of knowledge for development authorised and sanctioned by government” (2015: 332) and she argues that DE practitioners and organisations have been co-opted, through government funding, into new government constructions of what DE and GE involve. As such, her analysis of the influence of funding power and relationships on the depoliticisation of DE resonates very strongly with findings in this research which raises questions about the future direction of the organisation of DE in Ireland especially in the light of the growth of state funding through partnerships.

Debates about the politics of DE and GCE overlap with considerations of ideals and values, and whether or not they can have prescribed outcomes, as introduced above. These have included analysis of DE and its relationship to campaigning (Ní Chasaide, 2009), citizen engagement (Skinner et al, 2014) and activism (McCloskey, 2016) as well as the relationship between DE and the neoliberalisation of development and education contexts. In terms of the latter, as discussed in this thesis, there has been considerable debate about the influence of the marketization and managerialism on higher education in Ireland (Lynch, Grummel and Devine, 2012) as well as internationally (Giroux, 2002 and 2014 and Olssen and Peters, 2005), on education more broadly and on the introduction of a business and measurement culture in development (Duffield, 2001; Eyben, 2010 and 2013 and Shutt, 2011).

Questions about the relationship between DE, GCE and neoliberalism are important ones for this research and ones which have become increasingly important in the international literature in recent years. Whereas some DE facilitators in this research are conscious of the constraints placed on DE by neoliberalism and see a strong role for DE in critiquing its influence, many construct neoliberalism as something external to DE to be challenged through DE. They see it more in terms of a global economic system rather than as something which is embedded in, for example, accountability and measurement mechanisms which are shaping education, development and DE in Ireland. Findings here show that mainstreaming and accountability, results-based management and good governance have been framed as ‘best practice’ in an Irish context. Where the former appears to be successful and offers some opportunities especially in curriculum terms, it is acknowledged that the formal education context is a very challenging one in which to promote critical DE. While not singularly down to the neoliberalisation of education, the growing emphasis on learning outcomes, on measurement, on individualism and on market-objectives in Irish education has been highlighted by researchers and theorists working on different sectors within education in Ireland (Lynch, 2012; Simmie, 2012; Power et al, 2013; Gaynor, 2015 and Fitzsimons, 2015).

Internationally, the challenge neoliberalism presents to mainstreaming DE or GCE in formal contexts has been highlighted by Pais and Costa who argue that “whereas the official discourse... anchors GCE in the high values of social justice, solidarity, diversity and communitarian engagement, the implementation of this discourse into schools and higher education institutions seems to be thwarted by neoliberal practices, marked by a market rationality and the idea of an ‘entrepreneurial citizen’” (2017: 2). Biesta (2017: 316) talks about a “global measurement industry” and argues that “we have reached a situation where measurement is to a large degree driving education policy and practice without any longer asking whether what is being measured adequately represents a view of good education”. He contends that the culture of measurement brings together different discourses and agendas and a confusion between means and ends which makes this discourse very difficult to challenge. The slipperiness and difficulties of challenging discourses of DE in Ireland is an issue which emerges very strongly in my research. This is the case with, for example, accountability and measurement discourses in relation to DE in Ireland, as evidenced in this research, where “the fear of being left behind” (Biesta, 2017) appears to support compliance and consensus on the value of accountability and measurement frameworks without questioning what they might mean or their implications in open debate. I argue above that the buzzwords (Cornwall, 2010) of accountability and aid effectiveness provide discursive legitimacy to the introduction of neoliberal technologies of power (Eyben, 2013) which constrain DE criticality. Pais and Costa sum up the contradictions which apply when it comes to the constraining influence of neoliberal policies and discourses on DE and GCE: “the discourse of GCE functions as an ‘empty signifier’, wherein antagonisms that pertain [to] current education can be foreclosed and harmonised” (2017: 3). Bringing together critiques of the idealisation of GCE and the role of GCE in relation to the commodification of higher education, they argue, that

“GCE allows for the continuing commodification of higher education, but wrapped around a discourse of critical democracy and emancipation, so that the contradictions between community solidarity and individual competition, or between collective identity and individual identity are dismissed” (2017: 10). They go on to suggest that “as an empty container, emancipatory education and market-oriented, reactionary education can work together in achieving the high goals of global citizenship education” (2017: 10).

Discussions of the relationship between neoliberalism and DE or GCE in international literature pose questions about any simplistic suggestions that one of DE’s central roles is to simply challenge neoliberalism, as if it is an external phenomenon. Pais and Costa remind us that GCE is “posited as the enterprise that will bring about a change towards more ethical, solidarity and democratic practices in education. Although recognising the constraints that the objective reality of schools and universities pose to the development of this programme, not much is said about the concrete circumstances that have to be met so that such an emancipatory programme can be successfully implemented. This is partly because critical approaches to GCE conceive individuals as the loci of change” (2017: 11). Referring to ‘soft and critical’ approaches to GCE (Andreotti, 2006), Pais and Costa go on to argue that “both agendas thus perform a very important role within today’s neoliberalism: they provide us with rationales for action, thus keeping us occupied, while at the same time inhibiting a structural analysis and a possibility of a change beyond individual agency” (2017: 11).

In summary, a lot of the contemporary international literature is quite critical of the assumptions, values and politics which have underpinned DE for over 40 years. Gone are the old certainties of the past. Gone are the assumptions that when one talks of ideals, these are somehow ‘brought to life’. There are questions about the fantasies or the illusions that are prevalent in critical educations “of how we want things to be, as opposed to how things are... we need to be open to the experience of the here and now in ways that challenge the borders of the very categories, concepts, and ideas used to champion multiculturalism [or in this case DE or GCE] itself” (Todd 2015: 55). On the other hand, the belief in the potential of critical education to be transformative remains and the need for relevance and criticality is arguably greater than ever. In this context, no simple prescriptions or solutions are on offer. Even where theorists and researchers explore notions of criticality and transformation, treatments are often nuanced and complex with considerations of contradictions between ideals and practice and divergent views on whether DE or GCE represent part of the problem or the solution. This research highlights a criticality which is about ‘holding in tension’ – the stated aims, politics and values of DE on the one hand and the need to question the assumptions and implications of each of them on the other. It shows that exploring DE facilitator talk opens up many of the complex issues surrounding understandings of criticality and transformative education when it comes to DE and GCE specifically as well as broader understandings of critical education, as evidenced in international literature.



## **Conclusion**

This chapter has shown that though much talk among facilitators is of criticality when it comes to DE, this does not fully capture the contradictions and constraints involved. It is clear that criticality is not always that 'critical' or 'critical' enough. Nor is it the only discourse drawn upon. It often sits, in contradictory terms, with other, even 'less critical' discourses. Overall, this eclecticism reflects the sediments of various discursive strands laid down in an Irish context over time by missionary and non-governmental organisations as well as influences from international policy and the state, especially from Irish Aid. While findings here suggest that there is no hegemonic discourse of DE in the Irish context, this chapter shows that there is a hegemonic DE discursive style which is characterised by idealised, abstract and apolitical talk. This style has been supported by the hegemonic position of Irish Aid when it comes to funding and policy and by a restrained discursive culture which is based on consensual legitimacy-forming relationships and on policies and practices which constrain criticality such as 'mainstreaming' and technical approaches to accountability, results-based management and good governance. Given Irish Aid's position, its increased promotion of (and influence in relation to) a technical discourse of DE is concerning. This involves a blurring of the lines between DE, 'public information' and 'public engagement', as well as a technical approach to accountability, results-based management and good governance. At the same time as facilitators acknowledge limitations and constraints, they also talk about the critical potential of DE and it is clear that though they have internalised some of Irish Aid's hegemonic positioning, they are not determined by it. This is discussed further in the concluding chapter, where I outline the importance of more public debate and adopting more post-critical perspectives and practices if facilitators are to overcome the current constraints.

## **Chapter Nine: Conclusion – Towards a Reimagined Politics of Development Education**

### **Introduction**

In this concluding chapter, I begin by exploring insights gained about discourses of DE in Ireland and the factors shaping them before addressing the contributions of the thesis to DE research and its wider significance. I move on to the implications of this research for understanding DE and I argue the need for a reimagined post-critical politics of DE which addresses the 'elephant(s) in the room' of DE in Ireland: its idealistic, abstract and apolitical style and its 'development' associations; its discursive culture of restraint; the neoliberal context within which it is being promoted and the challenges resulting from the narrowing of civil society's role to service provision. I argue that what is really needed is to 'turn the gaze back on ourselves', as discussed below. In conclusion, I highlight the contributions of this research and propose some avenues for further research.

### **1. Discourses of DE and the Factors Shaping them**

This research provides considerable insight into DE facilitator talk, their understandings and perceptions of DE and the meaning they ascribe to it. As such, it advances understanding of different discourses of DE in an Irish context. Drawing on definitions of DE discussed in Chapter Two and Andreotti's (2014) work on 'root narratives', I identify an initial framework for analysing DE discourses. I apply this to the design and analysis of facilitator interviews in order to develop and illustrate a more comprehensive framework for understanding DE discourses, which is grounded in facilitators' talk. As such, the dimensions of knowledge and understanding, skills, learning processes and action are identified for exploration, as are the aims, values and politics of DE. What emerges is a picture of various ways that DE facilitators talk about and understand each of these aspects of DE. In analysing DE facilitator talk, and building on Andreotti's work (2014), I identify five main discourses that DE facilitators draw upon – technical, liberal, North-South, critical and post-critical discourses. When it comes to knowledge and understanding, for example, it becomes clear that while most facilitators talk about DE in critical terms as a learning process, some focus on content or acquiring knowledge, which is understood here as reflecting a technical discourse, while others emphasise the role of DE in deconstructing assumptions, narratives or stereotypes, which I argue is reflective of a post-critical discourse.

In addition to the dimension of knowledge and understanding, the findings in Chapter Six and analysis of discourses in Chapter Eight highlight the various ways that DE facilitators talk about each of the dimensions of DE explored as well as about what they see as the purpose of DE, the values which

underpin it and the politics associated with it. Among the insights emerging in this exploration of discourses is that though a critical discourse is most commonly drawn upon, DE facilitators also talk in technical, liberal, North-South and post-critical terms. There are very few differences in how different cohorts of facilitator talk about DE (discussed in Chapter Eight) and most facilitators draw on a range of discourses. Thus, it is difficult to identify any hegemonic discourse that DE facilitators draw upon, though it is clear that many talk about the action dimension in individualised, apolitical terms and there appears to be a greater emphasis on values as opposed to politics.

Despite some clear differences in the language used to describe some aspects of DE, which give an insight into different discourses, DE facilitators also often use the same terms while ascribing different meanings to them, e.g., justice, local-global connections, engagement and action. This suggests the importance of understanding how DE facilitators talk, as much as what they say. In Chapter Eight, I show that facilitators' talk reflects an idealised, abstract and apolitical style which is vague and which allows for a sense of agreement to exist where there is sometimes little. This obscures discursive and political differences. The reasons why such a style is prevalent become evident in reflection on the factors which shape discourses of DE.

In focusing on the factors shaping DE discourses, I explore the history of DE institutions and discourses in Chapter Two. I show some of the antecedents to current discourses of DE and set the scene for understanding the DE sector today. In Chapter Seven, findings from interviews and questionnaires reinforce some of the points made in Chapter Two, albeit offering more insight into the contemporary politics of the DE sector. Overall, the hegemonic role of Irish Aid becomes clear. DE facilitators talk about Irish Aid's position as chief funder of DE in Ireland and the strategies and mechanisms it uses to shape DE. They identify Irish Aid's influence over DE policy, its control through funding relationships as well as through its promotion of aid effectiveness mechanisms, and its ability to gain the consent of the big NGDOs as well as the Irish Development Education Association (IDEA) through close working relationships and some agreement on what constitutes 'best practice' in DE. While it is not possible, based on this research, to show the direct influence Irish Aid has on specific discourses of DE drawn upon by facilitators, its influence on the DE discursive culture in Ireland emerges very clearly (see Chapter Eight). This culture is categorised as restrained as it is based on contradictory discourses, consensual relationships and on policies and practices which constrain criticality. It is in the light of this discursive culture of restraint and in the context of Irish Aid hegemony that DE facilitators talk of DE in idealised, abstract and apolitical terms. The implications of this for the politics of DE are discussed in greater detail below.

Through this research the DE sector is understood as one where debate is focused largely on either technical issues related to DE or 'global' issues of significance to DE practitioners. There is little self-reflexivity when it comes to how DE is understood and interviewees talk about limited debate on

power relations within the sector. At the same time, some DE facilitators highlight questions about the criticality and framing of DE as well as about the role of various actors in the sector. Overall, and even among those who benefit financially from it, there is a sense that those in partnership with Irish Aid, the big NGDOs through programme funding, as well as Irish Aid 'strategic partners' in DE, are more secure. There is less agreement, but some point out, that they are also less likely to be critical in their DE. As the DE sector professionalises and is required to take on more governance and accountability mechanisms, it is becoming more divided and, it would seem, less critical. Paradoxically, this is occurring at a time of consensus building by Irish Aid and IDEA especially around DE policy and best practice guidelines. In their struggle for survival, it would appear that DE facilitators from a range of sectors, and reflecting different discourses, band together in apparent consensus as to what constitutes DE. Though they are aware of differences among them, there is little talk of difference. It is likely, in the context of the culture of restraint and power relations in the DE sector, that facilitators fear that bringing these differences to light and deconstructing DE aspirations, potential and constraints, might bring the whole house crumbling down.

## **2. Implications of the Research for Understanding DE**

As part of its focus, this thesis set out to explore the implications of this research for understanding DE. In this section, I discuss the critical potential and constraints of DE, which emerge from findings, as well as the implications of the research for the future of DE.

### **2.1. The Critical Potential and Constraints of DE**

As outlined throughout this thesis, facilitators talk about DE as offering critical and creative potential as an education process. This potential is based on how DE is understood, organised and practiced in Ireland. In terms of understandings of DE, facilitators talk about the kinds of learning involved, the skills and understanding gained, and the non-prescriptive learning spaces which democratise education. It is based on the values of justice, equality and empathy which are seen to underpin DE and on an acknowledgement that DE is political in promoting action or activism for social transformation. It is based on the assumption that DE challenges traditional 'development' approaches, that it engages with local-global interconnections and that it promotes solidarity rather than charity. When it comes to DE's potential in terms of how it is organised and practiced, among other things, facilitators highlight the funding and policy support for DE by the Irish government through Irish Aid; the new strategic plan (Irish Aid, 2016a) which reasserts the value of DE within development cooperation policy; the SDGs; support and funding from NGDOs such as Concern and Trócaire; the advancement of DE in ITE; the value of strategic partnerships for the promotion of DE in various

sectors; and the contribution of IDEA in terms of consolidating the DE sector in Ireland. From this perspective, DE in Ireland appears to be on solid ground (GENE, 2015).

Findings show that while there is critical potential, there are also constraints. Here, these are associated with its idealised, abstract and apolitical discursive style and its restrained discursive culture. Its discursive style implies that even when there is talk of criticality, it can obscure the lack of criticality and apoliticism in both talk and practice, e.g., the focus on individual action, an emphasis on values over politics, and the North-South assumptions which can underpin talk of local-global interconnections. At the same time, idealised, abstract speech is ideologically very attractive as it offers visions and values which can unite, and around which DE can be legitimised. This is especially important in the context of challenges to DE and has been used as a way of mobilising support for DE, e.g., by IDEA (2013b). On the other hand, what can be easy to grasp can also detract from the messy realities and complexities of the challenges it is designed to address. As such, in answer to the question I pose in Chapter Eight: ‘what is included and excluded and what kinds of policies, practices and relationships are established through them?’, when it comes to DE, idealised apoliticism sanitises rather than radicalises, inspires but doesn’t fully engage and reduces and simplifies rather than facilitating the critical exploration of complexity.

Underpinning this discursive style, as argued in Chapter Eight and highlighted above, is a restrained discursive culture of non-confrontation which is characterised by discursive contradictions, consensual relations and policies and practices which constrain criticality. In terms of discursive contradictions, burdened by the legacy of North-South, neocolonial and trusteeship discourses associated with development as charity and development cooperation on the one hand, and those of justice, solidarity and critical pedagogy on the other, its framing in development terms and ongoing association with development cooperation has, thus far, limited efforts to move ‘beyond DE’. These contradictions are evident in the increased promotion of public engagement and a blurring of the lines between it and DE despite efforts on the part of Irish Aid to differentiate between them (2016). As discussed earlier, for Irish Aid, public engagement is about promoting development cooperation. Where DE becomes increasingly associated with public engagement, its critical role in questioning and debating relationships, policy and practices operating in the name of development is significantly compromised.

In that context, DE is undergoing an identity crisis, where on the one hand it is becoming increasingly associated with public engagement and, on the other, it is having to share the values-education space with various adjectival educations, as discussed in Chapter Two. While DE is increasingly referred to in relation to global citizenship in Ireland, policy attempts to re-cast critical global education, whether in sustainable, intercultural or global citizenship terms, have repeatedly been framed in the context of their relationship to DE. This research suggests that a DE framing can limit the potential criticality of others, e.g., where sustainability becomes about how to sustain modernisation and citizenship becomes

equated with individual acts of kindness (Khoo, 2006; Bryan and Bracken, 2011; Gaynor, 2015). On the other hand, where interculturalism and development go hand in hand it can bring a neocolonial critique to development that might otherwise be absent (Andreotti, 2014).

When it comes to relations at work in the DE sector, as in other contexts, it is clear that some in civil society are experiencing the benefits of Irish Aid funding and closer working relationships more than others. This is particularly the case for the big NGDOs and 'strategic partners' who are now in receipt of most DE funding from Irish Aid (see Chapter Two). While from a positive point of view, close working relationships have brought greater consolidation in the sector, as outlined earlier, they have also created a 'two-tier' sector with bigger NGDOs and strategic partners increasingly secure in their service-provision contract role and smaller DE organisations or solidarity groups more vulnerable.

In tandem with funding dependency has come an instrumentalist approach to accountability, results-measurement and good governance practices, associated with aid effectiveness, new managerialism and public-sector reform. With its increased emphasis on administrative accounting practices and efficiency, this approach encourages 'tick-box' programme design, evaluation and reporting on the part of service-providers while it gives advantage to those organisations which are big enough or 'business-like' enough to implement the required funding conditions. As in many state-civil society contexts, these service-provision roles raise significant questions about the ability of civil society to fulfil a 'watch dog' role of holding the Irish government to account. While some facilitators in this research suggest that NGDOs have considerable influence over Irish Aid, others express their disappointment, for example, that the sector is not more like a movement; that it wasn't like a movement when the recession hit; that they had spent years talking about debt in the countries of the Global South but when it hit home, NGDOs and DE organisations were reluctant to challenge government policy on the banks or on austerity. They didn't want to 'rock the boat'. This lack of connection between what's happening in Ireland and globally, and between DE and political and economic policy is particularly poignant in the context of the critical talk of DE. On the other hand, it is also reflective of, and no doubt contributes to, the idealised, abstract and apolitical style of that talk in the Irish context.

When it comes to policies and practices which constrain criticality, in addition to accounting practices discussed above, a significant feature of DE policy over recent years has involved integrating DE into formal education. This emphasis on 'mainstreaming' DE within curricula and programmes, in textbooks and ITE, and with teachers and students, has been identified as an important strategy for promoting DE (Irish Aid 2003; 2007; 2016a and GENE, 2015). At the same time, though there is critical potential in much of this work, as highlighted by many facilitators in this research, formal education spaces do not represent the most critical contexts within which to promote DE. Previous research highlights the challenges for teachers and within textbooks (Bryan and Bracken, 2011) as well as in relation to activism (McCloskey, 2014) and critical pedagogy highlights the increasing

encroachment by neoliberalism into formal education spaces. In these contexts, the criticality of DE is in danger of further dilution with the political and activist dimensions under-emphasised in the promotion of idealised critical talk of aims and values and the emphasis on understanding and learning processes. Thus, as outlined by some facilitators in this research, teachers, especially newly qualified ones, are not likely to ‘rock the boat’ either. Where neither NGOs, DE organisations or teachers are likely to ‘rock the boat’, the picture that emerges is of a DE sector that is characterised by idealised critical talk on the one hand and constrained criticality on the other.

## **2.2. Implications of the Research for the Future of DE**

A number of possible implications are suggested by this research for the future of DE. If framed in terms of recommendations, it would be easy to recommend the importance of higher levels of government funding for DE – a return to the 5 per cent of ODA recommended in the 1990s (Smillie, 1996), perhaps or the 3 percent recently called for by IDEA (2017b). At the same time, this research highlights challenges related to dependency on state funding and suggests that more government funding for aid will not necessarily mean more funding for DE, or for critical DE. In that context, while funding is important, this research suggests that it is the type of DE promoted and supported which is even more important. In that context, another possible recommendation would be greater emphasis on DE in youth, community and adult education settings, which have been neglected and which might offer more critical potential than formal environments, as well as the promotion of more diversity and critical debate and research within the DE sector. Though funding commitments remain modest, Irish Aid has identified developing a strategic partnership with youth and community education as well as more research as priorities in its latest strategic plan (2016a). The question remains whether DE advanced in that context will reflect more critical and questioning tendencies or more promotional and apolitical ones.

In the light of the above, the following are implications for Irish Aid:

Having re-stated its commitment to DE, Irish Aid needs to ensure ongoing increases in funding for DE. One of the implications of this research is that increased funding is not sufficient. Irish Aid should also consider how best to ensure that funding is directed towards critical DE. One of the ways of doing ensuring its support for critical DE would be to include criticality as central to measurements of DE outcomes. This might include focus on criteria such as critical deconstruction of taken-for-granted narratives and assumptions in DE practice; critical reflection on North-South stereotypes and relationships of superiority which may be perpetuated by DE; critique of homogeneity in DE practice and of any exclusivity, complicity and Eurocentrism in DE talk or materials; questioning the value of aid and development co-operation as central to DE practice, questioning certainty and values based on universalism and superiority; and prompting the valuing of diversity, participatory learning for

alternatives and processes whereby participants' experiences are critically explored. A review of its Performance Measurement Framework with these critical questions in mind would offer opportunities for Irish Aid to support more critical DE.

Given the importance of Irish Aid funding to DE in the Irish context, Irish Aid should follow through on its current intentions to publish figures of its funding for DE and for development engagement through its civil society partnerships.

While the Irish Aid strategic plan (2016a) attempts to clarify the relationship between DE, ESD and GCE, there is no such clarification when it comes to public engagement. The latter would appear to be very important in the face of the erosion of differentiation between DE and public engagement and the increased promotion of the latter. Where IDEA has attempted to argue for greater emphasis on DE, rather than public engagement, and for more and different modes of state funding for DE, its close working relationship with Irish Aid raises some questions about its ability to influence any radical change when it comes to Irish Aid's approach to DE. A move away from the current managerial, business-like culture with its focus on instrumental accountability, measurement and governance sounds utopian in the current neoliberal context but a starting point for Irish Aid in this regard might be a critical examination of its discourses in relation to accountability, results and governance and their effects on the types of DE promoted and supported in Ireland.

In the light of the above, the following are implications arising from this research for IDEA:

IDEA should initiate debate within the DE sector on the effects of new service arrangements and partnership agreements on the criticality of DE, on diversity within the sector and on the smaller DE organisations. Through its annual conferences, and in conjunction with DICE and Ubuntu, IDEA could promote debate on the critical impact of the policy of mainstreaming DE in the formal sector and in initial teacher education. Debate could also be initiated with Dóchas on the effects on the critical potential of DE across various sectors of the framing of DE in development terms and its funding from within the Development Co-operation budget.

It would be useful for IDEA to clarify its policy on accountability and measurement when it comes to DE. IDEA, in association with Dóchas, should initiate a debate on the effects of accountability and results-based management discourses on the criticality of DE in Ireland. Furthermore, it could play a strong role in engaging with Irish Aid in relation to the introduction of critical criteria into Irish Aid's Performance Measurement Framework. It could also use its influence with Irish Aid to promote criticality as a key theme in any Irish Aid funded research on DE.

In its capacity building work with DE facilitators and in its working groups, IDEA could further



explore the challenges and opportunities for promoting critical DE in various sectors.

For IDEA and NGDOs, where a recommendation to work less with government and more with social movements may appear unrealistic for organisations dependent on their credibility with governments or on international aid contracts, greater focus on the implications of state-civil society relationships and in particular their implications for the type of DE promoted might be a worthwhile starting place. Further commitment to DE among NGDOs, especially of funds raised from general public donations for DE, would signal a more optimistic future for DE beyond state dependency.

The following are implications arising from this research for Dóchas and the NGDOs engaged in DE:

NGDOs should consider restoring their 2007 levels of funding and continuing to grow the proportion of their overall spending to DE. In their accounts, NGDOs need to clarify what proportion of their funding to DE and advocacy, public communications or public engagement is allocated to DE specifically.

NGDOs need to reflect on the criticality of their DE with a specific focus on understanding the effects of development language and associations on the criticality of DE in an Irish context. In addition to debates mentioned with IDEA above, Dóchas and NGDOs should initiate public debate on their role in relation to DE in Ireland as well as clarifying their understanding of the relationship between DE and 'public engagement'.

While these possible recommendations are laudable, this research suggests the need to think more deeply about the implications, not only of limited DE but of the types of DE promoted and supported in Ireland. Though it is focused on facilitators' talk, this talk provides insight into the assumptions and meanings as well as the policies and practices associated with it. In that context, this research suggest the need to find a new kind of thinking and politics beyond 'idealised' talk and to 'turn the gaze back on ourselves'.

### **2.2.1. Beyond 'Idealised' Talk and 'Turning the Gaze Back on Ourselves'**

As suggested above, what emerges clearly from the exploration of discourses of DE in this research is the need to imagine a post-critical DE with a politics beyond 'idealised' talk. In exploring the way DE facilitators talk about DE, the languages and phrases used, the assumptions we take for granted, this research has shown the importance of focusing deeply on meanings and effects. This post-structuralist influence calls for a contextualised understanding of DE, not one which aspires to all things critical and marvellous, or which closes down debate in its statements of the obvious and of the virtuous. As

outlined earlier, at first glance there can appear to be a consensus in the terms and talk associated with DE. Looking behind these terms, e.g., understandings of justice or of local-global interactions, one can see that even though DE 'speak' is often aspirational, general, vague and apparently meaningless, it also reflects complex assumptions about development, education and the value of DE, at the very least. Behind the rhetoric of aspiration lies an array of different perspectives which cannot easily be differentiated without detailed investigation.

This research has also opened up understandings of what is involved in a critical pedagogy and its potential through DE. In embracing post-criticality, a reimagined politics of DE would involve more critical deconstruction of the context shaping education and global development challenges, including the complicity of facilitators, organisations and institutions in supporting hegemonic assumptions about global development or, at the very least, in not challenging them. This presents many challenges for facilitators, including the importance of considering assumptions about development, education and the role and relevance of DE. In highlighting the relative lack of self-reflexivity in the sector and the persistence of individualised approaches to action, apolitical constructions of the politics of DE and North-South assumptions about development, there are important questions to be asked about the extent to which DE in Ireland is looking beneath the surface and questioning itself. Overall, this relative individualism in action and less than critical approach to politics confirms criticisms of DE as being in danger of being apolitical and individualistic (Bryan and Bracken, 2011; Gaynor, 2015). In addition, it brings to mind Andreotti's HEADSUP checklist (2012) and raises questions about the likelihood of facilitators' desire to move from a charity perspective to one of solidarity being realised in any meaningful way.

As highlighted in Chapter Six, though there is only some evidence of facilitators in this research drawing largely on a post-critical discourse, many do question development narratives and stereotypes and there is some questioning among them of the implications of a development framing for DE today. Though this signals some potential for a reimagined politics of DE, the challenge is to apply this type of 'constructive deconstruction' more widely within DE and in relation to how DE is constructed in itself. There is minimal questioning of the policy of mainstreaming DE in the formal sector, of Irish Aid control of DE or of its values. As such, there is an apparent consensus on the value of doing DE with little critical understanding of what that might mean for different facilitators working in different sectors. When facilitators talk about the ideals of DE, their vision for it, there are a lot of unquestioned assumptions about what DE involves and what it can do. On the other hand, when they look at the contexts within which they work, they seem much more aware of its limitations, e.g., in formal education, and among poorly funded DE organisations. Despite this, it is often these contexts which seem, thus far, to be considered beyond the remit of critical reflexivity within DE, for example, the effects of neoliberal economic policies on formal education in the Irish context; the promotion of instrumental accountability and results-based management and governance systems within education

and in DE practice; and the growth of ‘big business’ NGDOs and its effects on smaller organisations and on shrinking diversity within the DE sector.

This potential for critical questioning of the power relations shaping DE and of our own assumptions is central to this notion of ‘casting the gaze back on ourselves’ (Bryan, 2011), which involves self-reflexively and critically looking beyond the words we use to the meanings which underpin them and the effects associated with them. Unless DE addresses these ‘elephant(s) in the room’, as Liz put it, it is likely to continue to reflect ‘idealised critical talk’ while being constrained in its criticality by its development associations on one hand and its culture of restraint on the other.

Cornwall’s words sound a note of caution to the pessimist. She argues that words can be rehabilitated and that “it is in the very ambiguity of development buzzwords that scope exists for enlarging their application to encompass more transformative agendas” (2010: 13). In so doing, she suggests that ‘constructive deconstruction’ is a “vital first step to their rehabilitation” (2010: 14) and that “dislocating naturalised meanings, dislodging embedded associations, and de-familiarising the language that surrounds us becomes, then, a means of defusing the hegemonic grip ... unquestioned acceptance – that certain ideas have come to exert in development policy and practice” (2010: 15). In opening up the various meanings associated with DE in Ireland, this research has attempted to provide the kind of understanding which can support a post-critical politics of DE which involves critical self-reflexivity, constructive deconstruction and the creation of alternatives.

### **3. Contributions of the Research**

As indicated above, this research has attempted to contribute to research on discourses ‘of’ and ‘within’ DE in Ireland and on the politics of DE. By focusing on facilitators’ experiences, perspectives and assumptions about DE, it places them at the heart of the research, and understandings of discursive formations of DE in Ireland have been constructed here based on their talk – the concepts they use, their framings and words about DE and what these might mean. In understanding discourses of DE, I have attempted to build on the work of Vanessa Andreotti, in particular, by applying insights from post-development, critical pedagogy and Critical Discourse Analysis to this research on DE discourses. This has served to highlight what constitutes ‘critical’ and ‘post-critical’ discourses of DE and what factors shape it in an Irish context, and to provide a deeper understanding of what offers critical potential and what constrains it.

Where this research has focused on talk, which shines some light on practices associated with it, there is a need for a deeper and more focused exploration of the implications of DE discourses for DE practice. There is room, for example, for further research on the effects of new managerialism on DE

organisation and practice in Ireland or of discourses of DE within ITE or teacher constructions of DE. Arguably, one of the strengths of this thesis also highlights another limitation – that the focus has turned out to be more on constraints rather than on the potential for criticality. While the latter does emerge here, arguably more research emphasis on examples of post-critical DE would help to chart more radical and alternative avenues for DE in the future.

This research highlights the benefits of a discourse analytical perspective and applications of a post-development critique to understanding DE. Where Andreotti's use of post-colonial analysis, especially the work of Gayatri Spivak, clearly shows the influence of colonial constructions in DE, the approach adopted here is designed to build on those insights to understand how discourses of DE are shaped in discursive, policy and institutional contexts. In addition, in exploring the construction of hegemony, it sheds light on how power relations within the DE sector shape discourses and practices of DE. Rather than regarding DE as determined by state agendas, it highlights where NGOs, DE organisations and educational institutions play a role in supporting and/or challenging the hegemonic discursive style and culture at work in the Irish context. This emphasis on discourses and power relations when it comes to the construction of different understandings of DE opens up debates about the identity of DE, and its relation to other similar educations as well as in relation to its criticality.

An important contribution of this research is that it questions easy notions of criticality when it comes to DE. In applying a critical discourse analytical approach, it questions aspirations towards criticality in critical pedagogy. It highlights that DE cannot 'wish away' the context that is shaping or constraining it. It grounds ideal-type thinking in the messy realities of talk and institutional and actor relations, and shows that discourses are not fixed but created, shaped, negotiated and struggled over in institutional contexts. This implies that even when criticality is constrained it can be created otherwise.

In focusing here on the factors which shape different discourses of DE, this research also provides significant insight into power relations in the DE sector in Ireland. It highlights that while the content of talk provides insights in relation to policy and practice, it is the discursive style and culture which constitutes discursive hegemony in relation to DE in Ireland. In showing the dominance of Irish Aid, this research reinforces questions raised elsewhere about the critical potential within civil society in the context of engagement in service-delivery roles, especially in the light of growing neoliberal governmentality through management discourses. This raises serious questions for NGOs and networks regarding policy engagement and for the critical future of public debate in relation to DE.

Part of the story of understanding the DE sector in Ireland more thoroughly relates to funding of DE in Ireland. Through this research I found that there is no accurate picture of DE funding in the Irish context. Irish Aid does not publish records of its DE funding to its civil society partners. Trócaire and Concern Worldwide (the only NGOs I examined) include other areas with DE, thereby making it

difficult to get precise figures of their funding of DE. While Dóchas has commissioned research (in 2017) on Irish Aid DE funding, the draft findings (available at the time of writing) of which confirm this analysis (Barry, 2017), an interesting treatment of any future research on funding might involve critically questioning the use of the term ‘funding’ in relation to DE in the first place, rather than, for example, ‘costs’, ‘payments’ or ‘allocation of resources’, and an analysis of its implications on budgetary allocations, e.g., how does the framing of financial or resource allocations in ‘funding’ terms affect budgetary allocations and relationships? It is interesting to note Barry's (2017) use of the term ‘investment’ rather than funding in this regard.

In adopting a Foucauldian-inspired approach to writing the ‘history of the present’ of DE in Ireland (Foucault, 1979; Garland, 2014), this research highlights the influence of discursive sediments on current DE talk, in this case, the lingering influences of charity and North-South discourses among NGOs and in Irish Aid on the one hand and justice and solidarity discourses on the other. The influence of historical discourses on current policy and practice raises questions for the criticality of DE, especially in the context of increased promotion of public engagement. While each context is different, it is clear from this research that the ‘talk’ about DE in Ireland is largely critical but that it is significantly constrained. This is not simply to say that there is ‘a mismatch between talk and practice’ or that ‘it is all rhetoric and no reality’. Rather, the research highlights the importance of exploring the context (discursive, policy and institutional) which shapes DE talk and the effects of this talk on DE policy and practice.

#### **4. Closing Comments**

Undertaking this research was inspired by many years of experience and one conversation. It started in talk and, throughout, it has been about talk: talking to people, listening to their interview talk about DE, having chats with family, friends and colleagues about this research, and participants calling me to tell me things they’ve remembered. Talk is often underestimated. Phrases like ‘talk is cheap’, ‘it’s all talk and no action’, or ‘it’s not what you say but what you do that matters’ come to mind. For me, talk is neither empty nor unimportant. Through it, meaning is created and lives can be changed. Like many, I often find that I don’t know what I think until I talk it out or write it down. In a conversation recently with Dan, he made the point to me that by re-framing challenging situations we can overcome the barriers they present which limit us. “*We make the road by talking*”, he said. It seems to me that there is not enough talking (or listening) in relation to DE in Ireland, and that we could do with more conversations, more open debate (Khoo, n.d.), more critical reflection or self-reflexivity (Andreotti, 2014) together about what it is we’re doing and why. Central to this talk is the need to continuously ask questions (Gaynor, 2015).

This research is based on talk – what facilitators say, the words we use and why, and how we can understand the meanings we attribute to this talk. In this thesis, exploring talk has brought us deeply into the world of facilitators in Ireland and our/their understandings of what’s involved in DE and what shapes it. Many are frustrated with reduced resources, more administrative burdens, new working arrangements and precarious careers. Many feel challenged by the urgency and immensity of the problems facing our world today – war and massive migratory movements, climate change, global poverty and injustice. Through talk, we get some insight into the critical potential and limitations of DE. These limitations are not natural or predetermined. They are shaped in the very real day-to-day living out of decisions affecting DE in Ireland. As such, they too can be shaped, more critically or instrumentally, collectively or individually, through more or fewer resources, in formal or non-formal contexts. In this context, it is important to listen to facilitators’ talk, to hear what limits the realisation of criticality and what can transform critical talk into critical reality.

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## **Appendix One: Information and Consent Form for Development Education Facilitators**

**8<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

Dear X,

I am writing to invite you to participate in research I am undertaking in 2016 on discourses of development education among development education facilitators and policy makers in Ireland. This is research that I am undertaking for a Doctorate in Higher and Adult Education at Maynooth University under the supervision of Professor Anne Ryan ([Anne.Ryan@nuim.ie](mailto:Anne.Ryan@nuim.ie)) and, through it, I hope to build on my long-standing interest and involvement in development education and to deepen my understanding of it in Ireland. In focusing on discourses of development education, the research will examine the role of development education in addressing global development challenges and the future of development education in Ireland in the context of a shifting global and development context.

I am inviting you to participate in three phases of this research: a questionnaire to be distributed via SurveyMonkey (approx. 40 minutes), an initial interview with me of approx. 1 hour, to be organised at your convenience; and in a series of three follow-up morning or afternoon workshops which are designed to facilitate collective critical reflection on and analysis of themes emerging from interviews. At these workshops, emerging themes will be presented in a general way which does not attribute the points to any specific individual involved. It is anticipated that approx. 15 development education facilitators will participate in these workshops. Though donors will be involved in the research, they will not be participating in these workshops. The workshops are not designed to reach consensus but they should allow for different perspectives to be heard. The following workshops are planned as part of this overall research process (dates and times to be confirmed):

Workshop 1 - Exploration of Themes Emerging from Questionnaires and Interviews with Development Education Facilitators on the Role of Development Education in Addressing Global Development Challenges

Workshop 2 - Exploration of Factors Shaping Approaches to Development Education and the Future of Development Education in Ireland

Workshop 3 - Reflection on and Development of Analysis

Of course, please feel free, depending on your availability, to participate in a research interview without participating in the follow-up workshops.

Should you agree to participate in the research, I would like you to be aware of some of the procedures which will be employed to ensure that it reflects good ethical practice:

Consent will be sought from participants who agree to participate to use their questionnaire data anonymously. Consent will also be sought from participants who agree to participate in an interview to record their interview (or aspects of it, as desired by the participant) and for the interview to be transcribed by me. Confidentiality of information will be ensured, to the extent that it is possible, by separating personally identifiable information from interview transcripts. Notes that are compiled from workshops will not attribute any points to individuals, therefore notes will not include personally identifiable information. It must be recognised that, in some circumstances, confidentiality of research data and records may be overridden by courts in the event of litigation or in the course of investigation by lawful authority. In such circumstances Maynooth University will take all reasonable steps within law to ensure that confidentiality is maintained to the greatest possible extent. Please see the limits to confidentiality as outlined in Section 3.3. of the Maynooth University Ethics policy. (<http://research.nuim.ie/system/files/images/Ethics%20Policy%20Approved%20by%20AC>)

[%2012%2002%2012.pdf](#))

Despite these limitations, all data will be anonymised as soon as possible after collection and no personally identifiable information will appear in the doctoral thesis. It is anticipated that, with permission, anonymised data may be published following completion of the doctoral thesis. Records of personally identifiable information about research participants (name, organisation, email address and research number) will be stored separately from interview audio recordings and transcripts, which will be anonymised. I will be the only person to have access to the identifiers and data. The former will be encrypted and stored on a password protected desktop computer. Interview audio recordings will be stored in a locked cabinet at my workplace and transcripts and workshop notes will be encrypted and stored in a password secure desktop computer. Identifiable information will be removed from data as soon as possible and immediately following transcription. Identifiable information will be retained for any further publications but will be destroyed within 10 years of completion of the research. Written consent will be sought from research participants prior to semi-structured interviews and workshops to use anonymised data in future publications and presentations.

Every effort is being made to make the research as participatory as possible, while acknowledging the specific responsibilities I have, as the researcher, to design and complete the research. In this regard, workshops are designed to include participatory processes of reflection and will include an opportunity to reflect on the research process and to evaluate the workshops themselves. Your interview transcript and notes of any workshops you have participated in will be shared with you following these research processes. This will be done via email where you will have an opportunity to amend or remove your individual interview transcript from the research process and to comment on workshop notes. You will also be sent an electronic copy of the doctoral thesis arising from the research, following successful completion of the DHAE, and you will be invited to participate in a follow up meeting to discuss the research process and the analysis and conclusions contained therein. Should you have any complaints about the research process being undertaken, please contact the Maynooth University Ethics Committee.

Your contribution to this research would be much appreciated. Please indicate in the attached form whether or not you would be willing to participate in an interview and/or workshops and return it to [eilish.dillon.2014@mumail.ie](mailto:eilish.dillon.2014@mumail.ie)

With thanks,

Eilish

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## Appendix Two: Survey Monkey Questionnaire with Development Education Facilitators

### Introduction and Consent

Dear Participant,

Thanks for agreeing to participate in this research on discourses of development education in Ireland that I am undertaking for a Doctorate in Higher and Adult Education at Maynooth University under the supervision of Professor Anne Ryan (Anne.Ryan@nuim.ie). I am inviting you to participate in three phases of this research: this questionnaire which will take approx. 45 mins, an interview to be organised at your convenience; and in a series of three follow-up morning or afternoon workshops (dates and times to be arranged). Of course, please feel free, depending on your availability, to participate in the questionnaire and a research interview without participating in the follow-up workshops.

Should you agree to participate in the research, I would like you to be aware of some of the procedures which will be employed to ensure that it reflects good ethical practice. Consent will be sought from participants who agree to participate to use their questionnaire data anonymously. Consent will also be sought from those who agree to participate in an interview to record their interview (or aspects of it, as desired by the participant) and for the interview to be transcribed by me. Confidentiality of information will be ensured, to the extent that it is possible, by separating personally identifiable information from interview transcripts. Notes that are compiled from workshops will not attribute any points to individuals, therefore notes will not include personally identifiable information. It must be recognized that, in some circumstances, confidentiality of research data and records may be overridden by courts in the event of litigation or in the course of investigation by lawful authority. In such circumstances Maynooth University will take all reasonable steps within law to ensure that confidentiality is maintained to the greatest possible extent. Please see the limits to confidentiality as outlined in Section 3.3. of the Maynooth University Ethics policy.

(<http://research.nuim.ie/system/files/images/Ethics%20Policy%20Approved%20by%20AC%2012%2002%2012.pdf>)

Despite these limitations, all data will be anonymised as soon as possible after collection and no personally identifiable information will appear in the doctoral thesis. It is anticipated that, with permission, anonymised data may be published following completion of the doctoral thesis. Records of personally identifiable information about research participants (name, organisation, email address and research number) will be stored separately from interview audio recordings and transcripts, which will be anonymised. I will be the only person to have access to the identifiers and data. The former will be encrypted and stored on a password protected desktop computer. Your interview transcript and notes of any workshops you have participated in will be shared with you following these research processes.

You will also be sent an electronic copy of the doctoral thesis. Should you have any complaints about the research process being undertaken please contact the Maynooth University Ethics Committee.

Your contribution to this research would be much appreciated. Best wishes, Eilish (eilish.dillon@mumail.ie)

\* 1. I agree to participate in this research on discourses of development education in Ireland and to complete this questionnaire. I agree that data from this questionnaire can be used anonymously in doctoral research publications and presentations by Eilish Dillon.

Please note that if you agree to the above processes you will be invited (at later stages in the research) to give your written consent, or not, regarding note taking, transcription and the use of anonymised data in future publications and presentations. You should also be aware of your right to withdraw your consent and data at any time up until the work is published and you have a right to access your data. [additional sentence]

If during your participation in this study you feel the information and guidelines that you were given have been neglected or disregarded in any way, or if you are unhappy about the process, please contact the Secretary of the Maynooth University Ethics Committee at [research.ethics@nuim.ie](mailto:research.ethics@nuim.ie) or +353 (0)1 708 6019.

Please be assured that your concerns will be dealt with in a sensitive manner.

If you wish to contact me directly, please contact me at:

[eilish.dillon.2014@mumail.ie](mailto:eilish.dillon.2014@mumail.ie) or at the following address:  
Eilish Dillon c/o Department of Adult and Community Education, Maynooth University, Maynooth.

If you wish to contact my supervisor, her contact details are: Professor Anne Ryan, Department of Adult and Community Education, Maynooth University. Tel: (01) 7083683

- I agree to complete this questionnaire (approx. 45 mins) and for data from it to be used anonymously by Eilish Dillon
- I agree to participate in an individual interview (approx. 1 hour) and for data from it to be used anonymously by Eilish Dillon
- I do not agree to participate in an individual interview
- I agree to participate in follow-up workshops and for data from it to be used anonymously by Eilish Dillon
- I do not agree to participate in research workshops
- I do not agree to participate in any of this research

\* 2. If you agree to participate in any aspect of this research, please provide your contact details in the box below - your name, contact address, telephone number and email address.

Please be assured that these details are only for contact purposes and will not be shared with any other individual or linked in any way to the information you provide here.

3. Please give an indication of your approximate age by ticking the relevant range below.

- 60+
- 51 - 60
- 41 - 50
- 31 - 40
- 20 - 30

\* 4. Which of the following terms is closest to the term you use most often to describe the type of education you facilitate - please tick one only.

- Development Education (DE)
- Human Rights Education (HRE)
- Global Education (GE)
- Intercultural Education (ICE)
- Citizenship Education (CE)
- Global Citizenship Education (GCE)
- Education for Sustainable Development
- Other (please specify)

\* 5. How many years have you been working in this area of education?

- 2 - 5 years
- 6 - 10 years
- 11 - 15 years
- 16 - 20 years
- 20+ years
- Other (please specify)

\* 6. Please describe how you got involved in this type of education.

7. What formal educational qualifications do you have (please list all qualifications which apply at each level)?

Second level	<input type="text"/>
Undergraduate qualifications	<input type="text"/>
Postgraduate qualifications	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>

8. Did you have any full-time professional or voluntary work (in any sector) prior to your involvement in this type of education?

- Yes  
 No

Please Explain

9. What percentage, approx., of its education funding, if any, has your organisation (or you personally, if appropriate) generated from the following sources since 2014? Please tick the closest percentage box.

	0 - 20%	21 - 40%	41 - 60%	61 - 80%	81 - 100%	Don't know
Own organisation's fundraising	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Funding grant from Irish Aid	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Funding grant from the European Commission	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Funding grant from Trócaire	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Funding grant from Concern	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)



\* 10. What are your current responsibilities when it comes to development education (or HRE, GE, ICE, GCE, ESD etc) within your organisation? If you engage in more than one of these types of education, please indicate your responsibilities for each.

\* 11. Please offer a brief explanation of what development education is, in your view.

12. If you do not generally use the term development education for the type of work you facilitate, how is the type of education you engage in different from development education, in your view?

13. Please explain (briefly) two examples of good practice in development education that you are aware of happening in Ireland today and explain why you think these are examples of good practice.

Example 1

Example 2

\* 14. In comparison to other 'development' activities such as aid, buying fair trade products or campaigning for economic and political change, how effective do you think development education (or HRE, GE, ICE, GCE, ESD etc) is?

- Much more effective than some or most
- More effective than some or most
- As effective as some or most
- Not as effective as some or most
- Much less effective than most

Please comment on your answer here

\* 15. Please rank the following from 1 - 8 in terms of what you feel represent the greatest global development challenges today with 1 being the most significant and 8 being the least

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
poverty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
vulnerability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
injustice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
inequality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
climate change	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
the global economic system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
poor governance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
none of these	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please explain

\* 16. From the following list of terms please identify the one that best describes the kind of education practice you engage in most often

- training
- facilitation
- research
- publications
- curriculum development
- teaching
- project management
- none of these

Other (please specify)

\* 17. From the following list of terms please identify the accountability practice that you think is most important when it comes to development education

- evaluating programme activities
- reporting on activities
- monitoring learning
- gathering evidence of results
- none of these

Please explain

\* 18. From the following list of terms please identify the one that you prefer when it comes to describing your role in relation to those you work with in development education

- facilitator
- teacher
- mentor
- leader
- partner
- catalyst
- none of these

Please explain

\* 19. Please rank the following from 1 - 8 in terms of their importance when it comes to the value or ethical basis for development education with 1 being the most important and 8 being the least important

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
social justice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
solidarity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
human rights	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
charity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
empowerment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
equality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
none of these	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please explain

\* 20. Please rank the following pedagogical principles from 1 - 8 in terms of their importance to development education with 1 being the most important and 8 being the least.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
participation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
diversity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
imagination	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
criticality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
creativity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
problem-solving	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
none of these	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please explain

\* 21. From the following list of terms please identify the one that best describes the kinds of reflective or analytical processes involved in development education, in your view

- reflection
- exploration
- analysis
- praxis
- reflexivity
- critique
- none of these

Please explain

\* 22. Please rank the following from 1 - 8 in terms of what you hope development education can encourage among participants with 1 being the most important and 8 being the least

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
knowledge and understanding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
questioning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
activism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
responsible consumerism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
engagement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
respect for diversity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
none of these	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please explain

\* 23. Please identify three changes you would make, if you could, to development education in Ireland for the future

1

2

3

## **Appendix Three: Interview Topic Guide with Development Education Facilitators**

### **Topic Guide for Interviews – revised May 19<sup>th</sup> 2016 following completion of Pilot**

#### **Introduction**

Thanks for agreeing to participate in this interview and for completing the questionnaire. The interview should take approx. an hour. As I mentioned to you, this is the second of my research tools and the idea is that we will get a chance to explore some of the themes introduced in the survey monkey in greater detail in the interview. So, we'll be looking at development education and your understanding and experience of it. I'm hoping to gather the findings from interviews and bring people together who have participated in a series of workshops during the Summer to explore the issues together more generally.

Before we begin, I'd be grateful if you could sign the consent form for me. Basically, I'm asking your permission to record the interview – as much as you are happy for me to record – to transcribe it and then to use the data from it in the doctorate and in subsequent publications. I would do so confidentially with every effort made not to use any information that could attribute what you say to you personally. I intend to send you a transcript of the interview and give you a chance to amend it or to remove it from the research. Does that sound ok? Thanks....

As I explained to you, my research is about development education but I'm aware that people use different terms and have different approaches to education that is similar to development education. With this in mind, at times we'll look at what you do more generally and at other times we'll look more specifically at development education, if that's ok.

#### **Understandings of Development Education**

1. Can we start by looking at the terms you use to describe your education work. What term is closest to the term you use most often to describe the type of education you facilitate?

Development Education

Human Rights Education

Global Education

Intercultural Education

Citizenship Education

Global Citizenship Education

Education for Sustainable Development

Other [please specify]

2. Why do you use that term and not one of the others?

3. In general, what do you understand development education to be? How is it different or similar to the kind of education you are involved in, in your view?

4. What do you think development education is trying to achieve? What are you trying to achieve with your work in this area?

5. How would you describe your approach to education by comparison with others that you are familiar with?

### **Approach to Education More Broadly**

6. When it comes to inspiration for your work in this area, whose approaches do you admire and why?
7. What kinds of questions do you like to ask when you're doing this kind of education with a group?
8. What do you hope that learners will get out of their learning experience?
9. Where do values fit into this kind of education, in your view, if at all?
10. What about politics? How does that relate to the kind of education you're engaged in if at all?
11. What kinds of skills do you feel that people gain, if any, from their experience of this kind of education?
12. To what extent do you feel that the teaching or learning processes are important in this kind of education? Can you explain your views on this?

### **Development Framing – Development Education Specifically**

13. In your view, what kinds of relationships or practices are supported through development education, if any?
14. What do you see as the most significant global development challenges facing our world today?
15. What role does development education play, if any, in addressing these challenges in your view?
16. To what extent do you think it matters that development education is framed in terms of 'development'? What do you see as the implications of this framing for the kind of development education practiced in Ireland, if any?

### **Policy and Practice – Development Education Specifically**



17. What do you see as the main policy or strategic priorities among organisations involved in development education in Ireland today? Have these changed since you've become involved in development education?

18. In your view, who or what do you see as setting the agenda when it comes to development education in Ireland at the moment? Has this changed over time?

19. What do you think of the current funding and organisational arrangements when it comes to development education in Ireland?

### **Future of Development Education in Ireland**

20. What do you see as the main challenges facing development education facilitators or policy makers in the future in Ireland?

21. How do you see the future of development education in Ireland?

Any Questions for me and Thanks.....

#### Appendix Four: Themes Addressed in Interviews with Key Informants

	Niall	Hannah	Damien	Izzy	Freja	Kathleen	Oscar	Kate	Mandy
Role of Interviewee								X	X
Terms			X	X	X	X	X		
Aims of DE				X	X	X	X	X	X
Values and DE	X			X	X				
DE as Political			X	X	X	X			X
DE Ideals and Practice	X			X	X	X	X		
DE in Formal Sector		X				X			
Different Approaches to DE	X		X	X	X	X	X		
The 'Sector' in general	X	X				X	X		X
Measurement and Results		X	X	X	X			X	X
Difference DE and Public Engagement				X	X				X
DE Policy Landscape	X		X	X	X	X		X	
Driving or Shaping DE in Ireland	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
IDEA and Dóchas	X	X			X	X	X	X	
Irish Aid	X	X		X	X			X	X
DE in Irish Aid		X		X		X		X	X
INGOs	X				X		X		
Smaller DE Orgs or Disbanded Orgs						X			
GENE Review	X		X		X				
Strat Planning Process	X				X			X	X
IA funding of DE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Examples of DE projects re: a point made	X							X	
Future of DE			X			X	X		
Other Issues Specific to Each Interview	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

## **Appendix Five: Outline Design of Workshops with Development Education Facilitators**

10.30am – Welcome and Introductions

10.40am – Presentation of Initial Findings with reference to the 'Dimensions' of DE

11.10am – Discussion of the Presentation of Initial Findings

11.40am – Break

11.50am – Big Group Discussion of Key Points Emerging from Findings

12.20pm – Introduction to Draft Framework for Analysis of Discourses of Development Education – Post-It Exercise on Different Positions

12.50pm – Discussion of Mapping of Draft Discourses Post-It Exercise

1.25pm – Wrap up and Thanks.

## **Appendix Six: Notes from Workshops, February, 2017**

**Notes from Research Workshops - 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> February 2017** – Eilish Dillon [compiled 20<sup>th</sup> Feb 2017]

### **Process:**

Two workshops were organised in February 2017 for the research on 'Discourses of Development Education in Ireland and the Factors Shaping them within the Development Education Field' with the aim of sharing emerging findings with research participants and hearing their initial feedback on them. The purpose of the workshops was to involve participants in the analysis stage of the research and to provide an opportunity to check the researcher's interpretation and understanding of findings emerging from interviews.

The initial plan was to have multiple workshops but it was felt that time would not allow this, both for participants and in terms of the limitations of the research. Having decided to hold just one workshop, it became important to run this same workshop twice (over two consecutive days), as many of those who were contacted expressed an interest in participating but were not free on the first date suggested. The workshops were designed to take no longer 3 hours in order not to take too much time from busy work schedules. Though all of those development education facilitators who participated in the interviews were invited to participate in the workshops, in total 9 participated in one of the two workshops and 11 sent apologies.

### **Workshops were organised as follows:**

10.30am – Welcome and Introductions

10.40am – Presentation of initial findings with reference to the various 'characteristics' of development education

11.10am – Discussion of the presentation of initial findings in pairs or small groups (and noted by participants) in terms of: what rings true, what's surprising if anything, what's missing and how do they understand or make sense of the findings?

11.40am – Break

11.50am – Big Group Discussion of Key Points Emerging from Findings (notes taken on flipchart)

12.20pm – Introduction to Draft Framework for Analysis of Discourses of Development Education (with reference to data collected from interviews and in light of the analytical framework developed in the literature review). In order to give participants an opportunity to get familiar with the different draft discourses outlined and to reflect on them in relation to development education practice that might be associated with them, a copy of each was placed on the wall (with no name attached) and participants were given 3 post-its. Using these post-its they were asked to identify an organisation whose work largely (not fully – acknowledged that's not possible) represents a particular discourse (two post-its and organisations). With the last post-it they were asked to pick a discourse that they would most identify with themselves.

12.50pm – Discussion of the exercise, the draft discourses reflected upon and of the way in which the discourses were presented – in grid form which might suggest a continuum of different approaches. In the case of workshop 1, a discussion about what constrains people from realising their ideal in terms of their approach to development education ensued, whereas in workshop 2, participants were asked to reflect on the apparent 'disjoint' between the 'ideal' and practice.

1.25pm – Wrap up and Thanks.

### **Notes from Sessions:**

**Introduction to Emerging Findings re: 'Characteristics' of Development Education – See Power Point Presentation (Appendix X)**

**Re: The 'Characteristics' of Development Education** – [notes taken on purple sheets distributed and discussion in pairs or small groups]

<b>Is there anything that 'rings true' for you? Why?</b>	<b>Workshop 1 [returned mostly as individual forms, with one person not returning the form]</b>	<b>Workshop 2 [returned as two forms from one group and one form from the other]</b>
Person/Group 1	Focus on values Local-Global perspective	People referencing anti-racism, racism, diversity is very heartening (as in a conceptual way). DE very values driven for me – obvious that other people have spent time thinking of their values too, e.g., Freire as inspiration.
Person/Group 2	Approaches are context-driven DEFs trying to appeal/speak to broadest possible groups and therefore language often non-specific/tepid, e.g., 'engagement', 'action component'. Hesitancy in using very definitive terms, e.g., activism, political, because we don't want to scare people off	[worked in group with person 1 above] Political nature of DE Universalism – something which is key to understanding interconnectedness, shared 'development' issues locally and globally Moralism – highlighted this issue for me and made me question my own practice – do I 'preach', do I manage my own moral perspective – am I impartial enough?
Person/Group 3	[working in group with person 2 above] Context of DE does impact on the approach Language used – often non-specific, e.g., 'engagement' – trying to appeal to broad audience not 'scare people off'	Charity vs Solidarity Vision for the world Equality and justice – value-based learning Criticalism
Person/Group 4	Themes, issues familiar The language used Mainstream and edges – hinted at rather than fully explicated	
Person/Group 5	[working in group with person 4 above] The congruence of opinion around justice and equality and the centrality of 'perspective'	

<b>Is there anything that surprises you? Why?</b>	<b>Workshop 1 [returned mostly as individual forms, with one person not returning the form]</b>	<b>Workshop 2 [returned as two forms from one group and one form from the other]</b>
Person/Group 1	No reference to democracy Is DE occupied by the left?	High ranking of economic and financial issues in topics of DE. Surprised people were concerned about coming across as overly-moralistic – hadn't thought about things that way before.
Person/Group 2	Lack of reference to 'Global North' – did participants say 'the West', 'High consumption' countries when referring to role of industrialised nations in relation to global justice issues! Are we copping out using general terms, e.g., 'local-global'?	Ranking of economy, financial issues, 'spec dev issues' (as opposed to poverty, inequality linked to finances) The belief that DE is political yet not noted as being constrained by context – in formal ed settings, by donor requirements etc
Person/Group 3	Is there reference/deeper description of 'global North', e.g., West, developed	Political – not so fluid. The jump from values to politics. Is it perspective? From ed point of view

	countries etc? That certain topics e.g., poverty were not mentioned more. Perhaps climate change and migration to the forefront of people's minds as in media/so critical at present	it's about engagement – can we assume they mean political engagement? Critical and radical education not mentioned but inferred in Q 1 although Freire mentioned more Where is the word 'emotional'?
Person/Group 4	Absence of validation Knowledge as information	
Person/Group 5	The scoring for radical education – (0) Schools of thinking – advocacy and campaigning	

<b>Is there anything missing, in your view?</b>	<b>Workshop 1 [returned mostly as individual forms, with one person not returning the form]</b>	<b>Workshop 2 [returned as two forms from one group and one form from the other]</b>
Person/Group 1	Human flourishing Political – small 'p' Democracy	Gender – mortified that as a DE practitioner I did not mention gender as a DE topic or significant issue in the discourse Constraints and limits of how sector is funded in Ireland and associated challenges [explained that this issue comes up in data not presented]
Person/Group 2	Methodological/pedagogical processes underpinning DEF responses seem 'light' (would want this to be weightier!)] Something about the motivation of interviewees – why are they working in this space in spite of challenges/constraints?	Gender missing, not mentioned? Challenges – constraints, limitations, e.g., political nature of dev ed, constrained by donor/funder Use of term 'Third World' (surprised me given respondents roles) Integration (focus on, given Irish context, linked to racism and diversity)
Person/Group 3	More detailed description of pedagogical processes, range of methodologies used	How does each point related to each other? The question of timing – process and journey Reality checks – values and attitudes
Person/Group 4	Be more explicit about mainstream and edges as well as different approaches, e.g., like a village	
Person/Group 5	Possibly the centralising forces, the mainstreaming efforts Missing the 'edgy'	

<b>What do the findings tell you about different approaches to development education in Ireland, if anything?</b>	<b>Workshop 1 [returned mostly as individual forms, with one person not returning the form]</b>	<b>Workshop 2 [returned as two forms from one group and one form from the other]</b>
Person/Group 1	Seems to look at what students need to cultivate but lack of critical reflection of those involved in DE	Encouraging that people are critiquing charity model about mentioning solidarity/justice as way to go. Methodological focus and consideration very focused as well. Approaches probably very different depending on your DE context
Person/Group 2	Varying emphasis in people's work Are we operating on auto-pilot? (funding, staff, collaboration?) DEFs	DE fosters... moving from charity to solidarity – very encouraging to see it mentioned by 10 people, to see attitudes changing or at least being

	running on empty a bit? Need to regroup to refocus efforts, redefine mission, e.g., 2030 Coalition – interesting example Funder's agenda dominates (see fear of defining action as activism)	considered
Person/Group 3	Different emphasis to people's work depending on the context (both in delivering and where it's happening)	Huge diversity – multiple perspectives DE is making some of values more accessible Language people used – were they 'stock phrases' or jarjon? Changing values – there is common ground but different starting points Self-awareness around fundraising etc
Person/Group 4	There are different approaches and they are valid and useful – later clarified, there is validity in all but not when one dominates. At the moment it's the technical approach	
Person/Group 5	There are different approaches and a validity to different approaches. Great to see experiential learning mentioned.	

**Points Discussed in General Group re: Emerging Findings on 'Characteristics' – all points noted including repeats**

Day 1	Day 2
<p>Is DE occupied by the left? Students and their need to change – lack of critical reflection of those involved – tendency towards consensus Change attitudes of DE practitioners How robust are discussions? Need to find the cracks Need ways of dealing with current movements around the world Does DE set the direction? Need to open up perspectives/values-based ed Appeal to as broad an audience as possible Tentative language of engagement Hesitancy to use definitive terms- don't want to scare people off Context-driven, gently does it, softly softly, the group matters Zero comments on radicalisation – rang true and surprise (x2); mainstream? Confirming? Schools – action? not radical? How far are we willing to push out the boat? Small 'p' and big 'P' – assume people will pick it up by osmosis – the conservative nature of education is good in that way; big 'P' is when education becomes politicised, need to be careful Surprised no references to validation and appreciation – building on people's resilience and strength Centralising forces – mainstreaming with valuing diversity – education is political bit 'P'; cements the status quo; self-critical aspect needs to be more conscious Houses image – houses of advocacy, campaigning, awareness raising, global learning – different houses in the village emphasises different things (see picture) Language and themes (see picture of mainstream, edgy) – all of continuum may be valid</p>	<p>Gender not evident – not up there? Equality/inequality hides and reveals Racism? Themes and values – equality, Human Rights – more about them? Political nature of DE – context appropriate political actions – challenges to being political Fluidity re: politics – jump from values to politics International Dev Sector – campaigning, fundraising, education = siloed Not surprised re: political – activism = political Is engagement political engagement? Implicit in other things, e.g., engagement Accessible – getting past things like political speak, read into the way that it's presented, i.e., terminology Feelings and the emotional are missing apart from values – people respond at the emotional level and there's emotional learning There's an element of self-policing going on, not tyrannical – language management for the funder, doesn't mean that we don't do the work</p>

**Reflection on Draft Discourses of Development Education**

<b>Summary of Findings</b>	<b>Mainstream Technical Discourse</b>	<b>Liberal Pedagogical Discourse</b>	<b>Humanist Developmental Discourse</b>	<b>Critical Praxis Discourse</b>	<b>Post-critical Transformative Discourse</b>
<b>Knowledge, understanding: Process from knowledge acquisition to awareness raising, understanding and action</b>	Acquiring knowledge, content – policy and issue driven  Emphasis on content or 'dev' issues	Awareness raising of development issues for the individual	Awareness and understanding of specific North/South or global development issues and content – understanding for action	Understanding of global issues, structural causes of inequality, poverty etc at L-G levels Knowledge and understanding as process	Critical deconstruction of taken-for granted assumptions, narratives and truths; challenging stereotypes Multiple knowledges valued
<b>Skills: Critical Thinking and Analytical Skills; Skills in making connections, e.g., local-global; and collaboration skills</b>	Technical know how  Critical analysis	Skills for individual engagement  Reflection  Local-Global as entry point for understanding	Critical reflection on North/South dev issues and understanding effects of life in North on South  Local-Global to emphasises effects N-S	Critical thinking leading to reflection and action for change, making connections between structures, practices, discourses, relationships and agency at local and global levels.  Local-global as issues L-G	Critical thinking and creative processes of collaboration – open-ended  L-G to shift problematic N-S constructions and issues L-G
<b>Pedagogical and Methodological Processes: Safe Spaces which value Diversity; Active and Participatory Learning Processes; Experiential learning - learner-centred</b>	Didactic, predictive and technical  Creative and participatory processes for 'better' educational experiences	Safe Spaces for reflection on experience – learner-centred, tailored to participant needs	Safe Spaces for Participatory learning to develop active engagement	Safe spaces for critical reflection and dialogue, methodologies for critical analysis  From experience to action	'Free range' spaces - spaces of creative possibilities  Putting own experience up for question
<b>Action and Activism: Individual action in one's own context; collective action; Political Action</b>	'The action component' Superficial and not necessarily political/apolitical action	Individual action – - consumer, lifestyle driven – clicitivism, charity, fundraising	Mobilisation in Ireland for justice in the countries of the global South	As part of the praxis cycle – analysis, reflection, action, reflection etc.	Little separation between DE and activism – all part of the same process  Many actions – about living not lifestyle  Questioning action 'component'
<b>Aims of DE: Vision for world; for education; for development; and for learners</b>	Integration and Mainstreaming into formal ed - DE to ensure relevance of ed system  Political engagement or promotion of aid  About learning and lifestyle change	To improve the educational experience of the individual so that they can contribute  Not necessarily critical of development  About changing mindsets and indiv behaviour	Education that enables people to respond to North/South inequalities in Ireland  Critical of aid and development if not addressing 'root causes' of, e.g., poverty  About undersanding roles as global citizens	Education to support action for global justice and equality at individual and collective levels, challenges traditional education practices and traditional dev co-operation practices – from charity to solidarity  About understanding roles as global citizens  DE = global not N-S, about good relations with/ solidarity with others, world	Challenge existing assumptions which limit and creating alternatives which offer subversive possibilities - about being not doing or being and doing in different ways
<b>Values – Equality and Justice - Justice: Economic Justice; Justice and Good Relations; Justice as Inclusion; Justice, Shared Humanity and Solidarity</b>	Efficiency, results, mutual benefit – 'right values and attitudes'	Individual freedom, rights, justice, respect – equality of opportunity, care, compassion, empathy	Care, compassion, empathy  Justice and equality in terms of North-South relations	Values based on good relationships – many associated with justice, equality, solidarity, kindness etc  Not prescribed values or answers	Many diferent value systems including those of justice, equality, solidarity etc  Critique and questioning of values
<b>Power and Politics – DE as Political: DE about power to effect change; DE about power to give voice; DE about understanding</b>	Formal power of decision makers; limited role for small 'p' engagement	Power of individual to realise change, not necessarily challenging status quo; Power to give	Politics as a tool for realising change in the global South  Understanding dominant relations and structures	Power and politics central – need to facilitate understandings of how power works and challenge unjust power structures at L-G levels	Power everywhere, need to interrogate own power and explore possibilities of engagements with radical social movements



power relations		voice; Individual political or not – up to themselves	especially with reference to North- South relations	Power to effect change	Power with others
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### Reflection on Different Draft Discourses – Use of Post-its to identify different practices with discourses

	Day 1	Day 2
<b>Mainstream Technical Discourse</b>	Irish Aid x 4	Irish Aid x 2
<b>Liberal Pedagogical Discourse</b>		Kimmage DSC x 1 Maynooth University and Gorta Self-Help Africa x 1
<b>Humanist Developmental Discourse</b>	Worldwise Global Schools x 1 Trócaire x 2 Afri x 1 Afri and Comhlámh x 2	Christian Aid and DDCI x 1 Trócaire x 2 Formal Ed Trócaire DE x 1
<b>Critical Praxis Discourse</b>	Participants x 5 Kimmage DSC x 2 Concern and Trócaire x 1	Irish Aid x 1 [later explained = re: aspirations] Trócaire and Kimmage DSC x 1 Participants x 3
<b>Post-Critical Transformative Discourse</b>	Comhlámh x 1 Participant x 1	Participants x 2

### Exercises on Responses to the Mapping... [different questions asked in workshop 1 and 2]

#### Workshop 1

	Group 1	Group 2
<b>To what extent is the continuum/categorisation useful or not?</b>	Clarifying possibilities – intellectual visualisation, academic value Emerging area – terminology Is it a hub with spokes? Is it a village? Is it a continuum? Values and vision could be the hub Try to avoid binary options	Allows us to challenge ourselves Useful reference point to check our (potentially unconscious) parameters/assumptions Does 'continuum' indicate that one moves from 0 – 5? Misleading term? Does it need an arrow? But it does demonstrate a deepening of knowledge and understanding. And it also highlights alternatives/different ways of doing things Represents totality of DE in Ireland 'Continuum' less helpful a term than 'categories' – use the framework to dip in/review/reflect – not necessarily move through
<b>Given that most people seem to subscribe to the critical or the post-critical discourse as ideal, what are the constraints on us realising the ideal?</b>	Context as a variable – individual vs organisation; formal/non-formal; leadership, personality, value Dominance of project in human endeavour... artefacts... Lead into this.. (beginning, middle, end); Funding-led... relationship and partnership are being edited out Many influence/insurance/risk averse Political system... potential for freedom... social/economics Under-utilised as a process – general awareness of DE is low – communication is key	Lack of renewal of energy (for the sector as a whole) Who are we talking to? We need to talk to ourselves to maintain the DE sector's backbone DE is relational, relationship-based. So it will always be quality over quantity. It's a niche activity, which is a constraint. We haven't made enough impact in arguing that DE is fundamental to mainstream ed DE is not valued (see the limited budget it is allocated) People can tire of operating on the 'fringes' Who controls the narrative? We don't currently

## Workshop 2

	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
<b>What is your overall response to the mapping of the discourses?</b>	Challenging at first, lot of info, but interesting and found it easier when I attached 'labels' to each one, e.g., individual, technical, critical etc	It enables us to question assumptions It is complex stuff Useful for a framework, stimulates further discussion Is it accurate? 'Reasonable interpretative'
<b>Is there anything in particular that 'rings true' for you? Why?</b>	The various discourses strongly display clear values and key focus or objectives for me, and so in my mind I can 'fit' certain organisations into particular discourses (while acknowledging not in neat boxes)	
<b>Is there anything that surprises you?</b>	My dislike of/adverse reaction to liberal ped discourse option – individual focus does not appeal to me and does not acknowledge 'society', power and how change happens	
<b>Is there anything missing in your view?</b>	Nothing that jumps out, very comprehensive	
<b>Given that most development education facilitators identify the 'critical praxis discourse' as the 'ideal', to what extent do you think that practice reflects the 'ideal'?</b>	Probably on a scale of 1- 10, practice at 6? Practice is affected by own values (and energy, motivation) etc which can impact on 'ideal', also practice constrained by external factors, contexts, limits	Disconnect between individuals and organisational practice Ideal pushes against the practice Strives towards ideal In sector – some approaches are more favourable to be funded and measured
<b>Why do you think that most people subscribe to the 'critical' as the ideal?</b>	Promotes analysis and reflection and making up your own mind, forming own opinion, challenging power which includes 'the teacher', so promotes self-learning, self-mobilisation, collective action on shared beliefs, goals	We don't know – objective, both sides of story
<b>If there is a disjoint between the 'ideal' and practice, why do you think this is the case?</b>	Comment above	Funding restraints, institutionalised, environmental implications/restraints – context Directly competing/undermining Pushing Free Trade to it's Nth degree Some of the discourses undermine each other There are counter-discourses to dev ed within and without the sector

<b>Points discussed in general group re: Draft Discourses</b>	<b>Workshop 1</b>	<b>Workshop 2</b>
<b>Draft Discourses</b>	Question continuum – look at it in terms of spoke of a wheel – question is	There's a risk of categorising – how do you reflect the complexity? Need for further

	<p>what becomes the hub? Is that the dominant one? At the moment, the technical and the logic of the project is dominant – potential danger of that</p> <p>Value of the wheel is that it avoids binaries or a sense of right or wrong and leaves space for identifying commonalities [see picture]</p> <p>Value of the village image is that there are different aspects in each and you can take from them</p> <p>Not a continuum – totality of approaches</p> <p>Good reflection tool for auditing, not about moving through</p> <p>Context affects approach – time, physical setting, ethos, leadership – and the political and social context</p>	<p>discussion on it</p> <p>It runs the risk of being reductive but it's a good stimulus for fleshing out planning [introduced notions of the wheel and village discussed at workshop 1] – suggestion was that it was more like a compass which guides and not a ticking box exercise</p>
<b>Constraints</b>	<p>Accountability/ Results Based Management</p> <p>Fundamental dishonesty of the RBF/log frame</p> <p>Corruption – power corrupts – there's unequal distribution of power</p>	<p>Different constraints operating at different levels on different practices, e.g., formal sector curriculum constraints whereas not as evident in non-formal sectors; funding constraints different in different sectors etc</p>
<b>Why people subscribe to the 'critical' as the ideal</b>	<p>It's like a new religion</p> <p>Influenced by Catholic social teaching</p> <p>Issues change but the values remain the same</p> <p>History of civil war, famine, colonialism</p> <p>DE is a space that people have migrated to from the church and politics – it was non-institutionalised in the 60s and 70s, not ideologically tainted and people felt at home</p> <p>There are 'good healthy values' in DE</p> <p>People have moved from language of N-S to global because the global is now how the world works or is constructed</p> <p>They use generic language that people are familiar with</p> <p>The geo-political context has changed and people need a 'moral purpose' – a space to explore that</p> <p>People like learning</p> <p>The future of DE is important – include it in the research</p>	<p>It's a radical pedagogy which disrupts the settled order in terms of its origins, history, philosophy, questioning and desire for change</p> <p>DE in the business of challenging and cultivating dispositions on core issues, taking positions, alternatives, with overt values – at same time not prescriptive, different perspectives</p> <p>People have imbibed the pedagogy and radical traditions – they are feel good things and very attractive – 'the feel good factor'. When you challenge things that are not quite right, it's very liberating</p> <p>[explained that often I see these in terms of tensions – a radical tradition vs not being prescriptive etc]</p> <p>People are self-aware of their own agency, power and privilege – they are managing and reflecting on it; not neutral – how can we be; exposing others to that process</p> <p>DE is a mitigation against the helplessness you feel when looking at the world – it's a framework to latch ourselves onto and keep going – brings hope</p> <p>It's a coping strategy for the undiagnosed depressed</p> <p>It's become institutionalised in the sector – a lot of common ground – consensus, but some issues are still not tackled, e.g., reproductive rights, water rights, around family relationships and waste practices etc.</p>

## **Notes of follow-up phone conversation 1<sup>st</sup> March 2017 with participant from workshop re: the different discursive formations**

Participant – what I meant was not that they were each of equal value but that there is something of equal value in all of them.... re: Ronald Heffits work... good on context... context within which you're engaging. On the horizontal plane you have simple on the one side and complex on the other. On the vertical plane there is technical on one side and adaptive on the other. Think of an ear infection. The simple and technical will define the problem and formulate a response – they have authority. My job is to lie back and take it. They never ask 'what's it like to live with hearing loss?' They never get emotionally involved in that sense so they might not be able to give you the help you need. Professionals working in this realm define because they are trained to define the problem in a way which allows them to have the solutions. It's almost like a school of thought. If you see the problem as an adaptive problem, you need to learn about problems and solutions and your primary responsibility is with dealing with the person and their hearing loss... others support. So it's like a continuum. The technical model defines it, you have professionals defining problems and solutions and funding... at the other end you have people trying to find out what's going on and how to deal with it and ultimately you're going to deal with it. The danger is where you imagine that the simple can respond to the complex.... 'We'll build the road as we walk it'... difficulty when the technical is in the assent. It can't understand emergence and risk, constantly trying to reduce it.

Eilish – it's a bit like 'holding things in creative tension'

Participant – that's it. The technical is about resolving the tension not dealing with it, trying to solve problems. A lot of issues do not have resolvable problems. It's about holding things in tension and living with it, struggle... what bits of the human body get engaged? Down at the other end it's more demanding, at a personal level... it's not that people are not enormously committed but it's about engaging the whole person and not just the head. It's like in Dead Poet's Society, where he says 'tear it out... for God's sake we're talking about poetry, we're not laying a pipe'. There are scripts we've been given, books to tell you how to read poetry...rip it up!

## Appendix Seven: Code Tree – Exported from MAXQDA, 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2017

The following Code Tree reflects concepts and themes which emerged in DE facilitator interview transcripts and which were subsequently used for lexical searches, analysis etc.

### Codes:

- Process of the research
- Terminology
  - Definition etc
  - Why term dev ed
  - Problems with term
  - Does it matter?
  - Dev Ed and Other Eds
    - Dev Ed and Social Justice Ed
    - Dev Ed and ESD
    - Dev Ed and ICE
    - Dev Ed and Community Ed
    - Dev Ed and Critical Education
    - Dev Ed and Ad Learning
    - Dev Ed and Dev Studies
    - Dev Ed and Global Citizenship Ed
    - Dev Ed and Global Ed
    - Dev Ed and Human Rights Ed
- Characteristics of Dev Ed
  - Knowledge, Ideas, Understanding
    - challenging existing understandings
  - Issues
  - Understanding
  - Questions asked
  - Content
- Attitudes and Values
  - Shared
  - Cautions re: Values
  - Positive vs Negative Constructions
  - Values Mentioned
    - Open-minded
    - Helping people
    - Anti racism anti discrimination
    - Respect for Diversity
    - Collaboration
    - Kindness
    - Giving
    - Care
    - Empathy
    - Fairness
    - Respect
    - Inclusion
    - Equality
    - Empowerment
    - Justice
    - Human Rights
    - Solidarity
  - Vagueness
  - Congruency - talk and practice etc
  - Explicit or not
  - Struggles re: values
  - How important in dev ed
  - Changing
  - Challenging
- Skills
  - Confidence
  - Cooperative learning

- Making connections
  - Local Global
  - Effects of actions and behaviours here
  - Own experience and others
- Questioning
  - Others
  - Own experience
- Dialogue
  - Debate
  - Conversation
  - Discussion
- Critique Critical Thinking etc
- Reflection
  - Praxis, Reflection and Action
  - Critical Reflection
- Analysis
  - Framing discourses
  - Social analysis
  - Sritical analysis
- Practices and Relationships
  - Encourage Participation
  - Connections and relations fostered
  - Create Experiences and action opportunities
  - Challenging traditional approaches
  - Activism
    - Personal choice
    - Community development
    - Address poverty and social exclusion
    - Agency
    - Empowerment
    - Narrowing the gap
    - Tackling root causes
    - Growing civil society
    - Encourage engagement and change
- Action
  - Working in own context
  - Campaigning
  - Fundraising
  - Collective
  - Lifestyle
  - Shopping consumerism
  - Structural
  - Personal
- Processes
  - Dialogue
    - Debate
    - Shared experiences
    - Discussion
  - Political
    - Prescriptive actions
    - Not prescriptive
    - Not neutral
  - Answers and Processes
    - Multiple perspectives
    - One right answer
    - No certainty
  - Challenging system of learning processes
  - Who is the learning for
    - For people in the Global South etc
    - For the learners
    - Learner centred
  - Facilitation
    - General facilitation processes

- Room set up
- Lecturing
- Passion and commitment
- Congruency
- Voices heard
  - Giving voice to experience
  - Multiple perspectives
  - Diversity
- Analysis
- Reflection
- Pedagogical
  - Film
  - Methodologies general
  - Case study
  - Role play
  - Simulations
  - Games
  - Participatory
  - Experiential
  - Arts based
  - Appreciative inquiry
  - Problem based learning
  - Innovative
  - Creative
- Different Approaches to Dev Ed
  - Vision and change
  - Impact of dev ed general
  - Arguments for funding Dev Ed
  - Dev Ed as Political
    - Voice heard
    - Challenge system
    - Understanding structures,causes, power
    - People wary of it
    - How important it is
  - Organisational context
  - Facilitator
    - Motivations
      - Making voice count
      - Personal experience
    - Constructions of self
  - Group working with
  - Ed System and approaches
    - Non-formal
    - Youth Sector
    - Adult and Community Ed Sectors
    - Curriculum
    - Formal Sector
      - Schools
      - Teacher Ed and Training
      - Management
      - Teachers
      - Higher Ed
      - Post Primary
      - Primary
  - Contradictions involved
- Discourses of Development etc Drawn Upon
  - Understandings of dev
  - Global Dev Challenges
  - Dev ed and development cooperation
  - Influencers, Theorists, Ideas Ed
  - Self and Other
  - Local global relations
  - Dev - who's involved? Agency etc

- Causes of poverty, injustice etc
- Humanity
- Knowledge and certainty
- Role of education in general
- Understanding of global realities
- Analysis of Dev Ed Generally
  - Mainstream Technical Instrumentalist
  - Mainstream Liberal Humanist
  - Critical and Post-Critical
  - Alternative
  - Dev ed as, for, about dev
- Understanding the Dev Ed Sector
  - Dev Ed and Legitimacy
    - Politics of Legitimacy in Dev Ed Sector
    - Being active and accountable
    - Dev ed viewed by Irish Aid
      - Not rocking the boat
    - Background experience relevance
    - Professionalism in sector
    - Qualifications
    - Measurement, evidence etc
  - Policy Processes
    - GENE Review
    - Strategic Plan
  - Factors Shaping Policy and practice
    - Drivers of policy opportunities etc
    - ESD and other policy frameworks
    - Neoliberalism and managerialism
    - Position of dev ed in DFA
    - Financial crisis 2008
    - History of dev in Ireland
    - SDGs and international commitments
  - Policy Priorities and Landscape
    - Understanding of them
    - Public engagement and dev ed
    - Strategic partners youth and adult
    - Research
    - Mainstreaming formal education
  - Actors and Relations
    - Actors
      - Different Dev Ed Sectors
      - State Civil Society Relations
      - Dóchas
      - IDEA
      - Dev ed orgs
      - MAPS (partner) NGOs
      - Comhlamh
      - Strategic partners
    - DFA and Irish Aid
      - Staff in DEU
      - DEU in DFA
    - Other state actors DES and relations
  - Funding Tensions and Positions
    - Funding
      - IA and funding arrangements
      - Specific arrangements eg MA funding and A funding
      - Who controls
      - Effect on practice
      - How organised
    - Staffing Issues
    - Consortia and strategic partnerships
    - Membership of boards
- Future of Dev Ed in Ireland



## Terminology

- Trends
- Alterantive terms
- Losing Meaning
- New Framing

## Challenges

- Sustainability
- Context wider gov policy
- Professionalisation
- Mainstreaming related
- Policy and its position in DFA
- Institutional issues funding ownership etc
- How it's framed radical or not etc

## Actors and Relations

- Strategic Partners Consortia and Small organisations
- Dev Ed Movement in Ireland and Europe
- NGOs and IDEA etc
- Irish Aid, DFA and DES etc

## Strategic Opportunities

- Social movement engagement
- Alternative dev ed
- More dev ed
- Positive about the future
- Research
- EU linkages
- Formal sector Pols and Soc etc

**Appendix Eight: Initial Framework Developed from Coding of Individual Transcripts – September, 2016**

(Developed for Workshops – see Appendix Five, February 2017 and Final Framework Developed, September 2017 – See Table 8.1).

<b>Coding</b>	<b>Technical</b>	<b>Liberal</b>	<b>North-South</b>	<b>Critical</b>	<b>Post-Critical Alternatives</b>	<b>Total</b>
Knowledge and Understanding	Knowledge acquisition; content; issues	Knowledge for individual	North-South issues	Structural causes of global development issues	Deconstruction of narratives, stereotypes	
Skills	Technical [– not evident]	Individual engagement	North-South critical engagement	L-G connections	Critical thinking; Creative processes; Shifts in relations N-S	
Action	Action component superficial [– not evident; critique of this]	Individual action; consumer lifestyle change	Mobilisation in Ireland for justice in the South	Praxis cycle – understanding and reflection towards action	DE = activism	
Education Processes	Didactic processes for 'better' education	Reflection on learner experience to inspire individual or for learner needs	Participatory learning to develop active engagement with Southern issues in Ireland	Critical dialogue; safe spaces for critical analysis	'Free range' spaces; critical reflection on own experiences and assumptions; creative possibilities and alternatives	
Aims	Technical, mainstream – DE as PR or public engagement	For individual; not critical of development; about mindset change	About North-South aid or addressing 'root causes' of poverty in South	Action for global justice; challenge traditional education and dev; move from charity to solidarity	Challenge assumptions; create alternatives; 'being not doing'	
Values	Efficiency, results [– not evident]	Individual freedoms, rights and responsibilities	Values – justice, equality etc Nth-South	Justice, Equality, Solidarity – global and values not prescribed	Good relations; multiplicities and diversity of values; questioning values	
Politics	About 'big P' politics – formal politics	Individual to realise change through decision makers; not necessarily challenge Status Quo	Politics as a tool for change in the North of inequalities in the South	Power and politics central to all global development relationships	Politics to challenge own power; acknowledgement of different powers; reflection on social movements and other horizontal political processes	

**Appendix Nine: Photographs of Other Representations of the Discourses of DE in Table 8.1. Suggested in Workshops**

**1. Rainbow Representation showing more fluidity than Table 8.1.**

DISCOURSES DIMENSIONS	TECHNICAL DE DISCOURSE	LIBERAL DE DISCOURSE	NORTH-SOUTH DE DISCOURSE	CRITICAL DE DISCOURSE	POST-CRITICAL DE DISCOURSE
<b>KNOWLEDGE + UNDERSTANDING</b>	Acquiring knowledge Public engagement	Awareness Raising	AWARENESS + UNDERSTANDING OF DEVT. NORTH-SOUTH 'root causes'	understanding structures, causes Knowledge + understanding as process	Critical deconstruction Multiple knowledges + complexity valued
<b>SKILLS - CRITICAL THINKING + ANALYSIS; MAKING L-G CONNECTIONS; + COLLABORATION</b>	Technical know-how Analysis	Reflection local-global as entry point for understanding	CRITICAL Reflection on n-s DEVT. issues. Effects of north on south	Critical reflection → action = Praxis Making connections Issues = local-global	Critical reflexivity Praxis Local-global to shift conceptions of 'the other'
<b>ACTION + ACTIVISM - INDIVIDUAL, COLLECTIVE + POLITICAL</b>	Action likely to be surface level or technical	An 'action component' Individual action	Mobilise in the for justice in the 'Global South'	Action = part of praxis cycle Collective + political action/activism Non-prescriptive	Living not lifestyle Questioning 'action' component
<b>LEARNING PROCESSES - SPACES, PROCESSES, TOOLS</b>	Didactic Predictive + technical	Learner-centered Experience for individual for needs + to enhance indiv. learning experience	Participate + learner centred = harness experience for active engagement or mobilisation	Safe spaces for critical reflection + dialogue learning experiences forgotten to participants	Free range spaces, diversity Questioning own experiences + DE
<b>AIMS of DE - VISION FOR WORLD; FOR EDUCATION; FOR DEVELOPMENT; FOR LEARNER</b>	Mainstreaming into formal ed for relevance 'filling a gap'	To improve education experience for indiv. Learning + lifestyle, mindset + behaviour change	Education for global citizenship + engagement in n-s issues	Challenging 'trad' education + development Practices From 'charity' to 'Solidarity', not aid = global citizenship	Alternative education turning learning upside down
<b>VALUES - EQUALITY + JUSTICE - ECONOMIC GOOD RELATIONS, INCLUSION, SHARE, HUMANITY + SOLIDARITY</b>	Efficiency, results, mutual benefit 'Right' values + attitudes	Indiv: Rights - freedom, justice, respect, equality of opportunity charity perspective	care, compassion focused on 'global south' justice + equality in n-s relations	Values based on good global relations congruence - values + actions	valuing inclusion + diversity Challenging universalism + certainty
<b>POWER, + POLITICS - DE = POWER TO EFFECT CHANGE; GIVE VOICE; UNDERSTANDING POWER RELATIONS</b>	Formal power of decision-makers Formal politics - Big 'P' politics	Power of indiv. for change at personal level Power to give voice to indiv.	Politics as a tool for change in n-s relations Understanding power structures n-s	Understanding + challenging unequal power structures + relations DE = voice for change	Need to interrogate own power + explore alternatives

## 2. Wheel Representation

