Discourses

of

International Development

in Applicants' Personal Statements

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The representation and production of difference occurs in any number of everyday, banal enactments of otherness as a subjectively and socially constituted phenomenon. . .It is in this way, that interculturality comes to be more about material inequalities, power relations and ideologies of difference, rather than simply skin color, geographical location, passport, clothing, food, nonverbal behavior, or, of course, languages. – (Crispin Thurlow 2009)

Introduction

In his essay "The Spectacle of the Other," Stuart Hall asks: "Why is difference so compelling a theme, so contested an area of representation?" (1997: 324). A beautifully articulated response to this question can be found in the quote from Thurlow above. He points to what is often overlooked as simple acts of communication and identity-- and the implications of

how difference matters. Thurlow's description aptly expresses the complex nuances played out in representing the notions of culture and identity through language. Equally important is the significant value of examining these variables within the field of Intercultural Communication. Indeed, its unique lens serves to deconstruct and inform perceptions of reality that have rippling effects in the increasingly globalized world.

Along these lines Fairclough proposes that "[s]ince people need to work together across difference, differences have to be negotiated" (1999:76). Turning this discussion towards the field of international development, it is interesting to then consider the way in which development specialists negotiate this process. Furthermore, how do professionals within the international development field construct, imagine, and position the "Other" - the people and places they seek to impact through their work? By analyzing the personal statements of admitted applicants chosen to participate in one particular international development initiative, the Emerging Markets Development Advisers Program (EMDAP), in this paper I examine and reflect upon the ways by which applicants position themselves in relation to those on the receiving end of development efforts. Specifically, I focus on the marking and representation of difference, as well as how the applicants depict themselves in relation to the Other. Taking a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach, I review the discourses invoked by people working in the field of international development and how they frame the world through their language in distinctive ways.

I begin this paper by describing my internship and its relevance to the field of Intercultural Communication. Following this is a discussion of Hall's Critical Social Theory and his perspective of representations of difference. Next, I go on to review Said's notion of *Orientalism* (1978), as it is considered a seminal work for examining how the West positions itself to the rest of the world. Later I explain CDA as an analytical framework, and its usefulness in looking at discourses within the essays of the people that applied to be Emerging Market

Development Advisers. I then turn to dissect two archetypal essays of selected Advisers. Here, I offer examples from these essays of the ways language is more or less explicitly deployed as a means for *producing* cultural differences. After, I clarify the conventional features that compose the genre of the personal statement in an admissions process, taking into account the often overlooked discursive constraints placed upon the authors. I conclude with a discussion of the ways in which intercultural communication conceptualizations of culture -- as resource and as hybridity – can contribute to international development practice and studies.

Internship Background Information

During the summer of 2009, I completed an internship at the Institute of International Education (IIE) in Washington, D.C. IIE prides itself in being one of the most experienced global higher education and professional exchange agency in the world, providing training and leadership development programs for international public and private sector institutions. Overseas, the IIE organizes democracy-building, civil society, and human rights training initiatives that promote development in transitional societies; in the U.S., IIE provides international affairs programs and visitor exchange services. While working at the organization, the majority of my time was devoted to assisting the Program Manager in administering the Emerging Markets Development Advisers Program (EMDAP).

Under a cooperative effort among the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), IIE, and Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA), the Emerging Market Development Advisers Program is supported by USAID missions overseas, USAID's implementing partners and USAID in Washington, D.C. The pilot began in 1992, and since then EMDAP has fielded approximately 220 Advisers from 84 US universities to provide assistance to over 140 businesses and organizations in 46 USAID-assisted countries.

EMDAP places recent graduates of MBA, MA, MPP, JD, and other related programs as technical Advisers for ten to twelve months in support of USAID projects and partners. Upon being chosen as an Adviser after a highly competitive selection process, an Adviser is then matched with an organization upon their acceptance of the assignment.

EMDAP is designed to provide technical support in business management practices to local businesses and business-serving organizations in developing countries. By targeting assistance to the requirements of small to medium sized businesses and organizations that serve them, EMDAP supports the USAID strategy of "human resource capacity building as an essential element for broad based, sustainable economic growth" (EMDAP website).

EMDAP staff in Washington work closely with USAID missions and host organizations to review candidate qualifications and match them with appropriate work assignments. Each Adviser serves between 10 - 12 months, sometimes longer, providing professional assistance to middle and upper management. They are chosen based on their potential to help build capacity and create mechanisms to sustain their effort after the end of their assignment, as well. As a first step in the Adviser selection process, applicants must submit essays on why they would like to be chosen for the program. Almost 50% of my time at my internship was spent working on the Admission and Selection process for the next batch of Advisers. This involved carefully going through each applicant's application, getting to know their backgrounds through phone interviews and email correspondence, as well as participating in several evaluations of the candidates. It is here that I focus the rest of my analysis, as I believe these personal statements are representative of their conceptualization of their social identity as activists in furthering the 'altruistic West's' agenda. Moreover, a Critical Discourse Analysis approach to understanding these essays illuminates the discourses that development workers employ in their construction of social values, beliefs, and intentions. As discourse is seen as central to the construction of identities, the field of Intercultural Communication is helpful in revealing the operational

discourses underlying the Adviser's essays. More specifically, ICC proposes that social positions and experiences can be thought of not as static entities, but rather constantly negotiated through social interactions and institutions; it is a dynamic process, which CDA allows us to distinctly see as it happens in how the authors reflexively position themselves and thus their identities. By discourse, I use Burr's definition in which it is thought of as a "set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on that in some way together produce a particular version of events" (1995: 48). From the discourse analytic perspective presented here, we can perhaps begin to see how international development workers and even international development agencies use language to draw upon certain discourses to construct and reconstruct the populations they encounter through looking at how they differentiate themselves from the Other.

International Development Agencies and the EMDAP Initiative

EMDAP is an international development program. Arguably, it can be seen as being affiliated with a United States public diplomacy initiative that is imported to developing countries—since the program is funded by a United States government organization. On one hand, it may be perceived as spreading the United States' good will through sharing its human capital, while at the same time perhaps learning about the logistics of developing markets in hopes to tap into these potential sources of revenue for hopes of future economic and political gain.

The program, like many within development agencies, is framed as a mechanism for empowering local businesses in third world countries and as a way for young professionals to get the much sought after international field experience most novice practitioners lack.   Thusly, EMDAP is constructed as being an effective tool for sustainable development, and one that has lasting positive effects since Advisers are charged with helping to build the capacity and

infrastructure of local businesses and communities (referred to mostly as emerging market economies). But what in particular drives these young professionals to want to do this work? What compels them, and what value do they see in going in to a country to consult small and medium business enterprises? Some might even begin to question why these particular Westerners feel obliged, entitled, and invited to assist these countries. A closer look reveals an almost 'damsel in distress' discourse, where Western international development agencies as well as Western theories and mechanisms for economic growth are depicted as the 'knights in shining armor' -- the only ones capable of combating 'underdevelopment' while 'developing untapped markets and opportunities' as stated in one Advisers essay. In the next section, I lay out some ideas pertinent to development discourse, first discussing the idea of 'the West' and 'the Rest,' and then later turn to *Orientalist* (1978) representation practices. Henceforth, these ideas serve as the basis for framing the subsequent CDA of essays.

Cultural Theory in Intercultural Communication: West v. Rest

For the purpose of this paper, the works I draw from take a Critical Social Theory (CST) view. The CST perspective places an emphasis on ideology, inequality and power, as well as the interplay between micro-level textual and macro-level economic/political processes. This is the general framework within which I situate my essay, bringing Intercultural Communication 'into dialogue' with language.

Stuart Hall stresses the importance of perceived difference, and proposes that it needs to be understood. He reviews how meaning always depends on the relations that exist between the different terms in a meaning system, which make them relevant for how people construct relations between themselves and others, and this can then be tied to social order. As Rampton (2006) points out in his discussion of "Orientations to Diversity" that sometimes just stating that there is a difference inherently implies inferiority So in effect, drawing distinctions between the

writer's persona and the communities they seek to impact creates 'othering' and thus a hierarchy whereby the writer of the personal statement is always superior. Be that as it may, the personal statements also exemplify how meaning-making depends not only on marking difference as explicit, but then again, what is implicit-- what is not said. What is 'said' in a text always has a counterpart of what is 'unsaid' – part of this analysis incorporates identifying what has been left out but informs an understanding of the texts (Fairclough 2003; Hall 1997).

Hall's chapter in this textbook is about the role 'the Rest' played in the formation of the idea of 'the West.' Separate and distinct worlds became related elements in the same discourse, or ways of speaking that "frame certain problems; that is to say, they distinguish some aspects of a situation rather than others" (Hajer 1993: 45 quoted in Apthorpe 1996:2). Hall then depicts how " '[t]he West' is as much an idea as a fact of geography. . .[and that i]t is a *historical*, not a geographical, construct" (1992: 276- 277; author's emphasis). In other words, 'the West' is simply idea, an imagined boundary. The author describes how the idea of 'the West' functions, and highlights the ways by which it creates an unequal relationship between itself and 'the Rest' – the Others. Here, Hall shows how this dichotomy and its effects "enable people to know or to speak of certain things in certain ways and produce knowledge" (Hall 1992: 278). He goes on to make the point that this distinct kind of knowledge then becomes a working ideology,

Hall identifies two key features of the discourse of the Other. First, how "several characteristics are collapsed into one simplified figure which stands for or represents the essence of the people" (this is stereotyping) (1992: 308). Through "this strategy the Rest becomes defined as everything the West is not" (1992: 308). Before going on to analyze the texts, I will outline a few key concepts from Said's notion of *Orientalism* (1978).

Said and *Orientalism*

Although controversial, many see Said's *Orientalism* (1978) as the launching off point for postcolonial theory, or the study of cultures affected by imperialism that "addresses decentered multiplicities of power relations" and "draws attention to the multiple imbrications of 'central' and 'peripheral cultures' "(Shohat 1992:106-108). The *Orientalist* scope provides a device with which we can critically examine discourses circulating in the field of international development work. It too flushes out how Westerners effectively create a dichotomy between themselves and 'the Other', and subsequently how this separation between 'us' and 'them' serves as the basis for cultural supremacy and hegemony.

Secondly, *Orientalism* is also "a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and.   . .'the Occident'" which in turn becomes hegemonic, as this difference is seen as being a trait of inferiority (Said 1978: 2). With regards to this, Said argues that over time, certain sets of observations about the Orient became natural and or taken for granted as truth (usually depicting the Orient as backward or deficient and Western society as dominant and superior). The significance of Said's *Orientalism* is that the theory highlights how all interlocutors relied in one way or another on a construction of the Orient as fundamentally different from – and inferior to – 'the West' – a feature which we will come across when analyzing the texts within the essays.

Analytical framework through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Critical linguists like Norman Fairclough have become increasingly concerned with the role of language in representing, promoting, organizing and reproducing the global discourses. Fairclough defines the aim of CDA as a way to "to provide a framework for systematically linking properties of discoursal interactions and texts with features of their social and cultural circumstances" (Fairclough 2000: 179). We do this through analyzing the text. A good working definition of analysis is presented by Luke:

> The principal unit of analysis for critical discourse analysis is the text. Texts are taken to be social actions, meaningful and coherent instances of spoken and written language use. Yet their shape and form is not random or arbitrary. Specific text types or "genres" serve conventional social uses and functions. That is, particular kinds of texts attempt to `do things' in social institutions with predictable ideational and material effects (Luke 1997: http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/ed270/Luke/SAHA6.html)

CDA is useful because it allows us to look at the ways by which Advisers position themselves to the Other within discourses in 'international development' within their particular texts. We are able to see where and how within the texts the authors describe and tell about their primary experiences which validate their commitment and qualification to work in the international development field. What's more, it gives us a chance to account for the different techniques that create power stratifications within the text, by which the authors are strategically positioning themselves in relation to the other. Finally, CDA provides a toolkit for us to see the specific ways the author's social position influences their interpretations of situations and people, and also their ways of communicating this. Van Dijk (1993) poignantly states the importance of using CDA to deconstruct power relations within discourse. He argues that

> [i]f powerful speakers or groups enact or otherwise exhibit their power in discourse, we need to know exactly how this is done. And if they thus are able to persuade or otherwise influence their audiences, we also want to know which discursive structures and strategies are involved in that process (Van Dijk 1993:259).

Similarly, Tomi (2001) makes a claim about the significance of looking at how the Other is represented through CDA. She states

> [w]hat is said or written about the Other can do real ideological work in establishing, maintaining, and justifying particular relations of power between classes, cultures, political systems. . . It is further assumed that ideological frameworks can be revealed through critical language analysis (Tomi 2001:264).

In essence, Tomi puts forth that the intention of looking at 'what is said or written about the Other' allows us to create awareness about the ordinary and seemingly undetected processes

people use to sustain and maintain status while justifying practices and processes that underlie the institutionalization of negative and inferior status to those outside interlocutor's own community.

Essay Analysis

In this analysis, I selected two representative essays from among the twelve Advisers selected out of the 150 applicants that applied for the position.   I first describe some themes from within these essays that emphasize cultural productions of separateness. The features of the text I look for are influenced by the literature's suggestion for points of analysis. In Tomi's "Critical Analysis of American Representations of Russians" (2001) the author uses Critical Language Analysis (also known as CDA) to uncover ideological frameworks behind American cultural descriptions of Russians during the Cold War. The author goes on to demonstrate how these descriptions became truths, and are still reified today despite the Cold War's end more than a decade before (the piece was published in 2001). For example, Tomi points out how Russians are described as being profligate, 'impulsive', and 'emotional' caused by their simpleton background of being peasants, historically (2001: 268). The advertising of being Russians being this way functioned to establish them as less civilized than Americans. The "present[ed] a connection between Russian character and their peasant past" instilled the notion of the West (i.e. America) as modern filled with civilized, rational, and moral people, while Russia was, in contrast, full of Neanderthals and in desperate need of guidance or an adult role model (2001: 269). In following this methodology, I bring into play Fairclough's assumption that ideological frameworks can be revealed through critical language analysis (Fairclough 1995). Within these personal statements then, the intention of interlocutors is inferred through their written texts. Arguably, these texts and the discourses imbedded within them are rooted in specific cultural awareness factors. Certainly, when navigating across differences, interlocutors (in this case, the

Advisers) are influenced by their cultural background of being from 'the West.'[i] Within these essays, cultural epistemologies and ways of knowing the world, themselves, and others are (unintentionally or not) packaged into these essays.

Thurlow articulates how "privileged speakers (and writers) are able to shore up their own capitals – symbolic, cultural, social and economic – at the expense of others" (2009:15-16) It is within this framework that I turn to look at the features within the text.

Tomi points out that "certain linguistic strategies have been shown to organize representations of the Other, whom the describer wants to gain control" (Tomi 2001: 264). Within the personal statements, I will be looking for:

- **How the Other is portrayed as different and separate**
- **How characteristics of the Other are presented as stagnant and unchanging, and if change can occur, it is because of the author and the West's agency, rather than the Other's (Tomi 2001: 269 - 272)**
- **How the Other is universalized**

I offer examples from these essays of the ways language is deployed as a resource for *producing* cultural differences. The 'hidden agenda' of these representations of language/s is to stylize a marked Other and, thus, an unmarked Self. Cultural difference is "thereby exaggerated for strategic gain, even if, on the surface, speakers/writers appear to be celebrating 'diversity' " (Jordan & Weedon 1995). Ultimately, the effect is to imbibe a disproportionate amount of power between the author and the Other and to galvanize the privilege or dominance of the writer's position.

Themes from Essays

The essays selected for analysis (see Appendix) are drawn from among two of the twelve selected people chosen to be an EMDAP Adviser. These particular essays were chosen to be

analyzed by me because they are representative of their treatment of the theme of the Other. Notably, both structure their writing in a particular way. The essays were written in response to the prompt: 'Why would you like to participate in the EMDAP?'

Against the background of the theoretical framework described in the preceding sections, the next few sections will give s a brief characterization of the representation of the Other, within the two essays, before turning to a more detailed CDA of parts from each essay. I will be paying attention to the thematic structures in the personal statements first.

These texts offer a number of themes relating to the Other. In the data from the essays, we find topics such as: Emerging market countries need help; emerging market countries are poor; emerging market countries are corrupt; and largely, emerging market countries have problems that they are incapable of fixing themselves. Now, we turn to look at these themes in more detail, beginning with excerpts from Essay 1.

ESSAY 1 - Excerpt 1

```
1    I am excited to work in an emerging market country
2    because emerging market countries are the countries
3    with the most potential for success. I think of
4    emerging market countries as children who show
5    promise, who have the skill sets necessary to be
6    successful, but who just need assistance and the
7    direction so that they can flourish. It is up to us,
8    students of the developed world to give the guidance
9    and direction necessary to help these emerging
10   markets thrive.
```

Excerpt 1 is taken from the first paragraph of Essay 1. First, let's turn to look at how the author treats the Other emerging market countries. The author refers to the Other three times, but what is interesting to note is how the author universalizes the Other. In other words, despite the vast variety in origins, time, place, and local contexts, the author treats the developing world, or emerging market countries as one undifferentiated group (Van Dijk 1987 in Wodak 1989). Also worthy of attention in this paragraph is the way in which a very controversial measure is

insinuated as part of the list of measures: The analysis demonstrates how the Other is discursively constructed as immutable and that it is the role of the Adviser to manage the changes that are made necessary by the new global market. The author does this through employing the literary device of a simile (*I think of/ emerging market countries as children who show/ promise, who have the skill sets necessary to be/ successful, but who just need assistance and the direction so that they can flourish),* through which she invokes a paternalistic stance in referring to emerging markets as children. The term children has many connotations – it employs naiveté, room for growth, needing guidance, and thus taking away agency from the Other. The term children also provides a space for the author to insert herself as a needed entity – as that of a parent or authority figure who knows what's best so that 'they' (the emerging markets and the people within them) can 'flourish.'

In this text, let us look how the author positions herself to the reader, as well. The reader is the person that will be selecting who will be chosen as an EMDAP adviser. I would like to point out how the author chooses to represent herself through a paternalistic stance. Secondly, she groups the reader and herself as 'us' (the in-group) and emerging markets as a separate Other, as 'they' (the out-group). The author describes 'us' as separate through denoting place and also the type of knowledge and roles both the writer and the reader are presumed to have - us. The writer also says that the in-group is from even a separate *world-* this lexical item insinuates a huge divide. When someone says one is from a different world it implies that someone has very little in common, if anything, with a person that does not belong to their world.

Essay 1 - Excerpt 2

```
15    As a graduate student from a developed nation I am a
16    walking, talking sentiment of what hard work and
17    vision can accomplish. I have been blessed with the
18    lot in life that allowed me access to wonderful
19    experiences and a great education. I have the academic
20    tools and know-how to be of immense assistance to an
21    emerging market.  .   .By improving the economy
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22    through job creation the opportunity to augment
23    the social woes of emerging markets, arises. With a
24    strong economy, a country can make strides and fight
25    the endemic travesties that currently plague
26    education, finance, health, environmental degradation,
27    and problems surrounding overpopulation.  .  .I
28    believe it is the duty of students of the goal world
29    to assist these nations in their development so that
30    emerging markets can detoxify their societies and grow
31    in a direction that will lead to positive outcomes for
32    themselves, us, and the world.
```

I chose to examine this particular excerpt because of the way the writer portrays herself as

having agency and other inherent characteristics that qualify her to help emerging countries.

Also, it is interesting to note how the author depicts the qualities of emerging markets as

something inherent, authentic, and unchanging. The way she frames this paragraph makes it

seem like only she, by way of her 'lot in life' has the knowledge, wisdom, and experience to

combat the 'endemic travesties' of emerging markets – positioning herself as a savior. Notice

how she draws upon her place (the developed world), her status (as a graduate student), and

certain Western discourses of progress through distinct neoliberal economic theory (Lines 21-

22). Also, I would like to highlight the author's use of listing the 'travesties that plague' almost

all sectors of emerging market societies. What is noteworthy is that she casts emerging market

problems as being 'endemic' – inherent – as a symptom of a 'toxic' (she uses the verb detoxify)

disease which can only be cured through economic development, with students of the global

world serving as the catalysts for 'positive outcomes.'

Essay 2 – Excerpt 1

```
1    My earliest exposure to the challenges facing
2    developing  countries was in Brazil where I worked with
3    the city planning Agency of Curitaba to interview
4    Locals, analyze the effects of public policy, and
5    develop plans for urbanizing illegal slums.  I developed
6    this project because Curitaba was one of the few success
7    stories in sustainable development at that time.  The
8    city was able to implement strict environmental and
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 9   labor laws while continuing to attract businesses,
10   clean up slums and conduct social programs that created
11   a skilled cheap labor force. I was fascinated by
12   Curitaba's ability to rise above the surrounding poverty
13   and corruption to become a thriving metropolis. Most
14   importantly, I wanted to see how we could replicate this
15   Brazilian experiment in other parts of the world, which
16   eventually led me to join the Peace Corps and return to
17   school to focus on development economics.
```

Excerpt 1 is taken from the first paragraph of Essay 2. The most apparent feature when first reading through the text is how the author invokes concepts of medicalization of the Other. In Line 1, the author begins by writing "My earliest exposure" – the term exposure invokes a diseased image, as does the word "experiment" in Line 15.

Next, it is useful to look at how they author creates herself as an agent of chance while contrastingly painting all developing countries as static entities that aren't fully committed to 'developing.' The key phrases denoting this in paragraph 1 are "few success stories" and the "surrounding poverty and corruption." These terms also function to create separateness, in that "challenges" are inherent within all developing countries, but not in developed countries.

In this text, let us turn to look at how the author positions herself to the reader, as we did in Essay 1. Instead of taking a paternalistic stance like we saw in Essay 1, this author positions herself as a committed agent of change that overcomes developing countries inherent lack of commitment to 'change' and 'development.' I think it is useful to look at some of the pronouns and verbs the author utilizes within another excerpt of Essay 2.

Essay 2 - Excerpt 2

```
18   In the Philippines I was fortunate to work with a group
19   of committed individuals that sought a comprehensive
20   approach to development. We developed cooperatives,
21   trained members in accounting and bookkeeping, then
22   worked with them to provide micro-credit to local
23   entrepreneurs. . .we implemented alternative livelihood
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24  activities that relieved pressure.  .  .and provided
25  higher value goods. Recognizing a need for conservation
26  in one of the world's most important biodiversity hot
27  spots, we conducted education campaigns and developed
28  an eco-tourism industry. As locals initiated small
29  enterprises to accommodate tourists with our help, the
30  incentives to protecting the surrounding forest became
31  clear. It.  .  .allowed me to look for creative and
32  pragmatic solutions to poverty. I managed my projects
33  from initiation to close-out, monitoring and evaluating
34  activities as the project progressed. As a result of
35  good management and reaching out to developing
36  partners, we were able to more than triple our expected
37  outcome and leave behind a group of established
38  entrepreneurs that would slowly improve the local
39  economy. It was proof that sustainable development
40  through small businesses was possible.
```

Similar to the first personal statement, the author of Essay 2 describes a separate 'us' by using the pronoun "I" or "We". When using the term 'we' she refers to 'a group of committed individuals that sought a comprehensive approach to development" (Line 18-20). It is not coincidental that the reader is included in 'we' – as if the author assumes that the selection panel, or audience, would readily agree and support the writer's approach to dealing with "surrounding poverty and corruption" within developing countries (Excerpt 1 – Essay 2). Also, note how as in Essay 1, all developing countries and their challenges are grouped together as a homogenous entity – despite the author of Essay 2 describing her experiences in starkly different places – the Philippines and Brazil.

In bold, I noted pronouns and verbs in excerpt 2 that portray the writer as someone capable, efficient, methodical, scientific, and thorough. Comparatively, locals within developing countries within Essay 2 are seen as the beneficiaries of both services, and also morals. For example, in lines 28-30, the author writes as if 'the locals' only realized "the incentives to protecting the surrounding forest" after the author and the outside developmental specialists of 'committed individuals' inculcated the Other's belief system to make them see the light of

preserving natural resources. Was this really so? Furthermore, this depiction paints 'the locals' or 'natives' with a lack of appreciation for their own community and environment, and what the author sees as opportunities to implement her "good management and reaching out to developing partners" to establish entrepreneurship and sustainable development (Lines 34 -36). To conclude, I would like to highlight how the author suddenly contrasts the development of the Philippine community as "slowly improve[ing]" after she leaves. Conversely, before the author leaves the community, the development process is described as an momentous force where the writer is represented as a catalyzing agent of what seemed to be inevitable, describing an effortless result of " more than tripl[ing] our expected outcome" (Line 36-37).

Conclusion of Analysis

I now go on to summarize what, for me, are the most salient discursive features of the speech. Features I have noted are the use of lists, both at the level of the noun phrase and the clause; the omission of agency (by the use of nominalization), on the one hand, and the assertion of Western agency (through the use of 'we' and 'us'), on the other hand; the use of metaphor; the use of statistics; and the modality of certitude; in addition a one-sided picture of development is presented, with negative effects omitted or downplayed.

The combined effect of the use of lists, assertive agency of the author, the modality of paternalistic certitude that the author knows best, and similes, is to present an image of a highly confident and prepared Development specialists, capable of capitalizing the 'potential of emerging markets' for the emerging markets' own good, and also, as Essay 1 denotes (Line 32), '*us.*'

The Personal Statement as Genre

Before going any further, I believe a discussion about the discourse constraints of the genre of the personal statement is in order. Specifically, how the particular genre in and of itself may have impacted and even constrained the choices of discourses and the themes applicants

wrote about within their essays or felt they had access to draw upon within the personal statements. For instance, did the author have alternatives available to them in the positioning of themselves as anything but active, and capable? Could they have positioned the Other as the subject rather than the object of the essay, or vice versa?

Swales and Feak (1994 in Ding 2007) considered genre to be determined by the intended audience, purpose, organization, and presentation, with audience as the most important factor in their list. Undoubtedly EMDAP applicants are writing for a specific audience: the selection panel and their potential employers at their placement abroad. Members of the selection panel can be seen as the main audience though since they determine how far, and also, whether or not an individual will be selected for the next few rounds.

The panel ranks candidates based on a numeric score (the higher the number, the better the ranking). The score is comprised of their personal statement, letters of recommendation, transcripts, and resumes with each item given an equal weighting. Along these lines, it is helpful to examine the discourse constraints that this audience places on the candidates in order to give a more accurate and thorough picture of the discourses circulating within the selected corpora. First there is an issue of length –the prompt requests that the personal statement be "no more than **one** typed page on 8 1/2 x 11 inch bond paper (space and a half, with 'Times New Roman' Font at 11 point type), with your name and program name at the top the page" (EMDAP Application 2009-2010). This limits one to a little less than 500 words – not a lot when considering the high stakes of the genre within the application process. Corresponding to this matter is the issue of power in the relationship between the writer and their audience. Ding writes that in personal statements, the writers are distinct and even inferior to their audience. As a matter of fact, he raises the issue of the imbalance of power between applicants and their evaluators, or the audience, commenting that "writers [may feel that they] have to write to conform to the conventions of the genre and to meet the expectations of their evaluators" (2007:

371). It is possible then that the reasons certain features of the texts and themes were found within the personal statements simply reflect the efforts of applicants purposefully drawing from institutionalized discourses within the field of international development (noted previously). But despite this, I believe the subtle ways by which applicants utilize language to symbolically index their agency and separate themselves from the Other can be better seen as a social phenomena of constructing international development practitioner's perspective of reality – and difference.

Ding expands on why and how the genre of personal statement is separate from others. He notes that the personal statement genre differs in its "lack of prescriptive guidelines, its allowance for creativity and individuality, its space for narratives and stories, and its goal both to inform and to persuade" (Ding 2007: 370). Subsequently, the *successful* personal statement for the EMDAP application must stress relevant professional and practical experiences.

Within these essays, EMDAP applicants are required to both justify their motivation to work in an emerging market and the field of international development. In addition they must prove their preparedness to work in an emerging market country and describe the ways by which they "would contribute to [the country's] development" (EMDAP Application 2009-2010). As mentioned before, given the limited rhetorical space of one page, essayists must "encapsulate the entire [relevant] experience [to] present [one's] goals, motivations, sincerity, experience, and background [all while] expressing [one's] unique and likable personality'' (Kaufman, Burnham, & Dowhan, 2003 in Ding 2007).

Significance for ICC

The concept of intercultural communication can be used to gloss over the increasingly deep divide between the have and the have nots, between those who have access to Western discourse and power and those who don't, and the 'discourses of colonialism' vehiculated by English as a global language. (Kramsch 2002: 282)

This excerpt really epitomizes the importance and need for critical Intercultural Communication studies. Difference is, of course, a principle focus of intercultural

communication – as both an academic field and a human experience. Moreover, the way in which scholars of Intercultural Communication engage with difference varies along much the same lines. As discourse is seen as central to the construction of identities, ICC coursework gave me the tools to deconstruct operational discourses underlying the Adviser's essays. Finally, examining knowledge and social action through language from the tradition of Critical Discourse Analysis is increasingly useful; what becomes apparent is that social-constructions of identity have very real consequences. Within the field of Intercultural Communication, Critical Discourse Analysis allows us to deconstruct the potential ways of knowing different social actors often take for granted as the norm. This approach is significant in that it provides the space to examine disparate ideologies existing in synchrony, and how they can be communicated, interpreted, and enacted in a meaningful way to enable people to critically reflect on their stances and how they therefore contribute to the production of separateness within the field of international development. Intercultural Communication provides space to investigate the connection between language and identity – ICC allows us to see how both are interdependent on the expression of approaching difference (Thurlow 2009).

All applicants must be US Citizens to be considered as an EMDAP Adviser

Appendix

Essay 1

I am excited to work in an emerging market country because emerging market countries are the countries with the most potential for success. I think of EMCs as children who show promise who have the skill sets necessary to be successful, but who just need assistance and the direction so that they can flourish. It is up to us, students of the developed world, to give the guidance and direction necessary to help these emerging markets thrive.

I know that EMCs hold the key to the development of the world. In all of the current global crises, the hinge-point is merging market countries. How the world changes in terms of economic reform, poverty, hunger, disease, environmental degradation, overdevelopment and overpopulation depends on the responding in EMCs. I am excited of for the opportunity to work in an EMC because I am thrilled to be able to assist a nation at the forefront of change to make positive decisions to move in a positive direction for its own success and for the betterment of the global environment.

I am very passionate about this issue and am very motivated to work for change. As a graduate student from a developed nation I am a walking, talking sentiment of what hard work and vision can accomplish. I have been blessed with the lot in life that allowed me access to wonderful experiences and a great education. I have the academic tools and how-how to be of immense assistance to an EM. My studies and my experiences have made me more aware of the potential of EMs both economically and socially. By improving the economy through job creation the opportunity to improve the social woes of EMs, arises. With a strong economy, a country can make strides and fight the endemic travesties that currently plague education, finance, health, environmental degradation, and problems surrounding overpopulation.

I believe it is the duty of students of the global world to assist these nations in their development so that emerging markets can detoxify their societies and grow in a direction that will lead to positive outcomes for themselves, us, and the world. I am eager and motivated to work for this change-- I have strong interpersonal skills and am quick to assess social nuances. Through my life experiences and current course-load, I have had training in cross-cultural communication. I am highly sensitive to the needs of others and easily adapt to different personalities and different environments. I am organized and focused, yet I understand that not all nations share the American productivity ideal. As such, I have learned how to gain information and complete tasks in a culturally sensitive manner. I know the value of relationship building and I know that in many societies the work does not start until

you become a trusted member of the society, and as my references and past experience demonstrates, I am indeed a very trustworthy person. I hold true to my word and l always follow through with my responsibilities. However, I am not a rigid person. I am open to new ideas and perspectives and I value the input of all involved. I am eager to work with others, to learn of their ideas and perspectives, and to collaborate for   positive results. I believe that positive change is possible through hard work, dedication, mutual trust and a shared commitment. I am excited for the opportunity to apply my skills and knowledge to work with people of EMCs to assist them in making positive changes for themselves and the world.

Essay 2

My earliest exposure to the challenges facing developing countries was in Brazil where I worked with the city planning Agency of Curitaba to interview locals, analyze the effects of public policy, and develop plans for urbanizing illegal slums. I developed this project because Curitaba was one of the few success stories in sustainable development at that time. The city was able to implement strict environmental and labor laws while continuing to attract businesses, clean up slums and conduct social programs that created a skilled cheap labor force. I was fascinated by Curitaba's ability to rise above the surrounding poverty and corruption to become a thriving metropolis. Most importantly, I wanted to see how we could replicate this Brazilian experiment in other parts of the world, which eventually led me to join the Peace Corps and return to school to focus on development economics.

In the Philippines I was fortunate to work with a group of committed individuals that sought a comprehensive approach to development. We developed cooperatives, trained members in accounting and bookkeeping, then worked with them to provide micro-credit to local entrepreneurs. Using an asset-based approach we implemented alternative livelihood activities that relieved pressure on saturated markets and provided higher value goods. Recognizing a need for conservation in one of the world's most important biodiversity hot spots, we conducted education campaigns and developed an eco-tourism industry. As locals initiated small enterprises to accommodate tourists, the incentives to protecting the surrounding forest became clear. It was an incredible experience that allowed me to look for creative and pragmatic solutions to poverty. As a project manager, I learned to prepare proposals, manage project finances, and coordinate development activities throughout the province. I managed my

projects from initiation to close-out, monitoring and evaluating activities as the project progressed. As a result of good management and reaching out to developing partners, we were able to more than triple our expected outcome and leave behind a group of established entrepreneurs that would slowly improve the local economy. It was proof that sustainable development through small businesses was possible.

What I especially like about EMDAP is the focus on small and medium enterprises (SMES). SMEs and the economic drivers of the local economy, providing crucial employment opportunities and goods and services that meet local needs. It also provides a source of revenue for government programs and is an incentive for government reform. I am also looking forward to the opportunity to publish a case study and network with international development players. Having networked with delegations at high level meetings a the United Nations, I am hoping to integrate my knowledge if international development priorities and methodologies with my experience working in international development abroad and business development in the US private sector to advise entrepreneurs in emerging markets. I am convinced that with guidance, good training and access to credit, inputs and markets, the SMEs working with EMDAP advisers can become the catalysts of development.

Annotated Bibliography

Burr, V. 1995. *An Introduction to Social Constructionism*. London: Routledge. pp. 48
>   I decided to use his definition of discourse when describing what discourse was in the first section of my paper.

Dare, A. M. , 2007-05-23 "Tracing Culture in Discourses of International Development" *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, TBA, San Francisco, CA Online* <PDF>. 2009-05-24 from http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p173259_index.html

>   Dare traces the genealogy of the notion of culture within discourses of international development which is helpful as background reading and to use in my literature review within my paper. Using the lens of Foucault's notion of genealogy, the paper explains the ways in which inter/cultural communication perspectives on culture might be useful to incorporate in development work. Dare looks at development as a discourse, and then examines the implications of working within an intercultural communication framework. Lastly, the text looks at a theory within ICC - culture as resource and culture as hybridity – and suggests that it can contribute to development studies.

Ding, Huiling. (2007). "Genre analysis of personal statements: Analysis of moves in application essays to medical and dental schools" English for Specific Purposes 26 pp. 368–392
>   Ding provided so many useful quotes and looks at the moves successful applicants of dental and medical school applicants make, looking at how much time is spent on what particular moves. He offered a wonderful literature review, and points out how not much work has been done on the genre of *successful* personal statements.

Fairclough, N.(1999). "Global capitalism and critical awareness of language." *Language*

Awareness, 8(2) pp. 71-83.
>   In this paper the author defends using CLA. He argues that over time there has come to be a commoditization of discourse, and also there is a link between discourse and democracy**.** He ties these two issues through CLA, then goes on to talk about the nature of the new global capitalism, and conclude the paper with discussions of how CLA is anchored in 'critical discourse analysis.'

Fairclough, N. (2002). "Language in new capitalism", *Discourse & Society*, 3(2), pp. 163-166.
>   Gives an introduction to CDA and why it is an important – it is the theme of this journal issue. Good overview and case for why CDA is useful and how it can be applied to globalization.

Gasper, D. & Apthorpe, R (eds). (1996). Arguing Development Policy: Frames and Discourses. Frank Cass EADI, London.
>   The text dissects how discourses in international politics frames issues to include some matters while excluding others. This book is important because it has case studies, like one by D. Moore on Washington and democracy in Africa. Perhaps this text can serve as a guide by which I can model my own analysis off of while working with texts.

Grillo, R. D. & Stirrat, R. L. (1997). Discourses of Development: Anthropological Perspectives. Berg, Oxford.
>   The authors examine how certain discourses in development come into play between international actors. They see development as an institutional practice. It's useful because it explores the 'culture of aid.' Perhaps this reading will help me identify characteristics of the culture of aid within the organization I worked, or in applicant essays I look at, depending on which topic I pursue.

Hall, S. (1996). The West and the Rest: Discourse and power. In S. Hall & D. Held & D. Hubert & K. Thompson (Eds.), *Modernity: An introduction to modern societies* (pp. 276-320). Malden, MA: Blackwell
>   Hall's chapter is about the role 'the West' played in the formation of the idea of 'the Rest.' "Terms like 'the West' and 'the Rest' are historical and linguistic constructs whose meanings change over time" (279). The material describes how these separate and distinct worlds became imbedded in our ways of speaking and imagining of the world – and how it became a natural truth. This offers an analysis of distinct terms and discourses of viewing regions of the world, and I think it can help me identify different discourses going on within my reflection paper. – (http://books.google.com/books?id=yitBhzsd9OIC&lpg=PA56&ots=3DcjuF_Uj0&dq=s%20hall%20west%20and%20the%20rest&pg=PA56#v=onepage&q=&f=true) p. 56 in ICC Paper folder. Also p. 23 has outline of it : http://books.google.com/books?id=yitBhzsd9OIC&lpg=PA56&ots=3DcjuF_Uj0&dq=s%20hall%20west%20and%20the%20rest&pg=PA22#v=onepage&q=&f=true

Hall, S. (1997). The spectacle of the 'other'. In S. Hall (ed.) in *Discourse Theory and Practice: A Reader*. pp. 324 - 343.
>   Offers four theories of looking at 'the Other'. On page 338 under the heading "Representation, difference, and power" helps understanding of the idea of power and representation – "how it is used to mark, assign and classify" (338). "Power has to be understood here, not only in terms of economic exploitation and physical coercion, but also in broader cultural or symbolic terms, including the power to represent someone or something in a certain way – within a regime or representation" (338). Discusses Said and Orientalism, too. Very helpful. – http://books.google.com/books?id=yitBhzsd9OIC&lpg=PA56&ots=3DcjuF_Uj0&dq=s%20hall%20west%20and%20the%20rest&pg=PA56#v=onepage&q=&f=true

Hall, S. (1997). "The local and the global: Globalization and ethnicity", Culture, Globalization and the World-System: Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity, ed., A. D. King (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 20-39.
>   Compared this to what Hall said in later work – just food for thought but definitely contributed to the sculpting of how I organized my paper.

Jordan, G., and Weedon, C. (1995). "The celebration of difference and the cultural politics of racism", in *Theorizing Culture: An Interdisciplinary Critique after Postmodernism*, ed., B. Adam and S. Allan. London: UCL Press, pp. 149-164.

Found useful because they discuss hidden agenda of discourse in text, very similar to Van Dijk and used quote from the article.

Kramsch, C.: "In search of the intercultural", *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 6 (2) (2002), 275–285.

I pulled a quote from this piece which I included within my final discussion of the significance of ICC and the topic I chose to write about for my capstone.

Luke, Allan. (1997). "Introduction:Theory and Practice in Critical Discourse Analysis" in Lawrence J. Saha (ed.), <u>International Encyclopedia of the Sociology of Education</u>. Oxford, England: Elsevier Science, Ltd., at http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/ed270/Luke/SAHA6.html.
Good definition of Critical Discourse Analysis – I used this as a reference for terms I didn't understand when first approaching my paper.

Parekh, B. (1997). "The West and its Others", in Pearson, K.A., Parry, B. and Squires, J. (Eds), Cultural Readings of Imperialism: Edward Said and the Gravity of History, Wishart, London, pp. 173-93.
Good overview of Orientalism – easily understood.

Rampton, R. (2006). "Language in Late Modernity." Cambridge, CUP. pp 1-38.
Provides model of Orientations of Diversity, and helps case for how stating difference implies an inferiority in terms of 'othering.'

Salskov-Iversen, D., Hansen, H. and Bislev, S. (2000). 'Governmentality, Globalization and Local Practice: Transformations of a Hegemonic Discourse', *Alternatives* 25: 183 222.

Shohat, E. (1992). 'Notes on the Post-Colonial." *Social Text* 31-32: 99-113.
Provides definition of post-colonial theory. Clearly lays out definitions of hybridity and syncreticism, too.

Thurlow, Crispin. (2009). "Speaking of Difference: Language, Inequality and Interculturality"to appear in Rona Halualani and Tom Nakayma. (eds). (2009). *Handbook of Critical Intercultural Communication.* London: Blackwell. Found online and downloaded PDF:
http://www.faculty.washington.edu/thurlow/.../thurlow(2009)-chapter-critical-ICC.pdf
This was one of the most helpful articles in my paper. He is such a wonderful writer and clearly conveyed complex ideas of why difference is important to study within CDA and the implications for it across cultures and within the field of Intercultural Communication.

Tomi, Leena M. (2001) "Critical Analysis of American Representations of Russians" *Pragmatics*. 11:3. pp. 262-283.
Paper analyzes descriptions of Russians appearing in North American business publications. Helpful because provides theoretical framework from which to approach analyzing texts.

Westwood, Robert. (2006). International business and management studies as an orientalist discourse: A postcolonial critique, in *Critical Perspectives on International Business*. 2 (2), (pp. 91 – 113). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

This paper applies Orientalism to International Business (IBMS) and argues it is a valuable approach when dealing across cultures. Westwood demonstrates how when Orientalism is applied to the discourse of IBMS, we see types of "universalistic, essentialising and exoticising representations to colonial and neo-colonial discourse" (Abstract). Useful because International business can be linked to development, and lays out Said in a clear and useful way when considered in concert with IBMS (and for me, International development).