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ABSTRACT
              The first of three papers from this symposium, "If We Can't
Define HRD in One Country, How Can We Define It in an International Context?"
(Gary N. Mc Lean, Laird D. McLean), questions the possibility of defining
human resource development (HRD) in a worldwide context. Several factors were
found that influence a country's and an individual's definition. The most
common U.S. definitions have influenced definitions around the world, yet
definitions are influenced by the context in which they have emerged. A
definition based on comparison of many definitions is proposed. The second
paper, "A Refusal to Define HRD" (Monica Lee), argues that although it is
necessary at times to define HRD for political reasons, HRD should not be
defined on philosophical, theoretical, professional, and practical grounds
because HRD is a process of becoming, not of being. The final paper, "HRD:
The Power of Definitions" (John Walton), subjects the 1995 position statement
on the emerging concept of HRD produced by the University Forum for HRD to a
critical discourse analysis. It evaluates why the statement was produced in
the first instance and the discursive practice it reflected. The analysis
surfaces issues associated with developing a replacement version today.
(Contains 77 references.) (KC)

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If We Can't Define HRD in One Country, How Can We Define It in an International Context?

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Is it possible to define HRD in a way that is appropriate in a world-wide context? That was the question for this research. Several factors were found that influence a country's and an individual's definition. The most common U.S. definitions have influenced definitions around the world, yet definitions are also influenced by the context in which they have emerged. Definitions from several countries have been compared, and a beginning definition that meets the conditions of many countries is proposed.

Keywords: Definitions, Global, Theory

While there have been many efforts to define Human Resource Development (HRD) (Weinberger, 1998), no consensus has emerged. In fact, there is disagreement among the field's leaders about whether or not a singular definition is even a worthy goal (Ruona, 2000). Weinberger's (1998) review of US literature yielded more than 15 definitions of HRD. "The definitions that have been uncovered and consolidated represent the commonly held themes in the field today, from a US American perspective" (pp. 75-76). However, a U.S. perspective alone does not represent the entire field of HRD.

The world in which we live and work, including the field of HRD, is becoming increasingly global (Marquardt, 1999). However, the majority of articles and arguments aimed towards defining the field of HRD have at least one thing in common--they are written from the North American, and, more specifically, the US-American point of view (Ruona, 2000; Weinberger, 1998). Yet, as Hillion and McLean (1997) pointed out, "It appears that the definition of HRD terms vary from one country to another, and the national differences are a crucial factor in determining the way in which HRD professionals work (e.g., Okongwu, 1995; Yang & McLean, 1994)" (p. 695). In fact, "There are no universally accepted definitive statements of the meaning of HRM or HRD" (McGoldrick & Stewart, 1996, p. 9). How, then, are we to begin to define HRD in a global context?

Purpose of Research

There are those in the field of HRD who feel that it is important to define HRD more definitively. Ruona (2000) concluded that, "As a profession, we have not done a very good job of working to identify who we are, what we stand for, and what we can do for those we serve" (p. 2). The primary purpose of this paper is to explore definitions of HRD given by HRD scholars and practitioners around the world. In addition, we will summarize similarities and differences among these definitions and propose a global definition of HRD. In doing so, it is hoped that as the field will continue to discuss its definition, without, from the authors' perspective, having to agree on a specific definition. Further, a global perspective may help us all gain new insights and move us beyond our own ethnocentrism.

Research Questions

This study was designed to identify definitions of HRD used around the world, compare and contrast them, and propose a beginning global definition of HRD. To accomplish these objectives, the Internet was used to contact scholars and practitioners around the world. The following questions were posed to each respondent:
1. What is your personal definition of HRD?
2. What is a definition of HRD that seems most widely used or applicable in your country?
3. What reference or references (journal) support this definition?
    In addition, taking a post hoc approach, the data appeared to answer the following question: Who are the intended audiences and benefactors of HRD?

Methodology

Two primary approaches were used to accomplish the purposes of the study. First, available English language literature was reviewed, although participants were also asked to provide translations of references from available literature in their language, if available. As indicated, above, however, the literature readily available in the United States tends to focus on a U.S. perspective. Non-English language literature that may exist created a limitation to this approach. Thus, the literature review, initially, yielded very few sources. However, as those queried responded, additional resources were identified that yielded useful insight.

By far, however, the most useful information emerged through contacts that were made via e-mail. The senior author compiled a list of HRD scholars and practitioners from his own contacts who were from or working in countries other than the United States. A snowball approach (Patton, 1990) was also used, in which those who were contacted suggested additional contacts. Further, the international organizations who were affiliated with the International Federation of Training and Development Organizations (IFTDO) for whom e-mail addresses were available were also contacted. An e-mail was sent with the three questions. A follow-up e-mail was sent with a reminder. Some regions of the world seem to be underrepresented. While this may be due to the source of the respondent lists, it is more likely a result of the emerging nature of HRD in many regions of the world. Because of the snowballing efforts, no attempts were made to determine response rate. This was not a random selection, and no statistical analyses have been applied. Further, given the exploratory nature of this study, no attempts have been made at generalization.

The analysis of the data was a two-step process. First, the results of the literature review and the individual e-mail responses were reviewed several times for emerging themes. Next, from these themes, conclusions were drawn, and recommendations were made.

Findings: Dimensions and Contexts of Global HRD Definitions

The goal of this section is to provide a summary of the data collected and an interpretation of those data. The findings focus on two perspectives emerging from the data; first, the dimensions along which the definitions varied, and, second, the national context that is reflected in the countries' definitions.

Dimensions along which the Definitions Varied

The definitions collected (detailed in Table 1) varied according to several dimensions, including scope of activities included in the definition, intended audience for development, and the intended benefactors of the outcomes of development. These dimensions emerged from a detailed and repeated reading and analysis of the proffered HRD definitions.

Scope of Activities. The scope of activities considered to be HRD range from being strictly limited to training (A. Ardishvili, personal communication, October 1, 1998 (Russia); J. N. Streumer, personal communication, September 28, 1998 (Netherlands); M. S. Park, personal communication, June 29, 1998 (Republic of Korea)) to being as broad as activities that make "it possible for all people to develop their full potential in physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual terms, while improving their technical and productive skills, to ensure their full participation in the process of national development" (8th NESDP, 1997, p. 9, as cited by V. Busaya, personal communication, June 19, 1998 (Thailand)). While these points of view are at the extremes of the spectrum, most definitions fell somewhere between and focused on activities related to learning/behavior change, performance improvement, and changing attitudes or organizational culture (Rao, 1985 (India); Stewart & McGoldrick, 1996 (UK); J. N. Streumer, personal communication, September 28, 1998 (Netherlands)). Many of the US definitions cited in Weinberger (1998) followed McLagan's (McLagan & Suhadolnik 1989) classic research that included primarily organization development, career development, and training and development in her definition of HRD.

Intended Audiences and Benefactors of Human Resource Development. Most definitions focused on the individual (T&D, CD) or organization (OD) as the targeted recipient of HRD activities. However, the main differences were related to the intended benefactor of the HRD activities. For example, in Australia, the purpose of HRD is "to improve organisational effectiveness and individual performance" (Australian Public Service Commission, March, 1992, as cited in D. Short, personal communication, September 29, 1998). However, in both Singapore and Thailand, the aim of HRD is to benefit the individual, the organization, and the nation (A. M. Osman-Gani, personal communication, August 31, 2000; 8th NESDP, 1997, as cited in V. Busaya, personal communication,

June 19, 1998). At least one definition in the US includes not only the individual and organization level, but also the process level (Swanson, 1995). Another definition from Thailand (Na Chiangmai, 1998) included the community as the benefactor.

National Contexts Reflected in Country Definitions

Differences in national culture are reflected in the definitions collected from around the world. Just as products emerge in a market to fulfill a customer need, so, too; do fields develop in order to meet particular needs. Lee and Stead (1998) observed:

> In the United Kingdom, HRD is seen as a relatively young and predominantly Western concept that has emerged from management thinking and has been shaped by values and events as Europe has transformed itself over the past fifty years. This view is based on the argument that as one era presents a need, solutions are created to meet that need, which creates a new approach and perspective (Lessem, 1998; Kinsman, 1990, Pedlar, Burgoyne, and Boydell, 1991). (p. 297)

HRD, with its focus on humans, is heavily influenced by the context in which it is studied and practiced. By definition, context is determined in part by culture, which varies from nation to nation and organization to organization. Following are examples of how the definitions collected were influenced by the national context.

Influence of Economy on Definitions of HRD. Lee and Stead (1998) used Maslow's hierarchy of needs to explain the different focus of Human Resources (HR) at different points in history in the United Kingdom. The state of a nation's economy can dictate where on Maslow's hierarchy the majority of a nation's citizens, and workforce, reside. As argued earlier, if HRD is to be a solution, it must meet a need that exists in the country. Therefore, one would expect to see evidence of differences among countries' economies to be found in their definitions of HRD.

Countries such as Russia and China are in transition from a planned economy to a free market economy. With this transition come significant challenges for organizations trying to compete in a global economy. Some of these challenges are driving the need for HRD. Two trends cited in the China: Human Resources Update (News brief, 1998) are unprofitable state enterprises shutting down, putting large numbers of employees out of work, and workers transitioning from state organizations to private ones. Russia is facing similar trends. Under the planned economy, there was much more focus on ensuring that everyone was employed than on the development of individuals. This perspective is reflected in the response received about Russia:

> In my country (Russia) the concept of HRD is different. First, the language used is mostly from the realm of 'Personnel staffing, selection and training.' The word 'development' is not as widely used. In general, this reflects an emphasis on managing the employee pool, rather than on helping each individual employee to develop his/her abilities. (A. Ardishvili, personal communication, October 1, 1998)

Influence of Government and Legislation on Definitions of HRD. In some countries, where the government is involved in setting HR policy, the definitions of HRD reflect this such that performance is not the sole objective of HRD. In France, for example, "HRD is often used as a synonym for 'developpement social' (social development) of which the objective is to take into account the employee's satisfaction at work (and even in some personal issues, such as health, children, education, etc.)" (F. Sechaud, personal communication, October 1, 1998). The government in France plays a significant role in HRD in France, even within organizations. For example, a 1971 law required companies with more than ten employees to spend 1.5% of their payroll on training of their employees. Additionally, a 1984 law requires companies to grant a paid leave of absence to employees wishing to be retrained in a field of his or her choice (Deligny, 1998). By nature of a government's mandate, they must keep the national interest at the root of their policies. And, because the French government is involved in setting HRD policy for companies, HRD takes on a national flavor.

Influence of Other Countries on Definitions of HRD. In the responses from some countries, the definitions given referred directly to a US definition of HRD. In some cases this appears to be a result of the respondent having been educated in the United States. This is most easily seen in the differences between the participants' personal definitions of HRD versus the national definition of HRD in their countries. For example, Yang (personal communication, Fall 1998), a former doctoral student in HRD from Korea at the University of Minnesota, "agrees with the University of Minnesota definition of HRD. However, in Korea, most practitioners and academicians recognize only the Training and Development aspect of this definition." In other cases, definitions were taken directly from one country, translated and used in another country.

Wallace (personal communication, July 7, 1998) stated that

It is our impression that the Canadian definition of HRD differs little from the American. Our literature is very much influenced by U.S. approaches and research. For the most part, there is not a distinct body of Canadian literature in HRD.

Conclusions

The theme of this paper continues to emerge and will be expanded as the field of HRD becomes more established around the world. One of the problems in doing a literature review is that the literature of many countries (e.g., People's Republic of China, Korea, Japan, etc.) is not available in English and is not contained in data bases readily accessible. It is hoped that the deficiencies of this paper will gradually disappear as those with facility in non-English languages begin to identify resources that exist in the non-English HRD literature and in the literature that was simply not available during the research for this study.

Given the nature of the current investigation, the following conclusions emerge:

- By far the most extensive literature on HRD that has been identified in this research is out of the US and the UK, with India emerging as having an extensive literature, though it is not yet readily available or recognized outside of Asia.
- The predominance of US-based or modified definitions may, in addition to the predominance of the literature, be explained by the fact that many international students are being educated about HRD in the US. This exposure to US definitions has influenced how HRD is viewed in other countries. This process is not dissimilar to the emergence of US popular culture around the world.
- Professional organizations also seem to play an important role in the predominant influence of certain cultures. For example, the McLagan and Suhadolnik (1989) study, which has been so influential, was funded and disseminated by the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD). Much of the English language scholarly literature in HRD is sponsored by US and UK professional organizations (e.g., Academy of Human Resource Development, Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, International Society for Performance Improvement, The Organization Development Institute, University Forum for HRD), while the Academy of Human Resource Development (India) is emerging as a significant source of literature in India.
- There appears to be a difference in both the perception and practice of HRD in local companies compared with multinational companies (MNCs), with the MNCs much more likely to be influenced by their home countries.
- The definition of HRD is influenced by a country's value system, so we see the emphasis on performance in the US context, while religion and community predominate as influences in Thailand.
- Definitions vary according to the point in the life cycle of the field (US, UK, Thailand vs. Russia, China), which is, in part, linked to form or growth in the economy. While HRD is not mature in any cultural context, it is generally perceived to be most mature in the US, while it is still in an emerging state in many countries.
- In several countries, HRD is not distinguished from HR but is seen, systemically, as being a part of HR. This applies, for example, in France and the People's Republic of China, while many, particularly in practice, in other countries also fail to make a distinction, even when the academicians make such a distinction.

How This Research Contributes to New Knowledge in HRD

Growth in HRD means expanding the boundaries of our definition. Professional organizations are becoming increasingly globally networked and so, too, is practice and academia. If we are to create a body of knowledge that is relevant to academicians and practitioners around the world, the definition we use must be inclusive of the range of contexts that exist in the multitude of nations in which we live and work. The following definition is one which we feel captures many of the elements of the many definitions included in this research and may well serve as a beginning point for dialogue in forwarding the development of a truly global definition of HRD.

Human Resource Development is any process or activity that, either initially or over the long-term, has the potential to develop adults' work-based knowledge, expertise, productivity, and satisfaction, whether for personal or group/team gain, or for the benefit of an organization, community, nation, or, ultimately, the whole of humanity.

Thus, HRD can be found in all areas of the HR Wheel (McLagan & Suhadolnik, 1989), though, to be classified as HRD, the intent of the activity must fit within the definition, above. As has widely been accepted within the field, Training and Development, Organization Development, and Career Development clearly fit. However, many components of Employee Assistance, Compensation and Benefits, Strategic Planning, and HR Research, for example, fit into this definition. So, too, do areas not specifically identified in the HR Wheel, such as Continuous Quality/Process Improvement, International/Cross-Cultural Awareness, Diversity, Community Building, National Vocational Qualifications, and Employee Retention, and, we are sure, many others would also fit.

One example of how we would distinguish between HRD and HRM in one slice of the pie—compensation and benefits--might be the market research to determine the market distribution of pay for given positions, which would be the responsibility of HRM. Moving toward an ESOP (Employee Stock Option Program) or gainsharing plan, however, could have significant impact on employee satisfaction and productivity, thus moving it into the realm of HRD. The specifics for monitoring and recording the activities themselves, however, would remain an HRM function. Thus, such an undertaking would call for the partnership of HRD and HRM.

By no means do we expect that this will be *the* definitive definition of HRD now and forever. We agree with Mankin's (in press) contention that "...practitioners and academics should embrace HRD as an ambiguous concept, as it is this ambiguity that provides HRD with its distinctiveness." This is consistent with the senior author's contentions in an upcoming publication (McLean, 2000) in which he argued that ambiguity is an essential component of life, and the drive to remove ambiguity from our definition of HRD is futile and cannot happen. Lee (1998) concluded that she was unable to define it sufficiently for herself, let alone for others. That's the difficulty of the task that is before us in developing a definition of HRD.

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Table 1. Human Resource Development Definition Summary, by Country
(Due to space limitations, only selected definitions are included.)

Country/Source	Definition(s)	Benefactor of HRD:	Key Components
People's Republic of China (The China Training Center for Senior Civil Servants, 1997) (Yan & McLean, 1998)	A planned and organized education and learning process provided by organizations to improve employees' knowledge and skills as well as change their job attitudes and behaviors. The process helps unleash the employees' expertise for the purpose of enhancing the individual performance and achieving the effective organizational functions. [*This definition sounds very similar to Swanson's (1995) definition.*] In many ways, there is no distinction at present between HR, HRD, and Personnel.	• Individual • Organization	• Planned and organized Process • Skills, attitudes, behaviors
China (Taiwan) (Kuo & McLean, 1999)	At a national level, HRD has often been used synonymously with Manpower Planning. At a business level, HRD is often seen as synonymous with Training and Development and falls under HR rather than as a separate department.	• Individual • Nation	• Manpower Planning • T&D
Cote d'Ivoire (C. Hansen, personal communication, September 29, 1998)	HRD as separate from HR is not known. So HR is mostly thought of as a personnel function (and the administration of training requests) with few people formally trained in related fields, such as psychology or the sociology of work. Ivorian HR directors desire change as they wish to see the field operate as more of a strategic and systemic function. So I would say that the definition of our field is in transition.	• Organization	• Same as HR
France (F. Sechaud, personal communication, October 1, 1998)	HRD covers all practices that contribute to enhance the contribution of people to the organization's objectives: competence development, satisfaction of the human requirements of organisational development, training, internal career paths, etc. The term of 'developpement social' (social development) is often used as a synonym of HRD.	• Individual • Organization	• T&D • OD • CD • Social Devl
Germany (K. P. Kuchinke, personal communication, October 1, 1998)	In Germany, ...there is no field defined as HRD, hence no definition. There is a training industry, of course, and consultants from a variety of backgrounds. Personnel specialists in Schools of Business (at least their German equivalent) do some of the research.	• N/A	• T&D
India (Rao, 1996)	HRD in the organisational context is a process by which the employees of an organisation are helped, in a continuous, planned way to: 1) Sharpen their capabilities required to perform various functions associated with their present or expected future roles; 2) develop their general capabilities as individuals and discover and exploit their own inner potentials for their own and/or organisational development purposes; and 3) develop an organisational culture in which supervisor-subordinate relationships, team work, and collaboration among sub-units are strong and contribute to the professional well being, motivation and pride of the employees. (page number not specified)	• Individual • Group/Team • Organization • Process	• Process • Continuous and planned Process • Present or future Capabilities • Culture

Japan (Harada, 1999)	The concept of human resource development in Japan can be identified by three terms, based on explanatory translation. These terms are *Noryoku kaihatu* (development of individual abilities), *Jinzai keisei* (formulation of a mastery level of human resources through the work system and training), and *Jinzai ikusei* (fostering the development of human resources through management of the human resource process) (Hanada, 1987; Kitajima, 1995; Koike, 1985, 1995). Three major HRD components are Individual Development (ID), Career Development (CD), and Organizational Development (OD) (Harada, 1999, p. 357).	• Individual • Group/Team • Organization	• Individual Development • OD • CD
Korea (M. S. Park, personal communication, June 29, 1998)	I think that the definition of HRD is the broad concept including T&D, OD, CD. But most of Korean staff working in HRD Center, training center, or education department think about the definition of HRD as only including T&D.	• Individual • Organization	• T&D
Netherlands (J. N. Streumer, personal communication, September 28, 1998)	Recently the faculty of Educational Science and Technology (departments of Curriculum Technology and Educational Administration and Management) has started the Second National Study on Training and Development in Business and Industry. In this project, HRD is understood as all training and development interventions that are made to create and further develop human expertise within the context of an organisation in order to (further) improve the effectiveness of the organisation.	• Individual • Organization	• T&D
Singapore (A. A. M. Osman-Gani, personal communication, August 31, 2000)	In Singapore, the major public sector agencies (PSB, EDB, MOM) describe HRD (or manpower development) as the activities related to the knowledge and skills development through education, training and re-training, in a lifelong learning process for improving productivity at the personal, organizational and national levels.	• Individual • Organization • Nation	• T&D
Thailand (V. Busaya, personal communication, June 19, 1998)	HRD is an interactive process of enhancing and facilitating the development of capabilities and potentials of individuals, organizations and communities through organization development and community development to attain effectively efficiently and harmoniously personal and organization goals, as well as communal goals. (Na Chiangmai, 1998)	• Individual • Organization • Community • Nation	• Realization of potential • Tied to economic growth
United Kingdom (Stewart. & McGoldrick, 1996)	HRD is a relatively new concept which has yet to become fully established and accepted, whether within professional practice or as a focus of academic enquiry (p. 1). Key elements include: • Activities and processes which are intended to have impact on organisational and individual learning. • HRD is constituted by planned interventions in organisational and individual learning processes. • Constituted by interventions that are intended to change organizational behaviour. • Other dimensions related to HRD: Strategic, Organisation, Long term, Cultural, Organic, Change	• Individual • Organization	• Planned • Process • Behavior change/learning • Strategic

A Refusal to Define HRD

Monica Lee
Lancaster University

This paper argues that although it is necessary at times to define HRD for political reasons, on philosophical, theoretical, professional, and practical grounds HRD should not be defined. To proffer definitions of HRD is to misrepresent HRD as a thing of <u>being</u> rather than a process of <u>becoming</u>, and the defining of HRD is a moral issue.

Keywords: Philosophical Roots, Definitions, Moral Responsibility

In almost any educational situation it is common practice to first define the area or subject that is to be studied. It is generally considered to be the exercising of '*good* practice' if the syllabus and content that are to be taught are derived from such definition, if the students are actively encouraged to study and revise in the light of this structure, and if the assessment and evaluation of students, staff and course reflect and reinforce the coherence of the whole. This notion of '*good*' practice holds some moral force. A '*good*' teacher, trainer, or HRD professional is someone who lays out the subject clearly and coherently – in the predominant western model of education, to fail to do so is to be a '*bad*' educator.

In this paper I shall argue that this approach does particular disservice to the development of those who wish to become HRD professionals, as the notion and practice of 'HRD' is dynamic, ambiguous, and ill determined. Although the main thrust of this paper is conceptual, I firmly believe that philosophy and theory need to be rooted in practice, and thus I will draw upon the experience of a course that is now closed in order to counterpoint my arguments.

Scene Setting

In the early 1990's I started a Master's course at Lancaster University (MSC in HRD (by Research) designed to lead to both professional and academic qualifications for international cohorts of senior HRD professionals). In the first workshop of each cohort, people were getting their bearings – feeling what the course might be like. Two months later, after people have been back at work and started to reflect upon links between the academic and professional sides of their lives, they attended the second workshop – and the defining of HRD became paramount in most people's minds. It was as if they believed that they could not progress until they knew what HRD 'is'. Through this knowledge their future study and work roles would be laid out in front of them, such that so long as they knew where the path was, they could achieve excellence through sheer hard work. These 'classical' views shifted quite rapidly, but for a couple of days it was as if they thought that in refusing to define HRD for them, as course designer and leader I was deliberately and maliciously preventing them from achieving.

This programme generated significant income and proved to be extremely successful with the students, many of whom keep in touch and say that it has fundamentally changed their lives. About 85% obtained promotion or changed jobs during or directly after the programme. All participants had to have at least five years professional experience, and even though about 25% came with little academic experience, the majority of students achieved exceptionally good academic results, with about 20% registering for PhD's following the programme. On all the normal criteria it was considered to be an extremely successful programme, yet, despite this, the programme was terminated after running for only four cohorts. One reason for this might be because it adopted a philosophy and practice fundamentally different to that of 'normal' academe.

The Philosophical Case for Refusing to Define HRD

I designed the programme shortly after I joined Lancaster University, having previously spent twenty years working for others and myself in the field. Most of the literature (at that time) did not really reflect my own professional experiences, and there seemed to be a certain cynicism about regurgitating 'the literature' in the knowledge that it was a chimera. I therefore designed my Master's programme to reflect the way in which I understood my role as an HRD professional, and as an 'educator' of others. It seemed to me that in my professional life, whilst I carried a central

core of understanding from each experience that came my way, 'I', and 'my understanding' shifted and changed according to that experience – and each experience influenced, and was influenced by, future experiences. I could never say 'this is the organisation', 'this is my role', and 'this is what I am doing' as I could never manage to complete or finalise any of these states.

Similarly, as an educator, I could not identify with any firm body of knowledge and say... 'this is what is needed'. I could see that people needed knowledge, but that most of what they needed would be situation specific.. the knowledge needed by an Angolan participant would be very different to that needed by someone working in Hong Kong; working multi-nationally needed different knowledge and skills than working with SME's, working in the voluntary sector appeared fundamentally different to working with the corporate fat-cats... and so on. I could see that people needed different knowledge and skills, and that they would need to shift and change – to emerge into new roles and 'selves'. There did seem to me to be some meta-level areas of activity in what I did, and it was these that I tried to capture as workshop topics.

I therefore designed a course that avoided specification – or at least, the only specification was for the areas of focus on the different workshops, the form (not the content) of the assessed research projects and international placement), and the form of process that occurred over the different days of each workshop. The programme was not completely open – participants derived implicit delineations of the area to be studied from the brochure and the interviews, and, as I shall discuss later, it could be argued that there was an overriding 'definition in practice', but there was no set content or syllabus, and no area that had to be 'known' to satisfy assessment criteria. Some brochure details and description of the programme are appended. I designed the course like this because it felt the best way to foster the growth of reflective practitioners able to develop and marry best practice with academic credibility and personal strength. This was, however, a challenge to the 'academic' mindset.

As Chia (1997) states *'Contemporary Western modes of thought are circumscribed by two great and competing pre-Socratic cosmologies or 'world-views', which provided and continue to provide the most general conceptual categories for organizing thought and directing human effort. Hereclitus, a native of Ephesus in ancient Greece, emphasized the primacy of a changeable and emergent world while Parmenides, his successor, insisted upon the permanent and unchangeable nature of reality.'*

Parmenides's view of reality is reflected in the continued dominance of the 'belief that science constitutes, by far, the most valuable part of human learning and accomplishment'. He argues that this leads to an atomistic conception of reality in which 'clear-cut, definite things are deemed to occupy clear-cut definite places in space and time', thus causality becomes the conceptual tool used for linking these isolates, and the state of rest is considered normal while movement is considered as a straightforward transition from one stable state to another. *This being ontology is what provides the metaphysical basis for the organisation of modern thought and the perpetration of a system of classificatory taxonomies, hierarchies and categories which, in turn, serve as the institutionalised vocabulary for representing our experiences of reality. A representationalist epistemology thus ensues in which formal knowledge is deemed to be that which is produced by the rigorous application of the system of classifications on our phenomenal experiences in order to arrive at an accurate description of reality.'* (Chia 1997, p 74). A being ontology is conceptualised with one 'true' reality, the units of which are tied together in a causal system. The truth is out there, we just have to find it!

The Heraclitean viewpoint offers a becoming ontology in which '... how an entity becomes constitutes what the actual entity is; so that the two descriptions of an actual entity are not independent. Its 'being' is constituted by its 'becoming'. This is the principle of process.' 'the 'flux of things is one ultimate generalisation around which we must weave our philosophical system' (Whitehead, 1929: 28 & 240). Cooper (1976) suggests that within such a process epistemology the individuals involved feel themselves to be significant nodes in a dynamic network and are neither merely passive receivers nor dominant agents imposing their preconceived scheme of things on to that which they apprehend. All are the parts of the whole, and the parts, and the whole, change and develop together. From this point of view, there is both one and many realities, in which I 'myself' comes into being through interacting with these and am constituted within them, and the knowing of these is never final or finished.

Integral to 'living' within a process epistemology is the personal quality of what might be called 'hanging loose', or 'negative capability', as described by Keats: *'And at once it struck me, what quality went to form a man of Achievement... meaning Negative Capability, that is when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after facts and reason'* (Keats, letters of 21 December 1817). This quality is one of resisting conceptual closure and thereby creating the necessary 'space' for the formulation of personal insights, and the development of foresight and intuition – it is a quality that is vital for counselling and other helping professions, and one that *'should'* be within the remit of HRD professionals.

All my experience (in 'HRD' and 'life' – not that I can easily separate them) points me to the belief in a world of becoming, one of process epistemology and negative capability. It could be that I am out of step with the 'real world', but I suggest that the Parmenidean house of cards that we construct around us to provide clarity, certainty and delineation, will tumble in the wind of close examination. This house of cards stands on the strength of unique definitions by which every concept has its own, rightful and static place in the order of things. From the Heraclitean perspective, the meaning and 'boundary' of concepts is

negotiable. In the following section I shall briefly report on previous work I have done with the notion of 'development', and illustrate that despite being central to our ideas of HRD, even that concept is debatable.

The Theoretical Case for Refusing to Define HRD

Most would agree that, to be meaningful, the definition of something needs to encapsulate the properties or qualities of that which is being defined, such that it can be recognised uniquely from the definition and thereby distinguished from those that are not being defined. This sort of description of what a definition might be, is, in itself, one of being rather than becoming. We could, however, say that a definition of something need not be fixed or permanent, but instead, it could take the form of a working definition... if enough people use a word in a particular way, and know what each other means by it, more or less, then there is tacit agreement about the meaning of that word and its qualities, such that it could be deemed to be becoming defined.

We might, therefore, get a rough feeling for a word by looking at the way in which it is used. In Lee (1997a) I report an attempt I made to develop a working definition of the word 'development'. I examined promotional literature aimed at HRD professionals and found four different ways in which the word 'development' was used. In the first approach that I identified, 'development as maturation' was used as if to refer to a pre-determined 'stage-like' and inevitable progression of people and organisations. 'Development' is seen as an inevitable unfolding - and thus the 'developmental' force is the process itself, which, in turn, defines the end-point. The 'system', be it an individual, a group or an organisation, is seen as being a coherent entity with clearly defined boundaries existing within a predictable external environment - the organisation is discussed as if it were a single living element, whose structures, existence and change are capable of being completely understood through sufficient expert analysis. Concepts such as empowerment and change-agency are irrelevant in an approach that is essentially social determinism, with no place for unpredictable events or freedom of individual choice.

In the second, 'development as shaping', people are seen as tools who can be shaped to fit the organisation. Here, development is still seen to have known end-points, but these are defined by some-one or something external to the process of development. The organisation is stratified and 'senior' management define the end point for 'junior' management - the wishes of the corporate hierarchy create the developmental force. This approach assumes that there is something lacking, some weakness or gap, that can be added to or filled by the use of the appropriate tools or blueprint, and that such intervention is necessary. Individuals (their aspirations and their values, as well as their skills) are malleable units that can be moulded to suit the wider system. 'Empowerment' and 'individual agency' can be part of the developmental agenda, but not in their own right - they are acceptable developmental end points only if ratified by senior management - 'empowerment' becomes a tool to enhance performance and decision making (within limits).

'Development as voyage' is as a life long journey upon uncharted internal routes in which individuals construe their own frames of reference and place their view of self within this, such that each of us construct our own version of 'reality' in which our 'identity' is part of that construct. This is described as an active process in which the individual is continually re-analysing their role in the emergence of the processes they are part of, and in doing so also confronting their own ideas, unsurfaced assumptions, biases and fears whilst maintaining a core of ethicality and strong self concept (Adler, 1974). 'Development', involves a transformative shift in approach that enables critical observation and evaluation of the experience, such that the learner is able to distance themselves from it rather than 'replay' it - experiencing becomes a way of restoring meaning to life (Vasilyuk, 1984). The external world (including organisation and management) might mirror or catalyse 'development', but it is the individual who is the sole owner and clear driving force behind the process. 'Empowerment' would be within the individual's own terms, and might have little regard for organisational objectives.

'Development as emergent' is the fourth approach that I identified. Here 'development' is seen to arise out of the messy ways by which societal aspiration becomes transformed into societal 'reality'. 'The individual's unique perceptions of themselves within a social reality which is continuously socially (re)constructed' (Checkland 1994); in which 'individuals dynamically alter their actions with respect to the ongoing and anticipated actions of their partners.' (Fogel, 1993:34), and; in which they negotiate a form of communication and meaning specific and new to the group and relatively un-accessible or un-describable to those who were not part of the process (Lee, 1994). 'Self-hood' is a dynamic function of the wider social system (be it a family grouping, a small or medium sized enterprise, a large bureaucracy, or a Nation - or parts of each) and as that system transforms so do 'I'. Emergent development of the group-as-organisation is seen to be no different from development of any social system, and is not consistently driven by any single sub-section (be it senior management or the shop-floor). Discussion about planned top-down or bottom-up change is irrelevant, as the words themselves imply some sort of structure to the change. This approach is, of course, in direct conflict with traditional ideas that organisational change is driven by senior management, however, Romanelli & Tushman (1994) offer empirical support for rapid, discontinuous transformation in organisations being driven by major environmental changes.

It would be very simple to place these in a nice 2 x 2 matrix, as in Figure 1. The 2 x2 Matrix is pervasive and well understood in management, but it is a tool of being, rather than becoming. The lines are solid and impermeable, the categories fixed.

Instead, as in Figure 2, we can imagine these areas as areas of concentration, in which it is as if the most concentrated 'essence' of that which we are examining is in the centre of the area, and, as it diffuses outward, it mingles with the essences of the other areas.

IDENTITY

END POINT

UNITARY
CO-REGULATED

KNOWN
MATURATION:
Development through inevitable stages.

SHAPING:
Development through
planned steps.

UNKNOWN
VOYAGE:
Development through
internal discovery.

EMERGENT:
Development through interaction with others.

KNOWN DEVELOPMENTAL END-POINT

MATURATION   SHAPING

UNITARY IDENTITY   CO-REGULATED IDENTITY

VOYAGE   EMERGENT

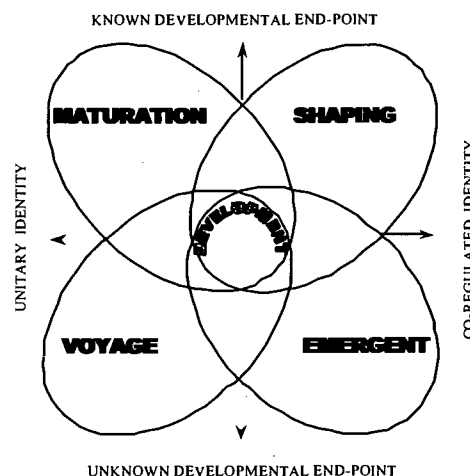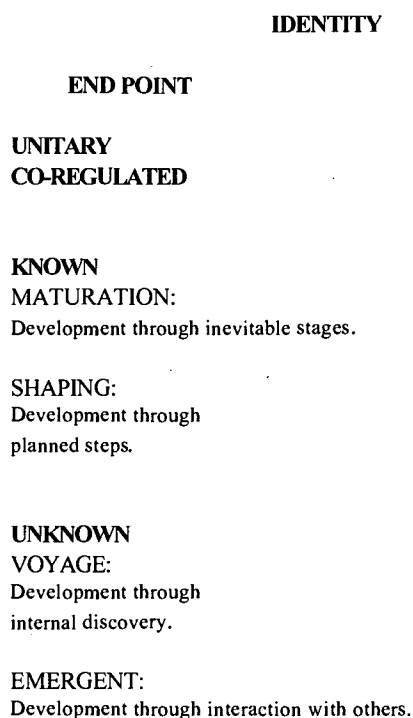UNKNOWN DEVELOPMENTAL END-POINT

Figure 1. A 2x2 Matrix of 'Development'.   Figure 2. Four Forms of 'Development', after Lee 1997a.

Despite finding alternative ways of representing these findings, which might help address the problem of how to represent the sorts of working definitions associated with becoming, we cannot avoid the fact that there appear to be four fundamentally different working definitions of 'development'. Each of these carries with it a particular view of organisation, and of the nature and role of HRD, and is used under different circumstances. When talking of our own development we normally address it as if it is a voyage. When senior managers talk of organisational development they normally talk of it as if it were shaping. When social theorists talk of development they normally adopt a maturational or emergent perspective (depending upon their theoretical bent). 'Development' is clearly not a unitary concept.

The Professional Case for Refusing to Define HRD

The many ways in which the word 'development' can be used indicates the many different roles that the professional 'developer' might adopt. For example the role of the developer in the maturational system has the sureness of the (relatively) uninvolved expert consultant who charts the inevitable unfolding of the stages. The developer within a shaped system is the process expert who can not only clearly help senior management identify an enhanced future, but can also apply the tools necessary to ensure that such a future is achieved. Such developers sell a 'better' (and otherwise unobtainable) view of the future (to individuals, groups and organisations) - and the blueprint to get there. Those that are being 'developed' are encouraged/moulded to meet the end criteria, regardless of whether such criteria are enhanced skills, positive attitudes or the achievement of corporate objectives. The role of the developer within the system as voyage is one of helping others to help themselves (see, for example, Rogers 1951, 1959). The developer brings 'expert' skills that help the individual recognise their self-imposed bounds and widen their horizons, but does so without calling upon the 'power' of expertise that describes a particular path and endpoint as 'best' for the individual concerned. In emergent systems there is little role for a 'developer' as the developer holds no 'unique' or special status. Developers are as similar and as different as each other member is, and although they (perhaps) have fewer vested interests in political machinations (and thus might be able to view circumstances more objectively), they are as directly involved in the life of the organisation as any of the individuals they are supporting in co-development.

Let us step back for a bit, and take a Parmenidesean view of the world, and examine what is meant by the definition of HRD. In this worldview we have the 2x2 matrix, and four different definitions of the word 'development', only one of which can

be what we really 'mean' (the other three need to be renamed – but that is not important to us here). When we talk about '*Human Resource* Development' however, the situation becomes clearer. A 'human resource' is a commodity – something to be shaped and used at the will and needs of the more powerful. The role of the HRD professional is clear, and, by implication, so is the nature of organisation and management. Senior management set the objectives within a clearly defined organisational structure, in which HRD is a subset of the larger HRM function

If we accept the common meaning of the words then there is no alternative to HRD as an activity and profession in which development is about shaping individuals to fit the needs of the organisation (as defined by senior management). Integrity, ethics, and individual needs are not important within this conceptualisation (and need only be considered if the circumstances call for hypocritical lip-service to them). A Parmenidesean definition of HRD, therefore, might be along the lines of 'the shaping of the employees to fit the needs of the employer'. This approach is described by Weinberger (1998) as performance improvement in her examination of theories of HRD, as derived mainly from the US. It is less prevalent in other countries (Geppert and Merkens, 1999, Grieves and Redman, 1999) and most HR Professionals (including those in the US) do not describe their own work in this way (Claus, 1998; Sambrook, 2000). They, and the professional bodies are increasingly paying attention to the ethical aspects of the profession. Some might still see HRD in this way, but for many, the profession has (slowly) moved on to incorporate notions of integrity and ethics, and also to reflect, at least in part, the notion that people are central to the organisation, and thus the strategic role that their development can play.

There is, however, a strong drive to define HRD, particularly within the professional and qualificatory bodies. They need to do so for political reasons - in order to patrol their boundaries, maintain their standards, and bolster their power base. The professional bodies have, in general, abandoned (at least in part) theoretically derived definitions of HRD and instead adopted a practice-based view, in which they attempt to promote what they see as 'best practice' (within their own contexts) through the establishment of their professional standards. These standards do not necessarily reflect what is happening in practice, but instead mirror what the professional bodies would *like* to see happening. As illustrated in Lee et al (1996), 'standardisation' across disparate systems of HRD is likely to have been achieved through cultural imposition, with the accepted 'standards' or definition in practice, belonging to those cultures with the loudest voices. Even if the rhetoric is of the dominant culture, the practice often remains that of the hidden, or underlying culture (Lee, 1998).

Clearly, professional and qualificatory bodies do provide definitions of 'HRD', and these definitions are suitable (generally) to meet their political needs – but this localised and self-serving activity is fundamentally different to that of trying to understand or encapsulate the field of knowledge and activity that is 'HRD'. Perhaps the only way to address the need to encapsulate what is meant by 'HRD' is to draw permeable outlines around this complex of activities that we all know and, for want of any other term, choose to call HRD.

The Practical Reason for Refusing to Define HRD

The idea of a generally acceptable definition of HRD achieved via the processes of standardisation becomes particularly unrealistic when we look at the degree of variation in practice across the globe. As McLean and McLean (2000) demonstrate, it is simply not feasible to seek global standardisation or definition based upon current practice. They conclude that definitions of HRD are influenced by the country's value system, and the point of the life-cycle of the field of HRD in that country, and that the perception and practice of HRD differs according to the status of the organisation (local or multi-national). We can proffer, with some accuracy and completeness, localised 'definitions in practice' or working definitions, however, descriptions of current practice become increasingly meaningless as the variation in practice increases. Furthermore, as soon as these definitions are encased in course brochures, syllabi, professional standards, organisational literature, or other such statements of fact, they stop becoming and ARE. Thus the very act of defining the area runs the risk of strangling growth in the profession by stipulating so closely what the practice of HRD is (or should be), that it is unable to become anything else... and so we reach the heart of the argument.

HRD theorists and professionals are increasingly talking and acting as if the process that we call HRD is dynamic and emergent. Organisational theory, and that of HRD, is starting to explore areas of complexity – and the notion of process itself. In order to accommodate the variation they found in definitions of HRD, McLean and McLean offer a global *processual* definition, namely: '*Human Resource Development is any process or activity that, either initially or over the long-term, has the potential to develop adult's work-based knowledge, expertise, productivity, and satisfaction, whether for personal or group/team gain, or for the benefit of an organisation, community, nation, or, ultimately, the whole of humanity.*' Even such a global definition, however, does not meet everybody's requirements – why is it limited to adults? What of all the child workers in the world? The authors did not include them in the definition as they considered the fact of child-labour to be one of the negative aspects of HRD practice. Thus the 'definition' is really a statement of how the authors would like the field to become.. not how it <u>is</u>.

Heraclites and Moral Responsibility

The views of Hereclitus and Parmenides could be seen 'merely' as two philosophical stances, with little to do with the bottom line of teaching people about making money through managing people in organisations... however this is a limited view of the field, the theory, the practice and the role of HRD – it focuses on one particular culturally specific (though dominant) way of working and end product. From the Parmenidesean perspective, no other viewpoint captures the essence of existence, yet from the Heraclitean perspective the Parmenidesean view could be one among many – all of which together comprise existence. Therefore, despite the dominant focus (in the West, at least) on scientistic definition and measurable outcomes, a broader view of the field shows that the practice or the 'doing' of whatever we mean by HRD is also a process of becoming.

There are parallels here between this and the emergent system of development I describe above. This system reflects the messy ways by which societal aspiration becomes transformed into societal 'reality'. Society 'develops' with no clear end-point and with its emergent activities as the drive behind change, rather than the edicts of the hierarchy (Lee, 1997b). From this perspective, HRD could be seen as that which is in the processual bindings of the system, which links the needs and aspirations of the (shifting) elements of the system, between and across different levels of aggregation, as they are in the process of becoming – but these words are sufficiently general to describe socialisation, per se, they are not a definition of HRD.

In summary of this point, acknowledgement of the Heraclitean cosmology as a descriptor of the metaphysical basis of existence carries with it a moral responsibility that is not entailed by the Parmenidesean cosmology. The act of definition, for the followers of Parmenides, is that of clarifying what exists. This might be complicated or problematic, but its moral valancy is no different to that of emphasising or copying the lines of a line drawing. It is just describing what already is.

In contrast, the act of definition within the Heraclitean cosmology is equivalent to the act of creation. To define is to intervene in the process of becoming, it is to assert a 'right' way, and what 'should' occur. It is to make moral judgements about what is good and bad, and to state these is to attest not only to their legitimacy, but also to the superior power or higher status of the attester. To define is to take the moral high ground and to assert one's power, and, by doing so, it is to deny the right of others to impose their own view on the becoming of HRD.

The world in which we move is political – all our actions and inactions can be seen as statements of power – but in the Heraclitean cosmos we are responsible for the exercising of that power in a way that does not occur in the Parmenidean cosmos. My attempts to maintain a space of negative capability and lack of definition within the Masters in HRD that I described earlier, was more than an educative ploy. It was an attempt to ensure that each person developed their own, emergent view of HRD – rather than wearing my view (adopting the one propounded by 'teacher') like an old ill-fitting raincoat. In this way, 'HRD' was different for each person and emerged out of their experiences – *'It is not enough to insist upon the necessity of experience, nor even of activity in experience. Everything depends upon the quality of experience which is had.. every experience lives in further experiences'.* (Dewey, 1938)

I was lucky to be able to run my Masters course as I did for four cohorts... many institutions wouldn't have countenanced it or accepted it's notion of self-generating content. Having ensured that its systems of verification and quality management were sufficient, Lancaster University was happy for it to continue indefinitely. It was particular individuals within the department that I was in at the time who caused it to close, largely through fear of the different and a desire to control the uncontrollable. They could not see the dimensions or implications of the processual roots to the success of such a programme, nor could they countenance (or even recognise) the existence of a way of working that was fundamentally different to their own. The Heraclitean *becoming* lost to the Parmenidesean *being.* in a fight in which the becoming was gagged and the being held the power.

By virtue of this paper, whilst acknowledging how very hard it is at times to live in a Heraclitean world, I wish to emphasize that there is no alternative. Each of us, in our professional lives, carries some responsibility as we contribute to what HRD is becoming. We need to be aware that to attempt to define HRD is to serve political or social needs of the minute – to give the appearance of being in control. Instead I suggest we seek to establish, in a moral and inclusive way, what we would like HRD to *become*, in the knowledge that it will never *be,* but that we might thus influence its *becoming.*

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Appendix 1. Outline of the MSC HRD (by research)

The programme consisted of eight four day workshops, over one and a half yours, and was assessed through three guided work-based research projects, an international placement, a learning log, and a dissertation.

Following a Kolb'ian pattern, the process of each workshop shifted daily and forced a focus on the academic [theory], followed by one on the professional (self within group) [reflection], and then the individual [planning], before the return to work [experience]. Specialists were invited during the first two day's of each workshop and were asked to present different views to the group about the workshop topic (half a day each), with specific instructions to be controversial and to follow their pet theories. For each half day the group lived in the world of that specialist – and, given the diversity of each group, there was lots of discussion and hard questioning. I would refuse to clarify, and insist that each person had to come to their own decisions on the differing views presented. I was very determined in ensuring that the third day shifted to one of no content. It was called 'academic debate' as it was set aside for the group to work with the ideas from the previous two days and with their own processes, contextualising theory with practice. This was, initially, hard for the participants, and proved to be particularly hard for those academic co-tutors with no counselling experience. The majority of participants came from commerce-based pressured lives where they had to be doing something. Quite often the group got 'stuck', and occasionally I would jump in with some exercise or idea to shift them, but despite the real pain sometimes associated with the processes of self within group, each group eventually came to value the creation of a reflective space in this way.

Whilst the whole programme was based on principles of Action Learning, (Lee 1996) the fourth day made this more explicit. The group split into sub-groups of about six people each, and these were run as a facilitative action learning set. Each person would have about an hour (even if they said they didn't want it!) in which to address whatever issues they wished. These

normally started as work issues, but quickly shifted to individual/group issues, and then, over the next year, moved increasingly towards issues associated with completing the dissertation!
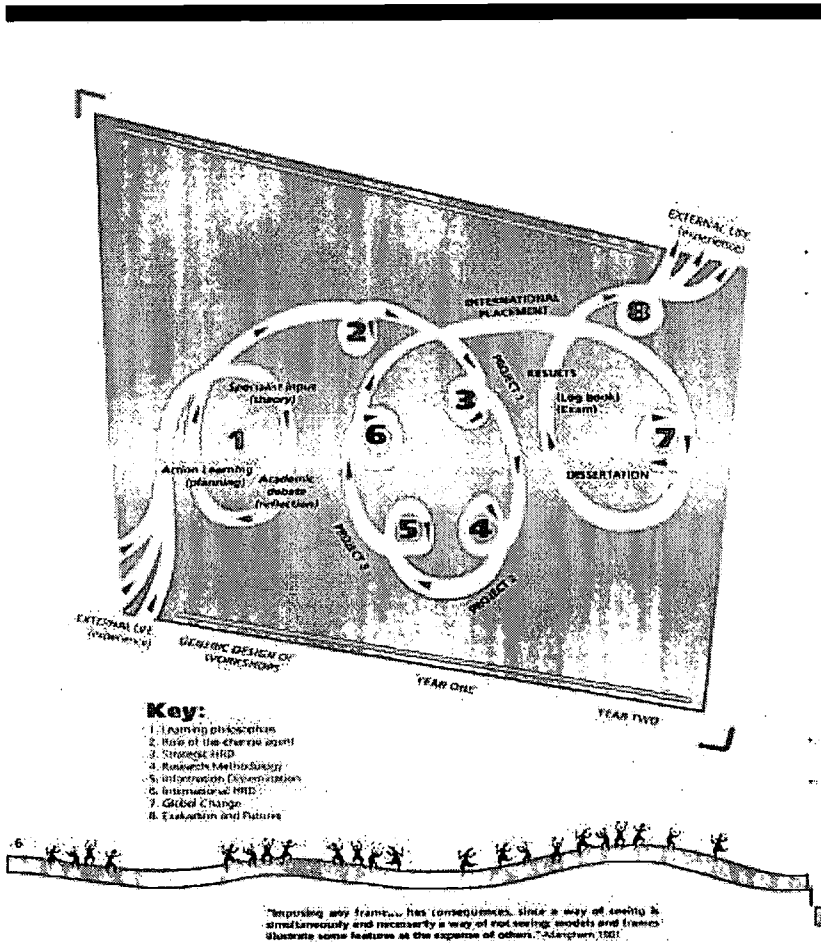
This programme generated its own content, and whilst the process was structured the (majority of the) knowledge wasn't. Participants had full responsibility for their own work, and the tutors acted as facilitators in order to enforce negative capability rather than closure. Although the univ-ersity structures and hierarchy were happy with this programme, it was closed after running for only four cohorts because politically engineered changes in staffing (as a result of the dominance of the Parm-enidesean viewpoint within the department) resulted in a dearth of staff willing to adopt a Hereclitean approach or to champion negative capability. The Parmenidean insistence upon clear definitions of the area and upon there being only one reality or one 'right' way (with all its attendant moral implications) meant that there was no room for alternative ways of being, or of 'educating' others.

HRD: The Power of Definitions

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This paper subjects the 1995 position statement on the emerging concept of HRD produced by theUniversity Forum for HRD to a critical discourse analysis. It evaluates why the statement was produced in the first instance and the discursive practice it reflected. The analysis surfaces issues associated with developing a replacement version today.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Power, HRD Definitions.

An interesting debate has developed in the academic community in both the US and the UK about whether HRD fulfils the requirements of a discipline (Hatcher 2000, Walton 2000). But the debate has been hamstrung by difficulties in obtaining a consensus on what HRD is about in the first place, the domain that it covers and even the terms that it uses. Chalofsky (1992) from an academic perspective has suggested that 'HRD is a field of study in search of itself'. Blake (1995) from a more practitioner oriented standpoint contends that 'the field of HRD defies definition and boundaries'. He goes on to say: 'It's difficult to put in a box. It has become so large, extensive, and inclusive that it's now greater than all outdoors. And the field keeps growing. It continues to spread beyond where it was yesterday, not just domestically but worldwide'. Ruona (2000a) makes the point that although ´much scholarly discussion has been devoted to definitional issues in HRD, this dialogue has primarily focused on competing definitions, while comparatively little has explored the issue of definition in and of itself.' Her US focused qualitative study explored whether - and why - HRD should be defined, from the perspective of 5 people who have occupied the role of President of the Academy of HRD, and another 5 people who have been Chair of the American Society for Training and Development Research Committee. Ruona (ibid) quotes one participant in her study who passionately argued against defining the field. 'Who needs a definition? .....It's only a problem if you are driven by trying to define your field and your expertise. I don't feel a need to do that.... Our field is strengthened by having different schools of thought and by its diversity......I don't need to control your definition and I'm certainly not going to let you control mine.' This respondent went on to say: 'The whole thing about disciplines emerging and maturing and going through stages and so on, I think it is all baloney......Why do we have disciplines? Why don't we see life as a holistic complex of perspectives, values, theories, constructs coming together'.

Problem statement

Megginson et al (1993) refer to the 'fog factor' that has developed in the HRD world. 'Anyone new to the world of human resource development will quickly realise that one of the most important requirements for a speedy assimilation is to learn the language'. However they go on to say; 'Don't assume that the people you are working with ....share your understanding.' All of the above creates one of the dilemmas articulated by Elliott (1998) when trying to review texts influential upon HRD in the UK. She felt the picture to be undefined, 'consisting of many fuzzy and indistinct areas with no recognisable boundaries'. This lack of boundaries and 'newness' made it for her an exciting field of work within which to work and write, enabling her to develop her 'own perception of the interdisciplinary nature of the field' but led to a justifiable 'concern that my understanding of HRD is likely to be different from anyone else's, and that because of this others in turn will not understand my understanding'. Ruona has more recently echoed this concern. 'A major barrier for HRD professionals is that our work and what we stand for are not yet well understood by others. Some would argue that we do not yet well understand ourselves either. As a profession, we have not done a very good job of working to identify who we are, what we stand for, and what we can do for those we serve.' (Ruona 2000b)

Even if one adopts an epistemological position that definitions have value, seeking them is fraught with difficulties especially when one is trying to use language to deal with dynamic constructs in a changing world. This was reflected by the philosopher and novelist Iris Murdoch who, in her 1953 analysis of the writings of Jean-Paul

Sartre, states that : 'The fact is that our awareness of language has altered in the fairly recent past. We can no longer take language for granted as a medium of communication. Its transparency has gone'. (Murdoch 1953, p37 in 1967 Fontana Library edition). She went on to say that the time at which she was writing represented 'the ending of a period of 'essentialist' thinking. In every sphere our simple 'thingy' view of the world is being altered and often disintegrated at an unprecendented rate; and a crisis in our view of the operation of language is inevitable'. (Murdoch ibid p37). She subsequently asked: 'Does the world change first and pull language after it, or does a new awareness of language make us see the world differently?' (Murdoch ibid p39). She was responding to Sartre (1950) who had argued that 'if words are sick, it is up to us to cure them......If one starts deploring the inadequacy of language to reality......one makes oneself an accomplice of the enemy, that is, of propaganda....I distrust the incommunicable: it is the source of all violence'. More recently it has been suggested that words 'change their meanings according to the positions of those who "use" them' (Pecheux et al 1979 p33) and that texts reflect the implicit power orientations of the authors.

Fairclough (1992) refers to the school of 'critical linguistics' which holds, in similar vein, that particular texts embody ideologies or theories. The aim is the 'critical interpretation' of texts; 'recovering the social meanings expressed in discourse by analysing the linguistic structures in the light of their interactional and wider social contexts'. (Fowler et al 1979: pp195-6) The objective is to produce an analytical method for deconstructing texts which is usable by people who are not specialists in linguistics.

Theoretical Framework

Fairclough and Hardy (1997) have suggested that the texts of a number of fields of study can be subjected to 'critical discourse analysis', and apply the technique to the promotional literature of an organisation advertising outdoor training and development courses. Their approach sees written texts as forms of discourse, and draws upon a combination of three different types of analysis; analysis of *discourse (or discursive) practice;* analysis of *sociocultural practice;* and analysis of the *text* itself. Fairclough (1992) describes the method as combining social-theoretical and linguistically oriented perspectives on discourse. *Discourse practice* is central since it constitutes the link between text and sociocultural practice and as a concept originates from the work of Michel Foucault. Among the practices of different professions and disciplines, Foucault (1972) made reference to their 'discursive practices': these incorporate the distinctive language they employ and in particular the objects of knowledge and concepts which furnish the reality they construct as being within their field of interest: the tacit rules governing who speaks with authority and under what circumstances; and the latent intentions and ideologies which determine specific thrusts, biases and power orientations. *Sociocultural practice* entails establishing the immediate situational context; the wider institutional context of the event; and the widest cultural and social context within which the event is framed. According to the 'systemic' linguistic theory of Halliday (1985), any part of a *text* will be simultaneously doing three things; it will be representing and constructing reality (the *ideational* function); it will be projecting and negotiating social relationships and social identities (the *interpersonal* function); and it will be setting up links with other parts of the text and with the context so that the whole is a text rather than a jumble of sentences (the *textual* function).

Research Methods

This paper subjects the position statement on HRD developed by the University Forum for HRD (UFHRD) in 1995 to a descriptive, interpretive and deconstructive 'critical discourse analysis' of the terms within which the definition was framed. The author of this paper is well positioned to do this since he produced the original draft of the UFHRD definition and was a member of the UFHRD workshop consisting of a mix of fifteen academics and practitioners that built on the original draft to produce the 1995 definition. Fairclough (op cit) refers to the importance of collecting supplementary data in analysing a text. This entails 'having a mental model of the order of discourse of the institution or domain one is researching, and the processes of change it is undergoing, as a preliminary to deciding upon where to collect samples.......The discourse analyst should depend upon people in relevant disciplines.....for decisions about which samples are typical or representative of a certain practice; whether the corpus adequately reflects the diversity of practice and changes of practice across different types of situation, and both normative and innovative practice' (p225). He goes on to say that 'there are various ways in which the corpus can be enhanced with supplementary data. One can, for instance, obtain judgments ...from panels of people who are in some significant relation to the social practice in focus'. The following analysis thus draws upon the comments of academics and practitioners associated with the UFHRD ,who were invited to provide email comments on the validity and utility of the statement in defining the HRD domain.

At the time it was written it was felt to be important to have an operational definition that described (and enclosed) the field. Why was this? Was this no more than an act of naivety by members of a new organisation that was trying to carve out a niche for itself?

Position Statement on the Emerging Concept of HRD

The scope of HRD

Just as many authorities see Human Resource Management as a synonym for Personnel Management, so a number of people see Human Resource Development as a synonym for Training and Development. Others see HRM as an umbrella term embracing all HR activities including personnel management, training and development and industrial relations. There is also a school of thought which further restricts the scope of Training and Development to the provision of learning opportunities for employees within a given organisation. These perspectives neither reflect emerging theory and practices on the subject of the scope of HRD nor on its relationship with HRM.

HRD as a process has been usefully defined by Patricia McLagan of the American Society of Training and Development as 'the integrated use of training and development, organisation development and career development to improve individual, group and organisational effectiveness'. These three areas use development as their primary process. HRD as an emerging concept thus encompasses training and development but is not restricted to it.

The target for development opportunities has also been extended beyond the perimeters of a given organisation as activities are increasingly being outsourced and sub-contracted. Non-employee human resource development is concerned with enabling an organisation to influence its external environment through a planned process of learning so that the skills and knowledge of those outside its boundaries on whom it depends to a greater or lesser extent are enhanced.

Strategic HRD is an extension of the above. It puts particular emphasis on the development of comprehensive, co-ordinated and dynamic approaches for major learning initiatives within and outside an organisation in order to facilitate the achievement of all stakeholder objectives in a competitive and turbulent environment.

It is not helpful given this perspective to think of HRD as a sub set of HRM, either in structural or functional terms. As the strategic significance of organisational and individual learning as a source of competitive and co-operative advantage gains recognition, a strategic need arises for appropriately positioned 'learning architects' with the distinctive competences and consultancy skills to orchestrate learning initiatives on behalf of their clients. They need to be seen as partners in the formulation of strategy as well as developers of 'quality' people to deliver strategy.
University Forum for HRD 1995

Analysis

1. Sociocultural Practice: Context

The University Forum for HRD (UFHRD) is a collaborative network of some 30 universities, primarily from the UK , which promotes professionally focused qualifications and co-operative research and consultancy initiatives . Prior to its formation in the early 1990s there had been no academic community of interest pressing the case for HRD in the UK nor was the term HRD commonly used. This definition was developed in 1995 at a time when professionally oriented Masters programmes for advanced practitioners in HRD were beginning to emerge in the UK. Support for their development had been provided by the Institute of Training and Development (ITD) prior to the 1994 amalgamation with the Institute of Personnel Management (IPM) to form the Institute of Personnel and Development (IPD) - as of 2000 the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). The intention had been to establish a national network of universities offering professionally (ITD) recognised Masters programmes across the UK and the initial impetus for the formation of the UFHRD was to facilitate this. The following criteria had been established by the ITD in conjunction with the UFHRD for the recognition of these programmes : providing participants with the analytical, research and process consulting skills and with the knowledge to incorporate HRD issues effectively into organisational overall corporate objectives and to manage change therein including a sustantial research based project focused on real corporate, strategic or professional HRD issues, needs and developments within an actual organisation.
(UFHRD Development Group for Professionally Focussed University Programmes 1995)

The first programme using the above criteria was developed in 1991 by a small team which included the author at South Bank University in London. The first UK professor in HRD was established at Liverpool John Moores University in 1993 to provide research support to their new Masters programme which followed the ITD criteria..

There was a political dimension to the publication of the definition reflecting an anxiety amongst members of the Forum that the values of the larger IPM would swamp those of the smaller ITD in the newly merged IPD organisation. By far the majority of those members of the UFHRD involved in its production were from business schools in the UK, were involved in teaching post-experience part-time students, and were closely associated with colleagues who were teaching students studying for IPM professional qualifications. HRD was perceived by many of these colleagues as a synonym for 'Training and Development', as a subset of of the personnel management professional field, and therefore, in their world view, HRD did not have the same significance as HRM. Stewart and McGoldrick (1996 pvii) in describing their experiences at Nottingham Business School found 'a common view that HRD is generally, and unhelpfully, treated as unproblematic and a subject which is not considered with the seriousness it deserves within academia'. In the same text they further point out that the academic space for HRM within the UK was 'well established, with a growing number of academic departments within universities, a range of dedicated journals for both academics and practitioners and a growing number of specialised HRM programmes on offer'.(McGoldrick and Stewart 1996 p10) . HRD was seen as 'a relatively new concept which has yet to become fully established and accepted, either within professional practice or as a focus of academic enquiry' (Stewart and McGoldrick op cit p1).

Even the use of the term 'HRD' was a subject of ongoing contention, especially in the practitioner community where many felt uncomfortable with the negative associations of people being a 'resource'. The comments of Oxtoby, expressed in 1992, are typical of a view still held by many.

'I hold the view that HRD should be eliminated from all official publications. The words 'Human Resource' reduce people to the same level of importance as materials, money, machinery and methods - which are also resources. People need to be distinguished as the world's greatest asset. HRD is without feeling for people. Who can define what HRD is? Those outside our profession must be confused, when those inside it cannot describe it in a consistent way. HRD is a phrase of the verbose. It takes three words to describe a process when one word is quite sufficient. The bleak prospect for the term 'HRD' may be summarised as: A fashionable flavour of the late 1980s and early 1990s which was promoted by those whose motives for the profession may have been reasonable - but which attempted to gain professional recognition and growth without an everyday feeling for people and their community: a lack of understanding that real growth comes from within the hearts and minds of ordinary people.' (Training and Development (UK) April 1992, quoted in Walton 1999)

2. Textual Analysis

Ideational Function and Terms: Nominalisations. At a descriptive level the textual analysis of terms is part of the *ideational* function, described by Fairclough and Hardy (op cit) as expressing our experience of reality and how we represent this.. One aspect of the ideational function is *nominalisation* – processes turned into nouns in the text. An example would be 'management', which is used as a noun but represents the process of managing, or 'organisation' which represents the process of organising. The text is full of such 'nominalisations', indeed they dominate it: Human Resource *Development*; Human Resource *Management*, Career *Development*; *Organisation Development* and so on. Fairclough and Hardy (ibid) go on to say that: 'What gets lost when a process is nominalised are tense, modality, and a sense of the associated participants in the process. Who is organising? What are they organising? And who is being organised.? A preponderance of nominalisations can have ideological significance, that is these features may be being used in order to hide certain aspects of power or to strengthen presuppositions or taken-for-granteds'. (p148)

In this case the nominalisations were designed to function as labels which would help to create a sense of gravitas about the significance of the emergence of HRD as a field of study and to reinforce the ideological message of what the authors felt the domain consisted.

Interpersonal Function: Grammatical Mood and Modality. The *grammatical mood* represents the extent to which a text uses devices such as declarative sentences – typically statements – or asks questions. The *modality* reflects the degree of commitment to propositions made. As might be expected with a position statement the mood is declarative with a preponderance of categorical statements reflecting considerable affinity and commitment to the various propositions. There are no modal markers such as 'possibly' or 'perhaps'. Thus

'These perspectives neither reflect emerging theory and practices on the subject of the scope of HRD nor on its relationship with HRM.'.

'It is not helpful given this perspective to think of HRD as a subset of HRM either in structural or functional terms'

3. Discursive Practice

A *discourse* is a particular way of constructing or constituting some area of social practice, and there are usually alternative – and competing - discourses available' (Fairclough and Hardy ibid p147). In HRD there are many alternative discourses by which the domain has been interpreted, reflecting different fields of interest and targets for investigation, each competing for contested space, and representing different levels of generality. A number of these are reflected in the position statement, an even larger number are not.

The following are examples of competing discourses which have impacted upon HRD over the years, presented as a series of either-or questions.

- Is HRD a sub-set of HRM or an independent - albeit linked - domain?
- Is HRD a synonym for 'training and development' or something broader?
- Is HRD concerned exclusively with work related behaviour or does it encompass non work related skills?
- Is HRD concerned exclusively with adult learning or with learning from cradle to grave?
- Is HRD concerned with the acquisition of expertise or with learning in the round?
- Is HRD concerned primarily with individual learning or organisational performance?
- Should HRD be defined or not?
- Is HRD a body of practice or an academic field of study?
- Is HRD a function or a process?
- Is HRD concerned exclusively with intentional learning processes or does it incorporate accidental learning processes?
- Is HRD an extension of Training and Development with a specific orientation towards organisational learning interventions designed to improve skills, knowledge and understanding; or does it have wider, more holistic origins focusing on 'the interplay of global, national, organisational and individual needs'? (Stead and Lee 1996).

Overall the statement is far closer to Stead and Lee's position a) than to reflecting an 'interplay of global, national, organisational and individual needs'. There was also an implicit assumption amongst its framers that HRD should be defined. Given that prevailing value orientation this paper analyses in some detail the stance the paper takes on the first two of the competing discourses listed above.

The question of whether HRD is a subset of HRM is one which is particularly prominent in the position statement and which has featured strongly in the subsequents writings of those associated with the UFHRD definition. McGoldrick and Stewart (op cit) state that 'it is almost axiomatic that our argument contends that neither is a sub-set of the other but rather that each has its distinctive, albeit problematical, space in the analysis of contemporary organisations'. Walton (1999) believes that it is of some significance how we see the relationship between HRD and 'HRM' and 'personnel management'. 'To comprehend how HRD relates in a theoretical and practical sense to other areas which see people issues as their primary concern demands an awareness of what the terms 'HRM' and 'personnel management' mean. However, as with 'HRD' they are not precise constructs but represent complex, abstract and fluid concepts whose interpretation depends on the backgrounds and experiences of the users and on 'where they are coming from'. How they are understood can determine HR reporting and power relationships, career structures, functional divisions and job roles.' (p122).

The question of whether or not HRD is a synonym for Training and Development (T&D) is another issue that has figured high on the UFHRD agenda and which is addressed in the position statement. Comments made by the working group that finalised the UFHRD position statement included: 'Comparing HRD to old style T&D is asking the wrong question.' And : 'the role of old-style Training and Development provides a service to the Board alone. HRD perceives employees as customers and considers development part of the reward system'. The McLagan perspective that HRD could be defined as 'the integrated use of training and development, organisation development and career development to improve individual, group and organisational effectiveness' had gained a measure of acceptance in the US and reflected the ideological position of the authors. McGoldrick and Stewart (op cit) justified the inclusion of 'organisation development' on the grounds that a) both conceptual and empirical work in the USA supports the view of HRD as being concerned with organisational as well as individual learning; b) 'it suggests that HRD in common with HRM is strategic and processual as well as being practical and functional'; and c) 'what might be termed traditional training and development focuses attention on the latter, that is on activities which are the concern of professional practitioners and which reflect (merely – my inclusion) immediate and operational needs'. (p13).

It is worth commenting that even for those authorities who feel that the field of HRD is adequately defined by approaches such as McLagan's, there is some discomfort with the view that it can pretend to homogeneity. One of Ruona's sources stated: 'I think another issue is that there's a certain assumption that seems to come through that HRD is a unified field. I see huge differences between my colleagues who see themselves primarily as training experts and those who see themselves primarily as OD experts and those who see themselves as CD experts.' (quoted in Ruona op cit). The position statement does not reflect such uncertainties.

Recent Comments Received on the Position Statement: Ideologies, Thrusts and Biases

At the May 2000 Annual General meeting of the UFHRD it was agreed to circulate the position statement of 1995 to members, and ask for comments on its current usefulness . This followed an earlier (January) debate led by the author on how far HRD met the requirements of a discipline. The following analysis of two of the observations received reflects different ideologies, thrusts and biases – in other words alternative perspectives and power orientations on HRD discursive practice.

One of the contributors to the January debate contended that the current interest in giving credibility to HRD was no more than a group of academics trying to position themselves within the power structure of Universities.. In a letter sent to the UFHRD in advance of the debate he argued: 'What we are doing here is playing politics. What do we want HRD to become to further our own particular interests at this time? So we have a collective interest that can be mobilised around a particular story about what HRD might become?' (Megginson 1999). In a more recent communication he argued: 'Any 'definition' of a field is not a description of the world, but an exercise of power - with the intention of appropriating or excluding other definitions and those that hold them. It seems to me that our definition would be enriched by an acknowledgement that this is going on'. For any HRD definition the question is 'Whose interests will be served and how by defining HRD thus?' (Megginson D.F. 2000). He picked up the enxiety of the original framers of the 1995 position statement, arguing that 'the statement that 'it is not helpful to think of HRD as a subset of HRM'.......is indefensible except as a political ploy. Not helpful to whom, for what purposes? ......Those seeing control as a key task of HRM or those wanting to use competencies to link all HR activities would ...have a conceptual case for seeing HRD as a subset of HRM (not one that I support but nonetheless a case)'. (Megginson ibid)

Another set of comments reflecting a totally different ideological position and perception of the domain was received from Thames Valley University (TVU). For me the comments additionally brought to mind Iris Murdoch's impression, quoted earlier, that the transparency of language as a means of communication has gone. The TVU views are precised as follows.: 'We had concerns about the labels being used.. There seems to be great scope for confusion about the labels attached to this whole domain.. If we start from 'people' the domain of interest seems to be labelled as 'people management and development'; 'personnel and development'; 'people management'; 'training and development'; 'personnel'; HRM; HRD; 'organisation development'; 'career development'; and 'providing learning opportunities'. The position statement uses some of these labels and seeks to draw boundaries between them that we do not recognise. It suggests that T&D is a separate area from organisation development and career development and all are within HRD. It also states that HRD is separate from HRM yet organisation development and career development are certainly within HRM in our perception.

The use of 'resources' in relation to people working in organisations seems to be moving out of favour Our concern was that staying with HRD and HRM would seem to be backward looking for the professionals we are seeking to develop

There seems to be an emphasis in the paper on development in an organisation context. There have been significant moves towards developing the idea of individual responsibility for personal development. This is within lifelong learning, CPD and the decline of a career within within one organisation. The revisions should recognise a responsibility to support the development of the individual in their career terms as well as organisational needs. There seems to be an emerging issue of the selfish learner seeking to meet their learning needs independently of the organisational needs.

Other issues which we discussed were self-managed learning, e-learning, knowledge management, intellectual capital and emotional intelligence as an HRM issue for development. Concern for learning of people should extend to suppliers and customers as well as direct workers. High performance organisations need a strong learning culture that supports independent high performers who accept responsibility for their own learning and are provided with support.

We felt that the operation of individual organisations determines a differentiation between HRM and HRD. We felt that HRM has generally roots in a top down systems focus while HRD is concerned with the individual. Both areas need to be informed by learning theories and motivation and reward.

The conclusion was that the above illustrates the difficulty of trying to develop a definition when so many stakeholders are contributing from their different perspectives.' (Roscoe J. June 2000.)

Conclusion

Both in the US and in the UK the majority of comments from those involved in the definitional debate have related to the need for clarity and specificity. The majority of contributors have also seen the domain within an organisational context. The following quotation is taken from the Rouna (2000a) US study: 'If HRD doesn't define itself the *organisations* that HRD professionals work in will'. It could equally well have been made by many members of the UFHRD. At the January 2000 UFHRD debate the following quotation symbolised the case for clarity of definition and some consensus of perspective from the primarily UK audience. 'We are all professing `what is HRD'. If it doesn't make sense to us how can we explain it to others'..

What has perhaps been less well recognised is that any attempt at definition cuts across different ideological positions and can be perceived as an attempt to exercise power and control. The critical discourse analysis has demonstrated that it is undoubtedly the case that the UFHRD definition was an attempt at a political statement that reflected a particular ideological and power orientation. The ideological stance was clearly understood at the time. At the November 1995 UFHRD working group meeting that helped develop the statement one sub group concluded 'Perhaps a need exists to address the question of why a statement/definition is needed and how it will help/serve the interests of different parties: eg managers, practitioners, academics.' A second sub group came to a similar conclusion: 'However who is the statement for? Academics teaching the subject or practitioners to inform their practice?' This group concluded : 'Both, as we would not wish to encourage/sustain the divide between academics and practitioners.' The power orientation was much more tacit and implicit.

Any attempt at influence is likely to run into resistance. To repeat the Ruona (ibid) quotation given in the introductory paragraph of the participant in her study who passionately argued against defining the field; 'Who needs a definition? .....It's only a problem if you are driven by trying to define your field and your expertise. I don't feel a need to do that.... Our field is strengthened by having different schools of thought and by its diversity......I don't need to control your definition and I'm certainly not going to let you control mine.' In turn this leads to counter-influence attempts as people try to present and project their own views of reality. To quote another contributor to the Ruona study: 'I don't think an individual can raise their core beliefs above a work group.....To think that you should have 10 different people in a department with a set of totally inconsistent and incoherent beliefs and functioning every day, I think is insane'. One inference to be drawn from this quotation is that where there are a group of people who claim to belong to a discrete field of study there must be some community of interest and common perspective that brings them together. Perhaps a more telling inference is that the contributor believes that for political reasons there is a need to present a common front, which in turn implies a measure of control. Perhaps the most significant conclusion to be drawn from the discourse analysis is : 'What went into the UFHRD position statement, what was left out; who decided; and what was the basis of their authority?

Does all of the above matter? I believe it is of enormous significance. How academics frame the world governs what goes into syllabuses and thus what is taught/communicated to others. In the UK at the moment the CIPD is revisiting the whole of the syllabuses that constitute its professional qualification structure. Judgments are being made about what goes in and what stays out. Who makes those judgments and the way they present their claims will determine the content of learning for entrants into the profession for the next few years and in turn have enormous impact upon their world view.

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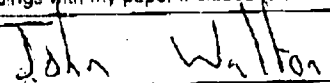***ONLY ONE AUTHOR IS REQUIRED TO SIGN THE FORM.***

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Author Names	John Walton
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