



Cooperation or Aid?

A Corpus-Assisted Critical Discourse Analysis of Finland's Development Policy

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Abstract

The current Finnish development policy, published in 2016, follows the *United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and its 17 sustainable development goals. With the help of a few tools from corpus linguistics, this study conducts a critical discourse analysis of the policy, using Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional method for CDA as its methodological framework and post-development theory as its main theoretical background. The study focuses on the definitions of development and its implementation as put forward by the policy, and how the policy text relates to its production and consumption as well as to the social and political context in which it is situated. Rather than working toward cooperation and participation which it promises, the policy reinforces the image of top-down aid dictated by institutions of the global North. It juxtaposes Finland as a giver and saviour with countries in the global South as vulnerable receivers of aid, granting little agency for the institutions, let alone the people, of its development partners.

Keywords: Development policy, Finland, post-development, CDA, hegemony.

1. Introduction

Finland adopted its current development policy on February 4th 2016, replacing the earlier policy from 2014. The new policy was based on the *United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* from the previous year with a set of new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The methodology used in the study, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), is a framework that analyses the relationship between language use and social life and is a useful tool for unearthing traces of hegemonic discourse in a text (Donoghue, 2018). Combined with post-development theory which criticises development as a hegemonic project of the global North, the study uses CDA to analyse institutional development discourse and power relations between Finland and its development partners.

1.1. Aim

The aim is to analyse Finland's development policy issued in 2016 amidst the 2015 'refugee crisis.' By analysing the policy, and how it relates to the *United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, the study aims to shed light on traces of asymmetrical power relations in development discourse. Following Norman Fairclough's methodological framework for CDA, the paper combines linguistic and social analysis in addressing the following research questions:

1. How does the Finnish government define development?
2. How is the implementation of development defined?
3. What is the style of the report compared to the previous Finnish development policy from 2014?
4. How does the report relate to the UN 2030 Agenda and the wider Finnish context?

2. Background

This section introduces the socio-historical context the Finnish government operates in and the social practices of the small Nordic state. It then delves into post-development, the main theory the study relies on, and from there continues to the methodology of critical discourse analysis. Finally it will take a look at previous work in the field of CDA concerning development discourse.

2.1 Situational context

2.1.1 Finland, the Nordics and the United Nations

United Nations (UN) is an international organization founded in 1945 and according to its charter, it is based on the equality of its members and one of its main purposes is:

to achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.

(U.N. Charter, 1945)

In its 2015 resolution, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, the UN defines development as sustainable, collective and mutually beneficial as it declares that '[w]e are setting out together on the path towards sustainable development, devoting ourselves collectively to the pursuit of global development and of “win-win” cooperation which can bring huge gains to all countries and all parts of the world' (UN, 2015, p.6).

Finland is a member state of the UN and its development activities are based on the UN 2030 Agenda (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, n.d.-a). As a part of the Nordics, a group of small Northern European states, Finland shares similarities in its socio-political structures with its western neighbours. The UN has historically been a cornerstone of Nordic countries' foreign and aid policies which have mixed idealism with the understanding that small countries benefit from a rules-based world order. Furthermore, in the field of development Nordic donors have often been seen as being in the forefront of protecting women's and children's rights, the environment, 'good governance', human rights and democracy (Engh & Paro, 2009).

2.1.2 A prosperous society

Finland has transformed from a poor country receiving foreign aid in the aftermath of the Second World War to one of the most prosperous countries in the world. After the war, it received humanitarian aid from UNRRA (UNRRA, n.d.) and took loans from the World Bank (World Bank, n.d.) to build its infrastructure and industries.

Nowadays, Finland consistently tops international rankings in health, education and equality. It is ranked as the stablest, freest and safest country in the world, and ranks in top three in things such as gender equality and literacy (Statistics Finland, n.d.; Hilson, 2008). A common explanation for Finland's comparative success has been the 'Nordic model.' The model was based on the Nordic welfare state, developed in cooperation between the Nordic countries and their Social Democrat governments and was seen as a compromise between socialism and capitalism. But increasingly, new explanations for the Nordic model, emphasising Nordic culture and identity, have become popular. These explanations use more vague terms such as Nordic brand or Nordic well-being instead of the welfare state, which are thought as easier to export and productise than social structures (Liukas, 2019).

2.1.3 The Finnish government and the refugee crisis

In 2015, a new government was formed by the traditional right-wing parties, National Coalition Party and Centre Party, with the populist right-wing Finns party. The same year, the government decided to cut development cooperation by 43% (Gotev, 2015), and between 2014 and 2018 development appropriations of the Finnish government dropped from 0.56% of GNI to 0.38% of GNI (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, n.d.-b) while the UN target is 0.7% of GNI (UN, 1970).

The formation of the new Finnish government coincided with the so-called 'European Refugee Crisis' during which more than a million people arrived in Europe over the Mediterranean Sea in 2015 and early 2016 (UNHCR, n.d.). The crisis ended for the EU after it reached an agreement with Turkey in March of 2016 which included Turkey agreeing to prevent 'irregular migration' routes to Europe in exchange for €3 billion in financial aid and easing of visa requirements for Turkish citizens to the EU (Corrao, 2019).

2.2 Post-Development theory

A disillusionment toward the achievements of development raised post-development theory to prominence in the 1980s. Instead of leading to poor countries catching up to rich ones, the era of development from 1949 onward had led to a massive loss of diversity and the Westernisation of the world (Ziai, 2007; Sachs, 2009). Post-development sees development as an ideology and an economic form of colonialism which dominant powers created in order to find a tool for their economic and geopolitical expansion, replacing the old political

colonialism (Rahnema & Bawtree, 1997). The definition of ideology in this context draws from the Marxist tradition as a system of constructing reality that sustains power relations in the interest of a dominant group, and is linked to the Gramscian concept of hegemony, i.e. consensual dominance (Simpson & Mayr, 2008). Thus, the ideology of development has, through discourse, created a means for producing knowledge about and control over poor countries (Escobar, 1995).

The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines development as 'action or process of bringing something to a fuller or more advanced condition' (Oxford University Press, 2020a). According to Sachs (2009), *development* was first used as a metaphor for the natural growth of living organisms and was used interchangeably with *evolution* by 18th century natural scientists. From there it gradually spread to the social sphere as historical processes began to be explained with the same inevitability as natural laws.

In its contemporary use, *development* evades a precise definition. According to Esteva, it has since become 'a mere algorithm whose significance depends on the context in which it is employed', but it 'always implies a favourable change [...] from the inferior to the superior, from worse to better' (Esteva, 2009, p.6). Thus, *development* can mean anything from software industries to oil drilling and to building toilets. It is used on the one hand to mean economic growth, in the interests of a world view where well-being is measured by economic success, and on the other, the expansion of rights and autonomy for the poor. Referring to both concepts with the same term, according to Sachs (2009), is confusing and borders on political cover-up.

The era of development began with the purpose of consolidating post-war American hegemony. Esteva quotes Harry S. Truman who proclaimed 'we must embark on a [...] program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas' (p.1). This, Esteva says, created a homogeneous mass of 2 billion people who were now underdeveloped and whose existence was diminished into reflections of others' reality, while the 'Western' industrialized society and its knowledge became the one-size-fits-all goal of social evolution (Esteva, 2009).

Looking at language through the Gramscian lens of cultural hegemony we can see that the ideological and other interests of the global North have been naturalized into 'common sense' through development. Hegemony in this context means when a dominant group with privileged access to resources exercises its power over a subordinate group by manipulation,

persuasion, and in other ways to create social unity in favour of the dominant group (Donoghue, 2018; Van Dijk, 1993). A concept becomes 'common sense' in Gramscian terms when an ideology is naturalized into the "'average" world view of the population' (Donoghue, 2018, p.400) and its ideological nature becomes hidden. As development has become 'common sense', it is not surprising when Sachs says that 'the South has emerged as the staunchest defender of development' (2008, p.viii). However, using development to work toward epistemological or material equity for the global South, even with the South participating in the process, leads to the danger of reproducing the world-view and the interests of the global North. This combined with the fact that the industrialized mode of society which development has furthered is the main culprit of one of our time's greatest threats, global warming, (Marks, 2015) means development cannot be seen merely as a process of 'bringing something to a fuller or more advanced condition' as per OED's (2020a) definition.

As an alternative to development, post-development proposes a decolonization of the mind and argues for separating the 'desire for equity from economic growth' and 'relinking it to community- and culture-based notions of well-being' (Sachs, 2008, p.xii). Unlike concepts such as participatory development who seek to mould development to account for the needs of the 'other', post-development criticises the whole concept of development and argues that using it to further the goals of the subaltern 'impedes thinking of one's own objectives, [...] undermines confidence in oneself and one's own culture, [...] clamours for management from the top down, [...] [and] converts participation into a manipulative trick to involve people in struggles for getting what the powerful want to impose on them' (Sachs, 2008, p.3).

Lie (2008) on the other hand criticises post-development theory and argues that in its portraying of development as a hegemonic discourse, it is guilty of losing sight of individuals and agency. He draws from his experiences in interacting with local actors of the South and argues that in the field, development discourse is not a one-way-street but instead local project staff 'can be manipulative and strategic with regard to imposed discourses and [...] have a tremendous impact on the local articulation and implementation of donor's development discourse' (p. 119). While Lie argues that post-development fails to take into account the relational aspect of power, seeing the subject as only reproducing development discourse, he does credit the theory for 'understanding the formal order of development on the macro-structural level and the interrelationship between various overarching structures and

ideas concerning development', but argues that it fails to provide 'an approach to the micro-level practices of actors' (p.119).

Thus, it is important to keep in mind that the global South is not only the receiver of development discourse but that there is a dialectical dimension when it is locally articulated. While taking into account the critique of post-development itself, this study will take a critical perspective of development discourse and analyse the relationship between the language of the text, the practices of producing and consuming the text, and the underlying social structures that affect discourse. This leads us to Fairclough's model for CDA.

2.3 CDA as a methodological framework

To analyse traces of hegemonic discourse, the study uses Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA as its methodological framework, as the model focuses on analysing language and its relationship with societal power. According to Fairclough (1995, p.7), "discourse" is the use of language seen as a form of social practice' and 'texts negotiate social relations between people in circumstances of doubt or contestation.' The model is based on the principle that discourse has a dialectical relationship with social structures. Therefore, it analyses discursive events, e.g. texts, in relation to how they are shaped by social structures and how they in turn shape, produce and transform those structures (Richardson, 2007). To do this, the model divides all 'real world' language use into three interconnected dimensions, textual, discourse practice and social practice, analysing the linguistic features of the text, the implications of its production and consumption, and its relation to its social context (Fairclough, 1995, 2003; Simpson & Mayr, 2010).

As the model focuses on the linguistic analysis of discourse, it begins with the textual dimension. The levels of textual analysis go from the micro to the macro level; from word choice to how propositions are structured on the sentence level, and how those propositions are combined and sequenced (Richardson, 2007).

The relationship between text and society is not direct but is mediated by discursive practices. This dimension of analysis concerns itself with text production, distribution and consumption. These intermediaries between text and society are, e.g. the professional practices of journalists (Simpson & Mayr, 2008, 2010) or, in this case, the practices of civil servants and politicians.

If the relationship between text and society is mediated by discursive practices, then the social practices are organizational entities mediating the relationship between discursive events and abstract social structures; those events themselves (re)producing, challenging and transforming power relations and ideological struggles within those social structures (Fairclough, 2003; Simpson & Mayr, 2010).

Fairclough's CDA differentiates itself from more descriptive models of discourse analysis. Instead of only describing the relationship between language and social life, it sheds light to the 'reproduction of relations of domination' (Fairclough, 1995, p.24) and aims to change the power patterns of the institutions it analyses (Simpson & Mayr, 2010).

2.4 Previous work

There seems to be a gap in research when it comes to development discourse in the Finnish context. There are some studies on Nordic models of development, such as Engh and Paro's (2009) 'Nordic Cooperation in Providing Development Aid', but they seem to concentrate on Scandinavian countries, leaving Finland as a side note. Therefore, this study looked at discourse analyses dealing with the UN 2030 agenda to see what kind of findings those studies have lead to regarding the discursive and social practices of the UN and the global North at large.

In Ala-Uddin's (2019) *Sustainable Discourse: A Critical Analysis of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, sustainability is seen as a 'significant step in the field of development' (p.1) but there is a lack of consensus when it comes to the definition to sustainability. He argues that development discourse has focused on poverty and created a juxtaposition of the ones receiving development as poor and vulnerable and 'Western' countries as rich saviours. According to Ala-Uddin, the focus of development under the new Sustainable Development Goals has focused more on 'social inclusion, environmental protection and economic prosperity' but the priority still seems to be economic growth as defined by donor countries and aid organizations. Uddin argues that the institutions of rich countries define problems and design the implementation of development. Furthermore, he accuses UN of reinforcing neoliberal ideology; a policy model emphasising the role of free-markets in allocating resources and driving for minimal state intervention in social and economic matters (Smith, N, n.d.).

Juan Tellerea (2017) also accuses the UN of naturalizing neoliberal order and turning political issues to technical ones by excluding the dimension of conflict in development and concealing the political causes behind underdevelopment. According to Tellerea, it links development with economic growth, democracy, well-being and freedom but not with domination and conflict. Thus, 'according to this approach, no power relations have to be changed in order to overcome underdevelopment' (p.1).

Tellerea (2018) analyses 'the intentionality of the power dynamics in the UN development agenda' (p.3). According to him, the institutional restructuring of the world during and after WWII, e.g. founding of the UN which established 'the political framework in which 'legitimate' political action could take place' (p.11), was intentional. On the other hand, those drafting the UN agendas now are probably not intentionally reproducing power dynamics of hegemonic discourse but 'simply trying to combat certain social issues *within the legitimate political field*' (p.11). This emphasises the importance of including the analysis of discursive and social practices in CDA as the civil servants drafting the policies and agendas follow established frameworks that have been influenced by the social practices of institutions such as the UN.

Ala-Uddin (2019) and Tellerea (2017) both take a critical look at the production of reality through hegemonic processes and shed light to a neoliberal tenet behind the inclusive language of the UN agenda, while Tellerea (2018) adds the dimension of intentionality to the (re)production of discourse. These three studies add focus to the criticism that post-development aims at development.

3. Design of the study

The study was constructed around the current Finnish development policy from 2016. To analyse discursive practices and social practices, the *United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and *Government Report on Development Policy 2014* were used as contextualization.

3.1 Data

This section introduces the data used for the study. It includes a short description of their content, context, and information on the process of their production.

3.1.1 Government Report on Development Policy 2016

The Finnish development policy (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2016) was published as a report to the Finnish parliament on February 4th, 2016 by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Finnish development policy follows the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of United Nations Agenda 2030 which aims to eradicate poverty and ensure 'wellbeing in an environmentally sustainable manner' (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, n.d.-c).

The policy report is available on the Foreign Ministry's website in Finnish, Swedish and English. The English version is a translation of the Finnish report. This study analysed the English version because, while the main producer-consumer relationship of the original report is between the Finnish government, the parliament and the public, the English language version is the one available for Finland's development partners. Thus, when analysing power relations between the global North and South, the discursive event analysed should be the one that is communicated to the outside world.

The study was unable to find information on specific discursive practices of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, e.g. guidelines for policy reports. The document does not specify an author for the text but the foreign minister responsible for development policy at the time was Timo Soini of the Finns Party.

3.1.2 Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The UN 2030 Agenda (UN, 2015) was agreed by member states in 2015 and declared 17 goals for sustainable development which are to be striven for: No poverty, zero hunger, good health and wellbeing, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth; industry, innovation and infrastructure; reduced inequalities, sustainable cities, responsible consumption and production, climate action, life below water, life on land; peace, justice and strong institutions; and partnerships for the goals (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, n.d.-c).

3.1.3 Government Report on Development Policy 2014

The previous Finnish development policy (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2014) was published on May 8th, 2014 and was the last development policy within the fifteen-year span of the UN Millennium Development Goals. The authors of the report are not mentioned but the foreign minister at the time was Erkki Tuomioja from the Social Democratic Party. The government

was a rainbow coalition, comprised of members of the parliament from the National Coalition Party and Social Democrats both with six seats; the Swedish People’s Party, Left Alliance, and the Green League with two seats; and the Christian Democrats with one seat (Government Communications Department, n.d.).

As the study focuses on the current development policy, the previous policy from 2014 is used as a reference point to analyse discursive practices in the style and structure of the 2016 policy report. Therefore, the 2014 policy will not be analysed on the textual level but is used merely to contextualize the 2016 policy.

3.1.4 Corpora

In order to analyse word choice in the Finnish 2016 policy as well as to compare discursive practices in relation to the previous policy, the study built corpora from the English versions of the 2016 report (FIN2016) as well as the 2014 report (FIN2014). The document from 2014 was divided into two corpora due to its size, as elaborated further in the next section.

Filename	Source	Date	Wordcount	Author	Name of the Document
FIN2016	Ministry for Foreign Affairs	04/02/16	12185	N/A	Government Report on Development Policy 2016
FIN20141	Ministry for Foreign Affairs	08/05/14	11907	N/A	Government Report on Development Policy 2014
FIN20142	Ministry for Foreign Affairs	08/05/14	12134	N/A	Government Report on Development Policy 2014

Table 1. List of corpora used in the study.

3.2 Method

3.2.2 Corpus analysis

The study used the corpus analysis tool AntConc to find frequently used words and collocations, which were then analysed further in a qualitative manner. These keywords were searched using *word list*, *concordance*, and *collocates* tools.

A *word list* is a list of all the words in a corpus sorted by frequency, showing the number of types and tokens in a corpus. A *concordance* is a list of words from the corpus that can be analysed in their context. *Collocate* on the other hand is a word that appears in the context of a given search term. The *collocate* tool enables the user to set the span of words that collocates are searched in, e.g. '5L' to '5R' from the search term, as well as to sort them either by mutual information score or by the frequency of collocation (Newcastle University, n.d.).

Apart from finding keywords, AntConc was also used in the discursive practices section to analyse the density of text in the 2016 policy report’s layout as well as its lexical richness compared to the previous policy. The density of text was analysed by comparing the total

number of words to the number of pages in the document. The lexical richness of the reports was analysed by uploading the corpora to AntConc and comparing the number of tokens (total number of words in a corpus) to the number of types (number of distinct words in a corpus), resulting in a type-token-ratio, TTR. FIN2014 corpus comprised of about twice the amount of tokens compared to the FIN2016 which might skew the results as TTR tends to decrease the more types there are in a corpus due to the higher likelihood of repeating the same words in a longer text (Cheng, 2012). This could be fixed by a standardized type-token-ratio (by dividing the corpus into corpora of e.g. 1000 words and calculate the average TTR), but AntConc lacks a tool for this. So, in order to calculate a more average TTR, the FIN2014 was divided into two corpora (FIN2014/1 and FIN2014/2).

3.2.3 Qualitative analysis

There are multitudes of ways to analyse language on different levels which means delimitations needed to be made for this study due to its scope. The study moved from word level textual analysis to the construction of propositions and used the following tools for linguistic analysis: *Word choice* helps analysing what implications choice has through connoted and denoted meaning as the text relates to its social surroundings, while *naming and referring* looks at who is referred to and how. On the sentence level, *material processes* are verb processes about doing. They consist of a relationship between the action, its circumstances, agents, and patients; agent being the one who acts and patient the target of the action. *Relational processes* on the other hand have an agent and an attribute, e.g. possessing, lacking, and being, while *modality* tells us about attitudes and judgements, and about the speakers commitment toward their claim. Finally, *metaphor* is the referral to an object with the terms of another, e.g. refugees as natural phenomena (Richardson, 2007).

Research question 1: How does the Finnish government define development?

To answer the first research question, the study began by analysing word choice around development. Then the study continued to the sentence level, and through analysing transitivity, in this case relational processes, it studied what kind of processes are attributed to those who are considered developed and those who are not. In the section analysing the juxtaposition of developed and underdeveloped, the study included analysis of metaphor to see how underdevelopment is conceptualized.

Due to the scope of the study, and the research questions focusing on definition, macro level textual features (such as the combining and sequencing of propositions) were only analysed as they related to how different definitions of development were put forward.

Research question 2: How is the implementation of development defined?

The second research question was answered by first looking at who are named as participants in the process of development. Then the analysis moved again to the sentence level, looking at transitivity; in this case who are involved in material processes.

Research question 3: What is the style of the report compared the previous Finnish development policy from 2014?

To answer the third research question, the study analysed the discursive practices behind the *Finnish Government Report on Development policy 2016*. As guidelines nor information on the professional practices of civil servants in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were not available, the study compared the structure and style of the 2016 policy to the *Finnish Report on Development Policy 2014*.

Research question 4: How does the report relate to the UN 2030 Agenda and the wider Finnish context?

The fourth research question was answered by comparing the priorities of the Finnish policy to the ones put forward by the UN. Here, the foci are the Finnish state's practices as a member state of the UN and as a small country on the world stage. This also relates to the structure of the Finnish society and its implications on Finland's development priorities.

4. Results and discussion

This section focuses on the results of the three dimensions of analysis. First is the textual level of analysis, focusing on the definitions of development and its implementation. Then, the study moves to the discursive practices in the style and structure of the document and finally to social practices.

4.1 How does the Finnish government define development?

Development as cooperation or aid

The analysis began by using AntConc's *collocates* tool to search the FIN2016 corpus with the term *development*, search parameters set to span from 2L to 2R with minimum collocate frequency at 3 and sorted by frequency.

Rank	Freq	Stat	Collocate
1	93	5.23541	policy
2	79	3.99355	finland
3	51	4.77078	cooperation
4	32	4.49067	sustainable

Table 2. List of collocates of *development*

Policy and *Finland* do not tell much about word choice as the document is the Finnish development policy. After that, the most often used lexical word around development is *cooperation* which is used 51 times compared to, for example, *aid* which is used only four times. The policy does not explicitly define what *development cooperation* entails but states that:

(1) The development cooperation implemented by Finland over the past years and its outcomes have been thoroughly evaluated. Finnish development cooperation is considered of high quality and effective. (p.4)

The choice of *cooperation* instead of *aid* is interesting. In the OED, under *development*, *development aid* is listed as a compound while *development cooperation* is not. It gives the following definitions for *cooperation* and *aid*:

Co-operation, *n.* **1.** The action of co-operating, i.e. of working together towards the same end, purpose, or effect.

(Oxford University Press, 2020b)

Aid, *n.* **2. a.** Help, assistance, support, esp. of a practical nature. **b.** Material help given to a country or region by another country or an international agency; *esp.* economic assistance to a poor or underdeveloped country.

(Oxford University Press, 2020c)

Aid has a strong semantic connection to international assistance; thus it is safe to say that according to OED, *development aid* is the more established term for this concept. The choice of *cooperation* then is interesting as it describes a process where parties work together, both having agency in the situation, for a common goal, instead of *aid* where one party actively gives something to another and the other receives the help. This reciprocity is brought up in the first sentence of the report:

(2) Development policy is important not only for those receiving support but also for Finland [...] Safe living conditions, human rights, people's ability to influence issues which affect them, an adequate income, and a good living environment in the developing countries are important goals in their own right. (p.3)

This is the first definition of *development* the policy puts forward, and its benefits for poor countries seem evident. At the same time the roles of a 'receiver' and 'giver' are established although the 'giver', Finland, is implied. Finland's role in development is defined on the next page:

(3) By contributing to the resolution of world-wide problems, Finland boosts its foreign policy role and economic position and improves its chances to get its voice heard internationally. (p.4)

The benefits of cooperation are portrayed as something reciprocal, where Finland helps to resolve problems and benefits from it economically and politically.

Development as sustainability

If development aid is defined as *cooperation*, then the mode of development the report puts forward is an adjective, *sustainable*. As table 2 shows, *sustainable* has the fourth highest frequency as a collocate to development with 32 hits. In thirteen of the hits *sustainable* refers to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development or its goals. The definition on OED that is the most fitting in this context defines *sustainable* as follows:

3. **a.** Capable of being maintained or continued at a certain rate or level. 3. **b.** Designating forms of human activity (esp. of an economic nature) in which environmental degradation is minimized, esp. by avoiding the long-term depletion of natural resources; of or relating to activity of this type.

(Oxford University Press, 2020d).

Definition **b.** is especially interesting in that it explicitly mentions economic activity but does it in relation to environmental factors. So, *sustainable* has an economic connotation but only as it relates to avoiding environmental degradation.

Following this, the study went through all of the instances of *sustainable* in the document and looked at the contexts it appears in. As expected from the OED definition, *sustainable* is used often in two specific contexts: economy and the environment. What is interesting is that the economic factors are listed as only one of seventeen on the list of UN sustainable development goals but in the Finnish report *sustainable* is used as an economic term nine times, six of those before any other uses, e.g. 'sustainable growth of economies', 'sustainable investments', 'a sustainable market economy', 'sustainable economic growth', 'sustainable consumption.' *Sustainable* is used in connection to the environment eight times, e.g. 'sustainable agriculture', 'sustainable management of water and sanitation', 'sustainable and modern energy for all', and 'sustainably manage forests.' The final use of the term is,

(4) prerequisites for sustainable development are all based on the citizens' right to form associations, have a say in the society, and influence their own lives. (p.44)

This is interesting as here the Finnish government defines *sustainable development* as participation. This will be analysed further as the study addresses the second question, 'how is the implementation of development defined?'

Development as security

Security seems to be a major motivator for the Finnish government to finance development cooperation. In the Finnish report, security in the context of immigration is brought up in its third paragraph when it is stated that,

(5) When people enjoy good lives in their home countries, they do not have to leave in large numbers to seek refuge or livelihoods abroad. Development increases security: many conflicts are avoided, and there is less room for extremist movements and terrorism. (p.3)

There's an incentive for Finland to help create better living conditions in the global South in order to curb immigration. Although it is not specified if immigrants are fleeing extremism or potentially bringing it to Finland, a connection between immigration and terrorism and the lack of development is created. It is also worth to mention the implicit separation between *us* and *them*, and the potentiality of those in the poor countries leaving their homes and moving into ours, unless they receive development.

Refugee or *refugees* is mentioned 19 times in the Finnish report. In example (6), as the report lists what Finland advocates for, it first mentions 'support for countries of origin and transit countries', i.e. solving the problems away from Finland, and only then 'the protection of the rights of refugees.'

(6) Finland advocates for the following: increased support for countries of origin and transit countries, more efficient coordination of the support, the protection of the rights of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants and their just treatment. (p.24)

It seems to be important to protect refugees, but mainly when it takes place away from Finland. In example (7), the same theme of fixing issues regarding refugees in the global South continues by emphasising the causes for refugeeism:

(7) Finland advocates joint solutions to the refugee situation and seeks to address the root causes of refugeeism. (p.24)

The use of the living organism metaphor, 'root causes', is interesting as it emphasises the spatial aspect of the issue. It gives the impression that unwanted people and phenomena, i.e. extremism and terrorism, are sprouting from their roots in the global South. None of these 'root causes' are specified in the document. Thus, it seems that the spatial aspect is the most important factor, not the causes themselves. If we go back to Telleria's criticism of the UN,

that it hides the aspect of conflict in development, we can see the same practice in action here. The root causes are implied to be problems of the global South, not the outcome of asymmetrical power relations between North and South.

In examples (8) and (9), refugees are referred metaphorically either to a number or to a body of water. And again by collocation, a link between extremism and refugees is made.

(8) The effects of refugee flows and increased migration on development policy. (p.23)

(9) While Kenya is the economic and political hub of Eastern Africa, it suffers from problems caused by extremist movements and large numbers of refugees. (p.36)

Following these examples, it is clear that Finland juxtaposes development as security and well-being against a lack of development threatening Finland in the form of extremism and masses of unwanted people.

Lack of development

Those in the global South are mostly described in relational verb processes relating to negative features or their needs due to their underdevelopment:

(10) Many countries are still guilty of human rights violations. (p.6)

The choice of the adverb *still* and the predicative adjective *guilty* in example (10) is interesting as, first, it implies that developing countries violate human rights, and second, there should have been a change but for some reason has not. This could be interpreted as, despite Finland's efforts, who is not guilty of the crimes of the underdeveloped, these countries have not yet gone through this natural evolution of development like Finland has. The attribute given to those countries in relational processes is *need*:

(11) What they need is a socially responsible private sector and sustainable investments to generate new jobs and livelihood opportunities, to mobilize tax revenue to allow them to finance their own spending. (p.7)

(12) They need better-functioning and more accountable governance and a civil society that can address irregularities and consolidate the democratic foundations. (p.7)

In example (11) and (12) the verb *need* is used to categorically assert what is good for poor countries. The choice of *need* also implies that poor countries' private sectors are not socially responsible, and their governments lack accountability. When Finland is described in relational processes, instead of the verb *need*, *possess* is used:

(13) Finland possesses the credibility and know-how to foster gender equality internationally. (p.16)

In a few cases, when the report makes propositions about countries in the global South, those receiving aid, the text uses the modal verb *may* which creates an uncertain truth modality (emphases added):

(14) Developing countries *may* have weak and corrupt government structures. (p.5)

(15) They *may* lack an economic base, and because of inadequate tax revenue, governments *may* be unable to provide necessary services and secure people's rights. (p.6)

By using *may*, instead of making a categorical assertion the proposition creates a smoke screen on the process of homogenizing developing countries into one corrupt and inadequate mass in need of assistance.

A separation of 'us' and the 'other' is created when the policy juxtaposes the global South with Finland when the report categorically asserts:

(16) The rights of women and girls are self-evident to all Finns, whereas in developing countries gender inequality is one of the greatest problems. (p.16)

It is also noticeable that the people of Finland are given praise, while the peoples of the global South are not mentioned but are referred to as 'developing countries.'

4.2 How is the implementation of development defined?

Participation

For the second research question, we need to look at who participates in development. The AntConc concordance tool was used to search the corpus with the terms *participation*, *participant**, and *participate**; asterisk was used to include different forms derived from the lemma.

Participation was used three times, *participant** once and *participate** eleven times. One hit was excluded as the sentence was a combination of a clause in the body of the text and in a 'speech bubble' which were unrelated.

Keyword in Context
Women in conflict situations and their participation
support for the participation of higher education institutions
Sustainable Development is based on the active participation of various societal actors
The EU is a key international participant in development policy
own property and participate in all development
may be a useful way to participate
people have an opportunity to participate in decision making
Finnish companies to participate in development
decisionmaking and participate in economic
more rapidly to support or participate in peace mediation
private sector, and it also participates in projects
development policy and participates in the formulation
developing countries and participate in worldwide efforts
their opportunities to participate strenghtens

Table 3. *Participation*, *participant** and *participate** in context.

The policy mentions participation in the context of local people in recipient countries four times. When it does this, it highlights the role of women (emphases added):

(17) Finland will strive to secure the protection and rights of *women* in conflict situations *and their participation* in the resolution of conflicts. (p.17)

(18) Finland will support the local private sector and its international partners to encourage them to improve the *chances of women* to find employment, work as entrepreneurs, own property and *participate in the economy*. (p.17)

(19) Experience has shown that *enhancing the rights and the status of women and girls and their opportunities to participate* strengthens the society as a whole, thus promoting the achievement of the other development goals. (p.16)

The participation of women is brought forward multiple times. However, how this participation will be realised or what it concretely means is vague. If we look at the material processes in all three examples, women are the targets instead of agents of action and have no agency themselves. Thus, it seems it is not really the participation of local women in the implementation of development that the policy strives for, instead the participation of women is merely another definition of *development*.

Only once, participation is granted to the locals in the actual decision making regarding development, but even then it is utterly devoid of concrete action:

(20) *The aim is also to strengthen the capacity of individuals and authorities to promote human rights as well as to assure that development cooperation is not discriminatory and people have an opportunity to participate* in decision-making. (p.13, emphasis added)

Actors and players

As the search with *participation* and its derivatives yielded insufficient results and the study aimed to look at who is described as an active participant in the process of implementing development, it moved to further analysis of transitivity. As material processes must have agents, the study searched AntConc again with *actor* (2), *actors* (29), *player* (1) and *players* (5); the number of hits represented in the brackets. Taking a closer look at results with *actors* and *players*, the study sorted the concordance results from 1L, 2L, 3L.

Keyword in Context
Multilateral organisations and players
UN and other international players
EU and other international players
contribution will be focussed on players
companies and other players

Table 5. *Players* in context.

Keyword in Context
Finnish development actors
as well as Finnish actors
different types of Finnish actors
dialogue with Finnish actors
central government actors
efforts of international actors
Development Banks are key actors
cooperation with local actors
different ministries, political actors
various societal actors

Table 4. *Actors* in context.

Finnish actors was mentioned four times, international actors twice, and local actors once. The context of *local actors* is the report mentioning the 'Business With Impact Programme' of the Finnish government that funds Finnish companies to help them get into developing nations' markets (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, n.d.-d). All of the instances of *players* were international organizations or companies.

The context of 'contribution will be focussed on players' seen in table 5 displays a noticeable lack of specificity in some of the material processes of the text. In example (21), the circumstances are put in the forefront:

(21) *Due to Finland's present economic situation*, its financial contribution will be focussed on players that most effectively promote the priorities of Finnish development policy. (p.30, emphasis added)

The document doesn't specify the economic situation nor does it refer to any studies or economic calculations; instead it is implied as common knowledge. In example (21), the action in the clause, 'financial contribution *will be focussed*', could be interpreted as a euphemism to cutting of financial contribution. Furthermore, the patient in the clause is unspecific, 'players that most contribute the priorities of Finnish development policy.' The report mentions several main players Finland cooperates with in the field of development: EU (which cooperates with ACP), UN, WHO, ILO, WTO, OECD, African Tax Administration Forum, IDEA, g7+ group, WFP, World Bank, Development Banks, and the Nordic Development Fund. The only institutions of the global South the report mentions are g7+, African Tax Administration Forum, and ACP, while it states that:

(22) 'Finland channels its development funding especially through the World Bank and the African Development Bank. In doing this, it can have an influence on the priorities and practices of the said institutions.' (p.33)

If we think about what kind of influence Finland wants to have in those organizations, we can look at the principles of the Finnish report:

(23) Finland's values and principles [...] provide long-term guidelines for action, which remain valid from one government term to the next. These values and principles include democracy and the rule of law; gender equality and human rights; freedom of speech; a sustainable market economy and sustainable use of natural resources; and the *Nordic welfare state*, including a high level of education. *The Nordic social model* enjoys a good reputation in many developing countries, and there is a demand for related know-how. (p.12, emphasis added)

The emphasis on the Nordic welfare state is interesting as it goes against the argument regarding the stripping of the welfare state from the Nordic Brand. While the Finnish government seems to have the welfare state as a core value it seeks to export as development, it seems almost like a catchphrase as no concrete features of the Nordic welfare state are mentioned.

There is a disconnection between the idealistic words and the traces of discourse the text analysis brings out. The criticism by post-development toward the vagueness of *development* and its implications of cultural hegemony is visible in the language of the policy. For the Finnish state *development* means, among other things, gender equality, less refugees to Europe, welfare state, and economic growth; i.e. a number of things which some are arguably beneficial for people in the global South and some that work mainly in the interests of Finland.

The givers of aid decide how development resources are accessed by the receivers of aid. Thus, the priorities Finland puts forward in its policy, are a clear example of cultural hegemony, even if some of them are beneficial for the global South. For *cooperation* to actually mean reciprocity, the local actors in the South would need to be included not only in the concrete implementation of development in the field but in the definition of development in the policies.

4.3 Stylistic choices

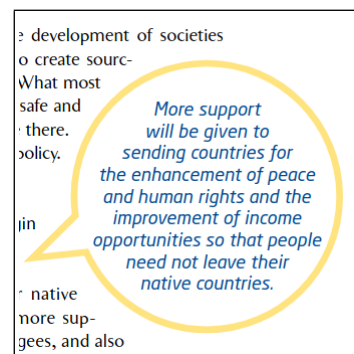
As stated earlier, there were no guidelines or other material available for the study regarding the production of policy reports in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Therefore, to analyse discursive practices, this section focuses on the differences and similarities in the structures and styles of the 2016 and 2014 policy reports.

The 2016 Finnish report has 52 pages and 12,244 words and the 2014 Finnish report has 65 pages and 24,137 words. This means there is a 36% drop in word density and a 49% drop in overall word count between the Finnish 2014 and 2016 reports. Also the type-token ratio, i.e. lexical richness is 4.1% lower in the 2016 report.

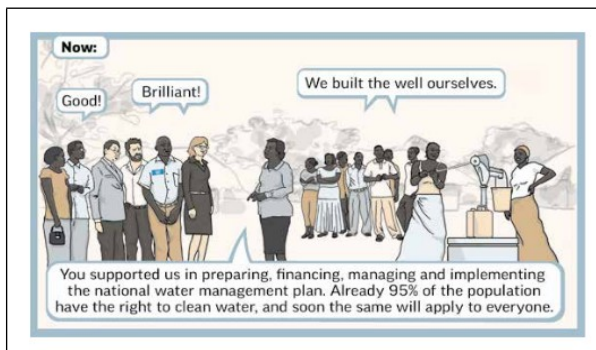
	FIN2016	FIN2014/1	FIN2014/2
Type	1937	2351	2281
Token	12301	11907	12134
TTR	0.157	0.198	0.198

Table 6. TTRs of corpora.

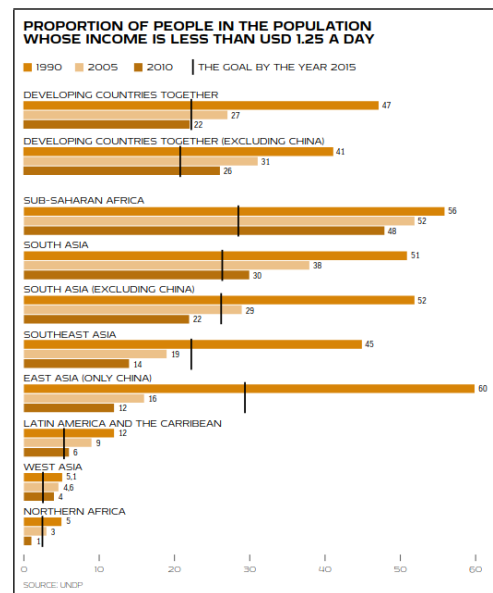
The 4.1% drop in lexical richness could be, at least partially, explained by the fact that in the 2016 Finnish report, key propositions are emphasised by repeating them in speech bubbles, thus containing a larger number of the same words. Out of 52 pages, 37 have a speech bubble that repeats a portion of the page. This means that there is even less actual content in the 2016 policy compared to 2014 than the number of tokens implies. The 2014 report does not use speech bubbles; instead it uses graphs and comic strips to present data and practices, and supports them by referring to sources.



P1: 2016 Report



P2: 2014 Report



P3: 2014 Report

The reports' structures follow similar lines. They are both divided into numbered sections and subsections. After an introduction, both reports continue to specify the main themes of the development policy. In the 2014 report this is called 'Finland's new approach', and in the 2016 report 'Finland's main goals.' In the 2016 policy, the goals follow the UN SDGs. Both of the reports have a section on migration; while the 2014 has it under a sub header 'Development demands an interplay of policies', the 2016 report has one of the main sections devoted to it.

Both reports have visual cues to emphasise certain issues. The 2014 borrows from other genres such as academia by referring to sources as well as from entertainment with its educational comic strip about participation. The style of the 2014 report thus is more akin to educational material and relies on sources while the 2016 relies on the ethos of the government and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. While both documents state their publication date, neither specifies an author nor how the documents were drafted. This makes the analysis of discursive practices challenging and is a testament to the opaqueness of those practices. What contributes to this even more is that differences in the reports' style and structure imply that while some practices are constant regardless of who has political power, some are not as elements of genre, visual style and general layout change between policies.

According to its website, the main responsibility for development policy is on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs while many other ministries are involved. The website also states that development policy involves 'dialogue with representatives of developing countries' (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, n.d.-e). While it is encouraging that this is mentioned, the process of producing development policy lacks concrete transparency, and it is difficult to say what degree of involvement those actors have within the discursive practices involved in policymaking.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs website offers both policies in Finnish, Swedish and English, but not for example in Swahili although it is a widely spoken lingua franca in Eastern Africa, the area where most of Finland's development partners are located (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, n.d.-e). This indicates that when it comes to the discursive practices of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, it does not fully include the people of the global South in the equation.

4.4 The Finnish policy, The 2030 Agenda and the wider Finnish context

The Finnish policy emphasises the goals of the UN 2030 Agenda. This goes together with Engh and Paro's (2009) idea about Nordic countries looking toward UN in their aid and security policies, stemming from their need of a rules based world order.

If we look at the prevalence of economy, from the definition of *sustainable development* the report puts forward to the institutions through which Finland funnels its financial contribution, we can see that economic growth trumps environmental and other issues. The document states that aid is funnelled through the World Bank and African Development Bank, of which especially the former is a proponent of the neoliberal ideology (Weeks, 1996). At the same time, the report mentions the Nordic model and the welfare state, and affirms that Finland strives to support democratization of societies by promoting, among other things:

(24) the upgrading of financial management and taxation capacity in developing countries and participate in world-wide efforts to improve global tax rules. (p.21)

Therefore, although the report puts forward an economic approach and participation of local actors is almost non-existent, it is not blindly reproducing the neoliberal hegemonic agenda that Ala-Uddin accuses the UN of perpetuating.

What Fairclough (2003) calls social practices become visible here. While the social structures of the Finnish society have an influence over how the state mediates between those structures and discursive events, at the same time, global social structures and power relations influence these practices as well. The government (re)produces the same economic world view through the discursive event, i.e. its policy, and through the practice of following the UN agendas, but Finland's specific social structures influence the text of the policy as well.

Telleria's criticism toward the UN regarding conflict can be extended to Finland. When the Finnish Government Report of 2016 addresses the issues leading to underdevelopment, the ones it provides are devoid of power relations between the global North and South. If they would be taken account for, it might reveal that the interests of poor countries and rich countries, or the interests of the poor and the rich within both North and South, are in conflict and the idealist term *development cooperation* might reveal its weak relationship with the actual implementation of development.

If we look at Lie's (2008) criticism of post-development, the Finnish development policy gives a blow to its hypothesis. The policy shows no interest in the local articulations of development policy or in the micro-level practices of local actors in the global South. If the local actors' contribution to development does not leave traces of discourse on the development policies of the global North, the criticism toward post-development somewhat misses its point. If post-development studies development discourse, it is difficult to take into account voices that go unheard in the practices of those institutions that define development.

Lastly, the specific implications of the Finnish political context become visible in the prevalence of refugee discourse in the policy. The government's negative attitudes toward immigration, which both stem from social structures as well as mould them, are visible on the language of the policy, from collocation to metaphor and to the structure of the document. The definition of *development* that sees refugees coming to Finland as a manifestation of the problems of the underdeveloped, creates and reaffirms unequal social structures and manufactures social reality that benefits the global North.

5. Conclusion

The three dimensional analysis of text, discursive practices and social practices in Finnish development discourse has shown us traces that in many aspects are indicative of cultural hegemony. The definitions of development Finland puts forward, such as cooperation, sustainability, and security, are all replete with inclusive language and encouraging words, but as soon as they are analysed in-depth, the vagueness and the manipulation of the global South to root for the interests of Finland, such as curbing of immigration, become visible.

The most striking feature of the policy is the absence of concrete measures to combat any of the issues it brings forward. Because the policy relies only on the ethos of the government and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs as the basis of its claims, the 'mutual accountability and transparency' (p.13) the policy calls for are all but absent.

Even though the policy puts forward issues outside of economic matters, such as gender equality and democracy, economy is at the core of Finland's definition of development. Furthermore, while the benefits of what the Finnish government calls as *development cooperation* have a potential of being reciprocal, the report does not portray the process of implementing or defining development as a cooperative venture between the North and South

but as a top-down movement from governmental, private, NGO and supranational actors of the North to the states and peoples of the South.

According to both the UN and Finland, sustainability is at the centre of development. Within the Finnish policy, *sustainable* has multiple different definitions, ranging from water and forest management to economic growth, mostly emphasising the economic side on things. Going back to the criticism of *development* by post-development; i.e. that it is used to refer to a variety of different concepts thus becoming confusing, and that it tricks 'people in struggles for getting what the powerful want to impose on them' (Sachs, 2008, p.3). The new sustainable face of development seems to have followed a similar path in which *sustainable* has gained so many definitions, that it has become confusing to decipher what it actually means.

In order to study the change in the definition of *sustainable*, and how it affects development discourse in general, a CDA with a wider scope could be done by making a comparative study of the 2016 and previous policies, relating those results to the UN MDGs and SDGs.

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