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Applying Transformative Learning Theory to Open Education Essays

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Abstract

Open Educational Resources (OER) adoption is often explained through the lens of diffusion of innovations theory. In this paper, the author argues that the frame of diffusion of innovations theory is insufficient, as adopting and sustaining OER requires transformation of faculty values and beliefs. Transformative learning theory provides a framework for change for faculty adoption of OER. This essay describes diffusion of innovations theory and transformative learning theory and discusses how transformative learning theory provides a useful framework for understanding the shifts in faculty beliefs necessary for OER adoption.

Keywords: open education resources, textbooks

Introduction

The process by which faculty decide to adopt Open Educational Resources (OER) is under theorized. As OER is considered by many as an educational and technological innovation (Ehlers, 2011; Jhangiani et al., 2016; Masterman & Wild, 2011; Perkins, 2011), many have applied Rogers' diffusion of innovation theory or an adaptation of diffusion of innovations theory for educational technology called the "pencil metaphor" to explain this phenomenon (Lane & van Dorp, 2011; Perkins, 2011; Hu, et. al., 2015). Diffusion of innovations theory aims to explain how ideas or products gain adoption over time. However, OER differs from most educational technology innovations, as it has a commitment to social justice principles and equity. A critical approach provides a framework to understanding the shift in beliefs necessary for faculty to adopt OER. Transformative learning theory provides a framework for how individuals shift frames of meaning. The purpose of this essay is to explore the diffusion of innovations theory and transformative learning theory. The author argues that adopting OER requires transformation of faculty beliefs and values, and therefore that the transformative learning perspective should be included in theorizing the adoption of OER.

What is OER?

OER are "teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and re-purposing by others" (Hewlett Foundation, n.d.). OER has developed as a result of the broken textbook market (Blumenstyk, 2017) and the opportunities of the internet. Textbook costs have increased dramatically, 88% between 2006 and 2016 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). The cost of textbooks has been posited as one of the costs of higher education preventing students from achieving their degree (Colvard, Watson, & Park, 2018). In the Florida Virtual Campus Student Textbook and Course Materials Survey, 66.6% of students surveyed did not purchase the required textbook, even though most knew it would lead to a poor course grade. These costs are detrimental to student success and particularly problematic for students in traditionally underserved groups (Colvard, Watson, & Park, 2018, p.262). Adoption of OER provides a

way to reduce textbook costs and make college more affordable for students. Decisions regarding course materials are made by the academic units, such as curriculum committees, section leaders, or individual faculty members.

The confluence of publishers drastically increasing the cost of textbooks and the development of the Creative Commons license has led to the creation of freely available, openly licensed textbooks and materials that can be accessed anywhere and at anytime, which represents a paradigmatic shift in education. OER provide a multitude of benefits to students.By their zero-cost nature, students have access to assigned resources. They do not need to worry about purchasing a textbook instead of buying food or putting gas in their car. Students can access these resources wherever they are and whenever they need to do schoolwork. Research shows that students learn as well or better from OER than commercial textbooks (Hilton, 2018). Faculty also reap benefits from assigning OER, as they can be edited, revised, and remixed. This affords greater faculty control of the curriculum, as they can remix materials rather than tied to a textbook and publisher's determination of content.

Diffusion of Innovations Theory

Published in 1962, Rogers' *Diffusion of Innovations* explores how groups communicate and how innovations disperse in a population. Rogers describes subgroups within a population based on how individuals adopt technologies over time. Diffusion is "the process by which (1) an innovation (2) is communicated through certain channels (3) over time (4) among the members of a social system" (2003, p.11). The diffusion of innovation theory also posits that relative advantages, or "the degree to which an innovation is perceived as being better than the idea that it supersedes" (Rogers, 2003, p.212), as it is perceived by adopters. With this knowledge, potential adopters can decide on an innovation. The adoption is a process in which the innovation is accepted or rejected. The categories of adopters within a social system include "innovators," "early adopters," "early majority," "late majority," and "laggards," based on the individual's innovativeness. The theory outlines how the adoption of technology is communicated through a group. Incomplete adoption and non-adoption are not part of the classification. The compatibility of an innovation with the values and beliefs of individuals in the social system influence the adoption rates. Rogers outlines what consists of a relative advantage in an innovation. These dimensions include: (a) social prestige, (b) economic profit, (c) the immediacy of reward, (d) savings of time and effort, and (d) low initial cost (2003). Rogers theorized that within the rate of adoption, there is a point at which it reaches a critical mass. The concept was later expanded into a theoretical framework updated in more recent editions of his text (Rogers, 2003).

Circa 2006, Lindy McKeown (now Lindy Orwin) adapted the diffusion of innovations theory for educational technology and represented it as a pencil. The metaphor has frequently been utilized to describe teachers' adoption of educational technology (Bliss, 2015). The metaphor categorizes teachers as the "leaders," the "sharp ones," the "wood," the "ferrules," the "hangers-on," and the "erasers." The "leaders" are early adopters; the "sharp ones" are observing and learning from the leaders and adopting soon after them. The majority of the pencil is the "wood" —those who would adopt if someone set them up and trained them and kept everything running. The "hangers-on" attend the workshops but don't do anything, the "ferrules" cling tightly to past practice, and the "erasers" seek to undo the work of the leaders. The pencil metaphor adds the ferrules, hangers-on, and erasers to the diffusion of innovation theory. As a strategy, the message of diffusion is that change agents should focus initially on innovators and early adopters. Advocates also encourage each other to not spend energy on ferrules and erasers, but on the "wood" or the majority who would adopt the innovation if it were made easy for them.

The addition of the "hangers-on," "ferrules," and "erasers" creates value judgements that present those who are resistant or erasing that change as wrong. The change leaders reinforce their own feelings of value through the descriptions as "leaders" and "sharp ones." In this taxonomy, individuals are not discussed as conceivably evolving or moving between categories. The use of this metaphor may be even further off-putting to those who have reservations around the use of OER if they believe their peers see them as "hangers-on," "ferrules," or "erasers."

Rogers (2003) contends that new ideas, even with advantages, are hard to get adopted. The diffusion of innovations theory focuses on the rate of adoption and categories of adopters. Rogers' innovation-decision process model describes how an individual moves from learning about an innovation to implementing it and confirming a decision to continue utilizing the innovation. The innovation-decision process model consists of five steps: knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation. Knowledge is the time at which an individual becomes aware of an innovation. Persuasion is when a positive or negative impression is formed regarding the innovation. The decision point is when an individual accepts or rejects the innovation. The innovation is used during the implementation period and the confirmation is when the individual affirms, modifies, or reverses their decision regarding the innovation.

The innovation-decision process implicitly assumes that educational innovations are products that faculty will adopt if a positive impression about the innovation is formed. Faculty adoption of OER does not typically consist of a relative advantage in an innovation. The dimensions of (a) social prestige, (b) economic profit, (c) the immediacy of reward, (d) saving of time and effort, and (d) low initial cost do not typically apply to adoption of OER (2003). In fact, Jhangiani, Green and Belshaw pose the question of why faculty adopt OER despite the "absence of royalty cheques, prestige, or institutional recognition" (2016).

The focus is on social process of communication as a linear process whereby the individual accepts or rejects the innovation. This assumes a behaviorist perspective in which individuals engage in a social process by modeling and imitating rather than engaging in a reflection. The model does not consider the meaning making associated with adopting an innovation and changing a teaching practice, nor does it allow individuals to evolve within the model. Jhangiani argues the application of the "pencil metaphor," yet applies the caveat, "no matter what theoretical lens one applies to describing OER users, it is important to understand that in practice these individuals may evolve over time and move into a different category" (2017). Applying a theory that allows and even theorizes the transformation of the individual may prove more useful.

Transformative Learning Theory

Transformative learning theory is a critical, constructivist theory of adult learning. This theory explores how individuals understand existing frames of reference and change their beliefs. It outlines a process by which adult learners engage in critical reflection of their beliefs, values, expectations and assumptions. Transformative learning involves perspective transformation, or "becoming critically aware of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about our world; changing these structures of habitual expectation to make possible a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative perspective; and, finally, making choices or otherwise acting upon these new understandings" (Mezirow, 1991, p.167). This can occur suddenly or over time, or termed by Mezirow as epochal or cumulative. Through critical reflection "on the assumptions upon which our interpretations, beliefs, and habits of mind or points of view are based" frames of reference are transformed (Mezirow, 1997).

The stages of transformative learning, as described by Mezirow are:

1. A disorienting dilemma.
2. Self-examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt, or shame.
3. A critical assessment of assumptions.
4. Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared.
5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions.
6. Planning a course of action.
7. Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans.
8. Provisional trying of new roles.
9. Building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships.

10. A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective.(2000, p.22)

Transformative learning theory has been absent from the scholarly conversation of the process of faculty adoption of OER. Yet, it provides a framework that considers the shift in beliefs and values. The existing meaning structures that faculty hold is informed by the traditional arrangement by which faculty have assigned commercial textbooks for decades; their colleagues require commercial textbooks. Fiddler explains "textbooks are "a not-so-hidden cost that often gets a pass because it's been rooted in college tradition" (2017). By and large, faculty were assigned commercial textbooks when in they were in college and their colleagues assign commercial textbooks as well. Faculty expectation has been that the commercial textbook is superior to anything that is available freely online. To consider moving away from a textbook from a commercial publisher, faculty would need to either fit OER into their existing frame of reference or experience a change in their meaning perspective.

To change a meaning perspective, a "disorienting dilemma" is triggered to begin this process. A disorienting dilemma is "an activating event that typically exposes a discrepancy between what a person has always assumed to be true and what has just been experienced, heard, or read" (Cranton, 2002). Much like this article, many presentations and articles on OER begin with the statistic on the high cost of textbooks. However, the motivation, or trigger, for faculty can vary. Some are dismayed with the textbook offerings, others are looking to incorporate more dynamic pedagogy in their teaching, and numerous faculty are concerned about the rising textbook costs and students' ability to afford these textbooks. Jhangiani describes his experience in learning about OER as a "red pill moment," a concept popularized by the movie *TheMatrix*, as a choice between the truth of reality or the bliss of ignorance (Jhangiani, 2016). DeRosa recounts her "professional epiphany" after hearing about OER (Sheridan, 2017). These realizations describe the experience of a disorienting dilemma.

Faculty who adopt OER relate feeling a sense of guilt or shame around the textbooks they previously assigned. As Steven Bell, Associate University Librarian at Temple University, relates, "[Faculty] express guilt about requiring students to purchase a costly textbook, knowing they may cover only a third of the content" (2014). This is the second step of the transformative learning process. Faculty may experience shame regarding past assignation of expensive course materials, or they may fear investing their time in adopting OER when they are tenure-track and worry that it will not be recognized in the tenure and promotion process. These feelings of guilt, anger, fear, and shame are part of a self-examination that prompts a critical assessment of assumptions. There are many assumptions regarding commercial textbooks and OER, enough for the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) to create a mythbusting document to "debunk the top myths about OER in North American higher education" (2017). This addresses the top seven common myths regarding OER, though the document is self-described as not being comprehensive. The topics addressed include that "open" does not just mean free, that all OER are not digital, that OER can be of the same quality as commercial textbooks, that open licensing need not be complex, that OER can be sustainable and have the ancillaries that faculty desire, and that small steps toward OER adoption are valuable at any institution.

The next step of the transformative learning process is to recognize that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared. Faculty can feel isolated if they are not aware of others considering OER on their campus. However, there are a number of organizations that provide community support for this process, including SPARC, as well as the Community College Consortium for OER, the Open Textbook Network, OpenStax and others. These organizations offer online spaces, such as listservs and monthly conference calls to provide support for those considering and actively working on OER.

Through steps five, six, seven, and eight, faculty explore their new role, plan a course of action, acquire the skills for implementing the plan, and try out their new role. The faculty receive support during this phase from librarians, instructional designers, and other faculty who have adopted OER. The trainings offered on how to find OER or integrate OER in a curriculum are best aimed at faculty who have already undergone a shift in their perspective. During step nine, faculty build self-confidence in their new role and in step ten, reintegration in their life on the basis of the new conditions from that perspective. As a critical and reflective practice, the application of transformative learning theory has

potential to shift beliefs. Mezirow argues that "transformative learners move toward a frame of reference that is more inclusive, discriminating, self-reflective, and integrative of experience" (1997, p. 5). Synergistically, transformative learning theory provides a process inclusive of the social justice aims of open education.

Conclusion and Future Research

To date, the diffusion of innovations theory has been primary in discussions of the dissemination of OER as an innovation. Despite growing awareness, the adoption of Open Educational Resources (OER) been described as a "slow burn" (Lieberman, 2019). A shift in educational practice is needed for the widespread adoption of OER, which requires a collective transformation and perspective shift. Transformative learning theory provides a useful framework to consider faculty professional development, as the design of professional development activities for faculty does not often utilize transformative learning theory (Bali &Caines, 2018). Additionally, "viewing professional development as adult education assists in not only focusing on the educator as learner, but also enabling us to consciously appropriate relevant theory, research, and practice from the adult education field" (King, 2002).

Increasing the adoption of OER has tremendous potential for higher education. The process of how faculty choose to adopt OER requires greater study. Qualitative, inductive research may provide insight into faculty motivation and behaviors in OER adoption. Removing or reducing the assumption of Rogers' diffusion of innovations theory can help to unearth a greater understanding of this process.

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In-service and Pre-service Teachers' Perceptions of Transformation and Observed Classroom Teaching Practices to Become Linguistically and Culturally Responsive Content Teachers: Quality Teachers for English Learners

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Abstract

Research reveals that teachers require immediate supports and training to become linguistically and culturally responsive content educators to meet the learning needs of the increasing number of immigrant and refugee students from diverse cultures. The Quality Teachers for English Learners (QTEL) project at a Midwestern university offered Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) courses and professional development (PD) sessions for a cohort of 35 in-service and pre-service teachers (3 administrators) in 2016 in a linguistically and culturally relevant content teacher framework (LCRCT). To examine if and how learning occurred, a transformative learning framework supported the analysis of mixed data addressing the research questions which examined the transformative learning themes of participant-identified disorienting events, perspective transformation, and classroom practice of LCRCT in coursework, professional development, and classroom teaching cases. Data sources were PD surveys, interviews, classroom observations, written and videotaped lessons, and online course data from VoiceThread comments and discussion board posts and reflections. Results revealed participants identifying disorienting events, identifying the need for further training, reflecting on self and prior assumptions in a community of practice, and acquiring instructional strategies and tools in the process of becoming an effective LCRCT practitioner.

Keywords: Linguistically and culturally responsive education, TESOL teacher training, transformative learning framework, English Learners (ELs).

Introduction

The increasing number of diverse populations represented in U.S. schools, including migrant, refugee, and immigrant children, present a necessity for teachers to learn new ways to deliver quality instruction to meet all learners' needs. Immigrant children are those who are foreign born or born in the U.S. who live with at least one foreign-born parent ("Key Facts," n.d.); refugees are those that flee for safety (from conflict, violence, persecution) and migrants may move for reasons such as work, education, etc. ("Refugees," 2018). Thus, teachers need immediate additional supports through effective training, and it is crucial that teacher educators take swift action (Lucas, Villegas, & Freedson-Gonzalez, 2008) to provide essential education to better prepare teachers to effectively teach English Learners (ELs).

However, in light of recent global political tensions, an acute obligation exists to improve teacher education to prepare linguistically and culturally responsive teachers to serve English learners, though research is lacking on which directions to proceed for the most effective teacher training. As one effort to address such lack and to support teacher education, this research describes findings from a study of transformative learning with a cohort of pre-service and in-service teachers in the Quality Teachers for English Learners (QTEL) program, a National Professional Development grant project at Midwestern university in 2016.

The reasons for taking immediate action to support all teachers in serving ELs are many, from the need for teachers to examine their own attitudes and beliefs (Bartolomé, 2004), to the fact that many educators believe that only EL specialists are responsible for taking care of ELs academically. Also included are outdated views that requirements for training teachers to teach ELs are complex and place too many demands on already burdened teacher preparation programs (Lucas et al., 2008). Ignoring the call for swift changes in teacher preparation is problematic, as Janzen (2008) notes, "the dropout rate for Latino/Latina youth, who comprise the majority of ELs, was 22.4%. This rate is more than twice the national average" (p. 1010). United States policies since the Civil Rights era have addressed the needs of English learners (Bos et al., 2012), yet the majority of teachers have not received adequate professional development to help their ELs (Lucas et al., 2008). Bunch (2010) confirms that most teacher preparation programs do not require training for EL-specific teaching and the results are evident. To illustrate, Durgunoğlu and Hughes (2010) found that pre-service teachers felt unprepared to reach ELs, and they often disregarded them in the classroom. Findings from their research (2010) showed the pre-service teachers' sense of self-efficacy was related to this trend of ignoring ELs, as the pre-service educators did not have confidence or a sense of how to help ELs participate in classroom learning. In addition, the regular classroom teachers also had no interaction with ELs, nor did they assist or support the student teachers in helping ELs learn (Durgunoğlu & Hughes, 2010). Solid preparation for pre-service teachers is imperative, as it will improve teachers' self-efficacy, with subsequent supports and services to help their future EL students achieve (Durgunoğlu & Hughes, 2010).

In addition to Durgunoğlu & Hughes' (2010) findings, Bartolomé (2004) reports that, because society in general interprets diverse or minority students "through a deficit lens" (p. 99), teachers need opportunities to carefully examine and scrutinize their own beliefs and perspectives and make adjustments where necessary in order to help all children they serve. This examination should take place beyond simply learning strategies and procedures for how to teach, according to Bartolomé (2004). This study examines pre-service and in-service teachers' perceptions of their learning, along with their classroom practices, while they were working to become linguistically and culturally responsive content educators for ELs. The terms transformative learning in the paper refer to Mezirow's original framework (1978), with transformation referring to change, as explained below.

Theoretical Framework

Transformative Learning and Professional Development

While giving teachers tools and strategies is vital (Durgunoğlu & Hughes, 2010), it is important for teachers to have opportunities and learn ways to inspect their attitudes and beliefs for teaching ELs. We adopted the framework of transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991) to examine teachers' beliefs and perspectives regarding how they serve students from diverse backgrounds. Transformative adult learning is a multifaceted process of perceiving and understanding, using memory, cognitive processes, and perceptions through experiences to examine extant personal interpretations of meanings to build new interpretations (Mezirow, 1991), and offers a way to interpret reasoning in those learning processes (King, 2009). In addition, reflecting, talking, and acting are important elements of that same process as detailed by Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner (2007). In context of the rapid and increasing changes in student demographics and the need for teachers to critically assess their attitudes, values, knowledge, and skills, it has been unclear what transformations and perspective shifts are possible and need to take place for in-service and pre-service educators to realize the importance of adequate preparation for teaching

ELs. As educators and researchers, we wondered about ways to productively train pre-service and in-service educators to effectively and immediately meet the needs of English learners in this time of increasing refugee, migrant, and immigrant enrollment. As teacher educators, we also desired to find ways to prepare teachers for transformation, by having them collaboratively gain knowledge and skills in a learning community designed to examine former perspectives and to develop linguistically and culturally responsive teaching for all of their diverse learners through professional development.

Cranton (1996), expounding on Mezirow's transformative learning in adult professional development, affirms that educators can examine their own growth by reflecting interpretively on their current perspectives, and changing or transforming incomplete or faulty perspectives in the process. This process is strengthened through collaboration (Cranton, 1996; Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007) where the adult learner, in a learning relationship with others, collectively reflects (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007) and evolves into an adult who can positively impact society. Cranton (1996) suggests that trainers and professional development providers forgo old patterns, such as the transmission model (transmitting knowledge from the teacher), and rather design opportunities for reflection. Seeing the potential for transformative learning in educator preparation, Forte and Blouin (2016) call for researchers to assimilate transformative learning in to the process of preparing and training teachers, and this research heeds that call. The framework for transformative learning is further clarified below as we highlight how the framework supported and intertwined with the research goals, purpose, and context.

Preparing Teachers to Serve

Training, conferences, workshops, and courses are offered for educators as a way to understand how to support "increasingly diverse" populations, including ESL/EFL students (de la Fuente Iglesias, Ju, Larson, Mathieu, Strawbridge, 2018, p. 3); as "society and students become more diverse and globalized" (p. 1). These authors join the terms, "diversity and advocacy" to emphasize the supports needed in these efforts for professional training.

Karabenick and Clemens Noda (2004) argue that well-planned professional development programs can be a smart alternative to hiring additional staff to work with increasing numbers of ELs in local districts. They researched 729 teachers working with a large influx of immigrants and refugee children and found a need for in-depth professional development in order to increase teachers' linguistic competency, confidence, and self-efficacy in their abilities in reaching ELs (Karabenick & Clemens Noda, 2004).

Tucker et al. (2005) found that, "high quality professional development that is ongoing and teacher-driven is necessary to improve the education of linguistically and culturally diverse students" (as cited in Tran, 2014, n.p.), though often overlooked are studies of professional development for teachers of linguistically diverse students (Knight & Wiseman, 2006). Further research on teacher preparation is needed in understanding how training and professional development may impact teacher effectiveness for ELs (Bos et al., 2012), particularly in how transformative learning processes allow teachers to understand their own reactions to EL students' learning, work, stories, and inquiries (McClinton, 2005). We must move past sharing general models of professional development to research reports with specifics to effectively prepare teachers who serve culturally and linguistically diverse students (Knight & Wiseman, 2006). A positive example can be found in Karabenick and Clemens Noda's (2004) research, which prompted one large local district to adapt strategies. The district's strategies included a renewed focus on additional professional development for teachers, to designing more appropriate assessments for ELs, to building awareness of bilingual learning and parental involvement throughout the community. Knowledge from research of effective teacher training and professional development can swiftly be applied where most needed—in local school districts, agencies, and colleges of education—but there remains the question of what are the most important elements to be considered during these opportune times?

Professional Development for Linguistically and Culturally Responsive Teaching

The destination that we desired our teachers to reach was the acquisition and practice of linguistically and culturally responsive content (LCRCT) teaching. An LCRCT teaching framework affords teachers the knowledge and skills to be able to understand and incorporate students' language and cultural diversity in conjunction with successfully teaching academic content.

In 2017, Song (second author) developed a two-dimensional LCRCT model—*C* for Content, based on the Nguyen and Commins' (2014) two-dimensional LCRT model, after extensive research on linguistically and culturally responsive teaching as well as content teaching for ELs (Aguirre, Zavala, & Katanyoutanant, 2012; Fillmore & Snow, 2002; González &Darling-Hammond, 1997; Halliday, 1978; Janzen, 2008; Kim, Song, & Coppersmith, 2018; Lucas et al., 2008; Schleppegrell, 2009).

The LCRCT framework is a type of analytic rubric (Brookhart, n.d.) that includes two dimensions which can be used to analyze, reflect on, or assess linguistically and culturally responsive content teaching. The first dimension consists of content competence, content discourse competence, and content pedagogical competence. The second dimension includes elements which illustrate how teachers can improve content-related competencies, framed as the essentials to 1) acquire and demonstrate knowledge in depth, 2) develop and apply procedural demands and reasoning skills, and 3) examine and develop socio-politically just teacher beliefs. Study participants engaged in activities in QTEL courses and PD to, "comprehend, discuss, demonstrate, reflect, and apply these interdependent dimensions of content and meta-content knowledge and practices to enhance their LCRCT content competencies" (Kim et al., 2018). Table 1 illustrates nine constructs of the interdependent two-dimensional LCRCT framework.

Table 1

Two-dimensional linguistically and culturally responsive content teaching constructs

	Content Competence	Content Discourse Competence	Content Pedagogical Competence
Acquire & Demonstrate Knowledge in Depth	Demonstrate knowledge of content language system and sociolinguistics (Richards, 2013)	Acquire knowledge of technical content and nontechnical everyday discourse including their L1s as resources (Aguirre, et al., 2012; Schleppegrell, 2009)	Acquire a wide range of reflective strategies and techniques to scaffold language support intentionally with EL-specific teaching tools (Richards, 2013)
Develop & Apply Conceptual & Procedural Demands	Apply content knowledge to the actual teaching with reasoning, inferring, and collaborating (Janzen, 2008)	Attribute the process of developing part-to-whole relationship using more explicit and reflective discourse (Turner & Drake, 2016)	Utilize cyclic guided coaching with EL-engaged, inquisitive, and dialogic (Kim, et al., 2018) Utilize technology-mediated communal space to be collaboratively reflective (Kim, et al., 2018)

Table 1 Continued

Examine and Develop Cross-cultural & Socio-political Beliefs	Develop a situated context for academic learning (Gee, 2016) Explore ELs' and their family's funds of knowledge (Moll, 2015)	Reject discrimination against different language use (Austin, 2009; Liggett, 2014) Incorporate immigrant family's home languages and their repertoires to school events (Noguerón-Liu, Hall, & Smagorinsky, 2017)	Examine Power and Authority & ELs' cross-cultural variances (Aguirre, et al., 2012) Create linguistically safe and inclusive classroom environments (Flores & Garcia, 2013)

Transformative Learning through Teacher Preparation and Professional Development

Seeing the possibilities afforded with Karabenick and Clemens Noda's (2004) report of successful programs and research on preparing teachers to serve ELs, and the need for in-depth research in educator preparation, (Bos et al. 2012; Knight & Wiseman, 2006), the importance of transformative learning for adults (Forte & Blouin, 2016), and EL teachers (McClinton, 2005) this study is offered to meet the gaps in that research. Included is a focus on transformative learning and outcomes of teacher training and professional development to prepare pre-service and in-service teachers through the Quality Teachers for English Learners (QTEL) program developed by a Midwestern university NPD grant team. QTEL was a five-year (2011-2016) National Development Grant (NPD) program sponsored by the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA). The first goal for this grant program was to form a dynamic QTEL academic learning community through cohort-based activities featuring TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) courses to prepare in-service and pre-service teachers to obtain state TESOL teaching certification through taking the six TESOL courses. A second aim was to ensure that course design and professional development (PD) included objectives, assignments, and placements to effectively develop linguistically and culturally responsive content teaching (LCRCT) knowledge and skills for participants teaching English Learners.

In addition to TESOL courses such as Principles of Second/Foreign Language Acquisition, General Linguistics/Foundation of TESOL, Cross-cultural Communication and Assessment, Methods and Practicum in TESOL, QTEL offered professional development (PD) workshops annually for the cohort. PD topics included sessions such as Designing Learning Environments for Multicultural and Multilingual Populations; Beginning a Journey to become Linguistically and Culturally Responsive; Developing Pedagogical Language Knowledge in the Content Areas; Inquiry-based Math Content and Pedagogy; Linguistically and Culturally Responsive Teaching Dimensions in a Mindful Way with Hands-on Activities; and the Socio-Historical Context of Language Learning in U.S. Schools, among other topics. These PD sessions were designed with a strong emphasis on the inclusion of the essentials of pedagogy incorporating linguistic or language goals (Lucas et al., 2008). These essentials comprise an understanding of, "conversational and academic language proficiency," the importance of "access to comprehensible input" and opportunities for, "meaningful output"; "social interactions" using conversational and academic English; the fact that, "ELLs with strong native language skills are more likely to succeed" given a safe, anxiety-free environment to learn, and the importance of attention to both, "linguistic form and function" (Lucas et al., 2008, p. 363). The QTEL program addressed each of these essentials in the yearlong TESOL coursework and professional development, utilizing best practices for preparing educators to serve in linguistically and culturally responsive ways.

The QTEL trainers and teachers examined how transformative learning occurred in the program by reviewing overarching goals for two of the QTEL courses where pre-service undergraduate and in-

service graduate teachers established a combined learning community. The two courses, titled Methods and Materials in TESOL, and Practicum in TESOL, included a critical learning process for students to integrate knowledge of second language acquisition research in instructional methodologies; utilize theories of linguistics, learn and design assessment modules with WIDA, (n.d.) second language acquisition, cross-cultural communication, and instructional technology into their material development to meet the needs of diverse language learners. As a cohort, the in-service and pre-service teacher educators designed and implemented instruction collaboratively in teams as they learned skills and increased their pedagogical knowledge of best practices for inquiry-based linguistically and culturally responsive content teaching (LCRCT) while serving in local elementary and middle schools. Collaborations took place in class, in the school setting, and online. The design of the course allowed participants to view and critique each other's work via videotaped classroom segments using the Kaltura video (online) platform, and to comment and give support via VoiceThread (VT) remarks. The web-based VT application allowed participants to asynchronously communicate in a variety of ways, such as orally via recordings, and in writing, posting images and sharing PowerPoint presentations and teaching case videos.

Throughout the 2016 QTEL professional development sessions and teacher training courses, data were mined from the sources to paint a picture of participants' perceptions of their own transformative learning as related to Mezirow's ten phases, or precursors (Forte & Blouin, 2016) of transformation (Mezirow, 1991; Cranton, 2006; Forte & Blouin, 2016) as related to teaching ELs (McClinton, 2005). Below are listed the ten phases with relevant experiences of teachers and data sets collected to examine each category:

Table 2
Phases of Transformation with Related Participant Experiences

Phase	Related Teacher Experience
1) Experiencing a disorienting dilemma	relates to method class activities, practicum experiences
2) *Undergoing self-examination*	sharing reflections online and in-class
3) *Conducting a critical assessment of internalized assumptions and feeling a sense of alienation from traditional social expectations*	comparing new learning to school system expectations
4) *Relating discontent to the similar experiences of others—recognizing that the problem is shared*	in-class critiques and asynchronous virtual discussions with team members
5) *Exploring options for new ways of acting*	exploring and applying the sheltered instruction observation protocol (SIOP) (Echevarria, Vogt & Short, 2013) to classroom teaching with ELs
6) *Building competence and self-confidence in new roles*	trying out LCRCT strategies in the classroom
7) *Planning a course of action*	developing instructional plans and assessments
9) *Trying out new roles and assessing them*	observing, commenting, and receiving comments on VT and Kaltura teaching videos
10) *Reintegrating into society with the new perspective*	trying out new practices after reflecting and observing teachers' practice

From these examples, and through the data, elements from participants' perspectives were culled of their learning process, situated in their own meaning perspectives and meaning schemes, including

their, “frames of reference” for current belief systems, “perspective transformations,” and the “reflections” that lead to transformative learning per Kitchenham (2006, p. 206). In addition, “reframing of narrative assumptions” was examined, analyzing any objective reframing of, “action assumptions”, and critical, “self-reflection on assumptions” (Kitchenham, 2006, p. 208). It is essential to note that these are the only types of reflections that lead to transformative learning; it is the reframing that leads to transformation, not just the reflecting (Kitchenham, 2006).

The QTEL methods courses were blended, online and face-to-face, yet linking the phases of transformative learning to online learning is rarely found in the research and is, “not at all addressed in ESL professional development programs for K-12 teachers” (Forte & Blouin, 2016, p. 784), thus the need for this study. While there were many opportunities to garner data on transformative learning throughout the QTEL project, in 2016 the research focus was narrowed to specify participants’ views on their perspective shifts and perceptions of their own learning in concert with their defined disorienting events when they experienced change while part of the program, as it is in the process of reflecting on prior meanings and old (or invalid) perceptions that transformation happens (Mezirow, 1991). According to Mezirow (1991), the most significant transformations on learning are transformations of, “meaning perspectives” (p. 38) which are transformed through reflections on former ideas. Learning often is an outcome of a disorienting dilemma (Mezirow, 2000) and can be understood in the figure below, representing processes explained by Mezirow (1991, p. 5). Figure 1 (first author sketch of Mezirow’s concepts) illustrates the process of transformation of perception through reflection.

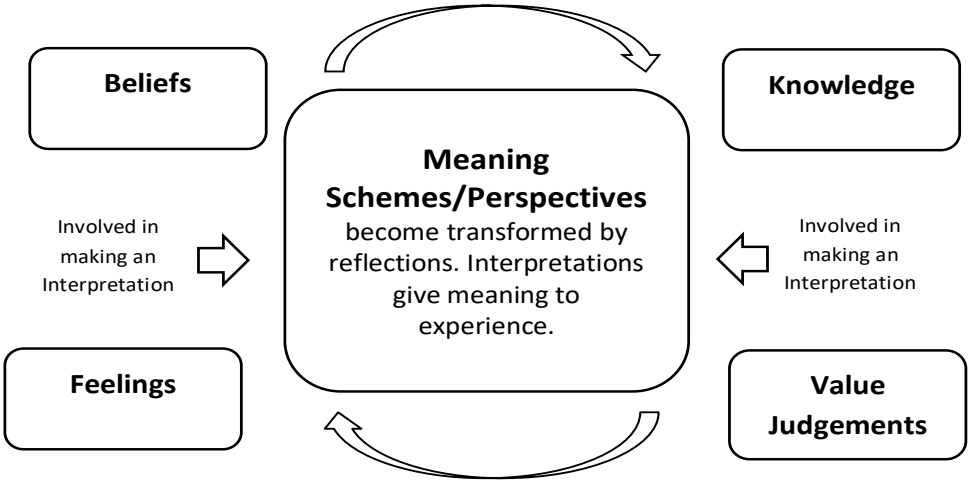

Figure 1. Transformation of Perspective by Reflection

Research Questions

According to Mezirow's theory (1991) transformative learning takes place through experiences, critical reflection, and reflective discourse. These elements were in abundance during the QTEL PD and were the framework for course sessions through group collaboration and instructional planning, field experiences, and peer-to-peer video reflections and discourse on teaching. In order to narrow the focus of data gathering and analysis, we attended to a focus on participants’ transformations via lesson planning and execution, work with students in the classroom, their learning via commenting and receiving comments from peers on VoiceThread through teaching videos uploaded via Kaltura Media, their perceptions of disorienting events in their own learning (via an open-ended course assessment questionnaire), interviews and final projects (assessments of their work). Particularly, we asked the following research questions:

Q1. What were participant-identified disorienting events in the QTEL program coursework and professional development sessions?
Q2: Were there levels of perspective transformation evident in QTEL program in-service and pre-service teacher participants by the end of their training?
Q3: How did QTEL participants' pre-identified levels of transformation relate to classroom practice with English language students in the classroom?

Question one facilitated identifying potential barriers to training teachers to meet the needs of ELs through detecting challenges to participants' learning in the program; question two helped establish the potential extent of participants' success in transformative learning in the program, and question three led to a non-subjective way to observe participants using their purported new and transformed practices in actual classrooms with ELs.

Methodology

Participants

Purposeful sampling allowed the gathering of data by, "focusing in depth on a small number of participants" already in the program (Patton, 1990, p. 169). The purposeful sample included these participants from the Midwestern university college of education: 20 pre-service teachers and 15 in-service teachers. Among the pre-service teaching cohort, there were three Black women, one bi-racial woman, two White men, and 14 White women. The in-service teaching cohort consisted of eight Black women, one Black man, four White women, and two White men. The in-service teachers had six to 27 years of teaching experience, whereas 16 of the20 pre-service teachers had only participated in the 3-credit hour internship/practicum course that occurs before a semester-long student teaching course, and four of 20 were juniors (not eligible to take the internship course).

Data Collection

The research team examined the core data to determine which data sets would yield the most information relating to the research questions and would show participants' development over time. Data used for this study are included in Table3.

Table 3

Type of core data analyzed

Data Type
Interviews with selected participants
Responses to class reflective question prompts (disorienting events)
Classroom teaching observations (videos and in-person)
VoiceThread comments by participants (and responses to peer comments)
Written lessons
Discussion board posts
Questions pulled from the in-service participants' final paper
Pre-service final projects
Interview questions for the Director
Instructional Practices and Daily Assessment surveys

Kathleen King's (2009) Learning Activities Survey was referenced while designing questions used at the end of the program for drawing out participants' memories of disorienting events while in the training program. Due to having several other frequent surveys/daily assessments through this grant-funded project, and to better focus the research project and not overwhelm the participants, we modeled two carefully crafted questions after King's survey regarding disorienting events to give to participants. King's survey was designed to improve adult education by aiding researchers in garnering details about learners' stages of perspective transformation (Cranton, 2006; Mezirow, 1991) and served the dual purposes of determining if adults had been transformed and what circumstances led to the transformation in perspective.

The two questions that all 35 participants were asked to answer at the end of the TESOL methods course were: 1) "In your QTEL journey, identify a time where you noticed something that you did not understand or that contradicted your previous notions/experiences regarding teaching ELs and diverse learners," and 2) "Describe the disorienting event and your thoughts/feelings. Following on your response in #1, describe whether and how you learned anything from the disorienting experience. How did your view/s on a disorienting event you identified in #1 change?"

Alongside this in-class survey, six participants agreed to be interviewed, allowing triangulation, comparison and contrast of replies, which was also true of the discussion board and VT group comments pulled from the course website at nine semester mile posts. Capturing participant's verbal and written responses over time added to reliability and recorded learners' chronological growth through the year through mining the data for their reflections on perspectives and subjective and objective review of instructional practices. Comparing and contrasting in-service and pre-service responses, comments, written and taught lessons, along with online peer feedback, gave abundant entry points to examine the data in order to answer the research questions.

Data Analysis

Responses to *reflective question prompts*, the *Instructional Practices and Daily Assessment surveys* from professional development sessions, along with *participant interviews,* themes from *online classroom observations* and *videotaped lessons*, with *VoiceThread comments, written lessons, discussion board posts*, and data from participants' *final projects* were analyzed. Data analysis included examining each line of data to identify concepts, and developing themes via coding, comparison, and theme development.

Borrowing from the grounded theory data analysis process, open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) was used, where concepts in the data were identified through, "constant comparative analysis" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 105).Grounded theory data analysis processes were borrowed and used, through coding for, "concept labeling and categorizing," (Cho & Lee, 2014). This analysis allowed comparison, labeling concepts, and grouping concepts into categories.

To illustrate, pre-service and in-service teacher assignments, work samples, (ideas, comments, teaching cases) and interviews were examined line by line and then compared and contrasted. Developing phrases, thoughts, and recurring leitmotifs were highlighted, and put into lists in a table with two columns, where the right column was used for coding and for writing memos and notes where applicable. Codes developed by combining overlapping, similar, and parallel ideas through constant comparison through all of the data.

Codes led to larger consistent themes which were then again compared from each data source, and properties of categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), were established. We re-examined the data during peer-review, inspecting the theme and code development individually, and discussed and confirmed final categories in relation to the research questions. While the data sources were diverse, the three research questions helped narrow the focus to determine evidence of transformation through the rich data sources which included the experiences, critical reflection, and reflective discourse required in order for learning to be transformative (Mezirow, 1991, 2000).

Findings

When studying transformative learning of pre-service teachers, "transformative themes" have been a useful analytic tool (Vatalaro, Szente, & Levin, 2015). The transformative themes which emerged from evidence in the data sets include: *"Process of Becoming*" a linguistically and culturally responsive content educator; "*Perceptions of Self and Peers*"; "*Acquired Instructional Strategies and Tools,*" and "*Disorienting Events*."Characteristics of each theme related to participants in their QTEL journey to becoming LCRCT educators, are described below.

Process of Becoming an LCRCT Educator

The process of becoming a linguistically and culturally responsive educator for these participants included transformations (in perspectives and meaning schemes) comprised of reflections on assumptions, a new awareness of self, new roles, changes in perspectives, transformations of interpreting experiences, new or transformed meaning schemes, and goals and visions for future teaching. For example, in the first month of the program, an in-service participant noted in a survey:

> There seem to be many ways to become a more culturally and linguistically responsive teacher, such as how I go about building relationships with students to promote community, how I manage student errors in language, and how I develop academic vocabulary knowledge in addition to content.

This early awareness for an already-practicing teacher reveals a new appreciation for strategies for becoming an LCRCT teacher, which illustrates Mezirow's (1991) transformative learning precursor, "Exploring options for new ways of acting and acquiring knowledge and skills."Additionally, this represents an example from the LCRCT framework of critically examining socio-culturally just teacher beliefs.

New awareness of language. Pre-service participants initially noted that they would like to be more intentional about "catering to multiple literacies and levels of knowledge" and then later "addressing WIDA standards and letting students explore the manipulatives without too much instruction" while "being more open to students' ideas and different views of how to solve math problems."A new awareness developed during the summer PD sessions, where participants started realizing the importance of "using instructional language that is accessible to EL students" and "making personal connections" with my students "that resonate with them through their identity and needs," and getting to know "student backgrounds and families." These strands reveal the "conducting a critical assessment of internalized assumptions" precursor in the transformative process (Cranton, 2006), as participants looked back and reviewed prior assumptions or viewpoints where ELs' learning needs were largely invisible.

Self-awareness of need for new frameworks. Participants regularly noted the importance of using new pedagogies which allow students to first explore (in math for example), to activate prior knowledge, and make connections on their own with real world applications before the teacher directs the learning in order to, "give the students a stake in it." Participants became more cognizant, aware, and mindful of students' first language (L1) and its use in the classroom, as well as, "using the four modalities, speaking reading, listening and writing to differentiate instruction." The focus on linguistics courses and assessments for ELs opened new horizons to these teachers as they worked to understand frameworks for teaching their students, as teachers must understand the learning needs of diverse students and implement strategies relating to their students' languages (Uribe-Flórez, Araujo, Franzak & Writer, 2014). Though as one in-service participant noted at the end of the program: "I cannot boast to know a great deal about second language acquisition, but I have been learning a great deal. I must say, it is complex to say the least. Certain items I take for granted such as sarcasm, figures of speech, puns, idioms, etc., are a whole different level of engagement for those acquiring a second language." Another noted:

"My current teaching practice is lacking routine inclusiveness of English Learners," illustrating the transformative learning precursor of undergoing self-examination for this educator (Mezirow, 2000).

Examining prior assumptions. Participants noted discrepant events in their learning around language use, as noted in the section on disequilibrium below. As one participant (administrator) acknowledged, there are challenges for the adult educator as learner:

> I admit this has been a whirlwind of information this school year. I admit, a challenge for me has been the plethora of new vocabulary, and understanding how this vocabulary shapes the field and explains the processes and, "journey" many of our students undertake as they assimilate and/or learn another language, beyond their L1. One statement I made at that time was, "I need to have a better understanding of the needs of these learners to make more educated decisions to prepare these learners to have their needs met, and support the teachers who are just as committed to meeting these students' needs.

Participants like this teacher looked back and reflected while writing the final paper for the course and this process of reflecting back on current or former meaning schemes (Mezirow, 1991) supports the beginning of transformation from a teacher who now knows the importance of understanding and attending to the needs of ELs. In another instance, one in-service teacher addressed the Habit of Mind of flexibility as he reflected on his learning over the year:

> I found this habit of mind to be extremely useful within my classroom. I need to support my EL students and modify or change the instruction to fit the needs of my students. One example that comes to mind was when I presented a lesson on Canada. I was talking about the origins of people living in Canada and the difference between an immigrant and a refugee. I could have moved on with the lesson, though I had student who recently fled the Republic of Congo and Sudan in the mist of the Civil War. She wanted to explain to her class her experiences as a refugee. We took 15 minutes out of the lesson to allow for dialogue between the students in response to this student's life experience in Africa as a refugee. My lesson and the textbook could not give the students the real-life experience of their classmate. And if I was not flexible, we would have missed on a story that touched the hearts of every middle school student in that class.

This teacher shared how the QTEL program helped her realize that her previous notion of self as: "knowledgeable about cultures of various people around the world" was just an assumption.
In other words, the QTEL journey provided a cognitive and affective framework for this teacher to facilitate an in-class sharing of a poignant story by a refugee student. His recollection of this scenario is an example of a, "reorganization of meaning" through "reflective assessment"; identifying and judging (former and current) cognitive structures and movement through the cognitive structures (Mezirow, 1991, p. 5). His cognitive process during this QTEL program reflects the LCRCT element of developing metacognitive procedure skills as well (Kim, et al., 2018)

Perceptions of Self and Peers as LCRCT Teachers

The transformative theme, "Perceptions of Self and Others," included awareness of self as a/n (adult) learner, in relation to peers, perceptions in the context of the learning environment, as evidenced through videos, via discussions, from classroom practices, supported via feedback from others and a give-and-take with peers. Perceptions of self were supported through affordances of the online peer-review process, when co-teaching and team collaboration.

Participants noted the challenges of having their teaching videotaped and watched by peers, and that it was sometimes "embarrassing," though members soon developed professional peer commenting skills using the VT platform, and made constructive comments to each other. Some pre-service

participants developed a professional voice in their comments to in-service class members' videos, as exemplified by Kate:

> The second observation I made (of the lesson) was having students go over their content and language targets, and then having them answer the question, "What should you be able to do at the end of the day?" All of the targets were measurable and achievable standards. I find it helps students focus when they know what they should be focusing on and what the big idea take-away is. I thought asking a student what they should be able to do by the end of the day was a great approach to checking for understanding. The third observation I had was the use of manipulatives. Manipulatives are very important when working in math, especially when it comes to ELs. The manipulatives give students a hands-on approach to reach comprehension, without having to use the English language to prove mastery. This opportunity gives ELs a chance to explain what they know of the topic, without having to use any words; which I find to be very important.

In this authoritative voice, Kate reveals her new confidence in teaching, ("I find it helps students…") and self-assurance in commenting on an experienced in-service classmate, which relates to the, "building competence and self-confidence in new roles" element of transformative learning (Cranton, 2006). This example highlights QTEL's LCRCT element of content competence, as well as discourse and pedagogical competence.

Self and peer reflection via online video. Participants noted learning how to more objectively remove themselves and evaluate others' work via the online video and discussion board platforms. They also noted that they learned to more objectively receive or, "take up" others' comments about their own teaching, through comments like: "I see how someone else would see my teaching in that lesson," noting that now they can more readily accept others' (and their students') views of their teaching. In contrast, one in-service teacher was, "on pins and needles" worrying that her comments to pre-service teachers might offend them and make them not "want to teach anymore."

Participants moved from worrying about seeing themselves on video to listening and respecting peer comments in the best interest of serving ELs, and began to function as a community of learners within a community of practice (Wenger, 1998) in a socio-constructivist teacher education setting (Dangel & Guyton, 2003). Elements of the community of practice developed when the participants, through, "mutual engagement," were involved in a "joint enterprise"—a learning exercise—using a, "shared repertoire" (Wenger, 1998, p. 73) of academic vocabulary and prior course communications and shared meanings and understandings.

The Program Director's interview captured a transformation as well, in that by the end of the program, the Director had changed from a transmission approach to teaching, to a team-based collaborative process of working with other instructors and developing a constructivist approach in the methods class during the last year of the program. Changes in perception of self included a prior separation of the concepts of, "teacher and learner," into a new perception of a "community of learners."

Acquired LCRCT Instructional Strategies and Tools

This theme was supported by evidence of classroom practices demonstrated throughout the coursework and shared in the online course, where participants were beginning to understand and use SIOP (Sheltered Instructional Observation Protocol) (Echevarria, Vogt & Short, 2013) protocol features in their written lessons, teaching cases in the classroom, and online assignments. These examples related to the precursor, "acquiring new knowledge and skills" for transformative learning (Cranton, 2006) and approaching the LCRCT criteria of content pedagogical competence.

Combining content and language objectives. Initially, course members began to utilize language and content objectives in their lesson planning and teaching. Peer comments in the VoiceThread

(VT) early in the semester included this comment (from a pre-service teacher to another pre-service teacher):

> You also had all the elements because students were speaking and writing and listening and reading their poems; I also liked that for your LO and CO you gave students a chance to discuss and reiterate in student language.

Peers were beginning to learn how to give reflective comments related to the assignment goals and best practices for LCRCT in the classroom, and were aided by the instructor's guidance in the VT and in the evening course sessions. Relating to the lesson described above, another pre-service peer noted after viewing the video:

> I actually just taught this lesson two days ago, to a fourth-grade class. You did an awesome job using kinesthetic learning with clapping and hand-to-jaw motion strategy, however since counting syllables deals with vowel sounds I can see this would be a challenge for some ELs. It is a possibility an EL would not pronounce the words correctly; I would review the vowels a e i o u and sometimes y and explain to count a syllable means to count all the vowel sounds when you speak a word. Example, coffee o and two e's, however I would be clear a word has x-amount of vowels… etc. This would benefit an EL.

In this instance, we see the engagement in discourse related to the participant's own taught lesson, the partnerships growing with shared experiences (having taught the lesson also), and a renewed emphasis and awareness on ELs in the lesson. From the same lesson, we noted an in-service (administrator) teacher's comment: "The only component I am not seeing is your WIDA standards; I cannot give you the full points because I do not see their presence." Participants learned about WIDA English Language Development (ELD) standards (WIDA, n.d.) in the summer courses and PDs, so class members were accessing prior knowledge and relating it to the current assignment criteria in peer comments.

In another VT comment, a pre-service teacher observed an in-service teacher's practice and related some ideas to language and content objectives as well as how they are utilized:

> I also like how you have the content/language objectives up and in large print for all students to see. Having them read the objectives out loud helps students remember what they are learning and why they are learning. These are all very good practices that I want to implement in my classroom.
> Do you see a difference in how students remember the objective when reading them aloud? Was there a time you didn't do that and noticed a change when you started? Does reading the objectives and actively participating in that part of the lesson promote engagement throughout the entire lesson?

The response from the in-service teacher gives further insight into how she related to the question and shared her own teaching experience:

> In my experience, the active engagement does keep some students more engaged overall throughout class time, but that isn't true for all students. If we don't recite objectives at the beginning, like was the case my first year of teaching when I alone stated them, then students seem to fight against learning more, I think because, back then, they didn't really have a grasp on what was expected. Currently, my students don't always remember the objectives 20 minutes into class, say, but I remind them and revisit a couple times, or in our small group station, and that helps to maintain focus.

Incorporating QTEL training. Participants frequently cited their QTEL training in comments and gave evidence to how they were assimilating QTEL concepts, practices, and strategies. In one instance, a peer wondered about ACCESS test scores and *Can-Do* descriptors which could have been specific to students or specific to the lesson, as they noted, and the peer shared their thinking of ELs and their progress:

> (Samone) I applaud you for including the *Can-Do* Descriptors toward the work the students will be doing; it's good that you were able to reach back and apply some of the information that we learned from our previous courses this summer. Glad you help students apply this to situations and capture a better understanding of the E language or whatever their L2 is.
>
> (Betsy) I agree with Samone's comments and wondering since the last slide focused on the writing Access scores if that was consistent with this slide, or if the Can-Do descriptors were more specific to the students…I wasn't sure if the listening and speaking were more specific to those students or if these Can-Do descriptors are more specific to the lesson.

In her reply, the in-service teacher assured that the descriptors were specific to each individual student, adjusted for everyone, and gave the proficiency level for each individual learner. This back-and-forth, give-and-take, through questioning, allowed "communicative learning" (Mezirow, 1991, p. 75), where participants adjusted their meaning schemes for ways of teaching diverse learners, and adapted a, "revised interpretation", or a new and revised meaning scheme for teaching ELs, in order to guide future action (Mezirow, 1991, p. 12) for using EL's ACCESS test scores to impact instructional goals.

Blending training into the classroom. The pre-service participants were sometimes bound by their classroom teacher's goals for lessons, as well as the school's and district's curriculum. One VT example illustrates how students enveloped the classroom goals with QTEL methods class assignment goals, incorporating SIOP component 1, 2, 3, 4, 8 in their written lesson:

> Peg: For SIOP Lesson Delivery: We chose '*I do, we do, You Do'* method. I presented a graphic organizer; Jen filled in the organizer, then we did *You Do* which is exit slip—they went off on their own completed the slip (found main idea from their reading).
> SIOP 8 for exit slip (assessment):Title of your Book; Is this FICTION or NON-FICTION; what is the main idea of the book; We asked that students chose a book out of their book box so it would be leveled to their reading level. They completed this before they went on to choose any book they wanted for independent reading.

From the teaching video, it wasn't clear whether the, "whole class instruction" was effective for every student, because only a few students answered the teachers' question prompts. When they, "went off and did independent practice" where they were applying their skills—was this a more accurate view of students' actual abilities? How did SIOP work with this section; Deb wonders: "The questions… over your lesson…do they go as planned; if you went back to re-teach what would you do differently; how you specifically scaffolded for the ELs in your class?" This question remained unanswered in the VT for that particular lesson, though the questioning process itself represents, "knowing in action undertaken jointly with others," with opportunities for reflection (Wells, 2001, p. 181). This, "situated knowing," involving action and reflection, is where sense-making can happen in a sociocultural context (Wells, 2001, p. 181), with change in learning as a result. As this peer reflected on her classmates' written and taught lesson, the questions represented how she was solidifying concepts for LCRCT teaching, as she attended to how the ELs in the classroom were or were not individually served.

Participants also learned from one another about classroom management, student cooperative groupings, introducing and concluding lessons, assessments, scaffolding techniques, literacy resources, social studies ideas, math concept teaching with ELs, how to have, "classroom conversations" from a

book of the same name, and ways to use diverse media. Strategies included manipulatives for math, images, word walls, think-pair-share, bilingual dictionaries, using direct modeling and visuals, iPads, realia, and ways to relate to students' home language and culture. The data revealed that participants had an improved understanding of ELs' experiences and they also began using the techniques as a 'bridge' to ELs' lives and learning, as they reported new awareness developing.

Disorienting Events as Beginning LCRCT Teachers

This transformative theme related to issues faced by participants during their QTEL journey which either led them to be transformed through examining their prior meaning schemes, or became a barrier to their learning. As one in-service teacher noted at the end of the program:

> I hadn't ever considered that our EL students were not only learning math and the cumbersome language and concepts that come with that, but that they were also learning English. I had just taken for granted that they would—even if I knew they had only been in the country a year or two, I never really took the time to process they were learning language and all how hard that was and then learning about how long it takes for them to really become proficient at a language or even moderately functioning in the language.

A perspective transformation shift is evident in her reflection: "I always felt like I taught it very well anyway and then I realized, "Whoa. I'm really not doing anywhere near what I need to be doing."Reflective learning becomes transformative when assessments of assumptions reveal that they are "distorted, inauthentic or invalid", which results in new or transformed meaning schemes (Mezirow, 1991, p. 6).

All participants related the challenges of learning WIDA, as demonstrated: "A majority of us sitting in this row were really confused about WIDA strands." Others confirmed the challenges of WIDA, including the fact that they still did not understand how to assess ELs, and intimated that more time was needed to learn these important concepts. In addition to still questioning WIDA, in the interview and the reflective questioning on disequilibrium, students noted the lack of modeling of teaching ELs in their school practicum:

> When it comes to our practicum and the EL incorporation, it's nonexistent. We have not done any type of general assessment for ELs, any type of internal reading inventory, DRAs, any type of testing. We've not really seen their access scores. [There is a] disconnect [between what the college promotes and what is actually happening in the local school].

Another in-service teacher adds that in their school there is an ESOL specialist, though they mention the limits of her services and the great need for all ELs to be serviced, revealing a new awareness of the needs of English learners and a newly found consciousness of the demands for additional services and resources.

Disorienting events for the Project Director included an evolving realization that the demands of a five-year grant project required much assistance, which was lacking in the home institution. For example, while content-area faculty were well versed in their subject areas, they lacked the training and expertise in how to combine content-area instruction with best-practices in TESOL teaching and learning. Finding experienced faculty for linguistics, second-language acquisition and TESOL courses remains a challenge. This highlights the ever-present need for highly trained educators at all levels who understand how to integrate language, content, and pedagogical competencies for educators working with diverse students in today's classrooms.

Discussion and Implications

The framework of transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991) was adopted in this study to examine teachers' beliefs and perspectives regarding how they serve students from diverse backgrounds. The goal for the QTEL program to form an academic learning community to prepare in-service and pre-service teachers to receive TESOL certification and to develop linguistically and culturally responsive content teaching (LCRCT) knowledge and skills was explored in this research. The immediate importance of professional development and training for teachers of ELs was presented, as the prior lack of research in this area left leaders, teacher educators, and faculty underprepared for the unrelenting demands for training in the current global political climate. Transformative learning within the LCRCT framework was presented as an appropriate context for examining in-service and pre-service participants' cognitive processes, disorienting events, perceptions, interpretations of meanings and new interpretations and learning in a teacher training and PD program to develop linguistically and culturally responsive content teachers for ELs.

Implications include new possibilities for professional development trainers. leaders, and teacher education programs, such as utilizing the LCRCT dimensional framework for teachers, ideas for in-class and online exercises and assessments for developing LCRCT educators, aligned with the ten phases of the transformative learning framework (Mezirow, 1991) for relating course activities to participants' prior, current, and future practice. The LCRCT framework allows leaders and participants to examine content competence and content discourse/pedagogical competence alongside elements of developing metacognitive procedure skills and ways to critically examine socio-culturally just beliefs. The research illustrated how this can be done in online and in-class settings, using Kaltura videos of classroom teaching analyzed and assessed through the VoiceThread platform with a diverse audience of in-service and pre-service educators. Where needed, the ten-phase model of transformative learning can help leaders examine participants' transformations by setting up assignments that allow them to scrutinize disorienting dilemmas, assess internalized assumptions and meaning perspectives, and explore options for new ways of acting. Reviewing participant comments relating to SIOP, WIDA, assessments, using language and content objectives for ELs and participants' growth over time in this study allows other leaders, educators, and researchers to efficiently design and assess professional development and teacher training programs to understand how to more effectively meet the learning needs of 21st century diverse learners by adequately preparing their teachers.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study illustrated that a framework of professional development and teacher training, developed with, and examined through transformative learning in a socio-constructivist, community of practice-based teacher education program, effectively leads to transformed educators. Evidence showed that supporting teacher participants' experiences, critical reflection, and reflective discourse is required in order for learning to be truly transformative (Mezirow, 1978, 1991). Areas of strength were identified, and suggestions for future research and growth include using Mezirow's transformative learning phases (Mezirow, 1991), supported by the QTEL LCRCT framework (Table 1) to now quickly train leaders, administrators, educators, and practitioners who serve today's students. In this way, leaders and teacher educators can design instruction where teachers will be able to critically examine their socio-cultural beliefs through metacognitive procedural practices, and to develop critically needed content and discourse competencies in teaching English learners in diverse classrooms nationally and internationally in the near future.

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Transformative Experience in Buddhism: A Qualitative Investigation

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Abstract

The goal of our research was to explore Transformative Experience (TE) in Buddhist monks living in the monastic setting. Pugh (2011) defines TE as learning that enhances everyday experience, including three components 1) motivated use, 2) expansion of perception, 3) experiential value. Our research looked to extend previous TE research by examining TE outside of formal classroom environments to gain better insight on facilitating TE. Three Buddhist monks from the American southwest were interviewed. Additionally, the primary author collected observational data from attending a traditional Buddhist ceremony. Results revealed that the monks interviewed, experience TE through a specific practice of Buddhist teachings, metta, or loving-kindness. Metta is a Buddhist practice centered upon generating thoughts of good will towards all beings. Adaptations of metta for secular use in educational settings were discussed.

Keywords: transfer, transformative learning, transformative experience

Transformative Experience in Buddhism

Buddhism, considered both a religion and philosophy, was founded in India by Siddhartha Gautama, otherwise known as the Buddha, over 2000 years ago. Buddhism is built upon the doctrine of the Four Noble Truths. Those Noble Truths, according to the Buddha are; 1) life is suffering, 2) suffering derives from craving or desire, 3) there is a way to end suffering, and 4) that way is through the Noble Eightfold Path. The Noble Eightfold Path is divided into the following categories; 1) right understanding, 2) right though, 3) right speech, 4) right action, 5) right livelihood, 6) right effort, 7) right mindfulness, and 8) right concentration. The Noble Eightfold Path is considered to be the moral code of conduct for Buddhists—both for laypeople and monks (Rahula, 1972). Buddhist monks are required to take a stricter code of conduct than lay people. This code of conduct is known in Buddhism as the Vinaya, consisting of 227 rules by which a monk must live (Buddha Dharma Education Association, 2008). Vinaya, for example, dictates how a monk obtains food (what is offered), what clothes to wear (robes of varying color), and where to live (simple shelters). This code also strictly prohibits certain behaviors such as sexual activity and engaging intoxicant substances. According to the UpaddhaSutta (Bhikku, 1997), the Buddha said that it is important for monks to pursue the Noble Eightfold Path through their interactions and teachings with the community. The Buddha said that these actions are the "whole of the holy life."

Being a Buddhist monk requires a monk to not only study and teach the Buddha's teachings to others, but also to live the Buddha's teachings in their everyday life, truly experiencing the teachings

directly. Buddhist monks are responsible for living the teachings of the Buddha while also teaching them to their community, known as the Sangha. One particular practice that embodies all of the Buddha's teachings is the practice of *metta*, or loving-kindness towards all beings. Metta is one of the oldest teachings in Buddhism and is cultivated through direct practice and experience of the Buddha's teachings in the community (Buddhist Center, n.d.).

Based on the teachings of the Buddha, it could be argued that fully practicing these teachings requires a monk to undergo transformative experiences. Pugh (2011) defines transformative experiences (TE) as learning that expands everyday experience. Transformative experience (TE) is a holistic construct from educational psychology derived from the work of pragmatist John Dewey (Pugh, 2002). Using a transformative experience (TE) framework, this research aims to unpack a Buddhist monk's life orientation and wisdom, to extend previous TE research by examining this construct outside of a formal classroom environment and testing the limits of the theory in a non-educational setting, and consequently to provide useful educational implications that can be applied to various educational contexts.

Additionally, this research looks to break new ground in TE research by studying engagement of TE in a unique context, Buddhist monks in the monastic setting. Unlike previous TE research, participants of this qualitative investigation are not students in a formal learning environment, but rather, participants are both teaching and practicing the teachings of the Buddha in their community. Given the unique role of Buddhist monks as both teachers and practitioners of the Buddha's teachings, this research could facilitate deeper understanding of how TE is experienced by learners and educators alike.

A secondary justification for this research is the methodological choice of approach. To this date, research of TE has utilized mostly a positivist approach, relying primarily on quantitative data (Heddy, Sinatra, Seli, Taasoobshirazi, & Mukhopadhyay, 2016; Pugh, Linnenbrink-Garcia, Koskey, Stewart, & Manzey, 2010a). While previous TE research has used elements of qualitative data, very little research in the area of TE has been purely qualitative in nature. By employing a qualitative approach, this study aims at developing deeper understanding and enriched description of TE from three Buddhist monks at a monastery in the American Southwest.

Theoretical Framework

Transformative Experience

Pugh (2011) defines transformative experience (TE) as learning that enhances everyday experience. More specifically, Pugh's definition of TE includes three components—motivated use, expansion of perception, and experiential value. The first component, motivated use occurs when a learner intentionally applies what they have learned into their everyday experience, (Pugh, 2002). An example of motivated use would be after a student learns the concept of gravity in their physics class they actively engage with this concept while watching basketball. This student might find the ideas of gravity so interesting that he or she begins a conversation to explain the principles of gravity to a parent or sibling while they are watching basketball. This student can explain why some players can jump higher than others, for example.

The second component of TE, expansion of perception, takes place when a learner uses their new ideas and concepts to see the world differently or in new ways. Using the previous example, after learning about gravity, the student watching basketball cannot help but to see the concept of gravity every time a player jumps to dunk the ball or block a shot. This student now views basketball as more than just athletes running and jumping, but a game that involves many of the principles learned in physics class, such as gravity, inertia, momentum, and others.

The third component, experiential value, occurs when learning is both useful and meaningful to the learner. The student in the aforementioned example may come to value the concept of gravity more because it changed how they watch basketball. Instead of watching the players jumping around randomly the student can now understand why some players jump higher than others. This could potentially allow the student to have a conversation with a friend or family member about the topic, thus providing some form of social value from learning.

Pugh (2004) used an interview with a middle school student who learned about inertia and force pairs in his science class to illustrate what each of the three TE components looks like. This middle school student applied the concepts of physics into his everyday life (motivated use) while making comments like "the ideas are worth learning" (experiential value) because "I can look at, like, when two cars crash into each other, I can look at that in a different way… Now I'm going to see things that I'm using to seeing in a different way" (expansion of perception) (p.8).

Heddy and Pugh (2015) place Transformative Experience along a continuum of Transformative Learning. Transformative Learning is the process of a deep, fundamental change in the way a person sees the world. Boyd (2009) defines Transformative Learning as an expansion of consciousness that originates from a fundamental shift in personality. The process of Transformative Learning is gradual, occurring in stages (Kitchenham, 2008) and can be facilitated through deep reflection on action (Minnes, Maybery, Soto, & Hargis, 2016; Peet, 2016). Additionally, Mezirow (2003) describes Transformative Learning as a process of fundamental change that takes place as a unique form of metacognitive reasoning achieved by adults. Colleges and universities are beginning to place more emphasis on instruction that is intended to be transformative in nature (Glisczinski, 2007). On the continuum of transformation, Transformative Experience is considered to be a smaller, micro change whereas Transformative Learning is considered to be a larger, macro change in perspective. Furthermore, environments can be modified and adapted to facilitate the processes of transformation (Fowler, Lazo, Turner &Hohenstein, 2015). However, research by Heddy and Pugh (2015) suggests that teaching for macro transformations achieved through Transformative Learning can be difficult, but learners might benefit from smaller scale TEs that accumulate to larger scale Transformative Learning over time.

Pugh and Bergin (2005) reviewed research on the impact of in-school experiences on out-of-school learning. Unfortunately, research into this topic was scant at the time. Their findings suggest that many students are not applying what they learn in class into their everyday lives. A solution to this problem, according to the authors is to provide instruction that teaches for TE.

There are many benefits associated when learners engage in TE. Previous research suggests that engaging in TE enhances the experience of positive academic emotions, (Heddy & Sinatra, 2013) such as interest (Heddy, Sinatra, Seli, Taasoobshirazi, & Mukhopadhyay, 2017). Additionally, TE promotes transfer (Pugh et al., 2010a) and conceptual change related to controversial topics in science such as natural selection (Pugh et al., 2010b) and biological evolution, (Heddy & Sinatra, 2013).

While the construct of TE is derived from the historical works of pragmatist John Dewey (Pugh, 2011), TE is a relatively new construct in the field of Educational Psychology. To date, TE research has been limited to primarily understanding the impact of teaching for TE on constructs derived from course materials, such as physics and biology. No research in TE has directly explored the impact of TE on constructs related to abstract ideas such as morals and ethics. This qualitative research study sought to expand the conceptual understanding of TE by exploring the construct in a novel setting with a unique sample of participants, such as Buddhist monks living in a monastic setting.

Research Questions

The overarching research question that guided this research is:

- How do Buddhist monks experience Transformative Experience?

This research is also guided by the following sub questions:

- How have Buddhist monks noticed the teachings of the Buddha in their everyday lives (motivated use)?
- How have the Buddha's teachings changed the way they see the world (expansion of perception)?
- In what ways is their new world view as a Buddhist monk valuable to them (experiential value)?

Methods

Research Design

In order to unpack this unique and complex phenomena, this study employed a general qualitative

approach. Qualitative research is beneficial when the target phenomena under investigation is complex and multi-layered (Creswell, 2013; Tracy, 2013). This is because qualitative inquiry takes a holistic approach to collect data in a natural setting, embraces context contexts as a key component to generate meaning, and focuses on unpacking experiences and perspectives of each participant with much depth and details. It is used when a complex understanding of phenomena is needed. This study employed semi-structured interviews with our monks along with direct observation of a traditional Buddhist ceremony lead by the participants.

Participants

Utilizing a purposeful, criterion sampling (Creswell, 2013), we recruited participants who have membership as a Buddhist monk at a Buddhist monastery in the American Southwest. The three participants in this study were all male Theravada Buddhist monks from a Buddhist monastery located in the Southwest region of the United States. Below is a brief profile of each participating monk in this study:

BhanteRahula – 62 years of age, novice monk with three years as a monk at the time of his interview. BhanteRahula was in the process of becoming a higher ordained Buddhist monk at the time of interview recording. Has since become a higher ordained monk after traveling to Austin, Texas. American born.

Stewart Wiggens – 29 years of age, novice monk with three years as a monk at the time of interview recording. Stewart Wiggens was in the process of a becoming higher ordained Buddhist monk. Has since become a higher ordained monk after traveling to Sri Lanka. American born.

Noble – 39 years of age, senior monk at the Southwest Buddhist Center. Born in Sri Lanka. Immigrated to the United States at 27 years old. 28 years' experience as a monk.

Data Collection and Analysis

Semi-structured, individual interviews were conducted for each participant approximately one hour on average. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed in verbatim. The primary researcher also collected observation data by visiting the monastery during a traditional Theravada Buddhist ceremony lasting for two hours. Data were analyzed inductively by identifying commonalities and differences across three interviews through line-by-line coding, categorizing and thematizing to detect salient patterns, and theorizing to develop possible explanations (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Shank, 2002).

Trustworthiness

Several steps were taken to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings. First, we did member checks to establish credibility of data analysis. To begin with, interviews were recorded by both the researcher and the participating monks. One of the monks, Stewart Wiggens, is currently developing a book on his understandings of the Buddha's teachings so he was interested in recording his responses as possible topics to write about later. After transcribing each interview, each monk was provided with digital and printed copies of the transcripts to review. Second, participants were given the opportunity to discuss their perceptions and thoughts about the process of the interview after reviewing the transcript. Lastly, researchers of this study conducted data analysis triangulation by checking accuracy and credibility of each other's coding and categorizing outcomes.

Findings

Findings were organized around three themes; aligned with three sub-research questions; motivated use, expansion of perception, and experiential value. Each theme is described in detail below.

Motivated Use

Each monk individually described how they actively used the teaching of loving-kindness in their everyday life. The usage of this particular teaching varies. In some cases, metta is practiced in thought or in attitude such as when BhanteRahula described how he thinks about the metta practice:

> "So when I think of that particular teaching I think of it pivotally for myself in terms of the compassion that I should carry within myself and learn and relearn every day. I think of suffering and how suffering is a part of the world we live in."

This particular quote reflects that loving-kindness is a teaching of Buddhism that requires active and daily practice in order to be more compassionate towards other beings. This is further illustrated by Noble's reflections on his own practice with the Buddha's teachings on loving-kindness: "So daily I practice breathing and loving-kindness. Loving-kindness is my favorite. So I practice a lot."

Metta is a vital practice of being a Buddhist monk. This experience of practicing metta illustrates the behavioral component of TE, motivated use (Pugh, 2011). The Buddhist monks interviewed are highly motivated to practice the teachings of loving-kindness because of the value they have brought to their own lives. Each monk interviewed actively uses this specific teaching in their everyday experiences as a Buddhist monk as described by Stewart Wiggens:

> "But I think the most impactful teachings in my life are the teachings on metta, or good will. Learning to wish well for myself. Thinking thought may I be well, happy, and peaceful. Developing a universal heart of loving-kindness. So that there is no room in my heart for ill-will or resentment."

The motivated use component of the metta practice can also be seen directly in how the monks interact with their supporting community.

The primary author also attended the Vesak ceremony at the Southwest Buddhist Center. Vesak is a celebration of the Buddha's birthday. The celebration itself does not have to take place on the Buddha's birthday, but typically on the first full moon of the month of May. The ceremony showed how metta is symbolized and practiced in various components of rituals.

When the primary author arrived at the ceremony there were 20 to 30 participants already in attendance. All of the attendees were Sri Lankan, nationally and culturally. The ceremony was conducted almost entirely in the Pali language and presented by Noble, who speaks fluent Pali. While the primary author does not speak Pali, he inquired with Stewart Wiggens and BhanteRahula about the contents of the ceremony. He was told by both monks that the ceremony would be focused on the importance of practicing and observing the Buddha's teachings, especially the practice of metta. The ceremony began with chanting followed by a lecture on the importance of observing the precepts established by the Buddha. The ceremony was a celebration of the Buddha's birthday, but also a time for members of the community to renew their precepts (Rahula, 1972) and provide service to the community.

At one point in the ceremony, the room cleared out except for one member of the Sri Lankan community, a young girl. She remained while Noble and her continued to chant. As they chanted, Noble began to wrap a thin, white piece of string around the girl's wrist. This is symbolic of taking the five Buddhist precepts of not killing, stealing, engaging in sexual misconduct, consuming intoxicants, or lying (Rahula, 1972). The five precepts are a physical manifestation of the metta practice. They are intended to cultivate a mind of loving-kindness for oneself and all other beings.

The primary author also noticed that the male attendees were the ones taking care of preparing the ceremony, including preparing and distributing food to the monks and other attendees. He asked BhanteRahula about this observation and was told that these attendees have chosen to take more precepts on this day as part of their service to the Buddhist community. This service by the male devotees is considered to be an outward form of the metta practice towards oneself and towards the larger Buddhist community.

Expansion of Perception

Each monk also described how the practice of loving-kindness expanded their perception, specifically in terms of being compassionate towards all beings. This specific variable of TE was apparent in Stewart Wiggens' description of how he is able to see relationships different because of the loving-kindness practice:

> "We hear about mindfulness and developing concentration, [in doing] this practice of metta. I tore down a lot of walls within myself, a lot of old resentment and anger towards myself and my situation and family (laughs). But because it was so transformative it's become very valuable to me."

From this quote it appears that Stewart Wiggens has experienced a change in his perception of how he views himself and his loved ones. The loving-kindness practice has expanded his perception towards being more compassionate towards all beings, including himself and loved ones. This change in perspective on compassion is consistent with Pugh's (2002) operational definition of expansion of perception, a change in the way a learner thinks or talks about a concept. But this change in perspective did not happen overnight.

Similar findings were found in BhanteRahula's recollections on how meditations of compassion, such as loving-kindness meditation, have on his perceptions of being present with others:

> "I am now emotionally centered and present. The teaching of being present to another is one of the byproducts I think of meditation. It helps you to really be fully engaged with someone and to understand someone directly the way they present at the moment. And that helps you to understand and to be compassionate. Maybe sometimes you would not understand what they believe in. Or how they look at it, especially their experience. But you can be compassionate. And you can share in terms of (pause) maybe insights or not. Maybe you just simply have to be there with them. And that provides enough in terms of the opportunity in teaching another value in Buddhism."

A change in perception like the one described above takes time and a tremendous amount of practice to develop. This is evident in the following quote by BhanteRahula when describing his change of perspective over time as a Buddhist monk:

> "It was gradual. It wasn't the epiphany. Or the lightbulb going on in one's head. It was a gradual understanding of how things fall into place. And how things and events and experiences and insights and elements of teaching, elements of daily life, elements of the lived experience of being a monk, the elements of reading and following a daily pattern that provides the platform for understanding. And the platform is very gradual. For me and my experience very gradual."

This quote on a shift of perception falls in line with the Transformative Experience-Transformative Learning continuum outlined by Heddy and Pugh (2015). According to these authors, small scale moments of TE gradually can lead to larger transformations in perspective that can be defined as Transformative Learning. The monks interviewed for this paper have a daily practice of metta towards themselves and their community. Each day provides an opportunity to grow and develop that practice further as described by Noble,

> "We practice morning and evening. We have discussions and we read together sometimes. And we share our knowledge sometimes and we have monthly and every other month meetings with other monks who are living close to us…"

Experiential Value

When describing the practice of loving-kindness, each monk described the value they perceived in this specific practice in Buddhism. This was apparent in Noble's description of the benefits associated with practicing loving-kindness:

> "Take loving-kindness. So if you practice loving-kindness there are 11 benefits. So those benefits you can get most of the benefits in front of you. You can sleep well. You can wake up well. You can you never dream so bad dreams. If you dream you dream good dreams. So you never harm to humans. You never harm to anyone. You are dear to humans. You are dear to non-humans and you can get concentrated mind and you can get good physical and mental health."

This quote illustrates the specific benefits that are associated with practicing loving-kindness as a Buddhist monk and how they can be achieved. Noble's experience is similar to how Pugh (2002) operationally defines experiential value. Pugh (2002) describes experiential value as finding a concept interesting and worth learning because of the value it brings. From this quote is seems obvious that the Buddha's teachings of loving-kindness are interesting to Noble because of the value they bring to him, in this case there are 11 specific benefits associated with practicing loving-kindness.

Additionally, the Buddha's teachings on loving-kindness appear to provide Buddhist monks with a framework for interacting with others, their Buddhist community of devotees or otherwise. This was reflected in a quote by BhanteRahula:

> "Well I do like the story of the Karaniya, which is what was taught by the Buddha in terms of teaching loving-kindness. That particular story because it is an important value that is not (pause) often acted enough in contemporary society. Um, we have so, so many opportunities of interaction. Of being with people and sometimes we don't spend enough time being compassionate with others especially in not only listening and in also providing support or in also helping someone alleviate whatever their suffering is by simply being with them."

Discussion

Summary of Results

The goal for this qualitative investigation was to understand the nature of transformative experience (TE) in Buddhist monks living in a monastic setting. According to Pugh (2011), TE is defined as learning that enhances the everyday experience of a learner. This definition of TE also includes three components critical for experiencing TE; 1) motivated use 2) expansion of perception and 3) experiential value. In order for a learning experience to be considered TE, it must meet each of these three criteria.

To understand the relationship between TE and the principles of Buddhism we conducted semi-structured interviews with three Buddhist monks from a monastery in the American southwest. Results revealed that the Buddhist monks interviewed are experiencing TE directly through their practice of the Buddha's teachings on *metta*, or loving-kindness. *Metta* is a specific Buddhist practice centered upon thinking and thoughts of good will towards the self and extending that good will to all other beings in the universe.

From the data collected, we contend that the Buddhist monks interviewed for this research experienced TE in Buddhism directly in their experiences of practicing the Buddha's teachings on loving-kindness. Based upon their rich descriptions of life before and after becoming a Buddhist monk and engaging in the metta practice, one could make the argument that each monk interviewed has demonstrated transformative experience from this specific teaching. Each monk in their interview expressed examples of each component of TE through the metta practice: motivated use by directly using and thinking about the metta practice in their everyday lives, expansion of perception through a new understanding of suffering, and experiential value in their descriptions of this particular Buddhist practice. This not did not happen overnight, but rather was a gradual change that took place with a daily practice of

metta in personal conduct and interactions with community at-large. Perhaps these results suggest that from these TE experiences, monks who continuously practice loving-kindness over time are engaging in more large-scale transformative learning (Heddy & Pugh, 2015).

Each monk's description of continuously practicing loving-kindness is similar to how Heddy and Pugh (2015) demonstrated that using small scale transformative events like TE can be used to generate larger scale life transformations, known as transformative learning. This is what appears to be taking place with the monks interviewed. They appear to be experiencing small, subtle changes each day in their practice of loving-kindness that has overtime, lead to larger scale changes in the way they perceive the world. It is the accumulation of an entire process of living fully engaged in the Buddha's teachings, specifically the loving-kindness teachings that is transformative. The monks have benefited from these changes and clearly demonstrate value in the teaching of loving-kindness.

Theoretical Implications

Based on the qualitative data obtained from conducting semi-structured interviews and direct observations with three Buddhist monks at the Southwest Buddhist Center, our research found evidence of transformative experience (TE) occurring within the Buddhist monastic setting. More specifically, we found evidence of TE from each monk's independent descriptions and understanding of the *metta* practice prescribed by the Buddha. These results imply that TE can potentially be found outside of commonly studied settings like schools and classrooms.

Theoretically speaking, these findings could potentially expand the conceptual definition of TE to include experiences that occur outside of such traditional learning environments. Previous research by Pugh and Bergin (2005) expressed the difficulty in studying learning that takes place during out-of-school experiences. Studying learning that takes place in non-traditional settings such as a Buddhist monastery provides potential evidence that TE can take place in out-of-school experiences when the content being learned is salient, meaningful, and relevant to the learner.

The results of our research add to the evidence that TE promotes transfer in learning, the process in which learning in one setting influences learning in a different context or setting, (Anderson, Reder, & Simon, 1996; Goldstone & Day, 2012; Perkins & Salmon, 1994; Schwartz, Bransford, & Sears, 2005). Previous TE research has shown that TE promotes far transfer, a type of transfer in which the transfer context significantly varies from the learning context (Barnett & Ceci, 2002; Detterman, 1993; Heddy, Sinatra, Seli, Taasoobshirazi, & Mukhopadhyay, 2017; Salomon & Perkins, 1989). A form of far transfer appears to be taking place with the Buddhist monks interviewed for this research. Each monk independently described examples of learning the practice of metta within the context of their monastic duties, but have gone on to apply, or transfer this particular teaching into all aspects of their day-to-day living. Investigating engagement in transfer in new contexts can provide useful information for more traditional educational contexts.

Finally, our findings suggest that TE can occur with the learning of moral and ethical concepts, such as the metta practice. To our knowledge, our study is the first research study to explore the relationship between TE and such constructs. To date, researchers have explored TE with biology, psychology, and social studies concepts. Investigating new topics and contexts in which TE can be facilitated is useful for expanding TE research to new settings, which can provide rich learning in those new contexts, while increasing our understanding of the usefulness of TE as well. Future research exploring the topic of TE should consider studying TE with new constructs and new contexts.

Practical Implications

In addition to the theoretical implications of this qualitative research, there are also important practical implications worth considering. Each monk appears to have experienced TE through their practice of metta, or loving-kindness. While this is a practice learned from studying the Buddha's teachings, secular forms of loving-kindness meditations have been adapted for clinical populations (Rosch, 2015), as well as educational settings (Roeser & Pinela, 2014).

Incorporating elements of self-compassion training into their instructional practices may prove beneficial to educators. Research by Neff and Dahm (2015) suggests that practicing self-compassion, such as the metta practice, is linked with increases in motivation for positive lifestyle changes, coping with stress, and improvements in interpersonal relationships. By including elements of self-compassion into their instruction, educators move beyond the curriculum and begin to promote a more holistic sense of well-being by teaching values, ethics and morals (Zajonc, 2016). Based on the results of our research, engaging in Transformative Experiences appears to be an effective vehicle for promoting transfer of those same concepts of morals, ethics, values, and compassion to learners' everyday lives.

Additionally, after recording each interview and reviewing the transcripts numerous times one could make the argument that the TE experienced by the Buddhist monks interviewed took place from reading Buddhist texts in which some were written over 2000 years ago. These Buddhist monks appear to have experienced TE from their reading, understanding, and directly practicing the Buddha's texts in their everyday experiences. This leads to the possibility that classroom texts could be modified to facilitate TE. Previous research by Heddy, Nelson, Husman, and Goldman (2016) suggests that TE can be facilitated in online/distance learning settings through Use, Change, Value discussions. Given this research and the current understanding of how to facilitate TE, perhaps textual materials can be designed for the purpose of facilitating TE.

Limitations

Our research exploring the phenomena of Transformative Experience with Buddhist monks is not without limitations. Results of our qualitative investigation suggest that our participants experienced TE through the Buddha's teachings on metta, or loving-kindness. However, generalizing these results is limited because we only interviewed and observed three Buddhist monks from a specific community. We did not achieve saturation in our data collection. This is the first study to explore the topic of TE with such a unique population. Future research exploring this topic will need to examine these questions with a larger, more diverse sample of Buddhist monks.

Conclusion

Our research goal was to understand the nature of transformative experience (TE) in Buddhist monks living in a monastic setting. We interviewed three Buddhist monks from a monastery in the American Southwest. In addition to semi-structured interviews, the first author of this study also collected field observation notes from attending a traditional Buddhist ceremony. Our analysis of the transcribed interviews and field notes revealed that each monk experienced transformative experience through their individual practice of the Buddha's teachings on metta, or loving-kindness. The metta practice is one practice in which each monk independently described that meets the criteria for TE; 1) Motivated use 2) Expansion of perception and 3) Experiential value. Results suggest that Buddhist teachings, specifically the practice of loving-kindness, explained through the TE framework can be applied into various educational settings. Previous research by Roeser and Pinela (2014) suggest that secular forms of loving-kindness practices can be adapted for the classroom, potentially helping students develop not academically, but socially, emotionally, and spiritually.

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Transformative Action Coaching in Healthcare Leadership

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Abstract

The context of this study focuses on the collaborative interest of three organizations devoted to the development of Healthcare leadership in the United Kingdom, namely the National Health Service (NHS), Army Medical Service (AMS), and the University of Cumbria (UoC). Each organization acknowledges the challenges facing healthcare leaders in their pursuit of effect organizational, personal, and professional learning and have come together and bring into play their own organizational learning to collectively design this pilot programme of leadership development that facilitates deep transformative critical self-reflection, reflexivity and learning. The authors have used the theoretical and practical integration of autoethnographic storytelling and arts-based action learning approaches to facilitate such transformative learning in the group setting of professional leadership development programmes. The aim of this study is to add to the growing discourses in the fields of Transformative Learning, Action Learning, Coaching and Autoethnography by critically evaluating the application of this approach when designing and delivering a combined military, university and NHS leadership development program to a cohort of 24 senior leaders within an NHS hospital.

Keywords: Transformative Learning, Action Learning, Coaching, Arts-based Reflection, Autoethnography

Background Literature

Transformative Learning in leadership development is a deep structural shift in basic premises of thoughts, feelings and actions of the leaders themselves. As Mezirow (2000) states, this involves a re-examination of our presuppositions, perspectives and beliefs, fostering a deep form of critical self-reflection on behaviours, and assumptions. However, such deep reflective and reflexive learning can prove challenging for senior leaders working in the context of healthcare leadership. With high demands from professional and organisational standards with equally high levels of expectation and accountability from multiple stakeholders, the healthcare leader can find themselves operating within a level of "organizational noise" that may drown out the more traditional experiential and reflective learning models used in the sector. Recognising the reflective learning challenges at such high levels of organization noise, O'Neil, and Marsick (2007 p.18) propose a Critical Reflection School of Action Learning (CRSAL) that builds upon a hierarchy of tacit, scientific, and experiential learning goals to include those of personal, organizational and cultural transformation. They go on to suggest the intervention of a learning coach to facilitate a suitable learning environment where the participants feel comfortable

critically examining their beliefs, practices and cultural norms and giving time for individual and collective reflection focused upon the roots of their presenting problems (p.20).

Whilst such deeply personal transformative change work can be effectively coached on a one-to-one basis within healthcare leadership (Corrie and Lawson 2017) where the leader explores their presenting problems and issues in a storied dialogic coaching approach (Swart 2013), the authors believe adopting and adapting CRSAL to include an exploration of multiple storied perspectives and using an arts-based autoethnographic methodology in a group setting can facilitate work-based group reflexivity (Lawson et al, 2013) and create a suitable learning environment for personal and organizational transformation. The foundations of this belief are reviewed in the following sections.

Action Learning

Action learning has become a preferred method of leadership development for many organisations in recent years (Conger and Benjamin, 1999). It was developed in the 1940's by Reginald Revans through his work with the coal mines and hospitals of England, when he came to realise that the knowledge needed by these workers to solve their problems lay not in the study of books, but as a product of their action (O'Neil and Marsick, 2014). Revans described Action Learning as being: "A means of development, intellectual, emotional or physical that requires its subjects, through responsible involvement in some real, complex, and stressful problem, to achieve intended change to improve his observable behaviour henceforth in the problem field." Revans (1982).

Building on such theories as Action Learning, Self-Directed Learning, Experiential Learning, and Transformative Learning, O'Neil and Marsick (2007 p.18) introduced a four-level pyramid shaped model of Action Learning specifically addressing learning goals in organizational settings and applicable to higher and lower levels of complexity, which they describe as "Organizational Noise." (see Figure 1 below).

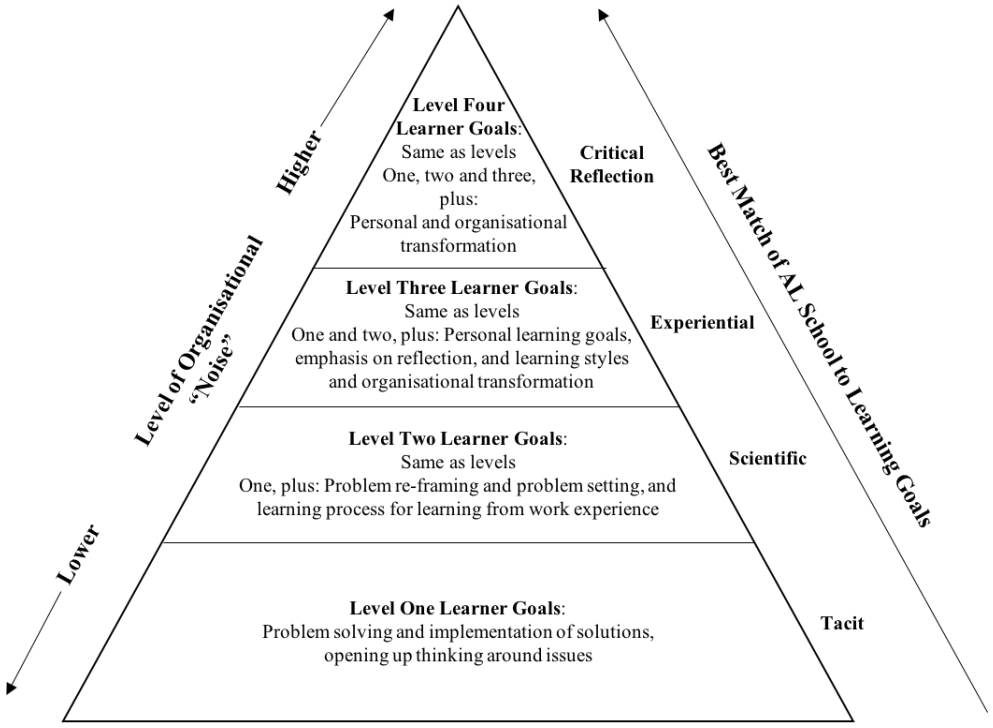


Figure 1. Action Learning Pyramid O'Neil, Yorks and Marsick (2007).

The high level of "noise" experienced within the senior leadership of the NHS hospital and indeed within the theatre of military clinical practice, would require the forth and highest level of action learning, which involves the participants to, firstly, at a "tacit" level, focus on problem solving and the implementation of solutions, opening up to thinking around issues. Secondly, on a "scientific" level, use problem re-framing, problem setting, and learn a process for learning from work experience. Thirdly, at an "experiential" level, incorporate personal learning goals with an emphasis on reflection and learning styles. Fourthly, and finally, at a "critical reflection" level build on the first three levels adding the ultimate learning goals of personal and organisational transformation. In recognising the challenges and organisational noise facing the NHS hospital, it would be appropriate, in line with these recent theoretical developments in action learning, to reintroduce it in the sector in which it was originally conceived and trialled by Revans to add currency to the developmental story of both.

Action Learning Coaching and Dialogic Coaching for Organizational Development.

According to Bushe and Marshak (2015), there are two organisational development mind sets. The first is a traditional diagnostic mind set in which the organization can be diagnosed as being fit and well in its environment or indeed not, in which case it requires treatment, a step change, re-structure, or new leadership. The second mind set sees dialogic organization development as a compelling alternative to the classical diagnostic approach to planned change in which organisations are seen as fluid, socially constructed realities that are continuously created through conversations and images. Bushe and Marshak go on to suggest that leaders within their organisations can help foster change by encouraging disruptions to taken-for-granted ways of thinking and acting and the use of generative images to stimulate new organisational conversations and narratives. However, in an organizational cultural environment that still fosters diagnostic approaches it can be challenging for leaders to transition to a dialogic perspective on change. Dialogic and narrative coaching can, however, create a space and support for such individuals to reconnect the rich knowledge, values, passions, and hopes in their relationship to the story of work and work-communities, in which they become the authors and co-authors in writing the story of the companies they represent (Swart, 2013).

The dialogic coaching and supervision of leaders helps them develop their critical professionalism (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014) by fully understanding the stories of their own professional identity, values, beliefs, and capital that they can effectively invest and apply in the organisational setting for their own development, the development of the organisation, and that of their particular profession. Appleby and Pilkington correctly identify that a key precursor for such critical professionalism is critical reflective practice, a practice that can facilitated in one-to-one transformative coaching (Corrie and Lawson. 2017) and be expanded in a group setting via action learning coaching (O'Neil and Marsick. 2007).

According to O'Neil and Marsick (p.106) there are four stages of interaction between the action learning coach and the team participants and in the context of CRSAL the first would be the framing of the encounter by the learning coach when he or she helps the team focus on the deep values and beliefs in the individuals and their wider organizational system. The second would be the intervention of the coach before the action learning team meeting at which time the coach helps the team probe organizational assumptions; encourage questioning regarding empowerment; plan and role play. In the third interaction during the meeting, the coach does not intervene as one of the participants will be facilitating, however, the coach will help raise difficult issues and questions about the system and share views. The final interaction between the coach and the team and / or the system is after the meeting, when there will be some group analysis of forces shaping their own behaviour and the system's culture; reframing problems and looking to the next steps. The underlying objective of the action learning coach, when operating in the context of CRSAL, is to look for opportunities to help participants to think differently (p.114) and from different perspectives.

Arts-based Transformative Reflection and Reflexivity

Professor Edward Taylor co-edited with Jack Mezirow "Transformative Learning in Practice" (Mezirow et al, 2009). In this work, Taylor extracted several core elements from insights gained in transformative learning research in community, workplace, and higher education. He states that these elements are "the essential components that frame a transformative approach to teaching" (p. 4). The core elements are: Individual experience, critical reflection, dialogue, holistic orientation, awareness of context, and authentic relationships. In general, Taylor finds that transformative learning in education requires the teacher to be both an initiator and a facilitator in a learner-centred approach (Illeris, 2014, p.10). This stance was taken by Lawson et al. (2014) when coaching and facilitating reflective and reflexive practices in the work-based education of police officers, to foster transformative learning, reflection, and reflexivity. In a similar environment of high levels of organizational noise, some officers were experiencing internal resistance to the reflection stage of Kolb's cycle (1984). To help resolve the issue a further cycle was extended from the reflective observation stage, in which Taylor's core elements of transformative learning could be incorporated (see Figure 2 below).

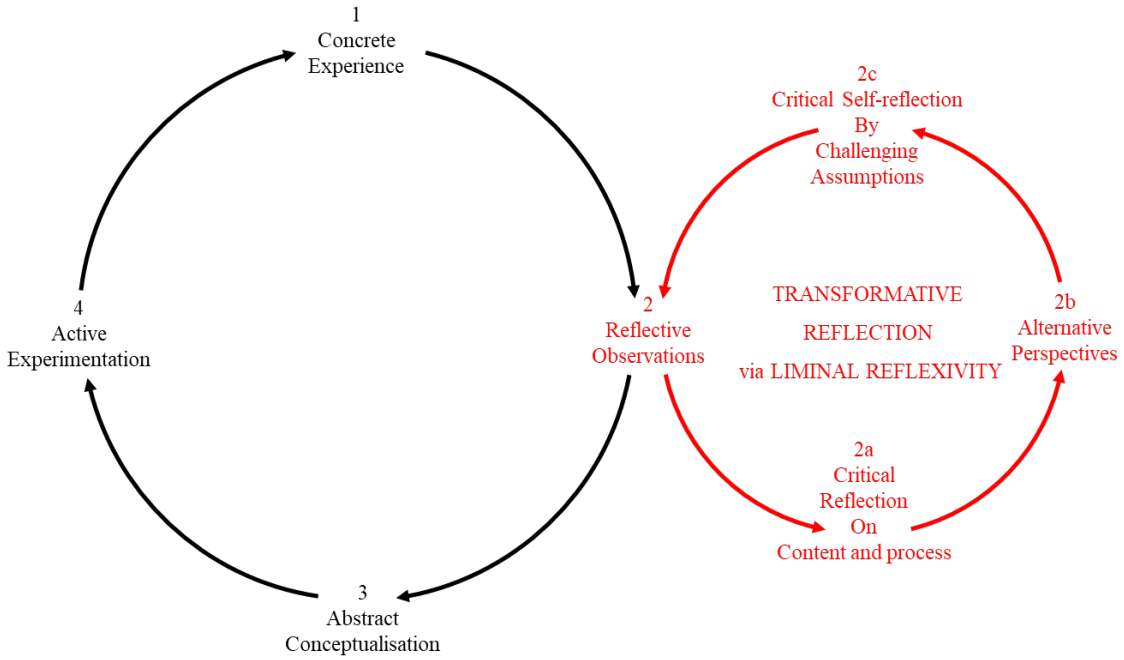


Figure 2. Transformative Reflection Model (Lawson et al. 2014)

The facilitated extended cycle in effect creates a liminal learning space, in which the content and process of the experience could be critically reflected upon, using a storied approach to explore their individual experience, starting a critical examination of their normative assumptions that underpin their emotions, value judgements, and normative expectations (Mezirow, 2000, p.31). The facilitated process then extended the officers' critical reflections into an imagining phase to include the alternative perspectives of others involved, fully contextualising the experience in another story, and then to retell that story in an artistic media of their choice, to gain a further alternative perspective to reflect upon. After creating these alternative perspective stories in an imagining and liminal learning space, the delegates return to review with others in the group each other's reflections, engaging in a professional dialogue and communicative learning phase before re-engaging in the experiential learning cycle.

The use of storytelling was introduced as a tool to assist the delegates in the understanding and development of their critical self-reflection. The starting point begins with the identification of a "critical incident." Summarised by Tripp (1993), critical incident technique asks learners to identify an event they

consider to be of significance in their career, from which they hope to gain better understanding of and eventually reframe their assumptions around the incident.

In the first instance the story is "found" when delegates are asked to identify an occasion in their current role or development that caused them a disorienting dilemma. This is the "critical incident," which is then considered objectively, analysed, and evaluated. As a period of time may have already passed between the incident taking place and the facilitated exploration of the story in the classroom, we propose that this "space" offers the students the period as described by Van Gennep (1960) as "separation," where the student is separated from their previous social environment (away from the workplace in the workshop setting). Normality is suspended in this conceptual liminal space.

In critical reflection at (2a), the delegates tell their version of the story, making sense of it in self-examination. The delegates are asked to write a short narrative from their professional perspective around the content and process of the chosen incident.

At (2b), directly related to their exploration of the impact on their professional identity, the delegates are asked to subjectively explore alternative perspectives of the incident, considering the feeling and rationales of the other characters in the story by writing a second narrative from the perspective of a selected other. The delegates are then asked to further broaden their perspectives by expanding their story, retelling it using an artistic medium of their choice. Their creative artefact, whether it is a painting, poem, an installation sculpture, lyric, or collage, together with the two narrative stories are created in their own space over the period of around one month. On returning to the workshop at (2c), their artefacts and stories are presented to the rest of the group where they are discussed in terms of underlying assumptions that shaped the meaning perspectives before during and after the experience.

The alternative perspectives are used to encourage the delegates to challenge their assumptions critically reflect, and take them to the threshold of Van Gennep's (1960) transition or "sacred time and place". This period of liminality continues through phases (3) abstract conceptualisation and (4) active experimentation (Kolb, 1984) of the transformative reflection cycle, this extended period of self-awareness work in which stories are processed in ways to work with meaning. The final stage of the transformative reflection process begins with a new story, reconstructed from the old forming a new professional identity, what Van Gennep calls "incorporation" (1960). This continues as they build confidence in their new roles and relationships by "investing" the time, space, and learning spent in the liminal phase until they have reintegrated themselves into their new life. It is argued that the delegates' old professional identity has been "stripped" to make way for the new. The process of reconstruction or transformation of identity allows the delegates to then move into a new cycle of both "being" and "doing" (Ibarra, 2003), thereby impacting on their personal, professional, and organizational lives.

In summary the literature indicates some synergies in the fields of personal and organizational transformative learning, dialogic coaching, action learning, and the development of reflection and reflexivity in practice. In the context of this research, the theoretical integration of these synergies forms the structure of a facilitated and coached workshop in which the NHS delegates were encouraged to play with narratives and artistic techniques to enable them to challenge their assumptions in a critical self-reflective way.

Research Study Design

The context of this research study focuses on the collaborative interest of three organizations devoted to the development of Healthcare leadership in the United Kingdom, namely the National Health Service (NHS), Army Medical Service (AMS) and the University of Cumbria (UoC). Each acknowledge the challenges facing healthcare leaders in their pursuit of effective, organizational, personal, and professional learning and have come together and bring into play their own organizational learning to collectively design this pilot programme of leadership development that facilitates deep transformative critical self-reflection, reflexivity, and learning. The authors have built upon the work of Lawson et al. (2014) and Corrie and Lawson (2017), detailed above, to design a pilot NHS/Military healthcare leadership development programme, delivered to a cohort of 24 senior leaders within an NHS hospital.

The leadership development programme took the form of a facilitated/coached two-part, three-day workshop with 24 senior leaders from the NHS Trust. The authors delivered the first part of the workshop (days 1 and 2 together) sharing the concepts, theories, and techniques of healthcare leadership with delegates using a storied and experiential approach, incorporating stories of leadership success from peers in the military, who also serve in challenging "high level or organizational noise" clinical environments. Delegates were also introduced to the theories of transformative learning (Mezirow, 2000), critical professionalism (Appleby and Pilkington 2014), dialogic coaching in organisational development (Bushe and Marske 2014), and actively participated in group-coached action learning sets (Revans, 1982: O'Neil and Marsick, 2007). Between days 2 and 3, a period of four weeks, the delegates reflected on their learning and used the liminal reflexive space to write their narratives and create artefacts in media of their choice (Lawson et al 2014), which were presented back to the group on day 3 as an alternative perspective on their learning and development. Following the presentations, the delegates again used action learning and group coaching to critically self-reflect on and challenge assumptions around their personal, professional, and organisational transformation. Delegates were fully informed of the rationale and purpose of the research and all gave informed consent to participate.

Method Assemblage

John Law (2004), in his book *After Method: Mess in Social Science*, research suggests that research methods in social science are enacted within a set of nineteenth or even seventeenth-century Euro-American blinkers, misunderstanding, and misrepresenting itself. He argues that method is not a set of procedures for reporting on a given reality; rather it is performative and helps to produce realities (p.143). He comments that in practice "bright ideas are very far from realities," and the key is in the word "practice." If new realities are to be created, then "practices that can cope with a hinterland (an area lying beyond what is visible and known) of pre-existing social and material realities also have to be built up and sustained." Law calls the enactment of this hinterland and its bundle of ramifying relations a "method assemblage" (p.14). As a method for this research the authors have created an assemblage in three progressive categories of; cognitive frames for the inquiry; means to enact the inquiry and finally the means to investigate the inquiry.

The cognitive frames for the inquiry include personal and organizational transformative learning, dialogic coaching, action learning, and the development of reflection and reflexivity in practice. The means to enact the inquiry carries on the continuity of the above by taking an action learning approach. The means to investigate the inquiry is autoethnography.

Maréchal (2010), states "autoethnography is a form or method of research that involves self-observation and reflexive investigation in the context of ethnographic field work and writing" (p. 43). Charmaz and Mitchell (1997) also tell us that in ethnographic writing, the voice is the *animus* of storytelling, the manifestation of authors' will, intent, and feeling. Animus is not the content of the stories but the ways in which the authors present themselves within them and "One characteristic that binds all autoethnographies…" says leading autoethnographer Professor Carolyn Ellis (2013) "…is the use of personal experience to examine and/or critique cultural experience. Autoethnographers do this in work that ranges from including personal experience within an otherwise traditional social scientific analysis (Chang, 2008) to the presentation of aesthetic projects—poetry, prose, films, dance, photographic essays, and performance. In this research, the delegates take on the role of autoethnographers studying their own experiences through narrative and artefact creation.

The assemblage approach to data collection strategy and analysis in autoethnography encourages the consideration of how a collection of items that fit together to form rich multi-layered accounts of a particular time, place, or moment in the life of the autoethnographer, presented from alternative perspectives (Hughes and Pennington, 2017). The sense and meaning-making on the part of delegates as autoethnographers of their own experiences took the form of their presentation of artefacts, narratives, and critical self-reflection on the final day of the programme, a sample of which are included in the following section.

Artefacts and Reflections

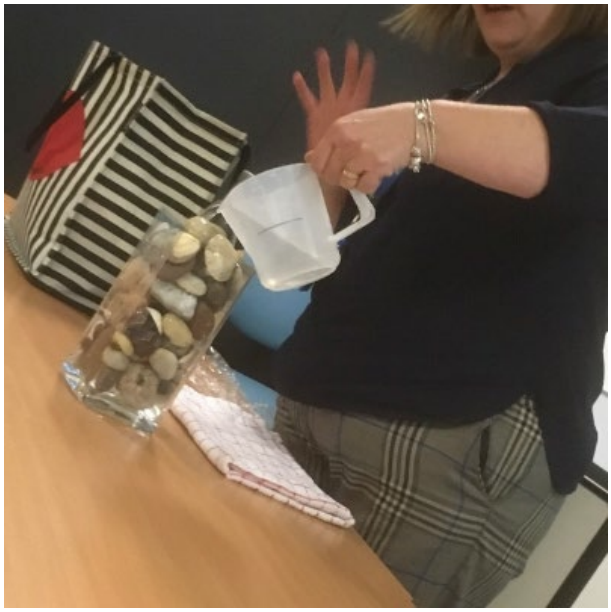
Artefact and Reflections (Paraphrased)

Medical Doctor:

> My artefact consists of a large black box representing the "dark side" of working long hours and "being in the dark" in relation to not recognising my own symptoms of mental health, which is a little ironic (laughs). (Opening the black box and taking out a red box with a white stripe) This box represents this course and action learning coaching as a life buoy that helped me recognise the symptoms and offered some options as potential solutions. (Opening the red and white box and taking out the green box) This box is my first aid box that holds my solution "Marge Simpson," I need to find the Marge to my Homer, the help of others at home and work how I can rely upon to help … This has helped my personal journey … I found the group coaching/action learning very useful as a technique to sort business issues … I found the artefact presentations very thought provoking and the strength of the three days was held together by the storytelling vignettes … I need to escalate concerns and delegate duties and I need to focus on personal development rather than prioritising the other's needs.

Human Resource Professional:

> In my flower arrangement the triangle represents the learning models with me, the large flower at the centre of that learning. I took advice from my flower arranging tutor and factored in some contingency, which was just as well. I did have a mirrored vase to represent reflection, but it broke on arrival here today, but I had a back-up vase, which on reflection is a good metaphor in learning … The artefacts are a good visual means of learning and whilst giving a presentation can be daunting, when speaking about artefacts people forget they are speaking to a group … I've learned to ask questions and stop offering solutions.



Podiatry Team Lead:

> I collect shells and stones each time I go to the beach, I have quite a collection and here are some (collection of stones and shells in a glass jar). They have a natural beauty and remind me of my

material instincts. You can see that the jar is full, however there is room between the stones and shells, which I will fill with this water that represents my learning on this course. As well as adding knowledge to my instincts it also brings out and highlights the beauty in the stones … everyone has different learning styles and members of the team are different so I will appreciate more of the differences that they bring to the team … I found the MBTI session useful and the personal stories, artefacts and the army stories/vignettes very powerful.

Physiotherapy Team Lead:

I was very taken by the stories on day one from the army and I've written my own (reads a prepared personal story of challenge, trauma, and learning in which the key thread was that of helping each other with resilience). My artefact represents the many hands involved in overall achievement of our shared goals … I have found the personal stories of the trainers, course participants about their artefacts, and the group action learning coaching invaluable … I need to embrace the "differences" in others and see things from their perspective and remind myself that leaders and managers are part of the team too … I will be incorporating the group coaching and action learning in my team meetings.

Senior Charge Nurse:

> Life is a cardigan in progress, it needs a pattern, process and be a little soft and woolly … Group coaching made me think differently about asking questions and being questioned … I don't have to do it all myself … I am more controlling than I thought, and I need to be able to hand over control … I found the stories from the army thought provoking.

Senior Dietician:

> Not surprisingly as a dietician I have taken food, and in particular the baking of a cake as a metaphor for my learning on this course. Here's my cake, which I expect will be fully consumed by the end of the day. The ingredients include people, tools for learning, building blocks, development approaches like coaching and action learning, all delivered with copious amounts of sugar (laughs) … I feel I now have a greater understanding of myself, my own qualities and how they can be used in a leadership role … the thing I will do differently as a result of this course

will definitely use transformative coaching to facilitate change and resolution of issues within my team.

Conclusions

The aim of this short pilot study was to add to the growing discourses in the fields of Transformative Learning, Action Learning, Coaching, and Storied Arts-based-Autoethnography, by critically evaluating the application of this approach when designing and delivering a combined military, university and NHS leadership development programme to a cohort of 24 senior leaders within an NHS hospital. It can be seen in the autoethnographic artefacts and reflections above that the participants certainly embraced this coached action learning approach. The individual personalities of the participants influenced the metaphors used to illustrate and tell their stories. Many acknowledged it was a challenging approach, with one participant commenting in class that the course wasn't a three-day workshop, it was a one-month and three-day course of challenging reflection.

The general feedback collated at the end of the program indicated a very high degree of satisfaction and the participants felt able to apply coaching, action learning and critical self-reflection in their workplaces. However, the authors, whilst heartened by this early positive response, do acknowledge that the proof of the pudding, or in this case the cake, will be in the longer-term critical analyse of sustained use of these reflective and reflexive learning techniques in the workplace. A three-month follow up research study with the participants using a case study approach is planned to assess the causality, if any, of the specific elements and variables of the approach taken in this pilot.

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A Mentoring Approach: Fostering Transformative Learning in Adult Graduate Education

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Abstract

Transformative learning is one of the major theories used throughout the field of adult education. Transformative learning is a theory that emphasizes how adults examine their own assumptions and beliefs with how they make sense of the world in various socio-educational contexts. Adult educators have expressed the importance of developing authentic environments and relationships in higher education that are vital to creating opportunities for transformative learning. There still remains a lack of empirical research and understanding of how adult educators and adult learners collaboratively process transformative learning in graduate education. The purpose of this study was to explore how transformative learning is fostered, promoted, and processed in graduate education. The findings indicated that adult educators and adult learners needed to have a common understanding and reciprocal empathetic mentor-mentee relationship during a transformative learning process. Implications for research and practice are provided for future research in transformative learning.

Keywords: critical reflection, transformative learning, mentorship, graduate education

Introduction

The creation and growth of Transformative Learning Theory has been one of the great inspirations for the fields of adult education since its establishment, over the past 40 years (Cranton, 2016). Transformative Learning Theory is still a relatively new to some areas in academia; with the growing interest has brought criticisms and uncertainty on the direction and boundaries that define the field of transformative learning. A multitude of theoretical perspectives has expanded to solidify Jack Mezirow's theory of transformative learning while continuing to build alternative perspectives. In the field of adult education, scholars continue to work to explain how adults experience a deep shift in perspective that leads them to better justify and more open frames of reference (Kucukaydin & Cranton, 2013; Mezirow, 2000). This makes transformative learning unique from other types of learning.

Jack Mezirow, who was a faculty member in Teacher's College at Columbia University and theorized transformative learning in 1975, believed that individuals must experience a disorienting dilemma and then engage in critical reflection and discourse during the transformative learning process (1978b, 1997, 2000). Scholars in the field of adult education have espoused that learners have to experience a disoriented dilemma to bring about critical reflection and discourse in order for them to experience the transformative learning process (Johnson-Bailey & Alfred, 2006). Dirkx (2006) claims that these dilemmas can be the product of ordinary and everyday experiences. Research indicates that various contexts such as education, workplaces, and medical fields have used Transformative Learning Theory to help better understand how people experience and transform their frame of reference for a greater understanding (Daloz, 2000; Mezirow, 1978b; Sheared, 1994; Tisdell, 2003). Fostering critical thinking skills is a pivotal part of developing autonomous thinking that promotes a self-directed process of

expanding one's consciousness (Wade, 1998), and this is brought about through a cyclical process of transformative learning (Mezirow, 1997).

Educators have expressed the importance of developing authentic environments and relationships in graduate education are vital to creating opportunities for transformative learning (Cranton, 2006, 2011, 2016; Stevens-Long, Schapiro, & Mcclintock, 2012). Although, scholars have conducted research on teaching strategies for transformative learning (Cranton, 2002, 2016) and being a mentor for learners engaged in transformative experience (Daloz, 2012), there is still lack of empirical research and understanding of how adult educators and adult learners collaboratively process transformative learning in graduate education. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore how transformative learning is fostered and encouraged in graduate education. In particular, this article will focus on the experiences of an adult educator (Mitsunori) who is an Asian male graduate faculty member at a R1 institution and an adult learner (Adam) who is a White, male, doctoral student in the same institution. Adam in particular practiced and experienced transformative learning in a graduate education. Based on their narratives, the study was guided by the following questions:

1. How does transformative learning foster mentorship in graduate education?
2. In what ways do a mentor/mentee process transformative learning in graduate education?
3. What strategies did adult educators and adult learner use in their transformative learning process?

A narrative inquiry using a retrospective narrative approach was conducted for this study to demonstrate the experiences of an adult educator who facilitated transformative experiences in a doctoral adult education course and an adult learner who experienced transformative learning in graduate education.

This section addressed some background of the study. Next section will cover a review of literature on the development and context of transformative learning theory in adult education, and mentorship in transformative learning. Then, we will discuss the methodology used to produce our findings along with future research and implications for practice.

Literature Review

Although transformative learning and mentorship are not new in adult and higher education, in fact, there are several studies to explore each area separately (Daloz, 2012, Cranton, 2016), there is still a lack of understanding of the intersection of those two content areas. So, in this section, relevant literature on the research topic including transformative learning, mentorship, and the intersectionality of the two will be explored. The first section of the literature review will discuss the development of Jack Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory built around the key element of having critical reflection on one's experiences and perspectives. Then, the second section will explore relevant literature on mentorship in adult education including the intersection of transformative learning and mentorship. Last, this section will conclude with a summary of the literature review.

Transformative Learning

In response to the prolific rise in women attending college level programs, Jack Mezirow's (1978a) original study in 1975, *Education for Perspective Transformation: Women's Re-entry Programs in Community Colleges*, was intended to replicate the success of the new and growing re-entry programs in higher education (Mezirow, 1978a). Inspired by the learning experience of his wife's return to college, Mezirow based his study on the desire to investigate the learning experiences of women returning to college after a long hiatus (Mezirow, 1978a). The main purpose of the study was to "identify factors that characteristically impede or facilitate the progress of these re-entry programs" (Mezirow, 1978a, p. 6). The major theoretical finding was that perspective transformation was the central process in personal development for the women participating in the programs (Mezirow, 1978b).

In the early stage of his theory development, Mezirow formed the theory of transformative learning from a variety of sources including Paulo Freire's concept of conscientization, Roger Gould's

theory of transformation, and Habermas' work with social philosophy (Mezirow, 1991). Freire's theory of radical conscientization provides a vision of human beings that face challenges and struggles in order to lift them to a higher level of consciousness. Mezirow drew inspiration from Gould's transformation theory that identified "unexamined psychological assumptions that must be reassessed through perspective transform to respond effectively to developmental tasks in adulthood" (Mezirow, 1978, p. 17). Mezirow also drew inspiration from Habermas' suggestion of discourse and domains of learning in which he paralleled Habermas' emancipatory domain with his perspective transformation that requires the use of self-reflection to become critically aware (Collard & Law, 1989; Mezirow, 1991).

The original study also introduced "three key themes of individual experience, critical reflection, and rational discourse in the process of meaning structure transformation" (Taylor, 1998, p. 8). The concept of Transformative Learning Theory was introduced to describe how learners question assumptions, beliefs and values, and consider multiple points of views to verify reason (Mezirow, 1978). Mezirow's perspective places the learners' experience as the starting point to the transformative learning process, and he used transformative learning to explain how our expectations directly influence the meanings we make from our experiences (Taylor, 1998).

Mezirow's theory of transformative learning "offers one of the most sophisticated conceptualizations of reflection within a larger frame of adult learning theory" (Mälkki, 2010, p. 208). Mezirow (1997) believed that as humans, "we must learn to make our own interpretations rather than act on the purposes, beliefs, judgments, and feelings of others. Facilitating such understandings is the cardinal goal of adult education. Transformative learning develops autonomous thinking" (Mezirow, 1997, p. 5). His perspective was based on the belief that for adults to make meaning they need to make sense and form interpretations with past experiences (Mezirow, 1990). The meaning making process of transformative learning allows for adults to explore the nature of knowledge, and better understand how they know what they know (Givens, 2016). Mezirow (1997) believed that everyone possesses the potential to break free from their own situations to transform their lives. He saw learning as the process of making assumptions explicit, contextualizing them, validating them, and acting on them. Transformative learning theory is based on the interest of understanding how individuals make meaning of a situation or phenomenon (Merriam, 2002).The essential dimension of transformative learning is the explicit recognition of the foundational process involving critical assessment of epistemic assumptions (Dirkx, Mezirow, & Cranton, 2006).

Mentorship

The theory of transformative learning is often taken for granted and watered down to the point that transformative learning is thought of as a method that can be simply introduced into an environment and the result will be in individuals having some profound transformation of self (Cranton, 2016; Hoggan, Mälkki, & Finnegan, 2017). However, the theory of transformative learning and each individual person presents a complex environment and process. Transformative learning is not a process that can be taught; however, a facilitator can remain a vital and important piece to the transformative learning process (Cranton, 2002). The role of the facilitator is loaded with the concerns of what to do to help support the learning process (Mälkki & Green, 2014). Based on the complex nature of transformative learning and the individualistic nature of the transformative learning process, developing a relationship-based mentoring approach during the transformative process becomes important. Based on Daloz's (2012) work with transformative learning and mentorship, we have chosen to base this study on Daloz's concept of mentorship. Daloz recognizes that people need to make meaning of their experiences and that individuals are often in a developmental transition when they seek higher education. Like Daloz, we believe that "to understand the mentor as guide, it is necessary to go back and look more closely at the journey itself" (Daloz, 2012, p. 19). Daloz (2012) believes that the facilitator can best serve as a mentor to help guide and be a confidante during the student's academic journey, so that they can offer support and challenge when needed.

For this mentor/mentee relationship to successfully develop, importance must be placed on both the student's and instructor's individual stories. Daloz (2012) explains that as individuals we are tangled

within our own stories. These stories can hold very powerful transformative learning experiences, however, often times the story represents a daunting journey that is void of understanding with no ending in sight (Daloz, 2012; Mälkki & Green, 2014). That is where the mentor comes in. Having a mentor that has already been through the trials of the journey can provide a sigh of relief (Daloz, 2012). An educator and student taking on the roles of mentor and mentee creates a relationship that is open and respectful for each individual to share their stories. The need for a mentor approach to transformative learning is based on the role of critical reflection within transformative learning. Critical reflection may not be willingly approached by all individuals and reflection is not an easy process (Mälkki, 2010).

Educators are faced with the challenges of not influencing an individual's transformative process or deciding that someone else has engaged in transformative learning (Cranton & Kasl, 2012). The journey each individual face within the transformative learning process is too daunting and complex for a mentor to completely understand and assist the individual with their transformation. One of the most essential roles of the mentor is to just be present with the student. This calls for a sensitivity by both educator and student, and this sensitivity is very important factor based on how different the life experiences can be between individuals (Yorks & Kasl, 2006). A mentor must be willing to be present during the student's journey, the student must be willing accept a mentor's presence and know they are there when the student is looking for guidance. It is important that the mentor not do it for them, "rather, merely being present may offer a silent acceptance and support for the person to go on and explore what is yet to emerge in words" (Mälkki & Green, 2014, p. 17). Sensitivity is very important so that the educator (mentor) does not introduce their own objectives with the student (mentee), so that the student is free to learn how and by what means they deem fit. Students must remain sensitive to the influences that an instructor may have on their own perspective that may not be present with peers (Cranton, 2016).

The journey of mentorship is long and difficult, yet, one of the greatest tools that can be used by educators and students is to just listen (Broughton, Plaisime, & Green Parker, 2019; Daloz, 2012). By opening up and sharing our stories offers the chance to enter into another's world. Cranton (2016) discusses that a major factor in supporting transformative learning is to be authentic in relationships with others. Being authentic with a student is central to the support needed in a transformative learning mentorship. "It is clear that if we really want to understand transformative learning richly, we need to recognize the extraordinary power of the webs of relationships in which we are invariably held" (Daloz, 2000, p. 115). Relationships through a mentoring approach to transformative learning require a strong understanding between instructors and students. These relationships must be built on trust, respect, sensitivity, and openness (Cranton, 2002, 2016).

Methods

A qualitative approach provides "the intimate relationship between the research and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 8). The essential dimension of transformative learning is the explicit recognition of the foundational process involving critical assessment of epistemic assumptions (Dirkx, Mezirow, & Cranton, 2006). Transformative learning theory provides the appropriate interpretive lens to examine the experiences of an adult educator and an adult learner who practiced and experienced transformative learning in graduate education (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

For us to recapture our own transformative and mentoring experiences in graduate education, a retrospective narrative approach was implemented. A retrospective narrative approach is widely used to examine critical incidents, phenomena, and cultures in social sciences (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007) and is usually told from the point of view of a character looking back on past events to clearly demonstrate how the events led to personal growth and some degree of transformation.

For this study, multiple sources were used to construct, re-construct, and co-construct stories (Johnson-Bailey, 2002). We decided to use our personal and mentoring journals and notes from our various conversations that occurred over a two-year period. In our mentoring journals, we kept our thoughts on our mentoring experiences and our experiences in graduate education. We followed

Brookfield's (1995, 2013) reflective strategy to capture what we thought was important in our mentorship processes each week. We tried to capture the moments in the particular incidents in graduate school in higher education. Also, we tried to address the incidents or events that were surprising or distressing to us during our mentorship processes. In addition to our own reflective mentoring logs, we recorded three separate conversations about our mentoring experiences based on our mentorship statuses, our academic statuses, and our own positionalities. The reflective journals of both the mentor and mentee and the three conversations were transcribed by the authors.

Braun and Clarke's (2006) six steps of thematic analysis were used as a structure for the researchers to follow during the coding process. Their six steps included "familiarizing yourself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, pp. 87-89). Coding was conducted manually, and the conversations were read and re-read to generate initial codes of information, also known as open coding, to provide the opportunity to "elaborate a deeper understanding of the text" (Flick, 2014, p. 406). Another round of coding was done to categorize the codes around phenomenon found in the data that was relevant to the research questions (Flick, 2014). After the categories were developed, they were then grouped into themes (Flick, 2014). The thematic analysis of data is recognized as an "*interpretive* act, where meanings are created" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 83). Attention was given so that the reflexive dialogue of the researchers before, during, and after the analytic process (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In order for us to keep trustworthiness, we conducted a member-check and triangulated using various data sources such as our reflective journals and interview conversations.

Findings

Three major themes that emerged from the research were relational, reciprocal, and environmental. The first theme, relational, was expressed by both the adult educator (Mitsunori) and adult learner (Adam) as a process of establishing a foundation to developing a more involved relationship. Relationship means in this context that adult educators should create non-authoritative learning environments for adults (Merriam & Bierema, 2014) and that mentors are also able to create safer environments for their mentees. For example, Mitsunori discussed that there has to be more of a relationship than that of an educator and student and said, "an educator and learner must build rapport through academic meetings and informal meetings." Adan also talked about how building a good rapport was important in a mentorship relationship and included, "as educator and student it is important to share stories from both individuals."

Both educator and student are expressing the need to develop a relationship that reaches deeper than the traditional educator and student relationship. For a mentoring approach to transformative learning to be relational, the mentor and mentee must critically review one's actions in relation to the other. Mitsunori shares, "it has to be relational, that is why we must include positionality. How does positionality influence the process? In order for us to be relational we need to make sure we engage in critical reflection." Adam added to this important aspect of a mentoring approach. He stated, "reflexivity is important." Transformative learning is a complex process and creating a mentorship approach to foster transformative learning needs to build a relationship that is relational for both the adult educator and adult learner. Making it relational creates a stronger sense of partnership within the relationship.

A second theme is reciprocal, which means a mentoring approach needs to be mutually beneficial. It also means that a mentor and a mentee understand how their mentorship relation influences their academic and personal lives. A reciprocal aspect of mentorship focuses on the importance of respect between the mentor and mentee. In this mentorship context, power dynamics based on positionality was key. In particular, their academic statuses, a professor and a graduate student, were important to consider because Mitsunori has organizational power as a professor. So, he was very cautious about how his power presented in the mentorship and provided Adam with an open environment where he could discuss his academic and personal experiences. Building a stronger foundation is needed so that both the educator and learner are able to share and respect aspects in one another's lives.

Mitsunori discussed this reciprocal process as a critical reflective progress as an educator-mentor because as an educator-mentor, he should be able to share his own experiences and his mentee's (Adam) experiences so that they can make meaning from their processes. Mitsunori stated, "For me as an educator, I need to think about student's life situations and life transitions." It was important for him to be able to think from his mentee's perspective so that both him and his mentee were able to mutually process their experiences in graduate school.

Adam responded with a student's perspective of this reciprocal relationship by stating, "I do think that as students we are so concentrated on our own position and own life aspects, I have to understand what a mentor is going through in their life." Having mutual respect for one another is a vital piece to the creation of a reciprocal mentorship. Mitsunori expressed this important aspect of the mentor relationship. Mitsunori stated, "You have to have mutual understanding with the relationship, and you have to have some respect for each other."Adam commented on the respect needed for a mentorship with, "taking on roles of mentor and mentored it is important to create a relationship that is open and respectful for individuals to share their stories."

The third theme, environment, is the pivotal piece to a mentorship approach to transformative learning and can heavily influence the relational and reciprocal aspects needed for mentorship. Environment can be physical and/or psychological. For a mentorship in transformative learning, it is important for both a mentor and a mentee to co-create a safer and more inclusive environment because transformative learning processes for them can be deep and personal. When discussing deep and personal matters, it is important for a mentor to be able to listen to his mentee. Mitsunori discussed the importance of creating an environment:

> For me to create a safer and more inclusive environment, and also it has to have a caring component to the environment to guide students, also said in order for me to be caring I need to practice active listening.

Adam discussed the importance of having an environment that allows for, as he stated, "Finding someone that cares. A caring individual is someone that listens, someone that knows when to challenge, and someone that engages in critical discourse." An important aspect in both the statements mentioned is the discussion on caring. For Mitsunori it is important to create an environment that is caring, and Adam describes that it is important to have a mentor that cares. When discussing environment this way extends it beyond the physical boundaries of a classroom or office, and it incorporates creating an environment of self that allows others to feel respected and understood in order to engage in critical discourse and reflection.

Discussion

Our first research question asked how does transformative learning foster mentorship in graduate education? The journey that each individual face within the transformative learning process can be daunting and complex for one to understand, and for an instructor to completely understand and assist the individual with their transformation. From transformative learning and mentoring literature, we came to understand how transformative learning might influence a mentoring approach. One of the most essential roles of an educator is to just be present with the student (Mälkki & Green, 2014). Educators cannot teach transformative learning or tell a student what to do, but they can be there to listen and provide a differing perspective when a learner reaches out (Cranton, 2002). Daloz (2012) believes that the facilitator can best serve as a mentor to help guide and be a confidante during the student's academic journey, so that they can offer support and challenge when needed. Graduate education is a complex landscape, and educators and learners bring with them complex backgrounds and experiences; therefore, the development of this mentorship in relation to transformative learning was done voluntarily and through invitation (Hubball, Clarke, & Poole, 2010).

Regarding our second research question, the retrospective narrative approach allowed us, as mentor and mentee, to explore how we process the transformative learning process. This understanding of the process is apparent in the findings when the reciprocal process is expressed as an important piece to

the critical reflective progress by both educator and student in order for them to share experiences to help make meaning with their own processes. The retrospective narrative approach allowed these stories and experiences to help develop the three themes: relational, reciprocal, and environmental that we feel help us process transformative learning. These themes also serve as overlying guidelines and strategies that we were looking to discover in our third research question in order to help adult educators and adult learners with developing a mentoring approach to transformative learning in adult graduate education. The three themes discussed can be used to build foundations that nurture relationships and environments between educators and adults built on respect and trust.

A mentoring approach to transformative learning needs to be reflexive. Reflexivity allows both adult educator and adult learner to critically review how their perspectives have developed (Preissle & Grant, 2004). To remain reflexive in a mentorship the mentor needs to reflect on his or her own actions about guiding his or her mentees, and mentees need to reflect on his or her own actions with mentor. This approach offers an approach that allows the mentor and mentee the ability to develop a relationship that forces the issues of power and respect to be continually reviewed. Reflexivity is needed throughout the entire mentorship process because of changing dynamics within the mentor relationship (Daloz, 2012).

The arduous journey that an individual will face in the transformative process needs to be understood by mentor and mentee. Cranton (2002) discusses that transformative learning is not a linear process but that there is some progress. She states, "we cannot critically reflect on an assumption until we are aware of it. We cannot engage in discourse on something we have not identified. We cannot change a habit of mind without thinking about it in some way" (Cranton, 2002, p. 65). Making the mentorship relational and reciprocal provides the opportunities for the adult educator and adult learner to build rapport, share stories, develop understanding with each other's life situations, and share concerns and ideas on the transformative learning process.

Daloz's (2012) concept of mentoring during the transformative journey envisions the mentor in the early stages of the relationship leading the mentee; however, the collaboration involved in building the relationship allows the mentor and mentee to soon be walking side by side, and soon for the mentee to move ahead on their own, and at times, take the lead. Therefore, the mentoring relationship allows both the mentor and mentee to explore their own transformative experiences in relation to one another while remaining aware of the possible influence of another's experiences and influence.

An import key to developing a mentorship approach to transformative learning that is safe and rewarding for both mentor and mentee is developing a relationship that fully discovers power dynamics and positionality. The power that exist between educator and learner matters, and so does race and sexual orientation (Grace, 2001; Hill, 2004; Johnson-Bailey, 2002; Misawa, 2010). The dialogue that needs to occur between educator and learner during mentorship must incorporate factors concerning power and positionality. Educators and learners share the same time and place in graduate education (Misawa, 2010) and taking a mentoring approach requires that educators and learners must fully understand how the positionality of themselves and each other can affect the mentorship process.

Implications

From the findings of the study, several implications can be helpful to practice and research. As for practical implications, adult educators should create an inclusive, open, and democratic learning environment where they can encourage and foster transformative learning processes in their students and where learners can feel more comfortable or freer to critically reflect on their own past experiences. Adult educators can facilitate such environments by allowing for participation, collaboration, exploration, and providing formal and informal written or verbal feedback or comments. Cranton (2016) states that transformative learning is an art and a science that enhance learners' psychosocial and psych cognitive developments. So, it is important to create an optimal environment for learners to be able to process their learning critically during their transformative learning processes.

Learning environments that encourage participation, collaboration, and exploration allow adult educators to relinquish their positional power as an educator. This relinquish of positional power will

allow educators to better understand and identify individual learning styles. This shift in power can foster group ownership and individual agency for all individuals in the learning environment. Within these environments' individuals would be able to build trust and give voice to one another. This trust allows for openness and during moments when another needs help, an outsider can ask questions that encourage one to dig deeper into their own thoughts (Daloz, 2012).

Adult educators should collaborate with their students to enhance their understanding of learning narratives that relate to transformative learning in specific contexts. Johnson-Bailey and Alfred (2006) stated that transformative learning can be contextual, and therefore is a context-specific learning process for adults. Also, transformative learning needs to be examined from an intersectional paradigm. That means, it is important to understand how sociocultural identities and positionality influence teacher-learner mentoring during the transformative learning process (Johnson-Bailey & Alfred, 2006; Sheared, 1994).

Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to explore how transformative learning was fostered and encouraged in graduate education. This article specifically focused on the experiences of an adult educator and an adult learner in graduate education at a R1 institution and added an understanding of how transformative learning should be practiced in graduate education in formal graduate education. The design of this study allowed the adult educator and an adult learner to explore and share the ways that they process and understand transformative learning. This article also provided adult educators and adult learners who are interested in practicing transformative learning in formal graduate education with some practical strategies for their own learning environments. Those three themes (relational, reciprocal, and environmental) in the findings section of this article revealed how important it was for an adult educator and an adult learner to manage transformative learning experiences collaboratively. As this article showed, while fostering transformative learning is often deemed to be difficult and challenging in formal education, it is very possible for adult educators and adult learners to collaboratively process transformative learning experiences using the mentorship approach that we discussed in this article. The mentoring approach to transformative learning requires a relational understanding between educators and learners. So, the willingness to collaboratively process their transformative learning experiences through their mutual understanding of the process and their mutual respect to each other in a safer and more inclusive environment becomes a pivotal part of the mentorship approach when fostering transformative learning in formal education. In addition, transformative learning theory is one of the major theories in the field of adult education and can be applied to various academic fields to help adult learners not only in formal education but also in informal and non-formal educational settings. As long as adult educators and adult learners use this mentorship approach in transformative learning, they should be able to safely and effectively process their disoriented dilemma to their transformation. Ultimately, the mentoring approach in fostering transformative learning can be a key for contemporary and future adult educators to continue to expand the area of transformational learning theory in the field of adult education.

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Koryu Bujutsu as a Transformative Learning Experience

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine koryu bujutsu, primarily through the lens of Japanese swordsmanship, as a transformative learning experience through the archival study of 1) the scant information available to outsiders on the teaching scroll of the Katori Shinto-ryu as part of an obscure pedagogical tradition that is sensitive to facilitating learning through egalitarian instruction and acknowledgement of different types of learners, and 2) other historical texts on Japanese swordsmanship. The study provides insights into the transformational states achievable through educational experiences. A considerable amount of information on the Katori Shinto-ryu, specifically, will be presented as a means to understanding koryu bujutsu, generally, and how koryu has survived into the modern age. While this study is not limited to Katori Shinto-ryu, it is used as a representative model of the workings of a koryu.

Keywords: koryu bujutsu, transformative learning, Katori Shinto-ryu, swordsmanship

Understanding Koryu

Kendo (the Way of the sword) is a subject of cursory popular interest. Cursory, in that while many are enthralled by the techniques of swordsmanship, very few go beyond Walter Mitty-esque fantasizing and actually enroll in a dojo (a school for studying a particular Way) and begin the study required to learn the techniques of Japanese fencing. To learn the proper handling of the sword requires more than finding a collegiate kendo club and learning to strike with a shinai (a bamboo sword). This sort of kendo is a sport that is as divorced from practical swordsmanship as Olympic fencing is from dueling with an epee. To learn proper handing and use of the sword, one may search out an iaido (the Way of drawing the sword) school. This is a little closer to the goal, as iaido may be a component part of a more complete martial system, but this will still not teach the essence of swordsmanship as a budo (the martial Way). Those who study budo are known as bugei or bushi. The traditions of the bushi were encoded in bushido (the Way of the warrior). In order to study the sword in its context as an instrument of war, one must find a koryu (old martial arts), where the techniques of using the sword and other battlefield weapons have been preserved and remained unchanged. Koryu are Japanese martial arts that were systemized prior to the Meiji restoration (1868), many by hundreds of years. Gendai budo (modern martial arts) are those formed after the Meji restoration (Draeger, 1974). Alas, however, for koryu do not exist outside of Japan. While some branch schools for koryu exist in the United States and other countries, the hombu dojo (home schools) remain in Japan. This has always been the case, as many of the koryu and practitioners of the koryu are considered living national treasures. In order to understand the essence of the system, one must study in Japan.

This makes knowledge of koryu rare. Even within Japan, koryu are not well known outside of the small number of people who train in them. Contrary to the *Kill Bill* movies, not everyone in Japan carries a sword. The All Japan Budo Association recognizes 78 koryu budo traditions with clear lineages and affiliated with the Nihon Kobudo Kyokai (Japan Classical Budo Association). This is in comparison to various koryu catalogued at the end of the 17th Century which included “fifty two ryu of archery, around

seven hundred schools of swordsmanship, more than one hundred styles of spearmanship, and around two hundred schools of for close unarmed and armed combat" (Rafolt, 2014, p. 541). The reason for the vast number of koryu during this period is that koryu training was provided for military retainers, i.e., samurai, who served the feudal houses of Japan. The term, samurai, referred to one who served one of the military houses (Friday, 2005). This military tradition is the essence of Japanese culture:

> According to Japanese mythology, some thousands of years ago the gods Izanagi and Izanami created the first island of the Japanese archipelago from a "heavenly floating bridge." This they did with a spear. From that time there developed a martial tradition that has been intimately bound up, in one degree or another, the country's culture in terms of literature, art, and ethics, and is a living heritage even today (Wilson, 1982, p. 14).

The essence of the military tradition is that bushido and the emblem of bushido, for the Japanese warrior, was and is the sword. Although it was only one of a considerable arsenal of military weapons used by the samurai, including muskets, the importance of the sword to the Japanese martial tradition cannot be underestimated:

> Bushido made the sword its emblem of power and prowess. When Mahomet claimed that "the sword is the key of Heaven and of Hell," he only echoed a Japanese sentiment. Very early the samurai boy learned to wield it. It was a momentous occasion for him when at the age of five he was appareled in the paraphernalia of samurai costume, placed on a go-board and initiated into the rights of the military profession, by having thrust into his girdle a real sword instead of the toy dirk with which he had been playing…. What he carries in his belt is a symbol of what he carries in his mind and heart, loyalty and honor. The two swords, the longer and the shorter, called respectively daito and shoto or katana and wakizashi, never leave his side. When at home they grace the most conspicuous place in the study or parlour; by night they guard his pillow within easy reach of his hand. Constant companions, they are beloved, and proper names of endearment are given them. Being venerated they are well-nigh worshipped (Nitobe, 1901, pp. 131-133).

To understand koryu, therefore, one must understand the sword and, more importantly, the education of the swordsman in the koryu that defined him. The study of swordsmanship is a transformational experience. It is this educational process that transforms the man (being a samurai was an exclusively male occupation) into the warrior, just as the sword forging process transforms the crude tamahagane (a Japanese base steel) into a functional blade and instrument of service. And as sword becomes more functional in the complexity of its construction, so the samurai becomes more useful in the complexity of his training. This complex training, the nature of which is closely guarded by the various koryu, transforms a man into a swordsman; and the transformative process has, until relatively recently, remained a mystery. Much like the transmission of the Dharma in the practice of Zen Buddhism, which is passed "from enlightened mind to enlightened mind," the transmission of how a koryu transforms its practitioners is passed from person to person through the context of the training: "The lessons of traditional budo from teacher to student normally took place from heart to heart without words. Or words were used which were not written down. To speak about it with others or to permit other styles to watch the lessons was strictly forbidden" (Sugino & Ito, 2007, p. 42). Recently however, the world was given a brief glimpse into the pedagogical practices of one of the oldest extant koryu, Katori Shinto-ryu, when the chief instructor of the koryu (Risuke Otake Shihan) deigned to talk about one of the most secret of their teaching kata, the Shinan-kata.

Statement of the Problem

There exists a lack of literature examining the pedagogical methodology of martial arts systems. Indeed, most martial arts systems, especially modern gendai systems but including traditional koryu, do not have a tradition of teaching pedagogy as a part of their curriculum. In most schools, students receive

ranks and titles based on proficiency in the techniques taught within the school, but not on teaching, itself. Students pick up the teaching style of their instructor or develop their own style based on their own experiences. In traditional styles, instructors may leave coded transmissions to pass along technical, psychological, and philosophical concepts within their schools. These documents are often passed down to successors and act as the bonifides of the new heads of the systems. Scrolls of this sort include the treatise, *Heiho Koden Sho* (*Family Transmitted Book of Strategy*), of the Yagyu Shinkage-ryu school of swordsmanship, and composed by Kamiizumi Hidetsuna (1508-1588), Yagyu Muneyoshi (1529-1606), and Yagyu Munenori (1571-1646) (Sato, 1985), as well as, *Go Rin No Sho* (*Book of Five Rings*) of Miyamoto Musashi's (1580-1645) sword system, the Niten Ichi-ryu (Tokitsu, 2004), and philosophical texts such as the *Tengu Geijutsuron* (*Demon's Sermonon the Martial Arts*) (Wilson, 2006) by Issai Chozanshi (1659-1741). The Tenshinsho-den Katori Shinto-ryu (also, Katori Shinto-ryu), however, contains not only written instruction on its weapons and strategy, but also on the psychology of education applied to teaching its students.

Risuke Otake, the Shihan (master teacher) of the Katori Shinto-ryu gave a brief glimpse into the 400 year old pedagogical training within his system in his book, *Strategy and the Art of Peace* (2016). This rare glimpse into the transmission scrolls of this ancient martial arts system allows us to examine these teaching methods and to compare them with contemporary thought in educational psychology. This is especially exciting because these teachings have both survived and thrived into the present day.

The thriving traditions of koryu, specifically, and Japanese martial systems, generally, continue to provide a fertile training ground for the training of swordsmen. In Japan, and across the globe, students undertake arduous physical, mental, and spiritual training regimens in the study of what may seem to most observers to be anachronistic systems of dueling and warfare. These pursuits can only be understood in the deeper meaning of exercises which transform the learners and provide meaning to their contemporary existence. This study seeks to understand the nature of the transformation that takes place through the study of koryu bujutsu. This study will be archival research into the nature of koryu bujutsu as a transformational learning experience.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine koryu bujutsu, primarily through the lens of Japanese swordsmanship, as a transformative learning experience through the archival study of 1) the scant information available to outsiders on the teaching scroll of the Katori Shinto-ryu as part of an obscure pedagogical tradition that is sensitive to facilitating learning through egalitarian instruction and acknowledgement of different types of learners, and 2) other historical texts on Japanese swordsmanship. In order to do this, a considerable amount of information on the Katori Shinto-ryu, specifically, will be presented as a means to understand koryu bujutsu, generally, and how koryu has survived into the modern age. While this study is not limited to Katori Shinto-ryu, that system is one of the oldest extant koryu in the world, and one that has been more open about its practices than others. As such, it is used as a representative model of the workings of a koryu. This is done with the knowledge that specific koryu each have their own traditions that separate and define them as distinct pedagogies with their own philosophical underpinnings. The koryu system, however, is a model that is replicated throughout martial culture. It is also acknowledged that participants who study koryu may also study other martial arts, and there may be overlap in the experiences between koryu budo and gendai budo as pedagogical practices.

The Research Question

The shoji walls (shoji are Japanese sliding doors made of paper) of the koryu dojo have, for hundreds of years, proven to be formidable barriers to inquisitive intrusions into the secrets of koryu traditions and the transformations that occur within those walls. This study seeks to penetrate those walls and asks the question: In what way is the study of koryu bujutsu a transformative learning experience? Mezirow's (2000) framework of Transformative Learning will be used in this analysis. This framework was proposed by Mesirow to explain how individuals modified their belief systems through their learning experiences. This particular lens is appropriate for this study because it is cognitive in nature, as is the

transformation that occurs in koryu training. The research question prompt is, “In what way has the study of koryu bujutsu and Japanese swordsmanship transformed your thinking, perceptions, or beliefs?”

Katori Shinto-ryu

Tenshinsho-den Katori Shinto-ryu is a koryu (an old martial art). Created in approximately 1447 by Iizasa Choisai (1387-1488), Katori Shinto-ryu has been passed down to the present day in an unbroken line of transmission through the Iizasa family and its heirs (Otake, 2016). To say that Iizasa Choisai created the Katori Shinto-ryu, however, is incorrect. The history of the ryuha (system) states that at 60 years of age, Choisai retired to Baikizan Fudansho near Katori Jingu where he underwent a 1,000 day period of prayer to Futsunushi-no-Kami and engaged in shugyo (period of intense training). At the end of 1,000 days, the deity, Futsunushi-no-Kami, appeared to him in the form of a small boy seated in a plum tree near which Choisai trained. The deity praised Choisai for his dedication and told him, “Thou shalt be the master of all swordsmen under the sun” (Otake, 2016, p.18), and presented him with the scroll which contain the essence of the Katori Shinto-ryu and trained him in the manner of the arts contained therein. Due to the manner of its divine origin, the school was named Tenshinsho-den (direct and authentic transmission from the deities) Katori Shinto-ryu (system of the divine way of Katori).

Choisai died in 1488 at the age of 102 (Japanese tradition adds one year to a person’s age, accounting for the time the child is in the womb). The teachings of the Katori Shinto-ryu have been transmitted through an unbroken line of 20 generations of the Iizasa family. The current Soke (head of the family tradition) is IizasaYasusada. The family dojo (school) is 300 years old and is one of the oldest in Japan. It has been designed as a cultural asset by the city of Katori in Chiba prefecture.

In its position as one of the oldest martial arts in Japan, Katori Shinto-ryu has influenced, directly and indirectly, many other martial schools, including the Shinkage-ryu, Ippa-ryu, Jigen-ryu, and Tennen Rishin-ryu (Otake, 2007). In 1960, Tenshinsho-den Katori Shinto-ryu was the first martial art to be named an intangible cultural asset by the Chiba Perfectural Government, due in no small part to the efforts of the current chief instructor of the ryuha, Risuke Otake.

The Menkyo System in Katori Shinto-ryu

Koryu do not give kyu/dan ranks. Kyu (literally, “boy”) denotes a junior, and dan (literally, “man”) designates a senior practitioner. The familiar kyu/dan ranking system that permeates modern martial arts, represented by the ubiquitous colored belt system, was developed by Jigoro Kano, the creator of judo, as a method to promote his system (Green, 2010). The practice was later adopted into karate by Gichin Funakoshi, an Okinawan school teacher and karate-ka, who worked with Kano to promote karate as a Japanese sport. Kendo later adopted a system of rankings. This is different from traditional martial arts, which designate authority and proficiency based on family lineage and menkyo.

In Katori Shinto-ryu “students and teachers are simply expected to learn from one another (much like the interdependent relationship of yin and yang)” (Otake, 2007, p. 41). “With the communion of mind with mind [ishin-deshin] the essence of the education [or fruits of the education – kyoiku no jitsu] will be achieved” (Sugino & Ito, 2007, p. 199). Both physical and mental skills are evaluated, and students are awarded mokuroku at the appropriate stage of development. A menkyo may be awarded after further training. The teaching scroll, the Shinan-kata (teaching methods) gokui kaiden transmission scroll, is only awarded to those at least 42 years old, regardless of development (Otake, 2007). Mokuroku is a handwritten scroll used in koryu that contains the name of the ryu, lineage of the teachers, catalogue of the techniques possessed by the recipient of the mokuroku, and the signature and stamp of the soke (head of the ryu) issuing the mokuroku. A menkyo is a license to teach within the educational system issuing the license. While menkyo are used in koryu, they are also used in other systems, e.g., sumi-e (ink painting), chado (tea ceremony), shodo (calligraphy). There are different types of menkyo, usually between two and nine, with the license of full transmission being the menkyo kaiden (Draeger, 1976).

The idea that students and teachers work together should not be construed as a constructivist paradigm. Truth, in a koryu, is not constructed between the interaction of teacher and student. That is not what Otake means in his statement, above. Positivistic truth is measured by the length of the sword (i.e.,

what has worked in the past to preserve life), and whatever one's personal thoughts and feelings on a subject within the ryuha, the training is designed to bring them in line with the ryuha's heiho. There is no deviation from the truth of the koryu.

Heiho of Katori Shinto-ryu

Katori Shinto-ryu has always practiced egalitarianism, in that instruction was available not only to the warrior class, but also to the farming and merchant classes. "Turn no one away, nor rope them back in" (Otake, 2007, p.41) is a maxim of the ryuha. This suggests that the focus is more on the ryuha and less on the student. The ryuha system of koryu is designed to preserve and transmit the teachings of the ryuha, itself; teachings which have been handed down unchanged for generations. Unlike modern martial arts systems, which seem to thrive on innovation and change, koryu train in the battle-tested techniques and strategies developed by the founders and that have allowed their practitioners (and the ryuha) to survive into the present age. For Katori Shinto-ryu, the guiding philosophy of the ryuha states that "the art of war is the art of peace; one who prevails over his opponent without force is superior to one who strikes his opponent down" (Otake, 2016, p.248). The term for both war, i.e., strategy, and peace is heiho, and is differentiated by the kanji (i.e., logographic Chinese characters) used to write the word, itself (Otake, 2016, p. 3). It is this philosophy that the ryuha takes to be its guiding raison d'être. The ryu exists to propagate itself and its philosophy. Students are a vehicle for the ryuha to do that.

It is interesting, therefore, that the Katori Shinto-ryu also contains instructions on pedagogy, the ostensible function of which is the teaching of students. Why does a ryuha, therefore, which is interested only in the promotion of itself, have a section on how to teach students; a subject that is practically ignored by other systems? It is a stratagem that is intimately connected with the survival of the ryuha. In Katori Shinto-ryu, the hieho of the ryuha is that "the art of war is the art of peace." By taking its focus off of external conflict, it forces the student to focus on internal change. And through this internal focus, the student is transformed into a carrier of the ryuha:

> My [Otake Shihan] decision to disclose a portion of our transmission scrolls, protected until now as secret, and not to be shared with outsiders, has been based on a desire to warn society of the social conditions currently before us. I sincerely hope that this volume serves to spread the philosophy of heiho in which people can learn to achieve objectives without conflict, and enable the people of the world to live safe and healthy lives in harmony with each other (Otake, 2016, p. 248).

This paper will examine various historical treatises on the transformational aspects of swordsmanship, and the recently exposed transmission scroll of the Katori Shinto-ryu, treat the transformational process of the swordsman, both from a philosophical standpoint and a practical tradition.

Literature Review

A Google Scholar search for "transformative learning koryu bujutsu" returned no hits; neither did searches for "transformative learning martial arts," "transformative learning Japanese fencing," "transformative learning fencing," or "transformative learning combat arts." The term, "transformative learning" returned 37,400 hits, which was not surprising considering the status of TL in educational psychology, generally, and adult education, specifically. The lack of relationship between the search terms indicates the gap in the research literature.

The term, "koryu bujutsu" returned 56 results. Of interest in these results was Rafolt's (2007) socio-anthropological examination of differences between koryu budo and gendai budo. Reguli, Vit, and Cihounkova (2016) asked 57 aikido practitioners about their spiritual perception of the dojo using the Spirituality of Movement Activities Questionnaire. Their findings indicated that there was no evidence that aikido practitioners developed "environmental spirituality" (p. 121); however, they noted that the construct of "motivation for personal change" was rated higher than other dimensions on the survey.

Roberts-Thomson (2014) looked at various empirical studies that showed studying martial arts led to reduced aggressiveness, increased self-esteem, self-confidence, and hopefulness. None of these studies, however, indicated critical reflection brought about through the study of martial arts, or a change in belief systems that would designate them as transformative learning experiences. The best examples of transformative learning in koryu bujutsu are the historical texts from the various ryuha, themselves.

Historical Texts of Other Ryu

Katori Shinto-ryu is not the only system that seeks to perpetuate itself, or bring about a transformation in its practitioners that allow that to occur. As has been stated, the function of any ryuha, what distinguishes it as a ryuha, is self-propagation. The heiho (strategy) of the ryuha however, varies in how it accomplishes this task. In the Yagyu Shinkage-ryu (New-Shadow system of the Yagyu family), as well as other sword systems, both ancient and modern, the strategy is to create a practitioner that has total freedom of movement. When such a state is reached, all other things being equal, the practitioner should be able to withstand any opponent. Being undefeatable, the student, and the ryuha, survive. While generally translated as "shadow," in relation to the system, *kage* means "rejection of offense in favor of defense, of outward manifestations in favor of inner working [hence, shadow], of the body in favor of the mind" (Sato, 1985, p.13).

This optimal performance through the interaction of mind and body is known as flow (Csikszentmihayli, 1997); and while Eastern religious thought may view this as a transcendent state, it may also be characteristic of the autotelic personality, i.e., a personality type predisposed to achievement of a flow state. Characteristics of this personality include, "a general curiosity and interest in life, persistence, and low self-centeredness, which result in the ability to be motivated by intrinsic rewards" (Nakamura & Csikszentmihayli, 2002, p. 93).

The goal of the Yagyu school is to focus on training the mind of the student in a specific way and to achieve a specific result. The training in the teachings of the ryuha creates a way of thinking peculiar to the ryuha, itself. The Yagyu family passed its general tenets down through the written text of the *Heiho Kaiden Sho* (*Family Transmitted Book of Strategy*), with the secrets of the ryu being passed down in verbal teachings. Notes on the *Shuji Shuriken* (*Life-Giving Sword*), the third volume in the *Heiho Kaiden Sho*, states of one particular technique that, "because it is to be secretly transmitted, we do not give the correct ideographs for the term in writing, but use ideographs that sound the same" (Sato, p. 82).

Such secrecy was a normal part of the transmission of koryu bujutsu (techniques of war from ancient martial systems). It must be remembered that these teachings were applied in actual combat during warring periods and in personal duels in times of relative peace. To publish a treatise that clearly revealed the techniques of one's style would be to invite personal defeat and the possible extinction of the ryuha.

Miyamoto Musashi (1580-1645), likewise passed his secrets through oral transmission. The *Go Rin No Sho* (*Book of Five Rings*), written by Musashi shortly before his death in 1645 CE, was originally destroyed by him after having his top students read the document in his presence. It was later copied down from memory by one of the students, Furuhashi Sozaemon, and transmitted as the *Ihon Go Rin No Sho* (Tokitsu, 2004):

> A little before his death, on the twelfth of May, he called Terao Maganojo, Motomenosuke, and me and told us: 'You must attain in practice everything that I communicated to you day by day without having nay need to note anything down. There is no written text for my school. Once you have read what I have written, you must make an end to it with fire.' (p. 246).

Tokitsu notes that, "in Musashi's time, in the realm of the arts, the transmission of written texts was rare, and taking notes during teaching and practice – and even afterward – was forbidden" (p.252). This was partially because of the reasons given, above, concerning protection against enemies, but it was also because the essence of the ryuha could only be learned through daily effort and rigorous training in the system. The philosophy of the ryuha became embedded in the unconscious and embodied in an adept's

every action, a mind-body fusion which created a living exemplar of the strategies, tactics, and philosophy of the ryuha, itself.

This mind-body fusion, i.e., embodiment, while largely alien to Western philosophical dualism which separates the two, is common in Eastern traditions (Light & Kentel, 2015) and it is becoming a more popular idea in Western science. Modern neuroscience has a popular expression known as Hebb's Postulate of synaptic plasticity that says, "neurons that fire together, wire together, " derived from the work of Löwel and Singer (1992); meaning that through repeated cognitive activity, behavioral patterns are imprinted at the level of automaticity, i.e., unconscious habit, through synaptic association.

Oral transmission of the ryu's secret doctrines and techniques was the usual custom in koryu bujutsu, and remains so in the extant koryu today. The philosophy of the Katori Shinto-ryu is that "the art of war is the art of peace," and emphasis is placed on winning through non-violence, so there is no need for secret techniques. In this way, the restrictions placed on access to the scroll become not so much a matter of learning secret techniques, but of working through mental frames of reference to understand the final teachings. They become markers of transformations in mental paradigms, and reveal themselves as another tool in the educational psychology of the ryuha.

One of the characteristics of Transformative Learning is the idea of transformation, itself. "At the core of Mezirow's conceptualization of transformative learning theory is the process of critical reflection. We transform frames of reference through critical reflection on our own and other's assumptions and beliefs" (Cranton & Roy, 2003, p.88). These cognitive processes only come about through both dedicated physical practice in the ryuha and intellectual maturity, hence the Shinan-kata scroll is not passed on until a practitioner is 42 years old, regardless of physical development in the system.

Contents of the Katori Shinto-ryu Teaching Scroll

The glimpse within the Shinan-kata (teaching methods) scroll reveals that the text is a treatise on educational psychology. The scroll begins by examining the psychological state that students should take when facing an opponent. This state is called suigetsushinmyoken, meaning the mind must be like the moon's (getsu) reflection on the water's surface (sui), a perfect reflection of the mind-state of the opponent; and the students should be able to instantly fill an opening (tsuki) in an opponent's defenses like the moon is immediately reflected in droplets of water splashed from a pool: "Suigetsu Shinmyoken refers to taking the opponent's freedom to attack through the application of techniques and tactics based on the opponent's combative posture" (Otake, 2016, p. 240). The explanation of shinmyoken is given:

- Shinmyoken involves reflecting the opponent without reflecting oneself; waiting without expectation to reflect the opponent's true nature. One must wait should one's self come to the fore; the sword serves as a tool with which to protect the self. Adopt this mental outlook. In Buddhism this is sometimes referred to as "fudochi," written with the characters for "motionless/immutable wisdom." Fudochi does not refer to an unconscious state like that of a stone or a tree, but instead to one maintaining a state of immutability while conscious of the eight and ten directions.
- Fudochi refers to the state where one causes someone to respond "Yes?" when one calls them. It does not refer to a state where the person wonders what one wants before answering when one calls them. The quintessence of strategy is the implementation of the heart.
- Kannon is sometimes said to possess a thousand arms and a thousand eyes, but in reality does not. Fudochi should be used to strike opponents.
- In strategy, as in any matter, the state where one calls out and the other person responds "Yes?" is the same as where the opponent moves, and one's technique naturally emanates, and as such is indicative of the activity of the mind's eye. A thousand eyesrefers to the state of observing and acting in accordance with the opponent's ki (Otake, pp. 240-241).

The excerpt goes on to discuss the teaching of different types of students. That this explanation on suigetsu shinmyoken immediately precedes the section of how to approach different types of students appears to indicate that the teacher should adopt this state when facing his pupils. It suggests that the teacher himself maintain a mind that is focused on reading his student's dispositions and responding to

them according to their various learning needs. This suggests that the educational concept of differentiation, i.e., proactively adapting teaching styles to address the diversity of student learning preferences and stages of readiness to learn, was acknowledged and codified in pedagogical practice centuries ago in the Shinan-kata of the Katori Shinto-ryu. This acknowledgement of the need for flexibility in approach is striking within the cultural context in which it is found; a cultural context that demands strict adherence to the paradigms of the ryuha. The Japanese adage, "the nail that stands up will be hammered down," indicates the emphasis placed on conformity over differentiation. The concept and practice of suigetsu shinmyoken thus presents itself as one of those paradoxical circumstances, where only through differentiation of instruction can the heiho of the ryuha be successfully transmitted.

The Shinan-kata recognizes several different types of students and, along with the types of students, gives the way to instruct each type:

- The impatient student should be taught in an unhurried manner. He should be corrected through practice.
- The insensitive student's technique should be corrected to give him confidence.
- The student who asks about principles should be made to practice, and taught the principles through training.
- The student who likes to rush should be taught to focus on their practice through learning the forms in detail.
- The talented student wants to learn more advanced teachings. He should not be taught advanced teachings, but nurtured skillfully by carefully observing his heart, and showing him his weaknesses in practice.
- The awkward student, if sincere, should be corrected repeatedly, and shown how to achieve victory through practice.
- All student's [sic] true natures should be brought out. Some students may be incompetent. They can become skillful through focusing on their weaknesses and working sincerely on them (Otake, 2016, p. 241).

It will be noted that the instructions for the different types of students stress the importance of practice. This practice in the traditions of the ryuha brings the student into line and transforms him into a living embodiment of the ryuha. As the Shinan-kata states, the students' natures must be brought to the surface, that is, their inherent beliefs and propensities must be exposed, so that they can be trained and brought into line with the paradigms of the ryuha. It is this educational process that creates the battlefield of the mind on which the transformational campaign is waged.

Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory

As one of the major learning theories in adult education, Transformative Learning (TL) has a considerable reference database. TL is a concept that has itself undergone transformation (Hogan & Cranton, 2015). On a fundamental level, TL states that all individuals make meaning of their experiences to form a set of perceptions about the world, a set of beliefs. Mezirow (1990) defined learning as "the process of making a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of an experience, which guides subsequent understanding, appreciation, and action" (p. 1). TL may be defined as "a process by which previously uncritically assimilated assumptions, beliefs, values, and perspectives are questioned and thereby become more open, permeable, and better validated" (Cranton & Roy, 2003, p. 87). In essence, this belief system is examined, questioned, and revised to assimilate and accommodate new experience. TL presents itself as a lens through which to understand learning as a transformation of belief systems. Studies that have examined transformative aspects of active engagement include Taylor's (1998) review of TL, as well as his (2007) follow-up on TL research. As noted above, while TL has now become one of the pillars of adult education research and practice, there have been no studies about how restrictive systems, such as koryu butjusu, systems which encourage adherence to the structure of the ryuha with a keppan (blood oath), act as a TL experience.

Mezirow (2000) listed ten phases in his TLT: disorienting dilemma; self-examination; sense of alienation; relating discontent to others; exploring options for new behaviors; building confidence in new

ways of behaving; planning a course of action to sustain new behaviors; acquiring new knowledge to implement plans; experimenting with new roles; reintegration. Dirkx (1998) points out that, "for Mezirow, the outcome of transformative learning reflects individuals who are more inclusive in their perceptions of the world, able to differentiate increasingly in its various aspects, open to other points of view, and able to integrate different dimensions of their own experiences into meaningful and holistic relationships" (p. 4). Mezirow's initial presentation of TL has often been criticized for being too cognitively focused (Taylor, 2008). It is this focus, however, that recommends it as a frame through which to view koryu bujutsu, because the transformation which takes place within the practitioner is a transformation of mind.

Discussion

Issazi Chozanshi's (1659-1741) was a member of literati and a samurai of the Sekiyado fief. He included in his text, *Tengu Geijutsuron* (*Demon's Sermonon the Martial Arts*) (Wilson, 2006) a learning story used in many martial arts schools called, "The Mysterious Technique of the Cat." In the story, a vexing rat overcomes all of the cats sent to kill it by a samurai, and it even chases the samurai about his house. A particular cat is finally called in and easily dispatches the rat as it cowers in fear in a corner. Later that evening, all of the previously unsuccessful cats come to praise the victorious feline and ask for instruction in its way of rat catching. The samurai listens to the discourse and understands that of which the cat speaks is intimately connected to the way of the sword. He finally asks the cat to reveal to him the deepest mysteries of swordsmanship:

> [T]here is something I heard in secret. That is that the art of swordsmanship is not exclusively in making efforts to defeat others. It is the art of dealing with the Great Transformation, and being clear on the matter of life and death. A man who would be a samurai should always maintain this kind of mentality and should discipline himself in the art. For this reason, you should first of all penetrate the matter of life and death; make no particular adaptations to the mind; have no doubts and no vacillation; do not use your own wit, contrivances, or prejudices; harmonize mind and ch'i; rely on nothing; and be as serene as a deep pool. If you are always like this, you will be completely free to respond to any change.... Because I exist, my opponent exists. If I do not exist, neither will my opponent. "Opponent" is the name we give to someone who stands against us. Yin and yang, water and fire, are of this sort. For the most part, something that has form will surely have something in opposition to it. However, if there is no form to my mind, there will be nothing opposing it. When there is nothing in opposition, there is no contentiom (Wilson, p. 185, 189).

The story of the swordsman and the cat reflects the same basic interests as the previously introduced systems, "the transformation of the martial artist vis-à-vis mental stance, and the ease of facility of his own body" (Wilson, p. 21). The transformation of the mind, through rigorous physical training, is the penultimate goal of these schools. The ultimate goal is the preservation of the ryuha. If there is no contest, one cannot be defeated, and the ryuha is preserved. The internal, psychological quest to transform oneself into a figure so indomitable that an opponent does not have an opening to strike provides practitioners with a lifetime of study and an almost impossible goal. Once again, the battle is focused inward, rather than outward. The opponent becomes whatever internal restrictions prevent one from achieving this superhuman state. Otake clearly states, "budo is a path for polishing the self" (2016, p. 227), and "through austere training, the practitioner awakens to the concept of *katsujin-enken* (the sword as life-giving and fulfilling), and is fulfilled as a human being" (2007, p.15).

Jennings (2010) looked at the transformation that occurs through long-term practice of Chinese martial arts, and while not a treatise on koryu bujutsu, the themes are similar: "martial artists are travelers; their martial development is a journey; progress through the journey is transformation" (p. 318). This idea of being a traveler evokes the koryu practice of shugyo (austere training), an intense period of training in which a martial artist would leave his own dojo (school) and visit other schools and teachers against

whom he would engage in combat as a way of learning. Training in martial arts acts as a form of self-discovery for practitioners, much the same as described by Magolda (2004) for transformation through epistemological reflection. These warrior journeys, both through internal reflection and external combat, represent Mesirow's disorienting dilemma, the first step in the transformation process. A practitioner must first confront the sword and it is then that s/he faces the first dilemma, i.e., how to get past the sword to strike the opponent without being struck. In this respect, it is similar to a Zen koan. The koan is a paradoxical riddle used to facilitate enlightenment in Rinzai Zen Buddhism. The koan is specifically designed to create a disorienting dilemma, challenge rational assumptions, and create a new, higher understanding (enlightenment). A koan given to the author while studying Zen in Korea was, "Who are your mother and father." The solution to the riddle isn't a straightforward genealogical response. It is the form of a famous koan which is also stated, "Show me your face before your parents were born" (Suler, 1989, p.222). For the practitioner of the sword, the koan of the sword is more than a practical problem. The kendo master Morita Monjuro talks about the similarity between kendo and Zen:

> Holding the sword with the principle of manipulating it perfectly is synonymous with attuning oneself to the universal principle. The effect is similar to that sought by Zen masters through sitting zazen facing the wall. The technique of the sword becomes the practice of the universal principle, and this practice is equivalent of the koan in Zen (Tokitsu, 2004, p.264).

This enlightenment that is gained through the practice of swordsmanship creates a transformation in the practitioner. Each physical pattern of movements within the koryu is designed to bring about a corresponding mental pattern. As the physical movements transform the body, they also transform the mind. That such a transformation is possible, is verified by the teachings of the ryuha. Katori Shinto-ryu has an oral tradition known as kumazasa-no-taiza, or, "dialogue atop the bamboo grass" (Otake, 2016, p. 4). Tradition states that the founder, Iizasa Choisai, was never beaten in combat and was, therefore, a magnet for swordsmen wishing to make names for themselves. When confronted by a challenger, Choisai would invite the swordsman to sit with him atop a thin stalked bamboo known as kumazasa. Unable to accomplish this task, the swordsmen would leave in defeat. Chosai's unique ability was gained through his understanding and mastery of the sword. His enlightenment, i.e., transformation, through the study of the sword was what allowed him to perform the feat. Anyone who was unable to duplicate the act had not achieved the same level of transformation. In a koryu, the transformation of mind is validated by the feats of the practitioners who embody the teachings of the ryuha.

The inward journey and transformational goal is not just sought in koryu, but in modern business and military endeavors. Kotler and Wheal (2017) examined the search for the ability to create the peak experience and flow state, which they called extasis, i.e., "step outside oneself" (Chapter 1, Section 1, para. 11), in various forms, from microdosing with hallucinogenics in Silicon Valley to more martial group training in the Navy SEALs. They found that these states were re-producible and highly sought after, not only by counterculture psychonauts but by business and military operatives as a way to go beyond the normal experiences and tap into creative states of enhanced performance. The same transformation that was sought by practitioners in the koryu is still being sought after in more contemporary activities. While koryu fostered these states through the creation of mental and physical paradigms, modern practitioners seek to understand the transformation on a chemical level and hack the results in less than a lifetime of focused study.

Extasis is transformation, and may represent one aspect of TL. Wettrick (2017) suggests that TL is possible in the classroom through various practices designed to create the flow state: "creating an environment that would allow my students to take more risks (safely), flush out stress, increase creativity, and drive deeper feelings of awareness and empaty" (para 6). While opening college courses with a round of sword practice may be impractical, Wettrick suggests using skills such as mindfulness (also fostered in koryu bujutsu) to help create the appropriate setting for flow to be experienced and transformative learning to occur.

The study of koryu bujutsu, which has as a practical aim the forced submission of an opponent through martial means, seems cursorily opposed to the idea of TL and expanding one's beliefs to have more holistic relationships. But this dichotomy is only understood through TL. The death-dealing sword (satsujinken) is transformed into the life-giving sword (katsujinken). As the learner is the living representation of the sword, the learned is transformed from one who uses the sword to bring death to one who uses the sword to bring life.

Miyamoto Musashi is revered in budo (warrior arts) as kensei (sword saint). This is because he was recognized (by many) as having achieved the plateau of being an indomitable force. Tradition states that Shinmen Musashi No Kami Fujiwara No Genshin (Miyamoto Musashi) killed his first man in a duel at the age of 13. By the age of 30, he had engaged in over 60 episodes of single combat and killed all of his opponents. He fought in two major battles, including the Battle of Seikigahara (1600 CE). At some point in his life, believing himself to be invincible, he stopped using a shinken (live blade) and, instead, used wooden weapons, to avoid killing his opponents. He eventually retired to a cave, where he died in 1645 CE (Harris, 1974). In his writings, Musashi states, "When I reached thirty I looked back on my past. The previous victories were not due to my having mastered strategy [heiho]…. After that I studied morning and evening searching for the principle, and came to realize the Way of strategy when I was fifty" (Harris, 1974, p. 34).

Through the study of the sword in the traditions of the ryuha, the practitioner confronts his beliefs and examines them through the processes of kata and combat, both being types of mental and physical koans. The practitioner reflects on his training, and the new experiences are assimilated into new paradigms. The entire process is facilitated by the ryuha to mold the thinking of the practitioner and make the practitioner an extension of the ryuha. In order to facilitate the perpetuation of the ryuha, the transformation of the mind through austere training of the body in the martial techniques of the system became the ostensible goal of koryu. Examples of these techniques are given as a video link in the references (Gonzales, 2011). Through this training, the heiho of the ryuha becomes embodied within the practitioner. The practitioner then becomes the living vehicle through which the essence of the system is preserved and transmitted. The paradigms that define the koryu are validated within the practitioner.

The Shinan-kata of the Katori Shinto-ryu gives us a glimpse into the educational strategies that are designed to bring about a transformation within the practitioner of the koryu. This is partly accomplished through teachings about what frame of reference a teacher should adopt, i.e., shinmyoken, and also through recognition of different types of learners and differentiation of instruction for each type. This gives the outward appearance that the ryuha is a closed system that discourages thinking outside the lines and encourages paradigm paralysis; the very opposite of the heart of transformative learning. Paradoxically, however, it is through this strict adherence to the mental paradigms of the ryuha that true freedom is achieved; freedom to move both mind and body in any manner necessary for the survival of the individual as a living embodiment of the ryuha. Only through adherence to the mental and physical paradigms of the ryuha can a paradigm shift be achieved and a transformation occur.

Conclusions and Opportunities for Future Research

Phenomenological interviews with practitioners of koryu bujutsu to examine the lived experience of the individuals studying koryu would give more in-depth insight into the transformative aspects of the experience. Once these interviews have been conducted and the eidae inherent in them brought to light, they can be compared with the historical record represented in this study. This comparison will provide insight into the transformations that occur (if any) through the strict training paradigms of the ryuha.

Historical documents of the type examined in this study are often rife with folklore, stories designed to serve the continuation of the ryu by creating a context conducive to the perpetuation of the ryuha. Such stories are esoteric in that they define the ryuha to its members and are understood only to those within the ryuha; and exoteric in that they define how the group wants others to understand them. This is one reason the Shinan-kata is interesting, in that it plainly gives instruction on the esoteric training of its adherents. It is hoped that future research with active practitioners of koryu bujutsu will help

distinguish esoteric, transformative learning from exoteric propaganda. This may also lead to a clearer understanding of common themes that exist in different types of learning.

More research of the Shinan-kata as a treatise on educational psychology and a guide to help facilitate a transformation of mind may prove useful, however, as a menkyo of the highest order in the Katori Shinto-ryu, access to it is off limits to anyone outside the ryuha. An interview with Otake Risuke, Shihan-dai of the Katori Shinto-ryu, was sought in an effort to find out more about the scroll and its instruction on teaching. The interview was denied. This is unfortunate, as much might be learned about historical teaching practices within the koryu, as well as how these practices may facilitate transformational learning.

While the idea of learning styles is passé in educational psychology, the Shinan-kata does indicate that learners within the Katori Shinto-ryu were recognized by their particular approaches to learning, and teaching was/is individualized to the student. In a time when educational theories are often transient, the Shinan-kata indicates that individualized approaches to education designed to create peak, transformative learning experiences can have longevity.

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